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THE INTERNATIONAL  
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF  
COMMUNICATION

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EDITED BY | WOLFGANG DONSBACH



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THE INTERNATIONAL  
ENCYCLOPEDIA OF  
COMMUNICATION

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Public Journalism  
Public Meetings  
Public Opinion  
Public Opinion, Media Effects on  
Public Opinion Polling  
Public Relations  
Public Relations Ethics  
Public Relations Evaluation  
Public Relations Field Dynamics  
Public Relations: Global Firms  
Public Relations, Intercultural  
Public Relations: Media Influence  
Public Relations Planning  
Public Relations Roles  
Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy  
Public Sphere  
Public Sphere, Fragmentation of  
Publics: Situational Theory

## Q

Qualitative Methodology  
Quality of the News  
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Quantitative Methodology  
Questions and Questioning

## R

Radical Media  
Radio  
Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of  
Radio for Development  
Radio France Internationale  
Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty  
Radio Networks  
Radio News  
Radio: Social History  
Radio Technology  
Rating Methods  
Readership Research  
Real-Time Ratings (RTR)  
Realism  
Realism in Film and Photography  
Reality and Media Reality  
Reality TV  
Reasoned Action, Theory of  
Reciprocal Effects  
Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction  
Regression Analysis  
Reification  
Relational Control  
Relational Dialectics  
Relational Maintenance  
Relational Schemas  
Relational Termination  
Relational Uncertainty  
Relationship Development  
Reliability  
Religion and Popular Communication  
Remediation  
Research Dissemination  
Research Ethics  
Research Ethics: Internet Research  
Research Methods  
Response Sets  
Reticence  
Rhetoric in Africa  
Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion  
Rhetoric in Central and South America  
Rhetoric and Class  
Rhetoric and Dialectic  
Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan  
Rhetoric in East Asia: Korea  
Rhetoric in Eastern Europe  
Rhetoric, Epideictic

Rhetoric and Epistemology  
 Rhetoric and Ethics  
 Rhetoric and Ethnography  
 Rhetoric, European Renaissance  
 Rhetoric and Gender  
 Rhetoric, Greek  
 Rhetoric and History  
 Rhetoric and Language  
 Rhetoric and Logic  
 Rhetoric and Media Studies  
 Rhetoric, Medieval  
 Rhetoric in the Middle East  
 Rhetoric and Narrativity  
 Rhetoric, Nonverbal  
 Rhetoric in North America: Canada  
 Rhetoric in North America: Mexico  
 Rhetoric in North America: United States  
 Rhetoric in Northern and Central Asia  
 Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems  
 Rhetoric and Philosophy  
 Rhetoric and Poetics  
 Rhetoric and Politics  
 Rhetoric, Postmodern  
 Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic  
 Rhetoric and Psychology  
 Rhetoric and Race  
 Rhetoric and Religion  
 Rhetoric, Roman  
 Rhetoric of Science  
 Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic  
 Rhetoric and Semiotics  
 Rhetoric and Social Protest  
 Rhetoric and Social Thought  
 Rhetoric in South Asia  
 Rhetoric in the South Pacific  
 Rhetoric and Technology  
 Rhetoric, Vernacular  
 Rhetoric and Visuality  
 Rhetoric in Western Europe: Britain  
 Rhetoric in Western Europe: France  
 Rhetoric in Western Europe: Germany  
 Rhetoric in Western Europe: Italy  
 Rhetoric in Western Europe: Spain  
 Rhetorical Criticism  
 Rhetorical Studies  
 Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations  
 Rhetorics: New Rhetorics  
 Right to Communicate  
 Right of Correction  
 Right to Know  
 Right of Reply  
 Risk Communication  
 Risk Perceptions  
 Rituals in Popular Communication  
 Rogers, Everett

Rumor  
 Rural Development  
 Russia: Media System

## S

Sampling, Nonrandom  
 Sampling, Random  
 Samsung Corporation  
 Satellite Communication, Global  
 Satellite Communication, Regulation of  
 Satellite Television  
 Scales  
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 Scandalization in the News  
 Scandinavian States: Media Systems  
 Schemas  
 Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction  
 Schemas and Media Effects  
 Scholarship of Teaching  
 Schramm, Wilbur  
 Science Journalism  
 Scopic Regime  
 Scripts  
 Search Engines  
 Secular Social Change  
 Security and Surveillance Agencies  
 Segmentation of the Advertising Audience  
 Selective Attention  
 Selective Exposure  
 Selective Perception and Selective Retention  
 Self-Presentation  
 Self-Regulation of the Media  
 Semiotics  
 Sensation Seeking  
 Sensationalism  
 Sense-Making  
 Separation of News and Comments  
 Sesame Street  
 Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of  
 Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives  
 Sex and Pornography Online  
 Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media  
 Sexism in the Media  
 Sexual Violence in the Media  
 Sexualization in the Media  
 Sibling Interaction  
 Sign  
 Sign Systems  
 Simulation  
 Singapore: Media System  
 Situation Comedies  
 Sleeper Effect  
 Small Talk and Gossip

- Soap Operas  
Social Behavior, Media Effects on  
Social Capital and Communication in Health  
Social Capital, Media Effects on  
Social Cognitive Theory  
Social Comparison Theory  
Social Conflict and Communication  
Social Desirability  
Social Exchange  
Social Identity Theory  
Social Interaction Structure  
Social Judgment Theory  
Social Marketing  
Social Mobilization  
Social Movement Media, Transnational  
Social Movements and Communication  
Social Networks  
Social Norms  
Social Perception  
Social Perception: Impersonal Impact  
Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism  
Social Stereotyping and Communication  
Social Support in Health Communication  
Social Support in Interpersonal Communication  
Socialization by the Media  
Soft News  
Sony Corporation  
Sound Bites  
Source Protection  
South Africa: Media System  
South Korea: Media System  
Spain: Media System  
Special Effects  
Spectacle  
Spectator Gaze  
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Speech Codes Theory  
Speech Communication, History of  
Speech Fluency and Speech Errors  
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Spin and Double-Speak  
Spiral of Silence  
Spirituality and Development  
Sports and the Media, History of  
Sports as Popular Communication  
Stage Fright  
Stages of Change Model  
Stakeholder Theory  
Standards of News  
Stars  
Statistics, Descriptive  
Statistics, Explanatory  
Stereotypes  
Stereotyping and the Media  
Stimulus–Response Model  
Stock Photography  
Storytelling and Narration  
Strategic Communication  
Strategic Framing  
Structural Equation  
Structuralism  
Structuralism in Visual Communication  
Structuration Theory  
Student Communication Competence  
Style and Rhetoric  
Subaltern Communities, Communication in  
Subsidies for the Media  
Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships  
Supply and Demand in Media Markets  
Support Talk  
Survey  
Suspense  
Suspension of Disbelief  
Sustainable Development  
Switzerland: Media System  
Symbolic Annihilation  
Symbolic Convergence Theory  
Symbolic Interaction  
Symbolic Politics  
Symbolism  
Synchronization of the News  
Systems Theory
- T**
- Tabloid Press  
Tabloidization  
Tailoring, Communication and  
Taste Culture  
Teacher Affinity Seeking  
Teacher Assertiveness  
Teacher Clarity  
Teacher Comforting and Social Support  
Teacher Communication Concern  
Teacher Communication Style  
Teacher Confirmation  
Teacher Feedback  
Teacher Immediacy  
Teacher Influence and Persuasion  
Teacher Self-Disclosure  
Teacher Socialization  
Teacher Socio-Communicative Style  
Teacher Training in Communication  
Teacher Use of Humor  
Technologically Mediated Discourse  
Technology Assessment  
Technology and Communication  
Technology as Fashion  
Technology and Globalization  
Technology, Social Construction of  
Telecenters

Telecommunications: Law and Policy  
Telegraph, History of  
Telegraphic News  
Telephone Talk  
TeleSur  
Televised Debates  
Television  
Television Broadcasting, Regulation of  
Television for Development  
Television Networks  
Television News  
Television News, Visual Components of  
Television as Popular Culture  
Television: Social History  
Television Technology  
Television, Visual Characteristics of  
Telework  
Terrorism and Communication Technologies  
Test Theory  
Text Analysis, Computer-Aided  
Text and Intertextuality  
Theatre  
Third-Person Effects  
Time-Series Analysis  
Time Warner Inc.  
Tourism Industry  
Tourism and Popular Culture  
Trademarks in the Media  
Transactional Models  
Transcribing and Transcription  
Transnational Civil Society  
Transportation Theory  
Trap Effect  
Triangulation  
Trust of Publics  
Truth and Media Content  
Two-Step Flow of Communication  
Typography

## U

Ubiquitous Computing  
Uncertainty and Communication  
Uncertainty Management  
Uncertainty Reduction Theory  
Underdog Effect  
Underground Press  
UNESCO

United Kingdom: Media System  
United Nations, Communication Policies of  
United States of America: Media System  
Uses and Gratifications

## V

Validity  
Vatican Radio  
Verbal Aggressiveness  
Verstehen vs Erklären  
Victimization, Secondary  
Video  
Video Games  
Video Malaise  
Violence against Journalists  
Violence as Media Content  
Violence as Media Content, Effects of  
Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of  
Violence and the Media, History of  
Virtual Communities  
Virtual Reality  
Visual Communication  
Visual Culture  
Visual Representation  
Visuals, Cognitive Processing of  
Voice of America  
Voice, Prosody, and Laughter  
Voyeurism

## W

War Correspondents  
War Propaganda  
Watergate Scandal  
West Asia: Media Systems  
Woman as Sign  
Women in the Media, Images of  
Women's Communication and Language  
Women's Media Genres  
Women's Movement and the Media

## Y

Yellow Journalism  
Youth Culture

## Z

Zapping and Switching  
Zines



# All Entries by Editorial Area

## COMMUNICATION AS A FIELD AND DISCIPLINE

Applied Communication Research ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Africa ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Rim ~ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel ~ Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia ~ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ~ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ~ Communication as a Field and Discipline ~ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ~ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ~ Communication Professions and Academic Research ~ Communication Research and Politics ~ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ~ International Communication Association (ICA) ~ Speech Communication, History of

## COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA LAW AND POLICY

Access to the Media ~ Advertising Law and Regulation ~ American Convention on Human Rights ~ Censorship ~ Communication and Law ~ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ~ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ~ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ~ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ~ Communication Law and Policy: North America ~ Communication Law and Policy: South America ~ Conflicts of Law ~ Copyright ~ Cross-Ownership ~ European Court of Human Rights ~ European Union: Communication Law ~ Fair Trial and Freedom of the Press ~ Foreign Policy and the Media ~ Freedom of Information ~ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ~ Gag Orders ~ Government Speech, Law and Policy on ~ Intellectual Property Law ~ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ~ Internet Law and Regulation ~ Journalism: Legal Situation ~ Libel and Slander ~ Licensing of Journalists ~ Media Policy ~ Open Meetings Law ~ Pornography, Media Law on ~ Privacy ~ Public Access Television ~ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ~ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ~ Right to Communicate ~ Right of Correction ~ Right to Know ~ Right of Reply ~ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ~ Self-Regulation of the Media ~ Source Protection ~ Subsidies for the Media ~ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ~ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ~ United Nations, Communication Policies of

## COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL/BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ~ Communication Inequality ~ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ~ Community Integration ~ Community Structure Model ~ Conflict Resolution ~ Consumer Informatics ~ Culture and Health Communication

~ Disasters and Communication ~ Disclosure in Health Communication ~ Environmental Communication ~ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ~ Health Belief Model ~ Health Campaigns, Communication in ~ Health Communication ~ Health Communication, Ethics in ~ Health Communication and the Internet ~ Health Communication and Journalism ~ Health Disparities, Communication in ~ Health Literacy ~ Impersonal Effects ~ Information Scanning ~ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ~ Media Literacy ~ Message Discrimination ~ Patient–Provider Communication ~ Persuasion and Resistance ~ Planned Social Change through Communication ~ Prevention and Communication ~ Reasoned Action, Theory of ~ Research Dissemination ~ Risk Communication ~ Risk Perceptions ~ Secular Social Change ~ Social Capital and Communication in Health ~ Social Conflict and Communication ~ Social Marketing ~ Social Movements and Communication ~ Social Networks ~ Social Norms ~ Social Support in Health Communication ~ Tailoring, Communication and ~ Uncertainty and Communication

### **COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY**

Archiving of Internet Content ~ Code as Law ~ Communication Infrastructure ~ Communication Technology and Democracy ~ Communication Technology Standards ~ Crime and Communication Technology ~ Cyborgs ~ Digital Divide ~ Digitization and Media Convergence ~ Domain Names ~ Domestication of Technology ~ E-Commerce ~ E-Government ~ Hacktivism ~ Human–Computer Interaction ~ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ~ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ~ Information Literacy ~ Information Overload ~ Information Society ~ Internet Ratings Systems ~ Internet, Technology of ~ Language and the Internet ~ Link Analysis ~ Log-File Analysis ~ Mobility, Technology for ~ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ~ Online Media ~ Open Access Journals ~ Open Source ~ P2P Networking ~ Personal Communication by CMC ~ Personal Publishing ~ Research Ethics: Internet Research ~ Search Engines ~ Sex and Pornography Online ~ Technology Assessment ~ Technology and Communication ~ Technology as Fashion ~ Technology and Globalization ~ Technology, Social Construction of ~ Terrorism and Communication Technologies ~ Ubiquitous Computing ~ Virtual Communities

### **COMMUNICATION THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY**

Aesthetics ~ Barthes, Roland ~ Cognitive Science ~ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ~ Communication: History of the Idea ~ Communication Theory and Philosophy ~ Communicology ~ Constructivism ~ Critical Rationalism ~ Critical Theory ~ Cultivation Theory ~ Cultural Studies ~ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ~ Cybernetics ~ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ~ Discourse ~ Emic vs Etic Research ~ Fiction ~ Functional Analysis ~ Genre ~ Habermas, Jürgen ~ Hermeneutics ~ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ~ Information ~ Information Science ~ Innis, Harold ~ Interaction ~ Interactivity, Concept of ~ Intermediality ~ Knowledge Interests ~ Lasswell, Harold D. ~ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ~ Linguistics ~ Lippmann, Walter ~ McLuhan,

Marshall ~ Meaning ~ Media ~ Medium Theory ~ Modality and Multimodality ~ Models of Communication ~ Objectivity in Science ~ Paradigm ~ Phenomenology ~ Postcolonial Theory ~ Postmodernism and Communication ~ Pragmatism ~ Psychology in Communication Processes ~ Realism ~ Remediation ~ Semiotics ~ Structuralism ~ Symbolic Interaction ~ Systems Theory ~ Text and Intertextuality ~ Verstehen vs Erklären

## **DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION**

Activist Media ~ Citizens' Media ~ Communication Evaluation Research ~ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ~ Communication Technology and Development ~ Community Media ~ Dependency Theories ~ Development Communication ~ Development Communication: Africa ~ Development Communication: Asia ~ Development Communication Campaigns ~ Development Communication: Latin America ~ Development Communication: Middle East ~ Development Communication, Planning of ~ Development Discourse ~ Development, Gender, and Communication ~ Development, Geometry of ~ Development Institutions ~ Development Journalism ~ Development Support Communication ~ Health Campaigns for Development ~ Lerner, Daniel ~ Media Democracy Movement ~ Modernity ~ Modernization ~ Participatory Action Research ~ Participatory Communication ~ Population Campaigns ~ Postdevelopment ~ Radio for Development ~ Rogers, Everett ~ Rural Development ~ Schramm, Wilbur ~ Social Mobilization ~ Spirituality and Development ~ Sustainable Development ~ Telecenters ~ Television for Development ~ Transnational Civil Society

## **DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATION**

Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span ~ Age Identity and Communication ~ Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span ~ Child Protection, Media Regulations for ~ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ~ Computer Games and Child Development ~ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ~ Death, Dying, and Communication ~ Developmental Communication ~ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ~ Family Communication Patterns ~ Family Decision-Making ~ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ~ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ~ Friendship and Communication ~ Intergenerational Communication ~ Internet Use across the Life-Span ~ Language Acquisition in Childhood ~ Media Use and Child Development ~ Media Use by Children ~ Media Use across the Life-Span ~ News Processing across the Life-Span ~ Parental Mediation Strategies ~ Personality Development and Communication ~ Pornography Use across the Life-Span ~ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

## **EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICATION CONTENT**

Addiction and Exposure ~ Affective Disposition Theories ~ Affects and Media Exposure ~ Audience ~ Audience Segmentation ~ Automaticity ~ Avatars and Agents ~ Channel/Program Loyalty ~ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ~ Computer–User Interaction ~ Consistency Theories ~ Co-Viewing ~ Empathy Theory ~ Enjoyment/Entertainment



Seeking ~ Entertainment Education ~ Escapism ~ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ~ Evolutionary Theory ~ Excitation and Arousal ~ Expectancy Value Model ~ Exposure to Communication Content ~ Exposure to Film ~ Exposure to the Internet ~ Exposure to News ~ Exposure to Print Media ~ Exposure to Radio ~ Exposure to Television ~ Fantasy/Imagination ~ Habituation ~ Identification ~ Information Seeking ~ Informational Utility ~ Interactivity in Reception ~ Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition ~ Involvement with Media Content ~ Media Equation Theory ~ Media Use, International Comparison of ~ Media Use by Social Variable ~ Mood Management ~ Multitasking ~ Navigation ~ News Audience ~ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ~ Perception ~ Personality and Exposure to Communication ~ Playing ~ Presence ~ Public ~ Selective Exposure ~ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ~ Sensation Seeking ~ Simulation ~ Social Cognitive Theory ~ Social Comparison Theory ~ Social Identity Theory ~ Stages of Change Model ~ Suspense ~ Suspension of Disbelief ~ Transactional Models ~ Transportation Theory ~ Uses and Gratifications ~ Zapping and Switching

### **FEMINIST AND GENDER STUDIES**

Audiences, Female ~ Black Feminist Media Studies ~ Commodity Feminism ~ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ~ Cyberfeminism ~ Feminine Mystique ~ Femininity and Feminine Values ~ Feminist Communication Ethics ~ Feminist and Gender Studies ~ Feminist Media ~ Feminist Media Pedagogy ~ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ~ Feminization of Media Content ~ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ~ Gender and Media Organizations ~ Gender: Representation in the Media ~ Grassroots Media ~ Heterosexism and the Media ~ Identity Politics ~ Latina Feminist Media Studies ~ Masculinity and Media ~ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ~ Postfeminism ~ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ~ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ~ Sexism in the Media ~ Sexual Violence in the Media ~ Sexualization in the Media ~ Woman as Sign ~ Women in the Media, Images of ~ Women's Communication and Language ~ Women's Media Genres

### **INFORMATION PROCESSING AND COGNITIONS**

Action Assembly Theory ~ Aging and Cognitive Processing ~ Aging and Message Production and Processing ~ Attending to the Mass Media ~ Attention ~ Attitude Accessibility ~ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ~ Attitude Functions ~ Attitudes ~ Attribution Processes ~ Cognition ~ Communibiology ~ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ~ Compliance Gaining ~ Comprehension ~ Constructivism and Interpersonal Processes ~ Discourse Comprehension ~ Dual Coding Theory ~ Elaboration Likelihood Model ~ Emotion ~ Extended Parallel Process Model ~ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ~ Implicit Personality Theories ~ Individual Differences and Information Processing ~ Information Processing ~ Information Processing: Self-Concept ~ Information Processing: Stereotypes ~ Limited Capacity Model ~ Listening ~ Memory ~ Memory, Message ~ Memory, Person ~ Message Design Logics ~ Message Editing ~ Message Production ~ Mindlessness and Automaticity ~ News Processing and

Retention ~ Planned Behavior, Theory of ~ Schemas ~ Scripts ~ Selective Attention ~ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors ~ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

## **INSTRUCTIONAL/EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Classroom Instructional Technology ~ Classroom Management Techniques ~ Classroom Power ~ Classroom Questioning ~ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ~ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ~ Communication Education, Goals of ~ Computers and Display Programs in Education ~ Course Organization Programs in Education ~ Curriculum Studies ~ Distance Education ~ Educational Communication ~ Educational Media ~ Educational Media Content ~ Instructional Television ~ Learning and Communication ~ Mentoring ~ Pedagogy, Communication in ~ Reticence ~ Scholarship of Teaching ~ Sesame Street ~ Speech Anxiety ~ Stage Fright ~ Student Communication Competence ~ Teacher Affinity Seeking ~ Teacher Assertiveness ~ Teacher Clarity ~ Teacher Comforting and Social Support ~ Teacher Communication Concern ~ Teacher Communication Style ~ Teacher Confirmation ~ Teacher Feedback ~ Teacher Immediacy ~ Teacher Influence and Persuasion ~ Teacher Self-Disclosure ~ Teacher Socialization ~ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ~ Teacher Training in Communication ~ Teacher Use of Humor

## **INTERCULTURAL AND INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION**

Acculturation Processes and Communication ~ Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ~ Bi- and Multilingualism ~ Collective Action and Communication ~ Communication Modes, African ~ Communication Modes, Asian ~ Communication Modes, Hispanic ~ Communication Modes, Muslim ~ Communication Modes, Western ~ Cultural Patterns and Communication ~ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ~ Disability and Communication ~ Diversity in the Workplace ~ Ethnic Media and their Influence ~ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ~ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ~ Intercultural Communication in Health-Care ~ Intercultural Communication Training ~ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ~ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ~ Intercultural Norms ~ Interethnic Relationships in Families ~ Intergroup Accommodative Processes ~ Intergroup Communication and Discursive Psychology ~ Intergroup Contact and Communication ~ Intergroup Dimensions of Organizational Life ~ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ~ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication ~ Media and Group Representations ~ Migration and Immigration ~ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ~ Power in Intergroup Settings ~ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ~ Social Stereotyping and Communication

## **INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Advertising: Global Industry ~ Americanization of the Media ~ Arab Satellite TV News ~ BBC World Service ~ Bertelsmann Corporation ~ China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ~ CNN ~ Cultural Imperialism Theories ~ Cultural Products as Tradable

Services ~ Deutsche Welle ~ Disney ~ Francophonie ~ Free Flow of Information ~ Global Media, History of ~ Globalization Theories ~ Hybridity Theories ~ Independent Media Centers Network ~ International Communication ~ International Communication Agencies ~ International News Reporting ~ International Radio ~ International Television ~ Internet: International Regulation ~ Korean Cultural Influence ~ Kurdish International Broadcasting ~ Le Monde Diplomatique ~ Migrant Community Media ~ Music Industry ~ NAFTA and International Communication ~ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ~ News Corporation ~ Public Relations: Global Firms ~ Radio France Internationale ~ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ~ Samsung Corporation ~ Satellite Communication, Global ~ Security and Surveillance Agencies ~ Social Movement Media, Transnational ~ Sony Corporation ~ TeleSur ~ Time Warner Inc. ~ Tourism Industry ~ UNESCO ~ Vatican Radio ~ Voice of America ~ War Propaganda

### **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

Comforting Communication ~ Communication Apprehension ~ Communication: Relationship Rules ~ Communicator Style ~ Dating Relationships ~ Deception Detection Accuracy ~ Deceptive Message Production ~ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ~ Environment and Social Interaction ~ Expectancy Violation ~ Eye Behavior ~ Facial Expressions ~ Friendship and Peer Interaction ~ Gestures and Kinesics ~ Goals, Social Aspects of ~ Imagined Interactions ~ Impression Management ~ Ingratiation and Affinity Seeking ~ Initial Interaction ~ Interaction Adaptation Theory ~ Interpersonal Attraction ~ Interpersonal Communication ~ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ~ Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in ~ Interpersonal Conflict ~ Long-Distance Relationships ~ Marital Communication ~ Marital Typologies ~ Mediated Social Interaction ~ Negotiation and Bargaining ~ Online Relationships ~ Paralanguage ~ Politeness Theory ~ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ~ Proxemics ~ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ~ Relational Control ~ Relational Dialectics ~ Relational Maintenance ~ Relational Schemas ~ Relational Termination ~ Relational Uncertainty ~ Relationship Development ~ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ~ Self-Presentation ~ Sibling Interaction ~ Social Exchange ~ Social Interaction Structure ~ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ~ Uncertainty Management ~ Uncertainty Reduction Theory ~ Verbal Aggressiveness

### **JOURNALISM**

Advocacy Journalism ~ Alternative Journalism ~ Blogger ~ Broadcast Journalism ~ Celebrity Journalists ~ Citizen Journalism ~ Cross-Media Production ~ Embedded Journalists ~ Ethics in Journalism ~ Ethnic Journalism ~ Foreign Correspondents ~ Gatekeeping ~ Gender and Journalism ~ Interpretive Journalism ~ Interview as Journalistic Form ~ Investigative Reporting ~ Journalism ~ Journalism Education ~ Journalism: Group Dynamics ~ Journalism, History of ~ Journalism: Normative Theories ~ Journalists, Credibility of ~ Journalists: Professional Associations ~ Journalists' Role Perception ~ Minority Journalism ~ Muckraking ~ New Journalism ~ News Agencies ~

News Cycles ~ News Ideologies ~ News Myths ~ News Routines ~ News Sources ~ News Story ~ News Workers ~ Newspaper Journalism ~ Online Journalism ~ Partisan Press ~ Peace Journalism ~ Political Journalists ~ Precision Journalism ~ Press Conference ~ Printer-Editors ~ Professionalization of Journalism ~ Public Journalism ~ Rumor ~ Science Journalism ~ Standards of News ~ Telegraphic News ~ Violence against Journalists ~ War Correspondents ~ Yellow Journalism

## **LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION**

Accounting Research ~ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ~ Apologies and Remedial Episodes ~ Argumentative Discourse ~ Bakhtin, Mikhail ~ Broadcast Talk ~ Business Discourse ~ Communication Accommodation Theory ~ Communities of Practice ~ Conversation Analysis ~ Deception in Discourse ~ Design Theory ~ Directives ~ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ~ Discourse in the Law ~ Discourse Markers ~ Discursive Psychology ~ Doctor–Patient Talk ~ Emotion and Discourse ~ English-Only Movements ~ Ethnography of Communication ~ Ethnomethodology ~ Gaze in Interaction ~ Gender and Discourse ~ Gestures in Discourse ~ Goffman, Erving ~ Identities and Discourse ~ Interactional Sociolinguistics ~ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ~ Language and Social Interaction ~ Language and Social Psychology ~ Language Varieties ~ Linguistic Pragmatics ~ Meta-Discourse ~ Microethnography ~ Power and Discourse ~ Public Meetings ~ Questions and Questioning ~ Small Talk and Gossip ~ Speech Codes Theory ~ Storytelling and Narration ~ Support Talk ~ Technologically Mediated Discourse ~ Telephone Talk ~ Transcribing and Transcription ~ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

## **MEDIA ECONOMY**

Advertising, Economics of ~ Antitrust Regulation ~ Audience Commodity ~ Brands ~ Circulation ~ Commercialization of the Media ~ Commodification of the Media ~ Competition in Media Systems ~ Concentration in Media Systems ~ Consolidation of Media Markets ~ Consumers in Media Markets ~ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ~ Cross-Media Marketing ~ Distribution ~ Diversification of Media Markets ~ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ~ Globalization of the Media ~ Labor in the Media ~ Labor Unions in the Media ~ Markets of the Media ~ Media Conglomerates ~ Media Corporations, Forms of ~ Media Economics ~ Media Management ~ Media Marketing ~ Mergers ~ Ownership in the Media ~ Piracy ~ Political Economy of the Media ~ Privatization of the Media ~ Public Goods ~ Supply and Demand in Media Markets ~ Trademarks in the Media

## **MEDIA EFFECTS**

Agenda-Setting Effects ~ Appraisal Theory ~ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ~ Availability, Cognitive ~ Bandura, Albert ~ Catharsis Theory ~ Chaffee, Steven H. ~ Credibility Effects ~ Cumulative Media Effects ~ Desensitization ~ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ~ Emotional Arousal Theory ~ Emotions, Media Effects on

~ Entertainment, Effects of ~ Excitation Transfer Theory ~ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ~ Fear Induction through Media Content ~ Festinger, Leon ~ Framing Effects ~ Frustration Aggression Theory ~ Gerbner, George ~ Hovland, Carl I. ~ Intercultural Media Effects ~ Katz, Elihu ~ Knowledge Gap Effects ~ Latitude of Acceptance ~ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ~ Mainstreaming ~ Media Effects ~ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ~ Media Effects Duration ~ Media Effects, History of ~ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ~ Media Effects, Strength of ~ Media System Dependency Theory ~ Mediating Factors ~ Mediatization of Society ~ Message Effects, Structure of ~ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ~ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ~ Observational Learning ~ Opinion Leader ~ Order of Presentation ~ Persuasion ~ Physical Effects of Media Content ~ Priming Theory ~ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ~ Reciprocal Effects ~ Schemas and Media Effects ~ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ~ Sleeper Effect ~ Social Behavior, Media Effects on ~ Social Capital, Media Effects on ~ Social Judgment Theory ~ Stimulus-Response Model ~ Trap Effect ~ Two-Step Flow of Communication ~ Victimization, Secondary ~ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

## **MEDIA HISTORY**

Academy Awards ~ Advertising, History of ~ BBC ~ Cable Television ~ Censorship, History of ~ Cinematography, History of ~ Citizen Journalism, History of ~ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ~ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ~ Collective Memory and the Media ~ Digital Media, History of ~ Documentary Film, History of ~ Elections and Media, History of ~ Electronic Mail ~ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ~ Fleet Street ~ Fourth Estate ~ Freedom of Communication ~ Graffiti ~ Historic Key Events and the Media ~ Illustrated Newspapers ~ Literary Journalism ~ Magazine, History of ~ Media History ~ Music Videos ~ New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century ~ News Agencies, History of ~ News Magazine, History of ~ Newscast ~ Newscast, 24-Hour ~ Newspaper, Antecedents of ~ Newspaper, History of ~ Newsreel ~ Paperback Fiction ~ Penny Press ~ Postal Service, History of ~ Printing, History of ~ Propaganda in World War II ~ Public Broadcasting, History of ~ Radical Media ~ Radio Networks ~ Radio: Social History ~ Radio Technology ~ Satellite Television ~ Sports and the Media, History of ~ Telegraph, History of ~ Television Networks ~ Television: Social History ~ Television Technology ~ Underground Press ~ Violence and the Media, History of ~ Virtual Reality ~ Watergate Scandal ~ Women's Movement and the Media

## **MEDIA PRODUCTION AND CONTENT**

Accountability of the Media ~ Accountability of the News ~ Accuracy ~ Balance ~ Bias in the News ~ Commentary ~ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ~ Conflict as Media Content ~ Consonance of Media Content ~ Construction of Reality through the News ~ Credibility of Content ~ Crime Reporting ~ Editorial ~ Endorsement ~ Ethics of Media Content ~ Fairness Doctrine ~ Fictional Media Content ~ Framing of the News ~ Infotainment ~ Instrumental Actualization ~ Internet ~ Internet News ~ Local News ~

Magazine ~ Media Performance ~ Media Production and Content ~ Morality and Taste in Media Content ~ Narrative News Story ~ Negativity ~ Neutrality ~ News ~ News Factors ~ News Production and Technology ~ News Values ~ Newspaper ~ Objectivity in Reporting ~ Plurality ~ Quality of the News ~ Quality Press ~ Radio ~ Radio News ~ Reality and Media Reality ~ Scandalization in the News ~ Sensationalism ~ Separation of News and Comments ~ Soap Operas ~ Soft News ~ Sound Bites ~ Stereotypes ~ Synchronization of the News ~ Tabloid Press ~ Tabloidization ~ Television ~ Television News ~ Truth and Media Content ~ Violence as Media Content

## **MEDIA SYSTEMS IN THE WORLD**

Africa: Media Systems ~ Argentina: Media System ~ Australia: Media System ~ Austria: Media System ~ Balkan States: Media Systems ~ Baltic States: Media Systems ~ Bolivia: Media System ~ Brazil: Media System ~ Canada: Media System ~ Caribbean States: Media Systems ~ Central America: Media Systems ~ Chile: Media System ~ China: Media System ~ Colombia: Media System ~ Convergence of Media Systems ~ Cuba: Media System ~ Czech Republic: Media System ~ Egypt: Media System ~ France: Media System ~ Germany: Media System ~ Gulf States: Media Systems ~ India: Media System ~ Iran: Media System ~ Israel: Media System ~ Italy: Media System ~ Japan: Media System ~ Malaysia: Media System ~ Mexico: Media System ~ Netherlands: Media System ~ North Africa: Media Systems ~ Poland: Media System ~ Portugal: Media System ~ Public Broadcasting Systems ~ Russia: Media System ~ Scandinavian States: Media Systems ~ Singapore: Media System ~ South Africa: Media System ~ South Korea: Media System ~ Spain: Media System ~ Switzerland: Media System ~ United Kingdom: Media System ~ United States of America: Media System ~ West Asia: Media Systems

## **ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Bona Fide Groups ~ Bureaucracy and Communication ~ Communication Networks ~ Control and Authority in Organizations ~ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ~ Dialogic Perspectives ~ Dissent in Organizations ~ Emotion and Communication in Organizations ~ Feedback Processes in Organizations ~ Globalization of Organizations ~ Group Communication ~ Group Communication and Problem-Solving ~ Group Communication and Social Influence ~ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ~ Institutional Theory ~ Interorganizational Communication ~ Knowledge Management ~ Leadership in Organizations ~ Learning Organizations ~ Meeting Technologies ~ Organizational Assimilation ~ Organizational Change Processes ~ Organizational Communication ~ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ~ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ~ Organizational Conflict ~ Organizational Crises, Communication in ~ Organizational Culture ~ Organizational Discourse ~ Organizational Ethics ~ Organizational Identification ~ Organizational Metaphors ~ Organizational Structure ~ Organizations, Cultural Diversity in ~ Participative Processes in Organizations ~ Sense-Making ~ Structuration Theory ~ Supervisor-Subordinate Relationships ~ Symbolic Convergence Theory ~ Telework

## **POLITICAL COMMUNICATION**

Agenda Building ~ Bandwagon Effect ~ Candidate Image ~ Deliberative Polls ~ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ~ E-Democracy ~ Election Campaign Communication ~ Election Polls and Forecasts ~ Horse Race Coverage ~ Issue Management in Politics ~ Issue Voting ~ Media Democracy ~ Media Diplomacy ~ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ~ Media Logic ~ Media as Political Actors ~ Mediated Populism ~ Mediated Terrorism ~ Mediatization of Politics ~ Negative Campaigning ~ News as Discourse ~ Party Political Communication ~ Party-Press Parallelism ~ Personalization of Campaigning ~ Politainment ~ Political Advertising ~ Political Cognitions ~ Political Communication ~ Political Communication Culture ~ Political Communication Systems ~ Political Consultant ~ Political Cynicism ~ Political Discourse ~ Political Efficacy ~ Political Knowledge ~ Political Language ~ Political Marketing ~ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ~ Political Media Use ~ Political News ~ Political Personality in Media Democracy ~ Political Persuasion ~ Political Socialization through the Media ~ Political Symbols ~ Polls and the Media ~ Populism and Responsiveness ~ Propaganda ~ Public Interest ~ Public Opinion ~ Public Sphere ~ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of ~ Spin Doctor ~ Symbolic Politics ~ Televised Debates ~ Underdog Effect

## **POPULAR COMMUNICATION**

Anime ~ Artifacts ~ Celebrity Culture ~ Consumer Culture ~ Cultural Appropriation ~ Culture Industries ~ Drama in Media Content ~ Fandom ~ Fashion ~ Fetishization ~ Film as Popular Culture ~ Girl Culture ~ Internet and Popular Culture ~ Media Ecology ~ Politics in Popular Communication ~ Popular Communication ~ Popular Communication and Social Class ~ Popular Culture ~ Popular Culture and the News Media ~ Popular Music ~ Popular Mythology ~ Reality TV ~ Reification ~ Religion and Popular Communication ~ Rituals in Popular Communication ~ Situation Comedies ~ Sports as Popular Communication ~ Subaltern Communities, Communication in ~ Symbolic Annihilation ~ Television as Popular Culture ~ Tourism and Popular Culture ~ Video Games ~ Youth Culture ~ Zines

## **REALITY PERCEPTION THROUGH THE MEDIA**

Behavioral Norms: Perception through the Media ~ Body Images in the Media Climate of Opinion ~ Computer Games and Reality Perception ~ Cultivation Effects ~ Disowning Projection ~ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ~ Extra-Media Data ~ False Consensus ~ False Uniqueness ~ Hostile Media Phenomenon ~ Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality ~ Media Content in Interpersonal Communication ~ Media Content and Social Networks ~ Media Messages and Family Communication ~ Media and Perceptions of Reality ~ Perceived Realism as a Decision Process ~ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ~ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ~ Perceived Reality as a Social Process ~ Pluralistic Ignorance ~ Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases ~ Social Perception ~ Social Perception: Impersonal Impact ~ Social Perception: Unrealistic

Optimism ~ Socialization by the Media ~ Spiral of Silence ~ Stereotyping and the Media  
~ Third-Person Effects ~ Video Malaise

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

Audience Research ~ Case Studies ~ Cluster Analysis ~ Coding ~ Comparative Research  
~ Content Analysis, Qualitative ~ Content Analysis, Quantitative ~ Copy Test and Starch  
Test ~ Correlation Analysis ~ Definition ~ Delphi Studies ~ Discourse Analysis ~  
Discriminant Analysis ~ Document Analysis ~ Election Surveys ~ Experiment, Field ~  
Experiment, Laboratory ~ Experiment, Natural ~ Experimental Design ~ Factor Analysis  
~ Field Research ~ Generalizability ~ Grounded Theory ~ Historiography ~ Hypothesis  
~ Interview ~ Interview, Qualitative ~ Interview, Standardized ~ Longitudinal Analysis ~  
Measurement Theory ~ Meta-Analysis ~ Network Analysis ~ Nielsen Ratings ~  
Nonparametric Analysis ~ Observation ~ Online Research ~ Operationalization ~  
People-Meter ~ Physiological Measurement ~ Public Opinion Polling ~ Qualitative  
Methodology ~ Quantitative Methodology ~ Rating Methods ~ Readership Research ~  
Real-Time Ratings (RTR) ~ Regression Analysis ~ Reliability ~ Research Ethics ~  
Research Methods ~ Response Sets ~ Sampling, Nonrandom ~ Sampling, Random ~  
Scales ~ Scales and Indices ~ Social Desirability ~ Statistics, Descriptive ~ Statistics,  
Explanatory ~ Structural Equation ~ Survey ~ Test Theory ~ Text Analysis, Computer-  
Aided ~ Time-Series Analysis ~ Triangulation ~ Validity

## **RHETORICAL STUDIES**

Arrangement and Rhetoric ~ Delivery and Rhetoric ~ Ethos and Rhetoric ~ Invention  
and Rhetoric ~ Logos and Rhetoric ~ Memory and Rhetoric ~ Pathos and Rhetoric ~  
Rhetoric in Africa ~ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ~ Rhetoric in Central and  
South America ~ Rhetoric and Class ~ Rhetoric and Dialectic ~ Rhetoric in East Asia:  
China and Japan ~ Rhetoric in East Asia: Korea ~ Rhetoric in Eastern Europe ~ Rhetoric,  
Epideictic ~ Rhetoric and Epistemology ~ Rhetoric and Ethics ~ Rhetoric and  
Ethnography ~ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ~ Rhetoric and Gender ~ Rhetoric,  
Greek ~ Rhetoric and History ~ Rhetoric and Language ~ Rhetoric and Logic ~ Rhetoric  
and Media Studies ~ Rhetoric, Medieval ~ Rhetoric in the Middle East ~ Rhetoric and  
Narrativity ~ Rhetoric, Nonverbal ~ Rhetoric in North America: Canada ~ Rhetoric in  
North America: Mexico ~ Rhetoric in North America: United States ~ Rhetoric in  
Northern and Central Asia ~ Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems ~ Rhetoric and  
Philosophy ~ Rhetoric and Poetics ~ Rhetoric and Politics ~ Rhetoric, Postmodern ~  
Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ~ Rhetoric and Psychology ~ Rhetoric and Race ~ Rhetoric and  
Religion ~ Rhetoric, Roman ~ Rhetoric of Science ~ Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic ~  
Rhetoric and Semiotics ~ Rhetoric and Social Protest ~ Rhetoric and Social Thought ~  
Rhetoric in South Asia ~ Rhetoric in the South Pacific ~ Rhetoric and Technology ~  
Rhetoric, Vernacular ~ Rhetoric and Visuality ~ Rhetoric in Western Europe: Britain ~  
Rhetoric in Western Europe: France ~ Rhetoric in Western Europe: Germany ~ Rhetoric  
in Western Europe: Italy ~ Rhetoric in Western Europe: Spain ~ Rhetorical Criticism ~  
Rhetorical Studies ~ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ~ Style and Rhetoric



## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS, ADVERTISEMENT**

Advertisement Campaign Management ~ Advertising ~ Advertising, Cross-Cultural ~ Advertising Effectiveness ~ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ~ Advertising, Emotions in ~ Advertising, Endorsement in ~ Advertising Ethics ~ Advertising Frequency and Timing ~ Advertising as Persuasion ~ Advertising Strategies ~ Branding ~ Change Management and Communication ~ Communication Management ~ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ~ Contingency Model of Conflict ~ Co-Orientation Model of Public Relations ~ Corporate Communication ~ Corporate Design ~ Corporate and Organizational Identity ~ Corporate Reputation ~ Corporate Social Responsibility ~ Crisis Communication ~ Cultural Topoi in Public Relations ~ Determination Theory in Public Relations ~ Direct-to-Consumer Advertising ~ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ~ Financial Communication ~ Fundraising ~ Image ~ Image Restoration Theory ~ Integrated Marketing Communications ~ Interefficiency Approach in Public Relations ~ Issue Management ~ Legitimacy Gap Theory ~ Lobbying ~ Marketing ~ Marketing: Communication Tools ~ Media Planning ~ Media Relations ~ Mediatization of Organizations Theory ~ Organization–Public Relationships ~ Organizational Image ~ Positioning Theory ~ Professionalization of Public Relations ~ Public Affairs ~ Public Diplomacy ~ Public Relations ~ Public Relations Ethics ~ Public Relations Evaluation ~ Public Relations Field Dynamics ~ Public Relations, Intercultural ~ Public Relations: Media Influence ~ Public Relations Planning ~ Public Relations Roles ~ Publics: Situational Theory ~ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations ~ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ~ Spin and Double-Speak ~ Stakeholder Theory ~ Strategic Communication ~ Strategic Framing ~ Trust of Publics

## **VISUAL COMMUNICATION**

Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ~ Amateur Photography and Movies ~ Animation ~ Art as Communication ~ Bollywood ~ Book ~ Caricature ~ Cartography ~ Cartoons ~ Child Art ~ Cinema ~ Cinematography ~ Code ~ Comics ~ Community Video ~ Dance ~ Design ~ Digital Imagery ~ Documentary Film ~ Ethnographic Film ~ Film Genres ~ Film Production ~ Film Theory ~ Graphic Design ~ Heraldry ~ Hollywood ~ Hong Kong Cinema ~ Iconography ~ Image Ethics ~ Infographics ~ Magazine, Visual Design of ~ Mask ~ Metaphor ~ Metonymy ~ Museum ~ Newspaper, Visual Design of ~ Nollywood ~ Painting ~ Perspective, Pictorial ~ Photography ~ Photojournalism ~ Picture Magazines ~ Portraiture ~ Poster ~ Prints ~ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ~ Realism in Film and Photography ~ Scopic Regime ~ Sign ~ Sign Systems ~ Special Effects ~ Spectacle ~ Spectator Gaze ~ Stars ~ Stock Photography ~ Structuralism in Visual Communication ~ Symbolism ~ Taste Culture ~ Television News, Visual Components of ~ Television, Visual Characteristics of ~ Theatre ~ Typography ~ Video ~ Visual Communication ~ Visual Culture ~ Visual Representation ~ Voyeurism

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**David H. Weaver** is the Roy W. Howard Research Professor in Journalism and Mass Communication Research at the School of Journalism, Indiana University, USA, where he has taught since receiving his PhD from the University of North Carolina, USA, in 1974. He has published 11 books as well as numerous articles about journalists, the media in political campaigns, newspaper readership, foreign news coverage, and journalism education. His most recent book is *The American journalist in the 21st century* (2006). He is past president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication and the Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research, and a fellow of the International Communication Association. [Agenda-Setting Effects]

**James B. Weaver, III**, holds a BS and MA from the University of Georgia, USA, and a PhD from Indiana University, USA. He is a research scientist in the Center for AIDS Research,

Department of Behavioral Science and Health Education, Rollins School of Public Health, at Emory University in Atlanta, USA, and a professor of communication and psychology at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, USA. [Experiment, Field; Experiment, Laboratory; Experiment, Natural; Experimental Design; Personality Development and Communication]

**René Weber** is assistant professor of communication at the University of California, Santa Barbara, USA. He earned several awards and honors, such as Michigan State University's New Faculty Award for the study *Neurophysiology of entertainment* and the Best Dissertation Award of the German and Swiss Marketing Associations for his work on TV audience prediction. [Audience Segmentation; Correlation Analysis; Nonparametric Analysis]

**Frank Webster** was educated at Durham University, UK, and the London School of Economics and Political Science, UK. He is author or editor of around 20 books, including *Theories of the information society* (3rd edn. 2006). He is professor of sociology, City University London, UK. [Information Society]

**James G. Webster** is a professor of communication studies and former senior associate dean at Northwestern University's School of Communication, USA. He has published extensively in the areas of audience behavior and measurement, including *Ratings analysis: The theory and practice of audience research* (2006) and *The mass audience: Rediscovering the dominant model* (1997). He has been on the editorial board of the *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* since 1985. [Audience Research; Nielsen Ratings; People-Meter; Rating Methods]

**Stefan Wehmeier** is a junior professor of communication at the University of Greifswald, Germany. He received his PhD in 1997 from the University of Münster, Germany. From 1998 to 1999 he worked as a journalist and as a public relations practitioner. From 2000 to 2006 he was assistant professor at the University of Leipzig, Institute of Communication and Media Science, Department of Public Relations, Germany. From October 2004 to March 2005 he had a grant to do research in management communication at the University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. His research interests include the development of mass media, public relations, and the application of sociological and managerial theories to communication studies. [Delphi Studies; Intereffication Approach in Public Relations]

**Lennart Weibull** has been professor of mass media research at the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Göteborg University, Sweden, since 1988. Dr. Weibull is co-directing the SOM-Institute for survey research, which conducts annual surveys on Swedes' attitude to politics and media. He has published books and articles on, among other things, the functions of newspapers, media ethics, and radio and television journalism. [Scandinavian States: Media Systems]

**Gabriel Weimann** is a full professor at the Department of Communication at the University of Haifa, Israel. His research interests include the study of media effects,

political campaigns, persuasion and influence, media and public opinion, and modern terrorism and the mass media. His books include *Communicating unreality* (2000), *The influentials: People who influence people* (1995), and *The Singaporean enigma* (2001). His papers have been published in journals such as *Journal of Communication*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *Communication Research*, *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media*, and others. Prof. Weimann spent a year as a senior fellow at the United States Institute of Peace working on his research project on terrorism and the Internet. This project yielded a book, *Terror in the Internet: The new arena, the new challenges* (2007). [Entertainment Content and Reality Perception; Opinion Leader]

**Siegfried Weischenberg** is director and professor of the Institute for Journalism and Mass Communication Studies at the University of Hamburg and academic chair of journalism at Hamburg Media School, Germany. Dr. Weischenberg is the author of *Nachrichtenjournalismus* (2001), *Journalistik 1–3* (1998–2004), and *Die Souffleure der Mediengesellschaft* (with M. Malik and A. Scholl, 2006), and editor of the handbook *Handbuch Journalismus und Medien* (with H. J. Kleinsteuber and B. Pörksen, 2005). [News Production and Technology; News Story]

**Doreen Weisenhaus** is director of the Media Law Project and an assistant professor in the Journalism and Media Studies Centre, University of Hong Kong. A former prosecutor and city editor of the *New York Times*, she is the author of *Hong Kong media law: A guide for journalists and media professionals* (2007). [Communication Law and Policy: Asia]

**Hartmut Wessler** is professor of media and communication science at the University of Mannheim, Germany. His work focuses on comparative and international communication as well as empirical applications of theories of the public sphere. It has appeared in *Political Communication*, *Media, Culture and Society*, and other journals. He is co-author of *The transnationalization of public spheres* (2008), author of *Öffentlichkeit als Prozess* (The public sphere in procedural perspective, 1999), and co-editor of four other volumes. [Deliberativeness in Political Communication; Habermas, Jürgen; Knowledge Interests; Political Discourse]

**Robert A. White** was the research director at the Centre for the Study of Communication and Culture in London, UK, from 1978 to 1988 and director of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Communication at the Gregorian University in Rome from 1989 to 2006. He has published extensively in the areas of communication and development, communication ethics, and media-religion and culture. He is currently professor of communication at St. Augustine University of Tanzania. [Communication Strategies for Empowerment]

**Tim Whitmarsh** is fellow and E. P. Warren Praelector at Corpus Christi College and university lecturer in Greek language and literature, University of Oxford, UK. Until 2007 he was professor of ancient literatures at the University of Exeter, UK. Among his books are *Greek literature and the Roman Empire: The politics of imitation* (2001), *Ancient Greek literature* (2004), and *The Second Sophistic* (2005). [Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic]

**Jürgen Wilke** has been professor of communication research at the Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz, Germany, since 1988. He is honorary professor of the Lomonossov University, Moscow, Russia, and has taught as visiting scholar at the Universities of Washington, Seattle, USA, and Lugano, Switzerland. From 1986 to 1989 he was president of the German Association for Communication Research. His main areas of research include structure and history of mass media, news and news agencies, international communication, and political communication. [Cuba: Media System; Germany: Media System; Propaganda]

**Holley A. Wilkin** holds a PhD from the University of Southern California (USC), USA, and is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication and affiliate of the Partnership for Urban Health Research at Georgia State University, USA. As a doctoral candidate and a postdoctoral fellow, she studied the communication connections of diverse ethnic communities as part of the USC Metamorphosis Project. [Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication]

**Karin Gwinn Wilkins** holds a PhD from the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania, USA, and is an associate professor with the Department of Radio-TV-Film at the University of Texas at Austin, USA. She has served as the chair of the Development/Intercultural Division of the International Communication Association and on the advisory board for the journal *Communication for Development and Social Change* as well as the World Congress on Communication and Development. Publications concerning development communication issues include *Redeveloping communication for social change: Theory, practice and power*, as well as articles in *Journal of Communication, Development and Change, Perspectives on Global Development and Technology, Keio Communication Review, Media Development, Gazette, Global Media Journal*, and others. [Development Communication; Development, Geometry of; Social Movement Media, Transnational]

**Kenton T. Wilkinson** is Regents Professor in Hispanic and International Communication in the College of Mass Communications at Texas Tech University, USA. His international communication interests include mass media and free trade, and cultural-linguistic media markets. He also specializes in US Spanish-language media and its Latin American connections, especially in Mexico. He has served as principal investigator on research grants focused on improving Hispanic-oriented health communication in the USA. [Cultural Products as Tradable Services]

**David Cratis Williams** is associate professor of communication at Florida Atlantic University, USA. He has edited five books, including most recently *Contemporary perspectives on argumentation* (with F. van Eemeren, P. Houtlosser, and M. D. Hazen, 2006), and co-edits *Controversia: An International Journal of Debate and Democratic Renewal* (with M. J. Young). He is also executive director of the North American Russian Communication Association and director of the International Center for the Advancement of Political Communication and Argumentation. [Rhetoric in Northern and Central Asia]

**Tony Williams** is professor and area head of film studies in the Department of English at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA. His publications include the co-edited *Vietnam War films* (1994); *Hearths of darkness: The family in the American horror film* (1996); *Larry Cohen* (1997); *Body and soul: The cinematic vision of Robert Aldrich* (2004); and many others. [Hong Kong Cinema]

**Steven R. Wilson** is professor of communication at Purdue University, USA. He is the author of *Seeking and resisting compliance: Why people say what they do when trying to influence others* (2002) as well as of more than 50 journal articles and book chapters investigating interpersonal influence, parenting and child abuse, conflict and negotiation, and politeness and identity management. He has chaired the International Communication Association Interpersonal Communication Division and served as associate editor for the interdisciplinary journal *Personal Relationships*. He was a visiting scholar at the School for Mass Communication Research at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, during the fall 2006 semester. [Compliance Gaining]

**Dwayne Winseck** is associate professor, School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada. He is author of *Reconvergence: A political economy of telecommunications in Canada* (1998), co-author with Robert Pike of *Communication and empire: Media, markets, and globalization, 1860–1930* (2007), and co-editor of *Media in global context: A reader* (1998) as well as of *Democratizing communication: Comparative perspectives on information and power* (1997). [Consolidation of Media Markets; Global Media, History of]

**Brian Winston** is the Lincoln Professor of Communications at the University of Lincoln, UK. He started his media career in 1963 on Granada TV's *World in Action*. In 1985, he won a US Emmy for documentary scriptwriting. He was director of the Glasgow University Media Group, producing *Bad news* (1976) and *More bad news* (1980). He won Best Book of the Year in 1998 from the American Association for History and Computing for *Media technology and society*. His latest book is *Messages: Free expression, media and the west from Gutenberg to Google* (2005). [Freedom of Communication]

**Werner Wirth** is full professor for empirical research at the Institute of Mass Communication and Media Research of the University of Zurich, Switzerland. His research focuses on diffusion, adoption, and use of new media as well as cognitive, emotional, and persuasive aspects of media use, media reception, and media effects. Prof. Wirth is author or editor of 12 books and over 80 articles. He is co-editor of the *Journal of Media Psychology* and of several book series. [Comparative Research; Emotions, Media Effects on; Involvement with Media Content; Navigation]

**Russ Witcher** is an associate professor of English-communication at Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, Tennessee. He is the author of *After Watergate: Nixon and the newsweeklies* (2000) and *A contextual analysis of movie director Oliver Stone's "Nixon"* (2004), and the editor of *Articles, interviews and book excerpts (1976–2000) on Richard Nixon's legacy* (2003). Dr. Witcher is currently writing a book about the US Senate and the Vietnam War following the withdrawal of American troops. [Watergate Scandal]



**Kim Witte** holds a PhD from the University of California, USA, and was a professor in the Department of Communication at Michigan State University (MSU, USA, for several years before taking a leave of absence to work for five years at the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Communication Programs, USA, where she managed large-scale communication research projects in Africa and India. Now she is a research consultant and writer, as well as adjunct professor at MSU. [Extended Parallel Process Model; Message Effects, Structure of]

**Kokkeong Wong** is associate professor of communication at St. Norbert College, De Pere, Wisconsin, USA. His research interests are media and globalization, US media, and media and cultural developments in Singapore and Malaysia. His publications include *Media and culture in Singapore: A theory of controlled commodification* (2001) and "Asian-based development journalism and political elections: Press coverage of the 1999 general election in Malaysia" (*Gazette*, 2004). [Singapore: Media System]

**Holger Wormer** is professor and chair of science journalism at the Institute of Journalism at the University of Dortmund, Germany. Between 1996 and 2004 he was science editor on the national German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. He specializes in issues of quality and ethics in science and journalism and in investigative science reporting. He won two journalism awards and his study courses at the University of Dortmund have been awarded prizes by Bertelsmann and the Volkswagen Foundation. [Science Journalism]

**Dominic Wring** is senior lecturer in communication and media studies at Loughborough University, UK. He is author of *The politics of marketing the Labour Party* and lead editor of *Political communications: The British general election of 2005*. He is chair of the International Political Science Association's Research Committee on Political Communication and associate editor for Europe of the *Journal of Political Marketing*. [United Kingdom: Media System]

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**Robert S. Wyer** is visiting professor, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and professor emeritus, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. Research interests include knowledge accessibility, comprehension, memory, social inference, the impact of affect on judgment and decisions, attitude formation and change, and consumer judgment and decision-making. Publications include *Social comprehension and judgment* (2004), *Handbook of social cognition*, and numerous journal articles and book chapters. He is editor of the Advances in Social Cognition series and former editor of *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* and *Journal of Consumer Psychology*. Awards include the Alexander von Humboldt Special Research Prize for Distinguished Scientists, the first Thomas M. Ostrom Award for Distinguished Contributions to Person Memory and Social Cognition (1998), and the 2008 Distinguished Scientist Award of the Society for Experimental Social Psychology. [Automaticity]

**Ronald A. Yaros**, assistant professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Utah, USA, is director of the Lab for Communicating Complexity Online. His research explores both formal and informal education of content in computer-mediated environments. His classes employ extensive use of technology, including blogs, WebCT, and other new media, to facilitate and enhance student participation, collaboration, research, and assignments. [Course Organization Programs in Education]

**Nick Yee** is a recent PhD graduate from the Department of Communication at Stanford University, USA, who researches social interaction and self-representation in immersive virtual reality and online games. Over the past six years, he has surveyed over 40,000 players of massively multi-player online role-playing games on a wide variety of issues, such as age and gender differences, motivations of play, relationship formation, and problematic usage. At Stanford's Virtual Human Interaction Lab, he works with Jeremy Bailenson in designing and analyzing experimental studies exploring social interaction in virtual environments. [Psychology in Communication Processes]

**Emily Chivers Yochim** was recently awarded her doctorate in communication studies from the University of Michigan, USA. Her primary areas of interest include gender and the media, subculture theory, and youth cultures, and her dissertation, "‘This is how I think’: Skate life, corresponding cultures and alternative white masculinities," discusses the ways in which adolescent males accept and reject the norms of hegemonic masculinity. Dr. Chivers Yochim has also published in *Media, Culture and Society*. [Symbolic Annihilation]

**Jina H. Yoo** holds a PhD from Michigan State University, USA, and is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA, where she teaches interpersonal communication, social influence, and research methods. Her research areas include the impact of the first impressions in interpersonal communication and the impact of using emotional messages in public health campaigns. [Self-Presentation]

**Kyu Ho Youm** is the Jonathan Marshall First Amendment Chair in the School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon, USA. He has published extensively about communication law in major academic and professional journals. His research has been cited by US and other courts in ruling on freedom of expression. [Fairness Doctrine]

**Marylyn J. Young** is the Wayne C. Minnick Professor of Communication emerita at Florida State University, USA. She has published four books, including *Nuclear energy and security in the former Soviet Union* (with D. Marples, 1997) and *Flights of fancy, flight of doom: KAL 007 and Soviet–American rhetoric* (with M. K. Launer, 1988). Dr. Young is the author of numerous scholarly essays and book chapters on political rhetoric in the former Soviet Union. [Rhetoric in Northern and Central Asia]

**Usha Zacharias** is associate professor in the Department of Communication at Westfield State College, Massachusetts, USA. She is co-editor of the Commentary and Criticism section of *Feminist Media Studies*. Her work on gender, citizenship, and media has been

published in *Social Text*, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *Cultural Dynamics*, and several anthologies. Her primary research is based on fieldwork conducted among marginalized castes/communities in India. Her recent work, part of a project funded by the International Development Research Consortium, is on the biopolitical shift in women's citizenship among the fish-worker castes who live on the coastline coveted by the tourism industry in Kerala, India. She has also published articles in the Indian media and worked as consultant to the Ford Foundation, India. [Identity Politics]

**Ansgar Zerfass** is professor of communication management at the University of Leipzig, Germany. He holds a university degree and doctorate in business administration and a postdoctoral lecture qualification in communication science, and has worked in management positions at various companies for 10 years. He is member of the board of directors of European Public Relations Education and Research Association. He is author and editor of 15 books on strategic communication, public relations, and online communication, among them *Handbuch Unternehmenskommunikation* (2007). [Positioning Theory]

**Yan Bing Zhang** is an assistant professor at the University of Kansas, USA. Her research focuses on intercultural, intergenerational, and mass communication, particularly regarding cultural values, age stereotypes, conflict management, and media effects. Frequently, she examines these issues from a cross-cultural perspective. Her work has been published in US and international communication journals. Dr. Zhang's teaching interests include intercultural/intergroup communication, mass communication, East Asian communication, and quantitative research methods. [Communication Modes, Asian; Conflict and Cooperation across the Life Span]

**Shuhua Zhou** holds a PhD from Indiana University, USA, and is an associate professor at the College of Communication and Information Sciences, University of Alabama, USA. His research focuses on the cognitive processing of mediated messages as well as media content, form, and effects. Professionally, he worked for more than five years in the news department of GDTV in China. [China: Media System]

**Dolf Zillmann** is Burnum Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Information Sciences and Psychology at the University of Alabama, USA, and fellow of the American Psychological Association. His research in communication comprises the influence of the news on the perception of social issues, the effectiveness of educational presentations, the appeal and selection of media entertainments, and the enjoyment of comedy, tragedy, suspenseful drama, horror, erotica, sports, and music. His research in psychology focuses on aggression, sexuality, and emotional behavior generally. His authored, co-authored, and co-edited books include *Hostility and aggression*, *Connections between sexuality and aggression*, *Selective exposure to communication*, *Media effects*, *Responding to the screen*, *Media, children, and the family*, *Exemplification in communication*, and *Media entertainment*. [Emotional Arousal Theory; Empathy Theory; Excitation Transfer Theory; Media Effects Duration]

**Barry J. Zimmerman** is a distinguished professor of educational psychology at the Graduate School and University Center of the City University of New York, USA. He has

served as president of Division 15 of the American Psychological Association (APA). He received the Senior Scientist Award of Division 16 of APA and the Sylvia Scribner Award of the American Educational Research Association for his research on social cognitive and self-regulatory processes. [Bandura, Albert]

**Astrid Zipfel** is lecturer for communication and media studies at the Department of Social Sciences at the Heinrich Heine University of Düsseldorf, Germany. Dr. Zipfel's research focuses on media violence, political communication, public relations, and advertising effects. [Violence as Media Content, Effects of]

**Thomas Zittel** is researcher at the Mannheim Center for Social Science Research of the University of Mannheim, Germany, and Fernand Braudel Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. His research interests cover electronic democracy, political campaigns, normative and empirical theories of democracy, and political representation. Most recent publications include *Participatory democracy and political participation* (co-ed. with Dieter Fuchs, 2007) and "Comparative legislative behavior" in *The Oxford handbook of political institutions* (co-authored with Eric Uslaner, 2006). [E-Democracy]

**Pierre Zoberman** is professor of literature at the University of Paris XIII, France. His books *Les Panégyriques du roi prononcés dans l'Académie française* (1991) and *Les Cérémonies de la parole* (1998) won awards from the French Academy. He has published extensively on all aspects of seventeenth-century French literature, eloquence, and culture, on theory of literature, and on rhetorical aspects of queer studies. [Rhetoric in Western Europe: France]

**Theodore E. Zorn** is professor of management communication and associate dean for management development at the Management School, University of Waikato, Hamilton, New Zealand. He is former editor of *Management Communication Quarterly* and former chair of the Organizational Communication Division of the National Communication Association. Recent publications include a co-edited book, *Management communication: New Zealand and Australian cases*, and articles in *Health Communication*, *Communication Yearbook*, *New Media and Society*, *Journal of Applied Communication*, and *Management Communication Quarterly*. [Change Management and Communication; Organizational Change Processes]

**Marvin Zuckerman** is retired professor emeritus of the University of Delaware, USA, where he taught and conducted research for 33 years. He received his PhD in clinical psychology in 1954 from New York University, USA. He has published over 200 articles and book chapters and eight books. The last published were *Sensation seeking and risky behavior* (2007), *Psychobiology of personality* (2nd edn. 2005), and *Vulnerability to psychopathology* (1999). He is a fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science and a past president and current member of the International Society for the Study of Individual Differences. [Sensation Seeking]



# Preface and Acknowledgments

## *The International Encyclopedia – A Team Product*

On September 14, 2004, I received an email that changed my life for the next three and a half years: “Dear Professor Donsbach: September greetings. I hope that the summer has treated you well, with time for both work and play . . .” The summer of 2004 had indeed treated me well. A few weeks after the International Communication Association (ICA) conference in New Orleans (it was the year before Hurricane Katrina hit the city), my family and I had spent two wonderful weeks at Lago Maggiore in northern Italy. It was as if I had known that it would be the last extended vacation for three years in a row.

The email came from Elizabeth Swayze, then editor and later senior editor of communication and media studies at Blackwell Publishing, and it was the first stage of an invitation to become the general editor of *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, to be published jointly by Blackwell and the ICA. After I had shown my initial interest Dr. Michael Haley, executive director of the ICA (who obviously had his share in my name being suggested), contacted the association’s publication committee. The second crucial email (January 2005) read “Wolf, the publication committee had no problem with you assuming the editorship and recommended this to the executive committee. They also had no issue. So, you are clear to sign a contract. Good luck with this venture. It could be a lot of fun actually. Michael.” At that point I was trapped.

But I was also astonished, to say the least, that I had been asked to take over this role in a project that has led to the biggest publication in our field by far. Although labeled from the beginning “the *international* encyclopedia,” the volumes would be in English, and it was clear that despite all efforts to make it truly international the majority of the contributors would be American. Why then pick a European? My first reaction was: the ICA is really taking seriously its commitment to opening itself up. When I was asked to run as president of the association there were some doubts as to how far this commitment was a political statement, meant to represent an aspiration more than to document a reality. But this offer *had to be* serious and it indicated a very special point in the development of our biggest association in the field: it is now a truly international association and the geographical disproportions that still remain, particularly in membership, reflect only the existing disproportions in people working in communication, resources, and academic output. Therefore, my first thanks go to the ICA, not for nominating me as the general editor, but for successfully going in this direction of becoming a truly international association.

I had never before worked on a project that involves so much cooperation. Producing the content of the encyclopedia has really been a network achievement. Creating this network was probably one of the most crucial tasks because of the specific nature of our field. The borders of the field of communication are so differently defined around the globe that – taking all the areas included together – we have a huge conglomerate of subjects in front of us. There is no one – even among the most seasoned and experienced scholars – who can survey this field and claim to have sufficient knowledge in all areas. And certainly the general editor cannot claim this. Rhetorical Studies and Visual or

Developmental Communication, to name a few, are areas in which the general editor's competence is not much higher than in, say, sinology. In this situation the editorial network structure comes into play.

In close cooperation with the divisions and interest groups in the ICA, we picked colleagues each of whom had the competence and energy to become an editor of one of the 29 areas into which we had divided the field. The first task of these *area editors* was to suggest headwords into which their specific field could be sub-divided. We started this process in the fall of 2005. Of course, visions of how to divide a field into headwords and perceptions of the relative importance of one's own field differed widely, and it needed some months to arrive at the overall architecture of the encyclopedia and, to some extent, of the whole field of communication. Representing areas of and approaches to communication research in quantitative indicators as well as in topicality was not always a smooth process, but it was one in which all area editors finally valued the overall success of this project more highly than the status of their own area.

At the next step, area editors were crucial for securing quality of content by picking the right contributors. Again, it was the area editors who suggested names of possible contributors for the entries in their area. And again, we had to negotiate sometimes to limit geographical or epistemological "ethnocentricity." The 1,339 headwords are authored by about 1,100 scholars from 47 countries. Needless to say, there is still at least a geographical imbalance, but it is much smaller than it would have been without the understanding and commitment of the area editors to making this a truly *international* encyclopedia.

And finally, the area editors' most important and time-consuming work was editing the manuscripts in their area. Starting with a rather complex (as it later turned out, somewhat too complex) system for the editorial workflow (for which the general editor takes all responsibility . . . ), area editors worked with their contributors in a multistep process to produce the best possible representation of the structure and evidence in their own fields. The area editors have been the academic bones of this project and their contribution to the overall quality of content cannot be overestimated. The reader will find their names at the beginning of each volume.

But our system of checks and balances to secure quality went one step further. As the general editor I needed at least two very experienced scholars to help me develop guidelines and policies, to solve conflicts, and to check in the final stage the quality of writing. In *Jennings Bryant* (University of Alabama) and *Robert T. Craig* (University of Colorado) I found the ideal persons to do this job. Jennings and Bob, both past presidents of the ICA, are highly connected with almost the whole field of communication, have a bird's-eye view of research in almost the entire field, are hard-working, reliable, and committed colleagues, and are fun to work with. They became the *advisory editors* of the encyclopedia and they did a tremendous job in helping me oversee and direct the whole process, giving me guidance and inspiration, and – most of all – adding to the academic authority of the project.

This international network of area editors and advisory editors was linked to the editorial headquarters in a medium-sized city in the east of Germany: Dresden. Starting from scratch, I was lucky to find my closest cooperator in *Nadine Bernhardt*, the encyclopedia's first editorial assistant. Nadine was still a student when I hired her in the

spring of 2005, and she worked for this project on a research-assistant basis. She graduated in the summer of 2006, somehow (and successfully) combining her studies with her day-to-day involvement in one of the biggest publication projects in the field, and became an official employee of the university. Our different professional statuses never played a role when cooperating on the project and developing its architecture and rules. She has a critical mind and is quick, efficient, and reliable. She gave the first feedback on all the ideas I had developed on how to proceed and she brought many good ideas herself to the project. Within a few months, Nadine became a well-known name among hundreds of scholars who corresponded with her day by day.

The editorial team was complemented by *Uwe Hartung*, who gained his PhD from the University of Mainz, had already worked for me as editorial assistant on the *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* (of which I am the managing editor), and holds joint positions at the universities of Lugano (Switzerland) and Dresden. Uwe's experience in the field allowed him to review the final drafts that arrived at the general editor's office and to edit them in parallel with me. I would never have been able to read and edit all 1,339 myself and I could totally rely on his judgment.

Four months before the entry submission deadline, in April 2007, Nadine made me almost collapse when she told me about her decision to leave the university and take a job in the industry at the end of June. But again, I was lucky in finding a replacement early enough for the remaining two months. *Anja Wild*, about to receive her Master's degree in communication at Dresden University, took Nadine's job. She was supported by *Anne Lehwald*, who just had received her degree. Both young women worked hours and hours during evenings and weekends to meet the schedule agreed between us and Blackwell. Like Nadine, they never thought much about working to contract but were committed to getting the job done.

While leaving total control over content to the editors, Blackwell Publishing gave us all the support we needed to accomplish the project. *Elizabeth Swayze* was one of the people who created the idea of this encyclopedia at the publishers and has stayed with us throughout, being always responsive, supportive, and – what is most important – understanding that this is before anything else an academic endeavor and not a commercial one. This also applies to Blackwell's books publishing director for the social sciences and the humanities, *Steve Smith*, who gave us the necessary resources, watched us from a distance, and only got involved when necessary.

Early on, when the general structure and contracts were settled, *Ken Provencher* had become our main contact at Blackwell. Ken was what they called the “development project editor, cultural and communication studies,” but more concretely he was our alter ego at Blackwell. Almost all editorial decisions concerning structure and format were made with Ken and there must have been thousands of emails flying between Nadine in Dresden and him – until he also left the job, at almost the same time as Nadine. Ken went to USC to get a PhD in critical studies at the School of Cinematic Arts. When I got this news a short time after learning that Nadine was leaving, I doubted for a moment if it would be possible to accomplish the project under these circumstances. But again, the transition to our new alter ego at Blackwell went smoothly. *Tiffany Mok* took over and from the first moment was on top of things. Her main job was controlling the workflow, chasing delayed manuscripts, and discussing with us measures to stay on track with our



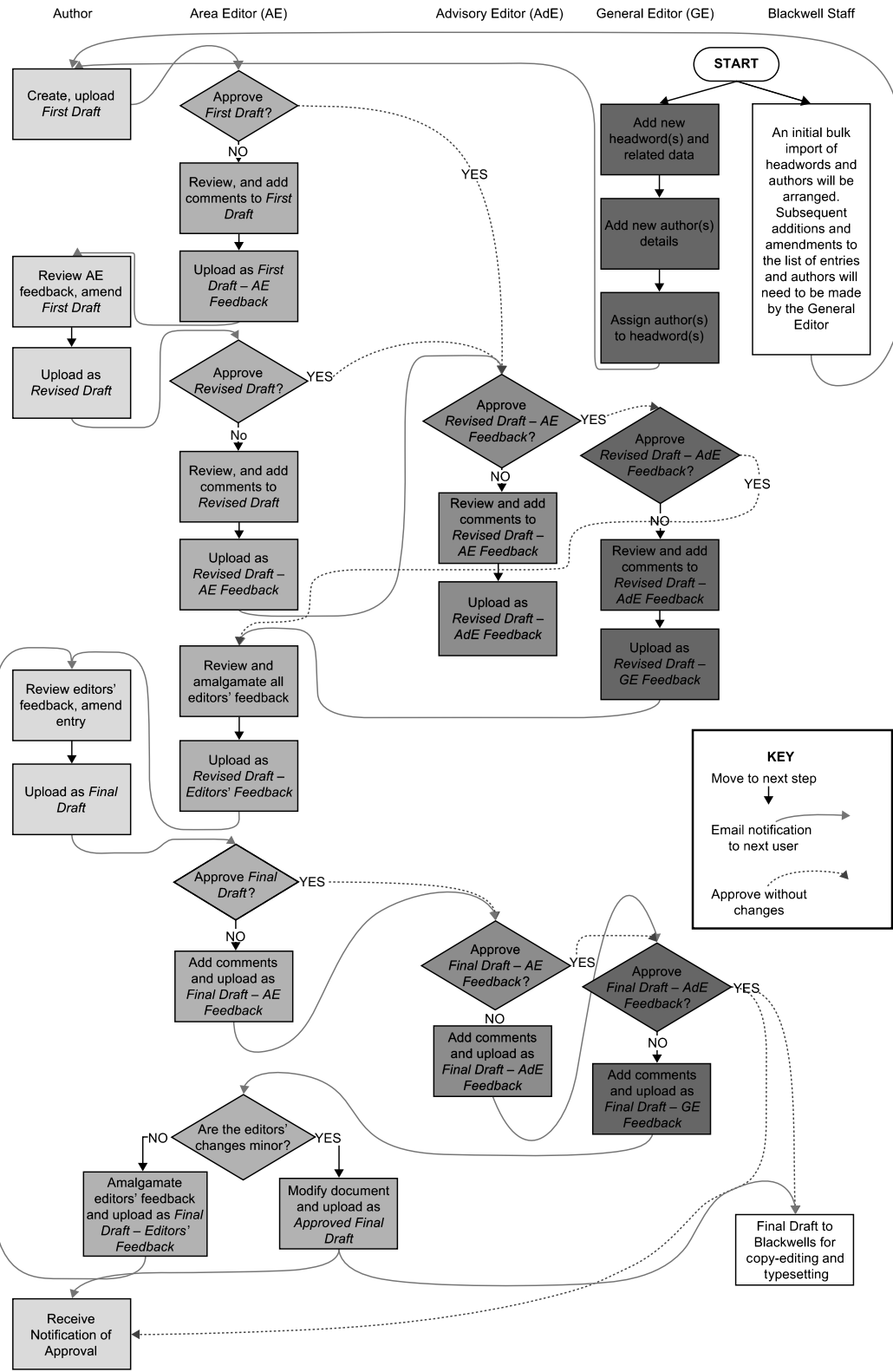
schedule. She also had the great idea of hiring toward the end of the submissions period what we called “the clean-up team,” a group of scholars to whom we reallocated headwords whose original contributors were missing in action. Tiffany was later assisted by *Christine Lagasse*, an assistant to Steve Smith.

On the other side of the Atlantic, the British part of Blackwell in Oxford, UK, took responsibility for the technical production of the work. *Tim Beuzeval*, web production team manager, has been in charge of the website, i.e., the technical skeleton of the whole process. It was no easy task for him to transfer our detailed ideas about the submission and review process into a computer program. Our review system included several loops of revisions and editing between contributor, area editor, advisory editor, and finally general editor. The chart opposite shows the challenge that Tim was facing. He managed to accommodate even our weirdest requests and helped us avoid some unnecessary extravagances. *Simon Eckley*, production manager, discussed with us the formal makeup of the encyclopedia. *Fiona Sewell* of Wordfusion was the leader of the team of copyeditors who really read the manuscripts with diligence and a clear mind and found, to our embarrassment, many mistakes and inconsistencies that had slipped through the editing process.

Losing my editorial assistant and the project editor in the middle of the battle was not the only major turbulence along the way. In late November 2006 we received the news that Blackwell Publishing had been taken over by an even bigger fish in the publishing business, John Wiley and Sons Inc. However, very soon we received signals that the new company, Wiley-Blackwell, is as much committed to the project as the old one, i.e., Blackwell alone. From that time on we have not seen any indication that this is not the case, and it was very satisfying for us to see that not much had changed for our colleagues at Blackwell with whom we had cooperated so closely.

To produce 12 volumes with peer-reviewed academic content of high quality within less than three years has only been possible because of the existence of the Internet and email. I have not read one manuscript on paper and not exchanged one conventional letter with anybody. Thanks to the brilliant engineering of Tim Beuzeval a lot of things happened automatically and in an orderly workflow. But this also meant having the encyclopedia project with me day and night and wherever I and my laptop were. The worldwide distribution of contributors made this a project that never slept. Somebody in Europe, Asia, or the Americas was always awake and communicating and many times we urged our colleague on the other side to finally go to bed, knowing the time difference between Dresden and, say, Oregon.

When dealing with about 30 editors and more than 1,100 contributors, many things happen along the way. We mourn the death of one of our contributors (who was also a close friend to me), Bob Stevenson of the University of North Carolina, whose two entries we were able to get finalized with the help of dear colleagues so that Bob is represented in this encyclopedia. Several colleagues became ill and finally were unable to submit. Some others faced temporary challenges. Michael Griffin, one of our area editors, sent us pictures of his house after a major storm had hit Minnesota and left him for four days without electricity. Among the hundreds of emails we were dealing with each day was the following from one of our contributors: “I have completed the document, expanded, amended and added references and suggested readings. However, I am in a lounge in



Lisbon airport, and the machines here don't allow the sending of attachments. I will arrive in Luanda tomorrow at noon, and in the course of tomorrow afternoon I hope to find somewhere from where to send the file. Sorry about the delay." Two hours later: "I have power again and I am back on the job. I will take care of the entry and send it tomorrow." This shows the commitment of our colleagues, their eagerness to do the job and to do it well – despite all obstacles.

At the end, I can only express my deep gratitude to all these colleagues who have in many different roles contributed to the encyclopedia. This product of an international network is also an indication of the momentum that our field has. We hope that these volumes will contribute to spread our approaches and our evidence throughout the world and in many different spheres of society. We have done, and we do, our best to demonstrate how far good communication research is in the public interest of all.

Wolfgang Donsbach, General Editor  
Dresden, March 2008

# Introduction

## The Challenges of this Encyclopedia

The reader of this introduction who expects of it a concise description of what the field of communication is and an overview of its state of the art will be massively disappointed. I am very confident, however, that this overview can be found within this encyclopedia. In my view, the best available account, describing development, fields, paradigms, and current problems of the academic side of “communication,” is an entry by one of the advisory editors, and therefore I refer readers to Robert T. Craig’s entry on “Communication as a Field and Discipline.” In a pluralistic manner, being fair to the rival camps, it gives a detached, analytical, and encompassing description of where we came from and where we stand today – at least to the extent of what can be said in 6,000 words.

If a whole field can be packed into an encyclopedia it means that there is at least some chance of defining its borders and naming its consensual evidence. Despite the fact that methodological and meta-theoretical disputes occur in any discipline (and belong to the sciences by default), communication has still been different in this from most of the other disciplines, particularly the natural sciences, which at least are more or less unanimously defined according to the scope of their objects and the canonization of their evidence. Textbooks, readers, or encyclopedias in, for instance, physics or economics might differ in nuances but their range of content and their presentation of what is the state of the art would be quite similar even when published in different regions of the world. Communication, on the other hand, has always ranked rather low on an imaginary scale of disciplinary coherence.

Nevertheless, over the last decades this field (whether it is a “discipline” is a more transcendent question) has reached some maturity that was not there a few decades before, and the attempts to present the vast body of our evidence to students and practitioners, for instance in the form of encyclopedias, is a clear sign of this. Previous projects of this kind were Barnouw’s four-volume *International Encyclopedia of Communications* (1989), Schement’s three-volume *Encyclopedia of Communication and Information* (2001), and Johnston’s four-volume *Encyclopedia of International Media and Communications* (2003). But none of these reached the scale of this *International Encyclopedia* in terms of scope of content, international representation, and mere size.

The identity and characteristics of this encyclopedia can best be explained when describing the challenges that the people involved were facing and that we hope we have met.

### CHALLENGE 1: REPRESENTING THE PLURALITY IN THE FIELD

*The International Encyclopedia of Communication* is a project that has been developed by the International Communication Association (ICA) and Blackwell Publishing (which has in the meantime become Wiley-Blackwell), the publisher of most ICA journals and an ICA book series. Thus, the identity of the ICA as the biggest international association in the field of communication has influenced the identity and content of this publication.

## 2 Introduction

However, this identity is not a single and clearly defined one, as it is in most other disciplines, but composed of a patchwork of subjects, theories, and methodological approaches. This plurality within the ICA finds its expression in the scope of these 11 volumes plus 1 index volume. After the general editor had been appointed by the ICA Executive Committee it was the first objective to find an editorial structure that represents this plurality. It has never been a one-man show, meant to display to the readers what the general editor's preferred subjects and approaches are. Instead, it was meant to display what the people who are organized in the ICA – and these are 4,000 scholars in almost 70 countries – have defined as the valid and relevant evidence.

Thus, we started from the ICA divisions and interest groups and sought their input on content and people. However, structuring the encyclopedia could not mean just copying the divisional structure of the association onto the editorial parts of the publication. The structure of the academic association has, of course, not developed in a “theoretical” or at least logical way but is due to individual initiatives, urgent social problems, and many other reasons. Thus, it could not well serve as the blueprint for a publication that was charged with presenting to everybody (and not only ICA members) a quite coherent and systematic picture of the field. Thus, less than two-thirds of the ICA divisions and interest groups are represented as “editorial areas,” the structure underlying all 1,339 entries in the encyclopedia. Those ICA divisions that do not find their label as an editorial area are by no means less important and not at all misrepresented. Their subjects and evidence just slipped under the roof of newly created areas, many of which followed a simple communication model from message production, content, and exposure to message effects. For instance, the ICA does not have a division “Media Effects,” but it was clear from the beginning that we had to compile the approaches and the findings on this (probably most important) field in one editorial area. “Exposure to Communication Content,” “Reality Perception through the Media,” and “Media Systems in the World” are other areas that do not represent ICA divisions.

Communication is anything but a clearly defined field – within countries and even more so between countries. The ICA, for instance, has a much broader scope than most national and regional associations in Europe, which are more focused on mediated communication, while the ICA also includes interpersonal communication, language and social interaction, and organizational communication. It has been a big challenge to accept the leadership of a publication of which a lot of the content is almost totally *terra incognita* for the general editor. I would never have thought that I could ever become the editor of a publication with headwords like “Marital Typologies,” “Linguistic Pragmatics,” or “Organizational Metaphors.” But here it is, and it is part of the collateral damage of the whole endeavor that the general editor learned a lot: first, he learned what can go under the umbrella of “communication studies and research” if one looks at the field from a global perspective, and second, he learned what interesting ideas, approaches, and evidence these fields have to offer. It was just a pity that the material that went through my hands (or better: across my screen) became so voluminous that this soon ended in an information overload.

This broad definition of the field is the reason why the area editors became so important for this project. The result of the deliberations in which – in addition to the division chairs – the two advisory editors, Robert T. Craig and Jennings Bryant, were

closely involved was the list of 29 editorial areas that are now the backbone of the alphabetically ordered entries in these volumes. Each of these areas needed a responsible area editor, a scholar who was capable of surveying the area's subjects and of critically but fairly evaluating the different approaches. Thus, the selection of the area editors was the second crucial stage that would decide how well we would represent true scholarship without bias. Again, the division chairs and the advisory editors were involved in this search and some of the chairs became the editors of the areas that represented their division. The area editors are the true gatekeepers for the quality of the encyclopedia's content (see below).

Thus, in the way the borders of this encyclopedia's content are defined (encompassing almost all areas that somewhere in the world sail under the flag of "communication"), in the way we sub-divided this field into a variety of areas (defining 29 specific sub-fields), and in the way in which we came up with a list of area editors (all scholars who were internationally acknowledged in their respective fields), we did our best to present to the reader a most representative picture of what we do and what we know in communication.

## **CHALLENGE 2: FINDING A COHERENT SYSTEM OF HEADWORDS**

Part of this striving for a valid representation of the field's reality then became the search for headwords. Defining editorial areas is one thing, filling them with headwords that are somehow coherent *across the areas* is another. It became the area editors' first task to suggest between 30 and 50 topics that should be dealt with by individual entries in the encyclopedia. In addition, the area editors were to indicate the possible length category for each entry. Basically, the encyclopedia has entries of three length categories, ranging from under 1,000 to 2,000 and 3,000 words. As could be expected, the perceptions of how such a list might look like and how many headwords would best represent the respective areas differed widely.

The general editor's biggest misjudgment was probably his estimate of how much time it would need to negotiate the headwords. With every list that the area editors submitted it became more difficult to keep an overview of how the headwords on this growing list would relate to each other and would form, in their totality, the coherent representation of the field that we were going for. Toward the end we reached a state of entropy in which we thought several times a day it might be best to drop the ball and start again.

The reason for this entropy was the fact that, by default, such an encyclopedia's content is not organized along one dimension (in which every new headword would just add to the already existing content) but consists of several dimensions. Therefore, the same subject could appear several times in different contexts (or technically speaking: in several editorial areas). Take, for example, the characteristics of media content. They are the product of journalists (area: Journalism), who work in institutional environments and role settings (area: Media Production and Content) that are partially defined by economic (area: Media Economy), legal (area: Communication and Media Law and Policy), technical (area: Communication and Technology), and other (area: Media Systems in the World) structures, are perceived or not by the audience (area: Exposure to Communication Content), and can lead to a certain reality perception (area: Reality Perception through the Media) and other effects (area: Media Effects) that can only be measured by applying

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specific methods (area: Research Methods). This example can easily be extended by adding more areas where media content plays a role, like Visual Communication or Rhetorical Studies. Thus (and again only as an example), “bias,” “framing,” and “stereotyping” of news are all constructs that appear several times at several spots and in different contexts.

In some cases this multiplicity is due not only to the different perspectives from which the contributor looks at a subject but also to different epistemologies. When the first drafts began to come in, it became clear that the ideal of an “internal plurality” where each and every entry presents the subject from all perspectives, including all epistemologies, is an impossibility in the social sciences. Internal plurality (a term used in many countries for the expectations of the content of public service broadcasting) would have offered to the reader the full perspective on each headword’s subject. This is, indeed, the case in most entries, and for many headwords there are no rival approaches or evidence to present. But for others there are, and in some cases the editorial areas as a whole (like some divisions in the ICA) correlate with specific epistemologies and methodologies. As a consequence, the reader will find a mixture of internal and external plurality, the latter presenting the same topic or problem from different angles in different entries. This is not ideal for an encyclopedia entry (where the reader expects *the* state of the art), but we think that the intensive use of cross-references to other headwords solves this problem to a great degree. And we are aware that some contributors will not like these cross-references in their text because the “other” text might challenge their view.

The 1,339 entries of which this encyclopedia consists are only one of many solutions one could have come up with to the problem of organizing the field. Many inconsistencies and other deficiencies were met and dealt with during the process; others were recognized too late to be corrected or will only be recognized by the critical reader.

### **CHALLENGE 3: SECURING QUALITY**

The system of headwords is intrinsically to do with quality management. The next and even more difficult and crucial dimension was the quality of the entries themselves. The first decisive step here was, again, people! The area editors, with the background of their first-class knowledge of their fields, suggested names of possible contributors that we discussed in close consultation with the advisory editors. Of course, even the best scholar’s horizon is finite and communication networks do exist, and are necessary - not least for research activities. Therefore, certain correlations – be they of a geographical, epistemological, or institutional nature – between the area editors and the contributors in their area have been inevitable. Nevertheless, if the biographic and bibliographic records of most contributors had not already given proof of their expertise in the field they were writing about, then the quality of their entries would have done so.

To secure the quality of each and every entry we implemented a rather complex system of reviewing. The first draft of each entry was commented on by the area editor only, then eventually revised and uploaded as a “revised draft” onto the encyclopedia website, which sent it to the appropriate advisory editor, from where it arrived with comments at the general editor. For about two-thirds of the entries the three-step editing process provided an almost printable manuscript after the first loop, and the general editor and his

colleagues only had to change formal matters and add cross-references. In one-third of the cases the manuscript went through a second loop, which was started by the area editor's amalgamating previous comments from advisory and general editors and the production of a new draft. This did the job in most cases; in a few we had to start a third loop in which again all editing levels were involved.

By far the majority of comments were suggesting minor changes and amendments, in most cases because the entry was too long. Very rarely was the critique by the editors more fundamental, for instance the manuscript being highly ideological, being almost evidence-free, or not presenting an account of what communication research had produced in terms of systematic academic research. We lost only two of the approximately 1,100 contributors over disagreement on content, and in neither of these cases was the decision made by one person only.

The way the contributors approached their entries differed quite considerably. Despite the publication on the encyclopedia website of writing guidelines and a sample article by the general editor, the style of the manuscripts varied. Some contributors wrote exclusively in a true encyclopedia style without references in the text, while others felt uncomfortable not mentioning the source of evidence for particular content. These style differences again correlated with epistemology. Entries from the "hard science" hemisphere of communication research approach contained on the average more in-text references, because their contributors were used to reporting more concrete evidence on their subjects, while many of the more qualitative or "critical" entries preferred a more essayistic style. Again, after intense discussions, we did not attempt to level all entries to the same formal style but decided to leave these peculiarities, at least to a certain extent. In any case, at the ends of entries the reader will find lists of references to literature the text is based on or for further reading. Our weakness for plurality also made us allow one entry that consists of nothing but a dialogue – between a rhetorician and a psychologist – a brilliant way of describing the different approaches of both disciplines (which was the entry's objective).

#### **CHALLENGE 4: MAKING THIS AN *INTERNATIONAL* ENCYCLOPEDIA**

Taking the membership structure of the ICA as an indicator, two-thirds of communication scholars live and work in the US and most of the research journals of international relevance are published there. It comes as no surprise then that there is not one country in the world that comes even close to the US in terms of academic institutions in the field of communication, research grants and research projects, and finally research output measured quantitatively in the number of publications and qualitatively in the relevant theories and results. Therefore, there is something like a natural and legitimate bias toward communication research in the US – and to a lesser degree in central Europe: there is just more research output there than in other regions of the world, and trying to totally level these disproportions in a publication like this encyclopedia would indeed induce discrimination by geography to the disadvantage of contributors from the US.

However, some variance in the visibility of scholars from different regions can also be explained by factors other than just academic output and quality. Language is one of



these. The lingua franca of research has for long been English and, as mentioned above, the major publications are in English. As a consequence, today deans and hiring committees in many countries expect that candidates for jobs and promotions have published in English. But not everybody can and should meet these expectations. Important journals, some of them having much longer traditions than today's relevant English-language journals, would eventually disappear or become academically insignificant if this trend were to continue. Nevertheless, students in the UK, Australia, or central Europe have the option of concentrating on these international, i.e., English-language, journals.

But in many regions of the world, English is far less widespread, even the brightest students have difficulties in writing their excellent work down in a foreign language, and translation is often not an option because of cost. In some regions there is also an understandable inhibition from disregarding one's own language and culture just for the sake of being more visible in an international "academic market."

We have tried to counter as far as possible this imbalance between geographical regions, which is only to some extent a "bias." One-third of the area editors are non-US scholars and the 1,100 or so contributors come from 47 countries. Further, probably the comment most often used in the editing process (at least by the general editor) was that an entry was too "US-centric" and neglected research in other areas. The contributors were usually very responsive to such comments and the next versions much better. The imbalance described here in academic resources and output and the language barriers still leave their mark in this publication also. Nevertheless, we would claim that it is a truly "international" encyclopedia of communication and one that does justice to the identity of its sponsoring association, the ICA.

### **CHALLENGE 5: MANAGING THE PROJECT TECHNICALLY**

We all learned how to produce this work while doing it. We had no exact blueprint for an encyclopedia of this size. *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, edited by George Ritzer, came closest but still used different editorial procedures and made a different use of the website. The key factors in managing the project became the website and email. Most of the editors and certainly the general editor never worked on paper. This became a double-edged sword, however. On the one hand, we had clean desks and could travel light; on the other hand, the project was always with us, at least when our laptops were in reach.

We almost met the original timetable for completion of the editorial work. But this was only possible because we switched to direct contact with contributors who were late, bombarding them with emails, calling them up, even visiting them in their offices when possible. Without the support of the publishers we would not have been able to solicit the manuscripts in due time. In some cases we had to reallocate entries to other contributors, some of them to the "clean-up team" that we had recruited about two months before the deadline.

A project of this scale needs clear procedures, timetables, and responsibilities. Every day of delay would have had an impact on the workflow at the publishers, who had to hire copyeditors and reserve resources at the printers. But timeliness is also an academic value, because the relevance of research evidence decays and the faster the production the fresher the content.

## HOW TO USE THE ENCYCLOPEDIA

The 1,339 entries are printed in an alphabetical order throughout the first 11 volumes. The length of an entry usually is some rough indicator of its centrality in the field. There are longer overview articles for the editorial areas. A reader who wants to get a first impression of approaches, keywords, and methods in, for instance, political communication is well advised to first look at this overview article.

Cross-references to other headwords have been extensively used to guide the reader to content that is more or less directly related to what he or she reads in any one entry. They are indicated by an arrow before the headword in the text, e.g., in the entry on “Academy Awards” readers are referred to “(→ Special Effects)” and “→ Cinematography.” Cross-references also have helped us to meet the length standards, because very often it was possible to just refer to a specific entry instead of explaining a certain theory or construct in the entry at hand. At some later point we might use the structure of the cross-references in all entries as a dataset that shows the underlying structure of this fascinating field of communication. But this will be a new project.

Of course, there will be many readers of this *International Encyclopedia of Communication* who – despite the size of this project – do not find what they are looking for, or who find it written from a different perspective than they had expected. We anticipate this criticism and we are looking forward to it in order to improve the next editions in print and online. For now, this is what more than 1,100 scholars worldwide present as the best theories and methods and as the most relevant results in this fascinating and socially crucial field of communication.

Wolfgang Donsbach, General Editor



# A

## Academy Awards

*Kathrina Glitre*

*University of the West of England*

Over 1 billion people in more than 200 territories watched the Academy Awards telecast in 2006. The Oscars are the most influential entertainment awards in the world, an enduring phenomenon affecting not only the film industry, but also radio, television, and advertising, with an increasingly global impact.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded in 1927, with the aim of improving the industry's status. The first Academy Awards were announced prior to the ceremony (a private banquet with 270 guests) in May 1929. The 15 awards included Outstanding Picture, Actor, Actress, and separate awards for Comedic and Dramatic Direction; Warner Bros. received a Special Award for *The Jazz Singer*, the only talkie mentioned. The statuette (designed by Cedric Gibbons) was produced for the occasion and remains largely unchanged; the nickname "Oscar" was not used officially until 1939.

There have been various *changes to the awards*, often in recognition of changing technologies. Sound Recording became a category for 1929/1930, with awards for Music (Scoring) and Music (Song) added in 1934. Special Effects was introduced in 1939 and later split into Sound Effects and Visual Effects (1963) (→ Special Effects). Between 1939 and 1966, → Cinematography and Art Direction were split into black-and-white and color achievements. Costume was added in 1948 (also split between black-and-white and color until 1956). Other awards were introduced: Supporting Actor/Actress (1936); Documentary (1941); Make-up (1981); and Animated Feature Film (2001). This list is not comprehensive, but indicates key changes in → Hollywood filmmaking, particularly the emphasis on spectacle.

The Academy is organized into separate *branches*, e.g., Acting, Direction, Writing, Cinematography. Nominations are generated by the relevant branch, whose members are presumed best qualified to recognize quality within its area of specialty: the Acting Branch nominates actors, the Direction Branch nominates directors, etc. All Academy members can nominate Best Pictures. Foreign Language Films are nominated by the country of production and then selected by a special Academy committee. All active members then vote on all categories. The Academy's tastes can partly be explained by its honorary membership: the Board of Governors invites people to join (Award nominees are automatically invited). Since only those with proven ability are invited to join, and membership is for life, members tend to be relatively old. They are also predominantly male:

the Board of Governors currently comprises 35 men and seven women; with the exception of Acting, branches are also male-dominated (→ Gender and Media Organizations).

These unintentional biases are significant, not least because of the *economic impact* of an Oscar nomination. Nomination improves bargaining power for future projects, but also brings immediate economic benefits. A 2001 study estimated that a Best Picture nomination can be worth US\$11 million in domestic ticket sales alone (e.g., prior to nomination, *Million Dollar Baby* was playing in 147 US theaters; the weekend after, it was playing in 2,010), while a Best Actor/Actress nomination is estimated to add US\$1 million. Nominations can also impact on sales of related merchandising, such as soundtracks and books.

Historically, the Awards have played an important part in media and communication. From 1930 to 1944, a portion of the ceremony was broadcast on local radio. In 1945, the ABC network began national broadcasts, while the Armed Forces Radio Service made the first overseas broadcast; together, they reached an unprecedented audience of 50 million in 1948. The NBC network broadcast the first televised ceremony in 1953. In 1959, 80 million Americans watched or listened to the show, while a further 100 million were reached overseas. This increasing audience affected the amount paid for TV rights. Disney-owned ABC currently pay US\$37 million for the domestic rights – money well spent, since the Academy Awards consistently tops the ratings, enabling ABC to demand exceptionally high rates for advertising: in 1999, they charged US\$1 million per 30-second commercial (totaling US\$58 million); by 2004, this had risen to US\$1.5 million. Buena Vista International Television (also Disney-owned) currently hold the rights to overseas licensing, expanding to new territories in Japan, Latin America, and Vietnam in 2006.

The Awards themselves have also become more international. Foreign-language films are technically eligible for *any* award, as long as they meet the normal requirements (theatrical release in Los Angeles for seven consecutive days); in practice, the Academy has always privileged English-language films. Levy (2001) estimates that 70 percent of nominees have been American, 20 percent British, and only 10 percent other nationalities; however, the majority of these non-American nominations were still for work on American films. The first foreign-language film to receive an award was *Shoe-Shine*, in 1947; a Special or Honorary Award was given to a foreign film most years afterwards, until the Foreign Language Film category was added in 1956 (*La Strada* won). The 1960s saw actors, actresses, and directors being nominated for foreign-language films (mostly European): Sophia Loren was the first actress to be nominated and still the only one to win (*Two Women*, 1961); Roberto Benigni is the only actor to win (*Life is Beautiful*, 1998). Foreign directors gained a higher number of nominations – including Federico Fellini (four times), Ingmar Bergman (three times), and Akira Kurosawa – but not one received the award. Nonetheless, two things are clear: foreign-language films became more “visible” in the 1960s (the height of European art cinema); and the Academy’s understanding of the world has expanded over the last 40 years to include European, East Asian, and Latin American cinema. African, Asian, and Middle Eastern cinema, however, rarely reaches their radar. Hollywood’s dominance means that the Academy Awards retain a global audience, but the reverse effect – global cinema reaching America – is notably weaker.

SEE ALSO: ► Americanization of the Media ► Cinema ► Cinematography ► Disney  
► Film as Popular Culture ► Gender and Media Organizations ► Globalization of the

Media ► Hollywood ► Media Conglomerates ► Special Effects ► Stars ► United States of America: Media System

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## **Access to the Media**

*Samuel A. Terilli, Jr.*

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Access to the media encompasses the efforts and rights of individuals and groups to represent their views through the pages or airtime of established media entities – private or public. It should not be confused with access to information (→ Freedom of Information; Right to Know) or even the related question of open-access television (→ Public Access Television). The access-to-media question typically arises when a political candidate wants advertising or free airtime or when a person, business, or group demands time (or space) to reply to a news report or present a competing analysis (→ Right of Reply). More broadly, the question asks whether society can or should force a publisher or broadcaster to devote space or time to diverse subjects and viewpoints.

### **COMPETING PHILOSOPHIES**

Whether the public should have narrow, broad, or even any access-to-media rights is a question on which free expression advocates often disagree (Barendt 2005). The *opponents of mandated access* see government intervention or compulsion as dangerously contrary to free expression. Proponents argue access, even if compulsory, improves the quality and breadth of expression and serves the public interest (Barron 1973).

If government may compel speech and thus interfere with private allocation of newspaper space and broadcast time, access opponents insist, journalists are not truly free because some will refrain from controversial speech to avoid compulsory access (Schmidt 1976). This view, common in the United States, for example, reflects a strong suspicion of government and a conception of expressive rights as rights against government and not also against large or concentrated media entities or as positive rights to an informed and fair debate (Barendt 2005).

The *countervailing view* focuses on the power of the modern news media, the concentration of ownership of major media outlets (→ Concentration in Media Systems), the reciprocal value of equal opportunity to speak among all speakers, and the public nature of broadcast licenses that allocate a finite electromagnetic spectrum. The scarcity or finite spectrum argument is losing its force as technological advances provide more diversity among the broadcast media. Without creating absolute or comprehensive public rights of access to private or public news media, some legal systems, such as those in France, Germany, and elsewhere in Europe, place a greater emphasis on access and reply rights as well as pluralist interests (Barendt 1989, 2005; Paraschos 1998).

### **SIGNIFICANT FACTORS AFFECTING NATIONAL POLICIES**

In evaluating the access-to-media question across national borders, there are six questions on which national law and policy often turn: (1) Does the society distinguish between print and broadcast media and, among broadcasters, between those using public airwaves and those transmitting by cable or satellite? (2) Are there differences in the law applicable to private media and that applicable to government-funded, -owned, or -controlled media? (3) Does the society have relatively few media outlets (or highly concentrated ownership) and a greater need for access rights? (4) What is the history of the society, from civil liberties to experiences with war or genocide? (5) Does the law examine the nature of the relevant statement to determine if a reply or access right is triggered (e.g., differences between opinions and statements of fact and between private persons and public officials)? (6) Is the mode of communication fairly new and thus more likely to be regulated, possibly including some equal access obligation?

Although not exhaustive, this list allows one to evaluate thoroughly different approaches to access rights, as shown by a comparison of the law in the United States and Canada with that of several European countries and the European Union generally.

### **ACCESS TO MEDIA IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA**

The law in the United States, until the late 1980s, reflected a sharp contrast between broadcast and print media. The key decisions of the Supreme Court were *Red Lion Broadcasting Co. vs FCC* (unanimously upholding in 1969 at least one part of the → Federal Communications Commission's → *fairness doctrine*, requiring, among other things, the airing by broadcast licensees, at their expense, of a reply by a person attacked or criticized), and *Miami Herald vs Tornillo* (unanimously declaring in 1974 Florida's right of reply statute unconstitutional because newspapers enjoyed a strong First Amendment right, rooted in history, to control content of and access to their pages, in contrast with the regulated broadcast media). The Supreme Court saw the two media through different historical and legal lenses and found the First Amendment more protective of the print media.

In *Red Lion*, the court reasoned that any regulatory interference with broadcasters through mandatory rights of reply was permissible because the broadcaster held its license in trust for the public and through government's apportionment of the scarce electromagnetic spectrum. This decision did not recognize a general right of public access to the broadcast media. The right of reply was a limited one, conditioned on the FCC rule

and triggered by the personal attack. The Court held in *Tornillo* that the limited power to mandate access or replies in the broadcast media did not extend to the print media. The Court stressed the First Amendment right of editors to select the news, and the fear that mandatory rights of reply would cause some to avoid controversial issues and thus deprive the public of information or opinion. The case did not address other media access questions.

With the development of cable and other technologies, the spectrum scarcity and public trusteeship regulatory rationales fell out of favor in the 1980s, as did the fairness doctrine (Barron 2003; → Cable Television; Satellite Television). The fairness doctrine, of which the personal attack or reply rule was one part, required that broadcasters devote a reasonable amount of airtime to public issues and present competing points of view on important public issues. The doctrine did not require equal treatment of issues or viewpoints, and broadcasters made the ultimate reporting decisions. Nonetheless, by requiring the reporting of diverse ideas and issues, the fairness doctrine was the pinnacle of compelled access to any US media.

The FCC rescinded in 1987 the fairness doctrine rules requiring presentation of diverse views, but left largely intact the rules regarding personal attacks, licensure, indecency, political advertising, equal candidate airtime, replies to political editorials opposing a candidate, and media cross-ownership. In 2000, a federal appeals court ordered the FCC to abolish the personal attack and political editorial rules as well.

Compelled access and replies are, therefore, essentially dead in the United States (Barron 2003). Occasionally public interest groups unsuccessfully petition Congress for reinstatement of the fairness doctrine. Broadcasters and newspapers that publish replies and diverse views do so for good business or other reasons, including state laws that often limit defamation damages if a publisher or broadcaster has published a retraction.

Although Canada's free expression law differs from that of the United States in several respects, Canada, like the United States, provides neither reply nor broad media access rights and protects expression only against government violations (Barendt 2005). In contrast, the → American Convention on Human Rights provides a strong right of reply without limitation of other legal remedies, but neither the United States nor Canada is among the more than 20 countries of the Americas that have ratified the convention.

## ACCESS TO MEDIA IN EUROPE AND ELSEWHERE

European countries and the European Union do not as a rule recognize broad, judicially enforced access-to-media rights, but *European law* generally shows a greater concern for social and media pluralism than American law does (Paraschos 1998). Public broadcasters tend to face stricter regulation and scrutiny in terms of fairness, quality, and breadth of news coverage than do private broadcasters or newspapers. Most European countries have not adopted constitutional rights of access (by individuals or groups) to any media, though rights of reply, subject to various details, in the print and broadcast media are more common (Schmidt 1976; Coliver 1993; Paraschos 1998). A refusal of a newspaper to publish a reply may, for example, allow one to seek a judicial review and remedies, including fines, publication of the reply, or a right to file a defamation action. The European Union has acknowledged through Chapter VI, Article 23, of EU Directive 89/552/EEC of 3 October 1989 that "any natural or legal person, regardless of nationality, whose legitimate interests, in particular reputation and good name, have been damaged



by an assertion of incorrect facts in a television programme must have a right of reply or equivalent remedies” (→ European Union: Communication Law).

*The UK* has historically maintained a traditional or negative rights approach to this question by protecting expression against only governmental interference and not against the news media itself or other commercial interests, though it has also provided more informal rights of reply (Barendt 2005). The UK has tried, with limited success, various means (e.g., voluntary news councils) of encouraging publication of replies and alternative viewpoints – an approach also tried in the United States.

France, Germany, and other EU members have not generally enforced broad public rights of access to the news media or used judicial intervention to ensure fairness or impartiality in news coverage (Coliver 1993; Paraschos 1998). Many, however, recognize individual and societal interests in avoiding governmental or commercial media domination of programming schedules (Barendt 2005) and provide an assortment of remedies to people who believe they were covered unfairly.

*France* provides for both the right of an individual to respond to a publication in which he or she is identified and the right of a public official to reply when the newspaper has falsely reported about the official’s activity (Coliver 1993). Concerns for pluralism are strong in France and elsewhere in Europe. French courts have ruled that Parliament must balance individual expressive rights in broadcasting with other values, including pluralism (Barendt 2005). Italy and Germany, for example, recognize the rights of the public or recipients of information as well as the speakers, but do not emphasize pluralism in the same manner as France does.

In *Germany*, the Constitutional Court has ruled that because broadcasting freedom must serve free expression, broadcasters do not have complete freedom to determine program schedules and must take into account the interests of viewers. German constitutional rulings also require that government prevent domination of broadcasting scheduling and programs by commercial and state interests (Barendt 2005).

The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Liberties (ECHR) may prove to be a basis less for positivist access rights and more for general broadcast regulation and diversity (Barendt 2005). Individuals may bring to the → European Court of Human Rights claims that a European state violated rights under the ECHR, including Article 10, which protects essentially negative rights against governmental interference. Article 10 does not create access-to-media rights, but it focuses on broadcast licensing and allows free speech limitations only when “necessary in a democratic society.” The ECHR in 1994, in *Informationsverein Lentia vs Austria*, ruled that a state broadcast licensing system or public monopoly interfered with media pluralism and was allowed only if necessary to achieve quality programming. Because the electromagnetic spectrum was no longer a serious constraint, the Court ruled Austria could license private broadcasters and require quality programming of them. The Court did not apply Article 10 to create a positive right of access to the public monopoly, but did apply it to open new channels or diversity within the regulated environment (Barendt 2005).

Other countries, including western and nonwestern societies, present both similar and significantly different approaches to the access question. Analyses of access questions in those countries must begin with fundamental questions about local laws and approaches to freedom of the press and expression generally. Some reflect at least a degree of western

influence. *Japan*, for example, reflects not only its own heritage, but also the influence of the American occupation following World War II (Haiman 1987). Japan reflects a legal and journalistic approach that is less adversarial than that found in the United States or many European countries, but nonetheless Japan has allowed courts to require the publication or broadcast of corrections to remedy certain falsehoods that injured reputation (Haiman 1987). Nondemocratic or authoritarian regimes present additional problems in the analysis of access to media because the media in those countries are generally subject to stringent governmental control.

SEE ALSO: ▶ American Convention on Human Rights ▶ Cable Television ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Right to Know ▶ Right of Reply ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Accountability of the Media**

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The accountability of the media is a normative notion that underlies the balance of freedom and social responsibility across media structure, performance, and product. In order to grasp the concept, we need to understand how closely related the two competing values of freedom and responsibility are.

*Press freedom* has been constitutionally protected to guarantee a → free flow of information by which citizens are empowered and directly involved in public life (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). From the birth of the press its freedom has been strongly connected with social expectations for the media to protect the → public interest and to improve the quality of democracy. This is why James Carey points to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as “a compact description of a desirable political society” (Merritt & McCombs 2004, 13). In short, the most important rationale of press freedom lies in the belief in the positive role of the media to build desirable citizenship, community, and democracy.

In that regard, press freedom is not an absolute value or a natural right. Even in most advanced democracies, press freedom has been constrained for various reasons – when it is in conflict with other constitutional rights or in order to satisfy various public interest requirements. Settling conflicts between different constitutional rights is largely a legal matter, and limiting the freedom of the media so as to fulfill its social responsibilities involves many complicated issues. Fundamentally, it is a matter of balancing *freedom* and *responsibility*, and two measures have been used primarily for that purpose: *the market* and *the law*. Neither approach, however, has proven successful. The free market measures often fail to secure plurality in media ownership and diversity in media content, and many other public interest requirements have been sacrificed at the expense of pursuing business profits. On the other hand, legal regulations, such as → censorship and other repressive measures legislated to protect the public good, often infringe freedom itself.

Many alternatives to these two approaches have been suggested, the most important, arguably, being the concept of *social responsibility*. The theory of social responsibility emphasizes the importance of media freedom to scrutinize power and to provide accurate information (→ Fourth Estate); there are calls further for the media to serve as a public forum for the exchange of comments and criticisms and to fulfill its responsibility to represent culturally and politically diverse perspectives. The theory suggests that the media’s obligations to society be fulfilled primarily by self-regulation, i.e., by the voluntary efforts of media owners and practitioners (→ Ethics in Journalism; Professionalization of Journalism). Governmental intervention, however, is not ruled out; state regulation is justified when public interest is at stake and internal regulation is not sufficient. However, social responsibility theory was overly optimistic about the media’s willingness to meet its responsibilities and the efficacy of self-control. Although the theory contributed to the notion of media responsibility and to promoting a positive understanding of freedom as freedom *for*, not as freedom *from*, it was not successful in detailing exactly how to hold the free market media socially responsible. The concept of media accountability fills in such a lacuna.

Linguistically, *accountability* and *responsibility* are linked to the general notion of answerability: responsibility concerns more the question of *what* while accountability is related more to *how*. Otherwise stated, the key issue of responsibility is to define to what social needs the media should respond while that of accountability has to do with how to compel the media to respond to those needs (McQuail 2003). Media accountability, however, remains in a conceptual muddle. Among various competing definitions, the one provided by Dennis McQuail is particularly noteworthy. According to him, media accountability refers to both “voluntary and involuntary processes by which the media

answer directly or indirectly to their society for the quality and/or consequences of publication” (McQuail 2005, 207). Along this line, media accountability can be considered to involve two sub-dimensions: *liability* for any harm caused by publication and *answerability* for the quality of publication.

In short, media accountability is a much wider concept than self-regulation, denoting both the media’s legal obligation to prevent or reduce any negative consequences of its practices and its moral duty to provide quality service for the public. Accountability is also a process-oriented concept defining how the media answer, to whom, and for what. There exist diverse ways of achieving media accountability, which include legal and legislative regulation, and involve the market, the civil society (or the public), and the media profession itself (McQuail 2003). No single approach can be sufficient; various combinations are desirable. In the long run, the approaches that emphasize the role and responsibility of civil society and/or the media profession – approaches concerned more with quality control – should play a more central function. In this respect, it is worthy to mention the media accountability system (MAS) suggested by Bertrand (1997; 2005). MAS aims at improving the quality of the media primarily by evaluation, monitoring, education, and feedback. The idea of MAS emphasizes the roles of media owners, professionals, and members of the public in defining the media’s responsibilities and in dealing with the transgressions. MASs may take a variety of forms; they can include printed or broadcast documents (opinion boxes, letters-to-the-editor, online message boards, or forums for immediate feedback; codes of ethics; journalism reviews; regular media sections; etc.), involve individuals or groups (in-house critics, media reporters, press ombudsmen, citizens appointed to editorial boards, press councils, other pressure groups, etc.), and consist of various processes (education, journalist training, regular opinion surveys, non-commercial research, etc.). To sum up, media accountability represents an effort to establish the rules by which the media perform socially expected functions in a democracy while preserving freedom and extending it to more people and incorporating more diverse voices.

SEE ALSO: ► Accountability of the News ► Censorship ► Ethics in Journalism ► Fourth Estate ► Free Flow of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Public Interest

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# Accountability of the News

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The notion of media accountability concerns how to balance *freedom* and *social responsibility* in various aspects such as *media structure*, *performance*, and *products*. Accountability of the news is a notion concerning media products, especially *public affairs reporting* (→ News). News accountability may involve two different sub-dimensions: *liability* and *answerability* (McQuail 2005). The former mainly addresses the issues of how to prevent or reduce potential harm or danger caused by news content and focuses on imposing on the media material penalties based upon private or public laws. The latter notion, on the other hand, concerns how to control and improve the *quality of news* and emphasizes more noncoercive measures such as debate, negotiation, and dialogue between the news media and their claimants (→ Quality of the News). The notion of answerability is most concretely expressed in various *codes of ethics* or professional conduct that journalists or media industries have voluntarily accepted as their own professional or managerial guidelines (→ Ethics in Journalism; Professionalization of Journalism). The answerability approach further underscores the role of news critics and those people affected by the news, beyond that of media owners and practitioners.

In sum, news accountability is a normative notion which explores how to balance freedom and quality content serving → public interests, and it can best be reached by combining external (or imposed) and internal (or voluntary) regulations. The law and codes of ethics deal with essentially the same issues and they mainly include: truthfulness, honesty, and accuracy of information; correction of errors; prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race/ethnicity/religion; respect for privacy; prohibition of accepting bribes or any other benefits; fair means in information collection; prohibition of any outsider influences on the journalistic work; prohibition of discrimination on the bases of sex/social class; freedom of expression of any kind; and professional secrecy (Sonnenberg 1997). And these issues can be condensed into a few more fundamental normative expectations for the news: *freedom* and *independence*, *equality* and *diversity*, and *truthfulness*. These can also be regarded as the most essential qualities required for the news to be socially accountable (→ Standards of News; see Kovach & Rosenstiel 2001; McQuail 2005).

Throughout its history, the pursuit of *freedom* has been the most respected value guiding media practice. Among a wide variety of ways of interpreting press freedom, the concept of accountability is close to a positive notion of liberty which emphasizes “freedom for” rather than “freedom from” (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; see McQuail 2003). This perspective does not acknowledge the absolute value of press freedom. Press freedom is rather a form of moral duty and is relative to ends. Press freedom essentially means the state of being independent from external pressures such as governmental, financial, or organizational forces. It can, hence, be a good indicator of press freedom whether the news reports relevant and significant matters even if no immediate profits or political advantages are expected. Such editorial independence can

best be achieved with the support of the public, whose members are the audiences, consumers, and voters. In short, serving more people with quality content can be the best way for the news media to secure their freedom.

*Equality* is another important normative quality expected of the news. The norm of equality is a principle underscoring news service for more voices and opinions based upon the rule of *fair access* in time, space, and priority (→ Fairness Doctrine). Equality, therefore, is closely relevant to such normative criteria as *diversity* and objectivity (McQuail 2005). Diversity in the news primarily refers to the degree to which the content truly and exhaustively reflects a range of perspectives on a given issue or a range of informational and cultural needs in a society. Objectivity, often equated with neutrality, has been a dominant norm of western journalism (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Neutrality assumes no partisan orientation, but news may advocate a particular side if such advocacy is based upon factuality, accuracy, relevance, and completeness. In this regard, the notion of due impartiality – the idea which supports subjective judgment and advocacy for certain values such as freedom, human rights, justice, and democracy – can be deemed a more proper acting guideline to accomplish objective reporting.

Meanwhile, the *disinterested pursuit of truth* has been noted as the first obligation of journalism (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2001). The principle of truthfulness should not be equated with mere → accuracy. Through relevant and complete accounts of the day's intelligence, in addition to accurate and factual reporting, a truthful reflection of reality can be reached. Of course, news is not a mere mirror of reality; it provides a socially constructed version of reality and, in so doing, influences the public's perception of reality. Because of the power of news in defining reality, the truthfulness criterion cannot ever be overlooked. As in social sciences, the pursuit of the truth should be a never-ending “sorting-out process that develops between the initial story and the interaction among the public, newsmakers, and journalists over time” (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2001, 42).

In conclusion, what is of major importance regarding news accountability is to control and improve the quality of news based upon the criteria discussed so far. Such quality news can bring the public various benefits: it can perform a systematic scrutiny of power; it can stimulate a participant democracy; and it can function as a → *public sphere* where different ideas, beliefs, and views are discussed and, as a result, public opinion can be formulated. There might be various forms and means to accomplish news accountability, such as regular ombudsman programs, in-house critics, news watchdog groups, press councils, and journalist education as well as codes of ethics, legal regulations, and fair competition in the market. Among others, the role of the members of the public is most important to hold the news accountable to various expectations in a participant democracy.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ News ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Standards of News

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## Accounting Research

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Research on verbal accounting examines how language is used to retrospectively explain or make sense of events. Citing one's motive or describing the context may serve to portray events in a different way – as understandable, excusable, or less culpable. An accounting can range from a lengthy discourse (a narrative or courtroom cross-examination) to a single word or nonverbal substitute, e.g., a shoulder shrug. In routine circumstances accounts are not necessary; persons, actions, and events speak for themselves. The need for accounts typically arises when something problematic or out of the ordinary occurs. Another's question, challenge, or blame makes an account relevant from the actor (Goffman 1971).

A distinction may be drawn between “accounts *for* actions” and “accounts *of* actions.” Accounts *for* actions arise in response to some troubles or blame; accounts attempt to remediate (→ Apologies and Remedial Episodes) the incident or one's responsibility for it (Scott & Lyman 1968). *Excuses* are a paradigmatic kind of account. Accounts may serve as a reason for why one did what one did. Accounts *of* action involve a person's sense-making for events such as relationships, personal crises, or life-course changes. A story-like account or narrative would be the paradigmatic form. Narratives can account by conveying a temporal sequence of events, the cast of characters, and the actor's part in portraying events in a particular way (→ Storytelling and Narration). This approach captures our need to interpret our lives, particularly in times of stress or trauma (Orbuch 1997).

Given that an accounting is offered to other(s), the *recipient* may honor the account or not. An account may not be addressed at all by the recipient; it may be considered incontestable. Alternatively the recipient may question the account, thereby prompting further accounts (→ Questions and Questioning). The larger the problematic event, the more likely the actor's accounts will be questioned. Accounts are typically partial and selective, so it is difficult to tell the whole story in the initial accounting. Persons may be probed by recipients so that accounts get incrementally unpacked and expanded. Accountings are collaboratively achieved among interlocutors. Persons may alter their account as it is retold to different recipients (Manusov 1996).

The uses and evaluations of accounts have been studied in everyday communication as well as in a variety of specialized or institutional settings, e.g., in the courtroom, therapy sessions, medical examinations, and business negotiations. Accounts have been studied

from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives, most notably from the *language and social psychology approach* (Cody & McLaughlin 1990) and from the *language and social interaction tradition* (Buttny & Morris 2001). The former collection of approaches typically examines the efficacy of different types of accounts in remediating a breach. The latter tradition looks at accounts as texts or as exhibited within a transcript and examines the various interactional moves and collaborations in co-constructing the social reality of events.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Apologies and Remedial Episodes ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Questions and Questioning ▶ Storytelling and Narration

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# **Acculturation Processes and Communication**

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Millions of people cross cultural boundaries each year (→ Migration and Immigration). Immigrants and refugees seek a new life away from their familiar grounds, along with various groups of temporary sojourners – from employees of multinational corporations, missionaries, diplomats, and military personnel, to professors, researchers, high school and college students, musicians and artists, and doctors and nurses. Although individual circumstances may differ widely, all strangers in a new environment embark on the common project of *acculturation*.

### **APPROACHES AND RELATED CONCEPTS**

Research on acculturation has been extensive across social science disciplines. The term was first adopted in the 1930s by the Social Science Research Council to represent the new



inquiry in cultural anthropology. The Council provided the parameters for this new field of inquiry, which dealt with “those phenomena which result when groups of individuals have different cultures and come into first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original pattern of either or both groups” (Redfield et al. 1936, 149).

Early anthropologists such as Herskovits (1958) observed the dynamics of change in traditional cultures and the presence of kin, friends, and social organizations within immigrant communities. Sociologists such as Glazer and Moynihan (1963) have addressed issues pertaining to the processes in which minority groups are integrated into the political, economic, and social structures of the society. More recently, researchers in social and cross-cultural psychology and intercultural communication have investigated acculturation at the individual level, dealing primarily with intrapersonal and interpersonal issues. Szalay and Inn (1988), for instance, examined how thought patterns of immigrants changed over time, while Gudykunst (2005) focused on the two ubiquitous psychological experiences of uncertainty and anxiety (→ Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory). Other individual-level studies have researched acculturation of native-born domestic ethnic minorities, such as Native Americans (Kim et al. 1998), who face acculturative pressures from the mainstream culture.

From the perspective of the individual, *acculturation* refers to the learning, practicing, and internalizing of the symbols and behaviors prevalent in the new cultural environment. Acculturation often accompanies *deculturation*, that is, unlearning or replacement of some of the symbols and habitual practices of the original culture, at least in the sense that new responses are adopted in situations that previously would have evoked old ones. The interplay of acculturation and deculturation experiences facilitates *adaptation*, that is, the process of internal change in the individual so as to achieve a relatively stable, reciprocal, and functional relationship with a given environment. As some of the old cultural habits are replaced by new ones, individuals acquire increasing proficiency in self-expression and the fulfillment of their various social needs.

Changes occur more readily in superficial areas such as overt role behavior than in areas involving deeply held beliefs and values. Given sufficient time, even those who interact with natives with the intention of confining themselves to only superficial relationships are likely to be at least minimally adapted to the host culture “in spite of themselves” (Taft 1977, 150). The theoretical directionality of adaptive change is toward *assimilation*, a state of psychological, social, and cultural convergence to those of the natives. Although full assimilation is a lifetime goal even for long-term immigrants, the long-term trend of cultural convergence has been amply documented in numerous studies of immigrants and subsequent generations.

The cumulative-progressive trajectory, however, has been challenged by some investigators since the 1970s following the movements of civil rights, ethnic power, and ethnic identity. Berry’s (1980) model, for example, reflects such a pluralistic concern. It is built on two basic conscious or unconscious identity choices each individual can make: “Are [ethnic] cultural identity and customs of value to be retained?” and “Are positive relations with the larger society of value and to be sought?” The response types (yes, no) to these two questions are combined to produce four acculturation outcomes: *integration* (yes, yes), *assimilation* (no, yes), *separation* (yes, no), and *marginality* (no, no). Berry’s model emphasizes multiple psychological choices individuals can make and the

corresponding identity outcomes with respect to their original culture and the host society. As such, the model offers an alternative approach to the traditional conception of acculturation as the unitary process of new cultural learning and acquisition.

### THE COMMUNICATION FACTORS

Communication is the carrier of all social processes and the essential means for organizing, stabilizing, and modifying human life. It is through communication that individuals learn to interact easily with others in a given cultural community. Documenting and incorporating an extensive body of research evidence, Kim (2001) offers an interactive model in which the following communication factors link an individual to a new cultural environment.

*Host communication competence* is defined as the totality of an individual's capabilities pertaining to communicative engagement with the host environment in accordance with the verbal and nonverbal codes, norms, and practices of the host culture. This concept includes linguistic and cultural knowledge as well as the affective-motivational aptitude to appreciate and participate in the emotional and aesthetic sensibilities of the natives including the experiences of joy, humor, and beauty, as well as anger and despair. Host communication competence directly influences, and is influenced by, participation in *host social communication* activities. The primary mode of social communication is *host interpersonal communication* in face-to-face encounters with local people. Active participation in such direct contacts facilitates the development of host communication competence and supportive personal relationships. Newcomers also participate in the host social processes via a wide range of public and mediated forms of *host mass communication*, from radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and movie, to art, music, and drama. By engaging in such public communication activities, strangers are able to expand the scope of their acculturation experiences beyond the immediate social context with which they come into daily contact.

Communication activities of newcomers often involve their co-ethnics or co-nationals, as well. Whether we speak of American military posts in the former West Germany, or African immigrants in Spain, ethnic communities provide newcomers with access to *ethnic interpersonal communication* activities. Many immigrant communities have organized some form of mutual-aid or self-help organizations (→ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication). Such organizations render assistance to those who need material, informational, emotional, and other forms of social support. In addition, immigrants in many communities enjoy *ethnic mass communication* activities such as watching satellite television programs or recorded movies and music tapes, and reading ethnic newspapers that are available locally or accessible via the Internet and other technological means (→ Ethnic Media and their Influence). Initially, participation in ethnic social communication may provide important support functions for newcomers. Prolonged and exclusive reliance on *ethnic social communication*, however, tends to discourage and impede acculturation in the host environment at large. Suro (1998) attributed Hispanic immigrants' relatively slower pace of socio-economic advancement in the United States (compared to Asian and European immigrants) to the ease with which they visit and maintain ties with their home countries.

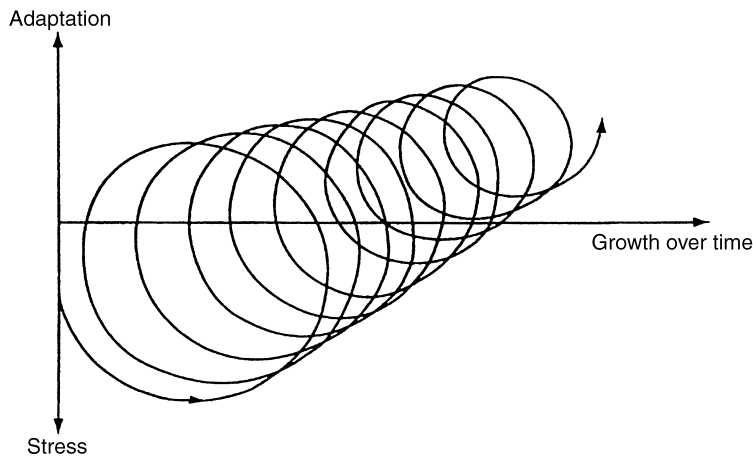


Figure 1 The stress–adaptation–growth dynamic (Kim 2001, 59)

### COMMUNICATION, STRESS, AND TRANSFORMATION

The experiences of host social communication necessarily entail *stress*. In studies of short-term sojourners, terms such as *culture shock* and *transition shock* capture stress reactions including irritability, insomnia, insecurity, and loneliness, as well as defensive reactions such as denial, avoidance, and withdrawal. Relatedly, the process of sojourner adjustment over time has been depicted in the *U-curve hypothesis*. This model explains that people typically begin a cross-cultural sojourn with optimism and elation, followed by the subsequent “trough” depicting a stage of hostility and emotional difficulty, a recovery stage characterized by increased language knowledge and cultural learning, and a final stage in which anxiety is largely gone and new customs are accepted and enjoyed. The U-curve hypothesis has been extended to the *W-curve* by adding the experiences of *re-entry shock* and readjustment upon returning home (Ward et al. 2001).

Stress is also central to Kim’s (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation. In this theory, the adaptation process is explained as an unfolding of the *stress–adaptation–growth dynamic*. As shown in Figure 1, the stress–adaptation–growth dynamic plays out not in a smooth, arrow-like linear progression, but in a cyclic and continual “draw-back-to-leap” movement. As a newcomer strives to meet the challenges of the host environment, some aspects of the host culture are incorporated into his or her *host communication competence*. A “crisis,” once managed, presents an opportunity for new learning and self-renewal. To the extent that stress is responsible for frustration and anxiety, it is also credited as a necessary impetus for new learning and growth. Kim further explains that, as the fluctuations of stress and adaptation diminish over time, a calming of the overall life experiences takes hold and a largely monocultural identity begins to shift toward an increasingly “intercultural” identity.

With the advent of electronic communication and globalization, one no longer has to leave home to experience acculturation. Through direct contacts as well as via mass media and other technological means of communication, people around the world are increasingly exposed to the images and sounds of once-distant cultures. In many urban

centers, local people are routinely coming into contacts with foreign-born individuals. This rapidly developing phenomenon of crossing cultures at home promises a new chapter in the continuing evolution of acculturation theory and research.

SEE ALSO: ► Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ► Ethnic Media and their Influence ► Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ► Migration and Immigration

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## **Accuracy**

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Journalists operate under an ethic that includes a respect for truth as demonstrated by the accuracy of the information delivered to the public (Sartori 1987). On the basis of that accuracy, it is assumed, public opinion is formed in a democracy. Accuracy is closely related to the journalistic norms of fairness and objectivity and to the credibility of producers of news (→ Fairness Doctrine; Objectivity in Reporting; Journalists, Credibility of). The “mirror” metaphor for the journalistic norm of the accurate reflection of facts may be popular among journalists, but every mirror reflects some distortion (Romano 1986; Ettema and Glasser 1998). In news production, deadlines and time constraints can distort accuracy (→ Reality and Media Reality).

Schudson (1978) provides a history of how American journalism came to rely on news based on facts and accurate information in the era of the → penny press. Competition among rival newspapers allowed the public to compare news accounts for accuracy in reporting. The competition for a broad audience through advertisers moved American newspapers away from a party press format, in which opinion is supreme, with the dependence of multiple newspapers on wire services also promoting news based on facts and not opinion (→ Partisan Press; News Agencies). By the end of the nineteenth century, editors were very much focused on the who, what, where, when, and how and were concerned with avoiding libel (→ Libel and Slander) and criticism from rival newspapers. Bennett (1988) explains that the emphasis on commodified news provided a better mass market product. Schudson quotes Theodore Dreiser from the 1890s when he walked in to the city room of the *New York World* and saw cards on the walls declaring “Accuracy! Accuracy! Accuracy! Who? What? Where? When? How? Facts?”

Accuracy is achieved through professional newsmaking processes such as fact-checking and the use of multiple sources, and basing news stories on what journalists observe or can document through credible sources, without embellishing or misleading. It is closely related to fairness, and to → balance. The omission of pertinent facts, or the misrepresentation of facts, is an unforgivable violation of the journalistic ethic, and journalists can lose their jobs over such transgressions.

In Leo Bogart’s (1979) survey, more than 700 editors of US newspapers, when asked to define the attributes of quality journalism, placed accuracy at the top of their list. Leading publications have taken steps to preserve that value. The *New York Times* created two new positions in 2003, a public editor to maintain high standards of accuracy and fairness and a standards editor to oversee training programs in accuracy and to develop programs to effectively track accuracy. The current Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the Radio-Television News Directors Association states that journalists should present the news accurately, and the American Society of Newspaper Editors Statement of Principles includes an article on truth and accuracy (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

Fact-checking is a tool used in newsrooms to catch inaccuracies before they make it into news reports. Students at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University learn the lesson of no tolerance for errors when they receive a grade *F* for any news assignment with even a single inaccuracy. Journalists must check concrete facts such as distance, addresses, phone numbers, people’s titles. Organizations such as Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting, Accuracy in Media, and USC’s Factcheck.org are public watchdogs that focus on the accuracy and objectivity of news reports.

Online news media give rise to greater concern about accuracy in news reports because information can be disseminated before it is checked (Anderson and Arant 2001; Puttnam 2003). There is also a whole set of new problems surrounding corrections to online errors because so much is archived without being updated. The question for online news and the 24-hour news channels is which new value should take precedence, being first or being accurate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Libel

and Slander ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Penny Press ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Right of Correction

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## **Action Assembly Theory**

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Action assembly theory (AAT) seeks to explain message behavior (both verbal and nonverbal) by describing the system of mental structures and processes that give rise to those behaviors (→ Message Production). As such, AAT is a member of the broader class of cognitive theories of message production. AAT, in turn, is itself an umbrella category for any of a variety of actual and potential specific theories that share certain central features, most prominently the notion that actions are created by integrating (or assembling) elemental features represented in → memory in code systems reflecting multiple levels of abstraction. Two distinct exemplars of this class are found in Greene (1984, 1997).

The initial impetus for the development of AAT was a set of fundamental observations concerning the nature of behavior and behavioral production – among them the observation that behavior is simultaneously patterned and creative. The approach of AAT is to ascribe the patterned character of verbal and nonverbal messages to action features represented in long-term memory. The creative character of behavior, then, comes from the integration of such features to form *unique collocations* – thoughts and actions that the individual may never have thought, heard, seen, or said before.

In the language of AAT, “action features,” the fundamental building blocks of thought and overt action, are stored in memory in units called “procedural records.” The theory

then specifies two processes involved in making use of action features to produce messages: “activation” (the process by which features relevant to one’s goals and ongoing activities are selected), and “assembly” (the process of integrating activated features). The result of assembly is the “output representation” – a constantly evolving representation of one’s thoughts and overt verbal and nonverbal behaviors.

“Second generation AAT” (Greene 1997) extends this framework and incorporates some additional constructs. In this theory, the nature of the assembly process is depicted as one of *coalition formation*. Consciousness, or the phenomenal awareness of thoughts and action specifications, is held to be a function of the level and duration of activation of a coalition of action features. Consciousness is ascribed a functional role in bringing executive processes such as planning, editing, and rehearsal into play.

AAT, then, views behavior as a constellation of coalitions of action features, in which those coalitions are only loosely related (if at all), and only some coalitions come to be manifested as overt action. The time scale on which these coalitions emerge and decay is quite brief (i.e., typically less than a second). As a consequence of the nature of the activation and assembly processes, behavior is less cohesive than we might typically assume. Thoughts may not “come out” as we intend; behaviors may reveal more than social actors themselves apprehend; inconsistencies may emerge between behavioral “channels” (Greene 2000, 2006).

Other features of the theory also merit mention. Among these, in contrast to common-sense notions that message production reflects a top-down, ideation-to-behavior ordering, AAT posits that lower-level action specifications can drive higher-order mentation. As a further example, second-generation AAT invokes no conception of a limited pool of processing resources to account for familiar multiple-task limitations on performance.

Because difficulties in assembly are held to be reflected in the time required to formulate and execute messages, a number of studies conducted within the AAT framework have examined speech fluency and various temporal characteristics of speech (see Greene 1995). These studies have included investigations into the impact of attempting to design messages that address multiple goals, and the effects of advance message planning on speech fluency. Another program of research has examined the impact of practice, or skill acquisition, on the speed of message production (see Greene 2003). AAT has also been applied in studies of the nature of the self, → communication apprehension, and the behavioral correlates of deception (→ Deceptive Message Production). Ongoing work is devoted to exploring “creative facility” – individual differences in the ability to formulate novel, socially appropriate messages.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Memory ▶ Message Editing ▶ Message Production ▶ Scripts

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## Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis

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Action-implicative discourse analysis (AIDA) is an approach to analyzing talk or text in a social context. It is a relatively new method of → discourse analysis, developed by Karen Tracy in 1995. AIDA views communication as composed of different practices in which communicators are problem-solvers. People reflect on what they did do (or would do) in interaction and respond to interactional problems and challenges they experience (or anticipate experiencing) with the aim of working toward what they think would create the best situation. AIDA is conducted in close relationship to grounded practical theory (Craig & Tracy 1995), a view of inquiry that contrasts with scientific perspectives that seek to describe, predict, and control “what is” in the world. AIDA, as well as practical theory more generally, is concerned with providing opportunities to discuss what “ought to be.”

AIDA's primary focus has been on analyzing communication practices in institutional settings. AIDA works by reconstructing the complex of participants' problems and their situated ideals regarding the practice in question through close examination of conversational moves and strategies. Practice can refer to specific communication actions that are cut across situations, such as “intellectual discussion” (Tracy 1997a) or “negotiation” (Agne & Tracy 2001). It can also refer to activities identified by specific participants in specific situations, such as school board meetings (Tracy & Muller 2001), or citizens' telephone calls to the police (Tracy 1997b).

Reconstruction involves three related *analytic tasks*. A first is to describe the problem communicators face within a particular practice. A second is to describe conversational practices that reveal both problems and techniques that participants use to manage them. Finally, reconstruction is about what participants see as the ideal way of responding when confronted with problems. AIDA is a normative approach. Drawing on Aristotle's idea



of phronesis – good judgment, wisdom, thoughtful deliberation, and reasonableness – AIDA seeks to cultivate normative practices by developing new ideas and raising thought-provoking questions. As its name indicates, AIDA is a method in which analysis is intimately connected to the actions that pertain to the practice in question; analysis should have implications for good, moral, or reasonable action. AIDA does not just describe the communicative world. It has implications for what people should be doing to create a more civil society.

*Analysis using AIDA* is an inductive process, focusing on recorded interaction, usually from an institutional setting. An argument is arrived at by transcribing the interaction in detail, attending to conversational particulars such as pauses, intonation, stress, volume, overlap, and, as some research has included, visual behaviors (e.g., Mirivel in press). Analytical points about participants' implicit interactional achievements emerge from an iterative process of forming hunches about what is going on in the interaction, referencing relevant scholarly literature, and finding specific evidence in the transcript. Analytical points are refined as they become more specific claims. Claims are then organized to form a central claim in the report with sub-claims that are supported with evidence in the transcript.

Given AIDA's focus on problematic communication, episodes amenable for analysis are those in which communicators are seen to be pursuing multiple goals or when those goals are in competition. AIDA is rhetorically influenced in that communicators are seen as purposefully and strategically managing those goals, making arguments for desired identities, relationships, and situated ideals. Doing analysis also requires learning about the social context and/or culture in which the transcribed episodes take place. For analysts to make proposals about problems and ideal situations, they must understand the social environment.

An *example* of a study using AIDA is Agne and Tracy's (2001) analysis of the Waco standoff negotiations between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the US and a religious group, the Branch Davidians, in 1993. FBI reports frequently referred to Branch Davidian leader David Koresh's talk as "bible babble." Agne and Tracy argue that using this dismissive label to describe the difficulty the FBI had in dealing with Koresh contributed to the FBI's failure in convincing him and the Davidians to surrender. One strategy demonstrating the problem with this label was that Koresh effectively positioned himself as an expert on the Bible and religious matters and the FBI negotiator as a novice. This and the FBI's lack of challenging the reasonableness of Koresh's religious claims helped legitimate God as a key player in the standoff and Koresh as God's rightful spokesperson.

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Discourse Analysis ► Discursive Psychology  
 ► Ethnography of Communication ► Interaction ► Interactional Sociolinguistics  
 ► Language and Social Interaction ► Qualitative Methodology

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## Activist Media

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Activist media are radio, television, and other media practices that aim to effect social change and that generally engage in some sort of structural analysis concerned with power and the reconstitution of society into more egalitarian arrangements. Many activist media practices are also committed to principles of communication democracy, which place at their core notions of popular access, participation, and self-management in the communication process. These dual characteristics – structural analysis and democratic communication practice – often create a tension that some activist media projects are unable to negotiate successfully (→ Development Communication; Media Democracy Movement).

The topic of activist media is closely related to development communication inasmuch as they both focus on the uses of communication for *social change* (→ Social Movements and Communication). But the traditional twin concerns of structural analysis and communication democracy distinguish these two fields of study. Studies of activist media emerged in response to transnational, capitalist communication with the goal of countering class, gender, ethnic, and other forms of domination, placing it within the tradition of critical scholarship (→ Critical Theory). At the same time, activist media have established a commitment to democratic communication principles, forging relationships with underrepresented groups and social movements (→ Participatory Communication).

Perhaps the earliest example of activist media practice can be traced to the *Bolivian tin miners' unions* and their establishment of radio stations beginning in 1947 (→ Bolivia:

Media System). This practice reached its peak in the late 1960s with about 30 stations that augmented the union struggle against a private oligarchy, then later a state monopoly, and finally brutal military dictatorships. Dozens if not hundreds of activist media exemplars have followed the path blazed by the tin miners' radio stations, including two well-documented cases: the people's reporters of Nicaragua and Video SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) of India (→ Community Media; Community Video). Following the 1980 revolution, the ruling Sandinista party gave journalistic training to workers and *campesinos* (peasant farmers) and provided preferential access to a network of radio stations to discuss issues, problems, and solutions to problems facing poor people. Likewise, Video SEWA directly involved poor women – mostly vendors – in the production of videos that not only focused on their everyday struggles, but also shared information with the association's 30,000 members.

Scholarship of these sorts of media practices received a great deal of theoretical attention, starting in the 1970s, especially in Latin America. The rise of authoritarian regimes in the 1970s and 1980s in Latin America resulted in the exile of numerous intellectuals, who began forming important research centers such as the Latin American Institute for Transnational Studies (ILET) and the Center for the Study of the National Environment (CEREN). These attracted the attention of notable scholars including Armand and Michele Mattelart, Fernando Reyes Matta, and Herbert Schiller, among others. Bolstered by → UNESCO's calls for a New World Information and Communication Order (→ New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]), these scholars argued that communication democracy was the key to achieving wider reforms in politics, economics, culture, and society. The central task that animated this research was how to create a communication *praxis* (a neo-Marxist term meaning theoretically informed practices) that was simultaneously democratic and participatory in structure, while oriented toward radical social change in outcome.

In accounting for the wide variety of specific, activist media practices that emerged around the world, scholars began to use the dichotomy of process versus product to make sense of apparent contradictions in different projects. Media projects with a process focus tended to emphasize grassroots participation, access to technology, and personal empowerment (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment). Activists taking this approach paid scant attention to the quality of the audiovisual products, size of audience, or impact on external readers, listeners, or viewers. In contrast, activist media producers with a product orientation were willing to sacrifice significant grass-roots participation in order to achieve objectives of producing high-quality and persuasive audiovisual programs capable of attracting a mass audience. Observers of this process/product dichotomy have called for research and practices that can reconcile the difference by consolidating isolated micro-projects and linking them with broader social movements (→ Development Communication: Latin America).

Despite a return to democracy in Latin America and an apparent rise in civic movements around the world, interest in activist media has not declined in recent years. Indeed, the early stimulus to resist transnational, capitalist communication domination is more relevant than ever with increased media conglomeration occurring worldwide. A robust, recent example of the activist media movement is the establishment of *Indymedia* centers: highly democratic, digital news operations that emerged in opposition to the

1999 meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle. The centers practice → “open source publishing” wherein the members of the Indymedia movement act as journalists using print, video, audio, and photography to document events from the perspective of activists in a wide array of social justice movements. Since its emergence, Indymedia has mushroomed to include over 110 centers in 35 countries around the world. Studies of these centers demonstrate that they often emerge out of specific social movements (e.g., feminist, environmental, gay rights), but tend to continue as protests against the tendency toward neo-liberal globalization policies imposed by transnational regulatory bodies.

A persistent challenge for activist media regards the assessment of their *outcomes*. Many of the objectives of both process- and product-oriented projects, such as empowerment and social transformation, are difficult to measure and evaluate. Furthermore, activist media projects are typically low-budget operations of limited reach or short duration. Nevertheless, scholars have documented numerous instances of such projects with seemingly profound impacts on participants and have argued that in the long term, activist media do play a role in significant social changes.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Bolivia: Media System ► Communication Strategies for Empowerment ► Community Media ► Community Video ► Critical Theory ► Development Communication ► Development Communication: Latin America ► Media Democracy Movement ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► Open Source ► Participatory Communication ► Social Movements and Communication ► UNESCO

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# Addiction and Exposure

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For many people the concept of addiction involves the ingestion of a drug. However, there is now a growing movement that views a number of behaviors as potentially addictive, including some that do not involve the ingestion of a drug, such as gambling, sex, and exercise (Orford 2001; Griffiths 2005). Increasing research into behavioral addictions has also concentrated on a particular sub-group that has been termed “technological addictions.” Technological addictions are nonchemical (behavioral) addictions that involve excessive human–machine interaction. They can either be passive (e.g., watching television) or active (e.g., playing video games), and usually contain inducing and reinforcing features, which may contribute to the promotion of addictive tendencies. Possible activities that could be included under this category are such activities as television addiction, computer addiction (e.g., hacking, programming), video game addiction, mobile phone addiction, and Internet addiction (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

Addiction is a complex *biopsychosocial process* and always results from an interaction and interplay between many factors, including the person’s biological and/or genetic predisposition, their psychological constitution (e.g., personality factors, unconscious motivations, attitudes, expectations and beliefs, etc.), their social environment and exposure (i.e., situational characteristics), and the nature of the activity itself (i.e., structural characteristics; Shaffer et al. 2004; Griffiths 2005). These many factors highlight the interconnected processes and integration between individual differences (i.e., personal vulnerability factors), situational characteristics, structural characteristics, and the resulting addictive behavior. However, there is little evidence that increased exposure alone to potentially addictive activities necessarily leads to higher rates of addiction, although increased access and opportunity to engage in the behaviors does usually lead to more people participating in that behavior. This is commonly referred to as the availability hypothesis (Griffiths 2003).

At a very simplistic level, addictions boil down to constant reinforcement (i.e., rewards). A person cannot become addicted to something unless they are constantly rewarded for the behavior they are engaged in. Many activities involving technological interaction are potentially addictive although the number of people who are truly addicted is small in number (Griffiths & Davies 2005; Widyanto & Griffiths 2006). Many addictions come about by the *partial reinforcement effect* (PRE). This is a critical psychological ingredient of addiction, whereby the reinforcement is intermittent, i.e., people keep responding in the absence of reinforcement, hoping that another reward is just around the corner. For instance, knowledge about the PRE gives a → video game designer an edge in designing appealing games. Magnitude of reinforcement is also important. Large rewards lead to fast responding and greater resistance to extinction – in short, to more addiction. Instant reinforcement is also satisfying. Online gaming involves multiple reinforcements in that different features might be differently rewarding to different people. In video games more generally, the rewards might be intrinsic (e.g., improving your highest score, beating your friend’s high score, getting your name on the “hall of fame,” mastering the machine) or extrinsic (e.g., peer admiration).

In these cases, the interactive technologies may provide an alternative reality to the user and allow them feelings of immersion and anonymity that may lead to an altered state of consciousness (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception; Interactivity, Concept of). This in itself may be highly psychologically and/or physiologically rewarding. For a small minority of people this will lead to addiction, where the preferred activity is the single most important thing in that person's life and for which they compromise and neglect everything else in their life.

It has been argued that the only way of determining whether behavioral addictions (such as video game, mobile phone, and Internet addictions) are addictive in a non-metaphorical sense is to compare them against clinical criteria for other established drug-ingested addictions (Griffiths 2005). However, most people researching in the field of technological addiction have failed to do this, which has perpetuated the skepticism shown in many quarters of the addiction research community. The main problems with the *addiction criteria* suggested by most researchers in the field is that the measures used (1) have no measure of severity, (2) have no temporal dimension, (3) have a tendency to overestimate the prevalence of problems, and (4) take no account of the context of how the technology is used. There are also concerns about the sampling methods used. As a consequence, none of the surveys to date conclusively shows that technological addictions exist or are problematic to anyone but a small minority.

At best, they indicate that technological addictions may be prevalent in a significant minority of individuals but that more research using validated → survey instruments and other techniques (e.g., in-depth → qualitative interviews) are required. Case studies of excessive players and users may provide better evidence of whether technological addictions exist by the fact that the data collected are much more detailed. There are → case study accounts in the literature that appear to show that excessive video game players and Internet users display many signs of addiction (e.g., Young 1996). These case studies tend to show that the activity is used to counteract other deficiencies and underlying problems in the person's life (e.g., relationships, lack of friends, physical appearance, disability, coping, etc.).

As with all addictions, there is a potential for long-term damage but the good news is that very few people appear to have developed such problems in relation to increased access to technology. Healthy enthusiasms add to life; addictions take away from them. The vast majority of excessive users of interactive technologies claim their activity has positive effects for them. Many people use interactive technologies excessively without their having any negative impact on their lives at all.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Case Studies ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Survey ▶ Video Games

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## Advertisement Campaign Management

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The key to unified and successful advertising campaigns is solid management. Each advertising campaign contains visible as well as unseen aspects. To the average consumer, a campaign is a series of advertising messages that look or sound alike. To the practitioner, a campaign embodies a wide range of activities that may include brainstorming, consumer → surveys, or media analysis. What distinguishes one campaign from another is the degree to which each aspect is connected and whether or not the effort achieves measurable objectives. A campaign may start out as cohesive but at the end the messages may lose focus due to lack of careful planning and strategic execution (→ Advertising Strategies).

In many situations the advertiser relies heavily on advertising to promote her product (→ Advertising as Persuasion). However, in some cases, she will broaden her campaign to include other types of marketing communication such as direct marketing, publicity, and sales promotion (→ Marketing: Communication Tools). This entry focuses exclusively on advertising.

As a communication tool, → advertising must consider the type of product and internal as well as external factors affecting the sponsor's relationships with its publics. Managing the advertising campaign involves *several processes*, although various firms and agencies may call them by different names. These processes are: (1) conducting a situation analysis, (2) identifying problems and opportunities, (3) establishing short-term and long term-objectives, (4) determining the advertising appropriation and budgeting, (5) developing a creative strategy, (6) selecting appropriate media to convey messages to the intended audience(s), and (7) outlining a plan to measure the campaign outcome.

### CONDUCTING A SITUATION ANALYSIS

The first step in managing an advertising campaign is gathering data about the company, consumer, market, product, and competition. This background information is usually

referred to as “situation analysis.” The main purpose of the analysis is to provide a research foundation that can be used to establish objectives and specify strategies and tactics (→ Strategic Communication). The analysis should be organized, structured, and detailed. Information on the company’s mission, finances, resources, products/services, sales trends, market share, etc. usually comes from primary sources such as company staff and secondary sources such as trade journals and syndicated data.

The *consumer analysis* involves five major areas: (1) consumers’ demographics and psychographics, (2) their wants and needs, (3) their use of the product/service, (4) their attitudes toward the product/service, and (5) their motivations to buy the product/service. Various techniques can be used to collect data on the consumer. Among these techniques are focus groups, depth interviews, projective tests, surveys, and the VALS system (→ Research Methods).

The McCann-Erickson agency calls the consumer analysis “pulse” – a deep immersion in the consumers’ lifestyle to gain insight into and understand how a → brand or new product can operate within their lives and to meticulously analyze issues that affect how brands are interpreted and categorized (→ Branding; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

The *market analysis* is an extension of the consumer analysis. However, many advertisers treat this section separately to organize additional sources of information that focus mainly on geographic data, and help media planners identify areas to allocate their media investment. Various resources can be used to analyze the market, for example, in the US the widely used resources are: Simmons Market Research Bureau, for information on product usage; Buying-Power Index, for predictions of sales potential; and Standard Rate and Data Service, for information about spot radio, spot television, and newspapers.

*Product analysis* assesses how the physical and psychological attributes of the product match up with consumers’ needs and wants. Since a major purpose in managing the campaign is to build or protect a brand’s personality, some advertisers focus their analysis more on the brand than on the product, especially when they look for new growth. They attempt to explore the existing associations of the brand, identify competitive perceptual territory, define the brand meanings that best capture what the brand gets credit for, articulate the corresponding personality traits, and reshape and reorder the work to come up with an integrated and coherent vision for the brand (→ Integrated Marketing Communication).

*Competitive analysis* identifies options that consumers consider in their purchasing decisions. The competition is both direct and indirect. One of the most important techniques used here is perceptual mapping. It examines where a company or brand fits into the consumer’s perception of the product category or brand (positioning). The map also helps define the brand’s image, which is influenced by functional aspects of the brand and psychological attributes associated with the brand’s heritage.

## **IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES AND ESTABLISHING ADVERTISING OBJECTIVES**

Getting useful baseline information is only half the task. Therefore, in step two, advertisers must also process the findings to offer direction to the people working on the campaign. One of the most common ways to process the information is through SWOT



*analysis* (an acronym derived from strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). The procedure involves a close look at: (1) the firm's prior and current marketing, (2) financial and organizational competencies, (3) actual or potential areas of profitability, and (4) forces that threaten the firm's growth.

After identifying opportunities, the next step is to establish clear, specific, singular, realistic, measurable and time-bound *advertising objectives*. These objectives can either capitalize on opportunities or overcome problems facing the business firm. In specifying the campaign outcome, the manager confronts perhaps the most intriguing characteristic of advertising: its link to sales. In general, business firms invest money in advertising on the assumption that stimulating demand for their brand will increase sales. However, consumers do not automatically purchase a product or service as a result of their exposure to advertising messages.

In fact, advertising is only one of many factors that contribute to sales. A sale objective may be appropriately assigned to advertising in direct-response situations. Consumers develop thoughts or attitudes about a product or service before they decide whether or not to purchase it. If advertising can establish awareness or create a favorable attitude in target audiences, then these effects may trigger a purchase response. There is a lack of agreement on the intent of advertising objectives. Some practitioners claim that objectives should be stated in terms of sales while others want objectives set in terms of communication effects. Until measurement problems connected to sales are overcome, campaigners should consider establishing advertising objectives in terms of communication criteria.

Regardless of the nature of advertising objectives, four components should be clearly covered in a statement of objective: the target audience(s), the message to be delivered, the desired effects, and the outcome measurement. The definition of a *target audience* begins with a concise statement of demographics and psychographics. For example, female household heads living in the northeastern region of the US, aged 35–44, employed outside the home, with two or more children, who enjoy outdoor activities, and read business and self-help publications. The *message content* is a clear description of the competitive benefits of the product or service. The *desired effects* specifies what advertising intends to accomplish: establish awareness, develop interest, build a positive attitude toward the product, etc. The intended effect must be clearly measured (*outcome measurement*), for example, to increase the percentage of the target audience who believe that the new car is environmentally safe from 10 to 25 percent in six months.

## **DETERMINING THE ADVERTISING APPROPRIATION AND BUDGETING**

Advertising budgeting is an essential management function. Advertisers should weigh the relative importance of price, product, or brand before deciding how and where to allocate advertising expenditures. Several methods are available to business firms. One is *all you can afford*. The main advantage of this method is its simplicity. It is also a good option for companies of limited resources.

Another method is *competitive parity*. Here the competition's expenditures serve as a benchmark against which the firm determines its strategy. A third method is *percentage of sales*. This approach involves multiplying past or anticipated sales by a certain percentage to determine the amount of money to be appropriated for the advertising budget. Still

another method is called *objective and task*. Here the planner defines specific objectives and then determines the various tasks to achieve these objectives.

## DEVELOPING A CREATIVE STRATEGY

The creative strategy is not just a lofty term. Its main purpose is to give copywriters and art directors a concise and clear document outlining exactly what these creative people need to know to turn out great advertising. Some advertisers label it their work plan. Advertising agencies and departments do not use a standard format for the creative strategy. However, major components of the strategy should include: definition of the key problem that the creative person attempts to solve; description of the product or service in reality and perceptually; identification of the persons who are most likely to purchase the product/service; clarification of the direct and indirect competition; specification of the competitive consumer benefits; articulation of the reasons that support the benefit claim; determination of the tone or personality that advertising will give the product or service; formulation of a call for action.

Along with the above components, there should be a big idea that offers a common bond to unify the campaign messages. Some of the famous big unifying ideas have been:

<i>Big Red Gum</i>	Makes your breath so fresh you'll want to kiss a little longer
<i>Energizer</i>	Toy bunny keeps going and going because Energizer batteries last long
<i>Serta</i>	The counting sheep are out of work because Serta mattresses make you sleepy
<i>Toasted Mini-Wheats</i>	Has good taste and nutrition for the adult and the kid in you

In a very competitive information marketplace, the big idea helps the advertiser's message break through the *clutter*. The strategy should also specify the creative approach that best meets the advertising objectives. Advertisers have at least seven alternatives: affective, brand image, generic, positioning, pre-emptive, resonance, and unique selling proposition.

## SELECTING APPROPRIATE MEDIA

The main purpose of media is to deliver messages effectively and efficiently. In general, media decisions evolve out of the creative strategy. The media plan starts with the development of media objectives (→ Media Planning). However, sometimes these objectives are stated in terms of reach and frequency (e.g., the percentage of the potential audience to be reached and the frequency with which that audience should be exposed to the advertiser's message).

Several decisions have to be made before setting media objectives. Among these decisions are: (1) identifying the target audience(s) to be reached, (2) selecting the geographic market to strengthen exposure to advertising, (3) determining the desirable level of reach within a time period, (4) specifying the frequency (repetition) of an advertising message, (5) deciding the timing and continuity of the campaign to reach potential consumers, and (6) selecting the media tools that offer the best match with the intended market (→ Advertising Frequency and Timing).

Some media planners call the first four decisions "strategies" because they constitute rules to deliver advertising messages and attempt to give the advertiser a competitive edge. They also label the last two decisions "tactics" because they help implement strategies.

## OUTLINING A PLAN TO MEASURE THE CAMPAIGN OUTCOME

Insightful evaluation is vital to all aspects of the campaign. In a fiercely competitive market, metrics can offer the business firm an edge over its rivals. Most importantly, evaluation helps the company avoid costly blunders and increase the effectiveness of advertising (→ Advertising Effectiveness). The question for the management is not whether or not to measure but *what to measure* (→ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of).

Measuring the campaign effectiveness is a dynamic process that should involve four stages of the campaign: at the beginning of the creative process, at the end of the creative process, during the campaign when advertising appears in the media, and after the campaign. Each stage may require different techniques. For instance, in the first stage (concept testing), one may conduct focus group sessions or experiments to test creative concepts, themes, or claims. In the second stage (copy testing), consumer feedback to rough advertising messages may be obtained through informal interviews to either better develop the message or predict its effectiveness. In the third stage (concurrent testing), tracking studies can be conducted to monitor the campaign pulse and keep in close contact with consumers' thinking and feelings. Thus, personal or telephone interviews, or mall intercepts, can be used to determine consumers' awareness and attitudes toward the product/service. In the last stage (post-testing), various kinds of survey can be used to measure the communication and behavioral effects. Among the most commonly used are recognition, recall, awareness, attitudes, sales, and inquiries.

## CONCLUSION

Managing the advertising campaign is a challenge that involves many interrelated decisions and requires strategic thinking. A manager who wishes to produce and implement an effective campaign must have a radar system that continuously monitors forces affecting the market and carefully forecasts the consumers' wants and needs. He or she must also have vision that sees beyond the ordinary. Some advertisers call it a communication campaign instead of an advertising campaign because their efforts may include new technology, public relations, sales promotion, etc.

Major agencies, such as McCann-Erickson, prefer to label the campaign a "road map" to get great communication. They emphasize the significance of connecting with consumers and developing insights into their minds. Regardless of the campaign label, the advertising discipline faces a great challenge – an unpredictable consumer in an increasingly changing world. Solid management is always needed to proactively consider the consumer and environment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Frequency and Timing ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Marketing: Communication Tools ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Planning ▶ Research Methods ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Survey

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## **Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of**

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Advertisements organize typography and art (photographs, illustrations, and graphics) into designed layouts. Advertising's visual characteristics can be described historically by analyzing their style, or functionally by analyzing their role in advertising rhetoric (→ Advertising).

Modern advertising appeared during the Industrial Revolution. In the early nineteenth century, most ads, like the goods they promoted, were locally produced. Written in a news style and set in type like today's want ads, they verbally described the attributes, availability, and price of a product or service. They were seldom illustrated. Occasionally small, crude linecuts that showed the product and complemented the copy were employed (→ Advertising, History of).

As the Industrial Revolution progressed and markets expanded, businesses began to compete visually to distinguish their products. Some tried typographic strategies such as bigger, decorative type, printing ads larger, and reiterating the product's name in text type (→ Typography). Others employed multiple type styles, ornaments, rules, and illustrations in a single ad, creating the cluttered, eclectic look called Victorianism. Textual hyperbole exaggerated brand claims to be the "best," "first," "most perfect," etc. *Sophisticated illustration* first came into advertising in full-color lithographic → posters and advertising trade cards featuring romanticized country scenes, mythology, fairy tales, foreign exoticism, and dramatic literary scenes. The sentimental pictures were enjoyable to look at but often communicated little about the product. William Morris initiated the English Arts and Crafts movement (1860–1890), which criticized Victorian excesses and revived a simpler, more harmonious aesthetic. Late in the century, Morris's Kelmscott Press set professional standards for the allied arts of typography, illustration, printing, and design (→ Printing, History of).

*Fine artists* improved advertising imagery. In 1891, French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec designed a lithographic poster, *Moulin Rouge, La Goulue*, whose bold, simple lines and colors anticipated modernism and launched Art Nouveau design style. It featured minimalist, naturalistic illustrations with soft, sensuously curved, vertically flowing lines, eschewing large amounts of text for small amounts of hand lettering (→ Art as Communication; Graphic Design). Imagery began dominating advertising design.

In the twentieth century, businesses recognized that advertising was no longer news about products but → persuasion. Advertising agencies and researchers began testing persuasive strategies. Psychologists argued that suggestive appeals made through imagery worked better than written hyperbole exaggerating products' benefits (Craig 1992). Research showed that simple, artistic, large-space, illustrated advertising helped people notice and remember products (Craig 1992). Images depicting the product in idealized settings are highly effective (→ Advertising Effectiveness). Psychologists argued that the key to stimulating consumers was to show products fulfilling human needs and desires through suggestive illustration (Craig 1992; → Advertising, Emotions in).

This fundamental *shift toward visual rhetoric* was accompanied by technical advances in photoengraving that allowed artists to completely retouch photographs, idealizing them as artists had previously done with illustrations. In image advertising, the product, candidate, or political policy is visually associated with positive cultural symbols (→ Symbolism). Because the images do not verbalize claims, their meaning must be inferred by the reader, leaving the process open to manipulation and disinformation (→ Advertising as Persuasion). For example, in an automobile advertisement when a handsome, well-dressed man is pictured addressing the doorman as he enters a smart mansion, the reader is meant to infer that his character, taste, and social class are an index of the car's qualities (→ Sign; Code). Likewise, today's conservative lobby groups adopt fake, democratic-sounding pseudonyms, and use common looking models to disguise their corporate interests.

Twentieth-century art movements like Futurism, Dadaism, and Constructivism revolutionized advertising design by combining dynamic photography, photomontage, and sans serif types in explosive, asymmetrical designs. A visually shocking break with the past, they were often difficult to read. But German Bauhaus School designers László Moholy-Nagy and Herbert Bayer and German typographer-designer Jan Tschichold countered with a cleaner, functional style that aimed to communicate rather than shock. *Art Deco artists* created an elegant, streamlined style that also communicated quickly. After World War II, the movement to simplicity was completed with International Style design, which stripped away everything inessential and arranged image and type in austere, asymmetrical, grid layouts with lots of white space. This widely adopted style helped advertising messages cut through the clutter and fast pace of modern life.

Today's advertisers combine strong imagery and typography with clever copy to create a *synergistic whole* in standard layout patterns: image ads, copy-heavy ads, grid ads, fine art ads, or postmodern ads. Image ads rely on photos, photomontages, illustrations, or graphics to carry the message through a number of approaches: direct representation of the product, visual narrative, visual analogy or metaphor, visual humor, exaggeration, understatement, or irony. Copy-heavy ads rely on copy to describe a product in detail and to tell consumers why they should buy technical products like automobiles, electronics,

and medicines. A variation is the circus ad, which borrows the busy format of old circus posters. It connotes bargain pricing, and is often employed by grocery and book stores. Grid ads may be symmetrical or asymmetrical. The former are called “panel ads.” They divide space equally, filling the panels with pictures. Copy appears at the top or bottom of the page or in one of the panels. Asymmetrical grids are called “Mondrian ads” after De Stijl artist Piet Mondrian’s practice of breaking space into unequal rectangles. Fine art ad styles rely on artistic media such as sketches, watercolors, oil paintings, abstract formalism, or art photography to carry connotations of creativity. Fine art ads may also visually “quote” the masterworks of art, sculpture, and architecture to contextualize the product. For example, one firm created authenticity by placing its olive oil in front of a da Vinci painting.

Postmodern ads derive from art and design based in electronic, digital communication. Photoshop and Illustrator created unprecedented ease of type and art manipulation, skills, which were once highly technical and expensive, and thus limited to professionals (→ Digital Imagery; Postmodernism and Communication). Designers combined hand-drawn, graffiti-like letterforms, conflicting period art and ornament, distorted photographs, surrealist-like photomontages, and functionless lines and shapes running in all directions. Early adopters, like Nike, employed postmodern style to attract hip, young audiences. But more recently, businesses have simplified, tamed, or discarded its most radical forms to ensure that the ads can be read quickly.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising, Emotions in  
▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Code  
▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Graffiti ▶ Graphic Design ▶ News ▶ Persuasion ▶ Photography  
▶ Poster ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Semiotics  
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# **Advertising**

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Advertising has been defined as “Any paid form of non personal communication about an organization, product, service, or idea by an identified sponsor” (Alexander 1965, 9).

Advertising intrudes into our lives and is not always welcome. Some scholars suspect that we are being manipulated by dark arts (e.g., Packard 1957). This entry examines current practice from three perspectives: the advertiser, the consumer, and society at large.

*Advertisers* know, roughly, what they want to achieve and seek to do so efficiently. A situation vacant ad may be read by 1,000 people but if the firm finds one successful candidate and that was the cheapest solution, then the “waste” of the other 999 is immaterial. That is why the most often quoted adage about advertising, “Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is, I don’t know which half” (attributed to John Wanamaker and Lord Leverhulme), is so unhelpful. To understand what the advertiser can expect for the money leads to the exploration of how advertising works, how ad performance can and should be measured, and how to improve that performance (→ Advertising Effectiveness; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of).

We then take the perspective of the *consumer*. Advertising provides some benefits to consumers but some argue that it also encourages them to spend money on products they do not need and/or inflates the prices they have to pay. Some also argue that advertising is responsible for excessive consumption of, e.g., foods high in sugars, salts, and fats or alcohol by young people. In short, advertising produces counter-productive behavior from the consumer’s point of view, or so it is alleged. How do the positives compare with the negatives?

Finally we take the perspective of *society* as a whole and the extent to which advertising is a benefit or a curse. Governments are now among the largest spenders on advertising, which makes it harder for them to be generally hostile to the techniques, and yet they have to deal with malpractice, typically through regulation. This can take three forms: self-regulation by the industry, legal regulation, and “co-regulation” which has become fashionable (e.g., for broadcast media in the UK) as a compromise between the two (→ Advertising Law and Regulation).

Although this entry is mostly concerned with marketing communications for → brands by for-profit companies, advertising is also important for individuals, notably classified, and not-for-profit organizations such as charities and governments.

## HISTORY

Since the dawn of time, sellers have been seeking to attract attention and present their wares in ways that encourage sales. A recent classified ad for a second-hand bicycle is substantively the same as an ad for a Roman chariot 2,000 years ago. Media have changed, notably broadcast and digital, and our understanding of how ads work has changed, but advertising itself has changed much less. Advertising has always provided information, used emotional appeals to sell to us, and reminded us. But it used to be less pervasive than it is today because of the limited media and the limited number of goods then available for trading (Norris 1980).

*Advertising agencies* have existed since at least the eighteenth century but their formal standing as experts dates from the mid-nineteenth century in developed markets and the late twentieth century in the late developers. These “full service” agencies offered the complete range of advertising services to advertisers while at the same time being paid by the media carrying the ads. Competitive pressures have eroded the fixed commission

system, with advertisers now demanding, in effect, control of the media discounts and paying the agencies a mix of lower rates of commission, fees, and payment by results (Lace 2000). With increasing media complexity in the late twentieth century, most agencies have split into “creative” and “media-buying” agencies with their minor roles covered by other specialist agencies, e.g., public relations and events (Lears 1994).

The importance of small start-up agencies is as great as it ever was but globalization has also promoted mergers of the larger, more mature, agencies into perhaps half a dozen multinationals led by WPP and Omnicom, followed by a second tier of worldwide groups and partnerships (Lears 1994). But the turnover of talented individuals and the avoidance of brand conflicts have maintained stability of the sectors, in the UK at least but probably worldwide too.

By 2000, an estimated US\$233 billion was spent on local and national advertising, while sales promotion expenditures increased to more than US\$250 billion (Belch & Belch 2001). This is significant because with classic packaged goods, or fast-moving consumer goods, advertisers have shifted budgets from advertising to promotions, but the slack has mostly been taken up by new advertisers such as financial services and government. As a share of world GDP, however, advertising appears to have grown (WARC 2006).

*Measurement techniques* have become more sophisticated partly in response to advertiser demands to see quantified results and partly as advertisers and their agencies have taken a more scientific approach to understanding how advertising works (e.g., Pedrick & Zufryden 1991). *Content* has increased in variety with more entertainment and appeals to emotion but this has largely been driven by the wish to exploit new media. Perceptions of different advertising styles may be seen as evolutionary by those involved but the changes in style also reflect the fashion cycles that are necessary to maintain the appearance of novelty (Fox 1984; for a fuller account of the history of advertising see McDonald & Scott 2007).

## THE ADVERTISER'S PERSPECTIVE

This section follows the process of commissioning advertising through to assessing the results. In practice, the process is rarely as tidy as shown here: circumstances dictate changes in decisions and choices made in the “wrong” sequence. Specifically, we look at determining goals and briefing agencies, agreeing the budget, choosing and scheduling media, pre-testing (or “copy testing”) the campaign before it runs, and subsequent evaluation.

### Determining Goals and Briefing Agencies

In recent years, the brief from client to agency setting out the requirements has been increasingly formalized (IPA 2003). Ideally the client should have already resolved with the advertiser's other senior management how, preferably in quantified terms, the advertising could help achieve the corporate goals and roughly what budget would be available for the purpose. Experience from previous campaigns plays a major part in the assessment. In other words, what do we want from the advertising versus what expenditure, and is that value for money credible?



The briefing itself is an interactive process as the agency brings its own experience and negotiating skills, typically, to making the goals easier to achieve and the budget bigger. What should emerge from the process is a clear identification of the target market and the changes the advertising should achieve. These may be indicated by changes in intermediate measures such as awareness or attitudes to the brand, or changes in behavioral measures such as sales or penetration, i.e., the percentage of the market trying the brand. These goals, ideally, should be few and quantified and subsequently used for pre- and post-testing to identify achieved performance. That rarely happens in practice (Ambler & Goldstein 2003).

But the brief is a great deal more than establishing the benchmarks for later performance evaluation. It needs to motivate and excite the creatives (art and copy) to produce brilliantly productive work (Fletcher 1997). The brief should not describe the means, i.e., what the ad should contain, but the end, i.e., challenge the agency with what the campaign should achieve. Creatives love tight briefs and hate open-ended ones; one cannot solve a problem that is not there. A tight brief also proscribes what an ad must *not* do, e.g., use young people when advertising a brand of alcohol.

### **Agreeing the Budget**

Apart from the horse trading mentioned above, there is no shortage of more or less scientific approaches to budget setting. Practitioners like to claim that they set the budget to maximize projected return on investment (ROI). This plays well with peers and their financial colleagues but it is a myth, and even if it could be done ROI is the wrong financial objective (Ambler & Roberts 2006).

One reason it cannot be done is that the creative content (copy) has not, at this stage, been decided and nor have the media. The copy and the media are the key factors in ad performance, and estimating not only what the advertising will achieve but the counterfactual (what would have happened without the advertising) calls for considerable confidence. Research (e.g., Low & Mohr 1999) indicates that formal models are rarely used to identify profit-maximizing budgets but when they are, they are simply treated as one input among many (West 1995).

More firms than would admit to it practice the “affordable” method, i.e., the money the company can spend without jeopardizing a respectable profit for the year. Two other methods remain popular: maintaining a constant advertising to sales ratio and doing much the same as the previous year (March et al. 1989). Nerlove & Arrow (1962) argued in favor of constant ratios if elasticities and margins are stable.

A better theoretical approach recognizes that ads work in two stages: they change *brand equity* (what is in consumer heads) and brand equity, at a later date, changes consumer behavior. That may imply that the goals for the ad campaign should be set by changes in brand equity (intermediate) metrics and the budget made available in those terms. In practice few advertisers formalize brand equity measurement in that way. Furthermore the correlation between intermediate and behavioral metrics can be poor so that clients typically prefer the latter, e.g., sales or penetration or profit, where advertising can measurably deliver those goals.

### Choosing and Scheduling Media

Media neutral planning (MNP; Saunders 2004) waxed and waned in the UK rather rapidly in the early 2000s. It shared with the more substantive → *integrated marketing communications* (IMC; Schultz 1993) the idea that communications should be planned from the consumer's perspective. MNP went much further in suggesting that campaigns should be tailored first to the relevant media for the target market and creative matters considered only after that. Most other practitioners see creative and media considerations as being interactive. IMC primarily argues that communications should be consistent with each other and with what the consumer should reasonably be expected to take on board.

From whichever place one begins, the target market should ultimately determine the relevant media both in terms of readership and in providing the appropriate context for the copy. An ad depending on high fashion and addressed to young women should clearly not appear in the *Sporting Life* which is read by middle-aged men more interested in horses than fashions. Thus media considerations are less driven by reach (how many people see it), frequency, or the cost per 1,000 readers (or viewers) than the relevance of the media and whether, in that context, the message is likely to work.

This in turn leads to the question of *how* the ads might be expected to work. For a new product or brand, the primary aim is, typically, achieving awareness. Thereafter advertising works mostly through two approaches, broadly classified as either active or central processing, involving argument and logic, or passive peripheral processing, which relies on cues (→ Elaboration Likelihood Model). Other scholars have reached similar, but not identical, conclusions that advertising *persuades* the viewer to do something they would not otherwise do (the strong theory) or merely *reinforces* existing habits (Jones 1996).

### Pre-testing (or “Copy Testing”) the Campaign

Pre-testing is a contentious topic. Predictiveness is dubious and ads are rarely pre-tested against the particular goals for the campaign. Specialist agencies, such as Millward Brown, more usually test with their standard metrics which has the advantage, of course, of using other campaign tests as benchmarks (Ambler & Goldstein 2003). Even if pre-testing is poor value in assessing campaign proposals, it has advantages such as gaining top management approval. Protagonists for pre-testing include Pieters & Wedel (2004).

### Post-Campaign Evaluation

Post-campaign assessment, on the other hand, is not contentious in principle although there are various competing approaches. Specialist research agencies, once again, tend to use their standard metrics rather than the original campaign goals. Post-campaign assessment usually takes the form of “tracking,” i.e., the key brand equity metrics are consistently monitored over time, for example, on a monthly basis (for a summary see White 2005).

A key factor is that the advertiser is looking for changes in brand equity, in other words brand effects, not advertising effects. According recognition and recall of the ad may lead to brand effects but they are not valuable effects in themselves.

### THE CONSUMER'S PERSPECTIVE

From as early as the first half of the nineteenth century, there has been public ambivalence toward advertising (Nevett 1982). It is seen as manipulative, intrusive, and seeking to persuade us to buy what we do not need (such as lottery tickets) or to buy what is bad for us (such as alcohol, tobacco, or fatty foods). Because brand leaders are typically more expensive than their private label equivalents, some argue that advertising causes us to pay more than we should.

On the other hand, advertising pays for the media we enjoy such as → television, → newspapers, and the → Internet. Quite often we enjoy the ads themselves which enter into general parlance such as “It does what it says on the tin” (Ronseal). Calfee (1997) has made the case for the defense, as has the Advertising Association in the UK and the equivalent trade associations in other countries. Advertising provides information and reminds us, quite often, of what we have bought before and may intend to buy again.

### THE SOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

Opponents of advertising claim that it commercializes culture, undermines values, and leads to less happiness as society is reminded of what it cannot afford (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Supporters argue that advertising merely mirrors society as it is (Fox 1984). They see it as a necessary part of a healthy market and contend that it has contributed to the growth of GDP and widespread prosperity (O’Guinn & Faber 1991).

The truth, as always, lies somewhere in between. Advertising in itself is neither good nor bad, but it can be good or bad in the way it is used. Accordingly, most countries have developed regulation as a means to control “bad,” or potentially harmful, advertising while allowing “good” advertising a reasonably free rein. Regulation, much of it self-regulation, has grown rapidly since the 1960s to meet increasing cultural sensitivities but also to dissuade governments from interfering. Self-regulation is seen as being more flexible and responsive to consumer protection than legal rules, but governmental wish to control the industry has led to “co-regulation,” i.e., government retaining the right to intervene when they deem it necessary. For example, the Code of Advertising practice in the UK is administered by a trade committee with an independent chairman which can, and does, amend the Code when the need arises, rather than following the lengthy and cumbersome process of changing UK law. Ofcom, the UK government quango, is an example of co-regulation in the UK (see [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk)).

SEE ALSO: ► Advertisement Campaign Management ► Advertising Effectiveness ► Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ► Advertising Ethics ► Advertising Law and Regulation ► Advertising Strategies ► Brands ► Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ► Elaboration Likelihood Model ► Integrated Marketing Communications ► Internet ► Newspaper ► Television

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# Advertising, Cross-Cultural

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With the globalization of markets, advertisers are faced with the question whether to internationally standardize their campaigns or to tailor them to each country's target audience. This controversial issue is discussed in the so-called *standardization/differentiation debate* in international marketing literature. Although standardization has the advantage of saving cost, companies that stress global standardization do not necessarily perform better than others (Samiee & Roth 1992). This is because standardized advertising campaigns run the danger of misunderstanding and violating cultural rules in the target markets. Hence, cultural differences are a reason why many companies favor a more localized approach (Kanso & Nelson 2002).

*Culture* can be defined as the collective programming of the mind (Hofstede 1984; → Culture: Definitions and Concepts). This means that individuals of the same culture share specific values, i.e., they agree on what is considered to be desirable. Several theories (e.g., learning theories, cognitive dissonance theory, and cognitive response theory) and related empirical findings suggest that advertising is most persuasive if it conforms with what recipients consider to be desirable (Gengler & Reynolds 1993; → Advertising Effectiveness; Advertising as Persuasion; Cognitive Dissonance Theory). Therefore, effective advertising on international markets should insure that the advertising message is consistent with the mental programming of each target group. In other words, advertising is (or should be) a mirror of the culture it is directed toward (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication).

The following questions have to be dealt with when adapting advertising to various cultural contexts: What advertising objectives are reasonable and feasible in the target culture? What should the advertising appeal be like? What sex roles should be portrayed in the ad? How much information should the ad contain? What symbols may be used?

## RESEARCH TRADITIONS

Research on cross-cultural marketing communication is usually based on Hofstede's (1984) landmark study (→ Cultural Studies). The author identified four dimensions reflecting cultural values, namely power distance (extent to which human inequality is accepted), individualism–collectivism (degree of an individual's social integration), masculinity (extent to which the dualism of sexes is recognized), and uncertainty avoidance (extent to which unstructured or unfamiliar situations make individuals feel uncomfortable). In a follow-up study, long-term orientation (degree of future-oriented behavior) was added as a fifth dimension.

More recently, House et al. (2004) introduced the GLOBE study (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness), which offers a more comprehensive view on cultures. The GLOBE researchers differentiate between ingroup collectivism (degree to

which members of a culture are affiliated with their organizations or families) and institutional collectivism (degree to which institutions encourage collective behavior). Moreover, they identified three additional dimensions, namely assertiveness (degree to which members of a culture are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive), humane orientation (degree to which members of a culture are friendly, generous, and altruistic), and performance orientation (degree to which performance is encouraged).

### ADVERTISING OBJECTIVES

Advertisers set forth specific goals to be accomplished (e.g., attracting attention, creating a certain brand image, or increasing the purchase intention of the target audience). However, these objectives have to be adapted to the degree to which advertising is accepted in different cultures. Although consumers around the world seem to perceive this marketing instrument as an inevitable part of everyday life, recipients in some societies are more skeptical than in others. It has been found that consumers in New Zealand, Denmark, Sweden, and Singapore in particular have a less positive *attitude toward advertising* than consumers in other countries, while recipients in the US, India, China, and the UK have a more positive attitude than their counterparts in other cultures (Durvasula et al. 1993; 1999; Zhou et al. 2002; Young et al. 2003; Mukherji 2005). The positive attitude of (urban) Chinese consumers, for instance, can be explained by a political peculiarity of the country. Advertising was restricted in the communist era and is relatively new to the Chinese. This is why they enjoy it, although it has been revealed that they have less trust in this marketing instrument than American consumers (Zhou et al. 2002). In general, advertisers should be cautious about using extremely persuasive appeals in cultures where acceptance of advertising is low (e.g., Denmark, Sweden), but rather stress alternative goals, such as attention or image creation.

In addition, adequate advertising objectives can be derived from three cultural dimensions, namely individualism–collectivism, performance orientation, and uncertainty avoidance. In *collectivistic* cultures (like Japan and Korea), for instance, little is explicitly stated in written or spoken messages, because people consider verbal communication to be only part of the overall message. They rely rather on contextual cues from which they derive the meaning of what is verbally expressed. That is why such societies are also referred to as high-context cultures. Advertising in such societies should not be too persuasive, but rather aim at anchoring a product in the recipient's mind. People in *individualistic* cultures, such as the US, tend to communicate more explicitly (low-context cultures). Hence, high-pressure selling is a common practice in these societies. In the US especially, advertising is often directly aimed at selling a product.

The US also allows comparative advertising messages that seek to persuade the audience by comparing a brand's performance with specific, named competing brands. In societies with a lower *performance orientation* score, such as Germany, comparative advertising is restricted. Islamic societies tend to have an even weaker performance orientation. In some of them (e.g., Saudi Arabia), comparative advertising is completely prohibited (→ Advertising Law and Regulation). Indians, while more in favor of advertising in general, were found to perceive this kind of communication as insulting to their intelligence. This may be due to their low *uncertainty avoidance* score, which implies a

high tolerance for ambiguity. Since Indian consumers do not feel offended by contradictory or inconsistent information, they are receptive to subtle messages rather than simple and direct selling propositions.

### ADVERTISING APPEALS

Advertising often appeals to values such as adventure, freedom, and economy (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). The goal is to condition a product in such a way that the audience associates it with these values. A commonly used research method to identify values stressed in advertising appeals is content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). Extensive content-analytic research on advertising campaigns across cultures indicates that the values stressed tend to correspond with the countries' scores on Hofstede's cultural dimensions, although economic and political transitions (e.g., in Korea) may be responsible for some contradictory results (e.g., Tse et al. 1989; Albers-Müller & Gelb 1996; Cho et al. 1999; Lin 2001; Müller & Gelbrich 2004; Han & Shavitt 2005).

In cultures with high power distance, such as Japan, advertising more often appeals to *status values* than in more egalitarian cultures like the US. Corresponding to these societies' value systems, prestigious products or services may serve as status symbols to provide evidence of the owner's or user's social position (provided that this strategy fits the product or service).

Whereas *performance* and *hedonism* are more often appealed to in individualistic rather than collectivistic cultures, the opposite is true for *sociability*. Although performance and hedonism seem to be mutually exclusive at first glance, they do not need to be (e.g., "hard-working people should also have fun").

In cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, people feel uncomfortable in new, unstructured situations. Preserving tradition helps to prevent such situations and to ensure stability. Since tradition is passed down from the older generation, advertising in "anxious" cultures tends to portray elderly people more often than advertising in cultures with low uncertainty avoidance. However, the differences are relative. Advertisers generally tend to refrain from portraying elderly people, but the few exceptions can be observed most often in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance.

A disadvantage of content analysis is that it only reveals what advertising is like rather than what it should be like. It fails to measure the effectiveness of an ad in terms of ad cognition, attitude toward the ad, brand cognition, attitude toward the brand, or purchase intention. However, contemporary research provides evidence that recipients actually prefer advertising that appeals to *culture-conform* values. For example, North American consumers evaluate individualist-laden culture-congruent advertising more favorably in terms of the above-mentioned effectiveness measures than collectivism-laden advertising appeals. The opposite holds true for their Chinese counterparts (Teng & Laroche 2006).

### SEX-ROLE PORTRAYAL

Sex roles are learned during the socialization process and differ from culture to culture. In *masculine* cultures, such as Japan, sex roles are rather distinct. Men should be determined and success oriented, whereas women are supposed to be modest and affectionate. Since

these societies are dominated by men, they follow masculine ideals (e.g., performance and success). In *feminine* cultures, such as Denmark and Sweden, sex roles overlap. These cultures tend to stress feminine ideals (e.g., social welfare, mutual support).

These sex roles are reflected in advertising. Relationship portrayals (spouse/boyfriend/girlfriend, parent, homemaker) are more frequently displayed in feminine than in masculine societies (Milner & Collins 2000), while the ratio of men to women shown at work is greater for masculine cultures than for feminine ones. The same can be observed for the ratio of men to women depicted as top executives (Müller & Gelbrich 2004). However, these results are relative. Even in feminine cultures, more men than women appear in work and top management roles, while women are more often portrayed in non-job activities (→ Women in the Media, Images of).

### INFORMATION CONTENT

Information cues (e.g., quality, nutrition, price, new ideas) help to reduce the uncertainty involved with a product purchase (Abernethy & Franke 1996). Although information seems to be something that is fairly objective, informative advertising is not at all culture-free. In particular, the scope of uncertainty during product purchase, and/or the degree to which this uncertainty is perceived as uncomfortable, vary from culture to culture. In cultures with high uncertainty avoidance, informative advertising is particularly useful for consumers to reduce their perceived risk of purchasing the “wrong” product. Consequently, advertisements on these markets contain more information cues – and in particular more price information – than in less “anxious” societies. Furthermore, advertisers refrain from introducing new ideas to consumers in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance (Müller & Gelbrich 2004).

The individualism–collectivism (low- to high-context) dimension also explains varying levels of information content in ads. People in high-context cultures are not used to exchanging explicit details when communicating. Therefore, commercials in these cultures contain fewer information cues in general and a lower level of price information in particular than in individualistic, low-context cultures, such as the US (Al-Olayan & Karande 2000).

Beyond culture, macro-economic variables such as gross domestic product (GDP) per capita or literacy level are responsible for the amount of information content provided in different societies. In three Arab countries, for example, the information content of magazine ads was found to increase with a country’s level of literacy. Similarly, the higher the per capita GDP the higher the level of price information (Karande et al. 2006). To sum up, studying culture is helpful when deciding upon the appropriate amount of information content for industrialized countries. In developing countries, however, advertisers should be aware of economic constraints that militate against the use of informative advertising. Since information cues are conveyed by text messages, illiterate people will not understand them. In this case, it is more reasonable to make use of symbols and images.

### SYMBOLS

A symbol is something that means more than it seems to at first glance. Symbols may be pictures or images, but also concepts, words, or whole sentences. A light bulb, for



instance, can stand for “enlightenment,” the caduceus is used as a symbol for medicine, and a virgin may represent immaculateness. Symbols are interpreted and decoded on the basis of *social agreements*, and hence may evoke diverging associations in different cultures.

In most European countries a stork, for example, symbolizes the birth of a child, but in Singapore it stands for the early death of a child. The French associate nudity with beauty and nature, while Russians, on the contrary, perceive depictions of naked people as displeasing and offensive. To Germans the term “Oriental” tends to be associated with stereotypical images of camels and veiled women, whereas Americans are more likely to associate it with kimonos and chopsticks, stereotypical images from East Asia. Even the concept of beauty, which is shared by all human beings, is represented by different symbols. In Milan and Madrid women with black hair are regarded as beautiful, whereas women with blonde hair are more highly rated in Hamburg and London (Bjerke & Polegato 2006). International advertisers should therefore ensure that the symbols they use are *equally decoded* in the target markets. As a minimum, a positive symbol in one culture should not trigger any negative connotation in another.

### NON-CONFORM ADVERTISING

Violating cultural values, for example, by depicting unfavorable sex roles, leads to less effective advertising. As the case of Benetton several years ago showed, consumers can be offended by advertising they consider to be unethical or politically incorrect. The Italian clothing company’s shock advertisements, depicting, for example, a black woman as a wet nurse, and an unwashed newborn baby with the umbilical cord still attached, gave rise to not only public criticism, but campaigns to boycott the company’s products. However, most advertisers follow the rule of adhering to the values of the target culture, and so appear undifferentiated from their competitors. In a heavily advertised market, breaking with traditional values may attract the attention of the target audience and build up a unique brand identity.

However, *non-conform* advertising has the advantage of novelty only when used for the first time. The more it is used the more the novelty wears thin and attention fades. This may be the reason why sex-role portrayal has become even more stereotypical in Australian advertising. Depicting the ideal of a working woman was new when only a few women were part of the workforce. As more women started to work, the novelty wore off and it received less attention (Milner & Higgs 2004). In the long run, non-conform advertising works only if the target audience actually seeks to distinguish itself from its own culture. Such *transnational target groups* are usually well educated, well off, and cosmopolitan. They are particularly receptive to luxury goods, durable consumer goods, and travel and hospitality services.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising: Global Industry ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Hispanic ▶ Communication Modes, Muslim ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Cultural Studies

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## **Advertising, Economics of**

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The economics of → advertising are crucially important in understanding the history of modern mass media as well as their continued development. Sometimes called “indirect” funding (compared to the “direct” funding provided by consumers to such media as books and recorded music), advertising as an economic institution involves several different industries and collectives. Advertising’s influence as a revenue stream for media is arguably a more significant social force than the symbolic power of explicit commercial content like television advertisements. Advertising revenue fundamentally influences not just the placement of ads in the media, but also the nonadvertising content and dissemination of funded media. This is increasingly true even for media and cultural forms that traditionally have not depended upon the generation of advertising revenue, such as theatrically released films and video games (→ Media Economics).

### **DEVELOPMENT OF ADVERTISING’S ECONOMIC LINKS TO MEDIA**

In the history of modern media, advertising has grown from a supplemental source of media income, to a dominant source, to (in some cases) an exclusive source. Although early newspapers and magazines carried advertisements, the main source of revenue was from readers. This changed with industrialization and the establishment of advertising agencies, brand marketing, and national markets, all of which encouraged companies to place ads in new and established media to market their goods and services. In the United States, by approximately 1900 both the newspaper and magazine industries generated a majority of their revenue from advertising rather than from readers. This shifted the basic *economic logic of the media*, as media users went from being the direct revenue providers – the customer/market of media – to being the product sold to the media’s larger customer, advertisers. Today, print media such as newspapers and magazines average about 65–75 percent of their revenue from advertising (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media; Media History).

Although it was not clear during radio’s early development that it would be advertising-supported, in the US through a variety of powerful commercial and policy maneuvers the medium eventually more fully embraced an advertising revenue system than did even the earlier print media. Following this, → television developed as a fully advertising-supported system from the beginning. Virtually 100 percent of for-profit broadcasting revenue, then, is generated from advertising. The economic influence of

advertising was further shown in media that were created to only carry advertising and promotional messages; such media include billboards, catalogs, and other forms of direct mail. More recent forms such as websites may be entirely funded by advertising, or exist only to serve as advertising (such as websites for products). In television, infomercials – a half-hour block of time bought by an advertiser – serve a similar function and have become an expected source of income for both local stations and national networks.

## ECONOMIC FIGURES AND TRENDS

Industry summaries of advertising-spending trends and amounts may factor in measured and/or unmeasured media. Measured media include traditional mediated advertising venues: print media such as newspapers and magazines, broadcast and cable entertainment media, billboards and the growing marketing venue of the → Internet. Unmeasured media spending typically involves marketing and promotional activities such as direct mail, couponing, catalogs, and sponsorship at special events.

The economic scope of global advertising is enormous and ever growing. Global spending on advertising increased in the US from under \$450 billion in 2001 to approximately \$640 billion projected for 2007 (Coen 2006). The US is by the far the top country in terms of advertising spending, accounting for nearly half of global revenue. However, spending in many other countries keeps pace with ad growth in the US and in some, such as China, it is growing at a significantly faster rate (Table 1).

The advertising industry involves an interplay of three powerful economic players: advertisers, advertising agencies, and media companies. Even though individuals can be advertisers – especially through classified advertising in newspapers and websites – easily the most visible and influential advertisers are multinational conglomerates, with the top companies spending billions each year to maintain a global promotional presence and establish a coherent and imposing global brand image (Table 2).

*Advertising agencies* are engaged in a variety of activities, including campaign creation and → marketing research. An important function is media planning and buying, in which the advertising agency serves as a liaison between the advertiser and media in

Table 1 Top countries by measured media ad spending, 2004

Rank	Country	Spending (US\$ billion)
1	United States	141.0
2	Japan	38.0
3	United Kingdom	18.4
4	Germany	18.3
5	France	11.1
6	Italy	9.5
7	China	9.0
8	Spain	6.7
9	Canada	6.4
10	South Korea	6.4

**Table 2** Top global advertisers by measured media ad spending, 2005

Rank	Advertiser	Spending (US\$ billion)
1	Procter & Gamble Co.	8.19
2	Unilever	4.27
3	General Motors Corp.	4.17
4	Toyota Motor Corp.	2.80
5	L'Oreal	2.77

Source: *Advertising Age* (2007, 10)

which ads are to be placed. Often compensation to the agency involves a percentage of ad placement costs charged by the media. One characteristic of modern advertising agencies is the globalization of very large advertising/marketing organizations, often holding organizations that own several powerful, globally spanning individual advertising agencies. Not only do these global holding organizations control many full-service agencies that integrate many marketing, promotional, advertising, and public relations functions, but their huge size allows them leverage in their negotiations with media companies. Illustrating a heavy ownership concentration in advertising agencies, the top four marketing organizations – Omnicom Group, WPP Group, Interpublic Group of Cos, and Publicis Groupe – through the advertising agencies that they owned, accounted for over 55 percent of 2004 measured media billings in the United States (*Advertising Age* 2006, 45).

In terms of advertising spending by media, in the US *direct-mail advertising* receives a higher revenue than any other single medium, followed by newspapers and televisual forms. Although the Internet is still fairly low on the list, its growth has typically been much greater than average, and traditionally powerful advertising media such as newspapers and broadcast network television find that their growth is lower than average for advertising revenue across all media (Table 3).

**Table 3** Advertising spending by medium in the United States, 2005

Rank	Medium	Amount (US\$ billion)
1	Direct mail	55.22
2	Newspaper	47.33
3	Broadcast TV	44.29
4	Cable TV	23.65
5	Radio	19.64
6	Yellow Pages	14.23
7	Consumer magazine	12.85
8	Internet	7.76
9	Out of home	6.23
10	Business publications	4.17
	All others	35.69
	Total	271.07

Source: *Advertising Age* (2007, 10)

Large media companies such as Time Warner, Viacom, and Disney account for a large share of the advertising revenue (→ Media Conglomerates). In fact, companies such as these are both among the top receivers of advertising revenue (through the ad-supported media companies they own) *and* the top spenders of advertising (through the marketing of their own media products such as theatrical films and DVDs). Such multiple roles by large conglomerates encourage the creation of large-scale cross-promotional campaigns and licensing.

## DEFENSES AND CRITICISMS OF ADVERTISING'S ECONOMIC INFLUENCE

Advocates for the benefits of advertising's economic effect contend that advertising lowers prices because it encourages mass production and thus economies of scale. Proponents also argue that advertising stokes economic growth by encouraging spending. The benefits of "free" media – media funded primarily by advertising, with no direct and obvious economic cost to media users – also has been highlighted, especially with broadcast media and "controlled circulation" magazines distributed without immediate cost to targeted markets.

Criticisms of advertising's effect upon a nation's economy include the barrier to entry for new goods and services that the expectation of large advertising budgets creates. A similar argument is made about the emphasis on political advertising, especially in countries with few restrictions on such paid practices. A common charge is that the high expense of advertising spending during a political campaign severely limits the potential pool of viable candidates for office (→ Political Advertising).

Much critical work has been devoted to understanding how advertising as an economic force has influenced – and continues to influence – the ideological and democratic limitations of media. Critics such as Bagdikian (2000) and Baker (1994) have argued that advertising encourages the growth of large and powerful *media monopolies* (→ Concentration in Media Systems). When media companies grow, they can offer advertisers large coverage and efficient placement – exploiting economies of scale – and thus disadvantage smaller media companies with less reach. Others have noted the explicit attempts by advertisers to remove ideas critical of advertisers or advertising in media by withdrawing advertising revenue, or the susceptibility to self-censorship by media that the potential threat may encourage. Ideas that are critical of commercialism generally – or even overly negative about the larger institutions or norms of society – may likewise find resistance in advertising-supported media. The exclusionary tendencies of advertising media also extend to the intended audiences. Generally, audiences who have disposable income, are willing to spend that income, and are willing to try many different kinds of brands are the ideal type of audience that advertisers would like to reach; advertising-supported media may tend to emphasize the creation of content that appeals to such audiences, thus excluding nonadvertising-desirable audiences. On the other hand, advertising encourages *entertainment-oriented content* in media to keep ratings/readership high, and consumerist messages to create a receptive climate for selling messages.

The economics of advertising will continue to change, perhaps radically, as media become cluttered with advertising, advertising agencies embrace → integrated marketing communications, traditional media become increasingly desperate to prevent further

erosion of their share of available advertising spending, and digital technologies integrate more fundamentally with traditional media forms. The concept of *branded entertainment*, where advertisers integrate the selling function in traditionally autonomous entertainment and news forms, is a trend of the new promotional millennium and one that changes the economic conventional wisdom of advertising. More specifically, product placement and sponsorship are increasingly found in various media, including broadcast media. These promotional strategies alter the nature of advertising deals with such media, making them more expansive in scope by entering the system during the early stages of media content development and production. Feedback-oriented digital technologies such as on-demand viewing and target marketing techniques like database marketing and mining potentially make media companies into audience-information brokers that collect and leverage different audiences' media consumption patterns. Media companies that are both major carriers of advertising and major advertisers for their own products will continue to blur the distinctions between the traditional categories of advertisements and nonadvertising media content.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Internet ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media History ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Television

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# Advertising Effectiveness

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How effective is advertising in contemporary markets? What does advertising effectiveness mean? By the term “advertising effectiveness,” we mean what change → advertising achieves in markets. Advertising also creates changes in awareness, → attitudes, beliefs, and intentions. These are all valid effects of advertising. However, in the interest of focus and parsimony, this entry focuses on the effects of advertising on *only market behavior*.

This topic has been the subject of research from the time firms began to advertise. Scientific research has begun to accumulate especially in the last 50 years (Tellis 2004; Tellis & Ambler 2007). This research falls within one of two paradigms: behavioral research and econometric research. *Behavioral research* uses theater or lab experiments to address the effects of advertising on awareness, attitudes, beliefs, and intentions (→ Experiment, Laboratory). On the other hand, *field research* uses field experiments (→ Experiment, Field) and econometric models to assess the effects of advertising on market behavior. This entry will attempt to classify and summarize what has been learnt from the latter paradigm of research.

We use six terms quite generically here: product, firm, → brand, consumer, market, and sales. The term “product” refers to any good, service, idea, or person being advertised. The term “firm” refers to any organization doing the advertising, whether it is a for-profit company, governmental agency, or nonprofit institution. The term “brand” refers to the names under which the firm advertises the product. The term “consumer” refers to the target of the advertising. The term “market” refers to the aggregate of consumers. The term “sales” refers to the aggregate behavioral response of the market of consumers, sought by an advertiser, such as unit sales, \$ revenues, registrations, votes, subscriptions, etc.

We can classify field research into three groups: contemporaneous effects of ad intensity, dynamic effects of ad intensity, and effects of ad content. These subjects are the focus of the next three sections.

## CONTEMPORANEOUS EFFECTS OF AD INTENSITY

We can further classify research in this area by which one of three aspects of advertising intensity the research addresses: weight, elasticity, or frequency.

### Research on Advertising Weight

The term “weight” refers to the level or intensity of the advertising budget. Weight studies examine the effect of differences in ad budget across time periods or regions. The main focus of such studies is to determine whether an increase in budget translates into a proportional or profitable increase in sales of the advertised product. The same criterion holds for a decrease in advertising. Researchers have carried out over 450 market experiments to assess the effectiveness of advertising. Details of these studies are in Tellis (2004) or Tellis and Ambler (2007).



Research from weight studies leads to the following four *important and surprising findings*. First, changes in weight alone do not cause dramatic or substantive changes in sales. That is, a big increase in weight does not boost sales while a big cut in advertising does not decrease sales. Second, prolonged cessation of advertising sometimes leads to deleterious effects on sales. Third, if advertising is effective, its effects are visible early on in the life of a campaign. Conversely, if advertising is ineffective early on, then repetition will not create or enhance its effectiveness. Fourth, changes in media used, content of the ad, product advertised, target segments, or scheduling of ads are more likely to cause changes in sales than are changes in weight alone.

These results suggest three *implications*. First, firms could be over-advertising; as a result, cutbacks in advertising do not lead to a loss in sales. Second, advertising may have delayed or even permanent effects, so that continued advertising at the same level is not always necessary. Third, a firm's budget increase or original budget itself may be more fruitfully employed in changes in media, content, target segments, product, or schedule rather than in weight alone.

### Research on Advertising Elasticity

Advertising elasticity is the percentage change in sales for a 1 percent change in the level of advertising. It is free of any units. Studies in advertising elasticity focus on the rate and shape of the mathematical function by which sales respond to advertising. Researchers estimate this function via a branch of science called econometrics (Dekimpe & Hanssens 2007). Thus, research on advertising elasticity allows a more fine-grained analysis of advertising effectiveness than does research on advertising weight. There are over 400 estimates of advertising elasticity carried out in numerous studies across countries, product categories, and time periods. Meta-analyses of this literature summarize the mean advertising elasticity and explain its differences across various characteristics of firm, product, and market (Assmus et al. 1984; Sethuraman & Tellis 1991).

Research on advertising elasticity leads to the following *important findings*. First, across all studies, the mean estimated advertising elasticity is about 0.1, i.e., about one twentieth the corresponding price elasticity. Second, advertising elasticity is higher in early than late stages of the product life cycle, for food than other products, in Europe than the US, and for durables than non-durables, especially in comparison to the price elasticity. Third, advertising elasticities are lower in models that incorporate advertising carryover and exogenous variables than in those that do not, and in models that are multiplicative than in those that are additive. Fourth, however, advertising elasticities are invariant over the measure of the dependent variable, the measure of the product, or the method of estimation.

These results suggest the following four *implications*. First, price discounting may lead to greater increase in sales than does an advertising increase; however, whether that increase is profitable would depend on the level of price cut, which consumers use it, and how much of that gets to the ultimate consumer rather than being pocketed by distributors (Sethuraman & Tellis 1991). Second, advertising may be more profitable for new products, while price discounting may be more profitable for mature products. Third, advertising may be more profitable for durables, while price discounting for may

be more profitable for non-durables. Fourth, advertisers in the US may be over-advertising or those in Europe may be under-advertising.

### Research on Ad Frequency

A firm's advertising budget normally impacts consumers through the exposure of consumers to ads through the media. The term "frequency" refers to the number of ad exposures each consumer receives in a particular time period. The advertising budget in a time period ultimately translates into a sequence of individual exposures targeted to one or more consumers. Similarly, sales may be considered an aggregate of consumers' choices of brands, called brand choice. Research on ad frequency normally examines the effect of ad frequency on consumer choice. Such research provides a more fine-grained and insightful analysis of advertising response than does that on advertising elasticity or advertising weight. In particular, such research can indicate the optimal level of exposures the advertiser should target at a particular market segment or even a particular consumer. However, research on ad frequency is not without limitations. Knowing the optimal frequency does not immediately translate into ascertaining the optimal budget. The advertiser would still need models that relate advertising frequency to budget and consumer choices to sales. So the tradeoff here is between detail and insight versus managerial usefulness.

Research on advertising frequency leads to the following *five findings*. First, the effects of advertising exposure are less prominent and immediate and more fragile than those of price or promotion on brand choice. Second, in general, increasing frequency of exposures increases probability of brand choice at a decreasing rate. Third, for mature, frequently purchased products, the optimum level of exposure *may* be relatively small, ranging from one to three exposures a week. Fourth, brand loyalty *may* moderate response to ad exposures, in that established brands have an earlier and lower peak response to ad exposures than newer brands. Fifth, brand choice *may* be more responsive to the number of consumers the ad reaches than to the frequency with which it is repeated.

These findings suggest some *implications*. First, advertisers need to target loyal and non-buyers of their products with differing levels of exposures. Second, consistent with findings from prior sections, heavier exposures need to be reserved for new consumers and brands.

### DYNAMIC EFFECTS OF AD INTENSITY

Research on advertising effectiveness has focused on three dynamic aspects of advertising: carryover effects, wear-in, and wear-out.

#### Research on Advertising Carryover

The carryover effect of advertising is that effect it has on sales *beyond* the moment or time of exposure. Econometric studies have typically estimated the size and duration of the carryover effect of advertising. Here again there are a large number of studies, which have been analyzed in a couple of → meta-analyses. This section summarizes findings from these meta-analyses as well as the primary studies themselves.

Research on advertising carryover leads to the *following main findings*. First, advertising typically has some carryover, so that all its effectiveness does not occur in the contemporaneous time period to its exposure to the consumer. Second, the estimated effect of advertising depends on the level of data aggregation. Estimated carryover effects tend to be longer with the use of more aggregate data. In general, the more disaggregate the time period of data, the less biased is the estimated effects of advertising carryover. In general, the effect of advertising *may* last for fairly short periods – hours, days, or weeks – rather than for long periods such as months or years. Third, advertising's effects vary by region, city, and time of the day.

These findings suggest the following three *implications*. First, advertisers should neither assume their advertising has only contemporaneous effects nor assume that it has very long-term carryover. Second, advertisers need to evaluate the carryover effect of their advertising and do so with as temporally disaggregate data as they can find or collect. Third, advertisers need to analyze effects by region and time period rather than rely on simple generalizations.

### Research on Wear-In and Wear-Out

A series of exposures of an ad is called an advertising campaign (→ Advertisement Campaign Management). Wear-in and wear-out are effects of an ad campaign. Wear-in is the effect of an ad that keeps increasing with repetition of the ad within the campaign. On the other hand, wear-out is the effect of an ad that keeps decreasing with repetition of the ad within a campaign. If they occur, wear-in normally does so early in the life of a campaign while wear-out normally does so late in the life of a campaign.

Research on wear-in and wear-out leads to the following *important findings*: *wear-in* either does not exist or occurs quite rapidly. It occurs more slowly when exposures are spread apart, when consumers are not forced to attend to the ad, for ads that contain emotional appeals rather than arguments (→ Emotion), for consumers who are not highly motivated to attend to the ad or actively processing the ad content, and in markets relative to theater or lab settings. Wear-in also might be stronger with ads that have higher persuasion scores.

Ad campaigns *wear out* if run long enough. Wear-out occurs more slowly for ad content that is complex, emotional, or ambiguous, for ads that are less rather than more effective, for infrequently rather than frequently purchased products, for exposures spread apart rather than clustered together, for light rather than heavy viewers of TV, and for campaigns with increasing variety of ads or ad content. A break in a campaign may lead to an increase in effectiveness of the ad; if that happens, the ad wears out even faster than it did the first time around. In rare cases, possibly for new products, advertising seems to have permanent effects. That is, the effect of advertising persists even after the advertising is withdrawn.

These findings have several *implications* for advertisers. Most importantly, an ad which is ineffective early on should be discontinued. It is futile to assume that an initially ineffective ad still needs to wear in, because wear-in is rapid or nonexistent. Second, the findings suggest typical types of wear-in and wear-out that advertisers may expect for their campaign, depending on the characteristic of that campaign. However, whenever

resources and time permit, advertisers should test their ads for wear-in and wear-out and accordingly decide on the duration of the ad campaign.

### EFFECTS OF AD CONTENT

The term “content” refers to what is in the ad as opposed to its external characteristics, such as weight or frequency. Aspects of content include the appeal (argument, emotion, and endorsement), the duration or length, the use of color, sound, or video, the amount and type of text, etc. While a vast number of theater and lab studies have examined the effectiveness of various aspects of ad content, only a few market studies have done so. Thus, generalizations of findings in this area need to be made cautiously.

Research on ad content seems to suggest the following *preliminary findings*. First, changes in the creative, medium, target segment, or product itself sometimes lead to changes in sales, even though increases in the level of advertising by itself does not. Second, informative appeals may be more important early rather than late in the product’s life cycle. Conversely, emotional appeals may be more effective late rather than early in a product’s life cycle.

These findings have two important *implications* for advertisers. First, to increase effectiveness, advertisers should modify content more than increase weight or frequency. Second, advertisers need to test and typically vary the content of their advertising with the life stage of the product.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Attitudes ▶ Brands ▶ Emotion ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Meta-Analysis

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# Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of

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In the 1990s, accountability of advertising came high on the agenda in the commercial communication world. As a result a growing need for knowledge about the way the media environment influenced advertising effectiveness emerged. Standardized tools and new media studies were developed. And after 2000, greater actionability for media planners even on a day-to-day basis was incorporated into these measurement tools. Nowadays there is little argument in the commercial as well as academic world that campaigns should be monitored to better manage them in the marketplace (→ Advertisement Campaign Management).

Several factors were responsible for this development. On the advertisers' side, financial control and return on investment (ROI) were stressed more in relation to advertising efforts than in the period before. The enormous growth of traditional and new media types and vehicles combined with an increase in commercial messages fighting for attention. This situation made involved parties curious as to which advertising messages are "getting over the hurdle." As Franz (2000, 459) concluded: "This is the situation media research has to face in the near future: an unimaginable number of media for a more or less constant number of media users with limited time, money and (most important) attention capacities. The psychological key to coping with the overwhelming variety of media is selectivity." And → advertising effectiveness studies are necessary to conclude which messages can "fight" against this increasing selectivity and which messages get attention.

In this entry three topics will be elaborated. Which research designs are adequate for measuring ad effect? Which key performance indicators, divided into advertising response and brand response, have to be selected? What future developments, like more insight into low attention processing, can we expect?

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Studying advertising effectiveness has an easy part and a difficult part (Bronner & Reuling 2002). Measuring advertising awareness and advertising response is the easy part. Any advertising study can measure awareness either *continuously* ("tracking design"), where different groups of respondents are contacted on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis, or *pre/post* (before and after the campaign), where different groups of respondents are contacted at two different points in time. The difficult part is to answer the questions "What was the effect of the campaign upon brand response variables like brand awareness, brand sympathy, and brand usage?" and, if there is an increase in positive direction, "Is this increase due solely to the advertising campaign?"

### Problems of the Pre/Post Model

Simple tracking and pre/post designs are not enough to answer these difficult questions, for two reasons: (1) an upturn in → attitudes or → brand ratings may have had nothing

to do with the advertising; and (2) the chicken-or-the-egg problem arises if the “campaign aware” group has more positive attitudes or brand ratings than the “not-aware” group. The difficulty is to answer the question, “Was the increase in the number of positive ratings solely due to the advertising campaign?” Perceptions and behavior could have improved for a variety of reasons. The increase may have had nothing to do with the advertising.

### Problems of the Exposed/Non-Exposed Model

Another possibility is to carry out only a post-measurement and divide it into two segments: exposed and non-exposed. Some researchers try to deduce effects by cross-tabulating these two groups with effect variables. But it is clear that  $\rightarrow$  selective exposure can cause differences. If young people are more exposed and in advance have more positive attitudes, the correlation between exposed and positive attitudes is spurious. One also needs the “starting scores” of exposed and non-exposed citizens.

If, say, the post-measurement shows that the “exposed” group uses more energy-saving devices than the “non-exposed” group, can advertising receive the credit for this change? Not necessarily! As is often observed, it may be that a positive attitude toward energy saving has increased advertising awareness. In other words, the exposed population may already have had better energy-saving attitudes before the campaign than the non-exposed.

In commercial advertising studies we see the same phenomenon: people with sympathy for brand X have a higher advertising awareness of that brand. So in a post-measurement the exposed have a higher brand X sympathy score than the non-exposed. It is obvious that we cannot ascribe this difference to the campaign. The exposed population already had sympathy for brand X long before the campaign started. This is what is sometimes called the “chicken-or-the-egg problem”: which came first – brand sympathy or ad awareness?

### Combination of the Two Models as a Solution

What is the solution? When we combine the two designs (pre/post and exposed/non-exposed) we obtain a very powerful tool (Table 1). For each effect variable, the campaign effect score  $E = (a - b) - (c - d)$ . The part  $(c - d)$  can be considered as an indicator about developments taking place in the world concerning this effect variable that are not due to the campaign. Thus the term  $(c - d)$  represents the changes that take place separately from the campaign. So we can separate campaign influence from other factors such as high levels of media attention.

The main question in the scheme above is how to establish in the pre-test whether someone is exposed to the campaign or not. The solution is the use of panels ( $\rightarrow$  Survey). Data are collected in two ways. In the *combined panel/ad hoc design* a pre-measurement is

Table 1 Logic of methodological designs for campaign effects

	Before ( $t_0$ )	After ( $t_1$ )
Exposed	b	a
Non-exposed	d	c

carried out in sample X. After the campaign this sample is subjected to a limited reinterview, only to establish if they were exposed to the campaign or not. These exposure scores are added to the pre-measurement. An independent post-measurement is carried out in sample Y in which both exposure and effect variables are measured.

In a *panel design* a pre-measurement is carried out and after the campaign a full reinterview with effect variables and exposure questions takes place. Many clients consider the first of these options as too expensive and statistically complicated. The second option, a panel with full reinterviewing, is easy to grasp and delivers adequate data for the scheme.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

*Strategic communication management* is a method in which communication is continuously measured and analyzed and the media strategy is adapted to improve its effectiveness and efficiency (→ Strategic Communication). Den Boon et al. (2005, 64) make the following comparison to explain the core elements of strategic communication management: “it works like driving a car: concentrate on where you want to go, where the other cars are and how the vehicle is performing. Use a dashboard with a navigator to help get where you want to go.” These authors also describe the five central elements of strategic communication management, all centered on key performance indicators: (1) definition of key performance indicators by the advertiser in relation to brand and target group; (2) monitoring of own key performance indicators and those of the competition; (3) analyzing performance of the media and their synergy in terms of effectiveness and efficiency in achieving these key performance indicator targets; (4) analyzing media strategy in terms of optimal contact frequency of different media and optimal timing; and (5) adapting media and creative strategy.

Of course the measured indicators vary according to campaign and measurement model, but a general line can be detected and Table 2 sketches the most used metrics.

## Ad Response

Daniel Starch wrote as long ago as 1923 that for an advertisement to be successful it must be (1) seen, (2) read, (3) believed, (4) remembered, and (5) acted upon. In the Starch

Table 2 Key performance indicators in advertising effect studies

		<i>Dependent variable</i>	
		Ad response	Brand response
<i>Type of reaction</i>	Cognitive	Spontaneous recall of ad	Top-of-mind awareness
		Recognition of ad	(Un)aided brand awareness
		Detailed recall	Familiarity with brand
	Affective	Specific ad beliefs	Brand image/liking
		General ad likeability	Brand relationship/loyalty
	Conative	Coupon response	Purchase intention
		Website visit	Trial

philosophy, as today, an advertisement must first be seen. So we start the detailed description of the cells of Table 2 with ad response—cognitive. How can we measure adequately if a consumer has seen an ad (*cognitive response*)? In the research world there are two schools of thought on this: (1) measure spontaneously (recall, e.g., “What brand of beer was advertised during TV program x?”), or (2) show the TV commercial or print ad and ask if the consumer has seen it (recognition). The discussion of which method is better has been going on for 40 years. Smit studied this problem in several experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory) and concludes (1999, 110) that measuring noticing ads by means of recognition results in more correct claims. DuPlessis (1994) has an explanation for this result: visual prompts (as used in recognition) fit the memory traces better than verbal prompts (as used in recall). Advertising is largely visual, so it is logical to use visual methods to measure effects.

For *affective ad response* in a standardized approach, one set of beliefs about ads is used to be able to compare strong and weak points of the ads over all beliefs. But because campaigns and resulting ads have different communication goals, a better approach seems to be to adapt the measured beliefs to the goals.

For *conative ad response* behavioral measures can be used – as opposed to relying on consumer research to measure if the ad is seen and what consumers’ reactions are. In the classic situation coupon response was such a measure. Nowadays print ads and TV commercials include in many cases a lead to an Internet site or a free telephone number. Post hoc qualitative research among coupon senders or site visitors can indicate more about the advertisement’s role.

### Brand Response

The effect of advertising upon brand awareness (*cognitive brand response*) is in nearly all effect studies measured in three steps: top of mind (“Which beer brands do you know?” – first one mentioned), spontaneous (“Which beer brands do you know?” – all brands mentioned), aided (“Here is a list of beer brands with their logos. Which ones do you know at least by name?”). Familiarity can also be measured and is a more nuanced scale (“just heard of/know just a little/know fair amount/know very well”; → Memory; Information Processing).

For the measurement of *affective brand response* the brand that is the focus of the campaign and the main competitors are measured on a salient list of attributes (brand beliefs) relating to corporate-, product-, and user-profile facets. Smit et al. (2007) describe validated instruments that can be used, for example the multidimensional brand personality construct proposed by Aaker (1997), based on the famous “Big Five” in personality research.

Likely changes in behavior (*conative brand response*) are measured through the introduction of such measures as purchase consideration and intention. Purchase intention measures on a kind of probability scale are a generally accepted measure for the conative part of brand response. For new products a trial measure is more common (“As you may have heard brand x is bringing out . . . How likely is it that you would try them in the first few months after they become available in the shops?”). Another measurement tool is using a constant sum procedure (“Please divide 100 points over the brands in your



evoked set in relation to buying probability”). The advantage of this procedure is that we get a better understanding of the relative position of a brand.

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

At least three developments will influence ad measurement: low attention processing, simultaneous media usage, and multimedia synergy effects.

As already stated, recognition is a more powerful memory system than recall, but as Heath (2004) states, advertising can influence future buying decisions even when subjects do not recollect ever having seen the ad. His *low-attention-processing (LAP) model* uses passive and implicit learning to create and reinforce links between elements in advertising and emotional “markers” in semantic memory. It predicts that advertising can work being seen several times, and that brand associations reinforced by this repetition may remain in memory long after the ad itself has been forgotten (Heath 2004, 37). Neuro-marketing may shed more light on this phenomenon in the next years.

Increasing *simultaneous media exposure* also raises questions on how media advertising should be planned and measured in the near future (Schultz et al. 2005). Consumers use increasingly multiple forms of media, all at the same time; younger people especially sometimes use three or more media at the same time (e.g., Internet, radio, TV). They are exposed to messages simultaneously. What about conflicting message exposures occurring simultaneously?

Finally, the use of *multimedia and cross-media strategies* will influence the measurement of advertising effectiveness. Successful campaigns more and more use several media types to effectively communicate their message (Bronner & Neijens 2006). Interaction of different media in one campaign can have a number of synergy effects (Bronner 2006). Multimedia campaigns show higher brand effects (Chang & Thorson 2004). In the effect research in the future there will be a strong need not only to detect the effects of a campaign but also to be able to ascribe these effects to certain media or combinations of media.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertisement Campaign Management ► Advertising ► Advertising Effectiveness ► Advertising Strategies ► Attitudes ► Brands ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Information Processing ► Memory ► Selective Exposure ► Strategic Communication ► Survey

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## Advertising, Emotions in

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Emotions are fundamental to the human experience, so it is not surprising that advertisers employ emotional appeals to evoke specific feelings in consumers. Today's commercials, print ads, and Internet interstitials generate a range of emotional reactions from humor and elation to shame and disgust, from arousal and fear to sorrow and pity (→ Excitation and Arousal).

Emotions serve several roles in → advertising. An important function of emotional stimuli is to attract viewers by capturing their → attention. Advertisers only have a few moments to hook viewers before they switch channels, turn the page, or scroll down a website, and emotional information is particularly adroit at getting noticed (→ Exposure to Communication Content). Once advertisers have that attention, feelings are used to associate a product or service with a particular emotion. Often advertisers simply use narratives to entertain consumers with the intention that consumers will return the favor with a purchase.

## DEFINITION

Aristotle identified “pathos” as emotion-based argument designed to play upon the audience’s fears and desires. Advertising is a paid form of persuasive communication – compact 30-second arguments – conveyed through the media by an identified sponsor (→ Persuasion). Marketers use advertising to create awareness, to inform, and to position their goods and services as they attempt to convince consumers that their brands are preferable to the competition. Advertisers use verbal (commonly referred to as “copy”) and visual information to generate certain feelings within audiences. Specifically, advertisers use → stereotypes, symbols, and narrative devices to evoke these reactions.

Emotion is often defined as strong feelings or an aroused mental state directed toward a specific object. Emotions are manifested cognitively, behaviorally, and physiologically (→ Emotion). There are several *competing conceptualizations of emotion*. In the 1980s, for instance, work in consumer behavior, borrowing from discrete emotion models, identified several basic emotions such as joy, elation, fear, and surprise. More recent work has found that fundamental emotions map within a two-dimensional model consisting of arousal and pleasure. It is generally thought that emotion is responsible for the human propensity to move toward stimuli and situations that are pleasurable and to move away from or avoid information that signals danger. Current research suggests that emotion colors most experiences and influences many decisions.

During the 1980s, consumer behavior researchers also reported that attitude toward the ad – the feelings consumers experience when viewing an ad – could both directly and indirectly influence thoughts and feelings toward the brand as well as purchase intention, especially for low-involvement and previously unknown products. The value of emotion in advertising is increasing as research continues to show, especially in the area of brain imaging, that emotion influences much of the consumer decision process. Not surprisingly, some of the most memorable commercials are those that evoked powerful feelings.

## HISTORY

Early advertising was not as emotion-evoking as it is today. From the beginnings of modern advertising through the early 1900s, advertising was chiefly informational in nature. Ads were simple and consisted primarily of text, much like today’s classified ads, as advertisers announced new services or the availability of products and informed potential consumers how to procure those products. As advertising developed into a profession during the second half of the nineteenth century, the *AIDA approach* (attention, interest, desire, and action), a hierarchy-of-effects model, guided much advertising thinking. Desire represented the emotional component of the persuasion process that was considered necessary to move consumers to take action. Much training in advertising and persuasion-based professions such as advertising sales continues to utilize AIDA-type models (→ Advertising as Persuasion).

In the early 1900s the look of advertising was altered by printing technology as well as by several creative directors who believed it was important to use images to evoke feelings, for example of status and patriotism (→ Printing, History of). Glossy magazine ads for Cadillac emphasized the status and prestige associated with ownership of the automobile.

The diffusion of → television in the 1950s represented a powerful means of *combining images and audio* in commercial messages to evoke emotions. An early commercial for the pain reliever Anacin in the US, notably annoying though highly successful, anecdotally gave viewers a headache as they watched an animated mallet pound repeatedly on-screen. Created by television advertising pioneer, Rosser Reeves, the Anacin commercial is often pointed to as an example that advertising does not have to be liked to be effective. Other successful ad campaigns that annoyed viewers include “Don’t squeeze the Charmin,” featuring Mr Whipple admonishing shoppers not to squeeze toilet tissue in the supermarket, and a campaign for Wisk, the laundry detergent that removed the “Ring around the collar.”

The role of emotion in advertising increased as many products achieved parity and consumer behavior research become more sophisticated. For example, today many commercials for investment brokers such as Merrill Lynch strive to emphasize security and comfort as a means of differentiation.

Emotion plays a significant role in → political advertising as well. Tony Schwartz created several notable political ads that evoked strong emotions about election candidates. In one memorable spot for Lyndon Johnson’s US Presidential re-election, the image of a girl pulling petals from a daisy was juxtaposed with a countdown to a nuclear explosion. The commercial was designed to evoke fear and doubt about the candidacy of Johnson’s opponent, Barry Goldwater. Political advertising can either seek to foster positive feelings toward the sponsoring candidate or to disparage an opponent by evoking fear and distrust. Much research has found negative advertising to be very effective in political campaigns because the negative emotions come to be associated with the targeted candidate.

### COMMON APPEALS

Although advertisers attempt to appeal to a range of emotions that include pleasantness, elation, accomplishment, and guilt, three *emotional appeals* represent the majority of emotional appeals in consumer advertising.

Estimates indicate that up to 50 percent of mainstream consumer advertising is *humor*-based. These messages contain instances of slapstick humor, self-disparaging spokespeople, and funny slice-of-life stories. Humor is thought to work by attracting and maintaining attention, enhancing liking for the brand, and by creating favorable feelings that can become associated with the brand. Not surprisingly, humor is thought to be more effective for low-involvement products. “Where’s the beef?” was a very popular campaign from the mid-1980s that Wendy’s restaurants used to compare its hamburgers to those of its competitors. In the signature commercial, a grandmotherly woman continually asks an employee, “Where’s the beef?”

On the other end of the spectrum, marketers endeavor to persuade consumers by creating *feelings of tension and fear*. Using the concept of fear appeals as in the communication field, ad creators attempt to scare consumers by creating fear and perceptions of threat. As a result, consumers become more vigilant in their search for alternatives to reduce their vulnerability. Usually toward the end of the commercial, the marketer’s brand or service is positioned as a preferred alternative to reduce the threat and to protect oneself and the family. Products such as auto and home insurance,

retirement savings, and theft prevention devices are often advocated using threatening appeals. Ads for personal-care products also employ fear appeals. For many decades, Listerine executives emphasized the social ostracism, loss of romance, and dead-end careers caused by halitosis. The mouthwash was touted as a proven way to avoid such undesirable outcomes (→ Fear Induction through Media Content).

It is estimated that from 10 to 20 percent of mainstream advertising contains *sexual images and references*. These images mostly consist of images of scantily clad women in provocative poses or couples in heated embraces. Research shows that sexual information evokes an emotional response that, depending on the receiver and contextual variables, is positively arousing. Sexy images attract and maintain attention and often serve to communicate a compelling benefit of buying and using a brand. Research supports a distraction hypothesis such that sexual information is more likely to be remembered at the expense of brand information (e.g., brand name, headlines). However, consistent use of ads that contain sex can serve to imbue brand identities with sexual meaning. For example, Calvin Klein and Victoria's Secret are brands that evoke sexual thoughts and feelings because of their long-running use of sexualized ad images. As expected, sexual appeals most often appear in ads for low-involvement and expressive products (e.g., fashion, fragrance, entertainment).

### MEASURING EMOTIONAL RESPONSES

Emotional reactions to advertising are assessed several ways in industry and academic research. The most common method involves asking participants to view a commercial and to respond to semantic differential items, adjective checklists, or visual representations of states of feeling. In some industry research settings, commonly referred to as copy-testing, viewers are verbally asked to rate their feelings on an interval scale. A closely related method, often used in political advertising research, requires respondents to register their feelings in real time by turning a dial. A criticism of these methods is that they introduce potential bias and inaccuracy because they force viewers to cognitively assess their emotional state.

To avoid response bias, researchers have increasingly employed physiological indicators to assess emotion. Feelings can be measured by monitoring perspiration (e.g., galvanic skin response), facial muscle contractions, pupil dilation, and heart rate. Although these methods are costly and require expertise to administer, they are considered to offer a more reliable reflection of the emotional responses consumers experience when viewing advertising compared to paper-and-pencil-based measures (→ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of; Research Methods).

More recently, researchers have begun to look to *brain science and brain imaging* to assess emotion in response to advertising. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technology is used to determine areas of the brain that are stimulated by certain advertising features. Such methods are promising but prohibitive to most researchers because of cost and lack of availability for this type of research. However, brain imaging and other advanced methods answer calls from within the field, from both practitioners and scholars, to better understand the role of emotion and consumer response. For example, in 2003 the Advertising Research Foundation joined with the American Association of Advertising

Agencies to sponsor research designed to enhance emotion assessment and to increase understanding of the role of emotion in the consumer behavior process.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Extended Parallel Process Model ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Media Effects ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Research Methods ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Television

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## **Advertising, Endorsement in**

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In the fields of consumer research, communications, and → persuasion, few concepts have been studied more over the decades than that of endorsers in advertisements. An endorser can broadly be defined as any individual who appears in an advertisement as a spokesperson for that product. The endorser can be a well-known actor, athlete, or any other person with celebrity status (→ Celebrity Culture; Stars), or another perceived expert such as a doctor, a scientist, or even the CEO of a firm. Using credible or celebrity endorsers to promote the product is a popular advertising technique used worldwide to attract → attention to the ad, enhance the persuasiveness of the message, increase recall of the ad, and make the brand stand apart from competitive products.

The origins of endorsers in advertisements can be traced to source credibility research in social psychology (Hovland & Weiss 1951–1952; Hovland et al. 1953; → Credibility Effects; Hovland, Carl I.). According to Hovland's model, the effectiveness of a message depends on the expertness and trustworthiness of the source. *Expertness* is defined as the perceived ability of the source (endorser) to make valid assertions. *Trustworthiness* is defined as the perceived willingness of the source to make valid assertions. The expertise and trustworthiness of an endorser in an ad are the two most important dimensions to credibility. An endorser that is seen as knowledgeable, someone with expertise, is more persuasive than one with less expertise. However, the influence of an expert endorser will be diminished if the person is seen as untrustworthy, i.e., dishonest, unethical, or unbelievable.

A third dimension, *attractiveness*, is sometimes associated with credible endorsers. The roots of source attractiveness also trace back to social psychological research. McGuire's (1985) model proposed that a message is more effective if the source is familiar, likeable, and/or similar to the receiver (consumer). *Familiarity* is knowledge about the endorser through exposure; *likeability* is affection for the endorser as a result of his or her physical appearance and behavior; and *similarity* is the supposed resemblance between the endorser and the consumer. If the endorser is seen as attractive to the consumer then persuasiveness is enhanced.

To a lesser extent, the dimension of *power* has been associated with endorsers in advertisements, but little work has been done with this construct. Power is the extent to which the endorser is perceived as having control over positive or negative sanctions and the ability to monitor whether or not the recipient accepts the endorser's position.

Over the decades, research has confirmed that expertise and trustworthiness are important dimensions of credible endorsers in advertisements. Attractiveness also has been found to be an important dimension, but not in every case. Ohanian (1991) found that attractiveness was not as strong as expertise when respondents indicated their intent to purchase a product. Other research found that endorser attractiveness enhances evaluations of the product when the attractiveness of the endorser was related to the product, as in the case of shampoo or cosmetics (Petty & Wegener 1985; Kamins 1990).

Beyond the expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness that the endorser brings to the brand, there are many culturally acquired meanings that are associated with the endorser that can explain why some celebrity endorsers work better than others. According to McCracken (1989), meaning is transferred from the endorser to the product on the basis of the roles they assume in their careers as well as their gender, age, status, personality, and lifestyle.

More recent research on endorsers indicates that while credible endorsers can influence perceptions of the advertisement and indirectly influence perceptions of the brand in a positive manner, the credibility of the company exerts a stronger direct effect on consumer's attitudes toward the advertisement, the brand, and their likelihood of purchasing the product (Lafferty & Goldsmith 1999).

While the use of endorsers is widespread and their ability to enhance the communication process is generally agreed upon, using endorsers is not without risks. A celebrity's behavior may embarrass the company and may compromise the → image of the brand that the endorser is promoting. Many endorsers have a morals clause in their contract

that allows the company to terminate the contract if a controversy arises. In addition, to insure the optimal success of an endorser, it is important that the endorser has star power but does not overshadow the product. The endorser also should be relevant to the advertiser's audience for that product. Finally, if an endorser is the spokesperson for too many products or companies, the endorser becomes overexposed. This can be detrimental to both the endorser and the companies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Attention ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Endorsement ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Image ▶ Persuasion ▶ Stars

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## **Advertising Ethics**

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Simply stated, “ethics” refers to standards of conduct derived from moral values. Those standards vary greatly from discipline to discipline and person to person, and even philosophers approach ethics from multiple directions (Spence & Van Heekeren 2005, 8). But in its most basic form these are concepts of right and wrong behavior, not limited to what is required by law (Drumwright & Murphy 2004; → Communication and Law; Advertising Law and Regulation). Law deals with only a limited range of “wrong” behavior, especially in the context of → advertising. In the US, for instance, the First



Amendment, along with practical enforcement limitations, prevent it from addressing most issues (→ Right to Communicate; Freedom of Communication). For the remainder, only the ethical standards of those involved in the advertising process stand as protection for consumers.

Public perception of advertising often is that “ethics” is a concept foreign to its practitioners. An annual “honesty and ethics” poll by Gallup consistently finds the public ranks advertising among the least ethical professions (e.g., Saad 2006). Indeed, study after study consistently finds that about 70 percent of consumers think that advertising often is untruthful (Calfee & Ringold 1994; → Truth and Media Content). This perceived ethical poverty, not surprisingly, leads to widely varying concerns and criticisms.

Whether or not advertising is conducted in an ethical manner ultimately is judged by the harm, or perceived harm, it does to consumers and to society as a whole (→ Media Effects). Advertising is criticized as causing people to buy products for which they have no need, manipulating the consumer, contributing to stereotyping (→ Stereotypes; Social Stereotyping and Communication), demeaning women (→ Women in the Media, Images of), and preying on children (→ Media Use by Children), along with a long list of other negative social impacts. Although some effects are intended by its creators, many or even most are potentially unintended consequences (Pollay 1986).

### INTENDED EFFECTS

Concerns about the intended effects tend to revolve around the manipulative potential of advertising. The distinction between advertising as → *information*, as → *persuasion*, and as *manipulation* is fundamental to assessing this impact on the → audience. In fact, research has shown that most advertisements contain few informational cues like price, quality, contents, etc. Informing consumers puts the decision-making power in their hands, while persuasion or manipulation tend to move that power progressively toward the advertiser. Besides the obvious fact that such a shift can negate consumers’ free will, a free market economy is erected on the principle of *consumer sovereignty*, whereby consumers hold decision-making power in the marketplace, so this arguably would undermine the entire economic system.

There is significant debate about whether advertising is sufficiently influential as to cause such negative effects (→ Advertising Effectiveness; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of), just as there are questions regarding media effects generally. It often is suggested that advertising creates wants or desires in consumers, but others counter that it merely helps to satisfy pre-existing wants. Consistent with → third-person effects theory, research indicates that people do tend to overestimate the effects of advertising (Gunther & Thorson 1992).

Because the power of advertising is subject to debate, criticisms related to these intended effects often dwell on the advertiser’s purpose or method. The ethics of forgoing facts and information in favor of reliance on images and emotional associations, for example, has received considerable attention. The most extreme example is the use of subliminal appeals, to bypass conscious thought processes. But evidence indicates that subliminal stimuli have no impact on purchase behavior.

One other aspect of intended effects looks at the product or service the advertiser intends to sell. Consequently, whether or not advertising should be used to sell ostensibly

harmful products like tobacco, alcohol, etc., has been subject to exhaustive exploration among scholars (e.g., Pollay 1993). However, most research and scholarly attention are centered on various effects that likely were not intended by the advertiser.

### UNINTENDED EFFECTS

It is the “side-effects” of advertising that most concern many observers, and most interest many researchers. Because advertising is so pervasive a part of modern cultural experience, with some clear influence on that culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts), discussion of those effects comes from numerous disciplines. Some health researchers, for example, study what → direct-to-consumer advertising is doing to the pressure placed by patients on their physicians, while some scholars in women’s studies explore the impact of advertising on women’s self-images. Indeed, new issues arise regularly, as new promotional techniques, new products, and new media are introduced to society that might present some new risk to the audience.

Some people are more at risk than others, thereby placing a greater ethical burden on advertisers who target those people. While the power of advertising to affect consumers individually and collectively is uncertain, it is generally recognized that some categories of consumer are more susceptible to those effects. The elderly, the immobile, the transient, the poor, and the poorly educated are such groups. Probably the most studied “susceptible” group, though, is children.

Children have become a serious target for advertisers in recent years, and because of their minimal cognitive and social development there is evidence that they may be more easily swayed than adults and that the youngest of them do not understand the selling purpose of advertising (Roedder John 1999). Schools, in fact, have become a major vehicle for reaching youth, as manufacturers are discovering more and more means by which to promote their products within the halls and on the grounds of those child-centered venues (→ Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span; Developmental Communication).

Beyond attention to vulnerable populations there is a variety of issues entailing advertising’s effects on other segments of society, or on society as a whole. Because advertising’s purpose generally is to sell products, the collective effect of this effort is seen as promoting consumption and a consumer lifestyle. This, in turn, may lead to depletion of our natural resources and an inversion of the free market structure by increasing demand and, again, shifting power from the consumer to the supplier.

A corollary of this is that advertising contributes to what many feel is a serious weakness of modern society: materialism. As clear as this negative consequence of advertising may appear to the casual observer, it is not without arguments to the contrary. Schudson (1984), for example, presents evidence that society is not as materialistic as commonly believed, including the fact that the majority of retail sales occur during the weeks just before Christmas as products are purchased for gift-giving.

Other prospective effects not typically intended by advertisers include the stereotyped portrayals of gender and racial roles, ethnic cultures, professions, and so forth (→ Stereotyping and the Media; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). This is a complicated topic because stereotyping is efficient communication, it aids in targeting groups of

consumers, and it can be used to humorous effect, but it also can create or perpetuate negative beliefs about the depicted type.

Advertising also is claimed to affect value systems (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on), including the dilution of cultural values, especially where advertising from first world countries is exported to the third world. But related to that is the concern that traditional values (e.g., modesty) even within the first world are diminished by the prevalence of modern values like the sexual sell. And the fact that advertising often uses poor grammar, misspellings, and other linguistic convolutions leads to concerns about its potential for polluting language, as well.

Although the list of suspected effects is effectively endless, with new topics added almost daily, one other issue is particularly worthy of mention. Because advertising funds many media, along with the news and entertainment content they carry, much attention has been given to the potential for abusive influence by advertisers (Baker 1994). A concern is that because the media rely on advertisers, of course, they may be told to exclude certain content under threat of losing future financial support. But perhaps an even greater concern is that the media may self-censor to avoid offending advertisers, even without overt influence. The audience, as a result, may be receiving highly filtered or even biased news and entertainment (→ Bias in the News). This criticism, too, has been subject to counterargument (→ Media Production and Content).

## **DEVELOPING AND PLACING ADVERTISEMENTS**

As advertising has developed more sophistication, advertisers and their agencies have become more advanced in their collection and use of consumer data. Once the province of those engaged in direct mail advertising, data mining is now a key to many print, broadcast, and online advertising campaigns. The methods by which advertisers collect that information, and the uses to which it is put, have grabbed public attention and even aroused fear. As children became serious users of the → Internet parents became especially concerned about advertisers “talking” to the youngest members of their households, since children can be more willing to disclose private facts about themselves and their families. And when advertisers began sharing data with their “marketing partners,” to build enormous databases with hundreds of pieces of information about individual consumers, concerns that advertisers might lack ethical self-restraint resulted in law-makers and regulators taking a closer look at these practices.

Related to these growing worries over privacy is the growing annoyance over advertisers’ methods that intrude into consumers’ private lives. Telemarketing, unsolicited “junk” mail, and their Internet counterparts, spam and pop-up advertisements, all have provoked articles alleging advertisers have crossed some ethical line. A number of laws have resulted to deal with these offenses (→ Internet Law and Regulation), as the result of arguments and, in some cases, research showing that consumers are offended by these techniques.

Even the billing practices of advertising agencies have garnered major attention in the context of ethics. Not long ago the head of a major advertising agency was found guilty of over-billing the government, which resulted in her receiving jail time and being ordered to write a code of ethics. General business ethics, then, also plays a role in the ethics of advertising.

## THE BROADER VIEW

Most research dealing with advertising ethics focuses on a specific effect or criticism of advertising, like those above, rather than studying the broad ethical principles or codes. There is a stream of research that looks at whether or not advertising professionals are concerned about ethics (Drumwright & Murphy 2004), but relatively little has been done in that area and the results are mixed. The Catholic church even conducted research into whether or not advertising is ethical, and likewise drew conclusions that were both positive and negative (Pontifical Council for Social Communication 1997).

Because much of this deals with policy and societal values – what should be, rather than what is – a large portion of the research in this area is critical, qualitative, even legal, rather than quantitative in nature. This is a difficult area of research, because the issues often evoke strong emotions even in the researchers. Some of those studies clearly are conducted with a priori agendas. Therefore, it is no surprise that conclusions are unclear. But because advertising touches every aspect of society, and appears to have great cultural influence, people from a broad range of disciplines obviously believe it is important that advertising be handled responsibly.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Direct-to-Consumer Advertising ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Image Ethics ▶ Information ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Persuasion ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ Self-Regulation of the Media ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Truth and Media Content ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## Advertising Frequency and Timing

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The frequency and timing of advertising message exposures plays an important role in advertising campaign management, specifically media planning. However, when planning an advertising campaign, this is not as important as addressing questions about the advertising goal (what is to be achieved), the target groups (who is to be reached), and the budget (amount). The question at the heart of the overall strategy is how many exposures are ideally needed to reach a target person and within what time frame (→ Advertisement Campaign Management; Advertising Strategies; Media Planning).

A number of restrictions must be faced when resolving this question: the budget is limited, the time frame of the advertising campaign is often determined by exterior circumstances, the chosen media are not endlessly available, etc. Determination of the exposure frequency and timing is also closely linked to other elements of the media schedule. Generally though, this is a multilayered, interactive, and, in the ideal case, integrated process. In practice, the decisions of media planners are strongly influenced by their own experiences and the standard work processes in their companies. However, there are a whole range of supportive tools and theories.

### ADVERTISING EXPOSURE AND COVERAGE IN MEDIA PLANNING

The number of times a target person is exposed to an advertisement is by no means the only control parameter used in media planning. One of the most important *planning parameters* is the total gross number of exposures, also known as gross rating points (GRPs), i.e., the total number of exposures achieved with one advertising campaign, usually expressed as a percentage of the target group but written without the percentage sign. If, for example, a target group of persons aged between 20 and 40 years is reached with 200 GRPs, then this means that each person has an average of two exposures to the ad. However, this provides no information about how many exposures reach each individual. Even people with zero exposures are included in this calculation. In media planning practice, only the average number of exposures, based on the total number of persons reached, is used. This opportunity-to-see (OTS) parameter is obtained by dividing the total number of exposures by the net coverage or the total number of persons

who were reached at least once. OTS is therefore the average number of times the target persons are reached by an advertising campaign.

A more detailed breakdown provides *information about the exposure distribution*, i.e., the exact number of persons reached by what dosage of exposures. This exposure distribution can form the basis for defining “effective coverage” if one assumes, for instance, that a certain number of exposures is necessary in order to achieve a specific advertising goal. Only a certain number or dosage of exposures, for instance three or more exposures, is then taken into account in the effective coverage. All of these parameters can then be used as a control parameter for media planning, when addressing the issue of which advertising agent in what genre of media is selected and occupied – in other words, which TV station, and which programs and advertising blocks are chosen for broadcasting the spots; in which → magazines ads are placed, etc. Large institutionalized market media studies or electronic measuring devices such as → “people-meters” form the basis of the media plans, which also supply the basic data on coverage and exposure build-up. The measures and processed data are then incorporated into media planning programs. The probable use and probability distribution, frequently the binominal model, are often used as a reference. Here, the intermedial or cross-media genre planning poses an ongoing challenge, in which the exposure levels of various media must be compared and evaluated. The type and quality of the planning data prepared for various advertising media also vary considerably, and very heavily influence the planning process.

### HOW MANY EXPOSURES ARE NECESSARY?

With regard to the planning requirements for frequencies of exposure and timing, it is difficult to *define general rules*. Time and again, research projects have confirmed the tremendous individual-level effects of advertising. A lot of studies from the 1960s and 1970s emphasized the amount of time and number of exposures. “Needless to say, the results of this research have been inconclusive and sometimes contradictory,” state Wicken and Solomon (1998). Nevertheless, media agencies have rules of thumb, e.g., for the desired advertising pressure in an advertising medium during a campaign in the shape of GRPs or OTS per week or month. These rules of thumb have most certainly arisen from everyday experience, from “heuristic” insights, in the best possible sense. However, they do not remain constant, either in terms of the time factor or by international comparison. After all, media environments are subject to fundamental and ever faster processes of transformation that are characterized by different cultural and technical starting conditions.

Thus, suggestions for achieving advertising pressure in specific cases are generally stated quite broadly. In their *annotated bibliography* of condensed research on advertising effects over a quarter of a century, Schönbach et al. (2002) write that the optimal frequency of exposure to an advertisement is somewhere between 2 and 20. However, the majority of research summaries that make a statement are probably closer to three or four exposures. A large number of individual studies also suggest that three or more exposures is a good control parameter for “effective coverage.” On the other hand, one can assume that if an individual is subjected to a large number of exposures, it will have a *wear-out effect* on him or her (Wicken & Solomon 1982). Too much of the same advertising leads to saturation, boredom, no longer noticing an ad, or even – in rare cases, presumably – to

reactance. As a rule, too much exposure to the same ad will no longer have an effect and, in financial terms, will simply lead to overspending. Good advertising campaigns try to avoid such wear-out effects by clearly changing the motif, mostly within the context of a general theme and a solid degree of recognition.

### **EFFECTIVE FREQUENCY VERSUS REGENCY PLANNING**

The theory that a consumer requires several exposures for an ad to have a certain effect ultimately draws on scholarly thinking and the assumption that there exists an effect or response curve. One basically assumes that every exposure produces a certain effect. This usually leads to a diminishing rise in the saturation function, which corresponds to the law of declining marginal utility.

In addition to the theory of effective frequency, another partly competing theory called “recency planning,” conceived by Erwin Ephron (1997), was first introduced in the mid-1990s. The theory of recency planning is essentially concerned with the sales promotion function of advertising, and it has played a major role in media planning and research in the United States, in particular. It is based on the assumption that advertising is most effective when a consumer wants to buy or replace a certain product. Hence, from this perspective, the receiver determines the effectiveness of the exposures. Advertising messages are most effective shortly before a potential buyer makes his or her purchase decision. The first exposure is the most effective. In recency planning it is, therefore, not important whether a certain frequency of exposure is achieved, but rather whether the consumer is driven in the right direction prior to an act of purchasing. In the case of doubt, one exposure is sufficient. And since one is generally unaware when the purchasing act will take place, the recency model *advocates continuous advertising* and an advertising plan over short periods of time. With its recommendation for week-based advertising plans, the recency planning model harmonizes with measuring instruments such as John Philip Jones’s short-term advertising strength formula (STAS), which, to put it succinctly, measures the success of advertising according to the weekly sales following the advertising exposure (Jones 1995; Ephron 1997; McDonald 2004).

The argument behind this approach is not so much the declining efficiency of multiple exposures with a number of people as the higher efficiency of exposures with people who would not have been reached otherwise. An advertising plan based on this view would not be concerned with trying to achieve a certain effective frequency within a given time frame, but would instead be focused on trying to reach as many people as possible within that period. In other words, the recency model demands as high a coverage as possible. It is driven by very strong, short-term, sales-oriented research and an “instrument single source” household panel for measuring effectiveness.

Yet the discussion is not limited to a debate between effective frequency and recency planning. According to Colin McDonald (2004), it merely adopts a “new level of complexity.” Instead of merely applying rules of thumb, the planner’s or media researcher’s task is to optimize advertising measures in individual cases. Needless to say, certain rules apply that are not only aimed at directly conveying impetuses to buy, but also, in the classical sense, to conveying a message, as with “instruction.” This message might be concerned with the creation of an image and brand management or establishing

purchase preferences (→ Branding). Here, product launches, repositioning, or simply “new ideas” constitute special cases. Results from panel research also confirm that, e.g., when buying a car, new exposures that build on previous exposures over a longer period of time are considerably more effective than exposures that have no antecedents (Buhr & Halleemann 2005). At the same time, many studies have demonstrated that purchase decisions and product uses are strongly influenced by attitudes, brand preferences, images, etc. However, from a purely short-term perspective, the influence of advertising on these long-term tendencies that flow into the brand depot can hardly be measured.

### TIMING AND MONITORING ADVERTISING SUCCESS

To measure the effect of their advertising campaigns, many advertisers and agencies perform ongoing *advertising tracking*, in which indicators such as ad awareness, a → brand’s degree of popularity, → images, willingness to buy, etc. are asked about. Advertising recall or recognition tests are conducted to measure how well an ad is remembered. The trend of the measurement data allows one to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of advertising campaigns, the need for a change of motif, or the level of advertising pressure needed.

Modeling aimed at trying to establish a statistical link between advertising effectiveness indicators and the budget is also frequently carried out. Ideally, sales modeling will show how much advertising pressure (in terms of GRPs) is necessary, how long-term its effect is (“ad stock”), and in which periods one should advertise in order to support sales.

Modeling also offers clues about the *timing of advertising*. There are no general rules concerning this. Recency planning clearly recommends continuous advertising over very short planning periods. The only exception would be purely seasonal products, for which there are no buyers on the market during certain periods, e.g., Christmas trees. Yet so-called “flighting” is very common. This is when there are several clearly defined advertising phases per year, with intervals in between. Flightings are often used when budgetary constraints make it impossible to conduct continuous advertising. Special cases include “pulsing,” the fast interchange between high and low advertising pressure and intervals; “waving,” with rising and falling advertising pressure; as well as the “burst,” a short, massive advertising campaign, used, for instance, for launching a product. “Frontloading” is often used with product launches, i.e., the campaign starts with high advertising pressure, which then steadily declines. But the opposite, “backloading,” which is the steady increase of advertising pressure in order to make an advertising campaign more dramatic, is also possible (Hofsäss & Engel 2003).

Great importance is often assigned to *observing competitors’ advertisements*. If it is not possible to keep pace with the main competitor and to achieve a high share of advertising (share of spending) or share of voice (share of exposures), we recommend a niche strategy of periodic evasions, with little or no active competition. Based on this view of achieving a high share of advertising in order not to be completely engulfed by the competitor, the “flighting” strategy of applying short, intense advertising pressure is a logical choice. Yet this theory is contentious and has in any case not been empirically substantiated.

There is certainly no ideal method of planning advertising pressure and timing. Both are closely interlinked and interdependent. The experience of practitioners in media



agencies and of major advertisers plays a large role, supported by the continuous observation of campaigns with tracking, panel research, and statistical modeling as a control instrument of increasing importance.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Communication Management ▶ Image ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Planning ▶ People-Meter

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## **Advertising: Global Industry**

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Advertising is the key link in the mutually sustained global expansion of consumer goods and services industries and the media of communication that carry their commercial messages. In this structural context, → advertising is much more than the → images and brand names (→ Brands; Branding) that form the surface of → consumer culture. It is the life-blood of the media, and the motive force behind media industry development. Further, it is the publicly most visible dimension of → marketing, that is, the cultural industry that seeks to connect the producers of consumer goods and services with their potential markets, and in fact, to bring those markets into being. This integrated institutional relationship between production and consumption, with the advertising agency at its center, may be referred to as the “manufacturing–marketing–media complex.”

Advertising agencies produce and place advertising for their “clients,” the consumer goods or service companies that are the actual advertisers (not just “manufacturers”).

However, although the clients pay their “agents” for these services, agencies also derive income directly or indirectly from the media in the form of a sales commission paid in consideration of the media space and time, such as newspaper pages or television “spots,” that the agencies purchase on behalf of their clients (→ Advertising, Economics of).

## **FROM THE MULTINATIONAL TO THE GLOBAL ERA**

The period since World War II has seen the internationalization of the advertising industry proceed in tandem with the emergence of the “multinational,” now global, consumer goods corporation, as well as with the international expansion of new media by their capacity to carry commercial messages to → audiences. US-based advertising agencies in particular were backed by “common account” agreements with their clients from their home market, that is, the advertisers would have the same agency act for them in all the foreign markets in which they were becoming active. As well as arriving with such clients, US agencies were able to quickly dominate the advertising industries of the countries they entered because of their experience with the relatively new medium of television, the advertising medium par excellence.

By the 1970s, the influx of US advertising agencies had provoked some local resistance, and they became one of the targets of the rhetoric against “cultural imperialism” in that decade (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Subsequent expansion then had to proceed more through joint ventures in conjunction with national agencies. At this stage, internationalization was largely driven by US-based national corporations that built up a number of overseas subsidiaries and hence transformed themselves into “multinational” or “transnational” corporations. However, in the era of globalization, corporations no longer necessarily have a home in any one particular country, in terms of either their management or their capital investment. Globalization is marked by an interpenetration of different sources of capital and complexity of corporate structure and management that transcend any single national base (→ Globalization Theories). This is particularly well illustrated by the advertising industry, above all in the emergence of the “megagroups,” or groups of global advertising agencies.

## **ARCHITECTURE OF THE GLOBAL ADVERTISING INDUSTRY**

Megagroups are organizational and financial structures under which major international advertising agency networks, global corporations in themselves, have been consolidated so they can be coordinated at a higher level of management. This corporate architecture is probably unique to the advertising industry, as it arises from the history of the advertising business itself, and the patterns of growth it has assumed at the international level in recent decades.

Although the very first of these groups to be formed was in the US in the 1960s (the Interpublic Group), it was the British agencies Saatchi & Saatchi and WPP that transformed the industry internationally in the 1980s. Advertising agencies had traditionally been owned by their principals and/or staff, but this imposed limits on their growth in the global era. What the British agencies did was to raise capital by making themselves into

Table 1 Global architecture of the advertising industry

Megagroup	Country of origin	Media buying agencies and “creatives”
Omnicom	US	BBDO, DDB, TBWA, <i>OMD</i>
WPP	UK	JWT, Ogilvy & Mather, Young & Rubicam, Grey, <i>Group M</i>
Interpublic	US	McCann Erickson, FCB, Lowe, <i>Universal McCann</i>
Publicis	France	Saatchi & Saatchi, Leo Burnett, <i>Starcom, Zenith Optimedia</i>
Dentsu	Japan	Dentsu, Dentsu Young & Rubicam (+ 15% Publicis)
Havas	France	Euro RSCG, Arnold, <i>MPG</i>

Note: “Creatives” are listed in italics.

Source: *Advertising Age* (2006)

public companies, which then funded the acquisition of other agencies. Thus, WPP famously bought up two of the biggest and best-known US-based agencies, J. Walter Thompson (now JWT) in 1987 and Ogilvy & Mather in 1988. Around the same time, three big US agencies joined with each other to form Omnicom, while the French-based agencies Havas and Publicis also formed international groups in the 1990s.

Apart from the growth imperative, these epoch-making moves were motivated by the need to manage “client conflict” in a world in which the advertising industry was serving fewer but bigger clients on a global basis. Such advertisers do not tolerate a conflict of interest in which their advertising agency is also handling an account for one of their competitors. The global group is a solution to this problem – for example, Colgate and Unilever are competing clients, but the WPP group can keep them both, with Young & Rubicam handling Colgate, while Unilever goes through Ogilvy & Mather.

Table 1 summarizes the global architecture of the advertising industry, listing the groups in their order of size, as of mid-2006. The huge Japanese agency Dentsu has been included, for although it operates as a single agency, it has a share in Publicis, as well as a longstanding joint venture with Young & Rubicam.

The division of labor between the two key advertising functions of “creative” and media buying agencies has been consolidating in separate businesses over the last decade, that is, respectively, the production of advertising campaigns (→ Advertisement Campaign Management) and the placing of advertising in the media. The former is more in accordance with everyday perceptions of what advertising agencies do, but the strategic purchase of media space and time by “media agencies” is the most traditional and consequential of the whole range of functions that specialized agencies now perform for clients. Thus, in addition, the global groups characteristically include companies in related marketing disciplines, such as → public relations, and perhaps more specific forms of advertising, such as direct mail and, of increasing importance, “interactive” or Internet advertising (→ Direct-to-Consumer Advertising).

## ISSUES IN GLOBAL ADVERTISING

The first issue is the impact of trends in the advertising industry upon media development throughout the world. In an era in which advertisers have become more concerned

to measure the results of their advertising expenditure, and skeptical about the ability of traditional media, especially broadcast television, to deliver such results, the flow of advertising expenditure toward new media, notably subscription television (“pay-TV”) and, more dramatically, the Internet, is undercutting the “mass” media we have known in the past. Furthermore, there is growing evidence that newer forms of commercialization are blurring the traditional line between advertising and information/entertainment content. Agencies are now assisting advertisers with producing “branded content,” and advising on product placement, sponsorship, and other forms of nonadvertising promotion via the media.

Even before the advent of the multichannel environment offered by pay-TV, we had entered a “post-broadcast” era in which media choices became much more tailored to individuals and less social. Following cable and direct satellite services (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television), personal digital recorders (PDRs) have now appeared on the horizon, the latest in the spread of ever more interactive, mobile, and individuated modes or “platforms” for accessing audiovisual information and entertainment. For advertisers, this means ever more precise and personalized targeting of prospective consumers. The consequent drift to nonadvertising forms of promotion is tending to undermine the basic, traditional business model on which the relationship between advertisers and the media has rested since the advent of commercial broadcasting, namely, with the media amassing audiences for sale to advertisers, and instead, the trend will propel growth in new means of marketing delivery, particularly the mobile phone, the Internet, and interactive TV. This implies on the one hand a more fragmented society, but on the other, a more interactive relationship between producers and consumers.

Second, there are issues surrounding the relationships between advertisers and their agencies. This relates to the degree to which global advertisers dominate in a given national market, and still favor common account arrangements, now referred to as “global alignment.” Such a practice has the effect of locking out local or national agencies from ever winning the large, lucrative accounts of advertisers that are aligned globally with the global agencies, unless the local or national agencies themselves become affiliated with one of the global megagroups.

Either way, globalization is having an impact. However, also of interest is the precise pattern and extent of global–local interpenetration within the main agencies in a given country. The joint venture arrangements that characterized the 1970s continue to provide mutual benefits: the local agencies gain access to the global clients, while the global agency acquires local cultural knowledge. Yet perhaps it is no longer meaningful to distinguish between global and local agencies at all, in an era in which global agencies can make campaigns look local, and vice versa.

A third set of issues is more concerned with cultural questions of how advertisers and their agencies are approaching their markets. Of particular interest are the precise ways in which global products and advertising for them are being “glocalized,” that is, modified in accordance with local culture, including language. Contrary to theorists’ fears, global advertisers and agencies have not created a homogeneous world. Some inherently global products and services can be standardized, or advertised with the same global campaign in all markets, such as airlines. Most others require globalization, or an even more tailored approach, taking account of not just national cultural differences, but religious or rural/

urban differences. In this respect, we can see how culture, especially language and religion, forms a bastion against global advertising, but also how global advertising seeks to camouflage itself behind local cultures.

A fourth set of issues concerns the capacity of governments to properly regulate advertising in the global era (→ Advertising Law and Regulation), with its pressures for free trade and prevailing neo-liberal ideology favoring industry self-regulation, in spite of current public policy questions such as the role attributable to advertising in the problem of childhood obesity.

## PROBLEMATICS AND PROSPECTS

With the advent in social theory of poststructuralism and postmodernism (→ Postmodernism and Communication), the diversification of feminism, and the eclipse of Marxism, much less attention is now paid to advertising than in the heyday of critical work on advertising in the 1970s and 1980s. At that time, there was a social science literature that tended more toward behavioral effects, while a political economy approach pursued the ownership and control of advertisers and their agencies, and analyzed their business strategies (→ Political Economy of the Media). Within a → cultural studies or media studies perspective, there was a concentration on the cultural codes and ideological meanings of advertisements themselves as texts.

In contrast, recent theory and research have largely moved away from the study of advertising as such, and more toward consumer culture in general. In the process, there is also a useful fusion being achieved between the traditionally antagonistic camps of political economy and cultural studies, under the rubric of “cultural economy” (Jackson et al. 2000). There is also a recent “anthropological turn” developing, with anthropologists doing ethnographic fieldwork in advertising agencies, or among consumers and viewers of ads (Malefyt & Moeran 2003).

Although there has not been a truly comprehensive, internationally comparative, and historically contextualized work on the manufacturing–marketing–media complex since Armand Mattelart’s *Advertising international* of 1991, Frith and Mueller’s *Advertising and societies: Global issues* (2003) is a useful guide to the more recent literature.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Cross-Cultural ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Audience ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Cable Television ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Direct-to-Consumer Advertising ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Image ▶ Internet ▶ Marketing ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Global Firms ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television

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## Advertising, History of

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Advertising is a tenacious form. Originating in the commercial impulse to promote sales, versions of what might loosely be termed → “advertising” can no doubt be traced to wherever and whenever surplus product has needed to be disposed of. The proverb “good wine needs no bush,” for instance, is at least 2,000 years old. It refers to the vintner’s practice, common until well into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, of hanging shrubs or ivy around the door to indicate wine or beer available for sale within. The sense of the practice contained within the proverb is quite familiar – good products need no extra promotion.

There are probably numerous other instances of advertising-like activity in early history, but usage of the word in its contemporary sense appears to date from the latter part of the sixteenth century. The term “advertise” itself is from the French meaning to inform, warn, or announce. It is not the only term to have been associated with the products and practices of commercial promotion. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, commercial promotion was often described as “puffing,” with the related terms “puff” and “puffery” in widespread use. Other terms, including “blast,” “bubble,” and “push,” were also used to describe commercial efforts to boost sales, although, as in the case of the “South Sea Bubble,” these terms were often associated with speculative, dubious, or fraudulent activity. By the close of the nineteenth century, “advertising” had become the preferred term for the practices, products, and institutions of commercial promotion. The subtle changes in the language of promotion reflect broader changes in the technical and technological arrangements that have made up the institutions, form, and media of the advertising field.

Journalists, historians, and social and cultural theorists have approached advertisements as mirroring dominant values, → attitudes, and habits and thus as prime source material for divining the “spirit” or “pattern” of the age. This view of advertisements as socio-cultural source material has structured critical academic work within the disciplines of communication studies, sociology, and cultural and media studies (→ Critical Theory; Cultural Studies). For a variety of reasons, including the difficulty of gaining access to advertising agencies and sourcing historical evidence concerning working practices, work in these critical traditions has tended to focus upon *form* with advertisements analyzed as “texts” (→ Text and Intertextuality). This has sometimes been at the expense of analysis of the practice of advertising – the production processes, institutions, and media that make up the industry. A broad understanding of the advertising field, however, should encompass both elements.

## INSTITUTIONS

The modern sense of advertising as a commercial promotional endeavor can be traced partly to its institutional origins in attempts in the late sixteenth century to establish bureaus or registry offices where people could come for commercial information. Theophraste Renaudot established the *Bureau d'adresse et de rencontre* in France in 1630 and published one of the first advertising newspapers. This model informed the formation of similar offices and advertising papers in London and across Europe in the eighteenth century. These offices were variously described as centers of "adresse," "intelligence," "discoveries," "encounters," and "advice." By the middle of the eighteenth century, advertising newspapers proliferated across Europe in forms ranging from the state monopoly *Intelligenzblatt* in Prussia to the mixed economy of commercial newspapers in England. The office function, however, was largely superseded by the growing network of coffee houses across countries like England, France, and Prussia (→ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere; Public Opinion).

*Coffee houses* were intrinsically multifunctional, acting as centers for the communication and the exchange of commercial, political, cultural, and educational information as much as social and recreational venues. They played a central role in the development of city financial institutions (most notably Lloyds of London, which famously took its name from a coffee house), sometimes acting as travel agents, insurance agents, hotels, retailers, and what we would probably now call "conference centers." Their main connection, however, was to the press and thus to advertising. The earliest coffee houses distributed → newspapers and acted as reading rooms, some even promoting their own newsheets (→ Newspaper, History of).

Coffee houses were known for their role as forums for rational debate, but their significance as information centers for business and commerce should not be underestimated. Among other things, coffee houses took on the role of the *bureaus d'adresse*, as institutional spaces where commercial activity could be publicized and promoted. They were supported in this endeavor by publishing and/or circulating advertising sheets like the *City Mercuries* and John Houghton's *Collection for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade*. In London, the production of the *Mercuries* was inextricably linked to the coffee house trade, as coffee houses provided the key institutional mechanism for both gathering information and distributing the papers. Coffee houses were also closely linked to another key player in the early institutional development of advertising; the proprietary medicine trade. Proprietary medicine manufacturers or "quacks" were one of the largest and earliest proponents of advertising and they conducted much of their business through coffee houses, which often displayed and sold their products.

It was out of these early connections to coffee houses and newspapers that the *advertising agency system* developed. The first British advertising agency has been identified as Tayler and Newton, established in 1786. This was followed by Whites in 1800 and then in rapid succession in 1812 by Reynells, Lawson and Barker, and Deacons. These early advertising agencies were very closely linked to the newspaper industry. It has been supposed by historians and theorists of consumption and communication that these early agencies existed not to design or advise upon advertising but simply to sell advertising space in newspapers. While space-selling was a key activity in many early agencies, it is likely that the first agencies took on a broader variety of work than this might suggest.

Surviving archive material shows agencies involved in a number of activities including the distribution of news and newspapers, political parliamentary correspondence, and advice on the design and placing of advertisements. In addition, some nineteenth-century agencies in both Britain and the United States combined the sale of advertising space with a diverse range of services ranging from stationery and bookselling, coffee house trade, insurance, and coal sales to dentistry and undertaking. This diversity of function can be traced in many fields and is a reflection of a very different, pre-professionalized occupational structure. By the early twentieth century, advertising agencies in their recognizable contemporary form had begun to dominate the institutional field, with agencies increasingly offering a broad range of service functions to a number of clients or “accounts” under the “full-service agency” model.

*Full-service* was the term adopted by agencies, including for example James Walter Thompson and NW Ayer in the US and Benson’s in the UK, which sought to offer a complete, professional advertising service. Full-service agencies aimed to provide services that some agencies considered the province of the clients, including research and creative design (involving artwork, layout, and text or “copy”), in addition to account management and media space-buying. Such agencies would typically bill clients for advertising space that they bought at a commission (usually around 15 percent) from the media. Agencies would then retain this commission.

The full-service agency model competed with other institutional arrangements. Until well into the twentieth century, some advertising agencies provided a minimal advertising service, concentrating instead upon offering very low rates for advertising space by “commission splitting” or by bulk buying space, often in obscure, low-circulation journals, a practice known in the industry as “farming.” In addition, some large firms preferred to keep the design of their advertising in-house. By the middle of the twentieth century, the advertising industry had largely settled along the lines of the full-service model. At the end of the century, the institutional field remained dominated by large full-service agencies, but the field retains some diversity with “small-shop” specialist and “boutique” agencies coexisting alongside transnational advertising agencies (TNAAs). The latter are typically the products of long histories of international acquisitions, consolidation, and mega-mergers.

## FORM

Historians differ over the precise dates and status of the first printed advertisements. The word “advertisement” appears in print in the sixteenth century and over newspaper press announcements in the seventeenth century. These early examples were not really “advertisements” as the term is understood today. Rather, as evidenced by the publication in the 1600s of numerous notices of absconding servants, missing spouses, and stolen property under the heading of “advertisements,” the term was roughly interchangeable with “announcement” or “notice”. By the 1700s the heading “advertisement” was deployed in newspapers like the *London Post Man* to refer specifically to particular types of advertisement, for instance publisher’s notices. Other eighteenth-century newspapers, including the *Daily Courant*, disdained advertisements completely, refusing to accept them and referring to paid notices as “impertinences.”



Reservations about *accepting advertisements* had a strong hold on the press until well into the nineteenth century. While newspapers had a vested economic interest in accepting advertisements (as is often the case today, when many newspapers and other media depend upon advertising revenue for their continued existence), this vied with a powerful moral opprobrium. This ambivalent position is illustrated in the draconian regulations many newspapers imposed upon advertisers. The best known of these was the “agate-only” rule, which stipulated that paid advertisements could be accepted but must use only very small, classified typefaces. Advertisements that broke the column rules or featured illustrations were technologically difficult for newspapers to reproduce. This was not the only reason that newspapers were reluctant to accept them: equally important was the view that they were vulgar, frivolous, and anti-competitive. Advertisers used numerous techniques to circumvent these regulations and achieve display effects, for instance by using drop capitals, repetition, and acrostics. A small agate-type advertisement repeated numerous times across columns can be manipulated to produce patterns or spell out other words, and advertisers made inventive use of such techniques.

Although agate-only regulations were relaxed by the early twentieth century, newspapers remained reluctant to admit illustrated advertisements, often either refusing them or admitting them only at prohibitively expensive rates. Partly as a result of this regulative environment, advertisers used *other media* to create visual impact. Trade cards, broadsheets, and posters were used throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and these often featured an array of typefaces, visual effects, and illustrations. These advertisements often look “busy” by contemporary standards. Advertisers used a variety of typefaces and borders and often a number of small illustrations in an attempt to stand out. This contrasts with the minimalist styles that came to dominate by the end of the twentieth century, with the widespread association of “white space” with quality and distinction in both press and poster advertising.

In addition to visual display, historical advertisements also feature a range of rhetorical, persuasive devices. The language or “copy” of historical advertisements is often judged “innocent,” “crude,” or merely informative in comparison with contemporary equivalents. It is clear nevertheless that historical advertisements aimed to produce changes in the behavior of their audiences by using a range of different persuasive strategies (→ Persuasion). Pre-twentieth-century advertisements feature such devices as poetry, jokes, puzzles, rhythm, association, endorsement, and emotional blackmail in addition to product information. Samuel Johnson’s eighteenth-century comment regarding “the improper disposition of advertisements,” by which “the noblest objects may be so associated as to be made ridiculous,” reveals the very long historical disapproval of the rhetorical excesses of advertising. Purveyors of persuasive advertising have received steady criticism across the centuries on a variety of grounds including dishonesty, manipulation, vulgarity, and irritation, as well as social, political, economic, and, increasingly, environmental irresponsibility.

## MEDIA

Advertising is an institution that has, throughout its history, utilized a wide range of technologies to allow it to communicate with the public. Contemporary concerns about

the industry's unprecedented saturation of public and private space often center upon the use of new media technologies like radio, television, and the Internet to bring advertising into private, domestic spaces.

In Britain, nineteenth-century commentary in newspapers like *The Times*, in publications like *Punch*, and in short books and essays, combined with various legislative measures designed to regulate outdoor advertising, indicate that this capacity to intrude is not necessarily the province of any particular media technology. Advertising at the time had the capacity to pervade public and private space, urban and rural locations. Specifically, advertisements were posted or painted on walls, streets, windows, bridges, public transport, trees, barns, and cliff-faces. Bill-posters and direct mail also helped to ensure that advertising got into residential domestic spaces. In the early nineteenth century, outdoor advertising was largely unregulated and it is therefore impossible to gauge precise volumes.

Published comment and legislation nevertheless indicate high levels of public awareness of the "nuisance" of outdoor advertising. A series of legislative efforts began with the 1817 Metropolitan Paving Act and the 1839 Metropolitan Police Act, which were both intended to curb street advertising. The *popularity of outdoor advertising* in part reflects the restrictions imposed upon newspaper and periodical advertising. Poster advertising was not only relatively unregulated but offered greater reach and permanence than newspaper advertising. In addition, by the 1820s techniques had developed that allowed the production of large poster displays featuring up to 36 sheets printed up with large woodcut letters and illustrations. Sites for the display of such posters were, however, unregulated and unlicensed, and competition for sites and space within them was fierce. This led to a climate of nuisance bill-posting in which over-sticking, the defacing of private, residential property, and violent confrontations between rival bill-stickers were so commonplace that they became the stuff of urban folklore, immortalized in music hall songs. By the end of the nineteenth century, poster sites increasingly came under the jurisdiction of advertisement contractors who had purchased the exclusive right to particular hoardings. This, allied with an active stance on the enforcement of anti-bill-posting legislation, resulted in a new, more ordered poster display system.

From around the 1830s, gas lanterns were used to illuminate posters and retail premises, and by the 1870s, magic lanterns displays animated advertising messages. By such means, advertising played a significant role in the visual environment of nineteenth-century industrialized cities. Although important, posters were far from the only advertising media in widespread use. *Placard bearers* were also an extensively used form of outdoor advertising. Men, women, and children in smart, brightly colored costumes, carrying boards announcing drapers, pens, whisky, accommodation, exhibitions, and other services and events, were a common urban sight throughout the nineteenth century.

In post-Civil War America, individuals often worked in groups, sometimes sporting a letter or phrase each that linked up to spell out product names or slogans. Alternatively, placard bearers were got up to resemble the object advertised. These human peripatetic advertisements could also take more bizarre forms. "Obtrusive demonstrations," Charles Manby Smith remarked at the time, were commonplace in London, creating "a regiment of foot, with placarded banners; sometimes one of cavalry, with bill-plastered vehicles and bands of music; sometimes it is a phalanx of bottled humanity, crawling about in labeled

triangular phials of wood, corked with woful faces; and sometimes it is all these together, and a great deal more besides" (1853, 279).

Nineteenth-century advertising media also featured some largely forgotten devices and contraptions known as "*advertising machines*" or "*advertising vans*." These mobile devices came in a variety of shapes: globes, pyramids, and mosques shepherded by exotic others described at the time as "hindoos" and "arabs" were popular. Advertising vans varied enormously in shape but the emphasis was on scale and impact. These horse-drawn devices occasioned bitter complaint about the disruption they caused, terrorizing horses and stopping traffic. Contemporary accounts describe vans flanked by drummers, trumpet players, and other colorfully dressed attendants. The use of the term "drummer" to describe, pejoratively, a traveling salesman most likely originates in such displays. These mobile devices were complemented by large stationary devices designed to carry advertisements that stood in busy thoroughfares. Described in Sampson's (1874) history as "hideous glass obelisks," these appear to have fallen into disuse by the end of the century.

Much outdoor advertising was adapted to suit busy urban environments, but other forms traveled further afield. *Advertising clock cabinets* appeared in public houses; flagstones were stenciled; envelopes, notepaper, sails and bathing machines in coastal resorts, railway embankments, and even copper coins carried advertising; and trade cards, stickers, and handbills were posted through doors and distributed on the streets, in shops, and on buses, and even dropped by balloons from the air.

*The country* provided little respite, according to contemporary accounts: "You wander out into the country, but the puffs have gone thither before you, turn in what direction you may . . . Puff, in short, is the monster megatherium of modern society" (Smith 1853, 278); or according to *The Times* in 1892 "advertisements are turning England into a sordid and disorderly spectacle from sea to sea . . . Fields and hillsides are being covered with unwonted crops of hoardings. The sky is defaced by unheavenly signs." The magazine *Punch* regularly satirized this promotional environment, publishing cartoons featuring, for instance, Marble Arch converted into an advertising station in 1846, or the moon "improved" by advertising messages in 1886. In addition, a stunning array of merchandise was used to carry advertising, and cross-merchandising of tie-ins with well-known books and plays was well underway by the close of the nineteenth century. Through such means nineteenth-century advertising messages pervaded both public and private, urban and rural environments.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Emotions in ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Attitudes ▶ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Media History ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Persuasion ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Advertising Law and Regulation

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The role of → advertising as a pervasive communication continues to expand around the world. In response, many societies face greater challenges in regulating advertising in a manner that shields the public from deceptive and unfair conduct. Many legal sources regulate advertising practices, and the legislative rationale for curbing this unique type of speech has been vigorously debated. Given that all the laws must be consistent with the principles of freedom of speech (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of), how to define commercial speech and the amount of constitutional protection it should be afforded are key issues among scholars and legal professionals.

## FORMS OF REGULATION

Although the scope of advertising law and regulations varies from country to country, regulation is generally manifested as self-regulation by the industry and statutory regulation by various government bodies. In many countries, self-regulation – voluntary, industry-wide control by advertisers – complements legal regulatory systems. Its great flexibility and adaptability offer realistic solutions in rapidly changing marketing environments. Hybrid forms have replaced the most basic form of self-regulation by the industry. Consumer representatives, as in the Netherlands and Canada, or public members, as in Italy, the United Kingdom, and the United States, participate to develop and enforce industry codes and standards. For instance, in the US, public members are drawn from a pool of distinguished educators, attorneys, and other public authorities.

### Statutory Regulation and Self-Regulation

In the US, the National Advertising Division (NAD) closely monitors national consumer advertising, responds to complaints, and enforces voluntary cooperation among advertisers. Individuals, organizations, or competitors who are concerned with the truthfulness or accuracy of an advertisement can make complaints. When the NAD and an advertiser fail

to reach a satisfactory settlement, an appeal can be made to the National Advertising Review Board (NARB). NAD and NARB findings and recommendations are published at the conclusion of each inquiry, and any unresolved cases can be forwarded to an appropriate government agency, in most cases the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Given that each self-regulatory system offers a different set of standards and codes, the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) plays an important role in coordinating efforts to develop international guidelines and policies. The ICC publishes the International Code of Advertising Practice, which is used and integrated into many self-regulatory systems around the world. The ICC not only assists countries in developing codes, but also handles complaints when the scope of a dispute spans multiple countries, or in cases where national self-regulatory systems do not exist. Other key international organizations that promote self-regulation in advertising include the International Advertising Association (IAA) and the World Federation of Advertisers.

Although self-regulation is less expensive and offers faster solutions than government regulation, voluntary cooperation is not always sufficient. With statutory regulation, a variety of judicial tools can be utilized to achieve prompt and efficient control of advertising practices. In the US, several federal administrative bodies have jurisdictions to regulate specific types of advertising. The agencies include, but are not limited to, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The FTC is the principal regulatory agency for advertising, and its rulings are not only legally binding, but also exert great influence on setting the standards for state and industry regulatory bodies.

### **The Contribution of the Courts**

In the United States, state and local governments also monitor advertising practices. For many years, state laws evolved without raising the issue of the First Amendment and its protection – or lack thereof – of commercial speech. In fact, for a long time, advertising was considered to be outside the realm of freedom of expression. When the US Supreme Court first considered the issue in *Valentine v. Chrestensen* (1942), it firmly discounted the notion that advertising deserved First Amendment consideration. Without providing much legal reasoning, the court decided unanimously that “purely commercial advertising” was not the type of speech protected by the First Amendment. For more than 30 years, the *Valentine* decision was regarded as the prevailing judicial precedent concerning commercial speech. In 1976, it was explicitly overruled by the US Supreme Court in *Virginia State Board of Pharmacy v. Virginia Citizens Consumer Council*. In this landmark case on commercial speech, the court declared that a Virginia state law banning the advertisement of prescription drug prices was unconstitutional, emphasizing consumer interests. It reasoned that such advertisements conveyed vital information to the public and that a free enterprise economy depended upon a free flow of commercial information (→ Free Flow of Information).

The US Supreme Court outlined more specific guidelines for the protection of “purely commercial advertising” in *Central Hudson Gas and Electric Corp. v. Public Service Commission of New York* (1980). In overturning a statute banning certain advertising by utilities,

the court developed a four-part test for determining the constitutionality of advertising regulation. The four key questions are: (1) whether the advertising at issue is lawful and truthful; (2) whether the asserted governmental interest is substantial; (3) whether the regulation directly advances the governmental interest; and (4) whether the restriction is no more extensive than necessary to further the governmental interest.

Compared to the US Supreme Court's continuous efforts to characterize commercial speech, the courts in Europe have generated less theoretical and conceptual argument on commercial speech doctrine (Barendt 2005). Contrary to the US Supreme Court's categorical approach, the European courts have tended to apply the same principles to both commercial and noncommercial expression. For the European Union, treaties are the primary source of law, and the Maastricht Treaty signed in 1992 incorporates by reference the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights decrees freedom of expression, and the European Courts have held that Article 10 applies to commercial expression. Unlike the US Supreme Court, which once put commercial expression outside the realm of freedom of expression, the → European Court of Human Rights has never excluded commercial expression from constitutional protection. It is worth noting, however, that in practice the courts in Europe are generally more willing to defer to governmental regulations (Shiner 2003). As a result, legal challenges to governments' infringements on commercial speech based on Article 10 of the convention have been relatively few.

## FIELDS OF REGULATION

### The Case of Tobacco

The advertising of controversial products, such as cigarettes, demonstrates a substantially different application of the commercial speech doctrine. Unlike in the US and Canada, a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising has been imposed in many European countries. In the UK, for instance, most forms of tobacco advertising are prohibited as a result of the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002. The US Supreme Court would invalidate such a comprehensive ban on the grounds that there are other less restrictive means.

In fact, in *Lorillard Tobacco Co. v. Reilly* (2001), the US Supreme Court struck down a statute falling well short of a comprehensive ban. At issue was a Massachusetts law banning outdoor ads and point-of-sale ads for tobacco products within 1,000 feet of public playgrounds and schools. The court agreed that the state had a substantial interest in protecting young children, but declared the rule much more extensive than necessary. Similarly, the Supreme Court of Canada invalidated a comprehensive ban on cigarette advertising in *RJR-McDonald Inc. v. A-G of Canada* (1995).

### Differentiating Commercial and Noncommercial Speech

Despite differences in commercial speech jurisprudence, it is clearly not protected to the same extent as many other forms of speech, such as political ideas. As stated in *Central Hudson*, commercial expression should be truthful and legal in order to be protected

under the First Amendment. However, there is no requirement under traditional First Amendment analysis for the underlying activity to be lawful or the speech not to be false or misleading. For noncommercial speech cases, the government should demonstrate “compelling” interest rather than just “substantial” interest. In a milestone case on libel, *New York Times v. Sullivan* (1964), the US Supreme Court stated that political advertisements, though paid for, were fully protected by the Constitution (→ Libel and Slander). Political speech, including political advertising, is at the top of the constitutional hierarchy of protected speech, thus subject to strict scrutiny.

The same principle can be found in the European Court of Human Rights trial *Barthold v. Germany* (1985). Barthold, a veterinary surgeon, was disciplined for advertising his services in a newspaper interview, hence breaching professional codes. Barthold defended the remarks he made about the absence of a veterinary night service in Hamburg, in which he incidentally mentioned his own name and services, as public discussion of a matter of general interest. The court sided with Barthold, maintaining that the German advertising restrictions could potentially deter a professional from contributing to public debate on a matter of importance.

Considering the different constitutional standards for commercial speech, categorizing an expression as commercial or noncommercial becomes a key issue. In fact, defining commercial speech was the key issue in *Kasky v. Nike*, a 2002 California Supreme Court case. In an effort to respond to public criticism of the underpayment and mistreatment of overseas workers, Nike launched a public relations campaign with press releases and letters to newspapers. Sued by consumer activist Marc Kasky over the truthfulness of its statements, Nike claimed that its responses were not made in an advertising format and argued that the campaign statements were an important matter of public controversy entitled to full First Amendment protection. Conversely, the California Supreme Court characterized Nike’s campaign as commercial speech subject to state statutes that prohibited false and misleading advertising. The court pointed to Nike’s profit motive, stating that the company’s public relations campaign was ultimately aimed at persuading consumers to buy its products. In January 2003, the US Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal, but in June of the same year, the court dismissed the case without offering highly anticipated resolutions.

As the Supreme Court of Canada pointed out in *Ford v. A-G of Quebec* (1988), commercial information leads to informed economic choices, an important individual self-fulfillment. Therefore, as expressed in *Virginia Pharmacy*, the interest in matters of public interest may be as keen as those in political ideas. However, some scholars and commentators strongly argue against the value of commercial expression and its constitutional protection (see Shiner 2003). Amid the continued debate on commercial speech jurisprudence, advertising continuously evolves and becomes increasingly ubiquitous. Nonetheless, the fundamental question of the distinction between commercial speech and noncommercial speech remains unclear and awaits further legal reasoning.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► European Court of Human Rights ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Free Flow of Information ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Libel and Slander ► Public Interest ► Self-Regulation of the Media

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## Advertising as Persuasion

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Advertising as → persuasion may be defined as an instrumental and intentional form of commercial communication by which a deliberate attempt is made to convince consumers of the value of the message position, i.e., the product or brand advertised. Advertising as persuasion focuses on the impact of advertising stimuli on cognitive, affective, and behavioral consumer responses (Kardes 2002). Implied in this conceptualization is a focus on the effectiveness of advertising on the individual level, rather than on a more aggregate level. Advertising stimuli can pertain to message elements (e.g., advertising format, the use of fear appeals, humor, sex, music, or number of arguments), source elements (e.g., brand familiarity, endorser characteristics such as fame, attractiveness, or credibility), or channel elements (e.g., visual versus nonvisual means of communication). Cognitive responses include belief and attitude formation and change (→ Attitudes). Affective responses include the influence of ads on → emotions and mood. Behavioral responses pertain to purchase and choice behavior, consumer decision-making, and brand loyalty.

Although this definition suggests a linear process and passive receiver, the body of research paints another picture. That is, any impact advertising may have depends largely on the way the consumer responds to the message, understood as the extent and valence



of information processing in response to the message. In this entry, we will discuss classic, contemporary, and future approaches to the study of advertising as persuasion.

### CLASSIC APPROACHES

Founded in the late 1940s, a Yale University team sought to systematically disentangle the persuasion process (“*Yale Studies*”; Hovland & Janis 1959; → Media Effects, History of). Their findings are a generally acknowledged source of reference for explaining the psychological impact of advertising. This program of research was spurred, in part, by the realization of the US army by the end of World War II that persuasion constituted a powerful means by which a nation’s population could be mobilized, as witnessed by the success of the propaganda of the Nazis (→ Propaganda in World War II). As a loose framework, the Yale group arranged their studies around → Harold Lasswell’s (1948, 37) classic communication effects formula: “who says what to whom in which channel with what effect.” Hence, the program studied the effects of various source factors (“who says”) such as credibility and expertise, message factors (“what”) such as the use of fear appeals or message sidedness, the role of individual differences of message recipients (“to whom”), and different types of dependent variables (“with what effect”). This line of research featured the so-called message-learning approach to persuasion: Any form of persuasion, including persuasion resulting from exposure to advertising, involves a four-stage process: attention, comprehension, yielding, and retention. Hence, persuasive ads are those that are attention grabbing, easy to comprehend, convincing, and memorable (see Kardes 2002).

In line with the message-learning approach to persuasion, William McGuire (1968, 1989) developed a *theory of* → *information processing* that acknowledged various basic stages of persuasion. In addition, he stressed the importance of recipient activity. McGuire’s theory holds that persuasion is mediated by at least three main steps that occur hierarchically: attention, comprehension, and yielding (→ Attention; Comprehension). McGuire stipulated that recipient characteristics influence the extent and impact of each of these processes. For instance, a recipient’s self-esteem may facilitate reception (because of a positive influence on comprehension), but may adversely affect yielding. Similarly, a person’s intelligence as measured by an IQ test may have a positive impact on reception, but a negative one on yielding.

Although the foregoing theories have been developed and tested with various types of persuasive communication in mind, *hierarchy-of-effects models* have been conceptualized specifically by advertising practitioners and researchers to account for the impact of commercial communication on purchase behavior. Although their empirical value is generally low, and they are considered obsolete in the academic community, their influence is still pervasive in the field of advertising practice, probably because of their heuristic value. In short, and in line with the frameworks discussed earlier, hierarchy-of-effects models posit that advertising affects behavior through a fixed sequence of stages. The best-known exponent of these is the so-called *AIDA-model*, an acronym that describes the effectiveness of advertising as a sequence of attention, interest, desire, and action. Over the years, modifications to this model have been proposed, each involving a different acronym, including “AIDCA” (attention, interest, desire, conviction, action), “ACCA”

(awareness, comprehension, conviction, action), and “AIETA” (awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, adoption).

Apart from a fixed sequence of stages, these models share the notion of a fixed “think–feel–do” sequence in which all advertising is processed via a cognitive stage (“what do I think about it?”), followed by an affective stage (“how do I feel about it?”), and finally a behavioral stage (“how do I act with regard to it?”). The think–feel–do sequence has proven to be problematic as an account of the various ways that ads are processed. The most prolific problem associated with these hierarchies is that the fixed sequence of processes presupposes a relatively high level of consumer involvement: the prototypical consumer is exposed to an ad, which invariably spurs his or her interest, induces desire, and so on. However, high consumer involvement levels are the exception rather than the rule. To accommodate this reality, contemporary approaches to examining ad effectiveness acknowledge that people often process information in less effortful ways.

### CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES

The → *elaboration likelihood model* (ELM; Petty & Cacioppo 1981, 1986; Petty et al. 1983) and the *heuristic systematic processing model* (HSM; Chaiken 1980; Chaiken et al. 1989) are considered “dual process models” (Chaiken & Trope 1999). These models assume that persuasion (defined as attitude change in response to exposure to a persuasive message) may be a function of two distinct modes of processing that anchor a controlled–automatic continuum. “Central route” (the ELM annotation) or “systematic” (the HSM annotation) processing occurs when consumer motivation and/or ability is high. Under these conditions, persuasion is the result of careful scrutiny of the true merits of the product that is advertised in the message. Consequently, attitude change is a function of the quality of the arguments presented in the message. This attitude change is thought to be highly predictive of behavior. Thus, product attitudes formed or changed systematically via the central route may predict purchase behavior, depending on their valence. In contrast, when motivation and/or ability is low, persuasion comes about via less effortful means, i.e., via “peripheral route” or “heuristic” processing, respectively. Under these conditions, consumers base their evaluations on message elements that offer shortcuts for inferring something about product quality.

The *unimodel* (Kruglanski & Thompson 1999; Kruglanski et al. 1999) is more parsimonious than the ELM or HSM; it basically poses one key process instead of two. Based on lay epistemic theory, the unimodel holds that advertising affects persuasion through a process of implicit hypothesis testing by the consumer, influenced by the structure of the message elements presented to support the advertised product, the ability of the consumer to engage in effortful processing, and the motivation that may influence the extent and/or direction of processing. In contrast to dual process models, the unimodel holds that *all* message elements (i.e., arguments and other persuasive elements) in an ad are essentially processed the same way (through a single route), to the extent that these elements are deemed relevant for the position in the ad.

The acronym MODE stands for *motivation and opportunity as key determinants of persuasion*. The model (Fazio 1990) shares with dual process models and the unimodel the emphasis on both motivation and a specific form of ability (i.e., opportunity) as

factors affecting the extent and/or direction of ad processing. Like these models, it posits that when motivation is high and opportunity abundant, extensive information processing may occur that results in product or brand attitudes that guide future (purchasing) behavior (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency). In addition to these models, however, the MODE model is more optimistic regarding the attitude–behavior link when either motivation and/or opportunity is low. In that situation, the MODE model would hold that highly accessible attitudes (e.g., brand attitudes that have evolved over a prolonged period of exposure to extensive advertising) might still affect choice behavior, albeit without any extensive processing. When exposed to the attitude object (i.e., the product or brand), the valence of this accessible attitude triggers a process of selective perception, by which either positive or negative aspects of the object are highlighted. This drives behavior, such that largely favorable attitudes result in approach behavior (e.g., purchasing the product), whereas negative attitudes induce an avoidance response.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

All frameworks discussed so far rely on *conscious* consumer processing as a basis for understanding persuasion effects, although they differ in the proposed extent and direction of this processing. This leaves open a vast reservoir of consumer persuasion and behavior phenomena that has been left largely unaddressed: unconscious influences of advertising on consumer behavior. Since the beginning of the new millennium, a renewed interest in automatic and unconscious consumer processes (→ Mindlessness and Automaticity) has flourished, spurred, in part, by work on automatic construct activation (i.e., “priming”; Bargh 2002). This trend has even accumulated in renewed research attention to one of the great myths of advertising as persuasion: subliminal influence of ad-related stimuli (Dijksterhuis et al. 2005; Strahan et al. 2002).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Attention ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitudes ▶ Comprehension ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Emotion ▶ Information Processing ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Mindlessness and Automaticity ▶ Persuasion ▶ Propaganda in World War II

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## Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span

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Advertising responses are the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors generated by exposure to a commercial message (Petty & Cacioppo 1996). Responses to → advertising can be divided into *three general types*: cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses. Studies on cognitive responses focus on recall or recognition of advertisements and brands. Affective response studies concentrate on likes and dislikes of advertisements and brands. Finally, behavioral response studies investigate the extent to which people are persuaded by advertisements; for instance, to purchase the advertised brand.

Advertising research has shown that the extent to which consumers respond to persuasive information varies greatly across different stages of life (Friestad & Wright 1994; John 1999). In particular, *children* are more receptive to persuasive information than adolescents and adults, because they have less experience and domain-specific knowledge that they can use while processing advertisements. It has been suggested that children are more easily swayed by an attractive advertisement, because they are less able than adolescents and adults to come up with critical thoughts and counterarguments while being exposed to persuasive information (Young 1990).

During childhood and adolescence, children develop various advertising-related competencies, which are increasingly known as “advertising literacy” (Livingstone & Helsper 2006; → Media Literacy). These competencies function as a filter when processing advertising messages (→ Information Processing). For instance, children who are not yet capable of understanding the selling purpose of advertising may see commercials primarily as entertainment, while children who do realize that advertising is intended to persuade are more likely to critically evaluate its content.

John (1999) has distinguished five competencies of *advertising literacy* that emerge in the developmental sequence from preschool to adolescence: (1) distinguishing commercials from programs, (2) understanding advertising intent, (3) recognizing bias in advertising, (4) understanding of advertising tactics and appeals, and (5) applying advertising knowledge and understanding. The acquisition of the various advertising literacy competencies can, in large part, be explained by children’s cognitive and social development (→ Development Communication).

A first step in the acquisition of advertising literacy is the ability to make a distinction between advertising and program content. It has been shown that children in early childhood (4–7 years) have difficulty distinguishing commercials from television programs and view advertising primarily as entertainment (Martin 1994). Second, during middle childhood (ages 8–11), children are progressively more able to recognize advertising, and show a basic understanding of advertisers’ motives and intent. Several authors have argued that children’s understanding that advertisers intend to sell should be distinguished from their understanding that advertisers intend to persuade (Young 1990; Martin 1994; John 1999). These authors assume that the understanding that advertising exists to persuade people and is, therefore, inherently biased requires more sophisticated cognitive and social skills. As a result, the third advertising competency, recognizing bias and deception in advertising, is likely to develop at a later stage in childhood than understanding of selling intent.

The fourth competency of advertising literacy, more specific insight into advertisers’ tactics and appeals, requires advanced cognitive and social skills. It is, generally, assumed that this competency does not develop until early adolescence (ages 12–14). This development is likely to vary for different types of tactics. For example, understanding of camera and editing techniques may emerge at an earlier stage than the more abstract understanding of product symbolism in advertising, which includes, for instance, linking the product with social or sexual success (Belk et al. 1984; → Advertising Strategies).

Finally, the development of advertising literacy is not only a matter of obtaining the necessary knowledge and understanding, but also of acquiring the information-processing skills that enable the viewer to apply the advertising knowledge and understanding

while processing an advertisement (→ Information Processing). Information-processing theories suggest that children in early childhood lack the skills to come up with critical thoughts and counterarguments when watching commercials, while children in middle childhood need to be cued to raise counterarguments (Roedder 1981; John 1999). During the adolescent years, they become capable of independently accessing and applying advertising literacy skills when watching commercials. From this age onwards, advertising responses are comparable to those of adults.

As yet, advertising research has predominantly focused on children's ability to discriminate between commercials and programs and their understanding of advertising intent (Martin 1994). Although it is assumed that recognizing bias and deception in advertising and knowledge of advertising tactics emerge later in the developmental sequence, it is unclear at what age these more sophisticated aspects of advertising literacy emerge. Moreover, there is a lack of knowledge on the differential impact of the different aspects on the cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to advertising. To gain a full understanding of advertising responses across the life-span, future research should recognize the conceptual complexity of advertising responses and assess at what age different advertising competencies emerge.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Development Communication  
▶ Information Processing ▶ Media Literacy

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# Advertising Strategies

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Advertising strategy is the set of decisions an organization takes with respect to the employment of → advertising to reach one or more objectives among a specific target group. Each advertising strategy is based on the → marketing strategy that encompasses the strategic decisions regarding all marketing activities, such as packaging, price, distribution, and promotion. Within this set of marketing activities, advertising is part of the promotion strategy. Besides defining target group and communication objectives, main parts of the advertising strategy are message strategy and → media planning strategy (→ Advertising Frequency and Timing).

A further difference can be made between message strategy and creative execution strategy. The message strategy is defined by the communication objective that is addressed by an advertisement; the creative execution defines how this objective is addressed. Though the ultimate goal of advertising is to maintain and increase the level of brand sales, most often advertising is employed to reach intermediate goals. Most important of these is communicating how a brand is positioned among its competitors (→ Positioning Theory). Other often employed intermediate goals are brand awareness and generating a general positive feeling toward the brand.

## TYOLOGIES OF ADVERTISING STRATEGIES

Many overviews of message strategies have been published and there is no generally agreed-upon typology. Nevertheless, a central element of most typologies is the difference between informational advertising that appeals to the rational mind and emotional advertising that appeals to the feelings of consumers (→ Cognition; Emotion). Instead of the term “emotional strategies,” often the term “transformational strategies” is used. *Informational strategies* include factual, more or less objective, information, whereas *transformational strategies* aim at relating the advertised brand to more subjective characteristics such as emotions, personal values, or group symbols. Transformational strategies transform the experience of using or owning the brand by adding a psychological dimension to the objective utility of the product.

### Vaughn’s FCB-Grid

One of the best-known advertising typologies is the “*FCB-grid*” by Vaughn (1980; the grid is named after the author’s company, Foote, Cone & Belding), which consists of four quadrants, defined by two dimensions: level of involvement and a thinking–feeling dimension. In the high-involvement/thinking quadrant of the FCB-grid, the consumer is highly involved with the purchase decision and makes a rational decision based on functional information. Therefore, in this situation an informative strategy should be used. In the low-involvement/thinking quadrant, involvement is low and buying behavior is habitual because the consumer wants to spend as little time and brain activity as possible on buying products. In this quadrant, the habit formation strategy is advised.

The primary aim of advertising is to remind consumers of the existence of the → brand. In addition, coupons and free samples can be used to stimulate trial behavior. In the two feeling quadrants, three purchase motives are relevant: ego gratification, sensory gratification, and social acceptance. In the high-involvement/feeling quadrant, the consumer seeks ego gratification, that is, the need to defend, enhance, and express one's basic personality. For this quadrant, the advice is to apply the affective strategy that aims at relating the brand to the personality of the consumer. The low-involvement/feeling quadrant is reserved for products where involvement is low and the purchase decision is based on sensory gratification, that is, the desire to please one or more of the five senses. The *satisfaction strategy* stresses how the brand stimulates personal satisfaction, and induces product trial so people can experience the brand. Finally, social acceptance can be relevant in situations of both low and high involvement. Advertising can address the need to be viewed favorably in the eyes of other.

### The Rossiter and Percy Typology

Another well-known typology, which is closely related to the FCB-grid, is the Rossiter and Percy (RP) grid. The RP-grid also has four quadrants, but these are defined in a different way. A first important difference between the RP-grid and the FCB-grid is that in the former, brand awareness is a necessary condition before any of the strategies defined by the grid can be effective. If brand awareness is low, the advertising strategy should primarily aim at increasing brand recall and/or brand recognition. A second important difference is that in the RP-grid feelings are relevant in all quadrants.

A distinction is made between negative motivation that is mainly relevant in the thinking quadrants and positive motivation that is mainly relevant in the feeling quadrants (called transformational quadrants in the RP-grid). A negative motivation occurs if people are motivated to avoid negative emotions that, for example, are evoked by unwanted situations. Informational advertising strategies should convince consumers that the brand can help to avoid or to solve problems. Positive motivation is related to positive emotions that occur in the case of social approval, sensory gratification, or intellectual stimulation (i.e., the possibility to explore and acquire new information and expertise). People are positively motivated to experience these emotions, and transformational advertising strategies should address these emotions.

### Other Typologies

In the 1980s and 1990s, several other less well known typologies were published. The advertising strategies that are outlined in these typologies largely overlap, though the terminology might differ slightly. One of the most cited of these typologies is the “*brand concept management framework*” of Park et al. (1986), in which three main brand concepts are discerned: functional, symbolic, and experiential. A “functional brand concept” is appropriate for brands that fulfill functional needs, such as problem-solving products. The “symbolic brand concept” can be used if brands have a symbolic function with respect to communicating to other people what kind of person the user is, or communicating to other people to what group(s) the user belongs. The symbolic brand concept is also useful if consumers use a brand because it matches their own personality and if consumers feel



that they can realize who they are by using this particular brand. Finally, the “experiential brand concept” can be used for products that provide variety or sensory pleasure (e.g., food). A good strategy for this type of brand is communicating what people experience when they use the product.

### **Behavioral Determinant Models**

To examine what the most important consumer motives are, often social-psychological behavioral determinant models are used. However, these models do not correspond well to most advertising typologies, either because in a typology two or more behavioral determinants are addressed by the same message strategy, or because two or more strategies are formulated that aim at the same behavioral determinant. Therefore, Van den Putte formulated an *integrative framework for effective communication (IFEC)* that integrates the main characteristics of many of the above typologies with social psychological theories (Van den Putte & Dhondt 2005). The IFEC stipulates that there are three conditions that every successful advertising campaign must fulfill: (1) people should be aware of the brand, (2) people must have a general positive feeling about the brand, and (3) the campaign should make clear what consumer motive or consumer need the brand fulfills. Social-psychological behavioral determinant models can be used to find the most important behavioral determinant(s) in order to select the potentially most effective advertising strategy.

In the IFEC, nine advertising strategies are discerned. The *awareness strategy* aims at establishing top-of-mind brand awareness by using novel or unusual formats. The *likeability strategy* aims at entertaining consumers in order to achieve appreciation of the advertisement. In the long run, this is meant to lead to a positive general feeling toward the brand. The *information strategy* aims at convincing consumers that the advertised brand offers them relevant, preferably new or improved, instrumental advantages. The *emotions strategy* aims at associating the brand with specific feelings, often by showing people who experience certain emotions in a product usage situation. The *identity strategy* aims at convincing consumers that the identity of the brand matches their private self-identity or self-image. Within this strategy, the brand is seen as a person, having its own personality. This strategy is focused on the consumer as an individual.

The *social strategy* aims at convincing consumers that the brand can be used to communicate their social identity to others or to seek approval by others. This strategy is focused on consumers as members of a social environment with which they interact. The *self-efficacy strategy* aims at convincing consumers that a brand can help them to make difficult behaviors more easy to perform. The *sales response strategy* aims at bringing about an immediate consumers’ response, often by communicating a temporary special offer. The *variation strategy* aims at appealing to consumers who seek variety in their life, either to discover new possibilities or to prevent boredom with daily routines.

With respect to all of the above-mentioned typologies, scientific empirical research is scarce. Whether the formulated advertising strategies succeed in attaining their objectives has hardly been studied. Insofar as research is published, it is almost always performed by the developers of the typology or grid.

## CHOOSING AN ADVERTISING STRATEGY

An important question is how the most effective possible advertising strategy can be chosen. Generally it is advised, besides maintaining and increasing brand awareness, that the advertising strategy should match the main purchase motives of consumers. For instance, if brand choice behavior is most strongly influenced by the opinion of others, the social strategy is the preferred option. This matching hypothesis has hardly been studied in the context of the above typologies, but there is some indirect support from studies that examine the role of attitude function. In these, it is found that if for consumers the function of their attitude is to evaluate how brand use can maximize instrumental advantages, they are more influenced by an informative strategy that communicates brand characteristics than by a social strategy that communicates how other people evaluate the brand user.

Some doubt about the → validity of the matching hypothesis is found in studies that apply attitude base theory. Whereas *attitude function theory* concentrates on the function that an attitude has for a consumer, attitude base theory concentrates on how the attitude is formed. The attitude base is cognitive if it is primarily formed by cognitions, and affective if it is primarily formed by affect. It is found that if consumers have little experience and weak cognitions or weak feelings, a matching strategy should be used.

For example, an informational strategy should be used if the attitude base is cognitive. However, if consumers have much experience and strong cognitions or strong feelings, a mismatching strategy should be used. In this latter situation, an emotional strategy should be used if the attitude base is cognitive, and an informative strategy if the attitude base is affective. So far, mismatching effects have only been found in tests of attitude base theory. The mismatching hypothesis has never been tested in the context of other theories. Though in most theories and advertising typologies, the assumption is that the advertising strategy should match the motives of the consumer, it might be that this only holds for consumers who have weak cognitions and feelings toward the brand. Of course, this last situation is often the case because consumers generally are weakly involved with the brand.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Frequency and Timing ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Attitude Functions ▶ Brands ▶ Cognition ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Emotion ▶ Information Processing ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Planning ▶ Persuasion ▶ Positioning Theory ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Validity

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## Advocacy Journalism

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The term *advocacy journalism* describes the use of journalism techniques to promote a specific political or social cause. The term is potentially meaningful only in opposition to a category of journalism that does not engage in advocacy, so-called *objective journalism* (→ Objectivity in Reporting).

This distinction tends to be a focus of attention in the United States, especially in the second half of the twentieth century, rather than elsewhere in the world; use of these terms does not necessarily translate to other political landscapes, though US (and more generally western) models are becoming dominant (→ Journalists' Role Perception). In western Europe, some newspapers have long identified openly with a political position, even though journalists from these papers are considered professionals not typically engaged in advocacy (→ Party–Press Parallelism). For example, in Italy *Il Manifesto* identifies itself as a communist newspaper philosophically but does not associate with any party and operates as a workers' cooperative (→ Italy: Media System). In developing nations that have become independent since World War II, journalism was typically part of freedom movements in support of liberation from colonialism. Many independent publications retain the opposition to entrenched power, for example, the *Hindu* in India.

The press in the United States, which was distinctly partisan well into the nineteenth century, developed objectivity norms that now define the practices of corporate commercial news media. Many journalists found (and find) these norms constraining, and in the political fervor of the 1960s and 1970s, advocacy journalism emerged with counterculture and revolutionary political activity. Other terms used for practice outside the mainstream include *alternative*, *gonzo*, or → *new journalism* (→ Alternative Journalism). Within those forms, journalists may openly identify with a group or movement or remain independent while adopting similar values and political positions.

This advocacy/objectivity dichotomy springs from political theory that asserts a special role for journalists in complex democratic societies. Journalists' claims to credibility are based in an assertion of neutrality. They argue for public trust by basing their report of facts, analysis, and opinion on rigorous information gathering. Professional self-monitoring produces what journalists consider an unbiased account of reality, rather than a selective account reflecting a guiding political agenda.

At one level, the term *advocacy* might be useful in distinguishing, for example, journalistic efforts clearly serving a partisan agenda (such as a political party publication) from those officially serving nonpartisan ends (such as a commercial newspaper). But the distinction is not really between forms of journalism as much as between persuasion and journalism (→ Activist Media). Although so-called objective journalism assumes that, as a rule, disinterested observers tend to produce more reliable reports, a publication advocating a cause might have more accurate information and compelling analysis than a nonpartisan one. The intentions of those writing and editing the publication are the key distinguishing factor.

More complex is categorizing different approaches to journalism by those not in the direct service of an organization or movement. Can those who advocate a particular philosophical or political perspective – but remain independent of a partisan group – produce journalism that the general public can trust?

An extended example is helpful here. In the general sense of the term, freelance reporter John Pilger (Australian-born, now living in the United Kingdom) could be considered an advocacy journalist, and *New York Times* reporter John Burns an objective journalist. Both are experienced and hard-working, with a sophisticated grasp of world affairs, and both have reported extensively about Iraq. Pilger writes primarily for newspapers and magazines in the UK but has a large following in the US, and he also is a documentary filmmaker. Burns writes almost exclusively for the *Times* but also gives frequent interviews on television and radio programs about his reporting. Antiwar and anti-empire groups circulate Pilger's reports and screen his documentaries, but, like Burns, he describes himself as an independent journalist and rejects affiliations with any political groups.

However, Pilger is openly critical of US and UK policies toward Iraq, including unambiguous denunciations of the self-interested motivations and criminal consequences of state policies. His reporting leads him not only to describe these policies but to offer an analysis that directly challenges the framework of the powerful. Burns, in contrast, avoids such assessments, not only in news reports but also in articles labeled *analysis*. His reporting tends to accept the framework of the powers promoting these policies, and his criticism tends to question their strategy and tactics, not their basic motivations. In some sense, both journalists advocate a particular view of state power and how it operates in the areas they cover. Both have reputations for accurate reporting: the difference lies in their interpretations. In the language of mainstream journalism Burns would be considered objective but not Pilger.

This example illustrates the limits of conceptions of journalism as practiced in the media industries, especially those under corporate commercial control. All reporters use a framework of analysis to understand the world and report on it. But reporting that contains open references to underlying political assumptions and conclusions seems to

engage in advocacy, while the more conventional approach appears neutral. Both are independent in the sense of not being directed by a party or movement, but neither approach is in fact neutral. One explicitly endorses a political perspective critical of the powerful, while the other implicitly reinforces the political perspective of the elite.

Accounts of the world, including journalistic ones, must begin from some assumptions about the way the world works (→ News Ideologies). None is neutral. Further research and examples from countries outside of North America and Europe would enrich the literature of advocacy journalism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Italy: Media System ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ New Journalism ▶ News Ideologies ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Party–Press Parallelism

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## **Aesthetics**

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In the context of communication studies, aesthetic theory may be defined as the attempt to understand people's enjoyment of certain forms of communication – such as stories, movies, music, dance – that are apparently attended to for their own sake, despite their lack of any ostensible instrumental value. Although this type of enjoyment can be considered an inherent feature of human biology (Dissanayake 1992), the specific experiences that give rise to it differ widely among the cultures of the world (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). Simply put, the study of aesthetics seeks to answer two basic questions: what do people like or dislike about such experiences – and why?

The idea that aesthetic judgments have a bearing on, or somehow derive from, real-world practical imperatives has traditionally met with considerable resistance in the western intellectual tradition, from A. G. Baumgarten and Immanuel Kant to certain postmodernist theories (Prettejohn 2005; → Postmodernism and Communication). Such resistance has been accompanied by a normative insistence that what is distinctive

about the aesthetic realm is whatever goes beyond the type of response that connects a work of art to the utilitarian goals of everyday life. Indeed, in this view of aesthetics, our contemplation of objects and events in the environment is aesthetic only if it is disinterested (see N. Carroll 1999, 170ff.). This aesthetic stance may be motivated by a desire to emphasize the values that are internal to art, or by an attempt to insulate the representational arts from moral judgments and censorship (Jenkins 2003).

### ATTRACTIVE OBJECTS IN REPRESENTATIONAL MEDIA

A useful starting point for reconsidering aesthetics within communication research is the distinction between representational and nonrepresentational media. In the case of *representational* media such as pictures or movies, one obvious component of aesthetic pleasure is our appreciation of certain types of sensory experiences in the real world. If the physical characteristics of some people, things, or places appeal to us, representations of those characteristics in pictures or other media may please us as well.

Of particular interest is research linking aesthetic preference to functional aspects of real-world visual pleasure (→ Functional Analysis). Paradigmatic instances are studies of facial attractiveness and the literature on landscape preference. A number of experiments, typically based on computer-manipulated images of *human faces*, have established a cross-cultural preference for symmetrical facial features (e.g., Little & Jones 2003; Perrett et al. 1999; Rhodes et al. 2001; → Facial Expressions). One explanation may be that bodily symmetry serves as an external symptom of an organism's capacity to cope with genetic and environmental stress. Accordingly, a preference for symmetry may be an evolutionary adaptation during mate selection (Thornhill & Gangestad 1999). In the area of *landscape preference*, an influential treatise by Jay Appleton (1990) has posited that there is a species-wide human tendency to favor pictorial landscapes that contain two features: "prospect," i.e., places from which the environment can be surveyed for danger or opportunity; and "refuge," i.e., places offering concealment from threat and protection from the elements. Although tastes in landscapes are certainly shaped by culture, as well as by individuals' life experiences, the evidence for some degree of cross-cultural commonality in such judgments is substantial (Stamps 1999). In sum, this suggests the broader hypothesis that the human capacity for aesthetic responses to mediated experiences is derived, at least in part, from our need to make adaptive judgments about the formal features of people, places, and things in the real world.

### THE APPEAL OF NARRATION

This hypothesis seems less relevant for aesthetic experiences that go beyond the external "beauty" or "attractiveness" of objects. In particular, such experiences relate to the large category of *narrative fiction* – including not only verbal storytelling, but also TV shows, theater plays, musicals, etc. (→ Fiction; Fictional Media Content; Storytelling and Narration; Theatre; Cinema). When we enjoy a → Hollywood movie, we may do so because we find some of the images, or the people in them, beautiful or attractive, but our more likely reaction will involve an evaluation of the story as "exciting," "suspenseful," "moving," etc. Still, such narrative experiences may be compatible with the hypothesis just noted:

by identifying with fictional characters to whom positive things are happening, the consumer of fiction may vicariously experience pleasures that correspond to the rewards of real-world success or achievement (Keen 2006; 2007). Alternatively, a major source of our enjoyment of some fiction may simply be the spectacle of good things happening to people we like or sympathize with (N. Carroll 2006).

The hypothesis, however, becomes problematic when the events of a narrative fiction would be undesirable or harmful in real life. There is a substantial explanatory literature on why humans expose themselves to, and derive pleasure from, stories about misfortune, violence, horror, and suffering. Much of this literature is premised on some variant of Aristotle's (all too brief) explanation of the appeal of tragedy: we voluntarily attend to stories of misfortune and calamity because they allow us to confront various fears and anxieties in a fictional context and thereby experience *catharsis* of such feelings. But this theory does not accord with the available empirical evidence. Direct tests of the catharsis hypothesis have failed to support it, and, on the contrary, there is a large body of research indicating that exposure to anxiety-provoking fiction leads to an increase in audiences' anxieties (Zillman 1998; → Catharsis Theory; Fear Induction through Media Content; Fear Induction through Media Content in Children). An alternative to the catharsis approach is to assume that we enjoy terrible or pitiful stories because the awful things in them are happening to someone else and not to us, as implied indirectly by empirical findings in the area of social comparison research (e.g., Taylor & Brown 1994; → Social Comparison Theory). Still, this alternative offers only a partial account of the aesthetic appeals of fiction. In an attempt to give a more comprehensive explanation of our engagement with fiction – as empathy or identification as well as a motivation to witness the unpleasant – a recent, and growing, body of literature has turned to another variant of the kind of evolutionary psychology adopted by Appleton and like-minded investigators of face and landscape preference. This body of literature sees fiction as part of an evolutionarily adaptive activity whose function is to allow for the vicarious rehearsal of social relationships and the enhancement of human beings' capacity for anticipating the contingencies of their social and physical environments (e.g., J. Carroll 2003; Hernadi 2002; Tooby & Cosmides 2001).

### **THE CHALLENGE OF NONREPRESENTATIONAL MEDIA**

In an evolutionary and functional perspective on aesthetics, *nonrepresentational* media pose a special challenge. Traditionally, the move away from representation in the work of visual artists (→ Visual Representation) – and, to a more limited extent, in the literary arts – as well as in the professional criticism of the visual arts, has been associated with the insistence on a disinterested aesthetic stance. Walter Pater's famous saying, "All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music," summarizes this approach to art and aesthetics (→ Art as Communication).

Even in the case of music, however, there is a substantial body of writing – in music theory per se, but also in ethnomusicology, history, and even social psychology – arguing that the connection between aesthetic preference and real-world values can never be severed. This general argument takes two relatively distinct forms. At one level, writers have sought to trace various lines of continuity between a culture's music or → dance

forms, on the one hand, and that culture's extra-musical features, on the other. Notable examples of this approach include Steven Feld's (1990) analysis of the connections between music and soundscape (the everyday sounds of the natural environment) among the Kaluli of New Guinea, Alan Lomax's (2004) extensive cross-cultural research on the relationship between dance styles and work movements, Judith Hanna's (1988) writings on dance performance and sex roles, and William McNeill's (1995) historical account of the connections between dance and rituals of social solidarity. At a different level, a highly influential book by Leonard Meyer (1956) suggested that all forms of musical enjoyment can be understood as entailing a single common element – namely, the appreciation of compositional and performative skill. By extension, Larry Gross (1973) has argued that the root of all art – whether superficially representational or not – lies in a biologically and culturally functional human tendency to appreciate skill. Societies may choose to reserve the label “art” only for those skillful activities that do not have any obvious utilitarian purpose (e.g., the movements of a dancer versus the movements of a manual laborer). But, in this view of aesthetics, the psychological mechanisms involved in the appreciation of the former are extensions of processes involved in the appreciation of the latter – and, indeed, would not exist without them.

Although this last approach to aesthetics has the appeal of inclusiveness, its adequacy as an all-encompassing aesthetic theory is questionable. Perhaps the biggest challenge is the argument that certain kinds of representational art (pornography being a pertinent example) are appreciated primarily for their content and not for the skill that went into shaping the form of that content. Indeed, filmmakers typically insist that the ideal viewer should be unaware of the process of artistic creation (Messaris 2006). Therefore, the most satisfactory synthesis of existing theories may be one that preserves the distinctions among different forms of aesthetic experience – looking at representational images (→ Visual Communication), reading verbal fiction, listening to music, etc. – and considers a diversity of aesthetic principles relating to function, form, as well as content, rather than searching for a single formula that attempts to explain everything.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Cinema ▶ Dance ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ▶ Fiction ▶ Fictional Media Content ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Hollywood ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Post-modernism and Communication ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Theatre ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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## Affective Disposition Theories

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Media scholars and consumers alike ponder the question “why do we enjoy the stories we enjoy?” Affective disposition theory is one of the leading explanations of the enjoyment

process. The theory – more accurately, set of theories – conceptualizes enjoyment of media content as a product of a viewer’s emotional affiliations with characters and the storyline outcomes associated with those characters. Although the theory does not seek to predict whether an individual will like or dislike a specific character or story, it provides keen insight into the process through which people enjoy these things (→ Emotion; Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking).

## **BACKGROUND**

As suggested above, affective disposition theory is a title given to a set of propositions about the media enjoyment process that, throughout the entertainment literature, is also referred to simply as “disposition theory,” “disposition theories,” and “disposition-based theories” (→ Entertainment, Effects of). The first such theory was developed to describe how people appreciate jokes involving the belittling of a person or group. The principles of the resulting “disposition theory of humor” (Zillmann & Cantor 1972) were subsequently applied to the appreciation of drama and sports, yielding the “disposition theory of drama” (Zillmann & Cantor 1976), and the “disposition theory of sports spectatorship” (Zillmann et al. 1989), respectively.

Entertainment scholars have also applied the key concepts of the theory to examine → suspense, frightening entertainment, action films, reality-based television shows, crime-punishment dramas, and even news programming. Differences between these genres dictate subtle differences in the application of the theory’s principles, rendering efforts to develop a single, all-encompassing affective disposition theory somewhat problematic. However, as discussed below, the process by which enjoyment is derived through dispositional affiliations and subsequent character outcomes is similar regardless of the media content. For the sake of clarity and because the majority of the work in the area has focused on it, fictional drama will be used as an example in the following section (→ Fiction).

## **THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS**

As noted above, affective disposition theory posits that enjoyment of media content is a function of a viewer’s emotional responses to characters and to the outcomes experienced by those characters throughout an unfolding narrative. In short, the theory predicts that enjoyment increases when liked characters experience positive outcomes and/or when disliked characters experience negative ones. Conversely, enjoyment diminishes when liked characters experience negative outcomes and/or disliked characters experience positive ones.

According to the theory, viewers of fictional drama form alliances with the characters portrayed. Stated more simply, drama viewers like and cheer for certain characters, while despising and rooting against others. Because these alliances are based primarily on emotional reactions to the characters, the affiliations formed are called “affective dispositions.” Accordingly, these affective dispositions can range from extremely positive through indifference to extremely negative, and may fluctuate as the story unfolds. With regard to enjoyment, these feelings held toward the characters are of ultimate importance.

As one might expect, though, the nature of drama and, indeed, the social nature of humans guide the formation of dispositional affiliations to some degree, preventing viewers from capriciously selecting whom they revere and revile. The drama viewer's emotional side-taking must be morally justified. According to affective disposition theory, viewers continually judge the *rightness or wrongness of a character's actions*. As a result, viewers come to like characters whose actions and motivations are judged to be morally correct, while viewers dislike characters whose actions and motivations are judged to be morally incorrect.

Once characters are liked, viewers can empathize with (i.e., experience anticipatory emotions toward) their troubles and hope for their triumph over them, in much the same way as happens with real-life companions (→ Empathy Theory). In fact, as in relationships in reality, the stronger the positive feelings held, the stronger the empathic reaction. On the other hand, once characters are despised, viewers cannot empathize with them and are morally justified in wishing for their demise. In the same way, then, the stronger the negative affect felt toward the hated character, the stronger the negative or counterempathic reaction. If the outcomes wished for by viewers are depicted in the narrative, then enjoyment increases in proportion to the strength of the affective dispositions held. If those hoped-for outcomes are not portrayed, then enjoyment suffers in proportion to the strength of the affective dispositions held.

### WHAT AFFECTS DISPOSITIONS?

A key factor in determining emotional reactions to characters, as well as a key mechanism for enjoyment of drama, is *empathy*. Measured as an individual-level variable, empathy varies across viewers, leading to measurable differences in reactions to media characters. For example, persons with higher levels of empathy have been shown to be more likely to sympathize with the victim of a fictional crime and in turn more likely to enjoy a film in which the crime is avenged. However, empathy is of interest *after* dispositions are formed. As Zillmann noted, "affective dispositions toward persons or their personas virtually control empathy . . . Empathy seems to be governed by such morally derived dispositions" (1994, 44–45).

To be expected, several scholars have analyzed the *process of moral judgment* that leads to dispositions. The work demonstrates that the strength of affiliations held toward characters can vary quite a bit between viewers, presumably due to differences in the unique, subjectively held moral compositions of viewers. Such differences are assumed by the various moral development perspectives that exist. Furthermore, it is thought that moral reasoning is governed and influenced by a complex constellation of factors. Consequently, viewers think about and respond to characters differently, with differing results. In short, if affective dispositions toward characters are derived from moral evaluations of their actions and motives and if viewers differ in the way moral evaluations are made, then affective dispositions toward characters should vary between individual viewers. Finally, because enjoyment is dependent upon these affective dispositions, viewers enjoy certain dramatic narratives more or less than others.

A few entertainment scholars have sought to identify factors that govern the crucial moral judgments of characters. For example, authoritarianism has been associated with

greater liking of reality-based crime dramas, while attitudes about vigilantism and punitive punishment have been shown to predict enjoyment of crime-based fiction. In fact, Raney and Bryant (2002) offered a model to describe the process of disposition formation in both affective and cognitive terms. The researchers demonstrated that both affective (e.g., empathy) and cognitive (e.g., subjectively held attitudes about real-world justice) variables were predictive of moral judgments within crime-punishment entertainment, with the outcome of those moral judgments predicting overall enjoyment.

Thus, affective disposition theory contends that dispositional affiliations are developed as the actions and motivations of characters are viewed, with the consumer evaluating the moral correctness of those actions and motivations through their own moral lens. As a result, viewers like and dislike characters to varying degrees. The valence and intensity of those affective dispositions lead the viewers to *generate anticipations about the characters' futures*. For liked characters, success is hoped and failure is feared. For hated characters, failure is hoped and success is feared. Enjoyment results from comparing those anticipations to the actual outcomes portrayed. More specifically, highly liked characters engender intensely hoped-for outcomes that when met result in relief, pleasure, and enjoyment. When the hoped-for outcomes are not observed, however, enjoyment suffers. This is the basic affective disposition theory formula.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

A review of the various expressions and applications of affective disposition theory yields several principles common across them all. Four such principles are noted below, with suggested lines for future research. First, affective disposition theory is *primarily concerned with the enjoyment of media content*. As noted above, although the theory cannot predict liking or disliking of a specific character or story, it can serve as a useful aide in understanding the process through which people enjoy these things. Enjoyment is widely accepted as playing a central role in media entertainment experiences; enjoyment as a complex process is similarly acknowledged. Researchers universally embrace the role of affective disposition theory in explaining a portion of the enjoyment puzzle, but they also point to the limitations of any one theory to explain all instances of media enjoyment. More research is needed to examine how the principles and phenomena described by affective disposition theory interact with other psychological and motive conditions of the enjoyment experience.

Second, affective disposition theory *concerns emotional responses* to media content. Affect is at the heart of the theory, with empathy identified as the primary mechanism guiding emotional responses to characters and their plights. Additionally, researchers acknowledge that various cognitive processes (e.g., moral judgment) play a significant role in the disposition-formation process. In fact, some contend that certain cognitive structures, such as story schemas (→ Schemas and Media Effects), may actually precede affective responses. Future research must seek to better understand the relationship between affective and cognitive structures in the media enjoyment process.

Third, affective disposition theory contends that media enjoyment starts with and is driven by the *viewer's feelings about characters*. Although empathy and other emotions and attitudes have been identified as important contributors to these feelings, they surely

do not completely predict the disposition-formation process. For instance, it is reasonable to assume that various content features (e.g., camera movements, sound effects, music) would influence the formation and maintenance of affective dispositions, as would the individual's viewing environment, age, or moral maturity. Future research should seek to better understand the complexity of the affective disposition formation process.

Finally, affective disposition theory acknowledges and relies upon *differences between viewers'* emotional responsiveness, personal experiences, basal morality, and countless other psychological factors. Because humans are constantly changing, our responses to media content should likewise be dynamic and perhaps somewhat unpredictable across time. For example, prior attitudes about certain characters (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships), mood (→ Mood Management), pre-existing attitudes about genre (→ Selective Exposure), motivation for viewing (→ Uses and Gratifications), ability or willingness to attend to the narrative, and many other factors should influence the enjoyment process. Future research should attempt to integrate these well-established media entertainment effects traditions with affective disposition theory.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Emotion ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Fiction ▶ Mood Management ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Suspense ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Affects and Media Exposure

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Recently, the influence of affects and emotions in media exposure on the impact of media has become indisputable. Formerly, the emphasis was largely on cognitive aspects such as recall, learning, thoughts, and beliefs. The affective aspects were reserved for entertainment media, mostly limited to processes of involvement and gratifications (→ Involvement with Media Content; Entertainment, Effects of). Nowadays, the borders between entertainment and → news and information fare get blurred. Entertainment programs like *The Simpsons* and *Survival* claim to be reality-based (→ Reality TV), whereas news items and information programming increasingly make use of emotionalizing cues, such as personal anecdotes and zooming in on “crying faces” (→ Narrative News Story; Soft News). The Fox news broadcast of the invasion of the US army in Iraq in the second Gulf War, for instance, appeared like a → video game such as America’s Army, including the upbeat music. The blowing up of the World Trade Towers in New York (9/11) seemed a gruesome science fiction at first hand, whereas fiction-based TV shows like *ER* inform many on real-life hospital affairs.

Thus, *two developments* emphasize the importance of studying the role of affects in media exposure: (1) the media (i.e., program-makers) increasingly use dramatic techniques (→ Drama in Media Content; Hollywood); and (2) cognitive or information functions of the media increasingly coincide with affective and entertainment functions. Therefore, after defining affect, its role within the realm of media exposure will be discussed: in media entertainment, in → persuasion and commercial contexts, and across the → Internet.

## POSITIONING AND DEFINING AFFECTS

Affect is often used as an even broader concept than → emotions, generally covering the various forms of emotional phenomena and used to distinguish an affective, feeling state from → cognition and thoughts. However, a strict separation between cognition and affect can hardly be hold from contemporary emotion psychology. The positioning of affect versus cognition dates back to Descartes, who proposed a strict separation of body and soul, which has ever since distinguished rationality and emotionality (Damasio 1994) and still excites heated debates among current emotion scholars. Today, however, the polarization of physiological change versus cognition as actually defining affect is seen as merely a matter of definition that depends on how strictly cognition is defined as purely rational thought and fully conscious. Most scholars now acknowledge cognitive appraisal perspectives, including evolutionary and neurobiological scholars (e.g., LeDoux 1996; Panksepp 1998; Barrett & Wager 2006 → Appraisal Theory). That is, a certain degree of understanding the situational meaning in relation to personal concerns is necessary for an emotion to occur. Thus, the recent loosening of positing affect versus cognition in emotion psychology parallels the blurring of the cognitive and information functions and the affective and entertainment functions of media fare.

Affect covers various concepts, such as moods, feelings, and emotions. *Mood* is often applied to an enduring affective state, characterized by being global and not clearly elicited by an external event. Moods are not felt as motivated by inner drives related to situational demands. Moods may also have a biochemical source (e.g., epinephrine) or may be experimentally induced, as in some media exposure studies (e.g., Lang 2000). *Emotion* is more clearly defined by a specific event, with a beginning and ending. It is the awareness of situational demands, personal concerns, action readiness, and often physiological change, along with hedonic quality. Emotions comprise the felt need to act or not to act, to serve one's needs, goals, or concerns (Frijda 1986). Others define emotions as characterized by increased activity in the sympathetic nervous system due to vital implications of threats and rewards for the human system (Rolls 1999). Hence, when no personal concerns are touched by an event, no emotion will occur.

A crucial *difference between affects and emotions* is that emotions have an object and relate to meaningful events, whereas affects are rather free-floating and objectless (Russell & Barrett 1999). Affect refers to consciously accessible feelings and their neurophysiological counterparts. Thus, affect is usually reflected in varying degrees of pleasure–displeasure, or positive–negative affect, as well as (de)arousal or (de)activation. Furthermore, affects are conceptualized as longer-lasting phenomena than emotions.

Finally, the concepts of affect and emotion are used to refer not only to subjective experiences but also to (*visible*) *behavioral expression* (e.g., facial expressions, verbal and nonverbal behavior), especially in communication. However, it is important to note that *experiencing* (felt) emotions should be differentiated from the *expression* of emotions (depicted). For example, sadness expressed in a media message (e.g., tears) does not necessarily imply sadness in the observer (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture).

## **AFFECTS AND MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT**

Many media entertainment scholars have studied how people experience affects through entertainment products (Bryant et al. 2003; Bryant & Vorderer 2006). Actually, it is an odd phenomenon: why should we feel concerned with nonexistent characters? Zillmann and colleagues have developed various theories to *explain affective responses to media exposure* and why people seek such experiences. In short, they state that people selectively expose themselves to particular media programs in order to manage their moods; to keep up or restore pleasant states or to avoid negative affect (→ Mood Management). While being exposed, people get aroused by what they see or read, experience suspense, excitement, fear for the hero, etc. The relief of such arousal when the dramatic conflict is resolved causes a pleasant state (→ Excitation Transfer Theory). Because it is human nature to empathize with the sufferings of others, particularly loved ones (→ Empathy Theory), we feel empathic distress and fear for the fate of the sympathetic protagonist (and enjoy his or her victory), whereas we hope for the devastation of his or her rivals (→ Affective Disposition Theories).

Uses-and-gratifications theory states that we seek media exposure for various reasons, informative, social, affective, or dispersion seeking in nature (→ Escapism; Uses and Gratifications). Social comparison theory (e.g., Suls & Wheeler 2000) states that it helps to make ourselves feel better to look at others suffering (→ Social Comparison Theory).

This may also explain the phenomenon of “Schadenfreude” – pleasure at another’s misfortune. Furthermore, emotion psychology might explain why we seek to get affected by media exposure just for the sake of being moved – for the emotional experience itself. It is a basic human need to have emotions, because emotions set one into motion (“I feel, therefore I live”). Also, emotional competence is acquired through media exposure, which is important to cope with emotional encounters in everyday life. Finally, media exposure supports the social sharing of emotions, which is a basic human need. In the last century, our social world has extended to mediated worlds, thereby extending opportunities for emotional encounters.

Many *media entertainment theories* somehow evolved around getting involved with the characters, dating back to Aristotle’s notion of catharsis. Numerous concepts have evolved to refer to a process of affective bonding; for example, involvement, → identification (similarity or wishful identification), parasocial interaction (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships), empathy (cognitive and affective), perspective taking, transportation (→ Transportation Theory), → presence, and immersion. However, these concepts are often not very clearly defined and are difficult to separate from one another. Furthermore, the measurement of these concepts has often been blurred by liking for the character or program. Therefore, various scholars have proposed using an umbrella concept (e.g., emotional involvement) and further defining related concepts in terms of various degrees of emotional involvement/empathy and distance/detachment. Liking a character may then be defined as a tradeoff between involvement and distance (Konijn & Hoorn 2005). For example, in wishful identification the character is liked *because* it is distinct from the viewer or reader, whereas most involvement conceptualizations view only similarity as constituent for liking.

An implicit fallacy is the assumption that more involvement implies more enjoyment, thereby suggesting that disliking a character would entail disliking a program (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). However, many examples may be given where characters are disliked, yet the program is liked – sometimes even because the character is disliked. For example, gruesome heroes in video games make games “cool.” The role of negative affects in (interactive) media exposure in optimizing enjoyment is an understudied area (e.g., why should we dispositionally like murderers?). Promising new perspectives integrate neuroscience into entertainment research (Weber et al. 2006). Future research may disentangle complicated affective processing of information in liking media fare – whether we like or dislike bad characters, we may still enjoy the program.

## AFFECTS AND PERSUASION IN COMMERCIAL CONTEXTS

Affects within the context of persuasion, ads, and commercials (→ Advertising, Emotions in) have evolved as a field in its own right, mostly studying fear appeals and humor (→ Fear Induction through Media Content). Fear-inducing displays are mostly used in prevention campaigns, for example showing rotten lungs to reduce smoking behavior (→ Prevention and Communication). Furthermore, attaching sexual affect to commercial content is a well known phenomenon (e.g., sexy women selling cars or, more subliminal, masking the word SEX in a liquor label). Creating an association of positive affect with a product or service will generally lead to a positive attitude toward that product, thereby



increasing purchase behavior. The positive affect connected with fear appeals lies in the relief following advertised recommendations. The results of such affect-laden exposures, however, are mixed (Obermiller et al. 2005). One reason is that consumers may remember the affect-arousing image (e.g., the joke) but not the message. Also, the affect-laden images may not match with the advertised product (e.g., women and trucks). Furthermore, the affective appeal may not arouse the intended affect (e.g., laughter among adolescents instead of fear) or may not be relevant to the consumer (e.g., considering oneself not vulnerable).

Recently, there has been a substantial increase in interest in general affective responses and specific emotions to persuasive media exposure, because “emotions sell” – even negative affect seems more effective than no affect (Williams & Aaker 2002). An increasingly popular development is *product placement* – the deliberate embedding of commercial messages (e.g., brands) in entertainment programming (including video games); for example, actors drinking Coca-Cola and wearing Nikes, thus blurring the lines between entertainment and persuasion (Shrum 2004). Even without deliberate product placements, television programs convey a considerable amount of information about consumption behavior; serving as guidelines for many viewers as consumers. Mixed results of studies in product placements suffer from methodological problems (e.g., not controlling for confounding factors).

A comparable format has been used in → *entertainment education* to convey pro-social and health messages (Singhal et al. 2004). Entertainment education is based on social learning theories in which the principal carriers are modeling and role models. Emotional involvement with characters in entertainment programming increases the likelihood of adopting a character’s lifestyle and emulating his or her behavior. The social sharing of entertainment (e.g., watching with friends) may further increase the affective response and the program’s effectiveness. Thus far, most research in entertainment education has taken place in “the field,” as it is popular in underdeveloped countries. Current attempts are being made, however, to develop learning environments in video games (serious games).

Future research may focus on the more general role of affect and emotional involvement, instead of discrete emotions, while processing ads, commercials, and promotion materials. Also, the role of negative affects should be further studied. Affective processing may prevail over cognitive processing, thus blurring the awareness of being exposed to commercial/persuasive materials. Affect may trigger heuristic processing of information, thereby inhibiting elaboration of arguments. Relatedly, emotions may inhibit or bias cognitive processing. Theoretically, an integration of media entertainment and persuasion research is a challenge for future scholars.

## **AFFECTS ACROSS THE INTERNET**

Media exposures through the world wide web are another important source for evoking affect in its users. Not only is much traditional media fare exposed on the Internet, but newly invented offerings can also be found, such as online gaming and interactive TV-related response options. Furthermore, the Internet hosts a lot of mediated → interpersonal communication, often accompanied by affect (e.g., online romance or hate speech; → Mediated Social Interaction). Influential moves are occurring that deserve attention

from communication scholars. An example is Pro Ana, an online virtual character promoting anorexia and self-starvation. Millions of adolescent girls worldwide follow “Ana” and show extreme levels of affective bonding through postings on related websites and blogs.

*Role-playing games* (Vorderer & Bryant 2006, 1–9) are an intriguing mixture of traditional media and technological innovation, allowing one to present oneself as a “fictional” character in virtual worlds and to create one’s own narrative. Some players even represent 50 different personalities online (keeping records of them offline). The “what if” scenarios and forced changes in perspective taking (e.g., Israeli prime minister versus Palestinian Authority in the game *Peacemaker*) are probably the main carriers of (educational) effectiveness. Furthermore, *cybersex* is an affect-arousing media exposure, holding a position somewhere between interactive pornography, sexually laden movies, and intimate affairs (→ Sex and Pornography Online).

Affective computing (Picard 1997) is yet another emerging research field, which focuses on designing affect in the communicative processes with computers to make the interaction more “life-like” or human-like. For example, embodied agents, avatars, or virtual humans are designed to enrich the computer-mediated communication processes (→ Avatars and Agents). Such human-like interface characters are also designed to detect the user’s emotions and to respond empathically. Virtual characters can be found in an increasing array of media fare on the Internet, including promotion and political campaigns, and are effectively used in a range of applications, such as in health-care, psychotherapy, and education.

For example, the virtual *Laura* was designed into a health-care system to motivate people to do physical exercises. *Laura* was most effective when she showed “emotional behavior” (Bickmore et al. 2005). Others found that “empathetic” characters were more trustworthy than non-emotional characters (Brave et al. 2005). Also, interesting parallels with media entertainment crop up. The *FearNot!* system was developed to teach children to deal with bullying behavior in schools through emphatic engagement with the bullied child. In *Façade*, users interfere in the marital problems of a materially successful, young virtual couple, leading to emotionally laden conversations that change the course of the virtual couple’s lives. Clearly, fruitful cross-fertilizations between scholars in media entertainment, media psychology, and affective computing are awaited.

## AFFECTS AND MEDIA INFORMATION PROCESSING

Affect and emotions play an important role on their own in processing the information derived from media exposure (→ Information Processing). Studies have shown the effects of emotions on → attention and recall of the news (Lang 2000; → Exposure to News; Memory). Others have found → selective attention (Brosius 1993) and → framing effects of emotion (Nabi 2003). Various scholars assume that affective processing limits the capacity to cognitively process the news, that emotions narrow one’s focus and affect the way information is stored in memory. When it comes to the role of affect in acquiring information from fiction (i.e., entertainment media), systematic studies are scarce. Studies in the context of narrative fiction (e.g., → cultivation theory) have already shown that fiction may lead to attitude changes equal to – and sometimes even greater than –

those that result from nonfiction stories. However, these studies have hardly either focused on the role of affect and emotion or used audiovisuals in experimental designs to systematically study how affects influence information processing from fiction.

Mood inductions are generally used in psychology to study the effects on a person's judgment of subsequent stimuli. One review concluded that feature films are most effective in evoking moods (Westermann et al. 1996). This and other information suggested that emotionalized viewers are more inclined to take fiction for real than are non-emotional viewers, especially when negative emotions are aroused (Konijn et al. in press). Affective processing of mediated information (e.g., through emotional involvement, mood induction, emotional framing, or otherwise) may constitute a decisive factor in adopting the represented (fictional) information and in incorporating the media message into one's worldview. Because emotions are our "life-vests," they tell us which events and what information should be taken seriously – mediated or not.

In all, affect plays a significant role in the selection, processing, and effects of media exposure. Future research should further detail how affective processing of media fare impacts the information gained from it; that is, how affective responses to media offerings modify the way in which the presented information is perceived, stored, retrieved, and valued, and becomes integrated into our real-life knowledge structures, whether fictitious (entertainment) or factual (news) media. Given the hybrid status of many current visual media messages, which creates ambiguity with regard to their "reality status," studies in the role of affect are becoming increasingly important as they give us information on the underlying processes of the media's power to influence people. This is particularly important given our current "mediated society," in which we not only develop intimate relationships online, but also acquire our real-world knowledge in large part through mediated exposure, in which affects and emotions play a vital role to get messages across.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Emotions in ▶ Affective Disposition Theories ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Attention ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Cognition ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Emotion ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Escapism ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Hollywood ▶ Identification ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Memory ▶ Mood Management ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Persuasion ▶ Presence ▶ Prevention and Communication ▶ Reality TV ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Soft News ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Video Games

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## Africa: Media Systems

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This entry concentrates on media systems in countries of Sub-Saharan Africa. The Sub-Saharan media system was born in the colonial era. Following the partition of Africa in

Berlin in 1884, the colonial era saw the establishment of mass media systems that initially served minority white settlers located in the emerging urban centers. Both early print and broadcasting frameworks were affected by the different policies and approaches of the colonial powers. The use of European languages, state-biased ownership systems, and limited media freedom are among colonial media attributes that continue today. The national media systems and countries discussed as part of this region are anything but homogeneous because Sub-Saharan Africa is huge and diverse. It covers 42 mainland countries and 6 island nations located south of the Sahara desert. Although the penetration of communication media has picked up in the past 50 years, only radio comes near to being described as a “mass medium.”

### GENERAL TRENDS

The spread and access to the mass media in Sub-Saharan Africa has been a highly uneven process. Estimates vary as accurate and up-to-date figures are very hard to find, but development has been rapid in the past 50 years. Among old media, → radio has achieved the best penetration owing to its affordability and adaptability. The estimated number of radio sets in Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) rose from 460,000 in 1955 to over 70 million in 1995. What is even more remarkable is that there was a tenfold increase in the number of radio sets between 1955 and 1965 and a fourfold increase over the next decade. Sub-Saharan Africa had 158 million radio broadcasting receivers in the late 1990s, up from 33 million in 1970 (Mytton 2000).

Even the largely urban and elitist medium of → television has shown remarkable growth in Africa. UNESCO estimated that in 1997 Sub-Saharan Africa had 1,396 million television sets compared to 299 million in 1970 and 749 million in 1985 (→ UNESCO). The figures for print media titles published in Sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1990s show at least 224 daily newspapers with a combined circulation of 12 million, a marked increase from 199 newspapers in 1970, which had a combined circulation of just 4 million (World Bank 2006). Today’s rapid growth of the African media belies the fact that these mass media are recent and that they were mainly introduced during the colonial era.

### PRINT MEDIA

One of the most obvious features of Sub-Saharan African media is the way print media were introduced in different parts of the region. The press in English-speaking West Africa was the earliest in Sub-Saharan Africa. The *Royal Gazette* and *Sierra Leone Advertiser*, first published in 1801, appear to be the region’s oldest newspapers. The *Royal Gold Coast Gazette* (published in 1822, in present-day Ghana) was founded by Charles L. Force, a former American slave, who had previously established the *Liberia Herald* in 1820. Missionaries also introduced → newspapers to Sub-Saharan Africa, a good example being in 1859, when they started Nigeria’s first newspaper, *Iwe Thorin*, in the Yoruba language. Factors that led to a viable early newspaper sector in West Africa included the presence of a large population that was western-educated and the absence of a colonial settler population that could undermine the development of the press in West Africa, as it did in other regions of Africa.

By contrast to patterns in West Africa, in Anglophone *Southern and Central Africa*, the press was largely introduced by European settlers. By the time the Cape Colony's administration passed the 1828 press law, the press was already 28 years old. The law stipulated that press operators were to deposit 300 pounds plus the equivalent sum in guarantees and then they were free to publish, subject only to libel laws (Bourgault 1995; → Libel and Slander). The most notable newspapers at this time included the *Cape Argus*, founded in 1857. In 1881, Cecil John Rhodes bought the controlling interests in the *Cape Argus*, using his vast wealth to grow it into a major newspaper chain expanding northward through South Africa, into Southern and Northern Rhodesia (now respectively Zimbabwe and Zambia). The Argus Group and other mining concerns established the Bantu Press in 1931 to channel indigenous African views from politics and keep an opposition press from developing in Southern and Central Africa.

The beginnings of the press in *East Africa* were not different from other parts of Africa. It was largely created for its settler population. The first paper was established in the Kenyan coastal city of Mombasa in 1902 by a member of the Asian community, A. M. Jeevanjee. From 1910 it was operated from the mainland under the title the *East African Standard*, which still exists today. In 1930, Jeevanjee established the *Tanganyika Standard* in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) and much later set up the *Uganda Argus* in Kampala. The *Standard* papers' rivals in East Africa included the Nation Group, owned and financed by the Aga Khan of the Ismail Islamic sect. The *Daily Nation* and the *Sunday Nation* began publishing in 1960. The Indian community in East Africa generated enough wealth from trade to be able to produce a chain of papers, an undertaking that was beyond poor, indigenous East Africans.

The *French colonial administration* in Africa actively discouraged the development of the press in the colonies. A heavy tax was placed on imported newsprint and printing machinery. The French, in keeping with their policy of assimilation of Africans into French culture, preferred to freely circulate newspapers produced in the metropolis to their African colonies. It was much later, in the 1930s, before citizens who were deemed to be in good standing with the French colonial authorities were allowed to publish in the colonies. The few African-owned papers established to serve white settler interests included *Le Reveil du Senegalais*, *Le Petit Senegalais*, and *L'Union Africaine*. *Le Gri Negre* and *La Phare du Dahomey*, set up in the 1920s in Dahomey (now Benin), are examples of papers that were published outside French rules (Bourgault 1995). Most basically, a distinction can be made between the underdeveloped and underresourced press system in Francophone Africa and the relatively and technically strong settler press model in Anglophone Southern Africa.

## RADIO

The introduction and organization of broadcasting closely followed colonial political and administrative systems. Radio was introduced in the 1920s, first in South Africa, and then developed further in 1927, when the British East Africa Company began a → BBC relay service for settlers, broadcasting from Nairobi, Kenya. In 1932, the British established the Empire Service, designed to serve their colonies and dominions, including Anglophone Africa. This service relayed the BBC from Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe)

in Southern Africa and from Lagos, Nigeria in West Africa. The Nairobi service broadcast in local languages (Kikamba and Kikuyu). The Accra, Gold Coast (now Ghana) radio service, which was started in the mid-1930s, had additional relays in Sekondi, Kumasi, and Korofidua. Not only did the service have African personnel, but by the 1940s it was broadcasting in Ewe, Twi, and Hausa. The British deliberately promoted the use of local languages in an attempt to build an African audience. The British spread radio to most of Anglophone Africa by the early 1940s.

The French, unlike the British, who wanted to provide something of a public service to their colonies, pursued an entirely different policy and initially delayed the start of broadcasting in their colonial territories. Radio broadcasting started in French Africa in 1931 in Madagascar, with Radio Dakar established in 1939 in Senegal. French colonial policy of direct rule was mirrored in broadcasting, as all programming was initially French in orientation and in delivery. Broadcasting served French citizens and underscored the value of colonial rule among French elites. In the Belgian Congo (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), the Jesuits at Albert College in Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) established in 1937 a small-scale radio station, broadcasting in French for two hours a week on Sundays and holidays. In 1939, a radio engineer, J. Hourdebise, began a private station called Congolia, which provided daily services in French but also in Lingala, Swahili, and Chiluba. The Belgians left broadcasting to private individuals or religious groups. In both the French and the British colonies, radio was from the outset an arm for colonial policies.

### THE TELEVISION AGE

The television age came to Sub-Saharan Africa in the late 1950s, which was the end of colonial rule for many countries in the region. Elite and urban in character, television depended on foreign programming and was initially used mainly for entertainment purposes. The medium was introduced in Ibadan, Nigeria, in 1959 and also later in Enugu, resulting in the country having two television stations before it gained independence from Britain in 1960. Other Sub-Saharan African countries that got television before national independence include Kenya, Zambia (Northern Rhodesia), and Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia), but it is important to stress that these early television services were mainly targeted at the white settler communities. Countries that got television after independence in the early to mid-1960s include Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Sudan, Gabon, Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, Niger, Senegal, Madagascar, Ghana, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire). Ethiopia and Liberia, two countries that were never colonized, also got television at this time.

It ought to be mentioned that some Sub-Saharan African countries resisted television for many years. These include Namibia (formerly South West Africa), which introduced the medium in 1981, and also Mali, the Seychelles, and Somalia, which created their services in 1983. Burundi did not have television until 1984. Cameroon and Chad delayed television until 1986 and 1987, respectively. In Southern Africa, South Africa resisted television until 1976, because of what was seen by the apartheid government as its "morally corruptive" influence and fears that it could provide information that would strengthen anti-apartheid forces (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Lesotho did not have television until 1988 and nor did Botswana until 1989. Television was introduced to

mainland Tanzania and Rwanda in the 1990s. Malawi launched its first national television station in January 1999 and Botswana did the same in July 2000. However, for most countries in the region, the television age coincided with national independence but the medium sadly remains a symbol of national status that hardly goes beyond the major African cities (→ Television for Development).

## **INDEPENDENCE AND DEMOCRATIZATION**

Although colonial media were used to suppress and misinform Sub-Saharan Africans, alternative media also helped them achieve political independence in the 1960s. African nationalists, such as Nigeria's Nnamdi Azikiwe, Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, and Malawi's Kamuzu Hastings Banda, used the media to articulate their ideas about national independence. As a way of dealing with resistance from colonial authorities, these African nationalists adopted various strategies, including going underground with the press and its liberation rhetoric through pamphlets, tracts, clandestine radio, and word of mouth, known under different names in different parts of Sub-Saharan Africa (Nyamnjoh 2005; → Activist Media; Advocacy Journalism). The push for African independence in the late 1950s and 1960s was partly aided by economic and geopolitical changes that took place after World War II and also by the attempts to liberalize colonialism by the colonial authorities.

Post-independence media systems were close to one-party systems (→ Partisan Press; Party–Press Parallelism). The reason was that, once in power, these nationalist governments expanded their mass media systems and, with the help of UNESCO and bilateral aid organizations, they experimented with the ideas of development and modernization using the mass media (→ Development Communication: Africa). In the processes of nation building, the ownership and control of broadcasting was more centralized than that of print media. To a large extent, some of the previously westernized communication models and media systems were indigenized after independence. For example, in Zaire under Mobuto Seseseko, the media were nationalized and newspaper titles were changed. In many countries, British and French models of broadcasting, and to a lesser extent print media and journalistic practices, were nationalized and attempts were made to localize → media policies.

For example, most media policies in Sub-Saharan Africa, certainly in Tanzania and Zambia, prioritized radio over other mass media because it had more resonance with local life. This is particularly true of television, which largely depends on programs produced in western countries. African independence also saw increased attempts by the new states not only to own but also to control the mass media. State → censorship and persecution of journalists (→ Violence against Journalists) increased as weak African governments sought to suppress criticism from the media for much of the period after the 1960s. African journalists are poorly paid and most media organizations are underfunded. On the whole, the legacy of western notions of media culture and practice is yet to be adequately reformed in order to address the expectations of the majority of Africans, especially those living in rural Africa.

In the 1990s, the changing African media became central to the new struggle for greater political and economic independence. In response to demands by international and local pressure groups, more and more African countries opened up their media and telecommunications sectors. Before 1990, only a few African countries allowed commercial or



nonstate radios; for example, Africa No. 1 in Gabon, Radio SYD in Gambia, Radio ELWA in Liberia, and Trans-World Radio in Swaziland. By 2005, most countries had opened up their broadcasting sectors after many years of state monopoly of the sector.

The 1990s ushered in a boom in private, local, community, and commercial radio stations in some regions, for example in West Africa, where 76 stations were established in less than 5 years up to 1996 (→ Community Media). In Burkina Faso and Mali, most of these new stations are in rural areas and are of a nonprofit public service character. Other countries that have allowed private broadcasting include Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Namibia, Senegal, and Botswana. After majority rule in 1994, South Africa made huge efforts to reform and democratize the South Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) into a genuine public service broadcaster. The country has also opened up its media sector greatly. By contrast, Zimbabwe is one of the countries that is yet to open up its broadcasting sector, and for much of its period of independence from Britain, since 1980, it has been less tolerant of private media. For example, in September 2003, police in Harare stormed the offices of the *Daily News* and shut the “opposition” newspaper, ostensibly banning it for refusing to register with the government-appointed Media Information Commission (MIC). In general, a wave of democracy in the 1990s brought with it multipartyism and a degree of media pluralism in many Sub-Saharan African countries.

### **INTERNET AND MOBILE COMMUNICATION**

From 2000 to 2006 the percentage of → Internet users in Africa grew 625.8 percent, with the bulk of Sub-Saharan African users in South Africa (5.1 million), Nigeria (5 million), Sudan (2.8 million), Zimbabwe (1 million), and Kenya (1 million). According to the 2006 World Development Indicators of the World Bank, the number of mobile phone subscribers in Sub-Saharan Africa rose dramatically from 7.5 million in 1999 to 76.8 million in 2004, and between 2000 and 2004, fixed-line and mobile phone subscribers increased from 31 per 1,000 to 84 per 1,000. This growth was mainly driven by a 400 percent increase of mobile phone subscribers in the region. Four times as many people had access to mobile phones as to fixed-line phones in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2004 (World Bank 2006), making Africa the first place where mobile subscribers outnumber fixed-line subscribers.

Although spectacular growth has been achieved in the mobile phone and Internet sectors, the overall picture in Sub-Saharan African countries seems to suggest that a very small group of privileged Africans have benefited. For example, in 2006 there were 32.8 million African Internet users (3.6 percent of the African population, about 3 percent of users in the world) in a continent with an estimated population of 915 million (14.1 percent of the world’s population; → Digital Divide). However, one needs to be skeptical of these figures, not only because of the efficacy of methods used to generate the statistics but also because of their failure to reflect multiple user dimensions, of say mobile phones, which are prevalent in Africa.

### **THE TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY AFRICAN MEDIA SYSTEM**

Regulatory and technological issues dominate the twenty-first-century African media system. There are increased calls and moves toward more diverse media frameworks.

State monopolies have been undermined by a wave of deregulation, commercialization, and privatization of broadcasting and telecommunications. Demands for democratic changes have included calls for the democratization of the media spaces, and technological changes have increased technical options, allowing plurality in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors (→ Communication Technology and Development).

A small but significant number of Africans is now able to receive popular radio and television content via terrestrial, satellite, cable, and Internet. Most countries are taking advantage of the rapid development of new communications technologies and digitization. For example, Cameroon and Mozambique now also use the capital-intensive cable television format. South Africa's Multichoice Digital Satellite Television (DSTV), a digital subscriber management company and the first pay-TV service in Sub-Saharan Africa, grew from M-Net, a single channel pay-TV service that was set up in South Africa in 1986. By 2002, Multichoice was providing 55 TV channels and over 40 audio channels for a monthly subscription of US\$45. In 2006, Multichoice was part of a group of big players in African broadcasting that include the BBC and Canal France International (CFI), which provide free-to-air networks delivered by satellite to local African television stations, which then broadcast the channels in whole or part. The networks are CFI, which styles itself as a program bank, and Africa Broadcast Network (ABN), which grew from program distributor ABC and TV Africa and received financial backing from the International Financial Corporation in 2001. In 2003, ABN broadcast one-hour prepackaged programs, typically consisting of American programs, to Ghana, Kenya, Zambia, Nigeria, and Tanzania (→ Digital Media, History of; Satellite Television).

Sub-Saharan Africa has also seen a dramatic growth in the indigenous entertainment production industry. For example, the burgeoning video film industry in Nigeria, now dubbed "Nollywood," has become Africa's answer to India's → Bollywood and America's → Hollywood industries. Rapid technical developments and affordable equipment are giving Africans a chance to produce and consume their own images. Internet radio stations, online newspapers, and digital music libraries are set to continue revolutionizing the Sub-Saharan African media scene (→ Online Media). However, the point can be made that the evolution of the African media system currently works in favor of new market-based operators, which are not producers but peddlers of foreign-produced content, within the parameters defined by colonial legacies. Information for citizenship is minimal in media diets that are urban-biased and market-driven. To sum up, Sub-Saharan Africa's emerging media system is diverse and fast growing but to a large extent is still influenced by its colonial legacy.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ BBC ▶ Bollywood ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Community Media ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media History ▶ Media Policy ▶ Newspaper ▶ Online Media ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Political Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television ▶ Television for Development ▶ UNESCO ▶ Violence against Journalists

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## **Age Identity and Communication**

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Communication plays a substantial role in influencing understandings and self-presentations with regard to age. While the immutable passing of time (and rising chronological age) is at the heart of life-span development issues, our age group identifications and the age groups into which we are categorized are not deterministically organized by chronological age. Rather, age identities and categorizations are considerably more malleable. Gender or ethnicity category distinctions remain relatively impermeable over time, and the boundaries between such groups remain fairly rigid and clear for most people (people who are multiracial “passing” as members of other groups, or who are transsexual/transgendered, constitute exceptions here). In contrast, age group memberships change with time and divisions between age groups are fuzzy and highly negotiable. As a result, they are perhaps more open to social construction (→ Discursive Psychology). This provides opportunities to study the communicative practices that people employ to manage their age identities. Negative age stereotypes and prejudicial (ageist) attitudes are also common. Despite the fact that most of us will (or hope to) get old, many young *and* old people hold negative views of older adulthood (Kite et al. 2005). Hence, age presents unique opportunities and points of interest for identity scholars.

## INTERGENERATIONAL PROCESSES

One approach to age identification and communication has been to examine intergenerational processes driven by age categorizations (→ Intergenerational Communication). Grounded in → social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1986) and communication accommodation theory (Shepard et al. 2001), this work has looked at how age stereotypes lead to patronizing speech from young to old (Hummert & Ryan 2001). Younger people who stereotype older adults as deaf or mentally impaired sometimes use a speech style similar to baby talk (→ Intergroup Accommodative Processes). This is often dissatisfying for older adults, and can yield negative outcomes for older people as they are assumed to be incompetent by those overhearing such speech.

Theoretical development in the study of intergenerational communication has centered on the communication predicament of aging model (Ryan et al. 1986). Some work has broken down the components of the patronizing speech style, identifying which may be functional for impaired older people, which are perceived as nurturing, and which serve no useful function (Kemper & Harden 1999). Identity issues are relevant because intergroup age stereotyping processes are closely related to age identities – social identity theory demonstrates that negative stereotypes reinforce positive ingroup identities (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication).

Other intergenerational processes have been tied to life-span identifications: storytelling (Nussbaum & Bettini 1994; → Storytelling and Narration); attribution (Erber & Prager 2000; → Attribution Processes); reproaching (Miller-Day 2004); disclosing painful experiences (J. Coupland et al. 1988), and intergenerational conflict (Zhang et al. 2005; → Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span). The specific processes described in most of this research are culturally limited. Research needs to pay attention to cultural variability in age-identity-related communication processes (Harwood 2007). For instance, Zhang & Hummert (2001) describe a process of *laodao*, a specifically Chinese pattern of repetitive complaining from old to young.

## MANAGING AGE IDENTITY IN DISCOURSE

A second area of research has examined how age identities are raised, manipulated, avoided, and negotiated in naturalistic language use (→ Identities and Discourse). This includes work examining the disclosure of chronological age (DCA) in older adulthood (i.e., when older adults tell others exactly how old they are). N. Coupland et al. (1989) discuss two functions for DCA. First, it serves a disjunctive function, positively contrasting current health status with what might be subjectively expected (e.g., “I’m doing well for 73”). Second, it serves an accounting function, explaining a negative state as a function of age (e.g., “I’m not as fast as I used to be; at 73, you can’t expect too much!”). N. Coupland et al. note that accounting and disjunction both serve self-presentation functions for the individual. The speaker is framed as doing either better than, or at least as well as can be expected given their age. However, both draw on an underlying presumption of decline and decrement that occurs with age – they reinforce assumptions about aging and decline.

Beyond DCA, J. Coupland et al. (1991) have identified other ways in which age categories can be invoked in discourse. For instance, an age-related role can be mentioned

(widow, student, retiree), or descriptions of the past or of changes over time can be made (e.g., noting that you remember when a residential subdivision was just a field). These authors argue that such comments are (like DCA) strategic activities that invoke age for particular discursive purposes. They are, then, *generational alignments*, ways in which we align ourselves with particular age groups or generations for particular purposes. The uniquely fluid nature of age groups lends itself to this process, but similar processes could be identified with other groups (e.g., at certain junctures it may be useful to emphasize womanhood, while at other times it may be strategically marginalized in talk). More coverage of a wide variety of links between discourse and life-span position is provided in N. Coupland & Nussbaum (1993).

### AGE IDENTITIES AND THE MEDIA

Age identities are also shaped by media presentations and portrayals. Research examining media underrepresentation of older people has demonstrated the lack of value placed on this group (Robinson et al. 2004). Interestingly, most samples of → television examined also underrepresent very young people (children and adolescents). Hence, both ends of the life-span tend to be marginalized in “mainstream” television. Such findings appear to be cross-culturally relatively stable. Quantitative analyses have also considered the *quality* of old-age portrayals in the media, noting that older people are often portrayed negatively (→ Stereotyping and the Media).

Less work has considered the complexities of age portrayals from a qualitative perspective, although there is some work examining age representations in websites (Harwood 2004), skin care and tanning discourses (J. Coupland 2003), Internet chat rooms (Lin et al. 2004), and on specific television shows (Harwood & Giles 1992). Further work is needed to examine the ways in which aging is used in cosmetics advertising (e.g., anti-wrinkle creams) and how age is marked in → news stories.

Older adults engaged in counter-stereotypical activities (sky diving, robbing banks) are often described in ways that could be interestingly unpacked by discourse scholars. Advertising portrayals also deserve more attention. For instance, the grandparenting relationship is being used in interesting ways in a number of recent print advertisements in North America: ads have appeared with the implicit message that using the product/service will result in enhanced relationships with grandchildren. These are undoubtedly designed not just to appeal to grandparents, but also to capitalize on the more general positive affect associated with grandparenting. Hence, a life-span-related role identity is being used to trigger affect that is then associated with a product. The extent to which such strategies are effective, and their effects on perceptions of the role relationship (e.g., idealization of grandparenting as a result of the ads) lead us to very interesting empirical questions (→ Advertising).

### AGING AND HEALTH

Aging is often treated as synonymous with ill health and decline, often with profound implications (N. Coupland & Coupland 1990; Hummert & Nussbaum 2001; → Health Communication). Aging is also a contested issue within health-care itself. N. Coupland &

Coupland (1999) describe some of the ways in which anti-ageist medical philosophies are invoked by physicians in dealing with older patients (→ Doctor–Patient Talk). These philosophies are well intentioned and for many patients may serve to move them out of a mindset where aging and ill health are seen as inextricably linked. However, N. Coupland & Coupland (1999) also note that some patients may find comfort in attributing health problems to age – it may be psychologically functional to see a problem as “normal for my age” rather than abnormal (and therefore pathological). Anti-ageist discourses can also themselves be seen as ageist at times, for instance when they reinforce ideas that older adults need protection from ageism, are unable to think critically about their own life-span position, and need to be shielded from certain “realities.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Aging and Cognitive Processing ▶ Aging and Message Production and Processing ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Health Communication ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interethnic Relationships in Families ▶ Intergenerational Communication ▶ Intergroup Accommodative Processes ▶ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ▶ News Story ▶ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Story-telling and Narration ▶ Television

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## Agenda Building

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Agenda building refers to the process by which news organizations and journalists feature, emphasize, and/or select certain events, issues, or sources to cover over others. Research in the area is closely linked to but distinct from the agenda-setting tradition which examines the connection between the issues portrayed in the news media and the issue priorities of the public (McCombs 2004). Agenda building is also related to work in political science on *policy agenda setting*, which focuses on how news coverage both reflects and shapes the priorities of government officials, decision-makers, and elites (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; → Agenda-Setting Effects).

The *news agenda* is defined as the list of events or issues that are portrayed in coverage at one point in time or across time. *Events* are discrete occurrences, such as the release of a government report on greenhouse gas emissions or a presidential speech on Iraq.

An *issue* can be a series of related events that are grouped together within a larger category of meaning such as climate change, the environment, the war in Iraq, or foreign policy. *Sources* include the voices, actors, or groups featured in news coverage such as government officials, environmentalists, or antiwar protesters (Reese 1991; → News Sources).

The agenda-building literature is characterized by a diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches. However, a common thread is that news coverage is not a reflection of reality, but rather a manufactured product, determined by a hierarchy of social influences that span levels of analysis (→ Reality and Media Reality). Macro-level factors involve economic, cultural, and ideological variables along with ownership structure and industry trends. Mid-range influences include organizational routines, professional norms, → journalist role perceptions, and source strategies. Individual-level influences derive from socio-economic, political, and psychological orientations of journalists (Shoemaker & Reese 1996).

### IDEOLOGICAL AND INDUSTRY-LEVEL FACTORS

At this level of analysis, there is a heavy emphasis on research on the news agenda and its relevance to the media's performance as a democratic institution. Critical theorists argue that media agendas tend to pay close attention only to the events, political figures, and issues that favor the interests of elites and that fall within a narrow range of political perspectives. The news agenda therefore serves a *hegemonic* function, maintaining a cohesive ideology and set of values that protects the status quo power structure (Reese 1991; → Critical Theory).

Beyond this critical perspective, other research has explored the impact of ownership structure on news attention to community issues or to the plurality of perspectives considered newsworthy (Demers 1999; → Ownership in the Media). Additionally, several scholars have examined how changes in technology and market forces have displaced coverage of policy-oriented *hard news* issues with coverage of more sensational and celebrity-oriented → *soft news* topics (Hamilton 2004; → Media Economics). A fourth area of research has focused on *inter-media agenda setting*, or the tendency for different types of news outlets to mirror closely the set of issues covered by just a few national news organizations (→ Quality Press; News Agencies) or to converge simultaneously on a single high-profile national story (Reese 1991).

### ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL FACTORS

Most of the research on agenda building has focused on workplace and professional-level influences that shape news attention. This research investigates the unofficial set of ground rules that govern the interactions between journalists and their sources, leading to a negotiation of newsworthiness. This co-production of news often privileges attention to certain issues, views, and societal actors over others (Berkowitz 1992; Cook 1998).

News organizations are profit-driven enterprises that are chiefly concerned with transforming complex events into appealing stories for their news consumers. Faced with financial, political, and time pressures, journalists routinize their daily work by relying on → news values such as prominence, conflict, drama, proximity, timeliness, and objectivity



(→ News Factors). Moreover, they rely heavily on storytelling themes and narrative to package complex events and issues and to make them appealing to specific audiences. In reporting the news, they follow a set of socially prescribed role expectations that are based on organizational rules, professionally derived standards of ethics and quality, and societal expectations relative to commonly held beliefs such as patriotism or religion (→ Ethics in Journalism; Quality of the News).

In order to further promote predictability, journalists have a tendency to rely heavily on routine channel sources and *information subsidies*. Examples include official government actions and events, the release of scientific journal articles or expert reports, and other *pseudo-events* (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Finally, media organizations make predictable the unexpected by assigning their journalists to news bureaus and beats, including government institutions or to a societal sector such as science or business (Shoemaker & Reese 1996).

These routines result in systematic patterns in news attention and sourcing. Studies find that the majority of news stories are source-generated, with government and industry officials having the strongest impact on the news agenda. Other actors – including lawyers, doctors, celebrities, and scientists – wield media influence because of their perceived social legitimacy. Few stories are “discovered” by way of enterprise reporting. In most cases, even objective indicators related to the economy or the environment are made newsworthy by the actions and claims of sources. In addition, the authority bias of journalists tends to lead to a close *indexing* of only the official views expressed in a policy debate, ignoring in coverage nonofficial sources that might offer dissent (Bennett 1990). As a result, in order to gain media agenda status, many nonauthoritative sources are forced to piggyback on favorable focusing events and/or invest heavily in cultivating personal contacts with journalists (Danielian 1992; → News Routines).

The heavy reliance by journalists on familiar narratives means that in order to generate continued coverage of an issue, journalists must be able to fit the issue into a broader storyline. Visible conflict, personality clashes, and dramatic claims in relation to risks and morality allow journalists to construct a “news saga” that they can cover for more than a day or week. As a result, issues that remain defined in more thematic and technical ways are less likely to receive wider media attention (Nisbet & Huye 2006; → Conflict as Media Content).

## **SOCIAL COMPOSITIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL FACTORS**

In shaping the selection of stories, several studies have focused on the political and social predispositions of journalists. In the US context, partisanship remains the most contentious among possible individual-level influences. In defense of journalists, many scholars argue that it is much more likely that professional and organizational norms override any political bias in coverage decisions. Yet survey research shows a significant relationship between the political beliefs of journalists and their responses to hypothetical coverage decisions, even among American journalists who prefer a tradition of political → neutrality (Patterson & Donsbach 1996). Other research finds connections between the racial, religious, class, and geographic composition of newsrooms and the selection of stories (Shoemaker & Reese 1996). More recent work applies theories from social psychology to understand journalistic decisions. This emerging approach argues that the cognitive and

emotional needs of journalists can help explain common agenda-building phenomena, ranging from pack journalism to political bias (Donsbach 2004; → *Bias in the News; Journalism: Group Dynamics*).

## **RESEARCHING THE AGENDA-BUILDING PROCESS**

Each approach to observing and tracking the agenda-building process features certain advantages and limitations. Content analysis is by far the most frequently used method (→ *Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative*). In combination with measuring the amount of media attention to an event or issue, this “visible source impact” approach (Berkowitz 1992) also involves tracking the standing given in coverage to certain actors or institutions over others. Researchers may also closely examine news stories for the use of routine channel sources that appear to have served as the news peg for coverage. The more prominent the actor in coverage or the more frequently appearing a specific type of news peg, the greater the influence that particular source is inferred to have on the agenda-building process.

A limitation for many of these content studies is their scale, with studies focusing on news coverage of an issue at just a few news outlets, over just a few years, within a single national setting, or using the agenda at the national elite newspapers as a proxy for the broader news agenda. Several studies have tracked coverage of an issue over a decade or more, identifying the important reciprocal relationships between media agendas and policy arenas (Nisbet et al. 2003; → *Time-Series Analysis*). Content analysis studies are also limited in that they only examine news coverage as the final product of the agenda-building process. Even though several valid and reliable interpretations are possible from this type of analysis, there remains some degree of uncertainty regarding the actual inputs to the process or the specifics of the process itself. Other studies attempt to build on the “visible source impact” approach with a tallying of source–media coverage success rates. This method involves comparing press releases from key sources and then noting their success rate in shaping news coverage.

Though employed less frequently than content analysis, → survey studies of journalists add many valuable insights to agenda building and news coverage decisions. In survey studies, self-reported attitudes and behaviors of journalists are often correlated with news organization attributes and/or news content measures. More innovative survey studies have embedded quasi-experimental designs that tap the influence of role perceptions and political beliefs in shaping coverage decisions. These survey studies, however, can be very expensive, with respondent participation rates a function of cost. Finally, future research needs to return to the classic ethnographic and observational studies of journalistic decision-making. Although these methods can be time-intensive, expensive, and suffer from either a lack of representativeness and/or observational bias, this original work helped lay the foundation for an entire field of media sociology, and should not be abandoned.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Regardless of the method applied to the study of agenda building, future research faces several central questions. First is the reality that no single issue exists in isolation from

other issues. Every news organization has a limited carrying capacity, meaning that the outlet can pay attention to only a finite number of problems at any given time. Consequently, unless carrying capacity increases, the rise of one issue to agenda status means that another issue is likely to be bumped from consideration (Hilgartner & Bosk 1988). Yet despite this “natural law” of public arenas, a major problem is that very few agenda-building studies examine coverage of an issue within the context of the wider competitive media environment.

Second, with technological changes and increasing audience fragmentation, future research needs to explore more carefully the relationship between traditional news organizations and their many emerging competitors. Conservative and religious cable news channels, pan-Arab satellite TV news, Internet portals such as Google, Yahoo!, and YouTube, and even portable handheld devices are all examples of alternative news agendas. Moreover, with the rise of these new media platforms, the definition and role of the journalist is changing, with → bloggers and → documentary filmmakers shaping traditional news agendas and reaching either mass publics and/or important targeted audiences.

Finally, since many agenda studies examine coverage of an issue or events only across a limited time period, very few researchers consider the potential power exerted in achieving agenda success early on in the history of a debate. For example, if in early coverage of an issue a select few sources can strategically define their position, as well as the alternatives available for discussion, they can shield themselves in future coverage from counter-arguments, making it difficult for opposing sources to even gain news attention. In addition, by gaining agenda status and subsequently altering the framing of an issue, sources can control which news beats or types of journalists cover an issue and even influence the type of policy arena where debate over an issue takes place. This connection between agenda building, frame building, and its impact on the trajectory of an issue remains an under-theorized area of research (Nisbet & Huye 2006; → Framing of the News).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Neutrality ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Quality Press ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Soft News ▶ Survey ▶ Time-Series Analysis

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## Agenda-Setting Effects

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One of the most oft-cited approaches to studying media effects that emerged in the early 1970s is known as the agenda-setting effect (or function) of mass media. First tested empirically in the 1968 US presidential election by University of North Carolina journalism professors Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (McCombs & Shaw 1972), this approach originally focused on the ability of the mass media to tell the public what to think *about* rather than what to think. This was a sharp break from previous media effects studies that had focused on what people thought (their opinions and attitudes) and on behaviors such as voting and purchasing various goods and services (→ Media Effects, History of).

In their original 1968 study, published in *Public Opinion Quarterly* in the summer of 1972, McCombs and Shaw quoted Bernard Cohen, author of *The press and foreign policy*, who wrote that the press “may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think *about*” (Cohen 1963, 13). They also quoted from Kurt and Gladys Lang’s chapter on the mass media and voting in Bernard Berelson’s *Reader in public opinion and communication*: “The mass media force attention to certain issues. They build up public images of political figures. They are constantly presenting objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about, have feelings about” (Lang & Lang 1966, 468; → Cumulative Media Effects).

To empirically test this agenda-setting effect of mass media, McCombs and Shaw content analyzed four local newspapers, the *New York Times*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the NBC and CBS evening news broadcasts (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), and compared the rankings of the key issues by these news media with undecided voter respondents' answers to a → survey question asking them what they were most concerned about at the time (the two or three main things that they thought the government should concentrate on doing something about). This study produced some very strong correlations between the rankings of issues by the media and by the public (→ Correlation Analysis), leading to the conclusion that the public learns not only about a given issue but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in news reports and its position.

Since this initial study of media agenda setting, there have been several hundred studies carried out by scholars in the US and other countries such as Germany, Great Britain, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Taiwan, and others. Most of these studies have focused on the relationship between news media ranking of issues (by amount and prominence of coverage) and public rankings of the perceived importance of these issues in various surveys, a type of research that Dearing and Rogers (1996) have called *public agenda setting*, to distinguish it from studies that are concerned mainly with the causes of changes in the media agenda (*media agenda setting*) or the impact of media agendas on public policy agendas (*policy agenda setting*).

The evidence from scores of such public agenda-setting studies is mixed, but on the whole it tends to support a positive correlation – and often a causal relationship – between media agendas and public agendas at the *aggregate* (or group) level, especially for relatively unobtrusive issues that do not directly impact the lives of the majority of the public, such as foreign policy and government scandal. At the *individual* level, the evidence is not as strong (McLeod et al. 1974). That is, the *individual* rank orders of issues are not necessarily the same as the *aggregate* ranking compiled from many individual answers to the question about the most important issue facing the country (or state or city or community).

## METHODS OF STUDYING AGENDA SETTING

In addition to examining the relationships between media and public agendas at the aggregate and individual levels, it is also possible to study single issues over time using either aggregate (group) or individual-level data. McCombs (2004) has described these *four different approaches* (entire agenda, aggregate level; entire agenda, individual level; single issue, aggregate level; and single issue, individual level) in terms of a four-cell typology, which he calls the Acapulco typology because it was first presented at the annual conference of the → International Communication Association (ICA) there in 1980 (Table 1).

He calls the first perspective (studying an entire agenda at the aggregate or group level) “*competition*” because it examines an array of issues competing for media and public attention. It was the approach used in the original 1968 Chapel Hill study, and it has been the most common approach employed in agenda-setting research since that time. It has also yielded notably stronger correlations between media and public agendas than studies

Table 1 The Acapulco typology: four perspectives on studying agenda setting

Focus of attention	Aggregate data	Individual data
Entire agenda of issues	I Competition	II Automaton
Single issue	III Natural history	IV Cognitive portrait

Source: McCombs (2004, 31)

using individual-level data to compare media and individual persons' agendas (an approach that McCombs calls "automaton"). He notes that another way of thinking about this approach is in terms of the ability of the news media to mobilize a constituency among the public for a particular issue.

Probably the second most common approach to studying agenda setting has been the use of aggregate data to study media coverage and public concern about single issues over time (an approach that McCombs calls "*natural history*"). Using media content and aggregate public opinion data over time, it is possible to track the rise and fall of media attention to and public concern over particular issues, and to get a sense of whether increased media attention precedes, coincides with, or follows an increase in public concern – essential information for inferring a causal relationship. A seminal study using this approach is Funkhouser (1973), who correlated news media coverage of major issues during the 1960s with public opinion and real-world conditions during the decade.

It is also possible with this approach to see if the relationship between media attention and public concern over a particular is linear or nonlinear – something that has been explored in relatively few agenda-setting studies (see, for example, a chapter by William Gonzenbach and Lee McGavin on a methodological analysis of agenda setting in McCombs et al. 1997, which explores the use of time-series analysis in studying agenda setting and cites several studies employing nonlinear analysis by David Fan, Jonathan (Jian-Hua) Zhu, and Russell Neuman). This chapter suggests that the methods of nonlinear approaches can be seen in the equations and analysis of some agenda-setting studies, and that one of the most significant contributions of agenda-setting research is to take a leading role in re-examining assumptions about linear relationships.

One of the earliest and most thorough studies to do this was by Hans-Bernd Brosius and Hans Mathias Kepplinger (1992), who questioned the linearity assumption of much agenda-setting research and who proposed four nonlinear models of the relationship of media coverage and public opinion: *threshold* (a certain level of media attention is necessary to affect public concern); *acceleration* (public concern increases or decreases faster than media coverage); *inertia* (public concern increases or decreases at a slower rate than media coverage); and *echo* (unusual peaks in media coverage have long-term effects on public concern; → Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis).

The third perspective or approach to studying agenda setting is to use individual-level public data to study a single issue over time. It has been called "*cognitive portrait*" by McCombs (2004) and is less common than the natural history approach using aggregate public data. Examples of the cognitive portrait approach include experimental studies in which the salience of a single issue for each individual person is measured before and after

exposure to news programs where the amount of exposure to various issues is controlled. Shanto Iyengar has done a number of these studies (Iyengar 1979; Iyengar & Kinder 1987). Jian-Hua Zhu, in his chapter with William Boroson on a cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis of individual differences in McCombs et al. (1997), has also analyzed single issues over time by disaggregating public opinion data by educational and income levels, an approach that seems to fall in between the natural history and cognitive portrait approaches.

The fourth approach, called “*automaton*,” has been the least studied. It involves comparing entire rankings of issues for each individual person with various media rankings of issues, and typically these correlations are much lower than those found when comparing an aggregate ranking of issues with media rankings (see McLeod et al. 1974; Erbring et al. 1980). This is not surprising because it would be a return to a “hypodermic needle” or very powerful media effects model that has not received much support from empirical studies since the 1940s (→ Stimulus–Response Model).

## **A SECOND LEVEL OF AGENDA SETTING**

In the majority of studies to date, the unit of analysis on each agenda is an *object*, a public issue. But objects have *attributes*, or characteristics. When the news media report on public issues or political candidates, they describe these objects. Due to the limited capacity of the news agenda, however, journalists can only present a few aspects of any object in the news. A few attributes are prominent and frequently mentioned, some are given passing notice, and many others are omitted. In short, news reports also present an agenda of attributes that vary considerably in salience. Similarly, when people talk about and think about these objects – public issues, political candidates, etc. – the attributes ascribed to these objects also vary considerably in their salience.

These agendas of attributes have been called “the second level” of agenda setting to distinguish them from the first level, which has traditionally focused on issues (objects), although the term “level” implies that attributes are more specific than objects, which is not necessarily true. The perspectives and frames that journalists employ draw attention to certain attributes of the objects of news coverage, as well as to the objects themselves (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News).

## **AGENDA SETTING AND FRAMING**

Tankard et al. (1991, 3) have described a media frame as “the central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration.” Entman (1993, 52) argues that “to frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described” (italics in original). McCombs (1997, 37) has suggested that in the language of the second level of agenda setting, “framing is the selection of a restricted number of thematically related attributes for inclusion on the media agenda when a particular object is discussed.” He argues that there are many other agendas of attributes besides aspects of issues and traits

of political candidates, and a good theoretical map is needed to bring some order to the vastly different kinds of frames discussed in various studies. This he sees as a major challenge and opportunity for agenda-setting theory in its exploration of the second level.

Not all scholars agree that second-level agenda setting is equivalent to framing, at least not to more abstract, or macro-level, framing. Gamson (1992) has conceived of framing in terms of a “signature matrix” that includes various condensing symbols (catch-phrases, tag lines, exemplars, metaphors, depictions, visual images) and reasoning devices (causes and consequences, appeals to principles or moral claims). Some would argue that second-level agenda setting is more similar to the first part of this matrix than to the second, because it is easier to think of condensing symbols as attributes of a given object, but more difficult to think of reasoning devices as attributes.

Nevertheless, there are similarities between second-level agenda setting and framing, even if they are not identical processes. Both are more concerned with *how* issues or other objects (people, groups, organizations, countries, etc.) are depicted in the media than with *what* issues or objects are most (or least) emphasized. Both focus on the most salient or prominent aspects or themes or descriptions of the objects of interest. Both are concerned with ways of thinking rather than objects of thinking, and with the details of the pictures in our heads rather than the broader subjects. But one primary difference between the two approaches, in addition to those mentioned above, is that second-level agenda-setting research has been more concerned with the relationship between media and audience ways of thinking than has framing research, which has concentrated more on how the media cover and present various subjects.

### AGENDA SETTING AND PRIMING

Several scholars have tried to link agenda-setting research with studies of “priming” (→ Priming Theory) that examine the effects of media agendas on public opinion as well as public concerns (McCombs et al. 1997). The focus on the consequences of agenda setting for public opinion can be traced back at least to Weaver et al. (1975, 471), who speculated in their 1972–1973 panel study of the effects of Watergate news coverage that the media may do more than teach which issues are most important – they may also provide “the issues and topics to use in evaluating certain candidates and parties, not just during political campaigns, but also in the longer periods between campaigns.” The basic idea of priming is that by increasing the perceived salience of some issues or topics (and also their attributes), media coverage can influence the criteria or standards by which certain people or groups are evaluated.

Not all scholars agree that priming is a consequence of agenda setting, however. Some have argued that both agenda setting and priming rely on the same basic processes of information storage and retrieval, where more recent and prominent information is more accessible (→ Information Processing; Memory). Regardless of these debates, it seems likely that an increase in the salience of certain issues, and certain attributes of these issues, does have an effect, perhaps indirect, on → public opinion. A recent article by Son and Weaver (2006) confirms that the media attention to a particular candidate, and selected attributes of a candidate, does influence his or her standing in the polls, cumulatively



rather than immediately. And an earlier study by Weaver (1991) found that increased salience of an issue was associated with public opinion and behavior regarding the issue.

### PROBLEMS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Toshio Takeshita (2006) has identified what he considers to be *three critical problems* with agenda-setting research: process, identity, and environment. The *process* problem focuses on the degree to which agenda setting is automatic and unthinking; the *identity* problem is concerned with whether second-level or attribute agenda setting will become indistinguishable from framing or traditional persuasion research; and the *environment* problem stems from the development of communication technology and the subsequent growth in the number of news outlets, and whether that will reduce and fragment the agenda-setting effect of media at the societal level. Takeshita (2006) suggests that *future research* on agenda setting should focus on the factors that distinguish “genuine” or deliberative agenda setting from “pseudo-”agenda setting that is automatic and unthinking. He also suggests focusing on how the salience of certain attributes of a given object (be it an issue or a candidate) leads to the development of attitudes toward that object.

In addition to these suggestions, it seems clear that more research is needed to clarify the similarities and differences between second-level agenda setting and framing, on the salience and perceived importance of issues and attributes, and on the conditions under which media agendas are likely to influence not only public but also policymakers’ agendas. And there needs to be more research on the influences on the media agenda from various sources. Agenda setting should be conceptualized as a societal-level process as well as an individual-level one. Not all agenda-setting processes should be analyzed at the psychological level. Some must be studied at the societal or cultural level to gain a richer understanding of how these processes occur, and the forces that shape them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Memory ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Survey

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## Aging and Cognitive Processing

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The body of work on aging and information processing has consistently indicated that, generally, cognitive performance deteriorates with age (Park & Minear 2004). Measures of speed, reasoning, and working memory all indicate a negative trend for age. Although these findings may seem bleak, there are some domains that remain intact. For instance, knowledge seems to continue to accumulate well into old age.

One distinction that must be drawn when examining the effects of aging on cognitive processing is that between primary and secondary aging. *Primary or normal aging* is the inevitable process of deterioration that occurs as we move through the life-span and when a diagnosis of dementia has been eliminated. *Secondary aging* results from effects of the environment and disease. There is clear evidence that pathologies (e.g., dementia, loss of cardiovascular functioning, etc.) associated with aging are also associated with less efficient

cognitive processes or abilities. Related to primary aging, three areas warrant attention: the relationship between aging and commonly assessed processing variables, the theoretical and methodological issues associated with this area, and finally, recent developments in the field of cognitive aging (→ Information Processing; Cognition; Memory).

## AGE-RELATED CHANGES IN COGNITIVE PROCESSING

### Processing Speed

As we age, the speed with which we perform certain mental operations declines. More specifically, scores for processing speed show negative age trends and are obvious before the age of 50, but probably begin in the early 20s. One large-scale national study indicated that the average performance on measures of processing speed for young adults in their early twenties was near the 75th percentile while adults in their early seventies performed near the 20th percentile (Salthouse 2004). Processing speed is often measured by how rapidly an individual can make same/different judgments about pairs of symbols, patterns, or letters.

The relationship between age and processing speed is extremely strong and linear. However, it is also important to note that these age-related declines are not associated with increases in between-person variability. Instead, the trend is for increased age to be associated with a smaller range in scores.

Speed of processing has received a large amount of attention and has been hypothesized as the major underlying mechanism for all cognitive deterioration. Although there are competing theories proposed in the literature, the processing-speed theory has been well developed and has received a considerable amount of empirical support (Salthouse 2004).

There are two underlying mechanisms regarding processing-speed theory. First, the *limited time mechanism* asserts that the time to perform later operations is hampered when a large portion of the available time is expended on earlier operations. The second mechanism proposed is the *simultaneity mechanism*, which is based on the idea that the products of earlier processing may be lost by the time later processing is completed, thereby making relevant information no longer accessible when it is needed.

### Memory

Findings related to memory and aging are less straightforward than processing speed and can be best understood by examining different types of memory. Memory can be conceptualized as a set of systems rather than a single entity. These include short-term and long-term memory, and both are comprised of various subsystems.

#### *Short-Term Memory*

Short-term memory is composed of both primary and working memory. *Primary memory* is the ability to store a small amount of information that has been recently experienced. *Working memory* is the integration of processing and storing information in a transient short-term system. Tasks involving working memory include encoding and decoding

messages, understanding text while reading, or mentally performing a math problem. Given that working memory is integral to everyday functioning, it has been examined extensively in investigations of aging and cognition.

Working memory is measured using complex span tasks. For example, the backward digit span from the Wechsler Memory Scale Letter–Number Sequencing task is one commonly used measure. In this test, individuals are presented with a string of intermingled letters and numbers (e.g., M83GH6). They are then asked to repeat the string back in alphanumeric order (e.g., GHM368). Another popular measure is the Reading Span task. This asks individuals to read a sentence and answer a question about it while remembering the last word of that sentence.

As with processing speed, older adults experience a decline in working memory capacity as they age (Park 2002). Working memory begins to decrease in the twenties and a gradual decline is evident with each passing decade. However, with the appropriate environmental support some of these age differences can be mitigated. For example, teaching older adults to write down items that they may forget later has been shown to enhance working memory.

### *Long-Term Memory*

Long-term memory is comprised of two components: implicit or nondeclarative memory and explicit or declarative memory. *Implicit memory* is measured by tests that rely on prior experience or learning but do not require deliberate recollection (e.g., accuracy and reaction time). *Explicit memory* is measured by invoking stored information and is a purposeful or intentional process. In tests of explicit memory, participants are instructed to engage in conscious recollection such as recall or recognition tasks.

Explicit memory can be further differentiated into semantic and episodic memory, and this particular sub-division becomes particularly important in regard to aging. *Semantic memory* contains facts and knowledge about the world and the meanings of words or concepts. Semantic memory is relatively preserved across the adult life-span as measured through vocabulary and general knowledge tests. Semantic memory performance increases through the early sixties followed by a gradual decline (Zacks & Hasher 2006).

In contrast, *episodic memory* contains information associated with one's experiences. It is the ability to recall the specific features of the spatial and temporal contexts in which events occur. Episodic memory can be measured by prospective memory, face recognition, name recognition, action memory, sentence memory, word recall with or without a distractor task, source memory, and memory for activities. The data clearly indicate age-related deficits related to episodic memory.

*Procedural memory*, a type of implicit memory, refers to skills that have been highly rehearsed such as motor skills or cognitive skills. Findings indicate that procedural memory is minimally affected by age.

In the context of aging, *repetition priming* is often utilized to examine implicit memory. Examinations of repetition priming involve two phases. First, subjects are oriented to the task and exposed to some experimental materials. This is followed by a sentence completion or perceptual identification test that requires participants to use some of the earlier experimental materials and some new materials. The goal in these studies is to determine whether subjects benefit from previous exposure to experimental materials.

Age differences with regard to repetition priming have been found to be quite small relative to changes in episodic memory (→ Memory, Message; Memory, Person).

### **Inhibition**

Inhibition is the process by which we are able to selectively process information. It allows us to stay focused on the most relevant issues or stimuli and ignore extraneous information or thoughts (Hasher & Zacks 1988). As we age we have more difficulty focusing on target information and thus our attention is spread across both irrelevant and relevant information, making us less efficient.

The findings in general indicate that our ability to inhibit irrelevant material does decline with age. Some of the most significant findings related to inhibition involve the ability to process discourse (e.g., off-target verbosity; → Aging and Message Production and Processing).

### **Intelligence**

It is overly simplistic to view cognitive aging only in terms of processing mechanisms or capabilities. Older adults bring knowledge and experience to situations and these resources remain stable even while processing capabilities may be diminishing. One issue of importance in cognitive aging is to understand the relationship between simultaneous growth in knowledge and decreases in processing abilities. While both longitudinal and cross-sectional studies have found marked declines in abilities such as encoding of new memories for episodes or facts, working memory, and processing speed, areas such as autobiographical memory, semantic knowledge, and emotional processing remain relatively stable across the life-span. Vocabulary test abilities increase until around age 50, after which they tend to level off or slightly decline (Salthouse 2003).

In order to fully understand the findings related to intelligence, it is important to distinguish between fluid and crystallized intelligence. *Fluid intelligence* can be conceptualized as a broad set of abilities related to information-processing skills involved in reasoning, abstracting, and problem-solving. Fluid intelligence is unique to an individual and is not imparted through systematic influences such as culture. *Crystallized intelligence* refers to knowledge that is acquired through experience and education and is demonstrated through verbal comprehension and concept formation. It reflects the cultural knowledge component of intelligence.

It is widely accepted that with age comes greater knowledge and experience and that this accumulated wisdom may offset or compensate for other age-related declines. This effect has been documented in some laboratory experiments, although some data suggest that when completing the same task, young adults depend on processing efficiency whereas older adults depend more on accumulated knowledge (Salthouse 2004).

Although there is a tendency to overlook the relationship between physical health and mental acuity, sensory changes may be good indicators of cognitive efficiency. Changes in sensory abilities such as visual and auditory acuity may increase the cognitive load necessary to function in a given situation and this increase in effort may be distracting, thereby making it more difficult to remember or make associations with what was heard

or seen. Declines in vision, auditory acuity, balance, and muscle strength are all good indicators of changes in cognitive ability because they probably are concomitant with changes in the brain.

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

One of the biggest issues facing researchers in the area of cognition and aging is whether the focus should be upon age-related effects on a single variable or process, or whether the focus should include several domains examined simultaneously. The former, referred to as *micro-approaches*, are often used with small samples from divergent groups (e.g., young vs old). The benefit of these approaches is that they can identify specific processes at both the behavioral and possibly the neuropsychological level, which may enhance our understanding of aging and cognition. The limitation of these methods is that the examination of a process in isolation may hinder our understanding by obscuring the interactions among various processes, which may be important.

In contrast, *macro-approaches* to cognitive aging utilize large samples of 100 or more adults across a wide age range. These approaches are correlational in nature and examine the patterns in relationships among variables. Supporters of this paradigm argue that age-related effects on particular cognitive tasks may be symptoms of broader phenomena. Therefore, independent examination of these variables fails to provide a complete understanding of cognitive processing in the aging context.

A second methodological issue concerns the fact that true experimental investigations are not possible because age cannot be manipulated by the experimenter. Some scholars argue that the focus should be on comparing pre-existing groups that share various lifestyle characteristics. Other researchers argue that the best method to overcome this limitation is to make some type of intervention that will then alter an individual's cognitive performance, making it possible to determine which manipulations influence the relationship between age and performance on a particular cognitive task.

A third methodological concern involves *proximal versus distal factors*. The former refer to individual differences between age groups at the time of assessment. In contrast, distal factors involve differences occurring much earlier in the life-span. The question becomes one of whether we should try to explain differences in performances based on information gleaned at the time of assessment, or whether differences should be explained in terms of earlier life experiences.

Finally, one of the biggest issues for research regarding aging concerns the nature of the cross-sectional design. Are cross-sectional differences informative about the age-related changes in processing, or should all conclusions be based on longitudinal trends? Conclusions drawn from static cross-sectional designs may reflect cohort effects and other confounds, and may fail to capture all of the effects of the aging process.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Recent developments in *neuroimaging techniques*, such as positron emission tomography (PET) and functional magnetic imaging (fMRI), have brought new data to bear on theories of age-related changes in processing speed, inhibition, and working memory.

Some of the most promising data show that older adults and younger adults recruit different areas of the brain to perform the same task. This has led researchers to question why this bilateral recruitment occurs. It has been hypothesized that bilateral recruitment may be a compensatory mechanism for older adults or it may be related to an inability to suppress activation (Park & Gutches 2006).

Much of the knowledge regarding cognitive aging has been derived under highly constrained laboratory conditions (→ Experiment, Laboratory). While such conditions have been necessary to control for a variety of confounds, it is also important to determine whether information processing differs on the basis of the *cultural, social, or environmental conditions* in which it occurs. Park and Gutches (2006) argue that many of the declines in cognitive aging experienced in western cultures are also experienced in other cultures. However, it appears that culture does impact neurocognitive aging. Park and Gutches (2006) found that older adults from Asian and western countries experience differences in activation of processing areas when completing the same behavioral task. This developing area of cultural psychology promises to inform us about the adaptability of the neurocognitive system and the biological imperatives that are unrelated to culture.

Real-world investigations, as opposed to laboratory investigations of information processing, are important in determining how age-related declines affect our day-to-day functioning. This research has established that *environment does affect information processing*, especially in the case of memory. For example, research indicates older adults remember to take medications more reliably than middle-aged adults. These results have been explained in terms of environmental demands. Older adults typically operate in an environment with very different demands than middle-aged adults. Middle-aged adults are normally required to balance competing demands from work and family. Therefore the chaotic characteristics of the environment may impact memory performance more than does underlying cognitive ability. Other studies (Chasteen et al. 2001) have also determined that context does play an important role in everyday behavior and may ameliorate the effects of decline in information processing in our everyday lives. A complete theory of cognitive aging should integrate context.

While we know a great deal about what happens to information processing as we age, we know less about the underlying mechanisms of why we experience these declines. However, new research in the areas of neuroimaging may be able to answer some of these questions. Naturalistic studies are extending what we know about information processing and how we cope with age-related declines. These studies may uncover intervention strategies that will enable us to maintain healthy minds across the life-span.

SEE ALSO: ► Aging and Message Production and Processing ► Cognition ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Information Processing ► Memory ► Memory, Message ► Memory, Person

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## **Aging and Message Production and Processing**

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Aging affects many aspects of → message production and processing. The nature of conversation changes: unlike young adults, dyads of older adults mix talk about the past with talk about the present which may help them achieve a shared sense of → meaning and personal worth. Conversations with older adults are often marked by “painful self-disclosures” of bereavement, ill health, immobility, and assorted personal and family



problems which may maintain “face” by contrasting personal strengths and competencies with past problems and limitations, and coping with personal losses and difficulties. Older adults tend to adopt a “not-listening,” “disapproving,” or “over-protecting” style when interacting with young adults. Older adults are perceived as more rigid and negative in their speech which may provide a reason for avoiding conversations with older adults (Nussbaum & Coupland 2004; → Intergenerational Communication).

However, three issues have dominated discussions of age-related differences in message production and processing: the use of elderspeak by others when communicating with older adults, the occurrence of off-target verbosity in the speech of older adults, and the frequency of word-finding problems experienced by older adults.

### **ELDERSPEAK**

Elderspeak is an accommodation by others to communicating with older adults, either in response to actual communication needs of older adults or to → stereotypes associated with aging. As a speech register, elderspeak is characterized by exaggerated pitch and intonation, simplified grammar, limited vocabulary, and a slow rate of delivery (Kemper et al. 1994). Like similar speech registers directed at young children, foreigners, and household pets, it conveys the assumption that the recipient is cognitively impaired. Ryan et al. (1986) argue that elderspeak contributes to the social isolation and cognitive decline of older adults. Other research has suggested elderspeak expresses a sense of disrespect and limits conversational interactions (→ Language and Social Interaction).

Hummert (1994) has shown how stereotypes of older adults contribute to the use of elderspeak. Young, middle-aged, and elderly adults hold positive and negative stereotypes of older adults. Positive stereotypes include those Hummert labels as the *Perfect Grandparent*, the *Golden Ager*, the *John Wayne Conservative*; negative stereotypes include the *Severely Impaired*, *Despondent*, *Shrew/Curmudgeon*, and *Recluse*. Young adults believe it is appropriate to use elderspeak when addressing older adults judged to be *Severely Impaired*, *Despondent*, and *Reclusive*.

Kemper and colleagues have explored the *nature and use of elderspeak* addressed by young adults to older adults in a laboratory setting (Kemper & Harden 1999). This research has demonstrated that elderspeak is composed of two sets of parameters. The first, which may benefit older adults, includes semantic elaborations and repetitions. The second set of correlated parameters includes modifications to fluency, prosody, and grammar; these parameters do not benefit older listeners but are perceived by older adults as patronizing. It is possible to develop a form of elderspeak that benefits older adults and is not perceived as patronizing or belittling. This beneficial form of elderspeak provides semantic elaborations by repeating or expanding instructions while avoiding off-putting changes to fluency and prosody.

### **OFF-TARGET VERBOSITY**

Hasher and Zacks (1988) proposed that inhibitory mechanisms weaken with age, affecting older adults’ conversational skills by permitting the intrusion of irrelevant thoughts, personal preoccupations, and idiosyncratic associations. They have linked such

inhibitory deficits to off-target verbosity, first noted by Pushkar Gold et al. (1988), who describe it as involving both excessive production and meandering, diffuse responses to questions. Further research has attributed off-topic verbosity to poor performance in frontal lobe functioning. Older adults who produce more off-topic speech tend to have difficulty in other inhibitory tasks, such as the Stroop task (Pushkar et al. 2000).

Burke (1997) argues that off-target verbosity arises in social settings in which older adults construe their task as monologic and thus generate a chain of internal associations. For example, when asked to reveal autobiographical information, an older adult is more likely to produce a long series of internal associations whereas a young adult may discuss a single incident. James et al. (1998) noted that speech samples collected from older adults were, indeed, more verbose than those obtained from young adults but only when they were describing personal, autobiographical topics. However, these autobiographical narratives were rated as more informative and interesting than the more focused, less verbose narratives of young adults.

### WORD FINDING

Older adults report that one of the most annoying problems they face is the inability to recall a well-known word, name, or title (Burke & Shafto 2004). Word-finding problems disrupt conversations, often shifting the conversation from the topic under discussion to a focus on the older adults' memory problems (→ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors). Word-finding problems are often referred to as *tip-of-the-tongue experiences* (TOTs). Burke and her colleagues have provided an explanation of TOTs: the transmission-deficit hypothesis. This hypothesis suggests that the mental connections between an idea, the word that stands for that idea, and how to pronounce that word can become weak as a result of aging or disuse. A TOT will result when one or more of the connections between the idea, word, and its pronunciation are broken. The speaker may have the sense that the word is on "the tip of the tongue," perhaps being partially aware of the letter it begins with, the number of syllables, or similar sounding words.

While older adults may experience more TOTs and word-finding problems than young adults, the mechanisms appear to be the same. In a test, James and Burke (2000) induced TOT states in young and older adults by asking general knowledge questions such as "What word describes a word that reads the same both forwards and backwards?" The questions were interspersed in a list of words. Sometimes, these words shared sounds with the target word; sometimes they were unrelated to the target word. Young and older participants were more likely to produce the target word, "palindrome" after reading "palisade" than after reading unrelated words. White and Abrams (2002) report that words sharing the first syllable with a target such as "abdicate," e.g., "abacus," "abrogate," are more effective at reducing word retrieval failures than words sharing other phonologically features with the target, e.g., "indigent," "handicap," and "duplicate." This research suggests that one of the keys to reducing word-finding problems or resolving occurring problems is to keep talking: the target word may be cued by another word or phrase that restores broken connections between the idea, word, and its pronunciation.

These concerns, the use of elderspeak, off-target verbosity, word-finding problems, converge in the study of the *effects of dementia* on message production and processing

(→ Disability and Communication). Whether arising from Alzheimer's disease or other neuropathologies, dementia accelerates and exaggerates age-related changes to language and communication, contributing in turn to caregiver burden (Savundranayagam et al. 2005). The development of discourse-based strategies for family members and caregivers has the potential to improve care and enhance the quality of life for older adults with dementia (Dijkstra et al. 2002).

## EMERGING ISSUES

New models of aging have contributed to the emergence of new lines of research on aging and message production and processing. A growing area of investigation concerns *dual task processing* (→ Aging and Cognitive Processing). Older adults appear to have more difficulty combining tasks, such as listening to one's source of information (e.g., someone's voice), while ignoring another (e.g., a television broadcast) (Tun et al. 2002). Indeed, even walking and talking at the same time appears to challenge older adults' abilities to do two things at once (Kemper et al. 2003). The demands of compensating for age-associated sensory, muscular, or motor changes (such as presbycusis or sarcopenia) may over-task older adults, detracting from their ability to process or produce messages.

Another new area of investigation concerns the so-called *positivity effect*. In the face of shrinking time horizons, older adults may be motivated more by emotional regulation than by knowledge acquisition, preferring to attend to and remember positive information (Carstensen et al. 2003). This greater emphasis on maintaining positive well-being and avoiding negative moods may affect older adults' discourse and social interactions, especially when their motivations conflict with young adults' information-seeking biases.

A third emerging area is the *use of technology* to overcome age-related sensory and cognitive changes (Fisk et al. 2004). "Smart" hearing aids and eyeglasses can compensate for sensory losses; medical check-ups can be conducted over the Internet; older adults' activity cycles can be monitored by motion detectors implanted in doorways and hallways; collision avoidance systems can protect older drivers; and grandparents can keep in touch with their grandchildren by text-messaging. Yet this technology also creates new problems: How to optimize the pitch and prosody of synthesized speech for older adults? Will older adults accept and trust health and medical recommendations administered by a "nurse-bot" (→ Doctor–Patient Talk)? How can websites be designed to facilitate older adults' search and retrieval of information?

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aging and Cognitive Processing ▶ Cognition ▶ Disability and Communication ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Intergenerational Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Meaning ▶ Message Production ▶ Multitasking ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors ▶ Stereotypes

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# Alternative Journalism

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Alternative journalism is a fluid concept, often casually attributed to a wide array of media practices unified only by being different from the journalism in so-called mainstream media. Such a “definition” can encompass everything from local entertainment weeklies thick with advertising to the clandestine media of revolutionary movements. Recent scholarship has moved beyond this approach to focus on practices that challenge the communicator/audience divide typical of mainstream media, including the range of voices presented, the privileging of marginalized and excluded news sources over traditional elites, a conscious identification with the audience being served, and a conception of journalism that promotes social action (Atton 2002; Downing 2001; → Citizens’ Media; Community Media; Development Journalism; Media Democracy Movement; Social Mobilization).

Although the term is of relatively recent origin, commonly dated to the → *underground* press of the 1960s, alternative journalism has been around as long as journalism itself (→ Journalism, History of). Dissidents have contested the terrain of mass communications since the beginnings of recorded history, from the underground printing presses used in eighteenth-century France to the anonymizers and remote hosting sites bloggers use today to evade local censors (→ Blogger; Censorship). Throughout the nineteenth century, Chartists and socialists made newspapers a central part of their efforts to build an oppositional working-class culture and campaign for their demands. In the twentieth century, Soviet Bloc dissidents circulated their ideas through Samizdat, underground writings reproduced by hand or with carbon paper. Despite an impressive apparatus of state terror, the Shah’s regime was toppled in Iran by dissidents who communicated their message through clandestine tape recordings and religious sermons. Pirate radio has been used around the world by guerrilla movements but also by community groups and unions looking for a means to give voice to their concerns. The photocopier facilitated an explosion of personal and highly specialized micro-media, often produced by people trying to create an alternative public space for community building and action (→ Zines). And today myriad alternative voices claim space on an Internet increasingly dominated by commercial enterprises.

## ALTERNATIVE PUBLIC SPHERE

Alternative journalism, then, embraces advocacy and oppositional practices over objectivity, and does not so much *serve* its audience as constitute a process of cultural empowerment, creating and maintaining an alternative public sphere which enables diverse publics to speak in their own voice (→ Advocacy Journalism; Citizen Journalism; Objectivity in Reporting; Public Sphere).

Alternative journalists have always challenged the professionalization that increasingly characterizes the mass media (→ Professionalization of Journalism). The labor and socialist press of the early twentieth century combined staff reports with articles written

by readers, often describing their own working conditions and local struggles. These newspapers were often published by cooperative associations that raised the necessary funds, elected editors and oversight boards, and convened regular public meetings at which editors reported to their readers, heard their concerns, and sought a mandate to continue (→ Radical Media). Labor newsreels and photo clubs in the 1920s and 1930s similarly gave voice to rank-and-file workers, not simply documenting their struggles but engaging those workers in communication as part of a broader emancipatory project that sought to transform participants and audiences alike (→ Participatory Communication). Community radio continued and expanded upon this tradition as early as the 1950s. More recently, groups such as the Independent Media Centers and South Korea's Media Act have revived the tradition of training media activists (→ Independent Media Centers Network).

Because of this close connection to the grassroots, alternative journalists have been able to break news stories or offer perspectives unavailable to established media, a phenomenon documented for the United States each year by Project Censored. Few who followed alternative journalists' reports would have shared the otherwise seemingly universal astonishment at the US–British failure to uncover weapons of mass destruction in post-invasion Iraq. Alternative journalists forced the horrors of slavery and child labor onto the national agenda, exposed war crimes in Chechnya and Vietnam, published the first accounts of the AIDS epidemic, and gave voice to victims of police brutality and political repression around the world (→ Peace Journalism).

## FROM UNDERGROUND TO ALTERNATIVE

Alternative journalists work in a wide variety of media, including → newspapers and → magazines published on behalf of youths, immigrants, minorities, social movements, and cultural and political outsiders (→ Minority Journalism; Social Movements and Communication). But the boundaries of alternative journalism can be remarkably permeable. In the United States, the Association of Alternative Newsweeklies is a trade association of newspapers, many with roots in the underground press, that combine advocacy journalism (some quite aggressively, others only occasionally) with events listings and cultural coverage.

Pacific News Service (PNS) followed a different trajectory. Founded during the Vietnam war, PNS expanded its coverage in the 1970s to include alternative perspectives on Africa and Latin America, and reports on US issues told from what the editors described as a “chicken's eye view,” or news from the bottom-up. More recently, it transformed itself into New America Media, syndicating (and translating as necessary) news and commentary from a wide variety of ethnic newspapers (→ Ethnic Journalism), and also sponsoring media for youth including YO! Youth Outlook, a website for homeless youth, and *DeBug*, a bilingual magazine for young workers in California's Silicon Valley.

The Independent Press Association (IPA), founded as an alliance of left-leaning magazines, followed a similar trajectory. Its New York City office brings together ethnic and community newspapers in a regional association that promotes their stories to a broader public while offering an advertising co-op and other assistance to its member papers. When the national IPA collapsed, dragged down by the bankruptcy of its

magazine distributor (killing several alternative magazines in the process), the New York office survived, perhaps because of its stronger local base.

Around the world, the periodical remains one of the most common venues for alternative journalism, including daily newspapers such as Germany's *die tageszeitung*, founded in 1978 as a cooperatively owned daily closely aligned with alternative social movements. With more than 5,000 readers having paid in to the publishing cooperative, *die tageszeitung* harks back to an earlier tradition of workers' publishing societies which played a key role in sustaining oppositional journalism in the face of a hostile political economy. More commonly, alternative dailies today serve immigrant communities alienated from mainstream media by linguistic or cultural barriers. A wide array of less frequent publications serve other disenfranchised publics, from Venezuela's *El Libertario* to the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions' the *Worker*.

### ORGANIZING AN AUDIENCE

In a world where the channels of communication (broadcast outlets, satellite frequencies, or shelf space on newsstands) are increasingly controlled by transnational corporations and sold to the highest bidder, alternative journalists often struggle to reach an audience.

Alternative film and video makers have historically had to organize their own audiences. In the 1930s, the Film and Photo League exhibited its newsreels and films in mutual aid society and union halls. In 1968, the Argentine documentary and film manifesto *Hora de los hornos* was shown clandestinely, in private homes and other venues (with breaks built in for discussion during each four-hour showing). Today, independent documentarian Robert Greenwald largely relies upon house showings and online DVD sales to distribute his films on Fox News, the Iraq war, and Wal-Mart.

Perhaps the most prolific medium for alternative journalism is now the → Internet, which has enabled many to *publish* their information cheaply and quickly, circumventing economic and other material constraints. Best known is Indymedia, initially founded in 1999 to facilitate coverage of the World Trade Organization summit in Seattle and which quickly grew to nearly 200 independent media centers operating in more than 50 countries on six continents. Indymedia centers make their facilities available to anyone wishing to practice journalism, reserving the right to remove material that violates their standards. The result is an eclectic combination of audio and video files, photographs, running reports, announcements, polished articles and commentary, some produced to professional standards and much of it more akin to raw notes.

Indymedia centers have also supported other alternative media. During the 2000 Republican Convention in Philadelphia, for example, Amy Goodman's nationally syndicated radio program, *Democracy Now*, was produced from an independent media center, which also published a free daily newspaper offering accounts of events in the streets to supplement the photographs and reports posted online and bring them to a wider audience.

Many alternative newspaper, → radio, and → television outlets also rely on the Internet to make their content available. Pacifica's *Free Speech Radio News* is syndicated over the Internet and relies on the web to collect reports and organize its broadcasts. Costa Rica-based Radio Internacional Feminista broadcasts bilingual programming over the Internet, which is often subsequently rebroadcast over conventional radio stations

(→ Feminist Media). In Minnesota, the Workers Independent News Service's daily newscast uses the Internet for direct access to listeners and to distribute the program to radio stations. The international trade union site LabourStart, based in London, in turn compiles WINS and other feeds for its international online audio service. In Argentina, alternative videographers have turned to the Internet for their *Ágora TV*, continuing the legacy of *Utopia TV*, closed in 1997 after five years of illegal broadcasts and relentless police persecution.

## CRASHING THE MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS

Probably the most common venue for alternative video journalism today remains → public access television. Cable systems in Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Fiji, Finland, Guatemala, Norway, Uruguay, and the United States generally make time available to any citizen. In the Netherlands, organizations can secure regular broadcast time in proportion to their membership. Corporate-controlled outlets have also been harnessed to the cause. During the 2006 Houston, Texas, janitors' strike, union members posted videos documenting their struggle to YouTube. Palestinian media activists have made similar use of the venue, although such journalism constitutes only a small fraction of the site's offerings.

Alternative journalism achieves a broad reach through radio, with thousands of member stations in the Association Mondiale Des Radiodiffuseurs Communautaires (AMARC). There have been attempts to launch broadcast community television outlets as well. Italy has seen several low-power pirate stations in a loose *Telestreet* movement. In the summer of 2001, for example, *Disco Volante Street TV* produced short broadcasts addressing neighborhood concerns ranging from the conditions of undocumented immigrants to architectural barriers hampering the movement of the disabled, before the Ministry of Communication shut it down.

Today alternative journalists work in every medium, ranging from clandestinely circulated news bulletins to the Free Speech television network, carried on the Dish Network satellite service (and also distributing programming to many cable outlets). In South Korea, Labor News Productions has produced more than 100 videos since 1989 and trained hundreds of media activists. For distribution, they organize showings in union halls and other venues, play videos at factory gates at shift changes, broadcast over public access facilities on the country's RTV satellite, and air labor programming over Hyundai Motors' in-house cable system, a right enshrined in the union contract. Korean labor videographers work closely with other media activists in the country, but also participate in a growing international movement that in 2006 saw international labor media conferences in South Africa, Turkey, and the United States. The *Indymedia* movement is similarly international, even though limited access to the Internet hampers its growth in much of the world.

Although the so-called *marketplace of ideas* remains relentlessly inhospitable to alternative journalism, media activists are seizing on new technologies and underserved audiences in their continuing quest to forge a new kind of media practice.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Blogger ► Censorship ► Citizen Journalism  
 ► Citizens' Media ► Community Media ► Development Journalism ► Ethnic Journalism



► Feminist Media ► Independent Media Centers Network ► Internet ► Journalism, History of ► Magazine ► Media Democracy Movement ► Minority Journalism ► Newspaper ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Participatory Communication ► Peace Journalism ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Public Access Television ► Public Sphere ► Radical Media ► Radio ► Social Mobilization ► Social Movements and Communication ► Television ► Underground Press ► Zines

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## **Amateur Photography and Movies**

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While the invention of the camera and advancement of → photography are best known in the contexts of the history of technology or the emergence of a new art form, cameras have been used for more than commercial concerns, scientific interests, or artistic work. From the earliest use of the camera and the emergence of consumer models of camera technology, nonprofessional photography has had an important parallel history. Ordinary people have taken their cameras home to produce the most frequent of all photographic imagery on a worldwide basis, namely the personal, nonprofessional production and use of personal pictures including snapshots, family albums, home movies, home video, and, more recently, family websites and even personal camera phone images. Amateurs have played a significant role in advancing the visual documentation of the everyday, of the private features of family life. Results have been highly valued in personal ways but far less so in commercial or scholarly contexts.

Photographic and image scholarship has been relatively slow to respond in any serious or sustained way. Home-mediated amateur forms of imagery comprise the least studied and critically reviewed mode of pictorial communication within the mediascape of

our contemporary symbolic environment. Some attention has been given to artistic approximations such as folk art or the snapshot aesthetic school, or to historic locations in fine art, or cinema as related to (and occasionally included in) → documentary film. Other efforts include some sociological and anthropological interest in indigenous media. Other authors have found connections of amateur photography to memory, to inventions of the past, to family socialization, to literary biography and autobiography, and to a lesser extent, to therapy and the detection of pathology.

Two points of neglect are significant. The generic, vernacular home-grown model has been ignored in favor of unusual examples as when a historically significant event has been accidentally recorded with home equipment (e.g., Zapruder 8 mm footage of the assassination of John F. Kennedy, video recording of the Rodney King beating). The increasingly popular use of cellphone cameras and blog display (London Tube bombing) are calling further attention to amateur camera use.

Second, a communication paradigm has been seldom used; image content has been attended to at the expense of attention to communicative process. In general, a singular focus on vernacular photography as a pictorial expressive form, as culturally sensitive communicative messages, unrelated to art, has been rare. While amateur stills, film, and video represent the world in different ways they also represent different experiences for both image-makers and viewers.

Much amateur photography evolves from George Eastman's 1888 innovations and new motion-picture technology in the early 1930s. *Changes in three contextual factors* have unsettled the meaning of any reference to amateur photography and moviemaking. First, the meaning of "amateur" has undergone revisions as different models and types of camera use have increased, e.g., casual family "snapshot" photographers, camera club members (using darkrooms, entering contests and exhibitions), camera-phone photographers, and other people who are involved and serious about photography without financial compensation. Second, the range of consumer technology available for nonprofessional photography has expanded, from box cameras, to single-use (or throwaway) cameras, to instant cameras, to digital cameras and now cameras embedded in mobile telephones. And third, the range of the pictorial formats has grown in popularity and variety, e.g., instant photography, photo-booth images, digital cameras, phone-pictures, 16 mm to 8 mm to Super-8 and then to a range of video formats, and the like.

The international existence and immense popularity of amateur photography and movies fit into a more general framework, namely, *home media*. When compared to mass media and formally structured modes of mass communication, home media attends to all forms of informally derived media, theoretically and practically framed as part of home culture. The cross-cultural study of home media includes a range of expression generated in spoken and written forms as well as pictorial/visual, mediated forms that are shared and retained primarily within private and personal networks of friends, family, clan, caste, and community. The production, content, use, and reception of visual home media can be seen as embedded within media culture, visual culture, and the home mode of visual communication (Chalfen 1987; 1991).

Studies integrating home media and visual communication center around the need to develop models for both qualitative and quantitative description and analysis – specifically for how snapshots, family albums, and home movies/videos (and now family web pages)

can be studied as cultural documents within the contexts of personal anthropology, indigenous imagery, visual narrative structure, family folklore, photo-therapeutic applications including metaphorical meanings of “Kodak culture,” “Sony society,” and “Polaroid people.”

*Future study of amateur photography* will need to address technological convergence resulting in new image formats (→ Digital Imagery). Interaction of home and mass modes of communication are increasing from a penetration of amateur still and motion-picture forms. We find fabricated snapshots in professional advertisements and fine art; we see filmic facsimiles of home movies in documentary and art film; fabricated home movies are made for feature films, video examples are edited into popular television programs, and most recently, home-video excerpts are put on commercial websites such as YouTube. Examples of amateur and professional imagery are appearing next to one another on news broadcasts, as photojournalists compete with blog-displayed amateur pictures. In short, amateur photographs as home media will continue to escape the home with greater frequency and, in turn, present new opportunities for study and theory-building.

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Digital Imagery ► Documentary Film ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Photography ► Photojournalism

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## **American Convention on Human Rights**

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The American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR) is the leading Organization of American States (OAS) human rights treaty. Adopted in 1969, it came into force in 1978. It guarantees, among other things, the right to freedom of expression (→ Freedom of Communication; Communication and Law). The ACHR was preceded by the OAS Charter, the founding document of the OAS, which includes only limited guarantees of

human rights, and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, both adopted in 1948. The latter provides a simple guarantee for the right to freedom of “expression and dissemination of ideas, by any medium” (Article IV).

Article 13 of the ACHR contains very detailed provisions on freedom of expression. In some respects, it is similar to its international counterpart, Article 19 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)*. Like Article 16, Article 13 guarantees everyone the right to “seek, receive, and impart information and ideas,” regardless of frontiers and using any form of communication, including oral, written, print, or art (→ Freedom of Information).

Like the ICCPR, the ACHR permits States to restrict freedom of expression, but any restriction must be established by law and be necessary to protect the rights or reputations of others, national security, public order, or public health or morals. This list is identical to its counterpart in the ICCPR. Article 13 also differs in important ways from its international and regional counterparts and, overall, it is generally regarded as being much stronger in nature. It expressly rules out any form of prior censorship, except in relation to public entertainments, for the sole purpose of protecting children. Although prior censorship is regarded with suspicion in all human rights systems, other international courts have not gone so far as to rule it out completely.

The ACHR also explicitly rules out indirect means of restricting freedom of expression, such as governmental or private abuse of controls over newsprint, broadcasting frequencies, or equipment used to disseminate information. Although this is probably implicit in the general guarantee, the prevalence of this form of restriction means that its explicit prohibition in the ACHR has practical importance. Finally, the ACHR, like the ICCPR, provides that incitement to war and hatred on the basis of race or other group affiliation shall be an offense punishable by law. The ACHR, however, provides only for the prohibition of incitement to lawless violence or a similar illegal act, whereas the ICCPR covers incitement not only to violence but also to discrimination and even hostility. The ACHR is thus consistent with US law in the area of hate speech which, unlike most other countries in the world, does not penalize speech which promotes mere hatred, as opposed to a specific illegal act.

The ACHR also differs from other human rights treaties inasmuch as it makes specific provision for a right of reply for anyone injured by inaccurate or offensive statements disseminated by a legally regulated medium of communication. The exercise of the right does not affect any other legal entitlements the claimant may have. It is significant that this right is limited to “legally regulated” media, so that it does not extend to newspapers where they are not legally regulated, as is the case in many countries.

The ACHR establishes two bodies to promote implementation of its provisions. The first, the *Inter-American Commission on Human Rights* was first established as an autonomous OAS body in 1960, prior to the enactment of the ACHR, as a vehicle for promoting the implementation of the rights in the Declaration. It was subsequently provided for in the ACHR itself. The Commission has a broad promotional mandate which includes fostering awareness and making recommendations to States to further the protection of human rights. It also has the power to consider individual or group complaints concerning alleged violations of the ACHR, but only when the State in question has voluntarily accepted its jurisdiction. In accordance with accepted international practice,

such complaints may be accepted only when the State's internal systems for resolving the problem, normally including an appeal to the courts, have been used without success (known as exhaustion of domestic remedies). If the alleged facts tend to establish a violation, the Commission must try to promote a "friendly settlement" between the parties. If this is not possible, the Commission issues a Report on the case containing its views as to whether there has in fact been a violation and including recommendations as to remedies. These recommendations are not formally (legally) binding on the State.

Second, the ACHR establishes the → *Inter-American Court of Human Rights*. Only States and the Commission may refer a case to the Court, but the latter may do so only after it has issued its own Report on the matter, and the State has failed to take measures to redress the problem. As with the Commission, cases may be referred to the Court only where the State in question has voluntarily submitted itself to the Court's jurisdiction. For the most part, it is the Commission that refers cases to the Court, although there have also been some significant Advisory Opinions, where States have referred matters to the Court for its opinion outside of the context of a contentious dispute. Unlike the Commission, the decisions of the Court are legally binding and States formally undertake to comply with them. For the most part, States do respect the decisions of the Court.

SEE ALSO: ► Censorship ► Communication and Law ► Communication Law and Policy: South America ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information ► Inter-American Court of Human Rights

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## **Americanization of the Media**

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The term "Americanization" has been used with varying intended meaning and with varying degrees of precision over the last three or four decades of communication research. The common element is a reference to a process or trend affecting either the media of countries external to the USA or the generality of media and media-related practices globally (→ International Communication). When and where the term is used, it is usually based on the assumption that American mass media are in some respects dominant and

ubiquitous and exert a strong pull on other systems to become like them or to incorporate content imported from the USA.

The term (or the idea behind it) has been applied both positively and negatively, but more often the second. Three main contexts of its use can be distinguished. The first relates to the general debate about “cultural imperialism” that began in the 1960s (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; UNESCO; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; Francophonie); the second to the consequences for European media in particular of the internationalization of → satellite television transmission following the 1977 World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC; → Satellite Communication, Global), and of the subsequent trend toward privatization of audiovisual media. The third context has been provided by a pessimistic assessment of the condition of political communication and the relation between media and politics at the end of the twentieth century.

## GLOBAL POLITICAL BACKGROUND FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II

The background to these interrelated contexts is provided by the circumstances following the end of World War II in 1945. The main relevant components of the situation were the great extension of American power in the world, the destruction or disarray of most of the European media, and the start of a global ideological struggle between communism and the “free world,” in which the media became a principal weapon.

The imminent *arrival of* → *television* (as a new medium frontier awaiting development) added another element. Relevant also was the basic division of the world into an impoverished and undeveloped south and east and a richer north and west. Although the term was not in circulation at the time, it can be inferred that “Americanization” of the media and media systems would involve an openness to → news and entertainment produced in great surplus by American media industries, a commitment to liberal values and freedom of expression (→ Freedom of Communication), and a fundamental reliance on the free market in place of government financing and control. In the earliest postwar phase, Americanization could be and was associated with positive notions of democratization, economic development, and liberation from restrictive cultural and political systems (e.g. Lerner 1958). In the liberated or occupied territories of Europe and the Far East, it offered the chance of a new beginning (→ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty). Media systems and journalistic practice were reconstructed with some reference to American professional practice, even if American “mass culture” was still regarded in Europe with traditional suspicion.

In respect of the first context named above, the climate surrounding American media influence changed quite radically during the 1960s, as the undoubted dominance of American media in much of the world was reinterpreted as evidence of (at best) unwitting → propaganda for western capitalism and consumerist values and (at worst) naked neo-imperialist ambitions (e.g. Schiller 1992).

The causes lay less in any objective change of circumstances than in the rise of *New Left* → *critical theory* at home and the rising consciousness of subordination in what was then being called the “third world.” The attack on American media and their influence was spearheaded and given intellectual weight during the early 1970s by Latin American

researchers in particular. The region, semi-developed economically, was most vulnerable to penetration by American media, for cultural and economic reasons, especially in the context of the Cold War. Covert American support for the coup d'état against Allende in Chile in 1973, following a domestic propaganda war by Chilean media, provided ammunition for critics. A diaspora of Chilean intellectuals fixed part of the blame on the baleful influence of American media. The contemporary rise in the 1960s and beyond of semiological theories and methods for exposing the hidden messages of media content added to the possibilities for blaming the media. All American-originated content, however seemingly innocuous, become potentially suspected of hidden propagandism.

### STUDIES OF GLOBAL MEDIA FLOWS

The tide of ideological criticism became inextricably mixed during the 1970s with a wider and less politically inspired campaign for a more *balanced flow of international communication*, following an accumulation of evidence that showed that most news in the world, on television or in print, tended to be dominated by the concerns of America, if not actually by American content, even in distant countries with other, more pressing concerns. The general findings were shown in “world maps” drawn in proportion to the presence of different territories in world news (e.g., Gerbner & Marvanyi 1977; → Gerbner, George).

The reasons could be found more in the operations of → news agencies and in the culture economics of news media than in conscious imperialism, but Americanization was nevertheless widely seen by many media theorists, even if not by world populations, as a problem condition for the rest of the world. Much the same applied to the unbalanced flow of televised entertainment, with American products seemingly in excessive supply (Varis 1974). UNESCO became a forum for debates on the issue and acquired a reputation for anti-Americanism as a result. The issue cumulated in the appointment and then reporting of the MacBride Commission (2004) into the causes and solutions of problems in this territory. By the 1980s, however, the world was changing quite rapidly (and world media as well) and the broad issue was to some extent defused without resolution.

Shortly before this date, elements of the debate were summed up in the title of a very influential book by British media scholar Jeremy Tunstall: *The media are American* (1977). This on the one hand confirmed and explained American media dominance in the twentieth century and on the other hand pointed to quite large areas of world media, aside from the communist world, that were not particularly dominated by the USA, notably India and the Arab world.

### CHANGES IN EUROPEAN FILM AND TELEVISION

The second context in which “Americanization” became a current term was more specific and no longer political in any primary sense. As Tunstall had shown, World War I had dealt a severe blow to the nascent but flourishing film industries of several European countries, leading to an easier postwar US dominance in 1945. Even so, there were renewed aspirations to rebuild national film industries in Europe, aided initially by economic restrictions on US imports (→ Hollywood). Preferential treatment was given for reasons of cultural and linguistic nationalism to domestic production. The new television systems

were sheltered in most of Europe by national governmental monopolies, and these restricted both advertising and foreign imports.

These protectionist regimes were under strain for economic reasons and facing collapse by the end of the 1970s for some new reasons, especially the arrival of new (re)transmission technologies by way of cable and satellite that threatened national sovereignty of the air waves, and by the rise of governments (especially in the UK and Germany) that either welcomed or tolerated privatization and expansion of television systems for their own reasons (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; United Kingdom: Media System; Germany: Media System; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

The expansion and transformation of European television in the 1980s and beyond could only take place on the basis of a large importation of (primarily) American television films, drama, and entertainment. European audiovisual industries were quite underdeveloped. The main exception to the trend was the UK, which remained largely self-sufficient, but in fact its expansion was also quite limited until the 1990s. These developments were also coincidental with the accelerated formation of a new European Community institutional framework and identity, beginning with expansion to 12 nations and elections to a European Parliament in 1979. One central project was the formation of a common European space in which all communications could flow freely and where hopefully strong new cultural industries would flourish. The implementation of the EU directive “Television without frontiers” in 1989, following a period of debate, was hailed as a victory for European media and seen as an undesirable new form of protectionism by the USA (→ European Union: Communication Law).

Against this background, “Americanization” came in Europe to incorporate several elements: *too many US imports* per se; negative features of content, especially superficiality, “dumbing down,” and homogenization; unfair competition with domestic cultural production; too much → advertising (widely seen as the great vice of American television); and “commercialization” of the media generally. The last of these implied subordination of editorial and cultural standards to short-term profit, neglect of public service objectives, and weaker democratic accountability, plus a tendency to private media monopoly (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

Less clearly, “Americanization” also meant the *adoption of formats* and of news values and media customs that were thought to typify American television in particular. The evidence seemed to confirm early fears, with high proportions of US-originated entertainment on many of the new commercial channels and a gradual flight of audiences from the once dominant national public broadcasters. However, not all the fears mentioned were confirmed, especially not the projected decline or dilution of news and information services (→ International News Reporting). Moreover, research also established that “Americanization” was a limited phenomenon in extent and in time, not an unstoppable disease of the system. The taste for American content was real enough, but so was the preference for home-grown fiction and entertainment, the national language, and things local and regional.

### **A THIRD PHASE OF “AMERICANIZATION”**

The third phase of “Americanization” was associated with a different kind of critique, originating both in the USA and in Europe. Its causes are obscure, but a common element



was a view that the media were becoming increasingly powerful and important as well as global, and increasingly driven by commercial imperatives and by a set of media-cultural values that were often at odds with the true informational needs of citizens and of other social institutions (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Attention focused on → political communication, with a link being made between the evidence of decline in political participation, trust, and interest and certain dominant tendencies and practices of the media (→ Video Malaise).

The latter included a persistent neglect of, or negativity toward, politics and politicians, a concentration on → “infotainment” and personalities, and a neglect of substantive issues (→ Soft News). More specifically, the media were being used and seen to be used as tools of → political marketing and manipulation rather than as a means of democratic public communication. In an influential study, Swanson and Mancini (1996) used the terms “Americanization” and → “modernization” interchangeably to describe the planned use of media in election campaigns, with potentially negative effects on citizen trust and involvement (→ Election Campaign Communication). Techniques of professional campaign management first developed in the USA were shown to be imported into other countries. For some critics (e.g., Blumler & Kavanagh 1999), the term → “mediatization” of politics was regarded as more satisfactory than “Americanization,” but the general effect at the time was hypothesized as more harmful than otherwise for a healthy public sphere.

To some degree, the relevance and specificity of these three instances of the idea of “Americanization” have been dissipated. It has always been a *rather weak concept* and the attributed effects were often due to more general changes in media practice and culture and other powerful driving forces, such as those of technology or the market. However, a broader notion of “Americanization” survives in the proposition advanced by Hallin and Mancini (2004, 254–9) that a dominant (liberal) model of media relations with politics and of a more homogenized journalistic culture worldwide does owe much historically to American influence over an extended period (→ Political Communication Systems).

As a postscript, we might also note that Tunstall (2007) has revisited the theme of his work of 30 years ago and recorded the relative, but very marked, decline in the hold of America over foreign media firms, content, and audiences and the loss of control over the new world agenda. Americanization has not been reversed but has rather faded into the background of influences and, by implication, can no longer be blamed for the continuing or new failings of media elsewhere.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Francophonie ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Germany: Media System ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Hollywood ▶ Infotainment ▶ International Communication ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Modernization ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television

► Soft News ► Television ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ► UNESCO ► United Kingdom: Media System ► Video Malaise

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## **Animation**

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History has belied the field of animation with misplaced emphases and ethnocentric retellings. First, animation did not start with Walt Disney and Mickey Mouse; the first animated show was *Pantomimes lumineuses*, produced in Paris in 1892 by Emile Reynaud. Second, the pioneers were not solely the Americans James Stuart Blackton, Winsor McCay, John Randolph Bray, or the Fleischer brothers; others were animating in Argentina, where Quirino Cristiani made the world's first feature-length film, *El Apóstol* (The Apostle), in 1917; and in the UK, Spain, Russia, Germany, France, Italy, and Scandinavia, and parts of Asia, such as India, Japan, and China. Early in the twentieth century, the German avant-garde film community took to animation through the experiments of artists such as Hans Richter, Walther Ruttmann, Viking Eggeling, and Lotte Reiniger, and in France, Emile Cohl and Georges Méliès added much to the quality of early animation; Cohl with his graphics, Méliès with his ability to blur the line between live action and animated cinema.

Some of the earliest animation in Asia resulted out of necessity and experimentation. In India it happened when in 1915 → cinema pioneer G. W. Phalke did not have sufficient film stock to continue making features and resorted to doing animated shorts. In Japan

Seitaro Kitayama, Junichi Kouchi, and Oten Shimokawa in the 1910s separately and successfully experimented with producing animation. In China in the early 1920s the four Wan brothers, curious about animation, slavishly experimented until accidentally, they were able to “make the pictures move.”

In a second phase, from the late 1920s through 1950s, animation advanced from a toy-like novelty to an *industry and art form*. In the US, studios such as those of Walt Disney, the Fleischer brothers, Pat Sullivan, Paul Terry, Leon Schlesinger, and Fred Quimby developed assembly-line systematization that often treated creators as mere cogs in a production wheel, which eventually led to efforts at unionization and strikes. Besides labor exploitation, animation as big business also stimulated commodification of → cartoons and characters, and later (the 1960s), runaway production (to Asia and Australia) to seek stable and inexpensive labor pools. Still, artistically, the US in the 1930s through 1950s turned out world-class animation, with memorable characters, beautiful music, moving stories, and excellent technical skills, including a series of Disney features beginning with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937); Warner Bros.’ time-honored characters such as *Bugs Bunny* and *Road Runner*; MGM’s *Tom and Jerry* series, and the United Productions of America cartoons, revolutionary with their stylized approach, graphic diversity, and unconventional stories.

Animation masters came to the fore elsewhere during this period, including *experimentalists* such as New Zealander Len Lye, known for his drawing on film, and Norman McLaren, who, after 1941, made Canada’s National Film Board an important haven for animators. In Europe, George Pal, Alexandre Alexeïeff, Oskar Fischinger, John Halas, Joy Batchelor, Paul Grimault, and Jirí Trnka each contributed to establishing animation as an art form.

Political-economic phenomena of the 1930s–1950s, including World War II, the division of Europe, and the triumph of communism in China, North Korea, and North Vietnam, greatly affected animation. As expected, during the war, all sides used cartoons to denigrate the enemy and build home-front morale (→ Propaganda in World War II). More profound was the division of Europe into east and west. Within western Europe, the artistic and financial weakness of animation relegated it to a lower status than cinema, while in eastern Europe, animation, supported by the state, found favor in the Soviet Union and in countries previously not known for animation. Among these were Czechoslovakia (popular for its puppet animation), Yugoslavia and its Zagreb school (known for its limited animation, and avant-garde graphics and subjects), and Poland (famous for its art films). By the time of the fall of the Soviet Union and communist eastern Europe in 1990, most countries and states within the USSR (especially Estonia) had thriving animation. China experienced its golden era of animation after 1949, at first following the Soviet model, but after the mid-1950s developing its own style, techniques (including brush painting), and stories based on Chinese proverbs and legends.

Since the 1960s, animation has faced many *challenging changes* brought about mainly by the growth of → television, the quick pace of corporatism and commercialization (→ Commercialization of the Media), the conversion from hand-made to computer-generated animation (→ Digital Imagery), and the changeover from state-planned economy to capitalism in Russia, eastern Europe, and China. Since it entered the market economy in the late 1980s, China has abandoned much of its artistic animation and has

increased production from a few hundred minutes to 80,000 minutes of animation yearly. In the US, after experiencing a low stage in the late 1970s, animation made a comeback with a spate of TV prime-time shows following *The Simpsons* in 1989, perennial theatrical features, and increased licensing/merchandising.

Globally, among other trends, local animation must compete with Japanese → anime in many countries, especially in Asia. Universally, animation is being reinvented, finding new outlets, such as → video games, DVDs, and cell phones, and new uses, particularly → special effects. Animation has also expanded to many countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and has benefited in recent years by higher levels of professionalism (more festivals, training opportunities, competitions, associations), government recognition and support (South Korea, China, and Thailand), and by globalization (overseas markets, co-productions). On the downside, in many countries, production has speeded up at the expense of quality – often to meet the gluttonous appetite of television. State funds for experimentation have dried up, several aspects of animation have been taken over by media moguls focused only on the bottom line, and training has concentrated on computer technology, not the specific techniques of animation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Anime ▶ Cartoons ▶ Cinema ▶ Commercialization of the Media  
▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Special Effects ▶ Television  
▶ Video Games

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## **Anime**

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The term “anime” is abbreviated from the Japanese word *animēshon*, which in turn is a direct transliteration of the English word → animation. Comprised mainly of TV series created in Japan, anime features distinctive characters, long-running storylines, and unique aesthetics (→ Cartoon). As Japan’s most visible export, anime and related products – *manga*, toys, action figures, and → video games – challenge the worldwide dominance of and serve as an alternative to US popular media (→ Comics). Starting as a major

influence in about 1995 and abetted by the Internet, Japanese pop youth culture has spread not just to the US, but also to western Europe, East Asia, and Latin America.

About a quarter of the Cartoon Network's programming features anime, from *Adult swim's Dragon ball* and *Inuyasha* to children's shows like *Pokemon* and *Yu-Gi-Oh*. Stylistically, Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the shell* inspired in part the *Matrix* trilogy, while Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* films feature anime-style segments (→ Cinema).

By the 1990s, the US anime market was worth about \$500 million annually. With even mainstream chain stores selling anime, by the mid-2000s, sales rose to close to \$1 billion, not counting related merchandise. (Translated *manga* alone rose from \$50 million in sales in 2000 to \$140 million in 2005 in North America.) However, to put US sales in perspective, consider that the overall Japan market amounts to \$26–\$34 billion and that no anime film has achieved the \$40–\$50 million *Shrek* box-office range. On DVD, all three *Inuyasha* movies combined sold just over 1 million US copies in 18 months.

That saga of a time-tripping junior high girl and a half-demon was, in 2007, still running on the Cartoon Network. One full TV series season usually includes 26 half-hour episodes. In addition, the field of anime includes long-form theatrical films with higher quality visuals, such as Hayao Mizaki's *Spirited away* (winner of the US 2003 Animated Feature Oscar). A third form, original video animations (OVAs), are usually one-shot productions, shorter than films and released directly to video. An OVA (e.g., *Tenchi muyo*) can even spawn movies and TV series.

One can think of the cartoon segment of the Japanese media industry as a pyramid (→ Japan: Media System). At the bottom reside *manga*, thick periodicals printed on cheap newsprint that contain multiple storylines. At the next level are cartoon books of popular storylines that originated in *manga* form. (A few of these cartoon books are translated into English for a growing foreign fan base.) Moving up, one finds some of the books taking on life as Japanese-language TV anime, films, or OVAs. Of those, a few find their way overseas, either dubbed or subtitled.

## GENRES

Most anime include a variety of thematic elements – action, comedy, drama, fantasy, horror – making them difficult to categorize. The setting may be contemporary, futuristic, historic, or fantastical. Certain specific Japanese-language designations, however, do apply to anime. Of these, some genres take their names from their target audiences:

- *Josei* (young woman), example: *Nana*;
- *Kodomo* (child), example: *Doraemon*;
- *Seinen* (young male adult), example: *Oh my goddess*;
- *Shōjo* (young lady, little girl), example: *Card captor Sakura*;
- *Shōnen* (boy), example: *Dragon ball*.

Other genres take their names from their content:

- *Bishōjo* (beautiful girl; anime featuring attractive female characters), example: *Magic knight Rayearth*;

- *Bishōnen* (beautiful boy, featuring “pretty” and elegant boys and men), example: *Fushigi Yūgi*;
- *Ecchi* (meaning “H,” short for *hentai*, a Japanese designation of indecent sexuality, featuring mild sexual content), example: *Love Hina*;
- *Hentai* (abnormal, perverted, featuring erotica), example: *La blue girl*;
- *Mahō shōjo* (magical girl; a sub-genre of *shōjo*), example: *Sailor moon*; this sub-genre is referred to as “big eyes save the world” (see below);
- *Mahō shōnen* (magical boy; the male equivalent of *Mahō shōjo*), example: *DNAngel*;
- *Mecha* (mechanical, featuring giant robots), example: *Mobile suit Gundam*;
- *Moé* (endearing; featuring extremely perky or cute characters), example: *Little snow fairy sugar*;
- *Sentai/Super Sentai* (fighting team, featuring a superhero team), example: *Cyborg 009*;
- *Shōjo-ai/yuri* or GL (girl love, featuring love and romance between female characters), example: *Revolutionary girl Utena*;
- *Shōnen-ai/yaoi* or BL (boy love, featuring gay love and romance between male characters), example: *Gravitation*.

Some anime titles have content even narrower than those above, focusing specifically on racing cars, golf, boxing, or the French maid fantasy.

## TECHNIQUES AND STYLE

At the start of the twentieth century, Japanese filmmakers experimented with the animation techniques that were being developed in France, Germany, the US, and Russia. The early Japanese animators believed that animation had to mimic live-action dramas. Then, in the 1950s and 1960s, popular US series were imported into Japan using “limited animation” (which lowered production costs by decreasing the number of cell drawings per minute). In 1963, the limited animation form was tried in *Tetsuwan atom* (Mighty atom); when it met with phenomenal success (a rating of 40.7 percent), the genre was off and running. The anime style still uses a limited number of drawings, with intensive effort put into each one. During the 1970s, anime further separated itself from its foreign roots.

A noticeable anime (and *manga*) hallmark is characters’ unnaturally large eyes, a legacy of the revered artist Osamu Tezuka (1928–1989). Inspired by the exaggerated features of US cartoon characters such as Betty Boop and those in classic films like *Bambi*, Tezuka drew large eyes – not necessarily to achieve a foreign look, but because eyes could empathetically reflect emotions (→ Disney). When Tezuka began drawing *Ribbon no Kishi*, the first *manga* specifically targeted at young girls, he further exaggerated the size of his characters’ eyes. Tezuka and later artists simply carried the big-eye print conventions into anime.

The *chibi* (super deformed) character style features not only huge eyes, but an enlarged head and small body. Other common motifs include, especially in comedic anime, bulging veins on foreheads (anger), a giant sweat-drop (disbelief), and thin facial lines (embarrassment). The male gaze, when aimed at women, can take the form of ridiculously bulging eyeballs.

More than 1,000 TV anime programs have been produced in Japan since the first TV animation was broadcast in 1963, the 30-minute series *Tetsuwan atom. As Astro boy*, the series was successfully exported to the west.

## ANIME EXPORTS

In the later 1960s, the world got its first large-scale exposure to anime via the dubbed *Speed racer* children's TV series, even though many viewers probably did not think of it as Japanese. After a lull in the 1970s, a wave of imports – notably *Star blazers* and *Robotech* – resumed in the early to mid-1980s. In the 1980s, as anime was accepted as mainstream in Japan, a boom in production ensued, especially of adult-oriented TV series. There followed another export lull, this time due to the increased value of the yen. Then, in 1988, the confusing, violent theatrical film *Akira* was released.

The year 1995 marked a turning point for exports; *Dragon ball* and *Sailor moon* appeared as dubbed US TV series, while *Ghost in the shell* was released in 1996, eventually peaking at 51 US theaters. These anime acted as placeholders somewhat low on the public radar until the arrival in 1998 of two blockbusters: the money-making *Pokemon* for children and *Dragon ball Z*, an epic good vs evil story told over 260 episodes. Would non-Japanese audiences accept storylines that were not self-contained in a single episode? The Cartoon Network, which took a chance on *Dragon ball Z* as a daily after-school program, saw it rise to become the channel's top-rated show. France is another large export market. Beginning in about 1993 with popular translated *manga*, Frederic Boilet's translation of the sophisticated *To a distant town* appeared in 1998.

Choosing new fare for western viewers can be dicey. In 2006, the Tokyo Big Sight convention center housed the annual Tokyo International Anime Fair, which included a sprawling trade show, closed-door industry symposiums, and awards ceremony; it attracted 100,000 or so fans. When the Frognation company's *Eureka seven* received three awards, including best TV anime, the Cartoon Network promptly acquired the show.

Earlier, Disney had bought the international distribution rights to many of Hayao Miyazaki's films. To date, *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited away*, and *Howl's moving castle* have appeared in many US theaters. Bringing "very Japanese" works, such as some of Miyazaki's films, to western audiences entails special challenges. Nowadays a "light touch" approach to localization has proved popular with fans as well as general viewers. Music, however, usually does change when an anime is licensed to another country.

For any anime, cross-national processing involves many steps. After a basic translation, an editor studies the script as he or she watches the show, getting a feel for the characters. Then, while holding auditions, a major decision involves how close the English voices should be to the original Japanese ones.

Each actor records alone, so he or she can concentrate on synchronizing the mouth movements, making it difficult to generate the chemistry needed between characters. Child actor Aaron Dismuke, 11, as Edward in the fantasy-adventure *Fullmetal alchemist* had a special problem: to complete the recordings before his voice changed. Another dilemma is difficult-to-translate puns and wordplays. In the case of OVA, the audience will mainly be serious anime fans, which means staying especially close to the original. Video and DVD releases include not only OVAs, but also TV series and films judged not to be commercially viable for general audiences.

## FANS

Terms for non-Japanese anime fans range from Japanophile to wapanese (wannabe-Japanese, who, for example, use Japanese words in their English sentences) to *otaku*. *Otaku* is a Japanese pejorative term used to refer to a geek obsessed with anime and *manga*. Derived from an honorific Japanese term for another's house or family, the term was first used by author Akio Nakamori in his 1983 series *Otaku no Kenkyu* (An investigation of otaku) and later when writing about rapist/serial killer Tsutomu Miyazaki, a recluse apparently obsessed with imitating pornographic anime and *manga*.

*Otaku* provides the name for Baltimore's annual August anime convention, *Otakon*, the biggest on the east coast; it attracted 22,000 fans in 2006. Just 15 years earlier, in 1991, the first US manga/anime convention was held in Anaheim, California. Costume contests, or *cosplay*, play a central role at US fan conventions, which usually feature musicians from Japan and voice actors.

*Baka-con* was created by a fan group. The anime fan club phenomenon, common at even small US colleges, has reached secondary schools. The US anime fan community, although numerically not very large, has influence because of its affluence, intelligence, and motivation. Fans' devotion to anime, however, can have ethical and even legal implications.

Although it is a violation of copyright laws in many countries, some fans watch fansubs, recordings of anime series that have been subtitled by fans – preferred by many over dubbing. The ethical implications of producing, distributing, or watching fansubs are topics of much controversy even when fansub groups do not profit from their activities and cease distribution of their work once the series has been licensed outside of Japan.

Adults brought up in the early 1990s on *Pokemon* and *Dragon ball Z* may create a market for more mature anime as they age. Beyond anime, many western fans' interests may spread to Japanese music, celebrities, film, fashion, and language. In the US, anime's status in the mid-2000s ranks between a niche phenomenon (in middle America) and – especially on the two coasts and larger cities – a major cultural force.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Cartoon ▶ Cinema ▶ Comics ▶ Disney ▶ Fandom  
▶ Japan: Media System ▶ Video Games

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# Antitrust Regulation

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As a neo-liberal approach to media policymaking has spread, many nations have relied more heavily on competition and the marketplace to shape the structure and output of their electronic media industries. The result has been a greater reliance on antitrust laws designed to maintain a competitive marketplace rather than industry-specific regulations (→ Media Policy; Media Economics). Indeed, this faith in the marketplace to produce optimal outcomes has been so great that it has often led to a view that promoting competition is virtually the only concern policymakers should have. But there has also been a countervailing force at work. In an era of growing media globalization and regionalization, many governments have seen the need to allow media corporations to grow in order to compete in this new global media economy. The result has often been a reluctance to apply antitrust laws as rigorously as in the past (→ Globalization of the Media; Media Conglomerates).

## ORIGINS OF ANTITRUST REGULATION

In the United States, antitrust laws developed in the late nineteenth century as a reaction to the growth of big business. These laws were designed to limit the economic and political power of these firms and their ability to collude in the creation of cartels to dominate an industry by destroying potential competitors and setting prices at levels that harmed consumers.

Wells (2002) has observed that this reaction against cartels was a particularly American phenomenon. Their existence in other countries was often tolerated and sometimes even supported by governments as a way of stabilizing markets. However, following World War II, the United States began to actively export its ideas about the role of antitrust laws. Wells notes that these efforts were successful in Europe but failed elsewhere, for example in postwar Japan.

## ANTITRUST AND THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

The application of antitrust law in the case of a specific industry requires both the definition of the relevant market and an assessment of the level of competition within that market. But defining the boundaries of the relevant market in the case of electronic media industries can be especially difficult. For example, if there are two competing providers of satellite radio to a nation, how should that market be defined if they wish to merge? Is it just the existing satellite radio market that should be considered? Or should terrestrial radio broadcasters be seen as participants in the market? Perhaps even providers of online services allowing consumers to download music should also be included (→ Competition in Media Systems; Markets of the Media).

Napoli (2001, 153–176) has noted the difficulty in *defining the geographic market* for media products before making an assessment of the level of competition, since, while

satellite services are aimed primarily at a national market, competition between broadcast radio or television stations often takes place in a more localized market. In addition, Napoli also distinguishes between various content markets and audience markets. Here the concept of substitutability is important in the assessment of the level of competition in a media market. For example, in an audience market, two competing broadcast radio stations may be attracting audiences with little or no overlap. To a potential advertiser the members of one audience are not substitutable for those of the other. However, as Napoli points out, even if the relevant market can be defined, the issue of how to assess the level of competition in that market is not without its problems.

Various *competition-concentration indices* have been used, including, in the United States perhaps most frequently, the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI), which is calculated by summing the squares of the revenue shares of all participants in a market. This works well if the measure chosen for the analysis is the share of the total advertising revenue attracted by all participants in a market. The problem with this type of assessment of the level of market concentration in media industries is that while this kind of measure may produce an index that is too low to allow companies to use their market power to fix prices, the level of market concentration may still be seen as harmful to the democratic conversation. An inability to control advertising rates may not correlate with a desire for a diversity of voices to be heard in a community (→ Plurality).

## ANTITRUST AND THE MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS

In the approach promoted by the Chicago School of economics, the central issue in antitrust law is whether a company can use its market power to fix prices. This view came to dominate antitrust enforcement in the United States during the 1980s. From this viewpoint, antitrust law is solely concerned with levels of competition and market efficiency. It does not address the role communications media play in a democratic society by providing access to a wide range of diverse voices (→ Journalists' Role Perceptions); that is, the creation and maintenance of a "*marketplace of ideas*." While the application of antitrust laws in a way that is solely designed to promote economic efficiency will probably also promote some of the democratic ideals embodied in the concept of the marketplace of ideas, the question is what it will miss. For example, a market may be found to be entirely unconcentrated provided it does not give any of those operating in that market the power to raise prices, even if a particular category of media content is entirely absent. This could include the complete absence of media products reflecting the lived experiences of specific cultural or ethnic groups. In the case of a geographically defined local media market, there could also be no local content, with all media outlets in that market being programmed from remote locations.

As a result of this narrow definition of antitrust as a purely economic issue, there has been a reluctance in the United States to stop media → mergers. Vertical integration leading to the creation of media conglomerates has rarely been challenged. Whether or not these mergers might harm citizens, rather than consumers, has been ignored in favor of the argument that such mergers create market efficiencies. Some have argued that this is a major flaw in the Chicago perspective and particularly troublesome in the way the antitrust laws have been used to assess large media mergers in the United States (Conrad

1996–1997). They also conclude that case law and legislative history do not support this narrow interpretation of the role of antitrust laws to the exclusion of concerns about the marketplace of ideas (Stucke & Grunes 2001, 273–275).

### **ANTITRUST AND THE CONCENTRATION OF MEDIA OWNERSHIP**

As the number of sector-specific rules limiting media mergers has decreased, some have expressed a concern that the application of antitrust law has proved an ineffective substitute for those rules in halting what they perceive to be the growing concentration of media ownership (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Their concern is related to the concept of the marketplace of ideas discussed above, and they fear that the growing concentration of ownership is creating a situation where the leaders of a few large media conglomerates have the power to control the content of that marketplace of ideas (Baker 2002; McChesney 2004, 235–240). They call for antitrust laws to be applied with a focus not only on the benefits of allowing increasingly large media conglomerates to achieve market efficiencies, but also on the harm this may do to maintaining a vigorous democratic debate (→ Media as Political Actors).

Critics of this line of thinking have responded by arguing that the media industries are not highly concentrated if one considers *all* media. They point to the proliferation of new media technologies in recent years, especially the → Internet, and suggest that this is actually increasing diversity of control (→ Communication Technology and Democracy). They also argue that ownership does not necessarily confer control, since the day-to-day decisions made in the many divisions of a media conglomerate must be left to managers and cannot be overseen by the individual leaders. This argument is, however, countered by noting that while operational control over the day-to-day operations of media conglomerates may have passed to managers, the owners still have allocative control (Williams 2003, 73–95). For example, setting the expected profit margin for a particular division within a media corporation can have profound impacts on its day-to-day operations without any direct intervention. The need to make greater profits can result in decreased numbers of reporters in a newsroom or a reduction in the number of pages in a newspaper and the elimination of some types of news.

In conclusion, a reliance on antitrust law to regulate media industries, especially when those laws are interpreted solely in terms of whether companies can use their market power to set prices, may be inadequate to protect some of the democratic ideals raised by the special role media industries play in the democratic process.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Cross-Ownership ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Local News ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Mergers ▶ News Corporation ▶ Plurality

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## **Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory**

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William B. Gudykunst (1985) extended Berger and Calabrese's (1975) → uncertainty reduction theory to explain the reduction of uncertainty in intergroup encounters as the first step in developing anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM) theory. He developed a model of intergroup communication by integrating URT and social identity theory in several stages. Gudykunst and Hammer (1988) also developed a version of the theory that used uncertainty and anxiety to explain intercultural adjustment. This version contained 24 axioms. Uncertainty involves the inability to predict or explain others' attitudes, behavior, and feelings. Anxiety involves feelings of being uneasy, tense, worried, or apprehensive.

At about the same time, Gudykunst (1988) included notions of intergroup anxiety into a *general theory of effective interpersonal and intergroup communication*. This version of the theory contained 13 axioms. Neither of the 1988 versions of the theory was designated AUM. According to Gudykunst, intercultural communication is one type of intergroup communication. He used the notion of the “stranger” as a central organizing concept. “Strangers” are defined as individuals who are present in a situation, but are not members of the ingroup.

Besides intergroup factors, anxiety, expectations, and outcomes were included in the theory. Gudykunst regarded anxiety as the fundamental problem with which all humans must cope, and he wrote that it is present anytime individuals communicate. To better understand either interpersonal or intergroup encounters, therefore, anxiety was

incorporated into the theory. Regarding expectations, he also wrote that → stereotypes and → attitudes create expectations. Generally, he concluded that positive expectations reduce uncertainty and anxiety, whereas negative expectations increase uncertainty and anxiety. Pertaining to outcomes, Gudykunst argued that uncertainty reduction itself can be considered an outcome of communication. He noted that it is also a process. He defined effective communication as minimizing misunderstandings within the theoretical framework.

The Gudykunst (1988) version of the theory included axioms that addressed both effective communication and intercultural adjustment. Gudykunst (1990) applied the theory to diplomacy, a special case of intergroup communication. Gudykunst (1993) focused on anxiety and uncertainty management: for example, maintaining anxiety and uncertainty between minimum and maximum thresholds to make effective communication possible. And he integrated Langer's notion of mindfulness as a moderating process between anxiety/uncertainty management and effective communication mindfulness. He used the label AUM for the first time in this publication. This version of the theory contained 49 axioms.

It was important for him that the 1993 version of the theory focused on interpersonal and intergroup communication competence. Unlike the 1988 version of the theory, the 1993 version of the theory was designed to be a *practical theory*. The change in focus from anxiety and uncertainty reduction to anxiety and uncertainty management, as well as focusing on practical application instead of just explaining effective communication, changed the fundamental nature of the theory.

The 1995 version of the theory contains 94 axioms (Gudykunst 1995). This effective communication version was written with respect to individuals communicating with strangers. The intercultural adjustment version of the theory, in contrast, was written with respect to strangers entering new cultures and interacting with host nationals. The 1995 version of the theory incorporated ethnic aspects of communicating with strangers and maintained the goal of being a practical theory. This version of the theory of interpersonal and intergroup communication effectiveness was later updated.

Gudykunst revised the intercultural adjustment version. In 1998 he outlined how it could be used to design intercultural adjustment training programs, and later updated it again (→ Intercultural Communication Training). Bill Gudykunst's legacy can be seen in the vast amount of empirical research that his writings have inspired in North America and Japan.

SEE ALSO: ► Attitudes ► Intercultural Communication Training ► Stereotypes ► Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Apologies and Remedial Episodes

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Apology is an action in which one admits the wrongful nature of an act and one's responsibility for it in dealing with some type of problematic situation; for instance violations of social expectations, offenses, rule-breaking behaviors, social predicaments, and embarrassment. The concept can be traced back to *apologia*, the speech of self-defense identified in Greek rhetoric. The first scholar to give much attention to this action in face-to-face settings was → Erving Goffman, who treated it as part of a remedial interchange. The remedial interchange is a sequence of exchanges in which one tries to change the meaning of an action that is potentially offensive to one that is acceptable through the uses of such acts as excuses, justifications, and apologies (→ Accounting Research).

Unlike an *excuse*, in which one admits the wrongfulness of an act but denies one's full responsibility, or a *justification*, in which one admits the responsibility but denies that the act itself was wrong, an apology admits both to the wrongfulness and to one's responsibility for the act, often with an expression of remorse. Goffman treated a remedial interchange as a unit basically consisting of four moves, namely remedy (i.e., accounts, apologies, or requests), relief, appreciation, and minimization, whereas other researchers have used slightly larger units, such as an accounting sequence and a remedial episode, for observing actions including apologies.

The concept of apology is important because it helps us understand the way in which society is maintained through individuals' everyday conduct. In apologizing, one demonstrates that one is guilty of an offense and, at the same time, shows one's willingness to adhere to the rule that one has violated (Goffman 1971). In other words, by apologizing the offender claims that his or her act was an exception to the rule, and, as a result, the original rule is sustained. The concept is also important in understanding the way in which individuals restore their preferred images of self, or "face." In interactions, one's face is sometimes supported by the other and thus maintained, but at other times, it can be threatened. The latter type of situation occasions an apology. The desire to restore one's own or the other's

face, as well as the relationship with the other, is a motivating factor for an individual to offer an apology.

The role of apologies has been examined in a wide variety of contexts including criminal and civil justice systems and mediation, medical malpractice, national and international political incidents and historic events, corporate image restoration, marital and family relationships, psychotherapy, literary texts, and public speech. Three *areas of research*, in particular, have investigated various dimensions of apologies in face-to-face interaction. First, social psychological research has examined the *relationship between apology and other concepts* (e.g., guilt, embarrassment, aggression, forgiveness, healing processes, and repairing trust) and the *relationships among variables* (e.g., age, sex, culture; offender's reputation, degree of remorse, responsibility, and intentionality; nature of relationships; severity of the offense; extent of damage; absence or presence of apology; content of the apology; effectiveness of apology versus other actions; timing of the apology; restitution and punishment; and consequences).

Second, researchers studying accounts have treated apology as a *concession*, one type of accounting strategy in the category that includes excuses, justifications, and refusals. Third, research in pragmatics and applied linguistics has typically treated apology as a *speech act* and a *politeness* strategy. It has attempted to identify strategies of apologizing (e.g., an acknowledgment of responsibility, an account) and their linguistic forms (e.g., "I'm sorry," "It won't happen again"). Note that most pragmatics research has considered accounts to be an apology strategy, whereas accounting research has treated apologies as a type of accounts. Pragmatics research has also investigated situations that require apologies, factors that influence the choice of strategies, cross-cultural differences in the uses of apology, and the similarities between apologies and thanks. Whereas some researchers begin with functions (e.g., admitting responsibility) and then collect their linguistic forms, others begin with forms and identify their functions.

Recent research has considered how apology is conceptualized and practiced in other speech communities and what happens when two interactants have two different meanings for apology (→ Communities of Practice). Researchers have increasingly collected natural data using *ethnographic methods* (→ Ethnography of Communication) as opposed to questionnaires, role-play, laboratory experiments, and analyses of textbooks. *Conversation analysis* has begun to explore sequential positions of apology and its preference organizations by treating it as the first or second pair part in adjacency pairs (→ Conversation Analysis). The source of both strengths and weaknesses in apology research might be that it has been conducted in many disciplines and languages and that these researchers have tended to operate within their own disciplinary and geographic boundaries.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accounting Research ▶ Communities of Practice ▶ Conversation Analysis  
▶ Directives ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Identities and Discourse  
▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Politeness Theory

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## Applied Communication Research

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Applied communication research refers to a *type of communication scholarship* as well as to a *sub-field of communication* with which that research is identified. In the more specific sense, applied communication research is communication scholarship that emphasizes the creation of knowledge about communication in specific contexts, applicable to social issues, and often for the solution of societal problems. The research typically is theory-driven or has the potential for (re)formation of theory, but theory building is neither the immediate nor the principal purpose of applied communication studies. Rather the hallmark of applied communication scholarship is its social relevance, for it is simultaneously (often primarily) directed by a concern with the usefulness of the research findings for illuminating pressing social issues, for improving practice, or for redressing societal problems. To a lesser extent, applied communication researchers therefore are concerned with the dissemination of that knowledge and its effective application by persons with a stake in the solution to social issues.

In the broader sense, applied communication research references a sub-area of the discipline (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). Applied communication scholarship has contributed to, and been nurtured by, the creation of formal structures in the field of communication that foster research which explores and enhances the relationship between communication theory and practice in applied contexts. The structures include divisions within professional associations and awards for scholarship; a dedicated journal and special issues of others; conferences and proceedings; edited volumes; graduate programs or emphases; curriculum tracks, individual courses, and textbooks; among others. Most prominent in the United States but in evidence worldwide, these structures have served to define applied communication as a sub-field of communication. That sub-field, in turn, has been an umbrella for many professional agendas and research foci.



### **APPLIED COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AS SCHOLARSHIP: EMPHASES AND TRENDS**

Article II of the Constitution of the National Communication Association, the largest communication association in the United States, proclaims: “The purpose of this Association shall be to promote criticism, *research*, teaching, and *application* of the artistic, humanistic, and scientific principles of communication” (emphases added). Despite the fact that *research* and *application* are inherent in the NCA’s mission, applied communication researchers have found it necessary to address issues that are crucial for any nascent field of study: finding its identity, contesting foci, debating an agenda, elaborating methods, and so forth.

While Eadie’s (1982) “case for applied communication research” was significant for justifying applied communication as a field of scholarship, the meaning of applied communication research has been contested since then. Disputes surrounding the legitimacy of applied research as scholarship, the problematic dichotomy between “basic” and “applied” research, whether there should be an agenda and boundaries (Eadie 1994; O’Hair 2000), and the relationship between theory and practice have arisen and abated (see reviews in Seibold 1995; 2000). On the last point, most applied communication researchers acknowledge the recursivity of theory and practice, but do not agree on the extent to which theory and practice are *equal* aspects of applied communication research nor the extent to which they can/must be mutual informing and reforming (Seibold 2005). Applied communication researchers also differ on where to enter the circle for analytic or ameliorative purposes and how to insure both are not lost in that process, including how to preserve scholarship in the process of service. An extension of that realization has been debate surrounding the depth of engagement desirable in applied communication research, and recognition of researchers’ potential to “make a difference” in the amelioration of the problems others live and they research. For some this is an ethical imperative (Conquergood 1995; Frey 1998) – “we are part of the problem or part of the solution” (Frey et al. 1996) – although there have been rejoinders (Seibold 2000; Wood 2000).

There also are discernible trends in applied communication research. First, the range of → research methods has broadened to include quantitative, qualitative, ethnographic, archival, experimental, and rhetorical methods. Second, as an extension of the field of communication, applied communication research reflects its disparate nature and emergent character. The evolving nature of the field has been mirrored in the evolution of the contents and contexts of applied communication research. cursory examination of articles published in the *Journal of Applied Communication Research (JACR)* since 1990 reflects the scholarly foci of all divisions in the National Communication Association, the journal’s sponsoring organization, as well as the types of scholarship produced by many of the sections and interest groups of that broad-based communication association. Since the field is in flux, it is inevitable that the foci and methods of applied communication research will change too.

Third, applied communication scholarship speaks specifically to more specific problems than ever before. Applied communication researchers have studied a wide range of social problems: child abuse, domestic violence, sexual harassment, smoking cessation,

skin cancer prevention, employee participation, organ donation, hospice care, intergroup conflict, delivery of health-care and social services, ageism, gender equality, children's self-efficacy, exposing negative campaigning, and anti-gang advertisements, to name a few of just research projects reported in *JACR*. The expanding scope of applied communication research has been the result of many factors, including correlative changes in the field as a whole, the sheer increased number of scholars doing applied communication research and their depth of engagement with social issues increasingly regarded by citizens and nonacademics as problems, and more limited and focused projects in specific contexts.

Fourth, not enough applied research speaks broadly to a range of social problems. This may be a consequence of a concern with describing, critiquing, and reforming practice over building theory. Few general communication-related theories have been available for application to a range of problems. The emphasis on case analyses has resulted in rich but less general findings, and the relatively few large-scale, grant-supported projects in the area leaves applied communication research quite focused on specific contexts and pressing issues.

### **APPLIED COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AS A SUB-FIELD: INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

Cissna et al. (in press) locate the genesis of applied communication research in the “speech” tradition of communication (→ Speech Communication, History of). They identify four factors contributing to the development of the applied communication sub-field: (1) American communication scholars’ struggle for disciplinary identity dating to 1914 when 17 Midwestern US teachers of speech separated from the National Council of Teachers of English to pursue the theory and practice of their pedagogical commitment; (2) the drive over the next 60 years among members of what is now the National Communication Association (NCA) to build research-based knowledge of communication; (3) in addition to generating theoretical findings of importance to other scholars, the desire to create knowledge that contributes to the solution to social problems – especially stimulated by societal tumult in 1960s America; and (4) commitment to insuring that stakeholders are aware of and can utilize communication scholarship (→ Planned Social Change through Communication). The “Disciplinary Roots and Importance of Communication Research” section of the NCA website reflects the last two impulses: “The discipline of communication – grounded in a rich and ever-expanding intellectual tradition, generating a wide range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary research, and engaged with major industries – is dedicated to *addressing critical social needs and improving lives* through basic and *applied research*” (emphases added).

As Cissna et al. (in press) chronicle, the institutionalization of applied communication research in America occurred through a number of concurrent applied projects in the 1970s. Annual publication of a compendium of abstracts of → *organizational communication* articles, while not necessarily focused on social problems, highlighted field studies that also were perceived as more “applied” than dominant experimental laboratory investigations. The development of the → International Communication Association audit project reflected the close cooperation of academics and practitioners in that

association's Organizational Communication Division, the only such unit in a major academic communication society. By 1977 the Speech Communication Association (SCA) – changed to the National Communication Association in 1997 – had created an Applied Communication Section, the first of its kind. A home for nonacademic members of SCA, academics interested in consulting, and scholars conducting applied research, APCOM sponsored research panels at annual meetings, supported a Section newsletter, and provided opportunities for its nearly 500 members and potential members to interact. The mission statement of the Section emphasized “discussion, study, and analysis of application of communication principles to communication problems” in a variety of organizational contexts. Regional communication associations affiliated with SCA soon sponsored their own applied communication divisions or created homes for applied research within other units, and in 1995 APCOM became a formal Division in SCA (see Cissna et al., in press).

Applied communication research was further institutionalized through the creation of another formal structure in the 1970s – a journal devoted entirely to scholarship on applied communication and the first scholarly venue in the field of communication with “applied” in its title. The first issue of the *Journal of Applied Communications Research* appeared in 1973. It was published as a private enterprise by academics Mark Hickson and Don Stacks, in part as an outlet for context-specific, participant observation, ethnographic and applied research that they found missing from sponsored journals. The founders sought articles that analyzed data collected in contexts outside university labs, and that dealt with important social issues. Articles in the first several issues included research on presidential communication, documentary broadcasting, → advertising and → marketing, marital conflict (→ Marital Communication), communication among the Choctaw Indians of America, interactions involved in childrearing, and an editor's essay (Hickson 1973).

The *Journal of Applied Communications Research* was acquired by the University of South Florida in 1981 under the editorship of Communication faculty, and its title was modified slightly to the current *Journal of Applied Communication Research (JACR)*. The focus of the *JACR* also expanded to “questions and problems regarding pragmatic social phenomena addressed through the analysis of human communication” with published articles not constrained to particular methods, contexts, or epistemology (Cissna 1982). The Speech Communication Association assumed publication of *JACR* in 1990, under the editorship of Bill Eadie. Eadie sought to publish research that explored specific communication problems or situations (or whose results were immediately applicable to them), that provided important information about the problem or situation, and that was securely based in theory but whose immediate purpose was not theory building. Over the years, articles have appeared representing all areas of the field: intergenerational, political, instructional, intercultural, organizational, interpersonal, and mass communication among many others. *JACR* increasingly has published studies of new communication technologies, intergroup communication, gender communication, legal communication, social justice, environmental and risk communication, gerontological and health communication, crisis communication, and family communication at the same time as the field of communication (including the units in its scholarly societies) has expanded to include formal focus on these areas. A recent issue, for example, included studies of maternity leave

policies and practices in US organizations, how parents who have experienced the death of a child communicate with persons in their social network, and the socialization of emotion management among municipal firefighters. Recent editors of *JACR* have developed conventions to bridge the findings reported in each article to practice (e.g., portions of the Discussion section devoted to application of the results).

Other structures have evolved over the past two decades that have further institutionalized applied communication research: journal special issues devoted to applied communication research (O'Hair 2000; Petronio 1999); major conferences on conceptions of and the future of the area, as well as ensuing publications (e.g., Cissna 1995); inauguration of the NCA Applied Communication Division's annual award for outstanding article and creation of the association-wide Gerald M. Phillips Award for Distinguished Applied Communication Scholarship to honor a body of applied communication research; development of graduate programs that emphasize applied communication scholarship; and applied communication courses and textbooks (Cragan & Shields 1996).

Researchers steeped in a → journalism tradition would not find "applied communication research" to be historically problematic or salient for their identity (→ Journalism Education). The "applied" character of their work has been presumed (→ Communication Professions and Academic Research). This also appears to be true, *internationally*. Examination of the International Federation of Communication Associations, Federation of Communication Societies, Council of Communication Associations, and numerous regional and national communication association websites around the world (mission statements, constitution, divisions, task forces) reveals scant reference to "applied communication research." Current and former officers of several of international societies interviewed by the author expressed uncertainty about the meaning of applied communication research. As one officer indicated: "It is not a term we use a lot. A lot of research reported at our conferences is inspired by a desire to make practice better and so is justified in terms of its potential or actual applications . . . We do not have a section called applied (communication) research. We tend to organize our activities, especially at conferences, around themes."

Nor do journals sponsored by these organizations engage in debates or offer commentaries explicitly related to applied communication research. For example, over the past 10 years the *Asian Journal of Communication* and the *Keio Review* had no forums or reviews separately dedicated to applied communication research. The editor of a prominent European communication journal indicated, "some authors may make reference to applied communication, but most of those are from things done in the U.S."

There are a few exceptions internationally, instances where applied communication or applied communication research is referenced explicitly. The mission statement of the → International Association for Media and Communication Research includes the following: "We welcome both theoretical and applied research, as well as research conducted at both micro and macro levels of analysis" ([www.iamcr.org/content/view/83/204/](http://www.iamcr.org/content/view/full/83/204/)). Reference to "applied communication" in the "Identity of the DG PuK" section of the German Communication Association (DG PuK) website ([www.dgpuk.de/english/identity.htm](http://www.dgpuk.de/english/identity.htm)) alludes to applied research methods and contexts as well as their relationship to basic research. Furthermore, some international universities have applied communication departments and offer applied communication degrees. Reference to

applied communication in these international associations, departments, and degree programs is unusual. Although applied communication research appears to be integral to international communication scholarship, the term seems not to have entered the lexicon outside American scholarship and scholarly institutions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Communication Professions and Academic Research ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Marketing ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Research Methods ▶ Speech Communication, History of

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# Appraisal Theory

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The evening news on TV presents extensive coverage of an oil spill just off the Spanish coast. The audience sees the sinking of an oil tanker in a severe storm, learns that it has leaked tens of thousands of tons of heavy fuel oil, and watches pictures of birds fighting a hopeless fight for survival as their feathers are agglutinated. It will be mentioned that at the moment the cause of the accident is still obscure. To analyze the effects of this media coverage on the audience it will be crucial to know what kind of cognitive processes and emotional reactions are likely to occur (→ Emotions, Media Effects on; Information Processing). For example, the identification of a clearly responsible human agent is likely to elicit anger and anger-congruent cognitions, whereas the recognition that matters were out of anyone's control more often leads to predominantly sad reactions. "Appraisal theories of emotions" offer a more complete and systematic linkage between such cognitive evaluations of a situation and emotional reactions (see Scherer et al. 2001, for an overview).

More generally, these theories link cognitive evaluations about the significance of a situation for a person's goal or well-being – that is, the cognitive appraisals of a situation – to that person's emotional experiences (→ Cognition; Emotion). For example, the appraisal that a situation is positively relevant for a person is seen as determining positive emotions, whereas the appraisal of negative relevance for a person is regarded as determining negative emotions. Of course, there are additional appraisals and it is assumed that different patterns of appraisals further differentiate emotions. Within appraisal theories, emotions are seen as continuous processes, changing as appraisals are added or revised.

Whereas the famous theory of James (1884) had argued that humans are not afraid of a bear and then run, but rather are afraid because they perceive themselves running, appraisal theorists insist on the *primacy of the initial evaluation of the situation*. Without the perception of the bear in the first place, its evaluation as a life-threatening animal, and the understanding that attacking it oneself is impossible, people would neither run nor be afraid. Appraisal theorists assume that initial evaluation or, in theoretical jargon, the situational appraisal causes experienced emotions (Roseman & Evdokas 2004). In contrast to Schachter's two-component theory of emotion (Schachter & Singer 1962), appraisal theories do not consider physiological arousal a necessary precondition for emotional reactions (→ Emotional Arousal Theory).

Although theorists disagree over details, granularity, and number of appraisal criteria, there is considerable consensus regarding the central and most important criteria for differentiation and elicitation of emotional reactions (Ellsworth & Scherer 2003). For example, most appraisal models include an evaluation of the degree to which a situation or event is consistent with, or conducive to, achieving one's goals (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of). This criterion differentiates between positive and negative emotions. Another important criterion is agency or responsibility for an event: an event might be caused by

the self, other persons, or by situational circumstances (→ Attribution Processes). Other important criteria are one's own potential to cope with the consequences of the event, and the event's normative significance; that is, its compatibility with prevalent moral standards. Novelty, unexpectedness, and pleasantness (or valence of a stimulus) are also among the core appraisal criteria.

Most appraisal theories assume *emotions to be caused by appraisal*, assuming a linear causal relationship between appraisal and emotion. Some theorists have challenged this view and postulate in one form or another reciprocal causation between cognitive appraisal and emotion. If the appraisal–emotion link is not a simple, causal relationship, then both cognitive interpretation and development of an emotion should emerge over time in a dynamic, bidirectional way (Lewis 2005). This stance implies that an emotion is continuously enhanced or modified by changes in appraisal, while appraisal is progressively updated by emotional influences on perceptions, judgments, or memories.

Adopting such a dynamic appraisal–emotion relationship has important implications for analyzing media effects. This was shown by Nerb and Spada (2001), who developed the computational model ITERA for analyzing and predicting media effects assuming a *dynamic, bidirectional appraisal–emotion relationship*. Using fictitious but realistic newspaper reports about an environmental problem, the authors manipulated attributes determining the agent's responsibility for environmental damage (knowledge about the riskiness of an action; motive of the actor). Manipulating these appraisals of responsibility not only influenced participants' felt anger and sadness but also affected ratings on non-manipulated attributes of the negative event. The effects on those non-manipulated variables were coherent with the overall emotional reactions of the participants. For example, in one study the manipulation of whether a company had control over the actions that caused an environmental problem not only affected ratings for anger, but also led to affective coherent judgments about the motive and knowledge of the agent. Although nothing was mentioned in the news report about the motive of the agent and whether the company could foresee that its action could imply a negative outcome, participants found that the company had more knowledge about the riskiness of the action and had a more negative motive when the action was controllable than when it was uncontrollable (→ Framing Effects). Thus, participants' construals of the situation are consistent with the underlying appraisal pattern for anger.

*Recent developments within appraisal theory* are concerned with the social aspects of the genesis of emotions. According to this view, emotion process does not unfold in a micro-world that only involves the emotional stimulus and the individual concerned, but is always embedded in a broader social context (Fischer et al. 2003). Thus, people include in their appraisal of a situation the way in which other people judge, evaluate, or behave in response to an emotional situation; this is called social appraisal. As a consequence, experienced emotions might not need to be the result of one's own situational appraisals; rather, it might be others' communicated appraisals that cause or modulate emotional responses.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Cognition ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Information Processing

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## Arab Satellite TV News

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Arab → satellite television emerged in the context of the 1991 Gulf War. Since then, the evolution of the industry has evinced two changes of direction. First, there was a shift, in the 1990s, from officially sanctioned national broadcasting systems to a process of regional media integration (→ West Asia: Media Systems; Egypt: Media System; North Africa: Media Systems; Communication Law and Policy: Middle East). The second shift occurred around 2000, toward specialization and niche markets. The years 1991, 1996, and 2003 witnessed industry milestones. First, politically connected Saudi entrepreneurs launched the Middle East Broadcasting System (MBC) in London, and the Egyptian government launched the Egyptian Satellite Channel (ESC) in 1991. Then came the launch of *Al Jazeera* and the initiation of satellite operations by Lebanese broadcasters LBC and Future TV in 1996. In 2003, *Al Arabiya* went on the air as a Saudi-financed rival to *Al Jazeera*. As of 2007, there were more than 250 Arabic-language, transnational satellite television channels.



Though Arab satellite channels began broadcasting in the 1990s, the policy and technical infrastructure of Arab satellite television had *developed over three decades*. The Arab satellite organization ARABSAT was established in April 1976 as an organization affiliated with the Arab League. Oil-rich Saudi Arabia bankrolled ARABSAT, and the Saudi capital Riyadh housed ARABSAT's headquarters. First-generation satellites were launched in the 1980s, and several generations have been put into orbit since. In 1998, the Egyptian government, long a political rival of the Saudi royal family for pan-Arab leadership, launched the satellite NILESAT. Pan-Arab broadcasters could also use the European satellite HOTBIRD and still others. In the 1990s, Arab states either removed or stopped enforcing restrictions on satellite dish ownership, and some states developed "media cities" with financial and labor incentives to national, Arab, and western companies. Dubai leads the way, with other less influential cities operating in Egypt and Jordan.

The combination of satellite technology (→ Television Technology), war, and economic considerations led to a *regionalization of Arab television*, aided by the presence of more than 200 million viewers living on a vast stretch of land from Morocco to Iraq and sharing the Arabic language. The new satellite channels attempted at first to replace terrestrial channels with a general format, mixing news and entertainment.

In → *news*, transnationalization led to the "anywhere but here" news phenomenon, where each channel took the opportunity to criticize all countries and policies except the country in which that channel was based or that financed its operations. Al Jazeera, the much-hyped Qatari news channel (→ Newscast; Newscast, 24-Hour) critical of US policies on the Middle East, is credited with creating a *pan-Arab* → *public sphere*, and criticized for neglecting local issues specific to countries or communities. The channel occasionally featured dissidents discussing sensitive political topics, but because of the need to retain a transnational audience, a small number of "big" issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the US occupation of Iraq took the lion's share of news attention (→ Conflict as Media Content), at the expense of local issues.

The most significant genre on Arab news channels was the *political talk show* (→ Broadcast Talk). Though national broadcasters in Lebanon and Egypt aired this type of programming in the 1970s, the satellite era witnessed a proliferation of talk shows featuring charismatic, opinionated, and antagonistic guests. The most famous is Al Jazeera's *Al-Ittijah Al-Mu'akiss* ("The Opposite Direction"), a spin-off from → CNN's now defunct *Crossfire*. The verbally aggressive journalist Faisal Al-Qasim hosted two guests in a pugilistic debate on issues varying from the attacks of September 11, 2001, to cultural globalization, to the impotence of Arab regimes, to US policies in the Middle East. Other shows have featured feminists debating clerics, dissidents arguing with regime representatives, and controversial artists defending their work. These talk shows were a dramatic illustration of the variety of opinions aired in Arab public discourse. Specialized satellite channels also attempted to lure niche audiences. This was especially the case with economically oriented channels, for example focusing on real estate (Al 'Iqariyya), or business news (CNBC Arabiya). This has led industry leaders Al Jazeera and Al Arabiya to increase their coverage of stock markets and commodity prices.

Arab satellite television presents a unique case of a regional media industry developing rapidly both qualitatively and quantitatively, and creating a vibrant and complex regional sphere of information and culture. Relying on a transient and transnational workforce

working increasingly on format-based productions destined for the pan-Arab market, and concentrated in Beirut, Cairo, and Dubai, Arab satellite television has established a strong regional, and even global, presence, especially in the case of Al Jazeera, which has penetrated the elite club of global news channels and challenged western hegemony over international news (→ Satellite Communication, Global; International Television).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ CNN ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Egypt: Media System ▶ International Television ▶ Music Videos ▶ News ▶ Newscast ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ North Africa: Media Systems ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Reality TV ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Television Technology ▶ West Asia: Media Systems

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# **Archiving of Internet Content**

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Communication scholars interested in new media are increasingly archiving content of the → Internet or “web content,” and studying web archives to examine retrospectively content produced and distributed on the web, and the behavior of those producing, sharing, and using the world wide web. Although web archiving has been actively pursued since the mid-1990s, new media scholars have more recently begun to find web archives

helpful as they seek to understand developments related to the web in a variety of ways. These may involve adapting traditional methods of social research such as content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative), ethnography (→ Ethnography of Communication), focus groups, → surveys, and experiments (→ Experimental Design) or developing methods such as network ethnography (→ Network Analysis), hyperlink analysis, and other approaches to structural or phenomenological analyses of the web (→ Online Research).

## RESEARCH HISTORY

The impetus for web archiving, for both scholarly and historical purposes, dates from the 1980s, as institutions increasingly shifted their records from paper to electronic form. With the advent of the world wide web in the early 1990s, this concern grew significantly, as greater numbers of institutions and individuals began producing documents in digital form only, rendering traditional modes of archiving less reliable as instruments to preserve records of social phenomena. By 1995, an opportunity to address this concern emerged with the development of *web harvesting programs*. Web harvesters or crawlers are applications that traverse the web following links to pages, initially from a set of pre-defined seed URLs. Harvesters were initially developed by search engines such as Alta Vista to overcome the increasingly impossible task of indexing the web through human cataloging techniques. Web harvesting technologies gave life to the notion of archiving web materials via the web itself (→ Digital Media, History of; Internet, Technology of).

Three *pioneering efforts* to archive the web appear to have developed nearly simultaneously in 1995–1996: the Pandora Project by the National Library of Australia, the Internet Archive in the United States, and the Royal Library of Sweden. The impetus behind web archiving activity was clear: the web was doubling in size every three to six months from 1993 to 1996 and it appeared to many observers that it had the potential to become a significant platform on which a wide variety of social, political, scientific, and cultural phenomena would play out. Some individuals at institutions such as libraries and archives whose mission included the preservation of cultural and historical artifacts and materials recognized the challenge that digital materials presented and began developing techniques and institutions to address these challenges.

## THE PROCESS OF WEB ARCHIVING

The construction of a web archive and accompanying infrastructure to facilitate scholarly analysis includes *four distinct processes*. First, the archive creators identify web pages and/or websites to be collected and specify rules for archiving page requisites, such as images, and for following links on archived pages. Next, crawling software is employed to collect the desired web objects (including html pages, images, etc.), and the archive creators verify that the crawl yielded an appropriate quantity and quality of archived objects. Analysis of archived objects – for example, to determine changes from one archived impression to the next – may then be performed, and metadata associated with archived objects can be created. Finally, a system for displaying archived impressions is developed and an interface created to provide access to the archive. The interface may support

searching or facilitating selection of archived objects on the basis of metadata. Primary analyses may be completed using web archives created by scholars to examine specific questions. Secondary analyses use web archives created by other scholars, libraries, or archive organizations.

Each of the four processes of web archive construction poses significant technical challenges for researchers. Identification of pages or sites to be collected in an archive should be done in a systematic, clearly specified, and replicable process. If the objects in an archive represent a sample of web content relevant to a particular topic, the specification of the identification process is especially important to demonstrate the validity of the archive in relation to the pool of relevant web materials that were accessible at the time the archive was created. Further, specifications or rules regarding page requisites such as images and how links should be treated by the crawling software, entail additional challenges and have a significant impact on the number, types, and quality of pages archived and made available for scholarly analysis.

The actual collection of desired objects from the web, and subsequent storage of these objects on disks for future review and analysis, are relatively straightforward tasks. The challenge increases when archivists and scholars wish to be able to move from an archived page to other archived pages in hyperlink paths that were available when the archiving took place. This requires replicating the hyperlinked structure of the archived pages as it existed at the time of collection. Verification, especially in a large collection, is usually done at a macro level, based on some expectation of the total size of any given crawl. It is not often possible to physically review each archived page to insure that an accurate representation is available in the archive.

Once objects have been archived, archivists need to address the task of *generating and storing metadata* at a level of analysis appropriate to the anticipated research. Crawl programs generally produce log files documenting their processes which provide invaluable metadata about the archived objects. These log files need to be associated with the archived objects and considered as part of the archive itself. Archived objects can also be interrogated by software programs to develop additional machine-generated metadata. Further, scholars or analysts can be given an opportunity to create user-generated metadata about individual pages or sets of pages.

Finally, in order to make a web archive useful to scholars and other analysts, there must be a *system to search* for and display archived objects. Ideally, the search system will allow scholars to query the archive on the basis of all available metadata and to return a list of pages or objects matching the specified metadata. The system to display archived pages should clearly identify the source of the archived object and its archival date. Navigation to other archived impressions of the same object can also be provided.

## ETHICAL AND OTHER CHALLENGES

In addition to this range of technical challenges, the processes associated with archiving web content yield significant and important ethical challenges as well. First and foremost, web crawling programs potentially impose costs on the servers of the sites being crawled and on the owners of the sites being crawled. These costs – which can include bandwidth charges, denigration of service quality, loss of control over copyrighted information, and

loss of privacy – ought to be taken into consideration by archivists. While a cost–benefit analysis may indicate that the benefits outweigh the costs, it should be acknowledged that the costs are not likely to be borne by the archiving entity. Scholars creating web archives may be under some obligation to insure that the archive is collected using crawling protocols that are acceptable to the producers of the sites being archived. For example, some institutions may require that producers of archived sites give permission to be crawled; others may restrict the distribution of archived pages to protect copyright and/or privacy (→ Research Ethics; Research Ethics: Internet Research).

In addition to creating their own web archives, some communication scholars also find value in web archives that have been created by others. There are additional challenges in working with the latter type of archive. Specifically, scholars working with web archives that have been collected as part of a general library or archive will need to address issues of sampling and boundaries, representation and selectivity, and archival standards.

The collection policy of an extant web archive, to the extent that it is available to the scholar, will provide an excellent window into the issue of sampling and boundaries. The range of sites collected and the criteria used to identify and specify the objects in the archive, will reveal a particular *sampling strategy*. In addition, the specification of which links to follow – and which to exclude from the archive – may be part of the collection policy. As all archives have boundaries or edges – representing the web space where pages or content linked from archived pages were not archived, the relevance of these boundaries to the representativeness of the archive should be examined. Scholars wishing to make generalizations based on sampled content should address these issues explicitly in their research.

Issues of representation and selectivity of archives are part of a somewhat broader set of issues associated with web archiving. First, there is growing concern that substantial archives of web content may *exclude significant portions of the web* – specifically, websites produced outside of North America, Europe, and Asia. This may become an increasingly salient issue for scholars interested in global issues and trends. In a related vein, it may be that archives will tend to include pages and sites that are highly ranked on prominent search engines – in a sense, replicating and perhaps reifying web traffic patterns while marginalizing less prominent websites. Finally, web archives will likely adhere to different standards, certainly in the near term while standards are being developed. Standards of verification, metadata, watermarking, and preservation may make research using web archives somewhat challenging.

Large institutions such as national libraries have engaged in both broad-based and thematic web archiving. In broad-based crawling activities, a web crawling program will start its archiving activity from sets of URLs that have no particular content relationship to each other. The web crawling program collects objects to be included in the archive by following links from the seed objects. This *automated collection process* continues indefinitely until all paths from the seed objects are exhausted or time and resources available reach their limit. A thematic web collection is an archive of web objects identified and captured using a set of URLs believed to be relevant to a specific theme or topic. A set of carefully selected URLs is used as the “seeds” for collecting activity. These URLs, representing either sites or pages of interest, are crawled at an established periodicity and with clearly specified rules concerning the crawling of linked pages and objects. For example, a crawler might be instructed to start at a given set of base URLs, to crawl all pages and page

requisites with URLs from within the domain of the base URLs and to repeat this crawling procedure once per week for six months. These activities often result in archives with terabytes of archived objects. Scholars, especially those interested in studying the development of websites over time, may be particularly interested in thematic collections.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Copyright  
▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Experimental Design  
▶ Internet ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Network Analysis ▶ Online Research ▶ Research Ethics  
▶ Research Ethics: Internet Research ▶ Research Methods ▶ Survey

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## **Argentina: Media System**

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Argentina is located in the southernmost part of Latin America. It has more than 38 million inhabitants, the main language is Spanish, and the Catholic religion is predominant. Since 1983 it has had a democratic system of government which formally guarantees press freedom in its Constitution. Article 14 of Argentina's National Constitution sets the guarantees for *freedom of expression*. The legal framework limits itself to the regulation of citizens' rights and journalists' responsibilities. Since the return of democracy freedom of expression has been exercised, although it has sometimes faced legal challenges on interpretation (→ Freedom of Communication).

Argentina has a robust media structure. There are many newspapers around the country, six of which have national coverage. Radio and television have a national outreach through a system that privileges licenses to the private sector. State-run radio stations and TV channels also have a nationwide presence, yet with very small audiences. Even though the end of the 1990s saw the appearance of national broadcasting systems, commercial exploitation of radio broadcasting has a local character. In 2005 nonprofit community radio broadcasting was authorized.

In this region of Latin America informal ties exist between the state and the media owners (Sinclair 1999). The predominance of a *commercial model*, based on private ownership, is complemented by unwritten pacts of mutual convenience. In this way, the

media owners benefit from the freedom to operate in the market, while the state maintains informal control over the content (→ Commercialization of the Media). However, this has not precluded the existence of tensions between the political and business sectors.

For the 15 years from 1974 to 1989 Argentina's media system was unique: a near state monopoly working on a competitive and commercial basis. In effect, many TV channels and radio stations were left in the hands of the state, which limited itself only to the control of content. Television and radio stations were managed commercially and competed for mass audiences. It was during the military dictatorship that the current Broadcasting Act of 1980 was approved.

The difficulties of establishing a democratic regulatory framework reflect the *structural characteristics* of Argentine broadcasting: early dependence on foreign capital and production; historical centralization of the system around Buenos Aires; discrimination against nonprofit organizations; regulation and control coming under the umbrella of central government; privatization of profits and nationalization of debts. The continuation of these policies point at a complex hegemonic social-institutional network (→ Political Economy of the Media). The use of the public media for the dissemination of official activities remains common.

Argentina saw an early development of the *press*, which went hand in hand with a high literacy rate in regional terms. This is evidenced by the foundation of two important dailies: *La Prensa* (1869) and *La Nación* (1870). Both still represent politically and economically powerful groups. The newspaper *Clarín* came out in 1945, during Juan Domingo Perón's first government, albeit with no political ties. *Clarín* has become the country's major publishing success and main newspaper in terms of print run in the Spanish-speaking world. Its economic power enabled it to expand, particularly during the 1990s, to other media sectors. The group now owns newspapers, terrestrial TV and cable channels, radio stations, information technology firms, cinema productions, and entertainment companies.

There are more than 100 daily newspapers, six of which have national outreach. The country boasts 56 newspapers for every 1,000 inhabitants. The printed press is still largely financed by Argentine capital. Recent trends in the regional press are its growing impoverishment (it depends largely on government advertising), as well as the growing number of acquisitions by larger national media groups – although the number of publications remain roughly unchanged.

The model adopted for *broadcasting* was generally inspired by the North American system, with a family ownership structure. Though it is still run along commercial lines, the internationalization of markets in the 1990s has led to the surge of new management forms, in line with international strategies (→ Globalization of the Media).

The 1960s saw the consolidation of the broadcasting model that predominates today roughly along the same lines: private companies that compete for audiences, centralization of production in Buenos Aires, and a dependence on North American capital. During the 1970s and 1980s the main TV channels came to depend on the state. The military dictatorship (1976–1983) benefited by staging a strong propaganda campaign. The same happened, to a lesser extent, during the government of Raúl Alfonsín (1983–1989), who did not know how to modify the media legacy of the dictatorship – and ultimately lacked political will to do so.

During Carlos Menem's first government (1989–1995) Argentina began the process of the privatization of broadcasting and telecommunications services, whose predominant features since then have been: the emergence of international capital flows; an accelerated process of mergers and acquisitions; adaptation of the legal framework to private sector interests; and instability of the control bodies.

Both radio and television have a strong *penetration index* of 98 percent of households. There are 850 legal radio stations and 2,000 that operate without state permits. There are 43 television channels and 50 percent of households have cable TV. In recent years there has been a strong growth of Internet access (25 percent of the population) and mobile telephony (66 percent). The economic crisis of 2001 significantly affected the whole media industry, which managed to overcome this setback only during 2004. From a high of US\$4 million in the 1990s the advertising market plummeted to US\$1,000 million.

*Media policies* in Argentina present an evident paradox: strong state intervention with a lack of a state policy taken in the interest of society as a whole. The state has had a decisive influence in the broadcasting sector (defining licensing terms, granting subsidies, sanctioning a legal framework), but at the same time it has lacked a sustained policy. Instead, it has acted by responding to the demands of the moment.

SEE ALSO: ► Commercialization of the Media ► Communication Law and Policy: South America ► Freedom of Communication ► Globalization of the Media ► Media History ► Media Policy ► Political Economy of the Media ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Argumentative Discourse**

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The concept of argument has a long history in communication. An argument is a concluding statement that claims legitimacy on the basis of reason. But argumentative



discourse is a form of interaction in which the individuals maintain incompatible positions. More specifically, argumentative discourse directs attention to the arguments of naïve social actors engaged in intersubjective social interaction rather than the nature and structure of abstract arguments (Willard 1989).

The traditional notion of argument has the *logical syllogism* as its elemental structure. Thus, the concluding statement ( $A = C$ ) is logically necessitated in:  $A = B$ ,  $B = C$ , therefore  $A = C$ . A politician who states that “Democrats are liberals; my opponent is a democrat; therefore, my opponent is a liberal” is arguing from such syllogistic logic. Argument in this case is abstract and separate from the perspective of social actors. Aristotle first recognized that people did not actually argue formally and posed the enthymeme as a practical syllogism. That is, a speaker would leave a listener to fill in some part of the syllogism (Bitzer 1959). Expressed as an enthymeme the above statement might be, “My opponent is a democrat and therefore a liberal.” This leaves the audience to fill in the missing premise about the relationship between democrats and liberals. Although enthymemes recognize the role of people, they remain modeled on the syllogism.

Recent formulations by Brockriede (1975) and O’Keefe (1977) accept a distinction between *two senses of argument*. There is *making* an argument and *having* an argument. Making an argument is constructing a product and can be done alone. Having an argument is an interpersonal or conversational experience. Argumentative discourse is in the tradition of having an argument rather than making one. It is argument as a type of communication between two or more people who perceive themselves to have incompatible positions; that is, argument as dialogue rather than monologue such that the interaction involves extended polarization that is negotiated in conversation (Schiffrin 1985). Argumentative discourse is less concerned with traditional “rationality” than with the naïve actors’ understanding of the ongoing interplay of social processes (e.g., psychological, sociological, political, and emotional) that actually characterize the interactional context of arguing.

A study by Maoz and Ellis (2001) demonstrated argumentative discourse by analyzing *arguments between Israelis and Palestinians*. Israeli Jews typically espouse ideals of equality, fairness, and justice but nonetheless hold negative feelings and hostility toward the other group. This creates an ideological and interactional dilemma in that arguments must be worked out in the face of contradictory personal perceptions. One way the interactants work this out is by arguing from ground, or the point at which one can argue no further. Thus, both Israeli Jews and Palestinians import sacred issues into the argumentative discourse (“the land,” “the Bible,” “freedom”) that function to mitigate the possibility of personal association with a position that is antagonistic to the other side. By arguing that the land is “sacred” and decreed in the Bible the Israeli Jews avoid the impression that they are expressing personally held negative or distasteful attitudes. Because both sides reason from fixed personal and political positions they reproduce their longstanding disagreements and maintain their argumentative and political impasse.

SEE ALSO: ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Rhetoric and Ethnography  
► Rhetoric and Logic ► Rhetoric and Religion

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## Arrangement and Rhetoric

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The category of arrangement (Greek *oikonomia*, *taxis*; Latin *dispositio*) in classical rhetoric includes both the “natural” ordering of the parts of a speech and the changing or truncating of that order to adapt to specific circumstances. While it may also embrace the ordering of premises in arguments, those concerns are fully treated under invention rather than arrangement. Similarly, the most basic level of arrangement, that of individual words and clauses, is properly subsumed under style (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman; Style and Rhetoric).

The canonical division of the parts of a speech derives from judicial rather than from deliberative or epideictic oratory. There are *four essential parts*. The introduction (*prooimion*, *exordium*) renders the audience well disposed, attentive, and receptive; the narration (*diegesis*, *narratio*) is brief, clear, and probable; the proof (*pistis*, *argumentatio*) is convincing; the conclusion (*epilogos*, *peroratio*) both summarizes and appeals to the → emotions. Some writers add one or more other parts: after the narration, a proposition stating what is to be proven; a partition enumerating the different arguments to be advanced (common); a refutation, separated as a free-standing section following the proof (very common); and a digression immediately before the conclusion.

Adaptive or “artistic” arrangement omits or transposes parts as needed for the specific case. So, for example, a narration may be omitted entirely, or may be divided into smaller narratives before different sections of the argument.

The treatment of each part of the speech seems to be the organizing principle of the earliest rhetorical teachings of Corax and Tisias in the mid-fifth century (→ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic). This principle, which we see in the remarks of Plato's Socrates at *Phaedrus* 266d–267d., organized subsequent handbooks. Aristotle (384–322 BCE) and his followers took a different tack, placing invention before arrangement among their five activities of the orator: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery (→ Invention and Rhetoric;

Memory and Rhetoric; Delivery and Rhetoric). Aristotle's *Rhetoric* in fact treated only the first three, and treated arrangement after style (3.13–19). Clearly arguing against earlier authorities, he stipulates two essential parts of the speech, namely proposition and proof, but will also allow introduction and epilogue. For each of the three types of speeches, Aristotle treats each part of the speech in a way that anticipates the canonical functions, with much attention to managing the prejudices of the audience. The slightly later *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* similarly treats the function and content of each of the parts, organizing the discussion under each of the three types of speeches (29–38).

The next complete rhetoric we have, the anonymous Latin *Rhetorica ad Herennium* of the early first century BCE, preserves and refines the discussion of the parts, but dramatically relocates their treatment. Explaining all five activities, it focuses primarily upon judicial oratory and incorporates in its treatment of invention the stasis theory of Hermagoras. The treatment in order of the parts of speech with their special attributes becomes the organizational skeleton for this discussion of invention. The free-standing treatment of arrangement (3.16–18) now functions mainly to note the possibility of adapting arrangement to special circumstances and to prescribe ordering of arguments with the weakest in the middle (cf. Quintilian 5.12.14). The anonymous author refers the reader to his discussion of invention for the natural order of the parts of the speech and of the ordering of premises in formal rhetorical argument. This subsuming of the teaching of the attributes and functions of the parts of speech under the discussion of invention, seen also in the treatment of judicial speeches in Cicero's contemporaneous *De inventione*, will become standard, although the older tradition is still seen in the free-standing discussion of the parts of the speech and their functions in Cicero's *De oratore* (2.307–332). Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, the great compendium of the classical rhetorical tradition written in the 90s BCE, completely subsumes arrangement under invention both in the discussion of the parts of the speech and even in the treatment of adaptive arrangement. Quintilian's free-standing discussion of arrangement (book 7) is instead a series of further comments on the ordering and content of arguments generated through stasis theory.

The theory of the order, functions, and characteristics of the parts of speech, even though subsumed under invention, remains a robust feature of classical rhetoric. To the extent that treatises ignore or assume stasis theory and its refinements, arrangement becomes even more prominent. This is clear in two third-century BCE Greek handbooks geared to declamation: the influential rhetoric of Apsines and the idiosyncratic Anonymous Seguerianus. The latter organizes his discussion of invention, arrangement, and style under each of the parts of the speech.

Arrangement was of course not immune from controversy. So, for example, Apollodorus, rhetorician to Caesar Augustus, insisted that a speech must have all four parts in fixed order. Theodorus, rhetorician to Augustus' successor Tiberius, famously disagreed. Lausberg et al. (1998, §§ 260–442, 443–452) offers an exhaustive synchronic sketch of the classical categories of arrangement, largely marshaled under invention.

SEE ALSO: ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Emotion ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Memory and Rhetoric ► Rhetoric, Epideictic ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetorical Studies ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Art as Communication

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Since the modern era in the west, art has increasingly been defined as distinct from communication. Since Kant and Hume, discriminations of sensory beauty and “delicacy of taste” have been invoked in judgments of → aesthetic value that separate those forms of communication that qualify as art from those that do not. Gross has argued that an important part of the process of art appreciation is the “perception and evaluation of the competence displayed by the artist” (Gross 1973, 124). That is, does the reader or viewer attribute skill on the part of the artist to “the selecting, transforming, and ordering of the elements” (Gross 1973, 127) that constitute the work of art, and see these creative actions as intentional? For Gross these demonstrations of competence may be appreciated anonymously, as examples of conventionally recognized ability or talent, but most often they depend upon the valorization of an individual artist, the repository of the skill that is distinguished.

Yet in most cultures for most of human history, the creation of art has been a socially organized activity, central to the communication of shared religious beliefs, mythic understandings of the world, and social relations. Indeed, the rise of technologies of mass communication were theorized in the twentieth century in terms of their relationship to the traditional arts, and the resulting media content often characterized as “popular arts,” the product of newly emerging → “culture industries” (Seldes 1956; Lowenthal 1984; Adorno 2001; → Popular Culture; Printing, History of).

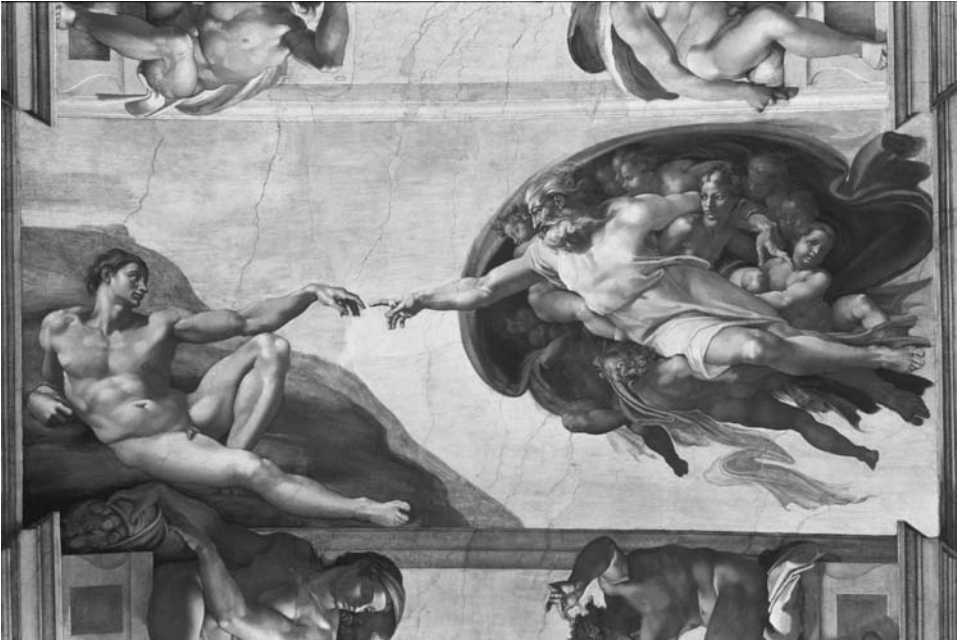
Modernist definitions of art as nonutilitarian and honorific have tended to separate art activity from religion, education, craft, and other forms of functional communication in favor of an emphasis on individual self-expression, formalism, emotional evocation, or representations of the mysterious, the subconscious, or the ineffable. This has involved a movement away from the reaffirmation of common cultural knowledge and shared community values toward the marking of elite knowledge and memberships. Thus, the main recent sense of the word “art” has referred to “creative” or “fine” art, and its communicative effect has shifted from the conscious articulation of social knowledge and cultural heritage to the idea of unique and innovative individual expression. Modern fine art has even been described as a “project of negation,” that is, the progressive breaking free from established cultural practices, generating “a growing canon of prohibitions: representation, figuration, narration, harmony, unity” (Bernstein 2001, 21).

### **ART, CULTURE, AND SOCIAL RELATIONS**

Defined as a human activity transcending modern history and modernist aesthetic philosophy, art is more likely to be seen as a wide-ranging process of creative production that reflects and projects social relations, political power, and cultural beliefs and practices. As such, it encompasses ancient architectural structures, statues, obelisks, bas-reliefs, pottery, masks, and funerary arts, as well as the conventional fine arts of poetry, literature, drama, music, painting, and prints. These and other forms of artistic creativity have functioned as powerful social communication in virtually all cultures, reproducing established cultural heritage (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977) and the ideological assumptions and social order of those social, economic, and political structures that support, or require, their creation (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Cultural Studies).

Studies in the sociology and social history of art identify artistic production as both the communication of prevalent ideas in a particular culture at a specific point in history, and, on a more micro-level, the result of the specific institutional and organizational contexts in which production processes, individual and collective, take place. Thus Baxandall (1972) documents the system of contractual agreements between patron and painters in fifteenth-century Italy, explaining how required applications of gold leaf and aquamarine to a → painting’s surface served to publicize or reaffirm the patron’s social status. Wolff (1993) asserts that the modernist notion of the alienated artist working against the grain of social convention is itself a historically specific concept resulting from the breakdown of patronage, and from the separation of production from consumption in capitalist markets. The artist’s dependence on impersonal markets, she notes, is not so different from the limited autonomy of all workers, and art in late modernism can be seen to communicate essential features of late capitalism.

Berger (1972), building from Benjamin (1968), makes a similar argument about the transformation of art from unique creations made to fulfill a particular role in a specific place and time, to art in the modern era that is easily reproduced and proliferates in multiple forms and contexts. The communicational function of paintings, such as those done by Michelangelo to adorn Pope Julius II’s Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, shifts when panels of the ceiling are lifted from their original context and reproduced in advertisements or on T-shirts (→ Visual Culture; Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). The



**Figure 1** A panel depicting the creation of Adam by Michelangelo Buonarroti, from the Sistine Chapel ceiling in the Vatican, Rome  
*Source:* Art Resource, New York

original design and placement of such paintings had significant religious and doctrinal implications. A central panel of the Sistine Chapel ceiling contains a painting that visually links the creation of Adam to the future coming of *woman* and the Christ child, Jesus (Fig. 1). As part of a sequence of illustrations depicting scenes from the Book of Genesis that projects above the pope's own chapel, this image creates a powerful visible connection between ideas and beliefs concerning the creation of man, the salvation of mankind, the church, and the pope himself. To remove any part of this tangibly coordinated arrangement and reproduce it elsewhere is to lose the original constellation of potential meaning, and to create a new network of references within a different social and physical context.

Art's function as communication is highly dependent upon its specific social use within particular institutional and organizational networks. In the modern era, as forms of art were loosed from traditionally situated contexts and reproduced within the more ephemeral flows of industrial communication media, a tension developed between humanist conceptions of art as transcendent creativity and sociological and materialist conceptions of art as a form of social communication. Marxist literary critics and art historians emphasized art as a product of the "social and ideological contingencies" of specific historical circumstances. "Humanist criticisms of the sociology of literature and art," according to Wolff, "are often . . . attempts to rescue a notion of 'creativity' which allows to art a special transcendence of all contingencies, particularly social and ideological contingencies" (1993, 69).

For European and American sociologists in the twentieth century, the fragmentation of art forms and the rise of mass-mediated popular culture effaced distinctions between art and craft at the same time as it reinforced the notion of “fine art” as a symbolic indicator of social status. Mass culture critics of the post-World War II era observed the degradation of both authentic “folk art” and “high art” by the proliferation of a standardized and parasitic “mass culture” (Rosenberg & White 1957; Bernstein 2001). Gans (1974) argued for a more nuanced view, describing a more elaborately class-stratified, yet democratic, hierarchy of → taste cultures. Bourdieu described knowledge of and participation in art as an important constituent of “cultural capital” enhancing the communication of social power and status (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977). Becker (1982) has foregrounded the collective nature of artistic production, consumption, and valuation, pointing to the meaning of artistic activity for the social communication of groups. The cooperative creation of artworks (in art studios, camera clubs, or film crews), the viewing, reception, and purchase of artistic products by audiences and networks of fans or connoisseurs, and the definition and evaluation of art itself by educational institutions, galleries, and museums, all involve the sharing and exercise of assumptions, communication practices, and definitions within social groups (Phillips 1982; Bourdieu 1991; Gross 1995).

Sociologies of art have effectively expanded the definition of art beyond “fine art” to include media or popular arts. Photography and the cinema, having been institutionalized in the museum and education systems, are now widely accepted as art forms (→ Photography; Cinema). Popular music, dance, and theatre (along with film and television) have come to be known as the “performing arts.” Advertising art has become perhaps the most ubiquitous form of imagery in the world, reflecting a movement away from aristocratic, religious, and state culture and power to business or corporate culture and power. Yet visual and verbal references to fine art are still commonplace in advertising, employed as signs meant to communicate social prestige.

### **VISUAL ART AS DESIGN AND ILLUSTRATION**

The capacity of figural and pictorial art to provide literal mappings and reflections of the world has facilitated the descriptive power of visual media, and by extension its persuasive and manipulative potential (→ Cartography; Portraiture; Photojournalism; Documentary Film; Propaganda, Visual Communication of). Edgerton (1991) makes the case that developments of pictorial perspective in the visual art of late medieval and Renaissance Europe directly contributed to the communication and diffusion of scientific knowledge and the acceleration of the technological advances that followed (→ Perspective, Pictorial). The potential for *mimetic art* to convincingly represent realistic scenes, situations, and relationships enhances its power to communicate persuasively about the social world, blurring the boundaries between art, entertainment, advertising, and information (→ Theatre; Television; Realism; Realism in Film and Photography; Visual Representation). But as Edgerton demonstrates, the design practices of picture-makers, in this case the precision of the geometric schema developed for perspectival grids, not just the appearance of naturalism, can powerfully influence the role of art in communication.

Today, what have come to be known as the *digital arts* involve techniques of design, and the use of iconographic symbol systems, as much as or more than naturalistic depictions

(→ Digital Imagery; Sign Systems). Iconography, the study of the range of pictorial symbols that a culture uses systematically to convey meaning, is as relevant to contemporary television, or the world wide web, as it is to Japanese landscape painting or the religious painting of medieval Europe (→ Iconography). What has become more uncertain in contemporary media arts is the degree to which artistic evaluation relates to effective communication, or to the recognition of skillful execution. Often in the past, the value of art was inseparable from its value as communication. Today, art and → visual communication have become ever more separately defined.

It might be argued that things have not changed so much, that art is still most important for its role as a marker of social position, its function as social communication. But the functions of artistic communication have multiplied, and its emphases have shifted: from providing material as painting, print, or building for the propagation of dominant or shared cultural ideas, values, and beliefs (Worth 1981; Bourdieu 1993), to the recognition and appreciation of skill in the performance of shared cultural practices (Gross 1973), to the romanticization and celebration of the artist as alienated, heroic, or tragic figure, and finally to the modernist distinctions between art and communication that continue to serve as powerful signs of social membership, status, and taste (Bourdieu 1984). These shifts may primarily represent changes in the perceived roles of audience members, from ready acceptance of cultural heritage and social destiny, to active appreciation of culturally valued skills, to resistance against convention and a desire for greater freedom, to alienated and divided consumers of taste cultures.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Cartography  
▶ Cinema ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Cultural Studies  
▶ Design ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Heraldry ▶ Iconography  
▶ Painting ▶ Perspective, Pictorial ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Popular Culture  
▶ Portraiture ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of  
▶ Realism ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Taste Culture ▶ Television  
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## Artifacts

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Artifacts are generally understood to be simple objects that show human workmanship. They are important to scholars for the role they play in reflecting a society's level of technological development and aesthetic taste, among other things. Archaeologists analyze artifacts and other aspects of everyday life from ancient civilizations and try to reconstruct these civilizations from the artifacts they have left behind. Sociologists and other social scientists, as well as culture critics, are also interested in artifacts – in the broadest sense of the term – using them and other aspects of material culture to gain important insights into values, beliefs, and ideological aspects of the society or culture being studied (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The study of artifacts can be approached from a number of disciplines. In recent years, scholars have expanded the definition of artifacts to include foods, fashion objects, and relatively simple machines.

The great Dutch historian Johan Huizinga (1924) focused on the symbolic significance of everyday objects, reminding us that medieval thinkers believed that “all things would be absurd if their meaning would be exhausted by their function and their place in the phenomenal world, if by their essence they did not reach into a world beyond this. This idea of a deeper significance in ordinary things is familiar to us as well, independently of religious convictions” (→ Symbolism).

One of the most celebrated studies of the cultural and symbolic significance of artifacts and everyday life was made by the French semiotician → Roland Barthes, in books like *Mythologies* and *Empire of signs*. In *Mythologies* Barthes explored the cultural and ideological significance of artifacts such as soap powders, detergents, sheets, and toys. As an example of his approach, consider his insights into French toys: “French toys *always mean something*, and this something is always entirely socialized, constituted by the myths

or the techniques of modern adult life: the Army, Broadcasting, the Post Office, Medicine (miniature instrument-cases, operating theatres for dolls), School, Hair-Styling (driers for permanent-waving), the Air Force (Parachutists), Transport (trains, Citroens, Vedettes, Vespas, petrol-stations), Science (Martian toys)” (Barthes 1972, 53).

These toys, Barthes suggests, prepare French boys and girls for their future roles as adults in French society and indoctrinate them with the myths that those who dominate French society want them to believe. There is, therefore, a great deal of hidden ideological significance to toys and, as his other essays show, other aspects of everyday French life too. In *Empire of signs* Barthes dealt with objects such as Japanese chopsticks, dinner trays, Pachinko (slot machines), and packages, along with popular foods like sukiyaki and tempura (→ Cultural Studies).

What Barthes and other analysts of artifacts and the material culture in which they are embedded show is that artifacts can provide a great deal of information if we know how to “read” them. Among the different methodologies for analyzing or “reading” artifacts are: → semiotics, which regards them as → signs, or more precisely as signifiers whose significance has to be assessed; sociology, which focuses on their functionality and their role in society; archaeology, which uses historical knowledge and scientific techniques to date ancient artifacts and other methods to determine what stage of technological development the society had achieved; and cultural criticism, which uses a variety of disciplines and techniques to interpret the meaning and significance of artifacts. In his book, *Bloom’s morning*, Arthur Asa Berger used this approach to deal with the cultural meaning of such artifacts as clock radios, electric hairdryers, shoes, toasters, garbage disposals, and trash compactors.

Ernest Dichter, considered to be the father of motivation research, analyzed artifacts from a psychoanalytic perspective, explaining in *The strategy of desire* that “the objects that surround us do not simply have utilitarian aspects; rather, they serve as a kind of mirror which reflects our own image. Objects which surround us permit us to discover more and more about ourselves” (Dichter 2002, 91). His interest in these objects was based on a desire to understand human motivation and how it could be used to sell certain products and services. Our interest in artifacts and objects reflects a broader interest in understanding human beings, what motivates them, how they arrange their societies, and other topics of a similar nature.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Symbolism

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# Attending to the Mass Media

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Mass communication's impact has been shown at an individual level and in society at large, yet all mass communication must pass through the same narrow gateway before having these varied effects. Unless people receive mass communication through their eyes, ears, or touch, and cognitively process it, it is powerless. This is why researchers are interested in studying attention – it is a necessary condition for all mass communication effects (→ Media Effects). Attention is a central factor in understanding what it means to watch → television, read the → newspaper, listen to the → radio, or use the → Internet. It has an impact on what type and magnitude of effects result from media. Although attention is a part of receiving and processing messages from all types of media, television has drawn most of the attention research. Consequently, much of what we know about attention comes from research on attention to television.

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ATTENTION?

### Attention as Focus

In everyday terms, “paying attention” describes the way we look and listen intently to see and hear a stimulus such as another person or a mass medium. However, in cognitive mass communication research (→ Cognition; Cognitive Science), “attention” has a more precise meaning – a state of cognitive focus on a particular stimulus. Looking and listening are external manifestations of attention, not the attention itself. Attention thus involves directing sensory organs toward the acquisition of messages and other stimuli and allocating cognitive resources toward processing them. As such, it is the first step in prominent models and theories used in media psychology research. For example, the information-processing model of active media learning (→ Information Processing; Learning and Communication) depicts cognitive processing as a linear path where attention to media must occur before information recognition or elaboration. Likewise, → Albert Bandura's social cognition theory (→ Social Cognitive Theory), a foundational theory for much research on social-behavioral effects of mass communication (→ Social Behavior, Media Effects on), places attention as the first of four processes through which audiences learn and repeat behavior modeled in mass communication (→ Observational Learning). Television viewers must first focus on a character's behavior before that behavior can go through retention, motivational, and production processes.

Although attention as cognitive focus sounds like a singular construct, there are in fact two separate aspects: (1) where cognitive focus is directed (an either/or matter) and (2) the amount of effort directed to it. The two are of course related, but they often appear as quite different research issues or involve different → operationalizations. Clearly, if one's

focus is not directed to a message then no effort is involved; and if one attempts to focus on more than one stimulus at once, the amount of effort on each may be limited. But beyond such cases, questions about where one focuses and the amount of cognitive resources applied are simply different, despite carrying the same label. We also need to distinguish between “attention” and “selection.” Selection (→ Selective Exposure) refers to processes that lead to attention, particularly the first, direction-of-focus, meaning.

### Operational Definitions of Attention

Attention to mass media is operationally defined and measured in a number of ways. Self-reports can allow people to state what stimulus received their attention or how much effort they directed to it. Visual regard (eyes on screen) clearly suggests attention is given to a stimulus when people look at it, but, as noted below, can also inform us about the amount of effort. Cardiac deceleration often occurs when a new stimulus is introduced, suggesting that heart rate can indicate attention (→ Physiological Measurement). Likewise, depressed alpha power in electroencephalogram (EEG) monitoring seems to be an orienting response indicating the onset of attention and an indication of more effortful subsequent processing as attention continues. Most recently, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) research shows patterns of cortical activity associated with attention and shifts in attention. One of the first experiments to apply fMRI methods specifically to media attention found a distributed cortical network activated by “coherent, edited video action sequences,” but not by randomly edited video (Anderson et al. 2006, 21). This network, which plausibly helps make sense of comprehensible film and video sequences, contained individual regions previously associated with selective visual attention and other reception processes.

It is important to note that all of these operationalizations are indirect measures of attention. They seem to indicate that attention is occurring or in other cases to indicate degree of activation, but they cannot specify for sure what thoughts or other cognitive processes actually take place.

### WHAT CAUSES ATTENTION?

Most research pursuing this question is directed at the first (i.e., where focused) aspect of attention, although the same question can apply to amount of cognitive effort as well. There are two classes of answers. The first is that attention stems from an automatic biological drive to attend to new or changing stimuli, resulting in *involuntary orienting responses* to the medium or some feature within it. The second is that attention is a *controlled and strategic process* (though perhaps overlearned and automatic). Although the two explanations have often been posed as competitive, it is clear that both operate.

### Medium-Directed Processes

Orienting responses are based on the basic biological tendency to orient oneself toward changes in one’s environment (a survival response before “fight-or-flight,” for example). A typical mass communication orienting response occurs when people who are not looking at the television turn and look in reaction to a sound or brightness change in a TV

program, or perhaps to devices such as cuts between scenes or object movement, whether representing character actions or camera pans (collectively, these stimuli have been referred to as “formal features”). Such reactive causes of attention can also be seen in other indicators of attention and with other media, such as cardiac orienting responses during voice changes in radio messages (Potter 2000). Early television attention research assumed a very broad role for the orienting reflex, such as eliciting children’s attention during educational moments of *Sesame Street* by associating those moments with cues that would demand the response, and it has been the basis of anti-television positions arguing that television turns viewers into mindless hypnotics captured by its formal features. Orienting responses occur quickly and often in response to very brief stimuli, and have been quite important in research on limited cognitive capacity for communication (→ Limited Capacity Model).

### **Audience-Directed Processes**

Despite an initial inclination to interpret children’s attention to *Sesame Street* as largely due to orienting responses, research led by Daniel Anderson in the late 1970s and early 1980s encountered results that did not fit well with that explanation. Similar stimuli (with adult males vs adult females, different kinds of audio cues) produced more or less visual attention, or the onset, continuation, and offset of the same stimulus might be equally likely to initiate looking (Anderson & Lorch 1983). A key study experimentally retained the exact same formal features, but altered their comprehensibility through scene order changes or foreign language audio. Even children as young as 2 years looked on the basis of comprehensibility rather than the presence or absence of the formal features (Anderson & Kirkorian 2006). In other words, the correlations between formal features and visual attention, even in very young children, are not simply (and perhaps not even mainly) due to orienting responses. Instead, the association apparently results from learning associations between formal features and types of television content, which then allows the viewer to use the features as cues for attention management (Anderson & Kirkorian 2006). The associations between meaningful information and formal features of content become richly developed, enabling viewers to be very efficient at strategically looking at television only at moments most likely to give them the information they desire. As viewers learn to expect the type of information they will find with formal features, attentional responses based on those expectations can become essentially automatic (Lorch et al. 1979). Viewers can also form a style of strategic viewing by using expectations based on content such as story grammar and not just formal features (Hawkins et al. 1995). The reader should beware of a tendency to associate medium-directed causes with low levels of cognitive effort and audience-directed causes with more effort (e.g., “passive” vs “active” attention). There may possibly be some such correlation, but it is not conclusively established, let alone absolute.

## **WHAT’S GOING ON DURING ATTENTION?**

### **Limits to and Division of Attention**

According to cognitive science, the brain has a limited capacity for processing → information; if it were to try to fully process all information from all available sources, it would

suffer from → information overload. Attentional processes protect the brain against that overload (Allport 1989). If multiple stimuli are potentially providing information, attentional mechanisms may allocate more cognitive resources to one stimulus and less to the others to accommodate limited processing capacity. For example, a person might pay primary attention to surfing the Internet, but also lightly monitor a television. If an important word or sound came across the television, the person might shift primary attention to the television. Researchers such as Lang and colleagues (2006) and Armstrong and Chung (2000) study how the limited cognitive resources allocated through attention might be split between media and other activities. Getting people to shift attention from one stimulus to another is a common experimental technique used to determine how much cognitive effort people give to a stimulus.

### **Attentional Inertia**

Anderson coined the term “attentional inertia” to describe the widely observed but counterintuitive phenomenon that look lengths are distributed in a log-normal way (much of what is described below comes from research on television, but similar results were obtained when the phenomenon was explored with other media or activities). That is, short looks are much more common than long ones (with the limit that there are relatively few shorter than a half-second). Typically, 40 percent of looks at a television program are 1.5 seconds or less, and only about 10 percent of all looks are longer than 15 seconds. Based on this and other findings, Anderson proposed that looks become progressively more stable and reflect greater cognitive processing the longer they continue, and findings on decreasing distractibility and increasing learning the longer looks have been in progress has supported this interpretation (Anderson & Kirkorian 2006). An interesting consequence of attentional inertia is that it may be able to drive attention across content boundaries and thus be an important involuntary basic converse to habituation. However, some recent research suggests that inertia at boundaries may be affected as much or more by strategic as by nonstrategic processes, leaving the nature but not the consequences of attentional inertia uncertain (Hawkins et al. 2002).

A related set of research has examined whether looks of different lengths might also reflect different causes. Surprisingly, viewers who employ a relatively high percentage of very short looks (under 1.5 seconds) comprehend more than those whose look distribution contains a high proportion of only slightly longer looks (1.5–5.5 seconds). Hawkins et al. (1997) suggested that the very shortest looks (which they called “monitoring looks”) reflect a strategy of mentally checking television content regularly to direct attention when it would be most useful for comprehension, and that the slightly longer looks (which they called “orienting looks”) might have been longer because viewers were having to figure out what was going on from scratch.

### **WHAT DOES ATTENTION DO?**

As an allocation of varying degrees of cognitive effort toward a media stimulus, attention plays a role in most, possibly every, cognitive, affective, and behavioral media effect

(→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). Although this is the case, most attention research has focused on attention's impact on learning and the physiological responses used in operationally defining attention.

Attention is a necessary condition for *learning*, and greater attention can lead to better learning of central information and reduced learning of incidental information. Note that time spent looking at the television is not necessarily related to better learning or *comprehension* of material, as indicated by the comparison of shorter and longer looks mentioned above. Also as discussed earlier, attention to television can lead to the learning of expectations about content based on salient formal features and story grammar, which are then used for strategic monitoring. Apart from strategic viewer goals, some research also suggests that attention elicited by formal features can increase comprehension and → *memory* (Anderson & Burns 1991; → Memory, Message). For example, rapid and moderate action can draw attention to central story content, increasing its comprehension for elementary school children (Calvert et al. 1982). Increasing the rate of edits in a program may increase memory by increasing attention to and encoding of television message content without significantly increasing cognitive load (Lang et al. 2000).

While increasing attention to television can improve learning from it, television often leads to less learning than other methods of real-life instruction. (This is labeled “video deficit.”) Having a television on in the background can serve as a *distraction*, disrupting attention given to play or other learning activities such as homework.

### **ARE THERE MEDIUM DIFFERENCES IN ATTENTION?**

Attention research across different media is too scant to provide a conclusive answer to this question, though it is reasonable to assume that the same basic cognitive mechanisms underlie attention no matter what the medium. Differences in attention strategy and level may result, however, from the varying features of different media and the way in which people interact with them.

*Print media* such as newspapers require readers to actively seek information by turning pages, scanning for articles of interest, and skimming articles to find interesting information. This amount of effort and these strategies for finding information differ from those of *television*, where viewers have the option of being much more passive. This does not mean all readers give the same amount of effort to reading, since there are likely varying levels of → automaticity in carrying out these strategies. Print media also provide more content control than television (e.g., readers can slow down their reading pace, back up to reread sentences, skip sections, and read selections out of order). Attention strategies for *audio-only* media such as radio or MP3 players may be similar to those used for the audio portions of television, but differences in how and where attention is focused without a visual component in the message should be investigated. *Computer-mediated* communication such as the world wide web and learning software often combines the features of print, audio, and video. It also adds unique structures such as hypertext, which allows users to seek further information in which they are interested, and pop-up windows and banner ads that often interrupt or divide attention.

All of these variables have the potential for affecting where and how much attention is given to a message at a point in time. More research is needed within individual media

and comparing media to better understand the extent to which attention processes and strategies are similar or different across media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Automaticity ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Comprehension ▶ Information ▶ Information Overload ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Listening ▶ Media Effects ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Mindlessness and Automaticity ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Newspaper ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Operationalization ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Radio ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Social Behavior, Media Effects on ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Television

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# Attention

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The concept of attention is one of the oldest and most commonly used in the communication literature. The concept is fraught with connotations that typically have little to do with the use of attention in a particular study because of its origins in vernacular language and the difficulty in separating everyday meaning from scientific meaning. To make matters more complicated, as Michell (1990) has noted, different operations often define different concepts, suggesting hundreds of attention concepts in the communication literature alone.

Attention might be described as different concepts within particular levels of communication, and may best be understood through its oldest definitions. In its original use, the concept meant to take heed or to be ready to accompany someone. Over time, usage evolved into the military version of attention, which refers to a readiness for commands. These usages, and the connotations that have developed since, have been used to suggest that attention is a precursor to action of some sort. That is, in research at a macro-level, a *society's attention* may refer to the issues that are the objects of governmental policy.

*Organizational attention* may similarly refer to those objects or actors in the environment that the organization focuses on. At the *individual level*, we perhaps see the most varied uses of the term, but all incorporating some sense of a precursor to → memory or learning processes. Attention may refer to eye contact between two persons involved in a conversation (→ Eye Behavior), the selection of news articles for reading (→ Selective Exposure), the inability to stay “on task” or complete tasks (as in attention deficit disorder), or the tendency to focus one’s eyes on a television screen (→ Exposure to Television). At a more micro-level, individual attention refers to some of the activities involved in → *information processing*. Although the concept of attention makes the most sense in terms of one actor (e.g., an individual, an organization, or a social system), some recent work includes the *concept of joint attention*, which focuses on the overlap in attention between two individuals, such as a child and parent (Kaplan & Hafner 2006). Here the focus is on the term as it has been used in the communication literature derived from concepts of psychology.

## MODELS AND CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF ATTENTIONS

At their root, models of attention describe how and what information can be processed. At any point in time, there are many different stimuli impinging on our senses (both external and internal). Attention is the process of filtering those stimuli to allow our concentration on only a few of them. Some signals (such as the noise we generate when breathing) are handled on a nonconscious level most of the time. However, this still leaves numerous external stimuli that we must deal with. In a noisy crowd, we can concentrate on one conversation and make sense of most of it to the exclusion of other conversations going on around us (the “cocktail party phenomenon”), yet we will react if, in one of the conversations near us, someone mentions our name. We may shift our attention to that

other conversation to try to understand what was being said about us. If we do so, we are likely to have missed a portion of the conversation we were engaged in before our name was mentioned. Such issues led early attention researchers to a principle called the “*law of prior entry*,” which suggested that only a single signal can be processed at a given time (Reynolds & Flagg 1977). These examples illustrate several ideas related to the concept of attention: first, that attention is a filtering mechanism – all attention is selective (→ Selective Attention; Selective Perception and Selective Retention), and second, that our attentional processes have constraints in the form of a limited processing capacity for stimuli that are to be processed concurrently (→ Limited Capacity Model). Attention is thus the process of allocating our processing capacity among different incoming stimuli (both internal and external).

### **Broadbent’s Filter Theory**

Although attention has always been a part of the field of psychology (e.g., James 1890), it was not until the decline of strict behaviorist models that serious study was given to developing a model of how attention works. Broadbent (1958) demonstrated that *physical dimensions of stimuli* (e.g., color, loudness, etc.) are most useful in enabling discrimination and selection for processing. Further, he showed that individuals have some control over the selection of content within a particular situation. Broadbent built on the state of research at the time to develop the “filter theory” to answer the question as to how the available processing capacity is allocated among incoming signals. He suggested a “sensory receptor” to receive incoming stimuli, followed by three major components of attention: a selective filter, a limited capacity channel, and a detection device.

In this model, the sensory register acts as a kind of buffer, holding all incoming stimuli for quick analysis of physical features that might indicate importance for further processing. After this, the “marked” signals are passed to the selective filter, which screens out everything that does not require further processing. Broadbent suggested that the selective filter could be “fine tuned” to allow for, or screen out, certain characteristics identified in the pre-attentive processing. From the selective filter, the stimulus moves into the limited capacity channel to receive further processing. Under Broadbent’s model, which was widely adopted in the 1950s and early 1960s, selection among stimuli is based entirely on the physical properties of the sensory information – no meaning is extracted.

### **Alterations to Filter Theory**

It has become clear that some of the components of Broadbent’s model are robust, such as the sensory store, which survives in models today with many of the same characteristics as identified by Broadbent, but typically separated as iconic and echoic store. However, the model of much of the process after sensory reception has been altered. By the 1960s, it had become clear that certain aspects of meaning must be extracted earlier in the attention process. Treisman (1969; Treisman & Gelade 1980) developed a modification (*attenuation theory*) that suggested that, rather than a simple all-or-nothing switch, the selective filter served to attenuate those signals that are least relevant to ongoing concerns.

By 1967, Neisser's "analysis by synthesis" model appeared. In this model, patterns of expectations are developed and these are used in the pre-attentive filtering as a warning about what types of signals are likely to be expected; when those signals arrive in the pre-attentive phase they are more likely to be passed on for further filtering.

In the 1970s, researchers began to further refine the idea of *limited capacity*. Whereas earlier formulations focused on the idea of one message, these researchers noted that, if cognitive demands are low, it is often possible to process two messages concurrently (such as when we read a book and watch TV at the same time). In the revised view, rather than a single channel of information being processed, the idea was that, although limited, various tasks took only a certain amount of capacity, so that one could perform multiple tasks as long as their combined processing needs did not exceed the capacity available. Additional work focused on the relationship between arousal and attention (Kahneman 1973; → Excitation and Arousal). Such work further complicated our models because it was found that our ability to attend to a task rises with arousal up to a particular point, and then decreases, in an inverted U-shape.

Most recently, spreading *activation models* (→ Priming Theory) have been incorporated into models of attention to help explain why certain message components may be processed more efficiently than others. Much of the current work focuses on the use of positron emission tomography (PET) scans and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to examine the brain during information-processing tasks, to obtain a better understanding of the relationship between attention and other neural processes. Noguchi and his colleagues (2007), for example, recently examined the speed of perceptual neural activity and found that attention led to an increase in both neural intensity and speed, suggesting that attentional processes, which are somewhat under our control, are able to modulate information-processing activity.

## APPLICATIONS IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

As mentioned at the outset, since its beginnings, the field of communication has employed the concept of attention in a number of ways. As the field of psychology has progressed from global uses of the term to more specific and micro-level conceptualizations, the field of communication has followed, with a respectable lag. Early work on public speaking and the audience for public speakers examined audience members' attention; work in political communication and media effects focused on attention as a precondition for learning about what was stressed in the news or in politicians' stands on issues (Chaffee & Schleuder 1986; → Audience). These more global meanings of attention form a core of research on attention as an observed behavior that, it is likely, provides a reasonable estimate of attention processes that are occurring within individuals.

The more recent developments in psychology that focus on the *cognitive process of attention* offer more exact descriptions of what occurs within our brains, and so offer a different look at communication processes from what was obtainable, or even conceivable, earlier. Although equipment for measuring attentional processes by fMRI or PET scanning remains out of reach of most communication researchers, the research that has been done in that area has had an influence on the thinking and conceptualization of communication problems.

Most of the immediate application has been in the area of mass communication processes and learning, affect, or → persuasion. Lang and her colleagues, for example, have used the limited capacity aspect of attention to develop a model of media message processing in a variety of contexts (Lang 2000; → Affects and Media Exposure). This body of work is focused on the attempt to understand how media content structures interact with attention processes in *learning and emotional responses*. While Lang and her colleagues often use psychophysiological devices to measure reactions under predictions of certain attention constraints or conditions, others have resorted to paper-and-pencil measures, questionnaires, or other, more traditional techniques for measuring while employing the tenets of current models of attention. Miller and Leshner (2007), for example, used a signal detection analysis to investigate the impact of “disgusting” news stories on processing resources and resultant memory. Wirth et al. (2007) have used current models of attention to investigate the concept of → presence in a multimedia environment.

Work on *attention and spreading activation* has been instrumental in developing models of persuasion as used by both mass communication and interpersonal communication scholars (Petty & Cacioppo 1986; Chaiken et al. 1989). Scholars in other areas of → interpersonal communication have been slower to incorporate contemporary attention models into their research, perhaps because the research topic is less likely to be concerned with micro-processes than is mass communication research, which often deals with learning and other media effects. Of the few examples of such application, most study nonverbal communication processes. Phillips et al. (2007), for example, have used current models of attention and working memory to investigate the use of social cues in nonverbal behavior, while Lieberman et al. (1988) used attention models and what was known about attention processes to examine nonverbal decoding ability.

Because it is crucial to our understanding of *learning and memory*, the concept of attention continues to hold center stage at a number of levels of analysis within communication research. As researchers in cognitive psychology and neuroscience learn more about the micro-level components of attention processes, researchers in communication will continue to take that knowledge and apply it to central problems in the discipline. As increased skills develop in multilevel modeling and advanced statistical analysis, we are likely to see a real contribution of communication in bridging between micro and larger levels, potentially developing links between individual information processing and group processes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Audience  
▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Information  
Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Listening  
▶ Memory ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Persuasion ▶ Presence ▶ Priming  
Theory ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective  
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## **Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span**

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Children, adolescents, and adults use many types of media. These include varieties that do not require input from the user, such as print media, movies, → video tapes, DVDs, music, and television, as well as those with more extensive interactive possibilities (→ Interactivity, Concept of), such as → video games, computer applications, and → Internet resources. As the media landscape has become more varied and extensive, children and adolescents in particular have increased use of these newer media (Rideout et al. 2005). However, at all ages studied, → television has maintained its place as the most commonly used medium (→ Media Use across the Life-Span). Further, characteristics of television enable a variety of measures of → attention (e.g., eye movements, visual orientation to the screen, probe responses to events). Perhaps for these reasons, television is the focus of

most studies of attention to media. Developmental differences in attention have been studied most systematically across childhood and adolescence, with far fewer studies examining attention to media in adults, especially in older adults (→ Attending to the Mass Media; Developmental Communication).

### **PATTERNS OF ATTENTION TO TELEVISION**

Since the introduction of television, popular conceptions of television viewing often have characterized children as “zombies” who are captured by television and stare fixedly at the screen. Naturalistic and laboratory studies of how children watch television generally deny this stereotype. Many studies document key commonalities in patterns of looking at and away from television among infants, children, and adults. Across ages, most looks are very short (less than 3 seconds), with a minority of extended looks at the television (Richards & Anderson 2004; → Spectator Gaze). Individuals typically divide attention between television and other activities, with attention patterns revealing systematic influences and consistencies in how attention relates to viewers’ comprehension and learning.

Similarities in patterns do not mean, however, that attention to television is unchanging across development. The percentage of time actually spent looking at television at home or in the laboratory increases steadily from infancy through the end of elementary school, levels off during middle school, and finally declines somewhat during adolescence and adulthood (Anderson et al. 1986). In general, increases in percentage of attention to television are due to more time spent in longer looks as children’s age increases. In turn, such long looks appear to enable greater engagement and deeper processing of content (→ Information Processing), as viewers are less distractible and remember more content presented during long looks (Lorch et al. 2004; → Memory). Although the overall percentage of time looking at television declines during adolescence and adulthood, these ages maintain a mixture of short and long looks at television (Hawkins et al. 1995).

### **THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS OF FACTORS INFLUENCING PATTERNS OF ATTENTION**

Several theoretical viewpoints on attention to television concur that children, from an early age, are active viewers whose visual attention to television is guided by ongoing comprehension, expectations, and purposes for viewing (Huston et al. 2007; → Communication Skills across the Life-Span). For example, Anderson and Lorch (1983) proposed that for young children, a look at the television may begin in response to any of several possible reasons, including stimuli that elicit orienting responses; formal features that signal informative, appealing, child-relevant content; and cues derived from the behavior of other children. Once a look has begun, its continuation primarily depends on the child’s ongoing judgments of whether program content is comprehensible and on the fit of the content to the child’s purposes. In this view, developmental changes in patterns of attention stem primarily from cognitive development and associated developmental changes in comprehension processes.

Huston et al. (2007) discussed similar factors as influences on visual attention, but traced the evolution of three overlapping models of the development of children’s

attention to television: exploration-search, stimulus sampling, and the traveling lens model. *Exploration-search* refers to a sequence likely to occur when an individual of any age encounters a new stimulus environment. Initially, the individual is dominated by exploration, characterized by relatively disconnected, brief attention to perceptually salient aspects of the stimulus. With greater familiarity, it is possible to become more systematic and goal-directed, with attention increasingly guided by knowledge, expectations, and strategies. With age and experience with a medium, many exploration-search sequences accumulate, resulting in an overall developmental change toward more systematic search underlying attention patterns. For example, the very youngest viewers, infants and toddlers, largely are exposed to television not designed for them. They may explore but process little content, primarily reacting to the changing sights and sounds of television. By as early as 1.5–2 years of age, however, children begin to respond more systematically to features that are not merely salient but signal content that children are likely to find relevant or entertaining (Valkenburg & Vroone 2004). For example, the presence of children's voices, peculiar voices, sound effects, animation, and puppets cue children to the child-relevance of the content.

In the *stimulus sampling model*, Huston et al. conceptualized a series of decisions children make about whether to continue a look at the television. At the beginning of a look, decisions are most heavily a function of formal characteristics, once again those that are indicative of informative, interesting, child-relevant content. If a look continues, more extensive, deeper cognitive processing takes place, such that a subsequent decision is affected by both current comprehension and initial expectations about content (Rolandelli et al. 1991). As further cycles occur, later decisions are increasingly influenced by deeper processing and more elaborated expectations about story content (Hawkins et al. 1995). In addition, the stimulus sampling model incorporates developmental changes in these cycles of decisions. For younger children, the continuation of a look at the television may be more dependent upon superficial features of the program than for older children, who are more likely to make elaborated decisions based on deeper processing of content (Rolandelli et al. 1991; → Selective Attention).

The *traveling lens model* builds upon the ideas of exploration-search and stimulus sampling. According to the traveling lens model, attention is maximized at optimal levels of complexity, novelty, and predictability. These optimal levels “travel” with development and experience with the medium, story structure, or a particular program. Relative to infants and toddlers, children's ongoing comprehension increasingly influences their attention across the preschool years. If children are making sense of a program and judging it to be “for them,” they are more likely to sustain attention than if the program seems confusing or adult-oriented. Preschoolers' attention also begins to show influences of familiarity with specific programs (e.g., the meaning of formats in *Blue's Clues*) and about story structure in general (→ Educational Television, Children's Responses to).

During middle childhood and adolescence, the cycle of decisions during stimulus sampling and optimal settings of the traveling lens are affected by considerable increase in media experience and substantial development in comprehension skills. Children and adolescents make more of their own programming choices than do younger children, select a wide variety of general audience programming, and combine television viewing with the use of other media (Rideout et al. 2005). Regarding comprehension skills,

children become more sophisticated at building an ongoing representation of the interrelations among story events during viewing. Not until later in elementary school do children become consistent at understanding complex production techniques (e.g., flashbacks) and characters' emotions, intentions, and motivations. Older children and teens also become more skilled at connecting groups of events to an overall theme. With age, children add to their store of world knowledge, and so become capable of appreciating a wider variety of situations. Associated with expanding → media literacy and development in comprehension skills with age, attention patterns reveal increasing effects of event centrality, causal structure, and plot development. For example, school-age children have been found to look at the television more during presentation of material that adults rated as important (i.e., central) to the plot of the story than during material rated as low in importance, and to increase attentional engagement on the basis of subtle cues to the centrality of the content (Lorch et al. 2004).

It was mentioned earlier that at all ages, the majority of looks last less than 3 seconds, with only a minority of extended looks at the television. This distribution of looks that is typical across age also is characterized by a phenomenon known as “attentional inertia,” based in the observation that the longer a look at television is maintained, the more probable that the look will continue to be maintained, regardless of content or content changes. As such, attentional inertia is thought to represent an automatic, nonstrategic means of insuring occasional engagement with material that might not otherwise be sampled, assisting in providing cognitive challenge to advance development (Anderson & Lorch 1983; Richards & Anderson 2004).

### **ATTENTION TO MULTIPLE MEDIA**

Although individuals at all ages divide attention between television viewing and other activities, children and adolescents increasingly divide their attention and activities among multiple media in complex → multitasking. Adolescents watch television while using computer software, or play music while interweaving instant messaging and a video game. To date, there is no specific evidence that individual activities suffer as a result of divided attention, but systematic studies of attention divided among media are yet to be pursued.

### **RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

Although research has provided a wealth of theory and research concerning developmental change in attention to television across childhood and adolescence, several aspects of attention to media need more extensive developmental investigation. As media materials increasingly are produced that are targeted at infants and toddlers, more investigations of attention are needed among these youngest audience members. Studies of developmental changes in attention to media other than television also are called for but are only in early stages for print media, video games, and computer use. As noted above, although children and adolescents are known to engage in media multitasking, studies of divided attention to media are lacking. Finally, although media use continues throughout adulthood, little information exists concerning attention to media in older adults, indicating a need for more systematic research on attention to media across the entire life-span.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Attention ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Memory ▶ Multitasking ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Television ▶ Video ▶ Video Games

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## **Attitude Accessibility**

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Attitude accessibility concerns how quickly an → attitude is activated from → memory. Attitudes that are more accessible from memory are more predictive of behavior, influence what messages are attended to, and how those messages are processed, and are more

stable across time. Unfortunately, little is known about how to change the accessibility of attitudes from memory, particularly with regards to how persuasive messages influence accessible attitudes (→ Information Processing; Memory, Message).

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Consider the following *example*. Suppose you see a spider – you might have a very quick “yuck” response. The fast yuck response indicates an accessible attitude toward spiders. You do not have to think about whether you like spiders, rather, the mere presence of a spider results in the activation of your attitude. On the other hand, imagine you are walking down a sidewalk with a friend looking for a place to eat. Your friend points to a Portuguese restaurant and suggests you try it. In this instance, you may have to think about whether you like Portuguese food, because you are not sure what you think of it, before deciding that it is good. The fact that you have to ponder whether you like something suggests that either you have a relatively inaccessible attitude or you have never formed an attitude toward that object.

Attitudes have been studied across a number of different disciplines for the past 100 years. There have been many different ideas concerning the structure of attitudes. Based on work in cognitive psychology, researchers began exploring the structure of attitudes in memory (→ Cognition). *Associative network models* are among the most influential approaches to understanding memory. According to such models, within memory there are various nodes that represent concepts. For example, you probably have a “spider” node in memory. The nodes are connected to other related concepts. So your spider node might be connected to “web,” “eight legs,” “poisonous,” “Spiderman,” “eats insects,” “Wilbur” (the spider in the children’s book *Charlotte’s Web*), and so on. In addition, energy is hypothesized to spread from an activated node to other related nodes. So if you saw a spider, activation would spread to other related nodes such as “web.” Drawing on this network model of memory, we can think of attitudes as associations between objects and evaluations of those objects. In other words, concepts could have attitudes connected to them within this semantic network. Your “spider” node might have a “yuck” link to it and this link corresponds to a negative attitude toward spiders.

One of the assumptions of network models of memory is that the *strengths of the links* between concepts in memory can vary. In our example, the link between “spider” and “yuck” is very strong so that “yuck” is activated and comes to mind easily when “spider” is activated. However, the link between “Portuguese food” and “good” is relatively weak so that “good” is not activated when “Portuguese food” is first activated. To the extent that an evaluation is strongly associated with the object, the evaluation will be highly accessible: that is, when the node for the attitude object (spider) is activated, the strength of the association will insure that, due to spreading activation, the node containing the evaluation of the object (yuck) is also activated. When the strength of the connection reaches a certain level, the attitude becomes automatically accessible from memory. In this instance, when you see a spider and the corresponding node in memory is activated, the evaluation of that object is quickly and effortlessly accessed. In this way, attitude judgments can be made rapidly and without extensive reflection.

In contrast, for attitudes that are not accessible, the associations between the object and the evaluation of that object are not strong and the activation of the object will typically

not spontaneously activate the evaluation of the object. Or it could be that this object has no evaluation associated with it in memory. This line of thinking suggests a *nonattitude to attitude continuum*. At the extreme, attitude end of the continuum are situations such as “spider” where the attitude is automatically activated from memory when the object is encountered. In contrast, the nonattitude end of the continuum refers to objects where there is no attitude with an evaluation stored in memory. Of course, most attitudes probably lie somewhere between these two extremes. Most people, when asked, can report their evaluation of a wide range of attitude objects. For any given person, some of these attitudes will be strong and very quickly retrieved, others may be relatively weak and slowly accessed, but for most attitude objects, people are able to report where on a continuum their attitude lies.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING ATTITUDE ACCESSIBILITY

Accessible attitudes predict where people orient their attention. People live in a complex world with myriad different objects constantly competing for attention. Evolutionarily, it makes sense that people should be more likely to notice things that they like or dislike. Noticing something threatening – or rewarding – in the environment would clearly help an organism to survive. Research has found that attitudes do serve an orienting function because they direct attention to attitude-evoking objects, and this is particularly true of accessible attitudes (Roskos-Ewoldsen & Fazio 1992).

Accessible attitudes predict how people process a message. With more accessible attitudes toward the topic of a message we are more likely to critically or centrally process that message (→ Elaboration Likelihood Model). A series of experiments also demonstrated that message recipients with more accessible attitudes toward the source of a message are also more likely to centrally process that message (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al. 2002). Basically, the automatic activation of an attitude toward the topic or source of the message acts as a cue that this is an important message that needs to be carefully processed.

Accessible attitudes predict how biased a person will be when processing a message. Attitudes have long been hypothesized to influence how we perceive objects in the environment. If you like a particular football team, infractions called against that team are more likely to be perceived as arbitrary or capricious. Numerous studies have found that attitudes color how people see the world (Fazio et al. 1994). Attitudes that are more accessible are more likely to result in *biased perceptions* of objects. In a study of the 1984 US presidential election, people with more accessible attitudes toward the candidates were more likely to judge that their candidate won the presidential or vice-presidential debate. Research has even found that the accessibility of people’s attitudes toward capital punishment will influence their judgments of the quality of scientific evidence on the effectiveness of capital punishment.

Accessible attitudes predict behavior. Attitudes were studied initially because they were thought to *predict behavior* (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency). However, the relationship between attitude and behavior is more complex than the simple idea that attitudes predict behavior. Studies have demonstrated that attitudes that are highly accessible from memory are more likely to predict behavior than attitudes that are not accessible from memory in a wide range of behaviors including voting, tobacco and alcohol use, product choice, environmental behaviors, feminist behaviors, and game play.

The basic idea is that an attitude can affect behavior only if the attitude has been activated from memory. Typically, social situations are characterized by ambiguity because there are many potential interpretations of the situation. How the situation is perceived plays an integral role in how people respond to that situation. Consequently, any factor biasing the interpretation of a situation should influence how the individual responds to that situation. As discussed earlier, attitudes exert a profound influence on the *interpretation of ambiguous information*. This biased interpretation allows attitude to affect how a person responds to situational cues. For example, when someone sees a spider the situation is typically perceived as repulsive. Once the interpretation of the situation is colored by attitude, the behavior within the situation is likely to be consistent with the attitude(s) that influenced the interpretation of that situation. When the presence of a spider results in the situation being perceived as repulsive, the person should act accordingly by calling an exterminator, using bug spray, or stepping on the spider.

Finally, accessible attitudes are *more persistent and last longer* than less accessible attitudes. A common finding is that an attitude that is changed by a persuasive message will revert back to the original attitude across time if nothing is done to reinforce the changed attitude. However, if the changed attitude is more accessible from memory, then it is less likely to revert back to the original attitude.

### MAKING ATTITUDES MORE ACCESSIBLE

Research on persuasion and social influence has traditionally focused on changing the extremity or valence of attitudes. However, given the functionality of accessible attitudes, research on social influence should also focus on how to make attitudes more accessible from memory. Unfortunately, little research has focused on how to make attitudes more accessible. We do know that attitudes based on direct experience with the object are more accessible from memory. Likewise, making repeated attitudinal judgments of an object increases the accessibility of the attitude toward that object. Consistent with this research is the finding that repeated viewing of a commercial resulted in more accessible attitudes. However, research from cognitive and social psychology suggests at least two more ways to increase attitude accessibility: expectations and cognitive elaboration.

When people anticipate future evaluative encounters with an object, they develop more accessible attitudes toward that object. In other words, the expectation that the attitude will be functional increases the accessibility of the attitude from memory. For example, comparative advertising may motivate people to spontaneously form attitudes because of the explicit evaluative comparison of one → brand to a successful (and hence, probably liked) brand. Comparative advertisements have been found to increase the accessibility of attitudes toward the new product more than noncomparative advertisements that contained the same information about the new product (→ Advertising Effectiveness).

Systematic or elaborative processing of a message's content has also been hypothesized to result in more accessible attitudes from memory due to the greater amount of cognitive "work" involved in such processing, with the result being better integrated attitudes that are more accessible from memory. In short, elaboration of the message's content paves more associative pathways for the given attitude and strengthens those pathways linked to the attitude.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitudes  
 ▶ Automaticity ▶ Brands ▶ Cognition ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Information  
 Processing ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Planned Behavior, Theory of ▶ Reasoned  
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## **Attitude–Behavior Consistency**

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The central question addressed by the concept of attitude–behavior consistency is whether people act in accord with their → attitudes. In other words, does knowing a person's attitude allow one to predict that person's behavior? Our naïve theories lead us to believe that this is true: we assume that attitudes guide behavior. Although it may initially seem self-evident, the story is more complex than our intuition would suggest, and this area has been the focus of an enormous volume of research going back nearly a century. Researchers are interested in this relationship because they have a desire to use attitudes to predict how people will behave. Such predictability may be important, for example, if a car manufacturer wants to predict the strength of the market for cars using alternative fuels for the coming year.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historically, attitudes were thought to be an important topic to study because early researchers assumed that attitudes are strongly related to behavior. Thus, it was thought that attitudes would provide a good proxy to behavior: asking people how they felt about things was easier than observing them engaging in activities (→ Observation; Survey). However, a classic study conducted by LaPierre in the 1930s was an early demonstration that attitudes may not always coincide with actions. In this study (LaPierre 1934), a survey was sent to hotel and restaurant proprietors asking them their attitudes toward serving customers of Asian origin. During this period in the history of the US, prejudice against Asians was strong. Thus it was unsurprising that a majority of respondents indicated that they would deny service to Asians. However, these establishments had earlier been visited by an Asian couple who were working with the researcher. In their tour of 250 hotels and restaurants, they were served by all but one proprietor. Clearly, the stated attitudes of the proprietors were not reflected in their actions when confronted with customers seeking food and lodging. Other work questioning the assumption that attitudes guide behavior began to accumulate. An influential paper published by Alan Wicker in 1969, which reviewed 42 studies examining the correlation of attitudes to behaviors, found only a weak relationship.

Wicker's paper set off a controversy over the importance of attitude research. Proponents of Wicker's position wondered whether there was any point in continuing to study attitudes if they did not predict behavior, which was consistent with a general climate of criticism of academic social science prevalent at the time (Elms 1975). Other researchers suggested that Wicker's conclusions may have been extreme. Overall this controversy fostered a somewhat contentious climate that nonetheless produced an abundance of creative ideas about the relationship of attitudes to behavior.

## THE PROBLEM OF SPECIFICITY

One response to the concern that attitudes were not predictive of behavior was the observation that behaviors and attitudes are often measured at *different levels of specificity* (→ Measurement Theory). In the typical attitude survey, the attitude question is a very general assessment of an attitude object, such as “global warming,” whereas the behavioral measurement is an observation of a very specific single opportunity to engage in an action, such as signing a petition in favor of legislation to reduce carbon emissions. Among other researchers, Fishbein and Ajzen (1974) pointed out that, psychometrically, attempting to correlate one very specific construct with another construct that is very vague is problematic and would tend to reduce the observed correlations. The solution proposed by Fishbein and Ajzen was twofold. First they suggest measuring behavior more generally, that is, creating an aggregate measure of behavior in much the same way as an attitude scale is constructed. This aggregate measure of behavior can become a reliable measure of a general propensity to behave just as a multi-item attitude scale is a more reliable measure of attitude than a single attitude item.

The second solution to the problem of specificity of measurement is to assess attitudes more precisely. According to Fishbein and Ajzen, the solution was to measure the attitude

toward performing the behavior at a particular point in time. For example, instead of asking a potential voter whether they had a favorable attitude toward a particular candidate, it was preferable to ask whether they had a favorable attitude toward voting for that candidate on Election Day next Tuesday. Asking the attitude question with that level of specificity improved the ability to predict behavior. Fishbein and Ajzen later went on to refine their ideas into models known as the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior (→ Reasoned Action, Theory of; Planned Behavior, Theory of).

### **MODERATORS OF THE ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOR RELATIONSHIP**

While Fishbein and Ajzen were focused on the specificity of the measurement of the attitude and the behavior, other researchers focused on understanding *under what conditions* attitudes predicted behaviors. These moderating conditions have clustered around individual differences in personality, variables that affect the strength of the attitude, and characteristics of the situation.

#### **Personality**

One group of researchers was particularly interested in the types of people for whom attitudes serve as behavioral guides. These researchers, led by Mark Snyder at the University of Minnesota, observed that attitudes serve as an inner code of conduct for some people, whom they termed *low self-monitors*. These people know how they feel about an issue and are unswerving in behaving consistently with that attitude. In contrast, *high self-monitors* tend to behave consistently with the social demands of the situation. Not surprisingly, the correlation between attitudes and behaviors is higher for low self-monitors than for high self-monitors.

Cacioppo and Petty (1982) identified a construct they termed *need for cognition* that ordered individuals along a continuum representing the extent to which they enjoy thinking about things (→ Information Processing; Limited Capacity Model). People who score high in need for cognition have a tendency to enjoy puzzling over complex problems and seek out complex intellectual challenges. In contrast, those low in need for cognition tend to prefer simple, black and white explanations. As might be expected, attitudes appear to be more predictive of behavior for people who are higher in need for cognition than for those who are lower.

#### **Attitude Strength and Accessibility**

There are many ways to think about what makes an attitude strong. Among the aspects of attitudes that have been studied in the context of attitude strength are confidence, extremity, importance, self-relevance, knowledge, and direct experience. Whatever index is used to identify strong attitudes, the findings are generally consistent: strongly held attitudes are more predictive of behavior than attitudes that are held more weakly. For example, many people have attitudes about whether Mac or personal computers (PCs) are preferable. Those for whom a well-functioning computer is important for accomplishing their day-to-day tasks have had extensive experience working with both types of computers,

and who have extensively researched the features of the different computer models and their operating systems, will be more likely to purchase the computer they have the most favorable attitude toward, because their attitude toward the computer would be more strongly held.

Another way to think about strong attitudes is to consider how quickly an attitude judgment comes to mind upon encountering an attitude object. Russell Fazio and his colleagues were primarily concerned with → *attitude accessibility*, or how easily attitudes are activated from memory. According to this research, when attitudes are highly accessible, they are quickly activated in memory and thus are more likely to be acted upon than less accessible attitudes. The pathway described in this model is that accessible attitudes are activated immediately upon encountering an attitude object. This activation then guides interpretation of relevant information, such that the information about the attitude object is perceived to bolster the existing attitude. These perceptions of the attitude object, in conjunction with a consideration of social norms, define the situation for the perceiver and thus lead to behavior that is consistent with the attitude. These processes are generally thought to occur relatively spontaneously and without much effort for attitudes that are highly accessible. Overall, findings with respect to attitude accessibility have supported the idea that accessible attitudes are more predictive of behavior than less accessible attitudes.

### **Characteristics of the Situation**

Finally, an additional moderator of the attitude–behavior relationship is the strength of the situation in which the behavior might occur. Just as attitudes can be described as being strong or weak, situations also vary in strength. A strong situation is one in which the range of acceptable behaviors is very narrow, whereas a weak situation has a wider range of potential behaviors. For example, in a college class the range of behaviors is quite limited: college students are expected to sit quietly and listen to the lecture, take notes, and perhaps politely ask a question for clarification. Thus a college lecture class represents a strong situation. In contrast, the expected behavior at a large fraternity party is quite vast: individuals may be expected to drink heavily or not much; they may dance wildly to the music or stand still; they may talk excitedly with many other party-goers or quietly converse with one person. Thus a fraternity party could be characterized as a weak situation because of the range of expected behaviors. Research indicates that attitudes are more predictive of behaviors when the situation is weak than when the situation is strong: Strong situations constrain behavior to the extent that all people behave similarly regardless of their attitudes, whereas in a weak situation, where the prescribed behavior is not clear, attitudes are far more likely to guide one’s choice of action.

### **THE EFFECT OF BEHAVIOR ON ATTITUDES**

Thus far, this entry has examined the attitude–behavior relationship from the perspective of how attitudes influence behavior. However, the attitude–behavior relation can also occur in the reverse direction: behavior can affect attitudes. The decades of research investigating cognitive dissonance and self-perception theory demonstrated that engaging



in counterattitudinal behavior is likely to change one's attitudes to be consistent with the behavior (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory).

This is most likely when the outcomes of one's actions are negative, when the behavior is public, and when there is no other easy explanation for having engaged in the behavior. For example, going to see a horror film with friends might change your attitude toward horror films. A recent study demonstrated that it is one's strong attitudes that are most likely to guide behavior, whereas the attitudes that are subject to change through behavior are more likely to have been weak attitudes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Information Processing ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Observation ▶ Persuasion ▶ Planned Behavior, Theory of ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Survey

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## **Attitude Functions**

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The functional approach to → attitudes specifies that people hold attitudes because those attitudes serve a purpose. Functions address the psychological motivations *why*

individuals hold their attitudes. Initial theorizing about attitude functions assumed that an attitude served a primary function ( $\rightarrow$  Functional Analysis). Shavitt (1990) demonstrated that although certain attitude objects (e.g., air conditioners) lend themselves to one primary function, other attitude objects (e.g., American flag) are more likely to be served by multiple attitude functions. Understanding *why* an attitude forms offers an insight into the process of attitude change. Although several functions have been identified, the conceptualizations scholars offer are similar to the functions established by Smith et al. (1956), Katz (1960), and Herek (1987).

Smith et al. (1956) defined three attitude functions. The *object appraisal function* is conceptualized as attitudes that form as immediate evaluations of attitude objects. The purpose of this evaluation is to quickly categorize an object, so it may be acted upon as part of the categorical group to which it belongs. The *social adjustment function* reflects the ability of attitudes to promote or maintain relationships with desired others or to highlight differences with disliked others. *Externalization*, the third function, occurs when an attitude is held because the attitude-holder experiences an intrapersonal conflict, and the attitude is held in order to address this conflict.

Katz (1960) described four functions. The *value-expressive function* operates when the benefit to the attitude-holder comes from the expression of a core value the holder associates with the self-concept. The *ego-defensive function* is similar to Smith et al.'s (1956) externalization function. The *instrumental function* recognizes that people hold attitudes because those attitudes maximize rewards and minimize costs for the holder. Positive attitudes are held for objects that bring pleasure to the holder; negative attitudes are created when objects are associated with unpleasant attributes. The *knowledge function* reflects attitudes that are held so the individual is able to organize objects and reduce uncertainty. Eagly & Chaiken (1993) note this function parallels schematic conceptualizations of attitudes in which objects are placed into existing categories that parallel the attributes of the new stimuli. Although Eagly & Chaiken (1993) report that a combination of Katz's (1960) knowledge and instrumental functions is similar to Smith et al.'s (1956) object appraisal function, the idea of categorizing the object indicates a deeper processing of the stimulus. Instead, the knowledge function parallels what Herek (1987) identified as the experiential-schematic function.

Herek (1987) identified two experiential functions where attitudes are formed based on previous interaction(s) with an attitude object. The experiential-schematic function forms when an object, whose attributes parallel pre-existing  $\rightarrow$  schemas for other objects, is placed into an existing cognitive category. An experiential-specific function is created when objects cannot be placed into pre-existing schemata; these attitudes are isolated from other attitudes as long as there are no generalizations made between the attributes of the object and other schema. La France and Boster (2001) demonstrated that these functions are usefully conceptualized as one *experiential* function continuum where individuals whose attitudes function experientially do so more or less schematically.

Smith et al. (1956) inferred certain functions existed through extensive interviews ( $\rightarrow$  Interview; Interview, Qualitative). Since then, several approaches for measuring functions have emerged. One such approach is the individual-difference approach, which assumes that functions can be assessed indirectly by measuring personality constructs. Perhaps the most extensive application of this approach is Snyder's use of self-monitoring

to assess the social adjustment function (manifest in high self-monitors) and the value-expressive function (manifest in low self-monitors).

A more direct approach to measuring functions has been open-ended responses that are coded for functionally relevant information (Shavitt 1990). Attitude function → scales have been developed (Herek 1987), and some scholars have modeled the process of function formation (Lapinski & Boster 2001). As scholars created measures of functions, a variety of attitude objects have been used in functional research.

Scholars guided by the functional approach to attitude change have consistently found evidence for the *matching effect* (see Maio & Olson 2000). Evidence of the matching effect demonstrates that changes in cognition occur when messages are perceived to contain attitude-function-relevant information versus attitude-function-irrelevant information. One explanation for this effect is that it is a result of biased message processing. Individuals attend to favor information that contains messages consistent with their attitude function (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory). Consistent with this explanation, Lavine & Snyder (1996) found perceptions of message quality were higher for individuals who were presented with a functionally relevant message compared to research participants who read a functionally irrelevant message. In the most direct test of the biased processing explanation, Julka & Marsh (2005) found arousing functionally relevant messages were more persuasive than merely salient functionally relevant messages.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Message Production ▶ Scales ▶ Schemas

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# Attitudes

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Attitudes have long been a focus of study by social scientists. In the first edition of the *Handbook of social psychology* in 1935, Gordon Allport referred to attitudes as an indispensable concept for social psychology. Today, attitudes have become an essential concept for the social sciences. Attitudes, defined as an evaluative response to an object or thing, are critical to the study of → persuasion; person → perception; reactions to politicians, racism, and stereotyping (→ Stereotypes); responses to the media; and so on. This entry will provide an overview of the nature of attitudes and how to measure them, summarize the tripartite model of attitudes, and review recent research on explicit and implicit attitudes.

## THE NATURE OF ATTITUDES

In everyday talk in English, when someone is said “to have an attitude,” it generally means the person takes a negative or critical view of the world. However, for social scientists, the standard definition of an attitude is simply that it is a *hypothetical construct involving the evaluation of some object*. First, attitudes are hypothetical constructs because they cannot be directly observed. Rather, attitudes are measured indirectly through a variety of different measures. Second, attitudes involve evaluations of how positively or negatively a person judges something. This evaluation can stem from any number of sources including a person’s beliefs, behavior, and affective reactions to the object. Third, attitudes are directed toward some object or thing. In this instance, “object” is broadly defined and can include things such as Diet Coke or convertible cars, ideas such as democracy or postmodernism, individuals such as your neighbor or groups of people such as foreigners, and so forth. The key point is that attitudes are directed at something.

*Earlier definitions* of attitudes included additional characteristics of attitudes that are not included in the current definition. In particular, attitudes were typically thought to be relatively enduring. But research now indicates that attitudes can be very sensitive to the context in which the attitude is expressed. In different contexts, people will express different attitudes. Further, literally thousands of studies on persuasion have attested to the fact that attitudes can be changed – sometimes fairly easily – and the result of the persuasion attempt is a changed attitude. According to more traditional definitions of attitudes, the changed attitude would not be an attitude because it was not enduring. Another development in thinking about attitudes involved the functions that attitudes serve for people (→ Attitude Functions).

While there are numerous different ways to measure attitudes, two methods are particularly common. The first is a semantic differential scale. A semantic differential scale involves having people judge their evaluation of an object along a scale anchored at each end by polar opposite adjectives, e.g., good/bad (→ Scales; Scales and Indices). Consider the following scales designed to measure someone’s attitude toward capital punishment:

Capital punishment	
Bad	Good
Acceptable	Unacceptable
Right	Wrong
Illogical	Logical

A person with an extremely positive attitude toward capital punishment should be more likely to check near “good,” “acceptable,” “right,” and “logical,” while a person with a more neutral attitude might check positions in the middle between the two adjectives depending on whether the attitude was slightly positive or negative, and a person with an extremely negative attitude should be more likely to place checks near “bad,” “unacceptable,” “wrong,” and “illogical.”

The second way attitudes are measured involves *Likert scales*. Likert scales present a statement and having people indicate how much they agree or disagree with the statement. The following Likert scale could be used to measure attitudes toward capital punishment.

Capital punishment is never justified, no matter how horrible the crime						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly disagree					Strongly agree	

Persons with more positive attitudes toward capital punishment are more likely to disagree with the statement and to circle 1, 2, or 3, depending on how positive their attitude is toward capital punishment. Conversely, a person with a negative attitude toward capital punishment would be more likely to agree with the statement and to circle one of the higher numbers. A person with a neutral attitude would circle 4, indicating they neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Recent research and theorizing on attitudes suggests that they may be more complex than these scales indicate. For instance, people can have *ambivalent attitudes*. Attitude ambivalence refers to situations where people simultaneously have both positive and negative evaluations of an object. Consider the giving of blood. A person may have a positive attitude toward giving blood because it is an altruistic act, but at the same time, he or she may have a negative attitude toward giving blood because it hurts and makes him or her feel queasy. To measure attitude ambivalence, two Likert scales can be used. Both are anchored at the neutral point (or 0): the first asks a person to judge only the positive aspects of the object (a 0 to 3 scale), while the second asks the person to judge only the negative aspects of the object (a 0 to –3 scale). Using the example of giving blood, a person may circle 2 on the positive scale and –2 on the negative scale. A further limitation of semantic differential and Likert scales is that there are other characteristics of attitudes that they do not capture, such as how confidently the person holds the attitude or the accessibility of the attitude from → memory (→ Attitude Accessibility).

### TRIPARTITE MODEL OF ATTITUDES

Early definitions of attitudes usually held that attitudes were comprised of three elements: affective, behavioral, and cognitive. While definitions of attitudes have shifted to simply

specifying attitudes as evaluations, this evaluation is generally thought to encompass these cognitive, behavioral, and affective components. The beliefs one has about an attitude object, how one acts toward the object, and how one feels about the object are most often thought of as the main components of an attitude. The tripartite model of attitudes has been extremely influential in shaping research and theorizing on attitudes. Research now suggests that these three components of attitudes can influence the development of attitudes which, once formed, can influence affect, behavior, and cognition.

The *affective component* of an attitude is the emotional or visceral reaction to the attitude object, that is, one's feeling that the object is good or bad. The "yuck" reaction to a cockroach involves the affective component of the attitude. There are many different ways that affective reactions can be learned including classical and operant conditioning. Classical conditioning, for example, simply involves repeated associations of positive or negative feelings with the attitude object. This example demonstrates how affective responses to an object influence the development of an attitude, but strong attitudes can also influence the affective reactions that people have when encountering that object. As people develop more extreme or stronger attitudes toward a politician, they will begin to have stronger affective reactions to that politician.

The *behavioral component* of an attitude refers to the actions taken in regard to the attitude object. This is the component that has historically been considered the most important. The initial justification for studying attitudes was that they predict behavior. And, while the relationship between attitudes and behavior is complex, attitudes do predict behavior in many instances ( $\rightarrow$  Attitude–Behavior Consistency). Likewise, research has shown that people's behavior influences their attitudes. People who do not have well-formed attitudes may look at their behavior to determine if they have a positive or negative attitude toward an object. For example, people may not have strong feelings about a particular band, but when asked whether or not they like it, they may consider that they listen to the band frequently because a room mate listens to it, and they don't ask the room mate to turn off the music, and therefore they reason that they must like the band. Likewise, dissonance theory predicts that if people engage in behavior that is very inconsistent with their attitudes, they may change their attitudes to be consistent with the behavior ( $\rightarrow$  Cognitive Dissonance Theory).

The *cognitive component* is generally thought to encompass the thoughts and beliefs related to the attitude object. Some people argue that beliefs and attitudes are the same thing. For example, how is the belief that Diet Coke tastes good different from a positive attitude toward Diet Coke? The distinction between attitudes and beliefs is that beliefs are often thought of in terms of how likely they are to be true (e.g., Diet Coke typically tastes good unless the syrup is mixed incorrectly). However, it would seem strange to talk about an attitude as being true most of the time. The beliefs about an object will influence what a person's attitude is toward the attitude object. The preponderance of pro- or anti-thoughts is a good indication as to whether the attitude is favorable or unfavorable toward an issue. However, it is also important to note that attitudes can influence the beliefs that people develop. For example, attitudes can bias how information is processed so that people are more likely to accept information that is consistent with their attitude or to distort information so as to make it consistent with their attitude.

## IMPLICIT AND EXPLICIT ATTITUDES

An important distinction that has recently emerged in the study of attitudes involves explicit versus implicit attitudes. This distinction arose from research on stereotyping and racism where it was found that people's explicitly stated attitudes and beliefs were not racist, but that oftentimes their behavior would display subtle forms of racism. The racist behavior reflected implicit associations that the person had developed between a certain group and negative attitudes. Out of this research grew the idea that people can have both explicit attitudes that they can readily express and implicit attitudes that are more difficult to express, but can influence the person's affect, behavior, and cognitions just as explicit attitudes do.

More recently, research has suggested that explicit attitudes reflect a person's beliefs. These explicit attitudes are easy to measure using traditional paper and pencil measures such as those discussed above. Furthermore, they appear to be easy to change using standard persuasive techniques. Implicit attitudes, on the other hand, reflect associations between the attitude object and various affective reactions such as fear that have been learned over time. Measures of implicit attitudes are more complex than measures of explicit attitudes and typically involve some type of task that measures how long it takes a person to make various kinds of judgments such as the tasks that are used to measure attitude accessibility. Currently, there is little consensus on how to change implicit attitudes (Gawronski & Bodenhausen 2006).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitude Functions ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Extended Parallel Process Model ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Memory ▶ Perception ▶ Persuasion ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Stereotypes

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# Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on

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Because of the extensive penetration of media into society, and the different purposes and types of information conveyed, there are a number of possible media effects. For the sake of simplicity, these possible media purposes are categorized as those intended to persuade (e.g., → advertising, → propaganda), inform (e.g., → news), or entertain (e.g., narrative television, film). In addition, these effects operate on different aspects of the person, affecting their beliefs (mental association between objects and attributes), → attitudes (evaluations of objects), and values (abstract ideals).

*Persuasive media effects* have often been thought to be powerful (→ Media Effects, History of). This public belief in massive media effects reached its apex around the time of World Wars I and II, when extensive research was conducted to understand and harness the supposed power of propaganda. Indeed, the power of Adolf Hitler was often used as an example of a strong effect of mass-mediated propaganda. However, the validity of the belief in massive media effects began to be challenged by empirical research. As previous research was analyzed across studies, and new studies were conducted, scientists were finding that persuasive media did not always induce expected attitude change. For example, studies showed that military training films increased knowledge about issues but did not change attitudes (Hovland et al. 1949) and that the impact of media during presidential elections was to reinforce existing attitudes rather than change them (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948).

As scientists further scrutinized the available research, they observed that not only were the expected persuasion effects often not obtained, but the effects were moderated by a number of contextual or situational factors. That is, under certain conditions, mass-mediated persuasive messages might exert relatively strong effects, but under other conditions, those exact same messages might have little or no effect at all. From this observation, more contemporary models of → persuasion were developed. These models generally posited a dual route to persuasion. That is, certain conditions, such as message involvement or importance, influenced the processing of the information, which in turn influenced which aspects of the message were attended to (and to what degree), which in turn affected the persuasiveness of the message. Two of the most widely cited models include the → Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo 1986) and the Heuristic-Systematic Model (Chaiken et al. 1989). The dual-process models helped illuminate some of the inconsistent findings in the persuasion literature, including mass media effects.

*Information media* such as news have also been shown to have effects on audience values, attitudes, and beliefs. At the societal level, one of the prominent theories of news media effects is called *agenda setting* (→ Agenda Setting Effects). This theory posits that news does not necessarily tell us what to think, but its power lies in its ability to set the agenda, or tell us what to think about. In other words, news makes certain issues more



salient than others through frequency and intensity of coverage, and this process influences audience beliefs about what issues are important.

Although the general point of agenda-setting theory is that the news influences beliefs about the importance of issues, there are other possible indirect effects of extensive news coverage. One is the belief in the prevalence of a problem, and thus corresponding effects on beliefs about the probability of being a victim of a problem. For example, the news media often cover sensational events (e.g., child kidnappings, tainted Halloween candy) extensively. The corresponding impression in news audiences is that these effects occur often, when in fact they are relatively rare (→ *Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of*). Other studies have provided supporting evidence that exposure to such things as news about crime influences fear and concern about crime (→ *Violence as Media Content, Effects of*).

An abundance of research has provided evidence that *entertainment media* can have important effects on the attitudes, values, and beliefs of audience members. In many respects, these effects operate in much the same way as the effects noted for persuasive media and news media. However, the observed effects of entertainment media consumption may be best understood as unintended effects, in the sense that these media do not necessarily intend to persuade or inform (→ *Entertainment, Effects of*).

Probably the most widely cited theory of such media influence is → *cultivation theory*. The theory, which focuses exclusively on television viewing, posits that television presents a distorted view of the world (e.g., more violence, more affluence, more dishonesty and distrust), and that frequent viewing causes viewers to incorporate these distortions into their real-world attitudes and beliefs (→ *Cultivation Effects; Gerbner, George; Media and Perceptions of Reality; Reality and Media Reality*). Quite a bit of research has accumulated to support this proposition (for a review, see Shanahan & Morgan 1999). Frequency of viewing has been shown to be positively related to estimates of the prevalence of crime and violence (Gerbner et al. 1977), drug use, prostitution, and alcoholism (Shrum & O'Guinn 1993), and the prevalence of affluence and ownership of luxury products (O'Guinn & Shrum 1997). In addition, frequency of television viewing has been shown to increase the importance of material values (Shrum et al. 2005). Finally, research that has investigated the processes underlying these effects have shown that they operate in much the same way as persuasive media effects and information media effects (for a review, see Shrum 2007).

The findings across the three domains just reviewed show that the media do have effects on audience values, attitudes, and beliefs. These effects occur when they are intended (e.g., persuasive media), but also when they are unintended (e.g., entertainment media). Moreover, although short-term beliefs and attitudes are often easily affected by media, longer-term, enduring attitudes and values (and their corresponding behaviors) are less easily changed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Persuasion ▶ Propaganda ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Attribution Processes

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Attributions are the cognitive and communicative processes involved in making sense of why someone acted the way he or she did. This → sense-making usually revolves around attempts to determine the *cause* (i.e., why) and/or *who is responsible* for an action. Studied initially as a largely internal, psychological process (e.g., Heider 1958), researchers in communication often look to verbal explanations as examples of expressed or communicated attributions (e.g., Burleson 1986; Roghaar & Vangelisti 1996). Generally, attribution processes are considered an offshoot of people's tendency to want to understand the world around them. This sense-making transpires in our thoughts (cognitive attributions), and we talk it out with others (communicated attributions). In fact, as we talk about why we think someone acted as he or she did, we often change our minds about the attribution we originally held (→ Psychology in Communication Processes; Cognition).

### HISTORY OF ATTRIBUTION SCHOLARSHIP

Early work focused on attributions of what Heider (1958) called *causal locus*, or the judgment of where a cause came from (i.e., internal or external to the person who engaged in the

action). Since then, researchers, most notably Weiner (1995), have identified a large number of other attributional dimensions, including assessments of a behavior's intentionality, controllability, stability, specificity, and valence. These dimensions help to reflect the variety of attributions people can make, both in their heads (the internal or cognitive attributions noted above) and in their talk (the expressed or communicated attributions noted above).

A number of theories have been developed to explain and predict attribution processes and outcomes. The first set of theories is often referred to as *normative* because they explain the ways that people ought to make good or valid attributional judgments (e.g., Jones 1979). For example, Kelley (1971) found evidence that we rely on three types of assessments to determine the best explanation for an event. He called these factors "distinctiveness" (i.e., our assessment of whether or not a person's behavior is different in one situation from other situations); "consistency," or the extent to which a person's behavior is the same over time; and "consensus," which concerns the behavior of similar others in similar situations.

As researchers looked more toward how people make cognitive attributions in interaction, however, they became increasingly interested in the *errors* or *biases* in people's attributions (see, e.g., Ross 1977). For example, researchers have identified a "fundamental attribution error" that involves people assessing the cause of another's action to largely internal or dispositional characteristics (e.g., personality) rather than to the myriad external or environmental influences that may have influenced an action. A corollary of the fundamental attribution error, the "actor-observer bias," concerns the tendency to attribute one's own behavior to situational factors while attributing the behavior of others to internal characteristics. People also make what have been called "self-serving attributions": rather than find the most likely cause, we often take cognitive shortcuts that allow us to find a cause that works well for our own sense of self and our self-presentation.

### CONTEMPORARY DIRECTIONS IN ATTRIBUTION SCHOLARSHIP

Although attribution processes occur across a large number of situations, contemporary research on attributions tends to focus on what can be thought of as → applied communication contexts. For example, researchers from a number of academic fields study the attributions that people make in their close relationships, most notably marriage. A general bias has been found when looking at the link between relational satisfaction and attributions. Specifically, people who are more satisfied tend to make what have been called *relationship-enhancing attributions*, providing attributions that distance their partners from unfavorable behavior and giving their partner credit for positive behavior. Those in less satisfied relationships tend to make what have been labeled as *distress-maintaining attributions*, judgments that blame the partner for undesirable actions and do not give him or her credit for more favorable actions. Research also shows that satisfaction and attributions may be mutually causal: people tend to be more satisfied later in their relationships when they make more benign attributions early on; they also tend to make more negative attributions if they are dissatisfied (see, e.g., Johnson et al. 2001; → Marital Communication).

Attributional processes have also been examined for what has been termed communication's "dark side." Specifically, researchers have looked toward the ways in which people who abuse their spouses or children make different patterns of attribution

for their own and their family's behavior. Abusers tend to see their own behaviors as unstable and external (that is, they may say, "I am not an abuser; I hit her only because she provoked me"). They also tend to see the other person as blameworthy and as having behaved negatively intentionally ("I would not have pushed him if he had not said what he said; he said that to upset me"). Other research on attribution processes focuses specifically on attributions that occur during communicative interactions, such as conflict (→ Interpersonal Conflict; Conflict Resolution). Researchers have found that people are more likely, for example, to avoid conflict if they believe that another's behaviors are unlikely to change, i.e., they make a stable attribution for the source of the conflict (for an expanded review of this literature, see Manusov & Spitzberg, in press).

There are also *moral* and *legal consequences* to the attribution processes that people make. For instance, people treat those with HIV differently when they attribute the person's HIV status to something internal and controllable (e.g., one's own "risky behavior") rather than to something external and uncontrollable (e.g., getting HIV from a blood transfusion or via childbirth). People are also likely to get shorter prison sentences when they are seen as less responsible for the crime. Recently, one court case in Australia found the parents responsible for their child's behavior and fined them on the basis of this attribution (White 2005).

Whereas attribution processes occur about and within communication interactions, their study has been criticized in a number of ways. Some scholars argue that attributions are more of a psychological rather than a communicative process and should therefore not be studied by communication scholars. Conversely, some who study communicated attributions assert that they are a language act and not a cognitive one and should be assessed more as a language form than a cognitive process. Others have argued for the salience of attributions themselves in communication but argue that attribution theories are not viable as theories. Still others are concerned with the best ways to assess attributions (i.e., with rating scales, in talk, based on what dimensions). Overall, however, attribution processes are, for many in our field, a vital part of communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Cognition ▶ Conflict Resolution  
▶ Interaction ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Relational Schemas  
▶ Sense-Making ▶ Social Perception

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## Audience

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The audience is an essential part of mass communication processes, and since the beginnings of communication research, it has been one of its central topics. As regards

mass communication, the term “audience” describes the sum of all persons who receive or received (parts of) a media offering. Thus, audience is a group participating in the public communication process but normally it is not involved in the making of its contents. Audience is not a lasting social formation; it rather originates as the case arises via → exposure to communication content.

The general concept of audience is quite abstract. For a more specific analysis, it is possible to differentiate between selected audiences: in this way, audience can be distinguished by its used media (e.g., television audience), channel/product (e.g., → CNN audience), or content (e.g., → News Audience). In the same way audience can be classified according to social characteristics (e.g., women vs men), or the location of use (e.g., American audience). Quite often audience is also characterized by its needs (e.g., information-oriented audience; → Audience Segmentation; Media Use by Social Variable).

### EMERGENCE AND CHARACTERISTICS

The origins of the traditional audience are commonly seen to come from ancient Greece and Rome, where people gathered in stadiums and theaters to attend organized literary and musical works or games and circuses. According to McQuail (1997), one cannot speak of a “mass media audience” before the circulation of printed → books and their use by a reading public at the end of the sixteenth century. New printing techniques, the development of audiovisual media, and factors such as an increased reading capability finally led in the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century to the formation of what we today call a mass media audience (→ Printing, History of; Media History).

Contrary to the traditional audience, the mass media audience is not assembled where the received contents take place or are produced. The audience of mass media is *dispersed*: as a general rule, the individual audience members are spatially separated from each other or, at the most, assembled only in small groups (→ Co-Viewing). The members of an audience do not know and do not see each other; they do not communicate with each other either. However, they are aware that they are not the only recipients of mass media content, but that a co-audience exists. A media offering can be received by all the members of an audience at the same time, although a temporally separate use is more common. The size of the audience can vary and is in principle unlimited – ranging from a small number of readers of a special interest magazine to the hundreds of millions watching the final of the soccer world cup.

### TRADITIONS OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH

There are various approaches to systematize the research into media audience. Taking the purpose of the research as the starting point, audience research can be separated into two sections, despite some overlaps: applied and academic audience research.

#### Applied Audience Research

Applied or commercial audience research determines on, the one hand, data about the audience’s media usage in order to offer exact information about its composition to

commercial industry; these data form the basis for advertisement prices in the media. The most basic unit in this case is the number of users reached. On the other hand, the evaluation of content can be measured additionally.

Applied audience research is of great economic importance. This is why various methods and systems to gather data about media usage from participants exist in many countries. As regards the press and books, the size of the audience can be ascertained through sales figures. However, data acquired through → surveys in which interviewees are asked about their actual use of particular publications are regarded as more valuable. A further instrument that is applied quite often for inquiry about TV usage is the storage of usage data via technical devices connected to the TV (→ Nielsen Ratings; People-Meter).

Commercial audience research has been criticized quite vehemently: the focus on quantitative methods and the interest in mere contact data leads to a sheer “head count” (Ang 1991, 56); each practice is said to have weaknesses, too. In addition, a focus on the results of audience research causes the arrangement of the contents only in accordance with the recipients’ needs, thus neglecting normative functions of mass media. Nevertheless, applied audience research is part of the most developed domains of empirical social research (→ Applied Communication Research).

### **Academic Audience Research**

Academic audience research is a field with different research traditions and interfaces to almost all other areas of communication science. As Webster states, “it is hard to imagine any form of media studies that is not, on some level, about audiences” (1998, 190). Equally manifold are the goals of academic audience research: the audience is the center of attention when investigating the reasons for media usage and the selection of certain offerings, or the experience during reception. Likewise, academic audience research can comprise investigation of the audience in line with media effect analyses or with inquests about the adoption of media and their embedment in the everyday life of a particular recipient. Furthermore, datasets from applied audience research are often used for detailed analyses, for example for the compilation of audience typologies or longitudinal analyses of media reception.

Jensen and Rosengreen (1990) systematize *five traditions* in academic research of the audience: effects research, → uses and gratifications, literary criticism, → cultural studies, and reception analysis. These traditions can be distinguished according to the type and focus of theory and the type of methodology and empirical approaches. However, the authors note that, especially in the literary research tradition, the audience plays only a minor role in comparison to the analysis of contents.

### **CONCEPTIONS OF THE AUDIENCE**

Academic research on the usage of media content often focuses on the individual user. A reasonable way to represent different traditions of audience research and to enlarge the perspective on the audience as a whole is given in the attempt to systematize the research field according to which audience perception is hypothesized (Webster 1998; Bonfadelli 2004).

The perception of audience as a mass regards the media users as a large group being acted upon by media messages – Webster terms this view the “*audience-as-outcome*” model (1998, 193f.). The most prominent scientific term for this perception is the stimulus–response model, which failed to prove tenable. Nonetheless, even nowadays one can often find in analyses the notion of a mass to be protected from the power of the media.

Applied audience research and its associated advertisement industries and media corporations also conceive audience as a mass, but more in the sense of a target group (→ Advertising). The audience is seen as *potential consumers* whose attention is to be attracted. In particular, the number and duration of media contacts is quantified. In doing so, the audience is divided into target groups, which are determined, for example, by means of socio-demographic criteria or lifestyle typologies (→ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience). The composition of a target group should be as homogeneous as possible in order to achieve positive reactions of all recipients to the respective advertisement messages. The value of a target group mainly depends on its assumed purchasing power.

Behind the conception of the *audience as social protagonist* lies a more normative perspective, which understands the audience in its role as citizen or collective actor who is to inform him- or herself about social and political topics and who is to form an opinion. A precondition for this is the provision of certain information – allowed, for example, by establishing broadcast stations regulated by the state or by public law. In the context of the social protagonist idea, the questions that are discussed include, among others, which sub-groups of the audience inform themselves politically via the media, and what information received from the media is consulted for a systematic forming of judgment (→ Public Opinion; Political Discourse).

The perception of the audience as an *accumulation of active individuals* is often considered the counter-draft to the mass concept. It massively confines the assumption of omnipotent → media effects. Its basis is the idea that individuals use the media selectively to satisfy their own needs and interests (→ Selective Exposure). This conception is mainly associated with the uses and gratifications approach. The research in this approach has shown that many cognitive, emotional, and social needs are seen, depending on the individual and the situation, as having different levels of importance, and are met by the different media offerings to varying degrees.

The interpretation of the audience as *fan culture* is also based on the view of active media users. It is mainly part of the cultural studies tradition, in which the meaning of culture, including the usage of media, as an everyday practice is explored. Fans, as in fans of a TV series or of an actor/actress, can therefore be regarded as a specific group of an audience because they, for example, include media content in their everyday life to a high degree, join in fan communities, and often proceed productively, for instance in the compilation of fan magazines (→ Fandom).

## CURRENT EMPHASES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Much importance is attached to some questions of audience research, as they are currently playing a major part and will be relevant in the future, too. A central question is whether the audience should be conceived as an *accumulation of individuals* or as a



*social group*. While especially its spatial separation suggests understanding the audience members as independent of each other, it appears that during phases of the reception process it can be important for users to be aware of other recipients. Such co-audience perceptions could include assumptions on size, simultaneity, social structure, and the experiences of exposure to other consumers. In this way, it is possible that a recipient uses a media offering because he or she knows that many people are doing so and, thus, can feel part of a large audience community.

Additionally, the growing consequences of *audience segmentation or audience fragmentation* are also being discussed. The increased diversity of offerings on the media market as well as social processes of individualization caused the media *audience* to consist of many diverse audiences. These in themselves homogeneous groups are being specifically served via the media's target group orientation. From the perspective of an integrative function, which the media are supposed to have in a society, this phenomenon can be perceived as problematic, although it could be demonstrated that there exist many overlaps between the different audiences.

Another central question deals with the development of the mass audience in a *new media environment* (→ Exposure to the Internet). This topic is also part of the context of fragmentation. In addition, it is relevant in the context of internationalization of the audience (→ Media Use, International Comparison of). New media, especially the Internet, feature a large plurality of usually worldwide diffused and available offerings. These offerings feature new forms of acting and experiencing due to their high potential for interaction. As the diffusion of the Internet in many countries does not seem to have come to an end yet, it is not possible to anticipate if – as has been observed so far – certain audience groups, such as younger persons, use the Internet more often than others.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Book ▶ CNN ▶ Co-Viewing ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Fandom ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media History ▶ Media Use, International Comparison of ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ News Audience ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ People-Meter ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Survey ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Audience Commodity

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The audience commodity is the main product produced by media that earn their primary revenues from advertisers. Traditionally, advertiser-supported media have included → newspapers, → magazines, and commercial forms of → radio, broadcast → television, and → cable television. Advertiser-supported media are often contrasted with media whose primary sources of incomes are audiences: → books, recorded music, and films. Depending on which source is the principal source of revenue, a media company will tailor its content to satisfy the demands of either advertisers or audiences (→ Commercialization of the Media; Commodification of the Media; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

In essence, the primary source of revenue functions as the proverbial customer exerting demand in the marketplace and thereby shaping the product. In theory, then, films should tell us more about what people want to see and television programs should tell us more about what advertisers think will increase the sales of their goods and services (→ Consumers in Media Markets). For advertiser-supported media, the task is to assemble an audience commodity – that is, a group of persons to whom advertisers want to sell their wares (Advertising, Economics of).

The implication is that advertisers will target consumers of brand-name products: people with the disposable income and access to the retail system who believe that brand names enhance their social status and who buy brand-name products both habitually and impulsively (→ Brands). Not targeted by advertisers are consumers who research products, identify products that are interchangeable (fungible) except for brand name, and make purchases on the basis of the lowest available price and fungibility. Such rational buyers are relatively unswayed by advertisers' emotionally charged claims. This suggests that advertiser-supported media will not target rational consumers by providing content designed to attract them. This implication is quite significant for media that provide → news, information, and analysis if, indeed, the audience commodity for such media is made up of irrational consumers.

From 1950 to the present, advertisers have increasingly narrowed the audience commodity in demographic terms (→ *Audience Segmentation*). The most significant demographic categories describe youthful audience commodities: 18–34 year olds, 12–17 year olds, and 9–14 year olds (the so-called “tween market”). These categories are further refined according to gender, social identities, and economic status. Typically, advertisers pay higher prices for youths who are male, white, and upscale. For example, in television, the audience commodity for which advertisers pay the highest price is comprised of white males who are 18–34 years old, and living in upscale households that subscribe to cable. As that cluster of categories becomes naturalized into *the* target audience commodity, all other viewers are treated as specialty audience commodities. Among them are downscale viewers, women, African-Americans, Hispanics, and people older than 34 or younger than 12.

For companies that own advertiser-supported media, the principal economic challenge is to efficiently assemble content that will attract an audience commodity for sale to advertisers. In economic terms, the notion of efficiency has two important dimensions:

the cost of assemblage should be as low as possible and the sale price should be as high as possible. That relationship insures that company profits will be high. In contrast, as active consumers of audience commodities, advertisers seek the highest quality and largest quantity of targeted audience commodities at the lowest price. These economic concerns shape the operations of firms that measure audience commodities.

Executives representing media companies, advertisers, and advertising agencies avoid publicly discussing the implications of the audience commodity for their operations. Instead, they claim that advertisers want to reach as many people as possible and so support media outlets that give audiences what they want and need. This view was (and is) often repeated by cultural scholars analyzing the symbols, images, narratives, etc. embodied by media artifacts.

Political economist Dallas Smythe (1977) argued that such a focus on ideology constituted a “blindspot” that drew attention away from the actual product manufactured by commercial media: the audience commodity. Content was the “free lunch” that lured people into spending time with media so that they could be packaged and sold to advertisers. The existence of the audience commodity was confirmed by information commodities like the A. C. Nielsen Company’s television ratings (→ Nielsen Ratings). Because the audience commodity was assembled in order to learn what products to buy, entertaining or educating the audience commodity was largely irrelevant. Audience members thus “performed essential marketing functions for the producers of commercial goods” (Smythe 1977, 000). Although unpaid, these activities were productive: they made sales for advertisers (Jhally 1982; Livant 1982; → Audience; Audience Research).

Smythe provoked considerable debate. Graham Murdock (1978) posited that Smythe’s argument should be limited to purely commercial media and ought to recognize that the audience commodity could also use the cultural materials embodied in the free lunch. Responses noted the increasing commercialization across all media (Smythe 1978; Livant 1979), which intensified under deregulation (Meehan 2006). Research into the ratings industry demonstrated similar economic constraints on the manufacture of ratings, refining Smythe’s view of information commodities and confirming his main argument regarding audience commodities (Meehan 1993). Smythe’s contribution to the field’s understanding of media’s *raison d’être* as businesses continues to shape research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Book ▶ Brands ▶ Cable Television ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Magazine ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ People-Meter ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## Audience Research

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Audience research is a broad term that, in principle, denotes the systematic study of any → audience for any purpose. In practice, the term usually connotes efforts to describe and analyze patterns of media consumption, often for some commercial or administrative purpose. Such research became commonplace in the early twentieth century as new forms of mass media were introduced (e.g., film and radio) and those media became increasingly intertwined with the business of advertising and marketing. Contemporary audience research uses a wide range of theories and methods, which can be organized using the familiar labels of theoretical vs applied, quantitative vs qualitative, and, somewhat less conventionally, syndicated vs custom research.

### THEORETICAL VS APPLIED AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Theoretical audience research operates on two conceptual levels; *micro and macro*. The former tends to look at audiences from the “inside out,” adopting the perspective of an individual audience member. Of theoretical interest are questions about what motivates media selections, what stimuli command attention, how media are used in everyday life, what meanings and/or pleasures are derived from use, and how people engage media as consumers and fans. The relevant bodies of theory run the gamut from the social scientific (e.g., Blumler & Katz 1974; Zillmann & Vorderer 2000), to the humanistic (e.g., Morley 1992; Hills 2002). The latter, *macro-level research* tends to look at audiences from the “outside,” in an attempt to understand their characteristics and behaviors in the aggregate. This perspective sees audiences as markets and/or publics and is often rooted in economics and marketing (e.g., Webster & Phalen 1997; Napoli 2003). Working at this level of analysis has allowed researchers to develop models or “laws” of audience behavior (e.g., Rust 1986; Goodhardt et al. 1987; De Vany 2004).

Applied audience research provides information that can be acted upon by institutions and media industries. It is more prevalent than theoretical research, due primarily to the commercial character of most media systems. Since the early days of radio, advertisers

have demanded surveys documenting the size and composition of the otherwise invisible audience. This gave rise to audience “ratings” research, which has become essential to the operation of advertiser-supported media throughout much of the world (→ Nielsen Ratings). Such data provide the basis for buying and selling audiences, and can be useful in supporting macro-level theoretical research. Commercial motives also drive a variety of research efforts measuring more “qualitative” aspects of the audience. These include surveys and various ethnographic methods designed to assess audience preferences, attitudes, lifestyles, and product usage. Foundations and nonprofit organizations may also do applied research to determine how media are used and whether they are meeting various social or instructional objectives. The producers of the children’s television series *Sesame Street*, for example, have a long history of conducting evaluative research.

### QUANTITATIVE VS QUALITATIVE AUDIENCE RESEARCH

*Quantitative research methods* are common in audience research (→ Quantitative Methodology). The most prevalent is → survey research, which is based on some form of probability sampling. Audience ratings companies use surveys to estimate audience size and demographic composition for an ever growing number of media (e.g., radio, television, movies, video games, out-of-home, Internet, etc.). Other regularly scheduled surveys are used to provide syndicated reports that relate people’s product purchases and personal characteristics to their media use, or assess their familiarity with and liking for various programs and celebrities (i.e., Q scores). One-of-a-kind surveys are often used to gauge media preferences, levels of engagement, opinions, and other administratively or theoretically useful information (→ Public Opinion Polling). Very large, nonrandom, samples or panels are also sometimes used to gather data. In fact, newer media technologies that produce a record of their use (e.g., server logs or digital cable boxes) offer the prospect of survey-like behavioral data based on a census rather than a sample (→ Rating Methods).

Quantitative audience research is not, however, confined to surveys. Media industries routinely measure the appeal of their offerings. Television and movie industries have long used a kind of theater-testing in which prospective viewers are recruited to watch a forthcoming film or pilot program. Respondents view the show in an auditorium and are asked to score various aspects of what they see – often in a near continuous manner that allows researchers to assess the ebb and flow of audience reactions. Such testing can help executives decide whether to go forward with a project, and if so, how to modify or promote it. Similar techniques have been used to measure people’s reactions to political communication and candidate debates. True experiments are relatively uncommon in applied audience research, but have been, and continue to be, a staple of more academically oriented theoretical research (e.g., Zillmann & Vorderer 2000); (→ Experiment, Field). Laboratory research sometimes features the use of physiological measures including eye movement, heart rate, and galvanic skin response (→ Experiment, Laboratory).

Although quantitative methods predominate, *qualitative methods* are increasingly popular in both applied and theoretical audience research (→ Qualitative Methodology). Sometimes labeled audience ethnographies, these techniques include focus groups, unstructured interviews, and participant observation (→ Ethnomethodology). Focus groups, in which a moderator guides a small number of recruits in a discussion, have long

been a staple of marketers and programmers. The method has been used to develop products and ad campaigns, craft radio station formats, assess media personalities, and, in the case of more theoretical research, help determine how people “decode” or assign meaning to media texts (e.g., Morley 1992). Similarly, in-depth → interviews and → observation have been used by both theorists and practitioners to understand the social uses of television, how people adapt to the introduction of digital video recorders (DVRs), and concurrent media use throughout the day.

### **SYNDICATED VS CUSTOM AUDIENCE RESEARCH**

*Syndicated audience research* is a standardized research product that is sold to multiple subscribers. It plays an important role in media industries because its costs can be distributed across many buyers, and it provides a credible, “third party” accounting of audiences independent of the media or advertisers. The most visible form of syndicated research is audience ratings. Measurement companies in the US and much of the world record audience behaviors using a variety of techniques, some of which are quite expensive (→ People-Meter). These data are processed and packaged as different reports that constitute a “currency” used to buy and sell audiences (Napoli 2003; Webster et al. 2006).

Like many forms of information, producing such research has high “first copy” costs, and very low marginal costs. Moreover, the product is a → “public good.” Once created, its supply is not diminished by consumption. These characteristics give the syndicators flexibility in pricing to attract additional business. They also make it difficult for new competitors to enter the market, since challengers will incur first-copy costs with uncertain prospects for displacing the competition and recovering those costs. Further, incumbent syndicators typically offer products that are the result of an ongoing negotiation between clients with disparate interests (e.g., advertisers and media). Their estimates reflect a compromise upon which all agree to conduct business, and their numbers become embedded in the routines of the affected industries. Even modest changes can upset the ecology of the system. Hence, in established industries it is not uncommon to see one syndicator emerge as the principle, quasi-official scorekeeper for the medium in question.

*Custom research* is tailor-made to suit the needs of a particular client. Media organizations often conduct research for their own internal consumption. Radio stations offering popular music formats will, for example, conduct “call-out” telephone surveys to assess the popularity of current hit songs. Alternatively, outside research firms and consultants are sometimes hired to gather data and make recommendations. Since these studies are designed to client specifications they can be quite useful internally, although for external consumption they lack the apparent objectivity of syndicated research.

### **CRITICISMS OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH**

Because of its central, and highly visible, role in the operation of media industries, syndicated research, and in particular audience ratings, has been the object of criticism. Generally, critics have one of three concerns: the accuracy of existing services, the need for different regimes of measurement, and more radical challenges to the entire enterprise of measurement.

In the US alone, billions of dollars in advertising are allocated in accordance with audience ratings. Programming is, in turn, cancelled, renewed, and/or cloned on the basis of those estimates. Increases in the sheer abundance and portability of electronic media, along with advertisers' desires to reach ever more narrowly defined target markets, has caused many in the industry to ask whether the current system is *sufficiently accurate*. While bigger, more representative samples and better behavioral measures always remain a possibility, they must be weighed against their costs. Quality is one of the factors upon which industry participants inevitably compromise.

A related concern addresses the appropriate *object of measurement*. The new media environment seems to invest audience members with ever greater control over what they see and when they see it. Advertisers worry that a simple count of "eyeballs" is no longer enough to guide their expenditures. As a result, there is growing interest in measuring the extent to which people are "engaged" with the media they consume. Such efforts are not new. "Qualitative ratings" have been used in western Europe and were briefly available in the US during the 1980s. The problem is reaching consensus on a useful definition of such factors, agreeing how to measure them, and finding clients willing to pay the price.

A much larger and more radical charge is that all commercially motivated audience research is part of an undesirable enterprise bent on *colonizing and commodifying audiences* (→ Audience Commodity). It is true that media industries often reduce people to one-dimensional members of a target market, or assign them value on a "cost per thousand" basis. Whether the public is, on balance, harmed by this is debatable (e.g., Ettema & Whitney 1994; Webster & Phalen 1997). While audience research inevitably fails to capture all the complexities of media consumption, the machinery of measurement has the virtue of making the audience manifest to institutions that desperately seek its attention.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Ethnomethodology  
 ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Interview ▶ Media Marketing  
 ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Observation ▶ People-Meter ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Opinion  
 ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology  
 ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Survey

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# Audience Segmentation

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“Audience segmentation” or “audience fragmentation” is a phenomenon that describes the process of partitioning mass audiences into smaller and smaller segments. It is considered as an inevitable outcome of competition in media markets (→ Competition in Media Systems). Hence, audience segmentation is expected to be stronger in high- rather than in low-competition media environments (→ Audience).

## MODELS OF AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION

The phenomenon of audience segmentation has been introduced to describe changes in the concept of an audience through the transition from old to new media environments. McQuail (1997) summarizes the concept of audience segmentation by means of four models that represent different stages in the transition. For television, which has experienced the most dramatic changes, McQuail (1997) defines these models as follows. The *unitary model* describes the early years of television (in the 1950s), when viewers either had no ability to select a program, because there was only one channel available, or could select at most among two or three channels. All viewers shared essentially the same television experience – there was more or less a single audience for the programs of one or a few channels. The *pluralism model* describes a status of “limited diversification” that came with an increased supply of television content and television channels. In many countries that introduced television in the 1950s, this development started in the late 1970s and 1980s. Besides channel diversification, viewers experienced temporal diversification. In addition to prime-time television, viewers were able to watch television during the daytime, in the morning, and at night. Further, most television markets diversified locally in this phase of transition, which meant that viewers could find programs that were unique for different locations (e.g., local television news or comedy and drama shows with stories from a particular region and only available in local television markets).

In the 1980s and 1990s, the multiplication of channels in many television markets made it possible that specific (special interest) channels had specific audiences and that viewers’ selective exposure differed significantly from that of the majority of viewers (*core-periphery model*). At the same time, most viewers still shared a common set of a few (general interest) channels. Mainstream content like national news, popular entertainment



shows, and famous movies attracted audiences of all kinds to share experiences. The core-periphery model of audience segmentation is currently the dominant one in countries with multiple channels (including cable and public service channels).

Finally, the *breakup model* describes a situation in which no audience (or at least no core audience) exists any more. Viewers are distributed over many different channels. There is no systematic pattern that explains viewers' channel selection. Viewers do not share or only sporadically share viewing experiences. This model of audience segmentation has not yet been realized but may be underway. New developments such as video on demand, digital TV, digital video recording, and online television, for example, may completely eliminate traditional programming and the temporal synchronization of viewers. In this environment every viewer creates his or her own "channel" with a program schedule that fits best to individualized patterns of viewer availability (→ Television; Television: Social History; Satellite Television).

Although television has experienced the most radical changes in the new media environment, McQuail's four stages of audience segmentation are not limited to television. All stages can be easily transferred to other traditional mass media such as radio and print. However, applying McQuail's models to non-traditional, interactive media, like the → Internet or → video games, is more difficult. While the breakup model still assumes viewers that freely select specific (but given) content that has been prepared by professional content producers, non-traditional media environments provide a platform to exchange content among multiple (professional or nonprofessional) content producers and content consumers.

In highly interactive media forms such as modern video games, for example, users generate their own content (→ Interactivity, Concept of; Interactivity in Reception). In new-generation role-playing video games, users become immersed in virtual worlds and narratives in which they are represented by virtual characters or avatars (Chan & Vorderer 2006; → Avatars and Agents). Usually, a virtual world has been created by a game producer and defines the rules and the theme of a video game as well as the possible depth of content generation. Beyond this, however, video-game experiences are individualized and depend highly on the players' decisions and interactions with the virtual environment. This means that audience segmentation in this media environment addresses both the free selection of a media platform among many alternatives and the generation of, and response to, individualized content. Hence, one might add to McQuail's four models of audience segmentation a fifth: the "*individualization model*." This defines the highest possible degree of audience segmentation, and the term "audience" may even appear inappropriate in this media environment. This raises the question of how the term "audience" is actually defined, and what exactly constitutes an audience.

## THE AUDIENCE CONCEPT

At the beginning of mass communication research, the term "audience" was more or less defined as the group of simultaneous receivers of messages at the end of a linear communication process (i.e., essentially an information transfer from one meta-communicator to many individual receivers). This definition mainly addressed listeners of traditional radio and television (→ Stimulus-Response Model; Media Effects, History

of). Since then, this conceptualization has been replaced by an understanding of audiences as active participants who are resistant to influence, selective, and defined by concerns and needs, as well as depending on specific social and cultural contexts (cf. McQuail 1997, 2005; Webster & Phalen 1997). Advertisers, journalists, filmmakers, and media managers all have different perspectives on and understandings of audiences. Moreover, the linear communication process from the early definition of audience has been supplemented by interactive and transactional processes.

Even simultaneous reception of messages no longer applies to contemporary definitions of audiences. Like radio stations and networks, which claim to reach specified audiences by aggregating listener and viewing ratings across time, new media forms may accumulate large audiences over time. The definition and use of the term “audience” require neither a temporal nor a directional restriction. As McQuail (1997, 143) puts it: “It is not just that the mass audience had fragmented physically as a result of multiplication and abundance of media outlets . . . , but that the meanings of ‘audience’ have multiplied.”

### **AUDIENCE POLARIZATION**

Another concept that is closely related to audience segmentation is that of audience polarization (Webster & Phalen 1997). Audience polarization is defined as the tendency of individuals to move to the extremes of either consuming or avoiding some class of media content. Classes of media content can be defined solely by content (e.g., program genres) or by content and structures that are used to deliver content (e.g., TV channels).

For example: audience segmentation posits that in a multi-channel TV environment, overall market shares of channels become increasingly smaller. However, audience segmentation does not explain whether low market shares result from everyone spending a smaller amount of time watching a particular channel or whether some subset of the audience is spending less time watching single channels and more time watching other particular channels. The more audience segments differ in composition between channels, the higher the extent of audience polarization. Or to put it in statistical terms: the more homogeneous audiences are within channels and the more heterogeneous audiences are between channels, the higher the extent of audience polarization. Similar heterogeneous audiences across channels would be an indication of low audience polarization.

Audience polarization helps to understand the social implications of the new media environment. For example, if fewer and fewer people share media experiences, one may consider audience polarization as a threat to cultural (or national) identities (cf. Katz 1996).

### **EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE OF AUDIENCE SEGMENTATION AND POLARIZATION**

In a recent study, Webster (2005) re-examined empirically the phenomenon of audience segmentation and polarization. He concludes that audience segmentation is well underway and has been rather underestimated than overestimated. In the United States, for example, the three big nationwide networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC; → Television Networks) together rarely reach average audience shares of higher than 20 percent nowadays. Moreover, audience segmentation is occurring everywhere in multi-channel

TV environments. In addition to audience segmentation, there is empirical evidence for a modest audience polarization. This tendency, however, is still mainly driven by the structure of the media environment itself. Many TV channels, for example, are still not available to all audiences.

On a *methodological level*, audience segmentation can be studied by using standard audience research methods (→ Audience Research; Rating Methods) such as → survey and diary techniques. In most multi-channel TV environments so-called → “people-meters” are well established. These record electronically who watched which channel at what time (→ Nielsen Ratings). The combination of media usage data with the stated preferences, needs, and opinions of people can be used to better understand the compositions of audience segments. Statistical cluster and classification procedures are frequently applied for this purpose (→ Cluster Analysis; Discriminant Analysis; Factor Analysis).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Cluster Analysis ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Discriminant Analysis ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ People-Meter ▶ Public ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Survey ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Video Games

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## **Audiences, Female**

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The ways in which “the audience” has been conceptualized have moved, historically, through an arc from passive to active to interactive, and the embodied audience has become fragmented as the media industry tries to deliver niche audiences to particular

advertisers. One such segmented audience is that of the group “women,” even though an archetypal “woman” does not actually exist. However, many researchers have nonetheless focused on the ways in which women, as a specifically gendered audience, have reacted to and engaged with media such as TV and film, and how they consume genres which are supposed to be especially appealing to women, such as soaps, romantic fiction, and magazines. Work in this field has often been feminist in orientation and has mostly focused on women’s relationship with texts, although some work makes comparisons between women and men in terms of their enjoyment of particular media forms. However, the history of researchers’ engagement with the female audience is, in some ways, exemplified by the overdetermination of research studies on soaps and magazines.

### RESEARCH HISTORY

Research on the gendered audience spans more than half a century, although even 50 years ago, there were contradictory views on what kind of women were consuming popular cultural products (→ Soap Operas). For example, while some studies identified the “typical” consumer of radio soaps as working-class women with little education and limited possibilities for advancement, others in the same period suggested that women across *all* class positions enjoyed this genre. However, there was a little more agreement about some of the other (imagined) characteristics of the typical member of the female audience, including that she was usually married, between the ages of 18 and 35, and with some education. Herta Herzog’s analysis of soap consumers was more “positive” than other studies because she argued that audiences used soap opera to learn about aspirational middle-class values and behaviors (1944). Later studies did begin to conceptualize soap audiences as being more educated than previous studies had suggested but still characterized them (still predominantly women) as being socially lacking or isolated, watching soaps to escape the tedium of their dull lives.

By the 1980s, much mainstream work on soap audiences still maintained that there was a correlation between social interaction and sociability in the real world and the extent of soap watching. This reinforced the idea that soaps function as a surrogate friend for social inadequates (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). But what was often absent from these somewhat positivist and generally harsh analyses of the soap audience was any real sense of the discursive and pleasurable possibilities for social interaction based on a shared enthusiasm for particular shows. This analytical gap was puzzling since there was often an acknowledgment running through such studies that viewers *did* talk about shows with other people and that they derived pleasure from both individual consumption and the post-broadcast discussion with friends, family, and/or workmates. Arguably, it was the interest of (women) researchers who wanted to explore the genre of soap as a specifically gendered practice, aimed at women and enjoyed by women, that marked a shift in the way in which the audience for soaps began to be perceived during the late 1970s and early 1980s. It became possible and even desirable to think about “popular” texts as foci for serious scholarly analysis, and with that shift came an understanding of the significance of popular culture in the lives of ordinary people.

In particular, Dorothy Hobson’s (1982) ethnographic research (→ Ethnography of Communication) on the British series *Crossroads* made a significant departure from the

more usual research mode. Hobson went to women's homes and recorded the conversations she had about their viewing experiences of and responses to the show. She specifically aligned herself with her participants as a sister *fan* and was thus able to provoke candid discussions as a consequence of a shared and knowing interest. What Hobson found were viewers who enjoyed the show but were often embarrassed to admit they watched, or defensive about their guilty pleasure, expressing an internalized disdain for the series which they had "learned" from cultural critics.

Focusing on the same genre but using a different approach, Ien Ang's study (1985) of *Dallas* found, rather surprisingly, that most viewers who participated in her study believed the show to be "realistic" and congruent with their own lives and experiences. Ang's answer to this apparent conundrum was to theorize a notion of "emotional realism," so that the pleasures of affect for audiences were derived from a shared sense of personal tragedy, allowing them to empathize at an emotional level with the pain associated with familiar renditions of domestic dysfunction. Ang's work also made very clear that women and men derived different pleasures from their watching and were interested in different aspects of the narrative. In contemporary studies of Latin American women, similar understandings of "reality" were also observed, especially the incorporation of existing class-, race-, and gender-based tensions (Mayer 2003; Tufte 2002).

Contemporary work on women and soaps has both continued the ethnographic turn and revived more structured research modes. As with earlier studies, current researchers have been keen to credit audiences with sophisticated deconstructive and interpretive skills, trying to understand their viewing behaviors and pleasures as forms of active engagement rather than passive dislocation, and assuming, for example, that soap fan networks have the potential (and reality) of providing sites of resistance for women to engage in critical discourses about sex-role stereotyping and expectations. In this way, the process of discussing plotlines and character development in their favorite soap can actually enable women to use those narrative themes as a springboard for much wider debates about their own lives and those of other women they know.

The potential of a safe rehearsal of one's own life choices through the discussion of soap characters' circumstances is an important function for audiences, where the shared experience of bad luck or poor outcome provides strong identifications between audience and character. It is the narrative produced by audiences which constitutes the primary site of resistance, not the primary text itself, which is more usually encoded in line with the dominant conventions of a patriarchal status quo. However, some scholars have argued that soap opera itself is a subversive genre, since its staple ingredients of broken marriages, casual sex, unintended pregnancies, domestic violence, and petty crime are directly antithetical to the socially acceptable norms of romantic love contained within the domesticated marriage arrangement and good citizenship (Lovell 1981). Soap opera's interest in and portrayal of women's lives provides useful gender role correctives to the more normative renditions of femininity and masculinity found in the archetypal Hollywood film.

### **WOMEN WATCHING FILM**

While the principal focus for much academic study of women and film has been textual analysis, the highly gendered nature of which can be partially attributed to the ground-

breaking work of Laura Mulvey (1975), part of the development of “seeing” film through a gendered frame has engaged some feminist media scholars in looking beyond the text and their own interpretation toward the views of the audiences. Helen Taylor’s (1989) work in the late 1980s sought precisely to rupture the firm hold that “the text” had on film researchers and to counter the dangers inherent in theories which irrevocably situate women and men in fixed subject positions based on so-called sex-based characteristics. She showed the multiplicity of readings that audiences could bring to a single cultural product, let alone a genre such as the “woman’s film,” and identified the importance of historical specificity in understanding changing responses to texts, since her respondents were women who had seen the original screening of *Gone with the Wind* in 1939. Such studies placed the female spectator at the center of the analysis in ways which gave her importance in her own right, as possessing agency, rather than being simply “positioned” by the text (→ Text and Intertextuality).

Key tropes in popular culture are those of crime and violence, commonly paired, and researchers have begun to differentiate women and men audiences for this genre, often with surprising results. For example, women can be as enthusiastic for blood and gore as men; although many films in this broad genre frame women as victims, the audience is often encouraged to identify with the woman looking for revenge; and women will sometimes invent reasons for liking certain kinds of films, in say kick-ass martial arts genres, by suggesting they watch because they appreciate the high level of fighting skills displayed by the protagonists (→ Violence as Media Content). As the audience intellectualizes aspects of the content, the text is transformed into an object of aesthetic appreciation, giving the viewer a high-culture “defense” for her enjoyment. Such are the ways in which women’s position and required behavior in society are constrained by prescribed norms of femininity, it is little wonder that women have had to invent strategies which allow them to breathe.

## THE GENDERED AUDIENCE FOR NEWS

If soaps are regarded as the archetypal women’s genre, then news and current affairs are seen as of almost exclusive interest to men. It is often taken almost as read that women are not interested in news and that as a genre it is very much the domain of men. Consequently, although there have been any number of studies which have focused on how audiences understand news discourse, both print and broadcast, few of those studies disaggregate findings in terms of gender.

Women’s actual interest in politics is rarely reflected in their on-screen characterizations or as a thematic in either fiction or fact-based programs, which ignore the very real interest that “ordinary” women have in the political process and the policies that affect all our lives. Karen Ross (1995), who has conducted research on female audiences for news, explored the ways in which British women viewers engage with the images of themselves routinely portrayed in news media and the extent to which they negotiate or challenge traditional gender orthodoxies. Ross’s participants fully understood the existence of specific slants and foci in news reporting, commenting that programs are too politically biased, too male-oriented, and don’t talk to or about women in any depth. What that study showed very clearly was that, contrary to popular opinion, women do watch news and current affairs programs and when asked specifically about their consumption,

the great majority of respondents reported that they always watched or listened to at least one news program every day and most read a newspaper regularly (→ News Audience).

### WOMEN AND MAGAZINES

The ways in which advertising influences girls' and women's sense of self-worth through the representation of women and women's bodies in magazines have received considerable and enduring scrutiny over the past few decades in a number of nations. The vast majority of this work suggests that magazines work to the detriment of their readers in terms of the perpetuation of heterosexist norms about appropriate forms of femininity, causing dissatisfaction among women (readers). This dissatisfaction can turn inward, producing an escalation in eating disorders, as well as outward, as women purchase increasing numbers of products selling the impossible dream which is obviously unrealized (unrealizable), thus perpetuating the tragic cycle of dissatisfaction/expectation/trial/dissatisfaction.

While much audience research is situated within a white western paradigm, a number of important studies look beyond the Anglophone world. Some of these show that irrespective of the traditional norms of "sanctioned" femininity associated with a particular country, young women may still aspire to the version of white bodily perfection promoted by global (fashion) advertising: they still want to be Kate Moss. For example, although the young *Japanese women* in one study felt that it was important to have a career, they also wanted to be married (Luther & Nentl 2001). In another, focused on ethnic identification, *black women* identified closely with black models but white women did not display the same affinity with white models, possibly because black women were more likely to promote positive, community-based self-esteem than their white sisters (David et al. 2002). Another complicated finding is that women will often have contradictory responses to the advertising world's insistence on what passes for beauty, simultaneously acknowledging the importance of the Eurocentric ideal and admiring specific national norms of beauty, particularly in developing countries.

### THE INTERACTIVE WOMAN

Most feminist media scholarship on women as audience has tended to focus on women's appreciation and understanding of particular "female-oriented" texts, what they mean to women and their lives, and how women work with content both on their own and with others. However, these studies have generally assumed the audience is passive, in the sense of simply "watching" or "reading" material. More recently, though, the rapid developments in information and communication technologies mean that we have to rethink what it means to be an audience, including a gendered audience, and consider the (potential, at least) shifts in power between the audience and the artifact (→ Technology and Communication). At the time of writing, if women like watching *Xena: Warrior Princess* but want to see Xena and Gabrielle in a more explicit embrace, they can watch or even create alternative storylines on any number of Xena fan sites. If women want to read news which resonates with their own interests and lifestyle, they can access any number of online newspapers and magazines on both mainstream and women-focused websites (Harcourt

1999). If women want to watch a film but don't want to go to the cinema on their own, they can rent a DVD and watch it at home, including star interviews and outtakes.

The more active, discerning audience has not escaped the notice of media owners and advertisers, who now recognize the *active audience* in new ways as they seek to keep their attention and loyalty. For example, the producers of reality TV shows such as *Big Brother* let audiences play an active part in how the show develops over a period of weeks by voting off contestants. The relative power of the audience would seem to have grown, and although these innovations impact on women as well as men, how women and men actually experience being interactive is often quite different. These differences (and similarities) offer new sites for interrogation for feminist cultural studies scholars keen to understand these new practices of audience-hood and to identify the extent to which traditional discriminations are being maintained or challenged in this brave new world (→ Cultural Studies). Feminist political economists are also interested in questions about whether these new interactive arrangements between women audience members really change either women's relationship to the media industries or their social status. Meehan's (2002) work, which considers gender in the commodity audience, offers a foundation. Among other things, she asks whether one can understand women's true power as a commodity audience without also examining women's economic status, their wages, and their ability to render meaningful institutional decisions made within media industries.

To be sure, for some time now, the emancipatory potential of new technology *has* been both celebrated and challenged by feminist and other scholars (→ Internet). In particular, there has been anxiety not to over-romanticize the Internet as always and everywhere a force for good. Early supporters of the web celebrated its facility to offer not only a quasi-community in which to affirm membership but also a safe space in which to "try out" different versions of ourselves, but others have been much more cautious about the web's allure. In particular, the overt and covert "rules" that limit and delimit user involvement continue to cause concern, as does the increasing availability of pornographic material and images.

Interestingly, the same gender skews which exist in relation to audience involvement and participation in older forms of media are also found in new technologies in terms of access and involvement. In other words, "old" forms of differential access, based on personal characteristics such as gender and age as well as geography (the North–South divide), are replicated in this new medium, as any number of studies on the "digital divide" have found. The male-dominated development of new technologies is thus conceptualized as being yet another way in which to entrench gender divisions. Several studies in both the developing and the developed world show that women's use of the Internet is often squeezed between discharging their domestic and family responsibilities. Most gender-focused work on information and communication technologies (ICTs) has tended to look at the ways in which women audiences and users are marginalized and even excluded from the marvels of the world wide web. However, a few more recent studies have explored the active relationship which women have as consumers and users of new technologies, both in general terms and in terms of being specifically targeted as niche audiences (→ Digital Divide; Exposure to the Internet).

SEE ALSO: ► Audience Research ► Audience Segmentation ► Cultural Studies ► Digital Divide ► Ethnography of Communication ► Exposure to the Internet ► Fandom



- ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction
- ▶ Feminist Media
- ▶ Film Theory
- ▶ Heterosexism and the Media
- ▶ Internet
- ▶ Internet and Popular Culture
- ▶ Magazine
- ▶ News Audience
- ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships
- ▶ Soap Operas
- ▶ Technology and Communication
- ▶ Text and Intertextuality
- ▶ Uses and Gratifications
- ▶ Violence as Media Content
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## **Australia: Media System**

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European settlement of Australia commenced with the establishment in 1788 of a British penal settlement in what later became the city of Sydney. While Australia was inhabited by an estimated 750,000 Aboriginal people, the continent was claimed as a possession of the British Empire. By the middle of the nineteenth century Australia comprised six internally self-governing colonies centered on the capitals of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, and Hobart. With federation in 1901 these colonies became States of the Commonwealth of Australia, a constitutional democracy based on a federal division of powers.

Australia, with a culturally diverse population of over 20 million in 2006, has had a long, continuous experience of democratic government based around a party system dominated by two political groups, the Australian Labor Party on the one hand and a coalition of conservative parties on the other. Under the federal system of government the powers of the Commonwealth Parliament are formally limited to areas of national importance, such as foreign relations, defense, and immigration. The Australian Constitution also gives the Commonwealth responsibility for the regulation of “postal, telegraphic, and other like services.” Under this provision, the Commonwealth has taken responsibility for the regulation of all broadcasting and telecommunications in Australia.

There are no press laws requiring newspaper licensing. The federal government’s power over the press is limited to its general corporate affairs responsibilities and foreign investment policies. It has, at times, used these to limit the extent of foreign ownership of the press. There is no constitutional provision that explicitly guarantees freedom of the press. Australia has maintained the English tradition that freedom of speech is adequately protected by common law (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

The European settlement of Australia in the nineteenth century took place at a time of rapid growth of the press in Britain, enabled by technological advances, liberalization of taxation and other government controls, and increasing levels of literacy. The growing importance of the press in social and political life was also reflected in Australia’s development. Australia’s first newspaper, the *Sydney Gazette*, which commenced publication in 1803, was published by the authority of the Governor. However, by the 1830s controls had been largely lifted and seven papers had been established in New South Wales. As settlements spread to inland areas, stimulated by gold rushes and agricultural development, the printing presses followed. In the 1890s it was observed that it was not unusual for towns of around 10,000 inhabitants to have four newspapers. It was also observed that in the Australian colonies there was approximately one newspaper title per 7,000 inhabitants, while in Great Britain there was one per 18,000. The current distribution of newspapers reflects nineteenth-century settlement patterns. While there are two national papers, the *Australian* and the *Australian Financial Review*, the press is largely locally oriented.

## PRESS DEVELOPMENTS

Since the 1920s the trend has been toward a reduction in the number of titles and a *concentration of ownership*. In 1923 there were 26 dailies in Australia’s six capital cities with 21 independent owners. By 1950 this had fallen to 15 dailies with 10 owners. Since then further metropolitan newspapers have closed, including all afternoon papers, and there has been a marked increase in the concentration of ownership. While Melbourne and Sydney retain two daily newspapers, all other cities are served by a single daily newspaper (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

Press *circulation*, relative to population, has declined more sharply in Australia than in any comparable country. Between 1970 and 2000 newspaper circulation reduced by half from 321 to 162 per 1,000 population. On the same measure, newspaper circulation reduced by 29 percent in the United Kingdom and 33 percent in the United States (Tiffen & Gittins 2004). In 2006, a total of 731 newspapers were listed in Margaret Gee’s *Australian Media Guide*, including over 400 regional and country newspapers, around 160 suburban

papers, and over 100 ethnic papers. Of the 11 major national or metropolitan dailies there were two which had daily average circulations of around 400,000 or more, five with average circulations of around 200,000, with the remainder having lower circulations.

The circulation of Saturday editions of major papers such as the *Age* (Melbourne) and the *Sydney Morning Herald* are some 80 percent larger than weekday circulations while the four newspapers with the highest circulation are Sunday newspapers. This suggests a reduced role for the daily newspaper, a trend linked to the idea that society is becoming increasingly time-poor and the fact that broadcasting has largely supplanted the traditional “latest news” function of newspapers. It is also argued that the decline in relative circulation can be linked to the concentration of press ownership in Australia and the fact that most cities only have a single newspaper (Tiffen 2006).

Rupert Murdoch’s → News Corporation accounts for just under 70 percent of the total circulation of major papers in Australia. The other major players are John Fairfax Limited, with 21 percent of the circulation and WA Newspapers with 9 percent. A fourth significant player, Rural Press Limited, owns the national capital’s *Canberra Times* and over 150 country papers. While these existing newspaper groups are profitable, it is extremely unlikely that any new daily newspapers will be launched in Australia given declining total circulation and the fall in the total newspaper proportion of advertising expenditure.

The major newspaper groups successfully operate *Internet editions* and associated services. Fairfax Digital is the leading news website with an average of 3.2 million unique browsers per month in 2005–2006, followed by Ninemsn (an offshoot of the Channel 9 television network) and News Limited’s website. Newspaper companies do not have significant interests in the broadcasting media in Australia because of government restrictions which have, since 1987, restricted cross-media ownership in any single market and so have prevented a company from having major newspaper and television interests in a single city.

## BROADCASTING SYSTEM

There is a dual system of radio and television broadcasting with two state-owned networks, largely funded by the federal government, operating side by side with government-licensed commercial operators. Regular radio broadcasting began as a commercial operation in 1923. In 1932 twelve existing radio stations were nationalized and formed the basis of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), modeled on the → BBC. The ABC now operates four national radio networks consisting of 60 metropolitan and regional stations throughout Australia as well as an international radio service broadcasting to Asia and the Pacific. A second publicly funded network, the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS), was established in 1978 and currently broadcasts in 68 languages to all major centers in Australia (→ Public Broadcasting Systems).

In 2006 there were about 260 commercial radio stations and 360 community radio licenses. With 37 million radio receivers, radio is arguably the most pervasive medium in Australia. A 2003 survey found that 70 percent of the population regularly listened to commercial radio, 51 percent to the ABC or SBS and 18 percent to community radio. In the early 1990s the government lifted restrictions on the number of radio stations a company could own and on foreign ownership. This led to a rapid consolidation of ownership,

accompanied by national networking. The metropolitan market is now dominated by three major owners while a single operator dominates the regional market, owning over 90 stations.

Regular commercial and public service television broadcasting began in 1956. In the early decades of television, programs from the United States and the United Kingdom were dominant. The period from 1970 to 1990 is regarded as the high point of Australian television drama while in the 1990s and 2000s lifestyle programs and reality TV have come to the fore. A strong tradition of public service television, through the ABC and SBS, continues albeit in an era of reduced government support. It is also suggested that, given the abundance of media made available through new technologies, there is a reduced community need for public broadcasting, though others argue that the role of public service broadcasting in providing an independent and noncommercial space for comment and discussion is as important as ever (Jacka 2006).

Commercial radio and television broadcasters are regulated by a licensing system administered by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). The principle that has underpinned television regulation has been that, as spectrum allocation involves leasing a scarce and powerful resource to private interests, it is appropriate to attach conditions to licenses which reflect the public interest. These conditions cover programming (e.g., requirements for Australian content) and codes of practice. This rationale has, however, been challenged in more recent years with the increased availability of spectrum associated with the shift from analogue to digital broadcasting (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

## REGULATION AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Before 1987 media companies combined interests in television, newspapers, and radio in single markets and could exploit synergies between different areas of their business, for example in advertising sales. However, as already indicated, the government introduced restrictions on *cross-media ownership* in 1987. Concurrently, a rule which had limited ownership to two television stations was dropped and replaced by an audience-reach rule which treated Australia as a single television market. This, accompanied by the development of a domestic satellite system from 1985, encouraged networking. These changes led to a major restructuring of the industry with the result that the commercial free-to-air television system, though it comprises over 40 commercial channels, is now dominated by three networks, Channels Seven, Nine, and Ten. This has led to an increased uniformity of free-to-air programming across Australia.

Subscription television was introduced in 1995 utilizing both cable and satellite delivery systems (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television). While the subscription TV share of the viewing audience has been growing, uptake has been relatively slow, with around 23 percent of homes connected by 2004 compared to 88 percent in the US and 50 percent in the United Kingdom. The most powerful player in the Australian subscription television landscape is Foxtel, jointly owned by the Australian telco Telstra (50 percent), News Corporation (25 percent) and Publishing and Broadcasting Limited (25 percent).

The first decade of the twenty-first century has seen further major changes to the structure and regulation of the Australian media arising from the recognition that the cross-media ownership laws are obsolete in an era of *technological convergence*, the switch

from analogue to digital broadcasting, and the increasing number of available media distribution platforms, especially the Internet. The government-initiated switch to a fully digital broadcasting system by 2012 has opened up new opportunities for multichanneling. Internet streaming and podcasting of radio has quickly established itself, and similar developments in television are anticipated (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

The availability of new technologies is also leading to the fragmentation of traditional audience cohorts. In the decade 1995–2004 Australians, on average, watched free-to-air television for over 20 hours per week. This audience is, however, slowly declining in response to greater media diversity, particularly in the youth market where the uptake of new technologies is very strong.

Between 1998 and 2005 the number of Australian households with a computer increased from 44 percent to 67 percent, while the number of households connected to the Internet increased from 16 percent to 56 percent. The Internet is lightly regulated in Australia, though the 1999 Broadcasting Services Amendment (Online Services) Act is designed to limit objectionable content hosted within Australia (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Cable Television ► Circulation ► Communication and Law ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Journalism: Legal Situation ► Media Policy ► News Corporation ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Satellite Television ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Austria: Media System**

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Austria is a parliamentary democratic federal republic with a population of 8.26 million. The official language is German; regional official languages are Croatian, Slovenian, and Hungarian. The historical development of its media system can be divided into the

following phases: the period 1621–1848 under the influence of censorship; the abolishment of censorship in the year of the revolution (1848); and the adoption of freedom of opinion and press freedom in the constitution of 1867, which facilitated the development of a modern press in Austria. The elimination of the parliament in 1933 brought measures to regulate the press again, and Austria's annexation by the Third Reich (1938–1945) led to a phase when the press was controlled by a totalitarian regime. After this there was a time of prosperous development with increasing modernization (Schmolke 1996).

The beginnings of broadcasting in Austria date back to 1924, when the Radio-Verkehrs-Aktiengesellschaft (RAVAG) started its operations. Initially founded as a monopoly with close proximity to the state, RAVAG was easily incorporated into the Third Reich broadcasting company in 1938. After World War II, broadcasting was constituted as a monopoly company under governmental influence in 1957. The public broadcaster *Österreichischer Rundfunk* (ORF), founded later, emanated from this station, and held a monopoly position until 1993 in the radio broadcasting sector and until 2001 in the television sector.

Today, Austria's media system can be characterized as typical of a small European state which is under the strong influence of a bigger neighbor market, in this case that of the Federal Republic of Germany (→ Germany: Media System). The relatively late introduction of the dual broadcasting system with public and private stations, as well as the particularly high degree of concentration in the press sector, can be regarded as identifying features. According to Hallin & Mancini (2004) Austria's media system can be associated with the (north-central European) "democratic corporatist model," characterized by a process (albeit interrupted) of democratization, moderately defined lines of conflict, consent orientation, organized pluralism, corporatism, and a strong welfare state.

With 19 independent newspapers and (still) two newspapers owned by political parties, the *Austrian press* landscape is shaped by the dominance of a small number of big publishing houses. The tabloid paper *Neue Kronen-Zeitung* has been the uncontested market leader for many years. With a readership share of more than 40 percent, it is one of the biggest newspapers worldwide in proportion to the size of the population. In the late 1980s bigger publishing houses from Germany began efforts to establish themselves in the Austrian market, which intensified the process of concentration.

In the year 2000, the development of market concentration was further intensified when the biggest publishing house entered into cooperation with the predominant publisher of magazines. Following an international trend, the publication of free daily newspapers led to an increase in the variety of titles. Four new papers, representing a counterbalance to the newly founded paper *Österreich* in September 2006, brought a new dynamic into the market. A press subsidies scheme, introduced in 1975, tries to ensure that there is variety in the market.

Since the 1950s *radio* broadcasting has been chiefly in the hands of the public broadcasting company, ORF. In the course of its operation it established four radio stations, thus building up a broad offer. It took a long time before private providers were admitted, in 1993. In the year 2006 about 60 commercial and four public radio stations were competing on a regional and national level, making ORF stations still the market leaders. Besides public and private radio, there are also programs for language minorities and noncommercial stations.

As in the radio broadcasting sector, the public ORF was also the only *television* broadcaster in Austria for many years. After a first reform in the late 1960s, aimed at

reducing political influence on the broadcasting company, the first steps in modernization included a comprehensive reform of the ORF program. Up to the time of writing, the ORF has been funded through a compulsory television license fee (currently about 51 percent of income) as well as advertising revenues (currently about 34 percent of income). Although foreign broadcasts could be received through cable and satellite transmission (in more than 85 percent of households), and competition, mainly from German private television channels, became fiercer, ORF was the last public television broadcasting company in Europe to lose its monopoly position, in 2001. This long phase as a monopolist enabled the ORF to expand its market position, with an average market share of about 50 percent today. Since 2002 one private Austria-wide channel (ATV plus) and three local channels have been broadcasting with modest market shares. Austria's step into digital television was made in 2000 with satellite television broadcasting (ORF digital) and with terrestrial transmission of digital television in 2006.

It was not until Austria's EU accession in 1995 that the telecommunications monopoly was opened up. In 1996 the first mobile phone provider started operations, and developed dynamically soon after. Above all, the late 1990s showed a clear increase in the size of the market. In comparison to other European countries the level of *Internet* access increased quickly, and it measures up to the international level today. Overall, the telecommunications market has been characterized by strong rates of growth in mobile and data communication, showing consolidation processes in the market dynamic after liberalization.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Germany: Media System ▶ Internet ▶ Newspaper ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## **Automaticity**

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Automaticity in information processing is best conceptualized in terms of its antithesis. “Deliberative” processing involves the comprehension and use of information for a

particular purpose (e.g., to make a judgment or decision, to communicate to others, etc.). This processing is conscious and intentional; it requires some degree of cognitive or motor effort, and it is volitional. In contrast, behavior is automatic if it does *not* have one or more of these characteristics. That is, it is unintentional *or* it is performed unconsciously without awareness *or* it is effortless *or* it is unable to be controlled. Although these criteria are not independent, a behavior is often characterized as automatic if it meets any one of them (→ Cognition; Information Processing; Mindlessness and Automaticity).

Of the four criteria for inferring automaticity, *lack of awareness* is most widely investigated. Numerous experiments demonstrate that stimuli to which people are exposed subliminally (below the threshold of conscious awareness) can influence not only the concepts they use to interpret information but also the information they use as a basis for inferences and the standards they employ in making comparisons (→ Experimental Design). Furthermore, these stimuli can activate goal-directed behavior and can have a direct impact on behavioral decisions (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of).

It is important to specify what people are aware or unaware of. As in the preceding examples, people can be unaware of a stimulus itself. In other cases, however, they might be aware of a stimulus but be unaware of the mental processes that govern its interpretation and use. For example, people who hear that someone wants to cross the Atlantic in a sailboat might interpret the behavior as “adventurous” but be unaware of the factors that led them to select this description rather than “reckless.” Alternatively, a person might form a favorable or unfavorable impression of someone on the basis of an → interaction with the person but be unaware of the specific features of the person that gave rise to this impression. Finally, people might be aware of a stimulus but not be aware of its influence. As one study shows, for example, individuals can be aware of a person’s ethnicity but unaware of its impact on their judgments of the person or their interpretation of his or her behavior. Similarly, people might be aware that they are in a good or bad mood but unaware of the influence that these feelings have on their evaluation of a person or object they happen to encounter.

The effects of subliminally activated concepts and knowledge are *unintended*. However, stimuli of which people are aware can also have unintended influences on their behavior. An example is provided by the “chameleon effect,” or a tendency for individuals to imitate the nonverbal behavior of persons with whom they are interacting (crossing their legs, rubbing their chin, etc.) without intending to do so. People often use the events and situations they see on television as bases for inferring the incidence of these events in the real world. Consequently, heavy television viewers tend to overestimate the incidence of events and situations that are over-represented in this medium (violent crimes, or people with swimming pools in their back yard; → Cultivation Effects; Media and Perceptions of Reality). However, the use of this source of information is unintentional, and calling attention to these effects can lead individuals to adjust for their influence.

The third criterion for inferring the automaticity of behavior is the extent to which people are able to control its occurrence (*controllability*). Native English speakers may find it impossible not to understand the statement “the boy kicked the ball.” At the same time, they cannot help but recognize that “the ball kicked the boy” is nonsensical, and that it can be understood only by engaging in deliberative processing (e.g., constructing a mental image of a ball with legs beating up on the boy). Similarly, it is difficult for



Americans not to recognize that the statement “Abraham Lincoln was Prime Minister of England” is untrue. Efforts to exercise control over a behavior can sometimes have unintended effects. This possibility is exemplified by research on the effects of thought suppression. That is, conscious attempts to suppress the use of a stereotype in making judgments can be effective in the short run. However, the attempts to suppress the stereotype actually increase the tendency to use it later, once conscious efforts to avoid using it no longer exist.

Behavior and judgments are performed automatically to the extent that their performance requires no cognitive resources (*efficiency*). This possibility is typically examined by asking individuals to perform two tasks, A and B, simultaneously (e.g., to remember an eight-digit number while making judgments of visual stimuli). If one task, A, is performed just as quickly and well when people are simultaneously performing B as when they are not, one can conclude that B is performed automatically. For example, research shows that gender stereotypes have similar effects on judgments of a target person regardless of the cognitive demands placed on them by performing a secondary task, whereas behavior and trait information has less effect when other cognitive demands are high. This suggests that the implications of  $\rightarrow$  stereotypes for judgments, unlike those of other types of information, are identified and applied automatically.

*Daily life activities* normally involve a mixture of both deliberative and automatic processing. A driver may consciously think about the way to a restaurant and may intentionally look for street signs that indicate where to turn. Moreover, the person may deliberately slow down to let a pedestrian cross the street. At the same time, he or she may not be conscious of the specific actions performed to attain these goals (turning left, stopping and starting the car, etc.). Similarly, writers may think consciously about the wording of a sentence they construct. Yet, many of the specific words and phrases they employ may come to mind automatically. A conceptualization of individuals’ responses to communications will ultimately require an understanding of how these two types of processing interface.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Cultivation Effects ► Experimental Design ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ► Information Processing ► Interaction ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Mindlessness and Automaticity ► Stereotypes

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# Availability, Cognitive

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The term “availability heuristic” refers to a judgmental rule of thumb for estimating frequencies and probabilities. It states that individuals determine frequencies and probabilities “by the ease with which relevant instances come to mind” (Tversky & Kahneman 1973, 207). The logic underlying the availability heuristic holds that frequent and probable events are well represented in memory and are therefore easy to retrieve. Reversing this link, the experienced ease associated with retrieving specific events from memory can be used as an indicator for the frequency and probability of events. For example, when asked how many different game shows are currently aired on TV, one may determine how easy or difficult pertaining instances can be recalled and base the judgment on the experienced ease or difficulty associated with this recall (“If it so easy to recall examples of different game shows, then there must be many”).

The availability heuristic generally yields accurate results since frequent events are better represented in memory than infrequent ones. However, when experiences of ease or difficulty are influenced by factors other than frequency of prior exposure, the availability heuristic may be misleading. In particular, events are also more easily recalled the more recently the event occurred or was otherwise activated (recency effect), the more attention they received during encoding (salience effect), or the more the situational context of the retrieval matches the initial encoding context (congruency effect). Consequently, despite being generally accurate, the availability heuristic may produce misleading results too. As a prominent example, it has been demonstrated that individuals overestimate the prevalence of *extreme* causes of death, e.g., flood, homicide, tornado (Combs & Slovic 1979). The striking bias was, obviously, not a result of “reality,” but was rather a consequence of media coverage, which, it has been suggested, tends to over-report sensational events (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of). Over-reporting is likely to render extreme events very accessible, thus increasing the ease with which related pieces of information can be brought to mind. Therefore, whenever media coverage does not reflect true variation in the environment (e.g., because of over-reporting of extreme events), frequency judgments are likely to be biased due to the judgmental implications of the availability heuristic (→ Priming Theory; Media and Perceptions of Reality; Reality and Media Reality).

The above examples suggest that individuals may rely on the ease or difficulty associated with retrieving information from memory when forming frequency and probability judgments. In a classic study, Tversky and Kahneman (1973) demonstrated this by asking participants whether there are more English words that begin with the letter *r* than those that have the letter *r* in the third position. Usually, individuals judge words that begin with the letter *r* to be more frequent than those with *r* in the third position, despite the reverse being true. Presumably, this is because it is easier to recall words that

begin with a particular letter than those in with the letter in a particular position, and the experienced ease of retrieval signals that there are many words of this kind. Although numerous studies employing different tasks and settings have supported these results, a closer look at the supporting evidence raises the questions of whether the effects of the availability heuristic are indeed mediated by experiences of ease or difficulty. On the one hand, words that begin with *r* are *easier* to recall; on the other hand, however, individuals are also likely to recall *more* words of this category. While the first explanation rests on the experienced *ease* as initially hypothesized by Tversky and Kahneman, the second explanation rests on the *content information* that is recalled. Addressing this confusion, Schwarz et al. (1991) developed a paradigm that allows for disentangling the competing explanations of ease versus content. Participants recalled either six or 12 instances of prior self-assertive behavior and subsequently judged their own self-assertiveness. As recalling six instances is easy, while recalling 12 is difficult, the implications of experienced ease versus recalled content information were diametrically opposed. In particular, if participants relied on their experiences of retrieval ease, they would judge their own self-assertiveness more positively after recalling six (easy) rather than 12 (difficult) instances – after all, if it is easy to come up with instances, one has to be self-assertive (and vice versa for experiences of difficulty). Contrarily, if participants relied on the content information, they would judge their own self-assertiveness more positively after recalling many rather than few instances, because more material was retrieved from memory. Judgmental results were in accordance with the ease- but not the content-explanation, thus underscoring that the effects of the availability heuristic are indeed mediated by experiences of ease or difficulty.

Three recent developments deserve particular mention. For one, it has been demonstrated that not only judgments of frequency and probability, but also *evaluative* judgments of many kinds may be affected by experiences of ease or difficulty. For instance, judgments about consumer products, about health-related issues (→ Health Communication), or about other individuals may be informed by the ease with which relevant pieces of information come to mind.

In a more loose relation to the original idea that ease of retrieval influences judgments of frequency and probability, one could speculate that individuals may draw inferences about the importance or adequacy of a given topic for the present situation. If this were the case, issues that are strongly covered in the media – and are thus easily accessible – would be considered important because they come to mind so easily. Such a mechanism could account for the agenda-setting function of the media, besides a more traditional mere priming approach (→ Agenda Setting Effects; Priming Theory).

Moreover, one may ask *how often* or *when* individuals rely on the experienced ease as opposed to the recalled content? First, experiences of retrieval ease are likely to be relied on in conditions of low processing motivation/capacity, that is, when individuals either do not want to or cannot invest much cognitive resources in the formation of judgments and decisions (→ Trap Effect). Second, experiences of retrieval ease are likely to be relied on if individuals are in a positive (rather than negative) mood state, or if individuals are low (rather than high) in depressive symptomatology. Third, experiences of retrieval ease are likely to be relied on if individuals currently or dispositionally experience uncertainty. Finally, experiences of retrieval ease are likely to be relied on only if they are perceived to be diagnostic for the judgment in question.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Health Communication ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Trap Effect

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## **Avatars and Agents**

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The term “avatar” derives from the Sanskrit word *avatāra*, meaning “incarnation” and has been used to describe a deliberate descent of a higher being into mortal realms for special purposes. Avatar also has a long history of use in Hindu texts to characterize the human appearance on earth of various Hindu gods such as Vishnu, Shiva, and Ganesha. More recently, avatar has become a *popular term in new media technology* to describe the digital representation, human or otherwise, of a real person in a virtual world. This use of the term emerged initially as a text construct in multiple user dungeons (MUDs), text-based social gathering points and chatrooms that became popular in the early days of the → Internet, and then later on to describe a two-dimensional icon used on Internet forums (Damer 1997; Fink 1999; Blackwood 2006) and other digital communities or the form of a three-dimensional human model used in computer games (Lessig 2000). For example, a person can use an avatar to represent himself or herself in a meeting held in an online virtual environment such as *Second Life* or similarly as a tutor in the course of conducting a distance learning activity.

*Avatars* can be designed to suit the “owner’s” choice of how they want to be represented, whether it be a realistic representation of their actual appearance, an idealized form, or even a surreal character or animal. They are operated in digital worlds typically using mouse and keyboard interfaces and are akin to a puppet controlled by a puppeteer. Users can interact through their avatar with other avatars that also represent other live users

who are “present” in a virtual space. The most common mode of communication between avatars is text-based, whereby the user can communicate in shared digital worlds by typed speech that appears in close proximity to their avatar for others to read. In these interactions vocal prosody and body/face gesture-based expressions of emotion are typically limited, so a variety of text codes have evolved to serve this function (→ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter). However, some digital environments can allow for basic keyboard control of a limited set of “universal” body and facial actions to serve the purpose of expressing → emotion and for the enhancement of believability.

By contrast, an *agent* is a more complex software entity that “possesses” or retains a certain level of autonomy or even some level of artificial intelligence. In real life, an agent can be a representative who acts on behalf of other persons or organizations for a variety of purposes (e.g., publicity, real estate, FBI, etc.). In digital technology, an agent is often referred to as a *software agent*, which is an abstraction or a logical model that describes software that acts for a user or other program in a relationship of agency (Franklin & Graesser 1996). Software agents can be autonomous, exhibit artificial intelligence, such as learning and reasoning, and may communicate and cooperate to achieve an objective. Viewed in this fashion, an autonomous agent is a system situated within (and as a part of) an environment that senses that environment and acts on it, over time, in pursuit of its own agenda so as to affect what it senses in the future (Franklin & Graesser 1996). Such agents are self-contained and capable of making independent decisions and taking actions to satisfy “internal” goals based upon their software and the sensed environment.

An *intelligent agent* is a software agent that exhibits some form of artificial intelligence that assists the user and acts on their behalf. In some literature, intelligent agents are also referred to as autonomous intelligent agents, which means they can act independently, and will learn and adapt to changing circumstances. With recent advances in digital technology, intelligent agents have become more common in everyday life. For example, *buyer agents* from shopping websites can explore a network (e.g., the Internet) to retrieve information from various vendors about a product that a customer wants to purchase. These agents, also known as “shopping bots,” work very efficiently for commodity products such as CDs, books, and electronic components. In addition to finding a product at the lowest price, buyer agents can also offer users a list of products that the user might like to buy on the basis of what he or she is buying now and has bought in the past. Amazon.com is a good example of a site that employs this type of shopping bot (→ E-Commerce).

In recent years, there has been growing interest in a particular form of intelligent autonomous agent – one that looks and acts like a human being. These software entities, often called *virtual humans*, can be designed to engage in conversation and participate in collaborative tasks while inhabiting a simulated environment. Such virtual humans have been created for use in a variety of applications, including primary education (Biswas et al. 2005), training (Swartout et al. 2006), and therapy (Marsella et al. 2003), as well as in marketing and entertainment. With continuing advances in virtual human technology, one could speculate on a wide variety of areas where their impact could be felt. History students could visit simulations of ancient Greece and debate Aristotle. Persons with social phobia could practice interpersonal interaction skills in the safety of their homes. Social psychologists could study theories of communication by systematically modifying a virtual human’s verbal and nonverbal behavior as they interact with other virtual

humans. Virtual human teachers could provide engaging and tireless educational activities that apply pedagogical best practices anytime, anywhere, and at any pace that learners require.

However, the construction of useful and believable virtual humans is still a challenging task and requires multidisciplinary effort. Since a virtual human agent is designed to emulate a real human, people have high consensual expectations as to how it should look and act, and will be disturbed by or misinterpret even minor discrepancies from human norms. Virtual humans must act and react in their simulated environment, drawing on the computer science domains of automated reasoning and planning. To hold a conversation, they must exploit the full gamut of natural language research. To create virtual human bodies that can be controlled in real time requires significant computer graphics and → animation knowledge (→ Graphic Design). And designers of embodied virtual human agents must draw heavily on the disciplines of psychology and communication to create entities that can effectively convey nonverbal behavior, emotion, and personality. In this regard, the creation of a virtual human is still a daunting task, but research is progressing on multiple fronts. Although Asimov's benevolent robots are still a distant fantasy, realistic interactive virtual humans will almost certainly populate our near future, guiding us toward new opportunities to learn, enjoy, and consume.

SEE ALSO: ► Animation ► E-Commerce ► Emotion ► Graphic Design ► Internet  
► Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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# B

## Bad News in Medicine, Communicating

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Any information that produces a negative alteration to a person's expectations about the future can be defined as bad news (Buckman 1992). Notwithstanding that there are instances in which information is in all probability universally appraised as bad, such as the sudden diagnosis of a fatal disease, most published articles on the topic adhere to the basic assumption that bad news is subjective and depends on individual differences in personality, personal resources, cognitive appraisals, expectations, and so on.

Medical information, then, is defined as bad news only when a patient appraises it as such after its disclosure. The medical literature has focused primarily on the physician's perspective on communicating bad news. Research investigating the patient's perspective is scarce. Questions include how to break bad news successfully, and how physicians and patients experience the delivery of bad news. The two questions are strongly related, for physicians' and patients' experiences not only guide how bad news is communicated, they also partly define the extent to which the communication of bad news can be considered successful (→ Health Communication; Doctor–Patient Talk).

### RESEARCH TOPICS

The medical literature on communicating bad news has been largely nonempirical, involving editorials, reviews, and opinion pieces. In the paradigms typically used to study the communication of bad news empirically, physicians are asked to recall a time when they communicated bad news and to report on their experiences and difficulties associated with delivering the news. In a few other studies, the patients' perspective is examined by either assessing their preferences for bad news delivery in general or by retrospectively assessing how they have experienced a specific bad news transaction. While these self-reports have yielded valuable information about and insight into difficulties faced by health-care professionals and patients' needs with regard to the communication of bad news, the extent to which these data reliably reflect actual practice is unknown. Only a handful of studies have made use of observational strategies to investigate actual physician–patient interactions during bad news transactions (e.g., Eggly et al. 2006). The lack of observational data may partly be because the setting is an inherently difficult



one to study, and because ethical considerations limit the feasibility of observational studies.

In most studies, participants have been physicians working in a variety of medical disciplines in which the communication of bad news is common, such as oncology, surgery, pediatrics, emergency departments, and family practice. Typically, they are asked to report what they do when planning and delivering bad news to patients, and which difficulties they face. Other kinds of participants in studies on the communication of bad news have included patients and (medical) students, who might have experienced delivering or receiving bad news. For example, Eberhardt McKee and Ptacek (2001) studied the topic by asking college students about their recollection of a time they had delivered bad news. In Ptacek and Ptacek's study (2001), cancer patients provided information about how their physicians delivered bad cancer-specific news to them and to what extent they experienced stress while they received the news.

### IDENTIFYING THE RIGHT WAY TO COMMUNICATE BAD NEWS

If physicians are to have any hope of successfully breaking bad news, there must be systematic, observable ways in which this type of communication can be done well, and done badly. That is, there must be reliable indicators of successful communication of bad news. Due to the lack of rigorous empirical research on the topic, no perfect manner of breaking bad news has yet been identified.

However, some frequent *correlates of successful delivery* have been mentioned repeatedly across articles (see Ptacek & Eberhardt 1996 for a literature review). These correlates can be grouped into three different categories: content of the message (what and how much information is given); facilitation (where and when information is conveyed); and support (emotional support during the interaction).

With regard to the *message's content*, appropriate behaviors include giving clear and honest information, allowing patients time to ask questions and express emotional concerns, using simple language, showing a confident and competent attitude, and letting patients know that bad news is coming (i.e., start the conversation with a warning shot). In addition, doctors should check what patients already know and summarize and repeat information if necessary. A crucial aspect of delivering a bad news message is that doctors maintain a balance between honesty and sensitivity.

The *facilitation dimension* mainly refers to the physical setting in which the news is delivered. Bad news should be delivered in a quiet location that offers patients privacy and minimizes the chances of interruption. Furthermore, doctors should take care to have sufficient time to insure that all information can be communicated at a time that is convenient for the patient.

Finally, the *support dimension* includes such behaviors as offering hope and showing care and respect for the patient, identifying the patient's support network, and having them present during the interaction, if desired by the patient. An essential aspect of supporting the patient is acknowledging his or her distress and letting the patient know that it is all right to be emotional.

The identified correlates of successfully breaking bad news are quite similar to the patient-centered communication style advocated for doctor-patient interactions in general. As the patient-centered communication style has repeatedly been shown to be associated with better

health-related outcomes for patients, it is reasonable to assume that in the particular case of delivering bad news, the same type of communication style can be successful too. In addition, scarce empirical research indicates that there is agreement between patients and physicians on the important dimensions of the bad news process. It should be noted, though, that systematic empirical research on these correlates of the delivery of bad news is lacking, and observational data reflecting the actual practice of the communication of bad news are practically nonexistent. Thus, the extent to which these correlates are reliable and valid indices of successfully communicating bad news remains open for empirical research.

### **PATIENTS' EXPERIENCES**

When asked to recall a bad news episode, most patients report positive experiences; they are satisfied with what is said and how it is said. However, many patients also report a gap between the amount of information they received and the amount of information they desired. This finding has often been reported in the medical literature, and may partly stem from physicians underestimating the extent to which patients want to be informed about their illness. Most patients want to be told the whole truth, though. In addition, ethical and legal considerations (i.e., informed consent) oblige doctors to inform their patients fully and to share the decision-making process with them.

Apart from patients' desires and legal requirements, another important reason to give adequate information lies in its influence on outcomes. That is, adequate information provision during bad news consultations is related to greater patient satisfaction, fewer depressive and anxiety disorders, and better coping strategies. Thus, the way a bad news message is communicated to the patient seems to have a profound influence on patients' emotions, attitudes, and how they view their future.

Although it is complicated to define what adequate information entails exactly, there seems to be a broad consensus of opinion about what patients want to hear and how they want the news to be delivered. In general, physicians with a caring attitude who show concern for their patients and give them time to talk and ask questions are better received than physicians displaying a cold professional detachment. In addition, Parker et al.'s (2001) study has shown that aspects related to the content dimension are the most important, again indicating that patients place a high value on being adequately informed.

### **PHYSICIANS' EXPERIENCES**

Research has shown that after delivering the bad news message, doctors tend to respond to their patient by assuring them immediately that they can at least control, if not cure, the disease. Why do doctors respond in this way, instead of first acknowledging the patient's distress and eliciting any underlying concerns? Part of the answer can be found in the so-called *MUM effect*, the reluctance to transmit bad news. Not only is bad news communicated less quickly compared to good news, it is also communicated less fully and less frequently. Explanations for the occurrence of the MUM effect can be grouped into three categories: communicator's self-concern, which reflects the costs associated with delivering bad news; communicator's concern with recipient, which relates to negative

effects of the news for the receiver; and communicator's concern with norms, which is related to societal rules that govern social interactions (Eberhardt McKee & Ptacek 2001).

With regard to doctors' self-concern, the costs of communicating bad news are primarily related to *difficulties in handling their own emotions*. For instance, doctors might fear being blamed by the patient or expressing their emotions, or might feel guilty at not being able to cure the disease. These feelings of inadequacy may stem partly from exaggerated expectations of the possibilities of medicine, on the part of both doctors and patients. Concerns related to the recipient of the bad news are associated with doctors' fear that giving bad news will lead to undesirable emotional reactions that have long-term harmful consequences. The reluctance to eliminate hope goes a long way back in history, and Hippocrates' advice to conceal most things from the patient, and reveal nothing of his or her future or present condition, still seems to live on in today's world of medicine. However, most patients cope better with open disclosure of bad news than with the uncertainty of not knowing what is wrong. Besides, by shielding the patient, the doctor takes away the opportunity for the patient to react and behave in his or her own way to the news. Finally, concerns with norms include general rules that govern social interactions, such as the norm to help. A last concern not mentioned above but quite often expressed by doctors is the lack of adequate training and guidance in delivering bad news. However, many protocols and guidelines have been developed that may be of use in the communication of bad news.

## GUIDELINES

A summary of available guidelines on breaking bad news can be found in Fallowfield and Jenkins (2004). The most well known are probably *SPIKES*, a six-step protocol for delivering bad news, and the Australian guidelines developed by Girgis and Sanson-Fisher (1995). Both guidelines include specific steps that physicians should take during the communication of bad news. While these guidelines may be helpful, though, they lack a theoretical foundation and are not based on rigorous empirical evidence, making it troublesome to establish their effectiveness. Moreover, the few randomized controlled trials (RCT) – the gold standard to provide evidence for clinical care guidelines – that have been carried out so far leave little room for optimism. Not only do these studies suffer from major methodological shortcomings (sampling errors, lack of follow-up data, etc.), results indicate no or inconsistent effects regarding various important outcome measures, such as patients' knowledge, satisfaction, and psychological adjustment.

Hence, no gold standard as to how bad news should be communicated is yet available. To be able to draw more definite conclusions about how to successfully communicate bad news to patients, far more methodologically sound research is needed. In the meantime, given the many unanswered questions with regard to the communication of bad news in medicine, the best clinical approach remains to ask the patient explicitly about his or her preferences and to tailor the information disclosure to the needs of the individual.

SEE ALSO: ► Communicator Style ► Doctor–Patient Talk ► Health Communication  
 ► Health Communication, Ethics in ► Interpersonal Communication ► Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ► Patient–Provider Communication  
 ► Social Support in Health Communication

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## Bakhtin, Mikhail

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Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin (1895–1975) was a Russian philosopher, scholar, and cultural theorist who devoted his writings to the study of language and social structure as it appeared in literature. He was educated in classical studies and taught as a schoolteacher before moving to a small town in Russia to escape the social and political revolution of 1917–1918. During this time he met two colleagues, Valentin Voloshinov and Pavel Medvedev, with whom Bakhtin would study and debate politics and philosophy, and who formed the core of the “Bakhtin circle.” (The three men would inform one another’s writings to such an extent that today there is continuing debate about the original authorship of many of their published volumes.) In 1929 Bakhtin completed his work *Problems of Dostoevsky’s poetics*, as well as his essay “Discourse in the novel.” He later became a professor in a small college where he was little known until the 1950s and 1960s. Interest in Bakhtin spread when his major works were translated into English in the 1970s and 1980s. Bakhtin’s name is now included among the most prominent social theorists of the twentieth century.

Bakhtin’s views on language contrasted with those of linguists who he believed misrepresented language by seeing it as a system of rules and failed to appreciate the function of language

in its social and cultural context. Of Bakhtin's major concepts, *dialogue* is the one that has attracted the attention of most scholars, and it is often considered the umbrella concept for his work (Holquist 1990). While Bakhtin's concept of dialogue can mean many things, in one of his central uses of the term he makes it clear that we are to see the world (or life) as a great dialogue, full of conversations and utterances on many themes and topics, where utterances respond to others' utterances, and expect a response of their own, even when the utterance is directly addressed to a single respondent. He thus encourages us to see not just a single utterance, but the utterance's relationship to others. Every speaker is always participating in a larger dialogue in which there have been utterances on similar themes and topics in the past, where the speaker's contribution is a part of the evolution of the dialogue. Sometimes this participation is explicit and easily identifiable, other times it is subtle and indirect. Bakhtin's idea that the text exists in a web of other texts and contexts has become adopted in postmodern and other theoretical circles as intertextuality (→ Text and Intertextuality; Dialogic Perspectives).

Both societal change and differences in worldview exist because of (and are reflected in) *heteroglossia*. Heteroglossia refers to a multiplicity of languages and dialects that contrast against the unified consistency of a single language or culture. In addition to national languages and dialects within a single language, we use multiple languages for different purposes in different settings. These languages reflect different views on the world, with different ideologies, theories, and perspectives. In any culture, Bakhtin argues, some of these languages give preferred, dominant, and accepted meanings, while others work against the dominant meanings. Bakhtin refers to the former as centripetal forces working to create ideological unity, and to the latter as centrifugal forces working against that centralization to develop new meanings. This tension between centralization and decentralization is always evolving and developing, so much so that this process exists in every utterance (Bakhtin 1981, 272).

Most sub-disciplines in communication studies have been significantly influenced by Bakhtin's work, rethinking commonplace beliefs and concepts from a dialogic perspective. In *interpersonal communication*, Baxter and her colleagues (Baxter 2004; Baxter & Montgomery 1996) have developed a relational dialectics perspective that has taken the implications of Bakhtin's dialogue and his writings about the self to rethink a number of widely held beliefs about interpersonal relationships such as relationship development, closeness, and interactional competence. In *organizational communication*, Anderson (2005) has used Bakhtin's concept of double-voiced words to describe how, in organizational change, speakers use quotations from other speakers to understand typical organizational practices and to imagine how future language might change when organizational practices change. *Rhetoricians* have also found much to adopt from Bakhtin's work. Hopkins (1989) analyzed the rural dialects in Flannery O'Connor's *Wise Blood* as heteroglossia, which she argued brings readers closer to characters and makes the characters' ideologies more explicit. In *language and social interaction*, Tannen (2004) used Bakhtin's notion of polyvocality to show how speakers articulate utterances as if spoken by the family pet in order to distance themselves from their own speech. The function of dialogue and the development and negotiation of meaning in social life draws together each of these studies, all influenced by a Bakhtinian philosophy about the nature and function of social discourse.

SEE ALSO: ► Dialogic Perspectives ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Text and Intertextuality

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## Balance

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Balance is one of the most contested concepts in the wider academic and public debates about the role of the media in society, but the concept is particularly relevant to public service broadcasters, with the UK's → BBC being an international exemplar, for whom balance often is a specific mandate (→ Television News; Public Broadcasting Systems). While the print media claim objectivity in their routines of news gathering, reporting and editing, they are not legally required to be balanced (→ Objectivity in Reporting). The newspaper may express its institutional voice, its political worldview, in its comment and analysis pages, and it may offer space to alternative viewpoints in the interests of genuine pluralism or to broaden its readership. (→ Plurality; Partisan Press; Party–Press Parallelism). The public service broadcaster, however, has a legal obligation in many societies to be balanced and be seen to be balanced, and it is internally and externally regulated to that end. The requirement to represent or give public access to a range of opinions in public debate without favor applies especially to → news and current affairs and must be demonstrable either within a program or across the range of such program within a certain time frame (→ Media Performance).

### PROBLEMS WITH THE BALANCE NORM

Regardless of regulation, however, normative, liberal assumptions of balance have long been open to challenge and dispute. The response of broadcasters has been to point to

these very same disputes and claim that “bias is in the eye of the beholder” or that if they are offending all sides of political debate equally then they must be upholding their public service duty of impartiality (→ Bias in the News). This rather relativist *debate* opens up every time public service broadcasters such as the BBC cover controversial issues in politics, and military or industrial conflict. Most major political parties in western, liberal democracies closely monitor broadcast coverage of politics for any evidence of explicit bias or imbalance in favor of rival parties. In the US, organizations such as the liberal Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) and the conservative Accuracy in the Media (AIM) have long played a watchdog role in lobbying for “balanced” coverage of politics, but usually always from their own partisan perspective. Most recently, celebrity campaigners such as Michael Moore and Al Franken have stirred the debate about structural bias in the American media system, which is seen to favor right-wing politics and corporate power (→ United States of America: Media System).

It is difficult in such debates to get a clear reality check on what is balanced or biased because every critic has a different idea of where the “center-ground” actually is, or of how the interests of all sections of the public should be represented. Furthermore, one could argue that with every charge of “liberal bias” comes a different understanding of what “liberal” means. Yet public service broadcasters themselves would refrain from absolutist definitions of balance and its application. For example, the BBC Guide of 1990 pointed out that impartiality “does not imply absolute neutrality, nor detachment from basic moral and constitutional beliefs. For example, the BBC does not feel obliged to be neutral as between truth and untruth, justice and injustice, compassion and cruelty, tolerance and intolerance” (cited in McNair 1994, 28). This article of faith has since been excised from editorial guidelines but its core value is still implicit in the BBC’s pronouncements on impartiality. Its conception of balance, as that of all public service broadcasters around the world, is not neutral but deeply ideological and system maintaining (see for example Glasgow University Media Group 1976). In Britain, all broadcasters, public or private, are regulated by the Office of Communications (OfCom). In the United States, the responsibility lies with the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC). These state regulators exercise control over all aspects of broadcasting from licensing and the allocation of transmission frequencies to regulating content according to legal standards of taste, decency, and impartiality (→ Fairness Doctrine). However, the broadcasters also have their own internal, regulatory structures designed to ensure compliance with the provisions of state regulation. There is an argument that when it comes to the question of balance, external critics need to hold broadcasters accountable on the standards they set themselves, not on standards set by external political agendas (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

### INTERNAL REGULATIONS

As with all areas of programming, the BBC’s news and current affairs output is guided by the policies, principles, and commitments set out in the BBC Charter, effectively the BBC’s license to broadcast. However, the day-to-day editorial management of news is the responsibility of the News and Current Affairs Directorate and is regulated by published editorial guidelines, including those on impartiality and diversity of opinion, which, it claims, lie “at the heart of the BBC’s commitment to its audiences.” The guidelines set out

the broadcaster's commitment to "a properly balanced service consisting of a wide range of subject matter and views broadcast over an appropriate time scale across all our output" and to "take particular care when dealing with political or industrial controversy or major matters relating to current public policy." They also remind us that "the BBC is forbidden from expressing an opinion on current affairs or matters of public policy other than broadcasting" (BBC Editorial Guidelines n.d.).

The American Public Broadcast Service (PBS) operates similar editorial policies with regard to balance, committing it to "present, over time, content that addresses a broad range of subjects from a variety of viewpoints." As with the BBC, therefore, there is the question of reasonable extent. The phrase "over time" means that affiliate stations, or their editors and producers, are not obliged to balance every available viewpoint in a single item or program but "to consider not only the extent to which the content contributes to balance overall, but also the extent to which specific content is fairly presented in light of available evidence." As a condition of broadcast, the PBS may require a producer to "further the goal of balance by deleting designated footage or by including other points of view on the issues presented or material from which the public might draw a conclusion different from that suggested by the content" (PBS Editorial Standards n.d.).

## EXTERNAL REGULATIONS

In the UK, section 5 of Ofcom's Broadcast Code (2005) commits all broadcasters, public or private, "to treat controversial subjects with *due* accuracy and impartiality" (emphasis added). The key, qualifying word here is "due," meaning that the application of impartiality should be "adequate or appropriate to the subject and nature of the programme," not that "every argument and every facet of every argument has to be represented" (OfCom Broadcast Code n.d.).

In the US, the FCC has specific legal obligations to impartiality contained within the Public Broadcast Act 1967 (and subsequent amendments). Sub-part D, section 19, of the Act requires from all public broadcasting stations "strict adherence to objectivity and balance in all programs or series of programs of a controversial nature" and that their commitment to objectivity and balance, including efforts to address public concerns about perceived failures in this commitment, should be made transparent to viewers.

## THE ACADEMIC CRITIQUE OF BALANCE

Public debates about balance in television news are usually founded on common sense or partisan perceptions rather than hard, empirical evidence (→ Hostile Media Phenomenon). However, there is a considerable body of academic research that seeks to measure imbalance or bias using quantitative and qualitative analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). One of the most comprehensive studies has been that by the Glasgow University Media Group. Their series of books, *Bad news* (1976), *More bad news* (1980), and *Really bad news* (1982), represents a sustained, longitudinal study of British television news in the latter half of the 1970s (→ Longitudinal Analysis), particularly the role of industrial disputes in exacerbating Britain's economic crisis during that period. The group found that news coverage amplified the role of strikes while



playing down the problem of mismanagement and disinvestment in key industries, and that the news privileged definitions of the problem from management sources over those from the trade union movement.

In the US, studies of American prime-time news coverage of the Vietnam War took a similar analytical approach. Lawrence Lichty (1973) and Daniel Hallin (1986) provided quantitative evidence that television news coverage of the war did not focus on images of death and injury among American troops to the extent perceived in the wider public debate about the role of the media in losing the war. This correlates closely with a study of British broadcast coverage of the war in Iraq, in 2003, which concluded that the BBC was among the most pro-war of all the broadcasters in its framing, again quite contrary to popular assumptions at the time (Lewis and Brookes 2004). In more recent studies, academics have challenged standards of balance in American news coverage (in the press as well as broadcasting) of local and presidential election campaigns (Lake Dates & Gandy 1985; Busterna & Hansen 1990; D'Alessio & Allen 2000; Niven 2001; Carter et al. 2002).

Broadcasters cannot guarantee absolute impartiality in their news and current affairs output but it is nonetheless essential that they be accountable and transparent in their editorial policies and production methods, key requirements for a truly public broadcasting system. Sometimes, however, political pressure can breed inhibition and oversensitivity to external perceptions of the service. In June 2007, a BBC internal report attracted widespread media attention for its scathing critique of the Corporation's tendency to "liberal group think" and its undue privileging of public campaigns such as Make Poverty History or Bob Geldof's Live 8 event in 2005. The title of the report, "From Seesaw to Wagon Wheel" (cited in Gibson 2007), referred to what the authors thought was a move away by the BBC from its commitment to balance and toward a tendency to build liberal consensus around such popular, public campaigns. One could argue that this misses the point, for it is not a case of moving from one position to the other. As a public broadcaster with a long history, the BBC has always sought to occupy the center ground, and its insistence on balance has been a means to that end. Yet the center ground is never fixed but shifts from era to era, a problem that applies to most public broadcasters around the world. The principle of balance, therefore, is not simply an editorial procedure or safeguard against undue bias but a key function of public broadcasting as an institutional ideology.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Bias in the News ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Fairness Doctrine ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Hostile Media Phenomenon ► Longitudinal Analysis ► Media Performance ► News ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Partisan Press ► Party–Press Parallelism ► Plurality ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Television News ► United States of America: Media System

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## Balkan States: Media Systems

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The Balkan states, situated in southeastern Europe, include Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, and Serbia. Altogether, the Balkan states have a population of almost 54.5 million people of very diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. Montenegro is the smallest of these states and Romania the largest. The Balkan states are emerging democracies with parliamentary systems; Bulgaria and Romania joined the European Union on January 1, 2007, and others aspire to do so in the future.

### MEDIA IN TRANSITION

The media in the Balkan states have traveled a long way since being freed from the Marxist-Leninist straitjacket in 1989, but becoming professional media that reflect and serve full-fledged democracies is still beyond the horizon. The desire to join the European Union and pressure from western → journalism, human rights watchdog organizations, governments, and other supranational organizations have effected some modest changes in the region's media, both to the laws and regulations that relate to them (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe) and to the practice of journalism.

Despite the progress made, there are still nagging problems that ensure that the media remain only minor contributors to the process of democratization and examples of an institution that has not been allowed to fully reach the status it should have or play the roles it must play in a democracy. One common post-1989 development is the tremendous *increase in the number of media* in the region, in some cases doubling, tripling, or quadrupling the number of outlets available during the communist era, and the free access to indigenous and foreign media offerings. The new constitutions in the region confirm the importance of the freedom of the press and of speech (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of) but the Freedom House Report (Karlekar 2006) judges the media in all Balkan countries to be only “partly free.”

Culture, the media’s history, the nature of the communist experience, the presence or absence of underground media during the communist era (→ Underground Press), and post-1989 economic and political development make for some distinctions between the region’s media.

The → *privatization of the media*, particularly the press, was accomplished in the very early 1990s outside of a legal context and regulatory agencies or rules, either spontaneously or mediated by the state, according to Coman (2000). The press was the first to privatize; radio and television, partly because they depend on frequency allocations, were obliged to wait for new broadcast laws to be enacted.

The post-communist media outlets almost instantly became vehicles for the political interests and aspirations of newly formed political parties and their politicians, whose numbers also climbed vertiginously after 1989. The post-communist elites have in great measure perpetuated the communist mentality that made control and manipulation of the media, anathema in mature democracies, perceived necessities. These undemocratic elites were not always able to control or manipulate all media, however, and the battle to minimize or eliminate such attempts continues with ever-changing levels of success. Media control and manipulation were made possible by the political atmosphere and overall culture in the Balkan nations, constant since 1989 with only minor modifications, the economic struggles of the media outlets, high taxes levied on the media, and the system of state and government advertising.

Public broadcasting (→ Public Broadcasting Systems) is perhaps the least free in the Balkans, and Splichal’s (1994, 48) observations in the mid-1990s in great measure still hold true: broadcasting is “largely subordinated to the state authorities and party elites rather than to public accountability” (→ Accountability of the Media). The situation of Romania’s public broadcasting, for example, epitomizes that in the region; according to Coman and Gross (2006, 104), it “struggles with the vestiges of the old, leftover mentalities from the communist era, a bloated staff, and the ever-present threat of government interference.” Major attempts at breaking this pattern were made in a number of countries, with mixed results. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, reform of public broadcasting stalled in 2005 and media independence was threatened, as it was in Montenegro.

Media ownership in the region is diverse, running the full gamut of possibilities: media are owned by the state, individuals and corporations, political parties, churches, and other groups. Additionally, the dominance of *foreign media groups*, particularly at the local and regional levels of the Balkan press system, give rise to concern, according to the European Federation of Journalists (2004) report. Foreign media groups are present in

Albania (Italian), Bulgaria (German, Greek, British, Eurocom), Croatia (German, Finnish, Austrian), Macedonia (German), Romania (German, Swiss, Finnish, French, Luxembourgger, American), Serbia (German, American), and Slovenia (Austria, Germany, Sweden).

While the media landscape in the Balkans changed in 2005 and 2006, Balkan journalists and western observers bemoan the negative side-effects of commercialization: lack of social responsibility and of a better understanding and acceptance of media roles and functions in democracies, and the absence of ethics and professionalism (→ Ethics in Journalism).

## **JOURNALISM**

Without indigenous models of good journalism, Balkan journalism developed helter-skelter in response to the personal whims of journalists and editors, the legacies of advocacy journalism from the pre-communist and communist eras, and political and economic exigencies. Ethical problems abound, ranging from unconfirmed and anonymous sources and reporting that is opinion-based and tenuous, to the acceptance of bribes and pure propaganda presented in the guise of news stories. The verification of facts, when they are the basis of news stories, is often shoddy.

The worst breaches of professional and ethical rules occur during election campaigns, when journalists are apt to work for a politician or a political party while they are employed by a news media outlet. Or as Siroka (2005, 67) describes the Macedonian case, “the media . . . tendentiously compile (dirty) material to be used . . . in the course of the campaign in order to discredit certain political opponents, which is in a way directed by some [*sic*] political structure that uses or abuses certain journalists/media.”

Ethics codes have sprung up throughout the region but to no avail, because there has not been any universal commitment to abide by them, mechanisms to enforce these codes are missing, and the overall culture in the region exhibits a deficit of concern for ethics. Furthermore, the journalists’ general lack of organization and power gives them little leeway in self-policing and no leverage to combat those who have no interest in seeing a professional, ethical journalism develop. Working for several news outlets at the same time, for politicians and political parties during elections, accepting money and other gifts for writing favorable articles or for not covering certain stories are only some of the unethical behaviors of Balkan journalists.

Coupled with tenuous job security for journalists and low pay, the attempted manipulation and control of journalism have led to a return to → censorship in some cases and more often to self-censorship. The Committee to Protect Journalists (2005) reported that, as is the case in the other countries in the region, journalists in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Croatia “commonly practice self-censorship to avoid pressure or harassment from nationalist politicians, government officials and businessmen who use advertising revenue, threats, and occasionally violent attacks to ensure positive coverage.”

Balkan journalists are in danger. In April 2006, Bulgarian journalist Vasil Ivanov’s apartment was bombed in response to his investigation (→ Investigative Reporting) of the abuse of inmates in the Sofia central prison, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (2005). That same month, a municipal court in the southern Serbian city of Prokuplje upheld a lower court’s verdict that found an RTV Kursumlija editor guilty of criminal defamation. Such incidents, together with other modes of intimidation and

threats, were a common occurrence during the 1990s and have only slightly decreased in the new century.

The trend of violence, intimidation, and threats against and harassment of journalists began shortly after communism's demise and was at one time or another fueled by governments, political parties, politicians, businessmen, officials at state, regional, and local level, and organized crime groups. Throughout the 1990s, reports Henrikas Yushkavitshus (World Press Freedom Committee 2006), a → UNESCO communications advisor, physical → violence against journalists was “the ultimate form of censorship.”

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Freedom of the press has improved in the last few years. Of particular importance are the changes in defamation laws; in Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania, and Serbia-Montenegro defamation is still under the criminal code but is no longer punishable with imprisonment. In Croatia, if there is intent to harm, defamation is still considered a criminal offense punishable with imprisonment, as it is in Serbia, where the defendant can be imprisoned for up to six months if he or she cannot pay the fine levied after a guilty verdict. In Bosnia-Herzegovina defamation is a civil matter, and in Albania it remains under the criminal code and is punishable with imprisonment, however, prime minister Sali Berisha ordered government officials in October 2005 to use the right of reply rather than sue the journalists for defamation.

Additional burdens for journalists and media organizations are created by the *absence of legal protection of sources* (→ Source Protection) and an interpretation of access-to-information laws in the countries where they were enacted that is seldom in favor of the news media. Things have improved in Croatia, where a press law enacted in 2003 restricted access to public data and reduced the protection of journalistic sources at the same time as it guaranteed press freedom and journalists' rights, and in Montenegro with the adoption of the Law of Free Access in 2005.

Despite attempts by politicians to enact press laws, most Balkan nations have opted not to have such laws. Albania is an exception; its 1997 Press Law is vague enough to allow for a heavy-handed interpretation by the government, despite the law providing for broad freedom of the press.

Post-communist broadcast legislation was enacted in Albania in 1998, Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2005, Bulgaria in 1996, Croatia in 1999, Kosovo in 2006, Macedonia in 1997, Romania in 1992, and Serbia-Montenegro in 2002. The new legislation addressed both public and commercial broadcasting, the organization of the ruling broadcast councils, their membership, and their mode of selection or appointment.

Small, tentative improvements are indeed discernible in the majority of the Balkan countries. A survey of Serbian journalists, made public by the International Federation of Journalists in April 2003, identified four major extant problems, however, that are shared across the region: political pressure, self-censorship, political constraints in editorial policy, and lack of courage on the part of editors. Altogether, the Balkan media and their journalism are works in progress, and their evolution depends as much on a better understanding of the role of media in democratic society and the professionalization of journalism as it does on the democratic evolution of political culture.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism ▶ Privatization of the Media ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Source Protection ▶ Underground Press ▶ UNESCO ▶ Violence against Journalists

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## **Baltic States: Media Systems**

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The three countries on the southeastern shore of the Baltic Sea in northeast Europe – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, known collectively as the Baltic states – had been subject to the empire-building policies of neighboring countries around the Baltic Sea since the thirteenth century before they first achieved independence from 1918 to 1940. In 1939, the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact brought them within the sphere of Soviet influence and they were incorporated into the Soviet Union as Soviet Socialist Republics (SSRs) in 1940. Since regaining independence in 1991, the Baltic states have aligned their future with western Europe by joining both NATO and the EU in 2004. While the similarity of their historical paths and their geopolitical situation might seem to have created the conditions for a common development of their media, their ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural peculiarities have resulted in three different systems, which are among the smallest in Europe with potential audiences of 1.36 million in Estonia, 2.33 million in Latvia, and 3.46 million in Lithuania (see Table 1).

Table 1 Basic data on the Baltic states

Country and type of political system	Territory (1,000 sq. km)	Population and % ethnic distribution (2006)	Official language	Name of Parliament and no. of members/ parliamentary parties (2007)	GDP per capita 2006 (US\$)
Estonia Parliamentary republic	45.2	1.32 million Estonians 68 Russians 26 others 6	Estonian	Riigikogu 101/6	9,936
Latvia Parliamentary republic	64.6	2.29 million Latvians 59 Russians 29 others 12	Latvian	Saeima 100/7	6,587 (2005)
Lithuania Parliamentary republic	65.2	3.40 million Lithuanians 84 others 16	Lithuanian	Seimas 141/9	8,899

Source: [www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5377.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5377.htm); [www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5378.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5378.htm); [www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5379.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5379.htm), accessed June 20, 2007

The press in the Baltic countries emerged in the seventeenth century in the foreign languages of the dominant members of society – the Baltic Germans in Estonia and Latvia, and the Poles in Lithuania. The first periodical publications in national languages appeared in Estonian in 1766, Latvian in 1768, and Lithuanian in 1823. Newspapers in these languages were published regularly only in the second half of the nineteenth century. When these states first gained independence after World War I, the press in each country was not restricted until the parliamentary democracies were replaced by authoritarian regimes in Lithuania in 1926, Estonia in 1934, and Latvia in 1934. Subsequently, the centralized standards of the all-Soviet media were introduced in 1940–1941 and from 1944 onwards (→ Newspaper, History of).

### MEDIA UNDER SOVIET RULE

The main goal and function of the Soviet Communist media system was → propaganda in support of the power of the Communist Party elite. All the media, as well as printing, publishing and distribution facilities, were owned, supervised, and controlled by the Communist Party, and fully subsidized from the state budget (→ Censorship). The media system in each SSR was hierarchical. The most important newspaper was the organ of the Communist Party – one national daily in each Republic's national language and its counterpart in Russian. The next most important were the national dailies of the Communist Youth League, again in Russian and in the national languages. Locally, one Communist Party daily was allowed in each city and district, and an evening paper in the larger cities.

The most authoritative source of foreign and all-Union information was the government news agency TASS (the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union). The national news agency of each Republic was permitted to produce and distribute only news of national and local importance. Broadcasting followed a similar hierarchical structure, with the most important radio and TV channels in Moscow and national state television and radio in the SSRs.

### MEDIA IN TRANSITION

The Soviet media system in the Baltic countries had begun to collapse during the independence movements in 1988–1990, and with the societal transition to democracy and a free market economy was entirely transformed. This process involved a transition from socialist to capitalist property structures in the media markets and the enforcement of media-related legislation (→ Media Policy). The Constitutions of all three countries guarantee the freedom of expression, the right of citizens to receive information, and the prohibition of censorship (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The 2006 press freedom index of 168 countries by Reporters without Borders ranks Estonia in sixth to seventh position together with Norway, Latvia in tenth to thirteenth, and Lithuania in twenty-seventh to twenty-eighth.

There are seven main features of media development common to the Baltic states after 1990:

- 1 *Privatization* of the state-owned press. Initially, existing editorial teams privatized their publications by establishing hundreds of small joint-stock companies which were then sold to local entrepreneurs who turned them into small national companies. A consolidation of the larger national companies dominating the market led inevitably to foreign takeovers (→ Privatization of the Media; Ownership in the Media).
- 2 *Fundamental structural changes* caused by privatization and the consequent inflow of foreign media capital. This led to diversification and fragmentation of the press and broadcasting markets in the early 1990s.
- 3 *Stabilization and increasing competition*. This resulted in fairly concentrated media markets and liberal market models by 2000.
- 4 *Total technological restructuring* of newsrooms as a result of rapid technological development during the late 1990s and early 2000s.
- 5 *Intensity of competition* for limited audiences and advertising revenue has led to a high degree of commercialization, the decline of journalistic standards, and a decrease of public trust in the media (→ Commercialization of the Media).
- 6 *Strong shift toward commercial broadcasting*. This has eroded the position of public service broadcasting, the audience share of which is from 11 percent in Latvia to 18 percent in Estonia in 2007.
- 7 *Unions of journalists* have not been able to gain authority among journalists either as professional organizations or as trade unions (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

The basic structures of the media systems in the Baltic States are summarized in Table 2.



Table 2 Media systems in the Baltic states, 2005–2007

Country	Print media	Broadcasting	New media
Estonia	71 newspapers, including 13 dailies, of which 7 are national (4 in Estonian, 3 in Russian); all dailies have online editions; highest circulation 65,000 (national tabloid); 8 national weeklies, c.150 general interest magazines, and c.200 other periodicals	1 national public service broadcasting company (Estonian National Broadcasting) since June 1, 2007, including 1 public TV company (Eesti Televisioon) and 4 national and 1 local public service radio channels, 3 commercial TV channels (2 national, 1 local), and 27 commercial radio stations	39% of households with Internet access (2005); 63% of inhabitants aged 15–74 used the Internet during the first half of 2007
Latvia	103 newspapers, including 22 dailies, of which 14 are national, 8 local; 366 magazines and other periodicals	1 public service television company (Latvijas Televīzija), with 2 national channels LTV1 and LTV7; 1 public service radio organization (Latvijas Radio), with 5 channels (3 national, 2 local), 43 commercial radio channels (3 national); 24 local and 2 national commercial TV channels; 42 cable TV operators	42% of households with Internet access, and 36% of inhabitants using Internet at least once a week (2005); 129 Internet service providers (2004)
Lithuania	354 newspapers; top 10 dailies have total circulation of 341,000; c.390 magazines and other periodicals	1 public service television and radio company (Lietuvos Nacionalinis Radijas ir Televīzija) with 2 public TV channels and 2 public radio stations; 41 commercial radio stations; 27 commercial TV broadcasters; 55 cable TV operators	16% of households with Internet access, and 28% of inhabitants using Internet at least once a week (2005); 98 Internet service providers (2004)

Source: Eurostat (2006); NRTP (2006); Latvijas Statistika; World Press Trends (2005); TNS-Gallup (2006)

### DOMINANT CHARACTERISTICS

While there is not a common pattern of ownership among the three Baltic media systems there are three broad patterns. First, there is a dominance of Nordic media capital in the Baltic states. Eesti Meedia AS (92.7 percent owned by Norwegian Schibsted ASA) and AS Ekspress Grupp (100 percent Estonian) produce over 70 percent of newspapers and magazines in Estonia. Furthermore, through Eesti Meedia AS, Schibsted owns Kanal 2, one of the two commercial TV channels with national coverage, 34 percent of the largest commercial radio chain with six stations, and the largest and most modern printing enterprise Kroonpress. In addition to Schibsted, Nordic holdings in Estonia include Bonnier AB (Swedish), Egmont Holding International AS (Danish), and Alma Media (Finnish).

The Latvian press market is split between two major publishing groups. Latvia's largest oil transit company Ventspils Nafta has shares in several print and publishing companies

Table 3 Top dailies in the Baltic states (Estonia and Lithuania 2007, Latvia 2004)

Country	Title	Readership (1,000)/ potential audience share (%)
Estonia	<i>SLÕhtuleht</i>	273/22.6
	<i>Postimees</i>	230/21.9
	<i>EestiPäevaleht</i>	145/13.8
	<i>Äripäev</i>	77/7.4
	<i>Tartu Postimees</i>	73/6.9
Latvia	<i>Diena</i>	282/– <sup>a</sup>
	<i>Latvijas Avize</i>	239/–
	<i>Neatkarīga Rita Avize</i>	105/–
	<i>Vesti Segodnja</i> (in Russian)	168/–
Lithuania	<i>Chas</i> (in Russian)	122/–
	<i>Vakaro žinios</i>	578/22
	<i>Lietuvos rytas</i>	488/18.6
	<i>15 minučių</i>	430/16.4
	<i>Respublika</i>	214/8.2
	<i>Kauno diena</i>	162/6.1

<sup>a</sup> For Latvia, the audience share is not freely available (data can be bought).

Source: World Press Trends 2005; TNS Emor (2007); TNS-Gallup (2007)

and owns the third largest daily *Neatkarīga Rita Avize*. The Swedish Bonnier Group, through its 63 percent holding in AS *Diena*, controls the largest national daily *Diena* (readership of around 300,000), 11 regional newspapers, and seven magazines, distribution and subscription services, and printing facilities. Table 3 shows the top dailies in the Baltic states, with their readership and potential audience share.

Second, the Lithuanian press market is still dominated by three national firms, Lietuvos Rytas UAB, Respublikos Leidiniu Grupe, and Achemos Grupe. Nordic capital entered the market in the spring of 2006 through the purchase of the largest regional daily *Kauno diena* by the Norwegian Orkla Media.

Third, there is trans-national ownership of regional networks. The Baltic News Service (BNS), the largest information agency in the region, is owned by Alma Media (Finnish); the online news portal *Delfi* (with its Russian language counterparts in Estonia and Latvia) is owned by Findexa (Norwegian), the Scandinavian–Baltic television network TV3 (with the channels in all Baltic countries) is owned by Modern Times Group (Swedish), and Bonnier (Swedish) owns the business newspaper *Dagens Industri*, which is edited and produced by local offices in all three countries.

Regulations that would restrict foreign ownership rights or cross-media ownership do not exist in the Baltic region, neither is there special legislation to support media diversity and pluralism (→ Plurality; Cross-Ownership). Competition legislation applies to the media sector for the provision of the conditions that insure free-market competition. There are also a few provisions in the other laws and broadcasting regulations that prohibit monopoly. Broadcasters in Latvia, except for public broadcasters, may not have

more than three programs. A political party or a commercial entity that is controlled by a political party may not own a radio or television station.

## **RADIO AND TELEVISION**

All three countries have adopted laws that regulate broadcasting and advertising which are aligned with the EU “Television without Frontiers” directive (1989/1997). The general principles and rules of this directive incorporated by each country’s laws concern the European works quota, the rules on the content and permissible amount of the daily and hourly advertising time, the use of exclusive rights, and the broadcasting of events of major importance to the public, and the right of reply. These principles also require advertising to be distinguishable from other program content, a ban on tobacco advertising, surreptitious advertising, and advertising that works against the interests of children (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). All countries have passed advertising laws that also apply to the mass media (→ Advertising Law and Regulation). More general mass media laws exist only in Latvia and Lithuania.

The Lithuanian Law on Provision of Information to the Public (adopted as Mass Media Law in 1996, and amended in 2000) regulates the functioning of all mass media and lays down the obligations and liabilities of journalists, public information producers, and disseminators (who must be registered in the Register of Enterprises). Every broadcaster in Lithuania must obtain a license from the Radio and Television Commission, an independent institution for the regulation and supervision of the activities of radio and television broadcasters, and is accountable to Parliament. The Commission consists of 12 members, one of whom is appointed by the President, three by Parliament, and the remaining eight by professional organizations (architects, journalists, composers, writers, cinematographers, artists, actors, and periodical press publishers). The Law on the National Radio and Television provides specific regulations for the funding, administration, and functioning of the National Radio and Television and the legal basis for the formation of the Lithuanian Radio and Television Council, which functions as the highest governing body for the organization. The Council consists of 12 members who are prominent individuals in the social, scientific, and cultural spheres (of whom four are appointed by the President and four by Parliament). Lithuanian National Radio and Television belongs to the state and is 75 percent funded by the government.

The Latvian Law on Radio and Television (adopted 1995, amended in 2001) regulates both private and public broadcasters, as did the Estonian Broadcasting Act (adopted in 1994, amended in 2001, 2004) until June 2007. Then the Estonian Parliament adopted the National Broadcasting Act, according to which the public broadcasters Estonian Television and Estonian Radio will be merged into one organization: Estonian National Broadcasting (ENB). The supervisory body for ENB will be the Estonian Broadcasting Council, which is accountable to Parliament and financed by the government. The Council consists of nine members, five of whom are appointed by Parliament from among MPs in accordance with political balance, and four from among recognized specialists in the fields related to public broadcasting functions.

The Latvian Law on Press and Other Mass Media (adopted in 1990, revised in 1998) states that all mass media are subject to preliminary registration at the Ministry of Justice

Table 4 National television and radio stations in the Baltic states 2006

	Television				Radio			
	Name	Type	Daily audience share (%)	Daily reach (%)	Name	Type	Audience share (%)	Daily reach (%)
Estonia	ETV/Estonian Television	Public service	15	38	Vikerraadio	Public service	— <sup>a</sup>	31
	Kanal 2/Channel 2	Commercial	23	41	Raadio Elmar	Commercial	—	28
	TV 3	Commercial	21	41	Sky Plus	Commercial	—	27
	PBK (Pervyi Baltiiski Kanal, in Russian)	Commercial (satellite)	9	18	Raadio 4 (in Russian)	Public service	—	21
Latvia	LNT	Commercial	19	—	—	—	—	—
	LTV 1	Public service	10	—	—	—	—	—
	LTV 7	Public service	5	—	—	—	—	—
	TV 3	Commercial	20	—	—	—	—	—
	PBK (Pervyi Baltiiski Kanal, in Russian)	Commercial (satellite)	9.5	—	—	—	—	—
Lithuania	LTV	Public service	15	41	LR 1	Public service	21	24
	TV 3	Commercial	24	48	Lietus	Commercial	13	16
	LNK	Commercial	20	47	M-1	Commercial	11	16
	BTV	Commercial	11	37	Pukas	Commercial	9	12
					Ruskoje Radio Baltija	Commercial	10	11

<sup>a</sup> Missing data can be purchased.

Source: Emor (2006); TNS-Latvia (2006); TNS-Gallup (2006)

and that the right of establishing and publishing of mass media belongs only to legal persons and legally capable natural citizens. The Law explicitly prohibits monopolization of any kind of mass media as well as censorship. The Latvian National Radio and Television Council is granted broad powers ranging from the definition of broadcasting policies to the granting and withdrawal of licenses. It appoints the directors and board members of the Latvian National Radio and Television and also deals with viewer complaints. It comprises nine members appointed by Parliament, who must be Latvian citizens and well known to the public. No more than three members can belong to the same political party. The Council is financed by the state.

Table 4 shows the national television and radio stations in the Baltic states.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Advertising Law and Regulation ► Censorship ► Commercialization of the Media ► Cross-Ownership ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Journalists: Professional Associations ► Media Policy ► Newspaper, History of

- ▶ Ownership in the Media
- ▶ Plurality
- ▶ Privatization of the Media
- ▶ Propaganda
- ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of
- ▶ Self-Regulation of the Media
- ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Bandura, Albert**

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Albert Bandura is a pioneering researcher of social modeling in the media (Zimmerman & Schunk 2002). He was born on December 4, 1925 in a rural hamlet in northern Alberta, Canada. He first achieved prominence as an undergraduate at the University of British Columbia by winning the Bolocan Award in Psychology. After completing his doctorate at the University of Iowa, he accepted a faculty appointment at Stanford University, where he has remained for more than 50 years. He was elected President of the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1974, and has won numerous awards for his research, such as the William James Award and the Gold Medal Award for Distinguished Lifetime Contribution to Psychological Science of the APA.

Bandura's initial research focused on the mechanisms governing observational learning of aggression, which he reported in a book entitled *Social learning and personality development*. In a series of seminal experiments using an inflated "Bobo" doll, he found that children readily imitated a social model's aggressive behavior toward the doll when they had an opportunity to interact with it (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). This vicarious increase in aggression

occurred after viewing either live or electronically mediated models. At the time, it was widely believed that modeled violence would have a cathartic effect and diminish an observer's aggressive drives rather than increase them (→ Catharsis Theory). Bandura's contrary findings immediately thrust him into a heated national debate on the effects of televised violence on children. He was invited to testify before numerous congressional committees and national commissions on his research findings.

A second focus of Bandura's modeling research involved children's development of self-regulatory capabilities. In a book entitled *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory* (1986), he discussed research indicating that children readily adopted high standards for self-reward after observing a model justify and adhere to those standards. He also found that children who observed a model forgo small immediate rewards for larger long-term rewards were more likely to wait for the delayed rewards than nonobservers. Clearly, these social learning experiences led children to internalize important standards that significantly affected their self-regulation and motivation (→ Observational Learning; Personality Development and Communication). Bandura also discussed research on the pervasive role of modeling in children's cognitive and linguistic development (Rosenthal & Zimmerman 1978; → Language Acquisition in Childhood). The importance of this cognitive dimension of social learning experiences led him to expand its role in his theory, to rename his approach "social cognitive," and to focus his subsequent research more directly on cognitive elements of observational learning, such as changes in self-beliefs of observers (→ Social Cognitive Theory; Cognitive Science). He was particularly interested in an observer's perceived capabilities to learn or perform a particular task, which he labeled self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura's innovative research on these beliefs culminated in a 1997 book entitled *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. His theoretical analyses broadened scientific understanding of the diverse effects of social modeling experiences on an observer's self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulatory attainment.

Because of recent advances in communication technology, such as the growth in → cable television, the impact of social modeling has expanded. Drawing on Bandura's research, Miguel Sabido (1981), a producer at Televisia in Mexico City, developed serial dramas to promote society-wide changes, such as improved national literacy and family planning in Mexico. The programs portrayed people's daily lives and the problems they face, and modeled strategies for overcoming them and vicarious incentives for adopting the modeled solutions. David Poindexter (2004), Director of Population Communication International, adopted the Sabido's serial drama method as a new focus of his organization. This methodology applied principles from social cognitive theory to raise the status of women, curtail the spread of HIV/AIDS infection, and foster environmental conservation in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (→ Development Communication; Environmental Communication; Health Campaigns for Development).

These worldwide applications demonstrated how the modeling experiments contributed to unforeseen applications to alleviate some of the most urgent global problems. These applications involved the integration of social cognitive theory and social diffusion theory regarding three key components, which include processes that govern the acquisition of knowledge and innovative patterns of behavior, the adoption of the innovations in practice, and the social networks through which they spread. Bandura formed a productive partnership with → Everett Rogers (1995), a pioneer in the study of the diffusion of

innovations, to use the latest media to speed the adoption of modeled practices designed to alleviate human problems on a global scale (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Development Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Environmental Communication ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Personality Development and Communication ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## **Bandwagon Effect**

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The bandwagon effect is a phenomenon of → public opinion impinging upon itself: in their political preferences people tend to follow what they perceive to be majorities in society. This implies that success breeds further success, and alternatives that appear to enjoy a broad popular backing are likely to gain even more support. The effect's metaphorical label dates from late nineteenth-century American politics and alludes to the wagon in a parade that carries the band, and thus attracts a large audience of followers who join in to enjoy the music.

The bandwagon effect is one of several hypothesized manifestations of “impersonal influence” – effects on individuals' attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors that derive from these persons' impressions about the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors of collectives of anonymous others outside the realm of their personal contacts (Mutz 1998; → Social Perception: Impersonal Impact). Other examples are the → “underdog effect,” complementing the

bandwagon effect by assuming a negative impact of perceived majority opinion, and the notion of “strategic” or “tactical” voting, which expects electors to refrain from choosing their candidate or party of first preference if they perceive it to be only weakly supported by others, in order not to waste their vote.

The bandwagon effect manifests itself in various forms. At elections, voters may choose parties or candidates because they expect them to win. The same happens in referenda, when perceptions of majority support help certain proposals gain additional votes. Perceived opinion distributions within the mass public can also lead to changes of attitudes. Election studies suffer from bandwagon effects, when in post-election surveys respondents claim to have chosen the winner although they did not actually do so (→ Election Surveys). Parties and candidates try to capitalize on the bandwagon effect during election campaigns when they seek to convey the impression that they are highly popular among voters.

The media are the main source of information on preference distributions among the citizenry at large (Mutz 1998). Published findings from public opinion polls are an important type of such mass feedback, although not the only one (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Polls and the Media; Public Opinion Polling). Due to the pervasive trend toward “horse-race journalism” the question of who is ahead and who is trailing behind is ascribed high → news value in modern election coverage (→ Horse Race Coverage; Election Campaign Communication). Accordingly, journalists and politicians have also become key sources of mediated statements about the mass public’s political sympathies (→ Political Persuasion). Stylistic devices like exemplars or man-in-the-street interviews help journalists to convey impressions of where the public stands regarding candidates, parties, or issues (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of).

As reporting on public opinion is thus a multifaceted phenomenon, the quality of the information on which citizens base their impressions is critically relevant. Many studies indicate that media audiences are not sufficiently capable to distinguish between sources of valid information, such as well-conducted polls, and sources of dubious significance. They may thus fall victim to → “pluralistic ignorance,” deriving preferences from impressions about the opinions of their fellow citizens that are actually wrong. People’s impressions of majorities and minorities are also often biased through projection. The → “false consensus” or “looking-glass” effect distorts perceptions of mass opinion and may lead people to assume that their own positions enjoy far broader public support than is actually the case. However, for elections it has been shown that the power of “wishful thinking” tends to recede as polling day draws nearer.

Although the notion of the bandwagon effect has fascinated social scientists for decades, empirically it has proven elusive. Only in recent years have carefully designed studies succeeded in demonstrating that the bandwagon effect really exists, both with regard to vote choices at elections and referenda, and with regard to issue attitudes. Its theoretical background has also only recently come to be better understood, mostly due to careful studies by Mutz (1994, 1998). Bandwagon effects typically occur under conditions of weak commitment on the part of voters, and a shortage of information other than the distribution of mass support. Hence, American primary elections where voters have to choose between mostly unknown candidates that all run for the same party (Bartels 1988), or referenda about complicated issues (West 1991), appear more conducive to bandwagon effects than do general elections.



How bandwagon effects are triggered depends on citizens' political involvement. Politically detached people tend to rely on the "consensus heuristic." Like consumers who need a new car but lack the expertise to judge which one is best, they take majority opinion as a proxy for the most intelligent choice, thus becoming able to form a preference without collecting any detailed information. Among more involved citizens, perceived majorities may trigger a "cognitive response mechanism" (→ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process). They think about reasons why so many others may have come to support a particular alternative, and thus persuade themselves to jump on the bandwagon. Empirically and conceptually, these hypotheses are better supported than other strands of theorizing, like the idea that going with the winner is somehow intrinsically rewarding, or the assumption that bandwagon effects are mainly a result of conformity for fear of isolation (→ Spiral of Silence).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ False Consensus ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ News Values ▶ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Social Perception ▶ Social Perception: Impersonal Impact ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Underdog Effect

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## **Barthes, Roland**

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Roland Barthes (1915–1980) was a French philosopher, semiotician, and literary and media theorist. Over three decades, he produced articles and monographs concerned with the general problem of how different systems of communication operate. His

activity spanned the periods in which authors who are identified with structuralism, and then those identified with poststructuralist and postmodernist theory, dominated critical debates in France and elsewhere. Barthes joined in these debates, often critiquing prevailing intellectual views on one hand and contemporary popular culture on the other.

Barthes's first major work was *Writing degree zero* (1st pub. 1953), in which he took part in the discussion on existentialism and Marxism that marked French intellectual life in the early 1950s. Barthes's turn toward → structuralism produced a series of short essays, eventually published as *Mythologies* in 1957: these were semiotic analyses of diverse cultural forms and everyday artifacts, such as detergents, wine and milk, wrestling, and popular entertainment. In the programmatic essay "Myth today," Barthes defined "myth" not in traditional literary terms, but instead as a second-level semiological system, or meta-language, extending the linguistics of Saussure, and facilitating the examination of tensions between the uncoded (or denotative) and the coded (or connotative) levels of signification (→ Semiotics). *The fashion system* (1st pub. 1963) is a systematic work of structuralism, in which Barthes analyzed the "vestimentary code" of French women's fashion, as depicted in magazines. In general, Barthes's structuralist analyses of the 1960s had a significant influence on qualitative media studies. His 1964 essay "Rhetoric of the image" further provided communication scholars with powerful tools for analyzing images and their relationship with texts.

While those working in communication studies found Barthes's structuralist essays most immediately useful, students of film, art history, and literary theory drew inspiration from Barthes's writings from the mid-1960s to 1980. In this period, Barthes influenced and was influenced by those who were questioning structuralism as a theory of communication (→ Postmodernism and Communication). He was in dialogue with Jacques Derrida when Derrida was producing works such as *Of grammatology* and *Writing and difference*, critiquing key western notions about the nature of and warrant for written communication. Barthes's *The empire of signs* (1st pub. 1970) shows this influence; the book examined elements of Japanese culture in a set of short chapters superficially resembling those in *Mythologies*. Rather than identifying mythic structures, however, Barthes described breakdowns of systematic communication in what he called "an emptiness of language which constitutes writing" (1982, 4).

In 1967, Barthes produced his essay "Death of the author," in which he challenged the assumption that the author of a given work served as the guarantor of the work's meaning. Barthes's position resonated with those of Derrida, Foucault, and a new generation of literary theorists and critics in Europe and North America, who were no longer satisfied with the traditional view of the transcendent value of canonical literary texts and the subordinate position assigned to theorists and other readers of these texts.

Barthes participated in this poststructuralist redefinition of the relationship of author, text, and reader, and he helped to foster in communication studies a greater awareness and appreciation of literary and other critical theory. He produced a classic example of poststructuralist critique in *S/Z* (1st pub. 1970), a close reading of "Sarrasine," a story by Balzac. *Image – Music – Text* (1977), a collection of Barthes's essays, included "From work to text," which defined a key distinction between "writerly" and "readerly" texts. A work is a frozen production of an author as authority figure; works constitute the literary canon and are not in that sense available for dialogue with other works in a culture. A text, however, is open to such dialogue (→ Text and Intertextuality). Barthes's distinction,

again, fit nicely with the work of Derrida and other deconstructionists as well as “reader-response” theorists such as Stanley Fish. At this same time, Wolfgang Iser and others were developing a distinct, empirically oriented approach to the study of the reader’s response. All of these theorists began from the premise that the process of reading is one of actively constructing the meaning of a text (→ Interactivity in Reception).

Barthes’s writings in the 1970s are particularly resistant to classification, as evidenced by his 1975 “anti-autobiography” *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes* and his fictional 1977 *A Lover’s Discourse*. His final and in some ways most personal book was *Camera lucida* (1st pub. 1979), a lyrical analysis of photography through a series of examples. Here, Barthes explored the tension between the indexical nature of → photography and the apparently arbitrary character of its cultural interpretation. He maintained, on the one hand, that a photograph does have a value as a record of an actual moment. On the other hand, a photograph has meaning through its special quality to affect us as viewers. A photograph is always an image of something past, always recalling death. Furthermore, there is an element in any photograph that seems tangential to the main representational subject, but is in fact central to our reaction as viewers. Barthes called this element the “punctum.” The picture whose punctum was most compelling for Barthes was one of his mother as a girl; Henriette Barthes had died three years before he wrote *Camera lucida*. Barthes himself died at 64, soon after completing this book and a month after being struck by a truck in the streets of Paris. The circumstances of his death have often been interpreted as confirming the melancholy of his final book.

SEE ALSO: ► Interactivity in Reception ► Photography ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Semiotics ► Structuralism ► Text and Intertextuality

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## **BBC**

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The BBC started life not as a public corporation but as a private company. Formed in 1922, the early BBC operated as a cartel, consisting of several wireless manufacturers, including the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company, one of the main pioneers of wireless telephony.

Though it was to all intents and purposes a private enterprise, its license to broadcast in Britain was regulated by the state, under the auspices of the Post Office. A further peculiarity of British broadcasting was that, just as broadcasters required permission to broadcast, so too were the listening public required to obtain an official license for listening in.

Whilst these regulatory provisos conferred certain economic benefits upon the BBC, not least an exclusive monopoly to broadcast and an entitlement to half of the license fee, broadcasting was subject to what was then an unusual degree of public control and officialdom by comparison with other media. This was especially so during the early years of the BBC when it had to weather a number of national crises (e.g., the General Strike in 1926), during which it was expected by the government of the day to represent the national interest, taken to be synonymous with the government's aims and objectives. Having said this, for reasons of political tact it was important that the BBC maintain an appearance of neutrality. The answer was to reshape the Company into a quasi-autonomous public authority, effectively run by a state-appointed executive Board of Governors (→ Public Broadcasting, History of).

### **TRANSFORMATION TO A PUBLIC CORPORATION**

The transformation of the BBC into a public corporation was signaled by the Crawford Parliamentary Committee, called into being to specifically consider the future of broadcasting. Of the many recommendations, the most significant proposal was that "broadcasting be conducted by a public corporation acting as a Trustee for the national interest, and that its status and duties should correspond with those of a public service." And so it came about that on January 1, 1927, the BBC was effectively nationalized under Royal Charter, and as such became one of the earliest examples of a national public utility (→ Public Broadcasting Systems).

One of the main advocates of the BBC's alteration into a public corporation was John Reith, the first General Manager and Director General of the BBC. Born a Scotsman, and a lifelong devout Christian, Reith's part in shaping the policy of the BBC, not least its public service ethos, was distinct. Following the example of Matthew Arnold, the nineteenth-century poet and educationalist, Reith wanted to make available as widely as possible the best that has ever been thought, said, or written. However, Reith's lofty idealism and high-mindedness bore all the hallmarks of nineteenth-century conservative paternalism. Ridden with a deep-rooted contempt for anything that detracted from his own political and religious beliefs, Reith was specially incapable of empathizing with the listening public. Consequently, much BBC culture during the interwar period was restricted to programs that were deemed appropriate for the moral and cultural well-being of the nation, prompting some listeners to tune in to the European radio stations (e.g., Radios Normandie and Luxembourg) for more popular programming, particularly on a Sunday when the BBC would permit only religious broadcasts.

### **CHANGING PROGRAMMING POLICIES**

The outbreak of World War II in 1939, a year after Reith retired as Director General, marked a new era in the history of the BBC. Wartime placed new demands on radio:

Britain now faced a crisis in national security. In its programming policy the BBC had to discover and broadcast what actually, as opposed to ideally, constituted the nation's identity. It had to identify with and personify the things for which Britain and its people were fighting if national morale and the war effort were to be sustained. Contrary to Reith's policy of cultural uplift, BBC policy was now defined principally in terms of popular entertainment, as evidenced in the establishment of the Forces Programme (later to become the Light Programme) and programs such as *Worker's Playtime* and *Music While You Work*.

This populist tendency was to prove irreversible, even after the war ended. The prospect of having to undergo yet another period of social reconstruction forced the BBC to follow a path of development less tied to the cultural and political rationalities that had characterized much of the interwar period. Though intended as a "cultural pyramid" for listeners to work their way up through, the BBC's adoption of a new tripartite system – banded into highbrow (Third), middlebrow (Home), and lowbrow (Light) – immediately after the war was indicative of the way in which the Corporation became increasingly resigned to continuing its output of popular broadcasts and allowing the listener to choose what they preferred to listen to.

### COMMERCIAL COMPETITION

This change in policy was even more pronounced from the 1950s onwards following the introduction of *Independent Television* (1955), based on the American model of commercial broadcasting and the attendant rise in disposable income and mass consumerism. Though radio broadcasting remained popular, demand for television coverage increased dramatically, forcing the BBC to acknowledge that the new medium was here to stay and that it would have to embrace television if it was to remain the main channel for broadcasting in the UK. For many BBC employees this was deeply problematic insofar as their preference was for the spoken word and sound broadcasting generally. Television, however, placed greater emphasis on the image, which, in comparison to radio, was deemed vulgar and lowbrow. Ironically, those employees who were enthusiastic about pioneering the new medium were lured away by the better pay offered by ITV (Independent Television).

A further problem for the BBC was that television was expensive to produce. Unlike ITV, which received advertising revenue and benefited considerably from increases in transmission hours, the BBC had to make do with the income it received from the yearly license fee. Nor could it spend its budget just on television, as could ITV. Not surprisingly, the BBC's audience share decreased significantly, a position from which it would recover only some years later. Whilst ITV undoubtedly challenged the BBC's ascendancy, in fact the two systems complemented one another reasonably well, and effectively operated as a "cozy duopoly" until the introduction of Channel 4 in 1982.

Another major change during this period was the emergence of so-called *pirate radio* in the 1960s (e.g., Radios Caroline and London; → Piracy). Unlike the BBC, which still offered only mixed programming, pirate stations broadcast continuous pop music, making them highly popular, particularly with young listeners. The BBC responded with the launch of Radio 1 (1967), its first dedicated pop music network. At the same time, the

Light Programme was renamed Radio 2, the Third Programme became Radio 3, and the Home Service was called Radio 4. Pirate radio was also to provide the catalyst for the development of more interactive radio formats during the 1970s, such as “access radio,” whose output tended to be more participatory and community-focused. Reactive as ever, the BBC belatedly established a network of local radio stations in many of Britain’s major urban centers. However, it would be some time before the local stations were properly funded, and even then, BBC headquarters regarded them to be of secondary importance.

In spite of the pressures from increasing competition, the BBC continued to inspire a regulatory regime in which it was seen as providing a touchstone against which conceptions of impartiality, diversity, quality, and public service were measured and configured into statutory or discretionary regulatory mechanisms and codes of practice. Even the commercially funded ITV contractors were required to broadcast public service programs; those that failed to fulfill their public service remit risked having their franchises revoked when they came up for renewal, and some did. The BBC, on the other hand, could do no wrong, as evidenced in the findings of the Pilkington Report (1962), whose recommendations resulted in the BBC being awarded a second television channel, which it called BBC2 (1964). The new channel gave the BBC a fresh appeal, with an emphasis on experimental and minority interest programs (e.g., the science series *Horizon*, epic documentaries such as *Civilisation*, *The Ascent of Man*, and *The Great War*, and the talk show *Late Night Line-Up*). It also broadcast populist programmes, taking the fight for ratings to ITV, and in some cases, beating them (e.g., *Match of the Day*, *Till Death Us Do Part*, and *The Likely Lads*). Yet another triumph was the introduction of regular color broadcasts (1967), the BBC being the first European network to do so. The BBC had vindicated itself and in so doing silenced its critics, for the time being at least.

### POLITICAL TURBULENCES

The institutional influence of the BBC and the Reithian public service legacy upon which it was founded only really abated with the 1980s and 1990s, a period that witnessed what was then the most significant overhaul to the ecology of British broadcasting, particularly the infrastructure of the BBC, which was made to adapt to the cultural hegemony of neo-liberalism. This was particularly so during the Thatcher years (1979–1990), throughout which the BBC was subject to unprecedented criticism and external pressures. The Conservative government was particularly critical of the BBC’s license fee, which was antithetical to laissez-faire market economics. A committee of inquiry was set up under the chairmanship of Sir Alan Peacock to recommend alternative means of funding. To everyone’s surprise Peacock’s report fell short of recommending that the license fee be replaced or supplemented by advertising or pay-per-view. Meanwhile, the BBC continued to produce programs that questioned the political status quo (e.g., news reportage of the Falklands War, and controversial series such as *Real Lives* and *Secret Society*), thus asserting its editorial autonomy and commitment to impartiality, even though this period culminated in the sudden departure of Alistair Milne, the first BBC Director General to resign as a result of political meddling.

The hostilities between the Conservative government and the BBC have since been characterized as a battle between competing ideologies, the effects of which are still being

played out today. In response to renewed attacks from the commercial broadcasting lobby demanding it become more publicly accountable, the BBC has reinvigorated the discourse of public service with its newly pledged commitment to “building public value,” a managerial discourse aimed at costcutting and efficiency drives, all of which has impacted on the quality and creativity of its program-making. Other examples of the ways in which the BBC has become more market-responsive include BBC Online, the move of the evening news from 9 p.m. to 10 p.m., increased competition with satellite and cable broadcasters for a greater audience share of new digital media, the use of consumerist rhetoric to justify its public expenditure, and plans to relocate parts of the BBC to the regions, such as Manchester in the north of England. Whilst some of these developments are to be commended, others are potentially detrimental to the BBC’s public service ethos and its unique relationship with the public as citizens.

### THE BBC LEGACY

Notwithstanding the continuing shift towards populist broadcasting, the BBC remains one of the world’s most influential and celebrated cultural institutions, widely revered as an authoritative source of information, trusted worldwide as a keeper of truth and the public interest. For many, its public service model still embodies the cornerstone of British broadcasting and is held up as a beacon for guiding any future regulatory reforms. The 2006–2016 Agreement and Charter largely guarantee the immediate future of the BBC as being allowed to continue to function as an independent, publicly funded broadcasting service.

Whilst no government has abused its position as paymaster, the threat to do so is always a possibility and cause for anxiety at times when the two institutions have been at loggerheads, as has been the case following the recent spat surrounding the war on Iraq and the controversial Hutton report. What is clear is that media institutions like the BBC will, more than likely, play an increasingly important role representing a diversity of competing political, cultural, and geographical communities, movements, and groups, not just in Britain but worldwide. The government has a responsibility, therefore, to ensure the BBC is appropriately funded and protected from the increasing pressures of creeping commercialism, whose sole concern is the pursuit of profits, often at the expense of democratic broadcasting. Such guarantees would ensure the future well-being, not just of the BBC, but of the ecology of British broadcasting as a whole.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC World Service ► Citizens’ Media ► Commercialization of the Media  
 ► Entertainment Education ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Piracy ► Propaganda  
 ► Public Broadcasting, History of ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Public Interest  
 ► Public Journalism ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► United Kingdom: Media System

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## BBC World Service

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The → international radio station with the largest global audience and the one with the best-known name, the BBC World Service, began as the Empire Service on shortwave in 1932. Today, while most of its estimated weekly audience of 183 million (all figures given here are for 2007) continue to rely on direct transmission on shortwave and medium wave from the BBC's own transmitters, it is also available via satellite, on mobile phones, on the → Internet, and through hundreds of local radio stations in countries around the world (→ Radio Technology). BBC World, a global → television service in English, is funded and organized separately. Organized within the World Service itself was a new TV service in Arabic. On radio, the World Service broadcasts in English and 33 other languages.

The original Empire Service was intended to be a link between the metropolis and the immense empire Britain then ruled. In the vastly changed world of today, when Britain's world role is much reduced, the English services are aimed both at mother-tongue English speakers and at the growing number of people for whom English is a major second language, one that they are comfortable to use as a source of → news and → information. The global weekly audience for English output is estimated at 38 million.

### SERVICES AROUND THE WORLD

#### Africa

The largest audience for English is in Nigeria, where it is estimated from surveys that the weekly audience (presently mainly reliant on shortwave because the government there has put restrictions on local retransmission) is over 5 million, 15 percent of the global audience for English. The extraordinary success of the BBC's African English output in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa has undoubtedly arisen as a result of its daily reporting of events around the continent. Its main daily news magazine programs *Focus on Africa* and



*Network Africa* are probably the most listened to radio news programs from any source in Africa. The BBC has an unrivalled network of reporters and stringers in Africa, almost all of them nationals of the countries from where they report. Sport, the arts, health issues, and daily life in African cities and rural areas make up much of the rest of the special English-language programs specially made for the African continent (→ Africa: Media Systems).

French and Portuguese as well as services in indigenous African languages are broadcast and these also have large audiences. Since 1991, when effective central government collapsed in Somalia, the BBC's Somali language service has in effect been the only truly national Somali radio service able to reach Somalis in all parts of a very divided country. It also has a large following among the now vast Somali diaspora, who can listen to the output via the Internet. A major service provided at the height of the 1991 crisis and in the years since has been a regular feature that seeks to put Somalis in touch with missing relatives and friends lost in the upheavals.

### **The World Service and Human Needs**

This is a recurring feature of the BBC World Service. During and after major *humanitarian crises*, different parts of the output have been directed to informing and assisting those many people displaced and in danger. Similarly, the ethnic tragedies in Burundi and Rwanda in 1994 led to the establishment of a special Great Lakes service in the two languages of these countries, Kinyarwanda and Kirundi, bringing news and programs of special relevance to communities in conflict.

Meeting human needs for information has been at the heart of the World Service's mission, and its many initiatives in this respect have usually been very successful. It was this feature of the World Service that prompted Kofi Annan, then secretary-general of the United Nations, to describe it in 1998 as "perhaps Britain's greatest gift to the world this century." Malcolm W. Browne wrote in the *New York Times*, "The BBC is for the free mind, what Oxfam is for the hungry" (quoted in BBC External Services 1982, 4). The importance of the BBC in meeting information needs in areas of crisis and human deprivation led during the 1990s to the establishment of the World Service Trust, an educational and development agency that had as its mission to "use the creative power of media to reduce poverty and promote human rights by inspiring people to build better lives" (BBC World Service Trust n.d.). This initiative came at a time when development agencies and governments in the developed world were beginning to realize the vital importance of improved communication of relevant information in the global fight against poverty, ignorance, and disease (→ Radio for Development; Development Journalism). Its many projects included broadcast series on such major global health problems as HIV/AIDS and malaria (→ Health Campaigns for Development; Media Advocacy in Health Communication; Health Communication and Journalism).

### **Arabic Service**

The largest of the BBC's 33 language services aside from English was the Arabic service. It was the first foreign-language broadcast when it started in 1938 as a British response to Italian fascist propaganda broadcasts to the Arab world. During major conflicts in the

Middle East it reached very large audiences, especially in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf States (→ Egypt: Media System; West Asia: Media Systems; Gulf States: Media Systems). During the 1991 Gulf War its audience grew substantially in all countries where surveys were conducted at the time of the war, but since then the spread of satellite TV broadcasts and especially the success of Al Jazeera, the first Arab TV news channel to provide good → journalism to the area, radio has been in some decline (→ Arab Satellite TV News). It was with this in mind that the BBC launched an Arabic TV service in 1995, which was carried on a Saudi-owned subscription satellite channel. But when certain news items were cut in breach of strict agreements signed that this would not happen, the BBC ended the service. Some of the BBC Arab journalists made redundant by the closure moved to the newly established Al Jazeera and helped win this service the wide following that it later enjoyed. But 10 years later, in 2005, the World Service announced a new TV service to start in 2007. Funds for this new service were found by closing down 10 other language radio services.

### HISTORY OF THE WORLD SERVICE

There have been four distinct phases in the BBC World Service's 75-year history. The first was the *empire phase*, from the beginning in 1932 for the next few years. This was then overtaken by the *challenge of fascism* and Nazism and the subsequent world war. At the start of hostilities in September 1939, there were broadcasts in English and just seven other languages. By 1945 the total number of other languages had risen to 45. For many the BBC was the voice of hope and freedom, especially after the fall of most of Europe to German conquest and when the UK was virtually alone. In many occupied countries the BBC was the only source of alternative news and the only voice of resistance.

After the war, new circumstances led to a *major expansion* of services to communist countries of Europe and East Asia, and this can be seen as the third phase, which continued until the end of communism in Europe. During the years immediately after the war, several west European language services established during the war years were closed and in their place new services were started, especially to the newly emerging countries in Africa.

The fourth phase followed the *end of the Cold War*. Major changes in the world of media posed several challenges to all international radio broadcasters. All of them relied heavily on shortwave. At the same time as communism ended, new technologies were beginning to be available, especially the Internet. That development was coincidental. But it had a big impact on all international radio transmissions. Several international services cut back heavily on shortwave because they believed, wrongly, that it was in terminal decline and would inevitably be replaced by new delivery systems. In some areas this did happen. But far more important than the issue of which delivery technology to use was another major development in media landscapes. This grew out of the ending of the world engagement between state-dominated economies and the free market. Until 1990 most countries in the world continued to have radio and television systems that were run as state institutions. This was especially true in the former Soviet bloc but it was also the case almost universally in the French, British, and other European nations' former colonies in Africa and Asia. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of many state-dominated economies brought in their wake a liberalization of the air waves. It became increasingly possible to deliver programs and services direct by satellite to the many new

independent radio stations that emerged in many countries in all continents. But this was not possible everywhere, and even when it was, local rebroadcasts did not usually extend far beyond the cities in which they are located. It remained true that more than half the BBC World Service's global radio audience continued to rely on shortwave.

### **ORGANIZATION, INDEPENDENCE, AND POLICIES**

The vigorous independence of the BBC in its domestic services was a great strength of the World Service, a feature not enjoyed by other major international services such as the → Voice of America, → Deutsche Welle, or → Radio France Internationale. The journalistic principles and practices of both the domestic and international services were the same. This enabled the BBC to assert that, despite the state funding of the World Service, it was not a government mouthpiece. Like the BBC in the UK, the World Service maintains a fierce independence. Surveys of audience opinion around the world showed that most listeners valued its independence, authority, comprehensiveness, and reliability.

There are problems, however, in appearances. Arabic broadcasting from Britain was originally a response to Italian fascist → propaganda in Arabic that had been targeted at countries where Britain was actively involved – notably Egypt and Palestine. Some in the British government had doubts about whether the BBC was the right body to undertake the task, given its impartiality and practice of giving all sides to a story. And there were many within the BBC who did not really like the idea of being involved in something that was a response to someone else's propaganda. It might make it look as if the BBC was now actively engaged in the same kind of thing. The BBC's founder, John (later Lord) Reith, however, strongly believed that broadcasting in Arabic was a proper role for the BBC and that providing reliable and independent information was the best way to counteract propaganda. He won the argument. The government agreed at this point to provide the funds needed for international broadcasting by the BBC. Then began a relationship that was always difficult and at times strained. The BBC World Service received virtually all its funds from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). For the financial year ending April 2007, the grant-in-aid was £239.5 million (US\$470 million).

The FCO has sometimes tried to have influence on or be involved in decisions about matters of editorial policy. The BBC has always resisted this. However, we return to the matter of appearances and how the BBC looks to those to whom its services are directed. One major problem with the new emphasis on Arabic is that it makes the World Service very slanted in its global balance. Until the end of the twentieth century, it had a balanced output in terms of continent coverage. But with the closure of nearly all its European language services, cutbacks elsewhere, and what might be regarded as a very heavy emphasis on reaching Muslim areas (a TV service in Farsi for Iran was planned for 2008 and a similar service in Urdu for Pakistan) made it look as if the BBC World Service had made a special thrust toward reaching Muslims. It looked as if more than a third of the BBC's expenditure would be on the Middle East. Was this the BBC doing the government's bidding? Almost certainly not; in all probability the FCO would like to push this trend further and might well prefer to see the BBC pull out of many of the other languages altogether. The FCO had a Public Diplomacy Board, but the BBC was not a member and attended its meetings only as an observer. The BBC has always resisted the

World Service being seen as any part of government's international diplomacy. It remains committed to independent journalism and a truly international public service.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Deutsche Welle  
▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Development Communication: Middle East  
▶ Development Journalism ▶ Egypt: Media System ▶ Gulf States: Media Systems  
▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Health Communication and Journalism ▶ Information  
▶ International Communication ▶ International Radio ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism  
▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ News ▶ Propaganda ▶ Radio  
for Development ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Television  
▶ Voice of America ▶ West Asia: Media Systems

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## **Behavioral Norms: Perception through the Media**

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Social norms entail learned expectations of behavior or categorization that are deemed desirable, or at least appear as unproblematic (Sherif 1936) for a specific social group in a given situation (→ Social Norms). Mass media have been found to help shape → perceptions of behavioral norms (→ Observational Learning; Media and Perceptions of Reality). These perceptions are consequential for health behaviors, social and sexual practices, democratic participation, and a range of other outcomes.

Certain social norms that are considered of extreme importance are typically elevated to the category of legal norms and are enforced through institutional apparatuses. Other

norms remain subject to less formalized modes of social control, including systems of rewards and punishments based precisely on sociability that include different combinations of isolation and recognition. Social scientists have long focused on certain key institutions of socialization in which those generalized expectations of behavior are learned by a new generation, namely the family, formal education institutes, and peer group interactions. Mass media are increasingly recognized as another important institution of socialization and cultivator of behavioral norms (→ Socialization by the Media).

Social scientists began to acknowledge media as an important socialization institution with the explosion of mass communication in the twentieth century. In addition to the transmission of information, mass media also convey behavioral expectations, offering role models as well as interpretive schemas to define a situation (→ Schemas and Media Effects). Different empirical research traditions within communication and related fields provide evidence of how media influence perceptions of social reality and “cultivate” attitudes and beliefs about the world. The emergence of the indirect effects paradigm has highlighted the importance of media for the perception of social norms, and explored the implications of these perceptions in greater detail (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). As a consequence, the study of media and perceptions of behavioral norms have become an important area of research in different areas of communication research including politics, health, gender, and identity.

## **SOCIAL NORMS**

Scholars working within the social norms paradigm are certain of the influence that social norms exert on individual and collective behavior. Yet the processes by which this influence occurs and the role of communication in this process are contested domains (Yanovitzky & Rimal 2006). In some early conceptualizations, social norms were understood as external social artifacts that regulated rewards and punishments within a group. Through a process of internalization these norms were incorporated by the individual (Sherif 1936). Social norms exist in all realms of human activity as a system of customs and/or laws of expected behavior in a given situation, and these customs and laws are expressed individually as values, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions.

Social norms of course are not unproblematic; they can be contradictory, evolve, and are perpetually challenged by emerging phenomena that test the limits of previously accepted expectations. Most individuals navigate the social world accepting certain norms while rejecting others, a “choice” that is socially constructed but also an individual expression. These choices result from, but also determine, our group affiliations. More current approaches view social or group norms as “regularities in attitudes and behaviors that characterize a social group and differentiate it from other social groups” (Hogg & Reid 2006, 7; → Group Communication).

## **MEDIA AND SOCIAL NORMS**

Social norms are “formed, reformed and maintained through human communication” (Yanovitzky & Rimal 2006, 2). In smaller groups people can infer the group’s norms from

explicit communication and implicit behaviors (Hogg & Reid 2006), but in larger groups mass media serve as conveyors of both words and actions.

These characterizations of groups are critical in helping us navigate the social world. Most importantly, they contribute in the *construction of our own identity* (for a review of this social identity perspective see Hogg & Reid 2006; → Social Identity Theory). In part who we are is determined by the groups we belong to and our emotional attachment to these groups. By categorization into groups, as well as out of groups, the individual self is defined in terms of similarities and dissimilarities to patterned behaviors. This process of identity construction entails not only adherence to perceived group norms, since what a “typical” group member would do in a given situation is what “I” should do in that situation provided I feel part of this group, but also the expectations “I” have about the behaviors of members of other groups. Consistency between group norms (potentially internalized as attitudes) and behavior increases with the importance attributed to group membership.

Media would contribute to this process of self-identity formation based on group portrayals with or to which a person sees some correspondence or attachment. Media working as socializing agents would then *provide role models* of “appropriate” attitudes and behaviors both reinforcing group norms and, more fundamentally, exemplifying the available group affiliations available at a given point in time.

To a certain extent all communication research traditions provide evidence of the importance of mass media in the perception of behavioral norms. From agenda setting and its focus on the relative importance of social problems that is provided by media attention (Althaus & Tewksbury 2002; → Agenda-Setting Effects), to cultivations of social reality by the disproportionate and continuous presentation of exemplars (Williams 2006; → Cultivation Effects), to more critical accounts in which elites secure consent for a given political order through the production and diffusion of meaning and values through mass media (Carragee & Roefs 2004; → Power and Discourse), the notion that media transmit behavioral norms is implied. Nevertheless, the case for a direct relationship between exposure to mass media and differential perception of social reality is probably exemplified best by the cultivation tradition, according to which sustained exposure to mediated messages, particularly television, cultivates a common outlook on the world in which mediated reality becomes more important than real-world experiences (→ Cultivation Theory).

Based on this notion of social norms and the power of media in their construction and dissemination, there is a long tradition of interventions in the form of communication campaigns that seek to alter certain social behaviors by providing cognitive or emotional appeals intended to influence what is considered “normal” (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods). In addition to the direct effects of these campaigns it has been argued that media, by changing the social acceptability of a behavior and influencing the direction of public policy, influence the social behavior indirectly through institutional changes enacted by policymakers.

### **INDIRECT EFFECTS OF MEDIA?**

According to third-person and hostile media perspectives in mass communication (→ Third-Person Effects; Hostile Media Phenomenon), media influence can also occur on the basis of the expectation individuals have of the effects of mass media on others. For

example, Gunther et al. (2006) have suggested that adolescents' smoking behavior is predicted not only by their exposure to smoking-related media content but more importantly by the perceived (not the actual) prevalence of smoking among their peers, which is a function of their likely exposure to smoking-related content. It appears then that being exposed to smoking-related content makes an adolescent more likely to smoke not only because of the direct persuasive effects of these messages, but also and mostly through a presumed influence process in which we judge the media will influence others, so our perception of what is the norm is altered.

This *presumed influence* is precisely what the social norm intervention approach has in mind when it relies on correcting misperceptions about social norms in order to affect behaviors. Based on the notion of pluralistic ignorance, i.e., the misperception that a disproportionate number of people engage in certain behaviors or hold certain beliefs, the social norms approach seeks to change certain behaviors that are considered risky by providing information about the "true" norm. For example, regarding alcohol consumption among US college students, there is evidence that despite how prevalent this behavior is, most students will actually overestimate the alcohol consumption of their peers and this overestimation ultimately affects their consumption. Working on this logic, certain communication campaigns that have sought to correct the misperception by providing information about "true" norms have been successful in reducing both pluralistic ignorance on the subject and alcohol consumption (Smith et al. 2006).

Beyond this realm of risky behaviors, media representations of social reality can affect our *perceptions of current public opinion* and in doing so alter the composition or expression of certain opinions, which ultimately may impact the political process (Mutz 1998). Beliefs about the relative prevalence of an opinion that result from the assumption of impersonal media influence can provide important cues about the social environment and local context. In fact, it has been argued that people are often exposed to perspectives and behavioral norms via mass media that they would not encounter through their interpersonal relationship, especially as they relate to the consumption of information and consumer products (Schor 1998).

More fundamentally, the perception of the → climate of opinion and associated judgments about the likelihood of people expressing those opinions have been linked to individual willingness to speak out, with individuals less inclined to talk if they believe others who share their views are silent (Glynn et al. 1997; → Spiral of Silence). Inferences based on journalists' presentations of the contending positions on an issue can influence perceived norms and the nature of the response by the perceiver (Gunther & Storey 2003).

With the emergence of computer-mediated communications, the influence of climates of opinion in interpersonal opinion expression persist (Price et al. 2006) and new domains for the cultivation of social norms appear. Williams (2006), for example, provides evidence of how online role playing cultivates fear of crime in the online domain. The development of social norms in online environments and their implications for social perceptions and behaviors are an emerging domain of research interest (→ Technology and Communication).

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Climate of Opinion ► Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ► Cultivation Effects ► Cultivation Theory ► Group

Communication ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Perception ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Social Norms ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## **Bertelsmann Corporation**

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Bertelsmann Corporation, with headquarters in the small northern German city of Gütersloh, is one of the largest multinational media, information, and consulting corporations worldwide (→ Media Conglomerates), with a turnover of almost 20 million euros



and about 100,000 employees (all figures here are for 2006). If the size of the company is assessed on the basis not of annual turnover but of its credit rating with banks, then for many years Bertelsmann has been the world's largest multinational information concern, as (unlike many US companies) it has been debt free for a long time.

The following six companies belong to Bertelsmann: Gruner and Jahr magazine publishers (14 percent share of turnover), the → television group RTL (29 percent), the publishing house Random House (10 percent), 50 percent of Sony BMG Music Entertainment (10 percent), the Direct Group Bertelsmann with its worldwide book clubs (13 percent), and the consultancy company Arvato (24 percent). Bertelsmann is the world market leader in → book publishing (in the USA, it owns among others Random House, Knopf, Doubleday, Ballantine, and Bantam Dell) and book clubs; in the music business Bertelsmann is among the five music majors (→ Music Industry); and it is market leader in Europe for → magazines.

The current Bertelsmann concern began as a small publisher of Christian song and text books, founded in 1835. The publishing house continually expanded and focused on popular novels; at the end of the 1930s it employed 400 people. Up until the 1990s the company claimed to have been opposed to the National Socialists, but research work into the group by historian Saul Friedländer established the opposite: during World War II, Bertelsmann-Verlag was one of the most important suppliers of books for soldiers on the front. Among those who wrote those front books were numerous Nazi authors (for example, Will Vesper and Hans Grimm).

After 1945, Bertelsmann initially focused on the West German market. Overtaking the traditional book business, it took control of the West German book market with special book clubs whose members could buy books regularly and at particularly good prices. Later the company complemented its mail order book business with mass-issue cheap novels sold in bookshops of its own where only club members could buy. By the 1960s the West German book market was too small for the company, so it took its first step toward internationalization by founding the first book club in Franco's Spain in 1962.

Spain was an obvious choice for Bertelsmann because it was an ideal stepping stone to the large Spanish-language book market in Latin America. Bertelsmann became particularly active in Colombia (→ Colombia: Media System). Every second book printed in that country comes from one of the two Bertelsmann printing companies. When Spain joined the EU in 1986 Bertelsmann was able to further strengthen its position in the Spanish market.

The year 1986 marked a strategic turning point in Bertelsmann's internationalization strategy to the extent that it was the year the company began investing significantly in the US media market. After the complete takeover of the company Bookspan from → Time Warner Inc. by the Bertelsmann company in early 2007, it is now regarded in the US as the largest direct supplier of music, films, and books (→ United States of America: Media System).

Whereas the Bertelsmann company has been always innovative in its traditional business sector, the book market, its approach to the new media technologies and markets (pay-TV, databases, the → Internet) was mostly conservative. Only when the new and recent growth markets had undergone a phase of self-adjustment, ridding themselves of too many actors, did the Bertelsmann concern enter those markets, simply by buying up

existing smaller innovative players in the new technologies and then taking the lead in individual sub-markets with the combined forces of a multinational concern.

With the emergence of the Internet, however, and the disruption of the media and information branch by the dot.com bubble in 2000, Bertelsmann's former global book market was no longer what it used to be. This became evident, for example, in its purchase and reselling of shares in America Online (AOL) or in the, for Bertelsmann, very expensive copyright court cases involving the commercial online music service Napster. Meantime Bertelsmann's method of raising capital also changed. While the family company, which is not publicly listed on the stock exchange, traditionally drew its investment capital from its profits, in spring 2007, it founded a private equity fund along with Citigroup, Private Equity, and Morgan Stanley Principal Investments, so as to be able to acquire urgently required capital through the controversial methods of finance investors.

The concern's turnover allocation in the mid-2000s was also a drastic indicator that the old book world was dead. A quarter of Bertelsmann turnover by then was being made by the services its subsidiary Arvato provided. This company offered technical and administrative services to the most varied companies, heading the conservative think tanks in Germany that were successfully supplying privatization models to German local governments for public institutions and services (schools, roads, hospitals, cultural institutions, etc.). The East Riding County Council in Yorkshire, England, was a showpiece in this respect: for the period 2006–2014, Arvato took over the entire, formerly sovereign public authority administration of the city for the sum of 200 million euros.

In response to these developments, at the much-frequented Internet site [www.anti-bertelsmann.de](http://www.anti-bertelsmann.de), socially involved individuals and groups in Germany set themselves up in opposition to the privatization of public institutions and services by the Bertelsmann Corporation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Book ▶ Colombia: Media System ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Music Industry ▶ Television ▶ Time Warner Inc. ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## Bi- and Multilingualism

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Approaching bilingualism and multilingualism from a communication perspective sheds light on a phenomenon which otherwise would appear static and asocial. Merriam-Webster's online thesaurus defines *bilingualism* as "the ability to speak two languages: the frequent oral use of two languages," and *multilingual* as "of, containing, or expressed in several languages" and "using or able to use several languages." The apparent simplicity of these definitions is, however, deceptive for a number of reasons.

### DEFINITIONAL PROBLEMS

First, they fail to make the distinction between bilingualism as a collective characteristic defining nations and bilingualism as a person's competence in one or more languages. As we will see below, the distinction is crucial to our understanding of bilingualism as the product of the interplay between individuals and their context.

Second, defining bilingualism at a national level entails, in itself, a number of difficulties. Since there are approximately 5,000 languages distributed in 200 countries, most would be characterized by a state of relative bilingualism. For a state to qualify as bilingual does not, however, follow from a simple head count. A key question, here, is: how do we distinguish a language from a dialect? Normally, languages are not mutually intelligible. Dialects, however, as varieties of one language differentiated by grammar, vocabulary, and accent may or may not be mutually intelligible. European French speakers would probably not understand the Creole dialect spoken in the French West Indies but they would probably understand the French spoken in Canada. Does that make Creole a language and French Canadian a dialect? Not necessarily. According to Weinreich (1945, 13), "A language is a dialect that has an army and a navy." This introduces the issue of power hierarchies in the definition of languages (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). Languages are not languages unless they are recognized as such by the state and this usually entails the obligation to support their acquisition, maintenance, and use. Hence, a state-level degree of bilingualism is heavily dependent on the political and social climate.

The third set of definitional problems is related to individual bilingualism or *bilinguality* (Hamers & Blanc 2000). A bilingual person could be someone who can speak two languages perfectly. However, there are those who suggest that even a minimal knowledge of both languages is enough to qualify one as a bilingual. Adding to the confusion is the fact that a strictly linguistic definition may not be appropriate. Apart from linguistic competence, Skutnab-Kangas (1981) proposes three other definitions of bilingualism based respectively on its developmental aspects, its functions for the individual and the community, and the speaker's identification and attitudes toward the second language community. This perspective supports the social and political underpinnings discussed above regarding societal bilingualism. It compels us to view bilingualism as heavily embedded in its social context and communication practices.

Each of the questions raised by these definitional problems will be discussed in turn. When we refer to bilingualism or multilingualism, we do not only mean languages in contact, but also the people from various cultural origins using these languages. Bilingualism is, therefore, an intercultural communication (IC) phenomenon (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication). While bilingualism and multilingualism have not been much explored in the literature on IC (see Gudykunst & Mody 2002), I will argue that the two fields of research share many concepts that are similar and that showing these would highlight their complementary characteristics (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication).

## BILINGUALITY

Acquiring and using a language other than the first language learned is a matter of fact in most areas of the world. A distinction is usually made between simultaneous and successive bilingualism. In *simultaneous bilingualism* both languages are acquired simultaneously, whereas in *successive bilingualism* the second language is acquired later in life. The first description of simultaneous bilingualism is attributed to Ronjat (1913) who observed the linguistic development (in French and German) of his son Louis from birth to age 4. Ronjat made positive conclusions about the development of his son. Since then, there have been numerous studies of simultaneous bilingualism which generally confirm what the early studies found: that children developing both languages simultaneously from an early age are able to differentiate their languages at an early stage and are not at any disadvantage in terms of language acquisition compared to their monolingual peers. However, achieving such a state of “balanced bilingualism” is subject to the existence of contextual factors such as the equal status of the languages, their equal valuing by parents, and the availability of a language community for each language, as well as individual factors such as positive attitudes toward bilingualism and the languages.

These factors are also present, under other labels in numerous IC theories. The importance of a network representing each language is expressed in Kim’s (1986) representation of the relation between second language (L2) competence and individual communication networks. Specifically, she relates network heterogeneity and the relative importance of outgroup members in the network to the achievement of outgroup communicative competence (→ Communication Networks). Similarly, Gudykunst’s (2005) → *anxiety uncertainty management theory* proposes that situational processes such as norms for interacting with L2 speakers as well as the individual’s connection with the L2 speakers act as determinants of communication effectiveness and intercultural adjustment. Finally, → *communication accommodation theory* (e.g., Gallois et al. 1995) underlines the importance, among other factors, of interpersonal and intergroup factors in determining the individual’s accommodative orientation. None of these theories deals specifically with development. They do, however, lay out concepts and constructs pertaining to the broader issue of communicative behavior. As suggested by MacIntyre et al. (1998), L2 usage is fundamental to L2 acquisition.

The factors affecting successive bilingualism (the acquisition of L2 after L1 has been established) are by and large identical to those affecting simultaneous bilingualism. Research results underline the importance of such factors as linguistic aptitude, learning strategies, and personality factors such as introversion. These aspects find little

correspondence in the IC literature. Pioneering work on the question of *motivation* does, however, cross many of the IC paths. Gardner & Lambert (1972) originally proposed that motivation is, with linguistic aptitude, the factor determining L2 competence. They further showed that L2 motivation was closely linked to attitude toward the L2 community and an interest in becoming similar to valued members of that group, a tendency which they labeled “integrativeness.” Originally aimed at describing the Canadian situation, research over three decades has shown that L2 motivation, as affectively based in intergroup attitudes, is a determining factor in L2 competence in numerous settings across the world. And this connects with aspects of the IC theories described above. Since the original research, many alternative motivational models have been created (Clément & Gardner 2001). In all cases, however, the affective basis of the motivation is linked to contextual factors (→ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts).

Besides intergroup attitudes, the more recent literature has supported the importance of *L2 confidence* as a determinant of L2 behavior and competence. L2 confidence corresponds to the belief in being able to react adaptively to situations involving the use of a second language. It is related to positive self-ratings of competence and a lack of anxiety when using the second language (Clément 1980). It originates from situations where contact with the L2 community is both frequent and pleasant. Thus, while positive attitudes may orient the individual toward the L2 community, intercultural contact generates the confidence required for L2 interaction and, in so doing, promotes L2 competence as well as others consequences of L2 acquisition to be discussed below (MacIntyre et al. 1998).

Anxiety and uncertainty are also concepts found in IC theories. Notably, Gudykunst (1985) proposed a general theory of interpersonal and intergroup communication in which anxiety management occupies a central role. Accordingly, reconciling intergroup and interpersonal communication hinges on defining as the “stranger” any other person, whether or not they are perceived as culturally different. Specifically, it is suggested that the influence on communication effectiveness of the motivation to interact with strangers, the reaction to strangers, the social categorization of strangers, and the connection with strangers are mediated (in part) by an anxiety management system.

### **SOCIETAL BILINGUALISM**

Many descriptions of bilinguality may convey the impression that the phenomenon is individually based or, at best, relevant to dyadic interactions. The reference above to the attitudinal context of bilingual development and L2 acquisition, however, situates it at the intersection of individual and societal processes. This question has, therefore, come to be a key issue for government authorities in a number of countries. *Language planning* has been the political and administrative instrument used to promote and protect languages according to predetermined societal options. Accordingly, the state may determine the goals of language education; the medium of interaction with government agencies, tribunals, and schools; and the relative visibility of different languages in public and commercial signs – the linguistic landscape. These actions are often premised on the idea that a minority situation will not only entail the loss of L1 but may also result in the disappearance of entire cultural groups.

Under the concepts of additive and subtractive bilingualism, Lambert (1978) proposed that language learning outcomes could be very different for members of majority and minority groups. Notably, subtractive bilingualism would refer to a situation where members of a minority group would come to lose their first language as a result of learning the second one. Additive bilingualism, on the other hand, refers to situations where members of a majority group acquire L2 without losing L1. This notion of relative group status was subsequently formalized by Giles et al. (1977) under the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality (→ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication), which encompasses demographic representation of the communities, their institutional representation, and the socio-economic status of their members. Ethnolinguistic vitality is linked to a family of language phenomena, and the results obtained to date show a consistent relation between these structural factors and first language retention and competence among minority group members.

These aspects find an echo in Kim's (2005) *contextual theory of interethnic communication*. Accordingly, language behavior is described along an associative–dissociative continuum controlled by various aspects of the communicator, the situation, and the environment. Associative verbal behavior would correspond to attempts at modulating messages to adjust to one's interlocutor whereas dissociative verbal behavior would seek to establish communicative distance. While no mention is made explicitly of usage of L2 to accommodate the interlocutor, that type of behavior would be considered associative. Kim's theory also describes the environment in terms of institutional equity, relative ingroup strength, and environmental stress, all aspects of the context that are likely to influence associative/dissociative behavior in a manner consistent with ethnolinguistic vitality theory.

## SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE CONSEQUENCES

A relevant issue here is the idea that positive benefits from L2 acquisition and usage will be achieved only to the extent that the first language and culture are well established within the individual (Clément 1980; Hamers & Blanc 2000). This presupposes a familial, educational, and social context that allows the development and transmission of the first language and culture. Although such conditions may be present for majority group members, they may not characterize the situation of minority group members, immigrants, refugees, and sojourners. The relative status of the first- and second-language speaking groups and the linguistic composition of the community are here key determinants of the linguistic and cultural outcomes of second language acquisition.

Specifically, as suggested by identity-based IC theories (Gudykunst & Mody 2002), there is an intimate link between communicative processes and *individual identity*. To the extent that a context brings about loss of the first language, it will also bring about loss of the first cultural identity. Noels & Clément (1996) have shown this to be the case among minority group members but not among majority group members. The systemic relationships between societal conditions and language loss, therefore, risk bringing about results that are the opposite of the intended goal of bilingualism programs.

A similar argument may be proposed as concerns *cognitive consequences* of bilingualism. It was originally thought that bilingualism would produce negative consequences for

cognitive functioning. The study by Peal & Lambert (1962), however, showed that bilinguals scored higher than monolinguals on verbal and nonverbal intelligence tests and showed a more diversified intelligence structure. According to these authors, bilinguals have the ability to manipulate two symbolic systems and thus analyze semantic features in greater detail. Subsequent studies have resulted in the conclusion that bilinguals have greater metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility, that is, they are better able to distinguish the symbol from its specific meaning which gives them an advantage in most school-type cognitive abilities. According to Hamers & Blanc's (2000) sociocultural interdependence hypothesis, positive cognitive outcomes will result only where both first and second languages are valued.

In conclusion, the picture that emerges, whether from the perspective of IC theories or of theories dealing specifically with bilingualism and bilinguality, shows a phenomenon that is closely interwoven with social factors pertaining to the community at hand. Whereas IC theories are generally formulated in more abstract terms than bilingualism theories, they do not cover some specific aspects, such as linguistic and cultural attrition, or cognitive enhancements, which have been the prime focus of interest in societies that value cultural diversity. Most theories (in either camp) attempt, however, to explain these phenomena through complex multitiered mechanisms. They vary in emphasis and epistemological style but none of them makes predictions that are diametrically opposed to the others.

SEE ALSO: ► Acculturation Processes and Communication ► Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Communication Networks ► Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ► Identification ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Intergroup Contact and Communication ► Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ► Language and Social Interaction ► Power in Intergroup Settings

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## Bias in the News

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In societies with a tradition of partisan news media (→ Partisan Press), whether news organizations have a political bias in their reporting is less of a concern. In other environments where mainstream news media purport to be fair and objective, and journalists are expected to be neutral gatekeepers instead of partisan advocates (→ Advocacy Journalism; Journalists’ Role Perception), whether or not the news media have a bias would receive close scrutiny from politicians, scholars, the general public, and journalists themselves. It is common for observers to perceive a political bias, which reduces their trust in the news media, and triggers their criticism of both media organizations and journalists (→ Media Production and Content).

### DEFINITIONS AND DIMENSIONS OF BIAS

A bias can be understood as a preference or inclination. A media bias, the opposite of objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting), can be defined as differential treatment of (e.g., favoring) a particular side of an issue, which can be measured quantitatively or qualitatively. If one side receives proportionally less news coverage, or apparently more negative, inaccurate, or unbalanced coverage, a bias is shown (see Simon et al. 1989). Some may



argue that an absolute objectivity is impossible to achieve, and therefore the term “bias” – the antonym of “objectivity” – should be replaced by a term such as “favoritism.”

McQuail (1992) identifies four types of bias on the basis of a typology of open versus hidden, and intended versus unintended. A *partisan* bias is open and intended, such as an editorial endorsement. *Propaganda* is intentional yet hidden, such as the result of a firm’s or a government’s public relations efforts. An *unwitting* bias is open and unintended, such as the fact that certain news topics are covered while others are not. Finally, *ideology* is unintended and hidden, and therefore is difficult to define or detect as it is “embedded in text” (1992, 194). Interestingly, the accusation that the news media have a liberal – which is ideological – bias is common in the US. Critics do not seem to have a problem finding evidence to support this claim.

The manifestation, as well as criticism, of a media bias generally consists of three aspects: the ideologies and party affiliations of journalists, actual media content, and the structure of media organizations. Using the United States as an example, its news media are constantly accused of having a *liberal bias*. Lichter et al. (1986) report that most reporters in large media outlets identify themselves as liberal and supporters of the Democratic party, which is perceived as a type of bias. Donsbach and Patterson (2004), who have investigated whether reporting is affected by journalists’ own attitudes and ideologies, conclude that journalists’ partisanship, especially in the US, has little effect on their news decisions. Echoing Gans (1979), Donsbach and Patterson also argue that journalists tend to hold somewhat “progressive” but “safe” views on social issues (2004, 260). Consequently, even though anecdotal examples of liberal or pro-Democratic coverage can be found occasionally, most systematic analyses of media content (e.g., Niven 2002) have found little or no political or partisan bias in mainstream news media.

Another group of media critics (e.g., Altschull 1995) believes that mainstream media, especially those in the US, have a *conservative bias*, partially due to the media’s corporate ownership, as evidenced by their support for a capitalist and two-party-system status quo. Some observers (e.g., McLeod & Detenber 1999) argue that alternative political views are often considered un-newsworthy and therefore are ignored by mainstream media, or receive unfairly negative coverage. In addition to partisan or political biases, the media have been accused of having *racial, gender, religious, and class biases*.

### POSSIBLE REASONS BEHIND A PERCEIVED BIAS

Media critic Michael Parenti (1996) offers several explanations for a general belief that the media have a political bias. First, due to the media’s corporate ownership, conservative voices are dominant and can repeat their complaints more often than liberal critics. Second, conservative politicians and commentators habitually attack the media to put them on the defensive. Third, the reporting of social realities in the news, such as wrongdoings in the government and large corporations, or poverty and pollution, can be considered liberal in nature. Similarly, a group of media scholars (Domke et al. 1999) argue that conservative and Republican elites’ strategic and frequent complaints have convinced both the media and the general public of the existence of a liberal and pro-Democratic bias.

Another line of research offers an alternative understanding of the perception of a media bias. “*Hostile media*” studies suggest that supporters of an issue or a group tend to

believe the media favor their opponents (→ Hostile Media Phenomenon). In other words, supporters of political or social groups or issues (e.g., Middle East conflicts, or liberals versus conservatives) tend to perceive the media as being unfair or even hostile to their own cause or side while favoring their opponents, and hence a media bias is perceived. Therefore, the perception of a media bias is likely caused by an observer's own bias. However, this argument does not exempt journalists from taking responsibility for accurate and objective reporting.

One more approach to understanding perceived biases in the media is the fact that audiences are likely to seek exposure to political information they tend to agree with, and process information in a way that *matches their existing view* (→ Selective Attention; Selective Exposure). However, if they happen to see a viewpoint in the news that they disagree with, they likely perceive a bias. At the same time, consumers may categorically assume all information from a certain source is completely biased and therefore not worth their attention. If citizens in a society are not exposed to, or are not open-minded about, perspectives they do not necessarily agree with, there can be some negative consequences in a participatory democracy.

### STRUCTURAL FACTORS BEHIND MEDIA BIASES

Conceptually, biases are difficult to avoid because news content is a reality selectively constructed by journalists (→ Construction of Reality through the News). Because of limited space and time in any medium (known as the “news hole”), decisions on topics and reporting angles must be made, and any selection itself can be seen as a form of bias. Certain forms of biases have been well studied, such as the overrepresentation of “official sources” and the lack of alternative viewpoints in the news. Possible explanations for such phenomena include the structure of a news organization, the ritual of news gathering, and the position of news organizations in a social structure.

Studies on the production of news, particularly on news gathering and gatekeeping (e.g., Tuchman 1978), suggest that journalists often operate under a *news beat system*, which makes news gathering easier given a news organization's limited resources. This system is biased toward official sources because they are easy to access. Also, journalists are socialized to adopt certain criteria of newsworthiness, which also might favor the power status quo (→ News Values). For instance, a reporter would automatically contact the spokespersons of the local police or fire department when a fire or crime occurs, likely because such officials are most apt to have relevant information. In addition, journalists are trained to judge newsworthiness in a way that reflects the power structure in society. For instance, politicians and business leaders are considered more important than common citizens. Therefore, the former group's voices are heard more frequently in the news. In other words, such figures often have the power to shape the agenda of news coverage (→ Agenda-Setting Effects).

Because the news media are part of the social structure, the variety of viewpoints reported in the news is related to the level of pluralism in a community, according to Tichenor et al. (1980). In a less pluralistic community structure, official voices tend to dominate news discourse, and groups or opinions critical of the local power structure tend to be absent in the news, which is also a form of media bias (→ Community

Structure Model). Furthermore, because the news media are part of a society, it is expected that they would reflect the dominant ideologies of the society in which they operate (also see Shoemaker & Reese, 1996, on a hierarchical model of factors affecting news content). For instance, in a capitalist country, reporters as well as audiences are unlikely to question such a system, and opinions critical of this economic system tend to be marginalized in the news. This itself can be seen as a form of media bias.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Balance ► Community Structure Model ► Construction of Reality through the News ► Hostile Media Phenomenon ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Media Production and Content ► News Values ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Partisan Press ► Selective Attention ► Selective Exposure

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## **Black Feminist Media Studies**

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Black feminist media studies is a growing body of scholarly work that looks at the intersection of media, race, and gender, with a specific focus on women of African descent. This field of research most often designates scholarship produced in the United States or

Europe that explores the ways that film, television, broadcast and print news, and new media (and, less often, radio) produce messages and ideas about women of African descent and the possible ways in which these representations influence political, economic, and cultural structures in society (→ Feminist and Gender Studies).

The *purview* of black feminist media studies is potentially very broad because the appellation “black” refers to different groups of people in different parts of the world. Even when “black” is restricted to people of African descent, it encapsulates an entire diaspora of people who may identify as or be identified as “black” within a given culture. In addition, the “media,” at least according to their broadest definition, designate a number of channels for sending signs by means of an ordered system (→ Sign; Woman as Sign). Many modes of communication fall within such an expansive definition of media. Currently, “black feminist media studies” takes as its object the production of media by, for, or about women of African descent. Significantly, the characterization of these studies as “feminist” highlights the political investment of the scholarship; it is interested in participating in efforts to build more just and egalitarian political, economic, and social conditions for black women.

Like media studies in general, black feminist media studies draws on a *range of methods and disciplines*. Ethnography (→ Ethnography of Communication), textual analysis (→ Text and Intertextuality), → critical theory, and → historiography are among the methodologies employed in the production of black feminist media scholarship. Scholarship has been produced from within the disciplinary formations of communication studies, mass communications, film and television studies, cultural studies, art history, history and literary studies, among others. Despite the diversity in methods, disciplinary location, and training of its practitioners, black feminist media studies scholarship shares a central set of issues.

One of the issues that has been central to black feminist media studies has been to assess the quality and implications of historical and contemporary *representations of women of African descent*. Analyses of these representations have provided explanations and insights into the ways in which black women are perceived not only via media but within society more broadly. Such “readings” of black women’s representation seek to explain how they operate ideologically to maintain existing power relations and thus where the ideological work they do might be challenged (→ Media and Group Representations).

Black feminist media studies also has been concerned with assessing, analyzing, and interrogating *media produced by women of African descent*. Political economy analysis, for instance, has produced quantitative analyses of media (→ Qualitative Methodology) in which black women have played a decision-making role regarding that media’s content. Qualitative analyses and readings of media produced by black women have also made an important contribution to the development of black feminist media research (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). Additionally, ethnographic studies of black women’s media consumption practices and patterns have added to this rich and increasingly varied area of investigation.

Most of the *changes in black feminist media studies* over time have occurred as the range of media considered under the rubric of “media studies” has expanded due to technological innovation and methodological changes that have influenced disciplines historically concerned with the study of media. Film, broadcast, and print media initially were the

primary media considered. However, the increasing prevalence of new media has encouraged more black feminist media scholars to consider the significance of the Internet and other forms of digital media. At the same time, the increasingly interdisciplinary scholarship produced by academics working across disciplinary assumptions and institutional locations has led to more multifaceted forms of black feminist scholarship.

*Issues of sexuality* have long been of concern to black feminist media scholars. Issues have included investigations into the ways that black female bodies are sexualized in various media's representations of them, and questions regarding the ways that differences in sexual orientation complicate the consolidation of the category "black woman" (→ Gay, Lesbian, Bixsexual, and Transgender Media Studies; Heterosexism and the Media; Sexualization in the Media). Scholars will continue to engage with questions around the representation of black lesbians and other queer black women as they become increasingly visible in the media – or rendered invisible within a new (white) queer visibility more broadly.

Black feminist media studies is becoming progressively more *transnational in character* as scholars around the world gain access to a wider range of black feminist scholarship produced outside of the United States and Europe (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). The widening availability of this work offers opportunities for dialogues among scholars that may open avenues of investigation that are more attentive to issues of place and space than current black feminist scholarship tends to be. Since at least the 1980s, black feminists in the US and Europe have become more strongly connected to other feminists of color, including American indigenous, Chicana and Latina, and Asian feminists (→ Latina Feminist Media Studies). These dialogues and collaborations constitute an engaging body of work that is sometimes referred to as "women of color feminism."

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Ethnic Media and their Influence ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ Historiography ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Sign ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Woman as Sign ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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# Blogger

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A blogger is a publisher of or contributor to a weblog. Weblogs are online publications that typically present contents in inverse chronological order, time-stamped, and with hyperlinks pointing at original sources online that bloggers refer to. Usually weblogs are conversational, so that readers' comments appear along with the bloggers' own postings (→ Internet).

Bloggers emerged in large numbers during the early 2000s, along with easy-to-use, often free weblog publishing software. The entirety of all weblogs is called the *blogosphere*. Technorati, a website providing news about the phenomenon, estimates that about 50 million blogs existed on computer networks worldwide as of August 2006 (Sifry 2006). Most bloggers have nothing to do with journalism; their weblogs represent personal online literary forms without aiming to deliver current affairs information of public interest (→ Personal Publishing). However, many bloggers operate close to or within → journalism, processing and publishing information in a manner that resembles journalistic routines. Bloggers have shaped → online journalism and sparked academic and professional debates about changing definitions of *journalist* and *journalism* (→ Online Media; Professionalization of Journalism).

From the perspective of journalism, bloggers fall into four categories on a continuum which illustrates their relationship with institutional media and professional journalism: citizen, audience, journalist, and media bloggers. *Citizen bloggers* are publishers of weblogs who operate outside of media companies. These bloggers may not intend to, or even prefer not to, produce journalism, but when publishing current affairs information they may “commit journalism” (Lasica 2002). Citizen bloggers may adopt roles as media commentators, specialized writers, or amateur reporters. Some bloggers monitor professional journalists, exposing on so-called *watchblogs* the deficiencies in journalists' work. Sometimes eyewitnesses turn into occasional citizen reporters by publishing on blogs first-hand information of news events. More sustained journalism can be found in blogs that experts maintain to cover issues in their own fields, or in community blogs that neighborhood amateur reporters publish to cover everyday life in their milieus. Citizen bloggers have also become a source of story ideas for professional journalists (→ Citizen Journalism).

*Audience bloggers* contribute to weblogs that media organizations provide either within or attached to their core publications. The audience contributions may appear closely linked to newsroom reports, but most are located in areas separate from newsroom contents. Gathering communities of audience bloggers may strengthen user loyalty to an online publication, resulting in improved regard for the media brand name. Audience bloggers may also generate a mutually beneficial dialogue between the newsroom and the audience, enhancing the quality of journalism by increasing the transparency of the reporting process.

*Journalist bloggers* are professionals who publish journalistic weblogs outside their home media institutions. The blogosphere lures them in by promising uncontrolled self-publishing space to deal with and comment on issues from viewpoints and in a style that

would not fit into the journalists' home institution. Some media companies forbid blogging by employees even outside working hours, but most professional journalists are free to blog without coming into conflict with their employers. In another variation, some journalists use blogs to showcase their work. These bloggers may be aspirants seeking to work in journalism or may be seasoned freelance professionals.

*Media bloggers* are also professional journalists, but they contribute to weblogs that their media employer maintains related to its online publication. Media bloggers may not adhere to as strict a journalistic code as they do in news writing. While allowing a more personal approach, the employer nevertheless applies some editorial judgment to the media blogger's output. Media bloggers may detest some characteristics of weblogs, such as the freedom of readers to comment on blog postings. Some media bloggers cover special events for their publications, such as elections or big sports events. They may write blog entries to publish more personal or less newsworthy musings about the event. Other media bloggers maintain blogs to comment and reflect on developments in their beats. Still others use the conversational feature of weblogs to share news ideas with readers before writing an article, drawing from the knowledge of their audience. Some newsrooms even publish notes from editorial meetings on a blog and engage readers in conversations about news decisions.

Bloggers may be a harbinger of more diverse and democratic communication, which online publishing technology can enable, as first predicted when the world wide web emerged in the mid-1990s (Castells 1996). Bloggers, along with podcasters, wiki-publishers, and other social media actors, challenge the institutional media and the journalism profession by offering competing or complementing information about news events and issues. The participatory features in blogging also highlight the lack of personal contact between conventional journalists and their audiences. The activity of bloggers may also question professional journalists' ownership of journalism by demonstrating that others can also deliver relevant current affairs information to wide audiences. Within established journalism, bloggers have created a new content genre that has rapidly become a customary element in the array of online publications (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

SEE ALSO: ► Citizen Journalism ► Internet ► Journalism ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Online Journalism ► Online Media ► Personal Publishing ► Professionalization of Journalism

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## Body Images in the Media

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Visual portrayals of women in the media tend to emphasize idealized standards of thinness and beauty that are beyond the reach of most women. The systematic analysis of the body type of fashion models (Silverstein et al. 1986) provide convincing evidence that women portrayed in glamorous roles in the popular media are thinner than the average woman. Moreover, these studies report that the normative standards of thinness have increased in the last few decades.

The increasing glamorization of thinness in the media is in stark contrast to epidemiological evidence, which points to an overweight and obesity epidemic in the population. Critics argue that the idealized thinness and digitally enhanced beauty portrayed in the media are beyond the reach of most women (→ Feminist and Gender Studies).

Idealized portrayals of women can be traced to the Renaissance artists and Venus sculptures by the Greeks. The interesting difference, however, is that these portrayals were not intended to serve as models of attractiveness for the average woman. Venus represented ethereal beauty, depicting godly standards, which women were not urged to imitate. In contrast, in → popular culture, the fashion model is presented as someone to emulate, whose thinness and attractiveness can be achieved through discipline, diet, exercise, and the consumption of fashion and beauty products.

### EVIDENCE FROM RESEARCH

Exposure to the thin media ideal is not without consequence. Body image distortion (Botta 1999), body dissatisfaction, body esteem, mood and eating disorder symptoms (Harrison 2001) are correlated to exposure to media ideals (→ Image). The case for the effect of media on body image is built upon research that includes media criticism, content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), → surveys, and controlled laboratory experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory). The findings from these different research traditions point to a significant association between exposure to media and body dissatisfaction, particularly among women with certain vulnerabilities. Even though it is



difficult to demonstrate a clear causal link, the associational evidence between media variables and body dissatisfaction is quite compelling.

*Early research* focused on the scientific analysis of media content. In these studies, researchers found that fashion models were becoming increasingly thinner and that the standards portrayed by these ideals were drastically different from the shape and size of the average woman. At the time these findings were being reported, a surge in diagnosed cases of eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa, were also reported in the media. The increase in portrayals of thinness and a concurrent increase in eating disorders in the population led to the examination of the link between media and body image.

With data from content analysis, media critics argued that unrealistic portrayals of thinness and attractiveness were in part responsible for body dissatisfaction among women, which in some extreme cases led to clinical outcomes, such as eating disorders. Further, some critics argued that the body dissatisfaction created by advertisers was not just incidental, but a strategic effort to create body dissatisfaction that could be exploited to market beauty and weight management products.

Even as these content-based arguments began to emerge, social scientists began to examine individual differences that explained body image effects. It appeared that despite the broad reach of the media, only some women were affected by body image distortions. Researchers began to examine what makes some women vulnerable (Stice et al. 1994). Two *key variables* emerged out of this research: social comparisons with media portrayals (Heinberg & Thompson 1992; Tiggeman & McGill 2004) and internalization of thinness norms (Thompson et al. 2004). Using in-depth interviews (→ Interview, Qualitative), focus groups, and surveys, it was found that women who compared themselves to bodies of fashion models had higher levels of body dissatisfaction and eating disorder symptoms. Later research suggested that social comparisons provided only a partial explanation of body dissatisfaction and it was the internalization of thinness norms that were more critical. Through a series of studies, researchers built the argument that although body dissatisfaction was widely prevalent in young women, those who internalized comparisons with media ideals were more at risk for clinical disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.

The study of body image media effects also focused on media → genres and their differential impacts. Among different media, the use of *fashion magazines* was found to be a significant predictor of body dissatisfaction (Thomsen et al. 2002). Given that fashion magazines are filled with how-to tips to improve body image, the strong tie between fashion magazine use and body dissatisfaction is not surprising (→ Fashion; Magazine). In the same vein, certain types of *television programs* that emphasize thinness have been found to be related to body dissatisfaction. However, these findings rest entirely on correlational evidence that does not explain whether these types of media create body dissatisfaction or whether women with high dissatisfaction are drawn to these types of media (→ Correlation Analysis). In other words, although findings from survey research suggest a relationship between media use and body dissatisfaction, these findings do not establish media as a causal factor.

To address the causal effects of media use and body image dissatisfaction, researchers have used a variety of creative laboratory experiments with some common characteristics. In the *typical body image experiment*, participants are asked to provide a baseline

assessment of body image. Then respondents are assigned randomly to a control condition or to one of the treatment conditions (→ Sampling, Random). In the control condition, participants are shown images of inanimate objects or normal-sized models, whereas in the treatment condition, participants are shown images of thin fashion models or celebrities. Usually the images of fashion models are placed within a magazine or television program to hide the intent of the study. After exposure, study participants are asked to repeat body image assessments using the same pre-test scale. The pre- and post-test difference in body image is compared between participants in the control condition and the thinness-emphasized condition.

A *review of findings* from such experiments suggests that even after controlling for the effects of baseline body image, dissatisfaction is greater among participants in the treatment condition than in the control condition (Groesz et al. 2002). Moreover, body image dissatisfaction from the experimental treatment is not distributed uniformly among participants. Participants with a higher drive for thinness and higher propensity to internalize are affected more by the experimental treatment. The findings from these controlled experiments, together with corroborating findings from content analysis and surveys, set the stage for a persuasive argument that the media indeed contribute to body dissatisfaction among women.

### OTHER FACTORS THAT AFFECT BODY IMAGE

The media are only one of a constellation of variables that could explain body dissatisfaction. Researchers advocate a biopsychosocial model that takes into account biological, psychological, and social factors (Polivy & Herman 2002). *Biological factors*, such as body mass index or age of maturation, could play a role. Similarly, individual differences could explain the endorsement and internalization of the ultra-thin ideal, resulting in a strong drive for thinness.

*Race, ethnicity, and nationality* also shape perceptions of attractiveness and thinness. Within the United States, researchers have examined differences in body image satisfaction among Caucasians, African-Americans, and other ethnic groups (David et al. 2002). Findings suggest that Caucasians express a stronger drive for thinness than other ethnic groups, although other groups are not immune from the pressure to be thin.

The effect of media on body dissatisfaction is not limited to women in developed countries. These days, supermodels and multinational advertising campaigns have a global audience, including *women in developing countries* where hunger and poverty are still prevalent. Even in these countries, women from the more affluent segments of society report body dissatisfaction. To make matters worse, when images of western supermodels are exported to developing countries, they set unrealistic norms not only in shape, size, and attractiveness, but also in skin tone.

Although much of the body image research has focused on women, recent efforts show that *men* are also susceptible to these effects. Surveys and laboratory experiments demonstrate that the media can induce body dissatisfaction about muscularity or fitness, leading to dysphoria. Given the widespread reach of the media, it is not surprising that men, too, are subject to some of the same pressures as women, although women are subjected to more exacting standards of youth and attractiveness (→ Masculinity and the Media).

Furthermore, much of the research on body image media effects are based on convenience samples of college-age women primarily from the United States, Australia, and Europe. For a fuller understanding, it is necessary to examine media effects in diverse populations with women from different age groups and socio-economic backgrounds.

### **SOME STRATEGIES TO COUNTERACT BODY IMAGE MEDIA EFFECTS**

To counteract the influences of body image media effects, a number of initiatives are being explored. Various groups are pursuing *media advocacy* to persuade advertisers to exercise more responsible advertising (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication). As a result of these advocacy efforts, advertisers face increasing pressure to present fashion models with body types that are closer to that of the average woman. Another advocacy objective has been to discourage advertisers from using the super-thin, waif-like fashion models. Although these advocacy efforts have had some success, perhaps the best form of defense is training and instruction in → media literacy.

Media literacy efforts focus on *educating the audience* about digital manipulation techniques used to achieve the air-brushed glamorous look that we are accustomed to seeing on billboards and in fashion magazines. Literacy training educates the population on how advertisers simulate glamour through digital manipulation (→ Advertising). Integrating such literacy training in school curricula could help adolescents understand that the body image ideals presented in the media are simply artificial constructions of attractiveness and thinness that even movie stars and supermodels can only aspire for.

Both media advocacy and media literacy are centered on approaches to thwart the negative effects of the media. Other approaches involve using the media to create positive outcomes, such as encouraging young women to be physically active (Thompson & Heinberg 1999). One of the positive trends in advertising and media portrayals is the increasing use of the athletic body type as an ideal. Although the athletic ideal could be equally unrealistic (Bissell & Zhou 2004), in light of the overweight and obesity crisis, it is possible that media portrayals that encourage physical activity and wellness may be beneficial. The potential positive media effects of such portrayals are being examined by researchers.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis  
▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Fashion ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Genre ▶ Image  
▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Magazine ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Media Advocacy  
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▶ Survey

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## Bolivia: Media System

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The evolution of the media system in Bolivia has been shaped by the nation's particular geography, demography, culture, politics, and economy to produce a contradictory blend of innovation, richness, stagnation, and poverty. Land-locked in South America, Bolivia is perennially one of the most impoverished and politically unstable nations in Latin America, a legacy that has negatively impacted the development of the media system. Despite this legacy and general tendency, Bolivia is also home to some of the most innovative media practices in the world, especially in the area of community radio.

Bordered by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Peru, Bolivia has just over 9 million inhabitants occupying a space of 1.1 million square kilometers, making it about the size of France and Spain combined. The nation gained independence from Spain in 1825 and experienced an armed revolution in 1952. The revolution ushered in major reforms such as the nationalization of the mining industry and the redistribution of lands to peasants, which precipitated class conflicts, political unrest, and a series of

military coups. The nation has experienced more than 200 different governments since independence and suffered periods of hyperinflation in the mid-1980s which hit 12,000 percent in 1985 alone. Civilian rule returned in 1982, since which democratic elections have been held for its president (who serves a single five-year term) and two houses of congress, a Chamber of Senators, and a Chamber of Deputies. Current per capita income is US\$2,900 per year, and 64 percent of the population lives in poverty. Bolivia has the largest ethnic Indian population (55 percent) in all of Latin America, and Spanish became the dominant language only in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Literacy has improved in the past 20 years, with a rate of 87 percent overall.

## HISTORY AND REGULATION

Media regulation in Bolivia has been contradictory and inconsistent since independence. Freedom of the press is constitutionally protected, but journalists have suffered from intimidation and arbitrary detention, especially in periods of social and political unrest (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Freedom House ranked Bolivia as a “partly free” country in 2005, while Reporters without Borders placed Bolivia seventy-sixth out of 167 countries surveyed in terms of press freedoms. By and large, the media system today is run privately with the state participating nominally in television and radio production and telephone service. Accurate and reliable statistics do not exist regarding basic data such as the number of daily newspapers, television and radio channels, circulation figures, and other indicators of media development. Nevertheless, Bolivia – along with Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua – is considered one of the least developed Latin American nations in terms of its media system according to the “media utilization index” developed by the United Nations’ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL) (→ Development Communication: Latin America).

*Print journalism* in Bolivia has a complex tradition which combines partisan affiliation with critical questioning that often stimulates repression from the very party it supports (→ Partisan Press). Print journalism was not established in Bolivia until shortly before independence in 1825. Republican victors at the time obtained “portable” presses, which had been exclusively in the hands of the military, and began printing ephemeral newspapers. The early press largely represented and promoted elite interests, arguing that civic rights were the domain of educated and cultured men who were literate in Spanish, which was spoken by only 20 percent of the population at the time. Despite its close relationship with powerful elites, the Bolivian press began advocating the causes of workers and peasants, while denouncing the ruling oligarchy and aristocracy.

The next major turning point for print media occurred during and after the 1952 revolution, when the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR) came to power. The party had set up newspapers to advocate its pro-worker policies, and younger journalists with leftist leanings suddenly supplanted news professionals who had traditionally embraced conservative values. They formed a national organization called the Bolivian Federation of Press Workers (FTPB), which took over by force, and later by election, the old-line Journalists Association of La Paz (APLP). The Federation became the focal point of repression in the years of dictatorship beginning in 1971, with one newspaper, *Presencia*, losing 14 of its 17 reporters to jail or exile.

Contemporary print journalism continues the partisan tradition with almost all newspapers known to reflect a particular political position, ideology, or party view. Concrete figures regarding the number of newspapers and circulation are difficult to acquire in Bolivia. Estimates on the numbers of daily newspapers published in 2006 ranged from 18 to 24, with eight of them based in the country's functional capital of La Paz. According to 1996 figures from UNESCO, daily newspaper circulation in Bolivia totaled 55 per 1,000 residents, compared with 98 per 1,000 in neighboring and more economically prosperous Chile. The most influential newspapers are *Presencia*, *La Razón*, and *El Diario de La Paz*, which are all based in La Paz. The most dispassionate of the three is *Presencia*, founded in 1952 under the auspices of the Roman Catholic church. It is considered the best consistent source of professional, centrist journalism in the country. *La Razón* started publishing in 1990 and represents a liberal perspective; in recent years it has emerged as a highly influential newspaper on political matters. The oldest of these three newspapers is *El Diario de La Paz*, which was founded in 1904 and reflected the conservative tendencies of its owners for most of the twentieth century. Calling itself the "Dean of the National Press," it has become more open to leftist party and union perspectives since the 1990s, breaking away from its staunch conservative reputation.

### ELECTRONIC MEDIA

The advent of television was late in Bolivia, with the first station going on the air in 1969. The development of television is best understood as occurring in two phases. The first phase began in 1969 and was characterized by tight state control. From 1969 to 1984, the state was the only authorized broadcaster, with one national channel and eight regional university channels. In early 1984 the Bolivian senate passed legislation allowing private television broadcasting. Coupled with the adoption of free market economic policies and the availability of inexpensive electronic equipment, the legal opening stimulated entrepreneurs, political activists, and local communities to enter the television arena. Within two years, Bolivia saw 45 new stations enter the broadcast field. The de facto private broadcast policy finally became legal in 1986 with the adoption of the General Rules on Television Service, which granted licenses for 10-year intervals. Along with this regulation, the state passed legislation imposing import restrictions on content, requiring national or local productions to constitute 25 percent of programming in 1986, increasing to 40 percent in 1990. Despite the proliferation of channels, between 75 and 80 percent of all content is imported fare (much of it pirated), with Bolivian productions consisting of news and sports programs (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Estimating the number of television stations in Bolivia is difficult. One author noted a swift proliferation of stations after the 1984 policy changes and counted 72 channels operating in the country by 1992. Most of the new signals operated locally, financed themselves through utility taxes or local contributions, and broadcasted signals of between 100 and 1,000 watts. The few large national and regional networks, however, are advertising-financed for the most part and owned by powerful business interests tied to mining, agricultural production, and import-export trade. These owners are also often tied to political parties, and several national personalities have emerged from television to run in elections. Currently, Bolivia has nine national and regional networks, the best known being ATB, Red Nacional, Bolivision,

and Red Uno. UNESCO figures from 1997 placed television receiver distribution at 116 per 1,000 residents, compared with 215 per 1,000 in neighboring Chile.

Radio is the most developed sector of the communication system in Bolivia and the one area where this country has established an international reputation for innovation in media practice (→ International Radio; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). Radio transmission in Bolivia began in 1929. Currently, the country hosts 171 AM, 73 FM, and 77 SW signals, more stations than neighboring Chile, despite having about half the population. The number of radio receivers in the country in 1997 was estimated at 5.2 million or 675 per 1,000 inhabitants, compared with 5.1 million and 354 per 1,000 in Chile, according to UNESCO figures. The structure of radio in Bolivia is largely divided into a large commercial sector, a vigorous religious segment (primarily the Catholic church), and a small state presence.

### PROGRAMMING ACCLAIM

The area of international renown, however, regards *community radio*, affiliated either with unions of tin miners or with the Catholic church (→ Community Media). The world's first known community radio stations emerged in Bolivia in 1947 in the mining region of the *altiplano* or high plain. Newly formed and officially recognized tin miners' unions established radio stations bankrolled by the dues of their members, who constituted the most important economic sector of the country during the 1940s. The stations programmed broadly, but were best known for establishing practices that were both highly participatory and strongly resistant to authoritarian regimes. For example, the stations developed the practice of the "open microphone," where personnel would make daily visits to public markets and other gathering places to give voice to ordinary people. They also developed "people's reporters" by training neighborhood and rural representatives to report news from their areas. The stations are legendary for mobilizing populations in times of military coups through the creation of "radio chains" (live retransmissions from one signal to another), and have suffered by having their stations bombed and closed down by the army. In their heyday in the late 1960s, the stations numbered around 30, but since the collapse of the price of tin, the exhaustion of the mines, and the mass firing of workers, all in the mid-1980s, the stations have virtually disappeared.

The other major force for community radio in Bolivia has been the Catholic church, which established its first station in 1955 and created an important network, Bolivian Radio Education (ERBOL), 12 years later. In its early years, ERBOL focused on literacy training, but has evolved to be more of a participatory network by working closely with more than 800 grassroots organizations and 2,500 community groups oriented toward social change (→ Participatory Communication). Community radio was given a boost in May 2004 when the President signed a law recognizing community stations with special licensing provisions. The new law is unprecedented in the Americas because it does not limit power, frequencies, or the airing of commercial announcements.

Finally, in the areas of telephony and Internet connectivity, Bolivia is largely underdeveloped and difficult to examine in terms of accurate figures. Current figures place the number of telephone landlines at 625,400. The introduction of cellular technology has skyrocketed, however, with 1.8 million sets in operation. Figures from

CEPAL indicate that Bolivia and Guatemala are the countries with the fewest networked computers per capita in Latin America. Nevertheless, the government does not impose any sorts of block, censorship, or restriction on Internet activity.

SEE ALSO: ► Community Media ► Development Communication: Latin America  
 ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► International Radio ► Participatory Communication  
 ► Partisan Press ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Bollywood**

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When a descriptor becomes more than its immediate signified – the concept that it refers to directly – we begin to feel that there is something special, something rather unusual about it. Such a descriptor is “Bollywood.” The word refers to a film industry situated in Mumbai/Bombay (the slash here is important because without its colonial name, “Bollywood” cannot be generated).

Bollywood has such pervasive currency in just about every part of the world that even the *Oxford English dictionary* (2005) has an entry for it: “a name of the Indian popular film industry, based in Bombay. Origin 1970s. Blend of Bombay and → Hollywood.” The OED acknowledges the strength of a film industry which in 2006 produced 152 films but which, since the coming of sound in 1931, has produced some 10,000 films. This figure is



not to be confused with the number of films produced in India overall. The latter would take the total number to well beyond 50,000.

### ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF BOLLYWOOD

The numbers in all respects for Bollywood are quite staggering: a \$3.5 billion per year industry which employs some 2.5 million people, ticket sales close to 4 billion every year, and a growing international market for the films. Films such as *Salaam Namaste* (2005), *Veer-Zaara* (2004), *Kal Ho Na Ho* (2003), *Devdas* (2002), and *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham* (2001) had box office collections of between \$1.5 and \$3 million in the US and between £1.5 and £2.5 million in the UK.

The short time span of these figures indicates the exponential demand for Bollywood in the UK and US Indian diaspora at the turn of the twenty-first century, even if India's share in the global film industry, valued in 2004 at \$200 billion, was less than 0.2 percent (Thussu 2007). One would have expected better returns from the UK but even there the Bollywood market accounted for just 1.1 percent of gross box office receipts in 2004 (Thussu 2007). At the forefront has been Yash Raj Films, a film company which quite self-consciously feeds the diaspora with values which it feels will alleviate the diaspora's unrelenting unhappiness for being untimely ripped from their homeland.

Additionally, the impact on → cable and → satellite television has also been enormous. B4U (a British Bollywood movie channel launched in London in 1999) is now available on eight satellites in more than 100 countries. With fanzines such as *Cine blitz*, *Filmfare*, *Movie*, and *Stardust* available globally online and in hard copy immediately after production, the Bollywood experience is growing into a worldwide phenomenon (→ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on).

### DEVELOPING THE BOLLYWOOD GENRE

Like any postcolonial form, Bollywood → cinema dealt with big issues – the idea of the nation-state, communal harmony, justice – all rendered through a melodramatic genre which grew out of a combination of the sentimental European novel, the Indian epic traditions, Persian narratives, a fair bit of Shakespeare, and the influential Parsi theatre, the last of these a form which effectively created the dramatic genre which was to become Bollywood cinema (→ Film Genres; Theatre). In this phase Bollywood was not unlike Hollywood as it reworked its base genre, created subtexts around its great actors (K. L. Saigal, Ashok Kumar, Dilip Kumar, Devanand, Raj Kapoor, Nargis, Madhubala, Meena Kumari), its auteurs (Mehboob Khan, Raj Kapoor, and Guru Dutt), and its film studios. Fanzines fed on all of these, and it could be said that with a few significant shifts – the arrival of the “angry young man” character of Amitabh Bachchan being one such rare shift – the form remained more or less intact. Indeed, from *Devdas* (1935) to *Maine Pyar Kiya* (1989), Bollywood cinema was a single interconnected syntagm (→ Semiotics).

Then came a *sudden redefinition* not so much of the form itself (which continued to be melodrama) but its mode of production, consumption, circulation, and its effects (→ Film Production). In the late 1980s a combination of disco dance and Michael Jackson (popularized a few years earlier by Mithun Chakraborty) was superimposed upon the old

staple of Bombay popular film, the sentimental song, in films such as *Ashiqui* (1990) and *Dil* (1990) (→ Popular Culture). The year is important inasmuch as these films also mark a decisive shift in theme, moviemaking techniques, and implied spectator. Youth, in the form of Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, Amir Khan, and Abhishek Bachchan (to name a few), returns to Bollywood with the same kind of excitement which had brought Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, and Devanand to cinema in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

But there had also been a major *shift in the nature of capital* – from the old manufacturing-based wealth (so well documented in Mani Ratnam’s recent film *Guru* [2007]) to a new kind of wealth, which moved swiftly via cyberspace. This wealth was also a virtual wealth made and unmade as well on the → Internet. The postmodern Bollywood, where the old depth of language and dialogue (hallmarks of classic Bombay cinema as seen, for example, in the 1953 *Parineeta*) is replaced by a “technorealism” (seen in the remake of *Parineeta* [2006]) at the level of production and the “mise-en-scène,” became the marker of Indian modernity (Rajadhyaksha 2003). With a difference, though – this (post)modernity negotiated a new definition of the spectator and a new definition of the subject of cinema (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

### AUDIENCE OF BOLLYWOOD FILMS

At the *level of spectator*, the implied viewer was no longer made up primarily of Hindi-Urdu speaking Indian denizens and those in the Middle East or the old Indian plantation diasporas (Fiji, Trinidad, Guyana, Surinam, Mauritius, and the like) but included, in growing numbers, South East Asians and the people of the new Indian diaspora of late capital (→ Globalization of the Media). The latter – the well-to-do Indian diasporas of the UK, the US, Canada, and Australia; rich but also uneasy in supposedly multicultural nation states and often unable to connect directly with these nation states’ own popular cultural forms – began to emerge as the target audience, while in India, too, the growth of a new middle class with disposable incomes created lifestyles seemingly similar to the Indian youths in the diaspora. Bollywood captures this new consuming class across national boundaries (→ India: Media System) – again, with a difference though.

Bollywood has a remarkable *mediating function*, inasmuch as it relocates, re-presents, and repackages contemporary culture for re-consumption by the diaspora (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The shift from Bollywood as a postcolonial form (aimed at defining the nation, its values, and so on) to Bollywood as a transnational form responding to a new consumer community, whether within India or in the diaspora, is now its fundamental characteristic (→ Postcolonial Theory). The hype around Bollywood, if not its global box office success, however limited, captures this trend. Expressions such as “Bollywood industry,” “Bollywood bonanza,” “Bollywood fix,” “Bollywood shakedown,” “Bollywood romp,” “Bollywood breaks,” “Bollywood dancing,” “Bollywood calendar,” “Bollywood experience,” “Bollywood culture,” and “Bollyweb” are now not uncommon. Indeed, Bollywood is a signifier of Indian modernity itself: Aishwarya Rai, the current Queen of Bollywood, performs at the closing ceremony of the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, and the British television show *Celebrity big brother* (2007) suddenly becomes global news because of racial slurs made against its Bollywood star Shilpa Shetty by her housemates in the show.

### THE NEW BOLLYWOOD

Implicit in the Lloyd Webber–A. R. Rahman musical *Bombay dreams* is a whole new definition of the subject of the Bollywood film. The basic themes of love, desire, and separation, of the lure of the city and its material benefits, of the stability of the family are all there, but these are being slowly transformed at the level of → discourse and at the level of representation. At the level of discourse, languages proliferate – Punjabi and English (as in *Kal Ho Na Ho* and *Dhoom 2* [2006]), regional dialects (as in *Omkaara* [2006]), Bombay slang (as in *Lage Raho Munnabhai* [2006]) – the English word “love” replaces its Urdu-Hindi equivalents; at the level of representation, the old “Bombay realism” is being replaced by a distinctly Bollywood “technorealism” and this distinctiveness is readily obvious in films such as *Don* (2006; a remake of the original Amitabh Bachchan *Don* of 1978) and *Dhoom 2*, where Bangalore software seems to overtake the camera. There is another distinctiveness, and this is in the two recent adaptations of Shakespeare: *Maqbool* (2006, based on *Macbeth*) and *Omkaara* (2006, based on *Othello*). In both of these Shakespeare is modernized in very Indian ways; in *Omkaara* with the use of Indian dialects; in *Maqbool* with its subtext of the Bollywood film industry itself.

The argument about Bollywood as a “hype” and in its late modern form as a new “technoreality” comes together graphically in Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s 2003 version of the P. C. Barua/Bimal Roy classic *Devdas* (1935/1955) based on Saratchandra Chattopadhyay’s 1917 sentimental novel in Bengali of that title. In Bhansali’s high-tech version of the film, the homage is neither to the writer of the novel nor to P. C. Barua and Bimal Roy (as the credits in the film declare) but to “Bollywood,” which now takes over *Devdas* and models it in its new image; the cinematic fidelity is not to an earlier form but to the film’s own postmodern, simulacral modes of representation (→ Visual Representation). Where classic Bollywood cinema (the pre-postmodern variety) indicated an impossible love through lyric and metaphor, the new *Devdas* shows the suffering Paro holding on to an everlasting flame to signify her equally tragic love for Devdas (Fig. 1). Sentimental



Figure 1 Still from *Devdas* (2002)

melodrama (the dominant form of Indian cinema) remains intact but its representation and effects have been radically altered (→ Genre).

With all the claims of globalization and transnationality, Bollywood remains different, and largely inaccessible, in its totality, to people not immersed in its form. In spite of all the borrowings from Hollywood (storyline, music, mise-en-scènes), Bollywood is the late modern face of India and of the Indian diaspora (Mishra 2002). For, in the end, it tries to be modern without throwing away its grounding in rather ancient ways of doing things (seen as late as 2006 in the film *Babul*), and these ways will always insinuate a different, an Indian, splitting of reason (→ Habermas, Jürgen).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cinema ▶ Cinematography ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Film Genres ▶ Film Production ▶ Film Theory ▶ Genre ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Hollywood ▶ India: Media System ▶ Internet ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Semiotics ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Theatre ▶ Visual Representation

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## **Bona Fide Groups**

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The bona fide group construct grew out of a concern over the external → validity and generalizability of studies conducted on zero-history, laboratory groups. More than just a focus on studying naturally occurring groups, a bona fide group perspective focuses on characteristics of naturally occurring groups that do not exist in laboratory groups

(→ Experiment, Laboratory). The first conceptualization of this by Linda Putnam and Cynthia Stohl (1990) emphasized that naturally occurring (bona fide) groups have stable but permeable boundaries, are interdependent with the immediate context, and have links between the boundaries and context. So unlike artificially created groups, in bona fide groups, group membership frequently changes, the group's internal dynamics are influenced by the external environment, and its members are influenced by their simultaneous membership in other groups. For example, an ad hoc committee frequently experiences membership changes as personnel are reassigned, is interdependent with the administrator who convened the group and with other groups who provide it with resources, and is affected by the divided loyalties of its members as they balance their involvement in the ad hoc committee with other departmental and social groups.

Further elaborations of the bona fide group perspective have contributed to the understanding of the complexity of groups in context. Putnam and Stohl (1996) emphasized that bona fide groups cannot be considered containers with unambiguous boundaries, and focused on how group identity is formed. Group identity is influenced by the degree of belongingness to the target group and the loyalty and commitment to other groups. In an extension of the bona fide group perspective, John Lammers and Dean Krikorian (1997) elaborated on aspects of context including the fact that bona fide groups operate at multiple levels, are simultaneously tightly coupled (interdependent) in some areas and loosely coupled (independent) in other areas, are resource-dependent, and have competing internal and external authority or power systems. Further, a bona fide group should be considered in terms of its age, its task duration, the characteristics of its members, and its institutional history (→ Group Communication).

Since its conception, a bona fide group perspective has generated a significant body of research including at least one entire edited volume of studies (Frey 2003). The bona fide group perspective provides insight into understanding such diverse topics as how a medical device sales representative can temporarily become part of a surgical team (Lammers & Krikorian 1997), how members balance their simultaneous membership in work, family, and social groups while participating in a community theater group (Kramer 2002), and how the different agendas brought to a government community cooperative by its members' multiple group memberships decreased its effectiveness (Keyton and Stallworth 2003).

Scholars sometimes mistakenly assume the importance of classifying or categorizing a particular group as a bona fide group. However, as Putnam and Stohl (1994) point out, all naturally occurring groups exhibit characteristics of the bona fide group; it is simply a question of the degree to which the researcher attends to these characteristics. In reflecting on research using a bona fide group perspective, Stohl and Putnam (2003) conclude that it will continue to expand the breadth of group research by exploring more varied group contexts through a range of research methods and by focusing research on the impetus and impact of both internal and external communication on group processes.

SEE ALSO: ► Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ► Experiment, Laboratory  
 ► Group Communication ► Group Communication and Problem-Solving ► Organizational Culture ► Organizational Structure ► Validity

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## **Book**

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The book is a durable vehicle for words and images and often is a central artifact in cultures with the written word. Those produced in the era before the advent of printing are unique “manuscript” books that were made by hand (→ Printing, History of). The book became the first mass medium, and conventions for its presentation shaped those of later media. It can be distinguished from other printed and electronic media by the substantial length of its texts and by the diversity of its content, which ranges from the worldly and practical to the poetic and sublime. Because books both comprise and safeguard the working memory of humanity, they are inherently conservative at the same time as they announce what is new. Thus the book is a complex artifact: it reveals the personal, social, and cultural values of a period, and it can be “read” in a variety of ways (→ Typography).

The many genres of content that have developed in modern book publishing demarcate organizational boundaries within the industry, affiliations of authors, commercial identities of bookstores, the arrangement of books within shops and libraries, and the particular interests of book clubs or readers’ groups. While most books are edited, designed, produced, promoted, and distributed by the processes discussed below, the field of book publishing is diverse and includes small presses, specialty publishers, government publishing, the private press, and artists’ books, inspiring many variant practices.

## **MATERIALS AND FORM**

Materials used in the construction of books must be light enough to be amassed in quantity and flexible enough to be rolled or folded. Papyrus, parchment, and paper all meet these requirements, with machine-made paper predominant in modern times. For economy, the sizes and shapes in which such materials originally are produced often act as determinants of the formats of books. Books must be comfortable in hand and most are regular in shape. The rectangles of the book page appear in both “portrait” (upright) and “landscape” (sideways) dispositions, or more rarely as the square. Page shapes often are built on the rationality of such whole number proportions as 2 : 3, 3 : 4, or 5 : 8, supplemented by more dynamic square-root proportions and special proportions such as the golden section. By design or of necessity, book formats sometimes break out of these norms: “elephant” folios and miniature books are two examples, and pictorially shaped books have an ancient lineage, as well (→ Design).

Comprehension of the content of most books requires a specific sequence of pages to accumulate meaning. Imposition (the placement of pages) and binding determine and enforce that order. Binding techniques for books include simple “stabbing” and side-sewing, machine sewing, adhesives, and “mechanical” methods reliant on devices. Hard covers offer protection and durability, while soft covers permit economy and portability.

## **EDITING AND PRODUCTION**

Editing books involves the selection and shaping of texts for publication. Formerly patrons and currently mostly corporate bodies with an interest in ideas or profit sponsor this process, providing its material and means. Editors channel and reshape texts, guided by dictionaries and manuals that insure consistency and predictability in the use of language and the presentation of thought.

The book was reorganized in its first 100 years as a mass medium. A period of experiment begun in the mid-fifteenth century introduced such things as the title page and printer’s device. Most texts were fragmented to create small, easily comprehensible units, and labels were added to identify parts. Prefaces and forewords were derived from manuscripts, but other elements of the book’s apparatus including page numbers and indexes were new to the book as a mass medium and continue to govern its presentation. The apparatus of the book is expansible or collapsible, but the nature and order of its components remains consistent and predictable.

Producing the book has almost always required the use of teams of people and specialized equipment, in the modern era in an industrial setting to accomplish typesetting, proofreading, printing, and binding. The introduction of computers into this process from the 1960s changed the process of typesetting and revised writing and editing practices, eliminating steps in production and altering relations among personnel.

## **ART AND BOOKS**

The earliest writing systems were fundamentally pictorial and the book continues to embrace pictoriality as a principal mode of communication or as a complement to texts.

In the era of the manuscript book, images often were objects of contemplation and were inserted by hand using direct, autographic techniques such as drawing and painting. A long tradition of the decoration of the page also developed in the manuscript era. Printmaking techniques that produced multiples replaced earlier methods. Across all cultures, the earliest of these techniques was the woodcut, often followed by metal engravings and then by processes like intaglio or lithography which adapted alternative methods of printing. The pictorial precision of → photography encouraged its inclusion in books as well as other printed media from the late nineteenth century. Images began to be digitized late in the twentieth century, speeding their transfer by electronic means and favoring their inclusion in books.

While long a tradition in the east, the modern artist's book came to the fore in the west in the late nineteenth century. Late twentieth-century technological change brought artists face to face with issues related to the book: some altered texts to subvert or convert meanings; others produced "installations" that reflected on accretion of knowledge or the worthiness of the many promises made by the form and content of the book.

## **DISTRIBUTION**

Transport of books became a logistical problem of some significance with the advent of the book as a mass medium, and the weight and bulkiness of books in numbers continues to be at issue in an era that permits the electronic transfer of texts and images. Bookstores originated in scribal and printers' workshops and spread in cities as specialized boutiques. An increase in literacy and in the number of bookstores promoted specialization and the establishment of genre-oriented bookshops.

The computerization of book ordering and shipping begun in the late twentieth century reduced diversity among bookstores, encouraging centralization and the development of uniform chains. Online sale and the electronic ordering of books further unified bookselling by providing access to the combined resources of used and antiquarian bookstores and the fresh output of book publishers, vastly increasing the number of titles accessible by this means (→ Personal Publishing).

The book review developed as a evaluative service for modern readers confronted with an array of texts. Reviews typically reprise the substance of a text, estimate its cultural value, and promote acquaintance with authors, texts, or publishers. Initially sponsored by magazines and newspapers, the reviewing process recently has been democratized by the advent of personalized, online reviewing.

## **LIBRARIES AND CONSERVATION**

In the era of the manuscript book, libraries were formed by individuals or developed for the corporate study and duplication of books in religious or academic settings. The durability of both manuscripts and printed books also lent them to amalgamation and protection by courts, governments, and religious institutions. Enlightenment thought fostered the notion of the individual reader as educable through the silent instruction provided by books and thus suggested the development of lending and then free public libraries. Modern economies in book production encouraged the formation of personal



libraries for “everyman.” Digitization of books enables the creation of “virtual” libraries, but challenges copyright and other forms of legal protection.

The need for the conservation of ancient manuscripts and printed books led to the development in the twentieth century of a science of book conservation dedicated to understanding historical materials and book production methods and to discovering ideal conditions for preservation. But it also emerged to address the consequences of a decline in the quality of materials and binding methods that began in the nineteenth century. Residual acidity in papers produced from the mid-nineteenth century, for instance, creates slow, internal “fires” that can destroy books.

## READING

Rapid reading of lengthy texts depends in part on the nature of the book as a “still” medium. The mechanics of silent reading involve revoicing the text in the mind and “hearing” the voice of an author or character, an operation that has been of some interest to modern literary theorists. The need for instantaneous recognition of character or word shapes accounts in part for the conservatism common in the development of writing styles and text fonts. The “transparency” of fonts permits a reader to partake of a text without undue consciousness of its vehicle.

The visual organization of the book page operates in much the same way and has many of the same purposes. The *mise en page* or layout of book pages is related to the body, with “head” and “foot” margins to orient the reader. In most books, pages also are subdivided in regular ways that are satisfying to the eye. The “restfulness” of a typical book page enables the concentration necessary for reading and leaves the reader in charge, fully acquainted with a plan for the “consumption” of the text (→ Graphic Design).

## PEOPLES OF THE BOOK

Some of the power of the book is revealed in the social or cultural organization that forms around them. Religions, for example, often are built on acquaintance with texts contained in books. The modern professions, whether law, medicine, or scholarship, also revolve around acquaintance with texts. But social groupings also evolve in response to such things as common interest in the books of a particular author or in those central to a popular cultural phenomenon. This produces differing ideological commitments, senses of identity, and styles of living based on sharing the ideas contained within books.

Study of the book began with the compilation of book lists. Bibliography developed to bring precision to this task and now takes into consideration factors relevant to both the composition of texts and the construction of the physical book. Early histories of printing and publishing usually focused on the medium of the book and spawned biographical studies of such figures as printers, publishers, and illustrators. New understanding of the power of the book has led in the modern period to more intensive study of its workings in an interdisciplinary context. Literary theorists delve into such things as the “fiction” of the author’s voice or paratextuality as a way of framing the experience of the reader. In the late twentieth century, intellectual historians opened paths for understanding such things as hidden aspects of the book trade, the impact of printing on culture, and aspects of

the “coming of the book” linked to technical, visual, economic, labor, and geographic concerns.

SEE ALSO: ► Design ► Graphic Design ► Message Editing ► Photography ► Printing, History of ► Personal Publishing ► Typography

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## **Branding**

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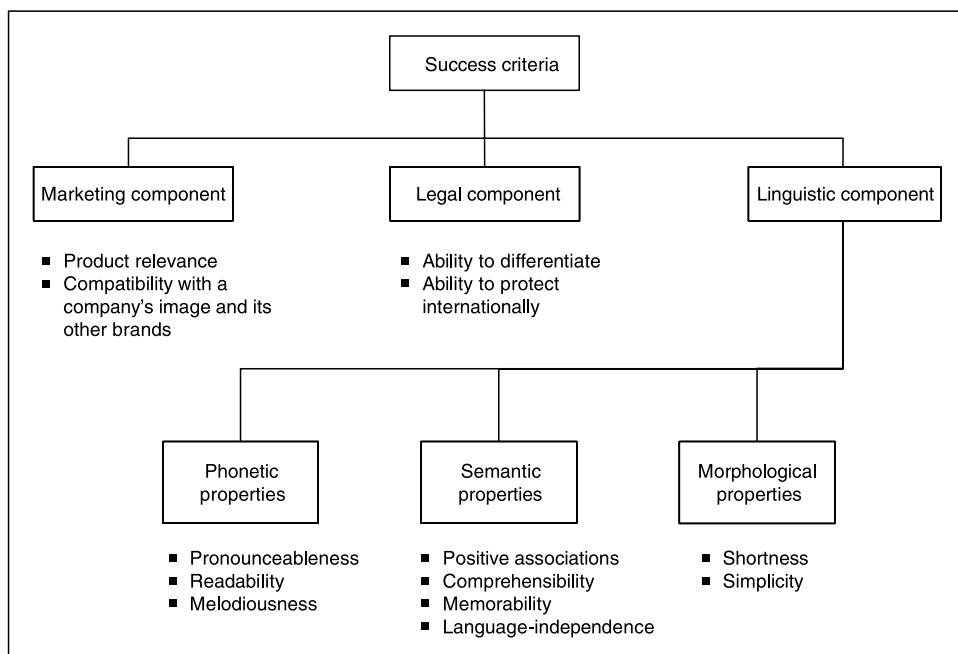
*Ilmenau University of Technology*

The term “branding” is used for the identification of offers (products and services). Etymologically, the origin of the word can be found in the branding of cattle. Initially, the spectrum of meanings was closely restricted to the pure act of naming. In the course of time, a more tailored definition of branding was suggested: integrated and harmonized use of all marketing mix instruments with the aim of creating a concise, comprehensive, and positively discriminating brand image within the relevant competitive environment (→ Image; Marketing). However, this all-embracing concept is not clearly distinguishable

from brand management. Hence, *another definition* situated between these two extremes has become widely accepted: the so-called magic triangle of branding. The triangle has the following three sides: brand name, trademark (for example, a logo), and product design and packaging. It is the task of branding to balance these three sides so that they position a brand uniquely (see also Aaker 1991; Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; → Brands).

## BRAND NAME

Faced with the increasing globalization of many markets, the issue of the creation of *global brand names* has recently received a lot of attention (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 1999; → Globalization of Organizations). The criteria mentioned in this context (for example, short, simple brand names that release positive associations and are easily understandable and easily remembered) are of course also important for the branding of *national brands*. In a global context, however, such criteria as “short, simple, easily remembered” have to be more strictly observed or differentiated (cf. Fig. 1). This is valid, for instance, for a brand’s suitability to release positive associations. This is because associations frequently draw on symbolic meanings and symbols that are usually only understandable within one cultural realm (→ Symbolism). With regard to the phonetic properties (easily pronounceable and readable as well as melodious), global brand names also have to meet tougher demands. The so-called *speech universals* play a special role in this context. They are



**Figure 1** Success criteria of global brand names  
 Source: Following Huang and Chan (1997, 322)

similarly effective in all alphabetical languages. One example is the universal sound symbolism of the vowels a and o (= large) and i (= small). Another one is the special effect that certain consonants have: brand names beginning with a plosive (= b, d, g, k, t) are significantly better recalled and recognized than other brand names.

### BRAND LOGO

A decisive role is attributed to the brand logo (Buttle & Westoby 2006). This is due to the fact that, like all visual stimuli, it is processed more easily and quickly than the verbal stimulus of the brand name. Moreover, visual impulses are more memorable than verbal ones and take a direct path to stored associations in the brain (→ Visual Communication; Visuals, Cognitive Processing of; Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). For this reason, *image logos* are used more often than script logos. The images may in turn be abstract icons or tangible pictures (cf. Fig. 2). From the relevant research on data processing, it is known that tangible graphic stimuli are better processed and remembered than abstract picture impulses. However, Esch and Langner (2001) found that, paradoxically, with regard to brand logos, people tend to convert the originally tangible (image) logos step by

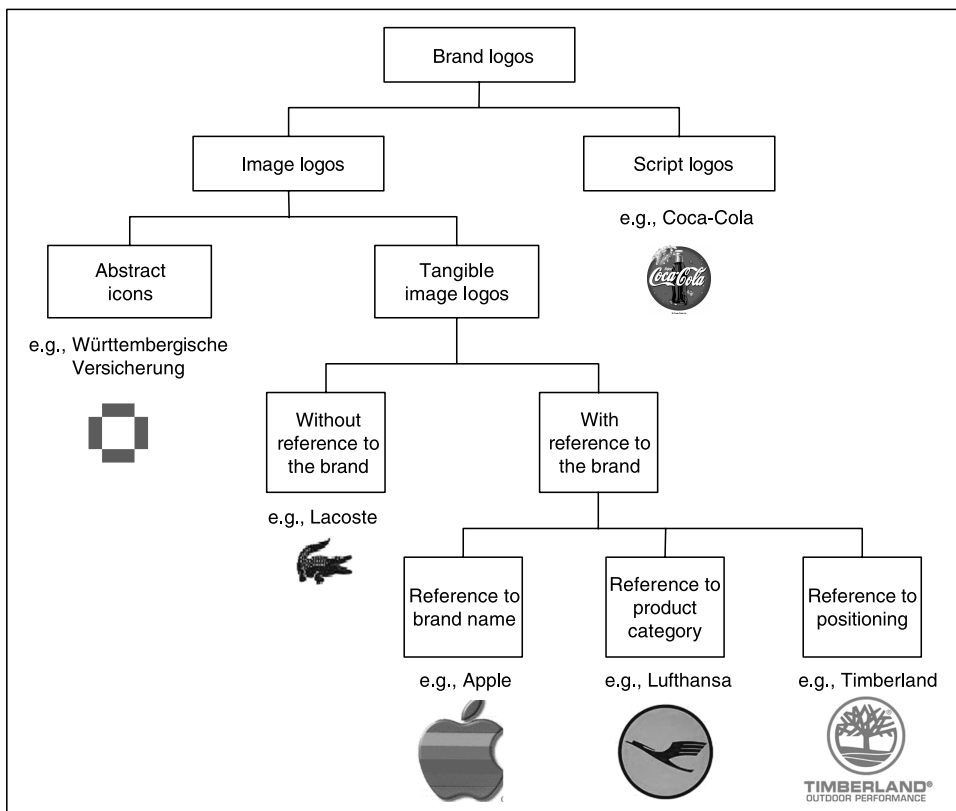


Figure 2 Brand logo types  
 Source: Adapted from Esch and Langner (2001, 498)

step into abstract (image) logos (e.g., the realistically represented Shell scallop into a stylized scallop; → Iconography).

Independently of these fundamental problems, a great number of criteria have to be taken into consideration during the creation of brand logos (for example, the ease of identification, differentiation, and intelligibility, and the sympathy effect). Additionally, one has to decide which *social techniques* can guarantee that these criteria are fulfilled and in which design. Among those techniques are the use of cognitively surprising impulses that question established perception expectations, the use of emotional impulses (for example, through giving the logo childlike characteristics), and particularly the use of physically intense impulses. The organizational dimensions in this case are the structure (e.g., simplicity vs complexity), color (e.g., signal colors), and form. It can be proven, for example, that *symmetrical forms* are better perceived, used, and recalled and are furthermore more agreeable than asymmetric forms. But even within the category of symmetrical logos, essential differences have been found: Triangular forms tend to appear more lively, and round forms trigger associations in the direction of tenderness and softness. Square forms, on the other hand, may appear quiet and deliberate, when they are perceived as “passive” due to environmental factors, or hard and strong, when their context makes them appear “powerful.”

## PRODUCT DESIGN AND PRODUCT PACKAGING

To the same extent as the brand name and logo, the → design and packaging have to contribute to the high-quality, unique positioning of a brand (Bloch 1995). This can be obtained by a characteristic form and color as well as other features (for example, materials). However, the ability forms (i.e., regular, closed, and symmetrical ones), and by areas that do not contain too many colors and graphics. Brand names and brand logos should possess, however, a strong contrast between figure and background, i.e., the figure should stand out clearly from the respective background. Finally, Langner and Esch (2004) identified the *factors of brand* → *aesthetics* that are important in this connection:

- Harmony: Do the colors, shapes, and images used in product design and packaging evoke the same associations and match the brand positioning?
- Modernity: Does the target group feel that product design and packaging are up to date?
- Sophistication: Do product design as well as packaging signal elegance and exclusivity?
- Emotionality: Do product design and packaging trigger positive feelings?
- Complexity: Is the design overloaded and unclear on the one hand or too simple and boring on the other hand?
- Intimacy: Do product design and packaging correspond to the brand knowledge and/or brand scheme of the target group?

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Brands ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Design ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Iconography ▶ Image ▶ Marketing ▶ Marketing: Communication Tools ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Symbolism ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

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# **Brands**

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In the late 1800s, a brand was a tool used to identify ownership. Cattle ranches placed their brands on their cattle, and biscuit manufacturers burned their brands onto the barrels containing their products. As manufacturing processes improved throughout the Industrial Revolution, brands became a way for parity products to differentiate themselves (Pope 1983).

Today, a brand is a symbol that embodies a range of information connected with a company, a product, or a service. Elements of a brand include a name, a logo, and other visual elements such as images, colors, or type fonts (→ Typography). The term “brand name” is often used interchangeably with the term “brand,” although a brand name is specifically the written or spoken linguistic elements of a brand. In this context, the brand name constitutes a type of trademark, if the brand name exclusively identifies the brand owner as the commercial source of products or services. A brand owner may seek to protect proprietary rights in relation to a brand name through trademark registration (→ Marketing; Trademarks in the Media).

Many brands have demonstrated a unique durability and sustained competitive advantage that many view as unmatched by any other corporate asset. Every year, *Interbrand* calculates the brand value of the world's top brands. Brand value is calculated as the net present value of the earnings the brand is expected to generate and secure in the future for a specified one-year time period. The world's most valuable brand, Coca-Cola, is more than 118 years old and has a brand value of US\$67 trillion. While the top five brands (Coca-Cola, Microsoft, IBM, GE, and Intel) are all US-based, international brands Nokia (Finland), Toyota (Japan), and Mercedes-Benz (Germany) are included in the top 10. Many brands have survived a string of different corporate owners. The combination of durability and commercial impact make brands a key corporate asset equally for companies marketing to consumers and to other businesses.

Through the various communication methods used by marketers (including → advertising, packaging, → public relations, and direct sales), brands provide information to consumers (→ Advertising Strategies; Integrated Marketing Communications). Individuals interpret this information, and a brand image is created in the minds of consumers. Once this brand image is in place, consumers develop a set of expectations for the branded product or service. These expectations, or values, are referred to as brand equity, an intangible asset related to associations made by individuals regarding the product or service.

Brands become valuable to consumers who want or need products that are better than satisfactory, and they provide consumers with a range of different benefits. First, brands indicate *value and quality* to many consumers (Ries & Ries 2004). Brand advertising promotes and encourages the development of quality products for consumers to buy (Schudson 1984), since advertisers will not want to risk spending money to develop a brand image for a product that will not perform up to expectations. When price parity exists, some consumers perceive brands to be a better value than non-branded items (Shavitt & Lowrey 1998).

Consumers can use brand information to *defend their own purchase decisions*, which minimizes cognitive dissonance, an internal conflict about a decision that occurs after the decision is made (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory; Consistency Theories). Finally, consumers use some brands to indicate to other consumers who they are, or *who they would like to be*. Consumers make certain purchase decisions (such as automobile decisions) based not only on the functional qualities of the brand, but also on what owning the brand says about the consumer to others. This brand image is often associated very closely with advertising messages for the brand (→ Advertising Effectiveness).

Brands *are valuable for companies* as well. When consumers purchase a brand that they like, the brand is contributing to the commercial success of the company and to the creation of shareholder value. If a consumer associates a brand with quality, the brand can command a higher price than a weaker brand, and this then contributes to company profits. Strong brands, which resonate strongly with consumers, allow for reduction in advertising expenditures. Brand advertising can be defensive in that it can try to prevent consumers who are currently satisfied with the brand from switching to other brands (Schudson 1984). Several studies have attempted to calculate *brands' contributions to shareholder value*. Interbrand's (2006) study of the "best global brands" concluded that brands account for more than a third of shareholder value in the average company, and in many cases for more than 70 percent of shareholder value.

A strong brand can be used as a platform to launch related products; for example, the strength of the Coke brand led to the *introduction of other popular brands* such as Diet Coke and Cherry Coke (Bottomley and Holden 2001). However, brand strength will not always translate into a successful brand extension. Coca-Cola's attempt to market "New Coke" as a replacement for its flagship brand was met with hostility from consumers, and the product was quickly pulled from the US market. Companies can also benefit from other aspects of the brand, such as *brand loyalty* and *brand equity*. Brand loyalty is a consumer's decision to continue to purchase the brand without considering other options. Brand loyalty is created by a consumer's continued positive experiences with a brand, and often translates into brand equity. Brand equity facilitates a more predictable income stream, increases cash flow by increasing market share, and is an asset that can be sold or leased.

In a world of abundant choices such influence is crucial for commercial success and creation of shareholder value. Even nonprofit organizations have started embracing the brand as a key asset for obtaining donations, sponsorships, and volunteers (Twitchell 2004). This represents a movement to have brands represent a company's key values in order to connect with a consumers on a deeper, more emotive level.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Marketing ▶ Public Relations ▶ Trademarks in the Media ▶ Typography

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## **Brazil: Media System**

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Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world, surpassed only by Russia, China, the USA, and Canada. It has over 180 million people, the largest Portuguese-speaking population



in the world. Independent since 1822, Brazil suffered in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries from several military and authoritarian regimes, and became a republican democracy again in 1988, with a president as head of the government, being elected every four years. One of the world's developing nations, Brazil maintains both modern territories, inhabited by the wealthier classes, and traditional spaces, which are associated with impoverished social segments. Fittingly, the country's media system reproduces these polar oppositions. It is shaped by the coexistence of industrial products (high tech), in demand within its consumer society, and craft arts, which circulate in the marginalized communities.

### HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Starting in the sixteenth century, Brazil's territory was disputed by various European powers (Portuguese, French, and Dutch). The dominant tool of communication along the coastline was *tupi-guarani*, an indigenous language. This *lingua franca* prevailed for almost three centuries and was systematized by the Jesuits for pedagogical reasons.

The *discovery of gold* in Brazil's hinterlands encouraged the Portuguese to expand and consolidate their colonial settlements in the country, a task that required them to bring in workers from other parts of the world. White settlers coming from Europe or recruited in Portugal's Asian colonies (Goa, Macau, Timor), along with Africans brought in as slaves, added to the existing racial mix between the Portuguese and the indigenous population. As a result, there was an inevitable linguistic conflict between the assimilated populations and the newcomers, which led the colonial government to intervene and impose the mandatory use of the Portuguese language.

This process generated *numerous tensions*, which caused the language to change. Words, phrases, and accents belonging both to African dialects and to indigenous languages began to mix with each other. As a result, there appeared a spoken linguistic code that was legitimized by its use among the subaltern classes but remained apart from the written language preferred by the elites. Communication among the working classes stayed close to orality and was dominant in the colony's hinterlands, while the idle classes remained connected to the linguistic affectations of the imperial court. In this rhetorical dissonance we will find the roots of the asymmetrical configurations that characterize the media system in Brazil nowadays.

For centuries, the country's vast extension and irregular landscape prevented media flows from reaching Brazil's hinterlands. This explains why transportation by the ocean was preferred as a means of interconnecting the cities along the coast (Salvador, São Vicente, Recife, Rio de Janeiro) and the metropolitan center (Lisbon), and why communication with the settlements in the hinterlands (Minas and Goiás) was so difficult. As a result, there appeared *regionalized cultural patterns*, which shared the same linguistic code but were separated by differences between local customs (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). This "cultural archipelago" remained practically unchanged until the twentieth century, when the use of fluvial transportation helped optimize communication between different parts of the country. Little by little, highways, railroads, air transportation, and information technology have helped lift the obstacles that prevented the circulation of material and symbolic goods.

The overall situation was worsened by the cultural policies adopted by the Portuguese crown during the colonial era. Shortly before the country's independence (early nineteenth century), there were still no schools, universities, press, libraries, mail service, or other cultural apparatus. The intellectual backwardness and cognitive sluggishness of the colonial era delayed the civilizing process in the independent nation. The majority of Brazil's society was made up of black slaves (illiterate, oppressed, and impoverished). The ending of slavery did not happen until the late nineteenth century. Even then, the abolition was not followed by public policies that emphasized cognitive inclusion and social mobility. Left to their own resources, the former slaves increased the migration movements from the countryside to the cities, thus creating marginalized communities, which are the seeds of the slums scattered all over the metropolitan areas today.

In those spaces, the impoverished communities create rudimentary communication flows. Relying on popular cultural manifestations that are reminiscent of rural traditions, they struggle to adapt to city life, as they encounter experiences produced by mass media flows (cinema, the music industry, radio, television).

### **SYMPTOMS OF TRANSITION**

These two Brazils confront, interact with, and complement each other. The traditional manifestations of folk communication reinterpret and recreate the mass media discourses that are associated with the modern country. Because of the elites' hesitant approaches to existing social inequities, the gap between the two currents was narrowed throughout the twentieth century.

The *arrival of foreign immigrants* (educated and politically conscious) helped develop the print media in the country. More recently, educational opportunities for the urban working classes have helped increase the circulation of → newspapers and → magazines. And the higher level of education among the middle classes has contributed to the improvement of content material on television, as has been the case with the *telenovelas*. But if there is no significant change in the existing forms of social exclusion and educational poverty, which affect large pockets of Brazil's society, the two media subsystems will remain active, corresponding to the cultural needs of distinct, distant, and segregated audiences (→ Access to Media).

### **INDUSTRIAL SUBSYSTEM AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Brazil's communication industry has the hegemony of audiovisual media, mainly → television, followed by → radio. TV is present in 90 percent of all households and radio reaches 87 percent of all residences. The role of print media is small, if not residual.

In 2005, → advertising expenses in Brazil reached a total of US\$6,689 million. Most of it, as much as 61.9 percent, was used in television advertising, a percentage that has remained unchanged in the past ten years. Radio advertising represents 4.2 percent.

The legal framework established by the 1988 Constitution guarantees press freedom and preserves private ownership of media industry (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Foreign investors are forbidden to control more than 30 percent of the business capital.

Print media are opened to investments, but electronic media remain as state monopolies, granted to private operation according to rules established by the parliament.

## NEWSPAPERS

Restricted to privileged segments of Brazil's society, newspapers help shape → public opinion. Their readers are members of the country's power elite in government, civil society, and the media industry. There are around 3,098 newspapers in the country, of which only 535 are printed daily. Their circulation is concentrated in the wealthiest regions of the country (southeast and south), where we find 75.5 percent of all titles.

Regional circulation is an important feature. There are no daily national newspapers in Brazil. While a few do enjoy "national prestige" and cover subjects of public interest, most of their readers live in the same region in which the newspapers are printed. Circulation is modest compared to examples in other countries. The total number of copies printed daily is 8 million. Assuming that each copy is read by an average of three people, there is a readership of approximately 24 million people. This excludes at least two thirds of all Brazilians.

The papers with the largest circulation are, fittingly, those that enjoy "national prestige": *Folha de São Paulo* (297,000 copies), *O Globo* (258,000), and *O Estado de São Paulo* (218,000). Their leadership, however, is being threatened by tabloids published by large corporations and read by the urban working classes. This is the case with *Extra*, which has a daily circulation of 250,000 in Rio de Janeiro, uses colloquial language, and covers everyday subjects (→ Tabloid Press). This tendency indicates the advertisers' preference for those media whose form and content are accessible to the majority of potential consumers. Another share of the advertising investment goes to print media, with newspapers taking 16.3 percent of the total, compared to magazines, which receive only 8.8 percent. The Internet's share is almost residual (1.7 percent), a little less than half of what is spent on billboards (4.3 percent; → Advertising, Economics of).

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

The main source of education, information, and entertainment for the subaltern classes, *radio* was historically a local or regional medium, but after satellite is being linked by national networks. The system is composed of two fighting segments: a powerful commercial sector with 3,668 stations controlled by entrepreneurs and politicians, and a popular sector with more than 10,000 small stations not completely legalized, but well managed by social movements, religious communities, ethnic groups, and radical societies (→ Radio Networks).

Just as we begin to enter the digital era, *Brazilian television* shows unequivocal signs of strength. Brazil has 9 television networks, with 406 broadcasting stations, of which 386 are privately owned and 20 are state run. Brazilian television reaches 48 million households in 5,564 municipalities throughout the nation. It is the medium with the greatest socio-cultural impact on Brazilian society (→ Television Networks).

The country's leading TV network for several years, Rede Globo, has 50 percent of all viewers in Brazil. The other half is disputed by the eight competing networks: SBT (19.4 percent), Bandeirantes (13.1 percent), Record (9 percent), and Rede TV (2.3 percent),

with the others taking the remaining viewers. Most programs are nationally produced, the preference going to entertainment (fiction, sports, and comedy), followed by information (news). Looking at the figures for the main network (Rede Globo), we easily notice that *telenovelas* take up most of the airtime (50 percent), followed by music and comedy shows (19 percent), news (17 percent), sports (8 percent), and films (6 percent).

In the 1950s and 1960s, a significant percentage of all programs were imported from foreign countries, mainly the United States. Brazil's television industry has since then gradually reduced its dependence on imports. In fact, it became an exporter of television content in the last two decades of the twentieth century. Rede Globo, for instance, exports *telenovelas*, music shows, and sports programs to over 100 countries. Recently, other companies have entered the audiovisual market. The Record network's *telenovelas* have been a hit in neighboring Latin American countries and distant Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa (→ Globalization of the Media).

## INTERNET

The → Internet has enjoyed enormous growth in Brazil. In 10 years of regular service, it has reached an ever-expanding audience. It is estimated that the Internet now has 26 million users in Brazil, which corresponds, not coincidentally, to the number of daily newspaper readers in the country. But since the Internet has more diverse content, one expects that number to increase in the next few years.

Internet users belong to the upper social strata. Of those, 57 percent are considered wealthy and 31 percent are middle class. Almost half of all users are young, between 10 and 24 years old. What do Brazilian Internet users look for? Most of them log on to the web for practical reasons, although a significant number of them admit a preference for entertainment.

## CRAFT ARTS SUBSYSTEM

Cut off from both the print media and the Internet, the disenfranchised communities that inhabit the outskirts of Brazil's major cities rely on rudimentary forms of expression to reinterpret messages disseminated by the mass media and to share their own opinions, information, or advice. Both those who are disenfranchised – the landless, homeless, jobless, etc. – and those who are culturally marginalized – members of religious sects, political dissidents, sexual minorities, and the physically impaired – use alternative forms of communication. They all resort to discursive strategies to survive, maintaining social cohesiveness, facing prejudice, and preserving ethnic identities and ethical values.

The folk media subsystem remains autonomous in relation to the mass media subsystem, but it also addresses its counterpart dialectically. Sometimes it serves as a mediator that filters and transmits meanings generated elsewhere. At other times, it fills in the gaps left open by the mass media. The interactive tension between folk media and mass media adds strength and vitality to Brazil's transitional status in the early twenty-first century.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of

the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks

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## **Broadcast Journalism**

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Broadcast journalism extends news to radio and television. The first broadcast journalists came from other media including newspapers, news and photo magazines, theater newsreels, motion pictures, documentary films, and radio (→ Television News), and the mix of media influenced the development of broadcast journalism. For example, job titles came from newspapers (*reporters* and *editors*) and from motion pictures (*directors* and *producers*), along with some original coinages (such as *anchor*).

In the United States, CBS, NBC and a few other television stations offered news programs before World War II (Conway 2006), but the service expanded after the war, when television diffused to a larger population (→ Television Networks). Some local stations limited expenses by hiring a few employees to read wire copy into a camera, to make phone calls on local stories, and to take occasional pictures with a silent film camera. Other US operations such as WFIL (Philadelphia), WBAP (Fort Worth), and WPIX (New York) invested in a team of photographers and reporters to blanket the coverage area and fill → newscasts with local coverage. More viewers turned to network and local television news until it eclipsed newspapers in the 1960s as the most popular source of news in the United States.

In England, Japan, the Netherlands, and other nations that employed a user fee to pay for television, broadcast journalism tended to focus more on public affairs news. In countries such as France, the government kept television under close watch, turning broadcast journalism into more of an official service (→ France: Media System). After Nazi Germany used the airwaves for propaganda, the Allies set up a public broadcasting system (ARD, later joined by ZDF; → Germany: Media System) not under government control, but under broadcasting councils with representatives from labor, churches,

industrial groups, and government. In India and other parts of the world, UNESCO first introduced television as a communal information source especially for rural areas (→ Public Broadcasting Systems; UNESCO).

Although television is highly visual, film (and later video) photographers rarely make editorial decisions about what to cover or how to present stories. Early television news marginalized photographers because network news managers came from print or radio backgrounds (Frank 2003). Professional training programs repeated the pattern, so that television → photojournalism rarely had its own courses or sequences, except as a vocational skill. As a result, local television photographers typically earn less than reporters and news producers.

As the lines between news and entertainment began to blur in the 1980s (→ Commercialization of the Media; Infotainment), the US Congress cut back government regulations that forced stations to present public affairs programming and increased the number of radio and television stations each corporation could own (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). News programming then had to compete with entertainment for viewers, which reduced political and government reporting and increased emphasis on crime news and features, presented with shorter sound bites and flashy graphics. In local radio news, owners cut news staffs and offered cheaper generic programming. Local television news became a profit center for stations, which made newscasts more frequent but increased the pressures to economize. Market-driven journalism presents the least expensive news acceptable to advertisers and consumers (McManus 1994). News departments unable to hire enough reporters for local stories instead relied on newspapers, wire services, and public relations firms for story ideas. Public broadcasting established a small niche of news programming, but politicians constantly threatened to cut funding.

The influence of government or advertisers has colored the way broadcast journalists do their jobs. In Hong Kong, the Netherlands, the Pacific Islands, Spain, Taiwan, and the United States, broadcast journalists rank at or near the bottom among their peers in autonomy to choose what stories to cover and how to interpret the news (Weaver et al. 2006).

In Asia, Taiwan has distinctly western news, with local versions of popular US programs such as *60 Minutes* and *Meet the Press*, despite the mostly eastern influences on other television programming. In China, the government determined the direction of most news programming through the 1980s, when it began loosening some restrictions. The most popular program each year on China Central Television (CCTV) is the Spring Festival Eve Gala, with more than nine out of ten families watching. The four-and-a-half-hour program celebrates national unity, partly by ignoring the country's 55 minority groups (Zhang 2004). Al Jazeera, based in Qatar, has adopted US news practices such as heated political debate, dramatic visuals, live coverage, and criticism of government decisions, altering the news landscape in Middle Eastern nations that previously stifled dissent.

In the twenty-first century, broadcast news across the globe ranges from stark public affairs programming, through 24-hour live coverage, to sensational tabloid shows (→ Newscast, 24-Hour). Advertiser-based systems have moved away from the public affairs model, and publicly funded services are adopting a flashier approach because of pressure from either nearby or satellite commercial stations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ France: Media System ▶ Germany: Media System ▶ Infotainment ▶ Newscast ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News ▶ UNESCO

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## **Broadcast Talk**

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Most radio and television programming encompasses talk in some form, but the term *broadcast talk* is usually understood as a specific category of programming in contrast to both fictional entertainment and traditional news. It refers to various programming genres that are broadly informational, to some extent nonscripted, and organized around processes of interaction (→ Narrative News Story). Although some are ad hoc events produced independently (e.g., campaign debates, town meetings), most are regularly scheduled programs produced by broadcasters themselves (e.g., news interviews, celebrity talk shows, radio call-in shows). Each genre involves some combination of public figures, media professionals, and ordinary people as interactional participants.

### **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Broadcast talk programming has grown substantially in recent decades, especially in the medium of television. A variety of forces have contributed to this development, with technological and legal changes leading the way as enabling factors. In the US, and to a lesser extent in England, the number of television channels and news outlets has increased in part because of the advent of cable television. At the same time, satellite feeds

and more portable news gathering equipment have facilitated live encounters with newsmakers virtually anywhere in the world (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television). And in the US, the demise of the → Fairness Doctrine in 1987 (a → Federal Communications Commission [FCC] regulation mandating that broadcasters offer a range of views on controversial issues of public importance) has reduced inhibitions stemming from government oversight of program content (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). These changes have expanded opportunities for the development of new interaction-based forms of informational programming.

At the same time, economic conditions have encouraged broadcasters to exploit the opportunities. This has been an era of tremendous volatility in the media marketplace on both sides of the Atlantic, with existing broadcast networks facing a succession of new competitors, starting with cable and the VCR and culminating in the personal computer and the → Internet. In the 1980s, the three major commercial television networks in the US – ABC, NBC, and CBS, which had long been stable corporate entities devoted primarily to communications – were each bought out by conglomerates which assumed substantial debt and were much less willing to allow their news divisions to remain insulated from the pressures of the bottom line. All of this has made broadcasters much more concerned about production costs and audience ratings and more willing to experiment with new formats for informational programming (→ Commercialization of the Media).

Moreover, such experimentation has taken place in an occupational culture which places a high value on programming attributes that favor broadcast talk. There is the well-known *preference for “live” programming* – the presentation of raw events that are, or appear to be, unfolding “in the present tense” (Timberg 2002, 4) – as the distinctive province of broadcasting. As one network news executive put it, “the highest power of television journalism is not in the transmission of information, but in the transmission of experience” (quoted in Epstein 1973, 39). Coupled with the preference for events-as-they-happen is a parallel *preference for discourse* that is informal and conversational in style, thereby addressing the audience in a familiar and inclusive way. Audience members, it is believed, want to feel that they are being “talked with” rather than “lectured at.” In this evolving context, formats based on spoken interaction have been particularly attractive. Such formats are inexpensive to produce, and embody qualities of “liveness” and “informality” which are regarded as both intrinsically televisual and popular with audiences.

## MAJOR GENRES

As broadcast talk has grown more prominent, it has become a focus of scholarly research from conversation analytic, discourse analytic, and other perspectives (→ Discourse Analysis; Conversation Analysis; Content Analysis, Quantitative). This research suggests that while the number and variety of talk programs is truly vast, most can be grouped into a few readily recognizable → genres based on characteristic constellations of participants, subject matter, and most importantly the form of interaction through which they are conducted. These interactional forms vary in the degree to which they differ from “casual” or ordinary conversation. At the conversational end of the continuum are



modes of broadcast talk that are freewheeling and informal, with opportunities for participation relatively unconstrained (e.g., celebrity talk shows, radio call-in shows). At the other end of the continuum are modes that are more formal in character, with dimensions of participation such as the order of speakership and the length and content of contributions to some extent determined in advance (e.g., formal debates, news interviews). Any given form of broadcast talk reflects the communicative objectives of program or event producers, as well as professional norms and other institutional constraints. Notwithstanding the existence of fuzzy generic boundaries and marginal cases, the following genres may be distinguished.

*Interviews* involve a program host who elicits talk from a public figure. Most interviews are organized primarily around questions and answers (→ Questions and Questioning), although the degree to which a question–answer framework is maintained varies substantially across programs and marks a variety of interview sub-genres. *News interviews*, which typically involve a professional journalist as interviewer and a politician or other newsworthy person as interviewee (e.g., *Meet the Press* and *Nightline* in the US, *Newsnight* in England), adhere closely to the question–answer framework. This is consistent with the journalist’s professional obligation to maintain a formally neutral posture. Journalist-interviewers systematically restrict themselves to the activity of questioning, so much so that they generally avoid producing declarative assertions except as prefaces to questions or as attributed to third parties. Correspondingly, journalist-interviewers also avoid producing even brief receipt tokens (e.g., “uh huh,” “oh,” “okay,” etc.) that might be interpreted as indicating support for what the interviewee has just said.

Other interview sub-genres adhere more loosely to a question–answer framework. *Partisan interviews*, conducted by political commentators or activists rather than journalists, may involve more nonquestioning and overtly opinionated contributions by interviewers (→ Partisan Press; Advocacy Journalism). *Celebrity interviews*, involving those from the entertainment industry and a live studio audience, are conducted in a less formal style which allows for conversational forms of feedback. And *panel interviews*, involving multiple interviewees from diverse perspectives, often combine episodes of interviewer-driven question–answer exchanges with episodes of direct interchange between interviewees. This sub-genre straddles the boundary between the interview and other genres such as the panel discussion and the debate (see below).

*Panel discussions* involve a host in interaction with multiple participants offering a variety of perspectives on a common theme. Although participants have traditionally been drawn from the ranks of political insiders and other experts (e.g., *Washington Week in Review*, *The McLaughlin Group*), some variants involve celebrity entertainers and are conducted in a less “serious” mode (e.g., *Real Time with Bill Maher*).

*Debates* involve a clash between participants representing opposing points of view. As a genre of broadcast talk, the debate form encompasses both ad hoc and relatively formal events held during election campaigns, as well as regularly scheduled programs that are less formal but essentially confrontational (e.g., *Crossfire*, *Hannity and Colmes*). Among campaign debates, there has been considerable experimentation with different formats, ranging from the traditional debate format of presentation and rebuttal, to formats in which the candidates respond in turn to questions from a panel of journalists or from ordinary people. In the latter arrangements, the campaign debate incorporates elements

from other interactional genres, namely the presidential news conference and the town meeting.

*Audience participation formats* involve interactions between program hosts and members of the audience, who may be co-present in the studio (as in daytime TV talk shows such as *Kilroy* in England or *Oprah* in the US) or phoning in from home (as in radio call-in shows). Since many programs that feature audience participation also involve politicians, experts, or ordinary people as program guests, the resulting tripartite interactions combine audience participation with elements from other interactional genres, e.g., host–guest exchanges characteristic of interviews, guest–guest confrontations characteristic of debates (→ Interactivity in Reception). Ordinary people, who lack both the authority of certified experts and the legitimacy of professional journalists, face distinct challenges when making contributions to such discussions. On the other hand, many audience participation programs are organized in ways that favor common sense knowledge over professional expertise.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION SCHOLARSHIP

The rise of broadcast talk poses both challenges and opportunities for communication scholarship. Such talk transcends many fundamental dichotomies that have long been taken for granted in social science and media studies, most notably the split between interpersonal and mass communication, between public and private spheres, and between media and society. Broadcast talk is a vehicle for communicating to a mass audience, but it is at the same time comprised of interpersonal communication processes. It is an important component of the public sphere, but is constituted through practices of talk-in-interaction that have been adapted from ordinary conversation and are thus rooted in the private sphere. And unlike traditional news, its significance lies not only in the stories it tells *about* the world at large, but also in that its interactional conventions and practices embody forms of sociality that are an intrinsic and constitutive part of that world.

Therein lies the promise of research in this area. Since broadcast interactions involve public encounters between associates of diverse institutions – journalists and other media professionals, government officials and other elites, and ordinary people from diverse backgrounds – the manner in which these encounters unfold is shaped by, and in turn contributes to, a multiplicity of institutions and their interrelations. Correspondingly, their study provides a unique window into these societal arrangements. Just as the conventions that organize news interviews can shed light on the profession of journalism and its evolving relationship to the state, the conventions that organize audience participation formats can shed light on constructions of the public in relation to officials, experts, and other elites. Accordingly, studies of broadcast talk have the potential to expand the reach of communication research in ways that bear on broader aspects of social life.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Cable Television ► Commercialization of the Media ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Conversation Analysis ► Discourse Analysis ► Fairness Doctrine ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Genre ► Infotainment ► Interactivity in Reception ► Internet ► Language and Social Interaction

- ▶ Narrative News Story
- ▶ Partisan Press
- ▶ Questions and Questioning
- ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of
- ▶ Satellite Television
- ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of
- ▶ Technologically Mediated Discourse

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## **Bureaucracy and Communication**

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In his monumental work *Economy and society*, Weber (1978, 1st pub. 1922), explained bureaucracy both in terms of principles of societal order and with respect to its place in the modern world. In seeking to answer the fundamental question “How do we understand un-coerced obedience?” Weber examined the history of societies and empires ranging from ancient China to the United States, arguing that kernel elements of the bureaucratic form could be seen in record-keeping on personnel at least 5,000 years ago. More important, Weber developed his three *ideal types of authority* and, by extension, organization from that historical survey and comparative analysis. In that sense, it is appropriate to speak of the ways bureaucracy arose through cultural patterns and experience (Crozier 1964). The authority types and their corresponding organizational manifestations are: charismatic authority (and the corresponding organizational type of a religious sect), traditional authority (and monarchy), and legal-rational authority (and bureaucracy).

## **UNDERSTANDING BUREAUCRACIES**

With the dawn of the industrial revolution in 1750, the growth of the factory system, the spread of the railroads, and the appearance of the telegraph in the nineteenth century, and the advance of electronic communication in the first half of the twentieth century, bureaucracy became the system of choice for organizations of great size and geographic reach. Spurred by concerns about the spoils system of political appointments and a concern for instituting systems of administration that were scientifically accountable, the governments of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States instituted civil service programs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries through which bureaucratization was employed to support fairness in personnel matters. Indeed, it is no accident that scientific management arose at the turn of the twentieth century, for it relied heavily on the impulse toward standardization that had become quite influential by the 1880s, in part as a response to severe economic turbulence and unpredictability within multinational capitalism.

As Weber (1978) outlined, the key features of bureaucracy in practice include: a fixed division of labor; a clearly defined hierarchy of positions; hiring and promotion on the basis of technical and publicly known qualifications, including assessments by qualified superiors; remuneration according to specified and rationalized salaries; commitment to the office as a career; the creation of management or administration; separation of work from family or home life; and written rules governing duties and the performance of work. Bureaucracy is considered by most informed observers to be a hallmark of post-Enlightenment society, yet many of its implications for social consciousness, social interaction, and overall well-being remain to be investigated (Albrow 1987).

In the popular political imagination today, bureaucracy is typically understood in negative terms and without reference to its specific features. In part, this is because of fundamental misunderstandings about what constitutes bureaucracy in practice and because of the way the system is mocked or cynically used for purposes of personal or group advantage (Gouldner 1984). That is to say, “bureaucracy” functions consistently as a “devil term,” associated almost exclusively with the public sector, the welfare state, Keynesian economic policy, and presumed inefficiency – in contrast to the celebrated efficiency of private enterprise. So powerful are these associations that in political debates, as well as in corporate boardrooms, the precise nature of bureaucracy is little considered.

In allied areas of organizational studies, especially in sociology and management/organizational behavior, bureaucracy has been the prevailing model of organization, with the machine being its root or implicit metaphor (Burrell & Morgan 1979). Periodically, the model has been reconsidered, not only to complicate the received view of Weber’s (1978) theory but also in recognition and support of bureaucracy’s significant advantages. Notably, Perrow (1979) offered a strong defense of bureaucracy’s opposition to particularism, and Reed (2003) argued for a re-evaluation of bureaucracy in terms of its potential for institutional reform.

## **RESEARCH AREAS**

Within communication studies, bureaucracy has been almost wholly the concern of organizational scholars, although we find some references to it in → critical theory,

→ cultural studies, and → health communication. Bureaucracy is understood in these specialties as the dominant mode of organizing work in the modern world; all other structures of work and organization are consequently measured against it. For critical theory and cultural studies, as two examples, bureaucracy represents a defining institution of → modernity, with attendant constraints and possibilities. Within health communication, bureaucracy is a concern alongside market forces in terms of the impact on care (and caring) of patients/clients (Lammers & Geist 1997). Bureaucratic organization has been the model most often subscribed to by organizational communication scholars, and until the study of emergent organization in the 1990s, bureaucracy was the taken-for-granted model within the system's theoretic approach.

In accord with Weber's (1978) framing of bureaucratic → organizational structure within the context of legal-rational authority, bureaucracy has been considered as a contemporary expression of *logos*, especially in terms of the impulse toward the transparent articulation of rules, norms, and standards (see Tompkins 1987 on the parallelisms between Aristotle's "artistic proofs" and Weber's three ideal types of authority. Bureaucracy's claim to universality rests in large part on its abstraction of standards from specific contexts, be those based in individual, community, or broader cultural concerns. Feminist scholars have accepted such an analogy, at least implicitly, but at the same time have challenged the presumed universality of bureaucracy, first, by raising the issue of the gendered nature of modern organizational structures (Ferguson 1984); second, by examining closely the constraints that bureaucratic organizing places on individual expression and therefore on social bonds (Mumby & Putnam 1992); and third, by considering bureaucracy in terms of the gendered discourses that preserve its institutional status (Ashcraft & Mumby 2004).

Bureaucracy has also been investigated in terms of the possibilities for its transcendence within so-called alternative organizations, including those explicitly or implicitly feminist (Ashcraft 2006), worker cooperatives (Cheney 1999), and radically democratic social movements (Harrison 1994). In this respect, bureaucratic structure is often treated as an *impediment* to democratic participation (Abrahamsson 1977). Through such studies, we find evidence of the enduring temptation of bureaucratization as well as its functional utility for organizing larger-scale and growing enterprises in all sectors (Heckscher & Donnellon 1994), although there are numerous successful cases of "hybrid" organizational forms.

Research from disciplines including communication, management, sociology, and public administration have found bureaucracy to have a generally chilling effect on relationships and micro-interaction. Two books by public administration scholars offer lengthy treatises on this subject (see Denhardt 1981; Hummel 1994). In more specific terms, bureaucracy is seen as emphasizing formality over informality, expediency over mutual understanding, distance over intimacy, and standardized prescription over local expression.

In recent years, as → marketing and customer service have come to dominate organizations in all sectors, the implications for bureaucracy have been considered. Du Gay's analyses have deconstructed the celebrated models of "customer/consumer service" and "entrepreneurship," showing how bureaucracy, faithfully applied, is more responsive to the public good than either of the other models as they have been typically formulated (e.g., Du Gay 2000).

## FUTURE RESEARCH

With respect to communication and organizational studies, there are several areas of investigation that remain un(der)explored. Briefly these include: an in-depth consideration of bureaucracy's relation to matters of "difference," examining how standardization can be "blind" while also neglecting personal circumstances; a close analysis of everyday rationalities in terms of bureaucracy's influence on human affairs beyond the boundaries of work and organization; an exploration of the ethical dimensions of bureaucracy, particularly in terms of how it can protect against individual whim and narrow economic interests.

In sum, bureaucracy remains one of the defined models for organization in the (post)modern world. It has broad historical and cultural foundations, and it continues to influence the ways in which persons orient toward, cope with, and interact within organizations. While the strictly economic–philosophical–psychological image of the rational actor has been undermined in several ways, it persists as an important point of reference in organizational life. For communication scholars, it is particularly important to explain, understand, and evaluate the day-to-day operations of rationality in terms of how it is symbolized and performed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ▶ Health Communication ▶ Marketing ▶ Modernity ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Structure

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## Business Discourse

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Studies of business discourse examine how the work of a business institution gets accomplished through talk and texts. Academic and practitioner interest in business discourse has emerged in a social context where business institutions, notably corporations, have a powerful presence in the world. Close attention to business discourse is predicated on the following suppositions: that people spend a significant portion of their lives in business institutions, that this work gets accomplished primarily through talk and texts (especially as managers and in a knowledge economy), and that there are better and worse ways to practice discourse. The study of business discourse is international and approached from multiple disciplines and perspectives, including various forms of → discourse analysis – such as → action-implicative discourse analysis, discursive psychology, and critical discourse analysis – conversation analysis and ethnomethodology, organizational communication, management theory, sociolinguistics, pragmatics, genre analysis, ethnography, and narrative analysis.

### CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF BUSINESS DISCOURSE

There are two characteristic features of research in business discourse: first, the insight that discourse represents a form of situated social action, and second, a disposition toward investigating actual language use in work settings (Bargiela-Chiappini et al. 2007). The notion that discourse is situated social action can be traced back to the “linguistic turn” in the social sciences, through speech act theory, and conversation analysis. From these traditions we learn that language is a dominant system through which social reality is constructed and social actions such as blaming, bullying, complimenting, or justifying are accomplished. Furthermore, talk cannot be understood without attention to the context in which it is produced, and for researchers of business discourse, this context is primarily the corporate work setting. Thus, it is not uncommon to see business discourse

researchers turn their attention to such topics as decision-making, facilitative management, leadership, meeting interaction, and strategizing, among others.

Differentiating business discourse from related terms like institutional discourse, professional discourse, and organizational discourse can be tricky. Poncini (2004) explains that professional discourse characteristically involves institutional settings such as courtroom and clinical interaction. These forms of institutional interaction are themselves differentiated from everyday interactions on the basis of three characteristics: (1) goal-orientation (for example, people in institutional settings interact to accomplish a task, not just to “hang out”), (2) distinctive constraints (for example, lawyers in a courtroom have certain restrictions about when and what types of questions are to be asked), and (3) features of inferences unique to a setting (for example, sharing personal details about one’s symptoms and ailments may be seen to violate a personal boundary when talking with an acquaintance, but is perceived as expected and desirable in doctor–patient interaction; Drew & Heritage 1992). Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris (1997) suggest that a decisive feature that differentiates professional discourse from business discourse is the identities of the participants; professional discourse usually involves a lay person and an expert (as in doctor–patient interaction) whereas business discourse involves participants coming together for the purposes of business and in a business setting (that is, in the context of organizations whose *raison d’être* include the profit motive, growth, or simply survival (Poncini 2004). Alternatively, Putnam and Fairhurst (2001) excluded settings that were primarily dyadic in nature, such as doctor–patient and clerk–customer interactions, as sites of → organizational discourse; for them, organizational discourse cuts across multiple organizational levels and units.

A seminal piece of work that illustrates these features of business discourse is Deirdre Boden’s work *The business of talk* (1994). She contends that talk is the “lifeblood” of the enterprise that shapes, and is shaped by, its structure, a view with similarities to Anthony Giddens’s notion of structuration. For Boden, meetings are a rich site in which to analyze the iterative, recursive relationship between talk and structure, in part due to their routine and ritualistic occurrence. Her analysis investigates recordings and transcripts of actual meeting discourse to describe the social organization of meetings: their openings, turn-taking, and closings. She is able to document, on a turn-by-turn basis, how the business organization literally gets talked into existence.

## **GENERATIVE TENSIONS THAT ANIMATE BUSINESS DISCOURSE RESEARCH**

There are a number of tensions and debates that stimulate dialogue among business discourse researchers, including the roles of context, power, and prescription. While these three issues are not unique to business discourse, they do animate this emergent field.

First, the *question of context* often plays out in terms of “how much” context beyond the text or conversational transcript researchers draw on to support their analyses. That is, do researchers analyze the textual elements exclusively (such as memos, letters, meeting transcripts, etc.), or do analysts draw on ethnographic knowledge of the specific business context (for example, knowledge of who authored specific discourse, for what purposes, the conditions in which it was produced, how it was received, etc.)? Some researchers



combine both approaches in the same study. For example, Samra-Fredericks (2003) combines conversation analysis of transcripts with ethnographic detail of the context to study how certain business strategists are more interactionally effective than others at influencing strategic processes. Other researchers contend that there are advantages to utilizing both approaches separately in a kind of reflexive dialogue at each stage of the research process to help generate new analytical insights (Barry et al. 2006). Another way the question of context is relevant to business discourse research concerns the notion of culture, not only the specific business culture of a company, but also national cultures. Indeed, a great deal of business discourse research seeks to make cross-national or cross-cultural comparisons. For example, Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris (1997) followed up Boden's important work on meeting discourse by investigating the similarities and differences in British and Italian business meetings.

Second, the *question of power* invigorates business discourse research in at least two ways. By looking at power from a language and social interaction perspective, researchers investigate how people "do" power, or how power gets enacted, in business settings. In their book *Power and politeness in the workplace* (2003), Janet Holmes and Maria Stubbe show how different forms of power are accomplished in a senior management meeting of a white-collar organization. As one example, they documented how some members influence group decisions by redefining situations in the area of their expertise even though they may hold a lower status in the organizational hierarchy (or more accurately, how their identities as experts are made more salient in the group's interaction than their identities as persons of lower positional status).

A second view of power, informed by critical discourse analysis, highlights how what gets taken for granted as the natural state of things (that is, "reality") usually serves the interests of the dominant group while marginalizing other perspectives and groups. For example, in her book *Good to talk? Living and working in a communication culture*, Deborah Cameron interrogates whether the discourse of empowerment that permeates corporate training materials actually benefits those lower in the hierarchy as it claims to do. Rather than employees being liberated from constraint, Cameron concludes that they are taught to discipline themselves so that they can be more flexible and work within those constraints, to become more team-oriented, to resolve conflicts, and to control emotions that could potentially disrupt the values of efficiency and order prized by business management (→ Power and Discourse).

Third, the *question of prescription* concerns different aims of the research endeavor. On the one hand there are those researchers whose primary focus is on describing how language is used in or by business organizations toward the end of understanding the process, while other studies investigate situated language use toward the end of informing pedagogy, training, and how to do it "better" (such as how to be a more effective leader, strategist, facilitator, etc.).

Early work in business discourse research often adopted an applied, *pedagogical focus*, largely owing to its roots in the dominant interests of the business communication field. However, other research aims largely for understanding how language is used in business settings, such as Francois Cooren's (2004) attempt to understand how texts exercise agency in business settings. Still other research attempts to first describe and understand business discourse and then apply those insights in the workplace. As an example,

researchers contributing to the Language in the Workplace Project in New Zealand blend detailed descriptions of workplace interactions with the needs of workplace practitioners. Rather than workplace practices being prescribed with a decontextualized list of dos and don'ts, a dialogue is created between academic researchers and workplace practitioners with the goal of generating an appreciation for the complexity of language use (Jones & Stubbe 2004).

### FUTURE OF THE FIELD

The future of business discourse research promises a more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of talk-in-interaction in and by business organizations. As these enterprises evolve new ways of working, roles and relationships inevitably change. These create opportunities for researchers to understand how organizational members develop and employ flexible, discourse-based competencies where talk and texts are not simply means to an end, but in large part the work itself. Further, for critically minded researchers, it serves as a further call to critique whose interests are served by such changes in business enterprises.

Second, the field is likely to see an expansion of its scope to include non-members producing talk and texts about business enterprises in their everyday discourse. An excellent example of this is the renewed interest in consumer-to-consumer word-of-mouth communication and consumer-generated media where the discourse about companies, produced by people unaffiliated with those companies, has been shown to have a consequential impact on the performance of the business enterprise (Carl 2006).

Third, due to the complexity of modern business enterprises it is to be expected that no one disciplinary or analytic tradition will monopolize business discourse research. There is already burgeoning cross-fertilization among disciplines, such as those between scholars of language and social interaction and organizational communication. This trend will likely continue to see greater collaboration among multiple disciplines and analytic frameworks as scholars and practitioners continue to seek insights into the interactional business of doing business.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Public Meetings

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# C

## Cable Television

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The term “cable television” typically refers to a form of subscription-based multichannel program delivery that relies on cables or wires. At first, cable television existed almost exclusively to extend the reach of broadcast signals, but more recently it has also delivered an array of additional program services – primarily satellite networks such as MTV (Music Television), HBO (Home Box Office), and → CNN (Cable News Network; → Satellite Television; Television Networks).

### START OF CABLE TELEVISION

As a technology, wired forms of → radio and → television transmission were sometimes used by national public service broadcasters to extend or supplement their coverage areas – as was the case with the British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC) starting with radio in the 1930s. The technology, known as “rediffusion” or “relay,” helped the BBC approach its goal of universal service. Also, smaller European nations such as Belgium and the Netherlands, in spite of having their own public service broadcasters, used cable-type technologies to import additional signals from nearby countries. In subsequent decades, cable-type technologies also were enlisted by some national governments, for example during certain periods in Argentina and China, as a means of maintaining central control of programming. Elsewhere, including in India and the former Soviet Union, “gray market” coaxial cable networks were used to share programming among residents of neighborhoods or apartment blocks. As a distinct and cohesive industry, though, cable’s origins lie almost exclusively in North America (→ Television Technology).

Most North Americans first became aware of broadcast television during the 1940s, following the end of World War II. However, access to television tended to center in major urban areas, where stations were located and where residents could receive the signals of those stations using set-top (“rabbit ear”) antennas. Other parts of the continent, particularly rural and mountainous areas, lacked access. In the US, the → Federal Communications Commission’s 1948–1952 station licensing freeze only worsened the situation. Meanwhile, Canada was just starting its national broadcast television service, and Canadians were – wherever possible – beginning to watch stations from across the border (→ Television: Social History).

Thus, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, some enterprising individuals in areas underserved by broadcast television devised means of extending television stations' signals. They built very tall receiving antennas known as "headends" (often located on mountaintops) to capture the nearest signals and used wire (most commonly coaxial cable) to deliver them to residents of communities lacking television service. Most charged a monthly fee for this service – which was termed *community antenna television* (CATV). Initially, those drawn to the business tended to be appliance dealers, radio station operators, and various other people with expertise in electronics. Before long, though, the demand for CATV service in communities without television service began to draw in even those without any experience in broadcasting or electronics.

### EXPANSION OF SERVICES

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, while there was no shortage of demand for the retransmission of broadcast television channels, CATV operators also were interested in expanding the scope of their service. Quite a few had enlisted microwave relays as a means of bringing in the signals of popular stations from locations too far away for reception by a community antenna alone. A handful had also begun to offer *local channels* (in most cases nothing more than a camera panning a clock and a thermometer to provide "time and temperature"), prefiguring the public access channels that would arise in the decades to follow. Also around this time a pay-TV industry was developing in both the US and Canada. Although only one pay-TV operation was directly affiliated with the CATV industry, many CATV operators were optimistic about adding pay channels to their systems in the future – a vision that would be realized in the 1970s with the launch of pay cable channels such as HBO and Showtime. Mexico's cable industry was also starting at this point; cable networks began to be built there in the 1960s to extend the coverage of Telesistema Mexicano (TSM), at that time the leading private television broadcaster.

But in the US during the 1960s, CATV operators began to face new challenges from government policymakers. The oft-stated objective in this was to uphold the FCC mandate to serve the "public interest" as defined in the 1934 Communications Act – a weak mandate within an almost exclusively advertiser-funded broadcasting system. Several sets of regulations were aimed at preventing harm to broadcast television from CATV systems and effectively prevented the CATV industry from doing business in medium to large broadcast television markets. Since these markets represented the areas of greatest revenue potential for CATV, the measures stalled that medium's growth considerably (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). Regulation inevitably lags behind the promise of a new technology, though, and no sooner had the FCC curtailed CATV's growth in the US than that same medium was absorbed into a set of utopian discourses aimed at reforming television generally – now known as "Blue Sky." Parties ranging from government task forces to private think tanks to professional associations forwarded visions for transforming CATV into a purveyor of a broad range of channel options, interactive services, and even document delivery services.

Some other events in the US also helped move CATV forward, including victories in two critical copyright cases. By the early 1970s, with business-minded Richard Nixon in the White House, the policy climate around cable grew more lenient. New regulations

allowed cable into more broadcast markets, and operators gained more programming choice. At this time, the White House's Office of Telecommunications Policy (OTP) instituted the policy of "Open Skies," which allowed free-market competition in the communications satellite industry. In contrast, stricter regulation of cable television in Canada began to emerge in the years following the 1968 creation of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), an entity charged with protecting the sovereignty of Canadian media industries. In 1975, the CRTC stated that cable was a "chosen instrument of public policy" and set in place regulations addressing such concerns as what channels and services cable companies might or should make available, reasonable subscription rates, and provisions for public access channels. Canada would continue to be challenged, though, by the easy access its residents had to US television outlets – both broadcast and cable.

### THE ROLE OF SATELLITE TV

The growth and flourishing of satellites in North America during the early 1970s was a major determinant in transforming CATV into modern cable television throughout all of North America and eventually elsewhere. In 1975, HBO, a fledgling US pay-TV service operated by Time, Inc. and delivering its signal to various locations in upstate New York and Pennsylvania by microwave, began to use satellite to deliver its programming nationwide. This breakthrough encouraged other enterprising individuals and companies to launch similar satellite-carried cable "networks." Most of these were pre-existing terrestrially based operations, including Ted Turner's Atlanta "superstation" WTCG (later WTBS) in 1976 and televangelist Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) in 1977. By 1980, there were around a dozen satellite cable networks in the US. In Canada, policymakers were beginning to grapple with the likely impact of the expanding US cable industry on its own public television system. By this point also, Mexico's private multichannel broadcaster Televisa had adopted satellites as a means of distributing Spanish-language programming both within Mexico and into the US – the start of the broadcast and cable network Univision. Satellites and the existing cable infrastructure would be significant factors as Mexico grew into a major player in the Spanish-language television market throughout the Americas.

The 1980s saw the launching of dozens of additional cable networks in multiple countries, in fact. For the US, these included *premium* networks such as HBO and its competitor Showtime, which charged subscribers directly for access to their programs, and *basic* networks such as MTV, CNN, and Lifetime, which came "bundled" together in a package for which subscribers were charged a flat monthly fee. While Canadian cable operators were able to import some of these networks from the US, the larger trend there was to develop indigenous networks to offer similar programming categories while still complying with "Canadian content" quotas. In both countries, this decade also saw the rise of new types of cable services such as home shopping and pay-per-view channels.

In 1984, the first ever cable-oriented legislation was passed in the US – the Cable Communications Policy Act – and only eight years later, the Cable Consumer Protection and Competition Act. Both were only moderately effective at keeping up with the rapidly changing nature of cable television service. By the early 1990s, cable television clearly was morphing into a different sort of industry as it both merged with other telecommunications

technologies, such as the nascent Internet, and contended with new competition from both direct broadcast satellites (DBS) and telephone companies. Legislators would attempt to address this scenario in the more comprehensive 1996 Telecommunications Act.

The policy shifts within the US and the overall popularity of multichannel television services in North America have rippled throughout the entire world since the 1990s (even earlier in some countries). In countries with longstanding television service (such as many in western Europe), established public channels now face competition from both privately funded broadcast channels as well as cable or DBS services. In *developing countries*, satellite transmission (sometimes enhanced by terrestrial cable) has made it possible to deliver television over large territories, which could not have been served effectively by either broadcast or cable networks – as in the case of Indonesia, for example. Policy analysts see this as a mixed blessing, given the virtually inescapable fact that it is much easier for satellite companies to import programming produced by and for other countries than to have it produced locally – perpetuating situations of cultural imperialism. Nonetheless, the presence of satellites and multichannel television also allows the possibility that the cost savings achieved by efficient means of distribution will generate more resources and incentives to develop indigenous programming infrastructures.

### **CABLE TELEVISION AND THE INTERNET**

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, cable companies throughout the world began to supplement their extensive program packages with high-speed → Internet access, also known as “broadband,” and cable telephone service, which relies on the Internet and voice over Internet protocol (VoIP). Nearly all cable companies now engage in a marketing practice known as “überbundling,” in which television program packages, Internet access, and cable telephone are sold as a package for a single monthly fee.

Today, the international cable television industry faces challenges from several other multichannel and Internet-based technologies. Since the early 1980s, cable has competed with direct-to-home (DTH) satellite. Starting in the early 1980s, large backyard C-band dishes allowed people to receive the signals of cable networks in the same way that cable operators did at the headends (a practice kept in check by signal scrambling technologies that essentially force dish users to pay for access to the channels). In the 1990s came much smaller Ku-band DBS dishes that allow even urban apartment dwellers an alternative to cable service. As of the early twenty-first century, telephone companies also offer cable-type service using high-speed Internet technologies (→ Technology and Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ CNN ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Internet ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Television Technology

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## Canada: Media System

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Canada is the world's second-largest country by land area, occupying most of the northern part of North America between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and extending north to the Arctic Ocean. Originally founded as a union of British and former French colonies, Canada became a dominion in 1867 and gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1982. It is a federal constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy comprised of ten provinces and three territories. An officially bilingual nation, nearly 60 per cent of the population have English as a mother tongue, while 23 percent have French. Canada adopted an official policy of multiculturalism in 1988, and its population of nearly 33 million people is composed of no fewer than 34 ethnic groups that number at least 100,000 people. Canada is a technologically advanced and industrialized nation whose diversified economy is heavily reliant on trade with the United States, with which it shares land borders to the south and northwest.

Canada's communications sector has been particularized by three factors: the country's close and often ambivalent relationship to the United States, its policy of official bilingualism, and its avowed dedication to the principle of multiculturalism. Of these differences, it is Canada's bilingual status that most clearly separates it from the American model (→ United States of America: Media System). With seven million French-speaking Canadians, the vast majority of whom are located in the province of Quebec, nationalist and nation-building projects have long had to contend with the issue of "two solitudes" existing side by side. Although some French-language → radio and → television services are available across the nation, they have limited audience outside of Quebec, and French-language daily newspapers have almost no circulation outside of that province. Concerns over the linguistic divisions among Canadians, as well as the perceived threat of American culture to English-Canadian identity formation, have characterized many governmental interventions into the media system.



## PRINTED PRESS

Canadian newspapers derive their origins from the influence of the New England colonies. John Bushnell, a printer from Boston, started Canada's first → newspaper, the *Halifax Gazette*, on March 23, 1752. Early newsweeklies were dependent on governmental patronage and, consequently, were rarely critical. The first significant expansion of the press occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century, as settlers arrived in Upper and Lower Canada. During this period, newspaper editors were often politicians, and their newspapers, including Stephen Miles' *Kingston Gazette* (1810) and George Brown's *Toronto Globe* (1844), reflected their political orientations. The westward expansion of the late nineteenth century spread the press across the nation, and events such as the Confederation (1867) and the Riel Rebellion (1885) created an interest in domestic news. Canada's population exploded at the turn of the twentieth century, when it was the fastest growing country in the world. Newspaper circulation doubled between 1901 and 1911, and by 1938 there were 138 daily newspapers in the country. In 1917, Canadian newspapers formed the Canadian Press, a cooperative → news agency, which allowed for a greater level of integration of news reporting across the geographically vast nation.

Since the 1960s, Canada's newspaper industry has been dominated by a shrinking number of increasingly large chains, including CanWest Global, Hollinger International, Quebecor, Torstar, Osprey Media Group, and Power Corp. While most major Canadian cities have competing daily newspapers, and while the country is served by two English-language nationally distributed dailies (the *Globe and Mail* and the *National Post*), diversity is limited considerably by the trend toward conglomeration. Specifically, by 1999 chains controlled 95 per cent of Canadian daily newspapers, accounting for 99 per cent of total circulation. Currently, only four daily newspapers are classified as independent by the Canadian Newspaper Association, and only one of those (*Le Devoir*) is considered to be a major newspaper.

In the area of press freedom, a significant body of law covers matters ranging from libel, to contempt of court, and copyright (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). As well, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, passed as part of the Canadian constitution in 1982, guarantees "freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication."

Canada's → *magazine industry* differs significantly from the newspaper industry insofar as it is largely dominated by American publications. In 1961 the Royal Commission on Publications, the O'Leary Commission, reported that 80 per cent of Canada's magazine industry was foreign-controlled, and recommended the imposition of a tariff on "split-run" editions, or foreign-owned magazines that print a second edition in Canada in order to benefit from Canadian advertising revenues. This recommendation became law in 1965, and has been a source of controversy between Canada and the United States for decades. In 1997, the United States successfully challenged Canada's laws on split-run magazines through the World Trade Organization, and two years later, after negotiations with the US, the Foreign Publishers Advertising Services Act was passed as a compromise position.

## BROADCASTING AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Canada's national broadcasting system was initiated as a response to the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting (1928–1929), also known as the *Aird Commission*. The Aird

Commission reported a widespread concern about the Americanization of Canadian airwaves, recommended that broadcasting be publicly owned, and advocated for the establishment of a national public radio network. In 1932, this network, known as the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission (CRBC), was established by the government of R. B. Bennett, when it took over a number of stations operated by the Canadian National Railway (CNR). Four years later the passage of the Canadian Broadcasting Act changed the CRBC into a full-fledged crown corporation and altered its name to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC; → Public Broadcasting Systems).

In 1955, spurred by the arrival of television in Canada (1952), a second broadcasting commission, the *Royal Commission on Broadcasting* (1955–1957), otherwise known as the Fowler Commission, was convened. The recommendations of this commission resulted in the Broadcasting Act (1958), which stripped the CBC of its regulatory powers by establishing the Board of Broadcast Governors (BBG) as an oversight body, opened the door for the creation of national private broadcasting networks, and established the first Canadian content regulations, requiring a threshold of 45 percent Canadian content as a condition for receiving a broadcasting license. In 1968 the Broadcasting Act was amended, expanding Canadian content quotas to 60 percent, requiring Canadian ownership of the broadcasting system, and establishing the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) as a replacement for the BBG. The CRTC was charged with granting and renewing broadcasting licenses, maintaining programming quotas, and ensuring the ongoing Canadian ownership of the broadcasting system. In 1971, the CRTC introduced a point system for Canadian content intended to clarify Section 3 of the Broadcasting Act. This checklist awards points for the number of Canadians involved in the production of a film, song, or television program, and became the basis for calculating Canadian content from that point forward.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, CBC Television's role as a public forum has been challenged by a series of funding cuts. In 1990, CBC closed eleven regional stations as a result of cuts to its budget, and in 1995 the resignation of CBC president Anthony Manera over the issue of funding highlighted the crisis situation for the public broadcaster. By 1999, the CBC's budget had been reduced to \$820 million, far below the 1990 budget of \$1.2 billion. Critics of the CBC point to the fact that Canada has one of the most diverse television spectrums in the world as evidence that there is no longer an important role for a public broadcaster in the system. Cable television was introduced to Canada in 1952 and was an important feature of the television landscape in urban centers by the 1970s. Subscriber specialty channels were introduced in 1983 and significantly expanded in 1996, and again in 2000 when the CRTC approved the licenses of 283 new digital television channels.

Canada's *current television landscape* is comprised of six types of channels: (1) basic service analogue stations comprising local over-the-air affiliates; (2) analogue specialty channels such as TSN, CBC Newsworld, and the Weather Network; (3) digital specialty channels such as OutTV and the Documentary Channel; foreign channels from (4) the United States (A&E; → CNN) and (5) other nations (Alpha Punjabi, → Deutsche Welle); and (6) premium movie services. Generally, satellite and cable providers offer packages ranging from approximately three dozen (basic service) to more than two hundred (digital) channel options. Despite the broad range of viewer options, television viewing in Canada is dominated by dramas, situation comedies, reality television programming, and

sports broadcasting (particularly professional hockey). Consistently, the most popular programs in English Canada mirror the most popular programs in the United States, with the notable exception of CBC's *Hockey night in Canada*. By contrast, almost all of the most popular programs in French-speaking Canada are produced in Quebec and feature local celebrities.

Despite the creation of two Canadian digital networks in 2005 (Sirius Canada and XM Radio Canada), *radio* remains a predominantly local phenomenon in Canada. While the CBC has two national radio networks that attract approximately 11 percent of all listeners, the bulk of the radio audience tunes in to one of the 515 commercial AM and FM radio stations offering a range of options from adult contemporary and contemporary hit music, to news, sports, and talk radio. One of the defining features of Canadian radio is the Canadian content regulatory framework that governs it. The CRTC requires that 35 per cent of popular music played between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. be of Canadian origin, as defined by the MAPL criteria that assign points based on a song's music, artist, production, and lyrics. French-language radio stations, which comprise 20 percent of the total, are further required to broadcast 65 per cent of their musical selections in French, and must also meet the minimum Canadian content requirements.

Unlike television and radio, the CRTC has largely left the → Internet unregulated, allowing it to be developed by the private sector and academic communities. Canada is a world leader in broadband access, a nation in which 17 million adult Canadians (68 per cent of the population) reported using the Internet for personal or nonbusiness purposes in 2005. Increasingly, the Internet has become an important domestic communications technology, with almost two-thirds of users who access it from home doing so daily. Nonetheless, a notable gap has arisen between cities and rural areas, with urban Canadians significantly more likely to access the Internet (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America; Internet Law and Regulation).

## **CONGLOMERATION IN THE CANADIAN COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRIES**

The conglomeration that has defined the Canadian newspaper industry is increasingly a reality for the entire media system. As convergence becomes the norm, a small number of corporations have seized control of much of the media. The largest players in the media field include CanWest Global, CTVglobemedia (formerly Bell Globemedia), Rogers Media, Quebecor Media, Corus Entertainment, and Alliance-Atlantis (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Convergence of Media Systems; Media Conglomerates).

CanWest Global owns the Global television network, the smaller CH television network, and a number of digital specialty channels; a small number of radio stations; and the former Southam newspaper chain, which includes a number of major dailies as well as the *National Post*. CTVglobemedia is the owner of the CTV television network, and a large number of specialty television channels, as well as the *Globe and Mail* newspaper. In 2007 it acquired the CHUM television network, a large number of specialty television channels, and a radio network from CHUM Limited. Rogers Media controls a large portion of the cable industry, more than 70 consumer magazines (including the newsweekly *Macleans*), 46 radio stations, and numerous specialty television stations. In 2007, Rogers agreed to purchase from CTVglobemedia the Citytv stations formerly owned by CHUM. Quebecor Media owns Vidéotron, the largest cable provider in Quebec, as well as the 18

newspapers in the Sun Media chain, the TVA French-language broadcasting network and its affiliated French-language specialty channels, and the group of publishing houses Éditions Quebecor.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Bi- and Multilingualism ▶ CNN ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ News Agencies ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## **Candidate Image**

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The candidate image construct is used in the study of political communication to explain how campaign messages affect voter perceptions of candidates. It is assumed that changes in the images of candidates lead to changes in candidate evaluations and choices in elections. This assumption is consistent with the vast voting behavior literature which indicates that there are numerous long-term and short-term determinants of voting choices. Candidate image is one type of short-term voting determinant.

While there are competing definitions of candidate image, most uses of the construct assume that candidate images are cognitive representations of candidates (→ Political Cognitions). In their seminal work, Nimmo and Savage (1976) initiated a rigorous focus on candidate image as a construct that can help to explain how communication affects candidate evaluation. They argued that an image of a candidate consists of voter → perceptions. These perceptions are the result of an interaction of voters' subjective knowledge and messages sent by candidates. Some scholars assume that voters compare candidates on a similar set of criteria, such as attributes for an ideal office holder. Others, however, argue that voters appear to incorporate dissimilar standards in their images of competing candidates (Hellweg 2004).

The general theoretical perspective for contemporary candidate image research is an information-processing view of voters and citizens (→ Information Processing). Some scholars argue that voters follow a rational choice model and select candidates with ideal image comparisons or with their own self-interests. Other scholars believe that voters reduce the plethora of campaign messages and claims they encounter into simplified models of the candidates. In the latter view, voters form images of candidates in order to judge how the candidates are positioned in relation to the concerns that are most important to themselves (Kendall & Paine 1995; Lodge et al. 1995).

### THE FUNCTION OF CANDIDATE IMAGES IN CAMPAIGNS

Campaigns provide voters with information about parties, candidates, and voting decisions (→ Election Campaign Communication). Campaign events like conventions and debates have significant effects on the public images of candidates (Holbrook 1996). Candidates attempt to shape candidate images in the minds of voters and reporters by projecting qualities that they believe will appeal to voters. Campaign public opinion analysts identify the desired traits and candidates then attempt to project those traits (→ Election Surveys). A common image-building technique used by candidates without international political experience is to film them abroad talking with foreign leaders. This might show that they are endorsed by a group of experts who do have the international background.

One of the most important characteristics of candidate images is that they are *changeable*. If they were not, there would be little need for political consultants, participation in debates, and expenditure on advertising. Candidates can present their views on issues in various ways to increase the level of support for their position on these issues. They may not be able to change their job experience or religion, but they can alter perceptions of such aspects of their personal history.

Unless a voter votes by party line, he or she makes decisions about differences between candidates in an election. Candidate images provide voters with a means of evaluating candidates in relation to what they are most concerned about in an election. They also provide a means of tallying positive and negative reactions. This is useful in contrasting one candidate with another, as voters are most likely to vote for the candidate with the best positive to negative impressions ratio. Voters reason about their choice of political candidates as they do about other important choices in their lives. Most voters engage in economical means of integrating information they receive about candidates. According to Popkin (1991) voter reasoning draws on information shortcuts and rules of thumb (“low-information rationality”).

### COMPONENTS AND PROCESSES

Early views of candidate images treated them as summary representations of candidate source credibility. An alternative view regards candidate images as representations of the personality traits of candidates including source credibility, competence as a leader, communication style, etc. A third view treats images as representations of both candidate personal impressions and candidate issue-position impressions. A more expansive view

allows any impressions about candidates (personality, issues, party, ideology, etc.) to be included in the images. This fourth view holds the promise of describing how affective responses can be part of images. To date, most approaches to images have conceptualize their content only as cognitions with inadequate accounting of affective responses to candidate and how those reponses might also constitute content in the images.

Kilburn (2005) argues that overall evaluations of candidates are formed by input from perceptions about candidates, issue attitudes held by voters, and partisanship. He also argues that trait perceptions and overall evaluations are mutually influential. For candidate images, this might suggest that the images of candidates have feedback influence on certain components such as impressions of candidate attributes. Voters tend to prefer candidates who have attributes they like, partisanship that matches their own, and views close to their own issue preferences.

Much of the *content* of candidate images concerns the personal traits of the candidates such as personality, mannerisms, communication behaviors, credibility, leadership potential, etc. Along with character input, however, candidate images appear also to be affected by reactions to candidates' issues positions. Candidate issues positions can include policy statements, actions on issues, record in office regarding issues, and arguments made about political changes. Studies show that voter perceptions of the candidate issue positions (issue perceptions) and candidate personality traits (persona perceptions) are highly and significantly correlated (Hacker et al. 2000).

Image formation is subject to dynamic changes throughout a campaign. Components may change in candidate images as new messages are received, but the relative importance of component types like issue positions and personal impression may also shift (Flanigan & Zingale 2006). One example is the 1952 election, when Dwight Eisenhower ran as the victorious general of World War II, whereas in 1956, he ran as an incumbent president with a good record on issues. Another example is Bill Clinton downplaying personality perceptions in favor of strong issue stands to focus images on policies rather than personal issues.

Cognitive processing of candidates in election campaigns involves the ways in which incoming messages and information are evaluated and related to previously stored knowledge, attitudes, and images. A candidate image may be linked to a candidate → schema with the latter being more long-term memory-based. This line of reasoning follows the “online tally” model of political cognition which holds that evaluations are continuously updated by voters (Lodge et al. 1995). Voters respond to campaign messages without necessarily being able to memorize or recall the content of those messages later. Conclusions may remain after the basis of concluding is forgotten. This may occur because facts presented through the news media can be forgotten while reactions to them are accumulated.

## COMMUNICATION EFFECTS ON IMAGES

When voters speak to one another about candidates, they describe the images they have of the candidates. These candidate images include cognitive and affective elements. What others tell them about the candidates interacts with what they already believe and feel. The candidate image can be easily articulated because it is a summary structure of the

candidate. However, it can be added to as more information from candidate schemas is activated to facilitate communication. Thus, candidate images can be seen as a mediating structure between schemas and the representations of candidates discussed in communication. The images may be reinforced, added to, or changed in personal communication as well as in mass and new media communication.

Candidate images are shaped in many forms of political communication. Political advertising, for example, directly targets image-shaping and image repair while sometimes attempting to generate negative images of competing candidates. News media provide information about candidates that makes it easy to observe their behaviors and make inferences about them (→ Political News). Film biographies are used as convention documentaries to provide extended video and audio narratives of a candidate and to highlight accomplishments and good traits. Debates provide candidates with opportunities to change certain impressions that voters have of them. Certain “defining moments” of debates can backfire and harm the candidates, however. A classic example of this from the USA was Gerald Ford’s claim, in his debate with Jimmy Carter in 1976, that the USSR did not dominate eastern Europe. Reactions by voters to what candidates say about issues and how they perform in the debates change their images of the candidates.

The nature of the content of candidate images is likely to be affected by the agenda-setting that occurs in news media coverage of campaigns, by priming done in news stories, and various processes of framing done by candidates, journalists, and others who use old and new media to characterize candidacies and campaigns (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Priming refers to the tendency of audience members to evaluate political candidates on the basis of the events and issues that are particularly salient in the news (→ Priming Theory). Framing, also known as second-level agenda-setting, refers to the ability of the news media to affect the construction of candidate images by selecting and emphasizing candidate attributes for attention (→ Framing of News). In the same way as journalists focus on certain events or issues more than others, they also focus on certain candidate traits or attributes more than others. This suggests that news media play a key role in helping to shape candidate images.

News media agenda-setting effects have been found in numerous nations. For example, in the Spanish election of 1996, voters’ images of the three candidates for prime minister were positively correlated with candidate descriptions in the news media. A study of a mayoral election in Taipei, Taiwan in 1994 found that salient features of voters’ candidate images were correlated with candidate attributes emphasized by Taipei newspapers (McCombs 2004).

## CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

In voting research, cognitive constructs help to study how people evaluate candidates and make their voting choices. A focus on any cognitive structure in the cognitive system is part of an effort to ascertain how people represent the political world to themselves.

Candidate schemas are knowledge networks and dense long-term memory structures regarding candidates. Candidate images are evaluative and online cognitive representations of candidates. Candidate → attitudes are summations of beliefs about candidates

which include affect attached to those beliefs to the point attitudes are essentially affective structures constructed of beliefs. While these three structures may overlap, their respective literatures indicate substantive differences. Moreover, studies of voting behavior suggest that political cognition involves multiple structures that affect voting choices. On the other hand, it can be argued that the three constructs simply describe three different angles of view on the same evaluative process.

There are various ways of measuring candidate images that are somewhat related to the various conceptual definitions of images. This should not be alarming, because many, if not most, constructs in social and behavioral science research have different conceptual and operational definitions. As with attitude and schema, an image is not directly observable. Cognitive constructs are hypothetical constructs that serve as devices to understand human behavior and communication. Constructs like images are believed to exist because we can see how they mediate between input and output in relation to the mental processing of messages.

As long as communication is conceptually related to cognitive changes in voter perceptions and evaluations of a candidate, a candidate image provides a useful construct for linking messages to stabilized cognitive representations of the candidate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Image ▶ Information Processing ▶ Perception ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political News ▶ Political Personality in Media Democracy ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Schemas ▶ Televised Debates

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# Caribbean States: Media Systems

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The Caribbean archipelago curves from Cuba in the northwest to Trinidad in the southeast. The islands have all been at some stage colonies, departments, or possessions of European or North American countries. This history has given the region a varied culture that has created divisions among groups of islands. The English-speaking group, for example, traditionally has been apart from the others. These differences of language and other aspects of culture have created barriers in communication among the 38 million people of the islands.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Caribbean's history has left it with differing political and administrative systems that, to a significant degree have determined the structure and operations of the media in the many countries. The culture of the media is also a consequence of the economic history of the islands. The media are more diverse in the larger and more populous islands such as Cuba, Hispaniola, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad and Tobago. With the exception of Cuba, the political systems in the region are based on periodic elections that have produced administrations ranging from social democratic through centrist to center right (→ Cuba: Media System). They are generally pro-business.

Fundamental *political changes* in recent years in the English-speaking islands have seen them become politically independent of the UK over the past 45 years. These countries inherited the British approach to press freedom (Surlin and Soderlund 1990; → Freedom of the Press, Concept of). There were also political changes in other countries with the overthrow of right wing dictatorships in Cuba (Batista), Dominican Republic (Trujillo), and Haiti (Duvalier). The change in Cuba was to a socialist administration with a centrally controlled economy, while the Dominican Republic and Haiti moved to elected administrations. Other islands have remained colonies, possessions, and overseas departments of the UK, France, the Netherlands, and the United States.

In most of the countries in the region, the past 25 years have seen fundamental changes in *economic policy* that have affected the structure and operations of the media. Most countries had one or two major newspapers that were owned by the state, economically influential individuals, families, or businesses. Radio and television stations were owned, in the main, by governments, well-established economic entities, or rich individuals.

Progressive deregulation of many economies has led to increased private business involvement in the media. Barriers to foreign ownership of media have also been removed in some countries. Many governments have divested state-owned media. This has led to a rapid expansion in the number and type of media operating in commercial competition (→ Commercialization of the Media).

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

While the constitutional and legal environments in most of the countries allow for free media, many media houses and professional associations complain intermittently about

elements that limit this freedom. These range from the murder and physical intimidation of journalists to the application of laws concerning slander and defamation (→ Violence against Journalists).

The Association of Caribbean Media Workers, a federation of media professional organizations (Cuba is not represented), found an “ambivalence of respect” for the practice of journalism in an environment “in which commercial and political agendas exist” (Association of Caribbean Media Workers 2006). It reports: “Self-censorship becomes a foil against the practice of good journalism and citizens are denied a view of reality necessary to move themselves and their societies forward” (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

## PRESS

The leading daily newspaper in the *Dominican Republic* is *Listín Diario* (circulation 160,000). It was part of the Grupo Intercontinental, a financial services and media conglomerate, one of whose banks – Baninter – collapsed in 2003 under what the government claimed was fraud of \$2 billion. The government took over the group, including *Listín Diario*. Other daily newspapers include *Hoy* (80,000), *El Caribe* (42,000), *El Nacional* (42,000), and *Ultima Hora* (circulation unavailable).

The main dailies in *Haiti* are *Le Matin* (circulation 8,000) and *Le Nouvelliste* (circulation 9,000). Both provide coverage of national events. Both operate in a turbulent political environment that has overtaken the country since the overthrow in 1986 of the dictatorship of Jean-Claude Duvalier.

The main newspapers in the *English-speaking Caribbean* are privately owned and operate in an environment that allows freedom of expression. The main newspapers in Barbados are dailies – the *Nation* (circulation 35,000) and the *Advocate* (16,000). The main dailies in Jamaica are the *Gleaner* (circulation 45,000) and the *Observer* (40,000). Both report higher circulation for the Sunday editions. The *Gleaner* also publishes the *Star*, an afternoon weekly. There is also a national weekly, the *Herald* (circulation unavailable), and several weekly community and regional newspapers. The main dailies in *Trinidad and Tobago* are the *Express* (circulation 85,000), the *Guardian* (60,000), and *Newsday* (48,000). There are several weeklies.

The newspapers in these countries cover broadly national issues relating to politics, business, and crime. They give significant coverage also to regional and international developments, particular where these have an obvious impact on their readers.

Newspapers in the *Leeward Islands* (Antigua-Barbuda, St Kitts-Nevis, and Montserrat) and *Windward Islands* (Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia, and St Vincent) concentrate more on domestic political and social issues. There are a few dailies, although most are weekly. While most are privately owned, several are published by political parties. The financial viability of many of these newspapers tends to be uncertain because of the small markets in which they compete.

## RADIO

There are 104 licensed → radio broadcasters in the Dominican Republic that operate on AM and FM frequencies. Most of these are provincial, while some provide national coverage. These are located mainly in Santo Domingo, Santiago, San Francisco de Macoris, La

Romana, Azua, and Barahona. The stations are privately owned, mainly by major business enterprises and media conglomerates.

*Haiti* has 121 listed stations broadcasting on AM and FM frequencies. Most are located in Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haïtien, Jacmel, Les Cayes, and the Central Plateau. The stations are privately owned and are generally small operations.

Most radio stations in English-speaking countries are privately owned. There is, however, state ownership in some of the smaller countries. The number of private stations has expanded over the past 10 years following the deregulation of the media market in several countries.

There are 32 radio stations operating in *Trinidad and Tobago* with commercial and community licenses. There are 17 in Jamaica. State-owned radio broadcasters are in the minority in the Leeward and Windward Islands, where they compete with a growing number of private stations.

## TELEVISION

The major → television broadcasters in the *Dominican Republic*, which provide national coverage, are RadioTelevisión Dominicana, ColorVision Canal 9, Teleantillas, and Telesistema. There are 54 television community and local commercial television broadcasters. *Television Nationale d'Haiti* is a state-owned broadcaster that provides national coverage. Six privately owned television broadcasters provide provincial coverage.

The leading television stations in *Trinidad and Tobago* are state-owned CNMG TV operated by Caribbean New Media Group, and privately owned TV6, which is part of the Caribbean Communications Network group. In Jamaica the main stations are operated by privately owned RJR Communications Group and CVM Communications.

State-owned television broadcasters in the *Windward and Leeward Islands* increasingly are competing with privately owned stations. Most television stations are part of converged broadcasters that also operate radio stations.

The content of most stations mainly is imported, with locally produced programming limited to newscasts, discussions/talk shows, and coverage of live sports and culture.

## NEW MEDIA AND THE INTERNET

There has been rapid expansion of privately owned cable television providers across the region. The content generally is sports, culture, and news, with limited local content being supported by foreign programming. Government regulators and the media industry in several jurisdictions are discussing the extent to which cable providers are allowed to carry → advertising. The pace of the expansion of new media ventures in the Caribbean is constrained by relatively low levels of Internet access in the region (→ Digital Divide). Figures from Internet World Stats (2005) indicate that these range from 1.7 per cent in Cuba to 60 per cent in Barbados.

While the average level of Internet penetration in the Caribbean of 8.1 per cent is higher than in most emerging economies, the region lags behind North America and Europe. Increases in the level of Internet penetration in the region will be determined by the efficiency of new players, which are challenging long-dominant providers, and the extent to which these will be able to offer broadband access at rates that can be afforded

in countries that are poor. Caribbean media houses increasingly provide web-based versions of their output. This is generally limited to repurposed content by newspapers, and radio and television broadcasters. However, in some instances the content is continuously updated (→ Online Journalism). There is also an increasing number of web-only media – mainly newspapers – produced mostly by and for the Caribbean diaspora in North America and Europe (→ Online Media).

## MEDIA TRENDS

Newspapers, which have been the traditional media in the Caribbean, have been forced to change their business and editorial operations to deal with increasing competition from broadcast media. The rapid changes in technology, combined with liberalized state policies, have put newspapers in direct competition with other – mainly electronic – media (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Except in Cuba, the changes in the region's media industry have significantly removed governments as major players in the industry. Media are being managed not as a public good being delivered by the state, but as private business. The financial framework has changed from state subsidies to accountable profits.

Caribbean newspapers were at the vanguard of these changes, and were influenced by what Grant-Wisdom (1995) saw as a consequence of a shift in the use of capital for activities, and the search for “strategic partnerships” in business. Consequently, the region's newspapers were followed by electronic media houses in moving from being unique business ventures to becoming wider media enterprises that benefited from an economic scale of production that enhanced their chances of survival in an increasingly competitive environment (→ Media Conglomerates).

This tendency for newspapers – and subsequently electronic media – in the Caribbean to seek linkages that could widen their markets was evident more than two decades ago. Brown and Sanatan (1987) observed that in the late 1980s the ownership of newspapers in the region was primarily private, and that this was a consequence of traditional links between advertisers and early newspaper development in the region. They said that the tendency toward concentration in the print sector was “observable,” and noted: “There is a cluster effect in newspaper management and plant operations. In Trinidad and Tobago, the *Express* is linked with the *Nation* in Barbados. These newspapers have been helping the weeklies in St Vincent, Dominica and formerly in Grenada” (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

The *trend toward linkages* has gathered pace across the region, leading to significant convergence in media businesses. This has been driven by increasing competition, which has brought about mergers and acquisitions as media businesses tried to survive by being more efficient. This has reflected developments in media in other parts of the world. However, the driving forces behind these changes, and the need to create entities that can benefit from economies of scale, as suggested by McChesney (2001), have been particularly important to Caribbean media because of the small markets in which they operate, and the increasing commercial competition that has accompanied the liberalization of the industry.

There is, for example, the case of *Listín Diario* of the Dominican Republic, which began at the end of the nineteenth century as a daily listing of the arrival and departure of merchant ships. It became a national daily and, after being closed because of political turmoil in the

country, re-emerged in 1967 as the centerpiece of the Grupo Listín de Communications, publishers of other newspapers, including *El Expreso*, *Ultima Hora*, and *El Financiero*. It soon after was acquired by Grupo Intercontinental, a major financial services conglomerate, and was expanded to include 4 television stations and 70 radio stations (James 2003).

The Caribbean Communications Network of Trinidad and Tobago, owner of the *Express* newspaper and the TV6 television network, holds a majority interest in the Grenada Broadcasting Network along with minority interests in other Caribbean media companies. The Nation Corporation, a privately held company, is the owner of the *Nation* newspaper and Starcom Network radio stations. Caribbean Communications Network Limited and the Nation Corporation agreed in 2005 to merge their operations to create a publicly owned regional media company called One Caribbean Media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Cuba: Media System ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Online Media ▶ Radio ▶ Television ▶ Violence against Journalists

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## **Caricature**

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A caricature is an exaggerated and distorted image of a person or thing, which is characterized by visual likeness, immediate recognizability, and pictorial wit, irony, or satire (→ Visual Representation). This visual burlesque can be insulting or complimentary. It is not uncommon that a caricature offends the sensibilities of a depicted person.

Caricatures can serve editorial, illustrative, entertainment, or commercial purposes, as part of political cartoons, illustrations for books and articles, standalone artwork, or use in publicity and advertisements (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of; Book; Cartoons; Political Communication). Caricatures can be standalone drawings or well-integrated depictions in a broader context. For example, caricatures of politicians can be one part of an editorial cartoon that comments on a political issue (→ Political Media Use).

## HISTORY OF CARICATURE IN EUROPE

Etymologically the word “caricature” originates from the Italian verb *caricare*, which means “loaded” or “overloaded,” and the Italian noun *caricatura*. The word *caricare* first appears in Italy around 1600, at the time of the rise of the artistic genre *ritrattini carichi* (exaggerated pictures). In a preface to the 1646 published collection of etchings of the drawings of Annibale Carracci (before November 3 1560–1609), it was pointed out that Carracci had employed *caricare* for sketchy, satirical, and exaggerated portrait drawings. Carracci’s fundamental idea was that in nature there is nothing like perfect beauty or total ugliness. From his point of view, perfect objects could only be created artificially by artists. For absolute ugliness the existing features must be exaggerated. In the sense used by Carracci, caricatures are simply drawings where quirks or imperfections of nature are highlighted and accentuated rather than corrected or idealized.

The art of *caricatura* was further developed by Gianlorenzo Bernini (1598–1680). Aside from the external appearance of a depicted person, it was important for him to expose internal characteristics of personality or temperament. The intention behind this approach was not only to exaggerate unusual or unattractive features but to make the depicted person seem ridiculous. During his occupation at the court of Louis XIV in 1665, Bernini introduced the term *caricature* to France. At the time, there was no conceptual equivalent for this term, which was translated into the French as *portrait chargé*. In the middle of the eighteenth century, the term *caricature* became popular in French.

In England the first definition of *caricature* appears in the *Bibliotheca abscondita* in 1686. Here, caricature was described as portraits of human faces using animal heads. In the middle of the eighteenth century there was a dispute over whether or not caricature satisfies artistic demands and quality criteria (→ Art as Communication). William Hogarth (1697–1764) described caricature as “scrawniness.” In 1743 Hogarth published his famous print “3 Characters – 4 Caricaturas” to illustrate the difference between proper portraits and “scribbling.” This dispute seemed to fade with the publication in 1813 of J. P. Malcom’s *An historical sketch of the art of caricaturing*, a compilation of caricatures that defined the nature of the art. From this point caricature is a term used widely for all depictions of persons employing exaggeration or deformation. In the second half of the eighteenth century caricature became the generic term for political, curious, emblematic, and comic → prints.

The evolution of the term *caricature* has followed a circuitous route. For Carracci, caricature was an exaggerated depiction of individual physiognomic characteristics. For Hogarth caricature was a flawed rendering of a grotesque illusion. For both, caricature was the selective depiction of isolated individual physiognomic guises and features, normally limited to the face and head. They were drawings that exaggerated the unique mental, physical, and other discernible characteristics or features of a person (Unverfehrt 1984).

Caricatures gained popularity among the upper class with broadsheets circulated for distraction and enjoyment among aristocratic circles in France and Italy (→ Printing, History of). It was a kind of honor to be depicted. And it was considered a pleasant pastime to view the exaggerated drawings. In Britain this kind of amusement also became popular around the middle of the eighteenth century. The rise of caricature as a genre is closely connected to some noteworthy artists. English artists Thomas Rowlandson (1756/7–1827), James Gillray (1757–1815), and George Cruikshank (1792–1878) played important roles. Rowlandson's early portrait drawings were strongly influenced by John Hamilton Mortimer (1740–1779). Around 1780 his watercolors became more socially conscious and humorous. After the publication of his etchings in 1784, Rowlandson turned increasingly to illustration and caricature. With Dr Syntax, a fictitious figure he invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century for the publisher Ackermann, he drew the first English “cartoon” character (Bryant & Heneage 1994, 185–187).

Like Rowlandson, James Gillray was influenced in technique and style by Mortimer. From 1786 he devoted himself to caricature exclusively. Gillray is renowned for his depictions of William Pitt the Younger (1759–1806), British prime minister from 1783 to 1806. Gillray's most famous etching and best-known political print is “The Plumb-pudding in danger,” which shows Pitt and Napoleon Bonaparte carving up a globe to divide the world between them (Bryant & Heneage 1994, 90–92). George Cruikshank was the son of the caricaturist, illustrator, and painter Isaac Cruikshank (1764–1811), who taught him to draw and etch. Cruikshank published his first caricature in 1806. He was especially famous for ridiculing George IV. However, in 1821 he abandoned caricature for straight illustration (Bryant & Heneage 1994, 50–51).

In France, painter, sculptor, and lithographer Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), perhaps the greatest social satirist of the nineteenth century, produced over 4,000 lithographs designed to comment upon and satirize social and political conditions in France and Europe. Appreciated as cartoons by his contemporaries, these prints are now considered masterpieces by many. A good deal of Daumier's work was published in the magazines *La Caricature* and *Le Charivari* between 1830 and 1835 (→ Magazine, History of; Picture Magazines). In 1832 his caricature of King Louis Philippe (1773–1850) as Gargantua led to six months imprisonment. After *La Caricature* was suppressed, his work appeared in *Le Charivari*, where he used a realistic graphic style to satirize and ridicule the bourgeois society of his day. In the later years, after 1848, he painted watercolors on the subject of jurisprudence. His visual skits about the Courts of Justice are well known. In old age, he went blind and died impoverished.

### POLITICAL CARTOONING IN THE US

The German emigrant Thomas Nast (1840–1902) carried the tradition of caricature and political commentary to the United States (see Figs 1 and 2). At the age of 15, Nast was discovered by the publisher Frank Leslie. Subsequently, his work appeared in the weekly magazine *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly Newspaper*. He joined Leslie's struggle against the so-called “swill milk scandal” and experienced the power of the press for the first time. After three years Nast became a freelance for magazines such as *Harper's Weekly*, the *Sunday Courier*, and the *New York Illustrated News* (→ Illustrated Newspapers; Newspaper;



**Figure 1** A caricature of Thomas Nast, one of the greatest caricaturists ever, by Milt Priggee. If you look closely at the figure, you will see a penguin on Nast's lap. This is a homage to Pat Oliphant (1935–), an outstanding contemporary American editorial cartoonist, who invented the penguin character called Punk

Newspaper, History of). As a sketch artist/correspondent for the *New York Illustrated News*, he accompanied Giuseppe Garibaldi's troops in Sicily for four months in 1860, contributing sketches to newspapers in Britain, France, and the US. In 1861 he returned to the US, having improved his drawing technique. After the outbreak of the Civil War, Nast was employed as a sketch artist/reporter by *Harper's Weekly*. In 1864 he supported Abraham Lincoln's presidential campaign with his drawings. His cartoons attacking President Andrew Johnson in 1866 established his reputation as an exceptionally talented caricaturist and editorial cartoonist. During his artistic career Nast invented some of the familiar encodings still in use in the US today: for example, the Democratic Donkey, the Republican Elephant, and Santa Claus. He was also famous for his aggressive and sometimes offensive cartoon series about William Marcy "Boss" Tweed (1823–1878) and





Figure 2 Another Milt Priggee caricature of Thomas Nast

the New York City political machine, as well as his anti-immigrant and racist depictions of Irish famine refugees. In the end Nast's drawings were responsible for the cessation of the political career of Tweed.

### MODERN CARICATURES

In the twentieth century the number of caricaturists working for newspapers and magazines, as well as creating books, comics, and animated cartoons, multiplied with the scale and reach of mass produced media (→ Animation; Comics; Media History). Milt Priggee (1953–) was encouraged to become a caricaturist and editorial cartoonist by his mentor and Pulitzer Prize-winning cartoonist John Fischetti (1916–1980). In his career Priggee has worked for the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Chicago Daily News*, and the *Spokesman-Review*, among other media. Americans such as Al Hirschfeld



**Figure 3** A Milt Priggee caricature of Al Hirschfeld, who was famous for his caricatures of Hollywood and Broadway stars, as well as other celebrities

(1903–2003; see Fig. 3), David Levine (1926–), Taylor Jones (1952–), and Christopher Fox Payne, alias C. F. Payne (1954–), as well as Austrian Erich Sokol (1933–2003), the British Gerald Scarfe (1936–), the French Jean Mulatier (1947–), the Italian Tullio Pericoli (1936–), Swedes Ewert Karlsson, alias EWK (1918–2004), and Riber Hansson (1939–), and Germans Dieter Hanitzsch (1933–) and Bernhard Prinz (1975–) enjoyed long and distinguished careers and contributed to the establishment of caricature as a routine practice in western culture.

Some of them, such as EWK, Hanitzsch, Hansson, Priggee, and Sokol, are not only famous for their caricatures but for their editorial cartoons. Dieter Hanitzsch pioneered animated editorial cartooning. Hanitzsch began his career as head of advertising at the Paulaner Brewery. As an editor for the economics section at a public broadcast station, he regularly produced cartoons and caricatures. In 1985 Hanitzsch became a full-time cartoonist for the German quality paper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and other print media (Fig. 4). Together



Stellvertreter-Krieg

**Figure 4** Dieter Hanitzsch. This cartoon appeared with the caption “War of the substitutes.” After eight years of war, on August 20, 1988, there was an agreement to a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq. Before this armistice the US supported Saddam Hussein’s Iraq (including the approval of attacks with toxic gas). The former USSR supported Iran. In the cartoon, President Ronald Wilson Reagan (1911–2004) of the US and Soviet President Mikhail Sergejevich Gorbachev (1931–) ask each other which substitutes they should use next

with the renowned journalist Herbert Riehl-Heyse (1940–2003), Hanitzsch invented the virtual conservative Bavarian politician “Max G. Froschhammer.” This cartoon character comments on weekly political events in Germany and Bavaria. First run as a weekly comic strip in the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, this political satire is now broadcast as an animated cartoon by *Bavarian television* (→ Television; Television as Popular Culture).



**Figure 5** Riber Hansson. This editorial cartoon showing “Bush almighty” shows that caricature often is a supporting element of a political cartoon. In his term of office as 43rd president of the United States, George Walker Bush (1946–) sees himself as Superman. With pleasure and in love with himself, he is watching the mightiest man on earth – himself – in the mirror. Using the American flag as a bath towel indicates that he will most likely leverage the legacy of presidency. He is neither indebted to the American people nor to his voters but to himself only. At least, he seems to feel this way. Bush knows that he has the power and he will use it for his own agenda

Drawings by Riber Hansson were published in Swedish papers like the *Svenska Dagbladet* and the *Sydsvenskan*. Furthermore, his cartoons were reprinted in *Courier International*, *NRC Handelsblatt*, and many other papers around the world. His work is represented in the National Museum of Art in Stockholm, the Swedish Library of Parliament, and many cartoon museums (Fig. 5).

By the twentieth century, caricature had come to be associated most often with political or editorial cartoons, visual frames, or opinion columns using unique tools like caricature, exaggeration, transformation, symbolism, narration, composition, design, and visual juxtaposition to construct ironic and satiric commentary (→ Design; Graphic Design; Symbolism). Editorial cartoons are filtered through the prism of the creator's perspective, imagination, and artistic preferences. Therefore, any editorial cartoon will show an issue from a particular point of view, which may shift the balance of debate and provoke thoughts that range from anger to whims. Editorial cartoons not only have the right but also the liability to be painful, cynical, and provocative. In some respects, an editorial cartoon is nothing but a graphic sledgehammer.

However, *caricature* and *cartoon* are not the same. A caricature is an exaggerated depiction of a particular person, characteristic, or thing and so can be a component of any cartoon. As such, caricature is a potential but not essential part of any cartoon.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Animation ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Book ▶ Cartoons ▶ Comics ▶ Design ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Illustrated Newspapers ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Magazine, Visual Design of ▶ Media History ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Prints ▶ Symbolism ▶ Television ▶ Television as Popular Culture ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation

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# Cartography

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Cartography is the visual representation and communication of data, geospatial information, and relationships in the form of printed and digital maps. The form of the map and the visual systems of map-making are determined by technologies of production and reproduction. The mass reproduction of maps has encouraged the dissemination of geospatial information, statistical data, and shared cultural and scientific understandings throughout history (→ Statistics, Descriptive).

Maps as historical documents provide evidence of worldviews, cultural values, relationships, and representational practices at specific moments in time. Cartographic history encompasses the changing forms of the map as artifact. Ptolemy's *Geographia* (2nd century AD), for example, records ancient Greek geographical concepts, and established conventions for representing geographic concepts including latitude, longitude, and north orientation. Mercator's (1569) projection became a well-understood way to translate the globe to a two-dimensional chart (Harley & Woodward 1987).

Design processes for mapping data include reduction/simplification, scaling, projection (converting three-dimensional data into two-dimensional representations), symbolization (→ Symbolism), assemblage, and execution. These require systems of graphic and geographic conventions, including design elements and symbols (points, lines, areas, text, and color), hierarchies, and layers of information (MacEachren 1995; Wood & Keller 1996; → Sign Systems; Perspective, Pictorial).

In the twentieth century cartography has been positioned as a science and an art of communication (→ Art as Communication). The lineal model of communication placed an early emphasis on scientific efficiency. A shift of research attention by the 1970s to the map user and the nonlinearity of visual information processing saw both visual cognition and → semiotic theory playing an important role in cartographic research and practice (Salitchev 1983). The rise of geographic information science (GIS) and geospatial computing in the 1980s concentrated attention on cartographic visualization processes and products in new technological environments. Early twenty-first-century research agenda have included map user experience and design issues in interactive, multimedia, web-based, mobile telecommunication devices and virtual cartographic environments (→ Graphic Design).

A wider interdisciplinary concern with cartography and mapping in the later twentieth century has examined the cultural and constructed nature of the map as representational text (→ Visual Representation). The concept and process of mapping is a mode of visual language and thinking equivalent to writing that enables a visual and spatial representation of abstract ideas, relationships, and understanding. Maps are thus understood as constructed texts, which interpret and present data in accordance with defined communication objectives and audiences (Crampton 2001; Harley 2001).

The cartography literature groups maps into *two broad categories*: topographical maps and thematic maps. Salitchev (1983) identifies three main uses of topographical and thematic maps: communicative use (i.e., storage, display, and dissemination of data);

operative use (i.e., geographical management or navigational uses); and cognitive use (i.e., space–time investigations and visual display of phenomena).

*Topographical maps* and charts aim to construct an accurate symbolic representation of what exists in physical geographical worlds. Sometimes also described as general or reference maps (Robinson 1982), topographical maps rely on the quality of survey and other geographic data for accuracy of positions and relationships. Graphic symbols used in topographic maps include points, lines, areas, and text. The growth in production of topographic maps is associated with exploration and global discoveries in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the invention and expansion of technologies of visual reproduction; the progressive advance of data capture and survey technologies; the worldwide military demand for geospatial information; and the subsequent expansion of empires and shifting national boundaries.

*Thematic maps*, also called data maps (Tufte 1983), visually represent all kinds of geographic, political, social, cultural, and economic data and relationships. Graphic symbols and conventions are used to represent the characteristics, patterns, distributions, differences, and changes over time of these phenomena, which include for example populations, routes, territories, and resources. The thematic map in the twentieth century has developed following the growth of quantitative geography and the production of geospatial data; the need for the visual presentation of scientific information; the development of statistics; the growth of information design; applied semiotics; and the centrality of the visual as the late twentieth-century mode of communication (→ Visual Communication).

Since the advent of printing technologies enabling visual reproduction, maps have been produced for dissemination as a reference authority (→ Printing, History of). Cartographic design and production bear a close historical relationship to both the technologies of visual reproduction and those of data capture. Reproduction technologies have included hand drawing; intaglio printing methods; photographic, photolithographic, and digital printing processes; and now screen-based media.

GIS (geographic information systems/science) have precipitated significant shifts in the production, function, dissemination, and uses of maps. These technologies have enabled network distribution, database linkages, interactivity, and new modes of visualization. The term *cybercartography* describes the intersection of geospatial visualization with digital and remote sensing technologies (Taylor 2005). Accompanying the rise in the technological expansion of cartography through GIS has been an interest by critical social theorists in the social and political implications of these technologies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Infographics ▶ Perspective, Pictorial ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Symbolism ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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## Cartoons

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Cartoons can be simply described as humorous drawings, separated into political or editorial, which use → caricature, humor, and satire to comment on current affairs and influence → public opinion, and social or gag, which poke fun at daily life and its problems or merely illustrate jokes. Although political cartoons normally are found in daily → newspapers, where they often support editorial views, they have also appeared in → magazines, on → television, and as broadsheets and → posters. Gag cartoons typically are in general interest magazines, some of which (e.g., *Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's*, *Esquire*, and *New Yorker* in the US) were famous for them, and in cartoon/humor periodicals (most notably, the long-lived *Punch* of the UK and *Mad* in the US).

The lineage of cartoons is long. Some early examples include Bishop Toba's humorous scrolls kidding Japanese religious and government leaders a millennium ago; the satirical prints of England's William Hogarth, James Gillray, George Cruikshank, and Thomas Rowlandson; France's Honoré Daumier and others who published in *Caricature* and *Charivari* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and the colonial unity drawings of Benjamin Franklin in the 1740s–1750s. Because of its often loose definition, the cartoon can include some of Pablo Picasso's abstract works, Francisco Goya's drawings entitled "Disasters of War," or Käthe Kollwitz's war and poverty paintings.

Besides amusing, cartoons serve multiple purposes worldwide, including social consciousness raising (notable examples being AIDS awareness cartoons, existing especially in Africa), education, instruction, and → propaganda, the latter particularly evident during wartime (→ Propaganda in World War II). In late 1930s China, a roving band of 10 or 11 cartoonists drew anti-Japanese cartoons on banners, posters, and elsewhere, warning the Chinese of the invaders. During World War II, the Japanese military dropped cartoon leaflets on Allied soldiers in an effort to demoralize them. During the same period, the US had a cartoon bureau within the War Department for similar propaganda purposes.



*Politically*, the cartoon has been universally effective and, at the same time, vilified. In the US, the drawings of Thomas Nast in the 1870s were credited with helping to bring down the corrupt New York City government, while more recently, Herb Block's caricatures of Richard Nixon were so devastating that Nixon felt he had to "erase" them before proceeding with his political ambitions. Elsewhere, officialdom, extremely wary of the potential impact of cartoons, have killed cartoonists (as in Vietnam, Argentina, Algeria, and other parts of Africa), threatened them with death (Ríos in Mexico, Alberto Breccia in Argentina), arrested them (Kim Song Hwan in South Korea, Zapiro in South Africa, Gado in Kenya), forced them into exile (as in Burma and parts of Africa), and imprisoned or otherwise stopped them from drawing for decades (Ding Cong, Liao Bingxiong, Wang Fuyang in China, Sibarani in Indonesia). In authoritarian states, such as Nazi Germany, the former Soviet Union, formerly Kuomintang-controlled Taiwan, and Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore, cartoonists were pigeonholed to serve the state. In the USSR, for example, two types of cartoons were permitted – *druzherskii sharzh* (celebratory of the state) and *karikature* (negative toward the west; → Violence against Journalists).

Home to both political and gag cartoons, the humor and cartoon magazines have also been around for a long time and have flourished under all types of regimes. In the Soviet Union, *Krokodil* was one of the highest-circulated periodicals, and *Dedeté* and *Palante* in Cuba were also favorites until economic woes destroyed them. China still has *Humor and Satire*. While the US has had venerable humor/cartoon magazines in the past (*Puck*, *Judge*, and *Life* in the latter nineteenth century; *National Lampoon* and *Mad* in more recent times), this is not the situation today. The UK's long-lived *Punch*, itself an institution, is also deceased. On the other hand, Malaysia, Turkey, and Tanzania each nurtures between 6 and 15 such periodicals at any given time, and other successful humor/cartoon magazines publish in France (*Le Canard Enchaîné*), Francophone Africa, Iran, Mexico, and elsewhere in Latin America.

Cartoons, especially political, face a number of challenges, even in the US, where they have had a fruitful stay. At the beginning of the twentieth century, US newspapers and magazines employed 2,000 fulltime cartoonists; the number is under 140 now. Fewer than 90 dailies have their own cartoonists, and papers such as the *Los Angeles Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, and *Baltimore Sun* have either dropped or not replaced their cartoonists. Increasingly, US dailies, and newspapers elsewhere, depend upon syndicated cartoons, thus depriving readers of visual commentary on local issues. Also, publishers worried about possible litigation have steered their cartoonists to draw gag rather than serious cartoons. Other problems plaguing cartooning are competition from other media for the readers and the demise or merging of dailies, which deprive artists of outlets. Furthermore, cartoonists are confronted by heightened levels of self-censorship on the parts of editors, who are fearful of stepping on the corporate interests of publishers or alienating minorities in an age when political correctness has run rampant. Widespread use of the → Internet is another problem cartoonists face because it necessitates the rethinking of how cartoons are created and distributed.

Like comics, the cartoon has reinvented itself in recent years, adapting to new technology and new norms. Many aspiring cartoonists have entered the field through Internet websites. Alternative cartoon periodicals, either printed or online, have appeared at an unprecedented pace and in unexpected places, and more explicit content has

become usual where hitherto it was highly frowned upon. These are all indications that the cartoon will endure and continue to amuse, inform, and persuade.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Caricature ▶ Comics ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Poster ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Television ▶ Violence against Journalists

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## **Case Studies**

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While the term “case study” (or “case method”) is widespread in social methodology and media research, it is nevertheless a complex concept. McCartney (1970, 30) defines a case study as “a descriptive report analyzing a social unit as a whole (e.g. individual, family, organization, etc.) in qualitative terms.” With a different focus but in a comparable manner, Robert K. Yin defines a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin 1994, 13).

In the case of working definitions like these, three main aspects become evident. The first is realizing that a case study is not a methodological choice of data collection and analyses but a choice of what is studied. A case study can combine completely different methods (qualitative and quantitative ones; → Research Methods) and analytical approaches, but is defined by the circumstance of focusing on a case (or a number of cases) and is especially established in qualitative media research (being also the main focus of this entry). Second, the term “case study” is rather vague as it can name either the process of doing research or the presented result. And, third, a main problem when doing case studies is the construction of the case borders.

## NATURE AND TYPES OF CASE STUDIES

All in all, case studies can be located in the tradition of quantitative as well as qualitative (media) research (Baur & Lamnek 2005, 241f.). Within *quantitative (media) research* case studies are considered as “exploratory research” (→ Quantitative Methodology). Based on this, further standardized research should be undertaken. The argument is that a higher number of cases allows more general conclusions than focusing on only one case (→ Generalizability). A more sophisticated understanding of case studies – which is outlined in this entry – is established in *qualitative (media) research* (→ Qualitative Methodology). One can argue that each qualitative study is based on “cases” in the sense that an engagement with contextualized social phenomena is the foundation of qualitative research per se. Beside that, a more concrete understanding of the case study grasps research investigating specific cases separated from one another. The aim of these studies is either the “thick description” (Geertz) of a case or case research with the aim of making general (theoretical) conclusions.

Systematizing case studies, Robert E. Stake (1994, 437) has proposed to distinguish *three types of case studies*: (1) intrinsic, (2) instrumental, and (3) collective case studies. An *intrinsic case study* is undertaken because the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case; the purpose is not theory building. An *instrumental case study* analyzes a particular case to provide insight into a more general issue or to redraw a generalization. The *collective case study* focuses on different cases to investigate a general phenomenon; in this sense, it is an instrumental study extended to several cases.

## THE CASE STUDY IN QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Focusing on case studies within the tradition of qualitative methodology, at least four aspects appear to be striking: (1) the history of case studies, (2) the problem of case definition, (3) the way case studies are undertaken, and (4) the question of generalization and theorization. While the considerations in this section address case study research in general, the examples are taken from media research or related to it.

First, focusing on the *history of case studies*, it becomes obvious that the case study approach has its foundations in the beginning of (modern) social and cultural research. Between the 1920s and 1950s it was already usual to contrast the “case study method” (the qualitative approach) with the “statistical method” (the quantitative one) (Platt 1992, 19, 41). Especially in the early days of American sociology, the case study approach was linked with the Chicago School, focusing on the personal meanings of people “involved” in a case. Locating media research in the wider context of social and cultural science, different classical work was undertaken as case studies; for example, the work of Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld or that within the Frankfurt School tradition. After a certain lack of interest in the late 1950s and 1960s – caused by a number of reasons, among them a fragmentation of the case study approach into different “qualitative research methods” – there is again increasing interest in case studies, especially in the context of theory formation (Glaser & Strauss 1967; → Grounded Theory) and of policy/consultancy work (Yin 1994).

Second, each case study is confronted with the *problem of defining a case*. “Cases” can either be “single persons” (for example, the case of an interview partner) or – more usually – “social

aggregates” or “cultural phenomena” like (media) organizations, (media) products, media events, interpretative communities, socio-cultural processes, etc. Especially when focusing on more complex cultural phenomena, each case study is confronted with the problem of demarcating “case” and “context.” As a case interacts with its context, it is not possible to make a clear distinction (Baur & Lamnek 2005, 244). Rather the “case” builds a kind of center for describing further contextualizing forces, which themselves take part in articulating the case. This aspect has a deep relation to methodological discussions in audience studies (→ Audience Research), where an ongoing contextualizing of media reception was criticized for loosening “the case” of specific reception practices or interpretative communities in a more general view on the everyday and its contexts (→ Cultural Studies).

Third, current methodological publishing focuses particularly on *organizing case studies*. Undertaking case studies in a more focused sense is at least in two points different from other procedures in qualitative (media) research. Concerning case selection, two approaches can be distinguished (Stake 1994, 446). While “intrinsic case studies” begin with an already identified case (based on a striking feature or – in commercial media research – on a research mission), in “instrumental” and “collective” case studies, normally the cases are selected by the researcher. This can either be done in a theory forming/inductive frame (Glaser & Strauss 1967) or in deductive relation to a theory that defines specific cases and needs to be tested/differentiated (Platt 1992, 45; Yin 1994). In all of these approaches, case studies are oriented on a research question, anchoring the case study research in the perspective of a specific academic discipline (Stake 1994, 440). Further, arranging case studies is based on the → triangulation of different methods. As case studies are not defined by a specific procedure of research but by a specific focus on a case, very different methods of “data collection” and “data analysis” are combined in current case studies. Nevertheless, these different methods are used in a qualitative frame as far as the aim of the case study is a (more) differentiated understanding of the specific case(s) and theory formation (Krotz 2005). This is typical for case studies in media research, too, where it is common to triangulate very different methods either for a more “thick description” of the case or for a more sophisticated theoretical conclusion.

A final point that is important for a general understanding of case studies in the tradition of qualitative methodology is the discussion about *generalization and theorization*. As already discussed, case studies are both descriptively and theoretically oriented. The argument is either to focus on something particular – an approach whose relevance is justified by the widespread neglect of the particular in (media) research – or to undertake research for a “grounded” way of theory formation/testing, which cannot be undertaken in another manner. Irrespective of in which approach case studies are oriented, in current qualitative methodological discourse they are understood as a procedure of their own: not functioning as a kind of “exploratory research,” whose “range” and “generalizability” has to be proofed by quantitative/standardized studies with a wider main unit, but as a kind of research to produce also generalizable and theoretical knowledge that cannot be achieved in any other way.

### **“CASE STUDIES” IN CURRENT MEDIA RESEARCH**

As the discussed examples show, case studies are common in current qualitative media research. Especially when focusing on audience studies and appropriation research, it

becomes obvious that a lot of far-reaching research focuses on specific cases in detail (→ Cultural Appropriation). For example, Herman Bausinger's classical considerations on the relation between media, technology, and everyday life are based on the research of one case, the family Meier (→ Domestication of Technology). Studies on the cases of different social groups are also the reference point of other early research on media appropriation, especially in the tradition of gender studies (→ Audience; Audiences, Female). But also, current efforts to argue for a more comprehensive cultural studies orientation in media research are especially oriented on cases along the "circuit of culture." Most of these studies are not "intrinsic case studies" but focus on specific cases as a starting point for (theoretically oriented) research. In doing so, they show the outstanding significance cases have for qualitative media research: research in that tradition takes up with (a number of) single cases and has the aim of investigating these cases as exhaustively as possible to make their meaning structures and patterns accessible for further, critical theorizing. For this, the data sample of research is not defined in advance but in the process of researching these cases (→ Sampling, Nonrandom; Sampling, Random), and qualitative data can be combined with quantitative.

Three tendencies in the use of case studies in current qualitative media research can be observed. First, the *potential of case studies* was underlined during the past decade, especially by research on media events integrating qualitative and quantitative data (→ Historic Key Events and the Media; Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Media events show exemplarily how far our present media cultures are marked by outstanding incidents (9/11, Live 8, public funerals, etc.), which demand detailed analyses. Research like this is not just a description of something exceptional but an important foundation to understand our increasingly mediated presence.

Second, in all, one can ascertain a *theoretical orientation* in current case studies within qualitative media research. While there may be "intrinsic" motivations for researching specific cases – like outstanding media events – such research is especially undertaken to make more general conclusions or for theory formation (Krotz 2005). One can understand this as an indicator of an increasing theoretical discourse in media research, which lies beyond the deductive/hypothesis-testing paradigm of much standardized media research and is more aimed at material-based enhancements of theoretical discourse (→ Hypothesis). This is the point where media and cultural theory meet each other.

Third, while case studies are a general moment of qualitative media research, a remarkable number of them understand research on specific cases – and not along predefined categories and samples – as a way of *critical reflection* (→ Critical Theory). The underlying idea of this argument is that case studies make it possible to bring into academic discourse "voices" and "particularities" that are normally excluded in media research. The critical potential of case studies, then, lies in the trajectory of taking specificities seriously while still contextualizing them in wider connections like power relations. These three points show that case studies are an inherent part of current media research. In this, an "intrinsic" orientation on specific cases is increasingly combined with a critical focus on theory development.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Audience Research ► Audiences, Female ► Critical Theory ► Cultural Appropriation ► Cultural Studies ► Domestication of Technology ► Generalizability ► Grounded Theory ► Historic Key Events and the Media ► Hypothesis

► Katz, Elihu ► Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ► Media Events and Pseudo-Events ► Qualitative Methodology ► Quantitative Methodology ► Research Methods ► Sampling, Non-random ► Sampling, Random ► Triangulation

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## **Catharsis Theory**

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Catharsis theory has played an important role in the discussion about the effects of violence in the mass media for many years (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). The term “catharsis” is derived from the Greek *katharsis* which means cleansing, purging, or purification. In the form the theory is used in communication research, it implies that the execution of an aggressive action under certain conditions diminishes the aggressive drive and therefore reduces the likelihood of further aggressive actions. The crucial point in catharsis theory is that the observed aggressive action does not necessarily need to be executed in reality – it can instead take place in the actor’s fantasy or in the media (symbolic catharsis).

Seymour Feshbach, key proponent of the catharsis theory in communication research, distinguishes between three conceptions of catharsis: the Dramatic, the Clinical, and the Experimental models. The Dramatic model goes back to Aristotle who used the term “catharsis” in his *Poetics* to describe an effect of the Greek tragedy on its spectator: by viewing tragic plays the spectator’s own anxieties are put outward and purged in a socially harmless way. The spectator is released from negative feelings such as fear or anger. Aristotle’s definition of catharsis is not precise and therefore was interpreted in various ways.

The Clinical model is based on the work of psychoanalytical researchers, e.g., Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud, who assumed the existence of an inherent aggressive drive as well as a correlation between repressed negative emotions and psychological symptoms. To treat these symptoms, they used a new therapeutic method, the catharsis method, whereby patients were encouraged to relive the situations that had given rise to their repressed feelings. By talking about them under hypnosis patients' tension was reduced and they were cured of their psychological symptoms. The term "catharsis" was used to describe the effect of the abreaction of repressed emotions.

The Experimental model can be traced back to the work of John Dollard and his colleagues, who defined catharsis in the context of the → frustration aggression theory as the reduction of aggression caused by the expression of any act of aggression. Here the catharsis was restricted to aggression catharsis.

Since the 1950s various experiments have been performed on the reduction of aggression by phantasm or by vicarious aggression in witnessing violence on → television (→ Violence and the Media, History of; Violence as Media Content). One of the researchers was Seymour Feshbach, who introduced the concept of catharsis to media effects research (initially as a combination of the Experimental and Clinical models). As the findings of most of the studies did not support the catharsis theory, but rather showed contrary effects (→ Bandura, Albert), the theory was modified. It was argued that a catharsis could occur only if the recipient was emotionally aroused or aggressive, otherwise stimulating effects were expected. Other variations of the catharsis theory consider the content of the perceived aggressive action, perception of the consequences of the aggressive action, the participation of the viewers in the plot, or identification with the actors. The empirical evidence for all variations is weak.

Research results on catharsis were often called into question. First, methodological aspects were criticized, e.g., the suitability of the stimulus material used, particularly in the early studies where whether the stimulus shown was perceived as aggressive by the viewers was not controlled. The stimulus material often consisted of a film lasting a few minutes, which might have been too short for evoking a catharsis. The measurement of aggression of the test subjects before the experiments was often disregarded as well as the measurement of the subjects' involvement in the films shown. Another central point of discussion was the measurement of aggression itself, especially the question of how to measure the motivation to aggression and the strength of the aggression drive. In the context of laboratory experiments a problem was how to annoy the test subjects and to provoke their aggression.

Second, research on catharsis theory was criticized on the level of content, e.g., the interpretation of a measured decrease of aggression after the watching of vicarious aggression as a symbolic catharsis. Several researchers interpreted these findings as a result of the inhibition of aggression due to aggression anxiety caused by watching violent actions. Feshbach's later reference to Aristotle was often seen as inadequate because his conception of an aggression catharsis differs immensely from Aristotle's conception of catharsis.

Third, on a theoretical level it was questioned why a reduction of aggression drive should have reductive rather than reinforcing effects on the likelihood of further aggressive actions.

After the discussion about the validity of the catharsis theory and the lack of empirical evidence (which went on for several years), most researchers conclude today that the

catharsis theory is obsolete. Others, like Berkowitz, one of the main critics of the catharsis theory, state the existence of “results which definitely suggest that a catharsis process has occurred – under limited circumstances” (Berkowitz 1993, 348). Today, there is still ongoing research on the catharsis theory, for example, in the context of violent computer games or song lyrics (Anderson et al. 2003), and the idea of aggression catharsis is still popular among nonscientists (Bushman et al. 1999).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Frustration Aggression Theory ▶ Television ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of ▶ Violence and the Media, History of

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## **Celebrity Culture**

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Perhaps the most rapidly expanding facet of today’s media landscape is celebrity culture; entertainers’ work in the film, television, music, and fashion industries accompanies gossip about their personal lives in → magazines and → newspapers, on → television, and online (→ Internet). The major players in celebrity culture are known worldwide – today, there are few who do not know of American actors Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt, English power couple Victoria and David Beckham, Australian singer Kylie Minogue, or Brazilian supermodel Gisele Bündchen (→ Stars). The ability of celebrity culture to cross national and cultural boundaries as well as media outlets has made it an important issue in communication studies.



The analysis of celebrity culture began in the 1940s with Lowenthal's (1944) content analysis of magazine biographies (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative), which traced a shift in focus from "idols of production" (politicians and businessmen) to "idols of consumption" (entertainers). Though the idols of consumption have remained the center of celebrity culture, communications researchers have broadened their studies to explore the types and purposes of celebrity, celebrity media, and audiences' relationships with celebrity culture.

### CELEBRITY TYPOLOGY

Attempting to categorize and describe the various types of celebrity has been a part of studying celebrity culture since Lowenthal (1944) initially distinguished between the idols of production and consumption. Researchers have often studied a celebrity's line of work – whether film, television, music, or fashion – as the determining factor in the type of fame a celebrity experiences. Gledhill (1991) and other researchers have argued the type of fame that dogs film stars is different from that of television personalities because of the distance each maintains from the audience. On one hand, film stars appear on the big screens at movie theaters, and on the other hand, television personalities enter viewers' homes on a daily or weekly basis making them seem more familiar. It is the air of mystery and unpredictability surrounding film stars that seems to lend itself to "true stardom."

Researchers maintain it is the audience's search for the authenticity of celebrities that creates the fascination of stardom. Gledhill (1991) observes that the "persona" of a celebrity is the coming together of the performance (role) and the private life to form a public self available to the audience (→ Image). And while the creation of a persona has been traditionally reserved for film stars, Jermyn (2006) points out the number of A-list celebrities that now appear both on television and in films, as well as the widespread stardom of American television actors, in particular, resulting from the international distribution of American programs (e.g., *Sex and the City* and *Friends*).

### USES OF CELEBRITY

Communications researchers recognize the connection between celebrity culture and → consumer culture. The function of celebrity overwhelmingly seems to be promotion: of self, of lifestyle, and of products. Celebrities themselves are an important part of the → culture industries because they can advertise themselves – on talk shows, at red carpet events, in interviews – and at the same time promote their latest projects.

The excessive media exposure that comes naturally from this type of self-promotion lends itself to *advertising specific products*, whether intentionally or not. McCracken (1989) points out in his study of celebrity endorsements the insufficiency of traditional "sources of credibility" and "sources of attractiveness" models (→ Interpersonal Attraction). Celebrities cannot increase sales simply because they are well known or have had successful endorsement deals in the past: he notes Bill Cosby's popular American campaigns with Kodak and Coca Cola and subsequent failure with E. F. Hutton. Instead, he argues, a celebrity must "connect" with a product, and the transfer of meaning from role to celebrity to product to consumer must flow seamlessly (→ Advertising Strategies).

Researchers have also looked at the inadvertent celebrity endorsements emerging from tabloid magazines and television shows. Jermyn (2006) and Feasey (2006) both point out the red-carpet-turned-fashion-ad photographs in tabloid magazines such as *heat*, *OK!* and the *Daily Mirror*. Jermyn notes the detail with which a photograph of Sarah Jessica Parker becomes a “how-to” guide for readers of the latest trends in → fashion, hair, and makeup (→ Commodity Feminism; Girl Culture). Similar features discussing the exercise regimes, diets, and leisure activities of celebrities also serve to promote the celebrity lifestyle.

## CELEBRITY MEDIA

Celebrity culture media outlets combine the audience’s need for authentic celebrities and celebrities’ ability to encourage consumerism. Schely-Newman’s (2004) analysis of Israeli gossip columns explains how tabloid magazines use intimate language to draw readers into the circle of celebrity gossip. She applies Bergmann’s (1993) *triad of gossip interaction* to the participants in celebrity culture: the columnist, the audience, and the celebrity. Schely-Newman points out how Israeli gossip columnist Zippora refers to herself and her opinions, personally addresses the audience, and divulges celebrity “scoops” in order to create an intimate exchange of information between columnist and audience about celebrities (→ Celebrity Journalists).

Celebrity media also create this sought-after sense of intimacy through photographs. Over the last decade, paparazzi have become an increasingly integral part of celebrity culture. The *paparazzi* are photographers who work for larger media organizations or freelance; they patrol the streets of major cities in search of celebrities in candid moments that will yield photographs or videos to be sold to magazines and other celebrity media outlets for thousands of dollars, or simply posted online for the world to see. Paparazzi provide constant access to celebrities around the world during moments not quite worthy of the red carpet (→ Tabloid Press). Feasey (2006) notes the barrage of cellulite, wrinkles, pimples, and other defects discussed in tabloid magazines. She says while these photographs appear to mock celebrities on the surface, the captions work to underline the ordinariness of celebrities, relieving the audience of the pressure to be celebrity-perfect (→ Body Images in the Media).

The pervasiveness of *reality television* has also increased the intimacy and authenticity of celebrity media. Programs such as *The Osbournes*, *Katie and Peter*, and *Newlyweds* offer paparazzi-style looks at the lives of celebrities “being themselves.” Tolson’s (2001) content analysis of Geri Haliwell’s documentary *Geri*, intended to rehabilitate her career after leaving the Spice Girls, highlights Haliwell’s goal of being herself as a way to redeem her public persona (→ Image Restoration Theory). Although reality television and documentary films are meant to capture what is “real,” Tolson highlights the conscious performance of self in celebrity media.

## AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Whether positive or negative, audience participation is vital to celebrity culture. While some researchers have looked at the effects of celebrity culture (increased body consciousness, participation in consumer culture), others have studied the ways in which

audiences interact with celebrity culture. Johansson's (2006) interviews with tabloid magazine subscribers in Britain focus on the way readers incorporate celebrity media into their own lives (→ Fandom; Audiences, Female). She says the gossipy nature of celebrity magazines not only works to increase the level of intimacy readers feel toward celebrities, it also encourages readers to incorporate the gossip into their own social circles.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Celebrity Journalists ▶ Commodity Feminism ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Fandom ▶ Fashion ▶ Girl Culture ▶ Image ▶ Image Restoration Theory ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Stars ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Television

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## **Celebrity Journalists**

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Celebrity journalists are news workers who become prominent or famous in their own right and thus objects of media attention. Journalists are a means of chronicling fame and

infamy, and stars and leaders depend on journalism to maintain a public profile. Under economic pressures, media industries have tended to associate public personalities with their chroniclers. Repeated contact with the renowned has led journalists to become closely identified with those whose stories they report, resulting in their being elevated to celebrity status themselves and joining the A-list of popular culture celebrities from film, television, and music (→ Popular Culture and the News Media).

Celebrity, which emerged from historical patterns of fame, is a modern phenomenon that arose along with democracy and capitalism. Unlike other forms of influence and power, it is a populist phenomenon. Celebrities come from the people, and their power depends on an affective connection with an audience. Over the past two centuries, the reach of personal reputation has expanded through the expansion of media forms (→ Communication Technology and Democracy). As media and entertainment industries emerge, they manufacture celebrity as a branded commodity (→ Branding; Brands), and the commodification of personality gives expression to individuality as part of consumer and democratic ideologies. In these economic and political cultures, celebrities exemplify hyper-individuality (→ Celebrity Culture).

Journalism and celebrity have parallel and intertwined histories (→ Journalism, History of). Journalistic practice developed a populist strain particularly in the late nineteenth century, when journalists championed popular causes and challenged the powerful (→ Yellow Journalism). Journalists emerged as personalities slowly. Although some editors became prominent, early reporters remained either anonymous scavengers supplying news items or pseudonymous correspondents supplying commentary. In the twentieth century, the coverage of celebrities became one route to journalism celebrity. For example, Walter Winchell became known in the US after inventing the *celebrity gossip column*.

Newspaper journalism generally maintained the tradition of reporter anonymity well into the twentieth century. Bylines emerged in the 1920s, but mostly for columns and commentary on the inside pages. Front-page stories generally did not include reporter names, but hierarchies did exist within newsrooms. Senior reporters became the first to win bylines and then their own columns. The column was the greatest encouragement to the development of celebrated journalists. Columnists adopted a distinctive voice that the paper itself could not produce in → editorials, and gained a license to express opinions and, like celebrities, to proclaim their individuality.

Different journalistic traditions and different media affected how celebrity emerged. Radio, television, and film with their distinctive systems of reportage often turned journalists into celebrities. It was a US tradition that then spread internationally. By the 1930s, film → newsreels in many countries made audiences familiar with reporters' voices. Edward R. Murrow in the 1940s quickly established an iconic voice with US audiences through his CBS radio reports during the London Blitz.

From the 1970s US newspapers attached a byline to almost any story, while European cultures continued to maintain anonymous reportage for most daily coverage, a tradition that persists in some newspapers today. Bylines allow reporters to develop reputations earlier in their careers by linking their names to significant stories.

Television, perhaps more than any other medium, has promoted celebrity journalism. In some cultures, news anchors became the public face of a broadcast network. A US

model for star journalists had developed by the 1960s, which Latin America and Canada in particular emulated. Network anchors represented the pinnacle of celebrity journalism, rising to that status generally by covering major news events: Walter Cronkite's coverage of the John F. Kennedy assassination in 1963, and later Dan Rather's coverage of Vietnam and the → Watergate scandal, made them stars. Polls identified Cronkite as the most trusted US man, in contrast to the low public opinion surrounding journalists.

Elsewhere, television employed the British tradition of simple and interchangeable newsreaders, but other routes to journalism stardom did emerge via genres such as the television newsmagazine or interview programs: Ray Martin in Australia, David Frost in the United Kingdom, and others. Access to the famous makes journalists appear to be equal with their subjects. Barbara Walters established the celebrity interview as a genre in American television journalism by profiling cinema and sports stars as much as political leaders (→ Interview as Journalistic Form).

Morning television programs provided another avenue to fame. In the United States, the *Today Show* and *Good Morning America* have led to celebrity status for their presenters. Katie Couric rose to the position of news anchor after gaining visibility for her morning work. Television generally seems to produce more than its share of celebrity journalists, and local television news represents a training ground for would-be news stars. Exposure and familiarity are key elements of celebrity that are provided by television and radio, with their intimacy, but not by some forms of print.

The pattern of celebrity journalism currently seems in decline. Television anchors no longer operate at the center of American politics and culture. In an era of person-to-person networks, celebrity status may emerge through news blogs or websites that circulate at the margins of the mainstream media (→ Blogger). The "Drudge Report" made Matt Drudge perhaps the first new media celebrity to emerge in the era of the Internet (→ Online Journalism).

Elements of the work routines and news values of journalists may contribute to their eventual quest for celebrity. Journalists learn to pursue the scoop and the exclusive, for example, both of which tend to focus attention on the journalist as journalist. Celebrity journalism may be an inescapable element of modern democracies which reward individuals and commodify culture.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Branding ► Brands ► Celebrity Culture ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► Editorial ► Interview as Journalistic Form ► Journalism, History of ► Newsreel ► Online Journalism ► Popular Culture and the News Media ► Watergate Scandal ► Yellow Journalism

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# Censorship

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Generally speaking, censorship is the control of speech and other forms of human expression. For the most part, bodies that partake in censorship attempt to provide stability for and strengthen their control over certain individuals and groups under their authority. Censorship commonly takes place in the following areas: morally questionable material like pornography (→ Pornography, Media Law on), military intelligence, corporate secrets (→ Corporate Communication), government actions, and religiously objectionable material. Legally speaking, censorship involves the attempts of government agencies to restrict public forms of communication. These forms of communication include holding public meetings and protests, publishing books and other written materials, and providing viewpoints and information in → newspapers and → magazines, or on the → radio, → television, and → Internet.

## **PRIOR RESTRAINT VERSUS SUBSEQUENT PUNISHMENT**

The two primary ways a government can censor material are either through prior restraint or subsequent punishment. Prior restraint refers to a government's attempts to prevent material from being released to the public. Prior restraints include legislation requiring a person to seek government permission before publishing or broadcasting information as well as government injunctions and orders barring the public release of specific material. Subsequent punishment, on the other hand, attempts to censor material through punishment after the offending material has already been published. Types of subsequent punishment include lawsuits for defamation, slander, and libel as well as criminal statutes for publishing certain material, such as pornography.

In US jurisprudence and, to some extent, in European legal codes like the German Basic Law, the law has been strikingly more hostile toward prior restraint than subsequent punishment. For example, in *Nebraska Press Assn. v. Stuart*, Chief Justice Warren Burger of US Supreme Court writes, “[P]rior restraints on speech and publication are the most serious and the least tolerable infringement on First Amendment rights” (427 US 560; → Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Some authors have questioned the distinction between prior restraint and subsequent punishment. Eric Barendt (2005) argues that sometimes the effects of subsequent punishment may be greater than prior restraint because a publisher's fear of facing prosecution and an unpredictable prison sentence may be particularly high. Furthermore, he states that criminal statutes against a wide range of material – such as those against pornography – affect many more publications than a prior restraint – a court or administrative order, for example – against a single publication. However, Barendt does acknowledge the main reason why the courts in western Europe and North America have been more hostile toward prior restraints. Prior restraints prevent the censored material from ever being distributed in the public. On the other hand, material facing subsequent punishment still enters the marketplace of ideas,

allowing public criticism and review (→ Political Discourse; Public Opinion). According to US constitutional scholar Alexander Bickel (1975, 61), “A criminal statute chills, prior restraint freezes.”

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PRIOR RESTRAINT**

Historically, the roots of censorship in Anglo American law can be traced to King Henry VIII’s use of prior restraints in sixteenth-century England (→ Censorship, History of). In part to develop a favorable relationship with the Catholic church in Rome, Henry tried to assist the church by controlling the heretics’ freedom of expression. In 1529, he executed booksellers and anyone else who owned copies of → books he had prohibited. One year later, Henry created the first licensing system outside of the church. All religious materials had to be scrutinized and approved by the clergy before publication. Anyone who disobeyed this order faced fines, imprisonment, and execution. Although soon after this, Henry had a rift with the Catholic church and began executing Catholics, he recognized that through censorship he could strengthen his authority by controlling public opinion. Thus, in the Proclamation of 1538, he expanded the licensing system to include all printing. In particular, no criticism of the government was allowed. This, according to Steven Helle (2007), was the first time political expression was censored using a licensing system. The system existed in England long after Henry’s reign and was not abolished until 1694 when the House of Commons allowed the act to expire. The licensing system endured in the American colonies until the 1720s, when a Massachusetts grand jury declined to indict a Boston newspaper publisher for refusing to abide by the legislature’s licensing system (→ Printing, History of).

To a certain extent responding to the licensing systems and other acts of prior restraint in England and the United States, Sir William Blackstone (1836, *Four commentaries*, 151–152, 1st pub. 1769), in *Commentaries on the laws of England*, wrote the following in what has been considered the foundation of the doctrine against prior restraint: “The liberty of the press is indeed essential to the nature of a free state; but this consists in laying no previous restraints upon publications, and not in freedom from censure for criminal matter when published. Every freeman has an undoubted right to lay what sentiments he pleases before the public: to forbid this is to destroy the freedom of the press: but if he published what is improper, mischievous, or illegal, he must take the consequences of his own temerity.”

Blackstone clearly supported the notion that a “free state” can make a distinction between prior restraint and subsequent punishment. While he emphatically states that prior restraints are inconsistent with freedom of the press, he suggests that subsequent punishments for “improper, mischievous, or illegal” materials are not.

### **RATIONALE FOR DOCTRINE AGAINST PRIOR RESTRAINT**

According to Vincent Blasi (1981), prior restraint is antithetical to the following three premises inherent in the limited government and libertarian theories that produced the First Amendment of the US Constitution and other codes against prior restraint: (1) distrust of government, (2) acceptance of risk, and (3) respect for individual autonomy (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy). First, Blasi argues that by rejecting prior

restraint, governments acknowledge that societies should base their trust in individuals and the public rather than in the state. Conversely, by regulating the public space, prior restraints can prevent open government criticism.

Second, freedom of speech includes accepting risks. Governments that impose prior restraints try to deter worst-case scenarios and provide stability and security. However, the doctrine against prior restraint argues that a government's worst-case scenarios usually do not come true, and a greater risk to society is not allowing the speech to be published. And finally, prior restraint restricts the autonomy that individuals in a constitutional system of limited government should have in relation to the state. Although public forums scrutinizing government action may create certain burdens on the state, supporters of the doctrine against prior restraint argue that this is a suitable price to pay for individual autonomy.

## TYPES OF PRIOR RESTRAINT

### Administrative Censorship versus Judicial Restraints

A major question regarding the doctrine against prior restraint, as practiced by western democratic governments, is whether judicial injunctions should face the same hostility in the courts as administrative censorship. Most forms of administrative censorship – when an administrative official or committee rejects certain material prior to publication – are condemned almost universally by western democratic governments. However, many countries differ as to whether judicial injunctions and orders to stop the issue of certain publications should be more tolerable than administrative restraints.

In *England*, for example, the courts will grant injunctions in certain cases but not others. English courts usually will refuse to grant an injunction to stop defamatory allegations before a full trial if the defendant will argue that the accusations are true or if the comments can be perceived as a suitable comment on public interest matters. On the other hand, the courts are willing to grant injunctions after a successful libel lawsuit, as well as temporary injunctions in breach of confidence and copyright cases.

Similarly, *German and French courts* are willing to grant temporary injunctions in certain cases regarding defamation and privacy. Although the third sentence of Article 5(1) of the German Basic Law states, "There shall be no censorship," the German courts have never argued that this statement should disallow granting temporary judicial orders to stop publication of certain material. In the US, on the other hand, the courts have argued that the doctrine against prior restraint applies to judicial restraints as well. For example, in the 1971 *Pentagon Papers* case, the US Supreme Court argued that temporary orders granted against newspapers for revealing confidential government secrets are unconstitutional. Only very rarely have American courts argued that injunctions are consistent with the First Amendment of the US Constitution (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

### Confidential Government Information

Regarding confidential government information, European courts have generally given greater consideration to accepting prior restraints than their American counterparts. The



primary justification in accepting prior restraints in these circumstances is that if the law does not prevent the publication of government secrets, then the harm will have already taken place, and subsequent punishments would be useless. The *Spycatcher* litigation in England is one example in which the courts stopped the publication of government confidential information. In this case, the English Attorney General in 1986 obtained interlocutory injunctions to prevent the *Observer* and *Guardian* newspapers from printing allegations from former MI5 agent Peter Wright about the English security services. Although the newspapers applied to discharge the injunctions, the injunctions were upheld initially by the Court of Appeal and subsequently by the House of Lords. The case then went to the → European Court of Human Rights, which sided with the newspapers and ruled that maintaining the injunctions after July 1978 was incompatible with freedom of expression. The court continued to say that although all prior restraints are not incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights, “the dangers inherent in prior restraints are such that they call for the most careful scrutiny on the part of the Court” (14 EHRR 153, para. 60). The court argued that delaying a story can remove its interest and value.

The position of US courts regarding the issue of prior restraints on confidential information is significantly different from that of the English courts. In the 1931 case *Near v. Minnesota*, the US Supreme Court left open the possibility of prior restraints on government secrets. Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes’s opinion states, “[T]he protection even as to previous restraint is not absolutely unlimited. But the limitation has been recognized only in exceptional cases.” He suggests that confidential government and military secrets could be examples of “exceptional cases” (238 US 717). In the *Pentagon Papers* case, however, the Supreme Court denied a government request to prevent the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* newspapers from publishing secret State Department records on US involvement in the Vietnam War. The justices disagreed over when injunctions should be issued regarding government confidential information. While Justices Hugo Black and William Douglas stated that the First Amendment does not allow any prior restraints, the majority of the Supreme Court supported the position that an injunction can be issued if publication of confidential government information will cause irreparable damage to vital national interests (→ Journalism: Legal Situation; Communication Law and Policy: North America).

### **Internet Censorship**

While courts in western democratic states continue to debate to what extent prior restraints in defamation, privacy, and confidential information cases are acceptable, authoritarian regimes in China and Saudi Arabia have practiced some of the most stringent forms of administrative prior restraint. Within the last decade, both countries have expanded their use of prior restraint over one of the most up-to-date methods of publicly disseminating information: the Internet (→ Internet Law and Regulation). In December 2000, the *Chinese government* passed a series of regulations explaining why and how the Internet would be censored. The Chinese government has established a prior restraint on certain Internet content by creating a nationwide firewall, which blocks thousands of websites that it deems inappropriate. Using domestic software, China filters not only sexually

explicit material, but also websites it considers politically sensitive, such as those of overseas human rights organizations, certain news organizations, and sites related to Taiwan, Tibet, the Falun Gong movement, and dissident and pro-democracy groups (→ China: Media System; Communication Law and Policy: Asia).

Similarly, the *Saudi government* has established the most widespread and technologically advanced filtering system in the world to block all online material that the ruling family argues is contrary to Saudi Muslim customs and values. A government body called the Internet Services Unit maintains specialized proxy equipment, which processes all website requests from within the country and compares them to a blacklist of banned sites. If the requested site is included in the blacklist, then it is blocked. The blacklists are purchased from commercial companies and renewed on a continuous basis. In addition to the commercial blacklists, Saudi censors contribute other websites they deem inappropriate (→ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East). Despite political opposition groups and others who have used increasingly sophisticated techniques to circumvent government censorship and disseminate information online in China and Saudi Arabia, prior restraint has allowed these governments to continue to maintain a stranglehold on power in the same way that King Henry VIII did with his licensing system hundreds of years earlier.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Book ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ China: Media System ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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# Censorship, History of

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The English word “censorship” is derived from the root *cense* from the Latin *censure*: to estimate, rate, assess, judge. Censor was a title given to two magistrates in ancient Rome who were responsible for administering the census, and supervising public morals. When the Roman Empire became the Holy Roman Empire, the church assumed primary responsibility for → censorship.

## **ECCLESIASTICAL CENSORSHIP**

The early church used its censorial authority to establish orthodoxy and condemn heresy. Written scripture codified the tenets of the Christian faith and secured the church’s earthly authority, but the clergy possessed a monopoly over interpretation of the sacred text. Instruction of the laity was almost exclusively oral: with few exceptions, only those entering the priesthood had advanced levels of education and access to reading materials, which were stored in monasteries during the manuscript period. The church began cataloguing forbidden texts as early as the second century; however the development of the Gutenberg press in the fifteenth century posed a profound challenge to church authority. Print facilitated the spread of heterodox ideas, especially Protestant reform. The church responded by establishing an elaborate administrative system of prior censorship, requiring a license to publish (an imprimatur), and certification that a book had been inspected by a local Ordinary, usually the bishop. The church published its first index of forbidden books, known as the Pauline index, in 1559. The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* went through 42 editions before it ceased publication in 1966.

The Index provides the most comprehensive record of censorship ever compiled. State censorship bureaucracies adapted the administrative model pioneered by the church, with its central authority and local enforcement. Where the church publicly condemned objectionable ideas, however, state censorships routinely operate covertly as well as overtly. National security, often a contentious construct with expansive boundaries, provides the justification for covert state censorship (secrecy), especially in wartime, when all nation-states practice censorship.

## **RECORDED HISTORY OF CENSORSHIP**

The etymology, administrative model, and much of the recorded history of censorship are of European origin, but the practice is universal. It predates the word, and continues in other forms even where religious or state censorships have been formally abolished. The written history is largely a history of western censorships because opposition to church and state censorships and advocacy for freedom of expression developed widespread support and achieved legitimacy first in Europe and America (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Enfranchisement of freedom of expression in the west is not, however, a story of European superiority or linear progress, but rather a

narrative of conflict and struggle. Several factors converged to produce this outcome. A synthesis of Asian, Middle Eastern, and European communication technologies took place in Europe at a propitious moment when the dominant social institution, the church, was experiencing a crisis of legitimacy in reaction to pervasive repression and corruption (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

Movable clay type had been invented in China four centuries before Gutenberg refined the technology in his workshop in Mainz. A difference that made a difference in the rapid development of book publishing and distribution in the west was the Roman alphabet. Based upon the writing system developed by the ancient Phoenicians in the Middle East and adapted by the Greeks, the simple 26-character Roman alphabet could be transferred to print quicker and less expensively than the open-ended system of Chinese characters, which can require thousands of different characters to print a single text. Once books were widely available in Europe, the simplicity of the alphabet also facilitated widespread development of literacy. As literacy spread beyond clerics and aristocrats, censorship became an important administrative tool of both church and state.

The suppression of books magnified the powers of print, enhancing demand for prohibited books and the skills to read them. It galvanized opposition to censorship among those most directly affected by its enforcement: printers, book dealers, authors, intellectuals, freethinkers, artists, performers, rebels, and revolutionaries. For fifteen centuries monotheistic orthodoxy and Roman administrative practices effectively imposed a monopoly over the minds and morals of Europeans: when opposition finally gained momentum, the targets were clearly legible, visible, and as accessible as the nearest church, as Martin Luther demonstrated when he nailed his 95 theses to the church door in Wittenberg in 1517.

Censorship in the west frequently involved church and state collaborations. In France, under the Ancien Régime, the Faculty of Theology at the University of Paris was responsible for censorship; later the king played a more prominent role; and then in the period prior to the revolution, the police served as censors. England followed the ecclesiastical model, publishing its first list of forbidden books in 1529. After 1557, the Stationers' Company, made up of printers and manuscript merchants, was granted a monopoly over the production and distribution of print by the crown; the Stationers' Company had the responsibility of suppressing all work that posed a danger to authority. With the proliferation of print, administration of prior censorship became increasingly difficult in England, and the Censorship Act was allowed to expire in 1604; but offensive expression remained subject to prosecution under criminal law.

## LANGUAGE, CULTURE, AND KNOWLEDGE

Censorship is a universal phenomenon: it casts shadows over all consequential forms of communication. It is the interdiction that empowers the dicta: sense is made by censoring nonsense. Social order is created by proscribing disorder and inclusion is defined by exclusion. Fundamental distinctions are reified and naturalized to form the categorical structures of language, culture, and knowledge. The resulting cosmology may be internalized, resisted, elaborated, or imploded, but it cannot be ignored because it defines the terrain upon which responses to censorship can be intelligibly enacted and communicated. Whether articulated in relatively benign or deeply oppressive forms, this *constitutive or sociological censorship* is

what makes society possible. Because it is largely unrecognized, its influence is insidious. It casts a pall over human consciousness, and compromises the most rigorous professions of objectivity.

Constitutive censorship escaped critical scrutiny until quite recently because censorship scholarship has been narrowly conceived. Sharing the Enlightenment's conceit that liberal democracies had abolished censorship, it viewed surviving forms of *regulative censorships* as the work of unenlightened or regressive institutions: churches and repressive states. Critique of regulative censorship is essential to preservation and expansion of free expression. Reasonable levels of transparency are possible in assessing regulative censorships: indices can be identified, calibrated, and evaluated based upon legal or human rights standards such as levels of violence used to secure and enforce control, degrees of tolerance for heterodox ideas, or the frequency and intensity of ritual purgation. Regulative censorships are amenable to reform or revolution in ways that can lower body counts, books banned, or citizens gulaged; but no revolution in human history – not even the scientific revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – has ever abolished constitutive censorship.

Constitutive censorships are elastic. Limits of permission can be expanded (or contracted), but constituent censorships can never be fully eliminated because complete escape would require fugitives to step outside of language and beyond the limits of human knowledge: the penalty would be silence or unintelligibility. Yet constitutive censorships share porous borders with regulative censorships. They provide precedents, and linguistic, conceptual, and epistemological anchors for regulative censorships. This is the fundamental conundrum of constitutive censorship: to step outside of one form involves stepping into another.

### CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF THEOCRATIC CENSORSHIP

Throughout most of human history, censorship has been considered a legitimate prerogative of power: a means that authorities use to authorize normative systems. In condemning the evil and erroneous, censorship also defines and clarifies the meaning of the good, true, just, or at least the harmless. Until the democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century, the power of communities to excommunicate, to silence, and to exile was nearly absolute. Freedom of expression, where it existed, was community bound and hierarchically distributed. Within these closed circles, censorship was considered a positive act: a way of ensuring morality and homogeneity.

In fundamentalist theocracies, the power is absolute, and sometimes extends beyond excommunication, even beyond communicants. This was the case when Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini issued a *fatwa* condemning to death the Indian-born author Salman Rushdie, who is not a practicing Muslim, for satirizing Islam in his 1989 book, *The Satanic Verses*: a sentence that the Iranian Government News Service reaffirmed in 2006. The *fatwa* obligated all faithful Muslims to carry out the sentence, forcing Rushdie into years of hiding; his Japanese translator, Hitoshi Igarashi, was murdered, and his Italian translator and Norwegian publisher suffered serious injuries when they were stabbed by assailants carrying out the orders of the *fatwa*. Others, including the Egyptian-born Nobel Prize-winning author of the *Children of Gebelawi*, Najib Mahfuz, also received death threats for defending Rushdie's right to free expression.

Resurgence and politicization of fundamentalist forms of Islam following the 1979 Iranian revolution has been accompanied by stricter enforcement of moral codes and

reinstating or strengthening of censorship in Muslim majority nations. Islam is, however, a world religion composed of diverse nationalities and branches, so all generalizations have numerous exceptions. Moreover, individual imams, as divinely ordained descendents of Muhammad, can issue moral orders as well as *fatwas*. In Iran, for example, censorship moderated under a reform government in the early years of the twenty-first century, but has tightened dramatically since 2005, with new restrictions on book publishing, film, and theatrical performances, suppression of some newspapers, and crackdowns on rooftop satellite dishes. The Islamic Guidance Minister has long blocked access to many Internet news sites; and in 2006 instituted new measures to attempt to control bloggers. The government also brought charges against journalists for postings on Internet sites.

As → satellite television and the → Internet have made it increasingly possible to circumvent national censorships, transnational responses are becoming more common. Repression of offensive forms of expression has also taken on new, extra-legal forms through international protests, including violent protest as, for example, when a Danish newspaper, *Jyllands-Posten*, published a series of cartoons ridiculing the Prophet Muhammad in late 2005, some of which were reprinted and denounced as racist in an Egyptian newspaper, *al-Fagr*. This set off worldwide protests and counter-protests over the next several months, including violent conflicts in Libya, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nigeria, and Somalia that killed at least 139 people and injured 823. The editor of the Danish paper apologized for publishing the cartoons. Pope Benedict XVI triggered another wave of global protests by Muslims in 2006 when he quoted a medieval text that condemned Muslim innovations. A nun in Somalia was murdered in retaliation. The Pope also apologized for offending Muslims.

### BUREAUCRATIZED STATE CENSORSHIP

State censorship, by contrast, uses law and administrative procedures to enact and enforce censorship. The most comprehensive and longest lasting form of state censorship in recent history was put into place as an emergency measure by Lenin immediately following the victory of his forces in the Russian Revolution in 1917. State censorship remained formally in force until 1989, when the Supreme Soviet eliminated newspaper censorship. *Russia* had a long tradition of censorship under the tsars, with only a brief period of liberalization (1855–1865) under Alexander II. Lenin was acutely aware of the power of the press and arts as “collective organizers” of propaganda, and mobilized them for socialist re-education. There was some openness to ideological divergence in the immediate post-revolutionary era; however, after 1928 ideological conformity to socialist realism, which entailed viewing life as it was to become rather than as it actually was, became mandatory. Religion was suppressed, and tight controls over art and literature were imposed.

Multiple agencies had responsibilities for supervising literary affairs and the performing arts. The most visible was the Chief Administration for Literary Affairs, known as Glavit; enfranchised in 1922, its powers were expanded considerably under Stalin to include all printed materials, visual arts, broadcasts, lectures, and exhibits. According to the procedural fiction, submission of materials to Glavit for editorial and ideological criticism prior to being publicly disseminated was “voluntary.” Glavit actually exercised absolute authority over publication and the performing arts, and possessed the power to shut

down any newspaper for ideological deviations. The campaign to rid Soviet culture of neo-bourgeois elements resulted in purges of well-known writers, including Isaac Babel, Osip Mandelstam, and Mikhail Kolcov; in all, it has been estimated that as many as 6,000 writers perished in Stalin's gulags. Tight controls were also imposed over foreign literature entering the Soviet Union, and over artistic and scientific contacts with the west. Stalin personally intervened in supervision of the arts in highly unpredictable ways; this made already cautious bureaucrats even more vigilant, and accelerated self-censorship in literature, the arts, and science to the point of cultural stagnation. The Soviet administration of mind was so successful that in 1952 Stalin had to moderate it because it constrained scientific discovery and produced dull, formulaic literature.

During a brief thaw in Soviet censorship in 1956, Khrushchev personally approved publication of Alexandr Solzhenitsyn's *One day in the life of Ivan Denisovich*, a story about life in a Stalinist labor camp. The same year Khrushchev denounced the Stalinist cult of personality at the 20th Party Congress. Although strict controls remained in effect, these two interrelated developments contributed immeasurably to the emergence of a visible dissident movement in the Soviet Union. After 1956, travel became possible for scientists and intellectuals, and Soviet participation in international conferences and performances increased substantially. Travel not only brought more exposure to western ideas, but also to Russian literature published abroad, *tamizdat*, such as Boris Pasternak's *Dr Zhivago*.

Technology posed special challenges to Soviet censors. Under Stalin, the typeface of every typewriter had to be registered so that illicit manuscripts, *samizdat*, could be traced; when photocopying machines became available, access was strictly regulated and every copy had to be registered. Administering these controls proved onerous; and in order to function at all, work routines were developed that gave higher level employees access to the "not allowed but possible." A fundamental contradiction was built into the Soviet system: the government emphasized universal literacy and provided its citizens with good educational opportunities that fostered intellectual curiosity. At the same time, however, Glavit's censorship was designed to stifle curiosity. Technology was also a factor in the demise of the Soviet system; suspicion of communication technologies along with restrictions imposed by the United States on export of high-performance computers to the Soviet Union and China left the Soviet Union lagging far behind the west in the telecommunications revolution of the 1980s. After the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russian media and the arts experienced a decade of unprecedented openness. However, under Vladimir Putin's leadership, the Russian Federation has reasserted centralized control, including control of media, especially television.

### **CENSORSHIP IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

In the twenty-first century, *China* is expected to be the primary site of struggles for intellectual freedom (→ China: Media System). Its imposition of controls on the Internet, with the compliance of US-based software companies Google, Microsoft, and Yahoo! has become a *cause celebre* among Internet freedom advocacy groups (→ Advocacy Journalism; Search Engines). However, the Committee to Protect Journalists ([www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org)) listed North Korea, Burma, Turkmenistan, Equatorial Guinea, Libya, Eritrea, Cuba, Uzbekistan, Syria, and Belarus as the ten most censored countries in the world in 2006. In an era of

instantaneous international communication, journalists, media workers, and communication facilities have increasingly become targets in both regional and international conflicts. Since 1991, when the Committee to Protect Journalists began monitoring violent deaths of journalists, 580 deaths had been recorded by early 2006 – more than three per month, 71 percent of whom were directly targeted in retaliation for their reporting. Even in war zones, murder is the leading cause of death for journalists. By October 2006, 118 journalists and media workers had been killed in Iraq since the US-led invasion in 2003, making it the deadliest war for journalists in modern history, far exceeding the number of journalists who died in World War II (69) and Vietnam (63).

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Censorship ► China: Media System ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Internet ► Satellite Television ► Search Engines

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## **Central America: Media Systems**

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Geographically, Central America includes parts of Mexico (→ Mexico: Media System), i.e., the southern part of the Tehuantepec Isthmus, but traditionally it is composed of the



countries of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. With the exception of Belize, which is a small country with about 300,000 inhabitants that did not gain its independence from Great Britain until 1981, all were Spanish colonies. The current Panamanian territory was part of Colombia until 1913. All of these countries gained their independence between 1821 and 1859. Of 43 million Central Americans, 13 million live in Guatemala. The geographic position of Panama and the political stability of Costa Rica have allowed both of these countries to develop economically, but the rest of the countries in the region display extreme poverty, particularly evident in areas inhabited by indigenous groups. After several decades of internal turmoil, civil war, and dictatorships, Central America has recovered its essence. Since the 1980s, it has recovered its peace. Even though democracy and competitive elections are now a fact within the isthmus, the influence of remote times still prevails.

### REGIONAL MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

The influence of the media was important during the democratization of Central America. It was the result of multiple experiences from the past, both those of journalists and those of several media owners. Many of these individuals faced → censorship, military repression, and the closure of their offices. The participation of the army was a common feature in these events. State financing, which plays an important role in private investments and represents a key survival factor, enables many governments to exert their influence over media content in the press, → radio, and → television. Tax collection and audits contribute to keeping state influence marginal. External influence also plays a key role, mainly that from Mexican investors.

Nowadays, many media function as *political instruments* and, in nearly every Central American country, they are concentrated in the hands of a few families (→ Ownership in the Media; Concentration in Media Systems). Their interests are primarily centered on the economic impact of the media network. Only Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Panama have laws that guarantee equal → access to the media by the political parties. Deviation or reduction in campaign funds and parties has led to greater distortions in competition.

The *lack of scientific research on the region* makes it difficult to provide quantitative data (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America). That said, radio is the most-used medium, and television constitutes the most-marketed medium, followed by the press. The proportion of the latter is 40 newspapers for every 1,000 inhabitants. Costa Rica has the highest proportion with 79, while Nicaragua has the lowest with 16.

Journalistic work faces the multiple challenges of a narrow labor market, complicated structural conditions, bad planning, corruption, and the limitations imposed by restrictive laws. A more active civil society is needed to support and encourage independent and capable journalists. Furthermore, both professionalism and journalistic ethics are nearly unknown, as is the case in the rest of Latin America (→ Professionalization of Journalism; Ethics in Journalism). Despite attempts made by some international training programs to change the situation, the tradition of research and → investigative reporting is unknown in many places. Finally, the lack of interest in regional and international issues is evident in the different media offerings.

The regional results obtained from the annual study of the US organization Freedom House are highly critical. Its 2007 report shows Costa Rica as the only country belonging to the group considered to be free countries (20th place of 195). The rest of the Central American countries are considered “partly free”: El Salvador and Nicaragua are placed 42nd, Panama 43rd, Honduras 51st, and Guatemala 59th.

There is a climate of aggression directed toward journalists in Central America, and *Guatemala* is perhaps the most notable example of this. This country suffers the consequences of a long and bloody civil war as well as the influence of violent regimes, which have lacerated social consensus. In this respect, it is the indigenous groups, representing 40 percent of the country’s population, that are the most deprived. Crime, international traffic of drugs, corruption, and a flourishing kidnapping industry make research in information and critical journalism a highly perilous occupation. According to the corruption index of *Transparency International*, Guatemala holds 117th position (of 159); attempts to clarify are overshadowed and contributions are regarded as threatening.

The Guatemalan radio and television industries are mainly concentrated in the hands of Mexican investors. A sole consortium controls the four open channels and 90 percent of the frequencies held by radio broadcasters are the property of three groups. Concentration also exists within the press. Newspapers (*Prensa Libre*, *La Hora*, *Siglo Veintiuno*, *El Periodico*, *Diario de Centro America*, *La República*, *Nuestro Diario*, *Al Dia*, *El Quetzalteco*, and *El Metropolitano*) are not the exception, and only two are published outside the capital. The general trend is mainly conservative, and economic forces dominate the scene, making it impossible for a spectrum of plural opinion to exist. As is the case in all of Central America, community radios are isolated (→ Community Media).

The amount of violence is also critical in *El Salvador*, with the issue of the *Maras*, gangs of juveniles active in the capital, terrorizing the population. The influence of a long civil war is ever-present, and the division of the nation keenly felt. El Salvador’s business elite dominates the five national newspapers with its conservative posture (*El Diario de Hoy*, *La Prensa Grafica*, *El Mundo*, *Clatino*, and *Diario Mas*, printing 250,000 issues in a population of 6.9 million people), as well as the audiovisual media. Three of the five private television networks are the property of *Telecorporación Salvadoreña (TCS)*, which openly supports the ARENA party, currently in power. Channel 12 is Mexican-owned.

El Salvador also has its official channel. The one-dimensional stance of its owners, reflected in its taboos and preferences, leads the path to self-censorship. If it does not follow this trend, a forceful silence is imposed. Finally, several Salvadorian laws point out the benefit of national security in contrast with critical journalism.

*Honduras* enjoys free elections – though they are often accompanied by expressions of violence – and this is reflected in a free media system, which is also concentrated in the hands of highly influential families. The country’s newspapers are *La Tribuna*, *El Heraldo*, *Diez*, *La Prensa*, and *Tiempo*. Journalistic work always encounters difficulties in the use of official sources, and corruption in exchange for positive reports is very common. A positive point is that slander was ruled unconstitutional (→ Libel and Slander).

In the case of *Nicaragua*, the influence of civil war and dictatorship continues. The change of power in 2007 – Sandinista commander Daniel Ortega, working in a coalition with a liberal former president, won the presidency – showed the existence of competitive democratic rules and processes. The country’s history and past changes of power made it

possible for leftists to gain presence and voice. Little before the conclusion of their term, the Sandinistas privatized the main radio networks and guaranteed the permanence of individuals and groups loyal to them in these entities. The main newspapers offer a space for different political voices – though demanding a positive political orientation in exchange. *La Prensa*'s liberal voice has represented public criticism since Sandinism times. *El Nuevo Diario* has a clear tendency toward Sandinism, and *La Noticia*, *La Jornada*, *Trinchera*, *Bolsa de Noticias*, and *Hoy* are also worth mentioning. In addition to six private television stations, Nicaragua has one official channel.

As a result of American influence and having direct management of its Canal in recent years, Panama's position is special in Central America, for it is also a bridge to South America. The history of the media in this country is also affected by past dictatorships. The country has four private television stations and a wide range of radio stations, along with one state television channel and a network, both of which are under the Catholic church's guardianship. Panama has eight national newspapers (*La Prensa*, *El Panama America*, *Critica Libre*, *El Siglo*, *La Estrella de Panama*, *Mi Diario*, *Dia a Dia*, and *Capital Financiero*). It also suffers from concentration of media and difficult working conditions for journalists: they are constantly threatened by the state, and by the end of the former president's term, 80 journalists had received official warnings. Media laws are highly restrictive; many date from dictatorial times and have not been reformulated.

Given its small size, Belize's open and free media system is seldom discussed. Although it is true that it lacks daily journals, its weekly press is varied and pluralistic. Belize's 300,000 inhabitants can choose from ten radio stations and two television channels. Cable television is a widely spread medium. However, the laws on media give the state intervention rights in journalism, mainly when public officials and ministries are within the focus of reports and if they are criticized. Finally, attacks on radio broadcasting freedom are commonly interpreted as protection of national security.

Costa Rica continues to be the Central American democratic model. This fact is reflected in its media system and the current situation: the → freedom of the press dates from 1835, and ever since, radio, television, and press have been able to work freely. More than 100 stations make up the private broadcasting system, along with the private sector newspapers *La Nación*, *La República*, *Diario Extra*, *El Herald*, *La Prensa Libre*, *Al Dia*, and *La Teja*, and public sector broadcasting such as *Canal 13*, which operates under the guardianship of the *Sistema de Radio y Televisión Cultural de Costa Rica* (SINART) and has been in existence since 1977. However, a financial crisis brought about restriction in investments and infrastructure. The open sector has a UHF channel from the University of Costa Rica, Channel 15, receiving income from university funds. 40 percent of its content comes from → *Deutsche Welle* and from *Asociación de Televisoras Iberoamericanas* (ATEI). One of the most controversial issues is whether or not stations should pay taxes on frequencies – this was not provided for in the obsolete 1954 act that regulates broadcasting in the country.

In recent years, press freedom in Costa Rica played an important role in uncovering massive corruption scandals. In the lead were *La Nación* newspaper and the editorial department of *Canal 7*. Meanwhile, the interest that the population shows in the media continues to increase. Costa Ricans invest a significant part of their incomes in the use of the media. There is increasing demand for cable television systems, which now accounts

for 20 percent of Costa Rican households. The use of telephones and computers with → Internet access is far above the Latin American average.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Community Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Mexico: Media System ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## **Chaffee, Steven H.**

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Steven H. Chaffee (1935–2001) was an internationally recognized mass communication scholar who had a crucial role in developing and shaping the field of communication during the last third of the twentieth century. He was born in Los Angeles on August 21, 1935. He received a BA in history (with distinction) from the University of Redlands in 1957, and an MA in journalism from UCLA in 1962. In 1965 he completed a PhD in communication at Stanford where he studied with → Wilbur Schramm and Richard Carter, who supervised his dissertation. He served in the US Navy as a public information

officer (1958–1961) and worked as news editor and reporter for various Los Angeles newspapers (1961–1962).

Chaffee began his *teaching career* in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1965. He established during his 16 years there a prolific research record: eight books and monographs, and 50 journal articles and book chapters. Much of his research was conducted in collaboration with Jack McLeod and graduate students in the Mass Communications Research Center where the innovative ideas for co-orientation and family communication pattern concepts were developed (McLeod & Chaffee 1972; Chaffee et al. 1973; → Family Communication Patterns).

His summary of the scientific evidence for a connection between televised violence and adolescent aggressiveness for the US Surgeon General's Committee on Television and Social Behavior in 1972 gave impetus to subsequent research on effects of media violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). His editing of *Political communication: Issues and strategies for research* (1975) can be given primary credit for founding the field of political communication (→ Political Communication; Political Cognitions). Chaffee served on a dozen key AEJMC and ICA committees during this early period and was elected president of ICA for 1980–1981 (→ International Communication Association [ICA]). He was awarded a prestigious Vilas Professorship in 1974 and served as director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication in 1980–1981.

In 1981, Chaffee returned to Stanford's communication department as professor and director of the Institute for Communication Research founded by Wilbur Schramm. He was named Janet Peck Professor of International Communication in 1987. His research productivity continued unabated with seven books and 42 journal articles and book chapters over the last 19 years. Most notable are three very different works: empirical research on measuring *attention* to media content (Chaffee & Schleuder 1986; → Attention; Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span), the co-edited *Handbook of communication science* (1987), and the helpful monograph on concept explication (1991). During the Stanford years he received many awards: ICA Fellow, 1983; the Nelson Award for career contributions to education for journalism and mass communication from Wisconsin, 1990; the Fisher Mentorship Award for service to his students and communication research from ICA, 1992; and the AEJMC Presidential Award for his dedication and service, 1996. He was editor of *Communication Research* (1983–1986) and served on the editorial boards of several other journals.

Chaffee left Stanford to accept the Arthur N. Rupe Endowed Chair in the department of communication at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1999. He died unexpectedly from a heart problem at the age of 65 on May 15, 2001.

An essential *key to understanding Chaffee's career* was his unusually strong commitment to the development of communication as a recognized autonomous scholarly field. From Wilbur Schramm, who stitched together a framework of the field, he learned that much more theorizing and empirical research needed to be done before claims of legitimacy could be made (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). He was able to see the weaknesses of the mid-twentieth-century models borrowed from other social sciences. The “*minimal effects*” Columbia model focused narrowly on → persuasion in terms of conversion of candidate vote preferences (→ Media Effects, History of). *Selective exposure*

was almost an iron law leading directly to the flawed concept of “reinforcement” (→ Selective Exposure). Instead, Chaffee focused his early research on knowledge and other cognitive news media effects that were more likely than attitude conversion (→ Media Effects; Cognition; Information Processing).

He later challenged → Lazarsfeld’s “synthetic competition” between media and personal influences through research showing that the two forms of communication could be mutually facilitating (1982; → Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). He was also ahead of his time in questioning the then popular diffusion of information models that assumed knowledge and technology to be of unquestioned value and treated them as fixed quantities “transported” to the “underdeveloped” world (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Development Communication). He also attempted to revise political socialization models that envisioned “transmission” of knowledge and values “functional to the ongoing system” from parent to child through simple modeling. A much more valid and sophisticated learning model can be found in Chaffee’s late work evaluating the “Kids Voting” school civic intervention program (McDevitt & Chaffee 2000; → Political Socialization through the Media).

Chaffee understood that progress in developing an autonomous field would depend on constructing a set of well-explicated communication concepts. Concept explication became a distinctive feature of the methods courses and group projects at Wisconsin. He insisted that the seemingly simple concept of “media use” was multidimensional and demanding of careful concept explication. Time spent with TV, the sole measure used by many social scientists, he showed, was totally inadequate. Exposure and attention to types of content within a medium were more important (→ Political Media Use).

His devotion to hands-on teaching of graduate students beyond classroom hours was testimony to his strong commitment to the communication field. He mentored his junior colleagues toward tenure by providing encouragement and extensive feedback on their research. He believed in the benefits of the expression of diverse viewpoints, an idea empirically supported by his early political socialization work where families with pluralistic communication patterns facilitated adolescent learning.

Steven Chaffee was a leader among a handful of second generation “young Turks” who reinvigorated the mass communication field in the 1960–1980. Chaffee was justifiably proud of the achievement of his cohort, but in historical essays on Schramm, Bleyer, Nafziger, and others he acknowledged their debt to the “founding fathers.” He was unsatisfied with past achievements and in a final essay on the future of political communication research (2001), he stressed the need to refocus research: “While questions of political content and direction will always be important, the direction in which the most inventive efforts are needed have to do more with the politics of communication than with the communication of politics.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span ▶ Cognition  
 ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Development Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Information Processing  
 ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F.  
 ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of  
 ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Media

Use ► Political Socialization through the Media ► Schramm, Wilbur ► Selective Exposure ► Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Change Management and Communication**

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Change management in the context of organizations is the process of planning, directing, and controlling a transition from one set of organizational conditions to another. Change management has been studied for many years in the management and organization studies disciplines. It has not traditionally been considered a communication process, although models of change management typically have included communication as a component of effective change management (→ Organizational Communication; Strategic Communication).

However, several related trends have led to change management and communication becoming much more closely interrelated. First, the rate of organizational change has increased, as has the perceived importance of changing organizations to managers, executives, and other stakeholders (Zorn et al. 1999). The result of this is that organizational reputation is greatly influenced by the appearance of keeping up with the latest

trends, as captured in organizational buzzwords such as benchmarking, continuous improvement, and best practice. Second, as a result of the massive failure rate of major organizational change initiatives (a 50–80 percent failure rate is typically reported in the literature), practitioners and scholars have given significant attention to rethinking the process of change management and the reasons underlying failure. In particular, there is a recognition that resistance by stakeholders – particularly, but not limited to, staff – impedes many organizational changes, and a concurrent belief that communication is the key to managing such resistance. Third, some prominent scholars have argued that organizational change is constructed in communication. That is, communication is not simply a tool to use in the process of managing change; rather, what we consider to be change is an intersubjective phenomenon co-constructed in discourse among organizational members and stakeholders (→ Organizational Discourse; Business Discourse). Ford and Ford's work is exemplary here; they describe change as a series of conversations in which people bring change into existence (or resist it) through their conversations (e.g., Ford & Ford 1995). Finally, as strategic communication has become more central to organizational strategy, communication with both internal and external stakeholders is seen as more central to change initiatives (→ Stakeholder Theory).

Much of the research on this topic is, not surprisingly, quite applied or “managerialist” in orientation, although the body of interpretive and critical literature has been increasing rapidly in the past decade. Of course, some research has both applied and interpretive (or critical) dimensions, but this distinction is still useful for differentiating the aims of most studies of communication and change management.

### APPLICATION-ORIENTED RESEARCH

Application-oriented research has focused particularly on strategic means of announcing or initiating change, principles for communicating effectively with stakeholders, methods of stakeholder involvement, and means for managing employee stress and resistance. Several scholars have focused their efforts on identifying the elements of communication that introduce change to stakeholders. This work stresses the importance of adapting change announcements to the situation, taking into account the organizational dynamics and the particulars of the change initiative and crafting messages that influence stakeholders' buy-in or readiness for change (e.g., Smeltzer 1991). Armenakis and Harris (2002) argue that such messages will be effective to the degree that they clearly identify the discrepancy between the present and desired state, and that they convincingly argue that: (1) members have the efficacy to be successful; (2) the particular change initiative is appropriate; (3) adequate support and resources will be provided; and (4) members will benefit from the change.

Perhaps the most extensive research on the topic of communication and change management has focused on principles and practices of communicating with employees in the process of implementation. As Elving (2005) argued, management attempts through communication processes to inform and direct employees, while at the same time creating a sense of coherence and community. Klein (1996) summarized the applied literature on *effective implementation communication* in the following seven principles: (1) message redundancy enhances message retention; (2) using multiple media is typically



more effective than the use of just one medium; (3) face-to-face communication is often more effective than alternatives; (4) the line hierarchy is the most effective organizationally sanctioned communication channel; (5) direct supervisors are the expected and most effective source of organizationally sanctioned information to employees; (6) opinion leaders are important conduits to changing attitudes and opinions; and (7) personally relevant information is better retained than abstract, unfamiliar, or general information (1996, 34).

Of course, change agents are interested in communicating with stakeholders other than employees, too, and often adapt the approach taken depending on the particular group of stakeholders targeted, as well as other factors. For example, Lewis et al. (2001) studied the strategies that nonprofit organizations used to communicate with external stakeholders, as well as the influences on their choices. They identified six separate approaches that vary from simple one-way message dissemination to highly interactive and/or adapted communication. They found that many factors might explain the choice of change communication strategies, for example, the scope, novelty, and complexity of the planned change, as well as the nature of the → organizational culture and the management style of the implementers. However, many of these influences are indirect in that they influence two factors that more directly predict the implementation strategy chosen: the perceived need for efficiency in communication and the perceived need for consensus building. Implementers are more likely to see a need for communicative efficiency when (1) the organization has limited channels for communicating; (2) there is perceived to be little time for interaction about the change; and (3) when resources are scarce. A high need for consensus building is likely to be perceived when (1) changes are perceived to be highly controversial or novel; (2) there is a history of resistance to similar changes; (3) critical resources are controlled by stakeholders; and (4) ongoing cooperation is needed for implementation.

A number of studies have examined *employee participation practices* as a key element of strategic communication in the change process. The importance of participation methods stems from the consistent finding that participation is associated with positive outcomes, including increased commitment and decreased resistance to change as well as more positive adjustments for employees who feel included in change-related decisions (e.g., Bordia et al. 2004). Thus, scholars have investigated alternative means of participation. For example, varieties of collaborative “dialogue” as a method or practice of communication have been explored for their potential to enhance the quality of organizational change initiatives (e.g., Kellett 1999). Dialogue is particularly valued for its emphasis on increasing understanding and learning, both of which may be valuable in enhancing relationships and creative action (→ Learning Organizations). Similarly, methods such as appreciative inquiry that focus on involving employees in identifying and building on existing, positive aspects of organizational practices have received increasing attention. Proponents of these methods theorize that such practices are energizing and motivating because they reframe change from a problem orientation that puts a spotlight on negative deviations from desired standards to an “appreciation” orientation that focuses on positive deviations and methods for enhancing them. Finally, given the documented value of participation in creating positive outcomes, various large-group participation methods have been devised and explored for their potential to include a higher proportion of an organization’s members in the participation process.

Since employees' responses to change initiatives can be a critical factor in the success of change initiatives, substantial attention has been directed at identifying factors that influence their responses and ways to manage them. In fact, much of the research on communication principles and participation studies reviewed above has been motivated by concern for generating positive responses from employees. Involving employees, in particular, tends to create a greater sense of control and commitment. In addition to research on participation and communication principles, other research suggests that early, regular, and relatively complete communication, along with various forms of social support, tends to relieve the stress associated with change as well as to decrease resistance to change.

### **INTERPRETIVE AND CRITICAL RESEARCH**

Beyond application-oriented research, interpretive and critical studies of communication in change management have focused on how change initiatives and practices are symbolically enacted and socially constructed, the tensions and contradictions underlying change processes, and the political processes through which participants employ power in their struggle for material and symbolic resources. An example that encompasses many of these themes is an in-depth, longitudinal investigation of change processes in the context of the post-merger developments at Nordea, a multinational financial services company (Søderberg & Vaara 2003). The study illustrates sense-making and political processes employed by managers and other stakeholders in the process of attempting to merge companies representing different organizational and national cultures into a coherent entity. The findings demonstrate that the process is fraught with tensions and struggle (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches).

Another theme within interpretive and critical studies is characterizing the role of discourse at multiple levels (e.g., macro, meso, and micro). Both change agents and stakeholders draw on prominent socio-cultural (or macro-level) discourses in framing their meso- and micro-level discourse in the context of organizational change. For example, managers are influenced by discursive hype surrounding new management trends such as e-commerce, sustainable business, and enterprise resource planning. They subsequently draw on the same discourses in selling these initiatives to stakeholders both internally and externally. Through resonance with these discourses – often framed in terms such as “best practice,” “leading edge,” and “world class” practices – organizational persuasion (meso-level) campaigns as well as manager–employee (micro-level) interactions take on legitimacy. Stakeholders, often immersed in the same discourses, draw on them to interpret as well as resist change initiatives. Critically oriented scholars often seek to demonstrate how discourse is used strategically to mask efforts to serve the interests of some groups – both within and external to organizations – at the expense of others.

Future research on change management and communication will need to pay more attention to theory development. At present, much of the applied research on change communication is atheoretical, although there have been attempts to draw on speech act theory, stakeholder theory, social identity theory, and others. Critically oriented research, for its part, will need to move beyond critique to offering alternative visions of more positive change communication processes.

SEE ALSO: ► Business Discourse ► Learning Organizations ► Organizational Communication ► Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ► Organizational Culture ► Organizational Discourse ► Stakeholder Theory ► Strategic Communication ► Technology and Communication

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## **Channel/Program Loyalty**

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The issue of viewer loyalty has received some attention from academics, but it is of vital interest to broadcasters. Since the beginning of → television, stations and networks have tried to promote viewer loyalty in order to increase ratings, advertising revenue, and profits (→ Advertising, Economics of; Markets of the Media). In fact, the way US broadcasters devise programming schedules – with most programs being shown daily or weekly at the same time – is designed to maximize loyalty. Branding strategies and campaigns have the same goal (→ Branding). However, looking at the history of television, it is clear that technological developments have changed television behavior and have strongly affected viewer loyalty. The following describes in more detail the changes in the US but the pattern would apply to most industrialized countries with multichannel television systems.

Until the mid-1970s most people in the US had about five channels and the three networks had audience shares over 90 percent. One might say, loyalty was high by default. Audience research indicates that most viewers expressed preferences and loyalties to local stations – the stations’ local news programs and also their prime-time programs (→ Audience Research; Exposure to News; News Audience). But many viewers were not able to correctly connect prime-time programs and the networks that carried those programs.

The increase in the *number of channels* through cable and satellite and, of course, the *remote control* changed viewer behavior (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television). First, the change was small: cable networks did not offer very attractive programming and in 1985, barely 30 percent of all households had remotes. However, as cable and remote control penetration grew, a third factor came into play: cable networks – like MTV – started to brand themselves in ways that eluded the major broadcasters. The big networks all showed a variety of programs that were not thematically connected and, therefore, could not as easily be branded (→ Television Networks). Only the Fox network followed a strategy that was similar to that of the cable networks – a more narrowly defined range of programs and target groups. The increase in choice, combined with new technology that made it simple to exercise choice, started an erosion in viewer loyalty.

These changes prompted a reaction by the broadcast networks. To prevent a further decrease in channel/network loyalty, they persuaded their affiliates to de-emphasize the station brand and *focus on network branding*. In addition, they started “seamless” programming; that is, they shifted commercial pods away from ends of programs to reduce channel switching at the end of programs. We do not know what would have happened without those measures, but indications are, these steps help slow down the erosion of audience loyalty (McGrath 1998).

In today’s multichannel environment, branded cable channels, branded broadcast networks, and many other media compete for loyalty. As Figure 1 shows, there has been a steady increase in the number of channels available to viewers during the past 20 years. Today, the average viewer in the US has close to 100 channels to choose from – a substantial increase even compared to just 5 years ago. The most recent increase is largely driven by digital cable subscriptions, which provide over 200 choices.

Most viewers use, as shown in Figure 1, only a fraction of the available options. Still, the more channels they have, the more they use and the less loyalty they have, especially compared with 20 or 30 years ago. However, there is little support for this statement by News Corp. chair and CEO Rupert Murdoch: “There’s no loyalty to TV channels. That went with the remote control” (Online Reporter 2005). It is true that the remote and the proliferation of choices for the viewers had a major negative impact on viewer loyalty. On the other hand, branding, programming, and scheduling strategies have counteracted those trends.

Research indicates that most viewers’ focus is indeed on the programs they like, but many networks have established a strong brand that attracts loyal fans (HBO, ESPN, Discovery, MTV, and SciFi are examples of networks with well-defined identities; → Brands) and the broadcast networks are still seen by most as “leaders” and receive the highest audience shares. The broadcast networks’ branding has led to a *stronger link between shows and network* than 20 years ago, and the role of local channels has decreased. Further, despite the remote control and the many viewing choices, lead-ins can still create hit programs (as an example, the hit show *American Idol* almost doubled the audience

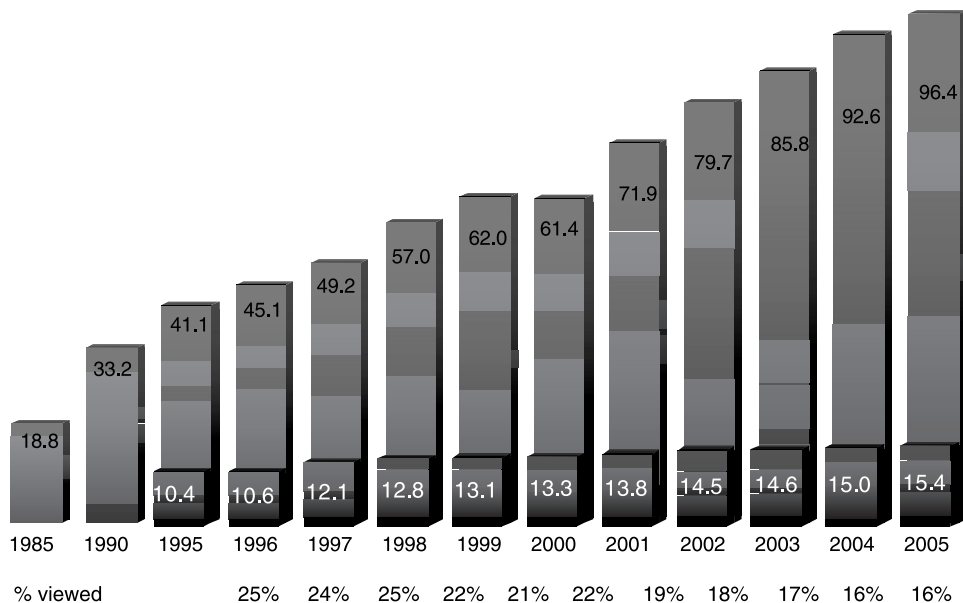


Figure 1 Trend in channels received and channels used, 1985–2005  
 Source: Nielsen Media Research, NBCU Research

for *House* when that show was scheduled to follow it; → Nielsen Ratings.) Even *channel position* can help a network increase loyalty, and viewing habits seem to have a positive impact on many viewers' loyalty to networks and stations. In short, loyalty and appointment viewing have not disappeared; loyalty is primarily driven by programs, but the network brand and also the image of local stations can be significant factors.

The number of channels available to most viewers is likely to increase further and we see already today a significant increase in the use of broadband for video entertainment. New Internet brands are emerging that compete with established media brands (Yahoo!, YouTube). This presents new challenges for established media brands that want to maintain audience loyalty. Those brands are already active on the web, trying to use their brand to move consumers between their TV and web products. It appears that both content and brand will be important to maintain audience loyalty (→ Online Media).

Technology continues to impact viewer behavior. In May 2007, the digital video recorder (DVR) was in about 17 percent of US homes. Interestingly, new research suggests that the DVR promotes loyalty to programs: it is used primarily to time-shift favorite shows, which are now seen more regularly by DVR owners than by non-owners. HDTV will also play a role in this context because it uses different channel numbers and is, therefore, likely to further diminish the role of channels as a driver of loyalty. At the same time, the increased complexity of media technology and content is confusing many consumers and is making search and navigation more important. This could give a boost to loyalty based on branding.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience Research ▶ Branding ▶ Brands  
 ▶ Cable Television ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ News Audience

► Nielsen Ratings ► Online Media ► Satellite Television ► Television ► Television Networks

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## **Child Art**

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The generic term *child art* often refers to graphic and even three-dimensional work done by children. The term was first made popular by a leading art educator of the last century, Victor Lowenfeld (1947). It is occasionally used to refer to “real” artworks produced by “wunderkinder” such as Alexandra Nechita (Plagens 1996) who paints only in Picasso’s Cubist style or Wang Yani (Winner 1993) who produced traditional Chinese brush paintings to global acclaim. Two aspects of child art have been studied: the aesthetic, i.e., how good, or expressive, or authentic the image created by the child is; and the developmental, i.e., how best to describe a child’s acquisition of graphic fluency (Golomb 1993; Kindler & Darras 1997; Kindler et al. 2002; → Art as Communication; Media Use and Child Development; Media Use by Children; Visual Representation).

Aesthetic judgments about children’s art are always the result of applying adult norms (Pariser 1997; 2006). Thus, judgments about the aesthetic worth of children’s art are highly contentious, and are best resolved with the antique quip *De gustibus non est disputandum* (There’s no accounting for taste; → Taste Culture). Wilson (2004) noted that the art that children make for themselves borrows heavily from → popular culture (→ Comics), while the look of “school art” reflects the aesthetic choices and preferences of art teachers (Kindler et al. 2002). The move to use popular culture as a source for motivating children’s school art has been much criticized by some modernist educators who define visual art as an exercise in craft and tradition, which gives form to humanistic insight, and comforts the afflicted (Smith 1998). Postmodernist educators see “art” as an open game whose sole purpose is to articulate a social agenda and to provoke the complacent. For the postmodern defenders of transgressive art, the notion of the art object as the occasion for aesthetic experience is a defense of outdated privilege (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

This clash of views has implications for the *identification of authentic child art*. The romantics and their modernist successors celebrated certain features of children’s artwork, its supposedly atavistic spontaneity and formal boldness (Fineberg 1997). Postmodernists, however, expect “real” child art to reveal the uncertainties and difficulties

of postmodern existence. Thus, pop-star cameos and photos of the latest human or natural catastrophe constitute the genuine visual language to use for teaching children art. We note here that there is no empirical basis for postmodernist claims that popular culture is an effective resource for teaching art.

When it comes to describing the trajectory of children's development in the visual arts the classic, stage-bound, linear description is enshrined in the work of Lowenfeld (1947), but it is being displaced by other models. Wolf & Perry (1988) conceived of individual artistic development as the simultaneous exploration of multiple repertoires of representation. Thus, teachers should consider that a child might be trying to master naturalistic drawing at the same time as she is acquiring skills in map drawing, schematic rendering, and cartooning.

The insight that informed Wolf & Perry's model was formalized in Kindler & Darras's (1997) elaboration. Theirs is a multiple-terminus model that describes graphic development as movement along a diverse network of pathways that any given child might travel as she attempts to communicate various ideas. The media explored by children go beyond the two-dimensional and include gesture, language, and the use of still and moving photographic images (→ Visual Communication). In many cases children integrate media, combining image with sound or gesture. Citing Vygotsky (1978), the authors emphasize the ways in which children rely for support on all aspects of their cultural environment (→ Socialization by the Media). This model expands the category of what constitutes child art. Where the term used to refer to material that could be displayed on the refrigerator, we are now dealing with child artwork that may require a DVD player or a computer screen in order to realize the child's communicative intentions (→ Digital Imagery).

SEE ALSO: ► Aesthetics ► Art as Communication ► Comics ► Digital Imagery  
 ► Media Use and Child Development ► Media Use by Children ► Popular Culture  
 ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Socialization by the Media ► Taste Culture  
 ► Visual Communication ► Visual Culture ► Visual Representation

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## Child Protection, Media Regulations for

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In democratic societies, the fundamental, core principle of freedom of speech must often be balanced with the need to protect children from harm. This issue has dominated the public debate over children and the media throughout the twentieth century, often moving to the forefront during the entry of a new medium, when parental anxieties are particularly high (→ Media Use and Child Development). Since the earliest days of television and continuing into the digital age, parents' groups, health professionals, and educators have organized numerous campaigns to protect young people from various kinds of harmful media content, often calling on the government to enact safeguards (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of).

These efforts reached a high level of intensity in the 1990s, as the growth and expansion of the → Internet and a host of accompanying digital technologies transformed the media system (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Several governments have responded with regulations designed to shield children from violent and sexually explicit material in the media. Presented below is an overview of some of these regulations as they have been proposed and carried out in a number of countries (→ Internet Law and Regulation; Sex and Pornography Online).

Concerns over TV violence began as early as the 1950s in the US, when Congress first took up the issue in hearings on juvenile delinquency. Over the years, dozens of bills aimed at reducing television violence were introduced, but none became law. However, when the US Congress passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996, it contained a provision requiring, for the first time, that all new television sets be equipped with an electronic chip that would enable parents to block certain programs (Federman 1998). The *V-chip* is designed to work with the TV Parental Guidelines, a system for labeling program content that was developed by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA). During the first few years after the V-chip mandate took effect, neither the television industry nor the manufacturers did very much to educate the public about it. Surveys of parents showed considerable confusion about how the V-chip functioned or what the ratings meant. In 2004, when the government began cracking down on broadcasters over indecent content, the television industry launched several high-profile campaigns to promote the V-chip, but these moves have not thwarted further efforts by advocacy groups and law-makers to push for additional regulations (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).



In Canada (where the V-chip was invented and where it is also largely ignored by the viewing public), the emphasis has been on voluntary measures on the part of industry, including the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' Action Group on Violence on Television and the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America). The European Union, in contrast, as part of its longstanding "Television without Frontiers" initiative, has rejected the V-chip in favor of purely rhetorical devices: "Programs which might seriously impair the development of minors are prohibited," according to a June 1997 Directive of the European Commission (without, however, specifying any means of enforcement). "Those which might simply be harmful to minors must, where they are not encrypted, be preceded by an acoustic warning or made clearly identifiable throughout their duration by means of a visual symbol" (→ European Union: Communication Law). As with the concern over racist and misogynist lyrics in popular music and depictions of violence in → video games, the debate over television programming unsuitable for children continues.

While the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, in its 1999 *Report on new media*, announced that it would not attempt to regulate the Internet and video games under the Canadian Broadcasting Act, other governments have been much more aggressive in these areas. Concerns over "cyberporn" and its impact on the safety of children and youth began during the mid-1990s, as the Internet began to make its way into more and more homes. The EU-funded COPINE (Combating Paedophile Information Networks in Europe) project, for example, is part of a larger effort to combat child pornography on the Internet. More generally, the EU's Safer Internet initiative (launched in 1999 and expanded in 2004 as Safer Internet Plus) promotes the use of hotlines, rating and filtering technology, public awareness campaigns, and other cooperative ventures to protect children online.

In the US, the Communications Decency Act (CDA), passed as part of the omnibus Telecommunications Act of 1996, imposed fines and possible jail sentences on anyone found guilty of transmitting obscene or indecent material with the knowledge that minors under 18 could receive it. Civil liberty groups challenged the CDA in the courts, and the Supreme Court struck it down within a year of its passage. Over the next two years, new laws were passed to replace the defunct CDA (→ Pornography, Media Law on). The Child Online Protection Act (COPA), enacted in the US in 1998, for example, would make it a crime for commercial organizations to allow access by those under 17 to sexual material deemed "harmful to minors." An official commission was set up through the National Academies of Science to work through some of the complicated challenges posed by the Internet indecency legislation, but because of challenges by civil liberty groups, the law has been blocked in a series of court decisions.

In contrast to COPA, the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed in the US in 2000, has been successfully implemented. That law requires libraries and schools receiving federal discounts and funding for computers and Internet access to install filters on computers used by minors, in order to restrict their access to harmful material on the Internet (American Library Association 2006). A survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that more than half of Internet-connected families with teens are using some kind of filter, although the overall effectiveness of this technology remains unclear. The US government passed a law in 2003 creating a "dot-kids" domain,

an official subsection of the .us domain, described as a “child-friendly” safe zone for children under 13. The following year in Europe, such concerns were extended to mobile networks (as an emerging major carrier of online content), with the formation by the European Internet Coregulation Network (a consortium of nine private organizations) of a working group on child protection and mobile phones.

The public policy debates over violent and indecent content during the 1990s left a legacy of “parental empowerment tools,” including an array of rating systems, filtering software products, and labeling schemes, as well as dozens of private, self-regulatory initiatives that are now institutionalized into the expanding media landscape. But the persistent public focus on media harm to children and teenagers has also created a climate within government, the educational community, and industry that positions young people primarily as potential victims in need of protection, rather than as productive participants in digital media culture. Such concerns have diverted attention away from developing a broader understanding of the role of media as a positive force in the lives of children and youth.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► European Union: Communication Law ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Internet ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Media Use and Child Development ► Pornography, Media Law on ► Sex and Pornography Online ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Video Games ► Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## **Chile: Media System**

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Chile is a country of over 16 million people, lying along the southwest coast of South America. Becoming independent from Spain after 1810, Chile evolved as a republic with

strong democratic traditions, until a major coup in 1973. The development of media in Chile has been unique in its region, principally because of the following interregnum of dictatorship from 1973 until 1988, which accelerated the adoption of neo-liberal policies. By the mid-2000s, although it still had a local press duopoly like its neighbors, Chile's degree of commercialization and of foreign ownership in radio, in free as well as pay television, and in related telecommunication services, notably the Internet, set it apart from the conventional model in the region of local family oligopolies.

Clearly, the *dictatorship* was a crucial turning point in Chile's history, including that of the media. Prior to September 11, 1973, when a military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet overthrew the legally elected Unidad Popular government of Salvador Allende, there was a highly politicized press, with five pro-government dailies and the government's own publishing house, Quimantú, lined up against the three dailies and regional papers of the conservative Edwards family's El Mercurio group. Centered in the capital and most populous city, Santiago, their papers dated back to the beginning of the twentieth century. As well, the Copesa company had one daily, and there was one other, *Clarín*.

As for broadcasting, radio had developed as a wholly commercial medium ever since the 1920s, when Chile was the first country in the region to adopt it, but in the 1960s, in order to keep television independent of both commercial and state control, the first licenses were given to universities, and funded jointly by state subsidies and advertising. This system was quite distinct in the region. The General Law of 1970 also set up a national state network and regulatory body (→ Radio Networks).

With the coup, all left-wing newspapers were closed down, and even those of the center-right and right squeezed out of existence. The state → television network was seized, and put under direct control of the new regime, and laws were passed in the name of state security to obstruct journalistic investigation and otherwise impose censorship of media content. Scores of journalists were killed or made to disappear, and hundreds sent into exile (→ Violence against Journalists). As the dictatorship consolidated itself, the press settled into a duopoly of El Mercurio and Copesa, while state subsidies were withdrawn from television, obliging networks to conform to an exclusively advertising-supported system. Before the end of the Pinochet years, the basis was laid for the subsequent development of privately owned broadcast and cable television networks (→ Communication Law and Policy: South America).

Under the constitution with which the dictatorship sought to legitimize itself in 1980, a plebiscite on the junta's rule was set down for 1988, and as that time approached, some opposition *daily newspapers* emerged, joining a flourishing alternative media scene. Pinochet was rejected in the plebiscite, ushering in an era of democratic transition under the Concertación, a coalition of pro-democratic parties. However, because the Concertación continued to pursue much the same kind of neo-liberal policies as were introduced by Pinochet, reform-minded Chileans were disillusioned by a failure to achieve the level of democracy and diversity they had expected. For example, the new government gave no support to the progressive dailies, and even online newspapers failed in a market still dominated by the El Mercurio–Copesa duopoly. Media reform was not a priority: it took until 2001 before the former dictatorship's media controls were superseded by a new press law.

Similarly with *television*, the Concertación government favored a neo-liberal approach, facilitating a privatized, commercial system, which has come to eclipse the university-based public service model. University channels and the national state network still form part of the Chilean system, however, regulated under the National Council for Television, but all are advertising-based. Even before the end of the dictatorship, broadcast television was in 95 percent of homes, and after 1990 the new government intensified the commercialization of the industry by carrying through the junta's initiative in permitting two private channels to open up, at the same time allowing cross-media and foreign ownership (→ Commercialization of the Media). These provisions initially enabled Copesa to acquire a network, while Mexican and Venezuelan media conglomerates were able to obtain significant interests in the industry later during the 1990s (→ Media Conglomerates). In terms of → advertising, television overtook print as the premium advertising medium early in the decade, and by 2004 was reaping almost half of total advertising media expenditure. Though radio lags behind even print in its attraction for advertisers, its reach extends into more remote areas than television, and it has undergone a similar internationalization of ownership.

However, the greatest extent of foreign ownership is found in the convergent media of *cable and satellite television*. Originally there were two cable providers, but the US companies involved in each of them, Liberty Media and UnitedGlobalCom, later merged within the US. In Chile, this created VTR GlobalCom, which in 2006 was claiming 80 percent of Chile's cable subscribers, as well as being the major → Internet service provider. Similarly, at the global level, the once-competing satellite services Sky and DirecTV merged with the Murdoch News Corporation takeover of DirecTV in 2004. The cases of both cable and satellite illustrate how foreign ownership can diminish media diversity, beyond the reach of national control (→ Satellite Communication, Regulation of). Both kinds of service tend to cater mainly for upper socio-economic groups, while broadcast television remains more of a mass medium. Nonetheless, pay services achieved over 20 percent market penetration by 2006, the highest in the region, stimulated by the availability of the "triple play" of fixed telephony, broadband internet access, and pay television in the one package. Consequently, there is also a high rate of computer ownership and Internet access.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Commercialization of the Media ► Communication Law and Policy: South America ► Internet ► Media Conglomerates ► Radio Networks ► Satellite Communication, Regulation of ► Television Networks ► Violence against Journalists

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## China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9)

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CCTV-9 is the global 24-hour English-language channel run by China Central Television (CCTV), the state-owned broadcaster of the People's Republic of China (PRC; → China: Media System; Newscast, 24-Hour). CCTV-9 has a dual function: (1) to provide → news and information about China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao in line with government policy, and (2) to provide news and information about world affairs from a PRC perspective. CCTV-9 is available globally via satellite, cable, and the Internet (→ Satellite Television; Cable Television; Internet). Its target audience is foreigners, both inside and outside the PRC. It plays a key role in *wai xuan* or “external publicity,” projecting for the PRC what Joseph Nye (2004) calls “soft power.”

CCTV-9 was *launched* on September 25, 2000, when the English-language programming was split off from CCTV's overseas-oriented channel, CCTV-4, which then became a global 24-hour Mandarin-language service. CCTV-9 and CCTV-4 are part of the Overseas Service Center at CCTV, which also operates a 24-hour global Spanish and French channel, CCTV E&F.

On May 3, 2004, CCTV-9 was *relaunched* as CCTV International, although it retains the channel identification CCTV-9. The relaunch was ordered by the Communist Party of China (CPC) Politburo member in charge of publicity, Li Changchun, who in 2003 had called for the creation of “China's CNN.” The idea of emulating → CNN, understood as an instrument of state power, had been circulating since at least 2001, when it was used to describe CCTV-9's role in the “going out” project.

The “going out” project was part of a long-term strategy to make the PRC's external publicity internationally competitive (Xu 2002). In April 2003, media involved in *wai xuan* were told to check whether reports helped create an international environment conducive to the PRC, whether they improved the PRC's image abroad, and whether they were conducive to safeguarding national security and stability. Media were charged with providing accurate information about the PRC's opening up, reform, and development, and promoting reunification with Taiwan as well as promoting the PRC's stated desire for world peace, development, and common prosperity.

In September 2003, Li Changchun further announced that CCTV-9 had to take issues such as the economy and travel, which Li delineated as of interest to foreigners, as the starting point for reporting, and at the same time to report the world's news, including news about the PRC, in a timely fashion. The goal was to make CCTV-9 an “international news channel in the genuine sense” (CCTV 2003; → International News Reporting).

The relaunch of CCTV-9 as CCTV International was aimed at creating a rolling news service that would eventually compete with channels like CNN International, the → BBC World Service and Al Jazeera International (→ Arab Satellite TV News). The ambiguity of a channel that is both an instrument of state power and committed to becoming an international news channel was glossed in the realization of Li's directive. The editorial

policy at CCTV-9 was to report foreign news according to international norms, and foreign policy and domestic news in line with official policy (→ Journalism; News Values; Standards of News; Journalism: Normative Theories). As a result, sensitive topics were variously reported from the government's point of view, toned down, or ignored. CCTV-9 was best understood as a hybrid channel that served both as a rolling news channel and as a government publicity organ, an amalgam of public service broadcaster like the → BBC, commercial news channel like CNN, and → propaganda channel like → Voice of America (→ Public Broadcasting Systems; Hybridity Theories).

CCTV-9 had a budget of 100 million renminbi (US\$12 million in 2005 figures) and about 300 staff, of whom some 30 were foreign nationals. Foreigners were employed primarily to copyedit stories and programs written or translated by domestic staff. Foreigners also worked as program hosts and news anchors. As part of its relationship with CCTV, → News Corporation provided CCTV-9 with consultants who periodically visited Beijing to advise management on strategies for targeting foreign audiences and to train program-makers and reporters. CCTV subscribed to the news wire and video services provided by Associated Press and Reuters, which provided the raw video and scripts for over 80 percent of the foreign news (→ News Agencies). Most of CCTV-9's domestic and foreign policy news programming was translated and rewritten from CCTV-1 (CCTV's flagship channel), and CCTV-4. CCTV-9 produced some of its own feature and entertainment programming and the reporting team generated about 10 percent of the news. CCTV-9 had video exchange agreements with several foreign broadcasters, but rarely used them.

CCTV-9 had two major departments, news and current affairs, and features. In 2007, the news and current affairs department had about 200 personnel and was providing 94 hours (56 percent) of programming weekly. The features department had 100 personnel and provided 74 hours (44 percent) of programming. Most news and current affairs were broadcast live. All feature programming was taped, and usually repeated once or twice daily.

The → audience for CCTV-9 was difficult to measure (→ Audience Research; Nielsen Ratings). CCTV did not include figures for CCTV-9 in its weekly ratings survey. Although the channel had become an indispensable instrument for foreigners living in the PRC with no access to other English-language programming, the bulk of CCTV-9's audience was thought to be local Chinese, most of them using it to help them learn English. In 2005, CCTV publicity materials claimed that the channel had 2.3 million subscribers outside the PRC.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Cable Television ▶ China: Media System ▶ CNN ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ International News Reporting ▶ International Television ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Corporation ▶ News Values ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Standards of News ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Voice of America

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## **China: Media System**

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For centuries, China stood as a leading civilization, outpacing the rest of the world in the arts and sciences. But in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, China was beset by civil unrest, major famines, military defeats, and foreign occupation. After World War II, the Communists, under chairman Mao Zedong, founded the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, which centralized control over almost every facet of Chinese life. After 1978, his successor, Deng Xiaoping, gradually introduced market-oriented reforms and decentralized economic decision-making. Political controls remain tight even while economic controls have continued to be relaxed under President Jiang Zemin (1993–2003) and President Hu Jintao (2003–).

China occupies a total of 9,360,000 square kilometers of land. The total population is approximately 1.3 billion. The Communist Party of China (CPC) is the key decision-making group in Chinese politics, economics, and security affairs, but the influence of non-party consultants, business leaders, and organizations has increased since the reform launched in early 1980s.

### **MEDIA REGULATION AND CONTROL**

The General Administration of Press and Publication (GAPP) is the government's administrative agency responsible for drafting and enforcing China's press regulations as well as screening books for content. The GAPP has the legal authority to screen, censor, and ban any print, electronic, or Internet publication in China (→ Censorship). Because all publishers, including those using the Internet, are required to be licensed by the GAPP, the agency also has the power to deny people the right to publish and to completely shut down any publisher that fails to follow its dictates.

China's State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) controls the content of all radio, television, satellite, and Internet broadcasts in China. The Ministry for Information Industry is responsible for regulating China's telecommunications and software industries. It also controls the licensing and registration of all Internet information services.

The Central Propaganda Department (CPD) is the Communist Party's counterpart to the government's GAPP and SARFT. Whereas the GAPP and SARFT exercise their powers through their authority to license publishers, the CPD is the organization primarily responsible for promoting and monitoring content to ensure that China's publishers, in particular its news publishers, disseminate information consistent with the Communist Party's policies and agendas. The CPD is a special organization that is highly involved in almost every aspect of China's media issues.

### PRINTED PRESS

China was among the first nations to have *printed newspapers*. The country's earliest newspaper, *Di Bao* (Court Gazette), debuted in the Tang Dynasty, during the first half of the eighth century (→ Newspaper, History of). The Chinese press, however, remained undeveloped until the late nineteenth century, when nearly 300 newspapers began mass circulation. In the early twentieth century, many progressive newspapers appeared to support bourgeois learning as part of the New Culture Movement. Between the two world wars, journalism under the Nationalists and the Communists saw steady growth (Chang 1989).

The number of Chinese newspapers increased approximately tenfold from 1950 to 2000. According to the GAPP (China Knowledge 2005), there were 100 million copies of daily newspapers printed every day in 2004, surpassing circulation figures for all other countries in the world, and making up 14.5 percent of the world's total number of daily newspapers in 2004. China had a total of 1,926 newspaper titles as of July 2005. The country has 218 party-affiliated newspaper titles, accounting for 11.3 percent of its total newspapers. Provincial newspaper titles reached 806, accounting for 41.8 percent, while city newspaper titles totaled 848, accounting for 46.9 percent.

There were only a limited number of *magazine and periodical titles* until the 1970s in China. While the exact number was unknown, it was reported that one-fourth of total circulation of all magazines was attributed in 1955 to two youth publications, *Chinese Youth* and the *High School Student* (Chang 1989). However, 9,500 magazine and periodical titles were published in 2006, among which more than 4,000 emphasize the natural science areas. This number also fairly represents the vast number of state-related institutions that are active in the publishing business (McCullagh 2006).

The total annual circulation of Chinese → magazines has been wavering between 2 and 3 billion copies for nearly 20 years. The average magazine purchase per capita per year has never reached more than three copies. Magazine advertising revenues are estimated to be \$500 million (McCullagh 2006).

Chinese magazines largely focus on general interest and leisure, which allow for simple and easy reading. The Chinese periodical industry, compared to other media, is slow in adapting to the information age and changing its business model accordingly.



## **RADIO AND TELEVISION**

The nation's official radio station is the Central People's Broadcasting Station (CPBS), which has eight channels, and broadcasts for a total of 156 hours per day through satellite (Huang 2006; → Radio). Every province and autonomous region has local broadcasting stations. China Radio International (CRI), the only national overseas broadcasting station, is aired to all parts of the world in 38 foreign languages, standard Chinese Mandarin, and four Chinese dialects, and its broadcasts total 290 hours every day. It offers a variety of programs consisting of news, current affairs, commentary, entertainment, politics, economy, culture, technology, and so on. Currently, CRI ranks third in overseas broadcasting time and languages in the world. There are approximately 1,000 radio broadcasting stations in China (Huang 2006).

The → television era did not begin in China until 1958, when the Beijing TV Station began servicing the capital city with one channel. Chinese radio was a step ahead, with the CPC establishing its first radio station in 1940 (Chang 1989).

In 1965, there were 12 television and 93 radio stations in China. In 1978, China had less than one television receiver per 100 people, and fewer than 10 million Chinese had access to a television set. However, at the time of writing there are about 25 TV sets per 100 people and approximately a billion Chinese have access to television (G. Xu 2003). By the end of 2005, there were approximately 2,450 television broadcast stations in China. Of these, 20 are administrated by China Central Television (CCTV), 31 are provincial TV stations, and nearly 2,400 are local city stations (Huang 2006).

CCTV is the largest and most powerful national television station in China. It has established business relations with more than 250 television organizations in over 130 countries and regions around the world. CCTV and some 3,000 television channels across the country constitute the largest television network in the world.

## **THE INTERNET**

The first computer network in China was the China Academic Network (CANET), set up in 1987. It provided email exchange services with the global → Internet via a gateway at Karlsruhe University in Germany. In spite of political and social concerns, the Internet has seen rapid growth in the last decade. Today, there are 123 million Internet users and the number is expected to hit 180 million by 2010 (CINIC 2006), making China the second largest Internet-using nation after the United States. According to China's Ministry of Information Industry (MII), three major Chinese metropolises, Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin, have the highest concentration of Internet users, with 28 percent of Beijing's population having access to the Internet.

China's broadband users have reached 77 million, about two-thirds of the total Chinese online population. This represents roughly 11 percent of Internet users in the world. Although mainland China has the second-largest Internet population, its penetration of 9.9 percent lags far behind nations like the United States and Japan. However, the price of broadband connections is fairly reasonable, financially within reach for the Chinese middle class. A wide gap exists between Internet use in cities and rural areas.

The number of websites has risen by more than 110,000 to a total of 788,400 (CINIC 2006). Blogging has also become a new way of communication for scholars, researchers, novelists, and social activists.

### NEWS AGENCY AND MULTIMEDIA GROUP

*Xinhua* is the nation's official → news agency, headquartered in Beijing. It was established in 1931 and is known as one of the major international news agencies in the world, with over 100 branch offices internationally. It has more than 7,000 staff engaging in news coverage, management and operations, and technical work. Its news gathering and processing system consists of three parts, namely the head office, domestic branches, and overseas branches. In many ways, *Xinhua* is the fuel propelling China's print media. Perhaps unique in the world because of its role, size, and reach, *Xinhua* reports directly to the CPC's Department of Propaganda. Because most newspapers in China cannot afford to station correspondents abroad, or even in every Chinese province, they rely on *Xinhua* feeds to fill their pages. The *People's Daily*, for example, uses *Xinhua* material for approximately a quarter of its stories. *Xinhua* is more than just a news agency, however; it is a publisher as well, with more than 20 newspapers and a dozen magazines in Chinese, English, Spanish, French, Russian, and Arabic.

China's membership of the World Trade Organization began on December 11, 2001. In response to competition and challenges from overseas media groups, the Chinese government organized state conglomerates by establishing transregional multimedia news groups in 2001 in order to compete on the transnational media giants' terms. The *China Radio, Film and Television Group*, founded by the end of 2001, combined the resources and power of the central-level radio, television, and film industry with the radio and television Internet companies, through the varied avenues of television, Internet, publishing, and advertisement. It is the biggest and most powerful multimedia group in China. At the same time, Chinese media began to cooperate with overseas media groups.

Prominent newspaper groups in China include the Guangzhou Daily Newspaper Group, the Beijing Daily Newspaper Group, the Wenhui Xinmin Associated Newspaper Group, the Liberation Daily Newspaper Group, and the Zhejiang Daily Newspaper Group. Among electronic conglomerates are the Hunan Radio, TV, and Film Group, the Shanghai Radio, TV, and Film Group, and the China Radio, Film and Television Group.

### CHANGING MEDIA ENVIRONMENT

Within the PRC, there has been heavy government involvement in the media for some decades. A number of the largest media organizations are seen as mouthpieces of the government. There are certain taboos and red lines within the media in mainland China, such as questioning the legitimacy of the CPC. Yet within those restrictions, there is vibrancy and diversity of the media as well as fairly open discussion of social issues and policy options within the parameters set by the party (Paradise 2004).

Much of the surprising diversity in the media in mainland China can be attributed to the fact that most state media outlets no longer receive large government subsidies and

have to largely depend on commercial advertising (Zhao 1998). Therefore, they can no longer fulfill the sole function of mouthpieces for the government; instead they must produce programming that attracts and interests people so that they can survive and develop through advertising revenue. In addition, while the government does issue directives defining what can and cannot be published, it does not prevent state media outlets from competing with each other for viewers and commercial advertising.

Government control of information can also be ineffective in other ways. Despite government restrictions, much information is gathered either at the local level or from foreign sources and passed on through personal conversations, text messaging, and the Internet. The withdrawal of government media subsidies has caused many newspapers, including some owned by the CPC, to take editorial stands which are bold and critical of the government. This has come about as the necessity of attracting readers and avoiding bankruptcy has become a more pressing fear than that of government repression (Zhu 1997).

Chinese newspapers have been particularly affected by the loss of government subsidies, and have used investigative reporting and muckraking tactics in order to gain readership. As a result, even papers that are nominally owned by the CPC are sometimes very bold in reporting social issues. However, both commercial pressures and government restrictions have recently caused newspapers to focus on lurid scandals often involving local officials who have relatively little political power. Chinese newspapers tend to lack in-depth analysis of political events that are seen as politically sensitive.

This separation between ideological dependence and financial independence has led to two interesting phenomena. First, most newspapers have begun to increase the number of pages printed in order to include light reading material. Publishers hope this method will help to increase readership and maximize advertising income. Second, some have become media conglomerates by acquiring or founding other businesses (W. Xu 2002). The *Guangzhou Daily Newspaper Group*, for example, owns 13 newspapers, four magazines, one publishing house, and one web station, in addition to advertising, printing, chain supermarkets, hotels, restaurants, and clubs (C. Lee 2003).

The deepening of market reforms has typically resulted in two types of outcome. One is the change of the media ownership structure. Although by law Chinese mass media could not be owned or operated by private sectors or individuals, the development of the stock market has begun to erode the state-owned basis deeply. The other typical outcome is the introduction of world professional standards, direct investment, and advanced management, which is a positive sign of China's integration into broader world standards. Although there is no concrete evidence that the greater participation in political affairs and relative autonomy will eventually lead to freedom of the press, an elite-journalist group, eager to shoulder more social responsibility for the mass public rather than ideological gospels, is steadily taking shape in China (Pan & Lu 2003).

Although the trend in mainland China clearly is toward greater media autonomy and diversity and away from government control and intimidation, cross-currents of resistance persist. Powerful domestic institutions still constrain efforts by the media to become more autonomous and politically diverse.

With the economic development that started in the 1980s, and the arrival of the Internet in the 1990s, Chinese media have become more diverse as they extend their reach throughout China and accommodate their content to mass audience for the sake of

advertising revenue. China's media reform started in the early 1990s, and while the pace was slow, the process of change is inevitable (P. Lee 1994).

Institutional change allows governmental authority and media practitioners to work together to explore some new paths, even though a clear destination is still uncertain. The basic principles of the party-state system remain heavily rooted and powerful (Pan 2005). Journalists have to effectively manage the tensions between market forces and the party-press system in order to reduce political and financial risks in media change. This juggling act often limits them to pursuing professional ideals in a highly restricted manner. Devising and establishing new methods constitutes a mode of media change in this transitional society where the central authority, through its control of political resources and ideological ownership over all media, initiates reforms and sets their speed, depth, and parameters. Viewed in this context, the trajectory of China's media reforms may be hard to predict; much is dependent on the political climate in the forecast (Pan 2005). While the ongoing media change is expanding the presence of and voices from people of different social milieus in the media, such representation enhances the welfare of the public without jeopardizing the authority of the regime.

SEE ALSO: ▶ China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media History ▶ News Agencies ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## Cinema

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Provisionally, we can define cinema as on-screen (and even large-screen) presentation of moving images that have been pre-recorded photo-chemically on some support (most often, strips of celluloid).

Among the practices of modern, mass-disseminated visual culture, the cinema was perhaps the pre-eminent form for at least the first half of the twentieth century (after which it confronted challenges for audiences' attention from television) and it certainly continues to exert great impact on both leisure activities and the visual education of publics worldwide into the twenty-first century (→ Popular Culture). As film theorists of the 1970s were fond of declaring, the cinema combines a technical apparatus – that is, technology for capturing images; technology for presenting those images to viewers – and a mental apparatus – that is, the psychological dispositions that encourage spectators to invest cinematic images with great affective power (→ Film Theory). That so many ordinary citizens report that their first response to the media images of 9/11 was to be reminded of → Hollywood big-explosion disaster films (and even perhaps wonder if they weren't seeing “just a movie”) is a sobering reminder of the cinema's ongoing emotional power, its ability to insinuate its imaginary visions into our very mental make-up.

### **HISTORICAL CHALLENGES TO ABSOLUTE DEFINITIONS OF CINEMA**

The cinema emerged out of the rich visual culture of nineteenth-century western society as an art that gave motion to the still images of photography (→ Cinematography, History of; Visual Culture). While the earliest films were single-shot renditions of everyday reality and delighted spectators simply by projecting their ordinary world to them, very quickly creative filmmakers used editing and staged scenes to construct narrative fictions that grew in complexity. The art of film came in the public imagination to be identified with entertainment stories geared for mass consumption around the globe (→ Global Media, History of).

Paradoxically, though, while its very popularity makes it seem easy to say what the cinema is, most definitions of the form capture only some part of the cinematic experience as it has evolved over time and been disseminated across the globe. But to return to the

provisional definition of cinema offered above, the actual history of cinema suggests that virtually every term in such a “definition” is at best a generalization from specific practices particular to just some phases of cinema’s complex history. For instance, although it is easy to associate film with movement and thereby distinguish it from, say, more seemingly static visual culture such as → photography (and here the etymological derivation of “cinema” from “kinetic” can encourage such association), some filmmakers play with stasis in ways that seek directly to challenge cinema’s ostensible kinesis. The motion of the film strip through the projector does not necessarily imply motion in the images that are then presented on the screen. Here, an extreme example might be Andy Warhol’s 1964 film *Empire*, which lasts close to 8 hours and offers a fixed shot of New York’s Empire State Building. While there is some “action” in the film (for example, a blinking light comes on the building as night falls), it is minimal, and Warhol slowed down the experience even more by shooting the film at fast speed (which generates more film stock and therefore extends projection time).

Warhol has been termed an experimental or avant-garde filmmaker, and it has been one of the goals of experimenters in the arts to challenge any attempt to fix artistic forms within rigid definitions. Where narrative diversion has been a, if not the, primary historical form of cinema, avant-garde artists seek other functions for the art form. Additional challenges to an encompassing definition come from the evolution of technologies for the capture and display of images and from changes in the roles those images take on for their various publics.

For example, it might be tempting to *distinguish cinema from, say, → television* by the supposed intimacy of the latter within the privatized realm of domesticity (television as a medium of the home). But it is clear that from the second half of the twentieth century on, there were various forms of convergence between screen practices, both large and small, public and private, that blurred the boundaries of cinema and other forms of moving-image culture. Is the ritual holiday presentation of *The wizard of Oz* (1939) on television part of cinema history (the holiday viewings are in fact where the popular veneration of the film really took off) or part of television history, or both? Is the viewing of a feature film on a computer screen or even, as is becoming more possible, on a mobile phone still part of a cinematic experience we so traditionally assume involves public movie-going? Conversely, is the viewing of a loud, explosion-filled Hollywood blockbuster on a television screen at home not to be called movie viewing, especially if the television is a large-screen “home theater” (which may be hooked up to a domestic version of multi-track Dolby and THX sound; → Digitization and Media Convergence)?

In today’s movie business, the public projection of a film in theaters is often only a first stage in a process in which the individual film moves across *multiple media platforms* – from theater to DVD, to subscription → cable television and cable video-on-demand, to computer screen, to large-screen home projection to hand-held device, and on and on. If we are tempted to think stereotypically of cinema as an independent cultural form centered on the experience of seeing films in a theater, then it seems increasingly likely that such singular imagining of cinema is partial and inadequate. It is the prediction, moreover, of most media experts that digital filmmaking and digital projection will eventually supplant most production and exhibition through the physical format of film stock, and this rendering virtual of film images will no doubt further the convergence of

cinema with other forms of digital culture such as television shows and video games (→ Digital Imagery).

### **FROM THE HISTORICAL VARIABILITY OF THE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE TO HOLLYWOOD HEGEMONY**

It is likely, then, that an understanding of cinema requires less an ontology (that is, a definition of the very being, the very nature, of the cultural form) than a history or a sociology of the various forms of cinema that have been and will be. Indeed, if we associate “cinema” with the experience of public, theatrical projection of moving images, that is because historically such experience became the socially dominant form for the art. Revealingly, many of the very first films were viewed not in public, theatrical contexts but on a person-by-person basis: in particular, the Edison Kinetoscope of the late nineteenth century involved the film strip running inside a large box that single spectators peered into one at a time. It was not inevitable that screen images would cease to be viewed in such privatized, individualized fashion, and it was in large part the impact of market conditions – the financial need to bring in more revenue by bringing more people into contact with the cultural form – that led to larger screen projection viewable by collective audiences rather than just individuals alone.

Clearly, the historically hegemonic form of cinema through the twentieth century was the narrative, fiction film, with the *US film industry* in particular assuming domination of the world market (→ Film Production). In the earliest decades, Europe had been in the forefront of production and distribution, but World War I left many European film companies in a shambles and US firms quickly gained a comparative advantage in the world market for film entertainment. For many audiences, cinema means “the movies,” by which the intention is to describe an entertaining, diverting, and kinetically moving form of leisure culture based on identification with on-screen characters who are involved in stories often of romance and action. That identification is fostered by film techniques that render the image seductive (for example, in Hollywood’s so-called Golden Age, soft focus might be used in close-ups of stereotypically beautiful women stars to give them an additionally attractive ethereal quality) and by the → star system itself, which implied that certain people stood out from the crowd and deserved special adulation for their grace and glamour (→ Cinematography).

The seductiveness of Hollywood fictions centered on vibrant protagonists could be so strong as to cast its spell over cinematic forms that set out precisely to move away from fiction and offer an imputed direct engagement with everyday reality. Thus, many works from documentary cinema adopt compelling narrative form and center on figures who fight the odds to insist on their place in the world: from Robert Flaherty’s portrayal of the resilient Eskimo who keeps at his battle with savage nature in *Nanook of the North* (1922) to Michael Moore’s documentary box office hits like *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), the history of the nonfiction film is to a large degree the tale of its complicated encounter with fiction, narrative engagement, and entertainment (→ Documentary Film).

Throughout its history, indeed, the documentary film has had to bear the charge that its seemingly direct presentation of reality is in fact mediated in ways that blur the boundaries of truth and fiction. The infamous manner by which Leni Riefenstahl’s 1935

documentary *Triumph of the will* set out to propagandize for Adolf Hitler as a seemingly god-like figure of incomparable charisma is only the most explicit example of a constant temptation in documentary to turn instruction into preplanned and prepackaged emotional persuasion (→ Propaganda in World War II). The documentary may set out to educate but it also frequently intends to seduce, and here the rhetorical devices of Hollywood storytelling are frequently an evident resource: not for nothing was the celebrated wartime propaganda series, *Why we fight* (1943), which set out in rousing fashion to mold ordinary citizens' support of the war efforts of the Allies, put together by Frank Capra, a Hollywood director well known for films of intense emotionalism and sentimental appeal.

Hollywood's hegemony over publicly shared image culture throughout the globe has raised concerns by → censorship organizations, moral custodians, and even governments over the power of this visual medium. For instance, in the domestic market of the US itself, worry over the potentially *deleterious effect of audience identification* with glamorously portrayed but morally dubious characters led to the imposition of a code of permissible content in films that achieved refinement at the beginning of the period of the sound film (the late 1920s and early 1930s) and then lasted for decades.

At the same historical moment, a group of conservative religious figures who worried over the *movies' impact on morals* decided to give their condemnation scientific standing by turning to social scientists for experiments that would “prove” the cinema's negative effects on behavior, conduct, and even health and personal well-being: with funding from a private foundation concerned with reform morals, the Payne Fund, the scientists produced over 10 volumes through the first half of the 1930s (→ Media Effects, History of; Morality and Taste in Media Content). The results of their investigations were somewhat mixed but it is clear that there was pressure on these social scientists to come up with conclusions that at least imagined popular cinema to likely have deleterious effects on public morals. However compromised in their research objectivity, the Payne Fund studies on the influence of movies are still cited in the literature of communication studies as one of the first concerted efforts – albeit highly biased in intent and highly questionable in control of method, collection of data, and interpretation of experimental results – by social science to conduct communications research on media effects for a specific form of modern popular culture.

### ALTERNATIVES TO HOLLYWOOD

Globally, there has historically been concern about the hegemony of Hollywood over other national cinemas, and resistance to the perceived power of the American feature film has manifested itself most immediately in such forms as quotas (percentages of indigenous production versus American film allowed into diverse national or regional markets), incentives (such as tax breaks) to local filmmakers, subventions of filmmaking when it concerns indigenous subject matter, and so on. The history of cinema is simultaneously the *history of a dominant industry* centered in Hollywood and the diversity of alternatives that have arisen elsewhere over time. This “elsewhere” can include American sites in which there is an attempt to articulate non-Hollywood modes of production: for example, the avant-garde film scenes of New York and San Francisco in the 1960s or the rough urban filmmaking of blaxploitation in the 1970s (which ironically was itself eventually largely co-opted and commercialized by Hollywood itself).



In some cases, the intent of filmmakers outside of the Hollywood system is to rival Hollywood at its own game by intensifying the entertainment propensities of various genres of playful diversion (→ Film Genres). For instance, *Italian “spaghetti westerns”* of the 1960s or *Hong Kong “kung fu” action films* from more recent years take inspiration from Hollywood genres of violence (for example, the western or the gangster story) as well as from Hollywood investment in the glamorous star (for example, in the Hong Kong case, the male star, whose characters exhibit extreme prowess in scenes of combat; → Hong Kong Cinema). Thereby, these non-Hollywood genres set out to articulate their own particularly seductive form of action through choreographed set pieces in which violent men move virtually balletically as they go about their work of mayhem.

In the 1980s, to take a very different example, a *French film industry* that was decidedly commercial in intent revitalized itself by focusing on the screwball genre of popular, fast-talking comedies of amorous and personal misunderstanding (as in the big indigenous hit, *Trois hommes et un couffin* [1985], about three carefree bachelors who suddenly “inherit” a baby from a single mom and must learn familial responsibility). Perhaps predictably, the success of such genre cinema has caught Hollywood’s attention and led to such phenomena as the hiring of global talent into the American system (for example, the revered Hong Kong action director John Woo was brought to Hollywood, as were seductive actors like Chow-Yung Fat) and to Hollywood remakes of successful genre films from the foreign scene (thus, *Trois hommes* became *Three men and a baby* [1987]).

Other global filmmakers and film industries find their own specificity less by extension or emulation of Hollywood genre entertainment than by the production of films that they assume offer audiences experiences that fall outside the purview of Hollywood escapism. For instance, in the 1960s and 1970s, a number of filmmakers in so-called “third world” countries set out, often with government support through production subvention, to challenge what they saw as their media industries’ risk of dependency on US hegemony in the cultural realm. Against the glossy visual perfection of the Hollywood film, some filmmakers (for example, in Latin and South America) thus militated for an activist cinema that would be rough or deliberately imperfect in look and politically confrontational in subject matter. This cinema was sometimes termed “third cinema” or “imperfect cinema.”

Yet other filmmakers have been driven by the assumption that there needs to be an encouragement of cinematic forms other than that Hollywood one geared ostensibly to passively absorbed entertainment. The alternative for these filmmakers is to create works that they assume lead to the audience’s intellectual engagement with what it is seeing and to reflection on both artistic and existential issues as well as political ones. Thus, in the period after the Russian Revolution of 1917, a number of *Soviet filmmakers* such as Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein set out to construct a dialectical cinema that would refuse easy entertainment and dramatically compel spectators toward new social attitudes.

Likewise, in the late 1950s and early 1960s especially, what was termed “*European art cinema*” was rich with films that offered thematic complexity, moral dilemma, intellectual puzzle, dis-identification with character, and philosophical reflection, along with an anti-narrative refusal of closure and the tying up of all enigmas with a happy ending. One strategy was to end with a freeze frame in which characters were caught in the midst of making a decision about life options – see, for instance, the famous last shot of François Truffaut’s *The 400 blows* (1959) with its truant boy stuck at the ocean’s edge not sure

where to go – and in which it was assumed the audience itself had to puzzle out intellectually what could or even should happen next.

Significantly, this emphasis in the 1950s and 1960s on an “art cinema” that ostensibly encourages the audience both to think and to appreciate concerted experimentation with cinematic language was complemented in the 1960s by criticism and scholarship that themselves emphasized a cinema of aesthetic distinction from Hollywood light diversion (→ Aesthetics; Art as Communication). Central to this new critical discourse was an emphasis on the film director as “auteur” – that is, a veritable author who, even with a screenplay written by someone else, imposed his or her own thematic vision on the finished work of film art. By the 1970s, the Hollywood film industry itself – which had seen its own efficacy of production and its own grasp of the world filmmaking scene challenged with the coming of television, the break-up of the old studios, and the influx of new subject matter in the area of sex and violence in ways that showed up Hollywood’s censorious fastidiousness as old-fashioned and out of step with the times – came to invigorate itself precisely by a turn to auteur-driven filmmaking.

For a while, Hollywood filmmaking ceased to seem conformist in order to give witness to films that appeared to have “something to say.” For instance, Robert Altman’s *McCabe and Mrs Miller* (1971) is essentially a “European” type art film but made from within the Hollywood system: this work employs ambiguity of character (is McCabe [Warren Beatty] a hero or not?), distinctiveness of visual style, critique of dominant power structures, thought-provoking thematic resonance, relative explicitness of violence and sexual reference, lack of full narrative closure, deconstruction of genre (in this case, the western) and its pleasures, and so on. However, as much as the “auteur” was intended to serve a directly critical function – reminding one that escapist cinema was precisely a site in which personal voice was rare – it was clearly also a sort of branding by which artful films could be promoted and sold to their target audiences. In this way, a cinema of supposed distinction rejoins the commercial impulses of dominant movie entertainment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship ▶ Cinematography ▶ Cinematography, History of ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Film Genres ▶ Film Production ▶ Film Theory ▶ Global Media, History of ▶ Hollywood ▶ Hong Kong Cinema ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Photography ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Stars ▶ Television ▶ Visual Culture

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# Cinematography

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Cinematography is the technique of photographing motion pictures. The art of cinematography involves working with three distinct sets of tools: the camera, the film, and the lighting. We can make useful distinctions among cinematography, *mise en scène*, and editing. Whereas *mise en scène* involves the arrangement of details in front of the camera, cinematography involves the act of capturing this arrangement on film (→ Film Production). The result of this process is a set of shots that can be cut together in the process of editing. Although these distinctions are not always clear-cut, cinematography is one of the major components of a film's visual style, playing a powerful role in shaping the spectator's experience of cinematic time and space.

## THE BASIC TOOLS OF CINEMATOGRAPHY

In the area of camerawork, the cinematographer can shape the appearance of an image in several ways. For instance, a lens with a short focal length captures a wide angle of view, while a lens with a long focal length (also known as a telephoto lens) captures a narrower angle of view. The resulting images have distinctive characteristics. It is often said that a telephoto lens “flattens” the image, while a wide-angle lens will produce more apparent depth. In Michelangelo Antonioni's *Red Desert* (1964), cinematographer Carlo Di Palma alternates between wide-angle and telephoto lenses to produce a disorienting sense of space, shifting back and forth between flatness and depth.

Each lens is also equipped with an iris, or aperture. By opening the aperture, a cinematographer can allow more light to hit the film. The size of the aperture is one of the most important factors in manipulating depth of field, the range of distance in which objects are in acceptable focus. Opening the aperture decreases depth of field; closing the aperture increases it. In Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941), cinematographer Gregg Toland uses an array of techniques, including a narrow aperture, to produce deep-focus images, allowing the spectator to see both the foreground and the background in sharp focus.

Cinematographic composition is often dynamic, incorporating both figure movement and camera movement. The camera movement options include pans, tilts, dollies, and cranes. A zoom looks similar to a dolly, but it is actually a manipulation of the lens, moving from wide-angle to telephoto, or vice versa. While many films use editing to direct the spectator's attention, some filmmakers rely more heavily on camerawork, using dollies and zooms to move from long shot to close-up and back again. The Hungarian filmmaker Miklós Jancsó is a master of this approach (see Bordwell 1985).

In composing the image, the camera crew must consider the aspect ratio of the film. This ratio measures the width to height of the image. During the silent period, the most common ratio was 1.33 to 1; in other words, the image had 1.33 times more width than height. During the 1950s, several new widescreen ratios were introduced, such as CinemaScope, with a typical ratio of about 2.35 to 1.

Since the introduction of sound, the film normally runs through the camera at 24 frames per second, but a filmmaker can produce special effects by altering the camera speed. A fast-running camera produces a slow-motion image, and a slow-running camera produces a fast-motion image. In Dziga Vertov's *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), cinematographer Mikhail Kaufman uses fast motion to convey the pace of the modern city.

The choice of film stock can produce variations in contrast, color, and grain. In Oliver Stone's *JFK* (1991), cinematographer Robert Richardson creates a collage of visual styles by mixing several different types of film stock. The cinematographer can also work with the laboratory to manipulate the image in developing and printing. The lab can correct routine cinematographic errors, such as underexposure, but it can also refine the film's visuals, by adjusting details like color and contrast. Recently, digital post-production tools have increased the filmmaker's ability to manipulate the image.

Although lighting is an aspect of *mise en scène*, it is usually considered a part of cinematography as well, because the cinematographer plays a leading role in coordinating a film's lighting schemes. This is particularly true in → Hollywood, though some industries divide the cinematographer's chores between a camera operator and a lighting cameraperson. Lighting has several variables, including direction, intensity, and contrast ratio. The most common arrangement in Hollywood is three-point lighting. In this system, a key light provides the primary illumination on the subject, a fill light brightens up the shadows created by the key, and a back light separates the subject from the background. With subtle variations, this arrangement can produce the glamorous images of the romantic drama, or the somber tonalities of the *film noir* (Place and Peterson 1976).

### THE BAZINIAN AESTHETIC

Perhaps the most celebrated analysis of cinematographic style is to be found in the work of André Bazin (1967), the French critic of the 1940s and 1950s. Building his analysis on his theory of the photographic image, Bazin argues that photography is distinctly valuable because of its ability to capture reality in all its ambiguity. The important point is not simply that the photograph looks like reality; it is that the photograph, with its causal connection to the object in front of the camera, preserves reality (→ Photography). Bazin is well aware that intentions play a role in the production of most photographs; still, even the most heavily designed photographic image preserves something of the original reality in front of the camera. When it comes to enhancing the cinema's capacity to capture the real world, Bazin argues that certain strategies are better than others. He criticizes editing-based styles because they fragment space and time in the interest of imposing a certain meaning on the spectator. By contrast, deep-focus photography encourages spectators to scan the frame for meaning; the result is closer to the relationship that the spectator has with the real world, where meanings are inherently ambiguous, never in packaged form. Relying on shots of long duration enhances this effect of realism by preserving the integrity of time. Similarly, relying on camera movements rather than editing can preserve the integrity of space. In short, the Bazinian aesthetic, favoring deep-focus compositions, long takes, and camera moves, emphasizes the cinema's capacity to capture the real world (→ Realism in Film and Photography).

In the 1960s and 1970s, film theorists drew on various methodologies, such as semiotics and psychoanalysis, to launch a sharp critique of the realist style. One of Bazin's successors

at the journal *Cahiers du cinéma*, Jean-Louis Comolli (1990) directs his critique at the level of film technology. According to Comolli, a deep-focus film is likely to sustain the dominant bourgeois ideology by reproducing the techniques of Renaissance perspective, thereby relying on dubious assumptions about a universally valid individual observer (→ Film Theory; Perspective, Pictorial). The argument is designed to apply to almost any deep-focus film, regardless of story.

More recently, Fabrice Revault d'Allonnes (1991) has produced a surprising mixture of semiotics and Bazinian realism. D'Allonnes distinguishes between classic and modern lighting. In classic lighting, all the devices work together to produce a single meaning, as when sunlight expresses the mood of a happy scene, or when shadows set the tone for a crime scene. However, d'Allonnes insists that the light of the world does not have any meaning: the sun may shine even when we feel somber. Modern lighting, as in the films of Jean-Luc Godard, respects the meaninglessness of light. Like Comolli, d'Allonnes studies the ways that images produce meaning. Like Bazin, he admires films that honor the ambiguity of reality.

### **QUESTIONS OF METHODOLOGY IN THE STUDY OF CINEMATOGRAPHY**

Some scholars build their arguments on the statistical analysis of a large group of films; others prefer the close analysis of individual cases. Barry Salt (1992) is the most prominent champion of the statistical approach. Examining thousands of films, Salt looks for patterns in variables of cinematography, such as shot scale, as well as in variables of editing, such as cutting rates. One of Salt's achievements is the tracking of changes in shot scale over a century of cinematic style (→ Cinematography, History of). This statistical method provides a background for more evaluative claims about the achievements of individual filmmakers. Salt evaluates filmmakers according to various criteria, including originality and influence. These criteria make sense only against a background of norms. Techniques are original when they depart from prevailing norms; they are influential when they cause a change in norms. Because the statistical method is the best way to track stylistic norms, Salt suggests that it is an essential tool of evaluation (→ Quantitative Methodology).

Some scholars have criticized Salt's approach, on the grounds that he pays too little attention to questions of ideology. In his study of Hollywood cinematography in the 1930s, Mike Cormack (1994) argues that changes in the Hollywood style cannot be explained sufficiently by pointing to the intentions of individual filmmakers; nor can they be explained by developments in technology. Instead, they were most likely caused by changes in American ideology as the United States weathered the Depression. In brief, Cormack proposes that an unpredictable, somber style expressed the sense of crisis in the early 1930s; later, a restrained, high-key style appeared, expressing the reassertion of American ideals that took place after the trauma of the early years. Such an argument combines statistical analysis with interpretation, pointing out systematic correlations of style and theme.

Taking another approach, Richard Dyer (1997) argues that Hollywood's three-point lighting system produced a particular standard of beauty – a standard that cannot be understood without considering the ideologically charged concept of “whiteness.” This is particularly true for female stars, who often appear to be aglow with soft, bright keys and powerful backlights (→ Woman as Sign). Because cinematography shapes meaning,

Dyer relies on interpretation more than statistics. In other words, he builds his argument on the analysis of several individual examples, such as the lighting of Lillian Gish and Mary Pickford, or the writings of major cinematographers (→ Qualitative Methodology).

## CINEMATOGRAPHY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

As digital tools become more and more important to filmmaking, the techniques of cinematography continue to change (→ Digital Imagery). The changes are obvious for cameras and film stock, but digital technology has even changed the way filmmakers approach lighting. It is now relatively easy to modify the lighting in post-production, adding shadows and highlights that previously would have been created on set. Some filmmakers lament the changes; others hope to use the new tools to reproduce the established styles more efficiently; still others predict that the new tools will produce distinctive new cinematographic styles. In any case, cinematography will continue to play a powerful role in shaping the spectator's experience of time and space, even if the borders between cinematography and *mise en scène* continue to blur.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cinema ▶ Cinematography, History of ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Film Production ▶ Film Theory ▶ Hollywood ▶ Perspective, Pictorial ▶ Photography ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Woman as Sign

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# Cinematography, History of

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Cinematography is the art of photographing motion pictures. All photographing of motion pictures is, in its broadest sense, → cinematography, but it is the special

combination of aesthetics and technology that distinguishes the term. It is the art of the cinematographer that makes cinema compelling, the skillful blending of → photography, lighting, composition, and the capture of motion that creates the essence of what is memorable in cinema. The cinematographer, also known as the director of photography (DP or DoP) or sometimes lighting cameraman, makes real a director's creative vision, establishing a sense of place, character, emotion, and drama, through the essential visualizing of the moment (→ Visual Communication).

## **THE EARLY DAYS OF FILM UNTIL THE ADVENT OF TELEVISION**

### **Technical Development**

Stephen Herbert says of the original efforts to produce motion pictures on film, "To succeed, cinematography required the availability of a sufficiently sensitive photographic emulsion to enable at least sixteen pictures to be taken in one second; a suitable medium on which to fix the photographic emulsion; and the development of suitable camera and projection mechanisms" (Herbert & McKernan 1996, 3). The history of photographing motion pictures precedes the history of their exhibition. The first motion picture as we would now recognize it was a fleeting scene of people walking across Leeds Bridge, filmed in October 1888 by the French-born Louis Augustin Aimé Le Prince, using sensitized paper rather than celluloid. Le Prince achieved a sufficient frequency of images (12 frames per second) to achieve the illusion of movement, but was unable to solve the problems of projection. The French scientist Etienne-Jules Marey, keen to use sequence photography for the analysis of motion, began to use transparent celluloid film in 1890 as a more suitable medium for the taking of motion pictures, and others soon followed, notably William Kennedy-Laurie Dickson, an engineer working for Thomas Edison who was charged with developing devices for the taking and exhibiting of motion pictures.

Dickson had developed a camera using 35-mm-wide celluloid film strips with a double row of perforations by October 1892, thereby establishing the format on which cinema continues to be based to this day. In 1894 he produced a device for the exhibiting of motion pictures, the peepshow Kinetoscope. Various teams now worked on the practicalities of projecting motion pictures onto a screen, a race won by the brothers Auguste and Louis Lumière, whose *Cinématographe* was first demonstrated in March 1895, and famously first shown to a paying public at the Grand Café, Paris, on December 28, 1895. The machine gave its name to the cinema and to the art of motion pictures.

### **The Art of Cinematography in the Silent Days**

There was distinctive art to the Lumières' actualities, and the term "animated photography," which was commonly used to describe the new phenomenon, emphasized the studied quality of the first films, with their careful compositions and capturing of essential motion and form. The dramatic film gradually emerged as films started to get longer, and with its growing popularity with audiences came the distinctive art of the cinematographer. Billy Bitzer, cameraman with the American director D. W. Griffith, is generally considered to be the first such camera artist. Bitzer began working with Griffith

in 1908, finding technical expression for the director's creative impulses by developing such features as the close-up, the iris in, fade-outs, and backlighting. None of these effects were unique to Bitzer and Griffith, rather it was the combined effectiveness and consistency of their execution that proved so influential. Bitzer continued with Griffith, photographing such classics as *The Birth of a Nation* (1914), *Intolerance* (1916), and *Broken Blossoms* (1919) and establishing a lexicon of cinematographic techniques. Generally, as cinema moved out of its initial phase, film stock became more light-sensitive (faster), artificial lighting was employed, lenses improved (wide angle, telephoto), and special effects techniques grew in sophistication. Technology marched forward hand in hand with the screen's hold upon the audience's imagination.

Billy Bitzer was followed by many other great cinematographers who worked in the US in the silent era: Charles Rosher (particularly associated with the films of Mary Pickford), Rollie Thorough (Charlie Chaplin's cinematographer), James Wong Howe (*Peter Pan*), Hal Rosson (*Manhandled*), Arthur Miller (*The Volga Boatman*), John Seitz (*The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*), William Daniels (*The Kiss*), and Lee Garmes (*A Social Celebrity*). Several of these would enjoy long careers well into the sound era (Howe won an → Academy Award for *Hud* in 1963). The artistry and technical mastery demonstrated by the finest → Hollywood cameramen of the 1920s was driven by technical innovations in camera design, box office demand, and the rise of the star system, whereby the cinematographer became essential in the creation and sustaining of the illusion of dream-like glamour. European cinema of the 1920s also saw the emergence of several great cinematographers, German expressionist cinema producing such masters of light and shadow as Karl Freund (*Metropolis*, *The Last Laugh*) and Gunter Krampf (*The Student of Prague*, *Pandora's Box*). German and American talents combined to produce perhaps the pinnacle of not only silent film but the art of cinematography itself, F. W. Murnau's *Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans* (1927), made for Fox Studios and photographed by Karl Struss and Charles Rosher, who jointly won the first Academy Award for cinematography.

### Arrival of Sound

The arrival of sound was initially an impediment to the cinematographer's art, as camera movement was restricted to accommodate cumbersome audio technology, and the purely visual means of expression brought to such aesthetic heights by the masters of silent cinema was replaced by a leaden subservience to the spoken word. Sound also saw the running speed of films move from the variable 16 to 22 frames per second of the silent era to a standardized 24 frames per second. Gradually the camera was freed once more, though the dictates of the Hollywood studio system produced a glamorous but formulaic style of cinematography. Gregg Toland's deep-focus photography (where both foreground and background would be in sharp focus) for Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1941) reinvigorated the art of cinematography, providing depth as well as sheen. Stanley Cortez in Welles's *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1942) and Desmond Dickinson for Laurence Olivier's *Hamlet* (1948) further demonstrated the striking effects of deep focus. The technique could not be used too frequently, gaining as it did from its strong dramatic qualities and a certain element of surprise, but its execution brought camerawork to the fore once more, and in its wake came the expressionist photography of postwar *film noir*,



with such skillful engineers of suspense and somber mood as Rudolph Maté (*Gilda*), Nicholas Musuraca (*Out of the Past*), and John Alton (*T-Men*), whose book *Painting with light* (1950) is an eloquent manual of the cinematographer's art.

## THE CHALLENGE OF TELEVISION

### Screen Size and Aspect Ratio

The commercial threat caused by rise of → television in the postwar era saw the cinema respond in two particular ways. The first was the size of the screen. A key consideration for the cinematographer is aspect ratio: the shape of the film frame within which the image is composed. This was effectively established by W. K.-L. Dickson's decision to produce 35-mm-wide film strips for his Edison experiments, with the rough proportions of four by three (horizontal and vertical), or more precisely 1.33 : 1. The addition of a soundtrack meant that a small portion of the picture area was lost, but this essential size remained the standard, and pre-determined the shape of television screens and subsequent monitor designs. Other formats have nevertheless proliferated, for both professional and amateur use: 35 mm and larger formats became the preserve of the cinema and the professional cinematographer; narrow gauge formats such as 17.5 mm (introduced 1899), 22 mm (1912), 28 mm (1912), and 16 mm (1923) were designed for the nontheatrical business; 9.5 mm (1922), 8 mm (1932) and Super 8 (1965) catered to the amateur market; and 16 mm and later Super 16 mm became prevalent in television, alongside new video technologies.

In the 1950s, television's increasing appeal for audiences, and the success of Cinerama (three synchronous films photographed and then projected in parallel) as a special attraction in select theaters, led the cinema to experiment with a variety of different aspect ratios, each giving a wider image than that which television could offer. Some systems achieved this by squeezing the image through an anamorphic lens and then unsqueezing it for projection. First and best known of these "scope" systems was Fox's Cinemascope, with a 2.55 : 1 ratio (subsequently 2.35 : 1), originally employed in *The Robe* (1953, cinematographer Leon Shamroy). Paramount's VistaVision process (first used in 1953 for *White Christmas*, cinematographer Loyal Griggs) used 35 mm film run horizontally through the camera, leading to a negative double the standard size, with reduction prints that could be run on standard projectors. Todd-AO employed a 65 mm negative, a special wide-angle lens, a running speed of 30 frames per second, and printing onto 70 mm film to incorporate six magnetic soundtracks. The result was then projected onto a curved screen, first demonstrated in 1954 with *Oklahoma!* (cinematographer Robert Surtees). Widescreen formats were exasperating for many directors and cinematographers ("It is a formula for a funeral, or for snakes, but not for human beings," said the director Fritz Lang), and in their way they were as restrictive of cinematic techniques as had been the case with the conversion to sound. Eventually 70 mm films were produced for particular film spectacles (although the Biograph company had innovated with this approximate frame width in 1896), and then IMAX. This uses 65 mm film run horizontally in the camera and requires not only special theaters for its exhibition (with a curved screen rising above the audience to achieve its immersive effect) but special films designed for a

format that is strong on natural spectacle but alarming when it comes to viewing faces in close-up. Different aspect ratios continue to be employed to this day, but the industry standard for cinema exhibition has become 1.85 : 1.

### Color

The other strategy to counter television was color. Films were originally monochrome, but the search for color began as soon as cinema was “invented.” In the earliest years, color effects were achieved by hand-painting, then in semi-mechanized form by the application of artificial color through stencils. The first successful natural color system was Kinemacolor (first exhibited 1908), which used red and green filters to achieve an approximation of a full color effect. Similar color systems in the silent era likewise employed two primary colors, including early Technicolor, used for example in *The Black Pirate* (1926, cinematographer Henry Sharp), while the majority of silents were richly colored through the tinting and toning of prints in colors that matched particular settings or moods. Three-strip Technicolor (red–green–blue) was introduced in the 1930s. Initially garish in its effects, Technicolor came to be used with expressive skill in Britain, in particular in the films of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger, such as *Black Narcissus* (1947) and *The Red Shoes* (1948) (both photographed by Jack Cardiff), and in Laurence Olivier’s *Henry V* (1944) (cinematographers Jack Hildyard and Robert Krasker), with its bright look inspired by the medieval Book of Hours. The arrival of cheaper Eastman Color in 1950, with improved color rendering, made color cinematography progressively the norm. It was soon followed by similar systems such as Warnercolor, Metrocolor, and Pathecolor. However, color’s prevalence in the cinema was soon followed by ubiquitous color television.

Such has been the move toward progressively naturalistic color that the emphatic or emblematic use of color seems to have, until recently, become a lost art. Directors such as Martin Scorsese, who were notable for their color sense, often looked back to the Technicolor era (Scorsese is a great admirer of Michael Powell, while his 2004 film *The Aviator*, photographed by Robert Richardson, showed the passage of time through the imitation of historical color cinematography techniques). The emergence of digital cinematography and sophisticated post-production manipulation, however, has led to some startlingly creative use of color, such as Christopher Doyle’s visually ravishing work for Zhang Yimou’s *Hero* (2002). Color coding, and the heightening of color for particular effects, is now far more common.

### **NOUVELLE VAGUE AND LATER REVOLUTIONS**

For all of the creative skill so often displayed through to the 1950s, cinematography had always been slave to the studio, employed to conjure up a hermetic illusion. The French new wave of the late 1950s/1960s encouraged a revolution in cinematographic techniques. A wish to capture life on the wing led to the use of light, hand-held cameras and faster film stocks more responsive to natural light. Jean-Luc Godard, François Truffaut (both working in particular with cinematographer Raoul Coutard) and Eric Rohmer (teamed for many years with Nestor Almendros) spearheaded a cinema freed from the shackles of

the studio, emblematic of a freer notion of society. Such films made the process of filmmaking more apparent, increasing audiences' awareness of the camera, of the choices to be made in visualizing a scene.

The new wave was immensely influential, but its innovations pointed up cinema's contradictory needs to portray the realistic (→ Realism; Realism in Film and Photography) and the fantastic. These twin needs have helped determine the trajectory of modern cinema. On the one hand cinema offers a vision of the grittily real, aided by plain or rawly authentic camerawork, for example, *Kes* (1969, cinematographer Chris Menges), *Five Easy Pieces* (1970, Laszlo Kovacs), and *Taxi Driver* (1976, Michael Chapman). On the other, there has been a great impulse toward fantasy, driven by ever more sophisticated special effects, so that cinematography shifts ever more from making the ordinary seem impossibly glamorous to making the impossible seem thrillingly plausible, as in *Star Wars* (1977, cinematographer Gilbert Taylor), *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977, Vilmos Zsigmond), and *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* (1991, Adam Greenberg).

Other great cinematographers not yet mentioned include Guy Green (*Great Expectations*), Winton Hoch (*The Searchers*), Oswald Morris (*Moulin Rouge*), Sacha Vierny (*Last Year in Marienbad*), Freddie Young (*Lawrence of Arabia*), Haskell Wexler (*The Thomas Crown Affair*), Geoffrey Unsworth (*Cabaret*), Conrad L. Hall (*The Road to Perdition*) Gu Changwei (*Farewell My Concubine*), and Dick Pope (*The Illusionist*). There have been some notable director and cinematographer teams, demonstrating how close the creative partnership between the two roles can be, including Woody Allen and cinematographer Gordon Willis (*Annie Hall*, *Manhattan*), Ingmar Bergman and Sven Nykvist (*Persona*, *Fanny and Alexander*), Akira Kurosawa and Asakazu Nakai (*Seven Samurai*, *Ran*), Wim Wenders and Robby Müller (*Alice in the Cities*, *Paris Texas*), Stanley Kubrick and John Alcott (*2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Barry Lyndon*), the Coen brothers and Roger Deakins (*Barton Fink*, *O Brother Where Art Thou?*), and Bernardo Bertolucci and Vittorio Storaro (*The Conformist*, *Last Tango in Paris*). It is rare, however, for a cinematographer to succeed as a director. Among the handful of notable exceptions are Freddie Francis, Jack Cardiff, and Nicholas Roeg. Organizations representing the art and craft of cinematography include the American Society of Cinematographers (founded 1919), the British Society of Cinematographers (1949), and the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (1916).

## THE FUTURE

Cinematography is constantly being reinvented, both by advances in technology and by shifting cultural tastes. The emergence of high-definition digital cinematography is changing what appears on our screens and its mode of delivery. Introduced in the late 1990s – the first high-profile Hollywood feature shot with a 24-frame High-Definition Progressive Scan camera was *Star Wars: Episode II – Attack of the Clones* (2002, cinematographer David Tattersall) – digital cinematography means that the motion picture is captured electronically as a series of digital images composed of pixels. The image resolution needs to be extremely high to emulate the quality of film (a precise correlative between digital and photo-chemical image is hard to determine, since ultimately they achieve their effects in different ways), but the advantages in the manipulation, transfer,

and ultimately projection of the images mean that the film industry will be moving increasingly away from film. Film is still the predominant medium for production and distribution, but the proliferation of broadcast outputs beyond the traditional cinema screen is making the digital image the norm. The cinema screen is but one stage in the complex life of a modern film production, which will be sold and resold through multiple platforms in ever-changing sizes – DVD, terrestrial television, cable, satellite, on computers, and now hand-held devices. Digital technologies have considerable implications for the art of cinematography and the relationship of image to audience. They have made the fantastical in cinema easier to achieve, but they have also encouraged the cheaply produced, rawly realistic production, as demonstrated by *The Blair Witch Project* (1999, cinematographer Neal Fredericks). With a mini DV camera and FinalCut Pro software, anyone can become a filmmaker. The technology is blurring the distinctions between cinema and monitor, between professional and amateur. The meaning of cinematography seems to be undergoing change even while its status as an art is still valued.

These contradictory impulses can be seen in the move toward high definition and a hyper-naturalistic image, and at the same time the low resolution of videos using Flash software available through YouTube and other social networking sites. Audiences both demand higher image quality, yet are paradoxically comfortable viewing the degraded or indistinct image. Just as audiences were made more aware of the filmmaking process through the free style of the new wave of the 1960s, so the rise of the digital image and multiple viewing platforms has made modern audiences aware of the manipulability and subjectivity of the image. The future of cinematography would appear to lie not with the artist, but with the consumer.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Academy Awards ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Cinema ▶ Cinematography ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Film Theory ▶ Hollywood ▶ Photography ▶ Realism ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Television ▶ Visual Communication

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# Circulation

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Circulation is the fundamental audience measure for print publications such as → newspapers and → magazines. Its importance lies in the fundamental relationship between circulation and advertising rates in the business models of most print publications.

Taking the US as an example, prior to 1830 US newspapers depended primarily on subscription revenues. Content was focused mainly on either politics or commerce, and subscriptions were expensive. Single copies of individual issues were generally only available to nonsubscribers at the publisher's office. In 1830, the US had only 65 daily newspapers with an average circulation of 1,200 copies, and total daily newspaper circulation was estimated to be 78,000 copies (→ Newspaper, History of).

In New York, the center of US newspaper publishing at that time, two publishers reinvented the newspaper business model. Benjamin Day, who founded the *New York Sun* in 1833, and James Gordon Bennett, who established the *New York Herald* in 1835, decided that by reducing the price of newspapers from the then prevalent six to eight cents per copy to a penny per copy, they could significantly increase the size of their audience (→ Penny Press). With increased sales (or circulation), they would provide a more effective vehicle for advertisers and could, therefore, charge more for → advertising (→ Advertising, History of).

Growing audience, however, required more than simply reducing the price. Publishers had to explore *alternative distribution strategies* that would increase sales while reducing their dependence on subscriptions. Newsboys, who hawked single-copy sales on the street, were introduced as a way to expand sales of single issues. By 1840, the number of daily newspapers in the US had grown to 138 and average circulation had nearly doubled to 2,200. Total daily circulation nearly quadrupled to 300,000. The model of decreased dependence on subscriber revenues and increased reliance on advertising revenues that were tied to audience size was firmly established and ultimately was nearly universally adopted by print media.

Circulation also impacts newspaper and magazine publishers' *cost structure*. "First copy" costs are the expenses incurred for the resources and activities required to produce the first copy of a publication. For newspapers, these average 40–45 percent of total costs. Once the "first copy" has been produced, the marginal costs of producing additional copies rapidly declines due to manufacturing economies of scale. Therefore, a publication with a circulation of 100,000 is significantly less expensive to produce than two newspapers of 50,000 circulation (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

For magazine publishers, the problem is complicated by the general use of third-party vendors to print their product. Newspapers, which generally control their manufacturing process in-house, can readily add pages or increase the press run if major stories break – thus increasing their circulation average. Changing press runs for magazines, however, is much more difficult and expensive, limiting the publisher's ability to leverage circulation by taking advantage of content that is likely to increase sales.

## CIRCULATION MEASUREMENT

If the prices that publishers charged advertisers were to be based on the size and value of the audience they could deliver, measurements were needed. The latter half of the nineteenth century was marked by circulation wars – sometimes literally involving physical confrontations between groups of newsboys affiliated with competing publications – and unverified publisher circulation claims.

In 1914, a group of advertisers, advertising agencies, and publishers created a voluntary program to ensure reliable circulation data. The Audit Bureau of Circulation was charged with direct verification of publishers' claims of paid circulation. That movement expanded in 1963 with the formation of the *International Federation of Audit Bureaux of Circulations*, which now represents organizations conducting publication audits in 50 countries. Today, ABC ([www.accessabc.com](http://www.accessabc.com)) provides audit information on both newspapers and magazines to advertisers making purchase decisions.

Traditionally, audit functions have focused on *paid circulation* – copies for which the reader/subscriber paid a stated price to the publisher. Advertisers generally considered this to be a more reliable measure by which to gauge audiences than figures including free or heavily discounted promotional copies. The logic was that if someone paid for an issue of a publication, they were more likely to read it than if they were simply handed a copy as they walked down the street.

This assumption, however, may be changing. First introduced in Sweden in 1995, by 2002 there were more than 60 free daily newspapers published in 26 countries with a combined daily circulation of more than 10 million copies. The growth of online advertising has also increased the desire of advertisers for audited information regarding newspaper websites. ABC has expanded its services to include electronic newspapers and circulation of free distribution newspapers if they are owned by an ABC member that derives more than 50 percent of its circulation from home delivery. Other organizations, such as Verified ([www.verifiedaudit.com/history.htm](http://www.verifiedaudit.com/history.htm)), cater to the free distribution audit market.

An ABC audit involves *several steps*. First, a publisher submits unaudited circulation figures with supporting documents to the Audit Bureau. Then, once a year, an auditor visits the publisher's workplace to examine production reports, inventory records, circulation records by category and geographic zones, prices charged, discounts offered, returns records, and other factors bearing on the circulation claims. Finally, a random sample of subscribers is interviewed to ensure that the person who received a publication is the one who paid for it (→ Interview, Standardized; Sampling, Random; Survey). If all data are congruent, the ABC issues a formal audit report showing the publication's average audited paid circulation for a 12-month period.

Circulation measurements may be expressed in several ways. The most basic measure is *audited paid circulation*. That reflects the number of copies printed and delivered to readers who paid for them. Another measure frequently considered by advertisers making purchase decisions is circulation penetration. That is calculated by dividing the paid circulation in a geographic market by the total number of households in that area. This is often viewed as a more accurate measure of the effectiveness with which a publication delivers information within its market because it is assumed that everyone in the household has an opportunity to be exposed to the same content. Household penetration

is most effective as a measure for newspapers, which generally have a geographically limited distribution area, and is less meaningful for magazines, which have less geographically definable distribution zones (→ Audience Research; Copy Test and Starch Test).

## REVENUE ISSUES

The degree to which publishers rely on circulation revenues varies between magazines and newspapers. Circulation revenue for newspapers generally represents 15–20 percent of total revenues. Traditionally, newspapers have looked to circulation revenues to recoup a substantial portion of the material costs of the product – paper, ink, and supplements. The percentage varies over time depending on the publisher’s willingness to increase prices and often wildly varying costs for newsprint. The rapidly growing free newspaper segment, however, is entirely advertising dependent.

Magazines have traditionally relied more heavily on consumer subsidies. Some publishers of specialized magazines, such as *Consumer reports*, rely entirely on circulation sales revenues to avoid any potential of real or apparent conflicts of interest with advertisers. Others, particularly controlled circulation magazines in technology and similar areas, may rely virtually entirely on advertising revenues. The overall trend in consumer magazines has been to increase dependence on advertising revenues. Between 1980 and 1998, consumer subsidies fell from 57.8 percent of total revenue to 41.8 percent based on a study of 96 major continuously published magazines.

While circulation represents a major factor in advertising prices, other factors affect rates as well. Overall cost structure, competition for advertiser dollars, which may result in discounts or incentives, and audience demographics all affect the ability of publishers to establish and maintain advertising rates.

## CIRCULATION COMPETITION

Relatively little industry or scholarly research into circulation issues was conducted prior to the 1970s, when publishers began to notice a flattening in circulation growth. Early research focused on the substitutability of news products and the development of the *theory of umbrella competition* (Rosse & Dertouzos 1978). This model argued that newspapers compete across geographic boundaries for circulation and advertising by segmenting audiences and differentiating their product and content (→ Audience Segmentation). As news consumers become dissatisfied with their existing media mix, they reorder their media consumption to better satisfy their needs. Rosse’s model postulated four layers of competition – large metropolitan dailies, newspapers in satellite cities, suburban dailies, and weekly newspapers, shoppers, and other specialized media.

Subsequent research exploring the Rosse model tested it by looking at circulation and advertising behaviors independently as well as in combination. This research revealed that circulation and advertising competition are different but are closely associated. To address this issue, Bridges et al. (2002) proposed a *concentric circle or ring model*, which preserved Rosse’s layer model but suggested that the relationships between the levels of competition were more complex. They also suggested the need to include consideration of national-level competition.

Little theoretical economic research has been conducted on magazine circulation. The general view is that magazines compete for readers based on content quality and differentiation in increasingly segmented markets, although differences in pricing, marketing investment, and distribution capabilities may affect sales.

## CIRCULATION TRENDS

In the US the frequency with which people read newspapers began to decline in the late 1940s, but increases in overall population allowed total newspaper circulation to increase until 1970. Real circulation numbers remained stable for the next 20 years, though circulation penetration declined. In 1990, circulation began to decline in real numbers and continues to do so at approximately 1 percent per year.

Total daily US newspaper circulation declined from 62.2 million copies in 1980 to 56.2 million copies in 1998. A portion of this decline can be attributed to a reduction in the number of newspapers published (1,754 in 1980 compared to 1,489 in 1998). This decline primarily reflects a shift in reader preference from afternoon to morning publications and the closing of many evening newspapers.

Total circulation of general and farm magazine publications audited by ABC increased from 275 million in 1980 to 366.3 million in 1997. This was accompanied, however, by a significant increase in the number of published titles (from 406 to 590). Average circulation per magazine actually decreased from 677,431 to 620,850. During the same period, single-copy sales of magazines declined from 34.2 percent of total sales to 18.1 percent. Similar developments can be found in many industrialized countries (→ Exposure to News; Exposure to Print Media).

Several factors affect these trends. For newspapers, a number of studies have found that younger readers simply have not developed the newspaper reading habit. Although for many years, industry executives argued that younger readers would turn to newspapers as they aged and became settled into adulthood, cohort analysis indicates otherwise.

Churn, the number of cancelled subscriptions that must be replaced in order to maintain the existing level of circulation, is also increasing for newspapers. Although the percentage of churn increases with circulation size, data from the Newspaper Association of America shows that the average churn factor for all dailies increased from nearly 50 percent in 1996 to nearly 58 percent in 2003.

The *economic constraints of public ownership* may also be contributing to circulation declines. The newspaper industry is a mature business with increasing competition for advertising revenue and rising costs. Between 1960 and 1996, the percentage of total daily circulation in the US by group-owned dailies climbed from 46.1 percent to 81.5 percent. Many of these groups are publicly owned, and institutional investors are primarily concerned with increasing profit margins and stock prices. If investor expectations are not met, the firm may be forced into a sale, as occurred with Knight-Ridder in 2006 and the Tribune Company in 2007. Management response to these pressures has frequently been to reduce costs and resources devoted to the editorial product despite a substantial body of research indicating a strong correlation between editorial investment and circulation growth.

*Audience fragmentation*, driven by the proliferation of media alternatives, is affecting all of the traditional mass media, not just print. Cable TV news audiences were flat



between 2002 and 2004, despite the impact of a presidential election cycle in 2004 (→ Cable Television). Broadcast network prime-time audiences have declined 26 percent since the mid-1990s (→ Television Networks). Audiences for all-news radio stations have remained relatively stable, while audiences for National Public Radio (NPR) programming have actually grown, but radio as a source of news has diminished since the Telecommunication Act of 1996 made it possible for hundreds of stations to drop news coverage altogether.

Magazine circulation is particularly affected by declines in single-copy sales – attributable to a proliferation of titles – and a decline in the effectiveness of traditional marketing techniques such as sweepstakes and direct mail.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cable Television ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Copy Test and Starch Test ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Magazine ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Marketing ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Penny Press ▶ Readership Research ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Survey ▶ Television Networks

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# Citizen Journalism

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Citizen journalism refers to journalism produced not by professionals but by those outside mainstream media organizations. Citizen journalists typically have little or no training or professional qualifications, but write and report as citizens, members of communities, activists, and fans (→ Activist Media). They are amateur media producers. The two broad types of citizen journalism are political and cultural.

The term *citizen journalism* dates from the 2000s, but its practice is not new. The radical reformist newspapers that flourished in England from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries had characteristics similar to recent citizen journalism: the so-called *pauper management*; the stance as activists; and a close relationship with the audience, who themselves wrote reports (Curran & Seaton 2003). Similarities also appear in the anarchist presses at the turn of the twentieth century. Socialist organizations and political parties encouraged worker correspondents in English newspapers. Workers' contributions arguably made the papers' political philosophies relevant to readers' experiences (→ Citizen Journalism, History of).

The space available distinguishes current citizen journalists. The Internet enables publication of reports outside of the industrial arrangements typical of media corporations. The Internet may also offer social movements a global reach.

## PRACTICES

Citizen journalists practice across a range of media, from homeless-produced newspapers to community-based local radio and television stations (Howley 2005). Print media offer scope for full participation. Broadcast media require technical competence and training. Dependence on experts leaves fewer opportunities for citizens to participate in production, reducing them to advisors. Home camcorders and computer video-editing packages, used not for conventional broadcasting but for producing videos, DVDs and web streaming, minimize the reliance on experts. The → Internet has permitted citizen journalism to expand. Despite barriers to access in many places, software allows users to set up websites and discussion groups with minimal expertise.

Participatory media production contests media power and challenges the monopoly on producing symbolic forms (→ Participatory Communication). Pierre Bourdieu (1991) argues that symbolic power is the power to construct reality. Citizen journalism constructs a reality that opposes the conventions and representations of mainstream media. Citizen journalists engage in self-representation, community empowerment, and self-education through dialogue (Rodriguez 2000). Citizen media production aims not at state-promoted citizenship but at media practice to construct political identity along with everyday life (→ Citizens' Media). The media help define the boundaries of political life and alternative media spaces become important to the development of critical citizens.

In political practice, citizen journalism adopts social responsibility but replaces an ideology of objectivity with oppositional practices (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Advocacy Journalism; Alternative Journalism). The practices emphasize first-person, eyewitness accounts by participants. They rework the populism of tabloid newspapers to recover a *radical popular* style of reporting. Their collective and anti-hierarchical forms of organization eschew demarcation and specialization.

Academic studies of citizen journalism focus on political projects in the United States and western Europe. The radical community press that flourished there in the 1970s and 1980s sought to be free from commercial considerations and to provide information that was directly useful in daily life (→ Community Media). Instead of the perspective of authority, the radical local press adopted the perspective of those low in status, who became not only sources in stories but also news gatherers. Reporters built up networks of local activists, residents' groups, parents, workers, unemployed, and homeless who could supply leads for stories (Dickinson 1997; Whitaker 1981).

The network of independent media called *Indymedia* is an Internet-based, globalized form of citizen journalism (Downing 2002; Platon & Deuze 2003). Indymedia came to prominence during the demonstrations against the World Trade Organization summit in Seattle, in November 1999. Since then an → independent media centers network has reported and commented on issues such as third-world debt, human rights, internationalization of capital, and the political and economic power of transnational corporations. The reports counter the enduring frames of mainstream media coverage, which demonize and marginalize protesters. Indymedia reporters present the perspective of activists and emphasize the personal. The network is global, and studies need to examine specific regional and national practices.

Studies have explored other citizen journalism projects in Latin America and Asia. Bolivian miners' radio stations, for example, flourished from 1963 to 1983, but first appeared in 1952, the year of national revolution. Their participatory media production highlighted the rights of workers in a politically marginalized region (O'Connor 2004). In revolutionary Nicaragua of the 1980s and 1990s, the Movement of Popular Correspondents allowed nonprofessional, voluntary reporters from poor rural areas to produce and publish reports in regional and national newspapers alongside the work of professional journalists (Rodriguez 2000).

Men appear to dominate the history of citizen journalism in Latin America, but not necessarily elsewhere (→ Feminist Media; Gender and Journalism). For instance, the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan reported on the abuse and execution of women under Taliban rule, producing audio cassettes, videos, a website, and a magazine (Waltz 2005). Afghan women distributed these clandestinely, using secretly filmed camcorder footage of abuse, for example. The South Korean OhmyNEWS has adopted a hybrid approach to its website (Kim & Hamilton 2006). Founded in 2000, the site relies on hundreds of citizen reporters, although a small professional staff runs its editorial office.

Researchers have not covered other regions as well. One study documents the diversity of citizen journalism projects in Africa and the Indian subcontinent (Gumucio Dagon 2001), presenting 50 brief examples of participatory communication used for social change. The cases represent all types of alternative media institutions that somewhat reproduce existing forms: newspapers, radio stations, and websites.

By contrast, → bloggers present their narratives, news, and commentary from the perspective of the individual. Citizen journalism is also a form of popular cultural commentary (Rau 1994). The world of fanzines, or *ezines* online, allows fans to create, maintain, and develop taste communities across geographic boundaries (→ Fandom; Zines). Considered an expert by readers, the fanzine writer accrues cultural capital, typically displayed directly, not through the mediation of other sources or primary definers (→ News Sources).

## CHALLENGES AND LIMITS

Citizen journalism is a radical challenge to the professional and institutional practices of the mainstream media. The citizen journalist engages in native reporting, which in a postcolonial sense is a subaltern media practice that contests the power of professional journalists, resists their othering and struggles within the politics of representation. Native reporting occurs within communities to present news relevant to their own interests, gathered with their collaboration and support and presented in a manner meaningful to them. Citizen journalism focuses less on the report as a commodity or on journalists as experts, not because of the novelty of knowledge they produce (a focus on uncovering hidden stories) but because of their new ways of thinking about and producing journalism (a focus on what kinds of knowledge they produce and how readers and writers may come together to make sense of the result).

The relationship between the citizen journalist's roles as writer and as activist (or enthusiast or fan) matters. For them, journalism is a secondary activity in the service of a greater goal. In the case of social movement journalism, for instance, the goal might be political reform or revolution (→ Social Movements and Communication). Such journalists are autodidacts, who practice not only different ways of writing but different approaches to sourcing and ethics.

Citizen journalism practices are not entirely separate from the mainstream. Commercial media organizations make use of amateur reporters; breaking television news increasingly relies on camcorder footage. Numerous examples appeared in 2005, for instance, including Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, the fire at the Buncefield Fuel Depot in England and the terrorist bombings in Madrid (Sampedro 2005). Newspapers and broadcasters routinely incorporate blogs into their websites; some solicit advice and recommendations for stories and programs from audiences.

The nonprofessional status of citizen journalists tends to restrict the range of their reporting. The form appears most appropriate when used to report on local community issues or to present personal narratives from within a major event (such as a conflict). In reporting hard news, citizen journalists have less access to elite sources and institutions. The reliance on comment and opinion has left citizen journalists open to charges of bias and subjectivity, but subjectivity can inspire trust. A survey found that blog readers placed great store by the honesty and authenticity of subjective accounts (Matheson & Allan 2003).

Problems also arise from organizational methods. Some citizen journalism projects fail for want of long-term commitment or for lack of capital. Some projects have developed hybrid models of organizing their reporting. OhmyNews from South Korea sustains itself

through commercial advertising, and established a hierarchy so that professional journalists report hard news and citizen journalists report on their immediate communities, with the professional staff retaining overall control. In this case, limiting citizen journalists to what they do best addresses the doubts about their subjectivity, bias, and expertise.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism, History of ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Fandom ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ Independent Media Centers Network ▶ Internet ▶ News Sources ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Radical Media ▶ Social Movement Media, Transnational ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Zines

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# Citizen Journalism, History of

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The history of the term → *citizen journalism* is closely associated with the rise of the → Internet as a medium of → news and public information. Citizens have certainly participated in news-making from the start of modern news, but journalism's industrialization in the mid-nineteenth century and later its professionalization marginalized that involvement (→ Journalism, History of). It was with the rapid growth of the Internet in the 1990s that attempts to conflate the categories of journalist and citizen gathered force. This article discusses three versions of that young history: (1) a cybercultural history; (2) the perspective most common in news organizations; and (3) a socio-cultural account.

The *first history* is one written on the Internet, largely in the US. Commentators looking back from the early 2000s explain the rise of citizen participation in journalism online by pointing to an *ethos of open collaboration* espoused by early Internet users – largely US-based academic and military researchers – which led to an open, nonhierarchical Internet structure. UseNet newsgroups' experiments in online community, such as The Well, offered up “a new cultural narrative based in collective self-determination” (Rushkoff 2003, 27). Strongly libertarian and anti-authoritarian ideologies have shaped this account of a free and open Internet. Key texts here include Dyson et al. (1994), which proclaimed the end of conformist mass society, and Barlow (1996), which told industrial society's institutions, “You have no sovereignty among us.” The utopian desire for citizen participation in public life has thus been closely connected with the rise of cyberculture.

The rise of weblogs, from 1997, was strongly shaped by such a history of citizen sovereignty, with talk of wresting control of public debate back from the “mainstream” or “old media” common, or recreating the liberal pamphleteering culture of eighteenth-century Britain and America (→ Blogger). The diary-like genre, often characterized by sharp-tongued and fast-moving public debate, soon produced the term “fisking” to describe right-wing bloggers' attacks on what they saw as “liberal” media, symbolized by British journalist Robert Fisk. By 2002 US bloggers celebrated the first instances where they had led the “mainstream media” in their job of monitoring power. The Indymedia network has drawn, in part, on similar anti-authoritarian ideas. Since its dramatic birth at the 1999 World Trade Organization in Seattle, the alternative news network, staffed by “volunteer journalists,” quickly gained in web traffic and reputation on the political left, and by 2004 had grown to an international network of 142 sites in 54 countries.

To many journalists and academic commentators, this first history has a little too much of the fable to it. The *second history* which they construct, then, points out that bloggers and other citizen journalists depend largely on the mainstream they critique for their agendas and information (Haas 2005). Indeed many bloggers themselves feel uncomfortable with the label “journalist.” It is also true that much citizen participation in journalism is facilitated by news organizations and is a story of collaboration or co-option, tension or accommodation. *San Jose Mercury News* technology journalist Dan Gillmor's experiments with using readers of his weblog as expert sources for his

newspaper column provides the model for one influential school of thought, which argues that citizen participation in digital media is leading to instances of journalism as “conversation” between journalists and citizens (Gillmor 2004). From 2004 on, in France (*Le Monde*), South Africa (*Mail and Guardian*), the UK (*Guardian*), and elsewhere members of the public were invited to write weblogs within the news website. Many journalists expressed concern at these moves, citing in particular dilution of the newsroom’s control over its sources and the absence of editing as lowering news quality. Indeed, the dominant practice has remained consistent since the early news websites of tucking away citizen contributions deep inside the site, firmly subordinated to the professionally produced news content, and usually unread by those journalists. Yet, from 2003, with each major news event and with each crisis where existing journalism practices seemed unable to sate the public appetite, the use of citizens’ eyewitness accounts, photographs, and video has increased, opening the way for further blurring of the lines between news producer and consumer.

The *third*, largely academic, *history* places citizen participation in the news within a much longer time frame, tracing the weakening of institutional society, with its homogeneous nation-state, its specialization of work, and its hierarchical structures. Industrial Anglo-American journalism took on a role on behalf of the public, holding government to account on behalf of citizens, recording civic life on their behalf, upholding society’s values. Sociologists and cultural geographers (e.g., Castells 1996; Harvey 2001) argue that contemporary social power resides more in networks of power and in global cultural forms. Wellman (2001) talks of the rise of a networked individualism, in which individuals in western culture move relatively freely among social networks and reflexively make their own identities as they do so. Jenkins (2004), building on fan theory, theorizes a “cultural convergence” to describe a growing expectation from media consumers that they can change and add to media content. In this view, the mass audience for twentieth-century journalism appears part of a departing historical moment. In its stead has emerged what Deuze (2005) calls “a perhaps over-zealous faith in ourselves” and a loss of trust in and dependence on professional storytellers such as journalists. For these reasons, some former enthusiasts for citizen journalism were beginning in 2006 to adopt the term “networked journalism” instead.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Citizen Journalism ► Citizens’ ► Media ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► Digital Media, History of ► E-Democracy ► Information Society ► Internet ► Internet News ► Journalism, History of ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► News ► Online Journalism ► Personal Publishing

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## Citizens' Media

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Citizens' media is a term used by communication and media scholars to refer to electronic media (i.e., → radio, → television, → video) and information and communication technologies (i.e., text messaging, cellular telephony, → Internet) that are controlled and used by citizens and collectives to meet their own information and communication needs. As an academic term, citizens' media belongs to a large family of concepts that, among others, include community media, alternative media, autonomous media, participatory media, and radical media (→ Activist Media; Communication Technology and Democracy; Community Media; Participatory Communication).

Although all these terms express more or less the same reality of media controlled by citizens and collectives, each of them emerges from a different conceptual framework. For example, "*alternative media*" accentuates the potential of these media to alter the social world in which they operate, and differentiates between these participatory, inclusive media and commercial media, driven by the need to produce a profit, produced by professionals, and limited to certain formats and genres (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). "*Autonomous media*" underscores the absence of political and financial interests in these media ventures (→ Commercialization of the Media). "*Community media*" highlights their collective nature and connects to theories of community building (→ Community Integration). "*Participatory media*" puts emphasis on the fact that these media are commonly open to anyone in the community to produce their own radio, television, or any other media product. Finally, → "*radical media*" stresses their potential to express and embolden discourses, practices, and politics of resistance.

The term "citizens' media" was first coined by Clemencia Rodríguez in *Fissures in the mediascape: An international study of citizens' media* (2001). It emerges from the need to overcome oppositional frameworks and binary categories traditionally used to analyze



alternative media. As a concept, citizens' media moves away from binary definitions in two different directions. First, instead of defining alternative media as that-which-is-not-mainstream-media, citizens' media defines media in terms of the *transformative processes* they bring about for participants and their communities. In other words, while "alternative media" define community media by what they are not – not commercial, not professional, not institutionalized, "citizens' media" define them by what they are – the processes of change triggered with media participants (→ Social Movements and Communication).

Second, citizens' media breaks away from a binary and essentializing definition of power, whereby the mediascape is inhabited by the powerful (mainstream media) and the powerless (→ Alternative Journalism). Instead of limiting the potential of alternative media to their ability to resist commercial media owned by large → media conglomerates – and restricting our understanding of all other instances of social change facilitated by community media – the focus of citizens' media is on the metamorphic transformation experienced by their producers and participants. That is, citizens' media is a concept that accounts for the *processes of empowerment, "conscientization," and fragmentation of power* that result when men, women, and children gain access to and reclaim their own media (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment). As they disrupt established power relationships and cultural codes, citizens' media producers and participants exercise their own agency in reshaping their own lives, futures, and cultures.

Citizens' media is a concept anchored in the *theory of radical democracy and citizenship* of political science scholar Chantal Mouffe. Mouffe takes distance from liberal democracy's definition of citizenship and proposes a move toward re-appropriating the term. Liberal democracy defines citizenship and citizen in terms of a legal status granted (or denied) to an individual by a state. Gaining citizenship is one of the foundational principles of representative democracies, because only citizens have access to full democratic rights. In this light, Mouffe proposes a reinterpretation and redefinition of the term "citizen" and "citizenship"; according to Mouffe, "citizenship" should be defined in terms of political action and access to power, and not as a legal status controlled by the state.

Mouffe defines citizens as political subjects not in terms of legal status that secures individuals' rights and responsibilities, but as localized subjects whose daily lives are traversed by a series of social and cultural interactions. Citizens exist in a mesh of interactions also localized in a specific context – family interactions, relationships with neighbors, friends, colleagues, peers, etc. It is precisely from these interactions that each citizen gains access to power – symbolic power, psychological power, material power, and political power. According to Mouffe, when citizens use their power to redirect and shape their communities, they enact political actions as political subject – and these actions are the building blocks of a democracy. It is this power that allows citizens to shape their communities (or not) according to their own needs and visions for the future (→ Media Democracy Movement). Thus Mouffe defines citizens as those individuals who generate power from their quotidian interactions and relationships and use this power to transform their community step by step.

Adopting Mouffe's definition of citizenship, Rodríguez coins the term "citizens' media" to refer to those alternative, community, or radical media that facilitate, trigger, and maintain processes of citizenship building, in Mouffe's sense of the term. Rodríguez's

“citizens’ media” are those media that promote symbolic processes allowing people to name the world and speak the world in their own terms, formats, and aesthetic values.

Rodríguez uses the term more as a qualifier than as a category that defines the legal status of the medium. In this sense, a medium can have a “community” license and still not qualify as “citizens’ medium.” A community medium will qualify as a “citizens’ medium” only as long as it triggers processes in which local producers can recodify their own identities and reformulate their own visions for their communities’ futures. Rodríguez has carried out case studies of citizens’ media in Nicaragua, Cataluña, Colombia, Chile, and among Latino communities in the US.

In other less academic contexts – such as Colombia, for example – media activists have adopted the concept of citizens’ media, although they are not necessarily referring to Rodríguez’s definition. In Colombia, the term is used to emphasize the role that community radio and television stations play in diversifying the public sphere and strengthening “a culture of citizenship.” Citizens’ media facilitate access to the public sphere for different political, social, and cultural views, thus encouraging public debate (→ Citizen Journalism). Colombian citizens’ media are becoming important elements of the public sphere where counter-publics express their views, disseminate information not accessible through the mainstream media, and demand transparency and accountability from local and national government authorities (→ Colombia: Media System).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Colombia: Media System ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Community Integration ▶ Community Media ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Democracy Movement ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Radical Media ▶ Radio ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Video

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# Civil Rights Movement and the Media

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Racism was an enduring part of American life before the modern civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. This was especially true for the southern United States, where racism was rooted in all aspects of society. Southern blacks were severely exploited economically, where they were forced to toil at the bottom of the occupational structure. Blacks had no political power because they were excluded from the formal political process (→ Power and Discourse). Because blacks were believed to be racially inferior, they were segregated physically and made to live in the confines of resource-starved communities (Morris 1984). Southern racial oppression was designed to humiliate blacks daily so that both races understood their respective places in the racial hierarchy.

This all-encompassing racism was backed by state power, terrorist violence, customs, and a plethora of Jim Crow laws. These laws restricted the scope of interactions between the races, requiring that blacks attend separate schools and parks, ride at the back of buses, drink from different water fountains, and the like (Kluger 1976). Blacks who disobeyed Jim Crow laws faced the possibility of jail, beatings, and even death. Although racism was prevalent throughout America, the magnitude of its southern version was rarely known outside the south. This virulent racism usually operated beneath the radar of the larger society and was shielded from the world by democratic rhetoric proclaiming America as the land of liberty (→ Rhetoric and Social Protest).

The relative obscurity of southern racism prevented it from direct attack by non-southerners and other nations. A major task confronting blacks was to discover avenues to expose southern racism so that it could be scrutinized and contrasted with democratic principles. The media, especially → television and → newspapers, proved to be the avenue through which the civil rights movement exposed the ugliness of southern racism. Indeed, this movement used the media to help achieve its victories against Jim Crow (Garrow 1986; Branch 1988; Roberts & Klibanoff 2006). It did so by generating media coverage that conveyed the brutality that blacks received from segregationists. Such coverage triggered outrage over such anti-democratic behavior, thus cultivating sympathetic attitudes toward African-Americans among audiences both domestically and internationally. The social disorder initiated by the civil rights movement, coupled with media coverage, eventually forced decision-makers to debate racial injustice and enact laws to overthrow the Jim Crow order. The movement achieved victories by staging public confrontations with segregationists that were so packed with human drama they could not be denied media coverage (→ Social Movements and Communication).

## RISE OF MODERN MEDIA

The modern civil rights movement developed at the same time as television was emerging as a major institution. By the late 1950s the mass of American households had become television viewers. As early as 1958 over 83 percent of households owned television sets, in contrast to only about 45 percent in 1953 (→ Television: Social History). This rapid

expansion was made possible because new technologies reduced cost, making television sets affordable for most households. Because the rapid spread of television coincided with the rise of the civil rights movement, it would provide a window through which millions could be jolted by the clashes between the oppressed and the segregationists in the comfort of their living rooms. This development changed black invisibility dramatically and permitted the whole world to witness the blatant racism practiced by whites.

Another crucial technological advance occurred in 1960, when → television news and documentaries shifted from 35 mm equipment to the 16 mm camera (→ Television Technology). Erik Barnouw described the change: “In 1960 the umbilical cord between camera and recorder became obsolete with the invention of methods for synchronizing them without wire connection. The wire between microphone and recording equipment could likewise be abolished by use of the wireless microphone, which communicated its signals to the recording equipment via miniature transmitters . . . Now the performer with his microphone, the cameraman with his camera, the sound engineer with his recording equipment, could all be free agents” (Barnouw 1975).

These advances made it tremendously easier for photojournalists and camera men to capture volatile protest demonstrations quickly and up close, thereby providing startling images for both television and newspapers (→ Photojournalism). Before these advances, camera men had to carry heavy equipment and mount cameras on tripods, which limited the speed and clarity of coverage. Prior to the smaller, more sophisticated equipment, the old cameras only allowed one picture at a time, but the new cameras enabled journalists to shoot in rapid succession. The difference was as great as that between a one-shot rifle and a machine gun.

Additional innovations made it easier for more in-depth coverage of racial issues. Television introduced the *genre of documentaries* in the early 1960s through which racial inequality received unprecedented attention (Roberts & Klibanoff 2006; → Documentary Film; Documentary Film, History of). The expansion of nightly network news from a 15- to a 30-minute format in 1963 was even more far reaching because this made it possible for the civil rights movement to be covered extensively. Additionally, in 1962 the Telstar 1 communication satellite was launched, enabling television pictures to be relayed across the Atlantic and from continent to continent. These advances created the “whole world is watching phenomenon,” whereby civil rights struggles could be broadcast globally, thus insuring that people of color in third world countries were exposed to the movement (Morris 1990).

## **MEDIA AND THE COLD WAR**

The Cold War provided crucial leverage for the civil rights movement (Layton 2000; Dudziak 2002). Following World War II, America became involved in an intense struggle with the Soviet Union to determine which would emerge as the great superpower. America faced daunting challenges because communism was on the march. Over a billion people of color, and their newly independent nations, were deciding whether to align themselves with either combatant, thus determining which nation would achieve the balance of world power.

The Soviet Union courted the third world by providing its liberation struggles with resources to overthrow European colonialism. The United States countered by offering democracy, which it promised to all newcomers. But America had an undemocratic fly in its ointment: the oppressive treatment of African-Americans, who were being hung, denied enfranchisement, and relegated to economic servitude, did not fit its democratic rhetoric. Soviet leaders

knew this nasty secret and its potential nightmare for American international aspirations. African leaders, many of whom had attended American universities and bonded with African-American leaders, knew the secret as well. And that generation of World War II black leaders, including W. E. B. DuBois, Paul Robeson, and A. Philip Randolph, were keenly aware of Cold War politics and took advantage of them by championing civil rights for blacks in the international arena. Through exposure to these leaders and their own knowledge of the international scene, the emerging leaders of the modern civil rights movement understood Cold War politics and the advantages they afforded the black struggle.

But nothing could dramatize the contradiction between racism and democracy like explosive *public demonstrations* targeting racial oppression in the glare of worldwide media. Martin Luther King, Jr, and other leaders, learned to skillfully use demonstrations and media coverage to interject black freedom aspirations into Cold War politics. The United States government, including the President, Senate, Congress, State Department, and the Supreme Court, were all vulnerable to charges of racism if they failed to act to overthrow racial segregation in the wake of civil rights demonstrations. Thus, these sectors of government had a profound interest in addressing racial inequality as it was exposed worldwide because they were the key actors seeking to realize America's global aspiration to become the world's superpower.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS VICTORIES AND THE MEDIA**

During the civil rights era, advances in media technology made it possible for a powerful social movement to expose southern racism to the nation and the world. Leaders of the civil rights movement came to increasingly understand how to generate coverage that dramatized racial inequality and to demonstrate why change was required if America was to continue promoting itself as the world's greatest democracy that reached out globally, declaring "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

The civil rights movement framed the confrontations between itself and the segregationists as a battle between good and evil. Its nonviolent strategy lent itself to this framing because demonstrators dressed appropriately, often carried Bibles, and moved into the teeth of violence with a poised dignity – refusing to strike back, even when viciously attacked by white mobs. These actions made clear that black people were committed to obtaining freedom no matter the cost, even if it meant sacrificing limb and life.

The segregationists were equally committed to maintaining Jim Crow. The massive marches, jailings, boycotts, and other disruptive tactics rocked the foundations of Jim Crow because for decades its well-being depended on the acceptance of its inevitability. When the black masses responded with bold resistance, segregationists countered with state resources and the mob to crush the rebellions that mushroomed throughout the south. Attack dogs, fire hoses, billy clubs, mace, bombings, firings, jailings, and assassinations were used to crush the uprisings. When movement forces and segregationists met in dramatic confrontations, the media recorded the drama that exploded when "good" and "evil" clashed directly. Television reporters with their immensely improved equipment and photojournalists with their rapid-fire cameras relayed the confrontations through televisions and major newspapers. As television cameras recorded white troopers bashing the heads of dignified, peaceful demonstrators, many of whom were children marching

for their democratic rights, a nation was shamed. As satellites and newspapers relayed the images globally, America was scrutinized by world opinion as the Cold War raged.

The relationship between movements and media coverage is always problematic. Tensions arise because media usually represent the interests of the status quo while movements represent marginalized groups (Molotch 1979; Gitlin 1980). Thus, southern media often refused to cover the movement. Even national coverage was often truncated because of the bias toward covering the movement only when violence occurred (Jackson 2007; → Bias in the News). Nevertheless, national media interested in drama, violence, and a struggle reshaping America provided extensive coverage. The charisma of Dr King enhanced coverage. As King's lieutenant James Lawson put it, "any time King went to a movement, immediately the focus of the nation was on that community . . . He had the eyes of the world on where he went. It gave the black community an advantage it has never had" (Morris 1984).

As the world watched in horror while peaceful demonstrators were attacked, the American public began demanding racial change, as did leaders across the world. The President, Senate, Congress, State Department, and Supreme Court came under intense pressure to address Jim Crow or lose the battle to become the world's superpower (Layton 2000; Dudziak 2002). The movement and the media coverage of its struggle ripped the curtains off southern racism and allowed the whole world to scrutinize its undemocratic nature. As a result, national legislation that overthrew formal Jim Crow became a reality. The powerful civil rights movement that utilized mass resistance and clever use of the media changed a nation and continues to inspire liberation struggles globally.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Documentary Film, History of  
▶ Newspaper ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Rhetoric and Social Protest  
▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Television:  
Social History ▶ Television Technology

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# Classroom Instructional Technology

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Classroom instructional technology (CIT) includes the pedagogical tools and methods that allow educators to communicate instructional messages that achieve instructional goals and facilitate learning outcomes at all educational levels in classrooms around the world (→ Learning and Communication; Pedagogy, Communication in). Over the past three decades, researchers have studied both the challenges and the opportunities associated with the potential of CIT to enhance effective delivery of instruction in the classroom. Researchers have also aimed to understand how pedagogical tools are used to enhance student learning. When integrated appropriately into the teaching and learning process, CIT functions to enhance knowledge sharing, student engagement and collaboration, and classroom interaction, and ultimately to support learning (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction). Studies also demonstrate, however, that CIT is least effective and can be detrimental to student learning when it is not intentionally integrated into a meaningful instructional strategy, and when it does not further a specific educational goal (Kadiyala & Crynes 2000).

## DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

There is no single or universally accepted definition for CIT but the term can be broadly understood from a combined teacher–student perspective as “the *way* teaching is done and *how* learning is accomplished.” Technology is often used incorrectly as a synonym for computers. While computer hardware and software provide powerful tools for creating, recording, analyzing, and transmitting a wide variety of instructional messages, they are certainly not the only CIT that should be considered. Any tool that can potentially support student learning, including chalk, pencils, whiteboards, textbooks, overhead projectors, and → televisions, is an example of CIT (→ Computers and Display Programs in Education; Instructional Television). Communicating instructional messages that achieve instructional goals can be performed using message creation and manipulation tools, organization and presentation tools, information search, and resource management tools. CIT also includes iPods for podcasting, presentation graphic programs, discipline-specific software programs and tutorials, and the incorporation of the → Internet as an integral part of the course curriculum (→ Internet, Technology of).

Technology is used to distribute materials, handle logistics, and provide students with access to other students and the instructor. It can be used to foster open communication and active learning, clarify course expectations, provide individualized attention to students, and facilitate the collection of assignments and document sharing. Furthermore, when implemented appropriately, technology has been used to increase student contact with course materials, peers, and with the professor outside of the classroom (→ Course Organization Programs in Education).

The Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) defines instructional technology as “the theory and practice of design, development, utilization,

management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning” (Seels & Richey 1994). From that vantage, instructional technology and the teaching process are synonymous and difficult to distinguish. Communication researchers instead claim that the difference between knowing and teaching *is* communication, and that CIT is best conceptualized as the tools, media, and conduit (medium) through which clear and relevant instructional messages are communicated. The impact of CIT use on classroom communication, therefore, may vary in part as a function of course type and the ways in which instructors use technology to achieve different instructional objectives (→ Communication Education, Goals of).

### **PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE USE OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Lane and Shelton (2001) have argued that throughout higher education, and particularly within the communication discipline, too many educators are latching onto the most recent wave of technological advances without fully considering fundamental CIT dimensions, practical issues, and evaluative pedagogical criteria that should be used to determine whether pedagogical tools can be used for effective delivery of instruction. Before CIT is integrated into any classroom, several strategic decisions about course objectives, curriculum, and the features of the technology must be considered.

Among these decisions are the determination of precise learning objectives – what students are expected to be able to do when they have completed the course or unit of instruction, and what the students need to know in order to meet behavioral expectations. It is also critical to ascertain what students already know and what knowledge they bring to the classroom, as well as to assess whether students can use their knowledge effectively. Effective integration of technology into the teaching and learning process must include consideration of key CIT features that would help educators make an informed decision about whether technology supports teaching and learning objectives, as well as how and when to use CIT, which squarely puts pedagogy before technology. It is necessary for educators to have a clear understanding of the available CIT features (e.g., text, audio, multimedia, storage, etc.) and how each could function to achieve instructional objectives, as well as a strong rationale for why the new CIT would improve the dimensions currently available in the status quo. One of the most important issues related to CIT integration is an accurate assessment of whether the teachers and students possess the requisite competencies and experiences to ensure an appropriate fit between the CIT, the instructional messages, and the course objectives. It is also necessary to have confidence in the flexibility of the CIT to allow for individual differences in teaching styles, student abilities, and learning styles. Finally, educators must consider whether the CIT will be reliable and available with consistent quality.

The practical considerations that can be potential barriers when implementing CIT include an analysis of whether the CIT is cost effective while providing access for all students, whether the integration of technology supplements and enhances the curriculum without becoming the focus of the curriculum, and an assessment of the intended and unintended consequences of CIT use. Educators have learned that purchasing computer technology (i.e., hardware and software) without budgeting for installation and training is a costly mistake.



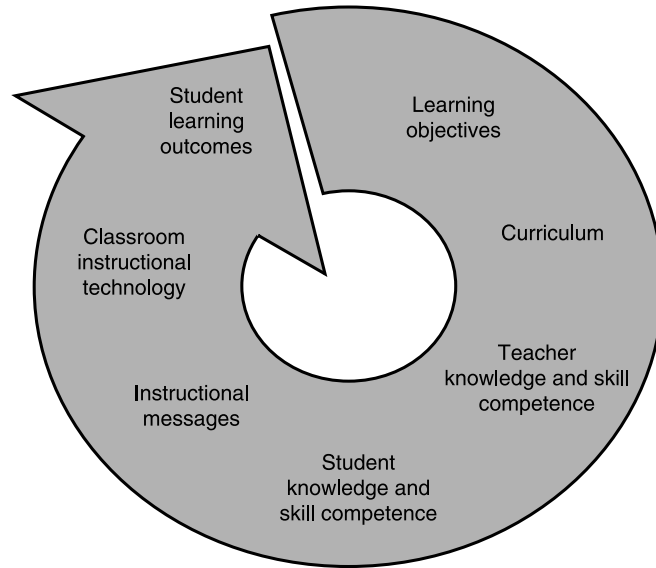


Figure 1 Teaching and learning with classroom instructional technology

A useful conceptual model to illustrate how technology can be successfully integrated into the classroom environment begins with a focus on learning objectives and the related curriculum, moves to a consideration of teacher and student knowledge and skill competencies, followed by the creation of tailored instructional messages that are communicated through appropriate CIT, and results in intentional student learning outcomes that accomplish the initial learning objectives (Fig. 1).

Evaluative pedagogical criteria should be employed based upon cost–benefit and assessment standards to determine whether the CIT succeeded in reaching its potential to enhance effective delivery of instruction in the classroom, and to understand how the pedagogical tools were used to enhance student learning. For example, the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of program tools, techniques, and materials that are presented as part of the curriculum should be assessed.

## RESEARCH ON CLASSROOM INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Several theories have been applied to investigations of CIT. *Media richness* analysis demonstrated that different technological channels (e.g., multimedia, audio only) may lead to different performance outcomes (Timmerman & Kruepke 2006). *Attribution theory* has been tested to demonstrate how instructor credibility and caring are enhanced when instructional technology is incorporated into the classroom (Schrodt & Witt 2006; → Attribution Processes; Credibility Effects; Teacher Socio-Communicative Style). *Gender theory* has been used to explain why females are more likely than males to equate technology use with instructor competence (Schrodt & Turman 2005). *Distributed learning theory* allows educators to compare traditional curriculum presentation without technology with the same curriculum incorporating technology (Walker 2003). More applied research

has investigated the benefits of textbook technology supplements (Sellnow et al. 2005) and the incorporation of podcasts to increase student engagement and interest, while allowing for more time for classroom discussions and lectures (Huntsberger & Stavitsky 2007).

Although anecdotal and descriptive research has been plentiful, empirical evidence regarding the effects of technology on student learning is largely absent. Oppenheimer (1997, 45) has argued, “there is no good evidence that most uses of computers significantly improve teaching and learning.” The studies that have been completed are largely anecdotal and lack the necessary scientific controls to be conclusive.

National, state, and local standards require teachers around the world to integrate technology into an already crowded curriculum. In New Zealand, a model of teacher development in technology education was integrated into several primary and secondary classrooms to demonstrate best practices for how teachers develop advanced competencies in technological knowledge and an understanding of technological practice (Jones & Compton 1998). In 2005, the Minister of Education in Japan approved a national curriculum of technology education that was similar to the curricular standards established by the International Society for Technology in Education ([www.iste.org](http://www.iste.org)). The competencies are generally related to “what students should know and be able to do to learn effectively and live productively in an increasingly digital world” (ISTE 2007). The International Technology Education Association ([iteconnect.org](http://iteconnect.org)) is based in the United States but has international centers in Australia, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Scotland, Spain, and Taiwan. Kimbell (1997) provides an overview and comparison of the international trends in technological curriculum and assessment in the UK, Germany, the United States, Taiwan, and Australia.

CIT has the potential to enhance a solid curriculum developed by a trained professional. Research that focuses on establishing the primacy of one instructional strategy over another should include considerations of the intended educational goal and corresponding instructional messages, and the extent to which a specific technology is best used to convey the intended message. The communication discipline can neither turn away from any mode of communication, nor can it practice an educational philosophy that is not grounded in practical use and access issues as well as critical evaluative issues. CIT enhances learning when pedagogy is sound and when there is a clear integration of technology.

Assessing the effects of technology on student learning is a complex process and requires that the strategies used to measure the effects of technology on student learning outcomes be appropriate to the learning outcomes promoted by those technologies. Instructional communication researchers will continue to document the effects of CIT on student learning outcomes. Of particular import will be whether CIT is related to course goals and objectives, and to what extent the implementation of the CIT supplements and enhances traditional teaching methods to increase student learning outcomes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Computers and Display Programs in Education ▶ Course Organization Programs in Education ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Distance Education ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Instructional Television ▶ Internet

► Internet, Technology of ► Learning and Communication ► Pedagogy, Communication in  
in ► Teacher Immediacy ► Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ► Television

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## **Classroom Management Techniques**

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Classroom management refers to teacher behaviors which “produce high levels of student involvement in classroom activities, minimal amounts of student behaviors that interfere with the teacher’s or students’ work, and efficient use of instructional time” (Emmer & Evertson 1981, 342). Studies continually reveal a significant relationship between time spent on the subject content and student learning (Berliner 1988). Making time for learning, also called “allocated time,” is an important goal of classroom managers.

Further, effective classroom managers find ways to ensure that students spend sufficient time on specific learning tasks, also known as “engaged time” or “time on task.” Finally, in order to maximize learning outcomes, classroom managers must set up the conditions in such a way that students’ time on task is success oriented (Woolfolk 2001).

### EFFECTIVELY MANAGED CLASSROOMS

A number of teacher behaviors contribute to effectively managed classrooms, ranging from classroom structure, learning format, and learning activities, to teacher leadership skills and behavior alteration techniques. Classroom structure involves the use of specific and clearly defined rules and procedures, generated by both teachers and students, with sufficient time spent socializing students to those rules and procedures early in the term. Important to lesson format and learning activities, the research indicates that teacher-led group activities work better than individual seatwork assignments.

Effective teacher leadership skills include the use of prompts, positive questioning techniques, motivational and conformational statements, and structured transitions (→ Teacher Socialization; Teacher Training in Communication). Taken together, all of these teacher behaviors serve to minimize classroom disruptions by maintaining student involvement in on-task learning. An important addition to this literature is the consideration of how teachers employ persuasive or influence strategies in order to engage students in ways that increase their time spent learning (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction).

### POWER IN THE CLASSROOM

Over the past 25 years, researchers have been examining how teachers employ strategies in the classroom to manage students’ on- and off-task behaviors, and, thus, students’ affective and cognitive learning. Most notable in the instructional communication literature is the early, systematic, and heuristic program of research referred to as “power in the classroom.” The origins of this research program began with preliminary investigations of teachers’ use of French and Raven’s (1959) *five bases of social power* (McCroskey & Richmond 1983; Richmond & McCroskey 1984). However, those original power bases referred to the teacher’s capacity or potential to effect students’ behavioral change. A major shift in thinking about teacher power was launched with the research that examined how teachers implemented that potential or, stated differently, how teachers communicated their power resources relationally with their students (Kearney et al. 1984, 1985). Inductively deriving teacher influence messages from college students, college teachers, and elementary and secondary teachers, a typology of 22 *behavior alteration techniques* (BATs) and sample *behavior alteration messages* (BAMs) resulted. Even though other operationalizations of teacher power are available, this typology continues to serve as the primary form of relational power measurement in the classroom context (Waldeck et al. 2001; → Classroom Power).

Subsequent research on BATs and BAMs revealed that teachers and students perceive the use of teacher power differently, with teachers reporting that they use pro-social or “nicer” strategies to influence students’ compliance, but students perceiving that their teachers use more antisocial or “meaner” strategies (Kearney et al. 1984). When teachers

are perceived to use pro-social strategies, students believe they learn more and like what they are learning. In reverse, with teachers who use antisocial strategies, students believe they learn less and dislike the learning process (Plax et al. 1986; Plax & Kearney 1992).

Continuing that line of research, others report a positive relationship between teachers' use of BATs and classroom outcomes, including cognitive and affective learning, student resistance and aggression, classroom interactional justice, motivation to learn, student interest, and their own reciprocal sense of power (Plax & Kearney 1992; Roach et al. 2006; → Learning and Communication). Similarly, teachers' selection of BATs is associated with nonverbal immediacy, credibility, satisfaction with their profession, teacher training and experience, culture, use of humor, and time during the semester (Plax & Kearney 1992; Roach et al. 2006; → Teacher Use of Humor).

Roach's parallel program of research illustrates how graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) use power or power-based BATs to manage their classrooms (Roach et al. 2006). He found, for instance, that the more inexperienced GTAs were perceived to use significantly more antisocial influence messages. Highly argumentative GTAs were prone to use more overall power than those low in argumentativeness, and those who were highly apprehensive about communicating as a TA in the classroom tended to use less power than those who were more moderate or low in their anxieties (→ Communication Apprehension; Teacher Assertiveness). Finally, Golish (1999) found that students reported using more power with GTAs than with their higher-status professors.

Finally, others have examined students' active role in the influence process by investigating students' resistance to teacher compliance-gaining attempts (Burroughs et al. 1989; Kearney et al. 1991; → Compliance Gaining).

Effective classroom management is often synonymous with teachers' ability to influence students in ways that optimize academic engagement time (→ Teacher Influence and Persuasion). Typically, teachers are rewarded or dismissed based on their management skills. And yet, not all management techniques are equally effective. Keeping in mind the relationship between selective use of particular BATs and student outcomes, teachers may facilitate student learning outcomes more effectively. In this way, teaching is more than content dissemination; effective teaching requires teachers to persuade and influence students (→ Persuasion; Persuasion and Resistance).

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Power ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ► Communication Apprehension ► Compliance Gaining ► Educational Communication ► Learning and Communication ► Persuasion ► Persuasion and Resistance ► Teacher Assertiveness ► Teacher Influence and Persuasion ► Teacher Socialization ► Teacher Training in Communication ► Teacher Use of Humor

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## Classroom Power

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Social influence is inherent in the process of classroom instruction. Interpersonal power, as social influence, is a relational phenomenon and is defined “as an individual’s potential to have an effect on another person’s or group of persons’ behavior” (Richmond et al. 1980, 38). It is a teacher’s job to communicate and to have an effect on students’ behavior and learning. Typically, teachers use power to help students learn, to keep students on task, to foster appropriate interactions between teacher and student and between student and student, to encourage students to stop antisocial or anti-productive behaviors, to encourage students to engage in pro-social and productive behaviors, etc. Notably, students exert interpersonal power in the classroom as well. Student communication, actions, and reactions have an influence on teachers and on other students.

It is important, as well, to realize that power is a perception. No one has power unless others perceive them to have it. Teacher power is granted or perceived by students, and

student power is granted or perceived by teachers and other students (→ Teacher Influence and Persuasion). Conceptualization and use of power must be receiver-based.

French & Raven (1959) outlined five basic bases of interpersonal power: coercive, legitimate, reward, referent, and expert. These power bases are anchored in the eye of the beholder – the perception of the person on the receiving end of the power use (i.e., the “target”). *Coercive power* is the perception of the target that the “source” (i.e., the person who has the power) can punish them if they do not do what the source wants. *Legitimate power* is the perception by the target that the source has the official right to tell them what to do simply by merit of position or authority. Society grants this power to certain individuals in certain roles or functions (e.g., teachers). *Reward power* is based on the target’s perception that the source has the ability to provide something desirable in exchange for cooperation. Like coercive power, this perception is influenced by whether or not the source can or will provide the reward. *Referent power* is based on the target’s desire to be like the source. This power base is rooted in the concept of identification. If a student likes and “identifies” with a teacher, he/she is more likely to do what the teacher suggests. Referent power is one of the strongest power bases available and tends to have more positive and long-term outcomes than other power bases. *Expert power* is the perception by the target that the source has great knowledge, training, background, and/or experience in a given area. “Knowledge is power” is a common and well-understood phrase. For this power base to be effective it must be relevant and seen as necessary by the target. There is a significant body of research literature dealing with classroom power.

In the early 1980s, a series of “Power in the Classroom” studies was launched to examine the operation and influence of power and compliance-gaining in instructional settings (→ Classroom Management Techniques). Instructor power use was found to be significantly correlated with student affective and cognitive learning (e.g., Richmond & McCroskey 1984). Other studies have extended findings from this research series. Richmond (1990) discovered a significant relationship between instructor power use and student exiting motivation to study course content.

Culture plays a significant role in classroom power. Roach and Byrne (2001) found that American instructors are perceived to use significantly more power in all five power bases than German instructors. In a comparison with French instructors, American instructors are perceived to use significantly more reward and referent power, and French instructors are perceived to use significantly more legitimate power (Roach et al. 2005).

Students also have and exercise power in the classroom. Golish (1999) found that students feel they have more power with graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) than they do with professors. Golish and Olson (2000) found that although teachers were perceived to use more power, students also used power and this power use was positively correlated with teacher power use. These studies indicate that supervisors and subordinates have power in an interaction context; power does not just come from the top down.

It is important that teachers use classroom power effectively. The overall goal in the classroom is learning and teacher power use is intended to promote this. Research indicates that though coercive and legitimate power can be used to accomplish desired short-term ends, the negative interpersonal aspects of these techniques are usually counter-productive in the long term. Even reward power, generally perceived as positive, can be ineffective in the long term. Research indicates that teachers should concentrate

instead on using referent and expert power. These two are the most pro-social power bases that produce the most positive outcomes. Use of referent power requires that teachers establish positive and trusting interpersonal relationships with students. Students are usually eager to respond to guidance from teachers they like and with whom they identify. Additionally, if teachers can convey their competence and character to the students (→ Teacher Self-Disclosure), the resulting level of credibility will allow the teacher to use expert power approaches toward the desired end.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Management Techniques ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Power in Intergroup Settings ▶ Teacher Affinity Seeking ▶ Teacher Assertiveness ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Influence and Persuasion ▶ Teacher Self-Disclosure

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## **Classroom Questioning**

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One important aspect of student–teacher classroom interaction involves the process of asking and answering questions. The proficient use of questioning in the classroom is



often recognized as a significant tool for managing classroom discourse and motivating student participation in the learning process. Many of the published studies in this area pragmatically advise teachers about the process of designing and executing questioning strategies that enhance student comprehension and recall of course materials. Other studies investigate the efficacy of teacher and student questioning practices. Although there is considerable disagreement regarding the outcomes of, and explanations for, effective classroom questioning, all researchers concur that educational questions are one of the fundamental tools teachers use to promote learning (→ Pedagogy, Communication in; Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction; Learning and Communication).

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND THEORIES

Research on oral questions asked during instruction emphasize the teacher's role in skillfully posing questions to stimulate student learning and the effect of questions on students' cognitive processing and understanding. Another studied area explores the effects of student question-asking/answering practices. At issue in these investigations is whether deliberately planned and implemented questioning can be associated with the integration and synthesis of the conceptual material being presented. Discussions about the efficacy of asking and answering questions most frequently conceptualize questions as inquiries that seek specific information or elicit cognitive elaboration (Graesser et al. 1992).

Although the notion of classroom questions is straightforward, researchers have yet to articulate a clear *theoretical perspective* to explain the way in which questions function to enhance student learning outcomes. Early research advanced a generative explanation that questions help students produce a myriad of thoughts related to the subject. Unconvinced by the simplicity of this explanation, some researchers embraced a more cognitive process suggesting that student learning was a function of elaborating upon the connections between material learned and questions asked. Not entirely satisfied that thoughts are stimulated by mere question-asking, other investigators suggest that teachers have so successfully modeled question-asking and answering behavior that their operant conditioning made questioning an integral part of the learning process. Finally, some investigators support a social interaction perspective, reasoning that the interpersonal interactions that occur in the classroom make question-asking and answering a normal part of a good teacher–student relationship.

Besides theorizing about the underpinnings of question-asking, there is also controversy about the best categorization schema to describe the *types of questions* employed and the descriptions used to classify the level of questioning occurring in the classroom. Many researchers use some form of Bloom's taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation) to assess the types of questions asked. Others have developed schemas that emerged from direct observations, but these typologies have few commonalities. The most pragmatic way to handle question types and/or distinguish between categories of questions is to differentiate between questions that require the retrieval of factual information (lower-level cognitive questions) and questions that require students to cognitively locate relevant information, sift through that information for material most closely linked to the question posed, and evaluate or extrapolate the application of the information to the question being asked (higher-level cognitive questions).

Much of the question-asking literature focuses upon the scope of possible questions that the instructor could ask, phrasing questions carefully, selecting appropriate content-based questions, implementing both high-level and low-level cognitive questions, and allowing sufficient time for student responses to maximize learning (see Gayle et al. 2006). Such *pragmatic advice* posits that effective teachers need to: allow both volunteering and nonvolunteering students an opportunity to answer questions posed, retain the possibility of spontaneously called-out answers, provide support for incorrect responses, prod for deeper-level responses, and favorably acknowledge accurate responses. Teachers are urged to side-step the threatening, power-laden nature of question-asking and to avoid asking vague, trick, or abstract questions which may inhibit responses and evoke negative feelings toward learning.

### CONCEPTUALIZING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUESTIONS AND STUDENT LEARNING

Not only does the research on classroom questioning behavior involve best practices, it also investigates the relationship between teacher questioning practices and student learning outcomes. This line of research addresses the efficacy of asking questions and the types of questions asked. Several studies indicate that student comprehension and recall can be enhanced by strategic question-asking (see Martin & Pressley 1991).

Not all studies affirm the educational benefits of asking questions, and some researchers found that more questions resulted in lower student recall of lecture material. Van den Broek et al. (2001) concluded that a host of factors such as student age, question timing, and question placement mediated student comprehension following teacher questioning. These authors caution instructors to investigate the efficacy of their particular question-asking strategies and to be mindful of the questions selected to motivate student learning.

Some writers make bold claims regarding the effects of questioning. Teachers are advised to increase the number of higher-level questions in order to enhance students' thinking capacity and overall level of academic achievement (Dornisch & Sperling 2004). Pressley & Forrest-Pressley (1985) reasoned that higher cognitive level questions require the integration of material and moving beyond the information presented. Research has not always supported these contentions. The discussion centers on how the cognitive level of the question actually functions to enhance recall or comprehension. Some research findings discount the educational benefits of higher-order questions (see Samson et al. 1987). On the other hand, researchers like Redfield & Rousseau (1981) in their meta-analysis claim that "gains in achievement can be expected when higher cognitive questions assume a predominate role during classroom instruction" (p. 237). This assertion is consistent with Gayle et al.'s (2006) meta-analytic findings that indicate achievement scores tended to increase following exposure to high-order questioning. The problem in documenting the impact of higher cognitive questions on student learning may lie in the actual employment of higher-order questions in the classroom. Wimer et al. (2001) observed that higher cognitive level questioning was surprisingly absent in American classrooms.

Researchers have also focused on teachers paying equal attention to the *type of question asked by instructors* and the *type of response received from students*. For example, Dantonio & Paradise (1988) observed that high-level questions, which require students to process

readily available information at a higher level than rote recall, elicited high-level responses. These authors believe that lower cognitive level questions requiring the recall of factual information elicit lower-level cognitive responses. Similarly, Fagan et al. (1981) concluded that asking higher-level questions produce higher-level responses. Their conclusions are supported by Gayle et al.'s (2006) meta-analysis. However, some researchers observe that half the time students' responses to questions fail to correspond to the cognitive level of teachers' questions (Dillon 1982). The issue appears to be that students may or may not have the mental ability or agility to answer a question at the level of abstraction sought by the teacher.

### **EXTENDED WAIT TIME**

One theoretical issue contributing to the efficacy of questioning behavior involves the amount of time necessary to deepen the level of student response. This construct is normally conceptualized as the time teachers allow students to think about, and answer, the question posed. Normally, wait time or lapse time is operationalized using a stop watch to measure the amount of time between the moment a question is asked and the time a response is initiated. Research into wait time suggests that the most frequent time allowed for students to begin answering the question asked is three seconds, which may not be the optimal interval for motivating student participation and/or learning.

Research on question wait time fails to produce conclusive evidence that extending wait time maximizes student learning. The majority of the findings have centered on question complexity and required processing-time. Several researchers report that students responding to higher cognitive level questions do not require more wait time than students responding to lower cognitive level questions (Duell 1994). It appears that pausing after higher-level questions does not necessarily produce higher-level responses and that extending the lapse time could actually lower the cognitive processing for higher-order questions.

There is some controversy surrounding the issue of wait time. Several researchers observed that using higher-level questions and increased thinking or wait time produced a higher-level cognitive response (Gambrell 1983). These authors also found that lower-level, text-based questions required more think time before eliciting a response. A mitigating factor may be the teachers' inability to capitalize on the use of higher-order questions which may improve educational outcomes. Another factor may be how a particular instructor encourages students to think before answering questions.

### **STUDENT AS QUESTIONER IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION**

An additional area of student-teacher interaction in the classroom involves asking and answering student-generated questions. Although this issue has received less attention, the pragmatic advice to teachers concentrates on modeling skillful questioning behavior for students. It appears that teacher questions generate the most opportunity for student question-asking. West and Pearson (1994) found that students ask about three questions per hour, and those questions most frequently pertained to classroom procedures, information inquiries, and clarifications of teacher statements. Student questions were most often answered by teachers' clarifying statements.

While considering student question-asking, investigations have focused upon the relationship between student question-asking ability and student comprehension and recall. King's (1990) studies provided students with a set of questions to guide them in asking and answering additional self-generated or peer-generated questions related to course materials. It appears that students capable of asking and answering questions when engaged in peer interactions produced more in-depth synthesis of the subject matter. Interestingly, the level of student questioning was significantly related to the level of the knowledge statement produced (King 1994). Students who asked questions about their experiences as well as questions that integrated course material demonstrated a deeper understanding of the subject matter and more sophisticated knowledge construction.

Finally, researchers have focused upon other mitigating factors in exploring student-generated question-asking. Graesser et al. (1992) reported that tutors generate more questions than students being tutored, but both tutors and students use more questions requiring yes or no answers. This made it difficult to determine the efficacy of questions in enhancing student learning. Good et al. (1987) discovered that lower-achieving students begin by asking more questions than other students in the early grades but ended up asking the least questions as they progress through school. The authors speculate that these students most likely learn not to ask questions because of teacher and/or peer feedback.

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Management Techniques ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ► Learning and Communication ► Pedagogy, Communication in

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## **Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction**

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Student–teacher interaction, both in and out of the classroom, is influenced strongly by the teaching perspective embraced by the teacher. Within the instructional communication discipline, teaching can be viewed from two perspectives: the rhetorical perspective and the relational perspective (Mottet & Beebe 2006). Teachers whose student–teacher interaction is governed by the rhetorical perspective communicate with their students as a means to influence or persuade them. Communication is teacher-centered, which means that teachers send a message to students who play a passive role as the recipient of the message. To communicate effectively with their students, teachers focus on teaching clearly, making course content relevant, and acting in an assertive manner (→ Teacher Clarity; Teacher Assertiveness). In essence, their in-class communication behaviors center on performing their classroom functions as lecturer and discussion leader and managing the classroom.

### **TEACHER–STUDENT IN-CLASS COMMUNICATION**

Teacher–student in-class communication revolves around the primary communicative roles played by the teacher. Two of these roles are teacher as lecturer and teacher as discussion

leader. The lecture enables teachers to communicate large amounts of information organized in a way to appeal to many students at the same time. For the lecture to be effective, it must have the appropriate breadth and depth of content, be organized in a logical pattern, and contain the appropriate amount and type of examples. Teachers must also strive to engage in effective communicative behaviors when lecturing. These communicative behaviors include being clear, making the content relevant, and using humor. When engaged in teaching with clarity, teachers communicate their expectations clearly, stress key points, provide preview and review statements, and describe assignments (Book 1999).

*Clear* teachers are concerned with not only the clarity of course content, but the clarity of course procedures, course policies, and course expectations. When making content relevant, teachers communicate content relevance through the use of examples, explanations, current events, and experiences. Teachers who are *relevant* are concerned with making the connection between course material and students' career goals, personal goals, and personal needs. When using *humor*, teachers communicate through relaying humorous stories, anecdotes, and jokes, and by exaggeration (→ Teacher Use of Humor). Humorous teachers make sure their humor is related to the course content and is used to clarify key points made in the lecture. Thus, by incorporating clarity, relevance, and humor in their lectures, teachers are able to enhance student learning. Additionally, when teachers are clear, relevant, and humorous, students report that they liked their teacher, liked the course, and were motivated to study (→ Pedagogy, Communication in).

When leading discussion, teachers rely on asking questions as their primary communicative tool (→ Classroom Questioning). By asking questions, teachers can assess whether students are learning, are interested in the course content, or are simply paying attention. Many teachers rely on asking recall and clarification questions to determine whether students are learning or paying attention, but other forms of teacher questions exist. These teacher questions are exploratory, diagnostic, action, cause-and-effect, and summary (Davis 1993). Exploratory questions ask students to probe known facts; diagnostic questions ask students to probe motives or causes; action questions ask students to develop a course of action; cause-and-effect questions ask students to derive a causal explanation; and summary questions ask students to synthesize content. Whatever the type of questions teachers ask, these questions are designed to challenge and involve students in classroom interaction.

Teacher communication is also central in classroom management. Classroom management refers to the communicative behaviors used by teachers to regulate and control student classroom behavior (→ Classroom Management Techniques). Some of the communicative behaviors used by teachers are messages rooted in teacher power and influence and behavioral alteration techniques. Messages rooted in teacher power and influence enable teachers to persuade students to behave in ways that are appropriate for the classroom. Two of these messages include teacher expert power and teacher referent power (→ Classroom Power). Teacher expert power refers to student recognition of the teacher as a content specialist and teacher referent power refers to student recognition of the teacher as a likeable person. When teachers use expert power and referent power messages, students report that they liked the course, learned something from it, are satisfied with how their teachers communicated in the course, and consider their teachers to be competent and trustworthy. Moreover, students are more likely to behave and

respond to their teachers' requests to behave, which emerge in the form of behavioral alteration techniques. *Behavioral alteration techniques* are 22 strategies used by teachers to gain student compliance using either a positive or a negative tone. When teachers use pro-social techniques, students are more likely to respond positively to teacher influence attempts; when teachers use negative techniques, students are more likely to resist teacher influence attempts (→ Teacher Influence and Persuasion).

Conversely, teachers whose student–teacher interaction is governed by the relational perspective communicate with their students as a means of developing a relationship. Communication is mutually created and shared between students and teachers, with an emphasis on the role of shared emotions and feelings used by students and teachers to respond both affectively and effectively to each other. To communicate effectively with their students, teachers use affinity-seeking strategies and immediacy behaviors, are supportive and confirming, and use humor (→ Teacher Affinity Seeking; Teacher Comforting and Social Support; Teacher Confirmation; Teacher Immediacy).

Through the relational perspective, student–teacher interaction is viewed as collaborative in that student–teacher interaction is interpersonally driven and relationally oriented. Implicit in this argument is the notion that students and instructors engage in communication in order to develop professional working relationships with each other. The relational perspective can account for student–teacher interaction, which impacts whether and how students are motivated to communicate with their teachers, whether students participate in the classroom, and whether students engage in out-of-class communication with their teachers.

### **STUDENT COMMUNICATION MOTIVES**

Whether student–teacher interaction occurs may be dependent on whether or not students are motivated to communicate with their teachers. Student communication motives refer to the primary reasons for students to communicate with their teachers. Researchers have identified five communication motives. These motives, or reasons, are relational, functional, participatory, excuse-making, and sycophancy (Martin et al. 1999).

When students communicate with teachers for *relational reasons*, they are doing so to learn more about the teacher on a personal level. Students may perceive their teachers as having similar interests, sharing the same background, or having the potential to become a potential friend. When students communicate with teachers for *functional reasons*, they are doing so to acquire needed information about the course. Students may ask questions or use information-seeking strategies to learn about course expectations, to understand the material, or to clarify the requirements for assignments, exams, and projects. When students communicate with teachers for *participatory reasons*, they are doing so to demonstrate their involvement in the course. Students may answer questions, offer examples, or challenge teachers' comments to demonstrate that they are genuinely interested in participating in class discussion or class activity. When students communicate with teachers for *excuse-making*, they are doing so to provide a reason as to why their academic performance is suffering. Students may offer excuses for why they are tardy, why they are absent from class, or why their assignments are incomplete or not finished at all. When students communicate with teachers for *sycophantic reasons*, they are doing so in order to

make a favorable impression on teachers. Students may engage in conversation, answer questions, or appear interested in the course content because they want to be viewed positively by their teachers.

When students communicate with their teachers for relational, functional, and participatory reasons, they report that they liked the course, learned something from it, are satisfied with how their teachers communicated in the course, and are motivated to study. Students who communicate with their teachers for relational and functional reasons also report that they liked the teacher. Conversely, students who communicate for excuse-making and sycophancy reasons do not indicate any positive links between their communication with their teachers and their liking, learning, or satisfaction and this motivation. These findings suggest that when students communicate with their teachers for relational, functional, and participatory reasons, their educational experience is affected positively, whereas when they communicate with their teachers for excuse-making and sycophantic reasons their educational experience is not affected at all, whether positively or negatively.

At the same time, whether students are motivated to communicate with their teachers is dependent on the interpersonal communication behaviors used by teachers. Generally, when students are motivated to communicate with their teachers, they perceive their teachers as being approachable, as friendly yet challenging, as responsive yet assertive, and as possessing the communication skills necessary for functional relationships. They are also motivated to communicate when their teachers use verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors and use pro-social classroom management techniques. Moreover, students are motivated to communicate with their teachers when they consider their relationships to be of high quality and unlike the relationships the same teachers have with other students.

### STUDENT IN-CLASS PARTICIPATION

One way in which students' reasons for communicating with their teachers may surface is through their in-class participation. In-class participation, which is defined broadly as the comments offered and questions asked by students during class time (Fassinger 2000), encapsulates the questions students ask, the clarification tactics and the information-seeking strategies they use, and the challenge behaviors in which they engage.

Asking questions is perhaps the most fundamental process through which students participate in class. By asking questions, students can request help, signal a lack of comprehension, request additional information, and check a point of view. College students generally ask five types of questions: classroom procedures, general inquiry content, clarification, confirmation, and general inquiry teacher (West & Pearson 1994). *Classroom procedures* questions center on course assignments and exams, the syllabus, and general classroom management; *general inquiry content* questions are factual and revolve around the subject matter; *clarification* questions focus on further elaboration of the subject matter; *confirmation* questions center on student requests for affirmation; and *general inquiry teacher* questions seek personal information about the instructor. Although it is estimated that 95 percent of students have questions, college students typically only ask three to four questions per hour of class, and these questions are asked primarily to request clarification and inquire about classroom procedures.



*Clarification tactics* refer to the questions asked or statements made by students through which students indicate they need additional information in order to enhance their understanding of the subject matter. College students use a variety of clarification tactics (Kendrick & Darling 1990). These tactics include: ignoring the problem; asking the teacher to elaborate, provide an example, rephrase the content, or repeat the material; asking the teacher a specific question; indicating confusion via a quizzical look or brief phrase; and checking to determine if the content was interpreted accurately. Other clarification tactics include asking classmates, asking the teacher to speak more slowly, and asking the teacher for written material. Of these clarification tactics, asking the teacher to elaborate, to provide an example, and to repeat the material are the most commonly used tactics, although the use of each tactic can depend on class size and instructional format.

*Information-seeking* is defined as the process by which students acquire feedback through the use of information-seeking strategies, and is used when they are unsure of how their performance is being evaluated. Five information-seeking strategies used by college students are the overt, indirect, third-party, testing, and observing strategies (Myers & Knox 2001). The *overt* strategy is the only strategy that involves direct interaction between two individuals; an *indirect* strategy entails either hinting at the information or getting the target to provide the information without explicitly being asked; a *third-party* strategy requires an individual to solicit the information from someone other than the target; a *testing* strategy involves an individual deviating from the organizational or institutional norms in the hopes of being noticed; and an *observing* strategy requires little or no interaction between the information seeker and the target. Among college students, the overt information-seeking strategy is used the most frequently and the testing strategy the least frequently, although the use of each strategy may depend on students' perceptions of whether the classroom climate is supportive or defensive and whether teachers use communication behaviors that invite students' use of each strategy.

*Challenge behaviors* are strategies used by students specifically in an attempt to reduce their uncertainty about classroom rules, expectations, power, and explanations. Four challenge behaviors used by students are procedural challenges, evaluation challenges, practicality challenges, and power challenges (Simonds 1997). *Procedural* challenges focus on students testing the classroom "rules," which may be stated by teachers or included in the course syllabus; *evaluation* challenges arise when students question teachers' grading methods, grading scales, or measurement tools; *practicality* challenges occur when students question the relevance or salience of course assignments or tasks; and *power* challenges arise when students attempt to exert influence over teachers or other students. All four challenge behaviors are used steadily by students throughout the course of a semester and across all academic disciplines.

### **OUT-OF-CLASS COMMUNICATION (OCC)**

*Out-of-class communication* (OCC) between student and teacher is defined broadly as "structured and unstructured activities or conditions that are not directly part of an institution's formal, course-related instructional purposes" (Terenzini et al. 1996, 150).

These activities or conditions include students' use of scheduled or impromptu office visits; e-mail messages and telephone calls; running into faculty on campus, at campus events, or off campus; stopping to speak with faculty in the corridor or during class breaks; speaking with their instructors before and after class; and scheduled advising sessions. OCC is initiated primarily by students and occurs most frequently in the form of office visits.

Although the number of students who participate in OCC varies, its content is restricted to several topics. Some of these topics include students inquiring about course-related information, engaging in self-disclosure, seeking advice, engaging in small talk, sharing intellectual ideas, asking instructors for favors, discussing future career plans, and discussing campus issues, although inquiries about course-related information are the most frequently reported OCC topic (Jaasma & Koper 2001; Theophilides & Terenzini 1981).

Students who engage in OCC report a better educational experience than students who do not engage in it. Similarly with the research findings on students' motives to communicate with their teachers, student learning outcomes are linked positively to OCC. When students engage in OCC, they report that they like their teacher, liked the course, learned something from it, are motivated to study, and are satisfied with how their teachers communicated in the course. Students also are more likely to discuss what they have learned in the course with their family and friends, and report that they consider their teachers to be trustworthy, empathic, and as possessing the ability to mentor.

At the same time, whether students are motivated to engage in OCC with their teachers is dependent on the interpersonal communication behaviors used by teachers. These interpersonal communication behaviors include whether teachers are assertive and responsive, engage in verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors, use humor, utilize affinity-seeking strategies, and use functional communication skills (→ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Management Techniques ▶ Classroom Power ▶ Classroom Questioning ▶ Pedagogy, Communication in ▶ Teacher Affinity Seeking ▶ Teacher Assertiveness ▶ Teacher Clarity ▶ Teacher Comforting and Social Support ▶ Teacher Confirmation ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Influence and Persuasion ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ▶ Teacher Use of Humor

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## Climate of Opinion

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Like many concepts in the social sciences, the “climate of opinion” is a metaphor borrowed from the physical world to describe a phenomenon that is not only important to the general public and policymakers but also to major mass communication theories. The *climate of opinion* refers to the “perceived popularity” of opinions (Sutherland & Galloway 1981). Political communication scholars often differentiate between → public opinion and popular opinion, between organized community on the one hand and mass or crowd on the other, between opinions based on consensus and unifying tradition and aggregated views of the moment. Policymakers generally respond to the former referents in each of these pairs, to public opinion, rather than to the latter, popular opinions, expressed in polls reported by the media (→ Polls and the Media; Public Opinion Polling; Survey). Scholars have examined how the climate of opinion affects → political discourse and the perceived freedom to talk (Wyatt et al. 2000).

The importance of the media lies in their ability to not only affect public opinion but also report popular opinion, and it is the latter that often is the content of messages conveyed to the general public as they consider what represents the climate of opinion at any given moment. When the topic or issue is clear, as in the case of elections – Who do voters support? Do people favor an issue? (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Election Surveys) – the public is generally quite accurate in gauging the climate of public opinion, but the same cannot be said of other contexts, when coverage of what is on the minds of citizens is more fragmented and fleeting, and when the referent opinion is unambiguous (→ Perceived Reality; Meta-Analyses; Pluralistic Ignorance).

The significance of the climate of opinion as a concept increased with the introduction of the → *spiral of silence*, first articulated by → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (1993). In this theory, what people learn from the media affects their perceptions of the climate of opinion and how they express themselves in interpersonal discussions. People are seen as using the media and personal experience to perceive those opinions that are gaining and those that are losing ground. When people believe that their opinions are in the majority or becoming more popular, they express their convictions openly, outside of their family and circle of friends. If they think their opinions are in the minority, or losing favor, they feel less certain of their position and are less likely to discuss their opinion except with friends. Thus, the climate of opinion visible in interpersonal discussions and reported in the media is distorted in some way (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on).

The research generated to test the spiral of silence shows support in numerous countries with diverse publics but also raises questions about its applicability based on how people process media messages conveying the climate of opinion (e.g., congruency between one's own opinion and that climate reported), whether the media present a consonant portrayal of the *climate of opinion* (→ Consonance of Media Content), a prevailing attitude (challenged when applied to the US), whether perceptions of a climate of opinion dissonant from one's own can sometimes stimulate people to “buck the spiral” to express opinions, and whether people's socio-demographic characteristics, the nature of the issue, the issue's salience to individuals, and the positive attraction to social groups are more important determinants of willingness to express an opinion than fear of social isolation.

Another issue surrounding the concept asks whether there is one climate of opinion or *multiple climates*. People live in various circumstances, so a national climate of opinion may be important for some topics, but individuals may respond to local climates for other issues. These distinctions may vary not only by geography but also by social groups, e.g., people living in communities with different levels of racial diversity when the opinion concerns racial issues.

The climate of opinion also is pertinent to discussions of → *third-person effects*. Documented across various publics, third-person perception represents the tendency for people to estimate negative media effects on other people to be greater than they are on themselves, with a reverse discrepancy when the effects are positive. This line of research links third-person perceptions to personal opinions and media perceptions through notions of a hostile or persuasive media and projection processes. The projection effect posits a positive relationship between personal opinion and the perceived climate of opinion, with support found in some studies (→ False Consensus; False Uniqueness; Hostile Media Phenomenon; Social Perception).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ False Consensus ▶ False Uniqueness ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Survey ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## **Cluster Analysis**

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Cluster analysis is a collective term for a broad variety of statistical methods and procedures which share the purpose of reducing the complexity of large collections of elements by arranging these objects into groups. Clustering procedures try to identify homogeneous groups (clusters) of entities within an empirical data set by comparing their attributes. The elements being clustered are predominantly the objects (cases, arranged in rows of a common data matrix) of an observation, but nothing stands against clustering the variables (columns in a data matrix) likewise. Thus cluster analysis is closely related to methods of → factor analysis.

The groups to be identified consist of elements that are similar to one another, while the resulting groups ought to be as different as possible. Thus the main goal of all measures and algorithms employed in cluster analysis is to optimize this equilibrium of homogeneity (of the elements within groups) and heterogeneity (of all identified groups).

## APPLICATIONS OF CLUSTER ANALYSIS

Early developments of methods for classification or cluster analysis can be found from the late 1930s on. The techniques and algorithms used today (and included in popular statistical software packages like SAS and SPSS) were developed mainly in the 1960s and 1970s, with the growing power of electronic data processing, which is essential for cluster analysis. The output of literature on classification and clustering is still much higher than in other fields of quantitative data analysis.

The main fields of application for clustering techniques early on, and still today, have been biology, psychology, marketing, and medical science (Mirkin 1996, 4–17; Mirkin 2005, xi–xxii). In media and communication studies the number of publications referring to this method is relatively moderate (if the much more frequently used factor analysis is not regarded as a variation of a clustering technique). Nevertheless, cluster analysis can be very helpful in exploratory studies as in hypothesis-testing in the field of communication studies: it can contribute substantially to the identification and description of types of media users, print publications, and patterns of media use (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Research Methods).

## ELEMENTS OF A CLUSTER ANALYSIS

A cluster analysis usually comprises several steps (Milligan 1996): (1) the entities to be clustered and the variables by which the clusters will be defined have to be selected; (2) the similarity of the objects of interest according to the selected variables has to be determined by measures of proximity; (3) the objects have to be sorted into groups on the basis of these measures and by using specific clustering methods; and (4) a decision has to be made as to the appropriate number of clusters, followed by description and interpretation of the final cluster solution.

The first step is usually predetermined by the available data set. The *entities for clustering* in the field of communication research might be primarily persons (survey data), media products, statements, images (content analysis), or even complex aggregates like states or communities. There are no special requirements for the entities, but some clustering methods achieve a better response with the problem of outliers than others. One solution is to eliminate outliers from the data set; furthermore, literature has provided specific methods of clustering that are less affected by extreme cases.

Much more crucial, though seldom discussed in applied research, is the *selection of the variables* for clustering. There is no upper limit for the number of variables that can be included in a cluster analysis. There are measurements and methods for binary data as well as for metric scaling; there is no normal distribution required and only a maximum number of variables is allowed. Nevertheless, the outcome of a cluster analysis may be severely affected by mistakes in choosing variables. The selection of the variables should

be made on the basis of theoretical assumptions, for the incorporation of just one or two “noise variables” might have a severe influence on the resulting solution (Milligan 1996, 361–365). It should also be recognized that large numbers of particular variables have a weighting effect on the cluster formation (if, for example, TV use is measured by 10 variables and newspaper use by only two, the resulting clusters will be strongly determined by TV use), as well as the use of different scale ranges or possible correlations of the variables used. This problem can be solved by the employment of standardization or weighting procedures; however, an imbalance of variables of different kinds might be deliberately imposed by a researcher as a way of weighting.

The second step concerns the selection of an appropriate *measure of proximity*. Proximity measures determine the distance between two objects on one or more variables, and many different statistical procedures are available that can deal with all sorts of scale types. For example, with binary data, there are four possible relations of two objects: both carry the same attribute (a), e.g., persons are newspaper readers or not, have online access or not, etc.; only either the first object (b) or the second object (c) carries it, or finally neither of them (d). In order to compute the *simple matching coefficient* (SMC) the matching values (a + d) are related to the sum of all measurements:

$$SMC = \frac{a + d}{a + b + c + d} \quad (1.1)$$

Distances between metric scales can be determined by the Minkowsky metrics, among which the Euclidian distance is the most common. All these measures have specific effects on the results which might be unwanted in the light of the data or of the research question. The decision as to what measure to use should be made on the basis of a careful examination of the requirements of the study (Arabie & Hubert 1996, 13).

The third step and the core procedure of a cluster analysis is the *clustering method*, which puts the objects into groups. The main distinction in the field of clustering algorithms is that between hierarchical and nonhierarchical methods. Hierarchical methods generally try to separate the whole portion of cases stepwise into groups, while nonhierarchical procedures start with a specific partition and try to optimize the cluster representation by moving single objects between the given clusters. As the latter group of methods require an idea of the possible resulting groups, very solid and theoretically based assumptions about the pre-formulated groups are essential. Thus nonhierarchical methods are usually employed in a second step to evaluate or optimize a cluster solution that has previously been produced by the use of hierarchical methods.

In order to identify groups of objects in a data set without any preconceptions, *hierarchical methods* are appropriate and common (Gordon 1996, 65). Here too a large variety of methods is available, of which agglomerative (bottom-up) and divisive (top-down) methods are the most common. *Agglomerative algorithms* begin by regarding every case as one cluster, and continue by merging the two most similar clusters step by step, until all cases are integrated in one final cluster. Some examples are single link, complete link, centroid, and the Ward algorithm. *Divisive methods* work the other way around: they start with all the objects in one cluster and then separate them step by step. Within these groups of methods there are many algorithms to identify distinct groups of objects that have, as the underlying proximity measures, certain consequences which may be positive or negative

depending on the type of data and research objective. Hence some of the algorithms tend to form long chains of cases, while others tend to produce more bold clusters; some tend to build clusters of a comparable size, while others produce different-sized clusters. Generally speaking, the results of agglomerative methods are strongly dependent on the starting point: a second run through the same data set, beginning with a different object, might easily lead to more or less different group sizes or even different optimal cluster solutions.

In the fourth step the last problem is to be assessed: the decision about the final cluster solution, which is mainly a decision about the *number of clusters* that best represents the structure of the population. As a result, hierarchical algorithms provide the whole scale of steps, from all cases in a single cluster to each case forming its own cluster, leaving the researcher to decide the result. Additionally, in a prototypical social sciences data set of about 1,000 or 2,000 cases and several dozens of variables it is – despite technological progress in software and hardware development – impossible to calculate all the potential distances, combinations, and clustering orders in order to identify the one solution that represents the optimum in similarities and dissimilarities of cases and clusters according to a specific measurement. Last but not least, there may be theoretical implications that lead a researcher to prefer, for example, a two-cluster solution to a six- or seven-cluster landscape. Statistics provide several “stopping rules,” which help to determine the optimal point at which to stop the cluster integration before the end (either all cases in one cluster or every case a cluster) is reached (Bock 1994, 9–10). Following the Ward algorithm, for example, a significant increase of the error sum of squares from one step to another would be a criterion for stopping the process and accepting the previous solution as final.

In all four steps of cluster analysis, there is not the *one* standard method (as the limited possibilities of standard software packages may sometimes suggest). In addition to careful selection of the appropriate variables, proximity measures, and clustering algorithms, the choice of procedure depends to a great extent on the individual research question.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience Research ► Discriminant Analysis ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Factor Analysis ► Media Use by Social Variable ► Quantitative Methodology ► Research Methods

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# CNN

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Cable News Network (CNN) has become an icon of the globalized news world (→ News; Television News). CNN's rise as one of the most prominent global news organizations is based on a successful strategic integration of three key spheres of → journalism: (1) an innovative approach to internationalization (→ International News Reporting); (2) the invention of unique presentation styles, such as “breaking news”; and (3) a continuous implementation of state-of-the-art technologies in order to reach clearly defined target audience segments (→ News Production and Technology).

## FOUNDATION AND EARLY HISTORY

CNN was launched on June 1, 1980 in Atlanta, Georgia (USA) as a dedicated 24/7 news and information channel (→ Newscast, 24-Hour). CNN was the fourth specific channel of the first phase of → cable television in the US: the movie channel HBO was launched in 1972 and the children's channel Nickelodeon and sports channel ESPN were both started in 1979 (→ United States of America: Media System). News as well as political information programs had been reduced on prime-time network television throughout the 1970s in the US. However, CNN's founder, Ted Turner, saw on one hand a potentially lucrative market niche and on the other a severe need for solid political information within the US television culture of the late 1980s.

Turner, owner of Atlanta-based superstation WTBS, envisioned a 24-hour program that would cover political, economic, and cultural issues in 30-minute components, framed as magazine-style journalism that would then be rebroadcast in continuous program loops. Given the need for low budget production as well as the experimental status of the channel in its early days, this program loop model helped to fill 24/7 airtime.

In 1980, CNN's audience consisted of only one million out of the 13 million households who subscribed to cable television in the US. Although the established networks had cut back on news programs, they still had exclusive access to the international news gathering infrastructure and to a number of international correspondents, as well as exclusive satellite access. CNN as a newcomer was not yet able to hire foreign correspondents and was instead forced to establish new forms of one-to-one national and international cooperation: CNN would receive footage of events happening internationally from a particular broadcaster, and that broadcaster would exclusively receive CNN material on events in the US. This innovative news gathering structure created what was later called “breaking news” coverage, meaning covering events as the story unfolded – a journalism style that is today the norm among 24/7 news channels.

In these early days, the established US → television networks and other news organizations did not take CNN seriously, which – in retrospect – allowed CNN to successfully expand into new and innovative territories. So successfully that ABC Westinghouse planned to launch a satellite news channel (SNC), airing headline-type news clips. In response, Turner formed CNN 2 Headline News on January 1, 1982, which clearly took

the lead, given that CNN was already a popular news channel. Furthermore, Turner promised to pay cable operators \$1 per subscriber to CNN 2, which quickly forced ABC's SNC to close down. In 1985, NBC plans to launch an all-news channel also failed, given Turner's successful negotiation with cable operators in the US.

## INTERNATIONALIZATION

Already in its early phase in the 1980s, CNN sent its signal abroad in order to establish a news exchange system with international broadcasters. In 1984, CNN was available in 22 nations of Central America and the Caribbean. In this first internationalization phase, the international channel consisted of CNN's and CNN Headline News's segments. In the early 1990s, CNN International (CNNI) began to produce news programs for an international market, such as *The International Hour* (co-anchored from London and Washington, DC), aired live from London, as well as *World News*.

Given the fact that cable and → satellite television emerged in various worldwide media markets such as Europe and Japan, particularly due to deregulation of media ownership policies, CNNI rapidly expanded internationally by utilizing an increasingly competitive second-generation "direct-to-home" satellite infrastructure. In addition, selected CNN programs were delivered by regional channels, for example in Southern Russia, on Bahrain TV, and on Australian networks.

From the outset, CNN was forced to innovate in news journalism in order to compete with established news outlets nationally and internationally. One key aspect of CNN's success throughout the 1990s was the "diversification" of news. Once gathered, news stories were repackaged and distributed through a system of outlets. Among these were *Noticiero Telemundo CNN* (for Hispanic audiences in the US), CNNI as well as so-called "out-of-home" channels, such as *CNN Inflight* (for inflight television), *Airport Channel*, and *CNN Reel News* in movie theaters as well as through a radio network (→ Radio; Radio Networks).

However, it is often overlooked that CNN additionally served as a news agency by selling breaking news to news outlets worldwide. This service, called *CNN Newsource*, was established in 1985 with 22 participating stations and helped to sell a CNN flagship product, breaking news, to outlets worldwide. It constituted a major component of CNN's revenue stream.

Covering breaking news in various parts of the world was possible through CNN's cooperation systems with international leading broadcasters. One of these quite unique systems was the program *World Report*, which allowed international broadcasters to contribute news stories. A great number of international broadcasters from developing and developed countries have participated since the 1990s in this program and use this unique global platform to deliver their viewpoints to an international audience. As Don Flournoy argued: "The emergence of a political climate for freer use of the media and the easing of restrictions on the flow of electronic information across borders played a role for establishing such an egalitarian news arrangement" (Flournoy 1992, 49).

## CNN AND THE 1990–1991 GULF WAR

CNN International gained further prominence in the 1990–1991 Gulf War through a unique set of four factors. These were the use of the latest satellite technology (mobile

uplink devices), which allowed “live” coverage from remote locations; access to a system of globally operating satellites to deliver images instantaneously; a powerful role in the controlled information flow of the “pool system” of journalists; and exclusive access to otherwise restricted war zones. These four factors enabled CNN to deliver a unique and unprecedented “live” war coverage to a worldwide audience.

The Gulf War of 1991 was the first “televised” war that “commenced and ended during US prime time” (Ammon 2001). The visual images of the war conveyed live by CNN and picked up by news networks in various world regions had an influence on the war strategy of the US administration and created a new journalistic terrain of real-time → media diplomacy. These new effects of live news coverage, not only of wars and military conflicts but also humanitarian crises, have been described as the “CNN effect” (Robinson 2002), and as “headline diplomacy” (Seib 1997), highlighting the power of continuous coverage of conflicts as a new force in shaping foreign policy (→ Conflict as Media Content).

### THE RISE OF COMPETITION

It was the role of CNN as the journalistic gatekeeper of the global crisis agenda that led to the launch of other international 24/7 news channels (→ Gatekeeping). *Euronews*, part of the European Broadcasting Union, was established in 1993, the television service of the BBC, *BBC World*, in 1995 (→ BBC World Service), the Arab news channel *Al Jazeera* (in Arabic) in 1996 (→ Arab Satellite TV News), *Channel News Asia* (English and Chinese) in 1999, *Al Arabiya*, in 2003, *Al Jazeera English* in November, 2006 and *France 24*, a transnational French news channel (in French and English, and from June, 2007, in Arabic), in December 2006, all attempting to challenge not only CNN but the “Anglo-Saxon” view of the world.

Within the US, CNN’s dominance faded due to other 24/7 news channels, such as Fox Cable News, a channel owned by Rupert Murdoch’s → News Corporation that competed with CNN for majority share of the US news audience, and MSNBC, as well as specialized news services such as *Bloomberg TV*, focusing on financial news. Turner sold CNN (along with the Turner Broadcasting System) to Time Warner, even as the → Internet began to gain a new role in news journalism.

As more satellites became available, more television channels with news components were delivered worldwide to enable national broadcasters to reach an international audience, among them the Italian broadcaster RAI (→ Italy: Media System), Jordan TV (→ West Asia: Media Systems), and CCTV-9, the English-language program of → China Central Television (→ China: Media System). Latest developments enabled by broadband technologies included entire program platforms, such as Cyfra+, targeting a particular sub-national audience in various world regions.

CNN’s influence on transnational audiences and policymakers peaked in the early satellite age when the former UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali famously remarked in an interview in 1995 that CNN was the 16th member of the UN Security Council. This influence, however, began to fade due to the network character of digital technologies, such as satellite (→ Satellite Communication, Global) and Internet, in which news constituted only one layer of a personalized information network. CNN found itself competing not only with other transnational channels but with local news and → citizen

journalism being delivered instantaneously through websites, blogs (→ Blogger), and mobile devices. Although the network had lost its dominant role in the global news sphere, it still constituted a powerful model for 24/7 news journalism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Blogger ▶ Cable Television ▶ China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ▶ China: Media System ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Italy: Media System ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Diplomacy ▶ News ▶ News Corporation ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News ▶ United States of America: Media System ▶ West Asia: Media Systems

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## **Code**

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A code is a term in → semiotics that designates a set of related signs or signifying practices that correspond to a system of → meaning. While each → sign has a unique signifier, what is signified is generally understood as a marker of difference within a larger group of signs. For instance, the number sign “2” has no meaning without the number system as a whole; when listeners hear the word “2,” they inherently understand that it represents a specific quantity different from 3, 4, and 5, etc., which were not uttered by the speaker (→ Sign Systems). Likewise, together color names comprise a code that corresponds to the color spectrum; “red” is meaningful as a sign because it is not green or blue. Morse code is a set system of dots and dashes that correspond to the alphabet. Knowing the whole code allows an encoder and decoder to communicate by selecting configurations from the code.

In media, codes operate at technical/production, formal/aesthetic, social, professional, and ideological levels. A significant aspect of being a professional photographer is

knowing how selections from these codes result in a photograph that communicates the desired message for a specific media context and audience. Thus, codes are also rules or norms that guide professional practice. The degree to which communication takes place between an encoder and a decoder is based on their shared understanding of codes.

### CODES IN PHOTOGRAPHY

Consider how codes operate in → photography. Taking a photograph involves dozens of technical decisions that affect its look and meaning (→ Visual Communication). Each decision is derived from a *technical code* or set of related technical choices the photographer makes, among different format sizes, film speeds, shutter speeds, lens types, aperture settings, lighting setups, and whether to use a film or a digital camera. For instance, to create a grainy photograph and its associated meanings, a photographer must make the appropriate selection from each code: a high ASA film, dim lighting with a large aperture opening, a slow shutter speed, etc. Other choices could have been taken, but they would result in a photograph with a different style and meaning.

*Formal codes* refer to sets of choices photographers make when composing photographs. These formal elements are too numerous to catalogue but include choices like camera placement, distance, angle, how the subject is framed and balanced, and whether it is posed or treated candidly, how the background depth and perspective are constructed, where horizon lines are composed, the use of leading lines to direct attention, and how light, shadow, and color are treated to create depth, pattern, and texture. Formal codes underlie photography's representational qualities because the visual range between realism and abstractionism derives largely from formal choices (→ Visual Representation; Structuralism in Visual Communication). So too, different genres of photography, such as landscape, portrait, news, fine art, postmodernism, advertising, and wedding photography employ different formal codes (→ Genre).

*Social codes* refer to broader sets of signs that appear in a photograph's content. Thus, in decoding a commercial photograph, readers employ their existing social and cultural knowledge and experience to make inferences about the meaning of content – say, about the model, her dress, make-up, jewelry, and other props in the picture (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of; Celebrity Culture; Popular Culture). Kate Moss playing pool and sipping a can of beer signifies something different than Cindy Crawford dressed like a businesswoman and drinking from a champagne flute. The photographer depends on the reader's shared knowledge of the codes of fashion models, modes of dress, appropriate vs edgy behavior, and kinds of drinking vessels to communicate meaning (→ Cultural Studies).

### THE PROFESSIONALS' USE OF CODES

Photographers rely on *professional codes* to anticipate the kinds of pictures they should take and the kinds of production practices and values they should follow to fulfill their professional obligations. Professional wedding photographers know the kinds of pictures the bride and groom expect to see in their wedding album, just as news photographers know how to photograph public officials in meetings. Both come prepared with the right

technology and expertise to position themselves to photograph the appropriate people at the appropriate moment so the results fit the visual code for their profession.

News photographers understand what editors expect relative to the assignment's → news value and context, whether they be close-ups, long shots, portraits, action shots, sentimental pictures, and so on (→ News Factors; Photojournalism). Working knowledge of other journalistic codes, such as → graphic design, helps photographers anticipate whether vertical and/or horizontal photos might be needed for a news package, and how their photos' meanings and significance might be combined in layout with headlines, stories, illustrations, and graphics (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of).

Photographic *production values* are codified as well, and news photographers must understand how certain practices correspond with specific contexts but not others. In investigative news coverage, photographers know the content of their pictures is more significant than their aesthetic value (→ Aesthetics; Investigative Reporting). If a presidential candidate is caught in a compromising situation, a grainy photo would be of little concern. But a blurry food photograph for the cover of a feature section would never even be shown to the editor for consideration.

Professionalism includes knowledge of different *ethical codes* that prescribe different behavior for different picture-making contexts. In hard news photography, ethical guidelines prohibit photographers from staging their pictures and limit manipulation and retouching (→ Image Ethics). News photographers violating these norms may be fired (→ Professionalization of Journalism). On the other hand, commercial photographers win awards for staging, manipulating, and even manufacturing photos through montage and illustration (→ Art as Communication).

## IDEOLOGICAL CODES

Ideological codes result from the fact that adhering to technical, formal, social, and professional codes leads to patterns of photography that repeat narratives, which shape and reify people's expectations and social norms (→ Narrative News Story). Pictures tell us who is powerful, beautiful, and heroic, and who is not. They situate, enculturate, and politicize our gaze toward men, women, and children and their race, class, and ethnicity. Some groups are left out of the frame altogether.

For instance, in reading → fashion advertisements, ordinary readers quickly infer that buying the product will make them sexy and rich like the pictured model. Ideological codes frame the readers' inferences because the assumptions that the ideal woman is sexy and wealthy, that "flaunting it" is desirable, that we want to be like her, and that buying products make us and our lives better are taken for granted and go unquestioned (→ Framing Effects). Thus, particular ideological understandings of how gender, wealth, and desire operate are codified in highly redundant forms and narratives found in everyday communication practice (→ Popular Communication).

The power of ideological codes is that they can operate at an unconscious level in both encoding and decoding. Fashion photographers must apply technical, formal, professional, and social codes to make their pictures fit the fashion industry clients' expectations. Professional models also know the code of poses they must strike to make acceptable pictures. Neither may recognize that in applying these codes they are ritualistically

reproducing an ideology that subordinates women to men (→ Rituals in Popular Communication; Gender: Representation in the Media). Fashion magazine readers generally flip through these magazines decoding them very quickly. Their familiarity with advertising codes generally does not extend deeply into the realm of technical, formal, or professional codes. But readers have been socialized to take for granted that the signs in the ad are relevant to the product (which often they are not; → Socialization by the Media). Knowing these social codes quite well allows readers to make quick inferences that idealize the product.

Such naïve, uncritical encoding and decoding are what Stuart Hall has called the *preferred meanings*, which situates photographers and readers within the dominant, hegemonic view of the social order. Without a critical attitude toward the way businesses and advertisers codify and thus present the world to us, photographers would seem to be just taking pictures of the natural world. Hall also pointed out two forms of critical decoding. A *negotiated reading* questions some aspects of the message while an *oppositional reading* questions all of its assumptions. So, a woman might negotiate the meaning of an ad, criticizing its portrayal of women without criticizing the consumer culture. A devout Muslim's oppositional reading might see the ad as a sign of the west's materialist over-indulgence and a loss of its spiritual direction, and reject not only the ad but the society that created it.

Signs and the codes in which they are embedded are socially constructed and thus are always politically and ideologically accented (→ Constructivism). Reproducing messages from within these codes reproduces the ideologies they frame, while oppositional readings are counter-hegemonic and challenge the existing order of things. Hall has written, "One of the most significant political moments . . . is the point when events which are normally signified and decoded in a negotiated way begin to be given an opposition reading. Here the 'politics of signification' – the struggle in discourse – is joined" (Hall 1980).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Aesthetics  
 ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cultural Studies  
 ▶ Fashion ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Graphic Design  
 ▶ Image Ethics ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Meaning ▶ Narrative News Story  
 ▶ News ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Photography  
 ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Professionalization of Journalism  
 ▶ Rituals in Popular Communication ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems  
 ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Visual Communication  
 ▶ Visual Representation

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# Code as Law

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In 1999 Professor Lawrence Lessig, then Berkman Professor for Entrepreneurial Legal Studies at Harvard Law School, later professor of law at Stanford Law School, opened his new book, *Code and other laws of cyberspace*, with a chapter entitled “Code is law.” This short but complex phrase has, since then, found itself at the heart of a thorough interdisciplinary debate on how new media technologies and, in particular, the Internet have altered the configuration of centers of regulatory power and the application of regulatory control mechanisms. “Code is law” is, as a result, one of the most deceptively complex and debated phrases in contemporary regulatory theory.

Lessig’s thesis is predicated upon his belief that “cyberspace presents something new for those who think about regulation and freedom” (Lessig 1999a, 6). This belief reflects views developed in the 1990s by a group of theorists classified as the *cyberlibertarian school* who viewed cyberspace as inherently unregulable because of the borderless nature of its environment (Johnson & Post 1996) and the lack of effective control mechanisms (Barlow 1996). Lessig’s *Code is law* thesis, although founded upon some of this school’s values, does not represent an addition to the cyberlibertarian literature. Instead, it forms part of the opposing *cyberpaternalist school* that grew in opposition to the cyberlibertarians (Goldsmith 1998; Reidenberg 1998; Benkler 2000). Drawing from these cyberpaternalist works, Lessig states that in cyberspace we are compelled “to look beyond the traditional lawyer’s scope – beyond laws, regulations and norms. It requires an account of a newly salient regulator: code” (Lessig 1999a, 6).

The “code” regulator referred to by Lessig reflects the regulatory contribution of the design element of cyberspace encoded in the systems software that both supports and controls the cyber-environment. Lessig believes that code in cyberspace represents control through architecture, one of four modalities of regulation that he identifies along with law, markets, and norms. Each modality is described in terms of constraints on action (Lessig 1999a, 235–239). Thus law, the traditional hierarchical modality, constrains through the threat of punishment; norms, or social controls, constrain through the application of societal sanctions such as criticism or ostracism; the market constrains through price and price-related signals; and architecture physically constrains (think of a locked door). The concept of architectural or design controls is not new. They are apparent in the works of Bentham (1995, 1st pub. 1787) and Foucault (1977) and are utilized today by the designers of theme parks and stadia to manage crowds (Shearing & Stenning 1984). The key contribution of Lessig’s work is to reassert the importance and value of architectural or design controls, in particular, with reference to cyberspace. Lessig’s application of these principles to the environment within cyberspace provides the foundation for a new and enhanced application of design controls: design in an environment that is completely plastic and that is under the management of a relatively few environmental designers.

Lessig believes design-based regulatory modalities, or, to use his term, architecture, are particularly effective in cyberspace because of the nature of the environment. As he notes: “we can build, or architect, or code cyberspace to protect values that we believe are fundamental,



or we can build, or architect, or code cyberspace to allow those values to disappear” (Lessig 1999a, 6). This is an application of *environmental plasticity* (Murray 2006), that attribute of cyberspace encountered when one ventures into the higher network layers (Benkler 2000) beyond the physical infrastructure layer. In its higher layers, cyberspace is an entirely virtual environment. As a result, designers of the environment, or code-writers as Lessig calls them, have complete control over the environment, something not available to architects in the physical world because of the constraints of physical laws (Murray 2006, 42). This creates both a challenge and an opportunity for regulators. The *opportunity* is that, as environmental controls are self-executing (Murray & Scott 2002), the designer/implementer of an architectural or code-based regulatory system need not invest in costly ex-post monitoring or enforcement agencies: once implemented, environmental controls mechanically regulate all who come in contact with them. The *challenge* is that, for traditional regulatory theory, this represents a shift in regulatory power from hierarchical, usually state or state-sanctioned regulators to private regulators such as the software companies and network providers. This shift is stylized by Lessig as a move from East Coast Code (the code of Washington, DC) to West Coast Code (the code of Silicon Valley and Redmond, VA.).

Thus far the story of the two codes may suggest that Lessig’s concern should be with the lack of democratic accountability of West Coast code-makers. However, his take on this is more subtle and much more complex. His concern is not about opposing camps and who wins the battle to design the environment of cyberspace. His concern is that East Coast code-makers are interfering in the business of West Coast code makers to the potential detriment of both Internet users and West Coast code. Lessig notes that “the power of East Coast Code over West Coast Code has increased” (Lessig 1999a, 53).

This increase is one of the results of the ever-growing commercialization of cyberspace and the increasing prominence of a select group of West Coast code-makers such as SAP, IBM, Oracle, and Microsoft. These large commercial organizations seek good relations with government, making it easier for East Coast code-makers to influence the design of their software products, even though in many cases these code-makers do not fully understand the product or how it regulates individuals. The result is, as predicted by Lessig, a migration of the regulatory center wherein East Coast code-makers increasingly will seek to develop controls in cyberspace, not through the application of laws, but through mandating changes in the environmental code of the place (cyberspace): code is thereby used as a substitute for law; or, to put it another way, with East Coast code-makers employing software code to bring about regulatory outcomes, “Code is Law.”

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► E-Government ► Information Society ► Internet, Technology of ► Open Source ► Technology and Globalization  
► Technology, Social Construction of

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## Coding

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The term “coding” has different meanings in empirical research. Generally speaking, coding becomes relevant whenever data at hand are unstructured, and coding then provides a structure for a systematic analysis of these data. In quantitative research using standardized instruments, coding is the process of tagging data about a given unit of analysis, in order to assign these units to a category (→ Quantitative Methodology). Usually, these categories correspond to numbers that allow the information to be processed by statistical software.

Coding gains particular importance in quantitative content analysis, where it represents the main task of researchers. Likewise, the term is used in qualitative research to describe how data gathered with nonstandardized methods is broken down into components relevant to the research question under study (Bryman 2004, 537; → Qualitative Methodology). Within statistical data analysis, the term “recoding” is technically used for the procedure of regrouping the categories of a variable; this meaning of the term is not elaborated on in greater detail here.

### CODING IN QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

#### Data Tagging

For the purposes of computerized data analysis, researchers need empirical information to be tagged with numeric codes. This is true whenever processing is based on structured

data collection commonly labeled as “quantitative.” The coding of items can be carried out either by the data source (usually the interviewee; → Interview; Interview, Standardized) or by the researcher (Sullivan 2001; Babbie 2002).

In the first case, *coding by the data source*, the researcher prepares a precoded instrument, e.g., a questionnaire with closed-ended questions. This means that the interviewee is exposed to a fixed selection of categories from which he or she can choose as appropriate with regard to the stimulus (for the most part, a question or an object to be rated). Accordingly, this is a two-step process that first requires the researcher to generate relevant and meaningful categories. These categories should be distinct, exhaustive, and adequate with respect to the related construct. In the second step, the interviewee gives the required assessment based on the given alternatives.

The advantages of this procedure are obvious: with the completion of the data entry, descriptive results of the research are quickly available. But this procedure also raises at least two problems in terms of → validity. On the one hand, the results of the data analysis depend heavily on the thoroughness of category construction exercised by the researcher. Second, the difficult task of transforming empirical reality into numeric codes is handed over to the interviewee (→ Measurement Theory). Thus, data quality reflects the way the interviewee understands the different answering options and the mental effort he or she puts into the responses. Variability in this respect is a substantial source of error, which is why careful category construction focused on minimal ambiguity is important.

The second case mentioned above, *coding by the researcher*, refers primarily to the use of so-called open-ended questions in a questionnaire. Here the steps are performed in reverse order. First, the interviewees are given a question without precoded categories and are encouraged to express their thoughts in their own individual style. In a self-administered questionnaire, respondents are required to write down all relevant aspects. During an interview, their answer is either recorded literally or in note form, or the interviewer translates the answer immediately into precoded categories usually not available to the interviewee. When data collection includes nonstandardized entries, the process of coding is postponed until the data editing phase, when categories are defined in a coding frame and codes are assigned to the answers.

*Pros and cons* are distributed exactly the other way around in this case. After collecting the data, further coding efforts are necessary, which postpones the results. Furthermore, people’s answers to open-ended questions may vary substantially across a sample – a phenomenon that becomes increasingly important when the reference point for answers is not clear. As no categories are administered, the researcher does not obtain comparable results from all units of analysis. This might impose severe restrictions on data analysis. Still, open-ended questions are an important tool since they produce “unbiased” data in the sense that interviewees can reproduce their thoughts without needing to perform any kind of mental transfer beforehand. Furthermore, if the subject matter lacks evidence to establish precoded categories in the run-up to the survey, open-ended questions provide an opportunity to collect a broad range of relevant aspects. To this effect, it resembles coding in qualitative research (see below).

While coding by the researcher has so far been applied to the example of → survey research, it is relevant to other methods of empirical data collection as well. For instance, in the case of structured or systematic → observation research, the schedule

for the recording of observations such as → interpersonal communication or → group communication may include precoded categories as well as space for individual notes to be coded afterwards (for a classic example of coding communication behavior in small groups, see Bales 1950).

### Content Analysis

One major methodological approach in communication research is the standardized content analysis of messages in general and of media coverage in particular (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). For this purpose, particular features of these messages need to be identified and assigned according to a set of relevant categories previously defined by the researcher. Thus, coding is the main procedure when applying this method, which explains why the term is prominent in almost every stage of a content analysis research process (Krippendorff 2004, 125–149). It is used to address the primary preoccupation of the research assistants we call coders, and, moreover, it serves as a general label for the fieldwork in content analysis as a whole.

Procedures in standardized content analysis are quite similar to data tagging in survey research, as mentioned above. Researchers will determine the concepts to be measured and operationalize these concepts by defining categories accordingly (→ Operationalization). These categories are summarized in a coding manual, together with further instructions and examples. Coders are provided with a coding scheme that is prepared to hold the codes attributed to each category by the coder. Data entry is based on these coding schemes or, if computer-aided coding applies, the coder enters each code into a preformatted data file (Neuendorf 2002).

With regard to the *mental processes involved in coding*, the term refers to the capability of each coder to identify the relevant characteristics of each unit of analysis, and to assign these coding units correctly to the categories and their respective codes. Thus, the difficult task of translating the content of messages to numerical data is left to the coder. Therefore, his or her performance is considered the main source of error in standardized content analysis. Different techniques are applied to ensure correspondence of coding acts, beginning with intense coder training and ending with checks of coding agreement between and within coders (Riffe et al. 1998, 104–134; → Reliability).

Besides this standardized type of content analysis, there is a longstanding tradition of so-called qualitative content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). This method basically refers to techniques of → document analysis. Messages are extracted from these documents by using a more holistic approach since texts (or pictures, films, or voice recordings) are considered complex structures of → meaning. Condensation of issues and arguments often follows a more implicit process. Quotes from the materials are presented in the text report, and are important to illustrate the reconstructions of the researcher.

### CODING IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Although qualitative research depends on standardization to a substantially lesser degree, coding still remains an issue. It applies, for example, to → grounded theory as a general

strategy of qualitative data analysis where coding is considered to be a key process. “It entails reviewing transcripts and/or field notes and giving labels (names) to component parts that seem to be of potential theoretical significance and/or that appear to be particularly salient within the social worlds of those being studied” (Bryman 2004, 402).

The meaning of “coding” in qualitative research (which some authors also refer to as “indexing”) differs from the meaning prevalent in quantitative research, where coding is a technique for transferring information to numeric data, classification, and data handling. In this case, important decisions about what a single code actually means are made in advance, during the procedure of operationalization. In contrast to this rather instrumental sense, coding in qualitative research is a *first step toward creating a theory*. It represents an ongoing state of potential revision and fluidity, as the resulting codes are not treated as fixed “data.” In contrast, qualitative research merely treats codes as potential indicators of concepts, with these indicators being permanently under revision. This is because, while research proceeds, they are compared with previous codes and modified with regard to the best fit of concepts.

Following Strauss and Corbin (1998), three types of coding practice can be distinguished, which are often not exclusive but used sequentially in the elaboration of categories. First, *open coding* implies the least regulated step, when data are examined, compared, and broken down into codes (or “concepts”), which are later grouped and turned into categories. Second, *axial coding* usually follows open coding and aims at connecting the categories obtained by relinking the codes to contexts such as causes, consequences, or patterns of interaction. Finally, *selective coding* identifies the core category, which is the one central aspect that serves as the main concept for interpretation. All other categories are organized around the core category and thus integrated into a larger frame that is called the “storyline.”

These steps are not undisputed in research practice. Researchers who fear terminating the exploratory step too early in the process suggest refraining from axial coding and performing only an initial and a focused coding. There are several different approaches to conceptualizing the coding process in qualitative research, but most of them share the general distinction between one phase that stays closer to the original data, and a second phase where codes are transferred to a more abstract level in order to construct meaning about the phenomena under study.

Research practice has developed *indications and guidelines for developing codes*. Considerations that may lead to relevant codes include the topic of an item of data, its underlying type of event, the persons involved, statements and intentions of these persons, causal attributions, and descriptions of opinions, emotions, and behaviors. In the process of coding it is suggested to code promptly after data collection, to keep in mind that each item of data can be coded in more than one way, and, above all, to constantly move forward and backward between the different steps of coding. Only from this permanent rereading and reviewing may the relevant connections between concepts and categories emerge. Finally, coding should not be equated to analysis in general: although coding represents an important step within the analysis (particularly because it reduces the amount of data available), interpretation is still the step in which codes are assigned to meaning, the significance of the coded material is assessed, and the findings are reflected in the light of theoretical considerations and earlier research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative  
▶ Document Analysis ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Group Communication ▶ Interpersonal  
Communication ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Meaning ▶ Measurement  
Theory ▶ Observation ▶ Operationalization ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quan-  
titative Methodology ▶ Reliability ▶ Survey ▶ Validity

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## **Coffee Houses as Public Sphere**

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The notion of a → “public sphere” is useful when thinking about the spaces available for public discussion and debate – and thus the formation of → public opinion – in different societies). The writings of → Jürgen Habermas (1989; 1992) have proven to be especially valuable in this regard. It is Habermas’ contention that under ideal conditions the public sphere serves as a discursive realm situated between the purview of the state on the one hand, and the economic dictates of the marketplace on the other, for public deliberations over social issues (→ Discourse; Argumentative Discourse). In his words, the public sphere represents a space for “rational-critical debate” among citizens, where “a time consuming process of mutual enlightenment” may take place “for the ‘general interest’ on the basis of which alone a rational agreement between publicly competing opinions could freely be reached” (Habermas 1989, 195). This normative conception of open and free relations of communication, where people can engage in reasoned dialogue about the conduct of social life as equals, highlights a range of intriguing questions for communication scholarship.

The importance of coffee houses for the emergence of what may be described as an embryonic public sphere in various European countries has been the subject of much scholarly attention. For Habermas, the coffee house – with its idealized projection of “a

kind of social intercourse that, far from presupposing equality of status, disregarded status altogether” (1989, 36) – evolved into the central institution of the *English public sphere*. Its ascendant popularity corresponded to the celebrated ambience it enjoyed as an establishment open, in principle at least, to any ordinary citizen inclined to “learn the news and discuss it.” Individual premises served as meeting places, usually for a specific type of clientele sharing an interest in a particular kind of news or information: newspapers, along with broadsides, pamphlets, journals, and similar tracts, were distributed via coffee houses, where they were passed about from one patron to the next (→ Public Meetings).

The purchase of a single “dish” of coffee entitled the customer to a seat around a communal table, to be occupied for several hours if so desired. Virtually every type of interest, trade, or profession was catered for by one coffee house or another, with particular establishments associated with politics, law, medicine, religion, science, arts, literature, or wit, among other topics. The term *penny university*, derived from a well-known rhyme of the day, highlighted their educational qualities. A further use revolved around the *conduct of business* (including insurance, shipping, stock and commodity dealing), where regular hours were kept at certain rooms for negotiations and transactions. Similarly pertinent here was the way coffee houses supported the fledgling postal system via the collection and delivery of letters and newspapers, while others facilitated alternative – even at times surreptitious – purposes, such as auctioneering, matrimonial services, masonic meetings, gambling, and prostitution.

Apparent from the outset was the formative role coffee house sociability of private individuals wielding considerable influence. The remarkable appetite of participants for → news – as well as for political discussion of its significance – recurrently attracted the attention of authorities concerned with controlling the flow of information. Habermas (1989) observes that coffee houses were sometimes castigated as seedbeds of *political unrest*. On these grounds, Charles II’s government responded to the “great complaints” that were being “daily made” of the “license that was taken in coffee houses to utter most indecent, scandalous and seditious discourses” (Pincus 1995, 828) by seeking to suppress them by proclamation on 29 December 1675. This attempt was abandoned shortly thereafter, however, when it became apparent that the order was being ignored. In addition to government proclamations, other efforts mobilized against coffee houses over the years included Christian authorities convinced that free speech was helping to cultivate atheism, purveyors of rival beverages (including critics fearful that the demand for English grain used in ale would be undercut), and also women alarmed by the amount of time their idle spouses spent newsmongering (→ Censorship, History of).

This last point underlines a significant issue. Although they were egalitarian in theory, actual participation in the typically boisterous, uninhibited discussions of the coffee house was largely confined to middle- and upper-class men able to afford the price – and conspicuous leisure time – to indulge their coffee-drinking habit on a regular (frequently daily) basis. In contrast with the *salons* of France, women were seldom welcomed to partake in conversation in this milieu, their custom tending to be discouraged for entirely sexist reasons characteristic of the period. Records indicate that some women were present in the role of proprietor (a “coffee woman,” who was often a widow) or, more typically, in a service capacity, but in any case women were ordinarily excluded from

taking part in “rational-critical debate” (Habermas 1989) because of the gendered culture of what was a predominantly masculinized domain.

The importance of coffee houses for public life had begun gradually to decline by the 1780s, in the main as a consequence of changing social patterns. Pertinent factors contributing to their demise included the growing prevalence of private clubs (where membership rules could be upheld) and public houses, as well as the increasingly popular consumption of tea in the private household. Many of the services provided by coffee houses – such as the relaying of post or for business purposes – were being transferred to other social institutions. By the 1830s, their status had diminished to the point where their association with public opinion formation had been effectively displaced.

Historians continue to rehearse contrary views on the extent to which coffee houses actually embodied the normative ideals of a public sphere. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that a consideration of their relative freedoms throws into sharp relief many of the factors that constrain public discussion and debate today.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Censorship, History of ► Discourse ► Habermas, Jürgen ► News ► Public Meetings ► Public Opinion ► Public Sphere

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## **Cognition**

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*Cognition* refers to (1) the wide variety of mental entities we locate within the mind, including thoughts, → meanings, ideas, → attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, perceptions, intentions, memories, images, dreams, states of mind, consciousness and subconsciousness, and (2) the operations of the mind, such as association, search, comparison, → attention, and inference. Cognition is thinking.

Ancient philosophers speculated on the nature of thought, and modern day researchers continue to explore cognition. What has changed over the years is just how we describe cognition, how we study it, and how we think it relates to our experiences in the world.



Plato tried to explain how it is that we can think of an abstraction rather than merely an instance of the abstraction, such as the abstract idea of “triangle” as opposed to a specific triangle. Modern day theorists propose models to describe how symbols and meaning work (Osgood et al. 1957).

Cognition plays a significant role in theories ranging over intrapersonal communication, → interpersonal communication, small → group communication, persuasive communication, attitude change, mass communication, and computer-mediated communication (→ Human–Computer Interaction; Persuasion). In each instance, the notion of meaning is at the center of the cognitive perspective. Cognition/meaning may in fact be one of the few defining features of communication in its broadest sense. This close tie between cognition/meaning and communication links all types of communication and links the field of communication to psychology, → linguistics, and philosophy (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy). As meaning has been increasingly seen as located in the mind, the role of cognition has gained a place in communication theory. Many theories of communication share a central concern for meaning assigned to experience in context.

In the late nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century, psychologists attempted to understand the mind through the *method of introspection*. When introspection fell into disfavor as unworkable, behaviorism – a movement toward eliminating cognition from psychological accounts of human behavior – grew up in philosophy and psychology. The mind was banished from accounts of behavior. Stimuli entered a person and responses came out, both of which are directly observable. According to behaviorism, meaning would need to be located in the observable world, not in the mind. Meaning was synonymous with what could be verified as true, a correspondence between words and the things around us.

Early models of communication adopted a stimulus and response psychology (Weiner 1950; Shannon 1948; Shannon & Weaver 1949) that placed meaning *in* gestures and words. Not surprisingly, this notion of communication was compatible with the stimulus–response (S–R) view of language also popular at the time (Skinner 1959). In short, cognition was not a prominent component of early communication research and theory (→ Models of Communication).

By 1983, Gerald Miller could write: “Among communication researchers, a respect for the role of human volition has replaced the law-governed, deterministic paradigm of communication behavior” (Miller 1983, 31). Miller maintained, “An actor’s perceptions of or meanings for a given situation constitute the primary data for communication researchers” (p. 32). Researchers began to look at → discourse over time and in natural settings (Nofsinger 1991). Communication offered a place to study cognition in real-life contexts. Ironically, that is exactly what the psychologist Ulric Neisser called for in his assessment of cognitive psychology when he wrote: “cognitive psychologists must make a greater effort to understand cognition as it occurs in the ordinary environment and in the context of natural purposeful activity” (Neisser 1976, 7). One could look back to Bartlett (1932), famous for his work on memory within psychology, for early signs of just such a view of people as active, constructivist processors. In a similar vein, it is significant that Broadbent’s model of attention, often cited as introducing the cognitive revolution, appeared in his book entitled *Perception and communication* (1958). Social cognition (Roloff & Berger 1982) and intrapersonal communication are good examples of cognitive

and communication studies converging (Roberts & Watson 1989; → Social Cognitive Theory).

Researchers in both cognitive psychology and communication have called for a return to the situated act, the larger unit of analysis found in ongoing discourse and human purpose. During the same time period, scholars from fields outside of communication have also proposed a communication perspective on cognition (e.g., Lave 1988; Levinson 1983; Seifert 1999; Smith 1999; Sternberg & Wagner 1994).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Comprehension ▶ Constructivism and Interpersonal Processes ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Dual Coding Theory ▶ Group Communication ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Memory ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Social Cognitive Theory

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# Cognitive Dissonance Theory

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Cognitive dissonance is a theory developed in the late 1950s by US psychologist → Leon Festinger, which claims that people tend to avoid information and situations that are likely to increase a dissonance with their existing cognitions, such as beliefs, attitudes, or other value judgments. The author proposed the following basic hypotheses: “(1) The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance. (2) When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance” (Festinger 1957, 3). For him, “two elements are in a dissonant relationship if, considering these two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other” (Festinger 1957, 13).

The theory has become by far the most influential of all theories based on the consistency paradigm. At the same time, it was one of the most controversial ones. In 1968 Aronson wrote, “Over the past three years, dissonance theory continued to generate more research and more hostility than any other one approach” (Aronson 1968, 5). And other authors noted with irony that the scientific career of the theory proved it to be right because its proponents did not take note of successful falsifications, or its opponents of confirming results. Nevertheless, it became widely adopted in communication research, where researchers linked it to findings about selective exposure to media content as, for instance, in the pioneer study *The people’s choice* by → Paul Lazarsfeld et al. (1944), and treated it as a basic psychological “law” behind these findings of de facto selectivity (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY IN PSYCHOLOGY

Like several other → *consistency theories*, Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance was based on the “law of good gestalt.” Accordingly, the protagonists of consistency theories suggested that individuals will try to avoid dissonance and pursue consonance between their many cognitions or even social relations. For instance, if a person, for whatever reason, perceived an argument against a political leader whom he or she otherwise admired, this person would try to resolve the tension between the two conflicting cognitions. As mentioned above, Festinger’s theory takes an already existing dissonance as the starting point for predictions about subsequent behavior. In his famous card game experiment, he created either consonance or dissonance with a decision taken by his subjects by means of manipulated results in the game, and had them then look at information supporting or contradicting their prior decision. The results confirmed the author’s assumption about a U-shaped curve between dissonance and selective exposure: selectivity was highest among subjects who had experienced a mean degree of dissonance. In cases of no or very little dissonance and in cases of very high dissonance, individuals had no reason to avoid further dissonant information.

Because of its compliance with day-to-day experience on the one hand and its contradiction to the normative image of a tolerant individual on the other, the theory immediately triggered numerous studies. Their results, however, remained all in all unclear. A first meta-analysis of 18 studies on selective exposure by Sears and Freedman (1967) found as many confirming as disconfirming results of the theory. A radical cooling down ensued, which was evidenced by a sharp decrease in the number of consistency theory studies in the 1970s.

The theory had *two main theoretical problems*. First, from the state of dissonance, only search can logically follow, but not the avoidance of information, because only active search can reduce the state of tension. In a state of consonance, however, only avoidance is reasonable, because every search could create dissonance. Second, the theory did not distinguish between simple cognitions (or “protocols”) and hypotheses-cognitions (more general cognitions, norms, laws, etc.).

The early dissonance research also showed several *methodological problems*. Often the question arose whether other variables besides dissonance – for instance, a person’s degree of dogmatism or the utility of the information offered – might have generated the behavior interpreted as the consequence of cognitive dissonance. Others criticized the theory and the experiments derived from it for radically simplifying the cognitive system of an individual by reducing it to the relationship between just two cognitions. However, in subsequent psychological research, some methodical problems could be overcome. For example, by using a skin galvanometer it was possible to prove that being exposed to dissonant information indeed creates a state of tension, and by using an EEG that dissonance is a motivational condition.

The history of the dissonance theory can be described as an ongoing limitation of the original hypothesis through intervening variables. Certainly, Festinger’s personal hope to establish the theory of cognitive dissonance as a general psychological–biological law that applies to all living creatures (as his dissonance-theoretical experiments with rats show) has clearly failed. Nevertheless, today we observe again an increasing interest in Festinger’s assumptions – such as in Beauvois and Joule’s (1996) “radical dissonance theory,” which aims at a return to the original theory but with an alternative understanding of Festinger’s basic assumptions. Over 30 years after Sears and Freedman (1967), D’Alessio and Allen (2002) conducted another meta-analysis with 16 experimental studies on cognitive dissonance fulfilling several requirements. The correlation between attitude and selection of consonant or dissonant information was highly significant – albeit with a relatively low correlation coefficient of 0.22.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEORY IN COMMUNICATIONS

“By and large about two-thirds of the constant partisans – the people who were either Republican or Democratic from May right through to Election Day – managed to see and hear more of their own side’s propaganda than the opposition’s” (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944, 89). With this statement the paradigm of weak media effects was born. Its basic presumption was that people selectively expose themselves to media contents according to their predispositions. It is worth mentioning that Lazarsfeld and his co-authors had already noted the basic assumption of dissonance theory in a footnote of their book: “The fact that

people select their exposure along the line of their political predispositions is only a special case of a more general law which pervades the whole field of communication research. Exposure is always selective; in other words, a positive relationship exists between people's opinions and what they choose to listen or to read" (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944, 164).

Together with Festinger's theory, published 13 years later, the findings in *The people's choice* paved the way for the concept of selective exposure and the *paradigm of weak media effects*: when people selectively expose themselves to media content according to their already existing predispositions, persuasion through media content is almost impossible. This paradigm dominated the notions about media effects for three decades. There are several reasons why cognitive dissonance theory became such a widely recognized theory in communications, and persisted there for much longer and almost unchallenged as compared to psychology. Two of these reasons were rather administrative than academic. First, the paradigm of weak media effects made rising questions about the legitimacy of the media's social power less prevalent. Second, cognitive dissonance theory offered the opportunity to the still young field of communications to link its findings to another, much more established, discipline (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of).

However, while psychologists tried to prove the causal relationship between dissonance and exposure to information mainly through experimental research, communication researchers most of the time supplied only evidence for *de facto selectivity*, i.e., a correlation between qualities of a particular media content and the predispositions of the audience. Cognitive theory was mostly used as an interpretation for the correlation obtained. Typical examples were and still are the relation between political preferences of readers and the editorial biases of newspapers used by them. However, there were also a few early quasi-experimental and experimental studies in communications. Atkin (1971), for instance, produced eight different front pages for a university newspaper that were different only in terms of layout and headline of an article (partisan bias). The results showed that supporters of both parties picked the articles that endorsed their opinions, even when the articles were not prominently positioned.

A field study by Donsbach (1991), combining content analysis, a reader → survey, and a copy test with readers of real newspapers, found across the board only a small influence of readers' predispositions on their exposure to political news (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Copy Test and Starch Test). However, when distinguishing by valence of the news, the data showed a very clear selectivity for consonant news when it is positive. The avoidance of selective exposure also to negative news complies with findings in psychology about a generally higher attention for negative, i.e., potentially "dangerous," information as in the theory of *automatic vigilance* (→ Negativity).

The adaptation of cognitive dissonance in communication research actually contains a serious misunderstanding. As cited in the beginning, Festinger only made assertions about an individual's state of dissonance but not about a state of consonance. Communications all but completely ignored this limitation and simply took the transferability of the basic hypothesis for granted. There is an easy explanation for this: for communication researchers, media content is not conceptualized as a potential instrument to reduce dissonance, but selectivity is seen as an instrument to channel media content according to one's own cognitive needs. Thus, it is relevant to communications whether selectivity in order to

avoid dissonance can also occur in a state of consonance or is only used – as Festinger asserted – to reduce already existing dissonance.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THEORY FOR COMMUNICATION RESEARCH TODAY**

Over the years the theory of cognitive dissonance has been linked to several other theories in communication research. One example is → mood management. As Festinger himself pointed out that dissonance, “*being psychologically uncomfortable*” (see above), is a mood state, Zillmann considered the theory as being just another case of his own mood management approach, viewing it as a “bad mood that is produced by exposure to counter-attitudinal persuasive messages” (Zillmann 1988, 329). Further research is needed to answer the question of how the emotional attractiveness of media content (as conceptualized, for instance, in the mood management theory) and its consonance or dissonance for the recipient’s cognitive system interact. A magazine story about a politician’s private affair might serve affective needs for personality stories but at the same time, if read, create cognitive dissonance because the reader likes this particular politician, whose career might be endangered by the story. Another example for the integration of cognitive dissonance theory with other theories of exposure is the information utility approach. Here, the avoidance of dissonance is one among many considerations of utility that can motivate people to expose themselves to information from the media (Atkin 1973).

The theory today still offers a lot to communication research because it applies to all phases of the communication process. While the theory so far has been predominantly applied to audience behavior, it is also relevant to journalists’ news decisions. Journalists are under a considerable constraint to make selections. The possibility of deciding unconsciously in favor of their own predispositions occurs for them in various phases, for example in the selection of issues to investigate, in their attention toward arguments in political speeches, or in the evaluation of the newsworthiness of stories in wire reports. As the effects of dissonance on the selection of information seem to be even more prevalent in group than in individual behavior, and as journalists show a high degree of ingroup orientation, cognitive dissonance might explain findings on the influence of subjective beliefs on news decisions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Copy Test and Starch Test ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Mood Management ▶ Negativity ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Survey

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## Cognitive Science

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Cognitive science is the study of mind, and is an interdisciplinary field that encompasses psychology (→ Psychology in Communication Processes), philosophy, computer science, education (→ Learning and Communication), neuroscience, anthropology, and linguistics. The intellectual origins of the field can be traced back to the 1950s, when researchers first began to use formal mathematical representations and computational structures to model theories of mind (→ Cognition). Cognitive science became an “official” field in the late 1970s; in 1976, the first issue of the journal *Cognitive Science* was printed, and the first meeting of the Cognitive Science Society took place in 1979.

According to Thagard (1996, 5), “Cognitive science proposes that people have mental procedures that operate on mental representations to produce thought and action.” What binds researchers across the various contributing disciplines is the notion that the processes that occur during cognition can be represented abstractly by some type of predictive representation. The nature of that specific representation depends on the discipline; for example, philosophers rely on formal logic, artificial intelligence researchers employ computer code, neuroscientists are guided by biological structure, and cognitive psychologists often use statistical analyses to fit data resulting from experimentation. By building theoretically driven, empirically tested structures of cognitive processes, cognitive scientists seek to increase understanding of the mind, as well as to build systems that are able to understand, predict, and generate human thought and action (→ Information Processing).

The *methods* employed by cognitive scientists vary greatly. Linguists (→ Linguistics) are most concerned with developing formal systems of syntax, semantics, phonetics, and pragmatics (→ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to), and their work typically consists of comparing sentences and utterances. Often, this is done by examining databases of existing language, whereas some linguists perform laboratory experiments and implement computer models to test their theories. Psychologists rely primarily on laboratory experiments, aiming to understand how people form categories, reason, perceive stimuli, and encode, store, and retrieve memories. To accomplish these goals, psychologists examine the outcome of various experimental manipulations, the amount of time it takes an experimental subject to perform a task, and the various strategies people implement to complete the task. Computer scientists, in comparison, most often build algorithms to simulate artificial intelligence, creating programs that can comprehend or generate language, exhibit creativity, or solve problems. Cognitive anthropologists compare multiple cultures to assess the universality of mental structures, often using ethnographies, field observations, and some direct manipulation of experimental variables.

In sum, cognitive science spans many disciplines and methodologies, but researchers across this field seek to answer the same fundamental question: how are information processes represented in the mind?

## COGNITIVE SCIENCE AND COMMUNICATION

In terms of their history and organization, the fields of communication and cognitive science share many characteristics. One of the main professional bodies of the communication field, the International Communication Association (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline), was officially formed around the time (1950) that much of the work in cognitive science began. Like cognitive science, communication is a new field with its roots in a number of related disciplines such as psychology, sociology, political science, linguistics, journalism, anthropology, and economics. Thus, not only are both fields extremely interdisciplinary; they share many of the same sub-fields. Throughout the world, departments of cognitive science and communication are becoming more common.

The similarities between the two fields are quite manifest. A number of scholars who teach and research in communication departments were trained in cognitive science and vice versa. Furthermore, while it is rarely listed in textbooks as a component sub-field, many would agree that communication is one of the related sub-fields within cognitive science. For example, when comparing a popular textbook in communication (Griffin 2003) to a widely used textbook in cognition (Medin et al. 2001), one notes that both feature very prominently, in the opening pages of the book, the classic work by Claude Shannon on information processing. Of course, there are international and cultural variations in the use of textbooks and the crossover between the two fields, but overall the relationship is robust.

Craig (1978) was among the first communication scholars to explicitly point out the practical and theoretical overlap between the two fields. Later, Craig (1999) recognized → cybernetics, an approach informed by cognitive science, as one of seven “traditions” of the communication field. According to Craig, cybernetics “points out surprising



analogies between living and nonliving systems, challenges commonplace beliefs about the significance of consciousness and emotion, and questions our usual distinctions between mind and matter, form and content, the real and the artificial” (1999, 141). He argued that modern communication theory evolved from the works of Shannon, von Neumann, and Turing; cognitive scientists cite these same scholars as the foundation for the development of their field. From the cybernetic perspective, communication is defined as information processing or an evaluation of input in order to produce output.

One of the most fruitful ways of comparing the two fields may be to think of communication as a macro-version of cognitive science. Cognitive scientists create models of human behavior to gain insight into the underlying structure of the mind. In order to do so, they often study how a person interacts with some set of information or stimuli. Similarly, communication scholars examine the exchange of information among people to provide an understanding of the structure of human interaction. In communication, scholars study how people interact with others face to face as well as through media technologies and cultural artifacts. From the perspective of cognitive science, communication research might be said to take the model that cognitive scientists apply to one person interacting with information, and transfer that model to interaction among multiple individuals and society. This micro/macro-relationship between the two fields can be illustrated by comparing case examples of the Stroop Effect from cognitive science with the notion of interactional synchrony from communication.

*The Stroop Effect* (Stroop 1935) is considered a classic paradigm in psychology, and basically addresses how people attend to and process stimuli by examining patterns of interference when these stimuli contain a cue conflict (e.g., an experimental subject attempts to quickly state the meaning of the word “green” although it has been written in a red font). This theoretical model continues to drive a large amount of work in cognitive science, including linguistics, psychology, neuroscience, and artificial intelligence (see MacLeod 1991 for a review of this work). By studying how people process various types of information with an explicit conflict in cues, one learns more general lessons of how the brain and the mind are structured.

*Interactional synchrony* (Kendon 1970) refers to the idea that successful communication among multiple parties depends on their simultaneous and coordinated use of multiple channels. A key finding is that interaction succeeds only when the many verbal and nonverbal cues are correctly in synch, both within a speaker (i.e., the speaker’s verbal cues should not conflict with his or her nonverbal cues) and across speakers (i.e., the verbal and nonverbal cues between two speakers should be coordinated). By taking the general “cue-conflict” paradigm arising from the Stroop Effect, communication scholars have been learning more about how people interact with one another (→ Social Cognitive Theory). The paradigm of cue conflict has been applied to studies of processes of social interaction, both face-to-face interaction (Burgoon et al. 1995) and mediated forms of interaction (Capella & Pelachaud 2002; Lee & Nass 2004; Bailenson et al. 2005).

To sum up, cognitive science attempts to formulate models of how the mind processes information, while communication research attempts to formulate models of how information flows between people, culture, and society. The paradigm of cue conflict serves to illustrate this micro/macro-distinction within two related interdisciplinary fields.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Cognitive science can enrich our general understanding of the psychological processes that inform the production and interpretation of messages (→ Message Production). Several specific phenomena that are commonly addressed by communication researchers lend themselves to cognitive approaches, including interpersonal scripts (→ Schemas and Media Effects; Schemas; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction; Scripts), priming (→ Priming Theory), attitude accessibility, patterns of discourse, → human–computer interaction, and responses to media stimuli such as those originally hypothesized by → Albert Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory. Each of these areas of inquiry can benefit from the exchange of methodological approaches and theoretical perspectives. A combination of micro- and macro-levels of analysis will provide a greater, more holistic understanding of communication and of the wider relationship between human cognition and behavior.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline  
 ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Human–Computer Interaction  
 ▶ Information Processing ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Linguistics ▶ Message Production  
 ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Schemas  
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 ▶ Scripts ▶ Social Cognitive Theory

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# Collective Action and Communication

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Collective action may be defined as any behavior that is directed at fulfilling a goal shared by two or more people. Examples of collective action include the chants and audience waves of sports crowds, race riots, language revival movements, political election campaigns, military action, and political protests. In essence, communication scholars have been concerned with the ways in which communication can serve to enable, or in fact stifle, collective action.

Social psychological theories have provided useful models for explaining the circumstances under which collective action will occur (→ Social Identity Theory). According to social identity theory, people who are in subordinate groups are most likely to engage in collective action when they believe that access to a dominant group and its advantages is blocked, and when the basis for their subordinate status is perceived to be illegitimate and or subject to change. On the other hand, members of elites are often more concerned with maintaining their advantages, or in other words, stifling collective action that might undermine their position. One strategy of elites is to communicate an ideology of social mobility, such as promoting tokenism. What this means is that members of dominant groups can control the degree to which members of subordinate groups can enter their group, and even when the rate of entry is very low, this can be enough to prevent the subordinate group members from organizing collectively to address shared inequalities or legitimate grievances (Wright et al. 1990).

Communicatively, then, we can expect that protests will increase in size when there is much media coverage because this will give others a sense of the possibility that the group might be able to effectively challenge the dominant group. Similarly, elites will be particularly interested in communicating the ideology of social mobility in their efforts to maintain ascendancy. Particular attention can be expected to be directed toward the success of individual subordinate group members, or more simply avoidance of discussion of subordinate group grievances. In all of this, there is a *dynamic interplay* between intergroup forces and their mass communications that are designed to enable their side to prevail (Reid et al. 2004).

Because of this, the ways in which leaders communicate to followers is critical to understanding collective action (Reid & Ng 2003). *Leaders* who are most likely to influence followers are those whose language carefully and strategically frames people as sharing an ingroup identity. By using language to create or manipulate such frames, a successful leader will be able to spur collective action because a critical ingredient in predicting whether people will engage in collective action is whether or not they identify with a cause (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). One way in which leaders do this is to demonize or attack members of a relatively defenseless outgroup. This has been seen on repeated occasions historically, and continues to this day in democracies where leaders flagging in the polls attempt to gain a boost in votes (→ Election Polls and Forecasts).

Similarly, we can understand the success of collective action by *self-determination groups* with respect to the degree to which the leadership of those groups have effectively

communicated an ingroup (often shared multicultural) relationship with the colonizing group. By doing so, self-determination groups can increase the perceived legitimacy of their grievances in the minds of majority group members, and at the same time lead those members to feel a sense of collective guilt or anger over past injustices. The collective guilt and anger are aversive motivational states, which can be satiated through bringing attitudes into line with reconciliation, affirmative action, and land redistribution policies. This has proven to be the case in popular support for reconciliation movements in Australia (Reid et al. 2005) and may well prove to be the case in dozens of other similar situations involving colonization around the world.

The mass media continue to occupy an important position in both the promotion and stifling of collective action. Herman and Chomsky (1988) in their propaganda model outline a number of filters on the media which serve to promote elite interests, and thereby stifle collective action that might challenge ascendancy. These filters include the concentration of corporate interests in media ownership, the government sourcing of information, and ideological constraints on the expression of dissident opinion. What this means is that the deck is stacked against those who lack the power to disseminate information. In this connection, an important new thread of work aims at understanding how the changing face of the mass media is making these traditional control relationships change, if not decay (→ Bias in the News; Construction of Reality through the News). The advent of the → Internet, mobile telephony, and texting has made it possible for people to organize without relying on elite-owned media (→ Mobility, Technology for). We can expect the future of the collective action enterprise to be affected by these new technologies, but the way in which this happens will continue to depend upon the nature of intergroup relations and the associated processes of communication, leadership, and control of information.

SEE ALSO: ► Bias in the News ► Construction of Reality through the News ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Internet ► Mobility, Technology for ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Social Identity Theory

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# Collective Memory and the Media

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Memory, according to the Greeks, is the precondition of human thought (Samuel 1994). For psychologists, memory is also seen as a fundamental condition of consciousness. Not surprisingly, psychologists have constructed a variety of complex models of individual → memory. However, memories also require distinct social and communicative frameworks, patterned ways of framing the flow of remembered actions, images, sounds, smells, sensations, and impressions. Without social frameworks to anchor and sustain memories, they would soon falter and fade. This idea is central to the contribution of the sociologist Maurice Halbwachs (1877–1945) who advanced the study of memory beyond the individual and the interests of psychology at the time through his notion of “collective memory.” He believed that for individual memory to thrive it was reliant upon continuous support from “frameworks of social memory” (1992, 182).

## INCREASING RELEVANCE OF THE FIELD OF RESEARCH

Memory is almost by definition part of the past, of course, yet in significant ways it is a central resource for making sense of the present and thus for extending the continuous present out to edges of the personal and collective horizons of time/space. An increasingly “presentist” perspective on memory is evident over the past thirty years with a growing premium placed on, and contestation of, memory in modern societies. Susan Sontag (2003, 86), for example, argues that the concept of collective memory is misleading, for it “is not a remembering but a stipulating: that *this* is important, and this is the story about how it happened, with the picture that lock the story in our minds.” Public discourses on our past have intensified in response to the renaissance of the heritage/museum industry, the technological, political, and cultural shifts affecting how, what, and why societies remember, and the near-globalization of discourses on the Holocaust (Huysen 2003). In this context, the concept of collective memory seems an inadequate expression of how individuals and societies remember in the contemporary age.

We now inhabit a new mediatized sphere of memory, in which individual and social memories increasingly intermingle or collide, partly as a result of the technological shifts in the modes of recording, archiving, and representing events. In response, new taxonomies of memory have emerged, particularly in the field of media, communication, and → cultural studies, and there is now a critical intellectual mass so that an emergent field of *Memory Studies* is evident – and a journal of the same name being launched in 2008. These transformations transcend and transform “living memory,” i.e., afford an “experiential” engagement with a past reaching beyond generational memory (this is the case especially with Holocaust and war memory: see Hirsch 1997, Landsberg 2004, and Weissman 2004, on “post,” “prosthetic,” and “fantasy” memories, respectively). And Barbie Zelizer (1998, 6) convincingly demonstrates how the “texture” of visual memory “becomes a facilitator for memory’s endurance” in her study of how images have transformed the remembering of the Holocaust.

The most far reaching, and perhaps least understood, of the new contestations of memory have been ushered in by and through the *mass media*. The electronic and now digital media have become the ultimate conveyors of the contradictions of contemporary memory: ephemeral, fleeting, and artificial in one sense (e.g., the rapid and continuous circulation of news and images) but also explicit, enduring, and authentic in another (e.g., the potentially depthless storage capacity of archives from which footage can be retrieved and “relived” by new generations for the first time). Thus a key function of the mass media today is the *renewal* of memory (Hoskins 2007). However, any process of renewal inevitably involves obsolescence, displacement, and discarding; thus the amnesiac effects of the process of renewal of memory are crucial in any understanding of how modern societies in particular come to live with and transform their pasts in and for the present. This importantly involves an understanding of the production processes of the media itself.

### MEDIA PRODUCTION

Increasingly central to contemporary debates on collective memory are critiques of the mass media overpowering or condemning human memory, or even negating the need for memory through potentially unlimited and increasingly complex documentation, storage, and instant retrieval and re-assemblage of our past(s). The neurobiologist, Steven Rose (1993), for example, contrasts the memory-keeping of early human societies with the memorial processes of today. In the oral cultures of the former, memories needed to be constantly trained and renewed, with select individuals afforded the considerable responsibility of “retelling” the stories which preserved the common culture. Rose argues that the media of “artificial memory” are said to diminish our capacity to remember in unique and imaginative ways (1993, 61). And, for the influential critic Pierre Nora (1989, 14), the accumulations of mass archives produce a “terrorism of historicized memory.”

These debates concern the nature and possibilities for memory exteriorized through and shaped by a seemingly rampant and particularly visual media. Are the prolific mediated symbols and signs of the past, for instance, sufficient to deliver our continuing relationship with what has gone before, or are these merely a product (and exploitation) of society’s anxiety with a present irretrievably loosened from the bonds of a past? Yet, today’s media-processing of events effect, if not always-fixed “artificial memory” in Rose’s terms, but a constant renewal of the past through the widespread usage of “media templates” (Hoskins 2004; 2007). Templates are the frames, images, and discourses (presumed by news editors and producers to be familiar to their audiences) that are routinely employed as often instantaneous prisms through which current and unfolding events are described, presented, and contextualized. For example, the Blitz (the 1940–1941 German bombing of London and other major UK cities) was widely employed as a template to frame the immediate coverage of the 2005 London bombings, invoking memory of the “Blitz spirit,” the capacity to carry on with daily life in the face of daily bombing attacks. This included the use of still images and footage, and the living memory of survivors from World War II, in renewed narratives interwoven into news coverage and analysis of the breaking story of London “under attack” in July 2005. The growing media archive thus constitutes a readily available local, national, and global resource of memory

which through its highly selective appropriation is self-consciously employed to shape interpretations of the present, as it in turn renews the past.

The media renewal of memory thus affords growing status to the historical functioning of the media and those who come to author and shape its content. So, particularly journalists, photojournalists, and even news anchors, who are increasingly co-present, contemporaneous and connected with the “production” of original events, are to some extent inevitably involved in the production and reproduction of the memory of those events. Thus, the core features of strong individual (and collective) memory: witnessing or experiencing the original event, its retelling and reshaping through repetition, and particularly its visualizing, are all increasingly powerfully constituted by and through the mass media and its personnel in our digital age.

These processes, however, also extend to anyone who is equipped with widely available and highly portable audio/visual recording devices to capture the unfolding of events as they witness them. Recent technological developments have enabled a much greater integration between the role of co-present witnesses and their subsequent testimony – and the emergent digital media. For example, mobile-phone video recordings and photographs taken by public onlookers (who are somehow compelled to stop and record even the most disturbing of scenes) led the global news coverage of the July 2005 London bombings, affording immediacy and proximity to scenes of fear and death that would until relatively recently have remained obscured or unseen. Thus so-called “citizen journalists” enter into the constitution of the media memory of events that they witness and record (→ Photography; Photojournalism).

In some instances, the accumulation of audio/visual records of some media events are so intensively and extensively mediated that it becomes difficult to imagine a history of them that is not already-inscribed, archived, and visually imprinted on social memory. For example, there seems little point in being a historian of the attacks on the US of 9/11 when there has already occurred such an explicit media rendering of oral testimony, combined with a seemingly endless archive of audiovisual material. In this way particular frames and images accumulate a granular quality in contemporary memory as they become over-familiar through their repeated exposure and analysis. Images of conflict and catastrophe are particularly vulnerable to this granularity as they enter into the public, political, and media obsession with the cyclical commemorative marking of these events.

### **FLASHBULB MEMORIES**

A significant contribution to the study of the relationship between memory and media is made by cognitive psychologists, although, unsurprisingly, they focus on the former at the expense of the latter. This is particularly so in relation to research into how media events are remembered, notably the study of so-called “flashbulb memory” (Brown and Kulik 1977). Some of the earliest photographs of publicly mediated life are associated with the introduction of burning flashbulbs of the 1920s. Flash photographs from this period, as well as carrying the age of the paper on which they are printed, possess a certain frozen quality. The subject was literally flooded indiscriminately with very powerful light, momentarily illuminating the detail of everything within range in the frame. The term

*flashbulb memory* thus describes human memory that can apparently be recalled very vividly and in great detail, as though reproduced directly from the original experience.

In this way, such memories are said to possess a *photographic* quality, owing to the apparent clarity of the reproduction of the image in the mind's eye. A pioneering example of work on flashbulb memory is the Emory Cognition Project which examined the relation between memory and affect in recollections of the US Space Shuttle *Challenger* explosion in 1986 (see Winograd and Neisser 1992). Neisser and Harsch (2000) found a shift to "TV priority" in some of their student-respondent recollections of this event two years after its widespread media coverage. In other words, even for the individuals who had not first learnt of this catastrophe via television, some later misremembered the medium as being their original source, suggesting an *accumulative* influence of the ubiquitous and repetitive televisual image and analysis (and public and private discourses thereon) on human memory.

Although it never exists within a vacuum of personal or collective history, it is the still visual image that is central to the idea of flashbulb memory in its apparent capacity to rest memory in a single moment and in a single form that is frozen, fixed, and stopped in time. And thus, it is precisely because we inhabit an image-saturated environment, with its much greater explicit rendering and contestation of established past, emerging past, and newly captured images, that has raised the stakes of flashbulb memory significantly, beyond explanations of the accuracy or otherwise of this phenomenon.

SEE ALSO: ► Cultural Studies ► Memory ► Memory and Rhetoric ► Photography  
► Photojournalism

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## Colombia: Media System

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With an area of 1.14 million square kilometers, Colombia is the fourth largest country in Latin America. The population is 45 million. Geographical conditions impede the infrastructural development as well as the opening up of an efficient system of communication. For several decades, a violent conflict has been going on in Colombia. As a consequence of the peaceful disarming of more than 30,000 paramilitaries before April 2006, the situation became relatively quiet.

To replace the previous 1886 constitution, the foundation of all *media law* for over a century, a new constitution was ratified in 1991. The basis of Colombian press law is now Art. 20, which grants every human being the right to "express and spread freely his opinion, inform himself, and get true and unbiased information, as well as to found mass media." All means of mass communication are free according to Art. 20, under a social responsibility concept of the media (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). There is no → censorship (→ Communication Law and Policy: South America).

Colombia can look back to more than 200 years of press history. The first → *newspaper* was published in 1791. In the nineteenth century alone there were more than 1,000 newspapers that accompanied Colombia's difficult path to the formation of a republic. Today about 35 daily papers are published in Colombia. Colombia's most important daily paper is the one with the highest circulation: *El Tiempo*. It is liberal and read across the nation; the oldest and most famous liberal newspaper *El Espectador* from Bogotá (founded in 1887) has been published as a weekly only since 1997. The daily paper *El Colombiano* reports from Medellín, *El País* from Cali and *El Heraldo* from Barranquilla. All other newspapers have only a small regional or even local area of circulation.

The official introduction of broadcasting in Colombia was in 1929. Since the late 1950s, → *radio* has become the most important mass medium with the largest spread and range. Law no. 72 dating from 1966 is still applicable, according to which the aim of broadcasting is "to spread and to support culture, to offer intelligent entertainment, and to strengthen the values of Colombian nationality" (Art. 22). According to Art. 75 of the Colombian constitution of 1991, ownership of all channels and administration of broadcast is a "public good." The state is allowed to interfere in cases of monopolistic activities. In 1995, with decree no. 1456, broadcasting stations were classified into commercial stations (*emisoras comerciales*), stations run by communities (*comunitarias*), and broadcasting

stations of public interest (*de interés público*). Altogether there are 1,292 broadcasting stations in 603 communities. 656 stations are said to be commercial (= 51 percent), 469 are community-run (= 36 percent), and 167 (= 13 percent) are run by public institutions. Commercial stations use FM as well as powerful AM transmitters (→ Radio Technology); → advertising, music, and short news dominate their program. The community stations, mostly run by associations and local, agricultural, and political organizations, have only existed since 1997; they are exclusively of local importance (→ Community Media). Stations of public interest, which are run by universities, schools, army, remote communities, native groups, and the government, also work only with FM transmitters. Of the 656 commercial stations, 341 (= 52 percent) are organized in six big station radio chains (→ Radio Networks). 182 of these stations (= 54 percent) belong to the *Caracol* Radio group; *Radio Cadena Nacional* assembles 75 (= 22 percent) and the chain *Todelar* 32 (= 9 percent) under their names.

Television in Colombia aired its first program in 1954 (→ Television). Founding the national Institute for Radio and Television *Inravisión* in 1963, Colombia chose to install a “mixed system” in the television sector. Unique in Latin America, government was on the one hand to participate in the television sector by owning, along with *Inravisión*, the channels and the technical means for broadcasting, while on the other hand it was to give licenses every four years to the private commercial TV companies by public invitation of tenders (*licitaciones*). Moreover, *Inravisión* was responsible for the state-controlled radio station *Radio Nacional* and the channel for education *Canal 3*. Until 1991 only two commercially run television channels and one state channel existed. In the 1980s additional regional channels started in different parts of the country. The constitution of 1991 finally laid down fundamental changes for television by decisively turning its back on the “mixed system” in television policies. Art. 76 laid down the foundation of an independent commission, the *Comisión Nacional de Televisión* (CNTV), whose five members (two of which were chosen by the government) from then on were in charge of technical issues, the distribution of channels and television policies in general. This was the first step toward privatization of television in Colombia.

In 1998 CNTV gave direct concessions to private commercial television channels for the first time. The radio and television companies *Caracol* and *Radio Cadena Nacional*, being market leaders, each acquired their own television channel with national range. A third channel (*Canal 1*) was immediately opened for smaller private commercial companies. At present, six companies share program time on *Canal 1*. Apart from commercial channels, the state channel (*Canal institucional*, *Canal 9*) and the education channel (*Señal Colombia Educativo y Cultural*, *Canal 3*) are still on air. In different administrative regions of Colombia, six regional channels are broadcasting. In Bogotá, the private, strongly commercial *Citi-TV* with information on the capital has gained a name, working together with *El Tiempo*. Its local rival is the *Canal Capital* in Bogotá.

In 2004 *Inravisión* ran dramatically into debt and was dissolved and replaced by *Radio Televisión Nacional de Colombia* (RTVC), which has been in charge of all technical matters for broadcasting channels since 2004. CNTV controls the distribution of broadcasting time.

Six companies supply predominantly wealthy urban households with *cable television*. Television for subscribers, a kind of Pay-TV (*televisión por suscripción*), is available too. The channels *Galaxy* and *Sky* dominate the market for *satellite television*. The Internet

was introduced in Colombia in the 1990s primarily by the universities. Meanwhile several providers offer their services and traditional media are using the new technology.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Community Media ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Television

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## **Comforting Communication**

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Comforting communication encompasses the verbal and nonverbal messages that people use when trying to reduce others' emotional anguish. Thus, comforting represents a strategic communication activity that has the primary goal of alleviating another's emotional distress; it may also aim to enhance the other's self-esteem, facilitate the other's coping, and assist the other's problem-solving in a troublesome situation. Comforting is a form of behavioral empathy (→ Empathy Theory) or social support (→ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication) and is usually studied as a communicative activity carried out by laypersons in everyday situations; however, professionals (teachers, pastors, nurses, counselors, therapists) and para-professionals (bartenders, hairdressers) also engage in comforting communication.

### **FUNCTIONS AND STRATEGIES OF COMFORTING**

Typically, people seek and receive comfort from intimates in their social networks, especially friends, family members, and romantic partners; neighbors and co-workers may also be important sources of emotional support. Research indicates that comfort (or

emotional support) is an important provision of close personal relationships and helps to maintain these relationships (→ Relational Maintenance), with people evaluating their partners for the quality of the emotional support given. When provided effectively, emotional support can assist with the processing of negative emotions, reduce affective distress, foster functional coping, maintain self-esteem, improve performance, and enhance the quality of social relationships. Moreover, by reducing potentially harmful physiological processes that often accompany emotional distress, effective comforting may protect mental and physical health, reduce susceptibility to disease, and decrease morbidity and mortality rates (→ Social Support in Health Communication).

Unfortunately, many comforting efforts intended to provide emotional support are *not* effective. Indeed, research has documented a fairly high incidence of support attempts that fail, “cold comfort,” or “miscarried helping” these messages, however well intended, are ineffective and may actually make the recipient feel worse rather than better. These findings motivated research focused on identifying the features of more and less effective comforting strategies.

This research indicated that highly *person-centered* verbal comforting strategies, in contrast to their low person-centered counterparts, generally are perceived as most sensitive and effective and do the best job of reducing emotional distress. These verbal strategies acknowledge, contextualize, and legitimize the feelings and perspective of the distressed other and encourage the other to express, explore, and elaborate his or her feelings. Low person-centered verbal strategies typically minimize or ignore the distressed other’s feelings, tell the other what to feel or do, and may even criticize the other’s feelings and perspective.

In addition, comforting efforts that provide *face support* are experienced as more helpful than those that ignore the face wants of recipients. Facework uses politeness forms (→ Politeness Theory) that support the recipient’s desires to be viewed positively and autonomously. Facework supporting the desire to be viewed positively expresses affirming feelings toward, or evaluations of, the recipient and his or her actions. These devices include statements of positive regard, admiration for the courage or effort shown by the target, esteem, understanding of task difficulty, and confidence that the other will prevail. Facework supporting autonomy includes indirect verbal forms such as seeking permission prior to suggesting or advising, expressing deference, offering suggestions indirectly, hedging and qualifying, hinting, describing hypothetical options, and otherwise indicating respect for the target’s autonomy. Nonverbal behaviors may also provide comfort and emotional support (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of).

*High immediacy* nonverbal behaviors (including forward body lean, touches and pats, hugs, hand-holding, focused looks, and soothing sounds) are experienced as comforting whereas low immediacy nonverbal behaviors (including backward body lean, folded arms, little eye contact, mumbled responses) are experienced as insensitive.

Comforting messages that exhibit high levels of these three features (person-centeredness, face support, and immediacy) typically receive favorable responses from both sexes, members of different cultures, and people with diverse personality traits; these messages also receive favorable responses across an array of support situations. In contrast, comforting messages that exhibit low levels of these features are generally viewed as insensitive, ineffective, and unhelpful, although there are somewhat larger cultural and gender differences in the evaluation of these messages. Recent research suggests that differential responses to comforting messages may be due to variations in recipient ability and

motivation to process comforting messages; high ability and motivation to process these messages leads to the sharpest discrimination among them. Numerous demographic, personality, and situational factors appear to influence the recipient's ability and motivation to process comforting messages (Bodie & Burleson, in press).

Recent scholarship has focused on explaining comforting outcomes by examining the cognitive and affective mechanisms these messages influence. Comforting messages can promote changes in feelings and coping behaviors through multiple mechanisms; these mechanisms differ in the verbal strategies that activate them, their information-processing demands, the magnitude and stability of the changes they can produce, and the speed with which they generate changes in feelings and behaviors. For example, *distraction* produces changes in affect by redirecting the attention of distressed recipient; this mechanism (1) may be activated by drawing the recipient's attention to some positive feature of the environment, (2) makes minimal information processing demands, (3) is capable of generating large, but typically temporary, changes in affect, and (4) acts relatively quickly. In contrast, *cognitive reappraisal* produces changes in affect by altering the cognitions (appraisals) that lead to particular emotional states; this mechanism (1) may be activated by inviting the recipient to reflect upon and talk about his or her feelings and the reasons for those feelings, (2) makes large information-processing demands, (3) is capable of generating large, stable changes in affect, and (4) often requires a relatively long time to produce affective changes (→ Appraisal Theory). Jones and Wirtz (2006) found that highly person-centered comforting messages bring about changes in another's emotions by encouraging the other to talk about those emotions which, in turn, results in cognitive reappraisals of the problematic situation.

### COMFORTING SKILLS

The ability to provide sensitive, effective comfort to the distressed is a fundamental form of communicative competence that requires appropriate knowledge and motivation (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). Models of comforting communication competence (Burleson 2003; Eisenberg 1998) indicate that skilled comforting requires several abilities, including (1) social perception skills such as cognitive complexity and social perspective taking, through which the helper can acquire knowledge of the distressed person and his or her feelings, goals, and perspective, (2) an understanding of human emotional dynamics (i.e., the circumstances that typically cause and relieve particular emotional states), (3) self-regulation of one's own emotional response to a distressed other and upsetting circumstances (since strong emotional reactions may interfere with the ability to generate sophisticated messages), and (4) the capacity to generate message plans that efficiently and effectively implement the helper's goals while adapting to situational contingencies.

In addition, because providing sensitive comfort to distressed others often requires considerable effort, the production of skilled comforting messages mostly occurs when helpers have appropriate motivations (Burleson et al. 2005; Feeney & Collins 2003), including high levels of *goal motivation* (the helper's desire to aid the recipient in feeling better), *effectance motivation* (the helper's belief that he or she is capable of improving the recipient's affective state), and *normative motivation* (the helper's belief that it is socially

appropriate to use particular messages with the recipient). These motivations are influenced by a variety of personality traits (e.g., attachment style, emotional empathy, gender-role orientation, pro-social orientation) and aspects of the comforting situation (e.g., presence of others, sex of the helper and recipient, recipient responsibility for the problematic situation). Women typically have higher levels than men of the abilities and motivations that contribute to skilled comforting, which may be why women are more likely than men to engage in such comforting. In addition, the abilities and motivations that contribute to skilled comforting develop with age, which helps explain why the use of sophisticated comforting efforts increases over the course of childhood and adolescence.

The abilities and motivations that underlie the competence to engage in skilled comforting are cultivated by several aspects of the social environment, especially during childhood and adolescence. In particular, caregiver and peer use of highly person-centered comforting messages is associated with children's use of such messages. Using these messages models the form and content of skilled comforting to the child and facilitates the child's development of social perception skills by explicitly mentioning feelings, intentions, and motivations. Caregiver talk in other contexts (such as discipline) about feelings and internal states also facilitates development of the skills and orientations that underlie skilled comforting. The reliable provision of emotional support by caregivers, along with their use of positive forms of discipline, also promotes the development of secure attachment, pro-social orientations, and an expressive personality, all of which contribute to the use of skilled comforting messages. Frequent social interaction with peers facilitates the child's development of good comforting skills; peer interaction creates opportunities for children to exercise their social perception and communication skills and provides feedback to children about the effectiveness of their skills.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH**

Given the numerous positive consequences that can result from skilled comforting, and the unfortunate fact that many people do not naturally possess the abilities and motivations that underlie the competence to engage in such comforting behavior, it is reasonable to inquire whether the comforting skills of ordinary people can be enhanced through educational or training efforts. Currently, this question cannot be answered directly because few (if any) studies have been conducted that assess the efficacy of efforts to train comforting skills. There is evidence, however, that certain abilities (e.g., social perception skills) and motivations (e.g., concern for others) can be fostered by clinical and educational interventions. Moreover, there is abundant evidence that instruction and coaching can improve a broad range of communication skills (e.g., conversational skills, presentational skills, persuasive skills). Thus, there is ample reason to hypothesize that comforting skills can be improved; one goal for future research lies in developing and evaluating curricula aimed at enhancing these important skills.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Social Support in Health Communication ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication

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## **Comics**

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Comics, either in the form of newspaper strips (funnies) or comic books, combine text and images to carry a narrative or a joke. Although semblances of comics can be found in Egyptian Pharaonic art, thousand-year-old Indian, Japanese, and Chinese scrolls, eighteenth-century Japanese *kibyoshi* (yellow books), and thirteenth-century European book illustrations, the nineteenth century is normally credited as their birth date. Strips by Rodolphe Töpffer appeared in Switzerland in 1827, and by Wilhelm Busch a few decades later in Germany, but it was in the US that newspaper comics flourished, especially after New York newspaper publishers William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer used

them to lure readers in the 1890s. After *The yellow kid*, usually considered the first US strip, was created in 1895, several hundred new funnies were started during the next five years.

These early comics left their imprints on American society, inspiring other literary and art forms, adding to the English lexicon, and even affecting women's → fashion. They also became favorite reading fare abroad, where they were reprinted or cloned, and later replaced by indigenous comics. Some early comic strip adopters were Canada (1901), Japan (1902), Australia (1907), Korea (1914), the UK (1915), and Argentina (1916). By the 1920s, local comic strips appeared in newspapers in China, Sweden, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Mexico, Denmark, and Finland.

The 1920s represented for the US an *era of specialization*, with new genres featuring women, average American children, adventure, and family. Playing a key role in the development of some of these comics was Joseph Patterson, publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, who nurtured new talent and helped conceptualize a number of memorable characters. In other parts of the world, the publication of funnies grew quickly before World War II, although the domestic genre lagged because comics were still a children's medium in many places, and because female-centered stories did not fit patriarchal norms in Europe and Asia. Although local adventure strips existed, they faced stiff competition from American classics provided through syndication. Countries such as Italy, Australia, and Canada banned or imposed import licensing regulations on foreign comics during the 1940s, giving local strips a chance. During World War II, comic strips thrived as escapist reading material and an effective propaganda vehicle in at least the US, the UK, Italy, and Japan.

Also popular during the war were American *comic books*, which began as collections of newspaper strips, but by the mid-1930s developed their own stories and characters. Although semblances of comic books had existed earlier in Switzerland, the UK, Germany, Australia, Japan, and Mexico, it was the American version that became popular, partly because of its superhero stories. Already in the 1940s, American comic books had left their mark: banned in France, Canada, and Australia because they thwarted local comic books; imitated in Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, and Mexico, which developed their own markets. Mexican comic books were so popular in the 1940s that some published daily (e.g., *Pepín*, published eight times per week).

When the war ended, some sectors of US and UK society blamed comic books for corrupting children's morals and education, leading in the US to Senate investigations in 1954 and the passing of a very stringent self-censorship code that nearly destroyed US comic books (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content). Similar actions were taken in about 20 other countries, although overall, comic books fared well in France, the Netherlands, the UK, Italy, Belgium, Argentina, Mexico, Brazil, and elsewhere (→ Censorship; Censorship, History of). In post-war Asian comics, some giants emerged, such as Osamu Tezuka in Japan, with *Jungle Taitei* and *Tetsuwan Atom*; Antonio Velasquez, who with publisher Ramon Roces established Ace Publications in the Philippines; and important strip artists Machiko Hasegawa (Japan), Lee Fei-meng (Taiwan), and Kim Song Hwan (Korea).

Significant changes occurred in the US comic book industry in the latter quarter of the century as sales dropped, many companies folded, and surviving firms DC and Marvel shifted to socially relevant superheroes, direct sales approaches, and adult-oriented themes. Actually, *underground comix*, which grew out of the 1960s counterculture, first showed



there was an adult market; rather quickly, local underground comix spread to Australia, the UK, Canada, the Netherlands, and Latin America. As the millennium ended, comic books in the US, and gradually elsewhere, reinvented themselves with different styles (more literary-like; better artistic execution), formats (varied panel shapes/sizes, graphic novels), contents (autobiographical, journalistic), companies (independent, alternate publishers), and venues (comic shops and cafes, Internet, movie/TV adaptations). Comic book publication also penetrated Africa (especially Francophone countries and South Africa), the Middle East, and new parts of Asia. During this time, Japan became the leader in comic book sales (more than a billion copies yearly in the 1980s) and overseas influence.

US *newspaper comic strips* during the latter twentieth century changed drastically, with reduced panel sizes, fewer genres (mostly gag-a-day), and lowered quality. Because of political correctness, bottom-line economics, and inept cartoonists, the strips suffered a lack of spoken dialect, clever puns, rich parody, and skilled artwork (→ Cartoons). Strips did not face the same dilemma in Belgium, the UK, France, Italy, Spain, Australia, and Japan, where genres such as science fiction, adventure, soap opera, western, police, fantasy, and humor have been kept alive. In the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, to name a few countries, strips with native characters and in indigenous languages found places in daily newspapers and humor magazines.

Comics, though imperiled at times and often reshaped, have endured as key storytellers and cultural identifiers.

SEE ALSO: ► Animation ► Cartoons ► Censorship ► Censorship, History of ► Fashion  
► Morality and Taste in Media Content

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## **Commentary**

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A commentary is a genre of journalism that provides interpretations and opinions on current events, rather than factual reporting (→ News). Interpretations may include

evaluating the motives behind actors' behaviors, interpreting the wider scope and meaning of events, and assessing the ramifications and significance of facts. It also includes speculation, such as forecasting future events and foreseeing the behaviors of actors in the news. Opinions, on the other hand, mean promoting or advocating specific standpoints, ideals, or policies.

Commentary has a principal function in the → public sphere. As the free expression and exchange of ideas is necessary for the formation of public opinion, commentary is crucial for the democratic function of the media. Historically, commentary became an integral part of the press long before journalism as an institutional practice and profession was invented (Chalaby 1996). In fact, partisan reporting outdates the ideal of objective journalism by more than a century (→ Partisan Press; Advocacy Journalism). The evolution of objectivity as a journalistic ideal, and the neutral, descriptive style of journalistic expression are closely connected to the growth of professionalism and of journalism as an independent social force in the 1900s (Schudson 1996; → Professionalization of Journalism).

In the US this modernization process gradually took place from the mid-1800s to the mid-1900s. The early US newspapers in the 1700s were governed by the printer of news, speaking in a universal voice that was impartial and neutral (Barnhurst & Nerone 2002; → Printer-Editors). Later, in the 1800s reporting often had a partisan tendency or bias, as the press became affiliated with political parties (→ Bias in the News). The early commentaries in the US press were mainly found in editorial columns, where politicians' statements were praised or criticized from an engaged, partisan stance (Schudson 1996). The news reports expressed a simple notion of objectivity; reporting or "mirroring" events in a manner that meant describing what the observers on the scene could see for themselves.

This approach changed gradually during the first half of the twentieth century. To an increasing extent the news started to assess the larger political meaning of the messages. The journalist was becoming an independent interpreter of news rather than a reporter of immediate events. This was a manifestation of a shift in power and focus from editors to journalists. Journalistic professionalization eroded political parallelism, and the ideal of objectivity was established in the 1920s. One of the basic premises in the objective style of reporting was that news should be separated from views and facts from opinions (→ Objectivity in Reporting).

In a *comparative perspective* the trajectory toward modern journalism is not as straightforward as appears in this short description of the US development. Forms and styles of journalism vary across cultures and contexts, and although the development of the European press, both northern and southern, shows many parallels to that in the US, there are also many differences (Hallin & Mancini 2004; Høyer & Pöttker 2005). The notion of objectivity is more pronounced in North American journalism than in other western democracies. US news tends to be more information- and fact-oriented, particularly in comparison to journalism in southern Europe. The informational approach is connected to a neutral style of reporting. In southern Europe, the advocacy tradition of the press persists more strongly. Commentary is mixed more freely with factual reporting, and the southern style of writing is also more interpretive and evaluative. In northern Europe, and particularly in the Scandinavian countries, journalism has a long tradition of a strong party-political affiliation. Here a depoliticization of the press gradually came about in the

second half of the twentieth century. A legacy of commentary-oriented journalism is coupled with an equally strong public service tradition in broadcasting, where public service from the outset was supposed to vouch for balance, fairness, and neutrality in reporting. Comparative studies of journalists' ideals and norms also suggest that the ideal of objectivity isn't prevalent everywhere in the world. Obviously, in countries that lack freedom of speech and where the media is closely monitored or even controlled by the government, commentaries on current affairs often tend to represent the power-holders' point of view (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

In the 2000s, commentary is an integral part of journalism worldwide. National journalistic cultures still exist in the 2000s, although research suggests an increasing *homogenization of journalism*, particularly due to market pressure and globalization (Hallin & Mancini 2004; → Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Commentary today exists in various forms and formats, from the long-lived editorials and traditional commentaries in current affairs magazines, to journalistic talk shows, Internet blogs, and online magazines in the 2000s (→ Broadcast Talk). Internet blogs represent a further blurring of the boundaries between facts and views, as journalists here may have more far-reaching opportunities to express opinions than in the traditional news media (→ Blogger). Commentary does not pertain only to political reporting. It permeates other journalistic topics and beats, such as business news, and sports news. Where commentary was historically rooted in specific social and cultural contexts and categories (class, religion, gender, race, and geography), in the 2000s it is supposedly free from such biases. Publicists in the 1800s and early 1900s often advocated the interest of particular social groups and analyzed the world from the viewpoint of the group they represented. Commentaries persist today but now rest on the purportedly disinterested critical expertise of professional journalists. However, journalists are increasingly speaking in their own voice, delivering interpretations and speculations more often than opinions, advocating nothing but the legitimacy of the profession.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Bias in the News ► Blogger ► Broadcast Talk  
 ► Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ► Journalists' Role Perception ► News  
 ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Partisan Press ► Printer-Editors ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Public Sphere

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# Commercialization: Impact on Media Content

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No industry exists without a product or service to offer to customers. For mass media organizations the product they offer is their content. The primary business of the mass media is to produce content – fill the broadcast hours, the print pages, the Internet site. Because of limits of time and space, selection of content is a necessary function. Mass media organizations have to make difficult decisions in evaluating their story options and determining which content to provide to an audience. Some stories never become “content” and are not exposed to a mass audience.

Many internal and external factors influence the mass media content decision-making process (e.g., Shoemaker & Reese 1996; Croteau & Hoynes 2001; Fortunato 2005; → Media Production and Content). Primary among those factors is the economics of the industry. Advertisers are an essential external factor in any evaluation of the business aspects of the mass media because they generate all of the revenue for privately owned broadcast media and most of the revenue for the print and Internet media. The size and demographics of the audience help determine the amount of money that mass media organizations can charge advertisers. Because it is the audience determining the advertising rate, Wenner (1989, 22) points out “the content per se is not what is being sold; rather it is the audience for that content that is being sold to advertisers.”

## CONCERNS ABOUT COMMERCIAL INFLUENCE

Because of this economic role, there is concern about the extent of advertisers’ influence dominating the content decision-making process (e.g., Shoemaker & Reese 1996; Croteau & Hoynes 2001; Jamieson & Campbell 2001). Jacobson and Mazur (1995, 206) contend “many producers, editors, and publishers alter or pull stories that might offend advertisers, write pieces expressly to appease or attract advertisers, avoid topics that create controversial ‘environments’ for advertising, and gear articles and programs to attract an audience that advertisers crave. In short, they often trade editorial integrity for the almighty ad dollar.” Picard (2004, 54) argues that “economic pressures are becoming the primary forces shaping the behavior of American newspaper companies” and this development is leading the “attention of newspaper personnel from journalism to activities primarily related to the business interests of the press.” He claims, “the result is that stories that may offend are ignored in favor of those more acceptable and entertaining to larger numbers of readers, that stories that are costly to cover are downplayed or ignored and that stories creating financial risks are ignored” (2004, 61).

Scholars argue that as a result of trying to deliver a mass audience to advertisers and not emphasize content that might lead to a reduction in audiences or advertisers, journalistic quality suffers (e.g., McQuail 2000; Jamieson & Campbell 2001). Croteau and

Hoynes (2001, 27) claim “the consumers that media companies are responding to are the advertisers, not the people who read, watch, or listen to the media.”

Scholars emphasize that because the mass media play a prominent role in providing information in a democratic society, their operating in only the advertisers’ economic interests has negative consequences. Another chief concern is the continuing trend toward commercialization. As the media environment changes, so too will the advertising environment. Advertisers are always reacting to the audience’s media use and are developing their media placement strategies on the basis of audience behavior. With the technology of the DVR, Internet, cable television, and pay-per-view having made the audience more splintered, it is harder for advertisers to reach the large masses they were once easily able to, leading to more sponsorship and product placement initiatives. McAllister and Giglio (2005) claim there is a blurring of the distinction between program content and advertising.

Jacobson and Mazur (1995, 25) speak to the cultural concern of increased commercialization, claiming, “taken as a whole, the collective body of advertising sells a vision of the world, a way of life. Each ad is a parable that illuminates the same theme: All of life’s problems can be solved and happiness attained by *buying things*.” Schiller (1989) also spoke of the cultural impact of commercialization where advertising influence goes beyond simple economic support of culture industries (i.e., the mass media), and translates into the domain of support for ideas and images, and importantly who controls these ideas and images. According to Schiller, economic support through advertising becomes tantamount to support and validation for that entity and its existence within the culture. He contends that corporate speech is the “loudest in the land” (1989, 4).

Other scholars do not contend that the advertiser influence on media content is significant. For example, regarding advertising’s negative impact on democracy, Baron (2003, 67) comments, “it is a strange but powerful testament to the American democratic and market system to have one of its most important democratic institutions to be a resounding market success.”

## EVIDENCE ON ADVERTISERS’ INFLUENCE ON MEDIA CONTENT

In evaluating the impact of commercialization, the question of what advertisers desire emerges. Advertisers pay large amounts of money because their investment guarantees them placement in the media outlet at the time and location desired, giving them access to the audience that participates in that mass media organization’s content. For that investment advertisers hope to achieve the following communication goals: (1) exposure to the desired target audience, (2) increase in product brand recall, and (3) increase in sales (e.g., Fortunato 2005).

The pivotal question thus becomes whether the achievement of these advertising goals necessitates control of the media content. It seems what the advertiser most desires is not necessarily to influence content, but simply to reach the largest possible numbers of its desired target audience as often as possible. In this philosophy, control or influence of media content is not a necessary condition for achievement of advertisement goals. Brants (1998) argues the evidence for the decline in journalistic quality and standard of media performance because of increased commercialization is not strong. To also support this idea, in a survey of network news correspondents from ABC, CBS, CNN, NBC, and PBS Price (2003) asked if they felt any story influence from advertisers. She found that

only 7 percent reported some advertiser pressure and 93.1 percent had never felt pressure from advertisers to report or not to report a story. No correspondents responded they were frequently pressured by advertisers to report or not to report a story, and only one respondent reported an occasional pressure of this sort from advertisers. With the purchase of advertising time well in advance, it is impossible for the advertisers who have bought time to know the exact topical content of that particular program or periodical. This also makes it difficult for the reporters, editors, or producers to tailor a story to fit the needs of an advertiser who they probably do not know has advertisements planned surrounding the content segments they are producing.

As evidence of advertiser influence on content, it has been pointed out that advertisers might pull out of certain media locations because they do not approve of the content (e.g., Jacobson & Mazur 1995; Richards & Murphy 1996). It is important to note that often such a pull-out is not a cancellation of the advertising contract with a mass media organization. Often the result of a conflict regarding content is a shifting of the location of the advertisement. If there is a conflict, an arrangement is made whereby there is a location or time shift and the advertiser will merely move its commercial to another segment of the television program or magazine, or possibly even to the next week's issue or program. The fact that the financial commitment does not change, only the placement location of the advertisement, is an important point when evaluating the influence that advertisers have or even desire on the content decision-making process.

This time shifting of the advertisement within a magazine or even the shifting of a story to the following week's broadcast is a minor adjustment and the editorial content of the mass media organization is not impacted at all. The tactic of time shifting, rather than completely pulling out of a program, is evidence that advertisers are not necessarily trying to intrude on the editorial process, but merely trying to use that media content vehicle to reach the audience. Time shifting does not conflict with the advertisers' need for exposure to the audience or with the mass media organization's editorial decision-making or their need for revenue.

The role of advertisers in the mass media industry is clear from an economic standpoint, as they provide the revenue to the mass media organization. For many scholars this arrangement allows for a clear connection to these advertisers strictly influencing and dictating media content decisions. To others what advertisers most desire is exposure of their brand to the audience, not necessarily control of the content. Therefore, the relationship between mass media organizations and advertisers does not appear to necessitate interference into the editorial aspects of content decision-making, as that level of influence is not a prerequisite for advertisers achieving their communication goals.

The arguments of many theorists that the mass media organizations are only trying to please advertisers is a little misleading in that advertisers most want an audience, particularly a desired target audience that might buy their product. Advertisers pay the mass media organizations and invest in locations only if that content delivers an audience. It is a large audience that generates advertising revenue and a profit for the mass media organization. If the mass media organizations are all about profits, they have to attract an audience – no audience, no advertisers, no profits. McQuail (2000, 105) points out that “the critique of commercialism is particularly difficult to reconcile with the redemption of the popular, since popularity is usually a condition of commercial success.” As Richards and Murphy (1996, 29) summarize, advertising “space or time is worthless

without readers, listeners, or viewers.” They add, “a medium is only beneficial to advertisers if consumers use it, and consumers will not use a medium if they are unhappy with its content” (1996, 30).

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising, Economics of ► Advertising Effectiveness ► Commercialization of the Media ► Marketing ► Media Economics ► Media Production and Content

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## **Commercialization of the Media**

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“Commerce” is a longstanding synonym for business as it is conducted in capitalist societies. It refers both to the institutions and practices of market economies and to the imaginative landscapes they produce. Commercial systems have two defining characteristics.

Organizationally, they rest on the assumptions that competition between privately owned companies is the most effective way to maximize the diversity and choice of products on offer, and that markets should be allowed to operate with the minimum of interference and regulation from government. Imaginatively, they present consumption as a unique sphere of personal freedom in which individuals can realize their aspirations and confirm their sense of self through the goods and services they choose to purchase and possess.

This identification of “being” with “having” lies at the core of the ideology of consumerism that provides advanced capitalism with its major meta-ideology. It presents itself as a system that can “deliver the goods.” The media play a unique role in sustaining this system. Not only do they offer a wide variety of purchasable communications goods and services, ranging from cinema seats to iPods, they are also the major conduit for the advertising promoting the consumer goods produced by every other sector of the economy (→ Political Economy of the Media).

The expansion of the modern commercial media however, coincided with the rise of the nation-state as the central political formation of → modernity and with an ethos of citizenship that required mass participation in the election of governments. It was also accompanied by the development of a new kind of civil society made up of the multiple organizations through which people championed their interests and expressed their shared identities. Both of these other nodes of mobilization and power supported cultural and communicative activities that operated outside the market. States subsidized interventions they saw as helpful in cultivating national solidarity and a culture of responsible citizenship. Civil society organizations supported a range of initiatives that relied on voluntary labor. Some were devoted to sustaining momentum within the group. Others were aimed at attracting new recruits or raising money from sympathetic supporters. The history of modern commercialization is a history of the shifting relations between capital, state, and civil society, and of the persistent efforts by private corporations to enlarge their sphere of operations, both institutionally and imaginatively, and commandeer the material resources and social allegiances developed by the other two nodes of power.

### FROM INDIVIDUAL PRESS FREEDOM TO MEDIA BUSINESSES

Most observers of the communications landscape in Europe in the early decades of the nineteenth century saw markets as guarantors of greater freedom of expression (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Everywhere, the dominant medium of the time, the press, was restricted by government censorship and licensing. In Cologne, the *Rheinische Zeitung*, edited by the young Karl Marx in his first job after graduation, was closed down by the censors for attacking the Russian Tsar. In London, every sheet of paper used in printing a newspaper was required to bear an official government stamp. By throwing ideas and argument open to the play of demand, commercialization promised to transfer power from governments to publics. A free market promised to produce a press that reflected the full range of political positions and social interests. After a series of long and bruising battles, this market-led definition of a “free press” prevailed and newspapers began to develop as modern businesses staffed by professionals. As this transition gathered momentum, however, it became increasingly clear that, far from disappearing, restrictions on expression had simply assumed another form. Control by



government had been replaced by the censorship of money (→ Censorship, History of; Newspaper, History of).

By the later decades of the century, newspaper publishing had become an increasingly expensive proposition. It required substantial investment in new printing and production machinery and subscriptions to the new telegraphic “wire” services that transmitted breaking → news (→ Telegraph, History of). Free market ideology presupposed that anyone who spotted a gap in prevailing provision could enter the market and submit their ideas to the judgment of readers. In the ensuing Darwinian struggle, good ideas would survive and develop. Bad ideas, like ill-adapted species, would die out. In reality, launching a major title was becoming a privilege reserved for the rich and well supported.

By the turn of the century, the press business was increasingly dominated by a *new kind of proprietor*, who owned chains of titles in a number of markets. The British entrepreneur Alfred Harmsworth (later ennobled as Lord Northcliffe) typified the imaginative estates of these new “press barons,” owning both the country’s leading popular “tabloid” titles, the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Mirror*, and the primary newspaper of record, *The Times* (→ Tabloid Press). The front page of *The Times* had long been filled with small classified ads, a practice that continued well into the second half of the twentieth century, but the *Daily Mail* and its rival tabloids were becoming important vehicles for the display advertising promoting the new branded goods – Lipton’s tea, Pear’s soap, and Colman’s mustard – that were rapidly replacing unlabeled generic commodities (→ Branding). In the process, the economic foundation of the press was shifting from sales to readers to revenues from advertising (→ Consolidation of Media Markets; Media Conglomerates).

### **EARLY CONCERNS ABOUT THE COMMERCIALIZATION OF THE MEDIA**

Chain ownership and advertising finance prompted increasing concern. Observers worried that the new proprietors would mobilize the titles they owned behind the political positions and causes they particularly favored (as Northcliffe often did) and exclude or unfairly denigrate alternative opinions. The greater the reach and centrality of their publications, the greater the potential damage to open debate and diversity of expression (→ Plurality; Political Discourse). There were concerns, too, that the drive to maximize advertising revenues by assembling the largest possible readership was pushing popular titles toward entertainment and sensation rather than objective information and rational debate on public issues (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Sensationalism).

These developments coincided with extensions to the franchise and the move toward mass participation in the political process based on the universal vote. To commentators committed to advancing this ideal by fostering a democratic culture rooted in informed deliberation, these trends appeared as “*market failures*.” Given the entrenched identification of a free press with a free market, there was little they could do to change the newspaper business other than impose limits on the number of titles any one owner could command and offer modest subsidies to support minority publications. When broadcasting emerged as a popular mass medium after the end of World War I, however, they saw another opportunity to counter the censorship of commercialism.

Governments in Europe had long seen the provision of public cultural facilities as an important aid in efforts to construct the nation as an imagined community with a

common heritage, and to promote rational recreation and self-improvement. The resulting array of public libraries, museums, and galleries differed from the novels, theatre seats, and → magazines produced by the commercial cultural industries in two key respects: they were free at the point of use and they were designed for shared use rather than personal possession (→ Culture Industries). They came to be seen as → public goods, not simply in the technical sense that a number of people could enjoy them simultaneously without pre-empting each other, but also in the more general sense that they contributed to the quality of collective life as well as to the pleasure and education of individual users.

Where commercial media were rooted in the private interests of producers and consumers, publicly funded cultural facilities were seen by their defenders as pivotal contributions to the common good. It was this view that prevailed in European debates on broadcasting and led to the establishment of radio as a *public service*, funded out of the public purse and oriented to providing the cultural resources deemed essential for a culture of citizenship and national solidarity (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). The fact that it delivered the same programs across the nation simultaneously and could be enjoyed by everyone equally – without the resource limits imposed by the limited space of a gallery or the competition for loans from public libraries – made it the ideal typical public good. In contrast, in the United States, despite a vigorous campaign for public service waged by universities and community groups, broadcasting followed the dominant pattern of the pre-existing cultural industries and became a commercial business, operated by privately owned companies and financed by assembling and selling audiences to advertisers (→ United States of America: Media System).

The *nature of* → advertising was changing, however. As real wages rose and a larger section of the audience began to move from maintaining basic living standards to making consumer choices that expressed lifestyle aspirations, so advertising set out to secure the links between tastes and → brands (→ Taste Culture). Hollywood began to embrace product placement, with manufactures paying to have their products featured and used in feature films and engineering tie-in promotions in local stores (→ Hollywood). Alongside spot advertising, broadcasters embraced program sponsorship, allowing manufacturers to include the name of the company or brand in the program title. Consumerism was no longer confined to the spaces between media artifacts; it was increasingly integrated into them. Faced with this *consolidation of commercialism*, at the level of both institutions and imagination, advocates of broadcasting as an essential medium of democratic life responded by subjecting the business of radio to regulations limiting the number of stations any one owner could command and insisting on a minimal diversity of output and opinion.

## COMMERCIALIZATION OF TELEVISION

When television emerged as the dominant popular medium after World War II, the same basic division of operating philosophies was reproduced. The major European nations extended the principles of public service to the new medium and were mostly joined by their former colonies, which mobilized broadcasting behind the twin drives towards → modernization and nation-building. Within Europe, the *United Kingdom* was unique in introducing advertising-funded television services in the mid-1950s, although the new

commercial (ITV) companies were bound by extensive public interest requirements. As a consequence, competition was confined to audiences and talent, with the → BBC continuing to receive the whole of the public subsidy provided by the license fee while the ITV operators enjoyed monopoly rights to advertising in their franchise regions. By guaranteeing relative security of income to both sectors, this convenient division of the spoils enabled both to fulfill their public service remits, an arrangement that supporters of greater competition dismissed as a “comfortable duopoly” (→ United Kingdom: Media System).

Elsewhere in Europe, broadcasting remained a public service monopoly. Against this, the *United States* pursued the basic business model already established for radio and constituted television as a commercially operated medium, subject to minimal public interest regulations, a pattern widely followed in the key countries in Latin America that lay within the US’s longstanding sphere of influence. This dual system lasted more or less intact until the mid-1970s, when a combination of technological innovations and shifting political ideologies progressively undermined both public cultural institutions and the ethos of public service. As a result, over the next two decades, commercialism was to gain unprecedented geographical and cultural reach.

In a number of countries, from Norway to India, the arrival of commercial cable and satellite services, often beamed from “offshore,” broke the historic monopoly of public service broadcasting and opened the way for increased competition and commercialism (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television). New advertising-supported terrestrial channels emerged alongside proliferating pay-TV services. Cultures habituated to the worthy fare served up by public stations were suddenly exposed to the full force of consumerism. The brashness and glamour offered by imported shows like *Dynasty* offered a window on a world where clothes and furnishing spoke louder than words about who one was and wanted to be. This way of looking played across an imaginative landscape already prepared by a fundamental shift in political and popular attitudes.

### **NEW DRIVE TOWARD MARKETIZATION**

The elections of Margaret Thatcher in the UK and Ronald Reagan in the US marked the beginning of a rapid movement toward a renewed reliance on entrepreneurship, markets, and competition as the key drivers of economic growth, and a corresponding rejection of public enterprise, public subsidy, and state management. It was a worldwide movement. Not only was there growing disillusion with welfare capitalism across Europe and an evaporation of trust in state-managed development in emerging economies, but the three major economies that for most of the postwar period had been partly or wholly uncoupled from the global capitalist system all embraced market-led solutions: the Soviet Union collapsed, China introduced a market form of economic organization, and India moved away from self-sufficiency.

The communications industries were central to this shift in three ways. The telecommunications and data-processing sectors provided the essential infrastructure that allowed business to operate across dispersed arenas of action in real time. The popular commercial media constituted the central spaces for product promotion and marketing. And, as core elements in the wider array of high-technology sectors, the creative and

information industries were assigned a central role in developing the next phase of advanced capitalism, based on trade in ideas and expressive forms rather than manufactured goods. This pivotal position made them prime targets for policies designed to enlarge the market sector and give companies maximum freedom of operations.

This drive towards marketization was pursued through a range of interventions deployed in varying combinations. Public communications assets were sold to private investors (→ Privatization of the Media). Markets that had previously been dominated by one or two suppliers were opened up to competition (liberalization). In Europe, the old state-run post, telegraph, and telephone monopolies were broken up and obliged to compete for customers with new entrants. Institutionally, regulatory regimes relaxed the previous rules governing acquisitions and ownership, permitting larger, more diversified media to emerge and allowing broadcasters to take more advertising in more flexible forms (such as product placement).

Ideologically, they moved from the defense of the public interest to the application of competition law and purchasers' rights, privileging audience entitlements as consumers rather than citizens (→ Audience Commodity). At the same time, media organizations that remained in the public sector were increasingly cajoled or pressured into behaving as though they were commercial corporations, a process known as corporatization. In China, the major state-owned broadcaster CCTV was required to support itself from advertising sales rather than state subsidy (→ China Central Television Channel 9 [CCTV-9]; China: Media System). In New Zealand, the public broadcaster was recreated as a state-owned enterprise, whose first duty was to generate profits that could be returned to the Treasury to top up the general pool of taxation. In the UK, the BBC was required to sell off its transmission network, commission a proportion of its programming from independent producers, urged to seek co-productions with commercial players in the US and other major markets, and encouraged to maximize the value of its assets by aggressively pursuing the merchandising opportunities offered by programs and selling program formats across as many markets as possible.

At the same time as established media sectors were being reconstructed around the principles of commercialization, however, new forms of communicative activity were developing on the → Internet. With the rapid expansion in computing power, the increasing speed and capacity of broadband networks, and the mobility offered by WiFi connectivity and the migration of the net to mobile phones, the struggle for the future of Internet services has become a major arena of contest between competing principles.

*Self-organized communities* played a central role in the Internet's development from the outset. Where commerce relies on prices or advertising subsidy and public goods are funded out of taxation, these grassroots initiatives are grounded in an ethos of reciprocity and collaborative creation. The first, and still in many ways the most impressive, example of this new gift economy in action is the *free software movement* that, though pooling expertise, has created a range of robust alternatives to the commercial software produced by Microsoft. This same basic principle has been successively applied to an ever-expanding range of uses. These include the wiki movement, which allows postings, such as the entries to Wikipedia, to be modified and added to by other participants, and the multiple recommendation sites, where users of hotels, airlines, and other facilities post their experiences and tips.

These developments are a double-edged sword for commercial enterprise. On the one hand, piracy and unauthorized postings are reducing revenues. On the other hand, users' loyalty and enthusiasm for peer-to-peer sites opens up new markets and promotional opportunities. The major media have been quick to capitalize on this, buying up sites, establishing a corporate presence in sites like Second Life, and pioneering novel forms of viral marketing. Public cultural institutions are also moving onto the Internet, using websites to extend their reach, make their resources and archives more readily available, and develop new participatory relations with audiences.

At present, then, we are witnessing both an intensification of commercialization and the extension of public goods and gift economies. The future of public communication will depend on eventual balance between these possibilities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ BBC ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ▶ China: Media System ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Modernity ▶ Modernization ▶ News ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Plurality ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Privatization of the Media ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Taste Culture ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Commodification of the Media

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All the goods and services used in everyday life possess intrinsic qualities that meet human wants, and even those that cater to basic needs, like hunger, may also satisfy a desire for beauty or a wish to communicate. Food is more enjoyable if made with love or artistically presented and served with style. These material and aesthetic qualities, as defined by social convention, constitute a good's value to its users: its use value. At the same time, in modern capitalist economies, goods also have a value in the marketplace: an exchange value. When a good is produced with the express aim of selling it at a price, it becomes a "commodity." In order to expand, capitalism required all goods to be converted into commodities. Analyzing this process of commodification and its impact on the diversity and availability of cultural goods is central to the account of media systems in industrialized, market-economy countries from the perspective of political economy (→ Political Economy of the Media).

## POLITICAL ECONOMY AND THE MEDIA

The professionally produced popular media that emerged in the nineteenth century had a *double relation to the commodity system*. All were commodities in their own right, sold for a price, but some, most notably the popular press and, later, commercial broadcasting, also provided the major spaces where other kinds of commodities were advertised and promoted. As a consequence, in the view of political economists, audiences themselves became a commodity to be traded between media organizations and advertisers, with the price being determined by the size and social composition of the readers and viewers (→ Audience Commodity). For Marxist analysts, commercial entrepreneurs were buying the work audiences devoted to paying attention to advertising in the same way as they bought their labor in the workplace.

Apart from firms making specialized or luxury items, companies paying for → advertising demanded the largest possible audience containing the highest proportion of consumers with command over spending. This requirement for *access to audience attention* had consequences for the range of diversity of media production. In a striking metaphor, the Canadian economist Dallas Smythe compares commercial broadcast programming to the "free" snacks put out by barmen in pubs and clubs. They needed to be tasty enough to be enjoyable in their own right but their main purpose was to encourage the clientele to stay and continue drinking. As numerous earlier commentators had pointed out, a system comprehensively geared to maximizing either direct sales or advertising revenues was likely to offer little scope for genuine creative originality. The contrast between "art" as an authentic expression of individual insight and inner conviction and industrialized creativity tailored to recycling already popular themes and formats was central to the critique of mass culture developed by many intellectual commentators, most notably the → critical theory developed by the Frankfurt Group.

Cultural commodification first happened in writing and book publishing. It was cross-cut by political considerations. In the nineteenth century public libraries opened in many countries. Where cultural commodities were only available at a price, these services were free. They were → public goods in three senses: they were paid for out of taxation; they were designed for collective use rather than personal possession; and they were seen to contribute to the quality of social life as well as to individual pleasure and self-development. What exactly constituted “common culture” and the “common good,” however, was fiercely contested (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Against a background of rising popular militancy and the extension of the franchise, many within the Establishment had two main ambitions for these initiatives: to encourage a sense of national unity based on a shared culture, and to provide the intellectual and imaginative resources that would support rational participation in the political process (→ Political Discourse; Public Sphere). The tensions between commodification and public intervention intensified with the arrival of broadcasting as a technology of mass distribution.

## BROADCASTING

There were some early experiments with providing subscription radio services over telephone connections, most notably in Budapest, but the broadcasting industry soon became centered around the air transmissions. Because signals were universally and freely available to anyone with suitable receiving equipment, broadcasting offered unrivalled opportunities both to extend commodification and to create a new kind of public cultural good.

The first option was pursued with vigor in the United States (→ United States of America: Media System); the second option was developed in its fullest form in the UK, where the → BBC was constituted as a public service and charged with defending national culture and providing resources for citizenship (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; United Kingdom: Media System). Variations on these basic templates were adopted around the world and were later carried over into the television era.

The legacy of the various political decisions taken on the financing and organization of cultural and communications services lasted until the 1970s, with most countries outside the communist bloc operating a *dual system*, with commercial enterprise dominating the publishing, music, and film industries (→ Film Production) and various public institutions, museums, galleries, libraries, and in many cases public broadcasters, offering an alternative network of production, distribution, and availability. Over the past two decades, however, this system has been progressively dismantled as governments around the world have pursued policies geared to expanding markets and promoting their operating values. This shift toward “marketization” has enabled a major extension of commodification (→ Commercialization of the Media).

Corporations have long wanted to extend their relation with programming beyond the confines of the 15- or 30-second spot advertisement. One early, and well used, device developed in the United States system was sponsorship. In return for a contribution to production costs, firms were allowed to integrate their company or brand name into the title of the program in the hope that the positive attitudes and feelings generated by the performers and content would transfer themselves to the company and its products. At

the same time, the film industry was experimenting with product placement deals inviting manufacturers to pay to have their brands featured in popular movies, and, where possible, used by the stars.

In many broadcasting systems, these forms of *integrated advertising* have been ruled inadmissible on the grounds that programming and promotion should be clearly demarcated and separated. As spot advertising has come to be seen as increasingly ineffectual, however, and the competition between brands has come to center on sign value, a commodity's ability to communicate the personality and lifestyle of its owner, so this separation has come under increasing pressure. As a consequence, even where formal rules forbidding product placement remain in place, they are persistently circumvented. The consequence is a contemporary broadcasting system in which product promotion has moved from the margins to the center, locking commercial services ever more securely into the commodity system.

### **IMPACT OF COMMERCIALIZATION ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS**

Nor have public cultural institutions been immune from this process. Persistent squeezes on tax funding have forced them to seek alternative sources of income. Some have had to introduce entry charges or to charge for services that were once provided free. Commercial sponsorship has become a necessity for → museums and galleries wishing to mount major exhibitions, and literary prizes increasingly feature corporate names.

But arguably the greatest impact has been on public broadcasters. The result has been an increasing reliance on co-production arrangements with commercial enterprises, a more aggressive stance toward selling finished programs and program formats overseas, and concerted efforts to maximize returns on program investment by marketing an expanding range of tie-in merchandise, from books and CDs to games and toys (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). In the process, the logic of commodification has come to influence not only creative decision-making but also the language through which the organization's goals are described and justified. Maximizing value has increasingly come to mean maximizing monetary returns rather than maximizing the intrinsic use value of programs.

### **OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY THE NEW MEDIA**

The → Internet offers public media and cultural institutions an unrivalled opportunity to revivify their public service remit, expand their reach, and forge new relations with their users and audiences. Digitization enables them to release themselves from the limitations of physical geography and make their archives and expertise universally available. The faculty of MIT have voted to make their lecture notes freely available on the Internet. The BBC is experimenting with a plan to open up its program archive, employing a creative commons rights arrangement that allows users to download material at no cost and to employ and adapt it for educational or creative activity, providing that they do not then sell the results of their reconstructions. These extensions of the principle of public goods provision are only one aspect of the Internet's potential to counter the onward march of



commodification. The other is the explosion of vernacular and amateur cultural production.

This had always co-existed with commercialized provision. The period 1860 to 1919 saw a boom in amateur singing and playing around the piano but the growth of the record industry and radio in the 1920s tipped the balance away from performance. Amateur playing revived with the guitar's emergence as the key rock, blues, and folk instrument, but unless they caught the eye of record company entrepreneurs, most performers achieved only local circulation. The Internet provides enlarged and potentially globalized spaces for the exchange of music and other areas of creativity, expertise, and experience outside of the price system (→ P2P Networking). Contributors to the online encyclopedia Wikipedia, or to the myriad popular recommendation and rating and video and photo posting sites, offer their material free of charge in the expectation that other users will contribute in turn.

These collaborative creations rooted in the *principle of reciprocity* offer a powerful alternative to the logic of commodification. In response, commercial companies are making strenuous efforts to co-opt the commitment underpinning peer-to-peer initiatives, buying up sites and mobilizing social online networks as sales forces. These extensions of commodification into new modes of communication have been accompanied by their entry into geographical areas from which they were previously excluded. The collapse of the Soviet Union and China's turn toward markets have opened up huge new arenas of operation.

For the first time, capitalism approximates to the global system foreseen by Marx. Whether the logic of commodification that underpins it will continue to determine the overall organization of the communications and media system will depend not only on the ambitions of the major corporations that currently dominate the cultural industries, but also on the strength of the countervailing principles of public goods, reciprocity, sharing, and collaborative production.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ BBC ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Film Production ▶ Internet ▶ Museum ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Public Sphere ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Commodity Feminism

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Commodity feminism refers to the way feminist ideas and icons are appropriated for commercial purposes, emptied of their political significance and offered back to the public in a commodified form – usually in advertising. The term pays homage to Marx’s notion of “commodity fetishism” and is often framed within contemporary Marxist and feminist terms.

The concept of commodity feminism is most commonly associated with the work of Robert Goldman, who elaborated it in detail in his 1992 book *Reading ads socially*. Writing in a US context, Goldman argued that advertising underwent a radical transformation in the late 1980s when it was forced to address three closely related challenges: sign fatigue – a condition in which viewers of advertisements were quite literally suffering from exhaustion and ennui on account of their daily bombardment by images in postmodern consumer culture; increasing viewer skepticism, particularly among a younger, media-savvy generation who had grown up with fast-paced MTV (and, after the mid-1990s, the Internet) and who were suspicious of any attempt to sell them anything; and finally women’s anger at being addressed constantly in terms of idealized images of feminine desirability (→ Advertising; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Women in the Media, Images of).

From the beginning of the second wave, feminists had identified *advertising* as one of the key sites for the production of sexist imagery. Throughout the subsequent decades women voiced their anger about being treated like objects to be visually consumed. By the end of the 1980s advertisers were beginning to recognize the significance of women’s hostility to being objectified and fed with unattainable, perfect images of femininity, and they started to rethink their advertising strategies. This was also prompted by women’s increasing financial independence, which meant that advertisers needed to address them in new ways: it is no good showing a woman lying on or draped over a car, for example, if the aim is to sell that car to women.

Goldman argued that advertisers’ response was to develop commodity feminism – an attempt to incorporate the cultural power and energy of feminism while simultaneously domesticating its critique of advertising and the media. An example of → postfeminism, it represents an aesthetically depoliticized version of a potentially oppositional feminism. It turns social goals into individual lifestyles, and has fetishized feminism into an iconography of things: a product, a look, a style. Just as femininity is portrayed through a narrow range of signifiers, so now is feminism conjured up through an increasingly predictable lexicon – shoulder pads, briefcase, location in an up-market work environment, etc. Advertisers assemble signs which connote independence, freedom, and bodily autonomy and link them to the purchase of commodities. In this way, feminist goals like independence and control over one’s body are emptied of their political significance and sold back to women as choices about what to consume. Far from being straightforwardly positive images, these newer representations invite women to become liberated and take control of their own lives by acts of individual consumption – rather than collective

struggle for social and political change. Feminism, signified in this manner, becomes just another style decision.

Commodity feminism can take many *different forms*. Pantene's (L'Oreal) advertising slogan "Don't hate me because I'm beautiful" is an example of a campaign that tries to appease women's anger at being addressed in terms of unattainable images of glamour (while still nevertheless using an image of an extraordinarily attractive woman). The global campaign for Dove products, organized around the company's apparent anger at the "narrow stifling stereotypes" of women's appearance, is a similar example – in this case backed up by the language of campaigning, and the establishment of a charity designed to promote "real beauty" and to tackle body image disorders among young women. The iconography of the Dove campaign and its use of "ordinary" women also link to the trend toward *photographic hyperrealism* and *neo-feminism* within contemporary advertising, which targets women's skepticism about the claims made in some adverts for their products, and promotes an unpretentious, authentic, "real" look.

A different strategy can be seen in the attempt to create a *détente between feminism and femininity*. Frequently this is achieved by presenting visual signifiers of female success, such as a business suit, a car, own home, with signifiers of conventional femininity, such as long hair, makeup, conventional attractiveness, so as to imply that there is no tension between being a successful and powerful woman who is taken seriously in the workplace, and being sexually attractive to men. The struggling subject of some feminist perspectives, then, is recast as a kind of superwoman – powerful, respected, successful, as well as effortlessly beautiful and desirable (and in some cases also a perfect mother). Other examples of commodity feminism include the shift from presenting women as passive sexual objects to presenting them as active, desiring sexual subjects; the use of gender "reversals" within adverts; and the increasing evidence of revenge themes in advertising (Gill 2006).

The notion of commodity feminism is an important corrective to views which see advertising as "becoming feminist" or simply "reflecting" feminist ideas. Advertising is involved in what Fredric Jameson in *Postmodernism, or the cultural logic of late capitalism* described as the "cannibalization" of ideas: it may wear a feminist mark today if that will help it to sell, but it may well wear a different mask tomorrow. Commodity feminism has clear links with "commodity racism," and with the packaging of alternative sexualities in a hypersexualized, ultra-glamorous, depoliticized "queer chic".

The notion also has strong resonances with the much older ideas of "incorporation" and "recuperation," which speak to the ability of mainstream political or commercial cultures to "take on" and absorb radical dissent – neutralizing its revolutionary or transformative potential, while appearing to be open to its significance and challenge. Such processes are well documented in political movements; commodity feminism might be understood as a specific example that relates particularly to advertising, marketing, and "promotional culture."

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Consumer Culture ► Femininity and Feminine Values ► Gender: Representation in the Media ► Postfeminism ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Sexism in the Media ► Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ► Women in the Media, Images of ► Women's Movement and the Media

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# **Communiology**

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An important and enduring question for communication science concerns why people interact in the ways they do. This issue has been simplistically framed as a “nature–nurture” question although the process is substantially more complex than can be captured by a dichotomous metric. Until the early 1970s, genetic inheritance played a central role in accounts of psychological development. Critics, however, argued that the correlations in the 0.50 region between identical twins’ personality scores indicated that no more than 25 percent of the variance in personality was attributable to genetic inheritance (→ Correlation Analysis; Regression Analysis).

This observation prompted a host of behavioral theories positing features of the social environment as the primary shapers of behavioral patterns and personality. Of these models, Bandura’s (1971) social learning theory emerged as most prominent (→ Observational Learning). According to → Bandura, people imitate (model) another’s behavior, depending on patterns of reinforcement and punishment vicariously witnessed in response to the model’s action. Whether an action pattern is repeated by the observer also depends on the reinforcement contingencies associated with the observer’s enactment of the model’s behavior. Beatty and associates have proposed that individual differences in communication behavior and responses to messages are manifestations of individual differences in inborn thresholds for activation of the neurobiological systems responsible for the particular response.

## **BACKGROUND**

In the late 1990s, Beatty and McCroskey began re-examining the relative roles of inheritance and social environment on the etiology of emotion-based communication traits such as → verbal aggressiveness (Beatty & McCroskey 1997) and → communication apprehension (Beatty et al. 1998). Beatty and McCroskey’s work was informed by the massive research literature that had accumulated under the rubrics of psychobiology, temperament, and cognitive-neuroscience (for references see Beatty et al. 1998, 2001b).

In spite of the general dominance of learning theory accounts of behavior and personality evolution, the role of genetic inheritance re-emerged in these literatures (→ Developmental Communication). Beatty and McCroskey took note of *two insights about the earlier criticisms of twins studies*. First, while it was true that the correlations were in the moderate range, it was also true that the reliability coefficients for the measures employed rarely exceeded the observed correlations by much. Given that the correlation between two variables cannot exceed the square root of the products of their reliabilities, it was possible that much of the unexplained variance in twins studies was due to measurement error rather than a substantive factor (→ Measurement Theory; Statistics, Explanatory). Second, when correlations between variables are spurious in nature (i.e., the variables are correlated because of a common latent factor), which is the case with correlations between twins' scores (i.e., personality scores are assumed to represent underlying genetic profiles, which are common to both twins), the correlation, not its square, represents the best estimate of shared variance (for explications, see Jensen 1971; Ozer 1985; D'Andrade & Dart 1990; Beatty 2002). Like many other researchers, Beatty and McCroskey viewed these psychometric oversights by critics as reason to question whether genetic explanations were prematurely abandoned. In addition, Beatty and McCroskey were heavily influenced by the temperament- and psychobiology-oriented theorists who posited several intervening variables between genetic inheritance and behavior. In such models, contemporary approaches depict genetic inheritance as having indirect rather than direct effects on behavior.

### TRAIT FOCUS

With respect to communicator traits, Beatty and McCroskey hypothesized that traits represented thresholds of activation of specific neurobiological systems. Because their initial work was limited to traits, which at the conceptual level contained a strong emotional component, Beatty and McCroskey anchored their work in Gray's (1991) neurobiological model of emotion. According to Gray, one set of neurological circuits – termed the *fight or flight system* (FFS) – consists of the basolateral and centromedial nuclei of the amygdala, the ventromedial nucleus of the hypothalamus, the central gray region of the midbrain, and the somatic and motor nuclei of the lower brainstem. Painful or frustrating input stimulates the system components, which combine to coordinate the brainstem effectors in producing defensive and aggressive behavior. Cessation of behavior results from stimulation of the *behavioral inhibition system* (BIS), which consists of the hippocampus, the subiculum, the septum, and the limbic system. The BIS is activated by novel stimuli and those associated with potential punishment or cessation of reward. The *behavioral activation system* (BAS) describes the neurobiological system that energizes goal-directed behavior. Anatomically, the BAS consists of the basal nuclei, the neocortical regions connected to it, the dopaminergic fibers that extend from the midbrain, and the thalamic nuclei. Although the anatomical regions and interconnections described by Gray are common across humans, there is considerable variance in the population regarding thresholds for triggering the systems and the intensity of response once activated. Gray referred to these individual differences as “parameter values” and argued, “the major dimensions of personality . . . are created by individual differences in such parameter

values” (Gray 1991, 23). By major dimensions of personality, Gray meant psychoticism, extraversion, and neuroticism. Strelau (1994) explicated the nature of the parameter values by pointing out that they may represent “sensitivity to neurons’ postsynaptic receptors or sensitivity in their synaptic transmission, the amount of neurotransmitter being released, or the reactivity of the neural structures (including receptors) to the different kinds of stimuli” (Strelau 1994, 135).

Zuckerman (1994) reviewed a huge body of research that demonstrated that biochemical signatures detected in the analysis of body fluids were accurate post-reaction indicators of particular neurobiological activity and that biochemical markers differentiated individuals along the dimensions of personality. Because the biochemical analyses supported Gray’s contention that the BIS, BAS, and FFS were the neurobiological underpinnings of neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), and psychoticism (P), Beatty and McCroskey viewed measures of N, E, and P as efficient proxy indices for the three emotional systems described by Gray. In their initial work, Beatty et al. (1998) reviewed literature that indicated that the neurobiological conditions for trait communication apprehension were a low threshold for BIS activation and a high threshold for BAS activation. Accordingly, they hypothesized that communication apprehension scores would be positively correlated with neuroticism but negatively correlated with extraversion. Both hypotheses were confirmed. Similarly, Valencic et al. (1998) found general support for a model of trait-like verbal aggressiveness using measures of E, N, and P.

### HERITABILITY OF COMMUNICATOR TRAITS

The scholarly dialogue concerning the origin and development of communicator traits centers around two predictor variables: social environment and genetic inheritance. With respect to environment, Beatty and McCroskey differentiate *physical influences* (e.g., chemicals) from *social features* (e.g., situations). Theoretical statements regarding “environment” are limited to *social features* in their work. Observation that malnutrition during childhood affects brain development, for example, is not inconsistent with Beatty and McCroskey’s position on trait development.

Although the substance of the etiological literature would seem to imply that traits are either due to genetic inheritance, social environment, or some combination of the two, such a view assumes only possible direct effects models. Beatty and McCroskey proposed an indirect effects model in which genetic inheritance is the principal (but not only) contributor to neurobiological operational parameters, which in turn are the primary (but not only) influences of traits. The variance in traits due to genetic inheritance, therefore, should be equal to the product of the coefficient between genetic inheritance and neurobiological set points and the coefficient between neurobiological set points and traits. Even if the strength of association were set at 0.80 for each path, the hypothesized percent of variation in traits attributable to genetic inheritance would be 0.64. Beatty et al. (1998) suggested that inherited components of emotion-based traits such as communication apprehension could be much higher, perhaps in the 0.80 vicinity. Other traits, however, could be far less influenced by genetic inheritance.

Support for the proposition that traits are strongly influenced by the indirect effects of genetic inheritance can be gleaned from studies of infants, biochemical studies, and twins

research (for references, see Beatty et al. 1998). Inheritance can be estimated from twins studies because identical twins (monozygotic) are genetically identical whereas fraternal twins (dizygotic) are no more genetically similar than non-twin siblings. Therefore, comparing correlations on variables for identical twin pairs to those of fraternal twin pairs provides a means for calculating genetic inheritance. Furthermore, partitioning twin pairs into raised-together and raised-apart cells allows analysis of common social environment effects. A massive number of studies, however, shows that the correlations are nearly identical for twin pairs raised together and those raised apart, a finding that generally holds for both identical and fraternal twins (for a review, see Zuckerman 1995).

In the communication literature, twins studies have provided interesting evidence that the biological underpinnings of many communicator traits are at least partially inherited (Horvath 1995; Beatty et al. 2001a). Beatty and colleagues (2002) meta-analyzed 40 twins studies that contained trait variables that had been cited in journal articles in communication and/or mainstream communication reference texts. This dataset provided a total sample size (i.e., *n* of twin pairs) of over 51,000. Conservative data analytic procedures were applied. Specifically, unless evidence of additive gene effects was absolute, non-additive effects were assumed; unless reliability coefficients were reported in a study, the highest reliability estimate reported in the literature for a measure was employed to correct for measurement error (this decision minimized corrections); and observer ratings, although imperfect, were not corrected for attenuation. The application of these analytic procedures addressed criticisms that allege that heritability factors have been inflated in twins studies. Although the conservative procedures employed by Beatty et al. (2002) would, if anything, yield underestimates of heritability, the results indicated that 70 percent of the variation in traits related to interpersonal affiliation (e.g., extraversion, friendliness, verbal expressiveness, gregariousness, empathy, perspective-taking) was due to inheritance, 65 percent of the variance in social anxiety traits was heritable, and 58 percent of the variance in aggressiveness was heritable. Furthermore, Beatty et al. applied Plomin's (1986) formulae for calculating variance attributable to shared and nonshared environment when analyzing twins data. The near-zero coefficients in the Beatty et al. data resulting from the application of Plomin's formulae were consistent with Zuckerman's (1994) observation about small effects of environment observed in the general twins literature.

### **PREDICTION OF BEHAVIOR**

Although the centerpiece of Beatty and McCroskey's work has been communicator traits, one of the major theoretical payoffs of a scientific model of communication is the accurate prediction of behavior. Theorists interested in human interaction became disenchanted with trait approaches, in part because syntheses of research appeared to indicate that correlations between traits and behaviors were quite low. Mischel (1968), for example, observed that the average correlation between traits and behavior was a meager 0.30. Beatty et al. (2001b), however, suggested that many of the problems that plagued twins research were also present in trait-behavior studies. Specifically, correcting the correlations for attenuation due to measurement error in trait measures, utilizing multiple traits to

predict behavior because particular behaviors are complex and represent influences from multiple dimensions of personality, and improving the measurement of behavioral variables would all produce larger trait–behavior correlations. Beatty (2002) added that the correlation coefficient, not its square, represents shared variation if behavior is conceptualized as a manifestation of traits.

Although considerable work is still needed, two studies conducted by Beatty and his colleagues are informative regarding the speculation of Beatty et al. (2001b) about trait–behavior relationships. Heisel et al. (2003) accounted for 55 percent of the variation in observer ratings of another’s affinity-seeking competence and 58 percent of the variation in another’s verbal aggressiveness using path analysis in which multiple indicators of personality (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism) were purified through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and employed as predictors, and observer ratings were also refined through CFA. La France et al. (2004) meta-analyzed the nonverbal behavioral correlates of extraversion studies and found negative relationships between effect size and both number of nonverbal behaviors coded and sample size, such that the largest correlations were observed in studies of a moderate number of participants and in which no more than three nonverbal behaviors were coded. La France et al. speculated that the near zero size effects for large sample, multiple variable studies were due to “coder fatigue.” Taken together, the results of these studies suggest that the prospects for accurate prediction of behavior are enhanced when complex rather than simple models are tested, and when fundamental psychometric practices are followed.

### **ROLE OF SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

The role ascribed to social environment in the communibiological paradigm is complex and perhaps the most often misinterpreted aspect of Beatty and McCroskey’s work. According to Beatty and McCroskey, social environment functions differently in shaping traits than in shaping specific behavioral reactions. As already discussed, social environment is portrayed as having very little, if any, impact on the development of traits and predispositions. With respect to behavioral action, Beatty and McCroskey have proposed that situations have a negligible direct effect. Attentiveness to the statistical meaning of “direct” is essential to understanding Beatty and McCroskey’s position. Drawing from a rather large body of research indicating that (1) individuals position themselves in circumstances that are compatible with their personalities, (2) manifestations of individuals’ temperaments contribute to situations, and (3) interpretations of situations are driven by personality (for references, see Beatty et al. 2001b, 39), Beatty and his colleagues treat situational variables as endogenous rather than exogenous variables in causal models. Thus, various selectivity processes combined with individuals contributing to the fabric of situations through their own behavior are critical aspects of immediate social environments. Beatty et al. (2001b) argue that inattentiveness to individual differences in temperament is responsible for the small effect sizes observed for situational factors in experimental research. In summary, Beatty and associates hold that the objective qualities of social environment have little impact on any dimension of communicative functioning. Rather, the communicator’s subjective reaction – which is driven by temperamental traits – is associated with behavior.



## CORTICAL FUNCTION AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES

Although Beatty and McCroskey have modified the basic propositions of communiology, a consistent tenet has been that theory regarding cognitive and affective processes involved in communicative functioning must be consistent with knowledge regarding brain functioning. One strategy evident in the most recent work of Beatty and associates has been to test hypotheses that are informed by cognitive neuroscience research. For example, brain wave recordings are consistent with cognitivist positions on social interactions (e.g., Beatty & Heisel, 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Paradigm ▶ Personality Development and Communication ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Verbal Aggressiveness

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## Communication as an Academic Field: Africa

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Present-day communication education in Africa has not been able to build on a rich tradition of a longstanding university system. Widespread university education in Africa is a postcolonial phenomenon, with North Africa and South Africa being the main exceptions. Like other academic disciplines, communication studies suffers much of this postcolonial legacy, be it the effect of the general education system, the role of universities in general, or the media and other communication systems, which have to struggle against oppressive state regimes and survive in a globalizing world (Bourgault 1995; Barratt & Berger 2007; → Globalization of the Media; Globalization Theories).

### ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

The general standard of communication as an academic field in Africa is disappointingly low when measured against western standards, but also when compared to peer-group

university departments in Latin America (e.g., Brazil) and in the east (e.g., Singapore). The rapid growth of the communication media industry in some African countries did not necessarily lead to an improvement in the teaching of communication and its applied fields. However, efforts in the 2000s were under way to radically structure and restructure African communication departments (→ Africa: Media Systems).

Communication education in Africa, like the modern mass communication system on the continent, is an import from western Europe and North America (Boafo & Wete 2002; → Journalism Education). The source of inspiration and supply of university staff, curricula, and textbooks is mostly western. Teachers are often western educated, curricula are drawn from western models, and most textbooks are authored and published in the west, especially in the USA. Consequently, communication education and training curricula in Africa are not geared to be culturally relevant, although cultural inculcation was usually the main justification for their introduction and sustainability.

Subjects offered in communication programs in Africa vary from one region to another. In eastern and southern Africa, the emphasis tends to be mainly on print and broadcast journalism, with marketing communication and public relations becoming more and more dominant. The curricula combine theoretical and practical courses – but only to a certain extent. Programs range from certificate level through BA degrees to doctoral programs, but the focus remains on the first few years of tertiary education.

A major shortcoming in communication is the shortage of available competent and experienced faculty. Poor working conditions, especially low salaries, often result in the loss of qualified faculty to the private sector or international organizations. Due to financial constraints, textbooks and library sources are insufficient in quantity and variety, partly because of prohibitive costs, exacerbated by low state subsidies to universities and extreme differences in exchange rates. Modern infrastructure in communication departments is the exception, rather than the rule.

## MAIN UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

*South Africa* presents arguably the best and strongest group of university communication programs in Africa. It has, in terms of the general African standard, a highly developed journalism communication system, with the Rhodes University school able to hold its own not only on the continent, but also further afield. Graduate programs at the University of the Witwatersrand and Stellenbosch University are complemented by communication and media/journalism programs at other universities (those of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Northwest, Free State, and South Africa) and universities of technology, such as Tshwane. The University of KwaZulu-Natal is internationally known for its M- and D-level programs and research in media studies. Communication programs are growing throughout the rest of southern Africa, with notable developments in Namibia and Zambia.

Journalism education and training in *eastern Africa* have commonly been a result of fragmented initiatives by western donor organizations, but there is a growing tendency to formalize programs in established colleges and universities. The merger of existing journalism programs, as has happened in Ethiopia and Tanzania, is a notable trend. While a major challenge for journalism in East Africa is fighting institutional and government corruption, as well as the regulation of journalism training, an acute challenge to both

schools and the media industry in the Horn of Africa is the insecure situation for media workers due to state actions against the media, and in some countries also against journalism schools – albeit in more subtle ways. The strongest programs in the region are found in Kenya (Nairobi), Uganda (Makerere), and Ethiopia (Addis Ababa).

The rapid growth of the media sector in *West Africa* since the late 1990s has fueled a major demand for trained media practitioners. This demand–supply pull has meant a remarkable expansion in the number of training institutions and programs in the region. However, questions remain unresolved with respect to the quality, as well as the rigor, of journalism and communication education and training in the region. Although there is sensitivity to improving the quality of journalism training in the region, little information is available publicly about how the training programs are organized, what they offer, the sequencing of curriculum and practical internships, graduation requirements, the numbers and profile of faculty, and information about accreditation standards or requirements. Some of the best departments are found in Nigeria (Ibadan) and Ghana (University of Ghana).

### SCHOLARSHIP AND RESEARCH

There are a limited number of *research books* on African communication studies (including works in the field of journalism, mass communication, and media studies). Most of these publications are concerned with the relationship between media development and political democratization, such as those of Nyamnjoh (2005), and more recently also those dealing with the role of communication in national development (→ Development Communication: Africa). One of the very few textbooks explicitly aimed at communication research in Africa is that of Boafa and George (1995).

A major disadvantage in communication research is the *lack of a paradigm* that could be called “home-grown” within the African context. Western theoretical perspectives, such as functionalism and → critical theory, have found a foothold in communication schools, where they often have a foreign ring to local theoretical expectations and aspirations (→ Functional Analysis). A glaring example is the *four theories of the press approach*, which sits uneasily in political systems where freedom of speech and the role of the media as a watchdog are not to be taken for granted (→ Communication Law and Policy: Africa). On the other hand, efforts to introduce indigenous theoretical dimensions, especially in the fields of development and → health communication, have yet to come to fruition as these approaches have often been dismissed as “inconsequential” (Ansu-Kyeremeh 2005; → Development Communication). Recently efforts have been made to introduce the traditional concept of *ubuntu* (an African form of communitarianism) into the curricula and research (→ Communication Modes, African).

It is thus a peculiar characteristic of African communication scholarship that an important section of the main body of communication research and publications has not been produced by Africans on the continent, but by either expatriates or researchers with African roots or research interests living and working elsewhere, especially in the USA, but also in Europe, and writing in English or in French. A case in point would be US-based African-American researchers such as Cecil Blake, Lyombe Eko, Festus Eribo, Sean Jacobs, Polly McLean, Andrew Moemeka, Charles Okigbo, Folu Ogundimo, Cornelius

Pratt, and Francis Wete. Non-African-American US authors, such as Louise Bourgault and William Hachten, have written groundbreaking monographs on the media in Africa. Even when African scholars do produce “indigenous” work, it is common to find many or the majority of co-authors in edited volumes and in journals not to be from Africa at all.

### COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA INSTITUTES

The Centre for Media and Cultural Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa (director: Keyan G. Tomaselli) is perhaps the only communication and media research center in Africa with a widely accepted international research reputation. The School for Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, South Africa (director: Guy Berger) is known throughout Africa as the foremost journalism training institute on the continent, especially in terms of its Highway Africa Program. In terms of infrastructure, facilities, and teaching staff, this school would be able to hold its own compared to typical journalism schools in, say, the US midwest.

The major center for social research (including communication studies) in Africa is the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (Codesria) based in Dakar, Senegal, with its head of publications, Francis B. Nyamnjoh, perhaps the foremost African communications scholar based in Africa. The Media Institute of Southern Africa in Namibia, and the Media Foundation for West Africa in Ghana are important research organizations tracing the role of the media in their regions, as well as doing training.

### RESEARCH JOURNALS AND PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

The continent does not boast an extended range of top-flight peer research journals. Three South African peer reviewed communication research journals that have been accepted into the international fold are *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies* (University of Wisconsin Press), *Critical Arts*, and *Communicatio* (both Routledge/Taylor & Francis). All three journals moved to international publishers in 2007, after having been published in South Africa since their inception in the 1980s. The only pan-African academic research journal of note is *Africa Media Review*, also founded in the 1980s. It is presently published by Codesria for the founding body, the *African Council for Communication Education* (ACCE).

Strongly supported by UNESCO and European NGOs, ACCE played a pivotal role in the 1980s and early 1990s to foster communication education, research, and publication under the leadership of Boafo and then Okigbo. Internal and regional strife, however, left the organization limping into the 2000s. In 2006 a new association, the Trans-African Council for Communication Education (Tracce), was founded on the basis of solidifying the discipline both in Africa and abroad. It strives to empower its members by encouraging and fostering good journalism and effective communication. The *African Forum of Editors* (Taef) is a pan-African association working toward the improvement of journalism.

According to Sawyerr (2000), important African university role players tend to agree that the present African situation is untenable, inasmuch as the conditions, policies, and practices of yesteryear cannot be replicated or restored. This is also applicable to the field of communication studies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline  
▶ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Critical  
Theory ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication: Africa  
▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Health  
Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalists: Professional  
Associations ▶ North Africa: Media Systems ▶ Rhetoric in Africa ▶ South Africa: Media  
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## **Communication as an Academic Field: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Rim**

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The communication discipline in Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, and Hong Kong is strong and diverse. Although regional research clearly emerged from a strong US and British tradition, it has matured. This maturity is evident not only in the region's contribution to evolving communication research, but also in identifying and analyzing significant trends as the region's rapidly developing economies and changing political circumstances impact on technology use and cultural mores.

### **HISTORY AND INSTITUTIONS**

In *Hong Kong*, communication studies began in 1965, when the Chinese University of Hong Kong developed a course in journalism. Since then, most universities have offered communication degrees, predominantly in → journalism, → public relations (PR) and → advertising, and film and → television, with most enrollments being in journalism, PR, and advertising (→ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia). In *Australia*,

communication courses emerged in the 1960s when speech training was developed into oral communication. In 1975, 12 journalism educators formed a journalism education association. Now, about three-quarters of Australia's 40 universities offer degrees in communication (some specializing in specialist areas such as → organizational and → health communication), PR, journalism, and → media.

In *New Zealand*, the first communication courses began in the late 1980s at what is now Auckland University of Technology, and Victoria University offered an MA. The first undergraduate degrees began at the University of Waikato in the 1990s. The Australian and New Zealand Communication Association, begun in 1980 as an Australian association, included New Zealand in 1994. Communication studies as a degree program began in *Singapore* in 1991 when the National University of Singapore established a Department of Mass Communication. In 1993, this department was transferred to Nanyang Technical University within the new School of Communication Studies. Nonetheless, NUS continues to offer courses in new media and public relations. Both NUS and NTU have strong research profiles. Singapore Management University and various other polytechnics now also offer corporate communication and PR programs (Kuo & Lee 2005).

The strongest sources of regional communication research are the Center for Communication Research at the City University of Hong Kong and the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre in Singapore. While Australia and New Zealand do not have centers of this significance, apart from the Institute of Creative Industries and Innovation at Queensland University of Technology, a considerable number of researchers have an international profile. Communication research in these two countries tends to be highly interdisciplinary with diverse theoretical sources. The US influence, although strong, is leavened by a strong British and European influence, so that critical, post-structuralist, and neo-Foucauldian research is relatively strong. Communication research in Hong Kong and Singapore has contributed significantly to a decentering of the Anglo-American bias, particularly with its comparative intra-Asian studies and analyses of the impact of media and ICTs within the momentously changing political and economic Asian landscape.

### ACADEMIC JOURNALS

Although Australasian and Pacific Rim researchers appear in the major international journals, there are also local journals. This analysis considers 11 local, refereed journals for the period 2004–2006. *Australian Journalism Review* and the *Australian Journal of Communication* contain most articles. The content of the 195 articles for all journals was then categorized according to the → International Communication Association's 21 divisions and interest groups; as each article could incorporate multiple divisions, there was a total of 301 division occurrences. Apart from these divisions, six other emerging issues became evident: media ownership/control (11 instances); globalization (9); rural and regional issues (3); creative industries (7); corporate social responsibility (6); and capitalist and economic discourses (2).

In the discipline-specific public relations journals, the *Asia-Pacific Public Relations Journal Prism* and *Asia Pacific Media Educator*, the emerging issue was corporate social

responsibility, media ownership/control, and creative industries. The articles in the other eight journals are spread across at least 9 divisions (i.e., interest groups and new emerging issues) up to a maximum of 17 in one journal, the *Australian Journal of Communication*. Other journals with a broad range of coverage across divisions are the *Journal of International Communication* which contains 28 articles spread across 16 divisions, *Media International Australia* with 26 articles across 13 divisions, and the *Asian Journal of Communication* which covered 9 divisions in 21 articles.

Of the eight journals with predominantly Australian and Asian-based editorial boards, the dominant issues are mass communication, → political communication, and → technology and communication. For example, mass communication and political communication dominated the *Asian Journal of Communication*. The *Australian Journal of Communication* published a large number of articles in the area of organizational communication in addition to articles relating to communication and technology, and *Continuum* displays an interest in the emerging issues of globalization and of mass communication. The content of the three journals with a stronger international focus is more eclectic. Most articles in *Media International Australia* (Australian and NZ board) are concerned with communications law and policy, while the *Journal of Asia Pacific Communication* (US and international board) is dominated by articles that deal with ethnicity and race in communication and language and social interaction. The *Journal of International Communication* (Australian and international board) has a relatively even spread of articles across divisions, with slightly greater numbers published in intercultural and → development communication and philosophy of communication. Future research trends may well be indicated by the emerging issues listed above.

## RESEARCH TRENDS

The nexus in the region between research and teaching as well as the academy and industry varies too much to simply categorize. Regional research in the eight areas below does reveal active and diverse research communities.

### Psychology-Oriented Research

Dominant in psychology-oriented communication research are → communication accommodation and → social identity theories. This is evident in the work of leading researcher Cindy Gallois in intergroup and health communication. Leading work in social identity theory has been provided by Deborah Terry and Michael Hogg, which has influenced organizational communication studies. Victor Callan's considerable research in corporate change communication has influenced, through collaborative research, more recent researchers (e.g., Paulsen et al. 2005).

A noteworthy trend is critical discursive psychology. Social psychologists Martha Augoustinos and Amanda Le Couteur, combining → discursive psychology, social constructionism, and feminist social theory, have analysed racist discourse in Australia. This critical perspective is also evident in the work of Iain Walker and Mark Rapley. Much discursive psychological research in gender and sexuality is conducted from a feminist social constructionist perspective. Ann Weatherall, who incorporates a social constructionist



approach, researches in communication technologies and sexuality education (Potts et al. 2004). Critical feminist scholars Virginia Braun and Nicola Gavey examine the relationship of bodies, sexuality and health, and their impact on public health policy and practice, as well as discourses of sexuality, including rape narratives (→ Language and Social Psychology; Psychology in Communication Processes).

### **Linguistic-Oriented Research**

Linguistic-oriented research output is considerable. Perhaps the strongest influence has been M. A. K. Halliday's systemic functional linguistics. Following in this tradition has been the substantial work of Jim Martin and Christian Matthiessen (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999). Although applied largely to literacy education, SFL has impacted on other communication research, including Gunther Kress, now based in the UK, and Theo van Leeuwen, who analyze visual text and multimodality. The work of linguist Michael Clyne has also been prominent, particularly in cross-cultural studies and bilingualism. Leading applied linguist Chris Candlin has contributed significantly in research on languages for specific purposes, and in intercultural, health, and legal communication (Candlin & Gotti 2004), using discourse, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic analysis. His editorial board membership on major journals, including the new *Journal of Applied Linguistics* ensures his continued influence. Anna Wierzbicka has been influential with her analysis of the relationship between language and culture (→ Linguistics; Language and Social Interaction).

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

The impetus for critical discourse analysis in Australia and New Zealand has been driven by critical educational theorists such as Allan Luke in the 1980s and 1990s. However, its application is now very diverse, particularly in organizational and management research. Cynthia Hardy, perhaps the most prolific critical discourse researcher (Grant et al. 2004), looks at organizational power and politics in organizations, identity, and strategic change. Phil Graham has an eclectic reach including the political economy of new media, discourse analysis, and the social changes wrought by the knowledge economy. His board membership of *New Media and Society* and *Discourse and Society* and co-founding of *Critical Discourse Studies* is indicative of the emerging international presence of antipodean critical theorists. Bronwyn Davies has provided leadership in narrative discourse and interdisciplinary research assessing the impact of neo-liberal management processes on intellectual work, youth, and labor market subjectivity, especially from a feminist perspective (Gannon & Davies 2006). Although not essentially a critical methodology, → ethnomethodology and → conversation analysis are now lifting their profiles, particularly in race, gender, and disability issues. For example, Alec McHoul and Mark Rapley's work has examined the interactional and rhetorical production of intellectually disabled people and of indigenous Australians. Richard Fitzgerald has applied conversation analysis to radio talkback and news (→ Critical Theory; Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches; Discourse Analysis; Language and Social Interaction; Political Economy of the Media; Rhetorical Studies).

## Organization Communication

Research in *organizational communication* is particularly strong in Australia and New Zealand. Indeed, Jones et al. (2004) provide a comprehensive set of challenges for future OC studies. Ted Zorn has influenced a wide range of communication areas including communication management, change, and PR. Much of his work is co-written with such people as Mary Simpson, Judy Motion, and Juliet Roper, extending his influence in multiple areas (→ Corporate and Organizational Identity). David Grant's discourse research has been primarily related to change (Putnam et al. 2005). Like Cynthia Hardy, he has significant international links, is published in journals such as *Academy of Management Review* and *Human Relations*, and recently co-edited the *Sage handbook of organizational discourse* (2004). Other researchers have taken OC into new directions. Rick Iedema conducts discourse analytical and ethnographic investigations into organizations and healthcare provision. In *Discourses of post-bureaucratic organization*, Iedema analyzes how people position themselves in changing organizational environments (→ Organizational Discourse). Prashant Bordia researches issues of organizational rumor and the impact of uncertainty in organizations. Colleen Mills applies Gioia and Weick's sense-making theories to discourse theory in studying change and intercultural issues. Feminist analyses have been provided by Deborah Jones and Janet Holmes, who are involved in the Language in the Workplace Project at Victoria University of Wellington. Jones draws on feminist and postcolonial theory to consider issues of communication and representation. Holmes adopts a critical sociolinguistic perspective to analyze the gendered role of language in the workplace (Holmes & Stubbe 2003). Little research is conducted on professional communication (e.g., English for specific purposes (ESP), or English for academic purposes (EAP)), apart from the work of Vijay Bhatia, who is also part of a larger project on legal discourse in multilingual and multicultural contexts directed from the City University of Hong Kong (→ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches).

## The Asian Context and Cross-Cultural Research

China's massive industrialization process and Asia's growing economic strength have provided an impetus to cross-cultural research, the impact of new media technologies, and Western cultural influences. For example, John Flowerdew analyzes the impact of globalization on Hong Kong by looking at how the city discursively constructs itself. Jian Hua Zhu considers the effect of the → Internet, in particular the implications of China becoming the second largest Internet-user market in the world. Chin-Chuan Lee, Director of the Center for Communication Research at City University of Hong Kong, is particularly interested in the social and political effects of a globalized media in China (C.-C. Lee 2003; → Globalization of the Media). Similarly, Joseph Man Chan of Chinese University of Hong Kong has extensively researched the impact of the Internet and globalized media on national identity (Chan & McIntyre 2002). John Erni's (Erni & Chua 2005) extensive work over 20 years has focused on queer and gendered subjects in Asia. The work of Lee Chun Wah on the cultural effects of advertising and Katherine Frith on depictions of Asian women in advertising provide useful leadership in more critical analysis of advertising in a local context.

Given the ethnic diversity of the region, cross-cultural research is a prominent research area. It has tended to be a distinctly critical, emancipatory, and democratic orientation as suggested by Simpson and Zorn (2004). James Liu has researched the impact of regional ethnic identities. Yoshi Kashima uses narrative in social psychology to consider cultural cognitions. Yunxia Zhu, extensively published in such journals as *Text* and *Discourse Studies*, and Bertha Du-Babcock consider the effect of different cultures in business contexts. This area of research importantly moves intercultural studies to consider intra-Asian relations.

### **Knowledge Economy, New Media, and Creative Industries**

Communication is now intricately linked to knowledge economy and knowledge management theory. David Rooney and Greg Hearn have contributed strongly in this area, particularly raising questions about the nature of knowledge. The related area of creative industries is strongly influenced by Queensland University of Technology's Creative Industries Faculty led by John Hartley and Stuart Cunningham. Its emerging researchers such as Terry Flew focus on multimodalities of communication and the impact of such industries on postindustrial economies. In other domains, researchers such as Virginia Nightingale research the impact of new media technologies.

Much Singaporean communication scholarship has been concerned with media effects, the social and legal impact of the Internet, news reporting, and cultural aspects of advertising and PR. Vivian Chen discusses the impact of popular culture on national cultures and how technology changes communication behaviors, while Stella Chia considers media effects particularly on adolescents' risky behaviors. Internet research includes the effect of globalization on cultural identity. Brenda Chan, Alfred Choi, and Lee Chun Wah study youth use of the Internet. Marko Skoric's research analyzes the social and political impact of new communication technologies. Outside Singapore, there is considerable analysis by such researchers as John Sinclair and A. O. Thomas on the cultural impact of globalized media.

### **Journalism and Media Studies**

Characterizing regional journalism and media research is difficult because no single area dominates and because some research tends towards → cultural studies, which is outside the scope of this entry. Australian and New Zealand research, while looking at general issues such as the nature of contemporary journalism, or investigative journalism and ethics, covers a wide range of other issues. Local and regional politics catalyzed research into reporting of asylum seekers, terrorism, and the Iraq war. The legal aspects of journalism such as FOI and defamation is another active area. Cross-disciplinary research, such as media portrayals of mental illness conducted by Warwick Blood and others, is strong.

Singaporean and Hong Kong research tends to show more interest in the democratic function of the media in the changing political landscape and also in Internet journalism. Peng Hwa Ang researches copyright, self-regulation, and free speech issues of media law and policy related to the Internet. Typical of the extensive research on news reporting in an Asian context is Cherian George, who looks at how Internet journalism opposes state influence on media in the region. Xiaoge Xu identifies the idea of Asian values in journalism,

demystifies its movement, and makes recommendations on how to further journalism theory development in Asia. Politically oriented research, primarily from Hong Kong, is diverse. It ranges from analyses of South Korean and Taiwanese presidential debates to the Chinese and Vietnamese governments' response to SARS, China's political (in)tolerance, and Hong Kong's incorporation. However, Lee and Chan (2004) point out that Western research can tend to categorize Hong Kong research as "regional studies" thereby diminishing their theoretical contributions, whereas they have contributed not only to such hypotheses as spiral of silence, but also to analysis of phenomena such as Internet and politics.

### Public Relations

Public relations research, although often criticized for being underresearched, is well covered regionally. In fact, Botan and Hazleton's *Public relations theory II* (2006) identifies Australia and New Zealand as leading PR research centres. Outside Singapore, David McKie and Debashish Munshi's (2004) article and their forthcoming book, *Reconfiguring public relations: Ecology, equity, and enterprise*, are contributing strongly to the theory debate. Methodological issues have been raised by cross-cultural theorist Niranjala Weerakkody.

Another prominent research center is Singapore, where Krishnamurthy Sriramesh, in particular, is influential. He is widely published and, through his editorial board membership of such journals as the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, has contributed to studies of public relations in an Asian context. His 2002 critique asserts that the PR body of knowledge is extremely ethnocentric and that PR practice and pedagogy must incorporate more diversity. His two books, *The global public relations handbook: Theory, research, and practice* and *Public relations in Asia: An anthology*, have attempted to remedy this ethnocentricity.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Development Communication ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Health Communication ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Linguistics ▶ Media ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television

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## **Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia**

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The community of East Asian communication researchers has been growing rapidly in recent years, which shows that communication studies in East Asia has reached a certain

level of maturity (Miike & Chen 2006). In the United States the academic study of communication began after World War I. In East Asian culture, however, the academic study of communication has been a relatively recent phenomenon. Focusing on three East Asian countries (Greater China, South Korea, and Japan), we shall review major research and educational trends in the field of communication.

## OVERVIEW

Any attempt to generalize about conditions and patterns in the region immediately comes up against vast differences and anomalies that arise from the diverse cultures, languages, religions, and traditions. While differences exist between nations in East Asia, their similarities, due to the influence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, are not surprising. According to Chen and Starosta (2003), similarities between the nations of East Asia can be viewed from different *paradigmatic perspectives*: (1) ontologically, a holistic view of communication or the universe is evident; (2) epistemologically, the holistic view of communication or the universe is conceived of in the relational connection of all things. There are some other similarities in these East Asian countries. Communications curricula in Asian universities have been greatly influenced by western, notably American, communication theories. One consequence of this is the uncritical acceptance of western models and theories.

We shall review trends in communication research and education in East Asia, describing some of the major developments. In examining the culture-specific development of communication studies in East Asia (focusing on Greater China, South Korea, and Japan), we shall focus our analysis on four aspects: (1) the development of communication research and education trends, (2) communication associations and scholarly journals, (3) academic programs in communication, and (4) communication-related professions.

## CHINA

Although the study of communication in Chinese societies started in the early 1950s, it was confined to Hong Kong and Taiwan. In the People's Republic of China (PRC), political ideology hindered the development of the discipline for almost 30 years. It was not until the coming of an open policy in the early 1980s that the PRC began to join the outside world through academic exchanges. Since then communication studies as a discipline has developed rapidly, following the enormous growth of the economy in the PRC.

Before 1990, the study of communication in Greater China was dominated by *mass communication*, which reflects the overemphasis on practical skills and job orientation. In addition, most theories and methods of communication studies were transplanted from the west without critical questioning. In the discipline of communication, most instructors in Chinese societies are trained in the west, curricula are designed following the western model, textbooks are either written by western scholars or translated from their work, and communication theories lack Chinese cultural components (Chen 2002).

Only recently have different areas of communication studies, such as interpersonal, intercultural, and → organizational communication (→ Interpersonal Communication; Intercultural and Intergroup Communication), received more attention from Chinese

scholars. At the same time, the localization of communication studies, i.e., examining the concept of communication from the perspective of Chinese culture, or studying so-called “Chinese communication,” is also increasingly pursued by Chinese scholars facing the impact of globalization (Chen 2002; Leung et al. 2006).

Four influential *communication associations* are leading communication research and education in Greater China: the Chinese Association of Communication (CAC) in the PRC, the Chinese Communication Society (CCS) in Taiwan, and the Association for Chinese Communication Studies (ACCS) and Chinese Communication Association (CCA) overseas. In addition to the *Chinese Journal of Communication Research* sponsored by the CCS, two well-established journals are *Mass Communication Research* in Taiwan, and *China Media Report* in Hong Kong and the PRC. *China Media Research* from the US, and the *Chinese Journal of Communication and Society* in Hong Kong, are two recent scholarly communication journals that are having an impact on communication research in Greater China.

Although → journalism dominated in the early stages, communication education has developed a stable base in Hong Kong and Taiwan since the early 1980s. Mass communication remains the main focus, but courses on other branches of communication, including interpersonal, organizational, rhetorical, and intercultural communication, are also offered. The Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Baptist University are the three key players in communication education in Hong Kong (Leung et al. 2006). In Taiwan, most universities have communication education programs.

A more systematic introduction of the discipline of communication took place in the mid-1990s in the PRC. However, due to its vast geographic area and the differing needs of each college, it is very difficult to draw a complete picture of academic programs in communication. More and more universities have begun to establish communication programs, but a problem of imbalance in terms of the content of communication teaching continues to exist. In addition to this, the problems of westernization, overemphasis on skill training, and lack of collaboration among universities are challenging contemporary communication education in the three areas of Greater China (Chen 2002). The tradition of freedom of expression in Hong Kong, the lifting of martial law in the late 1980s in Taiwan, and the open door policy in the PRC have led to a rapid development of the communication-related job market in Greater China, especially in the areas of → advertising, graphic and → visual communication, media production, and → public relations (→ Media Production and Content). It appears that the communication-related professions will continue to flourish due to the impact of globalization.

## SOUTH KOREA

It was not until the mid-1970s that the academic community in South Korea developed an interest in the study and teaching of communication. By the late 1970s, the field had grown from being a subject of topical interest to a recognized “independent” field of study (Kang 1991). The first development was the rapid establishment of regular four-year courses in journalism/mass communication in no fewer than 20 universities (Kang 1991). The rush was sustained through the 1980s and 1990s, and now there are no fewer than 60 universities or colleges with departments in journalism, mass communication, and/or

advertising and PR. From the late 1970s, professorships were taken up by those with doctorates from North American universities, and most research conducted in the field has followed in the footsteps of North American and European countries.

South Korea has one of the most developed *journalism and communication education systems* of any Asian country. Very rapid progress was made in communication and → journalism education at the universities and colleges, almost all of which now have journalism/communication departments (Heuvel & Dennis 1994). One reason for the rapid development may have been simply to keep up with the rapid development of the mass media. Since the beginning of journalism education in South Korea in 1954, this academic discipline has become increasingly popular.

Because of the long tradition and prestigious past of the South Korean press, education in the field of communication has been by and large identified with newspaper journalism (Kang 1991). Most of the mass communication departments at universities were called departments of journalism. The emphasis on newspaper journalism was reflected in curricula. Most communication courses used to be mainly about print media, with a literary tradition (Kang 1991). In recent years, however, US-educated returnees specializing in interpersonal communication and public relations have streamed into the universities and research institutes, thus counterbalancing the dominance of journalism and mass media-centered education. Many universities no longer consider “journalism” to be an adequate description, and have extended their department names to include communication, public relations, telecommunications, or newspaper and broadcasting.

Communication research and education in South Korea is led by several influential *communication associations*, including the Korean Society for Journalism and Communication (KSJC), Korea Communication Association (KCA), Korean Speech Communication Association (KSCA), and the Korean Association for Broadcasting and Telecommunication Studies (KABS), as well as the Korean American Communication Association (KACA) overseas. In recent years, several more professional communication associations have been established, including the Cybercommunication Academic Society (CAS) and the Korean Association for Advertising and Public Relations (KAAP).

The number of departments, schools, faculties, and students interested in communication has grown rapidly. So have the journals devoted exclusively to communication-related subjects, such as the *Journal of Journalism Studies* published by Un-Ron-Hak-Bo (Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies), the *Journal of Broadcasting Research* (*Bang-song-hak-bo*) published by the KABS (Korean Association for Broadcasting and Telecommunications Studies), and the *Journal of Advertising Research* (*Kwang-Go-Yeon-Ku*) published by the Korea Broadcasting Advertising Corporation. The Journalists' Association of Korea launched the *East Asia Journalists Forum* in October 2003 to strengthen the links between journalists in the Asia-Pacific region.

## JAPAN

Communication as an academic field in Japan has faced many challenges. The foundation of modern communication research and education can be traced to the Meiji restoration period in the 1860s. After 265 years of the Tokugawa shogunate's policy of seclusion during the Edo period, Japan was flooded with innovative technology and new ideas



imported from the western world. Among them was western rhetoric, which prominent scholars such as Fukuzawa Yukichi attempted to adopt and spread in order to educate the Japanese public to become competent as both speakers and audience in the coming democratic society. Such attempts, however, were not readily accepted in Japan, as western rhetoric was vastly different from traditional values and the Japanese ontological and epistemological orientation towards communication. While the absence of western rhetoric in Japan has been cited as evidence of the Japanese people's lack of persuasive skills, such criticism has stimulated contemporary scholars to initiate studies to identify the characteristics of Japanese communication (→ Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan). They argue that the Japanese have acquired and effectively utilized communication skills based upon their own traditions (Ishii 1993); they stress that the Japanese had their own rhetoric, though it was not called "rhetoric." The relatively new field of communication, however, has yet to establish its own identity and territory distinct from, although collaborating with, related subjects such as psychology and sociology.

Although Japanese journalism education at university level started in the 1930s, it did not play any significant role in the actual practices of Japanese journalists before World War II. After the war, Japanese *journalism education* imitated the US system. Many academic programs in communication studies in Japan focus on the practical aspects, i.e., acquisition of communication skills, particularly in English. While these programs have presented, and most likely will continue to offer, popular communication curriculums, the field of communication as a discipline has been slowly but firmly established in recent years. These communication programs possess interdisciplinary features, drawing upon and collaborating with other social sciences and liberal arts such as journalism, linguistics, literature, psychology, and sociology. Their main emphases can be roughly categorized into four areas: international relations, human relations, journalism, and → information processing (Ito 2006). The overemphasis on the practical aspects of communication has been criticized as a reason for the weakness of communication as a scholarly field, evidenced by the paucity of profound and sophisticated discussion of the philosophical issues, the absence of established methodologies, and the consequent lack of clear identity of the field (see, e.g., Ikeda 2006).

Despite its different culture and history, Japan's communication research is also under strong influence from the United States and Europe. Ishii (1998) has commented: "For decades, Japanese communication scholars have been willing to import and apply Euro-America-centered research paradigms not only in the natural sciences but also in the social sciences and humanities. They have been doing so without trying to develop their own non-Western frames of research" (p. 109). Today, Japanese researchers are expected to develop new research paradigms and perspectives based on their own Japanese cultural background, and to contribute these to the international academic arena.

Several professional communication associations have played active roles in generating and incorporating research interests and identifying specific needs and methods in communication education. The Communication Association of Japan (CAJ), originally founded as the Communication Association of the Pacific in the early 1970s, has helped develop ties between communication researchers and educators in Japan. *Human Communication Studies* and *Speech Communication Education* are the professional journals published by the CAJ.

The Japan Communication Researchers' Conference has held annual meetings since 1988. Other small-scale university-led communication research groups include the Intercultural Communication Group at Kanda Foreign Language Institute, publisher of *Intercultural Communication Studies*; the Institute for Communication Research at Keio University, publisher of the *Keio Communication Review*; the Rikkyo Intercultural Communication Society at Rikkyo University; and the Society of Language, Communication, and Culture at Kansei Gakuin University. A few other organizations have also helped establish and maintain the academic discipline of communication: the Japanese Association for Studies in English Communication; the Japan Association for Communication, Information, and Society; and SIETAR (Society of Intercultural Education, Training and Research) Japan.

### GENERAL TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

To summarize, these East Asian countries tended to follow the American communication training and research model. They began by setting up journalism departments at universities, later expanding them to include broadcasting, public relations, interpersonal communication, and advertising. With the growing importance of information and communication technologies (ICTs), training in new media has also been developed in communication curricula since the 1990s. In research, the American positivist-quantitative model dominated until the 1980s. In the late 1980s, the influence of critical and interpretive paradigms, prominent in the UK and continental Europe, began to spread around the world. Communication programs in East Asian countries have all followed similar paths of development (Leung et al. 2006).

As more scholars from Asia have entered the field of communication, there has been increasing dissatisfaction with the use of North American models of communication to explain communication processes in Asia, and even some aspects of communication processes in North America. Recently, questions have been raised about the use of communication theories based on western models to generalize about other countries, including East Asian countries (Kim 2002; Kincaid 1987). According to Chen (2002), this issue relates to the balance between globalization and localization. That is, communication study, both education and research, needs to be grounded in the soil of its own culture, while being projected to the global context. Globalization and multiculturalism will alter the communication landscape of the future.

Although it is true that communication research in East Asian countries has been largely based on the American model, several distinctive approaches can be identified. As a critical mass of researchers has formed in most Asian countries, collaboration among regional researchers is growing. The Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), and its journal, the *Asian Journal of Communication*, are exemplars of such collective efforts.

Furthermore, the search for communication theories and concepts unique to each of these societies and cultures has begun. In 1987, a book edited by Kincaid, *Communication theory: Eastern and western perspectives*, led the way toward theoretical approaches to communication that are compatible with the political and cultural realities of Asia. Dissanayake's book (1988) represented another collective effort to introduce Asian philosophies into the building of Asian communication theories. Since then, there have been

new and exciting approaches which differentiate clearly between communication as it is practiced in the “east” and in the “west,” especially in the United States.

Since the 1980s, a few cross-national studies have been published on communication within East Asia, comparing, for example, China and South Korea, or Japan and South Korea (Miyahara & Kim 1994). This is an important research trend, because it provides a close examination of cultural variability within East Asia – a region that, in the 1980s, was often treated in the literature as homogeneous.

Instead of attempting to construct theories that are distinctly Asian, today there is a call for efforts to *broaden the existing western theoretical framework*. Wang and Shen (2000) claimed that for an Asian researcher to fail to recognize, and take advantage of, their rich cultural heritage was to throw away their most valuable asset in making a significant contribution to the study of communication. However, at a time when one’s counterparts in the western world are making an effort to broaden their perspectives, limiting oneself to just Asia is not only counterproductive, but also draws away further from the goal of formulating a universal theory. If communication theory-building is to be successful, the relevant aspects of all human histories, experiences, philosophies, cultural traditions, and values should be given due consideration. Further exploration into East Asian traditions will provide rich insights for theory development, and may contribute to theoretical and methodological breakthroughs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ China: Media System ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Rim ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Information Processing ▶ Japan: Media System ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ South Korea: Media System ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan ▶ Visual Communication

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## **Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia**

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Media communication, mass communication, political communication, and other aspects of social communication represent a dynamic academic field in contemporary central and eastern Europe and Russia. In particular, communication on the societal level, which was the subject of the most visible and remarkable changes during the 1990s (reintroduction of “free” media and deep structural change of the media system, establishment of media and advertising markets, consequences of the commercialization of media), as well as some traces of older tradition and huge inspiration from western Europe and the USA, led to the establishment of communication and media studies as a new field of academic interest in many universities in the region. Some development can be found in studies of interpersonal and organizational communication, too, but those areas are traditionally covered by established fields, in which they have largely remained.

Various processes of social communication, including media and related issues (especially → journalism), have attracted the attention of various disciplines, but communication did not become a self-sustaining field of academic research and university education in most of the central and eastern European countries (including the former Soviet Union)

before the beginning of the 1990s. This does not mean that some topics understood as part of communication research and education nowadays did not appear in the region before, but no synthesizing theoretical approach looking for links between communication, media, society, and individuals was developed. The only exception was the “theory of journalism,” which developed in the post-war period as a theoretical and methodological framework for the role of media and journalism in “Soviet-type” societies.

The development of communication as an academic field in eastern Europe and Russia can be characterized by a set of distinctive features, among which the following are the most important: inspiration coming from western Europe and the USA, the fragmentation of “communication as a topic” into a variety of fields, the development of “theory of journalism,” and the focus on media and media communication after 1989 (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

### WESTERN AND OVERSEAS INSPIRATIONS

Before World War II, the development of the field was – at least in some countries of the region (for example, in former Czechoslovakia) – closely connected with developments in the rest of Europe. Some evidence of the influence of German “press science” (*Zeitungswissenschaft*) can be found before World War II (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe). There was an attempt to establish a new field of applied media sociology called *novinověda* (a literal translation of the German expression *Zeitungswissenschaft*) organized by a circle of sociologists, political and economic scientists, and journalists in the late 1920s and early 1930s. The work of Jan Amos Comenius (Komenský), a protestant Moravian educator and churchman of the early seventeenth century, was claimed to be the root of the tradition of modern thinking about media. In the inter-war period, there was a clear distinction between developments in central Europe and those in the Soviet Union, with its focus upon the role of journalism as a fundamental tool of → propaganda. Many “institutes of journalism” were founded and some university departments of journalism were established during the 1920s and 1930s, with the university in former Leningrad as one of the most important ones. The journal *Žurnalist* (“The journalist”), became representative of the whole field.

For many years after World War II, central and eastern Europe was under a strong and enforced influence of the Soviet Union, and links with the rest of Europe were weakened remarkably. Because of officially negative attitudes toward sociology and, to some extent, psychology, the field of communication was underdeveloped. Only in the late 1960s did some attempts to follow the changes taking place in western Europe appear, but these were weakened in the 1970s and 1990s. The situation has changed since the fall of the bipolar world in the early 1990s.

### COMMUNICATION AS A TOPIC IN VARIOUS ACADEMIC FIELDS

Within many academic fields, various communication processes and activities were studied before and after World War II but were never linked into one coherent academic field. There was a clear divide between interpersonal communication as an academic field on one hand and mass (media) communication as an academic field on the other. Both spheres

of communication were studied by a variety of disciplines; however, the focus upon media communication and its role in society is quite clear. Among others, the following academic fields seem to be the most important sources for developing the communication field in the region.

*Historiography*, and its tradition of studying media and journalism history, was predominantly inspired by inter-war German and French traditions (e.g., N. Lenin and G. Zinovjev from the USSR, S. Jarkowski from Poland, N. B. Andreeff from Bulgaria, K. Hoch from Czechoslovakia). Journalism history developed after World War II as a part of the theory of journalism (→ Journalism, History of). Thanks to that, the history of journalism grew continuously and became one of the strongest disciplines of the restructured and newly established media and communication field of study in the 1990s (J. I. Gerasimova, USSR; M. Beránková, Czechoslovakia; M. Ivanov, Bulgaria).

*Sociology*, which was developing especially in the inter-war period (including Weberian sociology and the *Zeitungswissenschaft* tradition), and then during the 1960s, particularly in Poland, offered a possibility to analyze the relations between media, culture, and society even in the context of Soviet-type regimes (Kłoskowska 1964).

*Linguistics* and the tradition of analyzing the role of language in communication processes were vivid, especially in the Prague Linguistic Circle (with Jakobson as one of the leading figures), with their “functionalistic” approach to language (the idea of a specific “journalistic language” was published in the late 1920s; → Linguistics). The linguistic approach to media and communication continued in the post-war period, since the “Marxist linguistics” followed the main ideas of the functionalistic tradition. Most of the research on interpersonal, as well as institutional, communication took place within linguistics.

*Literary theory* and → *semiotics* contributed to understanding the processes of communication, starting with the tradition of Russian formalism and Šklovskij’s study of narrativity down to Soviet semiotics. Especially Soviet semiotics, with Jurij Lotman as a leading figure and two centers – Moscow (Russia) and Tartu (Estonia, former USSR) – developed communication studies as a part of a more general interest in film, music, and painting.

## THEORY OF JOURNALISM AND THE SOVIET ERA

The role of media and the relations between media, political power, and society were in a sense central themes of Soviet-type societies. The highly centralized political and economic powers were dependent upon “manufacturing consent” within society by means of an effectively working propaganda system with mass media as the principal tool. The theoretical approach to media and their (desirable) role in society was under the strong influence of a Soviet “Marxist–Leninist theory of journalism,” which was focused upon measuring and improving the effectiveness and ideological control of media influence. The use of the word “journalism” refers both to the importance of journalistic work as a part of propaganda as well as to the fact that the officials were trying to avoid the terms “mass media” and “media” because of their connotations of a “western” sociology of media (→ Medium Theory).

The “theory of journalism” was developed not only in the Soviet Union (S. M. Gurevič, E. P. Prochorov, N. G. Černyševskij, among other) but also in other countries of the Soviet bloc (S. B. Stančev in Bulgaria, V. Hudec in Czechoslovakia, and others). The theory of journalism was sometimes understood as one of two parts of a more general “press

science” (*gazetoznaniye* in Russian; *prasoznawstwo* in Polish; German and Czech expressions mentioned above), with “history of journalism” as the other one. Being the fundamental theoretical framework for studying not only journalism itself but mass media (the “means of mass information and propaganda”) as a whole, theory of journalism was developed on two levels – the “general theory of journalism” and the “specific theory of journalism.” The former was focused upon the main common features that can be identified in any type of journalism and structured according to the main aspects of journalistic production (creativity, editorial work, analyses of final journalistic outputs, etc.); the latter studied specific features of journalism in different types of media (press journalism, radio journalism, television journalism, even film journalism). The dialectic and historical materialism, as defined by Marxism–Leninism, was understood as a general methodological frame of the theory, explicitly mentioning the ideas of V. I. Lenin on the role of the press.

“Press science,” covering history of journalism and theory of journalism, became a main subject and methodological and theoretical background for curricula of schools of journalism and for research institutes, which were founded in all countries of the former Soviet bloc. In each country, at least one academic journal focused upon journalism and media was published (e.g., Polish *Zeszyty Prasoznawcze* [Journal of Press Science], with the remarkable personality of Walery Pisarek, professor of Jagellonian University in Krakow; Soviet *Věstník MGU – Žurnalistika* [Review of Moscow State University – Journalism]; *Otázky žurnalistiky* [Questions of Journalism] in Czechoslovakia). The Soviet-type nondemocratic regimes were focused upon ways of improving the dissemination of ideology within the whole society and on effectiveness and control of the media as the main tool of this task. Therefore, surveys of public opinion were organized, too, and can be understood as a part of the pre-1989 milieu of media and communication research (e.g., the Mass Communication Research Centre in Budapest in the 1970s and 1980s).

However strong was the tendency toward unifying the field in the whole Soviet bloc, some differences can be found when comparing country to country. In Poland, as well as in some parts of former Yugoslavia (Slovenia), the strong tradition of Polish sociological thinking led to the development of a more sociological approach (e.g., Goban-Klas 1978). In former Czechoslovakia, the tradition of historiography led to the development of journalism history and the linguistic tradition in the study of “journalistic language.”

Part of the theoretical and historical approach to journalism was also a study of media and journalism in western Europe and the USA. This study, generally labeled as “criticism of bourgeois media and journalism,” represented the strongest link with media and communication in the west, and some of the academics established in this field became leading figures in restructuring the whole discipline in the 1990s (e.g., Y. N. Zassoursky, professor of Moscow State University, in the Soviet Union and later in Russia).

### **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES AFTER 1989**

After the Cold War period and collapse of the bipolar world, the concept of the free press was (re)introduced in the countries of central and eastern Europe (and with some limitation in the former Soviet Union and then in Russia), and the media system in each country was transformed. The fundamental changes and quick and massive development of mass communication, as well as the inspiration coming from western countries, led to

increasing interest in studying media and communication. The pre-1989 theoretical and methodological framework of Marxist–Leninist theory and history of journalism was abandoned and journalistic education was transformed. New schools and departments of media studies, media and communication, mass communication, etc. have been established.

There is a *plurality of normative and theoretical approaches*, mostly based upon the interests and training of people who established media and communication studies as an academic field. In some countries (Hungary, Poland, former Czechoslovakia, and contemporary Czech Republic), a clear distinction has been created between journalism on one hand and (mass) media communication studies and research on the other. Journalism as a part of higher education was transformed into a vocational (skill oriented) training field in many schools, with media and communication study as its academic background. Departments of media studies were established, and not only do research but also develop their own curricula of media studies and produce their own graduates as media and communication experts. New media journals have appeared in many countries.

In other countries (some schools in Slovakia, Russia, etc.), journalism remains an academic field but its content and theoretical framework have changed fundamentally and shifted toward media and mass communication studies, also introducing the concepts of media literacy and media education for the general public as topics of general education.

The interest in → interpersonal communication and → speech communication has remained nonintegrated and is still mostly connected either with linguistics (especially with studying national languages of nations and states in the region) or with psychology (mostly as an applied or practical set of skills).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Balkan States: Media Systems ▶ Baltic States: Media Systems ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Communication Research and Politics ▶ Czech Republic: Media System ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Linguistics ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Poland: Media System ▶ Propaganda ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Russia: Media System ▶ Semiotics ▶ Speech Communication, History of

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## Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America

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In Latin America communication studies started during the late 1960s, and were characterized by two very different conceptions. On the one hand, there was the *functional paradigm*, from the United States (where many Latin American professors had been trained), which related the study of communication to the *diffusion of innovations*, and which was part of a development policy primarily for the rural sector (→ Functional Analysis; Diffusion of Information and Innovation). On the other hand, there was the *theory of dependence*, developed by Latin American economists and sociologists, which asserted that mass communication was part of the process that included the domination Latin American countries had to put up with (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; Dependency Theories).

Even though the functional-diffusionist perspective silenced social and cultural problems by linking communication directly to the development of the mass media, the number of newspapers sold, or the number of radio and television sets per consumer, the theory of dependence provided a conceptual approach within which it was impossible to separate the action of the mass media from the social context and the political processes of the Latin American region. This is why both research and academic training on communication were initially characterized by a double function: development of the media and the training of its professionals, as well as trying to understand the role played by communication processes and the mass media in the changes that were taking place in Latin America.

From the beginning, the field of communication studies in Latin America has faced two issues: the *technological* one, characterized by the modernizing and developmental argument of the “technological fact,” and the *socio-cultural* one, which relates to cultural memory and identity in a struggle for both social survival and cultural reconstitution based on movements of resistance and re-appropriation.

### THE BEGINNINGS: COMMUNICATION AND CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

During the late 1960s, the Latin American reflection on communication was first synthesized by the works of Paulo Freire (1967) and Antonio Pasquali (1968). Freire

discovered and discussed the communicative dimensions of a liberating pedagogy: education as a dialogue and activity of appropriation of the cultural universe that constitutes the tissue of language. Pasquali researched the relationship between communication and the cultural/political structure of society, and introduced a groundbreaking distinction between information, which is characterized by unidirectionality, and communication, which implies some form of reciprocity (→ Information; Models of Communication).

During the 1970s, advances in the theoretical analysis of communication depended on the strength of the theory of dependence and structuralist → semiotics (→ Structuralism). The focus of theoretical work was *mass* communication as a strategic instance of *ideological struggle*. The rise of the concept of “form of merchandise” permitted Armand Mattelart (1973) to analyze the process of fetishization undergone by media messages: the process of message production is concealed, providing the medium with an almost magical strength/influence, and ignoring the structural relation between communicative products and the trade system that marks messages and consumption with the “factory brand” of the dominant ideology in society. L. R. Beltran (1973) devoted himself to analyzing the “deep regions” where ideology ritualizes social impotence, but also where the imaginary mythical-utopian dimensions of the hope for social liberation come from.

The theoretical and methodological development of those times was greatly concerned with the *ideological dimension* of mass discourses. Eliseo Veron (1971 and 1975) had a prominent role in this. His main contribution was the study of the processes of production and consumption of significations, which overcame the quantitative reductionism of content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative) and reoriented research toward the latent and connotative levels of operation of the *signifying structure*: a structure from which the signification of messages refers to the central conflicts experienced by a society.

The ideological and commercial fabric of communication takes its real shape in the *transnational space*, which is conformed by the imposition of an economic model to the internationalization of a political model where the mass media play a crucial role. In the field of communication, the “transnational issue” will clarify the need to develop new political ways of facing *information imbalance* (CIESPAL 1973), as well as the implementation of new modalities of intervention and participation on the part of civil society (CIID 1976).

## THE 1980S: RELATION BETWEEN COMMUNICATION AND CULTURES

Communication studies in Latin America experienced deep changes during the early 1980s, due mainly to a general shift in the social sciences. The greatest change had to do with the questioning of *instrumental reason*, which was present not only in the functional model but also in Marxist ideology. Conceptual and methodological shifts seeking to renew the field of communication studies came not only from the academic arena, but also from new social movements and cultural dynamics.

First, the relationship between the media and national cultures became historically important. It is impossible to separate politics and culture in the twentieth century from the shaping influence of communication processes and the media. The notion of modernity, which had been the basis for the national development projects since the 1930s, had already articulated an economic movement – the entry of national economies into the international market – into a political project which consisted of making them

nations through the creation of a national culture, identity, and *feeling*. But that project was possible only through communication between urban masses and the state. The media, especially radio, became the spokesperson of the process which, as part of a state initiative, transformed the masses into peoples and peoples into nations. In radio, populist leaders found a medium that facilitated a new way of communication, as well as a new political discourse that broke away from the rhetoric of both church and parliament. In radio, this new discourse found a fundamental mediation with “popular” language, as well as with a capacity to orally re-elaborate the passing from the expressive-symbolic rationality of the rural world to the informative-instrumental rationality of the urban world (Martin-Barbero 1987, 170; → Mediatization of Society).

In social terms, the cultural mediation offered by the mass media in Latin American countries refers to a new sense of the *popular*, which emerged with *urban culture*. The word “popular,” whose meaning implied both the primitive and the uneducated, became the culture of tango, movies, and football: an early hybrid of the national and the foreign (Sunkel 1985, 27). The → *radio* facilitated the passing from rural cultures, which were still a majority, to the new urban culture, without completely abandoning a number of traits of oral tradition. *Movies* helped develop a sense of nationhood through the theatricalization of rural culture, disrupting customs to the point of transforming what for long had been thought of as vulgar and cheap into an element that helped define a sense of “national identity” (Monsivais 1976, 112; 1981, 42). Both media decisively contributed to the development of a powerful *Latin American imaginary*, which included musical genres and rhythms such as tango, bolero, and ranchera, as well as movie stars like Maria Felix, Libertad Lamarque, and Cantinflas.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Latin American research on communication processes focused on the contradictory trend of cultural globalization and fragmentation, as well as on the worldwide diffusion and revitalization of the local through communication (→ Globalization Theories). The press, as well as radio and, increasingly, television, became most interested in *differentiating* cultures on the basis of region or age as it tried to connect them to the rhythms and images of the global. On the other hand, the presence of companies like Mexican Televisa or Brazilian Redeglobo in the audiovisual space of this world has been established at the price of molding these peoples according to the image of audiences that were gradually becoming more neutral and undifferentiated. These changes have been oriented by the demands of the model imposed by globalization (→ Globalization of the Media). Such demands have become evident in the privatization of national television systems all over the world (Portales 1988). Nevertheless, the increase in the number of channels, the diversification and the growth of → cable television, and the expansion of satellite connections (→ Satellite Television) have increased programming time and led to a growing demand for shows that has opened up the market to Latin American productions, especially soap operas. This has affected US television hegemony, as well as the image of a world traditionally divided into the producing countries of the north and the consuming countries of the south. Notwithstanding this, *market experience* is an evident victor in the field, as the media industry has managed to make a profit out of cultural differences by renewing worn-out narrative forms and by connecting them to other sensitivities whose vitality is re-signified in favor of a *culture of indifference* (Getino 1993).

## **THE LATIN AMERICAN AGENDA IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

### **Globalization and its Effects on Cultures**

In the current map of Latin American communication research it is possible to have a look at the landscape of the new century. Research on the political and cultural disorganization introduced by globalization has redefined the identification of the periphery with the foreign. It is within our countries, both nationally and locally, where culture is diffused worldwide (Ortiz 1995), because globalization is not simply a wider distribution of products, but a re-articulation of international relations due to a decentralization that concentrates power, and a loss of roots that hybridizes cultures. But what is really at stake in this hybridization (Garcia Canclini 1990) is not only the rise of new cases of cross-breeding; it is the reorganization of culture by a logic that detaches cultural experiences from the niche repertoires of each ethnic group and social class, as well as from the opposition between modernity and tradition, and modernity and modernization (Ianni 1996; → Modernity; Modernization; Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication).

Such logic thickens the technological mediation that blurs the boundaries between art and science, between work and game, and between the oral, the written, and the electronic; it radically challenges theoretical inertias, the barriers between different kinds of social knowledge; and it proposes, not only “new research objects,” but new ways to think about the struggles between the market and symbolic production, between culture and power, and between modernization and democratization. A particular reconfiguration of culture is carried out by the audiovisual universe, particularly by television, which, as a device that radicalizes the detachment generated by modernity, redefines the hierarchies that used to rule culture, its modalities, levels, and languages.

### **The Mass Mediation of Politics**

Second, we can see the study of the processes of mass mediation of politics (Landi 1992; → Mediatization of Politics), as well as the assimilation of → political discourse into the model of communication proposed particularly by television, which establishes a sense of identity between the public and the scene of the media, and influences the new forms of political representation and citizenship. Once the transformation of politics into a show is analyzed as a whole, future studies will be geared toward the analysis of the specific devices that link television and the emergence of a new political culture.

This is a research path that opens up analysis of the ways in which the media act, not as a substitute, but as a constituent part of the fabric of political discourse and action, because they densify the symbolic, ritual, and dramatic dimensions politics has always had, and are part of the new forms of recognition and questioning of social subjects and actors (→ Symbolic Politics). According to Mata, this displaces research on the mechanisms that confront “the square to the stalls,” i.e., the scene of the media, and focuses instead on the tensions between them; on the uses of the media in politics – the ways it looks at the camera – and on the re-signification procedures through which the scene of the media transforms the sense of political action into a representation that reduces publicity – the act of making something public – to mere visibility (Mata 1992, 61–77). Additionally,

there is another research path which displaces the viewpoint of formal politics in order to inquire into the role of consumption in the other forms that *create identities and citizenships*: the socio-cultural practices that establish forms of self-identification and need-satisfaction, as well as rituals of distinction and forms of communication which make consumption not only a means of squandering, showing-off, alienation and submission, but a means by which we re-elaborate the sense of the social, redefine the signification of the public through the publication of what we believe is socially valuable, and remake what we perceive as our own, as well as the ways in which we unite and establish differences (Lechner 1995; → Social Identity Theory).

### **The City as Communication Space**

The city as a space for communication presents itself as another watchtower from which to glimpse fundamental changes. The close relationship between the expansion and spread of cities and the growth and densification of electronic media and networks demands analysis of the anthropological scope of changes in ways of coming together, and of the new socialities that match the newly emerging urban scenarios of communication (Garcia Canclini 1998). Located at multiple levels, and composed of greatly diverse constituents, these scenarios correspond to the imbalance generated by an irrational and speculative urbanization which is evidenced by an impoverishment in the sense of solidarity and interaction among neighbors, the reduction of usable city space by citizens, and compensation for such constraints through a culture of delivery service, as well as through the reinvention of social bonds where the information running through international networks is mixed with a need of local membership and attachment.

These scenarios define the imaginaries from which people establish their feelings and representations of their city: events, characters, founding myths, places, aromas and colors, stories, legends and rumors that describe and identify cities in ways that greatly differ from the conception of city planners. These come together with the process of modernization, as well as with tensions between ethnic-local and transnational memories, which generates a mosaic whose set-up differs from the regularities defined by experts and tends to correspond to the disorganization and chaos experienced by citizens in their act of living together (Silva 1992). There are also the scenarios of the event-city, which, every time the inert daily life is altered, reveal how fragile the modern urban order is and uncover the corruption that connects the explosive inefficiency of public utilities – damaged sewage systems that cause floods and leave thousands homeless, or gas leaks that blow up entire neighborhoods – to the underground devices of power, while also revealing the communicational thickness of the survival strategies and the means of establishing citizen identity among the powerless (Reguillo 1995).

### **Media Use and Cultural Consumption**

Finally, another research field lies in the reception and use of the media and cultural consumption (→ Exposure to Media Content). An especially controversial and, even for some, worn-out field, the study of reception processes is characterized by an ambiguous duplicity, as well as being strongly revealing, in relation to some of the deepest changes in

communication research (Orozco 1994). This is because of the loss of the viewpoint that was sought in Latin America – reception/consumption as an epistemological and methodological starting place to rethink the process of communication – which was confused with the stage when, according to the American perspective, it had to do with the paradigm of “effects” (→ Media Effects) and then with that of → uses and gratifications. Nevertheless, when research on reception/consumption is identified, in a good number of research works, with a sort of hypostasis of reception, the value of such studies ends up confused with the “consumer power” fallacy.

The goal is to discover the extent to which communication works as an interchange and interaction between subjects (Wilton de Sousa 1994) who are socially established and located in produced and productive conditions and scenarios that present asymmetrical differences and are, therefore, areas of power where disputes, shifts, and struggles for hegemony take place (Garcia Canclini 1995). On the other hand, it is necessary to understand the forms of sociality that are generated along the paths of consumption, the level of cultural competence in such paths, which is possible from the perspective of an ethnography of usage (Sunkel 1999) that inquires into the trends of rupture and continuity, of attachment and placelessness, as well as into the long- and short-term memories that go through and support them. The resulting perspective is especially future-oriented if applied to the cultural paths of younger generations, strongly characterized by their connection with or disconnection from technologies, and by their ability to insert themselves into the rapidly changing society (Cubides et al. 1998; → Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on).

## **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

The field of communication studies in Latin America is going through a period of strong growth with the teaching of new academic programs, but not in terms of research in the field. Among the institutions engaged in research are the Departments of Communication at the Universidad de Sao Paulo and the Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá; the Department of Socio-cultural Studies of the ITESO in Guadalajara, Mexico; and the Faculties of Communication at the Universities of Buenos Aires and Lima.

In these departments and faculties the two leading indicators of research are the increasing number of publications, particularly of journals in which the different types of research are published, and the launching of international research programs such as OBITEL, which is devoted to the study of the production and international circulation of soap operas.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Information ▶ Media Effects ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Modernity ▶ Modernization ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Radio ▶ Rhetoric in Central and South America ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Semiotics ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Structuralism ▶ Symbolic Politics ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World**

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The history of communication as an academic field of study in the Arab world goes back to 1939 when the Higher Journalism Institute (HJI) was established within the College of

Arts at Cairo University (Cairo University 2004). By the early 1970s, Egypt and Iraq (Baghdad University) were the only countries in the Arab region to have full-fledged academic communication programs. In the early 1980s, however, mass communication programs mushroomed in many Arab universities, and as the third millennium dawned on the Arab world, almost all institutions of higher education offered some form of academic program in media studies.

From a historical perspective, communication studies in the Arab world have evolved in three distinctive post-World War II contexts: the modernization paradigm context, the dependency paradigm context, and the globalization paradigm context (→ Dependency Theories; Globalization of the Media; Modernization). In the three contexts, communication has developed in line with western-oriented perspectives about politics, culture, and social change. Daniel Lerner's classic about the "passing of traditional Society" (Lerner 1954) seemed to have focused research on a presumed media role in socio-economic modernization (→ Lerner, Daniel). To a large extent, academic programs share some common features: they cater largely to undergraduate students, focus more on professional preparation, and shape themselves more according to western theories of media and society (Ayish 2003a).

## **ACADEMIC COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS**

In early 2006, there were 70 communication programs offered at different government and private Arab universities, which seek primarily to provide students with technical professional skills in print, broadcast, and electronic media as well as in public relations and promotional activities. The programs, structured along similar lines as western academic programs, address the mass communication phenomenon along technological lines as marked by print media, broadcasting, public relations, advertising, and online communications. Available data show that Egypt is leading the Arab world in terms of number of programs (19), followed by Sudan (9), the United Arab Emirates (8), and Libya and Algeria (5 each; → Egypt: Media System). It has been noted that communication programs offered at Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian universities are more aligned with French media training traditions while those in the rest of the Arab world are styled more along American lines.

As such the programs seek to prepare students in specialized areas of communication with little emphasis on the interdisciplinary nature of the field. But as convergence continues to bear on the media market in the Arab world, the programs find themselves, more than ever before, under pressure to adapt to evolving realities (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Digitization and Media Convergence). The changing face of Arab media suggests that new media jobs are surfacing, and that there is therefore a need for new academic and professional training orientations. Unfortunately, most academic programs in the Arab world seem very slow in responding to the changes, while the programs being offered continue to focus on traditional rather than new digital and interactive mass communication.

## **RESEARCH OUTPUT**

Although the Arab world has witnessed an impressive proliferation of academic communication programs, the production of scholarly research has been limited. Ayish



(1998) noted that Arabs' earliest encounter with communication scholarship took place mainly during the post-independence era, when mass media infrastructures were being established as part of national development projects. Communication theorization was viewed as a luxury Arab researchers could not afford at a time when Arab societies were preoccupied with nation-building. In his review of communication research produced in the Arab world until the mid 1990s, Ayish (1998) noted that the works reflected clearly western influence not only in the framing of communication problems, but also in determining how they are methodologically approached.

A survey of research carried out over the past four decades reveals a range of areas and themes: propaganda, national development, cultural identity, Arab stereotypes, media hegemony, development of new conceptual views of communication from an Islamic perspective, representation of women, new technology, and globalization. To some extent, studies on psychological warfare were carried out in the spirit of Cold War politics when media were entrusted with huge mobilization functions (Nasr 1966; Tuhami 1974). The *development communication* research tradition arose out of growing interest in the role of media in social change in newly independent states (→ Development Communication: Middle East).

While this tradition has spawned a wide range of works (Hatem 1982; Khateeb 1983; Abu Bakr et al. 1985; Tal'at 1987; Kazan 1996), the perpetuation of *economic and social inequalities* in Arab societies in the 1970s and 1980s gave rise to more critical research work drawing on anti-western perspectives. Arab countries were central parties to global debates over a → New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) in the 1970s and 1980s. *Imbalances and biases in news flows* from and into the Arab world were important topics of research which sought to shed light on the nature, direction, as well as orientation of news transmitted by major international news agencies and carried by Arab print and broadcast media. Most of the studies found notable discrepancies in news flow patterns, with western agencies dominating the news scene in the Arab world (Masmoudi 1985; Abdul Rahman 1995).

A tradition of research known as *Islamic communication* was in vogue in the mid-1980s (→ Communication Modes, Muslim). Basically, it was no more than an exposition of how mass media could be used to propagate Islamic ideas and concepts around the world (Imam 1985; Khateeb 1985; Shanqiti, n.d.). Such efforts fell short of meeting the minimum requirements of model-building in theoretical and methodological terms. With the advent of globalization in the early 1990s, communication research in the Arab world shifted more to scrutinizing the potential negative effects of satellite television and the world wide web (Ayish 2003a; 2003b; ECSSR 2005). The conceptual tools used to address this issue have been more descriptive than analytical.

In the age of globalization, communication research in the Arab world has also witnessed contributions of non-Arab scholars, mainly from the United States and the United Kingdom (→ Globalization Theories). Boyd's work on Arab world broadcasting remains the most comprehensive account on *radio and television systems* in the region. Rugh's classification of Arab press systems has also been an outstanding intellectual effort to describe and understand media landscape in the region. New contributions by Alterman (1998), Hafez (2001), Miles (2005), and Lynch (2006) have added new outside perspectives to mass communication literature.

## ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Though all Arab countries have had some form of a professional press bodies to serve as an umbrella for journalists, these association have developed mostly within government-controlled mechanisms. The Arab Journalists Union is the central pan-Arab professional body serving as an umbrella for Arab journalists. National journalists associations, most of them with politicized orientations, are also operational in all Arab countries. There are also pan-Arab associations for broadcasting like the Tunis-based Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU), the Arab Broadcast Forum, the Arab Electronic Journalism Union, the Middle East Advertising Association, and the Middle East Public Relations Association (→ Journalists: Professional Associations). As for academic associations, the Arab world seems to be lagging behind in this respect with only one national association (Saudi Communication Association) and one international Arab–US Association of Communication Educators. These associations have annual conferences attended by media scholars and practitioners. The Arab world also suffers serious shortages in publications. There are only eight of them across the Arab World: the *Egyptian Communication Journal*, the *Public Opinion Journal*, the *Media Research Journal*, the *Algerian Journal of Communication*; the *Tunisian Journal of Communication*; the *Saudi Journal of Communication*, *Transnational Broadcast Studies* and the *Global Media Journal*.

## GENERAL TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It seems that communication has come a long way in the Arab world in terms of academic preparation and professional development. There are over 70 communication programs across the region extending from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to the Arabian Gulf in the East. Yet, despite these diverse offerings, one sees limited significant contributions of Arab researchers to communication scholarship beyond the institutions of Western-style conceptual and methodological procedures. There has been an impressive abundance of academic programs across the region mainly to meet the growing needs of an expanding media sector marked by the rise of satellite television and the World Wide Web.

Yet, communication as a theoretical discipline with significant cultural peculiarities remains largely unaddressed in the Arab World. One reason for this feature might be related to the sweeping effects of Western, especially American communication traditions that sought to insulate the study of communication from political and ideological structural variables impinging on its form and content. Many research analyses in the Arab world have viewed communication in mass media forms with little concern for its relevant inter-disciplinary nature. In order to understand communication in its mass media manifestations, researchers need to shed light on its cultural peculiarities, the very features that make it a distinctive social phenomenon in the Arab World. In this sense, the employment of cultural studies discipline would be of great help (→ Cultural Studies).

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ► Communication Modes, Muslim ► Convergence of Media Systems ► Cultural Studies

- ▶ Dependency Theories
- ▶ Development Communication: Middle East
- ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence
- ▶ Egypt: Media System
- ▶ Globalization of the Media
- ▶ Globalization Theories
- ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations
- ▶ Lerner, Daniel
- ▶ Modernization
- ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)
- ▶ Rhetoric in the Middle East

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## Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel

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The *institutionalization* of communication as an academic field in Israel began with the establishment of the Communication Institute of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. From 1966 when founded by → Elihu Katz, and through the 1990s, the Communication Institute acted as a sole academic authority, a conceptual model, and a source of faculty recruitment for communication departments in the other Israeli institutions of higher education. Today, 18 academic programs in communication operate in Israel, offering various academic degrees. The basic orientation of these programs is theoretical; yet, the professional practicum, taught by senior Israeli journalists, forms an integral part of the curriculum. About 200 practicing communication scholars are members of the Israel Communication Association (ISCA) founded in the mid-1990s. Most of them are also members of the ICA, IAMCR, and other professional organizations.

The concept of communication as an academic field, as developed in Israel in the 1960s, was rooted in → Paul Lazarsfeld's school, comprising the *administrative research model*, which sought to integrate academic and applied studies of communication that were relevant to journalists, cultural policymakers, and academic researchers. This concept was further enhanced by the Communication Institute's close, enduring cooperation with the Institute for Applied Social Research (IASR) headed by Israeli-American social psychologist Louis Guttman. The IASR generated crucial studies connected to policymaking, public opinion, and patterns of media consumption (Gratch 1973).

During the 1960s and 1970s, the *functional theory* was dominant in Israel as well as in the American social sciences (→ Functional Analysis). At the beginning of the 1980s, the hegemony of administrative research was weakened when several *sociolinguistics* researchers joined the Communication Institute at the Hebrew University. The immediate change was that new research topics and methods were included in the curriculum, such as → discourse studies, → linguistics and → cultural studies. The more profound changes were the legitimization of subjects that were traditionally part of the humanities and the diminishing influence of communication studies on communication policies.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Israel's electronic media system rapidly developed from one television channel and two government-controlled radio channels to a semi-private, commercial, competitive, multichannel system (→ Israel: Media System). Growing demand for media studies on both the academic and professional levels at least partly resulted from these radical changes in the communication scene. In parallel, the process of privatization of higher education enhanced the competition among existing universities as well as private entrepreneurs who established private academic colleges. Thus, in the 1990s, communication studies began to be offered in all the Israeli universities and several regional academic colleges.

At the time of writing (2007), 18 communication *academic programs* were offered by different governmental and private institutions, including six universities (Hebrew, Haifa, Tel Aviv, Ben Gurion, Bar Ilan, and Open Universities), three private academic colleges (Netanya University College, Herzlia Interdisciplinary Center, College of Management), and three publicly financed academic colleges (Yezreel Valley, Sapir, Ariel). Six colleges offer a BEd in communication (David Yelin, Oranim, Lifshitz, Gordon, Levinsky, College of Teaching Technology). (For full details, see [www.isracom.org](http://www.isracom.org).)

In most cases, the academic programs reproduce the Hebrew University model in which the research orientation remained dominant. However, they are also trying to develop their own unique academic features and specific subjects, and in general they are all investing more effort than the universities in the development of professional journalistic training for various media.

All the departments and schools of communication are equipped with state-of-the-art technologies and a practicum organized along specializations in different media – print, radio, television, online journalism – as well as general subjects of public relations and advertising. Notwithstanding the growing attention given to professional journalistic training, a diploma in communication studies has not yet become a condition for applying for a position in media organizations.

The *research output* of Israeli communication scholars has been most prolific and has produced a voluminous body of theoretical and applied social studies over the years. Historical studies demonstrated that the establishment of the Hebrew University was part of nation-building projects before the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 (Adoni & First 2006; Katz & Hed 1997), and the scientists viewed themselves as active participants in the Zionist project. Consequently, in the earlier periods of the country's history, most studies conducted by communication scholars focused on issues relevant to Israeli society, for example, studies of media contributions to social integration.

The hegemony of the functional paradigm ended in the early 1990s, and the rapid development of various branches of European cultural research opened up critical vistas of Israeli communication research, which nowadays includes critical approaches, cultural studies, and ethnographic and historical research. Although contemporary communication research is more interdisciplinary, it continues to focus on Israeli society's central issues. There is, however, a continuing effort to anchor these idiosyncratic problems in the wider theoretical context of various approaches in communication research.

At present, a wide *spectrum of topics* is investigated by Israeli communication scholars, comprising all the main issues of international communication research including research on discourse and on → popular culture. Among the dominant areas is a

well-developed and still growing research trend in → political communication, comprising analysis of news, public opinion, patterns of interaction between media and the political system, Palestinian media, and media and terror. There is also strong interest in multiculturalism and research on ethnic minorities, with a particular emphasis on Arab and Russian communities in Israel, their representation in Israeli mainstream media, the development of their own media systems, and their consumption of communication. Recent years have witnessed rapid developments in feminist communication research (→ Feminist and Gender Studies) which was previously rather scarce. Additional strongholds of Israeli research are → discourse analysis, → media effects on children and youth and cultural studies on various aspects of Israeli culture and media contents, using quantitative, ethnographic, and semiotic methods.

The privatization of applied social research significantly diminished the influence of academic, noncommercial, policy-oriented communication research on social and cultural policies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Israel: Media System ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Linguistics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Political Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Public Opinion

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## **Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia**

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The South Asian region comprises Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka. Given the relatively undeveloped nature of communication as an academic discipline in most of South Asia with the exception of India, the major focus of this article will be on the scenario in India.

**PHASE 1: 1940–1989**

Communication as an academic field in South Asia has until very recently been closely tied to → *journalism education*. This is not altogether surprising given that the first communication programs on the subcontinent were tied to promoting journalism education. The first was a short-lived course in journalism education in Aligarh in 1938, followed by the establishment of the Department of Journalism at Punjab University, Lahore, in 1940. The University of Dhaka, in what was then East Pakistan, started a journalism program in 1962, and a Department of Mass Communication was established at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, in 1973. These programs were promoted by newly independent governments who were keen on training journalists in the art of public communication and for careers in the news services, broadcasting, and publicity.

A free press was promoted as an essential foundation for democracy, and US-based foundations and agencies were involved in establishing the first *media programs* on the subcontinent (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The New Delhi-based Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), envisaged by the pioneer US communicator → Wilbur Schramm, and established by the Indian government under its Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, exemplifies an approach in which the state was vested with overwhelming authority to control the scope and character of communication education. In turn, this embrace of communication education by governments in the region affected its character, shape, and scope (→ India: Media System; Communication Law and Policy: Asia).

The Indian broadcaster Mehra Masani (1976, 1–2) has observed that the inability of the state broadcaster, All India Radio, to fashion an *Indian identity* in post-independent India could be explained in three ways: “the first would credit our former rulers with extraordinary foresight and understanding of broadcasting; and the second would reveal our lack of initiative and capacity to create appropriate organizations to our needs; and the third would expose the Government’s decision to retain, for reasons of expediency, vestiges of our colonial heritage which were neither democratic nor progressive.”

This may also account for the lack of an identity for communication and journalism education in South Asia, at least in the first phase of its growth up to the 1970s. Given the focus on a narrow, instrumental education, the advancement of knowledge based on research was assigned a low priority. There was very little original research output and the early books on communication in India were descriptive accounts of classical and traditional media and comparative studies of rural and urban communication. The diffusion of innovation was a popular subject for any number of doctoral students and for many years the only substantive “research” in communication was closely related to communication in agricultural extension. The only research of note was policy studies on broadcasting produced by interdisciplinary government committees: the Chanda Committee, the Verghese Committee, and the Joshi Commission.

In terms of research, the period 1975–1977, which coincided with the launch of India’s Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE), saw some innovative research in communication strongly influenced by sociology and social anthropology (→ Satellite Television). SITE arguably spawned the most comprehensive studies on communication research in India to date on media structures, processes and audiences, distance

education, and methods. Studies by Agrawal and Sinha (1981) and by others explored the role of satellite television in distance education. The Kheda project, an offshoot of SITE, led to innovative, critical, advocacy communication research, although, in hindsight, its findings did not affect the constancy of mainstream research. Ironically, this was also the period of the Emergency in India, a two-year dictatorial interregnum, the cessation of which led to a number of mainly descriptive studies on the freedom of the press. The Kothmale Community Radio project in Sri Lanka, which was begun with substantial funding from → UNESCO, led to significant research on community radio, the first of its kind in South Asia.

Overt *government control* has indirectly been responsible for the lack of a single nationally or internationally recognized center of excellence in communication research in South Asia. This rather doleful state of affairs can be contrasted with other areas in the social sciences and the humanities – economics, politics, sociology, literature – that were allowed to develop without overt government control and which, as a consequence, can boast of several centers of excellence. There is no equivalent communication school in India that has the reputation of the Center for Developing Studies, the Madras Institute of Development Studies, the Delhi School of Economics, the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, and the Indian Institutes of Technology and Institutes of Management.

Communication as an academic field did survive in some *private colleges* – for instance the Xavier Institutes in Mumbai and Kolkata, and the Unit for Media and Communications at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, although the most fertile academic studies in communication and culture emerged from interdisciplinary, often individual, research initiatives carried out in social science and humanities departments at a number of universities in India, including the University of Delhi, Jawaharlal National University, the University of Hyderabad, and research centres such as the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, the Centre for the Study of Social Sciences, and the Madras Institute of Development Studies. The subject of film in India received some academic attention along with academic writings on the history of the press and development communication. The IIMC did produce a journal called the *Communicator*, although it was discontinued in the early 1980s. The journals *Vidura*, *Communicatio Socialis*, and the ICCTR were in circulation for a short period. The *India International Centre Quarterly* and in particular *Seminar* (vols. 292, 300, 327, 342, 390, 458, 561) were devoted to issues related to the media. Critical research-based articles on the media were infrequently featured in the *Economic and Political Weekly*. The bestseller on the media in India was *Mass Communication* by Keval Kumar, which was widely available throughout India – from bookshops to book kiosks at railway stations and airports. This book was primarily a descriptive account of the media in India, although later editions did include research-based chapters on broadcasting and media education.

## PHASE 2: 1990 TO THE PRESENT

The second phase of communication as an academic field in South Asia coincides with the liberalization of the South Asian economy, the privatization of education, and industry backing for the establishment of mainly media skills-training institutes for the burgeoning media industry primarily in India but also in other countries on the



subcontinent. This development was a reflection of the demand for skilled media professionals in the advertising, cable and satellite, print and online journalism, and film and animation industries (→ Media Economics). There has been a professionalization of media in the region. There are, for instance, a number of journalist organizations in Sri Lanka today – the Free Media Movement, the Editors Guild of Sri Lanka, the Newspaper (Publishers) Society, the Federation of Media Employees Trade Union, the Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association.

There is also a supportive environment for *academic media research* at institutions such as the Sri Lanka College of Journalism which was set up in 2003, the University of Kelaniya, and Jaffna University, which have encouraged research, mainly on aspects of the press in Sri Lanka – the Tamil and Sinhala press, democracy, regulation, and the role of the media in peace and reconciliation. Additionally, a variety of NGOs are involved in the provision of media-training and capacity-building in Sri Lanka – the Centre of Policy Alternatives, the National Peace Council, the Women and Media Collective, and the Centre of Peace Building and Reconciliation.

The Centre for Policy Alternatives is involved in media research, for example, the study on “Post-Tsunami Media Coverage,” and publishes the *Media Monitor*. Likewise, in Pakistan, there are currently more than nine universities that offer journalism or mass communication courses and a number of professional media associations. In Nepal, both Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University offer courses in journalism or media studies and local and international NGOs, such as the Nepal Environmental Journalists Forum and Panos South Asia, are involved in media research and capacity-building. The Royal University of Bhutan, which was established in 2003, offers a program on language and cultural studies.

The most far-reaching and comprehensive change with respect to communication as an academic discipline has occurred in India. There are at present 60 universities, 25 agricultural universities, and 100 private institutions that offer media/journalism studies, along with a number of privately funded media research centers. To a large extent the incentive for change has come from the Indian media and entertainment industry which is worth US\$7.6 billion. Given demand, student intake has increased in journalism and media schools. The veteran journalist and founder of the Chennai-based Asian College of Journalism, Sashi Menon, is convinced that this demand ought to be met by offering students ethically grounded programs that are strong on theory and practice. The setting up of private media schools such as the Manipal Institute of Communication in Manipal, and the Mudra Institute of Communication in Ahmedabad, has led to a renewed emphasis on journalism/media research. Two media journals have been launched in India during 2005–2006, the *Journal of Creative Communication* and the Indian edition of the Internet-based *Global Media Journal*. Furthermore, institutions such as the Centre for Media and Cultural Studies at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, the Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, and the New Media Initiative at the Sarai Institute, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, have contributed to research on cinema, gender and the media, new media, intellectual property rights – from postcolonial, cultural studies, and political economy perspectives.

There is also demand for short- and long-term market forecasts, audience research, and administrative research carried out by the Centre for Media Research and similar

institutions in India. A number of NGOs, notably the Bangalore-based Voices, the Gujarat-based SEWA, along with other NGOs, have carried out grounded research on a number of media-related issues, e.g., ethno-religious conflict, gender, ICTs in development, community radio, and copyright. While research on issues related to the media and culture in India had long been a preserve of diaspora Indian academics, there are a number of internationally recognized researchers based in India today who are involved in interdisciplinary research on issues related to the media, culture, and communication, including Anjali Montiero, K. P. Jayasankar, Vivek Dhareshwar, Tejaswini Niranjana, Ravi Sundaram, Lawrence Liang, Ammu Joseph, Biswajit Das, among others. There is also a large market for applied research in areas such as health communication, development communication, ICTs in rural development, community media, and participatory communication. However, despite this apparent turn toward media research, the vast majority of government and privately funded academic institutions in media and journalism studies remain research-deficient.

While the future of communication as an academic discipline certainly looks bright for the region, it faces a number of challenges. The primary challenge is from the market, which is keen to shape communication as an academic discipline in its own image. There are other challenges as well – the need for indigenous theory, financial support for research, commitment to curricula development, emphasis on quality of teaching, and learning and research environments conducive to sustaining communication as an academic discipline.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication Law and Policy: Asia ► Communication Professions and Academic Research ► Development Communication: Asia ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► India: Media System ► Journalism Education ► Media Economics ► New Journalism ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Rhetoric in South Asia ► Satellite Television ► Schramm, Wilbur ► UNESCO

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# Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada

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There is general agreement that the communication discipline, as we know it today, began in the US. There is, however, a degree of disagreement as to how to trace the origins of the discipline. Arguably, the organizational roots of the communication discipline could be divided into *two traditions*: the “speech” tradition and the “journalism” tradition. Both traditions can be linked to the development of academic departments in US universities as they began to turn away from a single approach to higher education and to diversify and specialize. The development of land-grant public institutions after 1862 opened up higher education to students from a much wider range of economic backgrounds than before. This, along with a commitment to serve agricultural and technological interests, created a demand for specialized areas of study and thus spurred the creation of academic departments.

## THE ACADEMIC FIELD IN THE USA

### Development of Speech and Journalism

The University of Maryland, College Park claims to have established the first department to teach *speech*, in 1900, while the University of Missouri, Columbia, claims to have created the first School of Journalism, in 1908. Classes in speech and journalism had been taught prior to the establishment of departments, however.

Speech had been a part of the US university curriculum since Harvard University was founded in 1636 (Friedrich 1985). Speech could trace its lineage back to ancient writings on the subject of rhetoric, and had a claim as a branch of philosophy (→ Rhetorical Studies; Rhetoric in North America: United States). In practice, however, speech and debate skills were often developed as an integral part of the university experience, though not always through formal coursework. Debating societies were the norm in US universities, and both students and faculty took part in arguing the pressing policy issues of the day. In fact, Harvard’s first president also served as its debate coach. Principles of rhetoric, defined variously as the study of how humans influence one another or the style that speakers and writers use to move audiences, were taught under the rubrics of philosophy and literature.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, *journalism* was considered a trade and taught through apprenticeship to a printer, who typically published newspapers and magazines as a means of supporting the printing business. With the beginning of land-grant universities, however, trades that had been taught through apprenticeship (e.g., engineering) began to be professionalized and taught at universities. There were somewhat different approaches to how journalism was taught. One early course was offered in 1891 at the University of Kansas by a professor in the history and sociology department. Other coursework was offered as part of writing programs in English departments. The development of journalism programs was assisted immeasurably by newspaper publisher Joseph Pulitzer, who donated money to Columbia University to establish a journalism school and prizes for excellence in journalism and the arts which came to be known as the Pulitzer Prize. Debate continued among working journalists, however, as to whether a formal journalism education was superior to intelligence, a well-rounded education, and skill in writing regardless of how it had been acquired, as the best qualification for the work of a journalist.

The early years of the twentieth century also saw the formation of a number of *scholarly societies* serving the needs of faculty and students of the new academic departments. The American Association of Teachers of Journalism, the forerunner of today's Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), was founded in 1912. In 1913, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) was formed, which included an interest group for speech teachers. Almost immediately, the speech members of NCTE began to debate whether they, too, should form a separate organization. A large majority of speech teachers polled between the 1913 and 1914 annual meetings of NCTE favored having some sort of organizational identity, but the teachers were about evenly split on the question of forming a separate organization or working within the structure of NCTE. After the poll results were announced at the 1914 NCTE meeting, a group of 17 individuals held a rump meeting and decided unilaterally to form a separate organization. The name given to the new organization was the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking. This title was probably chosen to distinguish the group from professional teachers of elocution, who suffered from an unsavory public image (George Bernard Shaw had satirized the societal role of private elocution teachers in his 1912 play, *Pygmalion*). Four name changes later, this organization became known as the National Communication Association (NCA) in 1997.

### Communication Research in Sociology

Journalism and speech faculty focused on improving instruction and establishing curricula in their early disciplinary efforts. Scholarship was seen more as a necessity for status in the academy than as serious investigation of new ideas about one's area of study (e.g., Winans 1915). The memberships of the new organizations were much more interested in teaching and curricular issues than they were in generating new knowledge.

Meanwhile, scholarship on communication was developing in other fields of study (Delia 1987; Rogers 1994; → Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968). Principal among these was *sociology*, where the program at the University of Chicago predominated. The University of Chicago had been established in 1892, in the middle of

a massive era of immigration from Europe. New immigrants had settled in Chicago in large numbers, drawn by the massive industrial and agricultural processing plants located there. The immigrants settled in slums on the city's south side, and numerous social problems emerged from such a concentration of poverty. The first president of the university decided to use the campus location as an impetus for focusing scholarship on the study of social problems in the immediate vicinity of the campus and proceeded to recruit faculty for such a purpose. One of the faculty members recruited, Albion Small, founded the sociology department and hired a particularly talented group of faculty members. Four of this faculty group stood out: Robert E. Park, Charles Horton Cooley, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead. Park, a one-time newspaper man, was a prolific doctoral adviser, who worked with his students to develop early theories of mass communication. Cooley was interested in how individual self-concepts arose from their interactions with the groups to which they belonged, as well as how media could work to create community among individuals. Both Park and Cooley studied with Dewey at the University of Michigan before they all became a part of the University of Chicago faculty. Dewey and Mead were philosophers and close friends. Both were pragmatists – the philosophy that was dominant in US higher education at that time – and wrote extensively about the education process (→ Pragmatism). Dewey's work fitted well with the tone of the leading public-speaking textbooks, and he became popular with speech teachers, particularly for his writing on the process of critical thinking and how groups make decisions. Mead was a brilliant intellectual whose lectures were prized by his students for their many original ideas. Mead's ideas about how language use shapes both individuals and societies eventually became known as symbolic interactionism and exercised considerable influence over the development of communication theory (→ Symbolic Interaction).

Ideas about communication were often advanced by *practical concerns*. The rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany brought about interest in the US in propaganda and its uses. It also brought to the US eminent Jewish scholars, such as → Paul Lazarsfeld and Kurt Lewin, who pioneered work on media effects and group dynamics, respectively. Political scientist → Harold Lasswell developed the first communication model (Who? Says What? To Whom? With What Effect?). These individuals, along with → Wilbur Schramm, an English professor who had directed the famed University of Iowa Writers' Workshop, worked on communication problems for the federal government during World War II.

Following World War II, interest in communication burgeoned. Claude Shannon developed a mathematical theory for understanding the transmission of information electronically from one point to another (Shannon & Weaver 1948). Speech and journalism professors, whose scholarship had been focused largely on the development of messages and the content of media, saw an opportunity to model communication in scientific terms. So they took Shannon's model and began to study the information transmission process in humans, using → Carl Hovland's very successful attitude change experiments which he called the Yale Program in Communication and Attitude Change. The opportunity to do "scientific" research that was conflated with "experimental" research energized many speech and journalism professors, and they began to denigrate the atheoretical content analysis work that had been going on in journalism and the

atheoretical rhetorical analysis work that had been going on in speech. A new professional organization, the National Society for the Study of Communication (NSSC), was founded in 1950 to provide a means of pursuing communication research as a social science. By 1968, the NSSC had changed its name to the International Communication Association (ICA).

### **Communication becomes the Dominant Term**

This interest in communication eventually led to the renaming of the principal journalism and speech scholarly societies. In 1970, the Speech Association of America became the Speech Communication Association. In 1982, the Association for Education in Journalism added “and Mass Communication” to its title.

The 1960s and 1970s were a time of ferment, particularly in the speech field. As social scientists pushed for recognition of “communication” as the dominant term, rhetorical and performance scholars began to reconsider and redefine their theories and methodologies. Given the social justice concerns of the 1960s, it was not surprising that communication scholars wanted to engage in research that addressed social problems and not simply theoretical issues. Eventually, there was what might be called a counter-revolt against a social science paradigm that valorized laboratory experiments over other forms of scholarship. Several previously unused methodologies, such as ethnography (→ Ethnography of Communication), → discourse and → conversation analysis, and critical/cultural analysis, emerged as significant alternatives to experimental research, and eventually experimentalism waned in popularity (→ Experimental Design). By the early 1980s, a *détente* of sorts had been reached, and communication study from any viable theoretical and methodological viewpoint became acceptable.

By the 1980s, many academic departments had renamed themselves to include the word “communication” in their title. Common department names were “speech communication” or “journalism and mass communication.” Students who might have hesitated to major in either “speech” or “journalism” found the addition of “communication” to their liking, and enrollments in these programs soared. University faculties found themselves with far more student interest than they could accommodate, and higher standards for entering communication majors were imposed.

The *détente* led to some confusion as to where communication programs should be placed within the university’s organizational structure. Unless a university was organized around a large college of arts and sciences, neither speech communication nor journalism and mass communication fitted comfortably into units such as colleges of humanities or social sciences. Sometimes, a program would stay with the unit where it had begun its life (e.g., what had been a speech and drama department might continue to reside in a college of fine arts even though the department now included social-scientific communication research). Some journalism programs became freestanding schools, and some universities formed a school or college of communication to house former speech and journalism departments, perhaps including other programs as well. Universities also tried combining former speech and journalism programs into one large department or school. Sometimes, this approach proved successful, but on a number of occasions differences in the cultures of the faculties led to infighting, and the combined units might separate again.

### THE ACADEMIC FIELD IN CANADA

The intellectual impetus for the communication discipline in Canada seems to have come from the scholarship of → Harold Innis and → Marshall McLuhan. These University of Toronto colleagues both focused on the development of technology and the nature and uses of media from a historical and critical perspective. McLuhan, in particular, became widely known in the 1960s and 1970s and was, perhaps, the communication scholar with the greatest degree of popular recognition, to the point of appearing in a cameo role as himself in Woody Allen's film *Annie Hall*, in 1977.

The Canadian higher education system is organized differently from the US system, and communication programs were slow to take hold as majors leading to a degree. Most of the 51 communication programs leading to bachelor's degrees in Canadian universities focus on some aspect of media, and many of them have a focus on new media and technology. There are very few programs at Canadian universities that focus on topics under the "speech" tradition in the US. The very small number of Canadian universities that grant a doctoral degree in communication may have hindered the development of communication programs in Canada, as many Canadian communication faculty members probably needed to obtain doctoral degrees from US universities.

### PROBLEMS OF THE FIELD

The US communication discipline has struggled for legitimacy. The Speech Communication Association's application for membership of the American Council of Learned Societies was rejected more than once before it was finally accepted in 1995. John D. Rockefeller and the Rockefeller Foundation funded early communication research, initially as part of general support for the University of Chicago. Rockefeller money dried up around the time that the communication research of the 1930s and 1940s became associated with the better-known term "social and behavioral sciences." As the US government began to fund research, through the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), communication research was left out unless it could be associated with a discipline such as psychology, history, or philosophy. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and several private foundations have provided some support for communication research, but the level of support pales by comparison to other disciplines. In 1980, the US Department of Education classified "communication" as a practical discipline which was associated primarily with learning journalism and media production; the National Science Foundation followed suit, leaving communication ineligible for NSF funding. The same classification system considered "speech and rhetorical studies" as a subcategory of English, which meant that data collected on the speech communication field by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) could reside in a "communications, general" category or in "speech and rhetorical studies."

Scholars from the speech tradition have been unhappy with the "communications" designator, claiming that the added *s* makes the word refer only to media. The *s* was removed with some difficulty when the Department of Education's classification system was revised in 2000, and the communication category was revised to include

“communication studies, speech communication, and rhetoric,” as well as “media studies,” which were designated “scholarly” areas of study rather than practical ones. The NSF, however, did not designate communication a scholarly discipline until 2005, in conjunction with the discipline’s first inclusion in the National Research Council’s ranking of scholarly doctoral programs in the US. Unfortunately, despite efforts to the contrary, the “speech and rhetorical studies” category remained under English in the revised classification system.

Still, the continuing popularity of communication programs for US undergraduate students cannot be denied. NCES (2006) data available at the time of writing indicated that there were 955 programs in US universities offering bachelor’s degrees in classifications that fit into its “communication” category. Of those, 690 programs offered degrees in “communication studies, speech communication, and rhetoric,” and 420 programs offered degrees in journalism. These programs produced approximately 71,000 of the 1,400,000 degrees granted in the last year for which data were available. In addition, NCES listed 237 programs offering bachelor’s degrees in “speech and rhetorical studies.” NCES also listed 261 programs offering graduate degrees in some aspect of communication, plus another 63 programs offering graduate degrees in speech and rhetorical studies. The National Communication Association (2006) estimated that approximately 132 doctoral programs in some aspect of communication were found in US universities. More US students seem to be studying in programs that had evolved from the “speech” tradition than in programs that had evolved from the “journalism” tradition.

Similar ratios existed for membership and participation in the scholarly societies serving the communication discipline. The National Communication Association (NCA), the primary society evolving from the “speech” tradition, had approximately 7,500 members and attracted over 5,000 of its members to its annual meeting at the time of writing. The Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC), the primary society evolving from the “journalism” tradition, had approximately 3,500 members and attracted over 2,000 of them to its annual meeting. The → International Communication Association (ICA), whose membership overlaps with both NCA and AEJMC as well as attracting a significant number of members from outside the US, had a membership of approximately 3,500 and attracted over 2,000 to its annual meeting. There were also four regional communication associations whose members looked primarily to the NCA as their national organization, as well as a number of specialized societies serving various smaller constituencies within the discipline.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Rhetoric in North America: United States ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Symbolic Interaction



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## **Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe**

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Communications and media as a field of research in Europe scarcely predates World War II and, with minor exceptions, did not develop as a full program of study until the last quarter of the twentieth century. The main exception was Germany, where a press science (*Zeitungswissenschaft*) was quite well established in some German universities before the war and was later restored under the name of *Publizistik* (→ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968).

Much of the early work was historical or practical, but theory about the links between the press and society had also been developed by German sociologists (Hardt 2003). Early French sociologists, notably Gabriel Tarde, had also paid attention to the press and other means of publicity as influences on collective behavior, the formation of opinion, and the transition to modernity. Early British sociology was focused primarily on social problems, and the “media” attracted little academic attention until after the arrival of television in the 1950s.

### **INFLUENCES ON THE FIELD AND AREAS OF RESEARCH**

In general, the large task of postwar reconstruction and regeneration in Europe overshadowed issues relating to the media. All in all, at the middle of the twentieth century the field seemed very open to an influx of American ideas about mass media and methods of inquiry, not least because American media, especially film and music, were already ubiquitous in Europe. As Tunstall (1977) observed, not only were the media

American, so was media science (→ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada).

The social sciences were still underdeveloped and the field of media and communication was largely left either to informed speculation and elite commentary or to investigations carried out by the media themselves for internal purposes, with only limited publication. *Postwar American influence* showed up especially in a predilection for sample survey inquiries into “media use” and studies of → media effects carried out by statistical methods (→ Research Methods). It took the arrival of the new mass medium of → television to really stimulate media research. In the 1950s and 1960s, the study of mass communication in Europe was largely framed according to topics that lent themselves to inquiry within the frames of *leisure time use*, effectiveness in political persuasion, protecting the interests of children and youth, and assessing the merits or demerits of “mass culture” (→ Persuasion; Exposure to Communication Content). Apart from this, a central and growing concern of the media industry and others was the measurement of audiences, as media increasingly competed for → advertising revenue (→ Media Economics). In several countries, public broadcasting organizations played a key part in initiating research, as part of their public service mission (→ Public Broadcasting Systems).

From the later 1960s onwards, a new wind was blowing in European social science, perhaps especially from Britain. The dominant paradigm of study of media uses and effects was challenged by → *critical theory* that interpreted the tendencies of media content, especially in news, as a form of hidden ideology designed to maintain hegemonic control on behalf of state bureaucracies or big business. Attention also turned from messages, audiences, and effects to include the political economic supports for the media system (→ Political Economy of the Media). Another strand in the new movement was the development, more or less simultaneous in North America and Europe, of sociological inquiries into the *media production process*, especially of news, usually with a critical purpose (→ Media Production and Content). The results shed light on the dominant tendencies of content and supported the view that media tend to maintain rather than challenge the status quo. A major change also occurred in the study of *popular and mass culture*, involving a reevaluation of the significance of popular forms (in music and fiction especially) and a rejection of what were perceived as elitist and hierarchical perspectives (→ Cultural Studies; Popular Communication).

Although it has sometimes been claimed that European media research is distinctively more “critical” than American research, in line with Merton’s (1957) contrast between American empiricism and European *Wissensoziologie*, by the time of the general post-1968 upheaval, there is not much to choose between America and Europe in this respect. The distinctiveness of the European field of media inquiry was not clear at the end of the 1970s, except perhaps in the area of → popular culture (in the UK at least) and also in a preference for *qualitative methodological alternatives* to surveys, experiments, and statistical analysis (→ Qualitative Methodology). One of the forms this took was the greater use of ethnographic methods, especially for studying audiences, or “interpretative communities” (→ Ethnography of Communication). Another was the attraction exerted by semiological theory and other linguistic methods in the study of media content, largely following the guidance of French theorists, especially → Barthes, Grémas, and Lacan (→ Semiotics).

The development of critical theory in Europe was affected at some point by a growing gap between those who emphasized the determination of media ownership on media structures and therefore eventually content, and those who focused more directly on the ideological tendencies in content that favored the status quo or the potential for popular resistance. In the end, the “culturalist” branch of critical inquiry largely parted company from the political economic school, leading to separate publications and a cessation of dialogue across the divide. It also moved to a position where popularity (variously defined) became a criterion of merit and a guide to understanding media culture. The political economic school was to some extent vindicated by the huge changes to media systems that were driven by technology, economics, and politics, more or less in that order. For the cultural school, there was at least the relative novelty in Europe of a popularly driven abundance of media culture.

### THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF TEACHING PROGRAMS

Until about 1970, there were very few programs of study at any level or for any purpose, whether academic or professional. The study of media was mainly an individual research pursuit or organized in a handful of underfunded research centers. Occasionally there were courses within the framework of the study of politics, sociology, psychology, or education. In some countries there were separate institutions for the professional training of journalists, but the courses were practical in orientation and made little contribution to research and theory.

The main exception, again, was *Germany* where several universities had established programs in communication science, and much the same was true of *Belgium* and the *Netherlands*. However, from the early 1980s onwards more or less the whole of Europe saw a rapid institution and expansion of undergraduate and also graduate programs in media and communication, under various names, in response to demand from growing student numbers and the expansionary policies of educational authorities.

The precise reasons for growth at this time are hard to pin down, but a general explanation can be found in the belief that an → “information society” was being born, in which skills relating to communication of all kinds would be in demand. There was a practical correlate in the expansion of media industries, leading to new work opportunities in the field of communications, media, and information services. The enthusiasm for opening courses was not much restrained by the fact that the background of most existing communication research institutions (focusing on media effects on society) was not very well adapted or practical for meeting the expected new needs.

Nevertheless, the study of mass media provided the available core that could be expanded to deal with more relevant matters such as organizational communication, legal and policy issues, media management, understanding new technologies, and developing practical skills of communication in advertising, → public relations, public information, and → journalism (→ Organizational Communication; Media Policy; Technology and Communication). Particularly important and difficult was the need to bridge the gap between the public communication functions of mass media and the private (person-to-person) communication networks carried largely by telecommunications and subsequently the → Internet. Despite the difficulties, a new and expanding field of media and communication teaching and research has been forged in Europe.

## EUROPEAN “EXCEPTIONALISM”?

### Reasons for Differences

Despite the debt owed to the United States for the founding principles of “communication science” and the continuing influence wielded through literature and the dominance of international scientific publication, a distinctively European approach to media and communication developed. This is not, as is sometimes caricatured, simply more qualitative or more critical (or more amateur), but different in its agenda of issues and in the relative salience of different themes.

The distinctiveness stems ultimately from the fact that European media systems and circumstances differ between countries and from other countries around the world in many respects, despite widely shared legal, normative, and professional principles. Even habits of media use by the public vary a good deal from country to country (→ Media Use, International Comparison of). Virtually every communication “problem” takes on a somewhat different definition. This opens the way for fruitful and even necessary cross-national comparative analysis which is not really possible in North America.

European media systems tend to have a significant *relationship to the state and the political system* which seems unusual, even sometimes undesirable, to American eyes. There is no standard model for arranging these relationships, but it means that politics does tend to have some acknowledged interest in media performance and some means of influence (Hallin & Mancini 2004). At the same time there are mechanisms in place for managing this relationship to insure a degree either of independence or of transparency in the arrangements for linking politics with media.

The conditions described have resulted in persistent concerns about political diversity and → balance in the media (→ Plurality). This has been a legitimate object of *policymaking* in many European countries. Various forms of economic intervention have been adopted, especially in relation to the newspaper press (broadcasting being separately regulated in this respect), and in some countries limits have been set to the degree of concentration of ownership (→ Concentration in Media Systems). With varying degrees of effectiveness, many countries have also adopted self-regulatory mechanisms such as press councils and ombudsmen (see Bertrand 2003). There have also been safeguards in some cases for the rights of journalists within their employing organization.

In most European media systems, the most distinctive feature, as seen from outside, is the existence of a large *publicly financed broadcasting service* alongside now numerous commercial channels (with the ratio of public to private now long reversed). Public broadcasting was and remains an important means of linking the political system with the media system. However, powers of control have mainly been used to insure that broadcasting does not upset the balance of advantage between established political interests (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). Whatever the pros and cons, the presence, which is taken for granted, of a public media sector has left its mark on the agenda of European communication research. In general, the degree of “commercialism” of media in Europe certainly has to be considered as a variable rather than a fundamental and universal principle. It is also at times an object of disdain.

The particular *geography of Europe* has consequences other than those mentioned. The boundaries set by nation-states, and often by language, create divisions and also provide some natural protection against international media competition and incursion, except where small countries are overshadowed by a large same-language neighbor, as with Ireland, Switzerland, Austria, and French-speaking Belgium. Within a number of countries, differences of languages and historic regions have persisted and are either reflected in the media structure or give rise to pressure for recognition (e.g., in Spain and France). For many countries, it is hard or even impossible to maintain a viable audio-visual sector without heavy reliance on imports. The winds of globalization seem to have blown rather coldly across Europe for at least 20 years in the age of satellite, cable, and Internet, and this has provided a focus for research relating to national and cultural identity (→ Globalization of the Media).

### **Research as Response to Reality**

Communication research everywhere tends to respond to the circumstances and events in the “real world” as they affect the media and their audiences. News media in particular frequently become implicated in the events they report. In the period of development of communication science in Europe there have been *major themes* that are particular to the region.

These include the Cold War and the “Iron Curtain” actually dividing Europe; the tensions in relations with America over foreign policy and in the cultural sphere (globalization); the gradual move toward a more united Europe by way of the EC and later the EU; the marked turn toward deregulation and stimulation of communication markets that has followed the “communications revolution,” with new challenges to policy and governance especially as these affect the future of public broadcasting; ideological conflicts between left and right in the political arena that have diminished but not disappeared; various internal insurgencies and terrorist movements that have afflicted several major European countries, including the UK, Spain, Germany, and Italy; varied responses to the Balkan wars of the 1990s and the “War on Terror”; the response to immigration into Europe, especially in the later phase of large-scale asylum-seeking and economic migration. These and other matters have often provided the stimulus to research and shaped much of its agenda.

Against this background, we can better understand the evolution of the main themes of European communication research and their particular focus. Most of the issues mentioned are matters of public concern and have a political dimension. There are also some very large and growing areas of research in Europe, especially in relation to issues of culture and its many new forms and expressions and also the large expansion of attention to what might be called “commercial” or applied communication. Not far behind in growth is research into the use and content of Internet-based media.

### **European Specializations in Communication Research**

The preceding remarks about European “exceptionalism” mainly relate to the traditional core of research attention to news and related genres. An essential feature of development

during the last 20 years has been the growth of different specializations in research and in educational programs, with different institutions adopting different profiles.

In one important respect there is still a large difference from the United States and that is in the *lack of development of study of interpersonal communication* or of what typically falls in the United States under “speech communication” (→ Speech Communication, History of). However, even here, developments in the field of psychology have led to more work and teaching in these subject areas, even if still somewhat cut off from the mainstream of media and communication study. In summary, it could be said that much of the field of communication in western Europe is accounted for by the following main agenda items: news research (→ News); television fiction genres and audiences (→ Genre); journalistic roles and ethics (→ Journalists’ Role Perception; Ethics in Journalism); popular culture; audience and reception research; content and text research (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative; Text and Intertextuality); the → public sphere; cultural identity, Europeanization, and globalization; political campaigning (→ Election Campaign Communication); political economy issues; policy issues, especially relating to public broadcasting.

### VARIATIONS WITHIN EUROPE

Although it is possible to generalize about “Europe,” as in the above observations, there are and have always been considerable differences within this space. The most obvious differences are linguistic, but below the surface are less visible distinctions of academic culture and schools of thought. From this perspective, it is possible to sketch the outline of certain national or regional “schools,” each with its distinctive character and path of development.

A *francophone* school began with quite strong influences from postwar American empiricism and an emphasis on media institutions. It became marked subsequently by linguistic and semiotic theory and then by a strong focus on new technologies and “telematics” generally. The latter phase reflected an interaction between government policies and intellectual elites. A *Scandinavian* school, with Sweden initially in the lead position, also originated from American empiricism, with a strong focus on political communication, press institutions and policy issues, international news research, and applied communications.

A *British* school has also embraced empiricism with respect to media audiences and effects. It has also given rise to founding theories concerning popular culture, and remained attached to critical political economy perspectives. The sharing of a language with the USA did not make it more likely that it would follow the American language, and in some respects it has remained somewhat insular.

A *German-centred* school has typically been very empirical in orientation (studies of content, audiences, and effects), with a strong focus on politics and the newspaper press and on media institutions. High standards of scholarship and methodological correctness are typical. Issues to do with the clash between public private television and the division of Germany, as well press history, have been prominent.

A “*Mediterranean*” school, especially in Italy and Spain was initially dominated by linguistic theory, but has diversified with development. In Italy, the state broadcaster RAI

played an important role in stimulating research from an early date, while Spain was held back until the demise General Franco in the 1970s. Smaller countries were not necessarily backward in developing the field of communication and some, such as Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, and Finland, took leading positions. Nor were they lacking in distinctiveness, but even so they were more likely to be eclectic borrowers from surrounding cultures.

Since the 1970s, along with the growth of educational programs (→ Educational Media), there have been strong *signs of convergence*. These have been stimulated by several factors, including a common focus on new technologies and new media plus the impulses stemming from the European Union, with its educational, cultural, and technological policies (→ European Union: Communication Law). There have been numerous teaching and research programs promoted and financed by bodies such as the EU, the Council of Europe, and the European Science Foundation. The result has been extensive cooperation, networking, and sharing of paradigms and ideas. The wide use of English as a lingua franca has, somewhat paradoxically, been itself a vehicle for convergence and for the emergence of something like a European identity for the field. After an uncertain and troubled start, a new Europe-wide association of communication scholars, the European Communication Research and Education Association (ECEA), was founded in 2005 as a merger of two previously established associations, although to some extent the → International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) association had earlier fulfilled the role.

This tendency has been supported by a great expansion of publications in the field, in all languages and in the form of periodicals as well as books, even if the main periodicals that count as “international” are likely to be in English. These include *European Journal of Communication*, *International Communication Gazette*, *Journalism*, *Communications*, *New Media and Society*, *Media Culture and Society*, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Global Media and Communication*, *Discourse and Society*, and *Intermedia*. There are many other specialist journals in related fields.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Balance ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Educational Media ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Genre ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Information Society ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Policy ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Media Use, International Comparison of ▶ News ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Plurality ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Semiotics ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# **Communication Accommodation Theory**

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In interpersonal situations, language can be used to convey information about one's personality, temperament, social status, group belonging, and so forth. Although many of us like to think that we interact essentially the same way to virtually every person we encounter, thanks to fairness and our integrity, this simply is not true. In most instances, it is desirable, and even necessary, to adjust our language patterns to our conversational partners, be they close friends or loathed felons. Sometimes we encode this deliberately and consciously, other times it emerges automatically and may not even be decoded overtly.

Communication accommodation theory (CAT), initially known as speech accommodation theory, was first developed by Giles in 1971 so as to explain how we manage certain facets of interpersonal communication, particularly, our choice of accents and dialects. Indeed, it was originally conceptualized to mine more complex socio-psychological understanding of language choices than a mere recourse to people's socially normative dispositions (Giles & Powesland 1975). Over the years, and with various colleagues, Giles has elaborated and revised the theory in varying directions (e.g., Giles et al. 1991) and it has, according to many commentators, assumed the status of a major socio-psychological theory of language and social interaction (e.g., Tracy & Haspel 2004). It has embraced a wide range of communicative behaviors (linguistic, paralinguistic, discursive, and nonverbal) as well as being applied to a rich array of contexts (e.g., the workplace,



intergroup and intercultural relations, the mass media, and health clinics; see Gallois et al. 2005 for a history of CAT; Giles et al. 2007 for the most recent refinements).

### THE CONCEPT OF CONVERGENCE

Accommodation – as a process – refers to the way interactants adjust their communication behaviors so as to either diminish or enhance social and communicative differences between them; such shifts can be complete switches (as in bilinguality) or partial ones (as in a word choice). Put another way, the theory has devoted a significant proportion of its attention to examining how and why we converge or diverge from each other. *Convergence* – the empirical heartland of CAT – occurs when interactants' communication styles become more similar to another by choice of slang, obscenities, grammatical structures, volume, pitch, gait, hand movements, dress style, and so on. When the features involved connote social value (e.g., a fast speech rate is often associated with competence, a slow one with incompetence), convergence can be termed upward or downward. The former occurs when an individual approximates another's more formal, prestigious communicative style, while the latter refers to matching another's more colloquial, informal, and/or nonstandard product.

Convergence is a means of signaling attraction to, and/or seeking the approval of, the other person. As social power is an important component of CAT (→ Power in Intergroup Settings), interviewees, salespersons, and those in socially inferior roles will converge more respectively to interviewers, clients, and those in socially dominant roles than vice versa. People can also converge to underscore common social identities, to convey empathy, and to develop bonds with others. Relatedly, and giving a motive for convergent propensities, studies have shown that people in general evaluate those who converge toward them more favorably (e.g., considering them more socially attractive and respected) than those who do not – albeit up to an optimal point and perhaps also at an optimal rate. By assembling linguistic communalities, speakers reduce interpersonal uncertainties and interactional anxieties, and increase communication satisfaction. Moreover, not only are we more compliant and cooperative with those who identify with us by sharing our own language features (in the cases of, e.g., physicians and police officers), but it can also bolster our self-esteem. Indeed, data show that having a social network that is accommodating later in life can facilitate life satisfaction.

### ACCOMMODATION STRATEGIES

An important feature of CAT is that people converge not so much toward where others are located in any physical sense as to where they *believe* them to be. An illustration might be using an ethnic dialect with a known immigrant who, in actuality (and in ways you do not discern), has linguistically assimilated. In such cases, subjective convergence is translated into, and can be measured by, objective divergence. In addition, people can accommodate to where others expect (or would wish) them to be. This might occur in romantic situations where males take on more macho stances (e.g., speaking with deeper pitch) while females might incline toward sounding more feminine (e.g., softer tones) – tactics called “speech complementarity.”

Such subjective moves are often based on social → stereotypes and therefore can be problematic when people “over-accommodate” to certain others. In this vein, much work on intergenerational talk has shown how, because of unfavorable stereotypes that people hold of those who are older, young people can patronize elderly people by slowing down for them and using overly simple language. For those elders who are socially and cognitively active, such messages (even if constructed from positive and nurturing motives) risk being construed by recipients as condescending and demeaning (see Coupland et al. 1988).

Other accommodative strategies have been articulated (Giles & Coupland 1991), one of which is a so-called “interpretability strategy” (Jones et al. 1999). Here, interactants attend to their interlocutor’s knowledge of, or sophistication about, a particular topic being talked about. Supposedly communicatively competent speakers should, for example, attenuate the complexity of their speech and reduce jargon, thereby promoting comprehension, coherence, and clarity. The goal of this strategy is to establish mutual ground with an interlocutor, yet it is quite easy not to appreciate another’s lack of understanding and “under-accommodate” them – a stance that is often interpreted as insensitive and egotistic (Williams & Nussbaum 2001).

## APPLICATIONS OF COMMUNICATION ACCOMMODATION THEORY

As mentioned above, accommodation is not limited to converging behaviors, since CAT has, in contrast, shed light on why interactants may sometimes choose to accentuate communicative differences between themselves and others. This may occur through so-called “speech maintenance,” where people deliberately avoid using another’s communicative style and, instead, retain their own idiosyncratic stance or that of their social group’s; for instance, by not switching languages when they have the capability of easily so doing. Moving along the social differentiation continuum, people can *diverge* from others by adopting a contrasting language, dialect, jargon, speech rate, gestures, and dress style.

Drawing upon → social identity theory (e.g., Tajfel & Turner 1979; Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework; Intercultural Norms; Intergroup Accommodative Processes), CAT has argued that the more a person psychologically invests in or affiliates with a valued ingroup (be it occupational, religious, political, or whatever), the more they will want to accentuate that positive identity by communicatively divergent means. This will be evident where the dimensions diverged are salient components of their social identity (e.g., a switch to Greek where that language is a source of pride for, say, Greek-Australians) or when the relevant outgroup has threatened some aspect of their social livelihood, and particularly by illegitimate means (Giles & Johnson 1981).

In general, recipients who perceive divergence directed at them will tend to see the speaker in a negative light, other extenuating circumstances notwithstanding. The speaker will appear unfriendly, incompetent, impolite, and perhaps even belligerent or hostile (as in a situation where an African-American child adopts Black English with a Caucasian teacher). This need not actually be the intent behind the act, which is simply performed, again sometimes intuitively, to emphasize one’s loyalty toward a group. Sufficient numbers of a group frequently engaging in language divergence in an array of

public contexts (such as in the resurrection of an ethnic minority language or even the widespread creation of a youth code) can change the whole tenor of the communication landscape through street signs, newspapers, TV channels, or the Internet. Indeed such individual actions can mobilize social movements whereby whole languages and codes are institutionalized and or revitalized (see Marlow & Giles 2006).

CAT, therefore, appeals to and captures the evolving histories, politics, and changing demographics of the cultures in which interactions that draw on accommodative moves are embedded (→ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication). Like all theoretical positions, it has its limitations (e.g., it cannot precisely predict what linguistic dimensions particular people will accommodate). Nonetheless, it is supported by empirical research from diverse cultures and languages, is invoked across disciplines and different methodologies, and has spawned an array of satellite models in diverse areas (e.g., intergenerational relations and bilingualism).

SEE ALSO: ► Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ► Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ► Intercultural Norms ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Social Identity Theory ► Stereotypes

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# Communication Apprehension

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Communication apprehension refers to one's anxious feelings about communication. McCroskey defines communication apprehension as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (1977, 78). Communication apprehension has been one of the most studied individual differences in the field of interpersonal communication, under a variety of labels such as social anxiety, reticence, shyness, unwillingness to communicate, and social-communicative anxiety (Daly & McCroskey 1984). The scope of subjects includes dating anxiety, receiver apprehension or informational reception apprehension, singing apprehension, writing apprehension, and intercultural communication apprehension (Knapp & Daly 2002).

Richmond & McCroskey (1998) suggest that there are at least four types of communication apprehension: (1) trait-like communication apprehension, which cuts across time, receiver, and situation; (2) context-based communication apprehension, which is associated with a single type of communication context cutting across receiver and time; (3) audience-based communication apprehension, which is associated with a single receiver or group of receivers cutting across context and time; and (4) situational communication apprehension, which is specific to a given context with a given receiver at a given time.

Scholars have reported that communication apprehension tends to produce helplessness, social isolation, and disintegration; more than 30 percent of Americans consider themselves communicatively apprehensive (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety; Speech Anxiety). Communication apprehension also has a direct relation with cognitive performance and various academic achievements such as overall grade point average, standardized achievement scores, and grades earned in small classes in junior high and college. Compared with nonapprehensive people, apprehensive people engage in less eye contact, are more self-protective and less disclosive, and are seen less positively by others (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

Communication apprehension has been thought of as a relatively stable construct. Traditionally, scholars have assumed that communication apprehension is a personality-based predisposition, which is believed to be a more or less consistent trait across time, places, and situations. The notion that communication apprehension is a trait-like predisposition, however, does not necessarily mean that it is always rigidly invariant. Communication apprehension can be context or situation specific. For example, a person who is quite normal in everyday life may suddenly become fearful of communication in a certain context, such as job interviews and public speaking. In fact, some early researchers proposed that communication apprehension is a state rather than a trait-like predisposition (Behnke & Beatty 1981).

Many studies have examined causes and effects of communication apprehension, but relatively few studies have closely investigated changes in it. Some researchers, however,

have found that communication apprehension levels can be changed within a rather short period of time, even in a week, and posit that communication apprehension can be controlled or reduced with the right treatments. For example, Berger et al. (1984) reviewed studies examining various methods for reducing communication apprehension and concluded that systematic desensitization was the most effective method (→ *Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques*).

One interesting finding in this line of research is that communication skill training programs such as public speaking classes were found to be disappointingly ineffective in reducing communication apprehension. The reason may be the involuntarily enforced nature of such classes in schools. As an alternative, Richmond & McCroskey (1998) recommend interpersonal or small group communication classes that are less coercive. Perhaps nontrait-like communication apprehension that is context based can be more easily treated through regularly and externally imposed small group discussion sessions such as cooperative learning in class.

Many studies have compared cultural differences in levels of communication apprehension and reported that people of western cultures tended to have lower levels of communication apprehension than people of Asian cultures. But some studies have reported that two geographically close countries may have quite different levels of communication apprehension. For example, Klopff & Cambra (1979) compared communication apprehension levels among college students in America, Australia, Japan, and South Korea and found that the Americans had significantly lower apprehension than the Japanese but significantly higher than the Australians and Koreans. Interestingly enough, the Koreans and the Japanese, usually considered as neighbor countries that are very close culturally as well as geographically, showed quite different communication styles: while the Koreans had the lowest percentage of apprehensives, the Japanese had the highest.

Researchers have found communication apprehension affects a wide range of behavior, ranging from seating positions at a conference table to housing choices. It is not surprising that many types and versions of communication apprehension measures have been developed, including the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA), Writing Apprehension Test (WAT), and Test of Singing Apprehension (TOSA). Most communication apprehension measures are self-report scales. For future studies, communication scholars should consider using more objective measures based on biofeedback systems or hormones such as cortisol.

SEE ALSO: ► *Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques* ► *Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety* ► *Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills* ► *Speech Anxiety*

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## Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques

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Communication apprehension (CA) intervention techniques are systematic, empirically grounded methods employed in a variety of settings to reduce communication-related anxiety, most commonly in public speaking contexts, where many speakers experience → stage fright. Communication scholars have developed, adapted, and tested a variety of effective methods to treat → speech anxiety due to its pervasive nature and deleterious effects. Although most contemporary CA theories view → communication apprehension as being a multidimensional construct comprised of interrelated cognitive, affective/physiological, and behavioral components, different interventions emphasize one component over the others. That is, some theorists viewed speech anxiety as stemming primarily from thoughts, internal dialogue, and/or images associated with public speaking (e.g., Ellis 2001). Others emphasized the physiological consequences of autonomic nervous system activation. And still others underscored the lack of public speaking skills as the primary reason people experience speech anxiety (e.g., Kelly 1997). Thus, treatments are typically categorized as cognitive, affective, or behavioral in nature, and instructors and counselors employ either one or a combination of the treatments outlined below.

### VISUALIZATION AND PERFORMANCE VISUALIZATION

*Visualization* (VIS), a cognitive approach, was developed by Ayres et al. (1997). In the procedure, speakers listen to an approximately seven-minute script read by a trainer, played on a cassette tape, or shown on a video. This guided image task requires participants to follow the script, vividly imagining positive, upbeat images of a successful speech. The

VIS procedure provides a plausible scenario of public speaking success by creating a general picture of anticipation and reactive behavior regarding the communication performance throughout the day a speaker is to deliver his or her speech. The script consists of specific, detailed content, starting with the person waking up, dressing, walking to class, greeting people, and then successfully delivering the speech (Ayres & Hopf 1993).

VIS has been tested extensively, and has been shown repeatedly to reduce self-reported CA in public speaking situations better than placebo and control conditions. It is also adaptable to other contexts, like initial encounters and writing, and its effects hold over time (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety). VIS can be self-administered on a CD or video tape, providing an effective intervention for individuals reluctant to seek treatment in a workshop setting.

*Performance visualization*, a variation of VIS, includes a behavioral practice component. The treatment involves viewing a video of an outstanding professional speaker, repeatedly imprinting the linked mental images of the video-taped speaker, and eventually replacing the vivid images with oneself as the speaker. The speaker also prepares by alternatively imagining the speech, practicing the actual speech, imagining again, etc. until the speaker is satisfied that the speech matches the image. A full description of the complete procedure is available in Daly et al. (1997, 401).

There are several positive effects of performance visualization. First, it enhances behavior as well as reducing CA, and does so more effectively than other interventions or no treatment, although its impact is moderated by whether speakers can produce vivid images, or are able to control the nature of the images effectively. Second, exposure to performance visualization itself alters the way high apprehensives envision themselves as public speakers. That is, after exposure to the treatment, high-CA speakers see themselves in a more detailed, confident, and positive fashion. In addition, outcome studies indicate that speakers derive even more benefit if the video-taped model speaker more closely resembles the speaker in question (e.g., the same gender, excellent student model vs a famous orator). Finally, performance visualization also effectively reduces CA and improves performance in job interviews.

In general, available evidence suggests that both VIS and performance visualization are effective, but performance visualization is the preferred procedure because it enhances communication behaviors. However, VIS is still of considerable value because of its simplicity, ease of use, and time requirements.

## **RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY AND COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING**

*Rational emotive behavior therapy* (REBT), formerly rational emotive therapy (RET), focuses on thoughts/beliefs that lead to negative emotional and behavioral consequences (Ellis 2001). An REBT practitioner views fear/anxiety as a consequence of an irrational or dysfunctional thought/belief about an “activating” event/stimulus, such as riding in an elevator or giving a speech. Consequently, REBT seeks to identify and address the dysfunctional thought processes and/or belief systems that lead to anxiety. Accordingly, the primary therapeutic thrust of REBT is the identification and disputing of irrational

thoughts. REBT uses direct, confrontational, Socratic dialogue and other interpersonal exchanges with an individual in order to identify and challenge irrational beliefs.

REBT has been adapted as an effective intervention for reducing speech anxiety in a group workshop setting (Ayres & Hopf 1993), although it is more time consuming and requires more training than the administration of other interventions. In this context, an upcoming public speaking situation is the activating stimulus, and a speaker's belief, or worry about giving the speech would evoke anxiety or fear. For example, if a public speaker thought that the consequences of getting up in front of an audience would be catastrophic or unbearable, a trained instructor/counselor would identify and challenge that belief in order to ameliorate the consequences of the dysfunctional thoughts, thus putting the feared event in a more realistic, rational perspective.

*Cognitive restructuring* (CR) is similar to REBT in that it views cognitions as antecedents to emotion/anxiety (Meichenbaum 1985). Consequently, it also focuses primarily on modifying cognitive processes. There are differences, however. REBT actively challenges irrational thinking, whereas CR teaches people to identify maladaptive thoughts and develop coping statements to counteract them. Ayres and Hopf (1993) have tailored CR to treat CA by emphasizing education, speech skills acquisition, and rehearsal.

### **COMMUNICATION ORIENTATION MOTIVATION**

Communication orientation motivation (COM) was developed and refined by Motley (1997), who posited that a communicator's orientation toward an anticipated communication event is the key to understanding the potential for CA. One orientation is a "performance orientation," in which the speaker views a public speech similar to the way a professional performer would view his or her performance in front of an audience. If a speaker has a performance orientation similar to an ice skater's or gymnast's view of performance, she or he is more likely to experience CA. That is, a communicator may view a future speaking requirement as a similar expression of some great artistic ability, or skillful demonstration. With such self-imposed performance demands, it follows that such individuals, fearing themselves to be lacking the requisite abilities, experience high CA. The other orientation is a "communication orientation," which views a speech as a normal, everyday communication encounter, which serves to recontextualize speeches as less threatening.

COM emphasizes teaching people to focus on the message of a speech and how it is understood by the audience, rather than the speech as an anxiety provoking performance. This is accomplished by either reading Motley's book of about 20,000 words, or in interpersonal counseling sessions. Motley and Molloy (1994) reported that COM significantly reduces CA better than systematic desensitization (SD), placebo, and control groups. Ayres et al. (2000) compared COM to SD, placebo, and control conditions, and found that COM, while not significantly different from SD, effectively reduced trait CA compared to placebo or control conditions.

### **SYSTEMATIC DESENSITIZATION**

Systematic desensitization (SD) was developed and refined by Wolpe (1958). In his initial experiments with cats, the sound of a buzzer was paired with electric shocks, and the cats



subsequently developed a conditioned fear of the buzzer. After the conditioned fear was well entrenched (i.e., the buzzer alone elicited a strong anxiety response), the buzzer was paired with food, leading to a gradual extinction of the conditioned anxiety response. The observation of this counter-conditioning led to the development of SD as a treatment for anxiety in humans. The underlying principle of SD is that a person cannot be relaxed and anxious at the same time. In SD, people are trained in relaxation techniques and instructed to create a relevant, personally tailored “anxiety hierarchy,” comprised of a set of imagined “fear” situations arranged to be increasingly anxiety provoking (e.g. “lying in bed thinking about an upcoming speech,” to “preparing a speech alone in my room,” eventually leading to “delivering the speech”). People visualize these images until they can remain relaxed through the entire hierarchy. Full, updated, and detailed training procedures as well as a relevant standardized speech anxiety hierarchy are available in Friedrich et al. (1997, 305). Friedrich et al. (1997) report that SD as an affective treatment for CA has been significantly modified from its original procedure (e.g., group settings vs single sessions), yet is still effective.

### **RHETORITHERAPY/SKILLS TRAINING**

Rhetoritherapy, a form of skills training (ST), is a behavioral approach designed to build relevant micro-skills related to the speech act (Kelly 1997). This approach is grounded in the assumption that speakers are anxious primarily due to skills deficits. Consequently, rhetoritherapy focuses primarily on behavioral skills related to composing and delivering a speech. The method includes instruction, goal setting, practice, in vivo assignments, and instructor feedback. Empirical evidence for skills training as an effective standalone intervention is mixed, although ST can take so many forms that generalizing across studies is difficult. This approach, as well as any other intervention, can be combined with others to address the multifaceted aspects of speech anxiety more comprehensively.

In general, data reported here and elsewhere suggest that the aforementioned interventions, used either alone or in combination, are an important ingredient in the remediation of speech anxiety. Research in this area is ongoing and will likely continue to refine the effectiveness of interventions for the pervasive problem of speech anxiety.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Apprehension ► Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ► Reticence ► Speech Anxiety ► Stage Fright ► Student Communication Competence ► Teacher Comforting and Social Support

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## Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety

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Communication anxiety/avoidance is one of the most studied phenomena in the field of communication. Communication apprehension (CA) is defined as “the fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with others” (McCroskey 1984; → Communication Apprehension). CA is problematic when anxiety reaches levels that interfere with goal attainment (→ Goals, Social Aspects of).

Inherently social, communication apprehension is emotionally based, although CA does involve attitudinal and behavioral components (→ Emotion; Attitudes). Other anxiety-related constructs (e.g., reticence, willingness, shyness) are more belief-based and attitudinal, and all incorporate elements of avoidant behavior. Because responding can be via thinking, feeling, and behaving, these anxiety/avoidance constructs are related, but

not isomorphic. Fear of negative evaluation permeates self-perceptions, external orientations, and behaviors.

Such emotional responses are not necessarily aversive. Low levels of anxiety may be perceived as anticipatory arousal or excitement, and not negatively experienced (→ Excitation and Arousal). But as anxiety increases it becomes more aversive and debilitating, interfering with social interaction demands. In societies that place priority on active communication and talk, social anxiety can be painful and inhibiting.

Communication-based anxiety/apprehension occurs due to individual characteristics, situational factors, or their interaction. These factors give rise to “trait,” “state,” and “interactional” approaches to the study of CA. An enduring, cross-situational fear of communication is labeled *trait apprehension*. Transient responses, occurring in selected moments are considered *state anxiety*. Most explanations include a combination of both.

### TYPES OF COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

*Trait communication apprehension* is an enduring orientation toward communication. The trait predisposes someone to respond to many kinds of communication demands with anxiety and trepidation. A person who is trait apprehensive will be fearful across time, and respond anxiously to many different circumstances. Trait CA is resistant, although not impossible, to change.

*Audience-based communication apprehension* is anxiety toward communication with a specific person or group. It tends to be consistent across time with those specific receivers. For example, some work has reflected students’ fear of communicating in classroom settings with other students and teachers. Some people report an enduring anxious response toward communication with their spouse, and not surprisingly, this is linked to lower relational satisfaction.

*State, also called situational, communication apprehension* is a transitory response to a communication situation. One experiences the state of anxiety in a given circumstance, but as soon as that interaction or situation terminates, the arousal dissipates. State CA fluctuates widely across contexts, but due to accumulated effects, is reliably more intense and consistent among high trait-apprehensive individuals.

The premise underlying *context-based communication apprehension* is that certain settings have similar interactional demands that may create anxiety (i.e., as soon as people find themselves in that setting with those performance demands, anxiety occurs.) People may experience heightened anxiety in one context or multiple settings. Four primary contexts are associated with CA: public speaking, meetings, group discussion, and dyadic interactions. Although researchers have also investigated more specific contexts such as classroom, writing, or health-related interactions.

*Public speaking* remains the most widely recognized, studied, and feared communicative context. This typically involves prepared presentations in a one-to-many setting, where one primary sender has multiple receivers who do not interact in a balanced, reciprocal manner. While gender differences overall are negligible for CA, an exception is public speaking where females tend to be more anxious.

*Meeting and group* contexts may be less anxiety-provoking because participants share communicative responsibility in the more interactive settings. However, status differentials

may exacerbate anxiety. The *dyadic* or *interpersonal* context tends to be the least anxiety-provoking (although not for everyone). The dyadic pattern is typically one-to-one with both conversationalists sharing approximately equal responsibility for the interaction. Interpersonal communication is generally less structured and more social than other contexts. One reason dyads tend to be less anxiety-provoking is that interactive rules may be fewer, looser, and subject to negotiation and adaptation. Nevertheless, because of their innately more personal interaction demands, interpersonal communication contexts still evoke anxiety in many people.

### Measurement

Assessment of CA is primarily through self-reported feelings, attitudes, and behaviors, but there are also some studies measuring physiological responses (e.g., S. Booth-Butterfield 1987) and assessments of overt behaviors, especially in the public speaking context. The most widely used measure of trait CA is the personal report of communication apprehension (PRCA-24). This 24-item self-report scale measures four separate contexts of CA, which are either summed to identify levels of trait CA, or used individually to measure anxiety in specific contexts (→ Research Methods).

### CAUSES OF TRAIT ANXIETY

Development of trait CA may be due to genetics, modeling, and/or reinforcement patterns. There is good evidence that some types of apprehension/inhibition are biologically based or heritable (e.g., studies of twins, adoptees, and physiology). Modeling may also impact avoidance, when individuals act in ways they see others act. However, modeling tends to be more applicable to behavioral than emotional outcomes.

Reinforcement is based on the premise that consequences or outcomes of what we do cause us to either repeat or avoid certain behaviors. When people are consistently punished for communication, they learn to fear it. But a particularly dysfunctional pattern of reinforcement occurs when responses or reinforcement contingencies are random or unpredictable. Under these circumstances, productive expectations for avoiding punishment or garnering rewards cannot be formed and thus anxiety develops.

Recent attention among some communication scholars has refocused on the extent to which CAA is inborn or acquired. Most conclude that high CA is a combination of biological predispositions and long-term reinforcement patterns creating ambiguous or negative expectations for communicative outcomes.

### EFFECTS OF HIGH COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

Numerous communication scholars have conducted anxiety-related research, but the leader and most prolific researcher in these efforts has been James C. McCroskey. Most research on outcomes of CA has been correlational in design, with a few experimental and observational studies (Greene & Sparks 1983; M. Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield 1986; Behnke & Sawyer 2000). The effects of high CA for the individual include (1) avoidance of communication encounters, (2) withdrawal or minimization of communication

within interactions when they cannot be avoided, (3) cognitive interference which distorts information processing, and (4) behavioral disruption. These negative effects have been studied in a variety of contexts including educational settings, interpersonal situations, organizational contexts, health-related environments, and across cultures. For example, high anxiety is related to preferences for jobs with low interaction demands, self-selected seating arrangements, and task choice. High CAs often exhibit avoidance and disruption in performance/participation classes, whether this involves making speeches, playing music, or explaining science projects. Not surprisingly, they tend to avoid, withdraw from, or perform poorly in presentational circumstances.

Highly anxious people have been shown to differ on both *self-perceptions and perceptions elicited from others*. High CAs report a preponderance of self-focused negative thoughts. They have lower self-esteem, less creativity, and a greater need for structure. In addition they tend to be less assertive, more self-conscious, and higher in receiver apprehension and touch avoidance. They believe that others view them as less competent and may respond with verbal aggression when forced to interact. Higher trait anxiety is related to lower satisfaction with many types of communicative interactions; e.g., health-care providers, social interactions, work settings.

Studies find that others tend to view apprehensive individuals as more withdrawn, lonely, less socially attractive, having few leadership skills, low on immediacy and lacking interaction involvement. They are generally perceived as more difficult to interact with and as possessing poor social skills. Teachers' and supervisors' perceptions are similarly negative, contributing to lower evaluations and levels of achievement among highly anxious individuals.

*Physiologically*, anxious individuals experience greater levels of arousal, especially measured by heart rate, and such anxiety may occur a week or more before a presentation. Importantly, among high CAs, arousal does not quickly dissipate when completing communicative tasks such as public speaking, making it even more aversive.

Overt behaviors are generally congruent with the need to avoid or minimize communication in order to control aversive arousal. The most consistent observable effect is *low verbal output*. Whether in public speaking, groups, or dyads, high CAs talk less than others. Studies reliably report that they engage in less eye contact, maintain neutral facial affect, pause more, exhibit either excessive "fidgety" movement or gestural rigidity, and are more disfluent. Additional actions have also been noted in some studies, but they are more idiosyncratic and less widely verified. When assessing CA via behavioral output, it is best to observe clusters of behaviors rather than one indicant.

Due to fear and expectation of negative evaluation for their communicative efforts, high CAs avoid drawing attention to themselves. They may be overlooked by teachers, acquaintances, or supervisors. Thus, while they perform equally well in large lecture classes and there is no indication of substantive intellectual differences, due to communication expectations, high CAs tend to have lower GPAs and job attainment compared to lower CAs.

### **TREATING COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION'S EFFECTS**

The debilitating effects of high levels of CA have focused attention on alleviating the negative impact. This has taken two primary directions: therapeutic programs and

contextual adjustments. Therapeutic approaches seek to lower anxiety by reducing levels of activation and cognitive disruption, hence altering the individual's cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral responses. Primary forms of treatment are cognitive therapies, systematic desensitization, and communication skills training, with visualization offering a combined approach.

Reducing anxiety via *cognitive therapies* involves changing the way people think and feel about communication interactions, often altering their belief systems. This will likely take substantial in-depth, focused effort. *Systematic desensitization* (SD) incorporates training in muscle relaxation while visualizing a hierarchy of threat situations to reinforce a calm approach to communication challenges. Repetition of images successively approximating the fear-provoking situation, while in a relaxed state, *desensitizes* the apprehensive individual to the communication threat.

*Skills training* focuses on developing more competent behaviors and eliminating dysfunctional actions. Skills training involves planning, rehearsal, and practice of the communication challenge. Each form of treatment can be effective for specific types of anxiety-based avoidance, although meta-analysis indicates additive effects for multiple therapies, and performance visualization incorporates elements of all three to reduce high CA.

Reducing anxiety through *context adjustments*, compared to changing the individual, is most often applied to instructional practices. Numerous studies have examined pedagogical approaches supporting anxious learners. Providing sufficient assignment structure, arranging the room in conversational and nonthreatening patterns, facilitating introductions, supportive teacher behaviors, and avoiding excessive evaluation especially via oral communication, are all strategies that have been found to create a more sympathetic environment for people with high CA, at all levels of learning.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ▶ Emotion ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Research Methods ▶ Reticence ▶ Speech Anxiety ▶ Stage Fright

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## **Communication: Definitions and Concepts**

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The Latin root of “communication” – *communicare* – means “to share” or “to be in relation with.” Through Indo-European etymological roots, it further relates to the words “common,” “commune,” and “community,” suggesting an act of “bringing together” (→ Communication: History of the Idea).

The notion of communication has been present and debated in the west from pre-Socratic times. The Hippocratic Corpus, for example, is a list of symptoms and diseases; it discusses ways of “bringing together” the signs of a disease or ailment with the disease itself for the purposes of diagnosis and prognosis.

### **COMMUNICATION AS PROCESS AND COMMUNICATION AS PRODUCT**

In the west, classic works of Greek philosophy set much of the agenda for understanding communication (Peters 1999, 36–50). Emerging from a society in the transition from oral to literate modes, these works figured communication as a process bringing together humans to consider a shared reality through the word. Like many societies, early Greece was characterized by orality: communication by means of the voice, without the technology of writing. Oral communication, because it could not store information in the same ways and amounts as writing, evolved mnemonic, often poetic, devices to pass on traditions and cultural practices. Narrative, for example, developed as a form of communication in which facts were figured as stories of human action to be retold in relatively small public gatherings of people. Communication, in this formulation, was necessarily a locally situated process.

The development of literate societies involved communication resulting in a “product” to be stored, distributed, and used as a reference for scientific analysis, critique, and political organization. Written communication is originally thought to have developed as a means of keeping a record of economic transactions. In other spheres, it allowed the storage of large amounts of information and the recording of abstract, scientific principles. Furthermore, written communication was also to be used for the reification of cultural and religious traditions. Writing wrought a transformation in the experience of

space and time: in contrast to oral messages, a communication in writing could be accessed at a later date than its composition; it could also be consumed in private. In tandem with these transformations, written communication facilitated scientific thought and the growth of technology, providing a means of knowledge storage that far surpassed, in its capacity for detail and complexity, that of oral memory.

### SOCIAL USES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication could be understood originally as a *repository of tradition*. In pre-print Europe, the protection of religious tradition was partnered by the preservation of writing, enshrining the “Original Word” for the purposes of instruction. Before Gutenberg’s invention of the printing press, writing was the preserve of monasteries, the locations in which scriptures were copied out longhand. Latin writers from Augustine to Aquinas, through exegesis of such manuscripts, also meditated on the relation between signs and referents.

Following the introduction of print, communication became a key *symbolic resource* for social change. In the centuries after 1450, Europe experienced major transformations of social life in which communication played a central role. Print facilitated widespread communication of messages that might be deemed educational or seditious, ultimately enabling confrontation (as in the Reformation) as well as specialization (sciences building on the Renaissance). As a result of a series of legal and constitutional changes across Europe in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, print experienced a boom. Booksellers grew in number; the growth of magazines, periodicals, newspapers, and other printed materials also aided literacy, whether in schools or when taken up privately by the self-taught citizen. Print promoted a more private, individual communication centered on the self. Yet, through its reach to a large audience, it also allowed public life in Europe to prosper.

In the modern era, communication served as a *common denominator of public life*. The activities of public life in Europe developed into what → Habermas (1989) calls the (bourgeois) → *public sphere*. This sphere, derived from the meetings of the mercantile class – burghers and others – for talk and debate, was attendant on the eighteenth-century growth of coffee houses in Britain and the German-speaking lands and, in France, of the salons. As Habermas shows, coffee-house talk was driven by the content of printed periodicals and mainly oriented toward questions of literature and culture, even above politics. It was divorced from the family and the intimate sphere, and simultaneously extraneous to the relations of production, commerce, and business. The discourse of the public sphere could be considered political in quite a “pure” sense, a “rational” communication, enabling self-governance and self-reflection, not simply dictated by, or the epiphenomenon of, the accumulation of capital.

Among the educated classes in eighteenth-century Europe, oral communication assumed an importance that arguably surpasses that of the present-day western world of mobile telephony and wireless connection. Just as periodical content fueled oral communication, the content of conversation was frequently, in turn, reproduced and disseminated in periodicals. The “public sphere thesis” is important for understanding communication as a socio-historical phenomenon in that it exemplifies, first, the ways in



which social entities are brought together (in this case, members of a particular literate class) and, second, the way communication has long been simultaneously interpersonal in the flesh and technologically mediated.

### TWENTIETH-CENTURY CONCEPTS OF COMMUNICATION IN THE WEST

A full-fledged “communication theory” emerged in the twentieth century (→ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968) and was, not coincidentally, intimately linked to investigations of “togetherness” in a number of different fields. Among these investigations were those of American sociology (the Chicago School) and the written accounts of Anglophone anthropology (especially, Malinowski, Boas, and Sapir), which, along with assessments of the idea of “community” (for example, Tönnies), attempted to present a comprehensive vision of how communication is constituted. After these early milestones in the development of the human and social sciences, progress was accelerated in the 1920s by a series of studies into specific aspects of modern communication and communication as a general phenomenon (Peters 1999). New technologies of communication during the period stimulated the broadening of the understanding of communication. *Photography*, in various forms, had proliferated since 1839; film, from the mid-1890s, had become an important new medium of information and entertainment (→ Photography; Film as Popular Culture); and → *radio*, above all, became the defining medium in which communication by one to many – broadcasting, or mass communication – could take place without listeners having to even leave their homes.

Radio was an intensely public medium of communication and stimulated worries about its potential uses in bringing people together through propaganda. The period from the 1920s to the late 1940s, a period dominated by the use of radio for propagandizing purposes by the Nazis and the fascists in Europe, featured a renewal and expansion of the understanding of communication by intellectuals. Political scientists and theorists of the “public” (for example, → Lippmann, Bernays, Schmitt, → Lasswell) were aligned with “administrative researchers” (for example, → Lazarsfeld, Berelson) who carried out industry-funded studies of (usually) media audiences, who were being redefined as key players in public communication.

The understanding of communication in this period generally proceeded from the flow of

Sender == > Message == > Receiver

The message requires encoding and decoding, indicating that it is not a perfect, transparent vehicle for → “*meaning*”: it *mediates* meaning as a result of being in a channel, even if the concept of mediation is given a variety of definitions across the human, social, and technical sciences (→ Media). Lasswell (1948) presupposed that communication has “effects” on the receiver in the formula “Who, says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect,” an assumption shared by the early Payne Fund studies of movies in 1930s America. The work of Lasswell and others represented a “scientific,” de-personalized understanding of communication, which was taken further in an “objective” account of communication by researchers in cybernetics from the late

1940s. Producing → *models of communication*, their work exemplifies the concept of communication as both product and process.

For Shannon and Weaver (1949), on the one hand, an information source in the model, with a message, uses a transmitter to produce a signal, which is received, by a receiver, which delivers a concomitant message to a destination. At the interface of the sent signal and the received signal is likely to be “noise.” Such “noise” might corrupt the implicit integrity of the message as a product during the process of transmission, the prime example being several conflicting signals in the same channel at once. On the other hand, → Gerbner’s 1956 model and the 1957 model of Westley and MacLean attempted to unravel the process of communication to determine how elements and their combination might be susceptible to misunderstanding.

In the second half of the twentieth century, further advances in the technology of communication invited a specific focus on media to explicate what communication is. All communication is mediated by virtue of the fact that telepathy for humans and direct messages for other organisms have not been achieved. Radio was supplemented, especially after the 1950s, by television, a powerful medium of mass communication, allowing the flow not only of aural messages, but of images, as well, into the domestic environment. “Medium theorists,” observing such developments, stressed that media are, in the phrase made famous by the Canadian communication theorist → Marshall McLuhan, “extensions” of humans. Like tools, media extend the capabilities of humans to reach out into a broader world of communication and interaction. However, as a corollary of this, the media transform humans’ apprehension of the world and produce a consciousness that is tied to particular modes of communication, for example, orality and literacy. For medium theorists → Innis, McLuhan, Havelock, Ong, Meyrowitz, Postman, Levinson, et al., all the major media of communication have entailed “paradigm shift[s] in cultural evolution” (Danesi 2002, 15).

*Medium theory* assumed a much different “effect” of communication in audiences than Lasswell and other early social-scientific communication theorists (→ Medium Theory). Also, later social-scientific theories of communication that have been skeptical about direct effects, such as → *uses-and-gratifications* approaches since the 1940s, have found that audiences utilize communications media in ways that do not result in linear effects. In a parallel development, Lazarsfeld and colleagues put forward the idea of a → *two-step flow of communication*. This replaced the image of the audience as a set of unconnected individuals with, instead, a theory of → *opinion leaders* who, having been exposed to media, will circulate messages from the media and, hence, disseminate influence on a local basis (Katz 1957). This idea replayed the concept of communication as a symbolic resource. In a summary assessment of contemporary audience research, sociologist Joseph Klapper (1960) stressed the minimal effects of mass communication, conceptualizing communication instead, in a weak sense, as a common denominator of public life. Klapper’s review suggested that exposure to the large amounts of mass communication that have been characteristic of modernity was more likely to reinforce existing attitudes than to make receivers adopt new ones.

By the early 1980s, televisual communication, having established itself in western homes, was supplemented by video cassette recorders, which potentially offered greater autonomy to viewers through the capacity to “timeshift.” Research demonstrated that

television viewers were not necessarily behaving as expected; indeed, television sets that had been turned on in homes were sometimes found to be totally ignored. Timeshift allowed viewers to receive more televisual communication, repeatedly if chosen, and at times different to those of the original broadcast, by being active media users. Research during this period (→ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968) emphasized other aspects of “the active audience” as well, recapitulating lessons from the uses-and-gratifications approaches, although often in a more critical perspective (for example, Morley 1980; Hobson 1982) (→ Critical Theory; Cultural Studies). The audience was found to be the locus of attitudes, values, experiences – ideological baggage that is brought to the act of decoding. As a result, audience members could be seen to actively and immediately reshape the communications they received, thoroughly transforming them in a manner that tended to invalidate the idea of an encoded message that is decoded by a receiver. Audiences do not simply decode, but “make” or, at least, “remake” communication. In this perspective, communication as “bringing together” implies not just that communities are built through communication, but also that communication is accomplished in and through the “interpretive communities” of communicators.

Twentieth-century technologies re-fashioned the way in which communication was carried out and, accordingly, prompted revisions of the way in which it was to be theorized. Computers entailed a “digitizing” of communication (→ Digitization and Media Convergence), despite the persistence of naturalized, analog graphic user interfaces remediating previous media forms (→ Remediation). The use of computers for Internet access, along with the implementation of hypertext links, created the potential for non-linear as well as many-to-many communication, summed up as *interactivity* (→ Interactivity, Concept of). Some traditional aspects of face-to-face communication were revamped through the “time-space compression,” which allowed global communication to take place instantaneously (email, video conferencing, mobile telephony, and so forth). The proliferation of digital and converged communication technologies seems to suggest that there is more opportunity for humans to communicate with growing numbers of humans than ever before. Yet the profusion of technologies that enables global communication evinces a fundamental imbalance between those who can afford converged technologies and those who cannot. This presents political issues of who may not be “brought together” in communication; it also raises theoretical issues of how communication may be conceptualized with due consideration to the cultural specificity of the concepts of communication and cognition.

### COMMUNICATION BEYOND INDIVIDUAL COGNITION

As Kim (2002) argued, much western communication theory is underpinned by notions of an individualistic self, despite the fact that 70 percent of the world’s population is characterized by cultures of “collectivism” or “interdependence.” Not only have western concepts of communication been grounded in the self rather than “selves”; they have also assumed that communication is the preserve of sapient, cognizing participants.

A non-individualistic conceptualization of communication has been offered by → *semiotics*. Based on pre-Socratic principles, semiotics has been taken up in the study of animal communication as well as in media studies. Semiotics sheds light on communication

because of its focus on signs *as* signs, whether they are part of communication in films or novels, the expressions of animals, or the messages that pass between organisms or cells. The nonverbal signs that are exchanged between animals can be said to actually *communicate*, as do the verbal and nonverbal signs passed between humans. The nonverbal signs that occur in components of organisms or plants also communicate. The concept of intrahuman and interspecies – as well as interhuman – message transfer amounts to a major reorientation of the understanding of communication, one in which human affairs constitute only a small part of communication in general.

## COMMUNICATION AND NONCOMMUNICATION

Definitions of communication often assume successful contact and interaction. Yet the importance of noncommunication (or miscommunication) in understanding what communication is should not be underestimated. This includes ambiguity, misunderstanding, lying, cheating, deception, and unconscious and willful self-deception.

The famous case of “Clever Hans,” involving a horse whose abilities “proved” that animals could think and speak, but which in fact was responding to a number of nonverbal cues emitted by its “interlocutor,” illustrates well the vicissitudes of communication (Sebeok and Rosenthal 1981). Similarly, the overvaluing of verbal communication has tended to encourage neglect of nonverbal communication, a fact well understood by magicians and others practiced in deception. Lying is also central to communication, particularly as lies are often necessary to the project of human interaction (Ekman 2001). Nor is this exclusively a matter of human communication. In the animal world, too, lying is widespread (Sebeok 1986). Indeed, the reliance of communication on signs to substitute for something else that “does not necessarily have to exist or to actually be somewhere at the moment that a sign stands in for it” (Eco 1976, 7) suggests the fraternity of communication with lying.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Meaning ▶ Media ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Photography ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Radio ▶ Remediation ▶ Semiotics ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Communication Education, Goals of

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Because the ability to communicate is considered a major – perhaps even the primary – defining characteristic of humanity, people assume that, throughout human history, elders have taught the young this essential survival skill. Despite agreement on the importance of learning to communicate, there is no consensus about the particular goals of communication education or even about how people learn. People in many parts of the world and for long stretches of history have assumed that communicative competence emerges almost naturally through innate predispositions and imitation. In other cultural and historical settings, communication abilities have been fostered through informal forms of coaching or apprenticeships that were specific to the context of use. Yet others have believed that communication skills and knowledge were subjects that could and should be taught formally or at least explicitly in educational institutions.

The term “communication education” generally applies to these structured curricula. Discussions of the goals for teaching communication in schools center on the philosophical and ideological underpinnings of the enterprise. From whatever goals are established, educators derive their specific instructional objectives, standards, and implicit or explicit pedagogies. Although multiple goals are present in most educational settings, the four following categories of goals represent distinct rationales for teaching communication.

## GOALS OF INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCE

The most evident goal of communication education is to equip individual learners with the skills and knowledge they will require for success (→ Student Communication Competence). Countless studies confirm the popular wisdom that, other things being even approximately equal, the person who is skilled in communication will have greater academic and career success, more satisfying interpersonal relationships, and a greater sense of individual agency and empowerment. In the popular mind, communication education probably evokes an image of Demosthenes shouting over the sounds of the surf with pebbles in his mouth, a speech coach working with a politician to polish an important speech, or members of a Toastmasters Club meeting to overcome fears of speaking. In every case, the assumption is that individuals can meet their personal goals by becoming more articulate. The primacy of this goal can be traced from the emergence of the sophists in ancient Greece, through the rigid scholastic exercises of the Middle Ages, the stylized posturing of the elocutionary movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the extensive modern curricula in public speaking, argumentation, organizational, interpersonal and group communication, journalism, broadcasting, advertising and public relations (→ Rhetorical Studies).

Communicative competence has been widely theorized, providing alternative frameworks for scholars to classify the educational goals for individuals. For example, Dell Hymes' influential 1972 model implies a *hierarchical and developmental process* of acquiring communicative competence. At least a minimal mastery of grammatical and syntactical goals would be prerequisite to the achievement of more advanced strategic goals such as making situationally and culturally appropriate communication choices. Spitzberg and Cupach's 1984 model identifies *three components of competence*: (1) knowledge, (2) skill, and (3) motivation. This perspective invites educators to take a more functional perspective on classifying the goals of communication education. Recent documents such as the National Communication Association's *Speaking, listening and media literacy standards* (1998) and the *Expected outcomes for speaking and listening* (Morreale et al. 1998) illustrate comprehensive listings of specific individual goals, combining the type of learning outcome sought and the increasing level of complexity of learning.

## GOALS OF ENABLING ADVANCED LEARNING

A second set of communication goals, though still centered on the development of individuals, places less emphasis on communication skills as outcomes and more on the essential *role communication plays in all learning*. This perspective goes beyond the obvious point that learners must be able to receive and process information. Instead, learning itself is understood as a profoundly social process in which students co-construct knowledge through the acts of discussion and writing. This way of justifying the study of communication springs in part from the work of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, who in the 1920s argued that development occurs first interpsychically through scaffolded communication before becoming internalized. The move in rhetorical theory toward understanding rhetoric as epistemic further reinforces the concept of communication as a way of knowing rather than just a way of transmitting knowledge (→ Rhetoric and Social Thought).

This distinction can be traced back to the medieval universities, where the liberal arts curriculum was divided into the trivium and quadrivium. The *trivium* consisted of logic, dialectic, and rhetoric, skills that were prerequisite to learning the subjects of the *quadrivium*. In many contemporary universities, especially in the United States, communication is categorized as a basic intellectual skill, along with writing, critical thinking, and computation, which is required of all students. The justification for the requirement is that speaking and listening are prerequisite to gaining an advanced understanding of all other subjects (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts).

### **GOALS OF CIVIC, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**

A third major way to think about the goals of communication education shifts the emphasis from the individual to the *needs of the larger society*. Advocates of formal instruction in speech and communication often base their rationale on the need for certain kinds of citizens, consumers, or workers in order to meet national goals. Ever since the newly enfranchised citizens of the Greek city states recognized the need for coaching to defend their interests in public forums, the survival of democratic societies has been premised on the existence of a well-educated populace able to listen critically, argue effectively, collaborate, and compromise. When social critics and reformers set forth a vision of the good society, they are in effect specifying the kinds of citizenry that will be needed to create that society. Whether or not democratic values are at the heart of a political system, every collectivity has economic, religious, and cultural goals that can only be realized by developing appropriate communication skills. In a patriarchal society, communication education might have the goal of teaching women how to communicate submissively. Where economic productivity reigns as supreme, workers would need to learn to be complacent and to follow directions without question. In a highly collectivist culture, skills of teamwork and cooperative communication are essential; in a more individualistic culture, educational goals would involve fostering critical thinking, assertive communication, and effective self-presentation. In short, it can be argued that we can discern much about the vision of a society by the goals it sets for education of the youth, and more specifically, by the communication goals that are adopted (→ Discourse; Political Discourse).

### **GOALS OF TRANSFORMATION AND EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNICATION**

A final set of goals for communication education seeks to instill certain *habits of mind and heart in learners*. Advocates of this perspective look at education as more than technical skill building, and communication as more than transmission of information. Instead, they see all communication, including acts of education, as profoundly constitutive. The ways people speak and listen and relate are deeply tied to their cultural and personal identities and are enmeshed with relations of power and privilege. Within such assumptions, both individual competence and social indoctrination are illusory. It is not possible or justifiable for communication education to incrementally improve either individuals or societies, so the goal becomes to transform both. In effect, the more traditional goals of communication are replaced by a *set of meta-goals*. Students are taught that although it is impossible to

step outside of communication to study it objectively, they can glimpse its complexity through critical reflection. These perspectives have emerged from postmodern and post-foundational philosophy, social construction theories, critical pedagogy, critical theory, feminism, postcolonialism, and new media studies (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy).

The rapid acceleration of change has challenged all educational theories that assume elders know what youth will need to thrive in the future (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span). But specifically within communication, the new communication technologies have radically changed not only social life but also social reality. Students will continue to need to know how to communicate effectively through oral face-to-face modalities and traditional written media, but they also need to master the infinite combinations of time, space, sight, sound, music, pictures, and words that are available to them as communicators. More significantly, they will not only need to know the etiquette of mobile phones, the design of PowerPoint presentations, the dynamics of teleconferencing, and the strategies of Internet searches, but they will need to become aware of how these communicative forms themselves, and others their teachers have not dreamed of, will shape them and their world. This level of self-reflexiveness and cultural observation goes well beyond the foundations laid in critical media literacy or the study of computer-mediated communication, though it builds on both (→ Media Literacy). To reach these goals, students will need a sophisticated arsenal of analytical and critical frameworks. They will need to be intensely aware of the impact of the choices they make, not just about what to communicate but also how to communicate, rigorously critical of the kinds of social arrangements that are instantiated and perpetuated. At the same time, advocates of this sort of critical perspective do not want students to become overwhelmed or cynical, but to be empowered to use communication toward some desirable ends such as social justice or inclusiveness.

### RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE GOALS

Those who actually build communication curricula, write textbooks, and/or prepare communication teachers will usually have a conscious awareness of these goals and can justify setting one in a primary position. Politicians, parents, students, and even teachers may not be fully aware of the assumptions they are making when they speak about why communication should be taught. Unstated assumptions about the *priorities of these goals* underlie some of the dramatic clashes in the political and educational spheres.

When one group of educational stakeholders believes that students need to have the skills employers want and another believes that students should become discerning and eloquent citizens, radically different notions of the goals for communication education emerge. At the same time, if educators are able to articulate multiple goals and develop creative curricula and pedagogies, it is often possible for two or even all four goals of education to reinforce one another. Even when multiple goals coexist at a philosophical level, the move to more specific goals for a particular communication course or workshop typically creates tensions. In any area of communication, educators must set relative priorities for teaching theory and teaching skills, and also must decide whether to emphasize goals for senders of communication or goals for receivers. Those who deal with the performative aspects of communication will also need to set priorities between



content goals and presentation goals. Educators find that they differ on the importance of helping students develop effective communication products (such as speeches, press releases, effective interviewing protocols) as compared to helping them master the more general processes (audience analysis, persuasive strategies, empathic listening), which can be applied to a variety of settings (Sprague 1999).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Discourse ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Rhetoric and Social Thought ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Scholarship of Teaching ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Student Communication Competence

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# **Communication Evaluation Research**

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This entry addresses research that evaluates communication programs designed to bring about change in individual behavior and social norms. These programs or campaigns may focus on health, agriculture, environment, water and sanitation, democracy and governance, gender equity, human rights, and related areas. They can be referred to by different labels: → strategic communication, behavior change communication, information-education

communication, communication for social change, and → development communication, among others (→ Health Campaigns for Development). Communication evaluation research serves both to guide the design of such programs and to determine their effectiveness in achieving their objectives (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods). The myriad of communication forms used in such programs generally fall into three categories: mass media, community mobilization, and interpersonal communication/counseling (IPC/C).

## **TYPES OF EVALUATION**

A comprehensive evaluation of a communication program includes three primary types of evaluation: formative, process, and summative. Large-scale, well-funded programs will use all three types of evaluation, whereas those with limited budgets or evaluation know-how often stop at formative or process evaluation.

### **Formative Evaluation**

Formative evaluation refers to activities undertaken to furnish information that will guide program design. This information helps program planners to determine who is most affected by the problem; identify the needs of specific sub-groups; ascertain existing knowledge, beliefs and → attitudes; determine access to levels of services, information, social support and other resources; understand barriers to action; and determine audience media habits and preferences (Bertrand 2005; → Audience Research; Exposure to Communication Content). Some relevant information may be available from existing data sources such as epidemiologic or demographic reports, situation assessments, → surveys, secondary analyses of existing data, media ratings data, service delivery statistics, and other program records (→ Nielsen Ratings). However, the researcher often needs to collect new information regarding the opinions, aspirations, fears, beliefs, and other key psychological factors that influence a given behavior (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). Primary data collection may include quantitative or qualitative research methods (→ Qualitative Methodology; Quantitative Methodology). Surveys are by far the most commonly used quantitative method. Frequently used qualitative research techniques include focus groups, in-depth interviews, direct → observation, and a range of different participatory methods. This information serves to guide the design of a communication strategy for a given setting. It captures existing levels of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors relevant to the topic. It also focuses on characteristics of the intended audience, the potentially most effective channels, the sources of motivation and barriers to change among the intended audience, and other elements (→ Audience Segmentation).

Communication pre-testing before final production is one type of formative research specific to communication programs. This technique involves testing a communication product (e.g., radio spot, poster, TV storyboard) among a convenience sample of members of the intended audience to measure comprehension, attractiveness of the message, identification with the message, cultural acceptability, and related factors. Programs often conduct multiple pre-tests in an effort to “get the message right” before investing in expensive print runs or broadcast time.

### Process Evaluation

Process evaluation involves tracking program implementation once the program is launched. One common form of process evaluation is to compare actual implementation to the proposed scope of work, to answer the question: to what extent is the project implemented according to plan? (Rossi et al. 2004). This information serves *two useful purposes*. First, it can alert program managers to delays or shortfalls in implementation that need to be addressed midcourse in program implementation. Second, it provides valuable information in later assessing the effectiveness of the program to achieve its objectives. If the program falls short in delivering the projected elements (e.g., training, print materials, community mobilization activities, counseling sessions, media broadcasts) it will likely not achieve the desired objective. Rossi et al. (2004) distinguish between *implementation failure* (the program not implemented as designed) and *theory failure* (the hypothesized effects not being realized despite complete and appropriate program implementation). The results of process evaluation also help managers to understand the program dynamics such that one can replicate successful components and eliminate ineffective elements in future efforts (Bertrand 2005).

Process evaluation may take several forms, one of which is *monitoring outputs*. At a minimum, programs can and should track the activities conducted, such as number of materials used, number of radio spots, number and frequency of broadcasts for radio or TV spots, number of community educational activities conducted, and so forth. The measure reflects program activity and program managers' compliance with a work plan, but it should not be confused with achieving desired results or outcomes (measured in terms of actual change).

Measuring the *reach of a communication program* is another important type of process evaluation, especially for large-scale interventions. Such studies – conducted among a random sample (→ Sampling, Random) or a convenience sample (→ Sampling, Nonrandom) of the intended audience – indicate the percentage of the audience exposed to the campaign through different channels. They may also measure recall of specific elements such as the content of a radio spot or the logo of a campaign. The data indicate overall coverage by the program as well as the relative reach of different channels used. Data on reach via different channels also provide the basis for evaluating “dose–response” (i.e., the greater the exposure, the greater the effects) as part of summative evaluation, discussed below.

Special studies that examine the *functioning of different elements* of the program constitute another form of process evaluation. For example, a mystery client study to measure the quality of counseling in a given program captures one aspect of program implementation. Reviewing broadcast logs can indicate whether stations are delivering the number of broadcasts purchased or promised. Participants in community meetings or health fairs may give feedback on what they liked and disliked about the event.

In short, process evaluation tracks whether a communication program is implemented according to plan. Alternatively, it may capture *how much* the program has done and *how well* it has done it, measured by audience reaction and reach. However, process evaluation stops short of answering the question: did the desired behavior change occur among members of the intended audience?

## Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluation measures the extent to which change occurs, consistent with objectives of the program. It addresses the issue: did the program make a difference? Did it have an impact?

The answer to the question of impact relates directly to the objectives of the program and the types of change anticipated. In some cases, especially where funds for evaluation are limited, program planners may rely primarily on measuring service utilization or sales (also labeled “service outputs”), which serve as proxies to behavior change. For example, in the United States a smoking cessation campaign might track calls to a hotline or sales of nicotine patches. In an international public health context, programs might monitor the volume of contraception sold, the number of bed nets distributed, the number of prenatal visits made, or the number of doses of polio vaccine administered.

*Measuring outputs* has several advantages. First, the necessary data are often collected for programmatic purposes and become available to evaluators at little or no cost. Second, the results are easy to grasp, especially when presented in graphic form. And third, such measures reflect a behavioral response on the part of the intended audience. However, they fall short in answering the question of whether the program changed behavior, for several reasons. First, it is difficult to conclude with certainty that the program – and not other activities or factors – prompted the actions reflected in these measures of service utilization or sales (→ Validity). Second, the supplies or devices might be purchased but never used. And third, these measures of output yield “numerator data” but no indication of the denominator (50,000 prenatal visits might be impressive in a small country, whereas it would be insignificant in China).

For this reason many evaluators prefer to assess behavior change from a given program by conducting a population-based survey among members of the intended audience to measure outcomes consistent with the objectives of the program. Three categories of outcomes are initial, intermediate, and long-term. *Initial outcomes* relate to cognitive and psychosocial factors that are hypothesized to precede actual behavior change: knowledge, → risk perception, attitudes, beliefs, and self-efficacy (→ Political Efficacy), among others. Even if a program does not achieve its behavioral objectives, program staff may want to know if the audience demonstrates any progress toward the behavior, as outlined by Piotrow et al. (1997).

*Intermediate outcomes* refer to actual behaviors that will lead to the desired end state (e.g., stopping smoking to reduce morbidity or mortality, conserving water to improve the environment, voting in an election to promote democracy). Most summative evaluations that measure outcomes focus most directly on this type of intermediate outcome, because it captures the behavior(s) promoted by the program and is measurable within the life-span of the project.

By contrast, *long-term outcomes* measure the desired end state or ultimate objective of the program, such as increased life-span or decreased morbidity, increased agricultural yields, improved environmental conditions, more democratic societies, and higher quality of life. Yet communication research evaluation rarely measures these long-term outcomes because (1) they often happen long after the program itself ends, and (2) factors other than the communication program contribute to them (→ Media Effects Duration).

## MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

With respect to measuring impact, the strength of the evidence varies depending on the study design and/or statistical techniques used (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory). Not surprisingly, the methods needed to produce the strongest evidence are often the most costly and/or require knowledge of advanced analytic techniques, making it difficult for small projects with limited budgets to use the most rigorous evaluation methods (Bertrand 2005). The levels of evidence from strongest to weakest are described below.

### *Change occurred that can be attributed to the intervention/program*

Most donor agencies and program directors would ideally like to be able to make this claim. Purists would argue that the only means to definitively establish cause and effect is to conduct a randomized trial (experimental design). Specifically, the evaluator would randomly assign subjects to two groups, apply the communication intervention to one (the experimental or treatment group) and withhold it from the other (the control group), then compare the behavioral outcomes for the two to determine whether the program had any effect (→ Experiment, Field; Experimental Design). However, this type of randomized trial or controlled field test is only possible where the program can feasibly manipulate (control) exposure to the communication (e.g., in the case of home visits, mass mailings, clinic counseling sessions). By contrast, a large-scale program with a mass media component such as radio or TV potentially reaches all segments of the population; those not reached are generally “atypical” and thus unsuitable for purposes of comparison. This situation requires evaluators to seek alternative methods to determine the impact or effectiveness of communication programs, often requiring advanced statistical analyses.

### *Change occurred, which is associated with exposure to the intervention*

Because randomized trials are not feasible for the evaluation of communication programs using broadcast media, evaluators must seek alternative methods that yield plausible evidence of impact (Victora et al. 2004). For example, they may use quasi-experimental designs (Fisher & Foreit 2002). The most frequently used are time series, pre-test/post-test nonequivalent control group designs, and separate sample pre-test/post-test designs (→ Longitudinal Analysis; Time-Series Analysis). An alternative approach that is increasingly in use to measure communication effectiveness involves post-test only data, analyzed using a series of econometric techniques, such as simultaneous equations models, propensity score matching, or longitudinal/panel data methods (→ Test Theory). However, the latter require advanced statistical techniques and are used primarily in well-funded large-scale evaluations. Although still relatively rare, some evaluators have analyzed program costs in relation to effectiveness in an effort to measure “bang for the buck” (Bertrand & Hutchinson 2006).

### *Change occurred in the desired outcomes following the intervention*

In the real world, many program managers, donor agencies and policymakers are happy if change in the desired outcome(s) occurs at all, and they are less concerned about the technical aspects of study designs (for example, that factors other than the communication

program might have triggered the change). This type of trend data constitutes “adequate evidence” of change, to use the language of Victora et al. (2004). Programs with limited budgets or access to evaluation specialists can track changes in data from program statistics or surveys to demonstrate the extent of change in behavior(s), consistent with program objectives.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Development Communication ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Observation ▶ Political Efficacy ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Survey ▶ Time-Series Analysis ▶ Test Theory ▶ Validity

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## **Communication as a Field and Discipline**

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The editorial structure of the *International encyclopedia of communication* offers one view on the present state of communication as an academic field. The 29 editorial areas range

in scope from micro-analysis of individual behavior (e.g., → Information Processing) to macro-analysis of communication institutions on societal and international scales (e.g., → International Communication). Editorial areas also range across modes of inquiry, including those of quantitative social science (e.g., → Media Effects), interpretive social science (e.g., → Language and Social Interaction), critical and cultural studies (e.g., → Feminist and Gender Studies), humanities (e.g., → Rhetorical Studies), applied professions (e.g., → Journalism), and such varied other interdisciplines as → media history, → media economics, and communication and media law and policy.

As these examples suggest, the field of communication is highly diverse in methods, theories, and objects of study. What, if anything, unites the field as a coherent entity? What warrants bringing together such an apparently eclectic group of topics and approaches in a single reference work? Presumably, as the encyclopedia's title indicates, the common focus is on "communication." But what is the nature of that common focus? Is communication merely a nominal theme that loosely connects a series of otherwise unrelated disciplines and professions? Is communication truly an interdisciplinary field in which progress in knowledge is only possible through close cooperation and synergy among several distinct disciplines composing the field? Is communication actually (despite its apparent fragmentation), or at least potentially, the object of a distinct intellectual discipline in its own right? Might each of these interpretations of the field be true in some respects?

Three editorial areas overview the field as a whole and are, therefore, potentially helpful for illuminating its disciplinary identity and coherence: → Communication Theory and Philosophy, → Research Methods, and the subject of the present entry, Communication as a Field and Discipline. Whereas the first two editorial areas examine, respectively, theories and methods, Communication as a Field and Discipline is concerned with the historical development and academic–professional institutionalization of communication studies. It includes entries covering the history of the field, professional organizations and issues, and the current state of communication research and education in geographical regions around the globe. Where the question of communication's disciplinary coherence is concerned, these institutional and professional aspects of the communication field also touch on matters of theory and methodology.

## HISTORY OF THE COMMUNICATION FIELD

The English word *communication* derives from Latin and originally referred to acts of sharing or making common but without the distinctively modern emphasis on communication as a process of sharing symbols, information, and meaning. Those modern senses of the word can be traced back through a long "spiritualist" tradition (Peters 1999) to ancient and early Christian eras in the west, but emerged toward their current prominence in ordinary English discourse only from the late nineteenth century. Around the same time, academic studies of communication began to appear on scattered topics such as transportation systems, crowd behavior, community, and newspapers, with important work being done in Germany, France, and the USA. By the post-World War II period, in which communication research began to be recognized as a distinct academic field, the ordinary concept of communication had evolved rich connotations related to semantics,

therapy and human relations, interaction and social influence, mass communication, and information technology, and derivatives of the Latinate term, *communication*, or native words that had acquired similar connotations, were spreading globally in various languages (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts; Communication: History of the Idea; Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968).

Communication research and education underwent *rapid growth and institutional consolidation as an academic discipline* in the second half of the twentieth century (Craig & Carlone 1998; → Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968). Unlike, for example, the field of molecular biology, which emerged around the same time as the result of a unique scientific breakthrough (the 1953 publication of DNA's double helix molecular structure), communication and media studies sprang more or less independently from many different sources. Formation of the communication field has resulted from a partial convergence of various disciplines and lines of research that intersect in complex ways, all somehow related to the phenomenon of "communication," but have never been tightly integrated as a coherent body of thought. Hence, the manifest diversity of communication research and education is not a recent development but has characterized the field throughout its history.

The *intellectual traditions* that have informed the modern field of communication have come primarily from two streams: the humanities and the social sciences. Antecedents of the *humanities* most relevant to communication go back to the ancient Greek arts of rhetoric, dialectic, and poetics (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic; Rhetoric and Poetics). In early-nineteenth-century Europe, the humanities formed as research disciplines concerned with historically oriented studies of texts and artifacts. The disciplines of → aesthetics, → hermeneutics, → historiography, and → linguistics were among the intellectual traditions important to communication that developed with the humanities in this period.

The second main stream that informs the modern field of communication emerged a century later with *experimental psychology and the social sciences*. The system of social science disciplines that crystallized in that period included anthropology, economics, political science, and sociology but not communication (Abbott 2001). However, communication became a topic of interest across disciplines and a stimulus to interdisciplinary work that eventually gave rise to the institutionalization of the communication field.

As it was institutionalized, the field constructed an eclectic theoretical core by collecting ideas relevant to communication from across the social sciences, humanities, and even engineering and the natural sciences. Craig (1999) presented a model of the field based on the idea that distinct theoretical concepts of communication in the diverse intellectual traditions of the field interact with ordinary → meta-discourse about communication to address practical social problems. Craig identified *seven main traditions of communication theory* distinguished by different practical concepts of communication that underlie them: rhetoric, → semiotics, → cybernetics, → phenomenology, social psychology, socio-cultural theory, and → critical theory.

The vast range of topics in this encyclopedia reflects, again, the range of sub-fields and special research topics that now make up the field of communication. This body of knowledge has no universally accepted overall structure. Sub-fields and topics can be grouped and organized in various more or less systematic ways for different purposes. The field can be *divided up by disciplines*, beginning with "humanities," "social sciences,"



and “applied professions” at the top level. Or again, the field is sometimes bifurcated into “communication studies” and “media studies,” with sub-fields arrayed under those main headings. The *editorial areas and content taxonomy* developed for this encyclopedia provide a pragmatic organizing scheme that loosely follows some of the divisions and special interest groups of the → International Communication Association (ICA). Berger and Chaffee (1987) created a different scheme that organized the field in *three dimensions* according to “levels of analysis” (individual, interpersonal, network, and macro-social), “functions” (socialization, persuasion, conflict, etc.), and “contexts” (family, health-care, professional mass communication, etc.).

## COMMUNICATION RESEARCH AND EDUCATION AROUND THE GLOBE

### Common Themes

The state of communication research and education varies considerably within and among countries but can nevertheless be summarized with regard to some *common themes*. One theme certainly is *growth*: the field is flourishing in many parts of the world, wherever political and economic conditions and academic institutions have allowed it to take root at all. Where growth has been stimulated to a great extent by demand for trained employees in burgeoning media and communication-related industries, which is often the case, growth is also associated with certain problems: strain on resources, an over-emphasis on practical training of undergraduates that can stifle the development of a strong research discipline, and the threat of co-optation by commercial interests that are not necessarily aligned with academic and intellectual priorities.

Although always with much borrowing from Europe, the field matured first in the USA and spread from there. Overdependence on American and European concepts and practices and the need to develop locally based, culturally relevant knowledge of communication are common themes in other regions. Yet, as that very emphasis on local development suggests, the field is *increasingly internationalized*, with global influences now flowing from many places. As the field has spread globally, its assimilation to different academic systems and national cultures has created distinct local characteristics.

Finally, an international consensus may be emerging that the *name and underlying concept* of the broad field to which all contribute, as indicated by the title of this encyclopedia, is *communication*. Insofar as the concept of communication is understood to include forms of human interaction not encompassed by media studies and related professions, this trend may have implications for the future development of sub-fields of communication that now may seem to be “missing” from programs in many places. These themes are further developed as we survey the communication field region by region around the globe.

### The Americas

Academic communication and media studies programs in the USA are numerous, well established, and often include a broader range of sub-fields than programs in other countries. Unlike the rest of the world, in which communication research and education

tend to be identified with media studies and related professional fields, in the USA communication typically includes, in addition to media-related areas, substantial components of speech and rhetorical studies, → interpersonal communication, → organizational communication, and other areas of study not primarily concerned with media. Those subjects are studied, of course, at universities elsewhere but are less likely to be institutionally affiliated with communication; instead, they may be housed with disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, or management. Similar academic configurations are also common among some of the traditional elite universities in the USA, such as those of the Ivy League, many of which do not yet have communication schools or departments.

*Canada* (with important exceptions, such as rhetorical and organizational communication studies at the University of Montreal) generally follows the international pattern. A distinct Canadian contribution to the field has been the tradition of → medium theory growing from the work of → Innis and → McLuhan.

In the history of US higher education, “practical” subjects like speech and journalism were established in the early twentieth century primarily in the growing public-land-grant universities (→ Journalism Education; Speech Communication, History of). Under the influence of the interdisciplinary communication research movement that coalesced after World War II and related cultural trends, speech and journalism, along with other communication-related fields, gradually shifted their academic identities toward communication and began including that word in the names of courses and academic programs, professional associations, books, and journals. Student enrollments soared as communication programs in various arrangements (some in comprehensive schools or departments under various names, others divided between journalism/media studies and communication studies) became the designated institutional homes for communication research and education across the range of topics and approaches included in this encyclopedia, and more (e.g., writing, speech pathology, performance studies, or theater, in some institutions; see Craig & Carlone 1998; → Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada).

Major academic associations serving the communication discipline in North America include the National Communication Association (NCA; [www.natcom.org](http://www.natcom.org)), the Canadian Communication Association (CCA; [www.acc-cca.ca](http://www.acc-cca.ca)), the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC; [www.aejmc.org](http://www.aejmc.org)), and the Broadcast Education Association (BEA; [www.beaweb.org](http://www.beaweb.org)).

Journalism schools were founded in *Latin America* beginning in the 1930s and 1940s. Communication research, including both US-influenced empirical studies of mass communication and diffusion of innovations as well as critical studies on topics such as cultural imperialism and globalization, developed slowly beginning in the 1960s but more quickly in recent years (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America). Associations of communication scholars currently active in the Latin American region include the Asociación Latinoamericana de Investigadores de la Comunicación (ALAIIC; [www.alaic.net](http://www.alaic.net)), the Federación Latinoamericana de Facultades de Comunicación Social (Felafacs; [www.felafacs.org](http://www.felafacs.org)), and nationally based associations such as the Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Interdisciplinares da Comunicação (Intercom; [www.intercom.org.br](http://www.intercom.org.br)) in Brazil and the Asociación Mexicana de Investigadores Comunicadores (AMIC; [www.amicmexico.org](http://www.amicmexico.org)) in Mexico.

### Europe and Russia

The oldest intellectual traditions from which modern communication theory derives originated in Europe, as did certain fields of modern communication research (e.g., journalism studies growing out of the late-nineteenth-century German *Zeitungswissenschaft*). However, communication research did not really take off as an organized academic field in western Europe until the 1970s and in eastern Europe and Russia until the post-Soviet period in the 1990s.

Communication research in *western Europe* through the 1960s was influenced primarily by US empirical social scientific studies of mass communication content and effects. From the late 1960s, reverse flows of influence from Europe to America in the fields of critical theory, political economy of the media, and critical studies of popular culture also became important. Despite these significant cross-influences between Europe and the US, differences both among European countries and between Europe generally and the US due to different media and political systems, policy concerns, languages, and academic traditions have also shaped the field of communication in western Europe.

For example, the state tends to be more directly involved with the mass media in Europe than in the US, including a much larger publicly owned media sector, as a result of which European research tends to be more concerned with questions of media independence, political diversity, and cultural policy. Fields such as journalism studies, → political communication, → technology and communication, and → popular culture are highly developed in western Europe, while fields such as interpersonal communication and rhetorical studies continue to be less developed or institutionally disconnected from communication and media studies. Research on personal forms of communication occurs, however, in areas such as computer-mediated interaction (→ Personal Communication by CMC), → intercultural and intergroup communication, and organizational communication, all growing fields in Europe. The recently established European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA, created in 2005 in a merger of two older associations) presently includes 13 thematic sections covering both established and emerging topical areas ([www.ecrea.eu](http://www.ecrea.eu)) (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe).

The field of communication, primarily focused on media and related issues, developed rapidly in *central and eastern Europe and Russia* from the 1990s. Prior to World War II the beginnings of communication research across several disciplines followed trends in the west except in the former Soviet Union, where journalism studies were organized to support the functions of state → propaganda. The Soviet pattern prevailed as well to varying degrees in countries of eastern and parts of central Europe from the postwar period through the breakup of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s. Media and journalism historiography, media sociology, linguistics, literary theory and semiotics, and “press science” in the former Soviet bloc are among the disciplines that have principally contributed to the formation of communication research and education in eastern Europe and Russia (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia). Although nonmedia areas of study are not usually affiliated with the communication discipline in this region, topical areas represented in the recently organized Russian Communication Association (RCA; [www.russcomm.ru](http://www.russcomm.ru)) currently include interpersonal

communication, → group communication, and → discourse pragmatics (→ Linguistic Pragmatics), along with media-related fields.

### Africa and the Middle East

Communication education and media studies are beginning to develop in *sub-Saharan Africa* despite the postcolonial legacy of economic and political problems that continues to affect academic and media institutions across much of the continent. The expansion of media industries in some countries has created a rising demand for journalism and communication training programs, which are generally based on western models. Research goes on in universities and research institutes in fields such as → development communication, → health communication, and → cultural studies (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Africa; Development Communication: Africa). Aside from the recently organized Trans-African Council for Communication Education (Tracce), the most currently visible academic association is the nationally based South African Communications Association (SACOM; [www.ukzn.ac.za/sacomm](http://www.ukzn.ac.za/sacomm)), which includes sections representing corporate and business communication, cultural and social theory, film studies, and journalism and media studies.

Having grown rapidly since the 1980s, the communication field is more densely developed in the *Arab world*, where at least 70 academic programs currently exist in universities across the region, most primarily engaged in technical training of undergraduates for occupations in media or public relations. The production of research, limited to date and usually based on western models, has focused on development communication, cultural identity, Arab → stereotypes, Islamic communication, new technology, and globalization, among other topics. Issues concerning imbalances in international news flows and policy debates on the → New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) were prominent in the 1970s and 1980s. Academic associations currently active in the region include the Arab–US Association of Communication Educators (AUSACE; [www2.gsu.edu/~wwwaus](http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwaus)) and the Saudi Association for Media and Communication (SAMC; [www.samc.org.sa](http://www.samc.org.sa)) (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World).

The field in *Israel* has developed differently from other countries of the region since the founding in 1966 of the Communication Institute of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem as the first Israeli institution for communication studies. Communication programs in Israel, which currently number 18, have traditionally emphasized theory and research, although practical training in journalism and media fields has increased since the 1990s, partly in response to privatization and consequent growth of the media sector. In addition to media research, both administrative and critical, Israeli scholars have been prominent in cultural studies, discourse studies, and → ethnography of communication, among other fields. The Israel Communication Association (IsCA; [www.isracom.org](http://www.isracom.org)) has about 200 members (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel).

### Asia and the Pacific

In *South Asia* (India, Pakistan, and nearby countries) the field of communication grew from university-based journalism education, which developed slowly from the 1940s

through the 1980s, and from research projects sponsored by international foundations and agencies primarily concerned with the functions of media and communication in national development. Economic liberalization and privatization of education and media institutions in the 1990s led to a second phase in which the rapid growth of media industries and professions has driven the related growth of career-oriented media education and training programs at a large number of academic institutions. Communication research has also been expanding in areas such as development communication, community media, new media, cinema, and postcolonial studies, and new academic journals are appearing (→ *Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia*). South Asian media and communication scholars participate in local and international academic associations, among the latter especially the → *International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)* and the *Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC; www.amic.org.sg)*.

The communication field is burgeoning in *East Asia* and shows promise of important theoretical contributions spurred by efforts to adapt the discipline to Asian cultural traditions. Communication research and education, mainly in journalism and media studies, are well established in *Taiwan* and *Hong Kong* and have been developing rapidly in mainland *China* since the 1990s as economic liberalization has expanded the job market for communication professionals. The field is also highly developed in *South Korea*, where most universities have instituted journalism and communication programs since the 1970s, and where interpersonal communication and public relations studies are now growing along with the earlier established and still dominant media fields. Journalism education based on US models began to develop in *Japan* after World War II and the field of communication has gradually emerged in recent decades. As in some other parts of the world (e.g., *China* and *Russia*), practical instruction in speech communication skills and intercultural communication sometimes occurs in English programs, which forms a basis for developing studies of interpersonal forms of communication within the broader communication discipline. Communication and media studies are represented in the East Asian region by a growing number of academic journals and by international associations as well as nationally based associations such as the *Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies (KSJCS; www.ksjcs.or.kr)*, the *Communication Association of Japan (CAJ; www.caj1971.com)*, the *Chinese Communication Society (CCS; http://ccs.nccu.edu.tw)* in *Taiwan*, and the recently formed *Chinese Association of Communication (CAC)* in mainland *China* (→ *Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia*).

Communication, journalism, and media studies programs are developing in the *southeast Asian and Pacific* region, most prominently in *Hong Kong* (which can be included in this region for some purposes), *Singapore*, *Australia*, and *New Zealand*, but also in other countries such as the *Philippines*, *Indonesia*, *Malaysia*, and *Thailand*. Aside from the common themes of growth with a typical emphasis on journalism, public relations, and media studies, the diversity of the field across this vast region inhibits generalization. In *Australia*, for example, research and instruction cover a wide range of communication sub-fields, although not always institutionally located in communication/media departments or schools. Australian scholars have done important interdisciplinary work in intergroup communication, → *discursive psychology*, → *organizational discourse*, and *cultural studies*, among other fields. *Organizational communication* has a strong presence in *New*

Zealand. Comparative Asian studies are an important contribution from Singapore and Hong Kong. The Pacific and Asian Communication Association (PACA; [www.paca4u.com](http://www.paca4u.com)) and the Australia and New Zealand Communication Association (ANZCA; [www.anzca.net](http://www.anzca.net)) are among several academic associations that serve media and communication scholars in this region, and at least 11 local journals are published (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Rim).

## INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The field of communication as a whole is served by two international academic associations of worldwide scope: the ICA and the IAMCR. Several other international societies, such as the World Association of Public Opinion Research (WAPOR), the International Association of Language and Social Psychology (IALSP), and the International Association for Relationship Research (IARR), represent particular specialty areas.

ICA was founded in the USA in 1950 as the National Society for the Study of Communication (NSSC), an offshoot of what was then the Speech Association of America (now the National Communication Association), and launched the *Journal of Communication* in 1951. With its reorganization and adoption of its new name in 1969, ICA began a slow, uneven process of growth and internationalization that accelerated in the 2000s as a result of structural changes that markedly increased international membership and participation in the association's governance, conferences, and publication programs. As of 2007, ICA is a USA-based international organization of more than 4000 members from 76 countries. Its 21 divisions and special interest groups span most fields of communication and media studies. It holds conferences in the USA and around the world, and sponsors several highly ranked journals and a review yearbook, among other publications ([www.icahdq.org](http://www.icahdq.org)).

IAMCR from the beginning has differed from ICA in significant ways. Founded in 1957 by a Constituent Assembly meeting in Paris under the auspices of → UNESCO, the International Association for Mass Communication Research (as it was then called) was from the start a diverse international organization that, despite the global Cold War polarization of the time, brought together media researchers from the Soviet bloc, the developing world, and the west. IAMCR has further differed from ICA in being somewhat smaller and differently structured in membership, more focused on international media policy and development issues, and more actively involved in international policy debates on those issues. In response to the changing media environment of the early 1990s, IAMCR changed its name (while keeping the same acronym) to become the International Association for Media and Communication Research. IAMCR sponsors publications, including a book series, and holds major biennial conferences around the world, with smaller conferences held in alternate years ([www.iamcr.org](http://www.iamcr.org)).

## COMMUNICATION AS A DISCIPLINE

The word “discipline” in one of its standard senses refers to any distinct branch of knowledge or learning. Philosophers over many centuries in the western tradition have proposed category schemes for classifying knowledge (Machlup 1982). With the development of modern research universities since the nineteenth century, the notion

of a discipline has evolved in relation to specific institutional and professional structures (university faculties, scholarly societies, peer reviewed journals, funding agencies, etc.) that interact in complex ways with conceptually defined categories of knowledge.

Becher (1989), in a study of academic disciplinary cultures, wrote:

Disciplines are thus in part identified by the existence of relevant departments; but it does not follow that every department represents a discipline. International currency is an important criterion, as is a general though not sharply-defined set of notions of academic credibility, intellectual substance, and appropriateness of subject matter. Despite such apparent complications, however, people with any interest and involvement in academic affairs seem to have little difficulty in understanding what a discipline is, or in taking a confident part in discussions about borderline or dubious cases. (Becher 1989, 19)

Sociology, political science and economics are well-established social science disciplines in this academic system. While communication in the past few decades has acquired many of the trappings of a discipline, not even scholars in the communication field universally regard it as such.

By one relatively straightforward definition, an academic field becomes a discipline when it forms a faculty job market in which PhD-granting departments at different universities regularly hire each other's graduates (Abbott 2001). Communication does appear to meet this structural criterion. For example, a survey of ICA members conducted in 2005 found that two-thirds (rising to three-quarters of younger members) had received academic degrees in communication (Donsbach 2006).

Skeptics, however, still may debate whether communication is sufficiently coherent and distinct from other disciplines in its methods, theories, and objects of study to warrant admitting it to that exclusive club.

### **History of the Debate**

Communication's status as a discipline and/or an interdisciplinary field has been debated internationally at least since the 1980s. The "ferment in the field" addressed by a special issue of the *Journal of Communication* in 1983 mainly concerned the insurgency of critical cultural studies and political economy against the established tradition of functionalist mass communication research (Gerbner 1983). Because the insurgent approaches had gained earlier acceptance in Europe and elsewhere than in the USA, the "ferment" also involved tensions between different national traditions within an increasingly internationalized field. The primary theme implied by the title and contents of the special issue, although not endorsed with equal enthusiasm by all contributors, was unity in diversity. The dissidents were now "in" the field. The field would be redefined to include them.

This spirit of inclusiveness was somewhat in tension with a second theme of the 1983 special issue: that the sought-for unity-in-diversity of communication studies was that of a distinct academic discipline rather than an interdisciplinary area. Discussions of this theme foreshadowed the elements of the *communication science model* of communication as a social science discipline that was articulated in a series of prestigious publications over

the following decade (see especially Berger and Chaffee 1987). While the communication science model acknowledged a broader field of communication extending across a diverse array of academic disciplines and methodological approaches, it asserted the existence of, or at least the potential for, a focal *discipline of communication* marked by characteristic methods, lines of research, and scientific theories.

More specifically, the communication science model described the discipline in terms of *five salient features*: (1) its historical origins in the mid-twentieth-century interdisciplinary communication research movement; (2) its rapid institutional growth and consolidation in the last decades of that century; (3) its core identity as an empirical social science; (4) its proper place as a “variable” discipline spanning different “levels of analysis” in the scheme of academic disciplines (Paisley 1984); and (5) its urgent need to rejoin the “split” between interpersonal and mass communication that constituted the most serious barrier to the development of a cross-level theoretical core in the discipline (Hawkins et al. 1988; Craig 1994). Communication science admittedly did not yet have a well-developed theoretical core; however, its distinct focus on *messages* was said to provide a framework for constructing new theories to explain how messages perform specific *functions* across a micro- to macro-range of *levels of analysis* of communication. Whereas “level” disciplines like psychology and sociology focus on certain levels of human interaction, “variable” disciplines like communication and economics focus on variables that perform related functions on all levels.

The communication science model asserted grounds for inclusiveness and closer integration between interpersonal and mass communication studies, yet its core identity as an empirical social science tended to marginalize the critical and humanistic studies whose massive entrée into the field had produced the earlier-noted “ferment.” Aside from that structural problem, not even all empirical social scientists agreed that communication could or should become an independent discipline. Beniger (1988, 1990), for example, argued based on journal citation analyses that the academic field of communication had unfortunately isolated itself from interdisciplinary trends that offered the most fruitful approaches to communication theory. None of the most important communication theorists were associated with the communication discipline itself, he maintained; hence, communication research could thrive intellectually only if studied as an *interdisciplinary field*, not as an isolated discipline. Institutionalization of communication as a discipline has only produced intellectual poverty, according to this view (Peters 1986). Yet, as Donsbach (2006) noted, powerful institutional imperatives still drive communication to define itself as a discipline.

The ferment in the field was taken up in a different way in ICA’s 1985 annual conference on the theme “Beyond polemics: Paradigm dialogues” and a subsequent two-volume edited collection of essays (Dervin et al. 1989). Included among an international group of authors representing a wide range of areas and approaches to communication research were two major interdisciplinary theorists, Stuart Hall and Anthony Giddens. Although the communication science model was reflected in several chapters and commentaries, the framing vision of “paradigm dialogues” emphasized epistemological pluralism, interdisciplinary openness, and critical reflexivity in communication studies. One essay proposed that communication should be regarded as a “practical discipline” that uses both scientific and humanistic methods to pursue a common, essential purpose,



“to cultivate communicative *praxis*, or practical art, through critical study” (Craig 1989, 98).

In 1993, the *Journal of Communication* revisited the question of disciplinary status in two successive special issues on “The future of the field” (Levy & Gurevitch 1993). A cross-section of the 48 articles reveals *no emerging consensus*. Many writers referred casually to “the discipline” as if there were no longer any question of disciplinary status or identity. Many others claimed, some quite emphatically, that the field of communication was *not* a discipline, but they differed greatly in their attitudes toward this fact and their prescriptions for what, if anything, to do about it. Some were optimistic that the field was emerging toward disciplinary status; others seemed equally certain that no such thing was happening. Some saw the continuing fragmentation of the field as a problem; others celebrated fragmentation as an invaluable source of adaptive strength. Some called urgently for efforts to define the intellectual focus of the discipline; others just as urgently insisted that any such effort to define a theoretical core would be not only useless but counter-productive. Still others were unclear about the possibility or desirability of becoming a discipline but nevertheless proposed various conceptual definitions of the communication field.

None of these views clearly dominated the field by the mid-2000s. The disconnection between interpersonal and mass communication research was still regarded by some as a problem (McMahan 2004), as was the continued institutional growth of the field without any consensus on a theoretical core and a rigorous scientific epistemology (Donsbach 2006). The pluralistic vision of “paradigm dialogues” also continued (Putnam 2001; Dervin 2006), as did efforts to define a disciplinary theoretical core that could still accommodate the field’s pluralism (Craig 1999, 2007, forthcoming).

### PROSPECT FOR THE FUTURE

If communication is a discipline, it is one that will continue to have distinctly *applied* emphasis. As Donsbach (2006) noted, growth of the communication field has been stimulated by the *high demand for communication expertise* in modern societies. Applied communication research is both a quality that characterizes much of the field’s work globally as well as an organized sub-field that has developed, so far, principally in the USA (→ Applied Communication Research). The field’s practical relevance to important policy concerns, ranging from media concentration to public health campaigns to new forms of conflict resolution, both attracts research funding and draws communication scholars into policy debates (→ Communication Research and Politics). Also driving the field toward an applied emphasis is its incorporation of, or close *association with*, a *series of professional/occupational areas*, including, among others, journalism and other media fields, → public relations, → advertising, intercultural training, and organizational training and consulting. Creative efforts to resolve the inevitable tensions that arise between the different needs or value priorities of professional training versus academic research may, in an optimistic view, transform both types of work constructively (→ Communication Professions and Academic Research). Research scholars who may differ in their epistemological commitments still agree that communication research should be applicable to key normative questions and social problems (Deetz 1994; Donsbach 2006).

No matter how intellectually or institutionally well established the discipline of communication may become, many areas of the field will continue to be highly *interdisciplinary*. Contextually focused areas like health communication and political communication inherently straddle disciplinary boundaries. Study of the media as social institutions is unavoidably a multidisciplinary endeavor involving psychology, sociology, economics, legal and policy studies, technology studies, etc. The question is not whether communication will continue to be an interdisciplinary field, as it certainly will do. The open question is whether communication may also have a theoretical core that enables communication scholars to approach interdisciplinary topics from a distinct disciplinary viewpoint that adds real value to the interdisciplinary enterprise. The growing centrality of *communication as a theme in global culture* involves the discipline of communication in a “double hermeneutic,” a process in which the academic field derives much of its identity and coherence from its profound engagement with communication as a category of social practice while also contributing to the ongoing evolution of that very cultural category that constitutes the discipline’s centrally defining object of study.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Africa ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Rim ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Communication Professions and Academic Research ▶ Communication Research and Politics ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Discourse ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Group Communication ▶ Health Communication ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Historiography ▶ Information Processing ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Linguistics ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media History ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Meta-Discourse ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Paradigm ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Political Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Relations ▶ Research Methods ▶ Rhetoric and Dialectic ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ UNESCO

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# Communication: History of the Idea

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The word “communication” is descended from the Latin noun *communicatio*, which meant a sharing or imparting. From the root *communis* (common, public), it has no relation to terms such as *union* or *unity*, but rather is linked to the Latin *munus* (duty, gift), and thus has relatives in such terms as *common*, *immune*, *mad*, *mean*, *meaning*, *municipal*, *mutual*, and German terms such as *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Meinung* (opinion). Its root senses have to do with change, exchange, and goods possessed by more than one person; the Latin verb *communicare* means to make common (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts).

## ANTIQUE ANTICIPATIONS AND MODERN MEANINGS

Three lasting strands of meaning are already visible in the Latin root. The first is communication as a mutual exchange in language. The Roman philosopher-statesman Cicero used *communicatio* as a technical term in his treatise on rhetoric, *De Oratore*, to explain what occurs when an orator overtly includes the audience in the discussion by means of rhetorical questions or staged dialogue (thus “sharing” the floor with listeners). (→ Rhetorical Studies). The notion that communication involves some kind of mutual exchange between speaker and hearer(s) will be one of the defining features of the idea from Cicero onward. Here Cicero is extending *communicatio*’s basic sense of imparting to the realm of speech.

A second strand is visible in the Vulgate, Saint Jerome’s fourth-century Latin translation of the Bible. Here *communicatio* means the imparting of things both tangible (bread) and intangible (spirit). Christianity expanded the idea of communication from material to metaphysical senses: *communicatio* could mean both a physical sharing of food or drink and a spiritual sharing of mind or soul. The Vulgate reinforced the notion of communication as a spiritual sharing.

A third sense is communication as pollution or contamination. As the common can be profane (vulgar or inferior), making common can be taken as defilement or degradation, a sense found in both the Greek New Testament and the Vulgate.

All three senses – rhetorical, spiritualist, and purist, respectively – persist into the modern world. *Communicatio* left descendants in the Romance languages (French *communication*, Spanish *comunicación*, Italian *comunicazione*), and French bequeathed the term to English in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Though most languages have rich semantic clusters around “the common,” English launched the concept of communication into the modern world, and is thus the focus here. The King James Bible (1609), a foundational source for modern English, uses “communication” both to refer to speech (e.g., Matthew 5:37) and to sharing material goods with other people (1 Timothy 6:18). In Shakespeare as well, the verb “to communicate” could involve diverse substances (parts, strength, words), not exclusively symbolic matters. As late as the eighteenth century, the term had the predominant sense of sharing physical rather than metaphysical entities. Philosopher David Hume, for instance, used “communication” to refer both to

billiard balls (communicating motion) and to feelings (communicating emotion). It could even be used to refer to sexual intercourse, just as the term *intercourse* once meant more or less what we mean by “communication” today (human relations).

Communication’s modern sense as a reciprocal sharing of minds through speech was perhaps born in John Locke’s enormously influential *Essay concerning human understanding* (1690). In Locke, “communication” was the practice by which two or more minds shared “ideas” via words. He saw language as a “conduit” (Reddy 1979) between private meaning and shared understanding; signs publish the private wealth locked inside inner experience. He wanted to cure people of the tyranny of meaningless words, but he also loosed the specter of communication breakdown. He left the door open for later thinkers to the labyrinth of solipsism and the doldrums of empty convention – two options quite remote from his own ideal of civil, empirically grounded language use. In Locke, the spiritualist edges out the rhetorical sense: communication meant ways of creating shared mental space, not practices of coordinating public actions. Locke interiorized, privatized, and de-rhetorized communication.

### THE CONUNDRUMS OF COMMUNICATION

The next step was the twinned revolution of transportation and distant signaling that occurred in the long nineteenth century (Mattelart 1996; → Technology and Communication). What Adam Smith had casually called “free commerce and communication” in *The wealth of nations* (1776) soon took on special freight in the wake of political and industrial revolutions, the steamship and railroad, imperialism and the growth of a world market. By the time of Alfred Marshall’s epoch-making *Principles of economics* (1890), “communication” had become a regular term in economics, and an earlier economist with a very different outlook also gave “communication” (*Verkehr*) a central spot in his theory: Karl Marx. “Communication” retained a strong transportational sense into the early twentieth century and the term “lines of communication” still describes military networks for moving messages, troops, and supplies. By the early twentieth century, “communication” could refer to all the ways in which people interact symbolically.

The American sociologist Charles Horton Cooley announced the key rupture in 1894: “transportation is physical, communication is psychical.” This dematerialization of communication took its immediate inspiration from electricity – a potent medium and metaphor for human connection since the eighteenth century. By putting distant terminuses into instantaneous contact, the electrical telegraph revived the older spiritualist sense of “communication.” Indeed, the spiritualist movement was inspired by electrical telegraphy and later radio. “Wireless” intelligence was considered magical or uncanny. When *telepathy* was first named in 1882, it was defined as “the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another, independently of the recognized channels of sense.” Visions of channel-free communication were endemic in pre-Einsteinian physics and early radio practices in the late nineteenth century (Hagen 2001). The sense that communication was uniquely “psychical” spoke for a sea change in human economic and symbolic relations over the long nineteenth century.

The long revolution also precipitated a first wave of critics. Conservative individualists such as Carlyle and Kierkegaard, self-critical liberals such as Tocqueville and Mill, and

Transcendentalists such as Emerson and Thoreau all lamented the ways in which communication made prized things common (ordinary, vulgar). These complaints would only grow stronger in the twentieth century, especially in postwar criticisms of “mass culture” and “mass society.” Some saw real communication as a form of protest against a false world; others saw communication itself as the problem. Kierkegaard was one of the first to make communication (*Meddelelse*) a philosophical problem, specifically of how to disclose truth amid a din of inauthenticity. This theme was taken up influentially in the twentieth century by philosophers such as Karl Jaspers, Martin Heidegger, Martin Buber, Jean-Paul Sartre, Hannah Arendt, and Emmanuel Levinas (Pinchevski 2005). For these more or less existentialist thinkers, communication was both cure and disease, an ambiguity that goes back to *communicatio* as sharing and as pollution. A somewhat related sense of the impossibility of communication was manifested in the fractured dialogue that started to appear in several influential late-nineteenth-century playwrights such as Chekhov, Ibsen, and Strindberg, and which was to become a hallmark throughout twentieth-century drama and cinema.

A similarly double-sided analysis of communication took place in American social thought around the turn of the twentieth century. Pragmatist thinkers such as Jane Addams, Charles Cooley, John Dewey, George Herbert Mead, Charles Sanders Peirce, and Josiah Royce both feared the flattening effects of modern social life and celebrated the ethical and political potentials of communication (→ Pragmatism). Communication they saw as ethical because it taught us to assume the position of the other; they saw it as political because it helped to build democratic community. These thinkers created a rich treasury of communitarian communication theory. One heir is the German philosopher → Jürgen Habermas, perhaps the most important thinker about communication in the later twentieth century.

In the wake of World War I's horrific destruction and fearsome propaganda, many pondered communication and the power of symbols. Literary theorist → Mikhail Bakhtin, poet T. S. Eliot, linguist Roman Jakobson, political scientist → Harold Lasswell, political commentator → Walter Lippmann, critics C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, anthropologist Edward Sapir, philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, and novelist Virginia Woolf were some of the figures who grappled with the failure of communication, its all too successful influence on people's minds, or its centrality to the human condition. By the late 1920s the term “mass communication” came into use for the new reality of persuasion industries organized by the market and state (Peters & Simonson 2004). By the 1940s, the field of “communications research” was being organized by figures such as → Paul Lazarsfeld, and its academic institutionalization continued in later decades, eventually yielding a prolific variety of theories of communication (Craig 1999; → Communication as a Field and Discipline). By the end of the twentieth century, almost every serious intellectual had something to say about communication (Beniger 1990). It was an index of the age.

## THERAPEUTIC AND TECHNICAL TRENDS

Two more strands round out the twentieth century. The therapeutic strand owes something to both the pragmatists and the existentialists, and sees communication as a

criterion of mental health and a requirement for self-realization. That the notion was embraced by psychiatrists is evident in the book title, *Communication: The social matrix of psychiatry* (1952) by Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson (→ Communicology). Here they coined the pregnant term “metacommunication,” one that would prove fertile for Paul Watzlawick and “the Palo Alto School” in the 1960s, which viewed schizophrenia as essentially a problem of communication in families. Harry Stack Sullivan, Carl Rogers, and other psychological thinkers saw communication as a therapeutic norm useful not only for treating individual psychopathologies, but also for resolving global conflicts as well. By the 1970s, the notion that “communication” was a means of self-affirmation as well as a deep existential need had become an established and sometimes parodied part of American culture (Katriel & Philipsen 1981). Despite obvious contraindications, the notion that communication makes people better or happier does not seem to have lost its hold.

Finally, “communication” implies progress in techniques and technologies. A utopian and dystopian tradition stretching from the telegraph to the Internet, the technical strand hit one pinnacle in mid-century. *The mathematical theory of communication* (1948) by engineer Claude Shannon, and popularized by physicist Warren Weaver, not only institutionalized the telecommunications model of “sender, message, channel, and receiver,” but conceived information in terms of the old thermodynamic favorite, entropy (→ Information). This intellectual tour de force quickly spread to a wildly diverse set of fields in the 1950s, including psychology, music theory, philosophy, political science, linguistics, and genetics. Norbert Wiener’s *Cybernetics* (1948), in contrast, warned of the imminent displacement of the human brain in the second industrial revolution (→ Cybernetics). These two texts, which emerged from commercial and military research, had international resonance. In the Soviet sphere, translations of Wiener in the 1950s led to a new term *kommunikatsiya*, which entered Russian to join older terms such as *obshchestvo* (society) and *obshcheniye* (communication). Indeed, derivatives of the Latinate term “communication” have flourished in many languages since World War II alongside native equivalents. In postwar France, philosopher Jean Hyppolite and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan wrote on information theory, and since then communication has been a lasting concern in French thought for such diverse thinkers as Michel Serres, Jacques Derrida, Régis Debray, Luce Irigaray, and Jean Baudrillard. Thanks to → Harold Adams Innis and → Marshall McLuhan, Canada was another center for communication theory from mid-century, as was Germany from the 1970s, thanks to thinkers such as Niklas Luhmann and Friedrich Kittler.

The history of the idea of communication reveals diverse semantic strands: rhetorical, spiritualist, purist, transportational, communitarian, therapeutic, and technical. These lines of meaning give the term power and resonance. Some might consider it ironic that “communication” as a term fails to live up to the ideal of communication that it is often expected to fulfill – indisputable transmission of meaning. Rather, we might learn something profound about communication itself from the fact that even its name is full of competing meanings and visions. Plurality and difference seem to be our lot in both the theory and the practice of communication.

SEE ALSO: ► Bakhtin, Mikhail ► Communication: Definitions and Concepts ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication Theory and Philosophy

- ▶ Communicology ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Information ▶ Innis, Harold
- ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ McLuhan, Marshall
- ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Technology and Communication

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## **Communication Inequality**

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Communication inequality refers to differences in the generation, manipulation, and distribution of → information among social groups, as well as differences in: (1) access to and use of information channels, (2) attention to media content, (3) recall, knowledge, and comprehension, and (4) capacity to act on relevant information among individuals (Viswanath 2006). The intellectual origins of the communication inequality theory can be traced to the knowledge gap hypothesis by Tichenor et al. (1970), an early formalization of inequalities in communication research (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). According to this hypothesis, benefits from information flows on a given topic are more likely to be accrued by people of higher socio-economic status compared to people of lower socio-economic status, thus widening the existing gaps rather than narrowing them, drawing attention to



the unequal media effects. Subsequently, the term → “digital divide” made its way through both scholarly and popular literatures, drawing attention to the unequal access to the → Internet among different social groups. Viswanath expanded on these formulations of access to one medium (the Internet) and → media effects on knowledge to incorporate the thesis of inequalities across the communication continuum as well as across information delivery systems (Viswanath 2005, 2006). In its current formulation, the communication inequality thesis draws attention to disparities across the communication continuum, starting with access to learning, and the consequences of the disparities. Moreover, it argues that the inequalities may manifest at both individual and group levels.

### **DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNICATION INEQUALITY**

The first dimension of communication inequality relates to differences among individuals and social groups in their access to and use of a variety of information channels (→ Access to the Media; Exposure to Communication Content). These patterns exist in both developing and developed nations. For example, an assessment of mass media use among a range of African countries suggests that despite recent increases in mass media use overall, the ability to access a broad range of mass media resources is constrained for most individuals, and illiteracy and poverty often impede supply and demand of these resources. Lack of electricity or remoteness may limit the forms of media available (World Bank 2002). Alternatively, illiteracy may restrict access to certain types of media. For example, a recent survey found that in Mozambique, 62 percent of men are literate, compared to 31 percent of women, greatly impacting the types of media they can consume. Similarly, across the continent, most rural populations had higher rates of illiteracy than their urban counterparts (→ Media Use by Social Variable).

In developed nations, such as the United States, access to and use of information channels also varies between groups. For example, higher socio-economic groups are more likely to use the Internet for health information (Viswanath 2005; → Exposure to the Internet; Health Communication and the Internet). Similar patterns have been found in Germany based on gender, age, level of education, and other socio-demographic characteristics (Kubicek 2004; → Internet Use across the Life-Span). These inequalities appear to particularly manifest in the access to and use of media that demand recurring expenditures, as well as in complications in use. Often, issues of class, race, and ethnicity may conflate, generating inequalities, particularly in multiracial and multilingual societies.

Attention to media is a significant predictor of knowledge about a given health topic. Inequalities in → attention may lead to inequalities across the communication continuum from processing to communication effects. For example, recent data from the Health Information and National Trends Survey (HINTS) conducted by the National Cancer Institute in the United States show that greater attention to health information in → newspapers, → magazines, and the Internet was linked to higher education levels, though these differences did not present for → radio and → television.

The growing advances in medicine, science, and technology, despite their immense benefit to humankind, also place greater demands on individuals and institutions that are attempting to understand and use this information. These developments trigger information flows, yet the benefits from the flows accrue unequally among different social classes,

as predicted by the knowledge gap hypothesis (Tichenor et al. 1980). Conditions that may deter gaps from opening or widening include inducing or increasing relevance for that information, wide diffusion of information leading to saturation on that topic, the controversial nature of the topic, extensive social ties, participation and involvement in community groups, and use of appropriate information channels (Gaziano 1983; Viswanath & Finnegan 1996; → Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

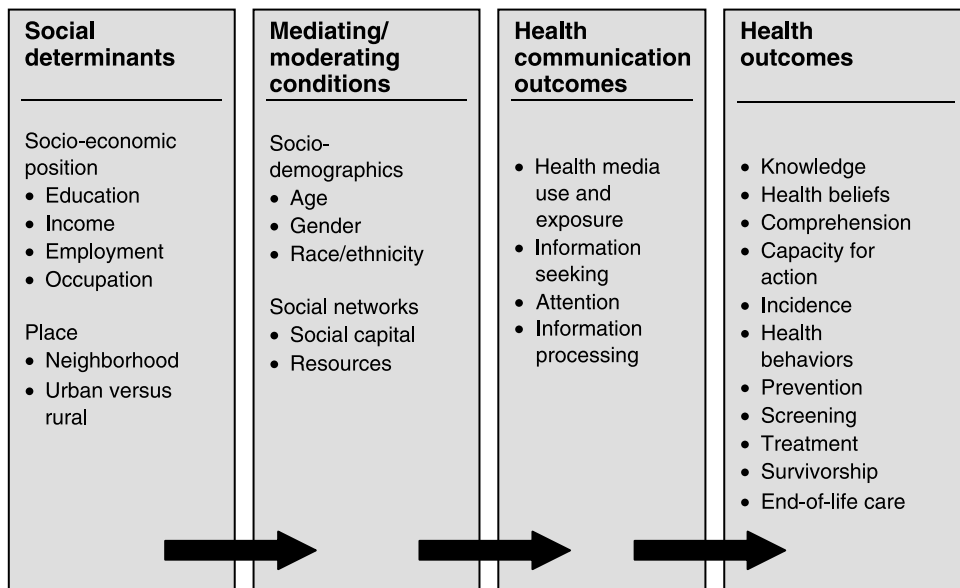
Inequalities in communication may also manifest in individuals' and groups' capacity in using the information. For example, in health, individuals vary a great deal in their ability to use health information to direct their medical and health needs. Part of this problem stems from limited → health literacy, an ability to find and use relevant health information to make decisions about one's health that are consistent with one's values. The capacity to act on information requires not just individual motivations and skills, but support from the environment and resources to act on the information. For example, mere provision of information about engaging in physical activity is unhelpful if the audience lack access to green space or live in unsafe neighborhoods, conditions that are more likely to be experienced by the poor.

### **APPLICATION OF COMMUNICATION INEQUALITIES: HEALTH DISPARITIES AS AN EXEMPLAR**

The thesis of communication inequality may offer one potent explanation for inequalities that exist in other aspects of our society. For example, communication inequalities may offer one explanation for widespread disparities in health, an inequity that has been attracting increasing attention from different groups (Institute of Medicine (IOM) 2002b; World Health Organization 2007; → Health Disparities, Communication in). Health disparities are disproportionate disease burdens faced by certain social groups, leading to increasing morbidity and mortality. For example, in the US, there is a clear socio-economic gradient in diabetes, where those in the lowest income group had a prevalence rate of 9.7 percent compared to 3.5 percent among those in the highest income group (Kanjilal et al. 2006). In Bangladesh, the neonatal mortality rate is 1.63 to 2.0 times higher among poor versus rich families (Razzaque et al. 2007).

Social epidemiology, the study of social determinants of population distributions of health, offers several explanations for such disparities, including social cohesion, social class or socio-economic status, social networks, work environment and life transition, neighborhood and residential conditions, and social policies, among others (Berkman & Kawachi 2000). Yet, while a number of explanations have been offered to suggest why these "social determinants" may contribute to health disparities, the precise mechanisms linking social determinants with individual and population health are yet to be delineated.

Viswanath et al. (2007) offered the structural influence model (SIM) of communication to connect social determinants to final health outcomes through communication (Fig. 1). The model posits that health outcomes and health disparities can be explained by understanding how (1) structural determinants such as socio-economic status and geography, and (2) mediating mechanisms such as gender, age, and → social networks, lead to (3) differential communication outcomes, such as access to and use of information



**Figure 1** Structural influence model (SIM) and health communication  
*Source:* Viswanath et al. (2007)

channels, attention to health content, recall of information, knowledge and comprehension, and a capacity to act on relevant information among individuals. Structural antecedents such as socio-economic status and geography influence both the information environment and resources for consumption, leading to differential communication behaviors, which in turn may affect actions along the public health continuum, including knowledge, prevention, detection and treatment, survivorship, and quality of life. Health disparities, therefore, may be explained partly by inequalities along the communication continuum resulting in a cumulative effect on ultimate health outcomes.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Despite innovations in information delivery systems and their speedy diffusion, inequalities are unlikely to ease or disappear. Constant innovations demand continuous and recurrent investment in information delivery services, placing demands on one's discretionary incomes. Moreover, people make conscious choices as to how they allocate money to different communication services, including entertainment and telecommunication services. Yet communication is a social function. Individuals' tastes, interests, and needs are shaped and influenced by their immediate orbit, including their social networks, significant peers, class interests, group norms, and perceptions about their leadership roles. Moreover, choices are made within certain constraints of availability of degree of discretion and calculations about relative costs. Thus, choices in both subscriptions to media services and exposure to content are still influenced by socio-economic status and social networks.

Further work in this area will have to elucidate such issues as:

- 1 How can information be targeted to underserved groups while accounting for structural barriers to access?
- 2 What are the obligations of institutions such as government and public and private sectors to ensure that current and future policies and innovations do not widen communication inequalities?
- 3 The constant change and improvement in technologies of information delivery systems assume – or, in fact, may even demand – frequent investment in new technologies (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Is this likely to be a deterrent for those who cannot afford to update their technologies as is warranted by the development of new systems?
- 4 Is the increasing sophistication in using and operating the new technologies likely to leave certain groups at a disadvantage? What are the downsides, if any, in not using new information delivery systems?
- 5 What are the implications of interactive effects of technologies and formats on attention and learning among different populations groups, and specifically, on their impact on communication inequalities?
- 6 What are the implications of social and communication policies on communication inequalities (→ Media Policy)?

These questions have acquired a sense of urgency given the characteristics of our epoch, which is sometimes called the “information age.” In the so-called “information age,” inequalities in communication are as invidious as inequities that exist in wealth, health, and power.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Attention ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Health Disparities, Communication in ▶ Health Literacy ▶ Information ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Policy ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Social Networks ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television

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## Communication Infrastructure

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Communication infrastructure refers to the backbone of the communications system upon which various broadcasting and telecommunication services are operated. This can be built from copper cable, fiber, or wireless technologies utilizing the radio frequency spectrum, such as microwave and satellite. The infrastructure is the core component that connects upstream production, such as voice, data and audiovisual services, with downstream consumers.

Albert Hirschman's (1958) now widely used definition of infrastructure as capital goods offering public services, often associated with public utilities such as electricity, water, and communications, remains pertinent to communication infrastructure today because it does not link public services to public capital goods. The definition accommodates public services being offered by public entities as they have been traditionally in most jurisdictions, but does not exclude public services from being offered by privately

owned and operated capital firms. Despite ownership and investment of communication infrastructure predominantly having been transferred from the public to the private sector through privatization and the introduction of competition to traditional monopoly networks, private communication operators continue to offer public services in addition to certain private services and, for this reason, continue to be regulated to different degrees in different jurisdictions.

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

The economic and social significance of communication infrastructures lies in the nature of such networks. They have the potential to produce value much greater than the direct investment made in them. Unlike other goods, the addition of new subscribers to a telecommunication network, rather than diminishing the availability of service, indirectly benefits those already on the network and enhances the value of the network by creating more calling opportunities. This side effect of a transaction is referred to as a “network effect” and can be positive or negative (Bergman et al. 1998). Additional subscribers on the network only enhance its value up to the point of congestion, after which the effect is negative. Hence the need for networks to constantly extend their capacity to meet demand (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy).

Such side effects or “externalities” can further extend outside the network. Access to broadcasting services, for example, could indirectly (positively) improve social cohesion or (negatively) erode cultural values as a result of foreign content. The extension of telecommunication infrastructure is associated with greater business activity, which it has the potential to enable and make more efficient (→ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of).

It is the positive *economic and social “multipliers” or “spillovers”* that motivate the state to seek investment in and to coordinate infrastructure development even if it is not provided directly by the state. Investment in communication infrastructure contributes directly to economic activity in that it creates demand for the high-cost products used in the expansion of the network. It has also an indirect impact in that telecommunications is an input for other services. If efficiently provided, it has the potential to reduce the transaction costs between businesses and with customers. Infrastructure expansion produces positive economic multipliers as productivity within the economy is increased through more efficient information gathering and the substitution of communication for higher-transactional-cost activities (Röller & Waverman 2000). Social multipliers associated with safety and survival, and social cohesion more generally, are also well documented, though they have not been costed or quantified (see Grace et al. 2001; Mansell & Wehn 1998).

Despite research in OECD country studies indicating a positive correlation between fixed *communication infrastructure and economic growth*, demonstrating causality has proved problematic (Waverman & Röller 1997). In 2000, after an extensive study of 21 OECD countries over 20 years, Röller and Waverman (2000) concluded that investments in the telecommunication infrastructure had strong growth effects and that causality is two-way in that communication infrastructure development and economic growth catalyze each other. Perhaps more significantly for developing countries, they also found

that in order for the positive growth effects of infrastructure investment and expansion to be realized, a critical mass or a threshold of a significant size would be necessary for the network effects to kick in (→ *Communication Technology and Development*). This critical threshold is close to universal access – around 40 percent of the population, assuming around 2.5 people per household. This would explain the absence of the often anticipated positive growth associated with infrastructure investment in many developing countries where, despite improvements, teledensity remains on average under 4 percent in non-OECD countries (Röller & Waverman 2000). The exponential extension of networks to meet this critical threshold would require unprecedented investment in national communication infrastructures, probably possible only through the creation of private investment opportunities and sufficient institutional capacity to regulate it in the public interest.

Credé and Mansell highlight the significance of this as knowledge-based development becomes a more important aspect of the global economic and social order: “advanced communication networks will become more central to the acquisition of information . . . Without the appropriate communication infrastructure, ICTs might accentuate, rather than ameliorate, existing parities in income, wealth and opportunity” (Credé & Mansell 1998, 19).

## **PUBLIC GOODS**

Communication infrastructure, like other national infrastructure such as electricity and water, has long been understood as a “public good” (→ *Public Goods*). These goods are regarded as so beneficial to society and the economy that access to them needs to be insured by the state, historically often through the creation of public utilities. Even where communication infrastructure has not been provided by the state, it is regarded from a policy perspective as an economic and social good, public access to which should be insured as far as possible through regulation (see Melody 1997; Laffont & Tirole 2000). While access to communication is not a pure public good in the classical sense in that, unlike defense of a country or clean air, it is technically possible to exclude someone from the service, the attainment of universal access to this public good is a core principle from a policy perspective.

In addition, communication networks are nonrival – a distinguishing characteristic of public goods – that is, the consumption of the services offered by an adequately proportioned network does not diminish the availability of the services or goods for others. An additional listener to a radio station does not affect other listeners on the station. Indeed, additional listeners or viewers of broadcasting services enhance the value of the audience for advertisers or better justify the public cost of delivering the service (→ *Consumers in Media Markets*).

## **NATURAL MONOPOLY AND PUBLIC UTILITIES**

Historically, the economic rationale for state provisioning of communication infrastructure was that these essential facilities and services could not be economically duplicated due to high fixed costs in several parts of the network. It therefore constituted a natural

monopoly (Laffont & Tirole 2000). It was operated as a public utility on the grounds that the only way to bring essential services affordably to citizens was through the economies of scale and scope made possible by a monopoly.

However, the potential offered by economies of scale and scope tends to be under-exploited when companies have no incentive for efficiency, as they would have in a competitive environment. On the contrary, the inefficiencies in many, particularly developing, countries, of state-run infrastructures have led to their paying a capital cost per line three or four times above international averages and little of the service revenues being reinvested in network extension and development. The widespread practice of subsidizing calls of those with access, and often greater resources, at the expense of those who could not own telephones meant insufficient internal revenue was generated to invest in network expansion (Stiglitz 1999).

As the necessity of developing a national information infrastructure as the backbone for a modern economy became evident, modernization and extension of communication infrastructures became the key drivers of a wave of telecommunication reform from the 1980s onwards. The poor outcomes of public provisioning in many countries, especially developing countries due to the lack of investment in network development, led to the privatization of national communication infrastructures and liberalization of markets. With new cost-effective technologies making possible the economic duplication of certain infrastructure components and services, and a growing acknowledgment of the inefficiency of telecommunication monopolies, the rationale for monopolies was increasingly eroded and difficult to enforce without resorting to repressive measures. The market was increasingly perceived as a more efficient operator of communication infrastructures and deliverer of services (Laffont & Tirole 2000).

## REGULATION AND COMPETITION

However, the imperfect nature of the telecommunication market, with its infrastructure bottlenecks and *high barriers to entry*, were acknowledged as requiring regulation to insure fair competition and to deal with market failures associated with the delivery of services to uneconomic areas (→ Digital Divide). The most critical aspect of creating a fair competitive environment is insuring access to infrastructures by competitors through interconnection and facilities leasing arrangements. The necessity of regulation relates to the special nature of infrastructure industries. For seamless communication by customers on different networks, rival firms need to cooperate in order to deliver services. Interconnection appears to be a logical and mutually beneficial action between competing customers: the more subscribers there are the greater the network effect and benefit to the entire network system. However, this is so if the networks that are interconnecting are of a similar size; but, if an incumbent's network is significantly larger than the new entrant network desiring interconnection, the benefits of interconnection are not symmetrical. Incumbents are likely either to delay interconnection or to restrict the conditions of interconnection or price it so that it is difficult for the new entrant to compete effectively (See Laffont & Tirole 2000; Melody 1997; → Competition in Media Systems).

Regulating access to facilities raises particular issues in a case where, as in many developing country jurisdictions, despite some liberalization of the services market, the



privatized entity has retained its monopoly on certain network elements and services and downstream competitors are required to acquire their facilities from it. Even if competition based on full facilities and service exists, it is likely that certain elements of the network are not economic to duplicate and open access is therefore essential.

### ESSENTIAL FACILITIES

A case in point is undersea cable *infrastructure in Africa* (→ Africa: Media Systems; Communication Law and Policy: Africa). Even with the opening up of international gateways in many countries there is only one economically feasible source of high-quality bandwidth which today is the SAT-3 undersea cable. It was built by, and is operated through, a closed consortium of African incumbents and international operators who have exclusive rights on the landing stations in their countries. Their practices have come under fire by a multi-stakeholder continental initiative to demonstrate the access and cost benefits of nonexclusive open access regimes for African countries which have the most expensive international bandwidth in the world. There have been calls to regulate these landing rights as “bottleneck” or “essential” facilities. This attention has also highlighted the arbitrariness of the costing of this essential facility for African countries at the national level and discrepancies in the charges across different portions of the network. A price survey of African countries that use SAT-3 for their international bandwidth showed that Telkom SA is charging up to 800 percent more than other countries for a megabit per second per month. While the Senegalese incumbent Sonatel charges only US\$1,316, Telkom SA, which also holds the management contract for the cable, charges US\$11,000 (Southwood 2006).

For some eastern and southern Africa countries the longer-term solution lies in the *Eastern Africa Submarine Cable System* (EASSy), which is to be completed by 2008. Through the intervention of nongovernmental and academic organizations and the e-Africa Commission, the consortium established to build the cable has been far more open and the approach to landing rights nonexclusive. Bandwidth will be sold on an open access model where everybody can purchase it at the same price whether they are an investor or not. Of course, while EASSy will provide relief for the eastern and southern African countries, including many landlocked countries that have bought into the consortium, the likelihood that west Africa will have any alternative to SAT-3 in the foreseeable future is poor, rendering the landing station a natural monopoly which requires regulation.

### INVESTMENT, CREDIBILITY, AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Intervention of this kind by regulators, however, has to be clear and reflect a fair rate of return on operator investment, otherwise it could impact negatively on future investments. This is one of the major challenges for regulators in insuring that the benefits of competition are achieved by guaranteeing access to all competitors to scarce resources such as spectrum, numbers, rights of way, incumbent infrastructure, and facilities. From an investor’s perspective all are regarded as “regulatory risk.” If, however, the government is regarded as credible as a result of clear policies and contracts on which there is no history of renegeing, and regulation is transparent and independent of political and

commercial interference, there is evidence that this can induce investment in new operations (See Gillwald 2005; Mahan & Melody 2005).

Because infrastructure investment is capital-intensive and involves long-term, “sunk” or nonrecoverable costs, governments have often induced infrastructure investment by offering periods of exclusivity (monopoly) at the time of privatization or reserving particular activities for new licensees before introducing competition. After several decades of reform there is evidence that the sequencing of these activities is important. Where privatization has occurred prior to competition, without effective regulation prices generally increase. There is little innovation of new services and even network extension, unless compelled, may not increase significantly (Wallsten 2001, 2002).

### CONVERGENCE

Broadcasting and telecommunication infrastructure looked much the same for the first 100 years of their existence. However, in the last few decades infrastructure has required constant reinvestment in network upgrades in response to the constant waves of new generation technologies and associated services. Historically, these services have been operated on distinct platforms but with digitization and the reduction of all communication information into bits, telecommunication services such as voice services and data services such as the → Internet can be offered on cable and satellite infrastructure proportioned for television (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television). Television can be offered on new broadband networks of fiber, upgraded cable, and wireless infrastructure originally used for telecommunications. This has allowed not only for the convergence of broadcasting and telecommunications but for convergence within telecommunications, for example, between fixed and mobile voice services that were previously operated on separate networks (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

This has compelled policymakers to create a regulatory framework and licensing regime better suited to the *convergence of broadcasting and telecommunication infrastructures*. Primarily this entails shifting the licensing of the silo-like vertically integrated operators that have characterized the market structure in the industrial era to horizontal service layers – infrastructure, services, and content (ITU 2005). Increasingly, it is only the “infrastructure” or “network” layer that requires a license, with the other service layers automatically receiving class licenses on compliance with basic threshold requirements, which might be only registration. This framework is more suited to the IP-based networks that are likely to dominate communication rollout in future and the seamlessly integrated information infrastructure necessary for a modern economy.

### NEXT GENERATION NETWORKS

Whilst digitization allowed for the convergence of broadcasting and telecommunications services through reduction of all services into bits that could be carried across any platform, it is through new IP-based networks that seamless communication across integrated networks can be realized. Such networks are generally referred to as *next generation networks* (NGN) and are evidenced in the increasing number of lower-cost, IP-based services such as Voice over IP (VoIP) and IP Television (IPTV).

The shift from circuit switched to packet switched protocols allows traditionally distinct PSTN, wireless, DSL, 3G, CATV, and potentially new power line communication networks to be integrated through common standards. The layered nature of these NGNs' architecture allows for the separation of the service from the transmission layers and permits new services to be offered independently of the underlying infrastructure on which they run. A significant characteristic of IP-based networks is the ability to distribute intelligence across the networks from the core to the periphery, unlike traditional public switched telephone networks (PSTNs), enabling the connection of different types of access networks at their intelligent edge (Wey et al. 2006). This is critical for the growth of potentially cheaper, decentralized services and the seamless connection of networks that enhances the network effects or positive multipliers (→ Television Technology).

Combining IP-based services with lower-cost, rapidly deployable wireless technologies has enabled rapid and easy entry into the market by new service providers, some of which have been able to circumvent technical and regulatory restrictions, often undermining the rationale for regulation and potentially the revenues of traditional PSTNs.

Despite prohibitions on many of these IP-based services in many developing countries, the significance of this type of network for countries with limited infrastructure is that considerably more efficient IP-based networks could be rapidly and flexibly deployed. Unencumbered by the financial and technical concerns of countries with extensive legacy networks, such countries would be able to benefit from open standards and global economies of scale and scope. Countries without these obstacles or those that rapidly reach a decision on how to enable IP-based networks will have quicker times to market and are more likely to achieve more widespread ICT diffusion.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Internet ▶ Public Goods ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television Technology

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## Communication and Law

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The phrase “communication and law” is used in this entry to refer broadly to the general field of speech and press law. It is also used to denote multidisciplinary research done at the intersection of two distinctly separate disciplines of study (communication *and* law).

The study of communication and law has traditionally been nation-specific, with a few exceptions, i.e., “those areas where particular technologies or common goals mandated a degree of international cooperation” (Huffman & Trauth 2002, 73). This is still true today, although less so than in the past. Perhaps the best examples of contemporary areas where technology and a common goal has allowed for substantially greater global cooperation are in the areas of intellectual property and Internet regulation (→ Intellectual Property Law; Internet Law and Regulation). The explosive use of the Internet as a “borderless technology with no international boundaries” has called into question the traditional, nation-specific approaches to communication law (Huffman & Trauth 2002, 91), although clearly nation-specific approaches still prevail.

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

There is no such thing as absolute freedom of speech and the press, for freedom of expression is subject to various social, political, economic, or legal controls of its society. This is also true more broadly about freedom of expression, a term which many people use to refer to both free speech and free press (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Fenwick and Phillipson put it another way: “Almost all free expression jurisprudence is, today, media jurisprudence” (2006, 2). Legal scholar Thomas David Jones has observed that free speech is a “general norm of customary international law” (1998, 37). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the → American Convention on Human Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights all consider freedom of expression a fundamental human right. As Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers” (Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948).

In his influential essay “Toward a general theory of the First Amendment,” Yale law professor Thomas I. Emerson writes of the importance of free speech to a democracy, but takes the need for protection of expression a step further. Emerson suggests “the right to freedom of expression is justified first of all as the right of an individual purely in his capacity as an individual” (1963, 877). He argues that four broad categories encompass the societal values that free expression serves – assuring individual self-fulfillment, attaining truth, securing citizen participation in political decision-making processes, and maintaining social stability and societal change. “Every man . . . has the right to form his own belief and opinions. And, it also follows, that he has the right to express those beliefs and opinions” (1963, 877).

In a democratic society, free press is considered equally important as *free speech*. The First Amendment to the US Constitution offers separate guarantees for speech and press, but in the US the two concepts are intertwined by well-established case law. They are also intertwined in American legal theory. First Amendment philosopher Alexander Meiklejohn is often credited with articulating the self-governance theory as applied in the US, which holds that the primary purpose of free speech in a democracy is to allow citizens to effectively govern themselves. The focus is on advancing democracy and the collective public good, rather than on the rights of individuals. Meiklejohn writes, “The First Amendment . . . is not the guardian of unregulated talkativeness. It does not require that, on every occasion, every citizen shall take part in public debate. Nor can it even give assurance that everyone shall have opportunity to do so . . . What is essential is not that everyone shall speak, but that everything worth saying shall be said” (1948, 25). Put simply by the noted constitutional scholar Lee Bollinger, currently the president of Columbia University in New York, “the primary function of speech and the press is to advance the process of self-governance” (1983, 438).

To advance the process of self-governance, press and speech must be *free from governmental interference*. In the US, England, France, and Sweden, it took several centuries

to move from an authoritarian model of free press to one that embraced libertarianism. The two main struggles in the move toward libertarianism in England and the US in the eighteenth century were with seditious libel (a libel against the government as a crime) and with the right of the press to publish governmental proceedings (more so in England than in America). The establishment of truth as a defense to libel in the US and England in the nineteenth century is what ultimately allowed libertarianism to triumph in those two nations. In some countries today, criminal or seditious libel continues as a major impediment to a free press (→ Libel and Slander).

The basic idea behind libertarianism is credited to English poet and philosopher John Milton. He had put forward the “marketplace of ideas” metaphor as early as 1644 in *Areopagitica*, Milton’s appeal to the English Parliament to rescind a licensing order that allowed the government to use official censors to approve publications. Legal historian Frederick Siebert writes that the libertarian system spread throughout the world in the nineteenth century: “Practically all democratic countries in the world adopted the libertarian theories and embodied them in their constitutions or fundamental laws” (1956, 51). Generally speaking, press and speech freedoms under the libertarian model are negative freedoms. That is, they are freedom *from* governmental restraint. Another model of press freedom exists in the positive form, which would focus on “the capacity to do or achieve certain ends” (Youm 2001, 5775).

An example of an international positive model of press freedom came in 1978, when the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO), which includes nearly all independent nations in the world, adopted the “Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights, and to Countering Radicalism, Apartheid, and Incitement to War.” The declaration was called a landmark, albeit controversial, in the history of journalism and mass communication, because it was able to create a body of principles and ideals on which north, south, east and west agreed “at a time when ideological confrontations, rather than harmony, became characteristic of the international community” (Nordenstreng 1984, xi). The declaration, though, soon sparked heated debate about free press and the intention of the document.

In 1981, the US and Israel broke the consensus that had prevailed in the adoption of the UNESCO mass media declaration, claiming that the Soviet Union and some third world nations were using the declaration to legitimize governmental press controls. In his first speech on communication to the UN Committee on Information in 1982, UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar responded: “Critics of the Declaration, who express concern that national public authorities have been given an instrument to limit freedom of the press, are mistaken. Such a concept was not and could never be the intention of any United Nations deliberative body, in which free and open debate always prevails” (Nordenstreng 1984, xiii; see also Mowlana 1989). The UNESCO declaration was not legally binding. But the international, often cantankerous, debate about the declaration highlighted some political, social, and cultural differences in opinion about what constitutes a free press across the globe.

As communication law scholar Kyu Ho Youm writes, “Most discussions of freedom of the press center on the relationship of government and the press, and here the basic question is not whether government controls the press, but how and to what extent” (2001, 5775).

In the eighteenth century, Sir William Blackstone, the English Chief Justice whose commentaries on English law profoundly impacted American law, defined the limits of a free press thus: “The liberty of the press is indeed essential to the nature of a free state, but this consists in laying no previous restraints upon publication” (*Near v. Minnesota* 1931, 713). The licensing of the press is considered by many as the most troubling form of prior restraint and is incompatible with freedom of the press as a fundamental human right (→ Licensing of Journalists). The → *Inter-American Court of Human Rights* (IACHR) ruled in 1985 that licensing the press would violate not only individual rights to free expression, but also “the right of the public to receive information without any interference” (*Compulsory Membership in an Association Prescribed by Law for the Practice of Journalism* 1985).

In 1992, the → *European Court of Human Rights*, emphasizing the pre-eminent role of the press in ensuring the rule of law in a state, said: “Freedom of the press affords the public one of the best means of discovering and forming an opinion of the ideas and attitudes of their political leaders. In particular, it gives politicians the opportunity to reflect and comment on the preoccupations of public opinion; it thus enables everyone to participate in the free political debate, which is at the very core of the concept of a democratic society.”

While the *United Nations Human Rights Committee* has not issued an express condemnation of licensing requirements for printing presses, “it has on several occasions asked critical questions concerning the issue and has been satisfied only when country representatives confirmed that such requirements were no longer in place” (Article 19, 2007, 7). Specifically, this was the case with Azerbaijan and Uruguay in 2001. Article 19, a nonprofit group promoting global free expression, wrote a memorandum in January 2007 on the draft law of the Republic of Kazakhstan, condemning that draft law, which would include some provisions for licensing the press (→ United Nations, Communication Policies of).

Meanwhile, since the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s, the positive concept of press freedom, more often than not, has defined the standard for quality journalism around the world. This is especially the case with the expanding press freedom in many newly independent countries and emerging democracies in Asia, former Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Africa.

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

The degree to which a country guarantees freedom of expression is still an important area to study and monitor (→ Censorship). But scholars should also consider less nation-specific ways to explore important communication law topics across the globe. Boston University law professor Pnina Lahav, whose book, *Press law in modern democracies*, is a seminal work on comparative press freedom, notes that the US often believes it has “a monopoly” over press freedom because it has a constitutional guarantee. “The United Kingdom and Israel have neither a constitution nor an explicit commitment to press freedom engraved on a basic charter. Sweden, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany have special press statutes . . . Yet all of these countries are generally recognized as democracies and their press is considered free. It is this [similarity] that triggers the need to compare the way by which different democratic legal systems treat their press” (1985, 1; for an example of another comparative study, see Couprie & Olsson 1987).

Future research in communication law should also account for *changing trends in press ownership* that could have implications for a free press around the world. Mass communication scholar Flew notes that while “the claim that the nation-state has been rendered increasingly irrelevant by media globalization is strongly questioned, it is at the same time noted that media globalization presents significant challenges for media and cultural policy as it has been traditionally understood” (2007, 28).

One other typical way that communication law issues are explored is by legal topic. This is often done in a nation-specific way (for example, you might look at libel law in the US or obscenity law in Canada), but it can also have a comparative aspect. Several freedom of expression issues have received a good amount of international and comparative law attention in recent years. Among them are defamation, → privacy, and hate speech (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms), which is not surprising, given that these three areas showcase important contemporary legal issues that have international dimensions worthy of comparative study.

### Defamation

Communication law is more global than ever. A good illustration is defamation law because transnational media, along with the Internet, defy the traditional state-nation sovereignty of geography-bound communication. Where does the “publication” of defamation as a civil wrong take place when any statement is increasingly accessible via the Internet around the world? This question relates to which laws should govern in libel lawsuits involving transnational mass media, whether online or offline. In a 2002 libel case that pitted an Australian businessman against a US newspaper publisher, the High Court of Australia ruled that when defamatory statements are accessible to and read by ISP subscribers in an Australian state, a court of that state has jurisdiction to hear an action for defamation relating to the statements (*Dow Jones & Co. v. Gutnick* 2003).

From a First Amendment perspective, the foreign libel judgment like the one from the Australian High Court does not directly impact US media unless the judgment is brought to the US and enforced against the American media. American courts have invariably refused to enforce foreign libel judgments if the judgments were based on libel law incompatible with the First Amendment standards. In the early 1990s, for example, a New York state court rejected a libel plaintiff’s request for enforcement of his English libel verdict against a newspaper publisher in New York. The court found England’s lack of an equivalent to the First Amendment to be crucial and ruled that enforcing a foreign libel judgment would seriously jeopardize the First Amendment protection of speech and the press (*Bachchan v. India Abroad Publications, Inc.* 1992).

It is still largely true that American libel law is more speech-friendly than the rest of the world. Nonetheless, an increasing number of countries are more willing to protect political expression – such as criticism of the government and government officials – than ever before. So, the actual or perceived gap between the US and other nations has narrowed. Since the mid-1970s, for example, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has embraced the Meiklejohnian free speech theory. The ECHR’s cartographical principle of application is fundamentally shaped by the self-governance theory. Thus, the European Convention on Human Rights’ preference for political speech is clear-cut. The ECHR’s



rejection of criticism of the government as a crime reflects the functional value of freedom of expression as crucial to an effective political democracy.

### **Privacy**

In 1890, American lawyers Samuel Warren and Louis Brandeis (a future US Supreme Court Justice) wrote a law review article that served as the starting point for discussions about privacy law in the US. In “The right to privacy,” they argued that the Anglo American common law implicitly recognized a right to privacy. But, in the US, it was not until *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965) that the US Supreme Court offered constitutional protection for privacy rights (→ Privacy).

Privacy as a basic human right is acknowledged in most international human rights declarations. For example, Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 17 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) both say that “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy . . . everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.” Privacy is a constitutional right in a number of countries, including Brazil, China, South Korea, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Russia. Also, several common law nations such as Australia, Canada, Iceland, England, the US, and New Zealand recognize privacy in case law. Hong Kong also has privacy case law, some emerging when it was under British rule, some coming after it was returned to the People’s Republic of China.

One of the issues in contemporary privacy law that has garnered a great deal of contemporary attention has to do with the balance of the privacy right against the rights of the media to pursue information. A recent case in Germany, centered on a series of photographs of Princess Caroline of Monaco that were published in a German → magazine, used ad hoc balancing to determine whether privacy or press rights prevailed. English judge Lord Wilberforce has suggested that Germany’s approach might help England as it strives to develop its privacy laws under the impetus of the Human Rights Act of 1999. Wilberforce notes that Germany’s ad hoc balancing approach and lack of code or statutory provision “has not led to a flood of litigation nor to any real or perceived restriction of speech rights. . . . The German approach shows us the way, avoiding the brutal simplicity of the [US] First Amendment, to work out a balance between the right of free speech and the right of privacy” (Markesinis 2001; → Celebrity Culture; Yellow Journalism).

With the increased use of the Internet, and increasing access to still and video cameras and technologies (for example, cameras in cell phones), privacy will become an increasingly important international communication law issue.

### **Hate Speech**

International law allows regulations on hate speech, and there are two human rights instruments – the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination – that require governments to prohibit hate speech. Many countries proscribe it as well. In this regard, the First Amendment protection of hate speech in the US signifies American exceptionalism as a speech-protective nation. (see *R. A. V. v. St Paul* 1992).

Germany and France are perhaps best known for their hate speech prohibitions, based on the theory that “no one may engage in an activity aimed at destroying the rights of others” (Farrior 1996, 4). International law of hate speech generally requires a contextual analysis. For example, the European Commission of Human Rights held that the European Convention on Human Rights allows punishment of someone for hate speech aimed at destroying the rights of others (*Glimmerveen v. Netherlands* 1980). Article 19 wrote in 2007 that it had recorded increasing instances of violations of freedom of expression in regard to hate speech, “occurring alongside a growing number of racist attacks, and the acceptability of traditional forms of racism” (2007, 11). The organization called hate speech a “crucial topic on the contemporary freedom of expression and anti-racist agenda.” The organization cited, as an example of a free speech violation, recent actions by Germany and France (despite their status as models for developing hate speech codes that promote a contextual analysis and respect for others). In 2006, Germany drafted a proposal and France’s parliament drafted a bill aimed at prohibiting speech that denied or trivialized the Holocaust and the 1915 Armenian genocide respectively. Critics have said this ignores the contextual analysis approach needed to insure that hate speech prohibitions do not infringe upon protected expression.

The contrast between the US and France on hate speech was highlighted in 2001, when Yahoo!, an Internet service provider in the US, was ordered by a French court to ban the display of Nazi insignia on its sites. The *Yahoo!* decision of the French court was challenged in the US. Yahoo! argued that the French court’s order should not be recognized and enforced in the US. A federal district court in California held that the French court order violated the First Amendment and was unenforceable in the US. The US court stressed the “fundamental judgment” embedded in the First Amendment that “it is preferable to permit the nonviolent expression of offensive viewpoints rather than to impose viewpoint-based governmental regulation upon speech. The government and people of France have made a different judgment based upon their own experience” (*Yahoo v. La Ligue Contre le Racisme et l’Antisemitisme* 2001).

In addition to considering issues of race, some more recent laws have begun to address religious hatred. Blasphemy law is linked to the area of incitement of religious hatred, and it is of ancient origin. Blasphemy, by definition, is the defamation of one or more Gods. In some ways, blasphemy is more connected to ideas about the separation (or lack of separation) of religion and government. For example, the Basic Law of Saudi Arabia denies any right to free expression that might counter Islamic tenets. Incitement of religious hatred is different from this, albeit connected, and these laws typically resemble hate speech prohibitions. For example, in 2006 England passed the Racial and Religious Hatred Act, which makes it illegal to incite hatred against a person on the grounds of their religion.

### **MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION LAW RESEARCH**

As noted earlier, one way the term “communication and law” is used is to denote multidisciplinary research done at the intersection of two distinctly separate disciplines of study (communication *and* law). The two major questions that scholars debate when considering how useful an interdisciplinary approach to the study of communication and law

are: “Which framework should prevail – law or communication?” and “Are the disciplines of legal studies and communication, as a field grounded in social science, compatible?”

Most scholarly approaches to legal research are grounded in traditional legal studies. Broadly speaking, this takes into account ideas of legal formalism or positivism, legal realism, critical legal studies, and law and society views, as well as some other, related schools of thought (Cate 2006). *Legal formalism/positivism* sees law and legal rules as important in their own right, requiring compliance without much regard for the effect or impact of laws. *Legal realism*, on the other hand, largely rejects positivism. It rejects the notion that law is objective or neutral and can be applied to achieve consistent, reliable results. Its focus is on evaluating factors such as judicial experience, bias, desirable public policy goals, and even some social science research as a way to better explain outcomes. Legal realism helped lay the groundwork for other legal schools of thought that followed in the twentieth century, including the *economic analysis of law* with its focus on the goal of wealth maximization. Legal realism also inspired *critical legal studies*, which builds on the more radical components of realism to assert that the study of law should include analyses of bias, ideology, power, status, and politics, and that social justice and measuring impacts on disenfranchised populations are most important. And it influences the *law and society* approach, which focuses broadly on how law and legal institutions operate in society.

In terms of communication studies today, most approaches are focused on evaluating communication processes and media effects (→ Media Effects; Communication Theory and Philosophy). As mass communication scholars Guido Stempel III and Bruce Westley note, “When we speak of ‘the systematic study of mass communications,’ we mean any research discipline that can shed new light on mass communication processes, effects, institutions, and institutional change, its legal constraints, its constitutional imperatives, its technology, its changing response to new challenges” (2003, 3). As a field of its own, communication is not disconnected from a wide range of other disciplines (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

Both law and communication as autonomous disciplines have their own set of assumptions, theories, and methodologies. Specific discussion about and promotion of greater interdisciplinary work between the two fields took off in the US in the early 1980s. By 1986, three strains of legal scholarship in mass communication had emerged – traditional documentary research, socio-behavioral research, and critical-qualitative research. These three strains reflect disciplinary overlap, particularly with respect to socio-behavioral research. Communication law scholars Jeremy Cohen and Tim Gleason wrote in their ground-breaking book, *Social research in communication and law*, that a new approach to communication and law research was needed. “A communication and law approach must distinguish itself from research generally recognized as within the traditional purview of law or legal studies. . . . It should be generated from the perspective of the communication scholar, not in competition with the legal scholar, but in recognition of the objectives of communication research” (1990, 8).

What is the difference between traditional legal research and communication research? *Communication research* grew from a social science foundation (→ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968; Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968). But today communication research is eclectic: “Mass communication researchers have drawn on the methodological insights of scholars in such fields as sociology, political

science, and psychology. Another linkage has grown up between journalism scholars interested broadly in communication processes and like-minded persons in departments of speech, communications, speech-communication, and the like. At the same time, those interested in historical and legal research in mass communication have found appropriate models in the base disciplines” (Cohen & Gleason 1990, 3). Generally speaking, the purpose of communication research is to build and test theory, and offer insight into a wide variety of communication processes, both at the macro- and micro-level. Social science research intends to be neutral and objective (→ Objectivity in Science).

*Legal research*, on the other hand, has its own methodology – one quite different from that which grows out of social science, even though the two fields may overlap. As media law scholars Eric Ugland, Everett Dennis, and Donald Gillmor observe, legal research will often “unabashedly advocate” a position based on “normative assumptions.” But the purpose of legal research is often quite different from that of the social scientist. The function of legal research is to clarify “the law through analysis of procedure, precedent, and doctrine” and to provide “a better understanding of how law operates in society” as well as to “furnish materials for legal education” (2003, 388).

Traditional legal research, like historical research, focuses on making a distinction between primary and secondary sources on which to base an analysis. Cases, statutes, and administrative codes are considered the primary sources (the actual source of law) at the disposal of the legal researcher. Secondary sources include someone else’s interpretation of the law, and these come in the forms of books, law review and journal articles, treatises, digests, encyclopedias, and annotated volumes.

The *differences in methodology* between communication and law as broad disciplines are vast. The same is true when you consider questions of theory. Within law, you first have to navigate through the broader ideas brought forth by legal formalism/positivism, legal realism, and other schools of thought, such as the economic analysis of law, the law and society approach, and the various critical legal theory approaches (including feminist legal studies and critical race theory). If you then consider questions of interest to scholars in communication, typically the focus is on free speech theory, other free expression models, or on human rights declarations.

While most scholars emphasize the importance of theory to all scholarship, within the field of law some debate about how to use theory exists. Communication theoretician Matthew Bunker refers to the two most common theoretical approaches as top-down and bottom-up theory. Top-down legal theory begins with a premise, value, or insight. A researcher would then explore the implications of the theory, and ultimately will bring these implications “down to earth to be operationalized in legal doctrine.” The bottom-up theory is also called doctrinal scholarship, or, legal formalism. This approach historically fits the roots of traditional legal research and involves the aggregation of case law and other textual evidence “to provide a theory about what courts are doing in practice” (2001, 185).

Bunker suggests that both models are problematic, arguing that “top-down theory is often disconnected from the concrete reality of constitutional law, and . . . so far removed from . . . history, text, and doctrine as to be of questionable legitimacy. . . . Bottom-up theory, on the other hand, can be little more than descriptive of existing practice” (2001, 185).

In the field of communication, a wide variety of theories exist, including agenda setting, knowledge gap, → cultivation theory, → spiral of silence, hierarchy of influences and framing (→ Framing Effects; Agenda-Setting Effects; Knowledge Gap Effects). All of these theories tend to be top-down, mostly because they come from social science models for conducting research.

It is within these vastly different theoretical and methodological approaches that research in communication and law occurs, sometimes connected and sometimes distinctly separate. A 2006 study of the US media law literature found that “mass communication scholars tend to cite theoretical, historical and philosophical works frequently” while “law school scholars tend to cite doctrinal works more often” (Pasadeos et al. 2006, 179). Its findings support the historical evolution of the two fields, and further highlight the challenges that scholars who work at the intersection of communication and law face.

In 2006, Amy Reynolds and Brooke Barnett, authors of *Communication and law: Multidisciplinary approaches to research*, argued for more interdisciplinary work and a better integration of theory and methods that come from communication and law, despite law’s heavily doctrinal approach. They note that, “Within the past two decades, these kinds of multidisciplinary approaches have become more creative and a little bit more common – traditional legal research combined with surveys, content analysis, experiments, or participant-observations, for example, as methodologies that answer questions and hypotheses that try to connect the law and mass communication rather than separate them” (2006, xv; → Quantitative Methodology; Survey; Content Analysis, Quantitative).

Not everyone embraces or sees value in a multidisciplinary approach. Matthew Bunker and David Perry (2004) have suggested that in American communication law research, First Amendment law is still considered by some legal scholars as the “last bastion” of legal formalism and that free speech theory, as well as jurisprudence, have resisted interdisciplinary efforts more than other areas of the law. Bunker further notes in his book, *Critiquing free speech*, that while there are “obvious advantages to legal disciplinarity,” interdisciplinarity is not “an unalloyed good. Much of the recent wave of interdisciplinarity seems to have been deployed to argue for greater limits on free speech rights” (2001, xiii).

Three of the major academic journalism and communication organizations in the US and abroad allow a variety of theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of communication and law. The → International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), the → International Communication Association (ICA), and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) all have communication law and policy divisions, and all embrace methodologies that evolve from both disciplines, which aids in the promotion of multidisciplinary work.

The challenges ahead for scholars who work at the intersection of communication and law are many, given that law is not science and science has never really fit the courts. However, as Cohen and Gleason wrote: “Interest in communication and law has increased. Research scholars are regularly working beyond the limits of the single discipline approaches of law, history, psychology, and communication to develop richly textured portraits of the environment – legal, social, and cognitive, among others – that influence and are influenced by the regulation, practices, and philosophies of expression” (1990, 6).

For scholars who want to understand communication and law, and freedom of expression, the contemporary trends that include multidisciplinary study as well as global

comparative analyses provide a number of challenges sufficient to attract attention for many years to come.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ American Convention on Human Rights ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Conflicts of Law ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Gag Orders ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Licensing of Journalists ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Policy ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Privacy ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Source Protection ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Survey ▶ UNESCO ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## Communication Law and Policy: Africa

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The media law regimes in Africa are the result of a confluence of historical and political factors: first, the authoritarian colonial systems inherited at independence; second, international communication policy transfers from the UN and its specialized agencies;

and third, the post-Cold War liberalization of the 1990s. The 53 countries on the African continent can be classified into *four major media law traditions*: (1) the English-speaking tradition, an eclectic mix of British colonial traditions and indigenous African communication values, (2) the highly centralized regimes of the French-speaking countries, (3) the ideologically laden systems of the Portuguese-speaking countries, and (4) the authoritarian media law regimes of North Africa. There is considerable diversity between and within these broad classifications. Each country's media law regime is a reflection of its specific political, economic, social, and cultural context.

## HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF AFRICAN MEDIA LAW REGIMES

The modern press was introduced in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in 1801 by former slaves from the US. The returnees brought with them some of the printing technology and press traditions of the American Republic (→ Printing, History of). Pockets of returning Africans also started → newspapers in Liberia, Ghana, and Nigeria. Under British colonial rule, the press was modeled on British newspapers. The colonial administrations allowed the press freedom as long as it did not threaten colonial rule. The first press laws were “sedition” laws passed to counter the scathing attacks of the African press against slavery and European colonialism. Offending reporters and editors were punished, and newspapers were censored (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

Things were similar in Southern Africa where the first newspaper, the government-owned *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, had been started in 1800. Conflicts between the governor and the press led the British government to issue a press ordinance in 1829. This law extended the freedom enjoyed by the British press to South African newspapers. In 1948, the National Party won the national elections and introduced the policy of apartheid, or strict racial segregation. The government instituted draconian press → censorship laws that banned publication of government information and made it illegal to quote “banned” persons, as well as material that was thought to incite hostility between white and non-white. Additionally, the law banned newspapers from publishing any information about prisons, universities, banned organizations, and so on. In addition, there was thorough censorship of → books, music, → magazines, and motion pictures coming into South Africa.

In broadcasting, British colonial administrations introduced public broadcasting corporations modeled on the British Broadcasting Corporation in all British colonies in the 1920s and 1930s (→ BBC). These localized versions of the BBC were aimed at serving British settlers in Africa. Since adequate revenue for these stations could not be raised from license fees alone due to the limited number of radio sets in the colonies, funding came from a combination of government grants and advertising. These statutory shadows of the BBC survived the colonial era in many African countries (→ Africa: Media Systems).

## FRENCH COLONIAL MEDIA POLICY

French colonial policy was aimed at assimilating, “civilizing,” and transforming Africans in French colonies into black Frenchmen and women. All French-speaking African



colonies operated under the press law of 1881 (→ Media Policy; Francophonie). Though this law granted French colonies the right to publish newspapers, this right was highly circumscribed. All publications had to be under the control of a European French citizen. All publications were systematically censored and anything that appeared in print did so at the discretion of the colonial authorities. All African journalists who did not follow the dictates of the French colonial administration were jailed or exiled to other French colonies (→ Violence against Journalists).

Broadcast regulation in the French colonies was different from broadcasting in other parts of the continent. Radio was introduced in the French African colonies in the 1930s by a French government agency, *La Société de Radiophonie de la France d'Outremer* (SORAFOM), the Radio Corporation of Overseas France. These highly centralized colonial broadcasters were managed from Paris. After World War II, management and development of colonial radio came under the auspices of *l'Office de Coopération Radiophonique* (Corporation for Radio Cooperation). Broadcasting in the French colonies was directed mainly at European settlers and the small group of French-educated African elite.

### POST-INDEPENDENCE MEDIA LAW REGIMES

From 1960 to 1990, media law regimes in Africa were a function of communication policies advanced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the press laws inherited from the colonial era. Communication policy transfers from the international community to Africa started in 1958, when the General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution calling for the building of mass media facilities in the “Non-Self-Governing Territories” in Africa and elsewhere. This was the origin of the concept of → development communication, a policy that dominated the mass media in Africa for more than 40 years.

As formulated by western experts, the *development communication perspective* postulated that developing countries do not have the resources to indulge in the luxury of the liberal, watchdog journalistic model of the western countries (→ Communication Technology and Development). As such, all media were to concentrate on the task of disseminating information that would improve agricultural production, health, education, and other vital sectors. The development communication model embraced in Africa was premised on the assumption that African countries were fledgling societies where national unity was more important than freedom of the press. Many African politicians argued that in situations of dire poverty, having mass media that concentrated on checking government action was a misuse of scarce resources. The result is that most African countries dusted off the old colonial press laws and imposed them on their media with little modification.

Two countries, Tanzania, a former British colony, and Cameroon, a country with mixed French and British colonial heritage, are cases in point. In *Tanzania*, President Julius Nyerere nationalized the press in 1970. The *Tanganyika Standard*, the largest English-language newspaper, which was owned by a British company, was merged with the *Nationalist*, the paper of the ruling party, Chama Cha Mapinduzi. A newspaper, the *Daily News*, emerged from this merger. President Nyerere himself became the editor-in-chief of the

newspapers. He appointed the managing editor and issued the newspaper's working charter. The *Daily News* became the mouthpiece of the ruling party and government.

In *Cameroon*, the government of President Ahmadou Ahidjo enacted the Cameroon press law of 1966, four years after independence. This law was a slightly modified version of the content-based, highly restrictive colonial press law, which itself was modeled on the French law of 1881 on freedom of the press. The Cameroon press law of 1966 made publication of newspapers and periodicals contingent on pre-approval from the government. Additionally, all newspapers were subject to strict pre-publication censorship. Some licensed newspapers often appeared on the newsstand with whole sections blackened out by censors. In addition, under the press law, libel was both a criminal and a civil offense (→ Libel and Slander). News photography was also strictly regulated. The Regulation of Public Photography Act of 1974 made it illegal to take pictures of national public ceremonies without prior governmental authorization (→ Photojournalism). The law on advertising of 1988 required that all advertising agencies be licensed. Additionally, pharmaceutical and health products could not be advertised without prior approval from the Ministry of Health.

These kinds of repressive media laws existed throughout the continent. The most egregious examples included the *Ghanian* Rumors Decree of 1966, an order that classified all newspaper criticism of the military regime in power as illegal rumor-mongering. In *Nigeria*, successive military regimes passed a plethora of anti-press decrees that eliminated criticism of corruption and human rights abuses. In *Kenya*, repressive statutes included seditious libel, the colonial era "misprison of treason," (an offense that is committed when a journalist is alleged to have knowledge of the actual or intended commission of a treasonous act, or the utterance or publication of a treasonous expression, and does not immediately inform the authorities about it), and inciting disaffection with the government through public utterances or through the press.

In virtually all French-speaking countries, Napoleonic-era laws against insulting the head of state and his family were passed. The media were subject to pre-publication censorship, seizure of published material from newsstands, and denial of the right to purchase newsprint or hire government printing presses. Journalists practiced self-censorship for fear of falling foul of the "forces of law and disorder" that enforced repressive laws. Ironically, during the same period, all African countries ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was translated into the 70 major languages spoken on the continent. Additionally, the majority of African countries ratified the African Charter of Human and People's Rights of 1981, which also guarantees freedom of speech and of the press.

### **MEDIA LAW IN AFRICA (1990 TO PRESENT)**

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 significantly affected media law in Africa. These historic events triggered popular uprisings and demands for political freedom across the continent (→ Freedom of Communication). In response, authoritarian regimes legalized opposition parties, and at least 50 of Africa's 53 countries implicitly or explicitly granted constitutional protection to freedom of speech and freedom of the press. National conferences were held to exorcise the ghosts of the

political past and chart the constitutional paths for the future. These *new freedoms* were circumscribed by local realities. For example, in *South Africa*, the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2) of the 1994 Constitution of South Africa states: “Everyone has a right to freedom of expression, which includes freedom of the press and other media; freedom to receive or impart information or ideas.” However, freedom of expression does not cover “propaganda for war; incitement of imminent violence; or advocacy of hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender, or religion and that constitutes incitement to cause harm.”

Additionally, freedom of the press in South Africa is balanced away by a limitation clause that states *inter alia*: “The rights in the Bill of Rights may be limited only in terms of laws of general application to the extent that the limitation is reasonable and justified in an open and democratic society based on human rights, dignity, equality, and freedom.” On the whole, media law in South Africa is a complex affair. South African lawyer Jacques Louw (2005) has noted that more than 100 statutes, many of which date back to the apartheid era, regulate the publication or disclosure of information in South Africa. Information that may not be disclosed or published includes the identity of children under the age of 18 who are involved in cases or legal proceedings, publication of private facts involving divorces, photographs of criminal suspects, certain matters involving terrorism and national security, as well as tax returns.

Having constitutional provisions protecting freedom of speech and of the press is not enough. A few cases from Gabon, Cameroon, and Zimbabwe illustrate the point. In February 2002, Michel Ongoundou Loundah, editor of *La Griffé* (The Claw), an irreverent, satirical newspaper based in Libreville, *Gabon*, fled to neighboring Cameroon, and sought political refuge there after *La Griffé* was banned indefinitely and its whole editorial staff barred from practicing journalism in Gabon. The newspaper was accused of publishing articles and cartoons “bordering on provocation against the head of state.” Loundah was ultimately granted political asylum in France.

Despite its hostility towards the independent press, the government of Gabon has a novel method of controlling the nongovernmental media. In 2005, the government enacted a law creating the National Fund for the Development of the Press and the Audiovisual Media (FONAPRESSE). Under the provisions of this law, the media – including the private media – are to be funded by a combination of government grants, fines levied on violators of the press law, and a 5 percent tax on advertising. This law essentially compromised the independence of the private press.

Journalists in *Cameroon* fared no better than those in Gabon. On November 29, 1998, Nyemb Ntoogue (Popoli), cartoonist of *Le Messager Popoli*, a satirical newspaper in Cameroon, fled the country when armed intruders broke into his home one night – he was not home because he had been tipped off – and left him a message to the effect that he must stop drawing caricatures of President Biya or face death by machete. These incidents continue to take place despite the fact that the law on social communication of 1990 had eliminated official pre-publication censorship. Nevertheless, this law criminalized material the government believed would lead to a breach of the peace, affect public morality, or insult the president. One of the most severe penal sanctions against the press was meted out on Pius Njawé, publisher and editor-in-chief of *Le Messager* (The Messenger). Njawé was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment and fined \$1,000 for “propagation of false news” after his newspaper published an article about the health of the President.

Pressure from international human rights groups led to the editor's release four months into his sentence.

In 1999, a law on legal registration of published material changed pre-publication censorship to post-publication seizure. The law requires all publishers of newspapers, books, periodicals, brochures, → posters, and other material destined for public dissemination to deposit four copies of their publications at the National Archives of Cameroon, no more than four hours after publication. This law was ostensibly intended to safeguard copies of all published material. However, in reality, the law was used to screen the content of all material published. Publications found to be objectionable are seized as soon as they arrive on the newsstands.

The *Zimbabwean government* of President Robert Mugabe has been a thorn in the side of the independent press. In 2004, the *Daily News* was banned for publishing material critical of the president. Police promptly sealed the premises of the newspaper. On four separate occasions, courts invalidated the ban, but the government defied the courts. After a four-month standoff, a high court judge ordered the police to vacate the premises of the newspaper. To the amazement of everyone, the police complied with the order. As these examples show, the media law environment in contemporary Africa is characterized by a system of law and disorder, a model of governance based on the triumph of arbitrary legalism over individual rights.

## ELECTRONIC MEDIA REGULATORY AGENCIES

One of the novelties of the post-Cold War era was the creation of regulatory agencies to manage the airwaves (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy). The degree of independence of these agencies depends on the political context in which they operate. Many of these agencies are neither insulated from political pressure nor adequately funded. The result is that transformation of broadcasting from state monopolies to competitive, market-oriented, or public service systems has not always been transparent.

*Uganda* was the first East African country to liberalize its airwaves. Parliament passed the Electronic Media Statute of 1996 and the Uganda Communications Commission (UCC) Act of 1997 to regulate the electronic media sector. The UCC was given the power to issue broadcast licenses as well as establish, manage, and operate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) training centers. Other African regulatory agencies include the National Broadcasting Corporation of Nigeria (NBC) and the Communications Commission of Kenya. The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) of South Africa is one of the most independent communications regulators on the continent. It manages the frequency spectrum and promotes diversity and equal political access to radio and television broadcasting.

## INTERNET LAW AND POLICY

Most information and telecommunications policies in force in Africa are the result of policy or legal transfers from the UN and other international organizations. With the spread of the → Internet around the world in the 1990s, international organizations and aid agencies conceptualized the Internet as a catalyst for rapid economic, social, and

political development in the third world. The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have, through structural adjustment programs, provided Africans with templates of Internet regulations ranging from data protection to electronic commerce. Most countries now have governmental agencies responsible for managing the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector, registering Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and monitoring the Internet for harmful or objectionable political content (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

One of the first African countries to recognize the potential of the Internet as a tool for development was *Burkina Faso*. In 1995, Burkina Faso had one of the first Internet nodes in Africa. By 1997, it had set up a regulatory framework to coordinate the management of the domain name server (DNS) for its zone, as well as for a number of neighboring countries. Burkina Faso subsequently created a policy framework, which included information technology regulatory and advisory bodies, and laws regulating training and licensing of information technology workers.

*South Africa* has the most extensive Internet law regime on the continent. In 1999, the country outlawed child pornography, which was increasingly being hosted on servers within its territory, under the Film and Publications Act no. 65 of 1996 and the Film Publications Amendment Act no. 34 of 1999 (→ South Africa: Media System).

In *North Africa* (Algeria, Morocco, Libya, Tunisia, and Egypt) governmental agencies are the de facto or *de jure* gateways to the Internet. In most cases, government ministries or agencies control telecommunications infrastructure, are the principal telecommunications operators and regulators, the domain name registries for their respective countries, the sole Internet service providers (ISPs), the Internet content providers (ICPs), and the Internet hosts. This type of arrangement ensures that transmission of politically and culturally objectionable material to and from the regulating country is blocked by proxy servers (→ North Africa: Media Systems).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ BBC ▶ Book ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Development Communication ▶ Francophonie ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Policy ▶ Newspaper ▶ North Africa: Media Systems ▶ Photo-journalism ▶ Poster ▶ Printing, History of ▶ South Africa: Media System ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ UNESCO ▶ Violence against Journalists

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## Communication Law and Policy: Asia

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Communication law and policy in Asia covers a spectrum of issues involving widely varying political, cultural, and legal contexts across dozens of countries in the world's largest and most populous continent. While it can be difficult to generalize legal trends in the region because of a lack of conformity of interests and laws, or of what even constitutes Asia, several observations about the more significant developments at both the public level of media–government conflict and at the private level involving civil litigation can be made.

The rise in emerging democracies, burgeoning media markets, anti-terrorism efforts, and new media technologies have been among the major factors affecting communication law and policy in Asia in the latter part of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The manner in which individual countries have responded to these changes has resulted in part from the unique historical traditions in the region.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For many of the more than thirty jurisdictions in Southeast, East, and South Asia and Oceania, the region's long history of European colonization continues to have a major impact on media law and policy and the type of legal system they inherited. The common law system, imposed in territories under British rule, dating back to the nineteenth century, remains in such former colonies as India, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, and Hong Kong.

The French, Dutch, and Portuguese introduced civil law systems in their Asian colonies, including Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, and Macau. Even without colonization, several jurisdictions – Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, and Thailand – adopted European-style civil codes. The significance of these systems extends to media law. For example, British sovereignty bequeathed many harsh laws regarding defamation, official secrets, sedition, and contempt of court to its common law progenies.

Control by Spain and the United States over the Philippines left a legal system based on Spanish and Anglo-American law, a combination of civil and common law. In fact, this blending of influences, including customary and religious law, in a common law or

civil system is a distinctive characteristic of many Asian nations. Islamic law or laws protecting Islamic interests are featured in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, and East Timor, which have sizable Muslim communities. Nepal's legal system is based on Hindu legal concepts and English common law.

As religion plays a larger role politically throughout the world, *nonsecular restrictions* figure prominently in press freedom issues in Asia (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Indonesia, home to the world's largest Muslim population, prohibits conduct or comment that is hostile or abusive to a religion practiced in that country (Criminal Code, Article 156[a]). In 2006, a newspaper editor in Jakarta was charged with blaspheming Islam by publishing a cartoon of the Prophet Mohammed that first appeared in a Danish newspaper. Afghanistan has decreed that no law can be "contrary to Islam." A Kabul television station was fined for airing Indian films considered insulting to Islam; an editor was sentenced to two years in prison for articles criticizing stoning and other Islamic punishments. In 1990, Pakistan's Federal Shariat Court, which examines legal matters to ensure they do not contravene Islamic principles, held that "the penalty for contempt of the Holy Prophet . . . is death and nothing else."

Concern over morals also affects the media in more conservative Asian cultures. In 2007, an article about a sex survey with questions about incest and bestiality published in a student university magazine in Hong Kong was ruled to be indecent. In Indonesia, religious groups protested the acquittal of the editor of *Playboy Indonesia* on indecency charges for publishing photographs of scantily clad women (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content).

As one of several remaining communist countries in Asia, the *People's Republic of China* continues to loom large with its unusual form of media regulation. Its law combines elements of Germany's civil code, Soviet socialist law, and traditional Chinese culture, emphasizing detailed administrative control over all aspects of media practice. But because of the rapid expansion of its economy, industrialization, and its admission to the World Trade Organization in 2001, rule of law in China and its impact on journalists are evolving. A draft law that would have fined Chinese media each time they reported on "sudden events" without prior government authorization was withdrawn after media protests. In late 2006, authorities announced a relaxation of reporting rules for foreign press (but not applicable to mainland journalists) in the run-up to the Beijing 2008 Olympics. China, however, is not expected to relinquish most of its tight controls over its media in the near future.

### **DEMOCRACIES, POLITICAL INSTABILITY, AND THE PRESS**

A dramatic increase in the number of democracies in Asia, particularly since the 1980s, has generally resulted in more legal protections for press freedoms and, for some nations, the repeal of harsh laws from earlier, more restrictive eras. Countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, and the Philippines best typify this phenomenon as they have made the transition from extended periods of martial law to robust democracies. The establishment of democracies, however, has also brought concurrent concerns by governments that public criticisms foster political instability, and thus in a number of Asian countries, a legal backlash against the media has occurred. Military coups such as in Pakistan (1999)

and Thailand (2006), and states of emergencies such as in the Philippines (2006) and Bangladesh (2007) have dealt further setbacks to a free press.

Most of the Asian nations guarantee freedom of expression and speech in their constitutions, but their political and legal environments often create quite different realities, notably in China, where Article 35 of the constitution (1982) states: "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of procession and of demonstration."

Governments also frequently use press laws that regulate print media to censor them, typically by withdrawing or withholding licensing and permits. Malaysia's Printing Presses and Publication Act can revoke licenses any time without judicial review. Singapore's Newspaper and Printing Press Act gives it control over content for both foreign and local publications. A much rarer situation is Mongolia's 1998 Media Law, which bans government censorship.

Despite the political and legal restrictions they face, the region's media have enjoyed expansion during a period of economic growth after recovery from the Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s. That growth has fostered competition, which in time led to concerns about press responsibility, especially in the areas of defamation and privacy.

Asia has seen an explosion in the number of *defamation cases*, both criminal and civil, filed by government officials, politicians, and others against the media. Most Asian jurisdictions have longstanding criminal defamation laws, although they have been long dormant in some places, such as Hong Kong and Singapore. Nonetheless, criminal prosecutions continue to be brought. The husband of Philippines President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo brought more than 40 criminal actions against journalists critical of him. He dropped the actions only after the journalists filed a counterclaim for violation of their constitutional rights. East Timor, as one of the youngest democracies in Asia, installed a penal code in 2005 with harsh penalties for criminal defamation, with specific protection for public officials. Under Article 173, harming an official's reputation can yield a three-year prison sentence and unlimited fines.

At the same time, though, there has been a *move toward more freedom of expression* in these cases. Courts in Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, and India have ruled in favor of the media, establishing new principles of press protection in criminal defamation. In a 1997 landmark case, a Taiwanese court dismissed criminal charges against two journalists for an article reporting that the business manager of the then-ruling party had offered a \$15 million contribution to US president Bill Clinton's re-election campaign fund; the ruling endorsed a good-faith defense on matters of public interest. In Japan, the courts have upheld a journalist's reasonable belief that statements made concerning matters of public interest were true, even if that belief later turned out to be wrong. Indonesia's Supreme Court in 2006 overturned a defamation conviction against a magazine editor, ruling that a civil press law was the more appropriate mechanism to better protect press freedom. Cambodia and Sri Lanka have repealed their criminal defamation offences altogether.

## ANTI-TERRORISM LAWS AND THE REVIVAL OF SEDITION

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States and the Bali bombing in Indonesia in 2002, Southeast Asian countries have been identified by some as



the “second front” in the global war against terrorism. A number of Asian countries (e.g., Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines) have passed or were considering anti-terrorism laws that would have a major impact on press freedom and other civil liberties. Nations in the region have also been reviving the use of existing sedition laws, which criminalize speech or conduct that incites resistance to or insurrection against authority.

In its 2005 anti-terrorism legislation, Australia, long a beacon of press freedom, strengthened its *sedition laws*, the first modern democracy to do so in decades. Like many former British colonies, Australia still retained the sedition laws it inherited but rarely invoked. In 2006, New Zealand prosecuted its first sedition case in more than 80 years. Malaysia, which had not used its 1948 Sedition Act in years, began using it to curb political dissent, with “seditious tendency” as its vague criteria. In a three-year period, Indonesia brought more than a dozen sedition prosecutions. In 2005, Singapore sentenced two ethnic Chinese bloggers under its Sedition Act for posting remarks offensive to the minority Muslim-Malay community on their websites. In 2007, Philippine authorities charged a publisher and two columnists with incitement to sedition for articles that alleged corruption in the military. Australia also enacted a covert surveillance law that allows phone tapping against journalists and others. Hong Kong passed a similar surveillance law in 2006. The threat of terrorism in Southeast Asia predates the attacks of the twenty-first century. The rise in militant Islamic groups that push for separate Islamic states has been ongoing for decades.

### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Laws ensuring access to government records have gained acceptance worldwide, with more than 60 countries having adopted → freedom of information laws as of 2007. The trend, however, has been slower to take hold in Asia, with only half a dozen countries having enacted national laws. They are Australia (1982), New Zealand (1982), Thailand (1997), South Korea (1998), Japan (2001), and India (2005).

Even without national freedom of information legislation, several Asian countries had acknowledged constitutional status for the right to government information. The Philippines explicitly referred to the right to information in its 1973 and 1987 Constitutions (“The right of the people to information of matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records and documents, and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law”). Before Thailand adopted its freedom of information law, its 1991 constitution expressly recognized the right to information, which was retained in its 1997 constitution.

India’s courts in the 1970s recognized a constitutional right as implicit in freedom of speech and expression. In 1989, South Korea’s Constitutional Court held that there was a constitutional right to information “as an aspect of the right of freedom of expression and specific implementing legislation to define the contours of the right was not a prerequisite to its enforcement.” In the mid-1990s, the National Assembly of South Korea enacted a freedom of information act, and it revised the statute in its entirety in 2004. The Korean freedom of information law guarantees Koreans’ “right to know” and aims to ensure the citizens’ participation in governance and the transparency of their government.

Despite constitutional recognition or the existence of federal or local laws, citizens and media often face excessive *court costs and improper denials of requests*. Increasingly, they are also finding denials for national security reasons or as contrary to official secrets laws. In 2007, Philippines President Arroyo issued an executive order to restrict public and media access to official information through the creation of a “National Security Clearance System” that would “protect and ensure the integrity and sanctity” of classified information against “enemies of the state.” While freedom of information laws have usually exempted various categories of information, including national security, the latest government efforts around the region citing this category indicate heightened concern over the issue.

Some restraints, however, do exist. South Korea, pursuant to its Military Secrets Protection Act, requires that secrets marked as classified must follow legal procedure and create a clear danger to national security. New Zealand, one of the first jurisdictions in Asia to pass a freedom of information law, also simultaneously dismantled its Official Secrets Act.

The right-of-access trend is likely to continue, albeit slowly, with other countries, such as Indonesia and Nepal, also considering enactment of a freedom of information law. Even China has experimented with a lesser form, an administrative access-to-information scheme, in several large provinces, and in 2007 authorities issued draft national legislation and a regulation mandating more government transparency. (China, however, also has stepped up its prosecutions of journalists and writers for violating state secret laws.) Right-of-access advocates hope further developments will help establish an affirmative right of the public to access the governing process in Asia’s developing democracies.

## INTERNET AND COPYRIGHT REGULATION

The rapid escalation in the use of the → *Internet* and other technologies to communicate and publish has spawned particular concern among Asian governments because of their potential for contributing to political opposition. The technical know-how and determination of Internet users in some Asian countries have created a fast-changing game of regulatory chess between the newly technically empowered and governments struggling to contain what they view as harmful content. This has led to varied attempts to monitor and control the Internet, including shutting down sites, filtering, enacting new regulatory regimes, and applying more traditional criminal and civil laws (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

China has been especially innovative and aggressive in *Internet filtering*, imposing regulations, and prosecuting online writers for violation of laws on state secrets, subversion, and sedition. Malaysia arrested a blogger in 2007 under its Official Secrets Act for posting comments about the country’s internal security system; this was despite Malaysia’s 1998 Communications and Multimedia Act and its guarantees against Internet censorship. Other countries with strong Internet controls include Vietnam, Burma, Pakistan, and Thailand.

Newer regulatory schemes include Thailand’s 2007 *cyber crime law*, which addressed computer-related offences such as hacking and data theft, but critics feared it would be used to regulate online content. The law gave the government broad authority to shut down or block websites, seize computers, and penalize individuals who use proxy servers to access banned sites. Also, under the law, damaging someone’s reputation by altering a

picture online can result in up to three years in prison and large fines. In Japan, the government was considering legislation that would regulate online video programming to the same extent as television broadcasting. A number of Asian jurisdictions, including Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea, however, maintain few specific controls over the Internet.

Because of international treaties and agreements such as the Berne Convention and with the World Intellectual Property Organization and the World Trade Organization, there are not as many differences among Asia's → *copyright laws* as there might be in other areas of law. Different legal systems can have similar laws, with some differences, of course. For example, the fair dealing defense is more common in the countries deriving from common law systems. There can also be unique national characteristics such as Japan's protection of *dojinshi*, which are self-published works, usually *manga* or novels.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Copyright ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Open Meetings Law ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Privacy ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Right of Correction ▶ Right to Know ▶ Right of Reply ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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# Communication Law and Policy: Europe

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The first newspapers were published in Europe in 1605: *Nieuwe Tijdinghen* in Antwerp and *Relation* in Strasbourg, both published as weeklies (→ Newspaper, Antecedents of; Newspaper, History of). Soon afterwards, more newspapers appeared in several European cities, until in 1650 the first daily newspaper was printed in Leipzig, Germany. Censorship and license were the key legal restraints on newspapers under the absolute monarchies of Europe (→ Censorship). The 1662 Licensing of the Press Act in England was the first media regulation. In the nineteenth century, dynamic movements of ideas, the consequent political changes, and technological improvements contributed to the emergence of the European press as we know it today (Chapman 2005), with precedents such as the *Daily Telegraph* in Britain (1855), *Le Petit Journal* in France (1863), and the news agencies Havas in France (1835), Wolff in Germany (1849), and Reuters in Britain (1851).

## MEDIA LAW: THE LIBERAL AND THE COMMUNIST SYSTEMS

The present media law of Europe has been shaped by two historical events: the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution.

In the eighteenth century, *the French Revolution* gave rise to liberal ideas about freedom that questioned the state's intervention in freedom of expression. The *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* was proclaimed in August 1789. Article 11 states: "The free communication of thoughts and of opinions is one of the most precious rights of man: any citizen thus may speak, write, print freely, save [if it is necessary] to respond to the abuse of this liberty, in the cases determined by the law." It exerted a strong influence on every liberal constitution and their provision of freedom of expression in Europe – Spain in 1812, Sicily in 1812, Belgium in 1831, Switzerland in 1848, and Piedmont in 1848 – and even in the new independent countries of Latin America, former colonies of Spain – Venezuela in 1819, Chile in 1833, and Mexico in 1857 (→ Freedom of Communication; Right to Communicate).

The English philosophers John Stuart Mill and John Locke prepared the basis for a liberal conception of the press (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). In *Law of libel and liberty of the press*, Mill (1985, 1st pub. 1825) spoke about the essential role of freedom of expression in a democracy: "The importance of free discussion . . . concerns equally every member of the Community. It is equal in value to good government, because without it good government cannot exist. Once remove it, and not only are all existing abuses perpetuated, but all which, in the course of successive ages it has overthrown, revive in a moment, along with that ignorance and imbecility, against which it is the only safeguard."

The *Russian Communist Revolution* created a system of censorship and control over the media, which rejected personal freedom of speech. The Decree on the Press of October 1917 included "temporary and extraordinary measures to stop the flow of dirt and slander." In the 1950s, the eastern and central European countries under Soviet domination adopted the Soviet system of media censorship and control. The Soviet Communist

Party's *Pravda* (1912–1991) and *Izvestia* (1917–) of the Supreme Soviet (the central government) were the main organs for propaganda. This state-controlled media system was repeated in every Soviet state (Richter 2002a).

### **THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

A third crucial event in Europe was World War II (1939–1945). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations in 1948 in response to World War II (→ United Nations, Communication Policies of). Article 19 states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

The right to information and freedom of expression, as expressly enumerated by the UN human rights declaration, has been recognized by all the national constitutions, such as the Basic Law of Germany (1949), the Constitution of Portugal (1977), the Spanish Constitution, (1978), and the democratic constitutions of the ex-soviet and ex-Yugoslavian European countries, such as Poland (1997), Lithuania (1992), the Czech Republic (1992), Slovakia (1992), Croatia (1991), and Slovenia (1991). In every European media law system, the right to information and freedom of expression is weighed against an individual's right of → privacy and reputation. Illustrative are the French Law of Privacy (1970), the Spanish Law of Protection of the Right to Reputation, Privacy and Own Image (1982), and the UK Human Rights Act (1998).

At the end of World War II came the entity now known as the European Union, as a European plan of cooperation, which aimed at producing economic links among European countries. The definitive objective of the European Union has been to build strong cultural and political links among the member states. So, the European Convention on Human Rights provides for freedom of expression as a right.

### **NEW MEDIA LAW IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE**

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the perestroika movement, which Mikhail Gorbachev had introduced to the Soviet Union, took the Soviet economy to bankruptcy. Although perestroika was for social and economic renewal, it became the last step toward the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

The majority of the postcommunist countries in eastern and central Europe have begun on their own paths to democracy. Their new constitutions guarantee freedom of expression, the right to information, and the right of privacy, as do those of many western European countries. Given that the democratic tradition in the post-Soviet nations is still weak, the constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression in many former Soviet countries are more aspirational than operational (Richter 2002b).

### **PROMOTION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND RIGHT TO INFORMATION BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

The Council of Europe has been a watchdog on human rights around the continent since 1950. The European Court of Human Rights has promoted freedom of expression over

the years, especially since the mid-1970s. Its jurisdiction affects European countries that have signed the European Convention on Human Rights. As of June 2007, the Court has ruled in more than 150 cases on freedom of expression. Its case law tackles a number of free speech issues: (1) special protection for children; (2) commercial speech; (3) hate speech (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms); (4) the balance between reputation and criticism of politicians and institutions; (5) the balance between privacy of public individuals and freedom of expression; (6) the secrecy of journalistic sources (→ News Sources); (7) separatist propaganda; (8) television licenses and transborder broadcasting; (9) independence of justice and journalistic reports on courts; and (10) access to public information. Both freedom of expression and the right to information are considered as fundamental pillars of a democratic society, as the Court reiterated in its case law on Article 10.

The European Union adopted its own *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union* in January 2001. Article 11 of the EU Charter is similar to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights: “Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. . . . The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected.”

## EUROPEAN UNION MEDIA LAW AND POLICY

### General Patterns

Media law and policy in Europe revolves around the EU’s measures concerning the media and their policies in each individual European country (→ European Union: Communication Law). The EU took note of the media as a subject for regulation in the late 1980s, when the idea of Europe as a political union was one of its possible goals. In this light, the media would play a fundamental role in configuring European identity. As in other sectors of society, the media have a big impact, and hence are valuable both in the market and in the cultural-political context. The media’s influence on the EU centers on the audiovisual area. Meanwhile, there are other regulatory areas in European media and communication policies, such as competition, advertising, and the protection of minors.

The diversity of European countries is a crucial component of media law and policies in Europe. Indeed, the different backgrounds of each EU member nation in their history and socio-political heritage determine the particular implementation and formulation of EU media policies. Although EU nations share with each other the challenges of reforming public broadcasting and creating audiovisual authorities (Carey & Sanders 2004), diversity still remains. Examples of successful regulations include the UK’s → BBC with a special regulatory frame, the Royal Charter, Poland’s broadcast regulation (1992), Belgium’s public broadcasting institutions in three different languages – *Belgische Radio en Televisie* (BRT), *Radio Television Belge Francophone* (RTBF), and *Belgischer Rundfunk und Fernsehen* (BRF) – and Italy, where the Constitutional Court plays an important role in media law (Caretti 2001).

### Focus on Audiovisual Media

The EU views audiovisual media as essential to building a European identity among Europe’s multi-citizenship. The promotion of inter-European delivery of audiovisual

contents throughout the “European Audiovisual Space” is the best support to the European multicultural identity. This started with the “Television without Frontiers” Directive of 1989. The main issues from the Directive are still relevant. Among them are → advertising limits, the protection of minors and human dignity, cultural diversity, and access to information.

The EU audiovisual policy is related to public broadcasting in particular (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). The EU pays close attention to various controversies arising from public broadcasting services. In the early 1990s, for example, commercial broadcasters complained to the European Commission that privileging public broadcasters violates fair competition. The EU Protocol “The Public Broadcasting System,” together with the Amsterdam Treaty (1998), supported European public broadcasting. It asserts that public broadcasting services are indispensable to meeting the democratic, social, and cultural demands of each society. Insofar as its public funding does not violate fair competition among broadcasters, public broadcasting may be maintained. After the EU public broadcasting protocol was adopted, the European Commission urged Italy, France, Portugal, and Spain to reform their public broadcasting systems in compliance with the protocol (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Thus, broadcasting laws in France, Italy, Portugal, and Spain have been revised (France, Public Broadcasting Laws [2000]; Italy, Law on Regulation and Principles Governing the Set-Up of the Broadcasting System and the RAI – Radiotelevisione Italiana [2004]; Portugal, Public Broadcasting Law [2003]; Spain, Public Broadcasting Law [2006]). The interest in public broadcasting has been heightened throughout Europe by digitization and EU demands for fair competition in the audiovisual market. The BBC adopted a new Royal Charter in 2007, Germany amended its Law of Interstate Treaty on Broadcasting in 2005, and Ireland passed a new Broadcasting Act in 2001.

### **Fair Competition Measures**

EU concern about media concentration issues has been addressed by the EU Parliament and Commission Resolutions, which are aware of decreased pluralism and the Commission’s executive actions (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Plurality). The EU’s focus is to preclude one particular communication enterprise from dominating the European market (→ Media Conglomerates; Mergers). But the necessity of being competitive in the global market has pressured the European Commission to compromise on its media concentration policy.

Regardless, the European Commission has devoted considerable efforts to fighting unfair competition through the European Registry of Mergers or by the Directorate-General for Competition. The EU does not have specific rules on media ownership; the legal ground of any activity on this field is based on general competition regulation, mainly on the Council Regulation of January 2004 “on the control of concentrations between undertakings” (→ Ownership in the Media). Its article 21 empowers member states to apply additional controls to protect media pluralism.

The latest significant actions by the European Commission include the merger procedure against the joint ventures of → Time Warner Inc., worldwide provider of online services, film entertainment, operator of cable systems and television networks, and publisher, and CBS, the US mass media company engaged in the delivery of television,

radio, and print publishing content; and the Commission's investigation in May 2002 of contracts among European pay-TV companies and various content providers, including the Hollywood film studios NBC Universal, Paramount Pictures Corporation, Inc., Buena Vista International, Inc.; Warner Brothers Entertainment, Inc.; 20th Century Fox Film Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment, Inc.; MGM Studios, Inc., and Dreamworks LLC (→ Sony Corporation).

In the first case, in March 2006, after the examination in light of Council Regulation (EC) no. 139/2004 of the newly created company, the CW, and the control operated by TimeWarner and CBS, the Commission decided not to oppose the operation and to declare it compatible with the common market. Concerning the broadcasting rights' contracts, the Commission's investigation pressured in some way the withdrawal of the "most favoured nation" (MFN) clauses from the majority of the Hollywood film studios' contracts, in October 2004. The only exemptions were Paramount and Universal. The Commission's preliminary assessment considered these MFN clauses to produce "an alignment of the prices," because they give the studios the right to implement the most favorable terms agreed between the TV companies and any of the Hollywood studios.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ BBC ▶ Censorship ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media History ▶ Mergers ▶ News Sources ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Plurality ▶ Privacy ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ Self-Regulation of the Media ▶ Sony Corporation ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Time Warner Inc. ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of

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## Communication Law and Policy: Middle East

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22 countries belong to the Arab League, established in 1945. Most of those countries were ruled by the Ottomans, British, French, or Italians. Thus, Arab countries have largely adopted legislation based mostly on the legal systems of their former colonial rulers. Egypt, however, has a longer and more established legal tradition that dates back to the Egyptian constitution of 1923, while some Gulf nations that were British “protectorates” until 1971 have a less tested or developed legal tradition. The normative sources regulating speech rights in Israel consist of a number of British mandatory statutes incorporated into Israeli law in 1948 from the Law and Administration Ordinance, as well as Israeli legislation enacted by the Knesset after the establishment of the state.

### LICENSING AND MINIMUM CAPITAL REQUIREMENTS

All Arab countries with the exception of Iraq still require licensing before publication. In almost all countries, minimum capitalization is required. Sometimes, licensing involves obtaining a certificate of good conduct from the ministry of interior or the intelligence services.

In *Israel*, the 1933 ordinance based on British law, which mandates licensing of publications, the approval of the credentials of journalists, and the closure of publications, is still in force (→ Licensing of Journalists). Although Israel kept the British Defense (Emergency) 1945 Regulations on the statute books, the government undertook not to impose them on the Hebrew press, signing an agreement on military censorship with Israeli editors in 1949 and renewing it several times. A “censorship tribunal” resolves disputes between the chief censor and the Israeli press, which receives general guidelines on the topics the

government considers sensitive. Ever since a 1989 Israeli High Court of Justice ruling that the censor can cancel an article only if there is “a near certainty of tangible harm to the state’s security,” censorship of materials for political expediency has been reduced (→ Censorship).

The latest (1996) agreement with the editors was amended to allow all media, not just publications that belong to the editors committee, to file petitions against the censor in the High Court of Justice. The censor cannot appeal decisions by the committee. The agreement also established a censorship appeals committee, headed by a retired Supreme Court Justice. Schmidt (2006) notes that although Jews and Palestinian Arabs who are Israeli citizens “are formally equal before the law, the basic approach of using different normative and interpretative standards on both groups underlies Israel’s legal, judicial, and socio-political system as a whole and may be described as systematic.” (→ Israel: Media System).

### ACCESS TO INFORMATION

*Israel* enacted a freedom of information law in 1998. The law allows any citizen or resident to access records held by government offices, local councils, and government-owned corporations. Requests for information must be processed within 30 days. A court can review decisions to withhold information. *Jordan* has approved an access to information law in 2007, but the law was criticized for not having an independent body responsible for overseeing compliance.

Journalists who publish information on corruption are often punished for obtaining documents on which they based their investigations. *Algerian* journalist Bahir Arrabi was imprisoned in 2006 after publishing his investigative report on a charitable institution whose boss registered a piece of land in his own name instead of the name of the organization he was heading. The court ruled against him for obtaining documents that did not belong to him. On the other hand, the Yemeni parliament formed an 11-member anti-corruption authority to apply the Yemeni Anti-Corruption Law no. 39 (2006). Such legislation will make it easier for journalists to cover corruption. The *Iraqi* interior ministry on May 13, 2007, limited journalists’ access to scenes of bomb attacks, thus restricting their ability to report independently (→ Freedom of Information).

### DEFAMATION AND INSULT LAWS

Insult laws have their origin in the concept of “lèse-majesté” in the 1881 French law. Henderson (2005) arrived at a typology to determine the categories of critical statements prohibited under defamation and insult laws in the five countries he examined (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Yemen). He found that the law prohibited statements (1) because of a person, such as the head of state (king, president) and his family, public officials, foreign heads of state, etc.; (2) because of an institution, such as the parliament, the courts, public agencies, religious authorities, etc.; and (3) because of a topic, such as public morality, nation’s reputation, or relations with a foreign state or territory. Additionally, many laws include vaguely defined offenses such as inflammatory propaganda or malicious information.

The → *right of reply* is found in the press laws of Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen among others. Israeli defamation law does not distinguish between defamation of private individuals and public officials or figures. It provides for imprisonment for six months for insulting “a public servant or a judge or officer of a religious court or a member of a commission of inquiry under the Commissions of Inquiry Law while engaged in the discharge of his duties.” No journalists were prosecuted under the criminal libel law. However, Amos Keinan, a columnist for Israel’s *Yediot Ahronot*, was convicted of contempt of court in 1995, and fined US\$670 for criticizing Israeli courts for imposing allegedly lenient sentences on Israelis convicted of attacking Palestinians in 1988 and 1989 (→ Journalism: Legal Situation).

### LEGISLATION AFTER THE SEPTEMBER 11 TERRORIST ATTACKS

September 11 has led Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Bahrain to promulgate new press laws to fight “terrorism.” The Jordanian government on October 8, 2001, amended the penal code and enacted a new anti-terrorist law.

The new anti-terrorist law defines terrorism in vague terms and increases the scope of the death penalty. It stipulates that “anyone who commits an act which undermines the political regime in Jordan or incites others to do so, and anyone who acts individually or collectively to change the economic, social, or fundamental situation of the society” can be sentenced to hard labor. Because of the way some of these laws have been applied, some observers criticized the laws as attempts not to combat terrorism but to muzzle internal dissent.

### THE EFFECT OF RELIGION ON MEDIA LEGISLATION

As a result of the level of secularism versus Islamic observance, Arab countries use Sharia law sparingly or extensively. The *Syrian* constitution is the most secular because the founder of the Baath party in the 1940s, Michel Aflak, was a secular Christian. In contrast, *Saudi Arabia’s* Basic Rules for Governance serve as its constitution: Article 1 states that Islam is its religion; God’s Book and the Sunnah of His Prophet are its constitution.

*Israel* has no constitution and no bill of rights: the religious parties objected to any constitution other than the Torah, and the military establishment realized that much of the Israeli and British mandatory emergency legislation would never stand the test of judicial review. Israel hopes, however, that the basic laws it has enacted will eventually serve as its constitution.

After the publication of the Danish cartoons on September 30, 2005, and the republication of some of them in *Jordanian* weeklies, *al-Mehwar* and *Shihan*, two editors-in-chief were first charged with blasphemy in violation of the Jordanian penal code. After being released on bail, they were rearrested and detained for a week on charges of violating the Press and Publication Law, which prohibits “publishing anything that conflicts with the . . . values of the Arab and Islamic nation” and “publishing anything that might instigate violence, prejudice, bigotry or . . . which invites racism, sectarianism, or provincialism.”

The editors of the *Algerian* weeklies *Ar-risala* and *As-safir* were imprisoned for a month for reprinting the cartoons, their imprisonment based on the criminal code allowing for

between three- and five-year imprisonment for “anyone offending the Prophet or emissaries of God or belittling the doctrine and principles of Islam” (→ Violence against Journalists).

## INTERNET IN THE MIDDLE EAST

In the mid-1990s, when → Internet use was reserved for the well-to-do, most Arab governments did not attempt to censor it. As Internet use became common, some governments set up surveillance units. Only Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, however, have Internet-specific legislation.

In 2007, 53 percent of the citizens of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were reported to use the Internet regularly, according to the *World Fact Book* of the Central Intelligence Agency. Israel comes second at 50 percent, followed by Kuwait (25 percent), Bahrain, (22), and Qatar (20). The rest of the Arab countries range between 10 and 15 percent. Iraq is in the last position at 0.1 percent (→ Exposure to the Internet).

Local Internet service providers (ISPs) enable governments to block certain websites. Gulf nations are most concerned about pornography, while Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Syria, and Tunisia concentrate mostly on human rights, political, and religious websites. Countries that have no Internet-specific legislation define communication in their press laws to include *any* means of dissemination, including digital. Thus, the most recent attempt to try a Bahraini → blogger for defamation of a government official was to be conducted under both the penal code and the Press and Publications Law 47/2002 before the official dropped the suit after mediation.

*Tunisia* has the region’s most detailed Internet legislation issued in a decree in March 1997, which explicitly extended the press law to cover the Internet. Each ISP must submit, on a monthly basis, a list of its Internet subscribers to the “public operator” (the state-run ATI); if the ISP stops providing services, it must turn over to the public operator a complete set of its archives as well as the means to read them. Furthermore, the “director” is to maintain “constant oversight” of the content on the ISP’s servers. The Internet decree also bars encryption without prior approval from the authorities. The contract presented to institutional clients by the ATI restricts their right to seek and access information online only to “scientific, technological, or commercial purposes under penalty of cancellation of the contract.”

*Saudi Arabia’s* 2001 Rules for Regulating the Internet forbid the publication of “anything contravening a fundamental principle or legislation, or infringing the sanctity of Islam and its benevolent Shari’ah, or breaching public decency,” and “anything contrary to the state or its system.” Censorship is undertaken by service providers, who, “record the time spent, addresses accessed or to which or through which access was attempted, and the size and type of files copied, whenever possible or necessary.” Saudis require the approval of the Ministry of Information “for setting up of media-type websites.” The Jordanian government has submitted a draft law in 2007 that regulates Internet broadcasting.

Although the *Egyptian* constitution stipulates that “no crime and no penalty may be awarded out of law, and no penalty may be awarded to the violations committed before affecting the respective law,” Egypt criminalizes some online activities, although there are no legal stipulations that criminalize them. Egypt jailed three bloggers in 2006.

Censorship of Internet content in *Israel* starts in 2008 after a law, unanimously approved by the ministerial committee on legislation, is brought to the Knesset for final approval. The proposed law requires Internet ISP and cellular phone providers to only allow access to Internet sites featuring pornography, gambling, and violence to users over 18 who specifically sign up for them and identify themselves as adults (→ Internet Law and Regulation; Pornography, Media Law on).

### POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ARAB PRESS

*Kuwait* is emerging as the freest country because of recent court rulings favoring freedom of the press. The Press and Publications Law of 2006 permits *any* Kuwaiti to engage in publishing after receiving a permit and allows for court review of rejected applications. It forbids the publication of material that criticizes the constitution or the prince, or calls for the overthrow of the regime. Insulting the prince, however, is no longer punishable by a jail term but by a steep fine.

Arab journalists are becoming increasingly assertive. The *Yemeni* journalists syndicate rejected a draft press law prepared by the government without consultation in 2005, leading to its suspension in 2007 and the initiation of consultations with civil society and the press syndicate on a new draft press law. Protests by journalists in Egypt and Jordan in 2007 also got press laws renegotiated. The Arab Journalists Union has crafted a progressive media law as a model; one that Arab governments have not yet adopted. The law ensures that the broad promises of freedom written into various constitutions are not contradicted in press laws or penal codes, forbids referring journalists to the State Security Court or imprisoning them, and insists that Arab countries adhere to the international conventions they had ratified.

*Bahrain's* most famous blogger cited on his website the Bahraini constitutional protections of free speech under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights “which the Bahraini Government is a signatory,” as he put it. The blogger, who writes in English, has published a photograph of the order to block his website, “Mahmoud’s Den,” signed by what he called “the minister of disInformation.” He also published a list of other blocked Bahraini sites coupled with instructions for unblocking them.

The Internet used to be the refuge for strict Islamists who issue fatwas (religious rulings) against Muslims with a different interpretation of Islam, and it still is. Today, however, the Internet is also the home of Muslims who take religious zealots to task by making fun of them, as happened in 2007 when sexually explicit cartoons ridiculed a fatwa on the separation of the sexes. The strange fatwa decreed that males and females may work together alone in offices if the female nurses the male five times, thus making him qualify as a brother. As a result of the uproar in the press and on the Internet, Al Azhar University of Egypt has since suspended an Al Azhar professor who issued the ruling, but the comic pornographic cartoons depicting what would happen in the workplace if the fatwa was applied were making the rounds on the Internet throughout the summer of 2007.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Censorship ► Exposure to the Internet ► Freedom of Information ► Internet ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Israel: Media System ► Journalism: Legal Situation ► Licensing of Journalists ► Pornography, Media Law on ► Right of Reply ► Violence against Journalists

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# Communication Law and Policy: North America

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North America consists of 23 countries, including the United States, Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean Island nations, and Central America. The continent also encompasses several territories and possessions such as Greenland. The United States dominates the region, especially in the area of communication law and policy, with Canada next in line. Except for Cuba, all of the countries in the region are democracies, with most of the legal systems based on the American system, English common law, or French civil law. All of the countries have constitutions that protect the right of freedom of expression. The extent of the right in practice, however, varies. In the 2006 Freedom House classification regarding freedom of the press, 14 of the countries are free (61 percent), 7 are partly free (30 percent), and 2, Cuba and Haiti, are not free.

## CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS

The *United States* has the oldest constitution on the continent. Protection for freedom of expression falls under the First Amendment, which states that: “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press” (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Although the provision originally applied only to Congress, it has been extended to governments at the state and local levels as well. The First Amendment is written in absolute language, but the protection it provides has never been absolute. The level of protection tends to vary depending on societal conditions. As a general rule, however, political speech (speech critical of the government) receives the greatest protection. Commercial speech (speech motivated by profit) receives less protection, and obscene speech receives no protection (→ United States of America: Media System).

The other North American countries have chosen not to adopt the absolute language of the First Amendment in their constitutions, and build in a method for balancing freedom of expression with other societal interests, rather than leaving the courts to create limits on the substantive definition of freedoms themselves. Freedom of expression, for example, is protected in *Canada* by Section 2(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (the Charter). The section provides that “everyone has the following fundamental freedoms: . . . (b) freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication.” The Charter also provides in Section 1 that the freedom is subject to “such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.” Section 1 allows the courts to reach a just result in a particular case without unnecessarily restricting the scope of freedom of expression (→ Canada: Media System).

The *Mexican Constitution* as of 2002 provides in Article 7 that “The freedom to write and publish on any matter is inviolable.” While “no law or authority may establish prior censorship, or require bond from authors or printers, or abridge the freedom of printing,” freedom of the press can be limited by “the respect of private life, of morals, and of public

peace" (→ Mexico: Media System). Similarly, *Guatemala's* constitution protects freedom of expression from governmental interference, but also allows for that freedom to be curtailed when its use is disrespectful of another's → privacy or morality (Greene 2007).

Nicaragua's constitution provides for freedom of the press, but allows for some → censorship (Freedom House 2006). Costa Rica, the oldest democracy in Latin America, has what is considered one of the freest press environments in the area (Freedom House 2005). Freedom of communication is guaranteed under Article 24 of the constitution (Freedom House 2006).

Guatemala's constitution guarantees freedom of expression but restricts press freedom to accredited members of the press (Freedom House 2005). *Cuba* has the most restrictive constitutional provisions regarding freedom of expression. The constitution prohibits private ownership of media but does allow free speech and press provided they "conform to the aims of a Socialist society" (→ Caribbean States: Media Systems; Central America: Media Systems; Cuba: Media System; Ownership in the Media).

## AMERICAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

In addition to individual country constitutions, several of the states in North America are signatories to the → American Convention on Human Rights. Under the convention, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought and expression. This right includes freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing, in print, in the form of art, or through any other medium of one's choice." The convention specifically provides that "the rights of each person are limited by the rights of others, by the security of all, and by the just demands of the general welfare in a democratic society" (American Convention, Article 32[2]).

The convention is applied and interpreted by the → *Inter-American Court of Human Rights*, which was created in July 1978 with the ratification of the convention (Statute). The court is an autonomous judicial institution seated in San Jose, Costa Rica. It has the power to decide cases involving those states that have formally recognized its jurisdiction. Barbados, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama have all declared themselves subject to its jurisdiction (Pasqualucci 2006). In addition, any member state of the Organization of American States (OAS) may ask the court for an advisory opinion regarding the interpretation of the convention.

The court has interpreted the right of freedom of expression as having two interdependent dimensions: an individual dimension, which is the right to express oneself, and a social dimension, which is the right to communicate and to receive information (Ivcher Brontein Case 2001; Pasqualucci 2006).

## ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Although constitutional protections for freedom of expression are important, they can be meaningless for journalists without access to information (→ Freedom of Information). In the *United States*, where freedom of the press has long been vigorously protected, the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits any person access to the records of federal



executive branch agencies. Under FOIA, government records are presumed open and exemptions to that openness are to be construed narrowly. After the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, however, the federal government changed its policy, making the range of the nine exemption categories broader and reducing access. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 further restricted the presumption of openness by expanding the nature of the information that fell under the national security exemption.

*Canada* also has a federal act regarding access to information. The Access to Information Act allows any individual to apply for access to a government document, and, like its US counterpart, has exemptions to the presumption of openness. Unlike in the United States, however, individuals who believe they have been improperly denied access to a record under the Act can appeal to the Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada. The Information Commissioner is an independent ombudsman appointed by Parliament to investigate complaints under the Act and mediate disputes. The Commissioner has strong investigative powers and annually ranks government agencies on their compliance with the Act.

As with the United States government, the Canadian government has restricted access to information since 2001. The Security of Information Act forbids unauthorized possession or communication of sensitive government information. In 2005, the government extended the Act's coverage to include a broader number of agencies. The result has been a severe curtailment of information flow to journalists (Freedom House 2006).

In *Mexico*, the concept of the public's → right to know is relatively new. Until the early 1980s, Mexico was under single-party rule. Criticism of the government was tolerated but only within certain limits and only by those who played by the rules (Sarmiento 2005). As a result, the majority of the country's press tended to promote the official agenda of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) rather than serve as watchdogs of the government (Lawson 2002). PRI was framed as being "the only valid representative of the Mexican population as a whole" (Lawson 2002, 126). Thus, there was no need for a right of access to government information. But in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Mexicans began to think more broadly about government and democracy, and journalists began covering the emergence of this new civil society and paying less attention to the PRI. The result was a more democratic election and the passage in 2002 of the Federal Law for Transparency and Access to Information.

Like the Canadian Act, Mexico's open records law created the Federal Institute for Access to Public Information to ensure that federal executive agencies were following the law in spirit and letter. Agencies in the judicial and legislative branches of government, however, were not subject to the Institute's oversight. Originally hailed as one of the best open records laws in North America, the law has failed to live up to its promise because of procedural hurdles that hamper its use (Freedom House 2005).

Several of the *Caribbean nation states* are also new to the concept of freedom of information. Jamaica's 2002 Access to Information Act provides for freedom of information (Freedom House 2005), as does the Dominican Republic's 2005 Free Access to Public Information Act. The government of the twin-island state of Antigua and Barbuda fulfilled an election promise to pass freedom of information legislation in 2006. The legislation provides for an information commissioner (Freedom House 2006). While El Salvador is considered a relatively safe place for journalists to comment on their

government, the country has no freedom of information legislation (Freedom House 2006). Nor is there such legislation in Barbados (Freedom House 2006). That situation may change, however, since the Inter-American Court has ruled that the right to freedom of expression protected by Article 13 of the American Convention includes the right to request and receive state-held information (*Claude Reyes v. Chile* 2006).

### **BROADCAST REGULATION**

Broadcasting in all of the countries is a mixture of private and public ownership with varying levels of regulation, except for Cuba, where the government owns all the electronic media outlets. The United States has a system of private ownership of television and radio stations, but those stations operate on an electromagnetic band that is owned by the public. Broadcasters are licensed by the → Federal Communications Commission and are obliged to operate in the → public interest. Because they use a public resource, broadcasters are subject to greater regulation over their content than are the print media. For example, broadcasters must limit programming considered “indecent” to particular hours of the day (Middleton & Lee 2007).

Canada has a similar private-ownership broadcasting system, but it also has the public, government-funded Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. The Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) grants licenses to and regulates broadcasters (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

### **INTERNET REGULATION**

For the majority of the North American countries the percentage of their population with → Internet access is extremely small (→ Digital Divide). For that reason, most of the countries have no government restrictions or regulations on Internet access and content. The United States government, on the other hand, has tried to pass laws censoring Internet content, but the courts have ruled those attempts unconstitutional. Consumer protection legislation has been successful, with commercial websites being restricted in the amount of information they can collect from minors (Freedom House 2006).

In Canada, the CRTC has indicated that it will not regulate content on the Internet, although several provinces have enacted consumer protection legislation that affects e-commerce, and the criminal code gives judges wide latitude in deciding what constitutes hate speech on the Internet (Freedom House 2005). Cuba is the only country in the continent that strictly regulates Internet content and access (Freedom House 2006).

### **OTHER RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

As indicated, although the constitutions of every North American country protect freedom of expression, that protection is never absolute. Some countries have built restrictions into the constitutional documents themselves; others have laws that make the constitutional provisions meaningless, such as criminal defamation laws and desacato laws, also known as “insult” laws. Desacato laws criminalize “expression which offends,

insults, or threatens a public functionary in the performance of his or her official duties” (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights 2002). Such laws are used to intimidate citizens and the media from criticizing the government and can result in self-censorship, effectively eliminating the public’s right to know (Pasqualucci 2006).

The *United States* has the strongest protections for journalists and others who speak out against the government (→ Journalism: Legal Situation). Defamation is still a criminal offense in some states, but the laws are rarely used (Middleton & Lee 2007). The US Supreme Court has made it difficult for public officials to bring libel suits civilly, requiring them to prove that the defendant knew the defamatory information was false or recklessly disregarded the truth. And hate speech is generally protected. In recent years, however, there has been an increase in the use of subpoenas to compel journalists to reveal confidential sources. Efforts to enact a federal law that would shield journalists from being compelled to reveal sources stalled, as they had on previous occasions. The District of Columbia and 34 states, however, have some form of “shield” law that protects journalists to some extent in such matters (→ Source Protection).

The Inter-American Court has not yet addressed the use of contempt laws to jail journalists who refuse to reveal sources although the Inter-American Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression specifies that “every social communicator has the right to keep his/her source of information, notes, personal and professional archives confidential” (Pasqualucci 2006; Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, n.d., Principle 8).

In *Canada*, journalists can be held in contempt for failing to reveal a source in a court case. And, unlike in the United States, defamatory libel and blasphemous libel are still criminal offenses under the Canadian Criminal Code (Freedom House 2006). Although the Canadian Supreme Court often looks to its US counterpart for guidance on freedom of expression issues, it has refused to adopt the American libel standard in civil cases brought by public officials, retaining the existing strict liability standard. Plaintiffs in libel actions need only show that the statement negatively affected their reputation and that the statement was made to a third party (Tingley 1999; *Hill v. Church of Scientology* 1995).

In April 2006, *Mexico City’s* Legislative Assembly passed a bill directing libel and slander complaints to be dealt with in civil courts, effectively eliminating criminal defamation. The law applies to the Federal District of Mexico City but has yet to be adopted by the other states (Greene 2007).

In Belize, the government may fine and imprison those who question the financial disclosures of public officials. And journalists are subject to libel laws for criticizing politicians (Freedom House 2006). Defamation is a criminal offense in El Salvador, and journalists are frequently prosecuted under the law (Freedom House 2006).

In May 2006, the Supreme Court of *Honduras* banned the criminal defamation laws that carried a mandatory two- to four-year jail term for defamation of a public official, but subpoenas are still used against journalists who reveal public information (Freedom House 2006). A year earlier, the country abolished its insult laws, which provided for the punishment of anyone who offended the president or other high-ranking government official (Pasqualucci 2006; Greene 2007).

Similarly, *Guatemala’s* highest court ruled in 2005 that the country’s insult laws were unconstitutional (Pasqualucci 2006; Greene 2007). Costa Rica’s Legislative Assembly also

has removed desacato laws from the criminal code, but the country continues to have strict libel laws that include penalties of up to three years imprisonment for insulting a public official (Pasqualucci 2006; Freedom House 2006). In 2004, however, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights held that the libel conviction of a *Costa Rican* journalist violated the American Convention on Human Rights (Pasqualucci 2006). In throwing out the conviction, the court concluded that those who “have an influence on matters of public interest have laid themselves open voluntarily to a more intense public scrutiny and, consequently, in this domain, they are subject to a higher risk of being criticized, because their activities go beyond the private sphere and belong to the realm of public debate” (Herrera Ulloa 2004, 129).

*St Lucia* usually enjoys a high level of freedom of expression. In 2003, however, the government amended the criminal code to include a jail term for anyone publishing false news that harms the public good. Section 361 of the Code states: “Every person who willfully publishes a statement, tale, or news that he or she knows is false, that causes or is likely to cause injury or mischief to a public interest, is guilty of an indictable offense and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years” (Freedom House 2005).

In *Cuba*, laws criminalizing “enemy propaganda” and the dissemination of “unauthorized news” effectively restrict freedom of speech. Violation of the country’s insult laws can result in jail terms of between three months and one year and in some situations up to three years. The Law of National Dignity proscribes jail time for “anyone who, in a direct or indirect form, collaborates with the enemy’s media.” The law is aimed at those who send material abroad for publication (Freedom House 2006).

SEE ALSO: ► American Convention on Human Rights ► Canada: Media System ► Caribbean States: Media Systems ► Censorship ► Central America: Media Systems ► Cuba: Media System ► Digital Divide ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Inter-American Court of Human Rights ► Internet ► Journalism: Legal Situation ► Mexico: Media System ► Ownership in the Media ► Privacy ► Public Interest ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Regulation ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Right to Know ► Source Protection ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ► United States of America: Media System

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## Communication Law and Policy: South America

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South America comprises 13 countries with a vast array of cultural backgrounds. Its cultural diversity stems from Spanish, French, Dutch, Portuguese, and a myriad of indigenous languages (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication), which is reflected in South American communication law and policy. Néstor García Canclini (2005) has called South American culture a hybrid variety of influence and patterns (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Citizens' liberty was a key idea in many South American countries during their pre-independence struggles. It can be traced to liberal traditions in South America (Habermas 2006). In South American political culture, *caudillos*, or charismatic leaders, were a vital element in the “delegative democracies” (O'Donnell 1994), as they considered themselves the voice of the people. They often monopolized political decision-making processes.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER AND THE QUESTION OF FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

During the nineteenth century, the *caudillos* occupied the vacuum of power left by the European colonial powers. As their predecessors did, they restricted freedom of expression and enforced censorship. But liberal principles impacted freedom of expression in most South American countries, and they evolved according to local customs and norms, which *caudillos* invoked in imposing their authoritarian rule. Two opposing free speech ideas coexisted: to obey *caudillos* vs. to achieve freedom while rejecting government → censorship. The *caudillos* modus of operation prevailed, which was similar to the military command system. Freedom of expression was allowed insofar as it did not diverge from the leaders' views and agenda.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, several South American dictators as well as constitutionally elected presidents signed the → American Convention on Human Rights, also known as the “Pact of San Jose of Costa Rica,” to protect freedom of expression and other human rights. However, the American human rights convention did not have a practical impact on freedom of expression in many nations of South America. Censorship was often imposed by non-elected governments. Besides, freedom of speech was subject to various penal limitations such as the crime of contempt or *desacato*. The late 1970s were a time of challenge to freedom of speech and the press in some South American countries (→ Freedom of the Press: Concept of). Non-elected government leaders suppressed freedom of expression through laws and regulations, and self-censorship was widely accepted as a fact of life. This was showcased by the military rule in Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile.

Significantly, however, the government restrictions on human rights made people increasingly conscious of the value of democracy and human rights. In the late twentieth century, the American Convention on Human Rights emerged as an important tool to stop these human rights violations. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the → Inter-American Court of Human Rights have protected, promoted, and defended human rights since the 1980s. Thus, many South American countries had to amend their constitutions to expand freedom of expression, freedom of information, and other related rights.

## CONSTITUTIONAL EVOLUTION

*Argentina* has the oldest constitution in South America. It does not explicitly mention freedom of the press as a right, but the Supreme Court of Argentina held that protection of press freedom falls under freedom of expression. Most constitutions of South American nations do not consider freedom of expression an absolute right. Colombia is an exception in that its constitution provides for the “immediate application of the consecrated rights” such as “the freedom to express and to diffuse . . . thought and opinions,” and prohibits censorship of expression (→ Argentina: Media System).

The constitution of *Peru* guarantees freedom of expression, opinion, and diffusion of thought without prior censorship. Similar free speech principles are included in the constitution of Paraguay. But freedom of speech varies from country to country,

depending on their social, cultural, and political conditions. Some countries consider the honor and reputation of individuals, including public officials, more important than the right to free expression.

The constitution of *Brazil* is similar to other constitutions in South America, but it is more detailed. It provides for the right of free expression of intellectual, artistic, scientific, and communications activities with no censorship or license. The constitution of Uruguay does not mention freedom of expression textually, but it stipulates protection of communication of thoughts through words, private writings, or published in the press, or in any other form. It forbids censorship of expression, but at the same time it disallows the abuse of freedom of expression. Similarly, the constitution of Suriname includes an individual's right to express his or her feelings to the public (→ Brazil: Media System).

*Guyana* became a democratic republic in 1970, and it adopted the Constitution of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana Act in 1980. The constitutional protection of freedom of expression in Guyana is a fundamental right, and it is limited only by "respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest."

Some South American constitutions include treaties, pacts, and conventions relating to human rights that have a constitutional rank and prevail over conflicting internal legislation. Among them are the Argentine Constitution Reform and the Chilean Constitution Reform.

## **RIGHT OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PUBLIC DOCUMENTS**

The General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS) reaffirmed its previous resolutions in 2005 to allow civil societies' participation in drafting access to information laws that would contain clear and transparent criteria. Several South American countries, including Peru, Argentina, and Bolivia, adopted freedom of information laws. In Bolivia, the Supreme Decree about Transparency and Access to Information exempts disclosure of information that affects territorial integrity and the existence of the democratic system, such as military strategic plans, financial information, and foreign relations.

In *Argentina*, access to public information is expressly guaranteed by the constitution, and the Personal Data Protection Act governs access to personal data. Similar freedom of information laws have been enacted in Chile, Paraguay, and Brazil. More recently, the Argentina government proclaimed an executive decree for public information access. The executive decree limits access to public information regarding national executive power activities and specific meetings of government agencies in charge of public services. Other access to public information laws in Argentina are the Establishing Access to Environmental Information Act and the Fiscal Transparency Act. But to implement the underlying principles of the freedom of information laws in Argentina is no easy task, for various administrative and political reasons.

*Brazil* has constitutional provisions for access to personal data, and also a 1997 law regulates habeas data, a judicial proceeding to "ensure the knowledge of information related to the person of the petitioner, contained in records or databanks of government agencies or of agencies of a public character;" and also "for the correction of data, when the petitioner does not prefer to do so through a confidential process, either judicial or

administrative.” Brazil is considering legislating access to government records. Suriname, French Guiana, and Venezuela have yet to put freedom of information laws in place.

*Chile* has laws limiting the public’s right to access government information, such as “state-held environmental information concerning the scope and terms of state deforestation project.” Such freedom of information limitation in Chile was submitted to the IACHR for review. The Commission determined that the “Chilean State’s interest in improving access to state-held information is insufficient.” It reasoned that the exemptions of the information access law “are overly broad, vague, and confer excessive degree of discretion on the official determining whether or not to disclose information” (*Miguel Fredes González and Andrea Tuzek Frides v. Chile*). In a case of 2006, *Claude Reyes v. Chile*, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ordered Chile to train public officials on the rules and standards governing public access to information, and declared that access to information is part of freedom of expression under the American Human Rights Declaration. The 2006 case was the first time in its 27-year history that the Court had ruled on the right to access government information (→ Chile: Media System).

*Colombia* was among the first South American countries to recognize access to public acts and documents as a statutory right. The Colombian freedom of information law excepts from public release classified documents according to the constitution and laws, or those related to national defense and security. The constitution of Colombia provides that the professional secrets of journalists are inviolable. Colombia’s Anticorruption Act guarantees journalists access to “knowledge of the documents, acts administrative and other illustrative elements of the motivations of the behavior of the public authorities,” with some legal restrictions (→ Colombia: Media System).

In *Guyana*, access to information for the public is limited when the informational access requested “would interfere unreasonably with the operations of the public authority,” or when it is “detrimental to the preservation of the document.” In *Ecuador*, the Law of Transparency and Access to the Public Information requires all information that is generated or controlled by public institutions and entities, public or private, connected with the state, be subject to the principle of publicity, unless otherwise stipulated by law.

The constitution of *Venezuela* provides “the right of access to the information and data concerning him or her or his or her goods which are contained in official or private records,” with exceptions established by law. The information access right includes the right to “access documents of any nature containing information of interest to communities or group of persons.” But the Venezuela government prevented *Transparencia Venezuela* from participating in an OAS meeting. *Transparencia Venezuela* intended to have presented a report “based on official governmental information” showing “that no steps have been taken to fulfill” the Inter-American Convention against Corruption.

## INTERNET REGULATION

In South America, *Brazil* is the country with the most Internet users, while Chile and Argentina have the highest penetration rates. ADSL is the leading broadband technology, although cable modems have a strong presence. Most countries have regulations about Internet service providers (ISPs), domains, and spam. Not everyone has access to the Internet due to economic constraints. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Peru, among others,



have adopted the Rules of Heredia (2003) to disseminate judgments and judicial decisions on the Internet to promote “transparency in the administration of justice” and to protect personal data.

The *Argentine* constitution makes no mention of the Internet. A 1997 Executive Decree considers the Internet similar to the traditional news media in its freedom of expression under the constitution. The Argentine Supreme Court ruled that the constitutional freedom of expression principle includes disseminating and receiving information (F. Gutheim *c/J. Alemann*, April 15, 1993). The European Commission recognized in 2003 that Argentina provides an appropriate protection level for personal data, and thus Argentina can engage in the free traffic of personal data with EU member states without further requirements.

The constitution of *Chile* is identical to that of Argentina in that it contains no reference to the Internet. But some regulations determined procedures and terms to accept connections among ISPs and for the national dissemination of information via the Internet. Others stipulated the minimum quality indicators of the connections for the national Internet. At present, the Chilean government is deliberating on two draft laws for broadband and net neutrality, i.e., free Internet access without any obstacle or discrimination.

In 2002, the *Ecuador* government enacted a law that regulates, among other topics, messages of data, electronic signature, and electronic services, through nets of information, including electronic trade and protection for users. In *Peru*, young people are denied access to pornographic web pages that violate their moral integrity or affect their personal and family intimacy. In 2005, Peru enacted another law aimed at the use of unsolicited electronic mail and spam, while the penal code has applied to cyber-crimes since 2001. MERCOSUR, a regional South America organization, adopted a resolution in 2004 to facilitate Internet access for consumers in gathering information about products, services, and commercial transactions (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

## FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION RESTRICTIONS

At present, freedom of speech in many South American countries is often limited extrajudicially, although it is constitutionally and statutorily guaranteed. Freedom of the press is brutally suppressed by some ruling authorities and those connected with drug trafficking. They kill, kidnap, or threaten journalists (→ Violence against Journalists). For example, Colombian guerrilla organizations and paramilitary groups threaten journalists whenever their activities are reported. In other countries, such as Peru, journalists are attacked and threatened so often that Reporters without Borders has officially denounced those governments (2007). Why does this physical suppression of journalists continue in South America? To begin with, certain restrictive laws and political decisions stand in the way of free speech principles. Second, the absence of internal security and widespread corruption make it impossible to put into effect those constitutional and regional human rights principles and norms.

The American Convention on Human Rights forbids freedom of expression to be restricted through “indirect methods or means.” It also bars the “abuse of government or private controls over newsprint, radio broadcasting frequencies, or equipment used in the

dissemination of information, or by any other means tending to impede the communication and circulation of ideas and opinions.” One or more of such speech-constraining methods are used by many South American governments, including Venezuela and Argentina. In Argentina, Joaquin Morales Solá, a highly respected political analyst, stated that at present there is an anti-free-expression “climate” similar to the one that existed prior to the restoration of democracy in 1984 (Inter American Press Association 2007). Importantly, however, the crime of contempt or *desacato* was abolished in Argentina in the 1990s due to people’s pressure for democratic ways.

In *Uruguay*, where a long period of military rule (1973–1985) was replaced with democratic politics, access to information about military and police violations of human rights is extremely difficult. The right to know is limited by the right of honor, as the Supreme Court of Justice in Uruguay stated in the Carlos Dogliani case in 2006. Uruguayan journalist Carlos Dogliani was sued for publishing information of public interest relating to the Department of Paysandú municipal government. He was charged with criminal libel and insults through communication. The Supreme Court, ignoring its own precedents, stated that it does not matter whether the facts are true because what really matters is “the possibility to offend other people’s reputation.” It also affirmed the journalist’s “criminal behavior” even though “the offended person had been condemned by that fact” (Inter American Press Association 2006).

Although the crime of contempt or *desacato* has been abolished in some South American countries, it remains on the books in Brazil, Peru, and Venezuela. In Venezuela, for example, *desacato* serves as an easy tool of censorship for the vice-president, the Supreme Court justices, cabinet ministers, and congressional representatives, as well as the military high command, in punishing insults to the authorities. To define insulting as a criminal offense is perilously more political than judicial because no exact definition of the expression has been given by the judges. The Venezuelan penal code mentions various possible offenses against the reputation, the dignity, and the honor of those who share in the political, judicial, or administrative power. In Venezuela, one of the most significant *desacato* cases was against General Francisco Usón for his comment on television about an incident in which many soldiers died. Such *desacato* crime was prohibited by the Law of Social Responsibility in Radio and Television, which imposes numerous obligations on broadcasters.

Because South Americans have limited access to → television sets or the → Internet, → radio is an important means of communication (→ Digital Divide). Politicians often use radio and television to connect with people. Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela are cases in point. Bolivia has different ethnic groups and languages, and President Evo Morales, a member of the Aymara, speaks the language of the largest group of Bolivians.

In *Venezuela* today, freedom of expression is increasingly in jeopardy because of its government’s repressive policies. Courts tend to view freedom of expression constrictively. The Supreme Tribunal of Justice refused to accept the IACHR’s decision as mandatory. This judicial rebuff of the IACHR rulings denies that the constitutional principles of the international conventions on human rights that Venezuela has ratified have a constitutional rank. The Constitutional Chamber of Venezuela also held that authorities can establish prior censorship. Further, journalists are intimidated and their contract clauses are altered in such a way as to restrict the news media. A good illustration is President Chavez’s much criticized decision not to renew the broadcast license of Radio

Caracas Television (RCTV) and his arbitrary distribution of government advertising. Direct and indirect methods to restrict information also tend to weaken people's right to be informed and to inform (→ Freedom of Information). Article 19 (2007), an independent free speech organization in London, presented a submission to the IACHR detailing international standards relevant to the regulation of broadcasting in the case of RCTV.

SEE ALSO: ▶ American Convention on Human Rights ▶ Argentina: Media System ▶ Brazil: Media System ▶ Censorship ▶ Chile: Media System ▶ Colombia: Media System ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Government Speech, Law and Policy on ▶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Licensing of Journalists ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Radio ▶ Right to Know ▶ Television ▶ Violence against Journalists

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# Communication Management

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For some, communication management is a special way of managing; for others it is the steering of all communications in the context of the organization; for yet others it is the same as → public relations (PR), i.e. managing communication itself. This entry features the second approach, i.e., communication management as the steering of all communications in the context of the organization (→ Organizational Communication; Corporate Communication).

In order to understand communication management, it is important to first discuss the different communications functions within an organization. A prevailing view today is of corporate communication as defined by van Riel (1995). His definition includes organizational communication, marketing communication, and management communication (→ Marketing: Communication Tools). Organizational communication in this context is seen as PR activities, or communications between (and to) all other stakeholders than consumers and the organization. Marketing communication is typically communication directed at customers (B2B or B2C), and management communication is defined as that between managers and stakeholders. Others view van Riel's umbrella definition not as corporate communication but rather as organizational communication. Corporate communication is thus the typical PR function. In this view, organizational communication is seen as encompassing all of the communication activities of the organization. This has caused some confusion, but regardless of how an organization's communications roles are defined, a prevailing issue common to any definition is how the functions are structured within organizations.

## INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATION

The two primary communication functions are marketing and PR. Kotler and Mindak's seminal article in 1978 discussed the organizational possibilities of the marketing and PR functions. Depending on what they call the "class of an organization," the two functions might be two separate but equal functions, equal but overlapping functions, marketing or

PR as the dominant function, and marketing and PR as the same function. An integrated approach to communication management, calling for increased cooperation and interaction between communication functions, has gained popularity in recent years but even this approach has caused confusion (Schultz et al. 1993; Gronstedt 1996; → Integrated Marketing Communication).

Cornelissen and Lock (2001) recognized the appeal of integration but believed that it deserves closer scrutiny. They cite the polarization within academia itself, describing those supporting it as pragmatists and those opposing it as purists. The pragmatists accept the concept enthusiastically, almost without question, as they see the need for communication consistency as even greater today. The “purists,” on the other hand, see integration as superficial and lacking theoretical grounding (Grunig & Grunig 1998). They challenge the idea of marketing as the dominant function in the excellence studies, which have become for some the standard for how PR should be organized. They believe that the marketing function, because of its budgets, perception in the organization, etc., would subsume PR if allowed too close proximity. Furthermore, they adhere to the oft-repeated argument that anything developing out of marketing cannot be strategic communication, as it can never understand the concept of dealing with multiple stakeholders.

Duncan and Caywood (1996) deal with this by viewing integrated marketing communication as occurring in seven stages, starting with awareness of the need for integrating communication by firms in dynamic markets. Their sixth stage encompasses stakeholder-based integration, and it can be said that the organization has achieved integrated communications due to all recognizing that customers are not the sole stakeholders of the organization (→ Stakeholder Theory). Finally, in stage seven, the relationship management integration results in a fully integrated communication strategy with contact by all management functions, thus achieving integrated communication.

Regardless of whether one takes a purist or pragmatist view, however, the need for integration exists. A primary reason for this is the need for consistency in communication. The marketing department that creates ad slogans that are inconsistent with an organization’s stated identity of ethics, trust, etc., can damage an organization’s reputation. Common sense dictates that organizations have oversight of who is saying what to whom. This, along with other influences, such as a tendency to consolidate communication disciplines within organizations, greater influence of communications in decision-making, and the rise of the corporate communication manager, all impact how communication is managed (Cornelissen 2004). As noted by Cornelissen, the integrated approach does not mean that there is no longer a need for separate PR and marketing functions.

Van Riel (2005) calls integration of communication a “magic word.” He proposes that “orchestration of communication” might be a more appropriate term, and, according to him, in essence it is more or less solving coordination issues. He suggests that the literature on “organizational behavior” (March & Simon 1958; Lawrence & Lorsch 1967; Ouchi 1979; Grant 1996) is also applicable to the field of communication management. Grant (1996) addresses the most important issues in the area of coordination. His approach can relatively easily be “translated” to the coordination of all forms of communication. He argues that there are four mechanisms within an organization that integrate specialist knowledge (such as communication knowledge). These are: (1) rules and instructions consisting of procedures, standardized information, and communication

systems; (2) the organization of the primary process in a sequential manner, such that the input of every specialist seems independent because it is granted its own “time slot”; (3) application of professional action in a relatively automatic manner, with the use of implicit protocols; and (4) group problem solving to be implemented when the complexity increases, a more personal and communication-intensive form of integration.

## ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES FOR COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

The ability to orchestrate (manage) communication is also dependent on, among other things, organizational structure. Brønn et al. (2005) provide a review of organization theory and communication following the typology developed by McPhee and Poole (2001). Broadly speaking, organizational research has attempted to describe and to understand the influence of organizational structure on communication. For example, in the *traditional perspective*, which is based on the container metaphor and takes a reductionist approach to the subject, organizations are reduced to sets of dimensions or factors that are seen to be relevant for understanding organizational behavior. These include horizontal differentiation, size, and vertical hierarchy. This research has yielded much detailed information and propositions that are used by practitioners.

A second perspective is called the *configurational view*, which takes a more holistic view of the organization. The configuration approach in organizational theory and communication looks at the organization in its entirety, rather than decomposing it into distinct parts. Each configuration is composed of unique and specific combinations of structural features. One objective of this research is to understand the implications of the configuration on communications, as well as to investigate new configurations that arise from the competitive environment. Communication is key in configurational theories, and their communication structure and processes define some configurational types. For example, new configuration types such as networks are dependent on communication.

A more extreme and thought-provoking group of theories that have emerged in recent years are those that see *organizational structure as a communicative phenomenon* (McPhee & Poole 2001, 529). An example of this form is the “formal structural communication” (FSC) model (McPhee 1985) and various textual models of the organization. The FSC model is intended to highlight the “distinctive features of organizational communication that help to explain the proliferation of the complex organization as a social form” (McPhee & Poole 2001, 529). Some examples of communication types that have a direct relationship to organizational structure include the organizational charter, a company newsletter article about a structural change, and a co-worker’s explanation of what a manager “really meant” in a presentation. These examples largely rely on individuals’ interpretations of the communication as the basis for action and change. This approach has natural links to some of the main themes associated with the organizational learning literature (Senge 1990). The structure–communication approach appears to provide a platform for promoting a higher degree of interdisciplinary thinking, including a stronger focus on communication.

Farace et al. (1977) offer an approach to communication management. These authors state that communication managers’ roles are emerging because organizations are putting more emphasis on the processes of organizational communication. They maintain that three actions are necessary in order for a systematic approach to communication occur.

First, it is necessary to know how things are in the organization's communication system, who is saying what to whom and how, including measures of timeliness, believability, and relevance. Second is a decision on how a system should operate, and third is knowing how to change the communication system. In this phase, the key to success is institutionalization of the communication system.

However, institutionalization does not imply that communication management is static. As the internal and external environment changes, organizations must also change and adapt. But institutionalization of communication management implies that communication is recognized for its key role in an organization's performance. Furthermore, an institutionalized system can deal with communication management viewed as the orchestration of communication functions, as well as managing communication, the communication performance of individual organizational members.

The discussion of communication management has not changed much since Kotler and Mindak's 1978 article. Organizations are still trying to find some optimal way to organize their communication functions so that communications are more effective and consistent. A popular approach has been the development of integrated communication but there is still not much empirical evidence that integration of PR and marketing is more effective than nonintegration, even though there is a large body of anecdotal evidence that integration might be a good idea. Resistance to integration is not solely a characteristic of the practitioner community, but also of the academic community. Marketing faculty in business schools and PR academics in schools of communication or journalism (at least in the US) do not help. Organizational structure is also a key element in communication management, with recent research indicating that communication may even be a driver of how organizations are structured.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Corporate Communication ► Integrated Marketing Communications ► Marketing ► Marketing: Communication Tools ► Organizational Communication ► Public Relations ► Stakeholder Theory

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## **Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968**

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Communication and media studies matured into an integrated discipline in the years following 1968. Research and education became centralized in independent schools of communication, while at the same time drawing from related disciplines to improve methodology and explore new paradigms.

By the early 1960s, communication studies began to move out of departments of sociology, psychology, political science, and research institutes and to build independent departments. Before that, the leaders in communication research came out of other departments in social science and the humanities, who simply explored communication processes as one approach to answering questions in their own discipline. Having such an academically diverse group of scholars contributed to a richness of early scholarship in the field; however, as many of these scholars then moved away from communication research, the field was left with a wide array of theories and methods that couldn't independently answer many communication problems.

This “disjointedness” in the field was reflected in Bernard Berelson's (1959) stinging criticism of communication scholarship in the late 1950s. In what is often referred to as Berelson's obituary for communication research, he argued that the field was essentially



dying, with no new ideas or directions. In 1983, → George Gerbner responded to this criticism with a special issue of the *Journal of Communication* entitled “Ferment in the field.” A series of solicited articles from scholars around the world discussed the new directions, challenges, and opportunities of communication scholarship. Communication research, it appeared, was very much alive.

In the 1980s, traditional departments of speech and schools of journalism in the USA added “Communication” or “Mass Communication” to their names, or simply created independent communication departments. Often these new schools merged the professional fields of print, broadcast, public relations, advertising, information science, and speech with growing research programs in more broadly defined communication research (→ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada). Growing recognition of the importance of the media by both industry and the public, as well as increasing respect for the field at the university level led to increased support for new scholarship. By the late 1960s scholars regularly met at national and international conferences and published in a growing number of communication journals. National as well as international communication associations like the → International Communication Association (ICA) and the → International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) all support scholarly research and its dissemination through conventions and journals. In 1970, *Ulrich’s international periodicals directory* listed fewer than 100 general communication academic and trade journals for the year. By 2004, that number had increased to over 800, with almost 100 of those being refereed. This combination of integrated research and scholarly outlets for sharing findings gave communication scholars the opportunity to merge their diverse ideas and approaches.

However, as communication departments formed separately from the other social science disciplines, their research lost the close connections it had earlier had to other social science fields. In recent years, however, the pendulum has swung back again, and many communication scholars now actively employ a multidisciplinary approach in their work, often in collaboration with colleagues in other social science fields. This combined effort allows scholars from different areas to bring fresh insight and methodology to the work.

## EDUCATION

As the discipline of communication grew around the world, so too did communication programs. The number of undergraduate and graduate students has grown exponentially in the past 30 years. Undergraduates, often attracted by the growing marketability of a communication degree, have dramatically increased in number. The boom in enrollment calls for bigger faculties, which, in turn, support more graduate students. Many communication programs increasingly demand that incoming faculty hold a PhD in communication as well as have professional experience. Communication departments try to offer both “professional” courses in print, broadcast, public relations, advertising, etc. and theoretical and methodological courses in communication research. This dual role can cause some friction, often referred to as a disagreement between “green-eyeshades” and “chi-squares,” as departments and schools of communication try to offer their students the best of both (→ Communication Professions and Academic Research; Communication Education, Goals of).

While American and northern European nations have a much longer tradition of communication programs, communication study became more popular in Latin American nations from the late 1960s, and Asian, Middle Eastern, and African countries soon followed. American and European programs continue to offer the majority of graduate programs, but many foreign students complete these programs and then return to teach in their home countries.

## RESEARCH

Historically, European and Latin American scholars have grounded their work in the critical school, focusing on critical analysis using qualitative data (→ *Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe; Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America*). European scholarship often emphasizes society as a whole, rather than the individual, as the basis of study. This work is often rooted in political or social issues, and the results of research adapted to promote social change, while American scholars have traditionally based their scholarship on empirical studies, using survey analysis and other quantitative data analysis techniques. While these descriptions are generally accurate, there are many well-known scholars from both sides of the Atlantic who break this mold.

Until the 1980s American and European scholarship essentially operated independently. Working from different schools of thought and paradigms, researchers rarely drew from or even read each other's work. By the 1980s easier travel and more international conferences, journals, and other publications also contributed to increased understanding of international scholarship and blurred the traditional lines between European and American scholarship.

By the 1980s, communication scholars had pretty much abandoned the linear model of communication in favor of more complex models (→ *Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis; Models of Communication*). As a result, the individual or society became the focus of study rather than the source or channel. This shift in focus, which had actually begun in the 1960s, led to a more sociological perspective, which included using a contextual approach, considering the individual rather than the media as the active agent, applying a convergent model of communication, and looking at communication as a process over time.

In the 1960s, researchers began including social context in their theories and empirical analyses. For example, traditional studies of how news organizations operate and the texts they produce shifted to examine how these structures and messages preserved the status quo of power and prevented social change. This contextual approach allowed researchers to look beyond using the media or channel as the variable for their work, and instead to explore the complex impact of communication messages.

As researchers moved away from the linear model of communication, they also turned their attention to what conditions determine when an individual will select information from a source. Individuals do not simply digest every message that crosses their path. Instead, people actively select information that they believe is relevant to them and can be incorporated into their construction of meaning. In addition, this line of research led to the notion of how communication can create shared meaning among groups. In these studies, the person or society is regarded as the activating agent, and researchers began to

approach communication as a process rather than as a single event or action that results from the media acting as a delivering agent for the message (→ Selective Attention; Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

The boom in diversity of communication technologies beginning as early as the 1970s forced scholars to adopt a more convergent model of communication (→ Technology and Communication). Not only could researchers no longer realistically determine a single source for a message, but the increasingly interactive nature of new media made it almost absurd to try to find a direct path from sender to receiver. Today's audience has much more control over which messages they are exposed to, and, through the interactive nature of the Internet, for example, one person can almost simultaneously be both the sender and receiver.

What became increasingly clear through all this research was that communication is a process, not a simple direct effect. The process of communication is often very complex, with many independent variables all affecting its outcome. In addition, this process of communication rarely happens quickly, but more often develops gradually over time. Scholars now regularly explore the communication process over time, in addition to trying to discover how sequences of events affects the process.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Although more American scholars now take a critical approach to communication studies, much of communication scholarship today remains empirical, quantitative, and focused on the effects of communication (→ Research Methods). Methodological advances in quantitative data analysis through the use of computers have further supported and enhanced this research. By 1970, most major academic institutions had computers and by the 1980s most had moved to desktop computing. The microprocessor gave researchers the statistical packages to complete complex analyses in minutes rather than months or years. Because of this, researchers can now use multivariate statistical techniques to quantitatively analyze complex communication processes with numerous independent and dependent variables all in interaction (→ Statistics, Explanatory).

Developing hand in hand with more complex statistical analysis were advances in both quantitative and qualitative methodology. Content analyses now make use of more complex coding schemes, which often allow researchers to put the content in context. For example, researchers using content analyses now often study genres such as television news, sitcoms, popular music, etc. instead of simply counting headlines, instances of terminology in texts, or acts of violence. These genres are then analyzed in context (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). In addition, many scholars have adopted a longitudinal approach to their work and moved away from the quicker, lab-based experiments (→ Longitudinal Analysis).

As scholars began studying communication processes in context, they expanded their methods beyond statistical analysis of quantitative data and found new ways of producing and analyzing qualitative data. Particularly since the 1990s, communication researchers have also improved the methodologies associated with case studies, interviews, focus groups, and various observational methods. Combining the traditional American empirical approach with the predominately European qualitative analytical approach in the 1990s,

researchers developed an empirical qualitative approach (→ Qualitative Methodology). This → triangulation in approach gave a more complete picture of the area being studied and has led to substantial theory-building.

## **FIELDS OF INTEREST**

The range of communication research is as rich, diverse, and complex as the communication processes under study. Rarely does an area of study remain in isolation; but instead researchers pull from other areas of communication and other disciplines. For example, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to draw a dividing line between the studies of new media, public policy, and media effects. However, since the 1970s communication scholars have by and large turned their attention to critical analysis, media effects, cultural studies, semiotics and meaning, agenda setting, new media, history, and law and public policy.

Critical research has gradually expanded in the United States over the past few decades to meet the growing desires of researchers to use their scholarship to promote change. European scholars with a long tradition of critical analysis continued to apply critical scholarship to politics and a growing number of other areas. American scholars applied critical research to the areas of politics, minorities, women, children, and new technology (→ Critical Theory; Feminist and Gender Studies; Political Economy of the Media; Postcolonial Theory).

Critical research will continue to be important as the world uses and develops new technologies. These technologies place communication and information in positions of ever growing influence in a nation's economic vitality. The same technologies also affect a country's ability to control and maintain power. Communication scholars across the world recognize the potential importance of critical communication research in balancing world power (→ International Communication).

As the expansion and development of new media and deregulation of existing media allowed increased global communication and made it possible to circumvent governmental barriers designed to keep outside messages out, many developing countries feared the influence of western messages bombarding their citizens through the media. They argue that western images, ways of life, and values subvert their traditional cultures which would therefore suffer from being opened up to new media. The result has been much research that is both critical in nature and concerned with global public policy (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). This body of research expanded after a United Nations resolution called for a "New World Order in Communication" in the mid 1970s, which was followed through with → UNESCO's appointment of an International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, known as the MacBride Commission. The Commission argued that before nations could enter into a truly global dialog, there must be equality in the distribution of global information resources and expertise.

Media effects scholars look beyond the individual level to try to understand how an audience as a whole is affected by a media message. Early media effects research focused on the effects of media violence, particularly in television and film, on children. Through decades of research using diverse methodology, samples, and media genres, scholars found that exposure to violent television and films, video games, and music increases the

likelihood of aggressive and violent behavior in both immediate and long-term contexts. Continued exposure to violent content desensitizes the viewer and undermines feelings of sympathy, empathy, or concern for victims. Scholars later applied similar methodology to the areas of pornography and women, children and advertising, and targeted audiences and health campaigns. Other studies of media content and their effects have explored issues such as sensationalism, stereotyping, and antisocial behavior. Communication scholars often classify media effects as either limited effects or powerful effects based on the impact on audiences' attitudes and behaviors. These effects are mediated in complex ways and depend on audiences' demographics, social context, values, beliefs, and emotional states.

Another area of media effects scholarship, uses and gratifications theory, posits that audiences actively consume certain media to meet specific needs. Many scholars have explored the relationship between mass media messages and their effect on popular culture. Some argue that mass communication simply reflects the status quo and doesn't directly affect attitudes and behavior, while others maintain that the messages serve as informal education and persuasion. Much recent research has explored various aspects of media effects using new media. Media effects remains the most popular area of communication research in the United States (→ Media Effects, History of).

Closely related to critical analysis and media effects is the area of → cultural studies. As a result of the political turmoil in the 1960s, communication scholars began to explore the power of the expanding mass media and its influence on culture and societies. Cultural studies scholars often study issues of empowerment of disadvantaged people in a society (based on race, gender, or social class). To do this, they moved away from the simple study of reproduction of media messages in the individual to a contextual analysis of cultural practice as a struggle for power and identity. They argued that the media were not simply benign, but that the prevailing structure of media organizations and their messages helped secure social control by elites. Researchers in developing countries, in particular, were concerned with the increasing disparity between people in these countries and people in the richer nations that was a result of unequal access to new technology and information (→ Digital Divide).

George Gerbner and his colleagues at the Annenberg School of Communication in the early 1970s introduced the term "cultivation analysis." They created a model of television's influence on behavior based on the theory of → symbolic interaction. Television, they argued, creates an environment of symbols which "cultivates" an individual perception of reality. These shared symbols, in turn, influence culture at a societal level. Later scholars approached cultural studies with critical research perspectives and explored the process in which a society together creates, modifies, and transforms a shared culture (→ Cultivation Theory).

Some critical scholars, who focus on the individual as opposed to the media as the acting agent, support an interpretive school where they look at how audience members individually interpret media messages. These scholars began to address questions about how and why people select media messages, how individuals and society create shared meaning, how individuals place new information into their realm of meaning, and how messages spread through channels and over time. Much of this research is based in theories of → semiotics and cultural studies.

Early research into why people select media messages began with agenda-setting theory (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). In this body of research, scholars attempted to describe and define how the media selects what information and issues are important and, through this selection, controls what information the audience receives. McCombs' and Shaw's early work with presidential campaigns in 1968, 1972, and 1976 formed the foundation for later work that developed the ideas of priming and framing (→ Framing Effects; Priming Theory). Other attempts to understand media usage developed the ideas of uses and gratifications and dependency theory, which argued that people actively select media based on their own needs (→ Dependency Theories; Uses and Gratifications).

The study of new media began with what is often called the communication revolution, when audiences could control the flow of information through new interactive technology. The growing interactive nature of most media was the final blow to the linear model of communication and forced scholars to consider more convergent models of communication (→ Computer–User Interaction; Digitization and Media Convergence; Interactivity, Concept of). Recent research has explored how individuals utilize new media, how they interpret and create meaning out of the messages they send and receive, how new media can limit or expand the information gap and knowledge gap, and how new media can play a role in government power.

Historians are now looking at long-run effects of media technology, control of the media, and the social effects of news, advertising, public relations, entertainment, and minority-controlled media. Media historians have expanded their focus from basic biographies and documentaries of particular media forms to more analytical discussions of how particular forms of media, groups of people, or social environments supported or forced change. In particular, media historians since the 1990s have compiled a great deal of work on the contributions of women and minorities in the media.

Legal scholarship in communication, traditionally related to First Amendment issues, has greatly expanded in scope in recent years (→ Communication and Law). New communication technologies, together with the continuing deregulation of the media industry, have raised a plethora of new concerns and issues related to public policy. Media conglomerates can now legally own and operate cable, Internet, and telephone services as well as hold publishing interests. In fact, the industry is in such flux with the development of new technology that many would argue public policy often lags years behind.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Professions and Academic Research ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media History

► Models of Communication ► Political Economy of the Media ► Postcolonial Theory  
► Priming Theory ► Qualitative Methodology ► Research Methods ► Selective Attention  
► Selective Perception and Selective Retention ► Semiotics ► Speech Communication, History of  
► Statistics, Explanatory ► Symbolic Interaction ► Technology and Communication  
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# **Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968**

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The international history of communication and media studies has yet to be written. To this point, most histories have been national, with the bulk of attention devoted to North America and western Europe. These emphases are not unwarranted, for the field established itself first on either side of the North Atlantic, was disseminated outward from there, and with a few notable exceptions remains best established in those regions today.

By necessity, this entry follows some of the traditional lines of analysis, but also aims to offer an overview of the interdisciplinary and transnational origins of the field, from its prehistory in the late nineteenth century through its institutionalization in the post-World War II era – when departments, doctorates, journals, and professional organizations were established in sufficient numbers to birth a separate field of communication from its several parent disciplines.

### **THE PREHISTORY OF A FIELD, 1870–1939**

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, newspapers and “communication” became objects of sustained scholarly inquiry. To be sure, there had been influential analyses of

both earlier (and doctoral theses as early as 1690 [Atwood & de Beer 2001]), but not before the 1880s did there begin a coordinated scholarly effort to interpret the press and related phenomena which were increasingly collected under the sign “communication.” The home discipline was political economy and its then sub-field, sociology. The most important work was done in Germany, France, and the US. One important thread developed from consideration of transportation systems and another from concern with publics, masses, and community. The German political economist Albert Schäffle’s *Structure and life of the social body* (1875–1878) portrayed society as an organism whose transportation/communication systems functioned as nerves. Schäffle influenced the University of Michigan’s Charles Horton Cooley, whose research on railroads led to a grander social theory of communication, the first of its kind in the US (c. 1895–1909). By then Karl Bücher, another German political economist, had conceived of a *Zeitungswissenschaft*, or science of newspapers, and offered a course on the history, statistics, and organization of the press system (Hardt 2001). In *fin de siècle* Paris, the sociologist Gabriel Tarde, whose theory of social imitation was implicitly about communication, published articles on conversation, public opinion, and the press, continuing a longer French preoccupation with newspapers most influentially pursued by Alexis de Tocqueville. In Berlin, the American Robert Park was hearing lectures about social interaction given by Georg Simmel, and readying himself for a 1904 dissertation on crowds and publics.

Others devoted attention to newspaper study in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Max Weber proposed an ambitious but unrealized study of the press in 1910, while Columbia University’s A. A. Tenney developed basic methods of content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative) that catalyzed newspaper studies by graduate students there into the 1920s, just as Park was overseeing better-known sociological research on the press at the University of Chicago. In 1916, Bücher founded the Institut für Zeitungswissenschaft at the University of Leipzig, the first such institute devoted to the science of the press, combining political economy, sociology, and history. The first American journalism schools had opened by then, but were devoted to the training of journalists and would not conduct serious academic research for another generation.

World War I and the Russian Revolution focused international attention on propaganda, widely used by all the major combatants (→ Propaganda; War Propaganda). In the US, political scientists like Harold Lasswell did some of the most important scholarly work, while the public intellectual → Walter Lippmann and the philosopher John Dewey weighed in with widely read books on the subject. In Germany Karl Jaeger coined the term *Publizistik* in 1926 to name a field concerned with publicity, media, and the formation of publics, while the philosopher Martin Heidegger explored communication (*Mitteilung*) in his hugely important *Being and time* (1927). The Agitprop Department of the Soviet Central Committee organized newspaper readership studies in the 1920s, enlisting linguists and literary critics to examine the content and style of the official mass press (Lenoe 2004).

Journalism programs were established in China, Japan, and Finland in the 1920s, drawing variously upon American and German models. In 1935, Brazil’s new Federal University in Rio established a professorship devoted to the study of journalism as a literary and social phenomenon. Following a more professional model, Argentina’s National University formed the first school of journalism in South America (1935), and



half a dozen other Latin American countries would follow suit before 1950 (Cuba in 1942, Mexico 1943, Peru and Ecuador both in 1945, Venezuela and Brazil in 1947). US journalism schools began producing scholarly research in the 1930s, initially of a historical sort, and led by Willard Bleyer and Frank Luther Mott, both of whom had doctorates in English. As director of Wisconsin's School of Journalism (est. 1927), Bleyer linked journalism with the social sciences and trained a cadre of academics who disseminated the model to other American universities.

Scholars also explored other media in the interwar years. Film study had begun before World War I (the Italian Futurist Ricciotto Canudo, the German sociologist Emilie Altenloh, and the Harvard psychologist Hugo Munsterberg had all written monographs). In the 1920s and 1930s, the League of Nations sponsored an encyclopedia of film, and the Payne Fund sponsored studies on the impact of movies in the US. Rudolf Arnheim went from studying Gestalt psychology with Kurt Lewin at the Psychological Institute of the University of Berlin to publishing books on film and radio. Lewin emigrated to the US in 1933, and over the next decade laid foundations for → group communications research at the University of Iowa and MIT. Tarde, Simmel, and Cooley had all written about face-to-face interaction, but published notes from George Herbert Mead's 1927 lectures probably had a greater impact on the study of communication.

Hundreds of thousands of Jews fled central Europe after the Nazis came to power in 1933, among them intellectuals who would play key roles in the institutional formation of communication study. Some emigrated to other European countries (Kurt Baschwitz settled in Holland), but many more went to America, where they cross-pollinated domestic institutions and ideas and helped bring mass communication research into existence. From Austria came → Paul Lazarsfeld, who had studied and worked at the University of Vienna, where he conducted perhaps the earliest scientific survey of radio listeners and advised the first Austrian dissertation on radio, written by his future wife, Herta Herzog (→ Audience Research). From Germany came Theodor Adorno and other members of the Frankfurt Institut für Sozialforschung. Lazarsfeld was instrumental in developing methodologically sophisticated objectivist approaches to mass communication, while the Frankfurt scholars formulated brilliant critical theoretical alternatives (→ Critical Theory). Their paths crossed briefly through Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research (ORR), begun at the University of Newark but moved to Columbia in 1941, and soon renamed the Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR). Initially funded by Rockefeller money, Lazarsfeld's institutes survived and grew through commercial and government sponsorship of audience, marketing, and propaganda research (→ Propaganda in World War II). In conversation with Lasswell, whom the Rockefeller Foundation brought in for its important Communications Group seminar (Gary 1999), Hadley Cantril, and later with Robert K. Merton, hired by Columbia in 1941, Lazarsfeld oversaw development of a social scientific field that by the mid-1940s was being called "communications research."

Scholars in literature departments also turned their attention to media and communication in the interwar years. In the US, speech teachers had broken from English and created their own association in 1915. Over the next several decades they differentiated themselves into two camps, one devoted to traditional humanist inquiry of rhetoric and oratory, another advocating instead "speech science" (→ Speech Communication, History of). In England, F. R. Leavis wrote an English dissertation on the relation of

journalism and literature in the eighteenth century (1924). At Cambridge in the 1930s, he teamed with his wife Queenie to analyze mass culture and its media with the tools of literary criticism (as Robert Silvey was conducting survey-based audience research for the BBC). Among those influenced by Leavis's work were a Canadian, → Marshall McLuhan, and a Welshman, Raymond Williams, both of whom took Leavisite criticism as points of departure for their own influential analyses of media and culture two decades later.

### **COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH INSTITUTIONALIZED, 1940–1968**

World War II played an important role in establishing international frameworks for communications research. In the US, many of the leading students of propaganda and mass communications joined the war effort, working for the Office of War Information (OWI) and other government agencies, where they solidified social networks and refined methods of content analysis, focused interviews, survey research, and laboratory-based experimentation. Allied victory reshaped the global balance of power, prompted formation of the United Nations, and ushered in a new era of international hope counterbalanced by Cold War hostilities. Communication became a relevant concept across many fields of study. American government money flowed into universities and went overseas, funding communications research in the name of democratic institution building, development, and American influence. Europe re-established traditions of media inquiry interrupted by the war, and the new United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO, est. 1947) extended mass communication research around the globe.

Communication established itself institutionally through institutes, programs, and departments. Wilbur Schramm was a key figure, who drew upon Lazarsfeld's model to establish the Institute of Communications Research at the University of Illinois in 1948, and another at Stanford in 1956 (the latter partly backed by the Ford Foundation, which supplanted Rockefeller as chief private funder of communications research after the war). Schramm edited communications readers, trained graduate students, and through wide-ranging international contacts exerted great influence on the field (→ Schramm, Wilbur). Other universities established programs as well, including the University of Chicago, whose Committee on Communication (est. 1947) remained active through the 1950s, led by David Riesman, Morris Janowitz, and Elihu Katz among others (Wahl-Jorgensen 2004). Magazine and newspaper magnate Walter Annenberg endowed a School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania (est. 1959), which would eventually become a leading center in the field. Louis Guttman took Lazarsfeld's model overseas when he emigrated from the US and established the Israel Institute of Applied Social Research (1947), an early site of public opinion research in that country. Katz began spending half his year at Jerusalem's Hebrew University in 1956, at which point he became the key figure in building Israeli communications research.

In the US the geographical center of gravity lay in midwestern public universities, which brought scholars of speech and mass media together, sometimes uneasily, under the covering term of "communication." After the war, speech faculty had established the National Society for the Study of Communication (an early version of the → International Communication Association), which in 1950 launched the *Journal of Communication*.

Though there were a handful of critical, cultural, and historical scholars working in the US, “The coalescence of American communication research was founded on the hegemony of quantitative social science,” as one observer notes (Delia 1987, 71).

Some drew upon American models in postwar Europe; others re-established native traditions of *Zeitungswissenschaft* and *Publizistik*; Finland’s University of Tampere established a chair of newspaper science in 1947. In Amsterdam, Kurt Baschwitz formed the Dutch Institute for the Science of the Press (1948) and organized a series of conferences that led to the founding of the *Gazette* (1955) as a central journal in the field. In Germany, *Publizistik* was institutionalized under Emil Dovifat at the Free University of Berlin, and by others at the Universities of Munich and Munster (Vroons 2005). At the University of Hamburg, the Hans Bredow Institute for Radio and Television was established in 1950, and began publishing a journal, *Rundfunk und Fernsehen*, the following year. Diverse spirits advocated the use of empirical methods, ranging from Theodor Adorno, working at the repatriated Frankfurt Institut, to → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, who founded the Allensbach Institut für Demoskopie (1947) and utilized survey methods in a long career as a conservative pollster and theorist. Adorno’s assistant, → Jürgen Habermas, conducted a public opinion study of student attitudes in 1961, a year before publishing his hugely influential critical-historical work, *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (→ Public Sphere).

In France, where public opinion research and press institutes (est. 1937–1938) had been closed down by the war, the study of the press resumed in 1947 at the University of Paris, under the guidance of legal scholar and historian Fernand Terrou. An international leader in the field known as *information* in France, Terrou founded the journal *Les Études de Presse* (1946) and served as the first director of the French Institute of the Press (est. 1951) and first president of the International Association of Mass Communication Research (founded with UNESCO backing in 1957) (→ International Association for Media and Communication Research [IAMCR]). UNESCO played important roles after 1947 by publishing bibliographies, sponsoring studies of mass communication systems around the world, and funding research centers, most notably the International Center for Advanced Study of Journalism in Latin America (CIESPAL, est. 1959 in Quito, Ecuador).

American foreign policy played a significant role in the spread of communications research. In US-occupied postwar Japan, the press was considered an important building block of democracy, and new journalism programs were established at four universities. In 1949, the Institute for Journalism and Communication Studies was founded at Tokyo University, and two years later the Japan Society for Studies in Journalism and Mass Communication (*ma su ko my ni ke shyo n*) was formed, headed by Hideo Ono, who had begun Tokyo University’s journalism program in the 1920s. Everett Rogers and other US development researchers conducted studies and trained students from around the world, spreading a paradigm of communication as diffusion from a centralized source, which served multiple purposes (→ Rogers, Everett; Development Communication). The Ford Foundation funded some of the work (sometimes in coordination with the CIA), and in the 1960s helped establish communication institutes in South and East Asia, including the Indian Institute of Mass Communication at the University of New Delhi (1965).

Operating from a very different vantage point, University of Toronto political economist → Harold Innis considered the relations between communications and empire in the last

years before his untimely death in 1952. He was the catalyst for an interdisciplinary group there which coalesced around the study of media and communications, led by English professor Marshall McLuhan and cultural anthropologist Edmund Carpenter, who used a Ford Foundation grant to publish the journal *Explorations* from 1953 to 1959. Canada had no graduate programs in communication before the 1970s, but the *Explorations* group pioneered a distinctive blend of cultural, literary, and historical analysis that distinguished it from the mainstream of American research (→ Medium Theory).

Two other influential alternative approaches emerged from Europe in the early 1960s. In Paris, the Centre d'Études des Communications de Masse (CECMAS) was founded in 1960 by the sociologist Georges Friedmann and his allies Edgar Morin and Roland Barthes (whose brilliant *Mythologies* [1957] probed the contours of modern mass culture). CECMAS began publishing the journal *Communications* in 1962, which like *Explorations* served as an ecumenical forum on communication and culture before it became the leading outlet for semiology late in the decade (→ Semiotics). Meanwhile in Britain the English professor Richard Hoggart established the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in 1964 at Birmingham University (→ Cultural Studies). It was a postgraduate research institute which supplemented methods of literary criticism with sociology and history, taking its early bearings from Hoggart's *Uses of literacy* and Raymond Williams's *Culture and Society* (both 1958). London School of Economics social psychologist Hilde Himmelweit had conducted an important study of the effects of television on children (1954–1958, funded by the Nuffield Foundation), but sociology was slow in developing in the UK, and media studies emerged from the ranks of literature – a tradition initiated by the Leavises and updated with new left sensibilities at the CCCS. Indeed, literature served as one of the key parent disciplines for media research in many countries, including Denmark and Norway.

With varying degrees of acceptance, communications gained institutional footholds around much of the world by 1968. It was centered in the US, but had a presence across much of western Europe, though Spain and Portugal, still governed by dictatorships, were slower in establishing programs. The Baltic countries provided intellectual leadership in the Soviet Union, with Estonia's University of Tartu becoming a key center for media research in the 1960s (when television first gained a mass audience there), under the leadership of Ülo Vooglaid, who led the Laboratory for Sociology (est. 1967) and hosted a series of USSR-wide congresses on mass communication research over the next three years (Vihalemm 2001). Though one study estimated that there were no more than 20 scholars in Latin America with graduate training in the "communication sciences" (Nixon 1970), the 1959 founding of CIESPAL represented a beachhead of sorts, and a critical strand of research was beginning to emerge in Venezuela and Chile (where the Belgian Armand Mattelart taught from 1962 until the coup of 1973). Institutes of mass communication had been established in a number of Asian countries. Africa still lagged in developing indigenous research traditions, but in the 1960s it too witnessed a handful of studies conducted by native researchers.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience Research ► BBC ► Communication as an Academic Field: Africa ► Communication as an Academic Field: Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Rim ► Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia ► Communication as an Academic

Field: Eastern Europe and Russia ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Development Communication ▶ Group Communication ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Semiotics ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ UNESCO ▶ Voice of America ▶ War Propaganda

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## Communication Modes, African

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Defining communication in Africa as well as the African diaspora is a complex task involving both cultural commonalities and differences. African communication itself reflects a complex mix of cultural values from the cultures and traditions spread across the vast continent (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Africa; Africa: Media Systems; Communication Law and Policy: Africa). While some traditional values have been fervently preserved throughout the continent, the myriad of outside influences, including European colonizers and religious crusaders, cannot be ignored. Similarly, Hecht et al. (2003, 9) explain that African-American communication builds from a “cultural amalgam of the cultural traditions, values, and norms of the indigenous African slaves as well as the European settlers who laid claim to what we know now as the United States.” Understanding African and African-American communication involves a thorough analysis of this cultural amalgam, understanding the worldviews through cultural codes (e.g., values and norms), processes (e.g., communication patterns and practices), and sense of community. We begin with a discussion of African-American communication.

### AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMUNICATION

Pioneers in research on African-American communication such as Asante, Blake, Cummings, and DuBois worked to establish it as a salient area of inquiry (Jackson & Givens 2006). Western thought had long neglected African influences and these scholars advocated the need to include African-Americans in communication research and

theorizing. For example, Asante (1993, 2) explained that Afrocentricity is “a perspective which allows Africans to be subjects of historical experiences rather than objects on the fringes of Europe. This means that the Afrocentrist is concerned with discovering in every case the centered place of the African” as a fundamental concept derived from African values rather than merely in comparison or contrast to European styles.

One of the key issues is identifying these common cultural codes of meaning. Hecht et al. (2003) identify *five core symbols* in African-American communication systems: (1) sharing or endorsing the group (including rituals and communication styles), (2) uniqueness of or homage to the individual, (3) positivity and emotionality (based on spirituality and expressed through art and everyday life), (4) realism (both a style that is genuine and a practicality about the world), and (5) assertiveness (standing up for self).

Building on these common themes, the research on African-American communication is also concerned with exploring *communication styles*. For example, Hecht et al. (2003) noted the centrality of oral tradition and performance. This is illustrated in the preaching styles of the traditional black church. The preacher’s sermon goes beyond a mere speech, becoming a performance complete with “tonal semantics” (long pauses, rhythm, etc.). Call-and-response is an important aspect of the sermon as audience members are encouraged to participate by speaking up (e.g., yelling “preach on” or “yes”). These styles transcend the church, permeating both public and private discourse in the community (→ Religion and Popular Communication).

This research is also concerned with the impact of various *identity factors* on African-American communication including issues of gender (masculinity, women’s experiences, etc.), context (i.e., communication environment of first-generation African-American students), and pedagogy (i.e., experiences of African-American in academia), etc. For example, Jackson (2006) describes how the media “scripts” black masculinity in essentializing and stereotypic ways (i.e., exotic/strange, sexual, violent, and incompetent/uneducated). At the same time, Jackson (2006) holds out the hope that artists can embrace multiple black masculinities, describing them in healthy, nonhegemonic terms.

Building on the efforts of its pioneers, African-American communication is a thriving discipline which addresses a complexity of standpoints and the diverse experiences of people of African descent in the United States.

## COMMUNICATION IN AFRICA

Unfortunately, communication research on the African continent lacks such breadth. African communication research has been, for the most part, development-oriented, emphasizing the move toward modernization (→ Planned Social Change through Communication). While definitions of development communication differ, they share the underlying concern about change for the social, economic benefit of populations (Okigbo 1996). During the African nations’ independence era (1950s to 1960s), communication research was mainly limited to *mass communication*, and in particular radio, which was used to diffuse messages about modernization. Mirroring earlier studies of African-American communication which had imposed mainstream models of communication, the ideas disseminated were “pre-packaged” (Rogers 1976; → Rogers, Everett), and since, in the main, they had been designed by experts in the west, there was hardly any attempt to conceptualize or adapt communication to the African context. The use of mass media may

have led to better family planning or higher health awareness, in some cases and for some people, but ultimately it did not insure that the poorest, those who needed assistance the most, benefited. More importantly, this change was not embedded in emic or indigenous cultural systems. Mass media dissemination could not insure that the needs of those who required assistance were met; all it could do was to share a standardized message.

In response to the use of western models of development communication, some African scholars propose a *culturalist approach*. West & Fair (1993) noted the work of Bofo and Ugboajah who proposed the term *Oramedia* to account for oral forms of media including dance, drumming, storytelling, etc. They pointed out, appropriately, that culturalists proposed different channels of communication, but did not challenge the basic top-down communicative approach. Additionally, the basic assumption of communication as being solely the mass media was not contested.

The prominence of mass media can also be explained by the postindependence political contexts of the 1960s. New African leaders considered mass media as a central mean of promulgating a nationalist ideology. Ngwainmbi (1995) quoted former Kenyan president Kenyatta (in 1968): “the press in Africa can have a tremendous influence in nation building . . . It may constantly inspire the spirit of Harambee or National Unity which every young country needs as the fundament of its progress.”

The dominance of mass media is still apparent in more contemporary efforts to conceptualize communication in Africa. Obijiofor (1998) identified two forms of communication in Africa which he labeled “urban” and “rural” based on the location and culture of the audience. He explains that the *urban form of communication* included western communication media (i.e., radio, television, magazines, telephones, and limited electronic mail, etc.). On the other hand, *rural forms of communication* include traditional channels (i.e., “Gongman,” community leaders, marketplace, friends/neighbors). Obijiofor (1998, 165) notes: “Simply defined, the gongman is a man appointed by community leaders to disseminate information to members of a community. In many parts of rural Africa and Nigeria in particular, the gongman uses a wooden or metal gong to disseminate official information.”

Some scholars, however, have promoted a more *elaborate study of communication* in Africa. Advocating a philosophy of African communication (analogous to the Afrocentricity movement in the US), Okigbo (1987) observed the need to establish a communication philosophy based on African thought. Such a philosophy would demonstrate the limitations of western-based communication for exploring African thought. Okigbo (1987, 21) explained that without theorizing about communication phenomena in Africa, communication research throughout the continent would continue to be “shots in the dark.” Today, in-depth discussion of communication in Africa remains rare. Efforts to study and research what communication (especially mass media) *can* do for Africa have surpassed and even eclipsed the fundamental discussion of what communication in Africa *is*. However, there do exist promising efforts to advance the latter.

For example, Opubor (2004) builds on conversations with his grandmother to advance an African conceptualization of terms such as “truth.” He (2004, 56) argues for an *ethnographic approach* (→ Ethnography of Communication) to studying communication in Africa and poses crucial questions: “Are there African theories of communication? Are there African theories of behaviour and social change? What would these theories consist of? What would they focus on? Would they stress: individuals or social groups or the



individual-in-the-group? What communication strategies would be applicable for creating change from an Afrocentric perspective? What are the meta-languages of African communication? Should we study them language by language and culture by culture, or their generalised communication framework related to 'Africanity'?"

### QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

For the reasons outlined above, the discussion of communication in Africa ends with questions rather than answers. Themes or fundamental principles of African communication can be adequately advanced only once these questions have been answered. This discussion illustrates the complexity of African and African-American communication. It is irrelevant to discuss similarities between African and African-American communication. After all, the two groups share strong ancestral experiences. For example, oral tradition is an important unifying feature in both African and African-American communication and the research traditions for both are centered on describing an endogenous rather than a Eurocentric perspective. However, social and political contexts have led to different communication research agendas. The African-American research tradition is, perhaps, further developed, with recognition of diversity within the group (e.g., identities), and has moved from description of communication patterns to attempts to address health and economic disparities. In the African setting broader communication research (beyond mass media) is necessary to understand the range of cultures and identities, address language diversity, and apply findings to health, relationships, and civic life as well as economic development. Of course, the pressure of economic development will continue to attract primary attention and communication that recognizes endogenous voices is likely to be more powerful than that which is externally imposed, particularly given the history of colonialism. From what we know about the commonalities, these cultures share an oral tradition that values expressiveness and community. This would suggest the importance of interpersonal channels, which are particularly understudied in the African context, as well as of a narrative style of message construction.

SEE ALSO: ► Africa: Media Systems ► Communication as an Academic Field: Africa  
 ► Communication Law and Policy: Africa ► Ethnography of Communication ► Planned Social Change through Communication ► Religion and Popular Communication  
 ► Rogers, Everett

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## Communication Modes, Asian

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Communication in its simplest form refers to the ongoing process of sharing and understanding meaning (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts; Communication: History of the Idea). Many intercultural communication problems stem from the different ways that messages are composed, transmitted, and interpreted. Human beings depend on a variety of philosophical, social, psychological, and institutional standards or criteria of conduct to arrive at reasonable, appropriate, and meaningful modes of communication. Asia is very heterogeneous. Each Asian culture has its unique philosophical traditions, ethics, and morals for appropriate social behaviors and conduct. Confucianism, however, is one of the most prevalent practices in Asian cultures. Although communication is unique within each Asian culture, systematic similarities in communication (e.g., indirect, implicit, polite, and formal communication) have been observed across the Asian cultures (Gao et al. 1996).

Human communication modes (→ Communicator Style) can be understood from multiple perspectives. The purpose of this article is to explore the phenomenon by examining the current literature from Asian perspectives (→ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia). Specifically, this entry discusses certain Asian communication modes, their fundamental core concepts, and the overarching philosophical frameworks of Asian cultures.

### CORE PRINCIPLES IN CONFUCIANISM: HARMONY AND HIERARCHY

Asian society has been strongly influenced by an ancient Chinese sage, Confucius, who lived approximately 2,500 years ago, before the Greek philosopher Socrates. Confucianism encompasses sets of principles and rules regulating social behaviors and

relationships, among them *ren* (humanism), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (courtesy), and *shu* (forgiveness), which are emphasized in dealing with the five cardinal relationships (father and son, emperor and minister, husband and wife, between brothers, and between friends) (Gabrenya & Hwang 1996).

Confucius proposed that things and persons be regarded as belonging to prescribed power hierarchies with responsibilities so that individuals could relate to one another in a supportive and harmonious manner. Confucianism was developed in a time of chaos in China. In the development of human civilization, its influence spread to neighboring countries and elsewhere in Asia. The effort to promote Confucian values in Asian societies is evident in media representations, school teaching, and government policies. In particular, some of the main Confucian values, such as interpersonal harmony, relational hierarchy, and traditional conservatism, are considered as essentially Asian, because they are generally emphasized more in the east than in other parts of the world. Hence, many scholars have identified Asian societies as collectivistic, rooted in Confucianism (e.g., Hofstede 2001).

### INDIRECT AND IMPLICIT COMMUNICATION

As one of the classical writers on communication and culture, Hall (1976) differentiated cultures on a continuum based on how much information is communicated and/or implied by the communication context per se, regardless of the specific words that are spoken. In Hall's view, on the high end of the continuum are *high-context cultures* where contextual messages other than the explicit verbal codes are emphasized. Not surprisingly, high-context messages can be implicit, ambiguous, and indirect. On the lower end of the continuum he locates *low-context cultures* where explicit and direct verbal codes are emphasized. High-context communication might involve managing strategic ambiguity, and sometimes "beating around the bush," thus seemingly little intended meaning is provided in the explicit verbal form. Grice's (1975) conversation maxims illustrate the ideal conversation styles preferred in low-context cultures, calling on communicators to give sufficient and relevant information and evidence in conversations and to avoid ambiguity, excessive verbosity, disorganization, and obscure expressions (→ Communication Modes, Western).

In line with the broader descriptions of Hall's high-context cultural traits where the *contextual cues and nonverbal communication* (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture) are emphasized more than the sheer verbal codes, indirect/implicit communication illustrates how communication is carried out in Asian cultures. By its discursive expression, indirect communication refers to a communicative practice that is shared in many Asian cultures where communicators express meaning (especially the intended meaning) by using implicit, sometimes ambiguous, and unassertive messages. For example, in the *Chinese cultural context*, indirect/implicit communication is most exercised in the expression of feelings and emotions, in initial encounters, in public settings, when imposing on others, in situations where the other person's face or image needs to be protected, in self-enhancing situations, and when dealing with sensitive people and topics (Gao 2006). Assertive verbal skills in public speaking and debate are promoted and evaluated positively in western societies, such as the United States; but in Asian societies those who are perceived to have a "sharp tongue" are viewed more

negatively and considered to cause trouble, be disruptive and self-centered, and to have less knowledge than those who are relatively reticent. In other words, taciturnity is encouraged. When verbal messages are necessary, they are usually strategically managed and unassertively presented, especially in expressing discontentment, in order to avoid the escalation of conflict (→ Strategic Communication).

Confucian tradition encourages individuals to conduct “*mind to mind*” communication (Tsujimura 1987), involving the communication of meanings through physical setting, context, the relational and psychological temperaments of the communicators, shared beliefs, values, and norms. Phrases like *ishin-denshinin* in the Japanese culture, *i-shim jun-sim* in the Korean culture, and *hanxu* in the Chinese culture all demonstrate the importance of nonverbal communication and strategic ambiguity (Gao et al. 1996; Tsujimura 1987; Yum 1987). Consistent with this perspective, previous cross-cultural studies examining assertiveness and argumentativeness have revealed that Asians are less assertive than westerners (Kim 2002). To a large degree, indirect communication aims to promote and cultivate modesty, humility, and harmonious relations with others. In addition, certain external variables have contributed to the practice of indirect communication. Tsujimura (1987) argues that linguistic and ethnic homogeneity enables people in Asian cultures to understand the unspoken subtleties and understatements of a message, presumed to be part of the normative repertoire of social knowledge. On the other hand, cultural and linguistic diversity in the United States would make indirect communication inefficient and problematic.

A recent discussion in an American college classroom about a dialogue between an American student and a Malaysian student who was indirectly asking for a favor revealed several critical points. Some American students read the dialogue several times and still did not know exactly what the Malaysian student was asking for. Those who understood the request perceived the Malaysian student to be sneaky and manipulative. Some thought that the Malaysian student had a problem with language proficiency. Two Asian students in the classroom were frustrated with the American students’ lack of sensitivity in reading between the lines. This example demonstrates how frustrating the use of an indirect communication style in intercultural communication between those from Asia and those from western societies can be for both parties.

## **POLITE AND FORMAL COMMUNICATION**

Cultural systems mold individuals’ communication behaviors by influencing individuals’ self-construal (Kim 2002). Asian communication is very affectively based, other-centered, and ingroup-oriented. Unlike western societies where the independent self (i.e., where individuals are viewed as autonomous beings with unique personalities, emotions, and motivations) is most valued, in Asian societies the *interdependent self* (i.e., where individuals are regarded as connected by multiple relationships with others) is most emphasized (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication). Self in Asian cultures is defined by a person’s surrounding relations, derived from kinship networks. An Asian person’s self-concept and self-esteem are dependent on how he or she is considered or perceived by others. To have a positive sense of self is to be able to relate to others in ways that are sensitive to cultural values (e.g., filial piety), norms, and role expectations. Western

self-esteem also depends on how one is considered by others, but the emotional attachment of Asians to the concept of others is far stronger than that of westerners.

In Asian societies, maintaining good relations with others, being able to work in a team, and having a supportive social network project a positive self-image of a person as amicable, likeable, and capable. The cultivation of such social relationships involves behaving with *politeness and formality to others*, including supporting their “face” by abiding by the spoken and unspoken social rules and norms. Using formal and appropriate forms of address; praising others; being friendly, patient, and respectful; knowing one’s limit; expressing concern; showing care, warmth, and gratitude; and displaying modesty and humility are all specific examples of politeness. In general, an Asian communicator uses a great deal of sensitivity to protect the other party’s positive image or “face” in the communication process. Hence, from early childhood, individuals in Asian societies are educated to respect established relational and social hierarchies and to show an abundance of consideration to others.

As hierarchy permeates every corner of Asian societies, Asian communication is characterized by its politeness and formality. Coming from an Asian cultural background and teaching in the United States, the present author finds that the different levels of politeness and formality extended by students in their emails illustrate these cultural disparities. A typical email from an Asian international student who is interested in enrolling in a class that is full will start with a very formal address (e.g., Dear Professor/Dr.), followed by a well-structured self-introduction and reasons for the request. Such requests are always signed off “Sincerely” or “Yours truly.” A typical email from an American student will be very informal, frequently without any form of address and often with no name at the end of the message.

In explanations of the motivational forces of Asian communication styles, using Hall’s theoretical framework of high-context and low-context communication, Confucianism has always been observed to be the overarching philosophical frame while collectivism and high power distance are cited as the shared Asian cultural traits (Hofstede 2001). Cultural level analysis (e.g., accounts of Asian communication styles tend to paint all Asians with the same broad brush as collectivistic and thus reserved, indirect) has enhanced our understanding of Asian communication styles and their motivational forces. However, recent research using individual level analysis calls attention to the complexity and *increasing heterogeneity of Asian communication styles* and takes into account the impacts of cultural change, especially within younger, more educated, and urban segments of Asian societies (e.g., Zhang et al. 2005).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Strategic Communication

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## Communication Modes, Hispanic

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It is widely accepted that communication, whether presented as a manner of acting, a style of conversing, or a fashioning of language, functions in many *modes* to bring individuals to some awareness of each other as members of a collective. This conceptualization of modes as *signifying forms of social activity* is in contrast to the more general notion of *channels* or means of communication (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts; Communication: History of the Idea; Communicator Style).

That researchers would seek to characterize Hispanic modes of communication is not surprising given the reported growth in the number and economic power of people ascribed to that demographic in the world. For some researchers, identifying modes of communication unique to Hispanics presents an opportunity to understand cultural biases that inform interactions and relations between Hispanics and non-Hispanics. Others find implicit assumptions about such modes as the source of strained relations between groups offensive. Still others find the notion of modes generalized to bodies of people classified as “Hispanic” to be politically suspect. These thoughts underlie and inform the inquiry as it pertains to cultural communication and intercultural contact.

### CONCEPTS AND CONTEST

Research identifying Hispanic modes of communication can be framed by its contests. At one level, some observed communication practices and preferences have been challenged as overly generalizing and nonrepresentative. For instance, Mirandé & Tanno (1993)

criticized research reporting Mexican-American themes of interethnic communication because survey data submitted by respondents who self-identified as Chicano, Latino, or Mexican were excluded from the study. One issue here is the extent to which communication preferences associated with one grouping (i.e., Mexican-Americans) can be generalized to other named but unexamined Hispanic groups. But an altogether different issue raised is the extent to which such groups can be represented on a continuum of Hispanic cultural identity at all.

Most researchers now seriously consider ideological differences between the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino.” For many people, the term *Hispanic* symbolizes an ascribed identity, a designator created by the United States government in the 1970s to define a disparate population by national origin, use of Spanish language, and Spanish ancestry as a common denominator. Consequently, an understanding of groups or individuals as *more or less* Hispanic becomes a summation of citizenship, language, and lineage. In contrast, *Latino* has come to symbolize an avowed pan-ethnic cultural identity for groups and individuals as connected to the heterogeneous origins, histories, and cultures of people indigenous to Latin America and the Caribbean. The hybridity and paradoxes presented by *Latinidad* enable an identity that is fluid, relationally defined, and dynamically responsive to changing social and political contexts. The concept is not without its own criticism, especially when scholars overstate Latino unity under a “Latinist” framing, leading many indigenous and non-Hispanic people (e.g., Portuguese) of Mexico and Central and South America to resist the term or its sense of collective consciousness (Mayer 2004).

At another level then, several modes of communication characterized as Hispanic, as well as the very idea of a Hispanic culture, have been contested as poorly represented in the research literature. For instance, *machismo* is often represented as a mode of communicating monolithic masculinity and honor in Latin America, but rarely described so as to present how masculine ideals of dignity and respectability within the particular communities and circumstances are activated. Similarly, the word *macho* (manly) can signify a host of meanings by Spanish interlocutors who speak in jest or with seriousness of what it means to be a man (*ser hombre*). Taken outside of these spoken contexts, the word becomes a signifier of the exaggerated male behavior and aggressiveness that typifies definitions of *machismo* as a generalizing image of Hispanic men and Latin American culture (→ Latina Feminist Media Studies).

Delgado (1994) and other critical theorists question the construct of Hispanic itself as presented in both research and criticism. The concern is not simply with regard to non-Spanish speaking or non-Latinos engaging the inquiry, but to any person unaware of the histories and politics of ethnic identity. For instance, scholars who privilege US–Mexican or Spanish–Mexican relations for constructs of cultural identity often do so without regard to how the practices and customs of Mexico might be viewed with skepticism by nations and indigenous groups of Central and South America. Taken together, inattention to how modes of communication are often taken out of social, linguistic, and political contexts underlies some of the strongest objections to the inquiry as being complicit in strategies of *essentialism* and the construction of an *ethnic other* to justify social policy.

Within these contested terrains, a body of research nevertheless exists that presents complex and contradicting modes of communication notable among Hispanics and

Latinas/Latinos, and to a lesser extent among indigenous peoples that share in historical, social, and political situation (e.g., Maya).

## MODES

Among the more favorably received bodies of research are *local knowledge theories* of communication (→ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on) in a variety of *speech communities* and regions in South, Central, and North America. Local knowledge theories inform researchers of the varied ways in which people identify forms of social activity as signifying their collectivity. The significance of these modes is not always apparent to naïve observers as they are embedded in larger cultural schemes or *codes* internalized by participants. This embeddedness affords multiple layers of meaning for the social activity, only some of which is ever explicitly conveyed verbally. Researchers of cultural variability refer to such embedded modes of communication as *high-context*, and tend to regard Latin American countries as high-context cultures. Relationships between connectedness, familia, and the Spanish language illustrate this communication dynamic.

Modes of communication embedded in codes of *connectedness* have been noted in many Hispanic and Latino speech communities. Codes of connectedness in communities influenced by traditions of Roman Catholicism and Spanish colonialism tend to emphasize relationships between persons (*personas*), who can expect to be treated with a dignity (*dignidad*) and deference (*respeto*) that is not extended to animals or material objects. Such codes have conflicted and have been combined with indigenous codes that extend connectedness in mind, body, and spirit with earth and cosmos. Codes of connectedness presented in Latina/Latino speech tend to move between these and other discourses, placing emphasis on a sense of self that is defined by personal, spiritual, community, and socio-political ties. For instance, Fitch (1998) highlights the importance of connectedness by middle-class Colombians who summarize *vinculos* (bonds to others) that are derived in part by nature (e.g., ties to homeland) and in part by nurtured shared experiences (e.g., friendship) as a fundamental unit of one's existence. The primacy of connectedness as a code is one reason Latin American countries are noted as *highly collectivist* by researchers examining cross-cultural communication (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication).

The extent to which individuals are defined by and place value on family and community relations has been a central feature for assessing societies as collectivist. For many Hispanics and Latinos, modes of communication that revere *la familia* are constitutive of the connectedness that defines their communities. Mexican parents who insist their children affirm age, sex, and even birth order as statuses worthy of honor, for instance, may do so not simply to sustain the orderliness of *respeto* in *la familia*, but to publicly signify the family's connectedness to local customs of *culto* (well-manneredness).

Modes of communicating *respeto* and *confianza* (relational closeness, trust and reliability) in *la familia* may be extended to close friends and in some degree to social relations. For instance, Fitch (1998) observes how acts of *confianza* must be balanced with acts of *distancia* (interpersonal distance) in professional relations between Colombians so as to communicate a familiarity that is appropriate in deference and personal respect. In other communities the importance of conducting daily interactions with *personalismo*



(interpersonal warmth) is necessary so as to construct one's person as *simpática/simpática* while affirming the *dignidad* of another. Milburn's (2001) analyses of "Puerto Rican time" in social and work settings illustrates how calling up that mode is not only meant to break the constraint of "American time," but to relax the "respect" rules among Puerto Ricans as well. These concerns for status, familiarity, and self-image help inform research which characterizes Hispanics and Latinos as preferring interpersonal conflict styles that are indirect, accommodating, and showing concern for another's positive face (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework).

Finally, numerous studies have reported the ability to speak Spanish as important for perceived ethnic and cultural identity (→ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication). While much writing exists that examines relationships between language and culture and between linguistic and social structures, descriptions of talk regarding what it means to "speak Spanish" are informative of disconnectedness within and connectedness between communities. For instance, a failure to speak Spanish (*habla*) might be explained as an inability to demonstrate a knowledge or fluency of the Spanish language proper (e.g., Castilian). To "speak Spanish" then is to signify connectedness to a worldview or culture through a language proper, with greater fluency often serving as an indicator of class status. In contrast, a person lacking in knowledge and fluency may be evaluated as disconnected from the history and culture afforded by the Spanish language.

A failure to speak Spanish (*hacen*) might also be explained as incompetence in a social activity signifying of connectedness to others (e.g., familial, community, regional, political). To "speak Spanish" then is to assist in the "doing" of some activity, such as making conversation, where the expected amount and quality of Spanish spoken varies with the coded significance of the activity. For instance, in a bilingual household a child may only be expected to greet visiting elders in Spanish. Failure to carry out such activities as expected might thus be experienced as some disconnectedness between persons and their communities.

Both frames inform how "speaking Spanish" functions as a mode of communication. While the Spanish language is generically structured to differentiate relations by gender and formality (i.e., status and familiarity), studies of language use illustrate how forms of personal address (e.g., *tú, usted*) and directives are fashioned so as to indicate how relations are being assessed in particular communities. A phrase fashioned so as to tease the sexed status of a hearer may be taken as play in one community but as serious transgression in another. It makes sense then that plays on words, use of irony, joking, and teasing are frequently listed as misunderstood social activities between people who can "speak Spanish" but do not know how to "speak Spanish." It also makes sense how growing up in a "Spanish-speaking" household in one community may mean something altogether different in another.

Calafell (2004) notes that, as townships, cities, and nations continue to grow more diverse in ethnic populations and social practices categorized as Hispanic, modes of communication notable in Hispanic and Latino speech communities will continue to be tested and contested as signifying of their collectivity. The paradoxes and dialectic between ideas and ideology, research and practice, as well as the connectedness/disconnectedness between individuals and community should not be seen as problematic, but as conflict worth having.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ▶ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies

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## **Communication Modes, Muslim**

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Traditional Islamic modes of communication have evolved to become very effective at enhancing conformity and obedience, and in strengthening ingroup cohesion (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods). Three illustrative examples are discussed here: the *azan* (call to prayer), the daily prayer, and the month of *Ramadan*.

It is particularly important to attend to Islamic modes of communication, because Islam is the fastest-growing major religion in the world, soon to constitute about a quarter of the world population. Although the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism (Moghaddam 2006; → Mediated Terrorism) has focused attention on Middle Eastern countries, particularly Saudi Arabia which is the home of Wahhabism, the most populous Islamic countries are outside the Middle East. Indonesia alone has about 220 million Muslims. Approximately 90 percent of Muslims in the world belong to the Sunni sect; Shi'a is the second largest sect, Shi'a Muslims make up the vast majority of the populations of Iran, southern Iraq, and southern Lebanon. The historic conflict between Sunni and Shi'a Muslims has intensified since the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003; on the borders of India and Pakistan, Islamic fundamentalists are fighting for control over Kashmir.

Anyone traveling in Muslim societies immediately experiences the *azan*, the call to prayer, which is heard from every mosque, in every neighborhood of a city and every village in the countryside. Radio and television stations also broadcast the *azan* (Bowen & Early 2002). The migration of millions of Muslims to western European societies means that the *azan* is now also heard in some western cities (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). The *moazen*, the person singing the *azan*, is specially trained, and the most successful *moazens* have a wide following and appeal. In traditional societies, each mosque has a *moazen* who climbs up the minaret and sings the *azan* five times a day, but in many places now tapes of the most famous and successful *moazen* are played through loudspeakers, and are available on the → Internet. An important consequence of the *azan* is that five times a day, the entire Muslim community is immersed in the call to prayer: everyone – people shopping, walking in parks, driving through the city, lingering in tea houses – undergoes the same experience. Even secular parts of society are forced to hear the *azan*.

Prayer may not be considered by some to be a mode of communication for study, but the social influence exerted by the practices associated with Islamic prayer play a unique and highly important role. All Muslims are obliged to pray five times a day at specific times. The prayers are to be said in Arabic, and are preceded by ritual cleansing. Children start learning the prayers by heart from an early age, and in Muslim families girls over 9 and boys over 13 are expected to follow the routine of daily prayer.

Muslims are encouraged to pray as part of a group, led by an *imam* or a community leader. The spiritual value of prayer is said to be higher when it is undertaken as part of a collective, rather than as an individual act, separate from others. Thus, the *azan* calls the faithful to prayers five times a day, and the expectation is that individuals will try to join others in saying their prayers. This arrangement creates opportunities for the collective to exert continuous influence on the individual, maximizing possibilities for achieving *conformity to group norms* and obedience to Islamic authorities. In particular, the gathering of Muslims for prayer presents Islamic preachers with daily opportunities to communicate with the faithful, passing on messages that come from local, regional, or national authorities (Parshall 1994).

The tradition of *Ramadan*, a month during which, from sunrise to sunset, practicing Muslims abstain from eating, drinking non-alcoholic beverages (alcohol is forbidden to Muslims at all times of the year), and smoking, represents another unique and effective mode of communication in Islamic societies (Bakhtiar 1995). Again, the emphasis during *Ramadan* is participation in collective life and conformity to group norms. First, the practice of fasting disrupts the normal routine of daily life and sharpens the difference between ingroup and outgroup. Muslims find it very difficult to interact with non-Muslims during the month of *Ramadan*, because they must fast between sunrise and sunset. A consequence is that during this month social and business meetings with Christians, Jews, and other non-Muslims becomes difficult. This is in part because during *Ramadan* fasting becomes a national preoccupation and there is far less attention on getting work done. Also, lengthier meetings typically involve sharing food and drink (e.g., a “business lunch”), which is not possible when Muslims have to fast. The result is that during *Ramadan* business slows down and even grinds to a halt in many parts of the Muslim world. Second, Muslims are encouraged to break their fast at sunrise each day as part of

a group, as well as to attend various sermons and gatherings special to this time of the year.

The power of traditional communication modes is weakened by some *alternative sects* and reformist Muslim groups, which have challenged the priority given to the interpretation of Islamic rules by authority figures. For example, Sufi groups tend to highlight personal inspiration rather than dictates from authority figures.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Internet ► Mediated Terrorism ► Religion and Popular Communication

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## **Communication Modes, Western**

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An understanding of values and worldviews can greatly inform our understanding of the modes of both face-to-face and mediated communication in the so-called western world. The terms “eastern” and “western” are problematic. Stevenson (1994, 178), for example, classifies Japanese media systems under his rubric of Western mass media. However, for want of alternatives, these terms will be used in this essay.

In terms of face-to-face communication, there is great diversity in communication among western cultures, yet we find some similarities in terms of values and thought structures – that is, similarities that characterize Europe and European-descended cultures, as opposed to non-European cultures such as Middle Eastern, Sub-Saharan African, Oceanic, South Asian, or Far Eastern cultures.

### **FACE-TO-FACE MODES OF COMMUNICATION: VALUES, WORLDVIEW, AND COMMUNICATION STYLES**

Hofstede (1997) created a set of value dimensions that many researchers apply to different cultures. The dimensions include the notion of self as a culture’s preference for individual autonomy versus connectedness of individuals to their group (individualism/collectivism:

I/C), a culture's acceptance of status difference or social inequality (power distance: PD), gender role rigidity and communicative directness versus role fluidity and face-saving communication (masculinity/femininity: M/F), and the culture's relation to ambiguous situations (uncertainty avoidance: UA). Within these dimensions few distinctly western patterns are observable.

In general, individualism increases with gross national product and with industrialization, because in collectives one's status role becomes more important; and as individualism increases in a culture, status importance tends to decrease. On some dimensions (M/F, UA), one cannot make predictions about eastern or western cultures. Greece, Portugal, and Belgium, for example, prefer to avoid ambiguous situations (high UA), while Scandinavian cultures and British-descended cultures are more accepting of such situations. Some central European cultures (Swiss, Germany, Austria) and British-descended cultures are more "masculine" (which, with a double-barreled definition is, in fact, uncertain in meaning), but Scandinavian countries are more "feminine."

The *power distance* and *individualism/collectivism* spectra are clearer: Mediterranean cultures tend to be at the midpoint of both ranges (PD and I/C), followed (in the direction toward lower power distance and increased individualism) by central European cultures, Scandinavian cultures, and finally by British-descended cultures, which are the most individualistic. Australia and the United States are among the most individualistic cultures in the world, with other sources suggesting that the US, with its "hyper-individualism," has only seen individualism increase in the last several years, to the point where some feel that there is an increasing breakdown in civility and social involvement, except where the latter meets personal goals (Bellah et al. 1996). These categorizations have limitations, such as the placement of many Latin American cultures (also considered to be "western" by most) among higher power distance and more collective nations.

Where value specifics may not be generalizable to western cultures, some writers make claims about western ethics and worldview, often by way of comparison with other world philosophical systems. In brief, the western philosophical system, strongly influenced by ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, tends to center on "reason, logic, evidence, and truthfulness," which Shuter (2003, 450–451) calls the "hallmarks of Western civilization." Kim (2006) notes that eastern and western cultures differ in terms of views of the person, of knowledge, and of time (→ *Communication Modes, Asian*). Western epistemology is bound up with reason, with an ethical system that privileges openness and honesty, where eastern epistemology focuses on reflection, propriety, intuition, and respect of others. These values extend to the very notion of communication: in western models, communication is often seen as a linear "transfer of meaning" from a sender to a receiver (Jandt 2004) – a "representative" view of communication (i.e., with communication actually representing reality, a notion challenged by social constructivism and postmodernism). Communication is "regarded as a tool for transferring and reflecting truth" (Chen 1998, 357). In other cultural views, to express something with words may be seen to obscure its beauty or even reality (e.g., some Asian cultures), while other cultures see reality as cyclical and interrelated (e.g., Afrocentrism; → *Communication Modes, African*).

Regarding religious worldview, western cultures are predominantly monotheistic, influenced strongly by a Judeo-Christian heritage, while most nonwestern cultures (with

the exception of Muslims and Farsis) tend to have ethics-based religious or polytheistic systems. Beyond that, the western world seems divided between those that are based on Judeo-Christian systems but with everyday thought and communication following a secularist (and often pragmatic) model, and those where the element of the spiritual still pervades thought and talk, such as the *si Dios quiere . . .* (if God wills . . .) of some Latin-based western cultures (→ Communication Modes, Hispanic).

As values and purposes of communication vary widely among so-called western cultures, so do communicative practices (→ Intercultural Norms; Cultural Patterns and Communication). Some western cultures – as low-context cultures – look for meaning in the explicit code, i.e., words (Hall 1976). These include cultures that use a more succinct style of communication, using understatement and few words, but with the meaning still supposed to be in the words themselves (e.g., Great Britain); and also cultures that prefer an elaborated style, giving much detail in the words, “spelling everything out,” so to say. Such cultures (e.g., the United States) may be *more* likely to favor direct modes of communication, for example, in conflict situations (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework). However, other western cultures favor the preservation of harmony and face-saving (e.g., the Latin American concept of *personalismo* or personal respect in communication). Some of these, while more collectivistic, do not look for meanings in silence, as happens in some Asian cultures (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture), but may use exaggeration, formality, and harmonizing behaviors, where communication is used not so much to *transfer meaning*, but to maintain harmony and build trust, as in some Muslim cultures (→ Communication Modes, Muslim).

Even these generalizations do not acknowledge the changing or diverse nature of the individual “national” cultures mentioned, within each of which there are co-cultures with different cultural norms and preferences. Within these cultures, communication takes on a different function even beyond meaning transfer: the building and maintaining of identity and the resistance of dominant (western) culture(s) (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). There is much criticism of attempts to define national cultures, even more attempts to generalize any notion of “western” culture. Some have opted instead for descriptions of specific western cultures or co-cultures. For example, Carbaugh (2005) compares western nations, such as Russia, the United States, and Finland, in terms of specific communication aspects (→ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on), while others provide contradictory views of communication reality from within single cultures (e.g., *Our voices*, on US culture; González et al. 2000).

### MEDIATED MODES OF WESTERN COMMUNICATION

If it is problematic to describe so-called western modes of verbal and nonverbal communication because of the diversity among nations, it is also difficult to discuss western modes of mediated communication because of similarities in modes between western and nonwestern nations. Nations such as Japan and South Korea are emerging as creators of new global media (→ International Radio; International Television; Internet: International Regulation). Eastern and western nations alternate among the top users of land telephone lines, cellular phones, and computers (*CIA Factbook 2006*; → Technology and Communication). Some argue that though global in origin and diffusion, media

technologies perpetuate the underlying values and epistemologies of (some) western nations (principally, those in the center rather than on the periphery of global media power, as noted above) (→ Globalization of the Media; Globalization Theories). The rise first of video recorders, and increasingly the use of digital forms of television and individual musical digital (e.g., MP3) players, allow listeners to select and create their own play list, and then to watch or listen to the recording individualistically. In addition to possible effects of hyperindividualization, Postman (1985) suggests that the onslaught of televised media and its version of reality have turned public knowledge in the United States (such as the news and education) into show business. This, in turn, has transformed public discourse into “dangerous nonsense” (p. 16), education into entertainment, and culture into “burlesque” (p. 155) (→ Media Ecology).

Some have striven to define the characteristics of western media systems writ more broadly. For example, Stevenson (1994) characterizes the *English-speaking media* in terms of their imperialistic or colonizing influence on the rest of the world and the increased privatization of media, especially in Australia and the United States. Others note the potential for such media forms to support systems of global media colonialism and dependence. This perspective has led some organizations, such as → UNESCO and the → New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), to seek to limit the outward flow of media content from nations with more powerful media systems (core nations) to those on the periphery, a move which in turn has strained the relations between some core nations, such as the USA, and those organizations (McPhail 2002). The strength of western media systems – in hosting most of the top news agencies and networks, music industries, and advertisers, as well as all of the top ten global advertisers help support western media’s place in the global media system.

Even with these summary statements, generalizations about western media systems become as difficult as those about face-to-face communication. While *some* western nations have large, dominant media systems, other nations rely upon these systems (either merely as recipients of diffusion of media form and content or of media colonization, depending on one’s perspective). Authors often group media systems not in terms of region, but in terms of degree of control over the media by the state (e.g., authoritarianism), or by macro-geographic regions (e.g., Latin America, Europe). And some simply note differences between the various western media approaches. For example, Canadian media, while still quite independent, works more overtly in the formation of national identity. British broadcasting has traditionally been geared more toward public service, with more financial involvement from the government, and concomitant restrictions on what is reported regarding government affairs (Stevenson 1994, 157; → Canada: Media System; United Kingdom: Media System). Stevenson states that continental European media systems are smaller and more homogeneous than those of the English-speaking nations, and that they focus on community (like Canadian media) and on public service (like British media). Press freedom on the European continent is often more restrictive (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Despite trends in eastern European nations, differences in newspaper readership, concentration of media ownership, advertising revenue, government subsidies (e.g., through value-added taxes), and Internet and film industries lead Fridriksson (2004) to conclude that “diversity remains a hallmark for the media of western Europe” (p. 181).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Hispanic ▶ Communication Modes, Muslim ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ▶ Intercultural Norms ▶ International Radio ▶ International Television ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Power in Intergroup Settings ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ UNESCO ▶ United Kingdom: Media System

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# Communication Networks

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Communication and other → social networks have been the subject of considerable scholarship since the eighteenth century (Mattelart 2000), but the past two decades have produced unprecedented growth in network theorizing and research. Further, this interest in communication and information networks now spans the social sciences, including sociology, psychology, history, political science, organization science, and economics, as well as the physical and life sciences. As Castells (2000) has so comprehensively elucidated, we are now living in the age of the network society.

Networks, in general, are structural configurations that emerge when sets of relations are applied to sets of entities. Entities are typically called “nodes,” points, or elements, and relations are called “links” or ties. “Communication networks” reflect patterns based on message and information flow relations among the elements of the network, thereby creating the information infrastructure on which all organizations and societies depend. Network configurations that occur across a large number of organizations are called “network forms,” and organizations that share a common network form are viewed as “populations.” Historically, → organizational communication focused almost exclusively on nodes defined as people who were members of specific organizations. Today, a much broader view of networks envisions both human and nonhuman nodes, the latter including elements like computer avatars, web-bots, and knowledge repositories (→ Avatars and Agents).

The study of networks tends to pursue one of two general research questions: (1) why are particular networks configured as they are? and (2) what are the effects of different network configurations on the people who comprise them, the performance of the institutions which contain them, and the fitness and survival of the larger organizational communities in which they operate? These questions will be addressed after a brief presentation of basic network concepts. We conclude with a brief discussion of recent trends in the field.

## NETWORK CONCEPTS AND MEASURES

Nodes and ties can be studied in a variety of ways. Many relations can be applied to create organizational communication networks. “Shares information with,” “innovates with,” “is friends with,” are all different relations. Network research has indicated that when different relations are applied to the same organizational members, they produce very different networks. Networks can be created by applying one relation to the nodes, forming a “uniplex network,” or by applying two or more relations to the nodes, forming a “multiplex network.”

Typically, *relations are defined* on one set of entities, such as people in organizations, called “one-mode networks.” However, relations can also be defined between two or more different sets of entities, such as organizations and people. These are called “*n*-mode networks.” Two-mode networks that relate people through common participation in

organizations (such as professional associations) or events (such as meetings) are often called “affiliation networks.”

*Ties* typically have a number of *properties* that impact the nature of the network. Many organizational communication relations link people directly with each other. Links that tie people together through intermediaries are called “indirect links.” Relations also have properties such as “sign” (positive or negative), “frequency” (how often the link is used), strength (weak to strong), direction (from one member to another), and “stability” (existence over time).

A number of important *measures* can be applied to the people or elements of a network. “Degree” is the total number of links with others in the network. “In-degree” is the number of directional links pointing to a person and “out-degree” is the number pointing away from a person. Centrality measures (in several different ways) how close each person is to all other members.

Metrics also exist for *networks as a whole*. “Size” simply indicates the number of people in the network. A “component” is the largest subset of connected people. “Connectivity” is the extent to which people are linked to one another. “Density” is the ratio of the number of actual links to the possible number of links. “Centralization” measures the variation in average nodal centrality of the entire network.

One important aspect of networks is their suitability for *multilevel analysis*, which compares different parts and wholes. For example, analysis can be at the level of nodes, dyads (a pair of nodes), triads (three nodes), cliques, or the entire network. *Dyadic network properties* include the degree to which directional ties are mutual or reciprocated, i.e., the degree to which a link from A to B is mirrored by a link from B to A. For triads, properties of transitivity and cyclicity apply. Transitivity implies that if A communicates to B and B communicates to C, then A also communicates to C. Cyclicity represents a closed loop:  $A \rightarrow B$  and  $B \rightarrow C$  implies  $C \rightarrow A$ . The next higher level in the network is the *clique or group*, which is composed of members who relate more to each other than to others in the network. Cliques have properties such as cohesion, the degree to which the members of the clique are tightly connected to one another.

Given the various properties mentioned above, it is easy to see that networks are inherently multilevel. Scores at one level, such as a large number of isolates, do not necessarily affect the network’s dyadic reciprocity or triadic transitivity. Further, these measures do not necessarily indicate the properties of the overall network, such as density (see Brass 1995 for additional details).

The analysis of network properties requires a special set of *statistical methods*. Because networks describe relationships between entities that are inherently related rather than independent from one another, the assumptions required for the use of normal parametric statistical tests are violated. Thus, network researchers have developed a variety of tools for addressing networks in a statistically appropriate manner (Wasserman & Faust 1994). The key concept in most statistical analysis of networks is that an observed property of a network should be compared to the likelihood that such a property could have occurred by chance in a network of the same size (Robins et al. 2007; → Network Analysis; Statistics, Descriptive).

## THEORIES OF NETWORK STRUCTURE

One of the critical challenges in network research is to explain how specific communication network configurations evolve out of the extremely large set of possible

configurations that could evolve. The evolution of the observed configuration of a focal network can be explained by four major factors. These are (1) endogenous factors internal to the network, (2) attributes of the people or other nodes in the network, (3) other networks, including the same network at earlier points in time, and (4) network externalities.

*Endogenous factors* are those tendencies within networks toward particular kinds of configurations. These tendencies include factors such as reciprocity among dyads, cyclicity or transitivity among triads, etc. *Attributes* are those characteristics of the members of networks that make a difference in terms of how people relate to each other. Typical characteristics include physical and social variables like age, gender, religious and political affiliations, and physical proximity. Other networks reflect other sets of relations that might impact the focal network. For example, a work network might be highly influenced by a friendship network (defined on the same people). *Other networks* also include *autoregressive networks*, which are the same networks at earlier points in time. Thus, last week's "shares ideas with" network is likely to be highly predictive of this week's "shares ideas with" network. Finally, *network externalities* refers to those factors outside of the network itself that are likely to influence a focal network, including market forces, regulatory regimes, major environmental events, etc. (Fig. 1).

Though researchers have identified these fundamental factors influencing the creation, evolution, and maintenance of network structure, there is no unified theory of network structure. Nonetheless, several social science theories have extensive implications for organizational communication networks. Monge and Contractor (2003) review *seven families of social theories* and discuss in detail the network implications of each. These theories are summarized in Table 1.

Importantly, each theory has a unique structural signature, a particular configuration of relations that should exist if the logic of the theory is operating in any focal network. For example, exchange theories suggest that people will seek to maximize their connections to others with valuable resources. Thus, exchange theories predict networks will demonstrate redundancy. On the other hand, transactive memory theory suggests that individuals will seek to outsource cognitive tasks, such as the storing and updating of specialized knowledge, to other individuals, thus reducing redundancy. Thus, the degree of redundancy in a network can serve as a structural signature indicating which logic is

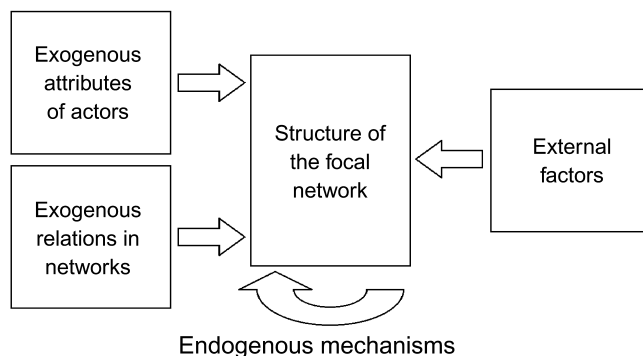


Figure 1 The multi-theoretical multilevel network structuring process

Table 1 Seven families of social science theories and their theoretical mechanisms

Theory families	Theoretical mechanisms
<i>Theories of self-interest</i>	<i>Maximization of individual benefits</i>
Social capital	Profit from investment opportunities
Structural holes	Control of information flow
Transaction costs	Cost minimization
<i>Collective action</i>	<i>Joint value maximization</i>
Public goods theory	Inducements to contribute
Critical mass theory	People with resources and interests
<i>Cognitive theories</i>	<i>Cognitive mechanisms leading to</i>
Semantic/knowledge networks	Shared interpretations
Cognitive social structures	Similarity in perceptual structures
Cognitive consistency	Maintain consistent cognitions
Balance theory	Drive to avoid imbalance and restore balance
Cognitive dissonance	Drive to reduce dissonance
<i>Contagion theories</i>	<i>Exposure to contact leads to infection</i>
Social information processing	Social influence
Social learning theory	Imitation and modeling
Institutional theory	Mimetic behavior
Structural theory of action	Similarity positions in structure and roles
<i>Exchange and dependency theories</i>	<i>Control over valued resources</i>
Social exchange	Equality of exchange
Resource dependency	Inequality of exchange
Network exchange	Complex calculi for exchange balance
<i>Homophily and proximity</i>	<i>Choices based on similarity</i>
Social comparison theory	Communicate with comparable others
Social identity theory	Choose others based on own group identity
Physical/electronic proximity	Influence of distance and accessibility
<i>Theories of network evolution</i>	<i>Variation, selection, retention</i>
Organizational ecology	Competition for scarce resources
Kauffman's NK(C) model	Network density and complexity

Note: See Monge and Contractor (2003) for references and citations.

operating in the network. Because several theoretical mechanisms might be operating on any specific focal network, Monge and Contractor (2003) recommend combining multiple theories to provide more comprehensive explanations.

## THE EFFECTS OF NETWORKS

Network scholars have always been curious about the effects that information and other content flows can have on various entities. These include (1) the people and other elements that comprise the networks, (2) the performance of the institution that contains the networks, and (3) the fitness and survival of the larger communities to which the organizational networks are connected. Advances in network methods are making it increasingly possible to pursue these issues.

Considerable network research has concentrated on the *network members* and considered how people and organizations make use of networks to meet their needs. For example, Wellman (2007) and his colleagues have documented the types of extended networks that exist in different local communities to understand how people rely on social organizations, such as family, friends, and institutions, to meet their needs. Burt (1992) demonstrated that nodes that fill or broker particular network positions called structural holes tend to thrive and outperform other nodes. Miner et al. (1990) found that organizations used linkages to other organizations to buffer threatening environments.

Another research focus has been the *institutional performance* of networks. Because networks are inherently relational, their effects cannot be examined only at the individual level. Positive effects at the node level can have negative effects at the network level and vice versa. Though brokering benefits individual nodes, the network as a whole performs poorly if all nodes attempt this strategy. If one organization dominates the network by becoming a central hub, this can lead to organizational stagnation for other organizations (Stark & Vedres 2006). The transformation of networks has had dramatic implications for the organizations and institutions in which they reside. Castells (2000) describes how companies, industries, and national economies have all been challenged by the changes in underlying social structure, with some thriving and others suffering. In particular, a new form of organization, the network organization, has emerged. Network organizations are flat organizational structures, as opposed to hierarchical, that are more flexible than hierarchies yet more stable than markets. Network organizations have performed exceedingly well in the environment of the network society though it remains to be seen if they can sustain this advantage as social structures continue to change.

A third area of research is the *fitness and survival of networks*. Often overlooked are the effects that networks have on communities. Most organizational networks are tied to multiple other organizations in their own populations and in their larger communities, including suppliers, regulators, retailers, professional standards organizations, and other community institutions. Organizations and their networks both cooperate and compete with each other. Often, competition for scarce resources leads to the demise of weaker organizations and networks. Further, research in a variety of fields indicates that networks may have a carrying capacity for links, i.e., a total number of links that the network can support. Thus, an organization could, in the course of optimizing its own network, overdraw this community capacity and begin an overall network decline. Individual organizational networks contribute to the fitness of the communities in which they reside, which often, in turn, impacts their own survival.

Research on the implications of network structure has recently begun to focus on the *new networks* that have emerged with the development of *new communication technologies*. For example, the online collaboration of social resistance organizers or of players in online role-playing games (MMORPGs) have both been studied (→ Social Movements and Communication). Researchers have also begun to consider the implications of the participation of nonhuman actors in these networks, particularly the mediating effects of cyber-infrastructure. For example, MySpace participants create enormous affiliation networks as they communicate with each other. Members of online communities may create both person-to-person and avatar-to-avatar networks as they communicate in different contexts (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology).

## THE EVOLUTION OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS

Historically, organizational communication research focused on (1) relatively small networks, (2) of single relations, (3) in single organizations, (4) at one point in time, and (5) without a theoretical rationale. Early research was descriptive, reporting different network configurations or testing how different network roles related to organizational outcomes. Over the past decade, a *new science of networks* has emerged that focuses on a wide range of organizational network phenomena, including virtual work teams and organizations, online organizational communities, electronic commerce, massively multi-player online gaming worlds, the network society, community level alliances such as nongovernmental organizations, and the growth of the world wide web.

Instead of studying small organizational networks, contemporary network research now typically focuses on much larger networks, some of which contain thousands of members and hundreds of thousands (or millions) of links. Rather than static configurations, network theorists and researchers now focus on growth, stability, decay, and other forms of change over time. Several *growth and decay principles* have been identified. One is preferential attachment, which states that new entrants to a network will link to the nodes that have the greatest number of existing links. Another principle is a preference for diversity, whereby existing nodes attempt to “hedge their bets” by connecting with as many different types of nodes as possible. An important *decay principle* is called the liability of newness. Burt (2000) has shown that new links tend to disappear faster than older links, a form of the inertial principle in which it is hard to establish links because they die out quickly, but once they exist, they tend to last. Ironically, an opposing principle, the *liability of aging*, asserts that links and networks tend to decline with age.

Network scholars are now beginning to study *multiplex rather than single relations*. For example, Powell et al. (2005) examined four separate relations in their study of all the organizations involved in the evolution of the biotechnology industry: research and development, finance, sales and marketing, and licensing. Shumate et al. (2005) examined the alliances among all HIV/AIDS nongovernmental and intergovernmental organizations from the onset of AIDS in the mid-1980s to the early 2000s, thus incorporating all of the organizations that comprised the community. Similarly, there is a significant increase in the number of longitudinal network studies, many made possible by new data capture techniques (→ Longitudinal Analysis).

Finally, network researchers are increasingly using theory as the basis for forming and testing network hypotheses, particularly *evolutionary theory*. Evolutionary principles of variation, selection, and retention account for network change and stability. Conceiving of networks as having niches that provide resources necessary for their sustenance provides important explanatory power. Researchers are now seeking to understand the evolutionary factors that induce sequential linking patterns, imprinting, and changes in organizational forms. These principles have the advantage of integrating explanations of how networks form particular configurations with findings regarding the effects of those networks.

SEE ALSO: ► Avatars and Agents ► Longitudinal Analysis ► Network Analysis  
► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► Organizational

Communication ► Social Movements and Communication ► Social Networks ► Statistics, Descriptive

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# Communication Professions and Academic Research

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Despite a common interest in communicative activity, mass communication professionals and communication scholars have long been at odds with each other. Scholars argue that media performance can only be enhanced by professionalization of the workforce and the self-knowledge generated from systematic, criteria-based analysis and assessment. They have also systematically criticized a great deal of mass media content since its origins. Conversely, communication professionals tend to disagree not by engaging in debate with scholars but rather by simply ignoring their work: the vast majority of academic literature from communication studies and cognate disciplines goes unread by media practitioners (Walker 2000). This is not to say that journalists and other media professionals are anti-intellectual. Rather, as sociologist Max Weber argued in 1918, problems arise in understanding a key media occupation like political journalism because the special talent, or what he called the “genius,” of journalists is rarely acknowledged, much less understood (Weber 2001). Consequently, wide discrepancies arise between practitioner and academic accounts of media practice, performance, and change.

There has been little research in the past on this relationship per se; rather, the topic typically arises in studies of specific media occupations or in discussion of developments in communication theory. Recently, however, fresh perspectives about the relationship between theory and practice in communication are emerging as scholars try to draw together the field's multiple and disparate intellectual traditions and, at the same time, as practitioners move to document and debate in their own terms the kinds of knowing found in media practice. Arguably, parallel lines of reasoning can be found both in these ground-breaking practitioner efforts to understand the art of journalism as “critical reflective practice” (Sheridan Burns 2002; see also Tumber 2000; Adam 2001; Tunstall 2001; Zelizer 2004) and in innovative research on communication as a “practical discipline” (Dervin et al. 1989; Craig 2007; → Applied Communication Research). Taken together, these efforts provide resources for thinking about new affinities in the relationship between communication professions and academic research rather than its traditional afflictions.

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The professionalization of communication is historically linked to the emergence of national mass media systems, the most potent of which developed in the United States of America from the 1890s (Pye 1963; Carey 1997; → Professionalization of Journalism; Professionalization of Public Relations; United States of America: Media System). A new social role was created in that context; that is, the role of the “professional communicator” or broker of symbols who mediates in a vertical direction between information elites and general audiences, and in a horizontal direction between the diverse communities that make up general audiences (Carey 1997).



The generic term “professional mass communicators” includes a range of media occupations such as journalists, editors, public relations people, speechwriters, radio broadcasters, film and television producers, and actors (Ettema et al. 1987). However, the journalist occupation tends to absorb academic attention because, as journalism historian James W. Carey (1997, 133) indicates, the informational role of journalists is seen as crucial to mass media performance, and by extension, to the vitality of democratic public life (→ Journalists’ Role Perception; Media Performance).

Alongside the creation of this new occupational category, at the turn of the twentieth century, US universities created new tertiary education programs to train mass media recruits; professional associations and codes of practice also emerged at this time. This US model of concurrent media/professional development was later exported via postwar modernization programs to newly emerging nation-states in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. These programs typically included the creation of a new class of professional communicators via university-level journalism education courses (Pye 1963). The International Centre for Higher Education of Latin American Journalists (CIESPAL), set up in 1957 and based in Quito, Ecuador, is an exemplary initiative of this kind. While democracy today remains a vexed issue in many of the aforementioned regions, nonetheless, current research on their media highlights the ongoing influence of these imported mass communication concepts. Thus, for example, the “creative genius” of journalists is said to have enlivened the African press even during the period from 1970 to 1990, when it achieved particular notoriety for its sycophancy toward new national governments (Mytton 2001).

Discussion of *media responsibility* provides another focus for this topic. (William Rivers & Wilbur Schramm’s 1969) seminal study identifies government, media, and the public as the social institutions that guarantee responsible media performance. And, while a nation’s cultural standards are said to depend on a concert between mass education and mass media, the most influential of these three change agents is seen to be the media itself. It has a fundamental duty to improve its own performance through both self-regulation of the media (industry codes of practice), and professionalization of the workforce (codes of ethical practice, higher pay rates, mid-career education, and self-criticism; → Self-Regulation of the Media).

In this schema, which owes much to a western liberal democratic view of press–government relations, governments contribute most when media regulation is minimal (Rivers & Schramm 1969). The public’s duty, on the other hand, is to argue for better media and, more broadly, for mass education that will raise public expectations of the media and, hence, cultural standards (Rivers & Schramm 1969). Universities do not figure in this kind of analysis. Academic research is mentioned, but only as a source that journalists routinely mock. Thus, “anti-intellectualism” is identified as a key problem in journalism, evidenced in the lack of a self-critical spirit found in individual newsrooms as well as in the institutional hostility toward public scrutiny. Interestingly, to remedy this anti-intellectualism, journalists are advised to undertake advanced media study, along the lines of the Nieman Program at Harvard University (Rivers & Schramm 1969).

Elsewhere, *the professional education of journalists* is the habitual primary focus in discussions of the relationship between professional journalists and academic research (O’Donnell 2002; → Journalism Education). A common premise is that journalists should

be more appreciative of educational initiatives directed at improving their public standing as well as news standards. Further, professional education is assumed to enhance the capacity of journalists to shape news agendas (Schultz 1998, 64–67). So, for example, journalism graduates are expected to report news to higher editorial standards than amateur news cadets or occasional → bloggers because they know more about journalistic ethics, → news values, politics, laws that impinge on free speech (e.g., libel, defamation, privacy, sedition), and → media history (→ Ethics in Journalism; Journalism: Legal Situation). Debate then centers on the balance between practical and theoretical subjects in curriculum design; the research assumes higher professional standards are linked to more theoretical curricula programs, but recognizes that media employers prefer job-ready skills to abstract knowledge when recruiting graduates (O'Donnell 2002; → Communication Education, Goals of).

Moreover, professional skills and autonomy are said to permit public advocacy and vigorous pursuit of news in the “public interest” (Schultz 1998), buffering journalists from the worst excesses of the market, political interference, workplace change, and the increasingly sophisticated news management techniques of sources. In this view, professional journalists and editors are key social actors enabling the mass media to exercise its normative role in democracy; that is, the role of facilitating and enhancing public life by providing citizens with a wide range of opportunities to inform themselves and engage in debate about matters of public importance. Watchdog journalism has become a synonym for the fourth estate ideal (Schultz 1998). In this way, the research on this topic reproduces the well-established dichotomy in western culture between intellectual and manual work (theory and practice), including its premise that a well-educated person offers more to the workforce and society than a laborer. Academic study can be seen in this context as an important resource both for communication professionals and for society. However, journalists and other communication professionals do not typically see academic research this way.

### THE UNDERLYING QUANDARY

Doubts over the relevance of academic research to practice, and the expectation of anti-intellectualism among media professionals can be seen as two sides of a quandary that repeatedly surfaces in the literature on this topic.

The quandary is summed up in the question: does communication practice really need communication scholarship? In other words, what is the nature of the relationship between communication *research* and communication *practices*, especially where these practices are seen as innate and intuitive, and are habitually performed in effective ways without the benefits of higher education or recourse to scholarship? This is, of course, a somewhat false dilemma because all communicative practice involves intelligent action, whether or not media practitioners want to call their work that or interpret it in explicitly theoretical terms. Nonetheless, it is also a real dilemma when it comes to identifying the specialized intellectual training that is indispensable for professional mass communicators: in curricular terms, decisions have to be made about which communication theory best serves practice. A related concern is whether independent, critical, scholarly review enhances excellence or deters malpractice in mass communication practice in ways that are significantly better than on-the-job self-appraisal. The quandary also has a

political dimension: should democratic societies that hold free speech, equality, and pluralism as axiomatic principles rely on elite corps of highly trained mass communication experts, or are they better off with communicators who represent and understand their public?

### CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

From the practitioners' perspective, ongoing doubts about the relevance of communication research to media practice arguably have their origins in the foundational experience of higher education mentioned above. Professional education in this area historically sought to enhance occupational status rather than transform the occupation into a learned profession (McGuire 1992), and was not grounded in abstract knowledge, much less a general theory of journalism. Indeed, mass communicator studies began some four decades after the first journalism education courses, with Rosten's (1937) inaugural survey of Washington correspondents (see Berger & Chaffee 1987), and the research field of journalism studies is a much more recent development, as evidenced by two international scholarly journals, *Journalism Studies* (Routledge) and *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism* (Sage), both of which began publication in 2000. From the start, then, journalism curricula were "theory-free" and instead institutionalized free press principles, objective reporting techniques, and an ethic of social responsibility (Carey 1997; → Objectivity in Reporting). Today, irrespective of research developments, these practical "fundamentals" continue to be taught. Thus in simple, chronological terms, communication scholarship has been an optional rather than optimal resource in professional media practice and industry-based discussions of media performance and change.

Yet, on the other hand, as early as 1933, in their classic work on *The Professions*, British sociologists A. M. Carr-Saunders and P. A. Wilson attributed journalism's susceptibility to commercialism to the lack of specialized intellectual training and the occupation's failure to establish a "monopoly of technique indispensable to the proprietors" (Carr-Saunders & Wilson 2001, 40).

Journalists' preference for practical competence over theoretical rigor finds support in an unexpected quarter: US educationalist Donald Schön's (1983) proposal that all intelligent action presupposes a kind of knowing and, hence, that "reflection-in-action" be accepted as a legitimate form of *professional knowledge*. Schön's concept challenges the traditional positivist epistemology of practice or "technical rationality" found in Carr-Saunders and Wilson's sociology of the professions, claiming it encourages a limited view of professional practice as the application of research-based knowledge to real-world problems. In the alternative view, research is not only a scholarly endeavor but also an everyday activity of practitioners that informs good decision-making.

Australian journalism professor Lynette Sheridan Burns (2002) extends this new *epistemology of practice* to journalism, arguing news practices consist of ill-structured problems that are context-specific yet require consistent decisions that are mindful of ethical, professional, and commercial exigencies. Journalists typically find it hard to put their intellectual processes into words; Sheridan Burns therefore sees it as her task, as a former journalist, to research journalistic "reflection-in-action" and to teach systematic critical self-reflection as the mainstay of excellence in journalism.

Canadian journalism educator G. Stuart Adam's (2001) incisive study of *journalism's epistemology* centers on "the journalistic imagination" as both an individual property and the historical product of the culture of modernity. In this view, knowledge is understood as a creative design process; the "art" of journalism is a process of working imaginatively with and through scholarly and non-scholarly ideas. Thus, journalism students need to experiment with journalism's ambitious forms – investigative reporting, documentaries, and features – rather than rehearse daily news practices. Likewise, rather than master communication and media studies theory, journalism students need to understand those disciplinary discourses and research interests that enable good journalism, such as ideas of justice-making (law), the purposes and practices of democratic institutions (politics), and notions of progress (history) (Adam 2001). In this way, discussion of professional practice in journalism assumes a more conventional scholarly form.

It is important to note that the *reflective turn* in thinking about professional practice occurred at around the same time as what might be termed a corresponding "pragmatic" turn in the field of communication, particularly in the USA (Dervin et al. 1989; Craig 2007; → Pragmatism). The empirical social scientific orientation of US communication studies came under considerable scrutiny and challenge in the mid-1980s from critical and → cultural studies scholars, giving rise to "paradigm dialogues" that sought to rationalize the field's multiple theoretical and methodological positions and, thus, reinvigorate its framework (Dervin et al. 1989; → Communication Theory and Philosophy).

Robert T. Craig proposed that communication is best understood as a "practical discipline" whose central purpose is to cultivate communicative *praxis* through critical study (Craig 1989, 97–98). Despite some links to the Habermasian tradition of emancipatory → critical theory, this methodology owes more to the US philosophical tradition of pragmatism (e.g., John Dewey), with its preference for socially relevant ways of thinking over formal theoretical abstractions. Hence, in this view, practical theory aims to integrate rational, skeptical inquiry into the analysis, evaluation, and redesign of communicative activities at whatever level. Craig's primary exemplar is the 2000-year-old art of rhetoric (Craig 1989, 116) but arguably the art of journalism (Adam 2001) serves as a more illustrative case for media practitioners.

How, then, does this "pragmatic" turn in communication scholarship strengthen the possibility of new affinities between communication professions and academic research? Like the epistemology of journalism canvassed above, it brings theoretical inquiry into more familiar terrain for media professionals. In his history of the ideas shaping American journalism, the veteran journalist turned scholar J. Herbert Altschull (1990, 236) points to pragmatism as a "can-do" philosophy rooted in the search for "facts" that was "almost made for the American journalist." Not only does Altschull encourage journalists to improve their performance by studying more, but he also encourages and expects them to join the scholarly dialogue about communicative futures. Thus, the pragmatist tradition can be seen as one bridging point between communication professionals and scholars.

## NEW DIRECTIONS

Current studies of media professionals introduce a wider range of variables into the discussion of media responsibility, performance, and change (Tumber 2000; Tunstall 2001).

Thus, while Tumber (2000) points to ongoing concerns about news standards, media accountability, and the autonomy of journalists, these questions are no longer framed in terms of institutional self-regulation or workforce professionalization. Instead, there is broad discussion of global trends in media policymaking, the rise of corporate media power, the complexities of modern communication management, and the internationalization of both media and media studies. Media power is no longer understood solely in terms of the institutional independence of the press. Instead, the transnationalization of media corporations and operations has created new communicative spaces and practices, and new analytical concerns include corporate control, commodification, and competing media rights and responsibilities (→ Globalization of the Media). Professionalization of journalism is no longer, if it ever was, a panacea for improving media performance because news has lost its privileged ranking as media practices proliferate and variegate via the Internet and other digital platforms (→ Internet News). Indeed, the boundaries between news workers and the public are increasingly blurred by technological change that puts information tools in the hands of everyone with a desktop computer, giving rise to changing perceptions not only of journalism but also of terms like “media responsibility” and the “public interest.”

Tunstall’s (2001) study of media professions further departs from earlier work that foregrounds media’s responsibilities. It highlights three new categories of powerful, highly paid individuals who are central to media performance and change: the media mogul, the media baron or chief executive, and the media celebrity. Tunstall (2001) suggests these individuals exercise an unusual discretionary power to change media; a power that owes much more to their wealth, business acumen, and audience appeal than to educational qualifications or formal knowledge of communication. In this way, the business of media seems to overtake previous concerns to identify and investigate the intellectual work of journalism, and its role in strengthening the relationship between information, knowledge, and democracy.

Nonetheless, the search for more constructive dialogues between communication scholars and media professionals continues because, as a recent study indicates, we “are in the same boat and a hole at either end poses problems for all” (Izard & Morgan 2004)!

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Blogger ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet News ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media Democracy Movement ▶ Media History ▶ Media Performance ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Paradigm ▶ Political Journalists ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Self-Regulation of the Media ▶ Standards of News ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Communication: Relationship Rules

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A *communication rule* is a description of a communicative regularity relevant to social interaction. The communicative regularities contained within rules are normative, in the sense that they are what is expected to occur by participants in social engagements and their absence usually results in social disapproval or sanction on the part of those participants toward a transgressor.

## THE NATURE OF COMMUNICATION RULES

The most prevalent use of the concept within the communication discipline stems from its centrality within the natural language philosophical tradition begun by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) in *Philosophical investigations*. Within this tradition, all culturally defined social situations are governed by a set of rules consisting of two types: those that define the situation (*constitutive rules*) and those that instruct participants about what actions are permissible and impermissible (*regulative rules*). Regulative rules take the standard form “When in Situation X, Action Y is required/recommended/recommended against/forbidden” (e.g., in the context of basketball, “When a team has possession of the ball, an attempt at shooting the ball through the other team’s basket is permissible”), whereas constitutive rules take the standard form “When in Situation X, Action Y counts as/means Z” (e.g., in the same context, “A ball legally shot through the other team’s basket counts as, depending on its length, either two or three points”).

These rules are arbitrary in the sense that their content is only determined through agreement, whether explicit or tacit, on the part of participants. As a consequence, they can be said to have no truth value in an objective sense, although they are used as standards for judging the correctness of participants’ actions. Language is viewed within this context as rule-governed action, with the actual meaning of terms dependent on their standard usages within culturally defined social situations. We understand the meaning of an expression when we are aware of the relevant regulative and constitutive rules regarding its proper usage within a cultural/linguistic group. John Searle (1969) in *Speech acts* clarified this approach in a structure for delineating the constitutive rules defining *speech acts*, or actions that can be taken through the use of language (e.g., promising, thanking, apologizing; → Linguistic Pragmatics).

## THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

A rules-based theoretical approach to interpersonal interaction was attractive to those communication scholars who accepted another Wittgensteinian (1953) idea, a distinction between *action* and *motion*. In short, action is behavior that is intentionally performed by a person, while motion is behavior that a person performs unintentionally. One can choose to raise one’s arm, or one can have one’s arm lifted by an outside agent. One

possible inference following from this distinction is that existing social scientific theory guided by a search for context-free, law-like generalizations is only relevant for nonvolitional behavior and is irrelevant for behavior resulting from choice. Although some communication scholars have taken this inference as evidence that all inquiry into human communicative behavior must eschew all of the standard trappings of scientific theory, others have proposed the possibility that theories based on rules can function in the context of action analogously to the way theories based on “laws” are intended; capable of describing, explaining, and predicting human behavior (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science).

Among those accepting this latter position, two specific approaches to communication rules warrant detailed attention. In a series of co-authored essays (e.g., Cushman & Whiting 1972; Cushman & Craig 1976), Donald Cushman laid out a possible *meta-theoretical framework* for rules-based theories of communication. Although accepting the validity of constitutive rules, Cushman concentrated on regulative rules and their classification. Communication rules can be categorized according to their *range* (breadth of contexts within which they are relevant), *specificity* (number of different actions permitted in a given circumstance), and *homogeneity* (equivalence of understanding of the rule among participants in a given interaction). Communication rules also differ according to their relevance to either culture-wide, organization-specific, or interpersonal-relationship-specific interaction. More macro-levels generally result in less homogeneous rules; marital partners tend toward a shared understanding of the rules of their relationship, whereas there is marked disagreement within, say, western cultures concerning the behavioral rules insuring treasured ideals such as “freedom” and “justice.”

In contrast with Cushman’s meta-theoretical efforts and emphasis on rule sharing, W. Barnett Pearce and Vernon Cronen’s *coordinated management of meaning* (1980) deserves the title “theory” and stresses the idiosyncrasy among people’s understanding of rules and the misinterpretations of one another’s actions that can result. Each participant in an interpersonal interaction has certain understandings of the relevant regulative and constitutive rules, and if there is a significant mismatch among these understandings, then confusion and anger are a possible result. I might believe that within the context of our relationship “hey stupid” counts as a friendly greeting (constitutive rule) and that when I see you on the street a friendly greeting is desirable (regulative rule), but if you believe that “hey stupid” instead counts as a nasty insult (constitutive rule) and that nasty insults from friends deserve a cold shoulder in response (regulative rules), then you may be angry at the insult and I confused by the cold shoulder.

Pearce and Cronen extended the concept of constitutive rules beyond its Wittgensteinian sense by proposing a series of “levels of meaning” for interpretation beyond the speech act: *contracts* (the rights and responsibilities we see inherent in given established relationships), *episodes* (routines seen as distinct wholes), *life scripts* (the repertoire of episodes we expect to participate in, the theory’s version of the self-concept), and *archetypes* (experiences shared by all people). Thus, your anger about my utterance “hey stupid” reveals that you have interpreted it on the speech act level as an insult and that insults are forbidden in the contract associated with our friendship. Pearce and Cronen also described three levels of *communicative competence* in the ability to coordinate meanings: *minimal* (knowledge of regulative rules sufficient for day-to-day interactions,



but without understanding of what actions “mean”), *satisfactory* (knowledge of regulative and constitutive rules sufficient for day-to-day interactions, providing understanding of what actions “mean”), and *optimal* (ability to step outside rules and envision alternatives, allowing for social creativity; → Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

Cushman and Pearce (1977) worked together in adopting the *practical syllogism* in a first attempt to describe how rules-based communication theories might be structured. This adoption makes sense in the context of the desire to develop rules theory in a structure parallel to that of the physical sciences. Philosophers had proposed practical syllogistic forms such as the following:

Person P intends to bring about goal G;  
 person P believes that performing action A will lead to goal G;  
 therefore, person P performs action A

as an explanatory form for intentional behavior. Given the assertion that rule-governed behavior is intentional, Cushman and Pearce proposed the following version:

Person P intends to bring about goal G;  
 person P believes that engaging in episode E will lead to goal G;  
 therefore, person P engages in episode E.

Note that there is no statement of a rule in this version; presumably we are to accept the notion that P’s engagement in E will feature intentional rule-governed action.

The absence of such a statement was central to Susan Shimanoff’s (1980) critique of the Cushman/Pearce model. In addition, Shimanoff noted that people often follow rules unintentionally and intentionally act in violation of rules. Shimanoff preferred an explanatory and predictive framework based on Toulmin’s model for argumentation (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). In the explanatory version of the model, the claim to be defended is that person P performed action A because of a given rule, the data used in the defense is the fact that person P performed action A, and the warrant linking the data and claim is the existence of a relevant rule qualified by person P’s knowledge of it. In the predictive version of the model, the claim is that person P will perform action A, the data is that a given context that makes a given rule relevant exists, and the warrant and qualifier are again the existence of the rule and person P’s knowledge of it. Shimanoff also wished to limit the range of the concept of rule to action, such that interpretive processes do not fall within its purview. If accepted, this limitation would invalidate the standard use of constitutive rules as interpretations, placing the Pearce/Cronen model in particular jeopardy.

### APPLICATIONS OF THE CONCEPT

At the time of publication of Shimanoff’s book, Cushman’s conception had been extended to persuasion and to both macro- and micro-approaches to mass communication, and Pearce/Cronen’s to organizational communication; both were soon applied to intercultural interaction. However, these efforts were limited to theoretical statements, very few relevant research studies appeared, and interest in rule-based approaches to

communication abated soon after. One likely reason for its demise is the failure to conceive of topics for research other than lists of rules applicable to different circumstances.

A second use of the concept, referred to in this case as *relationship rules*, is in the system-theoretic tradition stemming from the Palo Alto Mental Research Institute (Watzlawick et al. 1967; → Systems Theory). In this perspective, any message directed toward another person implies a possible definition for the relationship, and any response to that message implies an acceptance, rejection, or modification of that definition. Although relevant to other aspects of relationships, this school of thought has concentrated on relative relational power; in this context, any message is an attempt to either dominate or submit to the other, and any response is either an acceptance or rejection of that attempt (→ Relational Control). As relationships develop, interactional sequences of attempts and responses come to stabilize, such that particular patterns come to dominate. As a result, long-term relationships include regularities in the extent to which each person tends to dominate or submit in specific circumstances. These regularities are relationship rules. The Palo Alto group believed that dysfunctional families feature particularly inflexible relationship rules of which they are unaware, and that making their members cognizant of these rules and their pathological implications was a significant step in therapy.

Kurt Weick (1979) applied the concept of rule to organizational behavior in a manner similar to the Palo Alto group. Weick (1979, 89) conceived of organizing as a process in which, during the process of accomplishing some task, “an action by actor A evokes a given response in actor B which is then responded to by actor A.” Over time, these interlocking behavioral patterns stabilize, such that they tend to be adopted whenever the need to accomplish the given task reappears. A rule is a description of the behavioral patterns that are expected to occur in given task situations. Weick’s conception differs from that of the Palo Alto school in that organizational members are likely to have some awareness of the rules governing their coordinated activity (→ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ▶ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Relational Control ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Systems Theory

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## Communication Research and Politics

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Communication research is intimately related to politics, especially if politics is understood widely as the deliberate management of society. Research on media and other aspects of communication such as election campaigns has typically been inspired and financed by political motives (→ Election Campaign Communication). On the other hand, research has influenced politics by producing concepts and findings about how communication really works in society. Historically, the origins of communication research are deeply rooted in politics, beginning with the rhetoric of antiquity (→ Rhetoric and Politics; Rhetorical Studies) and ending with studies around each new medium – the press in the seventeenth century, film in the early twentieth century, → radio and → television in the mid-twentieth century, and the → Internet toward the new millennium (→ Media History). Histories of the field leave no doubt that each school of thought was founded as a consequence of a more or less direct political call of the day (Hardt 2001; Pietilä 2005; → Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968). It is less obvious what has been the opposite direction of influence – whether research has had a notable impact on politics.

The relationship between research and politics is an intriguing equation that has to be approached at different levels. The following three are most obvious: (1) *philosophy* – how communication-related concepts and paradigms of political thinking are generated and molded by research, and how research itself is shaped by prevailing political philosophy; (2) *policy* – how governance of communication is dependent on research and how research for its part is shaped by media regulation; and (3) *politics* – how political campaigns and specific political issues determine what research is being done and how research feeds back to politics.

### POLITICAL THINKING AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Political philosophies everywhere and at all times include elements from the communication field – concepts such as transmission of → information from rulers to the people; → persuasion of people and the → public opinion prevailing among them; the influence of media on the public mind; and → interpersonal communication as an essential constituent of communities. The best-known element in this regard is freedom of expression and information, including media freedom, which is part and parcel of the idea of democracy (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information).

In democratic theory, the press is typically understood as an independent branch of government, next to the three powers suggested by Montesquieu: legislative, executive, and judiciary (Hamelink & Nordenstreng 2007, 227; → Fourth Estate). Freedom of expression and information is included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 19), which was the basis for international law on human rights. The human right for freedom of expression and information is granted for individual citizens – not for media institutions, which, according to original liberalism, are supposed to serve as instruments of the people for an open and unhindered exchange rather than become a commercial marketplace by themselves (Nordenstreng 2007; → Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

Democratic theory with the concept of freedom is a central construct of contemporary political philosophy, which is based not only on political science but also on communication studies. A similar paradigmatic case was the so-called Frankfurt School, which emerged in the 1920s, with its notions of cultural industries and their repressing influence on people's authentic mental space (→ Critical Theory; Culture Industries). Contemporary followers of this critical line include scholars such as Douglas Kellner (2005) and Robert McChesney (1999). Thus, communication research feeds political thinking – both its grand theories and particular building blocks. An example of the latter is the concept of → media effects, both as such and as a later variant whereby media exercise influence by choosing the topics for public attention rather than by direct impact of individual messages (→ Agenda-Setting Effects).

Research is not just an autonomous source to feed political thinking but research itself is influenced by political philosophies. Accordingly, research in each country at each time reflects the prevailing political system – its basic philosophy and its particular needs. For example, European integration and globalization have introduced new research priorities in most EU countries, with more attention to multiculturalism and → international communication (→ Globalization Theories). And everywhere the paradigm of a world order in the media field, first introduced under Cold War conditions, has evolved into a paradigm of global challenge highlighted by the World Summit on the Information Society (Padovani & Nordenstreng 2005; → New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; UNESCO).

## **COMMUNICATION POLICY AS INTERFACE BETWEEN RESEARCH AND POLITICS**

At this level, communication research serves the legal and administrative regulation of communication and media, first and foremost by delivering data on the audiences, contents, as well as economics of media institutions (→ Audience Research; Media Economics; Media Production and Content). These data may not always be regarded as research proper but rather routine statistics. Yet communication research has a vital role in the process of media governance – not only by furnishing empirical data but also by elaborating concepts such as responsibility, accountability, and self-regulation (→ Communication and Law; Media Policy).

As above in political philosophies, policies are not only served by research, but research is determined by the system of regulation. Accordingly, the EU's audiovisual policies have

given rise to research, often commissioned by the regulatory agencies, concerning the TV and radio program structures, particularly the share of local/national productions and those originating from Europe against those imported from the rest of the world (→ European Union: Communication Law). General development of digitization and convergence has created research on structural changes and challenges of both print and electronic media (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). The institutions of self-regulation, for their part, have solicited research on news content and its various biases (→ Bias in the News).

### **ACTUAL POLITICS BEHIND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

This level includes, first of all, *election studies*, mostly around campaigns – the classic among them discovering that media influence proceeds in two stages: first indirectly by media and then through personal contacts (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955; → Two-Step Flow of Communication). Today, → political communication research has expanded a lot, along with the → mediatization of politics, whereby politicians pay more and more attention to their images and resort to so-called → spin doctors, leading to a professionalization of political communication (Holtz-Bacha et al. 2007).

Second, this level includes the research projects and programs that have been launched as a *response to specific political issues*. The history of communication research is full of examples of these, including the Payne Fund Project in the 1920s, which was a response to moral and political concern about the new film industry. Later, in the 1960s and 1970s, there were similar research projects in the UK and the USA on the influence of television on children, focusing on the potentially detrimental effects of the medium in general and its violent content in particular (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). The role of media in development belongs to the same category of research which was motivated by political concern about getting developing countries on the path of modernization and at the same time on the side of the Americans in the Cold War struggle with the Soviets (Lerner 1958; → Development Communication).

All this shows how politics has determined research by setting out the topics, defining the problems, and mostly also financing the exercise. Although the projects have been temporary, lasting for just a few years, the research tradition has been drastically shaped by this politically driven applied research. The basic research pursued in universities independent of political calls has always been more limited, but still vibrant enough to maintain tension between what is known as “administrative” and “critical” research.

While the other two levels were dominated by research influencing politics, here it is mainly politics that shapes research. But naturally there is also some influence in the other direction, from research to politics. All those politically determined projects do have an impact on political and other spheres – both empirical results and theoretical concepts have a bearing on society. Moreover, there are cases when even individual studies and scholars have stirred up political heat – an old classic being Max Weber in the 1910s (Hardt 2001, 140) and a new classic being → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in the 1990s (Koivisto & Thomas 2007, 64).

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Audience Research ► Bias in the News  
► Communication and Law ► Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968

► Critical Theory ► Culture Industries ► Development Communication ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Election Campaign Communication ► European Union: Communication Law ► Fourth Estate ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Globalization Theories ► Information ► International Communication ► Internet ► Interpersonal Communication ► Media Economics ► Media Effects ► Media History ► Media Policy ► Media Production and Content ► Mediatization of Politics ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ► Persuasion ► Political Communication ► Public Opinion ► Radio ► Rhetoric and Politics ► Rhetorical Studies ► Spin Doctor ► Television ► Two-Step Flow of Communication ► UNESCO ► Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## **Communication Skills across the Life-Span**

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This entry focuses on communication skills associated with success in same-sex friendship across the life-span. The ability to maintain a variety of relationships throughout life is

important to people's well-being, of which friendship is among the most significant. Individuals who lack friends experience myriad adjustment problems including drug and alcohol abuse, academic failure, antisocial conduct, depression, loneliness, anxiety, and fatigue. The relationship between friendship and communication has been studied in a variety of ways. One particularly promising approach involves analysis of individuals' conceptions and expectations of friendship, as well as the daily activities in which they engage (Zarbatany et al. 1990). Understanding what people think of and do with their friends tells us something about the duties and obligations of being a friend, the standards to which friends are held, and the kinds of skills through which such duties and standards are met (→ Developmental Communication).

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESEARCH AREA

Three caveats are in order before going into detail. First, most work in this area has centered on communicative competencies predictive of *children's* friendship success. Perhaps this is so that negative, long-term consequences can be avoided through a concerted effort to understand and remediate skill deficiencies early in life, or because of the common assumption that romance should take precedence over friendship as one enters adolescence and adulthood. Whatever the reason, it is clear that more work is needed to grasp the relationship between communication skills and friendship across the *entire* life-span.

Second, much of what we know about children's friendship comes from sociometric studies in which youngsters' social standing is evaluated relative to their peer group. Social standing – or peer acceptance – is typically regarded as a *unilateral* construct because it captures a group's evaluation of the individual. Friendship, on the other hand, is seen as a *bilateral* construct which indexes a reciprocal relationship between two people (Parker & Asher 1993a,b). Hanna (1998, 311) argued that “although elements important to peer acceptance are likely to make an individual seem an attractive potential friend, additional elements may be necessary for developing high quality friendships.” Children cannot form friendships with those to whom they are not attracted; thus, findings from the sociometric literature are included here.

Third, space precludes discussion of *gender differences*. It is important to note, however, that such differences are most pronounced in childhood and attenuate with age. By adulthood, men and women are much more similar than they are different in their beliefs about friendship – and in performance of the skills that predict its success. The readings below examine sex and friendship.

### EARLY AND MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

The ability to take another's perspective drives children's thoughts about friendship. Very young children do not understand that others possess thoughts and feelings different from their own; thus, young children fail to recognize that they can choose friends on the basis of personal qualities. Friends are conceived of as “nonspecific” others who share activities, time, and/or materials. Many children equate play and friendship – but the relationship lasts only as long as interaction. Youngsters become friends because they play together; when this activity is absent, friendship ceases to exist.

*Play* remains an important feature of friendship throughout middle childhood, but is much more organized than earlier. As children gain more complex ways of viewing the social world, they begin to understand others have thoughts and feelings that differ from their own – and that some of these may center on evaluations of one another as “friend.” Thus, “fitting in” and gaining acceptance among peers is a primary task of middle childhood. Youngsters not only evaluate themselves in comparison with peers, but also develop rudimentary self-presentation skills so that they can project a desired image. In addition, children regard help as an indication of friendship and liking – however, at this stage, help centers largely on tangible acts that others can do for *them* (Selman 1981).

Several *interaction competencies* coincide with friendship during this time. Many skills reflect the idea that friendship revolves around play; when performed correctly, each skill allows play to proceed in a smooth fashion. For instance, youngsters must not only be able to recognize and respond appropriately to others’ emotional displays during play, but also be able to produce affect that is suitable for the situation. Researchers argue that children who can control their emotional expression and reactions are better able to reflect on the problematic aspects of social situations that arise during play.

Second, skills that foster coherent discourse are associated with *friendship success* throughout early childhood. Speech dysfluencies and articulation errors prohibit peer acceptance. Similarly, compared to children who are not well liked, those who are well liked exhibit mastery of basic conversational devices such as turn-taking, making appropriate requests, initiating dialogue, responding when spoken to, making intentions clear, and active listening. Scholars suggest that limited language and conversational abilities may prevent friendship development because youngsters cannot access significant peer activities such as play. A related competency is *peer entry*. Youngsters with friends attempt to enter games by integrating their behavior and comments with the ongoing activities of the group. In contrast, youngsters who lack friends try to access games and conversations through a variety of tactics that direct attention *away* from the activity and onto the child. Such tactics include disagreeing, asking questions, saying something about themselves, or stating opinions and feelings (see Haslett & Samter 1997 for a review).

As youngsters move into middle childhood – and “fitting in” becomes paramount – being perceived as fun is key to friendship success. Although not widely researched, there is some indication that possessing a sense of humor, engaging in playful teasing, and even having interesting gossip discriminate children who possess friends from those who do not. The *nature of conflict* and its role in friendship also change from early to mid-childhood. Among young children, fights typically involve issues of social control (e.g., following the rules of a game) or object control (e.g., not sharing toys). Here, the most common responses to conflict are to vent angry feelings and to resist the other in non-aggressive ways.

With development, however, children not only believe that conflict is common to all relationships, but they also distinguish between major skirmishes (that can threaten a friendship) and minor ones (that are part of everyday life). Conflicts in middle childhood often center on the rules associated with social groups and activities. Although negotiation becomes increasingly common as children age, *disengagement* may be even more important to friendship; the capacity to disengage minimizes prolonged problem discussions that



interrupt the coordinated and sustained activities of the group (Hartup et al. 1988). Children without friends tend to be particularly poor at disengagement and, in fact, escalate conflict via aggressive responses (→ Friendship and Communication).

## **ADOLESCENCE AND YOUNG ADULTHOOD**

In adolescence, children develop the capacity to take the perspectives of others. This enables them to think about themselves, others, and relationships with a sense of objectivity and insight they did not have before. Adolescents often apply this ability to their *search for self* which, in large part, is accomplished through interactions with friends. Adolescent friends are now defined as others who possess unique psychological dispositions. Friends are expected to share their innermost thoughts and feelings and through such sharing provide each other with opportunities for intimacy and growth. Friendship is perceived as the most important source of emotional support in the adolescent's life, and loyalty is highly prized. Given such expectations, it is not surprising that talk is a valued activity among adolescent friends (Damon 1977). Studies indicate a high degree of continuity in the friendship expectations of adolescents and adults. Across adulthood qualities such as loyalty, warmth, and the ability to discuss personal matters are most often mentioned as important characteristics for friends to possess.

As was the case in childhood, *pragmatic competencies* make it possible for adolescents and adults to initiate and sustain conversation with potential friends. Compared to individuals with friends, those without friends make fewer statements focusing on the partner, change the topic more frequently, ask fewer questions, and respond more slowly to the partner's previous statement (see Samter 2003 for a review). Nonverbal expressiveness in the form of gaze, positive affect displays, and back-channel utterances are also linked to one's attractiveness as a friend.

Once formed, friendships are dominated by conversations involving *self-disclosure*. In general, people who engage in intimate self-disclosures are better liked than those who do not. However, there does seem to be an art to knowing when and what to disclose. Revealing extremely personal information can damage relational development if done too early in the friendship. And, while friends report that they purposefully use self-disclosure to maintain their relationships, they also note that the majority of their disclosures are about mundane topics. In fact, *avoiding* certain topics – particularly those involving negative life experiences and relationship issues – is actually functional for friendship maintenance (Afifi & Guerrero 1998; Berg 1984).

*Emotional support* is a key aspect of friendship and a prominent activity in which adolescent and adult friends engage. Individuals perceive communication skills focused on the management of negative affect as the most important for same-sex friends to possess, and relationship quality is linked to the kind of support they receive. Strategies that acknowledge, elaborate, and legitimize another's feelings and perspective are regarded as the most sensitive and effective, and the most likely to alleviate emotional distress (Burlinson 1994).

Finally, although conflict seems contradictory to the essence of friendship, there is evidence that adolescent and adult friends have *disputes*. Such disputes appear to center on violation of friendship rules – for instance, betraying a confidence, not repaying debts or favors, ignoring one another's privacy, etc. Some work demonstrates that individuals

who are well liked avoid minor conflicts and employ integrative strategies to manage major ones (→ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span).

### MIDDLE AND OLDER ADULTHOOD

Researchers distinguish between the middle-aged, the young-old, and the old-old. In terms of friendship conceptualizations, individuals in the first two categories are similar both to one another and to young adults. The old-old, however, alter the criteria they use to define friendship in three ways. First, face-to-face contact is not seen as essential for maintaining friendship; letters and phone calls are enough to sustain relationships. Second, ideas about who legitimately qualifies to be a friend are expanded. Unlike earlier periods, friends do not have to be equal in status; thus, acquaintances, hired help, and whole categories of people (e.g., people from church) count as viable relational partners. Third, friends are no longer identified as sources of support and esteem, but rather as companions with whom to have fun.

Given such conceptions, we might expect emotional support and self-disclosure to become less important to friendship as people get older. The few studies that have examined interaction competencies of the elderly bear out such assumptions. People aged 85 and older report it is “inappropriate to bother others with problems” (Johnson & Troll 1994, 85). When negative information is disclosed, it centers on *events*, not feelings associated with those events. In fact, expressing feelings to others is inversely associated with self-esteem and relationship quality among the oldest old. And, although conflict is mostly avoided during this time, pressuring another to be too close can be a source of conflict between elderly friends (→ Age Identity and Communication).

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We begin and end our lives by seeing friends as people with whom to have fun. Yet, because most studies focus on the serious pursuits of friends, little is known about what makes someone enjoyable to be around. Research on skills that enable others to be perceived as entertaining companions is needed. It is also important to note that most of what we know, and most of what is summarized here, concerns a small percentage of the world’s population. Studies examining the effect of culture on friendship conceptions and interaction competencies are also needed. Finally, although a great deal is known about the speech and linguistic patterns of older adults (Giles et al. 1994), little attention has been directed toward understanding the relationship between *specific communication skills* and friendship success among the oldest old.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Age Identity and Communication ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Friendship and Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction

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## **Communication and Social Change: Research Methods**

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Modern research methods for social/behavioral change reflect a tension between collecting data at the individual level while making inferences at macro-levels such as health-care systems, communities, and nations. This tension becomes more palpable

when measuring the concerns of historically underserved, difficult-to-reach populations, those suffering the greatest inequalities in access to information, civic participation, and, in particular, health-care. Research questions are explored by focusing on multiple levels of analysis, multidisciplinary approaches, targeted methods/measures, flexible measures of “community,” and converging methodologies for maximizing evaluation validity.

Communication studies often rely on national samples of self-reports on personal → attitudes and values, drawing conclusions at the individual level (→ Sampling, Random). Despite the risk of “ecological” or “atomistic” fallacies, creative *comparisons of different levels of analysis*, especially at the city level, can illuminate previously unconfirmed connections between communication and social change. For example, differences in community-level demographics or social structure have been linked to variations in major newspaper coverage, often called a “community structure” approach, sometimes revealing a “guard dog” relationship, in which media perpetuate existing social and political arrangements, as opposed to functioning as “watchdogs” on abuses of power (Tichenor et al. 1980; Donohue et al. 1995; Demers & Viswanath 1999; → Journalism: Normative Theories).

Combining article “prominence” and article “direction” into a single score, Pollock’s “media vector” measure used a → community structure model to link community/demographic characteristics or “stakeholders” at the metropolitan level – such as poverty level and educational or income privilege – to → newspaper coverage supporting social change or human rights claims, sometimes mirroring the concerns of more “vulnerable” groups (Pollock 2007). Other community analyses use hierarchical linear modeling to compare aggregate and individual levels of analysis regarding the positive contribution of local print media consumption directly (and indirectly, through increased social interaction) to community participation (Paek et al. 2005).

## **RATIONALE FOR MULTI-METHOD MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES**

Given the complexity of human communications and the consequences attendant with the flow of information, it is not surprising that communication both draws from and contributes to other disciplines. By extension, documenting and measuring communication processes and effects demand a variety of approaches.

For example, journalism → “gatekeeping” studies illuminate editorial decisions to omit some issues, “agenda-setting” studies enhance audience salience for selected issues, and “diffusion” studies underscore uneven flows of new information to different audiences (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Journalists’ Role Perception). All draw attention to → audience or population inequalities in information (→ Communication Inequality). Dependent variables such as community participation, civic engagement, collective action, and social capital (→ Community Integration; Social Capital and Communication in Health) – community interaction and solidarity (Putnam 2000) – borrowed from political science and sociology illustrate the use of *multidisciplinary approaches* and concerns. “Framing” drawing from sociology and psychology, refers to the way journalists organize → news stories to provide → meaning to related events, indicating the advocacy of certain ideas (Reese 2001), and helping social movements

foster mobilization (Johnston & Noakes 2005; → Advocacy Journalism; Framing Effects; Framing of the News; Media Advocacy in Health Communication; Social Movements and Communication).

These diverse phenomena in a variety of media and multiple settings call for broadening the scope of research designs beyond traditional random samples of individuals to employing a variety of research designs and data collection tools, including surveys or quasi-experimental designs (→ Experimental Design); analysis of communication and media content (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), including conversations, Internet postings, and exchanges; interpersonal exchanges (e.g., between physicians and patients); and exploring internal messages to improve self-monitoring of compliance with healthy behavior (Parrott 2004).

In addition, recent interest in the effects of health disparities, communication inequalities, and the role of “social contextual” factors like social class, social organizations, and social capital, on communication phenomena that affect health warrant measures at social level (Viswanath 2006; Viswanath & Emmons 2006).

Special attention is increasingly paid to *different types of “communities”* in reducing health knowledge gaps (→ Knowledge Gap Effects), whether communities with different levels of “community-boundedness” (relevance of a topic for a specific community) or “communities without propinquity” (Viswanath et al. 2000). “Community” as both a definition and unit of analysis is becoming elastic as researchers seek hard-to-reach and high-risk populations less through traditional telephone or residential interviews, more through intersecting respondents in the community contexts and venues they inhabit: in the workplace, meeting places, grocery stores, or recreational locations. Examining the role of “community norms” for college-age drinking, for example, requires exploring multiple norm sources: parents, social peers, close friends, etc. Modern research on breast cancer, for example, sometimes focuses on the roles that partners/spouses and workplaces can play in accelerating cancer recovery rates. In addition, some studies suggest training those in high-risk or difficult-to-reach communities themselves to promote risk reduction, suggesting that → identification can play a role in behavior change. In general, traditional onsite geographic research engagement is expanding to “onsite” measurement in a wide range of venues, from residence to workplace and → Internet sites of all kinds: blogs (→ Blogger), bulletin boards, chatrooms, or websites themselves (Sundar et al. 2007), including the use of online deliberation to discuss health policy and medical ethics (Price et al. 2006).

### **EVALUATING HEALTH COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS: MAXIMIZING VALIDITY**

The experiences with major lifestyle campaigns such as the Stanford Heart Disease Prevention Program and the Minnesota Heart Health Program, among others, highlight the difficulty of measuring the impact of community-based health campaigns (Hornik 2002). These include (1) the problem of finding legitimate “control” groups or segments when long-term secular trends (such as changes in social norms regarding balanced diets and tobacco consumption) outpace the pristine designs of investigators; (2) the need to search for appropriate (especially longer) effect lag times and magnitudes of expected

effects (much smaller) that may differ from traditional research expectations (e.g., reduction in tobacco use has been gradual over several decades, but efforts to measure the effects of reduction campaigns within one- or two-year spans would have encountered few significant results); and (3) the importance of flexibility in accounting for effects across multiple (individual, institutional, and social) units of analysis. These dilemmas could be addressed by more creative approaches to research designs, including longitudinal designs with multiple time points, comparing different levels of exposure to campaigns rather than assuming no exposure, and measuring intermediate outcomes that are amenable to change through communications rather than limited to final health outcomes, among others (Hornik 2002; Glasgow et al. 2004).

These challenges are not unique to communication, and, in fact, are common in medicine, where randomized control trials (RCT) remain the gold standard. Given the practical difficulty in conducting RCTs, and the fact that evidence is accumulated through a variety of observational methods such as surveys, experiments and quasi-experiments, perusal of medical records, literature reviews, and meta-analyses, among others, some have argued that one must look at the total “weight of evidence” from the multiple methods to reach inferences rather than rely on one single method (Weed 2005). The latter is a reasonable and viable alternative, given the complexity in studying the impact of communication in social change.

Employing multiple methods is not unusual in health communication research. Researchers have used textual analyses to study physician–patient interactions, and narrative and discourse analyses to examine the impact of social movements on health policies (Sharf 2001). Further, ethnographic critical incident interviews were combined with online and paper questionnaires to examine relationships among social support, communication competence, and perceived stress in a study of well elders, seniors with cancer, and their lay caregivers (Query & Wright 2003; → *Ethnography of Communication*; Interview, Standardized). In addition, → *meta-analysis* pools and statistically analyzes data from similar studies with similar measures, combining findings to reach larger conclusions (see, e.g., Witte & Allen 2000).

To mitigate inequalities and health disparities, scholars use imaginative levels of analysis, measures and definitions of community, and converging methodologies to improve research validity and (for health communication) effectiveness, exploring how much communication exposure measures add to income, education, gender, and age in their collective power to improve prevention behavior and reduce differential risk behaviors among different social groups.

SEE ALSO: ▶ *Advocacy Journalism* ▶ *Agenda-Setting Effects* ▶ *Attitudes* ▶ *Audience* ▶ *Blogger* ▶ *Communication Inequality* ▶ *Community Integration* ▶ *Community Structure Model* ▶ *Content Analysis, Quantitative* ▶ *Development Journalism* ▶ *Diffusion of Information and Innovation* ▶ *Ethnography of Communication* ▶ *Experimental Design* ▶ *Framing Effects* ▶ *Framing of the News* ▶ *Gatekeeping* ▶ *Health Communication and the Internet* ▶ *Health Communication and Journalism* ▶ *Health Disparities, Communication in* ▶ *Identification* ▶ *Internet* ▶ *Interview, Standardized* ▶ *Journalism: Normative Theories* ▶ *Journalists' Role Perception* ▶ *Knowledge Gap Effects* ▶ *Meaning* ▶ *Media Advocacy in Health Communication* ▶ *Meta-Analysis*

► News Story ► Newspaper ► Sampling, Random ► Social Capital and Communication in Health ► Social Movements and Communication

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# Communication Strategies for Empowerment

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“Empowerment” generally refers to development approaches that “enable” the beneficiaries, especially the poor and marginal and excluded groups such as women, to take initiatives to solve their own problems of poverty, exclusion, and chronic dependency (Narayan 2005; → Dependency Theories; Development, Gender, and Communication). The role of government and nongovernmental agencies is to encourage and support local organization efforts, help local groups define their own needs, and respond to requests for training and other technical or capital assistance. Beneficiary groups are expected to initiate → participatory communication within their communities, establish communication networks with other beneficiary groups, and build cooperative linkages with government and nongovernmental agencies. Because personal and social isolation is so much a part of social passivity and exploitation, communication strategies of organization, networking, group communication, and community media are central to empowerment methods (→ Citizens’ Media).

Models of development emphasizing local control and initiative emerged because highly centralized decisions often imposed approaches that were not related to local needs and were not able to build on local cooperation, understanding, and voluntary contribution. Neo-colonial power elites and those in positions of privilege in systems of class and caste tend to define the rural and urban poor as “inherently inferior.” Critiques of modernization point to elites using their power in the economy, education, and media to instill in lower-status people attitudes of passive dependency, resignation, and incompetence, while disregarding indigenous knowledge, leadership, and organizational traditions (→ Modernization).

## A NEW PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

The process of building a participatory communication structure for development often begins when groups recognize oppression and the lack of services from state bureaucracies, which require different solutions. The leaders in the movements often develop a communicative rhetoric and a new culture that rejects the myth of weakness and dependency and re-evaluates the identity of youth, peasants, or women as a positive value (Heward & Bunwaree 1999; → Rhetoric and Class). These *grassroots movements* have often been assisted by persons and organizations with a more urban-technical background, who wish to share their organizational, educational, and communication skills with these popular movements (Burra et al. 2005). Typical of this phenomenon is Paulo Freire, a Brazilian professor of education, who became involved with literacy training projects and applied his philosophical and educational background to develop the culture of popular confidence into a new method of education for the poor and excluded. The thought of Freire and others provides much of the theoretical foundation for methods of education



for dialogical communication aimed at creating a new culture of confidence and organizational capacity in these movements.

The relative success of the popular movements as a development strategy has gradually caught the attention of most of the major theorists of communication for development (→ Development Communication). Today, the theoretical paradigm based on participatory, grassroots communication and empowerment approaches has become dominant (Melkote & Steeves 2001; Servaes 1999; R. A. White 2004; Wilkins 2000). Theory and practice of development at the local level is today generally expressed in some form of empowerment, and this perspective has wide acceptance throughout the world including in some international development institutions such as the World Bank (Alsop et al. 2006; Bebbington et al. 2006).

### CONCEPTS OF EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES

Empowerment communication strategies generally take into consideration different dimensions of power, not just the traditional meaning of power as “power over” (Rowlands 1997, 13–14). *Personal empowerment* (“power to” or “power within”) attempts to develop a sense of self-confidence in one’s identity as female, peasant, or young person. The consciousness of personal identity as full of value, competent, and able to contribute to national development becomes important (Freire 1972; 1973). *Relational empowerment* develops the ability not to passively accept power relations but to actively negotiate and influence relationships and decisions made in them (Rowlands 1997, 15). *Collective empowerment* (“power with”) trains people to work in organizations so as to have a greater impact. This develops the ability of groups to analyze problems, to discover solutions, and to carry out these solutions as an organization.

*Political empowerment* (“power for”) prepares people to participate in representative democracy in order to get the regional, national, and international political decision-making process to provide opportunities and resources for grassroots organizational efforts. Some conceptions of empowerment stress building freedom of choice (agency), gaining awareness of assets, and learning to take advantage of opportunities (Alsop et al. 2006). Another dimension is *social capital*, the degree to which one can call upon the social commitment, trust, and support of family, friends, community, and other social relations. Empowerment, as a de facto exercise of initiative, leads toward *entitlement*, when there is an awareness that the exercise of creativity is a human right inherent in personhood (Gready & Ensor 2005).

### STRATEGIES AT THE GROUP AND COMMUNITY LEVEL

Empowerment approaches place great emphasis on participatory forms of interpersonal, group, and organizational communication. Especially important is a nondirective leadership and administrative relationship with beneficiaries that encourages them to recognize and express their own ideas for solving the problems they face.

The first step in the process of educational and communication change is the formation of groups interested in more formal discussion led by locally elected, nondirective leadership. This leadership, which may have been accustomed to authoritarian power

structures, often benefits from training in participatory communication by those who have skills in empowerment. The best of the leaders have come out of the movements themselves.

Central to the communication process of empowerment is the *animation model of dialogical discussion* conducted by nondirective leadership, which includes the following components. First, there should be an open and free space in which all members of the group are able to say what they think and experience a supportive response of listening, appreciation, respect, and constructive building on the good ideas of others. Second, the animator should refrain from telling the group what their problem is or its best solution, but encourage group members to come up with their own ideas. He or she must have a deep respect for the capacity of the group to come up with its own solutions and patiently allow it to do so in its own way. Third, the members of the group are encouraged to get in contact with their own ideas, to establish their own sense of identity, and to bring this before the others with confidence. Many participants may have lived in a context of fear or repression and therefore find it difficult to raise their own perceptions to the level of conscious affirmation.

Fourth, members deliberate on the causes of the problem they face and the best course of action. For those accustomed to authoritarian communication, it may be difficult to create a solution together from all the ideas of those present so that everyone can see something of themselves in the final decision and in the group action. Fifth, those in the group who may never have participated in public decision-making are enabled to reach and enact a responsible decision. Sixth, the animator provides guidance for the group on how to build communication networks with other groups and how to negotiate with government and nongovernmental sources of assistance as a network. Group and community communication may use “small media” such as videos they produce themselves, theatre, traditional music, dance, and other forms of indigenous media. The purpose is not primarily to instruct but to present for analysis the everyday relations based on a power structure that they may initially take for granted as “natural.” In the production, witnessing, and discussion of this media, participants can deconstruct and rebuild social relations according to principles of democratic governance such as equal representation of women and men, open discussion, free elections, and rotating leadership (S. A. White 2003).

## **EMPOWERMENT AT THE DISTRICT AND REGIONAL LEVEL**

Although group communication is important for personal empowerment, these groups must be brought together to form community councils, cooperative associations, and voluntary associations to gain access to technical and economic support. At this level community media, which provide intergroup and district-level communication, are important. Particularly useful is community radio, which is “owned” by a cooperative of local organizations and manned largely by volunteers from all these organizations (Alumuku 2006). Community radio opens program areas for less powerful sectors – peasant farmers, women’s organizations, youth, artisans’ associations – and conducts a continual open forum of discussion of the problems and interests of these sectors (→ Community Media; Radio for Development). Community radio circulates local news, takes advantage of local entertainers, sponsors information and improvement campaigns, supports local language and cultural traditions, and defends local interests against the

economic and power elites. Community radio is open to all who wish to speak and provides training in radio broadcasting for all.

Typically, community radio runs a series of instructional programs and educational campaigns that use methods of empowerment: interpersonal mentoring and guidance, participation in educational broadcasts, consciousness-raising discussions, theatre and video produced locally, and community radio “open forum” programs in which issues of power relations are often debated. Community radio is also empowering in that it often links rural neighborhoods to national and international information sources through wireless forms of the Internet.

### **EMPOWERMENT AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**

The networks of local organizations are now increasingly being brought into regional associations directed by elected councils. These associations are able to make agreements with government and nongovernmental agencies to provide technical training, capital investment, marketing access, agro-industry processing, support for small “informal economy” industries, and special informational services of national newspaper, television, and radio networks. The networks of associations are themselves a communication infrastructure and are able to “translate” the highly technical languages and service approaches of banking systems, government development agencies, and international NGOs into the culture of the people-oriented “economy of affection” at the local level.

In many countries of the world there is now a major shift in the structure of governance and development from centrally directed “command models” to “response models,” which encourage grassroots organizations and provide services to these initiatives. The theory and practice of empowerment is currently playing a major role in this new model of democratic governance and administration.

SEE ALSO: ► Citizens’ Media ► Community Media ► Dependency Theories ► Development Communication ► Development, Gender, and Communication ► Modernization ► Participatory Communication ► Radio for Development ► Rhetoric and Class

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# Communication Technology and Democracy

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Communication technologies have been seen both as instrumental and as destructive to democratic processes. The advent of the print media is intrinsically linked with the struggle for civil liberties and the construction of contemporary nations. At the same time their destructive capacities became equally clear when, for instance, at the end of the nineteenth century Hearst propagated war against Spain, and the French newspapers assisted in dividing the country during the Dreyfus affair, some of them relying heavily on anti-Semitic imagery. Similarly, the audiovisual media brought political voices and faces into the living room, but after Goebbels’s usage of the radio waves, their democratic capacity could no longer be taken for granted. Communication technologies are not necessary neutral instruments in the service of Enlightenment. They are always embedded in ideological constellations that may be democratic, but also may be totalitarian.

An equally tempting myth is the belief that communication technologies are the driving force of society, and that the development of new technologies will necessarily and fundamentally change our society. This *techno-deterministic myth* collapses the social into the technological, ignoring the complexity of the social. In this context Williams’s (1999, 133) remark should be borne in mind: “While we have to reject technological determinism, in all its forms, we must be careful not to substitute for it the notion of a determined technology.” While the realms of the social, political, democratic, and economic co-determine the technological, the technological simultaneously and dynamically co-determines the social, democratic, political, and economic.

## DEFINING DEMOCRACY

It is important to take a close look at democracy, as there is considerable variety in its significance due to the diversity of democratic theories (see Held 2006) and practices (Fig. 1). Some models restrict democracy to more centralized and elitist forms of societal

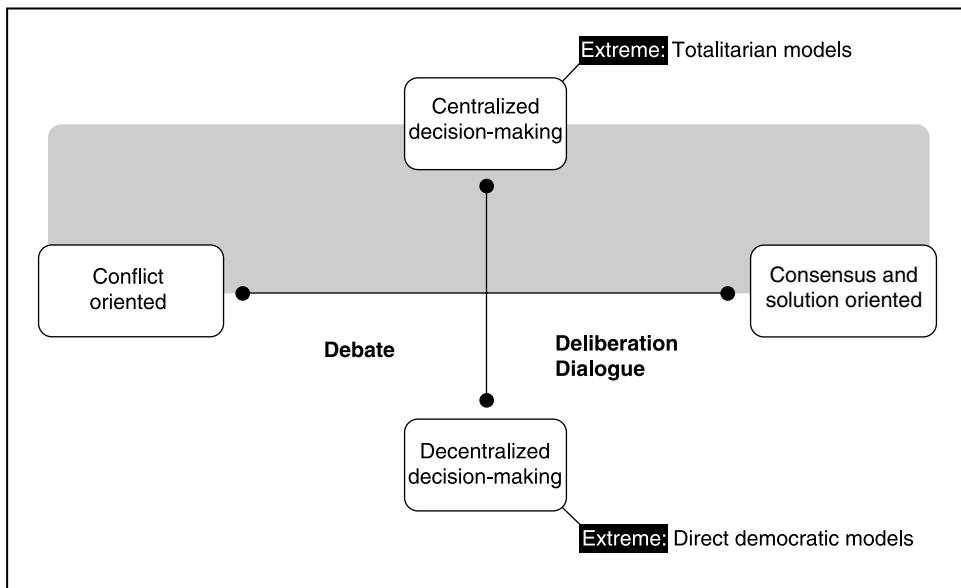


Figure 1 Dimensions of democratic theory

decision-making, protected by a legal-procedural articulation of democracy and a narrow definition of the political (as the political system). Other democratic models cherish a more decentralized version of societal decision-making, supported by a more substantial and/or culturalist interpretation of democracy and a broad definition of the political as a dimension of the societal.

A second dimension in democratic theory focuses on the main structuring concept that underlies the societal decision-making process and which ranges from conflict to consensus. In the first case, the socio-political is seen as being dominated by manifest and latent conflicts, possibly within the context of hegemonic projects. The confrontation between different societal groups leads to (heated) debates and claims of victory. In the second case, consensus is seen as the main societal organizing principle, focusing on the presence and achievement of societal harmony and unity. Here, processes of deliberation and dialogue support a harmonious polis and (if necessary) aim to stabilize the disruptions of this harmony.

### APPROACHES TO COMMUNICATION AND DEMOCRACY

The role of communication technologies in democratic processes cannot be separated from the political-ideological debates about the nature (and limits) of democracy itself. It is no coincidence that in the western media studies literature, theories of the (democratic) role of the media within society are designated as “normative theories.” The often-cited starting point here is *Four theories of the press* (Siebert et al. 1956), based on the work of the Hutchins Commission, which contains insights that remain surprisingly relevant in contemporary times.

The two models Siebert et al. describe that are relevant here are the liberal (or libertarian) and that of social responsibility. These focus strongly on information, but the function of the media is complemented by their role as a watchdog over the authorities (→ Fourth Estate) and by the need to create an independent forum for debate, a so-called marketplace of ideas. The importance of information for a political community in enabling citizens to make informed choices is rarely contested, although the “quality” of the information, its relevance and the degree of bias, are the subjects of ongoing debates within media studies (→ Bias in the News; Journalists’ Role Perception).

In the social responsibility model, the information and watchdog functions are complemented by stressing the importance of “accurate” representations of social groups and of providing a “truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account” of “the day’s events in a context which gives them meaning” (Siebert et al. 1956, 87). This early emphasis on representation has increased in importance over time, where the focus is not only on the representation of the social and its constitutive sub-groups (→ Gender: Representation in the Media), but also on the representation of the political. Moreover, the deepening of the theoretical frameworks that surround the concept of representation has also highlighted the unstable and ideological nature of media representations, incorporating these representations into the realm of the political.

As the treatment of these issues in *Four theories of the press* was considered too reductionist, McQuail (1994) added several models: the development model and the participatory-democratic model, which were replaced in the fifth edition of his *Mass communication theory* (2005) by the alternative media model. All of these models foreground the participatory role of the mass media. Here, it is important to distinguish between participation in the media and through the media (→ Media Democracy; Participatory Communication). Participation *through* the media deals with the opportunities for extensive participation in public debate and for self-representation in the public sphere. Starting from a broadly defined notion of the political, consensus-oriented models of democracy (and participation) emphasize the importance of dialogue and deliberation and focus on collective decision-making based on rational arguments in a → public sphere à la Habermas (→ Habermas, Jürgen). Other authors (Fraser 1990; Mouffe 1994) stress more conflict-oriented approaches. They point to the unavoidability of political differences and struggles and call attention to the articulation of the media as crucial sites of struggles for hegemony. Both consensus- and conflict-oriented models enable the need for citizens to participate in these processes of dialogue, debate, and deliberation to be emphasized.

Participation *in* the media deals with the participation of nonprofessionals in the production of media output (content-related participation) and in media decision-making (structural participation). These forms of media participation allow citizens to be active in one of the many (micro-)spheres relevant to daily life and to put their right to communicate into practice (→ New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; Right to Communicate). Although mainstream media have attempted to organize forms of audience participation, alternative media have proven to be more successful in organizing deeper forms of participation in the media (→ Activist Media; Citizens’ Media; Community Media; Grassroots Media; Radical Media).

## OLD AND NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES

With the arrival of the new information and communication technologies (ICT), hopes for an increase in democratic communication were reinvigorated (→ E-Democracy). The arrival of a new generation of so-called “new” media had an effect on the nature of discussions about democracy, participation, and the media. The importance of access increased, as techno-utopians emphasized that we would all gain access to all information at all times. Interaction and interactivity became the new buzzwords of the world of ICT. One of the major differences from the media landscape before the introduction of the Internet (and more specifically before the world wide web) is the reduced role of mainstream media organizations in the new media environment. Not only ordinary users but also civil society organizations (van der Donk et al. 2004; Cammaerts 2005) are enabled or empowered to avoid the mediating role of the “old” media organizations, to publish their material (almost) directly on the web, and to establish communicative networks that (often) support more decentralized models of democracy.

These reflections partially build on the earlier work of participatory theorists such as Barber (1998). His analysis points to the potentially beneficial increase in information, which challenges the “existing political hierarchy’s monopoly on powerful communications media” (Rheingold 1993, 14), the strengthening of social capital and civil society (Friedland 1996), and the opening up of a new public sphere, or a “global electronic agora” (Castells 2001, 138). When this discussion is framed in terms of the quest for more direct and/or deliberative democracy, notions of power and decision-making are explicitly highlighted. Budge (1996, 1), for instance, defends the move toward more direct democracy, where “public policy can be discussed and voted upon by everyone linked in an interactive communications net.”

In reaction to these bold statements, there has been a critical backlash partly from a production perspective, pointing to the control by large media and communication corporations of the Internet despite its potential independence from large-scale media organizations. The “heaven on ICT user earth” perspective also has been questioned by focusing on problems of access and interaction/interactivity. The lack of access for some has foregrounded the notion of the → digital divide. Although the level of interaction may have increased, it is questionable whether societal and media participation have increased proportionally, or whether Penny’s (1995, 54) term “interpassivity,” referring to the “*Pavlovian interactivity of stimulus and response*,” is a better characterization of recent developments.

When attempts to deepen democracy are contrasted with representative democracy, the critique of “*technopopulism*” (Coleman & Götze 2001, 5) is relevant. It is important to keep Barber’s (1984, 289–290) words in mind: “Instant votes of the kind envisioned by certain mindless plebiscitary democrats are as insidious as interactive discussion questions are useful.” ICTs can be used to deepen the democratic process but their embeddedness in a democratic culture – at the societal level and at the level of media organizations – is necessary to overcome token democracy and pseudo-participation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Citizens’ Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Information Overload ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media Democracy ▶ New World

Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► Participatory Communication  
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# **Communication Technology and Development**

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Information is critical to the social and economic activities that comprise the development process. Communication technology as a means of sharing information is not



simply a connection between people, but a link in the chain of the development process itself (→ Development Communication; Technology and Communication). In general, the ability to access and share information can contribute to the development process by improving:

- efficiency, or the ratio of output to cost (for example, through use of just-in-time manufacturing and inventory systems; through use of information on weather and soil content to improve agricultural yields);
- effectiveness, or the quality of products and services (such as improving health-care through telemedicine);
- equity, or the distribution of development benefits throughout the society (such as to rural and remote areas, or to minorities and disabled populations);
- reach, or the ability to contact new customers or clients (for example, craftspeople reaching global markets on the Internet, or educators reaching students at work or at home).

Communication technologies may *improve efficiency and productivity* in several specific ways. First, communication technologies offer price information. Producers such as farmers and fishermen can compare prices in various markets, allowing them to get the highest prices for their produce, to eliminate dependency on local middlemen, and/or to modify their products (types of crops raised or fish caught, etc.) to respond to market demand. Communication technologies may also reduce downtime, when timely ordering of spare parts and immediate contact with technicians can reduce time lost due to broken machinery such as pumps, tractors, and generators. In addition, communication technologies foster efficiency and productivity through reducing inventory, improving timely delivery of products to the market, reducing travel costs, and saving energy through coordinating shipping and transportation logistics. In addition, communication technologies facilitate the decentralization of information networks and can help to attract industries to rural areas, and allow decentralization of economic activities away from major urban areas (Hudson 2006; → Social Networks).

### **TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS**

Key technological trends that are driving the proliferation of new information and telecommunications services include attention to capacity, digitization, ubiquity, and convergence (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). New technologies such as optical fiber have enormous capacity to carry information, and can be used for services ranging from entertainment and distance education to transmission of highly detailed images for remote medical diagnosis. Satellites and some terrestrial wireless technologies such as WiFi and WiMax also offer a tremendous increase in available bandwidth. Telecommunications networks are becoming totally digital, so that any type of information, including voice and video, may be sent as a stream of bits. Digital compression allows more efficient use of bandwidth so that customers may have more choices (such as compressed satellite television channels) and/or lower costs, such as use of compressed video for distance education and compressed voice for Internet telephony. Advances in wireless technology

such as mobile cellular networks and fixed wireless systems offer affordable means of reaching rural customers and urban areas without infrastructure in developing countries (→ Rural Development). The convergence of telecommunications, data processing, and imaging technologies is ushering in the era of multimedia, in which voice, data, and images may be combined according to the needs of users, and distinctions between the traditional sectors of telecommunications, information processing, and broadcasting are increasingly arbitrary and perhaps irrelevant.

There are several significant *implications of these technological trends*, particularly for rural and developing regions. Distance is no longer a barrier to accessing information. Technologies are available that can provide interactive voice, data, and multimedia services virtually anywhere. Costs of providing services are declining. Satellite transmission costs are independent of distance; transmission costs using other technologies have also declined dramatically. Thus, communications services can be priced not according to distance, which penalizes rural and remote users, but per unit of information (message, bit) or unit of time. The potential for competition is increasing. Lower costs make rural/remote areas more attractive. New competitors can offer multiple technological solutions, including wireless, satellite, optical fiber, copper, and cable. In addition, the sector is being restructured through privatization of formerly government-owned networks and liberalization to allow competition among services and across technologies (→ Privatization of the Media). The communications industry itself is also being transformed, with new entrants as well as mergers and acquisitions creating vertically and horizontally integrated providers of content and conduit, hardware and software. All of these changes are taking place within a context of globalization, as international trade in goods and services expands and national economies become increasingly interdependent.

### THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Of course, these new technologies and services are not available everywhere, and in developing regions where they do exist, many people cannot afford to use them (→ Digital Divide). Telecommunications is a “missing link” in much of the developing world, as the International Telecommunication Union’s Maitland Commission (1984) noted two decades ago. A decade later, policymakers were calling for a “global information infrastructure” that would link everyone into a worldwide network, or more likely, network of networks. By the turn of the century, world leaders were committing themselves to bridge “digital divides” between the industrialized and developing worlds.

People in the least developed countries, many of whom are in Africa, still have very limited access to basic voice telecommunications. However, wireless technologies are beginning to bridge that gap. There are now more mobile phones than landlines throughout the developing world, as prices fall and users can buy services in small, prepaid increments. For most subscribers in the developing world, their mobile phone is their first and only phone.

Gaps also exist within the developing world. Not only do wealthier people have greater access to communication technologies, but the gaps are even greater between urban and rural areas. Typically, a high percentage of developing country residents live in rural areas (as much as 80 percent of the population in the least developed countries), where access to communication networks is extremely limited.

## RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF INTERACTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

During the 1970s, studies of telemedicine, teleconferencing, and interactive telecommunications (Hudson & Parker 1973) showed that telecommunications can facilitate many development activities (→ Telecenters). Several studies found a high correlation between economic growth and telecommunications investment, typically measured in GDP per capita and telephone sets or lines per 100 population. However, does telecommunications investment contribute to economic growth, and/or does economic growth result in increased telecommunications investment?

The first major study to address the causality issue was by Hardy (1980), who found that the causal relationship ran in both directions. Of course, telecommunications investment did increase as economies grew, but there was also a small but significant contribution of telecommunications to economic development. The implication was that early investment in telecommunications could contribute to economic growth. Cronin et al. (1991) used a similar methodology to show not only that increases in output or GNP level lead to increases in investment in telecommunications, but that the converse is also true: increases in telecommunications investment stimulate overall economic growth (→ Media Economics). Aside from the few macro-level reports, case studies provide much of the evidence on the benefits of telecommunications in rural development.

Many researchers note that there are *social benefits of telecommunications*, particularly in rural and isolated areas where other forms of interaction with distant family members, friends, and colleagues may be infrequent and time consuming. Field research from developing countries cites examples of rural residents keeping in touch with family members who have gone to the city or overseas to seek work (such as Egyptians and Indians to the Arab Peninsula, or South Pacific islanders to New Zealand); families contacting relatives scattered in many rural communities; and field staff such as nurses and teachers in rural posts using two-way radios or satellite links to keep in touch with colleagues and family members. Researchers have hypothesized that reducing isolation can help to reduce personnel turnover.

Communication technologies can contribute significantly to socio-economic development, but investments in them alone are not sufficient for development to occur. In addition to availability of communication technologies, other factors are necessary if they are to contribute to socio-economic development. First, context is important to understand the cultural, economic, and political context. For example, if women are “invisible” in public or in commerce, they are not likely to learn to use communication technologies without specific outreach activities. If there is no reliable transportation, producers may be forced to sell to a local middleman, even if they learn that prices are higher in the city. If there is no source of credit available, farmers may not be able to buy better seeds or pesticides, even if they learn from the Internet that these inputs would improve their crop yield.

Next, content matters. Telephones do not require literacy or knowledge of a major language. “Infomediaries” can help to find and interpret useful content, but communication technologies’ true potential will be realized only if content becomes available in more languages, and more content relevant for developing regions is produced. Finally, capacity must be taken into account. Use of communication technologies requires the skills to use the equipment and the ability to find useful information. Thus users require some training if they are to take advantage of access to communication technologies.

Alternatively, access sites must be staffed by “infomediaries” who can not only use the equipment but find relevant information. Thus, communication technologies may be seen as a complement to other infrastructure required for development, such as transportation, electrification, and a clean water supply.

## COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Communication technologies play an important role in health services in many developing countries (→ Health Campaigns for Development). Generically, these applications are referred to as “telemedicine,” although some use that term for consultative uses, and the term “telehealth” to refer to applications for medical education and administration. Initiatives using communication technologies to support health services include emergency care, consultation, remote diagnosis, patient monitoring, training and continuing education, public health education, administration, data collection, and research and information sharing.

The following are the most common *goals of applications* of communication technologies in education: improving the *quality* of instruction, for example by adding supplemental materials, research resources, opportunities to practice skills, interact with instructors, etc.; extending the *reach* of education to people who have been excluded because of distance from educational institutions or disadvantage, for example, to reach isolated students, illiterates, people in remote job sites or prisons, etc.; and providing *instruction* where no qualified teachers are available (for example, to teach foreign languages or advanced science or mathematics courses). Often these goals are combined with the need to save *time* and/or *money*, e.g., to enable employees to study at their workplace instead of traveling to classes or taking leaves of absence to attend distant courses; or to enable a specialized instructor to teach students in several locations.

A major problem may be that teachers do not have sufficient training to teach certain components of the curriculum. One approach is to use communication technologies to teach students directly, with the local teacher serving as an aide or tutor. Radio has been used to teach basic mathematics to school children, incorporating exercises using locally available materials such as sticks and bottle caps. Alternatively, communication technologies could be part of a strategy to improve the teachers’ knowledge and skills by offering courses for teachers using correspondence materials, radio, television, and possibly the Internet, often coupled with incentives for completing credentials and earning pay raises.

Another problem in developing regions is that there are not sufficient books for the students, or that the prescribed materials are dated. One solution is to provide access to up-to-date *materials from online sources*. For example, a teacher in Timbuktu (in central Mali) commented that the only African maps available in the school were from colonial times. That teacher could now use the telecenter’s facilities to download and print an up-to-date map of Africa. Worldspace, a satellite system that transmits radio programs directly to small receivers, plans to transmit educational radio programs via satellite for use in African classrooms (→ Radio for Development).

Another educational goal in developing regions is to *upgrade the skills of working adults*, such as extension agents, health workers, and employees of other government agencies. In the past, the main means of instruction were short courses that required participants to

travel to major cities or take time from work, or correspondence courses that workers were expected to complete in their own time. Today, such students may attend courses delivered to their workplaces or local training centers, or may supplement traditional correspondence courses with online materials and assignments, and email interaction with other students.

In many developing regions, women are using communication technologies to obtain and share information relevant to their work as teachers, community development workers, artisans, or entrepreneurs. *Women entrepreneurs* resell mobile phone services in countries such as Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Mozambique. Women entrepreneurs also manage phone shops in Ghana and teleboutiques in Senegal and Morocco, and many community telecenter staff in Africa and other developing regions are women (Hafkin & Taggart 2001). Women are indirect beneficiaries of communication technology use in a variety of contexts. Improvements in health-care can benefit women and their families; use of communication technologies in schools can improve education for girls; and availability of communication technologies in the community can provide opportunities for training as well as tools that can be used by community organizations that benefit women.

Several important *conclusions* can be derived from research on the benefits of information and communication technologies. Communication technologies may contribute to investment in telecommunications and thus to economic growth; improve the quality and accessibility of education, health-care and other social services; benefit rural and remote areas where distances are greater and telephone penetration is lower; and foster a sense of community and strengthening of cultural identity. Telecommunications can be considered a complement in the development process; i.e., other conditions must exist for maximum developmental benefits of telecommunications to be achieved.

All of these benefits are derived from the role of information in the development process. New technologies such as wireless and satellite communications and the Internet will provide more opportunities for people in developing regions to access and share information that can foster development, because, as a woman using a telecenter in Timbuktu noted, “Information is the key to all doors” (Hudson 2006).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Development Communication ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Media Economics ▶ Privatization of the Media ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Rural Development ▶ Social Networks ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telecenters

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## Communication Technology Standards

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Communication technology standards are technical specifications that enable technological components from different suppliers to work together within a given communication system. Some standards refer to the physical interfaces between network and terminal equipment. Others refer to logical elements expressed in algorithms and embodied in software. In digital systems, many standards involve both physical and logical elements: a standardized physical interface is supported by standardized software elements. Standards are essential to telecommunication, broadcasting, and computer networks. More recently they have become crucial elements in the integration of digital networking and services environments.

Much standardization is limited to physical and/or logical interfaces between components and functions. However, it is often the case that systems or networks that adhere to common standards also may incorporate specific implementations that are not fully compatible. Indeed, an essential institutional dynamic in the standardization process involves determining the limits to standardization. Such factors add strong socio-economic and often political dimensions to the process of defining and adopting communication technology standards (Schmidt & Werle 1998).

### TYPES OF STANDARDS

Generally it is understood that standards have strong collective characteristics; that they are applied across entire product or service segments or otherwise on an industry-wide basis (Kindleberger 1983). Thus, standards are considered to reflect a *consensus* among stakeholders to adopt common solutions to shared problems. But consensus can be expressed in many forms, ranging from market preferences for proprietary solutions, to the outcomes of formal rule-based negotiations.

It has been common to make a distinction between *de facto* standards (often called “market” or sometimes “informal” standards) and *de jure* or “formal” standards as negotiated under the auspices of a standards development organization (SDO). It has been common also to refer to negotiated standards as “open,” reflecting the principle of admitting all stakeholders to the negotiation process. However, often the term “open” is confused with “open source,” which refers to software that is unencumbered by

proprietary intellectual property. This is unfortunate, as an  $\rightarrow$  open source environment is not necessarily synonymous with a standardized environment.

These simple distinctions have given rise to an enormous array of specialized definitions and taxonomies. However, there is disagreement among scholars as to whether such demarcations reflect practice. Broadly speaking, opinion splits according to whether standards should be defined and classified in terms of form or of function. Formal designations focus largely upon the institutional settings in which standards are developed and adopted. Functional designations focus more upon the practical consequences and impacts of coordinating technology and markets through common technical specifications.

In principle, standards are distinguished from *regulations* (as, for example, concerning safety or electromagnetic interference) in that compliance with standards nominally is voluntary. Nevertheless, standards and regulations often are linked – a regulation may reference a technical standard or vice versa. In practice, however, standards and regulations can yield many of the same effects. Moreover, even where there is no regulatory compulsion to adopt a standard, there may be commercial pressures that favor adoption to the extent that it becomes virtually mandatory to adopt a nominally voluntary standard because the costs or risks of deviance are too high.

### THEORY OF STANDARDS

Prior to the 1980s, most of the literature on standards was descriptive rather than analytical. Much of it focused either upon industrial efficiency from an applied production management point of view, or upon the regulatory role of standards, especially in the context of industrial procurement and trade. There was rather little explicit connection to the theoretical and empirical tools of the mainline social sciences, although some of the earliest analytical work on the role of standards in establishing modern forms of industrial organization remains conceptually relevant to many contemporary and emerging standardization issues (see Thompson 1954).

The variety and quantity of theoretical literature on standards has increased remarkably in recent years. Growing interest in the dynamics of communication networks has been a significant contributor to the diversification of scholarly interest in this subject. Significant new ideas have been forthcoming from economics, the management sciences, political and legal studies, organizational studies, and various branches of sociological studies concerned with the production and diffusion of technology ( $\rightarrow$  Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

Nevertheless, a common theoretical core runs through virtually all of the literature. The most basic concept is that *standards reduce variety*. Theory predicts that, by adopting a uniform solution to a problem that is common to many stakeholders, any loss in the value of discarded solutions will be regained and amplified for all stakeholders in the form of production efficiencies and overall reduction in the unit cost of standardized items. Even though the price may decline following standardization, theory predicts that producers of standardized items will benefit from access to a larger market overall. A closely related concept is that standards ensure *compatibility* rather than uniformity. This implies that conformance to a standard does not preclude variations in product qualities

and features. To some extent, the compatibility concept reconciles the reduction of variety with the continuance of innovation and competition.

Reduction in variety is reckoned also to lead to *information efficiencies* between producers and users of technology. Thus, if we find a standardized connector on a computer keyboard or printer, we know that it will operate with any computer equipped with the appropriate standardized receptor. We do not require any additional information about either device. All of this information is transferred transparently by the standard.

In the mid-1980s, led by the seminal work of David (1985), Arthur (1989), and others, social scientists became interested in the role of standards in generating *network effects* – commonly expressed in terms of “increasing returns to adoption” or “positive externalities” (→ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of). The public telecommunication network is often given as an example of this phenomenon because its value to all users increases with the number of users whereas the cost of connecting each new user is low. Standardized interfaces within and between telecommunication networks facilitate access, thus ensuring that the value of the network as a whole will increase for all users. Most communication networks, from radio broadcasting to the Internet, can be seen to display similar characteristics (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

However, the phenomenon of increasing returns means also that the circumstances and timing of standards selection can be crucial. Standards can set up path dependencies, locking users into technological environments that may not always have optimal characteristics. Lock-in has economic implications in that the standardization of suboptimal technologies may impede technological progress. But it has political and managerial implications also in that dominant firms may use lock-in effects from standards to control markets and prejudice further technological development.

Understanding the *relationship between standards and innovation* is one of the most challenging theoretical and empirical issues (Blind 2004). On the one hand, because of lock-in effects and their role in establishing dominant designs, standards might appear to impede innovation. On the other hand, information efficiencies may lower the costs and risks of experimentation, thus encouraging innovation. It can also be observed that standardized infrastructures and platforms, such as we see with the Internet or mobile telecommunication systems, have facilitated significant innovation in business models and value-added services.

## **INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS**

Prior to the present era in which virtually all communication technologies and networks are digital and oriented in some respect to the Internet, the institutional landscape for communication technology standards was oriented to three, largely discrete, networking environments – telecommunication, broadcasting, and data processing. Although there were always overlapping standards requirements, each environment had its own standards regime centered in its own set of institutions.

The → Internet has the potential to enable virtually complete convergence of these environments (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). Nevertheless, vestiges of the historical system persist. Many international standards for public switched telecommunication



networks remain in the orbit of the *International Telecommunication Union*, either under the auspices of the Telecom-standardization agency (ITU-T) or the Radio-communication agency (ITU-R). As the authority responsible for the international management of radio spectrum, ITU-R also plays a significant role in the broadcast and satellite sectors. On the other hand, international standards for data-processing systems have been historically the responsibility of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) through a Joint Technical Committee (JTC1) on data processing and computer communication standards.

Spurred to a large extent by the liberalization of telecommunication markets and convergence between voice and data networking, the institutional structure of standardization has evolved considerably. Many telecommunication standards now are developed in regionally based organizations, e.g., the European Telecommunication Standards Institute (ETSI). Likewise, standardization activities for data networking are now distributed among an increasingly diverse group of organizations. Some, like the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) employ nominally informal methods, soliciting inputs from the community of Internet users at large. Others, like many of the standards committees of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) work to formal procedures.

In practice, the lines between national, regional, and international standards bodies are becoming as blurred as the lines between network and services environments. During the past 10 years, the most significant development has been the proliferation of industry “consortia”: stakeholder-sponsored organizations that develop technical specifications mostly for specialized product and service niches. W3C (the group that oversees standards development for the world wide web) is probably the most widely known consortium, but these organizations have grown in number from perhaps 60 in the mid-1990s to at least 350 today. Although some consortia collaborate actively with formal SDOs, many do not.

The rise of the consortium phenomenon has often been attributed to failure of the formal SDO system to develop standards quickly enough to meet the needs of ever shorter product cycles for information and communication technology products. But it now appears more likely that the selection of consortium or SDO environments is made for commercially strategic reasons. Many of the key technologies that now function as global standards are either wholly proprietary (like Microsoft Windows or Vista). Others may incorporate proprietary and nonproprietary elements (West 2003). Accordingly, intellectual property has become one of the most contentious standardization debates.

To sum up, over a period of 20 to 25 years, the scope and function of communication technology standards has broadened considerably. In addition to their historical role in ensuring the compatibility of network components, they have become associated more directly with the coordination of specific service environments. Also, the key issues and debates have moved largely out of the hardware segments and into the software segments. As all of these changes have occurred, the social and economic implications of standardization have intensified for a much wider variety of stakeholders.

SEE ALSO: ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ► Internet ► Open Source ► Telecommunications: Law and Policy ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## Communication Theory and Philosophy

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Communication theory is heir to classic issues in the history of ideas. If philosophy has traditionally asked how human knowledge of reality may be possible, communication theory addresses the media, modalities, and messages by which humans exchange, reflect on, and enact different perspectives on reality. Revisiting a number of key epistemological, ethical, and political issues, while responding to the increased importance of information and communication technologies throughout society and culture during the twentieth century, communication research emerged at the crossroads of social philosophy and scientific theory.

Communication became established as a distinctive category of human activity following the rise of new electronic communication media during the latter half of the nineteenth century (→ Communication: History of the Idea). These developments encouraged scholars and other commentators to think of diverse practices of social interaction – in the flesh, through wires, and over the air – in terms of their family resemblances. In Peters’ (1999, 6) felicitous formulation, “mass communication came first,” promoting explicit and sustained attention to the varieties of communication in research as well as in society

at large (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). Until the invention of the telegraph, “transportation and communication were inseparably linked” (Carey 1989, 15), because any communicative exchange depended on the physical presence of bards, manuscripts, books, newspapers, or other print media (→ Medium Theory). With telecommunications came decisively different means of interacting across space and time. With digital technologies, as increasingly embedded in everyday artifacts and living arrangements, have come additional resources of information and communication whose social implications may prove more radical than either the printing press or the telegraph, challenging communication research, once again, to reconsider its founding concepts.

This essay first outlines the profile of communication as a *scholarly field with a practical stake* in contemporary culture and society. The following sections trace the origins of key concepts of communication theory in *intellectual traditions* since classical Greece, and in modern sources within humanistic and social scientific *disciplines* as well as *interdisciplinary research*. These sources have been fed selectively into various models of the *process of communication*, which, in turn, have informed different approaches to the *process of research*.

### THE DOUBLE HERMENEUTICS OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

As perspectives on reality, all academic fields can be said to engage in hermeneutics, interpreting the world from particular positions of insight. Communication research belongs with those academic fields that engage in *double* hermeneutics, interpreting, not least, people’s own interpretations or understandings of how and why they communicate, and feeding such second-order interpretations back to the people in question and to society at large. Compared to natural and physical sciences, social sciences and humanities study already interpreted realities. In the words of anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1983, 58), much research on the communication and culture of humans seeks to determine “what the devil they think they are up to.”

The notion of double hermeneutics is familiar from early theories of culture and society; for example, Max Weber’s approach to understanding (*verstehen*) subjective meanings as a way of explaining (*erklären*) socially objective events (→ Verstehen vs Erklären). The specific terminology of double hermeneutics was advanced by Giddens (1979), who built on Winch’s (1963) challenge to predominant natural-scientific conceptions of post-1945 social science. On the one hand, social science encounters a preinterpreted world in the form of utterances, behaviors, and documents by social actors. On the other hand, the interventions and interpretations that are presented by social and cultural research cannot help but make a difference in the domain being studied – from respondents’ reconsideration, however slight, of their opinions in response to a political poll, to major reconceptions, for instance, of the nature of economic transactions or individual psychology, as prompted by the dissemination of the works of Marx and Freud.

Communication research may be considered emphatically double hermeneutic in three different respects. First, communication studies address the basic processes by which social reality is interpreted and reinterpreted on a daily basis, in everyday conversation and in dedicated institutions, from schools to news media. Second, as a field, communication research has been a response, following the nineteenth-century articulation of a category of “communication,” to the growth of an entire social sector of institutions devoted to

information and communication, what Beniger (1986) referred to as the control revolution, which was complete by the late 1930s, at the dawn of modern communication research. From government bureaucracies to market research and “mass media,” this sector produces information that enables society-wide planning, coordination, and control. Third, the rapidly shifting configurations of communicative practices in twentieth-century society, and the mixed success of single research traditions in accounting for them, has prompted the field to become increasingly interdisciplinary, observing communication through multiple lenses of human, social, and, to a degree, natural sciences. The double hermeneutics of communication research unfolds, simultaneously, within the academic field and in its nexus with the empirical field of study.

The notion of double hermeneutics can be concretized with reference to McQuail’s (2005) textbook formulation of *five types of “theory.”* *Scientific theory* is the most common understanding of the term, covering general explanatory concepts and models that apply across a range of empirical instances, as associated, not least, with (natural scientific and) social scientific quantitative research traditions. *Cultural theory* is one legacy of arts and humanities, drawing on textual and other qualitative approaches, which have contributed significantly to contemporary interdisciplinary research. *Normative theory* addresses the legitimate ends and means of organizing social resources of communication, not least mass media, from the printing press to the Internet. While communication research emerged at the interface of social philosophy and scientific theory, normative theories also developed as a separate area of research activity, particularly regarding the press, feeding into public planning and debate. *Operational theory* is the domain of media professionals and other communication practitioners, representing rules of thumb and tacit knowledge, as well as ingrained ethical and ideological positions regarding the purpose and status of their work. As such, operational theory constitutes both an object of empirical research, as in field studies of journalists or teachers, and a source of theoretical insight into communication processes. *Everyday theory*, finally, guides individuals’ interaction as citizens, consumers, and sources of information – with each other and with the media. Practically everybody has a notion of how communication operates, and in whose interests.

A common denominator for the five types of theory is that they enable people to act – as scholars, regulators, practitioners, and ordinary users of communication. What distinguishes scholarship is its potential for systematic and sustained self-reflexivity in grounding conclusions and actions. Communication research considers normative, operational, everyday, as well as previous scientific theories; it returns reconsidered theories. Like other academic fields, communication research thus amounts to a social institution-to-think-with (Douglas 1987), performing an ongoing double hermeneutics concerning contemporary institutions and practices of communication. In doing so, the field has been informed by a wide range of traditions in the history of ideas, and of disciplines in the modern research university.

## INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS THROUGH THE CENTURIES

By far the oldest set of ideas with a recognizable influence on communication theory comes out of the rhetorical tradition (Kennedy 1980; → Rhetorical Studies). To Aristotle, *rhetoric* was the source of a particular kind of knowledge that is probable and reasonable,

while logic might generate “necessary” or certain knowledge (Clarke 1990, 13). One legacy of rhetoric, then, is a recognition of the intimate relationship between knowing that something is the case, and knowing how to communicate about it. What we know, as individuals and communities, depends crucially on the mental capacities and material resources that are available for articulating such knowledge. Like the production of knowledge in science, the production of meaning in communication may be conceived with a relative emphasis on either the entities carrying intellectual insight or the processes resulting in such insight. This distinction – between meaning as pre-defined *product* or participatory *process* – can be retraced in much later communication theory, summarized by James Carey (1989) as *transmission* and *ritual* models of communication (→ Media).

Rhetoric built on the resources and conventions of ancient oral traditions, even if “classical” rhetoric was codified and consolidated as part of a transition to literate culture (Havelock 1963). The point of departure for rhetoric, moreover, was speech, especially concerning matters of fact, and how to argue about them. In comparison, → *hermeneutics* developed out of the practice of reading and understanding written texts, not least narratives. Whereas the texts at issue originally belonged to religion and law, particularly from the early nineteenth century onwards, the principles and procedures of hermeneutics came to be applied to the arts as well as to other kinds of texts – indeed, to human experience as such. Not just the Bible and the classics, but modern societies and sub-cultures lend themselves to hermeneutic analysis. One contribution of twentieth-century hermeneutics was what Paul Ricoeur identified in the works of Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, and developed further as a “hermeneutics of suspicion” (Ricoeur 1981, 46). Its purpose is to discover hidden principles behind what people as well as social institutions say and do, thus exposing interests and motivations that may equally be hidden to those people and institutions themselves. Such reading between the lines of society for reformatory as well as therapeutic purposes has been a central concern of critical communication studies.

All along, from classical poetics through traditional art history to modern → design, → *aesthetics* has remained a source of inspiration for the systematic examination of how meaningful expression and experience come about in human communication. Beyond separate domains of suspended disbelief and disinterested contemplation, aesthetics also serves to explicate how specific forms of representation relate to real-world functions of communication media. Recent aesthetic theory can be seen to re-emphasize an understanding of the arts as materially grounded phenomena and socially situated practices (e.g., Summers 2003). In the case of digital and interactive media forms, further, aesthetics has been coming back in style, being recruited by both scholars and practitioners to account for the reworking of familiar media and genres in new forms of representation and interaction (→ Digital Media, History of; Remediation).

The modern *humanities* took shape around the early nineteenth century as an inclusive configuration of scholarly traditions, incorporating rhetoric, hermeneutics, aesthetics, and other approaches to the study of history, culture, and communication (for overview, see Jensen 2002b) – even if the notion of communication was another century in the making (Peters 1999). The context was the reconception of universities as institutions producing knowledge through *research*, as initially associated with the Humboldt tradition in Germany (Fallon 1980; Rudy, 1984). This contrasted, in the domains of history and culture, with previous understandings of knowledge as either self-awareness or classical learning,

as sanctioned and administered by a class of learned people (Kjørup 2001, 20–22). Emphasizing analytical procedures and conceptual frameworks for research on human consciousness and culture, through detailed attention to historical and other empirical sources, the humanities helped to shape the foundations of modern communication research.

If the early 1800s marked the institutionalization of the humanities as one of the two mainstreams later feeding into communication research, the period around 1900 witnessed a further diversification of the academy into a second mainstream of *social sciences* (for overview, see Murdock 2002). Responding to a rapidly changing social reality, various social scientific disciplines came to perform a double hermeneutics of economy, politics, and culture. As imported into the field of communication research, diverse social scientific disciplines and their practitioners could be said to position themselves along an axis – simultaneously epistemological and political – from consensus to conflict. Communication is part and parcel of the ongoing social business of coordination and confrontation, from micro-social processes to macro-social structures. A gulf is still manifest in current conferences and publications between → *functional analysis*, from Spencer and Durkheim onward, and → *critical theory*, from Marx through the Frankfurt School to → *political economy of the media*, → *feminist and gender studies*, and → *postcolonial theory*.

This dual legacy of the social sciences for communication research has been complicated and enriched on several counts. Most important, perhaps, interpretivist and constructivist approaches have served as a constant reminder that the conduct of social life depends crucially on the available symbolic resources. Communication prefigures social agency, and configures social structure. *Symbolic interaction*, which emerged from the wider philosophical tradition of → *pragmatism*, has been widely influential in studies of how communication contributes to a sense of community and of self (→ Symbolic Interaction). Across the social sciences and humanities, moreover, → *phenomenology* reasserted the understanding of consciousness as a lived and interpreted whole. While phenomenology might be interpreted, in historical context, as a defensive reaction against reductionism in the shape of either positivism or psychologism, it became an active ingredient of twentieth-century social theory and of → *qualitative methodology*. A case in point, suggesting distinctive disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives on communication as an object of analysis, is → *psychology in communication processes*, which has been approached variously as a matter of interpretation or measurement, exegesis or experiment (→ Discursive Psychology; Rhetoric and Psychology).

### INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS THROUGH THE DECADES

The threshold to the twentieth century marked the onset of a two-tiered set of developments in the academic fields that were to feed into post-1945 scholarship on communication. On the one hand, specialized academic disciplines became the order of the day, operationalizing intellectual ideas into explanatory concepts for empirical research, while catering to the needs of professions and bureaucracies in modern society. Whereas both national and academic cultures differ (on the case of Germany, see Löblich 2007; → Communication as a Field and Discipline), the received, remembered history of US communication study (Dennis & Wartella 1996) is indicative of a widespread view that communication research stands on the shoulders of specific social scientific disciplines

(for a critique, see Hardt 1999). Although Schramm (1997) described its development with reference to “forefathers” (Lewin; → Lasswell, Harold D.; → Lazarsfeld, Paul F.; → Hovland, Carl I.), the conceptual and analytical substance derived from impersonal disciplines (political science, sociology, social and experimental psychology).

Importantly, a similarly partial history of communication studies might be told from the perspective of the humanities. In addition to the historical and intellectual traditions already noted, the candidates for disciplinary sources include art history, literary theory, → *linguistics*, and film studies. Interestingly, the second edition of Lowery and DeFleur’s widely circulated textbook on the (social scientific) “milestones” of mass communication research included reference to an ascending “meaning paradigm” (Lowery & DeFleur 1988, 455), which might admit some humanistic milestones. Only seven years later, however, in the third edition, this anticipation of a possible convergence had been replaced by a return to multiple parallel “focused theories,” each of which might explain “some set of events or phenomena that has clear boundaries” (Lowery & DeFleur 1995, 397). The crediting of relevant disciplines, and the definition of interdisciplinarity, remain contested.

On the other hand, communication research has always been at least tendentially interdisciplinary. This is evident, not just in Whiggish histories regarding the multi-disciplinary origins of the field, but also in some of the most influential contributions to its analytical concepts and techniques. At least two such sources can be identified. First, → *semiotics* and → *structuralism*, in multiple variants and in combination with other traditions of inquiry, for instance, rhetoric and hermeneutics, have provided detailed and rigorous frameworks for studying what Ferdinand de Saussure, a century ago, called “the life of signs in society.” Growing out of nineteenth-century studies of logic and language, these traditions inspired much linguistics and literary theory from the inter-war period, and were consolidated into a mainstream of humanistic media studies from the 1960s, while subsequently influencing also social scientific research on communication and culture.

The second family of interdisciplinary traditions is more closely associated with the social sciences and with technical and systemic conceptions of social life. *Cybernetics*, with a lineage in engineering and natural sciences, came into its own during the 1940s and 1950s as a generalized science of control and communication regarding machines and humans alike (→ *Cybernetics*). The related, but different, tradition of → *systems theory*, having lost its original dream of a theory of all systems, remains influential in the weaker sense of systems thinking. And theories of → *information* as a logical, statistical, and algorithmic category have been key to both the design and study of communication media throughout the post-1945 period.

Despite family resemblances between the analytical categories of, for example, semiotics and cybernetics, any committed convergence of these and other interdisciplinary sources into some consensual theory of communication is not in progress, may never occur, and might not be desirable. Instead, convergence between human, social, and, to a degree, engineering and natural sciences can be understood as the expression of a professional ethos and a research agenda, both of which may reflect a degree of disciplinary maturity that allows for intellectual tolerance and curiosity. At least since the symbolic “ferment in the field” issue of the *Journal of Communication* (1983), such a position has been advanced widely – even if tolerance can deteriorate into indifference between niches. Furthermore, the process can take the form of several local convergences, rather than a global

convergence across the field. To bring up two otherwise disparate strands of scholarship, → *cultural studies* and → *cognitive science*, each in their way has integrated elements from several disciplines across the humanities and social sciences. They constitute both interdisciplines in their own right and components of existing disciplines and fields, including communication research. Whereas cultural studies has brought classic hermeneutic and other discourse-analytical strategies to bear on modern society, reading for its cracks and fissures, cognitive science has revisited the notion of artificial intelligence with hindsight, as informed by neuroscience as well as anthropology.

The purpose of communication theory, thus, might not be to build one interdisciplinary building from disciplinary bricks, but to sketch a plan for how multiple buildings might be constructed and reconstructed. Craig's (1999) summary statement on communication theory as a meta-discursive practice suggested as much: communication theory is constituted in and through acts of communication that address practical problems and issues of communication in the real world, and which advance different and competing solutions and reflections. Craig's meta-perspective on the field yielded seven traditions of communication theory: rhetorical, semiotic, phenomenological, cybernetic, socio-psychological, socio-cultural, and critical. While their definition and delimitation remain debatable, this is precisely the point of a constitutive meta-model: communication theory is a communicative practice, and develops in relation to other practices and contexts of communication.

It is these practices that can be understood, more generally, as instances of the *double hermeneutic* of scholarship. Communication research is inter-, trans-, and multi-disciplinary and -traditional; it is all of these things in response to a reality that is endlessly communicating – or attempting to do so. The infrastructure of research institutions, journals, and conferences provides more glacial evidence of the dialectic. In addition to disciplinary and systematic distinctions such as → *communication and law*, → *media economy*, → *media production and content*, and → *media effects*, the field has been organized, further, according to domains of practical relevance, for example, → *educational communication* and → *strategic communication*, and with a view to historically contested notions such as → *popular communication*. New institutional configurations of a theoretical heritage arise (→ Communicology); revised disciplinary identities with a direct bearing on communication emerge, as in the case of → *information science*, which in some settings used to be known as library science, but whose research questions, with digitization, increasingly overlap those of → *human-computer interaction*. And, given the centrality of media and communication in contemporary society, communication researchers are regularly questioned in public to account for the role of communication in cultural change; for example, with reference to a possible epoch of → *postmodernism and communication*. The responses perform the double hermeneutic in live communication.

## THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Across disciplinary and intellectual differences, most forms of communication research share at least an ideal-typical understanding of the process of communication. *Models of communication* have been employed since the early days of the field as necessarily simplified, but heuristically helpful representations of the domain of study (→ Models of



Communication). A terminology of *sender* and *receiver*, *message*, and *channel* can be considered relatively uncontroversial, especially if reversible roles and feedback are considered. However, already regarding the *context* of this interaction, humanistic and social scientific approaches have tended to part company. Whereas the ideal-typical social scientist, as typified by Lasswell (1948), will think of contexts in terms of the natural and cultural environments embedding and being represented in communication; her or his humanistic counterpart, represented by Jakobson (1960), rather considers contexts literally as texts, as being always already discursive structures. And, while these two classic communication models have more than a surface resemblance, they imply alternative epistemologies. In Lasswell's paradigm, communicators are really existing individuals or institutions with intentions that say something in some physical channel to someone, eliciting behaviors; in Jakobson's model, communicators amount to immanent functions or traces in a text. This latter focus on the discursive vehicles of communication is re-emphasized by the category of a *code*, such as the English language or cinematography, complementing the physical channel (what Jakobson termed *contact*) – codes are not constitutive of Lasswell's paradigm. A third foundational model, originating from engineering, but widely applied to human communication, referred to whatever is being transmitted through some communication channel as a *signal*, which is subject to decay through *noise* (Shannon & Weaver 1949). In sum, the meaningful "content" of the communication process has been defined both positively, resulting from selections and combinations within a code of expression, and negatively, with reference to that portion of a signal which is not eliminated by noise arising from the material form of the channel of transmission – as well as indirectly in terms of the intentions and behaviors of senders and receivers.

The traditional divide between humanistic and social scientific approaches to the communication process can be traced to two distinctive conceptions of communication as either a mode of *representation* or a means of *action*. On the one hand, the humanities have emphasized the symbolic forms through which humans re-present different aspects of reality to each other as part of an intersubjective process of cognition and reflection. Theories have variously emphasized representation as a cognitive and aesthetic *expression*, as an externalized form of *exchange*, and as an internalizable source of *experience*. On the other hand, the social sciences have given priority to communication as a means of coordinating social interaction, as well as a type of interaction in its own right, feeding into all manner of social, cultural, and psychological practices.

Given their focus on forms of representation in communication, the humanities have generated a particularly rich legacy of concepts regarding the vehicles of communication. First, *texts* have been understood inclusively, since the 1960s, as carriers of culture, including print as well as audiovisual media, artworks, and everyday artifacts. The emphatically inclusive concepts of textuality and *intertextuality*, deriving from early twentieth-century literary theory, further suggest that no text is an island – texts enter into webs with historical ancestries and contemporary configurations (→ Text and Intertextuality). Long before hypertexts and the world wide web, humanistic scholarship had recognized the interconnectedness of texts as nodes of communication and culture.

Second, → *discourse* refers to the use of language and other signs in social contexts, sometimes as concrete instantiations of a particular text (e.g., a performance of *Hamlet*). Discourse, then, shifts attention from textual entities toward the situated processes in

which communication unfolds. In a wider sense, discourses refer to the cumulated usages of signs that articulate and bear witness to particular worldviews, ideologies, or cultural formations. Discourses accumulate as culture through communication. Also, beyond → *cultivation theory* as understood in media studies, communication cultivates humans, for better or worse, through the historically available media.

In typologies of the vehicles of communication, the humanities have often devoted special attention to → *genre* as an intermediate level of analysis in between specific texts or discourses and their institutional or media frameworks. While literary and aesthetic theory traditionally has examined epic, lyrical, and dramatic genres and their historical and cultural variants, media and communication studies have extended this perspective to apply to a wider range of (subvarieties of) genres, also beyond → *fiction* – genres include news and television serials, email and online computer games, lovers' quarrels and patient–therapist dialogues. Genres are textual equivalents of a wide variety of social practices, in public and in private, online and offline, as explored, for instance, in → *organizational communication* (e.g., Yates & Orlikowski 1992) and with added relevance in the context of *computer-mediated communication*.

Despite different conceptions of the “content” of communication, the social sciences and humanities may be said to converge on a performative concept of → *meaning* or a contextual concept of *information*. The humanities, increasingly, account for representational meaning in terms of its contribution to the ongoing structuration of culture and society (Giddens 1984); the social sciences, equally, attend to information as “a difference that makes a difference” in subsequent interpretations as well as actions within social and cultural contexts. Communication, accordingly, might be defined as those meaningful practices of human → *interaction* that depend on *interactivity*, not just with new digital media, but with the full range of “programmable” *media* and *modalities* (→ *Interactivity, Concept of; Modality and Multimodality*) – it is through an exceedingly complex set of selections and combinations within the available material and symbolic resources of communication that human representations of, and iterative interactions in and with, reality become possible. Communication enables doubt and delay – stopping, reflecting, and representing before acting.

The convergence of concepts regarding “media” and “communication,” as indicated, has been facilitated by new, interrelated media forms and contexts of communication, which call for interdisciplinary research. The contemporary media environment is being shaped by → *intermediality* in a technological, aesthetic, as well as institutional sense. In the process, new media rely on and reshape the repertoires of old media. One of the issues for further interdisciplinary research is how diverse everyday practices of communication relate to “the media” as specific institutions dedicated to communication about other institutions in society – political, economic, and cultural. What are the purposes and boundaries of different processes of communication? And what should be the purposes and institutional frameworks of different kinds of communication research?

## THE PROCESS OF RESEARCH

The process of research can be understood as a special case of the process of communication, even if it is certainly debatable, as noted by Craig (1999, 155, note 10), whether it could be argued that communication research is “the fundamental discipline

that explains all other disciplines, [all of which] are constituted symbolically through communication.” Communication research is a specific kind of communicative practice with particular social purposes or interests. The concept of  $\rightarrow$  *knowledge interests* – explanatory, interpretive, or emancipatory – suggests that purposes or interests are not external to, but constitutive aspects of, science and scholarship. The distinction between “administrative” and “critical” research (Lazarsfeld 1941) is founded in theoretical premises and research procedures, not political preferences.

Despite the diversity of research approaches that enter into communication research, it is possible to identify certain prototypical positions, as grounded in different forms of inference ( $\rightarrow$  Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction). In academic settings, two self-conceptions by researchers of what they think they are up to (Geertz 1983, 58) have frequently been pitted against each other – hypothetico-deductive reasoning supported by  $\rightarrow$  *quantitative methodology*, and abductive reasoning relying on *qualitative methodology*. (In fact, probably the most widespread kind of communication study, broadly speaking, relies on induction – research of the descriptive, commercial, and/or confidential kind that underpins business strategy and public planning.) These positions within academic communication research are aligned with wider traditions in epistemology and theory of science, which historically have amounted to separate cultures of research (Snow 1964), despite proposals for reintegration (Brockman 1995). On the one hand,  $\rightarrow$  *critical rationalism* informs a large proportion of empirical communication research, particularly quantitative studies. This is in spite of the fact that research practice may not always live up to the criteria stipulated by Popper, just as communication research as a whole, like other fields and disciplines, continues to struggle with definitions and implications of  $\rightarrow$  *objectivity in science*. On the other hand,  $\rightarrow$  *constructivism* has been influential, especially in qualitative, interpretive, and critical communication studies. In its more radical versions, constructivism may be said to abandon a modern notion of scholarship as intersubjectively validated representations of reality that social collectives may be willing to act on, putting narrative above argument.

In review, the two prototypical approaches to communication research can be summarized with reference to different aspects or levels of empirical studies (Fig. 1). Debates across the qualitative–quantitative divide have often focused on these individual levels, commonly with special reference to the levels of data collection and analysis. Importantly, however, it is research design or *methodology*, not theory, that distinguishes qualitative and quantitative research – although methodologies typically enter into families of theoretical frameworks and analytical techniques. The similarities and differences between the two mainstreams are perhaps best understood if one notes how they join – or separate – the several levels of analysis. Quantitative communication studies tend to assume that a separation of the moments of conceptualization, design, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation is both possible and desirable. Qualitative studies, in turn, hold that at least certain communicative phenomena require a research process that moves liberally among all the analytical levels in order to articulate and differentiate analytical categories, so that the minimal act of analysis is a constitutive part of a sequence. It is this difference that, above all, accounts for the different strengths of the two mainstreams, which thus recapitulate major conceptual dichotomies in the history of modern science  $\rightarrow$  *idiographic vs nomothetic*, *verstehen vs erklären*,  $\rightarrow$  *emic vs etic*.

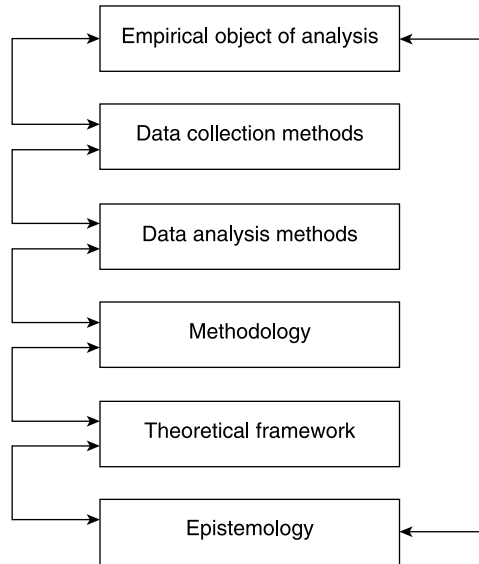


Figure 1 Six levels of empirical research

Current media and communication research has been undergoing a development of convergence between intellectual and disciplinary traditions since the 1980s, exploring the complementarity of qualitative and quantitative, humanistic and social scientific versions of the research process. Defined negatively, the field is pre-paradigmatic, lacking a consensual set of methodological, epistemological, and ontological premises (Kuhn 1970; → Paradigm). But, defined positively, the field has been the site of a dialogue between, in a weak sense, *paradigms* in the plural. While the process is open-ended, the evidence of publications and conferences suggests that convergence may continue, and might be consolidated with reference to epistemological and meta-theoretical frameworks that recognize the explanatory value of both qualitative and quantitative research; for example, scientific realism (Jensen 2002a; Pavitt 1999).

With each turn of the research dialogue, communication theory and “philosophy,” in the sense of an epistemology implying ontological as well as political commitments, are of the essence. In Figure 1, the epistemological level relates back to the empirical object of analysis, assuming preliminary definitions and justifications of what constitutes relevant “objects” of analysis, and what amounts to admissible forms of “analysis” enabling inferences beyond that object. Some venues of international communication research have tended to treat “theory” and “philosophy” as separate concerns and themes apart from the core business of research. To exemplify, the Philosophy of Communication Division of the International Communication Association, was formed in 1985 around “twin elements: theorizing communication and politicizing philosophy” (Erni 2005, 374). In practice, the division has been “a home to philosophical, critical, and cultural studies work” (Erni 2005, 371), implicitly as well as explicitly questioning theoretical and methodological premises in other divisions of that association. One of its dilemmas has been how to carve out a niche for theoretical reflection without remaining a niche to particular theories,

resisting a perceived scientific hegemony while engaging its “others” in dialogue. Certainly, it takes two parties to communicate, and reflexivity on the part of both parties to achieve a dialogue. An important challenge for future communication studies, across divisions, niches, and traditions, is how to accommodate and address communication theory and philosophy of communication, not as separate or self-sufficient practices, but as necessary conditions of communication research as such.

The struggles over research agendas, theoretical concepts, and analytical procedures, in the end, are part of the double hermeneutics of communication research. Communication studies examine a contested reality of communicative practices that everyday communicators as well as scholars care deeply about. An additional reason for theorizing communication at the beginning of the twenty-first century is its changing technological and institutional frameworks. The media – books, the press, broadcasting, the Internet – have long served as resources for reflexivity and deliberation on a macro-social scale, as institutions-to-think-with (Douglas 1987); digitization is affecting the very constituents and processes of these institutions – the who, what, and how of communication. Communication research performs the role of a second-order institution-to-think-with, without guarantees that its findings and insights may be adopted in either subsequent scholarship or everyday communicative practices. The communication of communication studies is an uncertain and unfinished business.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communicology ▶ Constructivism ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ▶ Design ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Discourse ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Emic vs Etic Research ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Fiction ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Genre ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ▶ Information ▶ Information Science ▶ Interaction ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Intermediality ▶ Knowledge Interests ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Media ▶ Media Economy ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Paradigm ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Realism ▶ Remediation ▶ Rhetoric and Psychology ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Structuralism ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Verstehen vs Erklären

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## Communicator Style

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Communicator style has been conceptualized by Robert Norton (1978, 99) “to mean the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts to signal how literal meaning should be taken, interpreted, filtered, or understood.” Norton was influenced by well over 2,000 years of scholarly writings concentrating upon speech, linguistic, and writing styles, by the soft magic skills of magicians (Norton 1981), and by such prominent social scientists as Leary (1957), Schutz (1958), Bales (1970), and Sandell (1977), all of whom mentioned or alluded to communication styles within their theoretical writings. Perhaps he was most influenced by the work of Bateson (1972) and those scholars and therapists who belonged or were in some way connected to the “interactional view of human behavior” (Wilder & Weakland 1981).

On this basis Norton (1983) viewed communication style as a complex concept that consisted of two interdependent perspectives. First, communication style “is seen as a function that gives form to content” (1983, 19). The way we communicate provides information as to how the interactants are to understand the messages being delivered. “Style messages are signals about how to process content. Style adds to the color, tone, rhythm, and distinct ‘signature’ of one’s communication” (Norton & Brenders 1996, 75). The second sense of communication style “is seen as a function of consistently recurring communicative associations” (Norton 1983, 19). In this second sense, patterns of communication style can be observed by others and these others can associate certain styles of communicating across various contexts and time to an individual. Thus, individuals can, over time, become associated with certain styles of communicating.

As individuals attempt to make sense out of any message that is being sent, they must simultaneously interpret both the content of the message and the style with which the message is sent. This process of interpreting the content message and the style message is referred to as the *Law of Gestalt Formation* (Norton & Brenders 1996). The style component of the whole message is always powerful because communication style can change the primary message. “The form giving style can negate, contradict, exaggerate, dilute, disconfirm, play down, make nonsensical, obscure, intensify, or weaken the

primary message” (Norton & Brenders 1996, 78). It is important to note that nonverbal information (→ Facial Expressions) is not only a significant part of the selected information a sender uses to trigger meaning, but also a very powerful component of communication style when the nonverbal behaviors are interpreted as significantly reinforcing the message.

Norton (1978) operationally defined communicator style in terms of nine independent variables: dominant, dramatic, contentious, animated, impression leaving, relaxed, attentive, open, and friendly. The dependent variable within communicator style was named *communicator image* and represented an evaluative consequent: “I am a good communicator.” Each style or a combination of styles can be viewed as adding to an overall sense of what constitutes being a good communicator. On the basis of his conceptualization of communication style, Norton developed a 51-item *Communicator Style Measure* utilizing smallest space analysis (→ Research Methods; Scales and Indices). Each of the nine independent variables (styles) was measured using a five-item scale. Communicator image, the dependent variable, was measured utilizing a six-item scale.

Several of the communication style sub-constructs have received additional attention within the literature. In some instances, this additional research attention resulted in the development of expanded measuring instruments for specific style domains. Norton (1983) reviewed numerous investigations concerning the open, dramatic, and attentive styles of communicating. In each instance, these particular styles are associated with competencies in accomplishing certain interpersonal and relational outcomes. For instance, the *open communication style* is linked to self-disclosure (→ Disclosure in Health Communication). However, while openness can be a very successful strategy with which to accelerate the development of an intimate relationship by revealing information previously not known, and can signal that the individual desires to move the relationship beyond the current state by his or her willingness to share previously unknown information, at times openness can also be rather intimidating and inappropriate. An individual who is too open at the beginning of a relational encounter can damage or at least slow down the process of relationship development. In addition, different communicative situations require different levels of openness. Norton (1983, 128) writes “the open communicator allows the possibility of either rejection or disconfirmation, but, at the same time, invites affirmation.”

The *dramatic communicator* “vividly, emotionally, or strikingly signals that literal meaning is being highlighted or emphasized” (Norton 1983, 130). An individual who has the ability to utilize a dramatic style of communicating is able to signal that the content that is being shared is important. Tension can be created or elevated with the use of the dramatic style. A great deal of research has investigated the use of the dramatic style by teachers within classroom settings (→ Teacher Communication Style; Teacher Socio-Communicative Style). Positive student and teacher outcomes have been associated with the appropriate use of a dramatic communication style by instructors, and several studies have attempted not only to provide a causal link between a teacher’s dramatic style and effective teaching but also to improve teaching by changing the behavior of ineffective teachers.

The *attentive style of communication* “signals an ongoing willingness to provide feedback that the person’s messages are being processed in an alert and/or understanding



manner” (Norton 1983, 154). Attentiveness within any communicative encounter provides positive reinforcement to the sender of a message, signaling that the receiver is actively listening to the message, actively processing the message, and prepared to engage the sender in the conversation. Attentiveness has been strongly linked to competent communication skills. A good communicator is an individual who has an attentive style (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

Although Norton’s Communicator Style Measure has not been frequently utilized by communication scholars to capture style within interactions, the conceptualization of the style component of a communication encounter has been investigated within such diverse contexts as the patient–physician interactions (→ Health Communication; Patient–Provider Communication), management–worker interactions (→ Organizational Communication), and various family relationships such as parent–child, sibling, grandparent–grandchild, marital interaction, and therapeutic interactions (→ Family Communication Patterns; Intergenerational Communication; Marital Communication). In each of these relational contexts, the way one verbally and paraverbally interacts has been shown to be a significant predictor of successful interaction.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Disclosure in Health Communication ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Health Communication ▶ Intergenerational Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Message Production ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Patient–Provider Communication ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style

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# Communicology

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Communicology is a tradition in the human sciences studying → discourse in all of its semiotic and phenomenological manifestations of embodied consciousness and of practice in the world of other people and their environment.

Since the foundational work during the 1950s by Jürgen Ruesch in *Semiotic approaches to human relations* (1972), and by Ruesch and Gregory Bateson in *Communication* (1968), a widely accepted understanding of the networks of human discourse includes: (1) the intrapersonal level (or psychiatric/aesthetic domain), (2) the interpersonal level (or social domain), (3) the group level (or cultural domain), and (4) the intergroup level (or transcultural domain). These interconnected network levels contain the process outlined by Roman Jakobson's theory of human communication (1971, 1972). In homage to the phenomenological work in → semiotics and normative logics by Charles S. Peirce and Edmund Husserl (→ Phenomenology), Jakobson explicated the relationship between an Addresser who expresses (emotive function) and an Addressee who perceives (conative function) a commonly shared Message (poetic function), Code (meta-linguistic function), Contact (phatic function), and Context (referential function) (→ Models of Communication). Operating on at least one of the four levels of discourse, these functions jointly constitute a semiotic world of phenomenological experience, what Yuri M. Lotman (1994) termed the *semiosphere*.

Communicology is the critical study of discourse and practice, especially the expressive body as mediated by the perception of cultural signs and codes. It uses the methodology of *semiotic phenomenology* in which the expressive body discloses cultural codes, and cultural codes shape the perceptive body – an ongoing, dialectical, complex helix of twists and turns constituting the reflectivity, reversibility, and reflexivity of consciousness and experience. Communicology theoretically and practically engages in the description, reduction, and interpretation of cultural phenomena as part of a transdisciplinary understanding. The scientific research result is description (rather than prediction) in which → validity and → reliability are logical constructs based in the necessary and sufficient conditions of discovered systems (codes), both eidetic (based in consciousness) and empirical (based in experience). The methodology is inherently heuristic (semiotic) and recursive (phenomenological), being a logic in the tradition of Cassirer, Peirce, and Husserl (→ Qualitative Methodology; Research Methods).

Historically, the tradition of communicology emerged in 1931 when the American anthropologist and linguist Edward Sapir wrote the entry “Communication” for *The encyclopedia of the social sciences*. Here, Sapir was building on the monumental work of Ernst Cassirer (1957, 1995), who also wrote on the logic of the human sciences. Cassirer's semiotic phenomenology and Edmund Husserl's existential phenomenology were elaborated in Germany by Karl Bühler and in the USA by Wilbur Marshall Urban (1971). Urban's doctoral student Hubert Griggs Alexander was a graduate student in philosophy at Yale University studying under Ernst Cassirer, Edward Sapir, and Benjamin Lee Whorf. In 1967, Alexander wrote the first textbook devoted to explicating the connection among

communication, linguistics, and logic (1988). Then in 1978, Joseph A. DeVito wrote the first university textbook, *Communicology*. Last, the theoretical and applied foundation of communicology as a scientific discipline took firm shape with the publication of *The human science of communicology* (Lanigan 1992).

At the intercultural level, “communicology” is now widely used as an appropriate translation for the French *communicologie* and the German *Kommunikologie*. This shift in labels to communicology and communicologist has been due largely to a systematic effort to avoid misunderstanding. The confusion was encouraged by the historical ambiguity of what is “information theory” and “communication theory.” While Shannon and Weaver (1949) appeared to conflate the two, Jakobson proposed in 1960 to distinguish *communication theory* from information theory with reference to the semiotic and phenomenological aspects of human communication, as studied by the “rhetorical branch of linguistics.” Clarity of usage was not soon achieved, although a serious effort was made at the First World Congress on Communication Science, held in Berlin in 1977, following upon the 1976 publication of DeVito’s *Communicology*. Communicology now clearly distinguishes itself from information theory on the ground that communicology studies the full range of semiotic levels in discourse, i.e., the semantic (meaning), syntactic (patterning), and pragmatic (practicing) forms of discourse. By comparison, information theory (sometimes called *signal theory*) is more typically concerned with the syntactic parameters of physical signal systems (informatics), e.g., the electrical impulses that make up computer memory (→ Information). Thus, communicology proposes to replace “communication theorist” by *communicologist*. Suggested by DeVito in 1978 and by Vilém Flusser, who first used the term “communicology” in lectures during 1977–1978 and published his mature theory in 1996 as *Kommunikologie* (→ Photography), the name was acknowledged worldwide by the proceedings at the First World Congress on Communication and Semiotics in Monterey, Mexico, in 1993. The institutionalization of the terms “communicology” and “communicologist” took place in 2000 with the founding of the International Communicology Institute.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Discourse ▶ Information ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Photography ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Reliability ▶ Research Methods ▶ Semiotics ▶ Structuralism ▶ Validity

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## Communities of Practice

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Communities of practice are groups of people who share similar interests and objectives. In pursuing these interests and objectives, they make use of common practices, work with similar artifacts, and use a common language (Wenger 1998). The concept of community of practice was first coined by Lave and Wenger (1991), when discussing learning processes within a new framework, that of “situated learning.” In that publication, the authors explored the activities of certain groups, such as of nondrinking alcoholics, butchers, and midwives in Yucutan. These groups were related in their modes of learning, characterized by Lave and Wenger as “apprenticeship.” The authors conceived knowledge as a social process in which individuals participated in mutual learning at different levels, which depended on their authority in the group – whether a person was a newcomer or a long-timer. It was specifically the process through which a newcomer learnt from the more longstanding members that comprised the core notion of community of practice. Lave and Wenger named this process Legitimate Peripheral Participation (LLP).

### THE CONCEPT

In a later publication, Wenger (1998) systematized and elaborated on the concept. There, the author maintained that communities of practice arose through mutual engagement in

a joint enterprise, and that individuals shared repertoires of many kinds (e.g., routines, vocabulary, discourse). It is within this redefinition of communities of practice that Wenger claims that they can be defined along three main *dimensions*: (1) what they are about a joint enterprise that is understood by all members and is continually negotiated among them; (2) how it functions (people become members through shared practices and are related to each other by getting involved in those practices); (3) what it produces (the members build a shared repertoire).

Communities of practice are everywhere and have existed for as long as human beings have learnt together, and most of us are normally members of a large number of them (at work, school, home, in political and leisure activities, among others). In some of these communities we are core members, whereas in others we are more peripheral participants. We might have just joined some of them (newcomers), or we might have been members of some for as long as we have existed (long-timers). Some characteristics of communities of practice also vary. A community of practice can comprise a small or a large number of people. It might have a name, even though many do not. It might be intentionally formed or have incidentally arisen as a result of members' interactions. Moreover, it might last for years, going through different types of members, or it might exist intensely for only a short period of time. It might be formal or informal, be local or cover different countries. The community might meet face to face or only online, through computer-mediated communications technologies (CMCs). Furthermore, a community is constantly renewed as new members join the group and old members leave.

The concept of community of practice has been largely debated in the field of education (Barton & Tusting 2005). Community of practice steers away from the idea that learning is an individual process. Instead, it understands learning as social and as something that comes largely from our experience in participating in everyday life in different communities. In other words, "situated learning" presupposes that learning calls for a process of engagement in a community of practice. The concept has been extended since the early 1990s and applied to environments other than educational ones. It has gained special ground within organizational contexts and in the field of linguistics, especially in studies of language and gender.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Several attempts were made to redefine community of practice in ways that would be more relevant to the business environment. The main interest in doing so stems from the later publication by Wenger (1998), in which the author publishes an ethnographic study of a claims-processing unit in a large insurance company. Within organizational development, community of practice (commonly abbreviated within this area as CoP) is employed to demonstrate that performing a task demands more than technical knowledge or certain skills. Within organizational development, community of practice is defined as the process of social learning that takes place when people who have shared interest in a problem get together to collaborate over some time in order to discuss ideas, propose solutions, and create innovations. Scholars within that field claim that communities of practice can improve organizational performance as they create organizational value. Lesser and Storck (2001) suggest that one should think of a community as an engine for the

development of “social capital,” understood here as the stock of connections, relationships, and institutions that create a society’s social relations, as well as what binds them together and makes cooperation possible, such as trust, shared values, and shared behaviors.

On what concerns organizational development, Lesser and Storck (2001) go on defending the view that the social capital created within communities of practice leads to behavioral change that positively influences business performance. The characteristics associated with communities of practice within organizations are: connections among practitioners who might or not be co-located; relationships that build a sense of trust and mutual obligation; and a common language and context that can be shared by community members. Among the positive business outcomes identified by the authors through the formation and development of communities of practice are: decrease in the learning curve of employees; prevention of “reinvention” of the wheel; and generation of new ideas for products and services.

### LANGUAGE, DISCOURSE, AND GENDER

Language and discourse are crucial in the development of communities of practice, specifically in what concerns the development of shared repertoires. Users develop certain *linguistic and interactional patterns* as they join in activities in the several communities of practice of which they are members. Each community develops a set of linguistic and interactional behaviors which function in somewhat different ways in other communities. Within the field of linguistics, the concept of community of practice has been quite fruitful for studies that focus on the relationships between language and gender. Instead of seeing gender as a set of practices imposed on the individual by society, as essentialist approaches have done, a large number of scholars have turned to a position in which they see gender as a more dynamic construct that is learnt and performed, and that can subverted. It is a perspective on language and gender that finds its roots in the everyday social practices of specific communities (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1992).

Studies of *language and gender* within this perspective claim that gender identity is negotiated through the individuals’ interactions in specific communities. The concept, as used by scholars interested in language and gender, emphasizes the mutability of the linguistic expression of gender identity and assumes that intra-gender differences are natural (Ostermann 2003). Following the direction taken by various feminists, the body of research on language and gender in the 1990s began to defy essentialist links between gender and language that see gender as given (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1995). Since the early 1990s, in particular, there has been an increasing interest in considering a complex of issues involved in “doing” gender in language (Bergvall 1999). Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet’s essay “Think practically and look locally: Language and gender as community-based practice” (1992) was influential in shifting the focus of language and gender research to diversity. The essay criticized the binarism of “*women’s style*” and “*men’s style*.” By building upon the concept of community of practice, Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992, 1995) argue that gender identity too is negotiated through the individuals’ participation in communities of practice, and that even though individual and community identity might be experienced as constant, they are always going through changes.

Studies on language and gender through the perspective of community of practice (in the studies of language and gender, commonly abbreviated as CofP) assume that gender is “occasioned” within interaction (Stokoe 1998) and thus in order to understand gender one has to look at the situatedness of talk (Ostermann 2003). More specifically, one has to look for explanations by ethnographically investigating a particular community in their range of practices; i.e., not only their ways of talking, but also their beliefs, values, and power relations (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; → Gender and Discourse).

As Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1995) explain, the way people talk reflects and creates their association with some people and dissociation from others, their acceptance of some social practices and rejection of others, their claim to membership in some communities and not others. “And within communities of practice, the continual modification of common ways of speaking provides a touchstone for the process of construction of forms of group identity” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 1995, 470–471). Thus, becoming a member of a community of practice – such as at a new job – takes learning, and requires the “acquisition of sociolinguistic competence,” which is the process of gaining control over the discourse practices constitutive of that specific community (Holmes & Meyerhoff 1999, 174). In other words, by gaining more and more competence also in the discursive practices of a specific community of practice, an individual moves from a more peripheral position to a more central position in his or her membership.

A number of studies within the field of language and gender have been developed through the framework of community of practice, such as the investigation of the communities of practice in the lives of pregnant women, the negotiation of identity among female nerds at a US high school, the analysis of the discursive practices of all-female institutions that address violence against women in Brazil, and the investigation of the language used by women in a sexual assault tribunal.

Even though not directly addressed by its proponents, the concept of communities of practice seems to have a strong relationship to the concept of “habitus” (Bourdieu 1991), especially in what concerns the construction of shared practices and repertoires. *Habitus* represents the practices that are involved in structuring a person’s world and her or his place in it. It is particularly this aspect of habitus that is related to the concept of communities of practice. Thus, it is the situated, occasioned communities of practice in which groups mutually engage in specific activities, and in somewhat intensive ways, that give rise to a particular set of socially shared linguistic and nonlinguistic practices (Ostermann 2003).

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Cultural Patterns and Communication ► Gender and Discourse ► Identities and Discourse ► Intergroup Contact and Communication ► Language and Social Interaction ► Power and Discourse ► Small Talk and Gossip

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## Community Integration

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Community integration is a compound concept derived from sociology that addresses the two central questions of (1) how communities are formed, reproduce, grow, and change; and (2) what continually integrates or binds them together. The field of communications adds a third dimension, asking (3) what role communication plays in forming, sustaining, and integrating communities. Through much of the twentieth century, scholarship on community integration was primarily concerned with communities in geographic space. But, as virtual communities began to grow at the turn of the millennium, a fourth dimension of scholarship began to inquire about (4) the relationship between place-based and virtual communities.

The original questions on community integration draw directly from sociology's classical scholars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Tönnies, Durkheim, and Simmel. These questions were directly taken up and developed by the research program of the Chicago School of sociology in the first third of the twentieth century, especially by Robert Park, through the elaboration of the concept of the urban community as an ecology.

Communication scholarship has more often focused on specific processes that contribute to or predict local community integration, usually understood as the relationship between community integration and interest in local issues and civic participation. Beginning in the early 1970s, community began to be reconceptualized in network terms,



which reshaped core understandings of community integration. Further, the concept of the community as a “network of networks” laid the ground for the study of virtual community that would begin in the mid-1990s, as well as the relationship between communities grounded in space and place, and virtual communities.

## COMMUNITY

The idea of community forms the cultural background of our understanding of who we are (identity) and how we should relate to one another (solidarity). At the same time, “community” is a series of social structures with multiple, complex, and changing boundaries. From these elements – the cultural and normative understanding of community identity and solidarity, and the physical, spatial, and social-structural frameworks in which we live – humans develop a larger sense of community.

In his classical statement, Tönnies (1887/1963) distinguished between *Gemeinschaft*, the densely knit realm of intimate, private, and personal relations of family, kin, neighborhood, and traditional community, and *Gesellschaft*, the arena of society in which social relations are constructed from impersonal ties of contract and association. In the web of *Gemeinschaft*, individuals “remain essentially united in spite of all separating factors, whereas in *Gesellschaft* they are essentially separated in spite of all uniting factors” (Tönnies 1887/1963, 65). Tönnies deployed these types historically, seeing modern social development as a movement from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*, or from tightly integrated unitary societies to those based on looser ties of contract. Integration of *Gesellschaft*-like societies is directly dependent on both micro- and macro-social communication processes.

## INTEGRATION

Integration refers to the process through which social groups form and continue (or fail) to be bound together. Integration theory derives from the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, who proposed the distinction between “mechanical” and “organic” solidarity (Durkheim 1893/1960). *Mechanical solidarity* is produced in elementary societies, in which social groups are segmented and similarities rather than differences among groups predominate. Religious life forms what Durkheim calls a “collective consciousness,” which reflects core group values. As segmented societies develop, they become more complex, particularly driven by the development of towns and cities. A new division of labor develops, in which groups become more specialized. This leads to a new type of *organic solidarity*, in which groups function analogously to organs in the body: as living systems that have a distinct identity, but are defined and coordinated by higher level organic systems.

Integration, then, for Durkheim is closely tied to the division of labor, understood here as a system of specialized functions that can exist in science, politics, or religion, as well as the economy. This differentiation drives modern societies, as well as binding them together into a system of mutual dependencies. Further, integration for Durkheim has a moral dimension, as the division of labor integrates, but does not entirely displace, earlier forms of the collective consciousness. The fundamental ideas that groups hold about society and each other are generated through social integration. Integration is the central process holding society together.

## COMMUNITY INTEGRATION AND THE ROLE OF MEDIA

A central question is whether *types of communities* themselves correspond to forms of integration. Broadly, are all small towns of the *Gesellschaft* type, characterized by high levels of “mechanical” integration? Are large cities inherently subject to *Gemeinschaft*-like forms of division, integrated by an organic division of labor? Bender (1978) has cautioned that these are *types of social relations* that can be found, with variations, in all formations of modern societies, even in highly individuated societies of the postmodern type. Both Tönnies and Durkheim recognized that communication played a central role in shaping the form of community and integration, but neither placed it at the center of analysis. That was left to Robert Park and the Chicago School of sociology.

Park’s classic work “The city” (1915) founded the Chicago School of urban ecology. For Park, the driving force of urban ecology was the competition for land and the spatial patterns it generated, but he believed that cultural values – group norms and moral organization – should be studied for their contribution to community integration. Following Cooley (1909), Park observed that primary communities of face-to-face relations were being replaced by secondary relations of association, which are maintained through looser communication networks.

Park’s work can be considered as the major source and foundation for the study of *local media and community integration*. Park held that communication makes consensus possible among independent social groups, both within the culture of a given society and between generations. He also viewed → public opinion as a source of social control and rated the newspaper as the foremost agency to “control, enlighten and exploit public opinion” (Park 1915). However, for Park, change took place largely through shifting ecological forces among the natural areas of the city.

While making the general theoretical link between communication and integration, the Chicago School left no clear and unambiguous guidelines for later empirical research in this area. Janowitz (1952/1967), of the postwar “Second Chicago School,” more carefully located the media sources of community integration. He considered the metropolitan daily newspaper as being incapable of integrating the diverse interests and views of the modern urban community. Instead, it was the local urban weeklies covering more homogeneous neighborhoods that performed this function. If the local neighborhood press promoted consensus, then conflict and change in the city was worked out through associations and institutions bridging areas of the community. Building on Park, Janowitz provided a clearer path that mass communication scholars could follow.

## MASS COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

The concept of community integration entered the mass communication research field in 1960 with studies that examined the weekly press and a sense of urban communities (Edelstein & Larsen 1960). Based on the earlier work of Janowitz, the intensity of reading an urban weekly newspaper was related to various assumed indicators of social integration: (1) length of residence, (2) perceptions of feeling about being a part of community, and (3) neighborliness. Home ownership, a presumed influence on community ties, was found to be a good predictor of newspaper readership. Absence of community ties appears to reduce metropolitan newspaper readership.

Stamm and colleagues, in a series of studies beginning in the early 1980s, distinguished between community identification and involvement, and found that newcomers who put more effort into integrating themselves into the community sought information from many different sources. Jeffres and colleagues found that the length of residence and anticipation of remaining in the neighborhood were related to readership of suburban and community weeklies. Those who watched local television news more often placed more importance on ties to the neighborhood. Finnegan and Viswanath (1988) found that neighborhood involvement was related to spending more time reading the community weekly. Friedland and McLeod (1999) reviewed this literature and proposed a multilevel model for media and community integration, taking structural, processual, and normative variables into account.

The *designs and methods* used in integration research have been primarily sample surveys of individual citizens in single communities (→ Research Methods; Sampling, Random; Survey). Although important evidence has been generated from such designs, it is obvious that they are not sufficient to answer many crucial questions about the role of media in community integration. Communities are more than the sum of individual citizens' behaviors. An important exception has been the research program of Tichenor and colleagues (1980), who conducted comparative studies of community pluralism and media using content analysis and interviews with editors and citizens.

### **SOCIAL NETWORK STUDIES AND COMMUNICATIVE INTEGRATION**

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the sociological study of community began to shift to the study of networks. Fischer et al. (1977) argue that interpersonal networks must be empirically studied, separate from theories of decline of unitary *Gemeinschaft*-like communities (→ Communication Networks; Network Analysis; Social Networks). Fischer argues that interpersonal networks form "personal communities," in which ties of intimacy to friends, neighbors, and others take on voluntary and associative qualities (→ Interpersonal Communication). In this view, community is not lost, but redefined through more multiplex, networked, social relations. Wellman, in a series of studies, redefined the community as a "network of networks" and, in parallel to Fischer, described the formation of networked individualism, in which individuals' personal networks, rather than larger group formations, are the foundation of community.

The idea of networked individualism leads directly to the question of how we understand the *boundaries between local and virtual communities*. If communities are no longer primarily defined by some combination of larger group relations (*Gemeinschaft* and mechanical solidarity) or those corporate relations characterized by association, professionalism, contract, and the division of labor (*Gesellschaft* and organic solidarity), but rather by the interlocking webs of individual networks, then it becomes more clear how genuine virtual communities form on the world wide web (→ Internet). The wide-ranging networks of web participants, linked by both common interest and weak social ties that potentially ramify globally, form an alternative to integration in locally bounded, physical community. Community integration is no longer limited by territory. Indeed, the global communication environment itself becomes the widest possible boundary for community integration, including strong and weak personal ties, group relationships, associational networks, and social solidarity.

However, as Friedland and McLeod (1999) have argued, local and regional structures continue to have considerable power in defining both the structures of community and media, and the framework of experience in which integration takes place, even in countries where the Internet has most highly penetrated. Rather than a simple expansion upward of the communicative boundaries of integration, the emerging structures of community integration require even greater attention to the multiple and embedded forms that community takes. Networked individualism frees individuals from the constraint of the most parochial local ties, but simultaneously opens new possibilities for local and regional association and solidarity. Increasingly, the study of community integration in communication will focus not simply on the border between the virtual and the local, but the entire networked communication ecology within which community integration occurs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Community Structure Model ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Network Analysis ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Social Networks ▶ Survey ▶ Virtual Communities

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# Community Media

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The concept of community media is understood as referring to small media institutions, often specifically to radio stations established in the so-called developing countries. These media have become ever more popular in recent years. However, the history of the concept is considerably older and more complicated (→ Development Communication; Rural Development; Radio for Development).

The objective of community media is to create local affinity, and through it, development (→ Development Communication: Africa; Development Communication: Asia). The aim is to “give voice to the voiceless.” Community media are established and run by local people, most often by local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or development projects. However, they are often at least partly financed by external sources. Most community media do not use advertising, and in none of them does advertising income cover the costs of running the station.

In this context, local means either geographical “proximity,” that is, people living close to each other, or “locality,” more abstractly referring to people sharing a joint interest in politics, culture, or a hobby. The mode of addressing the public should be participatory (→ Participatory Communication). Although the concept of community media today mainly refers to non-industrialized societies in the so-called south, locality as a component for mediated communication does not belong to the southern media alone. Creating community through local media has been a cherished characteristic of mass media since the nineteenth century. However, in broadcasting the focus was predominantly on the national level, especially in Europe, where public service broadcasting was developed (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). The idea was to include local variation and attention to local minorities within a national frame. On the print side, local and regional → newspapers have survived side by side with national papers. They have had their own voice. Some papers devote a few pages each day to particular communities, others offer local attachments, and, most recently, the local axis has been strengthened via net versions focusing on local communities. The aim is to strengthen the links, both with local readers and local advertisers.

## FORMS OF COMMUNITY MEDIA IN VARIOUS WORLD REGIONS

In Mozambique, there are roughly 80 community media centers, and in South Africa there are more than 120 community radio stations. In South Africa, the notion of community media is established by the Constitution. Having both multiplicity of mediascape and “voice to the voiceless” as ideals in the implementation of democracy via media policy, the South African Constitution states that three forms of media should be found in the country: public media, private media, and community media (→ Citizens’ Media). Also, in countries such as Ghana, Zambia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, community media were established in great numbers during the 1990s. In Mozambique and Sri Lanka, community media have grown into multimedia centers/→ telecenters, including not only a radio station but also other forms of mediated communication. The development of low-cost technology, such

as the simputer (low-cost computer), has made it easier to run community media, because of the decrease in equipment costs.

In the 1970s, another form of community media was very popular, especially in Africa. So-called *rural papers* were in fact reading material produced to support nationwide literacy campaigns in several sub-Saharan countries, especially in Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia. The papers were produced by teachers, and their content was strongly educational. Later on, some rural papers were developed into so-called village papers, which paid less attention to literacy matters and, in fact, had ideals very similar to the community radio in the 1990s. The rural papers were predominantly financed by foreign donors, and their sustainability was low.

Another form of community media, in the 1970s and 1980s, were the so-called *radio forums* in several African countries. Educational programs were broadcast by a national radio station, and people in the villages gathered to listen to them. After the program, a discussion forum was established. An extension agent led the discussion. The goal was to bring a national campaign to the local level and, simultaneously, to allow bottom-up reactions to the campaign goals (→ Development Communication Campaigns; South Africa: Media System).

In several Indian states, newspapers that have found their urban markets declining or stagnating have recently looked for new markets via local editions. In this “newspaper revolution” of the new millennium, village-level agents and civil society organizations have worked both as development actors and news gatherers in rural communities (→ India: Media System).

In Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, a movement to re-establish local radio stations emerged, based on ideals similar to the community media movement in the so-called south: to give voice to the voiceless, and to focus more strongly on local communities in all programming. The actors interested in local broadcasting were NGOs, trade unions, and commercial entrepreneurs. In most countries, national regulatory bodies were favorable toward this development and provided local stations with limited frequencies. But only a few local radio stations really became genuine local voices. Most developed into youth stations with very limited programming, mainly relaying international popular music charts to local audiences. In the case of radio and television broadcasting, local advertising markets have also been far weaker than local papers.

Most community radio stations and multimedia centers have an *educational policy line*. They reserve broadcasting time for campaign and project promotion as well as for talks with educational experts, and they invite local authorities to relay their messages. The dominant programming format is a live talk show or a studio discussion. In the most organized community media systems, such as in South Africa, Mozambique, or Thailand, a system of mini-scale news collection and preparation of news bulletins is organized as well. In some countries, the royalties for the music broadcast by these stations is organized via a system of annual payments to a fund supporting domestic musicians. However, quite often community radio stations break music → copyright regulations.

## PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION, OWNERSHIP, AND CONTROL

In an ideal case, the community media activity is based on volunteer work. Media monitoring studies have shown that community media, for example during election campaigns, have supplied the community with markedly different material than national media (→ Election Campaign Communication). However, local community leadership

might not at all be interested in the medium, or there might even be local-level forces that openly oppose the radio when it is considered critical of local governance.

Although the ideal is that community media would promote varied development activities in the community, communities frequently find their stations being taken over by one or a few projects. Sometimes women run the station, sometimes unemployed youth. Quite often senior citizens tend to keep a distance from the station, often due to the type of music played but also due to the topics discussed in the programs: family planning or sensitive political issues may be considered “improper” by them. Thus, the community media rarely offer a genuine solution for development problems, but provide a new tool for the strong ones in local communities.

Throughout the decades, the UN system, and especially → UNESCO, has been promoting community media ideology in different parts of the world. Today, international advocacy organs such as AMARC (World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters) promote community media, and, on the national level, most countries have councils or organs which try to strengthen the field. In the case of community radio or community television, NGOs acquire a frequency from a public authority, which also sets certain conditions for the license. The reach is most often around 50 kilometers, and the station is allowed to broadcast 12, 16, or 24 hours per day.

Local ownership has been found essential for smooth operation of these stations. The local community has to feel that the station is its own medium, otherwise it does not succeed. Most community radio stations in the developing countries are run by volunteers, although there are some stations that hardly differ from local commercial stations, neither by their output nor by their personnel structures. In South Africa, several such stations are found: for example, the oldest South African community radio station, Bush Radio in Cape Town, and Radio Juzi in Soweto. On the other hand, some community radio stations, especially in West Africa, have kept their strongly educational character. They focus almost entirely on health, agriculture, women’s status, and good governance.

Today, the community media belong to the local favorites of northern funding agencies such as national aid organizations, UNESCO, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), because they have been found useful agents of both development and democracy (→ Development Institutions). In several countries and several elections, the community media have formed a profile different from the national media, whether publicly or privately owned (→ Ownership in the Media). The community media are closer to the public, and they allow local voices to express themselves. They have been found especially powerful in raising the status of women in communities. In Africa, women produce 80 percent of the continent’s food, but still the economic power has been in men’s hands. The community radio has been a strong supporter of, e.g., village-level mini-loans given to women (→ Development, Gender, and Communication).

Unfortunately, the status of the community media in developing countries is far from stable. Being off-air and again on-air is very usual for community stations. Although the cost of basic radio equipment has gone down, it still must be acquired. In many countries, public authorities provide basic equipment; in some others, foreign NGOs have been active in donating equipment; George Soros and the Open Society Institute have actively promoted the establishment of community media. Some critics have raised the question of whether donated equipment also brings with it regulative ties. All stations have

financial problems even after acquiring the equipment, because the running of a radio station requires funding even if the activity is based on volunteer work.

Volunteers tend to leave the stations for salary-based positions as soon as they have gathered basic skills. The great demand for programs has also become obvious. Programs produced and delivered free of charge have been welcomed. "Programs in brown envelopes" are a common phenomenon. So far, such programs have been produced by NGOs, but in principle, such practice also opens an avenue for outside pressures. In some countries, also government organs have started to either produce programs on certain development themes for community radio stations or sponsored the stations to produce programs on developmental issues. Again, concerns about embedded regulation have been raised.

### PROSPECTS

In general, structural policies promoting local communication have been achieved fairly easily although some governmental organs have remained suspicious of the oppositional potential embedded in local media. For example, an early UNESCO-sponsored community radio station in Homa Bay, Kenya was not allowed to operate for more than a few days in the 1970s before being closed down by the national broadcasting company, because it was located in an area known to be in opposition to the government then in power. However, a far more difficult issue is keeping the content focus on the local level. A mass medium, local, regional, or national, engulfs enormous volumes of material, and the production of genuinely local material has often turned out to be impossible. Further, volunteer forces do not have the tolerance and capacity to run local media on a continuous basis, however enthusiastic they are in the beginning. Thus, the establishment of a media institution in a very poor community often appears impossible, although it may be very good for the promotion of the well-being of the community.

*Digitization* and other forms of new technology enable interactive communication in broadcasting, and the Internet strengthens another form of community: instead of geographic closeness, Interest-based community media can reach to people living far apart, but sharing the same interests in politics, art, music, or sports. Again, a historical equivalent can be found. Several centuries ago, monks in monasteries living far apart from each other exchanged information and knowledge through newsletters written in Latin. The speed of the exchange was counted in months and years, but the idea was the same as the interest-based communities debating via the Internet. In the future, the concept of locality might have a far broader meaning than the one exercised in community media in developing countries (→ Communication Technology and Development).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Copyright ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Development Communication: Asia ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Development Institutions ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ India: Media System ▶ Newspaper ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Rural Development ▶ South Africa: Media System ▶ Telecenters ▶ UNESCO



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## **Community Structure Model**

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The community structure model explores links among community characteristics, media content, and effects of exposure to media content from a system perspective. Focusing on macro-constructs associated with media content and media effects, the community structure approach rejects the perspective that all studies of media and audiences can be reduced to the individual level of psychological phenomena. "Structure" refers to community – typically city-level – demographics or other aggregate measures of community identity, membership, participation, production, consumption, or access, ranging from income or education to health-care access (e.g., number of physicians per 100,000 population or percent municipal spending on health-care; → Exposure to Communication Content; Media Effects; Community Integration; Community Media).

Community integration structure modeling mirrors the injunction of the University of Chicago's Robert Park in the early twentieth century to study not only the impact of *media* on society (the prevailing model in media studies), but also the impact of *society* on media. Beginning with the famous studies of Philip Tichenor, George Donohue, and Clarice Olien (1973, 1980) and their several generations of graduate students, the community structure model has been transformed over several decades.

### **EXPANDING GEOGRAPHIC AND COMPARATIVE FOCUS**

Initial studies focused on cities or counties in Minnesota, with size and structure of the community as major predictors of news variation (Tichenor et al. 1980). This "structural pluralism" theory proposed that larger, more diverse, socially pluralistic communities would be associated with greater diversity in media, especially newspaper reporting on critical issues (→ Plurality). Elsewhere, Keith Stamm focused on one or two cities, linking community structure and political attitudes (1985).

From the mid-1990s onward, the theoretical work organized by Demers and Viswanath (1999) and national and international databases such as Lexis-Nexis and NewsBank helped generate propositions for broader historical and geographic sample frames,

illustrated in political communication work associating community social capital, media, and civic engagement; and in empirical, cross-city US national comparisons of structure and reporting (Pollock 2007). Indeed, cross-national analyses using entire nation-states as units of structure and leading national newspapers for news content have found significant links between gross domestic product, infant mortality rate or literacy rate, and reporting perspectives on United Nations' and nongovernmental organizations' fights against AIDS (Gratale et al. 2005; Eisenberg et al. 2006).

## MAJOR PROPOSITIONS

### Media Can Reinforce Social Control or Accommodate/Affirm Social Change

Traditional community structure studies have linked structure to “social control”: media reinforcing existing social, political, and economic configurations. In this tradition, media are highly responsive to powerful groups, functioning as “guard dogs” (Donohue et al. 1995) to generally serve elite over mass interests (Tichenor et al. 1980; Demers & Viswanath 1999, 4). An alternative view is that media can also be agents of social change, articulated strongly since the mid-1990s: “Mass mediated messages typically reinforce dominant norms and institutions, but relative to other social institutions – including the church, school, state and family – media have a greater capacity to criticize . . . established institutions and traditions (Demers & Viswanath 1999, 3).

Recent studies have confirmed specific links between community structure and reporting on social change. Using a media vector measure combining article prominence and direction, cross-sectional national studies of US cities find significant, positive associations between poverty or unemployment levels and reporting opposing capital punishment or supporting a patients' bill of rights (a “vulnerability” hypothesis); or between higher levels of privilege (education, income, professionals) in a city and support for women's rights (in Anita Hill's congressional testimony in the Clarence Thomas hearings) or stem cell research (a “buffer” hypothesis); or between higher levels of privilege and opposition to tobacco advertising to children (a “violated buffer” hypothesis); or between specific stakeholders, e.g., proportions of families with children of specific ages, or voting Democratic or Republican, and reporting on such issues as gun control or trying juveniles as adults (all “stakeholder” hypotheses; Pollock 2007). Other studies trace connections between percent Hispanic and variations in reporting on immigration reform, or percent Catholic and varied journalism regarding ethnic profiling, gay marriage, and gay adoption.

### Multiplicity of Structural Indicators

While early scholarship focused substantially on city size as an indicator of structural differentiation or structural pluralism, more recent work measures the *size of interest groups* (Hertog & McLeod 1995) and diversity, in particular ethnic diversity, estimating how much media either support (Gandy 1999; Hindman 1999; Hindman et al. 1999; Viswanath & Arora 2000) or (since 9/11) oppose ethnic or religious groups (Pollock et al. 2005). In addition, online US Census databases and more widely available marketing and

demographic data illuminate innovative, comparative US city structural measures of inequality, power, and stakeholder interests: privilege (college educated, family income of \$100,000+, professional occupational status); health-care access; vulnerability (unemployed or below the poverty level); and stakeholders (percent Catholic, evangelical, or mainline protestant; voting Democratic or Republican in presidential elections; different age/generation groups, families with children of various ages; percent African-American or Hispanic, or Arabic or Farsi speaking (Pollock & Yulis 2004; Pollock 2007).

### MODERN RESEARCH CHALLENGES

The community structure model is poised to move beyond initial curiosity to a robust theoretical framework addressing mainly four challenges. First, longitudinal and time series analyses (e.g., HIV/AIDS coverage over time in Pollock 2007, ch. 8) can validate the explanatory and predictive power of cross-sectional structural theory (→ Longitudinal Analysis). Second, flexible definitions of community reach beyond traditional political/geographic boundaries, using modern GIS data resources to compare smaller and larger geopolitical units and to embrace “networking communities” or cross-community network measures, a focus of work on tobacco control in Colorado (Buller et al. 2001, 357–372) and a variety of cyberspace communities defined by multiple relationships, measured by hyperlinks or memberships in chatrooms, mapping multiple “interpretive communities” (Berkowitz & TerKeurst 1999).

Third, → public opinion as a proxy for behavior combines different levels of analysis, whether structure and public opinion (Paek et al. 2005) or structure and leadership composition (Armstrong 2006). Fourth, combining community structure with other powerful theories such as diffusion or → social marketing theory can yield new propositions on the alignment of media with political and social change, helping target communities most receptive to messages promoting healthier behaviors (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Health Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Community Integration ▶ Community Media ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Health Communication and Journalism ▶ Health Disparities, Communication in ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Social Marketing

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## Community Video

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Community video is one form of → community media. It is best defined by its objective, which is to stimulate participation in public affairs. The defining phrase might be “with the people, not just about them.”

John Grierson, in the late 1920s in the UK, began writing about its possibilities. His persuasive pen and leadership attracted young and able acolytes, who created the British documentary movement (→ Documentary Film, History of). Their purpose was “to put the working man on the screen,” not as an object of derision and comedy, which had been customary since Shakespeare created his sextet of “rude mechanics” in *Midsummer night’s dream*, but as fully responsible members of society.

Grierson’s persuasive polemics spread this idea throughout the empire, and it took root most impressively in Canada. In 1939 he was invited to transform the National Film Board into an instrument to unite the country to fight World War II. He and his staff used this as an opportunity to involve viewers in their own local affairs as well. Discussion leaders were sent to rural circuits, held screenings in trade union halls and church basements, and created town meetings – and always the purpose of the gatherings was to promote civic action (→ Social Movements and Communication). A similar pattern of use was developing in the early post-war years in the United States by adult educators, particularly those involved in changing attitudes and practices about healthcare and agriculture. Whatever the precise medium, be it 16 mm film, slides, posters, or audio recordings, the objective was to stimulate group discussion, leading to action for social change (→ Cinema; Photography; Poster; Radio; Radio: Social History).

A great leap forward, ideologically, came in the late 1960s, again at the Canadian Film Board, when young community oriented staff members, working with progressive government officials, created a program they called *Challenge for change* (→ Public Broadcasting, History of). They hypothesized that if ordinary citizens were involved in making media themselves, they would be more strongly influenced to make change happen. To hand was the Porta-pack, the first generation of consumer video-tape rigs (→ Video). Their early experiments were recorded on film. *VTR St Jacques* (1969), a half-hour program, ends with this essential voice-over: “Yes, but all this [the making and showing of the video recordings] is just a tool. The objective is to get people to act.”

In the decades since then, community media has found far more sophisticated devices, but objectives have remained much the same. The continued development of video technology has led to increasingly lower costs and more accessible equipment and production, the growth of media art centers that facilitated independent video production, and the expansion of amateur video production for personal and public purposes (→ Amateur Photography and Movies). Small portable video cameras were carried to neighborhood meetings, labor union actions, and protest demonstrations. At the same time, videographers were roughly divided between those who would foreground the professional quality and artistic excellence of the work itself and those who thought these things should be secondary to the primary purpose, which was to involve people in their own transformation. This tension can still be seen daily in the programming on the more than 3,000 community cable channels in the US that have been created since the early 1970s by those who believe the medium can foster community empowerment (→ Cable Television; Public Access Television).

In the 1970s and 1980s, as cable television systems were introduced to the nation’s urban areas, monopoly franchise agreements with municipalities routinely called for the inclusion and support of public access community cable channels. A portion of these channels were organized and funded to provide video training to community members

and to cablecast amateur, citizen-produced, community-based programming. Early experiments with these new opportunities, such as *Paper Tiger Television* in New York, drew a great deal of attention from community activist groups, and sometime led to satellite distribution of cable access programming nationally through networks such as *Deep Dish Television* (Halleck 2002). But the anchor for public cable access systems has been purely local community programming, from programs covering local high school sports to those featuring ethnic community music or dance, or those presenting weekly interviews with local community leaders.

Some *critics* have gone so far as to say there is a danger inherent in the medium of video itself. Television, they say, is usually viewed passively, in isolation, with the chance for active participation limited to the occasional invitation to “call in” or vote via an Internet poll. On the → Internet, video has tended to be restricted to brief presentations, due to memory and speed limitations, and has tended toward the curiosity or prank, revealing funny or taboo glimpses of embarrassing moments or shocking behavior on political websites or YouTube. Yet the power of exposing well-selected and provocative samples of reality on the screen to a group of viewers who share common problems and objectives is also widely recognized, particularly by community organizers. Experience has taught them that, to contradict → Marshall McLuhan’s well-worn phrase, the medium is *not* the message.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cinema ▶ Community Media ▶ Documentary Film, History of ▶ Internet ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Photography ▶ Poster ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Radio ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Video

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## **Comparative Research**

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A specific comparative research methodology is known in most social sciences. Its definition often refers to countries and cultures at the same time, because cultural differences

*between* countries can be rather small (e.g., in Scandinavian countries), whereas very different cultural or ethnic groups may live *within* one country (e.g., minorities in the United States). Comparative studies have their problems on every level of research, i.e., from theory to types of research questions, → operationalization, instruments, sampling, and interpretation of results (→ Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom).

The major problem in comparative research, regardless of the discipline, is that all aspects of the analysis from theory to datasets may vary in definitions and/or categories. As the objects to compare usually belong to different systemic contexts, the establishment of equivalence and comparability is thus a major challenge of comparative research. This is often “operationalized” as functional equivalence, i.e., the functionality of the research objects within the different system contexts must be equivalent. Neither equivalence nor its absence, “bias,” can be presumed. It has to be analyzed and tested for on all the different levels of the research process.

### EQUIVALENCE AND BIAS

Equivalence has to be analyzed and established on at least three levels: on the levels of the construct, the item, and the method (van de Vijver & Tanzer 1997). Whenever a test on any of these levels shows negative results, a cultural bias is supposable. Thus, bias on these three levels can be described as the opposite of equivalence. Van de Vijver and Leung (1997) define bias as the variance within certain variables or indicators that can only be caused by culturally unspecific measurement. For example, a media content analysis could examine the amount of foreign affairs coverage in one variable, by measuring the length of newspaper articles. If, however, → newspaper articles in country A are generally longer than they are in country B, irrespective of their topic, the result of a sum or mean index of foreign affairs coverage would almost inevitably lead to the conclusion that the amount of foreign affairs coverage in country A is higher than in country B. This outcome would be hardly surprising and not in focus with the research question, because the countries’ average amount of foreign affairs coverage is not related to the national average length of articles. To avoid cultural bias, the results must be standardized or weighted, for example by the mean article length.

To find out whether construct equivalence can be assumed, the researcher will generally require external data and rather complex procedures of culture-specific construct validation(s). Ideally, this includes analyses of the external structure, i.e., theoretical references to other constructs, as well as an examination of the latent or internal structure. The internal structure consists of the relationships between the construct’s sub-dimensions. It can be tested using confirmatory → factor analyses, multidimensional scaling, or item analyses. Equivalence can be assumed if the construct validation for every culture has been successful and if the internal and external structures are identical in every country. However, it has to be stated that it is hardly possible to prove construct equivalence beyond any doubts (Wirth & Kolb 2004).

Even with a given construct equivalence, bias can still occur on the item level. The verbalization of items in → surveys and of → definitions and categories in content analyses can cause bias due to culture-specific connotations (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). Item bias is mostly evoked by bad, in the sense of

nonequivalent, translation or by culture-specific questions and categories (van de Vijver & Leung 1997). Compared to the complex procedures discussed in the case of construct equivalence, the testing for item bias is rather simple (once construct equivalence has been established): Persons from different cultures who take the same positions or ranks on an imaginary construct scale must show the same answering attitude toward every item that measures the construct. Statistically, the correlation of the single items with the total (sum) score have to be identical in every culture, as  $\rightarrow$  test theory generally uses the total score to estimate the position of any individual on the construct scale. In brief, equivalence on the item level is established whenever the same sub-dimensions or issues can be used to explain the same theoretical construct in every country (Wirth & Kolb 2004).

When the instruments are ready for application, method equivalence comes to the fore. Method equivalence consists of sample equivalence, instrument equivalence, and administration equivalence. Violation of any of these equivalences produces a method bias. Sample equivalence refers to an equivalent selection of subjects or units of analysis. Instrument equivalence deals with the examination of whether people in every culture agree to take part in the study equivalently, and whether they are used to the instruments equivalently (Lauf & Peter 2001). Finally, a bias on the administration level can occur due to culture-specific attitudes of the interviewers that might produce culture-specific answers. Another source of administration bias could be found in socio-demographic differences between the various national interviewer teams (van de Vijver & Tanzer 1997).

### THE ROLE OF THEORY

Theory plays a major role in three dimensions when looking for a comparative research strategy: theoretical diversity, theory drivenness, and contextual factors (Wirth & Kolb 2004). Swanson (1992) distinguishes between three principal strategies of dealing with international theoretical diversity. A common possibility is called the *avoidance strategy*. Many international comparisons are made by teams that come from one culture or nation only. Usually, their research interests are restricted to their own (scientific) socialization. Within this monocultural context, broad approaches cannot be applied and “intertheoretical” questions cannot be answered. This strategy includes atheoretical and untheoretical (referring to one national theory) studies with or without contextualization (van den Vijver & Leung 2000; Wirth & Kolb 2004).

The *pretheoretical strategy* tries to avoid cultural and theoretical bias in another way: these studies are undertaken without a strict theoretical background until results are to be interpreted. The advantage of this strategy lies in the exploration, i.e., in developing new theories. Although, following the strict principles of critical rationalism, because of the missing theoretical background the proving of theoretical deduced hypotheses is not applicable (Popper 1994;  $\rightarrow$  Critical Rationalism; Hypothesis). Most of the results remain on a descriptive level and never reach theoretical diversity. Besides, the instruments for pretheoretical studies must be almost “holistic,” in order to integrate every theoretical construct conceivable for the interpretation. These studies are mostly contextualized and can, thus, become rather extensive (Swanson 1992).

Finally, when a research team develops a meta-theoretical orientation to build a framework for the basic theories and research questions, the data can be analyzed using different



theoretical backgrounds. This *meta-theoretical strategy* allows the extensive use of all data and contextual factors, producing, however, quite a variety of often very different results, which are not easily summarized in one report (Swanson 1992). It is obvious that the higher is the level of theoretical diversity, the greater has to be the effort for construct equivalence.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Van de Vijver and Leung (1996, 1997) distinguish between two types of research questions: *structure-oriented questions* are mostly interested in the relationship between certain variables, whereas *level-oriented questions* focus on the parameter values. If, for example, a knowledge gap study analyzes the relationship between the knowledge gained from → television news by recipients with high and low socio-economic status (SES) in the UK and the US, the question is structure oriented, because the focus is on a national relationship of knowledge indices and the mean gain of knowledge is not taken into account (→ Knowledge Gap Effects; Scales and Indices). Usually, structure-oriented data require → correlation or → regression analyses. If the main interest of the study is a comparison of the mean gain of knowledge of people with low SES in the UK and the US, the research question is level oriented, because the two knowledge indices of the two nations are to be compared. In this case, one would most probably use analyses of variance. The risk for cultural bias is the same for both kinds of research questions.

## EMIC AND ETIC STRATEGIES OF OPERATIONALIZATION

Before the operationalization of an international comparison, the research team has to analyze construct equivalence to prove comparability. In the case of missing internal construct equivalence, the construct cannot be measured equivalently in every country. The decision of whether or not to use the same instruments in every country does not have any impact on this problem of missing construct equivalence. An *emic* approach could solve this problem (→ Emic vs Etic Research). The operationalization for the measurement of the construct(s) is developed nationally, so that the culture-specific adequacy of each of the national instruments will be high. Comparison on the construct level remains possible, even though the instruments vary culturally, because functional equivalence has been established on the construct level by the culture-specific measurement. In general, this procedure will even be possible if national instruments already exist.

As measurement differs from culture to culture, the integration of the national results can be very difficult. Strictly speaking, this disadvantage of emic studies only allows for the interpretation of a structure-oriented outcome with a thorny validation process. It has to be proven that the measurements with different indicators on different scales really lead to data on equivalent constructs. By using external reference data from every culture, complex weighting and standardization procedures can possibly lead to valid equalization of levels and variance (van de Vijver & Leung 1996, 1997). In research practice, emic measuring and data analysis is often used to cast light on cultural differences.

If construct equivalence can be assumed after an in-depth analysis, an *etic* modus operandi could be recommended. In this logic, approaching the different cultures by using

the same or a slightly adapted instrument is valid because the constructs are “functioning” equally in every culture. Consequently, an emic proceeding should most probably come to similar instruments in every culture. Reciprocally, an etic approach must lead to bias and measurement artifacts when applied under the circumstances of missing construct equivalence.

It is obvious that the advantages of emic proceedings are not only the adequate measurement of culture-specific elements, but also the possible inclusion of, e.g., idiographic elements of each culture. Thus, this approach can be seen as a compromise of → qualitative and → quantitative methodologies. Sometimes comparative researchers suggest analyzing cultural processes in a holistic way without crushing them into variables; psychometric, quantitative data collection would be suitable for similar cultures only. As an objection to this simplification, one should remember the emic approach’s potential to provide the researchers with comparable data, as described above. In contrast, holistic analyses produce culture-specific outcomes that will not be comparable; the problem of equivalence and bias has only been moved to the interpretation of results.

### ADAPTATION OF THE INSTRUMENTS

Difficulties in establishing equivalence are regularly linked to linguistic problems. How can a researcher try to establish functional equivalence without knowledge of every language of the cultures under examination? For a linguistic adaptation of the theoretical background as well as for the instruments, one can again discriminate between “more etic” and “more emic” approaches.

*Translation-oriented approaches* produce two translated versions of the text: one in the “foreign” language and one after retranslation into the original language. The latter version can be compared to the original version to evaluate the translation. Note that this method produces etically formed instruments, which can only work whenever functional equivalence has been established on every superior level. Van de Vijver and Tanzer (1997) call this procedure application of an instrument in another language. In a “more emic” cultural adaptation, cultural singularities can be included if, e.g., culture-specific connotations are counterbalanced by a different item formulation.

Purely emic approaches develop entirely culture-specific instruments without translation. Two assembly approaches are available (van de Vijver & Tanzer 1997). First, in order to maintain the *committee approach*, an international interdisciplinary group of experts of the cultures, languages, and research field decides whether the instruments are to be formed culture-specifically or whether a cultural adaptation will be sufficient. Second, the *dual-focus approach* tries to find a compromise between literal, grammatical, syntactical, and construct equivalence. Native speakers and/or bilinguals arrange the different language versions together with the research team in a multistep procedure (Erkut et al. 1999).

### SAMPLING

Usually, researchers use personal preference and accessibility of data to select the countries or cultures to study. This kind of forming of an atheoretical sample avoids many

problems (but not cultural bias!). At the same time, it ignores some advantages. Przeworski and Teune (1970) suggest two systematic and theory-driven approaches. The quasi-experimental *most similar systems design* tries to stress cultural differences (→ Experiment, Natural; Experimental Design). To minimize the possible causes for the differences, those countries are chosen that are the “most similar,” so that the few dissimilarities between these countries are most likely to be the reason for the different outcomes. Whenever the hypotheses highlight intercultural similarities, the *most different systems design* is appropriate. Here, in a kind of turned-around quasi-experimental logic, the focus lies on similarities between cultures, even though these differ in the greatest possible way (Kolb 2004; Wirth & Kolb 2004).

Random sampling and representativeness play a minor role in international comparisons. The number of states in the world is limited and a normal distribution for the social factors under examination, i.e., the precondition of random sampling, cannot be assumed. Moreover, many statistical methods meet problems when applied under the condition of a low number of cases (Hartmann 1995).

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

Given the presented conceptual and methodological problems of international research, special care must be taken over data analysis and the interpretation of results. As the implementation of every single variable of relevance is hardly accomplishable in international research, the documentation of methods, work process, and data analysis is even more important here than in single-culture studies. Thus, the evaluation of the results must ensue in additional studies. At any rate, an intensive use of different statistical analyses beyond the “general” comparison of arithmetic means can lead to further validation of the results and especially of the interpretation. Van de Vijver and Leung (1997) present a widespread summary of data analysis procedures, including structure- and level-oriented approaches, examples of SPSS syntax, and references.

Following Przeworski’s and Teune’s research strategies (1970), results of comparative research can be classified into differences and similarities between the research objects. For both types, Kohn (1989) introduces two separate ways of interpretation. Intercultural similarities seem to be easier to interpret, at first glance. The difficulties emerge when regarding equivalence on the one hand (i.e., there may be covert cultural differences within culturally biased similarities), and when regarding the causes of similarities on the other. The causes will be especially hard to determine in the case of “most different” countries, as different combinations of different indicators can theoretically produce the same results. Esser (2000) refers to diverse theoretical backgrounds that will lead either to differences (e.g., action-theoretically based micro-research) or to similarities (e.g., system-theoretically oriented macro-approaches). In general, the starting point of Przeworski and Teune (1970) seems to be the easier way to come to interesting results and interpretations, using the quasi-experimental approach for “most similar systems with different outcome.” In addition to the advantages of causal interpretation, the “most similar” systems are likely to be equivalent from the top level of the construct to the bottom level of indicators and items. “Controlling” other influences can minimize methodological problems and makes analysis and interpretation more valid.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Definition ▶ Emic vs Etic Research ▶ Experiment, Natural ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Generalizability ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Newspaper ▶ Operationalization ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Reliability ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Survey ▶ Television ▶ Test Theory ▶ Triangulation

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# Competition in Media Systems

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Media enterprises operating under various types of media systems globally all have incentives to perform well and compete with other media units and types for resources and a variety of rewards. The differences in how performance is determined and types of rewards provided vary among the systems, however.

Media systems result from a variety of factors, including political ideology and structures, the nature and structure of the economy, and history and culture, which produce the environment that influences the structure of media, their financing, and the constraints they face in nations. Although these factors differ in individual nations, there are sufficient commonalities in approaches across nations to categorize systems. Although there are no universally agreed upon classifications of media systems, Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm's classic volume *Four theories of the press* (1956), Hachten and Hachten's *World news prism* (1981), and the more contemporary *Comparing media systems* (2004) by Hallin and Mancini provide reasonable means for categorizing systems.

The classic 1956 classification of "four theories" asserts that media systems can be classified by the relationships between states and media, and that libertarian, authoritarian, Soviet communist, and social responsibility theories explain four different types of systems. During the past half century, however, critics have argued that the social responsibility approach exists in theory only, and no national media system is based upon it. In addition, the model was biased toward North America and western and eastern European systems, ignoring systems in the remainder of the world.

In the 1980s, Hachten addressed those criticisms and argued that authoritarian, communist, western, revolutionary, and developmental media systems could be identified globally. These conceptualizations have been relatively unchallenged except for efforts made by a number of scholars to parse the libertarian/western systems into sub-categories to explain different political, economic, and social contexts of media. Picard (1985) revealed differences in approaches in western Europe, with strong democratic socialist ideologies. More recently, Hallin and Mancini (2004) argued that three models – polarist/pluralist, democratic corporatist, and liberal – explain differences among nations pursuing the western/libertarian influenced media systems. Although these approaches to western/libertarian systems provide more clarity in state–press relations, the nature of competition under them does not differ dramatically so these need not be considered independently here (→ Political Communication Systems).

## THE NATURE OF COMPETITION

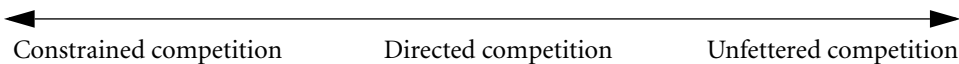
Competition involves rivalry among entities, whether they are organisms, animals, persons, or organizations. Competition is a fundamental principle of existence and central to understanding biology, ecology, economics, and business. Rivalry exists when resources necessary for development and survival must be divided, and this produces natural contention for those resources. The results of competition are not neutral: some

competitors benefit from the outcome; some are harmed by the outcome; in certain cases all competitors may be harmed.

The natural sciences recognize that rivalry for water, food, territory, and mating rights are the bases of competition among and between species and their members. Vegetation and creatures that are strongest, fastest, resistant to threats, resilient, and adaptive receive the rewards of greater resource consumption, survival, and propagation. In this competitive environment, those species that are fittest survive whereas weaker competitors face diminishment, specialize, or disappear.

Organizations, including media, also experience similar rivalry and struggle to survive and develop. This occurs because the environment in which they operate contains a pool of resources needed and desirable for the organization. Because available resources are not unlimited, media compete among themselves and with other organizations and entities for the resources. Rivalry exists for financial resources, access to influence, ability to distribute widely, attention of users, and a variety of other factors. It is recognized that competition yields rewards to organizations and users of their goods or services in terms of efficiency, innovation, prices, and service. The nature of competition and its roles in gaining advantage for and survival of some media under different media systems cannot be ignored. Regardless of system, competition results among entities as each struggles to gain resources, claim territory, and achieve its goals. Competition is used to determine issues involving resource allocation, choice, quality, service, and price in organizations.

There are essentially *three different degrees of competition* on a continuum from constrained competition to directed competition to unfettered competition. It must be recognized that there is no such thing as completely constrained or completely unfettered competition involving media because policies, substitutes, and differentiation limit their full development. Instead, there are differing degrees to which the elements of these polarities present themselves.



Individual nations evidence different patterns of competition among organizations and the various media are often treated differently because they are seen as having different roles and effects. As a result, one cannot classify media systems directly on this continuum, although authoritarian, communist, and revolutionary media systems overall tend toward the constrained and directed competition side, the developmental system more toward the central directed competition area, and the western/libertarian has tendencies toward directed competition and unfettered competition.

Media are organizations that compete for limited resources and rewards. There are *intrinsic and extrinsic rewards* provided in the differing media systems and those rewards are related to the values held in the various systems. Intrinsic rewards involve nonmonetary, often psychological, rewards, such as knowing one has done a good job, that one has served society well, that one's efforts matter, and that one is appreciated. Extrinsic rewards include such things as financial gain and influence, as well as extrinsic symbolic rewards such as awards and notoriety that recognize intrinsic rewards.

Competition takes place for basic resources needed to create and sustain media enterprises, whether they are commercial or not-for-profit entities. The fundamental

resource is the capital necessary to acquire personnel, equipment, and facilities to begin operations, and then further resources in the form of regular revenue are necessary to sustain those operations. Capital can be provided by the state, the market, other organizations, or individuals, and sustaining funds can come from those sources in forms of allocations, grants, sales of the media product, or advertising sales. In many cases more than one source may be involved.

Once a media enterprise is established, it *competes for the attention, time, and purchases of media users* (→ Attention; Audience). Because the abilities of individuals to make temporal and monetary expenditures are limited, they can be conceived as scarce resources for which media organizations compete. The performance of media enterprises in meeting the needs and expectations of these consumers/audiences creates the reward of having more readers, viewers, listeners, or users for one medium or one media unit than another. Size of audience is significant because it creates additional rewards. It provides financial rewards of greater income and, if the media organization operates in a commercial system, it provides financial rewards resulting from the ability to attract more advertising and advertising revenue.

A concurrent reward is that size is related to significance, so one reward of size is improved access to important or notable persons, state agencies, and other institutions and entities in society. This improved access can be developed into prestige and influence that allows the media organization to affect opinion and the behavior of institutions and individuals.

When more than one media unit or medium exist, these compete between and among themselves for financial resources, attention, and influence. This competition takes place as intermedia and intramedia competition. *Intermedia competition* involves rivalry among different types of media such as television and newspapers, whereas *intramedia competition* involves contention among units of the same medium, such as two radio stations. Both types of competition occur simultaneously.

Intermedia competition primarily involves competition for the attention and time of audiences, and sometimes for expenditures by consumers. In commercially funded media, competition for the sale of advertising involves each medium's abilities to attract audiences, differing characteristics of the media involved, and their ability to deliver certain types of advertising messages. The competition among media is not equal, however, because of wide differences in availability and demand factors. The highest levels of competition for audiences and advertisers' times and expenditures take place among units of the same medium (intramedia competition), particularly if they serve the same audiences in the same locations.

Related to issues of competition are *issues of resource dependence*, that is, reliance on certain resources of survival. This may include sources of finance or revenue, required supplies and services, informational resources, etc. When dependency on a particular resource is high, significant efforts are made in preserving access to the resource, and organizations will aggressively compete with rivals for preferential quantities. In doing so, they may displace consumption by rivals or seek to exclude them from the resource.

In media, another form of competition related to these influence issues involves competition among ideas. The concept of the "*marketplace of ideas*" is an imperfect metaphor describing discussion and debate of differing ideas and issues as a forum for public deliberation and determining which is most meritorious.

It is possible for entities to gain competitive advantages that make it easier for them to sustain themselves than their rivals. This occurs when factors in the environment treat them preferentially or when they have adapted and developed in such a way that they are able to command more resources than their competitors. These advantages include factors such as preferential treatment by providers of required financial resources and supplies, better media products, social recognition, and better distribution abilities.

### COMPETITION IN DIFFERENT SYSTEMS

Competition is present in all media systems; however, the types of competition and how they are manifest differ significantly. The rewards that rivals seek to acquire through successful competition also differ in the systems. Using the model of media systems suggested by Hachten, we can consider those differences.

In the *authoritarian media system*, rulers control the media by determining who may operate media, the structure of media competition, and content. Exclusive rights to operate media are controlled by the leader. The ruler may operate the media as part of the regime, permit individuals supportive of the government to do so, or permit other individuals to operate media as long as they do not challenge the regime (→ Censorship). In authoritarian systems, competition for attention, time, and monetary expenditures of media users exists. If media are permitted to operate commercially and advertising funding is available, competition for that revenue may exist if more than one unit of the same media exist or multiple commercially funded media types are available. In authoritarian systems, there is no competition in ideas that threaten the ruling power. There are both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards in the authoritarian system, including beneficial relations with the ruler that bring preferential treatment such as access to the corridors of power, government financial support or actions that diminish the strength of or remove the threat of other competitors, and prestige.

In the *communist system*, competition exists for state or party financial resources to establish and operate media, as well as for the attention and time of media audiences and expenditures they make to purchase media products. Because there are often multiple media units and media types, there is competition among providers of content for prestige and influence. Access to information is not contested because media are seen as functionaries of government and the party; however, access to the most important leaders is limited primarily to the largest and most prestigious media so there is competition to grow and develop preferential status. Competition involving noncommunist ideas does not exist in the system, but competition among ideas within the range permitted does take place. Rewards in the communist media system include provision of greater financial resources by administrative authorities, wider distribution ability, prestige, notoriety, and better access to leaders. Intrinsic rewards related to service to society and the cause, and quality content, also exist.

In the *western/libertarian system* media enterprises are independent from government and operate as commercial private companies, not-for-profit firms, and public broadcasting entities (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). Media compete for capital and there is competition among providers for the attention, time, and financial expenditures of users. When advertising funding is sought, there is competition for that revenue. In



this system, there is competition among ideas, although industry structures can sometimes constrain it. Rewards in the western/libertarian system include financial rewards for commercial media and additional funding for noncommercial media, prestige, and access to persons of power and notoriety, as well as intrinsic rewards related to public service and quality.

Media in a *revolutionary system* are politically related, serving the purposes of revolutionaries to mobilize inhabitants to support their causes (→ Activist Media). In this system, there is competition for money from the revolutionary organization as well as for the attention and time of media users. That rivalry is often constrained by limited number of media present overall and limited number of revolutionary media. There is little competition for access to persons of power because revolutionary media are typically the mouthpieces of leadership. There is, however, great competition to become influential to the public. Rewards are primarily intrinsic and related to the success of the revolutionary movement.

Competition in *development media systems* includes competition for capital and the attention and time of media users, which is usually constrained by a limited number of existing media because of lack of available resources. There is often little competition to gain access to developmental authorities because they utilize these media for their social purposes. There are financial rewards in this system as the economic conditions improve, and rewards related to prestige and access to government officials. Intrinsic rewards for quality work and public service are also present (→ Participatory Communication; Development Communication; Development Journalism).

Competition thus exists in different media systems and is not merely a function of a market economy. Under all systems, financial resources must be allocated among competing requests for expenditures, and audiences must be attracted to expend their time and, often, money. Competition takes place among media for access to important persons and events and to gain prestige and influence. A more sophisticated view of the breadth and depth of competition needs to be embraced when considering rivalry within different media systems in order to understand the complexities of interactions in those systems.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Attention ▶ Audience ▶ Censorship ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Media Policy ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems

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## Compliance Gaining

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The term *compliance gaining* refers to interactions during which one participant attempts to convince a second to perform some desired behavior that the second otherwise might not perform. Seeking and resisting compliance are common within personal relationships: an adolescent asks her parents if she can borrow the family automobile; a husband ignores his wife's hints to take out the garbage; a young man suggests to the person he has been dating that they see each other exclusively. Compliance-gaining episodes also occur within professional relationships: A mid-level manager asks her boss to reorganize which employees report directly to her; a dentist emphasizes the need for a patient to floss regularly; college students assigned to work together on a class project pressure a wayward member to complete his part of the project.

Attempts to seek or resist compliance vary in several respects. The person seeking compliance (called *the message source*) may state explicitly what the other party should do or may only hint at the desired behavior. Message sources may or may not explain why the requested action needs to be performed, how it benefits particular parties, or how it can be performed without undue effort; they also may express indebtedness, promise rewards, reference rules, or threaten undesired consequences. The person whose compliance is being sought (called *the message target*) may comply almost immediately, or instead may ask questions, suggest alternatives to the requested action, offer excuses for not complying, or refuse without explanation. The target person may comply only so long as the message source is watching or may internalize a rationale and continue performing the desired behavior over time.

Compliance gaining is an important area of study for three reasons. First, attempts to seek compliance can have important instrumental outcomes. When parents ask their adolescent child never to get into a friend's automobile if that friend has been drinking alcohol, at some point lives literally may depend on the effectiveness of this influence attempt. Second, seeking and resisting compliance are acts that reflect and impact relational closeness, commitment, and satisfaction. Couples who frequently enact demand-withdrawal sequences, for example, report lower levels of marital satisfaction (Caughlin & Huston 2002). Third, compliance-gaining interactions reveal interesting individual, situational, and cultural variations. Different people often approach the "same" situation in distinct ways, and most recognize that different situations call for different approaches. Two generations of research have explored the ways in which individuals seek and resist compliance.

### FIRST GENERATION: STRATEGY SELECTION

The term *compliance gaining* is closely associated with a research program initiated by Gerald R. Miller, a long-time faculty member at Michigan State University. Miller distinguished compliance gaining from traditional studies of → persuasion in two respects (Miller & Burgoon 1978). First, persuasion scholars usually focus on public and mass communication contexts, whereas compliance-gaining research focuses on dyadic and group contexts (→ Interaction; Interpersonal Communication). Although most people are as likely to encounter persuasive attempts from their friends, families, and co-workers as from product advertisements or political campaigns, up to that time persuasive attempts in personal relationships had been largely ignored. Second, persuasion scholars typically focus on message effects, whereas compliance-gaining research *focuses on message choices*. Persuasion scholars have investigated the impact of fear appeals, one-sided versus two-sided arguments, and other factors on audience attitudes. The same “effects” focus is present in research on sequential request strategies such as the “foot-in-the-door” technique (Cialdini 2001). As a complement, Miller called for research on how persons actually select means for seeking compliance.

Miller et al. (1977) conducted the pioneering investigation of compliance-gaining strategy selection. The “MBRS study” (from the initial letters of the authors’ names) was couched within a developmental view of interpersonal communication that assumes that individuals want to maintain a sense of control over their social environments and hence acquire strategies for influencing others (→ Relational Control). Message sources make predictions about the probable outcomes of using various compliance-seeking strategies, but the information used to do so changes as relationships develop. When the parties share an interpersonal relationship (i.e., know each other well), sources can rely on “psychological-level” knowledge – that is, information about how the message target is unique or different from others – to predict how the target will react to alternative strategies. In contrast, when the parties have a non-interpersonal relationship (i.e., do not know each other well), sources must rely primarily on sociological and cultural-level knowledge – that is, information about how the target is similar to others – to predict the target’s reactions. Drawing on this view, Miller et al. asked what compliance-seeking strategies were available to message sources, how their choice of strategies varied across situations, and whether there were stable individual differences in strategy choice.

Beyond setting a research agenda, the MBRS study provided a methodological exemplar for subsequent compliance-gaining research (→ Research Methods). Participants read hypothetical scenarios that varied in terms of whether the source-target relationship was interpersonal/non-interpersonal and whether the request would have short-term/long-term relational consequences and rated how likely they would be to use 16 different compliance-seeking strategies in each scenario. Participants reported greater likelihood of using a wide variety of compliance-seeking strategies when they shared a non-interpersonal rather than an interpersonal relationship with the target.

The MBRS study spurred a large body of research on how people select compliance-seeking strategies. Scholars debated the comprehensiveness of different typologies of compliance-seeking strategies and created typologies of resistance strategies. They mapped perceived dimensions of compliance-gaining situations, showing that people

distinguished the source–target relationship (e.g., intimacy, power) and the nature of the request (e.g., benefits to self and other, likelihood of target resistance). Scholars investigated whether situational dimensions predicted strategy choice, and searched for individual differences (e.g., dogmatism) in strategy selection as well as sex and gender differences.

Despite this flurry of activity, first-generation studies identified few reliable predictors of compliance-seeking strategy choice. Three criticisms of such studies eventually emerged (Kellermann 1994; Wilson 2002). First, studies were employing ad hoc lists of strategies that varied in numerous, unspecified ways. This made it difficult to discern whether strategies rated as likely to be used differed from less likely strategies in terms of explicitness, reasoning, politeness, or some other quality. Second, researchers were implicitly adopting implausible models of how individuals produce messages during conversation, assuming that individuals weighed predicted outcomes for many strategies and then “selected” and enacted an optimal strategy. Third, researchers vigorously debated the validity of having people rate their likelihood of using pre-formulated compliance-seeking strategies in response to hypothetical scenarios.

Research modeled on the MBRS study greatly diminished after 1990, and some claimed the study of compliance gaining did so as well. Such claims, however, conflate the phenomenon of compliance gaining with a particular research program (Wilson 1998). A newer generation of research continues to explore how individuals seek and resist compliance.

## SECOND GENERATION: GOAL PURSUIT

Contemporary compliance-gaining research is not couched within one research program; rather, research is guided by *several theoretical perspectives* (e.g., attribution/appraisal theories, politeness theories, the goal–plan–action model, → message design logics) and methods (e.g., written responses to scenarios, observation of naturalistic episodes) (Wilson 1998). Despite this diversity, contemporary research shares three assumptions about participants in compliance-gaining interactions. First, participants frame influence episodes around goals. Individuals do not conceive of their actions in broad terms such as “seeking or resisting compliance,” but in more specific terms such as asking for assistance, giving advice/avoiding unwanted advice, seeking permission, or getting others to follow the rules (Dillard 2004).

Second, people typically pursue *multiple, potentially conflicting, goals* when seeking or resisting compliance. Employees may want to change their boss’s ideas about a presentation, but they want to do so without alienating the boss. A college student wants to give her sister advice, but also wants to avoid sounding parental. Multiple goals arise from general norms for efficient and polite interaction as well as cultural definitions of roles and selves (Fitch 1998; Kim 2002).

Third, people have fleeting awareness of their goals and manage limits in their ability to adapt quickly. Because altering abstract plans requires cognitive effort, people may repeat the same argument in a louder tone of voice when more fundamental shifts in what goal is being sought or how it is being sought are needed (Berger 1997). Negative affect or stress may compound such tendencies.

Aside from assumptions about people, second-generation compliance-gaining studies share *four qualities*. First, contemporary research is *meaning-centered*, exploring how participants themselves conceive of seeking and resisting compliance. Participants achieve shared definitions of situations by orienting to goals, though at times individuals in the “same” interaction have different ideas about what is, or should be, going on. People from different cultures associate somewhat different relational meanings with influence goals (Fitch 1998). People with different message design logics (i.e., implicit theories of communication) also have different ideas about what is relevant or appropriate to say when seeking or resisting compliance.

Second, contemporary compliance-gaining research is *theoretically guided*. Theories highlight particular behavioral features/sequences as well as factors that predict such features. As one example, attribution theories direct attention to the accounts that message targets offer when resisting compliance as well as to the persistence with which message sources seek compliance; these theories assert that factors that influence judgments about why a target is resisting shape emotions/motivations and hence these message features (Wilson 2002).

Third, contemporary research is better attuned to the *incremental, interactive nature of compliance seeking* (Sanders & Fitch 2001). Researchers have used techniques such as videotaping conversations and afterwards asking participants to watch the tape separately and describe what they were thinking/feeling, to bridge the individual and dyadic levels of analysis.

Finally, contemporary research tends to be *contextually situated*. As one example, recent work has explored how compliance-gaining interactions in families with a history of child abuse or neglect differ from those in nonmaltreating families (Wilson et al. 2006). This work illustrates why compliance gaining remains an important area of study, but it is also undertaken with awareness that child abuse and neglect are multiply determined by risk factors at many levels of analysis (individual, dyad, community, culture) and hence analyses of compliance gaining must take this into account.

SEE ALSO: ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ► Interaction ► Interpersonal Communication ► Message Design Logics ► Message Production ► Persuasion ► Politeness Theory ► Relational Control ► Research Methods

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## Comprehension

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Human beings are uniquely able to understand sophisticated concepts through the use of language. Issues relating to comprehension encompass a wide variety of areas in linguistics, communication, and cognitive studies. Constructs regarding comprehension can be broadly divided into two theoretically diverse approaches, which diverge on the emphasis they place on cognition as an individual, self-contained process, or as a culturally situated one.

The first approach is distinctly *Cartesian*, with emphasis primarily on what takes place within the individual. It is profoundly influenced by the work of Noam Chomsky, who sees the systematic use of rules and representations as central for understanding language systems (→ Linguistics; Language and Social Interaction). Within this approach issues regarding comprehension primarily have to do with how people are able to parse sentences and construe word → meaning, with an emphasis on rules (principles and parameters) for the former, and component features for the latter.

Salient aspects of this orientation include the centrality of genetic endowment – the “hard wiring” that allows human beings to learn language – and the consequent emphasis on language universals, as well as the modularity of cognitive processes. This orientation has been criticized for a variety of reasons; among those most relevant to comprehension is that it draws upon and contributes to metaphors of mind that may not accurately or fully describe cognitive processes. The “mind as computer” metaphor constructs the mind as a largely self-contained mechanism that functions by using sophisticated algorithms that allow language input to be understood and produced. The conduit metaphor posits communication largely in terms of the packaging of meaning into words, which are transmitted to the interlocutor, where they are unpacked for understanding.

The second approach includes a variety of theoretical orientations that emphasize the social and cultural aspects of understanding, and the *co-construction of meaning*. From this perspective meaning is not simply packaged into words and unpacked by an interlocutor, but rather language itself is a significant tool for the construction of meaning. Theoretical orientations that are consistent with this approach include: cognitive linguistics in the tradition of George Lakoff, with its emphasis on  $\rightarrow$  metaphor and the centrality of embodiment for an understanding of human cognition; approaches to semantics that emphasize context, such as frame semantics; various forms of discourse analysis, particularly those that emerged from ethnographic traditions; and cultural-historical theory in the tradition of Vygotsky, with its emphasis on socially distributed cognition and the use of cultural artifacts as cognitive tools. These orientations share the belief that comprehension is not something that takes place primarily within the confines of the head, but rather in relation to contexts and environments that include interaction with others, and their intentions. In this way meaning is seen as negotiated rather than transmitted. While less theoretically unified than the Cartesian approach, these orientations in general have been criticized for not conforming to the standards of natural science, and for not providing sufficient models for understanding how cognitive processes are implemented within the brain ( $\rightarrow$  Cognitive Science; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

Disagreements about how categories are formed within the mind reflect this theoretical division. On the one hand the classical approach – in reference to its roots in Aristotle – is predicated on the idea that category membership is based on a set of necessary and sufficient conditions. Hence, we know that a dolphin is a mammal based on its having specific features that define the category “mammal.” Categories are discrete, and all members that meet the criteria enjoy equal status. *Prototype theory*, on the other hand, holds that categories are constructed around real or idealized central members, or on the basis of family resemblance.

Boundaries can be fuzzy, and members can be better or worse exemplars of a category. Hence, a table is a better (more central) member of the category “furniture” than a telephone, and sparrows are better members of the category “bird” than penguins. Proponents of prototype theory hold that studies where subjects are able to rank category members as better or worse indicate the importance of prototypes for cognition and understanding. Proponents of the classical category, on the other hand, hold that the ability to rank membership is essentially an epiphenomenon related to experimental conditions, rather than a true indication of how cognitive processes work. With respect to comprehension, the classical category is highly consistent with the Cartesian approach to language and cognition, emphasizing processes within the individual, while prototype theory is consistent with approaches that emphasize negotiated meaning and the cultural aspects of communication.

While much research into comprehension is theory driven, there are also a number of specific issues that researchers within a variety of fields have addressed. In cognitive studies the roles of working  $\rightarrow$  memory ( $\rightarrow$  Memory, Message),  $\rightarrow$  attention, and auditory perception have been of particular interest. Within linguistics, areas besides syntax and semantics that have been investigated in relation to comprehension include the use and interpretation of speech acts (how we do things with words) and the role of communicative gestures that accompany language.

A significant question within → discourse analysis is whether understanding takes place primarily from the top-down, with lower-level language aspects being derived from discourse, or bottom-up, with discourse structure being built from lower-level linguistic structures such as syntax and semantics. Within the field of second-language acquisition significant research has been conducted on both listening and reading comprehension (particularly as regards vocabulary, background knowledge, and narrative schema), the relationship of comprehension to production, and the influence of affective factors such as motivation or anxiety. Issues relating to comprehension also extend to neuroscience, in efforts to better understand what takes place within the brain during communicative activity, with studies of aphasia playing an important role. Even literary theory, where questions of whether meaning is contained in the text or constructed by the reader in interaction with the text, deals with issues relevant to comprehension.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Linguistics ▶ Listening ▶ Meaning ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Metaphor ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction

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## **Computer Games and Child Development**

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Video games are a prevalent and profitable facet of the modern media entertainment industry (→ Video Games). Although children (anyone under the age of 18) comprise only 31 percent of the \$10 billion US video game market, their numbers are increasing. Whereas in the 1990s, only 60 percent of middle-school-aged children reported playing video games on a consistent basis, a 2001 study by the National Institute on Media and the Family reported over 92 percent of US children played video games, an increase of over 30 percent. Worldwide, the video game industry is expected to grow to over \$46.5 billion by the year 2010, with a growing portion of this market comprised of children.



Video games have been found to have both positive and negative effects on children, from increased academic test scores to increased aggression levels, but these mixed results, coupled with the increased popularity of video games carrying an “M” rating (for mature audiences only), have media researchers asking the question, “what effects are video games having on the development of today’s youth?” (→ Media Effects).

### **GAME USE DURING CHILDHOOD**

Several studies have found significant variation in video game play based on age and developmental stage. For example, children in the sensorimotor stage (age birth to two years) are just beginning to learn about concrete objects in their environment and cannot process symbolic information; consequently, studies on US children show that less than three percent play video games at this age. In the most recent study of media use among the very young (ages zero to six), video game play was found to be the least common recreational activity. Whereas over three quarters of young children play outside, read, or listen to music on a typical day, less than 10 percent of these children play video games. This play is severely limited: several studies report that young children play video games for less than six minutes per day, despite three quarters of them having a computer and around half of them having a game system in their home.

As children get older, their game play increases until it peaks in the preteen and early teen years. By ages 4 to 6 years – the middle of the pre-operational stage of development – over half of US children have been exposed to video games, and 16 percent report regular video game play; as children enter the concrete and formal operations stages, their game play increases significantly. A study of US school children reports that fifth-graders (children aged 11 years) play an average of 1.81 hours per day, and eighth-graders (children aged 14 years) play 2.46 hours per day. These numbers drop off at the eleventh grade (children aged 16 years) to 1.62 hours daily, and for young adults (aged 18 to 22 years), 1.73 hours daily.

Interestingly, a US Kaiser Family Foundation survey (Roberts et al. 1999) found that, when non-gamers are removed from survey data, video game play figures are similar across developmental stages. For example, 16 percent of children aged 2 to 7 years who play video games consistently (as defined by having played the day before the survey administration) play nearly 50 minutes daily. This compares to 45 percent of 8- to 13-year-olds who were daily players (at 1 hour and 9 minutes per day), and 30 percent of 14- to 18-year-olds who were daily players (at 1 hour and 5 minutes per day). However, there are some methodological issues that make interpretation of these results difficult. For example, the Kaiser Family Foundation survey questioned parents about child game use, while the other surveys reported on child responses. Often, there are sizable differences in reported playing time based on who fills out the survey, parent or child.

### **GENDER DIFFERENCES IN GAMING**

Patterns of gender differences in video game play appear fairly *early in development*. One study found that US boys averaged 1.5 hours more game play per day than girls across all developmental stages. Another study found that US boys from 8 to 13 years of age averaged 47 minutes of game play per day as compared to only 16 minutes per day for girls of that same age. The difference stays the same among 14- to 18-year-olds, with boys

(34 minutes) playing significantly longer per day than girls (7 minutes). In a recent meta-analysis of 90 media use studies, Marshall et al. (2006) estimated that US girls aged 7 to 10 years spend around 30 minutes per day playing video games, while boys of the same age spend more than twice as much time – nearly 71 minutes per day on average – playing video games. These numbers dropped off slightly with age, but the patterns remained the same: older boys (aged 13 to 18) reported playing 60 minutes each day, while older girls played less than 30 minutes. Studies with British youth reported similar patterns (→ Media Use by Social Variable).

Clear differences in *genre preferences* between boys and girls also exist (→ Selective Exposure). The results of four different studies on video game preference of US children are consistent: boys prefer action, fighting, shooting, adventure, and sports games, while girls prefer platform, puzzle, and educational games. These gender differences in game preference are observed as early as 10 years of age. One survey reported that children endorsed statements containing game gender stereotypes and showed clarity on which types of games are “boy games” or “girl games” (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Stereotypes). British youth show a similar pattern of game preference by gender. Interestingly, Japanese youth – while showing similar patterns – reported playing fewer violent video games overall. Game sales reflect this trend, as violent video games rarely (if ever) top Japanese video game sales charts, whereas they frequently top the sales charts in the US and the UK.

Gender differences in game preferences have been attributed to *differences in cognitive skills* between boys and girls. Whereas girls have significantly better verbal abilities and tend to like puzzle games, boys tend to have greater capacities for targeting and mental rotational ability, and prefer games that utilize these skills (→ Cognition; Cognitive Science).

## VIDEO GAME USES AND GRATIFICATIONS

Part of the reason why we see differences in amount of game use by age may be because → uses and gratifications derived from game play also vary by developmental stage. Studies on US children show that, although competition and challenge are the highest rated reasons for playing video games across all age groups and genders, older teens (aged 16 years) and young adults (aged 20 years) primarily play video games as a means of social interaction with friends and as a way to get away from stress. Among 14-year-olds, game play is primarily a stress release, a cognitive challenge, and a means of social interaction. For 10-year-olds, their reasons are different. Although these children enjoy playing against friends and as a cognitive challenge against themselves, they also play for the fantastical desire to be a strong character.

It appears that games begin as exercises in mastery for younger children (as an intellectual challenge and as an expression of power fantasy), but become more of a social event as children progress through adolescence and into young adulthood. Studies of Japanese and British youth (aged 12 to 14 years), for example, report that companionship and preference for friends are often cited as motivations for video game play; similar results are found when looking at US children of comparable age.

## VIDEO GAME CONSEQUENCES

Scholars have found evidence of positive and negative effects on childhood development associated with video game play. One longitudinal study found that the young children

(aged 4 and 5 years) who were exposed to developmentally appropriate software had increased intelligence scores, nonverbal skills, dexterity, and long-term memory (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span; Longitudinal Analysis; Memory), while children exposed to developmentally inappropriate software showed decreased creativity levels. Because the pre-operational stage is characterized by a child's understanding of physical space over abstract thought, video games that focus specifically on shapes and structures are most useful as educational and entertainment media for these children (→ Educational Media). Research on 7- and 8-year-olds – children in the pre-operational stage of development – found that children who played video games had better hand–eye coordination and reaction time than children who did not, and Subrahmanyam and Greenfield (1994) found that video game play could significantly increase spatial skills in 10-year-olds.

Children at the later stages of development are able to comprehend and play nearly all video games available. This is an area of concern for some scholars due to the content of the more popular video games. As of the end of 2006, the three top-selling video games in the US were all “M” rated; combined, these games have sold over 17 million copies. A → meta-analysis by Anderson and Bushman (2001) suggests that, although children are not as susceptible to short-term effects of media violence as adults are, they are significantly more influenced in the long term (→ Media Effects Duration; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). These findings suggest that exposure to video game violence teaches children *antisocial norms and* → *schemas*, although they have been debated due to small effect sizes and lack of causality (Sherry 2001). In terms of academic growth and performance, studies have been inconclusive. One study, using eighth-grade students, found that the poorest performing students were typically the heaviest users of video games, while another study found no effect of game play – positive or negative – on classroom performance (→ Personality Development and Communication).

While there have been several studies examining patterns of children's video game usage and preference, existing research does not compare effects across ages or cognitive stages. Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the effects of video game play on childhood development. Research has been conducted with children on such diverse topics as learning from games, physiological reactance to games, and the role of personality in game use, but future research in these areas will be necessary to understand the role of gaming in child development beyond simple descriptions of game use and preferences.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Educational Media ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Memory ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Personality Development and Communication ▶ Schemas ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Computer Games and Reality Perception

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Immediately following the debut of Nintendo in 1995, researchers questioned what effects games like *Super Mario Brothers* had on those who played them (→ Computer Games and Child Development). Early → video games consisted primarily of objects or unidentifiable characters such as *Pac-Man*. Now, through several technological advancements, game play is more complex and has begun to visually mimic real life. For instance, within games and gaming communities of players, both male and female human forms of all races make up many of the characters.

And, with the arrival of online games, *multi-user environments* are increasing the number of video game players, the age of players, and the economic structure of play, thus, changing the outcomes and direction of video game research. Within the computer game literature, multi-user environments are defined as massive multi-user online games (MMOGs) or massively multi-player online role-playing games (MMORPGs; → Virtual Communities). Players of multi-user environments typically spend more than 20 hours each week playing alone or gaming with others (Yee 2006). MMOGs and MMORPGs can

consist of thousands of players. However, large gaming communities typically break down into manageable groups known as “guilds,” defined as a collection of players who share a common belief or outlook, and clans, defined as “an organized gaming team which enters leagues and tournaments” (Griffiths et al. 2003, 90). Unknown groups, typically small (2 players) or medium (2–20 players) in size, consist of players who, since they are only together for a specific mission, are usually not familiar with each other. Known groups, often clans or guilds, are usually medium in size and contain players who are familiar with each other and often play together (Ducheneaut et al. 2005). Although winning is considered a gaming motivation for these groups, players are also motivated to increase the status of their characters, or simply to game with and against others (Yee 2006).

As with some of the media effects literature, video game research is most broadly developed within antisocial gaming effects such as aggression (→ Media Effects, History of; Violence as Media Content, Effects of). Investigators have utilized several theories to explain offline outcomes and perceptions from mediated experiences, including arousal, excitation transfer, social learning, and cultivation (→ Cultivation Effects; Emotional Arousal Theory; Excitation and Arousal; Excitation Transfer Theory). From these theoretical frameworks, a comprehensive model on human aggression known as the general aggression model (GAM) was developed and applied successfully to the video game experience (Anderson & Bushman 2002).

The GAM suggests that situational and personal input factors combine to influence behavior through the present internal states of cognition, affect, and arousal. Personal inputs include variables such as trait aggression, while situational inputs have included violent and nonviolent game play. During game play, games provide a learning forum for behavior, including aggressive acts. Learned attitudinal and behavioral responses developed and rehearsed during game play can be transposed into real-life behavior and perceptions. The repetitive nature of game play creates a combined effect where long-term play develops schemas that are chronically accessible (Anderson & Bushman 2002).

In the case of the GAM, the social perception and reality of game play is a more hostile society. Using GAM logic, a recent → meta-analysis confirms a positive relationship between violent game play and aggressive outcomes (Anderson 2004). That said, the exposure and scripting process also has the potential to influence other game play behaviors (→ Scripts). Most recently, research has argued that realism (Eastin 2006) and realistic behaviors (Eastin & Griffiths 2006) facilitate the learning or scripting process. Complex environments and realistic gaming complicate the agenda and interpretation of research, perhaps rendering meta-analytic analyses ineffective. It is entirely possible that gaming could be a secondary goal of play. That is, the extent to which competitive game play is not the primary goal could attenuate real-world social perceptions. Many games require cooperation between group members; cooperative group play directs goal attainment to the group (Bonta 1997), which should decrease individual competitiveness and frustrations from game play, and subsequent aggressive outcomes. In short, those playing cooperatively with others should experience less aggression from game play than those playing individually.

From a *general exposure standpoint*, cultivation processes posit that heavy users of media such as video games are more likely to perceive a social reality consistent with the

“images, value systems, and ideologies propagated” (Weber et al. 2006, 351). Grounded in → cultivation theory, the first longitudinal study investigating potential influences on social perceptions from playing the online computer game *Asheron’s Call 2* found that “after playing the game, the participants in the treatment condition were more likely than those in the control group to say that people would experience robbery with weapons in the real world” (Williams 2006, 79; → Experimental Design; Longitudinal Analysis). Furthermore, significant findings were only discovered with “in-game and real-world parallels” (i.e., robbery with a weapon).

The ability to be anyone or anything within games presents a large obstacle for MMORPG or MMOG research, regardless of the theoretical framework. For instance, if “self” or “other” is central to game play, then scripting-type effects from play could be centrally focused within the game or character, and thus not carrying over into the real world. Although seemingly a positive outcome for role-playing exposure, it is important to note that, if true, then role-playing could also indicate that social relationships developed and maintained through game play represent weak relationships that are conveniently fostered through play. Regardless, amount and type of role-playing points to additional mediating (or moderating) factors to real-world social outcomes from game play.

In sum, the social reality of game play is hard to define. We know that there is a small but consistent effect on real-world outcomes, positive and negative (→ Social Behavior, Media Effects on). However, game complexities make studying and understanding video games difficult, or, at least, more difficult than previous media such as television, where content could easily be controlled.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Scripts ▶ Social Behavior, Media Effects on ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Virtual Communities

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## Computer–User Interaction

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The world wide web has revolutionized the ways in which people communicate (→ Exposure to the Internet; Internet). People can have simultaneous online chats with colleagues across the world. Yet, people often communicate with a single individual so the communication is in many ways like → interpersonal communication – except not face to face. Chatrooms have been created for many reasons, ranging from social interaction with liked others to sharing information about highly specific topics (→ Personal Communication by CMC). Likewise, web communities have sprung up within and around many different games. Massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs) – most notably *World of Warcraft* – have online communities within the games, such as the guilds that exist in *World of Warcraft*, and online communities that exist outside of the game to discuss the game. Even console-based → video games such as the *Halo* franchise have online communities. Again, there are communities that exist to discuss *Halo* and there are communities that are created while playing the game online as people communicate with each other. Research on computer–user interaction has focused on how changes in the audience – mediated versus face-to-face – influence how people communicate with each other and the consequences of these differences (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

*Early speculations* concerning communication in online communities were rather stereotypic. The expectation was that chatrooms devoted to medical topics would almost exclusively focus on providing information to the users, with the consequent focus on information accessibility on the part of the interface designers (Pena & Hancock 2006; → Information Seeking). Likewise, the expectation was that communication in guilds in *World of Warcraft* or between team members in *Halo* would be primarily focused on task-oriented issues because people were communicating to achieve some goal within the game, and the communication would be more hostile or negative because these are violent games.

The extant research challenges the stereotypes about communication in online communities. In a study of communication in an online community dealing with medical issues, people often went to the online community *seeking empathy and support* – not just factual information. In hindsight, people who are dealing with medical issues should seek

information *and* empathy. As Preece (1999) notes, designers need to be sensitive to the needs of the people participating in the online community and let the people determine what type of content is going to be sought and what is not (→ Human–Computer Interaction). Likewise, a study of communication in an online gaming community found that the assumption that the communication would primarily be task-oriented was not supported. Pena and Hancock (2006) found that substantially more socio-emotional statements were produced than task-oriented statements. While the participants in this community are there to play a game, they are probably participating in an online community because they are seeking more than the gaming experience. They are seeking interaction with other humans. Indeed, one of the important reasons for participating in online games is to spend time with friends or to make new friends. Both of these examples illustrate that the communication in online communities reflects the function that the communication is serving for its participants.

While there is a clear lack of research on communication in online communities, the existing literature suggests several interesting *insights into online communication*. First, research on perspective-taking theory found that people tend to do a poorer job of taking the perspective of the other people they are communicating with online (Jarvela & Hakkinen 2003). This makes sense because there are fewer contextual cues to help people adequately interpret and understand what other people are trying to communicate. However, these perspective-taking skills are a critical part of goal-directed and task-oriented communication because perspective taking is critical to adapting to other people. On the other hand, research also suggests that the longer a person spends on the web communicating with other people, the more sophisticated they become at online communication (Pena & Hancock 2006). For example, more experienced online communicators are more fluent in their use of emoticons. So the limitations in perspective taking demonstrated in some studies may disappear with greater experience of communicating on the web.

Research on communication in online communities is in its infancy. There are many things that need to be done to advance our understanding of how communication operates in these domains. What is the impact of a lack of nonverbal communication such as vocalics (how words are stressed) or paralanguage (“ums” and “ahs”) on how people interpret emotion? Do emoticons, e.g., the “smiley,” adequately address these limitations? Communication in online communities provides unique opportunities for studying basic interpersonal communication processes. Likewise, it is an exciting time for studying the impact of web design on how people communicate in online communities. Does the option of one-to-one communication that is found in many online websites as an alternative to one-to-many communication increase empathic communication in these communities? If the community involves a moderator, how does that moderator impact empathy in that community? More research is necessary to address how the design of these communities impacts how people communicate within them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Blogger ▶ Cognition ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information Overload ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Video Games



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# **Computers and Display Programs in Education**

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Communication instructors use two broad categories of display programs in their classrooms. The first category is whiteboard technology (→ Classroom Instructional Technology). When delivering a lecture, instructors make notes on the whiteboard using a special stylus. The text is digitized, so the whiteboard subsequently becomes the display program. Instructors can email these digitized notes to their students or post their lecture notes to courseware packages like Blackboard (→ Course Organization Programs in Education). An *interactive whiteboard* represents the latest technology in this area. In class, students can use their laptop computers, which are connected to a local wireless network to collaborate on a project. The group's output is displayed on the interactive whiteboard.

The second category of display programs are *software applications* which instructors use to create visual aids (→ Design; Graphic Design). Popular presentation software packages include Microsoft PowerPoint (Windows and Macintosh), Keynote (Macintosh only), and OpenOffice.com (→ Open Source). Monitors/plasma TVs and overhead LCD projectors display the output that presentation software applications create.

The use of presentation software – especially *PowerPoint* – is widespread. Microsoft officials contend that nearly 30 million PowerPoint presentations are delivered each business day (Mahin 2004). Despite their popularity, little empirical research examines how students and instructors can benefit from using these technologies in the classroom (→ Learning and Communication). Indeed, most empirical research was done in the late 1980s when a visual aid included an overhead transparency as often as a presentation software slide.

In general, researchers have argued that both students and instructors can benefit from using visual aids like PowerPoint. The use of presentation software is most effective when instructors combine both verbal and visual supports into their presentation (Vogel et al. 1986). Visual learners and English as a Second Language (ESL) students can benefit especially when their instructors use display program technologies in the classroom (Atkins-Sayre et al. 1998). Instructors' use of visual aids, researchers contend, helps students take better class notes and increases their recollection of lecture material (Hamilton 1990). However, there is little evidence that instructors' use of visual aids – or, more recently, presentation software slides – increases students' long-term retention of lecture material. So far, no instructional research has been conducted on the efficacy of digital and interactive whiteboards.

Several academics and practitioners, including Edward Tufte (2003), are vocal critics of speakers' reliance on presentation software applications like PowerPoint. PowerPoint, they argue, is popular because the software mirrors Westerners' tendency toward rational, linear arguments (→ Communication Modes, Western; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). The verbal support for this mode of argumentation often relies on statistical data and expert opinion (→ Rhetoric and Logic). Speakers then include each piece of verbal support as an individual bullet point and, in doing so, outline their argument. As a result, speakers may neglect to tie their ideas together for the listener. Instead, from the listeners' perspective, each bullet point acts merely as a sound bite (→ Sound Bites). In sum, critics argue, PowerPoint hides the structure of presenters' arguments.

An emerging cadre of PowerPoint scholars, designers, and practitioners urge speakers to supplement their traditional (logical) forms of verbal support with narrative forms of argument (→ Rhetoric and Narrativity). Instead of relying too heavily on bulleted lists of text, speakers can use images that support their stories (→ Visual Representation). These images can focus on the actors, plot, and inherent conflict (between central characters or broader ideas) that make stories resonate emotionally with an audience. Speakers' use of these narratives can also meet the needs of international listeners who prefer nonlinear types of arguments.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Communication Modes, Western  
▶ Course Organization Programs in Education ▶ Design ▶ Educational Media ▶ Graphic Design  
▶ Information Overload ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Open Source  
▶ Rhetoric, Argument and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Logic ▶ Rhetoric and Narrativity  
▶ Rhetoric and Orality – Literacy Theorems ▶ Rhetoric and Technology ▶ Sound Bites  
▶ Visual Representation

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## Concentration in Media Systems

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Concentration of ownership in the media sector presents important problems for the cultural industries. First, concentration creates dominant positions for some players, which can affect the necessary pluralism of ideas in a society (→ Plurality). From another point of view, there are strong pressures to allow strong players in a given market because of the growing trend toward globalization in cultural markets (→ Globalization Theories). The digitization of the whole field of cultural production and technological convergence processes have also stimulated concentration (→ Competition in Media Systems; Media Conglomerates).

### THE PROBLEMS OF CONCENTRATION

As Sánchez Tabernero and Carvajal have specified, “concentration can be analyzed from the market viewpoint or from the perspective of the companies. In the first case, concentration increases when the position of dominance or influence of the main companies becomes stronger, the public’s power of choice is reduced and when some ‘independent

voices' disappear. From the business point of view, concentration implies industrial growth of the communications groups" (2002a, 15). Economic centralization explains how a few players increase control of the means of production in a given society. From a critical perspective, the main danger with concentration is the trend toward oligopoly (i.e., when the market is dominated by a small number of companies) and monopoly (when the market is dominated by a single firm, instead of a large number of companies).

Less critical theories are more tolerant of concentration. For instance, Schumpeter (1943) argues that imperfect markets with a certain amount of concentration stimulate innovation and economic development, so long as this dominant position does not entail abuse over long periods of time. And classical economic theories support the self-regulatory capacity of the market and underestimate the ability of state action to prevent concentration.

The concentration of media systems implies a process whereby a certain set of companies tends to increase the relative or absolute number of units that they control (Miguel de Bustos 1993). This phenomenon involves companies adopting *two strategies of growth*: internal growth takes place when new products are created to gain markets thanks to investment and accumulation; external growth involves the purchase of other companies. Even though the capital demands tend to be larger for external growth, it has the advantage of immediate growth with foreseeable risk. In the cultural sector, internal and external growth result in three forms of concentration, which are also found in other industries.

First, *horizontal integration or monomedia* expansion occurs when a company produces various final products within the same type of business. Monomedia expansion takes place within the same business, with the objective of increasing market share, eliminating idle capacity of the company, and allowing the formation of economies of scale. This type of concentration developed early in the history of the press, with the consolidation of press groups. There is also strong monomedia concentration in the phonograph and cinema markets.

Second, *vertical integration or expansion* takes place when companies that operate in different stages of the value or supply chain are added. In this case, the companies expand with the objective of embracing different phases of production, from raw materials to the finished product, in order to obtain a reduction of costs and better supply. This type of concentration generally allows for the lowering of the costs of intermediation. Transactional costs are reduced and the power of suppliers and dominant buyers become more limited. Particularly in the audiovisual sector, companies depend on reliable access to content and/or distribution of this content. This type of concentration has been growing worldwide during the past two decades (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

Third, *diagonal or lateral growth* of conglomerates represents diversification outside the original business, with the objective of reducing risks by developing synergies. According to Gillian Doyle (2002), evidence suggests that diagonal growth is the most effective way to facilitate the sharing of specialized content or a supply structure. Diversification allows companies to disseminate the costs of the risks involved in innovation in a variety of formats and methods of distribution. The appearance of the → Internet has apparently promoted this possibility. Another example of such growth strategies is the conglomerate growth of the daily press, which has tried to explore more profitable sectors, such as TV (→ Cross-Media Marketing; Cross-Media Production). This is a long-term strategy with the objective of securing safer investments, to counteract the slightly lowering trend of decreasing profit rates.

Alberto Pérez Gómez (2002) identifies *five forms of concentration*: horizontal integration or monomedia; vertical integration; multimedia integration, when a company controls different types of media; conglomeration, when a company goes beyond the communications sector; and internationalization, when a company transcends national boundaries. Because of the growing convergence between the telecommunications, computer, and audiovisual sectors, some authors argue for the need to incorporate the category of convergence into the processes of concentration (Miguel de Bustos 2003). In this way, convergence would include offline activities that move toward the Internet. These forms can obviously complement or juxtapose each other (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Digitization and Media Convergence).

As a result of concentration processes, companies acquire a firmer standing and act as barriers to the entrance of other companies. In an international and dynamic market, companies often face a dilemma on how to grow: either by acquisition – purchasing smaller firms – or by merging with international groups.

The multiplication of mergers and acquisitions of companies in the information/communication sector has given rise to a new structure of conglomerates, replacing the traditional corporate structure of these firms. Despite the growing levels of concentration, the existence of thousands of small companies with a short life and little economic relevance is still functional to the process, whereby they renew the market by exploring new formats.

*Measuring concentration* poses a problem. There are several recognized methods and indicators, such as the index of relative entropy, the GINI index, which can be represented by a Lorenz curve, the four-firm concentration ratio (CR4), and the Herfindahl–Hirschman (HH) index. Although concentration can be measured, it is much more complex to quantify its effects on pluralism and diversity.

Another important problem is analyzing the *issue of control*. Historically, media companies have been family owned. Yet recent decades have seen a gradual change toward dispersed capital companies. In order to understand concentration processes as such, it is necessary to analyze the different forms of control and participation in the large groups or conglomerates.

## **DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CONCENTRATION**

There are *three dominant positions* on concentration: first, a liberal perspective that does not question concentration processes except for the case of monopoly; second, the critical school, which identifies concentration of ownership as one of the main capitalist mechanisms for its legitimacy; and, third, an eclectic position that does not share the critical view, but is concerned about the risks of concentration and argues for state interventionism to limit it.

From a *liberal perspective*, Eli Noam (2006) claims: “Pluralism is important. But there is no conceptual, practical or legal way to officially define and measure the vigor of a marketplace in ideas. The best one can do is to count voices, and assume that in a competitive system, diversity of information increases with the number of its sources.” To improve the analysis of the impact of media concentration of ownership, Noam divides the HH index (which is a sign of market power) by the square root of the number of voices. In this way, the index allows for consideration of different markets.

Other recent works in the United States intend to show that the presence of the big media conglomerates does not affect informational → balance, sources, or even electoral

behavior (Groseclose & Milyo 2005; Della Vigna & Kaplan 2006; → Election Campaign Communication). From this perspective, concentration of ownership would not be a threat for democratic societies.

In Europe, the liberal thesis is found in the works of Spanish authors such as Alfonso Nieto, Francisco Iglesias, and Alfonso Sánchez Taberero. Nieto and Iglesias (2000) point out that “the power to inform under circumstances of monopoly are not legitimate . . . but a direct sign of political or economic power which hinders competition in the information market.” Alfonso Sánchez Taberero and Miguel Carvajal (2002b) believe that the concentration of media markets has clear limits because an inordinate amount of growth could lead to paralysis. Even though these authors recognize that the concentration of power can be an obstacle to free competition and to the exchange of ideas, they emphasize that growth processes should not be stopped because that would interfere with success and innovation.

A study conducted by World Bank researchers points out that in modern societies and economies, the availability of information is central to the best decision-making by citizens and consumers because of efficiency. The media are intermediaries that collect information and place it at the disposal of consumers and citizens, and, according to the researchers, private organization of this content is superior to public organization (Djankov et al. 2001).

From another perspective, the *critical school* has denounced the processes of concentration of ownership (→ Critical Theory). In a pioneering work, Ben Bagdikian (1983) shows how the owners of the media promote their own values and interests. Their interference in editorial policies can be either indirect, through the influence of editors and self-censorship, or direct, through the rewriting of text. Furthermore, the concentration of ownership in the hands of the economically dominant sectors tends to inhibit the expression of voices critical of the system. Following the same lines, but more recently, Edward Herman and Robert McChesney (1997) draw attention to the risks of communications concentration at a global level, transcending historical national barriers: “According to the logic of the market and convergence, we should expect the global oligopoly of the media to evolve gradually to an even larger communications oligopoly.”

In Europe at the beginning of the 1990s, the British researcher Graham Murdock observed with concern the conflicts inherent in concentration: “Press freedom was seen as a logical extension of the general defense of free speech. This was plausible so long as most proprietors owned only one title and the costs of entering the market were relatively low . . . By the beginning of this century the age of the chain ownership and the press barons had arrived, prompting liberal democratic commentators to acknowledge a contradiction between the idealized role of the press as a key resource for citizenship and its economic base in private ownership” (Murdock 1990).

In Spain, the work of Enrique Bustamante (1999), Ramón Zallo (1992), and Juan Carlos Miguel de Bustos (1993) stands out among Latin researchers studying these issues. The work of Miguel de Bustos provides a detailed analysis of the structures and strategies of media groups.

There is also work that represents an *intermediate group* with respect to the two previous schools. Gillian Doyle (2002) offers two ways of approaching the subject. On the one hand, she presents economic and industrial arguments that tend to favor a more legal

approach to the problem, with an inclination to allow some level of concentration. On the other hand, she also discusses perspectives that focus on society and citizens, political power, political pluralism, and cultural diversity.

Pérez Gómez (2002) analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of concentration in media systems. In the first case, he underlines the exploitation of synergies and economies of scale, as well as the possibility to improve distribution and lower costs. Bureaucracy and limits to competition stand out as the risks. Yet, the major problems are not so much in the economic area but with the issue of information pluralism. Pérez Gómez is not conclusive as to whether concentration affects pluralism of information, and argues that it is very difficult to determine the cases in which it does influence it.

Finally, Carles Llorens Maluquer (2001) envisages the need to defend pluralism and diversity in the media, which shape public views, although not exclusively. He warns that the homogeneity of audiovisual services has more to do with competition than with the concentrated structure of the industry. According to him, “the liberalization of the audiovisual sector has promoted pluralism, but the levels of diversity remain the same or have decreased.”

## EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Several works have approached the difficult task of studying empirically the processes of concentration of media ownership. In most of them the analysis is focused on the national structure in certain countries. A much smaller number of studies have analyzed concentration on a regional scale, with a comparative approach.

Europe is the region with the greatest work on the subject. At the beginning of the 1990s, the Commission for the European Community sponsored a study by Booz-Allen and Hamilton on pluralism and concentration in the media (1992). This report shows a strong concern with the risks that pluralism would encounter when faced with concentration processes, especially in the distribution and consumption of media. The study analyzed the situation of *twelve member countries of the European Community* at the time. Even though the main focus was centered round consumption, it highlighted the predominance of the public media, as well as the growing role of the large media groups in the main European markets. It also sent a warning about the incipient transnationalization of broadcasting, currently limited by national frontiers. The researchers’ proposal was to harmonize different legislation in order to guarantee pluralism (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

A more recent study commissioned by the *Netherlands Media Authority* analyzed the levels of concentration of ownership in the national and regional press, radio, and television markets (Ward 2004). The study takes into account the percentage of audience share and turnover of the first three operators of each country and the presence of media groups that hold assets in diverse media markets (cross-ownership). The report states that there are several regulatory instruments that guarantee pluralism in media markets. Nevertheless, it warns that the concentration processes are reaching the levels established by law. Even though the public media still retain a considerable market share in radio and television, the report points out that since the 1990s, the concentration of media ownership has increased on a yearly basis (→ Netherlands: Media System).

Another study conducted in eighteen *eastern European countries* shows the growing level of concentration of the media in the region. Even though the passage from state-owned media to mixed systems after the fall of the communist regimes led to the appearance of a significant number of new media, both print as well as electronic, a strong concentration process based on a market rationale took place rapidly. A new group of media came onto the stage after a privatization process where the interests between the media and political parties became a matter of fact. The report emphasizes the following common denominators: small and fragmented markets, a strong bond between media owners and political parties, state influence through the granting of subsidies, a monopoly in press distribution, and the growing presence of foreign capital. The report recommends the establishment of limits to the concentration of media ownership (Petkovic 2004).

In *Latin America*, Mastrini and Becerra (2006) have done research that takes into account the structure of the cultural industries' markets and their levels of concentration. In the first place, the economic relevance of the information/communications sectors was analyzed; second, measurement of concentration levels was assessed in six different markets (press, radio, open television, paid television, basic telephony, and mobile telephony) of ten countries in the region. Finally, the study analyzed the main media groups in each country. The results show a very high degree of concentration in all cases. In fact, the research shows that the first four operators dominate 80 percent of every market.

These are not the only studies of media concentration. However, these are useful examples of how concentration studies have been conducted. The research does not typically include a methodology to relate concentration of ownership with media content. All of these cases highlight the high level of concentration reached in the different markets, the presence of media and communication groups that have dominant positions in several media markets, and the need to have regulations that protect content diversity and media pluralism.

SEE ALSO: ► Balance ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► Competition in Media Systems ► Convergence of Media Systems ► Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ► Critical Theory ► Cross-Media Marketing ► Cross-Media Production ► Cross-Ownership ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Election Campaign Communication ► Globalization Theories ► Internet ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Corporations, Forms of ► Media Economics ► Netherlands: Media System ► Ownership in the Media ► Plurality

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## **Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span**

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Conflict is pervasive and has been examined extensively in various relationships and communication contexts (Hocker & Wilmot 1991; Putnam & Poole 1987). Communication

scholars, however, have only recently begun to investigate this phenomenon from a life-span perspective, suggesting that communication among people at different ages deserves special attention. Nussbaum (1989) argued that people of different ages not only experience life events in unique historical contexts, but also develop different physical, cognitive, and psychological selves (→ Development Communication). In line with the life-span perspective, recent research on intergenerational communication in conflict situations has demonstrated several key factors influencing individuals' conflict styles, including age, age stereotypes, and cultural values. From the life-span perspective, the focus of this article is to explore the nature of conflict, conflict styles, intergenerational conflict management, and how younger and older adults differ in their perceptions and attributions of conflict and conflict-management styles.

### CONCEPTUALIZING INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICT AND MANAGEMENT STYLES

Putnam and Poole (1987) state that conflict is “the interaction of interdependent people who perceive opposition of goals, aims, and values, and who see the other party as potentially interfering with the realization of these goals” (p. 552). In a similar vein, Hocker and Wilmot (1991) define conflict as “an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals” (p. 21). Conflict can be functional and dysfunctional; its constructive functions are contingent upon appropriate management. Therefore, in the last few decades, scholars have sought to identify, conceptualize, and teach the preferred and most effective conflict styles in various relational and communication contexts (→ Conflict Resolution).

Thomas and Kilmann (1974) identified *five major conflict-management styles*: competing, collaborating (or problem-solving), avoiding, compromising, and accommodating (→ Interpersonal Conflict). These five styles have been applied, adapted, and validated in slightly different ways in research. Conceptually, the *competing style* focuses on the needs of the self over those of another by using an assertive communication style in an uncooperative manner to defend a personal position. The *problem-solving style* attempts to generate a plan of action in a cooperative manner that is mutually satisfying to all parties. The *avoiding style* has been identified with withdrawal and failure to take a position through an unassertive and uncooperative response with low concern for self and the other party. The *compromising style* emphasizes mutual concession-making by following the middle ground. The *accommodating style* is a self-sacrificing approach featuring the other person's satisfaction through being unassertive and cooperative.

A few studies have provided justification for combining compromising and problem-solving (e.g., Cai & Fink 2002). The accommodating style specified in Thomas and Kilmann (1974) has been largely ignored. Recently, however, research has found that the accommodating style, which emphasizes relational harmony and not necessarily problem-solving, is a distinctive style. In addition, the four conflict styles of *competing*, *avoiding*, *accommodating*, and *problem-solving* are found to be applicable to intergenerational communication research (e.g., Zhang et al. 2005), which has been examined from interpersonal and intergroup perspectives (→ Intergenerational Communication).

Each individual's communication behaviors are influenced by a personal identity, a social identity, and a cultural identity (→ Age Identity and Communication). While personal identity is composed of individuals' unique characteristics (e.g., polite, honest, and hardworking), social identity develops as a consequence of membership in a particular group within one's culture. Without denying the impact of one's personal identity, the life-span perspective on intergenerational communication incorporates intergroup and intercultural theories to enhance our understanding of the particular ways in which people from different generations manage their interactions. Intergenerational conflict management thus refers to an ongoing communication process where younger and older adults negotiate and manage their interactions as individuals while also considering group differences.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND INTERGENERATIONAL CONFLICT**

Aside from the interpersonal conflict frameworks, several intergroup theories speak of the nature of conflict management in intergenerational relationships. Tajfel's (1981) *Social Identity Theory* (SIT) maintains that human beings have an innate need to organize their social world into categories or groups (e.g., age groups) and to show positive ingroup distinctiveness in social comparisons in order to gain self-esteem (→ Social Identity Theory). As a consequence of this categorization, individuals might ascribe to group traits, behave in stereotypical group ways, and show ingroup favoritism and outgroup prejudice and discrimination. Grounded in SIT, Howard Giles's *Communication Accommodation Theory* (CAT) examines how different motivational processes influence communication styles, as well as the attributions, evaluations, and intentions for future interaction that people make as a result (→ Communication Accommodation Theory). Guided by CAT, Ellen Ryan's *Communication Predicament of Aging* (CPA) model was developed to explain roles of age stereotypes in intergenerational communication (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication). In its simplest form, the CPA model outlines how young people's speech accommodations based on age stereotypes may create a negative feedback cycle for older adults (Ryan et al. 1986; → Intergroup Contact and Communication).

Guided by these theoretical frameworks, research on intergenerational communication has revealed unsatisfying young-to-old and old-to-young communication behaviors that are sources of intergenerational conflict. In intergenerational communication, conflict may arise due to generational differences over lifestyle choices, habits, worldviews, and political beliefs, and the negotiation of these differences often involves verbal or behavioral expressions. Conflict can easily escalate if these differences are not managed well. Zhang (2004) examined Chinese college students' written accounts of their intergenerational communication experiences in conflict situations to uncover conflict-initiating factors. Results indicated five major types of initiating factors including old-to-young criticism, old-to-young illegitimate demand and rebuff, young-to-old criticism and disagreement/generation gap. Comparison of the initiating factors identified in this study with previous studies on interpersonal conflict (e.g., Witteman 1992) reveals that some of the categories are shared (e.g., criticism, illegitimate demand, and rebuff) and some are different (i.e., *young-to-old* criticism and disagreement/generation gap, *young-to-old* rebuff and older

adults' physical/mental inability). While the most frequent initiating factor in interpersonal conflict is annoyance, the most frequent initiating factor in intergenerational context is criticism. These results indicate the influence and functions of age and age stereotypes in intergenerational communication in conflict situations.

Several studies have been conducted as initial forays into *intergenerational conflict management styles*. Bergstrom and Williams (1995) took an intergroup perspective to examine young people's perceptions of intergenerational conflict. They manipulated age in order to make the target either an older person or a young adult in a work setting. Results indicated that respondents reported most satisfaction with an older co-worker who was cooperative and least satisfaction with a young co-worker who competed. Bergstrom and Nussbaum (1996) examined younger and older adults' general conflict-style preferences. Participants completed a conflict questionnaire and recalled and described a recent conflict scenario. The researchers found that younger participants scored higher on the control style whereas the older sample scored higher on the solution-oriented style. They also found that the younger adults preferred to use non-confrontational style as the depth of the conflict increased, but depth of conflict did not affect older adults' reports of style preference. Bergstrom and Nussbaum (1996) claimed that preference for solution-orientation in conflict management increases as individuals age (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span). Supporting this view, Cicirelli (1981) found a negative relationship between the age of adult children and their report of conflict with their parents, indicating that maturity likely minimizes the base for conflict between them.

Zhang et al. (2005) examined intergenerational *conflict management styles in China* from both older and younger adults' perspectives. Older and younger Chinese adults were randomly assigned to evaluate one of the four conversation transcripts in which an older worker criticizes a young co-worker. The young worker's response to the older worker's criticism was manipulated to reflect competing, avoiding, accommodating, or problem-solving. Results demonstrated that older participants favored the accommodating style over the problem-solving style. Young adults either preferred the problem-solving style to the accommodating style, or judged the two styles as equally positive. The findings revealed the combined effects of age-group membership and cultural values on how conflict styles are evaluated (→ Communication Modes, Asian).

Suitor and Pillemer (1988) examined intergenerational conflict in the family context between *adult children and elderly parents* who live together. The researchers' telephone interviews with 372 older adults revealed that the conflict frequency in general was reported as very low. From the perspectives of adult development and intergenerational relations, they explained that older adults were irritated less often in their relationships with young adults, due to more developed social maturity and emotional control. Among the reported conflicts, adult children's dependence on housing and need for financial assistance were listed as sources of conflict in addition to other factors such as how money is spent, who should do household chores, and the child's job. In general, previous research has indicated that young adults have more trouble differentiating between salient and non-salient conflict than older adults; thus older adults may not report those very same interactions as salient conflict (Sillars & Zeitlow 1993). From both elderly parents' and adult children's perspectives, Clarke et al. (1999) uncovered six most common themes of conflict between aging parents and their adult children, including communication and

interaction styles, habits and lifestyle choices, values, religion, work, and household standards. Close examination of the conflict themes reveal several frequent initiating factors centering on issues of interaction style (e.g., old-to-young criticism), most often listed by young adults, and generational difference in personal habits and lifestyle, most often cited by older adults.

Intergenerational conflict management from the life-span perspective emphasizes the influence of age-group membership, age stereotypes, and culture on the process. Yet much of the research on negative aspects of relationships such as conflict has focused on young adults' views. In addition, there has been little effort devoted to deriving theoretical explanations for why and how young versus older adults differ in perceptions and attributions of conflict. As age is a fundamental aspect of social categorization similar to other intergroup distinctions such as gender and race, future research should examine the influences of age salience on intergenerational conflict-management styles.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Age Identity and Communication ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ Development Communication ▶ Intergenerational Communication ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication

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## Conflict as Media Content

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Conflicts are endemic to the known social world and can be defined straightforwardly as struggles between opposing interests and outlooks. How the media report and represent conflicts have been questions throughout the history of media and communications research. From early studies of propaganda in World War I to the latest research into the media's role in propagating, post-9/11, the US-led "global war on terror," media researchers have analyzed and theorized the multiple roles, dimensions, determinants, and impacts of media conflict reporting. In addition to studies of war reporting, countless others have examined, for example, how minority groups and protesters have been labeled and stereotyped in the media and how new social movements and cultural identities seek media access and symbolic recognition; how moral panics, public crises, and political scandals are performed and conditioned on the media stage (→ Scandalization in the News); how some conflicts become forgotten or hidden in dominant news agendas and how in others the media become involved in forwarding peace processes; how natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies are signaled around the world and how global risks, such as the fallout from nuclear accidents, migrating health pandemics, or climate change, become periodically symbolized and dramatized, discussed and debated (→ Agenda Building; Cottle 2006; in press).

Everyone, it seems, from elected presidents to eco-warriors, now looks to the media to advance strategic aims and symbolic claims. Some protagonists have considerable institutional advantages over their opponents and unashamedly use them to manipulate media agendas to insure that their preferred message gets across (or, equally, that damaging information never finds its way into the media sphere). The resource-poor and institutionally powerless, for their part, are apt to resort to creative tactics or turn to new media in their bid to gain media space and symbolically counter structural imbalances of power.

Environmentalists and antiwar protestors, for example, have become adept at deploying symbols and cultural myths or at staging stunning media events – “dissent events” – to attract the media spotlight (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Whether pursued strategically by powerful corporate and government interests, or more tactically by diffuse cultural identities, the media have become a prized arena for the waging of conflict.

The discourses, symbols, and themes of media representations serve to variously define and legitimize or deny and delegitimize conflict aims (→ Symbolic Annihilation; Bias in the News). Conflict protagonists can be humanized, heroized, and held in high moral esteem or publicly dehumanized, denigrated, and even demonized. And conflicts can also be presented in historical context, discussed in terms of perceived or real injustices, and portrayed as politically dynamic and culturally meaningful, or they can be depicted as random violent events, seemingly without context or cause, perpetrated by criminals, pathological crowds, and bloodthirsty states or reified in Manichean terms as a “clash of cultures.” It is in and through the array of contending voices and views that manage to access the media and thus have the opportunity to publicly “put their case” that the state of democracy in today’s societies is revealed and publicly constituted.

The voluminous research into media conflict has also helped to recover the complex interactions between media and conflict processes as they unfold through time and in relation to political and other contingencies (Cottle 2006; → Reciprocal Effects). Researchers are increasingly cognizant of the dynamic nature of media conflicts and how representations of the same are often contested within and outside the media and how and why these can change across time (Wolfsfeld 1997). Critical sights are prematurely narrowed if media conflict representations are presumed to remain constant or invariant across different fields of conflict, say war, environment, crime, or political scandal, or when ideas of “media bias,” “distortion,” or even “propaganda” are uncritically assumed (→ Construction of Reality through the News). These concepts often do not have the necessary analytical precision and overlook epistemological issues surrounding media representations and analysis. Enemies and opposing parties, by definition, are likely to hold to different beliefs, values, and historical accounts, so recourse to notions of “nonbiased” media representations based, say, on “experts” and “evidence,” “history” and “truth,” can often simply compound, not reconcile, contending world outlooks. With few notable exceptions (Herman & Chomsky 1988), researchers today distance themselves from earlier monolithic views of mainstream media as instruments of “propaganda” working at the behest of dominant political and corporate elites. Nonetheless, most acknowledge the continuing structural imbalances, market imperatives, and political alignments of western mainstream media and how conflicts involving state interests such as war, terrorism, and foreign policy continue to summon government and military attempts at media control and censorship (Allan & Zelizer 2004). These, however, are often opposed by media professionals, and other shaping factors of media conflict are also at work. Deep-seated news values (“violence,” “deviance,” “drama,” “elite orientation,” “human interest,” and “spectacular images”), as well as the known “event orientation” of news and journalism’s reliance on key institutional sources and their definitions of events are all key explanatory factors in media conflict studies (Gitlin 2003/1980; Murdock 1981; → News Factors; News Values).

Today’s media ecology includes traditional media of mass publicity, press, and broadcasting as well as new digital and interactive media such as the Internet. Here

top-down, vertical communication flows from the “few to the many” by national elites are rapidly being supplemented by wider networks of bottom-up and horizontal communication flows conveyed by diverse groups and individuals around the world in “many-to-many” mode (Bennett 2003). This complex of media forms and flows makes attempts at censorship and control of conflict representations increasingly difficult. Globalizing communications and “contraflows” of alternative and oppositional views and voices render national borders and political cultures increasingly porous and contribute also to the historical “transformation of visibility” (Thompson 2000). Here powerful elites and their misdeeds are more readily exposed in the media than hitherto and they can often become subject to public censure in media-led scandals.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-events ▶ News Factors ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Symbolic Annihilation

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## **Conflict Resolution**

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Conflict resolution, in general, deals with ways of eliminating, terminating, or settling all kinds of conflict. Conflict can be broadly defined as a state of opposition, incompatibility, contradiction, or disharmony of statements, beliefs, goals, interests, or values among or



within individual or collective actors, and the observable processes of dealing with these differences. The notion of conflict thus has two aspects: (1) the “state of opposition,” which can be established and analyzed without any reference to the behavior of the parties; for example, opposing interests or contradictory claims of the parties to a conflict, and (2) the actual “conflict behavior” of the parties; for example, physical force or verbal dispute. The first aspect relates to the causes or motives behind the conflict; the second to observable action. Conflict behavior may take two forms: physical action, as in the use of force, and communicative action, as in arguments or disputes.

### TYPES OF CONFLICT

Conflict is ubiquitous and not even restricted to social → interaction. It can take place within individuals (intrapersonal → cognitions or → emotions), between individuals (partners, neighbors), between societal groups (religious or ethnic groups, social strata), and between more or less organized collectives (e.g., in industrial relations), most notably, states (international conflict and war; → Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). The objects of conflicts are manifold: scarce commodities, money, income and property distribution, power positions, individual or political goals, values, ideologies, religion, and so forth.

Given this background and depending on research interest, various *typologies of conflict* have been proposed. Examples of simple dichotomous typologies are the distinctions of latent or manifest, antagonistic or nonantagonistic, and functional or dysfunctional conflict. An early and encompassing typology was provided by Dahrendorf (1959), who divided conflict according to the affected actors, reaching from the individual to the nation state into role, group, class, party, and international conflict. Holzinger (2004), concerned with the communicative resolution of social conflict, distinguishes three types according to the substance of conflict: conflict over facts, over values, and over interests. Game theoretic typologies classify various constellations of conflict according to the degree of opposition of interests: the level of conflict is highest in zero-sum games while nonzero-sum games (such as the prisoners’ dilemma or the battle of the sexes game) include also motives for common action. Coordination and harmony games, by contrast, do not include any conflict of interest (e.g., Rapoport et al. 1976; Scharpf 1997).

### TYPES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Like conflict behavior, conflict resolution may take the two basic forms of physical action and communication. Physical force may be used to terminate conflicts. However, in a more demanding meaning, any resolution of conflict will have to rely on communication. The notion of conflict resolution or dispute settlement may imply various meanings. First, the most ambitious is an understanding of conflict resolution that aims at the *elimination of the causes or the motives* behind the conflict. If the causes are eliminated, no future outbreaks of conflict behavior are to be expected. One example is the clearing up of a misunderstanding leading to conflict behavior. Another example is the misperception of a conflict constellation by the parties. A classical story used in the literature on mediation may illustrate this. Two sisters quarrel over a lemon until the mother joins in and finds

out that one of the sisters wants the juice while the other one wants the peel for baking a cake (Amy 1987). Perceived conflict turns out to be no conflict in the first meaning outlined above, although there was conflict behavior. We can thus assume that such a solution is stable.

Second, a less ambitious notion of conflict resolution aims at the *termination of destructive conflict behavior*. There are basically two ways of achieving this. First, the parties in conflict can voluntarily come to an agreement they can live with. The conflict is settled. However, there remains a problem of implementation and compliance, as there may be incentives to deviate from the agreement. The solution is thus not stable; the conflict behavior may break out again. Second, one party may have the power to impose a particular “solution” on the other. The manifest conflict is terminated, but it is not “resolved” in any demanding meaning of the term. Examples of this kind of termination are decisions taken by the winner of a war or by the superior party in a hierarchical setting. There will usually be winners and losers in such a situation. The solution is less stable than in the case of voluntary agreement discussed above, because the inferior parties will be dissatisfied with it.

Modern societies have developed sophisticated mechanisms for the resolution of conflict. These mechanisms include:

- 1 *Hierarchies and physical force*: conflict resolution by power and force or in hierarchies will usually lead to winners and losers and will terminate a conflict rather than dissolve it. The stability of the solution will certainly depend on the power difference of the parties, but also on the legitimacy of a hierarchical relationship.
- 2 *Laws and courts*: dispute resolution by laws and courts, based on general rules and their interpretation by a neutral party, possesses legitimacy and will thus produce more acceptance and stability, although it might also create winners and losers.
- 3 *Majority voting*: the same is true for the resolution of a conflict by majority voting. It has democratic legitimacy but creates losers. Conflict will not be eliminated; however, it can be settled and terminated, at least for some time.
- 4 *Negotiation and consensus-based procedures*: the highest potential for reaching a stable settlement has unanimity or consensus as a decision rule. As all parties must agree with the solution found, there are no clear winners or losers. All parties win something, but usually do not get everything they wanted. In negotiations, a compromise can be reached by the willingness of the parties to make concessions. Bargaining usually does not strive for the elimination of the conflict of interest, but for only its settlement. In procedures based on argumentation or deliberation, a consensus can be achieved by reasoning and by convincing the other parties of one’s own position. Consensus-oriented arguing has the potential to eliminate those aspects of a conflict that result from opposing views on values or facts, and may thus lead to the full resolution of a conflict. However, mechanisms based on unanimity are very demanding in terms of finding a solution at all.
- 5 *The involvement of a neutral party*: such mechanisms as arbitration in industrial relations build on the ideas of fairness and impartiality. Whether these procedures lead to a stable resolution of conflict depends not only on the quality and the impartiality of the arbitrators’ proposal, but also on whether it is obligatory. If it is accepted by the parties, it has a better chance of surviving.

## ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Apart from these classical mechanisms of conflict resolution in society, various so-called alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms have been developed during recent decades (Pruitt & Carnevale 1993; Goldberg et al. 2003). There are many different models of ADR – negotiation, moderation, conciliation, mediation, round tables, policy dialogues, consensus conferences, planning cells, participatory technology assessment, deliberative discourse, just to name a few.

*Four elements* are constitutive of ADR procedures, although they are not all present in each model. *First*, they are built on communicative strategies of problem solution – information exchange, rationality, and “de-emotionalization” play a great role. The hope is that conflict can be eliminated altogether (or at least in some aspects). *Second*, they are consensus-based and aimed at win–win solutions. Nobody should be worse off after an agreement has been found, so there are no losers. *Third*, many of them include the presence of a neutral third party in various roles, as a moderator, mediator, or arbitrator. This contributes to the objectivity, impartiality, and, thus, acceptability of the solution. *Finally*, most ADR models are based on enhanced participation; that is, not only elected representatives but all stakeholders, or even all citizens, should have a chance to take part in the procedure. These four elements imply an ambitious notion of conflict resolution: if possible, the mechanisms should lead to the complete elimination of the conflict; if this is not the case, they should produce an agreement that is as stable as possible.

## THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

Any attempt to resolve a conflict or to terminate conflict behavior will usually be accompanied by some communication – which need not necessarily contribute to the resolution. There are *three functions for communication* in dispute settlement. *First*, it provides information on facts related to the object of conflict and information on the values, goals, interests, beliefs, and emotions of the parties. *Second*, communication takes the form of bargaining such as demands, offers, threats, and concessions signaling the willingness of the parties to agree to a compromise. *Third*, it can take the form of arguing. Arguments are exchanged and reasons are given in order to convince the other parties of the validity of one’s claims and to come to a consensus (Holzinger 2004).

Two abstract *models of communicative conflict resolution* have become especially influential: the Harvard concept of negotiation (Fisher et al. 1997) and the theory of communicative action and discourse ethics by Habermas (1984, 1993). The *Harvard concept* proposes four principles for objective negotiation. First, the parties shall learn to distinguish between the substantial problem and the emotional aspects of the conflict. Second, the parties shall concentrate on their interests, not on positions. Third, the parties shall develop options advantageous for both sides. Fourth, neutral criteria shall be applied in order to find a fair solution. These rules imply that the parties should not sacrifice their interests but try to find a fair compromise. The third and fourth rules ask for the search for information and for argumentation and justification. The hope is that the parties find a solution that is welfare-enhancing (win–win) and fair.

Habermas proposes a procedure for the justification of norms and values in a society. The procedure is called the “ideal → discourse” or the “ideal speech situation,” within which *verständigungsorientiertes Handeln* – that is, consensus-oriented argumentation – can take place (→ Habermas, Jürgen; Political Discourse; Public Opinion). The goal is the rational justification of norms; i.e., it is about collective decisions over rules valid for the whole society. The ideal speech situation is subject to a range of normative conditions. It has to be public; all concerned shall take part; the participants have to be equal; they have to be truthful and not opportunistic; the participants shall be impartial and their interests “generalizable”; and their preferences must be open to change. It is only the “power of the better argument” which counts. A norm is valid if all participants of a practical discourse achieve a consensus that this norm is valid (“principle of discourse ethics”). The consensus can be achieved as a result of the “principle of universality,” which secures impartiality. A valid norm must satisfy the condition that the consequences following from general compliance to it for each individual’s interests will be accepted by all concerned individuals.

The Harvard concept conceives of the process of conflict resolution as a bargaining situation. It focuses on the settlement of a conflict of interests, and emphasizes compromise and the willingness to concede. Communication serves to create more information and generate impartiality and objectivity. However, discourse ethics focuses on argumentation and reasoning. Habermas is concerned about conflict over values and norms in society and emphasizes the role of justification, persuasion, and consensus. The two concepts vary more strongly in which kinds of conflict they have in mind than in the normative rules they develop. Both rely on information, justification, and impartiality. The main difference is that the Harvard concept accepts opposing interests as given and looks for ways of accommodation, whereas Habermas requires the parties in a conflict to be willing to sacrifice their personal interests.

Research in conflict resolution is very dispersed in social science. It takes place in many disciplines, such as psychology, sociology, law, political science, and economics, and it comprises normative and analytical approaches. Although there are interdisciplinary research centers, such as the *Harvard Program on Negotiation*, research areas as different as studies in international conflict and peace, in the resolution of social and institutionalized political conflict, on ADR, or on personal conflict so far lack a common analytical framework. Future research would gain by doing more systematic comparison of the performance of the different conflict resolution mechanisms for various types of conflict.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Discourse ► Emotion ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Interaction ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► International Communication ► Interpersonal Communication ► Organizational Communication ► Political Discourse ► Public Opinion

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## Conflicts of Law

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The term “conflicts of law” refers to the procedures courts use to determine the appropriate law and place to settle a claim in cases involving litigants from different nations or sovereign states within federations. This area of law encompasses three separate but related concepts: *personal jurisdiction*, *choice of law*, and *enforcement of foreign judgments*. In Europe conflict of law is more commonly called *private international law*. Its corresponding branches are *adjudicative jurisdiction*, *prescriptive jurisdiction*, and *enforcement jurisdiction*.

In the context of communication, these issues come into play when publishers or broadcasters are sued in jurisdictions other than their own for material they disseminate. A New York magazine that publishes an article about a Japanese businessman, for example, could be sued for defamation in Tokyo if the subject feels his reputation was harmed there. In such a case, the forum court in Japan would first have to determine whether it has personal or adjudicative jurisdiction – or, in other words, the power to hear the claim. A court may exercise personal jurisdiction over conduct that occurs within its territory or that involves its citizens. It may also exercise jurisdiction if the effect of the injurious conduct occurs within its borders, regardless of where the actual conduct took place.

In cases involving international litigants, courts are obliged to consider the *interests of other states* that might assert jurisdiction as well. This practice, known as comity, is generally equated with reasonableness. In general, exercise of jurisdiction is considered reasonable if there is a link between the person, natural or a corporation, and the state; if the person has consented to exercise of jurisdiction; if the person regularly does business in the state; or if the person engaged in an activity outside the state that had a

substantial and foreseeable effect within the state. If the court determines that, in the interest of justice and convenience of the parties involved, it would be better to try the case in another forum, it may refuse to exercise jurisdiction under the doctrine of *forum non conveniens*.

European Union nations have simplified the process of resolving cross-border disputes by adopting the *Brussels Regulation*, a treaty specifying the rules for exercising jurisdiction among EU members (→ European Union: Communication Law). Elsewhere, nations have attempted to form international agreements on jurisdiction with less success. The Hague Convention on Private International Law established an international agreement for business-to-business choice of court decisions. But it failed to accomplish its larger goal of developing a general agreement on jurisdiction and recognition of civil judgments, because the negotiating parties could not agree on the appropriate criteria for exercising jurisdiction over foreign defendants.

Once a court assumes jurisdiction, it must decide the law to prescribe in the case. The court may apply the law of the forum (*lex fori*), which is common when the legal question is procedural, or related to the rules used to decide a case. Or the court may apply the law of the site where the tort or delict was committed (*lex loci delicti commissi*), which is normally the case when the legal question is substantive, or related to the rights and obligations of the parties involved. So, assuming that the Japanese court in the earlier example asserted jurisdiction over the New York magazine, it would then have to decide whether to apply the defamation laws of Japan or New York.

Civil law nations, such as Japan and most European countries, predominantly determine choice of law interest based on the principle of territoriality. The *lex loci* doctrine operates under the theory that people should expect to be held accountable for the laws of the places where they visit or engage in business – or, in the case of media, where they publish or broadcast. The rule also fosters simplicity and predictability.

Most commonwealth nations, like Australia and Canada, rely on *lex loci* for choice of law as well, although they may institute exceptions in certain cases. For example, although the United Kingdom recognizes *lex loci* as the principal doctrine to be used in tort cases, it exempts defamation from the rule. Defamation cases still fall under its common law rule of double actionability, which requires a tort to be actionable under English law as well as the other nation's law before English courts will consider it.

*Lex loci* was also the prevailing theory in the United States until the mid-twentieth century. Now, however, while territoriality is still a factor in determining personal jurisdiction and choice of law in the United States, it is considered insufficient to rely on it alone. Most US courts have endorsed the approach recommended in the *Restatement (Second) of the Conflict of Laws*, which is to apply the law of the state with “the most significant relationship to the occurrence and parties” (American Law Institute 1968). Many also employ interest analysis, in which the forum court is expected to consider the needs of state and international systems, the relative interests of the forum and other states that may be interested in the issue, the protection of litigants' expectations, the policies underlying the particular law, predictability and uniformity of result, and ease of adjudication in its choice of law. Interest analysis is more nuanced and flexible than *lex loci*, but it also lacks predictability, an important consideration in legal systems based on *stare decisis*.

The borderless nature of the Internet has magnified already inherent tensions in conflicts of law (→ Internet; Internet Law and Regulation). The traditional practice of relying on the place where the harm is felt to determine jurisdiction and choice of law exposes Internet publishers to potential legal action wherever the material can be downloaded (→ Online Media). And, because standards for content vary among nations, Internet publishers can be sued in foreign jurisdictions for content that would be legal in their own country. But the Internet is just the latest in a series of modern advances that have pushed legal issues beyond sovereign boundaries. Broadcast television and radio, satellite and other types of telecommunication technology have raised similar concerns (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy; Satellite Communication, Regulation of).

This dilemma has inspired calls to harmonize conflicts of law among member nations of the European Union. The EU has a choice of law agreement for contractual obligations already in place. Member nations are now trying to reach an agreement on choice of law issues in noncontractual obligations. But the treaty, dubbed “Rome II,” has been impeded by contradictory views on the latitude courts should have in determining choice of law in defamation and invasion of privacy torts, particularly in the context of Internet publication (→ Libel and Slander; Privacy).

Courts that render judgments against foreign defendants are powerless to enforce them outside of their own jurisdictions. But most nations show deference to foreign legal decisions in the hope of encouraging reciprocal recognition of their laws and judgments. This deference is not without exception, however. Courts can refuse to enforce foreign judgments that conflict with their nation’s fundamental public policies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Law and Policy ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Online Media ▶ Privacy ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy

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# Consensus-Oriented Public Relations

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Consensus-oriented public relations (COPR) is a concept for planning and evaluating → public relations (PR). Especially in situations with a high chance of conflict, companies and organizations are forced to present good arguments for communicating their interests and ideas – in other words, they must make the public understand their actions (→ Corporate Communication; Crisis Communication). Therefore, in the viewpoint of COPR, understanding plays an important role within the PR management process (Burkart 2004).

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

On the one hand, the COPR model ties up with Grunig and Hunt (1984) and the PR goal “mutual understanding” within their two-way *symmetric model of public relations*. Grunig and Hunt argue that primarily in situations with a high chance of conflict, PR must try to establish mutual understanding between organizations. On the other hand, the theory and terms of communication used for the COPR model are the ones established by → Jürgen Habermas in his theory of “communicative action” (1981). According to this theory, communication always happens as a multidimensional process, and each participant in this process needs to accept the validity of certain quasi-universal demands in order to achieve understanding.

This implies that the partners in the communication process must mutually trust that they fulfill the following criteria: (1) intelligibility (being able to use the proper grammatical rules); (2) truth (talking about something the existence of which the partner also accepts); (3) trustworthiness (being honest and not misleading the partner); and (4) legitimacy (acting in accordance with mutually accepted values and norms). As long as neither of the partners has doubts about the fulfillment of these claims, the communication process will function uninterruptedly.

However, these ideal circumstances are an ideal type of imagination – they hardly ever occur in reality. Often, basic rules of communication are violated and therefore there is a certain “repair mechanism,” which is called → *discourse*. Discourse means that all persons involved must have the opportunity to doubt the truth of assertions, the trustworthiness of expressions, and the legitimacy of interests. Only when plausible answers are given will the flow of communication continue.

Basically, Habermas distinguishes three types of discourse (Fig. 1). In an *explicative discourse*, we question the intelligibility of a statement, typically by asking, “How do you mean this?,” or “How shall I understand this?” Answers to such questions are called “interpretations.” In a *theoretical discourse*, we question the claim of truth, typically by asking “Is it really as you said?,” or “Why is that so?” Answers to such questions are called “assertions” and “explanations.” In a *practical discourse*, we question the normative rightness (legitimacy) of a speech act by doubting its normative context, typically by asking “Why have you done this?,” or “For what reason didn’t you act differently?” Answers to such



questions are called “justifications” (Habermas 1984, 110 ff.). A fourth aspect, i.e., the claim of trustworthiness (typical questions: “Will this person deceive me?”, “Is he/she mistaken about himself/herself?”), is an exception as it cannot be subject to discourse because the communicator can prove his or her truthfulness only by subsequent actions (Habermas 1981, vol. 1, 69).

Discourses must be free of external and internal constraints. However, this is what Habermas calls “contrafactual” because the “ideal speech situation” that would be required for this does not exist in reality. We only act as if it were real in order to be able to communicate (Habermas 1984, 180).

The process of “understanding” is not an end in itself. Normally we pursue the intention of putting our interests into reality. Thus, understanding becomes the mean for the coordination of actions, as the participants involved in this process aim at synchronizing their goals on the basis of common definitions of a situation (Habermas 1981, vol. 1, 143f., 385f.). This leads to the conclusion that commonly accepted definitions of a situation need undisturbed processes of understanding as a prerequisite for deciding what should be done in a given case.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A PROCESS OF UNDERSTANDING**

The COPR model focuses on the above prerequisites. PR managers who reflect on the basic principles of communication will always orient their activities in accordance with possible criticism maintained by the public. However, the COPR model is not a naive attempt to transfer Habermas’s conditions of understanding directly onto the reality of PR. In view of the theory’s contrafactual implications, this would be inadequate. It was rather a goal to gain from Habermas’s concept of understanding new ideas for the analysis of real PR communication. The main impact of creating the COPR model was the possibility of *differentiating communicative claims*, so that this process of questioning can now be analyzed more systematically.

Especially in situations where conflicts are to be expected, PR managers have to take into account that their messages might be questioned by critical recipients. Members of the publics involved will offer their doubts about the truth of presented PR information, especially when confronted with numbers, other data, and facts. They will question the trustworthiness of the company and its communicators, as well as the legitimacy of the company’s interests (→ Trust of Publics). This is illustrated in Figure 1.

For example, if a community plans to build a waste disposal site, this will most likely cause disturbance among the local residents. Sometimes even a citizens’ initiative will be formed that aims at bringing down the project. Normally the local media will support the protests, so a conflict situation can be expected (→ Advocacy Journalism). On the basis of the COPR model, the PR managers of the company planning the landfill should consider that (1) any assertion they make will be examined concerning its truth, e.g., whether figures about the quantity of waste to be deposited are correct, whether air, plants, wildlife, groundwater, etc. are really not endangered; (2) the persons, companies, and organizations involved will be confronted with distrust, e.g., representatives of companies might be taken as biased, experts/consultants as incompetent or even corrupt; (3) their intention for building the landfill will be doubted in principal, either because the basic

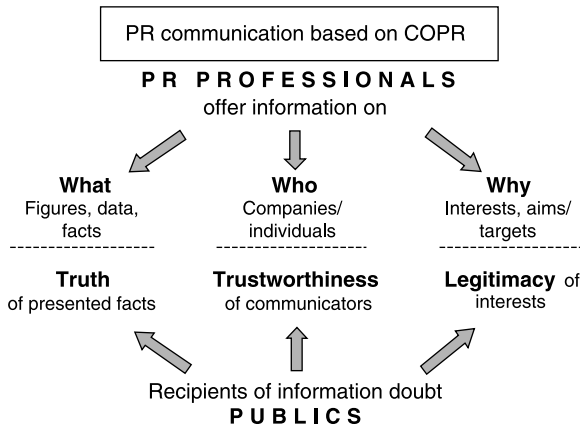


Figure 1 PR communication based on consensus-oriented public relations

strategy for waste disposal is questioned (e.g., by preferring waste avoidance as an alternative to landfills), or because the choice of the site for the landfill is seen as unjustified (e.g., because the region has just started developing tourism). Only if it is possible to eliminate such doubts, or, even better, if doubts are prevented from the very beginning, can the flow of communication not be disturbed (→ Corporate Reputation).

### PLANNING AND EVALUATION OF COPR

In the COPR process, four steps with corresponding objectives can be distinguished. These steps must be adapted to the actual conflict situation, in order to use COPR as a planning tool. This also makes it possible to evaluate the success of PR activities not only in a summative sense (at the end of a PR campaign) but also in a formative way (meaning step by step). For instance, on the information dimension, the following questions can be asked: “Have the relevant facts been presented?” (What?), “Have the main company figures been mentioned?” (Who?), and “Have the project goals been justified?” (Why?).

In the case of a planned landfill in Austria, the conception of COPR was useful for analyzing and explaining the consequences of the PR activities that the company launched in the conflict that arose from their project (Burkart 1993, 1994). A representative survey showed that the acceptance of building the landfill correlated convincingly with the degree of understanding. Respondents who tended to accept the project were not only better informed but also less likely to question the trustworthiness of the planners and the legitimacy of the choice of site for the landfill.

Nevertheless, the COPR model is not a recipe for generating acceptance. People cannot be persuaded to agree to a project by pressing a “PR button,” because acceptance can only emerge among the persons involved if the process of understanding has worked successfully. The prerequisite for this is that the need for dialogue and discourse on the side of the public is taken seriously by the companies and communication managers concerned, especially when the former feel restricted or even threatened by company interests and plans.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Discourse ▶ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Legitimacy Gap Theory ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Field Dynamics ▶ Trust of Publics

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## **Consistency Theories**

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In social psychology, consistency theories constitute a body of four theories: → Leon Festinger's → cognitive dissonance theory (1957), Fritz Heider's balance theory (1946, 1958), Charles Osgood and Percy Tannenbaum's consistency theory (1955), and Rosenberg's model of affective–cognitive consistency (1956).

Consistency theories are characterized by the assumption that humans strive for a balanced state of → cognitions and behaviors. If a set of cognitions or of cognitions and behaviors are contradictory in some manner to the person experiencing them, a state of imbalance, i.e., “dissonance,” occurs. The affected person perceives this state as unpleasant and is therefore motivated to reduce dissonance. Both behavior and cognitive activity are suitable for reducing dissonance.

### **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE THEORY**

The most influential of these four theories is Leon Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory. Initiated by this contribution, consistency became one of the most studied topics in social psychology from 1960 to 1970. The theory implies that people fall into an unpleasant

state of affairs if the different cognitions (thoughts, → attitudes, beliefs, states of behavior awareness) and the behaviors they produce are inconsistent. According to Festinger (1957, 13), “two elements are in dissonant relationship if, considering these two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other.” Consequently, to reduce dissonance a person might change or add elements that led to dissonance, or he or she might engage in active behavior either to avoid situations and information that increase dissonance or to actively reinterpret the situation or information.

The → *selective exposure hypothesis* states that dissonant information is avoided except when attitudes are very strong or very weak. If attitudes are strong, the affected person can find enough opposing arguments to integrate dissonant information into his or her cognitive system. If attitudes are weak, this person might better discover the truth and change his or her personal attitude. In this manner dissonance is avoided more effectively over time. In subsequent research on cognitive dissonance, → selective perception and selective retention were observed.

Varying kinds of selective exposure have been differentiated in terms of which information was selected, how much importance and meaning viewers and listeners allocated to it, and how they evaluated this type of media content. Researchers applying cognitive dissonance theory in empirical research discovered a number of methodological and theoretical problems, and found that the theory is unable to predict information behavior in the way its protagonists first thought possible. Nevertheless, cognitive dissonance can explain some variance in exposure to news, although the valence (positive or negative), the news value, and the positioning of a news item can overrule its influence on exposure (Donsbach 1991).

## BALANCE THEORY

Heider’s balance theory was derived from gestalt psychology (1946, 1958). Additionally, its formulation was influenced by Lewin’s field theory, i.e., all kinds of human perceptions such as objects or events can be summarized into a cognitive field (1951). Balance theory describes the relationships between a certain person (P), another person (O), and an attitude, object, or topic (X). A balance between all three elements is said to occur if they have positive relationships, e.g., P liking O (positive relationship), O disliking X (negative relationship), and P disliking X (negative relationship). This example depicts a balanced triad. It is supposed to be perceived as pleasant and remain stable over time.

Humans can encounter eight different relationships, four of which are balanced and the other four unbalanced. According to Heider, people prefer to have attitudes that are consistent with each other compared to those characterized by inconsistency. Humans try to retain consistency in their attitudes toward and in their relationships with other people and elements of the environment. People try to establish *balanced triads* in their day-to-day lives. As a consequence of unbalanced triads, people are motivated to alter elements and relationships within them. For instance, they could terminate the relationship with another person (O) or change their attitude toward an object or an event (X). However, we humans do not always try to resolve inconsistency in that way. Sometimes people would rather “reorganize” triads. For instance, they would not talk rudely about another person’s (O) hobby (X), if they liked this person but not the hobby. In empirical studies

subjects rated balanced triads as more pleasant and stable; however, research also shows that real-life triads are much more complex and that assumptions from balance theory are not always able to predict the complexity encountered in real-life triads.

The most important expansion of balance theory has been suggested by Newcomb (1953, 1961, 1978), who differentiates between balanced and unbalanced triads as well as triads without balance. He also investigates the relationship O has to P. A triad “without balance” is defined as one in which the P–O relationship is negative in at least one direction, e.g., O dislikes P. Accordingly, no interpersonal system can be defined and therefore the question of balance is not posed. Also, Newcomb addresses the relevance of relationships as a determinant of consistency. If, for instance, the relationship between P and O is perceived as very important, they are more likely to establish a state of balance.

### **CONSISTENCY THEORY AND AFFECTIVE-COGNITIVE THEORY OF CONSISTENCY**

This idea is also depicted in the *consistency theory* by Osgood and Tannenbaum (1955; Tannenbaum 1968). The authors expand balance theory in terms of quantifying how positively or negatively the other person (O) and the attitude, object, or event (X) are evaluated. These evaluations are made on semantic differential → scales. Osgood’s semantic differential method measures attitudes on a bipolar scale with opposite adjectives at the poles (e.g., good–bad, strong–weak). Subjects are asked to rate an object between the poles of given adjective pairs. Poles usually range from –3 to +3. The five spaces in between –3 and +3 are not indicated by words or numbers. Respondents are asked to check the space in between both poles that best indicates their attitude.

Congruity occurs if a person (P) evaluates an object (X) in a similar manner to how another person (O) did. If the evaluation relationships are balanced (e.g., a person evaluates an object as positively as another person did and both these people like each other), yet differ according to their quantitative value (e.g., P evaluates the object very positively, but O appreciates it only mildly), incongruity is the consequence. As with the other consistency theories, incongruity implies an unpleasant state of mind and leads to increased motivation to re-establish congruity.

Rosenberg’s *affective–cognitive theory of consistency* states that attitudes encompass a cognitive and an affective component (1956, 1960). The affective component implies the evaluation of the attitude object (e.g., positive evaluation of a politician) and the cognitive component implies the instrumental means (e.g., knowing that the politician is a Republican). Accordingly, humans strive for consistency among affective and cognitive components of their attitudes. Empirical research on this subject matter provided sound evidence that changes in one component will lead to the motivation to alter the other (Rosenberg 1960).

### **STATE-OF-THE-ART OF CONSISTENCY THEORIES**

Since 1960, consistency theories have increasingly lost recognition in social psychology, because information processing models have gained popularity and because consistency theories lack the complexity to predict behavior. In fact, in some instances, people may be

happy in situations characterized by imbalance and inconsistency. Yet despite criticism, consistency theories have inspired an enormous body of research and, until today, many of these results cannot be predicted by other approaches.

Apart from their outreach in social psychology, consistency theories have had a tremendous impact on the understanding of selective exposure to communication. In fact, they are still used to explain selective exposure, along with other theories such as → mood management or theories of social identity (→ Social Identity Theory). The impact of consistency theories for communication certainly lies in their scope to predict motivation. Communication scholars are able to define all kinds of subsequent actions of perceived inconsistency (e.g., selective exposure to mass media), cognitions (e.g., evaluation of mass media content or attitude change), and emotions. However, not all of the four theories named above have been equally addressed in communication research.

The theory of cognitive dissonance has gained the most attention and it has very often been applied to explain selective exposure to → news and advertisements (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). However, research on mass media effects has usually been realized in the form of correlational field research. Cotton (1985) and Donsbach (1991) have reviewed research on consistency theories in psychology and communication within recent decades. Accordingly, corresponding work addressed the question of how attitudes, e.g., toward political parties, are related to selective exposure to newspapers. It was hypothesized that subjects with strong or weak beliefs in political parties or candidates only show moderate interest in selective exposure, because they do not experience dissonance. On the contrary, a person with a moderate belief in a certain party or candidate shows strong interest in publications dealing with the subject matter, because he or she experiences cognitive dissonance. Findings produced in → field research of this kind were not always replicated in laboratory research conducted earlier in the domain of social psychology (→ Experiment, Laboratory).

Research on cognitive consistency was criticized on the grounds that it lacked appropriate consideration of inter-individual differences and characteristics of media content and format. Also, it was noted that scholars were not able to explain whether cognitive dissonance or some other psychological process was the reason for selective exposure. In addition, communication scholars have very often used cognitive dissonance as a theoretical inspiration rather than taking into account all corresponding research conducted in social psychology before. For instance, Donsbach (1991) holds that this manner of dealing with cognitive dissonance theory in communication hindered its development. Instead of doing rigorous research and appropriately recognizing such work, similar designs have been replicated over and over again. Cotton (1985) suspected that research on cognitive dissonance might decrease or even extinguish, because results are unequivocal and no new, inspiring issues have been raised. Donsbach (1991) argues that only rigorous research and consideration of all results on consistency theories can lead to adequate and ground-breaking progress. Consequently, the future directions that research on consistency theories will take are regarded as obscure.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cognition  
▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Field Research ▶ Mood Management ▶ News ▶ News Values ▶ Persuasion ▶ Scales

► Selective Exposure ► Selective Perception and Selective Retention ► Social Identity Theory

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## **Consolidation of Media Markets**

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Consolidation refers to the expansion of media firms through mergers and acquisitions. Formally, it is distinct from the concentration of media markets, although the terms are often used interchangeably. To some observers, consolidation responds to the growth of new television networks and cable and satellite channels – e.g., MTV, HBO, ESPN, CNN, Fox News, Canal 1, A&E, Al Jazeera – and the splintering of audiences into niche markets (→ Television Networks; Cable Television; Satellite Television; Audience Segmentation; Arab Satellite TV News). Even the grip of the → Hollywood majors – Columbia, → Disney, Paramount, Twentieth Century Fox, Universal, and Warner Bros – over US and international film audiences appears to be slipping, with their share of the US market tumbling from 85 percent in 1994 to 66 percent in 2004. Throw into this mix the Internet's endless websites, downloading services, and innumerable blogs, and the idea of media

concentration seems anachronistic. As Benjamin Compaine (2001) states, “the democracy of the marketplace may be flawed but it is . . . getting better, not worse.”

Others disagree. Over the course of six editions of *The (new) media monopoly*, Ben Bagdikian has argued that while thousands of firms exist in the US media business, the number controlling half or more of the broadcasting, newspaper, and film industries has fallen from 23 in 1990 to just five in 2004 (→ Culture Industries). Robert McChesney (2000) concurs, arguing that by 1999 six conglomerates controlled most of the media market within the US, and even globally. In contrast to those who see more channels as an index of greater competition (*numerical diversity*), these observers focus on *source diversity* – the number of media owners in a market.

### EVIDENCE

Applying the method of concentration ratios (CR4; → Concentration in Media Systems) to the US, Alan Albarran (2003) found strong evidence of concentration in markets for music (CR4 98 percent; → Music Industry), television networks (CR4 84 percent), film (CR4 78 percent), and cable systems (CR4 61 percent). In terms of national → newspaper ownership, however, the top four owners controlled just under the 50 percent threshold (48 percent), although 98 percent of American cities have only one daily newspaper.

A study of media ownership by the *Canadian Senate* (2004) found similar trends. The top five newspaper groups’ share of circulation grew from 73 percent in 1994 to 79 percent by 2003. In terms of television, the top five groups accounted for just 31 percent of all stations in 1980, but by 2000 that grew to 68 percent. These groups’ share of audiences for all channels in English-speaking Canada also rose from 42 to 50 percent between 1997 and 2002.

In a *global market* consisting of hundreds of firms and worth \$258 billion (2005), ten firms account for 81 percent of revenue: Time Warner (\$43.7 billion), Disney (\$31.9 billion), Bertelsmann (\$28.9 billion), News Corp (\$25.3 billion), Viacom (\$24.1 billion), Comcast (\$22.7 billion), NBC/Universal (\$14 billion), Pearson (\$7.5 billion), Fuji Television Network (\$5 billion), and ITV (\$3.9 billion). All of these firms are conglomerates, seven are listed on *Fortune’s* list of the global 500 (2005) and all are based in the US (6), Britain (2), Germany (1) or Japan (1). Each derives the lion’s share of its revenue from domestic markets and from Europe, North America, and Japan; only a fraction of their revenues comes from the rest of the world (→ Media Conglomerates; Time Warner Inc.; Bertelsmann Corporation; News Corporation).

### EXPLANATIONS

Consolidation and concentration can be explained in several ways. Some argue that consolidation has historically occurred in cycles, first between the 1880s and the first decade of the twentieth century, then in the 1920s, 1960s, 1980s, and again from the late 1990s until, roughly, 2004. The current cycle is notable by the *sheer size* of some of the transactions, as illustrated by the unprecedented, but ill-fated, AOL and Time Warner deal, initially valued at \$166 billion in 2000 but which fell to \$106 billion a year later. A few deals have been transnational in scope, such as Universal Studios’ purchase by the French



diversified conglomerate, Vivendi, in 2000 (\$35 billion), although the failure of that deal spawned further consolidation when GE/NBC acquired Universal Studios in 2004.

One outcome of current trends is the unprecedented common ownership that now exists between the major television networks and Hollywood in the US: Twentieth Century Fox and the Fox Network (1985), Disney with ABC (1995), Time Warner and the WB network (1995), CBS and Viacom (1999), and NBC/Universal (2004). Hollywood majors have also countered the mounting impact of independents by taking them over, as exemplified by Disney and Viacom's acquisition of Miramax and Dreamworks, respectively, in 2005. Policy shifts in Canada have fueled acquisitions *across* the media by Bell Globe Media, Canwest, and Quebecor between 1998 and 2000. In Britain, the amalgamation of Granada and Carlton in 2003, after disastrous investments in digital terrestrial television brought both to the brink of bankruptcy, furthered concentration in the national television market.

These trends also reflect the *influence of financial markets* on media firms. Media firms have turned to financial markets since the late-1990s more than ever in the past, with over half of all venture capital pouring into the communications media sector in 1999 (Picard 2002, 175). This is significant because financial markets abhor risk and prefer specific types of media firms, notably conglomerates, Internet companies, and those with a deep reservoir of content. While financial forces fueled a wave of consolidation, they also spawned a speculative bubble that triggered the collapse of some firms – WorldCom, Adelphia, Hollinger, Vivendi – and led to others becoming ongoing targets of investigation into corporate malfeasance, such as Time Warner. Nonetheless, an enduring monument to the dot-com bubble remains: the increased proportion of the media business accounted for by conglomerates. Even those who do not usually take a critical stance claim that empire-building and personal hubris are now driving forces behind the consolidation of media markets, alongside traditional concerns with profits (Demers & Merskin 2000).

A web of alliances among media firms has also *substituted cooperation for the sharp edge of competition*. Such alliances typically function as part of broader strategies that aim to counteract the risk of creating content for fickle audiences. The failure rate of media goods is far higher than in other industries, with unsuccessful television series, films, books, and music CDs vastly outnumbering successful ones. Hollywood releases hundreds of films a year, but only a few are box-office winners. However, since the cost of reproducing content is low, firms can achieve economies of scale by delivering content to as many audiences across as many media as possible. Time Warner and Viacom's decision to close down their rival networks – the WB and UPN, respectively – in 2006, while launching their jointly owned CW network, is an example of this strategy. Time Warner and Comcast also divided several cable systems they had acquired from AT&T in 2003 after it abandoned its push into the cable business, and from Adelphia in 2004 after that firm's owners pled guilty to pillaging the corporation for personal ends. The two companies also joined Cox Communication and Advance Newhouse to develop a new video-on-demand service, while Comcast combined with the PBS in 2005 to launch a new children's channel, KidsSprout.

Media firms also use deep pockets, alliances, and litigation to *shape the evolution of new media*. News Corp is particularly noteworthy in this regard, with its purchase of MySpace (\$580 million), gaming and entertainment site IGN.com (\$620 million), and the top sports site in the US, Scout Media (\$60 million) in 2005. Similarly, ITV acquired Friends

Reunited (\$200 million) in 2005, while Viacom bought Neopets (\$160 million), a children's website in the US, in 2004, and iFilm.com in 2005. Alliances with cellular telephone companies and computer firms such as Apple and Microsoft have also allowed these firms to stake out a key role in new mobile television, music, and film download services. While the largest deal in the post-bubble era occurred in 2006 when Google took over the video-sharing site, YouTube (\$1.65 billion), that transaction was preceded by agreements with NBC Universal, SonyBMG, Time Warner, Viacom, and News Corp that served three goals: (1) to implement content identification technology to help these companies maximize control over their content; (2) to share traffic and advertising revenue; and (3) to share access to Google's technology.

### DANGERS OF CONSOLIDATION

These agreements will not give these firms "perfect control" over their content, but will help to preserve their dominant role in the media economy. They will also allow them to shape the evolution of new technology, undermining claims that new technology is inherently antagonistic to concentrations of power. That the → Internet is not immune from such tendencies can be seen in Google's dominance of the → search engine market (50 percent), with the Yahoo!, MSN and Time Warner/AOL share accounting for 47 percent, yielding a CR4 of 97 percent – far exceeding the standard of concentration outlined above. This is why Google is such a powerful force in defining the relationship between the "old" and "new" media.

The *staying power of the global media giants* can be seen in the fact that Time Warner, Disney, and NBC possess four of the top ten Internet news sites in the US, while the *New York Times*, *Tribune* Newspapers, Knight Ridder, and *USA Today* account for another four. The fact that other top news sites rely on these sources and a handful of global news agencies for their content further magnifies this influence (→ Online Media). With almost no original news of their own, Yahoo! and Google do little to diversify the range of available news sources. Similar patterns hold globally, where the same firms dominate, with the exception of the BBC and three Chinese sites. The latter rely solely on reports from the state-controlled Chinese media.

Many critics argue that the biggest consequence of consolidation lies in the ability of media owners to *influence media content* and, thus, people's view of the world. While some claim that this potential has been sharply diminished by the rise of the modern corporation, where ownership is dispersed and control rests in the hands of managers, with media workers relatively free to do as they please within the limits of professional norms and good business practice (Demers & Merskin 2000), four of the top ten global media companies remain owner-controlled: News Corp (Rupert Murdoch), Bertelsmann (heirs to founder Carl Bertelsmann), Viacom (Sumner Redstone), and Comcast (Roberts Family). Moreover, in Australia, Canada, and Latin America, among other places, owner-controlled media firms remain the norm, suggesting that it is premature to sound the death knell of media moguls who can use their outlets to pursue political and ideological goals. However, identifying causal links between owners, content, and people's beliefs is fraught with difficulties, including the anecdotal nature of the evidence and the well-known limits of media effects research.

A larger view of the issues considers the consequences of consolidation on the *allocation of resources within media firms*. While some believe that the deeper pockets of media conglomerates allow them to commit more resources to production, news gathering and so forth, a counterargument is that resources are being diverted from these goals to meet the high cost of financing mergers and acquisitions. The merger between Granada and Carlton television in Britain, for example, led swiftly to the closing of the 24-hour ITV News channel and centralization of news production for all of its other channels in London (→ Television News; Newscast, 24-Hour). In 2006, NBC announced that it would cut 700 people, eliminate news bureaus in favor of a centralized operation in New York to feed NBC, MSNBC, CNBC, and its Spanish-language network, Telemundo, and replace high-cost, early prime-time drama with cheaper reality TV and game shows. Overall, the number of network journalists has fallen by over one-third since 1985 in the US, while international news bureaus have been slashed. This trend is especially acute in Canada, where the number of international bureaus operated by Canwest has fallen from nine in the late-1990s to two. The scope of such changes differs between firms, but the trend is clear: integrated news operations that serve multiple channels, budget cuts, fewer journalists, less foreign bureaus, and high-cost drama series replaced by low-budget programs.

These trends are bound by audience tastes and the complexity of the media business, but several points remain to be made in any final assessment of the consolidation of media markets (→ Audience). First, audiences now have more channels than ever, but source diversity is shrinking. Second, consolidation has created deep rifts within the media. Media workers report that bottom-line pressures now have a greater impact on their work than in the past, that the influence of owners, managers, and advertisers is increasing and that their trust in executives is falling (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2006). Lastly, the push by conglomerates to expand the scope and duration of copyright laws, aggressive litigation, and use of digital rights management technologies is subtly biasing the architecture of the media in favor of control and closure versus the values of openness and real diversity that are the *sine qua non* of democratic societies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ Cable Television ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Disney ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Music Industry ▶ News ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newspaper ▶ Online Media ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Search Engines ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News ▶ Time Warner Inc.

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## Consonance of Media Content

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The mass media are an important, if not the most important, factor in the development of free opinion in democracies. That is to say that the media have a specific democratic responsibility (McQuail 1987, 117–118). It is no wonder that, apart from freedom of speech, free journalism, and a free media system, the *diversity of media* is seen as being the most important condition for the emergence and progression of democracies (→ Concentration in Media Systems). A heterogeneous media structure is also seen as being an important condition for the development of a diverse and pluralistic media content, representing a balanced diversity of viewpoints on political issues and opinions (→ Plurality). This again is conceived as an important condition in the development of a diverse and pluralistic → public opinion and sound comprehension by citizens of political coherences and procedures in democracies.

On the other hand, low competition and too much homogeneity within the media system is seen as a threat to a diverse and pluralistic media content. This notion presumes that ownership concentration has a direct (negative) effect on the content variety of media. However, a pluralistic media structure and competition within the media system alone are no guarantee for the prevention of consonance of media content. This is especially true for nonfictional media content like news.

### CAUSES OF CONSONANCE

Noelle-Neumann and Mathes (1987, 410) define consonance as “uniformity of facts and arguments which do not result from reality but from a choice made by the communicators” (→ Construction of Reality through the News). Consequently, among the numerous and different theories of influences on mass media content (see, for example, Shoemaker & Reese 1991), those approaches that deal with the professional role of journalists are most prominent (Fishman 1980; → Media Production and Content). As journalists employ similar professional skills within the process of news production, they tend to select similar issues or events for publication (→ Gatekeeping; Journalism: Group Dynamics). To put it simply: all journalists write about the same things in the same way. This originates from the fact that, generally speaking, journalists have a similar professional pattern in

selecting events for publication. The result is a certain homogeneity (consonance) of news discourse despite there being a pluralistic media system. However, there are striking differences between news cultures of journalists of different types of media and even more between those of different (national) cultures (→ Journalists' Role Perception; News as Discourse).

The reasons for journalists' similar professional pattern in selecting events and producing news are manifold. The most important ones are: (1) governing professional principles of → news values and interpretation strategies lead to a commonly shared professional understanding of "newsworthiness" (→ News Factors); (2) respective professional routines at different types of media (TV, radio, newspapers, etc.) result in a commonly shared professional understanding of what "fits" to a specific type of media and what does not; (3) the standardization of journalistic education makes sure that those governing professional principles and routines are widely accepted within the journalist corps. In general, they are not questioned and are passed on from generation to generation (→ Journalism Education). (4) Furthermore, as a result of the professional necessity for orientation, media and journalists tend to be geared toward each other. Within this process of professional co-orientation, prestige media like, for example, leading national quality newspapers play the role of an → opinion leader for journalists (→ Quality Press). Both phenomena, co-orientation among journalists and opinion leaders among prestige media, further contribute to the consonance of media content.

Other causes of media consonance arise from aspects which are inherent in the media system: (5) as media/journalists rely heavily on the messages and news investigated and edited by news agencies and wires (for example, Associated Press [AP], Reuters, or Deutsche Presse Agentur [DPA]; → News Agencies), they very often use this kind of ready-made news material and adopt it without any changes. Thus, the news material of news agencies and wires are a further component of the emergence of media consonance.

Another factor, (6) → public relations (PR), increasingly influences the journalistic process of news production (Baerns 1985; Turk 1986; Turow 1989). PR produces ready-made news material and, thus, further enhances the consonance of media content. In particular, communicators from the political and economic spheres of society increasingly aim to control and homogenize their communication output. Through the help of spin doctors and PR consultants, many of whom are former journalists and media people and thus familiar with the needs and requirements of the media, politicians and managers aim to offer journalists perfectly styled news. This leads to a greater control of messages and content through the source of a message (→ Strategic Framing). The less time and fewer personnel at hand in the editorial room, the greater the chance of PR material (like, for example, press releases) being published in the media. This is especially true in times of media economic crises, when editorial rooms are short-staffed and editorial responsibilities are outsourced, meaning the media rely heavily on professional PR material (→ Public Relations: Media Influence).

Finally, apart from the classical professional principles of news production mentioned above, Herman and Chomsky (1988) additionally emphasize another possibly important cause for the consonance of media content, in particular of political news: (7) a certain interdependency between the political and economic system on the one hand and the media system on the other (see also Dreier 1982; Gerbner et al. 1982). Those inter-

dependencies undermine the freedom of the press and the development of a free public opinion. They are most evident in totalitarian systems but also exist in democracies, although less obviously. Herman and Chomsky (1988) drew on the analysis of American media coverage of Nicaragua and El Salvador, which was found to be extremely one-sided. While at that time the American media consonantly portrayed the socialist Sandinistas and their regime in Nicaragua negatively, they kept silent in the case of El Salvador, which suffered from the same political misery but was governed by a totalitarian military regime supported by the US government.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF CONSONANCE**

Media critics such as Chomsky (1989) argue that the consonant news of the American media brought about a factitious and simulated consonant public opinion tamed in the interest of the political and economic elites. The general concept of media consonance is related to the concept of homogeneity of public opinion: it is assumed that the higher the degree of media consonance, the higher the homogeneity of public opinion. As agenda-setting theory would suggest, the consonance of the media with regard to a single agenda of issues will in turn be reflected in a similarly consonant public agenda (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). It indicates that public opinion is highly influenced by the media agenda represented within media news. The supposed correspondence of media consonance and homogeneity of public opinion figured prominently in Noelle-Neumann's (1993) development of the theory of the → "spiral of silence," which among other things presumes that all-dominant consonant media content is picked up on by the public as the dominant and/or the majority's opinion. In this regard, consonance of media content with a high degree of consonance of issues and opinions consequently is considered to be an obstruction to the development of a pluralistic opinion within a democratic society. The more complex and diverse a modern democratic society is, the more complex and diverse the need for the public (opinion) to be represented in/through the media. In short: media consonance is considered a threat to democracy. This makes consonance of media content a most popular object of research.

### **DISTINGUISHING CONSONANCE AND FOCUSING**

Although the general concept of content consonance comprises both consistency of issues and topics as well as of opinions and interpretations, Eilders (2002) suggests a terminological differentiation: she describes a correspondence of issues as "focusing" and a correspondence of opinion as "consonance." This allows more detailed empirical analysis of consonance of media content and a more analytical understanding of the phenomenon (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). This is important and most relevant, as studies show that focusing (of issues) in the news does not necessarily lead to consonance (of opinions) among the media. Her own content analysis on German quality newspapers and the work of the American researcher Guido Stempel (1985) show that, although the media often concentrate on the same issues and topics, they editorialize or comment on them differently (Eilders 2002). This is due to the respective ideological profiles and editorial positions of newspapers, which generally govern rather the specific framing of an issue than the selection

of an issue for publication (→ Framing of the News). However, Eilders even found variation from this rule.

Furthermore, Eilders (2002) calls for a systematic consideration of the time dimension when dealing with the concept of media consonance, which means that one can only speak of media consonance if, for example, different newspapers report on the same issues or express the same opinion on an issue at the same time. This is increasingly relevant, as content stability over time is considered to be an important condition for media effects. However, research has not yet developed a commonly shared consensus on what exactly should be understood as high/strong/dangerous or low/weak/safe consonance of media content. Hence, a clear perception of a normative degree of content consonance (in terms of quantity and/or duration/continuance) does not exist.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News Agencies ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Quality Press ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Synchronization of the News

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# Construction of Reality through the News

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Between the local newspaper, radio updates, the evening television newscasts and now updates via the → Internet, your PDA or your cell phone, → news seems ubiquitous. But where does news come from? How does what you read and hear and view get to the point of being published or broadcast? Fundamentally, news is a construction, and the nature of that construction is important to how we shape our view of the symbolic and mediated reality of the world (→ Reality and Media Reality; Constructivism). So how are those symbols created and recognized, and what role do the mediators, the news producers, play in shaping how we think about the world around us?

## COMPLEXITY OF NEWS DECISIONS

News gathering may seem a simple process. An event happens, reporters go and gather facts, they write the stories, and we read or hear the stories (→ Objectivity in Reporting). On occasion it may happen just like that. But what remains invisible are the dozens and sometime hundreds of decisions that went on behind the scenes, invisible to news consumers, before that story was covered, reported, written, or edited.

Let's take a seemingly straightforward example. Two men enter a bank, produce weapons, fire shots to frighten patrons and employees, take a large amount of cash, and escape. Is this a news story or not? The answer is: it depends. Each news organization, each news community, each news manager may differ in the determination of what is or is not newsworthy, or in other words, what will and will not be covered and published (→ News Values). There are some fairly simple considerations: was anyone hurt or killed, how many people were affected, was the amount of money taken large, have the suspects been apprehended, and were there unusual circumstances surrounding the robbery? Then there are other factors, which may be determined by the location of the robbery. In Cheyenne, Wyoming, bank robberies may not be a common occurrence, therefore would warrant coverage. In Los Angeles, there may well be too many robberies in a single day to make any one single incident important enough to report.

Another set of criteria used may be how much is happening that particular day. In other words, what are the competing events of the day: is it a busy day with much to cover or is it a slow news day? Yet another set of considerations might include the historical context for this story, in other words, is this one in a series of robberies that have occurred? Furthermore, what is the news organization's policy about reporting crime? Some might put a premium on crime news given its prurient interest among viewers – others may choose not to publish every random crime committed in favor of more substantive news. What about the individuals making the news decisions – have they been the victim of a crime, what is their attitude toward crime stories, what are they trying to accomplish with each day's news? Also built into this decision-making matrix are factors such as where in the city the robbery took place; was it in an affluent area, was it in a poorer part of town, and what was the racial-ethnic background of the perpetrators?



Race, class, and other sociological facts can easily come into play in the decision-making process.

### **NEWS DECISIONS AS A SOCIAL PROCESS**

These are just a few of the hundreds if not thousands of considerations that surround decisions about news each day in every news organization. When we pull back for a broader look at any given news event and the coverage that may or may not occur, one thing becomes rather obvious: news is a socially constructed product. This social construction of news results in a certain view of a community and of the world at large. The day's news is a result of many decisions, policies, and circumstances. It is a social process, part institutional culture, part human dynamics.

A number of keen observers have helped with our understanding of the social construction of news. In 1922 → Walter Lippmann described the way in which people construct pictures in their heads based upon the often incomplete reporting on public affairs. In his scathing critique of journalism and public opinion, Lippmann, a journalist himself, was struck by how little the public knew and how easily this knowledge was manipulated. Lippmann recognized the power that he and others had over influencing what stories were covered and how they were covered. He also observed how willing people were at times to believe what they read because of a lack of knowledge.

So what influences news workers in all the decisions they make, from choosing what stories to cover, to whom they will interview, to what a headline might say (→ News Factors)? Edward J. Epstein made the case in 1973 that organizational constraints heavily influenced the way in which news was put together. In 1978 sociologist Gaye Tuchman made a strong argument for how news is socially constructed in her study of four news organizations over a ten-year period. She found that embedded routines and categories in the news process determine much of how decisions are made. Herbert Gans published *Deciding what's news* in 1979, his study of network news organizations and national news magazines, pointing out in great detail how journalists are strongly influenced by their beliefs, their own social standing, their organizational culture, and their sources. Both of these studies, along with Mark Fishman's *Manufacturing the news* (1988, 1st pub. 1980), demonstrated the way in which the structure and routines in news operations play a direct role in influencing news selection and decision-making.

### **NEWS AS MEANING-MAKING**

A group of later studies represented a shift away from looking at structures and routines to a stronger look at meaning-making in news (→ Meaning). This represents a shift from analyzing structural concerns to analyzing the texts and discourses themselves that are presented in news products (→ Discourse; Text and Intertextuality). Unlike Fishman, Gans, or Tuchman, Herman & Chomsky (1988), for example, offered little evidence from studying news operations or news workers themselves, but instead concentrated on the news products, what journalists produced, to make their case that the political elite control ideas delivered through news media. Taking a less political-economic perspective, James Carey proposed the ritual model of communication, writing about how news can be seen

as a means by which people survey the world each day to reinforce what they already believe. He wrote, “A ritual view of communication will focus on a different range of problems in examining a newspaper. It will, for example, view reading a newspaper less as sending or gaining information and more as attending a mass, situation in which nothing new is learned but in which a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed” (1989, 20).

Stuart Hall was influential in thinking and writing about ideology and news, and in particular the way in which media in general and often news media in particular impose an imagined coherence on ideas. He argued against the idea of a neutral ideology of news media (→ Neutrality; Balance; Bias in the News) and showed a number of ways in which meaning was constructed and audiences were able to read or decode these messages. Todd Gitlin (1980) drew on Antonio Gramsci’s hegemony theory, to show how the news media marginalized the left in coverage of the anti-war movement of the 1960s. Moloch & Lester saw value in not looking to news as a source of reality, but instead analyzing news to find the “purposes which underlie the strategies of creating one reality or another” (1974, 111). Later scholars have showed how race, gender, and class influence what news is covered, how it is covered, and how it is presented, as well as what stories are routinely ignored (see Entman 1990; Campbell 1995; Heider 2000, 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Constructivism ▶ Discourse ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Internet ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Meaning ▶ Neutrality ▶ News ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Standards of News ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Constructivism

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Constructivism refers to the philosophical perspective that human beings actively participate in creating their psychological selves and social worlds. Translated to the social sciences, where it is often known as “social constructivism” or “constructionism,” Constructivism is commonly considered to be a paradigm of its own (→ Paradigm), with epistemological tenets and methods of inquiry that contrast sharply with those of objectivist science (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy).

## KEY TENETS OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

Many varieties of Constructivism have been developed in the social sciences and humanities, most of them adhering to the tenet that reality is actively constructed – that is, created, maintained, and transformed – by human actors, not passively assimilated from the environment. As a corollary to this tenet, most forms of Constructivism reject the idea that meaning is materially fixed in time or place (→ Meaning). Instead, meaning is considered to be prolific, ever-changing, and subject to negotiation. Humans are conceived as *cognizing subjects* who construe the world according to their purposes, stocks of knowledge, and semiotic resources. This meaning-making activity establishes the “factual” nature of the world (in the form of institutions, policies, laws, rules, objects, technologies, and so forth) at the same time that it justifies belief in those facts. Whenever constructivists speak of a “social construction,” they are normally referring to this reification of experience: the object or event that seems natural or inevitable, but is actually the outcome of a historical process of negotiation (or management) of meanings by human agents. However, social constructions can also be the subject of dispute due to the competing value claims or meanings that people may attribute to them.

Another key tenet of Constructivism concerns the *role of science itself*. Most forms of Constructivism reject the independence thesis of objectivist science, which holds that any truth statement must answer to a world that exists independently of human consciousness and interests (→ Objectivity in Science). Constructivists contend that science does not literally discover a single, uniform reality “out there.” Rather, different kinds of scientific discourse, which embed different modes of perceptual encoding and interpretation, have the effect of bringing different versions of reality into being. Thus, there is a strong relativistic theme in constructivist thought and research.

Finally, again in contradistinction to objectivist science, the methods of constructivist inquiry tend to be explicitly *reflexive*. If everything we know is at least partly of our own making, then constructivist scholars can choose to – and often must – reflect on the situated practices and reality assumptions that help shape knowledge about social, psychological, and aesthetic phenomena. Indeed, there is a significant constructivist presence in science and technology studies, focusing on how knowledge claims are constituted in the activities of scientists, laboratory work, discourse, and artifacts (Van Den Belt 2003). Qualitative strategies such as ethnography (→ Ethnography of Communication) and

→ discourse analysis are among those best-suited for carrying out reflexive research projects (→ Qualitative Methodology).

## DEVELOPMENT OF CONSTRUCTIVISM

Early proponents of the view that truth (or reality) is made, not found, include George Berkeley and Giambattista Vico. But a key figure in developing the logic for Constructivism was the German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. In his “transcendental analytic” in *The critique of pure reason* (1781), Kant argued that sensory impressions contribute to a person’s knowledge of the world insofar as they can be perceived and organized through “categories.” In other words, humans have no direct access to external reality, but instead rely on a priori concepts (categories) to apprehend its features. Numerous questions arose from this formulation, not least of which is the role of experience in defining and shaping the content of these concepts. However, the Kantian idea that concepts mediate our contact with the world had a significant impact on the early development of psychology and the social sciences.

Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenological philosophy (→ Phenomenology), is often credited with articulating the nature of conscious experience in everyday life. Two of his arguments hold special importance for Constructivism. First, Husserl argued that human consciousness is rooted in intentional acts. That is, the material status of things is of no real consequence. Rather, it is our psychic relationships with an object – the intentions we have for acting toward it – that constitute the relevant ontological data. Second, Husserl called attention to the profoundly taken-for-granted quality of the life-world of everyday existence. This “natural attitude” – or commonsense orientation – consists of layers upon layers of meaning that are seldom questioned in the daily course of living. A proper investigation of the structure of consciousness, according to transcendental phenomenology (Husserl 1970, 1st pub. 1936), involves a series of analytic moves that “bracket” (or suspend) the components of the natural attitude. Only by systematic efforts such as these can an analyst truly understand not just *what* a thing is, but *how* a thing appears real.

While Husserl was interested in the universality of individual consciousness, it was Alfred Schütz who brought phenomenology into social science. In *The phenomenology of the social world* (1932) and other works, Schütz focused on the problem of how the natural attitude arises as a social phenomenon and how it takes different forms in society (Natanson 1968). The contributions of his decades-long work, as they pertain to Constructivism, are essentially threefold. One of these has to do with the definition of meaning. Building upon Weber’s study of human action and *verstehen* (→ Verstehen vs Erklären), Schütz conceptualized meaning as a way of regarding the stream of action, either by reflecting upon an already-completed act, or by projecting an action about to begin. In this way, meaning and social action mutually inform each other and together produce a moment-by-moment sense of goal-direction in the ego. Schütz also posited *intersubjectivity* as the process by which the constructs of everyday experience emerge. That is, understandings of reality stem mainly from the reciprocal, face-to-face relations we have with contemporaries; however, relationships with predecessors (those who lived before us) and successors (those who live on after we die) also play significant parts in shaping

our sense of social reality and where we are positioned biographically. Finally, Schütz sought to explain how we can navigate a complex social world in which we are largely ignorant of other individuals' motives, goals, and subjective meanings. He theorized that *typifications* – or, constructed generalizations about roles, motives, actions, and institutions – are among the principal “stocks of knowledge” used to interpret the scenes around us. Some of these typified schemes are employed very broadly (e.g., the routine actions of selling and buying), while others are more context-specific (e.g., a politician's understandings of voters' interests). By using typifications, it is possible to act in socially intelligible ways in public without possessing expert knowledge of every content domain or being intimately familiar with every person we encounter. Our sense of an objective reality of mundane life is heightened by the fact that typified schemes are so successful in getting us through the day – and are so seldom questioned by others or ourselves.

The ideas developed by Husserl, and Schütz in particular, inspired further explorations into the constructed nature of everyday life. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *The social construction of reality* became a classic text in the sociology of knowledge. It is largely due to this work that the term “social construction” came into wide usage. The central question for sociological theory, Berger and Luckmann argued, is how subjective experiences become “objectified” as a world of things (Berger & Luckmann 1966, 18). Their tentative answer, drawing upon Schütz as well as Karl Marx's social determinism and Émile Durkheim's functionalism, is that society's “reality-maintaining procedures” enable individuals to learn and “internalize” certain identities and role performances, as well as the stocks of knowledge that support them.

Considering reality construction at a micro-social level is *ethnomethodology* (→ Ethnomethodology). In his *Studies in ethnomethodology*, Harold Garfinkel (1967) proposed a theory of how interlocutors are able to make orderly sense of their world from the resources they have at hand. The basis of any culture's most trusted, self-evident notions of reality, from this point of view, is nothing more nor less than the artful “methods” that competent members use to coordinate meaning. For example, an ethnomethodologist would approach the study of family not by explicating the concept itself, but by a meticulous analysis of the contexts and social practices in which “family” is referenced, i.e., studying how family “is done.”

By the mid-twentieth century, constructivists had largely accepted, and begun to explore the ramifications of, the idea that language and other symbol systems are critical to the process of reality construction. Ludwig Wittgenstein's later work, *Philosophical investigations* (1953), was influential in constructivist circles, especially for his claim that “language games” animate the “forms of life” of human existence. *Symbolic interactionism* (→ Symbolic Interaction), following from its intellectual forebear, → *pragmatism*, put language and other significant symbols at the center of its explanations of social interaction. The semiotics of Charles S. Peirce (→ Semiotics), the mind-self-society formulation of George Herbert Mead, and the social dramaturgy of Erving Goffman, among others, laid the groundwork for studying communicative action in social life. Arguably, symbolic interactionism is the theory most closely aligned with the spirit of Constructivism, an affinity suggested in W. I. Thomas's famous dictum: “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.” Much of the methodology for doing constructivist-informed research, including participant observation (→ Observation), depth interviewing

(→ Interview, Qualitative), and → grounded theory, was also developed by symbolic interactionists.

At the end of the twentieth century, Constructivism and its allied research programs had established niches in all of the social science disciplines. The humanities also embraced the social phenomenology implicit in the emerging theories of texts, readers, and processes of semiosis. Constructivism itself was infused with a new sense of vitality and relevance as the “crisis of representation” bubbled up from cultural anthropology, and philosopher-critics like Richard Rorty and Michel Foucault articulated new views of cultural relativism and radical contingency. And, by hybridizing with such intellectual movements as feminist epistemology (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), → gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual studies, race theory, postmodernism (→ Postmodernism and Communication), and → postcolonial theory, the concepts and methods Constructivism uses for studying the production of meaning are increasingly harnessed to issues of identity, political voice, and empowerment in multicultural worlds.

## CONSTRUCTIVISM AND COMMUNICATION

The field of communication was not immune to Constructivism’s advancement in the academy. If anything, communication is commonly recognized as the chief means by which the social world is created, understood, and reproduced across time and space. As Anderson observes in *Communication theory*, “the constructed nature of reality and knowledge” now underpins a number of theories in the field of communication (1996, 36).

In mass communication, all of the components of the media circuit – production, content, and reception – are potent sites of meaning production (→ Information Processing; Media Production and Content; Media and Perceptions of Reality). Whereas early studies of media production focused on the decision-making for filtering events (→ Gatekeeping) or presenting the news, constructivist studies look at how organizational routines and workers’ practices actually create – or “manufacture” – the news product (→ News Routines). Gaye Tuchman’s *Making news* (1978) is an early and important exemplar of this kind of research. Also, some authors see the → news value of → news factors, i.e., as a tool for journalists to apply in order to construct social reality (Schulz 1976). Recent studies stress the interdependency of media with other institutional entities in the co-construction of media products.

Another stream of media research concerns the *construction of social representations*. Traditionally, content was given essentialist meanings, such as news, entertainment, advertising, pornography (→ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception; Construction of Reality through the News). Constructivists, however, regard media content as texts (→ Text and Intertextuality) laden with hegemonic, ambiguous, or contested signifiers, which can be activated in various ways depending on the reception context. News is often conceptualized as a discourse that organizes story elements in such a way as to suggest the existence of a social problem, or to “*frame*” conflicts in moralistic or ideological terms (→ Framing of the News; Framing Effects). For example, Yar (2005) analyzed the published claims of a global movie “piracy” problem. The author concluded that the media industries promoted the social construction of widespread copyright violation in order to exaggerate the dimensions of the problem and encourage intensified policing.

Research of *media audiences* has also been strongly influenced by Constructivism (→ Audience; Audience Research). In the 1980s, television and other media began to be studied as resources in the interpretive activity of families, peer groups, sub-cultures, and other social formations. Thus, people form their own meanings of content, irrespective of why it is produced or what the content seems to represent by some objective standard. This does not mean that meaning is a product of “free will” or the solitary individual; meaning, whether in audiences and other situations, always arises from the individual’s experience in social collectives. In social action studies, for example, media content acquires meaning only as it is joined in a line of social action within a specific context (see Schoening & Anderson 1995 for the underlying theory; → Media Content in Interpersonal Communication). In studies of interpretive communities, meanings of media texts gain coherence within groups of people who share pools of knowledge and interpretive strategies (Jensen 1991). However, the degree of local control that audience members exercise in making meanings (versus sources of influence from outside the social formation) remains the subject of lively debate.

Similarly, social constructionist studies of how people perceive and use communication technology challenge the formerly prevailing view of technological determinism. For example, the *social influence model* attempts to explain how group interactions affect the meanings attributed to technology (Campbell & Russo 2003). This focus on the formation of users’ perceptions – including perceptions of how technology supports lifestyles and social needs – offers a clear alternative to the assumption that technical features are the driving force behind consumer behavior. In addition, the social construction of online identity and socio-cultural community has become a vibrant area of research in the rapidly maturing field of Internet and other computer-mediated communication studies (for overview, see Lievrouw & Livingstone 2006).

In interpersonal communication, Constructivism is most readily associated with the theory and research program of the same name (→ Interpersonal Communication). Originally developed by Jesse Delia and his colleagues (see Delia et al. 1982), this “constructivism” is a derivation of the term “construct,” which in turn refers to the mental constructs (or schemas) hypothesized to store and organize information representing the characteristics, qualities, intentions, or emotional states of other persons. The theory posits that the more abstract, differentiated, and integrated this system of personal constructs, the better able a person is to manage the production of meaning in face-to-face interaction. Some of the ways in which a person with high cognitive complexity exhibits greater competence are by generating listener-adapted messages and engaging in emotionally supportive communication. Although the theory is rooted to some degree in symbolic interactionism, its epistemology builds primarily on a structural-developmental worldview (especially the theories of George A. Kelly, Heinz Werner, and Jean Piaget). As such, “constructivism” is concerned with the measurement of stable features of the construct system at the individual level of analysis, and thus generally allies itself with the assumptions and practices of objectivist science (Anderson 1996, 207–208).

Social constructionist approaches have long been employed for studying close relationships, organizational and small group cultures, intercultural communication, and the performance of community. In all of these scenes, researchers typically attend closely to the ways in which language is used to reproduce or transform cultural conditions like

solidarity, schism, and empowerment. The dialogical *construction of self or identity* is a salient theme in much of this scholarship. Increasingly, communication scholars are forging meaningful, even intimate, relationships with the people they study. They are also inventing novel ways of using narrative to “re-construct” these relationships. This trespassing of boundaries between the self and other, and between → fiction, introspection, and analysis, has led to a profusion of experiments in writing constructivist accounts (e.g., Clair 2003). Although it is too soon to say what future directions these new styles of scholarship will take, or whether the knowledge they contribute will have lasting value, it seems clear that they offer some of the most vivid demonstrations yet of the possibilities inherent in the constructivist paradigm.

The constructivist approach has been criticized mainly for denying the objective reality of the world. In the view of scientific realists, a “ready-made” world of objects and processes exists independently of the sense-making activity of human beings. People may entertain multiple, open-ended meanings, but the ontology of physical and social worlds is already settled and thus predetermines which meanings count as the “correct” ones. For example, we may describe an object such as a rose in a variety of ways, depending on our interests. But the names we create do not literally construct the object. Nor is every name an equally valid description of an exemplar of the category “rose.” In other words, our freedom to improvise “meaning” ends at the point of reference to objective reality. This argument, according to the realist perspective, undermines the relativistic foundation of constructivist thought (see Devitt 1991).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Fiction ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Content in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Observation ▶ Paradigm ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Semiotics ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Verstehen vs Erklären

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## **Constructivism and Interpersonal Processes**

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As Phillips (2000) observes, the term → constructivism is associated with numerous doctrines and positions in the social sciences, but in the communication discipline constructivism is most associated with a theory of individual differences in communication skills developed by Jesse Delia and his colleagues at the University of Illinois in the 1970s. Although constructivism originally focused on individual differences in interpersonal competence, it has been applied to numerous communication events and behaviors. It has served as the foundation for theoretical and empirical analyses of relationship development and maintenance, cultural influences on communication, language acquisition and communicative development, socialization processes, and communication instruction. It has also been applied to numerous communication events and processes in business, families, education, health-care, mass media, and politics (for reviews, see Delia 1987; Applegate 1990; Gastil 1995; Coopman 1997; Burlison & Caplan 1998; Burlison 2007).

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT

Constructivism was initially developed to understand how people's interpretations of the social world shaped their communicative behavior. Early versions of the theory were influenced by the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (1896–1980) and the American philosopher George Herbert Mead (1863–1931), both of whom believed that effective communication depended on the ability to “take” (or imaginatively construct) the perspective of others. Thus, early constructivist work focused on how individual differences in social perception related to the use of effective forms of communication.

As it developed, constructivism focused on the explanation of *functional communication competence*, the ability to generate and process messages that enable people to accomplish their social goals efficiently and effectively (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). Four processes involved in functional communication receive attention within constructivism: (1) → *message production*, the process of generating verbal and nonverbal behaviors intended to obtain desired responses from others; (2) *message processing*, the activity of interpreting the communicative behavior of others in the effort to understand the meaning of that behavior (→ Comprehension; Listening); (3) *interaction coordination*, the process of synchronizing message production and processing activities (along with other behaviors) in social episodes so as to achieve smooth and coherent interchanges (→ Social Interaction Structure); and (4) *social perception*, the process of identifying and making sense of entities and events in the social world, including experiences of ourselves, others, and social relationships, situations, and institutions (→ Social Perception).

## THEORETICAL DETAILS

Constructivism addresses *four issues for each aspect of functional competence*: (1) the nature and forms of specific functional competencies (i.e., what counts as skillful behavior in each process); (2) the determinants of skillful behavior for specific functional competencies (i.e., models of competence, including abilities and motivations required for skilled communication practice); (3) the antecedents of skilled communication (i.e., the biological predispositions, socialization experiences, and educational efforts that cultivate communication skills); and (4) the consequences of individual differences in specific functional competencies (i.e., the effects of skilled communication for multiple outcomes in varied domains of life).

Although *social perception* is not a communication process per se, constructivism maintains that it plays a central role in virtually all communicative conduct since making sense about the self, others, and social situations is critical to effective communication. Social perception proceeds through several processes, including identifying affect, making attributions, forming impressions, integrating information, and taking the other's perspective (Moskowitz 2005). Each process can be performed more or less well; thus, social perception is a skill (or a set of skills) on which individuals differ. According to constructivism, all social perception processes occur through the cognitive structures that Kelly (1955) termed “interpersonal constructs” – cognitive schemes that apply to the thoughts, behaviors, and qualities of others. Individuals' systems of interpersonal constructs are more or less differentiated (numerically large), abstract (have elements referring to

concrete qualities such as appearance or abstract qualities such as traits), and integrated (organized, connected, and accessible). People with more differentiated, abstract, and integrated systems of interpersonal constructs have higher levels of interpersonal cognitive complexity. Consistent with the constructivist view that all social perception processes proceed through the application of interpersonal constructs (→ Individual Differences and Information Processing), extensive research has found that interpersonal cognitive complexity predicts several social perception skills and performance on numerous social information processing tasks (Burlison & Caplan 1998).

Constructivism gives extensive attention to the *role of social perception in message production*. Message production is a complex process composed of many different skills; constructivism has focused on the particular skill of producing highly person-centered messages, which take into account and adapt to the subjective, emotional, and relational aspects of communicative contexts. As a general quality of messages, person-centeredness assumes a somewhat different form depending on the primary communicative goal pursued: highly person-centered persuasive messages exhibit greater concern with the goals and desires of the persuasive target; highly person-centered *regulative messages* seek to induce the other's understanding of and compliance with behavioral rules by getting the other to reflect upon and reason through the consequences of his or her problematic behavior; and highly person-centered comforting messages acknowledge, elaborate, and legitimize the feelings of distressed others and encourage them to express and explore their feelings. Highly person-centered messages are more likely than less person-centered messages to attain desired primary goals (e.g., persuading, regulating, comforting) and secondary goals (e.g., self-presentation, relationship maintenance), especially in demanding communicative contexts (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of; Goals, Social Aspects of); further, the regular use of person-centered messages is associated with long-term outcomes such as personal acceptance and professional success (Burlison 2007).

Constructivism maintains that the competence to produce highly person-centered messages is a *function of both relevant abilities and motivations*. In particular, advanced social perception skills are seen as a critical determinant of person-centered message use since they facilitate identification of and adaptation to characteristics of message recipients and social situations, generation and pursuit of multiple social goals in interactions, and deeper insights about the dynamics of human thought, feeling, and behavior. Extensive research has found substantial associations between interpersonal cognitive complexity (and other assessments of social perception skill) and the use of person-centered messages in a variety of social settings (see reviews by Coopman 1997; Burlison & Caplan 1998).

Another factor that contributes to the use of person-centered messages is the *availability of procedural memories* or plan elements that contribute to message construction; persons with more plan elements available are more likely to use highly person-centered messages (→ Memory; Memory, Message). In addition, because producing person-centered messages often involves considerable effort, their use is dependent on several types of motivation, including "goal motivation" (the desire to achieve a particular outcome), "effectance motivation" (the producer's belief that he or she is capable of achieving the goal), and "normative motivation" (the producer's belief that it is socially appropriate for him or her to use particular messages with the recipient). These motivations are influenced by a

variety of personality traits (e.g., emotional empathy, locus of control orientation) and aspects of the communicative situation (e.g., the source–recipient relationship).

## APPLICATIONS

To date, constructivism has provided less detailed analyses of message processing and interaction coordination than it has of social perception and message production. Sketches of message processing (Burlinson 2007) and interaction coordination (Burlinson & Caplan 1998) explain individual differences associated with these processes in terms of underlying differences in social perception skills.

Constructivism gives considerable attention to the antecedents of communication skills and their development, especially the influence of parents and peers during the course of primary socialization (Burlinson et al. 1995). Two caregiver practices that contribute to social perception and message production skills are (1) using language that explicitly mentions internal states (feelings, intentions), and (2) using person-centered messages when nurturing and disciplining the child. Frequent interaction with peers, especially those with good communication skills, may also contribute to developing the interpersonal constructs, procedural memories, and motivations that underlie skillful communication.

Constructivism assumes that humans *actively interpret the world*, construct meaningful understandings of it, and act in the world on the basis of their interpretations. Given these assumptions, constructivist research frequently employs free-response research methodologies (Delia et al. 1982). These include Crockett's (1965) Role Category Questionnaire (RCQ) for measuring interpersonal cognitive complexity. This task has participants write impressions of people known to them; these impressions are subsequently scored for qualities such as construct differentiation and abstractness by expert coders. Skill at producing person-centered messages is typically assessed by having participants generate messages in response to hypothetical or actual situations (rather than select messages from researcher-supplied lists of strategies); the generated messages are then coded or rated by experts for degree of person-centeredness and other qualities. These free-response methods are not only natural tasks for research participants, but they also preserve participants' spontaneous structuring of the social world and provide what are regarded as highly valid assessments of relevant theoretical constructs. Constructivist research also makes use of standard social science methods such as closed-ended questionnaires, rating scales, forced-choice response formats, and researcher-supplied items.

Constructivism has demonstrated value as a communication theory. It is general, flexible, and broad, having been applied to different skills exhibited by different types of people in different situations. It is testable, and has produced one of the largest bodies of empirical findings in the communication discipline, with corroborations of its predictions suggesting the accuracy of the theory. It is heuristic, having generated novel analyses of numerous communicative phenomena, and it has been fruitfully synthesized with other theories. It also has noteworthy limitations; constructivism has narrowly focused on the contribution of social perception to the use of person-centered messages and has not given sufficient attention to the processes through which messages are generated and received. In addition, some concepts in the theory need further specification, and greater effort should be made to apply the theory to skill enhancement.

SEE ALSO: ► Comprehension ► Constructivism ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of  
 ► Goals, Social Aspects of ► Individual Differences and Information Processing ► Information Processing  
 ► Interpersonal Communication ► Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills  
 ► Listening ► Memory ► Memory, Message ► Message Production ► Social Interaction Structure  
 ► Social Perception

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## **Consumer Culture**

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Consumer culture, the creation and cultivation of self- and social meaning from the marketing, purchase, and display of commodified goods, is a central characteristic of

modern and postmodern society. Although related to other forms of culture, such as commercial culture, material culture, and popular culture, it is a theoretically distinct realm that includes the symbolic qualities attributed to mass-produced goods, brand logos, product packaging, advertising campaigns, retail spaces, shopping activities, and consumption-centered media content. How these symbolic goods and activities relate to modern life, the self and social groups – and their destructive and/or emancipatory implications – have comprised much scholarship and debate in the humanities and social sciences.

## DEVELOPMENT OF CONSUMER CULTURE

There is no exact starting date for the creation of modern consumer culture. Although tied to the beginnings of industrialization, it could also be said to have existed in some forms as long as rudimentary capitalism existed. More specifically, British royalty emphasized and displayed the need to be fashionable in the 1500s. Colonialism exoticized spices and other goods from colonized lands. In the nineteenth century, popular events such as the Great Exhibition in London in 1851 and other World Fairs displayed and promoted industrialized goods.

Also at this time, in industrialized countries, mass manufacturing forced companies to market themselves outside of the companies' home communities, developing the idea of → branding as a sales and promotional technique to generate symbolic trustworthiness. The expansion of nationally distributed mass media, especially the national → magazine, facilitated the use of → advertising to create *universally known* → brands and symbolic linkages to these brands. Advertising was especially key in the development of consumer culture in that it inculcated people as consumers, teaching them not only the difference between brands, but also what the idea of a brand is and its legitimization as something to be trusted even more than one's own skills or the local merchant (→ Advertising, History of). Such legitimization was especially important in the establishment of consumer culture, given that earlier generations made many of their own goods or bought locally produced bulk goods.

Mail-order catalogs offered images of manufactured commodities, especially to rural and isolated households. The separation of work from other sectors of life cultivated leisure as an element of life, as did the rise of a middle class with disposable incomes. The creation of branded retail spaces that displayed goods rather than merely distributing goods also elevated modern consumerism, and encouraged shopping as a pleasurable activity. Finally, such meaning creation occurred in a context of great social change, in which traditional symbolic realms (religion, the family, local community) became unsettled, and universally understood commercial symbols offered meaning stability.

From its beginnings, consumer culture *intersected with class, gender, and race*. Although many mass-produced goods were available to the middle and upper classes, working-class people often labored long hours to produce or display goods they could not afford (a trend accentuated in modern globalization). Consumer culture was also strongly gendered. Shopping areas and non-spouse approved credit could create women-centered activities and spaces in the public domain. However, many image-oriented and emotionally laden brand strategies were designed to appeal to the prejudicial market construction of the

purported irrational female consumer (Paterson 2006). Despite claims that the new consumer culture could be democratic and inclusive of everyone (with money, that is), people of color still often found that they were excluded from such participation, even with money to spend. The use of terrible stereotyping in early advertising – often more subtle but nevertheless present even today – also highlighted the social divisions still central in consumer culture.

Critical historians such as Stuart Ewen (1976) view the development of consumer culture, and advertising's role in this development, as profoundly hegemonic, both solving mass capitalism's problem of overproduction by encouraging participation in capitalism while also placating workers (via the promise of valorized, branded goods) who found themselves alienated from the corporate, mass-manufacturing workplace. Other historians, such as Gary Cross (2000), although recognizing the negative elements in early consumer culture, nevertheless argue that this development helped ease individuals through the great social changes of the early twentieth century in a way that minimized social and psychological trauma.

Later developments further refined and accentuated consumer culture. Credit and installment plans and discounted "bargain basements" allowed the middle class to have access to upper-class-coded goods. Electronic media such as radio and television not only could display commodities via sound and video channels, but also economically were even more dependent upon, and thus beholden to, advertising revenue than print media such as newspapers and magazines (→ Commercialization of the Media). Lawrence R. Samuel (2002) contends that the display and celebration of products in early television advertising rejuvenated US consumerism after years of thrift cultivated by the Depression and World War II (→ Commodification of the Media).

New retail spaces such as malls systematized and aestheticized the shopping experience. Corporate and postindustrial capitalism increased advertising and marketing budgets while refining target marketing. Globalization encouraged an emphasis on universally recognized and understood symbols and an even sharper distinction between sites of production (often exploitative) and consumption (→ Globalization of the Media). Marketing research gradually became more sophisticated, focusing on demographics, psychographics, and lifestyles to facilitate, or even manipulate, purchasing. By the late 1990s, marketing firms used ethnographic and other naturalistic techniques to complement more quantitative methods.

## **MEDIA AND YOUTH IN CONSUMER CULTURE**

The media continue to play a key role in consumer culture. Media, of course, carry advertisements, the most explicit voice for consumerist messages. The level of advertising in society has steadily risen with the increase in both the number of media outlets and media organizations' expectations for advertising revenue. In addition, media promote the consumption of media products, such as commercials and publicity for DVDs and pay-per options on television, an emphasized factor in the era of large-corporate media synergy. To offer a selling-friendly symbolic climate for advertisers, many elements of media content – from lifestyle magazines to self-improvement television programs – are commodity- and consumption-oriented even in their nonadvertising messages

(→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Direct purchasing opportunities are increasingly integrated in media use, with the development of home-shopping options on television and the ease of online shopping and purchasing via the Internet and other interactive media. The convergence of audiovisual media content with mobile delivery systems such as mobile phones broadens the reach of consumption-oriented messages and activities.

Much scholarly attention has been devoted to how young people are inculcated into consumer culture, including the heavy commercialization of youth culture. Works such as Juliet B. Schor's *Born to buy* (2005) and Alissa Quart's *Branded* (2003) focus on the continued targeting of youth by commercial interests (→ Youth Culture).

### CRITICISMS AND DEFENSES

Scholars reacted early to the social implications of these trends, establishing arguments critical of consumer culture as well as counterpoints from scholars who see positive developments in modern consumerism.

Commodity fetishism – defined broadly as the separation of a commodity from its production context and the subsequent consumption-oriented celebration of such commodities – was a term coined by Karl Marx and subsequently adopted and developed by other scholars writing about consumer culture, including Judith Williamson, Sut Jhally, and Robert Goldman (→ Fetishization).

Thorstein Veblen's *Theory of the leisure class* (1899) introduced and critiqued what he labeled as conspicuous consumption, in which the display of symbolic commodities by the *nouveau riche* was used to distinguish themselves from other classes, ultimately encouraging class envy and excessive debt. This criticism was updated in more recent times by such scholars as Juliet B. Schor (1999). Consumption as a way to reify social difference also finds resonance with the work of Pierre Bourdieu, who argues that it is often used to display different forms of capital and enact social distinctions between groups. The notions of consumer distinction and envy as enacted in a highly segmented, market-researched, and interactive consumer culture is explored by Joseph Turow (2006; → Consumers in Media Markets).

Scholars associated with the Frankfurt School also have been influential critics. Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer argued that mass-produced and marketed goods foster standardization and homogenization, smothering creativity and cheating/deceiving citizens. Similar points were made in Herbert Marcuse's book, *One-dimensional man* (1964), which claimed that advertising and consumer culture inculcate false needs in people and thus degrade critical awareness (→ Critical Theory). Standardization in modern consumer culture is an element explored by sociologist George Ritzer in his argument on the "McDonaldization" of society. Although not from the Frankfurt tradition but influenced by it, Guy Debord, in *Society of the spectacle* (1967/2004), argued that the commodity-based spectacle – as exemplified by high-profile media events and advertising campaigns – is a defining characteristic of modern life that deflects attention from larger capitalist inequities and indignities (→ Spectacle).

Recent criticisms of consumer culture have similarly focused on the anxiety, low self-esteem, materialism, and vulnerability to advertising claims about self-image sparked by



heavy emergence in consumer culture. The environmental destruction and waste that overconsumption promotes have also been a concern of many scholars, especially Sut Jhally (2006).

Other arguments emphasize the emancipatory elements of consumer culture. Consumer culture offers symbolic materials that may be used to create unique cultural identities and cohesion, for instance. Market niches may recognize social groups marginalized by other sectors of society. How consumers may play with consumption activities and resist meanings imposed from above has been advocated by such scholars as Michel De Certeau, John Fiske, and Henry Jenkins (→ Cultural Studies). James B. Twitchell argues for the positive social benefits of both advertising and materialism (see, for example, 1999).

Activism against consumer culture offers a counter-voice, even if it seems to be a whisper compared to corporate-amplified consumption messages. Groups that have organized against the excesses of consumer culture include, in the US, Consumers' Research Inc. (founded in the 1920s) and, in Canada, Adbusters. Movements such as various forms of counterculture in the 1960s and environmentalism also offer critiques against consumerism. However, many critics have noted consumer culture's ability to co-opt and depoliticize such critical elements, including Goldman's notion of → commodity feminism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Commodity Feminism ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Fetishization ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Magazine ▶ Spectacle ▶ Youth Culture

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## Consumer Informatics

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In its broadest sense, consumer informatics can refer to that branch of the field of communications dedicated to understanding and improving the use of online information resources by the → public. Online information resources have been made available to consumers in a variety of different market sectors, from airline ticketing and travel to the online distribution of goods and services. In these instances, the online interactions replace interpersonal encounters as the basis for generating value to a sponsoring organization's bottom line. Communication researchers are often brought in to be sure the structure of the communication is made as user friendly and satisfactory as possible; unsatisfactory structures will drive away customers (→ Computer–User Interaction; E-Commerce). In a more specific sense, the study of consumer informatics has gained its greatest currency in the area of medicine and healthcare (→ Health Communication).

The French term *informatique* was coined in the early 1960s to describe the potential benefits, especially in science, of sharing data and tools electronically by mounting them online in a remotely accessible, networked fashion. Not long after the term was introduced, scientists and engineers began exploiting the communication capabilities of informatics technologies to support electronic mail, discussion groups, document sharing, and other types of collaborative information activities online (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). It was not long before the benefits of networked computer environments as communication media were felt by these professionals. Networked professionals used the connective features of the online technologies to overcome barriers of geographic distance and social isolation (Hesse et al. 1993).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the term “informatics” became commonplace in medical environments, where demands for information were high. Departments of *medical informatics* emerged in hospitals throughout the US, Europe, and Asia. Interdisciplinary teams of computer scientists and biomedical researchers began exploring ways of using informatics

technologies to overcome barriers in delivering medical expertise to underserved areas, an activity referred to as “telemedicine.” Digital library projects became popular as a way of making the breadth of medical literature available to physicians.

Up until the early 1990s, the benefits of informatics technologies were primarily available to professionals working in science, medicine, engineering, or education. During the last decade of the twentieth century, two events co-occurred that would change that. The first was a proposal from scientist Tim Berners-Lee, at the CERN High Energy Physics Laboratory in Switzerland, to create an interconnected computer environment making it simple for users to share information online in graphical ways. He called his concept the “world wide web.” The second was a movement by the US Congress that would open the benefits of the world wide web to the general public (→ Internet; Internet, Technology of).

These two events, occurring at a time when ownership of personal computers was becoming commonplace, opened up the advantages of an online transaction environment to consumers. Repercussions would soon be felt through all aspects of the global economy and in communication. Entire market sectors would restructure to take advantage of global access to consumers, eliminating the need for intermediaries, and accelerating the effects of competition on price and access (Friedman 2005). The communication environment would become increasingly more interactive, decentralized, personalized, and information-rich (Viswanath 2005).

As the US Congress opened access to the Internet in the 1990s and the world wide web caught on as an understandable access point for consumers, medical informatics specialists began exploring methods of using information technologies to meet the needs of healthcare consumers. The term *consumer health informatics* was coined by researchers in Canada to distinguish the emerging field from its roots in the more clinically based medical informatics (Eysenbach 2000).

The expansion of research activities into the area of consumer health informatics was also catalyzed by a general rise of consumerism among recipients of healthcare. Many observers have noted that previous generations of patients behaved with general passivity in response to their healthcare. Newer generations, accustomed to finding what they wanted through online computer access, appeared to be taking a more assertive role in their health decision-making. Designed appropriately, consumer informatics tools could help empower these patients by giving them the support they need to be proactive in their own health maintenance over their life-spans (Nelson & Ball 2004).

With this background, Eysenbach and Jadad (2001) suggested that the field of consumer health informatics should be considered as a whole *new discipline in online communications research*. Its goals should encompass analyzing, formalizing, and modeling consumer preferences and information needs; developing systems to integrate those needs into the broader biomedical research and delivery enterprise; investigating the effectiveness and efficiency of consumer informatics applications to improve health outcomes while stemming the tide of escalating healthcare costs; and studying the effects of consumer informatics systems on public health, the patient–provider relationship, and personal quality of life (Eysenbach & Jadad 2001).

The need for protecting public health through a scientifically garnered evidence base is as high in the case of consumer informatics as it is for general medicine. For example,

the unequal diffusion of consumer informatics technologies may actually worsen concerns over health disparities by creating a → digital divide in health-related knowledge (Viswanath et al. 2006). Likewise, diffusing a consumer health information system without the benefit of a “socio-technical” evidence base may cost millions of dollars in unnecessary expenditures or, worse, may put the public at risk from unsafe clinical practice (Coiera 2004). As in other areas of medicine, a solid evidence base is needed to guide the development of consumer informatics technologies in productive and safe ways (Hesse & Shneiderman 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Public

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## **Consumers in Media Markets**

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Communication researchers have devoted a substantial amount of attention to understanding consumers in media markets. The processes by which audiences select between the various content options available, as well as the mechanisms by which media organizations seek to understand, anticipate, and respond to these choices have traditionally resided at

the core of research focusing on media consumers. The study of media consumers fits within the somewhat broader framework of → audience research and is distinguished by its attention primarily to the economic dimensions of media consumption and the processes by which audiences select media products – as is reflected in the use of the term “consumers” (→ Media Economics; Exposure to Communication Content).

It is important to emphasize that to speak of media *consumers* reflects the adoption of a certain perspective on the interaction between media organizations and individuals; one that is, by connotation, primarily commercial or economic in nature. This is, of course, just one of a number of possible lenses through which scholars can examine the complex interactions between media audiences and media content providers. Perspectives that emphasize the cultural or political dimensions of the interaction between content providers and audiences, for example, address vitally important issues that are somewhat outside the bounds of the narrow conceptualization of the audience as consumers (→ Cultural Studies; Uses and Gratifications). Media content providers, of course, perceive of their audiences primarily through a consumer-oriented lens. Therefore to develop an understanding of this perception – as well as of its broader implications – is also an important element of research examining consumers in media markets, which helps to generate insight into the behavior of media institutions (Napoli 2003; → Audience Commodity).

### **ATTENTION AND MONEY AS LIMITED RESOURCES**

Studying the behavior of media consumers requires a focus on the allocation of two scarce resources: attention and money. The time spent consuming media has continued to expand according to many measures – most likely due to increased multitasking on the part of consumers (in terms of both consuming media while engaging in other activities and consuming multiple media simultaneously). Nonetheless, the attention of media consumers itself remains a scarce resource (Lanham 2006), particularly in an increasingly fragmented and cluttered media environment, in which available content options are growing exponentially, all of which compete aggressively for consumer attention.

Similarly, there is a limit to what consumers can spend on media. Some research has even suggested that the proportion of income that consumers spend on media has remained relatively constant over time, despite the continued introduction of new technologies and content options into the media system (McCombs 1972). Although the validity of this assertion has been questioned, it remains nonetheless important to consider the limitations in consumers’ financial resources that can impact media consumption and consequently create an environment in which different media technologies and content options compete for a pool of resources that is, in all likelihood, not increasing at a rate that is commensurate with the rate at which the media system as a whole is expanding (see Dimmick 2002).

### **KEY LINES OF RESEARCH**

Early efforts to understand media audience as consumers can be traced (as can many elements of communications and market research) to → Paul Lazarsfeld. Work such as

his 1946 study, *The people look at radio*, helped to establish a tradition of examining the interaction between audience member and content provider primarily through a consumers-oriented lens. Work such as this was often funded at least in part by various sectors of the media industries, which also helps to explain its focus on media audiences primarily as consumers (see also Steiner 1963).

While early research on media consumers examined issues such as consumer satisfaction with various media products, over time the study of media consumers has come increasingly to focus on understanding how consumers choose to expose themselves to various media products. This focus on exposure can be seen, for example, in the well-known “*program choice*” literature (see Owen & Wildman 1992). This body of primarily theoretical work has sought to develop predictive models of consumer content selection and media organization content provision under various circumstances of consumer preferences, channel capacity, and competitive conditions (→ Selective Exposure). The program choice literature was developed primarily in response to media policymakers’ needs (→ Media Policy), as an approach for determining the benefits (in terms of format/genre diversity) of competitive versus monopolistic or oligopolistic conditions in the programming market. However, this line of research is also notable for its early efforts at developing theoretical approaches to the process by which consumers select individual media products, even if many of these theoretical models (including the more recent ones) have tended to oversimplify the dynamics of media consumption (Napoli 2003).

Empirical work inspired to some extent by the program choice literature has delved into a wide range of *factors that impact consumers’ choices* in regards to individual media products. This work has considered both audience factors (i.e., the characteristics of the media consumers, such as tastes, preferences, and awareness of various content options) and media factors (i.e., the quantity of content options, the range of media consumption technologies available) in an effort to account for both the structural-level and individual-level factors that impact consumers’ choices in the media marketplace (Webster & Phalen 1997). Work in this vein has addressed questions such as the extent to which media consumers’ individual → genre or format preferences drive their media consumption; how content selection is impacted by changes in the technological environment (such as increased channel options or increased technological choices); and, more broadly, the extent to which media consumers exhibit passive versus active tendencies in their media consumption (and how such tendencies may vary across different media types and across different demographic categories).

The primary objective of research in this vein is, of course, to identify consistent and predictable patterns in consumer choice that can both have applied utility and yield theoretical insights into the dynamics of cultural consumption. For instance, audience researchers have frequently found evidence of a *double jeopardy effect* which characterizes media consumption (Webster & Phalen 1997). Specifically, research has shown that, despite popular perception, the common notion of the “small but loyal audience” is largely a fallacy. Rather large audiences tend to be made up of higher proportions of loyal audience members (i.e., frequent consumers) than smaller audiences. Consequently, content that attracts small audiences is doubly endangered – by both the small size of the audience and the fact that these audience members are not likely to be frequent consumers of the content.

Another macro-level trend among media consumers that has received a substantial amount of attention from researchers involves the “*one-way flows*” of *media products*. Research on one-way flows has illustrated enduring patterns in media consumer behavior involving (as the name suggests) the tendency for the consumption of media products to flow from large markets to small markets (both nationally and internationally), but seldom vice versa. Such patterns reflect an important tendency among media consumers to gravitate toward content produced for larger markets, due in large part to the higher production budgets associated with it (Owen & Wildman 1992).

Indeed, both the double jeopardy effect and one-way flows reflect the significant extent to which consumer behavior is affected by the underlying production budgets of the available content. To the extent that audiences tend to gravitate to higher-budget over lower-budget content, so arise the difficulties associated with niche content reflected in the double jeopardy effect, and the tendency of one-way flows from large markets to small markets.

### **THE NEW MEDIA ENVIRONMENT AND THE PREDICTABILITY OF MEDIA CONSUMERS**

Research on the behavior of media consumers does, however, face an increasingly difficult task in terms of identifying consumer behavioral patterns in media environments that are becoming increasingly fragmented, increasingly complex, and, consequently, increasingly unpredictable. The much greater channel capacity of many media technologies, the rise of alternative distribution technologies, and the increased interactivity of the new media environment (→ Interactivity, Concept of) all contribute to a media landscape that is vastly different from the one in which early researchers could, for example, in the television context demonstrate with great consistency predictable patterns of “audience flow” from one program to the next.

One important pattern that has emerged, however, is that the tremendous fragmentation of the media environment has not been accompanied by a comparable fragmentation of media audiences. Rather, audiences exhibit a consistent tendency to cluster around relatively few content options, even when their available choices expand dramatically (see Hindman 2007; Neuman 1991).

As this *clustering tendency* helps to illustrate, at the broader level of media consumer behavior we see fairly predictable patterns across the aggregate of content options. In contrast, however, perhaps one of the most enduring themes of the literature on media consumers is the tremendous uncertainty that inevitably revolves around the process by which consumers select individual content options. From the “nobody knows anything” mantra that long has permeated the film industry, and research into motion picture audiences (e.g., DeVany 2004), to the “all hits are flukes” perspective reflected in research on the production and consumption of television (see Bielby & Bielby 1994), media consumers have been, and continue to be, very difficult to predict. For these reasons, media usage often has been conceptualized as a *two-stage process*. The first stage – the decision to consume a particular medium – is reasonably predictable and exhibits fairly stable behavioral patterns. The second stage – the selection of the individual content option – is, in contrast, highly unpredictable.

## **MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS AND MEDIA CONSUMERS**

To the extent that an understanding of media audiences as consumers is typically a perspective characteristic of the media organizations providing consumers with content, research on media consumers has also frequently addressed the related subject of how these organizations perceive their consumers (Turow 1997), as well as the subject of how these organizations cope with the many distinctive and unpredictable characteristics of media consumer behavior (Napoli 2003).

For instance, the process by which media consumer behavior is translated into tangible information to guide decision-making and to facilitate transactions between content providers and advertisers has received an increasing amount of attention (Anand & Peterson 2000; Ang 1991), particularly in light of the increased difficulties that the increasingly fragmented and complex media environment pose for the organizations charged with effectively measuring consumer behavior (Napoli 2003; → Advertising, Economics of). A particular point of focus of this research has been on how technological or methodological shifts in the *systems for measuring the behavior* of media consumers can alter how media organizations perceive the composition and behavioral characteristics of their consumers and the competitive dynamics of their markets. It is also important to note that a tremendous amount of scholarly criticism has been leveled against commercial audience measurement systems and their usage (→ Nielsen Ratings; People-Meter), in light of their substantial methodological shortcomings and the associated questions about whether any legitimate representation of true media consumer behavior is (or even can be) captured by these systems (e.g., Ang 1991; Meehan 1984).

Along related lines, a substantial body of literature has developed that explores the mechanisms by which media organizations (both content providers and advertisers) place value on *different categories of media consumers*, and on the information sources that feed into the formulation of these valuations (Turow 1997). To the extent that the value of media consumers is, within the context of advertising supported media, tied to their behavior as consumers of other products and services, understanding how the media and advertising industries effectively link these two areas of consumption is central to understanding the interaction between media consumer and content provider.

## **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN THE STUDY OF MEDIA CONSUMERS**

The study of media consumers today faces its greatest challenges in terms of effectively accounting for the ever growing array of media choices that are available, and in terms of effectively accounting for the various ways in which the interaction between content provider and consumer is changing. In a highly fragmented media environment, questions regarding the mechanisms by which media consumers become aware of the content options available to them become increasingly important – particularly in terms of developing an understanding of how consumers utilize the wide range of new search and navigation tools available to them in the new media environment.

Similarly important are broader questions regarding the political, economic, and cultural implications associated with the increased fragmentation of media consumers



(Sunstein 2001; Turow 1997). And, in a technological environment in which consumers have increasing control over when, where, and how media content is consumed, researchers inevitably must devote greater attention to these micro-level dynamics of consumption that provide for increasing variation in the consumption process across individual media consumers. And finally, research is only now beginning to address the wide range of questions arising from a contemporary media environment (particularly in the online realm) where the line between producer and consumer of media content is becoming increasingly blurred.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Genre ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ People-Meter ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Content Analysis, Qualitative

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Like quantitative content analysis, qualitative content analysis is an empirical method of social sciences for analyzing live or recorded human communication such as → newspaper articles, protocols of → television news or programs, transcripts of → interviews, or protocols from → observations (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). This written or transcribed material is called text material in this context (→ Text and Intertextuality). From a general perspective, there are two main differences between quantitative and qualitative content analysis. First, quantitative content analysis works deductively and measures quantitatively. In this respect, quantitative content analysis decomposes the text material into different parts and assigns numeric codes to these elements or parts. Of course, such parts are not just words, but are rather issues, statements, arguments, or bundles of → meaning. By contrast, however, qualitative content analysis works inductively by summarizing and classifying elements or parts of the text material and assigning labels or categories to them. In this respect, qualitative content analysis searches rather for “coherent” meaning structures in the text material.

Second, quantitative content analysis can deal with a large quantity of text material. Qualitative content analysis, on the other hand, is limited to a few pieces of text material – whether these are newspaper reports, interview transcripts, or observational protocols. In practical respects, one can say that quantitative content analysis applies category schemas for the purpose of measuring quantitatively, whereas qualitative content analysis develops categories in a qualitative, rather inductive, or → hermeneutic, way. Further differences that are emphasized by advocates of → qualitative methodology or the qualitative paradigm will be discussed later.

## DIFFERENT VIEWS ON QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

In a wider sense, the term “qualitative content analysis” subsumes quite different and various methods and techniques of analyzing text material qualitatively or hermeneutically. Examples are → grounded theory, → discourse analysis, and the *objektive Hermeneutik* (“objective hermeneutics”) of Oevermann et al. (1979). In a more narrow sense, qualitative content analysis is a label for a specific type of qualitative text analysis that was developed by Mayring (2002). This type of qualitative content analysis tries to close the gap between the so-called quantitative paradigm and the qualitative paradigm. Following Mayring, all research comprises qualitative and quantitative steps, and the difference between the two paradigms lies only in the different weightings attached to them. From a more “orthodox” standpoint of qualitative research, Mayring’s version of qualitative content analysis is not open and flexible enough for social reality, however. There are rules and advice that seem to be too quantitative for strict qualitative research. From a more affirmative point of view, Mayring’s content analysis has the advantage of being a systematic and more transparent research method, when compared, for instance, to objective hermeneutics (Oevermann et al. 1979), but also compared to grounded theory.

Which argument one follows is a function of one's standpoint in relation to qualitative or → quantitative methodology. The following sections first discuss basic features of qualitative content analysis from a general qualitative perspective. Second, two prominent versions or techniques of qualitative content analysis are explained in further detail. The first version is the qualitative content analysis developed by Mayring (2002). The second is the research program and technique of Oevermann et al. (1979), called "objective hermeneutics." As mentioned already, other qualitative techniques of text analysis can be subsumed under the label "qualitative content analysis" as well. The two selected versions probably represent the two poles of what can be called content analysis in qualitative research. Mayring stands for a vision of bringing qualitative content analysis nearer to the methodological standards of quantitative methodology. While his position is clearly based in the social sciences, Oevermann and his colleagues stand for a vision of qualitative content analysis being rather at home in the field of the humanities.

### **BASIC FEATURES OF QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS**

Following Lamnek (1995), qualitative content analysis is not simply a "smoother" version of quantitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is in fact different in its core features and in its methodological background. As mentioned already, many advocates of the qualitative paradigm do not accept Mayring's version of qualitative content analysis since it seems too "quantitative" for them. From their point of view, qualitative content analysis should rather rely on the crucial features of qualitative research in general, which are then applied to content analysis more specifically. Lamnek (1995), for instance, mentions four basic features.

The first is *openness*. In terms of qualitative content analysis, researchers should be open enough to social reality by avoiding theoretically deduced and completely standardized → coding schemas. Thus, qualitative content analysis affords analyzing text material without pre-defined coding units, dimensions, or categories. This is similar to the coding procedures known from grounded theory, which can be seen as one technique of qualitative content analysis, as mentioned above. The main task in qualitative content analysis in terms of openness is to understand the meaning and concepts used and applied by the subjects under examination. For this purpose, qualitative researchers analyze text material "produced" by these subjects, for instance in a qualitative interview which has been transcribed (→ Interview, Qualitative). In sum, researchers do not apply their own categories but understand the meaning of subjects' everyday categories.

The second feature is *communicativity*: social reality is established by and in interaction or communication. Thus, we can assume that all subjects interacting or communicating have a common meaning ground. This means that subjects share some knowledge about the motives and structures of interaction and communication, i.e., about how and why people act and communicate this and not that way, what they mean by certain concepts, and so on. Text material – for instance, the protocols of observing interactions or the transcripts of interviews – should therefore not be decomposed into different separate dimensions or categories as in quantitative content analysis. To meet the aspect of communicativity, text material should rather be interpreted "coherently." This was emphasized by Kracauer (1952), who criticized quantitative content analysis for focusing merely on the manifest

structures of communication and thereby neglecting the latent meaning or latent text structures, e.g., ironic aspects of communication. Furthermore, qualitative content analysis does not aim at possible effects of the text material, but aims at decoding the subjects' meaning, which is represented in the text material. Oevermann's objective hermeneutics, for instance, tries to extract the "objective latent meaning structures" from the text material. Finally, the feature of communicativity also affords that researchers themselves should come into contact with the subjects they examine – for instance, in qualitative interviews.

The third feature is *naturalistics*. This standard is especially important for collecting or generating text material. If researchers interview a subject or a group of persons, they should keep the situation in which they collect information about subjects' interaction or communication, as natural as possible. The subjects being interviewed should feel as though they are in a natural environment. Furthermore, this criterion affords that the interview transcripts or observational protocols, for instance, should use the language of the "common man."

Finally, the fourth feature is *interpretativity*. It comprises two aspects: (1) qualitative content analysis aims at understanding everyday interpretations and attributions of meaning, and (2) it aims at typifying, i.e., at constructing patterns of meaning by analyzing the text material, and does not aim at representative statements about communication or interaction in the sense of a qualitative methodology.

### MAYRING'S VERSION OF QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

The version developed by Mayring (2002) does not provide a prefabricated instrument for qualitative content analysis appropriate for each study. It is rather a bundle of techniques, which have to be specified and adapted to the specific research questions of one's own study. Different techniques can also be mixed or merged. In most of his publications, Mayring distinguishes *three techniques of qualitative content analysis*: summarizing transcribed or written material, structuring this material, and exploring its context. By applying these techniques, the original material is condensed into a category schema. While quantitative content analysis looks at text material more closely and open-mindedly only at the time when categories are being developed or in the pre-test, qualitative content analysis does so continuously for the purpose of improving the process of "condensation" step by step. This adjustment to the original text material is done sequentially and not permanently as in grounded theory.

*Exploration* means analyzing the context of the text material. This can be the author's biographical context, his or her emotional state when being interviewed, as well as the social or cultural context in which a newspaper report was written. More popular are the techniques of summarizing and structuring. The aim and result of *summarizing* is a condensed or shortened version of the original text material – like a summary of a story. The process of summarizing can be visualized by an isosceles triangle standing on its tip. Mayring provides several rules and advice for reducing text material, for deleting paraphrases identical in meaning, and for generalizing paraphrases and integrating them on a pre-defined level of abstraction. These sub-techniques resemble the macro operations known from cognitive psychology and linguistics. The final system of general phrases or sentences, i.e., the "condensed version" of the original text material, is then applied to the material again for "verification."

The aim and result of the third technique of *structuring* is a structured cross-section of the original text material. The technique can be broken down into different subtypes. Mayring distinguishes between formal structuring, content structuring, scale structuring, and typification. Formal structuring means analyzing the text material, e.g., with syntactical or semantic criteria in mind, or identifying thematically related paragraphs and summarizing them. Content-bound structuring means filtering certain issues and aspects from the material and generalizing them – usually by starting with roughly defined categories or dimensions. This technique is quite similar to the empirical way of generating categories known from quantitative content analysis. Scale structuring means estimating the text material, e.g., on an ordinal scale that resembles the valence or intensity type of quantitative content analysis. Typification is a form of structuring that aims at prototypes or ideal types in the sense of Max Weber. Here, one focuses, e.g., on extreme aspects in the text material. By combining different dimensions or aspects, one obtains ideal types.

All four forms of structuring follow the same logic. First, one theoretically defines the criteria or dimensions of structuring. Then one defines the values of these dimensions, searches for examples in the text material, and formulates coding rules for categories. With this “raw” coding guide, one analyzes the text material and modifies the categories and values, examples, and coding rules. This procedure can be repeated several times until one obtains the final category system. There are some computer programs that have been specially developed for qualitative content analysis, which help to structure the text material and even allow for additional → cluster analyses based on qualitative material.

Compared to other methods of qualitative text analysis, the Mayring version has *three advantages*. First, all techniques can be combined and modified for the purpose of the specific study. For instance, in a specific study one can summarize and generalize text material as a first step, and identify ideal types or prototypes based on this generalized material as a second step. Second, Mayring provides detailed rules, which help to keep research intersubjectively transparent as well as systematic, but still open and flexible enough in a truly qualitative sense. So, in contrast to, e.g., hermeneutics, the Mayring version of qualitative content analysis can be checked intersubjectively. Finally, the elements of other types of qualitative text analysis – such as categories from discourse analysis – can easily be integrated into Mayring’s structuring techniques. For instance, one can ask for anti-Semitic → stereotypes when structuring transcripts, e.g., from parliamentary debates or when analyzing right-wing propaganda. But one can also use the results of summarizing or structuring techniques as a category system in a conventional code-book and apply them to a larger amount of material (e.g., many newspaper reports) in a quantitative content analysis.

### **OEVERMANN’S VERSION OF QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS**

Mayring’s version of qualitative content analysis is at home in the social sciences. Oevermann and his colleagues developed objective hermeneutics as a version of qualitative content analysis from the perspective of the humanities or *Geisteswissenschaften*. Several concepts and terms are easier to understand if one keeps the origin of objective hermeneutics in mind – which is family therapy. In a narrow sense, Oevermann et al. (1979, 181–182) understand objective hermeneutics as a technique of interpreting

transcripts of interaction, especially family talk. In a wider sense, objective hermeneutics is a technique for analyzing any kind of text or transcribed (communication) material.

The second part of the label “objective hermeneutics” reflects that this type of qualitative content analysis works hermeneutically. The first part of the label refers to the fact that each text represents a reality with an objective meaning structure. This objective meaning is detached from the speaker’s intentions (e.g., the intention of a mother in family interaction) as well as from the listener’s perception. Only in an ideal communication setting would all three fit perfectly. The difference between an objective meaning, on the one hand, and the intention of a subject speaking or the perception of a subject listening, on the other, is important. In this respect, objective hermeneutics follows Max Weber’s concept of ideal types. In his methodological study, however, Mathes (1988) emphasizes that intentions are often more important than any kind of objective meaning in communication research. Nevertheless, framing patterns in public → discourse can be considered as some type of an “objective,” i.e., socially shared or common meaning (→ Framing Effects). Thus, objective hermeneutics is not as far away from other methods of text analysis as it may seem at first sight.

Furthermore, objective hermeneutics calls for rules and standards as well, and claims to be a formalized, scientific technique of interpreting text material. Yet, these standards or rules are based on a *different concept of “objectivity”* than in social sciences and in quantitative methodology. All steps of interpretation in objective hermeneutics are undertaken by a team of three to seven researchers. Such teamwork aims at a discursive or consensual concept of “objectivity”: all researchers try to find the objective meaning by discussing all possible meanings. By contrast, quantitative content analysis calls for intersubjectivity, i.e., for documenting and explaining all steps (sampling, units, dimensions, categories, etc.) in order to allow replications by other researchers.

There are *three main principles in objective hermeneutics*. The first principle, extensive interpretation, affords collecting all possible interpretations of a text – even the unlikely ones. The second principle, complete interpretation, calls for considering even the smallest units of meaning. The third principle, sequential interpretation, calls for a process of eliminating alternative meanings by starting from one part of the interview transcript, observational protocol, etc., then moving to the next part of it, and so on. By this process, the structure of the transcribed communication emerges step-by-step. Different strategies serve to meet these principles. In the structural analysis, for instance, all available “objective” material, e.g., about the biographies of the interacting or communicating subjects, is collected. This is comparable to the exploration technique in Mayring’s version of qualitative content analysis, in some respects.

The core strategy of objective hermeneutics, however, is the “*detail analysis*,” which comprises two parts. The first part is reconstructing the communication figure as mentioned in the text and identifying the most likely objective meaning. The second part is making statements about structures, types, or pattern – for instance, about general social pattern in families. This is somewhat comparable to the structuring technique in Mayring’s version of qualitative content analysis. Both parts of the detail analysis decompose into different steps. Three of them are mentioned in the seminal publication by Oevermann et al. (1979). The first step is paraphrasing the meaning from the perspective of an ordinary reader. The second step is explicating the subjects’ possible intentions. The

third step is explicating the objective structure, i.e., the motives and consequences of interaction or communication, which are represented in the text.

From an overall perspective, objective hermeneutics is certainly the more time-consuming version of qualitative content analysis, and the one where teamwork does not meet the standard of intersubjectivity from the strict standpoint of social sciences. By contrast, Mayring's version is closer to the general procedures of the social sciences and therefore is criticized by the proponents of qualitative methodology for being too close to quantitative methodology.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cluster Analysis ▶ Coding ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Meaning ▶ Newspaper ▶ Observation ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Television News ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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## **Content Analysis, Quantitative**

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Quantitative content analysis is an empirical method used in the social sciences primarily for analyzing recorded human communication in a quantitative, systematic, and

intersubjective way. This material can include newspaper articles, films, advertisements, interview transcripts, or observational protocols, for instance. Thus, a quantitative content analysis can be applied to verbal material, and also to visual material like the evening news or television entertainment. Surveys, → observations, and quantitative content analysis are the main three methods of data collection in empirical communication research, with quantitative content analysis the most prominent in the field (→ Survey). In other disciplines like psychology or sociology quantitative content analysis is not used as widely.

## QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Ole R. Holsti (1969) defines quantitative content analysis as “any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages.” Bernhard Berelson (1952) speaks of “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.” There has been much debate on this classical definition of quantitative content analysis: what does the word “manifest” mean, and is it possible to analyze latent structures of human communication beyond the surface of the manifest text, i.e., the “black marks on white”? In a more practical sense, the word “manifest” should be interpreted in terms of “making it manifest.” For example, if one were to look for irony in political commentaries, the construct of “irony” is not manifest in the sense of being directly identifiable from “black marks on white.” Whether or not there is irony in a commentary has to be interpreted. Thus, before a commentary is coded, it has to be precisely determined what words, phrases, key words, or arguments should serve as indicators for the category “irony.” In other words, this “latent” aspect of communication is made manifest by its definition.

With newspaper articles, the logic of quantitative content analysis can be described as a systematic form of “newspaper reading.” Here, the reader, i.e., the person charged with coding, assigns numeric codes (taken from a category system) to certain elements of the articles (e.g., issues or politicians mentioned in articles) by following a fixed plan (written down in a codebook). Of course, one does not analyze only one but many articles, reports, or commentaries from different newspapers. In this respect, quantitative content analysis differs from qualitative content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). While qualitative content analysis is limited to a number of roughly 50 to 100 sample elements (e.g., newspaper reports, interview transcripts, or observational protocols), quantitative content analysis can deal with a huge number of sample elements. Qualitative content analysis works rather inductively by summarizing and classifying elements or parts of the text material and by assigning labels or categories to them. Quantitative content analysis, however, works deductively and measures quantitatively by assigning numeric codes to parts of the material to be coded – which is called *coding* in quantitative content analysis.

## FIELDS OF APPLICATION

Originally, quantitative content analysis was linked to propaganda research, for instance, propaganda material in World War II. Nowadays, quantitative content analysis is applied to many different forms of human communication like print and television coverage,



public relations, entertainment, advertisements, photographs, pictures, or films. For instance, subjects of analysis can include national images in media coverage about foreign affairs, the role models presented in television advertisements, the kind and quality of arguments in company press releases, or the features of actors in modern Asian film. In theoretical terms, quantitative content analysis is being applied to many different fields of research in communication science, for example, in analyzing the kind of issues covered by the media in the context of *agenda-setting* (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Similarly, quantitative content analysis is a key method in the cultivation approach, where it is called *message system analysis* (→ Cultivation Effects). In both these approaches, content analysis is combined with a survey in field design. Further applications of quantitative content analysis are in: *election studies*, where it is used to examine election campaigns themselves or media coverage about the candidates, parties, and campaigns; and in *media coverage* of or public discourses on social problems and issues like racism, social movements, or collective violence.

### PURPOSES OF QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Generally speaking, there are three major purposes and thus three basic types of quantitative content analysis which follow the popular “Lasswell formula,” which asks *who says what, to whom, why, to what extent, and with what effect*. The first purpose is to make inferences about the antecedents of communication, for example, examining the coverage of a liberal and a conservative newspaper (*who*). If there is a political bias in the commentaries or in the news reports (*what*), the bias would be explained (*why*), e.g., differences between the newspapers in their editorial lines or political orientation.

The second purpose is merely to describe communication (*what, to what extent*). Here, different techniques can be applied (which are described below). The third purpose is to draw inferences about the effects of communication (*to whom, with what effect*). Agenda-setting and cultivation studies are good examples for this basic type of quantitative content analysis. Yet, strictly speaking, such an inference is not possible when nothing but the message is examined. Additionally, a survey should be carried out, for instance, before a statement is made about mass media coverage influencing people’s thoughts and perceptions of the world, as in the cultivation approach. The reason for this can be explained by → constructivism. From the constructivist point of view, quantitative content analysis is a reactive method, like surveys for example, since the message to be coded is not fixed in an objective sense. Several people reading the same message may interpret it differently due to their individual schemata, beliefs, and attitudes. Thus, when making inferences about message effects, one should carry out not only a quantitative content analysis but also a reception study or an effects study.

### TYPES OF QUANTITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

There are different types of quantitative content analysis, i.e., different techniques of describing human communication. The first focuses on *frequencies*, where one merely counts, e.g., the appearance of issues, persons, or arguments in newspaper coverage. Many studies using the agenda-setting approach are such simple frequency content

analyses, and most rely only on media archives. Thus, they do not examine the content or text, e.g. of a newspaper article, but focus only on the headline. This is a simplified version of quantitative content analysis.

The second technique focuses on *tendencies*. The above-mentioned example of political bias in the commentaries of a liberal and a conservative newspaper is a good example. In another example, the analysis would not only measure the number of articles on nuclear energy, but also their viewpoint on the issue, e.g., by noting the advantages and disadvantages mentioned. If the advantages reported exceed the disadvantages, the article would be observed to be “in favor” of nuclear energy, while if the disadvantages reported exceed the advantages, it would be considered to show “disapproval” or a “negative tendency.”

The third technique does not only focus on tendencies, but also on intensities. Here, one would not just code on an ordinal scale (using, e.g., “positive,” “ambivalent,” and “negative”), but use interval measurement (e.g., “strongly positive,” “positive,” “ambivalent,” “negative,” and “strongly negative”).

Finally, there are also several techniques that meet the popular objection that quantitative content analysis “disassembles” communication. Critics of quantitative content analysis (e.g., Siegfried Kracauer) claim that quantitative content analysis cannot examine relations between elements of communication, i.e., the semantic and syntactical structures of communication. They argue, for instance, that when arguments and persons in newspaper reports are counted separately, the fact that arguments are raised by persons is neglected; or that when statements are separately coded, the fact that a statement can refer to another statement, e.g., by supporting it, is not taken into account. The latter objection may apply with reference to most agenda-setting studies, but it is not a justified objection against quantitative content analysis in general.

A good example of a technique that meets the semantic and syntactical structures of communication is the *Semantische Struktur- und Inhaltsanalyse* (Semantic Structure and Content Analysis) developed by Werner Früh. Without going into detail, the technique considers various elements of communication as well as the relations between them; for instance, it analyzes persons and roles mentioned in newspaper articles, but it also examines time aspects like anteriority and so-called “modifications” like persons’ features or local specifications. In addition, it looks for so-called “k-relations,” such as causal, intentional, or conditional relations as well as for “R-relations” mentioned in, e.g., news reports. Thus, newspaper articles are deconstructed into micro-propositions, but the semantic structure and content analysis reconstructs all relations between these micro-propositions.

Most quantitative content analyses examine text or verbal material, i.e., transcribed or recorded human communication. Studies analyzing visual material like films, television advertisements, or televised debates between presidential candidates are comparably rare. There are three major reasons for this. First, copies of newspaper articles are easier to access than copies of the evening news, for instance; in retrospective studies (which most quantitative content analyses are), especially, visual material is often no longer available. Second, visual material is more complex than verbal or text material. For example, television news not only provides information via the audio channel but also via the visual channel. Since verbal and visual information can deliver different messages, one

has to code both streams of information. This is more expensive than just coding print news. Finally, coding visual material like evening news on television requires more detailed coding instructions and more complex category definitions than a codebook for analyzing newspaper coverage.

A more or less recent development in quantitative content analysis is automatic, that is, computer-assisted, content analysis, where a computer program counts keywords and searches for related words in the same paragraph, for example. Before the coding process begins, all the relevant keywords or phrases in a so-called coding dictionary – an equivalent of the codebook of a conventional content analysis – have to be listed. While there has been some progress in this technique, it will be a while before the human coder becomes redundant.

Current challenges for quantitative content analysis stem from the world wide web, where the content of a private weblog, arguments in online chat, or the pictures in an online gallery can be subject to analysis. Compared to newspaper coverage, for example, a content analysis of online communication can be quite a problem. Here, the population from which a sample is taken for analysis is not fixed but changes from day to day, or even more quickly. It is therefore important to store all relevant communication for a specific study. But even if this were possible, one seldom has a view of the complete population since the world wide web, or the Internet, as a whole is not easy to grasp. Thus most studies that analyze online communication work with samples that are more or less clearly defined.

## STANDARDS

Like any other method in the social sciences, quantitative content analysis has to meet certain standards of quantitative empirical research. The first criterion of intersubjectivity calls for transparent research. This means that all the details of a quantitative content analysis have to be described and explained so that exactly what has been done is clear. The second criterion of systematics requires that the coding rules and sampling criteria are invariantly applied to all material. The third criterion of → reliability calls for the codebook to be dependable. Different coders do not always agree on coding. For example, one coder may identify an argument in a newspaper article as argument 13 from the argument list in the codebook, while another coder will choose argument 15, with the result that the numeric codes assigned to the argument in the newspaper article do not match. Yet, in other cases the two coders may agree. Using all codings of both coders, one can divide the doubled number of matching pairs (e.g., 17 identical codings) by the number of all codings of the first coder and the number of all codings of the second coder (e.g., 20 codings each), to obtain a ratio called the *Holsti-formula*, which is a simple reliability coefficient. In this example we would find  $R = 17 * 2 / (20 + 20) = 0.85$ . The values of all reliability coefficients range from 0 (no matching at all) to 1 (perfect matching). Another popular reliability coefficient – better known from index calculation – is Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha$ .

The fourth standard for a quantitative content analysis is → validity. An instrument of empirical research, i.e., the codebook with reference to CA, can claim to be valid when it measures what it intends to measure. For instance, if the codebook contains a category

“stereotype,” then the coders should not measure political bias or irony when applying the coding rules for this category, but code stereotypes. According to Klaus Krippendorff, there are different forms of validity. The type of validity in the example can be called *face validity*. *Predictive validity* and *concurrent validity* both refer to an external criterion measure for validating data obtained by a quantitative CA. Such a measure may be another quantitative content analysis or may be statistical data from governmental sources. With concurrent validity the validity test is administered at the same time as the criterion is collected. With predictive validity, scores are predicted on some criterion measure.

## CONTENT ANALYSIS AS RESEARCH PRACTICE

The research process using quantitative content analysis comprises six steps. It usually begins with theoretical considerations, literature review, and deducing empirical hypotheses. In the second step, the sample material that is to be coded, i.e., examined with the codebook, is defined. In the third step, the coding units (e.g., articles or arguments) are described. In the fourth step, the codebook with the category system is developed and pre-tested. The actual measurement, i.e., the process of coding, represents the fifth step of a CA. The final step is data analysis and data interpretation.

Most quantitative content analysis requires multilevel sampling, for instance, analysis of campaign coverage would involve the choice of a limited number of national newspapers which represent diverse political standpoints (e.g., from liberal to conservative). On the next level the time span to be analyzed (e.g., every day in the critical phase of the election campaign) is set. On the next level, the articles to be coded are determined (e.g., all articles on the front page). Usually the sample is called the unit of analysis. The *coding unit*, however, is the most important unit in quantitative CA. It defines the level of measurement. For example, if the features of an article (e.g., the main issue of the article) are examined, the single article is the coding unit, but if the attributes of an argument (e.g., the issues mentioned in an argument) are examined, then the single argument is the coding unit. In the first case, 100 articles (with 5 arguments per article) will lead to 100 codes, in the second case the same number of articles will produce 500 codes. The level of coding depends on the sample size as well as on the research question. If the study focuses on argumentation structures, the article will not be chosen as the coding unit. If political coverage in 10 newspapers in the last 50 years is the focus of the study, the argument or statement will not be chosen as a coding unit, otherwise a vast number of cases will have to be coded.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Constructivism ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Cultivation Effects ► Observation ► Quantitative Methodology ► Reliability ► Survey ► Validity

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## Contingency Model of Conflict

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The contingency theory of strategic conflict management, which began as an elaboration, qualification, and extension of the value of symmetry propounded in the excellence theory, has, over the last decade, come into its own and emerged as an empirically tested perspective. This entry consolidates the maturation and advances of the theory.

Much of the literature on effective → public relations and conflict management had been built on Grunig & Grunig's (1992) and Grunig & Hunt's (1984) *excellence theory* (→ Excellence Theory in Public Relations). Four models of excellence have been posited: in a "press agency/publicity model" the organization is only interested in making its ethos and products known, even at the expense of half-truths. The "public information model" is predominantly characterized by one-way transfer of information from the organization to its publics; the aim is to provide information in a journalistic form. In a "two-way asymmetric model," instead of a rigid transference of information, the organization uses → surveys and polls to persuade the public to accept its point of view. Finally, in a "two-way symmetric model" the organization is more amenable to developing a dialogue with the public: communication flows both ways between the organization and the public (→ Organization–Public Relationships), and both sides are prepared to change their stance, with the aim of resolving the crisis in a professional, ethical, and effective way. The two-way symmetrical model has been positioned as normative theory, stating how organizations should be practicing public relations (PR) and regarded as the most ethical and effective manner of doing so.

The contingency theory, however, saw a different reality. The complexity in → strategic communication was best represented by a *continuum of stance*, not by a limited set of models of excellence, its proponents argued. A continuum would be far more grounded in reality and able to portray the variety of PR organizations' practice in a conflict. The contingency theory, thus, argued that the organizational response to the PR dilemma at hand, has, at one end of the continuum, advocacy, and at the other end, accommodation, along the continuum:

*Pure advocacy* ----- *Pure accommodation*

The theory offered a matrix of 87 factors, arranged thematically, that the organization could draw on to determine its stance. Between advocacy, which means arguing for one's own case, and accommodation, which means giving in, was a wide range of operational stances that influenced strategies, and these entailed "different degrees of advocacy and accommodation" (Cancel et al. 1997, 37). Along this continuum, the theory argued that any of the factors could affect the location of an organization on that continuum "*at a given time regarding a given public*" (Cancel et al. 1999, 172). The theory, thus, sought to understand the dynamics, within and without the organization that could affect an organization's stance. By understanding these dynamics, it elaborated and specified the conditions, factors, and forces that underpinned such a stance.

To test the theoretical veracity and the applicability of the theory, Cancel et al. (1999) found further insights into the relative influences of the factors in positing the organization's position, thereby spawning the contingency terms, "predisposing" and "situational" variables.

There were *factors that influenced the organization's position on the continuum* before it interacts with a public; and there were variables that influenced the organization's position on the continuum during interaction with its publics. The former have been categorized as predisposing variables, the latter as situational variables. Some of the well-supported predisposing factors Cancel et al. (1999) found included: (1) the size of the organization; (2) corporate culture; (3) business exposure; (4) PR to dominant coalition; (5) dominant coalition enlightenment; (6) individual characteristics of key individuals, like the CEO.

These factors were supported in the crisis management literature. For instance, → organizational culture had been found to be a key factor in ensuring the formulation of a sound crisis plan and excellent crisis management (→ Crisis Communication). *Situational variables* were factors that were most likely to influence how an organization related to a public by effecting shifts from a predisposed accommodative or adversarial stance along the continuum during an interaction. Some of the supported situational factors included: (1) urgency of the situation; (2) characteristics of the other public; (3) potential or obvious threats; (4) potential costs or benefit for the organization from choosing the various stances (Cancel et al. 1999).

Besides the predisposing and situational variables, Cameron et al. (2001) later found that there were occasions when accommodation was not possible at all, due to moral, legal, and regulatory reasons. They labeled them as *proscriptive variables*. Six were identified: (1) when there was moral conviction that an accommodative or dialogic stance towards a public may be inherently unethical; (2) when there was a need to maintain moral neutrality in the face of contending publics; (3) when legal constraints curtailed accommodation; (4) when there were regulatory restraints; (5) when senior management prohibited an accommodative stance; and lastly, (6) when the issue became a jurisdictional concern within the organization and resolution of the issue took on a constrained and complex process of negotiation. The proscriptive variables "did not necessarily drive increased or extreme advocacy, but did preclude compromise or even communication with a given public," argued Cameron et al. (2001, 253).

These theoretical discoveries would have carried little weight if they had no relevance to real-life situations. For instance, to understand how contingency theory was a realistic description of the practitioners' world and why the two-way symmetrical model was

impractical and inflexible, Yarbrough et al. (1998) applied it to how conflicts were managed during the 1996 Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG).

While many subsequent studies had applied the contingency theory interorganizationally, Pang et al. (2006) took it further and applied it intraorganizationally in their study of conflict between an organization's dominant coalition and its executives in the implementation of a regional crisis plan (→ Organizational Conflict). This further boosted the theory's versatility and rigor as a viable conflict management lens.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ▶ Issue Management ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Organizational Conflict ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Survey

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## **Control and Authority in Organizations**

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Although scholars take differing perspectives on the purposes and functions of control and authority, the definitions of these two terms are quite clear. In an organization, to “control” means to constrain work processes, human activity, and environmental events so that the organization creates value. That is, a refrigerator-manufacturing business must control work processes so that it can produce refrigerators that work correctly. The company must control human activity so that the production staff actually gets the refrigerators produced on time, and the company must control the flow of new technology from the environment so that it can incorporate new innovations into its production.

In an organization, “authority” refers to that which makes control legitimate. The individuals working for an organization must see the control methods as legitimate; that is, the organization must control human activity reasonably, appropriately, and lawfully. A subordinate should accept the orders of a supervisor as long as the orders are reasonable, appropriate, and lawful. If a subordinate refuses legitimate orders, the subordinate gets fired. If the supervisor gives illegitimate orders, the supervisor gets fired. Regardless of perspective, control and authority both become manifest through the communication practices in an organization. For instance, a boss gives orders directly to a subordinate; a human resources department writes down employee guidelines and regulations; a company vision statement unobtrusively guides worker decision-making.

### THE PROBLEM OF CONTROL

Most often we consider organizational control as something to be resisted. Freudian psychology teaches us that humans are naturally *autonomous beings* and that we resist whatever constrains our autonomy. Thus, we would naturally resist a boss telling us what to do or a receptionist forcing us to follow a rigid bureaucratic rule, even if our resistance is no more than a simple frown and feeling of dislike. Hence organizations face the difficult communicative task of getting all these “autonomous” individuals to constrain their behavior in such a way as to enable the organization to create value. An organization needs its workers to show up for work, preferably on time. It needs workers to get products “out the door” on schedule. It needs workers to follow safety regulations and refrain from discriminatory practices. Organizational control presents us with a paradox: we naturally resist constraints on our autonomy, but we must willingly constrain our autonomy for our organizations to create value.

Experience of this paradox marks our everyday life in an organization. We feel a desire to be autonomous, but at the same time we recognize the need to constrain our actions so that we can get productive organizational work done with our fellow humans. Commonly, we deal with this paradox by entering into something of a contractual agreement with the organization. For example, when an organization hires an individual (or an individual agrees to join an organization, such as agreeing to accept enrollment in a particular university), the two parties enter into an *exchange relationship*. The individual agrees to labor in some way for the organization (working, studying, or volunteering), while the organization agrees to provide some form of reward for the individual’s labor (salary, a degree at the end of a program of study, or a feeling of having contributed to the common good). As a part of this exchange relationship, the individual agrees (most often tacitly) to allow the organization to control his or her behavior in ways functional and appropriate for the organization, such as showing up for work on time, wearing a particular uniform, following the company’s customer service rules, supervising subordinates in appropriate ways, and so forth. The organization now has the legitimacy to exercise that authority to control the individual’s behavior (in reasonable, appropriate, and lawful ways). The practice of control, as seen in this exchange relationship, is an inherently communicative process.

This exchange relationship of control, as with any communication process, is fraught with difficulties. If a firm fails to control the organization’s work effectively, then the organization itself will fail. Bosses can bully and intimidate subordinates. We may need to



work overtime to meet a deadline and miss a family activity. Yet, we still join organizations, we still subject ourselves to the control of the organization. We need what our organizations give us, so we willingly (in most cases) submit and let our autonomy be constrained.

Therein lies what scholars call “the problem of control”: how does an organization gain and maintain the uncoerced obedience of its members? The word “uncoerced” is important here because we assume that humans willingly (more or less) join organizations, as depicted in the exchange relationship described above. Thus, we willingly allow the organization to control our behavior rather than having the organization coerce us into compliance, such as in a prison. In an organization, we assume that we have a choice in terms of control.

The problem of control has vexed organizational scholars for many years. Most notable among these scholars was the famed German sociologist Max Weber (e.g., Weber 1958; 1962; 1978), who wrote in the early 1900s and gave us far-reaching fundamental concepts and frameworks for analyzing organizational control and authority. So powerful was Weber’s work that his thinking has significantly shaped how we understand the practice of organizational control. The different elements of control and authority described in the remainder of this section all either extend directly from his work or have been shaped by scholars influenced by his ideas.

### **TYPOLOGIES OF CONTROL AND AUTHORITY**

Control becomes manifest in organizations as a communicative system; that is, the patterns of discourse and activity that legitimately constrain work in directions functional for the organization. Scholars have identified four main systems of control with the first three found in the work of Edwards (1979). *Simple control* refers to the direct and personal type of control most often seen in a → supervisor–subordinate relationship. The supervisor simply communicates orders directly to the subordinate. *Technical control* refers to a structural system developed around organizational processes, such as how the speed of an assembly line controls the pace of worker activity. *Bureaucratic control* identifies the system of control that derives from organizational hierarchy and rules, such as seen in an organizational chart or in employee regulations or contracts (→ Bureaucracy and Communication).

Tompkins and Cheney (1985) and Barker (1993) identified a fourth system of control, *concertive control*, a system that grows from modern day peer and team relationships at work. Concertive control extends from the peer pressures and expectations of peers as they are communicated to others. Control, when viewed across these four types, becomes more unobtrusive as we move from simple to technical to bureaucratic to peer. While we can readily experience the simple control of a boss or the need to maintain the pace of the assembly line, the rules of a bureaucracy or the expectations of a peer are much more subtle and difficult for us to experience as a form of control.

Our primary typology of authority comes directly from Weber’s work. Weber identified three types of authority, three foundations for legitimately controlling our behavior in organizations. In *charismatic authority*, legitimacy comes from the compelling personal power of an inspirational leader, such as a visionary company president. In *traditional authority*, legitimacy derives from the organization’s (or broader society’s) culture and traditions, as found in the tradition of a family business passing from one member to the next. In *bureaucratic authority*, legitimacy resides in the hierarchical structure and rational rule system of the bureaucracy.

While Weber's typology is valuable, control scholars find more utility in understanding the locus of authority in a control system, as in understanding where the source of authoritative legitimacy resides in a communicative control system (Barker 1999). For example, in simple control, the locus of authority resides in the power of the immediate supervisor. In technical control, authority extends from the power of the technology or work processes. In bureaucratic control, authority resides in the power of the organization's hierarchy and practical rules. In concertive control, peer relationships and shared values form the source of legitimate authority.

### THREE PERSPECTIVES ON CONTROL

Control scholars generally take three perspectives on control. Scholars may take a *managerial perspective* and study how to make a control system more efficient and effective. These scholars focus on the outcomes of control and may study how to improve superior-subordinate communication or work processes so that an organization increases productivity. Other communication scholars may take a *critical perspective* and study the effects and consequences of our control practices on individual autonomy. These scholars focus on the outcomes of power and domination in control systems and may study issues such as workplace bullying, resistance to unfair practices, the negative effects of peer expectations (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches).

Communication scholars also take a *discursive perspective* which is concerned with the effects and consequences of our control practices as systems of meaning creation (→ Organizational Discourse). These scholars have studied such theories as identification, which is concerned with how individuals come to create their identity around the espoused values of the organization, thus unobtrusively acting in ways functional for the organization (→ Organizational Identification). Discourse-focused scholars also develop systematic theories for understanding the role of control in meaning creation, as found in the theory of structuration (→ Structuration Theory).

### DIRECTION OF DISCURSIVE RESEARCH ON CONTROL

Communication scholars are increasingly taking a discursive approach and focusing on how we construct meaningful discourses of control and the need for nuanced and sophisticated understandings of how we make ethical decisions about the reasonableness, appropriateness, and legality of control and authority (Sewell & Barker 2006). Such a concern for ethics helps bring together the three perspectives on control and enhances our knowledge of legitimate authority and truly productive control practices (→ Organizational Ethics). Barker (2005) recently argued that we should engage control by studying the discursive levels at which we make ethical decisions about control: the levels of peer, hierarchical, and governance relationships.

As globalization increases, as we work together in more collaborative, cooperative, and connected relationships, our need for effective but nonoppressive methods of control will also increase (→ Globalization of Organizations). Humans and organizations will still enter into exchange relationships regarding control. Our practice of control and our exercise of authority will still be tenuous. The best direction for future research involves

making the morality of control more transparent and finding ways for us to choose control practices with which we are comfortable.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accounting Research ▶ Bureaucracy and Communication ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Leadership in Organizations ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Organizational Ethics ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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## **Convergence of Media Systems**

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A system is an assemblage of individual elements that together constitute a whole, with each component interacting with the others and with the outer world (→ Cybernetics;

Systems Theory). Using this approach, a media system may be seen as consisting of different publishing entities, such as → news agencies, the press, or → television, which relate to each other. To give an example, agencies provide news for the different media, such as the press and electronic media, which compete and cross-promote at the same time. There are also links between the media system or its entities and the outer world of other systems, like politics (e.g., broadcasting legislation and regulation), economics (e.g., conglomerate companies or advertising), society (e.g., as readership or audience), or culture (e.g., popular culture and entertainment).

The most common *space for a media system* is the nation state, where the central markets and most of the companies are based. But the center of activities could also be a small place, such as a locality with its *mélange* of local media. Also, in an increasingly integrating world, media actors may be active in a number of different markets of different states. In some respect, one may even talk about Europe as an emergent media system, which may be compared to other large systems, such as that of the US.

A media system may also be shaped by different levels of *media activity*, like the combination of national program producers and local affiliations. This may be found in the television network system of the US or the federal system in Germany, where broadcasting responsibilities rest with individual federal states. Another way to group media activities is by language spaces, e.g., the large world of English-speaking countries dispersed around the globe, the Spanish-speaking region consisting of Spain and Latin America, the Chinese-speaking region with China, Taiwan, and Singapore, or smaller regions such as the German space in the center of Europe, which besides Germany includes Austria, parts of Switzerland, and other bordering countries.

### THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH

It seems a natural approach to compare media systems across borders. Comparison is a method for obtaining evidence of causal effects by searching for similar or different elements between two or more systems. The British philosopher John Stuart Mill talked of the combination of a “method of agreement” and “method of difference” (Mill 1843/1972, 648ff.), meaning that every substantial comparison has to look for common and different features at the same time. Blumler and colleagues combine several aspects and argue that work is comparative, “when the comparisons are made across two or more geographically or historically (spatially or temporally) defined systems, the phenomena of scholarly interest which are embedded in a set of interrelations that are relatively coherent, patterned, comprehensive, distinct, and bounded” (Blumler et al. 1992, 7).

The final step of a comparative analysis is the designing of theoretical statements, which are created by separating individual differences from the things that are common to all. Out of the latter one may distill statements about common features that constitute models or types. This is how theories of convergence and divergence have been developed. Their special feature is that they describe developments in the course of time; they focus on a paradigm shift. A theory of convergence argues that media systems are collectively moving in the direction of increasing homogeneity (→ Comparative Research).

### **Early Comparative Theories of the Press**

The comparative perspective reveals that media serve different functions, appear in different forms, and differ in many other ways. In 1956 Siebert and colleagues wrote an influential study on “four theories of the press,” looking at the relationship between press and society, based on the assumption that the media always take on the form and coloration of the structures within which they operate. The four theories are called “authoritarian,” “libertarian,” “social responsibility,” and “Soviet communism.”

The last of these has obviously disappeared, nearly totally. Authoritarian reflects the longstanding (mostly European) tradition of control over the media by repressive regimes. Libertarian stands for free enterprise and freedom from government interference, and social responsibility for a government that not merely allows freedom, but actively promotes it (Siebert et al. 1956). This approach represented an American perspective on the postwar world and reflected the polarization during the age of the Cold War, and has often been criticized for this. It devised a world shaped by divergence, as such reflecting facts and visions of the time the theory was developed.

### **Comparative Analysis and the Theory of Convergence**

Hallin and Mancini (2004), in their study on comparing media systems, start from the argument of the “four theories” and attempt to update it, mainly by looking at capitalist countries on both sides of the Atlantic. They find *three models*: a “liberal” model (the UK, Ireland, the USA), with relative dominance of market mechanisms and commercial media; a “democratic corporatist” model (northern continental Europe, including Germany), with a historical coexistence tied to social and political groups and a relatively active but legally limited role of the state; and the “polarized pluralist” model (Mediterranean countries of southern Europe), with integration of the media into party politics, a weaker position of commercial media, and a strong role of the state. So far they emphasize the differences between the three models, but see many common aspects inside each group.

But this is mainly a description of the present situation, which does not include developments on a longer time scale. Hallin and Mancini also look at long-term changes and see as a consequence of ongoing commercialization an overall process of homogenization. They argue that considerable convergence has taken place, primarily in the direction of the “liberal” model. They assume that this process will continue into the future, but also see limits, such as the tendency in society toward differentiation and individualization. The Internet, with its interactive qualities, is the obvious medium that supports this process. In general, the thesis of convergence is well argued and describes an important trend in international media. But it is only based on analysis of the western part of the world, and it refers primarily to the interrelationship between the media and politics (→ Party–Press Parallelism; Political Journalists).

### **ASPECTS OF COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MEDIA SYSTEMS**

Denis McQuail develops a scheme based on four models in his normative media theory. A “liberal-pluralist” or “market” model starts from the original “free press” (libertarian)

model of Siebert et al. A “social responsibility” or “public interest” model includes the right to freedom of publication but is accompanied by a positive notion of freedom, including social purposes for the media. The “professional” model emphasizes the journalistic profession as the guardianship of standards for the quality media. Finally, the “alternative media” model includes a range of non-mainstream media with purposely different aims and origins (McQuail 2005, 185ff.). It allows for the definition of different types that show an emphasis on the “free” model (prototype: USA) or the “public interest” motive (prototype: the UK with the BBC). The professional as well as the alternative type may additionally be found in both. Important for this approach is that it looks for features inside each media system, emphasizes convergence of different normative principles, and asks that all models should be combined to secure diversity.

Another approach was adopted by Wolfgang Hoffmann-Riem (1996), who compared six countries concerning their system of licensing and regulation of electronic media. After searching for common features, he identified two groups of countries, one with a long tradition of a privately owned sector (US, Canada, Australia), where a “market” model was established, financed from the revenues of free enterprise, in particular advertisement or viewers’ subscriptions, which differs clearly from the second group, with a strong public-service tradition (the UK, Germany, France), where a “trustee” model evolved; here broadcasting is legally organized in trusteeship for the whole of society. Even though the past was shaped by a difference between the two models, he also recognizes a converging future, following a trend from “the trustee to the market model” (Hoffmann-Riem 1996, 340). He therefore supports the convergence thesis of Hallin and Mancini, even though his focus is quite different, as it is mainly based on legal analysis.

Most of these approaches lack a global focus, as they place western systems at the center of analysis and do not recognize the fact that models that first evolved in a transatlantic environment have spread around the world. In consequence, one could group world systems according to their attitude toward the public-service traditions (besides Europe, British Commonwealth countries including Canada and Australia, also Japan) as opposed to regions with an unrestricted commercial dominance (USA, later Latin America, parts of Asia). In other regions (like the Arab world, the states of the former Soviet Union, China) the controlling state is still the leading force. Taking this distinction, one may arrive at another framework in which control over broadcast media may be separated into “public,” “commercial,” and “state.” Also, combinations of these are possible, as in the case of Latin America, where state-controlled broadcasters are financed via commercial spots and not by a general fee. The convergence argument of Hallin and Mancini may also apply to these findings, as public service is endangered in many states and commercial homogenization is the leading tendency, especially if one includes the ongoing digitization of media.

## FURTHER ASPECTS OF CONVERGENCE

Yet another comparative approach would take the *size of countries* – based on territory, population, and market forces – into account. Obviously, nations of a continental size (the USA, Russia, China) enjoy much more autonomy in terms of media actors, content, and policy than small and vulnerable states (Austria, Scandinavia). The small states react by emphasizing a variety of active media policy measures to protect their identity.

Therefore, in small states public broadcasters tend to be stronger and receive more public funding than in larger states. An interesting example in this respect is Canada – a country of huge size but with a small population compared to the US – which invests heavily in supporting “Canadian content” in broadcasting and films. Based on this distinction, one may argue that convergence takes place more inside the cluster of large or small states, where the large ones tend to be global players, whereas the small ones stress the autonomy of their own media resources.

Convergence could also be interpreted as a policy goal that should be attained in the course of time. The European Union has practiced an active media policy since the 1980s, and its central goal is to create a common audiovisual space. The main instrument for this is the 1989 Directive “Europe without Frontiers,” which attempts to support pan-European media actors, as they are best prepared – in the eyes of the European Commission – to reach this goal. In this case, one could talk about convergence as an explicit policy goal that combines with elements of commercialization and self-regulation – as seen in the present media policy of the European Union. (McQuail & Siune 1998; → European Union: Communication Law.)

Designing general frameworks of the media that consist of different models always creates the problem of a limited perspective. Obviously, the less-developed world is often not represented in these models. A dichotomy like the theory of a “digital divide” shows a different world. In this perspective there is a deep gap between rich and poor countries concerning access to the Internet and other forms of new media as a distinguishing characteristic. The end result of this view is a world dominated by increasing divergence that might only in the long run converge, when the new technologies are universally available.

SEE ALSO: ► Comparative Research ► Cybernetics ► Digital Divide ► European Union: Communication Law ► News Agencies ► Party–Press Parallelism ► Political Journalists ► Systems Theory ► Television

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# Conversation Analysis

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Conversation Analysis (CA) is a primary mode of inquiry for understanding how people talk with one another in everyday casual encounters, as well as in more specialized institutional settings involving bureaucratic representatives (e.g., medical, legal, educational, corporate, government). Research materials are naturally occurring audio and video recordings, and carefully produced transcriptions, of a broad range of interactions comprising the social worlds of diverse speakers, relationships, activities, and events. Examples are: telephone conversations and face-to-face interactions among family members, friends, acquaintances, and service providers such as telephone emergency hotlines; interactions among young children, parents, and daycare providers; patient–provider interactions (→ Doctor–Patient Talk); news and broadcast interviews (→ Broadcast Talk). Giving priority to recordings and transcriptions is based on the recognition that detailed features and contingencies of interactional events cannot be intuited, nor adequately reconstructed, through field notes, interviews, or other forms of self-reported information. Interactions that are “naturally occurring” are those that would take place whether or not a recording device were present, and are not significantly influenced by researchers prompting the origination, content, or length of the social occasion.

## BASIC PRINCIPLES

Speakers order their lives by collaboratively producing distinct courses of unfolding action. Discovering how these actions are sequentially organized is fundamental for explaining communication in everyday life. Through CA, priority is given to: (1) identifying how speakers utilize specific vocal and visible practices to manage the moment-by-moment design of turns-at-talk, and (2) the sequential and spatial environments within which actions routinely occur. Although CA has historically given primary attention to the ongoing orderliness of talk within single cases and collections of social interaction (e.g., see Atkinson & Heritage 1984; Sacks 1992), the embodied organization of gesture, gaze, and body orientation are basic and enduring concerns (e.g., see Goodwin 1981; Heath 1986; Beach 2007b).

Central to CA are ongoing, informal, yet systematic procedures for conducting what is commonly referred to as *data sessions*. Colleagues gather to repeatedly hear and view recordings, closely examine transcribed excerpts, and provide increasingly refined observations about practices comprising the organization of specific moments and interactions being examined. A defining feature of CA is the descriptive rigor and explanatory force brought to recordings and transcriptions, a proof-by-exemplar methodology of analytic induction: social problems are not brought to the data, but emerge from grounded and systematic inspections of moments not prematurely dismissed as lacking order or relevance. Observations about the ordering of interaction must be anchored *within the recorded and transcribed interactional data*, specifically, how speakers make available to one another their emergent understandings of local (i.e., “Why that now?”) interactional circumstances.



What speakers display and demonstrate in real time, in the first instance by and for them, become resources for analysts to warrant claims, progressively advance evidence about the organization of social interaction, and seek to establish consensus about the most compelling depictions of interactional conduct.

The analytic procedures of CA stand in marked contrast to attempts to understand communication by speculating about speakers' mental states, or background knowledge, which do not somehow get invoked during interaction. So too are analysts' imagined, hypothetical, and anecdotal possibilities minimized in favor of focusing on what is actually occurring between speakers. Attention is not drawn to individuals' interpretive or perceptual experiences, but to the turn-by-turn and embodied coordination of local actions within an *architecture of intersubjectivity* – an organization in which “a context of publicly displayed and continuously up-dated intersubjective understandings is systematically sustained” (Heritage 1984, 259).

Through systematic data sessions, and subsequent publications, empirical attention has been given to a wide variety of social activities. The *analytic dimensions of CA investigations* are broad and vibrant, revealing the organization of frequently recognized, yet taken-for-granted, features of language and action: recognition during telephone openings, repairing understandings, the systematics of turn-taking and overlapped speech, agreeing and disagreeing, acknowledging and closing turns-in-progress, establishing and withdrawing gaze, initiating and closing topics, questioning and answering (→ Questions and Questioning), referencing persons, the social construction of self, accounting, accusing, announcing, apologizing, blaming, complaining, complimenting, gossiping, offering, pursuing noticeably absent responses, requesting, storytelling, teasing, exhibiting and claiming entitlement to knowledge, grammar and syntax in interaction, dealing with embarrassment, laughing when displaying resistance to troubles, discussing uncertain and delicate futures, delivering and receiving good and bad news.

Across these diverse social activities, the empirical findings of CA reveal how ordinary speakers, in both casual and institutional interactions, routinely address and resolve emerging problems. For example, speakers manage the *allocation of turn-taking* by precisely coordinating the inception and completion of turns, minimizing overlapped speaking, and enforcing efforts to speak out of turn and/or interruptively. When monitoring the course and progression of another's speaking, recipients rely on acknowledgment tokens (e.g., *mm*, *mm hm*, *uh huh*, and *yeah*) to display attentiveness and facilitate others' extended talking (e.g., during stories). But words such as *yeah*, *okay*, or *all right* can also be recruited to close down prior speakers' talk and thereby secure speakership. Similarly, the word *oh* is utilized across a range of social actions, including displays of a “change of state” in knowledge, as well as treating prior questions as sufficiently problematic to avoid talk raised by another's query. What may appear to be small, insignificant, and otherwise benign features of everyday conversation are, in practice, employed as key resources by speakers to manage critically important activities such as speaker selection, topic organization, and reluctance (or willingness) to talk about particular issues.

Central to these social actions are ways speakers work together to negotiate and achieve *shared understandings*. One primary mode of CA research is to investigate how speakers work to repair their own talk (e.g., when a wrong word is employed), and/or exhibit an inability to understand another's talk (e.g., *What?*). Mechanisms comprising these sequential

environments have been identified, including how it is possible that “breakdowns” and “misunderstandings” are created and resolved, and how those who initiate repair about another’s talk are made out to be responsible for the trouble. Related studies of “troubles” have also revealed that while speakers may state they are “pretty good” or “fine,” such utterances may give rise to more elaborated talk about troubles they are experiencing – talk in which troubles-tellers display their resistance and ability to manage the troubles, just as recipients may (or may not) make available their receptivity to hearing and responding to another’s dilemma.

### HISTORICAL SKETCH

From the late 1970s, the empirical rigor and theoretical implications arising from CA have provided a viable alternative for communication scholars researching → *language and social interaction* (LSI). Although CA was emerging in sociology in the mid- to late 1960s, and strongly influenced by work in ethnomethodology (Heritage 1984), it was nearly a decade later when interdisciplinary relationships began to be cultivated. The work of CA, and its importance for communication research, was initially recognized with the reading of early publications such as Emanuel Schegloff’s (1968) paper on “telephone openings” (→ Telephone Talk), and the later (now classic) article on turn-taking published in the journal *Language* by Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson (1974). When contacted and visited in the Department of Sociology at UCLA, both Schegloff and his visiting colleague, Gail Jefferson, also generously provided “blue ink” mimeos of Harvey Sacks’ lecture notes – a bedrock for CA investigations. These notes were transcribed by Gail Jefferson, following Sacks’ untimely death in a car accident in 1976, and eventually published as an indispensable two-volume set (Sacks 1992). Emanuel Schegloff’s introduction provides a useful lens for appreciating Sacks’ contributions in historical and scholarly context.

As these mimeos, related earlier publications, and unpublished papers were read and disseminated among interested communication scholars, who otherwise had limited access to CA work, the integration of CA into the communication discipline became gradual yet progressive. Since the late 1970s, CA has been a primary focus of 11 special journal issues (and sections) involving communication researchers. The 1987 advent of the journal *Research on Language and Social Interaction* also provided a needed forum for LSI research, facilitating ongoing collaborations within and across traditional disciplinary boundaries.

Significant relationships between CA and alternative methodologies have been addressed (e.g., between ethnography and CA, and contrasting orientations to “context”). A variety of related and critical issues have also been examined (e.g., news interviews, conversational poetics, morality, verbal/non-verbal relationships, lay diagnosis, and turn construction).

Throughout these key developments, unequivocally the most important activities for a growing CA community in communication centered on the collegial discipline of *data sessions*: most gatherings included informal but rigorous analyses of recorded and transcribed data. The *doing* of CA occurred, first and foremost, when working directly with others analyzing interactional data. While data sessions were ordinarily conducted at separate universities, during conferences these sessions occurred more privately, among small groups in hotel rooms. But as interest grew and brainstorming increased, data

sessions became community-based, open events occurring (more or less “officially”) pre-conference and during programmed panel slots. Initiated during Western States Communication Association (WSCA) meetings, these sessions carried over into the National Communication Association (NCA) annual conferences: participants worked together with seasoned analysts to refine analytic skills and discuss the potential of CA for pursuing diverse and rich investigations into fundamental communication activities. These open data sessions continue and, especially at NCA and WSCA, related CA paper and panel presentations are now normalized conference events. It is particularly notable that NCA is internationally recognized as hosting one of the most prominent annual gatherings of CA researchers representing diverse disciplines and countries. This success is due, in large part, to growing openness and receptivity for CA as an innovative and substantive approach to how messages and social relationships might be examined.

### SITUATING CONTEXT-IN-INTERACTION

Fundamental to CA’s position on social order is the recognition that speakers construct, place, and participate within sequences of adjacently paired (i.e., contiguous) actions that are not random but highly organized. Each utterance and action occurs within structurally defined places, exhibiting what speakers treat as meaningful for unfolding interaction. In systematic ways, speakers work together to manage emerging interactions by constructing local contexts of meaningful, communicative actions. A speaker’s current turn-at-talk projects the conditional relevance of not just any, but a range of appropriate next responses. Next speakers design their responses by displaying understandings of what the prior speaker made available and relevant. Just as utterances cannot be understood when stripped from carefully designed sequential environments, for CA *context* is best understood as achieved through interaction – constantly renewing and shaping social actions – rather than external to or otherwise removed from communication (i.e., as located in roles, social settings, or institutions). Through close analysis of single cases and constant comparisons across collections of phenomena, it has become evident that numerous practices employed by speakers to organize specific moments of interaction (i.e., local and context-sensitive actions) also occur – in systematic and thus generalizable ways across speakers, topics, activities, and cultures (i.e., context-free and universal patterns of communication).

Locating context in speakers’ responses to immediately prior talk, and action, gives priority to capturing how speakers organize interaction. Alternative and more general descriptions of social settings cannot lay bare the details of how speakers collaborate to shape communication contexts (e.g., see Duranti & Goodwin 1992). In the last two decades, for example, turn-organized notions of context provided an empirically grounded alternative to creating and utilizing various “coding schemes” to capture message content and subtle features of relationships (e.g., control, dominance, and submission). With CA as a resource, it was recognized that many schemes utilized categories neither grounded in nor sensitive to interactional conduct. Coders’ decision rules were also ambiguous in that they were not focused on describing how current speakers project, and next speakers are responsive to, prior turns and actions. Even though arguments could be advanced that coders agreed on 80 percent or more of decisions made, such consensus did not translate into an ability to capture how speakers organized sequences of interaction.

Similarly, contextual approaches advanced by CA revealed the tendency to underspecify “speech act” functions of utterances (e.g., compliments, offers, requests), especially when the detailed and sequential environments in which such actions occurred were not fully articulated.

### MICRO/MACRO DISTINCTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

The social sciences in general, and communication scholarship in particular, have demonstrated considerable interest in what are often described as *macro* categories for explaining social order (e.g., power, status, race, ethnicity, gender, and culture). For CA, it is inherently problematic to claim that the existence of social order is the natural consequence of these (and related) attributes – overly general qualities that are too easily invoked, yet difficult to anchor within participants’ orientations to practical circumstances of choice and action. It is not sufficient, for example, to offer the following kinds of assertions: men dominate when conversing with women; persons with differing racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are communicatively dissimilar; or judges, doctors, and politicians are obviously more powerful than those with whom they interact. In each instance, such declarations do not evidence how participants in interaction exhibit and achieve such actions – dominance, lack of similarity, being powerful – in specific and observable ways during the routine course of daily interactions. Since it is through the fine-grained organization of actual communicative events that “macro” concepts are accomplished, it remains for analysts to provide empirically grounded, compelling evidence that speakers are engaged in activities amounting to whatever power, gender, culture, and the like might be conceived to be.

Distinctions between “micro” and “macro,” so frequently debated in classes and at scientific gatherings, are unnecessary for CA: roles, categories of societal membership, and institutions (i.e., “macro”) get simultaneously and interactionally constructed (i.e., “micro”) as speakers enact and embody their orientations moment by moment. Such actions are neither small nor insignificant, but may well be taken for granted when attempting to describe “larger” societal structures.

### ACCESSING CA AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Examples of recent CA investigations by communication scholars include work focusing on interactional activities such as laughter (Glenn 2003), narratives (Mandelbaum 2003), test results during medical consultations (Pomerantz & Rintel 2004), apologies (Robinson 2004), asserting speakers’ rights (Stivers 2005), and how family members talk through cancer on the telephone (Beach 2007a). Ongoing research involves an increasing convergence of studies on conversational and institutional interactions (e.g., patient–provider encounters), more frequent applications for external funding to support research efforts, and continued discussion of how empirical findings resulting from CA might be employed to refine communication skills across various relationships, settings, and institutions. These collective efforts seek understandings of the amazingly sophisticated and finely ordered nature of social interaction, extend fertile collaborations across disciplinary boundaries, and work toward developing grounded, universal, and relevant theories of social order. A seemingly

endless array of primal features comprising everyday communication awaits discovery, and CA is uniquely positioned to continue analyses of unexamined interactional involvements.

SEE ALSO: ► Broadcast Talk ► Discourse Markers ► Doctor–Patient Talk ► Ethnomethodology ► Language and Social Interaction ► Microethnography ► Questions and Questioning ► Telephone Talk ► Transcribing and Transcription ► Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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## Co-Orientation Model of Public Relations

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Public relations (PR) is a strategic management function responsible for cultivation of good relations between an organization and its strategic constituencies (stakeholders and publics; → Stakeholder Theory; Grunig 2006). The ultimate goal of → public relations is social harmony. The co-orientation model of public relations assumes that organizations prefer harmony to conflict and that they can use communication for that purpose (→ Organization–Public Relationships; Consensus-Oriented Public Relations).

### ORIGINS

The co-orientation model of PR originates in psychological balance theory, which is a motivational theory of attitude change (→ Consistency Theories). Heider (1946) proposed the consistency motive that helps people toward psychological balance. Links between people, and an object or idea can be favorable or unfavorable, and people rationalize and adjust their attitudes and/or behaviors to achieve internal balance. Two friends should both like or dislike a third person; if not, each of them suffers a psychological imbalance that can be overcome by one of them changing their attitude toward the third person. If that change of attitude does not occur, friendship suffers and a psychological balance can be restored by breaking the friendship. Now they still do not value the third person in a similar manner, but they do not like each other anyway, so this is no longer problematic.

Newcomb (1953; 1956) developed the balance model by introducing the idea that people use communication as a tool to resolve an imbalance: our friends who like each other should be able to communicate their differences in perception of the third person and in that process of communication find a compromise or perhaps one of them changes their opinion. This is a symmetry theory where communication leads to more interpersonal similarity: if the two friends like each other, they will try to be similar and they will use communication to resolve disagreements.

Co-orientation entered PR via the interpersonal model developed by McLeod and → Chaffee (1973), which provided the terminology now used to describe the co-orientation model and its variables in PR. This model was adapted for PR by Broom (1977) and Grunig & Hunt (1984) to elicit key ideas on how organizations and constituencies relate to each other (→ Social Perception).

## CONCEPTUALIZATION

“Intraorganizational congruency” describes how close the views of an organization are with the views of its constituency. “Intraconstituency congruency” describes how close the views of a constituency are with views of an organization. Broom & Dozier (1990) described both congruencies as “perceived agreement” – or “disagreement,” arguing that this was crucial in determining how an organization deals with its strategic constituency and how a constituency deals with its focal organization. “Organization-constituency agreement” reveals the extent to which an organization and its constituency share similar evaluations of something of mutual interest, and “organization-constituency understanding” tells the extent to which an organization and its constituency similarly define something of mutual interest. “Agreement” describes instances of a situation being perceived as positive or negative, and more or less important, and how an organization and its constituency agree on a particular issue. “Understanding” is about the descriptive details of a situation – how much an organization and its constituency see the same elements defining the situation. “Organization-constituency accuracy” highlights the extent to which an organization’s view of a constituency’s actual view is correct, and “constituency-organization accuracy” tells us the other way around. Following Chaffee & McLeod (1970), Broom (2005) sees effective PR as two-way communication producing high accuracy.

By putting accuracy of perceptions into the focus of the co-orientation model, the model loses its meliorist theoretical assumptions (from the balance and symmetry theory). Foci of the model instead become descriptions of agreement between an organization and its constituencies. We can now answer questions such as: how does an organization view something of common interest with a strategic constituency? How does that constituency perceive that area of common interest? How does the organization perceive the constituency’s views? And how does the constituency perceive the organization’s views? By answering these questions and by replacing the term “agreement” with Scheff’s (1967) term “consensus,” we get four possibilities: (1) *consensus*: an organization and its strategic constituency have similar evaluations and definitions of a situation; (2) *dissensus*: an organization and its strategic constituency do not agree either on an evaluation or on definitions of a situation, or both; (3) *false consensus*: one or both sides perceives a higher level of consensus than there is; and (4) *false conflict*: an organization or its constituency perceives a higher level of disagreement than there is.

This type of questioning is known in PR practice as a “gap analysis,” a method where practitioners audit organizations and selected constituencies and describe their perceptions as being more or less distant. Where discrepancies are the greatest, intervention is proposed and communication is used to increase accuracy of perceptions, albeit well short of helping to produce a balanced relationship.

## APPLICATION

Co-orientation in PR exists when an organization and its strategic constituency are simultaneously oriented to one another and to something of mutual interest. Based on its original assumptions, the co-orientation model enables organizations to adjust their goals in response to the expectations of their strategic constituencies and vice versa. In

that way, the co-orientation model serves as a tool for PR strategy development. The notion of balance focuses attention on the core idea of co-orientation: internal balance in both an organization and its strategic constituencies. This is possible only through continuous research and open, two-way and symmetrical communication between the dominant groups in organizations and the dominant groups in strategic constituencies.

Accuracy of perceptions is too narrow a goal for such a process, and the ideal of harmony should return to the core of this endeavor. When an organization and its strategic constituencies really value their mutual relations, they are interested in maintaining their mutual favorability. What original balance theory tells us is that accuracy may only produce cognitively correct relations, but it is highly questionable if they can be emotionally sustainable. By limiting the objective of a PR gap analysis to accuracy, internal tensions in organizations and their strategic constituencies may be stored (or even created), with a good chance of eruption in the future.

The co-orientation model has been recently used in PR not only for studying perceptions between organizations and their constituencies, but also for developing PR ethics (Pearson 1989), analyzing consultants (Johnson 1989), nation-building (Taylor & Kent 2006), and international relations (Verčič et al. 2006).

SEE ALSO: ► Chaffee, Steven H. ► Change Management and Communication ► Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ► Consistency Theories ► Excellence Theory in Public Relations ► Legitimacy Gap Theory ► Organization–Public Relationships ► Public Relations ► Public Relations Evaluation ► Social Perception ► Stakeholder Theory

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## Copyright

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Copyright is the branch of law that provides property rights in expression, and it is the primary legal regime for the cultural and information industries, including print publishing, music, film, television, radio, theater, computer software, photography, and fine art. Copyright only protects expression, not the ideas being expressed. Ideas are the thoughts inside our heads and expression is the way we communicate those thoughts to others (→ Freedom of Communication). A book may include many facts and ideas. The author then uses specific expression, including words or pictures, to communicate those facts and ideas. A second author (or artist or musician) can use any of the facts or ideas contained in the book but would need permission to copy the first author's expression.

Only original expression can be protected by copyright. Under international treaties, copyright protection begins the moment the expression is fixed (stored) in a tangible medium, which might include words on paper, paint on canvas, music on tape, or digital bits stored in a computer file. The copyright owner is granted control over the reproduction, distribution, public performance, public communication, and public display of the work as well as control over any derivative works that are based on the copyrighted expression. Derivative works include translations and adaptations, such as when a written story is made into a film (→ Intellectual Property Law).

### ORIGINS AND JUSTIFICATIONS FOR COPYRIGHT

Though copyright is entrenched in modern legal systems, it is a law of recent origin. For most of human history, anyone could copy someone else's expression without asking for permission. When the printing press was introduced to western Europe in the fifteenth century, many cities granted special "printing privileges" to encourage the development of this new technology (→ Printing, History of). Printers were granted exclusive rights to print certain books in a given territory. This encouraged printers to invest in developing their fonts and presses, and it also gave the authorities leverage in enforcing censorship against heretical and seditious books (→ Censorship, History of). By the eighteenth century, many printers wielded monopoly power. In 1710, England passed the first copyright

statute to break the printers' monopoly. For the first time, rights were specifically granted to the author rather than the printer. As more nations passed their own copyright laws, two rationales emerged to shape those laws: economic incentives and moral rights.

The *economic rationale* for copyright law is based on two related concepts, → “public goods,” and “economies of scale.” A public good is an economic term referring to situations where a resource can be consumed without depleting the resource and it is difficult to exclude individuals who don't pay for the use. For example, an unlimited number of individuals can sing or listen to a song without “using it up.” Moreover, it is very difficult to exclude non-payers from listening to the song. Few investors would be willing to invest in a product where there is no mechanism for recouping the investment and where it is easy for consumers to use the product or service without paying. Copyright law creates a legal right to exclude nonpayers in hopes of encouraging investment in the production of new expression.

Economies of scale create a similar problem. As communication technology has advanced, the cost to reproduce and distribute expression has declined dramatically. Yet the cost to create the expression in the first place can still be quite high. For example, some movies cost more than US\$200 million to create, but a DVD copy of the movie can be made for less than US\$1. Without copyright protection, a competitor could purchase a DVD and then make and sell copies far more cheaply than the producer who had to spend US\$200 million to make the original film (→ Media Economics).

The economic purpose of copyright is to give the creator an incentive to invest time and money in producing the expression. Copyright creates a market for content and is the legal foundation of modern mass media including the film, music, television, book publishing, computer software, and video game industries. Ultimately, society benefits because more works are produced. However, economists acknowledge that there is a tradeoff in that while more works are created, those works are also more expensive than they would be without copyright, which limits society's access. In recent years, alternatives to the market-based copyright system have been introduced. Open source software is written by individuals contributing to a project without claiming copyright (→ Open Source). Nonprofit organizations like *Creative Commons* have established copyright licenses and websites to encourage creators to share their expression with very few restrictions, creating a regime for individuals to share their content freely.

In addition to the economic rationale for copyright, many nations' laws are influenced by the *concept of moral rights*. From this perspective, the author's expression is an extension of her personality and therefore personal to her. Moreover, the author invests time and labor in creating the expression. Many argue that the author therefore has a natural right to control how her expression is used. So while the economic rationale for copyright is based on a public policy objective of encouraging creation for the benefit of society, the moral rationale is based on the author's private right to control her expression (→ Ethics of Media Content).

Moral rights include the right of paternity (attribution) and integrity (the right to prevent mutilation or distortion of the work that would harm the author's reputation). Moral rights are incorporated into the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works but nations can use other “equivalent” rights to comply with the moral rights provisions. For example, the United States does not include moral rights in its copyright statute (except for works of fine art).

## INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT TREATIES

Each nation has its own copyright law which is enforced within its borders. Most nations are signatories to one or more international treaties that set out minimum standards of copyright protection for domestic and foreign works. The most important of these treaties is the *Berne Convention*, first established in 1886 and amended six times since then. Before the Berne Convention, most nations did not grant copyright protection to foreign works or foreign authors unless agreed to by a bilateral treaty.

The Berne Convention is founded on three fundamental principles. First is the principle of national treatment: foreign works should be granted the same protection as domestic works. Second, there should be no formal requirements before obtaining protection; that is, the work should be protected from the moment it is created. Third, an eligible work should be protected even if it is not protected in its country of origin. As an indication of the increasing importance of copyrighted works in international trade, the number of countries that belong to Berne Convention has grown from 58 in 1970 to 162 in 2006.

In addition to the Berne Convention, the other major copyright treaties include the *Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights* (TRIPS Agreement) and the World Intellectual Property Organization's (WIPO) *Copyright Treaty and Performances and Phonograms Treaty*. The TRIPS Agreement was negotiated along with the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Under TRIPS, all WTO member states must adhere to the three basic principles of the Berne Convention even if they are not members of that convention. TRIPS was also significant for adopting WTO enforcement measures which are seen as having much more force than the enforcement measures included in the Berne Convention. The two WIPO copyright treaties were created in 1996 in response to the proliferation of digital communication technologies.

## COPYRIGHT, FREE SPEECH, AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Copyright gives the creator the ability to control how her expression is used and can reduce the public's access to information and limit free speech. The primary safeguard against the restrictive nature of copyright is the idea/expression dichotomy. Copyright only protects expression – everyone is free to use the ideas, facts, and discoveries that are being expressed. However, many commentators argue there are situations where copying someone's expression serves important free speech interests. Quotes are often useful as evidence, such as quoting sources in a newspaper article or research paper. There may also be times when the expression is so intertwined with the idea being expressed that it cannot be separated. For example, photographs often capture the essence of an idea in a way words cannot match, such as pictures from wars or natural disasters. Most nations include myriad exceptions and limitations to the copyright owner's control over her expression. The United States has one of the broadest exceptions, known as "fair use," which allows limited copying for the purpose of news reporting, research, comment and criticism, and other uses.

Copyright law has changed dramatically as *new technologies* are invented to create, store, and distribute copyrighted expression (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Expression contained in a digital file can be copied endlessly and

effortlessly, increasing the disparity between the cost to create content and the cost to copy and distribute that content. This extreme form of economies of scale makes it even more difficult for the creator to recoup her costs without some form of legal protection. The proliferation of consumer recording equipment makes it almost impossible for the copyright owner to prevent infringing copies from being made. The Internet makes this problem even greater. Once a copy is made available online, millions of users can copy the content and distribute it globally. One example of this phenomenon was the proliferation of peer-to-peer (P2P) software between 1999 and 2005. *Napster* became synonymous with illegal file sharing and billions of infringing copies of MP3 music files have been made and distributed using P2P software (→ P2P Networking).

To reduce the economic losses associated with piracy, the content industries have lobbied for stricter domestic and international laws that increase the penalties for infringement. Moreover, copyright owners have begun to use technological protection measures (TPMs) to prevent users from copying and distributing content without authorization. TPMs are controversial because they prohibit all copying even though most copyright statutes allow some copying in certain circumstances. In addition, TPMs may continue to prohibit access or copying even after the copyright has expired and the expression has fallen into the public domain. The WIPO treaties mandate that each member country pass legal protection for TPMs to prevent users from circumventing the protection measures. The increasing use of TPMs to control access to content has reawakened concerns about the tension between copyright and free speech. But copyright owners argue that without TPMs it will become more and more difficult to enforce their rights. How TPMs are implemented and regulated is one of the most contentious issues facing regulators (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

New technologies such as satellite broadcasting (→ Satellite Television) and the → Internet also have led to more content crossing national borders. This has increased the trend toward harmonization of domestic laws. Copyright owners fear that if copying is legal in one jurisdiction, users all over the world will be able to access that content via the Internet. Some commentators argue that each nation should be free to forge its own copyright law in response to its own domestic information policy objectives. Developing nations in particular often argue that they need increased access to content to stimulate their own domestic economies. It is clear that this conflict over harmonization, like the tension over technological protection measures, will increase for the foreseeable future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Media Economics ▶ Open Source ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Goods ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Trademarks in the Media

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## Copy Test and Starch Test

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The term “copy test” refers to a group of different test methods designed to measure the usage of adverts or editorials in the print media. During the course of an interview, readers who state that they have read the test issue of a → magazine or → newspaper are shown an original copy of the issue in question. The interviewer then goes through this copy with the respondent page by page, asking questions about all, or certain, selected adverts or editorials to establish whether each one was “read in full,” “only glanced at” or “paid no attention at all” (→ Readership Research; Test Theory).

Although such tests are conducted as close to the actual reading event as can be arranged, normally within a time span of just one or two days, it is still impossible to completely avoid memory distortions. Tests that employ technical equipment, for example eye cameras, to monitor respondents' field of vision while reading have shown that readers forget about some of the pieces that they in fact read (“underclaiming”). Other pieces are cited by readers even though they actually had no eye contact with them (“overclaiming”). In this respect, copy test findings often reflect respondents' interests and habits. For example, readers who usually always read the lead article but are not sure in the case of the test article, are likely to say that they read it even though they cannot clearly remember actually having read that particular one. Although copy tests use a clear investigative approach and solid memory aids, giving the outward impression that findings must correct, it is evident that there are still limits on the → validity of the information they can provide.

One of the most commonly used copy tests is the so-called *Starch Test*, which was developed by American media researcher Daniel Starch in 1931 and is still in use in

America and around the world today as a standardized procedure for investigating ad noting and advertising effects. In line with copy tests in general, the Starch Test is a recognition test based on the ability of readers to remember advertisements presented to them in their original context in actual issues of publications (newspapers, magazines). Respondents who identify themselves as readers of a particular magazine or newspaper are posed the following three questions to establish the Starch categories:

- 1 *Noted score*: Question: “Have you seen or read any part of this item?” (percentage share of readers who noted this advertisement).
- 2 *Associated score*: Question: “Have you seen or read sufficient of this advertisement to know what it was advertising?” (percentage share of readers who say that they have noted this ad (ad noters) and are able to recall the product advertised, the advertiser, or the brand).
- 3 *Read most score*: Question: “Have you read more than half of the words, or less than half of the words?” (percentage share of readers who say they have read at least half). In addition, it is possible to expand on these three standard measures by ascertaining two further parameters:
- 4 *Involvement score*: Question: “How involved do you feel with the ad?” (responses “involved” or “very involved” contribute to the score).
- 5 *Persuasion score*: Question: “How likely are you to try the brand?” (responses “likely” and “very likely” contribute to the score).

Responses are accepted on face value without any form of verification. Doubts thus exist as to whether all readers are equally able to provide sufficiently reliable responses considering the substantial demands the test places on their memories (→ Reliability). During the course of a typical advertising campaign, an ad is often run either in one advertising medium consecutively or in several different media simultaneously (e.g., several different magazines), meaning that it is often not possible for respondents to recall with certainty whether they saw the advert in question in the test issue or actually in an earlier issue or in a different advertising medium altogether (multiple exposure, overlap). For this reason, the Starch Test has its limitations when it comes to drawing conclusions about the performance of one particular advertising medium (→ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of).

In contrast, the Starch Test can clearly say a great deal about the quality of an advertisement itself. For example, investigations by Wells came to the conclusion that a Starch “noted score” in fact measures “whether, in the consumer’s judgment, the ad is worth at least a passing glance” (Wells 1964) and, according to Krugman (1985), what the Starch scores primarily convey is an advertisement’s “attention-getting quality.” Despite Starch scores being widely used by advertisers, for example also to optimize advertisement copy and form, there remains skepticism concerning the meaning of Starch data. Based on the findings of their own validity tests, Zinkhan and Gelb (1986) come to the conclusion that “however justified the qualms are about Starch scores as valid recognition measures, they are not useless numbers. They may only point out “ads the respondents believe they would have noticed”; but even if so, they predict, at least modestly, responses in which advertisers have a far greater stake.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ► Magazine ► Newspaper  
► Readership Research ► Reliability ► Test Theory ► Validity

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## **Corporate Communication**

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Perhaps the best way to define corporate communication is to look at the way in which the function developed in companies. Until the 1980s, professionals responsible for communication within their organizations had used the term → “public relations” to describe communication with stakeholders (a term still used in academic circles across the world). This public relations (PR) function, which was tactical in most companies, largely consisted of communication to the press. When other stakeholders, internal and external to the company, started to demand more information from the company, communication professionals within organizations subsequently started to look at communication as being more than just PR. The roots of the new corporate communication function started to take hold. This new function came to incorporate a whole range of specialized disciplines including → corporate design (→ Design), corporate → advertising, employee or internal communication, issues and crisis management (→ Issue Management; Crisis Communication), → media relations, investor relations, change communication, and → public affairs. An important characteristic of the new function was that it consolidated a range of communication disciplines and expertise into a single corporate communication or corporate affairs department. This department has a single mandate that is focused on the organization as a whole and on the important task of how an organization is presented to all its key stakeholders, both internal and external (→ Stakeholder Theory).

This broad focus is also reflected in the word “corporate” in corporate communication. The word of course refers to the business setting in which corporate communication became established as a separate function (alongside other functions such as human

resources and finance). There is also an important second sense with which the word is being used. “Corporate” originally stems from the Latin expressions for “body” (*corpus*) and for “forming into a body” (*corporare*), which emphasizes a unified way of looking at internal and external communication disciplines. That is, instead of looking at specialized disciplines or stakeholder groups separately, the corporate communication function starts from the perspective of the “bodily” organization as a whole when communicating to all internal and external stakeholders (Christensen et al. 2008).

Within corporate communication, a stakeholder is defined as any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s purpose and objectives (Freeman 1984). In this broad definition, a stakeholder can be anyone who (1) has direct or indirect ownership of an organization (e.g., owners or important creditors), (2) has an economic bond as a worker or consumer in relation to the organization (e.g., employees and customers), or (3) has a legitimate moral interest in its operations (e.g., the local community in which an organization is located). Van Riel (1995) has argued that organizations communicate and interact with a whole range of stakeholders beyond publics (e.g., activist groups) who actively mobilize themselves against an organization on the basis of an issue of concern to them (→ Organization–Public Relationships).

Edward Freeman, one of the intellectual leaders of stakeholder theory, suggested back in 1984 that “the stakeholder approach requires a redefinition of the public relations function which builds on the communications skills of PR professionals, yet is responsive to the real business environment of today” (1984, 219). He argued that “in the current business environment the concepts and tools that have evolved for PR managers to use are increasingly ineffective” (1984, 220) by which he meant that traditional concepts and tools such as press releases, annual reports, and corporate publications would not be sufficient to manage the organization’s relationships with key stakeholders. Freeman also felt that the term “public relations” is associated with “spin doctoring” and “window dressing” (→ Spin and Double-Speak; Spin Doctor). Instead, he argued for a new concept that would embody a more managerial understanding of communication; one that would help communication professionals manage the organization’s communication with stakeholders (→ Communication Management).

## DEFINITION

The definition of corporate communication and the conceptual terrain that it covers has evolved as a result of its incorporation into management degrees at business schools. Whereas communication courses had traditionally been part of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in schools of communication and journalism (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline), the business equivalent of the subject was refashioned in terms of management theory and education. This development echoed the sentiments expressed above about the need for a redefinition of communication as a management function. Argenti (1996, 74), one of the first professors in corporate communication at a US business school, puts it this way:

business schools are the most appropriate home for the discipline, because like other functional areas within the corporation (such as marketing, finance, production, and human



resource management), corporate communication exists as a real and important part of most organizations. As such, it should rightfully be housed in that branch of the academy that deals with business administration or graduate schools of business.

Shelby (1993, 255) defined corporate communication as “an umbrella for a variety of communication forms and formats” that “includes public relations (speech writing, press/community relations), public affairs (including lobbying activities), and employee, customer, and stockholder communication.” All of these forms of communication in Shelby’s view share a focus on communicating about the organization to “collectivities [i.e. stakeholders] that exist inside and outside organizations” (1993, 255). Van Riel (1995) added to Shelby’s early definition the idea that all these forms of communication need to be actively managed and coordinated to present a consistent image of the organization to all stakeholders. He defined corporate communication as “an instrument of management by means of which all consciously used forms of internal and external communication are harmonized as effectively and efficiently as possible,” with the overall objective of creating “a favorable basis for relationships with groups upon which the company is dependent” (1995, 26).

The original definitions by Shelby and Van Riel characterize corporate communication as a management function within organizations that involves communication professionals engaging in different forms of communication (e.g., public affairs, media relations) with internal and external stakeholders. In line with these early definitions, Van Riel (1997) stressed the importance of “orchestration” of all forms of communication. “Orchestration” refers to the coordination or integration of all forms of communication so that its contents convey the same corporate image or “corporate identity” of the organization and leave a consistent impression or “reputation” with stakeholders (→ Corporate and Organizational Identity; Organizational Image; Corporate Reputation; Image). Much theory-building and research has since focused on these concepts of “corporate identity” and “corporate reputation” and has argued that an organization conveys an image not only through forms of communication, but also through its products and services, the quality of its management, the behavior of its employees, its financial performance, and the economic and material support that it provides to different stakeholder groups. This has led some to define corporate communication in very broad terms as “everything a company says, makes, or does,” which emphasizes the fact that not only forms of communication “communicate”, that is, leave an impression with stakeholders, but also behaviors of managers and employees (Cornelissen & Harris 2001).

## **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

To describe the scope, processes, and objectives of corporate communication, researchers have developed a number of concepts. These concepts reflect developments in professional practice and draw upon ideas from management theory and education (Argenti 1996; Van Riel 1997).

The original set of concepts that were introduced to describe the field of corporate communication involved corporate identity, corporate image, and corporate reputation. The concept of corporate identity grew out of a preoccupation in the design and

communication communities with the ways in which organizations present themselves to external audiences; for example, in their visual images as well as through more elaborate forms of corporate advertising and communication. Initially, the term was restricted to logos and other elements of visual design, but it gradually came to encompass communication and all forms of outward-facing behavior in the marketplace (e.g., Birkigt & Stadler 1986). Larçon and Reitter (1979) added a further dimension to the concept of corporate identity when they argued that it not only involves the visible outward presentation of a company, but also the set of intrinsic characteristics or traits that bestow the company with its specificity, stability, and coherence. In their view, a corporate identity is not merely a projected image in the form of visual design and communication, but is fundamentally concerned with “what the organisation is” – the core of the organization as it is laid down in its strategies and culture. The notion of corporate identity traits resembles the conceptualization of organizational identity as involving identity anchors that are central (inimitable organizational traits), distinctive (differentiated from other organizations), and enduring (stable over time). These traits specify the general meaning of a corporate entity that resides in the values, beliefs, roles, and behaviour of its members as well as in the shared symbols and other artifacts that they create, in particular, through conscious acts of corporate → branding (Hatch & Schultz 2001). Accordingly, empirical research on corporate identity has explored links between a corporate identity, as the projected image of the organization, and both its underlying organizational identity or culture (e.g., Ravasi & Schultz 2006) and its received image or reputation in the eyes of stakeholders such as employees, customers, and consumers (e.g., Simoes et al. 2005).

In relation to these links, researchers emphasize that it is strategically important for organizations to achieve “alignment” or “transparency” (e.g., Fombrun & Rindova 2000; Hatch & Schultz 2001). According to Fombrun and Rindova (2000, 94), transparency is “a state in which the internal identity of the firm reflects positively the expectations of key stakeholders and the beliefs of these stakeholders about the firm reflect accurately the internally held identity.” Along these lines, researchers stress the particular importance of consonance between (1) the organizational culture as articulated by senior managers and as experienced by employees, (2) corporate identity (i.e., the image projected by the organization), (3) corporate image (i.e., the immediate impression of an organization in relation to a specific message or image), and (4) corporate reputation (i.e., an individual’s collective representation of past images of an organization, induced through either communication or past experiences). Importantly too, where these elements are nonaligned (so that, for example, the rhetoric of corporate identity does not match the experienced reality), a range of sub-optimal outcomes are anticipated, including employee disengagement, customer dissatisfaction, and general organizational atrophy (e.g., Hatch & Schultz 2001).

Organizations can achieve such alignment, it is argued, through consciously coordinating (“integrating”) the timing and content of messages that are communicated to stakeholders. Back in 1994, Robert Heath formulated this challenge as follows:

Some companies and other organizations are well known for their ability to conduct a truly integrated communication campaign designed to get the message across even though it is tailored to various stakeholders. Not only is the matter one of providing a coherent and

consistent message that fosters an understanding of the company as its management and employees want it to be understood, but it also means that key audiences are addressed in terms of the stake each of them holds with regard to the organization. (1994, 55)

Such integration is also seen as important when one considers the multiple stakeholder roles that any one individual may have, and the potential pitfalls that may occur when conflicting messages are sent out. The concept of “integration” has been described in terms of (1) consistency in messages that are produced and communicated to stakeholders, and (2) organizational coordination between communication professionals. Consistency in messages (i.e., similarity in content, tone, and visual design) is facilitated through guidelines on design and communication, including a specification of the central corporate identity or corporate brand values of the organization and of the general corporate story that the organization wants to tell (e.g., Fombrun & Van Riel 2004). Organizational coordination between communication professionals is facilitated through mechanisms such as teamworking, job rotation, corporate brand committees, networking events, and a dedicated intranet. These allow communication professionals from different disciplines (e.g., public affairs, marketing communication, media relations, internal communication) and from across the organization to interact and to align their work (e.g., Cornelissen 2008).

## EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Researchers have applied a variety of methods and empirical indicators to measure the concepts of corporate identity, corporate image, and reputation. Most research has used → survey methods to establish stakeholders’ perceptions and evaluations of organizations (e.g., Fombrun & Van Riel 2004) alongside in-depth → case studies of an organization’s culture and identity (e.g., Ravasi & Schultz 2006). Such case studies are often based on a variety of data sources including → interviews, (participative) → observation, and analyses of company documents (→ Document Analysis) and communication campaigns.

Fombrun and Van Riel (2004) have carried out comparative analyses of corporate reputations of the most visible organizations across the world. Based upon stakeholder evaluations of the strongest corporate reputation within their country, they inferred that organizations with the strongest reputations are on average characterized by high levels of *visibility* (the degree to which corporate themes are visible in all internal and external communication), *distinctiveness* (the degree to which the corporate identity or positioning of the organization is distinctive), *authenticity* (the degree to which an organization communicates values that are embedded in its culture), *transparency* (the degree to which an organization is open and transparent about its behavior), and *consistency* (the degree to which organizations communicate consistent messages in all internal and external communication channels) in corporate communication. This broad picture of linkages between corporate communication, corporate identity, and corporate reputation has been further refined in recent empirical research. Recent research has established that organizations in specific industry sectors may become more similar in the kinds of corporate identity that they project (e.g., Deephouse & Carter 2005; Lamertz et al. 2005) and that such convergence may be more or less appreciated by stakeholders dependent upon their expectations regarding appropriate corporate behavior in a particular industry

(Brammer & Pavelin 2006). Deephouse and Carter (2005) have demonstrated that isomorphism (i.e., the similarity of an organization to others in its industry) improves the degree to which an organization is deemed legitimate (socially acceptable) by stakeholders, presumably because organizations converge on images and behaviors that are expected of them by stakeholders. They also found that organizations with stronger corporate reputations were able to deviate from such mimetic behaviors and improve their status without losing their legitimacy. Lamertz et al. (2005) similarly identified social pressures at the level of an entire organizational field, which stimulated organizations in the Canadian beer-brewing industry to construct similar images (corporate identities) of themselves to meet stakeholder expectations. At the same time they found that alongside such similar images, organizations also claimed distinctive attributes as part of their corporate identity.

The development of corporate communication as a separate function within organizations and its grounding in management theory has led to research being rather disconnected from the PR and mass communication literatures. Recent years, however, have seen the emergence of new lines of research that bridge the two domains. For example, the research by Carroll and Deephouse on the role of the media in the formation of stakeholders' views on the reputation of organizations integrates management theory (i.e., the resource-based view of organizations) with mass communication theory (i.e., agenda-setting theory; e.g., Deephouse 2000; Carroll 2004; → Agenda-Setting Effects; Public Relations: Media Influence). Similarly, Cornelissen (2008) has connected management literature on → sense-making, professional identity, and career transitions with existing ideas from PR on “technician” and “manager” roles of communication professionals (→ Public Relations Roles; Professionalization of Public Relations).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Branding ▶ Case Studies ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Management ▶ Corporate Design ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Design ▶ Document Analysis ▶ Image ▶ Interview ▶ Issue Management ▶ Media Relations ▶ Observation ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Public ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Public Relations Roles ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Spin and Double-Speak ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Survey

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## Corporate Design

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Corporate design is an umbrella term for all of a company's design-oriented approaches to creating and projecting products/services, messages, brands, and other business or cultural propositions to external or internal audiences. Corporate design points to a potentially value creating, integrating business function. It deals with many design matters, embracing much more than the company logo (→ Corporate Communication).

It may encompass work spanning everything from company letterheads to orchestrations of the company's core offerings, identities, and → brands, transactional and presentational places, and communicative messages (Olins 1989). Corporate design thus includes functional, use-oriented, and symbolic concerns related also to system architectures, production platforms, buildings, interiors, websites, and other business interaction spaces, which

typically need to be thought about in systematic ways. Corporate design can become a nexus for design/business-inspired creative action that may reinvent, help organize, and express future offerings or otherwise serve a customer's experience. In advanced or large corporations, it may include managing a mixture of digital, artistic, technical, and visual-expressive means, which often calls for specialist resources and partner relationships.

### SENSITIZING CONCEPTS

In doing its multilevel activities, corporate design is concerned with the conception and expression of a *gestaltung* that can help create, synthesize, and communicate whatever the business enterprise offers – currently or as an opportunity. Also, exemplary corporate design leaders and allied designer consultants have taken an interest in cultivating the company's heritage while engaging in renewal and innovating (e.g., Peter Behrens at AEG, and Knut Yran, Robert Blaich, and Stefano Marzano at Philips; Sparke 1986; Marzano 2005).

Although corporate design often taps some personalized, blurred mixtures of cross-disciplinary backgrounds, it is fruitful to know about the rich variety of design specialties. Expertise involves a multifaceted designerly knowing. One traditional way of *categorizing design* is by discipline. Multiple design disciplines exist, such as graphic design, fashion design, product design, transportation design, textiles design, furniture design, interior architecture, information design, design engineering, etc. New, composite specialist fields have emerged, e.g., industrial design and interaction design, while application domains for these specialists have become more focused; e.g., sports design, retail design, web design, maritime design, and medical design. Thus, corporate design functions may find it rewarding to connect to specialists and form multidisciplinary teams to leverage concept development and design innovation efforts. Hybrid business-related areas are also attended to, such as strategic design, design management, service design, and even experience design. Although traditional boundaries seem to break down, hundreds of sub-fields and angles are identified from a broad point of view on design.

Not surprisingly, it is not so clear how to distinguish the particular design-intensive innovation efforts or actions by relatively young disciplines, like industrial design and interaction design, that are clearly interdisciplinary (covering more than one area of study) or even transdisciplinary, i.e., moving in areas across and beyond established disciplines.

When corporate design departments organize user-centered research or wish to initiate new online or offline conversations, both scanning widely and further exploration with frequent design reviews and quality-oriented screening can be of interest. In doing a range of temporal projects, corporate design managers often strive to become focused, rewarding, and meaningful for others, and realize new designs within tight schedules. Working in between divisional managers and not yet fully recognized concerns is an ongoing challenge (Blaich & Blaich 1993; Marzano 2005). Corporate design typically deals with a variety of solutions as well as with ill-defined or awkward problems in the social realm (Krippendorff 2006, 27), which cannot be optimized in simple ways but must be engaged with by participating stakeholders.

These diverse viewpoints make corporate design work complex. Learning from the market needs to be understood beyond traditional marketing practices, and includes

tapping into latent problems or overlooked desires (→ Integrated Marketing Communications; Marketing; Marketing: Communication Tools). Another design tool is through the “gift of iteration” (Shaughnessy 2005, 144). *Iteration* involves exploiting the feedback loops from critical scanning, using, or testing of new designs. Relationship perspectives together with the multi-skilled interactive design views may help understand the intricacies of setting up and facilitating plug-in, screening, and editing of digital conversations, which unfold in social media on the → Internet with increasing speed of interaction, though the few seem to entice the many in this beta land. The challenge for corporate design work is not merely to signify the corporate offerings but to help bring together new interactions affecting users’ experiences in more genuine ways.

The term *design* has many meanings; no agreement exists as to what design covers. Both designers and managers may find it difficult to move beyond jargon or the everyday language of likes and dislikes. This is related to how design involves a multiplicity of aspects and also talks to our feelings, e.g., the “emotional design” of a car. Being both a verb and a noun (Rand 1993), design refers to *processes* and *outcomes*, encompassing technicalities of what is “below the line” or invisible for the consumer (Dormer 1990, 15), as well as symbolic meanings depending on the situation or context to be read fruitfully.

It is fascinating but complex to create something distinct and original, and complex to make what seems “brilliantly simple” in retrospect. A sensitizing concept is *multimodality* – combining different methods of communication – because multiple media are often explored by corporate design to invoke the customers’ experiences.

## WHERE TO DRAW THE LINES

Although corporate design can be described in a number of relevant ways, managers may still perceive only a fraction of it (e.g., color choice). Three points can be made. These are related to (1) corporate design’s organizing potentiality to take advantage of the cross-over nature of both design and business enterprise, (2) the enabling of design-inspired arenas fostering new connections, projections, and conversations, and (3) the expressive creation of something to flock around or enjoy, something both tangible and intangible.

First, corporate design works in *cross-organizational areas*, and may include products, services, corporate websites, and → e-commerce. In most organizations, the multimodal areas tend not to exist as neatly organized domains. Rather, they have to be enacted and mobilized so as to become relevant and interesting for business unit leaders and project groups (Blaich & Blaich 1993).

Second, corporate design engages not only with a branch of organization areas but with and beyond their respective close *networking areas* (e.g., suppliers to production, dealers to marketing and sales). A wider scanning and connecting is related to how experienced designers and other specialists working for corporate design can bring in entirely new perspectives, ideas, and technologies from other industries or life-spheres (Kelley 2001) and from sustaining their own experimental work, which can become strategic.

Third, corporate design may work toward a *distinct expression and sense-making of the business* as well as broader human enterprise. Creative endeavors can lead to extraordinary performances or an aesthetic “schwung.”

## LAGGING OR LEADING DESIGN

Although sparsely researched, reflective practitioners, scholars, and other observers have provided insight into the uneven development of good design and abilities to manage design in business organizations (e.g., Lorenz 1990; Gorb 1990). If well done, corporate design work may lead to increasing returns. Design work can also have external effects – positive or negative “externalities” – for other design teams. Creative design teams may reconfigure quickly to take advantage of new opportunities or otherwise leapfrogging. Corporate design work may seek to protect accumulated values and build on previous steps taken, but traditional ways of corporate design regulation may become reduced in a connectionist society. Employees tend to work in shifting, temporal projects and engage in their own power points and other media. Design management research suggests that design decisions are often made by others than profession-based designers. “Silent design” denotes design-related work by managers or corporate staff, often not thinking of it as design (Dumas 1993).

Whether properly managed or not, corporate design tends to shift over time, space, and situation. What are the most important issues of corporate design depends on the actual business or mission (Olins 1989), as well as the emergent engagements.

## COLLABORATION IN DESIGN

Corporate design work can be decentralized, outsourced, or run by mixed approaches, but it can also be neglected as a corporate function (Sparke 1986; Blaich & Blaich 1993). Even in companies that primarily use in-house resources, a new trend of external design-oriented cooperation has been registered, e.g., in Japanese corporations (Masuda 1996). Insights into companies’ design collaborations have helped to recognize how corporate design can become expanded through advanced prototyping, new user research, cultural trend work, co-created collections, or other collaborative approaches (Marzano 2005). Research suggests that particular designer/business collaborations may enable the creation and strategizing of current or future products and services, especially if retained as “design alliances” over some time, yet the personalized relations may also remain somewhat fragile (Bruce & Jevnaker 1998).

Design consultants working with managers of other companies appear to connect and mediate in ways that may provide new insight into the focus on more complex co-creative relationships between business and users. Working with particular talents and multi-disciplinary teams, and accumulating deeper experiences by collaborating intensely in the short term as well as over time, may lead to increasing economic returns (cf. learning from past failures, virtuous circles of good design work, and cumulative reputation effects). Whereas working with new specialists may lead to fresh thinking and “seen design” or differentiated approaches, it can also lead to bypassing of internal competencies and disruptive efforts (Dumas 1993). The processes and outcomes of design-oriented collaboration thus seem to differ significantly (Jevnaker & Bruce 1999). Also, a design team designing recurrently for and with a business enterprise with shifting customers in several regions needs to think in different ways from an architect who may design something for one customer in one place.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising, Cross-Cultural  
▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ E-Commerce  
▶ Image ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Internet ▶ Marketing  
▶ Marketing: Communication Tools ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Visual Communication

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## **Corporate and Organizational Identity**

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Identity is one of the most prominent issues of contemporary organizations. Like individuals, organizations increasingly talk about “having” identities, seeking identities, expressing identities, and even changing identities. And the emphasis on identity is not idle talk. Having become an arena of managerial attention and concern, identity-related activities consume a growing amount of organizational resources and involve a wide variety of disciplines and practices across the organizational spectrum.

In spite of this development, the question of what identity means in the context of an organization is far from settled. It is commonplace to think of corporate or organizational

identity as an answer to the question: who are we as an organization? Yet, this question immediately raises additional questions: who poses and answers this question? What purposes does the answer serve? Does an organization only have one identity? And (how) do organizational identities change over time? These questions and a number of conceptual issues occupy a remarkable place in the literature and indicate that corporate or organizational identity has become a highly contested terrain (→ Organizational Communication; Corporate Communication).

### **CONCEPTUAL ISSUES**

Our everyday language is often equivocal when we talk about identity. On the one hand, we use the notion of identity to describe the special or unique features that characterize a social entity and set it apart from its surroundings. In this sense, we think of identity as something solid, reliable, and continuous, in other words, something deeply rooted in the “personality” of the social entity. On the other hand, we frequently talk about shaping and changing identities, leaving the impression that identity is an ongoing project that can and should be planned, manufactured, and communicated into existence.

This equivocality is reflected in the managerial literature where descriptions of organizational identity as essence and continuity coexist with discussions of identity as projects of communication. With their now classical definition of organizational identity as the “central, distinct, and enduring dimensions of an organization,” management scholars Stuart Albert and David Whetten represent the former perspective. More specifically, Albert and Whetten refer to organizational identity as the inviolable core of an organization that shapes its choices and defines its integrity (Whetten 2006). By contrast, management scholars Blake Ashforth and Fred Mael regard organizational identity as more fluid and malleable. In line with the work of philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who conceived of identities as ongoing stories, Ashforth and Mael define organizational identity as “unfolding and stylized narratives about the ‘soul’ or essence of the organization” (Ashforth & Mael 1996, 21). From this perspective, organizations enact their identities through the stories they, directly or indirectly, tell about themselves, their past, their ambitions, and their perceptions of the environment.

In the hope of circumscribing conceptual confusion, some writings try to establish a clear distinction between “corporate identity” and “organizational identity,” reducing the former to the sum of symbols that organizations seek to manipulate in order to shape their identity (e.g., logos, uniforms, → design, → advertisements, stories, etc.), and reserving the latter for the “deeper” layers of identity, that is, the organization’s “intrinsic” traits or characteristics. From a communication perspective, however, such a definitional solution is problematic for several reasons. First, because it implies a clear division line between the world of communication and the world of reality “behind,” excluding the possibility that corporate symbols and messages are significant forces in the transformation of organizational identities. Second, because it suggests that some observers have a privileged access to a deeper layer of identity – a layer untouched by corporate communications and other symbolic representations. When, for example, a scholar or a consultant of organizational identity points out that some corporate symbols (logos, architecture, advertisements, etc.) do not match the true character of an organization,

they claim to have access to a world behind those symbols, a world behind appearances or beyond representations. From a semiotic perspective, Christensen and Askegaard (2001) point out that our access to organizations is always mediated by representations, some of which are more carefully designed and managed than others. Following this line of thought we can define corporate or organizational identity as *the way an organization is commonly represented*.

Because different audiences refer to different representations (products, logos, stories, behaviors, reputations, etc.) when they describe an organization, it is evident that the identity of an organization is not a given feature, but a reference point or a theme that we activate whenever we try to express what we believe an organization “is.” Obviously, some versions of this theme are more powerful than others – at least in the short run – backed up, for example, by corporate advertising campaigns or managerial decisions. Still, such official readings of organizational identity are frequently challenged by alternative interpretations provided, for example, by inquisitive journalists (→ Investigative Reporting) or critical interest groups who claim that their description of the organization is more true or realistic than the official version.

Such conceptual complexity characterizes also the related notion of *corporate or organizational* → *image* (→ Organizational Image; Corporate Reputation). While some writings seek to reserve “identity” for the sender side and “image” for the receiver side of the communication process, the picture becomes fuzzier when we acknowledge, along with social psychologists, that identities are shaped through the perceptions of significant others. In an often-cited study of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, management scholars Jane Dutton and Janet Dukerich (1991) illustrated how the issue of identity is entwined with the ways organizations define, diagnose, and respond to problems in their surroundings. In their study of the organization’s reaction to homelessness in the 1980s, Dutton and Dukerich found that the organization’s self-perception at the time was affected by how organizational members thought outsiders viewed their organization. Corporate images and reputations, in other words, play significant roles when organizations develop and articulate their identities, just as their identities unavoidably influence the images they discover in their surroundings (e.g., Cheney 1992; → Social Identity Theory).

## THE SOCIAL-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The explicit preoccupation with identity, which we find intensified in contemporary western societies, is historically speaking a fairly recent phenomenon. In tribal or so-called “traditional” societies, identity is not an issue that is constantly discussed, enacted, and negotiated. As social theorists have pointed out, a person’s identity was given by the local community based on, for example, the lineage and the status of their family, the authority of the sovereign and the church, and other social institutions. Identity, in other words, was relatively fixed, ascribed by traditions and practices beyond the influence of the individual person.

In modern society, by contrast, identity is an ongoing issue, pursued and contested at many different levels. The rise of modernity implied a questioning of traditional practices and authorities that gradually eroded the institutions through which people previously

had defined their roles and positions in society. Without stable markers of orientation, the modern individual is constantly in search of answers to the question of who they are and who they want to be. While modern institutions like the nation-state, democracy, economics, rationality, and bureaucracy provide some points of guidance, the question of identity is an ongoing concern for the individual. This is especially the case in today's late-modern or postmodern society, where these institutions are frequently challenged.

Increasingly, individuals define and shape their *identities through practices of consumption*. Their choices of clothing, electronics, food, health-care, music, housing, etc. have become important dimensions of their extended selves. With their provision of products, messages and stories, organizations (workplaces, sports clubs, interest groups, etc.) play an important role in this project of identity. In fact, the organization may be one of the most important sources of identity for the modern individual. Accordingly, the pressure on organizations to stand out and supply its members, customers, and other stakeholders with clear signs of community and belongingness is more pronounced today than ever before.

This, however, is a precarious role. At the same time as contemporary organizations find their boundaries blurred by globalization (→ Globalization Theories), mergers, new information technologies (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of), inquisitive stakeholders, and new types of organizational arrangements, they are expected to articulate clearly and unambiguously who they are and how they define their role in society. Simultaneously, organizations face the challenge of being heard in a communication environment saturated with corporate messages crying for attention and interest. Yet, since the communication "explosion" has only intensified their urge to stand out in this environment, identity management has become an organizational imperative in almost all sectors of society (Cheney & Christensen 2001a).

## MANAGING IDENTITIES

The management of corporate or organizational identity is defined especially by the fields of design management, marketing, and public relations, although insight from human resources management and corporate culture plays a role too (e.g., Cheney & Christensen 2001b). The objective of these disciplines is to manage → *corporate design* (logos, uniforms, architecture, etc.) *corporate communications* (commercials, manuals, publications, etc.) and *corporate behavior* (corporate values, norms, attitudes, customer contacts, etc.) in order for the organization to build a single, unified, and consistent identity.

The notion of *integrated (marketing) communications* refers to the ambition of aligning everything the organization says and does (its symbols, messages, procedures, and behaviors) so as to help the organization communicate with clarity, consistency, and continuity across different media and different audiences. Without such consistency, it is argued, contemporary organizations will have difficulty in sustaining visible, credible, and legitimate identities in a world of growing complexity. The integrative efforts are often centered on the identity of a strong → brand, for example Levi's, McDonald's, or Coca-Cola. In recent years, the notion of "corporate branding," defined as the systematic effort to develop and present the organization as one unified brand, has gained momentum as a response to the notion that consumers increasingly "buy" the organization behind its products (Balmer & Greyser 2003; → Communication Management).

In the effort to streamline all symbols, messages, and behaviors, the communicative roles of organizational members attract growing managerial attention. While organizations have been significant sources of individual identity throughout modernity, identification has today become a far more explicit managerial strategy. Organizational identification refers to situations where people define themselves in terms of an organization, including its products, its missions, its slogans, and its values. When organizational members identify with their workplace, they internalize its customary ways of doing things and eventually develop a feeling of oneness with the organization. In the hope of stimulating such behaviors and feelings, contemporary organizations launch a wealth of employee programs designed to manage the hopes, fears, and aspirations of their members. Such attempts to foster, regulate and control processes of loyalty and commitment, however, are frequently challenged by employees who fail to see, or reject the notion, that the identity defined by management is inclusive enough to embrace the differences among organizational members (Alvesson & Willmott 2002). Such resistance calls attention to the problems of managing multiple selves under the umbrella of a single, unified organizational identity.

In a world where many corporate and organizational identities call for attention, there is a real danger that such constructions are ignored, disapproved of, or resisted. Under such circumstances, organizational projects of identity may have a tendency to develop a world of their own, where corporate symbols and messages become autonomized signifiers without reference to anything else but themselves. Although identity is fundamentally social, inasmuch as it rests on its reflection and accreditation in its surroundings, we see today a tendency for corporate or organizational identity projects to become rather self-centered undertakings that reduce the ability of organizations to see and respond openly to their surroundings (Christensen & Cheney 2000).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Communication Management ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Design ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Design ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Image ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Social Identity Theory

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## Corporate Reputation

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Corporate (or organizational) reputation refers to what is generally said about an organization. Corporate reputation is different than organizational identity by its focus on what other people say about the organization, rather than what the organization itself or its members say. Corporate reputation is distinguished from → organizational image in the sense that it is generally more durable and substance-based rather than fleeting and impression-based. Generally, there is some story, an activity, or a topic associated with the firm, which is, in effect, regarded as remarkable.

Corporate reputation gains credence because it is believed to be something that is widely held; that is, it is a form of → public opinion. Having a reputation, without specifics to its contents, has social value for an organization. Reputations can be for various things or of being or doing something. There are different kinds of reputations, and more than one reputation can exist. Reputations may exist within networks or be geographically distributed across unrelated groups. A reputation does not necessarily correspond to the truth. Instead, general sufficiency is found in that it is supposed to be true. Once organizational reputation moves from being a general public opinion to being accepted as a social fact, additional information-seeking behavior about the organization's nature, or whether to even become involved with the organization, is reduced (→ Organizational Communication).

Public interest in corporate reputation began in 1983 when *Fortune Magazine* first published its rankings of the “Most Admired Corporations.” The edition was so popular that the magazine turned it into an annual survey. Since then, many other magazines in the US have published their own reputation rankings, including *Wall Street Journal*, the *Financial Times*, and *Business Week*. Reputation rankings have become popular worldwide. Similar reputation assessments are made and published by NGOs, social monitoring organizations, and other third parties issuing their own assessments of reputation. Besides the promotion and proliferation of reputation studies through the news media, reputation affords an opportunity for advocacy groups to exert pressure on companies.

There are three general *components of corporate reputation*: name recognition, sentiment, and attributes and associations. Before a firm can be said to have a reputation, people must be familiar with the company's name. This raises the question of whether all firms even have or desire a reputation. Some firms do not; rather, they prefer to be anonymous and under the radar. This allows firms to stay out of the public's eye. Other firms, typically business-to-consumer (B2C) firms, are well known for being well known. The second component is sentiment or emotional appeal. This is largely the degree of favor that the firm has, whether positive, negative, neutral, or mixed. Then finally, firms usually have a reputation for something, but not always. The most common attributes in corporate reputation research are executive leadership, workplace culture, and environmental and social responsibility (→ Leadership in Organizations; Organizational Culture; Organizational Ethics). Attributes that are receiving increasing attention are innovation, litigation, legislation, corporate governance, and ethics. An emerging area of scholarship concerns associations (distinct from issues or attributes). Firms may develop reputations by being linked to larger social or public issues, their involvement with other organizations (in the same industry or not), and their affiliation with individuals of particular repute (such as their CEO), or other firms in the same market or industry. For example, firms that operate in larger markets or industries are more likely to gain recognition faster because there are other players in the same field.

A central question in corporate reputation scholarship is whether it can be managed or whether one should try. Certainly, a focus should be placed on improving the character and nature of the organization, rather than on the reputation. Yet, the general view is that it is easier to adjust the organization's symbolic environment than it is to adjust its behavior. The *can-reputation-be-managed question* is often tied to where the focus should be placed. In theory, the debate is framed in terms of reputation vs organization–public relationships; in practice, advertising vs public relations.

In theories of corporate reputation management, Carroll (2006) noted there have been two general views. One camp, at the University of Maryland, suggests that organization–public relationships leads to corporate reputation, and that firms should be concerned with managing their relationships rather than their reputation. This view focuses primarily on existing stakeholder relationships and how they contribute to reputation, but it does not consider whether or how reputations may affect the quality of the relationship. The other major camp, at the University of Texas, suggests that corporate reputation leads to relationships. That is, individuals who are largely unfamiliar with the organization may base their decision on whether to become associated with the firm based on the firm's reputation. The two camps are not incompatible, but simply reflect a difference in starting points, particularly whether concern is with existing stakeholder relationships, or with the potential for relationships with new or unidentified stakeholders. Both camps agree that the focus should be on reputation-cultivation, rather than on reputation management.

*In practice*, the answer to the management question has largely come through where the focus should be placed – on advertising or public relations. The answer has been mixed. Firms with favorable reputations benefit more from public relations because there is an upper limit to the payoff achieved through → advertising, at which point any more money spent is simply wasted. On the other hand, research has found that firms with poor reputations are better off postponing news releases until there is a considerable change, which is achieved through advertising, including advocacy and issue ads.

The proliferation of corporate reputation research indicates that corporate reputation can be *measured*. The earliest academic study on corporate reputation was Charles Fombrun and Mark Shanley's (1990) study of *Fortune Magazine's* Most Admired Corporations. They used the original survey data, though stripped of information from the respondents. Since this study, most reputation studies using secondary data have had to rely on the top-level published rankings available through the news media. Still others have conducted primary research using personal interviews, media content analysis, survey questionnaires, case studies, Q methodology, scorecards, experiments, and focus groups (→ Case Studies; Content Analysis, Quantitative; Experimental Design; Interview, Standardized). An under-explored methodology waiting to be examined is the quasi-judicial case study method.

Valuation remains a priority across disciplines involved in corporate reputation scholarship, but still remains as an unexplored topic in communication research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Branding ▶ Case Studies ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Leadership in Organizations ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Ethics ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Public Opinion

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# **Corporate Social Responsibility**

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The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) comprises stakeholder expectations of the social, ethical, legal, and economic impacts of an organization. These expectations and the perceptions stakeholders have of an organization's corporate social responsibility are central outcomes of business planning, management and operations, → marketing, → advertising, → corporate communication, and → public relations. Organizations seek to be perceived to be meeting their obligations to society, thereby gaining and maintaining a license to operate. Legitimacy is a major driver of corporate social responsibility (Sethi



1979). Increasing their attractiveness to potential and existing employees, investors and investment fund managers, and consumers is another motivation for organizations to adopt CSR principles. As such, CSR forms a central charter for public relations in communicating and creating mutual understanding, managing potential conflicts, and to achieving organizational legitimacy (→ Corporate Reputation; Organizational Image).

CSR is studied from communication, management, legal, ethical, and political perspectives. These various strands of research focus on the ethical and moral rationales for organizations, the institutional pressures from legal, economic, and political imperatives, and the management of perceptions about the alignment of organizational practice with social expectation.

CSR has been described as encompassing “the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point of time” (Carroll 1979, 500). The rationale for corporate social responsibility to society has shifted from the purely economic toward a broader conceptualization of the role of the stakeholder (→ Stakeholder Theory). Whereas the classical notion of an organization’s social responsibilities centered on short-term profit making (Friedman 1970), the emergent alternative view focuses on an organization’s reciprocal relationship with a range of stakeholders in society (Freeman 1984). Hence Sethi’s suggestion (1979, 66) that corporate behavior should be congruent with the prevailing norms in society. Whetten et al. bring the stakeholder into sharp focus in their view of CSR as “societal expectations of corporate behavior: a behavior that is alleged by a stakeholder to be expected by society or morally required and is therefore justifiably demanded of business” (2002, 374).

*Stakeholder theories* suggest that there is a wide range of groups in the social environment that an organization can affect through the secondary impacts of its activity and that these groups have legitimate claims on the organization due to concepts in agency and property theories. For example, a combination of economic, ethical, and legal rationales underpins the CSR slogan of “doing well by doing good.” It is also accepted that the idea of CSR involves “actions that appear to further some social good, beyond the interests of the firm and that which is required by law” (McWilliams & Siegel 2001, 117).

The *nature of social responsibility* has also evolved. Early conceptions involved notions of business ethics and business philanthropy. Sponsorship and cause-related marketing are often included as examples of socially responsible practice, while at the same time providing a type of commercial advantage to the organization. Social responsibility is now likely to be couched in terms of business sustainability and corporate citizenship. The sustainability case is linked to social, environmental, as well as economic implications of organizational decisions and their longer-term implications for organizational success.

*Corporate social reporting* provides a core channel for organizations to communicate with stakeholders about their social responsibility activities. It also seeks to measure and assess an organization’s responsibility. The term “triple bottom-line reporting” refers to the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of organizational activity. A fourth dimension, governance, is sometimes added. These four distinct types of CSR practices can be described in the following taxonomy of CSR practices (see Table 1).

Reporting on social and environmental impacts is voluntary in most countries but some, such as France, have made it mandatory. However, many large organizations produce externally audited social impact reports as a competitive strategy within their

Table 1 Taxonomy of CSR practices

Taxonomy of CSR practices	Examples of CSR practices
Philanthropy	Donations Foundations
Commercial advantage	Sponsorship Cause-related marketing
Business legitimacy or sustainability	Employee programs Community engagement and development Political positioning ISO standards
Performance	Triple bottom-line reporting Reputation measurement Internal audit Social audit

industry, or to build their legitimacy (as is the case for tobacco companies). Critics question whether issuing a report equates with real commitment to social responsibility and sustainability principles, or whether they are simply “spin” (→ Spin Doctor). Proponents, on the other hand, claim the focus is on balancing the needs of all stakeholders with the organization’s profit motives. There is no universally accepted standard or definition of what CSR entails, or of its evaluation methodology, or reporting standard. However, the global reporting initiative (GRI) and the associated AA1000 standard are emerging as the internationally accepted standard for reporting on organizational activity.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Branding ► Change Management and Communication ► Corporate Communication ► Corporate Reputation ► Legitimacy Gap Theory ► Marketing ► Organization–Public Relationships ► Organizational Image ► Public Relations ► Spin Doctor ► Stakeholder Theory ► Trust of Publics

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# Correlation Analysis

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A correlation analysis is a statistical procedure that evaluates the association between two sets of variables. The association between variables can be linear or nonlinear (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis). In communication research, however, correlation analyses are mostly used to evaluate linear relationships. Sets of variables may include one or many variables. Associations between two variables (two sets of one variable) can be analyzed with a *bivariate correlation analysis*. Associations between one (dependent) variable and a set of two or more (independent) variables can be studied using *multiple correlation (regression) analysis* (→ Regression Analysis; Discriminant Analysis). Relationships between sets of many (independent and dependent) variables can be investigated using *canonical correlation analysis* (→ Factor Analysis; Structural Equation).

Variables in each set can be measured on a nominal, ordinal, or interval level (→ Scales; Measurement Theory). There is a specific correlation analysis for any combination of measurement level and number of variables in each set. Associations between ordinal variables (i.e., variables that have been measured on an ordinal level) are usually analyzed with a nonparametric correlation analysis (→ Nonparametric Analysis). All other combinations can be considered parametric linear correlation analyses and are as such special cases of canonical correlation analysis. Among the quantitative research methodologies (→ Quantitative Methodology), correlation analyses are recognized as one of the most important and influential data analysis procedures for communication research and for social science research in general. Explanation and prediction are generally considered the quintessence of any scientific inquiry. One can use variables to explain and predict other variables only if there is an association between them. One of the most established and widely applied correlation analyses is the bivariate linear correlation analysis, which will be used in the following demonstration.

## **BIVARIATE LINEAR CORRELATION ANALYSIS – PRODUCT–MOMENT CORRELATION COEFFICIENT**

Suppose the researchers are interested in the relationship between the variables “playing a violent video game” (X) and “aggression” (Y). Both variables are measured on an interval level (X in hours per week; Y in aggression scores from 0 to 10) and with standard measurement instruments. The following dataset was obtained from five research participants:

$X_1 = 10; X_2 = 16; X_3 = 13; X_4 = 19; X_5 = 20;$   
 $Y_1 = 02; Y_2 = 07; Y_3 = 03; Y_4 = 05; Y_5 = 02;$

Since the researchers are interested in the linear relationship between the two interval variables they will apply a bivariate linear correlation analysis and calculate a *bivariate correlation coefficient*. A widely used bivariate correlation coefficient for linear relationships is the *Pearson correlation coefficient*, which is also known as *product – moment correlation* or simply as *Pearson’s r*.

$$r = \frac{\text{cov}(x, y)}{s_x \cdot s_y} = \frac{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - \bar{y})^2}}$$

$\text{cov}(x, y)$  means the covariance between the variable X and Y while  $s_x$  and  $s_y$  stand for the standard deviation of X and Y. The means of X and Y are indicated by  $\bar{x}$  and  $\bar{y}$ . Hence, the product–moment correlation is simply a standardized covariance between two interval variables, or the covariance divided by the product of the variables’ standard deviation. For calculations it is recommended to use the following formula:

$$r = \frac{n \cdot \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \cdot y_i - \left( \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \right) \cdot \left( \sum_{i=1}^n y_i \right)}{\sqrt{n \cdot \sum_{i=1}^n x_i^2 - \left( \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \right)^2} \cdot \sqrt{n \cdot \sum_{i=1}^n y_i^2 - \left( \sum_{i=1}^n y_i \right)^2}}$$

Therefore, we calculate the following sums and products:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{i=1}^n x_i &= 78; \sum_{i=1}^n y_i = 19; \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \cdot y_i = 309; \sum_{i=1}^n x_i^2 = 1286; \\ \sum_{i=1}^n y_i^2 &= 91; \left( \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \right)^2 = 6084; \left( \sum_{i=1}^n y_i \right)^2 = 361; n = 5 \end{aligned}$$

Inserting these sums and products into the formula results in

$$r = \frac{5 \cdot 309 - 78 \cdot 19}{\sqrt{5 \cdot 1286 - 6084} \cdot \sqrt{5 \cdot 91 - 361}} = \frac{63}{\sqrt{346} \cdot \sqrt{94}} = \frac{63}{180 \cdot 344} = 0.349 \approx 0.35$$

This result indicates a positive product–moment correlation of 0.35 between “playing time of a violent video game” and aggression scores. All statistical software packages, such as SPSS, SAS, S-PLUS, R, and STATISTICA, offer a procedure for the calculation of product–moment correlations and many other correlation coefficients. The statistic software R is freely available at [www.r-project.org](http://www.r-project.org).

### INTERPRETATION OF A PRODUCT–MOMENT CORRELATION COEFFICIENT

The product–moment correlation coefficient (as most other correlation coefficients) will be a value between  $-1$  and  $+1$ . A value of  $0$  indicates that the two variables are independent, i.e., have nothing in common. A value of both  $+1$  and  $-1$  would be interpreted as a perfect linear relationship between the two variables. A correlation of  $+1$

stands for a positive or increasing linear relationship (“the more of variable X the more of variable Y” or vice versa). A correlation of  $-1$  represents a negative or decreasing linear relationship (“the more of variable X the less of variable Y” or vice versa). The closer the correlation coefficient is to either  $-1$  or  $+1$  the stronger the association between the two variables.

The squared correlation coefficient indicates the proportion of common variance between the two variables and is called the *coefficient of determination*. In the example above, the squared product–moment correlation is  $0.35^2 = 0.1225$ , or 12.25 percent. This means that the two variables “playing time of a violent video game” (X) and “aggression” (Y) share 12.25 percent of their variance. In other words, 12.25 percent of variable Y is redundant when knowing variable X or vice versa. This result, however, also means that 100 percent minus 12.25 percent = 87.75 percent of the variables’ variance is not shared and needs to be explained by other variables. This quantity is commonly called the *coefficient of alienation*.

Many authors have suggested guidelines for the *practical interpretation of a correlation coefficient’s size*. The question is whether a given correlation coefficient indicates a small, medium, or strong association between variables. Cohen (1988), for example, has suggested the following categorization of correlation coefficients for psychological research:  $0.10 < r < 0.29$  or  $-0.29 < r < -0.10$  indicates a small correlation (small effect),  $0.30 < r < 0.49$  or  $-0.49 < r < -0.30$  a medium correlation (medium effect), and  $0.50 < r < 1.00$  or  $-1.00 < r < -0.50$  a strong correlation (strong effect). As Cohen stated himself, these guidelines are, to a certain degree, arbitrary and should not be taken too seriously. Ultimately, the interpretation of a correlation coefficient’s size depends on the context. On the one hand, a correlation coefficient of 0.85 may indicate a weak relationship if one is studying a physical law with highly reliable measurement instruments. On the other hand, a correlation coefficient of 0.35 may indicate a strong relationship if many other variables intervene in the association of two or more variables, or if one has to use measurement instruments with imperfect reliability. A categorization of correlation coefficients that is comparable to Cohen’s classification and based on communication research findings is still missing.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF A PRODUCT–MOMENT CORRELATION COEFFICIENT**

The above example of a product–moment correlation resulted in a product–moment correlation coefficient of 0.35 in a sample of five research participants. Most of the time, however, researchers are more interested in whether a result found in a sample can be generalized to a population. In other words: researchers are often interested in whether  $\rightarrow$  hypotheses that refer to relationships among variables in a population hold when confronted with empirical data in a sample ( $\rightarrow$  Test Theory). For this purpose, one has to apply a statistical significance test. The classical hypotheses of a product–moment correlation coefficient are:

Two-sided research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ; association existent):  $\rho \neq 0$

Two-sided null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ; no association existent):  $\rho = 0$

One-sided research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ; positive/negative association):  $\rho > 0$  or  $\rho < 0$

One-sided null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ; no or negative/no or positive association):  $\rho \leq 0$  or  $\rho \geq 0$

In the example above we assume a one-sided research hypothesis, i.e., we assume a positive correlation between the variables “playing time of a violent video game” and “aggression.” In other words, we expect that the more often people play a violent video game the higher their aggression levels, or vice versa. A null hypothesis test for  $r$  can be performed using a  $t$  or  $F$  sampling distribution. We obtain the  $t$  or  $F$  statistic as:

$$t = \frac{r \cdot \sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}} = \frac{0.349 \cdot \sqrt{5-2}}{\sqrt{1-0.349^2}} = 0.645; F = \frac{r^2}{1-r^2} \cdot (n-2) = \frac{0.349^2}{1-0.349^2} \cdot (5-2) = 0.416$$

As one can see,  $t = \sqrt{F}$ . If the null hypothesis is true, the  $F$  statistic is Fisher’s  $F$  distributed with  $df_1 = 1$  and  $df_2 = n - 2$  degrees of freedom, or the  $t$  statistic is student’s  $t$  distributed with  $df = n - 2$  degrees of freedom. According to the corresponding sampling distributions, the probability of finding a  $t$  value of 0.645 or an  $F$  value of 0.416 under the assumption of a true null hypothesis is  $p = 0.282$ . Since  $p$  values of greater than  $\alpha = 0.05$  (5 percent) usually do not result in the rejection of the null hypothesis, the relationship in the sample is characterized as not significant.

## THE PITFALLS OF CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The concept of correlation analysis and correlation coefficients in particular can be easily misconceived. The following three aspects are frequently a source of misinterpretations:

*Correlation Analysis and Linearity:* Most correlation analyses indicate only linear relationships among variables and will miss nonlinear associations. For example, a perfectly U-shaped relationship between two interval variables will result in a product-moment correlation coefficient of zero and, therefore, would suggest no association. Hence, it is important to test whether the relationship under examination could be nonlinear in nature before conducting a linear correlation analysis. Among various statistical procedures, one can use a simple scatterplot for this purpose.

*Correlation Analysis and Systematic Sample Biases:* A correlation analysis with a test of statistical significance assumes that we have a perfect random sample ( $\rightarrow$  Sampling, Random) at hand. Frequently, however, this is not the case. For example, samples can be composed of extreme groups, or samples may not cover the entire variation of variables in a population. While extreme group selection usually leads to an overestimation of the true relationship in a population, samples that are restricted in variation typically result in an underestimation of a correlation in a population. Another problem is that correlation coefficients are extremely sensitive to outliers in a sample which, too, lead to an overestimation of a population’s true correlation. It is recommended to check a sample for systematic sample biases before conducting a correlation analysis.

*Correlation Analysis and Causality:* The most common misconception of a correlation analysis, however, refers to the question of causality. The fact that two or more variables are correlated does not mean that some variables can be considered as cause and others as effect. Correlation is not causation! The example above stated a positive correlation between “playing time of a violent video game” and “aggression.” It is possible that playing a violent video game causes higher aggression scores (effect hypothesis), but it is also

conceivable that already aggressive personalities purposely select violent video games (selection hypothesis). A positive product–moment correlation coefficient does not provide any information about which of the two competing hypotheses is the better model. Perhaps both variables are even affected by a third variable and show no direct relationship at all. In this case the association between “playing time of a violent video game” and “aggression” would be a spurious relationship. On a basic level, three conditions define causality:

- 1 Time order must be appropriate. If X is the cause and Y the effect, then usually X antecedes Y in time.
- 2 Variation must be concomitant, as shown with a significant correlation coefficient.
- 3 The relationship among variables must not be explained by other variables, i.e., is not spurious.

Considering these three conditions, a significant correlation coefficient is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for causality.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Discriminant Analysis ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Nonparametric Analysis ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Scales ▶ Structural Equation ▶ Test Theory

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## **Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media**

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Media rely on different combinations of revenue from consumers and advertisers to pay production costs and earn a profit. Reliance on either revenue source is determined by the characteristics of the media good, and by consumer and advertiser demand for the good.

Consumers select media products that meet needs such as entertainment or information for decision-making. Advertisers in turn select media that reach potential customers for the advertised products (→ Markets of the Media; Media Economics; Economies of Scale in Media Markets).

Individual consumers use a mix of media products to meet a range of needs, but the mix is dynamic (Lacy 2000). Changes in existing media products, or the introduction of new products, can change their media mix.

Consumers select media products because of *embedded characteristics*, such as speed of delivery and quantity or quality of information (Litman 2006). Different media, such as → television, → newspapers, and the → Internet, have different proportions of desirable characteristics. Consumers use these characteristics to select a mix of products that gives them maximum utility within the constraints of time and income (Litman 2006; → Consumers in Media Markets).

Changing patterns of consumption mean some forms of media lose revenue that others gain. These changes can be understood with models of media economics. These models are used below, first to examine the costs of producing and distributing media content, and strategies for raising revenue to cover those costs. Then cost and revenue interactions are examined. Third is a discussion of how interactions are affected by competition and by new media technologies.

## ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Media products – be they printed, broadcast, or published on a website – have two important economic characteristics. First, significant costs must be paid to produce the first copy. *First-copy costs* usually increase with the sophistication of the product because skilled workers must collaborate to creatively use specialized equipment.

Second, it is difficult to tell in advance how many copies consumers will demand. Many media products are “experience goods” – consumers must experience the product before they know if it meets their needs. For instance, consumers must read a book to find out if they enjoy the story. Some media products also have characteristics of “credence goods” – consumer evaluation is imperfect even after the good is experienced. Reputation is particularly important for credence goods, such as news reports.

Together, these characteristics require that media producers pay substantial first-copy costs without knowing how many additional copies consumers will actually demand. The problem is complicated by expensive production technologies, such as printing presses. These investments create substantial fixed costs which must be paid regardless of the number of copies produced.

*Total production costs* are a combination of fixed costs, high first-copy costs, and relatively small variable costs of producing each additional copy. This means average costs of production actually decline as the number of copies increases, creating economies of scale. The change in cost from producing one additional copy, or marginal cost, is less than the average cost. Marginal cost will only increase if the number of copies produced begins to strain production capacity.

Traditional microeconomic rules state that firms maximize profits by setting the price of their product equal to marginal cost. But media firms will fail if they set prices equal to



a marginal cost that is less than average production costs. Producers must either attract an audience willing to pay average production costs, or find alternative financing. Ludwig (2000) calls this “the essential economic problem of the media.”

This problem varies with the characteristics of the medium. For instance, first-copy costs are less for books than for studio films, so publishers can earn a profit with smaller audiences than film producers. Distribution costs also vary. Only one copy of a television program needs to be broadcast, but separate copies of a newspaper must be distributed to each subscriber.

Nonetheless, many media must find a *source of revenue beyond consumers* to succeed economically. This source is often → advertising (Ludwig 2000). This solution creates interdependence between demand for a media product and advertiser demand to reach the audience for that product. Media producers must balance the interests of their audiences and the interests of advertisers trying to reach potential customers in those audiences. Producers use different strategies to strike this balance and reduce uncertainty about how many copies of a product consumers will demand.

### PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

All media have at least one of two physical characteristics of public goods. Nonrivalry in consumption exists if multiple consumers can use the same product without using it up. Nonexcludability exists if consumers cannot be prevented from accessing the good. Media products are nonrival, and many are nonexcludable. Determining demand for public goods is difficult because they can be consumed without payment. Governments supply *pure* → *public goods*, which are nonrival and nonexcludable, such as national defense.

Broadcasting is an example of a similar media product. Consumers cannot be excluded from radio and television broadcasts if they have a receiver, so there is no way to charge them for the product. Instead, broadcasting is supported by advertisers or by the government. The financiers determine the quantity and characteristics of broadcasts in line with their desire to reach particular audiences (→ Audience Segmentation). Expensive programs can use established formats, story lines, or actors to create mass appeal and attract support from multiple advertisers (Dimmick & McDonald 2001). Inexpensive programs can appeal to smaller audience segments because they only require support from a single advertiser.

*Mixed public goods* have only one characteristic, nonrivalry. Newspapers, magazines, and → cable television are products that can restrict consumer access. Subscriptions can be used to collect advance payments that reduce uncertainty about the future size of the audience and how many copies to produce. However, many excludable media products still rely on advertising to pay some costs.

With both pure and mixed public media goods, the degree of influence that consumers or advertisers have will vary. For instance, a product with many advertisers is less likely to be influenced by the preferences of a single advertiser because its economic success is not at stake, and vice versa.

### WINDOWS FOR CONTENT

Some media products, such as music and films, are not time-sensitive (→ Popular Music; Film as Popular Culture). Unlike → news, they remain attractive to consumers for extended

periods. If these products meet two additional conditions they can be sold repeatedly to different groups of consumers for different prices. The first condition is excludability. The second condition is that consumers can be separated into groups based on the maximum they are willing to pay for the product. This maximum is called a *reservation price*. When both conditions are met, the same product can be sold to different groups of consumers at different prices. If the sales take place in different markets, each market is called a window (Owen & Wildman 1992).

For example, films released first in theaters attract consumers with the highest reservation prices. This may be followed with a release on restricted cable television channels to viewers with lower reservation prices. Eventually, the film may appear on advertising-supported cable or broadcast channels. Additional distribution windows were created by home video and the Internet.

Foreign markets are another window for episodic television or film. However, national differences such as language or culture may reduce the utility that foreign audiences receive. For example, a movie with subtitles may attract smaller audiences than a movie using the audience's native language. Foreign windows require a *cultural discount* – producers must lower their price because audiences have lower reservation prices. Video sequences that cut across language barriers – such as chase scenes, or explosions – can reduce the size of the cultural discount.

Producers can use price discrimination in the same market if they sell different versions of a product (Varian et al. 2004). Cellular telephone providers vary prices according to the type and amount of service demanded by different groups of consumers. DVDs can offer a film, or a more expensive version with features such as extended commentary.

## BUNDLING MEDIA PRODUCTS

Bundling is used to sell groups of cable television channels, but the strategy has applications across a variety of media products. Bundling allows media producers to place consumers with different tastes and reservation prices in a group. The producer sells the group a bundle of different products for the same price.

The strategy requires low cost for supplying additional units of a media product. If one consumer has a high reservation price for films, and a low reservation price for history programs, but a second consumer has opposite preferences, sales can be increased by selling both consumers a bundle of film and history channels (Owen & Wildman 1992). This is why cable television channels are sold in tiers instead of being offered for individual sale. Newspapers and → magazines bundle a variety of information in print to attract consumers with different interests. This strategy can easily be transferred to the Internet.

## MARKET STRUCTURE

Interactions between costs and revenues are also influenced by competition between producers of substitute media products. Firms compete by reducing prices, or by differentiating products to make them less substitutable. Differentiation of media products often involves embedded characteristics such as content quality or speed of delivery. However, differentiation increases production costs and can be imitated. This means

profits from product differentiation are influenced by market structure. Firms with limited competition can set prices well above production and distribution costs, earning substantial profits that could be used for product differentiation. Firms in competitive markets must set prices close to cost, limiting their ability to differentiate (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

For example, economies of scale limit newspaper competition, allowing some newspapers to charge monopoly prices. The financial commitment model predicts that newspapers that do face competition will increase newsroom spending, improving the quality of coverage in order to make themselves less substitutable and maintain market share (Litman & Bridges 1986; Lacy 2000).

Thousands of magazines in the US compete in crowded market segments, and have little power to raise prices paid by readers or advertisers. To survive, publishers must produce articles targeting the interests of readers whom advertisers want to reach. Newspapers are adopting similar tactics as readers and advertisers migrate to newer forms of media.

Cable television and telephone providers can reach very large markets with continually decreasing average costs. These natural monopolies therefore have regulated prices and service. These firms had few incentives to differentiate before new technologies, such as satellite television and cellular telephones, threatened their monopoly status. This is part of the reason why Asian nations that lagged behind in developing telecommunications now have technology more advanced than the US.

### **ALTERNATIVE FINANCING**

Public financing offers an alternative to reliance on advertisers and consumers. Governments can make grants directly to media producers. Another alternative is financing from dedicated taxes, such as the tax on television receivers in some European nations. Public financing is used to support broadcasters, filmmakers, publishers, and other media producers.

Public financing can encourage production of content with social benefits that cannot be realized by private firms. For example, news programs that increase knowledge about complex issues may increase the efficiency of democratic political systems. Privately financed producers have no way of making consumers pay for these benefits and may focus on news stories with mass appeal to attract advertisers. Public financing is the only alternative for encouraging such production (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Quality of the News).

However, effects from these programs are hard to measure, so it is difficult to determine if public financing is providing too much, too little, or just enough of the desired content. The allocation of public funds is often subject to political influence. In extreme cases, publicly supported media are little more than government mouthpieces. In less extreme cases, they may limit content due to political considerations (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

### **EVOLUTION OF MEDIA**

Media production, technology, and markets are dynamic, and changes influence interactions between costs and revenues. Firms with a monopoly or few competitors could raise prices

above production costs plus a fair return to investors who put their money at risk. These firms earned economic profits, or profits above the amount necessary to remain in business. Media in these markets financed substantial investments in plants and equipment, increasing fixed costs, by producing content with mass appeal to maximize audiences and advertisers. This created opportunities for smaller firms to serve niche audiences with specialized content not available from the larger firms.

However, competition increased as *new distribution technologies* brought more content into the markets. New production technologies that lowered first-copy costs had a similar effect. These changes allowed new firms to compete away the economic profits enjoyed by existing firms. As prices decreased, firms had to reduce production costs, accept reduced profits, try to limit new competition, or some combination of the three.

For example, in the 1950s cable television was a threat to broadcasters because cable could import signals from outside local markets. Broadcasters pressured the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which regulates television in the US, to limit the spread of cable (Owen & Wildman 1992). The FCC restricted cable in large markets until the 1970s. As a result, cable was not widely available in the US until the 1980s. Cable allowed viewers to receive frequencies that were difficult to acquire with a television set antenna. This, and changing regulations, encouraged News Corp (→ News Corporation) to purchase local ultra high frequency stations that became the Fox network (Thomas & Litman 1991). Costs were minimized by using programs and movies owned by Fox film studios, and inexpensive reality programs. The network targeted young viewers, eventually acquiring rights to broadcast professional (American) football, which solidified its market position.

Cable made consumers pay to watch programs that were broadcast free. But cable also offered new programs. The growth of cable is an early example of consumer willingness to pay if new technologies offer desirable features not previously available. Consumers adjusted their mix of media, revealing preferences that were not apparent before they had cable. The mass audiences for broadcast television began to fragment, and advertisers followed audiences to new channels and new media. The adoption of cable, and News Corp's successful exploitation of new markets it created, is one example of a story that repeats with increasing frequency and speed.

## DIGITAL MEDIA

Digital production and distribution eliminates large capital expenses such as printing presses and broadcasting towers. Inexpensive software replaces equipment for creating and editing content, which the audience can copy and redistribute (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Digital Media, History of).

Digital producers operate with lower fixed costs and can profit with prices below what is economic for firms with higher costs. High-cost firms must cover costs with a diminishing audience or advertiser base. New technologies reduce the cost of collecting specific information about consumer preferences. Google and Yahoo! place ads beside compatible search results, track whether individuals click on the ads, and provide this information at low cost to advertisers (→ Search Engines). Advertisers only pay if someone clicks on the ad. This highly efficient technology draws revenue away from nondigital media, which must increase spending to find effective responses (→ Advertising, Economics of).

However, digital media still face the essential economic problem that reproductions cost less than the first copy. Varian et al. (2004) identify three variables that help resolve the problem. *Creating different versions* was discussed earlier. The second variable is *switching costs*, which exist when it is costly for consumers to switch from one product to another. Email creates switching costs because address changes require notification, and messages may be missed. Companies offer free email to create switching costs, then profit by selling advertising directed to email customers. Social networking sites, such as MySpace, offer free personal web pages with elaborate tools for managing online interactions. This creates switching costs for the site's users. Newspapers that offer readers free web pages and chat forums are using a similar strategy (→ Social Networks; Network Organizations through Communication Technology).

The third variable is *network effects*, which exist when demand for a good depends on how many other people use the good. Network effects can be direct; demand for social networking increases with the number of users on a site. Network effects can also be indirect; the number of DVDs increases as more people buy DVD players. Switching costs and network effects interact to increase demand for Internet media if production costs are low. As websites add content, the cost of switching to another site increases. As more people use the site, demand to place content there will also increase. YouTube makes it easy to watch or upload videos. As more videos are added, more people watch them, creating a cycle of growth. Google can then sell advertisers access to users while it tracks their activities to refine the efficiency of its operation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cable Television ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Diversification of Media Markets ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ Mergers ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ News ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newspaper ▶ Popular Music ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Search Engines ▶ Social Networks ▶ Supply and Demand in Media Markets ▶ Television

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## Course Organization Programs in Education

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Software programs and computer systems for organizing courses continue to grow in popularity and can be divided into two categories. The first category includes “standalone” computer hardware and software that is obtained by an institution and used onsite to deliver course-related content (intranet; → Computers and Display Programs in Education). The second category is a server environment capable of delivering content to anyone anywhere in the world via the world wide web (→ Internet). Physical absence no longer prevents students from participating in an educational experience. A 2005 survey of 2,200 colleges by the Sloan Consortium reported that nearly 3.2 million students took at least one online course in the fall of 2005, up from 2.3 million in 2004 (Carnevale 2006). Such programs can reach students who are physically or geographically unable to attend school. Some distance learners can interact with teachers and their peers on a daily basis (→ Distance Education).

Course organization programs facilitate the creation and delivery of text, graphics, and multimedia learning environments. In general, these programs deliver material that was previously only available in a traditional print-based format. Additionally, these systems provide students and teachers with instant access to email, course syllabi, calendars, discussions, blogs, live chat, collaborative conferences, galleries for publication of student work, educational communities around the world where students can learn about other cultures, and links to other relevant websites. Instructors can post student grades, comments, and progress reports.

*WebCT*, acquired by Blackboard in 2005, is one of the oldest and best-known programs, used by more than 3,700 colleges, schools, corporations, and government agencies in the US and other countries to create web-based educational content. This content can be integrated with traditional classroom instruction or can be posted for dedicated distance learning. Developed at the University of British Columbia, the WebCT program provides a customizable “shell” to post content such as text, images, audio, and video. WebCT also provides communication and testing tools, tracking of student activity online, grading, calendar, and student presentation area. The four classes of users in a WebCT course, each with its own set of privileges, include: administrator, designer, teaching assistants, and students.

Other course organization programs include *Convene* from Learning Technology Partners (LTP) of San Francisco. This program assists smaller schools with on-demand hosted academic technologies. The *FirstClass* groupware engine, produced by Embanet, is designed to foster learner collaboration at a distance for colleges, universities, corporations, and associations by providing a hosting service for learning platforms, live technical support, course development, and training services.

*IntraLearn* Software Corporation (ISC) provides technology that educators can use to create, deliver, and measure interactive learning over the Internet and intranets. More than 2,000 corporations, academic institutions, and associations use ISC's products to provide e-learning to millions of learners worldwide. The *Learning Manager*® (TLM) provides tools for development, delivery, reporting, and management of training and learning materials. Based on a modular approach, TLM allows clients to expand and tailor functionality to their current and changing needs. The *Learning Manager*® users can build the application that matches their organization's requirements.

The *FirstClass* Communications Platform, Open Text, develops and supplies schools, school districts and other educational organizations with a messaging and collaboration system including basic email and voicemail. The *ToolBook*, produced by SumTotal, is an authoring suite that organizations can use to create content and simulations for learning. The program is used to create professional, standards-based simulations, tutorials, assessments, courses, and interactive content. Finally, *eCollege* provides the technology and services for online distance programs, online degrees, certificates, and professional development programs for publicly traded for-profit institutions, community colleges, and public and private universities.

Empirical research results about the *effectiveness of courses using such technology* are mixed (→ Classroom Instructional Technology). Although some scholars found that web-assisted instruction was more effective than traditional classroom instruction (Maki & Maki 2002; Twigg 2003), others found that instruction without the use of programs produced better results (Wang & Newlin 2000; Waschull 2001). A third group of researchers found no significant differences between classroom and online instruction (Benoit et al. 2006). Limitations acknowledged by past studies include small sample sizes (→ Sampling, Random) and potentially confounding co-variables such as student age, gender, and previous computer knowledge by both student and teacher (→ Statistics, Explanatory). As students and teachers become increasingly comfortable with technology, the effectiveness of learning from course education programs could improve. Another limitation of past studies is the inability to generalize the amount of learning in one subject to all subjects using course organization programs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Computers and Display Programs in Education ▶ Distance Education ▶ Internet ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Statistics, Explanatory

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## Co-Viewing

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Co-viewing is the viewing of media content in groups. Typically, the co-viewing group is a dyad, but the term can also refer to groups of three or more. Most of the research has been conducted in regard to television viewing, but the concept has been a part of communication research since the investigation of silent motion pictures in the early 1900s (→ Exposure to Film). Generally, studies of co-viewing fall into *three areas*: co-viewing configurations (who views with whom and with what frequency), co-viewing as a socialization aspect of the family decision-making process (who controls the TV and decides what to watch), and – making up the bulk of current research on co-viewing – parent–child co-viewing as a mediation process (→ Audience).

Research on *co-viewing configurations* began with studies of the motion picture. In the early days of motion pictures, theaters were often small and dimly lit, and were generally considered unhealthy places for children (→ Cinema). Studies by Phelan (1919), Dale (1935), and others assessed the extent of the theater problem and documented the audiences for motion pictures and other social amusements, such as vaudeville and burlesque. These early studies found that children were most likely to view motion pictures with other children. Although some of the viewing was done with parents or siblings, the most common viewing situation was with peers. There was often an assumption of positive effects for parent–child co-viewing of motion pictures in these early studies; for children, co-viewing with friends drew the most attention and concern.

Few studies investigating radio seemed particularly concerned with co-listening. Kirkpatrick (1933) was one of the few reporting any data related to the concept. His report, though, suggests that, because the radio was a medium accessed at home, listening to the radio with others was a good thing. Reporting that about 3.5 persons listen together to an average radio program, he noted that radio listening “is to a certain extent a family matter.”

With the advent of television, co-viewing again became a subject and context for research (→ Exposure to Television). During the 1950s and 1960s, research focused on co-viewing configurations and *co-viewing as a context for* → *family decision-making*. As Wand (1968)



noted, researchers and broadcasters wanted to know who controlled the set. Much of the early literature focused on the idea of a dominant individual deciding when and what to watch (McDonagh 1950; Blood 1961). During the 1970s and 1980s, this stream of work continued, but researchers began to suggest that quasi-democratic processes (Lull 1978) and socialization (McLeod et al. 1982) might be better explanations. By the late 1980s, overlapping preferences as a result of socialization and physical maturation, rather than domination of the set by an individual, appeared to be the primary explanation for both the decision-making process and the most common co-viewing configuration of peer co-viewing (either parent–parent or children of similar ages; McDonald 1985; Dorr et al. 1989).

In the 1990s, most co-viewing research was undertaken within the context of what Nathanson (1999) described as a dimension of *parental mediation research* (the other two dimensions being active mediation and restrictive mediation). Parental mediation research is focused on the nature of parents' or other adults' behaviors regarding television, and the impact that those behaviors have on a child's reactions to television or other media. Co-viewing research in this context has led to mixed results in terms of whether adults' co-viewing leads to positive or negative outcomes for children. There is increasing evidence that co-viewing of content suggests to the child that the parent approves of the content, even if the content is violent (Nathanson 2001). Such a conclusion helps explain a number of negative and positive effects attributed to co-viewing of TV content (McLeod et al. 1982; Nathanson 2001; → Media Use and Child Development; Media Use by Children).

While co-viewing has become a part of the literature on mediation in recent years, research results suggest that the antecedents and consequences of co-viewing are different from those of other forms of parental mediation. Some researchers see these as different dimensions of the concept of mediation, while others suggest that parental mediation is a particular case of co-viewing – one in which a parent and child watch together. As indicated above, the earlier literature suggests that parent–parent or sibling–sibling co-viewing occurs most commonly.

A more general model of co-viewing and media effects is faint, but evident in the literature. Even the early literature suggests that anyone who views media content with another person may have an impact on their enjoyment and interpretation of that content. Such *peer effects* have been documented in televised sports and in watching sports at a stadium (Hocking 1982). More recently, McDonald and Fredin (2001) found evidence indicating a synchronization of emotional responses among co-viewers of televised content (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking).

The co-viewing literature established thus far suggests that our future knowledge of media use and media effects will hinge to some extent on how well we understand social aspects of the media. Early evidence on the proliferation of newer forms of media suggests that social uses of these media will also be an important part of their diffusion and acceptance (→ Exposure to the Internet). Some of these new media are inherently individualized or seem most likely to diffuse with dyadic use patterns (e.g., personal mp3 players, mobile phones with video capabilities), while others would appear to be very similar twenty-first-century versions of television or motion picture viewing (e.g., home digital video recorders, DVD players). Still others may emerge with differing co-use or co-viewing configurations (e.g., digital music through networks, video on demand). Our concept of co-viewing may need to be expanded to incorporate co-use of these new

media, or some other term may need to be introduced, which can incorporate new forms of media in social use situations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Cinema ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to Film ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Family Decision-Making ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children

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## **Credibility of Content**

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Credibility of messages, studied in the communication, psychology, sociology, political science, and other literatures, is generally defined as a collection of attributes of messages that make the message content or their senders valued relative to the information imparted. The

attributes generally refer to either the sources of the messages' content or the authenticity of their meaning. Perceived source or message credibility, then, is generally defined as a message recipient's recognition and holding of evaluative information about these messages and their sources (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

### **CREDIBILITY MOSTLY CONCEPTUALIZED AS SOURCE CREDIBILITY**

Perhaps the most noticeable characteristic of information credibility is its source – the individual who reported it, wrote it, or was quoted in messages. This human voice of messages is one of the most studied concepts in communication research. In addition, the institutions associated with the human sources, whether government agencies, private, or not-for-profit, have been found critical in determining credibility, as have the media organizations that bring the information to the message receivers – mass media → news, → advertising, entertainment, and sports, in particular (Berlo et al. 1969; Singletary 1976).

Historically, credibility has been researched almost exclusively in → persuasion, which generally studies whether messages or speakers can change people's beliefs, attitudes, and behavior. Stemming from the classical Greek focus on credibility, typically the work of Aristotle and Plato, the study of "ethos" has distinguished the field of public speaking in examining properties of texts and judgments of audience members about characteristics of speakers during rhetorical transactions. It was well into the twentieth century before communication social scientists began a systematic look at communication, and, therefore, credibility (Hovland & Weiss 1951). Although it was one of the first communication concepts studied, credibility remains an area with many questions.

Credibility has been studied empirically relative to human social behavior as a characteristic of speakers, organizations, media (usually news media), messages, or communication contexts. *Early research* investigated the relative trustworthiness of different media presenting similar information. Research specific to rating news media sources has investigated publications, not individual communicators (Gaziano & McGrath 1986). Early on, this work found → newspapers to be the most trusted purveyors of news. Interestingly, a new medium, → radio, followed with an era when the first electronic media form became more trusted than newspapers. Later, with the innovation of → television, news on that medium became the top trusted source (Lee 1978; → Television News). Some recent work has examined new information technology in this regard.

Most of this work has used audience perceptions of credibility, not systematic inquiry into what specific attributes about these particular media were believed to garner their comparatively greater trust. Some interpretation of this literature has proposed that the more personal delivery of electronic media has made it more trusted than mere printed information, i.e., the friendly voice or face of the newscaster bringing the news to the home in a recognized, personable, consistent style. This area of research has extended beyond issues of trust to such matters as a media institution's social concerns and level of patriotism (Gaziano & McGrath 1986).

The *conceptual definition of source credibility* stems from some of the earliest social science research in communication and mass communication, where message characteristics were examined as they impact persuasion (→ Credibility Effects). The first published empirical work on credibility as it pertains to persuasion presented information in

experimental settings to message recipients about a source who was either an expert on a topic or who was trusted by audience members. Often these earlier researchers mixed the people, messages, and communication channels to represent credibility. For example, in the 1950s, pioneer researchers → Carl I. Hovland and Walter Weiss (1951) presented audience members with information from the following sources, thought to indicate a high level of trustworthiness: Robert S. Oppenheimer, the scientist who led the development of the hydrogen bomb, writing about the practicality of atomic submarines; *Fortune Magazine*; the *Bulletin of the National Resources Planning Board*; and the *New England Journal of Biology and Medicine*. These scholars used the following low-credibility counterparts: *Pravda*, the Soviet Union's state newspaper; an "anti-labor, anti-New Deal, 'rightist' newspaper columnist"; "a monthly pictorial magazine"; and a syndicated women's movie gossip columnist. Research that followed frequently focused solely on audience judgments about people sources or institutional sources. Other confounding aspects of sources, such as gender, notoriety, and political ideology have also been teased out.

### **DIMENSIONS AND MEASUREMENT OF SOURCE CREDIBILITY**

Over time, findings of source credibility that utilized similar measures to the early research distinguished two consistent dimensions of the concept: (1) expertise is the extent to which a communicator is perceived by audience members as providing correct assertions, and (2) trustworthiness is the extent to which the audience members perceive that the assertions made by a communicator or speaker are assertions that the communicator considers valid (Sterthal et al. 1978). *Expertise*, then, generally involves a communicator's knowledge, accuracy, and precision relative to the subject matter presented in messages. *Trustworthiness*, on the other hand, can be thought of as the source's intentions in the relationship between the message and the receiver of the message. For example, a source is perceived as honest, believable, sincere, and reliable by message recipients. A shift in studying source credibility as merely an attribute of a message to the perceived credibility by audiences paralleled a paradigmatic shift in mass communication research, which at the time first viewed media content as all-powerful and important, capable of massive, uniform effects on audiences – moving to the view that aspects of audiences were also important, and that sometimes audiences could resist media influence (→ Media Effects, History of). This eventually gave way to the view that audience transactions with media messages depended on various personal and contextual factors – audience characteristics like selectivity, motivation, and decision-making (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

Hundreds of → scale items have been used to measure source credibility, and this concept has been studied as both an independent cause of persuasion, a contributory factor in a persuasion situation, and as the result of persuasion (Singletary 1976). Typical indicators of credibility, besides "credible" and "trustworthy," are "believable," "expert," "dynamic," "helpful," "rational," "objective," "professional," "intelligent," and "qualified." Although researchers have developed multidimensionality to source credibility, this has generated greater complexity of the concept rather than greater insight into its meaning (McCroskey 1966). Such components as dynamism, attractiveness, and professionalism have enhanced scientific understanding of how the style or presentation of a communicator

is part of that communicator's credibility, or the associated audience's perception of credibility. There has been some controversy about using traits of individuals as dominant in the study of perceived source credibility by audiences (Delia 1976). Over time, many studies have found that expertise and trust remain as useful dimensions for this concept (→ Research Methods; Validity).

### **SOURCE CREDIBILITY AS A PERIPHERAL ASPECT IN RESEARCH**

Regarding the importance of credibility in communication research, the phenomenon has taken a back seat to other critical aspects of persuasive messages. This was evident even in the first studies by Hovland and his colleagues, who initially may have been more interested in the propagandistic nature and sidedness of messages than the credibility of the message sender (Hovland & Weiss 1951; → Propaganda). They found an initial difference for high and low credibility conditions, in that people who received information from the high credibility sources, compared to the low credibility sources, were more persuaded. However, they found a delayed → *sleeper effect* about four weeks later, where the credibility of the sources were believed to be disassociated from the messages, and persuasive information from both types of sources was retained by experimental participants.

Even in recent persuasion research – indeed, in most current state-of-the-art persuasion models, like the → elaboration likelihood model in cognitive response theory (Petty & Cacioppo 1986) – source credibility is considered a peripheral cue to message processing. Although this research emphasizes message content characteristics that guide the cognitive processing of message content (→ Information Processing), understanding the actual processing mechanisms involved relative to message credibility remains elusive. In this theoretical approach audience members are thought to process central message content when they are highly motivated or involved in the message or its outcome. Conversely, audience members who are low in motivation or involvement are thought to pay attention to peripheral, less important message cues, such as source credibility.

### **MESSAGE CREDIBILITY**

This research brings to question the subject of the credibility of the message itself, as a message might also be viewed by audience members in persuasion or learning contexts as more or less credible. To a lesser extent, message credibility has been studied, particularly in experimental research (Slater & Rouner 1997; → Experimental Design). As far as message characteristics are concerned, qualities such as strong vs weak evidence, narrative vs statistical content (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of), truthfulness, number of arguments and variety of arguments have been studied. Some of this research shows a message credibility impact on source credibility, or an enhanced persuasive effect when credibility of the message and source were taken into account as to their combined effect on attitude change or behavior.

Some research documents *situational circumstances* or audience states that moderate the impact of credibility cues on either persuasion or learning. These include involvement or personal stake in a message's topic, knowledge and direct experience, and dispositional factors like incredulity and cognitive complexity. Only a few research studies have investigated the

actual nature of processing strategies associated with message and source credibility. Recent work not only continues to investigate persuasion processes but has expanded this inquiry to the study of information processing of information not meant for persuasion, such as news and public affairs media, as well as entertainment messages. Accurate reflection of social reality, believability, and message quality assessment are some more recent audience determinations that might affect source credibility (→ Reality and Media Reality).

## RESURGENCE OF CREDIBILITY RESEARCH

Recently, two research areas in the study of media have yielded a resurgence of credibility research: new information technology (→ Technology and Communication) and → health communication. Scholars have been studying message features of new information technology, for example, world wide web structural elements and message content quality, like thoroughness, complexity, and truthfulness. Combining this technology focus with health communication has become important, given the increasing use of new information technologies for health information in prevention, identification, diagnosis, treatment, and possible cures for varied health matters. Credibility of messages and their sources takes on new meaning for individuals recently diagnosed with cancer, possibly seeking more information about their illness and prognosis, available health information about future prospects, and a virtual community of cancer survivors with whom they might learn ways to cope and to share their stories.

Some additional audience characteristics found related to credibility include gender, race, ethnic similarity to the audience member, management style, and leadership. *Gender differences* have been mixed, demonstrating both research that shows males more credible than females and females more credible than males. However, recent research has found less evidence of gender differences, suggesting a time-period phenomenon that may have led to less bias against females as information sources, compared to the past, when males dominated as speakers and news deliverers (→ Feminist and Gender Studies).

The robust concept of credibility has held strong across the many years since communication originated as a field of study. It continues to be a crucial component of media content, particularly in public affairs, public speaking, politics, advertising, marketing, and public relations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Health Communication ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information Processing ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Persuasion ▶ Propaganda ▶ Radio ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Sleeper Effect ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Validity

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## Credibility Effects

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The importance of credibility in human communication had already been recognized long before modern communication research emerged as a scientific discipline. For ancient rhetoricians like Aristotle or Cicero it was self-evident that the credibility of a communicator had an important impact on the persuasiveness of his performance (→ Rhetorical Studies; Rhetoric, Greek). At the beginning of the twentieth century credibility became a central concept in communication research, first in → propaganda, later in other areas such as → advertising or → political communication. Today, the field of research is quite complex: different research traditions have bred a considerable number of definitions, operationalizations, and findings. Three major models of credibility can be distinguished: the source model, the recipient model, and the experience model. Modern research has come to the conclusion that there is no linear relationship between the credibility of a communication source and the effectiveness of its persuasive efforts. The magnitude as well as the persistence of credibility effects depend on several intervening variables (→ Journalists, Credibility of; Credibility of Content).

### THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Carl I. Hovland (1954, 1071) stated that “*who* says something is usually as important as *what* is said in the determination of the impact of a communication.” However, the effects of both the communicator and the message depend largely on the perception of the third

core element of every communication model: the receiver. Credibility is a perceptual state, i.e., the outcome of an attribution process in which recipients of messages form judgments about their sources and therefore assess them as credible or not. The perceived credibility of a communication source depends on the perception and attribution by the receiver: a message source may be regarded as highly credible by one person and not at all credible by another.

The *source model* focuses predominantly on the communication source: credibility is considered as the result of the pre-existing or perceived characteristics of a source. A rudimentary version of this model can be found in Aristotle's ground-breaking treatise on rhetoric in the fourth century BC, in which he argued that trustworthiness, good will, and wisdom make a communicator appear credible and therefore facilitate persuasion. The concept of credibility actually first appeared in the Yale Studies, a series of psychological experiments conducted by → Hovland and his colleagues in the 1940s and 1950s: credibility was conceptualized as a composition of several (perceived) communicator characteristics – especially the communicator's *expertise* and *trustworthiness* (→ Experimental Design). Later researchers have tried to identify additional source characteristics, e.g., qualification, fairness, similarity, physical attractiveness, and dynamism (e.g. Berlo et al. 1969). Although the model provoked intense criticism (e.g., Cronkhite & Liska 1976), it gained much attention in communication research.

The *recipient model* focuses predominantly on the recipients' traits: the perception and attribution of a source's credibility are likely to differ between different recipients. Thus it depends on the recipients' predispositions whether a message source is perceived to be credible or not. Hovland and Janis hypothesized the existence of an individual predisposition called general "persuasibility" (→ Persuasion). The term "refers to a person's readiness to accept social influence from others" (Hovland & Janis 1959, 5). It was assumed that women and individuals with low levels of intelligence or self-confidence were generally more persuadable. However, no significant evidence for the existence of a general persuasibility as a personality trait could be found. Later research focused on other traits such as dogmatism which can be defined as individuals' tendency to "close off their minds to new ideas and accept only the opinions of conventional, established authorities" (Perloff 2003, 219). Research indicated that dogmatic persons were more susceptible to persuasion than others. However, until today there has been no commonly accepted empirical procedure for identifying persuadable individuals. In addition, no sustainable evidence about the existence of general persuasibility or its correlates could be found (O'Keefe 2002, 242).

The *experience model* emphasizes the interaction between message source and recipient. According to Niklas Luhmann (1989), credibility serves as a heuristic that helps to reduce social complexity. Based on positive experiences with communication sources, individuals attribute credibility to them. By this, they avoid engaging in arduous investigations to find evidence for the trustworthiness of the respective source. Credibility is defined as an outcome of frequently practiced pseudo-empirical tests which are part of every individual's life. This "inductive knowledge" (Simmel 1990) leads to experience-based expectancies toward message sources. Credibility is thus the result of learning: individuals believe in a person or institution because they have learned that they can do so without experiencing negative consequences.



## EFFECTS OF CREDIBILITY

In early research a linear relationship between source characteristics and the persuasiveness of its messages was usually assumed: the more credible a source was perceived by its users, the more effective its messages would be (e.g., Berlo et al. 1969). However, the correlation between source credibility, the persuasiveness of messages, and attitude change is not as clear as is frequently assumed. Credibility effects are neither linear nor permanent. The magnitude and persistence of credibility effects varies from one case to another, depending on a considerable number of intervening factors (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis).

When discussing the effects of credibility it has to be noted that most experimental studies compare the effects of *high- and low-credibility* sources. Hovland and Weiss (1951) found that messages from high-credibility sources created more attitude-change than those from low-credibility sources. Subsequent studies revealed that high-credibility sources were not always more effective – their influence depended on other factors such as the position advocated in the message. High-credibility sources enjoy an advantage when the advocated point of view is opposed to the audience's position. Low-credibility sources, on the other hand, are more successful when the position advocated is shared by the audience (→ Latitude of Acceptance). Therefore the impact of both the source's perceived credibility level and the position advocated by the source and the receiver have to be considered when explaining credibility effects (O'Keefe 2002).

Credibility effects largely depend on the recipient's attitude toward the issues in discussion. According to contemporary → information-processing models such as the *elaboration likelihood model* (Petty & Cacioppo 1986), the effects of persuasive communication mainly depend on the recipient's *ego-involvement*. Indifferent or uninterested recipients tend to process information superficially (→ Involvement with Media Content). They rather base their judgments on source characteristics such as the communicator's credibility. Highly involved individuals, on the other hand, search for high-quality arguments and tend to process information systematically and carefully, mostly neglecting source characteristics and focusing on the quality of the communication content. In consequence, "under conditions of low personal relevance, the communicator's credibility may make a great deal of difference to the outcome, whereas on highly relevant topics, the source's credibility may have little impact" (O'Keefe 2002, 192).

Furthermore, the effects of credibility depend on the *availability of information* about the source. The timing of the source's identification and the revelation of information about it decide whether credibility dimensions like expertise or trustworthiness have effects on the audience. When no information about the source is provided, recipients concentrate on message cues, which leads to a minor significance of source characteristics. Sources that are usually regarded as simply not credible at all can improve the persuasiveness of their messages by delaying source identification (O'Keefe 2002).

Finally, the effects of credibility seem to decay over time. Hovland and Weiss (1951) discovered that messages of high-credibility sources lost persuasiveness after some time, leading to a lower extent of attitude change. Correspondingly, low-credibility communication seemed to be more effective at a later date than it had been directly after transmission. Regardless of many unsuccessful attempts to replicate these findings, this

so-called →  *sleeper effect*  gained much attention in communication research. It is assumed that message sources become forgotten or disassociated from the message. Effects of source characteristics such as expertise and trustworthiness seem to lose ground. Accordingly, long-term effects in persuasive communication are rather a result of message content than of source characteristics. However, the persuasive effects of messages also decay, but more slowly, thereby causing the sleeper effect. Although it is doubtful whether a general sleeper effect exists, it is an important finding that credibility effects probably are short-lived.

Although many questions still remain unanswered today, and although there is much criticism focused on theory and methodology, the last six decades of credibility research have produced a considerable amount of *agreement* among scholars concerning the nature and effects of credibility (Perloff 2003). First, most researchers agree that credibility is a perceptual variable – the result of an attribution process, not a property of a communication source. Second, there is an agreement that source credibility is a multidimensional construct, though the quantity and quality of credibility dimensions is controversial. Third, there is no doubt that under certain circumstances communicator credibility has a strong influence on audiences; however, there is no linear relationship between the (perceived) level of credibility on the one hand and the magnitude and persistence of effects on the other hand. To understand the effects of credibility in human communication it is necessary to attend simultaneously to the different intervening factors. The attribution of credibility and its effects on audiences result from a complex social interaction that includes all parts of the communication process.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information Processing ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Latitude of Acceptance ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Communication ▶ Propaganda ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sleeper Effect

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# Crime and Communication Technology

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Crime and communications are perennial and pervasive features of society, while equally subject to dramatic change. They have a complex and evolving relationship, covering both the communications function or service and its realization through communication technology (→ Technology and Communication). Attempts to control crime involve both conventional law enforcement/criminal justice and broader, more “scientific” approaches to prevention.

Crime is simultaneously a set of hazardous events and the expression of social conflicts, varying in seriousness from littering to terrorism (→ Terrorism and Communication Technologies); in target from property to person, organization, group, and society; in motive from materialism to sex, power and status, revenge and ideology; in organization and complexity from impulsive vandalism to international networks of people-traffickers; and pervading all of society from homes and shops to global financial systems in cyberspace. Beyond individual criminal events, *fear* of crime and distrust and avoidance of people, places, services, or systems prone to crime may have independent negative effects on social and economic life for individuals, economies, and communities – hence the interest in the role of the media in elevating fear (→ Crime Reporting; Risk Perceptions) and the wider “quality of life” concept of community safety. The *trust* necessary for secure transactions and services is difficult to establish/maintain in the absence of face-to-face contact, posing a serious problem for government, trade, financial, and other systems increasingly based on remote communications (→ E-Commerce).

## COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND CRIME

The evolving relationship between communications and crime mostly involves old crime in new forms (such as school bullying switching to cyberspace with hostile text messages or “happy-slapping” – taking movie clips of assaults for camera-phone transmission to friends). Entirely new crimes are unlikely except for contraventions of new regulations protecting communications themselves, such as anti-spam laws or those criminalizing possession of equipment for overcoming security features of mobile phones (→ Internet Law and Regulation). The crime–communications relationship can be understood using the “misdeeds and security” framework. This distinguishes generic roles which some functioning object, service, or system, or its underlying technology, can play in criminal events and processes.

For instance, communications as both a service and a technology can be *misappropriated* and act as a target of crime by being stolen or fraudulently obtained. Both can be *mis-treated*, as for example through damage via denial of service or hacking (→ Hacktivism). *Mistakes* in communications, as with accidental emergency calls to police from improperly locked and protected mobile phones, can also deny service, and *mishandling* may include improperly obtaining information in transit, or inserting false/misleading information into a message stream. *Misjustification* can take place when pedophiles or animal-rights extremists come to assume that their views and activities are widespread

and acceptable through, for example, self-selecting newsgroups (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology). *Misbehavior* with a communication system includes putting obscene or satirical messages on it for wider transmission. Both function and technology can be *misused* in the service of crime, whether by giving false information (as in hate-crime websites); obtaining information by deception (phishing: sending emails purporting to come from the receiver's bank requesting confirmation of security details, which are used to plunder the account); fraudulent sales, or disposal of stolen goods, on Internet auctions; coordinating crimes, football riots, or terrorist attacks; spying on rivals, enemies, or sexual prey; or remote detonation of bombs. A whole series of compound criminal involvements can occur; for example, *mishandling* of signals from remote car-locking devices by illicit reception, then *misusing* the code to *misappropriate* the vehicle.

With communications *technology* and items such as mobile phones, there are empirically and theoretically based risk factors (Clarke and Newman 2005): products most likely stolen are concealable, removable, available, valuable, enjoyable, and disposable. Trends toward miniaturization, portability, and added value that drive legitimate markets in mobile phones also drive theft. Continual emergence of new products/features and fashion considerations ensure that neither legitimate nor illegitimate demand diminishes with saturated markets.

With the communications function, several aspects are important:

- *Physical constraints* affecting risk, effort, and reward ratios in real-world crimes lose their strength or relevance; for example, emails can be intercepted anywhere in the network, and Trojan-Horse software accidentally received over the Internet can turn computers into spies that reveal passwords and bank details to remote users. Vulnerabilities can be rapidly and efficiently exploited before any compromise and loss are detected and loopholes closed.
- The *identity of offenders* is often linked only tenuously to the crime "scene," and *social constraints* from empathy with personal victims are weakened if the victim cannot be seen, heard, or imagined.
- Electronic media expose children to peer and other nonparental influences in *socialization*, which may create/reinforce a criminal predisposition, though research evidence remains conflicting (→ Media Use and Child Development; Socialization and the Media).
- Technologically enabled *cross-jurisdiction crimes and criminal collaborations* inhibit enforcement through diversity of national legal systems, extradition barriers, and even what constitutes crime or what is a local priority for enforcement (as with Internet pedophilia).
- *Specialist knowledge and equipment for law enforcement* involving modern communication systems are scarce and costly, and *organized crime* especially builds itself around networks.
- *Knowledge transfer among criminals* is facilitated – the Internet and search engines make information on explosives, lock-picking, etc. readily available.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT, CRIMINAL JUSTICE, AND CRIME PREVENTION

Criminal events extend beyond offender and victim to include the infraction of formal rules and informal norms supported and enforced by society. However, these traditional

approaches to crime control have significant limitations. Their capacity is constrained and the cost-effectiveness of conventional law enforcement and imprisonment is also limited. Alternative, preventive forms of crime control with potentially greater capacity and cost-effectiveness and fewer side-effects have developed on a more rational, causal, and evidence-based footing (Sherman et al. 2002).

Crime prevention reduces the risk and potential seriousness of criminal events by intervening in their causes. Preventive interventions can broadly be classified in terms of whether they act through manipulating the disposition and motivation of the offender (usually via attempts to influence the risk and protective factors in parenting, schooling, etc., and current life circumstances such as poverty or stress), or the immediate crime situation. Practical methods of “situational crime prevention” (Clarke 1997) change the immediate environment to influence offenders’ “rational” perception of risk, effort, and reward and hence their decision to commit a crime.

Situational and offender-based causes (and equivalent preventive interventions) are combined in the conjunction of criminal opportunity framework, which has been applied to cyberspace (Collins and Mansell 2005, 64, Table 7). This describes the causation of criminal events in terms of *offenders* predisposed, motivated, and equipped to commit crime, encountering or engineering a *crime situation* with a vulnerable, attractive, or provocative target in a conducive environment. The environment may *lack* people (or intelligent, active software) that act as crime preventers and *contain* those who act as “crime promoters” such as fences, or those “criminal service providers” who circumvent security by supplying passwords or doctoring security chips on mobile phones.

## DESIGN AND EVOLUTION

Crime prevention is only one of many requirements in communications systems/technology and is often low in priority for the commissioners and users. Designers are challenged by “troublesome tradeoffs” between security and cost, convenience, privacy, fail-safety, and a range of other values. Since there is little to distinguish illegitimate from legitimate use of communications, making systems *user-friendly* while *abuser-unfriendly* demands informed creativity and subtlety of the same order as medicine requires when destroying tumors without killing healthy tissue.

Crime and crime prevention are locked in an arms race, with preventers struggling to keep up with adaptive criminals and changing circumstances. Designers of many new technological applications and systems fail to “think thief” and a vulnerable product or service appears on the market, followed by a “crime harvest” and often inefficient or awkward attempts to retrofit security. Even when the motivation to forestall crime is there, the emergent properties of complex systems mean that surprise opportunities for crime will appear. *Laws* are especially prone to lag behind new forms of crime, particularly in rapidly evolving and complex technical fields where moral/ethical issues are not entirely clear and agreement is hard to reach. Communications technology and services are one such field, with advantage continually shifting between offenders and preventers in perpetual disequilibrium – “disturbed ground” in ecological terms.

Although preventive *principles* are perennial, knowledge of what specific preventive *methods* work is thus a wasting asset. To keep crime at tolerable levels preventers must

out-*innovate* and anticipate criminals; and must apply strategies such as researching *offender capabilities*, *horizon-scanning*, built-in *future-proofing* (as with automatically downloadable security patches for computer operating systems), generating a *variety* of security features and hence maximizing *design freedom*, and developing security standards based on *performance criteria* rather than fixed technical specifications.

## TOLERATION OF CRIME

“Rational” approaches to coping with crime problems can include simple *toleration and concealment*. Politically unacceptable in the public sphere, toleration, and the passing on of costs to consumers, is a common strategy in commerce. It is more likely where the costs of criminal justice involvement and the effects on a company’s reputation for competence and security are considerable, the costs of prevention are high (and may even put off customers through inconvenience), and the costs of crime to the company are limited (profit may sufficiently outstrip loss even with a large “parasitic burden” of crime). However, such toleration and inactivity allow *collective* commercial and social costs such as mistrust to grow, and they amount to market failure. Where victims are not companies themselves but third parties (such as purchasers of goods or services that are then stolen or enable identity theft), companies’ savings on security specifications become externalized costs to users, other citizens or organizations, and the taxpayer.

In such circumstances governments have felt obliged to step in. Attempts to *incentivize* crime prevention have included “climate setting,” by encouraging the public as customers or shareholders to understand that companies have some causal and contributory moral responsibility for the occurrence of crime, and to *expect* that they will alter their products or services to reduce the risk. Market forces can be awakened or supplemented by publishing a theft index of vulnerable makes, models, or services, “naming and shaming,” providing financial incentives, or fostering pre-competitive collaborations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Hacktivism ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Terrorism and Communication Technologies

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## Crime Reporting

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Crime reporting represents a significant component of → newspapers in the western world. This is the case for both broadsheets and tabloids, although crime coverage in tabloids tends to be more sensational, in terms of the types of crime covered, as well as the use of emotive language and visual images (→ Photojournalism; Sensationalism; Tabloid Press). The most up-to-date research in the US and UK suggests approximately 25 percent of newspaper articles are dedicated to crime and justice stories (Reiner et al. 2003). Furthermore, studies have shown crime news stories are read and remembered by a greater percentage of readers than any other type of news story (Graber 1980; → Exposure to the News).

Crime news in Europe can be traced back to reports of *witchcraft trials* in the late sixteenth century. Around the same time, specific pamphlets dedicated to crime news emerged, which included regular court reports written by court clerks. The amount of crime reporting increased in a variety of printed formats, as the commercial benefits of the genre became established. In the US, crime reporting was less common, although notorious crimes often warranted special reports from the courtroom. It was only in the 1830s, however, that crime news became a staple of newspaper reporting, with the advent of the penny presses, the overtly populist daily newspapers in the major eastern seaboard cities.

Although crime reports in different newspaper types and geographic locations can differ to some extent, they have many similarities. Newspaper scholars have acknowledged the influence of a powerful set of → news values, which influence the types of crimes that are covered, and the ways in which the stories are told. The types of crimes most commonly featured in newspapers are those which display certain characteristics: serious; extraordinary; violent; sexual; include children as either the victim or the perpetrator; can be blamed on individual deviance, rather than cultural or political explanations; and include graphic or emotive visuals (→ Emotion; Emotions, Media Effects on).

As reporting became more specialized, the crime beat established itself as a central feature of newsrooms, with trainee reporters frequently starting their journalistic life covering crime, honing their reporting skills while building relationships with local police officers. These loose relationships between reporters and police officers have become

increasingly professionalized, with police forces developing media relations departments that work closely with the media, particularly during large-scale investigations (→ Journalism, History of; Professionalization of Journalism). The relationship between the press and the police works on the basis of mutual reliance, with both sides requiring the support of the other in the course of their work. It also helps to explain the relative absence of reporting about courts and prisons, as equivalent relationships between representatives of these two institutions and the press rarely exist.

The most common characteristic of crime reporting is that newspapers tend to focus on the incident of the crime itself. If a report is particularly high profile, because it meets a number of established news values, coverage of the crime investigation will be included, and perhaps even the trial in the months that follow. Information about custodial sentences is rarely included, although executions are widely reported.

There are various *explanations for the continued prominence of crime reporting* in newspapers. One is the fact that crime news sells, with readers fuelled by a fascination that “it could happen to you” (→ Affects and Media Exposure; Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Second is the instinctive appeal of crime news: the good versus evil composition of reports that mirror childhood fairy tales and follow the simple narrative structures of fiction. Some have argued that crime reporting provides moral boundaries for social behavior, exposing and demonizing criminal behavior. A final explanation for the amount of coverage is the institutional influence of the crime beat system, which provides a steady stream of easily investigated, well-sourced material.

*Critics of crime news* can be found in large numbers. The most common criticism is that newspapers focus on unusual crimes, raising levels of fear, particularly about violent and sexual crimes. Many scholars point to the invisibility of other crimes, such as white-collar crime or sexual abuse within the home. Similarly, critics bemoan the disproportionate focus on the victims, and the frequent absence of any contextualization about the motive of the offender. This lack of context can lead to increasing support for more punitive punishments in society.

In 1972, Stanley Cohen wrote *Folk devils and moral panics*, which described the amplification of fear, and the knee-jerk moralistic reactions that can arise when the press concentrate their attention on a specific type of crime or deviance. Media scholars have identified the same pattern in news reports over the past 30 years, from subjects as varied as pedophilia to carjackings. Moral panics are caused by disproportionate amounts of attention given to particular crimes, and certainly the amount and type of crime news appearing in newspapers is significantly different to the crimes reported officially. Violent crimes are far more likely to be featured than property crimes, such as burglary, and while murder is the rarest crime, it is the most likely to receive coverage. Criminologists complain frequently about the effect of the coverage, believing it leads to misinformation and confusion about current crime figures.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to the News ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Victimization, Secondary



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## **Crisis Communication**

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The topic of crisis communication has attracted a great deal of attention from researchers in → public relations, → corporate communication, → marketing, and management. The ever-growing body of research is both a blessing and a curse. There is a large amount of information, which is good. However, the insights are scattered throughout a myriad of books and journals, making it difficult for crisis managers to uncover. In addition, there are some serious shortcomings to the literature.

### **KEY DEFINITIONS**

Crisis communication is usually associated with how management responds to a crisis. The emphasis is on what the organization says and does in response to the crisis (Benoit 1995; Coombs 1999; → Organizational Communication). The focus is on public statements and actions by management. The belief is that how an organization communicates during a crisis has important ramifications for how stakeholders will (1) perceive the organization in crisis, such as reputation (→ Corporate Reputation), and (2) interact with the organization in the future. However, there are important elements of crisis communication that transpire within the context of the crisis team. The crisis team must gather and process information in order to make decisions about how to respond to the crisis. Hence, crisis communication can be divided into two broad categories: public crisis communication and private crisis communication.

A “crisis” is the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important stakeholder expectations, significantly impacts the organization’s performance, and/or creates

negative outcomes. In general, “crisis communication” is the body of messages created to address the crisis. *Public crisis communication* is composed of the messages (words and actions) directed toward stakeholders outside of the crisis team. Examples would be warning sirens, product recall notices, statements about the time and extent of a supply chain disruption, and basic details about the crisis event. Typical stakeholders involved in crises are customers, communities, investors, suppliers, government agencies, news media, and employees. Employees are part of the organization but messages sent to employees about the crisis are often released publicly and are seen by other stakeholders as well. An example would be updates posted on an organization’s website.

*Private crisis communication* is composed of messages between crisis team members and private messages sent to employees. The collection and processing of information and decision-making by the crisis team constitute the core of private crisis communication. Restricted access messages sent to employees, such as automated response systems and intranet postings, would be considered private as well. There is a natural connection between private and public crisis communication. The public statements made during a crisis are a result of private discussions and deliberations by the crisis team.

## RESEARCH LINES IN PUBLIC CRISIS COMMUNICATION

### The Origins of Crisis Communication

The vast body of public crisis communication research can be divided into *three broad traditions*: (1) practitioner lessons, (2) rhetorical, and (3) social-psychological. Each tradition brings with it certain assumptions and research methods. The limited research addressing private crisis communication focuses on information processing and decision-making.

The initial discussions of crisis communication were provided by practitioners who drew lessons from their crisis experiences. There is no research method, just observations from experience. These lessons focused on the basic form of a crisis response: be quick, be accurate, be open, never speculate, and never say “no comment.” Crisis managers should respond in an hour or less but be confident in the accuracy of the information. Being open means a willingness to field inquiries from stakeholders and report what is known about the crisis. Never speculate because speculation could be wrong and make the company look incompetent or deceptive. Avoid “no comment” because stakeholders take that to mean the organization is hiding something (Coombs 1999). These lessons make sense, and later research has shown their value. But these early lessons fail to dig below the surface and to help crisis managers understand the dynamics of crisis communication. Applied research in crisis communication developed to unpack the dynamic.

### The Rhetorical Tradition

The rhetorical tradition is rooted in apologia (→ Apologies and Remedial Episodes; Rhetorical Studies). Apologia is a genre that examines how people respond to character attacks, or self-defense. A person is accused of engaging in some inappropriate act. Apologia posits that there are four rhetorical strategies for responding to these charges: denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence. Denial claims the person did not do anything

wrong. Bolstering connects the person to something others would view positively. Differentiation attempts to take the act out of its current, negative context. The idea is that it is the negative context, not the act, that creates unfavorable stakeholder reactions. Transcendence attempts to place the act in a broader context to make an event seem more favorable. Dionisopolous and Vibbert (1988) were the first to argue that organizations could engage in apologia. Their premise is that organizations have a public persona (a reputation) that may be attacked and in need of defense; organizations can experience and respond to character attacks. Their book chapter outlines the parameters of corporate apologia without specific application to crisis management (Dionisopolous & Vibbert 1988).

Keith Hearit (1994) is the researcher who developed *corporate apologia* into a distinct line of research. Hearit has articulated a unique perspective for integrating corporate apologia into crisis communication. Social legitimacy, the consistency between organizational values and stakeholder values, became a focal point. A crisis can make an organization appear incompetent (e.g., a hazardous chemical release) and/or violate stakeholder expectations (e.g., unfair labor practices), thereby threatening social legitimacy. A social legitimacy violation is a form of character attack and crisis communication can be used to defend the organization's character (Hearit 1994).

William Benoit (1995) drew upon apologia, guilt and redemption, and account analysis to create his → image restoration theory. *Image restoration theory* holds that one's → image (reputation) is important and communication can be used to defend against attacks on an image. It assumes communication is goal directed, and that maintaining a positive image (reputation) is a central goal of communication. Image restoration theory can be used when an image is threatened by an unfavorable act and the person is held accountable for the act (Benoit 1995). Image restoration theory was not designed specifically for crisis management but Benoit and others have applied it to a wide variety of crisis cases, including airlines, entertainment, and the chemical industry. A crisis is one of the situations when an organization is accused of objectionable behavior. Since such a situation can damage an organization's reputation, communication can be used to explain the behavior and repair the reputation.

Research in the rhetorical tradition tends to be → case study and qualitative in nature (→ Qualitative Methodology). The end result is that the conclusions are a suggestion and not "tested" recommendations. Image restoration theory is an example. Image restoration theory favors a public acceptance (mortification) as the response for most every crisis. Management is not always willing to do that because of the financial costs. Moreover, quantitative research indicates that mortification is not always the best option, nor are many of the suggested conclusions of image restoration theory accurate (Coombs & Holladay 1996).

The overdependence on case studies in the rhetorical tradition is problematic. While interesting, the cases shed precious little light on *how* stakeholders react to crises or public crisis communication. As Dowling (2002, 252) noted, "to date there are few published scientific studies of how a crisis (adversely) affects a company's images or reputations. Much of what (we think) we know is opinion based rather than well researched. For example, many managers believe that a good corporate reputation acts as a type of insurance policy the first time the company faces a serious crisis."

### The Social-Psychological Tradition

The social-psychological tradition is rooted in *attribution theory* (→ Attribution Processes). Attribution theory posits that people search for the cause of events, especially events that are unexpected and negative. People will attribute a cause either to the person involved in the event or to external factors. The causal attributions people make influence their feelings and behaviors toward the actor (Weiner 2006). The more we hold a person responsible for an action, the more negatively we will view that person, and it will affect our future interactions.

It is logical to connect crises and attribution theory. Stakeholders will make attributions about the cause of a crisis (a negative event) by assessing crisis responsibility. Was the crisis a result of situational factors or something the organization did? Indeed, extant research forges a link between attribution theory and crises (Bradford & Garrett 1995; Coombs 1995; Stockmyer 1996). Stakeholder attributions of crisis responsibility have perceptual and behavioral consequences for an organization (Coombs & Holladay 2005). If the organization is deemed responsible, the reputation (a key perception of an organization) will suffer. Stakeholders may also engage in negative word-of-mouth about the organization and/or sever their relationship to the organization (e.g., sell stocks or stop purchases). Attributions of crisis responsibility are a threat to an organization.

The key to using attribution theory is to understand what shapes stakeholder attributions of crisis responsibility, even when there is little information about the crisis. A variety of cues are used to make attributions of crisis responsibility. Understanding these cues helps managers to effectively respond to the crisis. Situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) offers one framework for predicting stakeholder attributions of crisis responsibility and reactions to crises. SCCT argues that by understanding the threat presented by a crisis situation, crisis managers can determine which crisis response strategy or strategies will maximize reputational protection and reduce the likelihood of negative behaviors. SCCT fuses the rhetorical and social-psychological traditions. The social-psychological tradition helps to identify the threat and the rhetorical tradition provides the communication strategies.

SCCT notes that the crisis type, crisis history, and prior reputation are the essential cues used to evaluate crisis responsibility. The *crisis type* is how the crisis is being framed. Frames are the cues stakeholders use to interpret a crisis (Coombs & Holladay 2002; Dowling 2002). The crisis type serves as a frame that indicates how people should interpret the crisis events. Was the event an accident, sabotage, or criminal negligence? Research using SCCT has found that crisis types cluster into three groups based upon assessments of crisis responsibility: (1) victim, very weak attributions of crisis responsibility; (2) accidental, minimal attributions of crisis responsibility; and (3) preventable, strong attributions of crisis responsibility (Coombs & Holladay 2002).

Crisis history and prior reputation serve to intensify the attributions associated with a crisis type. *Crisis history* refers to whether or not an organization has had a similar crisis in the past. *Prior reputation* refers to how well or poorly an organization has treated stakeholders in other contexts. A history of crises and/or a negative prior reputation will intensify attributions of crisis responsibility (Coombs & Holladay 2004). Applied to crisis management, a victim crisis will present the same threat as an accidental crisis and an

accidental crisis will present the same threat as an intentional crisis when either a crisis history exists or the prior reputation is unfavorable.

SCCT posits that the greater the threat, the more accommodative the response. The general recommendations from SCCT are as follows: for victim crises, provide instructing information (tell stakeholders how to protect themselves physically from the crisis) and express concern for victims; for accidental crises, add statements that reinforce the crisis was an accident to the instructing information and expression of concern; and for intentional crises, add either a public acceptance of responsibility and/or offer compensation to victims in addition to instructing information and expression of concern (Coombs 2006).

It would be simple to just use the most accommodative response all the time. But the costs and yields argue against that. Expenses increase as strategies become more accommodative (Stockmyer 1996). Moreover, using overly accommodative strategies produces no greater benefits than those recommended by SCCT. For example, accepting responsibility for an accidental crisis provides no greater reputational benefit than reinforcing that the event was an accident and expressing concern. Management pays more for the response but does not see a corresponding yield in reputation repair (Coombs & Holladay 2004). Furthermore, using an overly accommodative strategy may have a boomerang effect. Stakeholders may wonder why an organization has engaged in overkill. They may even wonder if the crisis is worse than they thought (Siomkos & Kurzbard 1994).

One problem with the social-psychological tradition is a failure to extend it much beyond the US. Researchers have begun to explore its application in China and the role of ambiguity tolerance in evaluating crisis responsibility. Maureen Taylor (2000) is right in arguing for the need to apply intercultural concepts, such as those of Hofstede, to crisis communication. Cultural variables such as ambiguity tolerance and power distance must be factored into the social-psychological tradition research to permit an international application of the findings.

### **PRIVATE CRISIS COMMUNICATION: INFORMATION PROCESSING AND DECISION-MAKING**

Situational awareness is the focal point of private crisis communication. In general, situational awareness is when the crisis team feels it has enough → information and knowledge to make a decision (Kolschoten & Appelman 2006). Knowledge is the end result of processing information. Information is the raw material and knowledge is the output. For the crisis team, situational awareness indicates that there is a perception and understanding of the crisis situation, and the ability to predict the effects of it and to determine what actions are needed to address it (→ Information Processing).

The crisis team must identify the information it needs and the sources that would have it, retrieve the information, and process it into knowledge. Researchers such as Egelhoff and Sen (1992) have noted the value of information processing, while Wang and Belardo (2005) emphasized → *knowledge management* as central to crisis communication. However, little research has explored the actual information processing and knowledge management of crisis teams. We know something about the problems that plague information processing/knowledge, but not much more than that. This is an area in need of further study. We

must understand in more detail the problems crisis teams will encounter in reaching situational awareness and how to overcome those problems.

*Situational awareness* is a prelude to decision-making. Once teams feel they have enough knowledge, they make decisions about how to respond to the crisis. There is a large body of work on decision-making in organizational groups. From this research emerge recommendations for vigilant decision-making. Vigilance applies critical thinking to group decision-making by emphasizing the need for careful and thorough analysis of all information related to a decision (Olaniran & Williams 2001). Four critical vigilant decision-making functions aid the decision-making process: problem analysis, standards for evaluating alternative choices, understanding the important positive aspects of an alternative choice, and understanding the important negative aspects of an alternative choice. Each of these functions helps to correct a factor that could contribute to decision-making.

Research has begun to explore how crisis teams actually make decisions, naturalistic decision-making (NDM). NDM studies decision-makers in the field. Crisis teams operate in a very dynamic information environment characterized by ambiguity, stress, risk, and time pressure. Due to the decision-making environment, crisis teams will not always be able to apply normative (ideal) decision-making models. Researchers have just begun to explore how crisis teams actually make decisions, and determine the correct course of action. Again, more research is needed to understand how crisis teams make decisions and what can be done to facilitate the team making effective decisions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Apologies and Remedial Episodes ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Case Studies  
▶ Change Management and Communication ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Reputation  
▶ Image ▶ Image Restoration Theory ▶ Information ▶ Information Processing ▶ Knowledge Management  
▶ Marketing ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Public Relations  
▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Spin and Double-Speak ▶ Trust of Publics

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## Critical Rationalism

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Critical rationalism is, first of all, the solution proposed by Karl Popper to the epistemological problem of the growth of knowledge. Second, it has come to be one description of the method by which science progresses. And, third, it has become an ideological position which both continues the project of the Enlightenment and celebrates the role of communication in the field of knowledge. The essence of critical rationalism is contained in four steps: (1) Through intuition, ignorance, or other circumstance, even blind luck, “we stumble over some problem” (*Myth*, p. 101). (2) We attempt a solution by boldly proposing a theory that entails material consequences that can be tested. (3) Our conjecture and tests are subjected to rigorous critical review and stringent testing by the scientific community. (4) The results of this process are used to refine our original understanding of the problem, and we return to step (1).

Critical rationalism, therefore, represents several differences from what Suppe (1989) calls the “received view” of science. First, it changes the starting place, which was and often still is considered to be careful observation. Second, it encourages dicey hypothesizing (Miller 1994). Third, it demands deductive rationalism as the basis of critique. Fourth, it requires both a review community and a community review. And last, it considers the process to be iterative and nonconclusive, although further refinement may be deemed currently unnecessary or too costly.

For Popper, the central epistemological problem was the growth of knowledge, which is best studied “by studying the growth of scientific knowledge” (*Logic*, p. 15). In crafting his argument for critical rationalism, Popper rejected inductionism, psychologism, probabilism, and verificationism, and advanced falsificationism and fallibilism (→ Deduction vs. Induction vs. Abduction).

## FOUR PRINCIPLES REJECTED BY CRITICAL RATIONALISM

### Inductionism

Inductionism supports a general principle of inductive logic by which we can move from statements of the particular (this swan is white) to statements of the universal (all swans are white). Popper rejected the possibility of inductive logic, because even a very large number of white swan sightings do not preclude the existence of a nonwhite swan. Accordingly, there is no way to move from experience (a series of singular events) to a justified hypothesis (a tentative universal statement) or from particular supporting tests of any number to a justified theoretical claim. The empirical basis of science, therefore, is not at the beginning of the process, but in the middle, within attempts to falsify a theory by demonstrating the failure of the material consequences deductively predicted from that theory.

Popper’s rejection of induction has implications for a description of science as moving in verifiable ways from observation to theory to hypotheses to confirmation, as proposed by Bacon (*Cogitata et Visa*, 1607; *Novum Organum*, 1620), and still used in standard textbooks. Popper’s starting point for science is not observation, but a problem. The goal of science is the continued refinement of that problem, which yields theory, hypotheses, as well as observations.

### Psychologism

The role of psychology in the philosophy of science is a continuing source of debate (e.g., Fuller 1992). To provide an empirical basis for scientific claims, psychology has been introduced in the form of “the doctrine that the empirical sciences are reducible to sense-perceptions and thus to our experiences . . . [This doctrine] is one which many accept as obvious beyond all questions” (*Logic*, p. 93). Popper’s rejection of the doctrine does not question that experience and its observations are central to science, but rather, he denies that experience could be the basis for accepting something as true (*Logic*, p. 98). As he points out, the ostensibly simple sensory statement, “this swan is white,” depends on the universal principles of swan-ness and whiteness. One’s unmarked experience of being



certain of the swan in sight happens only once, and is unique to the individual. Neither the experience nor the conviction can be shared except through some transformation. That transformation depends on something that is not in the experience, and is variable according to the rules adopted to govern the transformation. In making this argument, Popper rejected the various forms of positivism, accepted that theory inhabits every observation, and went on to establish a new standard of objectivity.

Positivism is a philosophical system of thought that addresses the certainty of knowledge. It is attributed in Enlightenment times to Auguste Comte, but the principles reach back to the Greek empiricists (Aristotle, Epicurus, and the Sophists). Positivism and its modern expression in logical positivism assumed the independence of theoretical statements from statements of observation – a position that Popper explicitly rejected: “Every observation and, to an even higher degree, every observation statement, is itself already an *interpretation in the light of our theories*” (*Realism*, p. 222). Critics of positivism have used this position to declare that no observation is possible without theory and that, therefore, observations made under the aegis of one theory cannot be compared with observations made under another. This doctrine – the incommensurability of theories – is often used to defend one family of theories against attacks from another. Popper, however, rejected this extreme, as well (as he must in order to sustain falsification). He pointed out that all (known) sentient beings start out with the same a priori (the material world). Consequently, all theories can be compared, although the task may be more difficult across some theories. He offered the slogan, “I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth” (*Myth*, p. xii).

Popper finds his *standard of objectivity* in this joint effort (→ Objectivity in Science). The need for the new standard stems from his rejection of the presumed independence of observation and theory statements. Objective observations are replaced with hybrid statements that are an indivisible mixture of fact and interpretation. How, then, does science protect itself from this inherent bias? Popper’s answer is first to warn us against false expectations and then to note the work to be done: “Science has no certainty, no rational reliability, no validity, no authority. The best we can say about it is that although it consists of our own guesses, of our own conjectures, we are doing our very best to test them; that is to say, to criticize them and refute them” (*Realism*, p. 222). Popper does not expect the individual scientist to criticize his or her own theory, but does demand that the *scientific community* commit itself to the practice of critical review and refutation.

### **Probabilism**

Probabilism is the practice of assigning truth-probability values to statements. Popper rejected all forms of induction, including those that depend on probability. In this form of induction, statements are arranged along a continuum anchored by ideal (but unattainable) end points of true and false, according to their likelihood of being true. For the swan example, the form might be, “all the swans I have seen are white, therefore it is most likely that all swans are white”; or, “all the swans I have seen are white, therefore, non-white swans are rare”; or, “all the swans I have seen are white, therefore, it is most likely that the next swan I see will be white.” For Popper, all these statements are inductions because a set of experiences is used to describe a universal set without any

knowledge of the universal. In the absence of such knowledge, one cannot establish the probability of any possible subset. Our sense of the truth of the matter, thus, is a psychological condition, not an epistemologically valid conclusion (*Logic*, p. 255).

Popper spends a good deal of time on this pernicious problem in at least four different volumes (*Logic*, *Realism*, *C&R*, and *Myth*). To him, there is no way of developing the probability calculus because the degree of corroboration depends, not on the number of tests that support a hypothesis, but on the complexity of the hypothesis and the quality of the attempts to refute it. A thousand replications of one supporting protocol offers no decrease in the probability of dozens of other tests that will refute the hypothesis. Further, a hypothesis with a 90 percent chance of being true can still be false. Consequently, it remains merely a statement not yet falsified.

Finally, Popper holds that probabilism encourages scientists to test only what is known to work, to become uninspired and uninspiring: “Every interesting and powerful statement must have a low probability; and *vice versa*: a statement with a high probability will be scientifically uninteresting, because it says little and has no explanatory power. Although we seek theories with a high degree of corroboration, *as scientists we do not seek highly probable theories but explanations; that is to say powerful and improbable theories*. The opposite view – that science aims at high probability – is a characteristic development of verificationism: if you find that you cannot verify a theory, or make it certain by induction, you may turn to probability as a kind of *Ersatz* for certainty, in the hope that induction may yield at least that much” (*C&R*, p. 65).

Although Popper would not admit that a theory can have, for example, a 90 percent chance of being true, he argues that we can distinguish theories and hypotheses according to their *degree of corroboration*. This phrase may sound like a probability but, it is instead an evaluation of the quality of the refutation attempted and of the severity of the tests that have failed to falsify the theory and/or hypothesis in question. The mere accumulation of confirming instances adds no new information about or value to the theory/hypothesis. Consequently, he would reject a simple counting as in arguments beginning with “many studies have shown.” A theory advances on the basis of a complex analysis of the deductive consequences that a theory/hypothesis entails and of the quality of the tests that have demonstrated (or failed to demonstrate) their occurrence.

This argument appears to have implications for *evidence from convergence*. In convergence, a statement can be held to be true if the preponderance of evidence supports the truth of the matter. Popper would consider this an extension of the statement: “all the swans I’ve seen are white,” which itself depends on the methodology of looking at swans. He argued that the fact that a particular methodology generates consistent results simply reflects on the methodology, not on the validity of the finding as a universal statement.

### Verificationism

Verificationism in science assumes that statements are meaningful only to the extent of their empirical content. Empirical content is material phenomena that can either be experienced directly or produce a necessary link to sensory experience. Verificationists use this principle as a demarcation between scientific and nonscientific statements, so that a statement with no empirical content is scientifically meaningless. This requirement

would appear to rule out many variables that are of relevance to communication research, such as uncertainty, compliance, or apprehension. (The solution was operationalism – a contested, but generally accepted practice – by which a concept like uncertainty is defined in the methods of measurement adopted.) Verificationists also advance the argument that each hypothesis has a crucial test or series of tests that would justify its acceptance. Nearly all statistical studies in communication research can be seen to adopt this as a rhetorical, if not an epistemological stance.

Popper disagreed with verificationism on both points. He noted that atomic theory predated our ability to provide an empirical basis by several centuries. Atomic theory, nonetheless, was a worthy scientific problem that justified the effort to achieve an empirical basis. The immediate availability of empirical content, therefore, was not an acceptable demarcation criterion. His demarcation criterion was that the theory had to entail *potentially falsifiable consequences*.

Popper saw crucial tests as a return to inductionism – a point in his writings that has been lost in current notions of verification. No hypothesis or theory can ever be justified by an individual outcome or even the sum total of all supporting outcomes. No matter how many there are, outcomes can never deny disconfirming instances.

### **FALSIFICATIONISM AND FALLIBILISM**

Though one cannot verify a hypothesis, Popper's system does offer ways of evaluating a hypothesis or theory, proposing falsification both as a demarcation between science and nonscience, and as the appropriate means of assaying the possible truth content of a hypothesis. *Falsification* rests on deductive rather than inductive logic. A theory, to be scientific, must require certain empirical outcomes that can be deduced and tested to see if they actually occur. If the theory meets this requirement, it is falsifiable and meets the minimal requirements of science. The more outcomes it requires, and the more directly those outcomes can be tested, the more robust the theory. Any failure to achieve those outcomes falsifies the present theory and calls for its revision. Importantly, the occurrence of a predicted outcome does not verify the hypothesis, but simply declares it as not falsified. In the ordinary practice of inferential statistics, however, positive information is gained when the null hypothesis – a negation of a predicted outcome – is rejected (→ Statistics, Explanatory). No information is considered gained when the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. This practice, on the face of it, is a verificationist, not a critical rationalist approach.

Popper proposed *four classifications of statements about the world*: statements that can be but have currently not been tested (not yet in the active domain of science); statements that have been tested and not falsified (scientific statements under continuing review; the location of current scientific activity); statements that have been tested and falsified (statements held to be scientifically false and presumably returned for revision); and statements tested, not falsified, and no longer being tested (statements acted upon by the scientific community as scientifically classified as true). The first type of statement is perhaps uninteresting or currently intractable to testing. The second is the bulk of research. The third is where the controversies lie, and the last type of statement is part of the background knowledge of science that will be used to pose new problems and their tests.

Popper's original formulation of falsificationism has been the subject of much *critique* for its unfaithfulness to the actual practice of science (Lakatos 1970), its presumption of a common basis of comparison across theories (Feyerabend 1965), its inability to specify just when a theory has been falsified (Newton-Smith 1981; see also the Quine-Duhem thesis discussed in Klee 1997), or equally when it has been sufficiently corroborated (Salman 1978).

*Fallibilism* is the doctrine that all of science can be wrong both in the particular and in general. Popper believed that science had no special claim to authority or to certainty. While fallibilism has a long history, including the philosophy of → pragmatism, Popper's position should be understood within the cultural context in which he was writing (Germany in the 1930s, anticipating the rise of Hitler) and his personal distaste for dogmatism of any kind (*Open*). He avoided falling into unrelenting skepticism by holding that sufficient corroboration can justify classifying a claim as true, and acting on it as if it were true, without giving up the possibility that it may be false. Popper saw fallibilism as the opportunity for bold new conjectures about the world rather than as a limitation on human knowledge.

## CRITICAL RATIONALISM IN CONTEMPORARY COMMUNICATION SCIENCE

Critical rationalism has steadily advanced Karl Popper in the ranks of scholars rejecting positivism. Other key figures include Thomas Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend, Norwood Hanson, Imre Lakatos, Willard Van Orman Quine, Dudley Shapere, and Frederick Suppe. While most philosophers of science today would declare positivism dead, there remains a nostalgia for the clarity and simplicity that it provided. Positivist positions such as the unity of science, the observational basis of science, the corrective presence of an objective reality, and the mathematical framework of science still dominate discussions of communication as a science. Nonetheless, critical rationalism and its allies in the history and sociology of science have opened up spaces for practices in social science that were simply unavailable as few as 50 years ago, albeit still controversial today.

One particular appeal of critical rationalism is that it grounds science in communication practices. Science, in critical rationalism, progresses in the robust debate between contesting theories and their empirical evidence. In Popper's figuration, it was, however, an enlightened, Habermasian debate with all members situated in a common epistemology (→ Habermas, Jürgen). The continued fractionalization of the field suggests that communication researchers remain divided by epistemology as well as politics (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

Communication is a very young science which has yet to develop a center. The conventionalism of critical rationalism is difficult to achieve because there is little agreement regarding background knowledge and frameworks of evidence. It is not clear that there is a common community of review, or an open, public critique in the pages of our journals. There is promise and possibility, but little of a unified practice.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Deduction vs. Induction vs. Abduction ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Statistics, Explanatory

### **References and Suggested Readings**

- Note: Popper developed Critical Rationalism over a 60-year period. The major works referred to here are: *The logic of scientific discovery*, 1959 (1st pub. 1935) [*Logic*]; *The open society and its enemies*, 1945 [*Open*]; *Realism and the aim of science*, 1956 [*Realism*]; *Conjectures and refutations*, 1989 [*C&R*]; *The myth of the framework: In defence of science and rationality*, 1994 [*Myth*].
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## **Critical Theory**

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The phrase “critical theory” was first promoted by the German philosopher and sociologist, Max Horkheimer, in a 1937 essay, “Critical and traditional theory.” An astute academic entrepreneur, he devised it to promote the approach to studying society and culture that he and his colleagues had been developing at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, which he had headed since 1930, and which became an important influence on international media and communication research (Horkheimer 1972).

The later labeling of the group as *the Frankfurt School* with its strong connotations of a single position misrepresents both the scope and diversity of the members’ interests. The institute was a path-breaking interdisciplinary center that cut across the boundaries dividing philosophy from empirical inquiry and the humanities from the social sciences. It attracted scholars from a wide range of intellectual and academic backgrounds, including musicology (Theodor Adorno); political economy (Friedrich Pollock; → Political Economy of the Media); literary theory (Leo Löwenthal); political philosophy (Herbert Marcuse); and psychoanalysis (Erich Fromm). This heterogeneity generated novel theoretical combinations, but also disputes and disagreements – self-critical debate as a basis of social critique.

### **ORIGINS OF CRITICAL THEORY**

The Frankfurt group’s work was grounded from the outset in the *Enlightenment’s* core philosophical project of advancing human emancipation by replacing the rule of religious

dogma, hereditary privilege, and tyrannical government with the free and critical exercise of reason. Surveying the social landscape in the early 1930s, however, the Frankfurt group saw rationality increasingly used to develop technologies and administrative systems employed as instruments of domination rather than liberation – a process later reaching its terminal point in the Nazi death camps. The promise of the Enlightenment had been negated by the very forces it had set in motion. Horkheimer and Adorno set out to reveal this logic in their best-known book, the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1973, 1st pub. 1944).

Against the ascendancy of “instrumental reason,” Horkheimer and Adorno sought to develop a critical theory that would keep the promise of emancipation alive, identifying possible points of opposition. Marx’s critique of capitalism was central to that project. As noted in the opening chapter of Marx’s major work, *Capital*, the seductive surfaces of *commodities* concealed the dark secret of capitalism’s radically asymmetric power relations (→ Commodification of the Media). The intention of critical analysis is to reveal these hidden mechanisms, to demonstrate how they block Enlightenment principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity, and to explore ways of dismantling them. This project is critical in two senses: it proposes a comprehensive critique of prevailing systems of power; it also subjects its own assumptions to continual scrutiny – a double ambition summed up in Marx’s favorite motto, *De omnibus dubitandum* (“You must have doubts about everything”).

For Marx, capitalist power was not as secure as it appeared. In the immediate aftermath of World War I, with popular protests and insurrections across Europe, it seemed as though his prediction of mass workers’ risings was about to be fulfilled. However, only the Bolshevik revolution in Russia succeeded, and within a few years, Germany and Italy, both bastions of socialist and communist opposition, had witnessed the rise of Hitler and Mussolini and the establishment of fascist dictatorships. This reversal posed a major theoretical challenge for intellectuals of the left, prompting them to look beyond economics and politics – to culture.

## CRITIQUE AND CULTURE

For both the Frankfurt group in Germany and Antonio Gramsci in Italy, one central explanation for social developments in the first few decades of the twentieth century lay in the intensified management of cultural life and its enlistment in securing popular consent. In the Soviet Union, too, the explosion of experiments that followed the Bolshevik revolution had been replaced by socialist realism, mandated by Stalin. Nor was this tendency toward closure and centralization confined to totalitarian states. The Frankfurt group’s leading political economist, Friedrich Pollock, argued that it was becoming increasingly characteristic of the major capitalist democracies, including the US. The market-driven system of capitalism’s initial phase, with its relative openness to innovation, seemed to be giving way to *state capitalism*, in which more and more of the responsibility for managing the economic playing field passed to the state, leaving only pseudo-markets that were carefully engineered to match mass consumption to mass production. This argument strengthened Horkheimer and Adorno’s conviction that, in the absence of a radical workers’ movement, the cultural sphere was the next battleground. As Horkheimer argued, “Art breaks through the barriers” erected by “accepted forms of thought” and “the language of propaganda” and marketing (Horkheimer 1972, 279).

The idea of culture and art as a separate and autonomous realm, resistant to incorporation into the mundane worlds of economy and administration, had long been a theme in idealist German philosophy (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Aesthetics; Art as Communication). For Adorno, culture in the true sense never simply accommodated itself to prevailing ideas and existing tastes – it always simultaneously raised a protest against the social relations within which people lived. His belief in the resistant power of art was at the core not only of his philosophical position, developed in graduate theses on Husserl and Kierkegaard, but also of his own creative experience. Adorno was an accomplished pianist, who had studied composition under the prominent avant-garde musician Alban Berg, and belonged to the circle surrounding the leader of the so-called Vienna School, Arnold Schoenberg. In Adorno's view, music retained an emancipatory potential, with two main characteristics. First, it was produced out of inner conviction, as an authentic expression of personal vision, rather than with an eye to sales. Second, instead of reconciling listeners to contradictions in society by offering the illusion of harmony, its formal structure should encourage a critical stance by engraving these contradictions in its innermost structure. Schoenberg's atonal string quartets met these criteria for Adorno; popular music, with its standardized formulae and routinized distribution, did not.

The relationship between popular and elite culture has remained high on the agenda of critical theory and research (→ Popular Culture). For the original Frankfurt group, this relationship was thematized in exile. As critical Jewish intellectuals in Hitler's Germany, their situation became untenable, and the institute moved, first to Paris and later to the US.

### EXILE IN POPULAR CULTURE

After a brief stay in New York, working in an uneasy partnership with → Paul Lazarsfeld on a research project investigating radio music broadcasts, Adorno joined Horkheimer in California. While there, he collaborated on a major research project on the popular roots of fascism published as *The authoritarian personality* (1950). His psychologist co-authors looked for determinants of anti-Semitic attitudes within the individual, but Adorno drew attention to the general cultural climate, and particularly to the role of mass media in molding public opinion. He explored this process empirically in 1943 with a detailed dissection of the radio broadcasts made by a right-wing Christian demagogue, Martin Luther Thomas, demonstrating how Thomas's personalized forms of address promoted an authoritarian populism and transformed religious bigotry into political and racial hatred (see Apostolidis 2000). This research was among proliferating studies of propaganda during and immediately after the war, including *Prophets of deceit*, a study co-authored by another Frankfurt group member, Leo Löwenthal (→ Propaganda in World War II).

Adorno's interest in the ideological role of media was not confined to politically motivated speech. He also explored how prevailing relations of power were bolstered by routine instances of popular culture, including the astrology column in the *Los Angeles Times*. By inviting readers to yield to invisible, pre-determined forces that paralleled the impersonal economic and administrative powers over which people had no control, he saw the daily predictions reinforcing everyday feelings of dependency. True to the

Frankfurt group's commitment to combining cultural, political, and economic analysis, Adorno developed his detailed analyses of particular media texts alongside a general structural critique of the commodification of cultural production and its consequences for the diversity of popular expression (→ Qualitative Methodology).

By the early 1940s, → Hollywood was a dominant force in world cinema; American jazz and popular music had achieved global reach; and commercial radio was an established everyday presence in American life. It was the dynamics shaping this imaginative landscape that Horkheimer and Adorno set out to investigate in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Subtitled "Philosophical fragments," the *Dialectic* was intended as a work in progress, and originally circulated as a mimeographed manuscript. The chapter on the → culture industry, still widely read, should be interpreted in this spirit, as an initial sketch of trends in cultural production rather than as a detailed analysis of the communications industries. In fact, the English translation conflates these two levels. In the original German, the term "culture industry" refers to the progressive transformation of cultural work, in all its forms, into commodity production, oriented to the market, while "*the* culture industry" refers more specifically to the mass media. The confusion is further compounded by Adorno's later admission that "the expression 'industry' is not to be taken too literally," and that their main concern was with the "standardization" of popular cultural forms and "the rationalization of distribution techniques, but not strictly the production process" (Adorno 1991, 87). There is little doubt, however, that Horkheimer and Adorno saw American commercial media as reproducing the stereotypical design and standardized assembly of any kind of commodity, and as prototypical of the rule of instrumental reason in the cultural sphere. "Cultural entities typical of the culture industry are no longer *also* commodities, they are commodities through and through" (Adorno 1991, 86).

The implication of such in-depth analyses was that the culture industry, specifically the drive toward standardization, was robbing popular culture of its critical potential. Adorno did admit exceptions, Charlie Chaplin's uniquely individual style, for example. He also pointed to detective novels, but noted that although they "regularly unmask" the sordid underbelly of capitalism, their "standardized schemas" would ensure that any challenge to the status quo was eventually charmed away by the "inevitable triumph of order" (Adorno 1967, 129). Even jazz improvisation was, for him, simply a collection of repetitive techniques, continually sorted out and kaleidoscopically mixed into ever-new combinations to produce the appearance of novelty, but no real innovation (Adorno 1967, 124). Returning to the relationship between popular and high culture, Adorno concluded that the creative autonomy defining genuine art was being eliminated, not because writers, performers, and musicians acted in bad faith, but because they – and their bosses – were employed in factories devoted to producing profits.

Many later commentators on Adorno and Horkheimer have assumed that they saw audiences as passively accepting the culture industry's blandishments. Horkheimer came closest when arguing that people had lost the power to conceive a world different from the prevailing system (Horkheimer 1972, 278), but in the *Dialectic*, consumers are cast as skeptics rather than dupes. They see through the promotional ploys, but nonetheless feel compelled to buy and use the products on offer (Horkheimer & Adorno 1973, 167). Audiences are not deceived, but the heartlands of popular culture offer them few



alternatives, making them informed accomplices. In Adorno's striking phrase, media users are "amphibians" moving between the solid ground of distrust and the pleasures of immersion in the warm waters of routine and repetition. This ambiguity has continued to occupy later critical communication studies.

### A CRITICAL LEGACY

With the end of World War II, the Frankfurt group dispersed. Marcuse and Löwenthal stayed on in the US; Adorno and Horkheimer returned to Germany. Despite a rapidly changing media landscape, neither pursued their analysis of the culture industry. The second generation of Frankfurt writers, led by → Jürgen Habermas, had different preoccupations. Appalled by the revelations of Hitler's "final solution," Habermas set out to construct a model for deliberative democracy, rooted in agreement through argumentation. He shared Adorno's view that the cultural resources for this project were becoming increasingly commodified, oriented to entertainment rather than Enlightenment, but offered no detailed analysis of how that general process operated in the contemporary media environment. This task was left, not least, to a disparate group of scholars in different national contexts who were developing a critical political economy of communications.

The US had survived the war unscathed by bombing, invasion, and rationing, enabling it to consolidate its strength in the film and music industries and to press forward with the major postwar medium: television. With the onset of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, the cultural industries assumed an unprecedented political significance. As the former colonies of the European empires achieved political independence, they became stakes in the struggle for global influence between the two new major powers. In accordance with the Frankfurt group's diagnosis, popular culture, again, became a key site in the battle for hearts and minds. A process of *cultural imperialism* was examined in detail by Herbert Schiller in a series of influential books, from *Mass communications and American empire* (1969) to *Culture Inc.* (1989; → Cultural Imperialism Theories). With a wealth of empirical examples, he described this dynamic as a logical extension of processes within the US that were marginalizing critique and mobilizing media around the promotion of consumerism. Although Schiller's work was indebted to the Frankfurt group, particularly Marcuse's *One-dimensional man* (1964), which achieved wide readership when they were both colleagues at the University of California, it also drew on a strong current in American critical thought running from Upton Sinclair's scathing attack on the commercial press, *The brass check* (1920), to C. Wright Mills' anatomy of "mass society" in *The power elite* (1956).

In an essay on "Art and mass culture," Horkheimer (1972, 275) had argued that the routinization and commercialization of leisure had turned it into "a kind of tail to the comet of labour." The Canadian scholar, Dallas Smythe (1994, 1st pub. 1977), took this argument one step further, arguing that since the economy of commercial television relied on selling viewers to advertisers, audience labor inevitably became commodified, and viewing became working to complete the circuit of consumption (→ Audience Commodity). Programs were the "wages" paid for the labor of attending to sales pitches.

This critique carried less resonance in Europe, where television (and radio) was organized primarily as a public service funded through license fees (→ Public Broadcasting,

History of). Identifying this system's distinctive features, and defending it against extensions of commercialism, became a major theme in critical media scholarship, particularly in Great Britain which, uniquely among major European countries, had introduced commercial television in the mid-1950s. Utilizing Habermas's notion of the → public sphere, Nicholas Garnham, Graham Murdock, and Peter Dahlgren, among others, argued that, for all its faults, public service broadcasting offered the most accessible and flexible basis for the cultivation of citizenship – within and despite a consumerist culture.

Central components of critical theory – for example, the theoretical conception of culture as a site of social struggle, and the reliance on interdisciplinary methodologies to identify power in social practices – have informed not just work in the political economy tradition, but also → cultural studies, → feminist and gender studies, → postcolonial theory, and other current research positions. Some of this work has been grounded in wider debates in the philosophy of social science, for example, Roy Bhaskar's argument for a critical realist epistemology (→ Realism). Identifying the generative mechanisms underlying everyday action and the hidden barriers to emancipation was, for Bhaskar, the first step toward encouraging action that transforms rather than reproduces existing social conditions. One influential version of such a critical project was pursued by the French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, in a series of studies of cultural production and consumption. His contributions have proved particularly fruitful in opening up new avenues for critical empirical research on everyday cultural practices, which had been given less attention by Herbert Schiller and other figures in the critical political economy of communications.

The critical interventions of Adorno and Horkheimer remain a starting point for contemporary studies of the concentration of media ownership, the commercialization and commodification of communication, and the consolidation of consumerism throughout culture and society. At a time when governments around the world see “the culture industries” as a driver of economic growth in the postindustrial era, it is important to revisit the history of the term and to reclaim it for critical inquiry. The Frankfurt group's legacy suggests the lasting value of an interdisciplinary approach combining the detailed analysis of texts with critical political economy, to interpret – and change – current cultural practices and institutions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Hollywood ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Realism

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## Cross-Media Marketing

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Marketing refers to activities that promote and organize the distribution and sales of products to consumers (→ Marketing). Specifying “cross-media” focuses on those activities that involve multiple media. As such, the term “cross-media marketing” can be used to describe two somewhat related phenomena: general marketing and promotion activities that cross media boundaries (→ Advertising Strategies; Markets of the Media; Media Management); and efforts to increase sales of content by distributing them in a variety of media forms (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Distribution). Increasing competition and the rise of new media forms have fragmented audiences and markets (→ Audience Segmentation; Consumers in Media Markets; Digitization and Media Convergence), making cross-media marketing more critical. The changing production and distribution

cost structures brought about by technological developments have made it more viable (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media; Information and Communication Technology, Economics of; Media Economics).

*Promotion* is an important part of economic activities. Promotion helps reduce uncertainty in the marketplace, by providing consumers with information about products and services. Promotion is particularly valuable for information goods and services, as new product is continually introduced, and there is always a degree of uncertainty and variability concerning the value of information goods and services to individual consumers (→ Uncertainty and Communication). Cross-media marketing, from the promotions perspective, refers to the use of multiple media for campaigns. Promotion targets potential consumers, who may or may not correspond with the audiences of specific media markets. Different media also have distinctive characteristics that may be more or less effective for particular promotional messages. As such, there was always a degree of cross-media marketing when it was appropriate for the particular product or campaign.

### TRENDS TOWARD CROSS-MEDIA MARKETING

Several trends are bringing cross-media marketing into greater use and prominence as a marketing and promotional tool. As competition and multiple media fragment audiences, utilizing multiple approaches across media becomes more critical in order to reach broad audiences. While fragmented audiences are valuable for those seeking targeted audiences, broad appeals need to reach across such fragments. Greater knowledge about the effectiveness of various techniques has allowed more sophistication in developing and using multiple message strategies across different media. The development and proliferation of *integrated marketing approaches* has also provided a focus on marketing across media (→ Integrated Marketing Communications). Increasingly fragmented audiences and increased competition has also acted to moderate the cost of media advertising. Technological developments, particularly the rise of the Internet and the world wide web (→ Internet), have opened up inexpensive alternatives for reaching audiences. These various factors have contributed to making cross-media marketing affordable, and a viable strategy.

A more competitive media environment also places a greater emphasis on promotion and → *branding in media products*. Cross-media promotions help to reach new markets and audiences, developing interest in particular channels and products. Reducing uncertainty about the value of new products and content provides a competitive advantage for media firms. Branding can contribute to this significantly, by establishing a clearer perception of the type and value of content to be provided. In addition, brands can be established across media, which facilitates cross-promotion of particular content and channels.

Increased *horizontal integration* among media conglomerates (→ Cross-Ownership; Media Conglomerates), and increased marketing of content in various media forms also increases the value and likelihood of cross-media promotions. Firms that produce and/or distribute content in multiple media forms have an interest in promoting all media forms, thus increasing demand in all markets and not just for one particular outlet. They are also in a better position to utilize open availabilities for promotional efforts among “in-house” media markets, although there is still considerable value in promoting in external outlets.

Marketing refers not only to promotional efforts, but to the goal of increasing sales. One strategy for doing this is to market products in multiple forms or versions, and in multiple markets. There are sound economic motives for doing this with media products.

### **ECONOMIC SPECIFICS OF MEDIA PRODUCTS**

One of the distinctive characteristics of media products is that they comprise both the information content and the specific form(s) in which that content is distributed to audiences and consumers. A related characteristic is that if you focus on the information portion, it is relatively costly to produce (high first-unit or fixed cost), but after that, there is very little cost involved in duplicating the information itself (low marginal cost). There also tend to be fairly high costs in fixing that idea or content in a particular media form (high first-unit or fixed costs), and often fairly low per-unit costs in making copies and/or distribution (low marginal costs). Having low marginal costs encourages wider distribution, helping to keep average costs (and thus prices) down.

Until fairly recently, media markets were thought of as generally distinctive and tended to have *limited direct competition*. Differences in media were such that translation of content across forms could be very expensive. If media forms were fairly similar, content could be ported from one media market to another fairly easily (say from hardcover to paperback books (→ Book; Paperback Fiction) or serialization in magazines, use of older movies (→ Cinema) as content for television broadcasts (→ Television), or distribution in multiple geographic markets). Content could also be marketed across more distinct media types (books turned into movies), but that often required the idea to be reproduced in the new format, incurring significant new first-unit (translation) costs in the new media form.

On the down side, new forms and markets could impact on primary market sales, if audiences viewed them as close substitutes. *Substitutability* tended to relate to similarity in media forms. Hardbacks and paperbacks are fairly close substitutes, books and movies are not (in fact, very different media are closer to complements – where consumption of one form can increase demand for the other). Firms were often more concerned about the negative impact of cross-media marketing from close substitutes on primary market sales, than the incremental revenues to be gained from entry into new markets. Media were seen as substitutes, cross-media marketing often included other versioning techniques, such as quality differences, or time delays past the point where the primary market demand has peaked. For media seen as complements, the impact of cross-media marketing was generally positive. However, the often sizable translation costs, and the fact that often the other media was owned by someone else, reduced the likely benefits of cross-media marketing as a general strategy.

*Firm and market structures* (→ Economies of Scale in Media Markets; Media Corporations, Forms of) also influenced the value and viability of cross-media marketing. Marketing across media made more sense to horizontally integrated media firms, who could engage in cross-subsidization and economies of scope, as well as more easily capture value across media outlets and markets in which they operated. On the other hand, media and market structures where content production and distribution were handled by the same firm experienced some disincentives to engage in cross-media marketing. While the production side tended to benefit, specific distribution systems might lose out to consumers choosing to access the content via alternative media.

## IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Technological developments and structural market changes have made cross-media marketing increasingly viable, and it has become an important business strategy. As technological developments reduced many production and distribution costs, translation costs lowered. The same developments also contributed to several structural shifts in media markets. Changing cost structures, as well as general deregulatory policy shifts (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy), have reduced barriers to entry, encouraging new firms to enter markets and conglomerates to expand. New technologies (→ Technology and Communication) encouraged the development of new media forms, with declining costs encouraging rapid diffusion and adoption by consumers.

For example, the once unique medium of movies has faced new competition (as well as new potential distribution markets) from a continuing litany of new media forms: television, cable systems and networks, video cassettes, DVDs, direct broadcast satellites, and on the horizon, video-on-demand, IPTV systems (not to mention digital piracy through the Internet), and cell phones, and there is probably more to come. An increasingly deregulatory policy focus encouraged these structural changes, while allowing greater horizontal and vertical integration by some media firms. Horizontally integrated firms are particularly well-positioned to benefit from cross-media marketing, as they can capture the benefits from distribution across their media outlets.

As noted earlier, technological advances have tended to reduce a wide range of production and distribution costs. *Digital technology* in particular has helped to significantly reduce translation costs, contributing to convergence of media markets and systems. Combined with telecommunications advances resulting in the Internet, distribution costs over some networks approach zero, virtually eliminate geographical boundaries, and expand the scope of markets. The changing cost structure has enhanced the discrepancy between the initial production costs of the information, and marginal costs. Reduced translation costs also reduce the average cost for secondary markets, enhancing their value. This has increased the potential to profit from cross-media marketing. The rise of digital media systems that exhibit near-zero translation and distribution costs are particularly disruptive. The ease with which content can be translated and distributed across digital media regardless of the intent of the content producers and owners has raised concerns about digital piracy (→ Piracy).

At the same time, the increase in competition within and across media has impacted on revenues within specific media markets. Many firms face shrinking sales and revenues from their primary media products, making it even more critical to develop new markets and revenue sources. Firms producing content, as opposed to those only distributing it, find the ability to market that content across as many media and markets as viable critical to their continuing success. As one example, the movie industry has shifted from having its primary revenues derived from theater ticket sales, to revenues from television and cable licensing, to the point where revenues from DVD sales provide the bulk of revenues.

Trends in technology suggest that cross-media marketing will be increasingly critical, both in terms of promotion and in the marketing of content. Old market boundaries are disappearing, and with them the ability of media firms to capture audiences and monopoly profits from exclusiveness. Competition and fragmented audiences spreading their

attention across a wide range of media (and increasingly multitasking) increase the value of promotion, and the need for cross-media promotion and marketing efforts, for many products. Changing cost structures suggest that content will be increasingly available across a range of media forms, and if producers do not market the content across those media forms themselves, they face losing that value to those who do (legally or not).

Currently, prospects for both aspects (advertising across media, and distributing content across media) look promising. Bruner (2005) notes the shift in advertising markets and the rise of cross-media advertising in his report on online advertising (→ Advertising, Economics of). The European Commission has been actively promoting the potentials of cross-media marketing in the emerging digital media marketplace, funding a variety of projects and consortia (e.g., Boumans 2004) as part of its → information society initiatives.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Book ▶ Branding ▶ Cinema ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Cross-Ownership ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Distribution ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Information Society ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Internet ▶ Marketing ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Corporations, Forms of ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Management ▶ Paperback Fiction ▶ Piracy ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television ▶ Uncertainty and Communication

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## **Cross-Media Production**

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Mainly used to refer to news, cross-media production is the coordinated reporting of events in several media outlets (press, radio, television, Internet, mobile phones, and other mobile

devices). The production can occur at a single *integrated newsroom* or involve collaboration among newsrooms from different media. The concept can also apply to other media products systematically designed for and delivered in different media formats. Practitioners and scholars use the term *convergence* to refer to the process of developing cross-media strategies in newsrooms.

The first newsroom-wide tests of cross-media production began as media businesses adopted digital technologies in daily news production and tended to concentrate in big multimedia conglomerates in the late twentieth century (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). The starting point in many cases was the exploration of a tighter relationship between the production of the newly developed Internet outlets (→ Online Journalism) and traditional formats (press, radio, television). The greatest challenge for cross-media production, nonetheless, is coordinating the different journalistic cultures of print and broadcast newsrooms.

Advocates of cross-media production argue that coordinated reporting may enhance the quality of coverage for an event and optimize the use of human resources in newsrooms, as each outlet provides the information that best suits it. At the same time, this global strategy facilitates cross-promoting different outlets from the same company. Their aim is to offer comprehensive, ubiquitous, and continually updated news, using the different media of the company to allow citizens to receive the best coverage at any time or place through the most convenient media device.

However, several scholars and professionals point out the risks to news quality and media diversity if reducing production costs drives the convergence process. An early case study found that journalists felt stress and considered their stories less elaborated when doing cross-media production (Cottle & Ashton 1999). Newsroom coordination may diminish the diversity of approaches that the separate media take toward a community, may ignore intrinsic differences among media formats that contribute to heterogeneous journalistic discourse, and may make immediacy prevail over analysis.

Two theoretical models attempt to differentiate cross-media efforts, although the concrete forms around the world show extraordinary variability: *coordinated newsrooms*, where each outlet retains an autonomous newsroom and a *multimedia desk* fosters strategic coordination among the teams; and *integrated newsrooms*, where a single team produces stories for any medium.

At Newsplex, an experimental cross-media production initiative, researchers in 2002 began developing four new professional roles for converging journalism (Northrup 2004). These roles are bundles of tasks in the cross-media production workflow, and one person may perform more than one role, depending on the structure of the newsroom.

- News flow managers decide what human and technical resources to devote to each event.
- Story builders coordinate reporting on a single event and decide which materials to gather (video, audio, photos, data) and the best cross-media publication strategy.
- News resource workers help journalists find and process archive and database information.
- Journalists gather information using multiple tools and skills (such as audiovisual recording, still photography, note taking, database mining) and combine multiple-format elements into a story or adapt the materials to different outlets. Multiskill roles



may give reporters more control over the final products of their work, but may also overload them with technical procedures, leaving less room for journalistic interpretation (Bromley 1997).

Successful cross-media production requires teamwork, a challenge to the individualistic work of journalists that demands training and flexibility (Deuze 2004). Companies cannot expect convergence to serve as a cost-saving strategy. Convergence may instead allow growth, resulting in better-quality and better-coordinated content in the outlets of a media group, and fostering loyalty and visibility among audiences who have new information-seeking behaviors (Quinn 2005). Another key to fluent cross-media production is adequate knowledge management (Quinn 2002), backed by efficient database software and online systems that store and retrieve the data journalists use and produce when they report events.

Empirical research has concentrated on the perceptions of professionals involved in cross-media production. General attitudes toward convergence are positive, but journalists perceive a lack of training, time pressure, and business-driven strategies as the main barriers to success and quality in cross-media production (Singer 2004; Klinenberg 2005). Media regulation, resistance from unions, physical distances between the newsrooms, lack of management commitment, and poor organizational flexibility also constrain convergence (Quinn 2005). To assess the relationships among newsrooms and the processes and consequences of convergence, research may need to use media groups as the unit of analysis (Boczkowski & Ferris 2005).

SEE ALSO: ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Media Production and Content ► News Production and Technology ► Online Journalism ► Plurality ► Quality of the News

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# Cross-Ownership

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Cross-ownership of media occurs when a person or company owns outlets in more than one medium (i.e., → newspapers, → radio, and → television) in the same geographical market. It is a business strategy driven by advances in technology and also a public policy issue due to concerns over increased concentration of ownership (→ Media Policy). Cross-ownership is aimed at achieving economies of scope across multiple media. Costs may be reduced through the “synergy” of sharing of staff and content between outlets in different media, and revenues may be increased through the sale of multimedia advertising packages.

On the other hand, diversity of media ownership is considered crucial to ensuring diversity of news information (→ Plurality). As a federal circuit court of the US noted in 2004, “diversification of media ownership serves the public interest by promoting diversity of program and service viewpoints as well as by preventing undue concentration of economic power” (*Prometheus Radio Project v. FCC*, 373 F.3d 372, 383 [3<sup>rd</sup> Cir.] 2004; → Public Interest). Various media competition laws and regulations are widely accepted in connection with a society’s significant interest in ensuring a wide range of information and opinion for citizens through pluralistic media (→ Competition in Media Systems). That is, media cross-ownership is a matter of freedom of expression as a right (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

## INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the → American Convention on Human Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights recognize a right of individuals to receive information and opinions from a diversity of sources (→ Freedom of Information). Thus, they impose an obligation on government to ensure media pluralism. This is especially the case with the American convention in that it expressly prohibits private entities such as the news media from restricting freedom of expression through media monopolies and concentration.

Article 10 of the *European Convention on Human Rights* has been interpreted as requiring member states to take positive actions against press monopolies. In 1994, for example, the → European Court of Human Rights held that the Austrian public broadcasting monopoly was incompatible with Article 10 because it violated the freedom of individuals to communicate their ideas on the audiovisual media (*Informationsverein Lentia v. Austria*, 17 E.H.R.R. 93 [1994]). A dozen years earlier, the Council of Europe’s Committee of Ministers stated: “States have the duty to guard against infringements of the freedom of expression and information and should adopt policies designed to foster as much as possible a variety of media and a plurality of information sources, thereby allowing a plurality of ideas and opinions” (Committee of Ministers, Declaration on the Freedom of Expression and Information, April 29, 1982; → European Union: Communication Law).

## NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The increased concentration of news media ownership through horizontal integration or multimedia integration came under heightened public scrutiny (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Consumer advocates, political activists, proponents of media reform, and most media scholars generally opposed allowing news media companies to grow larger. They perceived the increased political power that corporations could accumulate through cross-ownership to be contrary to the public interest and called for restrictions to be maintained or enacted (→ Media Conglomerates; Media Corporations, Forms of).

### Cross-Ownership Rules Relaxed

Reform and even outright repeal of restrictions on cross-ownership, however, have been broad trends worldwide, with long-running deregulation initiatives culminating in the United Kingdom in 2003 and Australia in 2006. In *Australia*, cross-ownership of media became linked with the country's limits on foreign ownership in a decade-long attempt at media deregulation that failed twice before finally being passed in 2006. The small size of the media market led to it being dominated by a few major owners, creating resistance to dropping a prohibition on cross-ownership without allowing more foreign ownership in order to prevent increased concentration. The ban on cross-ownership of print and electronic media had been introduced by the Labour government in 1987, forcing the country's multimedia owners to choose between their television and newspaper holdings. Nonetheless, the Australian government under liberal prime minister John Howard enacted a broad package of reforms in July of 2006. It abolished restrictions on foreign ownership and permitted cross-ownership starting in 2007, subject to a "diversity test" to ensure a minimum of five owners in metropolitan markets and four in regional markets (→ Australia: Media System).

In *Canada*, a prohibition against cross-ownership of newspapers and television stations was issued in 1982 by Order in Council after a Royal Commission on Newspapers recommended restrictions on ownership. The cross-ownership prohibition was allowed to lapse in 1985 following a change in government from Liberal to Conservative. Several multimedia transactions since 2000 prompted federal inquiries by committees of both Parliament and Senate. A report to Parliament on broadcasting and media ownership recommended in 2003 that the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) cease issuing broadcast licenses to owners of newspapers pending formulation of a federal policy on cross-ownership. A Senate report on news media was issued in 2006, but it stopped short of recommending measures against cross-ownership, as another change in government from Liberal to Conservative earlier in the year made unlikely any regulations limiting media ownership (→ Canada: Media System).

In the *United Kingdom*, the 1990 Broadcasting Act prohibited newspaper owners with more than 20 percent of national circulation from holding more than a 20 percent interest in any Independent Television (ITV) license. A new Broadcasting Act in 1996, however, loosened regulations so large newspaper owners could also reach up to 15 percent of the audience share in television and commercial radio, but with no more than one national license in each. In 2003, the Communications Act made sweeping changes to

media regulation, including for the first time allowing foreign ownership of broadcasting. Restrictions on cross-ownership were also eased, with owners permitted to hold both national radio and television licenses. But media mergers are subject to special statutory requirements. Under the Communications Act of 2003, the Secretary of State for Industry intervenes where the public interest considerations of media mergers are involved (→ United Kingdom: Media System).

### **Cross-Ownership in the Era of New Media Technologies**

With the advent of the → Internet in the 1990s, a “convergence” of print and broadcast media was seen as inevitable (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). The traditional content of newspapers, magazines, radio, and television was thus foreseen by some as all eventually being delivered online. This technological revolution was expected to render national regulatory agencies redundant, and as a result owners sought relaxation of cross-media and foreign ownership restrictions. As an OECD study of 1998 noted, “The pressure of convergence brings into sharp focus the restrictions many OECD countries have placed in terms of cross-ownership and joint provision regulations imposed on the traditionally separate communications” (OECD 1998). Consumer advocates, however, sought to retain limits where they existed and to implement them where they did not, arguing that more concentrated ownership of news media would reduce diversity of opinion and political pluralism.

In *South Korea*, where a select group of print and broadcasting media dominates the media industry, several special statutes showcase the Korean government’s commitment to diversify the media market while reducing the actual or perceived media concentration. The Newspaper Act, for example, prohibits the simultaneous ownership of broadcasting stations and newspapers and news agencies. In 2004, to stem the print media’s concentration in Seoul, the Korean government passed the Regional Newspaper Act. By laying a healthy foundation to develop regional newspapers, it aims to promote diverse public opinions and to accomplish a balanced development of local communities. The law mandates a development fund for regional newspapers to improve their management and distribution and to support their computerized database.

To the Korean government, the broadcasting industry is no exception. The Broadcast Act forbids anyone to own more than 30 percent of stocks of a terrestrial broadcasting licensee and a news broadcasting program provider. Also, a daily newspaper cannot operate a broadcasting station or a program provider simultaneously. Further, the corporate owner of a daily newspaper or a news agency cannot own the stock or equity shares in cable broadcasting or satellite broadcasting companies (→ Satellite Communication, Regulation of). Likewise, it is illegal to concurrently operate an off-the-air broadcaster, a cable television broadcaster, and a satellite broadcaster. Moreover, the Broadcast Act proscribes an over-the-air broadcaster, a cable television broadcaster, and a satellite broadcaster from owning another over-the-air broadcaster that runs a digital multimedia broadcasting (DMB) service, another cable broadcasting service, and another satellite broadcasting service, respectively. Similarly, a broadcast program provider cannot operate another program provider or own stocks in the other provider beyond what a presidential decree permits (→ South Korea: Media System).

The government of *Singapore*, which had tightly restricted media ownership for decades, announced in 2000 the introduction of “controlled competition” through cross-ownership. Singapore Press Holdings (SPH), which for 16 years had enjoyed a government-sanctioned newspaper monopoly, was issued licenses for English- and Chinese-language television stations. Government-owned broadcaster MediaCorp was issued a newspaper license and began publishing a free commuter tabloid titled *Today* (→ Tabloid Press).

### **Liberalization of Cross-Ownership Rules in the US**

US media ownership rules as they have evolved over several decades are probably in a class by themselves. In 1970, the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) passed the cable/broadcast cross-ownership (CBCO) rule, which disallowed a cable system from owning broadcast TV stations in its own market. At the same time, it enforced the radio–TV cross-ownership rule against ownership of a radio station and a TV station in the same market. In 1975, the FCC adopted a rule that banned a daily newspaper publisher from owning a broadcasting station in its community.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996, the most sweeping change in US broadcasting regulation since the 1934 Communications Act, has affected ownership regulations. In 2003, the FCC announced a new tiered cross-media ownership rule that would liberalize the radio–TV cross-ownership and the broadcast–newspaper rules. But a federal appeals court blocked the new rules from taking effect, reasoning that the FCC failed to prove justification of its new ownership rules. Meanwhile, there is no cross-ownership rule on satellite TV and cable in the US (→ Cable Television). Antitrust laws will apply if a cable company buys a satellite TV provider. The Department of Justice or the FCC will likely intervene (→ Antitrust Regulation).

*Germany* and *France* stand in sharp contrast to the US. Their cross-media rules are less developed. Constitutional law provided the basis for the enactment of appropriate competition rules to ensure pluralism in the media industry. In 1966, the German Constitutional Court indicated that *Pressefreiheit* (“press freedom”) obligates the government to take affirmative actions to the deleterious impact of media monopolies. Similarly, the Conseil constitutionnel in France held in 1986 that freedom of expression mandates special media merger restrictions to safeguard pluralism in media outlets (Barendt 2005, 433).

SEE ALSO: ▶ American Convention on Human Rights ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Australia: Media System ▶ Cable Television ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Corporations, Forms of ▶ Media Policy ▶ Newspaper ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Interest ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ South Korea: Media System ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of

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## Cuba: Media System

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With nearly 111,000 square kilometers Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean Sea. It is located only 180 kilometers off Florida on the American continent. Since 1976 the *República de Cuba* has been subdivided into 14 provinces of almost equal size and one special municipality (Isla de la Juventud). The total population is 11.3 million; 2.2 million live in the capital Havana. The official language is Spanish.

For a long time Cuba was ruled by Spain, but since the end of the nineteenth century it has been under American hegemony. In 1959, the authoritarian dictatorship of Batista

was overturned in a guerilla war under the command of Fidel Castro. Subsequently a socialist government was established. Fidel Castro became president and continued to adhere to communism even in the 1990s after the systems in the Soviet Union and its satellite states had broken down. As support from the Soviet Union ceased, Cuba faced a severe economic crisis. The so-called “Período Especial en Tiempos de Paz” brought considerable restrictions. Increasing tourism led to some relief, but the temporary toleration of the US dollar as currency was abandoned. For health reasons, Fidel Castro delegated the power to his younger brother Raúl in 2006. Since then there has been great uncertainty about the political future of the country.

Even at the beginning of the twenty-first century Cuba is – in accordance with its political system – globally one of the last *media systems of the Soviet totalitarian type* (Siebert et al. 1956). Today, however, basically two media systems coexist in Cuba: one for the population that is still strictly controlled, and the other for tourists, diplomats, and foreigners living in the country enjoying greater liberties.

Art. 53 of the Cuban constitution (1976, amended in 1992) grants citizens the right to freedom of speech and of the press “in keeping with the objectives of socialist society.” The latter justify restrictions of this freedom. Mass media are considered as public and social property, and private individuals are under no circumstances entitled to own them (→ Public Goods; Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

There is *no explicit media law* in Cuba. But in the 1990s laws were enacted restricting the freedom of the media and of journalists: Law no. 80 “Reaffirming Cuban Dignity and Sovereignty” (1996), further tightened by Law no. 88 in 1999 (“Law of Protection of the National Independence and Economy of Cuba”). Based on this more than 70 opponents of the regime were arrested in 2003, predominantly journalists, resulting in international protests by human rights activists. In the 2006 Press Freedom Index published annually by the journalist organization, Reporters without Borders, Cuba ranks 165th out of 168. Only in three countries of the world were the media classified as even more inhibited.

The first → *newspaper* in Cuba was published in 1764 (*La Gaceta*). When press freedom was guaranteed in the constitution of 1812 the number of newspapers increased. Under the authoritarian governance of Batista there were still 58 newspapers, mostly receiving state subsidies. Due to suppression many illegal publications emerged.

When Fidel Castro came to power a press concentration took place (→ Concentration in Media Systems). The *newspapers* also suffered from the problems of the “Período Especial.” Hence most of the 24 newspapers in Cuba today appear only once a week. Only two of them are published nationwide: *Granma*, since 1965 the official organ of the Partido Comunista de Cuba (PCC), bearing the name of the yacht with which Castro and his followers crossed over from Mexico to Cuba in 1956 to start the revolution. The paper has a circulation of 400,000 and comes out as a tabloid. It prints the official news and the speeches and editorial articles of Castro himself (Saavedra Hurtado 2003). *Juventud Rebelde* is the second nationwide newspaper. It was originally designed for youth but is read today by a broader public. The Cuban provinces have a weekly newspaper each. Since 1996 there has been an international edition of *Granma*, intended as antidote to the US media. Besides Spanish it appears in four languages (English, French, Portuguese, German); the circulation is 50,000.

In 2002, 284 → *magazines* were published in Cuba (Massmann 2003, 425), launched mostly by organizations and unions. Before the Período Especial there were more than 600 magazine titles. Since the mid-1990s the magazine market has been growing again. This mainly concerns specialist journals (medical science, culture, etc.). The most important general magazine is *Bohemia*, which has been in existence since 1908. It is published biweekly with a circulation of 100,000.

The Americans brought → *radio* to Cuba in 1922. Thus the medium was initially operating in the private sector. After the revolution the radio stations were expropriated and nationalized, or simply disappeared. Any kind of → advertising was prohibited. Since 1962 radio has been supervised by the Instituto Cubano de Radiodifusión.

Today there are 59 radio stations in Cuba. Seven of them broadcast their program nationwide, 52 only have a regional transmission area (Saavedra Hurtado 2003, 77). The programs concentrate on information rather than on entertainment. Furthermore there are service and educational programs. There are no music stations as such, but *Radio Reloj* is purely a news station. One exception is *Radio Taíno* addressing foreigners and tourists in Cuba. *Radio Habana Cuba* is designed also to propagate revolutionary ideals internationally. In Cuba there are more than three million radio sets, one to two per household.

Before the revolution Cuba had a private-sector → *television system* with six programs. Under Castro this system was also nationalized. Today it is technologically outdated and also abstains from advertising. *Televisión Cubana* developed in 1962 and broadcasts via two channels: *Cubavisión* (channel 2) focuses on information and entertainment, *Tele Rebelde* (channel 6) on information and sports. During the Período Especial the airtime had to be reduced. In 1999 *Cubavisión* was on air for an average of 13 hours per day, *Tele Rebelde* for 16 hours. *Televisión Cubana* has 15 Telecentros, regional broadcast stations covering nearly all provinces. These Telecentros normally broadcast 90 minutes with local information via *Tele Rebelde* from Monday to Friday. Before the revolution TV was restricted to the province La Habana and only covered half of the island. In 1988 TV reached 93 percent of the population.

Another TV station is *Cubavisión Internacional*, presenting a cable program for tourists, diplomats, and foreigners. In 2005 *Televisión del Sur (teleSUR)* came along. This is a joint program of various Latin American countries. “Founding father” was the Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez, who wanted to establish an “opposite pole” to the influence of the American TV station → CNN International. Cuba holds a 19 percent stake in the station.

Although Cuba had already introduced new information and communication technologies for education and in the health sector (→ Health Communication), the government tried to obstruct the licensing of the → *Internet* because it is difficult to control. However, as the Internet is important for tourism, the domain name “cu” was allocated in 1996 (→ Domain Names). In the same year, Law no. 209 decreed that only companies, state institutions, and universities get internet access. For private individuals this is prohibited. The regulation of the Internet was put in the charge of the Ministerio de la Informática y de las Comunicaciones de Cuba (MIC), newly founded in 2000. In 1996, *Granma Internacional* was the first Cuban media outlet with an Internet presence. Today nearly all newspapers, magazines, and broadcast stations have one. Although it is



illegal, the Internet is the medium most likely to be used by people in opposition. Private and illegal news agencies use it (Cuba Press, Habana Press, Prensa Cubana). Partly these are web pages maintained abroad. Employees and users within the country have become victims of a wave of arrests and sentenced because of subversive activities.

Media extending into Cuba from outside have been in existence for decades. They are organized by exile Cubans and considerably subsidized by the American government. By these means the Cuban population can receive news other than just the filtered news in the country. Since 1985 *Radio Martí* has been the most important radio station for this purpose. Five years later *TV Martí* was added, supervised by the US American Office of Cuba Broadcasting. Critics accuse the stations of being one-sided. In Cuba, their reception is prohibited and jammed. There are no reliable data available on the spread of utilization.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Censorship ▶ CNN ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Domain Names ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Health Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Public Goods ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## **Cultivation Effects**

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Television is the world's storyteller, telling most of the stories to most of the people, most of the time. As such it has become our most common and constant learning environment, one that very few can or even want to escape or ignore. Children today are born into homes in which most stories are told by a centralized commercial institution rather than parents, peers, schools, or the church. Television shows and tells us about life – who wins,

who loses, who is powerful, who is weak, as well as who is happy and who is sad (Weimann 2000; → Media Effects; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

Television is only one of many venues that help explain the world (→ Television; Television: Social History). What is different about television is that its version of reality bombards everyone with basically the same perspectives at the same time. These views are not much different from those found in other media or imparted by other powerful socialization agents. Yet television is unique because it provides a common set of images to virtually all members of society and because people tend to spend more time with television than other media.

Since television's inception there has been concern about its effects. The popular press and the government continue to ask: what does television do to us? Teachers and parents wonder if television makes children more aggressive or if it helps or hinders learning (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). Although seemingly simple, these questions are complex and the answers are far from simple or straightforward.

### THE CONCEPT

Cultivation analysis is one approach that helps us to find answers to these broad questions. It is the third component of a research paradigm that investigates (1) the institutional processes that underlie the media and the production of its content, (2) the prevalent images in media content, and (3) the relationships between watching television and audience beliefs and behaviors. Simply, cultivation analysis is designed to assess the contribution television viewing makes to people's conceptions of social reality (i.e., cultivation effects). In its simplest form, cultivation analysis asks if those who watch more television have views that are more reflective of what they see on television compared to those who have similar demographic characteristics but who watch less television (→ Cultivation Theory).

The methods and assumptions of cultivation analysis differ from those typically found in mass communication research. Research on media effects often focuses on how specific media messages produce immediate change in people's behaviors or attitudes. Cultivation analysis, on the other hand, is concerned with the long-term, more general, and pervasive consequences of cumulative exposure to television's messages (→ Media Effects Duration; Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). Cultivation does not imply a simple, linear, → "stimulus-response-model," or immediate short-term response to exposure. Rather, the focus is on the cumulative exposure to television's repetitive and stable messages that persist despite today's increased channel offerings available to most viewers (→ Cumulative Media Effects; Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis). Cultivation analysis represents the independent contribution of television viewing to people's conceptions of social reality.

### DESIGN OF CULTIVATION STUDIES

Cultivation studies typically begin with identifying and assessing the most recurrent and stable patterns in television content, looking for those images and values that cut across most program genres. These findings are used to generate questions designed to uncover

people's conceptions about social reality. These questions are then presented to samples of children, adolescents, or adults using standard techniques of → survey methodology. In addition, some cultivation analyses use existing data sets (such as NORC's general social survey), with the methods of secondary analysis. A key element in these surveys is the assessment of television viewing. Questions about viewing typically ask how much time the respondent watches television on an average day. Researchers then determine which respondents will be light, medium, or heavy viewers on a sample-by-sample basis (→ Exposure to Television). Hence the analyses look for differences in amount of viewing, not specific amounts of viewing. The questions about social reality used in cultivation analysis do not mention television but rather provide answers that reflect either the dominant views or images seen on television or those found in reality. The resulting relationships between amount of viewing and the tendency to respond in terms of what is seen on television reflects television's contribution to viewers' conceptions of social reality (cultivation effects).

According to cultivation theory, those who watch more television are different from those who watch less television in many ways. Although all demographic groups have people who watch more or less television, there are overall differences between those who watch more and those who watch less in terms of sex, age, education, income, occupation, race, and other demographic and social variables. In short, cultivation analysis assumes that those who watch less television are exposed to more varied and diverse information (from both mediated and interpersonal sources) compared to those who watch more television and thus rely more upon television for their information. It stands to reason that if you spend most of your time watching television then you will have little free time to explore other options that might provide different views or information about the world. Consequently, cultivation theory predicts that the more time a person spends watching television and being immersed in this mediated world, the more likely it is that their views about reality will reflect what they have seen on television.

## **SOME RESULTS**

Similar to findings for many studies about media effects, cultivation analyses typically generate small effects. Even those who watch very little television may watch 7 to 10 hours a week and certainly interact with those who watch more television, so the cards are really stacked against finding evidence of cultivation. Consequently, even though the effects may be small, finding even small differences between light and heavy viewers may indicate far-reaching consequences. Moreover, small effects may have profound consequences. For example, a difference of one percentage point in ratings may indicate the success or failure of a program, and a difference of a few percentage points in an election may determine who wins or who loses.

### **Variations in Cultivation: Resonance and Mainstreaming**

Cultivation is a continual, dynamic, ongoing process, not a unidirectional flow of influence from television to viewers. Scholars have found two processes that reflect differences in how cultivation may work, i.e. "resonance" and "mainstreaming." First, direct

experience may be important for some viewers, and the phenomenon called *resonance* illustrates how a person's everyday reality and patterns of television viewing may provide a double dose of messages that "resonate" and amplify cultivation. For example, those who live in high-crime urban areas often show stronger relationships between amount of viewing and stated fear of crime.

Second, television provides a shared daily ritual of highly compelling and informative content for diversified viewers. Television programs typically eliminate boundaries of age, class, and region. Consequently the *mainstream effect* is a relative commonality of outlooks and values that is cultivated by consistent and heavy exposure to the world of television. The phenomenon of mainstreaming means that heavy viewing may override differences in perspectives and behavior that result from numerous factors and influences. In other words, attitudes or behaviors that would ordinarily be attributed to different social or political characteristics may be diminished or absent in groups of heavy television viewers. For example, for some topics, the beliefs of those who designate themselves as liberal or conservative are often very different when they are light television viewers. But, when heavy television viewers who call themselves liberal or conservative are asked about these same topics, those classified as liberals may give responses that are somewhat more conservative and the conservatives may give responses that are somewhat more liberal. The result is that both groups reflect beliefs that are more moderate or middle-of-the-road. In short, mainstreaming reflects the sense in which television cultivates common perspectives, a relative homogenization that illustrates how television viewing has become the true melting pot of the American people and increasingly the world.

### Evidence of Cultivation

Cultivation analysis is most often associated with concerns about *television violence* (→ Violence as Media Content). Studies of television content conducted in the cultural indicators perspective have consistently found that US television's prime-time world has had a consistent and fairly high level of violence for more than 30 years. Approximately six out of ten programs are considered to have violent components, with violence occurring at the rate of four to five acts of violence per program (Weimann 2000; → Gerbner et al. 2002). Similarly, other studies of television violence, including the content analysis of the US national television violence study in the mid-1990s, found similar levels of violence across all channels (cable and broadcast, and throughout the day, with the most similarity during the prime-time hours).

As a result of this consistent level of violence viewing, cultivation studies have predicted and found that those who watch more television tend to see the world as a more violent place. These studies have found that those who watch more television are more fearful and believe that they are living in a mean and dangerous world. These individuals are more likely to buy guns and watchdogs for protection, and to install more locks on windows and doors. Heavy viewers also tend to overestimate the likelihood that they will be involved in violence and the numbers of police and others in law enforcement and crime detection. In short, viewing tends to heighten perceptions of danger and risk and reinforce an exaggerated sense of mistrust, vulnerability, and insecurity.

Evidence of cultivation is not, however, limited to studies of fear and violence. For example, television programs consistently *underrepresent women and women's roles* (→ Women in the Media, Images of; Stereotyping and the Media). Analyses have found that those who watch more television tend to give more gender-stereotyped answers to questions about the roles of men and women in society. They also found that youngsters who watch more television tend to say that boys and girls should do chores that are gender-stereotyped, such as boys should mow the lawn while girls should clean the house. Other studies examine television's content about *aging and the elderly*. These studies have shown that those who watch more television typically underestimate the number of older people in the US and are more likely to say that the elderly are infirm. They also tend to give more stereotypical responses about how people age. In addition, cultivation analyses have been conducted in areas pertaining to people's *health and nutrition*. For example, two studies of middle-school-aged children found that those who watch more television tend to say that the types of foods often advertised to children (sweetened cereals, fast food restaurants, candy, and soda) are more nutritious than they actually are.

Knowledge of cultivation and the cultivation process is by no means complete. Scholars are currently looking at the conceptual and methodological implications of cultivation on numerous levels. Cross-cultural studies are helping us to understand the → generalizability of cultivation on a worldwide basis. New technologies also are increasingly relevant for cultivation effects research, although the continued concentration and interdependence in media industries (→ Concentration in Media Systems), continued imitation of successful formats and genres (→ Cross-Media Production), as well as greater competition for media audiences should continue to enhance rather than fragment television's contribution to people's conceptions of social reality.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Cross-Media Production ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Generalizability ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Survey ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Cultivation Theory

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Cultivation theory, developed by → George Gerbner and his colleagues, proposes that television viewing makes an independent contribution to audience members' conceptions of social reality. The central hypothesis guiding cultivation research is that the more time people spend watching television, the more their beliefs and assumptions about life and society will be congruent with the most stable and repetitive messages found in television's dramatic entertainment programs.

## HISTORY

Cultivation theory was devised as one component of the *Cultural Indicators project*, a long-term research program that began in the late 1960s. The project follows a three-pronged research strategy. The first, called "institutional process analysis," investigates power roles in media industries and the pressures and constraints that affect how media messages are selected and produced. The second, called "message system analysis," quantifies and tracks the most common and recurrent elements in television content (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). The third, cultivation analysis, studies whether and how television viewing relates to viewers' conceptions of social reality (Gerbner 1973).

The theory of cultivation has been prominent in communication research, and the Cultural Indicators project has generated over 300 scholarly publications. Although early cultivation research was especially concerned with television violence, over the years the investigation expanded to include sex roles, images of aging, political orientations, environmental attitudes, science, health, religion, minorities, occupations, and other topics. Replications have been carried out in Argentina, Australia, England, Germany, Hungary, Israel, the Netherlands, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, and elsewhere.

The methods of cultivation analysis were designed to correct for specific blind spots in previous mass communication research. Most earlier studies looked at whether individual messages or genres could produce some kind of change in audience attitudes and behaviors; in contrast, cultivation sees the totality of television's programs as a coherent *system of messages*, and asks whether that system might promote stability (or generational shifts) rather than immediate change in individuals. Whereas most research and debate on, for example, television violence has been concerned with whether violent portrayals make viewers more aggressive, Gerbner and his colleagues claimed that heavy exposure to television cultivates exaggerated beliefs about the amount of violence in society, along with a sense of insecurity, victimization, and interpersonal mistrust. This cluster of outlooks is referred to as the "Mean World Syndrome" (Gerbner & Gross 1976).

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Cultivation theory is not concerned with the impact of particular program(s) or genre(s). It does not address questions of artistic quality, realism, or individual viewers' "readings"

of media messages. Rather, cultivation emphasizes aggregate patterns of images and representations to which entire communities are exposed over long periods of time (→ Cumulative Media Effects).

Cultivation does not deny the existence or importance of selective viewing, individual programs, or differences in interpretations; it just sees these as different research questions. It focuses on what is most broadly shared, in common, across program types and among large groups of otherwise heterogeneous viewers. Thus, cultivation theory argues that the systemic consequences of *television* as technology and institution cannot be found in terms of isolated fragments of the whole. The project is an attempt to say something about the broad-based ideological consequences of a commercially supported cultural industry celebrating consumption, materialism, individualism, power, and the status quo along lines of gender, race, class, and age. None of this denies the fact that some programs may contain some specific messages more than others, that not all viewers watch the same programs, or that the messages may change over time (Gerbner et al. 2002).

The theory of cultivation emphasizes the role that *storytelling* plays in the lifelong process of socialization (→ Storytelling and Narration). One basic difference between human beings and other species is that we live in a world that is created by the stories we tell. The stories of any culture constitute lessons that reflect and cultivate that culture's most basic, fundamental, and often invisible assumptions, ideologies, and values. Great portions of what we know, or think we know, come not from personal or direct experience, but from many modes of storytelling. Stories – myths, legends, soap operas, cop shows – tend to express and reproduce (i.e., cultivate) a culture's central beliefs about what exists, what is real, normal, good and bad, and what different types of people can expect in life.

Mass communication is the mass production, distribution, and consumption of cultural stories. Over much of human history, stories were told face to face by parents, teachers, or the clergy. Mass media, especially television, transform the cultural process of storytelling into a centralized, advertiser-sponsored system that now tells most of the stories to most of the people, most of the time. Most of the stories we now consume are not hand-crafted works of individual expressive artists, but mass-produced by bureaucracies according to strict market specifications. The commercial imperatives of television require it to produce stories that reflect – and thereby sustain and cultivate – the “facts” of life that most people take for granted.

## METHODOLOGY

Each year, starting in 1967, the Cultural Indicators project content analyzed a week-long sample of US network television drama in order to delineate selected features and trends in the overall world television presents to its viewers. In the 1990s, the analysis was extended to include new networks, channels, and genres. Throughout, message system analysis focused on the most pervasive content patterns that are common to many different types of programs but characteristic of the system of programming as a whole, because these hold the most significant potential lessons television cultivates. The coding instrument covers a wide range of themes, actions, and demographic representations, and is subjected to extensive reliability analysis.

The findings from the message system analyses are used to formulate questions about people's conceptions of social reality, often contrasting television's “reality” with some other

real-world criterion. Survey questions are posed to samples of children, adolescents, or adults, and the differences (if any) in the beliefs of light, medium, and heavy viewers, other things held constant, are assessed. The questions do not mention television, and respondents' awareness of the source of their information is seen as irrelevant. For the analysis, respondents are divided into groups of relatively light, medium, and heavy viewers on the basis of the distribution within any specific sample (→ Interview, Standardized; Survey).

### **MESSAGES AND IMPACTS**

The prominent and stable over-representation of well-off white males in the prime of life pervades prime time. Women are outnumbered by men at a rate of two or three to one and allowed a narrower range of activities and opportunities. The dominant white males are more likely to commit violence, while old, young, female, and minority characters are more likely to be victims. Crime in prime time is at least 10 times as rampant as in the real world, and an average of five to six acts of overt physical violence per hour involve well over half of all major characters.

Cultivation researchers argue that these messages of power, dominance, and victimization cultivate relatively restrictive and intolerant views regarding personal morality and freedoms, women's roles, and minority rights. Rather than stimulating aggression, cultivation theory contends that heavy exposure to television violence cultivates insecurity, mistrust, and alienation, and a willingness to accept repressive measures in the name of security, all of which helps maintain the prevailing hierarchy of social power (→ Cultivation Effects; Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

Cultivation is not a linear, unidirectional "effect," but part of a dynamic, ongoing process of interaction among messages and contexts. Television viewing relates in different ways to different groups' life situations and worldviews. For example, personal interaction with family and peers makes a difference, as do real-world experiences. A wide variety of socio-demographic and individual factors produce sharp variations in cultivation patterns. These differences often illustrate a phenomenon called "mainstreaming," which means that heavy television viewing may erode the differences in people's perspectives which stem from other factors and influences. Mainstreaming represents a relative homogenization of otherwise divergent viewers (→ Mainstreaming).

### **CRITIQUES**

Cultivation theory has been a highly controversial and provocative approach; the results of cultivation research have been many, varied, and often contested. The assumptions and procedures of cultivation analysis have been vigorously critiqued on theoretical and methodological grounds; extensive debates and colloquies continue to engage the scholarly community, and have led to a wide variety of refinements and extensions (Newcomb 1978; Gerbner et al. 1980; Hirsch 1980; Shanahan & Morgan 1999).

Some researchers have sought cognitive explanations for how television's images are processed, stored, and retrieved within viewers' heads. A broad range of intervening processes has been examined (e.g., the role of perceived reality, active vs passive viewing,



the family and the social context of exposure). Some have criticized the assumption of relative stability in program content over time and across genres, and emphasized the differential and specific impacts of exposure to different programs and types. The spread of nonbroadcast alternative delivery systems such as cable, satellite, and VCRs has been taken into account, and cultivation has been adapted to the virtual worlds of video games. Increasingly complex and demanding statistical tests and analytical models have been applied.

The literature contains numerous failures to replicate its findings as well as numerous independent confirmations. The most common conclusion, supported by meta-analysis, is that television makes a small but significant contribution to viewers' beliefs about the world (Shanahan & Morgan 1999; → Meta-Analysis) Given the pervasiveness of television and even light viewers' substantial cumulative exposure, finding observable evidence of cultivation at all is remarkable. Therefore, a systematic pattern of small but consistent differences between light and heavy viewers may indicate far-reaching consequences.

### NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Cultivation theory was developed when television viewing in the United States was dominated by three broadcast networks. Yet, in the early twenty-first century, all US broadcast networks combined attract under 50 percent of prime-time viewers, and the audience is divided among dozens of specialized cable and satellite channels devoted to specific interests. With the spread of VCRs, digital video recorders, digital broadcasting, video-on-demand, and pay-per-view, along with the ability to download programs on the Internet, mobile phones, and portable music players, audiences now seem to be able to choose from an extraordinary range of diverse content, watching whatever they want whenever they want, in ways that contradict many assumptions of cultivation.

Yet these new delivery systems alone do not fundamentally change the dynamics that drive program production and distribution. There has been little reduction in exposure to "network-type" programming; many new channels mainly offer more of the same types of programs. Concentration of ownership is increasing as the traditional barriers among networks, stations, studios, syndicators, cable operators, cable networks, and advertisers dissolve (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Further, key aspects of the earlier media system are amplified; e.g., premium cable channels have much higher levels of violence than do broadcast networks. Available evidence indicates that new technologies intensify cultivation; for heavy viewers, new media mean even greater exposure to more of the same messages. Thus, technological developments alone will not diminish cultivation if the messages do not change.

In sum, cultivation theory is concerned with the most general consequences of long-term exposure to centrally produced, commercially supported systems of stories. Cultivation analysis concentrates on the common consequences of living with television: the cultivation of stable, resistant, and widely shared assumptions and conceptions reflecting the institutional interests of the medium and the larger society. Understanding the dynamics of cultivation can help develop and maintain a sense of alternatives essential for self-government in a media-dominated cultural environment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cumulative Media

Effects ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Mainstreaming ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Research Methods ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Survey ▶ Television ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Cultural Appropriation**

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Cultural appropriation describes the use and exploitation by a majority or dominant group, of cultural knowledge or expressions originally produced by a minority or dominated group. It is applied to media and popular communication when ideas, images, sounds, and narratives produced by one group are appropriated for personal, professional, or commercial gain by members of a more powerful social group. Linked to colonial histories, racist discourses, and disparate access to power and resources, cultural appropriation can occur within and across specific national communities and within a range of popular communication practices (→ Communication Inequality).

### **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

#### **Distinguishing Cultural Appropriation from Related Concepts**

Cultural appropriation must be distinguished from other types of → popular communication and cultural exchange. Cultural appropriation bears some relation to processes of

assimilation, acculturation, hybridity, and cosmopolitanism, but is distinctive in important ways (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication). The term “cultural appropriation” came into widespread usage in communication studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Its theoretical development marked a shift away from the anthropological concept of *acculturation*; the gradual adoption of majority norms, values and practices by a minority or subordinate social group. The concept of acculturation as a model of cultural contact presupposes a degree of cultural essentialism and lacks an analysis of global structures of power (Born & Hesmondhalgh 2000). Postmodern influences in anthropology led to revised understandings of cultures as undergoing continuous transformation through intercultural contact and exchange (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

Cultural appropriation must likewise be distinguished from cultural *assimilation*. As Ziff and Rao (1997) suggest, assimilative practices occur when cultural minorities are encouraged or obliged to adopt the cultural forms and practices of dominant groups. Appropriative practices involve the reverse process; borrowing of cultural forms originating with subordinate groups. By the early 1990s scholars situated both these processes within theoretical analyses of power. Cultural appropriation developed as a negative concept to describe the exploitation of forms and expressions borrowed from other cultures by western societies without acknowledging their origins.

Cultural appropriation can also be compared to notions of *cultural hybridity* and *cosmopolitanism*. Within → postcolonial theory, hybridity is understood as both the transaction between past and present within a particular culture, and as the emergence of new cultural identities in periods of extensive contact between different cultures. This reinterpretation and mixing of cultural traditions is sometimes presented in a celebratory manner that obscures the histories of colonial violence from which hybridity emerges (→ Hybridity Theories). Contemporary theories of cultural cosmopolitanism suggest that global citizens should reject narrow attachments to national cultures. This view resists the notion that cultural identities are exclusively linked to specific cultural knowledge, rather it encourages forms of cultural sharing and borrowing. These concepts of cultural hybridity and cosmopolitanism neglect to consider how cultural difference is hierarchically ordered within → international communication flows. In the realm of popular communication, critics have suggested that postmodern notions of “crossover” and pluralism in music, art (→ Art as Communication), → fiction, film (→ Cinema), and → television disguise inequalities in the status and legitimacy of cultural production. This conceals practices of cultural appropriation behind appeals to aesthetic choice and cross-cultural exchange (Born & Hesmondhalgh 2000; → Aesthetics).

### **Disciplines and Areas of Study**

Because cultural appropriation occurs in a wide variety of domains, it has been studied by scholars in communication, → cultural studies, anthropology, history, art history, sociology, ethnomusicology, literary studies, political science, and law. Studies focusing on popular communication have examined appropriation in music, art, narrative, performance, popular film and television, sport and → advertising. Groups experiencing cultural appropriation can be defined in terms of ethnicity, race, and nationality. Researchers must define these groups according to their common identification with specific cultural

values, forms, and objects. Thus, approaches to cultural appropriation depend upon the initial conception of culture employed (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

As Rosemary Coombe (2004) suggests, culture is defined in two main ways in discussions of appropriation: either as the universal and common heritage of humankind, or in the plural anthropological sense in which different cultures have different properties. When culture is seen as universally shared and equally available to individual artists, musicians, or media producers, cultural appropriation is viewed more positively, especially if the borrowing is acknowledged and done respectfully. If cultures are conceived in relativist terms as collective entities with common traditions and shared identities, appropriation is viewed less favorably. This distinction is further problematized in the realm of popular communication because those cultures more often seen in the anthropological sense are indigenous, colonized, and minority cultures. Perceived as existing in a traditional and “natural” state, elements of these cultures are more likely to be used as a resource for western artists. Popular musicians such as Paul Simon and Moby, for example, have been criticized for producing commercially successful recordings that adapt the work of African performers or use samples from early African-American recordings. While the resulting commercial work is protected by the multinational recording industry and → copyright law, the source material and samples originating in other cultures are implicitly viewed as a “free” cultural resource to be exploited (Taylor 1997; Hesmondhalgh 2006).

The analysis of cultural appropriation in popular communication must be situated within an understanding of colonial discourse and racist ideologies and stereotypes in the media. Where cultures have come into contact with each other through colonial and neo-colonial relationships, aspects of the colonized culture are appropriated by the dominant one (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication; Stereotypes; Stereotyping and the Media). In the North American context, “playing Indian” in a variety of popular practices, from summer camp tribes and rituals, images of Indian princesses in brand-name logos and advertising, and New Age “shamans,” is an example of cultural appropriation (Root 1995; Deloria 1999). These practices demonstrate the ahistorical use of images and identities from indigenous cultures in ways that disown origin or authorship and reproduce stereotypical and one-dimensional perceptions (Lutz 1990). Even when the appropriation of a minority cultural form is well-intentioned and more direct, as is the case when contemporary hip hop or bhangra artists sample original African or South Asian music, the authorship of the musicians sampled is often erased or obscured (Hesmondhalgh 2000). Using the example of “pygmy pop” to demonstrate how musical communication is shaped by colonial contexts, Steven Feld (2000, 262) argues that this case of appropriation marks “the historical moments and contexts where oral performance and cultural participation are transformed into material commodity and circulable representation.”

## **MOTIVATION FOR AND EFFECTS OF CULTURAL APPROPRIATION**

Cultural appropriation is an aspect of institutional power that allows western media practitioners and cultural producers to objectify, reify, and authenticate nonwestern cultures. The motivation to appropriate has been traced to different needs and impulses

within the dominant society. In the case of appropriation of African-American musical styles and sensibilities, Perry Hall (1997) argues that white musicians are attracted to the innovative rhythmic and aesthetic sensibilities emerging from marginal black communities. This attraction triggers a form of cultural dissonance in the face of racist attitudes and values. The initial social rejection of new popular musical genres like jazz, blues, rock, and rap is overcome once these genres have been adopted by white performers and penetrate the white-dominated mainstream. The attraction to exotic and marginalized minority cultures might also be understood as a metaphor for the rejection of bourgeois western norms and values. The popular appeal of stereotypical Native Americans in Hollywood Westerns and popular television drama may reflect the viewer's desire to identify with the fictional victimized and "vanishing" Indian and avoiding the implications of real political struggles over indigenous rights (Root 1997). What might initially be perceived as a valorization of marginal and minority cultures can also be read as a desire to contain and control cultural difference and gloss over the unsavory details of the past.

Cultural appropriation in popular communication often takes the form of → fetishization of the cultural other, the reduction of living cultures and social groups to a means of social and spiritual redemption for members of the dominant society. Thus, advertising campaigns like the "united colors of Benetton" that code cultural and racial difference as an exotic commodity are also a form of cultural appropriation. The mass appeal and commercial success of yoga studios and fashions in major North American and European cities involves the appropriation of South Asian culture emptied of its original spiritual meaning and reconstructed as a form of upscale urban stress-relief. In postcolonial terms, members of the dominant society become "touring subjects" in Asian, African, and indigenous cultures (→ Tourism and Popular Culture). In each of these instances, cultural appropriation must be seen as a systemic attribute of communication practices rather than merely the result of individual acts by cultural producers and performers.

Not all researchers agree that cultural appropriation is always related to unequal power relations and modes of subjugation. Goldstein-Gidoni (2003) studied the appropriation of Japanese culture in Israel through the commercialization of activities like origami, martial arts, mask-making, dance classes, and flower arrangement. Though she suggests that these activities involve the production and consumption of an essentialized and objectified "people-less" culture, she argues that they are not ultimately harmful to Japanese culture. Other scholars defend cultural appropriation because even though it is offensive to some members of the appropriated culture, it is not always wrong. James O. Young (2005) suggests that when cultural appropriation produces works whose social value outweighs the offense (giving the example of Shakespeare's representation of Jews in the *Merchant of Venice*) it can be defended. Distinguishing between collaboration and appropriation, between mutually productive cultural exchange and exploitation, is sometimes difficult.

Although cultural appropriation includes the acquisition and use of cultural objects, its relevance in the study of popular communication is focused on the appropriation of intangible cultural forms. James O. Young (2005) distinguishes between *subject appropriation*; when outsiders represent members or aspects of another culture or make the culture or lives of others the subject of an image, story, film, or television production, and *content appropriation*; when artists, musicians, writers, or media producers use the cultural

forms, expressions, music, images, styles of another culture in the production of their work. Young suggests that people are offended by cultural appropriation because of the derogatory nature of the image or content represented, because consent to use or adapt cultural elements and expressions should have been sought and was not, or because appropriation is perceived as misusing something sacred or private (→ Ethics of Media Content).

The *effects of cultural appropriation* on subordinate groups are social, economic, cultural, and political. *Socially*, cultural appropriation is experienced as offensive, insulting, and sometimes violating. Stereotypical images of the Native American warrior or chief used as “mascots” by sports teams or in advertising logos are viewed as demeaning to indigenous people. The appropriation of religious imagery such as the eroticization of Hindu religious deities at a major gay and lesbian social event in Sydney, for example, is experienced as a form of disrespect and violation (Velayutham & Wise 2001). In the domain of *economics*, cultural appropriation exploits and commodifies aspects of subordinate cultures while diverting financial compensation away from its members. The case of jazz is a compelling example. Musical innovations in African-American communities in the 1930s were appropriated and commercialized by white musicians to the extent that black performers received little exposure in the market, were rarely rewarded with recording contracts, and were ultimately unable to support themselves by playing the music they had created (Hall 1997). The *cultural* impact of appropriation lies in the misrepresentation of subordinate cultures by stereotyping, simplifying, and silencing them. In the American context, while images of indigenous people appear frequently in many domains of popular culture, and indigenous languages are used to name regions, cities, and streets, most people know little or nothing of the original inhabitants’ history or cultures. In European cultures, representations of formerly colonized African and Asian peoples abound in literature, art, music, and popular media, but contemporary inhabitants of the former colonies have limited access to current global communications and cultural industries. Finally, cultural appropriation has a *political* impact that flows from the relationship between power and representation. Appropriation is compounded by other exclusions from education, financial support, and access to the media, and has the end result of displacing, containing, and controlling subordinate cultures.

*Responses to cultural appropriation* have emerged from debates amongst scholars, critics, media practitioners, and cultural activists. While critics of cultural appropriation have sometimes been accused of promoting → censorship, their goal could more properly be described as demanding respect and accountability in processes of cultural exchange. Both legal and ethical solutions have been considered to contain the negative effects of cultural appropriation. Legal debates have raised the problem of extending intellectual property rights to cultural forms and expressions whose ownership or origin may be collective rather than individual (→ Intellectual Property Law). Ethical questions have focused on shifting the balance of power in representation through cultural funding programs and media access policies. By this means, members of subordinate, indigenous, and minority cultures would have the resources to produce and circulate their own cultural forms to counteract appropriative processes.

SEE ALSO: ► Acculturation Processes and Communication ► Advertising ► Aesthetics  
 ► Art as Communication ► Censorship ► Cinema ► Communication Inequality

► Communication Modes, Western ► Consumer Culture ► Copyright ► Cultural Studies ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Ethics of Media Content ► Fetishization ► Fiction ► Globalization of the Media ► Hybridity Theories ► Intellectual Property Law ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Intercultural Media Effects ► International Communication ► Popular Communication ► Popular Culture ► Postcolonial Theory ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Social Stereotyping and Communication ► Stereotypes ► Stereotyping and the Media ► Television ► Tourism and Popular Culture

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# Cultural Imperialism Theories

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The cultural imperialism thesis states, broadly, that a powerful country uses cultural means to achieve or support the political and economic ends of imperialism that were historically attained through military force and occupation. In this view, the tools of culture can smooth the way for domination by exposing people to lifestyles to aspire to, products to desire, and even new sources of allegiance (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Overall, the notion of cultural imperialism appears embedded in critiques of the substantial US export of media programming to other countries. Those lodging the charge of cultural imperialism – found mainly in scholarly, political, activist, and diplomatic realms – have asserted that western films, TV shows, and commodities serve as → propaganda for a consumerism-based capitalist model of society (→ Consumer Culture). Gaining adherents for this model, the argument goes, would create overseas markets and political environments favorable to western – particularly US – interests (→ Americanization of the Media). In the process, the autonomy of receiving countries, as well as their cultures, values, and identities, would be weakened or destroyed.

## ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT

This idea is not limited to the contemporary setting: it has been applied to practices of, for example, Britain, Japan, the Ottoman Empire, France, Spain, and other imperial powers throughout history. The phrase “cultural imperialism” appeared in late-1940s discussions of the nascent United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO), expressing trepidation about the potential activities of countries with technologically advanced media systems. Although the term is not new, it first gained wide attention in the 1970s, in the context of the expansion of the US and western European mass media export industries.

The intellectual roots of the cultural imperialism thesis lie in world systems theory (Galtung 1971; Wallerstein 1974), which categorizes the countries of the world by their degree of development and of trade domination. It sees the developed countries – the “center” – dominating the non-industrialized countries – the “periphery” – in ways that do not allow the peripheral countries to establish their own paths. Dependency theory, a Latin American outgrowth of world systems theory that attained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s, elaborated the notion that underdevelopment was not simply a matter of some countries’ progress lagging behind others, but rather conferred structural advantages on developed countries (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America; Dependency Theories). Therefore it was in the interest of powerful countries to maintain their domination. During the same period, analyses of the global trade in entertainment products, particularly film and → television programs, confirmed that the US was by a large



measure the world's principal exporter of audiovisual material, while importing very little (Nordenstreng & Varis 1974). Together, these concepts – of center and periphery, of the advantage to industrialized countries of domination, and of the “one-way flow” of audiovisual material internationally – contributed to the charge that in their search for worldwide markets and ideologically sympathetic populations, states and transnational corporations were practicing cultural imperialism (→ Free Flow of Information).

The name most prominently associated with the cultural imperialism thesis is Herbert Schiller. In *Mass communication and American empire* he stated that, “Directly by economic control, indirectly by trade and a foreign emulation effect, communications have become a decisive element in the extension of United States world power” (1969, 163). Schiller set forth a fundamental claim of cultural imperialism exponents: that activities labeled as cultural imperialism constituted a threat to “the cultural integrity of weak societies whose national, regional, local or tribal heritages are beginning to be menaced with extinction” (1969, 109).

In his later book *Communication and cultural domination*, Schiller employed the term “cultural imperialism,” defining it as “the processes by which a society is brought into the modern world system.” Mass media, he contended, are the principal vehicle for “shaping social institutions to correspond to, or even promote, the values and structure of the dominating center of the system” (1976, 9). In Schiller's view, this was intentional – US government and business sectors were attempting to mold developing countries' values and institutions to benefit US objectives.

### RELATED CONCEPTS AND LIMITATIONS

Other analysts modified and adapted the notion in various ways, often focused on political and institutional relationships. The terms “media imperialism” (Boyd-Barrett 1977) and “electronic colonialism” (McPhail 1981), for example, were coined to describe phenomena recognizable as variants of the cultural imperialism thesis, drawing attention with the labels to the centrality of mass media in the analyses.

Another approach to these questions focused on media content. *How to read Donald Duck*, a seminal study by European scholar Armand Mattelart and Latin American author Ariel Dorfman, was first published in Chile in 1971. This book parsed Disney → comic books distributed in Latin America and found messages of native inferiority that the authors maintained were designed to induce readers to discard their own values and cultural identities, and to accept US superiority.

These diverse analyses both paralleled and intersected international debates about the regulation of media imports in the interest of national development. This controversy pitted the US/UK conception of the “free flow of information,” which promoted unregulated markets in news and entertainment, against many other countries' insistence on the need for balance in media exchanges, particularly of → news. This position was expressed in the UNESCO-based call for a → new world information and communication order (NWICO), which centered on concerns recognizably related to cultural imperialism claims. Exemplifying these concerns, the 1980 report of the UNESCO International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems signaled the problems caused by “certain powerful and technologically advanced States [that] exploit their advantages to

exercise a form of cultural and ideological domination which jeopardizes the national identity of other countries” (MacBride Commission 2004, 37).

There exist few explicit formulations of cultural imperialism as a theory. John Tomlinson has noted that cultural imperialism is a “generic concept” that has been used as an umbrella term for various propositions that, while related, do not share a precise meaning (1991, 9). Critics have argued not only that the concept lacks a clear definition, but also that it overlooks the complexities of culture and cultural interaction, and disregards the role of → audiences in interpreting media texts. Overall, the specific claims of proponents of the cultural imperialism thesis have not been supported by empirical research. As a → critical theory, however, cultural imperialism has provided a framework for thinking about global media flows and the power of state and commerce.

In the twenty-first century, the term “cultural imperialism” has been eclipsed. As a way of conceptualizing and analyzing multidirectional cultural interactions, the concept of hybridity has gained attention. Ongoing international trade liberalization and the advent of the → Internet have also brought the notion of “globalization” to the fore (→ Globalization Theories). The latter has largely supplanted cultural imperialism in discussions of international media flows, with analysts stressing that the concept of media globalization lacks the intentionality implicit in the cultural imperialism thesis.

SEE ALSO: ► Americanization of the Media ► Audience ► Comics ► Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ► Consumer Culture ► Critical Theory ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Dependency Theories ► Free Flow of Information ► Globalization Theories ► Hybridity Theories ► International Communication ► Internet ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► News ► Propaganda ► Television ► UNESCO

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# Cultural Patterns and Communication

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The concept of culture was first found useful by social anthropologists in studies of tribal societies. More recently, it has also been used to analyze differences between industrialized societies. A culture can be said to exist when a number of persons interpret the events around them in relatively similar ways. These shared interpretations typically include the meanings of both the behaviors of other persons and the physical entities that are present in a particular setting. Thus, attributes of a culture might include agreement that a certain building is to be thought of as a school and perceptions that certain students are more able, attractive, or industrious than others. Culture is a concept that can be applied to marriages, teams, tribes, organizations, and nations. There is obviously less consensus between the members of a nation than there is between members of smaller groupings, but cross-cultural psychologists have found value in studying nations as cultures.

By comparing survey responses of business employees from over 50 nations, Hofstede (2001) identified *five dimensions describing cultural differences* between nations. He named these as Individualism–Collectivism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity/Femininity, and Long-Term Orientation. First identified in the 1960s, these dimensions can still predict how many aspects of behavior relevant to communication vary between nations. In particular, the contrast between individualism and collectivism has been confirmed by later studies. Within the (mostly western) nations categorized as relatively individualistic, most persons define their identity in terms of personal attributes and see their linkages with others as based on individual choice (→ Communication Modes, Western). Thus, although relationships, marriages, and jobs can be long-lasting, they can also be terminated if they do not meet one's goals in life. Within nations categorized as more collectivistic, most persons define their identity in terms of long-term commitment to groups such as family, tribe, or organization. An individual leaving such groups would find it difficult to locate new sources of identity, because alternative groups would not be open to new members.

Nations cannot be categorized simply as individualistic or collectivistic, but can be arrayed along a *spectrum* from one extreme to the other. Individuals also vary in their orientation toward individualism and collectivism, so that one may find some individualists within a predominantly collectivist culture and some collectivists within a predominantly individualistic culture. This has been particularly true recently, due to extensive migration from collectivistic to individualistic nations.

The types of communication that are most prevalent in different cultures reflect the priorities of those living within them. In individualistic settings, it is important to establish one's credentials as someone who is attractive, coherent, competent, and trustworthy. In collectivistic settings, a stronger priority is to preserve harmony within one's group and to maintain the integrity of its boundaries. Even the languages spoken in different cultures reflect these priorities: those spoken within collectivistic nations mostly permit the omission of the personal pronoun "I" from a sentence, while those (such as English) spoken in individualistic nations do not (Kashima & Kashima 1998).

For members of a collectivist culture, preferred communication styles will depend upon whom one is communicating with more than for those in an individualistic culture. Among one's ingroup, concerns with face and harmony will predominate. In dealing with those outside one's group, communication may be as direct and as confronting as is favored by members of individualist cultures, in order that the integrity and honor of one's group may be upheld. Research studies (Smith et al. 2006) now show that individuals' orientation toward individualism or collectivism predicts directness of communication (→ Communication Modes, Asian), nonverbal aspects of communication (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture), expression of emotions, politeness strategies, concern with one's own face rather than with others' face (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework), embarrassability, receptiveness to individual- or group-focused feedback, styles of negotiation, and response to different types of advertisements. Communication style even affects how individuals respond to research surveys: members of collectivist nations show a stronger tendency to agree with positively worded questions, so that cross-national comparisons can be invalid if no correction is made for this (Smith 2004).

The other dimensions of cultural variation identified by Hofstede have been less intensively investigated. Power distance, defined as relative acceptance of hierarchy, affects styles of address in different nations. Preference for high or low levels of uncertainty avoidance is associated with variation in the types of emotion most frequently reported. More recent studies have shown that nations can be distinguished in terms of distinctive profiles of beliefs, in addition to the values upon which Hofstede focused (Bond 2004).

Conceptualizations of culture are important because communication can only be fully understood as an interaction between individuals' dispositions and the broader context within which they are located. To become effective, individuals must learn to express themselves in ways that convey desired meanings within the interpretive system in which they are located. While cultural transmission occurs normally in the family and at school, it becomes problematic for the increasing number of those who move from one cultural context to another, whether as students, tourists, business persons, refugees, or migrants (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication). Learning another culture entails more than learning a new language: it requires a grasp of the ways in which that language is used to interpret local meanings.

SEE ALSO: ► Acculturation Processes and Communication ► Communication Modes, Asian ► Communication Modes, Western ► Intercultural Communication Training ► Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture

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## **Cultural Products as Tradable Services**

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In the communication field, the term “cultural product” refers to media artifacts such as → books, → newspapers, → magazines, recorded music, films, → television programs, and related audiovisual materials. “Cultural product” succinctly conveys the juxtaposition that renders these artifacts controversial: they express cultural values of societies that produce them, yet are economic goods created, distributed, and engaged by → audiences under market conditions (→ Culture Industries; Music Industry; Markets of the Media). Because of their power to influence a society’s aesthetic and ideological environments, as well as its economy, the exchange of cultural products across political, cultural, and linguistic boundaries can be quite sensitive. Efforts to promote cultural products’ creation and dissemination – and also to control their importation and circulation – have been undertaken by a variety of organizations in diverse contexts (Hesmondhalgh 2007). Historically this has involved less developed nations restricting importation of cultural products from more developed nations, although despite moves toward free trade, more developed nations have resisted cultural imports from their peers.

### **HISTORY**

Cultural products have been assumed to carry the political, economic, and social ideals of their societies of origin since the beginnings of mechanized print media (→ Printing, History of). As western economies became more intricate and specialized under European colonial expansion and the Industrial Revolution, markets for cultural products grew more robust, and the products themselves more complex. A translation industry developed to increase their market reach across cultures. Concerns over the impacts of imported cultural products mounted during a period of accelerated technological innovation that began in the mid-nineteenth century and continues today. As cultural products assumed a more central position in cultural and economic relations among nations and social groups, national governments elaborated and began to enforce cultural policies (→ Media Policy). Political advocacy organizations also began monitoring media content and wielding political and economic power to press for change. A North American example is illustrative.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the US government supported the export of US-produced films through currency exchange rate guarantees, suspension of antitrust rules for international business, tax breaks, and other programs (Guback 1985). In the 1910s and 1920s, US studios produced so-called “greaser” films that depicted Mexicans

and Mexican Americans as unwashed, lascivious criminals. These portrayals led to public outcry and theatre boycotts in the southwestern US and Mexico. In 1922 Mexico's government threatened to block distribution of all films from an offending studio if representations did not improve. The filmmakers quickly developed a production code, and an industry organization, the Motion Pictures Producers and Distributors of America, began reviewing films prior to export so as to avert such confrontations. This example clarifies who are the major players in cultural products trade: media industry participants (including industry organizations), government agencies, advocacy groups, and the → public. Other key players would emerge later: supra-national organizations such as GATT and WTO.

### INTELLECTUAL ROOTS AND THE ISSUES OF THE 1970S

Cultural products and the organizations that create them, cultural industries, initially received theoretical attention from members of the Frankfurt School in the 1930s through 1950s (Horkheimer & Adorno 1996, 1st pub. 1944; → Critical Theory). The Frankfurt scholars joined analyses of media ownership and control with critiques of mass cultural products' content to discuss their impact on economic conditions as well as aesthetic values (→ Ownership in the Media). This scholarship brought attention to the multifaceted influence of cultural production and stimulated subsequent research along these lines (→ Political Economy of the Media). Midway through the twentieth century as many newly independent nations struggled to cast off the yoke of political, economic, and cultural dependency, discussions of a new world information and communication order occurred in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ Dependency Theories; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; UNESCO). The content, dissemination, and impact of cultural products were directly linked to arguments about the commodification of mass media and communication's role in maintaining global inequities.

An empirical study of international television flow by Nordenstreng and Varis (1974) summarized the lopsided distribution of programs from more developed nations to less developed ones – typically following former colonial trade routes – and highlighted the advantaged position of the US among more developed nations. This study, among others, invigorated the cultural imperialism thesis asserting that western culture displaces local culture in less developed nations where cultural products are imported and engaged by audiences on a large scale, thereby overshadowing locally produced media content (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). A widely read UNESCO report on the international communication status quo called for reforms to make media production and dissemination more equitable, and underscored the combined cultural and economic character of cultural products (MacBride Commission 2004).

### RECENT CONCERNS

More recent concerns about cultural products as tradable services have focused on their inclusion in *regional trade agreements*. Although North America and Europe pursued different methods of economic integration, the inclusion of cultural products was contested

in both regions. As the 1988 *Free Trade Agreement* (FTA) was negotiated, Canada's historic sensitivity to cultural domination, resulting from high volumes of imported US media, clashed with the US preference to treat cultural products like any other economic good. Canada insisted that cultural products be excepted from the FTA, and the US countered by reserving the right to retaliate in other industries should Canada restrict distribution of its cultural products. In 1994 Mexico joined an expanded North American Free Trade Agreement, with little public discussion of the agreement's potential impact on the cultural sector, though concerns were raised by Mexican intellectuals (McAnany & Wilkinson 1996; → NAFTA and International Communication).

*Europe's* integration efforts date from the 1940s and display deep traditions of direct government involvement in media production and dissemination through state-subsidized publishing, film production, and public service broadcasting (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; Public Broadcasting Systems; Public Broadcasting, History of). These traditions have complicated the emergence of additional commercially supported media systems since the 1980s. The European Commission's goal of establishing a vigorous regional exchange in cultural products is also challenged by considerable diversity in numbers of language speakers, the size and wealth of national economies, and the uneven productivity of media industries among European Union (EU) members. Equity and balance in the cultural product trade is at issue within the EU system since half a dozen languages and production centers predominate among more than 25 nations. As concerns the external trade in cultural products, the EU endeavors to promote the export of regionally produced media and curtail the heavy importation of outside content, especially from the US (→ European Union: Communication Law). In 1993, as the deadline to sign the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) drew near, the EU, under France's guidance, advocated specifying limitations for US films on European screens. The heated disagreement over this provision threatened to derail the entire agreement before a last-minute compromise was reached.

The *Southern Common Market* (MERCOSUR) among Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay was created in 1991. The agreement contains little specific language concerning the trade in cultural products, yet it should be noted that Argentina and Brazil are prolific producers of music, film, and television, especially telenovelas (→ Soap Operas), which are exported throughout Latin America and beyond (Galperin 1999; → Communication Law and Policy: South America). In *Asia*, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has left cultural trade issues for its member nations to address; some have successfully slowed the importation of cultural products while developing their own multicultural, multilingual media (Lent 1990; → Communication Law and Policy: Asia).

The *World Trade Organization* (WTO) is the supra-national organization administering the trade in cultural products since 1995, when it took over the GATT negotiation process. Several sub-agreements negotiated under WTO auspices address specific trade issues related to cultural products. A general agreement on trade in services (GATS) established a framework for facilitating trade and investment in the "services" sector, including → advertising, business, computers, finance, insurance, and market research, among others – industries that experienced tremendous growth due to digitization and diminishing costs for international telecommunications since the 1980s. The GATS annex provides that private telecommunication firms may gain adequate access to national infrastructures.

It has opened many domestic telecommunication systems to international competition, and institutionalized the → “free flow of information” principle long at issue in international communication (Thussu 2006). As various types of communication content move across myriad distribution systems, the definition of cultural products and the analysis of their exchange have become more complicated. It is also increasingly difficult to control → piracy as digital technology facilitates the rapid and economical reproduction of cultural products with no degradation of quality for each subsequent “generation” produced. This challenge is addressed by the WTO agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs), a treaty establishing minimum standards for intellectual property regulation. TRIPs is strongly endorsed by the US as a means of bringing order and dispute-settlement procedures to intellectual property protection through the multilateral trading system.

A key area of dispute over intellectual property rights has been *file sharing*, the practice of making computer files available for downloading by other users on a computer network (→ Internet, Technology of). A computer file containing the cultural product is transferred from a remote computer to a local computer’s hard drive or other storage medium (e.g., CD) or playback device (e.g., MP3 player). In the late-1990s concerns focused on file-sharing systems such as Napster, used for downloading music without paying royalties to the copyright holders (→ Copyright). By the mid-2000s, concerns had expanded to audiovisual content, including television programs and feature films that computer users could download and view without paying fees. In 2007 the media conglomerate Viacom filed suit against YouTube, a popular video-sharing website where users could upload, view, and share videos they had produced themselves or recorded from other media. The presence of commercially produced, copyrighted cultural products on servers that also stored home movies and other amateur productions challenged conventional approaches to intellectual property rights enforcement.

The easy access to volumes of content among people who have computers, the → Internet, and the knowledge to use them tends to obscure the vast majority of the world’s population who remain disconnected (→ Digital Divide). In 2004 the G8 countries were home to only 15 percent of the world’s population, but represented nearly 50 percent of the world’s total Internet users (World Summit on the Information Society 2005). A movement to address this and related problems emerged in the early 2000s with the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS; → Internet: International Regulation; Internet Law and Regulation). A series of international meetings sponsored by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) began in 2003 to “build a people-centered, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society, where everyone can create, access, utilize, and share information and knowledge . . .” (Building the Information Society 2003). Although some indicators suggested a *narrowing of the digital divide* in limited sectors by the mid-2000s, a clear pattern had emerged: slower uptake and fewer benefits derived from new technologies in the less developed nations. The WSIS concerns were reminiscent of calls for a NWICO, though with an emphasis on new, interactive technologies (→ Interactivity, Concept of). It must be emphasized that these new technologies are often used to engage cultural products that are still traded as economic services and simultaneously carry cultural values from the societies that produce them.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience ▶ Book ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Copyright ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Digital Divide ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Magazine ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Policy ▶ Music Industry ▶ NAFTA and International Communication ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Newspaper ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Piracy ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Television ▶ UNESCO

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## **Cultural Studies**

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Cultural studies is a recent, innovative, and interdisciplinary project that has had a significant presence in the field of communication since the late 1970s, as well as in other

humanities and social sciences (→ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968). Cultural studies is concerned with describing and intervening in the ways in which texts, discourses, and other cultural practices are produced within, circulate through, and operate in the everyday life of human beings and the institutions of society.

Unlike some other interdisciplinary fields, cultural studies is not defined by a single object (e.g., an identity, as in women's studies) or a geographical region (e.g., area studies). Moreover, there are several versions of cultural studies. Although some commentators locate its origins in Britain in the 1960–1970s (especially at the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies), it actually emerged independently, as an interdisciplinary and international project, in multiple geographical locations. While communication was perhaps its first and most sympathetic host, at least in the US, today it has a presence in many disciplines and fields. This diversity – theoretical, methodological, political, and empirical – can make it difficult to discern the project of cultural studies.

The common project involves a particular way of doing intellectual work that is responsive and responsible to its changing context, whether geographical, historical, political, or institutional (→ Critical Theory). Without giving in to relativism, cultural studies seeks new and more modest forms of expertise. Its modesty is based not on any failure of scholarly rigor, but on a realization that knowledge and the tools of its production are always, unavoidably, contextually bound. If people make history, but in conditions not of their own making, as Karl Marx suggested, cultural studies explores this process as it is enacted through cultural practices.

### KEY CONCEPTS

Two pairs of concepts ground the project of cultural studies: culture and context; power and belonging. Cultural studies starts from a recognition that *culture* has several meanings (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). While other disciplines may study one aspect, cultural studies aims to hold together the different dimensions of culture in a productive tension: (1) culture as a set of privileged activities, texts, and rituals, ranging from the highly valued (e.g., art) to the common (mass and popular culture), through which people express complex relations to the world in which they live; (2) culture as the uniquely human, symbolically mediating activities through which human beings make sense of that world; and (3) culture as the whole way of life of a group of people in the world, linking everyday life to the totality of social relations and institutions.

Cultural studies, thus, addresses the interrelations among the aesthetic-expressive-ritual, the symbolic-constructionist-hermeneutic, and the socio-anthropological dimensions of culture. It is the concrete totality of these relations that constitutes the uniqueness of human life in any particular time and place, for any particular group of people. To put it simply, cultural studies scholars believe that every aspect of human life is in part (but never only) cultural. This is different from a frequent, but mistaken identification of cultural studies with the application of humanistic or literary methods of interpretation and judgment to all of culture or society, or as the study of academically and socially marginalized forms of culture (e.g., media culture, popular culture, or subaltern cultures).

The second key concept is *context*. Cultural studies believes that any element or aspect of human life can only be understood relationally; what something is, is less the product

of its own internal essence than the sum total of its relations with other elements of the context of the lived social reality of a group of people. Cultural studies is an effort to think contextually about contexts; context defines both the object and the practice of research. Many of the core and unique features of the project of cultural studies derive from this concept. If academic work is commonly characterized as moving from the complex to the simple, from the concrete to the typical, cultural studies insists on describing and theorizing the complexity of the specific contexts. Instead of the disjunctive and reductionist logic that attempts to find the one thing that will explain something, cultural studies adopts an anti-reductionist and conjunctive rhetoric: “yes (it is that), and that . . . (and that . . . and that).” And, partly as a result, cultural studies work has to be interdisciplinary, establishing culture’s relations to everything that is not culture; for example, economics, the state, or various social institutions. The diverse versions of cultural studies normally operate within a broader theoretical framework – such as → pragmatism, historical materialism, or postmodern materialism – that embraces a radical contextualism. Cultural studies, however, does not have a general theory of culture per se.

This contextualism is expressed in the key notion of *articulation*, which refers to a theoretical model as well as a methodological practice. Articulation is the making, unmaking, and remaking of relations according to a logic of contingency, what Stuart Hall (1983) called a theory “without guarantees.” If some theories treat the shape and structure of social contexts as inevitable, other theories tend to deny any stability or reality to the structures and relations of social life. Cultural studies operates in the space between, on the one hand, absolute fixity and determination, and, on the other hand, absolute freedom and indetermination. Cultural studies is committed to the reality of relations that have determining effects, and attempts to construct politically relevant descriptions of how contexts are continuously being made, unmade, and remade.

The third key concept defines context as a material configuration of *power*. While avoiding a reduction of all social relations to matters of power, cultural studies approaches contexts as sites of a struggle over power. Here, power is understood not necessarily as domination, but as the ongoing production of structures of inequality, and as a temporary balance in the field of social forces and interests involving multiple dimensions. One dimension of power (e.g., class) does not necessarily explain another (e.g., gender), nor will changing one necessarily change the other. Similarly, there is no singular mechanism through which a given dimension of power (e.g., race) is produced, organized, and performed. Instead, power operates at different levels, including the state, civil institutions, discourses, everyday life, emotions, and the body.

In this process, culture is a crucial agent configuring, consolidating, and resisting power. Exhibiting fissures and fault lines that may become active sites of struggle and transformation, power can be seen as always contradictory and incomplete. Cultural studies examines how power infiltrates, contaminates, and limits the possibilities that people have of living their lives in humane, dignified, and secure ways; it also explores the possibilities for change through an analysis of the existing fields of power. Cultural studies, then, investigates how people are empowered and disempowered by the particular discursive practices through which their everyday lives are articulated in relation to the wider structures of social, economic, and political power.

The final key concept addresses how people experience everyday life and its contexts of social power: *belonging* points to the forms of affiliation, identification, and differentiation by which people locate and invest themselves in particular social groups, cultural identities, geographical and symbolic spaces. Whether understood in terms of national formations or local communities, shared identities or structured differences, belonging is closely connected to a notion of the popular: this is not some subset of culture, but the full set of maps, logics, and languages within which people understand themselves, calculate their values and commitments, and decide on the necessary stabilities and possible mobilities of their lives.

### KEY FIGURES

The actual shape of any version of cultural studies is determined by a number of choices and circumstances: the particular local or regional setting of the work; the specific cultural ensemble of media and discourses being examined; the theoretical tools and key concepts that lend themselves to the domain of study; and the (political) questions being addressed. The literature in cultural studies from different regions of the world and in different languages bears witness to the viability and diversity of the project within various national and regional settings. While some of these traditions emerged as a result of an encounter and conversation with English-language work in cultural studies, others, especially in Asia and Latin America, emerged out of their own traditions of cultural and political analysis in the context of developments following World War II (→ Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia; Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America; Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia). For example, the founding work of Néstor García Canclini and Jesús Martín-Barbero, drawing upon a long history of cultural criticism, has made important contributions to the cultural studies of communication in both the Latin American and global contexts. In the English-language literature within the field of communication, the two most important and influential figures have been James Carey in the US and Stuart Hall in Great Britain (→ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada; Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe).

Carey's contribution was driven by a pragmatic concern for the role of communication in community and democracy. Influenced by the anthropological semiotics of Clifford Geertz and the materialist history of → Harold Innis, Carey's research examined the ways in which the social appropriation of various technologies (e.g., the telegraph, railroads) and of cultural forms (e.g., journalism, the novel) gave expression to, shaped, and sometimes undermined the maps of meaning, modes of belonging, and structures of experience that are shared across culture, including not least people's experience of themselves in social space and time. Carey described culture as the symbolic realm through which human beings create representations of reality, and then live within those representations. He took the fundamental challenge facing cultural studies to be the growing influence of science as a model of research, embodied, for example, in a transmission view of communication as opposed to his own ritual view (→ Models of Communication). Carey argued that a reduction of human reality to the parameters of scientific knowledge was partly to blame for the growing weakness both of a sense of

community and of a commitment to democracy in the United States. A consistent underlying theme in his work, which became more evident toward the end of his career, was the historical processes by which societies themselves are made, unmade, and remade. He was particularly concerned with how the university was giving up its critical role in describing and judging larger social and cultural changes.

Hall's work began from an ambivalent relation to Marxism, and was also influenced by poststructuralism and postmodern materialism, especially as represented by Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. Hall's research has moved from analyses of the ideological messages of media content to broader accounts of the active cultural agency of media audiences and their symbolic resistance, as stated in his encoding–decoding model of communication. While continuing to explore more complex, circulatory models of the production and consumption of culture, his major writings since the 1980s have focused on the reorganization of national politics and the rise of a new conservatism in Britain. Theorizing such political developments as cultural struggles for hegemony over the definition of “the popular,” Hall's attention was turned to identities and subjectivities (particularly aspects of race and ethnicity), again not as analytical categories regarding individuals, but as dimensions of culture and society as such.

### RESEARCH ISSUES AND PROBLEMATICS

Despite their diversity, different versions of cultural studies define themselves as answering particular questions that derive not from academic protocols, but from the world of lived realities. At least four such problematics can be identified: knowledge, agency, subjectivity, and modernity. While different research formations may address these questions – whether alone or in combination – one has to remember that the form of the questions themselves will be differently articulated in relation to the specific context.

The concept of *knowledge* raises questions not just of how to assess the claims of, but of distinguishing between competing forms of, knowledge. Cultural studies generally places itself in opposition to the universalizing claims of “scientific” or reductionist approaches. It interprets the variety of cultural messages in a given society as maps of the structures of meaning and belonging. Such interpretations may approach culture critically, as ideological representations in the service of dominant interests, or more sympathetically, as rituals of belonging that reaffirm the shared meanings and values of a social group.

The question of *agency* is directly connected to the concept of power as described here. Cultural studies seeks to understand not only the organizations and institutions of power, but also the possibilities for resistance, struggle, and change throughout society. It takes contestation for granted, not as a reality in every instance, but as a potential and a precondition for the existence of critical work, political opposition, even historical change. People are not considered simply passive objects being manipulated by dominant messages, or cultural dopes. Cultural studies examines how people attempt to assert themselves in the face of power, the determinations that constrain and empower them, and the possibilities available to them.

The problematic of *subjectivity* arises primarily from two developments within cultural studies: first, the influence of poststructuralist theory, which argues that discourses produce the positions (subjectivities) from which individuals both experience the world and become speakers of the discourse (→ Postmodernism and Communication;

Structuralism); second, the organization of political struggles around a series of identities relating to gender, race, ethnicity, etc. This consideration of subjectivity challenges the common assumption that there is an authentic way of experiencing the world, which may have been distorted by ideological representations. The problematic is radical because it suggests that the very possibilities of human experience and agency are determined by the structures of discourse. One further implication is that any identity – understood now as a place within language from which people speak and live the world – is always and only constructed negatively, as differences. The everyday understanding of identity as positively defined is, accordingly, the result of a constant differentiation within and among the members of a social group. This helps to explain why cultural studies scholars have often championed notions of a hybridity and complexity of identities.

The final problematic – *modernity* – is the broadest, involving social formations in their entirety; it addresses, for example, not the question of race, but that of national formations that can be described as raced. In such cases, cultural studies analyzes the interrelations of state, economy, and culture. The aim is to understand the place of culture in the ongoing transformation of contemporary societies, whether in a national or a colonial perspective, and the particular processes, such as globalization, that are redefining the contours of modernity in both cultural and social terms.

The future of cultural studies is uncertain, in part because much of what makes cultural studies unique contradicts the demands of traditional universities. Neither the academy nor the “real” world of politics is a very sympathetic home for the kind of work that cultural studies proposes. Its commitment to studying relations and, hence, to an interdisciplinary project means that cultural studies cannot sit comfortably in any discipline. Even more important, while cultural studies is committed to the necessity of what Marx (1973) called a “detour through theory,” its commitment is to theory as a resource to be used strategically to respond to specific questions of relevance. Cultural studies measures the truth of a theory by its ability, first, to enable a better understanding of the context in question and, next, to open up new possibilities for changing that context. Theory, then, should not become a way of avoiding the risks of research, or of reducing the possibility of surprise and discovery. Therefore, cultural studies does not identify itself with any single theoretical paradigm or tradition.

Similarly, cultural studies seeks not to give priority to particular political stakes and constituencies, nor to take the appropriate goals and forms of struggle for granted; such assumptions might substitute political commitment for intellectual work. Therefore, cultural studies has no single politics. While it puts knowledge in the service of politics, it also attempts to make politics listen to the authority of knowledge. Cultural studies is a modest proposal for a flexible and contextual, intellectual and political practice that tries to make the connection between politics and culture.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as an Academic Field: East Asia ► Communication as an Academic Field: Latin America ► Communication as an Academic Field: South Asia ► Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ► Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ► Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ► Critical Theory ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Innis, Harold ► Models of Communication ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Pragmatism ► Structuralism

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# **Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture**

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The question of what counts as “feminist popular culture” arises from an engagement with foundational debates within → cultural studies as to the primary site for cultural reproduction and contestation (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). These debates are reflected in the competing definitions of → “popular culture” that circulate in the literature, namely: (1) the ideological products of mainstream commercial culture addressed to the mass audience, (2) an alternative, negotiated culture based on a “lived” sensibility of subordination and marginalization, and (3) an oppositional culture developed through the political consciousness necessary for a radical critique of the status quo (→ Critical Theory).

### **COMPETING VIEWPOINTS**

These three sites are connected through the hegemonic processes by which resistant meanings are co-opted into the mainstream in an attempt to neutralize their power, and thereby maintain the status quo. Thus it is argued that the more radical implications of contemporary feminism have been side-stepped by the incorporation into mainstream culture of the demands for greater female visibility, autonomy, sexual freedom, and economic equality through the figure of the “independent career woman” who takes on many of the attributes of the successful middle-class man while remaining sexually

alluring and feminine in appearance. Nevertheless, the performance of gender in contemporary culture allows for a much wider range of legitimate identities as a result of the questioning of gender norms that feminism has provoked (→ Identity Politics).

There are also differing views among feminist producers and critics about how cultural representations can adequately address political questions about *women's place in society* and, crucially, what those political goals should be – different strands of feminism have different ideas about what their utopian society would be like, ranging from the liberal feminist goals of integration and equal rights, for example, to the more separatist implications of radical feminist valorization of women's distinctive identity and culture.

There is also a *diversity of methods*: from an initial concern with textual issues of gender equity drawing on semiotics, psychoanalysis, theories of ideology, the analysis of mainstream → stereotypes, and “progressive texts” (→ Text and Intertextuality), feminist studies of popular culture soon took on a wider cultural agenda with research into audience pleasures, the politics of taste, the integration of popular media into the routines of everyday life, and the influence of feminist cultural critique on everyday gendered → discourse (→ Research Methods). An integrated approach researches feminist influences on textual meanings through the political, economic, and cultural contexts of their production and reception. Feminist critical discourses are themselves influenced by the portrayal of feminism in popular culture – they are “part of the same social and cultural struggles over the meaning of feminism” (Hollows & Moseley 2006, 15).

### PROGRESSIVE TEXTS

One of the outcomes of feminist studies of popular culture has been the identification of a “canon” of feminist texts, whether found in mass-produced culture or on the margins. A range of criteria has been used by commentators to identify them; it has been argued, variously, that they must (1) be female authored, (2) be produced and distributed outside mainstream patriarchal institutions, (3) be ideologically unambiguous and politically radical, (4) represent women's experience and subjectivity accurately, (5) deconstruct the codes of patriarchal culture, (6) provide positive images of women, (7) express female desire and fantasy, and (8) be addressed to and give pleasure to women.

There are some obvious contradictions in this list that reveal *divergent values and purposes*. For instance, calls for a realistic portrayal of women's lives imply a very different approach than required for utopian expressions of women's desires and fantasies. Similarly, it is difficult to reconcile the demand to accurately portray women's suffering and powerlessness with the desire for “positive images of women” (→ Women in the Media, Images of). It is also clear that, while calls for female authorship and alternative institutions of production and distribution have helped to deconstruct the embedded sexism of established cultural forms and working practices (→ Sexism in the Media), the effect of working on the margins has limited the impact of women's oppositional cultural production. Nor can female authorship guarantee a feminist perspective. Increasingly, interventions into mainstream media have been seen as equally significant for political change, and a popular feminist culture has emerged that engages with and pragmatically adapts familiar generic forms to express the social and political impact of feminism on women's experiences and perceptions. But there is a two-way permeable relationship



between the mainstream and the margins, with feminist artists, for example, producing work that both draws on and influences the more popular cultural forms addressed to wider audiences.

To tease out some of the difficulties that arise in designating texts as “feminist,” *Thelma & Louise* (1991), a film about two women escaping from capture after one of them shoots a rapist, provides a useful example as it has been extensively discussed in these terms in both the popular press and academic articles (Projansky 2001, 121–153). Its popular success was regarded as either surprising given its feminist perspective, or simply evidence that it was not really feminist at all in that it conformed to Hollywood conventions of narrative and visual pleasure and was made by a well-known male director, Ridley Scott. Yet it was scripted by a woman who reworked the road movie genre so that two women were the central characters in control of the masculine technologies of the gun and the car. The film was not marketed as “feminist” and so avoided the liberal dislike of → propaganda, remaining sufficiently ambivalent to be read in divergent ways. It fitted into a changed context where selected feminist ideas had become more generally accepted and the use of “role reversal” as a textual strategy was already well established. The film has been claimed for feminism on the basis that it offers empowering images of strong, independent women and produces an intensely pleasurable response in women audiences. It is celebrated as a fantasy of revenge for the disempowerment and injustices that women experience in their everyday lives. But equally it is condemned as anti-feminist for promoting violent masculine values and relying on masculine visual pleasures of technological excess to draw its audience in. In this view, the women take over the male hero’s role without really transforming it and their death at the end is a punishment for their transgression of acceptable femininity. In this reading, their driving over the edge of the Grand Canyon when pursued by the police is a confirmation of the women’s subjection to patriarchal law, but for other viewers it offers the ultimate escape fantasy as the women are suspended in mid-air in the final shot, a confirmation of their assertion that “there’s no going back” to their lives under patriarchy.

These diverse interpretations of the film’s textual politics highlight the problems with the concept of the “progressive text” that relies not only on an assumption of shared political values but also on shared interpretations of the meaning of a text. This difficulty intensified as feminist academics turned their attention to the increasingly ambivalent texts of what came to be known as “postfeminist” popular culture, in which contradictory discourses are rendered open to interpretation by an aesthetic of irony, parody, and excess that celebrates as well as critiques the established forms of popular culture and their gendered conventions (→ Postfeminism). The ideological work performed by these texts in undoing or reconfirming the disciplinary norms of femininity is therefore undecidable, except as an empirical question in local contexts using ethnographic techniques of research.

### **FEMINIST MODES OF RECEPTION AND PARTICIPATION**

When feminist popular culture is studied as a sensibility rather than as a set of texts, the focus turns to the ways in which people participate in cultural activities in their everyday lives. Feminist scholars seeking to validate women’s enjoyment of romance novels or

television melodramas argue that they have value in the face of a dominant hierarchy of taste in which they are labeled as “trash,” but there is a problematic gap between the tastes of the majority of women and their own politically motivated criteria of value (→ Exposure to Communication Content). One approach has been to maintain the political importance of women “carving a space” for their own pleasure through consumption of escapist fantasies when their role requires prioritizing other people’s needs. A case has also been made for “*Oprah*-style” confessional talk shows (→ Broadcast Talk), which focus on the problems of women’s lives rather than the “happy ending” of the romance, offering a means to convert painful personal experience into a politicized consciousness of how to overcome shared experiences of oppression.

Ethnographic studies (→ Ethnography of Communication) in countries undergoing rapid → modernization have shown that both global and locally produced female-centered television serials play a significant role in mediating women’s everyday negotiations of traditional and feminist conceptions of female identity (Mankekar 1999; Kim 2005). The empowering potential of popular culture has also been studied in “fan” communities in which the pathologized passivity of feminine consumption of “trash” is reconfigured as active appropriation. A well-known example is the production of “slash/fiction” by female fans of *Star Trek* who circulate homoerotic stories based on the series that subvert the patriarchal ideology of the original narrative. Internet communication has enabled fan activity to escalate to a new level in response to cult television series such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or *Xena: Warrior Princess*. The presence of female action heroes and explicit or implied lesbian relationships in these series encourages feminist and queer interpretive pleasures that spill over into imaginative and critical writing (→ Exposure to the Internet).

Feminist activists have wanted to educate taste, to develop *new cultural competences and communities of practice*, through formal courses in women’s studies or informal exhibition or workshop spaces, for example, that teach women to read “against the grain” of hegemonic patriarchal meanings and build their confidence to engage with (and produce) alternative feminist cultures (→ Feminist Media). But new feminist practices also emerge in sub-cultural contexts such as the predominantly masculine cultures of rock music, digital gaming, or hip hop, for example. Studies of youth sub-cultures as a “site of resistance” hold a privileged place in the development of cultural studies, but few initially gave any attention to the way in which young women carve out a space for expressive resistance in the home or the more masculine spaces of the street, school, or club.

More recent “*third wave*” *feminist studies* have emphasized the positive effects of young women’s entry into previously male-dominated cultural activities. The “riot grrrl” network, for example, seeks to subvert the masculine codes of rock culture through performing hard rock alongside an assertive expression of female difference derived from girlhood experiences. Work on women and girls playing digital games reports on how they learn to negotiate their enjoyment of the masculine pleasures of competitive game play and technical prowess alongside the more traditional pleasures of cooperation and communication that playing affords. “B-girl” break dancers challenge their own sexualization within hip hop sub-culture by adopting a masculine style of dress and learning the dance skills required to participate as equals in a culture that Ogaz considers to be “a powerful third space of play, resistance and creative achievement” (2006, 180), which not

only empowers them as women but forges an alliance with male break dancers in their resistance to the dominant racist culture.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Girl Culture ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Modernization ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Propaganda ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## **Cultural Topoi in Public Relations**

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A topos is a line of argument that can be adapted to a variety of subjects and audiences. Since Aristotle's time, communicators have used lists of topos to generate arguments relevant to their persuasive tasks (→ Argumentative Discourse; Persuasion). In addition to introducing the cultural topos perspective, this entry describes a set of topos that are widely used: cultural premises about the social world and how human relationships should be organized (see Leichty & Warner 2001 for a detailed description).

Mary Douglas (1997) characterized culture as an accounting system (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). "Think of culture as essentially a dialogue that allocates praise

and blame. Then focus particularly on the blame” (1997, 129). The cultural system consists of five voices or competing “ways of life”: fatalism, egalitarianism, hierarchy, autonomous individualism, and competitive individualism (Thompson et al. 1990). Each voice has a distinctive cultural topos that it uses in the competition of praising and blaming.

The *fatalist* voice considers the world to be capricious and unpredictable. It is characteristically cynical and suspicious of the motives of others. It routinely disparages calls for collective action. The *egalitarian* voice privileges the value of social equality. It seeks consensus in decision-making in order to maintain group solidarity. Anything that breaks down the primary group boundary, or increases social inequality in the group, is vociferously criticized.

The *hierarchical* way of life privileges harmonious relations among a differentiated set of roles and ranks. Defined relationships between ranks, often specified by tradition, make social order and social harmony possible. The *autonomous individualist* way of life stands aloof from constrictive commitments that would bind self and other. It favors the spontaneity of the present moment over reflecting on the past or contemplating the future.

The *competitive individualist* way of life is a confident and future-oriented voice. It focuses on the opportunities it may miss rather than concerning itself with avoiding mistakes. It celebrates competition and scans the horizon for clues about future trends.

The “ways of life” are interdependent. Each needs “its rivals, either to make up for its deficiencies, or to exploit, or to define itself against. To destroy the other (way of life) is to murder the self” (Thompson et al. 1990, 4). Ordinarily, one or two voices dominate the discussion and the remaining cultural voices are marginalized or pushed to the periphery.

In cultural disputes the egalitarian and competitive individualist voices tend to clash the most vociferously. The egalitarian way of life represents the simplest form of social organization, while the competitive individualist mode of organization provides the most complex form of social exchange and organizing (Fiske & Tetlock 1997). The egalitarian voice resists putting a cash value on many things, while the competitive individualist voice insists that everything should have a price (e.g., donor organs).

The cultural topoi perspective provides a parsimonious framework for describing the competition of praise and blame that constitutes culture. It enables us to trace cultural change. It also allows us to identify instances where groups operating from different premises may be able to collaborate.

People interpret a text differently when they apply premises from different cultural topoi to the message. Message credibility depends on how closely it aligns with the receiver’s underlying premises (→ Credibility of Content; Credibility Effects). If we know which cultural topos a person applies to a message, we can anticipate how a message will be interpreted.

Public relations (PR) is enmeshed in the cultural clashes of contemporary culture. PR practitioners interpret culture for organizational management, and represent the views of management to relevant publics. Tacit knowledge about cultural topoi enables PR practitioners to interpret multiple perspectives and encode messages that appeal to people who adhere to different cultural premises.

Communicators often deploy arguments grounded in different cultural topoi in order to broaden their appeals. For instance, when debating a proposal to raise cigarette excise taxes, tax-increase advocates predominantly used egalitarian premises (e.g., raising excise taxes saves children’s lives), whereas tax opponents predominantly used competitive individualist warrants (e.g., raising cigarette taxes is a politically correct tax scam). Each

side, however, also developed arguments that represented different cultural topoi. Tax opponents voiced egalitarian themes by claiming that the excise tax would damage the livelihoods of small retailers and small tobacco farmers. Tax advocates developed a competitive individualist theme by arguing that the excise tax was really a user's fee that reimbursed the state for treating sick smokers (Esrock et al. 2007).

Public relations itself is a culturally constituted system (Leichty 2003). Different versions of PR practice are advanced and criticized in → discourse about PR. A hierarchical model of PR and a competitive individualist model have long vied for disciplinary dominance (Leichty 2003). This cultural competition is visible when communicators: (1) identify problems with PR practice, (2) predict future trends in PR, or (3) make recommendations for collective action regarding the discipline. The hierarchical voice portrays PR as a science that applies its incrementally growing body of knowledge systematically and deliberately. In contrast, the competitive individualist model portrays PR as an art that requires continual adaptation to rapid changes in society and communication technologies (Leichty 2003).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Issue Management ▶ Persuasion ▶ Public Diplomacy ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations

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# **Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on**

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Studies of culture have been conducted in a variety of productive ways in several academic fields; one might say the same about studies of communication, while also

saying as much for ethnographic studies (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication). Adding this variety, that is, all three of these, together can create an unwieldy assortment of theories and research reports. Saying something about them all would be a difficult task, indeed. However, examining a subset of these that stand at the nexus of all three concerns, that is, identifying studies of communication that highlight cultural variability, and do so ethnographically, is a more manageable pursuit, and one that this entry undertakes, with special attention to intergroup and intercultural dynamics. It will be shown that this type of study has provided a very detailed and deep look at actual intercultural encounters.

We begin by assuming that communication and culture are inextricably tied, and, further, that the relationship between them can be studied through ethnographic theory and methodology. This brings several assumptions with it: (1) communication is a situated practice, and process, that is formative of social life; (2) communication is in some sense distinctive in its cultural scenes and communities; (3) ethnographic study of the social situations and communities in which communication occurs can indeed unveil the cultural features in communication conduct. In this way, ethnography provides a general way of studying communication that is not simply the implementation of a set of specific methods (such as interviewing and participant observation), but also a theoretical orientation to the subject matter of communication and culture (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts; Ethnography of Communication).

## **DIMENSIONS IN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE**

Ethnographic studies of communication and culture involve systematic observations of socially situated practices. For example, Bailey (2000) has noticed that service encounters in Los Angeles convenience stores are conducted differently by African-Americans than they are by Korean-Americans; Chick (1990) has observed that communication in educational settings is conducted differently by native speakers of English and of Zulu; Wilkins (2005) has investigated similarly Finnish and American enactments of speaking, and silence, in educational settings; my own work has explored how communication among people from different regional and national communities is coded differently (Carbaugh 2005).

Each such study is conducted through these basic modes of inquiry: *describe* the communication of concern in exacting and detailed ways; *interpret* the meaningfulness of that communication to those who have produced it; *comparatively analyze* the practices so described and interpreted; and occasionally, *critically assess* the resulting intergroup, or intercultural dynamics at play in these interactions. Each of these analytical tasks involves different yet complementary procedures. However, when put together, the set creates robust ethnographic accounts of communication and culture.

Ethnography involves living with the practices one is concerned with, seeing them first-hand, and feeling how they work (or do not work) for particular people. More formally for ethnographers, this involves carefully creating a detailed, *descriptive record of the practices* being investigated. This is done in the form of electronic recordings (audio and visual, if possible), detailed field notes, and recorded interviews (Gumperz 1992). These

materials are subsequently analyzed in order to create a documentation of the actual occurrences of the practice being investigated. This is the empirical bedrock of ethnographic inquiry, and involves claims of the form: "This practice indeed occurred, in these social contexts, in exactly these ways." Detailed accounts like those cited in the studies above involve exacting transcripts, for example, of communicative phenomena. These provide the necessary toe-holds of ethnographic inquiry in real-world events. A collection of these creates a descriptive record, a corpus of data, from which features of patterns are analyzed.

To describe a practice, pattern, or event is not necessarily to interpret its meanings. In other words, one can describe how a woman addressed a man, yet not be able to interpret the social meaningfulness of that form of address in that community. A further dimension in such study thus involves *interpretive analyses*, claims about the meaningfulness of the communication to participants. For ethnographers, this type of analysis focuses on cultural meanings, that is, those that are shared, common, and publicly active during the performance of the practice (e.g., Geertz 1976). In Bailey's (2000) study, he was able not only to describe exactly how Korean- and African-American participants engaged in service encounters, but also to interpret how these encounters activated different meanings in what constituted "respectful" (and disrespectful) interaction for each. While African-American customers enacted a high degree of verbal interaction as a way of showing appropriate interactional concern, Korean shopkeepers enacted verbal reserve as a way of showing proper distance between themselves and their customers. Efforts to become more verbally engaged by African-Americans led to further reserve from the Korean shopkeepers. In the process, each interpreted their own practice as appropriate, and respectful, but the other's practice as being improper, and disrespectful. Interpretive claims are thus built on the back of a descriptive record in order to establish the patterned practices of concern, while unveiling the socio-cultural significance in, and importance of, those practices when done in that way.

Intergroup dynamics such as these involve *comparative and cross-cultural analyses*. These help establish two complementary types of findings: what is distinctive to one group's practices relative to another, and what principles are held in common across different groups' practices. Given adequate fieldwork, ethnographers are thus positioned to analyze more deeply the unique qualities of, for example, respect in each group's practices, but also to understand what is common among those practices and others elsewhere. For example, addressing others or taking turns may be patterned in different ways in different speech communities, and these may hold different meanings; or the same or similar meanings, for example, of respect, may be active, but these may appear in different practices. Note, then, how ethnographic studies such as these employ comparative analyses in order to work toward the dual objectives of understanding what is particularly distinctive in a people's communication practices, and what is general across them.

At times, ethnographers describe and interpret how one set of practices may disadvantage, subvert, or in some ways harm others. For example, the way courses are taught in some classrooms can privilege some while disadvantaging others. Chick's (1990) study demonstrates this point, as others have done (e.g., Carbaugh 2005). The nature of some intercultural and intergroup dynamics thus warrants critical analyses,

judgments based upon an explicated ethical or normative stance. This is especially the case when asynchronous dynamics create outcomes such as the misattribution of intent, negative stereotyping, misinterpretations, misunderstandings, and/or discrimination (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework; Social Stereotyping and Communication). Ethnographers have identified and can identify these as aspects of interpersonal and mass communication, they can document in detail how these outcomes have occurred, interpret the meanings of these dynamics for participants, even link them to historically transmitted trends, and thus critically assess the ways communication is thus formative of such circumstances.

### PRIMARY THEORETICAL CONCERNS

Ethnographic studies of communication and culture have examined many current, major theoretical concerns. These have included the role of one's first language in learning and using a second language, the role of key terms in discourse systems, the relationship between visual and verbal signs in specific communicative situations, the relationship between speaking and silence as means of communication, and the ways in which electronic and face-to-face media are used, with all such concerns exploring the variability of each in cultural systems of expression.

A major concern in these studies has been the *relationship between communication practices* and identity (→ Interactional Sociolinguistics; Speech Codes Theory). A strong link has been examined in several cases between one's identity and the structuring of communication (Lehtonen & Sajavaara 1984; Wieder & Pratt 1993; Hester & Eglin 1997; Hastings 2000; Philipsen 2002; Katriel 2004). Variability in the focal interactional concerns has been examined in some televised and interpersonal events, revealing the importance of truth-telling for some, the espousal of a collective ethic for others (Carbaugh 2005).

A second set of concerns focuses on the cultural shaping of communication acts, sequences, and forms: whether one should speak or remain silent; if one should talk, who should speak; whether speaking should be done alone or together, and to what degree; how long one should speak, and in what ways; what the rules are for opening social events; how turns are exchanged, pauses managed (→ Conversation Analysis); what rules there are for departing encounters; and so on. The investigation of responses to each question begins an understanding of the cultural shape and meaning of communication acts, sequences, and forms. Various responses to each question suggest cultural features in the patterning of communication practices, such that communicative actions vary in culturally significant ways (Carbaugh 1990; Milburn 2000; Wierzbicka 2003). How social relations are structured, and indeed how interpersonal life should be conducted, have also become focal concerns (Fitch 1998; Milburn 2000; Philipsen 2002; Wilkins 2005).

Over the past few years, new theoretical concepts and perspectives on communication and culture have been developed. Some works have proposed a discourse-centered approach to culture (Sherzer 1990), with one program of work, indeed, developing a theory of cultural communication (Philipsen 2002). While not all of this work focuses on actual instances of intergroup and intercultural communication, some have set this as an



agenda for communication studies (Tannen 1986), with some work already done in exploring, ethnographically, the cultural role of communication in intergroup dynamics (Bailey 2000; Carbaugh 2005; Wilkins 2005).

SEE ALSO: ► Communication: Definitions and Concepts ► Conversation Analysis ► Cultural Patterns and Communication ► Discourse Analysis ► Ethnography of Communication ► Interactional Sociolinguistics ► Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ► Social Stereotyping and Communication ► Speech Codes Theory

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# Culture: Definitions and Concepts

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Since at least the nineteenth century, culture has been one of the most difficult, richly connotative concepts to define. While it is widely accepted that its roots are to be found in the Latin verb *colere*, among whose associated meanings is “to cultivate,” this has been all but forgotten in ordinary language. Being a web of meaning in which social life is suspended, culture most commonly goes unnoticed, and requires detailed inquiry, or what the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (borrowing from the philosopher, Gilbert Ryle) called “thick description.” Geertz used Ryle’s example of two boys in a room, rapidly contracting their right eyelids: is this a wink, a twitch, a deliberate message, to someone in particular, coded, without cognizance of the rest of the company? These and other preparatory questions have to be addressed before any analysis can reach an understanding of the “piled-up structures of inferences and implications” (Geertz 1993, 7) that characterize communications in any culture. Culture, thus, can be said to consist of all the structures and processes of → meaning in which communication takes place.

## ELEMENTS AND DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE

In the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries, anthropology, relying on ethnography as its “method” or approach, came to interpret the communications of diverse peoples in order to reach an approximation of their culture. Ethnography, further, provided a template and inspiration for understanding not only so-called primitive peoples, but also cultures in the industrialized west and, indeed, the broader concept of culture itself. As argued by Marcus and Fischer (1986, 20), much anthropology in this period involved a “salvage motif,” or a determination to capture cultural diversity, mainly of non-western peoples, coupled with a cultural critique of “ourselves” in the west. The implication was that “primitive” culture is somehow “authentic” in comparison to the “mass” culture that has grown in the west during the past two centuries. If culture resides in communication, societies with mass communication will have increasingly diverse and diffuse cultures, and no common cultural core (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). In modernity, then, the definition of culture has been made more difficult by the global proliferation of media and messages. In the second half of the twentieth century, anthropology responded, in part, by transforming its methodology: “thick description” of multiple and complex cultures could only be achieved through a melange of interpretive approaches from the humanities, complementing the methodologies of the social sciences. As media and communication research took shape during this same period, it imported several of the lessons and legacies of anthropology.

Summarizing elements of prevalent conceptions of culture across the humanities and social sciences, Jenks (2003, 8–9) offered a *fourfold typology*. First, culture is a cerebral or cognitive capacity (→ Cognition). This notion considers culture the product of a uniquely human consciousness, an exemplification of the status of humans as “chosen.” Although

culture may thus be considered the pinnacle of human achievement on earth, the concept of culture as cognition also feeds into ideas of false consciousness, as found in varieties of Marxism – an unrealized human potential. Second, culture is embodied and collective. Culture can be seen as evidence of moral development, indeed, an evolutionary feature of humans as group and species. However, this understanding of culture also informed the civilizing process that was foisted on to “savage” or “primitive” societies as part of imperialism and colonialism. Third, culture is a descriptive category: it refers to a body of work, “the best which has been thought and said in the world” (Arnold 1869) – special knowledge, training, and socialization whose products are commemorated in museums and archives. Yet, any account of which insights are special or best is not just descriptive, but normative. Fourth, culture has been understood as a social category. This is the idea, widespread in contemporary research, that culture constitutes the whole way of life of humans generally and of specific social groups and peoples.

The breadth of such a typology re-emphasizes the open-ended status of culture in modernity. Mass communication has produced a proliferation in the number and types of texts and other cultural artifacts; it has also, in extending their availability, resulted in a blurring of the boundaries between texts intended for the elite and those for the “masses.” Still, despite reports and debates concerning a collapse of the high-culture/low-culture distinction, it remains important to assess cultural practices in the context of other social structures. Jenks (2005) has suggested that the modern understanding of culture unfolds along a dimension involving tensions between *absolutist* and *relativist* tendencies. In the former case, attempts will be made to establish and maintain a given cultural formation while eschewing traces of others; in the latter case, the inclination is to see cultures and cultural artifacts as functionally equivalent and even, sometimes, essentially equal. If this first dimension captures the qualities of cultural products and processes in themselves, another related dimension addresses the interrelations between cultural forms and their social uses. This other dimension involves tensions between *elitism* and *egalitarianism*: culture can either be considered either the preserve of the few or, alternatively, the possession of many or all. Within a matrix of such dimensions, culture can be defined and practiced in different ways with specific social implications. For example, egalitarianism may be compatible with absolutism if the public at large is educated to gain access to, and to accept, one cultural canon. And relativism may feed elitism if the capacity to appreciate multiple or rapidly shifting cultural styles becomes a mark of social distinction.

### **CULTURE AS AN ESSENTIALLY CONTESTED CONCEPT**

Within a matrix of absolutism/relativism and elitism/egalitarianism, culture stands as an essentially contested concept (Gallie 1956), having a consensual core meaning, but also a series of connotations that give rise to continuous scientific as well as social debate. These connotations can be traced to the conceptual root of culture in cultivation and, especially, the extended metaphor of *horticulture*, i.e., the enhancement of gardens or natural environments. In use as early as 1837, when it was employed by the British poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the notion of culture as horticulture can be seen as absolutist (there is a state of cultivation against one of non-cultivation), relativist (there are different kinds of

cultivation), and elitist (only some could or should have the power of cultivation), as well as egalitarian (everyone can, potentially, cultivate). The connotations of culture in the sense of meaningful communication, similarly, are traversed by absolutism, relativism, elitism, and egalitarianism. One connotation of culture is *civilization*, the idea that participation in a culture qualifies the individual for membership and, even, status within a community. Further, at the community level, culture as ongoing cultivation suggests dynamism, emergence, and potential *change*, partly in opposition to the static implications of “tradition,” especially in a modern context. In summary, culture generally connotes *process* and *movement*: a process of educating and socializing people within specific webs of meaning, and a movement of meanings within and, perhaps, beyond a given community. In the last case, culture may amount to a colonizing process, complementing political and economic imperialism, or extending a national monoculture, for example, through elite adoption and transformation of popular culture.

Even the distinction between culture and its etymological opposite – *nature* – contributes to contested definitions. The root of “nature” is the Latin verb *nascere*, “to be born,” suggesting a contrast between qualities of innateness and processes of cultivation. This distinction has been emphasized within elitist and absolutist conceptions in an attempt to delineate culture as the height of achievement by human consciousness. The position was typified in Romanticism’s ambivalent relation to nature, celebrating the union of humans and their natural environment, while simultaneously elevating the work of the artist as the cultivator of such a union. In the wider history of ideas, the notion of *Kultur* as a privileged domain of human activity established itself contemporaneously with Romanticism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Germany, anticipating subsequent anthropological research on cultures in the plural and the very concept of culture. An elitist/absolutist conception of culture has remained influential in theories of communication and society, including, perhaps curiously, neo-Marxist analyses by the Frankfurt School from the 1920s to the 1970s. Here, an elitist definition of culture served to exclude popularly consumed artifacts produced by the industries of mass communication. Although Marxist and other critical work might be expected to pursue egalitarianism, or an alternative culture of the proletariat, an absolutist conception of culture may have been attractive across ideological divides in social theory as a representation of what societies might become in contrast to a state of nature.

## CULTURE, COMMUNICATION, AND SOCIETY

### Culture as Social Practice

Contemporary research on culture, communication, and society, while diverse, commonly addresses culture as an integrated constituent of social practice. The idea of culture as *a whole way of life*, associated primarily with the work of Raymond Williams, has been adopted by sociologists, anthropologists, and communication researchers as a framework for investigating the bewildering variegation of communications in modernity. Williams (1981) envisaged culture as an object to be studied by sociology rather than, say, art theory, because culture is a product of broader social formations, institutions, organizations, and ideologies, which make up particular historical means of production and reproduction.

His works (see especially Williams 1965) stressed that culture is a *process* whose continual movement and development are checked only by the vicissitudes and conflicts between those other social factors that make up its context. Unlike other egalitarian conceptions of culture that frequently have an absolutist tinge, holding that fine art should be the province of all, Williams's premise was that the practices of all people in a society are eligible to be considered parts of culture. Countering any relativist overtones in this position, Williams instead sought to erase the line between elite and popular culture, stressing not their relativity but their commonality.

Another influential body of work on culture as social practice is that of Pierre Bourdieu. Two of his concepts have passed into general usage in cultural and communication theory. First, Bourdieu (1986) conceived culture in terms of the specific *habitus* that different groups in society rely on as they orient themselves in, interpret, and act on everyday contexts. The *habitus* is at once an embodied predisposition and a socially patterned space of evaluative positions. It comprises "both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification . . . of these practices" (1986, 170) – a person's *habitus* generates value judgments, and these judgments bear witness to the place of that person in the larger social space. Accordingly, "taste" is an expression of how social groups – stratified by income, occupation, education, etc. – pursue different variants of language, art, and style. Second, Bourdieu described the distribution of such cultural resources across the social space in terms borrowed from Karl Marx; depending on the amount of *cultural capital* that individuals have accumulated, they may, or may not, be able to participate in particular aspects of social and cultural life. Even when practicing an egalitarian conception of culture, for instance, making museums accessible to all classes, Bourdieu noted, a society will tend to reproduce the elitism inherent in its stratification.

### **Subcultures**

The boundaries of culture are frequently challenged from both within and without. In the second half of the twentieth century, it became increasingly clear that western culture was producing a number of distinctive "subcultures" internally. These are generally thought to consist of communities of people who come together to pursue practices and observe customs (sometimes recently developed) that are somehow divorced from or in opposition to "mainstream culture." Frequently, though not exclusively, subcultures have been associated with youth tastes and pastimes, not least popular music. Facilitated and amplified by the mass media, subcultures form within as well as across national boundaries.

The relation of subcultures to culture in general, however, remains ambiguous. On the one hand, mainstream culture may integrate and co-opt subculture in an ultimately elitist fashion; on the other hand, subcultures may transform mainstream culture in an egalitarian direction as subcultural vocabularies and styles become naturalized forms of communication in the culture.

### **Intercultural Communication**

While subcultures may transform a culture "from within," cultures are also affected by communication "from without." Intercultural communication has usually been understood

in research as subject to difficulties and limitations (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). Growing out of anthropological work in the first half of the twentieth century, the *Sapir-Whorf hypothesis* has been influential, if debated, since the 1950s: it states that communication between different cultures is impeded by the distinctive languages and other → codes on which they are based, so that cultures can never be fully communicative with each other. Put briefly, the language you speak places you firmly within one culture and at a distance from any other culture.

Nevertheless, mass communication, globalization, and intensified commerce have meant that different cultures are increasingly exposed to diverse communicative practices and traditions – both verbal and nonverbal – far beyond translation in any traditional sense. The idea of monocultures is being challenged by notions of cultural hybridity. For example, → postcolonial theory has suggested that only mental and physical repression have enabled particular cultures to maintain a mythical monocultural status. Similarly, research on imperialism has noted that western cultures, in addition to imposing themselves on those being colonized, were changed in the interaction (Bhabha 1985). In the case of commercial exchanges, cultures can be seen, over time, to enter into a more consensual process of hybridization. Intercultural communication, thus, occurs not just through specific acts of translation, but through interactions in all areas of social life.

## SEMIOTICS OF CULTURE AND NATURE

The inclusive conception of culture as social practice has been developed further in research on the *semiotics of culture*. Semiotics has commonly been concerned with interpersonal communication (→ Semiotics), whether technologically mediated or not, but has also addressed interspecies or interorganism communication, seeking to reorient the culture/nature distinction. Thomas A. Sebeok summed up this position when referring to culture as that “minuscule part of nature compartmentalized by some anthropologists” (1986, 60). Communication can be said to take place across nature and culture, comprising both verbal and nonverbal signs (→ Sign Systems). Whereas the signs of the known universe are predominantly nonverbal, a small number are based on the uniquely human capacity for language, which is the primary source of culture. Contemporary semiotics has described language as a *modeling system*, following the work of the Moscow–Tartu school and Sebeok (1988), and conceives culture as the outcome of three distinctive processes of modeling in humans. The primary modeling system is language as a cognitive capacity for differentiation, ontogenetically and phylogenetically manifested in nonverbal communication. The secondary modeling system is the capacity for verbal communication, manifested in speech and writing. Culture is the tertiary modeling system, in which complex and metaphorical manifestations of the primary and secondary modeling systems are circulated (Sebeok and Danesi 1999).

One ambition of the semiotics of culture is to avoid the pitfalls of egalitarianism/ elitism and absolutism/relativism, in consonance with Williams’s (1981) conception of culture as a whole way of life. Another ambition, comparable in certain respects to that of → cognitive science, is to renegotiate the culture/nature dichotomy, which has been on the interdisciplinary research agenda since, in 1959, C. P. Snow lamented the divergence of the humanities and the sciences.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Meaning ▶ Modernity ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign Systems

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# Culture and Health Communication

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It is widely recognized that cultural norms, values, beliefs, and practices vary among population sub-groups, and influence how members of a group seek, understand, process, communicate, and act upon information about health. Ignoring these cultural differences during health and medical system interactions can have serious consequences that lead to or exacerbate disparities in health status between population sub-groups.

Critical reviews examining the relationship between cultural competence and health disparities recommend a wide range of communication-based strategies to help eliminate disparities (→ Health Disparities, Communication in), including improved patient–provider communication, interpreter services, → health literacy enhancement, clearer signage and forms, and culturally appropriate health education materials and health promotion and disease prevention programs (Brach & Fraser 2000; Betancourt et al. 2003; Institute of Medicine 2004). Yet surprisingly little is known about whether, or the extent to which, taking culture into account in such planned health communication efforts increases their effectiveness (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). A 2002 Institute of Medicine report on health communication strategies for diverse populations concluded that there is an urgent need for comparative studies of the effects of health communication interventions that address and ignore diversity factors, like culture (Institute of Medicine 2002; → Health Communication).

## **APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS IN HEALTH COMMUNICATION**

Although evidence for their effectiveness may not be clearly established, at least five approaches are commonly used to achieve cultural appropriateness in health communication (Kreuter et al. 2003).

### **Peripheral Approaches**

Peripheral approaches “package” health information in ways likely to appeal to a given group. The term “peripheral” is used in reference to the → elaboration likelihood model’s explanation of the non-central route of → information processing, which suggests that characteristics such as the superficial elements of culture described here can, under certain circumstances, lead to attitude change when included in a persuasive communication (→ Persuasion). Specific tactics include integrating colors, images, fonts, pictures of group members, or declarative titles (e.g., “A guide for African-Americans”) into health communication materials designed for a given group. By reflecting culture in the design elements of programs and materials, health communication developers hope to attract attention and convey relevance. Peripheral approaches tend to focus on expressions of culture that are visible and accessible to those outside the culture, like social rituals, traditional dress, language patterns, and cuisine.



Effective use of peripheral approaches should enhance receptivity to and acceptance of health communication materials (Resnicow et al. 1999). Although a mechanism for this effect has not yet been demonstrated empirically, → graphic design and visual literacy scholars propose that the language of colors, images, and pictures is immediately perceptible, and to the right audience will feel familiar and comfortable, be trusted, and may generate interest in or attention to the information.

### **Evidential Approaches**

Evidential approaches to cultural appropriateness in health communication seek to increase the perceived relevance of a health issue by presenting population-specific evidence of its impact to members of the group. Usually such evidence takes the form of statistics and/or probability statements. For example, health information designed to motivate lesbians to be screened for breast and cervical cancer might emphasize that lesbians have lower rates of mammography and Pap testing than other groups of women, and higher rates of breast and cervical cancer.

Evidential statements are generally designed to raise awareness, concern, and/or perceived vulnerability to a particular problem by showing that it affects a group to which a person belongs. Research based on Weinstein's precaution adoption process model lends support to this explanation, showing that those who perceived a problem to affect others like them were more likely to think about the problem, decide to take preventive action, and actually make plans to do so. But using certain types of group-specific evidence may have unintended and detrimental effects. Compared to exposure to the same evidence framed in a positive way, exposure to evidence that one's group is doing worse than another group can elicit more negative and fewer positive reactions to health information, and lower the group's intent to prevent the problem.

### **Linguistic Approaches**

Linguistic approaches seek to make health information more accessible by providing it in languages spoken or read by different cultural groups. Because language is so fundamental to effective communication, linguistic accessibility is arguably the most fundamental dimension of culturally appropriate health communication. In clinical health-care settings, linguistic approaches may involve providing translator services or hiring multilingual providers. Similarly, creating culture-specific health communication programs or materials can involve adapting existing content or developing original content. When translating existing health information to another language, maintaining the meaning and effectiveness of the original (i.e., fidelity) is a particular challenge, and can be difficult to achieve reliably in a straight translation task. Linguistic approaches also include efforts to incorporate into health communication the specific terminology, colloquialisms, and figures of speech used by a cultural group, even if they are not in a foreign language.

### **Constituent-Involving Approaches**

Constituent-involving approaches seek to assure cultural appropriateness by drawing on the experiences of members of a cultural group to be reached. Adhering to principles of

community participation and audience involvement is fundamental to health communication planning, and requires identifying substantive, decision-making roles for members of the cultural group during all phases of communication development. It may also include hiring staff members indigenous to the cultural group and training paraprofessionals or “natural helpers” from the group. Involving constituents can provide insight into deeper levels of culture such as underlying rules and assumptions that are known and understood by members of the group, but seldom shared with outsiders or accessible to communication scientists and practitioners from outside the culture. Their ideas, involvement, and commitment can often be applied to optimize the other four approaches to achieve cultural appropriateness in health communication.

### **Socio-Cultural Approaches**

Socio-cultural approaches present health information in the context of cultural values and beliefs held by the intended → audience. When key elements of culture can be identified and incorporated into health communication messages, sources, and channels, they can convey salience to the group’s members. For example, framing the benefits of a given health action in terms of faith or family may make the information more meaningful to those in cultures that value collectivism and spirituality. Thoughtfully executed socio-cultural approaches to health communication will reflect an understanding of culturally normative practices and beliefs – the inner workings of culture rather than the outward appearances emphasized in peripheral approaches.

There is some recent evidence that socio-cultural approaches enhance effectiveness of traditional health communication interventions (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in). In a randomized trial among lower-income African-American women from urban public health centers, those who received health information tailored to their behavioral beliefs and cultural values were more likely to get mammograms and increase daily fruit and vegetable consumption than those who received information tailored to behavioral beliefs or cultural values alone, or a usual-care control group (Kreuter et al. 2005; → Tailoring, Communication and).

### **OUTLOOK**

A summary of each approach and its proposed effects on communication outcomes is provided in Table 1. Further development and empirical testing of these hypotheses will enhance our understanding and application of culturally appropriate health communication. For intervention planners, the question may not be which of these approaches to use, but rather how best to integrate multiple approaches in a single health communication program. At present, however, this does not appear to be a normative practice. In a recent review of injury prevention interventions targeting racial or ethnic minorities, only 11 percent used three or more approaches to cultural appropriateness (Parks et al. 2006). Constituent-involving approaches were used most often (in 61 percent of interventions), but only one in four interventions used peripheral, evidential, linguistic, or socio-cultural approaches. While the review identified exemplars of multidimensional cultural appropriateness in interventions conducted in New Zealand and the US, these stood out as exceptions.

**Table 1** Description of five approaches to cultural appropriateness and proposed effects of each

Approach	Description	Proposed effects
Peripheral	Using colors, symbols, fonts, pictures, or titles that overtly convey relevance to those in the group	Captures attention, generates interest, is trusted, feels familiar and comfortable
Evidential	Providing evidence, often in the form of data, that a given problem affects members of the group	Increases awareness, concern, perceived susceptibility; may also offend some
Linguistic	Providing health information in the dominant or native language of the group	Increases accessibility of health information
Constituent-involving	Drawing on experience and knowledge of group members when planning and delivering information	Provides insight, builds commitment, establishes ownership, enhances credibility
Socio-cultural	Integrating cultural norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors of a group into health information	Conveys salience, provides context

Although progress has been steady since the 2002 Institute of Medicine report, there remain substantial gaps in the science of culture and health communication and significant need for applying evidence-based approaches to cultural appropriateness in health communication practice. Both represent excellent opportunities for current and future health communication professionals.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Elaboration Likelihood Model ► Graphic Design ► Health Campaigns, Communication in ► Health Communication ► Health Disparities, Communication in ► Health Literacy ► Information Processing ► Persuasion ► Tailoring, Communication and

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## Culture Industries

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The study of the culture industries has become increasingly more complex in the field of communications in light of the ways in which expanding research into their organization, activities, and logics connects with questions and arguments concerning culture, commercialism, and social control. Largely originating in Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer's *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), the term "culture industry" was initially utilized to critique the proliferation of commercial mass culture and what the authors perceived as the increasingly routinized techniques employed in the processes of cultural production (→ Critical Theory).

### THE ORIGINAL CONCEPT

In trying to explain why the working class revolution predicted by Karl Marx failed to materialize, Adorno and Horkheimer posited that a new, more subtle form of *social domination* had emerged which operated through the mass appeal and production of standardized leisure commodities and amusement culture which served to keep the population docile and distracted from recognizing the real conditions of their labor and exploitation under capitalism. Calling this process "enlightenment as mass deception," the authors suggested that administrative techniques within advanced capitalism played upon societal myths regarding scientific enlightenment, essentially curtailing the development of any revolutionary impulses toward systemic change from below. Consequently, the ideas and ideology (the "superstructure") of the ruling classes are able to condition and shape the material and historical impulses for change within the sets of economic (the "base") and social relations. In turn, individuals are "conditioned" and society is "structured" toward reproducing and expanding the relations of capital (→ Entertainment, Effects of).

In their analysis, the culture industry and its approach to cultural production was responsible for the "commodification" of culture, making the "exchange" value of cultural objects more important than their "use" value, and cultural products themselves, assembly-line commodities (→ Commodification of the Media). Through these processes, culture became *pseudo-culture*, where a surfeit of meaningless and unnecessary information and

products gratified people while impeding their ability to experience and understand phenomena on deeper levels. The information, technology, and organized rituals of pseudo-culture thoroughly mediated their ability to think through their “false consciousness,” keeping the masses oblivious to the monotony and meaninglessness of their lives. Advertising contributed to these processes, creating false needs and fostering and promoting “lifestyle” choices which implicitly disciplined work and leisure practices in ways that directly supported and reproduced the networks of capitalism (→ Advertising; Advertising as Persuasion). Consequently, market interests trump cultural considerations in society, citizens become enamored with and enslaved to consumerism, the mechanisms for ideological control induce uniform thinking and behavior within the population, and the masses are kept obedient to the system through their devotion to mass culture.

This sharp and pessimistic attack on mass culture, its mode of production, and the ideological control its instrumental and technological rationale imposed sought to highlight the detrimental social impact of commercial logics on cultural production. Moreover, it sought to underscore how these logics masked social domination, which occurred subtly in the manner by which mass-produced culture distorted the proper role of art in society – namely to challenge thinking and enhance cognitive development, rather than to entertain, gratify, and ultimately deceive the population.

Although often simplified and misinterpreted, this critique does not posit that all cultural products are necessarily homogeneous, that the logics of cultural production necessarily produce certain outcomes (and are simply matters of class domination), or that individuals are merely passive subjects readily controlled by the ideology of the culture industry. As such, the authors leave a space for the concept of agency and the development of an oppositional social politics to emerge, at least in theory.

### **FROM CULTURE INDUSTRY TO CULTURAL INDUSTRIES**

Since the late 1960s, the critique of the culture industry has become more detailed in light of developments in critical-cultural theory, insights from other disciplines, and the increasing recognition that significant differences separate the various types of content, systems, and processes related to cultural production (→ Media Production and Content). In turn, the plural term *cultural industries* has emerged as a way of speaking about investigations into institutions that produce symbolic objects/commercial products related to the construction of social → meaning. The core institutions of the cultural industries have subsequently been distinguished as advertising, → marketing, the broadcasting industries (radio, TV [cable, digital, and satellite]), the film industry, the → Internet, the music industry, print and electronic publishing (→ newspaper, → magazine, and → book), and video/computer games (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception). This shift from the singular to the plural has opened new avenues for exploring the processes related to cultural production and the dynamic variation among the institutions invested in integrating cultural objects and ideas into the realm of capital.

Scholarship utilizing integrated and interdisciplinary → *research methods* began to emerge in the 1970s and 1980s, serving both to extend and to nuance the perspectives of Adorno and Horkheimer, which had come to be known as part of the Frankfurt School critique of mass culture. Employing insights from political economy, sociology, and cultural

studies, several scholars (Kaarle Nordenstreng, James Halloran, Armand Mattelart, Nicholas Garnham, Herbert Schiller) began to consider the ways in which the cultural industries – through the dynamics of their economic and cultural power, institutional networks, and transnational influence – were implicated in new forms of cultural imperialism related to the emergent global political economy and ideas of globalization (→ Political Economy of the Media; Cultural Studies; Cultural Imperialism Theories; Globalization of the Media).

*Bernard Meige's* (1989) insightful sociological examination of the diverse logics of production and varied modes of labor organization in the cultural industries, however, challenged many of these ideas within the “cultural imperialism” thesis. By collectively considering a wide array of economic and sociological variables, Meige outlined the distinct plurality of the “social logics” of production within the cultural industries, underscoring not only how cultural production occurs across various sites of contestation, but also the extent of ambiguity involved in assessing the processes and outcomes related to cultural commodification. His work strongly suggested that media institutions and products have political and cultural dimensions and implications beyond the economic relations of their production. And despite the fact that critics have challenged Meige’s analysis on the grounds that it accomplishes little beyond description, it nonetheless deepened how the communication industries, their structures, employee activities, and the range of processes that constitute their activities have subsequently been conceptualized. These ideas have been further developed in the work of Bill Ryan, Keith Negus, and Jason Toynbee.

*Pierre Bourdieu's* empirical work, which examines how social relations within the processes of cultural production enact and reproduce networks of social meaning, power, and domination, has increasingly been incorporated in recent studies of these industries, complementing and extending the theoretical trajectories that seek to reconcile the tensions between structuralism and agency that often arise in considerations of the cultural industries and their impact upon individuals and society (especially in developing ideas about “cultural capital” and “cultural intermediaries”).

Although less concerned with distinguishing the plurality of the cultural industries or addressing the Frankfurt critique directly, the work of *Robert McChesney* has nonetheless been instrumental in identifying how the policies, practices, and organization of these institutions are specifically linked to questions involving macro-social power, democracy, and social justice. In the interest of nurturing media policy and grassroots activism, his critiques of corporate cultural production have been particularly effective outside the scholarly community, illuminating in plain terminology the links between institutional power, politics and media policy, and the negative impact commercial imperatives have with regard to the media’s role in fostering conceptions of citizenship, democratic governance, and civic society (→ Media Policy). In many ways, McChesney’s work pragmatically extends the call to arms that Adorno and Horkheimer’s essay initially put forward regarding reclaiming our media culture from the industries and logics that produce it.

### SHIFTING TERMS AND OVERLAPPING TERRAINS

Since the 1980s, a number of terms – i.e., “cultural industries,” “media industries,” “production of culture,” “the production of culture/cultures of production,” “creative industries,”

“cultural work,” “cultural economics,” “cultural economy” – have been employed by various disciplines (economics, organizational sociology, media studies, etc.) to examine the cultural industries from different perspectives. These investigations have both broadened understandings of the organization, activities, and influence of the cultural industries, and caused confusion with regard to exactly how they differ in their theoretical and methodological approaches. Only recently has an *interdisciplinary dialogue* begun to emerge, allowing popular communication scholars to draw from a wide range of insights in investigating the mutually constitutive relationship between culture and economy, examining cultural production as a series of interconnections between production, consumption, identity, texts, regulation, and discourse.

These dialogues (which increasingly include input from practitioners as well as scholars) range in their optimism/pessimism regarding the impact of the cultural industries and their products upon the development of society. Nonetheless, a consensus is emerging which recognizes “the complex, ambivalent, and contested” nature of the cultural industries, the texts they produce, and the social relations of symbolic creativity that constitutes activities within them, while simultaneously acknowledging the very real power they wield as networks of logics and forces (Hesmondhalgh 2002, 3).

Recent theoretical explorations from Manuel Castells, Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, and Scott Lash & John Urry have considered how the logics and forces of capitalist production are reproduced micro-socially in ever more complex organizational configurations within macro-social formations of power. These studies are particularly relevant when considering how the cultural industries are implicated in extending commercial logics ever further into all aspects of modern life, understanding how economic organization and power impacts social practices and the construction of textual meaning, and how the transnational development of neoliberal policies and practices are advanced and sustained.

Consequently, many of the original charges raised within the Frankfurt School critique still resonate and remain relevant, valid, and pressing concerns today for scholars examining the operations of the cultural industries and their relationship with society. Future research will most certainly continue to explore the links between institutional organization, technological innovation, cultural development, the implementation of power, and the role of agency as they relate to the cultural industries and upholding democratic principles, enacting egalitarian practices, and reproducing social and cultural justice within the expanding realm of global capitalism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Book ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Policy ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Newspaper ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Research Methods ▶ UNESCO

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## Cumulative Media Effects

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The mass media can be the major influence on the adoption of an idea after the general public begins to become aware. Initially, an idea spreads through limited → social networks, with members exchanging information in formats ranging from face-to-face discussions to blogs on the → Internet (→ Blogger). Such interactivity means that participants are actively engaged in the topic. The spread will be more rapid if the adopters are more vocal, more influential, and have the other traits that → Rogers (2003) ascribes to innovators and to early adopters for the diffusion of innovations (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

If an idea has features of interest to the general population, it can enter the mass media with its wider audience of people with diverse interests. This population heterogeneity leads to homogeneity in one important respect: most members of the general public will be disengaged and dispassionate about the idea.

Idea adoption can be modeled using survival analysis if this population homogeneity is further accompanied by homogeneity in mass media penetration, meaning that all members of the public have the same chance of being exposed. *Survival analysis* is a broad class of mathematical models applicable to phenomena as diverse as radioactive decay and the death of people. In survival analysis, there are two key components: (1) a hazard



or force causing change, and (2) a collection of unconverted individuals who respond by undergoing a one-way conversion. For human survival, the hazard is the “force of mortality,” and transition is from life to death. A survival-based model for ideas is “ideodynamics,” in which the force for change is a persuasive force and the responding population is the fraction of the public that does not accept the idea.

The mass media contributors to the persuasive force include media messages with each one assumed to have its maximum force at time of its release, and with the magnitude of that force declining exponentially over time with a rate characterized by a *persistence constant*. People can convert without learning about the message directly from the media. Instead, they can receive the information through interpersonal communications (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects; Two-Step Flow of Communication; Opinion Leader; Interpersonal Communication). The effective result is to prolong the persistence of the media message.

The other constituent of survival analysis is the non-adopters of the idea who are the potential targets of the persuasive force. The persuasive force will convert some fraction of the non-adopters with a probability given by a *persuasibility constant*. Survival analysis only considers the one-way transition from unadoption to adoption. Ideodynamics extends survival analysis by also including the reverse conversion from adoption to unadoption in response to opposing information (Fan & Cook 2003).

The validity of the ideodynamic model can be tested by its ability to use both favorable and unfavorable mass media messages to predict the time trend of the adoption of an idea. Theory assessment through time-dependent predictions is also the key to astronomy, for which it is also impractical to perform controlled experiments. Empirical studies show that the news media content can indeed capture the dominant forces for behavior change, because the ideodynamic model can use media coverage to predict behavior percentages over time with accuracies close to that of survey error (→ Survey; Statistics, Descriptive). The behaviors have included not only such actions as cocaine use by teenagers (Fan & Holway 1994) but also opinions, such as the University of Michigan’s index of consumer sentiment (Fan & Cook 2003).

The persistence constant of a media message is typically much less than a single day. Thus a message and its interpersonal repetitions must change a behavior almost immediately or it will be forgotten. In other words, people act on new and not old information. If, instead, old information has a major effect, then behavior change would be more sluggish than actually observed due to the time needed to flush prior messages from memory. Nevertheless, prior persuasion can have a long-lasting effect by bringing an individual to a current behavior. After that behavior has been acquired, the individual might even forget the earlier information that had been the cause, but that does not contradict the prior media effect. If no new information is available, the prevalence of the behavior will stay unchanged. However, if new messages do arrive, then changes from adoption to unadoption and vice versa will occur following the ideodynamic processes based on survival analysis.

The *ideodynamic equations* can use media values at time  $t$  to predict behavior at time  $t + 1$ . That predicted behavior can then be used to predict behavior at time  $t + 2$ , and so on in a recursive manner. A potential danger in such an iterative calculation is that errors in media measurements will grow with each computation cycle, leading to expanding

uncertainty in the predictions. However, formal statistics shows that this is not the case. Instead, the variance stabilizes, thereby justifying the recursive method that does not have the autocorrelation and missing data problems of autoregressive models (Fan & Cook 2003; → Time Series Analysis).

The Bass model for the diffusion innovations (Mahajan et al. 1990) is a special case of ideodynamics, with the special assumptions that the persuasive force from the mass media is constant over time and that the persuasive force from the social network is proportional to the adopters. This model is prevalent in marketing and related disciplines and assumes no idea unadoption. Given the satisfactory performance of the ideodynamic model, there is no need for the Rogers (2003) postulates of population and communication heterogeneity.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Internet ► Interpersonal Communication ► Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ► Media Effects Duration ► Opinion Leader ► Rogers, Everett ► Social Networks ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Survey ► Time-Series Analysis ► Two-Step Flow of Communication

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## **Curriculum Studies**

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Questions and discussion about the most appropriate goals for and organization of educational experiences in communication drive the area of curriculum studies. Curriculum studies are projects that examine the content, structure, and organization of communication curricula. These projects have focused on each level of educational endeavor from the elementary school classroom to the graduate seminar at a research university. Perhaps because formal degree programs in communication are rare outside of US universities, most of the work reviewed in the area of curriculum studies has been done by US scholars focusing on US curriculum issues.

Work reviewed in the area of curriculum studies includes both conceptual essays and empirical explorations. Examinations of communication curricula have been targeted

toward professional communication educators and administrators seeking to understand better ways to argue for and guide communication instruction. While a great deal has been studied and written about the nature of communication curricula, very little consensus exists (Morreale & Backlund 2002). Because the nature of communication phenomena is so complex and sometimes elusive, and because the discipline has evolved as an interdisciplinary amalgamation, widespread agreement as to the content and organization of communication curricula is difficult to find.

### ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY CURRICULA

A large body of work has examined the goals, standards, and appropriate outcomes of an education in communication at the elementary, middle or junior high, and high school level. The *goals* for communication instruction from kindergarten to 12th grade setting (“K-12”) focus on the idea that communication skills are important elements of an elementary and secondary school experience (→ Communication Education, Goals of). The *goal of skill development* can be seen in the amount of attention given to specific sets of skills in speaking, listening, and media participation. This focus on skills (as distinct from knowledge or disposition) was first initiated by the 1983 publication of *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform* (a report by the US Department of Education’s National Commission on Excellence in Education), and steered most recently by US President George H. W. Bush’s *Goals 2000* (Morreale & Backlund 2002). Given this public and widely publicized mandate, it is unsurprising that much of the work in communication curriculum studies has focused on the development, organization, and adoption of standards and outcomes of communication instruction.

The National Communication Association (NCA, previously the Speech Communication Association; → Speech Communication, History of) sponsored two conferences (widely known as the Memphis conference and the Flagstaff conference, respectively) and published a wide variety of documents in an effort to direct and guide the development of *standards*, competency statements, and assessment guidelines for instruction in communication in the K-12 setting. The outcome of these efforts is considerable. Two of the NCA-published documents are landmark resources for parents, teachers, and administrators, each representing considerable research by and dialogue among a number of communication scholars. At one point at least 60 communication scholars were involved in this endeavor. The first publication is a listing of 23 K-12 standards in four categories: fundamentals of effective communication, speaking, listening, and media literacy (→ Media Literacy; Student Communication Competence). The second publication serves as a companion tool and articulates grade-appropriate competency statements that are derived from the 23 standards.

In addition to content standards such as those composed by the NCA, efforts have been made to identify standards that describe the ways in which students will behave differently as a result of instruction. These *performance standards*, composed by a US agency known as the New Standards, are intended to be used in conjunction with content standards. To date, standards relevant to communication have been developed within the English language arts curriculum for grades 4, 8, and 10. Two areas of distinction are important to note. These performance standards identify expectations for specific develop-

mental changes in communication skill proficiency. They also highlight opportunities for cross-disciplinary reinforcement of communication skill development (i.e., giving oral presentations on science projects).

Questions have also been raised about the degree to which national standards such as those written by NCA and New Standards are put to use in curriculum development in individual school districts and classrooms. Some evidence suggests that national standards influence curriculum development at an abstract level (e.g., in the titles of state curriculum documents) but that state standards are much more relevant to the more concrete dimensions of state standards, (e.g., in statements of outcome measures; Goulden 1998; Hall et al. 1999). All of the work that examines the relationships among state standards and practices and national level articulation of standards appears to reveal that when communication instruction is included in the K-12 setting it is done so within the English and language arts curriculum; it does not, in other words, have standing as a curriculum unto itself (Witkin et al. 1996).

A second, and much smaller, body of work has focused on the goals and benefits of elective courses in communication. Targeting largely the middle and high school levels, this body of work describes the ways in which experiences in debate, forensics, and journalism can enhance the educational experiences of students as well as prepare them in meaningful ways for civic engagement in college or careers (→ Journalism).

## UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULA

Among the first claims that must be extended about studies of communication curricula is that there is consensus neither about a *core* communication curriculum nor the particular ways in which a communication curriculum might contribute to general education.

Up until the mid-1960s, examinations of communication curricula revealed a tendency toward helping to forge useful relationships between individuals (students) and society. During this time courses in public speaking, rhetoric, and argumentation and debate were guided by the goal of preparation for democratic participation (→ Rhetorical Studies; Argumentative Discourse). Beginning in the late 1970s a focus toward helping individuals (students) develop skills and capacities for working with each other began to evolve. These courses were guided by goals of helping to enhance relationships, families, and productivity in working environments.

Contemporary surveys of undergraduate communication curricula reveal some areas of relatively strong consensus. Repeatedly, four different courses are identified as either required for the major and/or necessary to fulfill general or liberal education requirements: communication theory (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy), public speaking, → interpersonal communication, and a survey or hybrid course (Smith & Turner 1993; King 1998; Morreale & Backlund 2002). For departments that include a degree in mass communication, courses in introduction to broadcasting (→ Radio; Television), broadcast news (→ Radio News; Television News), radio production, and public relations constitute the most frequently identified core or required courses. Other communication courses regularly included in the curriculum, but not with the consistency of the “top four,” include the following: rhetoric and public address, communication theory, organizational communication, persuasion, and small group communication (→ Group Communication).

At the end of a series of meetings (annually from 1985 to 1999) on the undergraduate communication curriculum, a group of scholars involved with the Hope College conference reached a consensus decision that the curriculum should be guided by competencies rather than specific courses. They identified eight different competencies, including: theoretical approaches, sensitivity to diverse others, presentation, media literacy, influence processes, systematic inquiry, ethics, and human relational interaction (Rosenthal 2002).

Curriculum studies have explored the contribution that communication makes to a liberal (or general) education. On the premise that communication is the basic building block of literacy and that an education in communication contributes to an understanding of the history and character of our culture, several essays have advanced arguments for the role of communication in liberal education. Communication is also included in the liberal education curriculum because the basic skills in communication are consistently identified as necessary building blocks for successful learning throughout undergraduate education (Allen 2002). As such, the NCA has identified specific competencies in speaking, delivery, interpersonal skills, and listening at both the basic and advanced levels as important elements of a liberal education (Morreale & Backlund 2002).

In addition to surveys and articulations of competencies, a number of essays have been published using a case study approach in order to provide detailed descriptions of curricular innovations as well as the benefits to learning that can be demonstrated. Examples of this type of contribution include the following: civic usability in Internet journalism classes (→ Internet; Internet News), experiential education in communication, communication research in the undergraduate curriculum, organ donation awareness campaigns in the PR campaigns course, and cornerstone and capstone courses.

Instruction in communication also plays an important role in the educational mission of disciplines other than communication. Some of this contribution has been recognized in discussions of general or liberal education. However, increasingly special attention has been paid to the unique role that communication plays in learning and performing disciplinary subject matter, especially in the context of professional education (e.g., engineering, law, and education). This body of work, commonly referred to as *communication across the curriculum*, has been the focus of numerous curriculum studies. These studies have primarily investigated questions about different models for structuring communication skill development within other disciplinary curricula. Cronin & Glenn (1991) in an excellent review of this body of work provide descriptions of programs that depend on standalone communication courses, courses that include a communication module or special communication assignments within an existing disciplinary course, and programs that take advantage of a speech laboratory or consultation service in order to help students who are not communication majors develop targeted communication skills. A recent evolution of communication across the curriculum focuses attention on unique types and functions of communication practices within disciplines (Dannels 2001). Referred to as *communication in the disciplines*, this work argues in favor of embedding communication instruction deeply within the epistemological structures and performance expectations of individual disciplines.

Curriculum studies at the two-year college offer two important dimensions of distinction from the four-year institution. First, two-year colleges frequently have a mission to

provide traditional job skills or vocational education. To recognize this responsibility, they frequently offer a greater number of courses geared toward specific vocational applications like business speaking or interpersonal communication for health-care providers than is commonly seen in four-year institutions. Second, two-year colleges have a mission to prepare students to transfer to four-year institutions. In response to this mission, many of the course offerings mirror those offered at four-year schools. Students who are following this educational path are likely to encounter courses in public speaking, introduction to interpersonal communication, and a hybrid course. Several essays by Wolvin and his colleagues (e.g., Wolvin & Wolvin 1999) describe the unique curriculum features of the two-year college.

Essays describing methods or approaches to teaching specific communication courses (like public relations, media ethics, and research methods) exist in abundance (→ Ethics in Journalism). A complete listing of these sources is beyond the scope of this entry but interested readers might examine the following for such work: BEA syllabus project (Broadcast Education Association 2005), *Teaching communication* (Vangelisti et al. 1999), and the journals *Communication Education* and *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*.

## GRADUATE CURRICULA

Studies of the graduate curriculum in communication have become more pronounced with the widespread attention given to graduate education in general (see Andersen 1997; Salmon 2006). Beginning in the early 1990s, concerns were raised about the potential “glut” of PhDs in a labor market not prepared to support an already unprecedented number. In response to these concerns presidents of both NCA and the association for education in journalism and mass communication (AEJMC) established task forces charged with examination of the graduate curriculum in communication. Like similar task forces established to study the undergraduate curriculum, this group of scholars published reports and held a summer conference on the topic of graduate education (see Applegate et al. 1997 for a summary). Curriculum studies of graduate education have tended to hover around issues of theory vs application, culminating pedagogical projects, and preparation for the faculty role.

Reports from both task forces have issued recommendations that doctoral education focus on a structured curriculum that assures development rather than use of theory. These reports cite the increasing need for a complex and theoretically sophisticated understanding of how communication technologies and practices are influencing global economics, politics, and sociologies.

Work on theory development is supplemented with increased attention on an alternative view of the MA degree. With increased need for and opportunities to attain professional applied advanced degrees, there has been effort on the part of many communication scholars to develop applied graduate degrees in communication. Such applied degrees, it is argued, should be offered as alternatives to the traditional theory-driven path to graduate education. To date, several such programs have been developed and are offered (Powers & Love 1999). Discussions of appropriate culminating pedagogical projects are a natural extension of this discussion. Programs offering applied MA degrees

in communication also report a flexible range of culminating projects from theses, to exams, to applied projects. Debate about the proliferation of PhD degrees led to concern about the extent to which graduate students were well prepared for the full range of duties expected of a faculty member at a variety of types of institutions. These concerns led to suggestions that PhD programs ought to include teaching methods courses and teaching supervision more systematically in their curricula (Nyquist & Wulff 1992). Salmon (2006) suggested that graduate students need to be as well prepared for teaching in online and virtual environments as they are for more traditional classroom settings.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

As early as 1954, essays exploring international perspectives on communication curricula appeared in a variety of journals. These essays explored the various ways in which communication topics were integrated into primarily European educational settings. The focus of attention was on performance skills, like voice and diction, and the most common curricular “home” for communication instruction was in theatre departments. Recently, increased attention has been devoted to the study of international issues related to communication education. The BEA syllabus project, for example, provided an analysis of international media studies courses, and an entire issue of *Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*, Winter 2005, explored communication education from a variety of international perspectives, including an internship program in Ghana and multi-cultural journalism education in the Netherlands.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Course Organization Programs in Education ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Group Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Radio ▶ Radio News ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Student Communication Competence ▶ Television ▶ Television News

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## Cyberfeminism

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Cyberfeminism as feminist theory and practice has grown out of an emergent use of digital media and new communication technologies. The concept was used for the first time by Australian artists' group VNS Matrix in their *Cyberfeminist manifesto for the 21st century* (1991), and soon after by British cultural theorist Sadie Plant. Cyberfeminism refers to a wide range of feminist practices, ranging from high theory to political techno-art, science fiction writing, game design, and activism. Cyberfeminist projects can usually be mapped in relation to two intersecting axes, one running between “theoretical” and “practice-based” cyberfeminism, the other between “third wave” and “second wave” feminism.

Theoretically oriented cyberfeminism, aligned with third wave feminism, operates primarily on a sophisticated theoretical level of feminist theory and technoscience studies,



in relation to which feminist historian of science Donna Haraway's (1991) cyborg is an emblematic figure (→ Cybernetics; Cyborgs). But in contrast to the use of the cyborg in, for example, mainstream science fiction as an illustration of hardened masculinity, Haraway uses the cyborg to represent transcendence of dichotomies such as mind/body, organism/machine, culture/nature, civilized/primitive, and, centrally, man/woman, implying movement toward a society where gender has ceased to matter, or at least matters differently.

Another strand of the theory-driven, cyberfeminist paradigm is inspired by thinkers such as Sandy Stone and Sadie Plant, who have envisioned the → Internet as a realm of re-embodiment, and/or a space in which a feminist utopia could be realized. Stone (1995) uses her transsexual body as an argument in the area of political transgressions. According to Stone, cyberspace is a place in which the unexpected compositions of the cross-dressed or transgender body are the norm (→ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies). Through the ever-present possibility of radical performance and play with gender and identity online, the problematic position of the transgendered body can potentially be turned into a starting point. Even though cyberspace provides environments where, momentarily, bodies can be virtually altered, Stone simultaneously highlights all the skills and requirements that are necessary for online participation.

Plant (1997), in turn, suggests a cyberfeminism in which there is an intimate and maybe even subversive element between women and machines. Her main argument is that women in the shadow of male culture have been the ones who did the ground-breaking work: from the very first computer program to the latest incarnation of virtual reality. She argues that in typing as well as telecommunicating women have, through their bodies, provided the male world with a living interface with machines. Her idea is that women have been the machine parts in a male culture, by reproducing both the species and the communication. When machines get more autonomous, women go the same way, and between them a sexually charged alliance is developed.

In contrast to cyberfeminists such as Stone and Plant, who emphasize that the use of new communication technologies carries utopian and emancipatory potential, feminist philosopher Rosi Braidotti (1996) argues for a "cyberfeminism with a difference" and points at the risks for women in buying into the notion of cyberspace as a place for subversive identity performances, freed from the limitations of the physical body. According to Braidotti, rather than liberating women, this repeats the Cartesian fallacy of separating mind from body. The dream of getting rid of the body reflects an understanding of masculinity as abstraction and of men as physically disconnected and independent, which, she argues, is being remapped onto cyberspace discourses.

Between the poles of third wave feminism and practice-based cyberfeminism, there is the online equivalent of feminist groups like Guerilla Girls and Riot Grrrls. In the field of artistic practice and with considerable ironical force, "grrrls" have come together transnationally to join in the fight over representation. Braidotti defines their position in terms of "the politics of the parody," which points at the irony of treating femininity as a set of multiple options to play with. This online politics takes shape among grrrls on the web through a mixture of putting up active resistance, having fun, and doing it all their own way. They are the bad girls, smart, and proud of having tech skills, guiding other women online to express, empower, and encode themselves.

In a similar location on the cyberfeminist map to that of the online grrrls, there is the Australian artists' group VNS Matrix, shuttling between art, politics, and theory through strategies of irony, parody, and appropriation of sexual obscenities. Even if VNS Matrix shares with Plant the idea of technology as feminine and sexual, they have used quite literal efforts to contaminate technology with corporeality. Sentences like "The clitoris is a direct line to the matrix," from their manifesto, have not only been interpreted as bad girls talking dirty, but can also be seen as female appropriation of computer technologies that traditionally have been viewed as belonging to a masculine domain.

Positioned between the poles of second wave feminism and practice-based cyberfeminism, there is another kind of cyberfeminism with significant awareness of information inequality, searching to network between women worldwide to create special women's spaces of resistance online. One such formation is an alliance between → UNESCO and the Society for International Development called "Women Working on the Net." This project considers how to expand online opportunities from women in academic, activist, and professional circles in industrial countries to other women, particularly in developing countries (→ Digital Divide). If theoretically oriented cyberfeminism has been critiqued for excluding women who do not belong to the inner circle of white, western, middle-class, theoretical cyberfeminists, this version of the cyberfeminist movement seeks to integrate women of many different ethnicities and cultures.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Cyborgs ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Girl Culture ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Postfeminism ▶ UNESCO ▶ Virtual Communities ▶ Virtual Reality

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# Cybernetics

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Heron of Alexandria (first century AD) was the first chronicler of a peculiar mechanism capable of holding the flame of oil lamps steady. Later, similar mechanisms were found in water clocks. In the eighteenth century, they reappeared in the regulator of Watt's steam engine, which drove industrial production. Since 1910, engineers have called them servomechanisms. Norbert Wiener (1948, 1950), mathematician at MIT, realized that the theory underlying them had far wider applications, linked them to communication, and called the study of these phenomena "cybernetics . . . the science of control and communication in the animal and the machine" (→ Communication: History of the Idea). He derived "cybernetics" from the Greek *kybernetes* or "steersman." Before him, Ampere had used the word to designate a science of government, without, however, developing the idea.

Cybernetics became established during a series of interdisciplinary meetings held between 1944 and 1953. It brought together some of the most important postwar intellectuals, including Wiener, John von Neumann, Warren McCulloch, Claude Shannon, Heinz von Foerster, Ross Ashby, Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead, and Alex Bavelas, and became known as the Macy Conferences on Cybernetics (Heims 1991). Erving Goffman presented his early sociological ideas at these meetings as well. Cybernetics quickly expanded its conceptions to embrace neural networks (McCulloch), communication patterns in groups (Bavelas), anthropological concerns (Mead), mind (Ashby, Bateson), management (Stafford Beer), and political systems (Karl Deutsch).

Cybernetics did not establish itself as a discipline with its own academic institutions. It remained an interdiscipline that gave birth to numerous specializations; for example, mathematical communication theory, control theory, automata theory, neural networks, computer science, artificial intelligence, game theory, information systems, family → systems theory, and constructivism. Many of its revolutionary ideas – feedback, digitization, simulation, autonomy, networks, homeostasis, and complexity – are now embraced by established disciplines. In the 1970s, cyberneticians shifted gears, recognizing that the known reality cannot be separated from the process by which it is explored and constructed. This gave rise to second-order cybernetics, fundamental to the social sciences.

The use of the prefix "cyber-" in popular literature about intelligent artifacts, digital media, and globalization of communication – fueling a sense of liberation from authorities, geography, and technological determinisms – is evidence for how well the fruits of cybernetics are growing in contemporary culture, if in a somewhat shallow soil.

## CYBERNETIC EXPLANATIONS

Initially, cybernetics explored models of phenomena, such as mentioned above, without reference to their materiality, ultimately favoring impersonal mathematical formulations. The power of computer programs, for example, does not depend on who uses them and on which machine they run. Their virtue lies in their reproducibility. The a-materiality of early cybernetic concepts fertilized many fields.

Ashby (1956) characterized cybernetics as the science of all possible systems, which is “informed” when some of them cannot be built or evolve in nature. This definition departs from the traditional preoccupation of science with generalizations from observational data. Bateson (1972) related this characterization to the theory of evolution.

*Second-order cybernetics*, or the cybernetics of cybernetics, the control of control, and the communication of communication (von Foerster 1996), by contrast, acknowledges that all explanations reside in language, the language of a community – cyberneticians, for example. It amounts to a shift from the earlier preoccupation with disembodied models to constructions that recognize the observer as a participant in them, embodied knowing.

Cybernetic explanations can be described as resting on four conceptual pillars: *circularity*, *information*, *process*, and *participation*. These are not separate ideas. They join in the cybernetic project of overcoming numerous orthodoxies of contemporary science.

## CIRCULARITY

Just as arguments proceed from premises to conclusions, Newtonian science proceeds from causes to effects. Cyberneticians, by contrast, are fond of circular causalities such as when A affects B, B affects C, and C affects A in return. They include linear causalities as less interesting cases. In systems that embody such circularities, every part affects itself via others, causes and consequences are no longer clearly distinguishable, and a dynamics is set in motion that resists outside interventions.

## Feedback

Circular causality is familiar in home heat control. The thermostat does not respond to room temperatures, but to the difference between actual and desirable temperatures. This difference determines another difference, whether a heater is on or off. When it is off, the room slowly loses heat. When it is on, the heater increases the room temperature up to the point where the difference has disappeared and room temperature stays where it is set. Feedback loops reside in more complex technologies (target-seeking missiles, automated production), biology (regulation of bodily functions), economics (supply and demand of goods and services), and in social life (the giving and taking required to maintain friendships). In human communication, feedback is explicit in verbal comments to what one said, and implicit in responses to differences between observed and expected consequences of one's actions. Feedback is a necessary condition for learning and for maintaining homeostasis, whether within organisms, families, or social organizations.

Systems with feedback loops either converge on a stable state, or diverge, leading to meltdowns, fights, and breakups. The former is called negative feedback, as deviations are reduced. The latter is called positive feedback, as deviations become amplified. While most technical devices are designed to converge on a preferred state, social interactions often escalate, unintentionally as in arms races, or intentionally, to achieve various kinds of growths, for example in business or individuals in therapy. Circular causalities underlie all purposive systems and explain their capacity to compensate for variations in their environment, control themselves, and display a “will of their own.”

### Self-Application

Tools usually are engineered as open functions, a means for humans to control something else – driving a car or influencing an audience. To understand systems with loops, including feedback, their output must re-enter their input, at least in part. The functions that enable self-application are called recursive. Examples of self-application are copying a document repeatedly, which eventually results in a version that resists what the copier can do to it, or taking the square root of any positive number over and over again, which converges to 1.000. Fractal geometry utilizes recursive functions by repeatedly inserting a figure into its own parts, generating a complex configuration. Individuals converge to their identity by recursively using their name, developing behaviors that are uniquely traceable to them, and interacting with others consistently.

Self-application ushered in the computer revolution. Early ideas of computation maintained a clear distinction between the data and the operations transforming them. It occurred to von Neumann to store programs in the same memory as the data to which they were applied. This opened the possibility of programming computers so that programs could call on other programs, including on themselves (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). He also theorized a special case of self-application, the ability of machines to reproduce themselves. While his work did not create self-reproducing robots, his ideas resurfaced in communication theory (reproducibility), and recently informed Richard Dawkins's memetics.

### Self-Organization

A self-organizing system is one that develops in its own terms, without instruction from, copying of, or adapting to features of an external environment. The biological makeup of living organisms, for example, cannot be explained from where they live. Their history is their best explanation. While social organizations may well learn from each other, they also develop indigenous forms. Ashby's *law of self-organization* specifies two properties. First, to the extent the parts of a system engage in recurrent interactions, they converge on stable regions – or attractors – in the process of which their networks of communication become increasingly orderly. Second, by moving from one attractor to another, the freedom to move is transformed into indigenously orderly conduct. Von Foerster demonstrated that systems are self-organizing by decreasing their entropy (increasing order) inside, or increasing entropy (decreasing order) outside, or both. He also showed that random perturbations can speed up self-organization, and called this phenomenon the “*order from noise*” principle.

Fundamental to all self-organizing systems is that they defy control from their environment as well as understanding by external observers. This is due to their constitution as relatively closed circular networks of communication. Conversations, for example, are self-organizing, and it is hard indeed to know what is going on in one without joining (→ Interaction; Interpersonal Communication; Language and Social Interaction). This difficulty is magnified when seeking to understand social organizations, which cyberneticians describe as networks of conversations. Self-organization presents profound methodological challenges to the study of communication.

### Autopoiesis

Autopoiesis or self-production is a process that Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela (1987) identified as the condition for living systems to practice their living. Autopoietic systems consist of *recursive networks of interactions* among components that produce all components necessary for such a network to operate, maintain a boundary within which their autonomy is practiced, and thus continually regenerate themselves under conditions of continuous perturbations from their outside. Reproduction, cognition, purposiveness, the efficient use of energy, and even survival are epiphenomena of the autopoietic organization of a living system. Autopoiesis explains, for example, that humans continuously change their organic makeup without losing their identity as human beings. Allopoietic systems, by contrast, produce something other than their own components. A bakery, for example, may feed its owner metaphorically but does not produce what it takes to bake. Autopoietic systems can distinguish among perturbations and compensate for them by changing their structure, but have no access to the nature or sources of these perturbations.

For Maturana, autopoiesis is embodied in the components that constitute the self-generating networks of production. It cannot be separated from where it is embodied. Therefore, he distanced himself from sociological theorists like Niklas Luhmann, who appropriated the term in his disembodied conception of social systems.

### INFORMATION

Cybernetic conceptions of information emerged in studying purposive systems, which must respond appropriately to deviations from their goals. Bateson observed that circular systems, from simple feedback loops, to manifestations of mind and social systems, do not respond to physical stimuli but to differences between them. They are triggered by differences, process differences and differences of differences, and may in turn affect the differences that triggered the process. He defined  $\rightarrow$  information as the differences that make a difference at a later point. This places information on a logical level higher than the physical phenomena it relates, and therefore it cannot be explained or measured in physical terms. To highlight that information is created within a system, not representative of realities external to it, Varela proposed to write the words as “in-formation.”

Shannon introduced binary digits (bits) as the unit for measuring the extent to which messages from one point are reproduced at another point. His information calculus gave rise to several concepts, such as *noise*, the extent to which *entropy* surreptitiously enters a communication channel and inexplicably pollutes messages; *equivocation*, the extent to which messages lose their details in the course of transmission; and *redundancy*, unused or wasted channel capacity. His tenth theorem asserts that the effect of noise can be eliminated by adding an amount of redundancy to the channel that is equal to or larger than the measure of noise. Redundancy has made contemporary information technology extraordinarily reliable. Language is said to be about 70 percent redundant, allowing people to understand verbal expressions even when barely audible, mispronounced, or containing spelling errors.

Ashby explored the complement of communication. Purposive systems, he noted, must counteract the entropy in their environment, for example, reducing the effects of external

temperature fluctuations on the room temperature, and to accomplish this requires internal variability. To remain competitive, business organizations need to respond to environmental changes and must have uncommitted organizational variety at their disposal. Ashby's *law of requisite variety* states that effective regulators or, more generally, purposive systems, must possess an internal variety equal to or larger than the variety of the disturbances of that system; in short: "only variety can destroy variety" (Ashby 1956, 207). Ashby's Law includes Shannon's tenth theorem as a special case. They merely pursue opposite aims of information processing.

## PROCESS

Philosophically, cyberneticians' preference for processes favors ontogenesis over ontology, accounting for processes of evolution rather than its products, constructing reality rather than describing what exists. An example from early cybernetics is the development of algorithms. Adding time to propositional logic, which is limited to stating facts, creates an algorithmic language, capable of describing processes and essential to programming computers. Shannon's celebrated MIT thesis enabled networks of relays – radio tubes in the case of ENIAC, the first operational computer – to be treated algebraically and hence far easier to program efficiently. He concluded before von Neumann did that anything that can be stated logically can be converted into an algorithm and hence becomes computable.

Adding time also led Varela to his calculus of self-reference. Self-references had threatened the consistency of logical systems for centuries. Whitehead and Russell identified them as the chief culprit of problems in logic, considered them an abnormality of language, and proposed a "theory of logical types" to rule them out of the language of science. Yet Zen Buddhism has employed paradoxes as powerful teaching devices for centuries, and psychotherapy has recently learned to use them in the treatment of psychopathologies. Human communication scholarship, especially by Bateson (1972) and the Palo Alto School that elaborated his ideas, developed its own responses to Russell's problem, for example, in the concept of meta-communication and the distinction between content and relational communication (Ruesch & Bateson 1951; Watzlawick et al. 1967; → Communication: Relationship Rules; Communicology). Utilizing Spencer Brown's *laws of form*, Varela dissolved the "viciousness" of such paradoxes by describing their eigen-dynamics – from assuming Epimenides is telling the truth, it follows he is lying, it follows he is telling the truth, it follows he is lying, *ad infinitum*. Dissolving paradoxes in time renders them analyzable, no longer threatening. Varela characterized self-reference as "the infinite in finite guise." Shifting from the study of writings to processes of communication did much the same for communication research.

Explaining systems in terms of what they do rather than what they are is also reflected in efforts at verbing nouns, like speaking of observing instead of observers, languaging instead of language, governing instead of government, or processes of living instead of life – but verbing may not be enough.

Contemporary computers are serial machines – characterized by changing from one state to the next. Social phenomena, by contrast, involve massively parallel processes: different things happen simultaneously, raising doubts about the ability of serial models

to help understanding of social processes. The parallel computer is a promising alternative. Heralded as a recent idea, it goes back to early cybernetic conceptions, for example in McCulloch's neural nets, Frank Rosenblatt's perceptron, and von Foerster's pattern recognizer.

Digital computers also are nonlinear machines. Many social theories, especially of the effects of mass communication, are still conceptualized in terms of linear functions – relating changes in one variable to changes in another. Although digital computers can be tamed to compute linear functions, this is not their strength. Recently, social scientists have discovered that nonlinear models can offer powerful simulations of social phenomena.

The cybernetic preoccupation with processes and ontogenesis also prepared the ground for its → *constructivism*, an effort to understand reality not as given but as brought forth in the process of enacting one's constructions of reality. Invoking actions that create realities implies that realities could have been otherwise, liberates scientific explorations from the determinism of causal explanations, and opens the possibility of changing what is undesirable.

## PARTICIPATION OR SECOND-ORDER CYBERNETICS

Werner Heisenberg's *uncertainty principle* asserts a limit to observing a system's states whenever the act of observation affects them. This principle troubled the idea of knowing by detached observation, celebrated since the Enlightenment, fundamental to the natural sciences, and emulated by social scientists as well. The shift from first-order to second-order cybernetics takes note of Heisenberg's epistemological challenge.

This shift was gradual. Early cyberneticians, while building models, already reflected on their own role. Shannon theorized his ability to design error-correcting codes that would resist noise in communication channels. Ashby explored the difference between what he, as the designer of a system, knew about its internal working and what he could learn about that system by observing the consequences of experimenting with it – describing that system without knowledge of its history or makeup, as a black box. The idea of a black box became the paradigm for studying systems that have no designer or cannot be taken apart, such as a living brain or an economy. In modeling such systems, cyberneticians soon became aware that their models defined, if not created, the conceptions of the modeled. This rendered the human modeler a key to understanding what was to be known. Following up on such threads, the anthropologist Mead (1968) suggested that cyberneticians apply cybernetic principles to their own work, a suggestion that von Foerster (1996) formulated as the inclusion of the observer in the observed and called “second-order cybernetics.” However, Mead went further, asking cyberneticians to explore systematically how societies organize themselves around cybernetic ideas and to assume responsibility for what the language of cybernetics brings forth – in effect, asking cyberneticians to acknowledge their role as unwitting change agents or designers. This prompted Klaus Krippendorff to define second-order cybernetics as *the cybernetics of participating in systems under continuous reconstruction by their constituents*, invoking a participatory epistemology.

Second-order cybernetics highlights the *use of language* – language not as a system of representations of an objective reality, which Richard Rorty (1979) aptly criticized, but as a Wittgensteinian language game or as Maturana's coordination of coordination of



action. Coordination is already evident, for example, when people kick a ball to each other. However, it is in language that soccer is distinguished from other sports and its rules are invoked to determine the progress of the game. In this conception, language brings forth consensual coordinations, in the process of which people acknowledge each other and direct their constructive attention to phenomena conceptualized in language. Conversation is one such language game. Second-order cybernetics takes conversation as the site where realities are co-constructed.

In the *social domain*, unless the products of communication research are purely academic or concern necessary causes, the very act of publishing social theories and making them available to interested parties, especially to those theorized therein, encourages people to respond. Whether people take advantage of such theories, and if applicable to themselves, conform to their claims, or act to counter them, any of these responses invariably change the theorized reality right in front of its theorist's eyes. The communication of social theories can affect what they theorize, change their own validity, and create new realities. This renders social theorists constitutive participants in the very realities they are describing. (Without realizing his own culpability in that constructive circularity, Anthony Giddens referred to this process as double hermeneutics; → Communication Theory and Philosophy.)

We know many constructive circularities of this kind. One example is self-fulfilling prophecies (or hypotheses), dreaded by sociologists like Robert Merton, who prefer that the truth-value of their theories be objectively verifiable, not changing in the course of their dissemination. Another well-known example is → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's → spiral of silence, which takes effect when citizens are informed of where they stand relative to a political majority. Economic crises, the growth of social movements, and many psychological problems can be explained in linguistic terms, as consensual coordination of understanding and actions. Herbert Simon realized the effects of publishing polling results on voting behavior, and suggested that valid election predictions must build these effects into whatever is published.

Mead realized that upholding the illusion of detached observers is no longer an option for cyberneticians when cybernetic principles begin to transform society (→ Objectivity in Science). To the extent that scientific findings are socially relevant, scientists need to see themselves as participants in the very systems they claim to describe but unwittingly influence if not create. The "god's eye view" that scientists have enjoyed since the Renaissance reveals itself as a convenient way to avoid responsibility for the inevitable circularity of scientific involvement. Second-order cybernetics can be likened to an insider's, not a meta-, perspective.

In the *domain of cognition*, McCulloch's work on neuronal networks, Maturana's experiments on the circularity of perception and action, and his and Varela's biology of cognition are embraced by what Ernst von Glasersfeld (1995) calls radical constructivism (Watzlawick 1984). It acknowledges that humans cannot leave their own nervous system and enter an external world to determine what they are seeing. Our nervous system does not map the Cartesian "universe" but constructs realities suitable for living and interacting with others. In enacting them, constructions of reality may be retained when they lead to what one expects, revised or expanded when they are seen as improvable, lessons to learn from, but when they prove fatal, the constructions and their beholders

vanish. Thus, constructions of reality are subject to evolution. They are what can bring down the autopoiesis of living systems.

Second-order cybernetic epistemology accepts Maturana's injunction against theorizing what violates human bodily capabilities. Its application to social phenomena leads to the study of embodied social phenomena, grounded in practices of living and communication, each enacting their own understanding, responding to their understanding of others' understanding, and generally expanding the possibilities of living together.

As an interdisciplinary, cybernetics continues to create challenging conceptions and takes responsibilities for the realities that follow from them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communication: Relationship Rules ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Communicology ▶ Constructivism ▶ Information ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Interaction ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Systems Theory

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# Cyborgs

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The term “cyborg” was coined in 1960 by Manfred Clynes and Nathan Kline as a portmanteau of Norbert Wiener’s (1965) “cybernetics” with “organism.” A cybernetic organism (cyborg) is a biological creature – generally a human being – whose functioning has been enhanced through integration of mechanical, electrical, computational, or otherwise artificial components.

Many concepts now associated with the cyborg pre-date the term’s usage: antecedent or similar terms include robot, android, replicant, bionic human; stories of human–machine hybrids date back to myths such as Daedalus’ artificial wings. Presentations of human–machine hybrids have frequently acted as tropes in social arguments and literary imaginations that attempt to conceive the proper roles, and deeper meaning, of humans themselves, of machines, of the moral worth of each, and of the interactions among them.

Following the popularization of the term “cyborg,” especially in science fiction of the 1960s and 1970s, a number of further neologisms with the cyber-prefix developed that chiefly refer back to cyborgs, rather than directly to → cybernetics. These include cyberpunk (fiction), → cyberfeminism (theory), cyberspace (electronic networks), and cybersex (shared fantasy). Indeed, ad hoc usage of the prefix is common in journalism and popular writing.

Organic capabilities enhanced in cyborgs vary in kind as well as in extent. The enhancements addressed in fiction or essays – or, indeed, by practiced technologies – follow both the rhetorical or literary purposes of their creator and the evolving state of societal technical capabilities. Early examples of cyborgs generally centered on mechanical enhancements to motion; the growing prevalence of electronic sensors and computers led to discussion of cyborgs that improve human perception, → cognition, and communications channels (→ Cognitive Science). With inventions in genomics and nanotechnology at the start of the twenty-first century, visions of cyborgs often discuss augmentation of human health and longevity.

Diverse thinkers set very different boundaries for what artificial additions make a human into a cyborg. In a broad sense, all humans in the last several thousand years have been intimately shaped by the utilization and presence of technologies around them, or physically manipulated or attached to them. A spear, or even a stick, extends human capabilities for hunting or warfare; writing extends human memory, cognition, and information transmission. Inclusive thinkers, including those embracing the label transhumanism, focus on this broadest sense, usually with the intention of extending human–machine interactivity (→ Human–Computer Interaction).

In a stricter conception of the cybernetics stem, a cyborg’s machine elements must have a meaningful feedback mechanism with its biological aspects. For example, a continuity exists between a wooden leg that, indeed, enhances motility, and a hinged, weighted, and carefully balanced artificial leg, and further between these and a servo-mechanical prosthetic that actively responds to posture and muscle conductivity.

A prominent trend in the literary portrayal of cyborgs has been distinctly dystopian, seeing cyborgs as extensions or symbols of socially destructive industrial or postindustrial

technologies. An early and prominent entry in this genre was Shelley's (1831) *Frankenstein*. Many subsequent works demonstrated a similar but updated anxiety over the violation of the moral dignity and integrity of human beings, ranging in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries from Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* to melodramatic portrayals of cyborgs as powerful evil beings in popular films such as the *Terminator*, *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, or *Matrix* series. With the increasing feasibility of genetic or other biological manipulation of humans, many criticisms of such genetic cyborgs arise from ethical – and often religious – perspectives, which largely recapitulate the set of concerns suggested by Shelley. Many of these are, in turn, represented in dystopian fiction portraying the emergence of a new eugenics.

In contrast to negative portrayals, several literary or intellectual trends praising or advocating cyborgs have occurred over a similar time frame. Cyborgs have acted as superheroes, from Jean de la Hire's *Nyctalope* at the beginning of the twentieth century, through numerous mid-century American comic book heroes, on to late twentieth-century television heroes such as *The Six Million Dollar Man* and *The Bionic Woman*, or the *Robocop* film series.

Beyond the cartoonish heroes or villains of some popular fiction, a number of intellectuals – who have generally conceived cyborgs in their expansive sense – have seen liberating potential in cyborgs. For some, such as Haldane (1923) or Wiener (1965), cyborgs simply represent an extension of the positive capabilities of technologies (→ McLuhan, Marshall); most practicing doctors and medical researchers probably share this attitude, albeit infrequently naming medically assisted humans as cyborgs. Another trend in social thought, however, puts a positive light on cyborgs in that they can break down normative roles of gender, class, race, or other subaltern status (perhaps as much by compelling metaphor as by direct intervention). This tradition largely follows Michel Foucault's (1998) conception of *biopower*; Haraway (1991) is a prominent thinker in this tradition (→ Technology, Social Construction of).

Recent fiction around cyborgs, particularly that labeled cyberpunk, both takes a morally ambivalent attitude toward what it conceives as more-or-less inevitable cyborg technologies, and also tends to focus on cognitive and communicative enhancements over physical ones.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Cognitive Science ► Cyberfeminism ► Cybernetics  
► Human–Computer Interaction ► McLuhan, Marshall ► Technology, Social Construction of

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## Czech Republic: Media System

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The Czech Republic is located in the central part of Europe, with over 10 million inhabitants, Czech as the main official language, and a two-chamber parliamentary system. The state was founded after the split of former Czechoslovakia in 1993, which had belonged to the Soviet bloc after World War II. The current media system, established and developing since 1989, can be characterized as a liberal, pluralistic system operating within the framework of constitutionally guaranteed freedom of expression. The media in the country operate in a market-driven environment with no or very limited regulation regarding both content and ownership. Audiovisual media operate within a dual system of both public-service media and private (mostly commercial) broadcasting. The system is close to the so-called “democratic corporatist model” (Hallin & Mancini 2004). The typical characteristics of the system are a high level of both horizontal and vertical concentration of ownership, with wide influence of foreign owners, especially in print media (→ Concentration in Media Systems); a strong tendency toward commercialization (with a remarkable shift toward → tabloidization and → infotainment); a comparatively weak and politically dependent position of public-service media; and dynamic development of Internet media.

The media system of the Czech Republic is based upon developments and changes that took place during the period of former Czechoslovakia (1918–1992) and, before that, in the period of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The *first periodical newspaper* in the Czech language was published in 1719, but even before that periodicals in German were published in the area now known as the Czech Republic. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the big quality or liberal papers and the structure of the political party press were established (→ Partisan Press). The serious interest of the general public in national and political issues slowed down the commercialization of the media, and sensational papers did not appear before the 1920s.

After the foundation of Czechoslovakia in 1918, a liberal approach to the media was adopted and the structure of the media was developing. The coexistence of both Czech and German written periodicals, as well as the rise of big publishing houses, the development of political quality press and cultural/political magazines, on one hand, and

sensational press on the other, and the establishment of a national press agency (1918) and radio broadcasting (1923) are main features of the changes in Czech media between the wars. After World War II, Czechoslovakia was incorporated into the domain of influence of the Soviet Union, and its media system was accommodated to it. All of the media were supposed to serve the goals of the leading party and ideology. Most prewar periodicals were canceled or redesigned, and new titles were launched. The content of the media was under strong and systematic control (→ Censorship). However, the system itself was developing, and television was introduced in 1953. With the short interruption of the so-called “Prague Spring” (in the broadest sense, the period 1967–1969), when the media were allowed to operate more freely, the system can be characterized as nondemocratic, centralized, and nonpluralistic.

At the end of 1989, developments in Czechoslovakia led to the establishment of the media as independent of the state, market driven, pluralistic, and mostly nonregulated (Jakubowicz 2003). The media and advertising market became established as a new feature of the developing market economy of the country. Both print and audiovisual media were transformed. This development was adopted by the Czech Republic in 1993.

One of the main features of the media transition was the *change of media ownership*. Private publishers were allowed to enter the segment where only political parties, governmental bodies, and quasi-nongovernmental organizations had been licensed before 1989. During 1990, the structure of ownership of dailies and magazines was stabilized, with substantial presence of foreign ownership. The main dailies are owned by publishers based in other countries. Among the leading dailies, only one is still owned by a Czech publisher (→ Globalization of the Media).

New *newspapers* were published soon after 1989 but most of them did not survive. Some pre-1989 newspapers were transformed, and some have survived until today: for instance, *Právo*, the successor of the former communist daily *Rudé právo*; *Mladá Fronta Dnes*, the successor of the former daily *Mladá fronta* published by the Union of Socialistic Youth; the weekly *Hospodářské noviny* has been changed into a daily; the *Lidové Noviny*, a daily with a long liberal and quality tradition, established at the end of the nineteenth century, banned during the pre-1989 period, and published as a *samizdat* since 1988, was re-established and got its place on the market. Among new titles that survived on the market, mostly sensational papers can be found, e.g., the *Blesk* (“Flash”) daily was founded in 1992. The structure of the regional and local daily press was re-established completely, as well as the structure of magazines. The mainstream magazines are mostly domestic versions of international magazines.

State-run *radio and television* were transformed into public-service media, the *Český rozhlas* (Czech Radio) and *Česká televize* (Czech Television). Private commercial broadcasting was established (the first private radio in 1991; the first private TV broadcasting in 1993 and 1994). The leading TV station is a private commercial one, *TV Nova*, which started in 1994 and quickly achieved the position of market leader.

The newly established → advertising market is one of the most dynamic segments of the economy in the region. The amount of money fueled into the media via advertising has been increasing constantly, starting at less than 400 million Czech crowns in 1990 and increasing to more than 21.3 billion Czech crowns (0.75 billion euros) in 2006.

The new network media (→ Internet connections and mobile phone networks) have developed rapidly since the mid-1990s. There are three international mobile phone providers present in the Czech Republic (including Telefónica and Vodafone). The penetration of the Internet into the population was over 48 percent in 2006. All main traditional mass media are present on the Internet and some have developed specific i-products (e.g., the *Hospodářské noviny* daily produces [www.iHned.cz](http://www.iHned.cz); the *Právo* daily offers [www.novinky.cz](http://www.novinky.cz)). New Internet media (radios, news servers, etc.) have been developed as well (e.g., [www.aktualne.cz](http://www.aktualne.cz), an Internet news server; *Leonardo*, a radio station provided by public-service radio).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Censorship ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Tabloidization

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# D

## Dance

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Dance is a complex visual form that communicates through movement in time and space, often in conjunction with music and poetry. Dances convey → meaning through culturally understood conventions within social contexts (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Symbolic Interaction; Visual Communication).

Dances are produced as a result of creative processes that move human bodies through time and in spatial layouts. They are transient in performance, visual manifestations of socio-political relations, and may be the subject of an elaborate → aesthetic system. Often the process of performing is as important as the cultural form produced. Dances and dancing are surface manifestations of the deep structure or underlying philosophy of a society. That is, as presentations for an audience, dances may be admired as art or work; they may be participatory and enjoyed as entertainment, they may make political or social statements, they may bring religious ecstasy or trance, or they may be performed as a social duty (→ Art as Communication).

It is misleading to assume that dance is a universal language, as many have done in the past. Except on a most superficial level, dance cannot be understood or communicated cross-culturally without an understanding of the individual dance traditions within a culture (→ Ethnography of Communication). However, some dance types, such as ballet and Hawaiian hula, have been imported across cultural boundaries and can be considered → discourses on globalization (→ Globalization Theories). The places of origin, cultural traditions, and “communicative competence” of these now globalized performances have become nearly irrelevant as particular dance forms have attained a status of “international languages,” variously understood, admired, or viewed simply as → spectacle.

Dances consist of grammatically structured movements that in performance are usually part of some larger activity or activity system (→ Sign Systems). The grammar of a dance idiom, like the grammar of any language, involves structure, style, and meaning; one must learn the movements, how they can be stylistically varied, their syntax (rules about how they can and cannot be put together to form motifs and whole dances), and what meanings are ascribed to them. Movements may have been given originally by the gods, ancestors, or historic figures, but are retained and perpetuated in contemporary life as cultural artifacts and aesthetic performances. These movements are important, even if



their meanings have been changed or forgotten, as a reference point for ethnic or cultural identity.

Meaning is not inherent in movement but is ascribed to dances by groups of people at specific points in time, and these visual dimensions of performance need to be decoded (→ Code). In order to communicate as a cultural and aesthetic artifact, performers and observers must have communicative competence in an evolved Chomskyan sense. *Competence* or knowledge about a specific movement tradition is acquired in much the same way as competence in a spoken language is acquired. Competence relates to the cognitive learning of the shared rules of specific movement traditions, as *langue* is acquired in a Saussurian mode (→ Structuralism; Structuralism in Visual Communication). Competence enables the viewer to understand a grammatical movement sequence that he or she has never seen before. *Performance* refers to an actual rendering of a movement sequence, *parole* of Saussure, which assumes that the performer has a certain level of competence and the skill to carry it out (→ Semiotics). Only after one has competence in this enlarged sense is it possible to compose, dance, or view performances in a culturally appropriate manner.

Dance, like all symbolic systems, creates new meanings by combining old forms in new ways. The product and process interact dialogically, relying on shared understandings among composers, performers, and viewers. As in spoken language, understanding the meaning of movement requires understanding structure and style, which are learned by watching and participating. Such knowledge is passed from generation to generation in a more or less formal manner, and absorbed by experiencing how the meanings of motifs, choreography, and style are communicated in context. Most important is knowledge about the culture in which a dance tradition is embedded, such as male and female roles in movement, social status, social structure, and especially socio-political discourse (→ Gender and Discourse; Spectator Gaze). *Methods and theories* currently in use for analyzing dance include “form analysis,” which originated in eastern Europe (Giurchescu and Kroschlova 2007; “emic analysis,” which uses linguistic analogies (Kaeppler 2007); and “semasiology,” which is concerned with the semantics of body languages (Williams 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Code ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Meaning ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Spectacle ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Structuralism ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Visual Communication

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# Dating Relationships

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Dating relationships have no uniform defining characteristics. They have romantic or sexual overtones, occur between two people who are not married to each other or to anyone else, typically do not share a residence, have not formally acknowledged plans to marry, and may or may not expect continued involvement. These relationships vary in expectations for and level of commitment, intimacy, exclusivity, and sexual activity. Dating relationships have often been equated with “premarital” relationships or are considered part of “courtship,” though it is recognized that most “premarital” relationships do not result in marriage, nor are they intended to. Dating as a relational form emerged in the US and has received limited research attention in nonwestern countries.

## THE PHENOMENON OF DATING RELATIONSHIPS

In the US, the primary type of romantic involvement among unmarried individuals has shifted from courtship as a precursor to marriage to dating as a recreational activity with little emphasis on commitment (Rollin 1999). In addition to courtship or mate selection and recreation, reasons for dating include socialization (getting to know each other), status grading (increasing one’s social status by dating popular or attractive individuals), sexual experimentation, satisfaction, and intimacy (Roscoe et al. 1987).

Some report that “dates” as formal preplanned activities are becoming less frequent (Glenn & Marquardt 2001). This has led some to proclaim that dating is becoming extinct. Others argue that dating and dating relationships simply continue to change (Surra et al. 2007). *Dating forms* vary from exclusive committed relationships to “getting together,” “hanging out” alone or in a group (Rollin 1999), “hooking-up” (sexual encounters between acquaintances or strangers without commitment), “speed-dating” (meeting individuals via fast-paced round robin interactions), and “pre-dates” (meeting potential dates via online interaction; → Mediated Social Interaction).

Many stage models of dating have been offered (Cate & Lloyd 1992). In the US, the most common reasons for initial attraction/interaction are physical attraction, similarity, reciprocal liking, and proximity. Reasons for breaking up include social incompatibility, low relational quality, and influence of social networks (Sprecher 1998). Relationships often develop and deteriorate at a similar pace; the more quickly partners become involved, the more abrupt the termination, whereas the more prolonged the development, the more prolonged the termination (Cate & Lloyd 1992). Scripts and expectations for dates have been examined, as have ways of ending dating relationships (→ Expectancy Violation; Relational Termination; Scripts).

Recently, dating relationships have been studied as one context for the numerous relational processes such as self-disclosure, abuse, power, and trust that are universal in close relationships (Surra et al. 2007).

### **DATING FROM 1880 TO 1960**

Dating emerged in the US during the 1920s, as did the term “date” (Bailey 1988). *From 1880 to 1920*, “courting” was the predominant romantic form among unmarried individuals. Courting was formal. After an introduction, a man could “call on” a woman in her family home. Among the upper and middle classes, courtship was a step toward marriage. Working-class families did not have homes large enough for courting so it occurred in public. Upper-class youth adopted the idea of “going somewhere” as part of courting, and an early form of dating was born (Bailey 2004a).

*In the 1920s* dating, as a recreational activity separate from courtship, was established. Dating and courtship coexisted but had different objectives. The term “date” was coined and was understood as “an occasion where a boy asked a girl to join him for an afternoon’s or evening’s outing, for which he generally paid” (Rollin 1999, 54). Dating was about fun and popularity. Courting was about selecting a marital partner. Despite this distinction, a series of dates with the same person over a period of time (keeping “steady company”) was expected to result in marriage.

Into the *1930s and early 1940s* the principal purpose of dating was recreation devoid of commitment (Burgess et al. 1954). “It was about competition within the peer culture” (Bailey 2004a, 35). In efforts to boost their popularity, individuals often had multiple dates with different people during the same week; the most attractive or popular dating partners were sought. Though this “rating and dating complex” (Waller 1937) did occur, the extent to which it was widespread has been questioned (Whyte 1990).

With the depression and World War II “rating and dating” waned, and arguably dating served as preparation for marriage. During the 1950s “going steady” took center stage. It involved “a whole new set of rituals” (Cate & Lloyd 1992, 26). Girls might wear boys’ class rings or “get pinned.” Going steady was an exclusive relationship, even if only for a brief period of time. Though going steady took on a semblance of preparation, this relational form was not expected to culminate in marriage. A person might “go steady” with several different individuals prior to engagement.

### **DATING RELATIONSHIPS AS PRECURSORS TO MARRIAGE**

Two relevant areas of study are the progression toward marriage (→ Relationship Development) and the prediction of marital success. In the former, trajectories and stage models from initial attraction, first date or encounter, through “serious dating,” engagement, and marriage have been plotted (Cate & Lloyd 1992) and facets surrounding decisions to marry, marriage markets, timing, and social, political, and economic influences examined.

Larson and Holman (1994) summarize research on premarital factors associated with lower marital quality and/or instability. These include: divorced or low-quality marriage of parents; dysfunctional family backgrounds (e.g., parental mental illness); lack of support for the marriage from parents; young age; less education; lower income; premarital childbearing; depression; an unsociable personality; holding dysfunctional beliefs about marriage; and cohabitation prior to marriage. When decisions to marry are made with external pressures such as job/career concerns, economic depression, or war,

success is less likely. Success is more likely the more homogeneous the partners are in terms of race, age, religion; the more similar in attitudes and beliefs; and the better partners know each other before marriage, often assessed as the length of time partners date and their ability to engage in positive communication (→ Marital Communication).

Early research suggested that premarital sex and cohabitation were associated with divorce, but according to recent research neither is associated with divorce when limited to a future marital partner. Thus sex and cohabitation are becoming part of a courtship progression. However, multiple sexual and/or cohabitation partners prior to marriage have still been found to be predictive of divorce (Teachman 2003).

### DEFINITIONAL ISSUES

A problem with research on “dating relationships” is the *lack of a conceptual definition and loose operationalizations*. No one definition or widely shared cultural norm exists. A couple in a dating relationship might or might not go on “dates,” and a couple who are going out on dates might or might not consider themselves in a dating relationship. Even the same event or relationship might be defined differently by the two individuals involved (Chornet-Roses 2006).

Studies of dating relationships often inquire whether participants are in a dating relationship, but provide no definition. Sometimes “dating relationship” is broken into categories of “casual” and “serious.” Some might argue that participants are only in a dating relationship (or in a casual as opposed to a serious relationship) if they believe they are; so this definition serves research well. Such participant-driven definitions can result in both partners in a couple disagreeing about whether they are in a “dating relationship” (e.g., one cohabiting partner considers the relationship to be a “dating relationship,” whereas the other does not). Such definitions also make integration of studies difficult; without stated criteria, the reader has little knowledge of the nature or characteristics of the relationships under study. Collapsing into one group individuals who are in a casual relationship as well as individuals seriously and exclusively committed to each other obscures variations within dating relationships.

Also, dichotomizing relationships as “marital” or “premarital” (or marital versus single) does not allow for consideration of nonmarital romantic relationships such as civil unions and cohabitation without marriage. Though it is unlikely that researchers or relational participants will come to a consensus on what a dating relationship is, given the amount of research conducted on “college dating relationships” studies might be improved by providing conceptual definitions. Such definitions could be based on factors such as level of commitment, intimacy, exclusivity, and sexual involvement. To understand the phenomenon better, it might be fruitful to break dating relationships down into the “activity” of going on a date, the “process” of dating, and the “status” or “role” of the relationship, and to consider these aspects separately and in conjunction with each other.

Most knowledge about dating relationships comes from never-married heterosexual college students in western cultures. Clearly, more heterogeneous populations and the types of dating and dating relationships formed warrant attention. Some research on relationship formation (e.g., arranged marriages, preferences for a mate) exists. Western views of mate selection, including dating, are gradually infiltrating other cultures, though

many traditions have also been maintained. Yet scholarly consideration of nonwestern dating relationships is virtually nonexistent. The limited research outside western cultures focuses almost exclusively on romantic involvements as related to marriage. Comparisons among preferred characteristics of mates, means of mate selection (e.g., free choice and parent-arranged), and beliefs about marriage (e.g., the role of love and fate) have received the most attention.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication: Relationship Rules ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Initial Interaction ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Relational Termination ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Scripts

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## Death, Dying, and Communication

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Death is considered a taboo topic in most cultures. The lack of willingness to talk about the issue reflects discomfort with the subject and attempts to deny the reality of death. Instead of talking openly about death, most people use euphemisms and metaphors to maintain distance from it. This communicative avoidance then defines death as an even more taboo issue. The topic of death was not even studied extensively by scholars until the 1970s.

Death anxiety affects both terminally ill individuals and those who interact with them. The fear of death can stem from thinking about one's own end and about the uncertainty of what lies beyond death – the unknown and unknowable. Being afraid of death can contribute to anxiety about aging; however, experiencing the deaths of others may help to lessen an individual's fear of death, especially when the dying person and those around him or her accept and cope with death directly. While initially causing a heightening of fear, death education reduces denial, allows for expression and discussion of fears, lessens anxiety, and eventually leads to greater comfort for health-care providers who deal regularly with dying people (Servaty & Hayslip 1997). Death anxiety is also reduced by having a relationship with a higher power.

People who are facing impending death need as much information as possible, whether positive or negative (Jenkins et al. 2001). Knowing allows hope, while not knowing allows the imagination to create scenarios often worse than reality. In cancer patients, *less than honest information* results in anxiety and adjustment disorders. In patients with inoperable tumors, lack of honest communication has been found to cause very high levels of drug use, anxiety, and depression. Accurate information allows people to be more actively involved in decision-making about their treatment, although some patients do prefer a more passive role.

Most dying people want to talk openly with their loved ones, friends, and caregivers about their death (Servaty & Hayslip 1997). Talking about death helps people deal with it and the emotions it causes in them. Those communicating with someone who is dying do best to listen as the person talks about his or her life, tries to make sense of it, and brings it to a close.

Health-care providers should talk with patients and/or their relatives to determine the level of awareness of the person's condition and its likely results (especially if it is a fatal diagnosis) and then gently confirm the bad news. Most patients (and their families) want to know if death is imminent (Seale 1991), although some may feel that loved ones or friends might not be able to handle such information. Patients who are not told the truth about their prognoses, yet perceive it from verbal and nonverbal messages that are disparate from information they have been told, are placed in a difficult double-bind and cannot properly deal with the impending death. People want to know they are dying so they can say goodbye to family and friends, maintain a sense of dignity, and secure God's forgiveness for their mistakes.

*Denial* can exist at the same time as an awareness of impending death. Some people report not remembering that they had been told of their fatal diagnosis, even when it had been clearly explained to them previously. Denial can help people deal with fear, can help them cope with the coming of death, and can protect interpersonal interactions that the nearness of death could diminish or extinguish (Beilin 1981–1982).

For the most part, interactions with those who are terminally ill are characterized by social distance and social death – treating people as if they are already dead. *Reluctance to interact* with the dying reflects both the death anxiety noted above and perceptions of a lack of knowledge about how to interact with someone who is dying – a lack of a response repertoire for dealing with the terminally ill. Negative attitudes toward death and dying also lead to less aggressive medical treatment for terminal patients, especially if the patients are older or of lower social status (Timmermans 1998). In addition to differential treatment from health-care providers, the terminally ill are also treated differently by their friends and families than are nonterminal patients. Family members and friends experience anticipatory grief prior to death; while it may make bereavement easier, this also leads to increased social distancing and social death prior to demise. It can rupture already fragile social bonds. Some research has shown that only a third of spouses openly discuss impending death, and another third discuss it in a limited fashion. The last third do not discuss it at all. Open communication from health-care providers, however, does positively impact openness of family communication. More open communication prior to death facilitates the grieving process after death.

Uncertainty about how to communicate with the dying is based on the assumption that there is a correct way to interact in this situation, when the research demonstrates that there is no correct way to communicate with the dying. There is nothing that can be done to make terminality more acceptable. The most effective interaction is that which just communicates caring and presence – that the other person is there for the dying or bereaved individual. There are no magic words that can be used to make the situation better.

Research in this area has also examined *bad news delivery* from health-care providers (→ Bad News in Medicine, Communicating). In general, providers receive very little and wholly inadequate training in this area. Bad news delivery is relevant in terms of the announcement of impending terminality in those cases where it can be anticipated and the indication to family and friends that a loved one has died (→ Doctor–Patient Talk). The anxiety and uncertainty experienced by care providers typically leads them to overwhelm the terminal patient with information when announcing the diagnosis rather than providing the empathy that is more appropriate in such a context. Patients cannot

process high levels of information when they are trying to comprehend terrible news. When making the death announcement to family members, care providers generally do not communicate the sympathy that is needed. Law enforcement personnel and physicians are less effective at such announcements than are nurses, whose training emphasizes more interpersonal sensitivity.

SEE ALSO: ► Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ► Doctor–Patient Talk ► Health Communication

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## **Deception Detection Accuracy**

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Much research attention has been devoted to identifying the factors that affect people's ability to detect others' deceptive acts. Communication researchers typically have focused on the accuracy of judgments based on the verbal and nonverbal behaviors of a message source, unaided by technological devices or extra-interaction information. In general, results show that people are not very good at detecting deception, that people overestimate their ability to detect deception, and that people are more likely to believe that others are honest than deceptive, independent of the other person's actual honesty.

Deception occurs when one person intentionally misleads another person. The most frequently investigated type of deception is the *lie*. Lying involves knowingly presenting false information. Other forms of deception include *omission*, *evasion*, and *equivocation*, but most deception detection research focuses exclusively on the ability to distinguish outright lies from complete truths (McCornack 1997; → Deceptive Message Production). People are considered to be accurate when they judge truthful messages to be honest and deceptive messages to be dishonest.



Deception detection experiments usually involve showing research participants a series of truths and lies, and having them identify which are which. Judges are typically exposed to an equal number of truths and lies, and accuracy is most often calculated as a percentage correct averaging across truths and lies. More recent research also reports separate accuracy scores for truths and lies.

Three consistent findings are evident in the literature. First, people are significantly, but only slightly, above chance levels of accuracy (50 percent). Second, people overestimate their ability to detect others' lies. Third, people are more likely to judge a message truthful than deceptive, independent of actual message veracity. Many research findings are counterintuitive, and common sense and conventional wisdom are often proven wrong in the realm of deception accuracy research.

People are, on average, 54 percent accurate in deception detection experiments (Bond & DePaulo 2006). This value is significantly greater than the 50 percent chance base rate, and is very stable, with few studies reporting values below 45 or above 65 percent. Although a number of variables affect detection accuracy rates, the impact of most of them is small in absolute terms. Nonverbal training improves accuracy only slightly. Judges tend to be slightly more accurate when presented with audio-only, audiovisual, or text-based messages than when only visual information is presented. Sender motivation actually improves accuracy. That is, the more motivated a liar, the more transparent the lie. Alternatively, variables that have little impact on accuracy include source expertise/occupation, source–receiver relationship, extent of interaction, question-asking, and whether honesty values are scaled or dichotomous (Bond & DePaulo 2006).

There are several reasons why people tend to be inaccurate lie detectors. First, there do not appear to be any strong, cross-situation behavioral cues that make high accuracy possible. Although statistically reliable cues to deception are observed across studies (DePaulo et al. 2003), these cues are too inconsistent to be of much use in detecting specific instances of deception. Second, people pay attention to cues that lack diagnostic utility. For example, there is a widely held belief that liars do not look other people in the eye, yet truth-tellers and liars do not differ in eye behavior, and eye gaze has no diagnostic utility (DePaulo et al. 2003). Third, research procedures preclude much potentially useful information for detecting lies. Research indicates that when people do detect lies in everyday life, it is often done well after the fact, and on the basis of information other than at-the-time source verbal and nonverbal behavior (Park et al. 2002). Instead, detection is often based on inconsistencies with prior knowledge, information from third parties, and physical evidence. Such information is not available in most deception detection experiments. Finally, people are generally truth-biased, and often fail to even consider the possibility of deceit (Levine et al. 1999).

Truth-bias refers to the tendency to believe another person independent of actual message veracity. Truth-bias likely stems from how people mentally represent true and false information and from tacit assumptions that guide communication (Levine et al. 1999; McCornack 1997). Truth-bias is more pronounced in face-to-face interaction, when communicating with a relationally close others, and when people are not primed to be suspicious. Because people are more likely to judge messages are truthful than deceptive, people are more likely to be correct at judging truths than lies. Accuracy for truthful messages is often well above 50 percent, and accuracy for lies is often below 50 percent.

Further, so long as people are truth-biased, the greater the proportion of honest messages judged, the greater the percentage of judgments that are likely correct (Levine et al. 1999).

The major research challenge facing detection research is making the experiments more realistic while maintaining ground truth (→ Deception in Discourse). Ground truth means the actual truthful or deceptive nature of the message must be known so that accuracy can be determined. The need for ground truth leads most researchers to laboratory experiments. This makes studying realistic, higher-stakes, unsanctioned lies challenging. There is a growing recognition that the distinction between everyday lies and high-stakes lies is a meaningful one, and different methodologies may be needed to study different types of deception.

SEE ALSO: ► Deception in Discourse ► Deceptive Message Production

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## **Deception in Discourse**

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The “truth-bias,” the expectation that, normally, one tells the truth, is proposed to be the cornerstone of humanity (Bok 1978). Yet, it is the skill of displacement – speaking of things which are not present – and thus also the ability to deceive that is the basis of human language (Aitchison 1996). A society of truthfulness, to highlight the downside of truth-telling, would be a society of hurtfulness. The discursive status of an act of deception has been the subject of some considerable debate. It focuses upon questions: (1) What is the act of deception? (2) What are its kinds? (3) What is its discursive and social status?

Discussions of the *definition of an act of deception* focus upon truthfulness of the proposition of the act and the beliefs of the speaker and of the addressee. There is widespread consensus that falsity (or other misrepresentation) of the act’s proposition, whether explicit or implicit, is not sufficient for the act to be deceptive. Thus, commonly, an act of deception is held to be one in which the speaker conveys information with the

intention to induce false beliefs in the addressee. There are, however, attempts to reposition deception in terms of accuracy of the speaker's beliefs (Ng & Bradac 1993), covert violation of Gricean maxims (→ Linguistic Pragmatics) – i.e., covert failure to be truthful, to say as much as needed, or to be relevant or clear (McCornack 1992) – or manipulation (Galasiński 2000).

There are many *classifications of acts of deception*. Regardless of the actual categories, classifications are based on a number of axes of comparison. Acts of deception can be monologic or dialogic (as in covert evasion where the speaker pretends to answer the question, e.g., A: *Do you want a tougher regime in these secure places?* B: *I want a regime that helps them [inmates] face up to their responsibilities . . .*); they can be active or passive (by withholding a message); they can be done via explicit or implicit proposition (implicatures, presuppositions, e.g., the infamous *Have you stopped beating your wife?*); and, finally, they can vary with regard to the way they misrepresent reality (they can falsify, but also only distort by making stronger or weaker claims, or take words out of context). Other important aspects of acts of deception are the relevance of the act and the accountability of the speaker (Bradac et al. 1986). The final distinction is whether the act of deception focuses upon the extralinguistic reality or the message itself (see Galasiński 2000).

The status of deception as a discursive act is relatively less explored. Deception is not a speech act in the same way statements, promises, or questions are (→ Questions and Questioning), nor is it related to any linguistic form. Rather, it is a characteristic of speech acts. Thus, lies are mendacious statements, and evasions are covertly uncooperative answers. Deception is parasitic on other uses of language in that speakers use conventional speech acts to further their social goals.

Even though morally condemned, acts of deception are sometimes accepted (the so-called “white lies”), and expected. There is a plethora of discursive activities in public, semi-public, and private discourses in which deception can be expected. Discursive practices in politics, in advertising, in storytelling (→ Storytelling and Narration), or in contacts with insurance companies are often assumed to be economical with the truth.

*Methodologically*, research into deception as a discursive action is fraught with problems, the main one being that of basing it upon naturally occurring data. As deception is inextricably linked to the intention to mislead, which is covert, socially unaccepted, it is therefore empirically inaccessible. Thus, it is possible to argue that research based on researchers' instructions for the participants to lie or deceive, which dominates in the field, or asking participants to remember their deceptions, explores social constructions of deception rather than deception itself. The way forward might be collection of data in which one has access both to the “act of deception” and the reality it is designed to represent and so it is research focusing on misrepresentation that might be part of the solution (Galasiński 2000; Miller and Stiff 1993).

*Future research* into the discourse of deception should, first, more clearly locate deception within the family of strategic, nonovert acts of discourse, such as manipulation, persuasion (→ Persuasion and Resistance), and others. Second, and related, it should more clearly locate discursive deception in relation to visual and other kinds of deception. Third, it might look into the linguistic workings of deception, its relation to the context as well as its various social configurations, and especially its relationship to power

relations as well as gender (→ Gender and Discourse), ethnicity, age, or disability, as well as other axes of social status.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Deception Detection Accuracy ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Questions and Questioning ▶ Storytelling and Narration

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## **Deceptive Message Production**

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Deceit is part and parcel of daily life. It not only frequents news headlines in conjunction with political chicanery, corporate scandals, campus cheating, telemarketing scams, identity theft, online predators, and terrorist plots but also permeates the fabric of everyday conversation (→ Deception in Discourse). People who complete diaries of their communication report 20 to 33 percent of their interactions include some form of deceit and they average two lies per day (DePaulo et al. 1996; Hancock et al. 2004). Biologically, deception is regarded as adaptive, as a part of natural selection that improves chances of survival for animals that are most successful at it. Thus, deceit is not limited to humans. Other species have developed very sophisticated forms of deception ranging from camouflage and mimicry to misdirection, bluffing, and hiding of resources.

*Definitions of deception* vary but most emphasize that it is an intentional act in which senders knowingly transmit messages intended to foster false beliefs or conclusions by recipients (Knapp & Comadena 1979). Self-delusions are excluded, as are mistaken representations or role-playing in which the audience willingly suspends disbelief. This

definition broadens the scope of the concept beyond outright lies to include such forms as omissions, intentional ambiguity, evasions, exaggerations, and the like. Human deception also includes not just deception for self-benefit but also deception intended to benefit others or the interpersonal relationship between sender and receiver. White lies intended to spare another's feelings, for example, are considered deception just as are blatant falsehoods intended to bilk targets of their fortune or to cover up treasonous acts.

### THEORIES OF DECEPTION

Research on deception has centered largely on one of two issues: deceptive message production and deception detection (→ Deception Detection Accuracy). Here we focus on theories that relate to message production – converting thoughts into verbal and nonverbal messages – and the message features that have been shown to be reliable indicators of deception.

The *Leakage Hypothesis* (see Ekman 1985) focuses on the neurophysiology, emotions, and cognitions of deceivers and how changes in these internal states due to deceptive attempts become apparent in behavioral displays. Involuntary signs – referred to as “leakage” because they “leak” out of the body unbidden – act as telltale signs to the actor's true intentions or state of affairs. Originally, leakage and deception cues were considered to be separate indicators, the former referring to signs of the true emotional state of the deceiver and the latter as signs that one was in fact attempting to deceive. However, all involuntary behaviors are now typically called leakage. This perspective, which partly harks back to Freudian psychology and psychiatric views of human behavior, drives much of the quest for lie-detection tools like the polygraph or vocal stress analyzers that are intended to detect physiological arousal and emotional states.

The *Four-Factor Theory* (see Zuckerman et al. 1981) is an extension of the leakage hypothesis and attempts to refine the origins of telltale nonverbal indicators of deceit. This theory proposes that (1) arousal, (2) affective reactions, (3) cognitive difficulty, and (4) attempted control all affect deception displays. Deceivers are thought to experience higher levels of arousal that will result in changes such as faster blinking, higher vocal pitch, and more speech dysfluencies. Deceivers also may experience emotional reactions such as guilt and anxiety that are evident in their behavioral displays, often in the form of micromomentary facial expressions – fleeting indications of negative emotions that are seldom recognized by the naked eye. Deception is assumed to require more cognitive effort than does truth-telling. This effort should be reflected in such indicators as more pauses in speech, dilated pupils, and fewer speech-related gestures. Lastly, this theory proposes that deceivers will try to control their leakage, resulting in overly rigid and stilted nonverbal behavior.

*Interpersonal Deception Theory* (IDT; see Buller & Burgoon 1996) advances a series of propositions (general statements) intended to predict and explain the causes, processes, and consequences of deception in interpersonal interaction. In contrast to the psychologically oriented theories, it distinguishes between strategic and nonstrategic components of messages. The former refer to purposeful features of speech and the latter refer to nondeliberate behaviors including leakage and other forms of impaired performance. This theory argues that because deceivers connive and plan and adjust to accomplish their deception and to avoid detection, deceptive message production must

look at these intentional strategies as well as at unintended and involuntary behaviors. Three classes of strategic activity identified by IDT are information management, which concerns the verbal content and style of messages; behavior management, which concerns the nonverbal behaviors that accompany a verbal message and are meant to create a normal communication style; and image management, which concerns general efforts to make oneself appear believable. A strategic perspective is consistent with viewing deception as a persuasive or self-presentational activity (→ Impression Management; Self-Presentation). Other key principles of IDT are that deception is adaptive and dynamic. Deceivers do not display the same behaviors constantly; they change in response to feedback from their targets. This means that there are no profiles of deception that can be counted on to remain stable over time. Lastly, deception is interdependent, meaning that what deceivers do is partly dependent on what co-interactants do. If a person questioning deceivers becomes very animated and involved, they will too, which can make them appear truthful. How deceiver and deceived interact and adapt to one another's behaviors over the course of an interaction is a major focus of IDT.

*Information Manipulation Theory* (IMT; see McCornack 1992), like IDT, recognizes the strategic nature of interpersonal deception. Drawing upon Grice's theory of conversation, IMT discusses four maxims that deceivers can violate to achieve their desired outcome. People can say less than is usually expected (the maxim of quantity), they can give untruthful information (the maxim of quality), they can say things that are irrelevant (the maxim of relevance), or they can say them in an unclear, ambiguous fashion (the maxim of manner). Deceivers rely on people's assumptions that others' messages are complete, truthful, relevant, and easily understood and they may covertly violate any of the four maxims to produce messages that are deceptive. *Information Management Theory* (see Burgoon et al. 1996), though similar, is a part of IDT that was developed independently of IMT. It adds a fifth dimension to IMT and elaborates on the semantic and syntactic tactics deceivers can use to intentionally alter the veridicality, completeness, relevance, clarity, and personalism of verbal messages.

The *Motivation Impairment Effect* (see DePaulo & Kirkendol 1989) hypothesizes that when deceivers try harder (i.e., are motivated), they end up with impaired nonverbal performance but also improved verbal performance, which should affect how detectable their deception is to observers. Challenges have been posed to this hypothesis in part because deceivers may show improved nonverbal performance and impaired verbal performance when they are highly motivated. In other words, motivation sometimes helps and sometimes harms performance but it need not have opposite effects on verbal versus nonverbal behavior.

## INDICATORS OF DECEPTION

Investigations of message features associated with deception have taken two approaches. The first has sought the behaviors that people *perceive* to be deceptive. Invariably, the number one answer worldwide to the question of how to tell when someone is lying is to look at their eyes. Yet research has confirmed that the eyes are *not* a good indicator of deceit (DePaulo et al. 2003), partly because skillful deceivers know to look their questioner in the eye. Other widely held stereotypes such as nervous gesturing are also not good indicators. The second approach is to identify *actual* verbal and nonverbal

behaviors that separate truth-telling from deceit. These can be grouped according to IDT's classifications of nonstrategic and strategic indicators and the division of strategic behavior into information, behavior, and image management.

*Nonstrategic behavior* includes all the telltale, nonverbal leakage cues of arousal, emotional states, and cognitive effort or difficulty (Vrij 2000; → Nonverbal Signals, Effects of). Arousal is the psychological activation in the autonomic nervous system, central nervous system, and/or limbic system. Examples of deception-triggered arousal are fidgeting, self-adaptors (self-touching), pupil dilation, blinking, pitch rise, postural rigidity, and a tense voice. Emotional states are overt reactions that signal discrete and transitory psychology feeling states. Examples include fewer authentic smiles, more forced smiles, and less vocal pleasantness. Micromomentary facial expressions of fear, guilt, or contempt are also purported by some to signal deceit.

Cognitive difficulty is associated with shorter utterances, longer delays in responding, more hesitations, looking away, and temporary cessation of gesturing. Greater cognitive effort need not signal deception, but deception may lead to greater cognitive difficulty. Other cognitive indicators may relate to memory processes and whether senders are accessing real versus fabricated or imagined memories of people and events. Unintended indicators of making up answers rather than reporting real answers include saying less and giving fewer details.

IDT also identifies impaired speech performance as nonstrategic activity. It includes more speech dysfluencies such as stutters, hesitations, and incoherent sounds; fewer punctuating head movements to accompany speech; more stilted posture; reductions in overall conversational involvement; mismatches between verbal and nonverbal channels; and behaviors that are unusual or “fishy-looking.”

*Linguistic and content features* of deceptive messages are understudied relative to nonverbal features. Deception has been associated with use of fewer words, sentences, and content details; simpler and less complex language; greater uncertainty shown through modal verbs and modifiers; and less personalism (e.g., use of first-person pronouns) and more language that instead refers to others. However, these patterns can reverse under many circumstances, making content and linguistic features very dependent on the specific context.

## **BEHAVIOR AND IMAGE MANAGEMENT INDICATORS**

*Behavior management* is directed toward approximating normal conversational patterns. *Image management* strategies are more global changes in demeanor intended to preserve a credible image and evade detection. Deceivers may attempt to increase postural, gestural, facial, and vocal involvement. This may include a shift from psychological “distance” to closeness signaled through forward lean, increased eye contact, and direct facing. Deceivers may attempt to become more expressive facially, gesturally, and vocally while simultaneously conveying that they are composed and unstressed through postural stillness while listening and postural relaxation. Efforts to achieve fluid conversational coordination may include fewer pauses, smoother switches in turns between speakers, and more synchronization of behavior between sender and receiver (→ Interaction Adaptation Theory). Deceivers may also strive to appear and sound pleasant. Finally, deceivers may adjust their levels of dominance and formality. They may opt to be submissive, meek, and

overly formal if caught off guard but become more dominant and formal if they have time to plan or rehearse their deception. Dominance may include use of a loud, deeper-pitched, more variable voice; more expansive gesturing; and more asymmetrical, relaxed posture.

SEE ALSO: ► Deception Detection Accuracy ► Deception in Discourse ► Impression Management ► Interaction Adaptation Theory ► Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ► Self-Presentation

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# **Decision-Making Processes in Organizations**

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Organizational decision-making is a primary process in organizations. It has been the subject of much research, and numerous prescriptive frameworks have been advanced. A



facile analogy with individual decision-making makes organizational decision processes seem relatively straightforward, but research has shown it to be complex and problematic.

In its simplest form, decision-making is the process of reaching a conclusion or resolution after consideration. Herbert Simon (1976) defined decision-making as choice based on analysis, and divided the decision process into the sequential tasks of intelligence, problem analysis, solution search, and choice. Henri Mintzberg (1979) defined organizational decision-making as making a commitment to action.

An important question is: “Who makes the decision?” In common expression decisions are often attributed to organizations (for example, “GM announced today that it has decided to close XYZ plant”), but decisions are made by people within organizations, and understanding of organizational decision-making processes is closely linked to the role attributed to participants in the decision process. One perspective treats organizational decisions as *unitary actions* taken by a single individual – a manager or leader – or by a group. Scholarship in this perspective focuses primarily on how the decision is made. It takes the classic rational model of decision-making as a reference point, whether as an ideal that decision processes should follow or as an unattainable standard that should be replaced by more realistic models. This perspective treats communication as a medium through which decisions are made and attempts to develop normative models for improving decision-making effectiveness.

A second perspective takes the *organizational context* of decision-making into account. Theories or models in this perspective focus on the role of different people, groups, or organizational units in the decision process, on how the process moves through the organization, and on how it is influenced by organizational structure and processes and by politics. This perspective has often focused on how the decision process departs from the rational ideal due to the organizational context. The organizational context perspective treats communication as a medium through which decisions are made, and emphasizes the role of communication processes in the shaping of decisions through formal and informal networks and argumentation concerning decision premises.

A third perspective focuses on the *social construction of organizational decisions* through communication. It is concerned with how decision premises and rules for making decisions are constructed by those making the decision as the process unfolds. The social construction perspective problematizes the other two by arguing that the elements of decisions they take for granted – problem definitions, solutions, decision rules, stakeholders – are constituted by communication during the decision process.

A range of outcomes is relevant to organizational decision-making, including effectiveness – as indexed by decision quality, return on investment, and other “bottom line” measures – timeliness, acceptance of and support for the decision, degree of implementation, degree to which the decision builds the capacity of the organization to make effective decisions, impact on morale, and degree to which the decision meets member needs. Different outcomes are emphasized by the three perspectives.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION-MAKING AS A UNITARY PROCESS**

An important goal of modern organizations is predictability and control, and in organizational decision-making this can be achieved through careful analysis and calculation. The

*rational decision model* aspires to systematize analysis and maximize the returns a decision will yield for the organization. A rational decision-maker gathers complete information about the situation and choices confronting the organization, generates all feasible decision options, evaluates each option thoroughly using an array of criteria that represent the various benefits and costs that the options might yield, and chooses the option that maximizes return. Decision scientists have developed models and decision-support systems that formalize various schemes for rational decision-making (→ Meeting Technologies).

The rational model assumes that the decision-maker(s) can gather all relevant information about the situation and options; that criteria are clearly defined; that the probability that the benefits and costs will actually materialize for a given option is known; and that the decision-maker can assign precise values to (or rank order) the various benefits and costs. Generating this information requires thorough and complete analysis, which is likely to ensure that the decision-maker exercises due diligence.

Herbert Simon (1976) and others criticized the classical rational model on the grounds that it sets too high a bar. They observed, among other things, that decision-makers can rarely obtain complete information about a situation; that criteria for evaluating options are often fuzzy and may change as the decision unfolds; that the likelihood of realizing benefits and costs from a given choice is impossible to estimate accurately; that preferences among criteria, benefits, and costs are unclear and change over time and across situations; and that the cognitive load involved in managing all the information that the rational model requires is far beyond the capacity of human information processing. Hence, it is literally impossible to be rational in the classical sense. While the rational model is a worthy ideal, these scholars argue, it is unattainable in practice.

Herbert Simon advanced an alternative model of *bounded rationality* that better captured the process by which decision-makers operate. Rather than the complete information and analysis demanded by the rational decision model (the maximizing principle), decision-makers operate according to the principle of satisficing. In making decisions based on satisficing, decision-makers acquire an understanding of the situation that is sufficient to enable them to proceed and search through available alternatives until they find one that satisfies the criteria that are most important to them in the situation at hand. To the extent that decision-makers actually find the most important information about the situation, generate a reasonable number of alternatives, and devote time and care to analysis, satisficing can yield effective decisions which approximate the benefits attainable through the exhaustive process demanded by the rational model.

While the bounded rationality model implicitly takes the individual as the focal decision-maker, organizational decisions are often made by groups (→ Group Communication), and group decision-making models analogous to bounded rationality have been advanced. One important model of group decision-making communication is the functional model of group decision-making (Gouran & Hirokawa 1996). Functional theory posits that effective group decision-making and problem solving are most likely to occur when group members attempt to meet five requirements of the decision-making task: (1) understand the issue to be resolved; (2) determine minimal characteristics of an adequate solution (criteria); (3) generate or discover a realistic and relevant set of alternatives; (4) evaluate positive and negative aspects of alternatives carefully; and (5) select an alternative that analysis reveals most likely to satisfy the criteria (→ Group Decision-Making,

Functional Theory of). In addition, members should be vigilant for and counteract a number of biases or constraints on group communication that undermine the group's ability to meet the requirements.

### **THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT OF THE DECISION PROCESS**

A limitation of the unitary perspective is that it focuses primarily on the process of decision-making per se and gives less import to the effects of organizational context on decision-making. In organizational context, a decision is not just an isolated action. It is one of a stream of past decisions that provide precedents and context for the decision at hand and of future decisions. Moreover, the choice aspect of decision-making is just one stage in a longer process. Mintzberg (1979) described the continuum of control over decision-making extending through several steps: (1) collecting information about the decision to pass on to the decision-maker(s) without comment; (2) processing the information to generate advice for the decision-maker(s); (3) making a choice; (4) authorizing that the choice be executed by the organization; and (5) actually executing the action decided upon. Different individuals from various organizational units may contribute to one or more of these steps, and their particular beliefs, attitudes, and interests (which are influenced by organizational structure and culture) will shape information passed on, advice given, and other aspects of the process. This introduces constraints and biases into the decision process.

Organizational decisions differ widely in terms of scope, participants, and temporal horizons. They range from routine, immediate operating decisions made by line workers, to longer-term decisions about coordination or organizational activities and exceptions by middle managers and staff, to long-term strategic decisions by top management that set high-level policies and general directions of the organization.

The organizational decision-making process can be described as a set of "flows" involving a mix of the decision types that move through the organization to the various involved departments and parties (Mintzberg 1979). For instance, a problem detected at the operational level and given an immediate "fix" may then become an object of an exception decision if the fix does not work, and then involve a coordinative decision to handle future cases. If the problem is important enough it may be involved in a strategic decision, which is then implemented through coordinative and operational decisions. This complex process is influenced by various actors and departments, which introduce constraints and assumptions that bound the rationality of the entire process (sometimes too narrowly, leading to ineffective decisions).

Decision flows may operate in ways that differ from the unitary models, yet still generate adequate decisions. Cohen et al. (1972; see also O'Connor 1997) advanced a "garbage can model" of organizational decision-making, which argued that organizational decision premises are made up of problems looking for solutions, solutions looking for problems, goals, and decision opportunities. The organization is a rich soup of these premises and a decision is made when all four components – problem, solution, goal, and decision opportunity – link up. The garbage can model allows for decisions that fit the unitary model when the first component of the process is goal or problem, then opportunity, then solution. However, when solution or opportunity comes first, the

decision process is quite different from the unitary model. Poole (1983) described a similar pattern in his multiple sequence model of group decision-making.

Studies have identified typical patterns of stages and phases through which the organizational decision process unfolds. Nutt (1984), for example, described five phases of organizational decision-making – problem formulation, solution concept development, solution detailing, evaluation, and implementation – and identified five decision-making patterns that activated different combinations of phases in particular orders. In each pattern, organizations tended to emphasize solutions very early in the process, thus going against the tenets of the rational model. Of the five patterns, those that emphasized locating established solutions, evaluating them and tailoring them to the organization were more effective and better accepted than those that emphasized creating novel solutions.

With this emphasis on the variety of decision processes and on the bias introduced by limited perspective and politics comes attention to what can go wrong in the decision process. Nutt (2002) noted that more than 50 percent of over 350 decisions he studied had negative or disappointing outcomes, a figure that is in line with other sources. He identified several blunders that contributed to decision-making debacles. These include accepting premises (claims) uncritically, ignoring barriers to action posed by key stakeholders in the decision, providing ambiguous direction and goals, limiting search for options and alternatives, using evaluation to bolster a preferred decision or as window dressing that conveys false rigor to external audiences, overlooking ethical questions, and failing to learn and revise plans over the course of the decision process.

Participation is a critical parameter in organizational decision-making (→ Participative Processes in Organizations). Actively participating in decision-making or implementation of decisions has been shown to increase participant satisfaction with the decision and decision process and acceptance of the decision, although it has not been shown to be related to effectiveness. In terms of organizational context, Mintzberg (1979) notes that participation is a complex phenomenon and distinguishes between vertical decentralization, in which formal power is distributed to those lower in the organizational hierarchy, and horizontal decentralization, in which authority for decisions is delegated to experts or nonmanagerial members. Organizations may have varying degrees of each for different decisions (→ Organizational Structure).

## **THE DECISION PROCESS AS SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION**

Karl Weick (1995) exemplifies the social constructionist position in his argument that people and organizations often act before they think (→ Sense-Making). Many organizational “decisions” are post hoc rationalizations of actions that members of organizations have taken routinely or as “experiments,” tentative tests of viable action. Decision-making serves a symbolic purpose as a justification and cover for organizational members so that they can appear rational.

Some studies of communication in organizational decision-making emphasize the enactment and construction of decision premises and procedures. Studies show that participants actively construct, modify, and reinterpret proposals and their own positions over the course of the deliberation in order to achieve a desirable self-presentation as they achieve their objectives (Castor 2005). Other studies inquire as to the basis of heuristics

and decision rules, suggesting that they are not the traditional logical shortcuts described in unitary research, but rather are based on narratives about the organization and grounded in emotion rather than reason (Oliver and Roos 2005).

Another group of studies focuses on the unique narratives that various participants create during decision-making, and on how these narratives reflect different takes on the decision (O'Connor 1997; Eisenberg et al. 1998). Narratives may present an integrative view of the decision consistent with the unitary decision model, different viewpoints suggesting that the decision did not reflect the views of all participants, or a fragmented view of the decision that stresses substantially different viewpoints and interpretations of the same decision. The narrative approach suggests that the decision process is neither unitary nor ultimately singular, but an occasion to observe the fragmentation of organizational processes.

### **VALUES AND ETHICS IN DECISION-MAKING**

Conrad (1993) highlights the role of values in organizational decision-making processes that are often treated as neutral by the scholars in the three perspectives (→ Organizational Ethics). For the three perspectives, values enter into the process primarily as decision premises that influence the assessment of options and choice. Typically ignored are the value premises underlying the decision process itself or the organizational context. Members of organizations are taught implicit values of the organization through socialization and the organization's culture (Tompkins & Cheney 1985). These values are usually hidden within other premises. For example, "the customer is always right" carries an embedded valuation of the profit the organization receives from its business. These values serve as the unspoken term in enthymemes used in justifying decisions and so exert a form of unobtrusive control over the decision process (→ Control and Authority in Organizations).

Deetz (2003) critiques the larger governance schemes that frame organizational decision-making. He argues that these schemes incorporate a narrow set of values that reflect the interests of stockholders, top management, and elites. Such value judgments include the presumption that ownership rights pre-empt other social rights, the valorization of managerial knowledge over other types of knowledge, and the belief that the market economy is always superior to other approaches to economics and social allocation. For organizational decision-making to be truly responsive to stakeholder concerns, it is important that all stakeholders participate in the decision process without the presumption that some are superior to others, and that all premises be open to consideration on their own merits.

### **COMPARING THE PERSPECTIVES**

The three perspectives (unitary action, organizational context, social construction) are in part complementary and in part antagonistic to one another. The unitary perspective's emphasis on the activity of decision-making provides the basis for adding complexity in the move to the organizational context and the social construction perspectives. The rational model provides a foil for both perspectives, while bounded rationality is a foundation of the organizational context and a foil for the social constructionist

viewpoint. The organizational context perspective provides a “full-bodied” view of decision-making that is an important supplement to the unitary perspective. The social constructionist perspective shows how bounded rationality and organizational factors operate in the micro-level interaction that constitutes decisions.

This literature provides a complex picture of decision-making, but always the classic rational model stands in the background as a key reference point. The bounded rationality and functional models treat it as a desirable but unattainable standard, due to limitations in human information processing and group processes. The organizational context perspective treats it as a desirable, but unattainable standard due to the constraints imposed by organizational structures and processes. The social constructionists treat it as one way to construct and make sense of decision-making processes. Those concerned with organizational values treat it as a tyrannizing image that could be useful if it did not exert such dominance over decision-making that it forecloses other modes of reasoning and valuation. This underscores the importance of normative standards in the understanding of organizational decision-making and the need to explore multiple standards in a pluralistic world.

In terms of the outcomes of organizational decision-making, it is noteworthy that effectiveness and acceptance are by far the most common in extant research. Other important outcomes, such as building organizational capacity, social justice, impact on morale, and satisfaction of member needs have received far less attention. As a multifaceted phenomenon, organizational decision-making should be judged using multiple criteria.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Group Communication ▶ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ▶ Leadership in Organizations ▶ Meeting Technologies ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Ethics ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Participative Processes in Organizations ▶ Sense-Making

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## Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction

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Deduction, induction, and abduction are three basic *forms of inference* that inform the methodologies of communication research as well as other fields and disciplines. Whereas the most familiar forms are inference from a general principle or law to individual instances (deduction), or from several instances to a law (induction), abduction is an equally important constituent of scholarship, serving to identify possible explanations for a set of observations. Different traditions of communication research can be seen to rely on distinctive variants and combinations of deduction, induction, and abduction.

Aristotle had identified abduction as a type of inference; it was reintroduced in modern philosophy by Charles Sanders Peirce in an 1878 article. An inference can be said to consist of three components – a rule which, when applied to a single case, produces a result or conclusion. These components yield three possible combinations (adapted from Peirce 1992):

### DEDUCTION

*Rule.* All the beans from this bag are white.

*Case.* These beans are from this bag.

*Result.* These beans are white.

### INDUCTION

*Case.* These beans are from this bag.

*Result.* These beans are white.

*Rule.* All the beans from this bag are white.

### ABDUCTION

*Result.* These beans are white.

*Rule.* All the beans from this bag are white.

*Case.* These beans are from this bag.

Strictly speaking, only the deduction is a valid inference. When the rule is applied to the case, the result follows from the meaning of the constituent terms. In the induction, the implication is that, if one examines a sufficient number of beans from the bag in question (cases), one may be willing to conclude that they are all white. The point of the abduction is that it introduces a rule which may explain why one encounters particular facts (white beans) in a particular context (the bean bag). While the bean example is trivial, such a newly devised rule can represent an exceptionally bright idea, as in Sherlock Holmes's solution of crime mysteries (Sebeok & Umiker-Sebeok 1983) and major scientific discoveries such as Charles Darwin's conception of the origin of the human species by natural selection.

### AN INDUCTIVE HERITAGE

Induction has a long heritage in human history and evolution. The capacity for generalizing from single events presumably has been a key instrument of human adaptation and survival. Also commonsense or lay theories (Furnham 1988) that guide people through their everyday activities have important ingredients of induction.

Despite David Hume's argument, in the mid-1700s, that an induction from "some" to "all" is never logically valid, an inductive ideal of science remained attractive throughout the nineteenth century. Notably, John Stuart Mill's *A system of logic* (1843) detailed how inferences could be accumulated in various scientific fields. In the early twentieth century, an inductive ideal of science rose to new prominence in the shape of logical positivism.

Taking its general cue from Mill's contemporary, Auguste Comte, and his call for a "positive philosophy" that would be nonspeculative and applicable to real human concerns, logical positivism developed into an influential school of thought between the two world wars. Much of the inspiration came from the so-called *linguistic turn of philosophy*, which took the structure of sentences to correspond to the structure of facts in reality. Logical positivism, further, upheld an absolute distinction not only between facts and values, but between empirical observations and theoretical conceptions of reality. Accordingly, any meaningful statement about the world is either elementary in itself (reducible to sense impressions in a given space and time), or may be decomposed into such elementary propositions, which are either true or false.

Within such a reductionist conception of knowledge, most of the questions of both social scientific and humanistic research fall outside the realm of science. In response, these disciplines and fields have fundamentally questioned the view of science as the identification of *universal laws*, or context-independent regularities; the grounding of science in *elementary sensations*; and the requirement that all scientific research proceed according to the *same methodological principles* (Hammersley 1989, 17). Re-emphasizing deduction and abduction, much contemporary theory of science has specified principles and procedures for producing knowledge concerning communication, culture, and society (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science; Verstehen vs Erklären).

Inductivism does figure prominently in at least two kinds of current communication research. First, probably the majority of all media studies are of the descriptive and administrative (and often commercial-confidential) variety, including marketing studies of



media audiences and evaluation research informing industry or government policy decisions. Importantly, although the aim is not to state or test particular theories, the approaches and findings are still theory-loaded (Hanson 1958). Second,  $\rightarrow$  grounded theory has advocated generating explanatory categories from the field and its informants – inducing theory from data. This position, in turn, has been questioned since grounded data collection and analysis may be guided by unacknowledged theoretical frameworks.

### A DEDUCTIVE MAINSTREAM

The quantitative mainstream of international communication research is sometimes described as *hypothetico-deductive*, testing hypotheses that have been deduced from some general theoretical principle ( $\rightarrow$  Quantitative Methodology). In a first step, deduction ensures that a hypothesis is neither logically inconsistent nor tautological. Next, a relevant hypothesis may contradict or specify an accepted principle, calling for further study. Again, it is deduction that serves to predict what the researcher will find under specified circumstances. If, finally, the findings correspond to the prediction, the hypothesis is confirmed.

Confirmation, however, does not equal verification. The hypothetico-deductive approach, as elaborated especially in Popper's (1972) *critical rationalism*, stipulates that scientists must seek to *falsify* their hypotheses ( $\rightarrow$  Critical Rationalism). Only if falsification fails is one justified in still holding the hypothesis, and only preliminarily. Further studies may end up falsifying it – which readmits inductivism through the backdoor.

In formal terms, the prototypical quantitative study will pose a *null hypothesis*, which suggests that any relations between the variables, as anticipated by the theory and documented by the data, are due to chance fluctuations or random error. If this is the case, as defined by a conventionally agreed level of probability, the original hypothesis has been falsified. The quantitative research process thus operates on a principle of deduction, even if the mechanisms in question are ascertained in probabilistic terms (see Hempel & Oppenheim 1988, 13–18).

The practice of critical rationalism has been challenged for not living up to its principles. A key problem relates to the notion of probability, which gradually acquired an ambiguous meaning in modern philosophy and empirical sciences (Hacking 1975). On the one hand, *stochastic* probability has to do with stable relative frequencies; the purpose is to rule out, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the particular configuration of empirical data could have occurred by chance (the null hypothesis). *Epistemological* probability, on the other hand, concerns “the degree of belief warranted by evidence” (Hacking 1975, 1). The distinction is sometimes summed up in the dictum that “correlation does not equal causation.” In other words, statistical measurements do not in themselves warrant conclusions about causality and other empirical phenomena. Ritchie (1999), for one, suggested that much current empirical media research fails on this crucial point. The fact that the null hypothesis is sufficiently improbable (statistically) is mistaken for evidence that a *specific* alternative hypothesis, namely, the one deduced in the study, is more probable (epistemologically). The logic of hypothesis testing, then, may contribute to a conflation of two distinct levels of scientific analysis and argument.

## **AN ABDUCTIVE SUBSTREAM**

Following the demise of positivism as well as other inductivism, qualitative and interpretive approaches to research have sought to specify an alternative to the hypothetico-deductive model ( $\rightarrow$  Qualitative Methodology). In opposition to Hempel and Oppenheim's (1988) "covering-law model," Dray (1957) argued that historical events cannot be examined as a variant of natural events (which may all be "covered" by one law), but require a different type of "rational explanation." In another influential contribution, Danto (1965) suggested that narratives provide a model for studying historical events and human actions. And Ginzburg (1989) identified an "evidential paradigm" in Sigmund Freud's and Sherlock Holmes's uncovering of underlying structures, respectively in dreams and crimes.

While no consensus comparable to the hypothetico-deductive model has yet emerged in communication research, abduction presents itself as a major candidate for a qualitative theory of science. Since Peirce's early formulation, its relevance has occasionally been considered in both philosophy and other disciplines, including mainstream sociology (Merton 1968, 158). It was reasserted by, among others, Hanson (1958) as part of the post-1945 questioning of both inductive and hypothetico-deductive prototypes of research. More recently, abduction has been reintroduced to social and cultural research, as an alternative to the inductivist self-understanding of grounded theory (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2000), as a strategy of interpretive social science (Blaikie 1993), and as a distinctive characteristic of qualitative media research (Jensen 1995).

In qualitative research projects, the category of abductive inference can explicate and formalize various contextual and empathetic forms of interpretation. One quality of formalization is that it facilitates a systematic comparison of different kinds of reasoning in empirical research. Abduction is at the core of that interchange between researcher and informants that serves to establish – infer – relevant categories and concepts. Qualitative studies gain a resource, first, for structuring key moments of the analytical process and, second, for deciding who (informants, researchers, both) originates which abductions.

In conclusion, the three types of inference point to several different types of relationship between empirical analysis and theory development. In this regard, two main varieties of media and communication research can be identified – hypothetico-deductive reasoning in combination with quantitative data analysis, and abductive reasoning employing qualitative data analysis. And yet many, perhaps most, actual research projects include aspects of abduction, deduction, as well as induction in configurations still to be explored in further research. To exemplify, the prototypical form of social scientific study departs from a relatively specific hypothesis, as derived from a more general premise (deduction), which is tested against a large number of concrete instances (induction). The findings may be only partly in accordance with the hypothesis, giving rise to a new rule (abduction) to be investigated in further research. The original premise of the study might itself have been the outcome of a bright idea or bold conjecture – abduction.

SEE ALSO: ► Critical Rationalism ► Grounded Theory ► Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ► Qualitative Methodology ► Quantitative Methodology ► Verstehen vs Erklären

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## **Definition**

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The meaning of a term is determined by a definition. Definitions are, therefore, conventions of a language. Terms are words that describe, for example, objects, processes, characteristics of objects or persons, or notional content of our imagination.

The language that we learn forms the foundation for every definition. Terms are attributed to phenomena, which science investigates, if our day-to-day language is capable of describing them, however inadequately. Definitions enrich and concretize the basic vocabulary of our day-to-day language. This language consists of words the meaning of which we learn essentially during childhood and adolescence. Words that possess content are linked by recurrent attribution of words to phenomena (objects, processes, and ideas). In this manner, we learn the general usage of day-to-day vocabulary. We learn the meaning of scientific terms not by recurrent examples; we determine their meaning through known words from the day-to-day language by means of a definition.

Because various disciplines of science are specialized and go deep into the core of every subject, a conceptual differentiation is necessary. For this purpose, new words are coined or borrowed from other (living or extinct) languages. Naturally, even words from the day-to-day language are attributed to scientific terms, but, in most cases, their meaning must be redefined in order to achieve the required degree of precision. Since the language of science also aims to facilitate proper comprehension, there must be unanimity about the usage of the terms. If new or inaccurate terms are introduced without a prior definition, their meaning will remain ambiguous or completely obscure. Nevertheless, comprehension is also lost when new definitions are formulated instead of using established terms or simple descriptions (→ Research Methods).

### NOMINAL DEFINITIONS

Nominal definitions interlink terms (nouns) – nouns are attributed to other nouns. That is to say, a word is defined as a term by equating it with other known words. The meaning of a term (*definiens*) to be defined is determined as synonymous with the description of a fact through known words (*definiendum*). For example, “mass media” (*definiens*) are defined as “institutions that periodically present communication content to an open public” (*definiendum*; → Media). This example makes the problem of nominal definitions clear: the usefulness of a nominal definition depends on the usefulness and the clarity of terms with which the *definiens* is determined. Also, the terms of the *definiendum* would have to be defined (in the example, particularly: “institutions,” “communication content,” and “open public”). Any attempt to give a “complete nominal definition” is doomed to fail, because terms are always explained with terms that, in turn, need to be defined through terms. This problem is called an *endless definitional regress*. Nevertheless, as a rule, such chains of definitions can be broken if we can assume that the terms of *definiendum* are generally known.

A definition becomes useless if it is circular. Circularity is always present if the *definiens* is contained within the *definiendum*. When terms of the *definiendum* are later defined in stages, the risk of hidden circularity increases. To illustrate this: a “journalist” is defined as a “person who possesses a journalist’s identification”; in the next step, a “journalist’s identification card” would be defined as a “document to identify a journalist” (→ Journalism).

In principle, nominal definitions cannot be incorrect or false; they can only be either useful or useless. Moreover, there must be certain unanimity about the usage of terms. Normally, generally known terms from the day-to-day language or established terms from the disciplines of science are analyzed for their usage (explicated) and, if necessary, more precisely defined. Whenever a term occurs even in the natural language or, as a rule, if it is already established in the discipline, it must be verified whether the given definition covers all that it is expected to cover. Only when a new object or phenomenon is described and a new term is coined for it, an absolute sovereignty of definition is present with the definer.

For example, if a definition needs to be formulated for the term “journalist,” this existing day-to-day term must be explicated. Similarly, we must take into account various definitions that have already been created in the communication research. One first attempt to define a word could sound like this: “Journalists are persons who work for the media of → radio,

press ( $\rightarrow$  Quality Press; Tabloid Press), or  $\rightarrow$  Television.” Now we must verify if instances are possible that are covered by the definition but generally *not* considered to be journalists, and also if others are not covered but, nonetheless, are considered to be journalists. According to the present definition, a printer of a publishing house would be a journalist. An agency journalist would not be a journalist.

Then we must try an extended definition: “Journalists are persons who work for the media and collaborate with their fellow journalists on the editorial content of media products.” In this case, what is decisive is particularly the term “media product.” Even the simple and ordinary terms like “collaborate” are after all not unambiguous. The latter condition must be further refined: “. . . who draws at least one half of his income through his work for the media products . . .” This would solve other problems concerning the demarcations, but it could also pose new problems.

In this process, examples that generally do not belong to the term should be included in the same way as those that belong to the term. Whether an explication of a term covers all and only that which needs to be covered, remains always a  $\rightarrow$  hypothesis. Erroneous attributions cannot be ruled out with absolute certainty.

### REAL DEFINITIONS

By real definitions, the researcher attempts to determine the essence – the “true meaning” – of a term. There cannot be such real definitions, because no word has a meaning by itself. First of all, a link must be established between a word and its meaning. Often, explications of a term are hidden behind the supposedly real definitions, which – as explained earlier – are analyses of nominal definitions. Even if science does not have the sovereignty of definition over a term, the existing convention of meaning does not revert to something “real” but to the established usage of the term. These established conventions of language do not have, in terms of their validity, any higher precedence over the nominal definitions.

A similarly misleading argument for real definitions is the reference to acquisition of language prior to the age of  $\rightarrow$  comprehension among children. After all, a child’s first words are not based on any known terms. But yet there is an arbitrary definition that has no higher validity than the nominal definitions. To illustrate this: using a nominal definition, a “stool” can be defined as an “object that is about knee-high and has a seat but no backrest.” Or whenever a child sees a knee-high object that has a seat but no backrest, someone would say, “stool” ( $\rightarrow$  Language Acquisition in Childhood). Also, every linguistic circumscription of a phenomenon is based on nouns and is, therefore, a nominal definition.

Another typical case of assumptive real definitions is the recourse to the history of the word; that is to say, the attempt to trace the meaning of the term from the etymology of a word. Apart from the change of meaning of words, an old definition is also based on an (obsolete) nominal definition, which, by no means, can claim a higher validity than the current one.

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

In the empirical research, terms must be determined so that they are measurable ( $\rightarrow$  Operationalization). We must decide how a characteristic should be precisely measured.

This process is called operationalization and the outcome “operational definition.” For example, if we are to find out from a man how long he reads newspapers daily, we can ask him: “How long do you read newspapers on average per day?”. The possible answers (“none at all”; 1–2 hours; 2–3 hours . . .) belong to the operational definition. If we wanted to know if someone is a journalist or not, we could ask him, for example, if he possesses a journalist’s identification. The characteristic “journalist” could be a trait if, for example, we are to ascertain whether journalists read more newspapers than all others. If I intended to conduct a journalist survey, I could use the same definition. So, we need operational definitions to determine the object of an investigation and to decide how the characteristics relevant to the investigation need to be gathered.

How do operational definitions differ from nominal definitions? Nominal definitions are expected to abridge elaborate descriptions through indicative terms, whereas operational definitions determine the measuring operations by means of which terms or constructs can be empirically obtained.

### UNAMBIGUITY AND PRECISION

A definition is good if it is unambiguous and precise (→ Reliability). If, on the basis of a definition, we can decide whether a person, a group, an object, or an event is covered by the defined term or not, the definition is unambiguous. In principle, definitions always deal with a demarcation and, for that, necessary and adequate conditions need to be defined. The necessary conditions are meant for exclusion: any object that does not fulfill the necessary conditions of a definition does not belong to the defined term. If, on the other hand, the adequate conditions are met, the object is attributed, in any case, to the term. In this, the adequate conditions always cover the necessary conditions. Therefore, we must verify which conditions are applicable.

We have three options: (1) the necessary conditions are not applicable and the object will not be attributed to the term; (2) the adequate conditions are applicable (consequently, the necessary conditions are met) and the object will be attributed to the term; (3) the adequate conditions are not applicable, but the necessary conditions are: the object cannot be unambiguously attributed; it is placed in a gray area. The quality of a definition increases if the gray area between attribution and demarcation becomes narrower.

### VALIDITY

The operationalization is always measured on a parameter of ascertaining if it credibly covers what was meant by the nominal definition. This criterion of quality is called → validity. If the operational definition defines measurement processes that unambiguously cover whatever is expected to be covered by the nominal definition, the operationalization is then valid. Validity is an assumption about the validity of a research operation. For example, if we were to ascertain if a person we are questioning is a journalist and, therefore, ask him if he possesses press identification, in the background the following assumption of validity is present: “every journalist obtains press identification and none other.”

If we intended to examine violence on TV (→ Violence as Media Content), an operational definition could sound like this: “Whenever a person intentionally causes physical or

emotional pain to another person, that is ‘violence.’” This definition may be adequate in many cases. Supposing we analyze TV news items where there is a report about fighter planes destroying bridges and roads. According to the present operationalization, no violence would be encoded here, but the group of researchers might agree without hesitation to extend the definition to “wanton destruction of property.” But then, we face a problem with medical drama on TV: doctors often cause physical pain to their patients in order to make a diagnosis or even during the therapy itself. The definition must be refined further. The validity of an operational definition can always be improved but it will always remain an assumption: exactly that and only that will be measured which needs to be measured.

SEE ALSO: ► Comprehension ► Hypothesis ► Journalism ► Language Acquisition in Childhood ► Media ► Operationalization ► Quality Press ► Radio ► Reliability ► Research Methods ► Tabloid Press ► Television ► Validity ► Violence as Media Content

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## **Deliberative Polls**

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The phrase “deliberative polls” most often refers to political philosopher James Fishkin’s conception of a multi-stage opinion poll that incorporates systematic deliberation on policy issues (→ Public Opinion Polling). As such, Fishkin has trademarked the phrase “deliberative polling.” It can refer to other methods of introducing a deliberative component to public opinion research, some of which are touched on below.

Deliberative polling addresses the relationship between public opinion and policy outcomes. Many political philosophers believe that in a representative democracy, policy should be responsive to considered public preferences (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication). Many empiricists conclude that policy *is* responsive to public opinion as expressed in conventional surveys – but whether such opinion is “considered” is another matter. Survey researchers agree that citizens do not typically form considered opinions on policy issues (→ Public Opinion). As Anthony Downs (1957) has argued,

citizens tend to practice rational ignorance: they expend little effort informing and refining political opinions that, individually, will have vanishingly little impact on outcomes. In consequence, conventional opinion surveys often tap what Philip Converse (1964) called “nonattitudes”: opinions made up on the spot (→ Survey). As such, not only are individuals’ responses often unstable, but the aggregate results can be distressingly inconsistent (for instance, influenced by substantively trivial changes in wording) and, arguably, irresponsible.

Deliberative polling seeks, in Fishkin’s words, to establish “the conclusions people would come to, were they better informed on the issues and had the opportunity and motivation to examine those issues seriously” (Fishkin 1997, 162). Fishkin proposes that the results have a “recommending force”: they indicate to political leaders and the public at large what the public’s view of an issue would be if citizens were to form considered opinions.

Deliberative polling begins with a baseline survey administered to a random sample of the relevant public (→ Sampling, Random). Many of these respondents – typically several hundred people – then convene to learn about the specified issues, through carefully vetted briefing materials, and to discuss the issues in moderated discussion groups. At the end, a post-deliberation survey measures possible changes in attitude induced by the process. For instance, the (US) National Issues Convention in January 1996 convened 460 participants (about half of the initial respondents) for three days of discussion on three broad issues: the US economy, the US role in the world, and the state of the American family. Participants discussed the briefing materials in small groups of about 15 apiece, and then posed questions to diverse panels of experts. The final survey elicited, *inter alia*, substantially less support for a “flat” (rather than progressive) tax, and considerably more support for current US levels of foreign aid, compared to the baseline. Follow-up surveys indicate that such changes in aggregate opinion tend to weaken, yet persist, well after the initial study.

Deliberative polls under Fishkin’s trademark have been conducted in the United States and elsewhere. They were originally conducted under the auspices of the Center for Deliberative Polling, University of Texas at Austin (often in cooperation with other organizations), and since 2003 by the Center for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University. Most deliberative polls focus on substantially narrower issues than the National Issues Convention described above. Various polls have considered foreign policy priorities, public utility policies, criminal justice, and adoption of the euro.

Deliberative polls can be conjectured to improve *opinion quality* in various ways. Factual knowledge questions often evince substantial information gains (→ Political Knowledge). Some studies show marked gains in opinion constraint – for instance, larger correlations among responses to arguably related policy questions – although there is little evidence that deliberative polls actually narrow prior differences in constraint. Deliberative polls could evoke more stable expressed opinions (e.g., larger correlations over time), but available data do not permit stringent tests. Some evidence indicates that deliberative polls may reduce the likelihood of preference cycles (in which distinct majorities prefer outcome A to B, B to C, and C to A). More subtly, deliberative polls can be hoped to increase majorities’ willingness to accept the costs and risks of their preferred policies. It is unclear how such willingness could be measured systematically.



Deliberative polling combines values of standard social scientific research and democratic theory, creatively but not without compromise. In comparison with conventional surveys, deliberative polls resist replication due to their scope and expense, especially in national studies entailing long travel. The attempt to present balanced information is inevitably problematic. The group dynamics are inherently unpredictable; the use of multiple small groups does provide for measurable variation (→ Group Communication). The survey instrument limits participants' ability to express their views. Some critics argue that any change induced by deliberative polls amounts to a *Hawthorne Effect* – participants' response to knowing they are being watched – with no normative relevance. Advocates reply that the Hawthorne Effect classically refers to improved performance; if people deliberate more effectively and responsibly because they are conscious of being watched, so much the better. Observers must decide for themselves whether the results merit “recommending force.”

Deliberative polling bears comparison with other modes of deliberative research. These include, among many others, the “Citizens’ Juries” designed by Ned Crosby, citizen panels convened by the Public Agenda Foundation, Alan F. Kay’s public interest polling, and Holland’s “General Social Debate” of the early 1980s. These methods vary among many dimensions, including the number of participants involved; the efforts to assure representative participation; the length of the program; the scope of the agenda, and whether participants can have any influence; the amount and form(s) of information provided; the opportunities to discuss the issues and to ask questions; and the means by which final opinions are assessed. Arguably, given Fishkin’s reasoning, various methods should tend to converge upon qualitatively similar outcomes. This provocative possibility has been little explored.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Research and Politics ► Deliberativeness in Political Communication ► Group Communication ► Political Knowledge ► Public Opinion ► Public Opinion Polling ► Sampling, Random ► Survey

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# Deliberativeness in Political Communication

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Deliberativeness denotes a specific quality of political communication that centers around argumentative exchange in a climate of mutual respect and civility. Empirically, deliberativeness is a variable feature of political debate or discussion. From a normative point of view, the standard of deliberativeness can be used to evaluate political communication processes and settings, and to suggest possible ways to improve them. Deliberativeness has been studied in very different communicative settings, including parliamentary debate (Steiner et al. 2004), news media content and television talk shows (Ferree et al. 2002; Wessler & Schultz 2007), online discussion forums (Price et al. 2002), civil society organizations (Ryfe 2002), as well as everyday political talk among citizens (Mutz 2006). When deliberative discussion is not confined to arcane settings, such as decision-making behind closed doors, or private settings, such as the family, it is also called public deliberation or public discourse (for an overview of the empirical literature, see Delli Carpini et al. 2004; Ryfe 2005).

## NORMATIVE STANDARDS AND MODELS

Standards of deliberativeness are an important ingredient in normative theories of deliberative democracy (for an overview, see Fishkin and Laslett 2003). Although it is by no means a uniform body of theory, deliberative democratic theorists agree on the central value of argumentative exchange in order to foster both the cognitive quality of political judgment as well as mutual respect and social cohesion between deliberators. If applied to the role of the news media in political communication, deliberative media content can be theorized to have salutary effects on both political decision-makers and citizens (Wessler, in press). Vis-à-vis decision-makers, political deliberation can foster active justification of political claims and decisions, and thereby at least help to avoid egregious mistakes. Vis-à-vis ordinary citizens, deliberative media content can serve as a repository of arguments and justifications as well as a model for deliberative behavior in everyday political talk (→ Political Language).

Conceptions of deliberative democracy contrast with other normative conceptions that are either less demanding in their normative standards or focus on different normative elements in political communication, or both (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). Habermas (2006) distinguishes (1) a *liberal model*, which places particular emphasis on equal rights for citizens and fair representation, (2) a *republican model*, particularly favoring political participation by active citizens, and (3) a *deliberative model*, prizing the formation of considered public opinions and the responsiveness of decision-makers to such opinions (→ Habermas, Jürgen). Ferree et al. (2002) present a similar typology, adding a fourth variant called *constructionist theory*, which aims at privileging and empowering oppressed or marginalized groups and nondeliberative forms of communication (also

called “agonistic pluralism”). It must be noted, however, that the assignment of individual theorists to these traditions is by no means unambiguous. For example, John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) has been claimed for the “representative liberal” theory by Ferree et al., while in his work we find numerous remarks on the epistemic and social benefits of deliberation. This shows that the traditions are not as mutually exclusive as they are sometimes portrayed for didactic purposes.

Still, there are important differences centering around three issues. First, a deliberative model of political communication demands more than providing a mirror image of pre-existing positions (as in a strictly representative liberal model) and asks for an actual exchange of positions and justifications. Second, due to the expected benefits of such exchange, a deliberative model tends to place more emphasis on argumentative exchange than on maximal popular inclusion and maximal levels of participatory activity (such as a strictly participatory model would suggest). Empirical research suggests that deliberation and participation can indeed not be maximized at the same time but that a tradeoff exists between them (Mutz 2006), and deliberative theory places a comparatively higher premium on innovation and creativity in public discourse than on strict equality (Peters 2008). Finally, a deliberative model privileges civil and “literal” modes of exchange over purely strategic, strongly impassioned, or rhetorical forms (as in the agonistic or “constructionist” tradition) in order to secure chances for considered opinions to emerge from public exchange (→ Political Discourse).

## **CONNECTING NORMATIVE THEORY TO EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION**

In connecting normative theories or models to empirical investigation, three basic strategies can be employed. First, one can try to measure the normative concepts in order to find out which normative model approximates social reality best. While this tells us something about social reality, such investigation cannot serve to bolster up or discard the normative claims, which can only be supported or contested on the level of normative theory itself. A second strategy attempts to test implicit or explicit empirical claims in the normative framework; in the case of deliberativeness, this pertains particularly to the putative benefits of deliberative media content (see below). A third strategy, finally, tries to ascertain the degree to which different normative conceptions guide social action in the real world. This can be studied, for example, by asking to what degree journalists subjectively or in their meta-communication endorse elements of the deliberative model (Gerhards et al. 1998, 163–177).

### **Measurements of Deliberativeness in Media Content**

For all three strategies, valid → operationalizations of deliberativeness are needed. In print media content, elements of deliberativeness have been studied on four different levels of analysis, ranging from an entire page or edition down to the level of an individual idea expressed by a particular actor (in direct or indirect quotation; see Table 1). Ferree et al. (2002) find no consistent differences in the level of deliberativeness between Germany and the USA. Such cross-national differences have not been studied on a larger scale, but it is likely that deliberation in print media will take different forms in different countries,

**Table 1** Measures of deliberativeness in print media content

Level of analysis	Measure	Operationalization
Idea	Justification	Presence of a justification for an idea expressed
	Rebuttal	Presence of an idea that refers to and argues against an idea that it opposes
Utterance	Conflicting ideas	Co-presence of separate conflicting ideas or policy positions in the same utterance
Article	Civility	Absence of “hot button” language (i.e., inflammatory speech)
	Responsiveness	Presence of a direct response by one speaker to a claim made by another speaker in the same article
Page/edition	Response articles	Presence of a direct response by one speaker/author to another speaker/author on the same page/in the same edition

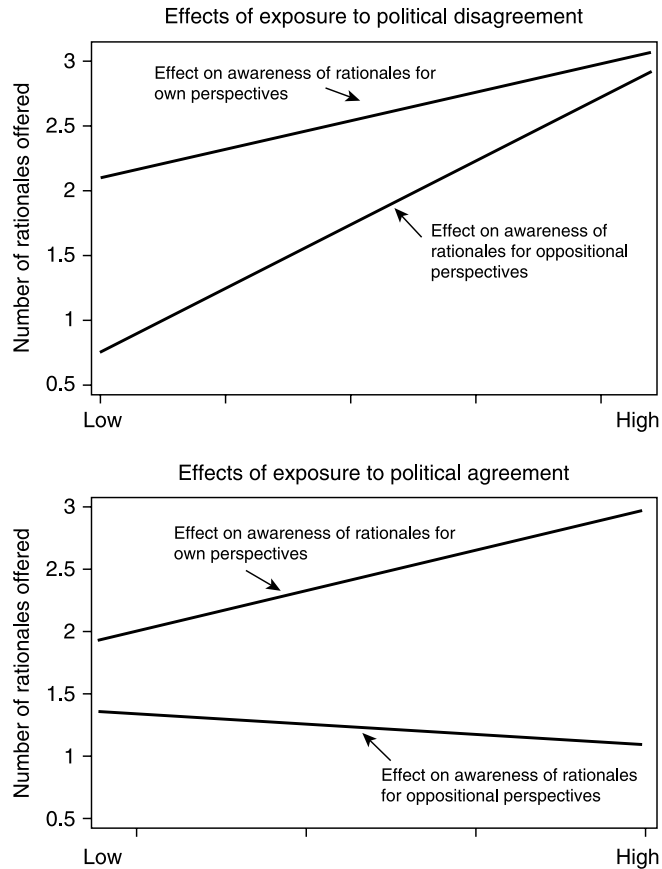
depending on, for example, journalistic traditions as well as the degree of political parallelism in the media (→ Party–Press Parallelism) and the degree of polarization in political discourse (Wessler, in press).

Similarly, the deliberativeness of political talk shows on television has been measured by the extent to which participants, in their contributions to the debate, engage in justification, explicitly weigh arguments, directly relate to other participants’ utterances, or directly attack and vilify their opponents (→ Broadcast Talk). Schultz (2006) has shown that levels of deliberativeness are generally higher for experts and journalists than for politicians, lobbyists, artists, and celebrities. Participants addressing others directly in talk-show discussion seem to be more prone to also engage in justification but do not necessarily weigh arguments more in their contributions. In public debate in front of large audiences, dialogue thus fosters justification but not argumentative integration. In addition, talk-show hosts have been studied with respect to their propensity to confront participants with questions eliciting justification or challenging participants to react to others’ contributions. Hosts differ in these respects and have considerable latitude in making a talk show more or less deliberative. In general, research has shown that deliberative features do exist in media content to a degree that merits close scrutiny but that they are not dominant in most media and most formats.

### Measurements of Deliberativeness in Citizen Talk

In citizen deliberation, the degree of deliberativeness has been measured by citizens’ argument repertoires, i.e., their awareness of rationales for their own positions as well as for possible counter-positions (Price et al. 2002; Mutz 2006; → Language and Social Interaction). Both elements of argument repertoire have been shown to increase with increased exposure to political disagreement in citizens’ personal networks. Conversely, exposure to political agreement (homogeneous networks) increases awareness of rationales for one’s own position but decreases citizens’ knowledge of reasons for opposing positions (Fig. 1).

These results lend support to one central empirical element in the normative deliberative model as described above, namely that “hearing the other side” does contribute to the



**Figure 1** Effects of exposure to political agreement and disagreement on awareness of rationales for own and oppositional political perspectives  
*Source: Mutz (2006, 73)*

formation of considered opinions. Network heterogeneity has also been shown to be related to more intense public affairs media use as well as to better factual → political knowledge (Scheufele et al. 2006, → Political Media Use). One crucial question remains open, however; namely, whether the news media can serve as a substitute for heterogeneous individual networks and thus also foster deliberative opinion, and whether they do so to varying degrees in different countries. More precisely, even, the deliberative model would suggest that it is not the news media as such, but deliberative features of news media content, as described above, that serve to enhance deliberative opinion. While this claim seems plausible from a deliberative perspective, more research is needed to substantiate it empirically.

SEE ALSO: ► Broadcast Talk ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► Language and Social Interaction ► Operationalization ► Party–Press Parallelism ► Political Communication ► Political Discourse ► Political Knowledge ► Political Language ► Political Media Use ► Public Opinion

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## Delivery and Rhetoric

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As rhetoric originally was closely tied to the oral presentation of a speech, delivery, understood as the best management of voice and body, was naturally of interest to the art. Thus, in the traditional rhetorical system, the so-called rhetorical *canon*, delivery made up the fifth and last part (Greek *hypokrisis*, Latin *actio* or *pronuntiatio*) (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman).

Of the five canonical parts, comparatively little has been written about delivery. The subject has been given rather uneven attention in books on rhetoric, from antiquity till today. Apparently Aristotle – perhaps under the influence of a Platonic distrust of rhetoric – only reluctantly accepted delivery as part of the art. In their turn, Cicero and Quintilian, the two major Latin rhetoricians, both evidenced their interest in rhetoric’s practical and educational aspects by including delivery as one of the public speaker’s duties. In John Bulwer’s *Chirologia* and *Chironomia* (Bulwer 1974) we have one rhetorical example of the compartmentalized interest in the body typical of the Renaissance, namely a treatise of the natural and the rhetorical hand’s gestures, respectively. Bulwer’s plans for a similar book about the head were never carried out. The high point of interest in delivery was in the eighteenth century, when the elocutionists equated delivery with rhetoric.

Throughout Europe books with rules for the proper management of voice and body, written in the national languages, were published for a growing reading public. The inspiration came from France, and the rules applied to the public speaker of many trades (→ Rhetoric in Western Europe: France). Gilbert Austin, an Irish-born educator and clergyman, even introduced a notation system for the proper and polite movements of head, arms, hands, and feet. For the elocutionists delivery had several venues. Besides delivering a speech it also encompassed reading aloud, reciting, and stage acting. For the private learner, assorted collections of literature in prose and verse equipped with delivery rules were published well into the nineteenth century in Europe as well as in the USA.

Delivery is predominantly a *tacit knowledge* because it does not easily lend itself to description or prescription. Apart from cautions against offensive behavior, such as picking one’s nose in public, it proved to be very cumbersome to describe the speaker’s voice and body in detail. The proper body language of any given time would be known to the majority of rhetorical practitioners, or at least to those inside the establishment, for those outside to emulate. The social mobility starting in the eighteenth century gave more people opportunities to speak in a political or an occupational setting. Some of these speakers lacked rhetorical education and therefore felt the need to acquire the skills in other ways. This may be part of the elocutionists’ success and perhaps also explains the demand for modern popular books on body language and voice production.

Present-day rhetorical textbooks still include some commonsense advice for good delivery; however, delivery is first and foremost an integral part of the teaching of public speaking. In the classroom students develop a suitable delivery through practice, often with the aid of visual recording. Philosophically, rhetorical delivery is phenomenological: through delivery speakers signify audibly and visibly to an audience their commitment to the issue at hand.

SEE ALSO: ► Body Images in the Media ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Nonverbal  
► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetoric in Western Europe: France ► Speech Anxiety

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## Delphi Studies

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The main objective of Delphi studies is to collect expert knowledge for decision-making. In Delphi studies experts' ideas and opinions are systematically surveyed. The data are gathered through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled and anonymous feedback (Häder & Häder 2000). The goal of most Delphi studies is to create a group consensus in future tasks. Although the method originates from the *modus operandi* of the Greek oracle at Delphi, it is a young research method. The modern Delphi was a spin-off from defense research conducted by the Rand Corporation in the early 1950s at the beginning of the Cold War (Gordon & Helmer 1964). The authors wanted to “obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion of a group of experts” (Linstone & Turoff 1975, 10).

The principle of Delphi studies is based on panel → surveys; however, in contrast to such surveys, participants in Delphi studies are confronted with feedback from all participants. Two main assumptions are central: first, the judgment of a group is claimed as superior to judgments of individuals, and, second, the multilevel process of opinion forming is preferred as more valid than the single-level process (Häder 2002). The classic design uses formalized questionnaires that are submitted to experts in the fields analyzed (pencil and paper or online version). The experts are anonymous; the feedback is sent in an averaged form and the questionnaire is repeated at least once. One main aim of the anonymous answering is to bypass the disadvantages of conventional group questionnaires or committee action where social orientation through the identification of communicative or rhetoric leaders has an impact on the result.

As Delphi is a young method its research design can take many forms. Most of these differ in two ways: the number of questionnaires and the number and selection of participating experts. Meta-analysis of Delphi studies shows that a consensus is often established after the second questionnaire (→ Meta-Analysis). A satisfying result is achieved after the third round at the latest (Häder & Häder 2002). The number of experts



varies: huge Delphi studies, as, for example, the 1993 study of the German Federal Ministry of Research and Technology, have more than 3,000 participants. However, many scholars prefer a maximum of 30 participants. Duffield's (1993) analysis demonstrates that comparable results were produced from two Delphi studies on the same topic but with different numbers of experts (16 and 34). The selection of experts is one of the major problems, as experts need to have not only knowledge but also influence in changing procedures and structures in the relevant field (Duffield 1993). Some authors suggest a standardized pre-questionnaire to determine the level of expertise of the candidates. However, such costly tests are rarely done.

Given that mass communication pertains to a field of rapid technological change, Delphi studies can be seen as having a kind of tradition in this discipline. Krüger, for example, was an early adopter of this method in the field of communication (1975). Nowadays the Delphi technique is applied in the field of new communication technologies (Beck et al. 2000) as well as in the field of → public relations (van Ruler et al. 2004; *Technology and Communication*). Despite the beneficial attributes of Delphi and its application in the field of communication, the method has its critics. The main criticisms are that (1) the outcomes of Delphi studies are mere opinion; (2) the method is not rigorous enough to be part of the serious research methods in the social sciences (Sackman 1974); (3) participants feel pressured to find a consensus; and (4) Delphi tends to simplify the complex tasks of forecasting. To judge the quality of the method, more comparative studies would be needed. These could also make valid statements on different aspects of the design such as the number and structure of the expert groups and/or the usefulness of Delphi as opposed to other foresight techniques like environmental scanning, → simulation studies, scenario technique, or trend extrapolation (Häder & Häder 2000).

SEE ALSO: ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Meta-Analysis ► Public Relations ► Qualitative Methodology ► Research Methods ► Simulation ► Survey ► Technology and Communication

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## Dependency Theories

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Even after they formally become independent, many developing countries still depend on the industrialized world for many resources, including technology, financing, models, and even media content, such as films or television programs. This is a structural legacy of imperialism, with which many countries with former colonies have struggled. Only a few countries have completely overcome it (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories).

For a long time, these post-independence issues were analyzed in terms of world systems theory and dependency theory. In *world systems theory*, a core of industrial nations controls the essential dynamics of the world capitalist system. A large number of nations, i.e., most of the developing world, are peripheral or essentially dependent, and a smaller number of nations, which Wallerstein (1979) calls “semiperipheral,” achieve some growth and development. Semiperipheral states include the partially industrialized states of the third world and eastern Europe, and, at least before World War I, also included Russia. In all of these cases, the world economy, still controlled by the core nations, expands and penetrates new states to draw in new raw materials, cheap labor for manufacturing, and potential markets for goods. The peripheral or developing countries depend on the industrialized world for capital, technology, and most manufactured goods, while tending to export low-cost primary products or cheap manufactured goods that add little benefit to the local economy.

### BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF DEPENDENCY THEORIES

*Dependency theory* makes a similar analysis, but more from the point of view of developing countries, which even after obtaining political independence, often saw themselves entangled in a series of dependent relations with either their former colonial rulers or with competing international powers, such as the US or Great Britain. These lines of dependence tended to center on the following dimensions.

*Finance*: many countries depended on outside powers for either investments or foreign aid; *trade*: many countries remained locked in unfavorable trade relations with dominant countries, selling their raw materials cheaply and buying manufactured goods for high prices; *politics*: countries often had to accept subordinate political alliances to obtain

foreign aid or other benefits; *culture*: countries often imported television, films, and news from either their former colonial ruler or the US; *education*: national elites often spoke the languages of either former colonial rulers such as France or of emerging global powers such as the US.

Dependency varied greatly in regions of the world. The term itself was created by Latin American theorists, e.g., Cardoso (1970), to describe the experience of Latin American countries after becoming independent in the 1820s, then forming powerful new relationships of dependency on Britain, France, and the US. Most other developing countries became independent of colonialism much later, after the 1940s. However, the Latin American experience provided a useful set of prototypes and precedents for understanding dependency among other newly independent countries in other regions (→ Development Communication: Latin America). However, regional experiences differed, and dependency developed and transformed in different ways around the world.

The reach of the industrialized nations continued to expand after World War II and to draw the newly independent nations into dependency. Even though the US had been a literal colonial ruler in only a few countries, for example, Cuba and the Philippines, it now became a logical economic partner for developing country elites around the world. Both the US and the USSR actively pursued *alliances with elites in developing countries* as part of the Cold War, so political and military concerns often overlapped or even opposed economic interests of the elites in both industrialized and developing countries.

Almost all national elites, whether in the economy, politics, or cultural industry, were seen as strongly linked to the economic interests of the core countries. These elites had been educated by the colonial rulers, had learned the colonial languages, had often worked in or been trained by their companies, and often saw their economic fortunes as linked to the corporations and governments of the major core countries, even after independence. So as these elites created political systems, economic groups, and cultural industries, they often saw profit and stability in continuing ties to the core countries. A key example is the television broadcasting personnel in various countries, who were trained in how to produce television and, implicitly, what television is or should be, by the BBC or other dominant media groups. Cultural industry elites, in television or elsewhere, were particularly interested in creating and guiding markets both in their economic role and in their ideological role in reproducing the systems of culture and information.

Many saw the *ideological role of* → *television* under dependency as making third world residents content with their lot as lower-paid consumers of first world products. The core nations saw advertising and the subsequent *consumerism* it promotes as key vehicles of both economic and ideological expansion. However, some elites in politics, economics, and media were interested in increasing their own national power and reducing dependency. So a great deal of policymaking came to focus on reducing dependency by addressing issues such as enabling countries to produce more of their own media content and reducing imbalances of cultural imports, as in UNESCO's MacBride Report in 1980 (→ New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]).

The continuing results of conditions of dependency, such as low income resources, lack of industrial infrastructure, lack of support by weak governments, inappropriate models for production, and lack of trained personnel, have kept a number of poorer countries from developing much local or national production, even if their audiences

might prefer more national programs. This is particularly true for the smallest and poorest of nations, such as those in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Over time, however, even as postcolonial dependencies in developed world countries sorted out and shifted, an asymmetrical replication persisted of core capitalist country structures, especially those of the US. Although some countries originally modeled British or French colonial systems, many moved increasingly toward the US model because it reflected an increasingly dominant, essentially capitalist, economic model. This took place in part because of direct economic dependency on the US and US firms. The US model spread well beyond its area of direct primary influence in Latin America, however, because as more countries shifted toward greater integration with the world capitalist economy, both policymakers and would-be media owners saw the US model as a highly functional and commercially successful way of organizing television. That view was powerfully reinforced by both foreign and domestic advertisers, who wanted to see television become an advertising vehicle open to them (Fox 1975).

When related to cultural dependency, particularly in television, most observers add → *advertising* to the foreign economic influences observed by the dependent development paradigm in the general economy. Fejes (1980) emphasized the influence of multinational advertising on television industries throughout Latin America, both currently and historically. He noted that “it was the demands of advertising, particularly the advertising of multinational corporations, that shaped the commercial development of television in Latin America” (1980, 25). Others observed that the television industry still depends on foreign financing in the form of advertising revenues from multinational corporations and advertising agencies (→ Advertising, Cross-Cultural).

## DEPENDENCY AND OWNERSHIP

Direct foreign investment in media ownership first followed lines of colonialism and then dependency (→ Global Media, History of). For example, the logic of regional proximity led US companies to become involved in Latin America from the nineteenth century on, first with resource extraction and trade, later with direct investment for manufacturing. So radio and television developed in Latin America in the context of a region that had already moved from mercantilist capitalism under Spain and Portugal to a capitalism dependent on trade, capital, investment, and corporate models from the US and Europe. American advertisers and advertising agencies promoted commercial radio and television elsewhere because they wanted to have commercial media with which to work.

The US, Britain, and France also made a considerable direct investment in colonial and other third world newspapers in the 1920s, in movies in the 1920s and 1930s, in radio in the 1930s and 1940s, and in television in the 1960s and 1970s. Early in the twentieth century, as today, many local elites have found it convenient to grow their national industries through cooperative links with global corporations. For example, Brazil’s *TV Globo* is now one of the largest media corporations in the world outside the core industrial countries. But when Robert Marinho started it in Brazil in 1962, he was unsure of his own capabilities in a new medium. In classic industrial strategy, he sought to minimize his risk with an alliance for technology, capital, and management advice with Time-Life, which invested in *TV Globo* and advised him until 1970, when it was forced

out by the government pressure and by its own frustration with lack of profit (→ Brazil: Media System).

There was one initial wave of investment in foreign television companies in the 1960s, particularly by the US in Latin America. However, most countries enacted laws that prohibited or limited direct foreign investment in television, even if it meant forcing out some of the investments made in the 1960s. “With a few minor exceptions, nationalism would prompt foreign governments to deny outsiders control of the sensitive and powerful medium of television” (Duarte 2001, 21).

Local families, often those already involved with print media, started most radio and television operations in Latin America, but they took these initiatives within a context of a capitalism that might be characterized as dependent. These cultural industries were also hybrid. They blended national characteristics, such as family ownership and strong ties to the state, together with typically US characteristics such as commercialization, professionalization of network management, production, and the development of truly national advertising markets with strong ties to national and global advertising agencies. Of the influences exerted on Brazil’s *TV Globo* by Time-Life, for example, the most lasting were the reorganization of its production system, its network/affiliate management, and its relations with advertisers and ratings firms. In contrast, Time-Life’s programming advice was almost immediately rejected as useless within the Brazilian cultural market context, and program decisions were made by a combination of Brazilian advertising executives who knew the national market and program producers hired from other networks who knew which genres worked in that market (Straubhaar 1984).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Cross-Cultural ▶ Brazil: Media System ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Global Media, History of ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Television

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# Desensitization

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Media desensitization is a reduction in emotional, physiological, cognitive, and/or behavioral reactivity resulting from extensive media exposure. Communication researchers have primarily used the term “desensitization” to label the effects of repeated media violence exposure on violence tolerance, meaning both a decrease in empathy and concern and also an increase in callousness toward victims of violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of).

The rise in popularity of media desensitization research starting in the 1960s roughly coincided with the development and popularization of exposure treatments for phobias of various kinds (→ Media Effects, History of). In systematic desensitization therapy, patients are exposed to anxiety-provoking stimuli (real, imagined, or mediated) at gradually increasing levels of intensity. Flooding therapy rejects graduated hierarchies in favor of immediate introduction to intense anxiety-evoking stimuli (→ Fear Induction through Media Content). Research has established the effectiveness of both approaches in dulling adverse emotions; regardless of the precise sequence, exposure to a previously aversive object reduces fear and anxiety. The predominant theoretical reasoning behind exposure treatments is that pairing aversive stimuli with relaxation reinforces positive associations with the stimulus, leading to an extinction of the phobia. The same mechanism appears to operate in the context of media exposure to aversive stimuli (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

The earliest frequently cited media desensitization studies are those by Lazarus and colleagues (e.g., Lazarus et al. 1962), who determined that physiological and self-reported stress waned upon repeated (albeit short-term) exposure to scenes of Australian aboriginal sub-incisions. Several widely reported incidents of bystander apathy among Americans, including the murder of Kitty Genovese and the My Lai massacre, fueled research into media desensitization in the 1970s. Researchers discovered that violence exposure led to decreased physiological reactivity during subsequent nonfictional televised depictions of riots and car accidents. Children are also susceptible to desensitization; various researchers (e.g., Cline et al. 1973; Drabman & Thomas 1975; Thomas et al. 1977) found that compared with children who watched little to no media violence, children exposed to high levels of media violence demonstrated low levels of physiological reactivity and high levels of behavioral tolerance of other children’s aggressive acts.

With the advent of video tapes and → cable television in North America in the 1980s, and the concomitant increase in anonymous access to pornography (→ Pornography Use across the Life-Span), legislators and feminist writers focused scholars’ attention on the effects of violent, sexual, and degrading depictions of women (→ Pornography, Media Law on; Pornography, Feminist Debates on). A field experiment by Malamuth & Check (1981; → Experiment, Field) established that exposure to a film portraying violence against women as positive and justified increased men’s attitudinal acceptance of violence against

women. Linz and colleagues (e.g., Linz et al. 1988) conducted multiple studies demonstrating that a decrease occurred in self-reported depression as well as in physiological and self-reported anxiety between the first and last day of exposure to violent sexual films, and ratings of the films' violence and degradingness also decreased. In addition, indifference toward victims of violence generalized to a mock sexual assault trial, in which male participants who belonged to a high violent-sex exposure condition demonstrated less sympathy toward the rape victim in the trial and toward rape victims in general, compared with men in a no-exposure condition (→ Habituation). Later studies suggested that women demonstrate some, but not all, of the same responses to violent sexual films, and that audiences' callousness toward violence victims dissipates in the days following exposure, provided that they avoid further exposure to violent sexual media content.

Current concern about the *increasing realism* of video-game violence has recently led researchers to study the desensitizing effects of video games (→ Video Games). These effects are indeed evident; for instance, the men who played a high-violence video game in a study by Deselms & Altman (2003) assigned more lenient prison sentences to violent criminals than did men who played a low-violence game, even an hour after exposure, and among children in another study (Funk et al. 2003), self-reported long-term exposure to violent video games was negatively associated with empathetic responses to vignettes.

Desensitization may be *rooted in changes in the brain*; recent research using event-related brain potential data (Bartholow et al. 2006) suggests that the aversive motivation system is less activated in habitual violent video-game players than in others, and that this decreased activation predicts greater behavioral tolerance for aggression. Further evidence, gathered by Funk and colleagues, suggests that the relationship between heavy exposure to violent video games and low levels of empathy may be stronger than are the relationships between empathy and violence on television, on the Internet, in film, and in real life.

Some areas of media desensitization research have yet to be explored in depth, including the apparent gender differences in desensitization; the interactions among cognitive, emotional, physiological, and behavioral domains of desensitization; and the precise mechanisms that govern media desensitization. Nevertheless, mounting evidence demonstrates that extensive exposure to media violence decreases depression, anxiety, empathy, physiological reactivity, and attitudinal and behavioral opposition to acts of violence by others, especially among males.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Habituation ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Pornography Use across the Life-Span ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Design

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Design is the human power to conceive, plan, and make all of the products that serve human beings in the accomplishment of their individual and collective purposes. It is a cultural art and a practical art, supporting all forms of activity in the human community by providing a high degree of forethought for communications, artifacts, actions, and organizations. The practice of design provides the subject matter and examples upon which the arts and sciences of communication base a significant portion of research and theory. In turn, the exploration of rhetoric and the arts and sciences of communication deepens awareness of the dimensions of communication in design and human-made products (→ Art as Communication; Rhetorical Studies).

### ORIGINS

The origins of design are prehistoric, since one of the signs of the emergence of human culture is the images and artifacts created by the first humans (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). However, the beginning of formal discussion of design and human-made products may be traced to the ancient world, in philosophical and technical writings in both Greece and China. The earliest technical writings were about architecture, instruments for measuring time, and weapons of war. In the west, those discussions were shaped by a broad conception of rhetoric as an intellectual art of invention and communication (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy; Rhetoric and Visuality). In the east, they were related to dialectic as well as rhetoric, placing communication in a context of social hierarchy and duty.



The *origins of modern design* are traced to the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution, because it was in this period that a significant division of labor distinguished the conception and planning of products from the manufacture of products by machines. Before this, both designing and making were in the hands of artisans. Craft remains a part of design, particularly in developing countries, as a popular art form in industrialized countries, or as an aspect of design practice, evident in the crafting of prototypes. But from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, design evolved from a craft activity into a *trade activity* and then into a growing body of professions, based on new disciplines of design thinking and more explicit methods of practice.

The *new disciplines of design thinking* emerged in a variety of places in Europe and the United States, but the Bauhaus (1918–1933), a school established in Germany during the Weimar period, is widely regarded as the place where these disciplines emerged around a single coherent vision. It was Walter Gropius, director of the Bauhaus, who expressed the idea of a “modern architectonic art” that would be all-embracing in its scope, creating all of the products and buildings that were designed for industrial production. With Gropius and the Bauhaus, we have the beginnings of design as a new liberal art of technological culture, with diverse forms of professional practice but also providing a broad intellectual and practical perspective on the human-made world that all men and women may use in understanding products and technological developments.

The history of design in the twentieth century took shape around a sequence of fundamental problems that represent a coherent practical inquiry into the human-made world, which continues to affect virtually every aspect of daily life. This is reflected in the *expanding concept of “product.”* At the beginning of the twentieth century, product usually meant a physical artifact – the result of industrial design. By the twenty-first century, product means any result of the creative work of designers. Designers and design theorists often recognize four broad classes of products, sometimes called the “four orders of design,” representing different kinds of design problems and different aspects of communication.

## **AREAS OF MODERN DESIGN PRACTICE AND RESEARCH**

### **Mass Communication**

Early in the twentieth century, the problems of design were identified in two great areas of collective enterprise: mass communication and mass production. The first area, mass communication, focuses on symbols and images, yielding a class of products whose explicit purpose is communication (→ Symbolism). It uses words, numbers, drawings, paintings, diagrams, and photographs to achieve the diverse ends of communication in daily life. Work in this area gave rise to → graphic design and its allied professions, including modern typography, book design, newspaper and magazine design, early forms of information design, and advertising (→ Media History). The evolution of the term “graphic design” into → “visual communication” and, most recently, “communication design” indicates the field that emerged. It is a field of *communication and demonstration*, presenting information and arguments for audiences in all areas of culture. It began in the medium of print but expanded with the technological development of new media such as film, sound recording, television, and digital communication.

## Mass Production

The second area of design problems, mass production, focuses on physical artifacts, yielding the class of tangible goods, objects, buildings, and technological marvels that are often regarded as the most visible sign of modern technological culture. Work in this area gave rise to industrial design and product design (the branch of industrial design primarily concerned with consumer goods), as well as new developments in engineering design and architecture. It also extended into other areas such as textile, clothing, and → fashion design, and led to the exploration of a vast array of new materials based on advances in physics, chemistry, and biology.

It is a *field of construction*, concerned with the conception and fabrication of the physical artifacts of everyday life, based on knowledge of the natural world and of the human and cultural context of products. Communication in this class of products begins with control features and the interface between the product and the person who uses or operates it. It also includes operating instructions, service manuals, and packaging. Finally, it includes the subtle, indirect communication that comes from forms and materials, with the complex symbolism and cultural associations that these have in different human communities (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication).

Work in the first and second orders of design continues to yield a flood of good and bad products that influence daily life around the world. However, in the latter decades of the twentieth century, two new problem areas emerged with revolutionary importance for design thinking and human culture, yielding the third and fourth classes of products.

## Actions and Activities

The third class of products focuses on actions and activities. It involves the *design of activities for living, working, → playing, and learning*. Work in this area gave rise to new professional divisions of design practice such as interaction design, service design, strategic planning, game design, and new forms of information design. Though prompted by the development of new digital technologies in the 1960s and 1970s, where designers were asked to support the dynamic, time-based flow of interface and interaction with computers, this area has expanded in many directions (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). It has led off the “flat land” of computer screens into the design of activities that support a wide variety of human experiences.

In this broad class of products, communication serves the advancement of specific human activities; → information is no longer regarded as a static subject to be presented in printed form but is understood as part of the temporal progression of experience toward some goal. Designing the progression of an activity is the central concern, though often supported by graphics and artifacts. From the earliest times in history, human beings have attempted to plan their activities, whether in battle or politics, education or law, religion or governmental administration.

Today, however, the planning and execution of human activities is increasingly understood as a design problem, requiring a designer’s forethought and communication skills to make the activities more effective in serving the goals of individuals and groups. This is evident in many areas of commercial life, but it is also evident in efforts to improve

the delivery of government services and education. The design of human interactions and services is one of the most important ways in which the real intent and values of an organization are communicated to its participants.

### **Creation of Environments, Organizations, and Systems**

The fourth class of products focuses on the creation of environments, organizations, and systems. It involves the context in which human activities take place and the values and principles upon which human-made environments are based. This class of products typically integrates many activities as well as products from the other classes into a system or whole with many interacting components. Designers working in this area often regard themselves as facilitators of organizational or community process. They organize conversations and debates among all of those who have a stake in the outcome, focusing on the values of a community and how those values may be implemented in concrete plans and actions (→ Environment and Social Interaction).

Work in this area is an emergent design practice with a wide variety of applications. Examples include the design of nature parks and amusement parks, businesses and governmental agencies, complex technological and information systems, and any other human environment, whether for medical care, education, entertainment, or some other purpose. What distinguishes this kind of design from earlier efforts to conceive of systems and environments is typically the designer's use of specific methods of practice and communication, as well as explicit recognition that a concrete product is the intended outcome. Significantly, work in this area has helped to raise consciousness of the issues of sustainability and interdependency in the natural and human-made world.

### **METHOD OF DESIGN**

Many people regard design as an art of styling and aesthetics, concerned primarily with the visual appearance of products. This is a serious misconception of the nature and discipline of design thinking. The "visual" in "visual communication" captures only part of the work of the designer. Designers create products to solve problems, and the central feature of their work is the discovery of the ideas and arguments upon which products are based.

The method or *practice of design* typically begins with an understanding of the function or purpose to be served by a product, including the social, economic, and cultural context. Next is the development of suitable form and content, based upon the subject matter of the product, the needs and desires of the intended audience, and the most appropriate quality of "voice" or "ethos" that will be influential and persuasive with that audience, inducing identification with the product.

Then comes the embodiment of form and content in appropriate materials, with determination of the styling and appearance of the product that will make it attractive and desirable for the intended users or → audience. Finally, there are considerations of the manner of production and distribution of the product. Design thinking integrates all of these factors in the final product, and variation among the factors serves to distinguish the wide range of products that are available in contemporary life.

## DESIGN AS A RESEARCH FIELD

The study of design encompasses history, criticism, and theory, including empirical investigation as well as philosophical speculation. In general, there are three *broad topics of investigation*: the nature of products and their creation in varied circumstances; the nature of the arts, methods, and techniques of design practice and product development; and the “career” of products in individual, social, economic, and cultural life. These topics are explored in three broad strategies of inquiry. First, *dialectical* inquiries (idealist, materialist, and skeptical) seek to place design in the context of larger systems of philosophical or cultural understanding. Second, the inquiries of *design science* search for basic underlying mechanisms in the workings of the mind and the material world. Third, *inquiry*, in the precise meaning of the term, is the exploration of human experience through analysis and synthetic or creative action, involving either rhetorical inquiry or productive science, known in the ancient world as “poetics.” In all of its variety, design research represents a pluralism of perspectives, reflecting the pluralism of practicing designers (→ Design Theory).

*Ethics* plays a significant role in design thinking because the problems of design are often “wicked problems,” involving conflicting values and visions that require careful consideration of the consequences of products in natural, social, and cultural life. However, many designers and design scholars would agree that design is fundamentally an affirmation of human dignity. It is an ongoing search for what can be done to support and strengthen human rights and the dignity of human beings as they act out their lives in responsible ways in varied natural, social, economic, political, and cultural circumstances.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Audience ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Design Theory ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Environment and Social Interaction ▶ Fashion ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Information ▶ Media History ▶ Playing ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Symbolism ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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# Design Theory

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A central puzzle that people face is how to make possible communication that is otherwise difficult, impossible, or unimagined. Communication design is a response to this puzzle. It happens when there is an intervention into some ongoing activity through the invention of techniques, devices, or procedures. Such interventions redesign interactivity and thus shape the possibilities for communication. Design is evident in the choices made about how people in relationships, groups, organizations, and communities will speak to and interact with each other. The purpose of design theory is to open up the intentional design of communication as an object of inquiry in order to advance knowledge about communication.

## KEY FINDINGS

Design theory is most immediately a response to the accelerated capacity for communication-by-design ushered in through advances in communication and information technology. Communication becomes an object of design when, for instance, people build web-based services such as forums for buying and exchanging goods and services, finding relational partners, or engaging in specialized discussions. Design theory also addresses the more generalized concern with the broad range of interests in the structuring, shaping, and disciplining of communication practice. Communication becomes an object of design across a range of settings such as when people determine the participants, topics, and decisions to be made at a meeting or when people decide who reports to whom about what so that an organization can run most effectively.

Aakhus and Jackson (2005) identify *seven key insights* from theory and research in language and social interaction that provide resources for investigating, understanding, and engaging in communication design: (1) turn-taking formats vary in the methods provided for generating and displaying relevant contributions; (2) participant identity and face concerns affect participation in any interaction format (→ Politeness Theory); (3) speech is a kind of action with collateral commitments; (4) speech act sequences are indefinitely expandable (→ Linguistic Pragmatics); (5) coordinated action depends on repair; (6) the consequences of design for practice are interactionally emergent; (7) communication is subject to culturally shared assumptions about communication (→ Ethnography of Communication).

Design theory is interested in what an intervention presupposes about communication and with what consequence the intervention is taken up in communicative practice. Interventions embody “hypotheses” about communication evident in choices about affordances and constraints for speaking and interacting such as turn-taking, turn types, topics, and the sequencing of acts. The communicative successes, failures, and surprises that result from interventions on speaking and interaction provide material for reflecting upon and theorizing communication. The accumulation of successful and unsuccessful interventions is a form of knowledge-building about communication.

## COMMUNICATION AS DESIGN

Communication design is often implicit in the work performed in society and taken for granted in the procedures and formats used by technologies, institutions, organizations, and communities. Design theory opens up the design of communication for inquiry in two general ways: (1) through the investigation of the communication design work that takes place in society and the designs for communication that emerge in society, and (2) by engaging in the practice of communication design and the development of design methodology.

Communication design work is evident in the interventions people make to realize preferred forms of interactivity and avoid non-preferred forms. For example, Jacobs and Aakhus (2002) examined the transcripts of divorce mediation sessions by looking at how the mediators treated the arguments made (or implied) by disputants. Their discourse analysis found that what mediators do with their words tends not to articulate the argumentative potential of what disputants say. Rather than resolving differences of opinion based on facts and shared values, disputes were managed in terms of the possibilities of striking a bargain or repairing identities. The mediators used their tools of practice (e.g., questions and summaries) to construct different types of discussion (e.g., bargaining, therapeutic, and critical discussion) as a way to manage the conflict among the parties.

Investigations of communication design work pay attention to the often taken-for-granted design work performed by people in a position to shape the communication experienced by others. These investigations make use of interviews, observations, and transcripts to articulate the tools, ideals, and knowledge of practitioner work. The analysis reconstructs the practical theory of communication evident in the conduct of intervention and the type of knowledge about and practice of communication cultivated in various forms of work and professional activity.

Designs for communication are evident in the procedures and formats available through technologies, organizations, institutions, and communities that provide affordances and constraints for interaction. These designs are solutions to communication problems and each solution varies in terms of its presumptions about how communication works and how it ought to work. For example, Aakhus (1999) examined the *Science Court* approach to resolving the disagreements that arise among experts and then complicate policy decision-making by non-experts. The analysis found that *Science Court's* design-for-communication altered the way experts and non-experts interacted in policy decision-making but did not relieve decision-makers from the predicament of dependence on expert authority. The design recreated the dilemma of authority, ignored facilitating reasoning across domains of expert practice, and encouraged rational discussion on potentially trivial matters. When the *Science Court* was used to facilitate learning about science policy issues in public settings rather than as a tool for rendering a policy decision, however, its design was more relevant and effective.

There are, in principle, an unlimited number of designs for communication and these designs are distinguishable by considering what any procedure or format implemented by an institution, technology, organization, or community presupposes about communication. Investigations of designs for communication articulate the affordances and constraints of various designs by examining artifacts, observing implementations, interviewing

developers, and collecting user assessments. The analysis reconstructs what the design presupposes about communication and how this resonates with the communicative practices and communication values of those participating in the social setting.

The study of design work and designs for communication uses the insights of language and social interaction theory and research (→ Language and Social Interaction). It draws from approaches such as micro-ethnography, ethnography of speaking, → discourse analysis, and → conversation analysis to examine how communication is made an object of design and with what consequences. While the focus is on micro-matters, a direction that design theory could develop is understanding the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of broader patterns and structures in society such as networks of influence, political communication, media systems, and organizational communication.

### **REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND DESIGN**

The reflective practice of communication design involves a designer using communication concepts, theories, and methods to work out how to make forms of communication possible in particular circumstances through intervention and invention. For example, Jackson (2002) developed web-based instructional support using argumentation theory to devise formats that facilitate learning. The structured online protocols were created based on research demonstrating that the expression and management of disagreement facilitates learning. The key design features of these protocols were developed using the concepts of “repair” and “preference for agreement” from conversation analysis and the theory of conversational argument. The protocols help participants in the online discussion overcome various argument suppressors such as authority dependence, peer pressure, and passivity.

Communication design is a *reflective practice* that uses communication concepts, theories, and methods to conceptualize design, examine the context of intervention, and analyze outcomes for redesign. When approached as a reflective practice, communication design ascertains the value of communication concepts, theories, and methods by discovering whether these aspects of communication theory help solve actual problems experienced in the world. Communication concepts realize their value when the concepts enable designers to determine relevant interventions and inventions. Communication research methods and techniques realize their value when the method or technique enables the designer to reflect on the situation at hand to detect surprises, flaws, and opportunities for redesign.

### **DESIGN METHODOLOGY**

Communication design as a reflective practice also develops design methodology. A design methodology is a strategy for operating in any circumstance of intervention from a design stance. For example, Aakhus (in press) describes how he developed a web-based system to support experiential learning in the workplace. The methodology involved several steps. First, he observed and assessed current communication practices relative to the educational goals. Second, he developed an idealized model of interaction – the conversation for reflection – that, in principle, would realize the educational goals. The

model was based on a theory of reflective inquiry and on empirical research on accounting behavior and disagreement management. Third, he used the model to determine the specific types of communication support needed, such as the types of turns and roles of participation required for the interaction. Fourth, he created a web-based support system to realize the idealized model in the practical circumstance. Finally, the implementation was monitored to identify opportunities for redesign and ways to better conceptualize and model the required interaction.

Methodologies for communication design address the relationship between ideals for communication and knowledge about how communication works. Since much communication theory and research either focuses on how communication ought to work or on how communication works, design theory addresses an important gap in the discipline. Design theory draws on two related approaches to methodology from the area of language and social interaction that engage both the empirical and normative dimensions of communication. Jackson (2002) has worked out the components of a *normatively pragmatic design methodology*: an empirical examination of discourse practices, a critical analysis based on comparison of practices with an ideal model, a specification of designable features, and a proposed redesign. Tracy's (2005) → action-implicative discourse analysis is a related alternative for integrating normative and empirical insights. This approach seeks to articulate normative beliefs, rather than starting with a given normative model, and aims to generate reflection on those beliefs and their consequences for action.

Engaging in design and developing design methodology draw upon the insights of language and social interaction research to formulate design processes for communication. Design theory is a unique complement to the traditional empirical and critical modes of theory in the communication discipline. Design theory brings communication studies into contact with the broad interdisciplinary area of design studies such as that found in architecture, urban planning policy, human–computer interaction, and computer-supported cooperative work.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Domestication of Technology ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Information Society ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Meeting Technologies ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Technology and Communication

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## Determination Theory in Public Relations

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Studies under the heading of determination theory focus on the question of how media content is produced (→ Media Production and Content). The main assumption is that news releases and other public relations material play a critical role in news-gathering activities.

Public relations (PR) as a source of media content has been analyzed in communication studies since the 1970s (Sigal 1973). In English-speaking research the relationship between → journalism and → public relations is examined in terms of → agenda-building processes. In 1982, Gandy used the expression “information subsidy” to describe media access to information. PR professionals provide information subsidies to the media in order to systematically distribute information on their behalf (Turk 1985). In German-speaking research the term “determination theory” was coined after an initial study by Baerns (1979; 1991, 1st pub. 1985). Based on the results of an extensive content analysis, Baerns stated that PR determines issues and timing of media coverage. The term “determination hypotheses” was coined with regard to this statement, and communication scholars began for the first time to take PR seriously as a possible determining factor in media content (→ Public Relations: Media Influence).

### **ASSUMPTIONS, METHODS, AND RESULTS OF DETERMINATION STUDIES**

Determination theory is inspired by a paradox. On the one hand, there is the social responsibility of journalism that is also expressed in the guise of investigative journalism (→ Investigative Reporting). Independent and investigative journalism should result in a plurality of topics and opinions in mass media. On the other hand, media coverage is characterized by a high degree of concurrence (→ Consonance of Media Content). This observation leads to the question of journalists’ perceptions and selection modes

concerning what is → news. Research on news values, gatekeeping studies, studies examining the internal structure of media institutions, and studies on news bias all try to address this question from different angles (→ News Values; News Factors; Gatekeeping; Bias in the News). They have in common their focus on the journalist's decision on what to publish, and on structural influences of media institutions. Determination theory offers an alternative perspective to this media-centered orientation: it focuses on the question of how extra-media information enters the news media and thereby becomes news itself. Thus, the use of PR material as extra-media information by news media becomes apparent.

Determination theory is based on a functional distinction between journalism and PR. While the latter is seen as self-perception and presentation of an individual's particular interests, journalism is considered a function of the public interest. The relationship between PR and journalism is described in terms of influence. Baerns formulated what later became known as the determination hypothesis that states: the more influence PR exerts, the less influence journalism exerts, and vice versa.

The main methodology of determination theory is content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). As an example of the design of subsequent determination studies, Baerns's original study will be briefly presented. In 1978, Baerns analyzed all news related to state politics in North Rhine-Westphalia in print, radio, and television coverage. Alongside this, she analyzed the corresponding releases of the main → news agencies. The study also encompassed all press releases of the legislative and executive bodies of North Rhine-Westphalia, all official publications of the regional state parliament, and protocols of press conferences. In total, more than 3,500 news items were analyzed to determine whether the news items relied on identifiable PR sources, other sources, or the journalist's own investigation. A main result of the study was that more than two-thirds of all news items appeared to be based on information provided by PR. The issues in the news were identical with the items of political PR. Obviously, journalists did not check for additional information as more than 80 percent of all news items relied on only one source (→ News Sources). Only 10 percent of all news items appeared to be produced by active investigation of the issue by the journalist. All in all, independent inquiry and further investigation were largely neglected. The involvement of journalists was mainly limited to cutting the PR material. Also, Baerns's study shows a fast dissemination of PR material. News agencies, → radio and → television distributed the PR-based information the same day they got the material; print media used the information the next day.

Furthermore, Baerns's results indicate an absence of disclosed PR sources. A disclosure of sources was indicated when phrases such as "statement in front of journalists . . ." or, "a ministry informs that . . ." were mentioned in the news item. Sources were mentioned most often by news agencies; more than 50 percent of all news agencies' releases referred to the origin of the information. In television, on the other hand, the source was mentioned least. In addition, the mentioning of sources in the news reports was misleading. Articles based on news releases were marked as agency reports in more than half of all articles in daily papers; the rest of the articles were published under the name of the journalist or anonymously. From this Baerns concluded that absence of reference to PR sources is possibly one reason why even researchers all too readily ascribe to journalism what is in fact a product of PR activities.

### EXTENSION OF DETERMINATION THEORY

The notion of PR and journalism as antagonists competing for influence, and the assumption of a largely passive journalism, provoked considerable follow-up research. This research tried to verify the quantitative influence of PR on media coverage. The studies come to different results: in fact, the amount of PR-based news articles ranged from 7 to 78 percent. This wide range of results is due to *methodological differences* in determination studies. First, the quotas differ depending on the definition of PR influence: is influence a literal adoption of PR messages, must the source be referred to or is it sufficient when there is an indication that PR information was the reason why a certain item was reported?

Second, a systematic comparison of determination studies reveals that there are two different ways to define media output: one way is to analyze all media coverage on a specific topic and to compare it with the PR input on the topic. This is the original design of determination studies and calls for use of determination quotas. Alternatively, all news articles based on PR material can be analyzed using selection quotas that show how successful news releases are in generating news stories. Selection quotas inform on PR's effectiveness to get its messages published in the news media while determination quotas give evidence on PR's capacity to influence the agenda of the news media.

Alongside differences in methodological design, the wide range of determination and selection quotas is explained by *situational variables*. Some studies identify the status of the PR organization as critical. Official sources are quoted more frequently (Hallin 1993) because governmental sources are assumed to be more reliable, more informed, and easily accessible (Sigal 1973). Other studies show the critical role of news agencies. They serve as a kind of catalyst for PR releases; media are more likely to publish information that is distributed by news agencies (Donsbach & Meißner 2004). PR information that is considered newsworthy (prominent actors, relevant topics, and timely information) is more likely to be used by journalists (Turk 1985; Schnitzmeier 1989; Saffarnia 1993; Gazlig 1999; Donsbach & Wenzel 2002). Determination studies indicate that press releases have an impact on media coverage, especially in routine situations. In crisis situations, however, journalists tend to become more investigative, questioning PR messages (Barth & Donsbach 1992; → Crisis Communication). Studies also suggest that the section makes a difference. Determination research initially focused on political journalism and excluded local pages. Further research suggests that local reporters make less use of PR material. Another variable that influences the use of PR material is the possible bias of news media. A partisan perspective in news media appeared to determine the way news releases of political parties were treated by different news media (Knoche & Lindgens 1988; Donsbach & Wenzel 2002; Kepplinger & Maurer 2004, 123). Finally, determination theory was combined with frame analysis. According to a study by Fröhlich and Rüdiger (2004), setting the issues is a PR activity, while framing the issues is a function of journalism (→ Framing of the News).

### LIMITATIONS OF DETERMINATION THEORY IN PR

Studies based on determination theory are not homogeneous. But most of them have a certain method in common: they use an input-output analysis and compare systematically media content and PR material. From this comparison, conclusions are drawn with regard

to the determining influence of PR on journalism. The advantage of this nonresponsive method is that conclusions regarding the interaction between PR and journalism can be drawn on the basis of the *result* of this interaction (→ Measurement Theory). This delivers a more accurate picture than → surveys and expert → interviews with journalists, because journalists tend to routinely underestimate the degree of influence of PR activities (→ Journalists' Role Perception). The disadvantage of content analysis is that much research is limited to the use of printed PR material by print media. In addition, determination effects have been shown mostly in quality papers. Compared with this, media coverage in tabloids seems to be less influenced by PR material (Donsbach & Wenzel 2002). Determination theory in PR is conclusive mainly with regard to the possible influence of news releases from relevant political sources on political journalism in quality papers.

The assumption of determination effects on journalism does not implicate PR efforts as reprehensible. In fact, determination theory is not so much about PR success as about journalism's performance (→ Media Performance). It challenges the normative image of journalism as an objective, neutral, and critical force (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Determination theory confronts this image with a highly influential PR practice that exerts its influence mainly in obscurity. Thus, determination theory has given proof of PR's ability to set the agenda in the news.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Interview ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Performance ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Media Relations ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Factors ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Radio ▶ Survey ▶ Television

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## Deutsche Welle

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Deutsche Welle (DW) is a German news and information broadcasting channel that explicitly targets a worldwide audience. DW cannot be received within Germany.

Deutsche Welle → radio service is distributed via shortwave, → Internet, and satellite, and its → television service is delivered by satellite to relay stations as well as to households in various world regions (→ Radio Technology; Television Technology). In addition, DW distributes content through an Internet platform (including weblogs). According to DW studies, DW radio reaches a 65 million audience and DW television 28 million viewers weekly worldwide (Bettermann 2005, 10). DW radio and television rebroadcasts programs from various public service channels and has its own production studios in Brussels, Moscow, and Washington, DC.

Although operating internationally, DW is a typical German public service broadcaster (→ Public Broadcasting Systems; Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). It is governed by two “public” commissions (broadcasting board and administrative board), to which the director general reports, is funded by public funds provided by the German foreign office, and is regulated under federal law through the Deutsche Welle act (*Gesetz über die Rundfunkanstalt des Bundesrechts “Deutsche Welle”*). As other public service channels in Germany, DW is also allowed to sell limited commercial airtime. Today, DW has a high reputation as a German international → news and → information program. However, its history, program profile, and journalistic approach are quite distinct from other internationally operating news and information channels.

During the 1930s, radio emerged as a household medium across Europe, throughout North and South America, and in some Asian countries such as Japan. Shortwave radio emerged in this era as the first “globalizing” medium, being able to deliver signals terrestrially across vast distances and across borders. This was when the first international radio services were launched. National shortwave radio services were seen as a way of extending “sovereignty” to a worldwide sphere by targeting audiences in other countries (1) in order to provide additional news sources, (2) for → propaganda purposes, or (3) for the shaping of a national “imagined” community (Anderson 2006) by means of reaching expatriate audiences.

In this first phase of shortwave journalism, the Voice of Russia (VoR) was formed in 1929 (the first program targeting Germany with a program called “Hier ist Moskau”), the → BBC World Service began its transborder program as the “Empire Service” in 1932, the BBC’s European Service began in 1940, and → Voice of America (VoA) began in 1942 (also with a German program). Deutsche Welle was established much later, on May 3, 1953, in the early Cold War period.

The BBC and VoA already had a clear focus on so-called “public diplomacy.” However, in its early days DW’s program was restricted by the Allied German government, the High Commission, which banned international distribution of programs in languages other than German. For this reason, DW’s early program was only aired in German and simply aimed to “connect” German expatriates living in North America.

In 1954, as soon as the Allied Government ban was removed, radio transmissions in English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese began. At this stage DW was also established as a federal public service institution.

Throughout the 1960s, when radio and television were not only “household” but rapidly becoming “mass media,” and mass-produced radio technology allowed easy access to shortwave in many world regions, DW also began to expand its international reach and diversify its program. The radio program was aired in a variety of additional languages

such as Farsi, Spanish, Turkish, Russian, and Polish, and also delivered by satellite to regional relay stations in Australia, East Asia, and Africa (→ Satellite Communication, Global). This expansion of the radio program into the international sphere, by focusing on specific cultures worldwide, continued throughout the 1970s.

DW's program philosophy changed in the mass media age of the 1970s when international radio stations began to compete for local audiences worldwide. During this time, DW attempted to increase the number of regional relay stations and aired information programs in local languages (such as Dari and Pushtu for audiences in Afghanistan). DW's overall goal was to represent and promote a new postwar Germany as a modern European country. News and information programs covered the latest political and nonpolitical events from Germany. In addition, German language courses were launched in cooperation with the Goethe Institute.

DW underwent major restructuring in the context of German reunification. The former international radio station of the socialist German Democratic Republic, Radio Berlin International (RBI), had been explicitly launched in 1959 to compete with DW's worldwide audiences and had in particular targeted the east European region. In 1990, what remained of RBI was merged with DW, forming a more powerful broadcasting organization. DW incorporated the RBI agreements in the territory of the former Soviet Union, such as with Radio Moscow.

Throughout the 1990s, DW strengthened its position internationally by launching DW-TV, Deutsche Welle Television, in 1992 in Berlin, programming 16 hours a day, delivered via satellite and relay stations in German, English, and Spanish. The launch of DW-TV (and also of the pan-European channel, Euronews) was a reaction to → CNN's dominance in the 1990–1991 Gulf War.

The objective of DW has been further refined since then. Globalization and the increasing number of public service (BBC World), commercial (CNN, Fox Cable News), and privately owned international broadcasters (Al Jazeera Arabic, Al Jazeera English; → Arab Satellite TV News) have influenced the program strategy. Today's DW mission is → media diplomacy (Gilboa 2000), which is viewed in a broad sense. Since 2004 a DW academy provides training programs for journalists of developing countries and crisis regions, especially focused on young journalists, as well as intercultural training (→ Journalism Education).

The new program philosophy is clearly defined in the amended Deutsche Welle act (2004). This act defines the public role of DW as no longer promoting a modern Germany and German viewpoints on world affairs but conveying a broader spectrum of perspectives on world events. This objective represents a new approach to international journalism, by including a variety of local viewpoints and making them transparent to a world audience. A recent study has analyzed audience reactions in the Arab world to this “dialogue” journalism and concludes that one of the key parameters of “dialogue” is to build trust among the audience (Zoellner 2006). The Internet will definitely help DW to reach out and extend this dialogue by including the audience interactively. The Internet is not defined as an additional version of radio and television, but as a standalone unit that provides specific content.

SEE ALSO: ► Arab Satellite TV News ► BBC World Service ► CNN ► Information ► Internet ► Journalism Education ► Media Diplomacy ► News ► Propaganda

- ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Diplomacy ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Television ▶ Television Technology ▶ Voice of America

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## **Development Communication**

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Development communication refers to a process of strategic intervention toward social change, initiated and engaged by organizations and communities. Development itself encompasses participatory and intentional strategies designed to benefit the public good, whether in terms of material, political, or social needs. While the more broadly defined field of development communication incorporates mediated as well as interpersonal channels, more particular approaches of media development specifically include mediated technologies, such as television, radio, and computer systems.

### **HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION**

Historically, the notion of development has been accorded to the domain of developing countries, meaning those with comparatively fewer resources than the wealthier countries supporting bilateral and multilateral development institutions. More recently, the field of development has been merging into a *more broadly defined interest in social change*, applicable to any group, regardless of material base or geographical setting, actively engaged in promoting economic, political, social, or cultural progress. Social change may be



occurring as a result of a variety of factors, such as long-term shifts in policies and political leadership, economic circumstances, demographic characteristics, normative conditions, and ideological values: development communication intersects with social change at the point of intentional, strategic, organized interventions.

Following World War II, development communication emerged as a *foreign aid strategy*, designed by northern, western institutions to promote → modernization among less wealthy countries. Early approaches articulated by → Daniel Lerner, → Wilbur Schramm, and others advocated the promotion of media toward modernization, through individual change (such as empathy, advanced by Lerner) as well as structural change (addressed by Schramm). According to these scholars, through individual attention to mediated news as well as fiction, consumers would become more modern, meaning capitalist and democratically inclined, constituents. These early efforts were also more focused on rural development. Everett Rogers expanded upon the individual process of social change through his articulation of diffusion of innovations, charting a path across the projected rate of adoption of new practices (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Rogers, Everett).

These theories equating development with modernization were advanced mostly from US-based academic and development institutions. From the mid-1970s, scholars in Latin America and Asia initiated critiques, joined by others, of these models of development, for being ethnocentric, linear, acontextual, and hierarchical. These critiques were grounded in broader concerns with *cultural imperialism* and *dependency*, drawing attention toward global conditions rather than the internal national contexts highlighted in earlier models (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; Dependency Theories). The processes of development, along with media production and distribution, were then recognized as privileging those with political and economic capital to the detriment of those without these resources.

Emerging from these critiques came a profound stance advocating participation, in opposition to hierarchically and narrowly defined terms of development. Overall, participatory approaches center their attention on the people engaged in and affected by social change interventions. Development is accorded to communities over nations, while communication is envisioned as dialogic rather than linear. Multiplicity refers to the aspect of participatory communication that recognizes diversity in approaches to development, as opposed to assuming social change occurs along one universal path. The role of the development communicator then becomes one of facilitator rather than outside expert, such that local knowledge is privileged over external advice.

## THE CONCEPT OF PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

Conceptualizations and justifications for *participatory development* have varied greatly, encompassing recognition of the processes as well as the consequences of social change (→ Participatory Communication). Development institutions interested in creating efficient and effective projects understand participation as a necessary tool toward achieving a defined end. For example, → social marketing projects may involve extensive interviews and conversations with intended beneficiaries in project planning stages. A television advertisement would be created only after beneficiaries had been consulted in their understanding of the problem and possible solutions, and in their reactions to types of

messages, sources, visuals, and other aspects of the campaign. These types of interventions utilize participation as a means toward an end, defined by the institution itself.

Other development institutions concerned with the ethical aspects of participation are more likely to conceive of participation as an end in itself, regardless of project outcomes. Community members are encouraged to define their own social problems, and to engage actively in their resolution. Some projects, for example, teach video production skills, so that local participants can create their own mediated texts, building on what came to be known as the “Fogo process” after Canadian development strategies implemented in the mid-1980s. Radio, the Internet, theater, and other venues of communication can function in dialogic capacities, contingent upon how the processes of production and distribution are organized. Participation can be built around concerns with access to the means of cultural production, as well as to the technologies of distribution. Key to this approach is centering control within communities rather than large development institutions.

Participatory goals may be constrained, however, by resistant power structures. In this view, participation may be a necessary though not sufficient condition toward social transformation. Substantive long-term change would require institutional, normative, and political-economic support. Positioning local community efforts within broader contexts of social change allows attention to the possibilities for resistance.

Moving participatory approaches toward more resistant strategies to fight oppressive conditions finds grounding in dialogic communication, inspired through Freire’s and others’ work in liberation theology. Building on a foundation in praxis, in which thoughtful reflection grounds political engagement, this dialogic approach sees the value of communications in illuminating oppressive conditions in order to inspire collective action. The locus of control then is situated within the collectivity of the oppressed group, determining both the reasons for problems as well as their potential resolutions. Moreover, the contribution of liberation theology to development recognizes the importance of addressing those who are suffering the most, not only in terms of lack of material resources but also in terms of human rights and dignity.

These concerns resonate with recent attention in development to the importance of social movements in the broader context of social change. *Social movements*, like development organizations, engage in strategic social change, using communications processes and texts to facilitate their goals (→ Social Movements and Communication). Their origins and compositions, however, differ from those of the more formally constituted development organizations, being created through interests and acts of collective groups and advocating potentially more resistant strategies. Although there are many different types of social movements in the development realm, they have the structural potential to advocate against groups with power, through recognizing historical conditions privileging certain groups over others.

Although the focus of development communication has changed over time from concerns with modernity, to dependency, cultural imperialism, globalization, participation, and resistance, these shifts have not evolved in a linear fashion (→ Globalization Theories). Many underlying concerns with power, whether conceived within political-economic structures or within community contexts, or whether posited as hegemonic or pluralist processes, remain.

Development communication typically addresses programs designed to communicate for the purposes of social change, or what can be called “communicating for development.” Other terms that resonate with this approach include “development support communication” and “participatory communication.” More recent critical approaches of development concern “communicating about development,” questioning the way that social change projects articulate assumptions about problems, solutions, and communities. These are not mutually exclusive endeavors: ongoing critique and dialogue engaged through communicating about development should contribute toward improving strategies for communicating for social change.

### COMMUNICATING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Communicating for development engages processes of mediated as well as → interpersonal communication designed to promote socially beneficial goals. Development problems often addressed through these projects can be found in health, agriculture, governance, population, nutrition, sustainable development, and other sectors. These projects address a variety of goals, such as facilitating economic liaisons between consumers and businesses, promoting transparent governance, asserting cultural identities and practices, and creating social spaces for interpersonal exchange and community dialogue.

Media and communication technologies might include radio, television, film, print, telecommunications, mobile phones, computers, and more. Interpersonal forms of communication might be manifest in the form of discussion groups, folk media, theater, and personal interviews, as well as other approaches. *Radio for development* projects have been quite popular in the field, particularly with rural and illiterate populations (→ Radio for Development). Evolving with the field historically, early radio projects were designed to advance the path of modernization, whereas more recent efforts are more concerned with issues of access and dialogue. *Television* has also been employed in development projects, with early efforts distributing information through satellite programming. More recently, → *telecenters* have been supported in order to offer public access to information provided through information and communication technologies. Many projects use other communications technologies as well, at times in concert with broadcasting modes.

Communication intervention for social change may help to mobilize support, create awareness, foster norms, encourage behavior change, influence policymakers, or even shift frames of social issues. The goals themselves vary with the underlying approach taken to development.

Communication projects focusing on media tend to employ social marketing, → entertainment education, or media advocacy interventions. What unites these approaches is an intentional, organized strategy toward a specific, noncommercial goal. These types of projects differ, however, in terms of the types of groups they address and the nature of the social change process assumed. Some projects integrate more than one of these types of interventions in broader programmatic efforts. Therefore, these are not proposed as independent types of interventions, but as a variety of approaches that can be employed in the process of strategic social change.

*Social marketing*, for example, targets individual consumers to change their behavior, whereas media advocacy directs attention toward policymakers who have the potential to

change structural conditions. Social marketing remains a frequently employed approach to communication for development, particularly in health, nutrition, and population projects. Typically, the ultimate goal of social marketing is to induce behavior change among individuals through mediated messages, through more intermediary goals, such as knowledge and attitude change. Built along the parameters of commercial models of → advertising, social marketing focuses on changing behavior, as a consequence of exposure to messages and knowledge gained (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods).

Entertainment education programs also incorporate socially beneficial messages into mediated texts, typically, though not always, through longer narratives in comparison to the shorter segments often used in exclusively social marketing campaigns. Popular cultural formats are used, such as songs and fictional narratives, distributed through radio, television, film, theater, and other venues. Capitalizing on audience interest in the entertaining draw of these texts, producers incorporate educational messages they hope will influence audiences. Social learning theory, building on projected positive and negative role modeling of fictional characters, guides the composition of these projects. Some of the topics addressed include fertility and gender equity, as engaged by the Indian television program *Hum Log*, as well as subjects of health, sexual and reproductive health, political and civic engagement, and education. Entertainment education strategies are at times combined with social marketing efforts, integrating intervention strategies in order to promote social change.

While prominent development organizations may be more likely to fund extensive social marketing and entertainment education campaigns, *media advocacy projects* tend to be promoted more by social movement organizations engaged in social change. Media advocacy is designed to foster change at a structural rather than individual level, through attempting to influence policy and decision-makers as well as normative climates. Media advocacy strategies are more likely to employ news media than the other approaches described above, which rely more on popular culture as a vehicle toward reaching audiences.

Some development institutions also address *structural issues* through investing in media systems and facilities. Rebuilding radio and television systems in countries devastated by conflict and war focuses on the need to build media infrastructures in order to bolster economic growth, democratic governance, and civic engagement. These projects tend to be expensive in nature, and thus promoted by the larger of the bilateral and multilateral development organizations. With these projects, the immediate goal is to establish the infrastructure needed for the system to function, with the intention that long-term sustainability will follow.

Whereas many of the large-scale infrastructural projects tend to be funded through the auspices of bilateral and multilateral development organizations, other media systems are engaged at a more local level, building on participatory processes. With some participatory media projects, people are involved in the creation of the texts themselves, such as through the use of video to document critical social issues. Other participatory efforts build and foster the media systems themselves, such as community radio, in addition to the production of texts. The terms → activist media, → citizens' media, and → community media share a concern with participation and control over media production and distribution. Community and citizens' media assert the importance of empowerment within local

venues to create cultural texts, focusing on the importance of the processes of production. Activist media identify the outcome of their strategies as a central feature, utilizing resistant strategies to oppose politically and economically privileged groups. Some of these media centers concentrate on the process of production, emphasizing participatory aspects of engagement, whereas others privilege the content produced, toward creating high quality texts designed to attract and compel particular responses. Funding structures and resources of these media centers, to the degree they rely on a concentration or multiple donors, commercial or nonprofit financing, volunteer or paid support staff, guide and constrain the possibilities for these processes and products. While their primary concern with process or outcome may diverge, these approaches connect in their interest in active participation among community members in the process of articulating problems and enacting solutions, as well as the more resistant possibilities of the strategies engaged.

Development journalism shares some of the concerns inspiring activist, citizens', and community media, attempting to offer democratic, public spaces for political engagement (→ Development Journalism). The value of development journalism lies in a need to chronicle the path of socio-economic development as well as to offer an independent critical voice. Whereas development journalism emerged through the ideas and practices of professionals in less wealthy countries, there are some critical links to a recently emerging → media democracy movement within the US. Both movements are concerned with establishing venues for critical dialogue and active engagement. The media democracy movement combines an interest with democratic engagement and a concern with corporate power in media industries, whereas the development journalism model has been more centered on political concerns.

## **RESEARCH METHODS AND APPROACHES**

Communicating for development builds on a variety of research approaches that inform the design, implementation, and assessment of projects. Formative research contributes to decisions made in the planning of communication interventions, such as the selection of problems engaged, media employed, messages devised, and audiences approached. This type of research can be used to promote participatory practices that might contribute toward more effective or efficient interventions. Monitoring research analyzes the ongoing implementation of projects, in order to understand how the project has worked in the event of future replication in other sites. Summative evaluation research allows an assessment of the consequences of the project, in order to contribute to improving future projects. The knowledge gained from summative work can inform the future development practices (→ Research Methods).

Participatory action research (PAR) resonates with the broader evaluative concern in acquiring knowledge for the sake of social gain (→ Participatory Action Research). Research engaged in the interests of development should be considering the broader interests of society, not implemented for commercial gain or for individual accomplishment. In addition to a concern with how research is used, PAR incorporates attention to research processes, advocating the active involvement of local constituents, rather than relying on external research experts.

Many projects focus their applied research on short-term indicators of success, such as audience exposure, knowledge gained, or behavior changed. There is a critical role, however, for more long-term consequences of social change interventions. Research of this nature serves as a valuable resource, for participants in the immediate intervention as well as others who might be interested in replicating similar projects.

In addition to assessing the degree to which projects have achieved their institutionally defined goals, research might also question the content of communication interventions, in terms of the efficacy or appropriateness of the source or message, or in terms of the relationship between the mediated representations and larger social circumstances. Relying on stereotypical images of gender roles, for example, may hasten short-term acceptance of campaign objectives in children's health or population projects, but may also curtail more progressive long-term goals toward shifting gender roles (→ Gender: Representation in the Media).

Although quite different in strategies implemented and theories engaged, these approaches are united in their attempts to build on communication processes and technologies toward social change. Sharing a profound concern with devastating conditions worldwide, critical scholars and advocates broaden the vision of development communication to encompass concerns with the development industry more broadly, in terms of what visions of social change and communities are articulated.

## COMMUNICATING ABOUT DEVELOPMENT

A complementary approach within the broader field of development communication addresses the topic of communication about development. Critical of a development industry that appears to channel resources yet with worsening rather than improving consequences, some scholars position development as a particular → *discourse* that communicates problematic assumptions about the nature of the problems addressed, appropriate solutions, and communities at risk (→ Development Discourse).

The *ideological assumptions of development*, as an industry and as a particular institutional practice, are deconstructed and critiqued in this approach. For example, when groups are described as suffering from a particular problem, they are framed in particular ways. Women may become subject to population projects designed to lower fertility rates, in projects that reinforce the idea of contraception as a female responsibility. When women are targeted in children's health interventions, women's central role in infant care is confirmed. Similarly, characterizing Egyptian development problems as a natural result of too many people on too little arable land confirms dominant development approaches that privilege geography and demography as points for intervention, rather than raising political questions regarding social and economic inequality or the role of development institutions in influencing national policies. In addition, when development institutions partner with commercial organizations, profit-driven processes are legitimized as a central part of efforts designed for the public good. Development institutions and social movement organizations create and act on these social categorizations as definitions of problems and solutions (→ Development Institutions).

This approach to development questions the discourse of the industry, through examinations of institutional rhetoric and practice. The underlying issue questions how

development communicates particular ideological assumptions, and, moreover, what the implications are in terms of *understanding power*. Power can be understood as a negotiated and fluid process through which some agencies have the economic, cultural, and other resources to dominate and advance their agendas, whereas other groups have the potential to subvert and resist. The power to situate a problem at an individual or structural level, for example, has serious long-term implications. Providing clean water, for example, could be framed as requiring individual change (such as boiling water) or structural change. Promoting automobile safety could be positioned as necessitating individual (such as wearing a seatbelt) or regulatory (such as fining people for non-compliance with seatbelt laws) acts. The group able to define these conditions and solutions is able to control the process of strategic social change.

Some development strategies explicitly take on the goal of “*empowerment*,” advocating the rights and responsibilities of particular communities (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment). Women’s empowerment in some gender programs, for example, may be facilitated through promoting gender equity in governance, education, and micro-enterprise. Empowerment can be conceptualized at individual, community, or even organizational levels, as a way of establishing control over social, economic, or political conditions. With reference to communications processes, empowerment might also refer to an ability to communicate one’s own stories.

Apart from the intentional objectives of particular projects to promote empowerment, one can understand development as implicitly enacting the broader power dynamics of society, engaging state as well as commercial institutions. Focusing on structure, power refers to the ability to shape the contexts within which interventions are conceived and engaged. These projects take place either through the direct coordination or the tacit approval of the state. Moreover, some projects explicitly incorporate commercial organizations in the implementation of their programs. Partnering with corporations may enhance the overall reach of a project through shared financial, material, and human resources. This form of partnership may be critiqued, though, for narrowing a vision of social change to one that benefits particular enterprises as well as more normative capitalist values.

*Critical approaches to development* have raised a number of other issues as well. While historically, development primarily referred to economic prosperity and growth, recent attention to issues of cultural identity, spirituality, and political governance broadens the scope of development to include non-material components of social change (→ Spirituality and Development). Recognition of human rights, freedom of expression, reproductive rights, and other concerns contribute to a more holistic vision of development (→ Freedom of Communication). Concerns with the spiritual aspects of development are based in part on Freire’s approach to liberation theology. But even with the emergence of these non-material interests within the development community, concerns with poverty and inequity remain.

Classic conceptualizations of development have divided up nations according to their relative wealth, though not in terms of disparity in income or basic needs. These divisions generally operated on a national level, classifying some as “developed” and others as “developing” countries, or aligning countries as in first, second, third, and fourth worlds. Critical approaches again contribute toward reshaping interest in social change across and within national boundaries, recognizing pockets of elite as well as poverty stricken

regardless of geographical positioning. Highlighting experiences of oppression and dominance, a reframing of the *geometry of development* shifts the landscape of development from nation-states in north/south orientations toward a more fluid sense of transnational collectivities and agencies (→ Development, Geometry of).

A central concern within the genre of communication about development work is with the ideological foundations of the development industry. Attention to women, gender, and feminism helps illustrate how these issues become articulated in the course of development practice (→ Development, Gender, and Communication). Early concerns with women's role in development highlighted their previous absence in discussions of agricultural and economic projects. Offering visibility then brought women's contributions into sharper focus. Subsequent concerns with gender dynamics questioned the ideological tenets of women and development work, in that the very goals and structures of development were not questioned, but rather assumed. Instead, gender concerns recognized the ways in which gender dynamics contributed to the potential for social change. Feminist critiques further broadened the scope of ideological critique to subsume attention to the political and economic structures constraining the possibilities for material, cultural, and political gain.

Understanding development as an industry within a global context also includes recognition of social movements, particularly in terms of their potential to resist dominant global forces. Communication strategies may facilitate the process of social mobilization toward resistance, but may also serve as a target for activists attempting to increase visibility and induce sympathy for particular causes.

This vision argues for a phase of → “postdevelopment,” positing social movements as radical alternatives to dominant development structures and ideologies. In this regard, social movements are seen not as a way to transform or improve development, but as a channel for resistance. The potential for social movements to engage in resistance is quite varied, given the complexity of their conditions, with varied access to powerful agencies and resonance with dominant discourse. Opening our gaze to the possibilities of more resistant strategies, though, means advocating a more inclusive understanding of development and social change. Individual projects need to be analyzed not only in terms of their defined objectives, but also as they relate to broader programmatic strategies, such as structural adjustment programs of multilateral and foreign policies of bilateral institutions.

Building on interdisciplinary theories and methods, development communication advances applied work through thoughtful reflection and critique. Development communication continues to offer an increasingly holistic and far-reaching framework for engaging in dialogue and action toward social change.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Community Media ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Development Discourse ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Development, Geometry of ▶ Development Institutions ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Discourse ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Gender: Representation



in the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Media Democracy Movement ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Action Research ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Postdevelopment ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Research Methods ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Spirituality and Development ▶ Telecenters

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## **Development Communication: Africa**

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“Development” refers to the process of social change that has as its objective the promotion of physical and material progress (→ Development Communication). The “silent engine” that drives this development endeavor is communication. In the developed world, development communication is geared toward addressing the dysfunctions of physical and material progress. In the developing world, it is concerned with the provision of physical and material infrastructure. But it is also concerned with social change in the form of inspiring hard work, eliciting self-help, and providing education, health facilities, and other critical conditions. Africa is one of the regions in the developing world where development seems to be occurring slowly. As a result, there has been great concern about how to stimulate development and social change.

## AFRICAN COMMUNICATION MODE

The act of exchanging views, opinions, and ideas on how to bring about this stimulation of development is the key thrust of development communication. Although it is often not engaged as such by governments, this process works best through the → participatory communication processes critical to substantive social change. However, the way this exchange of views for the purposes of community improvement is done and the underlying cultural and philosophical base that give effect to such exchange differ from society to society. In traditional Africa, communication was and still is largely seen as a matter of human interrelationships: what a person said, to whom, when, and how, was guided by certain cultural imperatives, giving effect to the cultural belief that the society takes precedence over the individual. This is summed up in the principle: “I am because We are!” (→ Communication Modes, African; Interpersonal Communication).

In such a cultural environment, development was in the past seen not so much as perpetuating movement beyond existing boundaries, but as creating stability within the culture by not allowing what had existed to decay or be destroyed; insuring that elders showed good examples; teaching the young; providing communal help to those who needed it; and avoiding conflict in the community (→ Community Integration). Although focusing on maintaining the status quo may have worked in the past, this process became problematic. While it was good to insure that material and socio-cultural heritage did not deteriorate, it was even better to move communities toward growth socially and economically. To do so demanded looking beyond the boundaries of their culture and thinking beyond their existing accumulated knowledge.

## MINIMAL IMPACT OF EXTERNAL AID

Development communication practice typically involves a transfer of resources from wealthier agencies or countries to those with fewer resources (→ Development Institutions). In the African region, western European agencies initiated some of these processes through colonial rule. The continent was exposed not only to what the Europeans said, but also to what they had and did. In addition to exchanges of ideas, discussions, and coercive actions, there were material goods and services as well as standards of living that opened the eyes of Africans to new ways of thinking and living (→ Social Mobilization).

This created not only widespread rising aspirations but also set in motion a spate of discussions that led to the formation of development unions, age grade groups, youth associations, development committees, and so on – all geared toward efforts to improve community socio-cultural and economic circumstances. Footpaths were widened, feeder roads were built, schools were constructed, environmental sanitation was encouraged, dispensaries and health rooms were established, and scholarships were bestowed on children. But these were all self-help efforts at the local level; shortage of resources did not allow these efforts to grow to appreciable levels. Rising frustration soon set in among many of these groups. People felt that what it would take to get them out of their existing conditions was more than they could handle, and many gave up. This was not a surprise because research has shown *that four unheralded and unwritten imperatives* are always at work in development communication. These are: (1) knowing what to do; (2) knowing

how to do it; (3) having the willingness and ability to do it; and (4) having the resources to do it. If any one of these is missing, development efforts are hampered. The fortunes of the self-help initiatives of rural Africa represent a case in point.

In the 1960s, newly independent countries faced with the task of developing their nations sought help from the west, especially from the UK and the US. They also sought help from international organizations, including → UNESCO, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Association (FAO), UNICEF, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The first major help came from the US, which had, through its *Marshall Plan*, turned war-devastated Europe into thriving societies almost overnight. Because of this success, it was thought that rapid development of any society was possible if adequate international financial and technological assistance were forthcoming. So the Marshall Plan was transplanted into Africa. But it became a failure not because resources were not forthcoming, but because a pre-existing socio-cultural structure oriented toward industrial organization and activities that obtained in Europe was nonexistent in Africa. Three very relevant cultural values identified by the British cultural anthropologist Radcliffe-Brown as basic to European social order – protestant work ethic, achievement motivation, and economic pragmatism – were foreign to the African social order.

The last factor that badly affected the Marshall Plan was a *disregard of the socio-cultural realities* of the target social system. This policy of bypassing what Inayatullah has called “the intractable local social structure” did extensive harm to the expected goals of the plan. Many people were suspicious of the plan because it was imposed; they regarded the behavior of the agents of the plan as ethnocentric. And they responded to the ethnocentric attitude with cultural pride, explicitly touting the values of their culture and accumulated traditional knowledge (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Cooperation of government officials with the agents was not effective enough without the cooperation of the people. In spite of these hindering facts, agents of the plan did not effect any changes in operation. The same was true of succeeding generations of European development agents in Africa. Not only did they not understand the people and their socio-cultural contexts, they in fact did not allow African development agents on contract with them to build local content into their work.

The impact of this failure to “know the people” before planning any development activity was so great that the then President of Tanzania – Julius Nyerere – had to warn that you cannot develop a people – people develop themselves. Sure enough, the people needed financial resources, technical advice, and technological knowledge. But these were expected to have been used, working with the people, not without them. Unfortunately, this tactic of working for the people without working with them did not end with the failure of the Marshall Plan; it continued in many development efforts of international organizations.

### **APPROPRIATE STRATEGY**

In addition to the extension and community development strategy described above, the other strategy mostly used in Africa in the 1960s up until the 1980s was *advocacy*. This strategy has the tendency to very easily become what is now known as “benevolent power strategy,” providing facilities and amenities for social change for a people but without involving the people in the discussions for the project, or in its planning and execution.

This is based on the principles that the government knows what the people want and need, and that consulting with the people would add extra cost, in time and money, to total expenditure. Examples abound of completed development projects that crumbled soon after they were put into use. Such projects failed because of one or a combination of the following: the people did not sufficiently appreciate the value of what was provided for them and so treated amenities carelessly; they did not have enough know-how to manage the projects efficiently, or, following the way the projects were brought to them, they did not feel it was their responsibility to maintain the facilities.

During this time, development communicators warned against working for the people without working with the people. Since the 1970s, Inayatullah, Ake, Somavia, Freire, Chikulo, and Grunig, among others, had, each in his own way, stressed the importance of not dumping development information and projects on target social systems. By the 1980s, the voices for involvement and participation were heard with increased strength and regularity. The Xavier Institute of Social Service in Ranchi (India) was particularly forceful in saying that development efforts should be anchored in faith in the people's capacity to discern what is best for them as they see their liberation, and how to participate actively in the task of transforming their society (Xavier Institute 1980, 11). People's intelligence and their centuries of experience should be taken into account. This view agrees with what the role of development is, that is, to inform, discuss with, and motivate the people and create an enhanced environment, in which target social systems can feel the need for – and demonstrate commitment to – development activities, thus raising the level of their participation in development projects (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment).

It is gratifying to note that since the beginning of the twenty-first century, development organizations would appear to have had a change of heart and of tactics. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNESCO, UNICEF, UNDP, and of course, the FAO and the British Government's Department of Overseas Development and many others, have not only shown committed to "getting the people involved," but have changed from using only foreign agents, to using African agents – people who know and understand the target social systems. African governments, too, seem to have seen the need for development agents to enter into the socio-cultural contexts of target social systems, learning from them and building on what they have. One concrete way of showing governments' resolve in this regard is permission given for the establishment of *local radio stations*, focusing on local participation in the production of programs to insure truly community-based projects built on the interests of the people (→ Radio for Development).

Many of the 194 *universities in Africa* have departments of communication. Many of these departments teach courses in development communication at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. A few have full-fledged departments of development communication. In addition, international organizations such as USAID and UNICEF do organize regular seminars and teach-ins to discuss how to incorporate development communication techniques and procedures into courses taught at the university and secondary school levels. Nongovernmental organizations around the continent are also setting up institutes for research and study of development communication. Examples include the Research Institute for Development Communication and School Partnership in the Cameroon,

and Soul City Institute for Health and Development Communication in South Africa. The African Council on Communication Education has a development communication division charged with the responsibility of keeping an eye on development communication initiatives on the continent, and making suggestions on how to insure that their activities are relevant to the needs of the people (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Africa).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Africa ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Community Integration ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Institutions ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Social Mobilization ▶ UNESCO

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## **Development Communication: Asia**

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Development and communication in Asia is a vast and complicated topic for two main reasons. First, Asia comprises a substantial portion of the earth's land mass and population. Second, the direction as well as the velocity of economic development in Asian countries varies profoundly. Economists have divided Asia into five categories, including Japan, People's Republic of China, East Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. The term "East Asia" here refers to the newly industrialized economies of Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan. South Asia consists of Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives,

Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam form Southeast Asia. This categorization is premised not necessarily on topography, but on such important economic variables as per capita income, structure of the economy, openness to trade, engagement with the imperatives of globalization, and policy directions.

Currently, development is vitally connected with the newer information and *communication technologies* (→ Communication Technology Standards; Communication Technology and Development). Email, mobile phones, semiconductors, etc. are becoming increasingly important in data transmission, database management, and in communication in general. It is evident that there is a glaring gap in Asia in the availability and use of information and communication technologies. There is, as development planners in Asia maintain, a → digital divide in Asia. Countries such as Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, Japan, Malaysia, and Taiwan are at the top of this digital divide while the other countries are at the bottom. The term “development” is used here in an expanded and inclusive sense, to include attention to a process of social change that has as its objective the improvement in the quality of the lives of people without causing damage to the natural and cultural environment in which they exist. In this understanding, development seeks to involve people as closely as possible in this enterprise, making them the masters of their own destiny. Communication plays a highly significant role in this process.

*Five models of development and communication* have guided Asian societies. *The first model* pertinent to the Asian context is the oldest and the most dominant among them. It emphasizes rapid economic growth by means of industrialization. Heavy emphasis was laid on capital-intensive technologies and centralized planning. The guiding thought seems to have been that productivity is the key to development and that the most productive sector of modern society is the industrial sector. Mass media such as newspapers, radio, and television were deployed for the purpose of creating a more conducive climate for rapid modernization and industrialization (→ Radio for Development; Television for Development). This was evident in countries like Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore. It was also felt that for rapid modernization to take place, a modern elite needed to play a crucial leadership role. It was felt that the weight of communication policies should be on the side of protecting the freedom of these leaders and fortifying their influence in society. This model of development and communication was very powerful in the 1950s and 1960s (→ Lerner, Daniel). By the 1970s certain doubts regarding the efficacy of this model were expressed by communication scholars and policy planners in countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Philippines, and Bangladesh. Critiques of this model pointed to the inappropriate replication of western models to Asian and other regions (→ Development Communication).

All these perceived deficiencies of the first model resulted in the emergence of a *second model* of development and communication, particularly advocated in India, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. It emphasized both capital-intensive and labor-intensive technologies, centralized and decentralized planning, and exogenous and endogenous factors of development. The advocates of this model raised a number of important questions related to development and communication: how can distributive justice be achieved? How can the ideals of self-reliance, self-development, and popular participation be attained? How can the power of the old and new media of communication be

purposefully combined? How best can we make use of culture as an ally and facilitator of development? How can we come up with more historically conscious and society-specific models of communication? This shift of emphasis regarding the meaning of development was accompanied by a parallel shift of emphasis in the meaning of communication. The old mechanistic, linear, one-way model of communication was replaced by a process-oriented two-way approach to communication (→ Participatory Communication). The emphasis was now on the facilitation of information exchange related to development through mass media and interpersonal channels.

A *third approach to development* focused on centralized planning within nations, emerging in communist countries like China, North Korea, and Vietnam. This model has to be understood against the backdrop of socialist ambitions and agendas, which placed emphasis on centralized planning and command economies. Capitalist individualism and private entrepreneurship were shunned and collective activities encouraged. In this model, media of communication played a propaganda role in mobilizing the people behind this set of goals. As is now evident, after the fall of the Soviet empire and the increasing globalization of the world, this model has lost much of its luster.

An alternative, *fourth approach* to communication and development was encouraged by communication scholars in countries such as Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, who were in some ways disenchanted with the development in their respective countries. Their approach focused on the interdependence of the developed and developing countries, and how developed countries are responsible for the underdevelopment in the poorer countries (→ Dependency Theories). The advocates of this approach demonstrated the futility of discussing communication and development in a national setting, when the global experience influences the possibilities and constraints for social change in nations and communities (→ Globalization Theories).

Prominent within Asian development was attention to self-reliance as a *fifth and last model*. Here the focus was on grassroots development, integrated village development, use of appropriate technology, productive use of local resources, maintenance of the ecological balance, and culture as a mediating force for development. NGOs across Asia played a critical role in the propagation of this model. In countries such as India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Philippines, Bangladesh, and Nepal, it was easy to see the way that this model was being popularized. The emergence of the concept of → sustainable development in recent times has strengthened this model.

With the increasing velocity of globalization and the spread of satellite communication (→ Satellite Television) and the strengthening of the forces of neo-liberalism, the first model has received additional impetus. Even countries like China, which were fiercely opposed to this capitalist model, are increasingly embracing it. Development and communication in Asia is a multi-faceted topic.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Development ► Communication Technology Standards ► Dependency Theories ► Development Communication ► Development Communication: Africa ► Development Communication: Latin America ► Development Communication: Middle East ► Digital Divide ► Globalization Theories ► Lerner, Daniel ► Participatory Communication ► Radio for Development ► Satellite Television ► Sustainable Development ► Television for Development

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# **Development Communication Campaigns**

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The use of → strategic communication has an ancient history dating back at least to Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (→ Rhetoric, Greek). But technological and theoretical advances beginning in the twentieth century, most notably the growth of electronic media and media studies, have resulted in dramatic improvements in the scale, sophistication, and effectiveness of purposive communication and in the rise of contemporary communication campaigns. Billions of dollars are spent globally each year on commercial, political, and public service campaigns aimed at influencing consumer decisions, mobilizing support for political candidates, changing unhealthy behaviors and reinforcing healthy ones, advocating for social issues and policy changes, and much more.

## **ORIGINS**

Contemporary communication campaign theory and practice owe much to public health movements (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in), such as Benjamin Rush's efforts to promote smallpox immunization during the American revolution (Artenstein et al. 2005), and to the abolition of slavery movement in America and Britain beginning in the late eighteenth century, both of which are early examples of large-scale organized attempts to influence mass publics through the use of communication. Fears about the effects of Nazi propaganda during World War II launched decades of primary and applied research on the social psychology of persuasion, establishing a conceptual foundation from which commercial and political campaigns still draw for inspiration (→ Propaganda in World War II; War Propaganda).

Beginning in the 1950s, post-World War II reconstruction efforts took full advantage of national broadcasting media to encourage such things as agricultural innovation, childhood immunization, and contraception; and national independence movements used national and local media to create or renew identities based on new political boundaries and mobilize populations to support political agendas. Mixed success with these large national communication campaigns drew attention to structural, political, and economic factors – particularly inequities in access to resources and control over them – that constrain or facilitate access to and use of campaign information. Beginning in the 1970s, these concerns pushed campaigns to re-assess the relationship between campaign designers and



their audiences, resulting in more participation by beneficiaries in the design, implementation, and evaluation of campaigns and more integrated, multilevel campaigns that address individual, as well as structural, change (Rogers & Storey 1987).

Commercial → advertising and → marketing campaigns build on similar foundations, but focus on influencing consumer behavior and promoting the purchase and use of products. So-called *social marketing campaigns* (Kotler et al. 2002) redefine behaviors, such as recycling glass or plastic, or condom use to prevent HIV transmission, as “products” and apply the principles of marketing to the promotion of behaviors that have personal or social but little or no commercial value for the adopter (→ Social Marketing). Worldwide, commercially oriented campaigns draw inspiration from popular culture and build on social and political structures and trends in order to make their products appealing and relevant to consumers.

Paisley (2001) argued that successful public communication campaigns historically have used some combination of what he called the “three Es of public communication campaigns” to achieve success: engineering, enforcement, and education. *Engineering* refers to planned technological change that facilitates a change in behavior, such as requiring car manufacturers to provide seatbelts. *Enforcement* refers to planned policy or law enforcement systems that sanction noncompliant behavior, such as creating and enforcing fines for non-use of seatbelts while driving. *Education* refers to informing people about desirable practices, how to perform them or reasons for doing so. Engineering and enforcement strategies almost always require some educational support, such as advocacy for technological change or communication to motivate the public to use a technological innovation or to comply with regulations.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

Although there are many variations, Rogers and Storey (1987) identify four attributes that characterize communication campaigns. They intend to generate (1) specific outcomes or effects, (2) in a relatively large number of individuals, (3) usually within a specified period of time, (4) through an organized set of communication activities.

Campaigns are *purposive*. The desired outcomes of campaigns can range from individual cognitive changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors to societal-level structural changes in political systems or the distribution of resources. Individual-level behavior change continues to be the most common type of outcome sought, but campaigns increasingly seek to change or support collective behavior.

Campaigns typically target *large audiences*. Large is a relative term that serves to distinguish campaigns from smaller interpersonal efforts to communicate or persuade (→ Audience; Persuasion). Because considerable financial, technological, and human resources can be required to design and carry out communication campaigns, campaigns usually justify themselves in terms of the number or variety of people they are able to reach.

Campaigns typically have *defined time limits*. Because campaigns are results-oriented, they often specify a time period within which those results should be achieved. While it may seem that campaigns begin with the launch of campaign messages, the launch is almost always preceded by a period of systematic needs assessment or formative research and strategy development before messages can be produced, pre-tested, and disseminated.

Campaigns typically end with some kind of formal or informal impact assessment that determines whether or not they have achieved their stated goals, how the results were achieved, and what might be done differently in the future. The period of time between start and finish varies greatly from one campaign to another. An advertising campaign for a weekend sale or the promotion of a national immunization day may last only weeks from beginning to end, while an HIV/AIDS stigma reduction campaign or a national political campaign might unfold over a period of a year or more. Some commercial or national development campaigns may be better characterized as communication programs composed of a series of carefully sequenced campaigns designed to achieve change in stages or to change and then maintain behavior over time.

Campaigns consist of *an organized set of communication activities*. Communication activities refer not just to the dissemination or exchange of information, but also to the other support functions that make campaigns run smoothly and effectively. The P-Process (Piotrow et al. 1997) describes one such set of activities ranging from systematic audience research, needs assessment and situation analysis, through strategic design, message development and pre-testing, implementation, and monitoring of campaign activities, to campaign evaluation and replanning. The most effective campaigns also involve their audience, beneficiaries, and stakeholders in many – if not all – of the steps in the campaign. Some social change or development campaigns go a step further and work to strengthen the capacity of beneficiaries and stakeholders to design, carry out, and evaluate communication campaigns themselves in order to increase the sustainability of pro-social communication.

Another aspect of campaign organization is the use of integrated mutually reinforcing messages and communication activities, rather than relying on one form of communication – for example, a poster or a television advertisement – to achieve the desired outcomes. More sophisticated campaigns use multiple messages and activities to reach audiences in a variety of ways. For example, a sport drink marketing campaign might reinforce television messages with outdoor advertising and giveaways at sporting events, as well as point-of-purchase advertising or discounts at the supermarket. Similarly, pro-social hygiene campaigns might reinforce radio messages about handwashing with community-based activities about the upgrading or maintenance of community water sources and safe water handling in the home (→ Advertising Strategies).

## OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

Variations in the ways campaigns are organized and conducted can be described in terms of three broad dimensions: the level of objectives, the locus of desired change, and the locus of benefit (Rogers & Storey 1987).

*Level of objectives* refers to the type of effect sought, ranging from relatively simple awareness or knowledge gain (e.g., creating brand awareness for a new commercial product) to relatively complex mobilization and maintenance of behavior (e.g., motivating and sustaining community recycling practices). Many hierarchies of this sort are identified in the literature (see, e.g., Rogers 2005). Higher-level objectives typically build on lower-level changes.

*Locus of change* refers to whether changes are sought at higher or lower levels of social aggregation from the individual level to the group, community, institutional, or societal

level. Often individual behavior change is directly sought in a campaign, but the ultimate locus of intended effect may be at the community or societal level. For example, a smoking cessation campaign might attempt to motivate individual smokers to quit, but the ultimate intended effect is lower smoking-related morbidity and mortality at the societal level.

*Locus of benefit* refers to whether successful achievement of campaign objectives primarily benefits the campaign designers or the campaign audience. Commercial campaigns are generally thought to benefit advertisers or producers of consumer goods through product sales, although marketing and advertising are often described in terms of an exchange process in which consumers voluntarily give money or other resources in exchange for a product of value to them. In comparison, health or environmental campaigns are often considered to benefit members of the audience or society at large in the form of better health or a cleaner and more stable environment. Little direct benefit may accrue to the designers of a health campaign in a government agency, except in the sense that a healthier populace means lower burden of disease and fewer demands on public health resources.

## **CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS**

How effective are communication campaigns? Given the enormous variety of campaigns and campaign objectives, it is difficult to generalize. If expenditures on campaigns are an indicator, they must be effective. Commercial advertisers paid up to \$2.6 million for 30 seconds of television airtime during the 2007 Super Bowl football championship. Impact data from commercial advertising tends to be proprietary, but → meta-analysis (synthesis of findings across studies) of health mass media campaigns provides some estimates of average effect sizes. For example, Snyder and Hamilton (2002) analyzed 48 health campaigns conducted in the US for which impact evaluation data could be found in the published literature. Overall, they found that health communication campaigns using mass media achieved on average an eight percentage point change in behavior among members of the targeted population, with greater effect sizes achieved by campaigns that targeted larger audiences. The size of the effect varied by type of behavior, with seat belt use, oral health, and alcohol abuse reduction campaigns being the most successful. Greater effects were found for campaigns focused on adoption of new behaviors compared with prevention or cessation of problem behaviors (→ Advertising Effectiveness; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of).

A number of planning and implementation steps, if followed, make campaigns more likely to succeed. Most campaign designers conduct at least some formative research to understand the campaign context and audience characteristics and they carefully pre-test messages with members of the target audience before the campaign is launched. Because most people are exposed to hundreds of communicated appeals every day, novel and creative messages are more likely to stand out from the information clutter and be noticed. The use of theory to guide campaign strategy and *message design* also increases the likelihood that the program will have desired effects (→ Message Design Logics).

When audiences are large and diverse, audience segmentation techniques (Grunig 1989) are often used to identify meaningful sub-groups that may benefit from individually tailored message strategies or message treatments. Messages should be placed in channels

that are widely used by the audience at times and places when they are most likely to be seen or heard. Even within the same campaign multiple channels may be used to reach the same audience segments with multiple reinforcing messages, or to reach different audience segments that have different media use habits. And because campaigns play out within a larger social environment, many campaigns design messages that encourage interpersonal discussions (e.g., within the workplace or the family) and try to mobilize interpersonal influence (e.g., of co-workers on each other or of wives on their husbands) to support campaign goals (→ Audience Segmentation; Segmentation of the Advertising Audience).

Finally, depending on the length of the campaign, its scale, and the need to justify expenditures or to learn from experience and improve future efforts, many campaigns conduct monitoring and impact evaluation research. Monitoring research includes the collection of data on the campaign implementation process: are the activities going as planned, on schedule, on budget, and reaching the intended audience? Many campaigns also monitor other events and activities occurring simultaneously with the campaign (e.g., policy changes, presence of other campaigns, disease outbreaks) that may affect outcomes either positively or negatively. Impact evaluation of campaigns refers to the collection of data that indicate if change occurred and whether or not the change can be attributed to the campaign.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Communication Evaluation Research ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Marketing ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Persuasion ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ War Propaganda

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## **Development Communication: Latin America**

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A universally valid and widely accepted definition of the field does not exist, but three conceptualizations have prevailed in the western world, the first two emanating from the US and the third from Latin America. The first, development communication, is the notion that mass media are capable of creating a public atmosphere favorable to change, which is assumed to be indispensable for modernizing traditional societies through technological advancement and economic growth. The second is → “development *support* communication,” i.e., the idea that planned and organized communication – massive, interpersonal, and mixed – is a key instrument for the accomplishment of the practical goals of national development-seeking institutions (→ Planned Social Change through Communication). The third is the concept of alternative communication for democratic development. This assumes that, by expanding and balancing people’s access to, and participation in, the communication process – at both mass media and interpersonal grassroots levels – development should secure, in addition to material gains, social justice, freedom for all, and the majority’s rule (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment).

## PRACTICE CAME FIRST

The practice of communication for development began considerably before the inception of its theory. During the last quarter of the 1940s three events occurred simultaneously in Latin America, two of them native and the third coming from the US, all of them pioneering endeavors but emerging through divergent paths.

A parish priest in a remote Andean village of Colombia established a rudimentary broadcasting facility, *Radio Sutatenza*, with evangelical purposes. He rapidly turned it into the centerpiece of a cleverly conceived educational communication strategy that he called “*radio school*.” It consisted of a number of small groups of peasants who met periodically to listen to programs specially produced for them to teach them literacy and, later, farming and health care. A trained local leader stimulated and assisted each group to discuss the lessons and applied them to undertaking community improvement activities. So successful was this endeavor that within about a decade it had grown into *Acción Cultural Popular (ACPO)*, a Catholic rural development agency endowed with a number of powerful broadcasting stations serving hundreds of “radio schools” across the country supported by a team of teachers, three leader-training institutes and a print shop to publish a weekly paper and teaching materials. The format corresponded to “development communication” and to “development support communication” (→ Radio for Development).

To break the isolation and silence to which they were confined, workers’ unions in the rich tin mines of Bolivia established very modest broadcasting stations across a vast territory through contributions their members made from their meager salaries. In about a decade these *Radios Mineras* were to grow to about 30, operating at times as a network (→ Radio Networks). This transformed downtrodden and often repressed citizens into protagonists of mass communication. The main characteristic of the miners’ radios was their “*open microphone*” policy that gave participants free and ample opportunity to become active sources of messages instead of remaining passive receivers. To that end, these radios not only welcomed people into their tiny studios but also went into the depths of the mines; in addition, much of their broadcasting was done through dialogue with people in their homes, churches, schools, marketplaces, and sports fields. They thus enabled people to speak out, even to criticize the unions’ positions and performance. Unknowingly, the Bolivian workers of the mines were the pioneers of the practice of what many years later became known as “alternative communication for democratic development.”

In the early post-World War II period, the government of the US launched an international program of development with emphasis on assistance for agriculture, education, and health (→ Health Campaigns for Development). Cooperative services specialized in those fields were established in Latin American countries. Each service focused on a particular line of communication activity such as agricultural extension information, audiovisual education, or health education. In the 1950s and 1960s, the program was to train hundreds of individuals in the principles and skills of communication for development so as to increase and improve the design, production, and distribution of educational messages through multiple media. And soon many other international agencies, such as FAO, → UNESCO, and UNICEF, were to do likewise. Over many years millions of dollars were thus applied, with different degrees of achievement, to hundreds of projects in this

commendable endeavor eminently corresponding to the development support communication and development communication formats.

### THE ADVENT OF THEORY

In 1958, US sociologist → Daniel Lerner published a 50-country study of what he regarded as the extinction of traditional society to make room for → modernization. He found this process was taking place in four stages: (1) urbanization, (2) people's participation in mass communication, (3) literacy, and (4) participation in politics. In 1962, US rural sociologist → Everett Rogers formulated the theory of diffusion of innovations as the engine for society's modernization (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). In 1964, US communication scientist and journalist → Wilbur Schramm (1964) published a major study on development and mass communication. Perceiving the latter as "watchman," "teacher," and "policymaker," he stipulated a set of roles for it in helping people meet these needs.

Throughout the 1960s these conceptualizations born in the US were received with interest in Latin America by communication specialists in universities and development agencies. No criticisms were recorded at that time. On the contrary, some conducted research based on the propositions, especially those of Rogers, notably in Colombia and Brazil. Others just proceeded to attempt to apply what they learned from the readings to their field operations. Many seemed to have even come to share with enthusiasm the faith in the mass media as endowed with powers to virtually generate development by themselves.

### REMOVING BLINDFOLDS

The theory and the practice of communication in general and of communication for development in particular came into question in Latin America at the start of the 1970s. This decade was plagued by dictatorships, by the failure of the development undertaking, and by the collapse of the region's economy due to the effects of a grave oil crisis in the developed nations. A movement of young communication scholars committed to radical social change to build a real democracy emerged during the first quarter of the decade. They criticized the classical model of communication in general, formulated by → Lasswell in the US in the late 1940s and expanded in the mid-1960s by Schramm and Berlo (S-M-C-R, i.e., source, message, channel, and receiver). It was regarded as unidirectional (monological) and impositive (vertical) as well as conservative, mechanist, and effects-oriented toward securing manipulative persuasion.

The pioneering propositions of Lerner and Schramm were also somewhat challenged, but the most criticized was Rogers's theory of diffusion of innovations. The main objection was that this model ignored the determinant influence of the archaic power structure, which in Latin America made possible the exploitation of the oppressed masses, especially the peasantry, by the oligarchy. Some critics argued that, in fact, it was that structure that defined who was to be an "innovator" and who would have to be a "laggard." And they added that the concept of leadership in the model hid the reality of the elite; that the notion of cosmopolitanism disguised the linkage between the powerful of the urban and

the rural areas; and that the use of the term “reference group” could dilute the reality of internal domination that victimized the peasants in Latin America.

### **TOWARD “HORIZONTAL” COMMUNICATION**

Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1969) gained international celebrity as of the early 1970s for his proposal of an “education for liberation” through “conscientization” based on dialogue. Extrapolating from this, Frank Gerace, an American living in Bolivia, was the first to suggest the notion of horizontal communication. Paraguayan specialist in educational communication Juan Diaz Bordenave (1982) soon engaged in creative reflection on the matter, which made him a chief proponent of theoretical bases for the democratization of communication for development.

Francisco Gutiérrez (1973), Daniel Prieto (1987), and Mario Kaplún (1978) were also prominent in this effort. And many other scholars of the region produced proposals for alternative communication, also understood as “dialogical,” “participatory,” and “popular.” Chilean journalist Fernando Reyes Matta (1977) advanced a scheme for “communication with active social participation,” in which he emphasized instrumental organization and education (→ Participatory Communication).

At the end of the 1970s, taking into account the critiques of the US-oriented models and seeking to conjugate the Latin American propositions to replace them, Beltrán formulated a set of bases for a model of horizontal communication, defined as follows: “Communication is the process of democratic social interaction based upon exchange of symbols by which human beings voluntarily share experiences under conditions of free and egalitarian access, dialogue, and participation. Everyone has the right to communicate in order to satisfy communication needs by enjoying communication resources” (Beltrán 1980, 3).

### **LIGHTS AND SHADOWS**

The era of neo-liberalism, globalization, and the “information society” started in Latin America with a catastrophic and paralyzing economic crisis in 1982. This seriously curtailed state development programs and, consequently, their communication components. By contrast, activities of alternative communication recorded considerable growth and improvement. Although multiple media were a part of this evolution, radio was by far the favorite for many grassroots organizations, especially in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, Costa Rica, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic. Films were used in Bolivia and Nicaragua, and video in many countries. Puppet shows, street theatre, dance and songs festivals, “mini-papers,” and even circus-type presentations were successfully used for various educational purposes. Along with the numerous Catholic educational broadcasting stations, modest but highly participatory “community radio” activities proliferated across the region, sometimes suffering repression.

The decade of the 1990s saw the intensifying of health communication activities, especially for family planning and for the struggle against AIDS, as well as programs to prevent adolescent drug use, to inhibit violence against women in the family, and to promote environmental protection.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Development Support Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ UNESCO

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## **Development Communication: Middle East**

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This entry offers an overview of → development communication in the region that the west calls the Middle East, but which in Arabic is known as “al-Mashrik al Arabi,” or the Arab East. The area comprises three Arab regions that fall between the eastern Mediterranean, the Arabian (Persian) Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean. Located in an area where Africa, Asia, and Europe meet, these regions are: Egypt, which is in Africa; Bilad ash-Sham (sometimes referred to as the Fertile Crescent or Greater Syria), on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, which extends from Turkey and Iran in the north to Egypt in the south and the Arabian peninsula and the Red Sea to the east (including the present states of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Palestine); and the Arabian peninsula, or Arabian Gulf, which is largely a desert area that includes the present states of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, the Arab Emirates, and Kuwait.

While the first two regions rely on aid funds for development (mainly from the west) and consequently are economically dependent on the west, the Arabian Gulf region generally enjoys more material resources. Thus the region includes development recipients as well as donors in development practice (→ Development Institutions).

### COMMONALITIES OF THE AREAS

Although the regions differ in economic wealth and political systems, they all suffer from social and economic inequalities as well as from similar structural development “diseases.” Bureaucracy enables politicians and senior state officials not to be accountable to communities, while corruption remains common. The absence of strategic planning and incompetence often means that “growth” or “development” have become synonymous with the accumulation of wealth by the rich and powerful while the support of the poor and deprived is seen as the responsibility of nongovernmental bodies. There is a notable similarity in the kind of development problems faced in the Arab region and in developing countries in Latin America and Africa (→ Development Communication: Africa; Development Communication: Latin America). They all seek social change but lack clear overall objectives or a vision of what this change might mean. They also lack a proper understanding of the process of communication and, while they admire the new communication technologies, are not usually aware of how they can be used to support development projects.

Functional social change is based on national development strategies, which are lacking in the Arab East regions due to the absence of agreement on the objective of this change, at regional and national levels. While there is relatively good awareness of the new technologies, this is based more on an enthusiasm for imitating the west than on how they may be relevant to their societies’ needs. Consequently, communication technology is usually regarded as a source of prestige, often at the expense of weakening or eliminating the support of traditional media institutions in the development process (→ Communication Technology and Development).

In short, development communication approaches have by and large failed in the Arab East because they often reflect western development approaches, are planned by experts who are not familiar with the local culture, and are mainly technology-oriented.

### THE STATE OF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IN THE ARAB EAST

The field of development communication is relatively new. In the Arab East it is often mistakenly regarded by officials and organizations as the act of promoting development projects. As in many other regions this approach focused on the public relations of government projects rather than engaging the broader process of social change. Communication for development or social change never took off as a specialized field in the Arab regions.

The most serious obstacle to development communication in the region is that communication is not regarded as a transactional process that aims at grassroots participation and behavior change, but rather as an act of informing and of increasing awareness, mainly a *top-down type of informing* (→ Participatory Communication). The issue of development is complex. It cannot be pinned down to a single variable, but attention

tends to be paid to economic variables to the neglect of other (such as social and political) variables. Arab development communication efforts often lack professionalism and strategic planning as well as the ability to function securely within the present world order, which suffers from corruption, and where the development agenda is usually set by the powerful and the rich. In this age of globalization development policies are mainly drafted and controlled by international superpowers and by regional powers (→ Globalization Theories).

Development projects often fail in the Arab East regions and in most developing countries because strategic communication is not integrated into development projects (→ Development Communication, Planning of). The communities that need development are often not involved, because the authorities either do not allow them or do not see the need for them to be involved. Dialogue and debate are not an option and freedom of expression is not guaranteed. Vertical projects (that come from above) are usually not sensitive to social change and cultural realities.

There seems to be a consensus among Arab development communication practitioners that failure in Arab development efforts is due largely to: a *lack of adequate structures* to support development efforts and facilitate popular participation; corruption of the social/political system (nepotism and political priorities over national societal interests); and ignorance by officials and decision-makers and their lack of vision for the role of development communication in the overall social and political processes.

The Arab East does not *lack qualified personnel* who are properly trained in development communication. The problem is that these personnel are usually not employed and most of them end up migrating to the west. Recommendations by regional and international organizations relating to development matters are frequently shelved, usually after ceremonial welcome. The author served on a panel of experts forming a National Population Council for one of the Arab states. In the two years of his service on the council none of the plans proposed were adopted or even taken into account by the authorities concerned when making decisions, although the minister responsible regularly attended the council meetings. Consequently, the present Arab national development organizations and nongovernmental organizations are *staffed by non-professionals*, most of whom are either well-meaning but unskilled social preachers or those who seek material gain.

Additionally, development projects that qualify for funding by United Nations organizations and most other regional and international development funding organizations require an application by the concerned governments. Competent nongovernmental groups often do not benefit from such development funds because of their inability to get endorsement by their governments.

In general there is a tendency in Arab development communication efforts to *focus on the adoption of information communication technologies* with little or no attention to their effect on actual community needs, or to the cultural factors that are essential for community involvement in development efforts. And while there has been a recent upsurge in the information channels in the Arab East these are not utilized to enhance participation but rather employed either to support official political positions or as entertainment channels. People need to be informed in order to participate meaningfully in development, and the media need to be utilized as instruments of information. Instead they are utilized more as instruments of propagation or agitation.

The *Arab media* do not play a meaningful role in advancing or developing awareness for development needs or good governance, in accelerating poverty reduction, or in stimulating debate about aspects of accountability. By providing individuals with material that bears no relation to their society, the media contribute to their alienation instead of facilitating their participation in society. Nor is any effort made by the media in terms of the socialization of children, for example, in helping children accept differences and in teaching social habits. Children's messages in the media and school curricula usually lack vision or coordination, and are often counter-productive. In general, the Arab media fail to serve the genuine development interests of their societies (→ Radio for Development; Television for Development).

The Arab East also *lacks solid academic programs* that address the subject of communication for development and social change. The teaching of this subject is scattered among different academic programs: in agricultural extension and public health programs, as well as in a few communication programs (→ Rural Development; → Health Campaigns for Development). Specialized study in communication for social change is urgently needed, in spite of opposition from traditionalists (both academic and political). The various curricula of communication programs in Arab universities do not address the social and development communication needs of the Arab regions. Academic training is mainly in the areas of journalism, radio, and TV as well as in public relations. The academic area of communication for development and/or social change is almost disregarded as are the important areas of communication policies, communication research, and even communication theories. Communication in rural contexts is nonexistent except within agricultural extension programs.

## NEW COMMUNICATION EFFORTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

This rather bleak overview of the state of development communication in the Arab East region is not the whole picture, however. There have been frequent, though scattered and uncoordinated, efforts toward development and social change. However, such efforts are not part of a comprehensive plan nor can they be ends in themselves.

Among the promising efforts in this direction are some of the *new tele-dramas* and → soap operas (→ Entertainment Education). While there are marked variations among the Arab countries in their efforts to adopt development messages in their tele-dramas and soap operas, Egypt and Syria have excelled. Syrian and Egyptian media reflect a new visual dynamic and a real effort to communicate development messages in their drama. For example, Syrian drama has used popular culture to deal with current social problems in bold historical dramas and clever satire, showcasing an abundance of technical and artistic talent.

Other established areas of Arab development efforts are in communication to improve people's *health and agriculture*. Health communication and agricultural extension can have a great impact on development outcomes in the Arab East. These areas are perhaps among the most successful in development efforts in the Arab East. However, most of the efforts are based on either individual initiatives or projects implemented by local, regional, or international organizations. They are not usually followed up and do not form part of a national development plan. Efforts in these areas are the public health and agricultural

extension work carried out by universities in the regions, notable among which are those of the University of Cairo and the American University of Beirut. There are also development projects carried out by UNDP in Syria and Jordan, as well as agricultural extension work by the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) in Syria.

Arab *higher educational institutions* can have an impact in the field of development communication. New academic institutions, many of which include communication programs, are being set up and are attracting well-trained professionals. While most of the new communication programs do not focus at present on development communication, the area is beginning to attract Arab communication scholars. The new Arab Gulf States are investing considerable funds in developing their higher education sector and are setting up promising communication programs.

A field that is in an early stage of development in the Arab regions, but has a good potential of growth, is that of *information communication technology* (ICT). According to El-Hage et al. (2003) the Arab region represents less than 1 percent of the world's Internet users and there are marked variations among the Arab countries in their efforts to adopt ICT tools and grow their networked economies. Yet, according to this study, by working together "Arab countries can build on each other's experiences to . . . position themselves on a common competitive platform, [and] they can improve their combined standing in the world ICT market."

The strategic goal of development communication in the Arab East needs to be a change of structure, that will produce an institutional system positively oriented to development goals as well as capable of allowing the enhancement of such positive orientations. A new outlook to development is needed that will encourage the Arab individual and official to build up positive development habits that stress participation, good governance, and transparency.

To reduce the Arab gap in development, Arab organizations and institutions need to focus on development projects that contribute to active citizen participation. There is a need for projects that are founded on qualitative and critical research and that are policy- and problem-oriented. These projects need to tackle the role of the state, the role of the people, and the role of the media in development.

The Arab regions need a development strategy that will involve citizens in development projects as well as in the evaluation process of these projects. This requires that communication theory feed into media strategies and social change. And the economic and policy transparency of development projects needs to be appraised according to constructs that recognize Arab cultural practices and not merely western constructs. What is needed is more attention to transparency at the policy formulation level and not merely at the level of local execution of projects. Policy transparency should be given as much weight as economic transparency.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Development ► Development Communication ► Development Communication: Africa ► Development Communication: Asia ► Development Communication: Latin America ► Development Communication, Planning of ► Development Institutions ► Entertainment Education ► Globalization Theories ► Health Campaigns for Development ► Participatory Communication ► Radio for Development ► Rural Development ► Soap Operas ► Television for Development

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## **Development Communication, Planning of**

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Effective development communication programs require a clearly defined strategy with specific goals established in advance. Communication goals may range from relatively short-term changes in individual behavior (for example, improving health or environmental practices) to relatively long-term changes in social or structural conditions (for example, increased economic opportunity, increased gender equity, improved environmental quality). Goals must align with → audience or stakeholder needs and achieving this match usually requires the involvement of stakeholders in the program planning stage, if not all stages of program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (→ Stakeholder Theory). Unlike many other types of communication programs, development communication demands greater attention to social structural factors (Wilkins 2000) because change typically is sought at the societal level, not just the individual level. Also, longer-term and macro-structural changes usually require greater attention to self-sustainability of communication activities, engaging whole communities and organizations (not just individuals) and creating mechanisms for ongoing participation by and coordination among stakeholder groups at multiple levels of social organization from the international and national level to the local and community level (→ Participatory Communication).

Consequently, successful development programs, even more than other types of communication programs, need to follow a systematic, rather than ad hoc, planning process. Numerous approaches, manuals, and toolkits exist as guides to program planning (see, for example, Mody 1991; Piotrow et al. 1997; or McKee et al. 2000). Although details vary somewhat from one system to the next, all describe a similar sequence of planning and implementation decisions.

### **ANALYSIS**

Before attempting to design communication activities and materials, planners need to understand the context within which a program will operate and the audience or audiences that will be involved in and benefit from the program. *Situation analysis* describes the existing context and status of issue(s) that the program will address: How prevalent or

severe is the problem? What causes it? What social, cultural, political, and economic factors inhibit or constrain change from happening? Situation analysis typically draws on existing data, survey results, and other study findings but may require additional research if gaps in knowledge exist.

*Audience and communication analysis* consists of identifying primary and secondary audiences and describing their current status in terms of their knowledge, attitudes, skills, behaviors, and access to resources relevant to the development issues at hand (→ Audience Segmentation). Other aspects of the audience that may be useful to understand include the presence of → social networks, socio-cultural norms, and community dynamics that influence individual and collective action. At this stage, planners also analyze audiences' media access and use and the capacity of local media, traditional media, nongovernmental organizations, and communication agencies to participate effectively in development communication programs (→ Audience Research; Exposure to Communication Content).

## STRATEGIC DESIGN

The second stage of systematic planning involves setting objectives, developing program activities to achieve those objectives, and specifying how the activities will be implemented, monitored, and evaluated. Participation in this stage by stakeholders increases the likelihood that the program will address needed changes. The first step is to *establish communication objectives* that are SMART (specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic, and time-bound). Many programs falter because their objectives are too broad, unmeasurable, or unrealistic within the limits of time and resources available. Programs should avoid the mistake of setting too many objectives, as this dilutes focus and overburdens available resources. SMART objectives also specify precisely who and what will change as a result of program activities.

Next, planners should *specify a causal model* for the program by drawing on relevant theories to define why and how the program is expected to result in change. This will help to focus communication activities precisely on factors or processes that are most likely to result in desired changes. Even before messages are designed, planners should *determine channels* that can be used to reach primary and secondary audiences. The most effective programs (even those that operate at a localized level) typically use multiple channels to achieve change on a larger scale.

For example, mass media can be used to encourage and reinforce community mobilization and interpersonal communication among family, friends, community members, peer networks, professionals, and policymakers. Once objectives and strategies are clear, planners *develop an implementation plan*, which includes a management plan, budget, and work schedule with regular benchmarks established to monitor progress. The implementation plan should include a list of indicators and data sources that will be used to monitor program implementation and audience reaction to it, as well as a study design to measure program outcomes and to assess impact (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods).

## DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING

Only after the strategic plan is clear and agreed to by key stakeholders should the program move on to the development of communication materials and messages. *Message and*

*materials development* is most effective when key stakeholders (managers, fieldworkers, and members of the intended audience) are involved in the process to insure that communication meets their needs. It is unlikely that one message can achieve more than one objective; more often than not a single objective may require more than one message or communication activity, which is another reason not to overburden a program with too many objectives.

As the materials and messages begin to take shape, it is essential to *pre-test communication concepts and messages* with stakeholders and representatives of the intended audience(s). Even if messages are designed with the participation of key stakeholders, formal pre-testing can still help to avoid costly errors and loss of time. If pre-testing reveals – as it usually does – that some adjustment or redesign is needed, then messages and materials should be *revised and retested* to insure that they match audience needs before final production of materials or implementation of activities occurs.

### **IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING**

As for all other stages, involving stakeholders in the implementation and monitoring stage helps insure that the program is responsive to local needs and conditions and increases local ownership of and buy-in to the program. The first step in this stage is *production and dissemination of messages and materials*. Successful programs formally assign responsibility for communication and dissemination activities and may enlist a variety of groups to assist in this process, including local governments, civil society organizations or community groups, private sector organizations and the media, with the aim of achieving maximum reach among those who need to receive materials or participate in communication activities.

*Training* may be needed to insure that communication activities and distribution of materials are carried out according to plan. In the case of longer-term social change programs, it may be necessary to design ongoing efforts to institutionalize capacity for program communication. Sustaining communication beyond the initial launch of a campaign requires ongoing *mobilization of key participants* and sharing information, results, and credit with partners, allies, and communities in order to keep everyone motivated toward the strategic goal. In order to insure that the program is on track and being implemented according to plan, it is important to design a system to *manage and monitor program implementation*. This involves such things as checking program outputs to insure quality, consistency, and timeliness; tracking existing service statistics; and conducting special studies using surveys, focus groups, observation, and other techniques to track audience reaction to the program. Programs need to be prepared to *adjust implementation activities based on monitoring results*. It is usually less costly to make mid-course corrections or adjustments in activities, materials, and procedures based on monitoring data than to let an inefficient program proceed unchanged.

### **EVALUATION AND REPLANNING**

The final stage of program planning is evaluating how well a program achieves its objectives. Evaluation can explain why a program is effective (or not), including the effects of different activities on different audiences. Sound program evaluation stimulates program



improvements and redesign, guides cost-effective future funding allocations, supports advocacy and fundraising, and can motivate continued involvement by stakeholders. Many programs *measure outcomes* to determine if the desired changes have occurred. More rigorous study designs *assess impact*, which links changes in outcomes to one or more intervention activities.

*Dissemination of results* is an important part of evaluation because it helps everyone involved to be aware of the program's impact, whether or not it is positive. Impact results should be shared and discussed widely with partners, allies, key stakeholders, the media, and funding agencies. Finally, because most development communication programs are part of a larger agenda for social change, evaluation results from one phase of a program should help to shape plans for future activity. Good evaluation designs help development communication planners *revise or redesign programs* by revealing program strengths to be replicated and weaknesses to be corrected. Again, key stakeholders, decision-makers, donors, and all interested parties should be involved in reviewing the results of the program evaluation in order to determine what the follow-up should be. New follow-on programs may have to start over at the analysis stage if the situation changes markedly or if new causes are found for the development issues being addressed.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Audience Research ► Audience Segmentation ► Communication Evaluation Research ► Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Participatory Communication ► Public Relations Evaluation ► Social Networks ► Stakeholder Theory

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## **Development Discourse**

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Development discourse refers to the process of articulating knowledge and power through which particular concepts, theories, and practices for social change are created and reproduced (Escobar 1995; 1999; 2000; Crush 1996). Historically, the approach to development in terms of discourse has evolved out of debates on → modernization and

Marxist dependency theory rooted in social evolutionism (→ Dependency Theories). Departing from the linear models of social progress, this approach to development seeks to articulate the processes and meanings of more nuanced social control and challenges. Epistemological premises are grounded in poststructuralist concepts asserting language and discourse of development as systematically organizing power through the subjectivity of social actors and their actions (→ Power and Discourse).

Attention to development discourse emerged in the 1990s, building upon critical approaches to → development communication studies. Development discourse studies tend to view dominant models of development as a highly contested domain in which dominant groups attempt to assert control over marginalized groups of people (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). Studies of development discourse tend to examine *strategic communicative intervention* of → development institutions for social change in terms of the constructed problems and solutions designated toward concerned communities (→ Strategic Communication). The issues of the exploitation of the rainforest region of Colombia in the Pacific coast, for example, are formulated around the discourse of “biodiversity” insuring manageable generic resources and effective controls of intellectual property of genes. Systematically organized “facts” were created, mostly through the networks of experts associated with international agencies and the northern environmental NGOs supported by G-7 countries, to provide scientific prescriptions for the defined goals. The created knowledge carefully submerges the identities and cultures of the Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities in the region.

Discussions of development discourse often parallel the concept of → postdevelopment (Escobar 1995), because they attempt to shift the analytical frame of discourse analysis to envision the popular resistance of local communities. Instead of reinscribing dominant development projects, they intend to critique the logics and devices constructed by and for development industries. Thus, they value the knowledge and experiences of local, self-reliant participatory, and collective actions as the fundamental sources for alternative social change, both at local and global levels (→ Participatory Communication).

Some critics question the feasibility of dominant development discourse to envision an alternative approach to social change (Pieterse 1998; 2000; 2001). Dominant development discourse fails to offer a venue for restructuring processes of social change, instead providing an “ideological platform” that benefits the work of the development industry and the logic of the global capitalist system. Critics of dominant development discourse stress the importance of → community media and alternative media in promoting collective and resistant approaches to social change (→ Activist Media).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Institutions ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Postdevelopment ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Power in Intergroup Settings ▶ Strategic Communication

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## Development, Gender, and Communication

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Development communication addresses issues of gender in a variety of ways. Communication projects designed to address social problems, such as health, agriculture, population, nutrition, education, democracy, and other topics, may either target women or consider gender as a way of understanding the social context in which the issue might be best addressed (→ Development Communication Campaigns). In addition, → development communication also refers to the way that → development discourse communicates particular assumptions made about groups of people, such as women and men, as responsible for social problems and subsequent change. The history of development communication has transitioned from no attention to women, to a recognition of women in development (WID), to gender and development (GAD), to more recent concerns raised that are pertinent to global feminism.

Following little attention to women or gender issues by early development communication scholars such as → Daniel Lerner, *women in international development* (WID) approaches emerged in the early 1970s. Notably Boserup (1970) used data from Sub-Saharan Africa to show how women's economic status was harmed by colonial and postcolonial aid policies favoring men. Development increased women's workload, as men's work was redirected to cash crops or urban employment. Women, who had traditionally farmed with the assistance of men, became almost solely responsible for food production and childcare, in addition to being forced to earn cash in the informal market.

From Boserup's and others' research, WID scholars argued for integrating women in economic development, an argument that catalyzed the 1975–1985 UN Decade for Women and the implementation of women-specific programs in most aid agencies. Many studies show, however, that these changes were cosmetic and did not alter the

capitalist-patriarchal basis of modernization. They affected a small minority of projects and most women remained marginalized (e.g., Staudt 1985).

The liberal feminist strategies of WID have been critiqued not only for their failures, but also for ignoring women's reproductive work, exploiting their labor, and neglecting gender relations (Mohanty 1991). Hence, while adding women to development has helped address an affirmative action problem, it has not necessarily improved women's lives. After a half-century of development aid, women remain poorer than men, with the greatest gender disparities in the poorest developing countries. This affects development, as improvements in women's employment and education have been correlated to virtually all indicators of positive social change (UNDP 2007).

These findings led to the gender and development (GAD) framework, which is more sophisticated than WID in addressing the *gendered* context of every situation, including the ideology of male superiority and men's control over resources. Especially instrumental in this shift was DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era), a group of activists, researchers and policymakers formed during the Decade for Women (Sen and Grown 1987). GAD challenges the distribution of power in societies. GAD's objective of empowering women by transforming patriarchal socio-economic structures threatens donor agencies that seek improvements in economic indicators but oppose fundamental social change. Nonetheless, agencies such as the US Agency for International Development (USAID) have embraced the rhetoric of GAD. However, as with WID stipulations, GAD applies only to some projects, and evidence thus far indicates little change in USAID practice (Wilkins 1999). Despite decades of research and dialogue on development communication, gender remains inadequately addressed.

Media and information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to reinforce as well as resist women's secondary status (→ Technology and Communication; Communication Technology and Development). For example, the → Internet, mobile phones, and other interactive technologies may facilitate the sharing of information, but may also exploit women through limited and harmful representation (→ Interactivity, Concept of). Hence, media monitoring and women's media projects constitute a key area for scholars and activists (Gallagher 2001).

In addition, the spread of ICTs is widening information gaps, often referred to as the → digital divide. Cybercafés and mobile phones require discretionary resources, less available to women than men. As literacy is essential for the Internet, extending women's access requires improvements in their education (Hafkin 2006).

At the level of project communication, there is consistency between those who advocate grassroots, participatory, project planning and implementation and those who agree with GAD ideology (→ Participatory Communication). Critical and feminist examinations of large-scale → modernization-based projects, particularly → social marketing and → entertainment education campaigns, are needed to expose biases that may neglect and harm poor women, while privileging men and commercial interests. While these projects are often associated with large bilateral and multilateral aid agencies, they are increasingly sponsored by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as well, many of which receive funding from government-affiliated agencies (→ Development Institutions). In addition, more projects aligned with community media practices (→ Alternative Journalism; Citizens' Media) are being engaged by women's collectives (Steeves 2007).

In sum, attention to both communication and gender in development are necessary for women's political, economic, and cultural empowerment, as well as successful outcomes in vital areas such as health, education, and income (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment). The spread of new information and communication technologies intensifies this mandate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Development Discourse ▶ Development Institutions ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Technology and Communication

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## **Development, Geometry of**

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Geometries of development refer to the spaces, shapes, and arrangements underlying the idea and practice of development. Similar to a classic definition of “geometry” as a physical arrangement of forms, discourses of development describe the arrangement of

various actors within a global system. As used within development discourse, geometries of development describe the relationship among three elements: spaces, key points, and vectors. Boundaries demarcate the “edges” of various kinds of spatially based actors in a global system – such as nation-states, regions, and transnational configurations. Points refer to key institutional sites where development policies and programs are formulated and implemented, such as government ministries and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), but also where policy may be resignified and resisted (e.g., social movements, nongovernmental organizations [NGOs], local governing bodies). Vectors are linkages among institutional and spatial actors characterized by directions of the flow of resources and benefits and by the strengths of the exercise of power. These relationships help create divisions of various kinds among actors and determine the overall shape of the structure of development. Thus, in the geometry of development framework, structural shape is somewhat contingent and fluid, created by the spatial boundaries and coordinates of actors in a global system. Further, the structural shape is characterized by hierarchically arranged actors whose places are formed historically by the vectoral relationships among those actors.

### **PURPOSE AND ORIGINS OF THE APPROACH**

The geometry of development approach offers a flexible analytical tool for analyzing development processes (see Shah & Wilkins 2005). The abstract concepts within the geometry of development framework are not bound by nation-states as the key unit of analysis, though they are recognized as important actors. Also, the geometry of development approach is not limited to viewing the flow of development aid in a “West-to-Rest” fashion. The nomenclature involving space, points, and vectors allows not only critique of various arrangements of development geometry, but also consideration of alternative development arrangements that are open to incorporating a wide range of actors and in which there are no predetermined roles.

The contemporary, neo-liberal geometry of development has been dominant in global development relations since the end of World War II. Grounded in a Cold War context, this geometry of development created spatial distinctions between west and east, rich and poor, and first and third worlds. The underlying principle of the Cold War-era development approach involved the transfer of financial, technical, and human resources (vectors) among spatial and institutional actors and functioned within a set of categories that distinguished, with each transaction, donors from recipients. The current global geometry of development articulates a vision of development that compartmentalizes communities divided along various types of boundaries. The Cold War-era development thinkers divided the world neatly along political (communism in the east vs democracy in the west), economic (industrialized north vs agricultural south), cultural (modern vs traditional), and hierarchical (first = west, second = east, and third = south) lines.

The emergence of the dominant geometry of development can be traced to the late 1940s. While preparing his 1949 inaugural address, US President Harry Truman’s staff agreed upon three central points regarding foreign policy: to continue support for the United Nations organization; to maintain commitment to the Marshall Plan; and to create a joint US–European defense organization. Almost as an afterthought, a mid-level

civil servant suggested a fourth point: to expand existing Latin American technical assistance programs to the poor countries of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, thereby expanding an existing vector between the United States and countries of the “south.” Point Four received massive attention from the press and policymakers around the world. As a result, government efforts in this area were intensified and over the course of several decades, new international actors were created, such as the forerunners to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), regional development banks, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Consequently, Point Four established in a very public, very global way the idea of underdevelopment as a synonym for what had been called “economic backwardness,” and demonstrated in a dramatic way the position of power held by the United States in defining the status of other nations.

At the time this framework emerged, the idea that development could be strategically planned and stimulated was notable for shifting away from the idea of intransitive social change. Importantly, the Point Four configuration of international relations eliminated (at least rhetorically) the colonizer–colonized relationship by erasing discussions of unequal relations of power among nations. Underdevelopment was now a stage in an inevitable, linear process toward development that all nations went through. This development–underdevelopment continuum created the possibility of recognizing intervention as a humanitarian mission rather than one of colonization or imperialism (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Finally, mass media were assumed to operate as an appropriate and relevant means toward inspiring people in the “underdeveloped” world to emulate those in the “developed” west (see Lerner 1958; → Lerner, Daniel). Many of these basic principles still serve as the foundations for development practice today, as international development institutions allocate resources to transfer knowledge and technologies to communities in nations with few material resources (→ Communication Technology and Development).

### **CRITIQUE OF THE DOMINANT GEOMETRY OF DEVELOPMENT**

The dominant geometry of development has been criticized from several directions. As has been suggested in many other reviews of dominant development models, the approach inappropriately justifies the positioning of wealthier states as a normative model and therefore legitimizes their intervention in “underdeveloped” areas. The model has been critiqued also for its ethnocentric vision, collapsing diverse communities of the south with a wide range of cultural histories into a single monolithic space for development intervention. According to some scholars, even the seemingly innocuous assumption that technologies themselves are inherently “neutral” belies an ethnocentric approach.

The dominant geometry of development also implies a vectoral relationship whereby interventionist policies and programs, created at various institutional points in countries of the north, are posed as being in the best interests of their target communities in the south. Such views allowed many academics and policymakers in the north, without a trace of self-doubt or self-consciousness, to craft blueprints for “developing” the south in the image of the north. The dichotomization of the entire global structure of

development into modern and traditional spaces (even with a transitional category in between, as evidenced in Lerner 1958) obscures the intersections between and within practices in historical contexts. These broad generalizations miss distinctions within countries, essentialize groups into homogeneous categories, typically at the level of nations rather than communities, and assume that experiences of poverty, gender, and other social conditions are similar across historical and cultural contexts. This kind of “spatial will to power,” as Escobar (1995) puts it, allowed domestic elites in southern countries in the postcolonial era to represent their specific self-interest as a class as equivalent to the general interest of the nation-state as a whole. More often than not, however, the interests of domestic elites in southern countries actually were identical to the interests of development policymakers in the north’s countries. As such, the south’s country elites replicated the dominant international geometry of development within the boundaries of southern nations. This process has, in many cases, resulted in the abuse of minority and indigenous rights.

Another problem with this dominant geometry of development is that it conceptualizes the development–underdevelopment continuum in a way that fetishizes geopolitical boundaries. Postdevelopment critiques have illustrated the processes through which the development industry constructs “third world” spaces through planning and implementing strategic intervention. The dominant bilateral and multilateral development institutions are premised on a notion of stable geopolitical boundaries, and the development “target” becomes operationalized as the “third world.” Even in participatory models of development, despite the best intentions and dedicated work of many practitioners and scholars, “participation” serves more often to fulfill administrative needs of the industry than as an alternative to dominant development approaches.

In the geometry of development created by Point Four, since the primary unit of analysis was the nation-state, five-year plans, data-gathering protocols, communication systems, infrastructure building, bureaucracy creation, and other activities were all conceived as national projects. While these data may have been useful for certain large-scale planning and policy purposes, they missed recognizing the inequities in resource distribution among segments of a country’s population. A tremendous amount of energy was expended on mapping territories and constructing borders of newly independent states. Again, this information may have been valuable for building infrastructure, facilitating some forms of social interaction, and creating certain kinds of economic growth (all with unequally distributed benefits), but another purpose of these activities was to monitor and constrain the movement of minority and indigenous communities.

With regard to communication issues in the dominant geometry of development, the operative assumption was that nationally based media systems were necessary to distribute information efficiently and to mobilize people to become modern in the national interest.

Lerner and others assumed that identities fostered through national media systems would transcend other identifications within and across national boundaries, and that these larger media systems would be more efficient and sophisticated than other, smaller media systems. Even current development discourse, perpetuating this geometry, seems incapable of dealing with the contemporary vectoral realities of specialized transnational media networks created by diasporic communities.



Many writers are uneasy with the vocabulary of the dominant geometry of development, employing quotations and footnotes to signal their critical use of terms such as “third world” and “development.” These scholars and practitioners are attempting to distance themselves from an ethnocentric vision of a hierarchical distinction between the northern west as “first” and others as somehow “lagging” behind, in “third” or even “fourth” place. However, even these critical usages can evoke a more-or-less traditional understanding of geopolitics. For example, the term “third world” was first posed during the 1789 French Revolution as a way to refer to a “third estate,” or people in poverty lacking political power, and since then has been critically used to denote spatial actors, such as communities united through shared experiences of oppression based on race, ethnicity, class, or gender hierarchies; of economic distance from or dependency on the global capitalist economy; or of anti-colonial political struggles. The dominant, Point Four-inspired geometry of development typically essentialized diverse groups of donor and recipient nations into broad geopolitical categories. An alternative geometry of development framework can accommodate a variety of social groupings (i.e., new spatial and institutional actors), along local and regional lines, that resonate more clearly with cultural histories and contexts.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Development ► Cultural Imperialism Theories ► Lerner, Daniel

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## **Development Institutions**

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At present, there are over 50,000 international organizations with a total budget easily over US\$250 billion devoted to improving social, economic, political, and health conditions around the world, specifically in less developed countries (Directory of Development Organizations 2007; → International Communication Agencies). The current status of

modern international development organizations can be traced back to the end of World War II and the official launch of the United Nations. Indeed, while other organizations pre-date the UN, including religious and political bodies, it was the formation of the UN and its many subsidiary programs and funds that helped catalyze international → modernization efforts.

## MODERN HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS

This launch also coincided with the establishment of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Bretton Woods System in 1944. While the Marshall Plan for post-World War II recovery focused on bilateral agreements made with individual European countries, Bretton Woods created a multilateral system that provided economic aid to developing countries through loans that were tied to changes in economic policies in the recipient countries (Spero & Hart 2003).

In the *United States* the first bilateral assistance to developing countries began with the Truman Point Four program (a Marshall Plan for the third world), which provided skills, information, and equipment from 1950 onwards, and other legislation that led to short-term assistance. But it was the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 that sought to address long-term world development needs through a bilateral system of loans and grants to be administered through the US Agency for International Development (USAID). To this day, USAID is the primary federal US agency for assisting developing countries. It employs a wide range of communication strategies to support its programs of disaster relief, poverty eradication, and democratic reform (Melkote & Steeves 2001).

During the Cold War era from 1947 to 1989, development aid was offered according to east/west ideological principles. One of the most obvious examples of this was the *Peace Corps*, initiated by John Kennedy in 1960. During this period, political rhetoric was often part and parcel of communication strategies employed by development agencies. The US development efforts closely followed foreign policy objectives, frequently tying aid to US technology, experts, and communication systems.

In *Europe*, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was one of the earliest organizations to establish a goal of supporting economic development both within and outside its 30 member countries. Established in 1948 to coordinate the Marshall Plan as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, OECD has emerged to offer its assistance to more than 70 developing countries. One of its major programs is in the promotion of information and communication technologies in sustainable economic growth and social welfare (→ Telecenters).

Once the Soviet Union began to fragment in the early 1990s, communication research and development organizations experienced a substantial paradigm shift. Largely absent from the communist/capitalist geopolitical framework, international development organizations lost their status as central to governmental policy focus, and hence the economic support for many of their activities. However, nongovernmental organizations, now grouped with trade unions, faith-based organizations, community groups, indigenous peoples' organizations, and foundations under the umbrella title of civil society organizations, have increased their activity in development assistance (Mody 2003; → Transnational Civil Society).

## MISSIONS OF DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONS

Many of these organizations use communication strategies and support communication projects in their work. These organizations operate at the international, regional, national, and community levels (see Table 1). A far-reaching group of organizations have made it their priority to develop media organizations and work for a western-style free press. These efforts include funding for infrastructure, training for the use and maintenance of such networks, and education for journalists and citizens alike in creating and using media for democratic ends (Wilson 2004; → Development Journalism). Additionally, some organizations work to insure that journalists who speak or write against the government are not treated unfairly, imprisoned, or executed.

*Civil society organizations* focusing on communications, such as Panos (working with journalists and other communicators) and CFSC (Communication for Social Change Consortium), were created as networks of smaller organizations in order to increase the potential impact across more countries and with greater resources addressing a wider range of development issues. Other groups organized around networks of faith, like the World Association for Christian Communication, made up of a range of ecumenical Christian funding partners, focus on communication as a human right.

Since the diffusion of communicative technologies, most recently the → Internet, has been shown to be linked to advances in education, health, and income, many international development organizations began to re-emphasize the importance of communication in their strategies. The United Nations made the information society the theme of one of its major world summits in 2003 and 2005, thus pointing other international development agencies in this direction and drawing in technology-based organizations, such as the Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility and various countries' Internet societies, to focus on development issues (Carpentier & Servaes 2006; → United Nations, Communication Policies of).

Another common mission is to effect *social change in health-care and practices* and in education, and to reduce poverty. In some instances, local programming is created in an effort to match cultural needs and norms (→ Health Communication; Health Campaigns, Communication in). These efforts, such as the → UNESCO-sponsored *Sara campaign*, directed to the education needs of young girls in Sub-Saharan African countries, are to be lauded, but may exceed their target audiences and reduce their effectiveness when exported multinationally. Many international organizations focus on solving particular problems, such as AIDS, illiteracy, or child welfare. Others support particular groups, such as migrants or indigenous peoples. Some of these organizations cross national borders, while others work at local levels within particular countries, such as the Rainforest Action Network (→ Migration and Immigration; Activist Media).

Still others operate only at the national or local level. One such organization in India, the Self-Employed Women's Association, established in 1972, grew out of a trade union for textile workers. In order to promote the rights of women workers, this organization has used a range of communication technologies to disseminate information and tell the stories of women workers' successes to other workers. Based on its successes in India, SEWA organizers have helped spread the movement to South Africa, Yemen, and Turkey. Though SEWA was begun as a gender-based organization, it has widened its

**Table 1** International development organizations and communication

<b>Mission</b>	<b>Representative organization</b>
Develop media and establish free press	International Press Institute
Social change in health, education, and poverty	Academy for Educational Development
Social justice for women and oppressed groups	United Nations Population Fund
Send economic aid, enhance free trade	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Several of the above goals	Organization of American States
<b>Type of organization</b>	<b>Representative organization(s)</b>
NGO and civil society	World Congress on Communication for Development
Governmental	United States Agency for International Development
National	Development and Educational Communication Unit (India)
Regional	Caribbean Institute of Mass Communication (Jamaica)
International	International Development Research Center (Canada)
Intergovernmental	United Nations; World Bank
Private foundation	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Ford Foundation
Academic	International Communication Association
Religious	World Association of Christian Communication
<b>Period of activity</b>	<b>Representative organization</b>
Pre-World War II	International Federation of Journalists (1926; relaunched 1946)
Early (1946–1975)	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (1947)
Middle (1976–1995)	International Programme for the Development of Communication (1981)
Late (1996–present)	International Institute for Communication and Development (1997)

focus to home workers and vendors in other countries (→ Development, Gender, and Communication).

Finally, there are a number of international development organizations with goals that encompass all, or a number of, the above-mentioned areas and using a wide range of frameworks in their approaches. These supra-mission organizations are usually well funded and have great discretion in choosing projects and locations as well as extending or restructuring their overall mission. Private foundations are able to change their focus frequently, and many organizations within the UN often have sub-programs or organizations under one umbrella to achieve larger goals such as gender equity or access to education (Servaes 1999).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Development, Geometry of ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ International Communication Agencies ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Internet ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Modernization ▶ Telecenters ▶ Transnational Civil Society ▶ UNESCO ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of

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## **Development Journalism**

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During the 1970s and 1980s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO) was the site of vociferous debate about global communication. Collectively, these arguments have come to be known as the → New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate. Nations of the south, many of which had relatively recently emerged from colonial domination, demanded a restructuring of the flows, distribution, and practice related to global information and communication. Many nations of the west, led by the United States and Great Britain, resisted any restructuring, arguing that such changes would have to be mandated by governments and would amount to undermining sound universal principles such as the free flow of information. Among the most contentious issues in the debate was development journalism – a term referring to the role of the press in the process of socio-economic development, primarily in countries of the south (→ Development Communication).

Development journalism was conceived in the 1960s at the Press Foundation of Asia (PFA), where Filipino journalists Alan Chalkley and Juan Mercado were concerned that news organizations were inadequately covering socio-economic development. Journalists were reporting government press releases and quotes but giving little attention to detailed analysis, interpretation, or evaluation of development projects, policies, or problems. Their concerns led Chalkley and Mercado to organize seminars at the PFA to train journalists in the art of development journalism.

### **THE DEBATE ABOUT DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM**

Development journalism, as conceived at the PFA, implied an adversarial relationship between independent news media and the government in which reporters offer critical

evaluation and interpretation of development plans and their implementation. Development journalism challenges traditional → news values, gives priority to the needs of ordinary people, and recognizes that objectivity is a myth (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Development journalism results in news that provides constructive criticism of government and its agencies, informs readers how the development process affects them, and highlights local self-help projects (Aggarwala 1980; Golding 1974).

Even as the *concept* of development journalism gained a following in Asia and beyond, the *practice* of development journalism was quickly appropriated by national leaders to justify government control of mass media and to promote state policies, often as part of larger campaigns of repression (Domatob & Hall 1983). Sometimes this appropriation was called “developmental journalism” (Sussman 1978), indicating a form of reporting and writing that viewed the task of news media as explicitly and uncritically supporting the government in achieving its development goals. Critics of developmental journalism said it opened the door for government control of the press (→ Communication and Law; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The result of such control, said the critics, was an emphasis on government success stories and uncritical government say-so journalism, not investigative and thorough development news as proposed by development journalism advocates such as the staff at PFA.

Critics such as Stevenson (1988) and Sussman (1978) proclaimed the failure of development journalism despite recognizing the vast differences between how development journalism was originally conceptualized and how the term was appropriated (as developmental journalism) to serve as a rationale for state control of national media. By suggesting that development journalism is inevitably controlled by government ministries and officials, the critics’ declarations of failure hurt even the development journalism projects taken on by independent media.

Thus, “debate” over development journalism often boiled down to a simplistic dichotomy: western commercial media were free while third world mass media were strictly controlled and manipulated by political elites. This questionable formulation gained a measure of acceptance among some academics and journalists as a “developmental” theory of the press (Hachten 1993), even though it could not be consistently supported empirically since some western governments also owned and controlled national media (particularly broadcasting) while many third world countries had independent and even oppositional media.

Further, others pointed out that even though developmental journalism might indeed uncritically emphasize government success stories, it did not mean that such reporting has no potential to contribute to development. Whether a government elected to control the media and use it for developmental journalism or the media freely reported development news in the way defined by PFA, development news contributes to development only if it possesses certain characteristics.

The *criteria for development news*, i.e., determining whether or not a news item can potentially contribute to development, should not be based on the source of the message (i.e., independent media or government-controlled media) but rather on the characteristics of the message itself. Aggarwala (1980), Shah (1996), and others have described the characteristics of effective development news. It should critically examine, evaluate, and interpret the relevance of development plans, policies, and programs. It should indicate the disparities between plans and actual accomplishments and include comparisons with how development

is progressing in other countries and regions. It should also provide contextual and background information about the development process, discuss the impact of plans, projects, and policies on people, and speculate about the future of development. And development news should make reference to basic needs of the population. News items that do not refer to some of these features cannot be considered development news.

### RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY

To highlight the unique features of development journalism, the concept should be distinguished from three similar ideas about the *normative relationship between mass media and society*. These are the social responsibility theory, articulated by the US Commission on the Freedom of the Press (1947); the democratic-participant perspective, summarized by McQuail (1987); and communitarian journalism detailed by Christians et al. (1993).

*Social responsibility theory* calls for journalism that emphasizes interpretation and analysis tempered by a devotion to fairness and neutrality. The theory suggests that journalists have an obligation to provide citizens with thorough, incisive, and useful information. In exchange, the press is provided with freedom from pressures and constraints that could be imposed by government and business interests. Development journalism also calls for comprehensive reporting with a critical edge. But while social responsibility theory supplements neutral reporting with an interpretive and analytical approach, development journalism requires not only provision of socially relevant information, but also journalistic advocacy in challenging oppression of all kinds.

The *democratic-participant model* features media that are small-scale, decentralized, and owned and operated by their users. The model assumes that certain audience needs are not adequately met by large, centralized, commercially oriented media and that professional communicators should have a minimal role in the communication process. The primary emphasis of this model is providing individuals and groups with access to channels of communication through which their voices can be heard. However, media access seems to be the ultimate goal. Although McQuail (1987, 122–123) claims that the model is informed by an eclectic “mixture of theoretical elements, including libertarianism, utopianism, socialism, egalitarianism, environmentalism, and localism,” there is no explicated theoretical or practical link between gaining access to media and movement toward alternative social organization. In development journalism, individuals are also given a means of voicing critique and articulating alternative visions of society. But then, the professional communicators disseminate the voices from the grassroots in forms and formats that can mobilize action to force policymakers to institute reforms.

*Communitarian journalism*, in its call for changing journalism’s preoccupation with dualism, scientism, and individualism, represents a model with several elements in common with development journalism. For example, both models urge journalists to assume a central role in helping construct community identities and critiquing unequal power relations and distribution of resources. Both models also encourage journalists to abandon the role of neutral observer while reporting in a manner that is thorough, deeply researched, historically and culturally grounded, and oriented toward progressive social change. However, community building takes place, in communitarian journalism, by “engender[ing] a like-minded philosophy among the public,” a problematic proposition

because it implies a fixed and universal understanding of community that exaggerates harmony and homogeneity (Calhoun 1993). From the perspective of development journalism, on the other hand, a primary focus is on specific and locally defined views of identity and community that recognize differences among and within marginalized groups (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

### FIVE PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM

Shah (1996) has summarized development journalism as comprising the following five principles. The first three are related to the practice of reporting and writing while the last two concern the role of journalists themselves.

- 1 Development journalism is concerned with *social, cultural and political aspects of development*, not just the economic. Development journalism promotes and contributes to humane development, which focuses on helping people meet their basic needs, empowering people to articulate their concerns and manage their development, and ameliorating poverty and inequality.
- 2 Development journalism is *democratic* and emphasizes communication from the “*bottom up*.” Bottom-up reporting results in news that includes the voices and perspectives of people most adversely effected by modernization. By prioritizing the views of people at the grass-roots level, development journalism allows them access to mass audiences and policy makers.
- 3 Development journalism is both *pragmatic and unconventional* in its approach to reporting. While traditional journalism reports facts perceived to be true and makes a conscious effort to remain detached from the subject of the story, development journalism makes explicit efforts to promote reform and encourage social action.
- 4 Development journalists take on the *role of professional intellectuals*, providing energy for social movements and helping create awareness about the need for action. Journalists can help “articulate the concerns of emergent forms of protest, putting them into broader frameworks,” and showing their “deeper meaning and significance.”
- 5 Development journalists encourage the *production of development journalism at multiple sites*, both geographically and within the overall structure of the news industry. The global concentration of → ownership in the media industry has left little space for cultural products that question the status quo, and even less space for material that forcefully advocates even limited structural change. Thus development journalists should advocate for “both the development of alternative, usually localized, media and a critical monitoring, intervention in, and sometimes use of mainstream media.

### DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM AND PUBLIC JOURNALISM

Finally, it should be noted that development journalism is similar to the → *public journalism* approaches to reporting developed in the United States in the 1990s by academics and journalists concerned with a crisis of media and democracy. Gunaratne (1996) perceptively pointed out that public journalism advocates typically refused to acknowledge the similarities of their model of reporting to the conception of development



journalism. Nevertheless, the similarities between development journalism, born in the south at a precarious moment when many newly independent countries struggled to establish democratic, accountable governmental institutions, and public journalism, born in the west at a precarious moment when people were losing confidence in the media and other democratic institutions, reveal that all democracies are inherently unstable and that journalism assumes a key role in creating and maintaining democratically accountable government that is legitimate in the eyes of citizens.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Citizen Journalism ► Communication and Law ► Development Communication ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Journalism ► Journalists' Role Perception ► News Values ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Ownership in the Media ► Peace Journalism ► Public Journalism ► UNESCO

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## **Development Support Communication**

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A cursory examination of halo terms used on the world stage in the last 50 years will surely unearth the term “development.” *Development* is commonly understood to mean a process by which societal conditions are improved. However, there is much disagreement

on what constitutes improvement. Consequently, the term *development* has been continually contested. Development communication, a special focus of this entry, often refers to a linear process of information exchange, resulting in knowledge acquisition or persuasion toward some objective related to development. This term too has been actively contested, especially with the changing interpretations of *development*. Today, many emphasize *communication* as a process of shared meaning that takes place in a cultural, political-economic, and geographical context, and is inseparable from that context (→ Development Communication).

Development in its modern form dates back to World War II. The early decades since World War II witnessed the dissolution of the colonial empires and the concomitant political emancipation of most of the countries in the third world, and the birth of the United Nations. This marked the formal beginning of development work and assistance primarily targeted at the developing countries in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America, or more often known collectively as the third world (→ Development Communication: Africa; Development Communication: Asia; Development Communication: Latin America).

The label “*third world*” will be used often in this text. There are a plethora of interpretations of this label. Most often the term is used to refer to countries considered less technologically advanced, economically poor, and less endowed with good infrastructures in the sectors of education, health-care, agriculture, etc. Other labels often used interchangeably with *third world* are: *developing countries*, *less developed countries*, *underdeveloped countries*, and *south*. Geographical connotations have been overemphasized over other factors, and consequently countries in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America are commonly considered as constituting the third world.

## DEVELOPMENT AS MODERNIZATION

Modernization propelled a powerful set of forces at work, especially in the third world. A dominant paradigm of development influenced by the techno-social biases of → modernization guided intellectual thinking and practice in the decades that followed World War II (Lerner 1958). It had enormous social, cultural, political, and economic consequences for the developing economies of the third world. The concept and practice of modernization were based on liberal economic theory. It was grounded in the grand project of Enlightenment, namely reasoning, rationality, objectivity, and other philosophical principles of science of the western-hemisphere developed countries (→ Modernity). In the modernization theories, the definition of a modern nation resembled western industrialized countries in all areas of society, including political and economic behavior, attitudes toward technology and science, and cultural norms. Thus, implicit in this discourse of modernization was a philosophy of what development in the third world should be, and how it should be facilitated.

The modernization paradigm was also influenced by a social evolutionary theory (Portes 1976). In these theories, the third world countries were usually considered as traditional societies and placed at one end of a development continuum, while the industrialized countries in the west signified the modern counterpart and occupied the other end of the same continuum. Unlike the developed countries, the third world nations were regarded as being limited in their capacity to cope with problems or crises

and even to master their environment. At the micro-level, individuals in the developing countries were considered as traditional, uneducated, unscientific, and irrational in their thinking, and generally inimical to modernization. Theories of individual psychological attributes stressed that attitude and value changes among these individuals were prerequisites to the creation of a modern society. These theories argued that modernization of the third world was dependent on changing the character of individuals living there to resemble more closely the attitudinal and value characteristics of people in western Europe and North America (Lerner 1958; Inkeles 1966; McClelland 1966; Rogers 1969).

The development process in the third world countries did not follow the assumptions implicit in the dominant paradigm of development. The paradigm worked better as a description of social change in west Europe and North America than as a predictor of change in developing countries. The neo-classical economic model in the modernization paradigm that suggested a trickle-down approach to development benefits started losing credibility in the 1970s (Seers 1977). The promised trickle-down of benefits did not occur. The worldwide recession of the 1980s and the economic reforms forced by multilateral institutions such as the World Bank on the third world countries left them further behind. The modernization paradigm was also criticized for its negative view of cultures (Singer 1972), especially the religious cultures in the nonwestern world, for its patriarchal biases and for its andocentric views (Braidotti et al. 1994). In the mainstream view, local cultural traditions and living arrangements had to be displaced with attitudes and value sets of people in the industrialized west if the third world nations and people wanted to modernize. This idea no longer has overt supporters (→ Development Discourse).

A universal model of techno-social development as articulated in the modernization paradigm has been increasingly questioned and criticized. Alternative approaches to development that have been posited in the last few decades tend to be pluralistic and indicate varied goals for meaningful and real development in the third world. The concerns in the alternative approaches have included the articulation of development models that are relevant to the local contexts (→ Community Media). The newer approaches have argued for more local people involvement in development initiatives. Grassroots activists have argued for a regeneration of local people's space and local cultures in the developing countries of the third world. In these approaches, goals of individual and community empowerment are usually central. Concerns with spirituality (→ Spirituality and Development), and with cultural and grassroots organizations provided a sharp contrast to the exogenous models of the modernization paradigm and its near-exclusive concerns with the technical and economic systems as the principal drivers of modernization.

## **DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT COMMUNICATION**

The earliest models of → media effects conceptualized the impact of mass media as direct, powerful, and uniform on individuals living in modern, industrial societies termed *mass societies* by sociologists in the early twentieth century. The early models conceptualized communication as a linear and one-way process flowing from a powerful source to a passive receiver. However, more recent research conducted after World War II showed the mass media as weak in effecting important behavioral and attitudinal changes (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948). Communication scholars suggested that the mass media were

more agents of reinforcement than of direct change (→ *Media Effects, History of*). This shift in emphasis made little difference to formulations advocating the use of mass media for development in the third world countries. Here, uses of mass media for transmission of information and for persuasion were transferred to fields such as agricultural extension, health, and education (Diaz-Bordenave 1977; → *Rural Development; Health Campaigns for Development*). The mass media were perceived by administrators and policymakers as important tools for bringing about quick behavioral change, particularly in favor of the modernizing effects of the state (→ *Development Journalism*).

Thus, mass media were considered to be ideal vehicles for transferring new ideas and models from the developed nations to the third world and from urban areas to the rural countryside. The mass media were entrusted with the task of preparing individuals in developing nations for rapid social change by establishing a climate of modernization. They were thought to have powerful, uniform, and direct effects on individuals in the third world. Research in this tradition generated high expectations from the mass media. They were considered the magic multipliers of development benefits in third world nations (Lerner 1958). Information was thus seen as the missing link in the development chain. The quality of information available and its wide dissemination were a key factor in the speed of development. Adequate mass media outlets and information would act as a spur to education, commerce, and a chain of other related development activities.

By the 1970s, it became increasingly clear in Asia, Africa, and Latin America that socio-economic structural constraints greatly diminished the power of mass media in overcoming problems of development (Beltran 1976). The process of development was not as straightforward and clear-cut as conceptualized earlier. And the mass media, far from being independent factors in the change process, were themselves affected by many extraneous factors. The top-down nature of the mass media models and their exogenous orientation were increasingly criticized by scholars and practitioners. Increasingly, it was felt that if development is to have any relevance to the people who need it most, it must start where the real needs and problems exist, namely in the rural areas, urban slums, and other depressed sectors. People living in such peripheries must perceive their real needs and identify their real problems. To a large extent, these people have not been able to do so due to a lack of genuine participation in development strategies ostensibly set up to ameliorate their problems (Mody 1991). Many scholars and practitioners since the 1970s have favored active participation of the people at the grassroots in development planning and execution (Ascroft & Masilela 1994; Jacobson & Kolluri 1999). Other practitioners have favored a more liberating type of communication education that would contain more dialogue and would focus more on the receiver and his/her social context (Freire 1970). In this approach, communication channels are used to generate dialogue, helping people to understand each other and identify their collective problems. Communication is thus used as a vehicle for liberation from mental and psychological shackles that bind people to structures and processes of oppression. Consequently, the changing nature of communication in development was labeled “development support communication” by critical scholars and practitioners. With this term, the emphasis changed from viewing communication as an input toward greater economic growth to visualizing communication more holistically and as a support for people’s empowerment, especially in marginalized groups (→ *Participatory Communication; Communication Strategies for Empowerment*).

## EMPOWERMENT

Sustainable development is not possible unless we deal with a crucial problem in society, namely the lack of economic and social power among individuals at the grassroots and other marginalized groups (Steeves 2000; Wilkins 2000; → Sustainable Development). Individuals are impoverished or sick or often slow to adopt useful practices not because they lack knowledge or reason, but because they do not have reasonable access to appropriate or sustainable opportunities to improve their lives. This is an issue of unequal power. The focus on unequal power dynamics has a direct consequence for development support communication. The transmission approach or the delivery of new information and technology innovations will be insufficient for the task. Empowerment requires more than just information delivery and diffusion of technical innovations (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). The objective of the development support communication professional should be to work with individuals and communities at the grassroots and other marginalized groups so that they eventually enter and participate meaningfully in the political and economic processes in their societies. This calls for grassroots organizing and communicative social action on the part of people at the grassroots, meaning women and others who have been marginalized in the process of social change. Greater importance will need to be directed to the use of communication in empowering citizens. The new focus in development support communication then should be to move away from facilitating development toward assisting in the process of empowerment.

Communitarian theory emphasizes preservation of community and emancipation from oppression at all levels (Tehrani 1994). Liberation, feminist, environmental, and some third world social movements have made arguments consistent with communitarian theory. It appears that communitarian theory offers potential as a general framework that could ground participatory and empowerment-oriented perspectives in communication and development. For development support communication, the goal is no longer just information delivery and diffusion of technical innovations but rather to work with individuals and groups at the grassroots or at the peripheries of a society so that they eventually have a voice in political, economic, and ideological processes in their societies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Community Media ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Development Communication: Asia ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Development Discourse ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Modernity ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Rural Development ▶ Spirituality and Development ▶ Sustainable Development

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## Developmental Communication

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In the last two decades of the twentieth century, communication scholars began to adopt a perspective that recognizes the dynamic and evolving nature of behavior. Termed “developmental” or “life-span” communication, this approach mirrors its sister disciplines, psychology and sociology, in the study of change across time. Communication scholars became interested in this perspective after the 1979 National Communication Association, led by Carl Carmichael and Robert Hawkins, included a caucus on communication and aging (Nussbaum & Friedrich 2005). Just over 10 years later, notable scholars including

Nikolas Coupland, Howard Giles, John Wiemann, Jon F. Nussbaum, and Mark Knapp responded to this surge of interest with a summer conference, a Fulbright International Colloquium, and numerous books that not only showcased a developmental approach to communication scholarship but illuminated the need to more fully appreciate change when examining communicative behavior (Nussbaum et al. 2002; Nussbaum & Friedrich 2005). To date, developmental communication research – with interdisciplinary studies in relationships, media effects, entertainment, education, and health – has produced invaluable knowledge on the individual, relational, and societal levels of how communicative behavior changes over time. Developmental communication has become an increasingly important part of the communication discipline.

## **DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATION: INFLUENCES AND CONSIDERATIONS**

### **The Life-Span Perspective**

Developmental communication is an area of study grounded in psychological as well as sociological research. Influenced by Baltes et al.'s (1988, 4) definition of life-span developmental psychology, developmental communication involves “the description, explanation, and modification (optimization) of intraindividual change in behavior across the life span, and with interindividual differences (and similarities) in intraindividual change.” Communication scholars have adopted and modified this description as well as other life-span scholars' perspectives to create a more communication-specific developmental approach to social science (Nussbaum et al. 2000; Williams & Nussbaum 2001; Nussbaum et al. 2002; Pecchioni et al. 2005). An exploration of these past and present influences reveals the undeniable utility of a life-span perspective when examining human interaction.

Baltes's (1987) *five assertions of the life-span perspective* explain the usefulness and stance of this approach in behavioral studies and have markedly influenced developmental communication research. His first assertion states that life-span developmentalists *refute* the commonly held belief that aging equals decline. His assertion means that we do not necessarily lose communication competence over time. In fact, the opposite is often true: many communication skills actually improve as we age (Bergstrom & Nussbaum 1996; Fingerman 2003). Baltes's second assertion recognizes that development is *not* a predetermined, non-influential form of change. Rather, our development varies in speed and is influenced by a multitude of factors. With this in mind, we can claim that communication development may vary due to different life experiences. Baltes's next assertion states that developmentalists must appreciate the gain–loss dynamic inevitably encountered over time. In other words, as some behavioral skills decline, others may increase in efficacy. Hence, while aging adults may lose abilities that impede their daily living activities, to compensate for such losses they may simultaneously cultivate a more supportive social network that provides assistance in these areas (Nussbaum et al. 2000). Finally, Baltes's fourth and fifth assertions acknowledge the unquestionable fact of diversity in human life. His fourth assertion acknowledges that behavior varies intra- *and* interindividually over the life-span. Our communicative behavior can vary from situation to situation (intraindividual variance) and from other individuals' interactive

skills (interindividual variance). Baltes's fifth assertion further recognizes such diversity: behavioral development is impacted by environmental influences, and vice versa. Therefore, when examining how communication changes over time, it is important to account for relational, social, contextual, and technical factors necessary to fully explain behavior.

Developmental communication scholars have modified Baltes's assertions to reveal the implications this approach has for communication research. One notable modification was presented by Pecchioni et al. (2005) in their text, *Life-span communication*, which was published to update Nussbaum's (1989) book, *Life-span communication: Normative processes*. They modified the above-mentioned definition of life-span developmental psychology to define life-span communication as a perspective that "deals with description, explanation, and modification of the communication process across the life span" (p. 10). They also outlined five propositions exemplifying the need for this approach to answer many communication-related inquiries.

First, they note that it is important to recognize that communication is, by nature, developmental. In other words, communication is a process over time rather than a single event. Second, like Baltes, they advocate acknowledging multiple influences in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of interactive behavior. Their third proposition asserts that when scholars examine communication change over the life-span, they must appreciate both quantitative and qualitative change because quantitative changes are useful in depicting "a difference in degree" whereas qualitative changes display a "fundamental departure in the meaning of an event or a relationship" (Pecchioni et al. 2005, 12).

In their final two propositions, they address theory and method. The fourth proposition advocates including all theories that are testable. Most communication theories lack any consideration of development, yet life-span scholars fully appreciate that any theory may be useful in expanding knowledge of communication behavior. Moreover, this perspective does not exclude any theory of behavior or development. As a result, developmental communication studies have been firmly grounded in communication theory (Nussbaum & Friedrich 2005). Finally, Pecchioni and colleagues address the need to entertain numerous diverse methodologies in order to gain real knowledge of communication change over time. Although cross-sectional designs are a favorite and are certainly helpful, they lack the ability to make causal inferences, observe change over time, or assess interindividual variation. Therefore, developmental communication scholars must learn the strengths and weaknesses of their methodologies and aim to use those that are of most value.

These guiding principles from past and present experts not only offer ways effectively to examine the dynamic nature of our interactive experiences, but also clearly depict the need for communicative behavior to be examined developmentally. Researchers need to know these basic principles and should also bear in mind the two critical factors that influence the substance and worth of any scientific study: theory and method. As Pecchioni et al. (2005) note in their five propositions, theory and method must be carefully considered when exploring communication change.

### **Incorporating Communication Theory**

Developmental communication studies can incorporate theory from all paradigms of thought (Pecchioni et al. 2005). Pecchioni et al. note that, at one end of the spectrum,



interpretive and critical theories are useful in attributing meaning to social interaction as well as in unveiling factors that influence these experiences. For instance, an interpretive perspective – such as Fisher’s (1989) narrative theory – is useful in examining how we communicatively make sense of our social experiences across time through the use of stories. Similarly, critical approaches, such as power and language studies, aid in illuminating factors, like power, that impact communication over the life-span (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction). At the other end of the spectrum, scientific theories enable scholars to examine more universal communicative patterns by using scientific methods to control variables in order to reach more generalizable conclusions from multiple data sets (Pecchioni et al. 2005). The latter approach is more common in the communication discipline as communication theory has typically been generated from this approach. For instance, expectancy violation theory can be used to examine how people react differently over time when their expectations of other people’s behavior have been violated (Burgoon 1994; → Expectancy Violation). In addition, Hirokawa & Poole’s (1986) functional approach is useful for scholars interested in communication development during group decision-making processes (Pecchioni et al. 2005; → Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of).

In addition to the above-mentioned scientific theories, → communication accommodation theory (CAT) has greatly contributed to developmental communication research as well as to the communication discipline as a whole (Ryan et al. 1986; → Intergenerational Communication). Like many life-span studies, CAT views age as a marker related to change. In this case, age is a group identifier that influences behavior leading to generational differences in attitude and behavior. CAT posits that younger adults influenced by negative age stereotypes will over-accommodate their speech with elderly adults. As a result, older adults may encounter negative social experiences with younger generations, which may lead to their avoidance of future interactions. Scholars have also used CAT to advance various models of communication and aging stereotypes. Ryan et al. (1986) introduced the communication predicament of aging model (CPA) to demonstrate that in social interactions, age-related cues (i.e., physical appearance, age, behavior, and socio-cultural signs) activate age-related stereotypes that negatively affect intergenerational interactions, leading for example to over- or under-accommodation results (Coupland et al. 1988).

Even though many intergenerational interactions are influenced by negative stereotypes, Hummert et al. (1994) discovered that some stereotypes are positive (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication). Hummert (1994) extended CPA by proposing the age stereotypes in interactions model to include a stereotype activation cue that is influenced by the perceiver’s self-system, the context, and the physical characteristics of the older person – cues that can lead to either positive or negative outcomes. According to this model, when elderly adults are characterized positively, they are perceived to have fewer communication problems; therefore, we proceed with normal adult communication. Conversely, elderly adults who are characterized negatively receive age-adjusted communication. The communication enhancement model of aging (CEM) also extends the CPA model by considering the conditions that are necessary for positive intergenerational communication to occur (Ryan et al. 1995). This model recognizes that social partners must concentrate on individual needs in addition to group characteristics, in other words, not solely relying on age stereotypes. Recently, Barker and Giles (2003) presented a model that integrates the above-mentioned models and includes intragenerational communication

– an often ignored component, even though older adults reportedly stereotype against their own age group (Hummert 1994). Like Hummert's and Ryan's models, interaction outcomes can be either positive or negative. For positive outcomes to occur, we must accommodate differences in regard to communication effectiveness rather than just assumptions based on the other person's social identity.

By integrating communication theory and appreciating all paradigms of thought, developmental communication research can continue to be produced by well-guided means and studies can be replicated and compared by researchers today and in the future. Moreover, by generating knowledge grounded in theory, scholars have the groundwork to establish theories – and models – specific to developmental communication – an element of the discipline that is significantly lacking and, as is seen with research grounded in CAT, incredibly valuable (Nussbaum et al. 2002).

### **Capturing Communication Development over Time**

While developmental communication scholars should be attuned to integrating theory in their investigations, they must also choose methodologies that enable them to capture change over time (Nussbaum et al. 2002; Nussbaum & Friedrich 2005; Pecchioni et al. 2005). Life-span research, by its nature, is methodologically more difficult as studies must be designed in a manner that enables change actually to be captured rather than just suggested. This is challenging, but experts in various disciplines have already provided guidance to help scholars make better methodological choices.

A critical area of concern frequently discussed in the developmental literature is the issue of capturing intra- versus interindividual change. To date, most life-span communication research has examined interindividual change. These researchers typically utilize cross-sectional designs to compare communicative behavior between age groups. By doing so, scholars can only *suggest* behavioral change over the life-span. For instance, scholars examining adolescents' conflict communication can show that they behave destructively (Comstock 1994). They can compare such findings with data collected from older age groups, such as elderly adults, whose conflict management skills are more constructive, and hence, competent (Bergstrom & Nussbaum 1996). Hence, we can conclude that conflict communication becomes more competent with age. However, when and how these changes manifest is not captured. Consequently, cross-sectional studies often produce findings that lead to misinterpretations of intra- versus interindividual changes over time (Schaie & Hofer 2001; Nussbaum et al. 2002; Pecchioni et al. 2005), illustrating the point that in order to fully appreciate, examine, and interpret communication change, designs and methodologies need to *capture* change, not just suggest it. Scholars need to consider using new methodologies and data from multiple methodological approaches, and to re-evaluate results across time (Pecchioni et al. 2005). In addition, life-span scholars need to utilize a design that enables them to produce the most valuable data. Currently, scholars in various disciplines are recommending longitudinal designs (→ Longitudinal Analysis). Although this design is not immune to validity threats, it remains the best approach in comparison to others (Schaie 2005).

To support this idea, scholars refer to Baltes and Nesselrode's (1979) five rationales for longitudinal approaches when examining development over the life-span. They argue in

favor of this approach because it enables scholars (1) to directly identify intraindividual change as well as interindividual variance within intraindividual change, (2) to appreciate complex phenomena (such as communication) that require knowledge about multiple variables as they occur concurrently, (3) to recognize that development does not always occur in a continuous or same-speed process, and (4) to consider that while behaviors may remain the same for an individual over time, the causes of these behaviors may differ. In essence, these rationales exemplify the critical issue at hand: the need for scholars to capture intraindividual change – an element that has virtually been ignored due to researchers' preference for cross-sectional designs. According to Schaie (2005), data from a conventional cross-sectional design is limited as it only enables scholars to assess interindividual change. Moreover, it is often based on or contributes to the assumption that development is linear. On the other hand, longitudinal designs offer more realistic portrayals of development. They account for the reality that behavior may develop differently. Thus, these designs portray a nonlinear growth curve that encompasses both intra- and interindividual change. In light of this, scholars must formulate longitudinal studies to obtain data over time that takes into consideration inevitable elements of variability (e.g., cohort differences, an unstable environment), and in turn, depicts change more realistically (Schaie 2005).

Although longitudinal research is rare in the communication discipline, other fields – namely human development, psychology, and sociology – have produced studies that can be used as exemplars in constructing future communication studies via this design. These studies include the USC 30-year study of generations (Bengtson et al. 2002), the PAIR project (Huston & Vangelisti 1991), and the Seattle longitudinal study (Schaie 2004). In addition, Schaie (1965) produced a useful tool, the general developmental model, which combines both longitudinal and cross-sectional designs. In the model he also outlines three data collection methods (cross-sequential, cohort-sequential, and time-sequential) in which data is collected with the same participants over time (e.g., time 1, time 2, etc.). Communication scholars have recognized that this model is also an excellent resource to utilize to produce more longitudinal research (Pecchioni et al. 2005).

While methodological choices are a difficult and critical consideration, scholars also need to employ better statistical analyses. This improvement is being sought by developmental scholars across disciplines. According to Schaie (2005), developmentalists using longitudinal design and multiple methods have begun to alter how they measure change because it is now possible to apply very powerful statistical models that enable them to separate patterns individually rather than just assess group averages. Communication scholars are also backing this claim. Nussbaum et al. (2002) note that powerful statistical resources, such as multilevel modeling, are valuable in testing longitudinal hypotheses of developmental change. They note that linear  $\rightarrow$  *structural equation modeling* (SEM) allows researchers to consider variances and co-variances rather than just mean differences from t-tests or MANOVAs, the typical statistical procedures. Like SEM, confirmatory  $\rightarrow$  *factor analysis* can assess differences in communication phenomena within as well as across samples of different age groups (Schaie 2005). Thus, as new, more appropriate methods are utilized in developmental communication research, so too should scholars employ more sophisticated tools to analyze their findings ( $\rightarrow$  Statistics, Explanatory).

## SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

To date, experts in life-span communication have integrated theory into many areas of research using various methods. These studies support the need to examine communicative behavior developmentally, and simultaneously highlight the multidimensional nature of communication. According to these scholars, cognition, language, communication competence, relational change, and media effects are key areas of concern in developmental communication studies (Nussbaum et al. 2002; Nussbaum & Friedrich 2005; Pecchioni et al. 2005).

### The Foundation of Communication: Cognition and Language

Cognition and language are foundational roots of communicative behavior. Yet, as Pecchioni et al. (2005, 41) point out, neither is more important than the other. Rather, “the development of language, cognition, and communication are intertwined.” Hence, communication scholars must consider cognition and language in order to accurately explain and interpret the short- and long-term consequences of behavior.

*Cognition* refers to any thought process that involves the use, storage, and retrieval of knowledge (Nussbaum et al. 2002; → Cognition). Cognitive aging, itself, is a discipline that investigates changes in memory, learning, and intelligence as a function of age (Schaie 2004). These processes impact our social experiences, more specifically our communication efficacy, as early as infancy. Child development studies clearly depict a massive development in cognitive abilities early in life that directly impact children’s capacity to communicate effectively (Haslett & Samter 1997). While it was originally believed that this cognitive development was biologically driven (e.g., Piaget’s theory of early cognitive development), theorists today consider environmental influences, and hence, view cognitive and communication development as bidirectional (e.g., Vygotsky; see Haslett & Samter 1997). Yet, the trajectory of our cognitive development is clear. While this development is significant early in life, it levels off in midlife, followed by a slow decline in later life and a sharper decline after the age of 80 (see Schaie & Hofer 2001). Even though cognitive abilities decline over time, these declines (such as processing speed and retrieval of information) do not significantly impair our social interactions until they are very pronounced, either due to old age or mental pathologies. In addition, people often compensate for these losses by adopting other strategies in order to continue to thrive in their social world.

Like cognitive development, language skills also develop considerably during early life (→ Language Acquisition in Childhood). Moreover, language aptitude develops over the life-span and impacts social interaction. Reportedly, children show great variance in this area of development, likely due to both biological and environmental influences (Nussbaum et al. 2002). By the time children reach the age of 5, they have acquired basic language skills that affect interaction (sound, meaning, grammar, and discourse). By the end of early childhood, language skills slowly decline with the exception of vocabulary, which can continue to expand over the life-span. However, by later life, we begin to lose linguistic skills, primarily those related to syntactic and discourse processing (Ryan et al. 1991). By the age of 70, older adults may even lose competence in verbal fluency, vocabulary,

and verbal performance (Schaie & Hofer 2001). As a result of these declines, older adults are more likely to experience social interactions that may negatively impact their self-esteem (see CAT research).

Language and cognition enable us to transmit information and are a part of our social world. Communication scholars have the challenge of carefully considering these foundational elements of behavior – and how they overlap – while assessing communication change over time. As scholars continue to recognize the importance of this interplay in communication development, future studies will continue to enhance our understanding of interactive behavior.

### **The Development of Communication Competence**

Research in communication competence has been instrumental in capturing the developmental nature of communicative skills (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills; Communication Skills across the Life-Span). According to Parks (1994, 595) communication competence is “the degree to which individuals satisfy and perceive that they have satisfied their goals within the limits of a given social situation without jeopardizing their ability or opportunity to pursue their subjectively more important goals.” While communication competence is related to cognitive and linguistic capacities, acquisition and refinement of these skills is inherently linked with age and experience – in other words, time. Although developmental research in communication competence did not take off until the late 1980s and 1990s, developmental scholars asserted long before this that such skills were learned and cultivated with age. Thus, life-span communication scholars should be concerned with how these communication competencies develop over time.

To date, research in communication competencies has centered on specific points in time, namely child development. As communication competence is linked with linguistic competence – skills typically acquired during infancy and adolescence – this focus on youth is not surprising. Much of the research centers on two areas of communication development: verbal skills and communication knowledge. Haslett and Samter (1997) note that most verbal skills (e.g., word production, initiating conversations) are learned from birth up to the age of 5. From birth up to the age of 3, children learn that communication is interpersonal. Between the ages of 3 and 5, conversational competence begins, and after the age of 5 more complex verbal skills are learned, such as monitoring, evaluating, and repairing messages. With time, individuals also learn to integrate these skills into social experiences (i.e., communication knowledge). These competencies accumulate as early as one year from birth, and like verbal skills, continue to develop with age.

Although less prominent than research focused on child development, scholars have also examined communication competence during middle childhood (see Stafford 2004). During this period of life, children learn communication competencies in nonliteral language, code switching, appropriateness of roles, conversation rules, and more complexity in language organization, vocabulary, abstractness, and syntax (Stafford 2004). In other words, linguistic competence coincides with the development of communication skills. Similarly, cognitive growth is also linked to communication competence. As we age and

our cognitive skills become more sophisticated, so too do our interactive strategies. For instance, older children have more competence in perspective-taking, adapting messages, message design, counterarguing, as well as in attending to listeners' needs (O'Keefe 1988; → Message Design Logics). In addition, Stafford (2004) notes that social growth occurs as children learn to communicate more competently in a variety of settings (e.g., school, family, peers). During this time, they acquire skills such as caring behaviors, argumentation skills, and emotional/affective display rules – skills that have been found to develop further in later periods of life.

In sum, the findings indicate that communication competence develops over the life-span. Various areas of communication competence demonstrate this growth. Emotional support skills first emerge in middle childhood when the parent–child separation and adolescent struggle for independence begins (Burlison & Kunkel 2002). As we become more cognitively complex (or age), we become more competent in our ability to support others emotionally (→ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication; Support Talk). This development is also exhibited in conflict communication. Children begin to learn argumentation skills in middle childhood, such as persuasive messages and situation-specific arguments (Stein & Albro 2001). By later life, older adults prefer and utilize more solution-oriented or cooperative conflict strategies, and hence, are more communicatively competent (Bergstrom & Nussbaum 1996; → Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span).

Clearly, with age, our communication skills become more competent. Hence, communication competence is a developmental phenomenon and should be examined as such. In addition, it is crucial that scholars take into account the interplay of cognition and language, as communication is grounded in these phenomena. By doing so, scholars can better examine how we develop and refine our communicative behaviors to adapt to life changes over time.

### **Relational Change**

Communication scholars have also produced a multitude of studies on relationship change (→ Relationship Development; Relational Maintenance; Relational Termination). Ultimately, due to cognitive growth alone, relationships are bound to change over time (Cohen 1981). Nonetheless, relationships are also influenced by life events that alter roles, dynamics, and expectations (Pecchioni et al. 2005). For these reasons, relationships are not stable phenomena, and the communicative behaviors used to adapt to relational changes are also not stagnant. Research to date illustrates the dynamic nature of relational communication in both family and nonfamily bonds. Therefore, it further supports the need to examine relationships and communication developmentally.

Studies across disciplines show that families change over time as relationships evolve or cease; members are born, welcomed, or lost; and the structure as a whole is altered. Family scholars have been examining family changes for the most part of the twentieth century. They have termed this approach the family life cycle (Duvall 1957), family development (Rodgers & White 1993), life-span (Hagestad & Neugarten 1985), and life course (see Price et al. 2000). Today, communication scholars also examine family from this perspective and have provided insight into how relationships and communication

change over time in the following bonds: parent–child; sibling; marital; and grandparent–grandchild (→ *Family Communication Patterns*).

The parent–child bond has been examined developmentally during the child’s adolescence (Haslett & Samter 1997), during midlife (Putney & Bengtson 2001) and during the parent’s old age (Fingerman 2003). During these time periods, the bond experiences role changes, variation in closeness, struggles of power and control, and at the same time encounters normal and non-normative transitions that alter the nature of relationships, such as health crises, divorce, marriage (Pecchioni et al. 2005). During these changes, parents and children are challenged to cope by adapting the way they communicate. For example, during the child’s adolescence, parents must learn to adjust communicatively to the child’s desire for independence and simultaneously manage their own midlife changes, such as “juggling” multiple roles and encountering unexpected transitions such as divorce (Fingerman et al. 2004). In later life, aging parents may have to adjust to being cared for by their adult children by communicatively adapting to changes in power dynamics and independence (Fingerman 2003).

Siblings also experience incredible change over time, and yet display a life-span of closeness that significantly impacts their lives (→ *Sibling Interaction*). Cicirelli’s extensive work has shown that siblings experience several relational changes in closeness. The relationship begins with a high level of closeness in early life, there is then a loss of closeness in midlife, and finally, closeness resumes in later life (Cicirelli 1983, 1991). Early in the life-span, siblings encounter life events, such as leaving home, that may lead to distance in their relationship; however, during later life, when siblings have more in common, they often become a significant source of social support to one another (Nussbaum et al. 2000). Although even less studied, research also indicates that the grandparent–grandchild bond experiences communication change in response to transitions. For instance, when parents divorce, grandparents and their grandchildren may lose contact or see one another less frequently (Noller & Fitzpatrick 1993). As a result, they may employ new communication strategies to maintain the relationship. Age also plays a role in how this bond develops. For instance, older grandchildren perceive their grandparents’ role differently in comparison to younger grandchildren, which ultimately impacts how they communicate (Pecchioni et al. 2005). In addition, younger grandparents tend to be closer to their grandchildren than older grandparents; consequently, cohort differences may impact this bond’s development.

Though not widely studied, bonds outside the family also experience dramatic changes over time. Of these voluntary relationships, friendships have received the most scholarly attention (→ *Friendship and Communication*). Though little is known about friendships on the macro-level, these studies highlight how the meaning of friendship evolves, how conversations with friends change with time, and how friendships play different roles at various stages of life (Pecchioni et al. 2005). Like other bonds, the friendships are influenced by cognitive, linguistic, and communicative development (Haslett & Samter 1997). Patterson et al. (1993) found that the meaning of “best friends” becomes more complex with age. In pre-adolescence, friendships are based on play or shared activities (Haslett & Samter 1997). By adolescence, friendships influence identity formation (Haslett & Samter 1997). From young adulthood through middle adulthood, the number of friendships decreases as other aspects of life (e.g., career, marriage, and children) influence the nature of the bond (Pecchioni et al. 2005). Yet, by later life, older adults’

friendships are often considered a critical component to successful aging as they become a significant form of social support. Research shows that friendships in later life provide a critical source of social contact, offer a context in which to manage health decline both emotionally and physically, and act as a primary source of emotional comfort not received from family (Nussbaum et al. 2000).

Thus relational changes are evident across time. Likewise, communication changes within voluntary and nonvoluntary bonds occur as the relationship evolves and encounters new circumstances. It is evident that communication scholars need to approach such studies from a developmental perspective that takes into account the dynamic trajectory of change both relationally, communicatively, and individually.

### **Media Effects**

Media exposure has greatly increased in recent years, which heightens the need to examine media influences on communication over the life-span (→ Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span; Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span; Educational Television, Children's Responses to; Media Use across the Life-Span). Wilson and colleagues' studies reflect how media exposure leads to short- and long-term consequences (see Strasburger & Wilson 2002; and Wilson 2004 for reviews). A notable media influence, television, plays a large part in how we formulate and evaluate our social world, and even impacts development into adulthood (Strasburger & Wilson 2002; Wilson 2004). Rather than just being influenced by friends, peers, family, and real-life social experiences, children are now noticeably impacted by what they see on TV. According to Wilson (2004), media shapes behavior, views, and expectations of family life behavior. Studies show that family communication patterns predict media habits and that media exposure can lead to conflict and power struggles between family members (see Wilson 2004). Moreover, these exposures affect perceptions of beauty and health, violence and aggression, and can even endorse stereotypes (see Strasburger & Wilson 2002). Additionally, more TV viewing in children is associated with negative long-term outcomes such as the potential for aggression and violence (see Strasburger & Wilson 2002; → Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of).

Ultimately, these media effects are related to cognition. As children cognitively develop in youth, they utilize these skills to interpret their social world, as well as what they view on TV (Strasburger & Wilson 2002). Recently, Valkenburg & Cantor (2001) produced a typology that descriptively characterizes cognitive development in accordance with media consumerism. During the first stage (infancy), primary information concerns are centered on the senses: smells, colors, sounds, and objects. During the second stage – preschool years – cognitive processing is still unsophisticated as children cannot distinguish between advertisements and sitcoms and also cannot identify the intent of programming. Interestingly, however, social relationships do influence our consumerism during this stage. For instance, when preschoolers are accompanied by an older sibling while watching a suspenseful program, they are less likely to experience fear (Weiss & Wilson 1998). During the third phase or elementary years, cognitive aptitude increases, and by the end of this stage, the foundations of consumer behavior are set (Valkenburg & Cantor 2001). Children can categorize information into schemas and are better at information processing (Strasburger &



Wilson 2002). Their perspective on what they see on TV affects how they behave and perceive real-life events (Strasburger & Wilson 2002; Wilson 2004). For instance, during these years, children perceive that families on TV are realistic, even though studies show that TV programming typically portrays families too idealistically (Weiss & Wilson 1998). Hence, by the time children enter elementary school, exposure to media has cultivated an unrealistic view of the social world, which ultimately influences interaction (Wilson 2004). In other words, part of our interactive learning comes from unrealistic representations on TV. As a result, scholars have recently been advocating mediation, suggesting that families should exercise more control over children's media exposure (Wilson 2004; → Parental Mediation Strategies). According to Wilson, by producing more studies, particularly longitudinal research, scholars can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the long-term effects of media on interaction.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Today, developmental communication scholarship has expanded and enhanced the stature of the discipline by contributing theory-grounded knowledge of human interactive behavior as a dynamic process. However, it should be noted that research has predominantly centered on communication at certain points in time (youth or later life). Consequently, a lack of knowledge of communicative behavior over the entirety of the life-span still persists. In addition, outside of life-span research, communication as a developmental phenomenon is still rarely integrated into studies. According to Pecchioni et al. (2005, 14) it is not an understatement that "communication as a developmental phenomenon has been systematically ignored in the discipline."

Nussbaum & Friedrich (2005) note that advances in this area of research should continue with the following two issues in mind: (1) expand the scope of the life-span to include it in its entirety; and (2) utilize the most appropriate and optimum methodologies to capture change. For instance, communication scholars need to pay more attention to overlooked areas in the life-span (midlife and young adulthood) and become more familiar with methodologies such as longitudinal design and multilevel modeling. In doing so, scholars can help contribute to our understanding of communication as a developmental phenomenon and continue to extend knowledge of the dynamic nature of communication in our social world.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span ▶ Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Friendship and Communication ▶ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ▶ Intergenerational Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Parental Mediation Strategies ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relational Termination ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Sibling Interaction ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Social Support in

Interpersonal Communication ► Statistics, Explanatory ► Structural Equation ► Support Talk ► Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Dialogic Perspectives

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Multiple intellectual traditions exist within a dialogic perspective toward organizational communication. These intellectual traditions share a common set of theoretical inclinations that distinguish a dialogic perspective by focusing on discourse, holism, and tensionality (Stewart et al. 2004). First, dialogic approaches emphasize the *centrality of discourse*. A dialogic perspective focuses on both “little d” and “big D” discourse, with the former centering on language-in-use and the latter spotlighting enduring systems of thought, feeling, and action that structure the way organizational members make sense of and act in their social worlds (Fairhurst & Putnam 2004). Second, dialogic approaches are *holistic* as they emphasize the interplay among communication, context, action, and meaning. Third, dialogic approaches view human systems as riddled with *tensionality*, which requires theorists and researchers to articulate the tensions constituting a system and how individuals attempt to manage them (→ Organizational Discourse).

Dialogic perspectives are also marked by difference, as some intellectual traditions use dialogue as a descriptive term and others employ it as a prescriptive term (Stewart & Zediker 2000). A *descriptive approach* to dialogue views all human life, communication, and meaning-making as dialogic whereas a *prescriptive approach* views dialogue as a particular type or style of relating and communicating. Three intellectual traditions toward dialogue have emerged within organizational communication: (1) dialogue as a form of critical thinking and deliberation, (2) dialogue as a form of relational practice, and (3) dialogue as a form of discursive coordination (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication).

Dialogue as a *form of collective thinking* and deliberation is best reflected in the work of David Bohm (1990) and the MIT learning organization project (Senge 1990). Dialogue is conceptualized as a special form of meeting that occurs at particular moments when people gather to explore how their thought patterns control their interactions. Dialogue as a form of collective thinking allows individuals and groups to explore how each makes meaning in situations, to become aware of the incoherence in their thoughts, and to establish a common pool of meaning that facilitates learning. Dialogue is a prescriptive phenomenon that emphasizes the importance of setting ground rules to create safe space for conversation and mastering the abilities of inquiry and advocacy (Isaacs 1999). Organizational

members who wish to create dialogue maintain a tension between accepting and rejecting their own thoughts, beliefs, and feeling through a process known as suspension.

Dialogue as a *form of relational practice* is best reflected in the work of Martin Buber. Buber (1998) characterizes dialogue as an ability to stand one's own ground while being profoundly open to the other. Dialogue facilitates organizational members creating I–Thou relationships where they enter into authentic communication with one another. Dialogue is a prescriptive form of interaction that emphasizes individuals being authentic, present, and accepting with others while communicating. Buber's work has been particularly useful for exploring the notions of otherness and spirituality within organizational communication processes and how organizational members can create genuine meeting with one another (Black 2005).

Dialogue as a *form of discursive coordination* is highlighted in the work of → Mikhail Bakhtin as well as Kenneth Gergen. Bakhtin (1981) is concerned with the dialogic qualities of language where dialogue is used as a descriptive term to highlight interrelatedness among self and Other in language and being. Dialogic practices are aimed at furthering meaning-making and creating patterns of coordination by managing the tensions among multiple voices and Discourses. Organizational members must learn how to make wise choices about how to structure their discourse and what Discourses need to be foregrounded and backgrounded if they are to orchestrate successfully working relationships (Barge & Little 2002).

Most recently, Gergen et al. (2004) contend that all communication is dialogic, involving relational coordination as people organize their activity from within the flow of communication. Gergen et al. have developed a descriptive approach that articulates different patterns of dialogic interaction. Generative dialogue occurs when the meaning-making potential of a previous communication is elaborated by subsequent communications, whereas degenerative dialogue occurs when the meaning-making of a previous communication is negated by successive communications. Generative dialogue is the basis for successful organizing because the process of successive affirmation creates a stable, yet fluid, image that individuals can co-orient around and so sustain their activity. One important exemplar of dialogue in Gergen et al.'s approach is an appreciative approach to organizational development and management that emphasizes picking up and spotlighting life-generating qualities of previous organizational activity and leveraging them to create new forms of meaning-making and action (Barge & Oliver 2003).

SEE ALSO: ► Bakhtin, Mikhail ► Deliberativeness in Political Communication ► Knowledge Management ► Learning Organizations ► Organizational Discourse

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## Diffusion of Information and Innovation

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### THE DIFFUSION PARADIGM

*Diffusion* is a multifaceted perspective about social change in which people, innovations, and the media environment affect how rapidly change occurs. Scholars dating back at least to the German social philosopher Georg Simmel and the French sociologist Gabriel Tarde theorized about imitative behavior at the level of small groups and within communities, and the relation between these micro-level processes to macro-level social change. In the 100 years since, researchers have tended to conceptualize diffusion either at the macro sociological level of sector, system, national, or state change (Dearing et al. 2006), the social psychological or communicative level of local relationships and how those linkages affect adoption patterns as in the classic studies by Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955) and by Rogers & Kincaid (1981), or the psychological level of how individuals perceive innovations in the form of a codified set of pros and cons (Manning et al. 1995). Beginning in the 1960s, diffusion concepts have been operationalized and used to purposively spread pro-social innovations through → development communication in Colombia, Pakistan, Brazil, Nigeria, India, Finland, Korea, Tanzania, Bolivia, and Vietnam (see, e.g., Puska et al. 1986).

Since 2000, diffusion studies have traced and explained the spread of kindergartens across cultures throughout the world, the spread of schools-of-choice policies among the 50 states in America, the diffusion of tobacco-control policies back and forth between Canadian and US political jurisdictions, the adoption of participatory approaches in

community health system planning, the spread of e-commerce, and the online spread of social norms among adolescents. Studies such as these form the basis of the generalized codification of key concepts and the general over-time pattern of diffusion from a literature of more than 5,500 publications as best synthesized by the communication scholar → Everett Rogers in his successive editions of *Diffusion of Innovations*. Diffusion concepts have also contributed importantly to theoretical and conceptual development of social learning theory, technology transfer, dissemination strategy, → social network theory, → entertainment education, and now the science and practice of translational studies (Singhal & Dearing 2006).

### MAIN ELEMENTS OF DIFFUSION

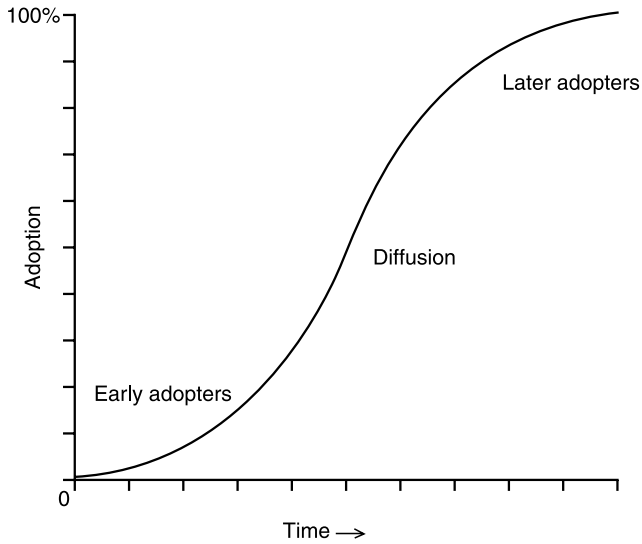
Rogers (2003, 5) defines *diffusion* as “the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.” An *innovation* is anything that potential adopters perceive to be new, inclusive of new ideas and beliefs, explicit and tacit knowledge, processes and protocols, tools and technologies, even value belief systems. The first 2.5 percent of adopters are *innovators*; the next 13.5 percent *early adopters* (a category that includes the subset of *opinion leaders*); followed by the *early majority* (34 percent), *late majority* (34 percent), and *laggards* (16 percent). Diffusion conceptualizes individuals as progressing through stages of change as they first confront, make sense of, and then routinize that which was new to them (→ Stages of Change Model).

Newness is key in diffusion processes, since the perception of newness creates uncertainty in the mind of potential adopters about what they should do or how they should respond to the opportunity presented to them about the innovation. Uncertainty, in turn, leads to a feeling of discomfort or → cognitive dissonance, which propels the individual to seek out, first, descriptive information about the innovation (typically through efficient mediated communication channels such as the Internet), and then evaluative information about how well the innovation performs (most often through nonmediated and mediated interpersonal discussion and observation of others’ behaviors). It is at this point that perceptions of the attributes of innovations become important. Simplicity, low cost, effectiveness, how observable the results of an innovation are, and how trialable an innovation is are all attributes positively related to individual-level adoption and system-wide diffusion.

Thus, in diffusion processes, communication of information through mass and specialty media often precedes the communication of personal influence through informal communication networks, especially local networks. Because people tend to communicate with others whom they recognize as similar to themselves, real and perceived heterophily slows diffusion. Innovations can spread rapidly within one clique or network of like individuals, and then take years to achieve acceptance in other networks where members differ in terms of demographics, ethnicity, behavior, and situation.

### LINKING MACRO- WITH MICRO-PHENOMENA

Many diffusionists take a macro-structural perspective on diffusion, especially those in population planning, demography, economics, international relations, anthropology, and



**Figure 1** Diffusion is a nonlinear over-time process of social influence

linguistics. Such scholars conceptualize waves of innovations washing over societies, and serving as the means by which social change occurs, as in → agenda building or → agenda setting. Their units of adoption are countries or cultures. A macro-orientation to diffusion is highly enticing to scholars because of its deductive and parsimonious potential based in a simple mathematical law of nature that describes a logistic (S-shaped or exponential) growth curve (see Fig. 1). Marketing scientists, epidemiologists, demographers, and political scientists create and test mathematical models of diffusion, based on this predictive potential and eloquence (→ Marketing).

Other scholars, including many in communication studies, conceptualize diffusion at a micro level of analysis of focusing on the predictors of positive adoption decisions of individuals or organizations, or interpersonal relations and how they mediate the effects of information exposure about innovations, or local social networks and how network position is related to adoption decisions (→ Interpersonal Communication).

The diffusion paradigm is noteworthy, especially in the work of Rogers (2003), for deliberately offering explanations based on empirical studies of how macro-change processes are linked to micro-individual- and group-level processes. The explanations offered show both how micro-level units of adoption (usually people) are influenced by system norms, as well as how system change is dependent on individual action. Diffusion is one of the very few social theories that persuasively links macro- with micro-level phenomena.

### **MASS MEDIA, SPECIALTY MEDIA, AND NEW MEDIA**

Mass communication channels are the most efficient means for spreading awareness of innovations that have popular or broad appeal. When the innovation in question is only an idea, as in knowing something new, awareness equates with adoption. Often, however, agencies or organizations have objectives that require more of adopters. To adopt, they



must engage in a new practice, buy a new service, or commit to learn a new routine. In these cases, mass communication functions to raise awareness and, for some, produce information-seeking behavior. For innovations with specialized appeal, such as new medical procedures or disease-prevention interventions, specialty media in the form of targeted magazines, industry newsletters, and conference presentations function to spread awareness.

The promise of new media, especially the Internet and portable telecommunications, is high, and not only for speeding up the awareness of innovations. New media, especially formats such as tailored interactive web pages that allow for portrayals of innovations, can be designed to encourage choice and a sense of ownership among potential and actual adopters, to show social modeling of the innovation, and to increase efficacy. Customized websites can, for example, increase the likelihood that modifications made during the implementation of adopted innovations will not be counter-productive. Insisting on innovation fidelity by discouraging or prohibiting adaptation is negatively related to adoption. Portable digital assistants and cell phones can be used to reinforce decisions in diffusion-based health campaigns (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in).

### **INNOVATION QUALITY AND DIFFUSION**

Many people assume that high quality, especially when paired with low cost, will result in rapid diffusion. This expectation is often not met. Many innovations that have a tangible basis spread because of other factors, such as bandwagon effects in which managers or administrators are afraid of lagging competitive rivals, or because the decision to adopt is decoupled from responsibility for implementation. In both cases, diffusion can be extensive, but implementation and use can be quite limited.

The diffusion literature includes many examples of advantageous innovations that do not achieve widespread use, even after many years, and even when campaigns are conducted to publicize them. This is so even for highly effective “best practice” innovations that have demonstrated, empirical advantages compared to alternative ways of achieving the same ends, and it is so even when studying diffusion within the same organization, where the rate of adoption might be expected to be more rapid than the adoption across separate organizations. Concerning innovation diffusion, what is best and what is used are frequently different. For example, in the field of health promotion, a computer simulation by Stover et al. (2002) found that if proven programs in HIV/AIDS prevention were actually adopted worldwide, 29 million new infections could have been prevented by 2010.

Cases from the diffusion literature do not stop at highlighting effective innovations that do not diffuse; we also have cases of innovations with very important implications for adopters that spread prior to the communication of any information about their effectiveness, such as in the rapid imitation of strike behavior by eighteenth-century coal miners as studied by Conell & Cohn (1995). Fads and fashions occur regularly; having an innovation received by potential adopters as fashionable can be highly desirable. Yet other studies have documented the diffusion of ineffective innovations.

In sum, while effectiveness is typically positively related to positive adoption decisions, the correlation can be weak, with other factors more highly correlated with adoption. Social influence is one of those factors.

## DIFFUSION AS A SOCIAL PROCESS

Opinion leaders influence the decisions that others make about innovations that are communicated to them (Weimann 1994; → Opinion Leader). Opinion leaders are the reason why diffusion can be such a very efficient process to jump-start: an innovation source or sponsor need only communicate an innovation to a special small subset of all possible adopters for the innovation to spread through a social system. Their existing influence and the extent to which followers monitor the attitudes and behaviors of opinion leaders can do the rest as long as opinion leader attitudes are favorable toward the new practice, and followers positively identify the opinion leader with the innovation. The social influence of opinion leaders either by talking or by example-setting is what drives the diffusion curve up, giving it its characteristic “S” shape. Opinion leaders are also responsible for innovations *not* diffusing, by ignoring an innovation (passive rejection) or speaking out against it (active rejection). Studies of higher-order aggregates demonstrate opinion leader effects through interorganizational networks, and among counties and nations (→ Interorganizational Communication).

Different people take different lengths of time to adopt innovations. For some, only one or two people in their personal networks or “reference groups” are required to adopt before the focal individual then adopts; for others, nearly all others in their personal networks or reference groups must adopt before the focal individual finally converts. These differences are *thresholds* that vary from person to person for any particular innovation.

Beginning with the empirical results of Ryan and Gross (1943), diffusion has been understood to be a social process. While knowledge is often gained through the largely one-way communication of information, especially with the increased information search capabilities of new communication technologies, persuasion occurs through the two-way communication of social influence, most commonly in the form of local informal opinion leaders who are already in place and who already influence the decisions of others. Information alone, whether in one-on-one counseling, training workshop, website, brochure, etc., is insufficient to move the individual toward a positive decision or even serious contemplation of innovation costs and benefits when the innovation in question is perceived to be consequential by the potential adopter.

Opinion leaders are perceived as expert and trustworthy, influential, credible, popular, a near-peer friend, and accessible. The trait of *opinion leadership* tends to be stable across time, and operates consistently across social systems such as hospitals, schools, towns, and distributed networks. In intervention work, opinion leaders are especially effective when they are not asked to do too much. Asking opinion leaders to advocate, persuade, promote, or educate in ways they normally would not with their colleagues is asking them to risk their status within the system in question by formalizing what is an informal role.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory  
 ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Development Communication ▶ Entertainment Education  
 ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Interorganizational Communication  
 ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Marketing ▶ Opinion Leader  
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## **Digital Divide**

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“The digital divide” terminology is often used in policy discourse to refer simply to access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). It is a misnomer in at least two ways. First, it suggests that there is something new and different about the particular information and communication inequalities that surround digital technologies, whereas it is just the most recent case of inequality spawned by the advent of new ICTs (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Hence, we should include a historical perspective in our examination of communication technologies and inequality (see, e.g., Marvin 1988). Second, it is the definite article *the* in “the digital divide” that

falsely suggests a single dimension dividing people into haves and have-nots when it comes to ICTs. *Digital divides* are better conceived as occurring at multiple levels of analysis and as a multidimensional phenomenon (Norris 2001).

### MULTIPLE LEVELS OF ANALYSIS: INDIVIDUALS, COMMUNITIES, AND COUNTRIES

One of the first things that researchers do when a new technology emerges is to track its diffusion through the population to note differences between the people who have early access and those who do not. The idea of a divide comes with the belief that access privileges people in some way; for example, people with access can communicate farther, more quickly, more easily, and less expensively than people without access (→ Access to the Media). With respect to ICTs, there are continuing large-scale survey research efforts to track patterns of access and utilization. These are generally at the *individual or household level of analysis*. Some of the better known are the Pew Internet and American Life Project which began its reports in 2000; the US Department of Commerce (2004) which began reporting in 1995, a series of reports by German public stations ARD and ZDF since 1997, and the World Internet Project, an international collaborative project looking at the impact of ICTs. These and other micro- or individual-level studies produced a familiar pattern. Those with relatively early access to ICTs tend to be relatively well educated (Howard et al. 2002), at higher income levels (Chakraborty & Bosman 2005), younger (Loges & Jung 2001), and members of a majority race or ethnicity (Kim et al. 2002; → Exposure to the Internet).

While the majority of studies are done at the individual or household level, ICT inequalities are also meaningfully analyzed at the *level of community* or residential area. There are, in other words, divides between communities that are or are not able to take advantage of resources that are available in digital form; for example, resources offered by institutions that concern quality of everyday-life dimensions such as health, transportation, leisure, education, and political representation. Communities that have integrated the → Internet and other ICTs into their indigenous → communication infrastructures (Matei & Ball-Rokeach 2003) are prepared to engage the digital worlds in and around them. There are many efforts to close community-level digital divides (e.g., Hayden & Ball-Rokeach 2007; → Community Integration). Researchers have found that interventions to close community-level digital divides are most successful when they take into account the existing and particular communication infrastructure of a community and adjust their efforts accordingly (Borgida et al. 2002). For example, some communities may benefit more from building a local network, while an Internet cafe may be more beneficial in others (Ferlander & Timms 2006).

In addition to the individual/household (micro) and community (meso) levels of analysis, there are studies of *digital divides between nation-states* (macro). According to a report of the International Telecommunication Union (2006), the average level of Internet penetration in the world was 13.3 percent in 2004. In this instance the haves are generally the developed world and the have-nots are the developing nations. For example, Europe and the Americas had penetration rates of 31 percent and 28 percent, respectively, while Asia and Africa had lower rates of Internet penetration – 8 percent and 3 percent, respectively.

The study of ICT digital divides has also been grounded in the context of larger issues of globalization. An important aspect of these inquiries is attention to the active negotiations of technologies by developing countries and marginalized populations. These often overlooked groups may create rich networks of association and commerce utilizing inexpensive versions of ICTs such as Internet cafes, prepaid phone cards, or mobile phones. Cartier et al. (2005), for example, refer to such negotiations by rural-to-urban migrants in China as the activities of “the information have-less.” Wilkin et al. (in press) observed that even in a global city like Los Angeles, it is possible for some new immigrant groups (e.g., Latinos) to have very low rates of Internet connection, relying on lower-tech technologies to maintain their networks of association.

### THE MANY DIGITAL DIVIDE DIMENSIONS

In addition to the vertical dimension of ICT access (haves/have-nots, have-less) that are of primary concern in the early diffusion of digital technologies, horizontal dimensions of digital divides emerge as people go beyond access to consider qualitative dimensions of how ICTs are employed in daily life. For example, the technological quality of connection is likely to affect people’s Internet use. In terms of broadband penetration rates, there are significant differences across countries. In 2006, South Korea led all countries with 83 percent broadband penetration, followed by Hong Kong (81 percent), Iceland (74 percent), Israel (69 percent) and Taiwan (65 percent) (Cox 2006). The speed and ease of connecting to the Internet is likely to affect the frequency of Internet use and the range of Internet activities (US Department of Commerce 2004).

Hargittai (2002) speaks of a *skills divide* or a “second-level digital divide.” Among those with relatively good ICT access, there are profound differences in the skills people develop when they engage ICTs. Generally, the people who develop higher-level Internet skills are well-off (Jung et al. 2001) and better educated (Bonfadelli 2002). Socio-economic differences have been observed in the adolescent population, again with higher socio-economic status being associated with a higher skill level (Jung et al. 2005). Given the importance of ICT skill level to issues of education and employment, studies are beginning to examine students’ educational achievement as a function of Internet skill level (Huang & Russell 2006).

As with any other communication technology, there are wide variations in what people do with ICTs in the course of seeking to achieve everyday-life personal and social goals. What people do on the Internet, for example, may reflect individual differences (e.g., skill level or personal goals), but often these differences are grounded in their socio-cultural and ethnic orientations (Kim et al. 2002). Another important source of variation is age (Loges & Jung 2001). Age, of course, reflects the widely varying histories of cohorts or people with respect to their information and communication practices. The socio-cultural differences associated with gender (Kennedy et al. 2003) and occupation (Thompson 1998) have also been found to affect the ways in which people engage ICTs in everyday life.

There are substantial divides or differences in *how people go online*, and these may affect what they are willing and able to do online. For example, whether people go online mainly on a home computer or on a computer at another location, or whether they go online with personal computers or with mobile devices, are important factors that are likely to affect

what they can or will do online. How people go online can depend upon individual choice, but it is also largely affected by the national ICT infrastructure. A case in point is Japan where, because connection to the Internet via mobile phones developed earlier than Internet connection via home computers, more people go online via their mobile devices than via home PCs (Ito et al. 2005). For example, 33.5 percent of Japanese Internet connectors access the Internet exclusively via mobile phones (NICT 2005), fewer people (28.3 percent) access the Internet exclusively via PCs, and 38.2 percent use both mobile phones and PCs.

Another horizontal or qualitative difference that might be viewed as a divide is the *relative importance of the Internet and other ICTs vis-à-vis other media*. This issue bears upon the position of ICTs in a larger media and communication ecology. Researchers have examined variations in people's Internet behavior in context of their home environment where many other media are present (Beentjes et al. 2001). Another approach to this issue is to ask people how much they would miss the Internet if it were unavailable (Jung et al. 2005) or by asking people to choose which media they would give up if forced to do so (USC Annenberg School Center for the Digital Future 2005).

It is important to examine multilevel and multidimensional digital divides in the light of Castells' observation: "The fundamental digital divide is not measured by the number of connections to the Internet, but by the consequences of both connection and lack of connection" (Castells 2001, 269). Discussions of the digital divide need to be grounded in their historical context and within the larger issue of communication technology and inequality. In the scholarly literature, discussions about the digital divide have become increasingly critical of this terminology and have begun to contextualize various kinds of divides within the broader contours of society. Nevertheless, this terminology continues to be widely used in policy settings, often being juxtaposed with debates about "digital opportunities." Future research will continue to be focused on the many dimensions of these divides, on the reasons that this language maintains its currency in national and international policy debates, and on the social, political, and economic consequences of failures to adequately address the complexity of the issues in this area.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Community Integration ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Online Media ▶ Technology, Social Construction of ▶ Telecenters

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# Digital Imagery

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Two distinct processes can give rise to digital images. On the one hand, they can be created entirely by computer, as → animations or as single computer-generated images. On the other hand, they can be produced photographically, through digital cameras and camcorders, or through the digital scanning of photographs originally recorded on celluloid (→ Photography). When a real visual scene is photographed digitally, the scene's pattern of light and color is translated into a rectangular grid of pictorial elements, known as pixels. Variations in brightness or color from one pixel to another are recorded in terms of discrete, fixed units – hence, “digitally” – instead of the continuous gradations employed by analog media.

These properties of digital photographs, which are also characteristic of wholly computer-generated images, have substantial technological consequences. Digital images can be copied repeatedly with no significant loss of information between one generation and the next. Likewise, they can be transmitted without significant loss across computer networks. Perhaps most notably, from a communications perspective, digital images that started out as photographs can be manipulated and altered by computer.

## POTENTIALS OF DIGITAL IMAGERY

Because of the dominant position of Adobe Photoshop in the market for photo-manipulation software, the term “photoshop” has now entered the dictionary as a synonym for the act of computerized photographic manipulation. The term is also commonly used to refer to the manipulated image itself. However, software for the manipulation of photographs had been in use for at least a decade before the commercial release of Photoshop in 1990. A notable early instance was the February 1982 cover of *National Geographic* magazine, in which the position of an Egyptian pyramid was shifted in order to create a more pleasing design. Popular media portrayals of computerized photo-manipulation often paint an exaggerated picture of what it can accomplish. For example, in the 1998 movie *Wag the Dog*, a single tap on an editing keyboard instantly transforms one object into another in a news video.

The actual capabilities of Adobe Photoshop and similar software are much better represented by the *National Geographic* example. As far as substantive changes in an image are concerned, the *capabilities that matter* most are the following: (1) the ability to detach an object in the image from its background more precisely and more efficiently than was typically the case through traditional cut-and-paste methods; (2) the ability to selectively resize portions of an image relative to the rest of the image; (3) the ability to clone parts of an image and paste the cloned patterns, colors, or textures elsewhere in the image; and (4) the ability to change an image's brightness, contrast, and/or color values in a much less cumbersome manner than that entailed in traditional photographic darkroom work. In one combination or another, these four types of operations have been



responsible for a series of photo-manipulations that have periodically raised public concerns about the social implications of digital imaging. The first two are exemplified by the notorious post-9/11 hoax entailing the insertion of an incoming airliner in a photograph of a tourist on the observation deck of the World Trade Center (an image subsequently rumored to have been retrieved from a camera that was found in the buildings' ruins). During the Israel–Hezbollah war of 2006, cloning was used to amplify the smoke over Beirut in a news photograph that led to the dismissal of a Reuters stringer. And, following O. J. Simpson's arrest on suspicion of murder, the fourth type of manipulation was used to darken a *Time* magazine reproduction of his booking photograph (→ Picture Magazines).

### PROS AND CONS

Two somewhat contradictory tendencies recur in scholarly analyses of this aspect of digital imaging. On the one side are those writers who are concerned about the *erosion of the evidentiary value of photography*. In a book originally published in 1990, Fred Ritchin (2006) describes the sense of dislocation and rupture that he felt when he realized that a news image of Tom Cruise and Dustin Hoffman was actually a digital composite and that the two actors had never been in the same physical space when the original photographs were taken. As Mitchell (1992) has argued, during a century and a half of traditional photography, the chemical basis of image creation had underwritten public belief in a causal link between photographs and reality. According to Mitchell, the advent of digital imaging has severed that link and ushered in a new, "post-photographic era," in which photographs are now no closer to reality than handmade pictures or other non-photographic images are.

In seeming opposition to such views, though, other writers have argued that the *idea of photographic truth* has always been an illusion and that concerns about digital lying are misplaced (Kember 2003). According to the authors of a theoretical treatise on new media, "Digital photography poses a . . . threat for those who believe that the traditional photograph has a special relationship to reality. . . . But in any case photographic 'truth' was not unassailable even in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (Bolter & Grusin 1999, 106).

Indeed, photographs that were recorded on celluloid and printed on paper have always been subject to alteration through cutting and pasting. Moreover, as photo-editor Kenneth Brower has pointed out, such darkroom manipulations as "burning" or "dodging" – i.e., selectively over- or under-exposing portions of a photographic print so as to emphasize certain features and suppress others – were considered routine, unremarkable elements of standard photographic practice (Brower 1998) .

Finally, since every photograph is the product of an inevitable act of selection as to where and when to record an image, there is a sense that no photograph can avoid manipulating reality (Lang & Lang 1971). With these considerations in mind, writers such as Julie Newton (2001) have argued that, far from representing a radical departure from earlier photographic culture, what digital images have brought about is a heightened appreciation of the complex nature of photographic truth and falsehood. This awareness is reflected in the work of professional photojournalists and editors, who are reportedly more attentive to certain practices, such as cropping, which might previously

have passed without comment (Gross et al. 2003), and it is also evident in the writings of academic authors with photojournalistic experience, who have invested considerable effort in the delineation of the boundaries and contexts separating acceptable from unacceptable forms of visual manipulation (Wheeler, 2002; Lester, 2005; → Image Ethics). In a related development, the systematic detection of digital manipulation has received increasing attention from such writers as Brugioni (1999), and Hany Farid has developed a substantial body of computerized techniques for that purpose (Lyu & Farid 2005; Popescu & Farid 2005; Farid 2006).

What is less clear is how the broader public views these matters. Vicki Goldberg has noted that, even as early as the post-Civil War period in the US – i.e., barely 25 years after the introduction of photography – the use of photographs as evidence in a courtroom trial was felt to require corroboration by expert witnesses who testified as to the photographs' authenticity (Goldberg 1991, 24). Since the advent of digital imaging, several instances of computer manipulation – for example, *Time's* O. J. Simpson cover – have received considerable attention in the mass media. After it was revealed that *TV Guide* had pasted Oprah Winfrey's head onto the body of actress Ann-Margret for a cover photo, the magazine published a humorous apology, in which Oprah's head was superimposed on the bodies of a number of other celebrities. Moreover, increasing numbers of nonprofessionals have direct experience with image-editing software.

These circumstances suggest that the general public is not entirely naïve about digital imaging technology. As far back as the 1990s, surveys by Messaris (1997, 156–160) and Huang (1999) point to widespread knowledge about the digital manipulation of images, together with relatively nuanced views about the acceptability of such practices. Moreover, research by Greer & Gosen (2002) suggests that greater understanding of the technology is associated with increased likelihood of its acceptance. Of course, these trends do not preclude the possibility that substantial numbers of people may still be deceived by any one instance of digital tampering. Awareness of a principle is not the same thing as being able to detect all of its applications. For example, in a study of college students' ability to discern the superimposition of one person's head on another person's body, about a third of the sample failed to detect a manipulated image, and about two-thirds incorrectly imputed manipulation to an image that had not been altered (Wheeler 2002).

Although issues of photographic truth and falsehood have received the lion's share of attention from writers concerned about the implications of digital imaging, such concerns should not blind us to other important ways in which digital images have affected the nature of visual communication. The fact that digital images can be manipulated by computer may have substantial social consequences even when the manipulation is transparently obvious and freely acknowledged. Moreover, the other characteristics of digital imaging – their *replicability and ease of distribution* – are significant in themselves, even when an image has not been manipulated in any significant way. Both of these possibilities figure prominently in studies of nonprofessional users of digital imaging technology (e.g., Cohen 2005; Majid 2005; → Amateur Photography and Movies). Because the market for digital media has experienced the same trend toward lower prices that has occurred in other sectors of the computer-related economy, the development of digital imaging has led to unprecedented levels of public access to the technologies of visual production, post-production, and distribution. These developments, in turn, have nourished a widespread

belief that digital technologies may loosen the grip that large corporate media have historically exercised over the flow of public communication.

### THE USE OF DIGITAL IMAGERY IN JOURNALISM AND FILMMAKING

Emblematic instances of this putative trend are not hard to find. In the realm of visual journalism, the Iraq war has provided several notable examples of photographs that achieved wide circulation despite the fact that they were taken by nonprofessional photographers (Griffin 2004a; Perlmutter 2006; → Photojournalism). A study by Frank (2004) has also drawn attention to amateur web posters' extensive use of Photoshop and related software to create composite images that comment on the news in a manner somewhat similar to that of traditional editorial cartoons. Focusing specifically on visual reactions to the terrorist attacks of September 11 – for example, a picture of Osama Bin Laden superimposed on the center of a urinal – Frank argues that such amateur image-making may be seen as a corrective to the restraint of the professional press and, at the same time, a protest against that restraint (→ Ethics in Journalism).

A parallel widening of the scope for amateur creativity is also taking place in the world of film and video, whose production practices have been affected radically, at all budgetary levels, by the advent of computer-based editing. Since the late 1990s, a number of movies produced entirely on consumer-level digital video have entered into commercial distribution, beginning with *The Last Broadcast* (1998) and *The Blair Witch Project* (1999). The latter is notable for its innovative use of the Web as a means of generating advance publicity (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

According to Holly Willis, the fact that *The Blair Witch Project* grossed \$140 million on a production budget of \$40,000 “helped spark an avalanche of interest in digital filmmaking, and along with it, a renewed rhetoric of transformation” (Willis 2005, 30) – i.e., a belief that digital technology would enable a renaissance of independent filmmaking in the US and elsewhere. However, Willis herself approaches such claims with caution. She notes that similar aspirations have been ignited repeatedly by previous waves of technical innovation – for example, analog video in the 1970s – only to be extinguished by the inertial power of existing institutional and economic arrangements. While it may be true that technologies of digital production and distribution have made it possible for a number of individual filmmakers and other creators of images to break out of obscurity, it does not necessarily follow that these technologies will lead to any enduring changes in the flow of information and ideas through the mass media. As Griffin (2004b) has observed in a study of newsmagazine visuals about US military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the broad patterns of pictorial coverage adhered to established narratives despite the publicity given to “spontaneous” images from the field. The established media industries have a history of absorbing or out-competing independent operators, and it should not be taken for granted that this historical trend will cease to operate in the case of digital media (→ Media History).

One issue that is often overlooked in discussions of the transformative powers of digital media is the fact that the wide availability of photo-manipulation technologies has not been matched by the other major category of digital imaging, namely, *computer generated imagery (CGI) and computer animation*. The ability to create photorealistic images

entirely by computer, and to make them move in a naturalistic manner, is still largely confined to the professional media industry and, most prominently, to special-effects houses (→ Special Effects). Scholarly analyses of special effects have noted their role in enhancing the visual spectacle of Hollywood movies and providing a measure of insulation against competition from television and independent cinema (Darley 2000; Pierson 2002). Dalianis (2005) has argued that digital effects are analogous to the spectacular visual creations of baroque art, whose function was also to bolster the social position of its patrons (→ Spectacle).

On a more metaphorical level, Bukatman (2003) has interpreted F/X scenes of flying superheroes as compensatory reactions to the anxiety-producing dislocations of rapid technological change. Within the media industry itself, however, the trend toward digital effects may also serve another function. To the extent that effects become major sources of movies' commercial appeal, they may contribute to wresting control of production away from powerful stars and returning it to producers and directors (Messaris 2006; → Film Production). Such a development would indeed constitute a transformation in the distribution of media power, although not of the sort that most digital-media enthusiasts have been hoping for.

SEE ALSO: ► Amateur Photography and Movies ► Animation ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Ethics in Journalism ► Film Production ► Image Ethics ► Media History ► Photography ► Photojournalism ► Picture Magazines ► Special Effects ► Spectacle ► Visual Communication

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## Digital Media, History of

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Digital media, also known as “new media,” comprise content created, disseminated, and/or stored using digital computers or mobile devices (video games, blogs, etc.), as well as their physical embodiment (DVDs, flash memory sticks, etc.). Digital media are often defined in contrast to “analog media,” new media in contrast to “mass media.” The history of digital media documents the move of computers from glorified calculators to devices for human communications, entertainment, and creative production, linking digital media to earlier interactive machines and media.

Central to this move and to computers more generally is memory: one of the definitions of digital media is *digital storage device*. The first clear articulation of computer memory

to store both data and instructions was John von Neumann's 1945 *First draft of a report on the EDVAC*, in which he compared vacuum tubes to human neurons. More concretely, J. Presper Eckert developed a mercury signal delay tube to produce "regenerative memory." Static magnetic memory – based on recording technology developed in Germany during World War II – was first used in 1952 for an MIT test machine. The term digital media, however, does not simply mean digital storage: not only do early forms of digital storage (CRTs, ferrite magnetic coated tapes, and so on) not register now as digital media, the emergence of digital media effected the notion of medium as storage device. The term digital media encompasses broader definitions of medium as a form of circulation, dissemination, and communication. These understandings emphasize algorithms and human use over storage and thus the difference between technology and media. Important to these definitions are the development of higher-level programming languages, real-time and graphic user interfaces, and networked communications – all of which rely upon discrete hardware.

### **DIGITAL, REAL-TIME COMPUTATION, AND HUMAN AUGMENTATION**

Higher-level *programming languages*, which enable language-based exchange between man and machine, depend on the programmability of discrete computation. Because digital machines treat ranges of signals as one value, they allow for the precision necessary for solving equations numerically, and for ensuring that instructions, stored in computer memory, are accurately read and executed. The first implemented higher-level language was Short Code for the UNIVAC (1950); the first widely used language FORTRAN, developed by IBM (1954–1957). Stemming from the desire to use the computer to program itself, higher-level programming languages hide the specificities of hardware and memory allocation from the programmer, and focus the programmer's attention on questions of problem flow and data relations. Computers are thus part of the drive within media development to offer a highly technologized, equipment-free reality (Benjamin 1968).

Software as a mediating entity also requires *real-time interfaces*, where real time means computation that occurs "in conjunction with instruments receiving and responding to stimuli from the external environment" (OED). The first real-time digital computer was the WHIRLWIND, a post-World War II project initiated by the US Navy and MIT to produce a universal cockpit simulator. It eventually evolved into an Airforce-funded, continent-wide missile detection system known as SAGE, already obsolete by the time it was first fully implemented in 1963 (Edwards 1996). Real-time interfaces are the basis for time-sharing interfaces such as UNIX, developed by Bell Labs in 1970, that make the user feel as though he or she controls a shared machine and are thus considered the basis for personal computing (Campbell-Kelly & Aspray 1996). Real-time interfaces also make possible graphic user interfaces (GUIs), in which computers respond in real time to user input framed as an intervention on to a graphical surface.

*Graphic user interfaces* – along with a concerted commercial effort to turn computers from industrial to personal commodities – have helped to make computers personal multimedia machines. GUIs are part of a series of attempts to make the computer a vehicle of empowerment and mastery, rather than an object of grudging acceptance and resentment. Douglas Engelbart, who demoed the first mouse in 1968, argued as early as

1962 for the development of computer interfaces to augment human intellect. Such systems, he argued, would enable the type of associative linking (and thus human progress) advocated by Vannevar Bush in his highly influential “As we may think” article (1945). Theodor Nelson, who coined the term “hypertext” and was also influenced by Bush’s ideas, similarly argued “Responsive computer display systems [that] can, should and will restructure and light up the mental life of mankind” (Nelson 1987). Whether or not such displays could or would effect, or have effected, such results, GUIs have been a key component to the spread of desktop computers and the automation of office work.

### INTERNET COMMUNICATIONS AS MEDIA

The → Internet has provided a means of circulation that makes digital media mass media. Like the technologies described above, the Internet was a military creation designed to augment human intelligence and turn humans into more creative producers. The Internet stems from ARPANET, a US military-funded network designed to link together several research sites. The main impetus behind its development was the belief that time-sharing computer networks could bring about a “man machine synthesis” (Licklider 1960). The most popular use of ARPANET was an unforeseen one: electronic mail, an application that would also drive widespread civilian use of the Internet. In 1983, with the formal adoption of TCP/IP, the Internet proper – as a network of networks, based on an open protocol to link differently configured local area networks – would emerge.

Commercial transactions were prohibited on the Internet until 1991, and before 1991 popular forms of communications were email (→ Electronic Mail), newsgroups (1979), Internet Relay Chat (IRC, 1988), and multi-user text-based games (1978), such as MUDs and MOOs. Access to the Internet backbone was limited to academia, the government, and the military, although there were some public bulletin board services run by organizations such as the WELL in San Francisco. Communications were mainly text-based, although image files could be downloaded.

The Internet as popular mass medium coincided with its commercialization, the privatization of its backbone (early 1990s) and the development of the *world wide web* (WWW) by Tim Berners-Lee in 1990. The WWW enabled the mass sharing of linked files and provided an easy to use, readily accessible way to post personal and commercial content. At first, the WWW was populated by personal and institutional homepages, designed with a distinctly amateur DIY aesthetic (now perpetuated as an indicator of “authentic” digital content). Soon flashy “push” media (content delivered to users whether or not they had requested it) were developed for the WWW. With the frenetic laying down of fiber optic cable in the late 1990s, high-bandwidth media such as video and music became available and “real time” referred less to synchronous computing and more to synchronous transmission. Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games (MMORPGs) also emerged. Technology, however, does not guarantee use: fiber optic cable was initially laid down in the 1980s in anticipation of demand for the video phone (→ Internet, Technology of).

During the mid- to late 1990s, the Internet was conflated with William Gibson’s “cyberspace” and was viewed as an alternative space that belied government regulation, big business, and intellectual property (Chun 2006). The information superhighway was

to fix all our political problems, from racial discrimination to the ills created by the mass media. The Internet was supposedly uncensorable, since it allegedly treated censorship like a network outage and thus routed around it. It was also a fundamentally anonymous and participatory medium. According to Janet Abbate (1999), “the culture of the Internet challenges the whole distinction between producers and users.” Information, the hacker ethic argued, wanted to be free (Levy 1984). This did not mean, however, that all of the utopian discussions around the Internet were non-commercial. New companies, such as amazon.com, seemed to threaten the continued existence of brick and mortar companies. Digital media were also sold as the medium of convergence and soon, it was prophesied, all mass media would converge into one narrow-casting digital form (→ E-Commerce).

### VIDEO GAMES AND OTHER “MEDIA”

Video games are a crucial form of digital media, and their history intersects with and diverges from the history of communications media. Video games underlie literary conceptions of cyberspace (Chun 2006; → Video Games).

The first *computer game* is widely accepted to be *Spacewar*, developed by Steve Russell for the PDP-1 minicomputer at MIT in 1962; the first major hit the arcade game *Pong* in 1972. The development of microchips in the late 1970s enabled more graphically complex arcade games and the development of relatively affordable digital home game consoles. Japan has a strong game machine tradition and in 1978, Taito’s *Space Invaders* was the first computer game to be more popular than local *pachinkos* (Malliet and de Meyer 2005). It and *Pac-Man*, introduced in 1980, were cross-continental hits. During this period, pre-assembled personal computers such as the Commodore-64 (1982) and the Macintosh (1984), on which computer games could be played and copied, were also introduced, and these multi-use computers threatened the game console business.

The game console, however, came back in the 1990s with new machines by Nintendo, Sega, and Sony, and later Microsoft. Made possible by the globalization of computer production, which led to cheaper microprocessors and memory, the return of the console signaled a move away from the personal computer as the universal machine, toward ubiquitous computing: from Ipods, introduced in 2001, to smart phones. SMS text messaging, first developed for GSM phones in Europe, is extremely popular globally and has started to penetrate the US market (Lee and Keeter 2006). Digital media have thus not simply signaled a convergence in hardware, but also a proliferation of it.

Digital media have also *penetrated other forms of media*. For instance, digital special effects have made animation and stop-image photography a more prominent factor in the practice and history of cinema (Manovich 2001). Devices and services such as Tivo have also affected normal television watching practices, making it possible to skip through commercials and to post recorded television shows on the Internet. This change in audience behavior is most distinct in fan sites and blogs, linked to early print fanzines, on which users post their own narratives based on the shows and stars of interest, and share information about the show. These have impacted the development of various series, with directors reputed to visit fansites regularly. Television shows have also produced official websites, which offer teasers for shows to come, episode summaries, photo galleries, and so on. The question is: what now is not digital media?



## CURRENT USAGE

New media have become both more and less than expected. They are used by over one billion users worldwide, and commercial transactions are now commonplace. Their very existence, however, has not eradicated older institutions and governmental regulations. The Internet, after all, is a networking protocol, and hence can be changed: policy-based routing protocols used by cable providers, for example, have challenged the equal treatment and circulation of data. As well, intellectual property laws, introduced by the US government, make “fair use” of digital media difficult. The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) has launched an aggressive anti-piracy campaign directed against content-sharing sites, as well as individual end users. The use of the Internet to prosecute people, from terrorists to journalists, and its use in commercial forms of surveillance have belied its status as an “anonymous medium.”

All this has not meant the demise of digital media DIY culture and free circulation. New networking sites, such as gnutella, are truly distributed and thus cannot be easily shut down. Sites such as Youtube.com enable users to post their own videos, and blogs, and indymedia sites have come to rival news sites as a source of credible information. More damningly for local newspapers, sites such as Craigslist, in which people can freely post classified ads, have taken away an important income source. Many popular sites, such as facebook.com and myspace.com, herald a return to homepages, albeit in an extremely standardized but easier to use form. Myspace and blogs are part of the much heralded Web 2.0 centered around these social networking sites, which enable the quick and easy posting of micro-content.

SEE ALSO: ► Digital Divide ► E-Commerce ► Electronic Mail ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Interactivity, Concept of ► Internet ► Internet and Popular Culture ► Internet, Technology of ► Video Games

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## Digitization and Media Convergence

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From the 1980s onward, media technologies have gone through a phase of *digitization*. CDs and digital music media replaced records and tapes in the 1980s and 1990s, and movies are increasingly being produced and distributed digitally. Newspaper production has become computer based and the news is distributed not only on paper, but also digitally on the web. Satellite television is completely digitized in many countries, cable networks are partly digitized, and in several countries terrestrial networks for television are being digitized. Furthermore, various models for digital radio are being tried out. And new digital media services, based on platforms like the web or the mobile phone, have become important in many parts of the world.

Digitization is the process of coding signals as numbers. When signals are digital, computer technology can be and is involved in all stages of production, as well as in distribution and media use. One single computer can be used to create and consume variants of all media. An important aspect of digitization is that the boundaries between different media have been brought into question and a presupposition has developed that we are in an era of *media convergence*.

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, convergence literally means “the act of . . . moving toward union or uniformity,” and is used to describe a number of phenomena: in physics, math, and geography, as well as in the media. Early concepts about media convergence were presented in the 1970s, but it was in the 1990s that the concept really impacted debates about media developments. From the 1990s onward, media convergence became a key issue in academic texts, policy documents, and industrial papers. The concept has had a strong influence in political and industrial circles. It communicates a media landscape

undergoing significant changes and has been instrumental in convincing politicians, regulators, investors, and other market players that they needed to adapt their strategies. The concept is, however, not always clear. There are a multitude of interpretations of what media convergence is, focusing on different entities that converge. Nevertheless, a few dominant interpretations may be singled out, emphasizing both the general arguments about convergence, and some more critical perspectives on the employment of the concept of convergence as a general description of media developments.

### **NETWORK CONVERGENCE**

The concept of network convergence implies that when digitized, any network can be used to transmit all kinds of digital signals – provided speed and bandwidth are high enough. There is no difference between sound, text, and images in digital networks, as they are all transmitted as bits and bytes, in contrast to analog signals. Consequently, possibilities are opened for integrated networks and seamless communication between networks that had earlier been used for separate purposes (e.g., voice telephony networks, cable, satellite and terrestrial television, and data networks; → Satellite Television; Cable Television). For consumers, an easier future has been imagined where each household could have one network for all communication purposes.

These predictions were particularly strong in the mid-1990s. A decade later, we find that most networks are digitized, and most are used for multiple purposes. The copper networks formerly used for telephony only have now been digitized, and in many areas enhanced to DSL (digital subscriber line) standards, implying that the same network can be used in communicating sound, text, and images. Similarly, cable television networks are in many areas upgraded to not only transmit television, but also enable telephony and IP (Internet Protocol) access (often called triple play). Most households are, however, connected to even more networks than before with recent additions such as wireless local area networks (WLAN), mobile networks, and DSL and broadband services, as well as broadcasting networks. The main reason for this is partly that people rely on electronic communication for more and more purposes, and partly that even if the networks are digital and potentially can transmit any services, many networks (such as terrestrial television) are still specialized for certain services.

### **TERMINAL CONVERGENCE**

Digitization means that computers could be used in the production and use of all kinds of media services, and several voices have predicted that this would lead to terminal convergence, meaning that different media terminals would be reduced to one – the “überbox.” As stated by George Gilder in the early 1990s: “The new system will be the telecomputer or ‘teleputer,’ a personal computer adapted for video processing and connected by fiber-optic threads to other teleputers all around the world. Using a two-way system of signals . . . the teleputer will surpass the television in video communication just as the telephone surpasses the telegraph in verbal communication” (Gilder 1994, 45).

The most radical versions of such scenarios were obviously too extreme. Although personal computers, advanced mobile phones, and other hand-held devices are multi-use

terminals, we see the number of terminals created for specific media types or user situations is growing. There are more and more kinds of terminals, not fewer. The mechanisms of capitalism ensure that we are unlikely to see the full convergence into one “übe-box” (if anyone ever truly believed that) – simply because the industry has very high stakes in always selling new and diversified gadgets.

### **SERVICE AND RHETORICAL CONVERGENCE**

Another aspect of media convergence has been the convergence of services. As digitization enabled the transmission of all digital media services over the same networks, and the use of different kinds of services on the same terminals, the services themselves were expected to converge. The services would become increasingly integrated with each other, and new multimedia services would develop. For television, cross-media formats, in which television shows are integrated with emails and/or text messages from mobile phones directly on the screen, are gaining importance. And on the web, audiovisual services are combined with text services that allow for chat, instant messaging, and network building.

The more radical versions of this line of reasoning have suggested that we will see not only the integration of services but also a rhetorical convergence in which expressions and genres would no longer be distinct, but grow into one unified language. This is a much more contested assumption than the integration of formats and services across media. Studies of new media show that what we do see is a growing number, and a differentiation, of genres in digital media. Each of these genres may be seen as a convergence of traits from one or more earlier genres, but the total number is growing (Fagerjord 2003).

### **MARKET CONVERGENCE**

A convergence of networks, terminals, and services was further expected to lead to a convergence of markets (→ Media Economics). It would no longer be self-evident where the telecom markets ended and the media markets started. The distinctions between infrastructures and services, software and media content, would become increasingly blurred. Thus ICT (information and communications technology), telecom, and media companies would merge or form alliances and we would, to an increasing degree, see the development of multimedia companies.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, we have seen large fluctuations in the communications markets, including new alliances across the value chain, the most prominent example being the merger between the Internet service provider AOL and the media house → Time Warner Inc. in 2000. There are many similar examples of alliances and mergers between telecom and content companies in both national and regional contexts. Nevertheless, this is only one aspect of the market changes. Parallel to this there are several examples of divestitures, of breakups of alliances, and of companies scaling down to “core business.” Thus, in addition to the tendencies toward vertical integration and blurred boundaries between old sectors, there is also a development toward new and highly specialized sub-markets (→ Consolidation of Media Markets).

## **REGULATORY CONVERGENCE**

The above perceptions of convergence between communication networks, terminals, services, and markets has had a strong impact on political discourse. In the 1990s, several governments, as well as the EU, produced consultation documents about the regulatory impact of convergence. It was argued that many of the old regulatory instruments were outdated, as they were related to specific technologies that were now converging – a development that produced inconsistencies in the regulatory framework.

This is illustrated by the 1997 EU green paper arguing that lack of action would prevent countries from taking full advantage of the possibilities convergence enabled. “If Europe can embrace these changes by creating an environment which supports rather than holds back the process of change we will have created a powerful motor for job creation and growth, increasing consumer choice and promoting cultural diversity. If Europe fails to do so, or fails to do so rapidly enough, there are real risks that our businesses and citizens will be left to travel in the slow lane of an information revolution which is being embraced by businesses, users and by Governments around the world” (EC 1997, 35).

It was argued that a new regulatory regime was necessary in which the regulations were horizontal. This implied that all electronic networks would exist within one framework – and all media services and contents would be in one framework. Such views were also supported by academic writers who pointed at the inconsistencies between the technological and the regulatory levels (e.g., Cuilenburg and Slaa 1993).

Following these debates, in many countries, regulations that used to be separate for different networks (e.g., voice telephony, cable television, and broadband services) have been integrated into common regulatory frameworks for all electronic networks. But, for media services and contents, regulations are usually still separate for different media. Generally, broadcasting, press, telephony, and web services have been and still are subject to different regulations. The reason for this is not only that institutional legacies are slowing regulatory reforms. The convergence processes have also been less pervasive than predicted. Media are much more than technology. Many, maybe even most differences between media are not due to technological factors, but are grounded in social codes, economy, rhetoric, and even our cognitive faculties. Thus, even if digitized, different media still vary in their characteristics, usages, and purposes. Different media play different roles in society, and politicians and regulators still perceive the need for regulation to be different (→ Communication and Law).

## **DIGITIZATION AND DIFFERENTIATION**

Digitization has enabled significant changes in the media – such as the blurring of boundaries between media that earlier were more distinctly different. Media convergence may be a description of how networks and terminals are used for multiple purposes, services integrate elements from audiovisual and text media, and media and telecom corporations form vertical alliances. At the same time, a number of closely related, yet quite opposite developments are taking place. There is an increasing diversification of products and terminals; new categories of services and genres develop, and new specialized companies and sub-markets. Thus, digitization contributes to the blurring of

boundaries between media, but this does not always imply media convergence. There are also developments toward stronger differentiation of media in which elements from earlier separate media and sectors are combined in new ways.

SEE ALSO: ► Cable Television ► Communication and Law ► Consolidation of Media Markets ► Digital Media, History of ► Media Economics ► Satellite Television ► Time Warner Inc.

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## **Direct-to-Consumer Advertising**

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Marketing communication is often equated with mass advertising using media such as television, radio, and print (→ Marketing; Advertising; Television; Radio). This is often referred to as above-the-line advertising. Besides these media, organizations can also use more directly targeted media, which include direct mail, telephone, email, etc. (→ Electronic Mail). This is referred to as below-the-line advertising or direct-to-consumer advertising. Remarkably, spending on below-the-line advertising more than doubles spending on above-the-line advertising in the US (V12 Group & Winterberry Group 2006). Moreover, below-the-line advertising spending has increased by 7.5 percent per year, while spending

on above-the-line advertising increases at a lower rate of 5.5 percent per year. These figures emphasize the importance of below-the-line advertising.

Traditionally, direct marketing has been the field that mainly focused on the use of direct-to-consumer advertising. In the early days, direct marketing was mainly associated with firms almost solely relying on direct media, such as *Reader's Digest*. The US-based Direct Marketing Association (DMA) defines direct marketing as an interactive system of marketing that uses one or more advertising media to effect a measurable response and/or transaction at any location. According to McDonald (1998), there are three key issues in this definition: (1) direct marketing is interactive, (2) all direct marketing actions are significantly more measurable than traditional mass advertising, and (3) activities connected with direct marketing communication can take place at any location.

European scholars have advocated a broader definition of direct marketing. Both Tapp (1998) and Hoekstra (2003) have emphasized the relationship dimension of direct marketing. Tapp (1998) defines direct marketing as a way of acquiring and keeping customers by providing a framework of three activities: (1) analysis of individual customer information, (2) strategy formation, and (3) implementation such that customers respond directly. It has also been acknowledged that direct marketing can be viewed at three levels (Hoekstra 2003): (1) direct marketing at the firm level: direct marketing drives the business (e.g., ING Direct, Capital One); (2) direct marketing at the marketing strategy level: direct marketing drives part or all of the marketing strategy (e.g., British Airways, Tesco); and (3) direct marketing at the tactical level: direct marketing is used within the communication mix (e.g., Albert Heijn).

Within direct marketing, multiple media are used (→ Marketing: Communication Tools). These include: telephone, direct mail, catalog, television (direct response commercials, home shopping), print media (coupons in → magazines, → newspapers, specialty print media advertisements), direct response radio. The upcoming of the → Internet has increased the potential of direct marketing dramatically. Consumers now use it as one of their primary information channels, while in certain product categories, such as travel and leisure, the Internet is the dominant channel. The field of → e-commerce focuses on the Internet channel. E-commerce is defined as the process of buying, selling, or exchanging products, services, and information via computer networks (Turban et al. 2004).

Direct marketing is closely related to other terms often used, the most important being *database marketing*. Verhoef and Hoekstra (1999) defined database marketing as that which uses individual customer and/or prospect data from a customer database and transforms these into information that supports marketing decision-making by applying statistical analysis and/or modeling techniques. Thus, database marketing focuses on the analysis of individual customer data.

The scientific marketing community has mainly studied direct marketing from a customer selection perspective. Research mainly focuses on predicting which customer or prospect is most likely to respond (i.e., response to a mailing). Direct marketing practice often uses the so-called *RFM-methodology* (recency of last purchase, frequency of purchase, and monetary value of purchase) to select customers. Marketing scientists have proposed sophisticated statistical models, such as logit models and decision trees. Another relevant topic is the prediction of *customer lifetime value*, which is defined as the expected net present value of all customers' future earnings. This concept is being used to value,

segment, and rank customers. High-value customers might be treated differently from low-value customers. Research in direct marketing practice is mainly concerned with testing the content and presentation of the media. For direct mailings, simple rules for the presentation of the envelope, the characteristics of the letter, brochure, and reply device have been developed based on expertise. For example, it has been recommended that they use short words, short sentences, and short paragraphs, and that they look easy to read (Roberts & Berger 1999).

Since the end of the 1990s, there has been much attention given to customer relationship management (CRM). This concept is clearly related to both direct marketing and database marketing. CRM is defined as a strategic approach that is concerned with creating shareholder value through the development of appropriate relationships with key customers and customer segments. CRM unites the potential of relationship marketing strategies and IT to create profitable, long-term relationships with customers and other key stakeholders (Payne & Frow 2005). Due to the focus on CRM in many firms, the proposed relational aspect of direct marketing is often nowadays ignored. Direct marketing is now usually again equated with its instruments, such as direct mail. The economic impact of direct marketing is, however, very large (DMA 2006).

Overall, direct marketing is an interesting and relevant discipline within marketing, which requires sufficient attention both in marketing practice and in marketing science.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Marketing: Communication Tools ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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# Directives

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Directives were described by Searle (1975) as one of five basic *speech acts*. In his approach, taken from linguistic philosophy (→ Linguistic Pragmatics), speech acts were defined by a particular fit between words (propositional content) and the world. Directives are the class of speech acts that attempt to fit the world to the words; they are attempts by a speaker to get a hearer to do something. The class of directives as Searle proposed it encompassed a wide range of action verbs in English – command, request, plead, invite, permit, and many others – without distinguishing among them in any way. He left aside such issues as the fact that words for directives would vary across languages, that contextual variables such as magnitude of the desired action and relationship between speaker and hearer would affect which kind of directive might be used, and the varied responses hearers might have to directives. The basic definition of directives as attempts to get people to do things does, however, lend itself to a connection with compliance gaining and persuasion in the field of communication (see Fitch 1994).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Searle did, nonetheless, take directives seriously as examples of how people made sense of indirectness. Because directives tend to be made indirectly, he claimed (an observation since confirmed among middle-class North Americans and contrasted with many other speech communities), they provided useful examples for understanding how hearers could recognize utterances as directives even when they seemed to be phrased as something else. “Can you pass the salt?” was a common example, as a question that no competent hearer could fail to recognize as a request for action rather than for information.

Rosaldo (1982) posed one of the most influential challenges to speech act theory based on analysis of directives among the Ilongot tribe of the Philippines. She observed that pervasive direct commands within this group upheld, rather than contradicted, a strikingly egalitarian interpersonal ethos among persons. She proposed that the failure of speech act theory lay in its assumption that language use could exist separately from social structure: “[I]t fails because it construes action independent of its reflexive status both as consequence and cause of human forms” (1982, 204). This inseparability of language use from social interaction is the central premise of the ethnography of speaking more generally (→ Ethnography of Communication), and much subsequent work on directives has proceeded as culturally situated case studies in that vein.

Before elaborating on the ethnographic work on directives, however, a strand of investigation more in line with Searle’s original formulation bears mention. Language pragmatics can be construed as the study of how people do things with words. *How to do things with words* (Austin 1962) was, in fact, the title of the seminal work from which Searle’s proceeded, and directives have received considerable attention from that direction. Politeness theory (Brown & Levinson 1987) developed Searle’s observations about

indirectness by pointing out the face threat inherent in nearly all directives (→ Politeness Theory). To try to get someone to do something they were not already doing (or to stop doing something they were doing) by definition constrains their autonomy or interferes with their freedom of movement, i.e., threatens their negative face. Directives may also threaten positive face if they concern something the hearer could already be expected to know they should or should not do. Telling a parent that their child is hungry and should be fed, for example, threatens the hearer's positive face as competent to know and meet their child's needs.

### FACE THREAT IN DIRECTIVES

The presumed face threat inherent in directives creates in many cases a social need to mitigate such threats, leading to the pragmatic question, what kinds of utterances can count as directives, being a complicated one. Commands, when formulated in conventional ways, are unmistakable: "Sailor, swab the decks." "You will clean your room this minute, young man." Hints, by definition, are far less transparent as to their status as directives. Rushforth (1985) gives an example of an Athabaskan saying, to an assembled group of kinfolk, that if he had a dog he would go hunting. This utterance, perhaps formulated within a sequence of general conversation about dogs or hunting, was understood to be a request to borrow a dog. Similarly, many North American speakers of English have little difficulty understanding the utterance, "I'd love to see you when I get to town, but if I take the bus from the airport I'm not sure I'll have time," as a request for a ride from the airport.

Some pragmatics research has thus examined the tradeoff in such indirect formulations of directives: a straightforward command is clear but is likely to be face threatening. An indirect request saves face but risks being unclear, to the point that it may not be understood as a directive at all (see Blum-Kulka 1987; Blum-Kulka et al. 1989, for extensive discussion and empirical support of this point). Beyond variation in cultural norms regarding circumstances under which clarity is more important than face threat, the pragmatic complexities of directive formulation have provided rich terrain for exploration of intention and interpretation of language use, and of construction of meaning more generally.

Ethnographic work on directives proceeds from the assumption that the need for people to influence the actions of others exists in every culture, such that directives must exist in every language. Directives have thus been widely studied as an index of culturally distinctive systems of beliefs about persons, relationships, and communication (see, e.g., Hollos and Beeman 1974; Katriel 1986). Because compelling the actions of another person implies some basic need or right to do so on the part of the person who does the compelling, directives also reveal cultural understandings and enactments of power and social structure.

### NAMING SPEECH ACTS

Fully apprehending the scope of directives' meaning as an index of cultural codes (→ Speech Codes Theory) more generally has been elaborated in various ways in the ethnographic case studies just mentioned. One line connecting directives with cultural codes incorporated speech acts with names (Fitch 1994). Speech events, as part of the basic set of categories proposed by Hymes (1972) through which language was integrated with

social life, are actions accomplished through language use recognizable within a particular culture. A speech event that has a native term associated with it can be assumed to be significant by virtue of the name itself, which identifies an action common enough to have a term of reference. Often, the distinctions between speech events are the richest source of cultural meaning and evaluation of action. “To sweet-talk someone,” for example, is recognizable among North American English speakers as a specific form of request – one “sweetened,” for example, with flattery or with promises of reciprocated effort. “To brown-nose someone,” although bringing to mind the same kind of flattery and perhaps promises of future payoffs, carries a much more negative connotation because of the assumption that the brown-noser is engaged in an often distasteful form of self-promotion (see Hall & Valde 1995), rather than merely posing a localized request in an overtly palatable way.

Names for speech events differ from the original list of performative verbs considered by Searle to distinguish directives from other speech events (commanding, for example, was a different form of action than promising or declaring) in that they incorporate culture-specific norms and premises about persons, relationships, and the nature of communication itself. To approach the meaning of utterances as inseparable from the social groups in which they are produced is one kind of departure – the same kind as Rosaldo’s, who much earlier insisted on this inseparability – from Searle’s approach that sought to specify a limited number of logical relationships between *language* – an abstraction of all human languages – and *the world* – an abstraction of all particular social worlds. A different kind of departure from that approach that nonetheless conserved the central idea of directives as Searle defined them sought to show that utterances counted as directives partly by virtue of the sequential environment in which they occurred. In the following exchange between a preschool teacher and a child, for example, the first utterance can only be clearly established as a directive by the response to it:

Teacher: Michael, I see someone throwing dirt.

Child: Oooo-kay. (sighs, drops handful of dirt) (Fitch 1994, 199)

Conceptually, then, the notion of a directive which began as an abstraction has expanded through research and theory in several disciplines to stimulate inquiry into a wide range of questions about the nature of language and its many constitutive relationships to social worlds.

SEE ALSO: ► Compliance Gaining ► Ethnography of Communication ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Persuasion and Resistance ► Politeness Theory ► Speech Codes Theory

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## Disability and Communication

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Specific communication disabilities affect the ability to understand and produce language. The most common hearing disabilities are congenital deafness and age-related hearing impairments. The primary causes for difficulties with the production of spoken language are traumatic brain injury, stroke, and dementia (Alzheimer's and related diseases). Of additional relevance is the impact of visual impairment on reading and writing and on following nonverbal cues in conversation. Disability of any type creates psychosocial issues associated with personal and social adjustment, identity, and interactions with others.

This entry focuses on the intergroup aspects of disability and communication. It acknowledges the importance of congenital disabilities, but emphasizes the challenges

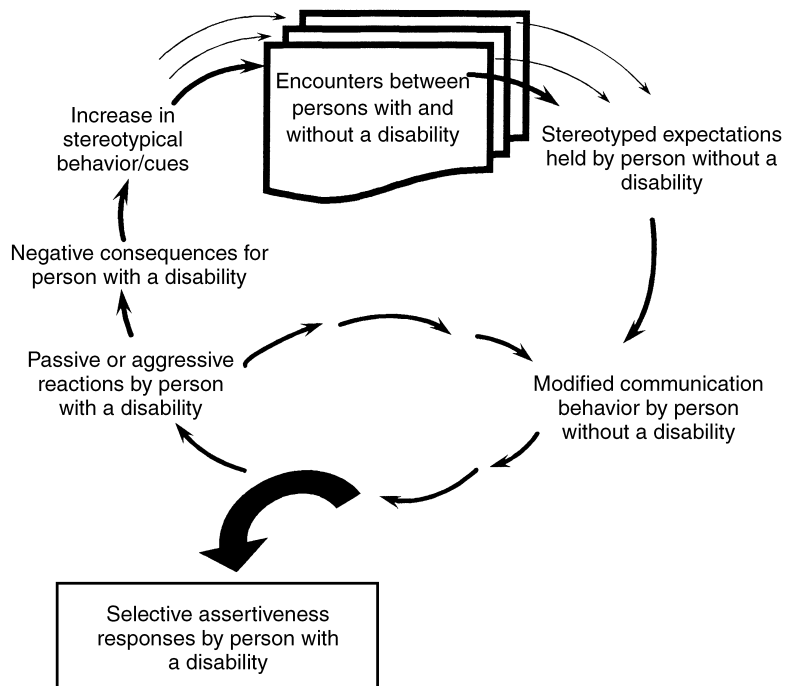
faced by the many individuals with acquired disability, where adjustment to major changes is required for the individuals and their social partners (→ Intergroup Contact and Communication).

### STIGMA AND COMMUNICATION PREDICAMENTS OF DISABILITY

As with many other social groups, societies create disability by categorizing human variation and building the boundaries through interpersonal, organizational, and societal activities (Higgins 1992). Negative stereotypes associated with disability include traits such as dependent, sick, unattractive, incompetent, burdensome, hypersensitive, and bitter. The *stigma* of disability is sustained by unquestioned societal values such as independence, beauty, and marketability (Hebl & Kleck 2000; Susman 1994; → Social Stereotyping and Communication).

Goffman (1963) highlighted the different issues faced in everyday interactions by persons with visible versus invisible disabilities. Those with visible disabilities (“discredited”) must deal with the anxiety resulting from their disability being public knowledge, while those with invisible disabilities (“discreditable”) contend with the burden of concealing information and of managing disclosure of their disability.

Based on → communication accommodative theory, the *communication predicament of disability model* (Fig. 1) summarizes the negative feedback loop within which persons with



**Figure 1** The communication predicament of disability model: interrupting the cycle with selective assertiveness

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acquired disabilities often find themselves (Braithwaite & Thompson 2000; Emry & Wiseman 1987; Ryan et al. 2005). Negative stereotypes lead able-bodied conversational partners to modify their behavior in ways that stifle real communication and reinforce expected behaviors from the person with disability. As with other intergroup situations, the expectation of homogeneity among individuals with disability is pervasive and particularly harmful. Persistent experiences of this nature (from family and friends as well as strangers) can lead to social withdrawal, lessened personal control, conformity to disability stereotypes, and to a reduced sense of self. Eventually, the person's disabled identity contributes to more and more disabling communication situations in their *interability* interactions (→ Intergroup Accommodative Processes; Social Identity Theory).

Modifications in communication toward persons with disability include changes in manner, language, and nonverbal behavior. The *patronizing*, paternalistic manner may be depersonalizing, impatient (or excessively patient), overhelping without consultation, or non-listening and dismissive. Talk can include simplified grammar and vocabulary, superficial topics, invasion of privacy, and high-pitched, exaggerated tone of voice. Gestures and facial expressions can support paternalistic language or undermine appropriate language choices. Being talked about or ignored in a three-person conversation is frequently experienced.

### **REFRAMING DISABILITY AND CONSEQUENT REDUCTION IN COMMUNICATION BARRIERS**

Models of disability have traditionally been medical- or rehabilitation-oriented, while newer social models reframe the notion of disability. In particular, disability is now thought of as created largely through barriers in the environment rather than in the person, and living with a disability need not emphasize the traditional rehabilitation value of "normal." *Ableism* is a term used by persons with disabilities themselves to emphasize the value of individual differences and to create the broadest context within which to thrive individually and as subgroups (Rauscher & McClintock 1997).

*Selective assertiveness* is featured in the model in Figure 1 as a conversational strategy for interrupting the automatic negative cycle created by stereotype-driven communication. Assertiveness is characterized by calm, confident, tactful, straightforward expressions of feelings and desires. As with stereotype-based communication, an assertive style is as much tone of voice and other nonverbal features as it is the direct, non-aggressive language used. Successful *impression management strategies* used by persons with disability include establishing normalcy by emphasizing similarities, using modeling behavior, limiting attention to assistive devices, limiting responses to overly personal questions, and managing the able-bodied tendency to overhelp. When empowered with a sense of equality as a human being, the person with a disability can more effectively manage the communication predicaments which are a part of everyday life. Since assertiveness takes energy and has its societal costs, persons with disability choose their battles – when to go along, when to get what one needs at the moment, and when to educate or advocate more generally (Fox & Giles 1997; → Communicative Strategies for Empowerment).

Intergroup communication strategies have also been used selectively by persons and groups with disability to meet the *social identity* goals of social creativity and social

competition. The disability community has contributed actively towards redefining models of disability, such as ableism and the independent living model (Rauscher & McClintock 1997). This latter emphasizes the competence of persons with disability to make their own decisions regarding care and emphasizes equal social access to needed resources. The disability community is also active in the shaping of terminology for reference to persons with disability of various types and in developing ingroup language to enhance solidarity. With regard to social competition, disability groups have succeeded in North America in establishing disability acts to eliminate barriers in buildings, streets, transportation, and law.

### COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND IMAGES IN THE MEDIA

*Communication devices* need to be learned and have their own influence on conversational interactions (e.g., blowing or eye movement technology to run a synthesized voice). A key issue for the future concerns how the rapidly burgeoning improvements in assistive technologies will affect interability communication (Braithwaite & Thompson 2000).

*Computer-mediated communication* offers persons with visible disabilities the opportunity to connect with others on an equal footing since their disability disappears in this medium. In addition, many individuals and disability organizations take advantage of computer-mediated self-help/mutual aid groups to build ingroup solidarity, plan advocacy, and support each other in their interability interactions (→ Personal Communication by CMC; Human–Computer Interaction).

With regard to *media images of disability*, autobiographical writings by persons with disability have a powerful impact in individualizing the disability experience. Writers with many types of disability (e.g., visual and hearing impairments, physical paralysis or weakness, vertigo, cognitive impairment, mental illness, spinal cord injury, chronic disabling illnesses) are expressing their emerging identities by selecting to be assertive through publishing books or articles aimed at others with their specific disability as well as education and advocacy directed toward caring professionals, policymakers, family members, and the general public (Ryan 2006). Similarly, images of persons with disability incorporated recently into major films and documentaries can counteract the societal lack of understanding about specific disabilities and about how well individuals can adapt to major functional restrictions. Disability advocates argue strongly for involvement of persons with disability in producing these media images – with the slogan “Nothing about us without us” (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality).

Persons with acquired disability can use oral or written communication to reclaim their voices and to reshape their identities. As in all social interactions, the process of expressing their emerging identities contributes reciprocally to the reshaping of identity and changes in societal images of disability.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Communication Strategies for Empowerment ► Human–Computer Interaction ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Intergroup Contact and Communication ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Personal Communication by CMC ► Social Identity Theory ► Social Stereotyping and Communication

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## Disasters and Communication

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Crises and disasters are increasingly common in their occurrence and increasingly widespread in their impact. Events such as the Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina illustrate the potential devastation caused by natural disasters, particularly as they interact with human development. Technology-based disasters, sometimes called accidents, such as the Chernobyl nuclear plant explosion, the leak of toxic material over the sleeping community of Bhopal, India, or the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill, can also create widespread devastation. In addition, the outbreak of diseases such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS), sudden acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), or H5N1, avian influenza, represent yet another kind of disaster. Finally, terrorism, as witnessed in the 9/11 attacks and the London transportation system bombings, has become an increasingly prominent and insidious form of disaster (O’Hair et al. 2005).

### CRISES AND DISASTERS: DEFINITIONS AND TYPOLOGIES

In general, *disasters* are “nonroutine events in societies or their larger subsystem (e.g., regions or communities) that involve social disruption and physical harm” (Kreps 1989,



34). The United Nations Committee on Humanitarian Relief defines a disaster as “a sudden, calamitous event that seriously disrupts the functioning of a community or society and causes human, material, economic, or environmental losses that exceed the community’s or society’s ability to cope using its own resources” (2006).

*Crises* are usually conceptualized as more limited in scope involving “a specific, unexpected, and nonroutine organizationally-based event or series of events, which creates high levels of uncertainty and threat or perceived threat to an organization’s high priority goals” (Seeger et al. 1998, 233). Karl Weick argues that crises are “low probability/high consequence events that threaten the most fundamental goals of the organization. Because of their low probability, these events defy interpretations and impose severe demands on sense-making” (1988, 305). During crisis and disasters, established routines, relationships, norms, belief systems, and sources of information and order break down or no longer function. Thus, these events are often characterized by confusion, disorder, misunderstanding, and uncertainty (→ Crisis Communication).

Disasters and crises include a wide variety of types such as intentional or unintentional, human-made or natural, and sudden in their onset or slow to evolve (Quarantelli 1988; Seeger et al. 2003). In general, disasters are seen as dramatically abnormal events that create widespread disruption and suspension of the status quo, and that require some organized, often governmentally based, response to contain and mitigate the harm. Disasters and crises are associated with *three defining characteristics*: high levels of uncertainty, surprising or unanticipated occurrences, and short response time (Seeger et al. 2003).

Disasters have different scopes. In general, those disasters labeled “natural” are the most devastating. In terms of modern disasters, the July 1976 Tangshan quake in China was estimated to have cost 250,000 lives. Floods also create widespread destruction. In 1939, floods ravaged northern China and may have claimed as many as 500,000 lives. Some estimates for the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 26, 2004 suggest 300,000 deaths. Disasters involving specific outbreaks of infectious disease account for untold numbers of deaths. The 1918–1919 influenza pandemic, known as the Spanish flu, is estimated to have killed as many as 100 million people worldwide, including 500,000 in the US.

### **COMMUNICATION FUNCTIONS AND PROCESSES IN DISASTERS**

Communication scholars and practitioners have described a number of instrumental functions of communication during crises. In fact, communication is frequently described as a core function of crisis and disaster management and response. *Functions include*: (1) clarifying risk and encouraging preparedness; (2) issuing evacuations and warning; (3) enhancing coordination, cooperation, and logistics; (4) facilitating mitigation on the part of the public and affected communities; (5) helping make sense of the disaster; (6) reassuring, comforting, and consoling those affected; and (7) recreating order and meaning, facilitating renewal, and learning and disseminating lessons (Auf Der Heide 1989; Seeger et al. 2005).

In a number of cases, *failure to communicate effectively* was a significant factor in the onset of a disaster. In the case of the Red River flood of 1997 in Grand Fork, North Dakota, for example, failure to communicate correct information about the expected crest of the river meant that makeshift levees were too low (Sellnow et al. 2002). Scholars have

suggested that the disaster of the space shuttle “Challenger” was a consequence of failed communication at NASA. In other cases, ineffective communication has significantly enhanced the level of harm. Following the World Trade Center attack, for example, fire fighters, police, and other emergency personnel were unable to communicate with one another due to incompatible equipment. Some emergency personnel did not receive the order to leave the collapsing World Trade Center. This event has led to a major push toward communication interoperability among emergency personnel.

During a disaster, established channels of communication are often disrupted or inaccessible. A significant proportion of the telecommunication capacity for Lower Manhattan, for example, was located on the World Trade Center. At the same time, the abnormal conditions of a crisis or disaster increase the importance of information. This accounts for the condition of high uncertainty or what has sometimes been described as an information vacuum; where there is an intense need for information at the very time when information is scarce.

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Disaster communication is a diverse, interdisciplinary field that spans political science, anthropology, sociology, and public health, among others. In addition, disaster communication has roots in applied issues and practices. Recently, several useful theoretical frameworks have emerged that are helping to unify this body of diverse research.

Apologia or image restoration involves a comprehensive body of research detailing the *post-crisis communication strategies* available to organizations (see Benoit 1995; Coombs 1999). These → image restoration strategies are most often associated with organizations perceived to have caused or contributed to a crisis or those organizations that have somehow failed to mount an effective response (→ Organizational Image; Corporate Reputation). These strategies are grounded in “the belief . . . that communication (words and actions) does affect how stakeholders perceive the organization in crisis” (Coombs 1999, 121). Benoit (1995) offers the most comprehensive and widely applied typology of image restoration strategies. His five image restoration strategies include: (1) denial, (2) evading responsibility, (3) reducing offensiveness of the event, (4) corrective action, and (5) mortification.

A concept known as the *discourse of renewal* has recently been offered as an alternative to image restoration. Grounded in larger notions of organizational responsibility and the opportunities inherent in any crisis, renewal is a more provisional response to many crises and disasters in that it is guided by values and a natural response to the crisis (Seeger & Ulmer 2001, 2002; Ulmer et al. 2006; → Corporate Social Responsibility). The guiding impetus is to recover, rebuild, and learn. Image restoration, in contrast, is guided by a strategic position designed to minimize cost and harm, and repair image. *Adaptations of chaos theory* to crisis and crisis communication have resulted in powerful insights about the role of communication and about the behavior of complex, nonlinear systems (Sellnow et al. 2002). Chaos theory is also closely aligned with Perrow’s (1999) *normal accident theory* of systemic crisis. In both, the assumption is that systems reach a level of complexity where severe failure, or bifurcation, becomes programmed into system operations. Chaos theory, however, also suggests that underlying factors, called attractors, serve to reconstitute the organization following these bifurcations. Attractors may take many

forms, including proximity variables, social values, shared goals, and communication processes. Some tenants of chaos theory also view crisis as a natural or evolutionary force, allowing for the emergence of new higher-order structures and processes. Some scholars have built upon this notion, emphasizing the opportunities inherent in a crisis or disaster. A forest fire may create widespread devastation, yet create room for new growth. In fact, some species of tree require fire for their seeds to become viable. In the same way, a crisis may call attention to longstanding social problems and create new opportunities for change.

*Developmental approaches*, or stages of disasters and crises, have been described by a number of scholars (Pauchant & Mitroff 1992; Coombs 1999). These approaches describe crisis and disaster events as series of interrelated phenomena occurring developmentally over time and moving through relatively discrete and predictable stages or phases.

Developmental models have been outlined by a number of researchers and represent one of the most common tools for crisis analysis. These models range from simple three-stage models of pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis, to much more detailed stages. Turner (1976) identified six stages: (1) normal starting point, (2) incubation period, (3) precipitating event, (4) onset, (5) rescue and salvage – first stage adjustments, and (6) full cultural adjustment. Some of these approaches have linked communication activities directly to specific stages (Coombs 1999; Reynolds & Seeger 2005). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a crisis and emergency risk communication five-stage model (CERC) that matches specific health communication strategies to specific developmental stages (Reynolds & Seeger 2005; → Risk Communication; Risk Perceptions). Developmental models also capture the time-sensitive nature of these events. Disasters compress the interval between decision, actions, and antecedent conditions on the one hand and outcomes, reactions, and consequences on the other. Time compression is associated with high levels of decision-maker stress and the need to move quickly to limit harm during a disaster.

An additional body of work has applied the *organizational theory of enacted sense-making* to crises and disasters. This work focuses on how individuals and groups lose important social and behavior references during crisis and how communication may help reconstitute sense-making (Weick 1988, 1993; Seeger et al. 2003). This reconstituted ability to make sense may include a new fundamental understanding of what is customary or routine. Some scholars have used the term *new normal* to describe the ways in which crises and disasters may fundamentally alter a sense of normalcy (Sellnow et al. 2002).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

Much of the research on disaster evacuations and warnings has adopted and expanded the risk communication literature and focuses on the *effectiveness of warning messages*. Mileti and his colleagues (Mileti & Sorenson 1990; Mileti & Fitzpatrick 1992; Mileti & Peek 2000) have suggested that warnings require six components: (1) hearing, (2) understanding, (3) believing, (4) personalizing, (5) decisions, and (6) actions. A variety of factors has been demonstrated to impact this warning process. Content of the warning message may include information about the nature of the hazard, what locations may be affected, guidance about what to do, timing of responses, and factors associated with the source (Mileti & Peek 2000). In addition, Mileti suggests that the style of the larger communication is also related to

message effectiveness. This includes the relative specificity of the warning, consistency, certainty, clarity, perceived accuracy, sufficiency of the information, and the channel selected.

Some research has suggested that these style variables may operate in more complex ways. Overly certain messages such as, "We have everything under control, we know exactly what is happening, and there is no risk," for example, have been shown to reduce credibility and message effectiveness under conditions of very high uncertainty and may impact message accuracy (Sellnow et al. 2002; → Message Effects, Structure of).

Finally, *receiver characteristics* are very important determinates of warning message effectiveness. These include: environmental cues, such as rain as the condition of flood warnings; social settings and social structures, such as a family being physically unified at the time of the warning; social ties, such as family cohesion, social structure, including demographic variables; psychological factors, such as cognitive features; and finally, pre-warning perceptions, including pre-existing attitudes toward hazards. Riad et al. (2001) have added gender differences, social influences and support, and prior evacuation experience to the list of receiver characteristics. Women have been consistently found to be more willing to evacuate. Social influence factors include observing others evacuating. In addition, prior evacuation is a strong predictor of future evacuation (→ Audience Segmentation).

Recent episodes, including the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the devastation caused by the 2005 hurricane season, have generated additional investigations of disaster communication. Although very wide-ranging, many of these investigations have focused on diffusion of information, uses and gratifications of disaster information, and media use.

A series of studies has examined *media usage and the diffusion of information* during crises and disasters (see Greenberg 2002). Several studies concluded that television is the most widely used channel for disaster information, followed by radio. Both radio and television are very immediate forms of communication, and radio in particular is a very robust technology that can be easily adapted to crisis conditions (Sellnow et al. 2002; → Television Technology). One study of media usage following 9/11 found that on average, individuals engaged in 8.4 hours of television viewing that day. Interpersonal channels of communication, however, are also important particularly as individuals seek out very specific kinds of information. In fact, word of mouth played a very important role in disseminating initial news about disasters even though subjects tended to disassociate their attribution of the initial source over time.

Work on diffusion of disaster information has generally supported the established *S curve of information dissemination* associated with the dissemination of more general news (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). In general, information disseminated through the media is diffused slowly at first, reaches a point where more rapid diffusion occurs, then reaches a plateau, at which stage a secondary surge occurs. One exception seems to be the speed of dissemination. Generally, news of disasters spreads very quickly and may flatten this S curve somewhat (Greenberg 2002).

The → *uses and gratifications* model of mass media has formed the basis of a series of studies on 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. These studies have focused on the needs, preferences, and uses of information reported by individuals. In general, these studies have concluded that information needs and uses vary by gender and by the relationship individuals have to an event. The closer the psychological or physical proximity to the event, the greater the need for information. Women may prefer information about

mitigation and management, while men appear more interested in information about consequence and response. Needs and uses may also vary by race, social-economic class, and by perceived vulnerability.

Disaster and crisis communication is a robust, interdisciplinary field that has received a great deal of attention in recent years. The field not only includes an important research tradition, but is also an important area of applied work. Research thus far has benefited from powerful theoretical frameworks and identified a number of fundamental concepts that impact the effectiveness of these messages. Much more work is needed, however, in part because disasters are such dynamic events and new threats and implications of threats are constantly emerging.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Image ▶ Message Effects, Structure of ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Television Technology ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Disclosure in Health Communication

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Much has been written in recent years about the issues of disclosing and communicating health information (including genetic information) in biomedical research and medical practice. Various guidelines and policy statements have been adopted internationally, but these are contradictory and the criteria they set out sometimes vague. Given the complexity of the ethical landscape surrounding this topic, particularly in regard to genetic risk and predictability of disease, guidance is undeniably needed on this issue.

In fact, the proliferation of tests to identify individuals with an increased risk of genetic disease has led to a re-evaluation of the duties of researchers, physicians, and other health-care professionals. Considering the speed at which genetic technologies are moving from bench to bedside, the questions of (1) whether researchers should communicate research results, (2) whether physicians should recontact patients concerning new information that might be useful to them, and (3) whether physicians should inform family members of relevant genetic information are becoming increasingly important (→ Bad News in Medicine, Communicating; Health Communication, Ethics in). These questions correspond to the current changes taking place in the spheres of knowledge, social and cultural values and norms, and individual life experience.

Currently, changes in professional attitudes are reflected in the increased level of communication and involvement in relationships with patients and research participants.

Fully informed communication and the presentation of choices and alternatives are now heralded as indispensable to ethical care. Patients are seen as full partners in the process of informed and involved decision-making. Debate surrounding the principles of confidentiality and beneficence has led to a re-examination of the Hippocratic oath and the sacrosanct principle of confidentiality. Yet there are still few therapies in the field of medical genetics. Once treatment does become available, however, a whole range of new questions arises, in the areas of access to care, the choice and costs of treatment, and the facilities available. The question is: ought we to disclose? In previous practice the wishes of the patient were paramount, but with the rapidity of genetic discoveries, research results might change over time, or the shifting of the significance of genetic diagnosis might prompt the recontact of a patient, or, finally, relatives may wish to receive information for their own benefit. This could mean telling the patient or even a third party against the express wishes of the patient.

These issues point to the need to respond to new developments in relation to existing ethical issues. An ethical framework for the practice of genetics may thus introduce new professional responsibilities in the existing duty of care, which includes the duty to inform, to provide appropriate care, to follow-up, to refer, and to refrain from abandoning a patient (Hunter et al. 2001, 270). To this, should we add the duty to communicate results in the research setting, the duty to recontact patients, and the duty to warn relatives (→ Research Ethics)?

## **MAJOR DIMENSIONS AND CHANGES OVER TIME**

### **The Communication of Results in Research Settings**

To clarify the discussion on the communication of results in research settings, there is a need to distinguish between the established ethical obligation to communicate general basic research results and the eventual return of specific findings that may be relevant to individuals. By their very nature, most research results are usually in the aggregate form and not at all “individual.” As stated by the World Health Organization (2003), in most cases genetic research data will remain of abstract significance.

Nevertheless, a suggested avenue is to communicate results in basic research if and when they have been scientifically and clinically validated and when they have implications for the health of the participant. The Consortium on Pharmacogenetics (2002, 6) considers that researchers should “offer the research subject the option of disclosure of research information when its reliability has been established and when the disclosure is of potential benefit to the subject.”

Turning to results in clinical trials, international guidelines for good clinical practice stipulate that investigators as well as institutions involved in trials “should ensure that adequate medical care is provided to a subject for any adverse events, including clinically significant laboratory values, related to the trial” (ICH 2001, 4.3.2). The communication of research results in clinical trials may occur when test results are relevant to the patient’s health: the patient has the right to receive information and to be fully informed about her or his health status, including the medical facts about her or his condition (World Health Organization 1997; World Medical Association 1995).

Ethical considerations require health professionals to evaluate the specificity of research results, differentiating between the obligations of a researcher, who usually only has general results, and those of the physician vis-à-vis their patients involved in clinical trials. Failure to provide information about study results may be one of the many factors that adversely affect accrual. Providing results to study participants or patients might maximize the good, i.e., respect for the person, quality of life, although no empirical data support this premise. The communication of research results might lead to better patient–physician communication, which would in turn lead to greater satisfaction with medical care.

### **The Duty to Recontact in Clinical Settings**

In addition to the communication of research results, do physicians have a duty to recontact patients when confronted with new genetic information, more precise tests, or new therapies? A physician may consider that recontact is needed following the discovery of preventive measures or treatment for a specific condition, or when the patient requires immediate and continuing treatment or management. The degree of uncertainty surrounding genetic risk notification warrants guidelines for determining the circumstances in which recontact efforts should be undertaken. It is important to remember that novel ethical questions come into play, as it is doubtful that consent to be recontacted could be autonomous since patients do not know in advance what kind of information might be disclosed. While recontact may be attempted if treatment or prevention is available, professionals should consider the emotional impact of communicating new sensitive information. They must, above all, ensure that the patient’s privacy and familial interactions are protected (Fitzpatrick et al. 1999; Hunter et al. 2001). The Canadian College of Medical Geneticists stresses that the disclosure process in testing “should avoid needlessly informing individuals who do not wish to learn their genotype or informing one family member of another family member’s genotype” (Hall et al., 1991).

Most professional bodies, however, have no policies requiring physicians to disclose new relevant information, except in the case of adverse events or medical incidents. This may be changing: ethical guidelines are directed at empowering patients to assume ownership of their ongoing care and to use new findings and therapies to improve their quality of life. According to the American College of Medical Geneticists (1999):

It is the medical geneticist’s responsibility to provide clinical updates to those patients to whom they provide an on-going service. However, since this represents the smaller percentage of the caseload, it should be incumbent upon the primary care physician to alert his/her patient to the need for a recontact as necessary. The patient should also be included in the process by being adequately counseled to contact the primary care physician or genetics unit as relevant changes in their lives occur.

The duty to recontact may be crucial because failing to disclose relevant updated information undermines public trust in medicine. Failure to recontact not only involves deception, but hints at a preservation of professional interests over the well-being of patients. It may cause harm if patients are injured further by the failure to disclose; moreover, it may also undermine efforts to improve the involvement of patients in their



care. And because it impinges on a patient's right to know, failure to disclose relevant genetic information could be deemed a breach of professional ethics.

While there are benefits to recontacting and to communicating new clinical data, there remain considerable disadvantages. Patients might not want to be recontacted or receive new information. Clinicians need to anticipate negative reactions and be prepared to provide the necessary support. Disclosure necessitates the use of substantial resources: participants may want more or less information and it could become quite time consuming. How should professionals recontact for new tests or treatments? The processes for both the communication of research results and for recontact should be built into the informed consent process and, if acceptable, re-offered to the individual at the recontact. And by engaging the individual in a comprehensive discussion of what disclosure entails (and always estimating the perceived benefits conservatively), physicians must insure a balance between harms and benefits. Provisions for anticipatory follow-up have to be made explicit. Patient advocacy groups, who lobby for the protection of patient rights, may prove very helpful in this process.

### **The Duty to Warn Family Members**

The personal and familial nature of genetic information further complicates confidentiality and privacy issues. It may be important for an individual to be informed of a family member's genetic test results and thus of their own risk when it comes to potentially preventable or treatable conditions. Hence, the duty to warn family members could arise when the warning is necessary to avert serious harm for treatable or preventable conditions. A Code of Ethics prepared by the Canadian Medical Association (2004) maintains:

Disclose your patients' personal health information to third parties only with their consent, or as provided for by law, such as when the maintenance of confidentiality would result in a significant risk of substantial harm to others, or in the case of incompetent patients, to the patients themselves. In such cases take all reasonable steps to inform the patient that the usual requirements for confidentiality will be breached.

Thus, health professionals must determine whether the family member is at a high risk of serious harm; they must also decide if, in the event where a patient has repeatedly refused to disclose the information, a breach of confidentiality is necessary to prevent or minimize this harm. How is a physician to resolve the competing ethical mandates of autonomy and beneficence and non-maleficence? This requires an evaluation and comparison of the actual risk of a genetic disease, the efficacy of potential preventive interventions, and emerging legal considerations and potential liabilities. The physician should strive for a balance between the right to confidentiality, the right to know, and the right not to know, including that of others who are not even his or her patients.

More detailed advice concerning the duty to warn relatives urges physicians to assist patients in their communication with relatives. Physicians, according to the American Medical Association *Code of medical ethics*, "should make themselves available to assist patients in communicating with relatives to discuss opportunities for counseling and testing, as appropriate" (2006). Advocacy groups, meanwhile, recommend asking the patient's

consent in advance of genetic testing for permission to disclose genetic information to relatives (Genetic Interest Group 1998).

### **CURRENT EMPHASES IN WORK AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

In the joint-account model elaborated by Parker and Lucassen (2004), it is assumed that genetic information should be available to all account holders (health professionals, relatives) unless there are good reasons to do otherwise. The justification in favor of a joint account adheres to the ethical principles of justice and reciprocity; there are also benefits to be gained by sharing genetic information. Seeing as physicians in medical genetics work with families, the chosen approach appears to be consistent with the very nature of practice in genetics. However, more often, a case-by-case approach is chosen. This approach enables professionals to intervene when the disease is fatal if diagnosed late but treatable if diagnosed early. On the other hand, in cases in which the disease is untreatable, the duty to warn would be tenuous, except for reproductive decisions. Some diseases would fit in between, such as hereditary breast cancer, which is treatable by aggressive surgery.

Ultimately, emerging responsibilities in genetic risk notification require an over-expansion in the duty of care for professionals. Duties to communicate research results and to recontact with clinical findings affect the concept of an “ongoing duty of care” in order to include patients’ informational needs. The duty to warn creates a shift from “individual therapy” to one that is “family-and-future-generation oriented.” The importance of this issue seems unlikely to diminish in the future. As public awareness grows and new technologies develop, the pressure for greater clinical services and information is inevitable. Individuals at risk push for research that is more process oriented and patient oriented. Consequently, requirements of informed consent and confidentiality may be modified relatively to other forms of medical care. These issues, along with that of non-maleficence, the duty to do no harm and yet also to prevent harm, are omnipresent. The current socio-cultural context and pressures of the “promise” of genetic information cannot be ignored.

A fair process in health-care ethics remains a priority. This approach is more likely to be successful and useful than agreement on a set of principles. A fair process would be one in which there was transparency about the grounds of the decisions to return results, recontact, or warn based on prior discussion. Appealing to rationales that all can accept as relevant to meet health needs fairly, it would allow procedures for revising decisions in the light of challenges to them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication, Ethics in ▶ Patient–Provider Communication ▶ Research Ethics ▶ Risk Communication

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## Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication

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Disclosure, as a type of interpersonal communication, means revealing private information that individuals believe they own and have a right to control. Disclosure builds romantic and friendship relationships, although there is a possibility of disclosing too much information, or telling information when a relational partner is not ready to hear the disclosure, thus hampering relational growth. Therefore we know that disclosure has both a positive outcome and the potential to have unwanted outcomes for interpersonal relationships (→ Interpersonal Communication).

Historically, the concept of disclosure is attributed to Sidney Jourard (1971). His work on “self-disclosure,” defined as “the act of making yourself manifest, showing yourself so others can perceive you” (Jourard 1971, 19), focused primarily on opening up the self to others (→ Disclosure in Health Communication). Much of the early research on disclosure accepted Jourard’s assumption that self-disclosure is unequivocally positive. In fact, Jourard argued that self-disclosure was the key to a healthy personality. From this early

work, we learned that there are some *gender differences* in self-disclosure. For example, women disclose more than men to others of the same sex. We also know that issues such as status, age, and attractiveness affect whether a person discloses. The research also showed that men conceal information because they fear loss of control, while women avoid disclosure to prevent hurt and problems with relationships (Rosenfeld 1979). A focus on the issue of *reciprocity* (whereby people disclose to others and those individuals respond with disclosures) revealed that people reciprocate disclosures early in a developing relationship, but as people come to know each other, self-disclosure occurs less often. Reciprocity does not have to occur immediately. When disclosure occurs, the recipient might wait days or weeks to reciprocate the disclosure. Altman and Taylor (1973) initially conceptualized disclosure reciprocity in their “social penetration theory.” Their theory explains how interpersonal relationships develop. They argued that reciprocal disclosure occurs along two dimensions: *depth*, meaning the level of intimacy of the disclosure, and *breadth*, meaning the number of topics discussed. Through these processes, people develop significant relationships with each other (→ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication).

Although early researchers argued for the unequivocal positive effects of self-disclosure, others cautioned that disclosure may not indisputably end in a positive outcome. As research began to illustrate that disclosure could be both positive and negative, it became clear that a new way to conceptualize disclosure was needed. One of the ways researchers expanded the notion of disclosure is seen in a theoretical perspective called Communication Privacy Management (CPM) (Petronio 2002). The research from this theory shows that people simultaneously need to reveal and conceal private information (→ Privacy). Disclosure helps people to connect; however, keeping information to themselves helps them to sustain autonomy. CPM illustrates how people manage the ebb and flow of these concurrent needs by placing private information within a privacy boundary. People manage the flow through privacy rules. Once people disclose, they make the recipients shareholders in the information, extending the boundary to include the recipients (→ Bona Fide Groups). In a perfect world, each person privy to the disclosed information negotiates the rules allowing third-party disclosures. But we do not live in a perfect world, so people make mistakes and inappropriately disclose or intentionally violate privacy (→ Relational Dialectics).

The CPM perspective helps us understand many interpersonal communication issues that were not clear in the past. We now have a better idea about stepfamily difficulties when children feel caught between both families (Afifi 2003). We know that there is a chilling effect in families when members apply pressure to conceal secrets by insisting on using certain privacy rules (Afifi & Olson 2005; → Family Communication Patterns). The management of secrecy and privacy is a powerful source of control for adolescents (Frijns 2004). Further, physicians use very specific management rules to preserve their integrity when it comes to disclosure about medical mistakes, but they suffer the consequences for doing so (Allman 1998; → Bad News in Medicine, Communicating). We also know that parents and children use privacy rules to avoid disclosing certain topics, leading to dissatisfying interpersonal interactions (Caughlin & Afifi 2004). People also use certain privacy rules to guide disclosing about HIV status to relational partners (Greene et al. 2003).

As the current thinking about disclosure suggests, we find that people manage a balance between wanting to connect through telling private issues, and also wanting to protect themselves from possible unwelcome or unexpected outcomes resulting from disclosure. Thus there appears to be a calculus that we use to traverse the complicated informational world we live in and still manage to establish, sustain, and repair our interpersonal relationships when it comes to disclosure of our private information.

SEE ALSO: ► Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ► Bona Fide Groups ► Disclosure in Health Communication ► Family Communication Patterns ► Interpersonal Communication ► Privacy ► Relational Dialectics ► Social Support in Interpersonal Communication

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## **Discourse**

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As a common term in English, discourse means any extended verbal communication, such as Jesus's discourse with the people (John 6: 22–71) or, "The Disinherited Knight then addressed his discourse to Baldwin" (Scott, *Ivanhoe*). Discourse is lengthy but targeted speech between individuals or between an individual and a group. As a theoretical term,

discourse gained in importance during the twentieth century, both in the relatively new discipline of → *linguistics* and in the newer discipline of communication study (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline), taking on two distinct meanings. First, it refers to stretches of communication beyond the small units that are examined with the traditional methods of linguistic analysis. Second, discourse directs attention to the social origins and consequences of communications (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts).

### HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT

Discourse has a Latin root in *discurrere*, which itself is related to *currere* (“to run”). French derives the terms *discourir* and *cours* from these roots; English similarly derives “discursive,” “excursion,” “current,” and “courier.” The core meaning is movement of one sort or another, or running around. This idea is embodied in current uses of “discourse” to refer to communication as social interchange, and was also reflected in older occurrences of the term. Famously, Descartes’s *Discourse on method* (1637) is envisaged as a journey round the philosophical issues with which he was concerned.

After the Renaissance, “discourse” was employed in philosophy to suggest a laying out of and meditation on theoretical matters. This usage echoes the idea of rhetoric as the moving back and forth between intellectual positions in order to communicate effectively (→ Rhetorical Studies). From the classical period onwards, rhetoric had been established, on the one hand, as a practical means of identifying and studying longer forms of human communication than individual signs – for example, *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, *refutatio*, *peroratio* (MacCabe 1979). On the other hand, these forms of communication lent themselves to persuasive or strategic uses. In envisaging *movements* between each of these forms or stages of communication, and between study and practice, rhetoric served to develop categories of discourse for scholarly as well as other social communication.

### DISCOURSE AND LANGUAGE

In his *Cours de linguistique générale* (*Course in general linguistics* 1916; translated into English in 1959 and 1983), Saussure projected “a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life” (1983, 15; → Semiotics). Despite his focus on the linguistic sign as such and the system by which specific utterances are underwritten (*langue*), he articulated a need to open up linguistics for analyses beyond individual signs and sentences. Following work by the Danish linguist, Louis Hjelmslev, Saussure’s *Cours* became applied outside linguistics and outside the domain of spoken discourse. Hjelmslev’s resolute systematization of approaches to the different levels of language, its elements and rules, made Saussure’s framework even more amenable to other structuralist thinkers (→ Structuralism) such as Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes (→ Barthes, Roland). Both of these theorists sought to explicate the components and possible combinations of language, further applying these as general categories to various other media and modalities of communication (→ Modality and Multimodality). While such work did not focus explicitly on a conception of discourse, it delineated an approach to the social uses and implications of signs as rule-governed, discursive sequences.

In the American structuralist tradition of the 1930s, Zellig Harris also explored rules beyond the sentence by developing the concept of *transformation*. Whereas this notion has been developed in various ways, within the theory of discourse it was elaborated especially in the area of *sociolinguistics*. For example, through extensive ethnographic work, Dell Hymes found that speech acts and other communicative events followed certain well-defined parameters within a given cultural context: discursive and social patterns were precisely aligned (→ Ethnography of Communication). The capacity to communicate, then, is not simply a matter of being able to produce an infinite number of syntactically correct sentences. Rather, communication depends on what current research would call a discourse – a frame of reference including practical knowledge of when one can speak, to whom, with what purpose, and in what circumstances.

Other sociolinguists such as William Labov and John J. Gumperz worked to cement the understanding of language as part of the social world, with reference to a similar, nascent notion of discourse (→ Interactional Sociolinguistics). One of the most influential sub-fields of sociolinguistics, → *conversation analysis*, concerned itself with *turn-taking* in discursive interaction and the protocols governing this, often highlighting the seemingly marginal aspects of linguistic communication such as interjections, intonations, pauses, and overlaps that inevitably feature in everyday talk. Next, conversation analysis would focus on these features as formal representations bearing witness to the social roles of the participants in a given interaction. The implication is that discourse – communication bearing a close relation to speakers' and hearers' roles – should be understood as an encompassing system of social interaction that constitutes any particular group of speakers in terms of a periphery and a core, and which comprises both their verbal and nonverbal communication.

## DISCOURSE AND SOCIETY

The first meaning of discourse – units of communication larger than sentences – tends to imply the second meaning – communication as embedded in society – which requires more than a descriptive account of language. Austin's (1962) notion of *speech acts* has been one of the key influences on theories of discourse in this respect (→ Linguistic Pragmatics). While demonstrating that certain statements, in certain circumstances, have a *performative* function rather than a descriptive (*constative*) one (e.g., naming a ship, pronouncing a verdict), Austin went on to suggest that all statements tend to be performative – even if they might be portrayed otherwise. This insight underlies contemporary discourse studies: discourse has a rhetorical purpose, constituting speakers and hearers as ingroups or outgroups, while simultaneously delimiting those social fields to which reference can legitimately be made.

As a rhetorical form and a social practice, the concept of discourse further relates to two other conceptions of communication beyond the sentence level. *Text* is a theoretically neutral concept that refers to a string of verbal or nonverbal signs – written paragraphs, paintings, films, dance performances, gestures, etc. (→ Text and Intertextuality). An analysis might determine that such texts are part of a larger rhetorical form, or that they enter into discursive practices with ideological implications. *Genre* denotes a group of texts that share particular features, and which have been shaped for specific audiences and purposes

(→ Genre). As such, genres, in addition to being discourses in themselves, may frame specific social discourses – drama, debate, → journalism, → advertising, etc.

As social discourses, texts and genres ultimately entail the exercise of power (→ Power and Discourse). While implicit in earlier understandings of discourse, power was defined as its key constituent following the works of Michel Foucault. Today, it provides a reference point for the social understanding of discourse, the second meaning above. Foucault (1980) suggested that a particular manifestation of communication leads to an embodiment of power in discourse. Because the state cannot be omnipotent, power is often exercised (in an apparently nonstate fashion) through discourses. Although discourses open up possibilities for what may be said or thought, their very organization also delimits what can in fact be said or thought in a particular social sphere. Such discourses include those addressing the body, education, gender, public health, etc. Moreover, each discourse, according to Foucault, is maintained by specific technologies facilitating, not least, the surveillance of individual subjects.

This understanding of discourse, further, implies a constructionist position (→ Constructivism). A discourse not only delimits what can be communicated about an object, but *produces* the very objects of knowledge. A social constructionist position on discourse is traceable at least to Vološinov's work of the 1920s (Vološinov 1973), emphasizing that verbal communication is more a matter of what people want to get out of a situation than of information exchange. Discourse encompasses goal-orientated acts of *representation*, effectively creating what is being represented. Because theories of discourse consider discursive representations so powerful in constituting the social world, the concept of discourse has sometimes replaced that of ideology.

## DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

While building on earlier work on language and society, → discourse analysis proceeds from a Foucauldian perspective on power as circumscribing discourse, and on discourse as constructing social reality. In empirical studies, discourse analysis sheds further light on how discourse is constituted in practice. Conversation analysis focused on turn-taking between people but, ultimately, surveyed the workings of power as discourse organizes membership roles for some while excluding others. Communication between humans is not merely a matter of attempting to reflect the world; rather, it is a form of social action.

Discourse analysis, despite variations, is committed to the general idea that meaning and social roles are produced in interaction. This is true, for example, of frame analysis, conversation analysis, and critical discourse analysis. One variant, → *discursive psychology*, seeks to demonstrate that people's very existence is constructed through their communications. Discursive psychology examines the detailed workings of discourse, especially how people use discourse to *do* things, constructing the social world for themselves and others. Such studies uncover, for example, the many disregarded stakes and interests that people pursue in everyday communication (see, e.g., Potter 1996; Edwards 1997; Edwards and Potter 2005).

Much discourse analysis has been predicated on verbal communication, but is increasingly conducted with reference also to nonverbal signs (→ Nonverbal Communication and



Culture). The multimodal communications of electronic media serve as one reminder that texts and genres are frequently part of a broader discourse, emanating from an industry, an artistic practice, a historical epoch, or a mode or reception. Also in → *interpersonal communication*, analysis has shown that the discourses pertaining to, for instance, occupational practices are constituted as much by nonverbal as by verbal communication (see, e.g., Goodwin 1994 on court proceedings and archaeological digs; see also Sidnell & Stivers 2005). Discourse is also operative in the myriad nonverbal communications that make up everyday life – the regularities of gesture, kinesics, and proxemics (→ *Gestures and Kinesics*; *Gestures in Discourse*; *Proxemics*) that people employ implicitly while enacting social roles for themselves and others.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Business Discourse ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Constructivism ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Development Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Discourse Markers ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Genre ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meta-Discourse ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ News as Discourse ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Proxemics ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Structuralism ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Discourse Analysis

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Like qualitative content analysis and → Grounded Theory, discourse analysis can be conceived as a qualitative empirical method of analyzing mostly recorded human communication (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). The term itself was first introduced to the public by Zellig Harris in the early 1950s, but used rather unsystematically. In general terms, discourse analysis serves for analyzing written or spoken language use within a society or in public – like public discourse about abortion in Germany and the United States or like the anti-Semitism discourse in postwar Austria. As one can tell from issues like abortion or racism, discourse analysis quite often implies a normative element. For instance, the critical discourse approach (e.g., Ruth Wodak, Teun A. van Dijk) asks about social hierarchies by studying language as a form of social practice. This approach is thus convinced that social and political domination is reproduced by speech, talk, and discourse.

## DEFINITION AND ASPECTS OF DISCOURSE

There are different approaches of discourse analysis in several scientific disciplines. In this respect discourse approach is truly interdisciplinary. Some forms of discourse analysis refer to poststructuralism (e.g., Michel Foucault), some are based on socio- or psycholinguistics (e.g., Wodak, van Dijk) and some more or less belong to communication research (e.g., William A. Gamson). The historical or critical discourse analysis combines sociological aspects and linguistic elements, as well as aspects of cognitive psychology in a coherent research program. While qualitative content analysis or Grounded Theory can be applied to different text material from different theoretical perspectives, discourse analysis is tied to the theoretical core construct of discourse. Discourse is defined in different ways. Gamson, for instance, defines it as “a particular set of ideas and symbols that are used in various public forms to construct meaning about it.” Jürgen Habermas defines discourse as a form of argumentative communication in which legitimacy that has been called into question is being restored (→ Habermas, Jürgen). Many researchers follow the definition of discourse as an argumentative form of “public conversation.”

Despite all their differences, most definitions share four crucial aspects. First, discourses refer to political or social issues which are relevant for society or at least for a major group of people. In this respect one can distinguish between a “drug discourse,” an “anti-Semitism discourse,” a “migration discourse,” a “nuclear energy discourse,” or an “abortion discourse,” for example.

Second, the elements of discourses are called speech acts. Following speech act theory, a statement is not only a statement in the sense of speaking (e.g., saying “thanks”), but also a form of social acting (e.g., actually “thanking” someone). There are different opinions about the elements of speech acts. For example, some researchers look at arguments, others focus on metaphors and neologisms, and some look at key words. These elements are conceived as patterns of discourse and are a focus of discourse

analysis. The role of speech acts in discourse can be exemplified by social movements: participants in a social movement make statements in order to emphasize their concerns, to tell the public about what they claim to be an injustice, and mobilize others to participate in the movement. Thus speaking is not only a verbal act but also a type of social acting or social interaction.

Third, discourses can be analyzed by studying text corpora like party political programs, official documents, transcripts of parliamentary debates, or historical sources. In most cases, however, researchers rely on media coverage as an indicator for public discourse. Therefore, a discourse can be conceived as a political or public debate covered by the mass media. Yet, one should then speak of “media discourse.” Mass media can be conceived as producers of discourse as well as an arena, forum, or platform for discourse participants. In this sense Gamson uses the image of discourse participants “speaking from a gallery.” Nevertheless, mass media or – more precisely – journalists, reporters, and commentators should themselves be considered participants in a public discourse.

Fourth, discourses are processes of collectively constructing social reality. Participants of such processes make use of activities called “discourse practices” (Foucault) or “sponsor activities” (Gamson). Since discourse participants try to establish their point of view as collectively binding, any discourse implies some element of hierarchy, domination, or conflict. Socio- and psycholinguistic researchers (Gamson, van Dijk, Wodak) share further assumptions. They assume that all knowledge is organized in the form of cognitive schemata, frames, or scripts, and that this knowledge is applied to and transformed within social discourse. Thus, this cognitive structure can be perceived in social contexts like using language and making statements.

### **AIMS OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

As mentioned above, discourses comprise speech acts and their elements. These elements serve as discourse devices – a notion going back to George Herbert Mead’s “significant symbols” of social interaction (→ Language and Social Interaction). The main task of discourse analysis is to examine and interpret discourse devices in terms of social hierarchies. On the one hand, one can distinguish different forms of discourse analysis according to theoretical backgrounds like sociology, → linguistics, or psychology. On the other hand, one can differentiate between different versions of discourse analysis according to the discourse devices under examination.

The poststructuralist version of discourse analysis (Foucault), for instance, aims at discourse practices, discursive content, elites, and formations. Socio- and psycholinguistic versions of discourse analysis (Wodak, van Dijk) rather examine argumentative structures and linguistic patterns, or focus on metaphors and neologisms. Some studies analyze these devices for a limited number of, for example, newspaper reports. Others decompose a single article in every syntactical and semantic detail. Those versions of discourse analysis dealing with public or media discourses (e.g., Gamson) focus on so-called “idea elements.” These can be categorized as “frames,” which are also called “packages of interpretation.” Although the above-mentioned researchers claim to do something different than an argumentation analysis, the idea elements are in fact simply explanations for a certain standpoint and thus a sort of “incomplete” argument. And the frames or

interpretive packages are comparable to global arguments. The process of identifying idea elements is explained rather vaguely in most studies. Yet, this also holds true for generating argumentative structures and linguistic patterns in socio- and psycholinguistic versions of discourse analysis. Some researchers seem to make a more or less hermeneutic or impressionistic categorization of the text material. Others rather do a qualitative content analysis in order to identify and describe discourse patterns more systematically.

Most studies carrying out a discourse analysis are more interested in the specific qualities of a discourse than in quantifying these qualities. For instance, critical discourse analysis is interested, say, in identifying different anti-Semitic rhetorics in political speeches or newspaper articles as well as in describing and discussing them in a wider social and political context. But there is no quantitative analysis in most studies. In contrast, a conventional content analysis would measure quantitatively by counting the appearance of such discourse elements for a large number of speeches or articles (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). Besides, considering the social or political context would be rather an aspect of data interpretation than an inherent aspect of a conventional content analysis. Most studies in discourse approach are qualitative work. Nevertheless, public or media discourse studies are also quantifying the idea elements and frames identified before. Thus, as with categories obtained in qualitative content analysis, the elements being identified in discourse analysis (e.g., neologisms, metaphors, arguments) can be incorporated into a codebook for a quantitative content analysis. So discourse analysis and quantitative content analysis do not necessarily exclude each other, but can be integrated into a larger research project.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Discourse ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistics ▶ News as Discourse ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Power and Discourse

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# Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to

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Most Language and Social Interaction (LSI) researchers would agree that their findings about the social functionality of details of language use and social interaction have potential value for cognitive science. Schegloff (2006) cites evidence that people have cognitive capabilities for managing, detecting, and processing the socially consequential details of expressive acts whose complexity exceeds what cognitive science has recognized to date (→ Information Processing; Cognition).

But LSI researchers are not concerned with the value of their findings for cognitive science. They are only concerned with cognition insofar as taking it into account helps us understand how language use and social interaction work. This involves an issue on which there are differing positions. At the one end, there is the position that opposes a concern with cognitive content, except for the way cognition-related talk functions in language use and social interaction. At the other end, there is the position that we can and should assess how cognitive content influences or is influenced by language use and social interaction – what people perceive, believe, value, want, or feel at the moment. In between these poles there is a concern with what people must “know” about language use and interaction to have a systematic basis for composing and interpreting socially functional expressive acts. From several recent publications in which these issues are addressed, four distinct approaches can be distilled regarding what aspects of cognition are relevant in LSI research, and for what purpose (Fitch & Sanders 2005; te Molder & Potter 2005; van Dijk 2006).

## THE ANTI-COGNITIVIST APPROACH

The anti-cognitivist approach arises mainly in → conversation analysis, → discursive psychology, → ethnomethodology, and sometimes → ethnography of communication. This approach has roots in the work of sociologists in the 1960s, especially Herbert Blumer, → Erving Goffman, and Harold Garfinkel. They attribute persons' actions and the personal qualities they exhibit to external social demands exerted on them, not internal cognitive states – to what is required of persons in situations to achieve coordination with others and sustain social order. Empirical work associated with this approach emphasizes the postulate in LSI that expressive acts and interactions are co-constructed by the participants, rather than products of any one person's cognitions.

An additional reason given for this anti-cognitivist approach is that – apart from what actors say – it is generally not possible for either analysts or interacting persons to detect any specific influence that someone's actual cognitive content exerts. This ties to the observation of what happens when persons do publicly manifest actual cognitive events; for example, when someone utters the “change of state” token *oh*, or engages in self-repair, or reports uncertainty or confusion. It seems to be the social relevance and meaning of the indicated cognitive event that occasions such expressive acts, not the cognitive event itself.

Talk about cognition has been examined from two main perspectives. One perspective is that matters attributed to cognitive events are for all practical purposes matters of language use and interaction. For example, Lynch (2006) considers that what is nominally the cognitive activity of “looking for” something actually involves social coordination with others as to what to look for and how to look for it, as does “counting” things. He also considers that the nominally cognitive event of “failing to recall” something (as in court) often has a social basis and social meaning independent of any cognitive state.

The other perspective focuses on the fact that talk is the primary medium through which individuals’ cognitions are made known, whether in interviews, on questionnaires, or in interaction. Because of the inherent *social functionality of such talk*, it cannot provide a faithful record of cognition. Much attention has been given to the way our knowledge about another’s cognitions – what the other perceives or knows, or what his or her intentions are – depends on the accounting and interviewing practices used to present or obtain such knowledge, not interviewees’ actual cognitions. Attention has also been given to the way cognitive states are reported so as to justify an action that was taken. In addition, some research attributes practices in institutional settings to “distributed cognition,” where the basis for what people know and think about on a task depends on the social distribution of effort within a community of practice, rather than their independent cognitive states and content.

### THE “COMPETENCE” APPROACH

In contrast to the anti-cognitivist approach, analysts in language pragmatics (→ Linguistic Pragmatics), some in ethnography of communication, and others scattered across other LSI sub-fields are concerned with a different aspect of cognition. They are concerned with the “knowledge” that people must have about what makes situated expressive acts meaningful that enables them to achieve and to detect social functionality in the details of language use and interaction. Finding out what has to be known reveals the systematicity of language use and social interaction, as well as the basis for culture learning, children’s communication development, and the source of differences in individual proficiency.

One approach involves *rules*. For example, an early formulation of the concept of “communicative competence” by the sociolinguist Dell Hymes involves knowledge of “rules of speaking” within a speech community that enables speakers and hearers to produce socially meaningful acts and understand them as such. The conversation analysts Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schlegoff, and Gail Jefferson formulated procedural rules that people orient to in taking turns and selecting next speaker in conversations. In language pragmatics, John Searle proposed that persons know constitutive rules that specify what the content of an utterance must be, the social conditions of the utterance, and the speaker’s intention, for the utterance to count as a particular speech act.

Another approach involves *formal relations between expressive acts* by which they are interpreted and interconnected. H. P. Grice’s cooperative principle and associated conversational maxims specify ways utterances are presumed to be connected that guide the way people interpret (and are counted on to interpret) them. Politeness theory draws on Grice’s thinking to model how persons reason in composing expressive acts so as to reduce the face threat that the act poses to the hearer (→ Politeness Theory). Sanders

(1987) has proposed principles by which utterances are relevant to each other on the basis of alternate possible interpretations. “Knowledge” of these principles would enable speakers to project the interactional consequences of their expressive acts. Such projections provide a basis for composing and interconnecting expressive acts to promote desired social results, and also a basis for inferring the social goals of others.

### THE ETHNOGRAPHY-IDEOLOGY APPROACH

This third approach is common to the sub-fields of the ethnography of communication and discourse analysis, with ties to critical theory and cultural studies. Work in these sub-fields has in common an interest in the cognitive content (beliefs and values) that is publicly expressed – presupposed and affirmed – by the texts and communal practices people produce, independent of the beliefs and values persons have privately. Ethnographies of communication start with communal or ritual practices that one finds community members engaged in regularly that are distinctive for the underlying beliefs and values they affirm for natives. These practices comprise not just texts but other materials of social expression and performance, including setting, participation structure, dress, nonverbal manner, equipment, and so forth. Discourse analysis starts with texts that individuals produce in relevant contexts, and inferentially specifies the underlying ideology that substantively interconnects the text’s components. In both cases, “native” informants may guide and correct inferences of the cognitions – the cultural code or ideology – underlying the materials of practices and texts.

There are two kinds of cognitive content that these sub-fields cite. Although not usually put this way, one of these is *schemas of the whole* that are the basis for the interconnections and functionality of particular component acts (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction). Another kind of cognitive content is the ideological value placed on specific acts by which they are hierarchically ordered, sometimes expressed in terms of rules. At times this approach merges with the anti-cognitivist approach when the public expression of cognitions is regarded as a separate matter from the cognitions persons actually have. At other times, it merges with the “competence” approach in identifying “knowledge” that speakers and hearers must have to produce socially functional expressive acts and interpret them as such. And at other times, this approach merges with the social psychology approach (below) that is concerned with the way actual cognitive states in the moment shape expressive acts and the response to them.

Philipsen and Coudu (2005) and Leeds-Hurwitz (2005) survey diverse studies by ethnographers that have identified *beliefs and values* about reciprocal entitlements and obligations among neighbors, married couples, public officials, and the like that rationalize diverse communal practices. These include conceptions of masculinity inferred from men’s speaking practices in a blue collar, urban US neighborhood; the value given to social connections in such practices as seeking favors, issuing and complying with directives, and managing social asymmetries in urban Colombian society; the cultural codes underlying wedding rituals that intercultural couples try to preserve in hybrid wedding rituals they devise; the value placed on symmetry and directness in conflicts by native Israelis evident from a ritual practice for setting aside social asymmetries during disputes with one’s superiors; the knowledge that is needed to be considered a member

and to participate in the reviving culture of Osage Indians; and conceptions of self that are codified and enacted in diverse activities, ranging from being a spectator at a sporting event to an advocate in a community dispute.

Tracy (2005) and Edwards (2005) have surveyed current thinking about discourse analysis in particular institutional and social contexts. This work owes a debt to Michel Foucault's thinking about the way institutional ideologies are embedded in the presuppositions of lexical categories and their interconnections in discourse. However, LSI analysts do not generally take a critical stance. Some work focuses on presuppositions embedded in members' discourse about the institution's and members' goals and how those guide and constrain practical action, for example in discourse about the research colloquia of an academic department, or in coordination problems in interactions between 911 emergency call-takers and callers. Other work has focused on the details of persons' reports of personal experience that represent their perceptions and biases, for example the descriptions of the conduct of members of a stigmatized ethnic group, or descriptions of the appearance and conduct of a passing stranger that made him seem "suspicious" and justified reporting him to the police.

### THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY APPROACH

There is consensus in the sub-field of language and social psychology that aspects of actual cognition (perceptions and attitudes) are directly relevant to certain details of language use and social interaction. Researchers investigate either what details of language use and bodily action have particular effects *on* cognition (principally, perceptions of and attitudes toward the other) and what details of language use and interaction result *from* certain cognitions (attitudes) regarding the other.

Much of the research in this tradition has been done on phonological, lexical, and syntactic aspects of speakers' style that are evaluatively (attitudinally) differentiated, as well as their nonverbal expression. These elements have been found to affect evaluative perceptions of the speaker including perceptions of speaker power, and perceptions of gender difference. In addition, a substantial body of research has been done in relation to the central tenet of communication accommodation theory that the language spoken, accent, lexical choices, and rate of persons will converge or diverge, depending on whether they have positive or negative attitudes toward the other (Bradac & Giles 2005). This general pattern of convergence and divergence and its consequences have also been investigated in the context of interviewing in organizations, and in doctor-patient interactions.

The differences among sub-groups within LSI about what aspects of cognition are relevant to examining the way language use and social interaction work do not indicate conflicting ideas about language use and social interaction. There is general agreement in LSI that the phenomena of interest are not the conduct of individuals except with reference to their coordinated interaction and the discursive practices that achieve that. When attention is given to one aspect of cognition or another, it is always in terms of the part that cognition (or talk about cognition) plays in the social functionality of expressive acts in social interactions.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Conversation Analysis ► Discursive Psychology ► Ethnography of Communication ► Ethnomethodology ► Goffman, Erving ► Information



Processing ► Language and Social Interaction ► Language and Social Psychology  
 ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Politeness Theory ► Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and  
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## **Discourse Comprehension**

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Discourse comprehension is the act of interpreting a written or spoken message by integrating the incoming information into the memory or knowledge structures of the interpreter. As such it involves social and pragmatic knowledge as well as grammatical and logical knowledge.

Consider an example from Schank and Abelson (1977): (1) “John went into a restaurant. He ordered a hamburger and coke, paid the check and left.” The statement is simple enough and comprehension of the word “check” in (1) above was probably effortless and automatic. But how does a participant in communication come to the correct meaning of the word “check”? There are other possibilities. The word (phonetic expression) “check” could have meant (a) a particular mark on a page (✓), (b) a piece of paper for depositing money into a bank, (c) to leave a hat and coat in a coatroom, (d) to restrain, (e) to examine, or (f) a move in hockey.

People are able to arrive at the correct meaning for the word “check” because they rely on prior knowledge structures such as → scripts. When you encountered the word “restaurant” in (1) above a “restaurant” script was activated that contains considerable experiential knowledge about typical roles (waiters, cooks, customers), objects (menus, tables, silverware, cash register), goals (get food on time, waitress brings check), and activities (be seated, order food, get served, pay the check). This restaurant script was the interpretive frame for the word “check” (→ Framing Effects). It provided the world knowledge necessary to correctly understand the meaning of the word “check.” This world knowledge includes justifiable expectations and typical inferences. Thus, the restaurant was probably not a sophisticated and expensive gourmet restaurant because one does not usually order a hamburger and a coke in such places. That would be a justifiable inference based on pragmatic knowledge of the world, but certainly not a guaranteed truth condition.

*Functionality* is a first principle of discourse comprehension. Functionality means that all language accomplishes something. Its expression performs some “work”; it is language *in use* or language that cannot be restricted to structural forms but must be related to the purposes, goals, and designs of human affairs. Consider this conversation:

(2) Randy: “What are you up to tonight?” Sue: “I’ve got an exam tomorrow.”

Here it is apparent that the sequence is an identifiable question and answer, but there are also interpersonal and social goals being realized. We might speculate about the specific meaning of the sequence but would require more knowledge to be precise, knowledge such as history of the relationship, communicative intent, settings, cultural patterns of interaction, as well as conventional routines such as “going out with someone.” Randy’s question might be a simple and genuine inquiry, or it might serve as pre-request for information in order to avoid potential rejection from “asking Sue to go out.”

Functionality is contrasted with *structural* approaches, which are more concerned with language as a formal autonomous system (e.g., Chomsky 1957). Structuralists are concerned with grammar and small constituent units of language that can occur in a restricted number of arrangements. In Chomsky’s well-known example – (3) “Colorless green ideas sleep furiously” – the statement is meaningless but structurally well formed. The main comprehension processes are (a) speech act assignment, (b) the coherence mechanisms that assist with tracking information, and (c) the interpretive codes used by communicators.

### SPEECH ACT ASSIGNMENT

A speech act is the performative aspect of an utterance that produces action so the utterance (e.g., “I am sorry for missing the meeting”) is the genuine accomplishment of certain action (to apologize). The goal of discourse comprehension is to use real-time subjective experience to assign conventional meanings to speech acts. If a speaker says “Put the book over there” and wants it to count as an order, then the listener must be able to actually place the book in the designated location and accept the position of authority required to utter an order. The utterance is partially processed as an order because it includes an understood “you” and an imperative structure. Lexically, the utterance is simple and denotes actions “put” and a deictic pronoun (“there”) that refers to a mutually

understood place in the environment. All interpreters get some assistance in assigning meaning to speech acts from deictic movements (e.g., pointing to an object), facial gestures, tone and stress, bodily movements, and interaction history.

Whether or not the interpretation of speech acts is unproblematic from one context to another is a controversy in discourse comprehension. Is an “apology” from a government official the same as from a family member? Some data (Rosaldo 1982) indicate that individual communities develop subjective differences in interpreting speech acts. These data support modifications to the analysis of speech acts by making them more sensitive to sociological and interactional constraints. Work by Labov and Fanshel (1977) is an applied example of how the nonstandard assignment of meaning to speech acts can have important implications in a therapeutic setting.

## COHERENCE

Rendering a discourse as coherent is another central task for both a producer and consumer of communication if they are going to successfully accomplish the act of comprehension. All language users develop pragmatic competence which includes the mechanisms and strategies in a language code for making sequences of messages sensible or coherent. This is an interactional achievement. There is a distinction between coherence and cohesion. *Coherence* refers to the general organizational patterns that lend order to discourse. *Cohesion* has to do with relations among surface linguistic forms. Cohesion is a tie between two linguistic forms that assists a text with its wholeness. In the following sentence the relationship between “papers” and “them” is a cohesive tie:

(4) “Bundle the papers with string. Then place them on the curb.”

The function of “them” is to refer to “papers” and makes it possible to interpret the two sentences as related. The term “them” presupposes “papers” and makes no sense otherwise.

The issues in coherence are separated into local coherence and global coherence (see Ellis 1999). *Local coherence* is related to cohesion and is termed “local” because the linguistic terms are properties of the text and not a larger structure. The cohesive tie in (4) above is local. Halliday and Hasan (1976) describe five major cohesive ties: reference, substitution, ellipses, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Local cohesive devices are a natural part of the linguistic system and communicators use them to process information. Their use varies by social constraints on language. Studies by Villaume and Cegala (1988) and Ellis et al. (1994) are direct tests of the relationship between the quality of communication and cohesive devices.

*Global coherence* is produced by interpreters who apply a general organizing scheme to a series or sequences of statements. It is a macro framework that provides the overall management and interpretation of local connections. For example, the headline of a newspaper story provides a global frame for all of the sentences that constitute the story. After reading the headline, everything in the story will be understood within the global frame of the headline. Scripts as described in example (1) above are global coherence mechanisms that direct the comprehension of the language.

Topicality is essential to notions of global coherence and discourse comprehension. It is the primary organization principle of a message. The *topic* is the theme or subject

matter of what is being written or talked about. Speeches, essays, paragraphs, and discourses of all types have a topic that organizes the language. The first sentence of a paragraph may be connected sensibly to the last sentence according to topicality rather than local cohesion devices. All discourses have a global semantic structure that explains the relevant information in the discourse as a whole.

Speakers and writers direct the fluid nature of topic changes and focus. Comprehending a discourse involves proper focusing and foregrounding of information. Information is focused and foregrounded when it is established in consciousness and other information is backgrounded. Line (5b) below makes sense because line (5a) foregrounds puppy (Tyler & Marslen-Wilson 1982):

- (5a) "The puppy stepped on a wasp"
- (5b) "He was very upset"

Line (5c) below is awkward because it is responsive to information that is not foregrounded:

- (5a) "The puppy stepped on a wasp"
- (5b) "He was very upset"
- (5c) "It started to buzz furiously"

The skillful use of foregrounding and focus is important for producers of messages who want to assist interpreters with the task of discourse comprehension.

Discourse comprehension involves the computation on the part of interpreters of communicative function. The sequence in (2) above is understood as coherent and communicatively sensible because the assumption of rationality on the part of communicators presupposes that the participants are cooperating (Grice 1975) and Sue's utterance in example (2) is a genuine response to the previous utterance that is expressed for an action performed in communicating.

## INTERPRETIVE CODES

At the highest level of generality, communicators use codes to comprehend discourse (→ Speech Codes Theory; Code). No description of discourse comprehension would be complete if it did not account for subjective and cultural experiences of language users and how these inform the comprehension process. A *code* is an orientation toward the production and interpretation of language. It is a set of interpretive frames formed on the basis of individual cultural experiences and is used to understand specialized group meanings. They are powerful to the extent that they are responsive to particular subjective experiences.

Philipsen (1997) and Katriel (1986) developed a widely recognized research program on communication codes and how members of a culture share orientations toward communication. A communication or speech code is a way of speaking that is culturally distinctive and results from the unique psychology and sociology of the culture. Discourse is interpreted on the basis of the cultural knowledge of the code. Katriel's (1986) research on *dugri* and *musayara* shows how Israeli-Jews and Arabs have ways of speaking that emerge from their respective cultures and is sometimes responsible for

problems and misunderstandings. Thus, the *dugri* code for example is direct, pragmatic, and assertive where the *musayara* code is more indirect and accommodating. One must have cultural experience in order to fully comprehend the discourse of the other. These codes are a sort of blueprint shared by members of the culture. It is interpretive information acquired in the experience of the culture and not abstractly. Linguistics had tended to ignore this aspect of comprehension in favor of more abstract cognitive processing rules for language. Recent work in communication directs the focus of discourse comprehension more toward communicative competence and language in use that includes the ability to interpret language in situated cultural contexts.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Code ▶ Cognition ▶ Comprehension ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Information Processing ▶ Meaning ▶ Schemas ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Scripts ▶ Speech Codes Theory

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## **Discourse in the Law**

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The law operates primarily through language. Legislative bodies enact statutes and ordinances, judges hand down decisions, juries issue verdicts, and people enter into a

wide variety of contractual relationships; in each case, a legal effect is produced through language. Nevertheless, until recently, the study of legal discourse was not well developed. Since the 1980s, however, an increasing number of scholars have addressed aspects of the relationship between law and language.

The language of the law, with its specialized vocabulary and technical subject matter, is largely inaccessible to the lay public. Accordingly, a major focus of legal education is the socialization into the discourse practices of the legal profession. American law school pedagogy is based on the Socratic method. The students read and “brief” decisions of appellate courts in order to prepare for a daunting classroom exercise in which an arbitrarily selected student is presented with a series of questions which aggressively challenge the reasoning of each prior response, thus training the student to recognize, isolate, and respond to the legal issues that are presented – that is, to “think like a lawyer.”

Much of the study of legal language has focused on courtroom discourse and, particularly, on criminal and civil trials. A trial is structured by speech events – voir dire (jury selection), opening statements, witness examination, closing arguments, jury instructions, and announcement of the verdict – and Stygall’s (1994) detailed analysis of the trial of an automobile accident case demonstrates the interrelationship of these discourses in producing legal outcomes. Other studies have limited their analysis to specific aspects of courtroom interaction.

The examination of witnesses has been extensively analyzed and discussed. In an early study, Atkinson and Drew (1979) examined the interactional effects of the structuring of testimony as a series of questions and answers, resulting in a fixed order of speaking in which the lawyer controls the topics to be addressed. They also detailed the manner in which lawyers can undermine a witness’s testimony by questions which construct a damaging version of the facts. Woodbury (1984) noted that questions posed in statement form (“The light was green?”) act to signal their expected answer, and can thus be used to suggest that the witness is lying (→ Questions and Questioning). Woodbury also noted that questions that call for a “yes” or “no” answer can be used to transform the lawyer’s question into evidence. These observations have been replicated in a number of case studies. For example, Matoesian (1993) shows how a cross-examining attorney can allocate blame by constructing a particular version of an event through a series of questions. Similarly, Chang (2004) demonstrates how prosecutors and presiding judges in Chinese criminal trials use coercive questioning to accuse defendants, invalidate their exculpatory testimony, and impose discursive punishment through shaming.

A number of scholars have commented on the narrative structure of trials. Both Stygall (1994) and Cotterill (2003) describe the trial as constructed of competing stories, while Woodbury (1984) notes that the story is elicited from the witnesses through the lawyer’s questioning. The narrative structuring of trial discourse was extensively examined in the late 1970s by Lance Bennett (→ Storytelling and Narration), who argued that the story form aids in the evaluation of conflicting versions and interpretations and allows ordinary people to make sophisticated judgments about complex issues. He notes that jurors will abstract information elicited from question-and-answer sequences during the trial and arrange them in story form in the course of their deliberations.

The lawyer’s restructuring of the evidence in closing arguments has been the subject of a number of studies. Cotterill (2003) describes the use of → metaphor in the prosecution’s

and defense's closing arguments in the O. J. Simpson murder trial in order to reframe the relevant events. Similarly, Hobbs (2005) details how the defense team's closing argument in the murder trial of millionaire Robert Durst acted to direct the jury's attention to a single event in order to effect a shift in focus that would allow the attorneys to argue that the prosecution had not met its burden of proof.

In comparison to the language of lawyers, the language of judges remains underexplored. Robertshaw's (1998) examination of "summing up," the practice by which English and Welsh judges summarize the trial evidence for the jurors, and Philips's (1998) study of how judges' political ideologies impact their conduct of guilty-plea hearings demonstrate the impact of language on the outcome of cases. In addition, Hobbs's (2007) analysis of the United States Supreme Court's majority opinion in *Rasul v. Bush* describes the discursive processes by which the Court presents its decision as grounded in existing law. However, given the power of judges and, particularly, the role of appellate judges in the development of the law, much work remains to be done.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Metaphor ► Power and Discourse ► Questions and Questioning ► Storytelling and Narration

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## **Discourse Markers**

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Using language – “linguaging” (Becker 1988) – is possible at two levels of discourse. Generally, when we use language, we look through it at a world we believe to exist beyond language. However, we can also use language for *metalinguaging*, i.e., in order to look

through it at the process of using language itself (→ Linguistics; Conversation Analysis). Discourse markers can be viewed as linguistic elements employed for metalanguaging – languaging about the interaction, as opposed to languaging about the extralingual world. In other words, rather than referring to the world perceived by speakers to exist *beyond* language, discourse markers refer to the text itself, to the interaction among its speakers, or to the cognitive processes taking place in their minds during verbalization (Maschler 1994).

Discourse markers have been investigated from a multitude of linguistic approaches. The terms used to refer to these elements vary greatly, e.g., pragmatic particle, pragmatic operator, pragmatic expression, discourse particle, discourse connective, discourse operator, marker of pragmatic structure, cue phrase, parenthetical phrase, and even mystery particle.

Discourse markers can be classified into *three major types*: (1) those operating in the realm of the structure of the text, signaling relationships between the conversational actions taking place (“textual discourse markers,” e.g., *and, but, so, because, first of all, anyway*); (2) those functioning in the realm of the interaction among text participants (“interpersonal discourse markers,” e.g., *yeah, no, look, really?, wow!, great, mhm*); and (3) those referring to (in the sense of attesting) the cognitive processes taking place in the speaker’s mind during verbalization (“cognitive discourse markers,” e.g., *uh, uhm, oh*, Hebrew *ke’ilu* (“like” recognizing the need for self-rephrasal; Maschler 2002). Of course, since all utterances are always constrained by the various contextual realms shaping discourse, discourse markers often function in more than one realm, and they often do so simultaneously (e.g., English *okay*, which can be both textual and interpersonal, Hebrew *’oy* (“oh no”), which can be both cognitive and interpersonal). Often, however, one of the realms is more pronounced, warranting a broad classification such as that above (cf. Schiffrin 1987).

In his influential study of grammaticization, Hopper conceives of grammar as a product of structuration, “an unintended outcome of communicative behavior . . . , rather than a bounded object to be thought of as structure” (1998: 158). The emergence of discourse markers from longer metalingual utterances, as well as their multifunctionality in several discourse realms, motivates studies investigating their grammaticization.

Common to all of these metalingual utterances is their function in negotiating a frame shift (Goffman 1981), or conversational action boundary in interaction (Maschler 1997). Studies of bilingual discourse show that bilinguals consistently switch languages in verbalizing discourse markers (e.g., Maschler 2000). This strategy suggests that discourse markers are perceived as a distinct and unified category – the category of utterances employed to metalanguage conversational action boundaries – constituting evidence that the category “Discourse Marker” is not merely a linguist’s construct, but rather a substantial and meaningful category for speakers.

Discourse markers constitute a system exhibiting two more types of patterning involving: (1) the moments at which discourse markers are employed in interaction, and (2) their structural properties. As for (1), in general, the higher the boundary between conversational actions, the more linguistic material necessary for its construction. “arger packages,” such as the beginning of a new episode in a narrative, typically open with more discourse markers – and particularly more *clusters* of discourse markers (e.g., *anyway, uhm, listen*) – than “smaller packages,” such as the beginning of a “second” in an adjacency pair.



In terms of their *structural properties*, discourse markers have developed from a variety of parts of speech: adverbs, interjections, conjunctions, deictics, verbs of saying, verbs of perception, nouns, adjectives, quantifiers, and even clauses. Besides having the semantic property of metalinguality, discourse markers share a prosodic property: 94 percent of the discourse markers in a spoken Israeli Hebrew corpus were found to occur at intonation-unit initial position, either at a point of speaker change, or, in same-speaker talk, immediately following any intonation contour *other than continuing intonation* (unless they appear in a cluster of discourse markers). For example:

... we talked a lot,  
 .. about this whole thing,  
 .. about compliments.  
 .... because,  
 ... to me,  
 ... that was really  
 .. that's something,  
 .. that I can't stand.

The discourse marker *because* appears here in same-speaker talk following final intonation (marked by the period following *compliments*). The remaining 6 percent of the discourse markers function at lower-level conversational action boundaries, such as introducing a voice “of second order” of the same speaker. For example, in

'amarti la *tir'i*,  
 I told her look,

*tir'i* occurs intonation-unit internally (Maschler 1997, 2002). The system of discourse markers punctuating interaction, then, constitutes part of a larger, iconic system of grammatical, prosodic, and kinesic features, helping participants distinguish higher-order frame shifts from those that are more subtle in nature.

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Goffman, Erving ► Interactional Sociolinguistics  
 ► Language and Social Interaction ► Linguistics ► Storytelling and Narration ► Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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## Discriminant Analysis

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The main aim of discriminant function analysis is to predict group membership of an object or a person by using as few characteristics (or set of predictors) as possible. Additionally, discriminant analysis is used to classify elements according to their characteristic properties (→ Statistics, Descriptive). So if you know the answers a subject might give to a crucial set of questions and/or the scores that subject might achieve on an important set of characteristics, discriminant analysis enables you to predict whether the subject is or will likely be a voter or nonvoter, buyer or nonbuyer, college dropout or graduate, researcher or lecturer, master or servant, winner or loser, television viewer or nonviewer, opinion-leader or follower, etc.

For example, a product manager is interested in the critical characteristics of the target group that distinguish the buyers of the product from the nonbuyers. The question is: what makes a person a buyer or a nonbuyer? What are the relevant factors that are responsible for paying money for the product or not? And which of the factors is mainly responsible for the difference; which are more important than others? Do buyers differ from nonbuyers predominantly in their socio-demographic background, their psychological profile, their attitudes, or their personal interests? If the answers a subject might give to the crucial questions are known, the product manager is able to predict the subject's group membership. In addition, the product manager knows the general probability of classifying a "new" element into the "right" group (→ Marketing).

### APPLICATION IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

A well-known example of the application of discriminant analysis in communication research is the attempt to *differentiate television viewers from nonviewers* by means of numerous variables (e.g., Tankard & Harris, 1980; → Exposure to Television; Audience Research). A list of more than 200 variables was reduced first to 43 and then to 11 by using discriminant analysis. The 11 variables succeeded in classifying television viewers and nonviewers correctly for 74.6 percent of the cases in a sample from a national US survey. Nonviewing was associated with less satisfaction from family life, greater happiness in general, fewer young children in the household, greater participation in groups and organizations, more time spent in active military service, lower family income, stronger view of self as religious, less frequent attendance at religious services, more frequent

socializing with friends outside the neighborhood, and so on (→ Media Use by Social Variable).

Another example of the advantages of discriminant analysis taken from the field of → political communication revealed that *supporters of various political parties* (in South Africa) could more easily be differentiated in terms of their support for internal harmony and equality than in their support for national strength and order (Heaven et al. 1994). Research on *opinion leadership* showed that, in addition to personal involvement and product familiarity, public individuation was the most important variable in distinguishing opinion leaders from non-leaders (→ Opinion Leader; Involvement with Media Content). Risk preference, open-mindedness, and mass media exposure, though correlated with opinion leadership, were not found to be important predictors of opinion leadership (Chan & Misra 1990).

## ORIGIN

The famous statistician, Sir Ronald A. Fisher, originated the concept of discriminant analysis. It is sometimes called *Fisher's linear discriminant*, although Fisher's original article (1936) described a slightly different discriminant, which does not make some of the assumptions of discriminant analysis such as normally distributed classes or equal class co-variances (see below). Technically speaking, discriminant analysis asks which (linear) combination of properties can best predict the discrimination of groups, and which of these independent variables has the largest predictive power, i.e., how much variance can be explained by each of the independent variables. The resulting linear combination of features is often used for dimensionality reduction before later classification.

Hence, discriminant analysis can also be related closely to principal component analysis (PCA) and → *factor analysis* in the attempt to find linear combinations of variables that best explain the data. While discriminant analysis explicitly tries to model the difference between the classes of data, PCA does not take into account any difference in class, and factor analysis builds the dimensions based on differences rather than similarities. Nevertheless, discriminant analysis can be employed as a useful complement to principal components analysis and also to → cluster analysis in order to judge the results of these analyses.

## STATISTICAL BASIS

The statistical technique (→ Statistics, Explanatory) underlying discriminant analysis is closely related to → *regression analysis and analysis of variance*, which also attempt to express one dependent variable as a linear combination of other measures. However, in the two latter procedures, the dependent variable is continuous, while for discriminant analysis it is categorical (i.e., group membership). In contrast to procedures like multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), in discriminant analysis group membership is explained and predicted by two or more metric independent variables. The set of these predictors could be all kinds of measures (→ Measurement Theory) – answers to questions in a → survey, test scores in psychological tests (→ Test Theory), → observation data, etc. The choice of predictors is usually made on the basis of theory about which variables provide information about group membership.

Because in MANOVA we ask whether group membership is associated with significant mean differences on a combination of dependent variables, MANOVA and discriminant analysis use similar mathematical algorithms. But discriminant analysis is putting cases into groups using a classification process – which is a significant extension of MANOVA. Moreover, adequacy of this classification can be evaluated. Adequacy reveals how many cases or subjects are classified correctly, that is, actual and predicted membership are identical (as shown in the above mentioned example where 74.6 percent of the cases were classified correctly). In addition, discriminant analysis allows for interpreting the pattern of differences among independent variables to differentiate among groups. Discriminant analysis may thus have a descriptive *and* a predictive objective. On the one hand, if the researcher is simply interested in a decision rule for classifying cases into groups, the number and meaning of the dimensions is of minor interest. On the other hand, interpreting the results of discriminant analysis in terms of the *combination* of predictors is usually of high value for research, as shown in the characterization of the “nature” of television nonviewers in the example outlined above.

Discriminant analysis can equally well be univariate as multivariate. Univariate discriminant analysis consists of only two groups that are separated through the linear combination of factors, represented by one linear discrimination function. If there are more than two groups, the number of discriminant functions is the number of groups minus 1 (degrees of freedom). In general, classification procedures such as discriminant analysis make fewer statistical assumptions (according to sample size and distribution) than inferential procedures. However, the sample size of the smallest group should at least exceed the number of predictor variables. Nevertheless, classification is optimal if requirements on data are met, such as absence of outliers and homogeneity of variance/co-variance matrices. If group sizes are unequal or distributional assumptions are unsustainable, logistic regression can answer some of the same questions that discriminant analysis answers.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience Research ► Cluster Analysis ► Exposure to Television ► Factor Analysis ► Involvement with Media Content ► Marketing ► Measurement Theory ► Media Use by Social Variable ► Observation ► Opinion Leader ► Political Communication ► Regression Analysis ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Statistics, Explanatory ► Survey ► Test Theory

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# Discursive Psychology

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Discursive psychology examines how psychological issues are made relevant and put to use in everyday talk. Unlike traditional psychological perspectives, discursive psychology does not approach the question of what psychology comprises and explains from an analyst's perspective. Instead the focus is on how psychological characteristics are made available, ascribed, and resisted by people *themselves*, as part of the social actions performed in and through talk.

The step from assuming that talk *reflects* to looking at what talk *does* is paramount. Discursive psychologists analyze how direct and indirect appeals to mental states *do* things in the interaction, such as accusing, defending, building expertise, complaining, and complimenting. Rather than determining the truth value of what people report – by looking at what a person really wants, thinks or feels, or what the world really looks like – discursive psychology focuses on the *interactional business* performed with these descriptions. Limited memories may, for instance, account for a forgotten action, while displays of anger may enhance the genuineness and spontaneity of an explanation. The *action-oriented approach* to language makes discursive psychology radically different from cognitivist traditions in psychology that treat mental states as the source or cause of what is being said (Edwards 1997; Edwards & Potter 2005).

The book *Discourse and social psychology* by Jonathan Potter and Margaret Wetherell (1987) marked the beginning of a research tradition that first emerged as a discourse-based alternative for traditional social psychological work. The notion of an *interpretive repertoire* was coined to capture the ostensible inconsistencies in people's accounts of mind and reality that were not explained by the classical attitude concept. The early work on repertoires has its roots in diverse disciplines such as Wittgensteinian philosophy, ethnomethodology, and poststructuralism (→ Ethnomethodology; Communication Theory and Philosophy). Its most direct origin, however, lies in the discourse analytic approach that has been developed within social studies of science.

Derek Edwards and Jonathan Potter (1992) are the founders of what is currently associated with the term discursive psychology. While still drawing from different disciplines, this tradition is increasingly influenced by the perspective and method of → *conversation analysis*. Like conversation analysts, discursive psychologists are interested in close empirical investigation of naturally occurring data. They work from detailed transcripts of audio or video recordings, derived from a variety of “natural” settings such as phone calls between friends, adolescents' talk, counseling sessions, or police interrogations.

Discursive psychology shares the conversation analytic focus on so-called *activity sequences* as the core concept for understanding what people do in interaction. Actions such as countering blame, establishing the normality of what happened, or rebutting the assumed motivated nature of what is being said are not performed on the basis of single sentences but embedded in a series of turns. The emphasis on turns and sequences rather than isolated spates of talk is both a theoretical and a methodological starting point. People use the turn-by-turn development of a conversation as a resource to make sense of

the social activities that are accomplished. These publicly displayed and continuously updated understandings of what is being said and done are an important “proof procedure” for the analyst.

People also talk rhetorically, in that they routinely resist or deny actual or potential alternative versions of what is being said. Inspecting stretches of discourse for these alternative versions helps the analyst to make sense of the actions performed. It is the combination of a sequential and a rhetorical analysis, focused on people’s practical psychology, that forms the basis of discursive psychological work.

Recently, Edwards and Potter (2005) distinguished three *major strands in discursive psychology* that are strongly interrelated. The first strand concerns the reworking of traditional psychological topics such as attitude, causal attribution, memory, and → scripts into discursive practices. The notion of a script, for example, is not approached as the expression of underlying cognitions. Scripting is studied for what it *does*, as a participants’ concern, such as explaining an event in scripted, dispositional terms (“he is always jealous”) instead of constructing it as a “one-off.” The second strand involves studies of how psychological terms are deployed in everyday talk (intent, motive, remembering, seeing, etc.). The phrase “I don’t know” may not simply refer to a lack of knowledge but also be used to display indifference about one’s ostensible stake precisely at the point where an accusation could be made (“she would say that, wouldn’t she?”; Potter 1996). The third strand of research focuses on psychological themes as they are drawn upon in the interaction in less overtly labeled ways. Attributions of agency and intent are typically performed not by explicit imputations but through apparently straightforward descriptions of the “world-as-it-is.”

All three areas show a salient interest in the triangular relationship between facts, interests, and accountability. A pervasive feature of participants’ discourse is the construction of reports in such a way that they avoid appearing invested or biased, thereby establishing factually robust versions of mind and world. The focus is on how talk routinely resists accusations of stake and interest, and how it therein attends to issues of agency and accountability.

Discursive psychological research has identified a variety of *discursive practices* in a heterogeneous set of fields, ranging from Bill Clinton’s testimony to the grand jury to racial discourse and mealtime conversation. While recent work (Hepburn & Wiggins 2007) bears a strong resemblance to conversation analytic research, there are also differences, such as the status of cognition in interaction (te Molder & Potter 2005).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accounting Research ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Scripts ▶ Transcribing and Transcription ▶ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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## Disney

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Though the Walt Disney Company began as an independent production company producing → cartoons distributed by other companies, the company has developed into one of the largest entertainment conglomerates in the world (→ Media Conglomerates).

### EARLY HISTORY, 1923–1960

Walt Disney began cartooning in Kansas City with a series called *Alice's Wonderland* (1923). Not long thereafter he and his brother founded the Walt Disney Studio, in → Hollywood. In 1927, the company developed an all-animated series called *Oswald the Lucky Rabbit*. After losing the rights to the character, Walt and his chief animator (→ Animation), Ub Iwerks, developed Mickey Mouse, who became the firm's staple product. Mickey's cartoons utilized synchronized sound. The company also began producing another series to feature sound and animation innovations. In 1932, the studio produced the first full-color cartoon (*Flowers and Trees*), winning the first → Academy Award for Best Cartoon. Disney continued to win the award throughout the 1930s and most other years thereafter. Disney also developed merchandising connected to its cartoon characters, beginning with a \$300 license to put Mickey Mouse on writing tablets in 1929. Other products quickly followed, including dolls, toys, dishes, etc., generating fresh revenue for new productions.

The company expanded into feature-length animation with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), the highest grossing film until then. Although the company continued to produce animated cartoons, it also made feature films (e.g., *Pinocchio* and *Fantasia*). The small company's resources were strained, especially during World War II. During the war, Disney produced two films for the State Department, as well as films for the military. After the war, the company repackaged some into features, as well as developing such live-action films as *Song of the South* (1946) and *So Dear to My Heart* (1949), both with animated segments. Disney's *True-Life Adventure* series introduced a new style of nature films, attracting numerous awards.

1950 saw Disney's *Treasure Island*, the animated feature *Cinderella*, and the first Disney television show. Disney moved further into → television with the *Disneyland* anthology series in 1954, which eventually appeared on all three → television networks under six different

titles. *The Mickey Mouse Club* debuted in 1955, introducing the popular Mouseketeers. These shows promoted Disney products and developed an outlet for new products.

The 1955 Disneyland theme park, featuring Disney characters and stories, continuously added fresh attractions from new Disney films, as well as providing a major outlet for Disney products. The company also started its own distribution company (Buena Vista Distribution) during the 1950s, and released *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, the comedy *The Shaggy Dog* (1954), and a TV series about Zorro. Disney also developed Audio-Animatronics and pioneered amusements with the Enchanted Tiki Room at Disneyland and at the 1964 New York World's Fair. Walt Disney died in 1966, not long after the release of *Mary Poppins* (1964).

### AFTER WALT: THE SIXTIES THROUGH THE DISNEY DECADE

By the 1960s, the Disney brand was firmly established in live action, animation, television, theme parks, and merchandise. The firm also re-released its already amortized feature films every few years: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was re-released in 1952, 1958, and 1967, amassing an additional \$50 million. Roy Disney, Donn Tatum (previously, vice president of administration), and Cardon E. Walker (formerly in marketing) served as the executive team until 1971. Film releases included *The Jungle Book* (1967), *Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day* (1968), and in 1969 the beginnings of an especially lucrative franchise, *The Love Bug*. Roy Disney saw Orlando's Walt Disney World opened in 1971, but died a few months later. Tatum became chairman and Walker president. By then, however, the company was even more oriented to recreation and real estate than entertainment. Tokyo Disneyland opened in 1983.

Meanwhile, the film division was mainly turning out perhaps formula-driven box-office duds. By the early 1980s, Disney's box-office share was under 4 percent, and was only slowly moving into new media outlets. The company did launch the Disney Channel in 1983, and an adult-oriented film label, Touchstone, in 1984. However, most analysts agreed the company's management was basically "sitting on its assets." In 1984, the management was challenged by a group of outside investors and eventually lost control of the company. A group of corporate raiders started accumulating huge blocks of Disney stock and jockeying for position to take it over. In the end, Bass Brothers Enterprises invested nearly \$500 million in Disney, preventing a hostile takeover, and ended up with nearly 25 percent of the Disney stock, enough to control the company and to appoint their own managers.

The new management team (dubbing itself "Team Disney") was led by Michael Eisner, former Paramount head, as CEO, along with former Warner Brothers' vice chairman, Frank Wells, president and chief operating officer until his death in 1994. Jeffrey Katzenberg (also from Paramount) became head of the film division. Immediately the team proceeded to break a Disneyland strike and fire 400 employees. Other cost-cutting measures and strategies were introduced. From 1983 to 1987, annual revenues more than doubled, profits nearly quintupled, and the value of Disney's stock increased from \$2 billion to \$10 billion; by 1994, it was worth \$28 billion. By 1999, company revenues totaled nearly \$23 billion, assets were over \$41 billion, and net income was \$1.85 billion.

The Disney empire now revived the classic Disney (repackaging existing products and creating new animated features), modernized some Disney characters, implemented fierce cost cutting (especially on features), introduced dramatic price increases at the



theme parks, and deployed new technological developments (such as computer animation). Team Disney also emphasized corporate partnerships, limited exposure in new investments, diversified expansion, and further developed its corporate synergy. The company linked its different business endeavors under the Disney brand (and, more recently, the ABC and ESPN brands). So not only was Disney busy diversifying, but the company became perhaps the quintessential master of synergy. During the early years of the Disney Decade, the company continued to expand and prosper utilizing these strategies. In 1991, the company ranked in the top 200 US corporations in terms of sales and assets, was 43rd in terms of profits, and stock was worth \$16 billion.

Despite this, a shadow fell over the Magic Kingdom in 1994. Wells died in a helicopter accident, Eisner had heart surgery, EuroDisney (which had opened in 1992) was suffering huge losses, and a proposal for a new historical theme park was getting hammered by nearly everyone. Then in 1995, the company dramatically spent \$19 billion to take over Capital Cities/ABC. This greatly enhanced the company's position in television, sports programming (→ Sports and the Media, History of), and international marketing, in addition to publishing and multimedia components. For a short while Disney was the world's largest media company, with \$16.5 billion in annual revenues.

### **DISNEY IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

The Walt Disney Company was made up of several divisions: Studio Entertainment, Consumer Products, Parks and Resorts, and Media Networks. The *Studio Entertainment* division produces a wide range of products, including animated and live-action films, as well as the Touchstone, Hollywood, Miramax, and Dimension labels. The company also distributes adult and foreign films that are not associated with the family-oriented, "parent guidance"-rated Disney brand. The division contributed over \$8.7 billion of the company's revenues for 2004. Buena Vista Home Entertainment manages Disney's home video business and interactive products globally. Disney has diversified its television offerings as with its film products, under the ABC, Buena Vista, Touchstone, and Walt Disney labels. It produces theatrical versions of animated films through Buena Vista Theatrical Productions and is highly visible in Manhattan, not only by way of its stage productions and the Disney store in Times Square, but through extensive real estate holdings, including ABC's headquarters.

Musical products offered further opportunities to feature Disney properties and are especially lucrative for animated features. Buena Vista Music Group coordinates Disney's various recorded music businesses, which include Walt Disney Records, Buena Vista Records, Hollywood Records, and Lyric Street Records.

The *Consumer Products* division was certainly the foremost merchandising company in Hollywood and produced or licensed a seemingly endless array of products, contributing over \$2.5 billion of the company's revenues in 2004. One of the largest licensors in the world, it was divided into Disney Hardlines, Disney Softlines, and Disney Toys, whose merchandise was marketed globally via its own outlets at the theme parks, through online sites, by way of the Disney catalogue, and at Disney stores worldwide.

The division also produced a wide range of printed material, ranging from comic books and children's magazines to adult-oriented magazines and books. At the end of

1998, the company reported that its print products were published in 37 languages and distributed in over 100 countries, ranking above other global publishers in children's → books and → magazines. In addition to publishing under the Hyperion banner, including ESPN Books, Talk/Miramax Book, ABC Daytime Press, and Hyperion East, the company published the number one US children's magazine, *Disney Adventures*. Consumer Products also included Buena Vista Games, which turned Disney content into interactive gaming products, and the Baby Einstein Company, which produced developmental media for infants.

As of 2007 the *Parks and Resorts* division operated or licensed 11 theme parks on three continents, along with 35 resort hotels, two luxury cruise ships and a wide variety of other entertainment offerings. The parks included Disneyland (embracing hotels, shopping, dining and entertainment venues and a new addition, California Adventure); Walt Disney World Destination Resort (including four different theme parks, numerous hotels, recreational activities, and shopping outlets); Tokyo Disneyland (with Tokyo DisneySea, since 2001); and Disneyland Paris. It contributed over \$7.7 billion of the company's revenues in 2004.

Disney Regional Entertainment operated across eight ESPN Zones (restaurant entertainment centers), featuring sports-themed dining and entertainment. The Disney Cruise Line featured voyages from the Florida complex to the Bahamas. The company also masterminded Celebration, the neo-traditional planned community south of Disney World. A number of sports properties supplemented the company's strong sports media holdings, including the Mighty Ducks (hockey), as well as extensive Florida facilities.

Through acquiring Capital Cities/ABC in 1995, Disney firmly established itself as one of the dominant US media industry players. The ABC television network provided abundant opportunities to promote Disney-produced programming and other businesses, as well as exploiting the more popular ABC programs throughout the rest of the Disney empire. In 2004, the *Media Networks* division attracted over \$11.7 billion, more than any of the others. The ABC Television Network included ABC Entertainment, ABC Daytime, ABC News, ABC Sports, ABC Kids, and the Disney-owned production company, Touchstone Television. In addition, Disney owned 10 television stations (affiliated with ABC) that reached approximately 25 percent of the nation's households, as well as 72 radio stations, including Radio Disney, ESPN Radio, and ABC News Radio.

Disney's ownership of ESPN was through ABC, which owned 80 percent of ESPN Inc. in partnership with the Hearst Corporation. The franchise included four domestic cable networks, regional syndication, 21 international networks, radio, → Internet, retail, print, and location-based dining and entertainment. At the end of 1999, the flagship network reached over 77 million subscribers domestically, while ESPN International was claimed to reach more than 152 million households in 190 countries. The ESPN franchise diversified its activities even further, adding ESPN Magazine, ESPN Radio, ESPN Zones, ESPN Skybox on Disney cruise line ships, and ESPN merchandise. Meanwhile, ESPN.com was claimed to be the most popular sports site on the Internet.

Disney's other cable holdings included the Disney Channel, ABC Family, 37.5 percent of the A&E Network, 37.5 percent of the History Channel, 50 percent of Lifetime Entertainment Services (including Lifetime and the Lifetime Movie Network), 39.6 percent of E! Entertainment Television, Toon Disney (with recycled Disney programming), and SoapNet (a 24-hour soap opera channel; → Soap Operas). The segment also operates

Walt Disney Television Animation and Fox Kids International, as well as Buena Vista Television and Buena Vista Television International.

Meanwhile, the Walt Disney Internet Group managed the company's Internet business. The company's Internet site was consistently rated as one of the most popular, while *The Daily Blast* served as a subscriber-based website, including various features from Disney-owned enterprises. While the company was plagued early in the twenty-first century with a series of highly visible controversies pertaining to executive compensation, the composition of its Board of Directors, and Eisner's replacement, the conglomerate still held valuable assets that continue to pay dividends. The company reported revenues of over \$30 billion for 2004, with nearly \$4.5 billion income and \$1.12 earnings per share.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Academy Awards ▶ Animation ▶ Book ▶ Cartoons ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Sports and the Media, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks

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## **Disowning Projection**

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In a *projection*, a person attributes certain aspects of him or herself to others (→ Attribution Processes). The process is closely tied to → identification in the psychology of personality. A *disowning projection* involves attributing negative aspects of the self to others, such as “selfish motives, evil intent . . . [or] stupid attitudes” (Cameron 1947). Cameron includes the exclusion of those characteristics from the self as part of that projection (hence the *disowning* portion of the name). Theoretically, a disowning projection should be contrasted with an *assimilative projection*, in which a person similarly projects his or her own qualities onto others. Although both are projections, the content and effects of the projections are quite different. When negative characteristics are projected, the person who is projecting disassociates him or herself from the characteristics. When positive

characteristics are projected, no such disassociation occurs. Instead, the person who is projecting maintains the view of him or herself as being described by these characteristics, and, after projecting them onto others, sees him or herself as similar to those others.

When facing a group of people who have been brought together for a particular purpose, such as a political meeting, a person may assume they are very different from him or herself, and so react very negatively to the group (a disowning projection), or see them as sharing certain positive characteristics, and so affiliate with the group (an assimilative projection). Cameron (1947) describes mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and paranoia in terms of a chronic disowning projection – with these mental patients reacting to their own behavior as if it were the behavior of others.

It is most likely that we all engage in both disowning and assimilative projections at one time or another. Despite the general nature of the phenomenon, the term has found little use in the literature. In the field of communication research, O’Gorman and Garry (1976) suggested that respondents to their survey projected their own ideas about racial segregation on to the general public. Glynn et al. (2004) suggest that the phenomenon may apply to the general public, and that the disowning projection may in fact be recognized and studied quite often under the label of → social desirability. In these researchers’ view, in a controversial social issue, respondents may often give what they believe to be a socially acceptable answer, but, when asked about what others may think, those same respondents may provide an answer that reflects a projection of their own view onto the general public (→ False Consensus; False Uniqueness; Pluralistic Ignorance, Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases; Social Perception; Third-Person Effects).

Although this is an interesting hypothesis, it has not been rigorously tested in the literature. In the psychological view of projection, the “disowning” portion is a real aspect of the phenomenon. Much of the social desirability literature points to a recognition among respondents as to what their own opinion actually is, and that it is one that is not socially acceptable, hence suggesting that this is the majority viewpoint, or the view of the average person provides a method for providing one’s own opinion without feeling social disapproval from the researcher who asks the question. As such, a social desirability phenomenon is a very rational method of expressing a deviant opinion; a disowning projection should reflect something less rational and voluntary. This suggests that further work on a test of the link between social desirability and the disowning projection needs to focus on awareness and ownership of one’s own opinion to establish whether social desirability responses are rational forms of communication or reflect some sort of defense mechanism in which one’s opinions are actually detached from one’s self.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ False Consensus ▶ False Uniqueness ▶ Identification ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Social Norms ▶ Social Perception ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## Dissent in Organizations

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Employee dissent occurs when employees express their disagreement or contradictory opinions about workplace policies and practices to various audiences. The most notable and obvious cases of dissent occur when employees engage in whistleblowing by dissenting to industry regulatory bodies, the media, or both. However, not all employees feel the need to voice their concerns in this manner. Rather, employees often express their dissent within organizations either directly to their supervisors, often referred to as upward dissent, or to their co-workers, known as lateral dissent. Additionally, employees may choose to speak with family and nonwork friends about their concerns, by engaging in displaced dissent (Kassing 1997, 1998).

Initial conceptualizations differentiated *personal-advantage dissent* from *principled dissent*, with the former referring to dissent expressed as a means for some personal gain and the latter as dissenting in order to correct some matter of ethical or moral concern (Graham 1986). Further exploration into these distinctions revealed that the two were not as discrete as previously thought and in fact often overlapped or coexisted (Hegstrom 1999). Later models of dissent moved away from a content focus and toward an audience focus by recognizing that employees could dissent to various people besides managers (Kassing 1997). This body of work considers the factors that shape employees' choices about expressing dissent to different audiences by considering individual, relational, and organizational influences.

*Individual influences* include employees' predispositions and demographic characteristics, their attachment to or affinity for their respective organizations, and their organizational position. To date, a constellation of communication and personality traits that appears to influence the expression of dissent has been identified. These traits include argumentativeness, verbal aggressiveness, and locus of control. Workplace attitudes – such as commitment, satisfaction, and organizational identification – also influence dissent, as do additional factors such as workplace experiences and organizational position. *Relational influences* concern the type and nature of relationships employees possess within organizations. When employees develop high-quality relationships with their supervisors they are more likely to express upward dissent. In contrast, employees in low-quality relationships choose to express more lateral dissent to their co-workers. Additionally, research indicates that employees regularly dissent to management in response to other-focused dissent that triggers events that concern the well-being of their co-workers.

Organizations vary tremendously in the extent to which they allow for and embrace employee dissent. Findings repeatedly demonstrate that → *organizational cultures* and climates foster or impede dissent. For example, employees report expressing more upward dissent and less lateral dissent when they perceive that comparatively more freedom of speech exists in their organizations. Organizational tolerance for dissent also has an impact on the topics about which employees choose to dissent. When organizational climates suppress dissent, employees tend to remain silent and choose to dissent almost exclusively about clearly unethical issues. However, when managers create opportunities for employees to share their dissent, dialogue between management and employees improves.

Research on organizational dissent has also considered the nature of messages used in the dissent process (Kassing 2002). *Direct-factual appeal* entails supporting one's dissent claim with information derived from some combination of physical evidence, knowledge of organizational policies and practices, and personal work experience. Similarly, *solution presentation* calls for providing solutions to address the dissent-triggering issue. *Repetition* involves continued and repeated efforts to draw attention to one's dissent claim across time, whereas *circumvention* involves expressing one's dissent to someone higher in the chain of command than one's immediate supervisor. Finally, *threatening resignation* entails using the threat of resignation as a form of leverage for obtaining responsiveness and action from one's supervisor. Clearly, some of these strategies will be more effective and appropriate than others. Indeed, recent findings revealed that direct-factual appeal and solution presentation were deemed the most competent upward dissent strategies, whereas circumvention and threatening resignation were seen as the least competent.

Concepts that overlap with and inform our understanding of employee dissent include: employee resistance, upward influence, employee voice, boatrocking, and whistleblowing. Some of these concepts are much broader than dissent, others defined more narrowly. For example, employee resistance, which concerns the ways in which employees react to and defend themselves against systems and structures of domination (→ Control and Authority in Organizations; Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches), would encompass dissent. Similarly, upward influence would include dissent, but also other types of influence processes such as adhering closely to the contractual obligations of one's position or fostering personal discussions with one's supervisors (→ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships). Likewise, employee voice involves all efforts employees make to have their concerns heard, not just their disagreement (→ Participative Processes in Organizations). Boatrocking aligns most closely with employee dissent in that it involves expressing dissent internally within an organization, whereas whistleblowing is a specific type of dissent, as noted above, that involves seeking the attention of regulatory bodies or the media. Conceptually, employee dissent should be thought of as a form of employee resistance, upward influence, and employee voice, which includes boatrocking and whistleblowing as specific means for expression.

SEE ALSO: ► Control and Authority in Organizations ► Feedback Processes in Organizations ► Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ► Organizational Culture ► Participative Processes in Organizations ► Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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## **Distance Education**

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Distance education refers to teaching and learning that occurs when students and teachers are in different physical and/or geographic locations. Although many people believe that distance education is a recent development made possible by the → Internet, it actually began in the late 1800s. Distance education has its roots in correspondence courses, which began around 1870. In fact, the first home study division of an American university was established in 1882 at the University of Chicago. Home study programs flourished in the early 1900s, and the National University Extension Association established a Correspondence Study Division in 1915. Correspondence programs provided written educational materials leading to the completion of programs, certification, and college degrees to students via mail services. Generally, early distance education programs were targeted toward adults living in rural areas who did not have access to education otherwise.

During the 1930s, → *radio broadcast* became a popular medium for providing distance education in the US, and by 1952, the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) had established public broadcasting with the primary objective of providing instructional television (Portway 1992; → Educational Media; Instructional Television). Telecourses became a mainstay in distance education throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. Some colleges provided entire programs of study via distance education telecourses. Video-tape technology expanded the opportunities for distance education, and telecourses had their most extensive use during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The Internet and world wide web revolutionized distance education, once again, during the 1990s and into the twenty-first century (see Portway [1992], for a complete review).

Today, distance education is *defined more broadly* as a formal learning activity that occurs when students and instructors are separated by geographic distance or by time, supported

by communications technology such as → television, video tape, computers, → electronic mail, mail, and/or interactive video conferencing (→ Computers and Display Programs in Education). Distance education has become commonplace in higher education and is particularly appealing to adult learners who wish to enter college for the first time or re-enter college for degree completion, advanced training, certification programs, or professional development. Contemporary institutions of higher education offer variations of distance education in the form of web-based seminars and hybrid instruction (part face-to-face, part distance education). Recently, mobile phone technology has been added to the list of popular devices that are used to provide distance education to college students.

Corporations also make use of distance education as a *cost-effective way* to provide online training, web-based training (WBT), and computer-based training (CBT) to employees. Webinars and just-in-time training modules are also popular distance education models used in corporate institutions to provide employee training and professional development. WBT and CBT are less costly alternatives to face-to-face training; furthermore, employee time-on-task and learning outcomes can be easily monitored and measured. Additionally, employees may access these learning opportunities at home or from their offices. The flexibility provided by web-based distance education makes it an attractive option for corporate training and development. The term e-learning is used by corporations and by higher, elementary, and secondary education to refer to a wide range of learning materials accompanying learning technologies.

The concept of distance education can no longer be viewed as a separate category of instruction. Few colleges provide faculty and students with exclusively in-person access to university and course-related information. In fact, distance access to course-specific learning material, even in face-to-face only courses, is commonplace. *Learning management systems* (LMS) are used widely to provide students with access via the Internet or mobile phone to course-specific learning material, communication with faculty, communication with classmates, class group communication venues, virtual office hours, electronic submissions for course assignments, grades and graded assignments, and online testing and evaluation (→ Classroom Instructional Technology; Course Organization Programs in Education).

Perhaps the most important distinction in contemporary education is how communication takes place in distance education. Historically, communication in distance education was defined by its asynchronous nature. In fact, the term asynchronous learning emerged from the distance education context to describe learning where interaction is delayed over time (student-to-learning interface, student-to-student, and student-to-instructor). Emerging technologies have allowed for the *rapid growth of synchronous learning* in distance education. Synchronous learning refers to any learning event where interaction happens simultaneously in real time (student-to-learning interface, student-to-student, and student-to-instructor). As such, distance learning communication can be categorized by its asynchronous or synchronous nature. Asynchronous communication, then, is characterized by communication that does not occur in real time, while synchronous communication occurs in real time (Roblyer & Ekhaml 2000).

Teleconferencing or video conferencing has become a popular method for delivering synchronous distance education. Teleconferencing uses a combination of television, telephone, and Internet technology to provide instruction and learning from one point of



service to another in real time. The instructor is in one location and students may be in any variety of other locations as long as they have appropriate access to the communication devices being used for real-time instruction. Students may ask questions, talk with, or instant message the instructor and one another, all in real time. Pedagogically, synchronous learning and communication are preferred over asynchronous learning and communication.

Given the ubiquitous nature of distance learning in higher education, considerable interest has also evolved in the *effectiveness of distance education* over face-to-face instruction. Contemporary pedagogical approaches to distance education focus on links among student learning outcomes and the student-to-learning interface, student-to-student communication, and student-to-instructor communication. The student-to-learning interface focuses on how much time on task (asynchronous and synchronous) a student spends interfacing with the course learning material. Student-to-student communication focuses on how much time (asynchronous and synchronous) students spend communicating with one another (Phipps & Merisotis 1999).

Finally, the common disadvantage that is tied historically to distance education is *student retention*. Even with advancements in synchronous communication and learning, most distance education classes and programs suffer from alarmingly high dropout rates. Dropout rates for distance education courses at brick and mortar colleges are significantly higher than for courses taken on campus (Carr 2000; Pittinsky 2003). To date, the problem of student retention in distance education has not been sufficiently questioned, examined, or researched. Nonetheless, universities across the globe are moving from *brick and mortar* to *brick and click*, cementing the role of distance learning in the landscape of education and training.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Computers and Display Programs in Education ▶ Course Organization Programs in Education ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Instructional Television ▶ Internet ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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# Distribution

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Communication requires the distribution of information from its creator to audiences, through some medium (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). This may occur in simple ways, such as talking (→ Interpersonal Communication), through broadcast networks (→ Radio; Television), or through the production and physical distributions of fixed forms such as → newspapers or → books. Distribution systems can be thought of as networks connecting senders and receivers, with structural limitations that can impact on what information can be sent, and to whom. It is the “channel” in Shannon and Weaver’s information theory model (1963; → Models of Communication; Communication Networks). While the concept of distributing information can be broadly applied, the characteristics and economics of distribution are of particular importance to mass communication, where the economic and technological features of distribution systems influence the definition of media and their markets (→ Markets of the Media). Media can be defined and differentiated, in fact, as specific distribution technologies for information. Media markets can be defined in part by the reach and scope of a particular distribution system for a media good or service. And the viability and function of media and markets depend on the economics of particular distribution systems.

The economics of distribution systems impact on media operations and organizational structures. Networks are designed or developed to take advantage of particular cost structures of their various components. Changes in technology and component markets can change costs and contribute to shifts in network structures, and have contributed to market convergence and globalization.

## ECONOMICS OF DISTRIBUTION

Media markets distribute information goods. Information goods have some interesting and distinctive characteristics, and are often identified as → public goods. One feature is that the information good combines the idea (or information) with the distribution systems, and while duplication of the idea is essentially costless, distribution of that content is not. Moreover, the costs of distribution depend more on the nature of the particular distribution network than on the nature of the information (although the nature of the information may constrain which networks can be used for distribution) (→ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of).

Distribution systems can incorporate a *wide range of structures*. While the particular technologies and structures employed have important implications for the specific economics of that network, there are a few general features that can be identified. First, before distribution can occur, the distribution network structure must be in place. As such, networks require an initial investment in developing, designing, and building an infrastructure, mandating at least some degree of fixed, or sunk, costs. The degree of sunk costs can depend on the costs of technology, the size and scope of the infrastructure

required for distribution, and the costs of fixing information goods and services in the appropriate formats that can be handled by the system. In addition, actual distribution of goods and services may incur variable costs tied to the particular amount distributed. These costs can change depending on the overall amount of goods distributed, the degree of duplication costs, and the costs of operating the network. If variable costs decline as production and distribution increases, the system is said to exhibit positive scale and scope economies (→ Economies of Scale in Media Markets). If variable costs rise as supply increases, negative economies (or diseconomies) result.

Another important characteristic, from a distribution perspective, is that information goods and distribution systems can exhibit *consumption externalities*. Consuming information goods and services takes time and attention, and may require access to costly equipment or networks, and acquisition of relevant literacy skills. Information goods may also have complements (other products used in conjunction with the information good) and substitutes (products used instead of the information good), which can influence demand levels.

Networks can exhibit what are termed *network, or adoption, economies*. This occurs for many types of networks (particularly interactive networks), when the value of the network increases with its reach. On the other hand, networks can also experience congestion effects (diseconomies), if the amount of information to be distributed approaches or exceeds the capacity of the network. Here, the value of the network is reduced due to the inability to deliver content effectively.

As distribution systems, or networks, develop, they encounter various *design decisions* involving tradeoffs among a variety of costs. Certain types of information products and services may require different types of distribution technologies and systems in order to be effective. Higher quality makes production and reproduction more costly and can incur higher distribution costs; the size of scale economies versus delivery costs impacts on network structure and centralization; policy can favor localism or national markets; balances must be sought between distributor costs and related consumption costs faced by audiences (time, receivers, etc.). While some older distribution systems evolved as a consequence of market forces, many were designed to achieve specific capabilities through the setting of standards and policy. In both cases, distribution systems tend to be tied to media and market characteristics, making it difficult to generalize.

In considering how distribution systems function, it is important to differentiate between systems that distribute physical copies of information goods, and those that do not distribute information in a physical form. There tend to be very different cost structures at work, in large part due to the different nature of, and cost structures for, physical goods, telecommunications-based networks, and information itself.

## **DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS FOR PHYSICAL INFORMATION GOODS AND SERVICES**

Distribution of physical products constrains networks in several ways. In other ways they can be more flexible. A key distinction is that producing physical goods is inherently costly. Once the information is produced in a fixed form in a particular medium, raw materials must be consumed in the production of physical copies. Production of physical goods also tends to exhibit limited scale economies, as the physical components are ruled

by scarcity. And once produced, those physical goods must be distributed. Distribution of physical goods requires physical transport and delivery, tying costs to distance and product characteristics such as size, weight, and susceptibility to damage. Physical distribution costs are distance-sensitive, which tends to limit geographical markets. Physical distribution also takes time. For products that are time-sensitive (perishable), where their value declines over time, the time required for distribution can dictate the limits of the market. Of course, the use of multiple production sites can reduce distribution costs at the expense of added fixed costs and possible loss of scale efficiencies.

As a general rule, physical distribution networks seek to *achieve a balance* between minimizing production costs by taking advantage of scale economies and holding distribution costs to a level that keeps the product affordable. One advantage of physical distribution systems is that they can often “rebalance” and adapt to changes in production and distribution costs or shift to different systems without disturbing the basic product. Similarly, the distribution network can fairly easily adapt to variations in the physical characteristics of media products. Another advantage to using physical forms for information products is that having physical copies provides a degree of exclusivity for media products, as they are costly to duplicate. This can make it easier to restrict access, and to charge for access to, or acquisition of, the physical good.

Another “balance” issue facing physical distribution networks is *estimating product demand*. As producing copies is expensive, and must occur before they can be distributed and consumed, losses can occur if copies are overproduced and remain unsold. On the other hand, underproducing copies also results in lost potential sales. The perishability of the content can minimize potential losses, as unsold copies can be shifted to secondary markets, and new production runs can provide additional copies.

A recent development is the rise of *on-demand production and distribution* systems, where the production of the physical copy occurs at the point of sale or acquisition, in response to a purchase. This solves the problems related to estimating demand, and by using nonphysical networks to distribute the fixed form to the production site, can also reduce distribution costs to the site of production. However, economies of scale have yet to reach the point where on-demand production is competitive for mainstream distribution.

## **DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS FOR NONPHYSICAL (ELECTRONIC) INFORMATION GOODS AND SERVICES**

Unlike physical goods, duplication of information in nonphysical forms is essentially costless. This type of information must still be distributed, and in some fixed form, which does impose some cost. While nonphysical forms can include media such as speech and signing, the idea of distribution systems and networks is more often associated with electronic forms such as broadcasting and telephony, i.e., telecommunications systems or networks (→ Technology and Communication). In telecommunications networks, the information or content is translated (fixed) as a particular type of electronic signal.

To distribute these effectively requires standardization of the translation process so that transmitting and receiving equipment can be produced, and the development of a system designed for the purpose of distributing just that type of electronic signal (→ Communication Technology Standards). This entails a generally greater level of development costs,

and perhaps more importantly, tends to fix the resulting system to the initial design standard. Policy often plays a role in setting standards, or defining markets and goals for telecommunications networks. Since systems are generally designed to deal with a particular level of service, telecommunications networks are more likely to experience congestion effects as demand and use increases. In addition, design limits restrict the ability to adapt to significant changes in the market or the product without replacing some or all of the infrastructure. For example, the shift from analog to digital television mandates the replacement of transmission and reception equipment.

There are two *basic types of telecommunications systems*, wired and wireless. *Wired systems* distribute signals through physical networks. They require the construction of a physical network (infrastructure), which can be very costly. While wired networks generally exhibit high fixed costs, operating and other variable costs tend to be low. In fact, average costs tend to decline over the range of the network, at least until congestion sets in. The high sunk costs also act as a significant barrier to entry. Between high economies of scale and barriers to entry, wired networks were often perceived of as natural monopolies. Natural monopolies occur when the scope of scale economies is such that a single firm can satisfy market demand more cheaply than multiple suppliers. Natural or not, monopolies were still viewed negatively, and as a result, wired telecommunications systems were generally regulated, or owned and operated by the state.

*Wireless networks* utilize broadcast spectrum to distribute signals. This still requires the development and deployment of an infrastructure, but infrastructure costs tend to be significantly less than those of wired networks. Partly this results from the shifting of some infrastructure costs (receiving equipment) to potential consumers. While spectrum is theoretically infinite, the usable spectrum is limited and systems must compete for space. Spectrum use is therefore regulated, and policy, along with spectrum limits and characteristics, tends to define distribution reach (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy; Media Policy).

If the spectrum is used only for distribution, wireless networks epitomize the public good properties of nonexcludability and nonrivalrous consumption. As such, operating costs are constant, regardless of how many in the market acquire the signal, making marginal costs zero. A classic example of “market failure,” wireless broadcast systems often need to develop funding sources not based on consumer sales. On the other hand, interactive wireless systems are rivalrous, and subject to congestion. While it remains difficult to prevent signal reception, interactive network operators do control one side of the system, and can exclude on that basis.

### **EMERGING ISSUES LINKED TO DISTRIBUTION**

There are several emerging issues related to distribution systems. The most dramatic is the emergence of the → *Internet as a digital global distribution system*. This network is flexible and expandable by design, accommodating both wired and wireless networks and any form of information good or service that can be digitized; it threatens to radically transform distribution (→ Internet, Technology of; E-Commerce). It exhibits fairly low barriers to entry (sunk costs), nearly costless distribution costs, and permits users to contribute to both supply and demand. It is a system that is potentially global in scope, although there is still limited diffusion in some areas and among some groups. Its cost structures

are at least competitive with most other distribution systems, and significantly lower than others. Further, the history of the digital computing and telecommunications markets on which it is based is one of constantly declining costs. The global digital network has the potential to disrupt and possibly usurp other distribution systems (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). On the bright side, the emerging global digital network also has the potential to open up new markets and content creation strategies, even challenging the basis of traditional economic approaches, i.e., the idea of scarcity (see Benkler 2006, among others).

The emergence of the network has also made copying and distribution of content cheap and easy, contributing to the rise of content → piracy. This has contributed to a scramble to develop mechanisms to restrict the ability of users to copy and use content in ways not explicitly authorized by the distributor (→ Copyright). Imposing such mechanisms is inherently costly, creating some broader social concerns. In addition, many of the proposed mechanisms would appear to threaten existing rights of use and, to the extent that they involve tracking mechanisms, this also raises privacy issues.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Book ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Communication Technology Standards ▶ Copyright ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Magazine ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Newspaper ▶ Piracy ▶ Public Goods ▶ Radio ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television

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## **Diversification of Media Markets**

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Diversification is a defining characteristic of media firms and products in the new millennium. There was a time when media companies concentrated on their core business,

whether through management decision-making or government mandate, and when there were fewer distribution channels available to media producers. Time and innovation altered both of these to dramatic degrees. The parent corporations of the major motion picture production and distribution companies in → Hollywood, for example, are now part of diversified conglomerates with holding in broadcast, cable and → satellite television, and → newspaper, → magazine, and → book publishing, and other media industries, as well as many others unrelated to their core businesses (→ Media Conglomerates; Film Production; Cable Television). These same corporations, moreover, distribute their products through countless channels, as the films that once headlined theaters around the world are also now viewed via satellite and cable television, home video, video-on-demand, iPods, and other new technologies.

## CONCEPTUALIZATION AND MEASUREMENT

The conceptualization of diversification varies in different contexts and across disciplines, so definitions are important. Diversification relates to the range of elements in a given population, whether stock in an investment portfolio or businesses in a conglomerate. Much of the literature on diversification can be divided into two broad groups: *product diversification*, which involves the expansion of firms into different lines of business or industries, and *market diversification*, which entails the adaptation of a given product to reach additional customers or users. The most common use relates to product diversification, which can be further classified as either unrelated diversification, also known as corporate or conglomerate diversification, or related diversification, also known as concentric diversification.

Diversification has been *measured* through various methods, and these techniques mirror the more nuanced understanding that has emerged since the 1960s. When Gort (1962) first measured the degree of diversification, his focus was on expansion across broad industrial sectors. Rumelt (1974) refined such measurements, making a distinction between industries and businesses. The importance of this distinction is clear in the two-digit and four-digit standard industrial classification (SIC) codes used in the US that Gort and Rumelt employed. For example, the two-digit code placed printing, publishing, and allied industries under a single title, while the four-digit codes made distinctions between newspapers, periodicals, and books. The four-digit codes under communications, meanwhile, differentiated between broadcast television, cable television, broadcast → radio, telephones, and telegraph (→ Telegraph, History of). In the Rumelt scheme, related product diversification was measured at the four-digit level within a broad industrial sector.

## PRODUCT DIVERSIFICATION

### Motivations

There are various motivations for product diversification. At a basic level, expansion into new businesses creates opportunities to *increase growth and reduce overall risk*. There are more sophisticated theories that explain such behavior. The resource view holds that

diversification results when firms accumulate excess capital, both financial assets for investment and human assets for management (Penrose 1995; Markides & Williamson 1996; Piscitello 2004). These perspectives argue that firms that are successful in diversification exploit their existing strengths, which include their given technical competencies and managerial resources, and create new synergies.

The agency view, on the other hand, holds that in the absence of significant ownership stakes, managers pursue diversification to advance their own interests at the expense of the firm's owners. This includes directing diversification down a path that increases the firm's demands for the managers' particular skills, which results in managerial entrenchment (Shleifer & Vishny 1989).

### Concentric Diversifications

There was a time when diversified conglomerates were in vogue, most evident in the 1960s and 1970s, but *related or concentric diversification* has been far more common since then. That pattern holds true in media industries, most evident with the major motion picture production and distribution companies. The Gulf & Western Industries acquisition of Paramount Pictures in the US in 1966, for instance, was the first in a series of mergers that integrated the studios into diversified conglomerates. Gulf & Western was the quintessential conglomerate of the mid-1960s, as Charles Bluhdorn spearheaded the acquisition of over 90 smaller companies between 1958 and 1969. Most of those properties were in manufacturing sectors, which is where Gulf & Western traced its roots. The Transamerica Corporation acquisition of United Artists in 1967 and Kinney National Services' purchase of Warner Bros in 1969 followed this same pattern (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

The News Corp acquisition of Twentieth Century-Fox in 1985 can be used as a line of demarcation (→ News Corporation). While the Coca-Cola Company purchase of Columbia Pictures in 1982 and the General Electric merger with RCA in 1986 sandwiched that merger, the Fox deal represents the related diversification that has been dominant since the mid-1980s. News Corp's roots were in publishing, but when Rupert Murdoch acquired Twentieth Century-Fox he also controlled Network Ten, a broadcast television network in Australia, and Sky Channel, a satellite service in Europe. In 1986, Murdoch purchased seven broadcast television stations from Metromedia and launched the Fox Television Network. In short order, Twentieth Century-Fox became the content producer for a chain of television outlets around the world.

The conceptualization of related or concentric diversification is critical to this discussion. The literature is replete with studies that conclude that related diversification leads to better performance than unrelated diversification since the former allows firms to build on their strengths (Penrose 1995; Chandler 1962; Rumelt 1974) The reasons for this are quite important. The characteristics of successful concentric diversification include, "existence of a strong core business, diversification into adjacencies that are close to the core business, and leveraging of skills from the core business" (Rijamampianina et al. 2003). Concentric diversification involves the acquisition of firms that are related to the core business in critical areas. This allows firms to improve their strengths and reduce their weaknesses through the investment in logical adjacencies.



### **Examples of Product Diversification**

The impact of such diversification is most evident in the case of the Walt Disney Company. In the early 1980s, → Disney was a corporation that focused on “family entertainment” and derived the bulk of its revenue from its theme parks and merchandise. The domestic and foreign box office from its motion pictures contributed just 15.5 percent of total revenue in 1980. The acquisitions that followed, with the purchase of Capital Cities/ABC Inc. the most significant, transformed Disney into a diversified media conglomerate. In 2005, it derived just under 35 percent of total revenue from its Parks and Resorts and Consumer Products divisions combined, just under 24 percent from Studio Entertainment and just over 41 percent from Media Networks. What was not part of the equation was a collection of newspapers and other publishing assets that Capital Cities/ABC held prior to the merger that Disney sold after it took control. The broadcast and cable outlets that Capital Cities/ABC controlled allowed expansion into logical adjacencies and created synergies for Disney, while the publishing companies did not.

Prominent media holdings have been part of diversified conglomerates since the mid-1980s. The General Electric ownership of NBC is the clearest case in the US. In the 1999 fiscal year, for example, NBC accounted for just 5.2 percent of General Electric consolidated revenues of \$111.6 billion. At the same time, Universal Pictures was part of Seagram Company Ltd., a conglomerate best known for its spirits and wine business. The latter business sector accounted for over 39 percent of Seagram revenues in the 1999 fiscal year, compared to just under 24 percent for the filmed entertainment business, which also included its investment in USA Networks. In 2000, Universal Pictures became part of Vivendi SA, a French conglomerate that traced its roots to water treatment and waste management. That relationship was short-lived, and the creation of NBC Universal in 2004 is more indicative of the diversified media conglomerates that are now dominant.

Media conglomerates around the world followed similar patterns. *Bertelsmann AG* traces its roots to the publishing company that Carl Bertelsmann founded in Germany in 1835 to print hymnals and religious material (→ Bertelsmann Corporation). Bertelsmann expanded its publishing interests in the pre- and postwar periods, but it was in the 1970s and 1980s that its diversification reached new levels when it took control of prominent US publishers Bantam Books and Doubleday and moved into the music business with the acquisition of Arista Records in 1979 and RCA Records in 1987. The impact of such growth was evident in 2004, when just under 25 percent of Bertelsmann revenue came from its book and magazine publishing divisions. This compared to over 42 percent from its television (RTL Group) and music (BMG Entertainment) interests and 21 percent from its media services division, Arvato.

### **MARKET DIVERSIFICATION**

The second dimension of diversification is also quite significant in the examination of media firms and markets. Product diversification remains prominent, but it is also important to consider various forms of market diversification. The most basic of these is geographic or international diversification, and the nature of most media products makes them conducive to such expansion into new markets. One of the defining characteristics of most media products is that almost the entire cost of production is incurred in the

creation of the master unit, known as the “first print” cost in films, with duplicates produced at little additional cost. That is the reason why most media products are said to be infinitely reproducible and infinitely exportable.

The *motion picture business* provides a prime example of the benefits of such diversification. The rise of the studio system in the US in the 1920s created a structure that resembled typical American industries, with production, distribution, and exhibition corresponding to the manufacturing, wholesaling, and retailing in other firms. And similar to other industries, the motion picture business pursued overseas markets. The total feet of motion pictures exported from the US increased from 32 million in 1913 to 235 million in 1925. In the latter period, American films accounted for 95 percent of the market in the UK and 77 percent in France. From that point forward, Hollywood worked hand in hand with the US government to ensure that it maintained unfettered access to foreign markets, with the Motion Picture Export Association of America, formed in 1945, becoming known as the “little State Department.”

The *importance of foreign markets* remains indisputable. The literature is rich with studies on the impact of Hollywood products across oceans and borders. The raw numbers can be rather staggering. *Titanic* shattered the worldwide box-office record with a total gross of over \$1.8 billion. While it established records for the US box office of over \$600 million, more than two-thirds of its total came in foreign markets. In 2004, the Motion Picture Association of America reported worldwide box-office revenues of \$25.2 billion, with \$9.5 billion of that generated in the US, and the major Hollywood studios accounted for a significant percentage of both these figures.

There is another dimension of market diversification that is relevant to media industries. While geographic diversification represents one attempt to access new customers and users, the *adaptation of products* represents another. The evolution of new digital technologies has created additional distribution channels for media products. Motion pictures were once shown in theaters, with broadcast television networks becoming a second alternative in the 1950s. The evolution of cable television set the stage for the creation of premium movie channels such as Home Box Office and Showtime in the US in the 1970s. While those all remain outlets for motion pictures, new technologies allow for distribution via direct-broadcast satellite and video-on-demand, DVD, and iPods. And the development of communication satellites has allowed such patterns to cross the globe, evident in the success of Star TV and other services across Asia.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Disney ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ▶ Film Production ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Mergers ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newspaper ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Telegraph, History of

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## Diversity in the Workplace

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Diversity has become an important topic in workplaces around the world, as nations experience changes in demographics. Many countries are adjusting to increases in numbers of nontraditional workers, especially women, older persons, and people with disabilities. Meanwhile, due to global economics, industrialized areas are witnessing influxes of skilled and unskilled migrants seeking employment (→ Migration and Immigration) (Cheney & Barnett 2005). Also, multinational corporations are setting up subsidiaries in foreign locations, where local workers interact with co-workers and executives from the companies' headquarters (→ Communication Networks; Meeting Technologies; Network Organizations through Communication Technology; Technology and Globalization). Thus, people from diverse places with diverse expertise, experience, and expectations are encountering one another at work, where they confront differences in value systems, language skills, and communication styles. As organizations accommodate these workers, they also must serve diverse clientele/consumers in various cultural and geographic contexts.

When organizations first recognized that diversity mattered, they concentrated on compliance issues such as civil rights, affirmative action, and equal employment opportunity. Currently, many companies are striving to leverage cultural differences among employees because they realize that diversity can positively impact their bottom line. Known as the “business case” perspective, this approach sees diversity as a resource rather than a problem (Mor Barak 2005). This viewpoint emphasizes valuing differences, and it encourages members from different groups to contribute their cultural insights to workplace endeavors (Thomas & Ely 2001).

Workplaces that value employee diversity can gain positive outcomes, including increased creativity and learning, better decision-making, and improved performance. However, a

diverse workforce also can generate conflict and tension among employees, which can lead to turnover, charges of discrimination and harassment, and backlash against attempts to integrate workplaces at all levels.

Communication plays a crucial role in developments and outcomes related to workplace diversity because differences among employees, clients, and other organizational stakeholders affect all communication processes in organizations. Therefore, communication scholarship can inform efforts to maximize benefits and minimize detriments of workplace diversity.

## DEFINING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

*Diversity* is an ambiguous, sometimes contested word whose meaning varies according to context (Konrad et al. 2006). In 1987, the landmark *Workforce 2000* (Johnston & Packer 1987) report indicated that increasing numbers of white women and women and men of color (mainly African-Americans) were entering the United States' workforce. Gender and race became significant as members of these groups and their advocates sought equal access and rights in the workplace, and sometimes faced conflict with members of majority groups. Recent definitions of diversity encompass population trends in the United States of an aging workforce, greater ethnic diversity, rising numbers of immigrants (especially Latino/as), and effects of globalization.

Although the United States pioneered the diversity movement, notions of diversity in the United States do not always correspond with those around the world (Mor Barak 2005). Although many nations have begun to refer to diversity as a human resource issue, their meanings vary. In Europe, "diversity" implies national cultures and languages. In the Netherlands, diversity means "ethnic difference" and "immigrant." In Brazil, persons who appear to be "black" according to US standards may be considered "white." These types of differences make it difficult to define diversity from a global standpoint.

Most contemporary views of diversity center on the idea that members of historically disadvantaged, *nondominant groups* (e.g., women and people of color) are more likely to experience discrimination than members of dominant groups (e.g., men and white people) (Konrad et al. 2006). Mor Barak (2005, 132) incorporates this stance along with the notion of variance across geographic and socio-historical contexts to define global workforce diversity as:

the division of the workforce into distinction categories that (a) have a perceived commonality within a given cultural or national context, and that (b) impact potentially harmful or beneficial employment outcomes such as job opportunities, treatment in the workplace, and promotion prospects, irrespective of job-related skills and qualifications.

This perspective aligns with emerging approaches to research on workplace diversity and communication.

## RESEARCH ON WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND COMMUNICATION

Early research on workplace diversity concentrated on national cultures, based on initial conceptions of intercultural communication (which centered on national identities) (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication), and due to concerns about globalization and

its potential impacts on the US economy (→ Globalization of Organizations). Projects on nationality and organizational communication often studied organizations in specific countries, or investigated communicative behaviors of members of particular cultural groups, such as decision-making in Japanese organizations and managerial communication in Chinese factories.

Many studies about workplace diversity and nationality refer to Dutch researcher Geert Hofstede's (1984) pioneering project about international differences in employees' work-related values. This large-scale survey assessed *value orientations of workers* from over 50 countries in local subsidiaries of the multinational corporation IBM. Hofstede concluded that national culture explained differences in employees' work-related values and attitudes toward expected, acceptable behaviors in the workplace. For instance, he found relationships between participants' nationality and their tendency to be loyal to their ingroups versus feeling responsible primarily for their own personal needs. Hofstede used this finding to label countries and their citizens as either *collectivist* or *individualist*. This distinction is the most widely studied and cited dimension of Hofstede's model (Triandis 2004).

Studies that employ Hofstede's framework tend to focus on culture and cultural differences by emphasizing communication between individuals. Although these projects offer insight, they usually do not consider organizational issues that can affect interaction, such as formal and informal policies, practices, and norms. Also, they rarely delve into power dynamics inherent in all organizations (→ Power in Intergroup Settings), and especially significant in diverse workplaces. Furthermore, these endeavors are apt to apply an assimilationist model which assumes that all employees will want to adopt the cultural values of organizations in which they work (→ Organizational Assimilation). Finally, they neglect to consider macro-level issues, such as social, cultural, economic, and historical factors that can affect communication processes, especially in newer contexts like multinational corporations (Tanaka 2006).

These criticisms offer useful direction for research based on the global definition of workforce diversity. Related to this, critics also have called for more studies about experiences of nondominant groups (Oetzel et al. 2001). Some scholars promote theoretical frameworks that seem especially suitable for learning about nondominant groups, and for studying power relations. These include critical approaches, which delve into power dynamics that pervade all interactions, but are especially likely when members of diverse groups interact (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches). A related theoretical perspective is co-cultural theory, which describes how nondominant members of dominant organizations strategically use communication to negotiate power relations (Orbe 1998). For example, they may employ various forms of assimilation, accommodation, or separation.

Some scholars recommend using qualitative *methods* such as in-depth interviewing, observation, and narrative analysis because they are more likely than quantitative methods to provide insight into experiences of nondominant group members. Some authors recommend matching researchers and participants according to cultural background to facilitate research interactions (Orbe 1998). They also advocate investigating intersections of identities, such as gender, race, and class, rather than focusing only on one (Allen 2004; → Research Methods).

While scholars offer numerous ideas for studying workplace diversity, they also acknowledge *potential obstacles*. For example, organizations may not allow researchers to study diversity because they fear repercussions from investigating such a potentially controversial topic. Even when researchers gain access to companies, potential participants may be reticent to talk about diversity issues, or they may not be truthful. Due to concerns about social desirability, participants may say what they think researchers want to hear. Also, members of dominant groups may be concerned about being perceived as prejudiced, and members of nondominant groups may fear that researchers will judge them as hypersensitive (Allen 2004). In addition, language and communication style differences can impede effective communication between researchers and participants.

### RESEARCH EVIDENCE

Despite these challenges, a slowly growing body of research employs many of the approaches that critics of previous scholarship have endorsed. Among these projects, gender is arguably the most widely studied topic (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). This type of research adheres to the ideas that consequences of diversity can vary according to membership in dominant and nondominant groups, and that power matters.

A team of researchers conducted case studies of three professional services firms to identify conditions under which cultural diversity enhanced or deterred workgroup productivity (Thomas & Ely 2001). Data collection teams consisted of members of various cultural groups, most of whom were matched with interviewees according to sex and race. Among three perspectives on diversity that emerged, the most effective was the integration-and-learning perspective, which advocates soliciting and using cultural insights and experiences of group members as valuable resources for accomplishing group tasks.

Another study applied qualitative methods to study power dynamics related to employee mistreatment in a culturally diverse workplace (Meares et al. 2004). A team of researchers employed muted group theory, which attends to ways that members of groups in society feel empowered or not to voice their experiences or worldviews. Based on narrative analysis of interview transcripts, the researchers concluded that intersecting identities (race, gender, and organizational role) made a difference in narratives about mistreatment: voices of people with more access to power (i.e., European-American male scientists) were less likely to be muted than those with less access to power (women, persons of color, and employees other than scientists).

As a final example, Tanaka (2006) conducted a longitudinal, ethnographic study of a Japan-based subsidiary of an American chemical plant to explore effects of identity, language, and behavior on intercultural business communication. The researcher interviewed participants in their native language of Japanese or English in order to acquire accurate information and to capture nuances. Analyses indicated that the use of English empowered native speakers, who had to negotiate different discourse systems as they interacted with American bosses and Japanese co-workers and clientele. The researcher shared insights with the company to help them develop strategies for dealing with linguistic and cultural challenges.

The need persists for studies about communication and diversity that delve into complexities of cultural differences and power dynamics in various workplace contexts.

Several scholars have provided blueprints, and some have begun to conduct work which incorporates their ideas. If more communication scholars heed their advice and follow their lead, the discipline can provide invaluable insight and information to help organizations worldwide to address the enduring, important issue of diversity in the workplace.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Networks ► Cultural Patterns and Communication ► Feminist and Gender Studies ► Globalization of Organizations ► Meeting Technologies ► Migration and Immigration ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► Organizational Assimilation ► Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Research Methods ► Technology and Globalization

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## **Doctor–Patient Talk**

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The world's leading medical schools and journals officially recognize that what doctors and patients say to each other, and *how they say it*, dramatically affect the welfare of both

patients and health-care organizations. Within the discipline of communication (→ Health Communication) generally, and specifically within the sub-field of → language and social interaction (LSI), the study of doctor–patient “talk” involves the study of all conduct-in-interaction between doctors and their patients. “Doctors” include all forms of formally institutionalized practitioners (e.g., medical doctor, acupuncturist), all specialties, and all levels of experience (e.g., residents). “Interaction” typically includes real-time, voice-to-voice or face-to-face encounters, including some mediated ones (e.g., telemedicine). Encounters in which participants are not immediately co-present (e.g., Internet-based forms of textual communication) are studied less frequently because participants do not labor under the standard affordances and norms of interaction. “Conduct” includes all forms of verbal and nonverbal (e.g., artifactual) communication.

### FEATURES OF AN LSI APPROACH

Doctor–patient talk is studied from a variety of LSI perspectives, including → conversation analysis, discourse analysis, (socio)linguistics, and some types of ethnography. Although different perspectives are guided by different theories, methods, and proof-procedures, they are all primarily committed to describing and explaining the content, organization, and meaning of conduct-in-interaction. A second-order concern is with the effects of interactional variables on post-encounter outcomes, such as patients’ well-being and adherence to doctors’ medical recommendations.

The focus on conduct-in-interaction entails a commitment to the repeated analysis of (relatively) detailed transcripts of conduct (→ Transcribing and Transcription). Patients’ self-reports of communicative events (e.g., from post-encounter surveys) do not correspond highly with their actuality. Although audio and video records can be repeatedly analyzed and coded without transcribing them, the process of transcription helps to ensure that consequential details are recorded that might otherwise not be given attention (e.g., silences, self-corrections, intonation). Furthermore, from an LSI perspective, interaction is the primary data, and transcription allows it to be presented in scholarly publications. Because LSI perspectives treat verbal and nonverbal communication as inseparable, there is a commitment to video-taping when relevant. Universities’ institutional review boards permit video-taping, and participation rates tend to be high even in “sensitive” medical contexts.

LSI research on doctor–patient talk does not focus on any conduct; rather, it focuses on conduct that is organized by participants’ orientations to *aspects of the institution* being examined, such as its norms, rules, functions, inferential frameworks, goals, tasks, roles, identities, etc. These “institutional” aspects include both professional and “lay” or vernacular conceptions, and thus can be different, and differentially relevant and consequential, for doctors and patients. Research attempts to discover what these aspects are for participants, how they come to be realized and managed in and through interaction, and what their interactional consequences are.

The abovementioned reference to “participants’ orientations” alludes to LSI’s commitment to inductive methods and grounded theorizing. Early research showed that social-structural predictions (e.g., roles) made from pre-existing theory and/or official medical ideology are not always valid during all types of doctor–patient talk (Emerson 1970). Furthermore, even when social-structural arrangements can be shown to be valid,



they are not always simply *reinforced* by interaction; rather, they are frequently negotiated, contested, or otherwise *modified* in interaction according to the actions and activities that participants are pursuing at the moment. Thus, while recognizing that doctors and patients interact with reference to social structures that are exogenous to interaction (i.e., while recognizing the macro–micro link), LSI studies privilege meanings that are oriented to by participants during actual interaction. Of course, extant theories arising from wide-ranging disciplines, such as those dealing with information seeking and uncertainty reduction, have proven useful in explaining doctor–patient talk.

LSI scholars are similarly wary about (but not completely averse to) understanding doctor–patient talk through the lens of pre-formulated coding schemas. Code categories of the earliest schemas were established deductively from theories that were insensitive to the nuances of human communication (e.g., theories that conceptualized the function of communication as information transmission vs social action), and were originally designed for non-doctor–patient contexts (e.g., studies of small-group decision-making). Even as sensitivity increased, code categories continued to be operationalized in ways that conflated grammatical form with social action (e.g., coding for *statements* vs *medical advice giving*), and in ways that were insensitive to both the organization of interaction itself (e.g., unitizing in terms of the social-psychological notion of *thought units* vs the conversation-analytic notion of *turn-constructive units*) and sequential context (e.g., not differentiating between doctor-initiated and patient-sought advice). Additionally, code categories are frequently transformed into variables that are not relevant to participants (e.g., measuring category-frequency per encounter). Finally, statistical requirements that categories represent single meanings produced by single speakers can run at odds with the fact that even the most basic units of interaction can be polysemic and interactively co-produced.

At least partially due to technological limitations, research in the 1960s was ethnographic. The primary focus was not interaction, per se, but rather how doctors' behavior toward patients, as well as doctors' understandings of patients' behavior, were shaped by professional socialization, including both its official forms (e.g., medical school) and its unofficial forms acquired as doctors labor under a variety of implicit and explicit organizational pressures (Becker et al. 1961). Within the discipline of communication, there has been a dearth of ethnographic research that intersects with doctor–patient talk, and a lamentable disconnect between health-care ethnography and interaction analysis.

### ASYMMETRIES IN DOCTOR–PATIENT INTERACTION

In the late 1970s through the 1980s, research was dominated by three interrelated themes dealing with asymmetries between doctors and patients. First, research examined the asymmetry of (largely medical) knowledge and understanding. Research focused on the interactional causes and manifestations of “miscommunication” (e.g., medical jargon), its resolutions (if any), and its consequences (for review, see West & Frankel 1991).

Second, research examined the structure of medical interaction itself and its underlying norms and rules (which, overlapping the first theme, included those pertaining to repairing problems of speaking, hearing, and understanding). Here, researchers were concerned with the asymmetry between doctors' and patients' levels of participation. Interaction was found to be restricted with respect to speaker identity and sequence structure, such that doctors predominantly initiated topics and sequences (e.g., doctors asked questions),

and patients predominantly responded. Research examined the interactional mechanisms of this asymmetry, such as how doctors design turns in ways that normatively restrict patients' answers (e.g., yes/no questions that are linguistically designed to prefer no-answers), and how patients (fail to) resist such pressures (for review, see Robinson 2001).

Third, overlapping with the second theme, research focused on the types of contributions doctors and patients made. Here, researchers were concerned with the asymmetry of, and conflict between, a variety of different types of doctors' and patients' interactional frames. For example, Mishler (1984) argued that doctors' *voice of medicine* dominated patients' *voice of the life-world*. Along these lines, a variety of researchers demonstrated that doctors, who largely controlled the flow of interaction, systematically restricted their contributions to biomedical topics, avoided psychosocial topics, interrupted or ignored patients' psychosocial contributions, and omitted such contributions from medical records. Additionally, it was argued that doctors' "voices" or frames are biased according to their (Caucasian, male, upper-middle-class) ideologies. Again, researchers examined the interactional mechanisms of frame asymmetry, its negotiation, and its consequences.

### THE STRUCTURE OF MEDICAL ENCOUNTERS

Although most of the abovementioned research was conducted from the perspective that communication is fundamentally produced and understood to accomplish social action(s), it primarily focuses on interactional structure (e.g., lexical choice, turn design, and sequence organization) and relatively broad characterizations of content (e.g., biomedical vs psychosocial). Based on this necessary groundwork, research in the 1990s focused more intently on medical actions and activities per se. It became increasingly clear that doctor–patient encounters have *overall structural organizations*, or normatively ordered and organized sets of medical activities. For example, in primary acute care, these activities are *opening*, *problem presentation*, *information gathering* (i.e., history taking and physical examination), *diagnosis*, *treatment*, and *closing* (Robinson 2003). Because medical activities are themselves distinct contexts that shape participants' understandings, the nature and level of asymmetries of knowledge, participation, and frame differ, and are differentially consequential, in each activity. For over 15 years, research has been explicating the social organization of individual medical activities and their constitutive actions. For example, in a volume by Heritage and Maynard (2006), Anssi Perakyla addresses the activity of diagnosis, including different diagnostic formats (e.g., "You have bronchitis" vs "It seems like bronchitis"), how they embody aspects of doctors' expertise and authority, how they attribute agency to patients, how their meanings are altered according to their sequential positioning, and how they shape patients' responses. Complementing this, Douglas Maynard focuses on how diagnosis delivery is shaped according to the valence of the news for patients (i.e., good vs bad).

LSI research on doctor–patient talk is not, in principle, opposed to coding interaction into statistically manipulable variables and testing their association with each other or with post-encounter health outcomes. However, these moves proceed from basic, inductive research establishing that (at least interactional) variables are relevant to, and procedurally consequential for, participants. For example, Heritage and Robinson (2006) found that certain types of doctors' opening questions are associated with patients responding with

an increased number of discrete symptoms, and Robinson and Heritage (2006) found that these same questions are associated with patients' post-visit satisfaction.

LSI research on doctor–patient talk opens and illuminates the communicative black box of pure survey research. One major consequence is that LSI research promotes efficacious behavioral interventions. For example, survey research indicates that pediatricians' perceptions that parents desire antibiotics (for their sick children) is a primary predictor of doctors' inappropriate prescription of antibiotics (e.g., for viral conditions). Until recently, it was unknown exactly how such perceptions were formed during encounters. Stivers (2006) has since discovered a variety of parents' communication strategies that promote such perceptions, as well as doctors' strategies for combating parents' pressure to prescribe.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Health Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Micro-ethnography ▶ Transcribing and Transcription

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## **Document Analysis**

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By no means all method textbooks discuss document analysis because there is disaccord as to whether this is an independent technique or whether it merely aims to apply

different methods to a particular investigation material (→ Research Methods). There is also controversy as to what has to be understood by “document.” Used in a wider sense as a synonym for the word “source” in historical research (→ Historiography), this concept encompasses all objects manufactured by man. However, as a rule, only written sources are considered to be documents. Examples are: reports, the wordings of laws, the minutes of proceedings, records, letters, diaries, leaflets, press articles, books, organization charts, or work instructions. Since these documents have their origin in everyday contexts and there is no contact between the researcher and the production of the investigation material, document analysis is a non-reactive method. Consequently, neither the researcher nor the aim of the investigation has any influence on the material itself. In addition, the costs of document analysis are lower than those of any primary → survey. Against this, the method has two major disadvantages: usually, documents only account for parts of the questions asked by the researcher, and they leave room for interpretations (→ Qualitative Methodology; Objectivity in Science).

Document analysis is the obvious choice whenever the objects of study (persons, groups, or organizations) are not available – either because they no longer exist (historical aspects) or because they refuse to be questioned or observed (like fringe groups and elites). In addition to that, document analysis can prepare for the use of other methods or be complementary to them. In the case of written material, document analysis allows for the use of all the methods that social science and the humanities have developed for the study of texts. However, one must always bear in mind that documents are never made without a definite intention. Consequently, the context of their production must not be disregarded. Methodological literature names numerous rules for dealing with documents that are evocative of the criticism of sources in historiography. The trustworthiness of documents has always to be questioned, and the relationship between the wording and the facts that are being described should be regarded carefully, by examining information about the document’s origin and its purpose, as well as the organization that produced the document and the intentions of the author. Quality criteria applied in document analysis are: transparency, diversity, and comparability. As far as comparison is concerned, data obtained with the help of other methods can be used in addition to other documents.

This approach will be illustrated by way of opinion polls carried out in the pre-computer age (→ Public Opinion Polling). Usually, the results of such surveys are available in written form. Unlike records, diaries, and other documents, opinion polls provide information about behavioral patterns, opinions, and values across the entire population, as well as about the differences between existing social groups and milieus. When interpreting such findings in the context of a document analysis, one has to ask who commissioned the polling, what was the position taken by the opinion research institute, what was the aim of the survey, who were the recipients of the reports, and whether parallel and preceding studies exist. Additionally, it is essential to submit the polling methods used in that time to a critical review. The → validity of the data depends on the instruments being used, as well as on the quality of the random sample, on the way the survey is conducted, on the indicators being implemented, and on the quality of the data analysis. Further methodological aspects to be considered are the questionnaire design and the way the questions are formulated, as well as the interviewers’ motivation and the behavior of the respondents. In order to permit classification of the information

contained in the historical report, one has to consider other data – for instance, the results of opinion polls held in other fields of inquiry and over other periods of time – or documents that might provide further indications for answering the research question (such as official statistics, diaries, or reports on → public opinion).

SEE ALSO: ► Case Studies ► Historiography ► Objectivity in Science ► Public Opinion ► Public Opinion Polling ► Qualitative Methodology ► Research Methods ► Survey ► Validity

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## **Documentary Film**

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Among the qualities that distinguish films considered documentary are: (1) explicit reference to the historical world that surrounds the film, (2) a persuasive effort that encourages viewers to see or understand some aspect of the actual world in a particular way, and (3) an indexical relationship between the image and the reality it refers to. Indexical images match in their particulars the physical appearance of what they represent (→ Documentary Film, History of; Film Genres). They do not possess a general likeness to a model or referent, as a → painting would; they are closer to an exact replica of what came before the camera. The cinematic image can capture the look of a person, place, or event precisely. The optical properties of cameras, lenses, and recording media – from film to memory cards – capture aspects of the world with great precision. This allows the indexical image to serve as documentary evidence, as footage from surveillance cameras demonstrates.

The offsetting fact that images can be creatively altered or politically manipulated, be they celluloid or digital, allows for expressive or persuasive intent to complicate the relation of the documentary image to reality. Documentaries are not raw documents or evidence in the way a medical X-ray is. They are *complex forms of communication* and, like any other form of communication, they convey something of their creator's goals or intentions. Caution must be exercised in assessing how images serve as evidence.

Take, for example, Leni Riefenstahl's notorious film of the Nazi party's annual rally in 1935, *Triumph of the Will*. The film, then as now, relies heavily on its indexical relation to

what happened before the camera. The historical actors are authentic and the event actually took place. But Riefenstahl worked closely with Nazi party officials to plan and stage the rally in order to film it more effectively. In other words, she did not just catch reality as it unfolded around her but *staged that reality* for maximum cinematic impact. Like modern-day political conventions, the entire rally is orchestrated as a media event for the camera rather than as a historical event the camera manages to record (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Some historical events, such as the press conference, photo opportunities, political rallies, demonstrations, and conventions, only exist in the form they have in order to be filmed or televised. Documentaries inevitably shape as well as capture the reality they represent.

Filmmakers use their works to convey their own point of view, sensibility, or perspective even though other interpretations are always possible. Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), for example, presents evidence that supports his contention that the American occupation of Iraq was totally unjustified. All the evidence he assembles serves to advance a specific argument. Among the most persuasive forms of evidence used are those images and scenes that carry a strong emotional impact, such as a mother who became a vocal critic of the war after her son died fighting in Iraq. In many documentaries the *emotional impact of images* outweighs their strictly evidentiary value (→ Emotions, Media Effects on). The realism of the documentary image makes viewers feel as if they are witnessing an actual event, or receiving evidence of what really happened in an almost unmediated form. Indexical images are a potent source of documentary evidence, but the interpretation of these images introduces subjective and persuasive factors that allow the same evidence to serve more than one purpose (→ Realism in Film and Photography).

As a rhetorical form of communication, documentary film seeks to move or persuade its audience (→ Rhetoric and Media Studies; Rhetorical Studies). Persuasiveness is achieved by adhering to the “three Cs” of rhetoric. These are what were called “proofs” by Aristotle because they provided proof of the validity of the case being made. The three Cs require that a documentary be (1) credible – the filmmaker or any commentator who appears on his or her behalf must appear trustworthy; (2) compelling – the evidence provided should carry an emotional charge that will move the audience, and (3) convincing – the claims and statements made, either explicitly by a speaker or implicitly by editing, music, composition, and so on, must appear truthful.

What is crucial, rhetorically, is the *impression of truthfulness*. Rhetoric comes to the aid of those who favor a particular course of action when scientific or purely logical analysis cannot decide the issue conclusively. What is known as fact and is now part of the historical record or what is known as true and not open to dispute must be respected, but this is not as great a safeguard as some might think. That global warming has come to be accepted as scientific fact, for example, does not determine what policies governments should adopt, nor does it determine what actions businesses should take. Specific choices become defended by rhetorical means.

The assembly of raw footage, with its powerful indexical relation to the historical world, into more elaborate, rhetorical statements about the world became a common practice in the 1920s. The documentary film provided a potent way for the state to advance its own agenda and for other organizations and individuals to present their own values and views, even if they challenged official state policies.

Decades later, numerous documentaries take up issues and topics that do not involve the state directly at all, from questions of gender and ethnicity to concerns about the environment. In fact, some films, such as Davis Guggenheim's *An Inconvenient Truth* (2006), make clear that the state has become a problem rather than the means to a solution. *An Inconvenient Truth* does not criticize specific state policies directly but makes clear that global warming has become an increasingly serious issue despite the various measures different states have adopted (→ Activist Media). The implication is clear that the measures taken so far are inadequate. The history of documentary film stands, on one level, as a record of the failure of western democracies to address successfully issues such as poverty, disease, environmental degradation, social justice, and war. It was, ironically, the need of the state to promote its particular approach to such issues that led to the rise of the documentary film in the first place.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Documentary Film, History of ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Film Genres ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Painting ▶ Pathos and Rhetoric ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Reality TV ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetorical Studies

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## **Documentary Film, History of**

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While scholars of early film have been much preoccupied with the emergence of storytelling and narrative (→ Storytelling and Narration), the dominant mode of early → cinema, beginning with the first films of the Lumière in 1895, was the actuality, or what might be called “documentary before documentary” (→ Cinematography; Cinematography, History of). An instinct for what Siegfried Kracauer (1960) called “the seizure of physical reality” produced a huge variety of images that, despite their brief and fragmentary character, were not without ideological implications, since they generally reproduced social → stereotypes unthinkingly and frequently projected and enhanced the iconic imagery of state power and authority. Cinema was born in the “civilized” countries of Europe and North America, and these early films also traded on exotic imagery from every corner of the world, which not surprisingly reflected the colonial ideology of the day. The French at this time used the term *documentaire* for what in English was called the

“travelogue,” which emerged before World War I as one of the most popular proto-documentary genres, along with the wonders of science and expedition films (→ Film Genres). However, the recent rediscovery in Britain of the Mitchell & Kenyon films reminds us that turning the camera on your own community was also a fundamental propensity.

### EARLY TRENDS

The rise of documentary as an art form after the war comprised several trends, which separated the form from both commercial interest films, and association with → propaganda and → public relations (the largest producer of short factual films in the USA in the early 1920s was the Ford Motor Company). One current, favored by European filmmakers influenced by the modernist avant-garde, turned toward the quintessential site of → modernity – *the city*. The “city symphonies” of the 1920s, by directors like Walter Ruttmann (*Berlin, Symphony of a City*), Dziga Vertov (*Man with a Movie Camera*) and Jean Vigo (*A propos de Nice*), have long been celebrated for creating a new perception of the city for the twentieth century; in the process they discovered a visual language for the representation of space and place quite different from that of the enclosed fiction studio: instead of narrative continuity, these films explored and expanded the principles of montage first theorized in the context of the Russian revolution by Eisenstein and others, which still remain an essential resource of documentary film language.

A very different tendency gave the travelogue an *ethnographic twist*, turning the camera on the distant wilderness of “primitive” societies in what the filmmaking metropolis saw as the periphery. When John Grierson (1946) applied the word “documentary” to Robert Flaherty’s film of South Sea islanders, *Moana*, in 1926, he used it as an adjective, speaking of the film’s “documentary value” as “a visual account of events in the daily life of a Polynesian youth and his family.” Within a few years, however, it turned into a noun and a subtle shift of meaning took place. What emerged in the 1920s was thus a range of films distinguished from fiction by their imagery of veridical reality, looking for a term to describe them in all their diversity.

For pioneering documentarists like Vertov, Joris Ivens, and Grierson himself, documentary represented a necessary alternative to the escapism and meretricious spectacle of commercial cinema. Ivens (1969), whose career spanned something like 70 films over 60 years, called documentary “a creative no-man’s-land, an interloper in the genre system.” For this very reason, however, it was largely marginalized from cinema as a site of mass entertainment and reduced to secondary status. One of the consequences is that the history of documentary would be quickly forgotten as the films disappeared into the archives (whence our new digital culture is now beginning to retrieve them rather randomly).

### COMING OF SOUND

The coming of sound was no help, because sound was introduced to serve the purposes of shooting fiction in the studio, and for many years remained deficient for location filming. Despite a few experiments in the creation of soundtracks by filmmakers like Vertov, Ivens, and the famous GPO film unit under Grierson’s leadership (*Enthusiasm*, *Philips Radio*, and titles like *Night Mail* respectively), documentary settled into a conventional



format, using music, commentary and sound effects to impose a preferred meaning on the images. The pretence of omniscience found in the impersonal commentary led to Paul Rotha dubbing it the “voice of God.” Exceptions point in a different direction, like Humphrey Jennings’s wartime *Listen to Britain*, an essay on the collective experience of the nation carrying a soundtrack composed entirely of noises, sounds, snatches of speech and music, matching the visual collage of the image. If the authoritative commentary has remained a feature of television documentary, it is nowadays much less favored in independent films with any pretension to stylistic currency; here, if commentary is employed, it tends to use the personal tones of the filmmaker’s own voice.

Grierson argued for the production of *documentaries in the* → *public interest*, as a form with “sociological rather than aesthetic aims,” although he also famously defined documentary as “the creative treatment of actuality.” When he wrote his “First principles of documentary” in the 1930s, he sought to distinguish “higher” and “lower” forms, to downgrade forms like the newsreel, the travelogue, and the educational “lecture” film, and to reserve the proper use of the term for films that aspired to the virtues of art. This turns out to be a difficult distinction to maintain, since the same skills are involved whatever the mode of the film, and most documentaries comprise an eclectic mix of different styles. Politically speaking, Grierson’s position was reformist (he once said he was always a little bit to the left of whatever government was in power), and the 1930s also saw the emergence on the Marxist left of documentary as a form of political agitation, not only on the part of filmmakers like Ivens, but also aficionados in the workers’ film associations that appeared in places like Japan, Europe, and the USA. This kind of filmmaking did not survive the cauldron of World War II, and would have to be reinvented in another form in the politicization that traversed the world in the 1960s.

Meanwhile, in the post-bellum, a still fairly small tribe of documentarists cultivated an essayistic approach to the form, like the Free Cinema group in Britain. This trend was particularly strong in France, where in 1955 Alain Resnais made the first documentary devoted to the Nazi concentration camps, *Night and Fog*, thus initiating one of the most crucial currents within documentary in the second half of the century: the reconstruction through archive footage of the history of the first half.

## RENOVATION

The 1960s brought technical and political factors into a new alignment. Television, after initial hesitancy, had adopted documentary eagerly but imposed its own codes of compliance, especially in the matter of political “balance,” a code word for not upsetting the conventional wisdom (→ Television: Social History). But this was accompanied by a technical breakthrough which completely changed the ground rules: new lightweight 16 mm cameras capable of hand-held operation and synchronous location sound with portable tape recorders. The result, in the felicitous phrase of Mario Ruspoli (1964), one of a new breed of filmmakers who first filmed this way, was that for the first time “sound and picture stroll along arm-in-arm with the characters in motion.” This innovation produced an effect of remediation in which the quality of filmic representation shifted gear and a new paradigm of observed reality was installed, to be known by epithets like *cinéma vérité*, direct cinema, or fly-on-the-wall.

The result was the paradox, as Brian Winston (1995) put it, that “because the new equipment made filming so much less intrusive than it had been, the finished films were far more so.” The camera is now able to follow its subjects across social boundaries and borders which previously served to keep it from intruding, to enter the semi-private places and even intimate spaces of everyday social life whose portrayal was previously the privileged province of fiction. And since this is a camera with ears, Edgar Morin (2003), co-director with Rouch of the key film *Chronique d'un Été*, spoke of “an authentic talking cinema,” where “there are no fistfights, revolver shots, or even kisses,” in which “the action is the word,” conveyed by “dialogues, disputes, conversations.” But documentary entered the private domain only in order to reflect it back into the → public sphere, and thus also contributed to a breakdown of the separation between public and private that is one of the markers of postmodern culture.

Different tendencies quickly emerged. In France, *cinéma vérité* was self-reflexive and dialectical, while direct cinema in the USA, in the style of Richard Leacock, D. A. Pennebaker, and above all Frederick Wiseman, aspired to unalloyed observation. In Canada, Michel Brault and Pierre Perrault pioneered a new current of French-Canadian documentary which offered a paradigm for the self-representation of cultural minorities until then poorly represented in the media. In Latin America, a radical movement emerged, stretching from Mexico to Chile, which valued documentary as an instrument of social analysis and political activism in opposition to the hegemony of the North. In Cuba, this included the films of Santiago Alvarez, who reinvented the newsreel, the compilation film, the travelogue, and every other documentary genre he laid hands upon in an irrepressible frenzy of filmic bricolage licensed by that supreme act of bricolage, the Cuban revolution.

Films of the *two avant-gardes*, political and artistic, circulated through alternative distribution in 16 mm throughout the 1960s and 1970s, finding audiences of trades unionists, solidarity groups, aficionados, and students wherever there was half a chance. By the 1980s, a new wave of independent documentary emerged aligned with new social sensibilities, from second wave feminism to the multiple strands of identity politics. Here an important tendency was a new mode of first-person address and the self-inscription of the filmmaker, which often translated into the autobiographical, replacing orthodox objectivity with new richer forms of social subjectivity. This is also true of the apogee of documentary as poetic essay in the work of Chris Marker, especially *Sans Soleil*.

Only after television had spawned consumer video would 16 mm decline, to be replaced by the camcorder and the video cassette, transforming the means of both production and distribution, which now began to reach new users and enter new spaces (→ Television Technology). On the one hand, documentary video art would become a regular feature of the art gallery. On the other, the camcorder was employed in countries like Brazil to create an indigenous video movement, dedicated to strengthening community politics, to be shown in the villages where the equipment would be powered by car batteries. But perhaps the most unexpected turn was the *return of documentary to the big screen* in the 1990s. Here the obligatory reference is Michael Moore, but as evidenced by the growing number of locally oriented documentary film festivals, the phenomenon is worldwide, with major documentary movements appearing in countries as diverse as Spain, Argentina, and China, testifying to a hunger for the renewed interpretation of social reality all too

often absent from both fiction cinema and television. However, few of these films are able to reach foreign audiences as long as international distribution is dominated by the same monopolistic distributors who control both entertainment and art cinema (and excluded documentary from the cinemas in the first place).

These trends have been extended and diversified by digital video and the Internet, encouraging a variety of new forms and practices to develop on the margins of the commercial industry. Many commentators speak of these developments as a decentering of the public sphere, where the idea of documentary originally took root as a discourse of the factual and the real, and which indeed it helped to reconfigure, with the effect that the modern public sphere is in part defined by its practice. Indeed, it can be said that without the documentary, the public sphere is not functioning properly.

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Cinematography ► Cinematography, History of ► Film Genres ► Modernity ► Propaganda ► Public Interest ► Public Relations ► Public Sphere ► Realism in Film and Photography ► Stereotypes ► Storytelling and Narration ► Television: Social History ► Television Technology

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## **Domain Names**

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The domain name system (DNS) was developed mainly by Paul Mockapetris and John Postel in the early 1980s. The main specifications are laid down in RFCs, or requests for comment, managed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). These are the accepted technical standards for the Internet; key ones are RFC 1034, RFC 1035, and RFC 1591 of March 1994, which defined the DNS structure and delegation.

### **FROM NUMBERS TO NAMES**

Until 1983 the communication among computers within and via networks was organized by numbers, so-called IP addresses. The IPv4 address had two blocks of numbers, each

divided into two strings of numbers. The first block identified the network, the second one the computer. Such a system was user-unfriendly as IP addresses had more numbers than telephone or fax numbers, and users had to remember 15 or more figures. Mockapetris and Postel wanted to give Internet communication via computers a human face. The idea was to link the numeric IP address to a real name so that end-users could have an identity via a domain name. The system, which became the DNS, follows the three-layer system of names where people have first, second, and family names. The DNS is organized on the basis of a hierarchy with a top level domain (TLD, the family name) at the top.

### **gTLDs and ccTLDs**

Postel introduced six generic TLDs (gTLD) with three characters each: .edu (educational institutions), .gov (governmental entities), and .mil (military) for use in the US only; and .com (commercial institutions), .net (network), and .org (organization) for the rest of the world. .arpa was reserved for the management of the zone files and later .int was added for intergovernmental organizations. The three global gTLDs were managed by Network Solutions Inc. (NSI), which also managed .edu. The US government took over the management of .gov, and the US Department of Defense the management of .mil (→ Communication Technology Standards).

As people asked for TLDs for other countries, Postel introduced a second category, the country code TLDs (ccTLDs). The problem was to specify what counts as a country, and in RFC 1591, Postel argued that “IANA is not in the business of deciding what is and what is not a country” (Postel 1994). Postel used a list of countries and territories managed by the International Organization for Standardization. The list included two-letter codes for 243 countries and territories.

The data zone files for the TLDs were hosted by a system with 13 root servers. For TLD management, Postel – working at this time for the Information Science Institute (ISI) at the University of Southern California – created the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) following a recommendation by the US Department of Commerce, which had oversight of the financing of Internet research via the National Science Foundation. ISI and the Department of Commerce entered into a contract whereby IANA was given responsibility for the management of the DNS and the IP address space. The Department of Commerce reserved the right to authorize the publication of TLD root zone files in the A root server, managed by the National Science Foundation via the Department of Commerce.

Postel used personal contacts and recommendations from friends to identify TLD managers with the capacity to manage a name server and with a sense of responsibility towards the global Internet community (→ Internet, Technology of). In the early days, delegation was mainly by a handshake between Postel, who maintained this until his death in 1998, and the designated manager, and neither government legislation nor political or legal processes were involved. Following his death, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) was established. ICANN coordinates the DNS, including the delegation and re-delegation of TLDs, under oversight by the Department of Commerce.

Each manager of a TLD has full responsibility for the second level domains (SLDs). Registries can independently register SLDs, keeping all registered SLDs in their own

databases. Registered SLDs can register more names at the third level, which leads to multilayered domain names. This decentralized and distributed system makes the DNS very robust and efficient.

### **The Commercial Value of Domain Names**

The system has worked efficiently since its introduction. Postel had estimated that the 250+ TLDs offered enough space for global communication, but after the invention of the world wide web and the dot-com boom of the late 1990s, domain names not only created a personal identity in cyberspace, they also acquired a commercial value and came to be treated as commodities or assets and as part of a proprietary system linked to trademark names (→ Information Society). Companies like Amazon, Yahoo! and Google built their empire on domain names.

Domain names were easy to understand, find, and remember, and they became the subject of a growing domain name marketplace. In 1999 domain names like *business.com* or *flowers.com* were being sold for US\$1 million or more, and by 2006 the secondary DNS market was worth approximately US\$1 billion. Highly valued names, such as those in the .com domain, have become a scarce resource and there has been pressure to introduce more TLDs, especially generic names. Theoretically, there is no technical reason to limit the number of TLDs to 250+. Given that a name server under the .com domain managed by VeriSign (until 2000 by NSI) can handle more than 60 million SLD data files, there is no reason why root servers could not manage thousands of TLD data files.

### **The Search for a Global DNS Management System**

By the mid-1990s Postel wanted to introduce 150 new gTLDs and sought to use the newly established Internet Society (ISOC) as an institutional home for the DNS management. NSI opposed this, fearing the loss of its monopoly in the emerging domain name market. Later Postel began talks with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and in 1996 he initiated the Interim Ad Hoc Committee (IAHC), with IANA, IAB (Internet Architecture Board), ISOC, INTA (International Trademark Association), WIPO, and ITU as members. The six organizations negotiated a memorandum of understanding (gTLD-MoU), signed in Geneva in May 1997. The plan was to establish a policy oversight committee (POC) as a public–private partnership. The POC was to oversee the DNS and, as a first step, to introduce seven new gTLDs. To demonopolize the registration of domain names in the gTLDs space, a group of some 35 registrars was to be licensed and to join a council of registrars (CORE). Another proposal was to move the A root server from the US to Geneva, giving the ITU a role as the repository of the MoU.

The plan was heavily criticized by the US government and by NSI. In a letter to the ITU the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, rejected the MoU. She argued that the ITU Secretary General had not consulted with member states before signing the MoU and that ITU was therefore not authorized to join the gTLD-MoU. Recognizing that the contracts between the Department of Commerce with IANA and NSI were terminating in October 1998, the US government proposed an alternative strategy for the privatization of the DNS.

### **Towards the Establishment of ICANN**

In January 1998 the Department of Commerce published a Green Paper proposing the creation of a new corporation for Internet names and numbers. This paper became the subject of controversial international discussion. The European Commission and the governments of Canada and Australia rejected the proposal as being unbalanced, arguing that the Internet was a public resource for global communication and needed international oversight. In June 1998 a White Paper proposed the establishment of NewCo, intended to uphold the principles of security, competition, and bottom-up policy development, and global representation. This paved the way for the establishment of ICANN in October 1998. A week before the launch of ICANN, the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Minneapolis recognized the principle of private sector leadership for Internet governance and for the management of the DNS.

ICANN entered into a MoU with the Department of Commerce and received the mandate to coordinate the root server system, the IP address system, and the DNS. The plan was that ICANN would become independent of the US government in 2001, but this did not happen. Instead, the MoU was extended and then transformed in 2006 into a joint project agreement (JPA), due to terminate in October 2009.

After its creation, ICANN faced the dual challenge of establishing a policy for handling domain name conflicts over trademark protection with respect to the gTLD domain names space, and of introducing new gTLDs. In 2000 ICANN adopted a universal dispute resolution policy (UDRP) that established a global system for dispute resolution for domain name conflicts in the gTLD domain name space. The UDRP recognizes the role of trademark-protected names in the DNS, defines registration of such domain names in bad faith, and offers a privately organized global online dispute resolution system.

In early 2000 ICANN started a process for the introduction of new gTLDs and in a pilot phase licensed seven new TLDs (.info, .biz, .name, .coop, .aero, .museum, .pro). In 2005 it licensed sponsored TLDs (sTLDs) .asia, .mobi, .cat, .jobs, .tel, and .travel, but rejected other proposals, including one for .xxx. Its generic supporting organization (GNSO) is developing a more stable gTLD policy. The plan is to create a clear legal procedure that would define political, economic and technical criteria for new gTLDs that have to be met by applicants, and it is expected that the ICANN board will adopt the new policy in early 2008, thereby making it possible for a substantial number of new gTLDs to be introduced.

### **DNS and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)**

During the WSIS that started in 2002, the DNS emerged as part of the controversial debate on Internet governance. A number of UN member states, notably China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and others, called for a new governmental body to oversee the Internet core resources, including the DNS. The continuing role of the US government in authorization and publication of TLD zone files in the Internet root (not the so-called “hidden server” operated by VeriSign) was criticized. The issue was discussed in the UN Working Group of Internet Governance (WGIG), which was established by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan after the first phase of the WSIS in 2003. During the second WSIS phase in 2005, governments recognized the role of ICANN but agreed on a number

of general political principles. The Tunis Summit created a new Internet Governance Forum (IGF) for discussion of Internet-related issues and a process of enhanced cooperation involving a consultation process was launched to clarify the future oversight of the Internet's core resources, including the DNS. It is expected that in 2010, when the JPA between ICANN and the Department of Commerce will have terminated and the mandate of the IGF is also due to end, the issue will come back onto the agenda of global Internet policy debate.

### ACADEMIC ANALYSIS

The development of the DNS has been analyzed by a number of researchers both from the technical and the social science points of view. A key analysis was published by Lessig (1999) on the theme of *Code and other laws of cyberspace*, (→ Code as Law), arguing that great care should be taken to develop an understanding of the interaction between the code embedded through software development and its effect – and potential constraints – on the way the Internet is used. Mueller's (2002) *Ruling the root* presented a detailed analysis of the politics and institutional processes influencing the decisions of ICANN. Various authors have provided further reflections on the tensions inherent in the need to address technical and policy issues on a global scale, including Drake's (2005) *Reforming Internet governance*, which offered a critical analysis of the work of the WGIG.

There have been studies over the past decade highlighting the complex environment in which Internet governance encompassing issues raised by domain names must operate. Cairncross (1997) highlighted the "death of distance," while others such as Castells (2001) have investigated the network environment from sociological perspectives. Legal issues have been critically reviewed by Drucker and Gumpert (1999) and, with respect to intellectual property considerations, by Lessig (2001). Others, including Loader (1997), have tackled governance issues from different disciplinary perspectives. There is a continuing need for interdisciplinary studies, especially to understand how the technical dynamics of domain names and root servers are played out on the global stage.

SEE ALSO: ► Code as Law ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► Communication Technology Standards ► E-Commerce ► Information Society ► Internet, Technology of ► United Nations, Communication Policies of

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## Domestication of Technology

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The *domestication of technology* is an approach within the area of media appropriation studies. It describes the process of media (technology) adoption in everyday life, and especially within households. It outlines several dimensions of this dynamic adoption process in the context of the household as a *moral economy* and through the concept of the *double articulation* of media as technology. Two major strands of the domestication approach have been developed, only one of which is clearly within the field of media and communication studies. The other is located in the field of social studies of technology (e.g., Lie & Sorensen 1997).

The domestication idea was first developed at the beginning of the 1990s, primarily in the UK. It has its roots, however, in an article by the German ethnologist Hermann Bausinger, published in *Media, Culture and Society* in 1984, where he described a weekend in the life of a “typical” German family and reflected on the communicative role of the media. He stressed the uses of different media, everydayness, and the *collective* use and discussion of media. Building on Bausinger, the main researchers contributing to the early formulation of this approach were Roger Silverstone, David Morley, and Eric Hirsch (and later Leslie Haddon) (e.g., Silverstone & Hirsch 1992). The approach is now used widely in Europe, and also in North America, Asia, and other parts of the world. *Two research projects* shaped the early history: HICT (The Household Uses of Information and Communication Technologies) and PICT (Programme on Information and Communication Technologies). From 1995 to 1998 the EMTEL (European Media, Technology, and Everyday Life) network was crucial in further developing the concept of domestication. This was followed by EMTEL II from 2000 to 2003.

The emphasis of the concept on the media’s materiality represented a move away from a concentration on the media text to the media itself. The emphasis on the context of media use underlines the close relation to → cultural studies as well as to feminist engagements with media use. The technology emphasis was in part inspired by developments in the field of technology studies (→ Technology, Social Construction of). Everett Rogers’s approach to the diffusion of innovations (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation) shared a concern with the routinization and “making common” of



technologies, but the emphasis in domestication research is less on use itself than on meaning-making via media use, and it also engages critically with any assumption of linearity.

An interesting feature of the domestication approach is the *dimensions of media appropriation*, which include commodification, imagination, appropriation, objectification, incorporation, and conversion. These dimensions suggest that media are first made (invented, marketed, etc.), then adopted and integrated as objects that find a place in daily routines. They are also used to communicate to the outside world that certain media are used in particular ways. This applies to the media as technological and consumption objects as well as to their content, which is also reflected in the idea of *double articulation*. Media are both material objects and content providers. The concept of the *moral economy* draws attention to the idea that people need to be secure in their everyday lives, that is, they strive to achieve ontological security. The household economy is embedded in the wider economy, and media consumption is treated as a transaction process where media enter the home and values and experiences are “traded.”

The moral economy concept within the domestication approach has been *criticized*, by Andrew Feenberg, for example, who described it as “too cozy” (1999, 107), claiming that it is not a general media adoption model. He argued that agency needs to be emphasized and that the possibility for resistance needs to be kept open. The ultimately conservative character of the approach was acknowledged by Silverstone himself, who stated that there would always only be an *attempt* at appropriation and that only that which is *not* domesticated is interesting because this is the site of change (Silverstone, in Berker et al. 2006). This insight also addressed criticisms that the domestication model is too linear. The earlier approach to re- and de-domestication, however, was articulated as a dynamic nonlinear model, although it did not allow for a radical break in the domestication process.

Initially, it was assumed that the domestication approach would be developed only through the use of ethnographic methods to achieve the necessary detail through observations of households over a period of two weeks. This method was soon replaced by qualitative interviews, and this is still the primary research method in this field (→ Qualitative Methodology; Ethnography of Communication). Additionally, time-use diaries, photos, drawings, lists, mental maps, etc., are used to achieve triangulation. Some researchers continue to engage directly with households over the long term and to achieve greater depth of analysis (cf. Berker et al. 2006).

The challenge for the *further development of the domestication concept* is the changing media environments in which the media are consumed, which mean that the study of home as a site for media adoption research (Morley 2003) is limited. There is also debate about whether the domestication concept should be restricted to its core focus on media appropriation. Nevertheless, the domestication approach remains a useful tool for examining the complexity of everyday life and media use and provides entry points for a better understanding of media production and consumption.

SEE ALSO: ► Cultural Studies ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Ethnography of Communication ► Qualitative Methodology ► Technology, Social Construction of

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## Drama in Media Content

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On the terrain of popular communication are cultural artifacts with a potential to entertain, inform, or persuade. Accordingly, dramatic media content has been investigated by way of five interdependent perspectives: (1) genre (→ Film Genres), (2) medium, (3) narrative, (4) ideology, and (5) → meaning. Especially with regard to film and → television, this generic designation has been fluid, with shifting parameters and a tendency toward what Altman (1999) and others have called “genre mixing.” Television awards and DVD sellers may broadly distinguish drama from comedy, but scholars often treat what might otherwise be considered sub-genres of drama as genres in their own right. So, any scripted, narrative program or film that is not comedy, and which cannot be neatly classified under another, more specific brand such as Western, soap opera, film noir, melodrama, science fiction, action, or suspense/thriller, is designated simply as a drama. For instance, television features medical, legal, crime/espionage, political, and teen dramas, among others.

Under the broader view, however, dramatic sub-genres have proliferated due to social and economic imperatives, often rooted in the institutional arrangements of a medium within national and/or international systems (→ Political Economy of the Media). In turn, these sub-genres, their constituent texts, and audience negotiations are further assessed by cultural, media, television, and film critics of popular media according to narrative and other interpretive dimensions as well as particular ideological subjectivities, including class, gender, sexuality, and race.

The crime drama illustrates the influence of the social and economic. It includes film noir, police, and detective/spy dramas on the big screen and police, espionage, and forensic series on the small screen. Recent attention has been given to the re-emergence of the episodic procedural in American television and its most popular manifestation – the forensic drama. The *CSI (Crime Scene Investigation)* franchise, including three series at this writing, has attained international renown. Its success, along with that of similar

procedurals such as the *Law and Order* franchise, is related to the recent reluctance of US networks to invest predominantly in series such as the medical drama *ER*, a type of ensemble, character-driven, serialized, *cinéma vérité*-style program that did not become fashionable until the 1980s and which, it turns out, does not play as well in five-day-a-week syndication as plot-driven, episodic shows that achieve closure at the end of each installment. Serialized dramas thereby curtail long-term profitability. Procedurals have also been said to respond to anxieties generated by the terror attacks of September 11, in that they present public servants working competently, swiftly, and almost always successfully to apprehend and convict the “bad guys.”

Soap opera provides a case by which to better appreciate interrelationships among genre, medium, narrative, ideology, and meaning (→ Soap Operas). In its American, commercial network incarnation, the soap opera’s invention was economically driven by the desire to target female homemakers, aged 18–49, with the power to purchase household products. Like other forms of women’s melodrama, soaps center on the private sphere of interpersonal relations, but feature an array of female characters central to multiple storylines.

Their kinship to tragedy and romance in classical theater, the romance novel, and the “woman’s film” notwithstanding, soaps are often distinguished in terms of one of their myriad “feminine” qualities – the delay or avoidance of narrative closure. While Chatman’s (1978) narrative constituents of story (characters, settings, plot elements) and discourse (story structure) were originally applied to novels and films, Fiske (1987) reconfigured such attributes in order to differentiate between masculine and feminine television, with soap opera exemplifying the latter (→ Gender: Representation in the Media; Masculinity and the Media).

It is not surprising, then, that soap opera studies take on ideological significance. For example, the openness of the soap opera narrative has been said by some to encourage potentially empowering interpretations from female viewers (→ Audiences, Female), although Mumford (1995), among others, has countered that when the individual storylines in soap operas do achieve closure, they often reproduce patriarchal meanings.

While the narratives of many of the soap opera’s international derivations, such as Latin American *telenovelas* and Hindi television serials, eventually resolve, they still refuse tidy, episodic endings and adhere to other feminine traits. They, along with British and Australian soaps, have not typically been conceived as daytime fare. Moreover, they are often produced by public television and, consequently, are not motivated by commercial exigencies to “narrowcast” to women in their childbearing years in order to maximize profit. Such distinctions allow them to display greater diversity in terms of such subjectivities as age and class. With respect to the visual aspect of medium and meaning, it has been noted that the dearth of camera flourishes in British soaps serves to accent their social realism. *Dallas*, the most-analyzed American prime-time soap, clearly eschewed such realism. However, Ang (1985) revealed the resistive power of this series’ “melodramatic heroine” in her study of Dutch viewers.

These lines of inquiry make apparent how genre, medium, narrative, ideology, and meaning generate issues and modes by which to investigate drama. Regardless of the fluidity of its demarcations, popular communication scholars continue to adopt and enmesh these perspectives in determining drama’s evolution and significance.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Film Genres ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Meaning ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Television

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## **Dual Coding Theory**

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In the typical demonstration of dual coding, a list consisting of an equal number of pictures and words is presented to study participants. On encountering an item in the list, the study participant is asked to read the word or name the picture. Later, when the items are recalled, twice as many pictures than words are recalled. This picture-superiority effect, or the better recall of pictures over words, can be attributed to dual coding, which is the activation of traces in visual and verbal memory systems. While the verbal system is dedicated to processing of linguistic information, such as words and sentences, which are represented as discrete units or “logogens” and processed sequentially, the visual or imagistic system is dedicated to the processing of images, which are processed more holistically and represented through units referred to as “imagens” (Paivio 2006). The complementary role of two distinct, but interconnected, visual and verbal systems is at the heart of dual coding theory (DCT).

According to DCT, pictures benefit from dual activation. First, the visual system has to interpret or decode the picture. Second, the verbal system has to generate a verbal label for the picture that has been activated in the visual system. Because the systems are interconnected, the activations are pooled, thus enhancing memory for the pictures. The pooling of activations from the visual and verbal systems is referred to as the additivity hypothesis of DCT, which explains the picture-superiority effect.

Unlike the naming of pictures, the reading of a word activates mainly the verbal system. However, because of the interconnection between the two systems, some leakage or incidental activation of the visual system may occur automatically. For example, when reading the word “fire,” a mental image of fire may be triggered. However, because such activations are only incidental, they are weak in comparison to the direct activation created by a picture.

The automatic or incidental activation of the visual system from verbal inputs is the basis for another robust experimental finding in DCT, which is the better recall of concrete items over abstract items. When study participants are presented with a list of concrete and abstract nouns, concrete nouns enjoy a decisive advantage, though their performance is slightly below the recall of pictures. The better performance of the concrete items can be attributed to their imagery evoking properties. A concrete noun, such as “lobster,” has greater imagery evoking potential than, say, an abstract noun, such as “truth.” In other words, just the thought of a lobster automatically conjures up visual images in memory, whereas an abstract construct, such as truth, does not have the same imagery evoking potential. This effect of concreteness has been demonstrated for a range of verbal stimuli, including concrete phrases, sentences, and even passages.

Logogens and imagens, which are the foundational elements of DCT, are not limited only to visual inputs, but can be extended to other senses. For instance, when we hear the word lobster, as opposed to seeing the word, the auditory input can be combined with the visual input. This is an important extension because communication researchers have applied DCT mainly to → television news, in which the verbal information is streamed through the audio channel.

Finally, it is important to note that DCT is not without its detractors. Those opposed to DCT contend that a single code system is more parsimonious than a dual code system. They argue that the better performance for pictures and concrete items could be attributed to the vividness of the picture or richer encoding of concrete items. Such explanations discount the need for two specialized systems that deal separately with pictures and words. However, evidence from recent research, including brain imaging studies, supports the existence of multiple specialized systems that work in concert to decode and integrate sensory information, thus providing support for DCT.

Both effects of the DCT – the additivity hypothesis and the concreteness effect – have *implications for news design and consumption* (→ Exposure to News; News; News Audience). Researchers from a number of areas, including marketing, education, and communication, have focused on the additivity hypothesis. The emphasis of these efforts has been to examine how the dual coding through the audio and the video channels can be maximized to improve learning (→ Educational Media; News Processing and Retention). On the surface, it would appear that inputs from the two channels should be better than separate inputs from either the audio or video channel. But a key limiting factor is human processing capacity (→ Limited Capacity Model). Streaming television video can easily overwhelm human processing capacity if the audio and video are not strategically edited to reinforce one another (Lang 1995). Communication researchers have examined this topic under the rubric of audio-video (AV) redundancy.

The concreteness effect, too, has implications for news practice. An important characterization of news is as episodic and thematic frames (→ Framing of the News). While episodic

news focuses on the concrete details of the four Ws – who, what, when, and where – thematic news focuses on the “why” aspects of a story and tends to emphasize analysis. Thematic stories tend to be abstract, lack compelling visuals, and have low imagery evoking potential. Because of these differences between the two types of stories, episodic news items are better recalled than thematic news items (David 1998). However, thematic news can be concretized through various techniques such as through a metaphor, a conceptual peg, or multimedia elements. Such solutions would require a concerted effort by news producers, but may be well worth the efforts in the interests of maintaining an informed citizenry.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Educational Media ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ News ▶ News Audience ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ News Values ▶ Television News ▶ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

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# E

## E-Commerce

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Throughout history, innovations in communication technology have been associated with important developments in the manner in which people and organizations engage in economic exchanges of goods and services (Beniger 1986; → Information Society). In the past several decades, communication technology researchers have examined the social and economic implications of the use of computer networks as a medium for supporting commercial exchange, an activity that is broadly termed *electronic or e-commerce*.

Research on e-commerce has linked its growth to a wide range of social and economic issues including but not limited to the following: *economic* considerations of its effect on markets (Malone et al. 1987; Wigand & Benjamin 1995) and the pricing strategies of sellers (Shapiro & Varian 1999; Smith et al. 2000); *marketing and strategic behavior of firms* including the viability of e-commerce business models (Weill & Vitale 2001), multichannel e-commerce (Steinfield et al. 2002), and competitive strategy (Porter 2001); *consumer behavior* issues such as privacy and trust (Chadwick 2001; Palmer et al. 2000); *site design and navigation logics* to enhance usability and help buyers find products among the vast numbers of vendors and products (Dieberger et al. 2000; Lohse & Spiller 1998); *organizational and sociological aspects* of exchange such as the influence of e-commerce on the relationships between buyers and sellers (Kraut et al. 1999); *geographical and social* aspects such as the role of e-commerce in developing countries (Mansell 2001; → Digital Divide), its use as a tool for promoting local business and regional clusters (Steinfield 2004), and its role in national and global commerce (Bouwman 1999).

### DEFINITIONS AND DIMENSIONS OF E-COMMERCE

Most commonly, e-commerce is considered to refer to the buying and selling of goods and services over a computer network, and mainly over the Internet. One concern is whether e-commerce includes any exchange of information that facilitates transactions, or must include either an actual order or online payment. In general, communications researchers examining this issue lean toward more inclusive definitions that recognize the role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in commerce, including support for *production* of goods and services, the *preparation of transactions*, and the *completion*



of transactions (Hawkins et al. 1999; → Technology and Communication; Information and Communication Technology, Economics of; Internet, Technology of).

Other relevant dimensions of e-commerce that concern researchers are the role of the parties involved and the platform over which transactions occur. Related to roles of the participants, business-to-business (B2B) transactions are investigated differently than business-to-consumer (B2C) transactions. The former are more likely to be *upstream* (i.e., acquisition of inputs by producers) transactions involving producers and suppliers, but can also involve *downstream* transactions between the producers of goods or services and distribution channel partners (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology). In either case, B2B relationships are typically longer in duration, involve higher volumes and value amounts, and are normally structured by contracts (Kaplan & Sawhney 2000). B2C transactions, however, are those that take place directly at the retail level, and typically do not imply the same degree of relational stability between buyers and sellers. The way in which e-commerce is structured, and its influences on buyer–seller relations, are therefore quite different in these contexts. Another role pattern that has stimulated research is represented by services like eBay that support consumer-to-consumer (C2C) selling, and thus expose many issues surrounding how to build trust among strangers so that transactions may occur (Resnick & Zeckhauser 2002).

Platform issues refer to the nature of the ICT infrastructure through which transactions are mediated (→ Communication Infrastructure; Information and Communication Technology, Development of). In earlier times, communication researchers looked at other types of electronic information service delivery platforms, such as *videotex* for consumers and *electronic data interchange* (EDI) for business-to-business transactions. One primary concern in these prior studies was the importance of the openness of the platform – EDI-based networks, for example, were typically constructed around a closed set of invited trading partners, and often were dominated by one powerful player (Hawkins & Verhoest 2002).

The main focus in recent e-commerce work is on the Internet, which differs in terms of the greater ease with which new trading partners can be accessed, and the lower costs that participants incur. In addition, a limited amount of research has also focused on wireless infrastructures connecting to mobile devices to support mobile or *m-commerce* (Balasubramanian et al. 2002; → Mobility, Technology for). As mobile devices and networks become more capable, their use will likely increase the overall commercial impact of electronic commerce by: (1) increasing network access given that more people use mobile devices than computers; (2) creating new opportunities for spontaneous commerce because it frees consumers from their desktops and allows anytime/anyplace interactions; and (3) promoting *location-based* and *context-relevant* commercial opportunities.

### **EFFECTS OF E-COMMERCE ON MARKETS, MARKET STRUCTURES, AND PRICES**

One of the earliest questions raised by researchers was whether the use of e-commerce would enable the rise of electronic markets characterized by lower *transaction costs* particularly in the business-to-business realm (Malone et al. 1987). Transaction costs include such factors as the search for trading partners, negotiation, settlement, and

monitoring. By reducing these costs, and hence the *costs of coordination* with the market, markets would be used for *governance* (i.e., as a means to control the behavior of the participants) in situations that heretofore were governed by *hierarchy* (i.e., a company would purchase needed inputs from external suppliers in a market rather than produce them in-house). E-commerce permits companies to find suppliers regardless of location, freeing them up from the constraints of geography, and thereby reduces vulnerability caused by a need for *specific assets* that potentially could make them victims of *opportunistic* behavior. Although there has certainly been growth in outsourcing on a global scale, the role of e-commerce per se in this is not well understood. Indeed, studies that have explicitly looked at the extent to which the use of network-based transactions has encouraged a “move to the market” have not found this effect. Kraut et al. (1999) found instead that companies were more likely to use computer networks to enhance their ability to work with established trading partners, resulting in what Malone et al. (1987) called *electronic hierarchies*.

A related debate is rooted in the belief that e-commerce enables a buyer or seller to *bypass intermediary actors* in order to engage in a direct transaction and eliminate the excess costs of intermediation. In this view, producers can use the Internet to sell directly to end consumers rather than selling through retailers, for example. Likewise, home sellers might sell directly to homebuyers rather than paying a commission to an agent. Such “dis-intermediation” can profoundly reshape the structure of industries and the roles of actors within an exchange network. Although examples of dis-intermediation are readily observable, the literature encourages a more nuanced view. Just as the Internet can lower transaction costs for producers interested in bypassing intermediaries, it can also enhance the efficiency of existing and new intermediaries. Many of the most well-known Internet commerce companies, in fact, are new intermediaries such as Amazon, eBay, and Craigslist. Additionally, many traditional offline intermediaries – often large retailers who leverage complementary assets such as their brand, their supplier relations, and existing infrastructure – have established online channels as well in a process termed “re-intermediation” (Chircu & Kauffman 2000; Sarkar et al. 1995).

For a variety of reasons, e-commerce is also linked with *expectations of lower prices* of goods and services. Reduced transaction costs, lower costs due to the ability to sell without maintaining physical presence in a market, and the fact that buyers can easily search and compare prices across many vendors all contribute to the hypothesis that one e-commerce impact will be pressure on sellers to reduce prices (Bakos 1997). Yet, again, research shows that the situation is more complex. By 2007, the evidence for lower prices was rather mixed, especially when the added costs for shipping are taken into account. In addition, there is evidence of price dispersion rather than homogeneous prices, contrary to the expectations of economists (Smith et al. 2000). It appears that because it is so easy to change prices (referred to as menu costs), Internet companies make more changes in smaller increments in order to respond to the market. E-commerce also makes it easier to engage in *price discrimination*, whereby vendors sell the same product to different customers at different prices (Shapiro & Varian 1999).

Also, e-commerce can be used in ways that lock in buyers rather than reducing the so-called *market frictions* that make it difficult to switch vendors. For example, companies can gather information from customers, and then use this to help offer highly personalized

services, or provide incentives to keep customers returning to their website, in order to create what has been called “sticky” e-commerce (Shapiro & Varian 1999). In this way, e-commerce raises customers’ *switching costs* (the costs to move to a different supplier of a good or service). *Network effects*, which create positive feedback loops so that the larger the service, the more attractive it is to users, also work to make it difficult for customers to switch. Hence, these techniques allow an e-commerce vendor to maintain higher prices and discourage new entrants who might compete on price.

## **BUSINESS MODELS IN E-COMMERCE**

Much was written in the early stages of e-commerce about Internet business models (Weill & Vitale 2001). Mainly, these authors provided typologies of alternative models, based upon the sources of value for buyers and sellers and the specific mechanisms (e.g., advertising, subscription, margin on sales, etc.) by which revenue was derived. After the dot-com crash, attempts to list the many observed Internet business models gave way to analyses focusing on what was wrong with the models. Critics of the early business-model literature point out that the dominant focus on revenue streams encouraged firms to ignore other benefits that e-commerce offers, such as cost reductions, improved customer relations, or enhanced performance of traditional channels (Steinfeld et al. 2002). For example, a traditional retailer might develop an online storefront, but can use its website to generate more traffic in its physical stores by offering coupons or searches of in-store inventory, rather than evaluating the online site purely on the basis of the exclusive sales it generates on its own. Business models were also easy to imitate, and therefore did not necessarily convey a sustained competitive advantage.

Despite the critiques, the development of e-commerce has enabled the application of many *innovative online selling strategies*. The dot-com crash can be viewed as an inevitable shake-out that follows from the rapid entry of firms into a new area of business. In this perspective, the models that survived represent the winning approaches, promising significant opportunity for the firms that have successfully adopted them.

One issue related to both market structure and the business model of an e-commerce company derives from the statistical patterns of e-commerce site visits. Adamic & Huberman (2001) demonstrated that e-commerce site usage follows a power-law distribution, with a small number of sites accounting for the vast majority of traffic volume. This leads to an expectation of a *winner-take-all* market. However, more recently, the “long tail” distribution is proposed to explain the dominance of niche products and markets on the Internet (Anderson 2006). The reach of the Internet, enhanced by recommender systems and other methods of connecting people to content, products, and services, enables items that are not “hits” to find enough of a market to be profitable. E-commerce vendors are encouraged by this to carry a wide selection of products rather than focusing only on the popular ones.

## **TRUST IN E-COMMERCE**

How to establish trust in online commerce is one of the most heavily researched e-commerce areas, becoming an issue when thousands of new and unfamiliar dot-com companies flooded the Internet (Jarvenpaa & Tractinsky 1999). Factors that are linked to the formation of trust

include website quality, presence of web assurance seals from trusted third parties, use of secure servers for transactions, and specification of privacy policies (Palmer et al. 2000).

One approach to the trust issue, pioneered by eBay, but now widely used in many e-commerce contexts in one form or another, is the use of reputation systems to build trust. Feedback systems whereby buyers and sellers rate each other have been shown to be remarkably effective in overcoming trust problems despite the potential that exists to “game” the systems to build better reputations (Resnick & Zeckhauser 2002). Collectively, the use of other peoples’ behaviors and opinions – either through explicit communication or derived through implicit data-mining techniques – to serve as a guide to making choices in online contexts has come to be called *social navigation* (Dieberger et al. 2000).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Online Media ▶ Search Engines ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ Ubiquitous Computing

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## Economies of Scale in Media Markets

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Since Samuelson (1958), the economic literature has considered that production in the media industries (films, TV programs, music, etc.) is characterized by high fixed costs and economies of scale. For instance, the costs of creating a TV program are high, but the incremental cost of physical distribution to an additional consumer is very low or even nil. Broadcast television should therefore exhibit large economies of scale.

### ECONOMIES OF SCALE IN MEDIA MARKETS

We say that a firm enjoys economies of scale when a proportionate increase in every input by a given percentage yields an increase in output by a higher percentage. A looser (and weaker) definition states that there are economies of scale when a firm's average cost of producing output decreases as the output increases (the former definition implies the

latter, but not the reverse). Finally, the degree of scale economies at given level of output is defined as the ratio of average cost to marginal cost (which also represents the elasticity of output with respect to the cost of production). With this last definition, there are increasing returns to scale if the degree of scale economies is strictly greater than 1.

Media industries are characterized by large fixed costs and small marginal costs (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media; Public Goods); therefore, the degree of scale economies is much greater than 1. A fixed cost is a cost that does not vary with the level of output, and which can be avoided by cessation of production. In the media industries, the fixed costs accrue mainly due to the creation of content (articles for → newspapers; films in the movie industry; recordings in the → music industry; programs in the → television industry; etc.), which yields a first-copy fixed cost (i.e., the cost of the first copy). Promotion costs are also sometimes considered as fixed, that is, independent of the number of units actually sold or of the size of → audience. For instance, in the music industry, it is sometimes argued, producers make some initial promotion, which leads to first sales and triggers word-of-mouth between music fans. To be more precise, the cost of content and the promotion costs are not exactly fixed, but rather *sunk*; the difference between a sunk cost and a fixed cost being that the former cannot be avoided by cessation of production.

Variable costs in media industries accrue due to the copies of the content that are produced and distributed to end consumers. However, the marginal costs of copies are in general very low, in particular compared to the initial fixed costs. Moreover, with the ongoing digitization of content (e.g., the digitization of music), marginal costs of copies are almost zero. Actually, most of the costs of distribution of content could be considered as fixed; for instance, broadcast networks for free-to-air TV involve mainly fixed costs.

As an illustration of this cost structure – high fixed costs, and low variable costs – consider the music industry. According to Vogel (2001), production costs for popular albums are greater than \$125,000 and marketing costs can reach \$100,000. The total sunk cost for those albums (around \$200,000) has to be compared with the marginal cost of a copy, which is around \$2 to \$3. In the movie industry, in 2005, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) member company average theatrical costs were \$60 million for negative costs (the sunk cost of the first copy), \$32.4 million for → advertising and \$3.8 million for copies (movie prints); hence, variable costs of copies represented only 4 percent of total costs.

### **THE RELATION BETWEEN PROGRAMMING COSTS AND EXPECTED AUDIENCE**

Empirical studies have shown that, very often, the more successful a TV program or a movie, the more it has cost (see, in particular, Litman 1983 and Ravid 1999 for → cinema). The existence of a relation between production costs and audiences is also recognized in the economic literature (→ Media Economics). For television, Spence & Owen (1977) think that it may be necessary to increase production budgets to draw larger audiences. Owen & Wildman (1992) consider that a program's production costs can influence its potential audience: "The cost of producing a television program is independent of the number of people who will eventually see it. (The production cost, however, may very well influence how many people will want to see it.)" More generally, there is anecdotal evidence that, in many media industries, operating at small scale is not impossible.

How can the idea of economies of scale be reconciled with empirical evidence that larger budgets for content lead to larger audiences? The idea is that, while there are economies of scale with regard to the actual audience or number of copies sold, the fixed cost of a film or a music recording can be higher when a larger demand is targeted by the producer. Otherwise stated, once the content has been produced, its cost cannot depend on the number of consumers, but *ex ante* the fixed cost of production can increase with the targeted demand. Thus, for instance, we might observe that films with large budgets draw more audience than films with small budgets.

A higher fixed cost of production can increase the expected audience through two different channels. First, the quality attributes of the content can influence demand; higher investments in quality would then lead to a higher demand. For instance, a higher number of journalists ( $\rightarrow$  Journalism) can improve the quality of the information proposed by a newspaper; or a higher number of cameras can improve the image quality of a movie. Second, some inputs can have the ability to attract a large audience.

In particular, “talent” inputs might be a source of the relation between production costs and targeted audience. For instance, in the movie industry, talent inputs (such as producers, actors, or scriptwriters) are used along with inputs of production work (lighting engineers, cameramen, etc.) and capital inputs (scenery, special effects, etc.) to produce movies (e.g., see Crandall 1972). These “talents” are responsible for a large part of the quality of content. But they also have an impact on the information processes that guide demand. Indeed, most media goods are experience goods; that is, their quality can be assessed only after consumption. Because they can be recognized by consumers after the production phase, “talents” are able to attract demand.

Thus, the notion of talent is not only related to the “artistic” character of inputs. There are also artistic inputs that play a part no different from that of ordinary work inputs, because they are not directly known to consumers. For example, designers in the luxury industry, because they are unknown to the general public, are remunerated independently of the success of the products they define. Likewise, most actors are not  $\rightarrow$  “stars,” insofar as their participation in a film has no statistically identifiable impact on audiences. For instance, De Vany & Walls (1999) identified only 19 stars in all North American actors and film producers during the period 1984–1996 (i.e., talents that had a statistically significant impact on success).

Insofar as they contribute directly to the production of demand, stars can, after achieving a degree of autonomy, impose modes of remuneration that reflect a sharing of created value rather than payment for a job done. This trend, now distinct in the television industry, has been clearly observed in the case of the film industry.

In the case of cinema, it seems that stars have progressively managed to capture most of the surplus they generate. In a study on a random sample of 180 films released between 1991 and 1993, Ravid (1999) found that while stars increase the box-office takings of films, they capture the income thus created and finally play no part in its financial success. In the case of US broadcast television, Woodbury et al. (1983) analyzed a sample of 99 series programmed in the US in 1977 and 1978 on the three national broadcast networks, *ABC*, *CBS*, and *NBC* ( $\rightarrow$  Television Networks). These authors showed that the producers of these series were remunerated in accordance with the “popularity” of the programs they had made (i.e., the *ex post* actual audience). For example, if a program drew a larger

audience than expected, the network distributed part of the surplus to the producer. For Woodbury et al. (1983), the network tried to maintain good relations with these producers in order to obtain new programs, and relinquished part of the surplus in order to ensure good performance from them.

## **ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF ECONOMIES OF SCALE**

The presence of strong economies of scale has strong implications with regard to market competition and pricing strategies.

In a market characterized by large economies of scale, competition is unlikely to emerge. Indeed, competition forces would drive prices to marginal costs, and firms would not recover their fixed costs and would make large losses. Therefore, in the medium or long run, only two types of market structures can emerge: either the market is dominated (or monopolized) by one firm, or firms differentiate and target different market segments (again, some firms are likely to be dominant in each segment). This latter pattern corresponds well to media industries, where consumers value variety.

The presence of economies of scale also has implications in terms of pricing. Since media services or products are characterized by high fixed costs and low marginal costs, with cost-based pricing firms would make losses. If a firm has market power, which is what we can expect, different pricing or commercialization strategies are possible (see Shapiro & Varian 1998 for more details).

First, the firm can price-discriminate, that is, it can sell the same good (or similar goods) at different prices, according to the quantity sold, the consumer's characteristics, or various sale clauses. A common example of price discrimination in media industries is the sale of → books in different formats (hardcover vs paperback). Versioning is a form of price discrimination that consists in creating different versions of a good, and inducing each group of consumers through the appropriate pricing scheme to choose the version that was intended for them. For instance, for a DVD, a collector's edition can be commercialized along with a standard edition to target the consumers who have a high willingness for the DVD.

Second, because marginal costs are very low (or even nil), the firm can sell its goods as a bundle. When consumers have very heterogeneous preferences for the different goods, bundling can increase profit.

Finally, the cost structure in the media industries facilitates → piracy. Indeed, the cost of a copy is very low or even nil, not only for the producer, but also for the end-consumer.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience ▶ Book ▶ Cinema ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Music Industry ▶ Newspaper ▶ Piracy ▶ Public Goods ▶ Stars ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks

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## **E-Democracy**

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The concept of electronic democracy has intellectual as well as technological roots. Its intellectual roots are anchored in normative democratic theory and in the idea of participatory democracy (→ Participatory Communication). Technologically, it is rooted in dramatic changes in media technology that amount to a revolution in the field of communication (→ Communication Technology and Democracy).

The communications revolution is a process that spans a long period of time, encompassing a multitude of technological developments from the first telegraph wire connecting both sides of the Atlantic Ocean since 1862 through to the diffusion of the → Internet in the 1990s. This chain of technological breakthroughs amounts today to a media infrastructure that provides mind-boggling new opportunities in the field of communication (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Communication Infrastructure). It opens up mass communication to every individual who cares to go public, it dramatically increases the volume of public communication, and it provides for a global presence of any piece of information as well as of any individual. As Nicholas Negroponte (1995) put it: On the net, every piece of information and every individual is just a mouse click away, independent of location.

### **INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT**

The communications revolution played to a longstanding debate in normative democratic theory on the role of participation. Theorists of democracy from Montesquieu to Schumpeter

have argued that modern democracy can only be structured as a contest between elites that ought to be held accountable through democratic elections. Most proponents of a more participatory type of democracy grudgingly accepted electoral democracy as a sorry substitute for the real thing. However, with the coming of the communications revolution, proponents of participatory democracy such as Benjamin Barber (1984) saw new prospects for democratic reform. They proclaimed new digital media to be the means to overcome technical impediments to political participation and to move closer to the ideal of comprehensive mass participation in the context of collective decision-making.

Social changes in established democracies such as the “cognitive revolution” of the 1960s and 1970s gave additional mileage to the debate on electronic democracy. It spurred new “postmaterialistic” policy concerns and triggered participatory needs that are no longer met by the established institutions of democracy. As a result, traditional forms of political participation have diminished since the 1980s, leaving political elites with a sense of crisis. The launch of an *e-participation* initiative by the European Commission in 2005 that “aims at harnessing the benefits of the use of ICTs for better legislation at all levels of governmental decision-making and at enhancing public participation in such processes” suggests that e-democracy is perceived as a means to overcome this very crisis (European Commission 2006).

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The notion of electronic democracy includes three different prescriptive models of *how* new media should be used to increase opportunities to participate. Each one of these models is related to distinct concepts that structure distinct and independent debates in the larger context of electronic democracy.

Authors such as Ian Budge (1996) perceive new digital media as the perfect *means to direct decision-making* via electronic voting. Each citizen could be provided with the necessary information on the issue at stake via the world wide web. Their decision could then be taken via a simple mouse click in the private home, could be transferred via the Internet and aggregated in a central computer controlled by voting authorities. According to proponents of electronic democracy, voting via the Internet provides a cost-effective, easy and reliable instrument for direct citizen participation in large-scale democracies. It is seen as a means to reduce the risk of misrepresentation, meaning elected representatives taking decisions that are not in line with the interests of their constituents. With a significant shift to direct modes of decision-making, modern democratic systems would move from representative systems to systems of direct democracy.

Authors such as Amitai Etzioni et al. (1975) perceive new digital media primarily as a means to *strengthen public dialogue*. In their model of a communication tree, digital phone networks are the means to organize mediated dialogues on specific issues among “millions of participants.” In this model, the aggregate is divided into a number of smaller groups deliberating via digital phone networks. The different group positions are aggregated through delegates who again deliberate with each other via electronic media in a smaller number of groups. This process continues until a final decision for the whole community is reached. Etzioni and his collaborators believe that this process will educate participants, that it will foster trust, the quest for the common good, and the cognitive capacities of

those involved, and that the functioning of the formal decision-making structure of democracy – be it representative or direct – is dependent upon informed and educated citizens and their opinions.

Authors such as Iain McLean (1989) see the Internet primarily as a *means to increase the responsiveness of representative democracy* to the demands of citizens. In McLean's view, modern democracy cannot function without representative institutions. But according to this perspective, the medium increases the responsiveness of modern democracy in the sense that constituency interests are aggregated in a more effective manner and that political decision-making is more in line with the demands of citizens. Through the Internet, citizens are able to inform themselves in better ways about the parliamentary agenda, to communicate their opinion on policy issues more effectively to their representatives and to deliberate with representatives. According to McLean, new media technology is also a most cost-effective means to register the preferences of citizens in the context of elections in more differentiated ways.

Some authors suggest also including in this third model of e-democracy the use of new media to make bureaucracies more responsive to demands of citizens and to provide better administrative services to citizens. Given the fact that these forms of digitalized communications do not concern collective decision-making and are not related to civil society either, they should rather be discussed in relation to the concept of → *e-government*. They concern the output-side of politics rather than the input-side. For the sake of analytical clarity, models of electronic democracy should also be kept distinct from the notion of *electronic participation*. While electronic democracy focuses on the macro-level of politics, electronic participation focuses on the micro-level. Both levels are related to each other though, because electronic participation is to some extent dependent on opportunities to participate as provided by models of electronic democracy.

### THE DYNAMICS OF THE DEBATE ON E-DEMOCRACY

The debate on electronic democracy took off in the late 1960s and early 1970s with first glimpses of local computer networks, cable television and digitalized phone networks. Since then, it experienced a multitude of changes at several levels of analysis.

The dynamics of the debate are first and foremost defined by changes in its key concept. In the late 1960s and early 1970s it sailed under the flag of *teledemocracy*. Electronic democracy as a term became more fashionable in a middle phase of the debate during the 1980s and 1990s. The term *cyberdemocracy* is a more recent addition to the language of electronic democracy (see, e.g., Bellamy 2000).

The different concepts signify changes in perspectives, theoretical frames as well as in subject matters. In its first stage, the debate was primarily driven by normative theorists of democracy. Their emphasis was on the potential of new media to implement a more participatory type of democracy in large-scale modern democracies plagued by large distances and great numbers. The debate on teledemocracy was then primarily based on normative reasoning and pilot projects to demonstrate the participatory potential of new media technology (Arterton 1987). With the further development of the technology and the social diffusion of the Internet, the debate became more empirical and more focused on the micro-phenomena of media usage, political communication, and e-participation.

In this phase, the debate closely aligned itself with the term electronic democracy, meaning all forms of communication and participation aided by new digital media (e.g., Browning 1996). It emphasizes *inter alia* spontaneous forms of public dialogue such as newsgroups on the Internet, discussion fora or blogs as a means to increase the quality and quantity of public debate.

Students of political communication such as Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) see increasing public dialogue on the Internet as a viable alternative to biased and irrational forms of public debate through the mass media. Students of democracy such as Robert Putnam (2001) consider public debate on the net as a factor that might strengthen the group basis of modern societies and counteract general trends such as individualization and social fragmentation. The term “cyberdemocracy” signifies a concern for the psychological and social ramifications of the new digital media. It emphasizes that the Internet opens up a new behavioral context that cannot be equated all too easily with mediated communication and that lays the cornerstone for a new cultural sphere (e.g., Shields 1996).

One important change over time in the debate on electronic democracy concerns its basic assumption regarding media impact (→ Media Effects). It started off with an all-embracing cyber-optimism, assuming that the Internet would right all wrongs in modern democracy regarding the concept of participation. In recent years, this tone has given way to a more cyber-skeptic perspective, concluding that “politics on the Internet is politics as usual” (Margolis & Resnick 2000). The truth of the matter, gradually emerging as a third stage in this debate, lies somewhere between these two hyperbolic hypotheses.

A more balanced view on the prospects of electronic democracy is based on two other developments that further define the dynamics of the debate. First, research on electronic democracy is moving from a “mostly American” case-specific type of research toward a more comparative research endeavor (Norris 2001; Zittel 2004). Second and more important, it advances in theoretical terms the construction of cumulative research frameworks and research questions that increasingly focus on testable theories (Jensen 2003; Zittel 2003).

## CURRENT ISSUES IN RESEARCH AND THEORY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The development of coherent theoretical frameworks in electronic democracy research is in a very early phase. The cumulative quality of the debate is increasingly evident in the research questions that transform the many individual research efforts and observations into collective research activities. Four questions recur frequently and need to be highlighted here.

First, how *reliable and safe* are the new media in technical terms as a means for political participation. This question is of particular importance regarding the issue of electronic voting – certainly one of the most specific and thus most visible elements of the e-democracy agenda. The Internet is an open medium which is hard to shield from external intrusion. This makes it difficult to prevent the manipulation of voting results. Technical malfunctions might contribute to further safety hazards in the process of electronic voting. These questions are being tackled in corporations between computer scientists, the private sector, and public authorities in a number of pilot projects across Europe (see, e.g., Cybervote 2003).

A second issue touches upon the question of the *compatibility* between *normative schemes of electronic democracy* on the one hand and *basic principles and structures of*

*democracy* on the other. This question was raised first and foremost in the debate on electronic voting. Democratic principles such as the secrecy of voting and the freedom of voting are hard to implement in the context of electronic remote voting schemes. It remains an open question whether this can be solved through technological means or through institutional design, or whether we should simply accept changes at the level of political principles because of new technological opportunities (Loncke & Dumortier 2004). The question of the compatibility of models of electronic democracy and existing institutional structures has recently moved beyond the issue of electronic voting. The above-mentioned e-participation initiative of the European Commission can be perceived as one attempt to direct research efforts in this very direction. The many initiatives of the Hansard Society (2006) in the British context are another example of current efforts to implement e-democracy within the real-world structures of democracy.

A third crucial research question concerns the *character and the quality of communication emerging on the net*. Social scientists as well as students of political communication invest an increasing amount of energy and time to investigate the quality of communication on the net. They ask whether the Internet is suited as a platform for rational public discourse that could foster trust and create social capital. Theoretically, there are real doubts because of the lack of physical contact and the anonymity of the medium. Empirically, the evidence is mixed at best. While some researchers see the Internet as a “cyberwasteland” full of flaming and monologuing individuals (Wilhelm 2000), others either suggest that this can be augmented by design (Jensen 2003) or that debates on the net could work not in isolation but rather as a complement to physical contacts and thus strengthen social capital and trust (Putnam 2001).

A fourth issue concerns the questions, *who is interested in electronic democracy*, and why? One of the standard findings of empirical research, closely related to the cyber-skeptic perspective in the debate, stresses the fact that political elites take up new media in ways compatible with established structures and interests. According to this research, political elites tend to use the Internet for campaigning and public relations purposes but rarely for interactive communication or in ways that would threaten their political autonomy (Margolis & Resnik 2000). This finding is empirically well-established but tells far from the whole story regarding the politics of electronic democracy. Comparative evidence suggests first and foremost that usage of the Internet differs across systems and that there is no such thing as a given interest for or against electronic democracy (Zittel 2003; → Exposure to the Internet; Digital Divide).

Available impressionistic evidence in the politics of electronic democracy also suggests the existence of three developments that enhance the *prospects of electronic democracy in the long run*. First, political elites are not a monolithic group. Elite pluralism and the competition among elites serve as a mechanism of innovation, with elites trying to use strategies of electronic democracy as a competitive advantage. Second, elites are not wholly independent of changing social contexts and resulting problems. They do develop genuine concerns regarding decreasing rates of participation, especially among the younger generation. Some perceive electronic democracy as a magic bullet to solve this problem. Third, elites could become subject to external pressures from advocacy coalitions that grow stronger with the development of the information society and turn electronic democracy into a powerful political movement (→ Information Society).

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TOPIC

The diffusion of the Internet is a most recent phenomenon. Any statement on the impact of the medium has to work with projections. There is hardly any reliable or readily available empirical evidence that can serve as a basis to build up or to verify general hypotheses and conclusions. This raises one core problem for any kind of research on electronic democracy. The problem arises from the fact that the social sciences have a poor track record in projections because of the complexity of the human environment and the spontaneous character of human behavior. How do we solve this problem, how do we move beyond mere guesswork, speculation, and wishful thinking in the debate on electronic democracy?

The philosophical tradition of strong technological determinism has never been a serious position in electronic democracy research (Street 1992). Few participants in the debate suggested a direct causal connection between particular media properties and specific social and political changes. Futurologists such as Toffler (1981) come closest to this position; theorists of the information society such as Manuel Castells (2000) are also within close reach of this category. However, most students of electronic democracy are aware of the fact that the impact of new media will be dependent upon a complex interplay between interests, ideas, institutions, and media capacities. The open question is, rather, whether this process can be modeled in order to develop testable hypotheses and to project outcomes.

Students of media and political communication such as William Dutton (1999; Dutton et al. 1987) have tended to answer this question in the negative. They argue in favor of focusing on the diffusion of the Internet and its politics rather than aiming to project the impact of new media. In contrast to this, political scientists have tended to adopt a more positive attitude toward the task of modeling electronic democracy. They point to established theories of politics such as theories of legislative behavior or theories of institutional change as a basis for this very endeavor (Zittel 2003). Such a strategy can only generate short-term projections that will not explain or forecast the impact of new media on democracy in its entirety or in the long term. But it can be used to formulate plausible expectations for the near future with regard to a specific aspect of democracy that can be tested empirically in the course of comparative research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Government ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Participatory Communication

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# Editorial

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The term “editorial” in the mass media refers to a format designed to express the outlet’s or a particular author’s commentary or political position most openly and legitimately. In editorials the different media outlets establish a particular ideological profile that distinguishes them from their competitors and binds to them certain segments of the audience. Editorials must be seen in contrast to news reporting, which insists on being factual, objective, and impartial, thereby reflecting the world by describing it (→ News; Objectivity in Reporting). The purpose of editorials is related to the more persuasive and evaluative functions of media performance. The newspaper, radio, or television program here seeks to express its distinctive view on issues of public concern, aiming to advise, evaluate, commend, rebuke, and imagine the world as it wishes it to be.

The *significance of editorials* is twofold. First, editorials serve as a figurehead that defines the political identity and values of the outlet, thereby signaling whether it would support either liberal or conservative positions. Through editorials, the media publicly express opinions and make use of their right to present themselves as autonomous actors in public and political debate (Page 1996; → Media as Political Actors). Second, editorials, and particularly the editorials of a nation’s agenda-setting media, are paid close attention by politicians, activist and interest groups, opinion makers, and other media. By speaking up openly in editorials, the outlet may exert influence on decision-makers and their decisions (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Public Opinion, Media Effects on). There is also empirical evidence that news commentators do have a significant impact on → public opinion and its changes over time (Page et al. 1987).

Editorials are often given a distinct space, which is labeled as *editorial page or story*, to distinguish it from the news coverage. Many publications have an editorial board or a group of opinion editors or commentators who decide on the tone and direction that the publications’ editorials will take. In Anglo-American journalism, editorials must not be written by the regular reporters or editors of news departments. Instead, they are authored by a separate group of individuals, who are not constrained by the rule of impartiality that governs news writing. In some European countries, however, staff policies regarding the separation of roles between newsmakers and opinion writers do not exist.

In contrast to news reporting, which is constrained by the professional rules, the logistics, and the time pressures of newsmaking, editorials are free from these external pressures (→ News Production and Technology). They can be taken as the result of some considered reasoning and opinion formation within the editorial staff (Eilders et al. 2004). Editorials are published without bylines, which means that they represent the newspapers’ or media outlets’ “official” position on issues. Editorials usually tackle current events of public concern or political controversies and intend to take a stance on them.

In order to broaden the spectrum of opinions offered in the newspaper, many outlets carry a so-called *op-ed page*, which is usually opposite the editorial page. These commentaries carry bylines and feature regular opinion columnists who present their own points of



view. Most newspapers feature freelance writers, guest opinion writers, and nationally syndicated columnists to supplement the content of their editorial pages.

In communication research, editorials are primarily discussed as a special form of opinion journalism, which is distinct from news reporting. At the same time, the boundaries between news and opinion and the effect of media commentary on politics and public opinion have always been debated. In addition to ethical questions regarding the use of media power and the right of journalists to impose their opinion on the audience, questions of the instrumentalization of media commentary for political purposes emerge. It is safe to say, however, that the format of editorials is only meaningful in countries that guarantee the right of free speech and free media (→ Freedom of Communication). Thus, editorials by their very nature are sensible expressions of media opinion only under the conditions of democracy and media pluralism.

Looking at editorials with respect to their political functions, it is important to differentiate between the tradition of Anglo-American journalism as compared to that of northern and continental European countries. This distinction is important as regards the partisanship of the press and the norm of objectivity in journalism. In the *United States*, the decline of the party press in the early twentieth century is seen as a consequence of the advent of a neutral commercial press that draws on a broad social consensus shared by the major parties in an otherwise pluralistic society (Schudson 2003). Journalism in this context turned to the norm of objective and factual reporting intended to bring about news that would serve the information needs of a most inclusive audience. Opinion was strictly limited to the editorials. In the *European tradition*, the press has always been granted to be partisan and divided across political party lines. Even if the party press has come to decline in most western European countries, the news media are politicized, which means that they not only represent the political cleavages in society but also feature the ideological spectrum of the political parties (Eilders 2002). Editorials clearly represent this traditional → party–press parallelism (→ Journalism, History of; Journalists' Role Perception).

The principal distinction between news reporting and expression of opinion has set the research agenda on editorials. Even though the norms of journalism prescribe strict separation between news coverage and editorials, it is an empirical question, after all, to what extent this principle is put in practice. This question is particularly pertinent in media systems in which news and editorials are written by the same editors. For instance, media research in Germany has demonstrated that news selection, news writing, and editorial opinion are synchronized to a greater or lesser degree (Schönbach 1977; → Synchronization of the News).

Finally, an essential question is when media opinion expressed in editorials turns into illegitimate political power over public opinion that constrains democratic principles. This question is all the more pressing since there is fairly solid evidence that news commentary does in fact have an impact upon how citizens and policymakers think and what candidates and policy preferences they support (Kahn & Kenney 2002; → Election Campaign Communication). It remains open to further research to clarify the conditions under which these influences operate and to what end.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Election Campaign Communication ► Freedom of Communication ► Journalism, History of ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Media as

Political Actors ▶ News ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ Objectivity in Reporting  
 ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on  
 ▶ Synchronization of the News

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## **Educational Communication**

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Educational communication is an umbrella term that encompasses all speaking, listening, and relational constructs and concepts that relate to learning. In the past, researchers have been interested in characteristics of teachers that enhance or hinder learning; student characteristics that increase or inhibit learning; teaching strategies that augment learning; how best to give criticism of student writing and speeches; how best to evaluate student work; how public speaking is best taught; and what should be taught in speech communication and media curricula (Staton-Spicer & Wulff 1984). More recent work has expanded to the effects of media on children, child development processes, and the use of pedagogical methods and newer technologies to facilitate classroom or distance education (Waldeck et al. 2001). This essay includes discussion of some of the major and fairly consistent lines of research and findings that have emerged over the years.

### **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The speech communication discipline began as a group of teachers interested in how best to instruct students in the basics of public speaking (Wallace 1954; → Speech Communication, History of). Interest in how to teach new and different facets of the field emerged on a regular basis in the academic journals as interest grew in public speaking, rhetoric, persuasion, and debate, and later in group, interpersonal, nonverbal, intercultural,

health, organizational, and family communication. As early as the first issues of the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* (now the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*), first published in 1915, scholars were interested in how best to teach or coach debate, parliamentary procedure, oral interpretation/drama/theatre, and high school and college speech classes, as well as how best to organize departments and regional associations. Scholarly concern about K-12, undergraduate, and graduate curricula, as well as the effectiveness of the basic college communication course and speech across the curriculum, also abounded (→ Curriculum Studies). With the addition of the journal *Speech Teacher* in 1952 (the title was changed to *Communication Education* in 1976), a forum for educational issues gained prominence in the National Communication Association (then called the Speech Association of America) and the profession at large.

Likewise, early interest in journalism education (O'Dell 1935) later extended to radio, television, electronic media, advertising, public relations, and new technologies. Organizations such as the Broadcast Education Association (BEA) and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) typify scholarly interests in how best to teach broadcasting, journalism, and other media-oriented classes. This latter area expanded over the past few decades into using television as an instructional device, with or without an instructor present, and the effects of media content on children (→ Educational Media; Educational Media Content; Instructional Television). More recent interest has been in the use of new technology in the classroom or in place of a classroom (→ Classroom Instructional Technology; Computers and Display Programs in Education; Course Organization Programs in Education; Distance Education).

Paralleling these interests were studies focused on how teachers can communicate better in the classroom and contribute scholarship in the education area (→ Pedagogy, Communication in; Scholarship of Teaching). But the traditional lines of research in communication education seemed to be confined to more classroom-oriented teaching/learning effects, ones that help enhance individual communication competence, enable advanced learning, allow civic, economic, and social participation in society, and empower people to become more self-reflexive and responsible for their actions and choices when interacting with others of the same or different cultural heritages (→ Communication Education, Goals of).

## **CURRENT RESEARCH INTERESTS**

Over the years, various literature reviews and review articles in the educational communication area have identified some of the major dimensions of the field. Rubin and Feezel (1986) reported priority and sufficiency ratings for various research topics in the field, which were grouped into three main dimensions: speech education (now communication education), instructional communication, and communication development. Although several other models have been proposed (see Staton-Spicer & Wulff 1984; Waldeck et al. 2001), the dimensions are compatible with the three described below.

### **Communication Education**

Communication education focuses on what is taught in communication classes (and programs), how the topics are chosen, methods of transferring knowledge to students,

and how best to evaluate student learning either in the classroom or through out-of-class assignments. From the early days of criticism research (Is feedback best given right after the speech? Is it more effective when given orally or in writing? How can teachers best grade and critique journalistic writing?) to current assessment concerns about K-12 or college program effectiveness and student public speaking competence, attention has focused on communication classroom content, evaluation, and teaching methods (Rubin & Daly 1999).

Teaching communication classes is one important focus of communication education. Probably because the discipline realizes how important communication in the classroom is, most undergraduate and graduate programs offer classes in how best to teach various communication classes (often in addition to those offered in education programs that cover basic teaching principles) in K-12, college undergraduate, graduate, speaking across the curriculum, and basic course settings. Topics such as the role of student talk, classroom strategies, lecturing, discussions, small group projects, and assessment are often covered. Such training helps new teachers enter the profession with a greater understanding of what and how to teach (→ Teacher Socialization; Teacher Training in Communication).

Vangelisti et al. (1999) have compiled a manual for teachers that summarizes research and best practices for teachers, as well as providing hints for newcomers to the communication profession and teaching in general. Guidelines for preparing specific communication classes, as well as suggestions for organizing content and selecting instructional strategies, are also provided. In addition, chapters deal with unique teaching assignments such as a multiple-section basic course, directing debate, two-year institutions, distance education, and extended learning. This volume is often used when training new college-level communication teachers. A similar volume is available for communication administrators (Christ 1999), and a variety of textbooks and handbooks exist for high school teachers, as well.

Recent advances in technology have seen past interest in the use of television in instruction move to interests in distance learning and computer-assisted instructional technology in the classroom. For instance, teachers are increasingly being drawn to whiteboards, LCD projectors, and presentation software (e.g., PowerPoint) to communicate in the classroom, as well as to course organization programs (e.g., Blackboard, WebCT) to manage the many aspects of teaching, learning, and assessment. Although lectures enhanced by visual technology have consistently produced greater learning, results are mixed for the superiority of traditional vs web-based vs web-assisted instruction.

### **Instructional Communication**

Whereas communication education focused on how to teach speech and related communication classes (e.g., broadcasting, interpersonal, group, journalism, public relations), instructional communication, a broader term, concentrated on how teachers can better communicate with students in the classroom, no matter what the subject (McCroskey & McCroskey 2006). McCroskey et al. (2004) have identified two general approaches to instructional communication, rhetorical and relational.

The *rhetorical* approach portrays teachers as influence agents of students, people who engage in a form of one-way persuasion in the classroom. Teachers select what will be

read, plan the assignments to be completed, and give information in the classroom. This traditional model of instruction views the teacher as demonstrating a particular communication style, one that should demonstrate elements of good Aristotelian rhetoric: delivery, memory, invention, style, and disposition.

The *relational* approach comes mainly from interpersonal communication and examines how teachers interact, share understanding, and develop relationships. Elements of teacher and student personality characteristics, concern for students, socialization into the profession, classroom questioning and interaction patterns, and interaction motives are examined. Also examined are barriers to effective instruction, such as teacher misbehaviors and aggression, student incivility and resistance, and other nonfunctional interaction behaviors.

### *Rhetorical Issues*

Teachers who are clear and make their content relevant structure their messages to achieve greater understanding. Research on teacher clarity shows that care in explaining concepts and use of lecture cues leads to reduced receiver apprehension, improved student affect for teachers and course material, greater motivation to learn, and greater perceptions of learning, whereas dysfluencies, tangents, and vagueness decrease student satisfaction and learning (→ Teacher Clarity).

In the classroom, teachers use questions to lead discussions and assess whether or not learning is taking place (→ Classroom Questioning). Several different types of questions lead to different types of assessments. For instance, recall questions assess memory, whereas summary questions assess ability to synthesize. Researchers have provided teachers advice on how best to include questions in the classroom, how questions can increase student achievement, how student answers correspond in level to the types of questions teachers ask, how much wait time is appropriate between asking the question and receiving an answer, and the effective use of rhetorical questions.

Along the same lines, teacher influence has been examined in literature focused on classroom power, mentoring, teacher credibility, and classroom management techniques (→ Teacher Influence and Persuasion). Teachers exert power in the classroom in several ways. Teachers can punish students (i.e., use coercive strategies) for misbehaving, reward them for behaving in acceptable ways, enact legitimate power in classroom management, use referent power to enhance student identification with them, and increase expert power through increased credibility and authority (→ Classroom Power). Teachers use various → classroom management techniques to take charge of the learning environment, and reward-based techniques tend to work far better than punishment-based ones.

This rhetorical interest in teaching style and classroom management converges with communication education for those involved in teacher training (in communication), mentoring, and classroom management. Teachers provide protégés with academic, career, and social support → mentoring.

### *Relational Issues*

Researchers have studied other communication behaviors used by teachers in the classroom and their effect on student affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning. Teachers who are assertive and responsive are seen as more effective, credible, and competent

(→ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style). Assertive teachers are confident in the classroom; they ably facilitate class discussions, manage the classroom environment, and clearly are in charge (→ Teacher Assertiveness). Responsive teachers show concern for students' well-being and learning (→ Teacher Communication Concern) and provide support and comfort when needed (→ Teacher Comforting and Social Support).

Teacher verbal (e.g., use of "we," more self-disclosure, informal names, etc.) and nonverbal (e.g., use of smiling, head nods, eye contact, touch, etc.) immediacy tends to result in greater student motivation and liking for the teacher and subject taught (→ Teacher Immediacy). Teachers use other affinity-seeking strategies in the classroom, as well (→ Teacher Affinity Seeking). For instance, researchers have found that those who display physical attractiveness, trustworthiness, dynamism, and sensitivity, elicit disclosure, and listen tend to be seen as more credible, and students are more motivated to learn. Teacher self-disclosure also can increase immediacy and affinity, and affect teacher clarity, especially when humor is incorporated. However, the disclosures must be related to the subject matter and not be seen as inappropriate for the classroom (→ Teacher Self-Disclosure). Teacher humor must also be seen as appropriate in order to be effective at motivating students to learn; offensive humor, disparaging humor targeting students, disparaging humor targeting others, and self-disparaging humor are seen as disruptive and demeaning (→ Teacher Use of Humor).

These and other teacher behaviors can lead to feelings of significance, value, and confirmation in students, by which students feel empowered to learn just through teacher–student interaction (→ Teacher Confirmation). Additional forms of teacher–student interaction include teacher-provided emotional, informational, instrumental, appraisal, and instructional support inside and outside the classroom; moreover, teachers confirm students through their responses to students' questions, interest shown in students, and teaching style. Students need to feel as though teachers are concerned about their learning and well-being, and this is done through effective teacher–student interaction.

Furthermore, researchers have examined classroom student–teacher interaction when they have looked at motives for communicating with teachers (both inside and outside the classroom), clarifying techniques used when students do not understand what is communicated, and classroom questioning patterns and interaction. Students often seek direct communication with teachers to gain additional information or have material explained more fully (functional reasons), but they also interact to provide excuses for inadequate work, to make a favorable impression on the teacher, to get to know the teacher on an interpersonal level, or to show their level of involvement in the class. Teachers provide feedback on the level of student achievement through oral or written criticism of speeches, papers, debates, group projects, and the like, in the classroom and privately to individual students (→ Teacher Feedback). Thus, interaction is seen as a direct influence on student learning and skill development.

All in all, the student–teacher relationship can be seen as a professional working interaction in which teachers hone their interpersonal communication skills in hopes of developing relationships that enhance student learning. In the classroom, teachers lecture, lead discussions, assess student progress, and give feedback and instructional support. Outside the classroom, they motivate, mentor, advise, tutor, and provide emotional and instructional support.

## **Communication Development**

Although speech/language pathologists are more concerned with the development of speech and language in children, communication researchers have also been interested in language and skill development and environmental factors that might impact students' growth. Three main areas of development research are communication apprehension, skill development and communication competence, and the impact of the media on skill development.

### *Communication Apprehension*

Communication apprehension (CA) is one area that combines the rhetorical interests from the instructional communication area with development. CA is the fear, anxiety, worry, nervousness, or lack of confidence that people have when speaking with others, either one-on-one, in a small group, or in a public setting. Much of the research in this area has asked people to report on the level of anxiety they experience in various communication environments.

Some studies have considered the trait–state nature of CA. A trait orientation presumes a stable personality trait, one that endures across all sorts of situations, whereas a state orientation presumes a less permanent, but trainable condition. Because measures of the two orientations are highly correlated, discussion continues as to its etiology. Treatments for state apprehension include systematic desensitization, skills training, and cognitive modification; all have been found effective (→ *Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques*).

A variety of specialized forms of CA exist in the communication literature. Early interest in the public nature of oral discourse was linked to the concept of → stage fright from theatre. Performance in front of an audience – especially a large audience where one is very conspicuous – can increase the anxiety of the situation for many speakers. This evolved into interest specifically in public speaking anxiety in both small and large settings (→ *Speech Anxiety*), which again is more situational. Reticence, on the other hand, is seen as a condition of skills deficit, which can be decreased through careful analysis of goals and planning of actions (→ *Reticence*). Concentrated effort to improve communication skills is seen as the best way to reduce communication incompetence.

### *Communication Competence*

As mentioned earlier, one of the main goals of communication education has been to increase communication skills. Although this interest stems from the time of Aristotle and Plato, concern in the past century has focused on, first, public speaking, and then communication in both interpersonal and mediated environments. Most definitions of communication competence acknowledge the necessity of communication to be both effective in accomplishing its goal and appropriate for the situation, audience, place, and time. In addition, motivation, knowledge, and skill are three basic elements (Spitzberg & Cupach 1984). Educators have attempted to identify important skills – message construction, persuading, informing, relating – that can be enhanced through instruction and that can be reliably assessed (→ *Student Communication Competence*). Through this feedback, students can later reflect upon and critique their own communication outside the classroom.

Research studies incorporating student traits such as motivational orientations toward communication – reticence, shyness, stage fright, willingness to communicate, public speaking anxiety, compulsive communication, receiver apprehension – and communication competence demonstrate the importance of self-concept and self-efficacy in skill development. Students who think that they are capable of improvement tend to be more open to instruction and growth.

Teachers who focus on improving students' speaking and listening skills, perceptive-taking abilities, and social interaction skills need to understand developmental levels, learning styles, and how to deal with nontraditional and at-risk students. They also need to study the impact of environmental factors – television viewing, video games, and social networks – at various age and developmental levels.

### *Impact of Educational Media*

Two major lines of research have examined the impact of educational media on learning. First, interest in all forms of educational media has led to examination of the programs shown and how learning occurs from this content. In particular, children's programming has been scrutinized to determine how much learning takes place when children watch programs designed to teach them basic skills. Children's Television Workshop (and its production of *Sesame Street*) epitomizes the concern existing in both academia and the television industry about how children learn and factors that enhance this at home or in class (→ *Sesame Street*). In addition, media literacy programs have been created in school systems to teach children (K-12) and college students how best to critique media messages and understand the commercial nature of the media (→ *Media Literacy*).

The second line of research has examined the use of media in education. From the early days of instructional radio and television, when programs were produced to replace, supplement, or complement in-class instruction, educators have been interested in how prepared media can enhance learning. Today, PowerPoint, whiteboards, LCD projectors, and other software and hardware technologies are commonplace in instruction, and concern focuses on whether the technology enhances or diverts learning efforts. Computer technology, course organization programs such as Blackboard, and digital video have allowed educational institutions to offer classes to students at home.

## **RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN METHODOLOGY**

Despite the large array of research designs effective for educational subjects (Campbell & Stanley 1963), most research in communication education has relied on correlational designs. Examinations of relationships between teacher qualities (or perceived qualities) and student learning outcomes or feelings are prevalent in the discipline's journals (Kearney & Beatty 1994). Student learning is often measured as level of agreement with statements such as "I feel like I've learned a lot from this instructor" or other perceptions of gains in cognitive learning, but most often as affective learning (how much the students like the teacher, subject, or class).

For example, some recent areas of interest are teacher qualities that are related to student learning. Assertiveness and responsiveness, i.e., socio-communicative style, concern, affinity-seeking behaviors, immediacy, and the use of humor in the classroom are



strongly related to self-reports of learning, whereas teacher misbehaviors and teacher anger are not. Students who feel that their teachers confirm them and care about them enough to encourage out-of-class communication report that they are more satisfied, motivated, and knowledgeable.

Another area of current interest in instructional communication focuses on student qualities. For instance, reasons why students communicate with their professors inside and outside the classroom (e.g., by email) have been linked to student liking of the teacher and perceived learning. Sometimes additional factors might influence conclusions that can be drawn about such a direct effect of one variable on another. Accordingly, motivation to achieve/learn, learning style, sensitivity to feedback and punishment, and learner empowerment are seen as important moderating variables in classroom instruction. Research designs that include such variables give a better picture of the complicated influence of teachers on students.

All in all, learning has been one of the most significant dependent variables. Allen et al. (2004) reported that most indicators of learning (in which distance is compared to classroom) have used exams scores and course grades. However, some studies have dealt with satisfaction, finding lower satisfaction in distance format than in the traditional classroom format (Allen et al. 2002). However, in communication literature, we see many measures of affective and cognitive learning that are based on student perceptions and feelings rather than objective measures.

Another dependent variable has been skill enhancement. Speaking ability and communication competence have received a great deal of attention, especially the measurement of these. Also, decreases in apprehension have focused on how intervention can make a difference in reducing anxiety and communication apprehension of students, thereby leading to greater skill and competence. Several measurement techniques, developed from the variety of perspectives that surround this literature, provide an indication of student anxiety levels.

Meta-analysis has allowed researchers to combine datasets into more meaningful summaries of study results (Gayle et al. 2006). By clustering results from several studies, power to draw valid conclusions is increased. This is especially important in educational communication, where researchers necessarily employ pre-experimental designs in classroom settings to investigate predictors of learning outcomes.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

Over the years, many suggestions have been made for future research directions for communication education researchers. Some of these have been thoroughly examined, and others are more contemporary concerns. For example, educators have been concerned with teacher education for many years, but with the increase of technology use in the classroom, we cannot expect such concern to wane. As Shelton et al. (1999) noted, computer technology at all levels of education has changed the nature of the communication classroom. Journalism students no longer pound out news stories on manual typewriters, and speech students are expected to enhance their presentations with electronic media products. Furthermore, when teachers move from the role of information presenter to that of guide, coach, motivator, or facilitator, the nature of communication will change, especially when highly evolved interactive multimedia technology is involved.

Effectiveness of distance education most likely will emerge as a related topic, again as the variety of interactive channels increases for interaction with students.

Other trends have been to examine the interactive teaching/learning environment and the use of teams in the classroom (Shelton et al. 1999). Much of the research in the past 20 years has actually examined the teacher–student communication environment, identifying communication behaviors that can enhance learning. This interaction has become more mediated through use of email, bulletin boards, chatrooms, blogs, and other out-of-class opportunities for interaction.

Another upcoming interest will be about culturally centered environments comprised of a multicultural student body. Knowledge of second-language learning, intercultural relationships, and cultural indicators will be important for teachers of all subjects, including communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Classroom Management Techniques ▶ Classroom Power ▶ Classroom Questioning ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Computers and Display Programs in Education ▶ Course Organization Programs in Education ▶ Curriculum Studies ▶ Distance Education ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Instructional Television ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Mentoring ▶ Pedagogy, Communication in ▶ Reticence ▶ Scholarship of Teaching ▶ Sesame Street ▶ Speech Anxiety ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Stage Fright ▶ Student Communication Competence ▶ Teacher Affinity Seeking ▶ Teacher Assertiveness ▶ Teacher Clarity ▶ Teacher Comforting and Social Support ▶ Teacher Communication Concern ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Confirmation ▶ Teacher Feedback ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Influence and Persuasion ▶ Teacher Self-Disclosure ▶ Teacher Socialization ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ▶ Teacher Training in Communication ▶ Teacher Use of Humor

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## Educational Media

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The idea of using mass media for educational purposes is by no means a new one. Books, songs, games: all of these are forms of media that have served as effective educational tools for centuries. In the case of electronic media, however, many discussions of the media's impact on children focus only on negative effects, such as the influences of violent media (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). However, such discussions do not, by any means, comprise the entire range of media effects. Just as negative media content can give rise to negative effects, positive media content can – and does – give rise to positive effects as well.

Educational media have been employed and studied in the context of many different settings and purposes. For example, the term → *infotainment* typically is used to refer to “lite” educational content embedded in media that are intended primarily to entertain, whereas *instructional television* often refers to material produced for classroom use and

*entertainment-education* often refers to global, media-based health initiatives (→ Entertainment Education; Instructional Television).

This entry reviews the topic of educational television and interactive media as tools for *informal education* (i.e., substantive educational content delivered primarily outside the classroom). It examines the topic from several perspectives: processes through which educational media are produced, empirical research on the impact of such media, theories to explain children's comprehension and learning, and production features that contribute to the effectiveness of educational television programs and computer games.

## PRODUCTION OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA

Beyond the aspects of production that are common to all media (→ Media Production and Content), there is a tremendous range of processes through which educational media are produced. On one end of the spectrum, some producers create media based entirely on their own creative instincts, with little or no support from educational content experts or empirical research.

At the other end of the spectrum lies the model used by production companies such as Sesame Workshop (formerly Children's Television Workshop, producers of *Sesame Street*) – a model that has come to be known as the *CTW Model* or *Sesame Workshop Model* (→ Sesame Street). Under this model, production staff, educational content experts, and researchers collaborate closely at all stages of production. Content experts define the educational curricula that guide the project, and subsequently provide input (e.g., via review of scripts and storyboards) to ensure that the content is executed in ways that are educationally valid (→ Educational Media Content). Researchers inform production through an ongoing program of *formative research* throughout the course of development and production. For example, needs assessment research might evaluate children's prior knowledge of and misconceptions about a topic so that the material can address these misconceptions directly. Potential character designs might be tested for appeal. Television scripts or rough cuts might be tested for comprehensibility and appeal, so that improvements can be made before the final product reaches the air. Prototypes of interactive games might be subjected to *usability testing*, to ensure that the interface will be easily usable by its target audience. And so on. By impacting directly on the development of material, formative research makes the voice of the target audience an integral part of the production process.

Most educational media are produced via processes that fall somewhere between these two extremes. The choice of a production model typically is determined not only by the nature of the project and educational content, but also by the corporate culture of the production company, the size of the production budget (i.e., the scope of resources that are available to support content and research), and any requirements set by broadcasters or funding agencies.

## CHILDREN'S LEARNING FROM EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Decades of research have demonstrated clearly that both preschool and school-age children learn from educational television series (→ Educational Television, Children's

Responses to). In contrast to the formative research mentioned earlier, these types of studies typically fall within the realm of *summative research* – that is, in-depth research that assesses the impact of these series on their viewers over time (often by comparing the performance of children before and after viewing, or by comparing viewers of the series to nonviewers).

Perhaps the most prominent – and certainly the most extensively researched – example of an educationally effective television series is *Sesame Street*. A number of major summative research studies have examined both immediate and long-term effects of *Sesame Street* on its viewers. Together, these studies demonstrate that extended viewing of *Sesame Street* produces significant immediate effects on a wide range of academic skills among preschool children (e.g., knowledge of the alphabet, vocabulary size, letter–word knowledge, math skills, sorting and classification, knowledge of shapes and body parts, relational terms, time spent reading and in educational activities, telling connected stories when pretending to read). Outside the US, comparable effects have been found for international co-productions of *Sesame Street* in countries such as Mexico, Turkey, Portugal, and Russia.

In addition, several longitudinal studies have found long-term effects of the US series as well; for example, preschool viewers of *Sesame Street* were found to be more likely to read storybooks on their own and less likely to require remedial reading instruction three years later, when they subsequently entered first or second grade. Moreover, in the longest-term study to date, even high school students who had watched more educational television – and *Sesame Street* in particular – as preschoolers had significantly higher grades in English, mathematics, and science in junior high or high school. They also used books more often, showed higher academic self-esteem, and placed a higher value on academic performance (see Fisch & Truglio 2001 for a review of these and other studies).

Beyond this powerful evidence for the educational effectiveness of *Sesame Street*, numerous other studies show that *Sesame Street* is not alone in helping children learn. Summative studies on other educational series for preschool and school-age children have shown that educational television can enhance children’s knowledge, skills, and attitudes in a wide variety of subject areas. These include effects of US series such as *Between the Lions* and *The Electric Company* on children’s language and literacy skills; *Square One TV* and *Cyberchase* on children’s use of mathematics and problem-solving; *3–2–1 Contact* and *Bill Nye the Science Guy* on children’s understanding of science and technology; children’s news programs on knowledge of current events; and preschool series such as *Blue’s Clues* and *Barney & Friends* on more general school readiness. Consistent effects of educational television have been found in other parts of the world, too, as seen in effects of *Al Manaahil* (Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia) on children’s literacy; *Owl TV* (UK) or *Australia Naturally* (Australia) on knowledge of science; or *Jeugdjournaal* (Netherlands) on knowledge of current events. Many other examples exist (see Fisch 2004 for a review).

## CHILDREN’S LEARNING FROM INTERACTIVE MEDIA

Because interactive media are newer media than educational television, less research is currently available to evaluate their impact on children’s learning (→ Computer Games

and Child Development). However, some research does exist to gauge the reach of such media and their impact on users' knowledge. Specifically, consider two aspects of interactive media: children's use of the Internet as an informational resource, and their learning from educational computer games.

Thanks in part to nationwide efforts to wire US schools with computers, by the year 2000, nearly 90 percent of 6- to 17-year-olds had physical access to computers at either home, school, or both (Newburger 2001). In the United States, national surveys have shown that as many as 94 percent of American adolescents now use the Internet to do research for school, and 71 percent report that they rely on the Internet even more than on traditional sources such as books (Pew Internet & American Life Project 2001). Similarly, an Australian survey found that the most common use of the Internet among 6- to 17-year-olds (reported by 88 percent of children) was for homework or study (NetRatings Australia Pty 2005), although only 41 percent of a Swedish sample of 9- to 16-year-olds said they usually use the Internet for homework (Medierådet 2005).

Students' use of the Internet as an informational resource opens the opportunity for unprecedented access to material on a tremendous range of topics. Yet, students' reliance on online information is also a matter of some concern, because much of the information posted on the Internet is not subject to the same sort of review or validation as material published in a book or newspaper. As a result, information found online may be subject to blatant inaccuracy or bias that children fail to recognize. For this reason, agencies and organizations such as the US Department of Education and the American Library Association have stressed the critical need to train children in *information literacy* – that is, the ability to recognize when information is needed, to find it (either online or offline), evaluate its relevance and credibility, and use it effectively. Children need to learn how to think critically about online information, weighing criteria such as its objectivity and the qualifications of its author (e.g., Alexander & Tate 1998). To date, however, no empirical research has been conducted to assess the degree to which children do so.

Educational applications of interactive technology reach beyond homework support as well. Leading scholars such as Seymour Papert (1998), Henry Jenkins (2002), and James Gee (2003) have argued that computer games provide a compelling context for children's learning. Indeed, several empirical studies have shown that children can acquire knowledge in areas as diverse as prehistory and asthma education from playing relevant computer games (Lieberman 1999; Paquin 2002). Analyses of existing games and case studies of individual users have lent additional (albeit anecdotal) support to the view that educational games can not only motivate children but also provide a framework for exploring, and engaging with, serious academic content (e.g., Gee 2003; Squire 2004). Thus, it seems that well-designed computer games can serve as useful tools for both formal (i.e., classroom) and informal (i.e., outside the classroom) education.

## THEORETICAL APPROACHES

In contrast to the extensive empirical research literature, there have been far fewer attempts to construct theoretical models of the cognitive processing responsible for such effects. Fisch's *capacity model* has its roots in information processing theory and cognitive psychology. From this perspective, all television programs can be seen as complex

audiovisual stimuli that require viewers to integrate a range of visual and auditory information in real time as they watch. Educational television programs pose even greater processing demands, because these programs typically present narrative (i.e., story) content and educational content simultaneously, so that the two must compete for the limited resources available in working memory (→ Information Processing; Limited Capacity Model). Thus, the model predicts that comprehension of educational content will be stronger, not only when the resource demands for processing the educational content are low, but when the resource demands for processing the narrative content are low as well.

In addition, the model argues that comprehension is affected by *distance*, the degree to which the educational content is tangential to the narrative (in which case the two must compete for working memory resources) or integral to it (in which case the two complement each other, so competition is reduced). Thus, comprehension of educational content typically would be stronger when the educational content is integral to the narrative than when it is tangential to it.

Like the capacity model in the context of television, Mayer & Moreno's (2003) *cognitive theory of learning from media* (CTLM) approach to high-tech multimedia is also grounded in the integration of information and the limitations of working memory. In this case, however, the challenge for learners stems, not from the integration of different types of content, but from the integration of multiple streams of information. According to this model, users learning from multimedia must attend to and acquire information from multiple sensory modalities (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.), and their ability to do so is constrained by the limitations of working memory. Thus, users can select only a few bits of information to process at any given time. Moreover, working memory limitations also affect the ways in which bits of information are connected, organized, and integrated, guided by information retrieved from long-term memory. Once the learned information is integrated in the learner's long-term memory, it can be retrieved subsequently as a schema to facilitate further learning. The use of such schemas becomes increasingly automatic with practice, thus reducing the demands of processing new information as the learner's knowledge base expands.

Both of the above models are concerned primarily with cognitive processing that occurs immediately while children interact with media, to explain their initial comprehension of the material. However, they are not sufficient to explain longer-term effects, particularly if the eventual outcomes bear little resemblance to the educational content that was presented on television (as in, e.g., effects of preschool viewing of *Sesame Street* on high school performance). Huston et al.'s (2001) *early learning model* focuses on the long-term effects of educational media, and how such media might interact with all of the other influences in children's lives. Under this model, three facets of early development are proposed as pathways by which long-term effects can result: (a) learning preacademic skills, particularly those related to language and literacy, (b) developing motivation and interest, and (c) acquiring behavioral patterns of attentiveness, concentration, nonaggressiveness, and absence of restlessness or distractibility. These factors contribute to early success in school, which then plays a significant role in determining children's long-term academic trajectories (e.g., placement in higher ability groups, more attention from teachers, greater motivation to do well). In addition, these early successes may also affect the types of activities in which children choose to engage; for example, good readers may choose to

read more on their own. Each of these outcomes can then result in further success over time. In this way, the model posits a cascading effect in which early exposure to educational television leads to early academic success, which in turn contributes to a long-term trajectory of success that can endure for years.

### **CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS**

As noted earlier, all of the above theory and research supports the fact that children learn from educational television. Yet, that is not to say that all educational television programs are equally effective, or have an equally strong impact on their audience. What causes some educational programs to be more powerful than others? Looking across research on a wide variety of educational television series, we can identify a number of features that have contributed to the effectiveness of existing series – and that producers can build into new productions to make them as educationally powerful as possible. These features include:

- engaging children via the use of appealing elements such as humor (with the caveat that children find different kinds of humor funny at different ages), mysteries, and games, among others;
- choosing age-appropriate topics (for both stories and educational content) that are inherently interesting to children and relevant to their lives;
- presenting content via age-appropriate language and at levels of difficulty that are tailored to children’s knowledge and developmental level;
- handling educational content in ways that are clear, direct, and explicit; keeping the educational content “on the plotline” – that is, making the educational content central, rather than tangential, to the narrative plotline (e.g., using a scientific principle to uncover the crucial clue that solves a mystery);
- focusing an individual episode or segment tightly on conveying a small number of ideas;
- reinforcing concepts by repeating them over the course of an episode or segment;
- drawing explicit connections among conceptually related segments, to encourage children to see how similar concepts can be applied to different problems or situations;
- using engaging or action-filled visuals, rather than static visuals or “talking heads”;
- including characters whom viewers see as competent and intelligent, and with whom they can identify;
- encouraging children to actively engage in the educational content themselves through viewer participation (e.g., during a game show, or by attempting to solve a problem before the on-screen characters solve it);
- motivating children to carry their learning forward via activities that extend the experience after viewing (e.g., by trying out hands-on experiments or activities they’ve seen on-screen, or through online games or resources that provide further opportunities for learning).

Naturally, this list is by no means exhaustive. It illustrates just a few of the many ways in which research has contributed to both researchers’ and producers’ understanding of what “works” in creating educational television programs.



## CONCLUSION

Despite critics who claim (without any substantive evidence) that television destroys children's attention spans or turns them into "zombie viewers," research has shown that television is inherently neither good nor bad for children. Rather, the effects of a television program depend on its content. As the late researcher John Wright was fond of saying, "Marshall McLuhan appears to have been wrong. The *medium* is not the message. The *message* is the message!" (Anderson et al. 2001, 134).

Research on educational television has been invaluable in demonstrating that such programming can hold significant benefits for its viewers. On one level, of course, data on the impact of any particular series are of great interest to its production team, who want to gauge the degree to which their efforts have been successful. At the same time, evidence of children's learning from educational television has also been critical for funding agencies interested in accountability and in the evolution of public policy regarding children's television.

Yet, perhaps the most important impact of such research lies in its ability to inform the production of new programming. By identifying what "works" – the approaches and production techniques that contribute to the effectiveness of existing programming – research can help producers build on the most effective techniques as they create new material. When used well, research brings the voice of children into the production process, so that material can be tailored directly to the needs, interests, and abilities of the target audience. In this way, research can help to ensure that future educational television series will continue to be as appealing, age-appropriate, and educationally powerful as possible.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Human-Computer Interaction ▶ Information Literacy ▶ Information Processing ▶ Infotainment ▶ Instructional Television ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Sesame Street ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Educational Media Content

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Educational media content refers to mediated messages designed to teach or provide opportunities for learning. The nature of mediated education varies greatly, ranging from formal curriculum-based message systems designed for classroom consumption to informal or pro-social media messages with the potential for producing incidental learning or pro-social change.

### BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CONTENT

Education has been an important goal and function of *print media* from their earliest formulations. Whether the words and other significant instructional symbols were carved into clay or writ onto papyrus or vellum, many of the earliest extant media message systems were educational in nature, with contents ranging from an ancient Egyptian Pharaoh's instructional manual on effective communication (McCroskey & Richmond

1996) to canons of early religious communities (e.g., Bible, Torah, Koran), which were employed both to help convert unbelievers and to instruct the converted.

Even today, print media in the form of textbooks, reference books, scholarly monographs, scholarly and professional journals, educational magazines, newsletters, and other educational media are an invaluable portion of the lesson plans for teachers from primary school through postgraduate education, and they are a major source of revenue for publishing conglomerates worldwide.

The story is similar for the place of education and instruction in the history of *film*, although the transition from the celluloid medium to diverse forms of electronic educational media is more complete than for its print cousins. The initial function of early films was largely entertainment, as is the case for current manifestations of this emotionally powerful medium. However, educational and instructional films were a vital part of the midlife of this medium, and 16-mm film projectors are gathering dust in the media centers of schoolhouses around the globe.

Educational → *radio* began when, in 1922, the British Broadcasting Company (later the British Broadcasting Corporation; i.e., the → *BBC*) was formed under the leadership of John Reith to enable independent British broadcasters to utilize wireless communication to *educate*, inform, and entertain all British citizens, free from political interference and commercial pressure. In part, the educational philosophy of the BBC was a reaction to the frontier mentality of America's unregulated commercial radio, which dominated to Britain's west, and the Soviet Union's state-controlled authoritarian system, which held sway to their east (History of the BBC 2006). With this development, electronic education via media began. In 1924, the BBC initiated its first national educational broadcasts to schools, supplementing home educational services via wireless. By the late 1930s, the BBC's educational broadcasts were regularly heard in more than 8,000 schools (History of the BBC 2006). This established a legacy of the centrality of education in public-service broadcasting, a model that would be emulated and extended in countries around the world (Public Broadcasting 2006). Even into the twenty-first century, educational radio is an important part of the media landscape in many locales, although the delivery of educational radio today is as likely to be via the Internet or satellite as from traditional broadcasts.

Unlike educational radio, many of the historically significant developments in educational → *television* were initiated in the US. The development of educational television was greatly facilitated by a television station license "freeze" in the US between 1948 and 1952, during which time the US → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) paused from a period of frenzied development in television's early history to engage in a number of important deliberations that would ultimately shape the future of educational television in the US and, to a lesser extent, worldwide. The concept of educational television programming was extremely controversial at this time. Commercial broadcasters claimed that the reservation of noncommercial channels was not necessary, because their programs already served the educational needs of the audience. Such an industry view had prevailed during the discussion of public radio leading up to the US Communications Act of 1934.

An important voice crying in this electronic wilderness played a pivotal role in shifting the ground rules for television away from radio's prevailing model of pure commercialism.

Frieda B. Hennock, the first woman FCC Commissioner, argued eloquently and forcefully that 10 percent of television channels should be reserved for educational television. Thanks to an effective public-communication campaign initiated by Commissioner Hennock, when the FCC issued its Sixth Report and Order in April 1952, the license allocation plan included 242 specific channel reservations for nonprofit educational licenses.

The evolution of educational and informational programming – defined by the FCC in 1996 as “any television programming that furthers the educational and informational needs of children 16 years of age and under in any respect, including children’s intellectual/cognitive or social/emotional needs” – has evolved rather dramatically from the 1950s to the present, and the models developed in the US greatly influenced educational programming around the globe.

The 1950s saw major developments in both computing and telecommunications, which fused to inaugurate the information age by *digital media* that was to truly revolutionize the role and form of educational media (→ Digital Media, History of). The introduction of educational videos and DVDs, the maturing of distance education, and the explosion of video and computer games, as well as the remarkable diffusion and adoption of the Internet as a vehicle for teaching/learning, have created an educational media landscape that is undergoing remarkably rapid evolution and reformulation.

## EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION CONTENT

### Trend-Setting Educational Programming in the US

In considering educational media content, our emphasis will be on electronic media. During the 1950s and early 1960s, as educational television stations struggled through a formative period in the US, most of the educational programs introduced for children featured adult “talking heads,” adult characters interacting with child audiences in a television studio, assorted puppet shows, make-believe vignettes, and other relatively primitive means of instruction and edification. Targeted narrative children’s programming, such as *Friendly Giant* and *Tales of Poindexter*, did not occupy a large percentage of programming time on these educational stations, and the programs of this type that were presented were typically low-budget productions. Moreover, new forms and formats for educational television were not given much consideration on the emerging state- and national educational-programming networks.

Because many leading educators, as well as parent opinion leaders, were not very satisfied with these early programming developments for children, the Ford Foundation and other philanthropic organizations not only supported capital facility grants to community and educational organizations, which helped dramatically expand the number of educational stations, they joined with federal education agencies to support a number of remarkable programming initiatives during the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. As a result, a number of innovative and popular programs were developed and broadcast domestically and internationally, including the perennially popular and educationally effective → *Sesame Street*, developed by the Children’s Television Workshop (CTW, now Sesame Workshop).

CTW programming revolutionized children's educational television, in part because CTW President Joan Ganz Cooney developed an innovative program-development model that brought together producers, educational advisors, and researchers to create innovative and effective educational programming. Not only did the CTW team fuse previously independent forces, they programmed for the developmental level of their programs' targeted audiences, and they harnessed the formal features of the television medium to meet specific instructional goals, while also addressing critical societal needs, such as getting young children reading for school (e.g., *Sesame Street*), improving the reading skills of school-aged children (e.g., *The Electric Company*), and guiding girls toward career interests in science (e.g., *3-2-1 Contact*).

Other programming and production companies successfully imitated the program development and production model of CTW and launched other noteworthy programs like *Freestyle* and *Vegetable Soup*, essentially turning the late 1960s and the 1970s into the first golden age of children's educational television. This period also featured the evolution of programming from "educational" to "public" (or "public service") television, which culminated in the US Public Broadcasting Act of 1967.

The 1980s were to witness a setback in educational programming in the US, because of President Ronald Reagan's "marketplace approach" to broadcast regulation. Specifically, the FCC no longer required stations or networks to broadcast children's programming. Only financially secure and extremely popular children's programs, such as *Sesame Street* and *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, were to survive in the era of Reaganomics.

Three developments revived children's educational programming efforts in the US during the 1990s and through the portals of the twenty-first century. The first was the Children's Television Act of 1990, through which Congress took a stand to advocate children's rights to receive educational and instructional programming. The second was the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which reinforced and strengthened the tenets that children's educational programming was a "public good" and specified particular guidelines for broadcasters to follow regarding educational television. The third was the increased advocacy of parents, caregivers, and child advocates, which led cable and satellite programming channels like Nickelodeon and the Disney Channel to effectively create and market curriculum-based programming that could and would be educationally valid and commercially successful domestically and worldwide in the new era of narrowcasting and highly targeted programming.

### **Educational Television Outside of the US**

It is difficult to examine educational television, especially children's educational programming, without focusing on the US. Not only have most of the dominant educational programming developments worldwide been derived from US formats and models, many of the most popular children's educational programs in other countries are co-productions with US agencies and corporations like PBS Kids, Sesame Workshop, Nickelodeon, and Disney. Moreover, other successful educational television-program production and distribution houses with a worldwide reach, such as the Discovery Channel and National Geographic Television, are based in the US. Finally, many television programming organizations and networks located outside of the US that have a stated focus on

children's and educational programming, such as TV Ontario, still telecast more educational programs from US providers than they produce and distribute themselves.

Given these caveats, most countries with any sort of public-service broadcasting initiative have created their own educational and children's programs, and many are successful educationally, financially, and in terms of quality. Perhaps the best way to highlight this claim is to profile the programs that won the Prix Jeunesse International awards in 2006. *Prix Jeunesse* is a foundation that was established in 1964, whose primary aim is to improve television for children and adolescents worldwide, and it has proven to be a major force for cultural diversity internationally (Kleeman 2001). The winners of the 2006 Prix Jeunesse competition included *A Slippery Tale* (Germany), "a heartbreaking story about a frog who falls in love with a slipper"; *Eva's Winterplaster* (Sweden), "which tells the story of the journey of the poo"; *The Scepter* (Poland), "a wonderful story about a magic branch and the ups and downs of friendship"; *Amigo* (Denmark), "an extraordinary, fine-produced game-show for children in which the studio audience can't stop laughing"; and *Stark! Kevin – Hear Me Out* (Germany), "a very moving and touching story about a boy who wants to overcome his stuttering." Runner-up awards went to programs produced in the US, UK, Japan, Estonia, Canada, India, South Korea, Venezuela, Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, and Jerusalem (Prix Jeunesse International 2006). The diversity of topics and countries of origin provides evidence that quality educational and children's programming is being produced around the world.

More general examples of advancements in children's educational television abound worldwide. For example, in 1997 the German public broadcasting stations founded the KinderKanal (or "KiKa" – the "children's channel"), a channel devoted exclusively to programs for children, including educational programs. The founding of this channel was an explicit reaction to the introduction of commercial television in Germany.

### Research Evidence on the Content of Educational Television

Very few studies have systematically examined the content of educational television. In examining the three most popular children's educational television programs of the 1970s – *Sesame Street*, *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*, and *The Electric Company* – and comparing them with the perennially popular commercial children's program *Captain Kangaroo*, Bryant et al. (1979) determined that the quantity of *formal education* content in the programs varied widely.

Because little or no molar evidence is available to complement such molecular examinations of the content of educational television, a systematic examination of one composite week's programming was developed by compiling the program schedules of six PBS affiliates in the US, thereby creating a normative public television program schedule. When this composite week's programming was categorized by target audience (children, general audience), it was found that an average of 11.5 hours of programming per day was devoted to *children* or adolescents, and an average of 12.5 hours was dedicated to *general audience* programming. Using a very general content-categorization scheme, it was found that approximately 2 hours per day were devoted to *formal education* (e.g., GED preparation), 11.5 hours to *children's education/information* (Educational/Informational,

or E/I, e.g., *Arthur*), 3 hours to *general audience news and public affairs* (e.g., *The Newshour*), 3.5 hours to *general audience E/I programming* (e.g., *This Old House*), and the remaining 4 hours to *general audience entertainment* (e.g., *Mystery*) and/or *special programming* associated with fundraising (e.g., *Celtic Women*), or to on-air fundraising per se.

With the passage of the US Children's Television Act of 1990 and the US Telecommunications Act of 1996, Congress strongly encouraged commercial broadcasters to join public broadcasters in increasing the quantity and quality of educational children's television programs. Specifically, the FCC indicated that commercial broadcasters who wanted to have their license renewal applications expedited must air three hours of core educational programming each week; this is therefore commonly known as the "Three-Hour Rule."

The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania conducted a series of investigations into the impact of this legislation on the quantity and quality of television programming specifically designed for children. Among their abundant research findings were: educational programming appearing on commercial stations that was designed for preschoolers was sparse, but typically not very enriching, and programming for teens had increased in quantity but decreased in quality since the three-hour rule had taken effect; taken as a whole, 77 percent of the E/I episodes were judged to be educationally sound, but 23 percent were judged to be "minimally educational"; and many parents remained unaware of the existence or educational intent of E/I programs (Jordan 2000).

### **EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS AND DVDS, COMPUTER SOFTWARE, AND VIDEO GAMES**

The twenty-first century has witnessed an explosion in electronic educational media, including media with quality production values that target preschoolers and are designed for home use. With names like "Baby Einstein" (video/DVD series), "JumpStart Baby" (computer programs), "V.Smile" (toddler-friendly video game console), "InteracTV" (interactive DVD series), and "Leapster" (hand-held video game systems), these new media products and platforms are specifically designed for very young children and targeted to their "upwardly educational" parents. Moreover, their promotion is typically accompanied by claims that the usage of these products will improve or accelerate children's cognitive development. For example, 16 computer software titles for children between one and two years were listed on Amazon.com in June 2005; all 16 made educational claims, as did all of the top 20 best-selling products for two-year olds (Garrison & Christakis 2005; → Video Games).

The use of such products by young children typically countervails the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations that babies under age two have no screen time whatsoever, and that other preschoolers have no more than two hours per day of screen time (→ Media Use by Children).

Because of this potential developmental problem, and because of rather hyperbolic claims made in the advertising and promotion of some of these products, the Kaiser Family Foundation commissioned a report to investigate these so-called educational media. Garrison and Christakis's (2005) research found that educational claims for these

juvenile media products were exceedingly common. However, *no published studies* on any of the products examined were found, nor could the authors find any more general peer-reviewed studies on the cognitive benefits of using any educational videos, computer software programs, or video games for children under six years. In other words, the results of the study were *caveat emptor*.

## THE REALITY OF CONVERGENCE IN EDUCATIONAL MEDIA CONTENT

In reality, as the twenty-first century unfolds, rarely is it valid to consider one educational medium in isolation, because convergence has produced an amalgamation of educational media message systems of all types, typically anchored on the backbone of the Internet. As one example, consider the BBC Learning homepage ([bbc.co.uk/learning/](http://bbc.co.uk/learning/)). Obviously the BBC has long presented educational radio and television programs. Today, those are merely the most public face of what the BBC Learning homepage provides access to. A click on “Course Searches” grants users access to almost any conceivable course for adult learning, delivered in almost any way imaginable; moreover, a related link labeled “Course Materials” lets those who do sign up for a course order instructional supplies, including textbooks, with a very few clicks of the mouse. Learning-success case studies are available for users to model under “Ready to Learn,” and “Learning Zone” grants access to BBC 2’s record and play services. “Spherox” provides access to an engaging educational game; “Ma France” enables you to brush up on French; “RaW Quick Reads” gives you access to the first chapter of a book; “Computer Tutor” is self-explanatory and excellent; “Hotcourses” lets you find courses anywhere within the UK, from beginners to postgraduate; and “BBC Training” links to free TV and radio courses for those who want a career in broadcasting. Seemingly appealing to the rebels among users, “State of Debate” provides a game that lets you use your English skills to get around immigration laws.

The “Children’s Learning” page offers abundant stimulation and education for children of all ages. “BBC Jam” is an interactive learning service for 5- to 16-year-olds; 5- to 7-year-olds are encouraged to tour the world with “Barnaby Bear”; 6- to 12-year-olds interested in art activities (with downloads galore) are invited to visit “CBBC – Art”; if 5- to 11-year-olds want interactive science experiments, they are invited to click on “Science Clips.” On the same page, “Curriculum Online” helps teachers find multimedia resources, and “National Geographic for Kids” offers pictures, maps, and articles to help with geography homework. These examples account for fewer than half of the resources available on this one web page to help children learn and give them an opportunity to love learning.

Convergence has enabled educational media to provide worlds previously unavailable and even unknown to those who would learn. We can only hope that the world’s young citizens are open to these educational possibilities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Educational Communication  
▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Television, Children’s Responses to ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Radio ▶ Sesame Street ▶ Television  
▶ Video Games



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## **Educational Television, Children's Responses to**

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If commercial success and global presence are valid indicators of acceptance, then it can be said that children around the world have embraced educational television programming. In 2006, the educational program → *Sesame Street* was broadcast in 120 countries. This included 20 international co-productions to utilize local expertise and accommodate for varying educational and cultural goals. Viacom's educational and entertainment network for children, Nickelodeon, continued to experience subscriber increases between 2005 and 2006 in Africa, the Asian Pacific rim, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, North America, and Russia.

Although variations exist between the different international versions of educational programming, observable similarities in children's responses to educational television exist. Researchers have found common patterns of cognitive behavior when children view educational programming in areas such as attention, comprehension, interactive learning, and altered attitudes. The focus of a large portion of the research has been limited by the means of measurement available to examine children's responses, although researchers have examined many other areas also (→ Educational Media).

## ATTENTION

One of the most immediate ways children can respond to educational programming is simply by choosing to watch a particular program rather than all others available, a process typically referred to as → selective exposure. A question that has arisen is to what degree children are deliberately selecting what they are attending to when watching television.

Other popular measures of attention involve assessing “eyes off” or “eyes on” the television screen, or visual → attention. Researchers have long debated whether this aspect of television viewing by children is primarily active or passive in nature. Not surprisingly, the levels of activity and passivity appear to be dependent on the age of the child and developmental status.

Young children, such as preschoolers, tend to focus their attention on shows that contain frequent changes in visual and auditory stimuli in brief segments presented at a rapid pace. Programs that rely on sequences of relatively independent short segments, often called “magazine format” programs, were pioneered by *Sesame Street*, which later came under attack for allegedly making educational television too passive and/or too frenetic. Critics charged that the format was overly stimulus driven and that children were only responding with reflexive attention, rather than mental engagement. Although still somewhat debated, the majority of studies support the notion that young children are cognitively active while watching magazine-format shows (Anderson 1998).

As children age, they attend to slower-paced programming that is more plot driven than stimulus driven. This shift is believed to reflect the increasing cognitive sophistication of older children, which allows for more goal-oriented viewing. Although younger and older children alike are passively affected by television stimuli, both appear to be cognitively engaged, only in different ways.

A commonality in how older and younger children respond to educational television relates to how comprehensible they subsequently find the programming. If a child determines that the content is beyond what they can comprehend, he or she may well divert attention away from the program. This comprehensibility assessment is typically made at first exposure to content and can be repeated frequently, depending on the level of exposure. A child may make repeated attempts to reassess whether the content is at a level he or she can understand and then adjust attention accordingly.

## COMPREHENSION

As with attention, developmental factors play a crucial role in the comprehension process. A key factor in comprehension is the level of prior salient knowledge the child brings to the content. Increased knowledge of language, social norms, and information about the physical world allows the child to make more sense of the programming. This suggests that comprehension is not solely a function of age, but also of environmental factors that impact development (e.g., educational emphasis in the home, school curricula, level of interaction with the environment). Therefore, by providing novel information that can be assimilated as new knowledge, educational programming can increase comprehension for future educational program viewing.

Similarly, as children develop cognitively and expand the pool of experiences and memories they can draw upon, there is an *increased ability to make inferences*. The ability to make inferences can help children make sense of situations where necessary information may not be explicit. For example, if one character refuses to help another character who is in need, more cognitively sophisticated children should be able to infer that this is undesired behavior that may be the reason for subsequent actions by the characters. Likewise, children's comprehension also increases as they develop the cognitive ability to understand antecedents. With little understanding of cause and effect, younger children may view acts as random and confusing, leading to the assessment that the content is not comprehensible, which in turn further diverts attention. This provides another illustration of how attention and comprehension play a dynamic and interrelated role in children's response to educational programming.

Another aspect of comprehension is  $\rightarrow$  *automaticity*. Over time, learned behavior becomes automatic, requiring less conscious effort, and allowing more mental energy and attention to be spent on  $\rightarrow$  information processing and assimilation. For very young children, understanding language may not yet be automated and may require significant effort. In addition, the formal features of a program may require significant concentration on the part of younger children, making it difficult to comprehend the content. For example, when a character's mouth is not moving, but words are heard in the character's voice, older children will have automated the process of determining that thoughts are being expressed, whereas younger children may be working to understand the convention and miss the content. As children develop, more complicated features and story structures can be employed, allowing for the aforementioned shift from stimulus-driven to plot-driven content.

### ACTIVE LEARNING

If the primary goal of educational television is to educate, then a reasonable question is: how do children respond to programs that attempt to teach? More directly, do children engage in the learning process? For learning to take place, many programs require active participation on the part of the viewer. This cognitive engagement is built upon attention and comprehension, but extends beyond them. The decision must be made on the part of the viewer to accept the challenge of active learning. Some shows ask viewers to read text (which may be laborious for younger children), answer riddles, engage in solving complicated social dilemmas, perform mathematical equations, seek hidden objects, and make comparisons.

An excellent example of this type of programming is a show called *Blue's Clues*. Developed by Nickelodeon, one of the many goals of the program was to teach preschoolers *flexible learning skills* that were adaptive and helpful in problem solving. Some of the formal features used to facilitate participation by the viewers were: a pause typically followed questions directed at the audience as if the characters were waiting for a response; then viewers were asked to find, point to, and call out objects found on the screen; and, finally, clues were accumulated throughout each show that were required to solve a problem. Episodes were repeated five days in a row, allowing younger children to become familiar with the formal features of the show, to utilize prior knowledge, and feel a sense of mastery over the problems.

Early *Blue's Clues* research is unique in that it specifically measured viewer interaction in a natural environment (Anderson et al. 2000). Over two years of collecting data,

researchers found that children did actively participate in the show and that the majority of children reported having helped the main character solve problems. Results showed that children were more likely to interact with the program the more they watched a particular episode. Cognitive participation was also evidenced by improved scores on problem-solving and creative-thinking tests compared to nonviewers. For older children, the show *Ghostwriter* asked viewers to read on-screen text during the show, which 83 percent of children reported doing. In an effort to improve literary skills, the program also asked viewers to compete in mail-in contests that involved elaborate writing tasks, such as creating songs and writing stories. Some 450,000 children sent in letters during the first two seasons.

Numerous other studies of children who view educational television have revealed that they show increased abilities in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and knowing current events (Fisch 2002). One recurring theme throughout the research is that children can learn from age-appropriate educational television. Once children advance beyond the target age audience for most programs, the benefits of viewing quickly diminish.

### ALTERED ATTITUDES

Frequent goals of educational programs have been to present positive social lessons and *promote pro-social attitudes and behavior* in children. Internationally popular shows like *Barney and Friends* and *Mister Roger's Neighborhood* aimed to teach children the value of behaviors like sharing, kindness, and friendship. Research has shown that many of these programs were successful in cultivating an appreciation for these positive characteristics. The pro-social benefits for children often increased when educational messages were accompanied by similar activities separate from television viewing.

A related goal often is to *reduce antisocial attitudes and behaviors*. Research has shown that children classified as having behavior disorders with tendencies toward violence actually increased in their concern for others after having watched pro-social programming. In contrast, many critics have argued that children reinforce gender and racial stereotypes in response to viewing non-educational television (→ Stereotypes). A recurring focus of research has been how to prevent, limit, or diminish many negative effects media can have on children. Areas such as stereotyping, fright responses, the impact of exposure to violence, and advertising to children have received a great deal of research attention. Some of the means of mediating children's response to media, both positive and negative, are limiting exposure, providing supplemental content apart from television, and reinforcing positive messages with dialogue after viewing. One of the most effective means of mediating effects is interactive co-viewing, in which an adult watches the content with the child and asks critical and observational questions (→ Parental Mediation Strategies). Research has shown that adult co-viewing is capable of assisting children to learn facts, acquire positive attitudes, and integrate social norms into behavior. Significant evidence supports the active involvement of adults in enhancing a child's response to educational television.

One shortcoming in the body of research available is that it is often difficult to compare findings due to a *lack of standardization in measurements*. Fields like developmental psychology, educational psychology, and child development typically rely on refined scales and

standard batteries of tests. Many of the scales and tests used have been repeatedly verified in the crucible of research and can provide quantifiable values for concepts such as self-esteem, language development, and cognitive skill. A uniformity in agreed-upon measures would allow for direct comparisons between study results and pave the way for future → meta-analyses (→ Research Methods; Scales; Scales and Indices; Test Theory).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span ▶ Automaticity ▶ Comprehension ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Information Processing ▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Mindlessness and Automaticity ▶ Parental Mediation Strategies ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Sesame Street ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Test Theory

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## **E-Government**

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E-government may be defined as the use by government of information and communication technologies, internally and to interact with citizens, firms, nongovernmental organizations, and other governments (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). E-government in practice, therefore, consists of both complex networks of information systems within government organizations and a huge range of websites with which citizens can communicate, interact, and transact.

### **OVERVIEW**

In some sense e-government has been around for over half a century in larger developed states; for example, governmental organizations in the US and the UK used computers for

internal operations from the 1950s onwards. But the term e-government only came into common usage in the 1990s as societal use of the → Internet became widespread. While earlier technologies were largely internally facing, the Internet for the first time provided government with the possibility to interact electronically with individuals and organizations outside government. Thus the Internet brought far greater possibility for the “transformation” of government through the use of electronic tools than earlier technologies, and the topic became interesting to a far wider range of researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers than hitherto. By the 2000s, almost all governments had some kind of electronic element, even if only a website describing the main institutions and political leadership (→ E-Democracy).

Information and communication technologies provide both potential advantages and new challenges to government. Such technologies have long provided the potential for government to be more efficient and effective, as the early automation of bureaucratic operations offered potential for reductions in staff (although early investments in such technologies were often hard to cost-justify in practice). With the Internet, the possibilities for cost reduction increased still further, as the marginal cost of Internet-based interactions is generally less than interactions taking place by letter, telephone, or face-to-face. But the implications of e-government are far wider than increased efficiency. Large-scale computer systems have long shown themselves in the public sector to be policy-critical. Most government departments in developed countries that process large volumes of transactions quite simply cannot operate without them, bringing widespread chaos when they fail to work. They also create new possibilities for new policy “windows” in terms of innovation. Margetts (1999) and Hood and Margetts (2007) have shown how digital technologies open up potential for innovation in the use of all four of the “tools” of government policy: nodality (the capacity to collect and disseminate information), authority, treasure (money, or other exchangeable benefits), and organizational capacity.

As use of the Internet became widespread from the early 2000s (→ Exposure to the Internet; Information Society), most developed governments introduced e-government initiatives, accompanied by “targets” for electronic service delivery. Certainly, governments have dedicated increasingly significant resources to the pursuit of electronic government, with most industrialized nations spending over 1 percent of GDP on the government’s own information and communication technologies. The UK, for example, spends around £15 billion annually on its own e-government effort, including a massive £6 billion dedicated to modernization of the information systems of the National Health Service.

In general, however, governments have struggled to develop the skills and expertise to develop their electronic channels. By 2006 most were reliant on a market of private sector computer services providers, who develop and maintain their information systems. In most industrialized states, distinct markets of global and domestic companies have grown up to service the public sector, with wide variations across governments in terms of the shape of the market and the extent to which domestic companies play a role (Dunleavy et al. 2006). These companies have shown themselves to be important players in contemporary government. More recently, the larger Internet corporations have come to play a role in the delivery and holding of information about citizens, in a way that can be difficult for governments to challenge. In 2005, for example, when the Federal Bureau of Intelligence in the US asked Google (→ Search Engines) for a million anonymized

records of the users of pornographic websites, in order to understand patterns of usage of such sites, their request was refused.

### VISIONS OF E-GOVERNMENT

Until the 2000s, academic visions of e-government tended to range from the highly utopian to the severely dystopian, with a lack of sustained empirical research filling the middle of the spectrum. Most of these visions revolved around the modernist notion that technology will somehow lead government to become more rational and efficient, with strong parallels to Weber's predictions for bureaucracy and his analogy of bureaucratic organization as a "machine" (→ Bureaucracy and Communication).

What have been termed "hyper-modernists" (Margetts 1999) have argued that as the Internet and associated technologies become ubiquitous, government will become more and more efficient and therefore smaller, until eventually governmental organizations themselves will become increasingly irrelevant. The most populist writer in this vein was probably Alvin Toffler, who in a trilogy of books running over 20 years from 1970 argued that the decentralization afforded by information technology would inevitably lead to political decentralization as well, so that eventually bureaucracy itself would become irrelevant: "exactly like businesses, governments are also beginning to bypass their hierarchies – further subverting bureaucratic power" (Toffler 1990, 255).

While also believing in transformation for government through technology, "anti-modernists" concentrated on the negative effects, believing that e-government would be more powerful, and more intrusive in the lives of citizens, than traditional bureaucracy. Writers such as David Burnham (1983) argued that the increased possibility for surveillance and control offered by information and communication technologies would lead electronic governments to the "Computer State" or the "Control State," whereby governments use CCTV cameras, "smart" identity cards, satellite navigation systems, electronic tracking devices, and centralized databases with sophisticated search capabilities to maintain an ever-closer eye on the activities of their citizens. These dystopian views are reminiscent of the more literary scenarios portrayed in Orwell's *1984* or Huxley's *Brave New World*. With technological development, surveillance technologies have become increasingly sophisticated and electronic identities more complex, while after the terrorist attacks on the US of September 11, 2001, and in other countries thereafter, many populations appear to have become more accepting of such technologies, believing them to be effective in counteracting terrorist activity. As governments appear to have had a freer rein in introducing surveillance technologies, a new generation of anti-modernists began to define the "Surveillance Society" (Lyon 2003).

Only in the 2000s did a sustained body of *research* into the development, functioning, and implications of e-government really begin to develop, and even by 2007 this research is still rather ghettoized within other academic disciplines. Writers in the field of communications do not tend to focus on government, perhaps because governments' use of communications technologies is less innovative and transformational than that of media organizations. For the same reason, management research tends to focus on the private sector, regarded as more innovative and cutting-edge in the delivery of online services and e-commerce applications. Political scientists tend to minimize or leave aside

entirely the implications of technology in government, regarding it as a straightforward administrative tool with no policy implications. Even by 2005, many standard texts on public administration and public policy barely mention computers or the Internet.

Meanwhile, the study of e-government has become heavily populated by management consultancies, IT corporations, and international organizations, which have produced a number of *reports and rankings of countries* in terms of their e-government development. Most prominently, Accenture produced a series of reports, each covering around 30 countries, from 2002 to 2006, Cap Gemini for the European Union produced a raft of reports on e-government development across European countries, and the United Nations continues to maintain an “e-government readiness” index and annual report for all the countries in the world (for example, UNPAN 2005). The OECD has produced a number of reports and single-country studies. Many of these studies are also based on a modernist notion of development, the so-called “*stages model*” of e-government, whereby governmental organizations (or in many cases, whole governments) are assumed to go through a number of “stages” (first a kind of web publishing model, followed by interaction and transactions, followed by the facilitation of “seamless” government, and ultimately “transformation”).

While most of these international reports tend to emphasize differences between governments, detailed research at the country level suggests considerable variation across governmental organizations. Although most countries with e-government initiatives have some central mechanisms and agencies for control and coordination, such agencies tend to have limited remit over the largest of government departments. So, for example, in many countries such as Australia and Canada, tax agencies lead the field, with some countries attaining very high levels of take-up of online services; 98 percent in Chile, for example. Social welfare agencies tend to have lower levels of online service provision, due in many cases to a (sometimes mistaken) perception of low levels of Internet penetration among their users.

## THE REALITY OF E-GOVERNMENT

In practice, the *transformation of government* through electronic tools, both for good and for bad, still seems elusive. Neither the wildest dreams of the hyper-modernists, nor the worst nightmares of the anti-modernists appear to have materialized. The use of the Internet varies widely across societies and also across governments, but use of information and communication technologies has not in any deterministic way caused liberal democratic governments to become less liberal or less democratic. Neither have authoritarian governments necessarily become more authoritarian, although the nature of their authoritarian techniques has changed. Certainly many countries, particularly China and several Arab states, practice sophisticated Internet filtering techniques (see Deibert et al. 2007; → Censorship). But in all these countries the new capacity for their subjects to develop social networks outside their country and to be aware of developments in the rest of the world can outweigh the increased control that technologies internal to government permit (→ China: Media System; Iran: Media System).

As for the “hyper-modernists,” their visions are challenged by the trend for governments in most countries to lag behind commercial organizations, and indeed society in general,



in capitalizing on the potential benefits of Internet technologies. In the UK, for example, the 2005 Oxford Internet Survey found that only 39 percent of UK Internet users had interacted with government electronically in the last year, while over 85 percent of Internet users had used the Internet to look for or buy goods or services (Di Gennaro and Dutton 2005). Others have identified a number of cultural barriers to e-government development, both from the supply side (in terms of civil servants being resistant to new electronic channels) and the demand side (in terms of citizens being willing to interact with government in new ways). Certainly the economists' dictum that the Internet has transformed the ability of firms to know their customers and treat them differently has not applied to government to anything like the same extent.

However, the *potential for e-government* to look different from traditional notions of government remains, with the opening up of a wide range of new options for policy-makers. Electronic road pricing for example, provides new possibilities for incentivizing drivers to use certain routes at certain times or even to stop using their car in favor of public transport systems. Ticketing systems present new policy options in terms of encouraging the use of public transport and, when combined with congestion charging, encouraging the use of public transport in favor of roads with potential environmental benefits. In law and order, electronic tagging systems allow a new intermediate option between incarceration and freedom for convicted individuals. Most of these potential applications of e-government have a key distinguishing feature: they allow the segmentation of citizens. Governments can identify and treat groups of citizens differently according to their circumstances and need. Such treatments can range across the four "tools" of government policy. For nodality, information can be targeted at specific groups, through websites used by specific age groups or group-targeted emails. Treasure, in terms of social welfare benefits or tax credits, for example, can be easily means-tested according to other financial information held by government. Authority can also be targeted, through "fast-track" border control systems, for example. Even physical organization can be group-targeted, for example through barriers that respond to transponders fitted to police and emergency vehicles but not to normal cars, as used in city centers in several parts of the world.

As noted above, in the early days of e-government the type of systems that governments were using were internal to government. In general they were not used by citizens; even when home use of personal computers became widespread, they were stand-alone machines unlikely to be connected to a wider network. In contrast, the Internet is a societal phenomenon which is making a huge difference to the lives of many citizens. Thus technological development in general, and technology-mediated relationships in particular, have an independent effect on e-government, by placing a continual pressure on governments to innovate. Governments have to respond to technological innovations used, for example, within the criminal world, as many traditional forms of crime and fraud become electronic and cyber-crime itself becomes a rising phenomenon. Many social problems have moved online, as Internet gambling has proved itself more addictive than its offline equivalent, cyber-bullying more psychologically damaging than in the playground, and Internet addiction itself has become recognized as a rising social phenomenon (Hood and Margetts 2007).

Another implication of the changing nature of technology is that government is under increasing *competition for public attention and visibility* in the online world. Governments

have been traditionally deemed to possess “nodality” (Hood 1983, as noted above) – the capacity of being at the center of social and informational networks and in a privileged position with respect to the collection and dissemination of information. In the online world, governments find themselves under increasing competition for that nodality. By 2006, most people used search engines to find information they needed, and few look further than beyond the first 10–20 results. So whether information about an organization is easily found within those results is vital to its visibility. In an online world where at the time of writing the auction site eBay had 168 million users, the social networking site myspace.com had 100 million users, the online bookshop amazon.com had 35 million customers in over 250 countries, and the community site craigslist.org, linking urban communities all over the world, had four billion page views a month, governments may find themselves struggling for online nodality (→ Social Networks; E-Commerce).

Furthermore, as Internet-based technologies themselves developed toward Web 2.0 applications, where users generate content through recommender and reputational systems, blogs (→ Blogger), wikipedias, social networking sites, and user feedback systems, governments too have to innovate if they want to take advantage of applications like these. In 2007 such applications were almost absent from governmental organizations, whereas in other areas they had become ubiquitous. So, for example, in the area of job search where private sector sites were offering job applicants the chance to post video clips and photographs and even teleconferencing interviews, government applications such as the UK Jobcentre plus were offering only text-based systems where employers could paste CVs and jobseekers could look for jobs, but there were few other facilities available. Here competition is also evident, with Jobcentre plus holding only 13 percent of the job application market in the UK, with consequent implications for the capacity of government organizations to tackle unemployment and job mobility issues.

Where governments do innovate in this area, the potential is great. By the mid-2000s, some authors were beginning to suggest that “digital-era” governance was a new potential paradigm for public administration, replacing the dominant trends in public management of the previous 20 years, a cohort of changes termed “*new public management*” (NPM; see Dunleavy et al. 2006). NPM was characterized by disaggregation of public organizations (into agencies, for example), competition (through outsourcing) and incentivization (through performance pay and performance management). In the countries where NPM was implemented in its most extreme form, it led to increased fragmentation and complexity of government, with a concurrent reduction in transparency. In contrast, digital era governance seems to offer new possibilities for increased transparency, with the web offering a “window” into governmental organizations and reduced complexity as Internet-based technologies facilitate a “joining-up” of previously fragmented governmental organizations.

There is nothing inevitable about digital era governance, as the discussion of the reality of e-government over time has suggested, and indeed a number of possible scenarios may emerge. But at its best, digital era governance, where innovations such as Web 2.0 applications are employed, could facilitate new potential for citizens to play a role in solving social problems. In health and social care, for example, where in some countries citizens can already view their own electronic health records online, where electronic booking systems for GPs and hospitals could be readily available, where user-generated

information might enhance the possibility of choice in health-care, and a huge range of health information is available freely online for those skilled enough in Internet use to look for it, there seems potential for citizens to play a greater role in tackling their own health-care than has ever been possible before, just as Internet banking involves users taking a more proactive stance in the management of their bank accounts.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Bureaucracy and Communication ► Censorship ► China: Media System ► E-Commerce ► E-Democracy ► Exposure to the Internet ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Information Society ► Internet ► Iran: Media System ► Search Engines ► Social Networks

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## **Egypt: Media System**

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Egypt occupies a leading political and cultural role in the Arab world as the region's most populous state, with 72.6 million inhabitants. Until 1914, Egypt officially belonged to the Ottoman Empire. However, British economic and geopolitical interests in the region turned Egypt into a semi-colony from 1882 to 1952. The ongoing struggle for independence culminated in the Free Officers Revolution in 1952, which established a nationalist regime. Islam plays a minor but visible role in official politics and legislation. Despite Egypt formally being a parliamentary democracy, the authoritarian president pulls the political strings.

Since 1954, only three presidents have ruled Egypt, each of them shaping the media system differently. Gamal Abdel Nasser (1954–1970) used the media as an instrument of political mobilization within the strategy of promoting Arab nationalism (→ Development Communication: Middle East). Anwar al-Sadat's (1970–1981) politics of liberalization opened up space for party papers. Hosni Mubarak (since 1981) still expects media to support the regime's politics but came to meet the Egyptian business elites' interests to invest in new media and information technologies. Therefore, Egypt's media system is in a transitional stage. Strong media competition in the Arab world during the 1990s led to a cautious liberalization aiming at securing markets without losing political control over the media.

Official legislation does not yet meet the liberalization process. The revised constitution of 1980 grants freedom of expression (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Nevertheless, the press can be censored or suspended by presidential order due to the state of emergency law, which has been in force since 1981 (→ Censorship). Press law no. 96 of 1996 regulates the role of journalists. Journalists can be sentenced for libeling public officials or offending the president. Only corporate entities, not individuals, are allowed to obtain licenses to publish a paper.

The first *newspaper* was launched by the French during Napoleon's invasion in 1798. During British colonial rule, the Egyptians' struggle for independence served as the cradle for a strong nationalist party press. In 1960 Nasser nationalized the press. Today, the government still controls the three leading dailies, *al-Ahram*, *al-Akhbar*, and *al-Gumhuriya*, a number of weekly papers, and the Egyptian *Middle East News Agency* (MENA); 86.8 percent of journalists in the print sector work for the state-controlled media (Korff 2003).

Sadat's reintroduction of the multiparty system in 1976 was meant to establish "straw dollies" to support government politics. However, parties were allowed to publish their own press (→ Partisan Press; Party–Press Parallelism). During Hosni Mubarak's era, the party press developed into a vivid but always controlled mouthpiece of oppositional ideas. The most important of the 14 party newspapers are the liberal *al-Wafd* and the (now banned) Islamist *al-Shaab* (El Gody 2004). Since 2000, a number of independent dailies and weeklies, such as *al-Dustur* and *al-Masry al-Yawm*, successfully obtained licenses. Their existence is often short-lived due to financial problems or political pressure. Nevertheless, the independent press has become a strong and critical watchdog. To avoid licensing, a number of papers are registered abroad. Like all foreign press, these papers are subject to censorship (→ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East).

The British Marconi Company established a radio system in 1934, and TV broadcasting started in 1960 with American help (El Gody 2004). Nasser soon used the radio as an effective propaganda tool to reach the largely illiterate masses. *Voice of the Arabs* became the most important radio channel in the Arab world during the 1950s and 1960s. Until 2001, national *television and radio* broadcasting was run solely by the state-owned *Egyptian Radio and Television Union* (ERTU). Eight different radio networks have been established, including local, national, and overseas programs. Two national TV channels were complemented with six regional TV channels from 1985 to 1990. Egyptian film and TV production dominated the Arab market at that time. In 1990, Egypt became the first Arab country to launch a TV satellite channel, *ESC 1* (→ Satellite Communication, Global). In 1993 the launch of Nile TV followed, carrying news in English and French to improve Egypt's image in the western world.

Egypt's great leap forward into the era of limited pluralism in the broadcasting sector started in 1998 with the launch of the national satellite *NileSat 101*, followed by *NileSat 102* in 2000 (→ Plurality). In 2001, nine private Egyptian channels were introduced, including the successful *Dream* channels. These channels are characterized by rather apolitical programs due to self-censorship to obtain their licenses. Similarly, two private radio channels started broadcasting in 2003. In 1995, the *Egyptian Media Production City* (EMPC) was inaugurated, including film shooting areas and fully equipped studio complexes (→ Film Production). Part of it was declared a Media Free Zone in 2000, offering tax benefits and exemptions from national censorship for foreign investments. The policy behind this deregulation is "the ruling elite's determination to present an image of Egypt as a 'cohesive community' to viewers at home and abroad" (Sakr 2001, 34).

Economic development through deregulation has also been the motive for supporting new information technologies like mobile phones and the → *Internet*. First introduced at universities in 1986, the Internet became available to the public in 1993. Since 1996 Internet service providing has been privatized. User rates have grown over 100 percent per year ever since, reaching 4 million users in 2005. Illiteracy and limited financial resources hamper wider acceptance. A Ministry for Information and Telecommunication technology was founded in 1999, and the government initiated a "one computer for each household" campaign.

Access to and content of Internet sites are officially not restricted in Egypt. Consequently, Islamist and other opposition groups, as well as a vivid weblog scene, adopted the Internet more professionally than official news media did. Nevertheless, websites of unwanted political organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood are shut down occasionally and → bloggers have been imprisoned. A comprehensive Internet law is still lacking (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Censorship ► Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ► Development Communication: Middle East ► Film Production ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Internet ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Partisan Press ► Party-Press Parallelism ► Plurality ► Satellite Communication, Global

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# Elaboration Likelihood Model

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The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of → persuasion, developed by Richard Petty, John Cacioppo, and their collaborators, is an example of a “dual process” approach to persuasion (another example is Chaiken’s heuristic-systematic model, HSM). The ELM suggests that important variations in the nature of persuasion are a function of the likelihood that receivers will engage in elaboration of (that is, thinking about) information relevant to the persuasive issue. Depending on the degree of elaboration, two different kinds of persuasion process can be engaged – one involving systematic thinking and the other involving cognitive shortcuts. Different factors influence persuasive outcomes depending on which process is activated.

These two persuasion processes are called the “central route” and the “peripheral route” to persuasion. The *central route* represents the persuasion processes involved when elaboration is relatively high. Where persuasion is achieved through the central route, it commonly comes about through extensive issue-relevant thinking: careful examination of the information contained in the message, close scrutiny of the message’s arguments, consideration of other issue-relevant material, and so on. In short, persuasion through the central route is achieved through the receiver’s thoughtful examination of issue-relevant considerations.

The *peripheral route* represents the persuasion processes involved when elaboration is relatively low. Where persuasion is achieved through peripheral routes, it commonly comes about because the receiver employs some simple decision rule (some heuristic principle) to evaluate the advocated position. For example, receivers might be guided by whether they like the communicator or by whether they find the communicator credible. That is, receivers may rely upon various peripheral cues (such as communicator credibility) as guides to attitude and belief, rather than engaging in extensive issue-relevant thinking (→ Information Processing).

## INFLUENCES ON THE DEGREE OF ELABORATION

A number of factors have been found to influence the amount of elaboration (and hence to influence which route to persuasion is activated). These factors can be classified broadly as influencing either elaboration motivation or elaboration ability.

A receiver’s motivation for engaging in elaboration can be influenced by the relevance of the topic; as the personal relevance of the topic (the receiver’s degree of “involvement” in the topic) increases, the motivation to engage in elaboration also increases (→ Involvement with Media Content). Elaboration motivation can also be influenced by the receiver’s level of “need for cognition,” a personality characteristic reflecting the tendency to enjoy and engage in thinking; people higher in need for cognition generally have greater elaboration motivation (→ Personality and Exposure to Communication). The receiver’s ability to engage in elaboration can be influenced by factors such as the presence of distraction in the persuasive setting or the amount of relevant background knowledge; a

person who lacks prior knowledge of the subject matter or is distracted may be unable to engage in issue-relevant thinking.

So, for example, when a topic is personally relevant to a receiver, the receiver is generally predisposed to engage in careful thinking, the receiver has extensive relevant background knowledge, and the receiver is undistracted, elaboration will presumably be high – and the central route to persuasion will be engaged. By contrast, on a topic that is not especially relevant, with a receiver who does not enjoy thinking hard and has little information about the topic, and in a context where there is considerable distraction, elaboration will presumably be low – and peripheral persuasion processes will be activated.

## **INFLUENCES ON PERSUASIVE OUTCOMES**

Because central-route persuasion and peripheral-route persuasion have different underlying processes, the factors determining persuasive success correspondingly differ.

### **Influences on Persuasive Outcomes in Central-Route Persuasion**

Under conditions of relatively high elaboration, the outcomes of persuasive efforts will largely depend on the outcomes of the receiver's thoughtful consideration of issue-relevant arguments (as opposed to depending primarily on the operation of simple decision principles). Broadly put, when elaboration is high, persuasive effects will depend upon the predominant valence (positive or negative) of the receiver's issue-relevant thoughts. To the extent that the receiver is led to have predominantly favorable thoughts about the advocated position, the message will presumably be relatively successful in eliciting attitude change in the desired direction; if the receiver has predominantly unfavorable thoughts, then the message will presumably be relatively unsuccessful.

Two primary factors influence the predominant valence (the overall evaluative direction) of elaboration. One is whether the message's advocated position is *proattitudinal* or *counterattitudinal* for the receiver. Everything else being equal, one expects proattitudinal messages (ones advocating views toward which the receiver initially feels at least somewhat favorably inclined) to evoke predominantly favorable thoughts, and counterattitudinal messages to evoke predominantly unfavorable thoughts.

The second factor is the *strength (quality) of the message's arguments*. Under conditions of high elaboration, receivers are willing and able to engage in extensive issue-relevant thinking, including careful examination of the message's arguments. If such scrutiny reveals weak evidence, slipshod reasoning, and the like, predominantly negative reactions are to be expected. But if the message is seen to contain powerful arguments, good evidence, sound reasoning, and so forth, then more positive thoughts are likely to result. That is, under conditions of high elaboration, the quality (strength) of the message's arguments influence the predominant valence of elaboration and hence affect persuasive success.

### **Influences on Persuasive Outcomes in Peripheral-Route Persuasion**

Under conditions of relatively low elaboration, receivers are not engaged in thoughtful consideration of the message's arguments and evidence. Rather, receivers use heuristic

principles (“heuristics”), simple decision procedures that require little information processing; heuristics are activated by “peripheral cues,” extrinsic features of the communication situation such as the characteristics of the communicator. A number of such heuristics have been identified.

One is the *credibility heuristic*, in which receivers are guided by the apparent expertise of the communicator. Rather than carefully considering the message’s arguments, receivers can simply rely on the communicator’s credibility as a guide to what to believe: where the communicator is judged to be an expert, receivers will be persuaded by the communicator’s view (and where judged inexpert, the communicator will be relatively unpersuasive). A second heuristic is based on the receiver’s *liking for the communicator*; when this liking heuristic is employed, liked communicators will be more persuasive than disliked communicators. A third processing shortcut is the *consensus heuristic*, in which the receiver’s views are influenced by the reactions of others to the message; when this heuristic is activated, seeing approving reactions of others enhances the message’s persuasiveness (and disapproving reactions impair effectiveness).

As elaboration increases, the influence of such heuristics diminishes. When receivers are engaging in close scrutiny of and thinking about the message, peripheral cues such as the communicator’s likeability, the communicator’s credibility, and the reactions of other people play smaller roles as influences on persuasive outcomes. But where receivers are unable or unmotivated to engage in message scrutiny, these cognitive shortcuts are relied upon.

## COMPLEXITIES AND CONSEQUENCES IN PERSUASION PROCESSES

### Tradeoffs between Central and Peripheral Persuasion Processes

Although the distinction between central- and peripheral-route persuasion is convenient, one should remember that in fact there is an underlying continuum of elaboration. The central route and the peripheral route represent idealized extremes of this continuum, but at intermediate levels of elaboration, complex combinations of central-route and peripheral-route processes can be expected.

Thus, broadly speaking, there is a tradeoff between elaboration valence and peripheral cues as influences on persuasion. As elaboration increases, the impact of peripheral cues declines, and the impact of the valence of the receiver’s issue-relevant thinking increases. For example, as variations in argument strength make more difference in outcomes, variations in communicator expertise play smaller roles as peripheral cues. This tradeoff creates the possibility that, at intermediate levels of elaboration, both central and peripheral processes might operate.

### Multiple Roles for Variables in Persuasion

The ELM emphasizes that any given variable might play multiple roles in persuasion. Specifically, a variable might influence persuasion in three ways. First, it might affect the degree of elaboration (and thus influence the degree to which central-route or peripheral-route processes are engaged). Second, it might serve as a peripheral cue (and so influence



persuasive outcomes when peripheral-route persuasion is occurring). Third, it might influence the valence of elaboration (and so influence persuasive outcomes when central-route persuasion is occurring).

The ELM recognizes that a given variable need not play only one of these roles. In different circumstances, a variable might influence persuasion through different mechanisms. For example, communicator credibility might serve as a peripheral cue (activating the credibility heuristic) or it might influence the amount of elaboration (as when receivers decide that the communicator's expertise makes the message worth attending to closely).

The possibility of different persuasion roles for a single variable points to considerable complexity in persuasion. Consider, for instance, the effects (on persuasive outcomes) of varying the communicator's attractiveness. The ELM suggests that the effects will depend on the role played by attractiveness in the particular persuasion circumstance. Increasing the communicator's attractiveness might enhance persuasion (e.g., if attractiveness operates as a peripheral cue that activates the liking heuristic, or if attractiveness enhances message scrutiny and the message contains strong arguments, or if attractiveness reduces message scrutiny and the message contains weak arguments, or if greater attractiveness encourages positive elaboration by serving as an argument – as might be the case in advertisements for beauty products), or might inhibit persuasion (e.g., if attractiveness enhances message scrutiny and the message contains weak arguments, or if attractiveness reduces message scrutiny and the message contains strong arguments), or might have relatively little influence on persuasion (if other factors play larger roles).

### **Consequences of Differing Persuasion Routes**

Although persuasion can be accomplished at any point along the elaboration continuum, differing degrees of elaboration will make for corresponding differences in the nature of the persuasive outcomes obtained. Where people's attitudes are shaped through central-route processes, those attitudes are likely to be more persistent over time, more directive of behavior, and more resistant to counterpersuasion (compared to attitudes influenced through peripheral-route processes). That is to say, central-route processes create persuasion that is more enduring and more integrated with a person's belief system – as might be expected, given the greater amount of issue-relevant thinking involved in central-route persuasion. Persuasion accomplished through peripheral-route processes is likely to be more evanescent.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS**

At least four lines of future development of ELM ideas can be identified. One is continuing articulation of the *nature of involvement* (personal relevance). Several commentators have suggested that different varieties of involvement can be usefully distinguished as having differing effects on persuasion processes. No consensus has yet emerged about exactly how to more carefully specify involvement variations, but this will plainly be a subject of continuing attention.

A second is clarification of the *nature of argument quality*. Although the ELM emphasizes the role of variations in argument quality as an influence on persuasive outcomes under

conditions of high elaboration, the model has not given much attention to unpacking exactly what makes for stronger and weaker arguments. At least some research suggests that the key ingredient of high-quality arguments may be the relative desirability of the properties attributed to the advocated view (e.g., the desirability of the consequences claimed for a social policy, or the desirability of the characteristics of a consumer product); that is, “strong” arguments are ones that mention properties especially valued by the audience.

A third issue is clarification of the *conditions under which a given variable plays one role or another in persuasion*. The ELM has usefully drawn attention to the possibility that a given variable might, in different circumstances, play different roles in persuasion processes. But it is not yet clear how one might predict when a given factor will serve in one role or another. Fashioning such an account is obviously of some importance.

Finally, the relationship of central-route and peripheral-route processes needs some attention. One prominent alternative to the ELM has been Kruglanski and Thompson’s “*unimodel*,” which proposes that the ELM’s two persuasion routes are similar in a fundamental way: in each route, receivers try to reach conclusions about what views to hold, using whatever evidence is available to them. Different kinds of evidence are employed in the two routes (peripheral cues in the peripheral route, the carefully scrutinized message arguments in the central route), but – the unimodel argues – there actually are not two fundamentally different processes here. Rather, there is just the one process of reasoning to conclusions based on evidence – and thus a “unimodel” of persuasion will suffice.

The unimodel stresses that both peripheral cues and message arguments can vary in their complexity, ease of processing, brevity, and so forth. But, it argues, in ELM research, peripheral cues have typically been quite simple and arguments have typically been quite complex – thus giving rise to apparent differences in how cues and arguments are processed. But, the unimodel argues, if cues and arguments are equalized with respect to complexity, then cues and arguments will be seen to be processed in identical ways, thus removing any need to posit two persuasion processes.

The unimodel raises many complicated issues and the empirical evidence bearing on the model is not uncontroversial. For instance, ELM defenders and unimodel advocates each point to research findings they believe only their favored model can explain – and each believes its model can accommodate the other’s findings. It will be some time before these questions can be sorted out, in part because the issues are both empirical (identifying differing predictions of the two models) and conceptual (for instance, whether it is true by definition that peripheral cues are easy to process).

The ELM has *contributed two key insights* about persuasion. One is the recognition of the variable character of topic-related thinking (elaboration) engaged in by message recipients. Because the extensiveness of topic-relevant thinking varies (from person to person, from situation to situation, etc.), the underlying persuasion processes vary and hence the factors influencing persuasive success vary. The second is the recognition that a given variable may play different roles in persuasion – it might in one circumstance influence the degree of elaboration, in another influence the valence of elaboration, and in a third serve as a peripheral cue. Naturally, then, a variable might have very different effects on persuasion from one situation to the next – which can give rise to seeming inconsistencies in research findings concerning the role played by a given factor. Taken

together, these two insights offer the prospect of reconciling apparently conflicting findings and mark the ELM as an especially significant contribution to our understanding of persuasion.

SEE ALSO: ► Attitude–Behavior Consistency ► Attitudes ► Information Processing  
► Involvement with Media Content ► Personality and Exposure to Communication  
► Persuasion

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# Election Campaign Communication

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Election campaigns are among the most important events in the lives of democracies and societies in transition. Campaigns often constitute the high points in public debate about political issues (→ Political Discourse). Election campaign communication takes different forms in different national and regional contexts. It is shaped by both party and media systems and by the regulatory environment governing the campaign process (→ Political Communication Systems). Election communication is also influenced by the balance of party and media forces in shaping the news agenda, and that balance has been tipped by the increasing role played by citizens and interest groups in generating messages and news about parties, leaders, and issues.

## THE CAMPAIGN IN THE NEWS

Television continues to be the main source of information for most people at election time (→ Political Media Use). Television news is the most common vehicle through which particularly the undecided voters and people who are politically uninterested get information about campaign events (→ Television News). That said, market pressures have come to affect the availability of main evening television news in many countries. One glaring consequence in the UK, for example, has been the complete evacuation of news from prime time on what were traditionally the flagship television news channels, BBC1 and ITV1 (→ United Kingdom: Media System; BBC). While prime-time television on the European continent by comparison continues to offer a great deal in the way of news and current affairs programming, the wealth of nonpolitical entertainment offerings provide new ways to opt out. Yet, as program formats change and the lines between hard and → soft news as well as between politics and entertainment blur, there are growing chances that election campaign-related information reaches even the politically inattentive citizens (Baum 2002; → Politainment).

The politically interested have a vast array of places to find campaign news, particularly in media systems with a diverse supply of daily newspapers and a well-established public broadcasting system. But even there, the mission of public service television to “inform, educate, and entertain” was probably never before so focused on the need to maintain status and ratings (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). News programs have become increasingly tailored to the demographics and assumed interests of their target audience. Moving from analogue to digital has fragmented audiences further. The 2005 British general election was described by those in the news business as the last election in the pre-digital age in which the general public was able to view the campaign as a common civic experience.

## CHANGING CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATION

Media system changes are a major factor driving the modernization and “Americanization” of election campaigns. The term “Americanization” has been criticized for being

applied by some scholars as a shorthand reference to the range of new techniques and opportunities being used to influence voters at election time in countries around the world (→ Americanization of the Media). The transformation of campaign communication is described as a greater tendency toward personalized reporting on the top party leaders or candidates, greater emphasis on campaign rhetoric as opposed to information about party policies, and increasingly negative as opposed to neutral or favorable reporting on the candidates in the campaign (→ Negative Campaigning; Personalization of Campaigning). Published election polls and forecasts, often commissioned by the media themselves, have given high prominence to the question of who is ahead and who is trailing behind (→ Bandwagon Effect; Election Polls and Forecasts; Underdog Effect).

Yet as far back as the early 1980s, when election campaign communication in general elections in the *US and UK* was compared systematically, it was clear that election communication on television in the US stood quite apart from the UK (Semetko et al. 1991). American election television was found to be more condensed, more focused on the electoral chances of the candidates, and more evaluative and negative in tone. American election news on television was also more inclined to diminish the prominence of the campaign in the news because story selection was primarily guided by conventional → news values rather than by the educational and informational ethos of British public service broadcasting.

In *Germany*, major changes have been observed by long-term studies showing that strategy or horse race frames have become increasingly salient in election coverage over the years (Esser & Hemmer, in press). In the main evening flagship news programs on television, the top candidates are nowadays more often seen with exciting and colorful pictures, which was uncommon in television news campaign reporting in the past (Schulz & Zeh 2005). This is partly due to the news discussions of televised debates that have been launched in recent election campaigns. In many countries → televised debates, as an adaptation of the American television format, became key events of election campaigns, often reaching a larger audience, generating more media coverage, and impacting more on voters' opinion formation than any other single campaign event.

Patterson's (1993) study of US presidential election campaign news over time (comparing news at each election over three decades from 1960 to 1992), found that it had become less descriptive, less issue-oriented, and less favorable over time. It had also become more analytical, more horse race-oriented, and more negative over time, with less time for candidates to speak in their own words (→ Horse Race Coverage). Patterson's (2002) study of the "vanishing voter" in the 2000 presidential election shows how this negative news may be discouraging citizens from taking part in the election campaign and may ultimately have negative consequences for electoral turn-out (→ Political Cynicism; Political Efficacy).

## CAMPAIGN EFFECTS

A central question of election research is whether and to what degree different modes and media of campaign communication have an influence on voters' opinion formation and on the election outcome – or, as some authors put it plainly: Does the campaign matter? The answer varies to some degree, depending on the national context, the political situation, the type of election, the media under study, and other factors (see, e.g., Farrell & Schmitt-Beck

2002; Norris 2006; Gunther et al. 2007). A review of the empirical evidence by Iyengar & Simon (2000) concludes that “campaigns do matter and can be pivotal.”

Election campaigns quite often serve as a kind of “laboratory” for developing and testing media effect models (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of; Political Communication). The seminal *Erie County study* by → Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) is an early and highly influential example. Several key concepts of media effects research, such as the selectivity principle and the opinion leader concept, originate from this study (→ Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Opinion Leader; Two-Step Flow of Communication).

Likewise, the agenda-setting concept, which is one of the most widely used models in contemporary communication research, has been advanced in election campaign studies (→ *Agenda-Setting Effects*). Over the past few decades, hundreds of studies have found support for the hypothesis of media agenda-setting effects, with evidence that the media play an important role in shaping the issue priorities of citizens in the context of election campaigns by giving priority in the news to some issues over others (for review, see McCombs 2004). But searching for agenda-setting effects does not always lead to finding them. Research on general elections in the UK in the 1980s and 1990s, and on Germany’s historically important “*unity election*” in 1990, for example, has shown that media agendas do not always coincide with or influence audience agendas during campaigns (Norris et al. 1999; Semetko & Schönbach 1994). The type of issue may also condition media’s power to influence public agendas. “Unobtrusive” issues – such as foreign affairs issues with which people have little or no direct experience – may be more susceptible to agenda setting than “obtrusive” issues relating to problems people may have direct personal experience of, such as inflation and unemployment.

Evidence of *media priming* – the media’s role in providing the standards by which citizens evaluate political leaders and candidates – was found in a number of election studies. Through focusing on certain events or issues more than others during the campaign, the media can influence perceptions of candidates (→ Candidate Image). Iyengar & Kinder (1987) defined priming more specifically as changes in the standards used by the public to evaluate political leaders, and found support for the priming hypothesis in their experiments (→ Priming Theory). The cognitive processes at work are the focus of much of the priming research (→ Political Cognitions; Political Persuasion).

*Framing* goes beyond the concept of agenda-setting research to study *how* people think and talk about campaign issues (Reese et al. 2001). Entman (1993) has described the process of framing as selecting certain aspects of a perceived reality, which then promotes a certain definition of a problem, a certain interpretation of its cause, a certain moral evaluation of the situation, and a certain recommendation for solving or treating the problem (→ Framing of the News). Framing effects have been described as evident when the important attributes of a message (the way in which it is organized, or the content, for example) lead us to draw on particular thoughts in making evaluations or judgments about a problem or issue (→ Framing Effects). This is particularly relevant during election campaigns when parties and candidates are trying to communicate their ability to handle some issues more competently than their competitors (→ Issue Management in Politics). Much of the research on issue perception is based on the assumption that the salience and framing of issues have an influence on electoral choices (→ Issue Voting).

Research on → *political advertising* in election campaigns examines the negative character of news and advertising and its potential effects, and negative campaigning and the consequences for voter mobilization. With new technology available in the US to capture targeted advertising and to identify its audience, a new dimension has been added to the investigation of the effects of television → advertising in election campaigns (Goldstein & Freedman 2002). Cable and satellite technology in the US make it possible to identify the (political) advertising broadcast at the (constituency) target level, and researchers have begun to investigate the links between the two. These developments are boosting the professionalization and marketing-orientation of campaigning (→ Marketing; Political Consultant).

Our understanding of campaign effects has been advanced considerably by research that has focused primarily on the US context. Over the past few decades research has also advanced theoretically and methodologically with a number of international comparative studies (see, e.g., Swanson & Mancini 1996; Farrell & Schmitt-Beck 2002; de Vreese & Semetko 2004; Gunther et al. 2007).

### **THE NEW MEDIA CAMPAIGN ENVIRONMENT**

The new media have altered the battle over the campaign agenda that was once waged primarily between journalists on the one hand and politicians/strategists/interest groups on the other. Traditionally, politicians and their political parties sought to control the message through staged appearances on the campaign trail, in preplanned press conferences and media interviews, and via political advertising. In the 1960s, in the UK and the US for example, the most important journalists reporting on the campaign were “on the bus” with the candidate traveling from one campaign venue to another. Common perspectives on a candidate’s or party leader’s abilities and accomplishments often emerged; the term “pack journalism” was used to describe how those collective judgments emerged among journalists who traveled together, like wolves, in a pack.

Apart from the increasing reliance on air transport to get candidates and party leaders from one campaign event to another, a bigger change was felt with the arrival of the → *Internet* as a widely available source of campaign information used by citizens, journalists, and strategists. Candidates have more to gain and more to lose in this new media environment. The technology-driven reality check provided by the occasional transmission of citizens’ candid videos of political gatherings can potentially dramatically alter the campaign or the chances of a candidate if a gaffe or inappropriate remark ends up posted online. Citizens can also become actively involved in interacting with the candidates’ campaigns while never leaving their computer. In many countries nowadays politically interested citizens can have a potentially greater voice and impact on the day-to-day campaign agenda simply by consistently offering their opinions and developing a reputation online (→ E-Democracy).

Success is measured by the volume of hits at a website or the times that new news spills over from the website into the mainstream campaign media agenda and causes others to recognize it and respond. Blogs have become very popular and have created new ways of campaigning and even more opportunities for grassroots organizing and fundraising (→ Blogger). Mobile telephones and text messaging (SMS) as well as direct marketing

mailings and email spamming are also used for mobilizing and influencing voters. For example, during the 2007 French presidential campaign, the winning candidate Sarkozy sent unsolicited emails to more than a million voters (→ Political Marketing).

A key characteristic of media convergence is an *emphasis on visuals* (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). We may expect more visuals, in relation to text, in the future. Visuals play a vital role in political learning, as Doris Graber's (2001) research demonstrates, and in the retention and understanding of political information. As television and the Internet become more graphic and visual and less text-driven, there will be new forms of political learning (→ Political Knowledge). Unsophisticated viewers differ from sophisticated viewers in handling messages that contain complex and possibly contradictory verbal and visual cues. The new media environment for election campaign communication will have implications for both groups (→ Visual Communication; Television, Visual Characteristics of).

With the arrival of *virtual worlds* in 2003, such as [www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com), candidates, protestors, campaigns, and corporations have opportunities to reinvent themselves online in a virtual space that leading business publications are now claiming is the edge marketing of the future (→ Avatars and Agents). Virtual worlds face many of the same problems of governance and empowerment as can be found in the real world. Recent election campaigns in a number of countries around the world, such as France, Japan, and the US, have been the subject of activity in the virtual world. There has also been discussion of challenges posed to those activities by regulations in the real world. In Japan, for example, the strict regulations guiding the forms of campaigning in the real world meant that one politician had to shut down his virtual world office during the official campaign period.

As the early onset of the 2008 US presidential elections has demonstrated, with numerous internal party debates among the candidates, television news is moving to accommodate and feature the new media. One of the new developments in summer 2007 in one nationally televised debate among the many contenders in the field of Democratic Party candidates was → CNN's decision to cooperate with YouTube to feature questions to the candidates from viewers via YouTube. Some viewers whose questions were aired were also brought into the studio to comment on the debate's content and new format. Overall, the post-debate coverage evaluated this new format quite positively, suggesting that the combination of old and new media brings excitement into the debate because of the direct involvement of citizens in the campaign process. We can therefore expect more efforts to create new formats with old and new media, and not only in the US.

Election campaign communication is a vitally important part of the electoral process. It has become increasingly important to electoral outcomes over the decades in advanced democracies, as voters have shown themselves to be more volatile and willing to switch parties or candidates between and during election campaigns (Dalton 2000). Given the new media landscape, we may anticipate more voter involvement in creating election campaign communication in the future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Bandwagon Effect ▶ BBC ▶ Blogger ▶ Candidate Image ▶ CNN ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Internet



▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Issue Voting ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Marketing  
 ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ News Values  
 ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Advertising  
 ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Communication  
 Systems ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political  
 Efficacy ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Political  
 Persuasion ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Selective  
 Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Soft News ▶ Televised  
 Debates ▶ Television News ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Two-Step Flow  
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## Election Polls and Forecasts

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The history of survey research is inseparably entwined with the development of election polling. As early as 1904, social scientists completed the first quantitative study focusing on the constituency of the Social Democratic Party in Germany. The breakthrough of the representative survey method in the year 1936 was brought about by the spectacularly successful election forecasts published by researchers George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and Archibald Crossley prior to the US presidential elections of that same year (→ Election Surveys). From the start, election forecasts contributed significantly to both public acceptance of modern survey research and new methodological advances, since they offered researchers the rare opportunity to prove the efficacy of the representative survey method (→ Survey).

Over the course of the past few decades, the methodological approaches employed in election polling have diverged strongly (→ Public Opinion Polling). Today, election forecasts are based on face-to-face surveys, or on telephone surveys or, most recently, on online surveys. In this regard, we must fundamentally distinguish between exit polls – in other words, post-election surveys conducted among voters immediately upon leaving the polling station – and election surveys that are completed prior to an election and that, as a rule, employ the same interviewing methods as are used in representative surveys on other issues.

Almost right from the start, it was suspected that election forecasts might have an influence on voting behavior – a suspicion that often went hand in hand with the concern that election polls actually represented an illegitimate way of manipulating the electoral decision-making process. In the US, this seems likely because voting is time-lagged from region to region. When polling stations on the East Coast close and the initial results are announced, the polling stations on the West Coast are still open so that it is possible that the publication of early results or exit polls has an effect on voters who are still going to cast their vote.

Published election polls and forecasts are supposed to shape voters' preferences and prompt tactical voting. A → *bandwagon effect* might occur when published poll results are demonstrating that a particular party or candidate is clearly leading in the race. In that case, voters might change their vote intentions in favor of the leader. However, there is also the possibility that the polls are stimulating an → *underdog effect*, i.e., changing

voting intentions in favor of the parties or candidates that are trailing behind. Published poll results are also supposed to affect voter *turnout* and thus increase mobilization or abstention, depending on the political circumstances of the election.

A number of studies have examined whether publishing election surveys affect voter behavior. Based on a thorough → meta-analysis of relevant empirical research, Hardmeier (in press) concludes that the impact of polls on voter turnout is rather marginal and that there is also no strong effect on voting intentions. The empirical evidence speaks for a weak bandwagon effect rather than for an underdog effect. If poll effects occur, they are more likely on undecided voters and on people with weak or no predispositions. In the light of these results, fears expressed in public debate about the manipulation potential of polls are exaggerated in most cases.

The reason why election polls have less impact on voter behavior than is often assumed is illustrated by experiments examining the persuasive influence of survey statistics as compared to illustrative single cases. As the findings show, exemplifying illustrations – e.g., remarks of passers-by interviewed on the street – have much stronger effects on people's opinion formation than statements based on representative statistics (Brosius & Bathelt 1994; Daschmann 2000). Many people appear to have great difficulties in grasping the significance of statistical data in day-to-day life. Concrete single cases seem considerably more accessible and thus more convincing than abstract numbers (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of).

Nonetheless, parties and candidates are frequently suspected of launching polls in order to improve their chances in the election campaign race. Similarly, mass media are sometimes falsely accused of publishing poll results that could be instrumental in furthering the political interests of their sponsors. In any event, election polls and forecasts, because of their high → news value, are a preferred topic of campaign coverage and serve media interest insofar as they attract audience attention (→ Elections and Media, History of; Polls and the Media).

Although most voters are unimpressed by election polls, this does not mean that their influence on the course of an election campaign is generally negligible. Even if survey results have only weak *direct* effects on voters, there are still indications – albeit no certain proof – that election polls could, under certain circumstances, have a considerable *indirect* impact. In contrast to the majority of the population, journalists are used to dealing with survey data. Poll results may thus prompt journalists to change their definition of the political situation and ultimately alter the basic tenor of their reporting. Hence, the population's voting behavior could be influenced by the overall tenor of media campaign reporting – i.e., not just reporting on survey findings, but on the political situation as a whole (→ Election Campaign Communication; Political Persuasion).

In most democratic countries, therefore, the question of whether it ought to be forbidden to publish the results of election polls in the final weeks prior to an election has occasionally been the subject of heated public debate. Almost half of the 78 countries covered by a worldwide survey have embargoes on the publication of poll results on or prior to election day (Spangenberg 2003). In many countries, however, calling for such bans is legally problematic – and also seems dubious from a democratic viewpoint. On the one hand, it does not contradict the principle of democracy when tactically minded voters obtain information on the strength of the parties or candidates and then make

their decision in light of this information. On the other hand, survey findings represent only one of many different kinds of public statements made on the presumable outcome of an election. Forbidding their publication would mean suppressing the only scientifically based information and allowing less reliable statements, speculations, and contentions based on personal opinion and hearsay to go uncontradicted.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandwagon Effect ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Elections and Media, History of ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ News Values ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Survey ▶ Underdog Effect

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# **Election Surveys**

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Election research has played a decisive part in the development of the methods of → survey research from the beginning. More than market and media research, election research has awoken, in a special way, the curiosity and the ambition of researchers, and thus strongly affected empirical social research. It is significant that the breakthroughs of both the modern method of the representative survey and of empirical methods in communication research are connected with studies in electoral choice (→ Research Methods).

## **HISTORY**

The first attempts at analyzing elections using statistical methods can be traced back to the early twentieth century. In 1905, the German researcher R. Blank published a detailed social science analysis of the social democratic party's electorate (Blank 1905). A decade later, attempts began to predict future electoral behavior on the basis of pre-election polls. In 1916, an American magazine, *Literary Digest*, began to conduct write-in mass surveys

before presidential elections, so-called “straw polls.” This endeavor became rather gigantic over the years, with 20 million ballot forms being sent to addresses taken from telephone registers and automobile licensing offices in the election year of 1932.

At the same time, another approach to studying consumer behavior had established itself in business life since the 1920s: interviewing a few hundred people, but taking care that the interviewed people exactly reproduced, in reduced size, the socio-demographic structure of the population at large (→ Sampling, Nonrandom; Sampling, Random). There was also at this time a shift from sending out questionnaires by mail to interviewing face-to-face (→ Interview, Standardized).

The researchers George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and Archibald Crossley first applied this method to the prediction of election results in the US presidential election in 1936. They predicted Franklin D. Roosevelt’s victory, while *Literary Digest* had anticipated Republican candidate Alf Landon would win. Roosevelt made it with a clear margin. Gallup, Roper, and Crossley had demonstrated that it was not crucial to interview as many individuals as possible to reproduce the people’s opinion correctly, but that, given an appropriate representative selection of respondents, a few thousand interviews would suffice to know, with computable confidence, what a population of millions thought – Gallup had interviewed 6,000.

The three avoided two crucial methodological mistakes that caused the failure of the *Literary Digest’s* forecast:

- 1 Respondent selection relied on telephone registers and the files of car licensing authorities. The share of well-to-do people was above average among the respondents chosen in this manner, and the well-to-do voted Republican to a larger degree than the average population.
- 2 The method of the write-in questionnaire further created problems: only a minority of the people contacted did indeed fill in and send back the postcards, and those who sent them back were not representative of the total sample. The problem of self-selection is considered an especially serious disadvantage of write-in and most online surveys to this day. The principles applied by Gallup reduced the detrimental effect of self-selection considerably and are regarded to this day as the methodological bases of representative surveys (→ Public Opinion Polling).

The 1944 election study *The people’s choice* by → Paul F. Lazarsfeld is of crucial significance for the development of communication research. Lazarsfeld studied voters’ decision-making and the effects of media coverage on voting behavior in a broadly designed six-wave panel survey (a panel survey is one that allows for the repeated interviewing of the same respondents over a period of time; Lazarsfeld et al. 1944). Several influential communication theories grew out of the results of this study, among them the hypothesis of a → two-step flow of communication (→ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968; Media Effects, History of).

Very soon after George Gallup’s success in 1936, election surveys became a fixed quantity in the media’s election coverage, at first in the USA and after World War II in western Europe also. Today, election surveys are conducted in almost all democratic states. From the start, the institutes conducting election surveys were confronted with the

allegation that the publication of their results affected the democratic process and thus interfered with the voters' free decision. Studies, however, have clearly shown that the effect of published election survey results is in fact weak (→ Election Polls and Forecasts). For this reason, and because of fundamental judicial considerations, repeated attempts to ban the publication of election survey results before elections have failed in several countries. Nevertheless, such attempts are still made time and again, and some democratic countries sustain such bans (Donsbach 2001).

## EXIT POLLS AND PRE-ELECTION SURVEYS

Today, there are two basically different types of election surveys: exit polls and pre-election surveys, with the former usually dominating media coverage on election day, while the latter are more important for in-depth analyses of the background of elections. The method of the *exit polls* was essentially developed in the 1960s by the American researcher Warren Mitofsky, who was responsible for the election coverage of the US television network CBS. In exit polls a representative sample of voters is interviewed immediately upon leaving the polling station. Results are published before the first returns come in on election night. They mostly allow a very precise estimate of the election result. In countries where it is doubtful whether the vote count is conducted correctly, exit polls are also a good control on the official electoral process, provided they can be conducted independently.

In contrast, *pre-election surveys* use the same methods as surveys on other subjects. They are one of the few situations that allow survey research firms to test the validity of their methods using verifiable external criteria. Pre-election surveys today are conducted in many countries with the traditional method of the face-to-face interview. In the USA and many other western countries, however, telephone interviewing has come to dominate. For some years, there has been an increasing number of experiments with online surveys, but in spite of some spectacular success (Martin et al. 2005, 359), telephone and face-to-face surveys appear to be more reliable at this stage. Pre-election polls offer a much more detailed analytical potential than exit polls, especially when conducted as panel studies, which can be considered the only truly reliable basis for the analysis of changing electoral preferences.

## METHODOLOGICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PRE-ELECTION POLLS

The public's expectations for the precision of pre-election surveys are especially high. This increases the risk for the research institutes active in this field to be publicly accused of failure. To meet the high expectations, the institutes conduct election surveys with a considerable methodological expenditure. The following are among the methods applied in these surveys.

In some countries, the shares of parties or candidates cannot simply be determined by the question, "If the election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?" Depending on the electoral system, whole series of questions may be necessary. In Germany, for instance, every voter has two votes, one to choose a local candidate for parliament, and the other to determine a party's number of seats. Questions to model the outcome of

an election not only have to consider both votes, but also have to account for the fact that a large share of the population is unaware of the functions of the two votes.

One of the biggest problems in predicting election outcomes is created by the fact that even shortly before election day, a considerable share of respondents is still undecided about whether they will vote, and if so, which party or candidate they will vote for. There is widespread disagreement in election research on the right procedure to deal with these *undecideds*. In many cases, they are just left out of the computation of party shares or allotted proportionally on the candidates standing for election (Mitofsky 1998), a risky procedure when an overproportionally large share of potential adherents to one of the political camps is among the undecideds. The problem seems to be somewhat smaller in countries with a two-party system than in countries with a multiparty system and proportional representation. In these systems, a method of distributing undecideds with the help of  $\rightarrow$  cluster analyses (“statistical twins”) has proven its worth.

A special problem for predicting election outcomes appears in situations in which one political camp comes under the *pressure of public opinion*, which causes its adherents to no longer (or only hesitatingly) admit to belonging to this camp in survey interviews (Noelle-Neumann 1993). In these cases, *weighting* the data according to the so-called recall question (Which party/candidate did you vote for last time?) can become necessary. The difference between the marginal results of the recall question and the actual outcome of the last election serves as the basis for the computation of the weighting factors (Noelle-Neumann & Petersen 2005).

Time and again, attempts are made to compute *long-term election forecasts* on the basis of figures acquired through experience over a long period of time. In spite of some remarkable successes of this approach (e.g., Norpoth 1995), it cannot replace traditional pre-election polls, no matter how instructive and analytically useful such procedures may otherwise be. Pre-election polls may help to control these forecast models. Attempts at combining the figures gained from long-term experience with new surveys are to be considered somewhat problematic. They may improve the precision of a pre-election poll in some cases, but they are always misleading when voting behavior, for whatever reason, does not follow the patterns observed earlier.

### PRECISION OF ELECTION POLLS

The reputation of election surveys among the public in many countries is strongly affected by a few erroneous prognoses, while the large number of correct prognoses is noticed less attentively by the media and the public. *Spectacular errors* in election forecasts, such as in the US presidential elections in 1948, 1980, and 1996, the British general election in 1992, the French presidential election in 2002, and the German parliamentary election in 2005, have always produced, aside from intensive scientific research of the causes of the failure, a public discussion of the uses of survey research as a political information medium and its quality.

Partly, these discussions are based on a misunderstanding of the *possibilities and limits of survey research*, for instance when the surveys were correct within the margins of standard error, but picked the wrong winner in a close race, as was the case with some exit polls in Germany in 2002, or when the survey results correctly showed the overall percentage shares of the vote but failed to reliably predict the resulting distribution of seats in parliament

because of a first-past-the-post electoral system, as was the case in the Indian parliamentary election in 2004.

A scientific analysis of the quality of election surveys faces the question of how their precision can be measured objectively. As early as 1949, Mosteller et al. listed eight different ways to measure the deviation of election forecasts from election outcomes in their study of the causes of Gallup's failure in predicting the result of the 1948 US presidential election. Most of these use either the difference between survey and vote shares of individual parties or candidates in percentage points or the gap between the two leading candidates as the basis of their computation.

Especially the latter are suited to the US political system, in which elections are almost always dominated by two parties or candidates. More complex modern computation models, which try to connect the various advantages of traditional methods, also assume an electoral or party system that is at least similar to the US system (e.g., Martin et al. 2005). In countries with a more complex party system, the average deviation of prognosis from actual outcome across all parties, multiplied by the largest deviation for any single party, usually provides a practical basis for analysis.

SEE ALSO: ► Cluster Analysis ► Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ► Election Campaign Communication ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Horse Race Coverage ► Interview ► Interview, Standardized ► Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ► Media Effects, History of ► Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ► Political Marketing ► Polls and the Media ► Public Opinion ► Public Opinion Polling ► Research Methods ► Sampling, Non-random ► Sampling, Random ► Spiral of Silence ► Survey ► Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Elections and Media, History of

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In mass democracies, where it is impossible for candidates to meet most voters in person, political campaigning has always relied centrally on mass media. Since the beginnings of democracy, vast resources have been committed to campaign communications, motivated by the “widespread belief that media coverage matters to the outcome of elections” (Franklin 2004, 8). Friedenberg (1997), in his history of political consultants in the US, traced mediated campaigns back to colonial elections of the mid-1700s. He suggested that the first “media blitz” in a political campaign took place during the failed presidential bid of Thomas Jefferson in 1796, in which the campaign manager flooded the targeted state of Pennsylvania “with thousands of political handbills and over 30,000 sample ballots” in an election where only 12,000 Pennsylvanians voted (Friedenberg 1997, 4).

The 1828 presidential campaign of Andrew Jackson has been widely recognized as the first orchestrated media campaign in the US. The most prominent medium of Jackson’s day was the → newspaper, and his campaign team took ample advantage of its potential. Campaign activists lobbied sympathetic editors and publishers for positive coverage, and produced an unprecedented quantity of campaign literature in the form of pamphlets, handbills, and broadsides. This literature pioneered negative advertising in its attacks on other candidates in the election, especially the incumbent, John Quincy Adams (Friedenberg 1997, 9; → Negative Campaigning). In response, his opponents issued handbills which “charged Jackson with ordering . . . executions, massacring Indians, stabbing a Samuel Jackson in the back, murdering one soldier . . . and hanging three Indians” (Jamieson 1996, 7; → Advertisement Campaign Management; Election Campaign Communication).

## RESEARCH ON US ELECTIONS

From the beginning, the mediatised campaign exerted its own logic on political life by encouraging a conflict-driven, personalized, and image-centered focus. Correspondingly, debates about whether campaigns should be image- or issue-driven began as early as the 1920s (Franklin 2004, 5). The need for careful management of media campaigns eventually gave rise to a new class of professionals: political consultants. The first *professional* → *political consultants* were Clem Whitaker and Leonora Baxter, who made their names as the advisers for the 1934 re-election campaign of California governor Frank Merriam. To undermine the image of his Democratic opponent, the writer Upton Sinclair, Whitaker, and Baxter “produced phony newsreels of staged events. In one, dozens of bedraggled hoboes [sic] leap off a freight train, presumably having arrived in the Promised Land of California. Explains one bum [sic]: ‘Sinclair says he’ll take the property of the working people and give it to us’” (Diamond & Bates 1992, 36–37).

With the rise of → television, the micro-management of candidates’ media images became increasingly important (→ Candidate Image). The need for campaigns to be image-savvy was most famously illustrated in the first *Nixon–Kennedy debate* of 1960, in which radio listeners believed that Nixon had won the debate, while TV viewers had little

doubt that Kennedy had emerged victorious (→ Televised Debates). As Jamieson (1996, 158) puts it, “Nixon’s pale complexion, the byproduct of a recent illness and inadequate make-up and lighting, his dark beard and the sweat that trickled over his upper lip and down his chin suggested a desperate person crumbling under the stress of the encounter with Kennedy.” To observers, the outcome of the Nixon–Kennedy contest highlighted the triumph of style over substance, image over issues, personality over politics, and emotional connection over rational deliberation.

Following the assassination of Kennedy and the ascent of Lyndon B. Johnson to the presidency, the power of images to pull on the heartstrings of the electorate was driven home in Johnson’s 1964 re-election campaign. He ran against the conservative Republican candidate Barry Goldwater, and his campaign produced the *most famous political ad* in the history of political broadcasting. Capitalizing on voters’ fear that Barry Goldwater might employ nuclear weapons in Vietnam, the spot juxtaposed the image of a young girl standing in a field, plucking petals from a daisy as she counts: “1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. . . . When she reaches ‘9,’ a Cape Canaveral voice begins a countdown of its own . . . At zero the camera, which throughout this second countdown has been closing on the child’s face, dissolves from her eye to a mushroom cloud that expands until it envelops the screen” (Jamieson 1996, 198). The ad, which never mentioned Barry Goldwater’s name, was aired only once, creating so much controversy that it was immediately pulled. Subsequently, however, it was shown innumerable times in news stories about the controversy. The “daisy ad” quickly became a symbol of the power of sophisticated campaign communications.

## PROFESSIONALIZATION OF CAMPAIGNS

Though much scholarly attention has been focused on the US case, the techniques developed there have slowly percolated through to media campaigning elsewhere. In most western European democracies, where paid political advertising on television is not allowed, and where public service broadcasting providers instead give the parties equal time to put across their message, the professionalization of politics and the image-consciousness that goes with it have been somewhat slower to emerge (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

Most scholars tend to agree that the first media-driven election in *the UK* took place in 1957, when the Conservative party spent a then staggering sum of £468,000 on a poster campaign which insisted that, “Life is better with the Conservatives: Don’t let Labour ruin it” (Kavanagh 1995, 49). After they won the election by a landslide, media strategy took center stage in future elections. For the 1978 general election, the Conservative party, led by Margaret Thatcher, hired the advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi, whose glossy campaign on the theme of “Labour isn’t working” ushered in the era of professionalized media electioneering in the UK (Kavanagh 1995).

Since the 1980s, the practices of campaign media management that started their life in the US have been globalized. In a process referred to as the “Americanization” or “modernization” of politics (e.g., Mancini & Swanson 1996, p. 4; → Americanization of the Media), campaigns around the world have become increasingly professionalized and personalized (→ Personalization of Campaigning). Political marketing is now a fact of life

in western industrialized democracies, in Sweden, Argentina, Israel, Japan, and beyond (→ Political Marketing). Such campaigns have often drawn on ideas and, in some cases, personnel from the United States, but have been shaped by the unique political, economic, and social circumstances of each national context. For example, in the 2005 *Palestinian authority elections*, Hamas paid a media consultant, Nashat Aqtash, \$180,000, to help them with strategy. Aqtash advised the party to change their image by “explaining that they do not hate Israelis because they are Jews. And he [attempted] to persuade influential foreigners that Hamas is essentially a peaceful organisation that was forced to fight, but is now committed to pressing its cause through politics, not violence” (McGreal 2006). Hamas also sought to soften its image at home with the launch of a television station in Gaza that includes a children’s show presented by “Uncle Hazim” and men in furry animal suits (McGreal 2006).

### FUTURE TRENDS

The strategies of campaign media management have had an influence that extends beyond the electoral context. In 1980, the author and political consultant Sidney Blumenthal coined the term, “the permanent campaign,” to describe how the emphasis on image making and strategy has colonized politics, remaking “government into an instrument designed to sustain an election official’s popularity” (Blumenthal 1980, 7). In the UK context, the New Labour government has gained a reputation for its obsession with image management and message control, earning prime minister Tony Blair the labels of “King of Spin” and “Phony Tony.” As Franklin (2004, 73) noted, in the months before the 2001 general election, Blair’s government “spent £3 million on a single advertising campaign about benefit fraud: the same as McDonald’s budget for promoting ‘Big Macs.’”

The increasing resources spent on persuading the public in elections and beyond have not, however, translated into more widespread public participation. If anything, observers lament the “crisis in public communications” (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995), reflected in a decline in conventional forms of political participation, including voting and newspaper readership. Some have linked this public apathy to an increase in negative and often deceptive campaigning. As early as 1981, Jay Blumler voiced his concern that “more and more people seem to be getting into a frame of mind where campaign propaganda is almost automatically expected to be off-putting” (1981, 59). While some scholarly evidence suggests that negative campaigning turns off voters to “shrink and polarize” the electorate (e.g., Ansolabehere & Iyengar 1996), other work suggests it may have a positive effect on voter turnout (Wattenberg & Briens 1999). Nevertheless, the emphasis on style over substance in election coverage remains a concern for observers, who worry that democracy is in danger when politicians and their policies are “branded and marketed like cornflakes or Big Macs” (Franklin 2004, 14).

In recent years, political campaigns have pinned their hopes for the revival of participation on new technologies. While the → Internet has been hailed as a revolutionary technology of emancipation, the scholarly evidence is ambiguous. Philip Howard (2005) has documented how the rise of the “hypermedia campaign,” drawing on new media technologies, including direct marketing, has led to the “managed citizen.” Howard suggests that new technologies, despite their promises of empowering the citizenry, also enable

increasingly sophisticated forms of surveillance, employed to cunning effect by hypermedia campaigners. And while citizens appear to appreciate the interactive opportunities inherent in new media campaigning, there is also evidence to suggest that such opportunities are severely circumscribed. As James Janack (2006) found, in his study of discussion on Howard Dean's campaign blog, supporters of Dean policed debate to focus it on issues of strategy and style over substance (→ Blogger). Contributors who wanted to actually discuss politics were silenced by other posters, who felt that such discussion was inappropriate. As such, the media through which electoral campaigns are channeled may change, but the debates surrounding their role in shaping political campaigns are as old as democracy itself (→ E-Democracy).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Americanization of the Media  
▶ Blogger ▶ Candidate Image ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Election Campaign Communication  
▶ Internet ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ Newspaper ▶ Personalization of Campaigning  
▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Politics  
▶ Televised Debates ▶ Television

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# Electronic Mail

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Since the 1970s, electronic mail (email) has changed from being a rudimentary method of text-based communication between a very few computer users in military research establishments, universities, and commercial telecommunications labs, to become a highly sophisticated and widespread media form. The growth of email has helped underpin not only the rise of the → Internet as a primary communicative technology of the early twenty-first century, but has also been an important contributor to the ongoing expansion of the “network society” more generally (Castells 1996). Today, email has become a basic means of communication in the everyday life of hundreds of millions of people in the developed and developing economies of the world, linking and expanding their social, cultural, political, and economic realms in ways that continue to be unforeseen and innovative; bringing new issues, problems, and opportunities to the processes of institutions and to individual lives, which are increasingly shaped by digital technologies.

Email continues to be a media that primarily uses text-based forms, but it now increasingly incorporates digital video, → photography, and sound files (→ Digital Imagery). Moreover, in the body of the text an email addressee can click on a hyperlink that will automatically direct the user to a website, or email attachments can be opened to reveal files in, for example, portable document format (PDF), which can contain large documents such as → newspapers, reports, → magazines, and → books – indeed, any media form of almost any size that is able to be digitized (→ Digital Media, History of).

It has been estimated that 60 billion emails are generated each day, and this figure grows exponentially. They are used to convey almost every conceivable message between humans (and between human and computer), and this phenomenon has been claimed to help reflect the constitutive forms of human experience (economic, cultural, and social) within the networked society (Castells 1996).

## GENESIS AND EVOLUTION OF EMAIL

As a form of communication via computers, email began in the USA in the 1960s as a method through which multiple users of large time-sharing mainframe systems could share information to enable them to work jointly on projects in a more efficient manner. The *original email users* were also its developers, working as scientists and engineers in the US Department of Defense, in the computer research institutes in the major universities, and in the research laboratories of the large telecommunications corporations. The practical utility of email allowed it to develop rapidly into networked email, where users from different computer systems were able to communicate. In 1969 the US military computer network ARPANET, which was a precursor to the Internet, further helped to drive email use and contribute to its continuing technological and practical sophistication. In 1971, Ray Tomlinson, an engineer working within the ARPANET network, began the use of the @ symbol as a means of separating the name of the user and their host machine.

The effectiveness of email as a way of interconnecting users created demand for its use on non-ARPANET systems, such as in business and in universities. This, in turn, called for more innovative computing hardware and software solutions that would allow *email communication between different network systems*. Enhanced email allowed the creation of new forms of networking between users clustered around shared interests. For example, the usenet system was developed in 1980, which allowed the categorization of emails into topics of interest. These categories formed newsgroups that enabled users to email each other on the topics that interested them. It was in these early newsgroups that acronyms such as FAQ (“frequently asked questions”) and terms such as “spam” (unsolicited email) were coined. These newsgroups, in fact, acted as “public discussion groups” – a spilling out into the public domain that further enhanced the popularity of email and fed directly into a greater use of what was, by the early 1990s, a growing Internet system.

It was around this time that the Internet and email began to shape each other’s developmental trajectory in an increasingly close nexus. Increased use of Internet-based email systems led to demand for more email accounts, which in turn spurred the growth of *Internet service providers* (ISPs). The perceived negative “control” by ISPs over the free flow of email traffic led in 1996 to the introduction of an email service called Hotmail. Developed by Sabeer Bhatia and Jack Smith, Hotmail was a free email service that could be accessed at any time or place through the open Internet. The service was bought by Microsoft in 1997 and now has over 230 million users and processes 100 million emails a day (Microsoft 2006). The success of Hotmail motivated many competitors, such as Yahoo! Mail and Google’s Gmail. In these and other systems, emails can be received and generated through mobile phones or PDAs. Internet- and networked-based systems such as short message service (SMS), instant messaging (IM), and ICQ (“I seek you”) allow users to communicate on an almost real-time basis.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

### The Optimistic View

From its earliest days as a growing media form, email has been argued to be either a positive or negative social phenomena, but there exists no real preponderance of opinion either way (→ Information Society). On the positive side, the popularity of email as part of the general networking process has been hailed by observers such as Howard Rheingold (2001) as contributing to the *creation of a “virtual community”* where the obstacles of time and space are substantially overcome by communication through computers. Email has also been argued to be a creative medium where *self-expression* took new and unexpected forms, such as through the use of “emoticons,” where “emotions” may be expressed in text by arranging printable characters into “icons,” such as :- ) to symbolize happiness. Some theorists, such as Pierre Lévy, argue that email, as part of larger computerized systems, is generating “*qualitative change in the learning process*”, whereby in “the new virtual campus, professors and students will share . . . material and informational resources. Teachers will learn along with their students and continuously update their knowledge along with their teaching skills” (2001, 151). And across the world, *network support groups* made possible through the use of email are transforming the way many

people approach issues such as illness, bereavement, trauma, or facing challenges such as giving birth, raising children with special needs, and so on (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology). The Internet hosts thousands of such networks, and creates what are argued to be constructive “communities of interest” for millions of people (→ E-Democracy).

From the point of view of business, many have grown through creative use of email as a *link to their customers* through → advertising. The trading website eBay, for example, would be a much less attractive alternative to interested parties if they were not able to get together through email to discuss the particularities of the goods or services being bought or sold. Again, from the *perspective of some businesses, email serves as a powerful strategic means* for “old” media such as television, newspapers, and radio to become “relevant” in the information age. To keep their businesses within the increasingly important digital technology connection, these media forms increasingly use email to link “old” media with the “new” by obtaining the involvement of the user or customer. Viewers, readers, and listeners of traditional media are encouraged to use email to “stay in touch” by, for example, voting on the popularity of a television program, writing letters or opinion pieces for newspapers to print, or commenting on the content of radio across the whole spectrum of its activities.

### **The Pessimistic View**

From the opposite perspective, the proliferation and increasing sophistication of email use has brought with it what many observers see to be a significant downside in a number of social, economic, and cultural realms. Prominent in this regard is the growing volume of spam, which takes up memory on individual computers, slows down overall network traffic, and “degrades” the Internet experience (Pew Internet Research 2003). It has been estimated that 75 percent of the total volume of daily email traffic is taken up by *spam* (Ferris Research 2007). Concern has also been raised over the prevalence of *phishing* through email, a practice where individuals posing as representatives of legitimate businesses, such as banks, make fraudulent attempts to gain sensitive information such as credit card details.

Email use has been blamed by some for contributing to a *decline in writing standards*, with poor grammar (and ultimately poor communication) being the result of the brevity and speed of writing that email supposedly produces (Dillon 2004). Others see it as degrading the “art of conversation,” where, again, the speed and ubiquity of email, mobile phones, instant messaging, and so on have had the effect of being face-to-face “conversation avoidance devices” (Miller 2004). Alternatively, however, it can be argued that email and other modes of electronic communication have ensured that there has never been a time when people have conversed more. This is an ongoing argument that relates quality to quantity.

This very argument feeds into another concern regarding the proliferation of email – *information overload*, where too much information creates the basis for miscommunication or noncommunication because there is simply too much data to be digested. A major issue of concern for both network architects and the wider user public is the use of email to disseminate *computer viruses*, which are created to do damage to personal computer

files as well as the large databases of commercial entities (Thompson 2004). Another growing problem, especially for those involved with the protection of civil liberties, is that of privacy. With the appropriate technology, governments are able to intercept private communication, corporations are able to read their employees' emails, ISPs can in theory capture the email traffic of those customers who use its servers, and anonymous "hacktivists" can intercept email as it journeys through possibly several routers on the way to its destination (Lyon 2001; → Hacktivism).

## FUTURE TRENDS

Most commentators see the growth of email continuing as a central feature of networked communications. However, some also identify a bifurcation in email that divides along generational and task-oriented lines. For example, surveys in advanced network economies such as South Korea and the USA show that younger people use email less and SMS, IM, and ICQ more (Lee 2005). They view email as an "older" and more "formal" mode that a previous generation grew used to. The younger demographic increasingly view it as a way to communicate with "adults" such as teachers or institutions like schools, and to convey longer and more detailed information to large groups (Pew Internet Research 2005).

Social communication with friends and peers, alternatively, is conducted through more mobile technologies (→ Mobility, Technology for). Nonetheless, much evidence suggests that diverse modes of electronic communication (including email) will become increasingly sophisticated, leading to yet more complex and complementary (or divergent) forms within the overarching dynamics of the information society. But this brings with it the caveat that forecasting in this particular instance is only ever able to be provisional, and that new forms of communication and new uses of email will present ongoing analytical and interpretive challenges.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Book ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Hacktivism ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Newspaper ▶ Photography

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## Embedded Journalists

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The concept of journalists accompanying troops into combat is not new, but the scale and manner of media operations on the battlefield transformed in the 2003 Iraq war. The change in terminology from → “war correspondent” to “embedded journalist” gave rise to debates among media, military, and other commentators about the implications for the coverage of current and future conflicts (→ Conflict as Media Content).

The origin of the term “embedded” is unclear but not specific to the Iraq war. Some Pentagon officials suggest the term originated with units having a distinct mission placed within a larger force, but others (ominously) suggest it involves fixing or placement so deep that the element is hard to get out.

Within the *Iraq context*, “embedded” combined with “journalist” to denote a correspondent traveling with and reporting on the activities of a military unit, especially one engaged in direct conflict, for the duration of the operation. Journalists not embedded with the troops (*unilateral correspondents*) were free to investigate and file reports from anywhere in the region, without military reporting restrictions but, importantly, without agreed military protection. They were like any other civilian on a battlefield the military aims to control.

Military organizations have grown aware that global, 24-hour news can be a weapon as well as a way to avoid conflict. US and UK forces pursue what they call *information operations*, with the media playing an integral part. Coverage of professional, effective combat operations not only deters adversaries but also bolsters domestic opinion (→ Public Opinion), an important factor given worldwide opposition to the 2003 war. The scale of the media operations in Iraq represented a shift away from overt → censorship toward a more subtle technique of media management (→ Communication Management). Such concerted effort may be → propaganda by another name (Miller 2004; → War Propaganda), but may reflect an increasing sophistication and media awareness among military elites (Lewis et al. 2006).

Among the thousands representing world media organizations in the Iraq region during the 2003 invasion (→ CNN; BBC), between 600 and 700 were embedded with Coalition forces. Some 80 percent of those the American organizers placed were US nationals, and British officials required that all embedded journalists they placed hold a

British passport. The one embedded reporter from the Arabic network Al Jazeera said he met with such suspicion that his reports were no more informative than others from the Coalition press centre (→ Arab Satellite TV News).

Embedded reporters gained unprecedented access to personnel and their strategic plans and received logistical assistance from the military. The American media abandoned the pooling system, and British networks, after initially agreeing to pool material, eventually followed suit. Military officials rarely subjected material to security review, and embedded journalists recalled an unprecedented degree of cooperation and openness from the military. Officials required every embedded journalist, however, to sign a document outlining restrictions on the content of reports, principally for reasons of operational security. Reporters relied on their units for transport and safety and therefore could rarely conduct independent investigations (for example, to interview Iraqi civilians).

News organizations feared that “embed” could become “in bed,” sacrificing journalistic perspective by becoming so close to and reliant on their units. There is little evidence to support the concern. On occasion an embedded story originating from military sources was incorrect. Reports of a popular uprising in Basra implied initially that the war was a liberation rather than an invasion, but Al Jazeera reporters inside the city quickly discredited the story. Embedded journalists were, however, free to clarify official briefings.

Embedded reporters brought viewers closer to combat than ever before, but the absence of images depicting casualties and death was still notable (Aday 2005; Lewis et al. 2006), partly because of military restrictions to maintain secure operations and to protect combatants’ next of kin. Even so, the news culture of western media organizations arguably shies away from portraying the brutalities of war.

Embedded journalists on the whole gave a dramatic but narrow view from the front lines, focusing on individual engagements with greater freedom, but supplying only part of a larger picture (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Intrinsicly, embedding results in personalized stories and reports of individual skirmishes at the episodic and tactical levels (Aday et al. 2005; Tumber & Palmer 2004). The strategic picture required independent reports from unilateral correspondents. The three weeks of official combat operations saw a startling casualty rate among independent reporters (→ Violence against Journalists), with at least 14 killed and many more injured, the majority as a result of so-called blue-on-blue (or friendly fire) incidents. The American administration had warned media organizations that the military would not take responsibility for, and actively discouraged the presence of, non-embedded journalists.

The risk for journalism is that embedded reporting may become the only option in conflict coverage. News organizations find embedding attractive because it can supply compelling footage, but unilateral reporters who supply a broader view of events face greater danger. During asymmetric warfare, regular troops cannot clearly identify their adversaries in civilian dress and civilian vehicles, and the casualties may include not only unilateral reporters but also the larger picture of the military conflict.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC ▶ Censorship ▶ CNN ▶ Communication Management ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Violence against Journalists ▶ War Correspondents ▶ War Propaganda

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## **Emic vs Etic Research**

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Derived from anthropological research, *emic* and *etic* describe two broad approaches to analyzing language and culture. The emic–etic duality has influenced the ways in which fields as diverse as personality psychology, consumer behavior, organizational science, and intercultural communication study cultural systems. The terms also refer to distinctive research strategies, particularly in the context of ethnographic fieldwork (→ Field Research).

*Emic* and *etic* were coined by the linguistic anthropologist Kenneth L. Pike (1954). Pike’s intent was to apply the principles of structural → linguistics to the problem of how and why language usage varies within and across cultures. The term *emics* – adapted from *phonemics* – conveys the idea that only members of a culture possess valid knowledge of their own language usage. As Pike defined it, an emic unit is any physical or mental item regarded as meaningful, real, accurate, appropriate, coherent, or relevant by the culture members themselves. Thus, the emic approach to research always starts from the “inside” of a culture. By studying the accounts, explanations, and social action that are meaningful to a group of people, researchers can better understand how symbolic communication varies from one situation to the next. A valid emic account is one that matches the consensus view of native informants. Emic accounts often require the stance of *verstehen* (→ Verstehen vs Erklären), and are typically idiographic in scope (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science).

In contrast, the term *etics* – adapted from *phonetics* – refers to concepts and descriptive systems that belong to a community of analysts. Etic units express the scientific observer’s perspective on a phenomenon, and are often thought to be valid in any culture where they

are applied. Following from this logic, etic concepts, such as “uncertainty avoidance” or the value orientation of “individualism–collectivism,” can be used to compare, classify, and explain behavior or attitudes across many different groups. The members of a culture need not agree with, nor even understand, an etic concept. Rather, a valid etic explanation is one that satisfies certain scientific criteria, such as falsifiability, replicability, and logical consistency.

In communication studies, emic and etic are referenced most often in sub-fields that focus on language use and cross-cultural communication (Sigman 1987; → Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). Due in part to its affiliation with sociolinguistics, the ethnography of speech has a long tradition of applying the concepts (→ Ethnography of Communication). For example, Philipsen (1975) used an emic approach to study what it means to “speak like a man” in one urban neighborhood. Scholars of ethnic and cross-cultural communication also employ emic- and etic-related concepts to theorize about cultural codes (Gudykunst 1997). For example, Edward Hall’s (1976) low-context/high-context message scheme is often used in etic fashion to compare communication styles across cultures.

The concepts also appear frequently in discussions of the appropriate methods to use for studying culture (→ Research Methods). According to Pike (quoted in Kaye 1994, 296), the emic/etic distinction “insists on the relationship of the observer to the data, as against an abstract science in which the observer is somehow eliminated in principle even when this would be impossible in fact” (→ Qualitative Methodology). Emic research tends to focus on a single case (or single culture), in which investigator and subjects engage interactively. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews are two of the most popular fieldwork techniques used to study emic constructs. Some ethnographic practices, such as member validation (or member check), rely heavily on the elicitation of emic accounts. Etic research, on the other hand, stresses data gathering across multiple cases or social systems. Etic data are often collected by means of tests, measures, scales, and other instruments that can be standardized and easily replicated. However, even in qualitative field research, etic concepts can be used strategically for formulating hypotheses or propositions.

Among the problems cited for the exclusive use of emic data is that they can leave the researcher immersed in the native language, unable to move up to the analytical plane. In addition, people are not always fully aware of the emic codes of their own culture. Therefore, any explanations they give of these items might be erroneous. Etic data have been criticized for being little more than the emics of observers. That is, an etic construct could simply describe the “insider” perspective of a scientific culture. In a related critique, the points of comparison gained from etic analysis may come at the cost of severe understatements of cultural difference.

Most contemporary researchers no longer view the terms as opposed or incompatible. In fact, it is now typical for the concepts to be discussed as symbiotic (Berry 1999; Headland et al. 1990; Helfrich 1999). The emic perspective alerts researchers to the “first-order” (indigenous) constructs of a culture or group, which can then be used in deriving the “second-order” constructs of a scientific community. Deployed together in research, each concept has the potential to compensate for the shortcomings of the other.

SEE ALSO: ► Ethnography of Communication ► Field Research ► Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Linguistics ► Qualitative Methodology ► Research Methods ► Verstehen vs Erklären

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## **Emotion**

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Emotion is a core part of human experience and, as such, plays a central role in numerous aspects of human communication. Contemporary communication research examines how emotion influences various communication processes and outcomes, how different aspects of communication influence diverse emotional states, and the multiple ways in which emotional states are expressed during the course of interactions.

### **CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF EMOTION**

Definitions of emotion vary widely (Solomon 2000), but there is broad agreement that emotion is a subset of the broader construct “affect,” and should be distinguished from the related construct “mood.” As forms of affect, both emotion and mood are feelings that have some valence (typically on a positive–negative continuum), some level of intensity (mild to strong), and some duration (brief to enduring). Emotions are typically episodic (provoked

by a particular circumstance), exhibit a relatively brief duration, and are comparatively intense. Alternatively, moods are typically tonic (more global and diffuse in character), are not usually tied to any particular provoking incident (and thus typically have no obvious cause), often endure for considerable periods of time, and are milder than emotions.

Moods are typically background states of which people may be only vaguely aware; moods generally have few direct motivational consequences. When moods influence behavior, they typically do so through subtle effects on perception, memory, information integration, and other forms of information processing (Forgas 2001). Emotions, however, have comparatively *strong and direct motivational implications*, arousing the distinct motivational and behavioral orientations termed “action tendencies,” biologically based behavioral responses that help organisms cope adaptively with emotion-eliciting environmental demands (e.g., the action tendency for fear is flight; the action tendency for anger is attack). Action tendencies provide orientations to action, not automatically executed behavioral programs; an aroused action tendency may be suppressed, ignored, or transformed rather than acted upon.

Although virtually all conceptualizations of emotion include the elements of feeling (especially valence) and action tendency, theorists diverge with regard to the essential nature of the emotions (for review, see Guerrero et al. 1998). Some maintain that emotions are categorically *distinct states*; proponents of this view hold that there is a small number of “basic emotions” (e.g., happiness, anger, fear, sadness, surprise, disgust), each of which consists of distinct (and discrete) patterns of feeling, arousal, and expression that are culturally universal. Others conceptualize *emotions as fluid, fuzzy conditions* best characterized as intersections of several different dimensions, such as valence (positive–negative), activation (active–passive), and intensity (mild–strong). A third perspective, the *prototype approach*, incorporates elements of both these approaches by maintaining that there is a small number of prototypical emotions, each of which consists of several distinguishing features (e.g., distinct feelings, → cognitions, physiological reactions, expressive behaviors); in turn, each core emotion encompasses a family of related emotions that differ from one another on one or more dimensions (e.g., the “joy” family encompasses amusement, enthusiasm, contentment, pride, etc.).

Contemporary theories often treat *emotion as a syndrome* that is constituted from several components (Parkinson 1995). There is general agreement that the most complete emotional experience is characterized by a distinctive (1) feeling state (a sensed subjective experience that is relatively brief and intense), (2) action tendency (motivational orientation), (3) set of cognitions (appraisals of the environment), (4) collection of expressive behaviors (including nonverbal, paraverbal, and/or verbal signals and symbols), and (5) physiological state (including patterns of neuroendocrine, cardiovascular, and respiratory responses). Theorists vary on which (if any) of these components are necessary (or sufficient) for emotional experience, and different theories give distinctive weights to each component in their depictions of emotional phenomena.

## THEORIES OF EMOTION

Four broad perspectives inform most current theories of and research on emotion: the Darwinian perspective, the Jamesian perspective, the cognitive perspective, and the social

constructionist perspective (Cornelius 1996). Each of these has had a significant influence in areas of communication research.

### **The Darwinian Perspective**

Grounded in Darwin's *Expression of the emotions in man and animals* (1872/1965), the Darwinian perspective maintains that emotions are universal (species-wide) response patterns that developed over the course of evolution. These response patterns function to help the organism cope with (and survive) persistent environmental challenges. Viewing emotions as adjustment mechanisms leads to a focus on the action tendencies and expressive behaviors (i.e., facial displays, gestures, vocalizations) associated with particular emotions since these are the vehicles through which coping occurs; the physiological response patterns associated with emotions also receive attention by some Darwinians. Because they are products of evolution, all humans should share the same emotions (especially the same set of basic emotions) and should experience and express these in similar ways. Further, because the genetically based patterns of expression for particular emotions are universal, these expressions serve an informative function (communicating the organism's internal experience), as well as an adaptive function.

Some research in this tradition focuses on identifying and assessing the universality of facial expressions for a variety of basic emotions, and considerable evidence indicates there are notable cross-cultural similarities in the facial displays associated with several distinct emotions (→ Facial Expressions). Other research suggests substantial cross-cultural universals in the meanings (i.e., experience) of different emotions, a finding consistent with the notion that basic emotions represent species-wide semantic primitives. Darwinians recognize, of course, that people do not always fully express every emotion they experience, nor does every emotional expression correspond to an experienced emotion. These facts are reconciled with the claim of universals in emotional experience and expression through the notion of "display rules," "socially learned, often culturally different, rules about the management of expression, about who can show which emotion to whom and when they can do so" (Ekman 2003, 4). The Darwinian perspective is evident in communication research examining social implications of spontaneous, socialized (rule-governed), and strategic (planned) expression of emotion, especially in deception contexts (Buck & VanLear 2002; → Deceptive Message Production).

### **The Jamesian Perspective**

The Jamesian perspective, inspired by the speculations of William James (1884), is also informed by evolutionary theory and assumes that emotions evolved as adaptive mechanisms that facilitate *copied with environmental demands*; however, it assumes that emotional experiences arise as a consequence of bodily reactions. Accordingly, bodily responses – including facial expressions, postural changes, neurological activity, and visceral reactions (e.g., changes in heart rate, blood pressure, respiration, and other autonomic activity) – follow directly from the perception of an "exciting fact" (i.e., an external stimulus), and the organism's sensing of these bodily responses *is* the emotion.

On this view, “we do not smile because we are happy. Instead, we are happy because we smile, and also angry because we frown, sad because we sit slumped and listless, and so forth, for all emotions” (Laird & Bresler 1992, 213).

One point of division within this perspective concerns the physiological (especially autonomic) specificity of different emotions. Some Jamesians hold that each emotion encompasses a distinct pattern of physiological arousal, it is the unique physiological pattern associated with a particular emotion that people experience as a discrete emotional state. Consistent with this view, some tests of the *facial feedback hypothesis* have found reliable changes in subjective feelings and autonomic activity when people pose certain facial and postural expressions of emotion; emotional experiences appear to follow these expressions. Communication scholars have observed that because people engaged in face-to-face interaction tend to mimic one another’s expressions, one implication of the facial feedback hypothesis is the social contagion of emotion; that is, an emotional state may be passed from one person to another through the unconscious mimicry of the other’s facial expressions and body positions (Cappella 1993).

*Empirical evidence* regarding the autonomic specificity of different emotions is mixed; although autonomic activity reliably differentiates negative from positive emotional experiences, specific emotions have not been reliably differentiated by distinct patterns of autonomic arousal. Thus, a second group of Jamesian theorists suggests that although physiological arousal is a necessary condition for emotional experience, and may precede that experience, the arousal associated with most emotions is undifferentiated and must be interpreted or labeled to acquire significance. For example, Schachter’s (1964) two-factor theory of emotion maintains that undifferentiated arousal gives rise to searches for the cause of the arousal, with individuals examining features of the setting, the status of goal-directed behavior, and other contextual cues in the effort to label the arousal. In communication scholarship, this multifactor Jamesian view of emotional experience is best represented in Zillman’s → excitation transfer theory and three-factor theory of emotion; these frameworks provide explanations for the emotional effects of media exposure, among other emotion-related communicative phenomena.

### **Cognitive or Appraisal Theories**

A third perspective on emotion, cognitive or appraisal theories, maintains that bodily reactions are generated as consequences of the individual’s cognitive interpretation (appraisal) of the situation (→ Appraisal Theory). These theories view emotions as arising from an individual’s *cognitive evaluation of a situation* and its appraised implications for personal well-being. Because appraisal theories view emotion as generated by cognitive evaluations of specific person–environment relationships, different patterns of appraisal about how the environment affects well-being lead to the experience of distinct emotions. Associated with the cognitive appraisals, subjective feelings, and consequent physiological activity that constitute the emotional experience are action tendencies that function to help the person cope adaptively with the emotion-arousing event.

Research within the cognitive perspective addresses a variety of issues, including the general dimensions along which events are appraised, the specific appraisal patterns associated with particular emotions, how emotional reactions are altered through modifying



appraisals, and the consequences for action that follow from particular appraisals and emotions (see review by Smith & Kirby 2001). Communication scholars have utilized the cognitive perspective to explore how appraisals and their attendant emotions influence – and are influenced by – interaction goals, message processing, and message use in a variety of social settings (MacGeorge 2001).

### **The Social Constructionist Perspective**

A fourth approach to emotion, the social constructionist perspective, conceptualizes emotions as *transitory social roles* enacted by people in particular, socially defined settings (Averill 1980). Action tendencies and patterns of expressive behavior receive focused attention within this viewpoint, but social constructionists see emotions originating in cultural conventions about the feelings and actions that are appropriate in particular social situations. Thus, the social constructionist perspective denies (or de-emphasizes) universals in emotional experience and expression, instead suggesting that the character of emotional experiences and modes of expression for these experiences are developed within particular communities. Emotions – particular patterns of thought, action, and feeling – are socially recognized and constituted roles within a community. Thus, “being angry,” for example, means taking on the role of an “angry person” – a role that includes particular actions (e.g., threatening others), expressions (e.g., a contorted face), and cognitions (e.g., seeing oneself as demeaned by an unwarranted insult) that are conventionally associated with anger within a given community. As such, emotions are social institutions for accomplishing social functions (→ Emotion and Discourse).

Research within this perspective focuses on identifying the emotions common within particular communities, detailing the social circumstances associated with the experience and expression of those emotions, and documenting the community’s rules governing legitimate occasions for, and expressions of, particular emotions. In communication research, the social constructionist perspective on emotion is most visible in research examining aspects of “emotion labor,” the notion that the emotional experiences and expressions of individuals in organizational contexts are heavily regulated by organizational norms and rules (→ Emotion and Communication in Organizations).

## **EMOTION IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

In most communication research, emotion is treated in one of three manners: (1) as a dependent variable influenced by some aspect of the communication content or process (e.g., effects of media content on fear reactions; effects of interactional synchrony on feelings experienced by interaction participants), (2) as an independent variable that influences some aspect of the communication process (e.g., effects of anxiety on verbal performances; effects of anger on verbal aggression), or (3) as the focal or background content of communicative behavior (e.g., expressions of happiness during greetings; behavioral leakages that signal anxiety during an interview) that conveys information about internal states of actors.

The contributions of different theories of emotion to communication research are most evident when emotion is considered a *dependent variable* impacted by communica-

tion processes and contents. Creating, changing, moderating, and intensifying others' emotions is a common objective for communication. For example, → advertising research regularly examines how the form and content of ads can generate moods or emotions so that these feelings can (1) become associated with a particular product, person, or image, or (2) influence the processing and outcomes of particular persuasive messages that are presented in conjunction with or subsequent to the affect-arousing stimulus (→ Advertising, Emotions in). An important thread of → persuasion research examines the aspects of messages and situations that reliably create perceptions (appraisals) of threat and feelings of fear, anxiety, and concern (Witte & Allen 2000), as well as effects of these emotions on the processing and outcomes of associated persuasive appeals. Other research examines the properties of fear-arousing media entertainment and its effects on various audiences; there is also research examining how media entertainment produces humor, mirth, and other positive emotions in audiences and the diverse effects of these emotions (→ Emotions, Media Effects on). Still other research examines message strategies intended to help those who are sad, anxious, fearful, or otherwise distressed (→ Comforting Communication).

Communication research examining emotion as an *independent variable* seeks to understand how emotional (or affective) states influence communication processes and outcomes. For example, considerable attention has been given to how various emotions and moods influence message production (Burlison & Planalp 2000) and message processing (Dillard & Nabi 2006). Other research examines how specific emotions impact particular communicative behaviors (e.g., the effects of anxiety on speech preparation, presentation, and outcomes; → Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety). Emotion can play a varied role with respect to communication, acting as a motivator (focusing and directing communicative activities), an energizer (enhancing the speed, fluency, or accuracy of communicative activities), or a disruptor (interfering with the conduct of communicative activities).

Finally, a substantial body of communication research treats emotion as the *content or substance of communicative encounters*; emotion is what people convey (both intentionally and unintentionally) during interactions. This research tradition addresses numerous issues, including how and why emotion is communicated, the nature of the verbal and nonverbal vehicles through which emotion is conveyed, the occasions for the expression of various emotions, the spontaneous vs strategic expression of emotion, the function of emotional expressions in the regulation of interactions, and the constitution of emotional meanings within interactions (for review of these and related issues, see Planalp 1999).

Emotion is inseparable from communication, just as it is from human life. The fundamental questions confronting scholars thus concern how the relationships between communication and emotion should be conceptualized and studied. Our understanding of how communication influences emotion will be deepened by improved theories of emotion; these will help us better appreciate the nature of emotional experiences and expressions, the sources and consequences of these, and how varied aspects of communication influence these. Our understanding of how emotion influences communication will be deepened by improved theories of core communication processes; these will help us better appreciate the mechanisms through which emotional arousal motivates, energizes, and disrupts particular communicative activities. And our understanding of how communication conveys emotion will be deepened by improved theories of both

emotion and communication; these will help us better appreciate how, when, and why emotions are experienced and expressed by people as they interact.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Emotions in ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Cognition  
▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety  
▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Emotion and Communication in Organizations ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Persuasion

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# Emotion and Communication in Organizations

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Emotional communication is central to many jobs (→ Emotion). Stockbrokers express aggression, nurses communicate care, and emotions such as shame, pride, and fear are central in organizational evaluation. Nonetheless, organization studies have traditionally written out emotion, treating it as a private issue, a barrier to effectiveness, or something that should be controlled (→ Organizational Communication). Early research suggested that organizations were and should be rational, scientific entities (→ Bureaucracy and Communication). In this paradigm, if emotions were examined, they were measured as variables of job satisfaction, morale, or commitment. Furthermore, emotions have traditionally been subjugated to the private, personal, feminine sphere (→ Feminist and Gender Studies).

Despite this early resistance, in the past 15 years, increasing numbers of scholars from communication, management, sociology, and psychology have examined emotion formation, expression, and control in the workplace. Researchers have explored how emergent work feelings are an integral part of organizational life (Mumby & Putnam 1992) and how emotional display and “emotional intelligence” (Goleman 1995) are co-opted by organizations to achieve an economic mission. As such, researchers have recognized that emotions are a core part of organizing and that emotionality is not the opposite of rationality or cognition (Planalp 1999), but, rather, is part of organizational processes.

## KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

A communicative approach to emotion and organizations emphasizes several key issues (Waldron 1994). First, emotion is not just a reaction, but functions as both a performance and a rhetorical act that achieves specific objectives. Second, emotion is an interactive, negotiated process that is continuously experienced across work groups and relationships. Third, communication not only serves as emotional packaging, but fundamentally constructs feelings. Through interaction and storytelling, employees negotiate cultural expectations of emotion, interpret the emotional displays of others, recreate and make sense of past emotional events, and elicit emotion in others.

Emotions have *several components*, which include (1) a cognitive appraisal of a situation, event, or object (→ Cognition; Appraisal Theory), (2) a feeling of action-readiness, (3) internal feelings, and (4) external physical characteristics. “Feelings” are generally considered subjective experiences that reside in individuals. “Emotions,” in contrast, generally refer to the external display of the affected state, the meaning of which is negotiated and constructed through organizational norms. Emotions are connected to direct objects or causes, while “moods” refer to enduring pleasant or unpleasant feelings with no direct object. The term “affect,” often connected to concepts such as job satisfaction and morale, is usually considered to be a valence that is determined by the appraisal of good or bad.

## **RESEARCH AREAS**

### **Stress and Burnout**

Burnout is generally considered to be a three-dimensional concept characterized by (1) emotional exhaustion (or a “wearing out” from a job), (2) depersonalization or a negative shift in responses to others, particularly clients, and (3) a decreased sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach 1982). Burnout is especially linked to professions that require high levels of client contact, such as teaching, social work, and human service work. Additionally, burnout has been associated with role conflict, close contact with emotional clients, work overload, cognitive dissonance, and lack of organizational identification. Communicative factors that mitigate burnout include social support, strong superior–subordinate relationships, participation in decision-making, and high levels of organizational identification.

Kathy Miller and her colleagues conducted several foundational organizational communication studies of burnout, and operationalized empathy as a two-pronged concept consisting of (1) emotional contagion, in which the caregiver experiences emotional responses parallel to the client’s emotion, and (2) empathic concern, which is a concern about the welfare of the other without feeling parallel emotions of the other. While empathic concern leads to increased satisfaction and decreased burnout, emotional contagion is counterproductive, as it leads to the depersonalization of clients and burnout for the worker (Miller et al. 1988).

### **Emotional Labor**

Sociologist Arlie Hochschild is recognized as being the founder of the emotion labor literature. In her study of the emotional display rules of Delta flight attendants, Hochschild (1983) distinguishes between emotion management and emotion labor. “Emotion management” is the effort that individuals put into making their private feelings align with socially accepted norms, such as looking sad at a funeral or jovial at a party. “Emotion labor” is the commercial exploitation of this process, as when employees are paid to smile, laugh, be polite, or be caring. The bulk of the emotion labor literature focuses upon professions in which employees put on a happy face, such as Disney employees, cruise staff, and waiters. Other research has examined professionals who feign negative or disinterested emotions, such as bill collectors or police officers, as well as health-care workers, who control emotions of disgust and express care.

Communication researchers have examined emotion labor among a variety of professions, including emergency communication call-takers (Shuler & Sypher 2000), teachers (Miller 2002), firefighters (Scott & Myers 2005), and correctional officers (Tracy 2005), among others. This research highlights the importance of everyday activities and organizational structures for socially constructing emotion norms, the purposeful selection and socialization of workers to exhibit certain emotions, the importance of social support in times of organizational tragedy, and the ways employees communicatively deal with emotion labor through storytelling, joking, and venting.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

A concept closely connected to emotion management is emotional intelligence (sometimes called EQ). EQ is a big business, producing consultants, scholarly research, and popular press books. The concept is based upon the idea that individuals have “multiple” intelligences and that rationality and emotionality are complementary rather than contradictory.

In the popular press book *Emotional intelligence*, science journalist Daniel Goleman (1995) summarizes the research, claiming that emotionally intelligent people: (1) know their emotions; (2) manage their emotions; (3) motivate themselves; (4) recognize emotions in others; and (5) can handle relationships. While the empirical research backing some of these claims is tenuous (see Dougherty & Krone 2002), research does suggest that emotionally intelligent people can identify and perceive emotion in self and others (e.g., have empathy), and understand, shape, and channel emotions successfully (Fineman 2006).

### **Bounded Emotionality and Compassion**

“Bounded emotionality” is likely the most referenced emotion and organizing concept emanating from the communication field. In contrast to prevailing views of emotion as either a pathology (e.g., burnout) or something to be rationally managed, bounded emotionality provides an “alternative mode of organizing in which nurturance, caring, community, supportiveness, and interrelatedness are fused with individual responsibility to shape organizational experiences” (Mumby & Putnam 1992, 474). The concept frames emotion in organizations not as a commodity to be controlled but as “work feelings” that are integral to the workplace.

Likewise, research has focused on how emotion, in the form of compassion, can constitute an ameliorative to organizational and employee pain. Compassion includes noticing another’s suffering, imagining the feeling of that person, and easing that pain through verbal and nonverbal communicative responses. Significant compassionate encounters rely on the degree to which individuals are attuned to provide compassion and the amount of organizational support of this behavior. Dutton et al. (2006) have developed a theory of compassion organizing which suggests that organizational structural features can be redirected toward responding to members’ pain. Their research, along with recent work by Miller (2007), has found that caring interactions at work dramatically influence people’s experience of organizations.

### **Affective Events and Mood Theory**

Affective events theory (AET), developed by Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), has been proposed as an overarching model of emotions in organizations (Fineman 2006). The theory suggests that organizational policies, roles, and events initiate emotional responses in organizational members, which, in turn, affect members’ behaviors and performance. The empirical work associated with AET has found that performance at work is not defined by long-term attitudes about satisfaction, but by the frequency and accumulation of everyday organizational emotional highs (“uplifts”) and lows (“hassles”).

Consistent with AET, research suggests that positive and negative mood states can determine employees' attitudes and actions. Employees in negative moods are less satisfied, more burned out, and more likely to leave their job. However, those in negative moods are also likely to better process cognitive information and make finer judgments. Positive moods help facilitate creativity and boost optimism (→ Mood Management).

### **Humor and Organizing**

The connection of positive moods and organizational effectiveness has spurred research on humor, laughter, and joking in the workplace. Research has found that employees are individually motivated to engage in joking and/or find certain messages to be funny because of superiority, tension relief, or incongruity (Lynch 2002).

Humorous communication in the workplace has been found to enhance job satisfaction, provide ingroup solidarity, manage the emotions of others, help employees to cope with low-level or dangerous work, construct organizational culture, provide an opportunity to strategically avoid certain topics, issues, or people, reduce burnout and job stress, reveal organizational values and beliefs, help employees adjust to change, and provide an avenue for organizational sense-making (Tracy et al. 2006b).

### **Workplace Bullying**

While sustained attention has been paid to workplace conflict and sexual harassment, generalized emotional abuse is a recently emerging line of research (→ Organizational Conflict). Bullying is negative, persistent, and long-term hostility in the workplace that may or may not be racially or sexually motivated. Bullying is an uneven onslaught of negative behavior in which targets often find themselves unable to escape.

Bullying is largely communicative, coming in the form of insults, nonverbal contempt (e.g., eye rolling), isolation, and discounting the target's voice. Most of the workplace bullying scholarship has been pioneered by Scandinavian and British organizational psychology researchers. American communication scholars have examined the prevalence, harm, and cycle of workplace bullying, the emotional pain of abuse, resistance to bullying, and the difficulty of telling stories about abuse at work (Tracy et al. 2006a).

## **THEORETICAL CONCERNS AND CONTROVERSIES**

Researchers continually grapple with how best to conceptualize emotion. Scientific approaches link emotions to physiological, biological, and psychological impulses, suggesting that emotions derive from genetically based programs of response, instinctual bodily perturbations, facial expressions, and urges to act. The *cognitive approach* urges scholars to explore environmental variables that affect cognitive processes, which in turn affect emotions. If an encounter is congruent or incongruent with the actor's goal, the actor will feel positively or negatively, respectively.

The most prevalent approach among communication scholars is conceptualizing emotions as *socially constructed*. This standpoint suggests that emotion develops in light of linguistic labels and a repertoire of social practices that are operative within the local

moral order. Similarly, a poststructuralist standpoint highlights emotion as a subjective and interactional process, constructed through multiple contradictory and overlapping discourses (→ Constructivism; Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches).

Capturing and making sense of emotion requires *methodological ingenuity*. Organizational burnout, stress, satisfaction, and morale have primarily been measured with self-report surveys. However, most emotion and organizing research has been interpretively analyzed using qualitative data such as organizational stories, dialogue, interactions, nonverbal cues, and pictures drawn by employees (→ Qualitative Methodology). Employee stories allow emotion to be known through embedded lived experience. Ethnographers argue that to write emotionally, scholars must experiment with the format of their representations through creative writing and scholarly performances. Ellis (1991) has developed an “emotional sociology,” which aims to purposely and reflexively portray emotion and evoke those feelings in readers/audience members.

In addition to these epistemological and methodological issues, two emotion and organizing topics are marked with *controversy*. First, researchers continue to grapple with why and to what extent emotion labor is difficult and/or psychologically painful. Some research suggests that emotion labor can be enjoyable, emotionally healthy, and even fun (Shuler & Sypher 2000). People who maintain a positive outlook on life have greater immune functioning and less disease. Furthermore, because individuals often infer their attitudes and beliefs from their behaviors or actions, employees who feign pleasant emotions may be more likely to believe they are happy.

Despite this evidence, the bulk of research has associated emotion labor with *negative psychosocial effects* such as alienation, stress, burnout, depression, cynicism, role alienation, and emotional numbness (Wharton 1999). Discomfort of emotion labor has been linked to “emotive dissonance” or a clash between inner feelings and outward expression (Hochschild 1983). The acting method used also affects the pain of emotion work. “Deep acting,” wherein members internalize the prescribed emotions, is connected to alienation and burnout. Surface acting – in which members do not change their inner feelings, but put effort into changing their outward emotional expression – may not cause estrangement, but may result in an unconvincing performance. Finally, Tracy (2005) suggests that power is a key factor in understanding whether or not employees feel discomfort with emotion labor (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches). Faking low-status emotions that do not align with a preferred identity is much more difficult than feigning those that paint an employee in ways that align with dominant organizational discourses. Furthermore, members can more easily feign low-status emotions when they can also interact with one another “backstage” and resist through using “hidden transcripts.”

Last, the *emotional intelligence concept is controversial* (Fineman 2006). Questions remain over how it is best measured and whether it is distinct from other constructs. EQ has been critiqued for overstating the extent to which individuals can control and channel their own emotions and understating the extent to which EQ can be used not only for good (e.g., charismatic leadership) but also for evil (e.g., manipulative bullying). Because EQ is associated with productivity, it is the most “marketable” of all emotion and organization concepts, and has been criticized for being inappropriately commodified.



## TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

With a dramatic increase in the use of new communication technologies and alternative organizational structures (→ Telework), questions emerge about whether employees can feel emotionally connected when they are physically in *different spaces* (Fineman 2006). Future research may fruitfully examine how employees develop trust and warmth and avoid loneliness when they work in virtual organizations, telecommute, or work at home.

A second trend is the *positive psychology movement*, and its offshoot, positive organizational scholarship. This research argues that scholars have spent too much time studying what is wrong with organizations, (e.g., bullying, emotive dissonance, burnout) and that attention should be turned to positive organizational emotions (such as well-being, happiness, compassion, love, and pleasure). As such, researchers have been increasingly motivated to study the factors that contribute to optimal and positive functioning of employees and institutions, the goal of which is to enhance the quality of life for workers.

A third trend is examining *emotion and work–family interference/spillover*. Recently, individuals have been exploring how organizational emotional display expectations, as well as issues of stress, burnout, and bullying, are carried with employees when they go home at night. Likewise, women who are expected to do caring and nurturing emotion management both at home and at work have higher levels of stress and depression.

Last, while organizational research has examined the gendered nature of emotion expectations, as it stands, there is little research on emotion and organizing beyond white, professional employees. A fruitful area of future research includes examining the raced and classed nature of emotional labor expectations and characteristics of EQ (→ Organizations, Cultural Diversity in).

SEE ALSO: ► Appraisal Theory ► Bureaucracy and Communication ► Cognition ► Constructivism ► Emotion ► Feminist and Gender Studies ► Mood Management ► Organizational Communication ► Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ► Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ► Organizational Conflict ► Organizational Culture ► Organizations, Cultural Diversity in ► Qualitative Methodology ► Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ► Telework

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## Emotion and Discourse

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Human emotionality is an ongoing stream that pervades every aspect of social life, talk, conversation, and discourse. Emotions are appraisals of situations; they have somatic bodily characteristics and their expressions can take nonverbal forms (facial, vocal, posture; → Emotion). Theoretical approaches to the emotional dimensions of discourse are found within three traditions of research: psychology of emotions, sociology of emotions, and psycho- and socio-linguistics. Although Charles Darwin's pioneering work in this field emphasized that different emotions are expressed in particular ways on a vocal level as well as a facial level, the vocal level has been rather ignored, both in classical

psychological works (Tomkins 1963) and in the later development of this field. The same tendency has characterized the development of psycholinguistic research.

A number of laboratory studies of *vocal expressions of emotions* have, however, been undertaken in recent years; some are designed to measure acoustic characteristics with the aid of technological instruments; others are based on observers' coding of vocal behaviors (Pittam 1994). These studies demonstrate a relationship between emotions and their vocal expressions; between, e.g., joy, anger, fear, and different patterns of pitch, loudness, and speed.

Conversational and discourse analytical studies of vocal behavior should also be mentioned (→ Conversation Analysis). These studies focus on different displays of emotive communication, i.e., intentional expressions of feelings, rather than on emotional communication, i.e., the spontaneous, unplanned externalization of internal affects (Arndt & Janney 1991). Emotive communication is an important dimension in discourse. Most of our emotions, however, occur rapidly and below our immediate consciousness, and therefore outside the scope of our intentional planning.

The sociologists Thomas J. Scheff (1990) and Susanne Retzinger (1991) have developed a *theory of emotions in discourse* taking spontaneous vocal expressions into account. Their analysis has its starting point in a theory of interaction. Social interaction involves the building, repair, or damaging of social bonds. Self-feelings in relation to the other or others are, in other words, always involved in a process of interaction, while the emotional dimension of this process includes feelings of shame, on the one hand, and those of pride and confidence, on the other. Shame and pride are inner emotional states, which seem to be an almost continuous part of human existence.

Inspired by the psychoanalyst Helen B. Lewis, Scheff and Retzinger distinguish between *acknowledged and unacknowledged feelings of shame*. The latter refer to episodes involving feelings of shame that, while remaining unacknowledged by either party in the interaction process, nevertheless affect the course of its development in systematic ways. Feelings of shame find expression in specific paralinguistic *markers* such as stammering, repetition, extended narrative pauses, speaking in a low tone of voice, rapid speech, etc. Inspired by the work of Lewis, as well as a number of other contributions to micro-linguistics, Retzinger has assembled a list of the paralinguistic markers of shame and anger, whereas Bloch (1996) has identified paralinguistic markers of pride and joy. Markers of anger include staccato speech, loudness, and heavy stress on certain words; markers of pride include rapid, flowing speech, melodious speech, and mid-stream inhalation.

Scheff and Retzinger have developed a theory about the subtle *dynamic of shame* in discourse. Other sociologists have developed theories concerning the generation of solidarity among conversationalists through turn-taking processes and synchronization of various vocal features: pitch register and range, loudness, tempo, accent, and duration of syllables (Collins 2004).

Psycholinguistic and sociological studies of vocal expressions of emotions focus on variables such as: loudness; speed, as in rapid speech, stammering, stuttering, pauses; pitch level and range; changes in quality of voice, as in harsh voice vs soft voice; vocalizations that do not have the character of speech, e.g., sighing, coughing, laughing, in- and ex-halations; and specific linguistic patterns such as filler words, incoherent speech, and mitigations. The available, if limited, literature points up relationships

between these vocal markers and different affective states. However, these individual markers must not be confused with the emotion itself. Rather, they are to be understood as signs that, in particular contexts and given combinations, can indicate specific inner emotional states. Markers, therefore, are signs that can be ascribed meaning in the course of a contextual process of interpretation.

Many contemporary researchers show an increased awareness of emotions as active forces in social interaction, talk, and discourse. Micro-sociologists have developed theories concerning the dynamic and expression of shame, pride, and solidarity in discourse. Nevertheless, a comprehensive and systematic theory regarding the subtle structure of emotional meaning in discourse and the relationships between open and covert emotional meaning, including processes of encoding and decoding, is still not available. The growing research on emotions in interaction is a promising step toward a comprehensive theory; however, we also need to develop methodological tools to facilitate access to the different facets of emotions. The nonverbal level is an important emotional channel. This level includes not only facial and postural cues, but vocal cues as well.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Emotion ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics  
▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Telephone Talk ▶ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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## **Emotional Arousal Theory**

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Arousal is commonly construed as the experience of restlessness, excitation, and agitation. It manifests itself in heightened overt and covert bodily activities that create a readiness

for action (→ Physical Effects of Media Content). Acute states of such arousal characterize all vital emotions, and the subjective experience of these acute states is part and parcel of all strong feelings. Emotional arousal is consequently seen as an essential component of such experiences as pleasure and displeasure, sadness and happiness, love and hate, despair and elation, gaiety and dejection, rage and exultation, exhilaration and grief, frustration and triumph, merriment and fear, anger and joy, and so on (→ Emotion).

Features common to all acute emotions are that their high arousal intensity is comparatively short-lived and that they show a strong focus on both causal circumstances and motivational implications. Moods are also considered affective or emotional states that are associated with elevated arousal states. In contrast to emotions, however, moods are typified by lower arousal intensities and longer periods of persistence. Additionally, whereas emotions are instigated by apparent causes and, in turn, instigate cause-determined actions, moods lack such focus and are marked by motivational diffuseness instead.

As both the evocation of emotions and the modification of moods are essential factors in the appeal and effects of media presentations, and as the intensity of both emotions and moods is largely determined by excitatory reactivity, it is imperative to consider arousal in the context of media influence (→ Sensation Seeking; Mood Management).

### **THEORIES OF AROUSAL AND ITS FUNCTION IN EMOTION AND MOOD**

In early theories of motivation and emotion, arousal has been treated as a unitary force, energizing behavior that receives direction by independent means. In *behavior theory*, arousal was likened to an engine that drives but does not guide overt actions. The necessary guidance was considered to result from impulses that are at any given time prepotent in the habit structure, this structure being partly determined by instinct but mostly established through learning.

*Activation theory* similarly construed arousal as the behavior energizer and considered some form of cognition accountable for behavior guidance. The theory focused on activities in the brainstem reticular formation. Measured in wave patterns and rhythms of the encephalogram, states ranging from coma through sleep, drowsiness, relaxed wakefulness, and alert attentiveness to strong, excited emotions were distinguished and used to map emotion intensity.

In a *two-factor theory of emotion*, Schachter (1964) adopted the emerging dichotomy of energization by arousal and guidance by cognition. As some of the research conducted in connection with the theory involved the injection of epinephrine, an adrenal hormone that activates sympathetic excitation, arousal was implicitly operationalized as heightened sympathetic-nervous-system activity. Schachter focused on both the intero- and exteroception of arousal as emotion determinants (e.g., heart pounding, palm sweating) and suggested that this feedback indicates the intensity of feelings. He further argued that the feedback-mediated awareness of a state of arousal instigates an epistemic search for the causes of the reactions, and that the resultant cognitive appraisal of the causal circumstances allows individuals to comprehend the particular feelings or emotions they are experiencing (→ Appraisal Theory).

Zillmann (1996) proposed a *three-factor theory of emotion* that retains the distinction between energization by arousal and guidance by cognition. However, in order to explain

the origin of arousal reactions, this being left unaddressed in Schachter's theory, the guidance function is divided into a dispositional and an experiential component. The dispositional factor integrates ontogenetically fixed and acquired dispositions in accounting for the autonomic mediation of excitatory reactivity and the guidance of immediate, deliberate, overt behaviors. The experiential factor entails the cognitive evaluation of prevailing circumstances, including the appraisal of bodily feedback. In case these appraisals indicate inappropriate reactivity, this factor functions as a corrective by redirecting overt behavior and also, as far as possible, by initiating the regulation of autonomic activity.

Three-factor theory incorporates the conception of emergency emotions that implicates sympathetic dominance in the autonomic nervous system with the function of providing energy for an episode of vigorous action as needed for fight or flight. Although the conditions of modern life render most fight/flight reactions inappropriate, information about non-immediate threats to personal welfare, or about non-immediate opportunities for its enhancement, still generates strong arousal reactions that are meant to energize immediate emergency-resolving action. These strong arousal reactions become linked to all basic emotions and determine their behavioral intensity and the intensity of associated experiences.

Sympathetic arousal of both emotions and moods is controlled by brain structures integrated in the limbic system (LeDoux 1996). The episodic versus tonic arousal supply of emotions and moods is more directly mediated by different endocrine mechanisms. The high excitatory intensity of emotions is primarily a function of activity in the sympathetic adrenomedullary system with its release of catecholamines. In contrast, the low excitatory intensity of moods is primarily mediated by activity in the pituitary adrenocortical system with its release of cortical steroids. Activity in the pituitary gonadal axis with its release of gonadal steroids is likely to assist the excitatory function of both these systems (Henry 1986).

### **SENSATION SEEKING AND CONSEQUENCES OF EMOTIONS IN MEDIA COMMUNICATION**

The state of acute bodily arousal that accompanies intensely felt emotions is hedonically ambiguous and therefore liberally interpretable. When connected with fear, for instance, experienced sympathetic arousal is bound to be construed as unpleasant. When the same kind of arousal is linked to triumph, however, it will intensify the experience of genuine pleasure. Despite this hedonic plasticity of arousal, or perhaps because of it, its accumulation to extreme levels is often sought and the experience valued in its own right.

Intense excitement is sought via *exposure to the communication media* as much as through overt individual or social actions. The fact that the evocation of diverse emotions can be compacted in media presentations or in interactive media formats, such as games, actually provides optimal conditions for the creation of arousal escalations and, ultimately, for intense experiences of joyous excitement (Zillmann 2006).

Tannenbaum (1980), in pondering the tendency to maximize arousal for pleasure, placed the experience of intense arousal in juxtaposition to boredom, a state characterized by minimal arousal levels, and then proposed that essentially any jolt of arousal would be appreciated and hence sought out by persons living in the comparatively secure and often hapless environments of modern times.

Zuckerman (1979) elaborated this consideration, arguing that humans, like other primates, are genetically prepared to cope with aversive conditions on a regular basis, but that modern life deprives them of opportunities. He focused on a *need for stimulation*, essentially an inclination to seek out challenges, as an individual difference variable in order to explain why some persons are more driven than others to jump from airplanes, climb cliffs, do drugs, listen to deafening music, or watch horror movies. In Zuckerman's conceptual framework, stimulation is sought for its excitatory quality. Although such stimulation may be noxious on occasion or even most of the time, the dominant sensation of attained excitement is deemed to be one of pleasure. It seems more likely that, as arousing challenges are overcome, their termination will give impetus to pleasurable reactivity, and that the intensity of this reactivity increases with the severity of overcome challenges.

In contrast to Tannenbaum's and Zuckerman's contentions, the theory of excitation transfer does not stipulate the seeking of arousal for its own sake but explains any build-up of arousal as the unavoidable accumulation of remaining portions from preceding arousal reactions (Zillmann 1996; → Excitation Transfer Theory). Independent of the hedonic valence that may be linked to particular arousal reactions, residual sympathetic excitation from earlier reactions combines and ultimately intensifies later experiences in the progression of emotional response. If a later reaction is appraised as pleasant, an intensified euphoric reaction will be experienced. If the later reaction is deemed unpleasant, an experience of displeasure will be intensified, instead.

In this conceptual framework, noxious arousal is not sought for its immediate experiential quality. Rather, such arousal is accepted as a necessary prelude to intense joyous reactions that are evoked by the resolution of distressing events, and it is the stimulation package featuring both challenge and its triumphant management that is sought out. The phenomenon of suspense in drama, sports, reality programs, and the news, as well as in the drama of daily life, generalizes this particular "dramatic" conversion. The appeal of media violence has been similarly explained as due to terror arousal that intensifies the satisfaction experienced in the justice-restoring heroics of concluding events (Sparks & Sparks 2000).

Arousal influences permeate numerous other effects of media exposure too. It has been shown, for instance, that exposure to highly arousing pleasant erotica can facilitate social aggression more than can somewhat less arousing exposure to violence. Such findings have called into question the sole focus on media content in the creation of behavioral effects and fostered a reorientation that demands the consideration of excitatory circumstances (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Media Effects).

An illustration of arousal consequences other than emotion enhancement is, for example, the *arousal-induced attention deficit* concerning events unrelated to the specific arousal instigation. It has been observed that, within a newscast, reports that follow emotionally disturbing reports receive little attention and are poorly processed as a result. During states of acute arousal, the limited capacity for information processing is apparently preoccupied with the witnessed events that caused that state (→ News Processing and Retention).

As the hedonic quality of mood also depends on the cognitive appraisal of the prevailing circumstances, mood changes are analogously subject to transfer enhancement. Although

residual amounts of arousal from earlier moods may be comparatively small, they should nonetheless elevate the experience of different, newly materializing moods. During low arousal states of boredom, for instance, exposure to arousing dramatic programs as well as to arousing musical selections is generally preferred to exposure to less arousing stimulation. Immediate arousal supplementation is apparently an effective way to normalize and improve mood.

Mood manipulation may also serve opposite ends, however. Tranquil environments, real or mediated, are capable of dissolving arousal and thereby relax noxious tensions from preceding emotional experiences. Deliberate exposure to calming media presentations can thus remove the possibility of arousal from undesirable emotions and moods. The indicated ameliorating effect was observed, for instance, in viewers who had watched a distressing newscast. The aroused viewers expressed grievous concerns about the issues addressed in the news. Their concerns greatly diminished, however, by the intervening exposure to an emotionally calming report. The dissipation of arousal is apparently capable of reducing the intensity of apprehensions and fears. This effect seems to be well understood by news programmers, as news programs routinely conclude with light-hearted news items (→ Fear Induction through Media Content).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Information Processing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Mood Management ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Physical Effects of Media Content ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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# Emotions, Media Effects on

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Emotions are commonly understood as a complex of interactive entities encompassing subjective and objective factors and consisting of affective, cognitive, conative, and physiological components. The affective component includes the subjective experience of situations, which is connected to feelings of arousal (→ Excitation and Arousal), pleasure, or dissatisfaction (→ Emotion). The cognitive component refers to how situations relevant to emotions are perceived and evaluated (→ Cognition). The conative component is related to expressive behavior, including facial and vocal expression and gestures (→ Facial Expressions; Gestures and Kinesics; Paralanguage). Also, emotions embed action tendencies such as approach (e.g., anger) or avoidance (e.g., anxiety; → Appraisal Theory). Finally, the physiological component encompasses peripheral reactions of the body that are mediated by the autonomous nervous system (physiological arousal).

Studies on media and emotion usually follow one of two research logics. They focus either on effects on arousal and valence of emotions (dimensional view) or they explore the effects on discrete emotions such as anxiety, fear, anger, or aggressiveness (discrete emotion approach). There is no doubt that media are capable of inducing emotions during the communicative phase – and there is a growing body of research dealing with the conditions and effects of emotional responses (Wirth & Schramm 2005). Here, → television is viewed as more emotionally arousing as compared to print, partly due to technological features and the emotional storytelling of television (→ Storytelling and Narration). In addition, media-induced emotions play a crucial role for → media effects, for example for learning, perceived risk (→ Risk Perceptions), → persuasion, and decision-making (→ Excitation Transfer Theory). It is mainly this intermediary role that makes emotion so essential for media effects research.

## EMOTIONS AS INTERVENING AND DEPENDENT VARIABLES

This entry focuses on short-term and long-term media effects on emotions after the communicative phase. There are at least two major and four minor research areas with a special emphasis on emotional media effects: (1) effects of media violence on hostile feelings and aggressiveness (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of), (2) effects of media on the cultivation of fear (→ Cultivation Effects; Fear Induction through Media Content), (3) effects of political media content on emotion, (4) fear and frustration as effect of terrorism reports, (5) dissatisfaction with one's body as effect of thin model images, and (6) positive feelings and parasocial relationships as effect of repeatedly viewing favored serials and soaps (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships; Soap Operas).

### Effects of Media Violence on Aggressiveness

Within the media and violence research, effects on aggressiveness are discussed as emotional effects. Experimental research finds consistently that youths who heavily watch

violent television scenes or movies subsequently display more aggressive behavior, aggressive thoughts, and aggressive emotions than those who do not (Anderson et al. 2003; → Experimental Design; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children). In a prolonged exposure experiment, Zillmann and Weaver (1999) demonstrated that after watching violent films on four consecutive days, male and female respondents showed increased hostile feelings and hostile behavior, independently of whether they had been provoked or not. Experimental studies explored as well the impact of violent computer games on state hostility, state anxiety, and arousal. Participants reported significantly higher state hostility, but not higher state anxiety. Playing a violent video game for as little as 10 minutes increases the player's automatic association of "self" with aggressive actions and traits, thus making aggressive thoughts and feelings salient. Past history of exposure to violent video games might fortify this process (Uhlmann & Swanson 2004). Moreover, evidence from correlational studies suggests that exposure to violent video games results in lower empathy (→ Computer Games and Child Development; Correlation Analysis).

The theoretical framework for many of the more recent studies on the effects of violence is the General Affective Aggression Model (GAAM). It suggests that violent media contents may increase aggression by increasing hostile feelings and the accessibility of aggressive thoughts. Furthermore, it provides a link between short-term and long-term effects of media violence. According to this model, viewing violent media content primes related aggressive thoughts in semantic memory (→ Framing Effects; Priming Theory). In turn, priming effects increase the probability of an aggressive response to provocations, real or imaged, by increasing hostile affect, by promoting hostile interpretations of the provocation, by instigating use of aggressive behavioral scripts, or by using learnt role models. Meta-analyses allow the conclusion that high levels of violent TV programs in childhood can promote aggression in later childhood, adolescence, and even young adulthood (Anderson et al. 2003; → Meta-Analysis).

Another emotional effect of exposure to violence is → desensitization. Emotional desensitization occurs when people who heavily watch media violence no longer respond with as much unpleasant physiological arousal or feelings as they did initially. Because unpleasant physiological arousal and empathy normally have an inhibitory influence on thinking about violence or on behaving violently, emotional desensitization can result in a heightened likelihood of violent thoughts and behaviors (Huesmann et al. 2003).

### **Effects of Media on the Cultivation of Fear**

Media programs are able to evoke fear that is comparable with fear experienced in other situations than media use. In their cultivation studies, → George Gerbner and colleagues have shown that the reception of media programs can have the effect of fear and anxiety. Frequent TV viewers have exaggerated ideas about how many persons are involved in cases of violence per week, and correspondingly have inappropriately high levels of fear (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). In other studies only small cultivation effects or only effects of high exposure to dramatic programming like crime-saturated local television news could be found. Especially for children, anxiety-evoking media programs can have long-term negative effects (Cantor 2002). However, children gradually develop a set of regulation strategies to deal with anxiety-evoking media content. Blunting is applied most

frequently – followed by monitoring, and seeking support. Several researchers found that long-lasting states of anxiety after early childhood media reception are not rare among juveniles or college students.

### **Effects of Political Media Content on Emotion**

Emotional responses to politicians or to political events are often determined by an interaction of predispositions (e.g., conservative versus liberal) with media characteristics. Gross and D'Ambrosio (2004) experimentally explored possible framing effects on emotions, using news reports about the 1992 Los Angeles riots (→ *Framing of the News*). They found interaction effects between different frames (social conditions versus criminality as cause for the riot) and predispositions like ideology and resentment. Similarly, research demonstrated that emotional responses to politicians are generated by an interaction of predispositions and nonverbal displays.

### **Fear and Frustration as Effect of Terrorism Reports**

News of catastrophes or terror attacks can induce lasting emotional effects. In the context of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a couple of studies explored emotional reactions of the media users. Results from a panel study suggested that heavier television news use sustained a higher level of negative emotional reactions (fear, frustration, anger) to the terrorist attacks than heavier newspaper use (Cho et al. 2003). Simultaneously, it was found that respondents' emotional responses to the attacks had a significant positive effect on the following television news viewing, thus indicating a reciprocal process.

### **Body Dissatisfaction**

The media have been criticized for depicting the thin woman as ideal, because these images could cause body dissatisfaction (→ *Body Images in the Media; Women in the Media, Images of*). These studies are based on → Leon Festinger's social comparison theory, on Gerbner's cultivation theory, or on → Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory. Two recent meta-analyses revealed mixed empirical results, maybe because of inconsistently used concepts, media measures, design types, and comparison stimuli. At least for some groups (participants under 19 years and those who are vulnerable to activation of a thinness schema), effects of thin model images on body dissatisfaction seem to be likely (Holmstrom 2004).

### **Parasocial Interactions and Relationships**

Parasocial interactions and relationships are those between television viewers and the characters they watch, involving mainly positive, warm feelings like intimacy. Contrary to parasocial interactions, parasocial relationships continue beyond the viewing period. Viewers experience characters as close friends or at least as good neighbors. According to Cohen (2003), women develop stronger parasocial relationships than men. In a hypothetical situation, when the favored character would be taken off the air (parasocial breakup),

viewers tend to fear breakup from fictional characters more than from real characters. Furthermore, parasocial interactions and parasocial relationships seem to reinforce reciprocally.

## THE FOCUS OF MEDIA EFFECTS RESEARCH

Taken together, it can be stated that there are considerable short-term and long-term, positive and negative media effects on emotions beyond the reception situation, regarding different media, different programs, and different parts of the audience (age and sex). However, media effects on emotion beyond the reception situation seldom constitute the basic interest of communication researchers. More often, research deals with media-induced emotions during the reception phase or with the intermediary role of emotions for further effects.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Cognition ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Desensitization ▶ Emotion ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Paralanguage ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Persuasion ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Television ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Empathy Theory

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Empathy is a social → emotion. It comes in response to bearing witness to the emotions of others, usually persons but also other beings thought capable of experiencing emotions. Prototypically, an empathic reaction is evoked by the immediate observation of others' acute emotions, and it manifests itself in an emotional experience that the witness believes to have some degree of similarity with the witnessed emotions.

The evocation of empathic reactions is not limited, however, to the direct observation of others' emotions in terms of their facial, bodily, and other behavioral expressions. Empathy can be evoked by the presentation of information about the circumstances of others that are presumed to cause acute emotions in these others. Moreover, empathy can be evoked by information about others' situations and actions that are presumed to have been caused by acute emotions these others experienced earlier (Stotland 1969; Hoffman 1978; Zillmann 2006b). The evoked empathic reaction itself constitutes an emotional experience, primarily because it is associated with increased excitement and awareness thereof (→ Excitation and Arousal). This awareness tends to foster a subjective appraisal of the reaction as *feeling with* or *feeling for* the observed party.

## THEORIES OF EMPATHY

The theoretical examination of empathy has pursued two different objectives. First, it has addressed the biological function or purpose of empathic reactivity, essentially the question *why* we empathize. Second, it has focused on the mediation of empathic reactivity in psychological, physiological, and behavioral terms and yielded various mechanisms of *how* we empathize.

### Evolutionary Approaches

The phylogenetic roots of human empathy have been derived from an abundance of empathy-like reactions in numerous animal species (Plutchik 1987; Buck & Ginsburg 1997). The principal observation is that genetically fixed expressions of emotional reactions, when witnessed, trigger genetically fixed like reactions, and that such emotional contagion fosters behavioral coordination that ultimately serves the survival of the species.

The coordination of flight by the empathic spread of fear in groups of endangered animals is a prime illustration of the adaptive value of empathy. The adaptive utility of empathic contagion extends to all behaviors of consequence, including coordinated aggression (→ Communiobiology).

### Empathy as Reflexive Reactivity

Theories that base human empathy on the reflexive contagion of emotions may be considered direct extensions of bio-evolutionary proposals. These theories posit that, as

we observe others' emotions, innate response dispositions initiate parallel emotions that resist inhibitory efforts (McDougall 1922). In a more elaborate form of this rationale, it is posited that observers, in giving way to innate dispositions, involuntarily mimic the observed party's posture and gestures, and that afferent feedback from this mimicry liberates empathic affect because it connects to the observers' affective experiences associated with the mimicked expressions (Lipps 1907; Tomkins 1962; Izard 1977).

The recent discovery of so-called mirror neurons has given support to the involuntary nature of empathic response by showing that the perception of others' actions excites areas in the human motor cortex that correspond with those controlling the observed actions, thus creating a propensity for empathic motor mimicry (Buccino et al. 2001; Fadiga et al. 2005).

### **Empathy as Acquired Reactivity**

Theories that project empathic reactivity as acquired invoke traditional learning paradigms. Socially parallel affective experiences define the forum in which empathic response connections are formed on a trial-by-trial basis. As particular environmental stimuli jointly and concurrently induce specific emotional experiences in both an observed person and an observer, the observed person's expression of emotion becomes associated with the observer's own emotion. With repeated experiences of this kind, the expression of specific emotions observed in other people will gradually assume the power to elicit the same or a similar emotion in observers (Humphrey 1922; Aronfreed 1970).

Such acquisition of empathic reactivity is developmentally relevant and, accordingly, considered essential during childhood and adolescence (Hoffman 1978). Regardless of developmental considerations, however, acquired empathic reactivity is spontaneous, but may be more malleable than reflexively controlled empathy.

### **Empathy as Cognitively Mediated Reactivity**

In contrast to theories that base empathic reactivity on built-in or acquired elicitors, cognitive theories project empathy as a result of deliberate and mostly conscious cognitive efforts, along with deliberately or spontaneously recruited associations in the cognitive network of the person who witnesses or is informed about another's emotions. The deliberateness of empathy is apparent in the formula that characterizes cognitive theory, namely "to put oneself into another's position." Such cognitive assimilation of another's emotional experiences places considerable demands on the imagination and resolve of those who attempt to empathize. The purely cognitive efforts are usually assisted, however, by the encounter of, and connection with, related experiences of the responding person. The result is that memory-based affective reactivity enriches the experience of cognitively relating to others' emotions and, in fact, tends to render it an emotional one (Rogers 1967; Stotland 1969; Smith 1971, 1st pub. 1759).

As empathic reactivity via the cognitive assimilation of others' emotions presupposes comparatively mature mental skills as well as rich emotional experience, it is usually considered a domain of post-adolescents and adults.

### Integration of Theoretical Approaches

The various mechanisms of empathic reactivity that are proposed in these distinctive theories can be considered established by pertinent research findings (Davis 1996; Eisenberg 2000).

It has become clear, however, that the validity of each of the theories is partial to, and ultimately limited by, specific situational and behavioral contexts. Moreover, it is apparent that, in producing empathic reactivity, the operation of several of the specific mechanisms is usually confounded. For instance, the reaction to witnessing others' acute emotions may be reflexive initially but then be supplemented by acquired dispositions, and it may eventually involve reflection of the circumstances that further deepens the empathic experience.

This likely interplay of mechanisms that contribute to empathic reactivity is addressed in integrative theories such as the *three-factor theory of empathy* (Zillmann 2006b). The three-pronged approach entails evolutionary considerations in a "dispositional factor" that combines reflexive and acquired response components in the elicitation of spontaneous and impulsive incipient empathic reactivity. An "excitatory factor" focuses on the emotional intensity of empathic reactivity that is analogously mediated by reflexive and acquired dispositions. The third, "experiential factor," addresses the contemplation of the emotion-evoking circumstances as well as of the evoked reactivity for both the observed party and the empathizer. As this contemplation is likely to activate salient emotional memories in the empathizer, the experience may be greatly enhanced, even in excitatory terms. Contemplation may also function as a corrective, however, and diminish reactivity that is deemed inappropriate under the given circumstances.

### WHEN EMPATHY FAILS

In accordance with evolutionary rationales, empathy may be considered to constitute a default system for affective reactivity in that concordant affective response is generally more adaptive than alternative reactions. However, except for incipient empathic reactivity that is reflexively controlled, empathy is subject to curtailment and even to hedonic reversal (→ Affective Disposition Theories).

The condition that is primarily responsible for the eradication of empathic response inclinations as well as for the hedonic reversal of empathic reactions is the *affective disposition* toward those whose emotions are witnessed or inferred (Zillmann 2006a, 2006b). Put simply, dispositions of indifference do not appreciably engage the affections of witnesses to others' emotions, and those who hold dispositions of disdain and hatred toward witnessed parties are bound to enjoy these parties' misfortunes and suffering as much as they would be distressed by witnessing their good fortunes and happiness.

Dispositions of enmity, then, are not only capable of eliminating all empathic inclinations but will foster *hedonically reversed affective reactions* whose experiential intensity tends to be comparable to that of empathic reactions by people with dispositions of amity. To the extent that dispositions of enmity are stronger than those of amity, which is frequently the case, reversed affect can be more intensely experienced than empathic

affect. The reversal of empathy can be considered accomplished by the same mechanisms that yield empathy. Analogous to the formation of empathic dispositions, the dispositions for hedonically reversed reactivity, also referred to as counterempathy (Stotland 1969) and discordant affective reactivity (Berger 1962), may be acquired via repeated learning trials. Additionally, reflective assessments, culminating in moral judgments, may not only disapprove and censure empathic reactivity, but may endorse and actually demand discordant affective reactions.

## EMPATHY AND ITS REVERSAL IN MEDIA COMMUNICATION

Empathic and counterempathic reactivity is obviously not limited to immediately witnessed social situations but extends to simulated realities, such as in the cinematographic representations of actual events or in linguistic accounts of these events (→ Emotions, Media Effects on).

Research evidence leaves no doubt about the fact that representations of realities are capable of engaging the emotions of respondents as strongly as the direct observation of these realities. Depending on affective dispositions held toward people in reality programs or the → news, empathic and counterempathic reactivity to such programs abounds (Bente & Feist 2000; Zillmann & Knobloch 2001; → Exposure to News).

Surprisingly, empathic and counterempathic reactivity is not necessarily diminished by the unreality of depictions. Such reactivity occurs despite the fact that respondents may recognize and, at least at times, be aware of the fabricated nature of presentations. In fact, fictional narration has been viewed as the ultimate forum for empathy and related affections (Zillmann 2006a; → Fictional Media Content).

The principal reasons for the apparent power of fictional media presentations to evoke empathic and counterempathic reactions are the following: (1) the dispositions toward characters, whether of admiration or contempt and disdain, are readily created by the display of the characters' morally approved versus condemned intentions and actions (Raney 2006); (2) the characters' experience of good or bad fortunes and the respective emotional consequences thereof can be displayed in greater detail than usually can be perceived in the direct observation of events (Zillmann 2006a); and (3) segments of the narrative are compacted and can be arranged such that residual excitation from empathic or counterempathic reactions elicited by some segments will intensify empathic or counterempathic reactions to segments that more or less immediately follow (→ Excitation Transfer Theory).

Given these *manipulatory possibilities*, elements of fictional narratives can be creatively composed so as to maximize empathy in order to make happy occasions wonderfully enjoyable and, analogously, heart-rending outcomes supremely tragic. At the same time, fictional narratives can be arranged so as to maximize counterempathy in order to torment those who deem the good fortunes of resented characters a travesty and to give unmitigated joy to those who consider patently brutal punishment of evil characters their just deserts. The latter consideration points to a potential benefit of fictional portrayals that feature the liberal punishment of wrongdoers. Only the fictional format allows unhampered counterempathic rejoicing upon witnessing the destructive, punitive treatment of those deemed deserving of such fate.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Affective Disposition Theories ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Communibiology ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Fictional Media Content ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships

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# Endorsement

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Newspapers report → political news and may also attempt to influence voting decisions through editorial endorsements, that is, formally stated support of political candidates or parties (→ Election Campaign Communication). In countries following the US and British system of organizing newsrooms, the news media have separate news and editorial staffs and pages, although it is not unusual for a news editor to sit on the editorial board. In other news systems, e.g., in most continental European countries, it is quite common that the same individual journalists who cover the news might also write editorials about the same events (Esser 1998). Nevertheless, in all systems the editorial goal is to give meaning and context to news and complex issues, whereas news reporting seeks to be impartial (→ Balance; Objectivity in Reporting). Many newspapers try to present a range of viewpoints in the editorial pages, such as letters to the editor and opinion columns from various sources, including the → public. The editorial staffers meet to discuss and vote on positions; however, publishers sometimes overrule them. The larger the newspaper, the easier it is to maintain separation of news and opinion. Other media endorse less frequently than newspapers.

Endorsements of political candidates, parties, or issues are only an ethical problem of the press when the endorsed candidate, party, or issue also receives more favorable coverage in the news pages. Whether or not *synchronization of news and editorials* happens unconsciously or by directions given by management or senior editors is a matter for empirical research. Some research has shown that journalists with favorable attitudes towards a subject tend to attribute a higher → news value to news items that speak in favor of this subject and a lower news value to items that speak against it (Kepplinger et al. 1991; → Instrumental Actualization). Although in many democratic political systems newspapers seek to clearly separate editorials and the news, many researchers question whether or not endorsements of candidates or parties influence their campaign coverage, since many studies link endorsements and people's voting choices (→ Separation of News and Comments).

Some researchers have found that newspaper-endorsed candidates in the US received more favorable treatment than non-endorsed candidates, on various election levels – local, state, and national (e.g., Kahn & Kenney 2002). Others reported mixed results (Pritchard 2002) or little influence of endorsement (Dalton et al. 1998). Research on newspapers across several US elections indicated that, for more than 60 years, those newspapers increased frequency of federal and statewide office endorsement, yet their partisanship decreased markedly (Ansolabehere et al. 2004). In addition, the papers increasingly preferred incumbents, reflecting an increasing shift in American politics toward greater voter support of incumbents.

As the group ownership of newspapers increased in the US between the 1960 and 1972 election years, concern about the *influence of economic concentration on editorial policy* intensified (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Wackman et al. (1975) concluded that, compared with non-chain papers, chain papers typically were high endorsers and

substantial numbers of chains were homogeneous in endorsements within elections and across at least three of the four elections. Only multiregional chains demonstrated less homogeneity. In the subsequent four elections, groups still tended to be homogeneous endorsers, but this tendency was much less pronounced (Gaziano 1989). Chains that grew in size and regional breadth tended to be heterogeneous endorsers. Homogeneous chains outnumbered heterogeneous chains, but heterogeneous chains had larger circulations. Busterna & Hansen (1990) analyzed data also from three of these four subsequent years, using somewhat different definitions and methods, concluding that chains and non-chains both tended to endorse Republicans and that results on homogeneity were mixed. One Canadian study found structure of ownership did not influence editorial positions (Wagenberg & Soderlund 1975).

Corporate newspapers, which tend to be in larger, more pluralistic communities, tend to publish more editorials oriented toward local issues and criticism of mainstream organized groups than do entrepreneurial newspapers, which are more often located in smaller, more homogeneous communities (Demers 1996). Newspapers in democratic systems tend to perceive their editorial role as providing leadership and stimulating discussion while preserving neutrality in their news coverage, whereas “endorsement” in authoritarian systems involves little or no separation of news and editorial sides and strives to maintain social control by suppressing debate.

SEE ALSO: ► Balance ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Cross-Ownership ► Election Campaign Communication ► Instrumental Actualization ► Journalism ► Media Production and Content ► News Values ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Ownership in the Media ► Political Communication ► Political News ► Public ► Separation of News and Comments

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## English-Only Movements

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English-only movements seek to establish English as the official language of a nation, part of a nation, or a colony. As such (as with other dominant languages), English acts as a communicator of social identity (→ Personality Development and Communication) and a vehicle of culture and economic power (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). Although proponents of English-only cite concerns about the erosion of English as a primary language, English is often seen as a language of wider communication, a world language, the language of globalization, and of the Internet. Underlying these descriptors is the notion of English as somehow “neutral” and non-threatening to multilingualism. Historically though, English either spread to or was imposed on minorities, indigenous populations and colonized peoples. This occurred first under English monarchies and the British Empire, exemplified by its imposition upon the Scots, Welsh, and Irish as well as its use almost exclusively in education systems of far-flung colonies like India and Africa. In the USA, Native Americans were systematically punished for non-English use and their children educated in boarding schools in order to diminish indigenous languages. Recently, English has come to be considered a “lingua franca” largely because of the number of English speakers (native and non-native) in the EU and because of USA corporate dominance globally (→ Media Conglomerates). Thus, among those of “Anglo-Saxon” origin especially, English has served as a tool for maintaining the proverbial upper hand and consequently possesses high linguistic vitality (→ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication).

That said, conservative Anglo-American interest groups in the USA (e.g., US English; English First) especially and USA Anglos in general have supported moves to legislate English as the official language. As an intergroup marker, language triggers social comparison (→ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts), becoming a lightning rod whenever dominant groups feel beleaguered by growing minorities (Barker & Giles 2002). *English-only policies*, such as prohibition of other languages in government, education, and the workplace, represent strategies designed to maintain a group’s ascendancy over others (Barker et al. 2001), and are akin to other forms of limitation such as denial of government services, education, and citizenship. So far, 27 USA states have adopted English as

their official language, a largely symbolic act. However, in May 2006, the USA Senate voted English as the “national” language, declaring that federal services should not be in any other language except for those already allowed by law. President George W. Bush stated that immigrants must learn English and that the national anthem should be sung only in English (a reaction to a Spanish-language version of the “Stars and Stripes”).

This underscored the widely held assumption that immigrants do *not* learn English, an assumption which is not supported by research (or by the USA census), since most immigrants are monolingual English speakers by the second or third generation. Regardless, perceptions about the disappearance of English have led to a backlash against bilingual education in the USA and a return to English-only immersion for immigrant children (particularly in California and Arizona, where Spanish speakers are numerous). This in turn has led to negative outcomes for English acquisition and academic achievement among immigrant students. So far USA English-only advocates are most active, although factors associated with support for English-only policies do exist in other core English-language nations.

In *Britain*, immigrants have brought different languages from former colonies and recently from the Middle East and the EU. While immigration is a source of public concern, language conflicts are less salient than issues such as “bogus” applications for political asylum. However, in 2002 the home secretary, David Blunkett, caused controversy by recommending that immigrant parents should not only learn English but also speak English to their children at home. Additionally, since November 1, 2005, naturalization candidates are required to show English, Welsh, or Gaelic proficiency by passing a test or by attending English-language and citizenship classes. In *Australia* and *New Zealand*, national governments have acknowledged the importance of linguistic diversity. Nonetheless, studies investigating perceptions of linguistic vitality among Australian Anglos report that high contact and lower education predict exaggerated perceived vitality of minority languages relative to English. English is the majority language in New Zealand, but Maori is the official language and is widely represented in signage and English-based publications. However, although immigrants to New Zealand complete language shift relatively rapidly, some Anglos are hostile to non-English languages.

Much popular and academic commentary debates English-only issues, but little *communication* research has investigated the impetus for such measures. In the USA, over 82 percent of residents speak *only* English and for most Anglos contact with non-English speakers is still limited. (In Iowa 94 percent of the people are non-Hispanic whites, and yet the state lately adopted English as its official language.) Future research should examine the potential influence of the news media (→ Framing of the News) as a source of information concerning language minorities and language shift in the USA and other core English-language nations. Similarly, the influence of non-English mass media on subjective perceptions of linguistic vitality is still largely unknown and should be assessed (→ Ethnic Media and their Influence).

SEE ALSO: ► Ethnic Media and their Influence ► Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ► Framing of the News ► Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ► Media Conglomerates ► Personality Development and Communication ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Social Identity Theory

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## **Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking**

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As early as 1962, → Elihu Katz and David Foulkes wondered why communication researchers had almost exclusively addressed mass media's persuasive capacities (→ Persuasion) and almost completely neglected its role as an agent of entertainment. Their surprise was caused by the simple observation that the bulk of mass media consumption at that time served entertainment needs – an observation that is equally, if not even more, valid today (→ Exposure to Communication Content). Cinema movies, television series, radio music, illustrated magazines, and video games (to name just a few examples) frequently attract mass audiences and serve as reliable “cash cows” of the media industries (Wolf 1999). Interestingly, communication research has begun to reflect the remarkable importance of media entertainment very late in the day. Since then, significant theoretical progress has been made on the description and explanation of entertainment experiences (Bryant & Vorderer 2006).

### **THE DIVERSITY OF MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT**

Entertainment research is confronted with a huge number of different manifestations of its object. For instance, a broad range of television content is categorized as entertainment programming: crime drama, comedy and → situation comedies, reality shows, live shows, call-in shows, melodrama, sports broadcasts, adventure movies, mystery shows, daytime talk shows, late night shows, and many more. Other media offer a similar bandwidth of entertainment, such as dozens of video game genres, countless radio music styles, or highly distinct types of novels (→ Media Production and Content). To say that somebody is seeking media entertainment can therefore mean very different things: highly diverse motives may evoke entertainment seeking; highly diverse reaction processes may trigger

actual entertainment experiences; and specific person–medium interactions may produce numerous kinds of entertainment media effects.

This diversity challenges the perspective of a unified and simple theory of media entertainment that could describe and explain why people attend to *any* enjoyable media messages and how media enjoyment unfolds. Therefore, entertainment theory is trying to find the common base for the diverse manifestations of media enjoyment and, at the same time, to collect the many different psychological mechanisms and pathways through which actual entertainment experiences occur (Vorderer et al. 2004, 2006).

### MOTIVES BEHIND ENTERTAINMENT SEEKING

Klimmt (2006) has proposed two general classes of motives that can manifest in the wish to expose oneself to very different kinds of media entertainment. One class of motives refers to a *short-term action disposition* that is similar to the notion of → escapism. Media entertainment provides possibilities to distance oneself from undesired conditions such as boredom, loneliness, overexcitation, sleepiness, or frustration. Individuals who are seeking experiences that contrast their current, undesired condition have the choice between various entertainment media that provide the matching mode of escape (→ Excitation and Arousal; Fantasy/Imagination). As a consequence, negative moods that accompany the undesired state are improved and repaired (Zillmann 2000). So the experience of media entertainment contrasts the stressful states that arise from day-to-day activities (for instance, professional work, housekeeping, or family conflicts) and contributes to mental relaxation and recovery. The motive to seek media entertainment is thus the desire to overcome aversive and/or undesired short-term (state) conditions through temporal mental distancing (“escape”) from these conditions. What kind of escape is strived for, then, depends on the quality of the undesired state the media user perceives. The short-term compensation motive is thus capable of explaining decisions for very different entertainment media (→ Mood Management).

While the escape motive to seek entertainment is rooted in communication, the other class of motives underlying entertainment seeking is derived from the *psychology of play*. Playing displays several striking conceptual similarities with the use of media entertainment (→ Vorderer 2001; Evolutionary Theory; Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition; Playing), and Klimmt (2006) argues that the desire to cope with life and to resolve developmental challenges drives entertainment seeking. Developmental challenges are typically overcome through learning. Social orientation about what other people do in certain (e.g., emotional or family) situations is helpful to expand one’s repertoire of conceivable actions (Bandura 2001).

Watching *talk shows*, for instance, can help to cope with specific life situations, as they transport information about what other people have done (→ Broadcast Talk). Watching action movies can reassure viewers of the world being a just place in which it is worth working for morally good goals and striving for one’s individual happiness. Another good example has been elaborated by Jansz (2005). He argues that violent video games are enjoyable for male adolescents because these games provide a virtual test laboratory to experiment with properties and emotions associated with the male gender role (e.g., courage, honor, competition, defeat, fright). Violent *video games* are thus a tool to resolve the major

developmental task male adolescents are confronted with; that is, the adoption and definition of a male gender role. Playing such games is experienced as negotiation of masculinity, which in turn is enjoyable. In this sense, violent games help male adolescents to cope with life. That does not, of course, mean that this support will necessarily lead to appropriate and socially acceptable role images (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception; Video Games).

Vorderer et al. (2006) argue in a similar way when they root the wish to be entertained back to evolutionary processes. Playful learning about life is part of humankind's genetic survival program, as it facilitates gain of competence and flexible adaptation to environmental conditions. In the modern world, entertainment seeking is, according to Vorderer et al. (2006), a residual motive of this urge toward playful learning. The evolutionary perspective thus backs up the assumption of coping with life as generalized (class of) motives underlying entertainment seeking.

### **SPECIFIC SELECTION OF MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT**

Entertainment seeking is, of course, more than the enactment of a more or less abstract motive to escape from certain states and/or to cope with certain life conditions. Since there is so much media entertainment out there, specific decisions about which media product is to be used are required. The most effective heuristic to decide for a given entertainment offer is prior experience. Zillmann's (2000) concepts of → selective exposure and mood management assume that media users memorize what a specific product of media entertainment has done to their mood and use this memorized information for subsequent media selection. When people face a situation in which they desire a certain kind of mood repair, they will select an entertainment product that they remember to have facilitated that kind of mood repair in the past (→ Affects and Media Exposure).

Specific selection of media entertainment may be executed on the base of other heuristics as well. In most entertainment media, people play a central role – for instance, sports stars, movie actors, talk show hosts, or famous video game characters such as “Mario.” Several lines of entertainment theory address the quasi-intimate, social-emotional bonds between media users and people in entertainment media, such as → empathy theory, → identification, → parasocial interactions and relationships, and disposition-based theories of enjoyment (→ Suspense). Positive attitudes toward certain media characters (e.g., a favorite actor, a preferred sports team) may thus serve as a heuristic to decide for specific entertainment media (e.g., to decide for *CSI: Miami* and against *CSI: New York*).

### **READINESS TO ENGAGE IN THE EXPERIENCE**

To achieve the desired experience of “being entertained,” media users have to accomplish more than finding and deciding on a suitable entertainment medium. They must also adjust their personal mode of processing to allow the according entertainment experience to occur. Most entertainment media are only enjoyable if their users are deeply absorbed, immersed, and fascinated. Several concepts have been proposed or applied in entertainment research that describe this condition; for instance → involvement with media content, → presence, and → transportation theory, or flow (Sherry 2004).



Such states of “diving into” the media world can be evoked by certain media attributes (e.g., a large screen size or a thrilling story). But media users have to admit this absorption in order to achieve the desired state of intensive entertainment (Wild et al. 1995). For example, movie viewers have to (actively) ignore their knowledge that everything they see is artificial and unreal in order to access a strong experience of the movie world (→ Suspension of Disbelief). Deciding for a specific piece of media entertainment, then, also implies some self-adjustment by the users to “let the desired experience happen to them.” Such self-regulatory processes have not been researched extensively so far (→ Sensation Seeking), but there are theoretical arguments for their importance in the process of media entertainment (Klimmt 2006).

Enjoyment/entertainment seeking is a complex phenomenon that is driven by different motives, can refer to very different media products, and is connected to complex and diverse responses to those media products (e.g., Ritterfeld & Weber 2006). The use of media entertainment is vital for everyday life; it supports coping with aversive states (e.g., stress, loneliness), long-term life situations, and developmental tasks. It can thus impact well-being and life-satisfaction positively. From an evolutionary perspective, seeking entertainment is a “natural” human behavior, and most people benefit from entertainment consumption. However, as with any other activity, an overdose of media entertainment is likely to counteract these benign consequences or even turn them into negative ones. The complexity and the potentially huge implications of entertainment (seeking) for individuals and society therefore justify the increased research efforts in communication and suggest a further expansion of entertainment research in the future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Escapism ▶ Evolutionary Theory ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Fantasy/Imagination ▶ Identification ▶ Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Mood Management ▶ Parasocial Interaction and Relationships ▶ Persuasion ▶ Playing ▶ Presence ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Suspense ▶ Suspension of Disbelief ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Video Games

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## Entertainment Content and Reality Perception

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Our perceptions of reality may often rely on mass mediated images. Walter Lippmann's classical work, *Public Opinion*, first published in 1922, highlighted the possibility that factual features of the world often have little relation to the perception and beliefs that people entertain about the world (→ Lippmann, Walter). Lippmann (1922) argued that the press's depiction of events was often spurious; the images it created were misleading, distorted, and shaped false "pictures in our heads" of the "world outside." Although Lippmann never formulated his ideas in terms of a model or theory of reconstructed realities, his notion of the reliance of the public on the often distorted presentation of reality in the media should be acknowledged as such. Lippmann made the important distinction between the real environment and the pseudo-environment, sketched and delivered by the mass media. However, although Lippmann had vision concerning the differences between reality and perceptions of reality, he could not anticipate the emergence of the electronic media and the ever-growing role of the new media in shaping "the pictures in our heads." As radio, and then television, cable, and satellite technologies,

and then the Internet, appeared, the world shrank to a global village, exposed to the flow of mass-produced news and entertainment, and the notion of a mediated world became more realistic and powerful. Consequently, a common focus of communication research has been the public's perceptions of reality as based on mass mediated contents and images (Eveland 2002) (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). Social reality perceptions, or the "pictures in our head," are best defined as individuals' conceptions of the world. They include perceptions of others' opinions and behavior, social indicators such as crime, wealth, careers, professions, sex roles and more (→ Reality and Media Reality).

### **INTEGRATING NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT**

The modern electronic forms of mass communication have only strengthened the power of the media in mediating reconstructed realities. The boundaries between news and entertainment are blurred: journalism is mostly storytelling, thus providing a structured account of the environment, and like all stories, these articles structure events and experiences for us, filtering out many of the complexities of reality (→ Construction of Reality through the News). An important element of the mass-mediated world is the integration of news and entertainment, facts and fiction, events and stories into a symbolic environment in which reality and fiction are almost inseparable. Thus, the news becomes storytelling while soap operas become news. They present to us realities from other cultures, other social strata – and despite their fictional nature – are seen and interpreted as realities: "The dominant stylistic convention of Western narrative art – novels, plays, films, TV dramas – is that of representational realism. However contrived television plots are, viewers assume that they take place against a backdrop of the real world. The basic 'reality' of the world of television drama is highly informative. Television offers to the unsuspecting viewer a continuous stream of 'facts' and impressions about the way of the world, about the constancies and vagaries of human nature, and about the consequences of actions. The premise of realism is a Trojan horse which carries within it a highly selective, synthetic, and purposeful image of the facts of life" (Gerbner & Gross 1976, 178). Moreover, the nature of news "stories" (note the storytelling nature of reporting news) is a reconstructed format of presenting events. The importance of the narrative presentation in the reconstruction of reality was noted by Schudson (1982, 18), who argued that "the power of media lies not only (and not even primarily) in its power to declare things to be true, but in the power to provide the form in which the declaration appears. News in a newspaper or on television has a relationship to the "real world", not only in content but in form; that is, in the way the world is incorporated into unquestionable and unnoticed conventions of narration, and then transfigured, no longer for discussion, but as a premise of any convention at all."

The so-called → "infotainment" narrative of the modern media affects us all. How can one make the distinction between fictional representation and factual "real world" information when both are so well integrated into our mediated environments? Living in a mass-mediated world is the result of several processes: our reliance on media sources to know and interpret the "world out there," the distorting effect of the selection process in the media and the practice of writing news as "storytelling," and the mixture of information and fiction where real and fictional worlds become a homogeneous, synthetic reality.

Many scholars suggested that when we study media impact on perceptions of reality we should step beyond a singular focus on news. Gamson (1999) distinguished between various categories of television content and contended that prime-time entertainment television may be particularly influential in constructing and maintaining political attitudes. The presentation of what Gamson defined as “life-world” content engages the audience on an emotional level, bases truth claims on experiential knowledge, and treats the audience as being physically present within the program. Each of these unique characteristics of prime-time television dramas allows for the creation of a unique set of effects relative to those found in the traditional study of news.

### **CULTIVATING IMAGES OF REALITY**

The most important work on the impact of mass-mediated realities on audiences’ perceptions has been done within the tradition of → cultivation theory. Cultivation theory (sometimes referred to as the cultivation hypothesis or cultivation analysis) was an approach developed by → George Gerbner. Essentially, the theory states that heavy exposure to mass media, namely television, creates and cultivates perceptions of reality more consistent with a media-conjured version of reality than with what actual reality is. It began with the “Cultural Indicators” research project in the mid-1960s, aiming to study whether and how watching television may influence viewers’ ideas of what the everyday world is like. Cultivation theorists argue that television has long-term effects which are small, gradual, indirect, but cumulative and significant. Cultivation analysis generally begins with identifying and assessing the most recurrent and stable patterns in television content, emphasizing the consistent images, portrayals, and values that cut across most program genres. In the next step, cultivation analysis tries to ascertain if those who spend more time watching television are more likely to perceive the real world in ways that reflect the most common and repetitive messages and lessons of the television world, compared with people who watch less television but are otherwise comparable in important demographic characteristics (→ Cultivation Effects).

One of the major constructs of cultivation theory is → *mainstreaming*, the homogenization of people’s divergent perceptions of social reality into a convergent “mainstream”. This apparently happens through a process of construction, whereby viewers learn “facts” about the real world from observing the world of television. Memory traces from watching television are stored “relatively automatically.” We then use these stored images to formulate beliefs about the real world. When this constructed world and the real world have a high degree of consistency, *resonance* occurs, and the effect is even stronger. The notion of cultivation has been applied to various areas, including the amount and forms of violence and crime, depictions of women, elderly people, minorities, professions, sex roles, health and sickness, science, and scientists, to name only a few (Weimann 2000). But despite its popularity, the theory continues to be criticized, debated, and modified.

### **SOME LIMITATIONS AND SOME MODIFICATIONS**

The notion of cultivating images of reality was often criticized for being oversimplified. Critics argue that the theory ignores the complexity of media consumption and its role in

our lives today. Cultivation theorists tend to ignore the importance of numerous intervening factors such as developmental stages, viewing experience, general knowledge, gender, ethnicity, viewing contexts, family attitudes, and socio-economic background, which all contribute to shaping the ways in which television is interpreted by viewers. Moreover, when the viewer has some direct lived experience with the subject matter, this may tend to reduce the cultivation effect. Most criticisms of cultivation theory have focused on the validity of cultivation research, arguing that cultivation effects found in various studies are statistical artifacts of demographic differences in both TV viewing and perceptions. Another perceived shortcoming of the original cultivation research has been the treatment of TV viewing as a uniform activity, ignoring variations in viewers, in content to which viewers are exposed, and in the contexts in which they view (Shanahan & Morgan 1999). Several scholars noted that the cultivation effect may be program-specific rather than the result of total television viewing. Specific programs, such as crime-related shows, would be most influential in affecting perceptions of crime.

The tradition of studying cultivation effects essentially concludes that some contents may have some effects on some people under some circumstances (Cohen & Weimann 2000). Several researchers attempted to refine the notion of cultivation by examining closely the cognitive processes involved. A key distinction suggested by these studies is that there are two stages of the cognitive process: “first order” effects (general beliefs about the everyday world, such as about the prevalence of violence) and “second order” effects (the resulting specific attitudes, such as fear of strangers or of walking alone). Other studies revealed the psychological processes involved in cultivation of reality perceptions. Thus, some argued that “source confusion” (the tendency of individuals to confuse events from news stories with those from fictional contents) is promoting stronger cultivation effects while others explained the cognitive mechanism of cultivation in terms of accessing information in the memory (e.g., Shrum 1996).

## **NEW MEDIA AND VIRTUAL REALITIES**

The concepts of cultivation and mainstreaming emerged with the age of television. Toward the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries the age of the new media technologies–based computer-mediated communication (or CMC) began to increase in use and in prominence. The important assets of CMC are its “vividness” and speed, easy access to everywhere in cyberspace with no time or distance limits. What happens when virtual reality becomes more appealing than “real” reality? Will large numbers of us abandon socially relevant pursuits for virtual travel in the media world? As computers’ capabilities to develop increasingly complex and realistic images advance, the illusion of reality will become even more convincing. Shapiro and McDonald (1995) expressed concern about people being unable to distinguish virtual experiences from reality (→ Virtual Reality). Based on a survey of communication literature, they argue (1995, 331) that “mass media with elements of virtual reality are at least as likely to shape our attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors as other forms of mass media. Those judgments are likely to be continuous, not dichotomous and, with experience, relatively sophisticated”. Moreover, Shapiro and McDonald argue that just as with other mass media, there is likely to be a media dependency effect (→ Media Systems Dependency Theory). People are most

likely to be influenced by media information when they have little other experience that enables them to evaluate the new information. When virtual realities in computer-mediated entertainment are the only source of information people can use to experience places, situations, and actions, one can expect a powerful impact. Williams (2006) applied a longitudinal, controlled experiment of a video game to the notion of cultivating perceptions of reality due to the use of the game. He found that participants in an online game changed their perceptions of real-world dangers. However, these dangers only corresponded to events and situations found in the game world, not to real-world crimes. Computer-mediated communication is giving new meaning to the idea of “mediated realities” and should be related to cultivation theory. Although the cultivation paradigm highlighted the role of television, the basic argument seems even more valid in the case of CMC.

It appears that the introduction and spread of modern communication technologies and applications such as computer-mediated communication will only enhance the necessity of studying the role of entertainment media in communicating and cultivating unrealities. Today’s technologies of communication, with their speed, vividness, interactivity, and multi-sensual totality, may provide a more powerful impact on our “virtual realities.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Infotainment ▶ Lippman, Walter ▶ Mainstreaming ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Systems Dependency Theory ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Virtual Reality

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# Entertainment Education

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Entertainment education is defined as the “process of purposely designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate, in order to increase audience members’ knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms, and change over behavior” (Singhal & Rogers 2004, 5). Parables, fables, and morality plays have been used for centuries not only to entertain but also to transmit knowledge of history, culture, values, and life lessons. Modern entertainment education includes designing a campaign strategy that incorporates radio and television dramas, talk programs, comedies, music, → animation, participatory theatre, interactive websites, and → video games, largely to promote health and social issues (Singhal et al. 2004; → Drama in Media Content; Broadcast Talk; Situation Comedies).

Most scholarly research has focused on *the uses of dramatic serials*. Dramas offer many advantages, including capturing the attention of specific audiences, altering viewers’ → emotions, developing characters, viewing characters’ conversations with others, and decision-making, allowing for multiple examples of social modeling, focusing on issues from multiple perspectives, focusing on issues repeatedly over time, and showing characters overcoming resistance and adversity (Sabido 2004). They also provide a perfect vehicle in which to put communication theory into practice and test theories in both experimental and non-experimental contexts (Green et al. 2002; Slater & Rouner 2002).

Much of the work on entertainment education stems from Miguel Sabido’s *methodology*, which was utilized in Latin American *telenovelas* to promote adult literacy and family planning before being adopted globally (→ Communication Evaluation Research; Communication and Social Change: Research Methods). It is based on four key elements. Utilizing → Albert Bandura’s social learning theory, the methodology relies on multiple examples of *similarity modeling* (→ Observational Learning). Central characters are portrayed “suffering” and unhappy. Viewers watch as the characters discuss their plight with others, decide to take action, overcome difficulties, and eventually succeed in achieving intended goals. “Satellite characters” are minor characters who observe key characters successfully change their lives, and they too decide to take action. Modeling, reinforcements, and self-efficacy are pivotal. The entertainment education program needs to prompt characters to utilize an existing infrastructure, such as family planning or adult literacy offices.

The methodology also relies on Jungian “archetypes,” and characters in dramas represent archetypal characters well recognized in a particular culture. The methodology also relies on key aspects of *drama theory*, including → suspense, cliffhangers, → interpersonal conflict, and a final conflict between protagonist and antagonist. Viewers watch as multiple characters progress through “stages of change” toward fully adopting and maintaining a new behavior. Finally, characters in the particular program have to communicate with an

appropriate “tone,” or physical tension, usually animalistic (terrifying, aggressive), intellectual, or emotional (love, dignified; Sabido 2002).

A number of *theories* are relevant to the effective use of entertainment education, including → parasocial interactions and relationships, → empathy theory, → identification, → transportation theory, suspense, → social cognitive theory, and the → stages of change model.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Communication Evaluation Research ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Emotion ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Identification ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Stages of Change Model ▶ Suspense ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Video Games

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## **Entertainment, Effects of**

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One of the dominant functions of modern media is entertainment (Zillmann & Vorderer 2000). Moreover, entertainment offerings presented by virtually all mass media seem designed to provide immediate gratification of the diverse hedonic needs of modern media consumers.

If entertainment is the primary goal of modern media, why are so many critics concerned that those who consume such fare will suffer detrimental social and psychological effects? Indeed, if the real purpose of modern commercial fare were to create high levels of audience enjoyment (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking), negative effects might not be such a major issue. However, in reality, in the US and other capitalistic media systems, creating a satisfying entertainment experience is barely a secondary goal of the executives



in charge of modern media institutions. The dominant goal is to garner the → attention of as many consumers as possible for those omnipresent advertisements and commercials. In other words, the primary objective of commercial media systems is profitability (→ Media Economics). Entertainment reactions are a functionally necessary *by-product* if one is to gain and retain the eyes and ears of consumers and guarantee ample advertising exposure for profitability. Entertainment really is the means to an end, not the goal.

Although the distinction between entertainment as a means rather than an end may be subtle, it is important. If your primary goal is audience attention to commercial messages, entertainment programs become *vehicles* for → advertising. Moreover, commercial potential is best served through audience maximization; that is, by attracting the largest possible audience of desirable entertainment users. How much those consumers really enjoy the entertainment is of little importance, unless lack of enjoyment motivates audience defection or adversely affects processing of or responses to advertising messages.

The heavy reliance on various media ratings systems (e.g., → Nielsen Ratings) as the primary performance indicators of media messages is strong evidence of the pre-eminence of this drive for potential exposure to advertising. In general, such ratings are measures of *exposure* that are designed to serve the advertising industry; they are not ratings of the entertainment value of media message systems (→ Exposure to Communication Content). The end result of this drive toward numbers is that media producers, distributors, and exhibitors consistently favor content that they believe will attract the largest possible audience. This is the primary reason for media's over-reliance on violence, sexual titillation, voyeurism, and other sensationalistic fare (→ Violence as Media Content; Sexualization in the Media).

This hypercapitalistic, sensationalistic programming provides the financial infrastructure of most modern media and is a primary reason why critics are perennially concerned about harmful side-effects of consuming popular (or "pop") culture, including watching entertainment television, playing → video games, reading romance novels, browsing fashion or fan magazines, surfing the net, and the like.

## TYPOLOGIES OF MEDIA EFFECTS

Many different typologies of media effects (→ Media Effects) have been posited. A popular system of categorization is to divide effects into *cognitive* (e.g., learning) versus *affective* (e.g., emotional displays) versus *behavioral* (e.g., aggression) effects. However, such typologies work best when types of media content other than entertainment are also considered (e.g., education, news and public affairs, commercial messages, political communication). Therefore, we employ a relatively simple system in which four types of *detrimental* effects of entertainment are considered: displacement, stereotyping, sexual attitudes and behaviors, and violence and aggression.

### Displacement Effects

Communication scholars have often discussed media effects as being either content-dependent or content-irrelevant; displacement effects fall into the latter category. Displacement effects occur as a result of devoting time to entertaining media fare instead of engaging in other activities.

When television was a new medium of communication, discussions of displacement effects were commonplace. Classic early large-scale investigations in England, North America, and Japan addressed issues such as whether television viewing was associated with later bedtimes, less time spent on homework, less recreational and educational reading, and a variety of other displacement issues. These early studies presented an array of mixed findings, although a common summary was that watching television typically resulted in less time spent in general play but not in substantial losses in other realms (Furu 1962; Himmelweit et al. 1958; Schramm et al. 1961; → Media Effects, History of).

Canadian Tanis McBeth Williams (1986) designed and conducted a classic longitudinal field investigation to attempt to clarify displacement effects. The findings of this naturalistic investigation were complex. For example, it was reported that television viewing does displace some activities directly, such as playing sports. However, other activities, such as reading, were often time-shared with television viewing and did not appear to be affected markedly by displacement mechanisms.

More recent research has combined investigation of displacements effects with examinations of content-specific programming factors. For example, displacement research conducted in Europe, especially in the Netherlands, found that although viewing highly violent programs reduced imaginative play, viewing so-called neutral programs seemed to have no detrimental effects, and in some cases, viewing entertaining educational television enhanced creative play (Valkenburg 2001).

With citizens of → information societies devoting increasing time to playing video games and using the → Internet in addition to consuming traditional entertainment media, displacement effects have become of increasing concern to many modern social critics, especially in light of highly publicized reports on the poor state of health of citizens of various information societies. For example, Robinson (1999; 2001) has argued that heavy usage of entertainment media causes obesity by one or more of three mechanisms: (1) displacement of physical activity, (2) increased caloric consumption while watching or via direct effects of advertising food products, and/or (3) reduced resting metabolism.

When discussing displacement effects, two *cautionary notes* offered by Perse (2001) appear germane: (1) displacement appears to assume that time is spent on only one activity at a time, whereas research documents that media usage often is a secondary activity to other tasks – it often accompanies rather than displaces activities; (2) some displacement effects of entertainment may include consuming content that is also educational or inspirational, which may be more enriching than the activities the entertainment usage replaced.

### **Stereotyping**

The use of overly simplistic or overly narrow representations of a particular group without consideration of their true diversity occurs in entertainment media for a variety of reasons. Writers, producers, and directors may not have had primary experience with anyone of the ethnicity of the character they are being asked to present in a program, so they rely on prevailing “pop culture” representations without finding out how accurate their images are. An even more common reason for relying on → stereotypes is because they serve as dramatic shortcuts. In short-form fiction, including → magazines, television

programs, and video games, creators rarely have enough time to develop a character in full-blown form. In fact, true character development is extremely rare in popular electronic media fare. Therefore, in order to present a hero, villain, agent of justice, or whomever efficiently and parsimoniously, writers and directors rely on commonly held stereotypes to present easily understood and identified character types. Essentially, stereotyping is a cost-effective way of taking shortcuts in drama, and it is an all-too-common practice (→ Popular Communication; Popular Culture).

Unfortunately, media stereotyping can have very detrimental effects. Much of what people learn about the world outside of their immediate sphere comes from the media. In other words, media are potent agents of socialization that can cause entertainment-message consumers to classify the world around them to some extent in the terms and categories provided by television's reality (→ Socialization by the Media). Portrayals that are biased, overly narrow, or lack diversity in depictions of one or another gender or ethnic group can affect the way in which people create the *scripts* they use to deal with real life. Although research has been conducted on several categories of stereotypes – racial, gender, age, sexuality, disability, occupation, etc. – we will focus primarily on the effects of racial and gender stereotypes in entertainment programming.

Research over the past 30 years consistently has found that minorities are underrepresented and misportrayed in entertainment fare. Another common form of stereotyping in entertainment television is gender stereotyping (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). Although some improvement has been made during the past three decades in this regard, media messages are still infused with stereotypes of both men and women. In general, women are portrayed less often in entertainment media fare than are men, and women typically are presented in roles of lesser status or importance than their male counterparts (Signorielli 2001).

So what do consumers learn from stereotypes on entertainment fare? Social learning theory, → social cognitive theory, and → cultivation theory suggest that media consumers should learn stereotypical attitudes and may perform associated behaviors from watching, listening to, or reading about a steady stream of stereotyped roles. In most cases, this is what the research has shown. Meta-analyses of research on television stereotyping, for example, conclude that entertainment television has a significant overall effect on holding gender-role stereotypes in all age groups; however, among children younger than 6, the relationship is more pronounced; and for children younger than 3, the relationship is most pronounced (Van der Voort & Valkenburg 1994; → Meta-Analysis). Moreover, the findings on racial/ethnic stereotyping in entertainment programming indicate that media portrayals of racial/ethnic minorities influence majority group members' real-world perceptions about minority groups in addition to minority group members' evaluations of self (Greenberg & Collette 1997; Greenberg et al. 2002; → Cultivation Effects; Stereotyping and the Media).

### **Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors**

According to a 1998 Time/CNN national poll (→ Public Opinion Polling), 29 percent of American teenagers indicated that television was their primary source of information about sex, whereas only 7 percent cited parents and 3 percent cited sex-education classes

as primary sources. Given the way that television presents human sexuality, that finding is very frightening. The nature of sexual content in the media – e.g., sex is presented or alluded to frequently; fictional media characters and live media “personalities” are pre-occupied with sex; media role models often behave irresponsibly about sexual behaviors – adds dramatically to the nature of public concern about vulnerable audience members’, especially young people’s, exposure to sexual content via the media.

What kind of social and psychological effects might exposure to hypersexual entertainment-media content and even explicitly sexual materials have? Here are just a few of the many extant findings (Zillmann & Bryant 1984). Because depictions of sex in the media often take place outside of supposedly durable, legal relationships like marriage, regular exposure to such content may *undermine the values of marriage* and having a stable family. Feminists often claim that depictions of sexual behavior in the mainstream media have tended to *show women as sex objects* and subordinates to men, and repeated exposure to such images may create images of women as promiscuous, hypersexual creatures whose primary function is to serve men (→ Feminist and Gender Studies; Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives; Women in the Media, Images of). Rape and rape victims are commonly alluded to if not depicted on television, films, and video games. Some evidence suggests that repeated viewing of such materials leads to more *callous attitudes about rape*, less sympathy for a rape victim, and more sympathy for those accused of rape (→ Sexual Violence in the Media). Whatever else sexually oriented entertainment fare does, it serves as *informal sex education* for millions of readers, listeners, and viewers.

### **Violence and Aggression**

Over the years, far and away the most active area of media-effects inquiry has been that of media violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). Literally scores of books and thousands of scholarly and popular press articles have been devoted to this topic. Obviously doing the topic justice in a short space is impossible, so the key elements of the social issue have to be summarized succinctly. They include recognition of the common assumption of entertainment message designers that media violence attracts numerous readers, listeners, and viewers. Therefore, pop culture fare is replete with violence. Moreover, entertainment consumers around the world consume a great deal of this fictional and real-world violence.

What effects does this steady diet of symbolic violence have? Abundant research has addressed this question from a variety of perspectives, and several theories have been advanced both to generate hypotheses and to clarify findings. In terms of theoretical mechanisms, the most prominent theories of the effects of media violence on human aggression fall into the general categories of: social learning (→ Observational Learning), priming (→ Priming Theory), arousal (→ Emotional Arousal Theory), cultivation, → desensitization, and catharsis (→ Catharsis Theory).

What does the research say? In general, the bulk of the extant empirical evidence – bolstered by findings from several recent meta-analyses of the effects of violence across types of media – concludes that consuming a heavy diet of media violence in entertainment fare results in higher levels of personal and societal violence (Sparks & Sparks 2002).

## FUTURE TENSE

With the advent of newer forms of mediated communication, in which the end-user is both producer and consumer and assumes considerable agency over media content, through interactivity and other means of selectivity and control, the potential for entertainment – and for productive entertainment-effects research – is almost unlimited. Understanding entertainment needs – and creating media content to address these needs beneficially – while at the same time avoiding unwanted detrimental social and psychological effects, is almost certain to be one of the new frontiers in media-effects inquiry.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Attention ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Desensitization ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## Environment and Social Interaction

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Every face-to-face interaction occurs in a specific location. Although it is typically assumed that the course of particular interactions is a product of the individuals involved and their relationships to one another, the surrounding environment has important effects at both the macro- and micro-levels.

Where people live has an important effect on social behavior. For example, urban dwellers are less likely to initiate eye contact with passing strangers than are suburbanites or small-town residents (Newman & McCauley 1977). More importantly, helping behavior also decreases as *population density* increases from small to large cities (Levine et al. 1994). One explanation for the decreased sensitivity to others in large urban areas is *social overload* (→ Proxemics). That is, because urban dwellers are consistently overstimulated by the presence of large numbers of people, they adapt by automatically filtering out less important events (Milgram 1970).

Sensitivity to others is affected by more than just population density. Levine et al. (1994) found that, in the United States, the incidence of helping strangers was greater in the south and mid-west than in the northeast and west. Historical and technological changes have also contributed to decreased sensitivity to strangers, and even neighbors, in both low- and high-density situations. Sixty years ago, prior to the common availability of television and air conditioning, people in small towns and large cities spent more time outside, interacting with their neighbors. In addition, although the current technological environment, with the Internet, mobile phones, and palm pilots, extends our ability for remote communication, the frequency and quality of face-to-face communication may be adversely affected (Bugeja 2005; → Interpersonal Communication).

*Weather* also plays a role in social interactions. In good weather, people are more likely to be outside and engaged in a variety of activities that, in turn, increase the likelihood of contact with one another. In contrast, stormy weather and extreme temperatures reduce the opportunities for outside interactions. Nevertheless, very hot temperatures can increase negative affect and the probability of aggressive encounters (Bell et al. 2001, ch. 8).

The approach of ecological psychology provides a broad perspective on how the immediate environment shapes social behavior (Wicker 1979). The concept of a *behavior setting* is basic to explaining the role of the environment on behavior. A behavior setting refers to a geographically limited location with a specific physical design where goals and norms direct the behavior of individuals over a limited time period. For example, a college class on communication, a church service, or a school board meeting all occur in specific locations with distinct design features, have a particular agenda, and last for a limited length of time. Social behavior is also constrained by self-selection, with more similar people choosing common settings. The result of these coordinated influences is that most people in a given setting tend to behave in a relatively homogeneous fashion.

The initiation and development of social interaction are also affected by *territory* (→ Initial Interaction). When individuals are at home, in their office, or simply claiming a picnic table in the park, they have more discretion in initiating and controlling interactions with others (Altman 1975). Visitors typically recognize their own status and defer to the territory holder (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction). For example, territory holders usually meet visitors at the doorway, invite them inside, and direct them to a particular room or location. As a result, territory facilitates order and predictability in interactions.

A number of *physical characteristics* of settings also affect interactions. In the business world, higher-status individuals have larger, better-furnished offices, with nicer views of the surrounding area. Their larger desks not only signal their importance, but also serve to keep visitors at a greater distance. Thus, the immediate physical environment reinforces the office holder's power in interacting with subordinates. Furniture arrangement also affects the ease of interaction in home settings. For example, the furniture in most living rooms and dens is usually arranged to accommodate the easy viewing of a television. Such an arrangement does not, however, typically facilitate the more comfortable facing positions that most people prefer in interactions. One accommodation might be moving to a kitchen or dining-room table with a closer and more directly facing arrangement.

Finally, the *number of individuals* in a given setting influences affective and behavioral reactions. High-density settings typically increase physiological arousal, precipitate negative attributions (e.g., feeling crowded), and often lead to behavioral withdrawal – but not

always (Bell et al. 2001). Parties and sporting events can also be arousing, but precipitate positive attributions (e.g., interest or excitement) and foster greater engagement with others.

Most people assume that they are active agents operating on their social worlds. Nevertheless, research indicates that the physical and social environments not only constrain our behavioral options, but also prime specific actions, often automatically and outside of awareness (Bargh & Williams 2006). An appreciation of the role of the environment on behavior facilitates a better understanding of social interaction and provides an opportunity for greater control in contacts with others.

SEE ALSO: ► Initial Interaction ► Interpersonal Communication ► Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ► Proxemics

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# **Environmental Communication**

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“Environmental communication” refers to communication about the natural environment and ecosystem, commonly focusing on the relationships that human beings and their institutions have with the nonhuman natural environment. Much of this communication, historically, has been generated by concern about various environmental problems and issues (global warming, energy, smog, extinction of species, land uses, population growth, water quality, to name but a handful). Some messages, such as Rachel Carson’s popular and controversial *Silent spring* in the early 1960s, which revealed the deleterious side-effects of pesticides, have been credited with spurring public concern and major policy changes. However, there has also been a prevalent thread in literature and storytelling in many cultures that urges people, often through descriptive imagery, to appreciate beauty



and harmony in nature (or, in some cases, to fear nature). Sometimes, of course, nature description has also been a vehicle for teaching social and ethical values and ecological principles and for alerting people to environmental issues (e.g., Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* and Aldo Leopold's *A sand county almanac*).

### THE SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNICATION

Environmental communication can take many forms and can occur through a diverse set of communication channels. Thus, communication scholars of various stripes might readily find environmental communication applicable to their interests in various media. Overall, "the rate of growth in environmental communication research . . . is phenomenal," observe Pleasant et al. (2002, 200), based on their review of 963 articles about environmental communication published in academic journals from 1945 to 2000.

The meaning of the term "environmental" has evolved over time from earlier, more limited, and more human-centered terms such as "conservation" (Schoenfeld 1983), to a more global perspective, encompassing urban as well as rural locales, tough ecological choices, and grassroots participation in policy formation – in essence, "a recognition of pervasive interdependencies, in which everything is connected to everything else" (1983, 471). In more recent years, increasing attention has been paid to risks to human health stemming from a variety of environmental contaminants. Some in the environmental movement seem to welcome this new nuance as a means of widening the environmental constituency to include those whose main concern is human health and as a way of showing larger segments of the public that various kinds of environmental degradation can ultimately threaten their health. Others in the environmental movement seem to object that emphases on health return environmentalism to an anthropocentric philosophy. Nonetheless, communication about risk – whether to the natural environment or to human health – has emerged as the top environmental communication topic investigated by researchers, according to the review by Pleasant et al. (2002).

### ORIENTATIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Over the years, various researchers have attempted to gain more insight into differences in individuals' environmental orientations, e.g., their beliefs, affects, values, attitudes, and behaviors as related to the environment. Although much of this research has been atheoretical, there have nonetheless been numerous studies that have applied one communication model or another (e.g., framing, agenda-setting, and others) to environmental orientations as objects of study (→ Framing Effects; Agenda-Setting Effects). Rather than reviewing these models here, we will instead concentrate on just a few of the models that have shown considerable promise and usefulness for studies of environmental communication and that, in some cases, may not be well known among communication scholars more generally.

#### **New Environmental Paradigm**

The most widely used model designed to reflect individuals' general beliefs about the environment is the new environmental paradigm (NEP, more recently amended as the

new ecological paradigm) of Dunlap and Van Liere (1978) and various collaborators. NEP is not a process model, but rather a conceptually based measurement scheme designed to “tap ‘primitive beliefs’ about the nature of the earth and humanity’s relationship with it,” state Dunlap et al. (2000, 427; → Measurement Theory; Scales and Indices; Research Methods). “Social psychologists,” they explain, “see these primitive beliefs as influencing a wide range of beliefs and attitudes concerning more specific environmental issues” (2000, 428). Fundamentally, the NEP scale was designed to measure individuals’ beliefs about limits to growth for human societies, humanity’s right to rule over nature, and humanity’s ability to upset the balance of nature – what Stern et al. (1995) have termed a “folk ecological theory of how the world works, the nature of the biosphere, how it functions, and how it is affected by human actions” (1995, 726). NEP scores generally reflect a more ecocentric set of beliefs about humanity and the ecosystem.

In a multinational study of more than 2,000 students in 14 countries, Schultz and Zelezny (1999) found that NEP scores were positively associated with values of universalism and negatively with values of power and tradition. US respondents scored lower than those from most of the other countries. Stern et al. (1995) integrated NEP and another scale of environmental beliefs – an amended awareness of consequences (AC) scale based on Schwartz (1970) – into a framework of social psychological theory. In a telephone sample → survey of 199 adults in Fairfax County, Virginia, in the US, they determined that NEP and AC → scales represented generalized environmental beliefs that could affect beliefs, attitudes, and behavioral intentions in regard to specific environmental problems and, in turn, could be affected by values and social structural variables. Major (1993) combined the NEP scale with Grunig’s (1983, 1989) situational communication theory and found that these basic environmental beliefs helped to explain the ways various publics responded to and communicated about two environmental issues: air pollution and landfill shortages.

Fairly few studies, as Major (1993) notes, have examined the relationship of communication to general environmental dispositions. Nonetheless, Dunlap et al. conclude that NEP measures “should be responsive to personal experiences with environmental problems . . . and to information – diffused by government agencies, scientists, environmentalists, and the media – concerning the growing seriousness of environmental problems” (2000, 429). It is likely that these primitive beliefs might also affect individuals’ information seeking and processing as well (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on).

### **Environmental Behavior**

Two of the more significant behavior models that offer frameworks for exploring connections between communication and environmental behaviors are Ajzen’s (1988) theory of planned behavior (TPB; → Planned Behavior, Theory of), which is based on the Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) theory of reasoned action (TRA; → Reasoned Action, Theory of), and the theory of environmentally significant behavior (Stern 2000).

TRA and TPB have been widely applied to investigations of a variety of human behaviors, including a number of studies of communication and environmental behavior (see Trumbo & O’Keefe 2004). Trumbo and O’Keefe (2004) employed TRA in a study of factors that affect individuals’ voluntary water conservation behavior in the Truckee River

watershed and augmented the model by incorporating measures of NEP, past behavior, communication exposure (→ Exposure to News), → attention, and → information seeking with regard to water conservation information. They found that communication was at least as strong as the key TRA variables, subjective norms and attitude toward the act, as a predictor of intention to conserve, and appears to mediate an effect of NEP and past behavior on behavioral intention.

Stern (2000) has proposed a compelling theory that synthesizes a variety of factors, including NEP, into a comprehensive values-beliefs-norms model to predict environmentally significant behavior – the extent that a behavior “changes the availability of materials or energy from the environment or alters the structure and dynamics of ecosystems or the biosphere itself” (2000, 408). Although communication itself is not central in this theory, nonetheless there are various components of the model that might be affected by communication, or interact with it, with ultimate impacts on environmental behavior.

## **COMMUNICATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS**

Ecosystems inhabit a world rife with risks, just as humans do. Assaults on the environment are the stuff of much environmental reporting in the mass media, and while members of the public might learn about risks to the ecosystem in various ways, media depictions are a pre-eminent source and the most studied by scholars.

### **Media Coverage of Risks to the Environment**

One might argue that environmental reporting is all about sending signals regarding real or potential harm to an ecosystem. It is easy to unearth content analyses of media coverage of these risks to the environment. Most examine print – not broadcast or Internet – outlets (the former has historically been more accessible than the latter) and most offer descriptions of patterns of coverage across media or over time. Although there exists no → meta-analysis of these studies, we isolate a few of the more common patterns below.

*Coverage of a single environmental issue* will be erratic, not sustained, over time. Journalism tackles individual topics in relatively brief, discrete bits and does so only when events or processes coincide with news values such as timeliness or magnitude (→ News Routines; News Values). This means that context of all kinds is often missing from individual stories, leaving audiences to build a more comprehensive picture of an issue on their own. For example, Bendix and Liebler (1991) analyzed newspaper coverage of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon and found it to be intermittent and sensitive to crises.

*Journalistic norms* may be prominent drivers of coverage strategies (→ Journalists' Role Perception; Ethics in Journalism). For example, since journalists cannot be arbiters of scientific truth when that truth is contested (a common situation in science), they instead aim to include in stories a variety of truth claims, often “balancing” these viewpoints in an effort to convey to audiences a sense of the range of views. Boykoff and Boykoff (2004) found that roughly half of the global warming stories they examined from US newspapers hewed to this balancing act, and they concluded that such coverage may lead to misperceptions by audiences.

Stories, by definition, are dominated by *interpretive frameworks*, and scholars argue that these frameworks can be important predictors of the “take-home message” that a reader or viewer will derive from a journalistic piece. Studies of frames employed in stories about risks to the environment suggest that they can stem from a complex welter of factors, including a journalist’s a priori knowledge of an issue, a willingness to buy into the first frame that is offered as an issue comes to light, and even the social structure of the community in which the media organization operates. In a study of media coverage of three Superfund sites in Wisconsin, US, for example, Dunwoody and Griffin (1993) found that coverage of these sites over the course of years adopted community-specific interpretive frameworks.

### Communicating about Risks to the Environment

Human beings engage in a host of risky activities, much to the alarm of policymakers and the health community. Much effort and many dollars are devoted to trying to persuade people to stop smoking, to engage in safe sex, and to employ infant car seats correctly. But how can one persuade individuals to change their behaviors when the risk in question does not affect them directly? When a lake is in trouble, when warming temperatures allow beetles to overwinter and destroy ash trees, how do you jump-start behaviors that would help fix the problems?

*Risk campaign* managers say that it is hard enough to convince individuals to adopt behaviors in service to their own personal needs, much less devise means of convincing people to be responsive to risks to bodies of water or to ecosystems (→ Risk Communication). Complicating this scenario is the fact that truly lessening many, if not most, risks to environmental systems requires concerted efforts by many individuals, agencies, and even nations. It can be difficult for individuals to feel that their personal efforts could make a dent. Models such as Ajzen’s (1988) theory of planned behavior (TPB) can offer guidance regarding the behavioral beliefs, outcome evaluations, attitudes toward the behavior, feelings of efficacy, and felt social pressures (subjective norms) that can contribute to individuals’ behavioral change. As people process information about at least some environmental risks, they might experience a change in a number of these behavioral intention predictors (e.g., felt social pressures, outcome evaluations or beliefs in regard to taking old paint or mercury thermometers to a community recycling center instead of throwing them away in the trash). Of course, individuals would seemingly have to attend to and process this kind of information in the first place.

Kahlor et al. (2006) investigated some of the factors that could increase the likelihood that people would seek and process information about impersonal risks, that is, risks not to oneself but to others or to the environment. Specifically, they used elements of the *risk information seeking and processing (RISP) model* (Griffin et al. 1999) to examine how residents of two cities on the Great Lakes – Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Cleveland, Ohio – dealt with information about risks to the lakes (e.g., to the ecological health of the lakes) rather than the effects the lakes might have on human health. The RISP model combines aspects of other theories, most notably TPB and Eagly and Chaiken’s (1993) heuristic-systematic model of information processing. It proposes that more active seeking and processing of risk information is facilitated, directly or indirectly, by combinations of

some key variables, including (1) information insufficiency (i.e., a person feels the need for more information to confidently form an opinion or otherwise deal with the risk), (2) a person's capacity to seek and process the risk information, (3) a person's beliefs about communication channels that carry the information, (4) informational subjective norms (felt social pressures to be informed about the risk), and (5) affective responses to the risk (→ Affective Disposition Theories). Deeper processing of the risk information is expected to lead to more stable attitude and behavioral changes over time. (Affective response, including attitudinal and behavioral outcomes, was not analyzed in this study.)

The Kahlor et al. analysis found that *informational subjective norms* bore a much stronger relationship with seeking and processing the risk information than any other predictor, a relationship stronger than expected based on some past tests of the model that had examined how individuals seek and process information about risks to themselves. Among possible explanations, they suggested that social normative forces might be more powerful predictors of seeking and processing risk information in the absence of motivations based on perceived risk to the self. Although more research is needed, the results suggest that a variety of cultural and social forces, working through or with communication, might influence the ways people attend and respond to information about risks to the natural environment.

### **SOME DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH AND PRACTICE**

In general, environmental communication offers a rich area for studies of individual, cultural, social, and structural forces affecting human behavior. It takes place through various media, old and new. For example, the local → newspaper's series about water quality in nearby rivers, the → television network news broadcast that spotlights an inexplicable reduction in the number of bee colonies, and the pamphlet explaining mercury risks from eating fish caught in a local stream are, arguably, archetypical forms of environmental communication. But environmental communication can also be discovered in the → Internet → blogger's opinions on global warming, the local environmental group's interactive website mapping hazardous chemicals stored in the community, a government agency's public hearings on the siting of wind turbines for renewable electric power, chats people have with friends about recycling, and parents' emails discussing the best sunscreen lotion to limit their kids' exposure to solar ultraviolet rays.

Among the challenges to environmental communicators, and among the key topics of interest to those who study environmental communication, are the communication of risk and uncertainty to lay audiences, the interpretation of the attendant technical and scientific information for non-experts, differences in orientation to the environment based on various cultural, structural, and social factors, and issues related to public concern about the "impersonal" environment. Studies of environmental communication, regardless of whether they are based on quantitative or qualitative methods, would benefit from the continued application and development of theory.

SEE ALSO: ► Affective Disposition Theories ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Attention ► Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ► Blogger ► Community Structure Model ► Disasters and Communication ► Ethics in Journalism ► Exposure to News

► Framing Effects ► Framing of the News ► Information Processing ► Information Seeking ► Internet ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Measurement Theory ► Meta-Analysis ► News Routines ► News Values ► Newspaper ► Planned Behavior, Theory of ► Publics: Situational Theory ► Reasoned Action, Theory of ► Research Methods ► Risk Communication ► Risk Perceptions ► Scales ► Scales and Indices ► Social Conflict and Communication ► Survey ► Television ► Uncertainty and Communication

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# Escapism

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Escapism was introduced as an explanation for people's use of entertainment media in the 1950s. The tremendous popularity of entertainment programming in radio and, especially at the beginning of the 1960s, in television inspired communication researchers to discuss the reasons why mass audiences felt attracted to these programs and what consequences should be expected from this development (→ Audience). Escapism – a Latin-based term that could be translated as “tendency to evade one's current situation or environment” – was elaborated as an important motivation of entertainment consumption (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking; Selective Exposure). The concept centers on the assumption that diversion and distraction from real-life circumstances are desires felt by many individuals in many situations, and that entertainment media can serve the purpose of diversion very effectively. The most influential reflection on escapism was authored by Katz and Foulkes (1962). Their work exemplifies that escapism theory and research was dedicated both to motivational determinants of entertainment use and implications of escapist media consumption for the individual and society at large.

## DESCRIPTIVE AND NORMATIVE SUBSTANCE

The original understanding of escapism was rooted in the assumption that many working-class people in western mass societies were alienated and suffered from poor life satisfaction (→ Media Use by Social Variable). “Alienation” was assumed to breed the *desire to evade everyday sorrows and troubles* by involving oneself in fantasy worlds that offer relief and distraction (→ Fantasy/Imagination). “Escapist worlds, for most critics, are made of unreal or improbable people who are very good or very bad (or very good–bad) and whose successes and failures conveniently cater to the supposed wishes of the audience” (Katz & Foulkes 1962, 382). As the typical content of 1950s and 1960s entertainment programming indicated a sharp contrast to the stipulated social reality of “the masses” (e.g., radio → soap operas), involvement with such programming was theorized to serve the function of making people forget temporarily about their troublesome life circumstances by “diving” into mediated worlds of (more) happiness and luck (→ Involvement with Media Content). Some empirical evidence was collected that supported the need for diversion and “escape” as the motivational driver of entertainment consumption (Pearlin 1959).

In addition to the motivational dimension of escapism, the notion was also discussed in terms of the *effects* of escapist media use on people's life and performance in social roles

(→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Entertainment, Effects of; Social Behavior, Media Effects on). Mostly negative consequences of such media use were stipulated. Katz and Foulkes (1962) list examples of conceivable dysfunctional effects of escapist media use at different levels. One is the level of political affairs (e.g., “a housewife is assured by a soap opera that there is perfect justice in the world, and, as a result, is socially unconcerned and politically apathetic” [Katz & Foulkes 1962, 386]). They refer to interpersonal relations as another dimension of escapism impact (e.g., “an adolescent goes to the movies, whatever is playing, to get away from his parents, and there is a resulting strain in the parent–child relationship” [Katz & Foulkes 1962, 386]).

*Intrapsychic dysfunctions* are suggested as a third dimension of negative consequences of escapism (e.g., “through identification with a drama character, a person’s own impulses are negated or denied, impairing personality integration” [Katz & Foulkes 1962, 386]). While empirical evidence for such negative impact was scarce, it is clear that a normative dimension was loaded onto the concept of escapism from its very beginning. Katz and Foulkes (1962) warned against estimating solely negative consequences from entertainment media content and suggested positive feedback from escapist media use to social role performance as a realistic alternative. However, the term “escapism” was and partly still is today negatively valenced through its connection with normative tenets of mass audiences seduced by the media industry not to cope with, but just to forget, their real-life challenges and problems.

## CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS

While the notion of escapism has not been addressed by much research since the public debate in the 1950s and 1960s, its motivational component (i.e., a diversion and relief motivation as driver of media use) has been picked up in various lines of research (→ Exposure to the Internet; Exposure to Print Media; Exposure to Radio; Exposure to Television).

For instance, Anderson et al. (1996) found positive relationships between personal stress level and preference for entertainment media. Henning and Vorderer (2001) elaborated a specific escape motivation, namely the desire to avoid thinking about oneself. Based on research on the “need for cognition” trait, they demonstrated that the wish to avoid situations of intense thinking predicted television viewing.

In terms of *communication theory*, elements of escapism are reflected in most approaches to media selection, for instance → mood management theory (Zillmann 1988), and contemporary accounts of → uses and gratifications (LaRose & Eastin 2004). Thus, the tradition of escapism has continued in the history of research on media choice. In contrast, the normatively loaded effects component of the original concept formulation (i.e., the proposition of dysfunctional impact of escapism on people’s life performance) has been criticized, and contemporary research rather argues for the *benign effects of entertainment consumption* for people’s lives. The notion of well-being has been advanced in the social sciences (Kahneman et al. 1999), and some scholars consider the use of media entertainment and the accompanying “escape” from real-life stressors as a benign contribution to well-being (that is, as “vacation” instead of “flight” from real-life circumstances; cf. Klimmt 2006).



Overall, the concept of escapism has been very influential and has founded important elements of today's communication research on media choice. It is a good example, however, of how theory building can mix up conceptual and normative issues and, as a result, justify and promote pessimism and stereotyped attitudes concerning "mass audiences" using "mass media." Nevertheless, a careful consideration and theoretical elaboration of the actual scientific substance of escapism has turned out to be very fruitful (e.g., Henning & Vorderer 2001) and is likely to continue to be so in future (entertainment) research as well.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Fantasy/Imagination ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Mood Management ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Behavior, Media Effects on ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Ethics in Journalism**

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Journalism ethics is a branch of applied philosophy of moral values and rules. Beginning with moral issues in medicine, the field expanded since the mid-twentieth century to

include such professions as law, business, journalism, and engineering. Applied ethics has developed over the decades from merely describing actual moral behavior to establishing principles that guide decision-making. Journalism ethics retains an interest in the concrete, everyday challenges of professional practice, but considers it crucial to integrate those principles as well.

In its ideal forms, → news serves the public interest, that is, the interests not of readers and viewers but of citizens. From this perspective, social responsibility theory has become the most common form of journalism ethics in democratic societies around the world (→ Journalists' Role Perception). With the same core ideas but different nuances in countries across the globe, this ethical framework parallels the socio-political character of news. Through an ethics of social responsibility, the major issues facing journalism are: the market, truth, diversity, privacy, and technology.

### **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY WORLDWIDE**

In the US, the Commission on Freedom of the Press published its report, *A free and responsible press*, in 1947. Named for the commission chairman, Robert Hutchins of the University of Chicago, the report insisted that the news media have an obligation to society, instead of promoting the interests of government or pursuing private prerogatives to publish and make a profit. Believing that the press was too committed to its own individual rights, the Commission stood both terms on their heads with the label *social responsibility*. For socially responsible news to fulfill its duties to the community means, among other principles, giving a representative picture of the constituent groups in society and presenting and clarifying society's goals and values.

A similar emphasis on the press serving society has emerged elsewhere since World War II without any reference to Hutchins. In 1980, the MacBride report, *Many voices, one world*, put social responsibility in explicitly international terms. The UN delegate from Ireland, Sean MacBride, spearheaded for → UNESCO this review of international media policies and practices, cultural diversity, human rights, and professional journalism (→ Media Policy). It described a world information and economic order concentrated in media industries that downplayed local cultures and silenced diverse voices in developing countries (→ Development Journalism; Development Communication). MacBride recommended quality → journalism education around the world, so that countries could report effectively on themselves.

Against the backdrop of MacBride, the International Order of Journalists and its counterparts – a total of 400,000 working journalists, the majority of the organized profession in the world – produced a document entitled “International principles of professional ethics in journalism” at meetings in Prague and Paris from 1983 to 1988. While calling for the autonomy of journalists, it asserts that journalism should operate in the public interest without undue government or commercial influence (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

These examples illustrate social responsibility thinking in academic studies and professional codes. Most of Europe takes social responsibility for granted as the dominant policy in journalism practices and media structures, including public service broadcasting (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). The protocols and regulations for the European Union take as their starting point the need to preserve media pluralism, to ensure

representation of the democratic, social, and cultural needs of each country and language group. Public service broadcasting pursues national priorities, in an exception to the predominantly market-oriented EU philosophy (→ European Union: Communication Law; Plurality).

Since the 1990s, *civic or community journalism* has been restyling the press toward greater citizen involvement and a healthier public life (→ Public Journalism; Community Media; Participatory Communication). Sam Chege Mwangi has researched this movement internationally (Mwangi 2001). In Kerala, India, indigenous knowledge in agriculture, health, and housing is shared in local languages. In New Zealand during general election campaigns, journalists from *The Evening Standard* and *Waikato Times* live among the citizens and give voice to the public. In Latin America, more public journalism projects have been carried out than on any other continent, especially through community radio. In the language of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1970), the aim is a critical consciousness that empowers people. When journalists represent the voice of the people instead of speaking for themselves and for the dominant class, the press becomes an instrument of liberation.

In countries of Africa and elsewhere, communication confirms, solidifies, and promotes the communal whole. The Zulu maxim *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* [“a person is a person through other persons” or “I am because of others”] reflects one kind of communalism. Humans are social beings and personhood is a gift from other persons. Ethics is not a question of personal choices but a matter of social and cultural duties. Because communal energy knits together public life, humans by definition have a moral obligation to one another. Societies are moral orders and not merely functional entities; journalism ought to appeal to listeners and readers about human values and conceptions of the good (Blankenberg 1999).

Parallel with these developments in the profession, education, and public policy, the expanding and deepening work in *feminist ethics* has strengthened social responsibility theoretically (→ Feminist and Gender Studies; Feminist Communication Ethics). Feminist ethics calls for a dialogic version more public than the usual private definitions of care and nurturance (Koehn 1998). The axis of feminist ethics around human relations resonates with social responsibility, in contrast to an ethics of individual selves adhering to formal principles. The work of the multinational alliance for a responsible, plural, and united world, in producing the *Charter of human responsibilities*, is testimony in the public arena to the viability of social responsibility guidelines for the media.

## BUSINESS INTERESTS

Media corporations are among the largest businesses in the world at present: → Disney, → Bertelsmann Corporation, General Electric, Microsoft, → News Corporation (Fox), Nokia, Samsung, and Sony operate on a global scale unprecedented in corporate history (→ Media Conglomerates). To cope with institutions of this magnitude, social responsibility ethics insists on social justice (→ Corporate Social Responsibility). A dynamic, multilayered ethics of social justice is at the leading edge of new information technologies.

The just distribution of products and services would allocate media access to everyone according to essential needs, regardless of income or geographical location (→ Access to the Media). In contrast, the standard conception among private media would allocate

according to ability to pay, letting the open marketplace determine who obtains the service (→ Media Economics; Markets of the Media). This standard assumes that decisions about allocating the consumers' money belong to them alone as a logical consequence of their right to exercise their own social values without coercion.

In an ethics of justice where distribution responds to subsistence needs even if circumstances prevent adequate provision, information nonetheless remains one of the necessary goods. Practical wisdom (to form conceptions of the good and engage in critical reflection) and using the mind (for political and artistic speech) are essential to the quality of human life (Nussbaum 2000). As a necessity of life in a global order, the information system ought to reach everyone, regardless of income, race, religion, or merit.

The marketplace is unlikely itself ever to fulfill a need-based distribution. Digital media are disproportionately concentrated in the industrial world, and, under the business principle of supply and demand, no structural reasons exist for changing those proportions (→ Digital Divide). Universal diffusion driven by profits is unlikely. History indicates that communications media follow existing political and economic patterns; inequities in society lead to inequities in technology. A social responsibility ethics requires intervention through legislation, government policy, and public ownership to implement open access. One approach is to model media institutions on schools, which taxpayers accept as a responsibility in common, rather than leaving engineers or profits to decide alone.

## TRUTH

The press obligation to truth is standard in journalism ethics. Truth-telling is the generally accepted norm of the media professions, and credible language is pivotal to the very existence of journalism. But living up to this ideal has been virtually impossible. Budget constraints, deadlines, and self-serving sources complicate the production of truth in news writing. Sophisticated technology accommodates almost unlimited news copy and requires choices without the opportunity to sift through the intricacies of truth-telling (→ Truth and Media Content).

Social responsibility ethics requires not just technical changes and better effort but a *new concept of truth*. The mainstream press has defined itself overall as objectivist, so that the facts seem to mirror reality and genuine knowledge is scientific. The objectivity of physics and mathematics sets the standard for all forms of knowing. In this type of journalism, beginning most prominently with the wire services (→ News Agencies), news corresponds with accurate representation and precise data, and professionalism stands for impartiality. Journalistic morality is equivalent to unbiased reporting of neutral data (→ Accuracy; Balance; Bias in the News; Neutrality; Objectivity in Reporting; Reality and Media Reality). Objective reporting is not merely a technique but the moral imperative to withhold value judgments.

The prevailing view of truth as accurate information is too narrow for today's social and political complexities, though objectivity remains entrenched in ordinary practices of news production and dissemination. With the no-longer-tenable dominant scheme, philosophical work is critical for transforming the concept of truth intellectually.

A more sophisticated concept of truth is *disclosure*, getting to the heart of the matter. Reporters seek what might be called *interpretive sufficiency*. The best journalists understand

from the inside the attitudes, culture, language, and definitions of the persons and events that enter news reporting. In the process of weaving a tapestry of truth, reporters' disclosures will be true on two levels: they will be theoretically credible, and they will be realistic to those being covered. Rather than reducing social issues to the financial and administrative problems politicians define, social responsibility requires that the news media disclose the depth and nuance that enable readers and viewers to identify the fundamental issues themselves.

### **CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

Indigenous languages and ethnicity have come into their own. Religious fundamentalists demand recognition. The cultures of 20,000 ethnic groups have become more salient than nation-states. Rather than melting-pot Americanization, for instance, US immigrants now retain their cultures, religions, and languages (→ Migration and Immigration). Identity politics as a dominant world issue after the Cold War, along with ethnic self-consciousness as a source of social vitality, challenge social institutions, including the media, to develop cultural pluralism.

To respond to the challenge, social responsibility ethics yields an individualistic morality of rights to the common good. Only specific social situations that nurture human identity can determine what is worth preserving. The public sphere becomes a mosaic of distinguishable communities, a pluralism of ethnic worldviews that intersect to form a social bond but remain seriously held and competitive. Active participation articulates and mutually implements the common good.

As the basis for cultural pluralism, social responsibility ethics replaces melting-pot homogeneity with the politics of recognition (Taylor et al. 1994). Democracies may engage in morally troubling discrimination when they fail to recognize their constituent groups. How should specific cultural and social features of Buddhists, Jews, the physically disabled, Native Americans, or Afrikaners matter publicly? Or should public institutions continue treating groups as free and equal without regard to race, gender, or religion, ensuring only that democratic citizens share equally in political liberty and due process? Language is the public medium for realizing individual identity, and its vitality or oppression inevitably conditions individual well-being (→ Language and Social Interaction). Thus journalism ethics requires a commitment to cultural pluralism, encouraging with other public institutions the flourishing of particular cultures, ethnicities, and religions (→ Ethnic Journalism; Minority Journalism).

### **PRIVACY**

Polls about public attitudes toward the press identify invasion of → privacy as a premier issue in media ethics, at least in western cultures. Such intrusions create resentment and damage press credibility. Despite the technical sophistication of case and tort law, definitions of privacy are porous and inadequate. They fail, for instance, to distinguish between newsworthy material and gossip or voyeurism (→ Rumor).

The journalism ethics of privacy builds on such moral principles as the dignity of persons and the redeeming social value of information disclosure. Privacy is a moral good

because controlling intimate information about oneself is an essential component of personhood. However, privacy cannot be absolute because cultural beings also have social and political responsibilities. As individuals, human beings need privacy; as social creatures, human beings need public information about one another. For individuals, eliminating privacy would end existence as humans know it; for social beings, elevating privacy to absolute status would likewise render human existence impossible. Thus emerges the formal criterion forbidding an invasion of the intimate life space of individuals without their permission, unless, and only after exhausting all other means, the revelation would avert public crisis or have overriding public significance.

The social responsibility perspective turns the issue of privacy inside out. Instead of journalists deciding about falsehood, innuendo, or legitimate intrusion, people have power to decide for themselves. A reasonable public determines whether to expose its life space. Whether publicity places individuals in a false light or is warranted belongs first to humans as ends-in-themselves.

From the theoretical debate about what constitutes community, journalism ethical practice applies moral principles to three areas: (1) reporting personalia about social groups that vary from criminals to innocent victims, (2) storing confidential information in computer databases, and (3) allowing ubiquitous advertising to intrude on everyday activities. In all three areas, neither the journalist's prerogatives nor the legal technicalities but the citizens themselves have priority and moral authority.

## **MEDIA TECHNOLOGY**

Harold Innis (1951; 1952) argues that social change accompanies media transformations (→ Innis, Harold). Technologies are not neutral; shifting from one medium to another alters how societies organize and how individuals think. Following Innis, → Marshall McLuhan (1964), and the Toronto School, media ecologists examine all forms of media technology, from cuneiform writing to the Internet, to understand their properties deeply and distinctly. This perspective divides the history of media technologies into oral, print, broadcast, and digital, but nearly all the important ethical issues received their sharpest focus in a print context. The intellectual roots of the democratic press were formed during the reign of print technology, and media ethicists have a predilection for news in literary rather than broadcast form.

In the digital era, journalism ethics must establish an agenda appropriate to the distinctive properties of a system of networking, search engines, and computer databases (→ Technology and Communication). This ethical framework can orient most fruitfully around social structures, recognizing that political and cultural formations offline and online are fundamentally different. Cyberterrorism, cyberwarfare, and other urgent new threats to social order are impossible without a digital infrastructure. The ethics of representation has a new orientation as persons enact and symbolize gender, race, sexuality, and religion in anonymous cyberspace. Some issues are new, and some amplify past ethics to levels of complexity heretofore unknown. Other problems inhere in the accessibility of computer mediated technology itself (→ Blogger; Citizen Journalism; Online Journalism). Digital technology weakens the distinction between home and work, emphasizes the character of interactivity, alters the struggle to engage social issues, and

shifts the means to build human communities. These changes require special emphasis on developing appropriate ethical principles.

The new media must pass the same social responsibility test as the old: to what extent they fulfill their democratic potential. The important question is whether educational and information services will be primary. Interactive technologies give people a voice and connect users directly without professionals or gatekeepers in between. The technologies are democratic tools in principle – hence the concern that the new media serve people’s needs rather than those of special interest groups or the market. Multitudes of online channels are technically feasible. Will they tangibly improve the quality of education, broaden the political horizons, or make public policy alternatives more understandable? Important social issues raise moral conflicts that the public itself must negotiate so that the media provide the soil in which democracy can flourish.

### NEW DIRECTIONS

New technology can be *tools for conviviality* (Illich 1973). *Convivio* means “living together,” and Ivan Illich emphasizes the means for communities to prosper, rather than destroying or homogenizing public life. Convivial tools are dialogical and publicly accessible. They do not require users to submit to expert pedagogy; they encourage experimentation, disassembly, and repair. Because of their simplicity and open design, they do not give rise to professional monopolies of knowledge. Fulfilling the principles of general morality often requires small, distributed technologies rather than massive or centralized ones.

Social responsibility is explicitly cross-cultural in character. The canon of journalism ethics has been largely western, gender-biased, and monocultural. To succeed under current conditions, professional ethics must instead be international, gender-inclusive, and multicultural. The global reach of communication systems and institutions requires an ethics commensurate in scope. Thus the current efforts toward a diversified ethics of social responsibility journalism build on a level playing field that respects all cultures equally. Because every culture has something important to say to all human beings, a journalism ethics in the interactive, transnational mode is the greatest challenge today worldwide.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Accuracy ▶ Balance ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Community Media ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Disney ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Ethnic Journalism ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Feminist Communication Ethics ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Minority Journalism ▶ Neutrality ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Corporation ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Plurality ▶ Privacy ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Rumor ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Truth and Media Content ▶ UNESCO

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## Ethics of Media Content

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Questions of media ethics address the way media practitioners – journalists, public relations (PR) representatives, bloggers, technical support staff – resolve various types of dilemmas they face, as well as the value judgments that media audiences make regarding media content and performance. What does it mean to be “responsible” as a media professional? How should journalists balance the need for sensitivity with their mission to convey accurate, comprehensive depictions of events? What should a PR practitioner do when the interests of a business client conflict with professional values of public service and transparency? How do newspaper readers and television viewers expect news organizations to minimize potential harm to people without sanitizing the news? These are examples of key questions that concern media ethicists. As such questions make clear, ethics generally is not concerned with defining “right” and “wrong,” which is the subject of the broader



field of moral philosophy. Instead, ethics provides tools to help navigate “gray” areas in which conflicting or competing solutions may be legitimately argued. The purpose of ethics, then, is not to provide clear-cut answers regarding what constitutes good behavior or the “right” thing to do, but to enable people to resolve conflicts and dilemmas by asking the right questions based on the promotion and prioritization of key ethical principles and values.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF ETHICS

A moral dilemma, Foot (2002, 14) said, is “a special case of the dilemma that exists wherever there is evidence for and evidence against a certain conclusion. What is special is that the conclusion is about what an agent ought to do.” As a sub-field of moral philosophy, the discipline of ethics shares an epistemic form; i.e., just as moral philosophy is concerned with the essence that constitutes the “goodness” of something, ethics is concerned with what exactly constitutes the “rightness” of a decision when an individual is presented with a range of plausible (and often equally unsatisfying) options. At bottom, ethical reasoning legitimizes the moral claims we make. Walker (2000, 89) defined ethics as “pursuing an understanding of morality, which provides understandings of ourselves as bearers of responsibilities in the service of values.” The central concern of ethics is the justificatory power of our rational deliberation, rather than the nature of a particular moral stance. While morality and ethics are clearly related, they are not synonymous. Morality refers to a system of beliefs on which we rely to make judgments about right and wrong; ethics is a process to articulate rational justifications for our actions when the values that we hold come into conflict. “Ethics begins when elements of a moral system conflict,” the media ethics scholar Deni Elliott said (Patterson & Wilkins 2005, 3). While the two terms are often used interchangeably in general public discourse, the philosophical distinction is subtle yet significant.

Moral philosophers have sought ways to justify claims for the use of “ought” statements since the *Nichomachean ethics* of Aristotle and the dialogues of Socrates as recounted in the works of Plato. Hegel insisted that moral freedom be grounded in reason as well as in an acknowledgment of man as a vehicle for a larger “spirit.” Kant (1991, 2002) outlined a system of moral law based on our “absolute” duties to honor humanity’s free will and capacity for rational thought. In his landmark *Principia ethica*, Moore (1903) argued that “goodness” was a simple, non-natural property on which our moral judgments were based. Since then, moral philosophers have argued over what constitutes an ethical judgment and whether our conception of morality has any basis in reason.

In our efforts to articulate rational justifications for our actions, ethicists urge us to draw on common, longstanding principles such as respecting human dignity, truth-telling, and transparency, and carrying out our obligations as members of a community or public. These and other key principles comprise the heart of most professional codes of ethics. Ethicists direct us to draw on many different philosophers and theorists depending on the nature of the ethical dilemma we face. Our duties as social creatures with moral obligations are emphasized both in Aristotle’s call to pursue “virtue” through moderation and in Kant’s system requiring us to honor the human capacity for reason above all. The utilitarian approach of J. S. Mill can be useful in assessing the needs and welfare of a majority. The distributive-justice approach of John Rawls challenges us to envision a model of fairness that places a premium on the welfare of society’s most disadvantaged.

## ETHICS APPLIED TO MEDIA

While the broader principles mentioned above play a central role in media ethics theorizing and research, they often manifest themselves in more specific values that are enshrined across media sectors. Media professionals must be committed to a spirit of public service. They must be above-board, or transparent, in their work. They must take reasonable steps to minimize harming others in the course of carrying out their duties. They must allow their audiences to hold them accountable for their performance. Most cases in media ethics involve events or decisions in which two or more of these values come into conflict, and media practitioners must decide which will be given priority in a particular decision and why. Such real-life dilemmas are referred to as applied ethics. For example, there are many instances in which the journalistic mission to serve the public with aggressive pursuit of facts may create some degree of individual harm or discomfort. Most or all of the values mentioned above are explicitly promoted in codes of ethics adopted by professional associations such as the Society of Professional Journalists in the US, the Public Relations Society of America, or even the American Marketing Association. Media ethicists also are concerned with more specific questions such as perceived invasions of privacy, conflict of interest among journalists and people on whom they report, how public relations agents can successfully serve both private clients and the general public through their use of the media, and depictions of minorities and other vulnerable or disadvantaged groups in advertising.

Since media ethics is concerned with such fundamentals of behavior, the field incorporates several other dimensions of media. For example, media ethics research addresses the evolution of ethical standards and norms (→ Media History), questions of how ethical orientations influence professional behavior (→ Journalists' Role Perception), and assumptions and implications of legal and policy decisions (→ Media Management; Media Policy). Much of the media ethics literature that deals with these and other areas generally falls into one of two categories: philosophical explications for normative theorizing and empirical research on issues of media sociology.

### Normative Theory

A large body of media ethics literature attempts to develop theoretical frameworks to guide media behavior and apply elements of moral philosophy to media practice. Much of this work focuses on the organizational and social levels by suggesting how media organizations and professionals *ought to perform* to properly fulfill their ethical duties. This work also explores ethical implications of current practice. It includes arguments about threats posed by the propagandistic tendencies of message campaigns (Cunningham 2002) and the ethical problems regarding trust and truth-telling posed by online communication (Tompkins 2003).

Media ethicists have put forth various, often competing normative theories – calls for what the media ought to do as ethical agents – that advocate different philosophical approaches. These theories draw from the work of Dewey (1985), Lippmann (1922), and others who, while not explicitly concerned with ethical issues, have argued that media systems should serve specific roles in society. Merrill (2006), drawing from John Locke

and other Enlightenment thinkers, has emphasized a media ethics framework predicated on First Amendment, libertarian ideals of freedom and journalistic autonomy. In contrast, Christians and colleagues (Christians et al. 1993) have argued for a communitarian model of media ethics, which emphasizes the obligation of media systems to cultivate community and encourage civic engagement. A considerable amount of the media ethics literature reflecting the communitarian approach draws from philosophers such as Taylor (1990) and Sandel (1982), and from the social theorizing of Habermas (1989) and his notion of the need for the existence of a “public sphere” to promote social harmony and ethical discourse. Regardless of the philosophical approach used, most theorists in the field of media ethics strive to distinguish their work from moralizing punditry.

### **Media Sociology**

Since ethics by definition primarily addresses the efforts of individuals to resolve dilemmas, empirical research in the field of media ethics generally focuses on the individual level of analysis and thus is considered a division of media sociology. Research in this area seeks to explore attitudes of media practitioners toward professionalism, their perceptions of responsibilities, and their decision-making processes and influences. It seeks to find explanations for how practitioners approach particular issues and the key influences in their decision to handle or resolve a conflict or dilemma in a particular way. Researchers have sought to assess the value systems and moral outlooks of journalists and PR officials; the moral development of journalists as compared with other professions also has been studied (Wilkins & Coleman 2005).

Most of the empirical research in this area has been based on surveys and structured interviews. Because of the interpersonal, largely subjective nature of the work in news media, theorists have suggested that the manifestation of personal and professional values and norms can be easily observed in workers’ output, which continues to fuel public debates about degrees of bias in content (→ Bias in the News). Research on ethical decision-making in the media, as a result, often is more directly focused, at least among journalists, on professional norms and on the concept of news as a social construction of reality. Yet even so, many of these studies, which are ethnographic in nature, have directly addressed moral or ethical dimensions of professional media work. Gans (1980), for instance, was focused on how journalists “decide what’s news,” but his topic inevitably required an examination of personal and cultural values that he believed could be regularly found embedded in news content – what some social psychologists would say indicate journalists’ “ethical ideologies.” Shoemaker and Reese (1996) cautioned that routines and organizational constraints are likely to minimize or negate the influence of personal attitudes, values, and beliefs on media content. Conversely, McQuail (1994, 204) warned against ruling out any legitimate degree of autonomy in the newsroom and overestimating the power of workplace socialization. Much ethics-related empirical research, consequently, has focused on manifestations of values in content in efforts to contribute to this debate.

SEE ALSO: ► Accountability of the Media ► Bias in the News ► Communication Theory and Philosophy ► Ethics in Journalism ► Image Ethics ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► Journalists’ Role Perception ► Media History ► Media Management

► Media Policy ► Morality and Taste in Media Content ► News Values ► Public Relations Ethics ► Public Sphere ► Truth and Media Content

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## **Ethnic Journalism**

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Ethnic journalism is the practice of journalism by, for, and about ethnic groups. Because ethnicity is a historical and relational construction (Jackson & Garner 1998), the interplay of power and difference is central to the ways scholarly research defines ethnic media. Ethnic journalism relates to how difference is recreated and connected to the social, political, and economic participation of ethnic groups. Ethnicity is a membership formulated around a shared history, religion, cultural ancestry, geographical region, race, or language, which generates a sense of belonging among particular groups. By this definition, all news media are ethnic. What sets ethnic journalism apart as a distinct

category is the involvement of ethnically differentiated groups living within a dominant culture. The literature on ethnic media and journalism maintains conceptualizations of ethnicity marked by contexts of disenfranchisement and limited access to media production (→ Access to the Media).

Ethnic journalism embodies *sociopolitical projects of groups* that remain unaddressed in the news industry. Members of ethnic minorities seldom hold decision-making positions in the media, and content for and about ethnic minorities is marginal. News stories tend to emphasize the cultural and social traits that distinguish minority groups from mainstream culture (→ Minority Journalism), reinforcing constructions of these groups as different, exotic, and a problem (Wilson & Gutiérrez 1995). Ethnic journalism formulates representations of the group in ways that conform to how they see themselves, as a strategy for *political advocacy* and *cultural preservation* (→ Advocacy Journalism). Historical analyses have found that ethnic media and journalism crystallize during times of political and economic stress, to denounce discrimination and energize mobilization (Miller 1987). In some cases, ethnic media link to movements for political autonomy. Catalan and Basque news media in Spain, for instance, point to efforts for cultural reaffirmation and language preservation, but are also implicated in historical struggles for self-determination and the advance of a nationalist identity in seeking political independence (Hourigan 2003).

Ethnic news media do not always deviate from predominant journalistic values (→ Ethics in Journalism). Although in some cases they develop journalistic practices attuned to the group's communicative traditions, ethnic media are more likely to tailor mainstream news content to their audiences. To gain credibility and legitimacy, ethnic journalists often adhere to prevailing *professional standards*. For example, producers and reporters for a nightly newscast serving Latino audiences in the USA reproduce standard practices and the ideology of US journalism (Rodríguez 1996; → News Routines; Journalists' Role Perception). Nevertheless, they push forward a Latino-centered news agenda and configure a map of American society based on the Latino ethnic experience.

*Economic support* is another factor shaping ethnic journalism. Noncommercial ethnic media struggle to maintain operations with limited and intermittent resources. Scant funds translate into small editorial staffs and a dependency on external material, such as press releases and news feeds. Commercial news outlets operate through a profit-driven logic that may suppress diversity within the ethnic group to reach the largest portion of the audience (→ Media Economics). Because ethnic minorities are not unitary groups, the character of the ethnic experience to be communicated becomes a subject for negotiation. Ethnic media place the boundaries of ethnic membership under examination: who gets represented and who addressed?

Research on ethnic journalism emerged with the growth of the foreign-language press during times of increased immigration in the first half of the twentieth century (Park 1922). Given the continuous worldwide migration, the role of the diasporic press in the integration and identity formation of new migrants remains under investigation (Sampedro 1998; → Migrant Community Media). In a context of cultural globalization, ethnic journalism provides an opening to explore the particularistic markers that have resurfaced as a source of cultural identity and a resource for political mobilization (→ Globalization Theories).

Studies of linguistic communities, racialized groups, and indigenous populations historically at the political and economic margins have examined the relationship

between ethnic media production and public discourse (Riggins 1992). For example, indigenous media in Australia and Canada constitute an Aboriginal space, which enables conversation on common issues and experiences that do not find their way into mainstream discourse (Avison & Meadows 2000; → Public Sphere).

Aside from measuring patterns of ethnic news-media use, the social and cultural dimensions of consumption have had little study. But the institutional histories of ethnic media, which often apply political pressure to make communication policies more inclusive and to provide better access to media technologies, receive considerable attention. Researchers are shifting their focus to the levels of production and content, to understand the dynamics that shape ethnic news media and the maps they formulate of the world.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Economics ▶ Migrant Community Media ▶ Minority Journalism ▶ News Routines ▶ Public Sphere

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## **Ethnic Media and their Influence**

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Ethnic media are media vehicles (e.g., specific programs, publications, promotional pieces) that carry culturally relevant messages designed for and targeted to a particular ethnic group. Studies have demonstrated the rapid growth and success of ethnic media in North America and throughout the world (Deuze 2006; Gross 2006; Ojo 2006). In the past, media planners were guided by the assumption that they could capture ethnic

minority audiences using the same general messages and mainstream media that appealed to majority audiences (Askey 1995). However, given the current extent, growth rates, and buying power of ethnic minority members' media use patterns, and better understanding of this, there has been a greater effort to target ethnic minorities with culturally relevant media and messages (→ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication). In fact, research suggests that ethnic media rather than mainstream media may be the most effective way to reach and persuade minority groups (La Ferle & Lee 2005).

Recently, the New America Media Foundation (Chan 2002) found that culturally relevant media reach on average 84 percent of ethnic minorities like Blacks, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans. Also, over 80 percent of minorities reported that they get information through ethnic television, radio, and publications, and over two-thirds reported they preferred ethnic media to mainstream media, particularly for news information (Conner 2004). Studies also suggest that culturally relevant media deliver greater returns on investment for advertisers than white general-market advertising (Cunningham 1999). For example, in a study on Asian audiences, Forehand & Deshpande (2001) found that Asian participants exposed to ethnic-specific media responded more favorably to same-ethnicity spokespeople and advertising than they did to mainstream advertising and spokespeople (→ Advertising).

This is also true for Hispanics, who not only prefer Spanish-language to English-language media but also respond more favorably to Spanish-language ads than English-language ads, regardless of the medium (Chan 2002). Numerous studies have concluded that Spanish-language media validate Hispanic consumers' cultural heritage and, therefore, are attributed with greater source credibility (Lee et al. 2004). Similarly, blacks are more likely to trust ads and editorial content in black media than they are to trust mainstream media, leading them to be more attracted to and positively affected by black media than mainstream media (Appiah 2002).

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK GUIDING RESPONSES TO ETHNIC MEDIA**

The communication literature related to culturally relevant media has inadequately addressed the psychological mechanisms at work when ethnic minorities encounter media and messages targeted to them. In other words, why do ethnic media do a better job persuading ethnic minorities? Identification theory and distinctiveness theory are particularly relevant in addressing this question.

The persuasion literature has indicated that source–recipient similarity has shown that audiences are more likely to be influenced by a message if they perceive it as coming from a source similar, rather than dissimilar, to themselves (Brock 1965). Individuals are more influenced by media content when they identify with media characters, symbols, and values and perceive themselves to be similar to those characters, symbols, and values.

Identification theory (Kelman 1961) states that individuals automatically assess their level of similarity with a source during an interaction and make similarity judgments. This process drives individuals to choose a source based on perceived similarities between themselves and the source (Kelman 1961). It follows that culturally similar source cues that are inherently embedded in ethnic media would be particularly salient cues that lead ethnic minority audiences to not only identify with targeted media and their

content but also favorably respond to targeted media and their content (→ Audience Segmentation).

This notion is supported by distinctiveness theory, which states that a person's own distinctive traits (e.g., black, red-headed) will be more salient to him or her than more prevalent traits (e.g., white, brunette) possessed by other people in his or her environment (McGuire et al. 1978). The theory predicts that ethnicity will be more salient for people whose ethnic group is part of a numeric minority in a social environment than it will be for members of an ethnic majority in a particular social environment. Grier & Brumbaugh (1999) argue that, unlike whites, ethnic minorities appreciate the acknowledgment associated with being the target of media. They also state that ethnic minorities are more likely to use targeting cues based on their ethnically distinctive trait in attending and evaluating media than white majority members are to use targeting cues based on their non-distinctive trait.

Although the source's ethnicity does not seem to matter to ethnic majority members, racially concerned persons like ethnic minorities may react adversely to media sources that feature ethnic group members unlike their own. Although ethnic minorities do attend to some general market media, they often ignore mainstream media messages that are perceived to be targeted to primarily white audiences (Rossman 1994). Appiah (2002) concluded that because ethnic minority members do not identify with many white sources they often find mainstream media personally irrelevant, displaying a conscious form of *dis-identification* that causes them to tune out to white media and characters.

### **ETHNIC AND MAINSTREAM MEDIA SELECTION AS A FUNCTION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY**

While a low proportion of ethnic minorities attend to mainstream media compared to ethnic media (Fannin 1989), mainstream media should not be ignored as a potential method for reaching and persuading ethnic minorities. In fact, an integrated approach that combines both general market and culturally relevant media may be the best strategy. For example, blacks often choose between general media networks or those tailored more narrowly to black audiences (La Ferle & Lee 2005). Like blacks, Hispanics also enjoy both Spanish-language media and mainstream media (→ International Communication), but their preferences vary based on length of time in the US, language ability (La Ferle & Lee 2005), and in particular ethnic identity (Donthu & Cherian 1992).

Although a person's ethnicity is a significant predictor of their response to targeted media and characters, ethnic identity seems to be a more effective variable in explaining minority members' responses to media (Appiah 2004a). That is, individuals' feelings toward culturally relevant media and characters depend largely on their degree of identification with their own ethnic group. Studies demonstrate that minorities with strong ethnic identification perceive themselves as more similar to, and identify more strongly with, ethnic media and characters, and express greater liking for ethnic media and characters than do those minorities with weak ethnic identities (Appiah 2004a, 2004b). For example, strong Hispanic identifiers show more ethnic pride, greater use of Spanish-language media, and greater preference for ethnically advertised products than weak Hispanic identifiers (Donthu & Cherian 1992). Research also shows that minorities with weak



ethnic identities typically respond either indifferently or more favorably to white media and models vis-à-vis targeted media and models (Appiah 2004a; Green 1999).

### **WHITE AUDIENCES' RESPONSES TO ETHNIC MEDIA**

The positive effects of culturally relevant media are not limited to minorities. There is a growing body of work that has investigated how white audiences respond to ethnic-specific media and characters (e.g., Grier et al. 2006). Studies clearly show that these media and characters have succeeded in attracting and persuading mainstream audiences. In fact, in some cases ethnic media have been more effective than mainstream media in connecting to and persuading white audiences. For example, Appiah (2004b) found that white respondents were more likely to believe they were the target audience of black character ads than white character ads, and rated black character ads more favorably than white character ads. White respondents' more favorable responses to culturally relevant media and characters have been explained, in part, by the term *cultural voyeurism* (Appiah 2004b).

Cultural voyeurism is conceptualized as the process by which a viewer seeks knowledge about and gratification from ethnic minority characters by viewing them using a specific medium (Appiah 2004b). This notion implies that white audiences may seek, observe, and emulate ethnic minority characters in ads, in music, and on television to gain general information about their dress, music, and vernacular primarily because these characters are perceived to possess certain socially desirable traits (→ Stereotyping and the Media). For example, because black people often set the trends in many areas like clothing, language, music, and dance, which not only dominate "U.S. youth culture but the entire global youth market" (Rossman 1994, 140), white audiences may find black media and characters particularly appealing. As a result of cultural voyeurism, some white audiences, particularly white youth, may "identify more with Black characters than White characters on dimensions such as product use, social activities, sports, fashion, and music. For White adolescents, the desire to be cool and hip may override the importance of cultural and racial similarity" (Appiah 2004b).

Today, campaign and media planners should be more familiar with cultural values and lifestyles of ethnic minorities, and should have greater access to a wealth of research on these audiences that will enable them to more effectively target minority groups using culturally relevant media and messages (Rossman 1994). By not using ethnic media, campaign and media planners forgo valuable opportunities to effectively communicate with and persuade ethnic minorities, thereby losing out on a huge market and market opportunity (→ Strategic Communication).

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Audience Segmentation ► Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ► International Communication ► Stereotyping and the Media ► Strategic Communication

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## Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication

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We live in an increasingly diverse world, not only in terms of ethnic heritage, but also in the forms of communication available. With so many information resources to choose

from, how do we make sure that communication campaigns reach target audiences? Ethnicity is often implicated in the formation of knowledge gaps, in which certain portions of the population receive and gain knowledge through the media at a faster rate than others, creating a difference between information “haves” and “have-nots” (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). As a result, the issue of ethnicity and exposure to communication becomes particularly important when trying to ensure equal access to → information pertinent to life in the twenty-first century.

Ethnic groups are distinguished by common culture, language, religion, and/or ancestral origins. There are no internationally agreed upon ethnic categorizations because history often plays a role in what aspects are considered most important for ethnic identity. For example, the historical conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland makes religious affiliation imperative to ethnic categorization, whereas the history of immigration in the US leads to a greater focus on ancestral origins (→ Migration and Immigration). Most research tends to use broader racial categories to define ethnic groups. In the US, for example, census categorizations of “White/Caucasian,” “Black/African-American,” “Hispanic/Latino,” “Asian,” and “Native American” are used most often in research, with most concentrating in the three largest ethnic categories – Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics. Occasionally case studies focus on a specific ethnic group as defined by religion or country of origin.

Ethnicity is viewed mainly as a potential co-variate in message exposure studies and appears in the literature when ethnicity is a significant predictor of exposure and/or effects (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Audience Research). Ethnic differences in use and/or communication connections could account for some of the significant findings attributed to ethnicity and are therefore the focus for this entry. The two goals of this entry are: first, to review some of the findings of studies comparing ethnic groups in media use and connections (→ Uses and Gratifications; Media System Dependency Theory); and second, to encourage a shift in the way that we study ethnicity and communication connections in the future.

### **ETHNIC COMPARISONS IN MEDIA USE AND CONNECTIONS**

Early media use research in the US concentrated on *television viewing* (→ Exposure to Television). The general consensus of these studies was that African-Americans and Latinos watch more and report greater satisfaction with → television than Whites. Blacks use television for entertainment and as a diversion, and Latinos more for entertainment and information. Both Blacks and Latinos prefer watching programs featuring characters or topics representative of their ethnic groups (Greenberg et al. 2002). This preference for ethnic → identification with television personalities likely spreads beyond these two ethnic groups. In recent years, reality television producers (→ Reality TV) have successfully appealed to a more diverse audience by seeking ethnic diversity while casting the programs.

Recent studies of ethnic groups in the UK found a slightly different relationship with television than found in the US. Ethnic minorities in the UK – including Mixed, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African, and Chinese ethnic categories – watch less television than the general population. These ethnic groups are more likely to

have cable television and Asians, Chinese, and Middle Eastern groups, in particular, report preferring ethnic channels (OfCom 2007).

Ethnicity is also a common feature in → *digital divide research*. While most studies in Europe show that income, not ethnicity, is a key element in the digital divide, in North America studies indicate that lower-income Blacks and Latinos have less access to the → Internet and other new communication technologies, while Asian-Americans lead other ethnic groups in Internet access (→ Exposure to the Internet). In the UK, Black Africans are least likely of all ethnic groups to have Internet access (OfCom 2007). Programs around the globe are attempting to increase Internet access for all ethnic groups and income levels. However, even amongst those with access, ethnic differences still exist. African-Americans are more likely than Whites to search for information on new jobs, places to live, religion, and to download music, video, and audio clips online (Spooner & Rainie 2004). African-Americans indicate more appreciation for the ability to learn new things on the Internet, while Whites are more likely to report the importance of the Internet for staying in touch with family and friends (Spooner & Rainie 2004). Whites are also more likely than Hispanics to indicate interpersonal benefits from the Internet (Hacker & Steiner 2002).

Marketing research tells us the most about ethnicity and use of other media. African-Americans and Latinos are said to listen to more → radio than other ethnic groups. Whites/Caucasians are most likely to read → newspapers daily, followed by African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Latinos/Hispanics. However, while circulation numbers are down for the traditional newspapers (readership has shifted to online formats), ethnic newspapers have shown some growth in recent years (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2007). Magazine readership studies (e.g., PReSS 2006) indicate that African-Americans prefer → magazines targeted to their ethnic groups (e.g., *Ebony*, *Jet*, and *Essence*) over general interest magazines, while Asian-American adults prefer news publications not found in the top ten magazines for general audiences and other ethnic groups (e.g., *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *Wall Street Journal*; → Readership Research).

## **MOVING BEYOND “USE” OF SPECIFIC FORMS OF COMMUNICATION**

In today’s media-saturated environment, it no longer makes sense to study single forms of communication. A person can “use” multiple forms of communication simultaneously. For example, a person can watch television, check email, play computer games, and talk to someone on the phone at the same time if they desire (→ Multitasking). Media use studies do not capture this intricacy. Several researchers have stressed the value-added of examining media in context so as to be able to assess their relative importance (→ Media Ecology). The importance of any particular communication connection is relative to the importance of all other available and appropriate options. People usually connect to more than one communication option to achieve any particular goal; that is, they operate in context of the best choices available.

It has been shown that people construct different communication ecologies in order to achieve their everyday goals (→ Communication Infrastructure). For example, while you might find that local newspapers are the best way to find out what is happening in your community (→ Local News), talking to other parents or reading parenting magazines

may be more important when determining how to discipline your child for misbehaving in public. Therefore, while an ethnic group might spend more time using particular media, recall measures may find they were less exposed to particular messages because they were not connecting to the medium for that type of information. Exposure rates may be higher when the messages appear in media that the group spends less time using but considers more important for specific goals. So instead of studying ethnic differences in the use of television, the Internet, or other form of media, the goal should be to identify the communication ecology – the web of interpersonal and media (new and old or mainstream, and local and/or ethnic) connections that ethnic groups construct in the course of everyday life to reach specific goals.

### MOVING BEYOND BROAD ETHNIC COMPARISONS

There are some indications that there may be as many differences within broad ethnic categories as there are between ethnic groups (Resnicow et al. 2002). There are variations within Latino-Hispanic, Asian, and African-American groups based upon socio-economic status, ethnic backgrounds, identification with countries of origins and/or specific regions of a country, language use and accent, and city versus rural distinctions. Acculturation plays a role in whether immigrants of various ethnic backgrounds prefer media in their native language to that of their host country (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication). Sharing a native language does not always lead to common media exposure since the meanings of words and cultural symbols can vary greatly between countries of origin that share a common language. In addition, even people within one country (e.g., China, Brazil, South Africa, etc.) can connect to different media based upon the use of different dialects.

While most research has concentrated on the dominant racial and ethnic categories (e.g., Blacks, Hispanics, Whites, and Asians), a couple of studies have broken *new immigrant groups* down further. For example, one study found that more affluent Caucasian and Chinese-origin groups had the highest quality of Internet connectedness, while Korean-origin, Mexican-origin, and Central American-origin groups had lower-quality connections (Jung et al. 2001). Other studies have shown differences between Chinese and Vietnamese immigrants with regard to newspaper reading, suggesting a potential knowledge gap within the “Asian” ethnic categorization (Mansfield-Richardson 2000).

Not only will we get a more accurate picture of communication exposure when exploring intra-ethnic differences, there is reason to believe that geo-ethnic differences are just as important. The term “*geo-ethnicity*” refers to the interaction of ethnicity and geographical space. Studies have indicated significant communication differences between people of similar ethnic backgrounds who live in different communities – with different communication infrastructures – even when controlling for socio-economic status, immigration history, residential tenure, and home ownership.

These geo-ethnic differences can influence media connections. For example, Latinos in different communities in Los Angeles vary in their preference for mainstream English-language media rather than Spanish-language resources (Wilkin et al. 2007). There are also differences in the relative importance of television versus newspapers in these communities. While three Latino communities had extremely low Internet connections

(less than a quarter of the community surveyed had Internet access), one of the communities studied had almost three-quarters of the sample connecting to the Internet. These geo-ethnic variances were not unique to Latinos. The study also demonstrated that Whites in two Los Angeles communities differed in their connection to interpersonal, television, and local versus mainstream newspapers (→ Migrant Community Media).

There is no question that ethnic differences exist in exposure to communication and these differences can have implications for disparities between groups. With increasing diversity of communication resource options, ethnic and intra-ethnic exposure studies need to take place within an ecological framework.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Acculturation Processes and Communication ▶ Audience Research ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Identification ▶ Information ▶ Internet ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Local News ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Media System Dependency Theory ▶ Migrant Community Media ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Multitasking ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Readership Research ▶ Reality TV ▶ Television ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Ethnographic Film

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It is commonly assumed that an ethnographic film is any documentary about nonwestern cultures. There is scholarly debate about its parameters. Some suggest all film is ethnographic (Heider 1976), while others restrict the term to films produced by anthropologists (Ruby 2000). There are no up-to-date histories of ethnographic film. The scholarly literature in the field is concerned with assumed dilemmas between science and art; questions of → accuracy, fairness, and objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting); the relationship between written and visual anthropology; and collaborations between filmmakers and anthropologists (see Banks & Morphy 1997; Crawford & Turton 1992; De Heusch 1962/1988; MacDougall 1998; and the journals *Visual Anthropology* and *Visual Anthropology Review*). The common definition will guide the discussion that follows.

## HISTORY

The earliest ethnographic films were the Lumière Brothers' "actualities," one-reel, single-take episodes of human behavior, such as "Leaving the Lumière Factory" (1895). Among the first anthropologists to produce researchable footage was Felix-Louis Regnault, who proposed, in 1900, that all museums should collect "moving artifacts" for study and exhibit. Scholars, explorers, missionaries, and colonial administrators often made footage for research and public display. However, the crude technology, lack of familiarity with the equipment, and vagueness of the maker's intention greatly limited their value.

In the 1930s Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson extended Regnault's ideas and "published" fieldwork films like *Bathing Babies in Three Cultures* (1941). This approach continued with: Alan Lomax's Choreometrics study of dance as cultural behavior; Ray Birdwhistell and Edward Hall's cinematic studies of body movement and the use of space as culturally conditioned communications; and the use of cameras by dance ethnologists. In the 1950s the Institut für den Wissenschaftlichen Film in Göttingen launched its Encyclopedia Cinematographica Project, an archive and center for the study of filmed behavior. A similar organization exists at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. However, such films are seldom seen by nonresearchers.

Ethnographic film designed for the public began with a general educational film movement in the 1920s. Films of "exotic" peoples were produced commercially, sometimes with the assistance of anthropologists and screened as "Selected Short Subjects." For example, Pathé employed members of Harvard's Department of Anthropology when producing "People and Customs of the World" in 1928.

There were a number of early attempts to represent native life in feature-length theatrical film. Edward Curtis's *In the Land of the Head Hunters* (1914), a romantic epic of the Kwakiutl of British Columbia, was a box-office failure but established a precedent for Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922), a film frequently described as the first documentary and ethnographic film (→ Documentary Film). Nanook's international

success prompted Paramount to finance Flaherty's Samoan film, *Moana* (1926) and to distribute Meriam Cooper and Ernest Schoedsack's *Grass* (1926), a study of the annual migration of the Iranian Bakhtari. These films had more impact on Hollywood than on subsequent ethnographic films. When Cooper and Schoedsack again departed to make *Chang* (1927) in Siam, they carried a fully approved dialogue script, ensuring fidelity to executive preconceptions. Hollywood developed its own traditions of Native American, Asian, African, and South Sea Island adventure drama. In *The Silent Enemy: An Epic of the American Indian* (1930), director H. P. Carver employed an all-Native cast to tell the tale of an Ojibway warrior. The advent of sound caused the film industry to move onto the studio stage and abandon location productions until the 1970s. For 40 years, movie audiences learned about the "exotic other" from back-lot Tarzan films and cowboy and Indian movies. Because of the popularity of such films, ethnographic filmmakers are still forced to disabuse audiences of their expectations of seeing cannibals, headhunters, and other clichés. The rapid disappearance of native peoples, as well as western culture's folk customs, caused salvage ethnographic film projects to be undertaken, particularly among the "folk" cultures of Europe. The Heye Foundation supported a series of films on Native Americans from 1912 to 1927 produced by Owen Cattell and Frederick Hodge. However, it was not until after World War II that substantial activity is noted in the US.

### NATIONAL TRADITIONS

In France, film and ethnography were paired together by such pioneers as Marcel Griaule. One of his students, anthropologist/filmmaker Jean Rouch, gained the attention of both academics and filmmakers. In the early 1960s technical advances made it possible for small crews to produce synchronous sound films on location. *Chronique d'un été* (Chronicle of a Summer, 1961) was produced with sociologist Edgar Morin as the first *cinéma vérité* film. It combined the ideas of Soviet avant garde filmmaker Dziga Vertov and those of Robert Flaherty. Rouch took cameras into the Paris streets for impromptu encounters in which the filmmaking process was often a part of the film. Those filmed became collaborators, even to the extent of participating in discussions of the footage, which was in turn incorporated into the final version of the film.

Rouch continued his collaborative approach in a number of films made with West Africans such as *Les Maîtres Fous* (The Mad Masters, 1955), which was criticized for an assumed emphasis on the bizarre. Rouch sought a "shared anthropology" with his "ethnographic science fiction" films, such as *Jaguar* (1965) and *Petit à Petit* (Little by Little, 1968). The impact of Rouch's work was immediately evident in the films of French New Wave directors such as Chris Marker and Jean-Luc Godard. During his long career Rouch produced over 150 films (Feld 2003); he died in Africa in 2004 on his way to a film festival.

Rouch's attempt to present the world through the eyes of natives was taken a step further in the Navaho Film Project of Sol Worth and John Adair (1973), a project designed to teach Native Americans the technology of filmmaking without the western ideology usually attached to it. Similarly, Sarah Elder and Leonard Kamerling launched the Native Alaskan Heritage Film Project, producing more than 20 community films, such as *Drums of Winter* (1988), in which the people filmed play an active role in the film's conception and realization. Given the shift in power and awareness in a postcolonial and



postmodern world, some argue that the only ethnographic films that should now be produced are those that result from an active collaboration and sharing of power between ethnofilmakers and their subjects (→ Image Ethics). Through the efforts of such people as Vincente Carelli in Brazil (1980s), Eric Michaels in Australia (1987), and Terence Turner in Brazil (1992), many indigenous people have produced their own videotapes (→ Community Media; Community Video).

*The Hunters* (1958) is the first North American ethnographic film to gain worldwide attention. It is part of John Marshall's 30-year-long film study of the San (Bushman) of Southern Africa. Marshall subsequently produced dozens of African and North American films including *N'ai* (1980), a life history of a San woman, broadcast on American public television. His final film, *A Kalahari Family* (2004), was completed shortly before his death in 2005.

Robert Gardner, a former associate of Marshall's, released *Dead Birds*, a study of symbolic warfare among the Dani of New Guinea in 1964. The film grew out of a project in which ethnographers, a novelist, and a filmmaker all described the same culture. Gardner later produced several films in East Africa and India.

Timothy Asch worked collaboratively with anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon, creating a series of films on the Yanomamo of Venezuela. Among them are *The Feast* (1968) and *Ax Fight* (1971). These films, along with written ethnographies and study guides, were designed to teach college undergraduates cultural anthropology. In addition, Asch worked collaboratively with anthropologists in Bali and Indochina until his death in 1994.

The educational value of ethnofilm is exemplified by the curriculum developed by Educational Development Corporation in "Man: A Course of Study," produced by Canadian anthropologist Asen Balikci and filmmakers such as Robert Young. Films on Netisilik Eskimo life originally designed for use in a grammar-school course have also been repackaged for college-level courses, a commercial television special, *The Eskimo Fight for Life*, and a Canadian preschool children's series (→ Educational Media). The series became a political hot potato when some US congressmen found the films offensive because they assumed a culturally relative position and were thought to be anti-American (Dow 1991). *Through These Eyes* (2004) is a recent filmic attempt to review this project and the controversy that followed it.

While most European and North American ethnographic filmmakers travel to distant places to film exotic peoples, Australians have been filming their own native people since the turn of the century. The Torres Straits Expedition (1898) is reputed to be the first ethnographic expedition in which a motion picture camera was used. The Australian government provided a consistent source of funding. The Australian Commonwealth Film Unit (Film Australia) made it possible for Ian Dunlap to undertake long-term filming projects such as the "Peoples of the Western Australian Desert" series. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies employed a staff ethnographic filmmaker. In that capacity, Roger Sandall produced films on the ceremonial life of Australian Aboriginal peoples, including *The Mulga Seed Ceremony* (1969). Public showings of these films have been restricted owing to the secret nature of some of the ceremonial acts portrayed. David and Judith Macdougall followed Sandall as the Institute's resident filmmakers. They are most noted for their African films, such as *Lorang's Way* (1979) and *The Wedding Camels* (1981), shot in a distinctive observational style that caught the attention of cineastes as well as anthropologists.

The Institute for Papuan New Guinea Studies has carried on the tradition begun by their Australian colleagues and sponsored a number of films on native life. Of special interest is *First Contact* (1983) by Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson. It employs 1930 footage of the forays of three Australian miners into remote sections of the New Guinea highlands and contemporary interviews with the surviving miners and Papuan natives as they recall their first encounters.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURE

Television networks have become a significant source of support. In Britain, Granada's long-running series "Disappearing World" established a fruitful collaboration between field ethnographers and producers, resulting in films like Brian Moser's *Last of the Cuiva* (1971). BBC Television ethnographic projects have included the series "Face Values," produced in cooperation with the Royal Anthropological Institute, and "Worlds Apart," in which series producers Chris Curling and Melissa Llewelyn-Davies explored the impact of Leni Riefenstahl's photography in *The Southeast Nuba* (1983). In the United States, the Public Broadcasting Services aired "Odyssey" a series that covered all aspects of anthropology. A similar series was supported by Japan's Nippon TV under the title "Man," produced by Junichi Ushiyama.

Since the mid-1990s ethnographic filmmakers have become increasingly interested in the potential of new digital technologies and multimedia productions, in which video is combined with still photographs and text, resulting in an interactive experience for the viewer that is more often viewed on a computer screen than projected. In addition, the Internet and the world wide web are being explored as new outlets. Among the first to produce such works was Peter Biella with his *Yanomamo Interactive* (1997). More recently there has been Sarah Pink's CD-ROM on bullfighting and Jay Ruby's CD-ROM *Oak Park Stories* (2004–6).

The western world's fascination with people unlike themselves is centuries old and shows no sign of diminishing. It seems certain there will always be an audience for ethnographic film and, as more and more "natives" make their own work, opportunities to see the world through their eyes will increase (→ Visual Representation).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Video ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Educational Media ▶ Image Ethics ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Photography ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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# Ethnography of Communication

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What are the means of communication used by people when they conduct their everyday lives; and what meanings does this communication have for them? These are central questions guiding the ethnography of communication. The ethnography of communication is an approach, a perspective, and a method to and in the study of culturally distinctive means and meanings of communication. The approach has been used to produce hundreds of research reports about locally patterned practices of communication, and has focused attention primarily on the situated uses of language. It has also been productively applied to various other means and media of communication including oral and printed literature, broadcast media, writing systems, various gestural dynamics, silence, visual signs, the Internet, and so on.

## NATURE OF THE APPROACH

The approach is concerned with (1) the linguistic resources people use in context, not just grammar in the traditional sense, but the socially situated uses and meanings of words, their relations, and sequential forms of expression; (2) the various media used when communicating, and their comparative analysis, such as online “messaging” and how it compares to face-to-face messaging; (3) the way verbal and nonverbal signs create and reveal social codes of identity, relationships, emotions, place, and communication itself. Reports about these and other dynamics focus on particular ways a medium of communication is used (e.g., how Saudis use online communication, or how the Amish use computers), on particular ways of speaking (e.g., arranged by national, ethnic, and/or gendered styles), on the analysis of particular communicative events (e.g., political elections, oratory, deliberations), on specific acts of communication (e.g., apologizing, campaigning), and on the role of communication in specific institutions of social life (e.g., medicine, politics, law, education, religion).

In addition to its focus on locally distinctive practices of communication, the ethnography of communication is also guided by a *particular methodology* and general concerns in theory development. As a theoretical perspective, it offers a range of concepts for understanding communication in any possible scene and/or community; as a methodology it offers procedures for analyzing communication practices as formative of social life. The methodology typically involves various procedures for empirical analysis including participant observation in the contexts of everyday, social life, as well as interviewing participants about communication in those contexts (→ Research Methods).

## ORIGINS

The ethnography of communication was founded by Dell Hymes. In 1962, he published a paper that called for a new area of study, a kind of linguistics that explored language not just as a formal system of grammar, but as something culturally shaped in the contexts of social life. At the same time, he called for a kind of anthropology that took speaking, and communication broadly, as its focal subject matter. The two interests, together, helped establish an innovative enterprise, a kind of linguistic study that was grounded in the social life of language; and in turn, a kind of cultural study focused on speaking and communication generally. In 1964, Hymes and his colleague John Gumperz published a special section of the journal *American Anthropologist* on the subject, which formed, in 1972, the basis of a highly influential reader, pioneering a general path for ethnographic studies of communication (see Gumperz and Hymes 1972).

Collections of research reports were published in the 1970s that helped move such study from the periphery of some disciplinary concerns in linguistics, anthropology, sociology, and rhetoric to more central concerns in the study of communication and culture. These studies explored aspects of communication that were often overlooked, such as gender role enactment, the social processes of litigation, marginalized styles, social uses of verbal play, and culturally distinctive styles of speaking (e.g., Bauman and Sherzer 1974). By the late 1980s and 1990s, a bibliography of over 250 research papers in the ethnography of communication was published, with another reader and several books appearing (e.g., Katriel 1986; Philipsen and Carbaugh 1986; Carbaugh 1990). These demonstrated how communication was a culturally distinctive activity while examining issues such as the ways communication varied by social agent and class, communication on and about popular movies, talk as done on television, relationships between speaking and silence, and intercultural interactions, as well as Native American poetics, political speech, verbal dueling, and verbal arts generally.

## CONCEPTUALIZING BASIC UNITS OF COMMUNICATION

The ethnography of communication offers a system of concepts that can be used to conceptualize the basic phenomena of study, and a set of components for detailed analyses of those phenomena. The phenomena of study are understood to be, fundamentally, communication phenomena, and thus the ethnographic design focuses investigators on communication as both the data of concern and the primary theoretical concern. Hymes introduced several concepts as basic units for the ethnographic study of communication. Chief among these are communication event, communication act, communication situation, and speech community.

Ethnographers of communication start their analyses by focusing on uses of the means and meanings of communication in particular socio-cultural lives. As a result, the locus of the study is on the practice of communication in contexts. The concept of *communication event* has become a prominent starting point for these analyses, for it draws attention to communicative action as formative of social processes and sequences. A communication event is understood to be, from the point of view of participants, an integral, patterned part of social life. Like gossip sessions, talk shows, and political

meetings, communication events typically involve a sequential structuring of acts, can be understood by formulating norms or rules about them, and involve culturally bounded aspects of social life which have a beginning and ending.

Communication events involve actions of many kinds. As such, events can be understood as the conduct of social actions, with *communication act* being the concept that brings together the performance of that action and its interpretation. One might say, e.g., “I enjoy hiking.” This saying might perform many actions: it might be used to explain one’s office decorations, to account for one’s attire, to counter others with anti-hiking interests, and so on. The concept of communication act, then, ties ethnographic analyses to specific social interactions in order to understand the range of conduct and actions that is getting done within them. Communication acts are most typically parts of larger sequences of social actions and in this sense are often usefully conceptualized as integral aspects of communication events.

In any human community, there are many places where communication is expected (or prohibited). These enter into ethnographies of communication as aspects of a setting in which communication itself takes shape. The concept of *communication situation* is used to identify specific settings and scenes for communication. For example, in some communities, communication situations involve the front porch, the television lounge, the bar, or a medical office (→ Communities of Practice). Unlike communication events, such as a church service, which are typically governed by a set of special rules and sequences, communication situations may involve activities with some particular boundaries or shapes, but without a strict sequencing of acts or activities.

A *speech community* is a group of people who share rules for using and interpreting at least one communication practice. A communication practice might involve specific events, acts, or situations, with the use and interpretation of at least one essential for membership in a speech community. The term “speech” is used here to stand in for various means of communication, verbal and nonverbal, written and oral; the term “community,” while minimally involving one practice, in actuality typically involves many, and is thus used to embrace the diversity in the means and meanings available for communication.

As communities of people gather in communication, so do they conduct themselves in particular ways. It is these patterned *ways of speaking* – e.g., about politics, in worship, or in education – that identify in which community one is, indeed who and where one is. In this sense, ethnographers of communication explore various ways of communicating, the situated variety in the events, acts, and situations of communicative life. Of special interest are specific situations and events in which different cultural styles of communication are simultaneously active (→ Interactional Sociolinguistics; Intercultural and Intergroup Communication; Intercultural Norms; Intergroup Contact and Communication).

## COMPONENTS FOR THE ANALYSIS OF COMMUNICATION

Once ethnographers of communication have identified a specific event, act, situation, or community for study, a subsequent move is the analysis of that selected practice as a multi-faceted phenomenon. This involves a particular methodology: the systematic analysis of the selected practice as it has been observed in its normal social contexts, and as it is discussed by participants. These analyses are conducted systematically

through a range of components. These components were originally formulated by Hymes, and involve explorations of the variety of dimensions of each such communication practice.

The components were summarized by Hymes using the mnemonic device *SPEAKING*, which will be used here for their brief discussion. As Hymes discussed, each component invites us to ask certain questions about the communication practice of concern. Questions such as these provide abstract theoretical bases for analyses that accomplish many objectives, including an understanding of the special qualities of specific communication practices (e.g., how Nigerian social interaction appropriates texts from popular culture), and what is common across a variety of practices. In other words, the components structure both descriptive and comparative analyses.

S: What are the *setting* and *scene* of the communication practice? This component explores two aspects of context: the physical setting in which it takes place, and the scene, i.e., the participants' sense of what is going on when this practice is active. Analyzing the setting and scenic qualities of the practice helps ground the analyses in the specific contexts of social life.

P: Who are the *participants* in this practice? A significant shift is marked here in conceptualizing communication as an event in which people participate, and thus the key concept is "participant" (in the event). This moves away from typical encoding and decoding models, or others which focus initially on senders and receivers of messages. What if a practice such as "reading the paper" is considered an event? Who are the participants in that practice?

E: What are the *ends* of this practice? This asks about two ends: the goals participants may have in doing the practice, and the outcomes actually achieved. In the event of joke-telling, many of us are familiar with an off-color joke, the goal of which was to entertain, with the outcome offending. Communication practice, generally, may target some goals, yet attain other outcomes (intended and not).

A: What *act sequence* is involved in and for this practice? The practice is part of social interaction. When does it arise and as part of what sequence? And further, what are the content of the practice and its form? This component invites a careful look at the sequential organization of the practice, its message content, and form.

K: How is the practice being *keyed*? What is the emotional pitch, feeling, or spirit of the communication practice? Regarding funerals, most are keyed as reverent and serious. Other events, such as some talk shows, can be keyed as more light-hearted. The ways practices are keyed, and the ways the key can shift from moment to moment, are questions raised and analyzed with this component.

I: What is the *instrument* or channel being used in this communication practice? The oral mode may be necessary, or it could be prohibited in favor of a specific gesture or bodily movement. Is a technological channel preferred, or prohibited? Should the practice be conducted in print or via a face-to-face channel, through song or chanting? The range of instruments being used to design a practice, and the ways each is interpreted, are entered into the analysis here.

N: What *norms* are active when communication is practiced in this way and in this community? This component distinguishes the two senses of norms that may be relevant to a communication practice: what is done normally as a matter of habit (e.g., few vote),

and what is the appropriate thing to do (e.g., one should vote in every election). Standards of normalcy can be productively distinguished from the morally infused, normative dimensions of communication practices.

There is a second distinction that guides this component: norms for interaction can be distinguished from norms of interpretation. The norm for interaction can be formulated as a rule for how one should properly interact when conducting the practice of concern: e.g., one should respect one's elders. The norm for interpretation can be formulated as a rule for what a practice means: e.g., sitting in silence with an elder counts as respecting that elder (→ Discourse Comprehension). Both norms are analyzed through this component.

G: Is there a *genre* of communication of which this practice is an instance? This might involve identifying the practice as a type of a formal genre such as verbal dueling, or a riddle, or a narrative. As a result, the properties of those formal genres become relevant to its analysis. Alternately, the practice might be understood as part and parcel of a folk genre, and be analyzed accordingly.

The investigative methodology summarized here involves identifying a unit of communication practice for purposes of analysis, generating data about that practice through procedures of participant observation and interviewing, then analyzing instances of the practice through the components. For any one practice, some components may prove more fruitful for analysis than others, and thus the use of the theoretical framework itself becomes an object of reflection during the ethnographic study.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Recent ethnographies of communication have examined mass media texts in various societies, political processes at the grassroot and national levels, interpersonal communication in many cultural settings, organizational communication in various contexts from medicine to education, intercultural communication around the globe, processes of power, advantaged and disadvantaged practices, and so on. And further, these studies have been conducted in and about several languages, including Chinese, Danish, English (of several varieties), Finnish, German, Hungarian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish (in several locations), among many others. The growing number of native ethnographers conducting ethnographies of communication in their own speech communities is important to note, for this helps generate a fund of such studies, from a variety of authors, which is ripe and rich for future comparative work.

Several trajectories of work have evolved over the years that derive from or are indebted to the ethnography of communication. Some ethnographers have recently explicated a model of communication that is a discourse-centered approach both to culture (Sherzer 1987), with developments of it through explorations of indigenous practices (Urban 1991), and to the problem of intertextuality (Bauman 2004). Other trajectories involve a newly formulated theory of cultural communication and codes (Philipsen 1997, 2002), with developments of it through applications to work organizations (Covarrubias 2002), interpersonal life (Fitch 1998), and intercultural interactions (Carbaugh 2005). There is much recent work that is comparative and focuses on aspects of conversation and media, with special attention to the ways people conceive of and evaluate television texts, various uses of the computer, and how these relate to face-to-face channels of communication

(Katriel 2004). In any event, all illustrate what is culturally distinctive about communication, yet also suggest some general properties in communication, additional units for study, and so on.

And thus we have come full circle. For ethnographers of communication, communication is explored as something locally patterned and practiced as a part of social life, and as something crucially important, being formative of all societal and cultural communities. Discovering the locally distinctive means of all communicative media is crucial to our understanding. Interpreting what meanings are associated with these various means of expression is also essential. Knowledge of what is common across our various communities of communication is being served as well. In the process, ethnographers of communication demonstrate how communication is formative of social and cultural lives, comparatively analyzing both the cultural features and the cross-cultural properties of communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Communities of Practice ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Intercultural Norms ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Microethnography ▶ Research Methods ▶ Speech Codes Theory

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## Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication

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The vitality of language communities can affect the quality of intergroup communication between speakers of contrasting language groups. This is the case where accent, dialect, and language not only provide important cues for the categorization of speakers, but also serve as salient dimensions of ethnic identity. Vitality is defined as “that which makes a group likely to behave as a distinctive and collective entity within the intergroup setting” (Giles et al. 1977, 308; → Collective Action and Communication). The more vitality an ethnolinguistic group enjoys, the more it will be able to use its own language so as to survive and thrive as a collective entity.

Three dimensions of socio-structural variables influence the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups: demographic, institutional support, and status. *Demographic* variables are those related to the absolute number of speakers and their distribution throughout the national, regional, or urban territory (e.g., birth and mortality rates, mixed marriages, and immigration/emigration patterns in and out of an ancestral territory). Demographic factors constitute a fundamental asset for ethnolinguistic groups as “strength in numbers” and they can be used as a legitimizing tool to grant language communities the institutional support they need to foster their development within multilingual settings.

*Institutional control* is defined as the degree of control one group has over its own fate and that of outgroups and can be seen as the degree of social power enjoyed by one language group relative to competing linguistic communities (Sachdev & Bourhis 2005; → Power in Intergroup Settings). The extent to which a language group has gained formal and informal representation in the institutions of a region, state, or nation constitutes its institutional support. Informal support refers to the degree to which a linguistic community is organized as a pressure group to represent and safeguard its own language interests in key state and private domains. Formal support refers to the degree to which members of a language group have gained positions of control at decision-making levels of private institutions and the local/national government. Such control improves the likelihood that the first language will be taught and used in education, provided as a language of health-care in hospitals, used as the language of work in business and government services, and included as the language of broadcasting. The presence and quality of leaders

within formal and informal institutions representing language groups also contributes to the institutional support of language communities. Gains in institutional support often depend on the emergence of activists and charismatic leaders who succeed in mobilizing groups to struggle for greater institutional control of and support for their ingroup language use.

Language groups that have made gains on institutional support factors are also likely to benefit from considerable social status relative to less dominant groups. The *status variables* are those related to a language community's social prestige, its socio-historical status within the state, and the prestige of its language and culture locally, nationally, and internationally. Social psychological evidence shows that speakers from high-status groups enjoy a more positive social identity and are likely to use their own language in a greater range of private and public situations. Conversely, being a member of a disparaged, low-status linguistic group can sap the collective will of minorities to maintain themselves as distinctive language communities, leading to linguistic assimilation. The experience of belonging to a high- vs low-status language community is reinforced through language stereotypes and enshrined through the adoption of language laws that legislate the relative status of language communities within multilingual states (Bourhis & Maass 2005).

The above three dimensions combine to affect in one direction or the other the overall strength or vitality of ethnolinguistic groups. A language community may be weak on demographic variables but strong on institutional support and status factors, resulting in a medium vitality position relative to a language minority weak on all three vitality dimensions.

The *subjective vitality questionnaire* (SVQ) was designed to measure group members' assessments of in/outgroup vitalities on each item constituting the objective vitality framework (Bourhis et al. 1981). Vitality research using the SVQ showed that, overall, group members are realistic in perceiving their vitality position along the lines suggested by "objective" assessments of ethnolinguistic vitality (Harwood et al. 1994). However, studies have also shown that group members can be biased in their assessments of own-group/outgroup vitalities. For example, perceptual distortions in favor of ingroup vitality occur when language groups exaggerate the strength of their own-group vitality while underestimating the vitality of the outgroup. Perceptual distortions in favor of outgroup vitality involve language groups who underestimate the vitality of their own-group while exaggerating the vitality of the outgroup.

Studies have shown that ethnolinguistic vitality can mediate a broad range of language attitudes and communicative behaviors. Combined objective/subjective vitality assessments allow language groups to strategically plan and mobilize not only to limit linguistic/cultural assimilation, but also to act more efficiently to improve their own-group vitality relative to coexisting groups in multilingual settings.

SEE ALSO: ► Collective Action and Communication ► Power in Intergroup Settings

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# Ethnomethodology

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Harold Garfinkel introduced the term “ethnomethodology” (by analogy to “ethnoscience”) in the 1950s and 1960s and gave the approach its fullest explication in his widely influential *Studies in ethnomethodology* (1967). Ethnomethodology consists of the effort to discover and analyze generic practices – *methods* – found across different occasions by which people in concert with one another deal with the concrete particularities of their circumstances and actions. Though initially misrepresented and trivialized in some corners (owing to a range of factors, including the chaotic state of social theory in the 1960s and, to a lesser extent, Garfinkel’s complex writing style), ethnomethodology is now widely recognized as having provided a radically transformed basis for a science of social life. Garfinkel’s theoretical writings furnished social scientists a powerful alternative approach to a core set of issues that underpin any social theory: the organization of social action; the social constitution of knowledge; and how two or more people develop and sustain a shared – or intersubjective – grasp of the world and each other’s actions (Heritage 1984). Garfinkel laid out his profoundly novel approach to social life in series of papers that involved studies of mundane settings (such as record keeping, jurors’ methods for making decisions, and the like) and reports on the results of his now famous breaching experiments.

## NATURE OF THE APPROACH

Ethnomethodology entails a fundamentally different approach to understanding the orderly character of social life. Beginning with Durkheim, Weber, Marx, and others, and with few exceptions since then, the sine qua non of a scientific approach to social life has entailed the development of (a) deterministic model(s) of actor and society. In this view, the difficulty of grasping the complex particularity and apparently chaotic messiness of actual conduct in concrete situations of action can be overcome by attending to patterns of social life that emerge in aggregated populations, aggregated interactions, or historical periods that have been (in different ways) abstracted from the particulars of singular

episodes of interaction. Once aggregated (or viewed through the lens of theoretical constructs), such patterns can then be explained by reference to whatever variables have been formulated explicitly in the social scientists' model.

As Garfinkel argued, however, such deterministic accounts are pursued at the cost of treating social actors' concrete experience, knowledge, and capacity for choice and reason as irrelevant, except insofar as they correlate with what has been formulated explicitly in the model. In Garfinkel's terms, deterministic accounts of social actions render actors as "judgmental dopes," since how actors recognize, interpret, and reason about their situations, the basis on which they select and design courses of action, and their justifications for acting, are (at best) only marginally relevant to such explanations. Indeed, the tenability of such deterministic theories of social action depends on forms of reductionism that render them inherently problematic (Wilson 1971). Instead of focusing on actors' motivations for acting, Garfinkel argued that social scientists should investigate the procedures by which members of society produce and recognize actions, and by virtue of this, explicate the "knowledgeable ways in which, whether consciously or not, social actors recognize, produce, and reproduce social actions and social structures" (Heritage 1987, 245).

Ethnomethodology simultaneously introduced a novel approach to understanding *the role of social knowledge in social life*. Although ethnographers and interviewers routinely exploit the fact that actors can explain their own actions, social scientists had long struggled over the status this ordinary rationality should be accorded. As had emerged in the "debates on rationality," mainstream social science approaches argued that insofar as the explanations that actors provide for their actions differ from those developed by social scientists, such "lay theories" and the commonsense knowledge they embody could be ignored as a flawed or distorted form of (proto)scientific knowledge. Garfinkel rejected this view, arguing instead that such commonsense knowledge was the stuff of social reality itself – not because the social world is as actors describe it, but because such commonsense understandings are the fundamental bases for their actions. Garfinkel summarized these views in his recommendation that "the activities whereby members produce and manage settings of organized affairs are identical with members' procedures for making those settings 'accountable'" (Garfinkel 1967, 1). Thus, in one elegant theoretical maneuver Garfinkel "integrated the analyses of action and knowledge" (Heritage 1987, 229). Instead of either accepting actors' accounts, *tout court*, or rejecting them as flawed, such formulations could be analyzed as one more form of action, especially insofar as they tend to be preoccupied with moral matters such as justifying, blaming, and the like.

Garfinkel's concern with the actors' point of view extended to his conception of *intersubjectivity*. In the prevailing approach in the 1950s, Parsons argued that the values internalized by actors would lead them to interpret the world in roughly similar ways. In such situations, actors also sharing a common system of symbols (i.e., a language) could communicate with each other. This approach treats intersubjectivity as a relatively uninteresting problem by handling it as an all-or-nothing affair that is guaranteed, in principle, by shared values and overlapping symbols systems (→ Objectivity in Science). Garfinkel argued that, in fact, shared understanding is a thoroughly contingent accomplishment that is sustained only through actors' persistent efforts in actual situations (→ Phenomenology) – thus, two or more actors' struggle to establish for all practical purposes an intersubjective grasp of a situation (including each other's thoughts, feelings,

and intentions) step by step, through their use of a common set of procedures for building and interpreting action. Garfinkel's concern with the "problem of intersubjectivity" led him to consider the ways in which ordinary understandings are contextual (Heritage 1987) and the complex and detailed ways in which the contexts of events furnish resources for their interpretation. Two concepts, in particular, proved especially important: the Documentary Method of Interpretation and the Indexical Property of Social Action.

### **THE DOCUMENTARY METHOD OF INTERPRETATION**

To describe how social actors recognize their situations and bring to bear relevant background knowledge in making sense of them, Garfinkel borrowed a key concept from the Sociology of Knowledge, the *Documentary Method of Interpretation* (DMOI). According to Mannheim, the DMOI involved the search for "an identical, homologous pattern underlying a vast variety of totally different realizations of meaning" (Garfinkel 1967, 78). Thus, actual appearances are treated as the document of, or as pointing to, a presupposed underlying pattern. Rather than relying on the DMOI as a research methodology, however, Garfinkel appropriated the formulation to describe the fact that humans unavoidably interpret individual appearances in light of an underlying pattern that is imputed to them. Moreover, Garfinkel added that "not only is the underlying pattern derived from its individual documentary evidences, but the individual documentary evidences are in their turn interpreted on the basis of 'what is known' about the underlying pattern" (Garfinkel 1967, 78). Thus, according to Garfinkel, the underlying pattern, and the documentary evidences through which it is grasped, are co-constitutive; each is used to elaborate the other. As Garfinkel argued, the use of this circular process of reasoning is unavoidable – there is no privileged position from which the underlying pattern can be understood apart from the individual particulars, and vice versa. In fact, the DMOI is the only way meaningful phenomena can be understood.

### **THE INDEXICAL PROPERTIES OF LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL ACTION**

To describe how actors make concrete sense of the contextual specificity of concrete situations while using a set of generic resources to construct them, Garfinkel appropriated and radically extended the concept of "indexical expressions," which had emerged in the Philosophy of Language. Language philosophers had long recognized that in order to make sense of sentences containing so-called indexical expressions such as pronouns (I, she, he, etc.) and other pro-terms (it, this, that, etc.), one must inspect the context of their production. Garfinkel borrowed this expression (and the contextual character of meaning it highlighted), arguing that, in fact, all language use, and indeed all action, has indexical properties. As Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, 341) observe, "the understandability of any utterance rather than being fixed by some abstract definition, depends on the circumstances in which it appears . . . [and] because any linguistic usage is indexical, the effort to remedy the circumstantiality of one statement by producing a more exact rendition will preserve that very feature in the attempt" (→ Conversation Analysis; Linguistic Pragmatics). While language philosophers treated indexical expressions as a barrier to analysis, Garfinkel suggested that attending to how actors make definite sense

with such indefinite resources would offer critical insight into the ways that social structures and collective forms are reproduced in concrete situations. Instead of providing a basis on which mutual understanding can be guaranteed, such forms and structures – and the order they afford – could be approached as “an ongoing, practical accomplishment of every actual occasion of commonplace speech and conduct” (Garfinkel & Sacks 1970, 341).

### BREACHING EXPERIMENTS

Garfinkel’s insights into the cognitive underpinnings of social order (→ Cognitive Science) have been massively influential: he articulated a radically novel approach to social action, the nature of shared understanding, the bases of social organization, and the relation between individual action and collective forms. The persuasiveness of his arguments rested in no small part on his ingenious demonstrations of their empirical reality through a series of “breaching experiments” (→ Experimental Design, for a different use of the term). Describing the genesis of these experiments, Garfinkel noted that instead of asking what variables contribute to the stability of persistent patterns of action, “an alternative procedure would appear to be more economical: to start with a system with stable features and ask what can be done to make trouble. The operations that one would have to perform . . . should tell us something about how social structures are ordinarily and routinely being maintained” (Garfinkel 1963, 187). In considering how to make “trouble,” Garfinkel had observed that in coordinating actions with one another, each actor “trusts” that the other will use the same set of procedures and commonsense knowledge as a basis for inference and action. In “perceivedly normal environments,” that trust is validated. The aim of the breaching experiments was to violate this trust by creating specifically senseless situations, for example, by refusing to fill in “what anyone knows” (by having experimenters repeatedly ask “what do you mean”), or by designing senseless actions (such as inviting subjects to play tic-tac-toe, erasing their first move and placing it in a different place on the grid).

According to Heritage (1984, 78–84), the *cumulative results of the breaching experiments* demonstrated three highly significant and previously unknown aspects of how order is maintained. First, the studies demonstrate that there is a staggering range of assumptions and contextual features that people draw on to sustain a particular documentary version of a sequence of events. Second, maintaining a continuing sense of the situation was not done through a set of rule-governed procedures; instead, subjects assumed an underlying pattern from the beginning and used it as the basis on which the appearances should be interpreted – giving that underlying pattern the benefit of the doubt at every possible point. Finally, people treat the use of interpretive resources for “filling in” what anyone can see, as well as the suspension of doubt concerning “what the appearances” amount to, as deeply moral matters.

Ethnomethodology opens up a vast domain of ever-present, but systematically overlooked, human activity for investigation: the generic methods by which people in concert with one another deal with the concrete particularities of their circumstances. While the import of this perspective can be described as “post-structuralist” insofar as it casts social structure as a *product* of social actors’ concerted efforts rather than as the basis for them, it does not entail a rejection of social structure, per se. From an ethnomethodological perspective, social scientists remain committed to understanding

objective social facts; however, instead of privileging their own understanding of such facts, analysts attempt to “rigorously explicate the phenomenon as an accomplishment of actors’ concerted work in making social facts observable, and accountable to one another in their everyday lives” (Maynard & Clayman 1991, 387).

Since its inception ethnomethodology has contributed to a range of fields, including the study of gender, studies of work, studies of science, ethnographies of “normal environments” (→ Microethnography), and studies of cognition, epistemics, and discourse. This entry has focused on Garfinkel’s classic statement of ethnomethodology, which has had the widest impact on the conduct of social science research (Wilson 2003). Garfinkel and his colleagues have continued to develop his transformative vision of social science, advancing a “radical ethnomethodology.” The influence of this later work will await a further assessment as it becomes more widely known and applied.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Constructivism ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Microethnography ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Qualitative Methodology

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## **Ethos and Rhetoric**

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Ethos, commonly translated as “ethics” and “moral character,” is a fundamental term in the history of the western rhetorical tradition. For “who does not know,” writes the

ancient Greek philosopher and rhetorician Isocrates, “that words carry greater conviction when spoken by men of good repute than when spoken by men who live under a cloud, and that the argument which is made by a man’s life has more weight than that which is furnished by words?” (Isocrates 1982, 278; → Rhetoric, Greek). Ethos is both a legitimating source for and a praiseworthy effect of the ethical practice of the orator’s art. Heeding the call of public service as a person of “good repute,” the orator’s presence and rhetorical competence are a “showing-forth” (*epideixis*) of a “principled self” that instructs the moral consciousness and actions of others and thereby serves as a possible catalyst for them to do the same for the good of their community.

Isocrates anticipates the doctrine of ethos developed in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, but with this doctrine comes a significant change in the technical use of the term. For Isocrates, rhetorical *paideia*, education and socialization, serves the process of character development, but it is a person’s character itself, his or her stellar reputation, that anchors the persuasive capacity of rhetoric. Aristotle, on the other hand, associates ethos not primarily with the orator’s reputation for being such a soul, but rather with the actual rhetorical competence displayed in the orator’s discourse. The practice of rhetoric constitutes an active construction of character; ethos takes form as a result of the orator’s abilities to argue and to deliberate, and thereby to inspire trust in an audience. Aristotle thus directs our attention away from an understanding of ethos as a person’s well-lived existence and toward an understanding of ethos as an artistic accomplishment.

Although the notions of ethos defined by Isocrates and Aristotle are certainly different, there nevertheless exists an “existential” connection between the two (Hyde 2004). Aristotle’s understanding of artful ethos presupposes that the character that takes place in the orator’s specific text is itself contextualized and thereby made possible by past social, political, and rhetorical transactions that inform the orator’s and his audience’s ongoing, communal existence: the “places,” “habitats,” and “haunts” (*ethea*) wherein people dwell and bond together. This earliest use of ethos as “dwelling place” dates back to Homer and Hesiod. Aristotle develops this particular usage of ethos when, in the *Nicomachean ethics*, he discusses how, beginning in childhood, “ethical” virtues can be trained and made habitual (1103a17–30). He also emphasizes this habituating process in the *Eudemian ethics*, when he identifies ethos with the “irrational part of the soul” that is still capable of following the orders of reason (1220b2–6).

The rhetorical tradition owes its technical use of ethos (associated primarily with oratorical skill) to Aristotle’s appreciation of the term as set forth in the *Rhetoric*. Martin Heidegger’s hermeneutical and ontological discussion of this text (“Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie,” an unpublished transcript of Heidegger’s 1924 Summer Semester lecture course at Marburg, in the Marcuse Archiv in the Stadtsbibliothek in Frankfurt am Main) has been described as providing “arguably, the best twentieth-century reading” of its teachings (Struever 2005, 127). This reading, however, emphasizes a more robust appreciation of ethos than what is typically found in traditional discussions of the term throughout the literature of the rhetorical tradition. In the most original sense of the term, writes Heidegger, “Ethos means abode, dwelling place. The word names the open region in which man dwells” (1977, 233). This open region shows itself in the ongoing and future-oriented process of human being; the way the objective uncertainty of our spatial and temporal existence is forever challenging us to assume the



ethical responsibility of affirming the burden of our freedom of choice whereby, through thought and action, we bring a sense of order and meaning to our lives. This primordial challenge of human existence defines what Heidegger terms the original “call of conscience.”

Like Aristotle, Heidegger understands the art of rhetoric as a practice that employs logos (logic) and pathos (emotion) to transform the spatial and temporal orientation of an audience, its way of being situated or placed in relationship to things and to others. The genuine enhancement of public opinion requires, among other things, that the orator “modify” the lived and attuned space of others by “making present” to them what the orator has reason to believe is true, just, and virtuous. In so doing, the orator not only places his own character on the line and in the text but also clears a place in time and space for people to acknowledge and “know-together” (*consientia*) what is arguably the truth of some matter of importance (Hyde 2001). The ethical practice of rhetoric entails the construction of a speaker’s ethos as well as the construction of a “dwelling place” for collaborative and moral deliberation.

With all of this in mind, it may thus be said that the “ethos of rhetoric” directs one’s attention to the “architectural” function of the art: how, for example, its practice grants such *living room* to our lives that we might feel more *at home* with others and our surroundings. The ethos of rhetoric would have one appreciate how the *premises* and other materials of arguments are not only tools of logic but also mark out the *boundaries* and *domains* of thought that, depending on how their specific discourses are *designed* and *arranged*, may be particularly inviting and moving for some audiences. The ethos of rhetoric makes use of our inventive and symbolic capacity to construct dwelling places that are stimulating and aesthetically, psychologically, socially, and morally instructive (Hyde 2004; 2006).

SEE ALSO: ► Rhetoric and Ethics ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Roman

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# European Court of Human Rights

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The European Court of Human Rights, established by and solely responsible for interpreting the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (the Convention), is arguably the most developed and respected international court. Its caseload has swelled in the past two decades thanks in part to its growing legitimacy and to the Council of Europe's expansion since the fall of the Soviet Union. The Court delivered 36 judgments in the 1960s and 1970s. By comparison, it issued 1,560 judgments in 2006. The Court is increasingly seen as a legitimate influence with a vital role to play in protecting individual freedom throughout Europe (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

Until 1999, the Court existed alongside the European Commission on Human Rights. The Commission reviewed cases and attempted to get the parties to the dispute to reach a friendly settlement before it referred deserving cases to the Court. A modification to the Convention – Protocol No. 11 – merged the Commission into the Court. Now the Court directly receives petitions from states and individuals who claim the Convention has been violated.

Membership in the Council of Europe requires acceptance of the jurisdiction of the Court. The number of judges on the Court is set at the number of contracting states to the Convention, currently 47. Judges are elected by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly. When hearing and deciding cases, the ordinary judicial panel is a seven-judge chamber. Judgments of chambers of the Court are final, unless a case has been referred and accepted by the Grand Chamber. Containing 17 judges, the Grand Chamber has jurisdiction to review decisions if a case raises a serious question affecting the interpretation of the Convention. Parties to a case have three months from a chamber's decision to petition that the case be heard by the Grand Chamber. The Grand Chamber accepts relatively few cases for review.

Final judgments of the Court are binding on the states that are parties to the cases. If the Court rules that a state has violated the Convention, it can award compensation and/or costs and expenses to the injured party. The Court transmits its final judgment to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, which is responsible for supervising its execution. Although in practice the Court's judgments appear to be followed more dutifully in some states than others, on balance a substantial majority of states respect and follow the Court's judgments, and the Convention itself has been incorporated as domestic law in most of the Council of Europe's states.

One basic human right recognized by the Convention is freedom of expression. Article 10 provides that "everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers." That right is not absolute, however. A second section of Article 10 – Article 10(2) – enumerates justifiable limitations on expression. Among other things, Article 10(2) states that restrictions on expression may be "necessary in a democratic society" in the interests of national security, for the protection of health or morals, and for the protection of the reputation or rights of others. The Court's Article 10 case law has thus required it to delicately balance the

right to freedom of expression with the “necessary” restrictions delineated in Article 10(2) (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information; Right to Communicate).

In a sizable body of case law – several hundred cases to date – the Court has articulated strong protection for free expression. In 2006, for instance, the Court issued 19 Article 10 judgments, finding violations in 17. The Court has said exceptions to the right must be interpreted narrowly and justified convincingly. In its case law, the Court has shown appreciation for instrumental and intrinsic values of expression (Janis et al. 2000). In one of its first Article 10 cases, the Court said freedom of expression “constitutes one of the essential foundations of [a democratic society], one of the basic conditions for its progress and for the development of every man.” The Court in that case held the right to free expression applies to ideas that “offend, shock or disturb.”

The Court has especially championed the value of political debate. In a seminal 1986 case, *Lingens v. Austria*, the Court ruled the criminal defamation conviction of a journalist for criticizing a politician violated Article 10. The Court said freedom of political debate was “at the very core of the concept of a democratic society.” A politician, the Court said, “lays himself open to close scrutiny of his every word and deed.” The Court’s constant approach, it said in a 2006 case, is to require “very strong reasons” for justifying restrictions on speech involving political issues and political figures. In the wake of *Lingens*, the Court expanded protection for allegedly defamatory statements beyond political issues to include discussion of other matters of public concern, even when the plaintiff is a private person (→ Libel and Slander).

The Court has also stressed the importance of protecting the press from regulation and → censorship. The Court has said the press fulfills an essential function in a democratic society and has a “duty to impart information and ideas on all matters of public interest.” On rare occasions, the Court has upheld injunctions against the press, but it has said such restrictions have inherent dangers and “call for the most careful scrutiny.”

In a 1996 judgment, the Court upheld a journalist’s right to refuse an order to reveal a source for his story (→ Source Protection). Because of the potential chilling effect an order of source disclosure has on press freedom, the Court said such a measure is not compatible with Article 10 “unless it is justified by an overriding requirement of public interest” (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). And in an important 1994 case, *Jersild v. Denmark*, the Court ruled that a journalist’s hate speech conviction for aiding and abetting the dissemination of racist statements violated Article 10. News reporting based on interviews, the Court said, “constitutes one of the most important means whereby the press is able to play its vital role of ‘public watchdog.’”

The Court’s free expression decisions have not escaped criticism. Scholars have charged, among other things, that the Court has permitted states too much deference in cases involving expression that offends morals or religion and in defamation cases concerning judges and prosecutors. In *Otto-Preminger-Institut v. Austria*, for instance, the Court ruled the seizure of a film that Austria claimed was an “abusive attack” on Catholicism did not violate Article 10. The Court said it was best left for Austria to determine what was required to “ensure religious peace.”

SEE ALSO: ► Censorship ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► European Union: Communication Law ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information

- ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of
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- ▶ Right to Communicate
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# **European Union: Communication Law**

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The European Union (EU) is a unique supranational entity that has adopted an innovative approach to the challenges posed by its distinctive structure, by the convergence of communications technologies, and by the introduction of free market economics. In the process of transforming into a powerful union that preserves the sovereignty of its members, the EU has embraced the free flow of cross-border communications, market-oriented policies, each member state’s unique cultural identity, and the need to create a European cultural identity.

## **EUROPEAN UNION – HISTORY AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE**

The Rome Treaty of 1958, signed by France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, created the European Economic Community (EEC). This treaty set the stage for the political unification of Europe into a single entity. During the 1970s and 1980s, Denmark, Ireland, the UK, Greece, Spain, and Portugal joined the EEC, increasing its membership to 12 nations. The Single European Act of 1987 streamlined the EEC’s decision-making processes with the goal of creating a political union, not an economic one, and it introduced majority voting on a limited number of issues.

After the Soviet collapse in the early 1990s, the Maastricht Treaty of 1993 created the European Union. The EU’s jurisdiction over economic assets was extended to a common foreign and defense policy and to cooperation in law enforcement, thereby trying to balance a central European power with individual national regimes. With Austria, Finland, and Sweden as its new member states in 1995, the “EU 15” adopted two key treaties: the

Amsterdam Treaty (1999) and the Treaty of Nice (2001). Consequently, the EU was restructured in such a way as to further expand to the former Eastern bloc nations. By 2005, the EU had 25 members, as the EU 15 nations were joined by Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Two years later, its membership increased to 27 with the addition of Bulgaria and Romania.

The EU resembles a conventional federal state (Tsebelis & Garrett 2001), although it allows each of its member states to maintain its national sovereignty. The Council of Ministers, which directly represents the member states, and the European Parliament, which is elected directly by the citizens of these states, both resemble a traditional bi-cameral legislature. The Commission of the European Communities, the EU's administrative branch, is in charge of drafting bills and enforcing legislation. The European Court of Justice (ECJ) functions as the judicial branch of the EU, charged with interpreting the emerging European law.

Among the binding legal instruments of the Union are: (1) regulations, which take immediate effect and apply to all EU citizens; (2) directives, which apply to the member states and aim to harmonize the goals of national laws across the Union, while leaving individual member states with the means of achieving these goals at the national level; and (3) decisions, which apply to specific situations. In addition, the bodies of the EU may reach nonbinding resolutions and form common positions on different matters.

### **A COMMON REGULATORY HERITAGE**

The basic assumptions underlying each European nation's communications law and policy were quite similar. With the exception of Luxembourg, all EU 15 members originally subjected their media and telecommunication industries to state control, believing that broadcasting was too important to be left to the whims of the free market (Levy 1999), and created national public service broadcasters (PSBs; → Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). Because they considered telecommunications a natural monopoly and a public utility as well, they maintained control over telecommunications through state-owned post, telegraph, and telephone monopolies (PTTs; Sandholz 1993; → Postal Service, History of; Telegraph, History of; Telecommunications: Law and Policy).

All these PTT entities were governed by the public service principles, which derived from the absolute powers of monarchy, while recognizing no particular right for citizens (Garnham 2001). This shared ideology allowed the EU to emerge as a unifying force and for these highly politicized and central public institutions in the member states (see Blumler 1992) to play a critical role in determining future policy for the Union. The majority of the 12 countries that joined the Union in the 2000s, with the exception of Cyprus and Malta, were former authoritarian Soviet bloc regimes, in which the media and the telecommunication infrastructure were government-owned and -operated.

The EU's growing political clout in the 1990s brought about a *change in its public service-oriented policies* concomitant with the ideological revolution that saw most European nations, especially the EU member states, embrace more neo-liberal market-oriented policies, and with the technological revolution that saw the rapid introduction of new media technologies – cable and satellite transmission, digitization, and the Internet – completely transforming the industry. The rise of neo-liberalism notwithstanding, the

Union also committed itself to create and maintain a common European culture, while respecting the cultural uniqueness of each individual member state, under Article 151 of the consolidated European Union Treaty.

## TELEVISION WITHOUT FRONTIERS DIRECTIVE

The first and most significant initiative of the EU in its audiovisual policy was the 1989 *Television Without Frontiers directive* (TVWF) (Hirsch & Petersen 1998), which was substantially revised in 1997 and in 2007, in response to the changing political, ideological, and technological realities of Europe. As its name suggests, the TVWF aimed not only to harmonize legislation across member states, but, more importantly, to unify the rules for → television broadcasts across national borders as “without frontiers” was seen as a basic element of European unity (Wheeler 2004; → Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

With regard to the flow of content across European borders, the directive advocated openness and minimal cross-border constraints, prohibiting member states from restricting retransmission of television signals from other member states (Article 2 in the original version of the directive; Article 2a in the amended version), with the exception of forbidden broadcasts that harm minors (Article 22) or incite hatred (Article 22a).

The concept of television without frontiers, however, was not always embraced by the EU member states, and the European Court of Justice intervened in several cases. In *TV10 SA v. Commissariaat voor de Media* – a case involving a ban on a channel aimed at the Netherlands – the court ruled that a member state could not be denied the right to ban broadcasting from a foreign territory when the sole purpose of this broadcasting was to bypass rules that would have applied had the broadcaster been operating within that state (Staetmans & Goemans 1995).

The court drew the opposite conclusion, however, in the case of VT4, a Flemish-language channel owned by Scandinavian shareholders and incorporated and licensed in the UK. The court found that the broadcaster was a British entity, and that there was no justification under Article 2 of the TVWF to block VT4’s signal from being retransmitted on Belgian soil. The motivation for the ban on retransmission may explain the contradiction between the two rulings. While the ECJ ruled in favor of the ban in the Dutch case because of TV10’s threat to the pluralism of Dutch broadcasting, the initial ruling against VT4 in Belgium was made in order to safeguard the monopoly of a single Flemish-language commercial broadcaster in Belgium (→ Plurality; Concentration in Media Systems; Competition in Media Systems). Indeed, in a third case – the criminal case of Paul Denuit, who was accused of violating Belgian legislation by retransmitting transborder commercial television stations whose distribution was prohibited by the state – the ECJ held that only under limited circumstances could a ban on the receiving market be justified. Even tax evasion was rendered a legitimate justification for “circumvention” in light of the goals of a common European community in later rulings (*Centros Ltd. v. Erhvervs-og Selskabsstyrelsen*). The 1997 amendment to the TVWF all but incorporated these rulings and further limited the ability of member states to block transfrontier broadcasts.

The TVWF, however, is more often cited for its role in safeguarding Europe against American cultural imperialism (Middleton 2003; → Americanization of the Media;

Cultural Imperialism Theories). Responding to the fear of American media influence, the directive created a quota system that ensures a minimum level of original European content on European channels (Article 4). The minimum quota is at least half the programming, with 10 percent of it produced by people other than the broadcasters (Article 5). These quota provisions, however, have been a source of tension in negotiations surrounding the GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), which would ensure the free flow of “services” but did not include cultural products within its jurisdiction (Barendt 1996).

### **THE CHALLENGE OF COMMERCIAL BROADCASTING**

The fear of Americanization of audiovisual content stemmed from the introduction of commercial broadcasting into Europe, which also threatened the dominant position of the PSBs, the perceived guardians of culture that were closely aligned with their national governments. Consequently, the Fourth European Ministerial Conference on Mass Media Policy decided in 1994 to ensure public service broadcasting’s independence and to secure its appropriate funding framework, which enables it to fulfill its mission. A protocol appended to the Amsterdam treaty defined the mission of public broadcasting as “directly related to the democratic, social, and cultural needs of each society and to the need to preserve media pluralism.”

The legal dispute between commercial and public broadcasters centered on the articles of the treaty that called for fair competition in the Common Market and the meaning of “state aid,” under Article 87 of the Treaty, which prohibits it if competition is undermined or is likely to be so. The commercial television companies argued that the license fees collected by the states to support PSBs constituted such aid.

Under the Amsterdam protocol, the Commission and the ECJ adopted a balanced approach to this issue, limiting the allocation of “state aid” to television programming that fulfilled the public service remit of the PSBs and served the “democratic, social, and cultural needs of each society.” Public service programming decisions were left to the discretion of the member states, which were allowed to include among them entertainment and sports programs. Still, the organization of European public broadcasters, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), had to change its membership criteria so that commercial broadcasters could join it and enjoy its collective purchasing power, which was seen as a threat to fair competition, in particular with regard to sports programming.

The principles that guide the Commission in addressing the grievances of commercial broadcasters about unlawful “state aid” are proportionality and transparency. Proportionality limits public funding to the fulfillment of the public service mission and considers whether any distortion of competition arising from the aid can be justified by the need to perform the public service. Transparency requires separation of public service from nonpublic service activities of the public broadcaster.

The ECJ held in the *Altmark* ruling that state funding of public service broadcasters, including through license fees, is not “state aid” if it meets four conditions: (1) the recipient has actually and clearly defined public service obligations to fulfill; (2) the compensation is calculated based on parameters that have been established in advance in an objective and transparent manner; (3) the compensation does not exceed the necessary

costs incurred while carrying out the public service obligations; and (4) the level of compensation is based on a cost analysis conducted by a well-run organization or by tendering out the responsibility for the particular public service obligation.

The challenge from commercial television in the EU is also addressed by the TVWF in regulating advertising. The TVWF stipulates that in “fully and properly” protecting the interests of consumers as television viewers, television advertising must comply with minimum rules and standards. Article 10 of the directive states that television advertising must be distinguished from programming by visual and acoustic means, and it prohibits any form of subliminal or surreptitious advertising. Further, Article 20 limits advertising on television to 20 percent of transmission time per day. Advertising of tobacco products and prescription drugs is not allowed, while advertising of alcoholic products and advertising directed at children are limited (→ Advertising Law and Regulation).

### INTRODUCING COMPETITION IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Fear of external influences as a motivator for EU communication law was not limited to the fear of American content. Increasingly concerned about possible economic colonization by the US and Japan, which had been far more successful in employing information society technologies (Schneider 2001), the European Commission took control of telecommunications policymaking in the 1990s, and revolutionized the European political structure and regulatory landscape (Sandholz 1998). The first cross-European liberalization policy was not introduced until 1988. By 1990, however, the EU discerned a nexus between growth in the information sector and global economic competitiveness, and it linked this to its liberalization policies. In 1993, it set 1998 as the deadline for its full liberalization of voice telephony, allowing member states and incumbent PTTs a lengthy period of adjustment (Waverman & Sirel 1997).

The concept of an → “*information society*,” introduced by the Clinton–Gore administration of the US, was quickly integrated into the European discourse (Servaes & Burgelman 2000), and its principles, namely the predominance of market forces, became the central focus of a major EU-commissioned policy report, known as the Bangemann report (Anttiroiko 2001). The report’s publication coincided with the debate over telecommunications liberalization in Europe, in which the European Commission asserted itself as a supranational governing body (Sandholz 1998).

The initial European regulatory framework of 1997 was supplanted in 2003 by a new regulatory framework consisting of five directives. One issue that the Commission deemed a top priority, however, was resolved by 2000, when it adopted the regulation on unbundled access to the local loop to enhance Internet access.

The 2003 regulatory framework had two unique features: technological neutrality and preference to competition law over telecommunications law. The technology-neutral approach of the EU allows rejection of the legacy regulation that created different legal arrangements for different technologies, in favor of a new framework that first identifies what services are provided by the technologies and then harmonizes the rules regarding those services, regardless of the technologies involved. The EU’s option for competition law limits specific communications law provisions only to those product markets that are deemed uncompetitive.



## THE NEW AUDIOVISUAL FRAMEWORK

In 2005, the Commission proposed a directive on audiovisual media services that would significantly revise the TVWF. While motivated by technological changes impacted by wider access to Internet broadband, the new directive aimed yet again to promote a neo-liberal market-oriented agenda. Thus, it drew considerable opposition across the Union. The eventual political agreement among the different organs of the Union in May 2007 significantly modified the original proposal. It is expected to take effect in late 2007.

The amended TVWF directive retains the basic principles of the free flow of audiovisual products across Europe and limits the circumstances for creating exceptions to such flow. Based on the principle of technological neutrality, the new directive, popularly known as the *Audiovisual Without Frontiers* directive, distinguishes “linear audiovisual media services” (analog and digital television, live streaming, webcasting, and near-video-on-demand), from “nonlinear audiovisual media services,” (on-demand services). Because “nonlinear services” are distinct from “linear services” in the user’s choice and control, and in their impact on society, the directive imposes lighter restrictions on them. Newspapers and magazines do not fall into the jurisdiction of the directive.

Because of the cultural importance of audiovisual products, however, “nonlinear services” were also obligated to promote European works and “actively contribute to the promotion of cultural diversity” by supporting European works through financial contributions, a minimum share of European works in video-on-demand catalogues, or the attractive presentation of European works in electronic program guides. The new directive also delineates the circumstances in which the practice of “product placement” can be deemed legitimate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Information Society ▶ Plurality ▶ Postal Service, History of ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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For access to all European Union legal documents: <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex>.

## Evolutionary Theory

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While social sciences of the twentieth century could be characterized by endeavors to “debiologize” human nature, evolutionary thinking has become increasingly presentable in scientific rationale. The most influential approach utilizing evolutionary theory to answer questions in respect of communication is evolutionary psychology (EP). EP (or Darwinian psychology) is focused on how evolution has shaped human mental architecture. EP is a theoretical approach to psychology that attempts to explain mental traits (cognitive

architecture) as adaptations, i.e., as functional products of natural or sexual selection. This approach introduces the functional way of thinking about biological mechanisms to the field of psychology.

Darwin and Wallace proposed that natural and sexual selection explain why organisms comprise a number of functional mechanisms that often exhibit a surprisingly complex evidence of design. This theory has important implications: (1) all evolved mechanisms must serve some function that ultimately increases the reproduction of the organism, and (2) the design of each mechanism will be best understood in relation to the environment it evolved in.

EP has roots in cognitive psychology and evolutionary biology. It also draws heavily on behavioral ecology, artificial intelligence, genetics, (human) ethology, anthropology, archaeology, biology, and zoology. EP is closely linked to sociobiology, but there are key differences between them, including the emphasis on domain-specific rather than domain-general mechanisms, the importance of mismatch theory (see below), and psychology rather than behavior. Even though EP bears a strong resemblance to human ethology, it was developed to a large extent without taking account of this forerunner.

EP argues against a widespread metaphor used in social sciences to describe the structure of the human mind as a blank slate or general-purpose computer. This metaphor has become the predominant orthodoxy in mainstream anthropology, sociology, communication sciences, and psychology. According to this orthodoxy, all of the specific content of the human mind originally derives from the environment and the social world. The mind's architecture consists of only a small number of content-independent general-purpose mechanisms like "learning," "imitation," "rationality," or "the capacity for culture." Contrary to this, EP assumes that the mind is a set of information-processing machines that were designed by selection to solve adaptive problems faced by our prehistoric ancestors. Adaptive problems are problems that occur very often and with stable characteristics in the evolutionary history of a species.

## PRINCIPLES

EP can be described using five principles:

- 1 The human brain is a physical system. The neural circuits are designed to create behavior apt to the environmental conditions.
- 2 These circuits or psychological mechanisms were designed by selection to solve problems that our hunter-gatherer ancestors faced during our species' phylogeny (evolved psychological mechanisms; EPMs).
- 3 Most of what goes on in our mind is hidden (instinct blindness); consciousness is just the tip of the iceberg of mental processing. Most problems that are experienced as easy to solve are in fact highly difficult to solve.
- 4 Different EPMs are specialized for resolution of specific adaptive problems.
- 5 Our modern skulls house a Stone Age mind.

The mismatch theory is an indication of the fact that not all behavior individuals engage in these days is adaptive (see principle 5). A taste for the sweet may have been adaptive

in an environment of evolutionary adaptedness (EEA) where vitamin-rich sugared fruit was scarce. In a modern environment, with confectioneries at every street corner, it can generate maladaptive behavior. Once an evolved → information processing mechanism exists, it can be deployed in activities that are unrelated to its original function: because we have evolved learning mechanisms that cause language acquisition (= adaptation), we can acquire writing as well (= by-product). But these learning mechanisms were not selected because they created writing capabilities.

## EVOLUTIONARY ANALYSIS

In evolutionary thinking, there are different levels of complementary and mutually compatible explanations. Thus, explanations at adaptive level do not necessarily preclude or invalidate explanations at cognitive, social, cultural, or economic level. Theories of adaptive function serve as guidelines to the investigations of phenotypic structures and mechanisms.

The logic of evolutionary analysis considers a hierarchy of levels, starting with the general evolutionary theory (natural selection, inclusive fitness). It subsequently takes into account middle-level evolutionary theories (parental investment, reciprocal altruism), assumes specific evolutionary hypotheses, and finally formulates specific predictions about empirical phenomena. On the one hand, there is this top-down strategy of formation of predictions and hypotheses, but one can also start with a phenomenon and then generate hypotheses of possible evolved function and design (bottom-up strategy). Both strategies attempt to discover the adaptive problems a given species encountered during its evolutionary history, to then develop a mechanism capable of adequately solving these problems under ancestral conditions. From an adaptationist perspective, one should adopt the stance of an engineer, or rather a reverse engineer. Theories of adaptive problems guide the search for the cognitive programs that solve them; knowing which cognitive programs exist can, in turn, guide the search for their neural basis.

The testing methods evolutionary psychologists (EPs) are actually using include comparison of different species, comparison of males and females, comparison of individuals within a species, and comparison of these same individuals in different contexts and cultures. Their sources of data to test evolutionary hypotheses include archaeological records, data from hunter-gatherer societies and different cultures, observations, self-reports, life-history data, and public records, as well as human products (cultural artifacts).

## EVOLUTIONARY THINKING IN COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH

In communications research, media psychology, and media theory, the reference to evolutionary arguments is becoming increasingly popular (Schwab 2006; Schwender 2006; Vorderer et al. 2006; → Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Does our preference to be entertained reside in an adaptive function of *Homo sapiens sapiens* or is it only an evolutionary by-product of other adaptations (Ohler & Nieding 2006)? Furthermore, which selection constraints may have produced this adaptation (natural or sexual selection)? Some approaches suggest that entertainment is an evolutionary by-product (e.g., Zillmann, leisure-time approaches; → Mood Management). Pinker's non-adaptive "cheesecake

metaphor” emphasizes that art and entertainment are utilizing evolved cognitive and emotional mechanisms to produce something like “cheesecake for our brains.” Entertainment and art provide useless techniques to trigger our pleasure buttons (Pinker 1997, 2002). Successful TV series or movies like *Titanic* or *Gone with the Wind* contain patterns of intra-sexual competition, mate choice, romance, and life-threatening hostile forces of nature and social environment (e.g., conflict and war). We are allowed to see breathtaking landscapes, be intimate with important people, fall in love with adorable men and women (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships), protect loved ones, attain impossible goals, and defeat spiteful enemies. People invent and consume media according to this hypothesis, not because these activities are themselves adaptations, but rather because their content and form artificially activate adaptations that have evolved for different reasons.

Other approaches assume an adaptive function: one of them uses the explanation pattern of sexual selection (the ornamental mind theory; Miller 2000), while others start with natural selection of a play module and attempt to reconstruct the destiny of this module in later stages of phylogeny. The ornamental mind theory accentuates the role of sexual selection in the evolution of skills and preferences for entertaining and aesthetic exhibits. Sexual selection is seen as the driving force behind the development of the human mind and complex human behavior: intelligence, inventiveness, art, humor, and kindness. Miller claims that human minds are entertaining, intelligent, creative, and articulate far beyond the demands of surviving in the environment of evolutionary adaptedness, and that psychology has been wrong to view them exclusively as problem-solving computers; that they are rather entertainment systems that evolved to attract sexual partners (Miller 2000).

Tooby and Cosmides (2001) propose that cognitive adaptations can operate in two ways: in ordinary functional modes and in organizational modes such as play, learning, and perhaps dreaming, to help construction of the mind. They elect art – especially in the form of narrative fictional entertainment – as a fourth organizational mode. Those adaptations, they argue, should be scheduled for off-peak demands: when we are safe and fed, without obvious reproductive opportunities (Schwab 2006).

Tooby and Cosmides (2001) place emphasis on the role of imaginative skills to augment our individual mental faculties to think, feel, and fantasize. They offer concrete grounds for the supposition that → fiction is adaptive. Across cultures, humans engage with pleasure in fictional worlds and there is strong evidence of specialized cognitive design in coping with fiction:

- 1 Fiction engages emotion systems while disengaging action systems.
- 2 We are able to disconnect fictional information from factual – so that it cannot corrupt our knowledge stores – with the efficiency and effortlessness that mark all evolved mental mechanisms (→ Fantasy–Reality Distinction; Media and Perceptions of Reality).
- 3 In communication meant to be accepted as credible, we pay keen attention to accuracy (→ Credibility Effects).
- 4 The malfunction of a specialized cognitive system can indicate specialized cognitive design. The competency to engage in pretend play, a forerunner of fiction, fails in autism, but not in other kinds of mild mental dysfunction.

5 An unexpected feature offers better evidence of functional design than an expected one. That minds should seek out accurate information seems equally predictable, yet this appetite for the truth spectacularly fails to match the frequent human preference for fiction over fact.

In a comparable rationale, Vorderer et al. (2006) propose an evolutionary theory of play by drawing on a cognitive model of entertainment as simulation. They suggest that the biological function of entertainment is learning, that this learning is accomplished by means of cognitive adaptations for mental simulations. This natural pedagogical system comes along with feelings of pleasure and enjoyment in fiction-based forms of entertainment as a necessary design feature. Due to mismatch theory, an evolutionary theory of entertainment does not amount to a claim that modern forms of entertainment deliver genuine benefits. Thus, an evolved function may regulate entertainment preferences, even in a world that has long since outrun the environment in which *Homo sapiens sapiens* evolved.

With the mismatch argument, one can even hypothesize that the ability to disconnect fictional from factual may not always prove satisfactory and thus remain without effect. Modern media worlds may (ab)use outmoded ontologies of human mental architecture and evolved mechanisms, like scarecrows that outsmart crows (Schwender 2006). Some particular emotional modules may react to media content in the same way as to real environmental cues. Pornography is affecting sexual arousal and even – as predicted by evolutionary means (sperm competition theory) – sperm configuration (→ Excitation and Arousal; Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of). On the mental level it seems to affect partnership satisfaction and intentions to break up.

Until now, the proposed evolutionary explanations are highly speculative, albeit with some supporting empirical data (Buss 1999). From an evolutionary perspective, many traditional disciplinary boundaries are not merely arbitrary, but are misleading and detrimental to scientific progress. Studying scientific problems via adaptive problems and their solutions – the organizing principle of EP – provides a natural way of crossing disciplinary boundaries. EP has barely scratched the surface by identifying some of the most obvious problems linked to survival and reproduction. But EP also provides helpful tools to linking communication sciences with the rest of the life sciences to facilitate scientific integration.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Fiction ▶ Information Processing ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Mood Management ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of

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## Excellence Theory in Public Relations

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The excellence theory is a general theory of public relations that resulted from a 15-year study of best practices in communication management funded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Research Foundation. Three books were published from the research (J. E. Grunig 1992; Dozier et al. 1995; L. A. Grunig et al. 2002). This general theory incorporates a number of middle-range theories of → public relations, including theories of publics, public relations and strategic management, models of public relations, evaluation of public relations, employee communication, public relations roles, gender, diversity, power, activism, ethics and social responsibility, and global public relations (→ Public Relations Evaluation). The theory was tested through survey research of heads of public relations, CEOs, and employees in 327 organizations (corporations, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and associations) in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom (→ Survey; Interview). The survey research was followed by qualitative interviews with heads of public relations, other public relations practitioners, and CEOs in 25 organizations with the highest and lowest scores on a scale of excellence produced by statistical analysis of the survey data (→ Interview, Qualitative).

The excellence theory first explained the value of public relations to organizations and society based on the social responsibility of managerial decisions and the quality of

relationships with stakeholder publics. For an organization to be effective, according to the theory, it must behave in ways that solve the problems and satisfy the goals of stakeholders as well as of management (→ Stakeholder Theory). If it does not, stakeholders will either pressure the organization to change or oppose it in ways that add cost and risk to organizational policies and decisions. To behave in socially acceptable ways, organizations must scan their environment to identify publics who are affected by potential organizational decisions or who want organizations to make decisions to solve problems that are important to them. Then, organizations must communicate symmetrically with publics (taking the interests of both the organization and publics into account) to cultivate high-quality, long-term relationships with them. The interviews with CEOs and senior public relations officers revealed that good relationships were of value to organizations because they reduced the *costs* of litigation, regulation, legislation, and negative publicity caused by poor relationships; reduced the *risk* of making decisions that affect different stakeholders; or increased *revenue* by providing products and services needed by stakeholders.

Based on this theoretical premise about the value of public relations, the excellence theory derived principles of how the function should be organized to maximize this value. First, the research showed that involvement in strategic management was the critical characteristic of excellent public relations. Public relations executives played a strategic managerial role as well as administrative manager role. Public relations also was empowered by having access to key organizational decision-makers (the dominant coalition).

Second, the study showed that public relations loses its unique role in strategic management if it is *sublimated* to marketing or other management functions. Sublimation to another function resulted in attention only to the stakeholder category of interest to that function, such as consumers for marketing. Sublimation to marketing also usually resulted in asymmetrical communication. An excellent public relations function was *integrated*, however. Programs for different stakeholders were gathered into a single department or coordinated through a senior vice president of corporate communication. An excellent public relations function did work with other management functions to help them build relationships with relevant stakeholders.

Third, the excellence study showed that a symmetrical system of internal communication increased employees' satisfaction with their jobs and with the organization. However, internal communication generally was not practiced unless organizations had a participative rather than authoritarian culture and a decentralized, less stratified (organic) structure rather than a centralized, stratified (mechanical) structure.

Fourth, the excellence study examined the effect of the growing number of women in public relations and evidence that women had difficulty entering managerial roles. The research showed that organizations with excellent public relations valued women as much as men for the strategic role and developed programs to empower women throughout the organization. The emphasis on gender also led to inclusion of diversity of race and ethnicity as a fifth part of the excellence theory. This focus, along with the international nature of the project, expanded the theory to make it appropriate for use outside the United States – in diverse cultural, political, and economic contexts. Replication of the study in Slovenia (L. A. Grunig et al. 1998) showed that the excellence theory is generic to many contexts, as long as the theory is applied differently when contextual variables are



different. The research in Slovenia also resulted in the addition of ethics to the excellence theory – a sixth component (→ Public Relations Ethics).

Since the completion of the excellence study, scholars in this research tradition have continued to improve and enlarge the theory by conducting research to help public relations professionals participate in strategic decision processes. This research has been on environmental scanning and publics, scenario building, empowerment of public relations, ethics, relationships, the return-on-investment of public relations, evaluation, relationship cultivation strategies, conflict resolution, complexity theory, specialized areas of public relations, and global strategy (J. E. Grunig 2006; Toth 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Public Relations Evaluation ▶ Public Relations: Global Firms ▶ Public Relations Planning ▶ Public Relations Roles ▶ Publics: Situational Theory ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Survey

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## **Excitation and Arousal**

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Common sense holds that exposure to media content can be associated with different levels of excitement and arousal (→ Exposure to Communication Content). The specific case of a thrilling movie well describes the type of stimuli that come to our mind when using the terms arousal and excitation in everyday language. From a psychological point

of view, arousal is conceptualized in more general terms, as a state of alertness and physical excitation elicited by external or internal stimuli, which challenge an adaptive response of the organism. The modern world is complex and rich in stimuli. It is in many respects different from the environment of our early ancestors, which required the organism to be physically prepared for immediate action, e.g., when possible threats entered the field of perception.

Although vigorous actions like “fight” or “flight” might be dysfunctional or inappropriate in the daily life of civilized humans, evolution has preserved those basic physiological alarm mechanisms, leaving the organism with a new type of adaptive task: to cope with arousal and excitation without launching atavistic behavioral programs (→ Communibiology). The narrow view of arousal as suggested by the fight–flight theory (Cannon 1914) only describes an extreme form of bodily excitation, nowadays subsumed under the term “acute stress response.” Arousal has, however, been recognized as a more universal physiological phenomenon, which is scalable along different intensity levels and which accompanies and/or influences various psychological processes relevant to the reception of communication and media content, such as → attention, → cognition, and → emotion.

## CONCEPTS AND BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Several terms have been used synonymously with arousal. These are activation and intensity (Duffy 1972), as well as excitation (Zillmann 1983), the latter being most often used in the sense of sexual arousal. A broadly accepted conceptualization of arousal was introduced by Lacey (1967), considering it a multidimensional phenomenon, which can be differentiated in cortical, autonomous, and behavioral arousal.

*Cortical arousal* is associated with the ascending reticular activating system (ARAS) located in the brainstem. It receives input from the sensory receptors and projects nonspecifically into the cerebral cortex, producing a general cortical activation. The ARAS is responsible for tonic activation (i.e., being awake, drowsy, or sleepy) as well as for phasic activation (momentary alertness). Measures of cortical arousal can be derived from frequency analysis of the human electroencephalogram (EEG). *Autonomous arousal* is associated with the activity of the vegetative or autonomous nervous system (ANS). The ANS consists of two antagonistic parts: the sympathetic and the parasympathetic parts. Arousal is associated with the activation of the sympathetic sub-system, while the parasympathetic part serves mainly inhibitory functions. Indicators of autonomous arousal therefore are mostly derived from peripheral measures of sympathetic activity, as, for example, from the galvanic skin response (GSR). *Behavioral arousal* describes the activation of the motor system, which can be observed as agitation or measured as muscular innervation using electromyography (EMG). As most research on arousal is based on animal studies, we have to be careful with the meaning of the terms. Behavioral activation is not the same as a playful action to cope with an arousing event.

## AROUSAL AND EMOTIONS

There is consensus that emotions consist of *two major components*: an intensity component, i.e., the autonomous arousal (high or low arousal), and a directional component,

i.e., the hedonic valence (positive or negative feelings). Schachter and Singer (1962) formulated the two-factor theory of emotion, in which arousal (or excitation) is considered the unspecific component of emotional experience, identical for all kinds of feelings and blind to their hedonic valence (pleasurable or not). Via bodily sensations, arousal is perceived by the individual and interpreted as intensity of the actual emotional state. The quality of the emotional state, however, is dependent on the cognitive analysis and the labeling of the situation. Based on this assumption, Zillmann (1983) designed his → *excitation transfer theory*, which has broad explanatory value for various media effects (→ Emotions, Media Effects on). Excitation transfer theory holds that due to slower biochemical processes, the unspecific arousal part of emotions has a longer decay time than the cognitive appraisal of the situation. Thus, arousal stemming from a thrilling part of a movie can pertain and affect the intensity of joy during the happy ending. The model has also been applied to aggression as a media effect, suggesting that it is not necessarily the violent content, but the excitation effects of media stimuli, which can create the preconditions for post-receptive aggressive behavior.

Arousal and emotional valence can also be moderated by cognitive processes. By exposing participants to stressful images (e.g., a film of brutal genital surgery), Lazarus and Alfert (1964) could show that intellectualizing information can significantly reduce the level of autonomous arousal (sympathetic activation). Based on such observations, appraisal theories of emotion do not conceptualize arousal as a prerequisite for emotional experience at all and stress the regulatory functions of primary and secondary appraisal processes. These include the detection of the hedonic value of a situation as well as the judgment of the individual coping possibilities. Arousal might occur as a consequence of these cognitive processes but it is not crucial for the genesis of the emotional experience itself (→ Affects and Media Exposure; Emotional Arousal Theory).

## **AROUSAL AND INFORMATION PROCESSING**

In many cases communication content aims at providing information and thus primarily addresses the cognitive system of the recipient. As has been demonstrated, arousal can be an important determinant of → information processing, including attention, comprehension, learning, and → memory (Revelle & Loftus 1992).

A basic automatism preparing the organism for information intake and focusing the attention is the so-called *orienting response*, which occurs whenever the organism is confronted with a new, unexpected, or salient stimulus. The orientation response is closely associated with the activation of the sympathetic nervous system, and is characterized by a general decrease in muscle activity, an orientation of sensory receptors toward the stimulus, phasic heart rate deceleration, and an increase in electrodermal activity (Ravaja 2004). According to Öhman (1979), any stimulus is compared by preconscious mechanisms to the short-term memory. When the stimulus is classified as new, it is processed consciously. This switch from automatic to controlled processing mode is elicited by an *orientation response* and accompanied by an allocation of processing resources to the main channel of information processing. Stimuli that elicited an orientation response are more likely to be memorized later, which is most important for media content with persuasive intention, e.g., advertisement.

Depending on the quality of environmental stimuli, the organism has to decide whether to accept or to reject the input. The *two attentional modes*, environmental intake vs rejection, are reflected in specific arousal patterns (Lacey 1967). Both modes show sympathetic activation, as indicated by increased skin conductance and vasoconstriction. Heart rate, however, decreases during environmental intake and increases during rejection.

A phenomenon of particular relevance to media research is *suspense*, which shows the close connection between arousal and cognition (Vorderer 1996). Contrary to the orienting reaction, the arousal patterns associated with suspense are obviously derived from higher cortical areas, which are necessary for the involvement in a narrative. Suspense has been described as a state between fear and pleasure, based on expectations of bad outcome for the favored protagonist. Arousal goes along with the anticipation of a decisive point in time in the near future, where any uncertainty is reduced abruptly. The clarifying event, be it a positive or a negative outcome, leads to spontaneous relief, and a measurable drop in physiological arousal: “the *gestalt* is closed.”

Tonic aspects of arousal are also related to *cognitive processes*. Since the early work of Yerkes and Dodson (1908), there has been replicated evidence that a medium level of arousal is optimal for cognitive performance. It has to be mentioned that the delay period for recall plays an important role when judging the relation of arousal and memory (Revelle & Loftus 1992). High arousal seems to impede short-term recall and to foster longer-term recall, which is an important finding for advertisement and market research. Newer data also suggest that there is a similar “excitation transfer effect” concerning arousal and memory as for arousal and emotions, showing that memory-enhancing effects are semantically independent of the arousal source (Nielson et al. 2005). Such findings are most relevant for the future design of mediated learning environments and the conceptualization of edutainment software or game-based learning applications (→ Educational Media Content; Learning and Communication).

## AROUSAL AND PERSONALITY

Observations of our social environment as well as the variety of TV programs and movie genres indicate that people differ in their preferences for certain media and media content (→ Film Genres). Some people prefer horror movies; others like comedies or dramas. An important reason for these individual media preferences is personality differences. Two prominent personality constructs formulated on a psychophysiological basis and closely related to the arousal concept are extraversion and introversion, as introduced by Eysenck and Zuckerman’s concept of sensation seeking (→ Sensation Seeking).

*Extraverts* are hypothesized to have a lower habitual arousal level than introverts and thus require stronger external stimulation to achieve or maintain a comfortable activation status. However, the empirical findings to support the psychophysiological basis for the concept are at least controversial and not abundant at all (e.g., Matthews & Gilliland 1999). The concept of *sensation seeking* is germane to the concept of extraversion, although it has a stronger emphasis on stimulus choice than on social aspects. High sensation seekers generally have a lower level of internal arousal and do therefore need novel, complex, varying, and intense stimuli to maintain a comfortable arousal state. They have

been shown to exhibit a stronger orienting response toward novel stimuli. Although the empirical studies with regard to psychophysiological correlates of sensation seeking are also controversial, Zuckerman (2006) could summarize an impressive amount of studies using psychophysiological measures, which support the assumed biological foundation of the concept (→ Physiological Measurement). With respect to media choice, high sensation seekers have been reported to show a higher preference for sexually explicit material, action adventures, and violent action films, and have also been observed to switch channels more often than low sensation seekers (Zuckerman 2006).

It has to be mentioned that the interrelations between arousal measures and psychological constructs are in most cases complex, and interpretations are rarely straightforward. As different sources of arousal may produce similar outputs in a single measurement, the features of the stimulus material have to be regarded thoroughly at the time the reaction occurs (Ravaja 2004). In addition, most authors stress the importance of monitoring more than one physiological end point, as single physiological measures can indicate a different psychological process. The selection of appropriate arousal measures (i.e., a particular psychophysiological end point) very much depends on the research question (i.e., what kind of arousal has to be measured), but also on economic considerations, its invasiveness (i.e., less invasive measurement techniques are generally preferable), and its validity (i.e., whether the measurement technique is a widely accepted indicator for the variable targeted).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Attention ▶ Cognition ▶ Communibiology  
▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions,  
Media Effects on ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exposure to Communication  
Content ▶ Film Genres ▶ Information Processing ▶ Learning and Communication  
▶ Memory ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Sensation Seeking

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## Excitation Transfer Theory

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The theory of excitation transfer addresses sequential dependencies in emotional reactivity. Specifically, it predicts an enhancement of emotional reactions to immediately present emotion-arousing situations by portions of excitation that are left over from preceding related or unrelated emotion-arousing situations ( $\rightarrow$  Emotion; Excitation and Arousal). The theory operationalizes excitation primarily as dominance of sympathetic activity in the autonomic nervous system and treats this activity as the main determinant of the intensity of emotional behavior and experience (Zillmann 1983, 1996). Excitation transfer theory was initially advanced and tested to explain emotional reactivity in immediate social interactions. It equally applies, however, to emotional reactivity evoked by exposure to communication. Excitation transfer may be created by emotions from message exposure and affect emotions in social interactions, be created by emotions from social interactions and affect emotions from message exposure, and be both created by and affect emotions from message exposure (Zillmann 2006).

### **ASYNCHRONY IN COGNITIVE AND EXCITATORY REACTIVITY IN EMOTION**

Excitation transfer theory is based on marked differences in the time course of cognitive and excitatory adaptation to changes in conditions that arouse emotions. Cognitive adjustment to situational changes is quasi-instantaneous because of the exceedingly fast neural mediation of cognition. In contrast, the hormonal mediation of sympathetic excitation via the cardiovascular system is lethargic, and excitatory adjustment to situational changes occurs only after considerable passage of time. For most practical purposes, the latency of excitatory reactivity is negligible, but the so-called regulation of excitation – i.e., the homeostatically controlled return of excitation to normal levels – is

not. Elevated sympathetic excitation, once produced, dissipates slowly, usually over the course of several minutes. In the case of extreme excitatory reactivity, recovery may take an hour or more, and a variety of related or unrelated emotional reactions that occur prior to complete recovery may be affected by the persisting residues of excitation (→ Information Processing).

### **EMOTION INTENSIFICATION BY EXCITATION TRANSFER AS A CONSEQUENCE OF ASYNCHRONY**

The consequence of this time discrepancy in cognitive and excitatory adjustment is that residues of sympathetic excitation linger and intensify emotional behavior and experience for some time after cognitive adjustment to a novel situation has occurred. It is therefore expected that, whenever particular circumstances instigate an emotional reaction at a time when portions of excitation are left over from preceding emotions, the composite of newly instigated and residual excitation will foster emotional reactivity whose intensity is greater than that specific to the new instigation alone. *Residual excitation* may thus be considered to have “artificially” intensified the newly triggered emotion. In terms of emotional intensity, the strengthened reaction amounts to an over-reaction.

Excitation transfer theory treats sympathetic excitation as *hedonically neutral*. The function of this excitation is to energize the organism to act on vital conditions. Pleasure or displeasure associated with such actions is determined by cognitive processes and their hormonal concomitants in the central nervous system. As a result, residual sympathetic excitation from pleasurable emotions can intensify noxious emotions and residual sympathetic excitation from noxious emotions can intensify pleasurable emotions. Emotion intensification by residual sympathetic excitation can also occur, however, within sequences of either pleasurable or noxious reactions. For the projection of transfer effects, then, the hedonic valence of preceding and subsequent emotions is immaterial.

### **THE ROOTS OF EXCITATION TRANSFER IN EMOTION**

The expectation that residual excitation from preceding emotions readily combines with excitation to later instigated emotions entails the assumption that heightened sympathetic activity is common to all essential emotions. This assumption derives from *evolutionary theories* that construe emotions as reactions designed to resolve behavioral emergencies (→ Communibiology). Emotions that serve the indicated function require bursts of energy for immediate vigorous action, and it is such energy that heightened sympathetic activity provides. In situations of acute danger, for example, early humans needed to be able to alternate quickly between fight and flight reactions, both of which demanded high energy levels. Similarly high levels were also needed during sexual pursuits and in other vital quests.

As neither the emotion-controlling limbic brain structures nor the autonomic nervous system have undergone appreciable changes during recent millennia, the evolutionary consideration of human emotions leads to the conclusion that, in our times, excited emotions are still being triggered by circumstances of consequence. The energizing reactions occur despite the fact that nowadays adaptive actions do usually not require

bursts of energy and that such energization may often prove counter-productive in fostering unreasonable, nonadaptive actions. Considering the transfer of excitation from emotion to emotion specifically, the evolutionary rationale projects that the combination of emotion-intensifying excitation is primarily one of compatible elements of sympathetic excitation. It further suggests that, as awareness of combining energetic resources could only distract from urgent behavioral objectives, the specifics of excitatory integration generally elude cognizance.

### **A CASE ILLUSTRATION OF EXCITATION TRANSFER**

Imagine a woman who steps on a snake in the grass of her backyard. Deep-rooted survival mechanisms, organized in the brain's limbic system, will be activated and make her jump back and scream. A rush of adrenaline will have been released alongside to elevate sympathetic excitation. Following these initial reactions, the woman is bound to construe her emotional behavior as fear and panic. She might also notice herself shaking and thus realize that she is greatly excited. Upon looking once more at the object of her terror, she recognizes, however, that the snake is a rubber dummy, planted by her mischievous son, who enters the scene laughing his head off.

This recognition, a result of instant cognitive adjustment to changing circumstances, proves her initial emotion of fear groundless and calls for a new interpretation of her experiential state. Still shaking from the scare, she is likely to feel acute anger toward her son. In her infuriation she might even lash out at him. But after fully comprehending the prank, she might consider anger to be inappropriate, and cognitively adjust once more, this time joining in his laughter and appraising her experience as amusement. Throughout this cognitive switching from experiential state to state, the excitatory reaction to the detected danger in the grass persisted to varying degrees. It initially determined the intensity of the fear reaction. The *left-over excitation* from this reaction then intensified the emotion of volatile anger and, thereafter, the experience of amusement in fits of hysterical laughter. In short, residual excitation fostered over-reactions in a string of different emotions.

### **EXCITATION TRANSFER IN SITUATIONALLY EVOKED EMOTIONS**

The facilitation of primary emotions by residual sympathetic excitation from prior emotional reactions has been demonstrated in numerous experiments. In these investigations, an initial emotion is elicited to provide excitation for transfer, and an immediately following one is evoked to receive the excitation transfer and be intensified by it. In both emotions, excitatory reactivity is ascertained, usually in peripheral manifestations such as blood pressure and heart rate. This assessment focuses on the magnitude of transferred residual excitation. Cognitive reactivity is ascertained alongside to ensure the experiential quality of the emotions. Finally, the intensity of the subsequent, focal emotion is recorded in expressive and behavioral manifestations.

Using this research paradigm, it has been demonstrated, for instance, that excitatory residues from acute sexual excitedness can intensify such diverse emotions as anxious apprehensions, anger, aggressive behavior, altruistic inclination, and help rendering.



Conversely, residues from noxious emotions such as fear have been found to intensify sexual attraction to viable partners. But residual excitation may also come from emotionally neutral sources. Residues from strenuous physical exercise were found to facilitate anger and aggressiveness, this in accordance with the prevailing magnitude of the slowly dissipating residual excitation. Excitatory residues from neutral sources were also found capable of enhancing sexual excitement and amorous inclinations (cf. Zillmann 1996).

Research on the relationship between fear and joy similarly shows that excitatory residues from acute fear intensify the experience of pleasure upon the cessation of fear. Newcomers to parachuting, for example, showed considerable apprehension before jumping, but also the greatest joy upon landing. As jumping became routine and fear diminished, the experience of joy, no longer invigorated by appreciable amounts of measured sympathetic excitation, faded away along with the fear (Klausner 1967).

Investigations addressing yet other constellations of emotions give further evidence of the excitation-transfer intensification of primary emotions that are evoked in social situations or by environmental challenge (Zillmann 1996).

### **EXCITATION TRANSFER IN COMMUNICATION-MEDIATED EMOTIONS**

The transfer facilitation of feelings and emotions evoked by exposure to media presentations has been examined within the same research paradigm. It has been shown, for instance, that residual sympathetic excitation from pleasant emotions, such as sexual excitedness, or unpleasant emotions, such as disgust and dejection, can enhance the subsequent enjoyment of music (Cantor & Zillmann 1973), the appreciation of humorous presentations (Cantor et al. 1974), and feelings of sadness in response to happenings featured in motion pictures (Zillmann et al. 1974). Hedonically neutral residues from physical exercise, moreover, were found capable of enhancing favorable affective reactions to televised commercials (Mattes & Cantor 1982).

The application of excitation transfer theory to communication-mediated emotions is not limited to presentations that are composed of independent reports or programs. The → news, for instance, commonly presents an admixture of unrelated, differently arousing reports. For such aggregations it must be expected that arousing reports leave much undecayed sympathetic excitation behind for the immediately following, potentially entirely unrelated reports. Affective reactions to these subsequent reports thus should be enhanced by the excitatory residues from the preceding reports. A highly exciting documentary may analogously enhance reactions to material presented in its aftermath (→ Fear Induction through Media Content; News Processing and Retention).

For example, an emotionally upsetting report about a tribal massacre in a developing country, being followed without delay by a report about an expanding avian flu epidemic, is likely to enhance felt concerns about the flu and foster increased assessments of the risk of contracting it. In the reverse direction, a preceding fear-arousing report about a flu epidemic should intensify feelings of terror and revulsion in response to a subsequent report about a massacre. Facilitatory effects may also cross the hedonic divide, however. After learning of a glorious victory by a supported sports team and basking in reflected glory, the report of a stock-market debacle may strike one as being especially severe and

damaging to economic interests; and after learning of such a debacle and feeling miserable accordingly, the report of a glorious win by the supported team may prove extraordinarily exhilarating.

Excitation transfer theory applies analogously to the *aggregation of singular events* within a report or story. Successions of differently arousing events regularly occur in news programs, but are most characteristic of entertaining storytelling. The undisrupted presentational compression of scenes of limited duration defines, in fact, a unique forum for excitation transfer because excitatory reactions are, as a rule, not allowed to decay. Unlike in situations that permit interruptions, information intake in audiovisual presentations is continuous. New scenes are presented and cognitively assimilated before appreciable excitatory decay can manifest itself. Under these conditions, residual excitation is bound to enter into and enhance reactions to scenes that immediately follow arousing ones (→ Information Processing).

An excitation transfer variant of interest is the simultaneous presentation of *differently arousing events in a message*. The transfer expectation is that the more arousing part of the message will intensify emotional reactivity to the less arousing part and, to a lesser degree, vice versa. This expectation was confirmed, for example, in an investigation of the enjoyment of music presented in music videos (Zillmann & Mundorf 1987). The music-accompanying imagery was manipulated, featuring either highly arousing violent scenes, highly arousing erotic scenes, or unarousing innocuous scenes. The music was additionally presented without the accompaniment of imagery. In accordance with excitation transfer expectations, the identical music was experienced as more enjoyable when accompanied by arousing imagery than when accompanied by either unarousing imagery or no imagery at all.

Research on the phenomenon of *suspense in fiction* confirms the transfer facilitation of satisfactory resolutions to arousing tensions. It has been demonstrated that witnessing a liked character in acute danger generates empathic distress, that this distress is accompanied by elevated sympathetic excitation, and that residues thereof enhance joyous reactions to the display of the character's triumph over the endangering circumstances (Zillmann 2006). This enhancement of enjoyment has been observed for miniature plots (i.e., a scene of endangerment followed by a scene of overcoming) as well as for plots spanning an entire dramatic presentation (e.g., a motion picture). Numerous other dramatic transitions can be similarly explained. In "comic relief," for example, an acutely distressing event is immediately followed by an amusing one, which regularly triggers intense laughter in a transfer-intensified over-reaction (→ Entertainment, Effects of).

Dramatic entertainment does not necessarily serve the maximization of pleasure, however. It may focus on the creation of reflexive, contemplative states or on the evocation of somber and even grievous emotions. In case reflective states are targeted, arousing events should obviously be avoided. If such events are dramatically essential and must be featured, ample time must be allowed for the dissipation of the arousal produced by these events. In case grievous emotions are the object of drama, such as in tragedy, these emotions are again subject to excitation transfer. It has been shown, in fact, that grievous emotions can be intensified by residual excitation from preceding distressing experiences. This intensification functions analogously to that of suspense resolutions, except that the resolution of tragedy is, in terms of pleasure, very unsatisfactory.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Communibiology ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Information Processing ▶ News ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Suspense

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## **Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of**

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The term “exemplification effect” describes the influence of illustrating and aggregating case descriptions in media presentations on the recipients’ perceptions of issues. Aggregating case descriptions emerges whenever media coverage presents any kind of generalizing claim about natural or social phenomena and an arbitrarily selected sample of single cases to illustrate the issue at hand. General claims (e.g., “growing poverty in society”) often are supported by presenting quantitative information (so-called “base-rate information”) about a large number of cases (e.g., statistics about poverty; → Statistics, Descriptive).

Single case information often describes events, episodes, individual experiences, or testimonials (e.g., the fate of an individual homeless person, testimonials of homeless, etc.). This suggests that the general claim can and should be applied to events or subjects beyond the displayed cases. Therefore, single cases serve as examples (also called “exemplars”) that illustrate (i.e., exemplify) the general claim about the total population of phenomena (the exemplified) from which these cases are drawn. However, as a rule, the recipients’ conceptions of frequency, urgency, or potential risk of the events covered are strongly influenced by the number and type of the exemplars, whereas the general information often is ignored.

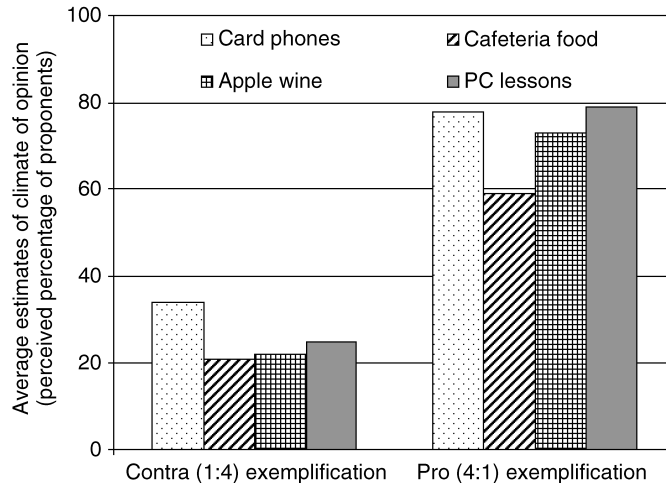
### **SINGLE CASES, EXAMPLES, AND COMMUNICATION**

From an epistemological perspective, all events and objects have distinctive features: no two cases are truly alike. Nevertheless, we can combine individual cases into classes of cases with similar or equal characteristics. This grouping strategy is a basic tool in human → cognition (categorization; → Information Processing; Schemas). If we select a case out of such a class of cases and regard it as representative for all other cases of the class, we use it as an example, assuming that it is typical or representative for other unobserved cases (Zillmann 1999). Thus, an individual case becomes an example whenever an observer generalizes from an individual observed case to other unobserved cases, or if a communicator uses the individual case as an illustration of a general statement (Daschmann 2001; Zillmann 2002).

The use of examples is frequently based on a *persuasive intention* – the aim is to present the general claim particularly convincingly and impressively – and obviously, episodic information has this quality (→ Persuasion). In the mass media, the use of examples is even on the increase: journalists have to make their contributions vivid, comprehensive, and interesting. Therefore, they prefer episodic information and illustrating single cases: this type of information is easy to understand and obviously more vivid and more dramatic than pallid and abstract general information. Iyengar (1991) showed the frequent use of episodic information in television. Zillmann et al. (1992) pointed out that the combination of abstract general information and exemplifying single cases is a prototypical format of media contributions. Content analyses document that examples frequently present a biased selection of cases, consistent with the news report’s focal contention and often selected due to their dramatic and emotional potential (Daschmann & Brosius 1999; Zillmann & Brosius 2000; → Instrumental Actualization). Biased selection of examples in the media is a particular problem, since there are no professional rules for exemplification in journalism – besides the self-evident requirement that the examples have to be true.

### **RESEARCH DESIGNS AND FINDINGS**

Most experiments in the effects of exemplars use the following design: subjects read, hear, or watch news coverage containing statistical information (base-rate) about the focused issue (in most studies, information about the climate of opinion provided by survey results) and a sample of five to nine examples illustrating the focused issue (in most studies,



**Figure 1** Estimates of climate of opinion as a function of exemplification

*Note:* The base-rate indicated the majority would not like card phones, was not content with the quality of the food or the wine, and liked the idea of computer lessons (Brosius & Bathelt 1994).

testimonials by a few individuals that articulate their personal opinion). While the base-rate information is kept constant over all experimental versions, the number and content of the exemplars is varied: in one version, the pro–contra distribution of the exemplars is in line with the general claim of the base-rate data, in the other version it contradicts the base-rate. After the presentation, subjects are asked to estimate the frequency and urgency of the issue (in most studies, the → climate of opinion), as well as to indicate their own opinion about the topic (→ Experimental Design).

For example, Brosius & Bathelt (1994) presented radio reports about four different issues. Each of the reports contained five testimonials (examples). The pro–contra distribution of the examples was varied in two versions. Subjects' estimates of the climate of opinion were in line with the number of exemplars while ignoring the base-rate data (Fig. 1).

## EXEMPLIFICATION EFFECTS – A RESEARCH OVERVIEW

In the 1990s, findings in social psychology led to exemplification research as a new branch in communication science. The impact of exemplification has been investigated in nearly 40 studies (for an overview, see Zillmann & Brosius 2000; Daschmann 2001), mainly in the US and Germany. Only one of these studies did not confirm exemplification effects as described above. All other investigations found an impact of the distribution of exemplars on perceived climate of opinion, on estimates of frequency of occurrence, on urgency of the issue (→ Agenda-Setting Effects), or on perceived risk ratio (→ Risk Perceptions). In addition, several studies found an influence of exemplification on the personal opinion of the recipients.

The more examples are presented, the more one-sided their distribution is. The more dramatic, extreme, and emotional the displayed cases are, the stronger are the effects. Presentation features such as personalization, vividness, or direct speech increase these

effects, too. Exemplification effects are reproduced in different kinds of media (radio, television, and print). Most studies focus on exemplification in nonfictional media coverage, mainly in the news, but confirm the effect for very different issues, e.g., the introduction of new technologies, the threat of crime (→ Fear Induction through Media Content), the safety of means of transport, including social topics such as the poverty of farmers as well as current political topics and questions of fashion or taste (Gibson & Zillmann 1998). For all issues, exemplification effects are confirmed, some studies document effects even two weeks after exposure. As yet, there are no systematic hints concerning interactions of the effect with socio-demographics like age, gender, or education. Different psychological traits or states, e.g., empathy, involvement, knowledge, preconceptions, or former experiences also do not interact with exemplification effects. In addition, exemplification effects seem to occur unconsciously: even when subjects regard the presented examples as a nonrepresentative sample, their judgments are influenced by the examples.

### CAUSES OF EXEMPLIFICATION EFFECTS

Findings in social psychology indicate that most people ignore available statistical information when forming judgments about frequencies, probabilities, or risk (*base-rate fallacy*) but rely for their judgments on information about a few nonrepresentative cases. Obviously, the relevance of information for human cognition is in contrast to its diagnostic value as seen from an epistemological point of view. Social psychologists assumed that due to their vividness examples are more available in memory and therefore have a stronger impact on *memory-based judgments* (→ Availability, Cognitive). Empirical studies did not support this hypothesis. Instead, it was found that many other presentation features, such as direct speech or personalization, or characteristics of the examples such as credibility or perceived representativeness, as well as characteristics of the recipients such as preconceptions or involvement also did not satisfactorily explain the findings (→ Involvement with Media Content).

More recent theories (Brosius 1995; Zillmann & Brosius 2000; Zillmann 2002) assume that the exemplification effect is rooted in a basic *cognitive mechanism of inductive learning* (“episodic affinity”) from episodic case information (Daschmann 2001). The mechanism is a cognitive tool, increasing the ability to draw general conclusions based on everyday experiences. The “heuristic” may be seen as a product of evolutionary development because it is helpful and reasonably correct when general conclusions are drawn from typical cases (→ Observational Learning; Elaboration Likelihood Model). However, if applied to untypical cases, misperceptions and wrong conclusions are the rule. In the process of reception of media coverage, the heuristic may thus lead to inadequate judgments due to the special type of examples used in the media.

This hypothesis implies *consequences for journalism*: since journalists cannot do without examples due to their advantages for presentation, they should use them in a more responsible and representative way (Meyer 2002; → Precision Journalism). They should present less extreme examples and include counterexamples in their contributions. On the other hand, recipients should be aware of the biased exemplification presented in the media and try to validate their judgments and conceptions by including further information sources.

While the existence of exemplification effects is well-confirmed, there are still *questions open* concerning the connections to other approaches in media effects research (e.g., → cultivation effects). These concepts describe different effects but can be based on the same cognitive mechanism. With respect to the methods and issues used, further research is necessary. Because nearly all studies tested students only, there is a lack of field research that could improve the external validity of the findings. There should be a greater focus on investigations of exemplification within domains of communication other than news coverage (commercials, entertainment, etc.). In addition, surveys of journalists about the selection and use of examples are necessary.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Availability, Cognitive ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Cognition ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Information Processing ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Persuasion ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Schemas ▶ Statistics, Descriptive

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# Expectancy Value Model

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Human beings have a natural tendency to react with some degree of positive or negative affect to any object or concept of psychological significance (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975; Eagly & Chaiken 1993). We like or dislike certain people, support or oppose various policies, regard some activities as pleasant and others as unpleasant, have favorable views of certain television programs but unfavorable views of others, and so forth. The expectancy value (EV) model is concerned with the origins and structure of these “social attitudes” (Feather 1982; → Attitudes).

According to the EV model, the overall evaluation of or attitude toward an object is a function of the information or “beliefs” we have about the object in question (→ Information Seeking). In the domain of communication research, the EV model has been applied to predict viewer attitudes and viewer exposure to various types of television programs and shows: news in general (Palmgreen & Rayburn 1982; Babrow & Swanson 1988) and health-related news reports in particular (Cooper et al. 2001), → soap operas (Babrow 1989), and prime-time entertainment programming (Galloway & Meek 1981). In recent years, it also has been applied to predict computer technology use of Canadian elementary and secondary teachers from schools in Quebec (Wozney et al. 2006; → Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking; Exposure to Communication Content; Exposure to the Internet).

## ASSUMPTIONS

The EV model assumes that in the course of our daily lives our experiences lead us to acquire different beliefs about various objects, actions, and events. These beliefs may be formed as a result of direct experience with the object (e.g., watching a new Steven Spielberg film); they may be acquired indirectly by accepting information from other people or from printed and electronic media about the new Spielberg film; or they may be self-generated through inference processes based on knowledge stored in → memory about Steven Spielberg films in general.

Each belief associates the attitude object with an attribute. For example, we may come to believe that a → newspaper (the object) is created by a team of competent journalists and covers new and relevant information that is presented in an unbiased way (the attributes; → Journalists, Credibility of; Neutrality; Objectivity in Reporting). Because the attributes that come to be associated with the object are already valued positively or negatively, we simultaneously and automatically acquire an attitude toward the object. Specifically, the subjective value of each attribute contributes to the attitude in direct proportion to the strength of the belief, i.e., to the subjective probability that the object has the attribute in question. The way in which beliefs about an object (*o*) combine to produce an overall attitude is shown in the following equation:



$$A_o = f\left(\sum_{i=1}^n b_{io} \cdot e_i\right)$$

It can be seen that the strength of each belief ( $b_{io}$ ), i.e., the subjective probability that object  $o$  is characterized by attribute  $i$ , is multiplied by the evaluation of the associated attribute ( $e_i$ ), and the resulting products are summed over the  $n$  beliefs about the object. According to the EV model, a person's attitude toward an object ( $A_o$ ) is a *function of this summative belief index*. In this fashion, we learn to like objects we associate with largely desirable characteristics, to hold unfavorable attitudes toward objects we associate with mainly undesirable characteristics, and to form ambivalent attitudes toward objects we associate with both desirable and undesirable characteristics.

Of course, individuals are not expected actually to perform the mental calculations specified in the equation. The EV model is taken not as an accurate description of the way in which attitudes are formed but rather it is assumed that the attitude formation process can be modeled as if individuals were performing the stipulated calculations. It is also important to realize that people can form many beliefs about any psychological object, but that only a relatively small number is readily available in memory at any given moment. It is these readily *accessible beliefs* that are assumed to be the prevailing determinants of a person's attitude ( $\rightarrow$  Attitude Accessibility).

### IDENTIFYING ACCESSIBLE BELIEFS

Different approaches exist to identify accessible beliefs about an attitude object. *Two popular approaches* are the thought listing technique and the use of focus groups. For the thought listing technique, individuals are asked to list in a free response format any positive and any negative aspects of the object that come readily to mind. In focus groups, potential users of, say, a mass medium (e.g., television program, newspaper,  $\rightarrow$  Internet) are brought together in small groups and, in a permissive atmosphere under the guidance of a moderator, discuss various aspects of the media offering in question.

Based on one of these techniques in most applications of the EV model, the most frequently listed responses (thought listing technique) or most frequently mentioned beliefs from group discussions (protocol from focus groups) are selected to construct a *list of modal accessible beliefs*, i.e., beliefs that are common in the population of interest. Once a list of accessible attributes has been constructed, a new sample of participants is asked to rate the likelihood and the valence associated with each attribute. That is, they are asked to rate how likely it is that the object has the attribute (belief strength) and to rate the attribute on an evaluative scale (attribute evaluation;  $\rightarrow$  Rating Methods; Scales and Indices). These two ratings are multiplied, and the products are summed in accordance with the above equation. In addition, as a direct measure of attitude, participants are also asked to rate the attitude object itself on an evaluative scale. In accordance with the EV model, empirical research has demonstrated strong correlations between this direct attitude measure and the summed belief  $\times$  evaluation index.

In short, in the EV model it is assumed that our beliefs form the informational foundation for our attitudes. Although often quite accurate, beliefs can be biased by a

variety of cognitive and motivational processes (→ Consistency Theories). They may be irrational, based on invalid or selective information (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory), be self-serving, or otherwise fail to correspond to reality. However, no matter how they were formed or how accurate they are, beliefs represent the information we have about the world in which we live, and they form the cognitive foundation for our attitudes toward aspects of that world.

### APPLICATION OF THE MODEL

The EV model can be used not only to account for the formation and structure of attitudes but also to help explain behavioral decisions (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency). People form attitudes not only toward physical objects, institutions, social groups, events, and mass media offerings, but also toward behaviors. Thus, we may hold favorable or unfavorable attitudes toward watching a television program, reading a newspaper, playing a computer game, using a certain computer technology for teaching purposes, and so forth.

When the object of the attitude is a behavior, the relevant beliefs that determine the attitude are readily accessible *beliefs about the consequences of the behavior*. For these behavioral beliefs, again, a list of modal accessible behavioral outcomes must be constructed, and participants are asked to rate the likelihood that the behavior will produce each outcome and to rate the valence of each outcome on an evaluative scale. Belief strength and outcome evaluation ratings are multiplied and the products are summed to produce the EV composite, which is again found to correlate well with a direct measure of attitude toward the behavior. Some research has focused on the question of whether the EV composite can be decomposed by factor-analytic methods into belief sub-groups representing different functions that a certain behavior serves (→ Factor Analysis; Uses and Gratifications). In a study on watching soap operas among college students, Babrow (1989) identified four positively correlated EV subscales: perceived opportunities for social interaction, anticipated learning, anticipated general amusement and entertainment, and expected opportunity for romantic fantasy.

The EV model also has a number of *implications for attitude change* (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980; Fishbein & Ajzen 1981). Change in an attitude can be produced by changing the beliefs that are already accessible for the recipients or by making new beliefs accessible. According to the EV model, to change an attitude in a favorable direction, the summed EV products of the beliefs that underlie the attitude must become more positive than prior to the influence attempt, whereas a change in an unfavorable direction is produced by a negative change in the summed products.

To illustrate, if a person seeks information about basketball and believes that a certain television sports channel would supply a great deal of relevant information, the individual may seek such information from that sports channel. If the individual receives basketball information at a lower level than expected, it should reduce belief strength with regard to this attribute and as a consequence change the attitude in a negative direction. If, however, the same sports channel offers information about football at a higher level than expected (and this information is also positively valued by the individual), the resulting increase in belief strength can compensate for the decrease in the former belief strength,

leading in sum to an increase in the product sum and to a more positive attitude toward watching that sports channel. According to the EV model, changes in beliefs can occur either via changes in the belief strengths of the attributes or via changes in the evaluations of the attributes, or in both terms. Empirically, persuasive attempts trying to change belief strengths tend to be more effective than attempts trying to change belief evaluations, probably because evaluations of attributes are well anchored in prior learning.

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

A methodological issue of the EV model concerns the scaling of belief strengths and outcome evaluations that are multiplied in EV products ( $\rightarrow$  Scales). Usually, respondents make their ratings on 7-point scales for both belief strengths (e.g., likely vs unlikely) and outcome evaluations (e.g., good vs bad). Derived from the conventional assumption that evaluations have a bipolar quality ranging from negative to positive with a neutral midpoint, bipolar scaling of outcome evaluations is used (from  $-3$  to  $+3$ ). Controversial, however, is the most adequate scaling for the belief strength ratings. Either bipolar scaling (from  $-3$ , very improbable to,  $+3$ , very probable) or unipolar scaling (from 0, very improbable, to  $+6$ , very probable) has been used. The bipolar scaling method allows respondents to express the falsity of modal accessible beliefs (Eagly & Chaiken 1993) and enables strong disbelief in very negative attributes to make a large positive contribution to the product-sum ( $-3 \times -3$ ).

To illustrate, perceiving it as very unlikely ( $-3$ ) that a television program will show pornographic material ( $-3$ ) can contribute positively to the composite score. However, unipolar scaling may appear more reasonable given the interpretation of the belief strength as a subjective probability. Unipolar scaling requires disbelief in negative attributes to make either no contribution (0 expectancy:  $0 \times -3$ ) or a small negative contribution (1 expectancy:  $1 \times -3$ ) to the composite. Most studies explaining media-related attitudes by the EV model have employed the combination of bipolar scaling for outcome evaluations and unipolar scaling for belief strength ratings.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitudes  
▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Memory ▶ Neutrality ▶ Newspaper ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Expectancy Violation

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People have expectations about how others should and will act in a given situation. Some expectations are based on personal knowledge about an individual, relationship, or situation. Other expectations are based on rules of social and cultural appropriateness. When a communicator's behavior deviates from these expectations, an *expectancy violation* has occurred.

Expectancy violations theory (EVT) explains how people respond to unexpected communication. EVT, which was developed by Judee Burgoon, initially focused on violations of personal space (→ Proxemics). The theory was later expanded to apply to other nonverbal behaviors and more general interpersonal events, including unexpected moves to escalate or de-escalate a relationship, transgressions such as deception and infidelity, and dating behavior (Burgoon & Hale 1988; Burgoon et al. 1995).

According to EVT, expectations come from three sources: communicator characteristics (such as personality), relationship characteristics (such as being friends vs being romantic partners), and context characteristics (such as culture and the situation). Behavior that confirms people's expectations generally goes unnoticed. Unexpected behavior, on the other hand, captures people's attention and leads to heightened arousal. Sometimes arousal change is aversive, leading to a fight-or-flight response. At other times arousal takes the form of an orientation response that leads people to scan the environment for information to help them interpret and evaluate the unexpected behavior. Evaluations are largely made on the basis of the perceived valence of the behavior and the reward value of the partner.

*Valence* refers to how positive or negative an expectancy violation is compared to the expected behavior. *Positive expectancy violations* occur when the unexpected behavior is better than the expected behavior, whereas *negative expectancy violations* occur when the

unexpected behavior is worse than the expected behavior. Some expectancy violations are unambiguous. For example, receiving an especially nice gift from a relational partner is almost always a positive expectancy violation; infidelity is almost always a negative expectancy violation.

*Reward value* refers to the level of regard a person has for someone. Reward value is associated with characteristics such as physical attractiveness, social attractiveness, and status (→ Interpersonal Attraction). When the meaning of an expectancy violation is fairly ambiguous, reward value is often the key determinant of whether the behavior is evaluated positively or negatively. For instance, a hug by an acquaintance is likely to be valenced negatively or positively depending on whether the acquaintance is perceived as unrewarding or rewarding, respectively.

According to EVT, valence and reward value work together to predict behavioral and emotional responses to expectancy violations, including patterns of reciprocity and compensation (→ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction). *Reciprocity* occurs when a person responds to an unexpected behavior with a similar behavior (e.g., one person is flirtatious, the other person responds with a coy smile). *Compensation* occurs when a person responds to an unexpected behavior with a dissimilar or opposite behavior (e.g., one person is flirtatious, the other person pulls away). People often engage in compensation when a change in the intimacy level of an interaction makes them uncomfortable. Expectancy violations can also produce uncertainty (→ Uncertainty Reduction Theory).

Burgoon and her colleagues have conducted numerous experimental studies applying EVT to the exchange of nonverbal behavior. In particular, EVT has been used to explain reactions to changes in nonverbal involvement. *Nonverbal involvement cues*, such as eye contact, touch, and vocal expressiveness, signal interest in an interaction. Other scholars have applied EVT to relationship transgressions (infidelity, deception) and dating behavior. Two consistent findings have emerged: when rewarding communicators engage in positive expectancy violations, people respond with positive affect and reciprocity; when unrewarding communicators engage in negative expectancy violations, people respond with negative affect and reciprocity.

Findings for *rewarding communicators* who engage in negative expectancy violations are less consistent. Studies looking at patterns of nonverbal communication have shown that when a rewarding communicator engages in a negative expectancy violation, the partner often compensates, at least initially. However, if the rewarding communicator continues acting negatively, the partner eventually reciprocates. Research on relational transgressions suggests that people are more likely to grant forgiveness and engage in constructive communication if the partner and the relationship were previously regarded as highly rewarding and the transgression only constituted a mildly negative expectancy violation. Highly negative expectancy violations often lead to destructive communication, even within the context of previously satisfying relationships.

Findings for *unrewarding communicators* who engage in positive expectancy violations have also been mixed. Sometimes people are suspicious of positive behavior by unrewarding partners; other times they evaluate the partner as more rewarding in light of the positive expectancy violation. Burgoon's research suggests that unrewarding communicators fare best when they confirm expectations and act in socially normative ways. In contrast, rewarding communicators have more leeway to violate expectations – either positively or negatively.

EVT provides a good example of how the scope of a theory can broaden over time. The theory has been successfully applied to the study of nonverbal behavior for decades. Recent work on EVT expanded the theory's scope by examining relational transgressions, dating behavior, expectations about sex, and sexual resistance, suggesting that the concept of expectancy violations explains a variety of human behaviors (Afifi & Metts 1998; Bachman & Guerrero 2006; Bevan 2003; Morr & Mongeau 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Proxemics ▶ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## **Experiment, Field**

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Research utilizing experimentation is increasingly being conducted in venues outside the research laboratory (→ Experiment, Laboratory; Experimental Design). Such projects, when they involve the manipulation of an independent variable in realistic circumstances, are called “field experiments.” Natural experiments, involving research conducted in realistic circumstances where the researcher *does not* manipulate the independent variable, are discussed elsewhere (→ Experiment, Natural).

### **DISTINCTION FROM LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS**

Field experiments provide an excellent approach for studying both theoretically derived → hypotheses and problems of practical application. Conceptually, the differences between the laboratory experiment and the field experiment are slight; ideally, both are structured on one of the true experimental designs and consequently incorporate

randomization and manipulable experimental treatments or interventions (i.e., independent variables) as fundamental components (→ Sampling, Random).

Similarities in the two experimental contexts diverge considerably, however, in terms of *experimental control*, with the researcher's ability to guard against circumstances that might provide alternative or rival explanations, threatening the → validity of causal explanations, frequently challenged in field experiments. Yet, field experiments, because they are undertaken in circumstance not radically different from everyday life, can afford the researcher greater external validity. Following the initial experimental treatment, for example, research participants in field experiments typically continue functioning in their everyday social settings with little investigator interaction until outcomes assessment (i.e., dependent measures). This can significantly reduce the reactive or interactive influence on subsequent outcomes resulting from participants' awareness of the research procedure and enhance external validity.

At the same time, however, undertaking experimentation in the field can involve *complications* rarely seen in laboratory experiments. Field experiments, for instance, typically entail a significantly longer time frame (e.g., weeks and months rather than hours and days) and often engage a substantially larger number of research participants. They frequently require a variety of exigencies and preliminaries, such as establishing contacts, gaining cooperation, and securing permissions, which can strain research resources and researcher patience. The process of identifying eligible research participants in field experiments, for example, can be difficult, and the failure to retain research participants for follow-up (i.e., outcomes assessment) can be a serious threat to the → generalizability of research results. Additionally, field experimentation commonly occurs in settings permeated with systematic and random noise where achieving an adequate degree of measurement precision or accuracy can be difficult (→ Measurement Theory). Some threats to internal validity (e.g., compensatory rivalry and the Hawthorne effect) can be particularly problematic in field experiments.

### EXAMPLES OF FIELD EXPERIMENTS

Field experiments, although not prominent in the communication research literature, have appreciably informed our understanding of important phenomena across diverse areas, including → interpersonal communication (Fennis et al. 2006), language and communication disorders (Cohen et al. 2006; → Language and Social Interaction), → political communication (Gerber & Green 2001), and → media effects (Robinson & Borzekowski 2006). Generally, field experiments appear most commonly in → health communication research, with such projects typically operationalized as randomized controlled trials. Guidelines and practices incorporated in the randomized controlled trial, which is a refinement of the basic pre-test/post-test control group design, assist the researcher in overcoming many of the common limitations encountered in field experiments (Moher et al. 2001). Consequently, the randomized controlled trial, if effectively implemented, can yield the strongest evidence of causality of all research undertaken in realistic environmental and situational circumstances.

An *informative example* of the application of key communication concepts in a field experiment is provided by a study of an HIV sexual risk-reduction intervention by

DiClemente and Wingood (1995). This single-blind, randomized controlled trial employed a communication and social skills enrichment program in an intervention (i.e., experimental treatment) to enhance the consistency of condom use for HIV prevention (→ Communication Skills across the Life-span; Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). A sample of 128 sexually active, heterosexual, African-American women aged 18 through 29 years were recruited using street outreach techniques in an economically disadvantaged neighborhood of San Francisco, CA. The women were randomly assigned to one of three groups: (1) a communication and social skills intervention, conducted over five sessions, which emphasized communication skills, ethnic and gender pride, proper condom use skills, and development of partner norms supportive of consistent condom use; (2) an HIV risk-reduction education program administered in a single session; or (3) a control condition in which administration of the HIV risk-reduction education program was delayed three months until after outcomes assessment (i.e., dependent variables).

The findings revealed that, compared with the delayed HIV education control condition, women in the communication and social skills intervention demonstrated increased consistent condom use, greater sexual communication, assertiveness, and self-control, and increased partners' adoption of norms supporting consistent condom use. No significant differences in the outcome variables were observed between the HIV risk-reduction education condition and the control condition. Overall, this field experiment demonstrates that community-based HIV risk-reduction programs that provide communication and social skills training within a gender- and culture-sensitive framework can effectively enhance consistent condom use and promote HIV prevention.

Another instructive example of a field experiment is provided by the work of Vaughan and his colleagues (2000; Rogers et al. 1999), who explored the impact of an entertainment education radio program on HIV/AIDS prevention in Tanzania (→ Entertainment Education). The project employed a radio → soap opera, *Twende na Wakati* ("Let's Go with the Times"), as the communication intervention. The program used negative, transitional, and positive behavioral role modeling to promote HIV prevention, family planning, gender equity, and other health themes, and was broadcast in Swahili, the national language of Tanzania, twice per week for 30 minutes from July 1993 through the end of 1999.

The field experiment was structured on a variant of the pre-test/post-test non-equivalent control group design, with restricted access to the program within a large geographic region of Tanzania during the first 2 years of the project providing the control group. Outcome measures were assessed through five personal interview surveys conducted annually. Each survey, the first of which was initiated just prior to the first program broadcast, involved a unique randomly selected sample. The survey instrument tapped personal characteristics, exposure to and perceptions of *Twende na Wakati*, knowledge and attitudes about HIV/AIDS, and HIV/AIDS preventive behaviors practice.

The findings revealed that *Twende na Wakati* positively influenced behaviors facilitating HIV/AIDS prevention, significantly reducing the number of sexual partners reported by both men and women and significantly increasing condom adoption. The radio soap opera influenced these behavioral changes through several intervening variables, including increased self-perception of HIV/AIDS contraction risk, enhanced self-efficacy for HIV/AIDS prevention, and more extensive interpersonal communication about HIV/AIDS.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experiment, Natural ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Generalizability ▶ Health Communication ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Effects ▶ Political Communication ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Validity

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## **Experiment, Laboratory**

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Research utilizing experimentation (→ Experimental Design) is undertaken in a variety of contexts and settings. Decisions concerning the circumstances under which to conduct an experiment typically reflect a combination of considerations including the nature of the research question (→ Hypothesis), the availability of research resources, and the researcher's

interest in balancing concerns about the → validity and the → generalizability of subsequent findings. Overwhelmingly, the most common setting for experimentation in communication is the *laboratory*.

### ADVANTAGES OF LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS

Laboratory experiments, when effectively operationalized (→ Operationalization) and carried out, afford strict experimental control by allowing for isolation of the research situation from the variety of extraneous influences that can impact both experimental treatment or intervention (i.e., independent variable) and the subsequent outcome (i.e., dependent variable). Accordingly, laboratory experiments are typically structured on the more rigorous “true experimental designs” and, consequently, yield the strongest evidence of causality (Wimmer & Dominick 2003).

An array of *locales* can be utilized in staging laboratory experiments ranging from general purpose accommodations such as conference rooms, classrooms, lecture halls, and theatres to facilities specifically designed for experimentation. It is the researcher’s ability to structure and manipulate the experimental environment (e.g., lighting, temperature, soundproofing, seating arrangement of research participants), not the specific locale, that is the defining characteristic of experiments in the laboratory setting.

Beyond situational and environment control, the laboratory setting allows *substantial control* over all aspects of the research process. Working in a laboratory setting, for example, significantly enhances the researcher’s ability to accurately identify eligible research participants, insure their random assignment to treatment conditions, and extensively observe their progression through the research activity. The level of specificity achievable in the operationalization of independent variables – or, in other words, the extent and certainty with which treatment manipulations can be accomplished – and the consistency of their re-enactment are both extremely high in laboratory experiments. Equally important, the degree of precision possible in outcomes (i.e., dependent variables) assessment, which promotes measurement reliability, is a key aspect of experimentation in laboratory settings (Kerlinger 1986).

### DISADVANTAGES OF LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS

While many aspects of laboratory experiments offer crucial advantages in research endeavors testing causal relationships, experiments in laboratory settings can also involve potential disadvantages. Perhaps the most obvious shortcoming is *operational and environmental artificiality*. Laboratory experiments facilitate the precise and systematic observation of human reactions under controlled conditions; but sometimes the experimental situation and/or experimental procedure is rather sterile and unnatural. Some behavioral and perceptual outcomes observed under such circumstances can have little direct application to those occurring in natural surroundings. In extreme cases, laboratory experiments can involve such artificiality that little or no confidence in the external validity and generalizability of resulting observations is warranted. Consequently, several research questions simply do not lend themselves to examination through laboratory experiments (Miller & Salkind 2002).

Because laboratory experiments typically involve extensive interaction between the researcher and research participants, the potential is great that *researcher biases* can emerge as threats to internal and external validity. Two forms of subjective bias, that unconsciously and unintentionally affect laboratory experiment results, are experimenter bias and observer bias. Experimenter bias is introduced into the experimental process when the researcher subtly communicates expectations about outcomes to the research participants. Observer bias occurs during outcome measurement when the researcher overemphasizes expected behaviors and ignores unanticipated ones. Blinding methods are frequently incorporated into experimental procedures to avoid such distorting influences. The double-blind method, in which neither the researcher nor the research participants know who belongs to the control or experimental groups, is most common (Myers & Hansen 2005).

### AN EXAMPLE OF A LABORATORY EXPERIMENT

Laboratory experiments have proven instrumental in communication research enlightening both our understanding of basic communication phenomena and informing theory construction. The scholarship of Judee Burgoon (→ Deceptive Message Production; Interaction Adaptation Theory), James Dillard (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of), Robin Nabi (→ Selective Attention), and David Roskos-Ewoldsen (→ Attitudes; Attitude Accessibility) summarized in this encyclopedia provides numerous examples. Perhaps the most sophisticated and diverse utilization of laboratory experiments in communication research emerges from the work of Dolf Zillmann (→ Empathy Theory; Excitation Transfer Theory; Educational Television, Children's Responses to; Entertainment, Effects of; Selective Exposure).

One study in particular, entitled *Effects of an opposite-gender companion's affect to horror on distress, delight, and attraction* (Zillmann et al. 1986), provides an informative illustration. The study was built on the observation that teenagers love to be terrorized – at least at the movies. Most of the audience for slasher or slice-and-dice horror films are adolescents and young adults. Further, the horror film audience is typically evenly split between male and female viewers. This is not coincidental, argued Zillmann and his colleagues, noting that horror films seems to serve an important function as “date movies” for young audiences. As one teenager, quoted in *Seventeen*, put it: “Sometimes you feel weird and self-conscious holding onto a guy's hand on the first date but this way you can just grab him.” Another teenage girl observed, “Guys like to take you to horror movies, hoping you'll be real afraid and need them to comfort you.” A third said, “You can get all rowdy with boys and jump into their lap.”

Casting these observations within the framework of a gender role socialization of affect model (Zillmann & Weaver 1996; → Emotional Arousal Theory), Zillmann and his colleagues designed a post-test-only control group design experiment. Specifically, they implemented a  $2 \times 3$  factorial design with research participant gender (male, female) and the affective reactions to a horror film that were enacted by an opposite-gender companion (mastery, indifference, distress) as independent variables. Male and female college students watched, with an opposite-gender companion, several of the final scenes from the horror film *Friday the 13th, Part 3*. The four companions (one with lower and one with higher

physical appeal within each gender) participating in the study were actually research confederates; students who were trained by the experimenters to enact mastery, indifference, or distress at critical moments throughout the film segment. This behavioral enactment by the research confederates provided the crucial independent variable manipulation (i.e., experimental treatments) across which the research participants were randomly assigned.

Several outcomes were measured following the experimental treatments. These dependent variables included the research participants' affective reactions to the movie; their perceptions of the companion's physical appeal, personality traits, and desirability as a working partner; and the research participants' tendency to acquiesce to apparently erroneous contentions on the part of the companion.

The findings from this laboratory experiment revealed that men enjoyed the film most when their female companion acted distressed and least when she displayed mastery. Women, in contrast, enjoyed the film most when viewed with a mastering male and least in the company of a distressed male companion. The intensity of distress experienced by research participants in response to the film followed the same pattern.

The enactment of mastery while co-viewing the horror film did not enhance the physical appeal of female companions. Perceptions reported by female research participants of the lower-appeal male companion were enhanced significantly, however. The lower-appeal companion also benefited from the display of mastery in that pronounced positive traits were ascribed to him by co-viewing female research participants. Male research participants co-viewing with female companions did not yield a significant pattern of perceptual shifts.

And, finally, the display of distress in response to the horror film segment reduced the desirability of both male and female companions as working partners. Furthermore, female research participants showed a clear tendency to acquiesce to assertions made by male companions who had shown mastery while viewing horror. Taken together, the results of this laboratory experiment support both the conventional-wisdom observations of teenage movie-goers and predictions derived from theory. They highlight a complex interaction between the mass media and their audiences and show that the social context in which mass media content is consumed can have a significant influence on perceptions of and reactions to both the media message and media users.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitudes ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Generalizability ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Interaction Adaptation Theory ▶ Operationalization ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Validity

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## Experiment, Natural

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Our understanding of several communication phenomena has benefited extensively from informative reports of “natural” experiments. Natural experiments are infrequently detailed in the social and behavioral sciences, however, because they result only when naturally arising circumstances make it possible to separate and examine typically confounded phenomena. Like field experiments (→ Experiment, Field), natural experiments occur in venues where the researcher has limited control over environmental or situational conditions. Distinctive in the natural experiment, moreover, randomization is impossible and the researcher exercises no influence over the independent variable (→ Experiment, Laboratory). That is, the independent variable is not manipulated but rather varies (often presence vs absence) due to a naturally occurring event or situation.

Natural experiments, consequently, are not actually experiments; but, instead, are observational studies (→ Observation). In a natural experiment, the researcher identifies and anticipates the progression of an evolving phenomenon (→ Hypothesis), isolates and defines unique characteristics of the incident or event to articulate different levels of the independent variable (→ Operationalization), and develops systematic techniques to observe outcomes (i.e., dependent variables; → Measurement Theory). Quasi-experimental designs typically provide the logical structure for natural experiments. The strongest evidence emerges from variants of the pre-test/post-test nonequivalent control group design (→ Experimental Design), with systematic observations recorded both before and after the onset of the naturally occurring phenomenon (i.e., independent variable). It is important to recognize that causation can never be unequivocally determined through natural experiments. Nevertheless, this alternative research method can inform theory development by providing data unattained through other means.

A classic example of a natural experiment is a study initiated in 1973 by Williams (1986) and her colleagues. They conducted an elaborate investigation of the impact of → television – or more precisely, the absence of television – on a non-isolated working-class community in Canada. “Notel,” the name given the town, received no television programming. Two other communities that were demographically and socio-economically matched with Notel, but which received either only a single Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

(Unitel) television channel or television content from four channels (Multitel; → Canada: Media System), were identified. The three communities were operationalized as three levels of a TV-content independent variable.

Using the *pre-test/post-test nonequivalent control group design*, Williams and her associates first surveyed (pre-test or  $O_1$ ) the residents of the three communities about one year prior to the introduction of television in Notel and then surveyed (post-test or  $O_2$ ) the communities two years later. In each community adults and children were assessed on a number of dependent variables including aggressive behavior, personality characteristics, sex-role perceptions, cognitive and creative task performance (e.g., intelligence, reading ability, and vocabulary), and leisure-time activities. Television programming was also content analyzed for aggressive behavior and sex-role portrayals (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative).

Williams and her associates found that television viewing significantly affected other everyday activities concluding that “television affects viewers negatively in a variety of areas via displacement” (p. 395) since each day viewers spent several hours of their limited discretionary time watching TV (→ Exposure to Television; Media Effects). They observed that activities that could not be multitasked with TV use (e.g., reading and creative activities), especially those conducted outside the home (e.g., participation in community activities), were most adversely displaced. Williams and her colleagues also found, consistent with prior laboratory experiments, that television was a prominent source of social learning (→ Social Cognitive Theory; Observational Learning), particularly for children, with significant content effects observed in both aggressive behaviors and sex-role perceptions. Finally, they found that the presence of television, not the number of channels available, was the origin of television effects. The effect of television on residents of Notel appeared significantly different from that observed in Unitel and Multitel; but residents in Unitel and Multitel, despite variations in the source and number of television channels available, tended to be similar.

More recently, Weimann (1996) conducted a natural experiment exploring how the rapid diffusion of → cable television access affected television viewers in Israel (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). Specifically, he employed the pre-test/post-test nonequivalent control group design to compare a sample of residents with newly established cable access (cabled residents) with a matched sample unreachable by cable television (uncabled residents). Weimann found significant behavioral, cognitive, and affective differences. Residents with cable reported substantial increases in television viewing, and more positive feelings toward television, despite the fact that increased TV viewing displaced time spent with other activities. Cabled residents also reported considerable uneasiness, discomfort, and shock as “family feuds,” conflicts, and disagreements emerged following adoption of cable television in their homes.

Finally, Snedeker et al. (2007) provide an excellent example of a natural experiment structured on the time series design (→ Time-Series Analysis) in their work examining language development among children of international adoption (→ Language Acquisition in Childhood). Parental reports and speech samples were collected from 27 preschool children repeatedly for 3 to 18 months after US parents adopted them from China. These children, the authors observed, showed the same developmental patterns in language production as much younger monolingual infants (matched for vocabulary size). Initially, their vocabularies were dominated by nouns and their utterances were short. The children,

at later stages, displayed vocabularies that were more diverse and produced longer utterances with more grammatical morphemes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Effects ▶ Observation ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Operationalization ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Television ▶ Time-Series Analysis

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## **Experimental Design**

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Experimental design provides the logical architecture for scientific research examining causal relationships. Most people intuitively recognize causal relationships. It is not uncommon to hear, for instance, that increased time studying caused an improved test grade, that a “sweet tooth” enabled a friend’s weight gain, or that traffic congestion instigated a “road rage” incident. The tendency to attribute causality, often spontaneously, in commonsense explanations of everyday behaviors punctuates both private and public discourse and appears a distinctively human characteristic (Frey et al. 2000).

In scientific endeavors, we are typically much more deliberate when making causality inferences (Hill 1965) and often rely on experimentation to inform judgments about causal relationships. Experimentation is a process used to determine the extent, if any, of causal connections between two or more variables. Through experimentation, we test predictions about causal relationships by manipulating aspects of a particular context or activity and then observing the resulting perceptual and behavioral outcomes.

### **BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**

Effective experimentation is guided by a testable descriptive causal → hypothesis asserting the conditions under which a manipulable independent variable, commonly called an

“experimental treatment” or “intervention,” involving at least two levels, influences measurable outcomes or dependent variables (→ Operationalization; Measurement Theory). Experimentation typically incorporates *systematic procedures* maximizing, to the extent possible, the researcher’s ability to guard against or control circumstances that might provide alternative or rival explanations threatening the → validity of causal explanations. Unfortunately, when working with human research participants, an inverse relationship often emerges between the extent of control exercised in experimentation and the → generalizability of subsequent research findings. Equally important, sometimes, even when experimentation is possible, ethical considerations preclude its use (→ Research Ethics).

Experimental design is the logical system providing the foundational framework for experimentation utilizing well-developed principles of scientific inquiry. Contemporary understanding of experimental design has emerged from the incremental accumulation of new concepts and practices proposed by a range of scholars working in diverse disciplines (e.g., agriculture, education, health/medicine, psychology, and statistics) over the last hundred years (Cochran & Cox 1957; Fisher 1971; Kirk 1995; Winer 1971).

Two concepts, randomization and control, are the cornerstones of experimental design. Randomization, first popularized by McCall (1923) and Fisher (1925), refers to the assignment of research participants to treatment groups or conditions (i.e., levels of an independent variable) based on mere chance. *Random assignment* can be accomplished using any procedure (e.g., tossing a fair coin) in which each participant has a nonzero probability of being assigned to each treatment group. For instance, in an experiment with two conditions (control vs treatment), on a “coin toss” yielding heads, a research participant would be assigned to the control condition; but if tails comes up, the research participant goes into the treatment condition (→ Sampling, Random).

*Control*, in experimental design, involves holding constant or systematically varying extraneous variables (e.g., mediators, confounders, and suppressors) to minimize their effect on the focal causal relationship. Campbell and Stanley (1963; also see Shadish et al. 2002) were instrumental in articulating the critical importance of control in experimental design. In their seminal work, *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research*, they identified 12 factors jeopardizing the internal and external validity of various experimental design configurations. They outlined eight different classes of extraneous variables that, “if not controlled in the experimental design” (p. 5), might threaten the study’s internal validity and obscure otherwise meaningful findings. These factors – including history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, selection bias, and experimental mortality – are detailed elsewhere in this encyclopedia. Factors jeopardizing external validity or generalizability included reactive or interactive effects resulting from participant selection, experimental arrangements, and outcome assessment.

## TYPES OF EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

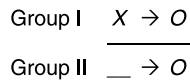
Incorporating these threats to research validity, Campbell and Stanley also advanced a comprehensive *typology of experimental design configurations*. Specifically, they divided designs for experimental into four general types: (1) pre-experimental designs, (2) true experimental designs, (3) quasi-experimental designs, and (4) ex post facto designs. To facilitate description of experimental designs a standardized notation has been developed.



When research participants are exposed to an experimental treatment (i.e., independent variable) the letter  $X$  is used. The letter  $O$  indicates an outcome or dependent variable measurement. The absence of a manipulative treatment ( $X$ ) is indicated by the symbol “ $\_$ ” and the letter  $R$  denotes random assignment to experimental treatments. Directionality, which refers to the temporal order in which a treatment ( $X$ ) and outcome ( $O$ ) occur, is symbolized as “ $\rightarrow$ ” when forward and “ $\leftarrow$ ” when backward. Treatments ( $X$ ) and outcomes ( $O$ ) presented vertically take place simultaneously.

### Pre-Experimental Designs

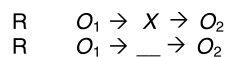
Three configurations are categorized as pre-experimental designs including the “one-shot case study” ( $X \rightarrow O$ ), the “one-group pre-test/post-test design” ( $O_1 \rightarrow X \rightarrow O_2$ ), and the “static-group comparison” (Fig. 1). Although these configurations have been frequently employed in endeavors testing causal relationships, they lack many of the basic characteristics crucial for effective experimentation (e.g., random assignment, control of validity threats, equitably treated comparison groups) and afford little or no utility for testing causal inferences. The horizontal line separating the treatment groups in Figure 1, for instance, highlights the absence of random assignment in the static-group comparison pre-experimental design.



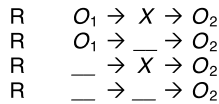
**Figure 1** Static-group comparison pre-experimental design

### True Experimental Designs

Randomization and the inclusion of controls against threats to internal validity are fundamental to the three configurations within the true experimental designs category. For instance, the *pre-test/post-test control group design* (Fig. 2), considered by many to be the “old work-horse” of traditional experimentation, controls for eight threats to internal validity if effectively implemented. Randomly assigned from the same sample to both the treatment ( $X$ ) and control ( $\_$ ) groups, research participants are first observed prior to treatment via a pre-test ( $O_1$ ). The first group then receives the experimental treatment ( $X$ ) while the second group, called the control group, engages a comparable, but unrelated, task ( $\_$ ) and both groups complete a post-test assessment. The differences between the pre-test and the post-test ( $O_2 - O_1$ ) are compared between the treatment and control group. If this comparison yields a significant difference then we assume that the experimental treatment was the primary cause. The *randomized controlled trial*, a mainstay in health communication and health-related disciplines, is a refinement of the basic pre-test/



**Figure 2** Pre-test/post-test control group design

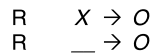


**Figure 3** Solomon four-group design

post-test control group design that incorporates several contemporary methodological guidelines intended to enhance both validity and generalizability.

The *Solomon four-group design* (Fig. 3) is an extension of the previous configuration and perhaps is the most precise and powerful experimental approach. In order to minimize any potential negative consequences resulting from testing, the design incorporates each pre-test and treatment alternative. Systematic comparisons across the six pre- and post-test assessments allow the researcher to check both the efficacy of randomization and for any interaction between the pre-test ( $O_1$ ) and the treatment ( $X$ ). Practical considerations, in particular the required additional resources (i.e., research participant, time, and money), appear to have limited the popularity of this experimental design.

Recognizing that the pre-test, while a deeply embedded practice in social/behavioral sciences, is not an essential component of a true experimental design, Campbell and Stanley detailed the *post-test-only control group design* (Fig. 4). This design is particularly effective in circumstances where a pre-test is ill-advised because it could sensitize research participants or where limited resources require an efficient research implementation. The crucial role of random assignment distinguishes this design from the “static-group comparison” pre-experimental design outlined above.



**Figure 4** Post-test-only control group design

While these simple, single independent variable or one-factor experimental designs promote conceptual clarity, their application in contemporary research activities is relatively rare. Instead, researchers often elaborate on the conceptual basis of the pre-test/post-test control group and the post-test-only control group designs to produce *factorial designs*. A factorial design involves the simultaneous analysis of two (two-factor design), three (three-factor design), or more independent variables within the same experimental design. Factorial designs, unlike the one-factor designs detailed above, permit examination of the interaction or interdependence between two or more factors or independent variables in the effects they produce on the outcome or dependent variable.

The *repeated-measures design* is another variant commonly employed in social and behavioral science research. The previously detailed experimental designs all involve a *between-group* structure in that research participants are assigned to a particular treatment group (a level of the manipulated independent variable), their outcome measures are combined as group outcomes, and then differences between group outcomes are analyzed. The between-group structure, for example, guides the analytical process outlined for the pre-test/post-test control group design above. The repeated-measures design, on

$$\begin{array}{c} O_1 \rightarrow X \rightarrow O_2 \\ \hline O_1 \rightarrow \_ \rightarrow O_2 \end{array}$$

**Figure 5** Pre-test/post-test nonequivalent control group design

the other hand, involves multiple assessments of a single outcome or set of outcomes within each research participant. In repeated-measures designs, research participants encounter and respond to every level of an experimental treatment so that the effects of such manipulations materialize as variations within each individual's pattern of outcomes rather than as differences between groups of people.

### Quasi-Experimental Designs

Research situations can arise in which the random selection and assignment of research participants is not possible. Experimentation undertaken under such conditions can utilize quasi-experimental designs. These nonrandomized designs, while providing valuable information, must be recognized as involving basic faults that can influence data interpretation. The strongest and most widely used quasi-experimental design is the *pre-test/post-test nonequivalent control group design* (Fig. 5). This design differs from the true experimental designs because the test and control group are not randomly assigned (emphasized by the horizontal line) and, consequently, are not equivalent. Deliberate comparison of the pre-test results reveals the degree of equivalency between the treatment (X) and control (\_\_\_) groups.

Other quasi-experimental designs advanced by Campbell and Stanley are all built on the notion of serialized assessment of the dependent measure both before and after the introduction of an experimental treatment ( $O_1 O_2 \rightarrow X \rightarrow O_3 O_4$ ). If substantial change follows introduction of the treatment then there is reason to suspect that the treatment caused the observed change. Referred to as "time series designs," these configurations can be expanded to incorporate multiple treatment levels (i.e., a control group in the simplest form) and other variants intended to bolster validity.

### Ex Post Facto Designs

Often characterized as "experimentation in reverse," the ex post facto design has emerged as an important investigative tool for researchers in behavioral and social sciences. Commonly referred to as a *case-control study* (Fig. 6; Gordis 2004), the general concept underlying this design is to identify individuals with an outcome or consequence of interest (case group) and, following backward directionality, compare their experiences

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Case group} \quad X \leftarrow O \\ \hline \text{Control group} \quad X \leftarrow \_ \end{array}$$

**Figure 6** Case-control study

(i.e., antecedent variables) to a similar group without the outcome of interest (control group). Research participant matching is used in the strongest form of this design to minimize potential threats to validity. The case-control study design, it must be recognized, employs observational data. Consequently, interpretation of findings requires careful consideration of several criteria, such as biological, environmental, and temporal plausibility, before causation can be projected (Hill 1965).

## EMERGING TRENDS

The simple designs for experimentation summarized here continue to provide the essential logical building blocks for much contemporary research. At the same time, however, it is important to recognize that these designs are, at least to some extent, bounded by the era in which they were articulated. We often forget that the work of most researchers was aided by slide-rules and mechanical calculators when these designs were proposed. Contemporary advances in both computer technologies and statistical software have, of course, substantially expanded our analytical prowess and, as a result, the sophistication of experimental designs.

Factorial designs involving several independent variables, mixed-measures models combining factorial and repeated-measures designs, and multivariate designs that simultaneously include multiple dependent measures – all of which were emerging trends just three decades ago – are now commonplace (Smith et al. 2002). And new developments, such as multilevel modeling (Luke 2004), which promotes experimentation in diverse cultural, social, and behavioral contexts, are rapidly evolving. Nevertheless, the basic tenets of experimental design outlined here remain as the benchmarks for scientific inquiry, attempting to satisfy our distinctively human desire to understand causality and causal relationship (→ Statistics, Explanatory).

SEE ALSO: ► Generalizability ► Hypothesis ► Measurement Theory ► Operationalization ► Research Ethics ► Sampling, Random ► Statistics, Explanatory ► Validity

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# Exposure to Communication Content

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“Exposure to communication content” describes one of the most recent areas of specialization within the communication discipline. It is located at the intersection of → media effects research and audience research, two academic traditions that have remained relatively separate. Over the past half a century, the well-established tradition of media effects research has revealed a rather complex and increasingly differentiated view of the individual and social processes that underlie and accompany notable changes in people’s thinking, feeling, and behavior, caused by exposure to media content. The more recent work in this area has considered not only psychological mechanisms that manifest themselves in people’s minds or behaviors some time *after* they have been exposed to communication content, but has also studied what happens *while* those individuals or groups are responding to media content or immediately after doing so. Book titles like *Selective exposure to communication* (Zillmann & Bryant 1985) or *Responding to the screen* (Bryant & Zillmann 1991) seem to indicate this trend and demonstrate that media effects research has become more involved with psychological *processes* rather than only with the end result. Conceptual and theoretical differentiations have also evolved, e.g., various attempts to distinguish between short- and long-term effects, or between their cognitive, affective, and behavioral manifestations (→ Affects and Media Exposure; Media Effects Duration). But, despite multiple conceptual differentiations in this area of research, which also include distinctions between observations and explanations of effects at psychological (micro) versus sociological (macro) levels of analysis, media effects research maintains its focus on the consequences of exposure to media rather than on exposure itself. Meanwhile, the work focusing on “exposure” itself and on the individual and social processes that accompany exposure has outgrown the more traditional lines of research on media effects by simultaneously expanding its scope and differentiating its levels of analysis.

## DEVELOPMENT AND MAPPING OF THE RESEARCH FIELD

Audience research, the second tradition in this new study of “exposure to communication content,” originated in scientific disciplines other than communication, specifically psychology, but also in the humanities (→ Audience). In an attempt to not only describe

and explain the final effects of communication but also to include the processes involved during and even before exposure, scholars have defined new concepts, models, and even theories from these different disciplines and academic backgrounds to better understand how all of these processes eventually may contribute to media effects. Scholars in psychology primarily have formed a more differentiated understanding of how and why different (groups of) individuals approach specific media contents, whereas those with a humanistic background primarily have examined the media content (the “text”; → Text and Intertextuality) itself and its (often social, socio-economic) context and potential to attract a “reader” (or in more general terms, a “user”). In doing so, humanist scholars complicated what social scientists have often oversimplified. Thus, the overall picture of what is believed to happen during exposure to media content has become rather complex.

Due to this complexity, many humanistic communication scholars have developed their own approach: the so-called “critical” or → “cultural studies” approach, in which the criteria for scientific work are more similar to those in the humanities (→ Critical Theory). At the same time, the more social scientifically oriented scholars have tried to incorporate theories from the other disciplines to explain the phenomena of interest according to their psychological and social scientific point of view. What scholars have called “audience research” sometimes has, at other times, been labeled “reception research” or even “media psychology.” This psychological and social scientific manifestation of audience research appears remarkably strong in communication departments in Europe (e.g., the success of establishing the term “media psychology” in Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland) compared to the “critical approach” still dominantly located in the humanities. In the US, however, both traditions focusing on “exposure” often coexist in one school or department (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

Jensen and Rosengren (1990) called for an *integration of these various traditions*, which are all “in search of the audience.” But although some have supported this proposition and have tried to substantiate it (e.g., Vorderer & Groeben 1992), few have attempted this conceptual advancement. Nevertheless, in this new research area, “exposure to communication content,” we find research that follows Jensen and Rosengren’s initial request, probably without even being aware of it. This new perspective is primarily, but not exclusively, “psychological” in its theorizing; it focuses on micro-level analyses but also describes macro-structures in explaining what happens during exposure. It certainly looks at new technology as much as it looks at more “traditional” media, but most importantly, it studies what happens before people become exposed to media content, what happens while they are exposed, and finally what happens right after exposure, i.e., as immediate consequence of it, thereby reaching into the realm of media effects research.

To organize the more than 60 different entries on “exposure to communication content” for this international encyclopedia, one can envisage them in a two-dimensional field (Fig. 1). The horizontal line indicates whether the respective entry focuses on processes that primarily occur *before*, *during*, or *after exposure*, whereas the vertical line distinguishes between (1) the *theoretical constructs/processes* studied (again, from more complex objects/processes at the top to more specific ones at the bottom within that category); (2) the *theories and models* that have been developed to describe and explain these objects and constructs; (3) the *areas of content* that have been investigated; and

	Before exposure	During exposure	After exposure
Constructs/processes			
Theories/models			
Media/communication content			
User/audience			

**Figure 1** Two-dimensional categorization of the “exposure to communication content” entries

(4) the major constructs that have been specified with respect to the media *user/audience*. The following explication of the various elements (“entries”) within this area follows the structure given in Figure 1, from the left (“Before exposure”) to the right (“After exposure”) and within the columns from the top (“Constructs/processes”) to the bottom (“User/audience”).

## CONSTRUCTS AND PROCESSES

### Pre-Exposure

Most of the theoretical constructs that researchers have developed to describe the specific processes that precede and impact exposure to communication content have examined topics at the psychological level of analysis. Although → media use by social variable has also been included and social variables like → ethnicity and exposure to communication have been considered as well, the bulk of theoretical developments concern *individual processes* that lead to exposure. On a rather abstract level, attempts to explain individuals’ exposure to media content by referring to their → personality and exposure to communication or to their → intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and volition exist. But so do claims that attribute such exposure to very specific individual motives and interests, such as → enjoyment/entertainment seeking, → escapism, → information seeking, → sensation seeking, or → mood management.

The main differences between these concepts lie in their theoretical complexity, their empirical usability, and also in their specificity. For example, the concept of *escapism* has a long history not only within the discipline of communication but also in related areas, such as the empirical study of literature, and it seems to have some prominence in lay persons’ explanations of their own media-related behavior as well. But it is not based on any well-defined theoretical assumptions, nor does the concept have any remarkable empirical support.

At the same time, constructs like *mood management* seem to reduce the complexity of a media user’s decision process to a single dimension (i.e., to decide on such a media

product, which promises to enhance somebody's mood), but its empirical support is overwhelming. The more inclusive concept "behind" mood management, → selective exposure, claims that the selection of specific media content follows some psychological regularity, mood management being the most important one. To date, the selective exposure research seems to be the most differentiated, best specified, and most empirically supported in the entire field of exposure to communication content, and it developed from a truly interdisciplinary perspective (with communication and psychology as the host disciplines).

The research on → automaticity is dominantly psychological in nature, and remarkably successful, particularly in social psychology, which has not yet been leveraged fully by scholars in communication. In contrast to these more psychological constructs, → suspension of disbelief is one that clearly stems from the humanities and has only been incorporated, discussed, and questioned by communication scholars very recently (Zillmann 2006). Finally, within this intersection of constructs/products studied as antecedents to exposure, → channel/program loyalty is a very applied concept that comes from neither a social scientific nor a humanistic background but from the applied research area, where knowing (i.e., being able to predict) what makes the audience stick to a program or channel is crucial (→ Applied Communication Research).

### During Exposure

Examining what has been thought to occur *during* exposure, again, ethnicity and media use by social variables are considered to affect how the audience deals with content. In addition to this, an international perspective on comparison of media use has also been applied, so that findings about exposure in one country can be related to those in other countries (→ Media Use, International Comparison of). We find, in fact, the highest level of differentiation and specification among the psychological processes studied here. Researchers in this area have been studying → habituation as a form of media use that does not require the audience's full attention when selecting or using a program. They have been looking at what is different when these users engage in → co-viewing as opposed to an individual exposure situation. More specifically, they have been studying how individuals relate cognitively and – even more importantly – affectively to characters on the screen by engaging in so-called → parasocial interactions and relationships with them, or by coming to terms with → interactivity in reception.

Because much of the work in this context relates to new and rapidly evolving media and technology, it is no surprise that these various interactions with media content have been described and explained differently, not only over time but also depending on the specific theoretical background of the respective researchers. Within communication, → involvement with media content has long been used to specify such a relation, whereas some researchers have incorporated a construct used more often outside of the social sciences, i.e., → identification. Due to many new technologies emerging recently and a variety of possible applications of these new media, researchers have imported and applied additional constructs from technical disciplines, which is why → presence is now often considered the best way to describe this relation in the context of new media.

This also holds true for studying → computer–user interaction, and includes more cognitive processes such as → fantasy/imagination, → playing, or → simulation, but to



some extent also physiological processes like → excitation and arousal. Some of these constructs are defined on the basis of what we know from psychology and from cognitive science about → perception and, even more specifically, about → selective perception and selective retention. Other entries refer to the affective quality of such experiences; the investigation of affects and media exposure has become very relevant to the study of exposure. More specifically, researchers have scrutinized and explicated → suspense because it seems crucial in exposure to entertainment products. On a more behavioral level, → navigation through the wide array of what is offered and available today, → zapping and switching between different channels or products, and → multitasking, reflecting the fact that some media products are used simultaneously, have moved to center stage.

### **After Exposure**

Of course, we regard most of these processes as lasting throughout exposure, and hence can still identify and often measure them even after exposure. In fact, constructs like “habituation” describe the course or the process of exposure, i.e., the time period from before the actual exposure to some communication content through the moment that exposure is terminated. We consider other constructs, e.g., personality and exposure to communication, to impact each step in the process differentially, and to selectivity play out differently in terms of perception.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that compared to the many processes and constructs studied during and before exposure, only a few were considered to “belong” to this sub-category, probably because they have most often been linked to the area of media effects. In fact, only two will be outlined within this area of exposure, because they are so closely related to what happens while being exposed to communication content. One is → entertainment education, which we can think of as a media effect but can only understand if we take into account the development of the effect during exposure. The other is → addiction and exposure, which does not limit itself to any step in the process, from before to after exposure, but refers to an effect of exposure that leads someone to constantly reinitiate the process again and again and without much awareness of its coercive nature.

### **THEORIES AND MODELS**

Most attempts to describe and explain the aforementioned processes have been quite similar. The majority of available theories and approaches have tried to analyze exposure by referring to what precedes it, i.e., by linking exposure to the reasons media users may have for acting in a particular way. Those theories focus on either cognitive or affective processes. Most prominent among those examining cognitive processes are → *consistency theories*. Such theories, which developed out of social psychology, use the social situation in which individuals live, interact, and think to derive specific hypotheses about the factors that contribute to or detract from cognitive coherence.

Among those theories, → cognitive dissonance theory has been very specific and extremely successful. According to the theory, exposure to communication content is a function of whether a specific action, e.g., the selection of a newspaper article, agrees (is consistent) with a reader’s thinking (here: the political opinion). Thus, media users

expose themselves to communication content that will not produce cognitive dissonance. Attempts to explain exposure by → social comparison theory are somewhat similar. From this perspective, the presence or cognitive representation of others also impacts a media user's decision in a specific act of exposure. In → social identity theory as well, others and our group membership with others determine our behaviors regarding exposure to communication content. Finally, various → expectancy value models focus on cognitive factors but differ from consistency theories. According to expectancy value theories, people (hence: media users) act (here: in their decisions for exposure) in a manner consistent with their values and beliefs.

Two families of theories that focus on the *affective dimensions of exposure* are → affective disposition theories and → empathy theory. The latter describes how media users feel about and toward protagonists in the media. However, affective disposition theories suggest that media users are primarily interested in witnessing protagonists succeed and antagonists fail, having developed affective dispositions toward them – which explains exposure to entertainment content. More generally, the → uses and gratifications perspective asserts that media users choose content that promises to gratify their interests and needs. Thereby, it provides a theoretical framework for some theories that examine people's interest in using the media, as well as the historical starting point for comparable research. Within communication, it certainly has been the most important paradigm that first explored media users' interests and preferences, when much of the research was still focusing on the media's potential and actual effects.

Two more recent theoretical developments also need to be considered: the recently developed → media equation theory examines new technologies and acknowledges that people deal with and understand new technology differently compared to more traditional media. Therefore, new media require new theoretical approaches. In contrast, → evolutionary theory is all but new, but has only very recently been applied to people's exposure to media content, i.e., to the reasons users might want to be exposed to a specific content. It does not seek its explanation in the situation nor in the personality of the media user, but rather in the audience's evolutionary history, which – according to this reasoning – makes individuals interested in specific types of content.

Whereas all of the aforementioned theories focus more or less explicitly on processes preceding the act of exposure, → transactional models focus on *what happens during exposure* instead. They indicate most obviously how far the underlying theories of communication have moved away from traditional behaviorist approaches, which assume a rather passive media user. The same applies to → transportation theory, which contemplates the media user moving away from the “here and now” and toward the place and time depicted by narrative. Since new media seem particularly able to “move” users to other places cognitively and emotionally, it is not surprising that several other and quite related constructs describe this phenomenon (e.g., “presence”). But only transportation theory seems to have adequately systematized some key constructs and propositions to justify calling it a theory.

Looking at the *immediate consequences of exposure* to communication content, two theories come to mind. Most importantly, → social cognitive theory is arguably the most influential attempt to describe and explain why exposure to a specific content may lead to certain consequences. The theory has also triggered and directed a huge array of empirical

studies in this domain. In contrast, the → stages of change model is a rather recent and more specific model that nevertheless has impacted theorizing and research, particularly in health-related domains.

### **MEDIA/COMMUNICATION CONTENT**

Another way of looking at what the discipline has achieved in terms of understanding and explaining exposure to communication content is to distinguish between various types of media and communication content. Note that some of the theoretical and empirical work done in this area is quite diverse, depending on which medium or what kind of content it considers. In that respect, research on → exposure to news or → exposure to print media, for example, follows a theoretical tradition that is well embedded in the discipline of communication.

In contrast, more recent lines of research, such as those that study → exposure to the Internet, are more interdisciplinary in nature. This has not only to do with the fact that different media and different content provide different opportunities for users but also with the fact that users and audiences approach various media and content forms with different expectations. Although → exposure to television and → exposure to radio are most often daily activities and experiences for many users around the globe, what TV and radio have to offer is often hard to compare and so are the ways in which people use them. Hence, the users' expectations, experiences, and gratifications with respect to these media are rather diverse and so is their scientific description and explanation by communication.

### **USER/AUDIENCES**

The final perspective that is taken here to systematize the various contributions to the field of exposure to communication content is one that distinguishes between the different agents who approach such content. Traditionally, the most important stakeholder for the field of communication has been the → *public*, and some scholars still argue that it is this public that constitutes the discipline's core. Much of the work in this domain has been advanced by theoretical conceptualization from sociology and political science.

Yet, psychological theories have had a greater impact on research about the audience (though clearly this topic has also been studied from a more applied and therefore less theoretical point of view). In fact, empirical research on the audience has not only grown in size but also diversified itself, so that today we can also identify more specific perspectives, like the one that focuses on the → news audience.

While being studied, the *audience itself has changed*, and the constitution of the audience is highly relevant to those who try to provide the best, i.e., the most profitable, content. Thus, → audience segmentation has attracted a lot of interest within the discipline as well.

Finally, and again this is due to the most recent developments in new media and technologies, we must consider not only the user or the audience, but also those *entities created by the user*, i.e., → avatars and agents. They certainly represent content or forms of content, but the media no longer provide them (as, e.g., a TV show) but (at least in their specific appearance and constitution) the users themselves do. Some may argue that

interacting with avatars and agents does not constitute exposure to media content because “exposure” implies user passivity (“reception” in some European countries), meaning that users of new technologies interact with but no longer are exposed to communication content. But this is a dispute that touches upon the self-understanding of the discipline and therefore will not be pursued here.

## OUTLOOK

### New Theoretical Developments

This leaves us with a comparatively new but already rather voluminous, almost exuberantly *expanding field of research*. Where will this development lead, and what may we expect? In a situation like this, scholars often suggest or even ask for the integration of loose ends, i.e., a synergistic approach to integrate various perspectives, if not paradigms. However, this expectation is probably unrealistic, at least for the next five to ten years. One can be skeptical because the various advancements we have seen lately in this area are moving in opposite directions. An example of this is the diverging yet simultaneous development of *two movements* within the area: the application of cognitive science or social cognition models to the study of exposure to communication content and the exertion of evolutionary theory in communication. Both have been successful within the field, yet they work on opposite ends.

As some psychologists and psychologically oriented communication scholars became more involved with various *cognitive processes* underlying or antecedent acts of media exposure and effects, they started to differentiate them more and more specifically and precisely, sometimes even using a language that modeled these processes after functions and algorithms of a computer. By doing so, they have been able to explain various phenomena that were widely accepted but not sufficiently understood in communication. One example of this is the process of “cultivation” through exposure to media messages, which has been prominently investigated by → Gerbner and his collaborators (Gerbner et al. 1994) but never really well explained. The social cognition approach, mainly coming from social psychology, helped explain cultivation by addressing the question of *why* a specific content may demonstrate the cultivation effects in the minds of the viewers that were predicted in the first place (Shrum 2007; → Cultivation Effects; Cultivation Theory). The important point here is that such an explanation was possible by referring to certain cognitive constructs and processes that were thought to be responsible for the overall effect. In this respect, the scientific inquiry went from using rather broad constructs (such as “cultivation”) to considering, including, and referring to much more specific and detailed micro-constructs (like “accessibility of cognitions”).

At the same time, attempts to explain, e.g., the motivation of media users to expose themselves to content went in the opposite direction. Whereas interest in such forms of content has primarily been explained by psychological constructs (e.g., moods) on a micro-level (e.g., affective disposition theories), most recently this problem has also been approached by *evolutionary theory* (Ohler & Nieding 2006) or by those concepts that have tried to combine evolutionary and psychological approaches (Vorderer et al. 2006b). Here, the idea is to explain a current interest someone has in media content and various

motivations to expose themselves to this content by taking into account the evolutionary history, not of the individual, of course, but of the species (→ Communibiology). This development certainly indicates a tendency to produce rather abstract macro-phenomena, i.e., it utilizes such macro-phenomena as “explanans” in order to explain the “explanandum” and thereby proceeds in a direction opposite to the one mentioned before. It can be suggested that the area of exposure to communication content is developing rapidly, and it is doing so by expanding in different directions. A consequence of this observation may very well be that increased theoretical coherence and integration in the area is a rather long way off.

### Changing Object of Investigation

A more immediate question for the area of exposure to communication content might therefore rather have to do with another fact, i.e., that the very object under investigation is about to change dramatically. Researchers used to study exposure to a given content, which newspapers, television, or any other media provided. In addition, this content was both stable for the exposure’s duration and independent of what the user preferred and anticipated. Although research established that users do not simply “receive” messages – they select, process, and elaborate on them in a way that is specific to the person and the situation in which exposure takes place (thereby going beyond the initial information offered) – the message itself always remained the same.

In a media environment that includes online communication, playing video games, and human–computer interaction, however, this has become different. If somebody plays a → video game, e.g., the narrative to which he or she is exposed to changes according to the player’s actions. In more general terms: the content changes. Strictly speaking, those users are no longer exposed to a given content. Rather, *users create, modify, and manipulate content* – one of the main reasons why they like to play such games so much (Vorderer et al. 2006a). Thus, it is likely that the way the user creates this content determines its impact on the user as well. Naturally, this change of perspective has several consequences for the study of exposure.

Again, an example might help to illustrate this point: affective disposition theories assert that a central requirement for a media user to experience entertainment is a strong (either positive or negative) affective disposition toward the narrative’s protagonists and/or antagonists. With interactive media, however, these protagonists are often not only chosen but also manipulated by media users (cf., avatars and agents). We do not yet know what this may mean for the affective disposition. Not only is it unclear what kind of protagonists players will create (e.g., a representation of themselves, a character opposite to themselves, somebody unrelated to themselves, etc.), but most importantly, we do not know how such an affective disposition is impacted by the fact that someone is responsible for the target of this disposition. After all, it is “his or her” character that acts in a specific way and toward whom the user feels an affective disposition.

In other words, many of the problems that scholars have investigated in the context of this rather new research area will appear (or have appeared already) in a new light. Most of the questions will have to be addressed again and answered in a new way. It is not a given that the communication discipline will be able to answer all related questions by

means of its established theoretical and methodological techniques (→ Research Methods). But if we consider the great number of challenges this relatively new area of research on exposure to communication content has identified and successfully dealt with already in a comparatively short time, one can only be optimistic for the problems that lie ahead.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Addiction and Exposure ▶ Affective Disposition Theories ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Automaticity ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Channel/Program Loyalty ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Communibiology ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Computer-User Interaction ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Co-Viewing ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Escapism ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ Evolutionary Theory ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Fantasy/Imagination ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Habituation ▶ Identification ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Equation Theory ▶ Media Use, International Comparison of ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Mood Management ▶ Multitasking ▶ Navigation ▶ News Audience ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Perception ▶ Personality and Exposure to Communication ▶ Playing ▶ Presence ▶ Public ▶ Research Methods ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Simulation ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Stages of Change Model ▶ Suspense ▶ Suspension of Disbelief ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Transactional Models ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Video Games ▶ Zapping and Switching

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## Exposure to Film

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One of the most challenging tasks in research on media exposure is quantifying the amount of film viewing. Currently, people watch films via a variety of media, such as → television, VCR (→ Video), DVD player, computer and → Internet, and → cinema. For some of these media, it is difficult, if not impossible, to track the number of viewings. Especially when it comes to international comparisons, reliable numbers are often rare due to heterogeneous measurement systems. Nevertheless, we can obtain some valuable information from nonacademic sources about disparities in film exposure between different countries.

### THE AUDIENCE FOR FILM IN INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

According to these data, even people from western industrialized countries vary in their amount of contact with films, as they differ in access to *audiovisual equipment* (Table 1) as well as in frequency of use of this equipment. Between 30 and 40 percent of TV viewing is dedicated to films, series, and other fictional narratives (→ Exposure to Television).

Table 1 Audiovisual equipment in selected countries

Country	TV households (%)	VCR (in % of TV households)	DVD (in % of TV households)
USA	98.2	88.7	76.2
Japan	99.4	82.6	32.5
Germany	95.8	68.2	43.1
France	95.4	72.0	68.6
UK	97.6	77.6	78.6
Russia	99.5	58.1	22.2
Spain	99.5	60.5	63.1
Italy	98.9	58.8	44.0
Iceland	98.7	94.0	84.8
Romania	94.8	5.4	3.1

Source: IP Network (2006)

Table 2 Admissions to cinemas in selected countries (in millions)

Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Population (millions)	Average admission per capita
USA	1421	1487	1639	1574	1536	1403	1449	298	4.80
Japan	135	163	161	162	170	161	164	128	1.29
Germany	153	178	164	149	157	127	137	82	1.66
France	166	188	184	174	195	175	189	62	3.07
UK	143	156	176	167	171	165	157	60	2.60
Russia	30	36	41	68	77	83	90	143	0.63
Spain	135	147	141	138	144	128	122	45	2.72
Italy	104	113	116	111	116	106	107	59	1.83
Iceland	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.4	–	0.3	4.80
China	115	120	110	117	138	157	–	1314	0.14

Source: European Audiovisual Observatory (2007)

Thus, the average time of exposure to film via TV in western industrialized countries can be estimated at between 60 and 100 minutes per day.

Particularly with regard to *cinema access and cinema visits*, there is an enormous discrepancy between western industrialized countries (including Japan) and, for example, Russia or China. Every year, US citizens go to the movies almost as often as the rest of the world combined. On average, US citizens go to the movie theater 4.8 times per year, whereas Russians (0.63) and, even more notably, Chinese (0.14) go less than once a year (Table 2).

## PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTIONS TO THE EXPOSURE TO FILM

### Overview

Films and movies belong to those prototypical media programs that can elicit emotional effects during exposure (→ Affects and Media Exposure), which is explicitly reflected in the categorizing of many → film genres, such as romance, erotica, thriller, horror, tear-jerker, tragedy, drama, and comedy. Other sub-genres, like adventure, war film, science fiction, fantasy, pornography, mystery, and action film, evoke strong emotions during reception, too, because the stories generally are conceptualized with respect to the assumed psychological affect structures of the viewers (Bordwell 1985).

Although music is only an accessory to films, it can effectively influence the meaning of single frames, scenes, and the whole narration (Cohen 2001). Not only are specific sequences of the film interpreted differently depending on the music in the background, but the subsequent plot of a film can also be anticipated differently. Thus, music serves the film and fulfills dramatic, epic, structural, and persuasive functions.

The psychological processes that occur during film exposure encompass a wide range of different categories (Tan 1996; Plantinga & Smith 1999). Sympathy and empathy, → excitation and arousal, suspense, fear, cognitive, and affective involvement, as well as joy and entertainment are key elements of most film genres (→ Empathy Theory;



Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking; Involvement with Media Content). Tan (1995) proposed that interest is the central reception category in film viewing: “interest is the urge to watch and actively anticipate further developments in the expectation of a reward. The film’s control of the viewers’ perceptions of events imposes on them special attitudes towards those events and characters. The events themselves together with the attitudes coloring them determine the viewers’ emotions” (Tan 1995, 7). Additionally, Tan (1996) distinguishes → emotions that arise from concerns related to the film as *artifact* (A emotions) from those emotions rooted in the *fictional* world and the concerns addressed by that world (F emotions). Moreover, some communication scholars discuss whether the viewers are only witnesses of the events in the film or whether they can partly or completely identify with the heroes of the film (→ Identification). The extent to which one’s own identity is given up during film exposure has a significant influence on the spectrum of cognitions and affects being experienced (→ Emotions, Media Effects on).

### Suspense

One of the most central categories in film exposure (very often the reason/motive for film consumption) is → suspense. Suspense has primarily been investigated in the context of semiotics-oriented film studies, → cultural studies, and → popular culture research. Across all disciplines, one can distinguish between psychological and text-oriented approaches (Vorderer et al. 1996; Plantinga & Smith 1999). While psychological approaches (e.g., → Affective Disposition Theories) concentrate on the interplay of various cognitive and affective constructs within an individual, the text-oriented approaches (e.g., structural affect theory; Brewer 1996) have their starting point in the narrative structure of texts and stories (→ Storytelling and Narration). Integrative works on film exposure try to combine both, as it has become apparent that the relation between the film text and psychological effects is more complex than assumed so far (Tan 1996; Plantinga & Smith 1999).

All of these approaches primarily explain the formation of suspense, but do not really explain why viewers consciously expose themselves to suspenseful and even frightening films that involve strong negative arousal and inner conflicts. Based on the background of excitation transfer theory, it is plausible that the relief and euphoria of a happy ending are more positive the more suspenseful and “stressful” the film was (→ Emotional Arousal Theory). But how can the fascination with suspenseful and frightening plots be explained when they are not resolved by a happy ending (Weaver & Tamborini 1996)? For an explanation of this phenomenon, communication scholars have developed and adapted a number of reasonable approaches, such as → sensation seeking, → playing, meta-emotions, catharsis theory, or emotion regulation.

### Fear

Especially for children, suspenseful and frightening films could have long-term effects (Weaver & Tamborini 1996; Cantor 2002; → Media Effects Duration). Researchers found that long-lasting states of anxiety after film exposure are not rare even among juveniles (→ Fear Induction through Media Content; Fear Induction through Media Content in

Children). And even college students report being nervous after viewing scary films, experiencing sleep trouble, avoiding exposure to other scary films, and being afraid to go into certain rooms of their own house (Cantor 2002). “The extent to which adults experience these lingering fears after media exposure suggests that something other than the willing suspension of disbelief occurs when audiences view horror films” (Sparks & Sparks 2000, 85; → Suspension of Disbelief).

With this background, it is remarkable that most parents are not aware of these effects on their children and underestimate how much time their children spend watching frightening films. However, children gradually develop a set of regulation strategies to deal with such films. Children at the age of 7 years or younger use *behavioral strategies* in almost every situation (87.5 percent) when they are confronted with scary media content, whereas children between 8 and 12 years of age choose such strategies in 66.7 percent of such cases, and children at the age of 13 and older choose behavioral strategies in only 42.3 percent of all scary media situations (Cantor 2002). As they grow older, children learn that cognitive strategies are often more effective in regulating negative affect in a sensitive and constructive way (→ Cognition; Mood Management).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affective Disposition Theories ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Cinema ▶ Cognition ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ▶ Film Genres ▶ Identification ▶ Internet ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Mood Management ▶ Playing ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Suspense ▶ Suspension of Disbelief ▶ Television ▶ Video

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## Exposure to the Internet

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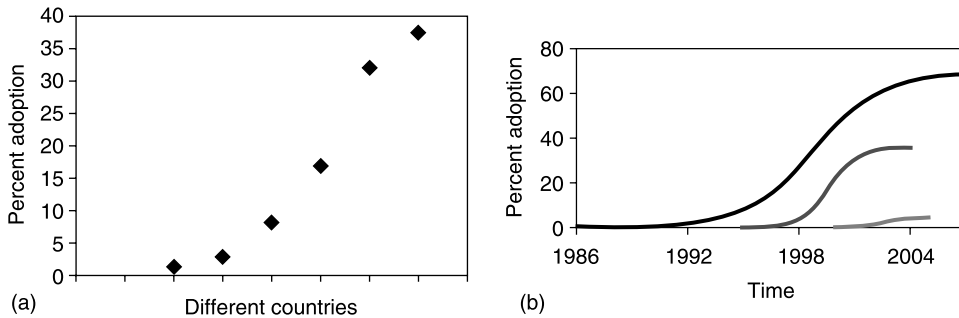
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How has the spread of the → Internet been studied and explained? Numerous studies have established that the spread of Internet access follows an S-shaped curve. What is not well understood is the factors responsible for different levels of Internet access among different countries (→ Digital Divide; Media Use, International Comparison of). Many theories of the diffusion of innovations, such as the Bass model, are oriented toward individual factors, such as perceived need (Bass 1969; → Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Media Use by Social Variable). The inadequacy of this theoretical stance becomes readily apparent when we consider that cultures exhibiting low levels of gender empowerment deny Internet access to half of their populations. Thus, adoption of the Internet is affected by factors beyond simple exposure to the technology. What are the theoretical and methodological problems with the current approach to cross-country studies of the Internet diffusion process?

### CROSS-COUNTRY RESEARCH DESIGN ISSUES

A common misconception, termed the *pro-innovation bias*, occurs when researchers assume that innovations, such as the Internet, will eventually be adopted by all members of a social system (Rogers & Shoemaker 1971). Related aspects of a pro-innovation bias concern attitudes that rapid diffusion is superior to slower diffusion and that innovations are not typically rejected. In reality, the degree to which innovations diffuse through a population is a complex function of many different factors, some of which act to impede the diffusion process. Part of the reason for the prevalence of the pro-innovation bias occurs because much of the diffusion literature exhibits a US and western European research focus. Data collection is expensive, and consequently data availability is higher in richer countries, which also happen to exhibit higher levels of adoption of new technology.

Pro-innovation biases are inadvertently created when researchers plot percent adoption of an innovation at a single time point, across multiple countries. The resultant curve is indeed often S-shaped (see, for example, Figure 1[a]), but it carries with it the implicit assumption that all of the plotted countries will follow a universal diffusion trajectory, and that, in time, countries at the lower left of the curve will eventually “catch up” with the countries on the top right of the curve.



**Figure 1** (a) Six different countries' percentage Internet access adoption, 1999 (b) Three different countries' percentage Internet access: S-shaped diffusion curves

Figure 1(a) plots percent Internet access adoption for six countries for the year 1999; Figure 1(b) plots the full Internet access diffusion curves for three countries from 1986 through 2006. Clearly, these three countries are following very different Internet diffusion trajectories, a finding that is not apparent in Figure 1(a).

Another cross-country research design issue concerns the *homogeneity assumption* (Fforde 2005). Many studies use country summary data in multiple  $\rightarrow$  regression analyses. One of the primary underlying assumptions of multiple regression analyses is that the underlying population is homogeneous with respect to the pattern of associations (Cohen & Cohen 1983;  $\rightarrow$  Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory). In reference to Figure 1(b), are the factors responsible for Internet adoption the same for those three countries? The development of multiple regression models across non-homogeneous countries leads to misconceptions with respect to causal outcomes and applies a form of epistemological and ontological universalism that assumes people can be understood the same way, and are everywhere the same (Fforde 2005).

Cross-country *sample selection issues* abound in the literature. There are numerous examples of studies using "samples of convenience," consisting of a relatively small number of countries. The problem here is that the results from these studies only generalize to that particular mix of countries. While these studies state generalization limitations in their discussion sections, the knowledge value of so many publications with limited generalization potential is questionable ( $\rightarrow$  Sampling, Random).

*Country grouping effects* are another area of concern. Clearly, different people find it convenient to divide the world in different ways. Grouping countries on the basis of their being on the same continent, a common practice, ignores the fact that there is a considerable degree of between-country variability within these global groupings.

## FAILURE OF THEORY

The Bass model (1969), developed in the marketing domain, provides an efficient mathematical description of the S-shaped diffusion pattern over time ( $\rightarrow$  Longitudinal Studies; Time-Series Analysis). The Bass model resembles epidemic models that describe the spread of a disease in a population through contact with infected individuals (Bailey

1957). In the Bass model, the concept of disease contagion has been replaced by the concept of a social communicative “contagion,” which is postulated to be chiefly responsible for the resultant S-shaped form of the diffusion process. *Social contagion* is defined as a spread of behavior from one individual to another, where one person serves as the stimulus for the imitative actions of another. The definition of the Bass model coefficients reflects the model’s connection with a social contagion explanation. The  $m$  parameter describes the market potential (the projected asymptotic level). The  $p$  parameter is interpreted as the coefficient of innovation because it presumably reflects the spontaneous individual rate of adoption in the population. The  $q$  parameter is interpreted as the coefficient of imitation because it presumably reflects the effects of prior cumulative adopters on subsequent adoption (Rogers 1995).

Defining a model’s fit parameters in terms of the influence of mass media and interpersonal communications from prior adopters presumes that communication processes in conjunction with individual decisions are chiefly responsible for the diffusion of innovations (→ Interpersonal Communication; Two-Step Flow of Communication). But defining a model’s fit parameters in terms of speculative causal mechanisms is problematic. This raises the generalization issue known as construct validity. In this situation, do the Bass model’s  $p$  and  $q$  coefficients actually reflect the influence of mass media or interpersonal communication?

### **NON-INDIVIDUAL FACTORS RELATED TO INTERNET DIFFUSION**

Several researchers have suggested that the primary reason for cross-national inequalities in Internet access resides in *differential economic development* (Hargittai 1999; Rodriguez & Wilson 2000; Norris 2001; Chen & Wellman 2003). Findings that implicate public investment in human capital and infrastructure are important because they associate aspects of economic influence beyond the concept of GDP per capita with a country’s degree of Internet access. Increases in life expectancy and literacy require long-term investments in large-scale public services and facilities, such as public health, power, water, public transportation, telecommunications, roads, and schools. Aspects of wealth such as education and infrastructure take a considerable amount of time to develop and consequently policies designed to enhance Internet access through the insertion of short-term economic aid are questionable.

Norris (2001) considers individuals who prescribe to an economic interventionist policy as “cyber optimists.” In conjunction with short-term economic aid, a cyber optimist would expect Internet access to eventually defuse throughout a country’s population. This diffusion pattern (the “normalization” pattern) might be expected to occur in wealthy countries with cultures that value and reward innovative behavior. Alternatively, cyber pessimists would expect that, irrespective of economic aid, digital technology will more likely amplify existing inequalities of power, wealth, and education, creating deeper divisions between the advantaged and disadvantaged (→ Technology and Communication). This “stratification” pattern of Internet diffusion suggests that individuals who do adopt mostly consist of a country’s advantaged. Basically, Internet diffusion patterns that resemble the stratification pattern suggest that the individual’s ability to adopt is substantially moderated by country-specific cultural and economic considerations rather

than the fulfillment of individual needs. Both adoption patterns yield S-shaped curves that can be fitted by mathematical formulations such as the Bass model. However, results similar to the stratification pattern are difficult to explain in terms of social contagion theory.

Given the normalization and stratification diffusion patterns, it is natural to question if the factors responsible for the diffusion of Internet access are amenable to “quick fix” treatments, such as the insertion of technology or short-term economic aid, or whether the degree of Internet access is shaped by more *deep-seated forces, such as culture* (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Norris reports that affluent Middle Eastern countries have relatively low Internet access levels, a finding that raises concerns with the notion that, in all situations, economic factors are solely responsible for the degree of Internet access. Several Middle Eastern countries are wealthy and have been wealthy for some time, but aspects of their culture act to inhibit Internet access for half of their population, i.e., females (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). This is decidedly not a small effect and points to the danger of making generalizations when predictive factors are causally entangled. In that circumstance, a single correlation may yield a high degree of association, but the ability to predict something is not necessarily synonymous with understanding how something works.

A second point of consideration here is that explanations based on social contagion theory should work best in countries that support a normalization pattern of Internet adoption (i.e., the US and western European countries). In these countries, we would expect the adoption decision to be largely under an individual’s control. However, social contagion models should fail when attempting to predict Internet diffusion in countries that follow the stratification pattern of diffusion. When examined from this perspective, social contagion explanations for the diffusion of innovations appear to be an artifact of early diffusion research that predominantly focused on US and western European countries. These are the countries where the individual-oriented normalization diffusion pattern is found. These are the countries where the inhibiting effects of fear, diminished gender empowerment, and low levels of long-term economic development are minimized.

Clearly, social contagion theory provides an incomplete picture of the innovation diffusion process, and this theoretical deficiency naturally extends to explanations of that process based on definitions of the ubiquitous Bass model’s  $p$  and  $q$  coefficients. The implication is that models that seek to enhance understanding of the cross-country diffusion process need to utilize a mixed-level hierarchical modeling approach, where one level defines the moderating influence of country-specific factors and another level deals with individual decision factors.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Use, International Comparison of ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Time-Series Analysis ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Exposure to News**

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In democratic societies “being informed” is regarded as part of the citizen’s duty in order to form a political opinion and to participate in political life. The media, on the one hand, play a major role in the transmission of information about current events, and they are thought to be very influential. To fulfill its democratic responsibilities, the audience, on the other hand, is expected to consume news with a high level of attention in order to get detailed information, to learn as much as possible. Corresponding to these expectations, television is the principal source of information about current events for most people, and getting the news belongs to their daily routines. Research indicates that the acceptance of the civic duty to be informed is correlated with the frequency of news consumption (Poindexter & McCombs 2001).

### **NEWS CONSUMPTION IN THE MID-2000S**

Television is the most popular source of news, but half of the public uses multiple news sources (→ Television News). On a typical day the average US American spends 66 minutes consuming news: 30 minutes watching television, 15 minutes listening to radio, another 15 minutes reading newspapers, and 6 minutes using the Internet for getting news

(Pew Research Center 2006). However, in the mid-2000s the percentage of US Americans who get news from any medium is lower than it was a decade ago (about 80 percent in 2004 and 90 percent in 1994; Pew Research Center 2006).

This is the case for *young people*, in particular. Whereas among older adults (31 years and older), 60 percent watch TV news, 40 percent listen to radio news, and 35 percent read newspapers every day, only 30 percent of young adults (18–30 years) watch TV news daily, 25 percent listen to radio news, and 16 percent read newspapers on a daily basis (Joan Shorenstein Center 2007). For some scholars, these figures are alarming, since research indicates that news habits develop early in life and remain rather stable. The Internet alone is a medium with rather low age differences in news consumption: about a fifth of the older and younger adults get news from the Internet every day (Joan Shorenstein Center 2007).

### NEWS PROCESSING AND RECALL

In contrast to the expectations that the audience should learn as much as possible in order to fulfill its democratic responsibilities, a lot of studies show that people remember only a relatively small amount of the information presented in the news. *Audience → memory and comprehension of news* is often very poor (Schaap et al. 2001; → News Processing and Retention). Furthermore, findings from exemplification theory indicate that news consumers rely on single cases rather than on more accurate, base-rate information when making judgments about the social phenomena described in news stories (Zillmann & Brosius 2000; → Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of). It seems that consuming the news cannot be equated with rational, highly involved information processing. Some scholars suggest that consuming television news is associated with a rather *heuristic mode of information processing* (→ Elaboration Likelihood Model). Because people want to assure themselves that nothing important has happened, that the world keeps on going as usual, they watch the news without great attention and interest, and without the objective to learn any details. Nonetheless, in contrast to these findings, the audience feels well informed (Robinson & Levy 1986).

In order to understand these discrepancies, it may be helpful to consider → information processing theories. Top-down processes largely account for the *selectivity of information processing*: people selectively expose themselves to messages; pay attention only to those aspects of the content interesting to them; interpret information according to their needs, interests, and prior knowledge; and remember information within their individualized mental schemas (→ Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention). This may explain, for example, research findings that people tend to remember stories about more familiar topics better than stories about unfamiliar topics.

Individual variables, such as prior knowledge, cognitive abilities, and interests or attitudes toward the media (such as credibility or perceptions about how difficult it is to learn from different media) influence selective exposure, perception, attention, information processing, and recall. *Knowledge gap research* shows that socio-economic status is an important variable in understanding knowledge gain from news (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). People with higher socio-economic status are more likely to selectively expose themselves to news; they typically gain more knowledge and gain knowledge more quickly than people



with low socio-economic status. Socio-economic status is of such high importance because it combines many other variables, like political interest, prior knowledge, access to information sources, communication skills, etc.

Moreover, motivations for watching the news play a major role in understanding knowledge gain from the news media. *Uses and gratifications research* has identified a series of motivations drawing people to news media (→ Uses and Gratifications). The motivations influence information processing and acquisition. Watching the news for information is linked to deeper, more elaborative information processing, and therefore to greater knowledge gain (Eveland 2002). However, the news serves needs beyond orientation; it also fulfils affective and social needs, and this is especially the case for television news. For most persons, watching the news is not a matter of being well informed; rather, it is a kind of social activity and entertainment. Television news connects the individual to society and provides topics to talk about (McQuail 2001).

Despite the rather disappointing results on news retention, there are also some clear and consistent research findings about news consumption and retention. First of all, people who regularly consume news are generally better informed; news attention and news reliance are effective predictors of political knowledge. Second, there are certain *presentation features* that can influence understanding and remembering (Perse 2001). For example, visuals or the personalization of stories can increase news retention: story placement, the frequency or length of a message, as well as visual/verbal redundancy affects recall. As part of bottom-up processes, such formal elements can attract attention and lead to orientation reactions, which might lead to mental engagement if the message is interesting or important.

*Framing research* suggests that the way the news is presented affects what people think about issues and events (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News). Moreover, each news source exhibits characteristics that make its content easier or more difficult for the individual to process cognitively; thus, individuals may learn more effectively from some news sources than from others. For example, people remember more from print news than from a comparable television news presentation (DeFleur et al. 1992). Some researchers assume that whereas certain characteristics of television news (such as its fast pace and emphasis on pictures rather than text) inhibit viewers' information processes, print news may be easier to process cognitively, since a reader can read at his or her own pace and can reread portions of the text that are difficult.

### **NEWS CONSUMPTION IN TIMES OF CRISIS**

Much of the work in news research, carried out since the 1950s, has focused on the informational impact on the audience. However, the field of news effects research covers a much broader range of topics. Other prominent topics are the study of news diffusion (the question of how rapidly and by what means information about an event is spread throughout a system; → Diffusion of Information and Innovation) or the agenda-setting hypothesis (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Another interesting topic is the study of news consumption in times of crisis.

Times of crisis are particular situations that are reflected in changed conditions of news consumption (Perse 2001). Due to heightened uncertainty and fear, television as an

immediate source of the most current news is of great importance for receiving confirmation and details. The diffusion of news is rapid and complete. People rely on mass media for information, explanation, and solidarity. Even if media are unable to fulfill surveillance and correlation needs, because of constraints on news gathering, the function to offer assurance and tension reduction is very important for the audience. The solidarity-building effect is associated with a heightened willingness to accept censorship and limits on press freedom, as well as with a strong increase in patriotism (the so-called rally effect – a sort of “rallying around the flag”). Many of these effects are uniform and universal; the role of audience variables is quite small.

### NEWS CONSUMPTION IN TIMES OF GROWING INTERNET USE

Looking at news consumption, we are currently at a turning point. There are more news sources than ever before: newspapers, network and cable TV, radio, the WWW, news headlines sent directly to mobile phones and PDAs, etc. (→ Internet News; Online Media). The Internet allows people immediate access to news and the efficient selection of the news of interest to them. Some media analysts see the Internet as a threat to the traditional news media. On the other hand, there is evidence that people tend to remain relatively faithful to news sources that they have habitually used in the past, and that they often visit websites of the traditional media but the news they select on those sites differs from what they may have received via the traditional media. People seem to use online news to supplement, not to replace, their core news consumption (Ahlers 2006). The reliance on traditional news media and the adoption of online news seem to be influenced by lifestyle variables (Chang & Leung 2005). However, the exposure patterns on Internet news are not yet well understood; new technologies may change the nature of news consumption.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet News ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Memory ▶ News ▶ News Audience ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Online Media ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Television News ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Exposure to Print Media

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The term “print media” can be defined in different ways. In its broadest sense the term is used for a whole range of publications that can be subdivided into two main categories in terms of their format and content: media published at regular intervals such as → newspapers and → magazines, and media for one-time publication such as → books in their different genres (→ fiction, nonfiction, and textbooks). For the purpose of this entry, we will narrow down the definition of print media and concentrate on the periodically published mass media newspaper and magazine and their use, with a focus on dailies.

The print media are significant players in the development of a society. They are, at the same time, reflections of that society as well as social artifacts and, as such, are subject to societal change. They are seen as agents of social change or agents of social control (Demers & Viswanath 1999). Generally speaking, people use print media in many different ways. Print media are used as sources of → information, they provide models of behavior and serve as a frame of reference for possible dissociation and → identification, differentiation, and participation in everyday life. Additionally, they provide content for personal communication (→ Interpersonal Communication; Media Content in Interpersonal Communication), relaxation, and emotional relief.

International comparative research on the use of print media has to take into consideration that motivation for using print media, as well as their circulation and availability, is embedded in the cultural, political, and societal structures of the national systems in question, and that it is also dependent on economic conditions (→ Media Use,

International Comparison of). In the case of (national) dailies, the format (daily publication) and the strong dependence on national language and local events contribute to a marked restriction of the print media to national concerns.

### THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PRINT MEDIA USE

Use of the print media assumes certain skills on the part of readers. Level of education and literacy are therefore significant socio-cultural indicators for media use in a given country (→ Media Use by Social Variable). Countries with a high rate of illiteracy lack this basic prerequisite. In contrast to audio or audiovisual media, print media require a minimum ability to read. Reading skills and motivation, both essential conditions for reading, are complexly interrelated. The general historical and social as well as the specific situational context influences the reading process.

Reading is a *cognitive process* (→ Cognition). The reader actively and constructively incorporates the content of the text into pre-existing knowledge structures, based on the reader's familiarity with the language and knowledge of the world (→ Information Processing). The process of reading begins with the perception and processing of visual information (→ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of). Following the identification of individual words, the reader moves on to sentence level, interrelating and structuring word sequences according to their semantic and syntactic correspondences. On text level, the → meanings of the individual sentences are put into context to form individually varying meaningful structures. Conclusions that the individual reader draws from the text, and that transcend the tangible information it contains, play a significant role in this construction of meaning. Its quality is largely determined by the reader's working → memory, previous knowledge of the subject, how the reader relates this previous knowledge to the content of the text, and also the reader's familiarity with the genre. Mastery of these sub-processes identifies competent reading as a key qualification for the use of print media (Christmann 2004, 435–436). Moreover a developed linguistic sensitivity is required to be able to grasp the connotative potential of the text, such as ambiguities, allusions, irony, etc.

In addition to reading competence, the reader's *motivation and interests* play a pivotal role. Generally speaking, we can identify three subject areas that provide an incentive for readers to use print media. These are "hard news," (e.g., politics and business; → News), → "soft news," (e.g., people or society), and sports (→ Sports and the Media, History of), while local interest topics (→ Local News) cut across these three subject areas and can be found in each of them. This system has proved helpful in explaining preference for different types of media content. Deliberate use of the media as motivated by a desire for information or distraction, entertainment or instruction, varies considerably with media genre.

The reading of print media, unlike that of electronic media, requires complete → *attention and focus*, excluding all other activities. At the same time, the mode of exposure allows the reader to use print media irrespective of place and time and thus offers higher accessibility and flexible use at all times, to be interrupted and resumed at the user's discretion. The print media and their content are less ephemeral and can easily be transported, filed, and passed on. The reader determines the length and speed of use in accordance with his abilities and needs. Also, it is primarily the reader who selects the information and the order in which it is read.

## EXPOSURE TO NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers can be published daily (daily press), weekly (non-daily press) or on specific days (especially the Sunday press). Their geographic orientation can focus on a specific area of distribution. In this case they are referred to as local or regional newspapers, as opposed to national newspapers, which are distributed nationally. All newspapers have in common that they offer different sections, i.e., recurring thematic units. Beside a variety of subject areas, the main sections are national and international politics, business, sports, culture, and local or regional news. In addition, there are newspapers that are solely concerned with one subject area, as for example sports or business papers. Newspapers are either distributed through subscriptions, i.e., the newspaper is delivered directly to the subscribers' homes, or through sales outlets.

Dailies play a significant role in shaping the day-to-day local and political orientation of their readership. They strengthen political interest and knowledge (→ Political Knowledge), increase participation, and improve understanding of political events. Moreover, in many countries the need for local information is one of the most important reasons for reading daily newspapers. Hence, in many societies newspapers play an important role, which is also constitutionally granted in many democracies.

Newspapers cannot fulfill these functions if they are not used. Notwithstanding the continuing strength of the newspaper market in many countries a *downward trend in newspaper reading* can be observed worldwide. Their share of → advertising is declining. Selling price can only partly make up for loss of revenues and is strongly limited by what customers are willing to pay (→ Advertising, Economics of; Media Economics). Additionally, → circulation and coverage of dailies have been decreasing for years.

A number of *factors influence newspaper use*. These are: income, age, sex, level of education, race, length of residence in a particular region or community, mobility, number of children in a household, marital status, housing condition, and interest in politics. In addition to these socio-demographic factors, respondents name lack of time, lack of interest, preference for a different medium, and cost as reasons for not reading newspapers. Content and general reading interest are the least significant factors. Moreover, in recent years other media have been taking over as information and entertainment providers and dailies are having a harder time holding their ground in the media competition.

In particular the *share of younger readers* has seen a noticeable decline for years. Many studies in the US and also in Europe have shown that age is the first and foremost predictor of shrinking coverage. This changes only to a limited extent with increasing age, as it is unlikely that those who did not read newspapers when they were younger will become newspaper readers later in life (cohort effects). They will be reached less and less by the political information in dailies. If they do read newspapers they tend to be interested in other subject matters (Lauf 2001). Apart from age, income has played and continues to play a significant role. In some countries it has been shown that readership increases with household income (Schönbach et al. 1999).

The number of available daily newspapers and their use varies widely from country to country (Table 1). The table compares a selection of countries in terms of three parameters: (1) circulation per 1,000 population, (2) average daily coverage, and (3) number of newspaper titles per 1 million adult population. The values provide a clear picture of the

**Table 1** An international comparison of newspaper circulation and use: average circulation size and daily coverage of daily newspapers and number of newspaper titles in the year 2002

Country	Circulation per 1,000 adult population	Daily coverage in %	Number of titles per 1 m adult population	Country	Circulation per 1,000 adult population	Daily coverage in %	Number of titles per 1 m adult population
Norway	705	86.0	23	Serbia and Montenegro	163	50.6	5
Japan	654	78.3 <sup>b</sup>	1	Croatia	162	27.0	3
Finland	532	86.0	12	Turkey	132	65.3	2
Sweden	509	88.0	13	Spain	127	37.4	4
Switzerland	433	73.1	16	Slovakia	120	45.1	4
Great Britain	402	>83.8 <sup>a</sup>	2	Italy	118	40.1	2
Austria	365	73.8	2	Poland	116	31.7	1
Canada	342	54.0	7	Costa Rica	114	73.5	2
Peru	342	–	3	Lebanon	94	35.0	6
Singapore	340	87.0	3	Cyprus	94	–	16
Iceland	339	80.5	9	China	88	70.9	1
Denmark	334	74.5	7	Macedonia	83	–	4
Germany	333	77.3	5	Portugal	83	37.0 <sup>b</sup>	3
Netherlands	330	66.1 <sup>a</sup>	3	Greece	71	18.2	4
Luxembourg	327	63.5	25	Romania	70	15.0	3
New Zealand	274	46.0	9	Brazil	57	50.0	4
Ukraine	272	50.0	2	Argentina	56	–	4
USA	269	55.0 <sup>a</sup>	7	India	50	–	1
Hong Kong	262	80.4 <sup>a</sup>	8	Colombia	41	20.0	1
Thailand	250	21.7	1	South Africa	38	17.1	1
Estonia	228	58.2	11	Sri Lanka	35	90.0	1
Slovenia	211	45.1	4	Indonesia	33	40.9	1
Austria	208	73.8	2	Mongolia	28	–	3
Belgium	204	50.0	4	Azerbaijan	24	–	4
Bulgaria	203	45.0	7	Moldova	21	–	1
Latvia	202	63.5	13	Kenya	15	63.5	0.2
Ireland	196	58.8	2	Uruguay	13	23.9	1
Czech Republic	196	52.6	8	Kirgyzstan	12	28.6	0.3
Hungary	192	30.1	5	Armenia	10	14.0	4
Malaysia	185	51.0	3	Tanzania	3	1.5 <sup>c</sup>	0.2
France	164	31.4	2	Cameroon	1	19.0 <sup>a</sup>	0.1

<sup>a</sup> Data from 2000; <sup>b</sup> data from 2001; <sup>c</sup> only men.

Source: Hasebrink & Herzog (2004); WAN (2003)

widely varying significance of daily newspapers in individual countries. The Scandinavian countries, Japan, and Switzerland have the highest circulation of newspapers, followed by Great Britain, Austria, and Canada. The Scandinavian countries also show a clearly higher level of coverage of daily newspapers than, for instance, the southern European countries. The case of Japan in particular is remarkable, with only a few mass circulation newspaper titles (per 1 million population) published. The average number of copies distributed per

title is 674,400 in Japan, 69,500 in the EU and 37,600 in the US. This is another example of the diverse supply structures in different countries.

## EXPOSURE TO MAGAZINES

The term “magazine” encompasses a wide variety of differing subject matters and forms. Especially as regards the different national markets, a systematic approach or rather categorization proves difficult. Generally speaking, we can distinguish television magazines, news magazines, general interest magazines, special interest magazines, as well as the large sector of customer magazines and professional journals.

Magazines are especially sensitive to trends and fashions, both national and global, and therefore require constant reorientation of content and form to current conditions. Traditional economic and social structures are evidently undergoing a process of change in many countries. The worlds of work and leisure are changing. An increasing individualization and differentiation of consumer and living habits can be observed not only in western countries. Among the print media, magazines are the ones that adapt most quickly and strongly to the changed needs. Consequently, fluctuation in the magazine market is high. This trend is reinforced by readers’ behavior. Nowadays readers use a broader range of different titles, they experiment more, and traditional target groups and definitions of readers are losing validity (→ Audience Segmentation).

Reader motivation and the functions of magazines vary widely and cover the whole spectrum, from specific information about different topics to distraction or entertainment. At the same time, magazines represent certain images and thus can also take over functions of social identification for the user.

It is difficult to find comparable magazine coverage and circulation figures on a national level. On an international level it is almost impossible, due to the enormous heterogeneity of titles. Use is too dependent on magazine content and reader motivation and interests. However, it can be said that the pronounced independence of magazine readership from specific reading times is a main characteristic of magazine use, not least because magazines do not as a rule offer up-to-the-day information.

## METHODS AND DIFFICULTIES OF PRINT MEDIA RESEARCH

Measuring print media use and impact presents a methodological challenge. There is a long tradition of → readership research arising from this challenge. Readers often use different sources of information, talk about content, and understand reports differently. The general problem in readership research is the respondents’ recall of sources. The subjective importance attached to a piece of information and thus also its storage in long-term memory results primarily from its content, i.e., the sender (communicator) and the information carrier (medium) of a piece of information are of secondary importance to the recipient (the reader) of the information. As a result, sources of information are usually more easily forgotten than the information itself.

The following models (often labeled differently) can be regarded as the best established *models of readership research* (Wiegand 1996). *Through-the-Book* (TTB) is the oldest method of readership → survey. It was introduced in the US in the 1930s. Respondents

are shown a specific edition or several editions of a newspaper title. The interviewer goes through the edition(s) page by page with them, asking whether they have read specific “key articles.” The growing number of titles has made this method almost impracticable for national surveys, but it is still useful for targeted surveys.

*Recent Reading* (RR) was first introduced in Great Britain in the 1950s. RR records whether the respondent has read a given title within the previous publication period. The flaws in this method lie in the difficult time identification and in the problem of cumulative and extended reading. However, RR is considered a standard model.

The *First Read Yesterday* (FRY) approach was developed in the 1980s. While respondents have to remember their reading over quite a long period of time (when questioned about weekly titles) under RR, FRY asks about what they read on the previous day. Here a large sample is indispensable in order to get sufficient data on titles with a longer publication period.

In addition, surveys are conducted with the help of panel data or also with diaries (→ Longitudinal Analysis; Research Methods).

## NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND THEIR IMPACT

Print media use is going through a phase of profound change. Traditional use patterns are increasingly difficult to identify. The processing of written texts remains one of the main reception strategies, but technological developments have changed the manner of distribution. The computer screen has now ousted paper as the center of attention.

Today, most publishing houses at least in western countries offer online information in addition to their traditional printed papers. Their strategies range from complete transcription of contents and form (digital editions) to online newspapers and online information platforms (van der Wurff & Lauf 2005; → Online Media; Internet News). The goal of this commitment is to reach new markets by using new technology and to strengthen traditional products as an information brand. Furthermore, in many countries there are online newspapers that are not published as printed papers as well. The typical online newspaper reader is mainly younger, highly educated, and male. In general, studies on the use of online newspapers show that online newspapers seem to be used in a complementary manner, i.e., they do not replace printed newspapers. However, in particular younger online newspaper readers do not read the printed edition (de Waal et al. 2005). This might be one reason for the decline of the traditional papers in this target group.

Multimedia offerings have led to new forms of media use that continue to be based on traditional reading. At the same time, the hitherto existing print media remain complementary sources of information alongside the Internet for a large part of the population. For others, they still are – for the time being – the most important source of information, particularly with respect to political and local information.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Attention ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Book ▶ Circulation ▶ Cognition ▶ Fiction ▶ Identification ▶ Information ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet News ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Local News ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Magazine ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Content in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Use, International



Comparison of ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Memory ▶ News ▶ Newspaper  
 ▶ Online Media ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Readership Research ▶ Research Methods  
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## **Exposure to Radio**

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Radio is the medium with the highest relevance for media users in daily life – at least with respect to the amount of exposure time (→ Radio; Radio: Social History). In western industrialized countries, people listen to radio for about three hours each day, with about 80 percent of daily reach (Table 1).

Radio consumption has decreased massively since the beginning of the twenty-first century, especially among people under the age of 40, due to the increasing use of mobile music media like MP3 players (Schramm 2006). About 90 percent of the radio consumption occurs while people pursue other activities at the same time, such as eating, working at home (e.g., cleaning, cooking, ironing), working outside home (e.g., gardening, office work), or car driving. For instance, 85 percent of US Americans listen to the radio during

Table 1 Exposure to radio in selected countries

Country	Daily reach (%)	Listening duration (min)
Poland	77.4	325
Germany	81.8	218
UK	80.2	205
France	83.6	191
Romania	46.4	191
Spain	56.0	185
Italy	67.8	182
USA	76.9	180
Sweden	77.5	163
Switzerland (German part)	93.1	131

Source: IP Networks (2002)

morning drive time (6 a.m. to 10 a.m. weekdays), and 80 percent listen during afternoon drive time (3 p.m. to 7 p.m.; MacFarland 1997). Studies have shown that radio music listening can positively affect reaction time during simple routine driving (for example, monotonous driving on a highway) and negatively during difficult, demanding driving (for example, in heavy city traffic). In addition, loud music can lead to driving faster, while slower music can lead to improving reaction time in dangerous situations. If a driver experiences music as pleasant, the number of driving mistakes is often reduced.

Besides the central function of accompanying other activities in order to ease workload, to abridge time, and to compensate monotony, primarily emotional motives can be identified in radio use (MacFarland 1997; Rubin & Step 2000; Schramm 2006; → Affects and Media Exposure). To these belong mood regulation (→ Mood Management), stimulation of excitation, activation versus damping/catalyzing of excitation, abreaction, relaxation (→ Excitation and Arousal), wallowing in memories, distraction, day dreaming (→ Escapism), social belonging, affiliation (→ Social Identity Theory), distinction, social comparison (→ Social Comparison Theory), → parasocial interactions and relationships, social alternative, and → information seeking and life assistance (→ Audience; Audience Research).

## FORMATS AND MUSIC CONFIGURATIONS

The main motive for turning to radio and the primary content of most radio programs is music (aside from news and talk radio) with a music portion, on average, of about 70 percent. According to MacFarland (1997), the most popular music format is *adult contemporary* (AC) with a target group aged between 25 and 49 years. Its features are hits from the 1980s and 1990s and current hits, primary melodic pop and rock songs, an extensive playlist, and a moderate/reserved young presentation/moderation. Its variations are “hot AC,” “soft AC,” and “oldie base AC.” The format *contemporary hit radio* (CHR)

targets teenagers and young adults between 14 and 29 years. It plays current top-40 hits, has a very small playlist, variance in music genres only according to the formation of the charts, and a young, fresh presentation/moderation. Its variations are, among others, “mainstream CHR,” “dance-oriented CHR,” and “rock-oriented CHR.” The format *rock/album oriented rock* (AOR) was created as a backlash against the CHR formats. Its target group consists of higher educated people aged 18 and older. It plays progressive rock music, mainly album songs that have never been in the charts. The presentation/moderation style is unobtrusive and factual. The *oldies/gold* format is mostly concentrated on songs from one specific decade, e.g., songs from the 1940s and 1950s (rock ‘n’ roll), the 1960s (beat), or the 1970s (disco). The target group is at least 30 years old, depending on the music genre/decade. Further common formats include “country,” “urban contemporary,” “Hispanic,” “Classic,” and jazz (→ Audience Segmentation).

In order to create music programs compatible with large groups of people, the degree of complexity of radio music must remain rather low (Barnes 1989; Ahlkvist & Fisher 2000); consequently, music research conducted by radio stations remains rather simple (Schramm et al. 2002). One can assume that most radio stations would rather offer music programs at the lowest common complexity level and risk boring the audience than overtax and possibly lose them (Schramm 2006). Because of the fact that “activation” diminishes when people listen to a series of titles with a similar complexity level, radio programmers take certain tonal-structural contrasts between the titles into account when putting together radio programs, specifically changes between fast, more activating, and slow, more calming titles (MacFarland 1997). A radio program can be diversified by changes between music genres, as far as the format allows (for example, switching between pop, rock, soul, rhythm and blues, hip hop, etc.), female and male singers, pure instrumental and vocal, fast/activating and slow/calming songs, old and new songs, text languages, well-known and unknown songs, and changes in the song’s mood, for example changes between happy and sad songs.

## LISTENING MODES

Music listening is composed of cognitive, affective, and behavioral elements; in other words, it is determined by mental/intellectual elements (music structure, composition idea, and construction), psychological-emotional elements (sound, sensual stimulation), and physical elements (rhythmic components). Roughly, we differentiate between intentional/concentrated and unintentional/distracted listening, whereas most radio listening can be assigned to the latter. Moreover, music research has identified quite a number of different listening modes (Schramm 2006).

“Motor or kinetic listening” is associated with bodily movements while “compensatory listening” leads to repression of unpleasant moods. “Physiological listening” comes along with physical reactions such as goose bumps. Listening is called “diffuse or vague listening” when the audience member performs other activities parallel to listening to the radio. Other forms include “emotional listening” (associated with emotional abandonment to music), “sentimental listening” (associated with memories of past experiences), “associative listening” (associated with visual concepts or images), and “distanced listening” (associated with analytical, evaluating attitudes). The mode of radio use can be composed

of different listening modes at the same time, e.g., analytical listening can positively influence the intensity of emotional listening and vice versa.

### AUDIENCE TESTS

Because of individual differences in abilities and capacities in the perception of music, it is very difficult to develop radio programs which will be favorably evaluated and used regularly by a large group of people (→ Information Processing). Nevertheless, radio stations try to reach this ambitious goal by relying on standardized music research (Fletcher 1987; Balon 1990; → Test Theory). This research is primarily assigned to check the acceptance of each song and to avoid audience switching to competitor stations. Within the music research of commercial stations, two kinds of music tests stand out: telephone surveys/“call-outs” and audience/auditorium tests.

Telephone → surveys are faster and more favorable, and are preferred by most radio stations. Every week or at least every two weeks, 30–50 music titles in the form of *hooks* (salient excerpts from a title with a length of approximately 8–12 seconds and with the highest presumed recognition value, most often from the refrain) are played over the phone to approximately 100–200 people randomly selected from the target group (→ Sampling, Random). The sample judges every title along several *evaluative criteria*. As a rule, these criteria involve three aspects: familiarity (“Have you heard this title before?”), pleasure (“How do you like this title?”), and saturation (“Would you like to hear this music title on your favorite radio program more often?”).

In the case of *saturation* (or “burnout”), listeners are asked whether they hear these titles too often. In telephone surveys in particular, the test titles are those that receive very frequent airplay, and therefore have a high rotation rate, where saturation tendencies are more likely to occur. Telephone surveys have the advantages of quickly gauging the mood changes of listeners and of continuously observing music title developments over short intervals. Accordingly, radio programmers can include or exclude titles with certain characteristic values of current interest from their playlists. Off and on, radio researchers ask additional questions that go beyond the three above-mentioned criteria. For example, they inquire about *station affinity* (“To which radio station does the title fit?”), emotional expression of the music, or the desired time of the day during which the music should be played.

In data analysis the researchers compile the results from the three criteria (familiarity, pleasure, and saturation) in a so-called “power score” and, through combination with media use data by socio-demographic variables, create *target-group-specific title indexes* that indicate which title is preferred by which group of listeners. Enriched with additional information about various music parameters, such as music genre, tempo, instrumentation, gender of the performer, lead-in time to the beginning of singing, title length, the way the title ends (“cold” = abrupt end; “cold fade/quick” = quick fade-out; “fade” = slow fade-out), and the desired rotation, the data are fed into the data banks. Based on these data, special computer programs such as “Selector” compute music programming lists that target a specific group of listeners. Subsequently, a music editor has to revise these lists in ways that guarantee a harmonious music program reflecting the philosophy of the radio station.

The second method, *audience or auditorium tests*, costs more and, for this reason, is funded only once or twice a year by radio stations. For audience tests, a group of up to 300 persons is recruited (in most cases reflecting the socio-demographic composition of the target group) and invited to a large auditorium like a movie theater or hotel hall. There they listen to hundreds of music titles in the form of hooks and evaluate them according to the criteria mentioned above. The group listens to the titles either together on a stereo set (here mutual distractions and possible group behavior limit the validity of the data) or they listen to the titles in an individual random sequence through headphones. In the first phase, sequence effects are neutralized by playing the titles in reverse order (the mirror image method) to a second group of the same size. Such audience tests work well in testing large parts of the playlist, as well as those titles that do not appear on the highest rotation. They also have the advantage of generating a great amount of data in a short time and improving the sound quality of the hooks, or, if headphones are used, optimizing that sound quality, as compared to telephone interviews.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Escapism ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Mood Management ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Radio ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Survey ▶ Test Theory

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# Exposure to Television

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Research on exposure to → television builds a large and heterogeneous field with one common denominator. Studies of television viewing try to provide evidence on the question: What do people do with television? Exposure to television has developed as a major research field since we cannot understand television as a medium of public communication without considering those who actually watch it. In particular, the television industry has an existential interest in finding out how many people watch its programs; it is exactly this kind of audience data that it can sell to the → advertising industry (→ Media Economics). But even beyond this economic interest, information on exposure to television is a necessary condition for any statement on the role of television in people's everyday lives and on potential social and individual consequences of television (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Audience Research).

## MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF THE TOPIC

The field of research on exposure to television can be structured according to several levels of analysis. The main differentiation refers to the *level of aggregation*: at one end of the spectrum, the dominant line of research on exposure to television aims to describe and explain the viewing behavior of "aggregate audiences." If we see television as a mass medium, we can conceptualize exposure as behavior of aggregate audiences (→ Audience). We cannot regard these audiences as a countable group, as for example the audience as present in a theatre or cinema. Instead, we have to construct television audiences by certain operational definitions and methodological procedures. All over the world, the television and advertising industries have developed similar mechanisms to construct the "mass audience" as the dominant model of research on exposure to television (Ang 1991; Webster & Phalen 1997).

At the other end of the spectrum, some lines of research, mainly in the academic area, examine exposure to television as individual behavior or individual social action. This kind of research is more interested in the psychological processes linked to the selection, interpretation, and appropriation of televised content, in interindividual differences between different viewers and viewer groups, and in intraindividual differences between different situations and social constellations.

Another differentiation of the field reflects the fact that the theoretical and empirical core, i.e., contacts between television and viewers, is examined from *different perspectives that complement each other*. Besides the plain audience research, which is satisfied with counting the numbers having contact with a specific channel or program, most studies link the contact to other theoretical concepts that might be called: (1) selection, (2) reception, and (3) consequences. The most important perspective here is research on the selection of television as a medium and of specific channels or programs (→ Selective Exposure). Selection processes mainly refer to the pre-communicative phase of television viewing.

Studies try to understand why people have selected the channel or program they watch, or why certain programs reach bigger audiences than others. In these studies, exposure to television is treated as the dependent variable, which is influenced by individual, situational, and program-related factors.

The second perspective focuses on the processes during the communicative phase of television viewing (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Once a certain program has been selected and viewers watch it, the question is how they perceive, process, and interpret the program. The focus is on the → attention and involvement of the viewers (→ Involvement with Media Content), and on their parasocial interactions with the personae portrayed on television (Klimmt et al. 2006; → Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). In these studies, exposure to television is categorized according to different kinds or qualities of contact – emphasizing the fact that two contacts with the same program can be very different from each other.

Finally, the third perspective examines the consequences for viewers of the programs watched and thus the consequences of exposure to television in the post-communicative phase; the question is how people integrate the televised messages into their knowledge and belief systems, how they deal with them in follow-up communication (→ Media Effects). Within this perspective, two lines of research can be identified: on the one hand, research on media effects treats exposure to television as an independent variable, influencing cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes and structures on the viewers' side. On the other hand, research on media appropriation focuses on how viewers actively integrate the television experience into their everyday lives.

Within the major dimensions of the topic as outlined so far, two areas can be regarded as the most important: the measurement of pure audience behavior, and the determinants of exposure to television. We shall treat these in more detail in the next two sections.

## RESEARCH ON TELEVISION AUDIENCE BEHAVIOR

In dealing with mass audiences, the media industry's research on exposure to television mainly focuses on structural factors, besides the basic question of the size of the audiences reached by certain channels or programs; this research examines how exposure to television is related to time and to channels.

The first indicator for describing audiences is their *size*. The most common indicator is the reach, which is defined as the percentage of the population that had at least one contact with the particular television offer. This measure can be assessed for different levels of the medium, e.g., for television as a whole, for single channels, or for certain programs, and for different periods, e.g., per day, per week, per 14 days, etc. In most developed countries the percentage of people reached by television on an average day has been stable on a high level (between 75 and 85 percent of the population; IP 2006; → Rating Methods; Nielsen Ratings; People-Meter).

As a rule, the information about the size of the audience is complemented by additional information on *how long people have watched*. The “viewing time” indicator reflects the average duration of use for the whole population; it is usually expressed as minutes per day or hours per week. Whereas this indicator is based on the whole population, another indicator, “time spent viewing,” is the average duration of use of

**Table 1** Average individual television viewing time in selected countries (in minutes per day, Monday–Sunday)

Country (age group)	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
USA (adults 18+)	262	270	277	290	297	299
Japan (adults 20+)	205	201	207	218	223	214
Germany (adults 14+)	203	205	215	217	225	226
France (adults 15+)	204	209	212	212	216	219
United Kingdom (adults 16+)	234	231	228	239	237	235

Source: IP Networks (2002–2006), based on national people-meter systems

those viewers only who have actually used the medium or the specific channel in the period concerned. According to data from people-meter systems, the amount of television viewing has been increasing in many countries over recent years (Table 1; → Media Use, International Comparison of). Thus, according to these criteria, television is still expanding its role in people's everyday lives.

Another time-related aspect of television exposure is the *distribution of viewing sessions over the day*. For all countries, the highest viewing figures are observed in the evening, which is clearly television “prime time.” However, as for the rest of the day, there are important intercultural differences concerning the medium's reach. Countries in southern Europe show high viewing figures at lunchtime, which reflects the cultural habit of having extensive “siestas”; Japanese television morning shows reach fairly high figures at breakfast time, whereas in many other countries, the morning is clearly devoted to listening to radio.

Due to heavy competition between television channels in many countries, particular attention is paid to *channel-related indicators of television exposure*. As a general indicator, the “share” of a channel or program expresses the percentage of viewing time devoted to this channel or program compared to the total viewing time in the period concerned. In recent years, as a consequence of the increasing number of channels available, the average share of channels has been decreasing substantially. We can interpret this process as audience fragmentation or segmentation (Webster 2005, 367; → Audience Segmentation). However, as studies from many countries show, people who have access to multichannel systems do not use the whole spectrum of channels. Instead, viewers develop their personal “channel repertoire,” i.e., the selection of channels they regularly watch. The size of these channel repertoires generally does not exceed 10 to 15 channels. For multichannel systems with more than 150 channels, this means that many channels do not have an opportunity to reach a wider audience.

Besides these limited channel repertoires, research has identified some other patterns of television exposure, which have become extremely important for program planners. This kind of research is called *audience duplication research*, because it is empirically based on the percentage of viewers of a certain program who also watch a certain other program at another time (see Goodhardt et al. 1987; Cooper 1996). The concept of “channel loyalty” refers to the empirical observation that viewers tend to select programs on a particular channel (→ Channel/Program Loyalty). More specifically, the “inheritance effect” means



that viewers of a program are likely to watch the next program on the same channel. "Repeat viewing" is defined as the degree to which viewers are likely to watch two different episodes of the same program. Since these effects are to some extent confounded, it is difficult to identify their exact prognostic value. However, program planners consider these effects.

Another relevant aspect of channel-related behavior is the *frequency and pattern of changing channels*. Since the remote control became part of the usual technical equipment, many studies have dealt with the question of why people change channels (→ Zapping and Switching). Several types of changing channels have been identified, such as avoiding advertising ("zapping"), watching two or more programs at the same time ("parallel viewing"), looking around for interesting programs on offer ("grazing," see Eastman & Newton 1995). There has been particular interest in changing channels as a means of finding out what to watch. In an early study on watching television under the conditions of cable systems, Heeter proposed a choice process model (Heeter 1988), which distinguishes different phases of orientation, such as orienting search and re-evaluation.

## RESEARCH ON INDIVIDUAL VIEWING BEHAVIOR

### A General Model of Program Choice

As a complement to the classical audience research of the media industry, academic research on exposure to television is interested in individual processes, in explaining why viewers select the programs they watch, how these programs are perceived and the consequences they have. As a general model in this area, the theory of television program choice proposed by Webster & Wakshlag (1983) has become very influential. According to this model, exposure to television – in this case defined as the choice of a specific program – is determined by the following factors:

*Availability:* Television exposure depends on whether people have time to watch television, and whether they are at home or at any other place where they have a television set at their disposal. This factor represents the necessary condition for any kind of exposure to television.

*Needs and preferences for program types and specific programs:* The main theoretical line included in the model refers to research on the → uses and gratifications approach. It is assumed that certain social and communicative needs shape people's expectations toward television programs. Based on their individual needs, people develop preferences for program types that fulfill expectations or satisfy gratifications sought (→ Expectancy Value Model). Through preferences for specific programs, the model assumes that program type and program preference strongly influence the individual choice behavior.

*Group:* As an intervening factor, the model considers potential influences of other people being present during television use, who might have different interests and preferences and thus might alter or moderate the decision on what to watch.

*Structure of the television offer:* The choice of a certain program is influenced by the structure of the television channels and, quite importantly, by the extent to which the viewers know about the available channels and programs.

In integrating these factors, the model emphasizes that exposure to television is jointly shaped by individual, social, and structural variables. In the next section, we shall describe some of these variables in more detail.

### Determinants of Exposure to Television

In order to explain individual exposure to television and interindividual differences between (groups of) viewers, several determinants have been investigated. One area of research provides strong empirical evidence on stable *differences between social groups*. A general finding is that elderly people watch substantially more television than younger people; the reason for this is a higher degree of availability and the fact that they have less alternative options for spending their time and television is a cheap and accessible activity (→ Media Use across the Life-Span). Beyond that, there is a tendency that people with less formal education watch more television than better educated people (→ Media Use by Social Variable). Men and women do not show substantial differences regarding viewing time, but men tend to switch channels more often than women do and they devote much more of their viewing time to sports programs, whereas women have stronger preferences for serial fiction programs (→ Audiences, Female).

Another explanation for stable interindividual differences in exposure to television refers to traits. In particular, the trend toward sensation seeking has been investigated as one factor that might explain differences in the extent to which people prefer exciting action and violence-oriented programs (→ Sensation Seeking).

Below the level of broad social categories and traits, *individual preferences for certain kinds of programs* are regarded as the most important determinants of viewing behavior. These preferences are regarded as temporarily stable dispositions, which depend on the viewers' needs and interests; inasmuch as these needs and interests change, e.g., due to major life changes and challenges, individual program preferences might change as well. The broad research on selective exposure to television has provided strong evidence of how viewers selectively compose their personal television repertoire.

On the lowest level of concrete situations of exposure to television, *affects and moods* are treated as important determinants of viewing behavior (→ Affects and Media Exposure; Mood Management).

### METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

Exposure to television and, more generally, television audiences are not natural entities that can be objectively observed by researchers. On the contrary, assessing television exposure and measuring audiences is a constructive process shaped by underlying theoretical conceptualizations and methodological procedures (Kent 1995). Therefore, it is important to reflect on how different methodological approaches define "contact with television" as the core aspect of television exposure.

The dominant approach to measuring television exposure is *people-meter systems*. These systems are run by the television and advertising industry in most countries. Electronic devices are installed in representative samples of households, which continually register the channels watched on any of the households' television sets. While data from people-meter

systems are sometimes re-analyzed by academic researchers (e.g., Krotz & Hasebrink 1998), most studies run outside the television industry rely on less expensive methodologies.

Studies on the links between television exposure and everyday practices often use standardized or nonstandardized *diaries*, in which subjects have to note their activities over a certain period. Partly for pragmatic reasons, the most popular method of investigating television exposure is *questionnaires*, which allow for an easy combination of indicators of exposure with other dependent and independent variables (→ Survey). Other methods, like participating → *observation* or, more generally, *ethnographic methods* have been used more often in recent years; these methods allow for an examination of television exposure as an integrated part of cultural and social practices (e.g., Lull 1990; → Ethnography of Communication).

Due to this diversity of methodological approaches, the comparability of these studies is often limited. Exposure to television as measured in the people-meter-based research might be completely different from exposure to television as measured by questionnaires or participating observation. Consequently, results from the different areas of research are often hard to integrate, and exposure to television, although being a core element of public communication and of any process of media effects, has not yet developed as a coherent field of research with an agreed set of theoretical concepts and empirical methods (→ Qualitative Methodology).

One of the *future methodological challenges of research on television exposure* will be how to identify and classify the increasing number of audiovisual services that are similar to television but not (yet) regarded as television. Watching a television news program or a movie downloaded via the → Internet on a computer screen; following a sitcom on the small screen of a mobile phone; watching vodcasts offered on broadcasters' or other institutions' websites: a decision will be necessary as to whether we should define all these activities as "watching television," or whether there should be conceptual distinctions between different kinds of audiovisual services.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Attention ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Channel/Program Loyalty ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Internet ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Use, International Comparison of ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Mood Management ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Observation ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ People-Meter ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Survey ▶ Television ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Zapping and Switching

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## Extended Parallel Process Model

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The goal of the extended parallel process model (EPPM) is to provide guidance on how to manage fear generated from communications about a threat. Fear is a powerful motivator, and the key to a successful communication about a threat is to channel this fear into a direction that promotes adaptive, self-protective actions, and prevents maladaptive, inhibiting, or self-defeating actions (→ Information Processing).

According to the EPPM, when people are faced with a threat they either control the danger or control their fear about the threat. The variables that cause individuals to either control the danger or control their fear are defined as follows. *Perceived threat*, or the degree to which we feel susceptible to a serious threat, is composed of two dimensions. The first, severity of threat, refers to the perceived seriousness of a threat or the magnitude of harm we think we might experience if the threat occurred (e.g., injury, loss, death, disgrace, etc.). For example, do you think contracting HIV is serious? Do you believe there would be harm if you did not prepare for a natural disaster? The second dimension, susceptibility to threat, is the perceived likelihood of experiencing a threat. For example, you might ask, am I at-risk for contracting HIV? How likely is it that a natural disaster will occur?

*Perceived efficacy*, or the degree to which we believe we can feasibly carry out a recommended response to avert a threat, is also composed of two dimensions. The first is response efficacy – our beliefs about whether or not a recommended response works in

averting a threat. For example, do you think condoms prevent transmission of HIV? Do you think preparation will mitigate harm from a natural disaster? The second, self-efficacy, is beliefs about our ability to perform the recommended response. For example, do you feel able to use condoms to prevent HIV transmission? Is it feasible for you to prepare for a natural disaster?

### THEORETICAL PREDICTIONS

Research has shown that perceptions of threat and perceptions of efficacy jointly influence behaviors such that one of three responses occur – no response to the message, a fear control response, or a danger control response.

When perceived threat is low, there is no response to the message. If a threat is believed to be trivial or irrelevant to a person, then individuals simply ignore any communication about a threat. For example, if people hear about a polio outbreak in China but live in Ethiopia, then they will perceive the threat to be irrelevant to them and they will not pay any attention to messages about polio (an example of low perceived susceptibility). Similarly, if there is a flu outbreak in Ethiopia, but people do not think of the flu as being serious, then they will not respond to a message about the flu because it is of so little priority in their lives (an example of low perceived severity; → Risk Perception).

In contrast, when people perceive a threat, they are motivated to act. The greater the threat perceived, the more motivated we are to do something (anything!) to get rid of the negative feelings caused by the fear arousal. That is, the more serious we believe a threat to be and the more vulnerable we feel toward that threat, the greater the fear aroused, and the greater the motivation to do something. Thus, when individuals feel susceptible to a serious threat, they are motivated to act.

Perceived efficacy determines what *type of action* is taken. Once motivated to act, perceived efficacy about recommended responses determines whether we will control the danger or control our fear. When perceived efficacy is high, i.e., people believe they are able to do a recommended response that effectively averts the threat, then they are motivated to control the danger and they adopt the recommended action. In contrast, when perceived efficacy is low, i.e., people doubt if they are able to do a recommended response and/or they believe the recommended response to be ineffective against the threat, then they turn instead to controlling their fear and engage in psychological defense mechanisms like denial (e.g., “there’s no such thing as HIV”), defensive avoidance (e.g., “I just don’t want to think about it”), or reactance (e.g., “this is just a government plot”). Thus, when perceptions of threat are strong, high perceptions of efficacy promote danger control actions (self-protective actions) and low perceptions of efficacy promote fear control actions (self-destructive actions).

In short, perceived threat motivates action, perceived efficacy determines the nature of that action. The greater the threat perceived, the greater the behavioral actions, as long as perceptions of efficacy remain stronger than perceptions of threat. However, at some critical point, when people begin to doubt their efficacy in averting the threat, they shift to controlling their fear instead of the danger (Fig. 1).

Overall, the EPPM suggests that when people feel at-risk for a significant threat (high level of perceived susceptibility and severity), they become scared and are motivated to

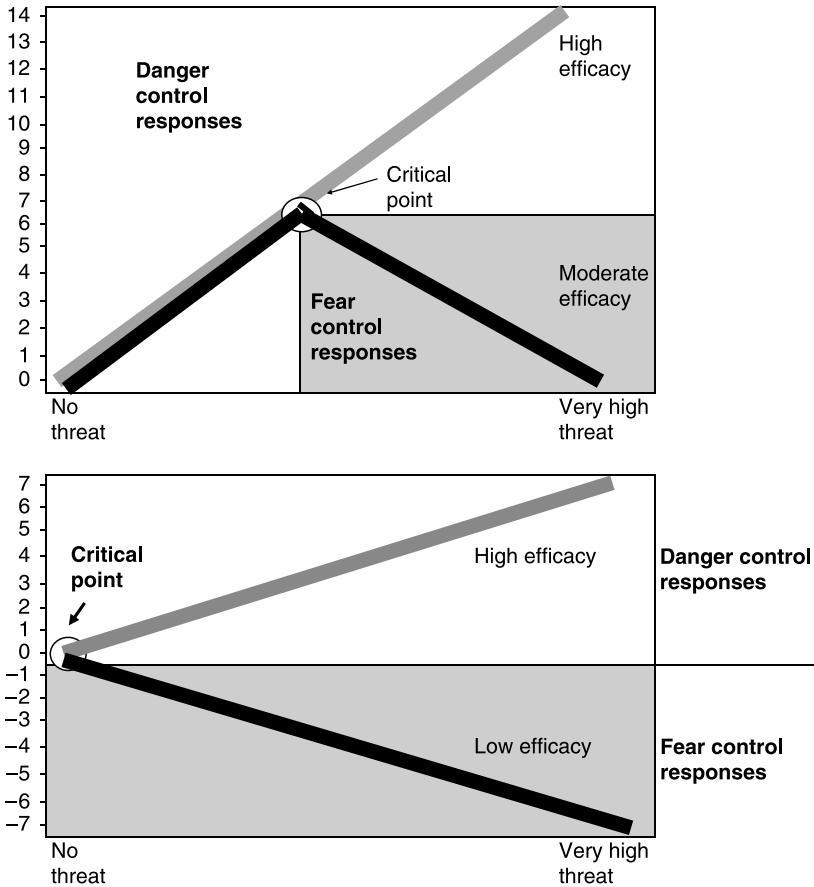


Figure 1 Graphical depictions of the EPPM

act. Perceptions of self-efficacy (i.e., perceived ability to perform a recommended response) and response efficacy (i.e., whether or not the recommended response is seen as effective in averting a health threat) determine whether people are motivated to control the danger or control their fear. When people feel able to perform an action that they think effectively averts a threat (strong perceptions of self-efficacy and response efficacy), then they are motivated to control the danger and engage in self-protective health behaviors such as condom use to prevent HIV infection. In contrast, when people either feel unable to perform a recommended response and/or they believe the response to be ineffective (e.g., they believe condoms have holes), they give up trying to control the danger. Instead they control the fear by denying their risk, defensively avoiding HIV/AIDS issues, adopting a fatalistic attitude, or perceiving manipulation (e.g., “AIDS is a hoax that really is a government plot to repress people”).

### APPLICATION OF THE THEORY IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

The EPPM has been applied to a large variety of topics and populations across different channels. It has been used to guide education entertainment radio dramas, worker

notification programs for beryllium exposure, statewide gun safety courses, and is currently used to guide individually tailored counseling in HIV clinics across the nation (→ Entertainment Education).

Empirical investigations consistently show the theory predicts behavioral responses as long as cultural definitions of threat and efficacy are taken into account. For example, western industrialized nations tend to focus (with good success) on threats to physical health, whereas in poorer countries, economic or social threats may be more threatening and relevant than physical threats (→ Communication Modes, Western). Further, it is critical that studies measure intended *and* unintended effects, because in order to distinguish between “no response” to a message versus “fear control response” (which masks as “no response,” because if an individual is in denial they are not adopting a behavioral recommendation), a researcher must measure things like denial, defensive avoidance, and reactance. Specifically, a “fear control response” masks as a “no response” because there is no behavior change, yet in reality, there was a huge defensive response to a message that prevents behavior change.

The EPPM can be used to tailor messages to promote danger control responses via interpersonal channels (as in counselor–client, doctor–patient (→ Doctor–Patient Talk), or peer educator encounters) or mass media channels (as in a public service announcement or entertainment education programs).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Communication Evaluation Research ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Culture and Health Communication ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Individual Differences and Information Processing ▶ Information Processing ▶ Persuasion ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions

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# Extra-Media Data

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The term “extra-media data” describes a methodological approach to assessing the quality of media content. The phrase was coined in the early 1970s by Swedish scholar Karl Erik Rosengren (1970) during a controversy about the criteria needed to assess bias in the news. Scandinavian researchers Galtung and Ruge (1965) had criticized the coverage of foreign countries in the Norwegian press for highlighting certain news factors and thus creating a distorted picture of these countries. The researchers’ conclusion was based exclusively on the occurrence of news factors like personalization and negativism (→ News Values). Rosengren instead suggested that researchers should evaluate the performance of news media by comparing their coverage to external, primarily statistical indicators. In his own study Rosengren investigated how newspapers in three different countries covered parliamentary elections in countries around the world. He then related the coverage to information about the countries and about the respective elections as listed in contemporary archives. By doing this, he was able to compare media coverage of the events with their “objective” news value according to, e.g., country size, GNP, or whether an election brought about a new majority.

In communication research today we can find at least three different approaches to assessing the quality of media content by sources from outside: statistical data (as suggested by Rosengren), participant observation of events, and the use of expert opinions. Funkhouser (1973) compared the number of news articles on several political issues in the sixties in the USA with statistical indicators for their real salience. For instance, in the case of the Vietnam War Funkhouser used the number of US soldiers fighting in Vietnam; in the case of the labor market he used the number of unemployed Americans. He found almost no correlation between the number of news stories about these issues and their salience as indicated by these statistical data. However, he did find a strong correlation between media coverage and public opinion. In a similar manner, Kepplinger (1992) compared the coverage of the ecological condition of air and water in Germany with statistical data on air and water pollution over a period of 20 years. Adams (1986) developed a “news geography” of US media by comparing the death tolls of natural disasters with the emphasis given in the news.

Almost 20 years before Rosengren wrote about extra-media data, Lang and Lang (1953) compared the impressions of an event when seen on television with the impression of the same event when participating in it. The event was General MacArthur’s parade in the streets of Chicago. People who watched the parade on television received the impression that there was much more excitement in the streets than there actually was. The authors attributed this discrepancy to a → reciprocal effect created by the presence of the television camera itself. Many years later Donsbach et al. (1993) applied the same approach in an experimental study on a campaign speech. While one group of subjects attended the event live, another watched several versions of a television broadcast of the event. The impressions received of the event, the speaker, and his speech when watching him live and when seeing a television broadcast differed significantly, with the television versions usually creating much worse ratings.



Finally, experts can be used as an external benchmark for evaluating the quality of media content. Lichter et al. (1986) surveyed experts on nuclear energy about the potential risks of this technology and compared the result to the opinions expressed by experts cited or interviewed in the media. In a similar study, Snyderman and Rothman (1988) surveyed experts on human intelligence and compared this to the coverage of the IQ controversy in the US media. According to both studies, the media misrepresented the distribution of opinions among experts.

These examples show that the use of such reality indicators for an assessment of media coverage by extra-media data is problematic. In most cases the concrete indicators used either represent only a certain aspect of the issue or event they are supposed to indicate (e.g., the number of American GIs in Vietnam), or may be biased themselves (as in the case of the experts). Further, there are many areas of media coverage where no such extra-media data exist to be used to assess media content. Schulz (1976) even went so far as to negate the possibility of any benchmark for media content. He argued that each system had its own criteria for constructing reality (→ Constructivism; Objectivity in Reporting) and each of these would necessarily differ from the dominant criteria used by the news media, i.e., the value of news factors. Nevertheless, if one assumes that some scientific measure of the quality of reality representation in the media is important, the comparison of media content with extra-media data is probably the strongest tool.

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► News Values ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Reciprocal Effects

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# Eye Behavior

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People use their eyes during social interaction in three primary ways: looking in the direction of the other person's face, often referred to as *gaze*; looking away from their partner's face or *gaze aversion*; and *mutual gaze*, in which both interactants look in the direction of the other's face and eye area at the same time. Human beings engage in relatively little direct eye-to-eye contact. For humans and other animal species, eye behavior plays an important role in survival, reproduction, and building/maintaining social and role relationships. Being watched is as important as watching others. As the target of another's eye gaze, a person's performance is infused with significance – in either positive or negative ways. Because of its importance to human interaction, people are sensitive to the absence of gaze when it is expected and its presence when it is not. We often perceive eye-to-eye contact when the eyes are actually tracking many points around the area of the eyes.

## FUNCTIONS

The direction, frequency, and duration of eye gaze serve several individual and communicative functions in human transactions. Gaze can serve more than one function at a time. One function of gaze is to serve as a mechanism for *regulating the flow of interaction*. To initiate interaction, people often look into the eye and face area of another person to signal an open channel for communicating. When strangers meet, they typically give each other a brief glance of recognition. When a person's gaze is extended too long, it can make a more elaborated response seem almost obligatory. The closing of communication channels, in contrast, is accompanied by a decrease in gaze. Eye gaze also regulates the flow of interaction during conversation. As a listener, it can signal a desire to take a speaking turn; as a speaker, an other-directed glance may signal the end of a thought unit or grammatical break. The amount of eye gaze varies from situation to situation, but listeners typically gaze more than speakers. *Seeking feedback* is another function of eye gaze. Each interactant wants to know whether their partner is paying attention, understanding, accepting, or in some other way registering a response to the dialogue.

Eye behavior also plays a major role in signaling the degree of *interpersonal involvement* as interactants negotiate their relationships. For example, eye gaze, or the lack of it, is a critical element in communicating increasing or decreasing intimacy. We look at things and people that are rewarding or potentially rewarding to us. Our pupils dilate when we are interested, attentive, and aroused. Some evidence suggests that other people notice pupil dilation and respond favorably to it, even though they may not be aware of the reason for their positive attraction. With strangers and acquaintances we tend to reciprocate or match eye gaze when we perceive their behavior to be generally congruent with our expectations and involvement preferences; we tend to compensate or offset another's eye gaze when it is perceived as a major violation of our expectations and preferences.

Eye gaze is used by infants and caregivers to establish an early bonding, but mothers with “difficult” children manifest less intimacy with their children by looking at them less. Gazing at others is also a way for adults to signal a desire for affiliation and affection, and for romantic partners to indicate the depth of their intimate feelings. In western cultures, women often call attention to their eyes by decorating them. One female flirtation ritual involves a pattern of relatively short glances at a person of interest followed by slightly longer ones. Gaze and mutual gaze frequency and duration are key factors in establishing close relationships, but a variety of patterns may develop as a couple sets their own rules for a long-term relationship. Happily married couples may even look at each other less than those who are dissatisfied, particularly when negative messages are being exchanged. If a close relationship continues to deteriorate, the need to threaten and monitor the other’s behavior decreases and eye behavior will decrease correspondingly as the desire for involvement wanes. Thus, the frequency and duration of eye gaze can be a reflection of a negative or confrontational relationship as well as an intimate one, but both show a high degree of involvement by the participants.

Many formal and informal relationships necessitate the negotiation of *dominance*. Human beings, like other animals, tend to exert dominance visually by staring and subordination/submission by avoiding eye gaze. In informal conversations, dominance is exhibited by increasing the amount of gazing typically exhibited while speaking so it approximates the amount of gazing while listening. The pattern for people who perceive themselves to be relatively similar in power and status is to look more while listening than speaking. Reciprocated staring signals a challenge associated with dominance. It is a peaceful way of signaling aggressive intent, but mutual gaze can be highly arousing, which can lead to more physical forms of aggression. Variations in eye gaze patterns may also accompany a person’s ascribed status in an organizational hierarchy. The eye behavior of new and lower-status employees may signal alertness and attentiveness as they try to learn the rules and accommodate to those who have more status and power. For those with status and power, the motivation to monitor the behavior of those around them may not be particularly strong if they feel their status and power are unchallenged. However, when challenges to their status and power are perceived, we would predict an increase in gaze used to monitor feedback as well as an increase in the use of gaze to assert the kind of dominance and power a person feels is befitting his or her status.

The way a person uses his or her eyes may also reflect both *cognitive and emotional activity*. It is not unusual for a person to avert his or her gaze during “difficult” or complex information processing. Silently looking away from high-intensity visual stimuli with a “thinking face” not only creates a cognitive processing environment with less noise, but may simultaneously tell the listener not to assume the speaking turn. Averting gaze to collect one’s thoughts represents a major interruption in the flow of speech, but decreasing eye gaze is also likely to accompany less dramatic breaks and hesitations in speech fluency. Some research makes a connection between the direction of gaze aversion and the type of cognitive activity occurring. For example, glances to the right have been associated with left-hemispheric brain activity and glances to the left have been associated with right-hemispheric brain activity.

Mutual gaze, whether it reflects a positive or negative intent, has an emotional impact and increases a person’s heart rate, galvanic skin response, and other physiological

measures of arousal. The eyes themselves may also reflect a person's emotional state, as in the excess blinking accompanying anxiety. In addition, a person's eyes are a crucial feature in communicating facial expressions of emotion – e.g., anger, surprise, sadness, fear, disgust, happiness. Some emotions can be accurately identified by viewing only the eyes. The tensing or relaxation of the lower eyelid helps to distinguish fear from surprise, for example. The upper eyelid is very different in expressions of sadness and happiness. With the addition of the eyebrows, still more facial expressions of emotion can be accurately identified.

### **INFLUENCES ON PATTERNS OF GAZE**

The meaning of gaze patterns, like other communication behavior, is dependent on the context in which the behavior takes place – i.e., the relationship of the interactants; their gender, age, and status; the situational expectations; the goals and motivations of the participants; accompanying verbal and nonverbal behavior; and the like. For example, eye gaze may decrease when interactants are physically closer than they want to be and increase when the distance between them is perceived as too great. This same eye pattern can be observed with conversational topics perceived as too intimate or not intimate enough for the parties involved.

Certain characteristics of the interactants themselves may also affect eye gaze. Vast differences in height will necessitate increasing conversational distance, which, in turn, will affect the pattern of gaze. When people expect to interact with a disabled person, they tend to gaze in their direction less than when they don't expect to talk to them. The frequency, duration, and reciprocity of gaze by females in informal conversation is greater than for males. The greater a person's racial prejudice, the more likely this person is to gaze less when interacting with members of the racial group in question – provided, of course, it is not clearly a confrontational encounter. The frequency of eye gaze seems to be correlated with certain personality characteristics as well. Socially dominant individuals gaze more in informal conversation, but shy people who want to be sociable tend to look less. Extraversion and openness tend to be associated with a tendency to gaze more while the clinically depressed and autistic people tend to avert their gaze more often. During critical feedback, people with low self-esteem tend to gaze more at the source of the feedback than do people with high self-esteem. The opposite pattern occurs during positive feedback.

Rules about looking and not looking vary from culture to culture, but too much looking and too little looking are commonly not approved. Too much gazing is often associated with anger or disrespect and too little gazing with shyness, inattention, and dishonesty (→ Gaze in Interaction).

### **MEASUREMENT**

The most common measure and the basis of most behavioral research is the frequency of gaze. To a lesser extent, studies draw conclusions from the duration of gaze. Relatively little of what we know is based on the direction of gaze.

Measurements are taken by observers, with or without stopwatches and counters. Some observations are made by coders as they view video-taped interactions. A few studies use eye-tracking devices, but they are too intrusive to be of much use in studies of natural

interaction. Observers may be reliable, but validity is likely to suffer except under pristine conditions. Glances that appear to be in the direction of the other person's face may, in fact, not be. Coders often use head movement as the basis for decisions about gaze. The greater the distance between observer and observed, the greater the chance for error. Animated conversations often involve frequent and erratic head and body movements, some of which may even shield an observer from viewing eye behavior. Some of these problems can be reduced with careful preparation and observer training.

Most of what we know about eye behavior is based on observations of individuals. We need to learn more about how eye gaze is manifested and coordinated over the course of an interaction and how each person's eye behavior affects the behavior of the other. In addition, we have relatively little knowledge of how eye gaze is perceived. A split-second image from one's peripheral vision may be enough to register awareness and trigger reaction to another's eye gaze.

SEE ALSO: ► Gaze in Interaction ► Nonverbal Signals, Effects of

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# F

## Facial Expressions

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When people use cues other than words to communicate, they often think first of facial expressions. Facial expressions involve movements of the face that change dynamically in the course of an interaction. People also use more static facial features (e.g., eye color, shape of nose) as part of the communication process. Both facial expressions and static face cues are considered here.

### STATIC CUES

The face has long been a source of curiosity. Early interest in faces focused on “face-reading” or *physiognomy* (Fridlund 1994). Pythagoras, Hippocrates, Galen, Aristotle, Della Porta, and Caspar Lavater were among the many well-known figures to propose methods of assessing static (and sometimes dynamic) features of the face to determine medical conditions, personality, temperament, and divinity (Fridlund & Russell 2006).

Whereas dynamic cues are thought to be more communicative, and the bulk of contemporary scholarship on the face seeks to understand how they function, static cues are still studied for the ways in which they work as identity displays and affect perceptions (often negatively). For example, Heatherton et al. (2000) looked at the ways in which certain craniofacial anomalies, like harelips and scarring, “can lead to aversion reactions and, like all stigma, result in social marginalization” (Fridlund & Russell 2006, 301). Cole (1998) likewise details the identity issues that arise for people with various physical conditions that affect the face and, for instance, make it immobile (→ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication). In his work, he found that people with Mobius syndrome (a condition where people, from birth, have immobile faces) are often assumed to be unintelligent, even though the condition only affects motor movement. Cole also discusses the effects of facial disfigurement and Parkinson’s disease on people’s view of themselves and their experience of emotion.

Other scholars have looked at the more general feature of “facial attractiveness.” In a recent review, Guerrero & Floyd (2006) argued that specific characteristics tend to make up faces that, across cultures, are seen as more attractive (→ Interpersonal Attraction). The static facial features that tend to be judged as more attractive include *facial symmetry*,

*neoteny* (i.e., looking more juvenile; this includes full lips, shorter noses, and eyes that are more widely separated), and *koinophilia* (i.e., faces with “average” rather than extraordinary traits). The authors also make the argument that there are survival-based explanations for our tendency to make attractiveness judgments for these facial features.

### DYNAMIC CUES

As noted, there is a larger set of studies focused on the movements that faces make when people engage in conversation. These dynamic cues are often referenced as *facial expressions*. Perhaps best known of the work in this area is scholarship that has documented the range of movements that the face can make. Ekman’s *Facial Action Coding System* (Ekman & Rosenberg 1998) and the *Maximally Discriminative Facial Movement Coding System* (MAX) developed by Izard (1979) are two of the well-known schemes used to reveal the range of dynamic cues available to most communicators.

The concern with *facial* expressions in modern scholarship often co-varies with an interest in *emotional* expressions (→ Emotion). That is, for many scholars, a, if not *the*, primary function of facial expressions is as a vehicle for the expression of emotion. Stemming from this assumption, much of the scholarship on facial expressions, particularly work by Izard, Ekman, and Matsumoto, has sought to determine the extent to which emotional expressions are innate and universal. Matsumoto (2006, 222) summarized the origins of this research, stating that

[q]uestions concerning the universality of facial expression find their roots in Charles Darwin’s work. Darwin’s thesis, summarized in *The Expression of Emotion in Man and Animals*, suggested that emotions and their expressions had evolved across species, were evolutionarily adaptive, biologically innate, and universal across all human and even non-human primates. According to Darwin . . . , humans, regardless of race or culture, possessed the ability to express emotions in exactly the same ways, primarily through their faces.

The large body of scholarship concerning the universality of emotional expressions has resulted in a range of conclusions, with some scholars arguing for universal recognition of at least some basic emotions. Specifically, although cultures develop *display rules* that affect when, where, how, and with whom we express emotions, people from diverse cultures can recognize photographs where persons are posing or have generated spontaneously particular emotional expressions such as anger, happiness, and sadness (see, e.g., Matsumoto 1990; → Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Moreover, work by scholars looking at congenitally blind infants finds evidence for emotional expressions that must arguably be innate (see, e.g., Charlesworth & Kreutzer 1973).

Others argue that the question is less clear. For instance, some scholars assert that the methodologies employed in many of the “universality studies” were based on a form of facial expression (posed photographs) that does not mirror how people actually use their faces. Motley (1993), for example, had study participants interact while being videotaped. His assessment of those tapes showed that most of the facial movements associated with emotional expressions tended to be relatively brief and ambiguous, understood only in relation to what was being said concurrently in the conversation. There were no instances of the types of expressions used to assess universality in many studies.

Still other scholars have taken issue with the central contention that facial cues are best characterized as emotional expressions. Fridlund and Russell are perhaps best known for their work in this area. Following what Fridlund (1992) labeled the *Behavioral Ecology View* (BEV) of *facial displays*, the authors have explored the idea that *social motives* rather than emotions are the primary internal concepts that drive communicative facial displays (see review in Fridlund & Russell 2006). They argue that it is rare to see a facial expression that extends only or even largely from an emotion; rather, the dynamic features of our faces are more likely to be tied to other meanings or functions.

In support of this, Chovil (1991) worked to identify the primary forms that facial movements take in everyday discourse. A careful analysis of 1,184 facial movements drawn from 12 pairs of people talking to one another led her to assert that there were five primary types of facial displays. Chovil referred to these as *syntactic displays*, which are facial movements connected with either intonation or syntactical features of talk that are redundant with what the speaker is saying. *Speaker illustrators* depict or represent what the speaker is discussing; *speaker comments* show information that is separate from what the speaker is stating verbally; *listener comments* appear to respond to what the speaker is saying; and *non-linguistic adaptors* seem to have no clear relation to ongoing speech, and include such things as biting one's lips. In only some cases were these movements tied to what could be described as an emotion (→ Gestures in Discourse).

Facial cues are an important part of interactions. Static cues provide the source of information people use in their assessments of others. Dynamic cues make up the larger array of potentially meaningful communicative messages. Although the messages people assume are communicated through the face are emotional messages, many scholars argue that the picture of what is expressed through facial expressions is a murkier, if more interesting, set of meanings.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Emotion ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture

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## Factor Analysis

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Factor analysis is a data analysis procedure that aims at extracting a small number of factors from a large number of items, that is, from variables. The extracted few factors should be able to describe and explain the core characteristics of a phenomenon, without the loss of too much information. Hence, factors show the essence of a large amount of measured items.

### ORIGIN AND APPLICATIONS

Charles Spearman pioneered the use of factor analysis and is credited with the invention of this statistical technique (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory). He found out that children's scores on a wide variety of seemingly unrelated items were somehow correlated (→ Correlation Analysis). He postulated that a general mental ability underlies and shapes cognitive performance. Factor analysis was and is therefore often associated with intelligence research and the development of objective tests for its measurement (→ Measurement Theory). Raymond Cattell expanded on Spearman's idea in using a multifactor theory to explain intelligence. He addressed alternate factors in intellectual development, like motivation and psychology. Still very well-known is Cattell's 16 personality factors (16 PF) theory of personality. However, the technique has also been used to find

factors in a broad range of domains such as psychology (personality, → attitudes, beliefs, motives), → marketing, sociology, etc.

An important and famous *application* of factor analysis in communication research is the derivation of general motives for media use that stem from numerous single reasons for using media (→ Uses and Gratifications). Factor analysis was able to reveal that television is mainly used because of general motives such as → information seeking, entertainment (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking), (para)social interaction, and orientation (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). Known as the *television viewing motives scale* this measure, developed by Bradley Greenberg and adapted by Alan Rubin, is the most widely used measure of viewing motivation. Other popular communication and/or psychological scales derived from factor analysis are the *need for cognition* scale, *big-five* personality inventories, the *parasocial interaction* scale, the *personal involvement inventory*, the *source credibility* scale, etc. (see Rubin et al. 2004 for detailed references; → Scales; Scales and Indices). Because of their ability to reduce the complexity of extensive phenomena, factor analysis procedures are frequently used in communication research. Out of 550 published articles in *Human Communication Research*, *Communication Research* and *Communication Monographs* between 1990 and 2000, 119 (21.6 percent) used factor analysis procedures (Park et al. 2002).

## FORMS OF FACTOR ANALYSIS

The technique can be differentiated into exploratory factor analysis (EFA), principal component analysis (PCA), and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). While the general goal of EFA (outlined above) is to find the latent structure of observed variables by uncovering *factors* that influence the measured variables, PCA tries to reduce the measured variables to a smaller set of *components* that finds as much information as possible in the measured variables with as few components as possible. While EFA focuses on the shared variance among the variables by separating common variance from unique variance, PCA does not distinguish between common and shared variance and focuses on the variation among the variables. Therefore PCA is less suitable to reveal latent constructs (i.e., factors), but more appropriate for reducing measured variables into a smaller set of items (i.e., components). In doing this, PCA keeps as much variance as possible out of the total variance (Park et al. 2002). For example, if a researcher wants to reduce measures such as indicators for education, income, occupation, and qualification into a composite component such as socio-economic status, PCA would be more appropriate than EFA. In short, as in EFA the measured variables are a function of factors, in PCA the components are a function of the measured variables. The latter will retain as much information as possible from the original variables (Fabrigar et al. 1999).

This being said, EFA is usually performed in the early stages of research, providing a technique for consolidating variables and for generating hypotheses about the underlying constructs. While in this exploratory stage we may want to determine a structure among many variables, factor analysis can also be used in a *confirmatory fashion* (CFA). In that case, we are either testing a hypothesis, or wanting to find the statistical proof that one specific theoretical construct is responsible for the correlation of several theoretically relevant variables (→ Structural Equation). CFA should therefore be used when constructs are measured with multiple items, when the items have a linear relationship to the scale

average or total, *and* when an a priori idea of which items measure which constructs is present (Levine 2005). The latter procedure therefore aims mainly at construct validation and requires a more thorough and sophisticated approach than does EFA, which is a relatively simple task due to sophisticated and user-friendly data analysis software.

### STATISTICS BEHIND FACTOR ANALYSIS

Technically, factor analysis uses the correlation coefficients between all measured items as a description of the similarity of items. For example, the researcher starts out with a very large number of items reflecting a first guess about the items that may eventually prove useful – different reasons for watching television, for instance. The researcher is now interested in the dimensions that lie “behind” these individual reasons. The statistical procedure tries to maximize correlations within one factor and minimize correlations between the factors. Hence, the factor is the underlying theoretical construct that is able to explain the correlation between the items. The “correlation” between one item and the factor is called “factor loading” and represents the importance of this variable for the factor. The sum of squared factor loadings of one variable is called “communality.” It indicates to what degree the variance of this variable can be explained by all factors. An item with a low communality is therefore deficiently represented in the model.

Mathematically, the technique produces several linear combinations of measured variables, each linear combination a factor. As an example, a high correlation between the items “fun,” “well-being,” “tension,” and “liking” could be subsumed under the factor “entertainment.” While a factor reduces complexity and is able to illustrate phenomena on a higher abstraction level, the interpretation and naming of the factors is derived from the particular combination of the measured variables that correlate highly with it. Thus, the final choice among alternative interpretations and – mathematically identical – solutions depends on the researcher’s assessment of its interpretability and scientific utility.

The → validity of the factors is tested in research where predictions are made regarding differences in the behavior of persons who score high or low on a factor. The researcher tries to prove that scores on the factors (latent variables) co-vary with the scores on other variables. Nevertheless, in PCA and EFA there is no external criterion against which to test the solution – as there is with group membership in → discriminant analysis or logistic regression, for instance (Tabachnik & Fidell 2007).

Factors – and factor scores of every subject – can be used for further analyses. The advantage is that we do not have to deal with long lists of variables anymore. The problem, however, is that part of the variance explained by all items is lost by using factors as variables. Nevertheless, when scores on factors are estimated for each subject, they are in the majority of cases more reliable than scores on individual observed variables.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Discriminant Analysis ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Marketing ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Structural Equation ▶ Survey ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Validity

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## **Fair Trial and Freedom of the Press**

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Fair trial and freedom of the press concerns how to balance the right of a free press and the defendant's right to a fair trial. News reporting on judicial proceedings helps the public understand the legal procedure better and contributes to the public's right to know about the working of the justice system (→ Right to Know). The media play an important watchdog role in monitoring the administration of justice (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). However, the news media sometimes misrepresent court trials and mislead viewers and readers (→ Yellow Journalism). This kind of inaccurate media coverage might affect jurors or judges in such a way as to prejudice their supposedly impartial judgment.

The idea of balancing the right of the news media to cover judicial proceedings with the right of the accused to a fair trial has been incorporated into a number of international conventions and national constitutions. For example, the European Convention on Human Rights, while guaranteeing freedom of speech and of the press, protects the right of the accused to a fair trial. Its Article 6(1) states that the press and public may be excluded from all or part of a trial "where the interests of juveniles or the protection of the private life of the parties so require" or "where publicity would prejudice the interests of justice." The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also regulates access of the press to a trial when it is necessary to maintain public order, to protect national security and to prevent the prejudice from publicity. In the US, the First Amendment to the federal constitution on a free press collides with the Sixth Amendment on a fair trial. The UK, which does not have a written constitution, relies on a criminal statute to regulate the media coverage of a trial. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms places freedom of the press and fair hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal on an equal footing.

### **PREJUDICIAL PUBLICITY AND PRIOR RESTRAINTS**

In jury trials, jurors must consider only the facts relating to the defendant's guilt or innocence in the specific case before the court. But the media sometimes report a

defendant's prior criminal records or his confessions that may not be admitted into evidence during a trial. Although jurors are more likely to be influenced by the prejudicial media coverage than judges are, judges are not entirely free from a possible media impact.

Over the years, the → European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has ruled on prejudicial publicity as an issue. The ECHR case of *Sunday Times v. United Kingdom* (1979) arose when the House of Lords affirmed an injunction against the *Sunday Times* of London on the grounds that its news reporting concerning children deformed by thalidomide would lead to a "trial by newspaper." The ECHR held that the injunction against the *Sunday Times* was a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights, because the newspaper stories dealt with a matter of public concern, and it would not substantially undermine the authority of judiciary. The ECHR's 1997 decision in *Worm v. Austria* addressed whether a publication during a criminal trial might exert an influence on the members of the trial court. Worm, a journalist, was convicted under the Austrian Media Act for creating a "prohibited influence on criminal proceedings" with his article about the trial of a former finance minister. The ECHR agreed with the Vienna Court of Appeal that Worm's conviction was necessary for maintaining both the authority and the impartiality of the judiciary in Austria (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

In the past, the common law in Canada emphasized the right to a fair trial over freedom of expression. But the Canadian Supreme Court, in *Dagenais v. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation* (1994), held that the common law on the right of the accused to a fair trial was no longer sustainable under Canada's 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The court ruled that the Charter principles require the rights both to a fair trial and to a free press to be respected, without a hierarchical approach. In considering a publication ban because of the threat to a fair trial, the court suggested that trial judges should ask (1) whether the ban is necessary to prevent a real and substantial risk to the fairness of the trial; and (2) whether the salutary effects of the ban outweigh the deleterious effects to free expression. Further, even if the ban were aimed at preventing a substantial risk to a fair trial, it could not be upheld if alternative measures were available (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America).

In overturning Dr Sheppard's conviction for his wife's murder, the US Supreme Court in *Sheppard v. Maxwell* (1966) criticized the state trial judge for failing to control the courtroom and to take proper measures against the prejudicial publicity. The court suggested several fair-trial remedies, which included: (1) a continuance to postpone the trial (adjournment); (2) change of venue (moving a trial to a new location); (3) change of venire (changing the pool of potential jurors); (4) admonishing the jury; or (5) sequestration of the jury.

Gag orders were widely used against US media in the early 1970s, although the *Sheppard* court did not suggest a gag order. In *Nebraska Press Association v. Stuart* (1976), the US Supreme Court addressed the validity of gag orders. Chief Justice Warren Burger, writing for a unanimous court, stated that before issuing a gag order, the trial judge should consider three factors: (1) the nature and extent of pre-trial news coverage; (2) the availability of other measures to mitigate the prejudicial publicity; (3) the effectiveness of the gag order. Unfortunately, gag orders are occasionally abused to silence the media publication (→ Gag Orders).

When a reporter disobeys a court order or shows disrespect for the judicial process, a judge can use the *contempt of court proceedings*. In England, the Contempt of Court Act allows judges to use contempt of court when news reporting creates a substantial risk that judicial proceedings will be seriously affected. Sometimes criminal contempt might be used by courts to punish criticism or commentary about judges' work. But the US Supreme Court, applying the "clear and present danger" test, ruled in 1941 that judges could punish commentary on pending cases only when such publications presented an imminent and extremely serious threat to justice. In contrast, Bangladeshi journalists got a jail sentence for contempt of court when they published stories about a judge's secret conversation with a party in the lawsuit in 2002 and about a judge's fake qualification in 2005.

### **"OPEN JUSTICE" PRINCIPLE**

Open justice is a basic principle in Anglo American judicial proceedings. In *Scott v. Scott* (1913), Lord Atkinson of Great Britain said that, even if a public hearing would be painful and humiliating, it should be endured. He reasoned that public trial is, on the whole, "the best security for the pure, impartial, and efficient administration of justice, the best means for winning for it public confidence and respect."

But this open justice principle does not mean that every trial should be open to the public or the press. In the US, the Supreme Court held that the public and the press have a constitutional right of access to criminal trials under the First Amendment. Despite the right of access, however, the court said trials could be closed under certain extraordinary circumstances. For example, grand jury proceedings and juvenile proceedings are closed as a rule. Also, civil proceedings can be closed when a compelling interest exists and the closure is narrowly tailored to serve the interest. The German Constitutional Court recognizes a right of reporters to attend criminal trials, but the right to obtain information about the judicial process may be limited under the Basic Law.

### **CAMERAS IN THE COURTROOM**

Another issue relating to access to trials is whether *cameras should be permitted in legal proceedings*. The presence of cameras in trial might disturb the parties, witnesses, and even jurors. On the other hand, the public's attendance at judicial proceeding might be best served by a complete audio and video account, which requires cameras in the courtroom. In *Chandler v. Florida* (1981), the US Supreme Court held that the presence of television cameras does not inherently violate a defendant's constitutional right to a fair trial. In the years following *Chandler*, all states developed rules on allowing television or still photographic coverage of some court proceedings. With regard to US federal courts, only a few circuit courts allow electronic coverage of trials.

Broadcasting of trials in other countries varies. In France, during the preliminary stage of a judicial investigation, information likely to put pressure on witnesses cannot be published. Besides, during court proceedings, French courts prohibit photographing, filming, and recording of trials. In England, the Criminal Justice Act bans the taking of photographs or drawing sketches of any person involved in trial. But Scottish courts have permitted the recording and broadcasting of judicial proceedings under strict conditions

and restrictions. After the → BBC sought permission to film the Lockerbie bomb trial, the Scottish appeal court proceedings in 2002 were broadcast live in English and Arabic by television and on the Internet. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) also offered real-time video and audio coverage of its proceedings in three courtrooms through its web page.

In South Africa, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) sought permission to broadcast live (on both television and radio) the entire proceedings involving a corruption. The Supreme Court of Appeal rejected the request because televising the trial would cause undue stress to counsel and judges and might prejudice the defendant. The Constitutional Court ruled in 2006 that the Supreme Court of Appeal was within its discretion in regulating its own process when it refused to allow the broadcasting of the corruption trial. This South African case shows that balancing the media's right to a free press and the defendant's right to a fair trial remains a challenging issue, which reflects each country's social, legal, and cultural backgrounds (→ Communication Law and Policy: Africa).

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Communication Law and Policy: Africa ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► European Court of Human Rights ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Gag Orders ► Right to Know ► Yellow Journalism

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## **Fairness Doctrine**

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The Fairness Doctrine, from its inception in the 1940s to its demise in the 1980s, epitomizes American broadcast law in flux. In adopting the broadcast policy, the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) of the United States intended broadcast licensees to make reasonable effort to discuss controversial issues *and* to do it fairly by

affording equal treatment to conflicting viewpoints. But the doctrine was abolished in 1987 by the Reagan administration, which thought it had outlived its usefulness (→ United States of America: Media System; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Nearly every democratic media system considers impartiality and balancing the *sine qua non* of its broadcasting law and regulation (→ Balance). Yet few countries impose impartial and balanced programming upon their broadcasters the way the United States did with the Fairness Doctrine. Perhaps Israel is the only nation that has directly borrowed from the US broadcasting rule, but the Israeli Fairness Doctrine is not identical to its American model, and should be instructive to those interested in the international and comparative approaches to the Fairness Doctrine.

The US Fairness Doctrine has evolved through the policy statements and rules of the FCC. In 1949, the FCC officially announced the doctrine:

Broadcast licensees have an affirmative duty generally to encourage and implement the broadcast of all sides of controversial public issues over their facilities, over and beyond their obligation to make available on demand opportunities for the expression of opposing views. It is clear that any approximation of fairness in the presentation of any controversy will be difficult if not impossible of achievement unless the licensee plays a conscious and positive role in bringing about balanced presentation of the opposing viewpoints (Report on Editorializing by Broadcast Licensees, 13 F.C.C. 1246, 1251 [1949]).

When revising the Communications Act's Equal Time Rule for political candidates in 1959, Congress noted the obligation of a broadcaster "to operate in the public interest and to afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views on issues of public importance" (47 U.S.C. § 315(a) [1981]). Courts and the FCC read into this statutory language the Fairness Doctrine as a legal obligation for broadcasters.

When challenged in the late 1960s, the Fairness Doctrine was upheld by the US Supreme Court, along with its corollary rules on personal attacks and political editorials. When the public interest requires, the Court held, the FCC may direct the licensees to "present those views and voices which are representative of the community, and which would otherwise be barred from the airwaves" (*Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. FCC*, 395 U.S. 367, 389 [1969]). The Court noted spectrum scarcity and the broadcast licensees' fiduciary duty to the public.

In the 1980s, however, the FCC started questioning the Fairness Doctrine. Given cable and other new electronic technologies (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television; Television Technology; Radio Technology), the FCC wondered about the doctrine's scarcity rationale. A federal appeals court in 1986 declared that the doctrine was not a statutory requirement but an administrative policy, and one year later the FCC repealed the doctrine. It argued that broadcasters suffered from the doctrine's "chilling effect" and that the scarcity issue was no longer valid. In 2000, the DC Circuit Court of Appeals ordered the FCC to abolish the Fairness Doctrine's component rules on personal attacks and political editorials. The Court found no justification for retention of the doctrine's corollary rules, for it had already repealed the doctrine.

Congress has tried unsuccessfully to reinstate the Fairness Doctrine since its abolition in 1987. President Ronald Reagan and his successor, George H. W. Bush, vetoed legislation that would codify the doctrine. Most recently, in 2005, two bills – the Fairness



and Accountability in Broadcasting Act and the Media Ownership Reform Act – were introduced to Congress. Neither bill has made progress.

The theoretical and conceptual foundation of the US Fairness Doctrine is recognized in broadcasting law and regulation internationally. This is no surprise. Whether or not free speech jurisprudence is libertarian, the broadcasting media are more tightly regulated than the print media. Fairness in broadcast programming is mandated or recommended by way of → right of reply or impartiality/balance requirement. A case in point is the European Union Directive (→ European Union: Communication Law), which provides for the right of reply for any natural or legal person when television broadcasting damages the person’s reputation. The right of reply under the EU Directive parallels the personal attack rule of the US Fairness Doctrine.

Broadcasters in Europe have a general duty to present news and issues in an impartial, objective, and neutral way (→ Bias in the News; Neutrality; Objectivity in Reporting). The impartiality requirement especially is accepted in most western European countries. The UK Broadcasting Act, for example, states: “(b) that any news given (in whatever form) in its programmes is presented with due accuracy and impartiality; (c) that due impartiality is preserved on the part of persons providing the programmes as respects matters of political or industrial controversy or relating to current public policy” (→ Accuracy; United Kingdom: Media System).

In a number of European nations, the right of reply is also accepted to insure balance and impartiality in broadcasting. If a program questions the reputation of an individual or institution, the BBC Producers’ Guidelines stipulates, it is presumed that those criticized have a fair opportunity to respond. On the other hand, the impartiality doctrine in European countries does not allow broadcasters to editorialize public issues. This stands in sharp contrast with the US Fairness Doctrine. American broadcasters could express their views on public controversies if they provided others with the opportunity to counter their opinions.

The Israeli Fairness Doctrine traces its origin to the US Fairness Doctrine. Nonetheless, its underlying principles relate more to the European concept of impartiality than to the American notion of fairness. The Broadcasting Law and the Second Authority for Radio and Television Law mandate a fair representation of ideas, but proscribe editorializing. Nor do they provide for discussion of controversial issues as part of programming requirements. Rather, broadcasters should present different views that are “prevalent” in Israeli society.

The right of reply is recognized statutorily (i.e., Second Authority for Radio and Television Law) and administratively (i.e., Telecommunications Regulations). It is also included in an internal broadcasting guideline (i.e., Broadcasting Authority Regulations). Besides, Israeli courts accept it in incorporating the personal attack rule of the US Fairness Doctrine into Israeli law. Most significantly, the Israeli Fairness Doctrine is thriving while its US progenitor has died. In tweaking the American doctrine to their legal system, Israelis have turned to the European principle of impartiality and pluralism (→ Israel: Media System; Plurality).

SEE ALSO: ► Access to the Media ► Accuracy ► Balance ► Bias in the News ► Cable Television ► Communication and Law ► European Union: Communication Law ► Federal

Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Israel: Media System ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Neutrality ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Right of Correction ▶ Right of Reply ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Technology ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## **False Consensus**

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False consensus is the inaccurate perception that our own beliefs are similar to those of others, when in fact they are not similar (Ross et al. 1977), and the tendency to see our behavioral choices and judgments as common and situationally appropriate, while viewing alternative responses as uncommon, deviant, and/or inappropriate (Mullen et al. 1985; Bosveld et al. 1994). Overestimation inaccuracies and deviance perceptions are based on a social judgment projection that opinions, beliefs, values, traits, and behaviors like one's own are more prevalent than they in fact are. This “egocentric self-anchor” or tendency to overestimate inaccuracies apparently exists even when the individual's attribute is in the minority (Sanders & Mullen 1983; → Social Judgment Theory; Social Perception).

Two major predictors have been offered as a partial explanation for false consensus: the notion of self-serving bias and the notion of available heuristic. *Self-serving bias* refers to the human tendency to take personal credit for successes (as the result of our own disposition). It also refers to the individual's tendency to ignore, rationalize, and/or deny responsibility for failures, often viewed as dependent upon situation (Sherman et al. 1984). We tend to overestimate the typicality of our undesirable actions or unsuccessful

efforts. This cognitive bias is generalized to an evaluation of ambiguous information to benefit self-interest (Miller & Ross 1975).

*Available heuristic* connotes a bias toward estimating an outcome's probability based on simplicity. It is easy to imagine. Available heuristics are often emotionally tinged. Imagined consensus lends an implicit aura of support from others for our position and/or behaviors. This sense of certainty reduces the need to alter ourselves or to change the status quo, a basic assumption of → consistency theories. Other explanations for the false consensus phenomenon include selective exposure to and recall of others who agreed with our own choices and judgments. This personal strategy enables us to appear “normal,” provides self-enhancement, and satisfies need for social support.

Further theoretical elaboration of false consensus comes from studies examining concepts such as need for uniqueness, threats to the self, self-schemas, differential construal, embarrassment, overconfidence, attitude importance, social distance, outgroups, monetary incentives, and selectivity processes (Bosveld et al. 1994; Jones 2004; → Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Availability of similar others facilitates false consensus. Availability of dissimilar others depresses the effect. False consensus tends to be most prevalent concerning issues on which there is wide diversity and heterogeneity of opinion range (Bosveld et al. 1994). Perceived social distance, or overall level of perceived similarity between self and typical target group member, reflects the extent to which self is perceived as generally representative of the group (→ Group Communication). Perception of social distance is theorized to mediate the false consensus effect, further explaining why ingroup false consensus exceeds outgroup false consensus – more social distance is perceived with the outgroup (Jones 2004; → Third-Person Effects).

Evidence suggests a *cultural influence* on self-serving biases. The phenomenon is routinely found in studies focusing on western individuals, but may not generalize to Asians. Markus & Kitayama (1991) noted that many Asian cultures stress the harmonious and interdependent collective, whereas American culture emphasizes unique individuals who seek independent self-fulfillment (→ Communication Modes, Western; Communication Modes, Asian). Kitayama et al. (1997) studied American and Japanese university students and found American situations tended to be conducive to self-enhancement and that Americans took advantage of those situations. Japanese situations fostered self-criticism and stimulated Japanese engagement in self-criticism. Historical and cultural processes are thought to influence collectively shared ideas of the self as independent or interdependent and ultimately reinforce psychological tendencies and processes, thus extending and sustaining cultural norms and values from generation to generation.

False consensus has been linked with social issues, such as tobacco, alcohol and drug consumption, beliefs concerning welfare reduction, presidential preferences during election campaigns, body shape and weight, risky sexual behavior, and depression (Mäkelä 1997; → Applied Communication Research).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Cognition  
▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Consistency Theories  
▶ Emotion ▶ False Uniqueness ▶ Group Communication ▶ Selective Exposure  
▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Judgment Theory  
▶ Social Perception ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## False Uniqueness

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A person expresses false uniqueness, an inaccurate social comparison, when that individual perceives that differences between his or her own attitudes, abilities, and behaviors and those of others are larger than they really are (Suls & Wan 1987). This difference is thought especially prevalent when one's own behavior is desirable and the individual estimates the prevalence of others exhibiting, or willing to exhibit, the same or similar behaviors (Monin & Norton 2003) (→ Pluralistic Ignorance; Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases). The result is an underestimate of how common one's desirable attributes and successful behaviors are in relation to those of others and one essentially casts oneself in the role of "better than thou."

Historical treatises stimulating investigation of false uniqueness can be found in Festinger (1954) (→ Festinger, Leon), Schachter (1959), and Fields and Schuman (1976–1977). Their various approaches to explaining the human mind focused on the social comparisons that an individual makes between self and others. According to Fields &

Schuman, a particular problem humans face during this process is that direct information on others' views may be absent, unavailable, equivocal, or for some reason not sufficiently compelling. Nonetheless, humans do not let informational deficiencies prevent them from estimating what others think or do. Holmes (1978) used the term "attributional projection" to summarize situations when differences are found between perceptions and actuality, but noted that the functionality of the process requires more evidence than projection theories have been able to provide. Campbell (1986) found that individuals overestimated consensus for their opinions and low abilities ( $\rightarrow$  False Consensus), but underestimated consensus for high abilities. In other words, people tend to think their high abilities are shared by a smaller proportion of the population than really exists. Campbell isolated important predictors of over- and underestimation. Higher relevancy on ability was associated with decreased accuracy, greater overestimation on low abilities, and greater underestimation on high abilities. Individuals with higher self-esteem were more likely to overestimate the sharing of opinions by others, but also were more likely to underestimate others' shared high abilities. Psychological fear also has been shown to be an important mediating variable in explaining false uniqueness. Low-fear subjects tended to underestimate the incidence of low-fear among their peers, while high-fear subjects were more inaccurate in their estimates of high fear among peers (Suls and Wan 1987).

Earlier, Fields and Schuman (1976–1977) explored three Detroit sample surveys to examine social comparisons concerning issues of racism. They found great inaccuracies in perceptions of others across a spectrum of racial issues. In particular, they isolated a process demonstrating that respondents felt others' opinions were the same as their own. They also postulated a "conservative bias," the perception that the population is more conservative on racial issues than it actually is (see also Glynn 1989). They explained these phenomena by evoking the widespread understanding that American ideals were at odds with racial prejudice. In this case, racial conservatives thought of themselves as no worse than others (who were perceived as even more conservative), but liberals were prone to think of themselves as closer to the ideal than the average, illustrating the difference between false consensus (conservative perception) and false uniqueness (liberal perception). Fields and Schuman (1976–1977) summarized additional factors affecting or interacting with accuracy of perceptions: communication, coordination, object salience, role relationships, attraction, personality traits, and view of others' social positions.

There may be a cultural bias implicit in the concept of false uniqueness. Heine et al. (1999) found the phenomenon was rare among Japanese, whereas it was common among Americans (Campbell 1986). Vignoles et al. (2000) referred to a "distinctiveness principle," or a motive within identity that pushes toward establishing and maintaining a sense of difference between oneself and others. This motive, apparently typical within western cultures, is not incompatible with non-western cultural systems; however, distinctiveness in non-western cultures more likely will be associated with group distinctiveness rather than individual distinctiveness.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Emotion ▶ False Consensus ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases ▶ Social Perception

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## Family Communication Patterns

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Communication patterns in families refer to repeated interaction styles and behaviors. A single family member's communication behaviors over time can be patterned, but family communication scholars tend to focus on patterns among family members. Family relationships are typically involuntary and long-lasting (Vangelisti 1993). One usually cannot choose one's siblings, for instance, and sibling relationships – even strained ones – commonly endure for most of one's lifetime. The involuntary and lengthy nature of family relations provides myriad opportunities for various communication patterns to emerge.

The meaning of any particular interaction between family members is informed by previously established communication patterns, sometimes even patterns involving previous generations (Vangelisti 1993). Such family communication patterns are so central to family life that some scholars state that the very nature of family relationships is constituted by the ongoing pattern of exchanges (Rogers & Escudero 2004).

Although there is widespread agreement that patterns are important in families, the notion of a pattern can have many different meanings. One reason that conceptualizations of patterns vary is that patterns develop over different temporal periods. Messman

and Canary (1998, 122) stated that most of the empirical literature defines patterns as “recurring act-to-act sequences of interaction behaviors.” Yet many meaningful communication patterns take longer to unfold. Crouter and Maguire (1998), for instance, found seasonal patterns in parent–adolescent interaction: parents were more involved with adolescents during the summer than during other seasons. Additionally, there are intergenerational communication patterns; those that develop in one generation appear to influence patterns in the subsequent generation (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002). Individuals who are raised in families that discourage open conflict, for example, tend to expect little conflict in their adult relationships and react negatively when conflict does occur (→ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span; Intergenerational Communication).

### PROMINENT RESEARCH FOCI AND FINDINGS

Although patterns of family communication can be conceptualized in various ways, there are two main *clusters of existing research*. The first is a typological approach, which focuses on relatively broad patterns of interaction and the rules and norms associated with those broad patterns (→ Communication: Relationship Rules; Relational Schemas). The second is a behavioral sequence approach, which examines how behaviors are patterned within particular conversations (→ Interpersonal Communication).

#### Typological Perspective

The typological approach has its roots in McLeod and Chaffee’s (1972) research on family types (→ Chaffee, Steven H.). McLeod and Chaffee identified four general family communication patterns, which were based on two communication dimensions: *concept-orientation* (i.e., the degree to which open discussion of ideas is encouraged) and *socio-orientation* (i.e., the degree to which harmonious family relations are fostered and emphasized). Fitzpatrick and her colleagues (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie 1994) adapted McLeod and Chaffee’s framework to create the Revised Family Communication Pattern (RFCP) instrument. The more recent conceptualization retains two dimensions that are similar to the original, but concept-orientation has been renamed “conversation orientation” and socio-orientation has been relabeled “conformity-orientation.”

*Conversation orientation* is the extent to which families foster open interaction among family members about their thoughts and feelings. In families at the high end of this dimension, members interact frequently and for large amounts of time. High conversation orientation is associated with the tendency to engage rather than avoid conflict and the belief that rewarding family life depends on open, frequent, and substantive communication. In families at the low end of conversation orientation, family members interact less frequently and discuss fewer topics openly with one another. Associated with low conversation orientation is the belief that open, frequent, and substantive interaction is unnecessary for family effective functioning (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002).

*Conformity orientation* is the extent to which families encourage all members to have similar attitudes, beliefs, and values. Interactions in families at the high end of this dimension typically emphasize obedience to parents and the interdependence of family members (→ Family Decision-Making). Families high in conformity orientation tend to

favor hierarchical family structure and conflict avoidance. Conversely, families at the low end of conformity orientation encourage individuality in family members' thoughts and feelings and tend to be less cohesive. Communication in these families stresses the independence and equality of family members, including children (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002).

The impact of each orientation depends on the degree of the other (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002). Thus, instead of considering conversation and conformity orientations separately, it is useful to conceptualize the two dimensions as underlying *four patterns of family communication*: laissez-faire, pluralistic, protective, and consensual. "Laissez-faire families" are low in both conversation and conformity orientation. Family members in these families do not communicate often, and when they do, they tend to focus on a few topics without becoming very involved in the conversation (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002). Parents in laissez-faire families tend to believe that all members should be able to make their own decisions, and they demonstrate little interest in their children's decisions. Children in these families are relatively likely to be influenced by social ties outside of the family (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie 1994).

"Pluralistic families" are high in conversation orientation and low in conformity orientation. Family members interact openly and supportively while exerting little pressure on one another to conform. Parents in pluralistic families encourage their children to autonomously develop their opinions through active participation in family discussions. Children in pluralistic families learn to think independently and to value rational argumentation (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002).

"Protective families" are low in conversation orientation and high in conformity orientation. Family interaction stresses obedience to parents and discounts independent thinking in children (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie 1994). Parents in protective families tend to make family decisions without sensing a need to explain their logic to their children. Children in protective families learn to avoid conflict and not to question authority figures outside the family system (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002).

"Consensual families" are high in both conversation and conformity orientation. Communication in these families attempts to maintain the existing family hierarchy while also considering new ways of expressing thoughts and feelings (Fitzpatrick & Ritchie 1994). Parents in these families engage their children in decision-making discussions although they hold the ultimate decision-making power. Children in consensual families tend to evaluate messages according to how consistent they are with their parents' attitudes, beliefs, and values (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002).

This typology of families based on family communication patterns is important beyond the theoretical utility of categorization. The predictive power of the typological model is evidenced by a number of studies of children's outcomes. For example, there is evidence that family communication patterns influence children's communication apprehension, conflict behavior, and social restraint and social withdrawal (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002).

### **Behavioral Sequences**

Another large group of studies examines family communication patterns by focusing on specific behavioral sequences in interaction. Given the wide variety of research on



interaction patterns in families, it is impossible to note all the specific patterns that have been examined. Three *types of patterns* are particularly prominent.

### *Relational Control*

The relational control perspective holds that relationships are self-regulating systems characterized by three dimensions: trust, intimacy, and control (for a review, see Rogers & Escudero 2004). Control is the primary focus of the → relational control perspective. The perspective recognizes three types of messages, or control maneuvers. *One-up* movements attempt to gain control of the exchange; e.g., ordering or commanding another family member to do something counts as a one-up message. *One-down* movements allow the other person to control the definition of the situation; e.g., indicating support for and acceptance of another's command is a one-down message. Finally, *one-across* maneuvers attempt to neutralize control; e.g., extending another person's assertion by simply continuing with the theme of that statement is considered a one-across message. One-across messages neither assert control nor grant it to the other person.

A series of control maneuvers forms a control configuration, or pattern. In a symmetrical pattern of control, interaction partners respond similarly, using the same type of message. Symmetrical configurations can be competitive (one-up/one-up), submissive (one-down/one-down), or neutral (one-across/one-across). In a complementary pattern, partners respond differently, using opposite (one-up/one-down or one-down/one-up) types of messages. In a transition pattern, one partner uses a one-across message.

The relational control perspective characterizes family relationships on the basis of two continua. The first dimension – i.e., rigid vs flexible – refers to the extent to which the same individual remains in control or different individuals gain control over time. The other continuum – i.e., stable vs unstable – refers to the extent to which control shifts are predictable or unpredictable. Several studies have indicated that relational control patterns are associated with marital satisfaction (for a review, see Rogers & Escudero 2004). For example, rigid dominance by either partner (i.e., when one person consistently responds to their partner's one-up messages with one-down messages) is related to dissatisfaction in marriage (Rogers & Escudero 2004).

### *Negative Reciprocity*

Extensive empirical research based on a variety of definitions and coding schemes suggests that family relationships tend to be dissatisfying when they are characterized by exchanges of negative behaviors (e.g., defensiveness, expressions of negative affect, complaints). The inverse correlation between negative reciprocity and relational satisfaction holds even after controlling for overall negativity rates (Gottman 1979). This connection between negative reciprocity and dissatisfaction has been established with measures focusing on nonverbal behaviors, verbal behaviors, and a combination of both verbal and nonverbal assessments (for a review, see Messman & Canary 1998). Although some studies have suggested that the verbal exchange is less important than the affective aspect of negative reciprocity (Pike & Sillars 1985), the link between negative reciprocity and marital dissatisfaction is one of the most consistent findings in family communication research (Messman & Canary 1998). There is also a link between negative reciprocity in marriage and eventual divorce (Messman & Canary 1998; → Marital Communication).

*Demand/Withdraw*

In the demand/withdraw pattern of communication, one relational partner nags, complains, or criticizes while the other person avoids the demanding partner. No particular order of behavior is implied in the pattern's label. Indeed, sequential analyses indicate that withdrawal can lead to demands just as demands can lead to withdrawal (Klinetob & Smith 1996). Additionally, both men and women sometimes play the role of demander and withdrawer in relationships (Eldridge & Christensen 2002). Although most demand/withdraw research has been conducted in the context of marriage relationships, it also occurs between other family members, including between parents and adolescents (Caughlin & Malis 2004).

Numerous studies have confirmed the importance of this pattern to family well-being. An inverse association between the demand/withdraw pattern and concurrent marital satisfaction has been established through both observations and participant reports of demand/withdraw (Heavey et al. 1993). The prospective outcomes associated with demand/withdraw are somewhat less clear. Demand/withdraw (particularly woman-demand/man-withdraw) often predicts declining relational satisfaction (Heavey et al. 1995) and marital dissolution (Gottman & Levenson 2000). Some studies, however, have failed to replicate such findings (Heavey et al. 1993), and demand/withdraw also can presage increasing relational satisfaction (Heavey et al. 1995). More longitudinal research is needed to clarify the impact of demand/withdraw over time in marital relationships.

In addition to being linked to dissatisfying relationships, demand/withdraw is associated with other important outcomes. A rigid pattern of husband-demand/wife-withdraw, for instance, may be associated with spousal abuse (Eldridge & Christensen 2002). Also, demand/withdraw between parents and adolescents is correlated with low self-esteem and high drug use among the adolescents, even after controlling for overall level of parent-adolescent conflict (Caughlin & Malis 2004). Future investigations should continue to examine the implications of demand/withdraw apart from the well-documented connection with concurrent marital satisfaction.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The research on family communication patterns is already quite varied and has produced important advances. Still, future research could yield even greater insights. One possibility involves investigating different combinations of patterns and communication behaviors in families. Research on patterns is often rooted in a systemic perspective (Rogers & Escudero 2004), which implies that the impact of various patterns needs to be understood within the larger communicative context. There is evidence, for example, that the aversive influence of demand/withdraw in marriage is moderated by affectionate communication (Caughlin & Huston 2002). More research ought to examine the interplay among various types of patterns as well as the impact of this interplay.

Another potentially important direction would be to pay more attention to behavioral patterns involving multiple family members. The important literature on alliances and coalitions indicates that alliances, especially intergenerational alliances in which a parent turns to a child rather than a spouse, are associated with poor well-being for the child (Jacobvitz & Bush 1996). Overly strong mother-father coalitions can also be problematic

(Vuchinich & Angelelli 1995). Compared to the voluminous work on dyadic patterns like negative reciprocity, the research on alliances and coalitions has not been a dominant focus, particularly within the communication discipline. However, the research that has been completed demonstrates the potential utility of focusing on patterns in triads and even larger groups of family members.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Chaffee, Steven H. ▶ Communication: Relationship Rules ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Family Decision-Making ▶ Intergenerational Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Relational Control ▶ Relational Schemas

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## Family Decision-Making

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The family is a complex unit comprised of individuals with varied cognitive, emotional, and behavioral characteristics and abilities that can greatly affect family decision-making across an individual's life-span. "Decision-making" describes the process by which families make choices, judgments, and ultimately come to conclusions that guide behaviors. Family decision-making implies that more than one member's input and agreement is involved (Scanzoni & Polonko 1980). The decision-making process is centered on core communication processes involved in creating shared meaning. In the decision-making process, families can acknowledge the differences among members and negotiate their needs for closeness and independence (Baxter & Montgomery 1996).

### NATURE OF FAMILY DECISIONS

Aspects of verbal (e.g., words, syntax) and nonverbal communication (e.g., eye contact, tone, vocalics, gestures, expressions, etc.; → Nonverbal Signals, Effects of), listening (e.g., passive or active), and conflict (e.g., collaborative, competitive, or avoidance) negotiation skills play important roles in the myriad of family decision-making across the life-span (→ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span). Such elements range from everyday decisions such as where to live, to rent or buy a home, and which schools or universities to attend, to increasingly life-altering decisions such as whom to marry or whether or not to have children and how many. Difficult family decisions are made when faced with more multifaceted family issues ranging from "should mom move into our household because she can no longer independently take care of herself" to excruciatingly difficult chronic health and end-of-life decisions such as treatments for a cancer diagnosis or a "do not resuscitate" (DNR) decision. Such decisions are made either within the family unit or in consultation with extended family from birth to end-of-life.

Decisions within families can be classified into types such as: instrumental, affective, social, economic, and technical. *Instrumental decisions* are those that focus on issues of money, health, shelter, and food for the family members (Epstein et al. 1982). *Affective decisions* deal with choices related to feelings and → emotions such as deciding about getting married. *Social decisions* typically consist of decisions related to the values, roles,

and goals of the family (see, e.g., Noller & Fitzpatrick 1993). Such decisions may include whether the children will be raised going to one church or another or whether one parent will stay at home while the children are preschool age. *Economic decisions* focus on choices about using and gathering family resources, such as whether an adolescent should get a job and contribute to the family income or buy his or her own car. *Technical decisions* consist of the smaller decisions that must be made to carry out a larger decision. For instance, if a family decides that one member must stop working in order to go back to school for an advanced degree, then a series of technical decisions must be made so the larger decision will materialize (Noller & Fitzpatrick 1993). Families use a variety of decision-making processes ranging from using familiar approaches over and over to more varied methods depending on the type of decision, their emotional state, and most often their stage of development across the life-span, from when the children are babies to when they are in school to midlife and later-life issues.

### **DECISION-MAKING IN EARLIER FAMILY LIFE**

The temperament and disposition of each child can greatly vary within the same family. Consequently, the relationship between parents and different siblings is dynamic and unique, with each individual responding to and modifying the behavior of the other (e.g., Pecchioni et al. 2005). Family decision-making processes are a two-way street with parents influencing communicative patterns of their children and vice versa. Joint decision-making and autonomy are best achieved through collaborative problem-solving, parental modeling, negotiation, and compromise (e.g., allowing the child to decide when to set the table or when to walk the dogs; Crockenberg et al. 1996).

When children are given opportunities for decision-making in areas that matter less, they are more likely to conform to parental expectations that matter more. Conflict resolution in collaborative decision-making between parents and children has been found to play out in later childhood in the resolution of peer-group interpersonal issues (e.g., Kochanska 1992). Developmental stages and child dispositions are important factors to consider in family decision-making in the early years of family life. As children grow older and more mature, they can be granted more autonomy and play a larger role in individual and family decision-making (Baumrind 1996).

### **DECISION-MAKING IN LATER FAMILY LIFE**

Research has consistently shown that serious illness impacts the lives of patients, their families and loved ones, with a number of scholars making the argument that serious illness is indeed a family issue (e.g., Sparks & Pecchioni 2007). Serious illnesses such as a cancer diagnosis add demands, strains, and hardships to families who must deal with numerous changes and decisions that impact the entire family (→ *Bad News in Medicine, Communicating*). Families are often uniquely qualified in terms of understanding patient attitudes and decision-making strategies and can therefore assist as an important resource in helping the patient to make better decisions about their care (Blustein 1998).

In a review of *variables affecting family decision-making* and family dynamics in later life, Rothchild (1994) found that there are a range of factors confronting families as they

decide about terminal care of a family member. Many families react to their sense of guilt and hopelessness by pushing for maximal medical intervention until the end of life. This often results in patient failure to resist such pressure and → persuasion, consequently accepting treatments that they very likely would not have chosen on their own. Rothchild claims that family decision-making is impacted according to the following variables: (1) patient's role in the family (boss, scapegoat, caregiver), (2) ages of patient and family members, (3) family continuity and cohesion, (4) who is considered to be "family," (5) how information and decisions are shared within the family, (6) presence of denial, guilt, and anger, (7) communication of treatment wishes to proxies, (8) comfort with sophisticated technology, (9) ethnicity and religion, and (10) economic pressures.

Family decisions are negotiated every day from family decisions in the childhood and adolescent years to middle- and later-life family decisions, many of which occur in health-care environments. Family decision processes in the health-care environment are particularly difficult and complex because of the uncertainties, emotions, technical language, and subsequent health outcomes (e.g., Sparks 2003). Conflicting information from various sources can be difficult to navigate and process to make the most informed health-care decisions. Families make decisions about health issues using information from a variety of sources, including insurance provider lists, internet research, recommendations from primary care physicians and specialists, interpersonal communication with friends and family members, and mediated messages (see Pecchioni & Sparks 2007).

Individuals and their family members process the uncertainties involved in health-care decision-making in different ways due to individual differences in message processing and the history of family member dynamics. For example, developing the most effective communication to encourage detection and prevention of a health concern assumes that the patient will engage in message-relevant thinking (see, e.g., Sparks & Turner, in press). Early research on persuasive message processing focused on issues such as the time and attention allocated to the message, the comprehension of the message content, and the acceptance of the message conclusions (Todorov et al. 2002; → Aging and Message Production and Processing; Memory, Message). Even though people can carefully process messages they do not always do so. Individuals who process messages systematically will think carefully about the message and engage in thoughts and judgments that are relevant to the message content. Individuals are economical and will only invest in the cognitive effort required to complete the current task. In order to engage in systematic processing people must be suitably motivated, and have adequate cognitive resources.

If messages are perceived to have features that are high in quality or very appealing, the message receiver should generate positive ideas and opinions. If the message is reviewed to have features low in quality the thoughts generated by the message will be negative, leading to less influence or a different outcome. Thus, *systematic processing* is the highest pursuit of cognitive processing (→ Cognition; Information Processing). Systematic processing of messages occurs in various ways. Cognitive processes refer to such information-processing activities such as perceiving, abstracting, judging, elaborating, rehearsing, and recalling from → memory. If one can motivate careful processing, message receivers will engage in message elaboration and engage in the recommended actions, which will result in more effective decision-making and long-term change. For family decision-making related to an emerging or chronic health issue, this could mean the difference between

(1) early detection of alcohol abuse and living, or failing to detect alcohol abuse and dying; (2) early detection of heart disease and living, or failing to detect heart disease and having a heart attack; or (3) early detection of cancer and living, or failing to detect cancer and dying. In addition, the role of the family in the decision-making process in the initial stages that surround the end of life can be particularly important as the care-giving team is often comprised of the patient's family, loved ones, and interdisciplinary health-care teams (Connor et al. 2002).

### **FAMILY DECISION-MAKING SOLUTIONS TO CONSIDER**

Family decision-making has become increasingly complex as family life has dramatically changed over the last several decades. Changing roles of women, increasing integration of women in the labor force, increases in divorce rates, increased mobility, increased longevity, and complex health-care environments are just some of the crucial changes that are impacting families and thus, arguably, impacting family decision-making across the life-span. Where does this leave family decision-making in the twenty-first century?

A few final thoughts that families should consider when implementing decision-making processes: (1) identify the issue, (2) understand all possible alternative strategies and options, (3) achieve satisfaction in choosing the best strategy for the family, (4) enact an action plan for implementing the decision, (5) evaluate the decision and refine as needed. These are a few simple steps to get families started in decision-making processes. However, more evidence from empirically based studies is needed to substantiate ways in which family decision-making processes are impacted by and impact individuals and their family units in our increasingly complex multicultural society.

SEE ALSO: ► Aging and Message Production and Processing ► Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ► Cognition ► Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ► Emotion ► Information Processing ► Memory ► Memory, Message ► Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ► Persuasion

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## Fandom

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A fan is someone who is more than an ordinary, occasional → television viewer, → book reader, → Internet user, music listener, or movie-goer (→ Cinema). The etymology of “fan” is the Latin word *fanaticus*, which is also the source of the word fanatic. Bielby et al. (1999, 35) state, while being a consumer of a medium is one thing, “to be a ‘fan,’ however, is to participate in a range of activities that extend beyond the private act of viewing and reflects an enhanced emotional involvement” with the narrative.

Fandom is a community of fans, a sub-culture of fans, who share common interest, empathy, and enthusiasm for a → popular culture product as well as camaraderie and communication with each other. The origins of the concept are often associated with the 1939 World Science Fiction Convention (aka Worldcon), the longest running science fiction convention, which continues today (→ Fantasy–Reality Distinction). Fandom, however, is a sub-culture that goes well beyond the science fiction/fantasy genre. While Trekkies (fans of the television series and movie versions of *Star Trek*) are perhaps the most often referenced group (as well as parodied on television programs such as *Saturday Night Live*), others include *Harry Potter* devotees, romance novel readers, celebrity fan clubs, → soap opera viewers, and team sports fans. With the arrival of → reality TV series, fans have organized for communal viewing around programs such as *The Bachelor* and *American Idol*.

The totality of fans dedicated to a particular object or subject is referred to as its “fan base.” The concept of this interconnected base started with sports fans but the same phenomenon quickly became apparent in behavior ranging from symbolic appreciation



to extreme parasocial interaction, when a fan's interest extends beyond accepted boundaries of viewing and behavior associated with a particular celebrity, television show, film, → video game, author, or details about them (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships; Sports and the Media, History of; Sports as Popular Communication). Responses fall along a continuum, ranging from "normal" adoration to "extreme" obsession, in the form of stalking and harassment. Jenkins (1988, 86) argues, "Fans appear to be frighteningly out of control, undisciplined, and unrepentant, rogue readers." The 1971 film *Play Misty for Me* is a classic example of a female radio listener's obsession with a DJ (played by Clint Eastwood). Examples of other fan fixations include repeated break-ins to late night talk show host David Letterman's home, the tragic 1989 fatal shooting of *My Sister Sam* star Rebecca Schaeffer by an obsessed fan, and the 1995 murder of *Tejano* singer Selena by the president of her fan club.

Participating in the community of fandom involves more than active consumption of media; it also involves "doing" (→ Exposure to Film; Exposure to Television). Some fans are active on related Internet sites, posting opinions on television programs, commentary on characters, or playing games and downloading images (→ Internet and Popular Culture). Others write fan fiction and critiques, produce art, scratch videos, construct websites, and share their enthusiasm with like-minded others (→ Fiction; Fictional Media Content). The activity of fiction fans who rework storylines, find continuity errors, or construct alternative endings is called fanwank. Fanzines are another popular expression, originally in printed form but today increasingly found on the Internet (→ Zines). Fans also hold conventions dedicated to topics, genres, titles, or characters, such as a 2004 academic conference dedicated to what is known as Buffy Studies. Groups also dress in costumes and clothing associated with an event or cast such as fans of the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*.

As a result of the size of groups and purchasing potential, fans constitute an *economic base* of great interest to product marketers and advertisers. Sports fans are an emotionally invested group and buy millions of dollars worth of team-related, logo-laden t-shirts, hats, jackets, mugs, and related paraphernalia. Fans of particular television programs not only buy show-related merchandise, but also other products advertised within the time the program airs. Not all fans organize spontaneously, however. Creating communities around particular media phenomenon is frequently the result of public relations and → advertising campaigns designed to organize consumers.

Advertisers focus on this self-selected audience in hopes of building brand loyalty to the program and to products associated with it, hence creating a brand community (→ Brands). Examples include product placements such as in the HBO hit *Sex in the City* of Absolut Vodka, Barneys Department Store, and Manolo Blahnik shoes, and advertisers "surrounding" programs, such as General Motors' ads during the CBS reality television program *Survivor*. Public relations firms capitalize on the interactivity of the web by inviting visitors to join clubs or fan groups, and take online quizzes. The website for the television program *Desperate Housewives* invites viewers to shop for show-related merchandise, take the "Which housewife are you?" quiz, and watch recent episodes.

Defining who is a fan and the degree of fandom requires engaging with definitions of *audience*. Beyond discussions of active versus passive consumers, level of involvement, degree of enthusiasm, and questions of consistency in relation to media use or symbol consumption are also assessed. Sandvoss (2005) argues for the importance of the polysemic

(multiple meanings) readings of fan texts and the relationship between that and audiences' ability to evade, resist, or participate in acts of social and cultural power (→ Power and Discourse).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience ▶ Book ▶ Brands ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Exposure to Film ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Fiction ▶ Fictional Media Content ▶ Internet ▶ Internet and Popular Culture ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Perception ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Reality TV ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Behavior, Media Effects on ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Sports and the Media, History of ▶ Television ▶ Video Games ▶ Zines

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## **Fantasy/Imagination**

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The past three decades have witnessed a considerable increase in empirical research into the origins, contents, and effects of people's fantasy and imagination. What exactly is meant by fantasy and imagination, however, often remains unclear. Moreover, the two terms are often used without distinction, suggesting that they capture one and the same

experience. Of course, fantasy and imagination overlap to some extent. Both activities require the generation of thoughts, and in both activities associative thinking plays a role. However, there are also differences between the two activities. First, fantasy usually takes place separately from the context from which the fantasy emerged. Fantasizing is a shift of attention away from an ongoing task or external stimulus toward a response to an internal stimulus. Imagination, by contrast, does not necessarily take place apart from an external context. Imagination is the ability to reproduce images or concepts originally derived from the basic senses but now reflected in one's consciousness (Singer 1966).

A second difference between fantasy and imagination lies in the degree of goal directedness. Fantasizing is typically a free-floating mental activity (Klinger 1990). Imagination, on the other hand, is more goal directed. Typical examples of imagination are efforts to visualize the appearance of a monster described in a book, to "see" a friend's face when she is not around, or to give an accurate account of a movie just seen.

Fantasy and/or imagination can be related to media exposure in three successive phases, namely before, during, and after exposure (→ Exposure to Communication Content). This entry focuses only on the first phase. The role of fantasy and imagination during and after exposure to media content is discussed by Valkenburg and Peter (2006). The role of fantasy and imagination before exposure to entertainment lies in their potential to influence one's → selective exposure to media content. Three hypotheses have been proposed for how certain types of fantasy may cause changes in people's exposure to media entertainment: the → escapism hypothesis, the thematic correspondence hypothesis, and the thematic compensation hypothesis.

According to the *escapism hypothesis*, exposure to media entertainment is stimulated by an overproduction of unpleasant fantasies. There are two versions of the escapism hypothesis. First, the thought-blocking hypothesis argues that individuals suffering from many unpleasant fantasies expose themselves more often to media content in order to drive away these unpleasant thoughts. Second, the boredom-avoidance hypothesis argues that individuals suffering from a fantasy style called "poor attentional control" spend more time with media content. Individuals with poor attentional control are easily bored and distracted, and hence experience a great deal of fantasies, mind-wandering, and drifting thoughts (Henning & Vorderer 2001). Both versions of the escapism hypothesis have been investigated only in correlational research (→ Correlation Analysis). Consistent with the thought-blocking hypothesis, people with an unpleasant fantasy style watched more television (McIlwraith 1998). In line with the boredom-avoidance hypothesis, people suffering from poor attentional control watched more television in general and more entertainment programs in particular (Schallow & McIlwraith 1986). News and informational programs were watched less frequently by these people, probably because news and informational programs are less likely to fulfill an escapist function than entertainment programs (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking; Exposure to News).

The *thematic correspondence hypothesis* argues that the themes people fantasize about directly influence the types of entertainment they prefer to view. It assumes, for example, that people select more violent or heroic entertainment contents if they have more aggressive or heroic fantasies. This hypothesis received support in a series of studies (Huesmann & Eron 1986). It is, however, an open question whether fantasy is the

causal factor in this relationship because watching violent entertainment may also stimulate people to fantasize more about such themes. The fantasy–media exposure relationship may be bidirectional: certain types of media content could stimulate corresponding fantasy themes, which in turn could stimulate interest in watching these media contents.

The *thematic compensation hypothesis* proposes that people select media contents that reflect those types of fantasies that they cannot produce themselves. For example, individuals who are unable to produce arousing sexual fantasies may turn to erotica or pornography. This hypothesis is consistent with Freud’s (1908/1962) assumption that one’s motivation for fantasies is unsatisfied wishes. The thematic correspondence hypothesis presumes a negative relationship between fantasizing about specific contents and the viewing of corresponding program contents. However, the research to date has only shown null and positive relationships between exposure to specific media contents and corresponding fantasies. As discussed, frequent viewing of aggressive media content goes together with more fantasies about aggressive themes. Frequent watching of erotic content is related to fantasizing about similar themes (Leitenberg & Henning 1995). These findings suggest that the thematic compensation hypothesis may not be tenable.

Two out of three hypotheses forwarded in this entry seem to be valid. Both the escapism hypothesis and the thematic correspondence hypothesis received empirical support. However, the thematic compensation hypothesis, which assumes that people choose entertainment themes that are opposite to their fantasies, appears to be invalid.

SEE ALSO: ► Correlation Analysis ► Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ► Escapism ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Exposure to News ► Selective Exposure

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# Fantasy–Reality Distinction

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The ability of young children to distinguish between fantasy and reality with regard to television, and the changes that occur in those perceptions have significant implications for their preferences in television content, their comprehension of such content, and their emotional responses (e.g., fear reactions; → Fear Induction through Media Content in Children). By applying developmental psychology theories, researchers primarily in the field of communication studies have found that developing the ability to distinguish fantasy from reality may influence the tendency to imitate dangerous behaviors, to expect unrealistic solutions to problems, and to hold misconceptions about the nature of social life. It may also have an impact on purchasing decisions.

While “television reality” is a complex and multidimensional concept, the literature relates more specifically to the degree of factuality of the mediated reality, for example: (1) the ability to determine when people and events presented on television exist beyond the screen; (2) the understanding that some characters on television are real people representing themselves while others are actors playing a role; (3) the distinction between events depicted on the screen that happen in the outside world and those that are staged and created according to a script.

Research studies have sought to determine at what age and through what processes children learn to understand that television is not a “magic window” (Hawkins 1977) to the real world, but a constructed reality. Studies of social realism focus on children’s answers to questions such as: Are the people, places, and events on television similar to the ones familiar to us in the real world? Are they believable? Is it probable that events depicted in fictional programs will take place? (→ Fiction). Is knowledge acquired through viewing television applicable in real life?

In most cases, children are not systematically instructed in developing such distinctions, but rather they develop them on their own – as they mature, as they gain experience and come to understand the real world, and as their knowledge of the media expands. Until the age of 4, on average, children believe that everything on television is real, that television characters also live outside of the screen, and that action in the real world can affect these characters directly (e.g., they can pet an animal on television; they expect a television character to recognize them and react to their speech; Lemish 1987). As children grow older, their perception of television as a “magic window” is gradually replaced by a growing understanding that television reality is not quite like the everyday reality in which they live (→ Media Use and Child Development; Developmental Communication).

## **EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DIMENSIONS OF FANTASY–REALITY DISTINCTION**

Studies indicate that *children use two principle types of criteria* to make distinctions between fantasy and reality on television: external versus internal dimensions (Hodge & Tripp

1986). The external dimension refers to the reliance of children on their knowledge of the real world that results from their individual life experiences. The internal dimension refers to cues within the television program itself that direct children's evaluation of its realism.

Dorr (1983) specified three levels of the *external dimension*. The first level refers to the concreteness of the television image – when something on television is exactly as it is without television. This ability to evaluate the reality of television based on the perceptions of people, objects, and events actually existing outside of the television world has also been called “physical actuality” or “factuality.” The other two levels accept the fabricated nature of the television world and judge each specific content item according to the criteria of possibility or probability. For the most part, elementary school children evaluate the reality of television based on their perception of whether events portrayed are possible in the reality familiar to them beyond the screen. As they move into the *formal operations* stage of cognitive development, around the age of 12, they gradually learn to evaluate the reality of television based on their perception of whether it is probable that it represents something that could happen beyond the screen, even if it is possible. Thus, while it is possible that one family will experience all the intensive events happening in the life of one television-family and solve them in similar ways, the child's life experience suggests that it is not very probable that this would be the case. In contrast, adult thinking about reality on television is mostly characterized by an understanding that everything on television is constructed to some degree and therefore cannot be “purely” real, but it is defined as real if it is representative of real life or probable in real life.

The second group of criteria for judging television reality has been defined by researchers as relating to the *internal properties of the program*, namely those related to the formal features of television (i.e., production elements such as camera shots, editing conventions, sound effects, and the like). According to this line of research, formal features also serve as cues through which children learn to perceive the reality of television content and to classify programs as real or fictitious (Fitch et al. 1993). For example, by the age of 4–5 on average, children begin to identify the grouping of television programs that are distinguished by the co-occurring features of form and content, i.e., the concept of program genre. Thus they come to understand that a live, unedited series of pictures of a war scene followed by a medium range camera shot of an adult who seems to be talking seriously and who is seated in a studio behind a desk indicates a “real” news report, while a colorful, animated scene of talking animals in children's voice with background music is “unreal.” Similarly, children learn to identify commercials as a distinct genre (Lemish 1997).

These two interactive dimensions – external and internal – can be framed as “real-world knowledge” versus “television-related knowledge.” Both forms of knowledge are used by children, in varying degrees, to make sense of the reality of television and to classify genres. The demand or urge to organize the world of television according to the integration of both these dimensions and to establish content and form expectations of different programs seems to be a central cognitive task undertaken by young viewers in particular.

### **AGE DIFFERENCES IN FANTASY–REALITY DISTINCTIONS**

It is possible to organize the above criteria in a complementary manner. Generally speaking, researchers have found that younger children are more heavily dependent on

internal criteria (e.g., → animation is “imaginary” because it is drawn and does not use live actors). However, as they mature, children learn to incorporate external criteria as their knowledge of the world expands (e.g., a specific animation series can be much more realistic in content than many programs employing live actors). However, similar to adults, there are many levels at which it is possible to interpret children’s responses in research situations when they are asked to evaluate something as fantasy or real (Messenger-Davies 1997). Children may say “this is not real,” or may remind themselves that “this is just pretend stuff,” but not be able to apply such knowledge to the reduction of anxiety, for example.

Therefore, some researchers disagree about the age at which children can distinguish between fantasy and reality and the various stages in the process. The age of 7–8 (the beginning of the *concrete-operational stage*, according to cognitive development theories) has been pinpointed by researchers as an important turning point in the development of such understanding. As children grow older, however, the task becomes more complicated as it involves answering the question, “real in what sense?” Through their elementary school years, their knowledge of both the world and the making of television expands significantly and they become more critical of the lack of realism they find in much of programming and commercials.

### **FANTASY–REALITY DISTINCTION, FEAR, AND IMAGINATION**

Related to this ability are the age-related differences in *fear reactions* to television content. On the whole, children before the 7–8 turning point are much more fearful of fantastic content on television that looks and sounds scary, while older children gradually become more aware of the implications of real and more abstract dangers (Cantor 2002). Effective parental strategies for coping with such fears were also related to their children’s developmental stage on the fantasy–reality distinction continuum, with physical strategies (e.g., hug, snack, favorite comforting object) found to be most appropriate for children who were scared of fantastic elements, and verbal strategies more effective with older children who already had a clearer ability to detect real dangers.

Also related is the research that investigated children’s *creativity, imagination, and play* as related to the developing ability to distinguish between fantasy and reality, and to the role television fantasy has in children’s make-believe world (Götz et al. 2005). The argument put forward in such work is that children build upon a wealth of fantasy-related information gathered from mediated resources in playing out their wishes to imagine and act. Even when clearly capable of making cognitive distinctions, they purposefully mix and interweave fantasy and reality elements taken from their media experiences to suit their needs and desires.

Similarly, there is evidence that *children’s trust of commercials* and vulnerability to their persuasive messages is related to their difficulty in distinguishing between the *fantastic* elements, including size of product, its performance, and the implied psychological and social gains from purchasing the product. Here, too, the development of associated cognitive skills, as well as children’s real-world experiences with the product or those similar to it, both of which develop over time, facilitate the development of such distinctions. There is no evidence that heavy exposure to television fundamentally transforms such

cognitive processes as the ability to distinguish between reality and fantasy. Media literacy efforts that sought to accelerate and facilitate it at an early age have also had only limited success (→ Fantasy/Imagination).

The task at hand for children – as well as adults – is becoming increasingly complicated with recent trends in the television industry worldwide. One such trend is the development of new television genres that purposefully aim at *blurring the distinction between fiction and real* for the purpose of infusing entertainment content with relevant real-world information, such as those coined “edutainment,” “infotainment,” and “informacials.” A second is the widespread flourish of reality TV genres in prime time around the world. These texts require much more sophisticated, media-literate consumers in order to manage the influence that such content can have on cognitive processes, attitudes, behaviors, emotions, purchasing decisions, etc.

In addition, studies on the fantasy–reality distinction have focused to date almost exclusively on the medium of television. The convergence of various audiovisual media into an *integrated “screen culture”* that also includes computers, Internet, mobile phones, video games, and hand-held consoles, and probably more in the near future, requires the development of a new research agenda that will address the concerns created by such a rich, diverse market.

SEE ALSO: ► Animation ► Developmental Communication ► Fantasy/Imagination ► Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ► Fiction ► Media Use and Child Development

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# Fashion

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Fashion, as extension of a human being beyond the corporeal body, is also a method of demarcating sameness and difference. As communicated through advertising, fashion not only reflects an individual's self-image, but also is done in anticipation of how others will regard the dramaturgical display (Goffman 1959). As an expression of popular preferences and culture (→ Popular Culture), fashion is constructed not by an actual garment, but by the desire it creates (Barthes 1983). Theories of communication studies suppose and propose that audience or consumer liking/disliking is often expressed in ways that reflect not only what people value, but also what producers want them to value (Merskin & Tankel, in press; → Communication Theory and Philosophy; Audience; Audience Commodity). As a creative cultural expression and commodity, fashion functions ecologically as a system of → meaning. To survive and thrive, fashion requires the constant cultivation, renewal, commodification, and reproduction of public desire.

Because fashion is “playful,” it is easy to overlook its *role in maintaining social cohesion*, marking social class and rank, and its “disciplinary power” in pressuring people to conform (Noelle-Neumann 1984, 117). School uniforms, dress codes, and sexually alluring garments are all used to make distinctions between youth and age, masculinity and femininity, social class, occupation, attitudes, values, and beliefs. As an effective social control mechanism and means of integration, fashion is a powerful ideological tool to instill fear of ostracism and isolation if an individual is perceived to be “in” or “out” of touch with the fashion scene. As an expression of dominant ideology, fashion is (1) functional, (2) a form of communication, (3) a political statement, (4) a tool of conformity, (5) a mechanism of ideology, and (6) a weapon for resistance.

The tools used to critique fashion and media images are interdisciplinary. Critical methods draw on a variety of theoretical positions, including literary theory, feminist critique, postmodernism, neo-Marxism, semiotic analysis, and Freudian analysis, to name a few (→ Critical Theory; Feminist and Gender Studies; Postmodernism and Communication; Semiotics).

## UNDRESSING THE AD

The conventional way that marketers define → advertising is as messages that impart information about products and services. The limitation of this definition is that it falls far short of giving us the whole picture. Advertising does much more than impart product information; it tells us what products signify and mean and how the use of these products can help us socially. Advertisers do this by marrying aspects of a product with aspects of a society. Embedded in advertising's messages about goods and services are the cultural

roles and cultural values that define our everyday life. Advertising not only tells us about the products we consume, it also informs us of their meaning within our culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Advertising as Persuasion).

Analyzing the social and cultural content of an advertisement involves interpreting both the verbal and visual aspects of the advertising text to determine not only the primary sales message but also additional secondary social or cultural messages (Frith 1998; → Visual Communication). Fashion advertisements reflect society in a sometimes slightly distorted way, and by deconstructing ads we can begin to see the social and cultural messages (O’Barr 1994). By critically examining fashion ads that target women in Singapore we can begin to deconstruct some of the social structures related to the role of women in a society that is undergoing a significant paradigm shift in terms of gender roles.

### **WOMEN IN ASIAN FASHION ADVERTISING**

Across Asia, women are shaking off their stereotypical portrayals as submissive, traditionally attired, shy, neglected introverts or hardworking housewives. Singapore is no exception. In women’s magazines throughout Asia, women are being portrayed as trendy, carefree, and even in some countries in sexual roles wearing western clothes – for better or worse, they are invading what was once the reserved territory of western and Caucasian women models.

Models in women’s magazine fashion advertisements throughout Asia closely follow the stereotypical gender portrayals of thinness and flawless skin so popular in women’s magazines in the west (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). Women’s magazine ads are mainly targeted to young, predominantly female, consumers. Despite the liberalizing influences that are sweeping through Asia, in countries such as Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and China women’s magazines – both the local and the country-specific international editions of magazines like *Vogue* and *Elle* – tend to use Caucasian models more frequently than local models when portraying sensuality in ads for women’s intimate wear and personal care products (Frith et al. 2005). Thus, foreign models are used to express more liberal attitudes and in some ways set beauty standards for thinness and fairness. Some authors, e.g., Kim and Cha (in press), question whether the tendency of women’s magazine advertising in Korea might project western beauty as superior to traditional Korean beauty and might be responsible for insecurity in Korean women. Kim and Cha argue that the imported beauty ideal has become so crucial among young Korean women that they are willing to spend fortunes having plastic surgery on their noses, eyes, and jaws. Growing numbers of young women are having their noses lifted, their jaws shaved, and their eyes widened in a drive to attain the western image of beauty. Most recently, Kim and Cha report, young Korean women are using plastic surgery on their calves in the hope of obtaining the “Barbie” legs sported by the world’s supermodels.

### **LEVELS OF MEANING**

All advertisements rely on the social knowledge and background of the reader. We all “make sense” of advertisements by relating them to our culture and to the shared belief

systems held in common by most people in our society. These beliefs are ideological in nature. They appear to be “commonsense” beliefs because they are widely held in a given culture, at a given moment in history; nonetheless, they are not universal beliefs. In addition to the more obvious social and cultural beliefs, subtle ideological values are expressed in fashion advertisements.

The underlying assumption in Singaporean fashion ads is that being slim and flawless is implicit in being a beautiful woman. For women in most cultures “looking beautiful” is part of being a woman. Advertising can only work if it appeals to an audience and presents the audience with something they want or need. Many fashion ads play on the fact that women who are even mildly overweight often feel guilty and less-than-beautiful. These kinds of advertising messages work because women in Singapore accept that it is part of their cultural role to be slim – at whatever cost (and in this case, \$38.00 per session). Within the culture it is a “commonsense” belief that women must be thin and fair to be attractive. Beauty ideals differ from country to country, and while women in most countries certainly do feel a need to be beautiful, this is not always defined as “being slim.” In the US, for example, big breasts may be an important marker of beauty, while in another culture thick, long hair may be the most defining factor. Based on fashion ads in women’s magazines in Singapore, we could reasonably conclude that slimmness and fairness are (or have become) a major cultural component of female beauty.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Advertising as Persuasion ► Audience ► Audience Commodity ► Communication Theory and Philosophy ► Critical Theory ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Feminist and Gender Studies ► Gender: Representation in the Media ► Meaning ► Popular Culture ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Semiotics ► Singapore: Media System ► Visual Communication

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# Fear Induction through Media Content

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The capacity for media messages to induce fear has been the object of scholarly inquiry since at least the 1930s when the Payne Fund Studies launched the first systematic effort to study the impact of media on children and adolescents. As part of that effort, Herbert Blumer (1933) found that 93 percent of the children who participated in his study reported that they had been scared by something seen in a motion picture. Some scholars maintain that, taken together, the Payne Fund Studies introduced the “legacy of fear,” a phrase used to describe the main attitude that audiences had to media content at that time. Despite the prevalence of fright reactions to media indicated by Blumer’s finding, there was little research on this topic for nearly 50 years. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of media-induced fear certainly manifested itself repeatedly over that 50-year period (→ Media Effects, History of).

## RESEARCH HISTORY

The fact that media presentations induced fear became apparent in sporadic scholarly reports about media impact or in news reports such as those that followed the 1938 broadcast of the radio play by Orson Welles, *The War of the Worlds*. Researchers at Princeton University (Cantril 1940) investigated reactions to this broadcast in order to discover which features of the program contributed most to the widespread panic that seemed to characterize audience response. A few scholarly reports in the 1950s and 1960s devoted attention to the media’s capacity to induce fear in audiences (Himmelweit et al. 1958), but, for the most part, the topic received little attention until the 1980s.

Several factors probably helped to contribute to the scant attention devoted to media-induced fear during the 1960s and 1970s. During this time, research was devoted heavily to the problems associated with violent media content and its possible effect on aggressive behavior (→ Violence as Media Content; Violence as Media Content, Effects of). In addition, the prevailing theoretical emphasis in psychology and communication was upon behavior instead of emotion and cognition. Once the area of emotion became a primary focus of research in the 1980s, the door was open to consider fright responses to media in a more sophisticated fashion. Finally, the level of graphic horror in mainstream entertainment increased in the 1970s and 1980s. Movies such as *The Exorcist* and *Jaws* had such dramatic impact on audiences that scholars were naturally drawn to study the phenomenon of media-induced fear.

In the 1980s, research initiated by Joanne Cantor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison under the funding of the National Institute of Mental Health developed the research on media-induced fear in a theoretical and systematic fashion (Cantor 1994). The first studies in this program of research were designed in order to identify the types of movies and TV programs that were most likely to cause fright reactions in children at different points in their cognitive development. A second emphasis in this research was to

identify the coping behaviors that parents could employ to successfully reduce media-induced fears in their children (→ Emotions, Media Effects on; Emotion).

### **CANTOR'S RESEARCH ON CHILDREN'S FEAR REACTIONS**

Building upon the developmental psychology of Jean Piaget, Cantor attempted to make sense of children's fright reactions to media by emphasizing the level of a child's cognitive functioning at either the pre-operational (2–7 years) or concrete operational (7–11 years) stage of development. This theoretical approach was used to guide numerous investigations conducted by Cantor and her associates and resulted in a number of empirical generalizations that were consistent with theoretical expectations. For example, in the younger age group, children's fright reactions to media are far more likely to be determined by visual appearances – consistent with the emphasis in Piaget's writings on the perceptual dependence of the pre-operational child (Flavell 1963). In simplest terms, if something looks scary, then younger children are likely to be scared. In contrast, children in the older age group are able to integrate various pieces of conceptual information into their perceptions of media content such that they can discount visual appearances in favor of other facts that help to override any fear. For example, a monster like *The Incredible Hulk* might not be so scary to the older child who is able to realize that although the Hulk appears to be threatening, his primary motivation is to help people in trouble and perform charitable acts that serve the common good. Thus, while the Hulk might be extremely frightening to young children, he loses his capacity to induce fear in older children (Sparks & Cantor 1986; → Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of).

An important corollary to this empirical generalization is that younger children are much more likely to be frightened by content that is appropriately described as fantasy (i.e., containing events and characters that could not possibly occur in the real world). In contrast, older children who are more able to recognize that fantasy is “just pretend,” are more likely to be frightened by the sorts of media content that feature events and characters that could actually occur in the real world (→ Fantasy–Reality Distinction).

An important consequence of these tendencies is that children's susceptibility to the experience of media-induced fear does not necessarily diminish with increasing age. On the contrary, older children are likely to recognize the ubiquity of media content that, while failing to present ugly visual features that younger children find upsetting, presents various natural and technological disasters (e.g., earthquakes, fires, tornados, nuclear accidents, and war). This research suggests that any parental tendency to become more lenient about exposure to media content as children grow older is likely to underestimate media threats to induce fear and emotional upset.

In terms of the coping strategies that parents might effectively employ to reduce media-induced fear in their children, Cantor's research supports the notion that cognitive strategies are more likely to work for older children (e.g., telling a child that a character is not real) while noncognitive strategies are more likely to work for younger children (e.g., distraction from the object of fear; Cantor 1998).

In addition to bringing a new developmental perspective to the study of children's fright reactions, the research by Cantor is noteworthy for some of its methodological innovations. Insofar as fear is an emotional reaction with both subjective and physiological components,

both self-report and physiological reactions are of interest. The use of physiological monitoring in the context of experiments with young children proved influential in the general conduct of research on emotional reactions with older participants as well, which now routinely includes the use of physiological measures (→ Physiological Measurement).

Although conducting research on fright reactions to media (particularly the reactions of children) may raise concerns about the possible risk to the research participants, scholars who conduct these studies have been able to chart a careful methodological course that gains approval from institutional review boards and appears to offer more than adequate protection from unreasonable risk. When working with children, the procedures often involve: (1) the use of media material that would already be common in the participants' media diets, (2) required informed consent on the part of the participants and their parents or legal guardians, (3) the opportunity for parents to screen the media materials prior to providing informed consent, and (4) a debriefing procedure that is designed to leave the participant in a positive emotional state upon leaving the study.

The popularity of frightening entertainment poses an interesting theoretical problem for emotion theorists and media scholars. Fear is a negative emotion that involves perceptions that some aspect of our well-being is threatened. This suggests that the popularity of frightening media is not linked to the experience of fear per se but arises from other sources that occur simultaneously or nearly simultaneously. For example, Dolf Zillmann's theory of "excitation transfer" would suggest that the physiological arousal associated with fear may quickly transfer to positive emotions that viewers may feel at a movie's conclusion (→ Emotional Arousal Theory; Excitation Transfer Theory). This additional arousal can serve to intensify the positive emotion such that attendance at frightening movies is associated with post-viewing euphoria (Zillmann 1980).

Another explanation for the appeal of frightening entertainment involves individual difference variables such as "sensation seeking" (→ Sensation Seeking). Individuals who are high on sensation seeking may seek out frightening media for the extreme adrenalin rush that such entertainment provides. For these individuals, the fear associated with the heightened arousal is still experienced as a negative emotion but does not outweigh the positive sensation of the high arousal itself. Individuals who are low on sensation seeking are more likely to become avoiders of frightening entertainment since there is little reward to counterbalance the negative experience of fear (Zuckerman 1979).

For some individuals, the enjoyment of frightening media is undoubtedly related to the experience of satisfaction that arises with being able to conquer a threatening stimulus. According to this scenario, levels of post-viewing gratification are specifically linked to the level of fright experienced during the media event (Sparks 1991). The more difficult it is to cope effectively with the frightening stimulus that is presented, the greater the level of gratification experienced upon successfully making it through to the end. This process may be more likely to take place among males, who tend to be socialized to express satisfaction in conquering a threat.

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

One phenomenon studied by Cantor and her associates that is likely to continue to attract the attention of future researchers is the tendency for some individuals to suffer lingering

emotional reactions to frightening media that may endure for days, weeks, months, and even years after initial exposure to the media stimulus. The fact that some people suffer such disturbances is well documented. For example, following the movie *The Exorcist*, reports appeared in the clinical literature that documented numerous patients who had to be hospitalized due to the experience of uncontrollable fear, anxiety, and general emotional upset (Bozzuto 1975).

Presentations most likely to induce fear are those that excel in convincing the audience that the depicted threatening events may actually occur – while simultaneously presenting the impression that there is little hope for the viewer to identify a successful defense against the threat. Thus, *The Exorcist* was often reported to produce lingering emotional upset perhaps because its depiction of demon possession seemed so realistic and viewers left the theater feeling relatively helpless in protecting themselves from demonic attack. In general, paranormal themes that are depicted as if they can actually happen, but that allude to a mysterious world beyond understanding and control, offer considerable potential for the occurrence of lingering fears.

The experience of lingering fears that are only induced by projected images instead of encounters with their real-world counterparts is also a phenomenon of considerable interest. One goal of future research is to increase understanding about the way parts of the brain may influence this experience. Already, in following the work on the brain, Cantor has suggested that the amygdala may play a pivotal role in preserving fright responses that arise from media (Cantor 2006). As understanding of these processes increases, perhaps strategies to reduce lingering fears may be refined and applied successfully.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Fear Induction through Media Content in Children

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There is a growing body of evidence that the mass media, especially television shows and movies, often induce fear and anxiety in children. Fear is an → emotion characterized by the subjective feeling that one is in danger, and is usually accompanied by physiological reactions, including increased heart rate, blood pressure, muscle tension, and other forms of arousal of the autonomic nervous system (→ Physiological Measurement). Fear is often referred to as an intense response of short duration, whereas anxiety usually refers to lingering feelings of nervousness that endure over longer periods (→ Media Effects Duration). Research shows that feelings of fear or anxiety produced by media exposure often result in sleep problems and can cause children to dread or avoid activities that they once considered non-threatening (→ Affects and Media Exposure).

There are *methodological challenges* inherent in studying media-induced fears because it is unethical to show scary movies to children in order to prove that they cause nightmares and intense anxieties (→ Research Ethics). Research on long-term fears, therefore, uses either → surveys or a more detailed, retrospective approach, in which individuals report on their reactions to television shows and movies they have seen in the past. Research exploring the types of media images and events that scare different sub-groups of children is usually done experimentally, using short excerpts of relatively mild fare, often manipulated into different versions (→ Experiment, Laboratory; Experimental Design). Experiments sometimes supplement self-reports of feelings of fear with physiological measures, the → coding of facial expressions, or behavioral measure of approach or avoidance (→ Observation).

There are important *developmental differences* in what frightens children in the media, and these are based on a child's level of cognitive development. First, the *importance of appearance* decreases as a child's age increases. Both experimental and survey research support the generalization that preschool children (approximately 3–6 years old) are more likely to be frightened by something that looks scary but is actually harmless (such as E.T., the kindly but weird-looking extra-terrestrial) than by something that looks attractive but is actually harmful (e.g., a beautiful villainess); for older elementary school



children (approximately 7–11 years), appearance is much less influential, compared to the behavior or destructive potential of a character, animal, or object.

Second, as children mature, they become *more disturbed by realistic, and less responsive to fantastic dangers* depicted in the media. This change results from developmental trends in children's understanding of the fantasy–reality distinction. Because of this, older elementary school children begin to be especially susceptible to fear produced by the news and other realistic presentations. Younger children are sometimes vulnerable to fear produced by the news as well, however, especially when the threat is explicitly visual, as in natural disasters.

A third developmental change is that as children mature, they become frightened by media *depictions involving increasingly abstract concepts*, such as world problems (e.g., the threat of war or famine) and invisible environmental threats (e.g., AIDS, anthrax). Themes that adolescents and young adults report as extremely disturbing include sexual assault and stalking, and attacks by supernatural and occult forces.

*Retrospective studies* show that fear produced by the mass media can be surprisingly long lasting and may result in seemingly irrational responses. For example, many adults who saw *Jaws* (a movie about a man-eating shark) before the age of 10 report that they are still afraid to swim not only in oceans, but in lakes and pools. Such long-term reactions involve the physiological responses of fear whenever the individual is reminded of an earlier traumatic experience. These reactions are consistent with recent research on the neurophysiology of fear, which suggests that traumatic incidents may leave virtually indelible memory traces.

A large amount of research has been conducted on the impact of the *terrorist attacks* on the US of September 11, 2001. These studies reveal that greater exposure to media coverage of the attacks was associated with more frequent symptoms of post-traumatic stress in both children and adults even a year or more later (→ Mediated Terrorism).

Strategies for *coping with media-induced fears* need to be tailored to the age of the child. Up to the age of approximately 7 years, nonverbal coping strategies work the best. These strategies, which do not depend on words or explanations, include removing children from the media situation, distracting them, giving them warmth and attention, and under some circumstances, desensitization (gradually exposing children to small, less threatening parts of a program). Children aged 8 years or older can benefit from verbal coping strategies, including logical explanations of why they are not in danger. If what they saw is pure fantasy, it helps children in this age group to be reminded that what they have seen could never happen. If the program depicts frightening events that can possibly occur, however, it may help to give older children information about why the specific event they have seen cannot happen to them or to give them empowering instructions on how to prevent it from occurring. Research shows that explanations that minimize the likelihood that a horrible event will occur (e.g., “that sort of thing is extremely rare”) are not effective. Teenagers and adults can also benefit from writing about what has frightened them.

Because it is often difficult to calm children's media-induced fears, parents and caregivers are urged to be vigilant about what children are exposed to in the media, to seek information about a show's contents in advance, and to err on the side of caution when unsure how a child will respond (→ Media Use by Children).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Coding ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Observation ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Research Ethics ▶ Survey ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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# **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)**

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The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the regulatory agency in the United States charged with oversight of electronic communications (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; United States of America: Media System). Since the 1980s, it has taken much of the blame for the lack of diversity and the concentration of ownership in US broadcasting, and the rise of → media conglomerates. The FCC has a larger range of responsibilities and more autonomy than regulators in other industrialized countries. It was partially the model for the consolidation in 2003 of British regulatory agencies into one communications regulator, OFCOM, which, like the FCC, has a laissez-faire approach.

Since its creation, the commission has been controversial, largely because it was formed through conflicting philosophies. It was meant to uphold the decision of Congress following World War I that broadcasting should be mostly commercial and free of government control; but also to ensure that access to the airwaves was allocated responsibly and that those granted access put the public’s interest before their own.

## **HISTORY AND STRUCTURE**

The agency was created on June 19, 1934, when Congress passed the Communications Act. It was formed from its predecessor the Federal Radio Commission, along with parts of the Interstate Commerce Commission and Postmaster General. It was organized into a

broadcast, telegraph, and telephone division (it has been reorganized since), but the overall entity is directed by five commissioners (it was seven until 1983). They are appointed by each president, but only three can be from the president's party. With the chairman and two members essentially working for the president, broadcast policy has been kept in alignment with ruling party ideology in the US, and less mainstream ideologies are effectively locked out of policymaking. Ironically, the FCC is constituted so as to enable it to act with considerable autonomy from the executive branch (→ Media Policy).

The Communications Act has been amended many times but still dictates most US communications policy and determines most of what the FCC does. Key broadcast laws, including the public service requirement (→ Public Interest), came into effect with the Radio Act of 1927, but these were incorporated in the 1934 law (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). Importantly, section 326 within Title III of the Act prevents the FCC from censoring broadcasting in the US, although modern debates about media content have suggested that threats of penalties for certain content serve as a form of control tantamount to censorship. This received attention in 2004 when singer Janet Jackson revealed a breast – allegedly accidentally – in the most-watched annual US television event, the “Superbowl.” Under political pressure, the FCC reacted with record fines, and US broadcasters subsequently became extraordinarily cautious, especially when airing live events.

## COMPETENCES

The best-known and perhaps most crucial function of the FCC has been to *license broadcast stations* and ensure that basic regulations are adhered to. It does so through its authority over use of the radio spectrum. In the 1969 Red Lion case the Supreme Court reaffirmed that FCC actions to ensure broadcasters serve the public are not a violation of the First Amendment right to free speech. In practice, broadcasters have wide leeway in what they can and cannot do, and fines for breaching regulations are rare; revocations of licenses or denials of license renewal are rarer. Grassroots organizations such as Rocky Mountain Media Watch have worked to catalog license violations by stations and derail the nearly automatic renewal process, but such efforts have yet to significantly improve standards. In one of few license denials for failure to serve the public interest, in 1969 Mississippi television station WLBT had its license revoked for bias against African-Americans, following years of complaints by citizens' groups; this only happened after the FCC was ordered to do so by a federal appeals court.

In 1962 the FCC was given *authority over satellite communications* in the US (although international satellite communications are governed by treaty; → Satellite Communication, Regulation of). Its influence over the → cable television industry was gradually increased with the Cable Act of 1992 and the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Media Bureau of the FCC licenses and regulates broadcasters and enforces cable television regulations. Separate bureaus deal with telephone communications, wireless services, and satellite communications (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy).

Through its history the FCC has sought to increase the diversity of views available in US broadcasting – with the presumption that doing so is in the public interest

(→ Plurality). The cross-ownership, duopoly, prime-time access (PTAR), and syndication and financial interest rules are examples. Rules restricted how many broadcast outlets one company could own, locally and nationally, but these have been relaxed to the point that it is now possible for one corporation to own up to a third of broadcast outlets in the US and reach nearly all the audience. Since the same corporate entities dominate most other information and cultural products used by the US audience, the worst fears of critics of media consolidation, like Bagdikian (2004), seem close to realization (→ Ownership in the Media).

## PHILOSOPHY AND DECISIONS

The philosophy of letting profit, rather than quality, be the determinant of who is permitted to broadcast in the US began under Democrat President Carter prior to 1980, but the approach has been aggressively pursued and expanded under Republican presidents and congresses since. Since the 1980s and the presidency of Ronald Reagan, the FCC has aggressively deregulated. Mark Fowler, an FCC chairman under Reagan, was one of the most influential proponents of this philosophy. He is remembered for his assertions that “the public interest is what interests the public” (as opposed to something governments should determine and protect), and that television is “just another appliance – it’s a toaster with pictures.” By denying television’s social and cultural role in snappy quotes, Fowler empowered himself and the conservative FCC chairs that followed to decimate 50 years of regulation intended to police that role.

The *Telecommunications Act of 1996*, in particular, was promoted by Congress and the FCC as a public benefit because of its potential to increase competition, but it did the opposite – resulting in mergers, increased concentration of control over mass communications, a lack of local radio programming and reduction in local television production, and increased cable television costs with little content diversity. It was also made more difficult for the FCC to deny a license.

The role of the FCC as a catalyst for economic and technological change has been a point of contention. While it was not originally given this mandate, presidents have sought to use it for these purposes; critics charge this happens only in support of their narrow political and economic interests. Robert McChesney (2004) has argued that starting with the 1934 Communications Act, the profit-making potential of companies has been the main criteria used by the FCC in permitting entities to broadcast, rather than ill-defined efforts to serve the public interest. Indeed, there has been little opportunity for public input in policymaking, and when further relaxation of ownership rules was proposed in 2003 the FCC held only one official public hearing. But the public demonstrated a new interest in communications policy when a broad coalition of groups, and nearly one million citizens from across the political spectrum, sent messages to the FCC to demand an end to further deregulation. The changes were still passed, but were rejected in a court challenge.

US communications policy has been as much determined by courts as by the FCC. Courts have sometimes upheld the agency’s broad latitude to make policy, and sometimes castigated it for going beyond its remit or ignoring the consequences of its actions (→ Communication and Law; Communication Law and Policy: North America). The

FCC has taken some steps to ensure minority representation in the broadcast industry and minority ownership of broadcast outlets, although the latter rules were relaxed in recent deregulation (→ Access to the Media). A number of rules have been aimed at protecting children. Limits on the amount of commercials in children's programming were strengthened by the *Children's Television Act of 1990*, but critics charge that much of what passes for children's television in the US is essentially long-form commercials (→ Child Protection, Media Regulations for).

An important aspect of deregulation was the FCC's *rejection of the → Fairness Doctrine*, a rule that stated that broadcasters must give equal time to both sides of a controversial issue. Media corporations argued it had a "chilling effect," causing broadcasters to avoid controversial issues. In 1987 the FCC repealed it, and a new breed of political broadcasting captured much of the radio audience; opening the way to conservative cable television outlets like Fox News. Until the advent of the left-leaning Air America radio network in 2004, all of the new one-sided political broadcasting had a right wing – occasionally reactionary or racist – perspective, and reinforced the platforms of the Republican presidents and members of Congress making policy (Aufderheide 1990; Hilliard & Keith 1999; Barker & Knight 2000; McChensney 2004; groups like fair.org and mediamatters.org have documented these trends). Critics of the FCC have observed that as the White House attempted to convince the public of the need to invade Iraq, media with the most to gain from the further relaxation of ownership rules largely abandoned neutrality and critical news coverage and fueled support for war (for example, Boyd-Barrett 2005).

Broadcasting in the US has historically been dominated by networks, although the power of these has decreased in the last decade due to market fragmentation (→ Television Networks). The FCC does not have authority over networks, so has sought to control them through the regulation of stations. Legal scholars have argued that Congress was "eloquently vague" (Pember & Calvert 2005, 589) in defining what the FCC should do, providing room for interpretation to adapt to a fast-changing communications landscape. But the 1934 mandate that broadcasters serve "the public interest, convenience, or necessity" has never been aggressively interpreted by an agency which that critics argue was co-opted from the outset by the industry it was to regulate. FCC chairman Newton Minow (1961–1963) famously called television broadcasting "a vast wasteland," (Messere 2005) but his challenge to broadcasters to raise their standards has never been taken up.

Low-power radio broadcasting can take place within local communities and there is broad agreement that it usually does not interfere with other broadcasting, but the FCC, under pressure from business, has aggressively banned it and sent armed agents to close amateur radio stations. In 2000, the FCC finally permitted some low-power stations, but continued to ban them from cities. And it is noteworthy that while the FCC is nominally a domestic agency, its officials have worked in other countries to influence broadcast policy to the benefit of US corporations (Paterson 1994).

O'Siochru and Girard (2002) observed that, globally, media regulation has been oriented either toward regulation of media as an economic sector, or toward the enrichment of society through the promotion of diversity and plurality. The US model has always sought to do both, but while the FCC's enabling legislation emphasizes a social and political role, it has played mostly an economic one; shifting to an almost entirely economic role in service to the media industry since the 1980s.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Cable Television ▶ Child Protection, Media Regulations for ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Policy ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Networks ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## **Feedback Processes in Organizations**

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Engineers have linked the concepts of feedback and enhanced performance since the time of the industrial revolution, but the term “feedback” was coined only in 1948 by cybernetic theorist Norbert Wiener. In this early work, feedback was a *signal* which indicated a discrepancy between the *goal* of a system and its current state (→ Cybernetics). Based on feedback, systems could recalibrate and improve performance. Research on the concept

expanded rapidly as managers came to believe that effectively communicated feedback could increase the motivation and performance of individual employees. Given this understanding, researchers worked to understand the psychological mechanisms people used to encode performance signals and adjust their work output. However, by the 1980s, it became obvious that the cybernetic model was only modestly successful in accounting for the complexity of human feedback processes. Further progress would come when researchers addressed such neglected factors as the linguistic qualities of feedback messages, relational and cultural context, interactivity, and the construction of meaning (Cusella 1987; Fairhurst 2001).

### TRADITIONAL THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Discussion of feedback often begins with its context. *Interpersonal contexts* such as performance evaluation interviews have received much of the attention from communication researchers and practitioners. However, *system contexts* are of primary importance, as when corporations receive feedback from the stock market, environmental protesters, and other entities. *Formal feedback contexts* are different from *informal* ones, in that the former may be regulated by law, work procedure, and prescribed roles. A supervisor may share performance feedback informally over a cup of coffee or in the formal context of a required annual review. Finally, feedback is interpreted with reference to the *goals* or *standards* of individuals or systems. The nature of the goal, whether it is chosen or imposed by an outside entity, and the extent to which the goal is realistic, are among the contextual factors that shape employee interpretations of performance feedback (Latham & Locke 1991).

The *form* of feedback is another much-studied factor. Researchers use the term *valence* when describing positive or negative feedback. Positive feedback communicates satisfactory or accelerated progress toward a performance goal. Negative feedback is corrective; it suggests unsatisfactory performance. *Specificity* refers to the amount of detail in the performance message. Specific feedback contains more information that can be used in the modification of performance. Feedback *frequency* refers to rate of communication. More frequent messages create more opportunities for adjustments in performance. *Timeliness* is a measure of the delay between a performance and the feedback that follows.

The *source* of feedback is an important variable. Feedback can be derived from the *task*, as when a surgeon observes improvement in a patient's vital signs during an operation. However, feedback is typically *social* in nature. Andrews and Kacmar (2001) confirmed that employees differentiate among sources including organizational, supervisory, peer, and the self. A key research issue is the priority given to each of these sources by employees. Feedback from a low-priority source may have limited effects on performance. In contrast, feedback from high-*credibility* sources is weighted more heavily.

### CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN INTERPERSONAL FEEDBACK

Much contemporary communication research considers feedback as an interpersonal phenomenon, typically involving interactions between leaders and members (→ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships). Whereas cybernetic models tended to view recipients of

feedback as passive, newer interpersonal models acknowledge that partners actively seek feedback (Ashford & Cummings 1983; Larson 1989). *Feedback seeking* can be accomplished through *inquiry*, as when employees seek informal evaluation from a supervisor or co-worker. A more indirect *monitoring* process can also be used. This may involve noting others' reactions to a task performance or comparing one's own behavior to that which is being rewarded.

In contrast to early work that focused primarily on *downward* feedback, more recent research has examined feedback communicated *upward* in organizational hierarchies. Supervisors tend to overestimate the amount of upward feedback they receive. In fact, limited feedback is communicated from low-power to high-power employees. That which is delivered tends to be unrealistically positive. Bad news rarely travels upward, in part because employees fear being blamed. One consequence is that organizational decision-makers fail to adjust course because they remain unaware of unfavorable business circumstances. Leaders who maintain strong communication relationships with employees and reward upward feedback may overcome the tendency to suppress negative information. Upward feedback may be related to the ethical climate of an organization. Organizations that foster the upward expression of constructive *dissent* (→ Dissent in Organizations) are more likely to detect ethical lapses and make needed adjustments (Kassing 2002). In contrast, in organizations that suppress dissent employees may feel compelled to hide their ethical concerns or express them anonymously to outside sources. Some organizations foster this kind of upward feedback by establishing special communication channels for ethical complaints (e.g., telephone "hotlines") and employment protections for "internal whistleblowers."

The relatively recent term *360-degree feedback* describes the practice of seeking performance information from multiple raters rather than a single source (Atwater & Waldman 1998). This approach acknowledges that employees function within a web of work relationships. In a 360-degree feedback process, the typical leader receives performance feedback from lower-level employees, peers, supervisors, customers, suppliers, and other more distant sources. This approach is now widely used to evaluate and develop the communication skills of managers and team leaders.

Feedback *message quality* is an important concern of contemporary communication research. Here the concern is with the message features that promote positive or negative outcomes. For example, the degree to which negatively valenced feedback is delivered with consideration for the recipient's identity may determine the degree to which it is accepted (Larson 1989). At the same time, overly tactful feedback can be misconstrued when the recipient concludes that no substantive change in behavior is necessary. Feedback seekers may frame their messages so as to deflect blame for poor performance or to encourage positive responses.

## CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN FEEDBACK SYSTEMS

At the systems level, feedback is frequently associated with *organizational learning* (Weick & Westley 1996). Organizations increasingly exist in fragmented, changing, competitive environments. Accordingly, they foster cultural practices which aggressively question traditional ways of doing business and cultivate continuous performance feedback from external sources (→ Learning Organizations). In learning organizations, feedback seeking



is embedded in such functions as new product development and employee evaluation. Similarly, the importance of feedback from external sources is associated with the functioning of decisionmaking groups. Effective groups seek external information as part of a reality checking process that curbs excessive conformity. External feedback supplements a group's internal resources and reduces chances for *group think*. For Weick and his colleagues, feedback from the external environment varies in the extent to which it is subject to multiple interpretations or *equivocality*. Highly equivocal feedback requires more communicative cycles (e.g., staff meetings) as the organizational system processes the meaning of external cues.

Feedback can also be conceptualized as a *control chain* rather than a singular message (Fairhurst 2001). From this point of view, the *patterns* of feedback that define dyadic or group systems are of more concern than individual communicators. Interpretation of feedback messages is influenced by the parties' shared communication history, including past criticisms and adaptive responses. Feedback exchanges not only result in adjustments in task performance, they also define relational control. For example, the act of offering performance feedback is a means by which leaders assert power in relationships with members. By unconditionally accepting feedback, employees affirm the leader's relational position; in contesting feedback members signal an unwillingness to accede relational control. As Fairhurst has noted, in contrast to traditional hierarchical relationships, some leader-member relationships are characterized by patterns of shared control and mutual feedback.

## MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS

Progress has been made on a variety of feedback measures (Fairhurst 2001). For example, processes for multi-rater evaluation have been refined in recent years. Coding systems have been developed for assessing control chains, valence, sources, style, and other dimensions of the feedback process. Yet relatively few studies have assessed *naturally occurring* feedback interactions, or carefully coded the *qualities* of effective feedback messages. Exceptions include a study by Zorn and Leichty (1991), who found that effective messages were responsive to the identity concerns of the recipient.

Research on the effectiveness of feedback processes is still evolving, and results are subject to numerous qualifications. Effectiveness is typically defined in terms of receiver acceptance and performance enhancement. Research suggests that recipients prefer positive feedback over negative and respond more favorably when messages are adapted to their unique circumstances and identity concerns. Constructive feedback, which includes instructions for improvement, is typically preferred over messages which simply communicate negative evaluations of performance. Receivers may be more satisfied when feedback includes encouragement, particularly for recipients who believe they can exercise control over their work environment. Employees who receive ambiguous feedback are inclined to interpret it positively and often choose not to make behavioral adjustments. Recipients prefer to receive negative feedback in private but may be appreciative when positive feedback is shared in public.

The link to performance improvements may be enhanced when feedback is linked clearly to performance goals. Timely, specific, and concrete feedback processes have been linked to positive performance outcomes in some studies, in contrast to feedback which is

delayed, ambiguous, and abstract. Frequent and informal feedback may result in more rapid performance adjustments than occasional, formal feedback such as that communicated in annual performance reviews. Effectiveness is enhanced when recipients receive feedback about the performance of their peers (normative feedback) in addition to feedback about their personal performance. Some evidence supports the efficacy of feedback systems that include multiple raters, credible feedback sources, developmental information as opposed to merely evaluative information, and clear ties to organizational rewards, such as salary increases and promotions.

SEE ALSO: ► Cybernetics ► Dissent in Organizations ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of  
 ► Impression Management ► Leadership in Organizations ► Learning Organizations  
 ► Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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## **Feminine Mystique**

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The 1963 publication of *The feminine mystique* by Betty Friedan (1921–2006) is certainly linked to, and sometimes considered the starting date of, the second wave of feminism in

the US. Despite a lackluster “launch” by its publisher, the book quickly became a brisk seller in its hardback edition and went on to sell 1.5 million copies when it was issued in paperback a year later. The book remains available after a dozen republications, including one in 2001, more than forty years after it first appeared. Its title, a phrase that Friedan coined, has come to represent the accumulation of expectations attached to women, especially those that are dissonant and conflicting. Friedan called this liminal status, wherein women are dissatisfied but cannot quite identify why, as “the problem that has no name.”

In its time, the success of the book provided a platform for its author to claim for herself the role of the mother of the US women’s movement. For the purposes here, we may consider that the book helped establish the second wave in the US as a social movement that was largely dependent upon mass media attention for the distribution of its messages (→ Women’s Movement and the Media).

On a theoretical level, the subject of a mass-media product calling for social change emphasizes the notion, as explored by Frankfurt School theorists, of the difficulties, and perhaps the impossibility, of a capitalist economy promoting socio-economic change that challenges its own foundations (→ Critical Theory; Political Economy of the Media). That *The feminine mystique* owed much of its style and substance to US mass magazines suggests its popularity was in part because it did not demand such systemic changes, the characteristic that was immediately noted when it was reviewed by a sociology journal. The book can also be explored from the perspective of the interpretation of individual readers, who brought their own backgrounds and experiences to the book. Nonetheless, however readers interpreted the book, its impact in the US was widespread and included a role as a starting place for many feminists of the period, including those who would later consider themselves to be radical feminists.

The intellectual influences on the book included Friedan’s personal background and her interest in Marxism, as well as the direct influences of ideas already articulated in Simone de Beauvoir’s *The second sex* (1972, 1st pub. 1949), but the discussion here emphasizes a political economy approach in examining how the book was influenced by expanding media markets at the time. These influences included a publishing industry seeking to enlarge the market of suburban women readers; the role of executive women in paperback publishing; and an author who understood the demands of the emerging practice of book promotion and consciously emulated the style and substance of US women’s magazines. It should also be noted that republication of the book by the major British publisher Penguin helped distribute the ideas of the book to an international audience.

## POSTWAR FEMINISM AND WOMEN’S MAGAZINES

On an immediate level, *The feminine mystique* represented Friedan’s success in establishing herself as a freelance writer. In the mid- to late 1950s, she achieved moderate success in placing nonfiction articles, from “The coming ice age” for *Harper’s Magazine* (Friedan 1958) to “Women are people too” for *Good Housekeeping* (Friedan 1960), the article that represented many of the ideas developed in her subsequent book. As an experienced freelance, Friedan not only learned how to reach the magazine audience, but she also had learned the limits of mass media, as in a 1955 *Redbook* article on an interracial

housing project, wherein an editorial pen had eliminated a reference to “Negro” families in favor of “people with the widest range of cultural differences” (Bradley 2004).

Still, in the period, the women’s service magazines were turning to concerns beyond domesticity. Although Friedan claimed in her book that women’s magazines unilaterally promoted women’s oppression (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Sexism in the Media; Women in the Media, Images of), various communication scholars now suggest that postwar magazines represented to some degree the complex nature of changing ideas around women’s roles. In this respect, *The feminine mystique* was indebted to women’s magazines (→ Women’s Media Genres). Moreover, the book not only expanded upon the themes already present in such publications, but also used a magazine writing style familiar to readers. Friedan’s survey of her college alumnae, for example, likely resonated with readers familiar with magazine surveys. The book, in fact, represented a compilation of magazine strategies – the professional voice of the advice columnist, the anecdotal and other “proofs” of the nonfiction articles, the small but achievable steps presented by the self-help articles, and the epiphanies that routinely climaxed fiction. Moreover, as in the magazine article on the Arctic ice cap, her zeal to tell her story strongly led her to exaggerate or misinterpret social science evidence.

Friedan’s freelance writing career contrasts with her previous experiences as a radical journalist. In the 1940s, she was sufficiently involved in radical politics to draw the attention of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In 1946, working for the left-oriented Federated Press, she covered the formation of the Congress of American Women, the American branch of a pro-Soviet organization, which, in its US context, took positions against racism and anti-Semitism, for equal pay for equal work, and for childcare facilities, and sought to include working-class women in women’s rights activities. In 1952, as a writer for the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, considered the most pro-communist of all American unions of the postwar period, Friedan wrote an unsigned pamphlet, *UE fights for women workers*, calling for an end to gender-based wage discrimination. “It is no accident that big business all over the world opposed the movement for votes and equal rights for women . . . the public acceptance of women’s equality would mean the loss of a huge source of labor they could segregate and exploit for extra profit and as a means to hold down the wages of all workers” (United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers 1952; → Activist Media; Alternative Journalism; Radical Media).

She closed out her career as a radical journalist after marriage, children, and a shift of interest to paid, freelance writing. Perhaps unwilling to risk blacklisting because of the red-baiting McCarthyism of the period, she eschewed her earlier interest in systemic notions of female oppression when she came to write *The feminine mystique*. The book is significantly silent on societal analysis issues in favor of feminist promptings on an individualistic, woman-by-woman basis. In a book filled with personal anecdotes, none had to do with her own challenges to race and class. Feminism is framed as “the problem that has no name,” a phrase that better represented the general unease in Cold War America than feminist issues in particular. However, Friedan, ambitious for success in the mass marketplace, chose a framing that would comport with the demands of the field in the time it was written. As she would lecture and write in professional contexts, the secret of successful commercial writing was to explore a subject in ways that emphasized personal stories (Friedan 1962b; Bradley 2004).

### MARKETING NONFICTION BOOKS TO SUBURBAN WOMEN

Book publishers in the late 1950s sought to expand sales among the female suburban audience (→ Audiences, Female). Although bookstores in suburban malls offered easy access to book buying, suburban women were not regular book purchasers and were occasionally lumped with other “nonreaders” who needed to be enticed with specialized marketing. Doubleday Company hired the long-time women’s editor Margaret Cousins in the expectation that her knowledge of the women’s magazine market could translate into increased book sales to women. However, her collection of short stories culled from women’s magazine fiction, *Love and marriage*, failed, considered too traditional for the changing times. Following the cue of the women’s magazines, book publishers also considered nonfiction aimed at women’s interests as a possible approach that would appeal to women readers. Friedan’s article on “The coming ice age” (although disavowed by the scientists she interviewed for the piece) caught the eye of the W. W. Norton Company and led to an invitation to write a book prospectus.

*The feminine mystique* was not the only book on the subject of emerging feminism. However, its hardback US sales of 60,000 in its first year quickly overshadowed other entries and it became a national phenomenon when it sold 1.5 million copies in paperback before its second edition. The book quickly went on to be published in paperback not only because of its strong hardback sales, but also because the paperback industry was seeking to enlarge its audiences by widening its lists beyond the romance and detective genres. Moreover, more women existed in the ranks of the less-prestigious paperback houses than in hardback publishing. This fact played an essential role at Dell, where women executives lobbied for publication of Friedan’s book. Under chief executive officer Helen Meyer, Dell paperbacks had already broken new ground in publishing books by women that transgressed traditional female genre boundaries – Francois Sagan’s *A certain smile* and the nine-million sale bestseller, *Peyton Place*. *The feminine mystique* quickly joined the Dell bestseller roster, prompted by its cheap price, the readiness of the audience for its messages, and, not an inconsiderable factor, Friedan’s understanding of book promotion.

At a time when many publishers still relied on the review process for book publicity, newer publishers viewed books as products to be promoted like any other commodity. At one extreme, Bernard Geis Associates only published books by celebrity authors who were likely candidates for the new television talk shows, or, failing that, books about seamy subjects that would elicit media interest. Geis published another major bestseller of the era, Helen Gurley Brown’s *Sex and the single girl*, promoted by Brown, another media professional, in ceaseless interviews (Bradley 2004).

Less attuned to the new trends, Norton provided a publicist for *The feminine mystique* only at Friedan’s angry insistence. On her own, Friedan engaged a booking firm for paid speaking engagements. When the book went into paperback, Friedan also turned to television, as in her two-part article for *TV guide*, “Television and the feminine mystique,” and on one of the new talk shows, *Girl Talk*. This latter appearance was considered strident and controversial, partly because Friedan demonstrated an inability, unlike her writing style, to adapt to the conventions of talk television.

## FEMINISM REDEFINED

Friedan's ongoing efforts to remain a prominent media figure in the second wave of feminism contributed to the US mass media emphasis on defining feminist leaders in terms of stridency, a definition that was only furthered by Friedan's argumentative role in the organized movement. Her ability to harness women's dissatisfaction in an accessible way and to promote the book in popular venues accounted for the growth of the feminist message to women who otherwise may not have come to any sort of feminist understanding. Many anecdotal accounts exist in which women claim that reading *The feminine mystique* changed their lives (Friedan titled her second book *It changed my life*, based on the comment she most frequently heard). Many of these women formed the leadership base of various activist organizations, including the National Organization for Women (NOW), and publications (such as *Ms. magazine*), and influenced legislative and social change.

However, it should also be noted that the popular and individualistic framing of feminism in the book set US feminism along a trajectory that necessarily involved the mass media at every step. At a time when it was believed that the mass media could be agents for powerful change, feminists on both the political left and right tended to take the messages of feminism directly to them for distribution. Once on the news agenda, feminism was subject to its craft traditions that often pitted feminism against anti-feminists and emphasized their differences in negative ways that remain in the US culture today.

*The feminist mystique* had its greatest influence in the US, but its success helped make Friedan an international figure and, to some, the representative of US feminism in her subsequent travels. In the same year as its US debut, the book was published by the British publisher Victor Gollancz and by Penguin Books in 1965. Penguin's worldwide distribution channels helped introduce the book to other English-speaking nations. It was translated into German and French in 1966 and later into Hebrew.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Radical Media ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Media Genres ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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## Femininity and Feminine Values

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Femininity and feminine values refer to the qualities of appearance, behavior and practices conventionally attributed to women. Feminist thinking strongly endorses the view that these qualities are not innate, but exist as ideological constructs, defined in opposition to masculinity and masculine values (→ Masculinity and the Media; News Ideologies). The superiority ascribed to masculinity in patriarchal thinking devalues the "feminine," despite assigning it some positive characteristics. As ideological constructs, femininity and feminine values are differently inflected in diverse cultures. White Anglo American definitions and perspectives have predominated in western writing but are being increasingly challenged by postcolonial feminist thinking (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational).

### HISTORIES OF FEMININITY

Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, first published 1949, provided an early critique of the construction of the feminine woman, defining her as "an artificial product" manufactured by society's expectations and norms (1972, 428). This view gained popular dissemination with the 1963 publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1992). Friedan argued that women, denied equal education and social opportunities to men, were stereotyped as passively content to perform housewifely duties. Her attention to the role of media images in seducing women into entrapment within the home marked the beginning of feminist enquiry into the power of media depictions in reproducing ideologies of femininity. Friedan's views were later challenged for perpetuating a myth of femininity that was based on white, middle-class norms.

Recognizing that “being, becoming, practising, and doing femininity are very different things for women of different classes, ‘races,’ ages, and nations,” Beverley Skeggs (2001, 297) has focused on the *intersections* especially *between class and gender* (1997; 2001) (→ Popular Communication and Social Class). She traces the exclusion of working-class women from the development of normative ideas of femininity and feminine qualities, but notes how, for women of this class, performing femininity offered a route to social acceptability. Post-colonial criticism emphasizes how white femininity was constructed in opposition to the colonial derogation of the black female body and its sexualized associations. When bell hooks (1981) re-posed the question attributed to the black nineteenth-century slave, Sojourner Truth – “Ain’t I a woman?” – she was stressing the need to take account of ways of being female that had been edited out of the dominant script of femininity (→ Black Feminist Media Studies). Other ethnic identities are equally excluded. Assumptions about the relationship between Muslim women’s modesty in dress and their sexual reticence are, for example, read through Western discourses in ways that ignore Islamic thinking (→ Communication Modes, Muslim).

The *qualities attributed to women* under the rubric of femininity or feminine values include a mix of positive and negative characteristics. While attributions of passivity, weakness, fickleness, or guile identify traits that have pejorative connotations, and are linked to the inexpressibility by women of overt sexual desire, other attributions ostensibly credit femininity with positive value. Femininity is also associated with nurturing, and demonstrating empathy and sensitivity to others. Yet within the context of male domination, these feminine values perform the dual function of associating femininity primarily with the private rather than the public sphere, and ensuring that responsibility for caring, whether within the family or within work contexts, falls principally on women. In this sense, feminists observe that discourses of femininity have operated to “keep women in their place” while off-loading on to women central responsibility for the social well-being of their communities. As one commentator observes, women consequently “become a kind of dumping ground for all the values society wants off its back but must be perceived to cherish” (Williamson 1986, 106). In Western cities, Victorian statues of female bodies are used to symbolize positive qualities such as “love,” “justice,” and “liberty,” but the women doing this representational work remain anonymous and depersonalized. Male statues, more typically, represent identifiable individuals who have acquired official status and recognition in the public sphere (Warner 1987).

### **POLICING AND CELEBRATING THE FEMININE**

Conventional ideas of femininity and feminine values have been powerful agents in policing female behavior. Forms of conduct or appearance that diverge from feminine norms are judged to be aberrant, deviant or unruly. These judgments apply with especial stringency in relation to the female body and female sexuality. While passivity and reticence have been historically applauded, the open display of sexual or other forms of desire attracts disquiet or censure. Women have, as a consequence, incurred blame for provoking male violence through their own style of dress or non-verbal behavior (→ Sexual Violence in the Media).

In contrast to the containment that typifies femininity, loudness, occupation of space and large female body size are all perceived as *signs of “unruliness”* (Rowe 1995). Continuing



dilemmas confront young women who wish to participate in sporting activities that are still perceived as “masculine”: whether to resist the pressures of gender conformity, or risk the danger of being identified as unfeminine or as “tomboys” (Cockburn & Clarke 2002). Women who achieve prominence in occupations formerly associated primarily with men (such as professional sport, business or the military) frequently have their achievements belittled, either through a process of sexualization or through being labeled as surrogate men (Woodward & Winter 2003). While the advent of “girl power” in the 1990s was ambivalently regarded as self-indulgent youthful exuberance or as an empowering tribute to feminism, the phenomenon of the “ladette,” as a binge-drinking, loud-mouthed young woman, offered a more direct challenge to established conventions of acceptable feminine conduct (→ Sexualization in the Media).

At the same time, the inferior status granted to femininity has led some feminist theorists to argue for an instatement and celebration of feminine values that have been suppressed by hegemonic masculinity. While these critics have been accused of adopting an essentialist approach to femininity, their primary aim is to emphasize the silencing of particular kinds of voice rather than to endorse, even in inverted form, the structure of a binary divide between masculinity and femininity. Within French feminist theory, Hélène Cixous (1981) argues for improved status for *écriture féminine* as a less linear, more exploratory style of writing than that privileged within the rational logicity favoured since the Enlightenment and typified in dominant forms of the written word. Her labeling of the suppressed style as “feminine” (or “female,” as the French “*féminine*” covers both) marks its excluded status without claiming that all originators of this type of writing will be women. Similar arguments have been advanced in relation to masculine/feminine ethics. Carol Gilligan (1982) suggests that morality based on sensitivity to interpersonal relationships is dubbed “feminine” and devalued relative to “masculine” forms of morality based on rule-governed systems.

Feminine values have also acquired positive connotations in contexts where masculine values have been thought to exert undue authority. In the spheres of *sport, business, journalism, and politics*, for example, the historical primacy of masculine values of competitiveness, conflict, and blindness to the interests and achievements of women or other marginalized groups has been increasingly questioned. In journalism, the constructed dichotomy between “hard” (masculine) and “soft” (feminine) news has appeared to evaporate as news selection has become more responsive to the interests of women, and news presentational styles have become increasingly personalized (→ News Values; Soft News).

Critics such as Liesbet van Zoonen (1998) have commented on the double bind of regarding such changes as a “feminization” of news. Applauded, on the one hand, for wider inclusivity, the notion of “feminization” can also devalue and ghettoize the changes that are taking place (→ Feminization of Media Content). In other areas, the incorporation into mainstream areas of the media of material once deemed to be only of feminine interest produces cosmetic, rather than radical, shifts of direction. The re-labeling of “women’s pages” as “lifestyle” or “style” pages or supplements, or the introduction of fashion or grooming features into men’s magazines, masks the extent to which gender binaries are still maintained, with adventurous sporting activities, for example, or the most up-to-date technologies, continuing to be associated with men rather than women.

Within *sociolinguistics*, debate has also revolved around the degree to which feminine and masculine language and interactional styles are either inherently different, or differently valued in terms of a gender hierarchy (→ Interactional Sociolinguistics). Early claims that women's speech was more polite and conservative than men's, less given to interrupting others and more hesitant in articulating strong opinion, have been increasingly reviewed. Critics argue that these expectations of difference ignore the degree to which language use varies with social context and with relative positioning within the social hierarchy. As more women engage in forms of work or leisure pursuits formerly deemed "masculine," styles of speech and communicative interaction display greater diversity and synergy with masculine modes (→ Women's Communication and Language). Through the influence of post-structuralist theory, many linguists reject the notion that we speak *out of* a masculine or feminine subject position, and prefer to argue that language is one of the practices through which we fashion our own identities (Talbot 1998).

### **COMMERCIALIZING FEMININITY**

One of the questions frequently raised about femininity and feminine values is how these concepts can have continuing discursive validity, given the radical changes in women's and men's social roles in the latter part of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries. In line with the concept of "hegemony" advanced by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, consent has to be continually renegotiated and won against other competing versions of what it means to be a woman. The longevity of femininity as a dominant ideology has been achieved through its continuing ability to appeal to female desires, especially in its association with an idealized, if changing, bodily appearance. The long-established synergy between "femininity" and "consumerism" has been especially productive in sustaining women's own complicity in versions of femininity that remain associated with consumption-oriented pleasures and aspirations (→ Consumer Culture).

Femininity invites constant re-performing of its consumer rituals, and consumption forms a significant part of young women's identity-forming practices. Young women are socialized into feminine values through education, the media, family life and peer pressure, and their performance of femininity wins them acceptance in a variety of social contexts. Early constructions of masculinity and femininity through binary characteristics of "male" and "female" toys, and styles of teen and sub-teen dress, lay the foundations that invite adoption of contrasting masculine and feminine identities. Feminine values have no specific age connotations, but femininity, in its bodily inscription, is associated especially with youth. The women's magazine press, in its dependence on advertising, embodies particularly youth-oriented models of femininity, and these are further endorsed within the beauty and fashion industries and within celebrity culture (→ Celebrity Culture; Women's Media Genres).

### **PERFORMING FEMININITY**

Modes of "performing" femininity have undergone change in line with the evolving social roles of women. The notion of femininity as "performance" took particular form in the concept of the "masquerade" advanced by film critics. Appropriated from psychoanalysis,

this concept suggests that performing femininity to excess (as in the screen roles of Marilyn Monroe, for example) draws attention to its fabricated and artificial nature, and invites the viewer to be critical of normative assumptions. In the wake of feminism, femininity is regarded as being performed with knowing irony, leading to an undermining of its power to circumscribe female identities.

*Post-feminism* acknowledges the changing roles of women, and the greater opportunities for equality in education, employment, relationships, and lifestyle experienced by contemporary women (→ Postfeminism). Post-feminists argue that the struggles of feminism have been won, and that acknowledgement of feminism's achievements is inscribed in contemporary representations of femininity. A number of critics writing especially about television programmes such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Sex and the City*, or the rise of "chick-lit," claim that central female characters exhibit traditional characteristics of femininity alongside feminist-inspired self-confidence and ambition. This mixing of femininity with feminism has been welcomed by some (Moseley & Read 2002), but it has also sparked less optimistic readings (Tincknell et al. 2003). Angela McRobbie, who had in the 1990s seen the alliance between feminism and femininity as offering space for feminist development, later retreats from this position, arguing that what is being offered to young women is "female individualization and the new meritocracy at the expense of feminist politics" (2004, 258).

Post-structuralist anxieties that the concepts of femininity and feminine values connote essentialist categories inimical to social change co-exist with recognition that they continue to inform thinking about women's identities and social roles. The growing instability within these concepts derives in part from their interaction with feminism and in part from the need to respond to a culturally diverse world.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Communication Modes, Muslim ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Feminine Mystique ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Values ▶ Popular Communication and Social Class ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Soft News ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Communication and Language ▶ Women's Media Genres

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## Feminist Communication Ethics

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Feminist ethics is concerned with how people can live together with others in healthy, productive ways and how we can build social or political structures to support this. As a way of thinking and acting that is fundamentally transformative and concerned with human good, feminism is itself normative. Its resistance to codification and preference for contextualization mean that its applications for communication and media are implied, rather than explicit; feminist philosophers, especially ethicists, rarely focus on media per se. Nonetheless, feminist ethics – derived from feminist insights and theories – is highly relevant to communication and media, as practices and as subjects of research (→ Ethics in Journalism; Ethics of Media Content).

Of central concern for feminists are media representations: news that demonizes subordinated populations or neglects vulnerable communities (→ News; Bias in the News), sexually exploitative advertising, entertainment content that traffics in gross stereotyping, objectification, and symbolic annihilation (→ Sexism in the Media). Besides issues of content, feminist approaches to ethical dilemmas in media may be derived from several strands of feminist work, each elaborated below. First is the issue of feminist ethics itself, a debate over whether women and men behave in fundamentally different ways, including with respect to ethical reasoning. Feminists' concerns with methodology and researcher–subject relationships apply both to media and communication scholarship, and to media practice (→ Journalism: Normative Theories;

Objectivity in Reporting; Research Ethics). Feminist activists' complaints about workplace discrimination and their experimentation with organizational forms also provide accounts of ethics in media workplaces.

### THE EMERGENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FEMINIST ETHICS

Gilligan's (1982) *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development* was a ground-breaking study of women's ways of analyzing and resolving ethical dilemmas. Gilligan accused then-prevailing notions about moral development – based upon abstract notions of rights, rules, and justice – of ignoring women's distinctive ways of thinking. Interviews with women convinced Gilligan that women's moral development emphasizes care, relationships, and responsibility. “[A] morality of responsibility and care begins with a self who is enmeshed in a network of relations to others, and whose moral deliberation aims to maintain these relations” (Kittay & Meyers 1987, 10).

Gilligan was criticized for essentializing sex and gender, falsely universalizing women, and ignoring the distorting impacts of a history of sex stereotyping and subordination (Steiner 1989). Some feminist ethicists remain unreceptive to ethics based on caring. Still, for the next two decades, feminist scholars openly challenged utilitarian, contract, neo-Kantian or rights-based theories.

While scholars seemed originally to assume that women's ways of thinking were feminist, Gilligan (1995) eventually distinguished between a *feminine* ethic of care, emphasizing special obligations and interpersonal relationships, and a *feminist* ethic of care, which exposed the disconnections of feminine selflessness. Moreover, Gilligan now denies that care and justice are opposites; nor is one a better form than the other. The net effect of the emphasis on face-to-face and personal relationships was to mitigate the impersonality of justice and rights-based models, and challenge abstract, universalized and disembodied conceptions that inherently marginalized women as moral agents and excluded women's experiences as a source of moral reflection.

### ATTEMPTS TO REVISE THE ETHIC OF CARE

Some feminists have tried to extend or amend the ethic of care. Given her concern that an ethic of empathy discourages self-reflection, and that caregivers may indulge in self-righteous anger or manipulation, Koehn (1998) emphasizes *dialogue*. She would carve out a space where receivers of care can contest the expectations of caregivers; her dialogic female ethics thus incorporates, she says, the principles of male ethics into the consultative ethos of female ethics. Others have integrated care and justice approaches, arguing that this integration raises political questions about who needs what kinds of care. Even Gilligan eventually conceded that all relationships, public and private, can be characterized in terms of equality and attachment; both inequality and detachment are morally questionable. Tronto insists that “care is not solely private or parochial; it can concern institutions, societies, even global levels of thinking” (1995, 145).

Conceiving caring in the neighborly sense as well as at the universal level, Denzin (1997) and Christians (2002) advocate “*feminist communitarian ethics*.” This takes the community as ontologically and morally prior to persons and presumes that values,

moral commitments, and existential meanings are negotiated dialogically. Denzin and Christians see this as facilitating civic transformation and promoting universal solidarity. Communitarianism, they say, takes as fundamental the social nature of the self, the connection of personal dignity and communal well-being, as well as the importance of care, justice, and interpersonal respect.

### **APPLYING THE ETHIC OF CARE TO RESEARCH**

Among other implications for communication and media research, caring as an ethical way of knowing requires researchers to be highly self-reflective about their ethical and scientific obligations, especially to subjects, so they do not objectify or “otherize” those being studied. Researchers must be self-conscious in deciding whose problems are important (those of vulnerable communities), what to research (with potential for transformative impact), and how and when to share it (among subjects themselves, as the research proceeds). Feminist ethics insists that researchers be humble, acknowledge their partiality, and not claim to have “the” knowledge; researchers are held accountable for their methods and their effects.

Feminist scholars, especially Sandra Harding (1993; 2004), challenge *andocentric science* not merely as bad but as unethical, given that its ideological practices and procedures conceal how power works, rather than revealing it. Feminist standpoint theory is thus also highly relevant, with its emphasis on consistent attention to how knowledge is always socially situated. Standpoint researchers start with the lives of marginalized peoples. Dominant classes do not need to understand those they dominate, and therefore do not understand them. However, since marginalized people are compelled to understand their oppressors, careful listening to them enables researchers to foreground and then incorporate bias into their method. Such knowledge-seeking concedes that inquiry and representation are inevitably partial and perspectival; reflexivity discloses partiality. Again, standpoint theorists’ claim that strong reflexivity produces “strong objectivity” is not uncontested; it may ignore how women’s lives are themselves socially constructed (→ Objectivity in Science).

Denzin (1997), a prominent scholar of qualitative research methods, especially in communication, says that ethnographically, feminist communitarian ethics requires giving participants a voice in research design (a position long advocated by feminist scholars), and building collaborative, reciprocal, friendly, trusting relations with subjects (→ Qualitative Methodology). Rejecting positivism’s ethical principles (beneficence, anonymity, and justice (→ Quantitative Methodology), its norms are grounded in community: research serves the community and reflects a community’s multiple voices so that participants can act to transform their social world. This also echoes critiques of empiricist epistemology, with its (misguided) view of agents of knowledge as culturally and historically disembodied individuals and of knowledge as homogeneous, unitary, and consistent.

### **FEMINIST ETHICS OF MEDIA PROFESSIONALS**

Foundational literature in feminism describes care almost entirely in the context of private and/or personal relationships. This would seem by definition to exclude application

of a care ethics to professional relationships, or at least the kind of abstract relationships that media professionals have with audiences. Articulating a practicable ethic of care for journalism requires at a minimum extending the world of moral considerability beyond the family to include caring for strangers and communities. Ethical schemas that work only for women, or only in the private or intimate domain, will not suffice.

Nevertheless, caring can be reconstructed. A politicized and “socialized” caring applies to journalism practice, as well as public relations, photojournalism, and other media work. Again, as with epistemology, the ethic of care has implications, including decisions about what to report on (important problems, with potential for having impact) and making journalism accessible to those most disenfranchised; and about the proper relationship of reporter to subjects (not “othering” interviewees). Feminist theorizing also implies something about the need for reporters to be humble, to acknowledge their privilege, and not claim to have complete knowledge about others. Media ought to serve the community, represent many voices (again especially of the marginalized), and critique power. Denzin calls for a (feminist) “communitarian journalism that treats communication and newsmaking as value-laden activities and as forms of social narrative rooted in the community” (1997, 157). He applauds → public journalism and asks ethnographers (→ *Ethnography of Communication*) to function as public journalists.

Given the ongoing concern about objectivity in journalism, the concept of “strong objectivity” has important, albeit subversive, applications. Standpoint epistemology requires journalists to rethink their craft “from the position of marginalized Others, thus uncovering unconscious ethnocentric, sexist, racist, and heterosexist biases that distort news production” (Durham 1998, 132). At the very least, this means journalists using those without power or privilege as sources and acknowledging their own position.

Relevant here is Fraser’s discourse ethics, emphasizing a contextual, collective dimension in order to advocate the standpoint of the collective concrete other. For Fraser, norms of collective solidarities as expressed in shared but non-universal social practices should govern interactions. She insists that people need enough collective control over the means of interpretation sufficient to enable them to participate in moral and political deliberation; “that is, to speak and be heard, to tell one’s own life-story, to press one’s claims and point of view in one’s own voice” (1986, 428). This requires journalists to abandon formalist, rights-based ethics privileging neutrality and to engage in self-reflection, deliberation, and informed debate. Not all intimate relationships and contexts are moral. Not all political “causes” are equally progressive. Thus, journalists must both evaluate and help audiences evaluate claims about suffering and policies to ameliorate suffering.

## FEMINIST ETHICS AND THE WORKPLACE

Feminist scholars are also divided on how best to organize work (→ *Organizational Ethics*). But relevant to workplace structures in media organizations and other communication organizations is feminists’ critique of the distorting and distorted polarity between public arenas as the legitimate site of work (and masculinity) and a private arena devalued for its association with emotional, domestic, and reproductive processes (and women). Feminists have experimented with horizontal and collective forms of organization and organizing

that are flexible and rotating and that grant agency rather than objectifying people. Notably feminist work or organization practices may fail to merge personal and emotional dimensions with rational, political, and professional dimensions. Indeed, the aspirationalist aspect of feminist ethics, and feminism's openness to contradiction, or at least to provisional, experimental processes, explain failures to achieve ethical purity. Ashcraft (2000) studied a feminist organization whose principles of "ethical communication" mandated members to disclose emotions and "name" conflict. However, this produced tensions. For example, in the name of empowerment and ethics, the system subjected interpersonal relationships to scrutiny and, ironically, preserved boundaries.

Nevertheless, presumably feminist ethical principles (caring, protecting those disenfranchised, understanding people as situationally embedded, and resisting sexism) imply active opposition to workplace sexism, including unfair wage scales, sexual harassment, and undermining active parenting. Creating double binds for women (that is, defining professionalism as acting like men but then judging women's behaviors as unsuitable because they seem like men's behaviors) is thus unethical.

Finally, an open question remains as to whether feminist ethics must always rely on ideas about gender or sex differences. Feminism as a political theory takes women seriously. Feminism as a movement hopes to transform social and political relationships to eliminate patriarchal distortion. Nonetheless, as a social construct, albeit a consistently powerful one, gender is assumed to be interstructured with sexual orientation, class, race, ethnicity, and religion. Feminism's ethical and epistemological principles need not always privilege women. Ultimately, a feminist ethic will take seriously values (community) and responsibilities (caring) long associated with women, without insisting that all women are always oppressed and pressed into economically, socially, and culturally dependent roles (→ Community Media; Community Structure Model). The history of male bias in ethics does not require feminist ethics to reify women's experience.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Structure Model ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ News ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Organizational Ethics ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Research Ethics ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Symbolic Annihilation

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## Feminist and Gender Studies

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Feminist and gender studies represent key fields of research within communication studies today. It is difficult to discuss their emergence and developments as two separate entities, as the two often overlap. However, it can be noted that mainstream forms of gender studies research tend to differ from feminist studies politically, theoretically, and methodologically. As Dow and Condit (2005, 449) argue, “The field of communication has come too far to categorize all research on women, or even gender, as feminist in its orientation. Rather, the moniker of ‘feminist’ is reserved for research that studies communication theories and practices from a perspective that ultimately is oriented toward the achievement of ‘gender justice,’ a goal that takes into account the ways that gender always already intersects with race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class.”

As a political movement for gender justice, feminist communication scholarship always has at its core a goal of examining how gender relations are represented (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Gender: Representation in the Media), or the ways in which audiences make sense of them, or how media practitioners contribute to perpetuating gender injustice. At the center of this is the view that hierarchical gender relations (re)produce social inequalities across time and cultures, thereby making it difficult for men and women to be equal partners in democratic society. Feminist communication research is tied to a political movement for structural social change rather than individual change. As such, feminist scholarly research is inseparable from activist forms of feminism. On the other hand, gender studies are not implicitly political in the sense of having an agenda for social change on the basis of gender equality. Instead, the principal aim has been one of raising public awareness about the ways in which gender affects the individual’s life choices and chances, and thus women’s and men’s relative opportunities for personal and career success.

## GENDER STUDIES IN COMMUNICATION

Communication scholarship examining gender issues has a longer history than that of feminist scholarship. “Gender studies” usually refers to the social constructions of masculinity and femininity. However, studies on sex roles – or the false belief that women and men are innately different – are often included in this definition (→ Constructivism). Gender studies, as a recognizably distinctive field of academic scholarship, dates back to at least the 1960s in the disciplines of psychology, sociology, linguistics, and anthropology. Insights from these disciplines provided a formative basis for the establishment of gender studies in communication from the 1970s onward. Until the 1980s, it was generally assumed that communication studies gender research would focus on women. As the twentieth century came to a close, gender and communication scholars became much more interested in also researching some of the ways in which men and masculinity were portrayed (→ Masculinity and the Media), and began to explore how communication systems and processes contributed to the construction of different forms of masculinity. This preoccupation represented a shift from assumptions about masculinity as an unquestioned norm, to one in which masculinity became the focus of scholarly examination.

As noted above, gender and communication studies have largely been grounded in assumptions about the individual’s acquisition of gendered attitudes and behaviors, and the ways in which socially constructed gender roles can negatively impact on the individual’s life chances, especially in terms of sense of self-worth, → social perceptions of women, and their career prospects. Here it is assumed that portrayals of women in the media that depict them as less able, mentally and physically, or where their beauty or domestic service are the aspects most highly valued in them, will hold women back from achieving individual (career, wealth) success (→ Women in the Media, Images of; Body Images in the Media). More recently, a central concern with some of the ways in which masculinity is depicted centers on the extent to which the media contribute to the construction of masculinity as inherently violent and out of touch with everyday (domestic) life.

Aside from mass communication research on gender, two key areas examined by gender researchers in interpersonal and human communication include: (1) the ways in which media *organizations portray gender*, where the relationship between gender and such organizations is said to shape both individual consciousness and a sense of collectivity within the organization (→ Gender and Media Organizations); and (2) women’s and men’s *language styles* and how these might maintain social inequalities in personal and professional life for women (→ Women’s Communication and Language; Gender and Discourse; Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in; Language and Social Interaction).

In the first area, there has been a growing interest in making global comparisons around the extent to which *women appear as news reporters and news subjects* so as to judge the extent to which women’s voices are making a contribution to democratic political systems (Sarikakis & Shade 2007; → Gender and Journalism). Research projects such as the global media monitoring project, conducted in 1995, 2000, and 2005, for instance, show little improvement over a ten-year period in women’s position as media professionals or news actors (Gallagher 2005). Indeed, this project has consistently shown

that female journalists tend to be younger and less authoritative than their male counterparts, and are also visibly less present. Also, women are rarely news subjects. When they do show up in the news, they tend to be in the roles of victim or celebrity (and sometimes both).

In the second area, some researchers have argued that there is in fact little quantitative proof that *women's and men's language differs*. Instead, it is social perception of differences (women are thought to be more talkative, circuitous, and elaborate in their language than men) that in turn holds women back, because such differences are the basis upon which women's speech and communication come to be less valued than men's (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 2003). On the other hand, other researchers refute this claim, providing what they assert to be evidence to show that there are often real differences in women's and men's language use and that these differences are what continue to hold women back from achieving personal and career success. More recently, some researchers have claimed that both perspectives are right, in that there are instances when men's and women's language is not that different, and others where it is, and it is up to researchers to document when such differences occur and why. Additionally, recent years have also seen an increasing interest in documenting men's and women's speech in different parts of the world, with some of this research echoing findings in countries such as the US and UK, whereas some findings are specific to the culture under scrutiny. For example, research in Japan has noted that women's language more clearly expresses a perception of powerlessness than does women's language in the US (Mulac et al. 2001). Similar findings have recently been published on women's language in Morocco (Sadiqi 2003; → Language Varieties).

### FEMINIST STUDIES IN COMMUNICATION

Feminist communication studies has only been a distinct scholarly field since the 1970s after the "second wave feminist" movement emerged in western countries and in many others including Japan, India, and Egypt. Feminist thought, political activity, and scholarship comes in a myriad of different forms, from western constructions such as liberal, radical, socialist, and postmodern feminism (→ Postmodernism and Communication) as well as the more recent phenomenon of → postfeminism, to the development of postcolonial and transnational feminist theory (→ Postcolonial Theory; Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). Additionally, more specifically focused forms of feminism have emerged recently. For instance, in the US, examples include Latina, Black, and Asian feminist theory (→ Latina Feminist Media Studies; Black Feminist Media Studies). Elsewhere, various forms of Islamic feminism have developed both within and outside the Middle East. Globally, this range of conceptual and methodological approaches within feminism and their differences as well as commonalities have led to different forms and practices of communication research and feminisms that are increasingly sensitive to cultural, social, and economic differences (as well as points of connection locally and internationally).

In considering the *challenges* that second wave feminist communication scholars have faced, it is important to note, as Gill (2007, 9) argues, that "the tide of feminist creativity, thinking, and activism that swept the western world in the late 1960s and 1970s faced a

challenge that earlier women's movements had not known: a world dominated by media." This has necessarily meant, Gill maintains, that since the 1960s, feminists have had to come to terms with the ways in which women are represented in the media. This realization, she suggests, underpins the rapid growth of feminist research and political action over the past 40 years. Typically, early feminist studies emerged from researchers and students in universities, particularly in the fields of communication in the US and cultural studies in the UK, who had become only too aware of the extent to which these disciplines failed to address gender issues (McLaughlin 1993; Carter et al. 1998). As Gill (2007, 9) further states, "Women in universities found that they were up against the 'male as norm' problem, in which women were frequently entirely invisible, and men were taken to stand for the whole human population."

Turning to look specifically at the development of *feminist communication studies in the US*, Dow and Condit (2005, 448) suggest that, historically, we can trace the emergence of feminist communication research to the growing visibility of feminism in society more generally (from the early 1970s). Early research in media studies, especially on → television, showed that women were rarely portrayed and that when they were, such portrayals tended to be heavily stereotyped (Dow & Condit 2005, 448; → Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Social Stereotyping and Communication; Stereotypes; Stereotyping and the Media). Other research highlighted the experiences of women working in the media, noting the dearth of opportunities open to women and the difficulties that they faced in seeking promotion.

Many studies during the 1970s, in the US and elsewhere, utilized *content analysis* to provide evidence for the narrow and often negative fictional roles available to women in the entertainment media as well as the absence or marginal status of women working behind and in front of the camera in journalism (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). Here, the argument was that all of these things led to an undervaluation of women's contributions to society and how they were regarded. Some researchers, however, came to the view that content analysis was problematic because it was only able to comment on the manifest media content of specific images rather than wider structures of meaning. Out of this developed, particularly in Europe, critical forms of analysis of methodological approaches, such as the semiotic and ideological analysis of British → cultural studies in the late 1970s (→ Semiotics).

From the 1980s onward, *more complex approaches* to the analysis of gender in the media were influenced by studies that sought to examine what had become, in some researchers' view, "a much more plural and fragmented set of signifiers of gender. There was a new playfulness in media representations, a borrowing of codes between different genres, and a growing awareness and interest in processes of image construction" (Gill 2007, 11). At the same time, theoretical advances encouraged a movement away from a transmission model of the media, i.e., the view that somehow its messages were directly conveyed to audiences, carrying with them stereotypical or ideological assumptions about femininity (→ Models of Communication). In its place, new theories put forward by post-structuralist scholars such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Lacan provided feminist communication scholars with a conceptual framework that would allow them to go beyond calls for the media to reflect more realistic images of women (with all of the attendant problems associated with defining what is real and therefore

what is realistic), and to embrace a position arguing that the media play an important role in constructing reality. In other words, “rather than there being a pre-existing reality to the meaning of the categories masculine and feminine, the media were involved in actively producing gender” (Gill 2007, 12).

This research eventually led the way to an interest in understanding how the media help to *construct gender identity and subjectivity*, which are seen to be partial and fragmented, rather than unified and rational, assumptions underpinning previous notions of gender subjectivity. This development allowed feminist communication scholars to see gender as fluid and open to change, rather than immutable and ahistorical. A related point coming out of this theoretical shift was that → meaning itself is never fixed across time and culture. “In poststructuralist theory meaning is never single, univocal, or total, but rather is fluid, ambiguous, and contradictory: a site of ongoing conflict and contestation” (Gill 2007, 13; → Identities and Discourse).

In opening up gender to this sort of theoretical scrutiny, it also followed that feminism itself was re-examined with a view to exploring the ways in which mainstream forms of feminism could be used to advance the position of certain women (particularly white, middle-class, heterosexual women), while at the same time doing little to raise awareness or improve the position of women of color, working-class women, lesbians, women with disabilities, etc. It was at this point that there began to develop postcolonial and transnational forms of feminism, as well as black feminism, Latina feminism, and third wave feminism, among others, highlighting the extent to which western political thought, including that of some forms of feminism, had tended to silence the voices of those who were not included in the dominant discourses of western feminism.

## **GENDER AND FEMINIST RESEARCH BY SPECIFIC MEDIA FORM**

In the next sections, gender and feminist research is reviewed by specific media form. No distinction is made between studies that are positioned within gender or feminist scholarship as these have already been noted, as has the point that in scholarly practice there is often much overlap between them.

### **Advertising**

Feminist and gender communication scholars have examined advertisements, viewing them as potentially debilitating, demeaning, and inaccurate reflections of “real women” (→ Advertising). Many initial studies examined *women’s sex roles*, and found that common images were of submissive wives and mothers located within domestic settings. Other studies examined gender power imbalances and found that advertisements depicted a parent–child relationship between men and women. Women tended to symbolize the child, had less power, and were shown as smaller to men and submissive to them. When other scholars began examining advertisements’ representations of the female body, they found that advertisements often portrayed fragmented body parts rather than the whole person, which had the effect of de-humanizing the subject. While in the past, this fragmentation was reserved for women, gender communication scholars show that it is now evident with men too.

Men and women are typically portrayed *advertising gender-specific items* – men with alcohol, vehicles, or business products, while women tend to be associated with domestic products. Authority has also traditionally been associated with men, and voice-overs are almost always male. While women have tended to be depicted as passive, sexual objects, more recently there has been an increase in the number of advertisements that show them to be active, sexual subjects. This has coincided with a growing → sexualization in the media, meaning that there has been an increase in sexual representations of both men and women. In western countries, the rise of second wave feminism helped incorporate feminist messages into advertising. This has contributed to several changes, including more images of women in the workplace, in positions of authority, and as independent beings. Older and minority women, however, typically have been marginalized in advertisements, depicted in a limited range of roles, or portrayed as having diminished mental and physical capacities (Lauzen & Dozier 2003). Stereotypically, black women have tended to be often represented as exotic or as a mammy (Cortese 2004), while Latinas are often shown to be passionate and emotional (Fregoso 1993) and Asian women as sexually submissive (Espiritu 1997).

### Magazines

Research on → magazines has variously examined constructions of femininity, masculinity, the rise of the “lad magazines,” discourses surrounding romance, sex, beauty, and consumption. Feminist media critics, such as Betty Friedan in the US who wrote *The feminine mystique* (1962; → Feminine Mystique), were among the first to become interested in women’s magazines in the 1960s, and argued that they reinforced traditional gender differences and inequalities (→ Women’s Media Genres). As such, they were not a site of innocent pleasure, but instead an arena that undermined women’s “real” identities. Not all scholars were as pessimistic about readers’ relationships with magazine texts, and some viewed them as an arena of political contest, not just ideological manipulation. Magazines therefore became a site where women’s oppression was debated and negotiated, not just reinforced. This meant that despite promoting notions of traditional womanhood and femininity, magazines could still be a source of pleasure for women (even feminists), because their meanings are polysemic, unstable, and subject to subversive interpretations. Second wave feminism brought about changes in women’s magazines. In the UK, as the women’s movement grew in the 1960s and 1970s, there was more coverage of political issues, including those that had previously been described as “feminist.”

*Men’s magazines* have been the subject of much discussion worldwide (Benwell 2003), and there has been a change toward including more sexualized images and photos of women. Gill (2007) has argued that these “lad” magazines assert their heterosexuality through a “laddish” tone that fetishizes women’s bodies and represents a defensive assertion of masculinity, male power, and men’s rights against feminist challenges. However, men’s lifestyle magazine content is not the same everywhere. An Italian study found that the recent success and growth of men’s magazines signaled a positive and progressive change of gender roles and identities (Boni 2002). Tanaka’s (2003) study of Japanese men’s magazines focused on the difference between the UK’s “new lad,” and Japan’s “city boy,” who is preoccupied by what his girlfriend thinks of him. Tanaka

describes how gender lines are more easily crossed in Japan, which is evident in magazine discourses.

### Film

For some time, western feminist film studies was shaped by the key theoretical contribution of Laura Mulvey's pioneering article "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema" (1975), where she argued that psychoanalytic theory could be used to understand how visual pleasure in → Hollywood film has been organized around the male gaze or masculine perspective. As such, film audiences experience narrative → cinema through the eyes of men, subjugating and objectifying women and suppressing feminine sexual desire.

In recent years, feminist film scholarship has become much broader in its theoretical and methodological orientations (→ Film Theory). For instance, Shohat's research (1990) has explored Hollywood's fascination with the Orient, and found Arab and black women were shown to be controlled by their libidos, while white women needed to be lured, made captive, and almost raped to awaken their desire. Much feminist film research has been geared toward studying pornography and other forms of sexual violence (→ Pornography, Feminist Debates on; Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives; Sexual Violence in the Media). Horror films have been analyzed to see how men, women, and sexuality are portrayed.

While there are many studies devoted to examining women in different → film genres, a growing number of gender researchers are now examining *men in films*, including sexuality and masculinity. De la Mora (2006) has investigated Mexican films from the 1930s and found that at the time masculinity was deployed differently than in western, and particularly Hollywood films. Studies have also examined heroes in film, heterosexual and homosexual masculinity, and working-class men and the relationship of the body to the male gaze.

Feminist research has also begun to look at political economy of films, examining the integration of patriarchy and capitalism (→ Political Economy of the Media). Riordan (2004), for example, has appraised the film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (Lee 2006) to see how the film was marketed, and how it constructed and commoditized culture and feminism.

### Television

As with the other media, television studies have found women to be shown in a narrow range of roles that tend to revolve around domestic settings or portray women as subordinate or as sex objects. Studies have also found this to be true in nonwestern countries, such as Japan (Suzuki 1995), where there are two images of men for every woman. Thus far, no European study has found a television category where women outnumber men. US television programs from the 1970s tended to ignore feminist characters and themes in television programs. However, by the 1980s there was a marked increase in the use of feminist rhetoric with shows such as *Cagney and Lacey* (1982–1988) and *LA Law* (1986–1994) being among the most successful. This continued through the 1990s into the twentieth century in a much wider range of television genres, including drama, situation comedy, and in factual programming.

Media researchers have used ethnography to research television viewing habits and have found that gender affects almost everything about the individual's relationship with television (→ Ethnography of Communication). At the other end, production studies have shown that women tend to hold lower-ranking jobs, take longer to gain promotions, and often face the "glass ceiling" (Joseph 2004). In addition, the percentage of female reporters diminishes with age, whereas this is not the case with men (Gallagher 2005). There have been several studies on specific television genres such as → soap operas, talk shows, and anime. Studies on women from ethnic minority groups in the US have typically revealed the use of traditional racial and gender-based hierarchies. For instance, Gillespie (1999) has established that African-American women have often been depicted as faithful companions to white women and, sometimes, men. In Puerto Rican television, research has found that traditional gender roles are often sustained by showing female characters receiving personal rewards, such as love from a man, for being well-behaved, and, conversely, loneliness for those who behave badly or outside the boundaries of socially constructed gender expectations.

US research examining depictions of men also appears to suggest that men tend to be presented in highly stereotypical ways. "Real men" are inevitably portrayed as dominant, aggressive, rational, and competent, whereas their opposite (desirable, compliant, domesticated women) featured mostly in comedies and soap operas (Craig 1992). Researchers have also examined minority men, male relationships, and the male gaze (see Craig 1992). Findings suggest that men tend to appear more in action/drama programs, and are least likely in sitcoms and soap operas. Men are more likely than women to be depicted as employed in high-status jobs, are less likely to be shown as married, are generally shown as older, and more likely to be involved in violence. The masculinity portrayed on television tends to be white, middle-class, and heterosexual, and more work needs to be done examining black, transsexual, rural, and working-class men (see Craig 1992).

## News

Feminist and gender studies scholars have analyzed the gendered nature of news culture (Carter et al. 1998; → News). More specifically, scholars have researched → journalism production, content, the gendered use of sources (→ News Sources), reporting men's and women's issues, representations of male and female athletes, politicians, → war correspondents, and sexual violence, among other topics.

In the US, Croteau and Hoynes's research (1992) has demonstrated that the *newsroom's gender imbalance* has led to male-centered news practices, such as the demand for objectivity and detachment, the importance of public matters over private ones, and limited definitions of what is "newsworthy" (→ Objectivity in Reporting; News Values). When it comes to stories about women in the US, Rakow and Kranich (1991) have argued that women are rarely, if ever, used as sources, and men speak for them all (see also Chambers et al. 2004).

Gallagher's (2005) international research on gender and news has found that men tend to report more "hard" news with topics such as politics, business, and economics, while women are most likely to report on → "soft" news, or social issues such as health-care and education. Her survey of one day of news (television, radio, and print) in 76 countries



(undertaken by volunteers), revealed that 79 percent of news subjects were men, and that one woman appears for every five men. There is no consensus on why this is. Global research examining *women's representation as news subjects* have found that women are often portrayed as victims (Lemish 2004; Gallagher 2005). A Chinese study has established that women's images were more likely to appear in the news than their voices or opinions (Yuan 1999), and in Japan, women tend to be used to give personal reaction to a given news event, while men show up more often in the role of providing expert comment. In India, the increased presence of women in the newsroom has had a positive effect on the macho culture, but much more could be done to speed up progress (Joseph 2004).

When reporting on women in politics, there tends to be a focus on gender roles and domestic and childcare services. Unlike women, men are rarely described in terms of physical attractiveness in news reports. Women's age and marital status are often discussed, and women are often referred to by their first name, and photographed in domestic settings (Ross 2002). Studies from around the world have found women's appearance is discussed more than their policies or messages (Lind & Salo 2002).

## Radio

Very little feminist or gender research has been undertaken to date. That which has been done tends to reflect upon and assess feminist attempts to create gendered → radio spaces for female audiences. Many women's community stations have been feminist projects, where the top priority has been to increase women's visibility and experience in the public sphere. There is a difference between women's and feminist production, where the former is not necessarily political, but the latter demonstrates resistance to patriarchal oppression. Feminist radio is grounded in the notion that women have a right to broadcast on their own terms, use their own voices, share their concerns, and represent their own lives. Studies have focused on histories of women's community radio, and this is one area in which studies are not predominantly from the US or UK (→ Community Media).

Many African nations have witnessed an increase in *community radio* since the 1990s when political systems opened up. These stations have been used to strengthen democracy and increase representation of people (particularly women) and issues previously ignored (Mitchell 2004). Radio listening in many of Africa's poorer areas has become a communal activity, and "listening clubs" have been developed (→ Radio for Development). Community radio has been around Asia-Pacific, New Zealand, and Australia since the 1980s. Asia has some of the fewest women's community radio stations while Latin America and the Caribbean have many, often in remote or rural areas. One of the most successful stations is the feminist international radio endeavor (FIRE), an online radio station located in Costa Rica, and broadcast in Spanish and English (Mitchell 2004).

Radio studies show that although women are not represented proportionately in production, radio still tends to be defined as a female medium, as women are frequent users because of its low cost, and their ability to do other work while listening (Hobson 1980). Even though radio tends to be perceived as a feminine space, Gill's UK (1993) study confirms that there are few female DJs (at the time of her research, male DJs outnumbered female ones by 10 to 1). To explain this anomaly, she discussed several myths about female DJs, including the idea that women could become DJs but chose not to;

that audiences prefer male DJs; that women lack the necessary technological skills; and that women who are more interested in broadcasting become journalists rather than DJs.

### Internet and New Media

The diversity in research on the → Internet and other forms of new media is difficult to summarize because of its expansive and multilayered theoretical and methodological approaches. Though this entry mainly focuses on Internet, there is an entire research area devoted to other forms of new media such as young people and new media, and gender and gaming. While other media have a strong focus on the western world, Internet studies tend to be more global. Scholars have examined the relationship between gender and technology, gendered consumption and technological production, activism and technology (particularly feminist-oriented), Internet pornography (→ Sex and Pornography Online), technology and gendered identity construction, etc. Much communication technology research recognizes that gender affects how everyday life is organized, and that the home has different meanings for men and women. Taking this into account, some studies have looked at how women use new information technologies at home and found that they consume technologies reluctantly, but feel they need to because of family responsibilities (Sing 2001).

Scholars have identified three distinct *narratives surrounding women in technology*, all related to views or assumptions about the Internet: (1) that it is a tool for feminists' search for social activism, organization, and networking, (2) that it is a misogynist sphere promoting sexual harassment, and (3) that it is a tool for women to combat globalization. Lee (2006) argues that new technologies can be problematic because they create and reinforce power imbalances in women's → communication networks, where technological knowledge is unequally distributed. In addition, women use new technologies differently in different parts of the world, and current technological discourses are seen to have a capitalistic, colonial, and western bias (Kurian & Debashish 2003; → Information and Communication Technology, Economics of). In addition, some feminists, particularly those situated in the global south, point out that a discourse exists saying that if women do not use technologies to increase and improve women's organization, they are not seen as putting the technology to good use. When examining policy in developing countries, Steeves (1996) outlines areas organizations should consider, such as women's employment, access to information, and selection of appropriate technologies (see also McLaughlin, in press).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Community Media ▶ Constructivism ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Feminine Mystique ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Film Genres ▶ Film Theory ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ Gender and Media Organizations ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in ▶ Journalism ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Language Varieties ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Magazine ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Meaning

- ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Models of Communication ▶ News ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Political Economy of the Media
- ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Semiotics
- ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media
- ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Perception ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Soft News ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media
- ▶ Television ▶ War Correspondents ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Communication and Language ▶ Women's Media Genres

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## Feminist Media

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Around the world, → newspapers and → magazines, → cable and → satellite television programs, → radio broadcasts, → documentary film, and more recently → Internet sites

produced by, for, and about women have been crucial to the process of resisting dominant conceptions of women, celebrating oppositional visions of womanhood, and adopting lives as “new women.” Until the 1960s, such journalism outlets rarely used the term “feminist.” Nonetheless, “feminist media” usefully describes media that consistently advocate expansive political, social, and cultural roles for women and expose gender oppression (interstructured with oppression by sexual orientation, class, “race,” ethnicity, and religion). By definition, these largely women-run media enable them to redefine news, exchange information unavailable in mainstream media, and nurture a feminist community. Participants experiment with alternative working styles, organizational systems, and ethical standards, and develop their media skills (→ Femininity and Feminine Values; Feminist Communication Ethics).

### FIRST AND SECOND WAVES

Historically, feminist journalism was an outgrowth of efforts on behalf of other causes, such as the abolition of slavery and moral edification, as well as ones important specifically to women, such as health and dress reform, and especially suffrage or voting rights. Already in the mid-eighteenth century, especially in the US and UK, feminists published papers advocating equal rights for women, universal suffrage, abolition, liberalizing of divorce laws, birth control, and free education. Other feminist journals advocated quite different causes, including free love, anarchy, and socialism.

Notably, not merely mainstream media but also radical countercultural movements of the 1960s, and their periodicals, marginalized – if they did not altogether ignore – feminist issues and the so-called *second wave of feminism* (→ Women’s Movement and the Media). The 1970s, therefore, gave rise to literally hundreds of feminist periodicals. Some lasted only for a year or less, given the economic, physical, and time burdens of production. There were feminist magazines specifically for different races, ethnicities, religions, professions, ages, as well as for “goddess-minded wimmin,” Marxists, prostitutes, and celibates.

In the 1970s, a few leading women’s liberation magazines genuinely aimed at a general readership. *Spare Rib*, in the UK, originally limited the ads to nonsexist messages for crafts, but then was relaunched for the same reasons with a glossy cover and new style. In the US, *Ms.* quickly generated 26,000 subscriptions after its 1972 launch but also faced financial instability. For a time it solved advertiser resistance by rejecting all advertising. Since 2002, the Feminist Majority Foundation has owned *Ms.* as well as operating a quarterly newsletter and *Daily Feminist News*, a news website. Canada’s *Herizons*, which dates back to 1979, claims to be “a unique hybrid” of nonprofit business (with revenue from subscriptions, donations, advertising, and sales of music and clothing), feminist publishing and advocacy journalism, but attempts at this combination are common (→ Activist Media).

Second wave publications innovated along several dimensions. They sought grants from private foundations and government agencies to send issues free to prisons and mental hospitals, and to train women in publishing. Evolving distinctively feminist ways of working often was equally important, although developing collective, noncompetitive modes proved difficult. The Washington DC collective that has published *off our backs*

(oob) since 1970 continues to make decisions by consensus. Exemplifying feminist journalism's explicitness regarding activism and advocacy, and disdain for conventional journalistic principles, oob says: "We intend to be just; but we do not intend to be impartial" (→ Advocacy Journalism).

Most feminists disdained professionalism, which smacked of hierarchy and elitism, and even bylines (→ Professionalization of Journalism). In particular, second wave feminists experimented with alternative formats and innovative organization, often nonhierarchical collectivities or rotating jobs. To avoid editing, several published everything submitted. Some limited the kind of advertising they would carry or declined all advertising. As a matter of political education, some feminist papers charged men more for than women. Likewise, some lesbian periodicals charged extra for brown paper wrapping. Some rejected information from straight people and/or gay men, or declared, "TO BE SOLD TO AND SHARED BY LESBIANS ONLY" (→ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies). Others referred to "wimmin" to avoid the word "men." Still, the major problem, as well as the final straw, is nearly always that costs exceed revenues. Furthermore, most feminist periodicals can only be found at independent or feminist bookstores, a dying breed.

### NONPRINT AND THIRD WAVE JOURNALISM

The US-based Pacifica network is known for its leftist and pacifist perspective; but Pacifica, founded in 1946 by an outspoken pacifist as the first listener-supported radio network, also carries some feminist radio. The women's international news gathering service (WINGS), also based in the US, produces global-minded news programs about women for noncommercial radio stations and the Internet. Feminist television is even more infrequent, since television production is more difficult, complex, and expensive than radio. Even with relatively low production values, public access shows – such as *New Directions for Women*, produced since 1994 by a New Jersey collective for public access channels – require the coordination of many trained people, who end up concentrating on processes (not content).

Arguably, the Internet is a more accommodating space for feminist journalism, especially if the goal is not financial profit (→ Alternative Journalism). The low production and distribution costs and design plasticity allow *cyberfeminists* to experiment in the name of individuality, self-expression, and choice. Nearly all feminist periodicals also maintain an Internet presence, but increasingly feminists abandoned other media forms, given the relative expense and the availability of online feedback and interactivity. Operating on their understanding that "the personal is the political," feminist online media often tie personal experiences to larger structural principles, illustrating how personal problems transcend the individual (→ Cyberfeminism).

Still, it is rarely profitable. Some feminist Internet sites have been co-opted by corporate agendas and a few feminist standalone sites cease altogether each year. Korean feminists have successfully operated *Unninet* (Sisters' Village) since 2000, using metaphors of home-like spaces to welcome young feminists to their critiques of the gender politics of everyday life, but their attempt to establish a profit-generating corporation failed.

Beginning in the late 1980s, a *third wave of feminism and of feminist media* emerged, both as a response to the second wave's tendency to essentialize women and to defend the second wave in the face of a popular backlash. Typical of third wave feminism's concern to avoid defining itself in terms of the experiences of upper-class US white women, *Expository Magazine* bridges the gap among various feminisms by remaining cross-generational, cross-cultural, and cross-theoretical, but it frantically pleads for donations and feminist advertising to help "raise awareness about the plight of women worldwide" (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational).

However, this generation of feminists is also concerned with the micro-politics of everyday life, so most of the emerging opportunities for third wave feminist journalism emphasize edginess, or at least funky humor, even when they aim to sustain a visionary global women's network. And for some, sassiness is the point. "Girl power" and "girl culture" are more about fashion and marketing than social change. Unlike many western second wave feminists, who refused to answer to "girls," US-based *Bust* magazine and its online "Girl Wide Web" are "for women with something to get off their chests." *Bust* describes itself as "the voice of the new girl order." Likewise, *Bitch* magazine, publishing from Portland, Oregon, critiques media images of femininity and feminism and highlights "girl-friendly" media. Katha Pollitt, reporter for *The Nation*, has described *Bitch* magazine as "cheerfully attitudinous updated feminism" (→ Postfeminism).

Many US websites provide a platform for young women to speak on their own behalf, such as *Feministing*. Online "zines" or magazines are also available for older women. *Crone Chronicles*, a → zine which began in print, highlights the aging process. Moreover, serious print and online sites are continually emerging. *Trivia*, which appeared in print from 1982 to 1995 before going online, addresses the pattern of relegating women's most important concerns to the margins of patriarchal history. *The Women's Space* provides news and commentary from "radical feminist" and "distinctively and unapologetically woman-centered" perspective. *The F word*, a UK-based site launched in 2001 for young feminists, now emphasizes "contemporary" feminism.

According to *Altar Magazine*, since problems are not monolithic, neither are solutions; it therefore calls for socially progressive women and men fighting on many fronts against racism and heterosexism, and for feminism and economic justice. *Azizah* reflects the experiences and perspectives of North American Muslim women. Among the few journals managing to bridge the gap between activists and scholars is *Manushi*, founded in 1978 by two Delhi scholars to cover South Asian women's issues. Several lesbian magazines are published in Europe, especially in Germany, and in the US; some are highly politically edgy, others much flashier.

Few are genuinely international. Launched in 1975 as a quarterly emphasizing development, human rights, and especially, female genital mutilation, *Women's International Network (WIN) News* is "a world-wide open participatory communication system by, for, and about women of all backgrounds, beliefs, nationalities, and age groups." Since 1999, using freelance writers from around the world who are committed to professional standards but paid in free copies, *Women's eNews* has distributed news about women's issues globally to individual subscribers and commercial media. In 2003 *Women's eNews* launched an Arabic language version. *Scum Grrrls*, "a 100% feminist energy magazine,"

appears in French and English. Nonetheless, most US, European, and Asian outlets, including online, are available in only one language.

## DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Scholars seldom analyze feminist media. Suffrage papers have drawn historians' attention, but historians often use periodicals as sources of data about the early women's rights movement, rather than subjects deserving analysis themselves. In particular, Internet sites warrant study. They seem to avoid most of the problems that plague feminist periodicals and broadcasting, although feminist sites have died when participants were diverted by other causes, new jobs, or families, or because of personality and political rifts. Whether the content producers and audiences of feminist Internet sites can enjoy the kind of camaraderie that sustained first and second wave feminists is unclear. That is, the extent to which feminist websites will sustain a feminist community remains to be investigated.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cyberfeminism ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist Communication Ethics ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Magazine ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Newspaper ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Social Movement Media, Transnational ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Media Genres ▶ Women's Movement and the Media ▶ Zines

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# Feminist Media Pedagogy

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Feminist media pedagogy is a critical teaching practice and body of scholarship concerned with the lives and relationships of both women and men as mediated through cultural forms and institutions. Primarily, feminist media pedagogy focuses on the processes of teaching and learning about the politics of teaching and learning, especially as they are related to media production, content, reception, and consumption.

## EMERGENCE OF THE FIELD

This critical teaching practice emerged from feminists' concern both with the portrayals of women in media (→ Women in the Media, Images of) as well as with the uncomplicated critiques of power in critical and radical pedagogy. Feminist media pedagogy is an interdisciplinary body of scholarship, with contributions coming from the fields of film studies, communication, education, English, women's studies, among others. Its theoretical foundations are equally eclectic, with contributions from → cultural studies, neo-Marxist, poststructuralist, postcolonial and psychoanalytic feminist theory, as well as well-known educational theorists and philosophers such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, Paulo Freire, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, Henry Giroux, Gayatri Spivak, bell hooks, and many others. Feminist educators from around the world, working in a variety of contexts, from international grassroots and NGO efforts at media literacy with adult populations to undergraduate and postgraduate classrooms, focus their pedagogical work on the tenuous and complicated relationships among media critique, consumption, pleasure, and production.

From these theoretical and practical concerns, feminist media pedagogy has developed a strong orientation toward both interaction in the classroom and broader critiques of media and educational institutions. It has also developed some tensions and contradictions in its analyses of power dynamics. Nonetheless, feminist media pedagogy can be distinguished by its willingness to confront the complexities of power in a world where teachers are not always powerful while students remain powerless, and where interactions with the media and their institutions may be occasioned by choice and agency among viewers (→ Classroom Power). Thus, feminist media pedagogy offers an emphasis on classroom dynamics that necessitates a more complex reading of power as shifting and changing, located completely neither in the teacher nor in the student.

## FEMINISM

Feminism is defined by its focus on patriarchy as it shapes all aspects of women's lives. From this assumption, there have developed multiple feminist theories, each of which posits power, identity, and discourse differently. Each of these perspectives positions both the teacher and student as agents, capable of making small or radical changes in their lives

and communities (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). The feminist theories that apply particularly to feminist media pedagogy are, broadly speaking, liberal, socialist, and poststructural, although other strains of feminism critical of these areas are also influential (e.g., black, queer, radical, postcolonial, and transnational feminisms). Liberal feminism is often defined through its vision of equality for men and women in the workplace, home, and politics. Its proponents do not look to make deep structural changes in society, as much as they argue for equal representation within existing institutions. Here, the concern lies with educating students about the disparities in employment and pay between men and women working in media industries, as well as in media ownership. Liberal feminist pedagogy often focuses on the numbers: how many women are portrayed in the media and in what roles? Students are taught to analyze representation within current programming and institutions in the hope of increasing access for women to better roles in front of as well as behind the camera.

Socialist feminism in media pedagogy is closely tied to political economic theory and class analysis in media representation. From this perspective, attention is concentrated on the ownership and hierarchization of media industries, the class implications of media policies, as well as analysis of media representations and the slippage between their use and exchange value (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). Students are encouraged to become active outside the classroom in boycotting certain programs and advertisers and creating opportunities to influence government regulation of the media industry.

Poststructuralist feminism is also influential in teaching about the media. Whereas in other forms of feminism, identity may be viewed as essential – based primarily on a common understanding of what it means to be female, poststructuralist feminists see gender as a performance of femininity or masculinity that is dependent for its meaning on the contexts in which it is enacted. In fact, all aspects of the “self” are constructed in this manner, and so identities can never be stable or unified in their meaning (→ Identity Politics). Indeed, an individual can take on performances of race, gender, class, etc. that may be contradictory from one moment to the next. The media accordingly address viewers in terms of the performances with which they hope they will identify. Post-structuralist feminist teachers, thus, might ask, who do the media think you are? And, in turn, who are you when you interact with particular media?

Feminist teachers concerned with the media focus their efforts in several areas: on the level of institutional power in ownership of multinational media conglomerates that hierarchize production, distribution, and programming power in the hands of a few (western, white males); on the representation of gendered, sexualized, raced, classed, able-bodied, aged images in those programs that reach the widest range of people; and on the ways people make meaning of those mediated images and stories in their everyday lives. The variety of feminist approaches to pedagogy encompasses a wide range of topics and approaches to teaching those topics inside and outside the classroom.

## **ROLE OF THE MEDIA**

Feminist media pedagogy brings to pedagogical theory and practice an emphasis on the intersection between media studies – of production, effects, and content – and the everyday lives of women. Building on Freirean concerns about the relationship between

the word and the world, it asks how both are constituted in the media as cultural common sense. In other words, the media use symbols and language practices (words) to represent the past, present, and future social world. The social world created through the media, much like the everyday world of social life, is created through relations of power that situate women and other groups in the minority in positions of lesser moral, political, cultural, and economic value. Although distinctions are made among for-profit and not-for-profit media ventures, as well as between mass-marketed and private or independent media productions, all media traffic in the symbol systems that tell our most pervasive cultural stories of identity, relationships, justice, and community.

Although most feminist media pedagogues analyze the media as an “object” to be represented and understood, others are interested primarily in the ways people create → meanings for the media and communicate through media in their everyday lives. Where the former are primarily interested in the media as symbolic object and artifact, the latter are primarily concerned with symbolic processes of meaning-making that rely, more or less, on media in constructing modes of being and doing in the world.

Concerned foremost with the media’s power to represent identities and maintain dominant groups’ versions of common sense, those feminist pedagogues who analyze the media as object examine the ways people (primarily oppressed groups) are portrayed in the media. They work with their students to unpack the motivations behind such representations and try to envision and construct (via production of alternative media stories and forms) narratives that reverse or alter the relations of power. Examples of this type of pedagogical work abound, and many are associated with efforts to promote media literacy (→ Media Literacy). For example, studies that examine Disney narratives and the resistance among students to critique and/or construct alternative narratives that empower women exist in both the feminist media pedagogy and the media literacy scholarship.

On the other hand, those teacher-scholars interested in the media as mediator of common sense look at the ways in which discourse in the media becomes part of common sense in the classroom (→ Discourse Analysis). They ask how students come to compare their bodies, relationships, lives with those they see in the media. For example, has reality television increased or lessened the distance between real (immediate) and mediated events? Do images of the ideal mate portrayed in the media make their way into everyday stories about dating and relationships? Moreover, can pedagogy as an intervention into discourse-as-usual change student awareness of the pervasiveness of media? How might female students in particular gain both self-awareness and the motivation to resist unhealthy media images and messages? (→ Classroom Questioning).

Responses to these questions can be found in the attempts by some teachers to incorporate community action projects into their courses, asking students to develop media projects in coordination and consultation with women’s groups. For instance, the grassroots media literacy movement takes feminist pedagogy out of the classroom and into the streets, barrios, and countryside – where the idea of media developed by and for poor and/or rural women is becoming a reality (Riaño 1994). In these examples, there are few differences between media literacy projects and feminist media pedagogy; however, as we discuss in the section to follow, feminist media pedagogy focuses more on the process of teaching and learning while media literacy often focuses on the outcome (→ Grassroots Media).

## PEDAGOGY

In addition to its similarities with media literacy, feminist media pedagogy also shares many of the characteristics of *critical pedagogy*. Critical pedagogy concentrates on what is learned, how it is learned, who defines what is learning, and in whose interest knowledge is defined and achieved. Critical pedagogy is concerned with schooling as an oppressive institution that stifles learning and creativity. As a body of theory it promotes empowerment of students through recognizing and respecting their knowledge and experience. Critical pedagogy deconstructs schooling as a tool of the government and multinational corporations to reproduce a corporate citizenry focused on dreams of individual material wealth at the expense of true democratic community. While not all critical pedagogues espouse these goals, they are all critical of an institutional structure and curriculum that maintains the power of the dominant culture.

Feminist media pedagogy builds on these ideas and also critiques them, mindful of the ways gender, “race,” class, and sexuality position some teachers and students differently from others in the classroom. Where critical pedagogy situates the traditional teacher as powerful and the student as powerless, feminist pedagogy paints a more complex picture. Teachers and students are situated in discourse, in interaction, and through the power relations that construct various episodes in the classroom as teaching and learning, desire and resistance. Authority may be upheld or contested and both teacher and students negotiate status in conversation; such as when an open discussion is cut off or closed down, or when a lecture is interrupted by a student disagreement. Moreover, feminist pedagogy is concerned with the embodiment of teaching and learning in their performance – in the gestures, actions, and bodies that make a “good” teacher or a “difficult” student and in the spaces that contextualize these performances (→ Teacher Communication Style; Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction).

In other words, pedagogy in a feminist frame concentrates on the relationship between the teacher, the student, and the knowledge that they together produce (Lusted 1986). Feminist teachers work to create an atmosphere of safety in the classroom, where women especially can feel encouraged to give voice to previously silenced experiences of oppression or marginalization. Feminist educators are also concerned by the division of mind and body in western philosophy, where mind is equated with rationality and with men and body is equated with emotions and with women. In the classroom this division often plays out in the discounting of emotion and the discipline of the body (→ Femininity and Feminine Values). Critical knowledge encompasses embodied experience – past, present, and future – as well as desire for and resistance to alternative curriculum. In this vein, resistance is not viewed as noncompliance or as the teacher’s lack of control over her class, but as the logical extension of experience. Resistance, thus, is *not* not knowing, but is knowing differently, or knowing “other than” the dominant epistemology.

When the focus of feminist pedagogy is on media, attention turns to the relationship between performances of identity on the screen or in magazines and actual interaction in the classroom and everyday life. Feminist media pedagogy differs from critical pedagogy and from media literacy in its focus on the complications and messiness of bodies in the classroom – bodies disciplined by educational and media institutions and bodies interacting in the process of teaching and learning.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Power ▶ Classroom Questioning ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Pedagogy, Communication in ▶ Teacher Communication Concern ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women’s Communication and Language

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## **Feminist Media Studies, Transnational**

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Transnational feminist media studies, an emergent area of scholarship, is both a critical intervention and a response to the challenges posed by globalization (→ Globalization of the Media; Globalization Theories). The transborder movement of capital, commodities, images, and people has set in motion a range of social and political issues, affecting multiple aspects of lived experience. Globalization reproduces gender and sexuality in ways that demand academic attention. Media systems, forms of representation, and communication practices serve as key points from which to unravel the complexity of global configurations. The rubric of the transnational enables feminist scholars to revise and rethink theoretical frames in media studies and produce critical, alternative accounts of globalization. Key aspects of globalization, detailed below, serve as impetus and set the agenda for transnational feminist media scholarship.

### **GENDERED GEOGRAPHIES**

Defying any singular form of definition, globalization is being heralded, celebrated, and deplored simultaneously by different constituencies. The contemporary landscape is characterized by social and political formations that have reconstituted the relationships

between the national, local, and global. Technology and corporate expansion have popularized the global → discourse of connectivity. Reality on the ground, however, speaks to great disparity in terms of media access and distortions (→ Access to the Media). While most mainstream accounts of globalization emphasize the inevitability and speed of transformations, far less attention is paid to the gendered contradictions that are inherent in these processes.

The rapid transformations engendered by the new technologies and the hypermobility of capital create new forms of inequity in the global landscapes and at the same time reinforce existing schisms by spatially extending old logics of domination in global guises. Lines of power are constituted, consolidated, and deployed in highly interconnected circuits that cross borders, resulting in what feminist scholars Grewal and Kaplan (1994) term “*scattered hegemonies*.” New technologies, systems of media representation, and information networks serve as crucial nodes in the transport and circulation of these modalities of power (→ Technology and Globalization). The issues here demand innovative theoretical responses, paying nuanced attention to the inequalities and asymmetries inimical to the global scene.

Enmeshed in these changes are various regulatory regimes that remain deeply classed, raced, and gendered. Transnational critical practice works against models that privilege binary cultural critique based on universalism, essentialization of cultures, and an unquestioned Eurocentrism. In addition, the emphasis on the transnational locates and identifies culture and cultural politics as traversing borders and hence exceeding the boundaries of nation (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). As Appadurai (1996) argues, globalization constitutes a “complex overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing center-periphery models.”

The demands of the global economy and colonial legacies have led to vast demographic movements of people. These *new patterns of migration* have stirred debates on borders and national identity in various corners (→ Identity Politics). Inflected by the nuance of local politics, the subject of immigration is inevitably compounded by larger discourses of nationalism, “race,” religion, and community. It is important to note that this economic expansion has set in motion alternate circuits that travel through shadow economies and invisible pathways, constituting counter-geographies of globalization. With the shift of dominant structures of capitalism to flexible modes of production and accumulation, there is a significant feminization and transnationalization of labor. New actors enter the global stage, calling into question conventional assumptions about agency, choice, travel, and mobility. The free flow and mobility of some is predicated on the fixity and status quo of others. For example, women from the global south are increasingly occupying low-paid jobs created by the fast-growing global service economies. This range of new global actors typically falls outside the frame of dominant accounts of globalization that, as Sassen (1998, 82) describes, read like “narratives of eviction.” Hence Sassen argues for a feminist analytic that allows a reconceptualization of globalization capturing “strategic instantiations of gendering.”

## **MODERNITIES AND NEO-LIBERAL TRANSLATIONS**

Along with deregulation and privatization, a pervasive neo-liberal worldview is taking shape, privileging consumerism and individuality. Packaging market-driven interests as

social values, neo-liberalism reshuffles the meaning of public responsibility and citizenship into the language of private choices and entitlements. Spurred by a consumer economy, this ethic is rapidly reshaping social formations and cultural practices in its transnational travels, with gendered consequences.

Discourses of consumption working with global popular culture and new technology script global identities based on strategic models of *cultural homogeneity*. In the deterritorialized world of free-floating commodities, local desires and cosmopolitan desires are connected. However, the networks of global consumer culture, in their commodification of difference, erase the complicity of interconnected historical forces in the production of global hierarchies that are both gendered and racialized (→ Consumer Culture). Simultaneously, the enduring power of western modernity continues to exert its hold globally, reproducing old colonial hierarchies in new sites as exemplified in the hegemony of the Eurocentric gaze in popular media.

At the same time, competing with the dominance of western popular culture, there is an emerging global presence of images and media products from the global south (for e.g., Hong Kong and Indian films), shaping local understandings of gendered categories. Mediated and technological regimes connect the diasporic and national spaces and also form the backdrop for distinctive types of transnational affiliations and gendered identities. There is increasing attention being paid to how issues concerning gender and sexuality are being drafted into the transnational public sphere, and whether new media flows are interrupting or restaging the hegemonic ordering of cultures.

The landscape of global cultural production underscores the need for discursive definitions and material constructions of gender to be situated within the complex intertwining of local and global fields – a rich and important site of investigation for transnational feminist media scholarship.

## MAPPING THE TRANSNATIONAL

These issues require media scholars to engage with globalization in new and revised terms that necessitate going beyond the familiar binaries of local/global, east/west, private/public or civilized/oppresed. The objective is to open up the terms of analysis and expand the ways in which media scholars conceptualize the material and concrete conditions within which cultural practices are constituted. The production, circulation, and consumption of cultural products have to be situated against the flow of migrants, transnational communities, and the neo-liberal worldview that is re-articulating difference and inequality on a larger global stage. Feminist scholars begin with the assumption that to evoke the transnational is not merely to aggregate different cultures. The transnational serves as an analytical frame to interpret the contested relational structures between cultures situated within a complex field of power relations. The transnational framework enables a rethinking of the categories of the nation-state, culture, identity, and modernity (→ Migration and Immigration; Modernity).

The mediascapes of globalization create *transnational public space* and accentuate the deterritorialization of culture and community (→ Public Sphere). These new types of global communities are the focal point of contemporary discussions regarding inclusion, modernity, citizenship, and the policing of borders. Feminist media scholars working on

transnational issues are paying critical attention to the racialized and gendered discourses and routes through which people are drafted into global processes. These varying levels of interconnections require a shift in theoretical approaches that work from the premise of the bounded, homogeneous nation-state. Contemporary global processes cannot be captured by resorting to models employed in communication and media studies that are entrenched in Enlightenment paradigms and the normative privileging of the west (→ Communication Modes, Western). Feminist research in transnational media studies assumes an interdisciplinary stance in order to make visible the interrelated issues of ethnicity, gender, and sexuality, mindful of their historical and political specificity.

In this endeavor, the intellectual contributions of postcolonial theories have been influential, particularly the focus on addressing the problematics of western modernity with reference to race, gender, nation citizenship, and sexuality (→ Postcolonial Theory). Postcolonial critique of universalism and theoretical attention to colonial power and its discursive translations have made a significant impact on feminist critical practices and theorization of global syncretisms, contradictions, and heterogeneities (Hegde 2006). This is the challenge, as Mohanty (2003, 229) poses it: “How we think of the local in/of the global and vice versa without falling into colonizing or cultural relativist platitudes about difference is crucial in this intellectual and political landscape.”

Media practices provide the standpoint from which we can understand globalization, as it is scripted and enacted. It is through communication and media practices that we apprehend the dynamics and everyday translations of globality. We need to think about media culture and practices in more expansive ways and revive an analytical interest in the intersections of media practices and everyday life, and in the connections between representation and experience in various global locales. Herein we see the power of mediated images as they mobilize global versions of modernity. New forms of sociality and cultural practices are currently emerging, constructed through the coming together of media, migration, mobility, and the flow of capital. These formations, exploding traditional categories of space and time, also forge new relationships between the national and the global, crafting new conceptualizations of belonging, national community, and citizenship.

## **FEMINIST TRANSNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS**

Globalization has seized the imagination of scholars from many disciplines. To feminist scholars, however, the goal is to bring into focus the multiple ways in which gender is defined, reworked, and deployed in the global context. Producing a *gendered understanding of globality* is not only about pointing to the absences but also showing through systematic analysis how these invisibilities are produced and sustained through discursive reiterations that resonate across borders and communities. The term “transnational” offers conceptual pliability and enables a theoretical framework that can account for various types of economic, political, and cultural interconnections. The transnational provides an analytical rubric for feminist scholars to move beyond modes of liberal multiculturalism and produce politically and intellectually incisive scholarship.

These theoretical moves also reflect the shifts within feminism and the trajectory of feminist scholarship within the field of communication and media studies. Transnational



scholarship continues to build on the third wave feminist insistence on historical and geographical particularities in the construction of gendered systems of power and social relations. The focus on the transnational forces a rethinking of stable, bounded definitions surrounding categories such as gender, identity, nation, and community (Shome 2006). Transnational feminist scholarship does not claim allegiance to a particular method or approach that privileges political economy over cultural approaches. Instead, the transnational directs our scholarly response to the cross-cutting issues of “race,” class, and gender that intersect and travel across geographic and political landscapes (→ Ethnic Media and their Influence; Gender: Representation in the Media; Popular Communication and Social Class).

Sreberny (2001) asserts that feminist media studies in the twenty-first century should be global in purview and should not become overly media-centric. A transnational focus together with a commitment to feminist politics furthers the contemporary study of media and media forms as it relates to wider social, historical, and cultural practices. Feminist scholars have answered this call by addressing both the need to globalize and pay attention through a gendered lens to emerging issues related to the global public sphere, media systems, emerging technologies, “race,” gender, and modalities of representation (Gajjala 2002; Valdivia 2003; Lemish 2005).

Current geopolitical conditions have created the need to conceptualize issues that often exceed national borders (for e.g., militarization, immigration, and labor flows). The terrain is bristling with questions for scholars, demanding the provision of alternative feminist accounts of global geographies as they intersect with the transnational constitution and complexities of gender and sexuality.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Ethnic Media and their Influence ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Modernity ▶ Popular Communication and Social Class ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Technology and Globalization

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## Feminization of Media Content

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The term “feminization” tends to be used in communication studies in two basic ways. On the one hand, it describes any increases in the proportion of women working in a particular media profession. On the other, it refers to a process in which communication norms, values, and behaviors coded as “masculine” are becoming gradually modified, if not replaced, by others associated with the “feminine.” Some communication researchers use the notion of feminization to refer, for example, not only to increases in the number of women working in particular media but also to what they regard as a trend toward media organizations gradually acquiring a “feminine image,” i.e., undergoing a shift toward norms and values coded as feminine, with their attendant lower professional status (→ Femininity and Feminine Values; Gender and Journalism).

The association of the *two meanings of feminization* can be traced back to the concept of the “feminization of culture” (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Huyssen (1986) gives a striking description of how the increasing presence of women in cultural production starting in the late eighteenth century led to a fear of culture being feminized and losing its character as a male construction. This cultural ideology, in which women are equated with lower-status mass (popular or low) culture, while men are associated with a superior, high culture (fine arts and serious media), today forms the implicit subtext of the concept of feminization (Spigel 1992/1997; → Popular Culture). It is precisely these gender-based dualisms that deconstructionist approaches seek to challenge to prevent their confirmation. In this, the seemingly inevitable, natural connection between gender and gendered attributions is questioned and decontextualized.

There are many dualisms in media studies that are gender based. Well-known *gendered binary hierarchies*, read as chains of equivalents for masculinity versus femininity, include: public versus commercial broadcasting, serious papers versus tabloids (→ Tabloid Press), national and international politics versus local interest and gossip, public versus private or personal issues, public versus aesthetic interest, information versus entertainment, facts versus opinion, hard news versus → soft news, factual reporting versus feature writing, objective versus emotional style (→ Objectivity in Reporting), and high versus low credibility (→ Credibility of Content). In all of these, the dimension coded as masculine is regarded as the norm, conferring prestige and professional status, whereas the dimension coded as feminine carries low prestige and is equated with a lack of professionalism.

In feminist media studies, the claim that in recent years there has been a marked feminization of media professions and media content has been the focus of much *critical analysis and commentary*. One point around feminization has focused on → news and → journalism. It was not until the second wave women's movement, which emerged in many western countries from the late 1960s onwards, that the underrepresentation of women in journalism met with sustained criticism from communication scholars. Within the profession, some feminists began to call for hiring quotas for women in order to redress gender imbalances and schemes to promote women journalists and media workers so as to challenge sexual discrimination within media organizations (Carter et al. 1998; → Gender and Media Organizations).

Initially, it was hoped that as more female journalists were hired, the underrepresentation and discriminatory portrayal of women in media content would change as a result. Taking the claim of a "feminine journalism" as their starting point, researchers investigated whether women practiced a "different" journalism to that of their male colleagues. This claim has not yet been substantiated; however, it does appear that, similar to other counter-hegemonic discourses, the gradual emergence of feminist public spheres, and feminist publications catering to them, is influencing and challenging sexism in the mainstream media (Klaus 1998, 190ff.).

Some feminist researchers have concluded that increases in the number of women journalists from the 1980s onward has not led to a different style of journalism. On the contrary, according to van Zoonen (1998, 45), it may well have been changes in media genres and content produced in part by increasing commercialization and a growing market orientation, with its emphasis on human interest and soft, emotional, or sensational news, that has paved the way for more women entering the field of journalism (→ Commercialization of the Media). Those who point to its Eurocentric assumptions have called this hypothesis into question. Researchers point out that there has long been a high proportion of female journalists working in (formerly) socialist countries such as China or the eastern European states (until their recent transformation, in any case). Some suggest that this situation can be explained by the greater role accorded to gender equality within the state ideology of these nations. Examining media in such countries thus provides examples of organizations with large numbers of female journalists working in newsrooms where media content primarily was focused on politics, and was noncommercial and non-market-driven (Lünenborg 1997).

As in other professions, it has been the emancipation of women generally that has led to more women gaining admission to journalism and related fields. This has been reinforced by a growing media differentiation, such as public and commercial broadcasting, local and transnational coverage, and new formats in the print media, public relations, and online journalism (→ Diversification of Media Markets). In this process, the employment opportunities open to men and women have not been equal. In the newer professions, e.g., in public relations and various newly emerging commercial media, there have been certain areas where men had not yet "staked out their claim," thus making it easier for women to enter them. In these areas, as in → online journalism, the share of women has been growing at a much faster rate than in the more traditional and prestigious media, due mainly to a greater demand for new labor. The debate about "feminine values," a "feminine style," or "new" → genres merely served to legitimize the continually increasing

share of women in the field (Dorer 2005). Nevertheless, gender-based horizontal and vertical segregation remains a reality in these occupations. Female journalists more often work on less prestigious news beats and departments, they still earn less than men, and they more rarely rise to the top of the profession (Neverla & Kanzleiter 1984; Chambers et al. 2005).

The interlinked meanings of feminization produce an associative link between the two, thereby constructing a hierarchic dichotomy based on gender, with the masculine assigned a higher and the feminine a lower social status. As long as this discursive link remains unchallenged, existing gender differences can be reproduced and confirmed instead of being subjected to critical questioning and deconstruction.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Diversification of Media Markets ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ Gender and Media Organizations ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Journalism ▶ News ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Soft News ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Woman as Sign ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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## **Festinger, Leon**

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Leon Festinger was one of the most important figures in modern psychology and contributed several theories that are still important today for our understanding of the communication process, particularly the individual's exposure to communication and

processes of opinion formation and judgment (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory; Exposure to Communication Content; Social Comparison Theory). Born in 1919 in Brooklyn, New York, as the son of Russian immigrants, Festinger received his first training in psychology at the University of Iowa under the famous German-born social psychologist Kurt Lewin. After World War II he followed Lewin as an assistant professor to the Research Center for Group Dynamics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. There, in a group of other avant-garde psychologists, Lewin and Festinger developed the standards for modern experiment-based research on perception and group dynamics. It was during his time at MIT that Festinger authored his theory of informal social communication (1950), in which he described the influence of group pressure on the individual's attitudes and behaviors.

One year after Lewin's death in 1947 Festinger moved to the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and another three years later to the University of Minnesota. There he developed his *theory of social comparison processes* (1954) in which he suggested not only that the social group affects the individual's opinions but that there exists a drive within the individual to evaluate his or her opinions and abilities by comparison with those of others. Besides its relevance for processes of personal communication, the theory also applies to mediated communication. First, the mass media are one major source for the individual's assessment of what others think in a society. Second, journalists' decisions on media content, particularly in the area of news on politics and current affairs, usually lack objective criteria for news value and are often the result of similar social comparison processes, in which journalists compare their judgments with those of their peers (Donsbach 2004; → Objectivity in Reporting).

In 1955 Festinger became professor at Stanford University. It was during this period that he published his most famous contribution to social psychology, the *theory of cognitive dissonance* (1957). Building on the general paradigm of consistency existing at the time, Festinger endeavored to establish the individual's drive for consistency among the cognitions as a general biological law explaining most other phenomena, such as → persuasion, decision-making, and exposure to information (→ Consistency Theories). The theory became one of the most acknowledged and at the same time one of the most controversial in the history of social psychology. Hundreds of empirical studies have been carried out since 1957 and it is now fair to say that Festinger's ambition to establish this theory as a general law has failed, but at the same time the motivation to avoid or reduce dissonance is now recognized as an important driving force behind the individual's behavior.

In 1968 Festinger left Stanford to become a professor at the New School of Social Research in New York City, thus returning to his hometown. This move was accompanied by a sharp shift in his research interest. Partly because he was disappointed by the reception of his cognitive dissonance theory in the scientific community ("I never really understood the emotionality of the controversy," Festinger 1999), he now turned his interest to physiological processes of visual → perception. His research on the interaction between the eye and the brain in representing reality was primarily of a neurological nature, although he still focused on the structure and dynamics of the cognitive system.

In 1979 Festinger left the field of psychology and the laboratory and turned to such different fields as the impact of archaeology on mankind and societies, and the history of the Roman church. On the one hand this again showed his frustration with some of his

research agenda: “It is natural for me to talk as if the laboratory was at fault, but a laboratory is only a collection of rooms and equipment. It was I who conceived of and worked on narrower and narrower technical problems. That is not a proper occupation for an aging man who resents that adjective” (Festinger 1983 in Schachter 1994, 105). On the other hand this change shows the universal intellect and broad research interest of one of the greatest social researchers. Among many other awards, he received in 1959 the distinguished scientist award of the American Psychological Association, in 1978 an honorary doctorate from the University of Mannheim, Germany, and in 1980 the distinguished senior scientist award of the Society of Experimental Social Psychology. As Schachter (1994, 107) wrote: “The psychological world is a different place because he lived.”

Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance had a great impact on the development of communication research and particularly media effects research (→ Media Effects). For normative reasons it was welcomed as a tailor-made explanation for → selective exposure and perception and hence as an argument against strong media effects (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Although the author was not uniquely interested in media-related phenomena he thus had a considerable influence within the discipline.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Media Effects ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Perception ▶ Persuasion ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Comparison Theory

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## **Fetishization**

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Fetishization refers to a process of imbuing an object or idea with power. A fetish object is often associated with sexual gratification, desire, and worship. Fetishization marks a

cultural, psychological, and social technique of fetishizing things by making them appear larger than life, animate, or sexually desirable (→ Sexualization in the Media). It is argued that this process has profoundly influenced contemporary consumer culture (Fernbach 2002; Jhally 1987; Schroeder 2002).

### THE CONCEPT AND ITS APPLICATIONS

Fetishization is a useful concept for analyzing communication processes – it illuminates important aspects of consumer’s relationships with media, as well as how popular communication creates objects of desire. In an economy based on attention, → images, and → information, fetishization – as displacement, as dysfunction, and as deviance – contributes to a larger project of linking products with psychological fulfillment, emotional satisfaction (→ Emotion), and sexual gratification.

The word *fetish* has come to be associated with subaltern sexuality, or a fetish lifestyle organized around wearing fetish clothing and engaging in fetishized practices and rituals. Fetishization within popular communication draws upon these cultural associations to create associative connections for products, brands, and organizations. Fetishization, as used here, encompasses these concepts, but also refers to a broader cultural process of fetishizing objects via communicative technologies.

Fetishization in popular communication is often associated with *commodification* – associating objects and humans with markets and mass consumption. For example, → advertising often fetishizes goods by eroticizing and *reifying* consumer goods (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of; Advertising, Emotions in; Reification). Products and → brands are worshipped for their ability to complete the self, to help consumers gain satisfaction – or even ecstasy – and revered for their capacity to project desired images (→ Branding). In this way, consumer goods function similarly (in a psychoanalytic sense) to the fetish object, which promises gratification but ultimately is unable to deliver, forever displaced within a fetishized relationship.

Fetishized objects often *symbolize control* and release, power and helplessness, sexuality and infantilism. In psychoanalytic terms, a fetish may be a dysfunctional response to sexuality, eventually replacing human contact for arousal. Further, a fetishized relationship, in some cases, interferes with the ability to have more “human” relations. Typically linked to sexuality, fetishized items are often contextually isolated – the shoe that by itself arouses, the disembodied body part, or the black stocking unconnected to any recognizable body. Visual communication often further displaces these objects via fetishization, by which an image replaces the physical object. The study of fetishization can be particularized by focusing upon clothing items, but widespread communication processes are also implicated.

Fetishization is associated with *displacement and disavowal* – sexual energy becomes directed toward something other than the genitals – a substitute charged with sexual power and attraction. Examples, of course, abound, but mainstays of the visual culture of fetish are sexually inflected clothing, such as high-heeled shoes, tight corsets, and lingerie. In popular terms, fetishism often refers to a psychological relationship or an intra-individual practice, but fetishization can fruitfully be considered a kind of communicative process or a cultural discourse.

## FETISHIZATION IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION

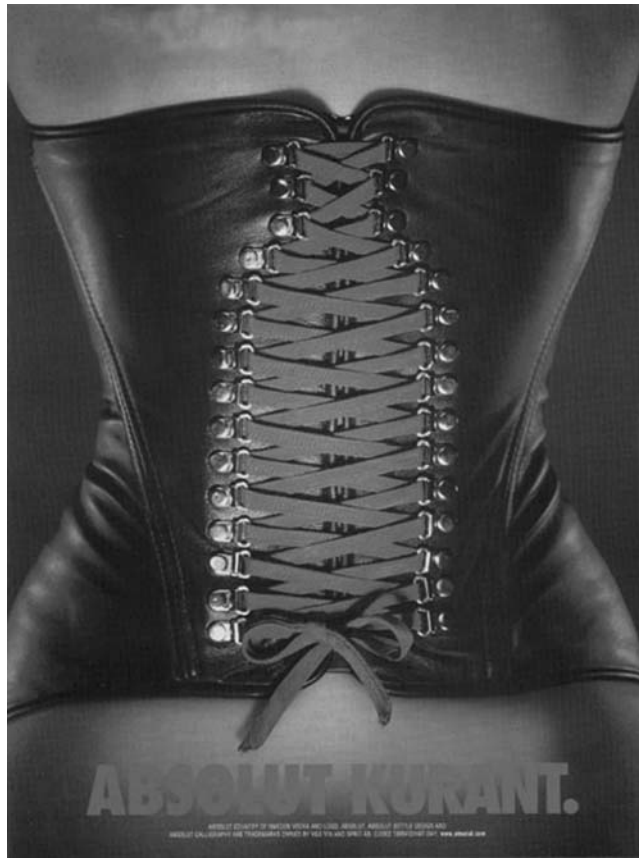
Visual communication and fetishization work together to create fantasy images of desire and inaccessibility. Fetishism has been discussed from many perspectives, including psychology, anthropology, and Marxism (Apter & Pietz 1993). Visual communication draws on each of these, creating objects of desire through visual techniques and symbols. Psychoanalytic theory holds that fetishization is based on paradoxical repulsion and attraction, which charges fetish objects with power as it simultaneously represents attraction and taboo. Visual representations of fetish objects – made possible by photographic reproduction, mass media, and digitization (→ Digital Imagery) – add another dimension to the fetish concept. Fetishization emerged as an important tool of advertising, via direct representations of fetish objects, and the fetish-like worship and power of consumer goods inherent in contemporary advertising (Schroeder 2002).

Photographic techniques such as close cropping, lighting, and depth of field help fetishize objects by isolating and reifying them. Two factors underlie the visual power of fetish: associations made through repeated usage of stock items in fashion, photography, and pornography and what has been called the *liminal* element of fetishization (Schroeder & Borgerson 2003). The word *liminal* reflects a gap, a space between, or an edge. Liminal zones are often spaces of uncertainty, creativity, danger, and passion. The space between – a space to be entered or crossed – can be exciting and unnerving simultaneously. Many fetishized objects – particularly items of clothing – represent a powerful liminal zone. Shoes, boots, corsets, and stockings are typical fetishized items – usually colored black or bright red. In popular discourse fetish clothing is usually desired by men on women.

The visual vocabulary of fetish has become a staple of the culture industries, television, fashion, film, music video, comic books, and advertising, which often draw on the cultural stereotype of the fetishist, a male whose sexual identity is linked with the fetish object. This projection – of lust, of desire, and of want – onto a fetish object seems the simplest way to present such imagery, which is usually recruited to lend an edgy sexuality to the advertised product. Ads for many products, from cologne to telecommunication networks, feature fetish themes of high-heeled shoes, stockings, tight leather, S&M, and bondage (e.g., Reichert & Lambiase 2006). Often these motifs are invoked with a wink to the knowing audience, a hip sign that the viewer understands – and appreciates – what might be implied by the image of a handcuff, an extremely high heel, or a leather corset.

These ads draw on motifs developed by *photographers* such as Helmut Newton, Horst, and Jean-Loup Sieff, who featured women in corsets, leather, and lingerie in their photographic work for mainstream fashion magazines. In the 1970s this trend accelerated, pushed by the art world, a growing awareness of “underground” sexual practices, and a market hungry for extreme imagery. By the 1980s fetish imagery had established a firm place in the visual pantheon of fashion, music video, and film, as adopted by celebrities as such Grace Jones, Madonna, and Annie Lennox, and showcased in the photography of Robert Mapplethorpe. Today, fashion companies such as Thierry Mugler, Versace, Jean-Paul Gaultier, and Sisley regularly include fetish-themed apparel in their clothing lines and ad campaigns, media icons like Kate Moss and Britney Spears are photographed





**Figure 1** The Absolut Au Kurant ad

Under permission by V&S Vin & Sprit AB (publ). Absolut®Vodka. Absolut country of Sweden vodka & logo, Absolut, Absolut bottle design and Absolut calligraphy are trademarks owned by V&S Vin & Sprit AB (publ). ©2005 V&S Vin & Sprit AB (publ).

in fetish garments, and mainstream movies and television shows like *The Matrix*, *Underworld*, *X-Men*, and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* feature fetishized outfits as standard hero equipment.

The long-running and spectacularly successful Absolut vodka advertising campaign provides a classic example of fetishization in visual communication (Fig. 1). In a fairly simple and straightforward image in the Absolut Au Kurant ad, Absolut links itself to leather corsets, fetishism, alternative sexuality, and sexual allure. The message of the ad centers on the resonance between opening an Absolut bottle and consuming the product and opening the black corset and consummating a relationship. The lace bottle opens up the person within, undressing for potential intimate activity. The Absolut bottle serves as the key prop for sexual readiness. The magic, fetishized properties of the Absolut bottle are hinted at by these elements, a common theme in liquor advertisements (Goldman & Papson 1996).

Fetish clothing interacts with visual representation in intricate ways, supported by contemporary advertising photographic practice. Photography supports a fetish relationship with things by representing items devoid of context, reifying objects, and visually emphasizing tactile qualities like shininess (Mercer 1997). The language of photography, moreover, reinforces a dichotomous conception of black/white, inscribing racial categories with technological markers, in a process of racial fetishization. Fetishization also occurs via the use of composition, cropping, and color. In the Absolut Au Kurant ad, the fetishized bottle is given a contrasting lavender detail color to accentuate and isolate it as a graphic element. Advertising images often support fetishization processes by visually focusing on garments over bodies, things rather than humans, objects over relationships. Although most consumers do not exhibit classic fetishism – foot worship, for example – the relationship promoted between consumer and goods has many fetish-like tendencies. Moreover, many objects can and have been fetishized within contemporary visual communication.

### CONSUMPTION AND FETISHIZATION

The fetish relationship – object worship, delusional belief in the power of the fetish, and substitution of human relations with fetish relations – are also invoked in the broader dimensions of consumer culture and its aggressive object worship. Advertising appropriates and harnesses the power of fetishism to sell goods. Moreover, advertising creates meaning and values via photographic techniques, injecting new associations into the circuit of culture. Researchers attempting to understand its meaning-making capabilities miss a great deal by relying solely on information-processing models for themes and insights; fetishization represents a cultural, social, and psychodynamic process that often eludes cognitive-based approaches (→ Meaning).

Marx introduced the commodity fetish concept over a century ago and his analysis of the relationship between consumer goods and the market remains important. Marx may not have fully anticipated an economy based on image, one in which the dialectic of fetishization relies less on material things than on symbolic ideas. Advertising's use of photographic technology accelerates this process in a way that seems both readily apparent and relatively understudied. Contemporary consumption is highly visual: websites crave eyeball capture and advertisers work to break through the clutter. Fetishization offers useful conceptual tools for understanding how popular communication works in an economy that is attention-focused.

Fetishization may attract the eye to products or services in an economy fueled by obtaining consumer attention, but fetish themes have also been criticized as perpetuating stereotypes – women are most often the objects of the fetishistic attention, or women are portrayed as slaves to fashion (Reichert & Lambiase 2006). This critique suggests that fetishization with popular communication may reveal some transgression of sexual stereotypes that are mainly in the service of entrenched visions of human relationships – woman as object, black as exotic, fetishized sex as deviant (Schroeder & Borgerson 2003; → Women in the Media, Images of).

Further work would be useful to delineate how fetishization works in a wide variety of communication contexts, and how fetishism has developed as advertising shorthand for

various desirable attributes to be associated with brands and products. Key questions remain about how fetishization creates value. Just as art historians and literary scholars have been adept at tracing the history of icons, types, and characters, so communication researchers could show how these types migrate into advertising and photography, as well as how advertising generates new type and tropes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Emotions in ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Cultural Appropriation ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Emotion ▶ Fashion ▶ Image ▶ Information ▶ Meaning ▶ Reification ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## **Fiction**

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Fiction is intuitively understood and widely used, both in the public at large and among specialists of literary theory, to refer to a representation not committed to the truth. Yet, the concept is as difficult to define technically as it is easy to recognize. Unlike lies, fiction is not deceptive, and unlike honest error, it is not mistaken (→ Fantasy–Reality Distinction).

The specification of the concept of fiction involves at least three questions. First, what are its relations to narrativity, a concept with which it is easily confused, as the tendency to equate “fiction” with “narrative fiction” demonstrates? Second, how can it be described in pragmatic terms, i.e., as a use of signs? Third, is it a concept specific to language, or can it be extended to other media?

### FICTIONALITY VERSUS NARRATIVITY

Fiction is commonly taken to mean “narrative fiction” (→ Storytelling and Narration). The overwhelming majority of fictions are, indeed, narratives, but not all narratives are fictional (e.g., news or biographies), and fictional texts do not always tell stories, as postmodern novels have demonstrated. The narrativity of a text or message is a semantic issue, i.e., a matter of content, and the audience can decide whether or not the text tells a story by simply decoding its meaning. Fictionality, by contrast, is a pragmatic issue, i.e., not a matter of what the text is about, but a matter of how it is used in social interaction.

Judgments about fictionality, thus, have far greater cognitive and practical consequences than judgments about narrativity. In the first case, the judgment can be right or wrong, and a wrong categorization would lead people to take the false as true, or the true as false. In the last case, we can read a story without asking ourselves, “is it or isn’t it a narrative,” and still process the text correctly.

There may be some semantic restrictions on the content of a fiction; for instance, it can be argued that a fiction must be about particulars and not general ideas, but there are no positive conditions that specify a certain type of subject matter. Even though literary critics have detected “signposts of fictionality,” or stylistic features that betray fictional status (Cohn 1999), these features are not mandatory. A given text could be read, at least in principle, either as a fiction or as a report of facts, as evidenced when Orson Welles’s 1938 radio dramatization of *The War of the Worlds* as a present-day invasion of the US from Mars reportedly created a public panic (Cantril et al. 1940). What tips the user to the fictionality of a text is usually a so-called paratextual device, such as the labels “novel,” “short story,” or “drama” (→ Text and Intertextuality). These labels instruct the user how to process the information of the text.

### PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO FICTION

In the Renaissance, Sir Philip Sidney characterized the stance of the author of fiction in these terms: “Now for the poet, he nothing affirms and therefore never lieth.” Two centuries later, Samuel Taylor Coleridge captured the phenomenon from the point of view of the audience, by describing the attitude of the reader of poetry as a “willing suspension of disbelief.” There is, however, more to a theory of fiction than the combination of a lack of truth and a non-deceptive intent. Both these features also describe figural language, such as → metaphor, as well as the counterfactual statements of everyday conversation, such as “If the referee had seen that this player was offside, we would have won the game.” Moreover, if fictions are generally false, they often contain accurate statements (e.g., historical novels). They could also be true entirely by accident, as

suggested by the need for disclaimers in fiction films which indicate that any resemblance to real people or events is coincidental.

Interest in the nature of fictionality was renewed in the 1970s as an outgrowth of *speech act theory* and other analytic philosophy. Philosophers of the analytic school were attracted to fictionality because it poses basic questions of truth and reference. Austin (1962) described fiction as an “etiolated” and “parasitic” use of language that does not entail the normal consequences of the speech acts it represents: an actor who makes a promise on stage is not held to honor it. This idea was further developed by Searle (1975) in his pathbreaking essay “The logical status of fictional discourse.” For Searle, fictionality is an operator that affects the status of assertive speech acts. In writing a novel, authors are only pretending to make assertions, or imitating the making of assertions. Though the language of fiction is often indistinguishable from the language of nonfiction, readers are protected from taking its statements to be genuine information because they recognize the author’s act of pretense.

Whereas the notion of fiction as pretense has been widely accepted, Searle’s account had difficulties handling the statements *within* fiction that refer to real-world entities. According to Searle, Conan Doyle pretends to make assertions when he refers to Sherlock Holmes, but he makes serious assertions when he refers to London. It is hard to reconcile this patchwork of fiction and nonfiction with the homogeneous impression that the world of the Sherlock Holmes stories makes on the reader.

Lewis (1978) offered, instead, a theory based on the idea of a plurality of worlds. He defined fiction as a story told as true about another world than the one we regard as actual by a narrator situated within this other world. A nonfictional story, by contrast, is told as true about our world by one of its members. The difference between fiction and nonfiction, then, is a matter of different reference worlds. In Lewis’s model, members of the actual world have counterparts in alternative possible worlds, so that when a novel refers to Napoleon, it does not describe the historical individual, but imports an alter ego of the emperor, possessing somewhat different properties, into its fictional world. For Lewis, the world of the Sherlock Holmes stories is not created by a mixture of fictional and nonfictional statements, but by a fully fictional discourse that describes a possible world linked to the actual world through many common features (or counterpart relations). This idea of counterpart relations solves the problem encountered by Searle when the text refers to actual entities. One of the most important implications of Lewis’s account of fiction is the self-denying quality that it attributes to this mode of expression: fiction is not just a product of the imagination, but an invention that passes as a report of facts. An overt prescription to the imagination (“think up a one-eyed, one-horned flying purple people eater”) and *if . . . then* counterfactual statements are not fiction, because they construct a world explicitly flagged as “other.”

While Searle’s and Lewis’s accounts were designed for fictions in verbal language, Walton (1990) put the theory of fiction on a transmedial track by relying on the notion of make-believe. Drawing an analogy between a certain type of children’s game and the representational arts in general, Walton defines fiction as a “prop in a game of make-believe” – an object that inspires imagining rather than belief. Just as children playing cops and robbers adopt imaginary personae and pretend that a certain tree is the jail, spectators of a painting of a ship pretend that they are facing a ship, and readers of literary

fiction pretend that the text is the description of a world that exists independently of the text, when they know that this world is in reality the product of the author's discourse. In all three examples, fictionality derives from a decision by the "player" to take something as something else.

## FICTION IN DIFFERENT FORMS OF MEDIA

As demonstrated in the case of language, fictionality is not a feature inherent to semiotic media, i.e., media understood as a type of signs associated with particular sense modalities (→ Media; Modality and Multimodality; Semiotics). Just as verbal texts can fall on either side of the divide, the concept of fictionality is applicable to the uses of other signs, modalities, and technologies in a number of distinctive ways.

Fictionality is a relevant analytical concern for all technological and institutional media that involve a language track: film, drama, opera. It is because the actors of *film and drama* engage in an act of pretense that these media can be considered fictional. In drama, pretense is inevitable, but in film, it is optional, since the camera is able to record both authentic and simulated events. Film (television, video), consequently, can be either fictional or documentary (→ Film Genres). As a form of make-believe, fictionality also cuts across gestures and other embodied communication: pantomime and acted silent movies are fictional, practical action is not, and dance is fictional only when the dancer impersonates a character. In purely instrumental music, a medium which cannot articulate a specific content, the distinction becomes inapplicable, at least in a literal sense.

*Photography* can be considered fictional when it captures role-playing models rather than people "being themselves" (→ Photography). In the case of → painting, the concept of fictionality is more controversial. One could regard as fictional the pictures of models who pose as historical or mythological creatures, or pictures illustrating stories (in which case their fictionality would be derived from a verbal text), and as non-fictional realistic portraits of real individuals. This categorization, however, leaves most paintings in a conceptual no-man's land between fiction and nonfiction: the fictional status of a Picasso portrait of a specific person in Cubist style is not only undecidable, but irrelevant to the understanding of the painting.

The concept of fictionality is better applicable to the images of film and photography than to painting because they are obtained through a mechanical recording device that gives them documentary value. They become fictional when this value is playfully subverted. The necessary condition for a type of signs, with any supporting technologies, to be considered as fiction is that they can also be used to make truth claims.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Discourse ► Escapism ► Fantasy–Reality Distinction ► Fictional Media Content ► Film Genres ► Genre ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Media ► Metaphor ► Modality and Multimodality ► Painting ► Paperback Fiction ► Photography ► Semiotics ► Storytelling and Narration ► Text and Intertextuality ► Theatre ► Virtual Reality

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## **Fictional Media Content**

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Media content takes many forms and is differentiated by → code and convention, → genre and technology. The term “content” refers to the nature of the representations that are communicated by media genres and technologies rather than the medium in which they are carried. Fictional media content is one such classificatory grouping, signaling a similarity in the nature of the content on the basis of its intended relationship to a given reality, regardless of the specific media genre or technology in which the content is conveyed. This type of media content has received varying degrees of academic attention in communication, media, and cultural disciplines (→ Media Production and Content).

### **DEFINITIONS AND FORMS OF “FICTION”**

Etymologically, the term “fiction” derives from the Latin root *fict-*, which in its original usage referred to an activity rather than cultural content. However, in contemporary culture fictional media content refers to all media output that is not concerned with representing events or issues as they are lived or experienced in the real world.

Media fiction commonly refers to content with a narrative structure in contrast to the singular use of images, for example. Most commonly, this covers media content that takes the form of a story, ranging from literary novels to television drama (→ Drama in Media Content). Some fictional content takes the form of a discrete, one-off story-narrative that can vary in length and is characterized by the introduction of a setting and collection of

characters, a set of main events or developments in the plot, and a conclusion where the plot is resolved, such as in feature films, radio plays, and novels.

Alternatively, the narrative structure of fictional media can take an *episodic form*, where short sections of narrative are broadcast or published in succession. This would include → soap operas or → comics, where an indefinitely continuing narrative is constructed. Cast members may be introduced or may leave, but the core themes and settings of the program or publication remain the same. For instance, the British soap opera *Coronation Street* has run continuously since 1960. Other narrative forms of fictional content include the serial, where a story-narrative is divided into several episodes that build toward a conclusion in a final episode, commonly called a “series.” The more popular series may introduce subsequent series using the same characters or themes. Televisual forms of these narratives are particularly lucrative as they can be released in DVD/VHS format (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

Fictional media content involves many *cultures of production*, ranging from the relatively solitary to the collective. However, most fictional media production begins with a written narrative. In the production of fictional literature, this is the main stage of production and it is followed by an editorial process. The writing of fictional literature is traditionally conducted by a solitary writer; however, it is becoming increasingly common for popular fiction novelists to co-author work, for instance the popular fiction writer Clive Cussler has co-authored several novels with his son. Popular fiction of this kind has received popular and academic criticism for its tendency toward formulaic plots, encouraged by the commercial pressures of the publishing industry.

The production of fictional feature films and television fiction frequently involves the production of a *written narrative* (→ Storytelling and Narration). This takes the form of a script or screenplay and, like fictional literature, this can be produced by a single writer, or as part of a writing team. In fictional content for the broadcast media, this is the first stage of the production process. It is followed by the practical planning of the production process, including costing and location planning. Choices at this stage play a crucial role in determining key features of the finished fictional content. The creative construction of the fictional content is then further developed in the processes of production by various members of production teams including actors, producers, and directors. Similarly to fictional literature, this is then followed by an editing process.

Fictional content is determined in relation to its conventional *conceptual opposite: factual content*. Whereas factual content claims to naturalistically represent real-world events, as for instance in current affairs programming, representations involved in fictional content refer to invented happenings despite bearing the recognizable conventions of narrative meaning. This means that although fiction may have a recognizable referent, such as a person or event, that referent may never have existed in lived experience. For instance, although the British soap opera *Coronation Street* features a recognizable community in spatial and communicative terms, it has not existed, nor will it ever exist, outside of the televisual text. Fictional media content is also contrasted with factual content on the basis of its narrative structure, where fictional features such as plots, characters, and scenes are set against nonfiction mass media content that features a non-narrative structure, such as the current affairs program, the news, or documentary (→ Documentary Film).



## THE LEGACY OF LITERARY CRITICISM

The distinction between factual and fictional media content has had considerable implications for the ways in which fictional content has been studied. The critical repertoire for assessing fictional content is largely derived from literary criticism. As well as providing evaluative terminology, such as labeling discrete representational content as “texts,” literary criticism has shaped the critical attention paid to fictional media in important ways. It has institutionalized the *separation of factual and fictional content* and as a result fictional media content has since been evaluated in these dichotomous terms. The development of this division in the evaluation of written or dramatic content has been maintained and applied to new forms of media content as they have developed through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Particularly in early media studies, this critical legacy is easily visible. Fictional media content has often been evaluated on the basis of form and internal structure in relation to other fictional forms. Their subversive and political potential was, in the early period of media criticism, largely overlooked given their perceived disconnection from the reality of public and social life. In contrast, nonfiction representations have been considered in their relation to lived reality and their representational attributes have only more recently become subject to investigation.

Although having a long history in literary criticism, this separation was shared by media studies as it emerged in the early twentieth century out of the social commentary and philosophy of the *Chicago School*. The focus on the mass media’s role in political communication and participatory democracy resulted in the critical elision of fictional media content in early media studies in favor of a focus on the news and current affairs media (→ New Journalism). Fictional media content, like written fiction, was considered a superficial counterpart to the serious business of civic participation. The examination of media content was adjudicated through the criteria of realist aesthetics, espousing either recognizable political credentials or aspiring to an ideal of objectivity. Fictional media content, certainly in its most popular forms, could make precious few claims to these rationalist benchmarks of cultural value and so received limited critical attention until well into the twentieth century.

The second bequest of literary criticism is the *distinction between popular and literary fiction*. This involves superimposing a hierarchical framework onto literary texts, creating a canon worthy of critical attention with the others cast aside as mass entertainment. F. R. Leavis in the 1920s and 1930s is one such literary scholar who has propagated this distinction. A cultural pessimist, he decried popular genres with mass appeal, such as romance fiction, as evidence of a crisis in literary standards, in contrast claiming the qualitative value of particular “classic” forms. Ward (1989) tracks the associated pessimism regarding mass mediated culture emanating in large part from the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt. The Frankfurt School positioned mass entertainment, which was largely fiction, as antithetical to political engagement. So, where literary criticism allowed for a canon of elite texts based on formal textual attributes, the Frankfurt School evaluated media texts on a similar conservative textual basis, casting the vast majority of fictional media as de-humanizing and appealing to the lowest common denominator.

In elite, conservative circles, attention to fictional media content was framed largely as fiction's potential to incite criminal or antisocial behavior in the working classes. Springhall (1998) discusses this form of critique in relation to anxiety over crime and gangster movies of the 1930s and their potential effect on the young. Popular concerns over the effects of fictional media content continue to be prevalent and are largely premised on the assumption that fictional media can elicit a direct response from their audience. For example, there have been moral panics over so-called "video nasties" and violent behavior in children, fuelled by a few high-profile criminal cases such as the murder of James Bulger in 1993. In Marxist circles, critique was framed rather differently, centering on potential inaction rather than unregulated behavior as popular entertainment was perceived as threatening the possibility of radical thought and public engagement (→ Popular Culture).

### **FEMINIST CRITICISM**

In contemporary consideration of fictional media content, the evaluative dimension of textual analysis applied to fictional texts has largely been abandoned, at least in academic circles, as a result of several related shifts. Feminist media theory, particularly in film studies, has been one of the central intellectual movements away from hierarchical frameworks of cultural value applied to fictional media content. It has attacked the lack of attention paid to fictional content and exposed the gendered nature of the omission (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). The division of fiction and nonfiction media content has not only been premised on the putative cultural value of fact and fiction, but on the gendered affiliations of those two forms. Masculine genres coalesce around nonfictional forms, particularly in terms of television and literary media, while fictional content, particularly soap opera and romance fiction, has been considered to be feminine in its modes of appeal. This gendered division has meant that feminist critique has loomed large in the intellectual consideration of fictional media content. Bearing many of the technical hallmarks of literary criticism, such as a focus on the text as a carrier of meaning, feminist media criticism has seriously considered previously ignored forms of popular entertainment as worthy of critical attention, evaluating fictional works not in hierarchical terms relating to their mass appeal but on the basis of their relative textual attributes and psychological or other benefits to the (female) consumer (→ Women's Media Genres).

Some of the early work in this domain focused critically on the gendered nature of fictional media content, for example considering how stereotypes are drawn on and reified in the texts, comparing gendered reality with gendered representations (→ Gender: Representation in the Media; Women in the Media, Images of). Much of the work on gendered stereotypes considered television soap opera and Latin American telenovelas as well as prime-time content. For example, Jenrette et al. (1999) give a comprehensive account of the stereotypes of Hispanic women deployed in daytime soap operas and measure them against their own account of Hispanic women. In the field of film studies, the gendered nature of fictional content was also receiving burgeoning attention. Mulvey (1975) has been central to this movement, repositioning the female critic in relation to the masculinized text. Here, fictional content is considered a dimension of political interaction rather than disconnected from everyday politics (→ Film Theory). The content

of media fiction is seen as connected to everyday reality, bringing fiction and nonfictional realities into view of one another. Film theory has also provided a plethora of alternative frameworks for analyzing fictional media content including “auteur” theory, genre analysis, and narratology. These approaches share a resounding emphasis on the meaning of the fictional text in itself.

### **CULTURAL STUDIES APPROACHES**

Cultural studies approaches to media content form a second strand of the critical assessment of fictional texts, involving a shift away from the meaning-inherent-in-text mode of analysis. This shift is not completely distinct from feminist media research, as many theorists belong to both intellectual fields. From the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary → Cultural Studies emerged a new approach to media texts that emphasized a new relationship between the audience and the media text. This became known as the active audience approach. Hall et al.’s (1980) encoding/decoding model suggested that meaning does not inhere in the fictional text but is a result of a negotiation between the audience and the text. This theoretical development was a watershed in the consideration of fictional content. Rather than being considered as a reflection of a given reality, fictional texts were involved in its constitution. Fictional content in this sense is allocated an equally important role in the construction of lived reality as nonfiction, therefore legitimating fictional content as worthy of critical attention. Dethroning the formal properties of the text and contextualizing fictional content in everyday life has resituated fiction within lived experience.

This has positioned cultural studies as central in redressing the critical imbalance between fiction and nonfiction media content. Feminist theorists have been keen to exploit the new seriousness with which “female” genres are being considered. Hobson (1982) has considered the practical and imaginative pleasures of the soap opera *Crossroads* and Hermes (1998, 166) has suggested that consuming popular fiction can have as much potential in the articulation of cultural citizenship as traditional, masculinized forms of communication. This engagement with fictional content has not revolved solely around the everyday politics of gender. The politics of class and ethnicity alongside gender and their intersections have also been key features of the cultural turn toward fictional content. Fictional forms are seen as resources for the construction of plural identities and also as providing literal and imaginative space for their articulation. The polysemic nature of fictional content makes it suitable for appropriation as resources for resistance and the subversion of dominant ideologies. In this theoretical perspective fictional media content is afforded the same active potential for constructing progressive meaning as nonfictional forms (→ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture).

### **BOUNDARIES BETWEEN FICTIONAL AND NONFICTIONAL MEDIA CONTENT**

Alongside the rebalancing of fiction in its relationship with factual content, there has been a parallel challenge to the very nature and premise of this distinction. This involves retracing the boundaries between genres of media content, specifically documentary form and drama. In early work of this nature, features of fictional content such as narrative

structure were considered to be migrating across formal boundaries, resulting in hybrid genres such as dramadoc and docudrama. The boom in “reality television” alongside historical content heavily reliant on dramatic techniques of reconstruction has intensified this debate, stimulating consideration of the implications of increasingly blurred boundaries between fictional and factual media genres. This has historically been met with pejorative accusations of falsehood and fakery in academic and popular forums (Petley 1996). Fictional imperatives of entertainment were perceived as compromising the validity of factual genres. However, this view is being revised, taking into account the constructed nature of both factual and fictional representational forms and problematizing outright rejections of cross-fertilization between factual and fictional genres. Winston, for example, suggests that previous accusations have failed to appreciate the “symbiotic connection between documentary and ‘reconstruction’” (2000, 106).

Postmodern critics have taken this blurring of boundaries a stage further to suggest that any differentiation between factual and fictional content has been removed altogether and that a disconnection of representations from their referent, factual or fictional, has rendered any evaluation on the basis of a connection to reality impossible. In this sense the organizing principle of mediated content is pastiche, and simulacra replace authentic signs, making coherent narratives or claims to lived experience redundant. Accounts of past lived realities cannot be separated from fictions, rendering accounts of the past subject to endless play and limitless revision. In postmodern media studies, the integrity of the criteria of fictional and nonfictional content has been compromised. While postmodernist critique is useful in undermining the rigid adherence to the critical dichotomy of fact and fiction, clearly it does matter for many people whether we have accurate, credible reporting of wars or financial fraud, or whether the Holocaust is represented as myth by anti-Semitic revisionists (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

A less radical response to the blurring of factual and fictional content has been to separate the notion of “truth” from fiction and nonfiction. The common-sense assumption that factual content can make claims to truth where fictional content cannot is re-evaluated, particularly in respect of historical accounts. Rather than tying the notion of truth to life as it was lived, truth is about making a contextual meaning of the past that has efficacy and resonance in the present. Stella Bruzzi (2000) argues that in documentary there are two kinds of truth: the factual images that we see and the meaning that can be generated from them. The reality depicted in a documentary remains a representation and is more than a collection of facts; claims are made to broader truths beyond the boundaries of the literal textual content. In this sense, fictional content can also make truth claims. John Steinbeck’s portrayal of the American dust bowl of the 1930s in the novel *Grapes of wrath* is perhaps one of the most moving and “truthful” evocations of the historical moment of the Depression. It makes sense of a period that speaks beyond those fictional experiences to a broader sense of truth. In contemporary filmic forms debates move away from the “facticity” of dramatized history to the nature of the truths that emerge. Spielberg’s historical drama *Schindler’s List* and Lanzmann’s documentary *Shoah* have been subject to these debates over claims to truth.

The relationship between fictional and nonfictional media content is becoming increasingly complex, but the intensifying intellectual debates surrounding it are generating ever more nuanced and sensitive accounts of media content and the politics of its classification and

evaluation. This increased critical attention in terms of both importance and definition of fictional media content has re-charted traditional attributions of value in media studies and forced the categorization of media forms to be substantially revised.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Comics ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Fiction ▶ Film Theory ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Media ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ New Journalism ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Realism ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Reality TV ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Women's Media Genres ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Field Research

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Field research is a somewhat dated term that is used to describe research conducted under the naturally occurring contingencies of unmanipulated or naturally manipulated contexts. In this usage it is contrasted with laboratory research, which is to be conducted under highly controlled circumstances and in fully manipulated contexts. In this contrast, field research is considered to provide relevance to everyday life, and laboratory research rigor to the conclusions drawn. In the traditions of law-seeking sciences, laboratory research returns findings of the highest generalizability and, therefore, of greater value. This attribution, of course, politicizes the relationship between different → research methods and the sciences that depend on them.

## TYPES OF FIELD RESEARCH

Setting the political issue aside for the moment, old-school field researchers catalogue objects, places, and spaces, do content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative), perform → surveys, do → case studies, hold → interviews, conduct focus groups, do protocol analysis, perform nonparticipative → observation of naturally occurring behavior, or use similar research methodologies. The cataloguing of objects, places, and spaces generally has to do with their role in some activity. Objects might be a tool, a ceremonial element, or ritual implement; a place might be a geographical or architectural configuration that facilitates an enactment or set of beliefs, for example, a study of the cathedrals of Europe as a cultural expression or the role of the ancestral Puebloan ruins of Chaco Canyon (New Mexico) in New Age practices; a space might be a classroom or office designed to materialize practice of control or the expression of status.

Content analysis focuses on the components and elements of texts of every sort – written, spoken, visual, linguistic, and nonlinguistic. A survey is a descriptive methodology that, as its geological and geographical heritage suggests, attempts to catalogue the demographic and/or psychographic attributes and traits of a group of people or ideational domain. A case study is an extensive description of a (usually) single exemplar of some social behavior, group, organization, etc. It ordinarily involves nonparticipant – and sometimes covert – observation of the targeted behavior and individuals. Interviews can be highly structured short-form, where the answers require little additional coding prior to analysis, or open-ended long-form, with answers of several paragraphs that require extensive coding prior to analysis. Focus groups are usually conducted by bringing individuals of interest to the researcher together for a session in which they will participate in a guided discussion on a researcher-chosen topic. Protocol analysis takes a variety of forms, but each involves collecting information during the process of some respondent-initiated, ongoing activity (protocol) for the purpose of learning something about the activity itself or the activity's consequences for the practitioner. Nonparticipant observation is any sort of covert (e.g., behind a two-way mirror) or overt (fly-on-the-wall) observation, in which the observer is neither part of the group nor a participant in the activity being observed.

### METHODOLOGICAL STATUS

The significant *components in all of these methods* are: (a) the targeted object, place, space, or text is considered an actuality whose existence does not depend on the research; (b) the respondent retains a high level of autonomy of action; (c) the researcher is considered a neutral element and not a stakeholder in the object/place/text/action; (d) the relationship between the researcher and the respondent is not part of the results; (e) the respondent's behavior is unconsidered and not deliberately enacted to achieve some agenda (other than the researcher's); and (f) the responses given are (therefore) ingenuously true. The purpose of the researcher is to collect information about an object/place/space/text, the respondent or the respondent's state of mind, and/or about the course or consequences of some action. The data are descriptors of the respondent and/or the action, and the findings are considered descriptive rather than causal in character.

The fundamental *limits of the sort of research* are that the findings are always contingent on the particular – the particular objects, persons, or actions that are the source of the data. Given proper sampling procedures, one is justified in generalizing to larger populations but one is still limited to the particular conditions of that population. Populations shift, attitudes change, social practices evolve, technology intrudes, economies fail, governments fall out of favor. One would be hardly justified in using a survey of political attitudes taken as few as 10 years ago to describe a current situation. The findings may still be applicable, but the evidence would be missing.

The generalized claims that are advanced from descriptive data are considered tentative until they can be demonstrated under controlled experimental conditions conducted in the laboratory (gold standard) or in the field (lesser quality; → Experiment, Field; Experiment, Laboratory). Field experiments attempt to take advantage of differences that develop across some natural divide. For example, we might be interested in attitudes toward aggressive behavior for families with video game technology (VGT) and families without. Based on claims in the literature that participation in violent video games leads to a desensitization toward aggression, we might hypothesize that families with VGT will show more accepting attitudes toward aggression than families without VGT.

Such field experiments suffer from a common vulnerability in that the respondents self-select into the treatment categories. In our example, the very circumstances that led one family to buy VGT and another not may be associated with attitudes toward aggression. People who say “oh, it's all harmless fun” might be very different from those who say “I will never allow that stuff in my house.” Laboratory experiments would achieve much higher rigor by being able to randomize assignment across the “harmless” and “never” folks, but in turn their findings would lose relevance to how people actually live.

### POLITICS OF METHOD

The debate between rigor and relevance occurs across all science disciplines, but it is particularly pointed in the human sciences where laboratory, field, clinical, and applied sciences all vie for attention and funding. Most of the research generated in the history of the communication discipline has been traditional field research with content analysis and survey methods leading the list (a notable exception has been the message effects

studies). This characteristic would put the discipline in the prescientific category using the traditional criterion of ranking sciences by the clarity with which they can attain causal explanations. Communication would be considered still in its descriptive stage with the fundamental axioms of the discipline yet undiscovered and its paradigmatic configuration yet unresolved. Causal claims are certainly advanced, but they are routinely challenged as well (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

Naturally, there are practitioners who do not care to think of communication as pre-scientific. Some of these would argue that solid experimental work is being done and good, causal theory developed. Others might pick up the sociology argument that the relationships of interest are not materially determinant ones but rather contingent, social processes. If that argument is true, then the relationship between field approaches and laboratory approaches reverses itself because the laboratory work can never achieve the relevance necessary to make its findings of value. By being a field science, we are at the top of the game.

### CHANGING CHARACTER OF FIELD RESEARCH

In the early 1970s, most of social science was marked by what was called “*the interpretive turn*” and a distinction between objectivist and interpretivist research began to come to the fore. The term “field research” came to be associated with objective methodologies, and such terms as “naturalistic inquiry” and “hermeneutic empiricism” with interpretive approaches. An additional layering was introduced as postmodern sensitivities for power relationships began to question the justification for imposing researcher-driven meanings on respondent actions and answers. In this paradigm, the researcher was no longer considered neutral but an obvious stakeholder in the outcome; the relationship between the researcher and respondent became a significant element in the character of the data; and the research itself became a social process available for analysis on its own. The respondent lost the cloak of ingenuity and became a modal actor in the research text. The position of postmodernism (to the extent that postmodernism can take a position) was that there was no place for the researcher to stand in order to objectively observe and describe the condition of the other (→ Objectivity in Science; Postmodernism and Communication).

This epistemological variation has been called a paradigm shift, in what has been so far shown to be a gross overstatement. There is an engaging group of scholars, who support interpretivism, postmodernism, one or both, but they have hardly swept the field. What has happened is that the term “field research” became further politicized. Now it is burdened not only by being “descriptive” but also by being “objectivist” and “modernist.” The ostensibly harmless, “Oh, I see you are doing field research,” can be akin to throwing down the gauntlet.

### INTERPRETIVE FIELD METHODS

The principal difference between interpretive field methods and objective field methods is the former’s commitment to member understandings and the latter’s dependence on some form of literal meaning. Interpretivists hold that nothing reads itself; the meaning of things is rarely obvious; and what can be understood through impersonal observation is merely a surface reading. To understand objects, space, place, texts, beliefs, and actions,



one must be involved in the social processes that are the source of their → meaning. Consequently, passive observation becomes participant observation (surveys, especially attitude surveys, are rarely used); texts are understood not only in their content but also in the activation of that content; and objects and space are considered not only in their static properties but also in their dynamic use.

Participant observation begins by establishing membership with the social grouping that sustains the action or belief set of interest. Interpretivist epistemology holds that it is the relational terms of the group that establish the meaningfulness of what the group does or holds true, or what group members acting as members do or believe. Consequently, to tap into that meaningfulness, the observer must achieve some level of a member's understanding through participation.

A similar prior assumption directs the analysis of texts (→ Discourse Analysis; Text and Intertextuality). The facts of the text (this word rather than that word) are necessary to know, but are insufficient to understand, the force or power to influence of the text. That information comes through analyzing the interpretive processes through which the text is activated or made available to the action. Further, these processes are not simply cognitive engagement; interpretation does not begin and end "behind the eyes." It is in the social processes of interpretation that texts achieve their full significance.

Objects, space, and place are treated in the same way as texts: an inventory of the static components cannot by itself lead to an understanding of their meaningfulness. That meaningfulness arises and is made apparent when the object/space/place is put into play.

### **STATUS AND POLITICS REVISITED**

If one were to do field research on the techniques and tactics of objective versus interpretive field researchers, one might find, in the middle of things, little difference in what they do. It is not a question of a special set of methods that defines the two groups, although there are some clear differences. The primary difference in method is the prior preparation of membership required of the interpretive approach, but there is a behind-the-scenes, epistemological structure that turns the whole thing upside down.

In interpretivist epistemology, field research is always preferred to laboratory research, and grounded approaches that move up from the action are always preferred to hypothetical-deductive approaches that move down from prior theory. This configuration seems to echo the sociology argument about the primacy of field methods, but, in fact, objectivists and interpretivists will both make the sociology argument and then disagree on epistemological grounds. The result is a mutual rejection of what the other holds dear. Ideas compete and so do their adherents. In the real world of science, things are neither neat and tidy nor necessarily friendly.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Case Studies ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Interview ▶ Meaning ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Observation ▶ Participatory Action Research ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Research Methods ▶ Survey ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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## **Film Genres**

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A working definition of film genre depends on the purposes toward which it will be applied. The audience approaches genre as it is generally defined as kind, sort, or style. Categorizing films this way has been in use going back to the advent of film production and consumption (→ Film Production). For example, the “actuality” (early documentaries; → Documentary Film), the “comedy” (*The Waterer Watered*), and the “Western” (*The Great Train Robbery*) were all references that theaters used to advertise the film that accompanied the vaudeville show of the week (→ Cinema). Early filmmakers learned to cinematically code a narrative as early viewers learned how to understand these new codes, and the film company duly noted their response (→ Code). This relationship has continued to the present day. Genres offer fairly reliable means by which the industry can attempt to repeat and capitalize on previous box-office successes. They also provide audiences with knowledge they can use to organize their own viewing. In this sense, the rationale behind film genres has always been that of production balanced by consumption, and like the study of → stars, genre has always transcended the traditional boundaries of film studies.

The study of film adopted a more specific definition inherited from the study of art (→ Art as Communication) and literature. This schema categorizes films according to specific structure or thematic content through a consideration of the narrative and stylistic or formal aspects, setting or mise-en-scène, costume, character, and → cinematography. “The problem has always been to search for agreement about which elements or characteristics are essential to the category named, whether ‘idyll’ or ‘melodrama,’ ‘epic,’ or ‘tragedy’” (Chatman 1999, 52).

Hence, some film genres have their origin in literary genres: comedy, tragedy, and melodrama. Others are based more specifically on cinematic capabilities such as actualities, tableaux, travelogues, animated cartoons (Stam 2000, 14; → Animation). Genre criticism as an area of film study has historically been concerned with mapping the boundaries of each class, and determining which films belong where, while ignoring larger issues such as to what extent genres are “transcultural,” and whether “genres” exist beyond the critics’

→ discourse. In the 1990s many critics understood that what was at stake in defining film genres was the ability to organize and control the discourse around film. “The central assumption of genre criticism is that a work of art and communication arises from and is inserted into a specific social context and that its meaning and significance is constrained and limited within this context” (Ryall 1998, 328).

## EARLY DEFINITIONS

The introduction of genre criticism into the field of film studies represented a “tactical attempt to think beyond auteurism” (Anthony Easthope, cited in Hutchings 1995, 59). During the 1960s film critics, both within and outside academia, were attempting to legitimize the study of film within the university. Those interested in genre criticism argued that all film had far-reaching sociological, cultural, political, and economic implications for society and as such constituted a valuable object of study. Genre study was seen to be more systematic than the auteur approach (Gledhill 2000, 222). It offered a reliable classification system for film that was less subjective and more inclusive than that offered by auteur theory, and it was the advent of a serious consideration of popular film as art within the purview of the academy. In other words, the focal point of film studies shifted, “from film’s aesthetically ‘transformative’ and medium-specific attributes toward a more empirically based sociological interest in relations between style, popular narrative, and myth” (Berry-Flint 2004, 28).

Paul Watson has usefully suggested that the development of genre criticism can be divided into three areas: text, industry, audience. Each of these has been treated as sources of the meaning and significance of genre by researchers who have typically focused on only one at a time (Watson 2003, 152, 154). As in other areas of media and cultural studies, film scholarship has conceived → “meaning” as a discursive construction that occurs within a particular historical context and is related to other social, political, and aesthetic formations. In reference to the study of film genres, this has meant an ongoing conceptual broadening of the relations between genre aesthetics, industry, and audience expectations.

## AREAS OF GENRE CRITICISM

### Text

As a theory and method adapted from the study of literature, genre criticism has primarily focused on the Hollywood film text, and specifically on narrative and → iconography, themes and motifs (→ Hollywood; Film Theory). An early model argued that narrative (→ Storytelling and Narration) and iconography are structured to communicate cultural myths.

Attributing the popularity of the Western to myth, Bazin argued in the 1950s that myth manifests itself in the Western through the portrayal of Manichaeic struggles between the forces of good and evil. The mythic quality stands in a “dialectical” relationship with the Western’s specific historical settings, and because of this it takes on epic and tragic qualities. Thus the Western’s formal attributes are “simply signs or symbols of its profound reality, namely the myth” (Bazin 1971, 142; → Sign). Other critics also asserted

that, through iconography, particular “genres” addressed and attempted to resolve in imaginary terms the needs and contradictions of American society (Warshaw 1954). Iconography was identified as predominant in analyzing generic identity.

When genre criticism was taken up in the 1970s, the exceedingly formulaic Western and gangster films were used as exemplars of genre in general for their narrative and iconography. From these categories, genre critics elaborated the tone, purpose, subject, and audience, and the thematic identity that bound them as a text. In other words, genres were what critics said they were. The repetition of genre motifs can only be experienced intertextually (→ Text and Intertextuality). Genre studies set out to define and codify such intertextual fields. In this way, it created its own objects rather than simply discovering them. Early theorists argued that genre conventions are found in the films. Later theorists argued that genre categories are imposed (Tudor 1974, 135; Berry-Flint 2004, 27).

The next step in the development of genre analysis was the incorporation of Lévi-Strauss’s work on myth. Jim Kitses in *Horizons west* (1970) laid out a series of oppositions such as individual/community, nature/culture, law/gun, that structured the Western. Will Wright’s *Sixguns and society* (1975) sought to identify structural formats within the historical progression of the Western and relate these to broader shifts in American society (→ Structuralism in Visual Communication). Both models maintained that genres signified myths “crystallizing our fears and desires, tensions and utopias” (Stam 2000, 126). A further development of this divided Hollywood genres into films that re-establish social order, such as the Western and the detective film, and those that work to establish social integration, such as the melodrama, comedy, and musical. This “gendered” model argued that genres function as “cultural ritual,” either integrating fractured communities or restoring order, often through mediation, to conflictual groups (Schatz 1981). Problematic in this approach was the application of thematic analysis to genre definition because of its overinvestment in the Western. For example, melodramas lacked the visual and iconographic unity of the Western and were largely left unanalyzed. In the acceptance of form/content distinction most of these avenues reverted to a form of auteurism. Other sources of meaning, most notably the audiences’ relation to themes or iconography as sites of meaning were not considered.

In the late 1970s, genre criticism was influenced by ideological and psychoanalytical theories applied to classical Hollywood film (Willemsen 1994). In an effort to move beyond use of myth and ritual as primary operations of genre, critics argued that identity of genres depends on the specific relations established between a range of elements rather than on the selective representation of particular motifs (Gledhill 2000, 224). Popular genres represent patterns of repetition and difference, in which difference is crucial to the continuing industrial and semiotic existence of the genre. Proposing a model based on the balance between generic verisimilitude (ensuring audience recognition) and cultural verisimilitude (ensuring a film’s relevance to the audience), Stephen Neale argued that genre studies consider the changing historical context within which genres are produced. (Neale 1981). The attention to history in genre criticism raised the question of the impact of contemporary theoretical frameworks on genre analysis, such as postmodernism and postcolonialism (→ Postmodernism and Communication; Postcolonial Theory). Is there a distinctly “postmodern” genre or is it more accurate to refer to the impact of postmodernism on film as a style? The postmodern genre was characterized by irony, parody, hybridity, bricolage, and pastiche (Collins 1993). *Blade Runner* was referred to as the

classic postmodern film. But since most films contain these elements to a greater or lesser degree, genre criticism was yet unable to demarcate different classes of film.

In light of the insights of postcolonialism and transnational identity, Janet Staiger has suggested that the term “hybridity” is a misnomer for the kind of genre mixing that goes on within American film (→ Hybridity Theories). She proposed substituting the term “inbreeding” in recognition of the dominant role Hollywood has played in globally exporting cinematic style and form through genres. Applying the term “hybridity” to postcolonial and transnational films that are a *mélange* of global influence organized around the “cultural dominant,” Staiger acknowledges their creative force and ingenuity. She reserves “inbreeding” as a descriptor of the American film industry’s lack of cinematic creativity as production becomes increasingly cannibalistic through seemingly endless sequels, prequels, and remakes (Staiger 1997).

### **Audience**

The advent of audience studies in the early 1990s defined genres as “socio-discursive frameworks” brought to the viewing experience (→ Audience). Genres are provisional and malleable conceptual environments, in which viewers participate in construction of meaning and modify frameworks. They refer to cognitive repositories of images, sounds, characters, events, stories, scenarios, expectations, etc. (Berry-Flint 2004, 27). Genre definition is part of a larger question concerning cultural perception and structures of → visual communication. Approaching genre from an audience perspective is to study how cinematic artistic value and use value is constructed by the audience. It is an implicit communication between producers and consumers, allowing the audience to approach any given film from a “horizon of expectations” within which the film is comprehensible (Neale 1990; Watson 2003, 160).

The concept of genre helps explain the use of conventions and → stereotypes (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication; Stereotyping and the Media) and their function in the social world of the audience, without assuming a fixed set of codes for representing reality (Gledhill 1997, 351). Acts of communication are intelligible only within the context of shared conventional frameworks of expression, a contract between viewer and producer so that particular expectations occur, which then allow the acceptance or deviation from previous modes of intelligibility (Culler 1975, 147). It is a “conceptual space,” in which issues of texts and aesthetic overlap with those of “industry and institution, history and society, culture and audiences” (Gledhill 2000, 221). Reframing Robert Altman’s argument that filmic excess is an organized system of meaning, Linda Williams argued for “body genres” as made up of those films whose success is measured by “the degree to which the audience sensation mimics what is seen on the screen (Williams 1998).

### **Industry**

Genre is also analyzed as an economic method of producing, marketing, and distributing film and thereby attempting to control the ongoing uncertainties of the business. For some critics, the appeal of studying genre is that it offers the opportunity to deal with

cinema, and Hollywood cinema in particular as both an industrial and a popular medium (Hutchings, cited in Watson 2003, 151; → Political Economy of the Media).

From the audience's point of view, there are so many films available today on the web and in the form of DVDs that, in the absence of a title, generic categorization is the primary means of accessing the medium whether the location be a library, archive, catalog, or the web (→ Internet). Thus, while the critic might start with an individual film in seeking to understand its place in the generic regime, the audience learns to identify and thereby choose films through an industry-defined classification system that then becomes the frame through which both significance and value are determined.

Critics who analyze genre through the industry look at how global cultural flow has impacted film production. The increased production of genre films specifically for export to a global audience is one way the industry has attempted to deal with diminishing domestic ticket sales. Action films are so expensive to make that producers will not expect to recoup the cost from the domestic audience. They will create the film intending to export it, and these become identifiable in part by their lack of dependence on dialogue for narrative progression.

Hollywood genres perform two interrelated functions: to provide pleasure and meaning for viewers and to minimize risks of industrial production. There need to be innovation and difference within a generic regime in order to continue to appeal and be relevant to an audience. Genre provides for an atmosphere of reduced risk (Neale 1990). However, since digital technology brings less expensive equipment and the ability to bypass the major distributors by uploading and distributing film over the Internet, the American film industry faces sharply heightened risk as pressure to innovate the Hollywood product is directly proportional to dwindling box office.

## NEW DIRECTIONS IN FILM STUDIES

An example of the effect of new technology on definition of genre is an argument that in the virtual online game, *The Sims*, players rely on the conventions learned in “real life” (Nutt & Railton 2003, 589). It is applied here as a set of codes and practices by which game creators write and game players understand the game play. Genre is not only the categorization of a film but enters into an analysis of the practices of film viewing and film production.

The previous nomenclature used to refer to film types may not be such useful delimiters when it comes to specifically digital production (→ Digital Media, History of). Much genre criticism emerges from analysis of Hollywood classical period and cannot easily be transposed to the contemporary situation. Genre criticism has to do with understanding precisely the “rule”-governed practices of cinema as a mass entertainment medium (Watson 2003, 152–153). If the “cinematic” technology changes those rule-governed practices and if the “cinematic” technology is no longer a mass entertainment medium, is “genre” a term useful to criticism? Contemporary film resembles less the standard texts of the classical Hollywood system and more “multipurpose machines” that initiate “an endless chain of other cultural products” (Schatz 1993, 9–10). In that case, genre becomes an almost meaningless term as there is little that would not be included.

Digital media scholars are considering the usefulness of “genre” within the intensified mode of visual digital culture where genre becomes merely nominal, and the notion of seriality is “coming to replace or subsume genre in more recent manifestations of mass visual culture (Darley 2000, 126; → Digital Imagery). “Serial mode” is seen as a useful term because of Hollywood’s tendency toward sequels, prequels, series, follow-ups, and franchises. Not intended to reference the industry’s aesthetic deficiencies, mode is a more adequate reference to contemporary production trends. It indicates the “most potent distillation of the economic imperatives” having to do with innovation and difference. “Blockbuster,” “event cinema,” “summer movies,” and “special effects movies” describe a mode of filmmaking *and* a mode of viewing. These production trends fall outside the traditional generic method of organization. The term “intermedia” is offered as more appropriate to the “bidirectional system of aesthetic commodification exchange” involving merchandising, product tie-ins, product placement, branding, TV spin-offs, video games, and novelizations (Watson 2003).

Films of the last 20 years exhibit an array of technological, formal, thematic, and stylistic affinities with other media forms (Watson 2003, 153). The term “intertextuality” has also been suggested by several critics as a replacement, though “genre” itself remains a useful conceptual tool both for audiences and those studying the relationship between American film, international film, and global culture (Stam 2000, 129; Berry-Flint 2004). In at least one case, the uses of technology define categories of genre as well as narrative, character, setting, etc. Machinima (machine+cinema) is the term given to film production in a virtual world and it is often referred to as a new “genre” of film. As machinima is neither animation nor live-action filmmaking, it falls outside current understandings of genre. If we make machinima of a class held by a Harvard law professor in the virtual world, *Second Life*, is that a documentary? Andrew Darley argues that in a postmodern culture of intertextuality and radical eclecticism brought about by new technological developments “genre has a far more limited structural role to play,” referring to nothing more than “the general level of a form itself – narrative cinema” (Darley 2000, 144).

SEE ALSO: ► Animation ► Art as Communication ► Audience ► Bollywood ► Cinema ► Cinematography ► Code ► Digital Imagery ► Digital Media, History of ► Discourse ► Documentary Film ► Film Production ► Film Theory ► Genre ► Hollywood ► Hybridity Theories ► Iconography ► Internet ► Meaning ► Political Economy of the Media ► Popular Culture ► Postcolonial Theory ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Sign ► Social Stereotyping and Communication ► Stars ► Stereotypes ► Stereotyping and the Media ► Storytelling and Narration ► Structuralism in Visual Communication ► Text and Intertextuality ► Visual Communication

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# Film as Popular Culture

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In the relatively short time since their invention at the end of the nineteenth century, movies have rapidly evolved from a temporary novelty to the most dominant visual form of modern popular culture worldwide. Unlike the print mass media (→ Book; Newspaper; Magazine), which require literate audiences, or even → radio, which requires audiences who understand the originating language, film is an almost universal language of moving visuals that was immediately embraced and popularized not only in the US, but also around the world.

In → Marshall McLuhan's "global village," twenty-first-century films are made by a kaleidoscope of countries and cultures. Virtually every developed culture in the world produces or presents films for theatrical release or home-viewing. In addition, movies specifically made for → Internet distribution can be accessed from every part of the wired world. Using digital video technology on personal computers, even amateurs can be filmmakers (→ Amateur Photography and Movies).

If popular culture is indeed "the culture of the people," then such worldwide popularity justifies the consideration of film as perhaps *the* iconic media form of popular culture. Although film is an art form and a political tool as well as a medium for → news and documentary reporting (→ Documentary Film), movies are the dominant form of entertaining and educating audiences about the human condition or providing a means of escaping from it. A century after its invention, film continues to both reflect and shape the popular culture of individual nations and the global village.

## THE APPEAL OF FILM AS STORYTELLING

The major appeal of movies has always been their ability to give a visual presence to storytelling (→ Storytelling and Narration). From their beginning, movies became a major source of entertainment for the burgeoning movie-going public, first in Europe and then in the US. Film also took its place as a major medium for preserving and reflecting popular trends and expressions of the cultures in which they were created, as well as for influencing and shaping them.

In 1894 in the US, Thomas Edison invented motion pictures that could be seen through a "kinetoscope" by one person at a time. However, the next year in France, brothers Auguste and Louis Lumière created the "cinematograph," which both captured moving images and, for the first time, projected them for multiple persons at the same time. Storefront neighborhood nickelodeons were soon replaced by sumptuous movie theatres that were "the people's palaces."

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the darkened *silent-movie theatre* represented a place where troubles and worries could be forgotten, and where dreams and even

fantasies could come to life. Movies created the kinds of images that could never be constructed in live theatre. Combining wish-fulfillment desires with thrilling action, adventure, and even sensationalism, this new technological miracle transported moviegoers not only to real places with real people – both famous and ordinary, past and present – but also to worlds with characters and creatures that never were or would be. As they watched, audiences could believe that they were actually in places and meeting people most could only imagine before the invention of film. In fact, when moving pictures were first shown in 1895, scenes of trains caused several audience members to jump out of their seats to get out of the way. The moving visuals – and the stirring music – made even pure fiction seem so real (→ Reality and Media Reality).

Moreover, the film actors and actresses who portrayed a culture's heroes and heroines became the twentieth century's *most popular celebrities*. The intimacy of a new technique, the close-up, turned performers – e.g., Mary Pickford (“America’s sweetheart” and then “the world’s sweetheart”) and Charlie Chaplin (“the little tramp”) – into both stars and friends. On larger-than-life screens, they literally and figuratively became larger than the heroes they portrayed. And, in the new symbiotic relationship of film and popular culture, new heroes and heroines were created in new narratives that worked well on the screen.

Thus, visual storytelling supremacy passed from the single community storyteller to the live stage to the movies. The first audiences came mostly from the working classes, but as movies developed, they became popular with all social strata.

## A GLOBAL POPULAR-CULTURE MOVEMENT

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, film was a global phenomenon, offering the public stories that were deeply embedded in the cultures in which they were created. Italian filmmakers created lavish sets and gave visual splendor to the classical history of Rome. French filmmakers created both comic and serious stories that reflected their culture's conflicting values, including Sarah Bernhardt in *Elisabeth Reine d'Angleterre*. The British introduced extensive film-editing to cinematic storytelling with *Rescued by Rover*. The Russians created sweeping historical dramas that had the look of documentaries. Denmark and Sweden made contemporary stories reflecting introspective self-reflective points of view, pioneering an approach stimulated by the psychoanalytic theories of Freud.

With D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*, first shown to audiences in 1915, the US began its meteoric rise to becoming the film center of the world. Critics now vilify the film as blatantly racist, but when the cultural context in which it was created is considered, the film can be understood as a prime example of how cinema reflects the popular attitudes of its time. Other countries also reflected their contemporary culture in the landmark films that remain icons of cinema greatness, such as Sergei Eisenstein's *Battleship Potemkin* (1925), a reflection of the Russian culture's transition from monarchy to socialism/communism, and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927), an archetype of German expressionism, which emerged from a culture of artistic and social exploration in a society attempting to stabilize after a failed war.

The 1920s also witnessed the advent of “talking” pictures or “talkies,” which were at first ridiculed by critics but nevertheless adored by audiences worldwide, signaling the

end of the silent era. Full-length animated features like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* also became a cherished part of the popular culture, enlivening culturally embedded fairy tales for audiences of all ages (→ Animation). Advances in full-color presentation made movies even more real.

By the end of the first half of the twentieth century, film was the most popular entertainment medium in the US. As television challenged cinema over the next decades, the content of cinema evolved: Fiction and fantasy still reigned, but there were more examples of the naturalistic reality that was sweeping the world. Partnering with the new popular medium of television, movies provided content as well as production facilities. Ultimately, the accessibility of home video in home theatres ensured the survival of film as popular culture by bringing cinema directly to the people. And in the twenty-first century, non-professional members of the public began to make movies accessible worldwide, expanding the popular culture exponentially.

### **FILM AS CULTURAL MIRROR AROUND THE WORLD**

In spite of recent advances in interactive visual media, films retain their place as the dominant mirror of the society in which they are created – reflecting the popular culture as they simultaneously create and change it. Movies represent the contemporary state of a culture and remain the foremost expression of popular culture. Sweden and Denmark, for example, became known for their stream of consciousness narratives, minimizing the linear development of traditional storytelling. Filmmakers in India, China, Japan, and Hong Kong developed visual styles that continue to be among the most remarkable on film, reflecting the cultures in which the smallest nuances of visual communication are important.

Some of the most important films have come from nations experiencing significant political and social change, such as the dramatic shifts in filmmaking after World War II in Germany and Italy, as well as Japan and China. Japan transitioned from a relatively closed culture to an open market deluged with Western influences, epitomized by Akira Kurosawa, whose films are lauded internationally because of their universal themes that integrate Japanese and Western cultural mythologies.

The French “new wave” films of the 1960s ushered in a new approach to filmmaking that minimized narrative while developing rich and unforgettable characters, and that brought international acclaim to such directors as Jean-Luc Godard and François Truffaut. Reflecting the post-World War II Italian culture, Federico Fellini and Bernardo Bertolucci presented unsettling 1960s and 1970s cinema images of persons in struggles for identity and purpose, which have become international archetypes.

Many of the films produced in the US in the 1970s reflected the cultural conflicts emerging from the country’s struggle and increasing disillusionment with the political decisions of US leaders, such as the decisions behind the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal. Hollywood’s “A” list directors Francis Ford Coppola, Brian de Palma, George Lucas, Martin Scorsese, and Steven Spielberg all started their careers in the upheaval of the Hollywood studio systems that began in the 1970s (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

## HOLLYWOOD: WORLD CAPITAL OF FILM AS POPULAR CULTURE

Although Europe was the dominant center of film production and distribution until the beginning of World War I, the US has been the center of filmmaking ever since. US movies are often the highest-attended films in other countries. US blockbuster films like “Titanic” have grossed billions of dollars, which speaks to the “popular” in popular culture. Few countries or film studios outside the US have the economic resources to spend one to two hundred million dollars on the production of a movie. The US generates 90 percent of the world’s revenue from film but actually produces only 15 percent of the world’s films: India produces more than twice as many films annually, and the film industries in many countries around the world are vital components of their country’s economic structure.

Despite the importance of the worldwide film industry, films produced in the US have the largest impact on world cinema and its audiences. Cultural critics complain about the resultant “colonizing” of the rest of the world by the US popular culture that → Hollywood both creates and reflects, which is increasingly violent and commercial, and includes rampant product placements for US goods and services (→ Cultural Studies).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ Animation ▶ Book ▶ Cinema ▶ Cinematography, History of ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Film Production ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Radio ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Visual Communication

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# Film Production

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The term “film production” has routinely been used as a way to indicate the stage in the making of a movie where actual filming takes place. While this usage is shared by both the public and filmmakers, it is somewhat misleading in that it draws attention to just one aspect of filmmaking at the expense of a fuller understanding both of the different stages of production and of the key relationships at the heart of the filmmaking process (→ Collective Action and Communication).

## PRE-PRODUCTION STAGE

The earliest stage of production, also known as pre-production or development, involves a handful of people who are in a position to shape a film project. Traditionally an idea is developed or picked up from existing material (be it in the format of newspaper news, books, previous films, etc.). There are several people who are in a position to develop the initial idea and bring it to the attention of a studio. Producers, writers, actors, and directors all have a share in this process, though the relative contribution of each will vary substantially from case to case. In particular, the actual influence of the director at this stage of the process is rather difficult to quantify. He or she could be the very initiator of the whole project (though this is not very common). More likely, a director will be hired once the main features of the story have been sketched out and the studio expressing an interest in acquiring the project begins assembling what they see as the right team for the project. Apart from the director, writer(s), and producer(s), actors, especially recognizable names, are attached to the project as early as possible to enhance its financial attractiveness.

This stage is a very *delicate* one; despite lengthy negotiations involving a number of professionals, many projects never get past this first hurdle. Indeed, it is not uncommon for directors to be replaced at this early stage, and for projects to change hands within a studio or even go to a different studio altogether. This instability can become problematic since financial backing needs to be secured, and this depends heavily on how effectively studio executives and filmmakers can present their case to potential backers. When the ever increasing cost of production is factored in, it becomes easier to see why this phase of production should be one of the most complex, difficult, and often frustrating aspects of filmmaking. The popular belief that → Hollywood operates according to a “cookie cutting” approach does not adequately account for the complications and pitfalls of the film development stage. While it is true that studios and filmmakers sometimes opt for the apparently “easier” option, often due to the huge financial risks involved in mainstream production, this does not guarantee them a smoother ride to success than that which filmmakers going against the grain will endure.

Pre-production is also one of the *least standardized stages* of the production process. Time, budget, and, most significantly, individual personality combine in a number of potential combinations so great that it would be unwise to even begin to suggest “the way

Hollywood does things.” The director and the producer are usually in charge of the project at this stage. The distinction between financial and administrative duties (the domain of the producer) and creative tasks (understood as the domain of the director) that is traditionally understood as regulating this key relationship is somewhat artificial.

The nature of the working relationship that some producers have with directors with whom they have collaborated on other projects goes well beyond such a schematic division of duties. It is fair to say that some producers will stand aside and let the filmmakers get on with their job (so long as they remain on schedule and on budget), while others will choose to be more involved throughout production to ensure that the director and other key personnel are given the opportunity to deliver the best possible film. The enduring image of the overbearing, dominant, crass producer hell bent on making money at the expense of artistic endeavor is mostly a caricature of reality. While there are producers who fit that mold in some sense, the vast majority of producers today do not exhibit those characteristics. Despite these variations in practices, there seems to be agreement on one point: the producer is perhaps the only figure who can ensure that all the filmmakers involved in the production of a film work to the same brief and find some common ground where the same “language” is spoken.

The ultimate aim of pre-production is neither entirely clear nor obvious. On the one hand, engendering a common sense of purpose (something that filmmakers often refer to as “vision”) of what the film would ideally ultimately feel, look, and sound like would appear to be a basic requirement (→ Cinema). However, even this “basic” aim often proves difficult to achieve due to lack of proper communication, clash of personalities, or a lack of a properly developed script idea. On the other hand, there are filmmakers who meticulously plan their production in order to enter the filming stage with as few variables as possible. Extensive storyboarding, early discussions with the key members of the cast and crew, and working toward achieving a workable script are all part of this process (for a fuller account of the key individual roles in filmmaking, see Goldman 1985). Both approaches present their advantages and pitfalls, and other variables, such as the composition of the filmmaking team (some directors and producers prefer to work with the same skeleton crew, whenever possible, to be able to establish a close working relationship that can be replicated on different projects), budgets, and the time allocated to the project, can mean the difference between failure and success.

Despite these variables, there would appear to be universal agreement on one aspect: the *quality of the script* is paramount. Cinematographer John Bailey summarizes this perfectly when he says: “The more experience I get the more I see that a problematic or mediocre script in the hands of a brilliant director is still going to have problems. A brilliant script in the hands of an okay director can still be a very good film” (Schaefer & Salvato 1984, 68). Indeed, in most cases the lack of a properly developed script is likely to cause serious tensions among cast and crew, leading to confusion, misunderstanding, delays, and budgetary issues. Despite this general agreement among filmmakers about the importance of scriptwriting, there is still a prevailing view among some critics and the general public that the making of a film is in the filming, where directors can put their vision into action. Screenwriter Caroline Thompson makes this point forcefully: “screenwriters work really hard at what we do, and it’s a very distinct job. I did feel hurt by the pieces written about *Edward Scissorhands* when it was always Tim Burton’s vision, or

ninety percent of the time it was Tim Burton's vision. There was a lot of me in that movie, and anybody who knows me can see me in it. But to the public at large, it wasn't mine at all, it was Tim's completely" (Schanzer & Wright 1993, 238).

## PRODUCTION STAGE

Once the production team has been assembled, locations have been selected, and a draft version of the script is available, the project moves into the filming stage, also known as "production." As in pre-production, individual and artistic personalities will determine how filming is organized. While there are producers and directors who wish to take as active a part in every stage of filmmaking as possible, there are others who are content with delegating creative decisions to key members of the crew. This distinction in approach has less to do with budget constrictions than it has with individual preference. To mention two notable examples, James Cameron prefers to be involved in virtually every decision that is made during the filming stage whereas Steven Spielberg prefers to delegate to trusted members of the crew, especially those with whom a working relationship has already been formed in previous films.

Key relationships form at this stage, the most important of which are the director-actor and the director-production designer-cinematographer relationships (→ Cinematography). Production designer Richard Sylbert illustrates the latter thus: "I take care of how the picture looks. The cameraman takes care of the lighting. And the director takes care of the emotions" (Heisner 1997, 159). Once again, filmmakers involved in this stage of the production are quick to point to the script as the key: a poorly developed or badly written script can make life very difficult: "One of the big challenges for this movie [*Silence of the Lambs*] was, how do you depict some of the shocking scenes described in the screenplay. Like when the police officers burst into the room in Memphis to discover their fallen partners. Ted [Tally] wrote 'What greets them is a snapshot from Hell.' Thanks Ted." (Heisner 1997, 159).

Interestingly, many directors indicate this stage as the least enjoyable phase of the filmmaking process. This view is mostly due to the huge pressure that is placed on filmmakers, directors especially, to make a great deal of decisions in a very short amount of time. Indeed, many see the cumulative effect of the inevitable mistakes that are made along the way as a direct threat to the ultimate success of the project. Director Spike Lee illustrates this issue very effectively: "a director is asked five million questions every single day. And you've got to make all those decisions very fast. And over the course of eight, nine, ten weeks, an accumulation of the wrong choices and your movie is fucked up!" (Breskin 1997, 179).

A further key reason for identifying filming as the least pleasurable part of filmmaking is the difficulty in rationalizing a process where a badly timed poor weather front can nullify in a matter of hours the months of careful preparations that had taken place in pre-production, while sending budgets spiraling out of control in the process. There are countless examples where weather inclemency threatened to derail an entire project and some have been very publicly documented. Eleanor Coppola, wife of director Francis Ford Coppola, shot a documentary on the making of *Apocalypse Now*. The documentary,

*Hearts of Darkness*, remains one of the best accounts of the difficulties of making a film in hostile weather and terrain conditions. There are clearly too many variables at work in this stage of the filmmaking process to suggest that there is “one way” of doing things. To state the obvious, each project and each set of filmmakers will present different challenges; this requires a flexible system, one that, though based on established hierarchies, is capable of accommodating change and innovation.

## POST-PRODUCTION STAGE

Once filming has been completed, the film moves into its final stage of production. Often referred to in the industry as “editorial,” this stage is most commonly known as “post-production.” Crudely, this is divided into two areas, *image and sound*. The image part of this process will involve mainly image editing and visual effects, whereas the sound part will involve sound editing, designing, and mixing as well as music composing. As before, practices vary substantially according to who is in charge of the project. Some directors and producers prefer to have film and sound editors on board a project very early on, sometimes during the development stage.

The majority, however, still follow a longstanding approach whereby editors put together a rough edit of the film (using a temporary sound track), to which both the composer and the sound team will work. Some filmmakers suggest that, though evidently viable, this approach is fraught with problems. Their argument is that early involvement in the filmmaking process would ensure a smoother and less troublesome (hence more cost effective) transition from stage to stage. In particular, bringing in key personnel, such as editors, sound designers and composers, and visual effects, so late in the project will inevitably limit what they can achieve. Sound designer Randy Thom illustrates this eloquently: “[Directors] tend to ignore any serious consideration of sound (including music) throughout the planning, shooting, and early editing. Then they suddenly get a temporary dose of religion when they realize that there are holes in the story, weak scenes, and bad edits to disguise. Now they develop enormous and short-lived faith in the power and value of sound to make their movie watchable. Unfortunately it’s usually way too late, and after some vain attempts to stop a haemorrhage with a bandaid, the Director’s head drops” (Thom 1999).

This sense of having to put things right that had gone wrong in previous stages of the filmmaking process is felt strongly among all filmmakers involved in these late stages of the process, as this rather sanguine quote from film editor Peter Frank confirms: “The picture editor is responsible for the film being a success, period. No matter what it takes. Sure, he can hide behind the director and the writer and the producer, but the mandate is simple. He’s just supposed to make it work, and if it was shot wrong, he’s still supposed to make it work. If it was misconceived, he’s still supposed to make it work. And if it was miswritten, yep, he’s supposed to fix that too. There is really no limit to the responsibility, in the ultimate sense, of the film editor” (Oldham 1995, 238).

This already difficult situation is compounded by the rather limited time available to the post-production crew. Often working to accelerated schedules due to a combination of unchangeable release dates and delays in finishing filming, the editorial teams face a



constant race against time. It is also not rare at this stage of the project for the director and other members of the original crew to have begun work on a different project. This in effect means that a considerable amount of delegation of responsibilities may have to take place from the director to the film editor and the supervising sound editor. This is one of the key reasons why so many directors prefer to work with the same crew wherever possible: the relationship they develop over the years ensures that working to the same brief does not require their constant presence at every stage of the production. Put succinctly, key decisions concerning the look and sound of a film will likely be taken by filmmakers other than the director.

### **FILM PRODUCTION AS TEAMWORK**

Although in film studies scholarship the figure of the director has traditionally been singled out as in effect shaping the whole production process through his or her “vision,” actual filmmaking practices in vigor in Hollywood today would seem to suggest a much more complex situation (→ Film Theory). The unstable nature of pre-production, the quantity and nature of the choices that need to be taken during filming, and the highly accelerated post-production schedule films need to follow to meet release dates paints a picture that is manifestly too broad and complex to be understood as managed by the director or any one person alone. Similarly, it would be unwise to underestimate the importance of directors: they are ultimately held responsible for their choices, and their decision-making power is accordingly larger than those of other crew members.

Ultimately, whatever the objectives of any film project and the relative creative input of cast and crew, film production remains a hugely complicated enterprise involving hundreds of people, several specialist languages, different creative and personal sensibilities, and extremely large sums of money, even in the case of an average mainstream film (→ Film as Popular Culture). In this sense, the complexity of film production is one of the very things that set cinema aside from other media: put simply, no other creative enterprise of any kind requires anywhere near the amount of people, money, and organization (with their attendant risks) than filmmaking. Perhaps it is no accident that the most effective way that filmmakers have to signal the complexity of film production is to compare it to another hugely complicated, expensive, and risky enterprise: going to war.

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Cinematography ► Collective Action and Communication  
► Film as Popular Culture ► Film Theory ► Hollywood

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# Film Theory

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Film theory is a form of speculative thought that aims to make visible the underlying structures and absent causes that confer order and intelligibility upon films. These structures and causes, while not observable in themselves, are made visible by theory. The ultimate objective of film theory is to construct models of film's nonobservable underlying structures.

Because the invisible structures are unknown they cannot be discovered by means of inductive procedures such as taxonomies. At the same time, the structures are not unknowable, for they can be represented as a system of theoretical hypotheses, concepts, or propositions, which have only a tentative or speculative status. Theories therefore offer explanatory depth rather than mere empirical generalizations. A particular theory enables the analyst to identify specific aspects of a film's structure, and to look at and listen to the film from the perspective of its own values. The aim of "theory" in this particular understanding is to construct different conceptual perspectives on a film, each informed by a specific set of values. A biased or value-laden theory is not only inescapable, but is also the condition of knowledge (→ Critical Rationalism for other conceptions of "theory").

Academic film studies has created a specialized theoretical vocabulary around the → cinema in order to talk about the invisible structures underlying films. This vocabulary represents the film theorist's unique way of seeing and thinking, which exceeds the immediate, commonsense view of films (their consumption as harmless entertainment) and begins to ask a set of questions that common sense has no need for. Film theorists are experts who develop a passionate interest in theories, and ask seemingly strange and difficult questions about films. Where do these questions come from? Why are they important? What do you need to know to ask such a question, let alone answer it? To understand the questions film theorists ask we need to place cinema in the context of twentieth-century thought.

## THE LANGUAGE ANALYSIS TRADITION

Twentieth-century thinking is marked by a shift from idealist philosophy to language analysis (→ Semiotics). The structural linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the American semiotician C. S. Peirce initiated a radical critique of Descartes's and Kant's idealist philosophy of the subject. In this critique, language and → signs replace mental entities

as the locus of knowledge. Language analysis rejects idealism, transforming its focus on private mental events (as in Descartes's method of introspection) to the public perspective of language and signs.

The language analysts' assumption of indirect access to one's own thoughts via language replaced the idealists' assumption of immediate access to thoughts. In the late 1950s cognitive processes made a decisive return within the language analysis tradition, beginning with Noam Chomsky's transformational generative grammar. Chomsky created a synthesis of both idealism and the intersubjective nature of language. This history of thought in the twentieth century is encapsulated in film theory.

### SCHOOLS OF FILM THEORY

The values inherent in all film theories have directed theorists' attention to particular aspects of film's general nature. *Classical film theory*, which dominated from the 1920s to the early 1960s, tried to define film as an art and attempted to achieve this from an idealist perspective by focusing on film's ontology, or "essence." Different classical film theorists located film's essence in two incommensurate, diametrically opposed qualities of cinema: its photographic recording capacity (e.g., Siegfried Kracauer; Stanley Cavell; André Bazin 1967) and its unique formal techniques that offer a new way of seeing (e.g., Lev Kuleshov; Sergei Eisenstein; Vsevolod Pudovkin; Rudolf Arnheim 1957). For realists, film automatically (that is, mechanically) records and reveals reality. Filmmakers therefore have a duty, the realists argued, to maintain film's relation to reality by privileging its recording capacity (→ Realism in Film and Photography). *Formalists*, on the other hand, regarded film as a modernist medium that offers a new view of the world, and therefore urged filmmakers to exploit film techniques (montage, camera movement, etc.) to create a view of the world unique to the cinema. Auteur criticism is an offshoot from formalism. It examines the way individual directors use film techniques to manipulate film content in order to express their unique vision.

From the perspective of *language analysis*, which became prominent in the 1960s, film semioticians such as Christian Metz did not conceive "film" to be a pre-given, unproblematic entity, nor did they try to define its essence. Instead, they aimed to define film's specificity by constructing a general model of its underlying system of codes (→ Code; Sign Systems). Metz's first semiotic model was the *grande syntagmatique* (1974a) which (he believed) designated one of the primary codes underlying and lending structure to all narrative films. It represents a set of finite sequence (or syntagmatic) types from which a filmmaker can choose to represent filmed events. Metz defined each sequence according to the spatio-temporal relations that exist between the events it depicts. He detected eight different types of sequences in total, each of which is identifiable by a specific spatio-temporal relationship existing between its images. Metz's second semiotic model, developed in *Language and cinema* (1974b), attempted to define filmic specificity in terms of a specific combination of five overlapping codes – iconicity, mechanical duplication, multiplicity, movement, and mechanically produced multiple moving images.

Out of this semiotics emerged *modern film theory* of the 1970s (sometimes called the second semiotics or contemporary film theory) of (again) Metz, Jean-Louis Baudry, theorists centered around the journal *Screen* (Stephen Heath, Colin McCabe) and feminist film

scholars (Laura Mulvey, Mary Ann Doane, Teresa de Lauretis) (see Rosen 1986). They combined the Marxism of Louis Althusser with the psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan to examine the underlying ideological, social, psychical absent causes that structure mainstream films and create the illusion of spectators as free, coherent subjects. They then mapped out the space for an oppositional avant-garde cinema that would break the ideological hold over mainstream film.

*Cognitive film theory* emerged in the 1980s as an alternative to modern film theory. Cognitivists share with the modernists a focus on the specific nature of the interface between film and spectator. But whereas the modernists examined the way a film addresses the spectator's irrational/unconscious desires and fantasies, the cognitivists analyzed the knowledge and competence spectators employ to comprehend films and engage them on rational and emotional levels (Bordwell 1985; Branigan 1992; Tan 1996).

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The New Lacanians (most notably Slavoj Žižek) are united by a new concern with what has been called the "ethics" of psychoanalysis and its contemporary political ramifications, which revolve around democracy, totalitarianism, universality, and multiculturalism. Instead of concentrating on the imaginary and the symbolic when assessing the film experience in relation to a spectator, the New Lacanians focus on the imaginary and the real. This shift is a double one: it tries to free film studies from its obsession with vision, illusion, and representation, especially as elaborated around sexual difference, and it tries to repoliticize the cinema, by tracking the various permutations of the symbolic order under capitalist globalization (Elsaesser & Buckland 2002, 236–248).

Film scholars not persuaded by psychoanalytic or Marxist film theory, but equally dissatisfied with the cognitivists' analysis of rational and emotional reactions to films, have in recent years turned to the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze's two cinema books (*The movement image* [1986] and *The time image* [1989]) offer an alternative conceptualization of the film experience as an embodied, spatio-temporal event. Deleuze is not a film theorist in the commonly accepted sense, for he theorizes *with* rather than *about* the cinema. What seems to have drawn him to the cinema is the relation of bodies, matter, and perception, seen as a traditional philosophical problem, and in the twentieth century most vigorously explored by phenomenology (Elsaesser & Buckland 2002, 261–283).

### PIECEMEAL THEORIZING

Film theory, then, is a system of interrelated hypotheses, or tentative assumptions, about the unobservable nature of reality (a reality assumed to be a regular, economical, cohesive structure underlying chaotic, heterogeneous, observable phenomena). It unveils the scope and limits of human reasoning. This is Film Theory in the singular, written with a capital T.

For David Bordwell and Noël Carroll (1996), localized, middle-level (or piecemeal) theories should replace this singular Film Theory. They argue that to theorize should be conceived as an activity that is problem-driven rather than doctrine-driven. There are two immediate responses to this reconfiguration of film theory, one serious, the other less serious. First, piecemeal theorizing sounds like the story of the elephant and the six blind

men. The one who felt the elephant's leg said that it was like a tree trunk; the second who felt its tail said it was like a rope; the third who touched the elephant's trunk said it was like a hose, and so on. Piecemeal theorizing may not be able to see the forest for the trees if it completely abandons the tendency to develop a unifying theory.

Second, and more seriously, Theory and piecemeal theorizing are not incompatible. The initial stage of the theoretical activity involves the *simplification* (abstraction and idealization) of the domain under study. Simplifying is the necessary first step in constructing a theory. The early stages of any theory are governed by attempts to obtain the maximum amount of simplicity by studying only the essential determinants of a particular domain. But as research progresses, those determinants deemed inessential and irrelevant at the early stages take on a greater importance, and make the research domain complex, in the negative sense that the theory cannot successfully subsume important factors within its framework. For research to progress, this "negative complexity" must be translated into "positive complexity" – the theory must expand to take into account these additional factors.

Film Theory followed the simplicity principle and attempted to reduce, by as much as possible, the negative complexity of its research domain, by studying only those characteristics of the cinema posited to be specific to it (the spatio-temporal articulations of the *grande syntagmatique*, or the five overlapping codes outlined in *Language and cinema*). This process of simplifying eventually and inevitably leads to a crisis, as the so-called inessential phenomena take on importance. Modern film theory embraced positive complexity by including in its domain of research additional absent structures and causes – ideology, society, and the unconscious. To recognize and break down general theoretical problems into smaller, piecemeal theoretical problems does not necessarily involve a rejection of Theory, as Bordwell and Carroll suggest, but represents its next stage of development.

Film theory is valuable to the extent that it does not study film as an unproblematic, pre-given entity, but as a complex and little understood medium with its own properties, and cultural and social effects (→ Film Production). Film theory therefore challenges and goes beyond the commonsense ideological understanding of film as a mere form of harmless entertainment, and instead maintains that it is an intrinsically significant medium integral to contemporary society (→ Visual Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cinema ▶ Code ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Film Production ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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## Financial Communication

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Financial communication entails all of the strategies, tactics, and tools used to share financial data and recommendations with investors and other interested parties. Around the world, companies need strong, proactive financial communication competencies to successfully help shape the evolution of capital markets for themselves and their industries. In return, companies likely will see the benefits in stock price and operating performance.

Thompson (2002a, 1) defines *investor relations* (IR) as “a strategic management responsibility that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities laws compliance to enable the most effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and other constituencies, which ultimately contributes to a company’s securities achieving fair valuation.” The field is described here on the basis of its development in the US and with examples of the US economy.

### BEGINNINGS

Financial communication evolved during the 1960s and 1970s with, as Mahoney (1991) wrote, a promotional flare. Annual reports became costly showpieces. “Dog and pony shows,” the euphemism for multimedia presentations to security analyst and stockholder meetings, became the trademark of full-service public relations (PR) departments. Financial communicators were technicians, leveraging their communication skills to create the

necessary tools, such as reports, speeches, and multimedia presentations, to inform the investment community.

The “Age of Impressionism,” as Mahoney (1991, 3) described it, came to a sudden and unnerving end in the early 1980s with the emergence of a most unlikely influencer – the corporate raider. Individuals such as T. Boone Pickens, Ivan Boesky, and Carl Icahn in the US created a battleground unlike any ever experienced in corporate America.

Traditional → public relations practitioners, functioning as IR representatives, found themselves involved in financial discussions with corporate leaders. Those who understood the financial markets moved easily into the dialogue. In a matter of months, the IR/PR practitioner experienced a major reality jolt. Priorities went from producing bland press releases and glitzy annual reports to battling in the takeover trenches: giving daily reports from the field on how the battle was going, assessing the friends and foes, identifying and facilitating direct contact with shareholders who were hidden behind brokerage or bank accounts, doing quality research on the bidder, leading or conducting media contact or providing the information that went to reporters, determining the strategic content of information that would sway investors and analysts, and preparing and disseminating the actual communications materials (→ Strategic Communication).

By the 1990s, the takeover battlefield became considerably quieter as corporate managements had pretty well learned their lessons. Managements became more aware of enhancing shareholder value and incorporating it into strategic growth priorities. In the process, senior corporate executives recognized a very different role for IR, the more specific and strategic tools of monitoring investor attitudes and actions, and communicating corporate valuation programs and results.

Subsequently, IR moved from the PR or → corporate communications departments to the chief financial officer’s group, or even as a direct report to the chief executive officer. The people who occupied the posts were highly credentialed and often consisted of former business journalists, PR executives who possessed strong communications skills but also thoroughly understood business and finance, and perhaps a research analyst, an accountant, or a line business manager. They were working in a field that had become well defined as focusing on the investor constituency to enhance valuation.

### **ENTER THE BULLS OF THE 1990S**

The next major life-changing event for IR was the bull market that led Wall Street virtually throughout the 1990s and into the twenty-first century. The boom led to two developments that dramatically altered the financial communication landscape. First, the *competition for capital and for market visibility* became intense. IR pros were charged with developing initiatives that would break through the clutter on Wall Street and other capital markets, improve their company’s market visibility, and open the door to low-cost capital to fuel growth. This prompted the marketing discipline to drive IR. Marcus and Wallace (1997, xvii) argued that IR always had been a marketing function: “It has always been a process of understanding the needs of the target audience, and of casting the information about a company in ways that persuade the investor that a dollar invested in my company will appreciate faster than a dollar invested in somebody else’s company.”

Any process that relates a company's products or services – or even cogent information about that company – to the needs of the buyer is marketing.

Second, the boom of the 1990s rudely forced aside the notion of investing for long-term value and replaced it with a very *short-term focused approach* that worried about satisfying capital markets quarter to quarter. With this shift came the “managed earnings syndrome,” where corporate managements, through the accounting process, attempted to meet or beat the previous quarterly earnings to satisfy analyst expectations. The culprit here, as Louis M. Thompson (2002a, 12) wrote, was the reality that a “penny missed” could have devastating results on a company's stock price.

The combination of these two developments – vying for the attention of Wall Street and managed earnings – brought the investment community and IR to the brink of another dramatic sea change.

### **THE CRASH OF CORPORATE CREDIBILITY**

Except for the 2000 passage of Regulation Full Disclosure, which restricted the selective disclosure of material information to analysts and investors prior to making it available to the general public, Congress and the SEC basically stood aside as corporate America maintained its managed earnings practice. Financial scandals at Enron, Global Crossing, WorldCom, Tyco International, Adelphia Communications, and other blue-chip companies argued for new standards of financial communication. Multiple issues were blamed: aggressive accounting practices to meet quarterly earnings “consensus” expectations, conflicts of interest between research and investment banking, weaknesses in board oversight, a compensation system ill designed to align managements' interests with those of their shareholders, and conflicts of interest between auditing and consulting in major accounting firms.

Were the IR officers in these companies aware of the alleged fraudulent practices? If so, is it that they voiced their objections and no one listened? Whatever they did or did not do “obviously reflects on our profession,” remarked NIRI's president and CEO Louis M. Thompson, Jr (2002a, 11). Enron's collapse, exacerbated by the other scandals, triggered the most extensive congressional legislation and SEC regulations seen on Wall Street in 60 years (Thompson 2002b, 2). Heading the list was the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, passed in July 2002, which in its simplest definition requires public companies to validate the accuracy and integrity of their financial management.

### **INVESTOR RELATIONS RETURNS TO ITS PUBLIC RELATIONS ROOTS**

Fast forward to today and we see IR again evolving, this time seemingly back to its PR roots. Shane McLaughlin, senior writer at Best Practices in Corporate Communications, maintained that IR and PR are once again converging: “With renewed calls for information in the wake of corporate scandals and new financial reporting standards . . . there is more reason than ever to combine the functions of investor relations and corporate communications” (McLaughlin 2003, 9).

Also, McLaughlin (2003) argued that it is only natural that as companies open up more channels to send information, corporate communications will play a central role in



preserving consistency and content. Even if a company has not integrated the two functions of IR and PR, the people on these two sides need to be joined at the hip: “That way communications is systematically involved way before a matter becomes a public issue” (McLaughlin 2003, 9).

Roger S. Pondel (2002) argued that the debate essentially is over. Those who do not understand that IR and PR are converging are seriously weakening their companies’ valuations. The two management disciplines of IR and PR are being brought together more closely, Pondel maintained, because of heightened disclosure regulations and exploding technology around the Internet and related telecommunications.

Jeffrey Greene, global vice chair of corporate finance at Ernst and Young, suggested a new view of IR before a symposium of IR professionals in 2003. He called it “investor relationship management,” whereby IR officers move beyond providing data to facilitating a dialogue with the investor community on how best to value their companies. Greene added that the IR officer’s job is to manage relationships – internally and with the investing community – communicating but also educating and coaching: “It’s a two-way dialogue, and it requires integrated communications” (Berstein 2003, 4).

### **INVESTOR RELATIONS DESTINED FOR NEW RESPECT**

This turf battle among the disciplines promises to prevail for decades. Regardless of where IR lands, corporate managements appear in agreement that the role and responsibilities of the financial communication executive will continue to expand. Specifically, *five developments are singled out* for fueling the future growth of IR: (1) a greater need to satisfy more stringent disclosure requirements; (2) a broader communications role in the company; (3) a more proactive attitude by corporate managements toward IR; (4) more involvement in the strategic planning process (aside from all the disclosure requirements dictated by Sarbanes-Oxley, the recent rash of executive stock option postdating incidents strongly suggests that IR executives need to be “in the know” in order to effectively firefight these and other issues); and (5) greater information needs from institutions and portfolio managers.

Since Sarbanes-Oxley’s inception, its onerous enforcement impact on the New York Stock Exchange has led many corporate executives, particularly those heading up-and-coming entrepreneurial companies at home and abroad, to consider the New York market as an obsolete place to do business. They are flocking to exchanges in Europe and Asia instead. Around the world, corporate managements have a great opportunity to elevate IR to a more strategic and valuable role in response to today’s turmoil in capital markets and corporate governance.

SEE ALSO: ► Corporate Communication ► Organization–Public Relationships ► Public Relations ► Public Relations Evaluation ► Public Relations Planning ► Strategic Communication

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## Fleet Street

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Running between the Strand and Ludgate Circus in London, Fleet Street is synonymous with the national newspaper industry of the United Kingdom. Though from the mid-1980s all the major newspaper offices were relocated, the name was still used to denote this type of newspaper and journalism. The most common explanation for this synergy was that since its development in the fourteenth century Fleet Street has connected the City of London with the City of Westminster, and thus governmental, financial, and commercial activities – traditionally staple sources of news.

When the first printing press was installed in Fleet Street by Wynkyn de Worde in 1500, the area was already a religious and legal center, settled from the twelfth century by the Knights Templar. In the 1340s, the royal courts moved permanently to London. Both the church and the law increasingly relied on documentation, and the streets, courts, and alleys in the area were populated by scribes and clerks. Books, pamphlets, tracts, treatises, official records, and plays provided the impetus for a printing industry, and an area extending east–west from St Paul's Cathedral to Whitehall was the location for publishers, booksellers, printers, binders, and other related traders. Much of this printing was conducted under royal license and noble patronage. The King's Printing House was near Blackfriars Bridge, and the Stationers' Company controlled the book trade. Another, more popular print culture, producing cheap handbills, pamphlets, and chapbooks, and more focused on the goings-on at the Old Bailey assizes and Newgate prison, emerged, too. Although sold in Fleet Street, these artifacts were produced elsewhere, including Cripplegate, where the term Grub Street evolved to describe the kind of “hack” writing associated with them.

Serial print publications, *corantos*, published in continental Europe, appeared in English translations in the early seventeenth century. They contained gossip, rumor, and sensation,

as well as commercial intelligence. The English Civil War encouraged the production of political propaganda, often spiced with scandal. At the same time, administrative control over Fleet Street, which lay outside the City walls, practically collapsed, and the area became a prime location for the publication of salacious and subversive, as well as conformist and respectable, material.

If print production fostered a supportive material infrastructure, writing required a set of intellectual relations. The inns and taverns of the Fleet Street area provided the basis for these, attracting the likes of William Shakespeare and Ben Jonson, and later the diarist Samuel Pepys and Dr Samuel Johnson. Coffee houses, too, began opening in Fleet Street in the 1650s. As well as facilitating the verbal exchange of ideas, news, and gossip, they published their own newsletters.

State control of all print publication under the 1662 Licensing Act lapsed in 1695, and attempts to close coffee houses failed (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). After the Great Fire of London in 1666, the rebuilt Fleet Street area was characterized by its inns, taverns, coffee houses, and burgeoning serial print publications. By the 1720s there were 12 London newspapers in circulation, including the *Daily Courant* (1702). At mid-century, Fleet Street was both the main distribution center for most London newspapers and “the central meeting-place for newsmen,” as well as “a gossip factory” (Boston 1990, 41).

The period of the long nineteenth century (the establishment of *The Times* in 1785; the development of popular Sunday newspapers in the 1840s; the repeal of taxes on newspapers in the 1850s; the emergence of a popular cheap press, particularly between 1896 and 1910; the industrialization of newspaper production) is popularly connected with the final cementing of Fleet Street with newspapers and the ideology of a “free press” (→ Newspaper, History of).

The enormous expansion in newspaper publishing in the second half of the nineteenth century attracted distributors, advertising agencies, and telegraph offices to the Fleet Street area. Between 1868 and 1900 purpose-built offices were erected for a number of papers. Railway access was improved and Fleet Street was widened and realigned several times. The embanking of the River Thames and the demolition of existing buildings opened up a freehold estate south of Fleet Street in the 1880s, where many of the new cheap newspapers (notably the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Mirror*) were located. This second rebuilding of Fleet Street continued into the 1930s.

In the twentieth century, most of the major national newspaper offices were located in these streets south of Fleet Street (Bouverie, Carmelite, Whitefriars, and Tudor). To the north of the street, a myriad of alleyways and courts, such as Bell Yard, Cliffords Inn Passage, and Wine Office Court, housed radio broadcasters, magazines, news agencies, book publishers, and related organizations and bodies. After 1945 the only major national newspaper offices actually in Fleet Street itself were those of the *Telegraph* and *Express*. After the exodus began with NewsCorp removing its titles in 1986, it was completed within four years. Ancillary premises well away from Fleet Street had been used for more than 70 years. The last remaining news organizations in Fleet Street were not national papers, but Reuters (which relocated in 2005), Agence France Presse, and the provincial press and comic book publisher DC Thompson.

The use of Fleet Street as a synecdoche for newspapers was largely a post-1900 practice, as the concentration of activities fostering shared interests developed into a collective

identity. Fleet Street was, as the editor Henry Massingham said, more “a habitation of the mind,” cultivated by a persistent informal culture, centered on its many public houses, and more formal institutions, such as the Press Club (founded in 1875). One origin of Fleet Street as cultural reference was Philip Gibbs’s 1909 novel, *The street of adventure*, although other journalist-novelists, such as Evelyn Waugh and Michael Frayn, have since taken a more sardonic view of what the satirical magazine *Private Eye* called “the street of shame.”

SEE ALSO: ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Journalism ► Newspaper, History of ► Newspaper Journalism ► Printing, History of ► Quality Press ► Tabloid Press ► United Kingdom: Media System

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## **Foreign Correspondents**

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The “classic” foreign correspondent had become an identifiable occupation by the second half of the nineteenth century, supporting an increasing need of European and US newspapers to cover overseas military and civilian developments (→ Journalism, History of). Ever since, foreign correspondents have been considered an elite among news professionals. The numbers of “classic” foreign correspondents reached a peak worldwide between the 1950s and 1980s, but have been falling since because media organizations have increasingly been using local reporters to provide international news to their audiences (→ International News Reporting). Competition, financial constraints, and technological advances have democratized the field of international news gathering and the profession of the foreign correspondent.

Foreign news has a demonstrable impact on foreign policies and → public opinion of every country (→ International Communication; Foreign Policy and the Media). In one formulation, the press acts as a “strategic center” that transmits facts about foreign policy between political systems (Cohen 1963). Mediated foreign news, particularly television

and photo imagery, has shaped public opinion around the world, often bolstering governments' resolve for action. The so-called "CNN effect" (Livingston 1997) stipulates that global real-time media have exerted a profound influence on diplomatic conduct and on foreign policy in the United States and perhaps elsewhere (→ CNN). The effect, also dubbed compassionate cosmopolitanism or electronic empathy (Hannerz 2004), has precipitated western-led interventions in various locations. On the flip side, foreign news is also among the most tightly controlled imports in countries without free media (→ Censorship).

Reporters on international assignments were assumed to have the freedom of travel around the world as requested by their editors, seeking ways to understand what is happening there, and recounting that intelligence as a critical but also sympathetic story (Hess 2005). This foreign correspondent of the "classic" model has been labeled "a cosmopolitan among cosmopolitans" in a somewhat romanticized image because of their assumed ability to adapt to new environments and situations, reporting from any location of interest to home-country media (Cohen 1963).

Recent social, occupational, and cultural changes in the uses of existing technology, such as the emergence of → bloggers, have made it possible for virtually anyone to send dispatches from abroad. Media have also liberalized their hiring practices, thus altering international news-gathering routines, although perhaps at the expense of professionalism.

## THE EVOLUTION OF THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

An early glamorized image of the profession comes from Alfred Hitchcock's 1940 patriotic caper, *Foreign Correspondent*, where reporters are called "soldiers of the press . . . who are writing history from beside the cannon's mouth." Most countries still use or presume professional classifications of foreign correspondents that include an expectation of special training and a permanent station in a foreign city – a status not unlike that of diplomats. A pre-Internet study of US foreign correspondents (in Erickson & Hamilton 2006) found that compared with their peers in the US, four times as many foreign correspondents had graduate degrees and twice as many had attended private colleges.

These assumptions are no longer universally valid. A marked trend worldwide has been the disappearance of the correspondent stationed in a foreign city for a pre-assigned "tour of duty" of three to five years. Instead, many news organizations send their representatives directly to the country of interest and retrieve them back home when the newsworthiness of the location wanes. Another trend is the increasing use of "local" foreign correspondents living permanently in one country and contributing to news organizations in another, who can be freelancers or permanent hires, but rarely move to their publications' home office (Hess 2005).

The bulk of foreign news reporting today falls to news agencies, such as the *Associated Press*, *Reuters*, Russia's *TASS*, and China's *Xinhua* (→ News Agencies). Large, usually western, news organizations maintain permanent correspondent bureaus abroad, such as the major broadcast networks (→ BBC and CNN, for example) and weekly news magazines (the *Economist*, *Der Spiegel*, and *Newsweek*), as well as major newspapers such as the British *The Times*, the US *New York Times*, the French *Le Monde*, and the German *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, among others.

Sending a reporter abroad, let alone maintaining a foreign bureau, is expensive. Every correspondent requires financing for travel, equipment, accommodation, and local assistance, in addition to salary and benefits. The cost is prohibitive to smaller news outlets in the developed countries and to all but the largest media from economically weaker countries. Media that cannot afford in-house international reporting must instead rely on news agency information or syndicated stories provided by major newspapers, or, increasingly, use local reporters who contribute stories on demand.

Western editors were initially apprehensive of hiring foreign nationals out of fear that they may be culturally detached from home audiences. A recent survey of US foreign correspondents found that today only 31 percent of US foreign correspondents are American citizens (Wu & Hamilton 2004). Data is limited for other nations, although the trend in the western media seems to be toward a decrease in the Eurocentrism of reporters' postings abroad. Some research findings indicate that institutional foreign correspondents share relatively similar → news values across the globe, as expressed through the topics and events that receive most media attention (Wu & Hamilton 2004). Such shared news judgments may result from a worldwide Americanization of news production or the appearance of universal news values related to the emergence of a profession (→ Professionalization of Journalism), or they may be a study artifact. No data exists on news values of local reporters who file stories for overseas media, but it could be expected that a more diverse field of contributors will increase the variety of viewpoints, but at the same time making quality control more difficult.

Foreign news organizations can rarely match domestic journalists in resources or access to political leaders and institutions, especially for coverage of breaking news. Local politicians and authorities are seldom interested in catering to the out-of-country constituencies served by these reporters, although under certain circumstances foreign news outlets may be preferred as a venue for political announcements when the creation of international resonance is an intended goal.

As a matter of tradition and convenience, foreign correspondents worldwide have relied heavily on local media for story tips, contacts, and news verification (Hess 1996). This has led to criticisms that few foreign press corps members venture outside of their offices to interact with natives. Lack of language proficiency is a related problem: while over three-quarters of correspondents reporting from Europe and North and South America report high levels of host-country language proficiency, this proportion dips to half for Russia and China, and below a quarter for Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Eastern Europe (Hess 1996). This imbalance is changing with the increasing numbers of local journalists entering the field.

Foreign correspondents can have a direct effect on the fortunes in their host country. For instance, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association in the United States, which is a bastion of "classic" foreign correspondence, distributes the Golden Globe movie award, which can shape film marketing outcomes. Similarly, many foreign press organizations award prizes or hold events devoted to journalistic, civic, cultural, and even political achievements in their host countries.

Overseas business and financial news has supplanted foreign political news reporting in recent years (Hachten & Scotton 2002). The proportion of business and financial reporters has been growing among the foreign press corps members stationed in developed

and developing countries alike, leading to an increased demand for journalists specializing in business and financial stories.

### CHALLENGES IN FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE

Numerous external pressures affect the way foreign correspondents cover the world, such as restricted access, suspicion from local authorities and citizens, along with cultural and language differences. Nondemocratic governments control the access for journalists as a rule, but even countries with otherwise free media have practices that often impede foreign reporters' work through limitations on questions, bans on the attendance of background briefings with officials, and other formal and informal restrictions.

Foreign correspondents may also find themselves torn between their understanding of what are the most important stories in the country they are covering and what their editors back home think is newsworthy. Because of such perceptual differences, foreign correspondents may not always succeed in portraying important events, despite their preparation and best intentions (→ Journalists' Role Perception). Superficial reporting, stereotyping, and "groupthink" on the part of foreign correspondents have been identified as major constraints of international news coverage, which makes it all the more important for news organizations to diversify their sources.

Editors have expected that the "classic" foreign correspondent living in a country for a set time would combine insiders' knowledge and outsiders' independence, allowing him or her to avoid partisan or vituperative edges that local media may exhibit. A foreign correspondent, however, usually provides a less nuanced interpretation of the host country or region than is available through local coverage, because of the correspondent's domestic audience's assumed lack of in-depth knowledge or interest.

A recent anthropological study followed *parachute journalists* covering various hot spots, finding that this practice does not seem to be as detrimental to reporting quality as journalism purists often portray it to be. Often involved in such parachute journalism are seasoned professionals whose beats and stories have taken them abroad to continue their work in a foreign setting (Hannerz 2004). The unexpected downside of this practice is the decreasing numbers of women sent to cover the world for their countries, most likely because of the inconveniences and risks associated with frequent travel to conflict areas (→ Gender and Journalism). No data exist on the gender structure of local stringers serving international audiences, although anecdotic evidence suggests that at least in conflict areas these contributors are overwhelmingly male.

Today, many individuals without formal media affiliations have adopted technology to become *de facto foreign correspondents* by posting regular online dispatches, especially from conflict or disaster areas (→ Citizen Journalism). Bloggers or other individuals who venture into foreign correspondence "informally" do not face the same editorial limitations as their institutional peers. The main challenges such freelancers face are attracting sufficient audience and financing themselves.

*Safety concerns* have been another issue in modern foreign correspondence. Nonprofit organizations such as the *French Reporters without Borders* and the *US Committee to Protect Journalists* estimate that between 15 and 25 percent of journalists killed worldwide from 1992 to 2007 were either foreign correspondents or local reporters freelancing for foreign news outlets (→ Violence against Journalists).

Special cases of foreign correspondence are → war correspondents and the institution of *embedded reporters*, which has existed in practice since World War II but became prominent with the US-led war in Iraq of 2003 (→ Embedded Journalists). These journalists reporting from conflict zones face the gravest professional risks among their peers.

Although foreign correspondents of the “classic” model are still influential in filtering the news from a country to the rest of the world because they can decide the angle, tone, and extent of coverage, the sheer diversity of news sources at editors’ disposal today deprives foreign correspondents of the exclusivity they once enjoyed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ Blogger ▶ Censorship ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ CNN ▶ Embedded Journalists ▶ Foreign Policy and the Media ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ International Communication ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Values ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Violence against Journalists ▶ War Correspondents

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## **Foreign Policy and the Media**

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There are at least two salient questions when thinking about foreign policy and the media. The first is whether foreign policy is affected by media considerations: have modern technological developments meant that foreign policy is increasingly affected by media concerns? The second is whether there is what might be called a foreign policy of media



structures, namely an interest by an individual state (or the international community) in the mode by which media is developed through an interdependent set of nations (→ Media Policy). The answer to both questions is yes, and the issues are interconnected.

## **MEDIA AND DIPLOMACY**

The term *CNN effect* is used to describe a variety of putative consequences of new media technology for foreign policy (→ Technology and Communication). The term was first used during the Gulf War of 1990. The argument was that because of the rise of → CNN and its style of reporting, leaders learned more from television than from their own officials about what was going on both on the battlefield and in the diplomatic sphere. By conducting diplomacy in real time and in the fishbowl of a global news service, leaders could directly reach past official and autocratic gatekeepers to broad civil publics (→ Globalization of the Media).

Stephen Livingston (1997) has listed three elements of this phenomenon: (1) → agenda setting (trumping the agenda-setting effort of the government); (2) an impediment to policymaking (where the existence of the media effect narrows or forecloses options open to the government); and (3) an accelerant to policy decision-making (where the impact of media coverage forces the government to take an action it might otherwise not have been inclined to do; → Media Logic; Mediatization of Politics). “Instant reporting,” it has been said, “requires instant response.” With the CNN effect, whatever leisure for decision-making that might have existed has been truncated.

There has been much controversy over the *extent of the CNN effect* and its transformation of the relationship between state and society. Several conclusions can be drawn. First, most of those who seek to shape multiple foreign policies – those who would react to the CNN effect – have internalized the phenomenon of global news services and have adjusted their behavior. What was most novel about the supposed impact of media in the early 1990s was its innovative qualities. Like militaries seeking to cope with new weaponry, diplomats had to adjust to an altered media world. Once they did so, once they could more consciously calibrate the consequence of various appearances on global news services, the transformative impact of the new technology was lessened. Second, it is no longer just a CNN effect, it is also an Al Jazeera effect (→ Arab Satellite TV News); networks are competing among themselves to have the most stunning breakthrough, and therefore the most impact on foreign policy. While the first factor works toward reducing the effect, the second works toward increasing it.

An important area for inquiry has involved a consideration of when use of broadcasting is most effective in transforming foreign policy. James Hoge (1994) has argued that the impact is greatest during a humanitarian crisis when there is an effort to mobilize a domestic community to press its officials into taking action (→ Crisis Communication). *Imagery* is also an important factor: the effect of broadcasting is most conspicuous when a broadcast shows, to a government’s domestic audience, a sustained set of images that, through their tragic and dramatic force, undermine the narrative of success that officials have proclaimed (→ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of). Here such a broadcast narrative can impede or accelerate government action or can alter the agenda (→ Narrative News Story).

The issue can be put differently. The ubiquity of media and its capacity to provide unfiltered access to harsh global events increases *emotional impact* – and an emotional impact not constructed or controlled by the government or its menagerie of gatekeepers (→ Emotion; Emotions, Media Effects on). This is not to say that foreign policy was previously based solely on reason and conducted in an environment wholly immunized against → public opinion. But, at certain times, and subject to the varying skills of international players, media can foreshorten time for reflection and spectacularly raise the way the stakes are perceived and governments are measured.

### **MEDIA AND SOVEREIGNTY**

Even leaving aside this described impact on media (but certainly in light of it), individual states as well as the international community have an interest in the structure and functioning of transnational media. Precisely because of the CNN effect and its now far broader incarnation, states wish to have unimpeded *access to foreign audiences* to present their priorities and their visions of the world; simultaneously, they wish to control efforts by other states to reshape, counter, or block that message.

Historically, states have had a tacit agreement that the media of one state would not persistently permeate the boundaries of another. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) was, in a sense, created to help police the allocation of the spectrum so that, for the most part, radio (and then television) signals would be contained within national boundaries (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy). Short-wave efforts designed at first to reach subjects around a colonial world were an exception to this general rule. While there were accepted and less accepted violations of the general principle, it was only with the arrival of the satellite (and to a lesser extent cable) that the general understanding disintegrated (→ Satellite Television; Cable Television). And even then, there were attempts at the UN and elsewhere to transfer to the satellite regime the state-protective elements of terrestrial radio and television.

International human rights norms, such as Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which gives the right to receive and impart information, can be said to be part of an international “foreign policy” of media structures. States have utilized Article 19 to press for a greater range of domestic voices, especially in societies that are thought to be authoritarian or oppressive of domestic minorities. The general proscription against hate speech, and bilateral agreements to adjust media use in the interest of peace, are another example. In 1947, Pakistan and India agreed (though the history of this agreement is not consistent) to modulate speech that might instill enmity to the other within their borders. In the ill-fated Oslo Accords, there were mutual undertakings by Israel and the Palestinian authority to seek a media sphere that was more conducive to sustained amity.

### **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING**

States have also undertaken persistent and large-scale efforts to subsidize radio (and later television) that would alter the flow of ideas in a target society. Some of these efforts are called “*international broadcasting*” and include → Deutsche Welle, the → Voice of America and the → BBC World Service. But the process of developing government-subsidized

efforts for radio and television that reach a global audience has altered greatly. Serbia, as an example, invested in a satellite service to reach its diaspora and gain moral and financial support for its position in the 1990s. Hungary, after the transition, created Duna TV to reach ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (Romania).

The strongest of these international services, like the US-funded Voice of America and RFE/RL (→ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty), and the BBC World Service, financed by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, had extensive ambitions that were tied to foreign policy goals (sometimes only the goal of greater access to information, but sometimes more). RFE/RL was established as “surrogate radios” in the Cold War, ostensibly to provide information-deprived populations with access to news and information about their own society. In the early twenty-first century, the US foreign policy question was which of these Cold War services to maintain and at what level, or whether to use scarce resources to reach, inform, and persuade another “demographic.”

Patronage, foreign aid payments, transfers through non-governmental organizations – subsidy on a relatively large scale – is often deployed to determine what groups to persuade or influence, using what languages and what technologies. Qatar, in a novel use of funds, established Al Jazeera and altered the media face of the Middle East. Other governments in the region, including Saudi Arabia, saw to it that their satellite presence was bolstered. Even independent satellite services are tied to government-related interests. For the west, there is a determined notion of using media to reach the “hearts and minds” of Arabic youth across boundaries. The BBC launched an Arabic-language television service; the French promised to do likewise; and the US limped along with Al Hurra, its entry into the competition among Arabic satellite channels for the privilege of defining “news” and presenting a stronger image of the US or a view of the world as defined through the management of the channel and its relationship to Washington officialdom.

Beginning with the post-Soviet transition, western nations have subsidized or invested in the *development of an indigenous media in the transitioning societies* as part of the process of democratization. Without being too reductionist, the US has emphasized the development of “free and independent media” as an integral part of this process, while the UK has focused on strengthening public service broadcasters. In some transitional contexts, this odd Great Powers contestation has led to temporary stalemates. It is not clear that there is a formula that works.

### **RESTRICTIVE STATE RESPONSES**

It is an element of domestic policy (with foreign policy overtones) to limit or prohibit foreign ownership of internal communications technologies or to limit foreign-originated channels on cable or satellite channels that serve domestic audiences.

In the → Internet era, government policies vary in terms of surveillance, limiting access to the Internet and prohibiting certain kinds of use. From these variations, foreign policies arise, as one country seeks to pressure another (usually) into expanding use of the Internet and, through that, access to a greater bank of information. Some countries have foreign policies that would condition access to international finance or to regional alliances on their fostering of Internet technology.

We now see a broader interplay among leaders, governments and publics than was identified in connection with the CNN effect. That phenomenon somehow located the broadcaster as the independent variable, and the impact on leaders, governments, and publics as dependent. But the examination of a foreign policy of the media sphere demonstrates how almost all aspects are interdependent, including the broadcaster itself. Major players – finance, government, international goals, human rights – are interconnected. The mixture of foreign policies of media space provides the background against which daily media practice emerges.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Cable Television ▶ CNN ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media Policy ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of ▶ Voice of America

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# Fourth Estate

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The term “fourth estate” has been used to refer to the press since at least the early 1800s. It has become shorthand to denote the role of the public media as a pillar on which the smooth functioning of a democratic society rests, together with the other three estates – legislative, executive, and judiciary. A free press is also a counterbalance to these powers, a watchdog guarding the public interest, and providing a forum for public debate – a public sphere – that underpins the processes of democracy.

## ORIGIN OF THE IDEA

The idea of the fourth estate has a long history, parallel with that of the democratization of political processes, with its origins in the European Enlightenment and the French Revolution. The origin of the term “fourth estate” is attributed to the eighteenth-century English political philosopher and commentator on the Revolution, Edmund Burke, referring to the three sections of the French Estates-General, an assembly consisting of representatives from the clergy, the nobility, and the commoners (in practice, the bourgeoisie), whose gathering in 1789 is said to have paved the way for the French Revolution. The ideas of freedom and democracy enshrined in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, passed by the French National Assembly after the 1789 Revolution, also inspired the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which, in 1791, proclaimed the sanctity of “the freedom of speech, or of the press.”

The term was given wider currency by the nineteenth-century British historian Thomas Carlyle, another great chronicler of the French Revolution: in his book *On heroes, hero-worship and the heroic in history*, published in 1841, he wrote:

Burke said there were Three Estates in Parliament; but, in the Reporters' Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important than they all. It is not a figure of speech, or a witty saying; it is a literal fact. . . . Printing, which comes necessarily out of Writing, I say often, is equivalent to Democracy: invent Writing, Democracy is inevitable. . . . Whoever can speak, speaking now to the whole nation, becomes a power, a branch of government, with inalienable weight in law-making, in all acts of authority. It matters not what rank he has, what revenues or garnitures: the requisite thing is that he have a tongue which others will listen to; this and nothing more is requisite. (Carlyle 1841, 141)

In this context, Carlyle was referring to the three estates of the British parliament: the Lords Temporal, the Lords Spiritual, and the House of Commons. The quotation indicates Carlyle's view of the growing power of newspapers in shaping the public agenda in nineteenth-century Britain as well as acting as a check and balance on the possible abuse of power by the other three pillars of the state. Such champions of liberalism as John Stuart Mill, in his book *On liberty*, published in 1859, also argued that a liberal press was necessary for “the public good” (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). According to the German sociologist and philosopher → Jürgen Habermas, the wider availability

of printing facilities and the resultant reduction in production costs of newspapers stimulated debate in eighteenth-century Britain and led to the emergence of a “bourgeois → public sphere,” an arena that was independent of the state and the church, dedicated to rational debate, accessible, and accountable to the citizenry, in which public opinion is formed (Habermas 1989; → Political Discourse; Public Opinion). During the nineteenth century, greater freedom of the press was fought for and achieved in parallel with struggles for parliamentary reform.

The British press had a profound effect on its colonial territories, such as India, where the first regular newspaper, the *Bengal Gazette*, was founded in 1780 by James Augustus Hicky, an employee of the East India Company, who described the journal as “a weekly political and commercial paper open to all parties, but influenced by none” (quoted in Rau 1974, 10). The *Times of India* came into existence in 1838, while in 1858 the *Straits Times*, southeast Asia’s premier newspaper, was started as a daily newspaper from Singapore.

Advances in printing technology meant that newspapers in non-European languages could also be printed and distributed (→ Printing, History of; Newspaper, History of). By the 1870s, more than 140 newspaper titles were in circulation in various Indian languages, representing the linguistic diversity of the subcontinent. Though many of these were launched as commercial enterprises, a growing number were also inspired by a public information and fourth estate function, despite having to operate within undemocratic political systems.

*Al-Ahram*, the newspaper that has defined Arab journalism for more than a century, was established in Cairo in 1875, while Japan’s most respected newspaper, *Asahi Shimbun* (“Morning Sun”), was founded in 1890.

A socially responsible agenda was part of the nascent media, and newspapers were also used to articulate the emerging nationalism in many Asian countries.

## THE CASES OF INDIA AND CHINA

Despite strict colonial press laws, which severely curtailed freedom of expression, newspapers played a crucial role in anti-colonial movements, especially in India, where many nationalist leaders were involved in campaigning journalism, most notably Mahatma Gandhi. Writing in *Young India* (later named *Harijan*) in 1920, Gandhi, who was to become the “Father of the Nation,” defended the right of newspapers to protest against press laws: “The stoppage of the circulation of potent ideas that may destroy the Government or compel repentance will be the least among the weapons in its armoury. We must therefore devise methods of circulating our ideas unless and until the whole Press becomes fearless, defies consequences and publishes ideas, even when it is in disagreement with them, just for the purpose of securing its freedom” (Gandhi 1970, 59).

The fourth estate function of the media contributed to India’s transformation from a feudal colony to a modern nation-state with a stable, mature, and multiparty democracy. A democratic polity ensured that the government tolerated criticism of its policies on the editorial pages of the national press, providing the space within which the media could engage in critical debates on socio-political and economic issues. More importantly, the proactive and often adversarial role of newspapers contributed to a discourse of social

justice through, for example, the evolution of an early-warning system for serious food shortages and thus a preventive mechanism against famine (Ram 1990).

According to the *Hindu*, India's most respected newspaper, the long-term Indian press experience, set in larger context, suggests a set of functions that serious newspapers have performed with benefit to society. These are (1) the credible-informational, (2) the critical-investigative ("watchdog"), (3) the educational, and (4) the agenda-building functions (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Investigative Reporting; Journalists' Role Perception). Summarizing its own principles, the newspaper said in a special editorial to mark its 125th anniversary, in August 2003: "*The Hindu* has worked out for itself a set of five principles as a template for socially responsible and ethical journalism. The first is the principle of *truth telling*. The second principle is that of *freedom and independence*. The third component of the template is the principle of *justice*. The fourth principle is that of *humaneness*. The fifth principle is that of *contributing to the social good*" (*The Hindu* 2003, italics in the original).

This fourth estate role of the media was also recognized in China, where the nationalist leader Sun Yat Sen founded *Chung-kuo Jih-pao* ("China Daily News") in 1899. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the discourse of Chinese journalism had a marked "social responsibility" bias, with such names as Liang Qichao (1873–1929), one of the most "exalted editor journalists" in the Chinese world, bringing a "rational and responsible" journalism to the Chinese public sphere (de Burgh 2003, 204).

### THREATS TO THE FOURTH ESTATE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

The liberal fourth estate functions of the media were undermined by the state control of media under communism, while in the capitalist world, hypercommercialism, indicated by a ratings- and circulation-driven media system, has eroded the democratic potential of the mass media. During the Cold War years the two competing models of media – state controlled and market driven – set the parameters of the extent to which the media could perform their fourth estate functions. In communist countries as well as in most developing countries they were little more than the mouthpiece of the ruling parties or of dictatorships – whether of right- or left-wing political orientation (→ Media Policy).

With the globalization of the US model of the media – one largely dependent on commercial → advertising – the → public interest has come under strain in most countries, evident in the decline and fall of public service media across the world (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). However, globalization has also provided transnational connectivity, enabling the creation of what has been called a "mediapolis," defined as the "mediated public space where contemporary political life increasingly finds its place, both at national and global levels, and where the materiality of the world is constructed through (principally) electronically communicated public speech and action" (Silverstone 2007, 24; → Globalization Theories). Unlike Habermas's conception of the public sphere, with its rational debate and argument, the mediapolis is more inclusive, because within it communication is "multiple and multiply inflected" (Silverstone 2007, 34).

Given the global nature of the → Internet, it has emerged as an increasingly important communication forum, providing opportunities for developing and strengthening a

transnational network of journalists and information activists to cooperate and exchange ideas. The “journalism domain” within the Internet, it has been argued, “is a core element of the public sphere on the Internet” (Dahlgren 2005, 153; → E-Democracy). In the age of the Internet, journalists can incorporate various viewpoints in their reports: in foreign reporting such access can be particularly useful in providing more balanced coverage on contentious international issues (→ Foreign Policy and the Media). It is the case that much of the online connectivity has been colonized for e-commerce, and yet the fourth estate functions, undertaken by activists and information mavericks, have enriched the transnational public discourse by providing alternative voices and perspectives on crucial contemporary issues.

In the 1990s the Internet was used effectively to mobilize international support against the US-sponsored Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), which would have given unfettered powers to transnational corporations to move capital from one country to another. A concerted campaign was able to thwart the MAI. The growing importance of blogging in political communication as well as such “user generated” media outlets as *Current TV*, the channel made of clips created by viewers and producers and run by Al Gore, the former US vice-president, could be said to be “democratizing the media” (→ Blogger). Such globalization of news media has prompted scholars to extend the Habermasian idea of a public sphere into a global arena, facilitated by the unprecedented growth in transnational satellite news networks and online journalism, creating a global public sphere (McNair 2006).

The conception of a single, rational public sphere to promote the fourth estate function appears hard to sustain in the twenty-first century 24/7 multimedia world. In a “globalized public sphere” various versions of the public interest are circulating in a media ecology characterized by increasingly fragmenting and rapidly proliferating news and information outlets (McNair 2006, 143). The notion of a fourth estate too needs to be broadened to take account of our globalized media production and consumption patterns.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Blogger ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Foreign Policy and the Media ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Internet ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media History ▶ Media Policy ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Public Sphere

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## Framing Effects

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There is no single commonly accepted definition of framing in the field of communication. In fact, political communication scholars have offered a variety of conceptual and operational approaches to framing that all differ with respect to their underlying assumptions, the way they define frames and framing, their operational definitions, and very often also the criterion variables.

Previous framing research can be classified based on its level of analysis and the specific process of framing that various studies have focused on. In particular, Scheufele (1999) differentiated *media frames* and *audience frames*. Based on these two broader concepts, he distinguished four processes that classify areas of framing research and outline the links among them: *frame building*, *frame setting*, *individual-level effects of framing*, and *journalists as audiences for frames*.

### TYPES OF FRAMES AND FRAMING PROCESSES

#### Media Frames vs Audience Frames

Media frames are defined as “a central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events” (Gamson & Modigliani 1987, 143). Media frames are important tools for journalists to reduce complexity and convey issues, such as welfare reform or stem cell research, in a way that allows audiences to make sense of them with limited amounts of prior information. For journalists, framing is therefore a means of presenting information in a format that fits the modalities and constraints of the medium they are writing or producing news content for (→ Media Production and Content; Framing of the News; Media Logic; News Routines) and that also makes it possible for audiences to make sense of the information and integrate it into their existing cognitive schema (→ Information Processing; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

Some view news frames as tools of spin and manipulation (→ Spin and Double-Speak; Spin Doctor). Frames can certainly be used to manipulate the interpretation of messages by audiences. But it is important to note in this context that for most journalists framing is a tool that allows them to reduce complexity of issues and present them in a way that is easily accessible to wide cross-sections of the audience. Or as Tuchman says, “The news frame organizes everyday reality and . . . is part and parcel of everyday reality . . . , [it] is an essential feature of news” (1978, 193). Media frames serve as working routines for journalists that allow them to quickly identify and classify information and “to package it for efficient relay to their audiences” (Gitlin 1980, 7).

### Individual Frames

Media frames work as organizing themes or ideas because they play to individual-level interpretive schema among → audiences. These schemas are tools for information processing that allow people to categorize new information quickly and efficiently, based on how that information is framed or described by journalists. Framing research has often used the term “audience frame” to describe these schemas, defining them as “mentally stored clusters of ideas that guide individuals’ processing of information” (Entman 1993, 53; → News Processing and Retention).

Two types of frame of reference can be used to interpret and process information: global and long-term political views on the one hand, and short-term issue-related frames of reference on the other hand. Goffman’s (1974) idea of frames of reference refers to more long-term, socialized schemas that are often socialized and shared in societies or at least within certain groups in societies (→ Attitude Functions). But in addition to these more long-term and broadly shared schemas, there are also short-term issue-related frames of reference that are learned from mass media and that can have a significant impact on perceiving, organizing, and interpreting incoming information and on drawing inferences from that information (Pan & Kosicki 1993).

### The Interplay of Media and Audience Frames

The Price and Tewksbury (1997) applicability model of framing offers a theoretical explanation of how media frames and audience frames interact to influence individual perceptions and attitudes. They argue that frames work only if they are applicable to a specific interpretive schema (→ Schemas and Media Effects; Media Effects). These interpretive schemas can be pre-existing ones that are acquired through socialization processes (→ Socialization by the Media; Political Socialization through the Media) or other types of learning (→ Observational Learning). But they can also be part of the message itself. For example, a news message may suggest a connection between tax policy and unemployment rates. The news message may suggest that the best way to think about whether higher or lower taxes are desirable is through a consideration of whether one wants higher or lower unemployment. Thus, the message has said that considerations about unemployment are applicable to questions about taxes.

Price and Tewksbury’s applicability model does imply that when audience members do not have an interpretive schema available to them in → memory, and the schema is not

provided in a news story, a frame that applies the construct in a message will not be effective. Framing effects therefore vary in strength as a partial function of the fit between the schemas a frame suggests should be applied to an issue and either the presence of those frames in audience members' existing knowledge or the content of the message (Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007).

## **THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF FRAMING**

This applicability model is consistent with the two larger theoretical or historical contexts within which researchers commonly examine framing: psychological approaches and sociological approaches.

### **Psychological Approaches**

Psychological approaches to framing research are often traced back to Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky's notions of bounded rationality, more broadly, and prospect theory, in particular (e.g., Kahneman & Tversky 1979). In 2002, Kahneman was awarded the Nobel Prize for his contributions to this collaborative effort, and in his acceptance speech he nicely summed up the basic premise of prospect theory: "Perception is reference-dependent" (Kahneman 2003a, 459). The idea of reference dependency assumes that a given piece of information will be interpreted differently, depending on which interpretive schema an individual applies. More importantly, however, different interpretive schemas can be invoked by framing the same message differently. Kahneman's experimental work focuses mostly on the impact of framing on economic and risk-related choices, but the implications for communication research are obvious.

A good example is the coverage of the death of Rachel Corrie. Both Reuters and the Associated Press ran news releases, outlining the basic facts. Corrie, a member of the International Solidarity Movement, was run over and crushed to death by an Israeli army bulldozer on Sunday, March 16, 2003 while she was trying to stop it from tearing down a building in the Rafah refugee camp in the Southern Gaza Strip. The difference between the two news releases was that the AP release was accompanied by a file photo of Corrie burning a mock American flag, surrounded by Palestinian children, her face contorted with anger. The Reuters photograph instead showed her lying on the ground after being run over by the bulldozer, still covered in sand, surrounded by fellow protesters, with blood running down her face.

Similar to Kahneman's example of ambiguous letters and numbers, this example highlights the idea of perceptions being reference-dependent. The written news story about Corrie's death can be interpreted quite differently, depending on which visual image is used to frame the account of events. The image, in other words, sets the context for or "frames" any subsequent information processing.

### **Sociological Approaches**

Sociological approaches to framing are often traced back to Erving Goffman's (1974) notion of frames or primary frameworks. Goffman assumes that individuals cannot

understand the world fully and therefore actively classify and interpret their life experiences to make sense of the world around them. An individual's reaction to new information therefore depends on interpretive schemas Goffman calls "primary frameworks" (Goffman 1974, 21). In particular, Goffman distinguishes between natural and societal frames similar to Heider's (1978) notion of attributions (→ Attribution Processes) to personal or environmental factors: natural frames help to interpret events originating from natural and non-intentional causes, whereas societal frames help "to locate, perceive, identify, and label" actions and events that stem from intentional human action (Goffman 1974, 21). Based on Goffman's ideas, there are various ways in which journalists can portray any given event in news coverage. And which portrayal is chosen depends on the framework employed by the journalists (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of).

### FRAMING AS A MULTILEVEL CONSTRUCT

The term "framing" has been used almost interchangeably to describe individual-level media effects, macro-level influences on news content, and other related processes. At least four interrelated processes involving framing at different levels of analysis have been identified (Fig. 1).

The first of these processes is *frame building*. Frame building refers to the linkages between various intrinsic and extrinsic influences on news coverage and the frames used in news coverage. These influences include the personal predispositions of journalists, organizational routines and pressures, the efforts by outside groups to promote certain frames, the impact of other parallel issues or events, and the type of policy arena where decision-making or conflict might take place (Shoemaker & Reese 1996; → Instrumental Actualization).

*Frame setting*, the second process, refers to the process of frame transfer from media outlets to audiences. Some communication researchers have suggested that

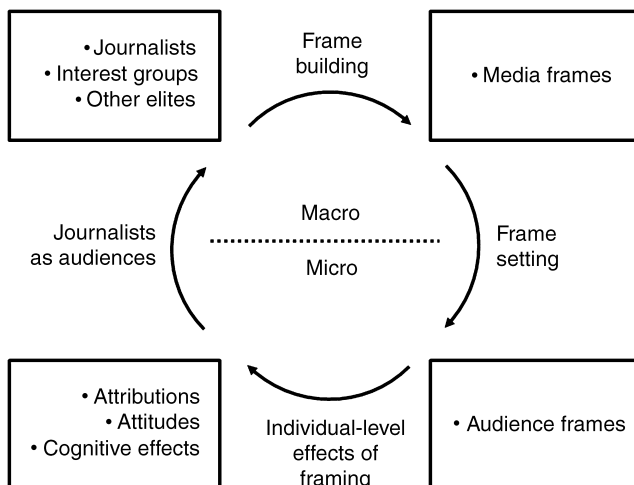


Figure 1 Typology of framing processes

this frame-setting effect is conceptually similar to the transfer of salience hypothesized in the agenda-setting model (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Recent research, however, has shown that the two processes rely on distinctly different theoretical premises and cognitive processes (for an overview, see Scheufele 2000; Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007).

Most communication research has focused on a third process: *individual-level effects of framing*. These individual-level outcomes include attributions of responsibility, support for various policy proposals, or citizen competence (Druckman 2001; Iyengar 1991). Unfortunately, while making important contributions in describing effects of media framing on behavioral, attitudinal, or cognitive outcomes, most of these studies have not provided systematic explanations as to why and how these variables are linked to one another. Price and Tewksbury's (1997) notion of applicability effects outlined earlier provides a first step in this direction.

The last process related to framing that political communication scholars have explored is the idea of *journalists themselves as audiences for frames*. Without directly referring to the idea of framing, Fishman (1978; 1980) suggests that, similar to “regular” audiences, journalists are indeed susceptible to frames set by news media (→ Reciprocal Effects; Journalism: Group Dynamics). Fishman's study demonstrates how news coverage of isolated crimes in a community was framed as a “crime wave against the elderly” by initially a small number of local media and how that frame was soon picked up by other journalists and spread across other news outlets and communities. Fishman labels this phenomenon a “news wave.”

## UNRESOLVED ISSUES IN FRAMING RESEARCH

Framing research continues to struggle with at least three unresolved issues related to how the concept has been defined or measured.

### Framing as a Type of Agenda Setting?

Some scholars (e.g., McCombs 2004) have argued that framing is just a conceptual extension of agenda setting. Similar to agenda setting, they argue, framing increases the salience of certain *aspects* of an issue and therefore can be labeled “second-level agenda setting.”

A number of scholars, however, have rejected that notion (for an overview, see Price & Tewksbury 1997; Scheufele 2000; Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007). Rather, agenda setting is based on the notion of attitude accessibility. Mass media have the power to increase levels of importance assigned to issues by audience members or the ease with which these considerations can be retrieved from memory if individuals have to make political judgments about political actors (→ Priming Theory). Framing is based on the concept of context-based perception, that is, on the assumption that subtle changes in the wording of the description of a situation might affect how audience members interpret this situation. In other words, framing influences *how* audiences think about issues, not by making aspects of the issue more salient, but by invoking interpretive schema that influence the interpretation of incoming information (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on).

### Is there a Consistent Set of Frames?

The second unresolved area of framing research concerns the different *types* of frames identified in previous research. Scholars have operationalized media frames along dichotomies, such as episodic vs thematic frames (Iyengar 1991) or issue vs conflict frames (Cappella & Jamieson 1997) or game schema coverage (Patterson 1993). Other studies examined frames along content areas, such as conflict frames, human interest frames, or consequence frames (Price et al. 1997). What has been missing, however, is an examination of a set of frames that could potentially be applicable across issues. By taking an inductive approach, previous research has identified unique sets of frames with each new study. As a result, communication researchers continue to have only a limited understanding of the specific frames that can trigger certain underlying interpretive schemas among audiences and therefore lead to various behavioral or cognitive outcomes.

### Framing in the Lab vs Real World?

The final challenge for communication researchers is the inherent conflict between the different approaches to framing research that originated from the psychological and sociological foundations of the concept outlined earlier. In particular, Kahneman's (2003b) early experimental research focused on a very narrow but highly internally valid approach to studying framing. For Kahneman, framing a message means to keep the content absolutely constant and to manipulate only the mode of presentation or the context within which the information is presented (→ Strategic Framing). Based on more sociological approaches, however (e.g., Tuchman 1978), it is questionable to what extent it is possible to create real-world examples of news articles that are framed in different ways, but do not differ in terms of content. In short, framing in everyday journalism probably means a mixture of changes, both in terms of content and mode of presentation. And externally valid studies of framing effects will have to balance the desire for internally valid designs with the need for externally valid stimulus materials. Message effects in the real world are confounds of persuasive content effects (→ Persuasion) and modality- or presentation-based framing effects.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitude Functions ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Audience ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Memory ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ News Routines ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Spin and Double-Speak ▶ Strategic Framing

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# Framing of the News

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Framing of news has become a lively interdisciplinary research area in recent years. The sprawling growth of this research area has its roots both in the intellectual ferment spurred by the “linguistic turn” of social theories and political practices in the era of mediated politics. Although the extant framing studies vary in precise conceptual definitions and theoretical foci, one can find some general agreements; that is, framing is a process of social actors using symbolic means to structure the social world (Reese 2001).

## CONCEPTUALIZING NEWS FRAMING

Among various definitions of framing, the most widely circulated comes from Robert Entman: “Framing essentially involves *selection* and *salience*. To frame is to *select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described. Typically frames diagnose, evaluate, and prescribe . . .” (Entman 1993, 52; italics original). Focusing on the cognitive underpinnings associated with salience, this definition describes how varying salience is accomplished (via selection), where a frame resides (in text), and how such a text produces real political consequences (proving certain problem definition and policy prescription). In essence, frames are templates (ideas and principles) embedded in news texts; they are used to organize, and are also signified by, various symbolic elements (e.g., catchphases, images, metaphors, etc.; Gamson 1988).

While such a definition was offered to place news framing research in a coherent theoretical framework, others point out that news framing is a research program that has benefited from and is currently operating in the interfertilization of multiple paradigms (D’Angelo 2002). This is because framing is a *multifaceted phenomenon* with social, cultural, and political dimensions; it cannot be completely reduced to the cognitive level. Selecting what to include or emphasize in a news story is often ideologically motivated and politically charged; news text, regardless which frame structures it, is a physical embodiment of an ideology and is embedded with organizational and institutional rules and procedures of news production; and both information selection and problem definition are strategic acts performed by political actors situated in the spatio-temporal configuration of political and economic interests. Because of all these, as Gitlin points out, framing of news is an ideological process. It involves the construction of a discursive representation “about what exists, what happens, and what matters”; framing makes “the world beyond direct experience look natural” (Gitlin 1980, 6–7; → News Ideologies).

Framing of news is a *joint operation of journalists and various other social actors*. These social actors operate as sources that supply journalists with not only information but also the primary definitions and vocabularies concerning an issue or event that is to be represented in news stories. In this collaborative process, journalists play a more



subordinate role in defining the reality and their reports often “index” the opinions of political elites. In a pluralistic society, these social actors are not monolithic. Rooted in different interests and playing different roles in democratic politics, they engage in a discursive contestation in the recognition, definition, and labeling of issues, events, and problems (→ Agenda Building). By incorporating both the strategic and discursive aspects of these social actors’ actions, the concept of news framing is at the very center of developing an integrated perspective on public discourse (i.e., its structure and order, its articulation with the enduring values and the political climate of any moment, and its formation as shaped by the promotional or advocacy activities of various social actors, including social movement organizations that aim to promote their agendas through collective action; → News as Discourse).

We also need to add to Entman’s definition the conceptual meaning of framing in Kahneman and Tversky’s (1979) *prospect theory on risky choices*. In this theory, framing refers to organizing the presentation of equivalent information in different frames, which lead decision-makers to arrive at different choices through two mechanisms: first, the “gain” and “loss” frames correspond to different nonlinear value functions; second, there is a concave weight function for different levels of probability ranging from 0 to 1. These two mechanisms lead to a risk-averting tendency under the condition of certain gain and a risk-seeking tendency under the condition of uncertain loss in individuals’ decision-making. The theory makes it clear that, independent of *what* information is included, *how* such information is presented invokes a particular template through which the information is experienced. Framing, therefore, refers to the structuring of symbolic representation that sets in motion a distinct “train of thoughts” in individuals’ reasoning (Price et al. 1997) and their ways of discussing an issue.

These explications of the framing concept make it clear that framing is a process at the intersection between → political discourse and psychological effects. Therefore, the research on framing of news recognizes the “double lives” of frames and explores the connection between the two. As interpretive structures, frames are congealed in political or media discourse; as cognitive structures, they are part of individuals’ mental representations.

## NEWS FRAMING RESEARCH

News framing research to date can be roughly grouped into two broad categories: (1) identifying frames and framing devices in news, and (2) examining the effects of news framing. The former involves mostly some forms of content or textual analysis of news texts, whereas the latter often involves experiments, either taking place in laboratories or embedded in surveys. This body of literature attests to both the heuristic value and theoretical imprecision of the framing concept.

In the first category, researchers have analyzed *news texts*, often in connection with analyses of other discourses, to address a host of theoretical issues. Research has examined how an issue is framed in the news, how the framing of an issue in the media has evolved over time, the ways in which the representations of an issue are connected across the private and public arenas in a society, how the news media situate other political actors’ frames of an issue in news narratives, how journalistic → news values are manifested as organizing templates across media outlets or platforms, issues or events, and so on.

In the second category, researchers have not only examined a range of *effects* manifested as outcomes among individuals who are exposed to news frames but also proposed various accounts of the cognitive mechanisms involved. The effects range from causal attributions; internal consistency of an individual's belief system; political opinions (evaluations and preferences) on politicians, policies, and political process; ways of talking about politics and political issues; likelihood and levels of participating in civic as well as political lives; and so on. The following theoretical accounts have been proposed. First, framing affects individuals' outcomes by changing relative degrees of salience among different aspects of an issue or different considerations. Second, framing effects occur through the mediation of news frames reconfiguring the importance ranking of various principles from which individuals' judgments, evaluations, and inferences are derived. Third, framing involves reconfiguring the semantic associations among the relevant concepts stored in one's memory (e.g., increasing their proximity and strengthening their associative paths). And fourth, framing effects occurs through the application of the frame-related concepts stored in one's long-term memory. All these ideas are based on the associative network model of memory and point to transitory shifts in accessibility, applicability, prominence, and/or proximity among the concepts in such a network (Higgins 1996), presumably generated by news frames (→ Framing Effects; Media Effects).

Despite the mushrooming empirical studies on news framing, there has been little consensus on how to differentiate various frames and which frame classification system to use in various research settings. Six different *systems of frame classification* can be identified in the research literature: gain vs loss frames (sometimes simplistically referred to as positive vs negative frames), drawn from the prospect theory; thematic vs episodic frames in television news on their effects on voters' responsibility attributions (Iyengar 1991), and its more substantive extension, individual vs societal frames, based on the level of narrative foci (Shah et al. 2004); strategy vs issue frames in media coverage of election campaigns and policy debates; value frames (i.e., some enduring values functioning as "central organizing ideas" in news texts), drawn from the works of Gamson and developed further by others; news values such as human interest, conflict, and consequences functioning as frames (e.g., Price et al. 1997); and mental templates based on familiar social institutions being used metaphorically in representing unfamiliar or more complex issues (Schlesinger & Lau 2000).

Because researchers have differentiated frames in the context of addressing their own research questions, it is not clear how these systems can be integrated. Several typologies of different frames have been proposed for the purpose of studying effects (e.g., Druckman 2002; Levin et al. 1998). But they have not been useful for studying news content and its production. How to map news texts in connection with other types of public discourse remains a major theoretical and methodological challenge in news framing research. Pan and Kosicki (1993) differentiated the structural dimensions of news discourse – syntactical, script, thematic, and rhetorical structures – providing some heuristic suggestions.

## NEWS FRAMING AND DEMOCRATIC POLITICS

News framing has become a key construct in *understanding democratic politics*, based on the recognition that political actors have become increasingly sophisticated in their uses

of language and other means of signification. As a result, democratic politics increasingly involves contestations in the realm of representation, and journalists are more frequent targets of strategic framing by their sources (→ Political Communication). As a theoretical construct, news framing connects to the traditional formulations about news production and information control (e.g., → gatekeeping). But it goes beyond these confines by situating the analysis of news in the context of discursive formation of issues, policies, opinions, and engagement.

News framing also clearly relates to media effects in the → public opinion process – e.g., agenda-setting and priming (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Priming Theory) – and news as a form of knowledge or window to the world. But it cultivates a much more expansive conceptual space to situate effects as micro constituents of democratic politics and to go beyond the informational effects of news. Further, the framing construct also raises questions about the practices of democratic citizenship, both in terms of citizen competence, interactivity between elite and the mass public's discourses about complex public issues, and the participatory potentials of individual citizens in policy deliberation and collective action.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda Building ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Constructivism ► Discourse ► Framing Effects ► Gatekeeping ► Media Effects ► News ► News as Discourse ► News Ideologies ► News Routines ► News Values ► Political Communication ► Political Discourse ► Priming Theory ► Public Opinion

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## France: Media System

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In its 543,965 square kilometers and some overseas dependencies, France has a population of 63 million. Currently under its Fifth Republic, a semi-presidential, semi-parliamentary political system, and a founding member of the European Union, it is a democracy of long standing. As early as 1789, freedom of speech was one of the main claims of the French Revolution, with its famous article 11: “Freedom of speech and opinions is one of the most precious Human Rights; any citizen may then freely speak, write, print, unless he has to answer for an abuse of that freedom in the specific cases determined by Law.” Nevertheless, the French media system’s independence from the state came only at the end of the twentieth century. As a consequence, nowadays, the French media system is sometimes still unbalanced by its new freedom.

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Print media – mainly the printed press, but also posters, etc. – have been ruled by a set of laws and government decrees based on the law of July 29, 1881, which established freedom of the press and printed material as a principle. The only limits are set by specific laws protecting minors or protecting individuals from defamation. For the audiovisual media, the case is different: freedom of radio and television is not a very natural state of affairs in France. Television and radio were a state monopoly for most of the twentieth century. The system started to come apart in the 1960s, when these media were reorganized under the sole aegis of the Office de Radiodiffusion Télévision Française (ORTF), which was nevertheless still subject to the Ministry of Information.

The end of the state monopoly, and the appearance of private radio and television stations, came when socialist politician François Mitterrand became president in 1981. After several short-lived and controversial reforms at the beginning of the eighties, the regulation of audiovisual media reached some level of stability with the September 30, 1986, law on freedom of communication. This established a fully independent regulating body for the audiovisual media, the Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel (CSA). Its area of competence is very extensive: it may issue rules, enact them, and even sit as an administrative court.

Its control is very thorough, though sometimes criticized as being more or less politically minded, since its nine members are designated by the president of the Republic and the presidents of the two chambers of the French Parliament, with some inevitable side-effects.

French audiovisual media regulations are currently facing two main problems. First, the increasing use of the Internet in many new kinds of ways is establishing it more and more clearly as a competitor to the “classical” audiovisual media. Second, there are frequent conflicts of competence between the French legal system and the decisions coming from the European Union authorities.

Taking the Internet first, it was initially understood that it would be ruled by the body of laws and regulations specifically intended for telecommunications, namely the July 26, 1996, law on telecommunications regulation. This established an independent authority in charge of that field, the *Autorité de Régulation des Télécommunications* (ART), which in 2005 became the *Autorité de Régulation des Communications Électroniques et des Postes* (ARCEP). But the increasing use of broadband to convey television is generating a conflict of legal competence yet to be resolved: in this area, should the CSA or the ART/ARCEP decide?

The second main problem comes from the discrepancies between the French and the European Union legal systems. One of the cornerstones of the European Union regulations on media, the *Television without Borders Directive*, is a particularly frequent source of conflict, because it throws the French legal system into disarray: it stipulates that a television channel legally authorized in any country of the European Union is then automatically authorized in the rest of the Union. This means that while the owners of a new channel need to go through a severe screening by the French CSA, they may seek an authorization to another less demanding country of the Union, and then be retransmitted in France through cable, Internet, or satellite (→ European Union: Communication Law).

## PRINTED PRESS

The French printed press is split into two main kinds, which follow quite different paths: daily papers on one side, magazines and other non-dailies on the other. National and regional daily papers are rather weak and have trouble staying in existence. French dailies' circulation (about 2.6 million copies) is very small compared with that in other similar countries, with a ratio in proportion to the population about half that in Germany or the UK, for instance.

Two of the dozen or so remaining French national daily papers (out of more than 80 a century ago), *Le Figaro* and *Libération*, have recently been bought by wealthy industrialists seeking influence and ready to take on their debts. In 2006, in spite of this help, *Libération* was put into receivership. The renowned evening daily *Le Monde* has been in a chronically difficult financial situation for some years, as have two smaller-circulation, narrowly focused newspapers, the Communist *L'Humanité* and the business-oriented *La Tribune de l'Économie* (with sales of under 100,000 each). Three profitable morning national dailies are *L'Équipe*, a successful sports daily with sales over 366,000; *Les Échos*, another business paper, selling around 100,000; and the Catholic *La Croix*, again with a rather small circulation of around 100,000 copies. (*Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* average 350,000 copies.) As for the formerly popular evening daily *France-Soir*, it is on the verge

of closing, while the tabloid *Aujourd'hui en France* is in fact a barely different version of the regional paper *Le Parisien*.

The situation of French national dailies has grown even worse recently with the launch of two free morning papers, *Métro* and *20 minutes*, as successful here as everywhere else. Both seem to have become profitable after only a few years and have taken away a considerable share of the advertising market from the traditional dailies. In 2006, another French businessman, Vincent Bolloré, launched the first free evening daily, the tabloid *Direct Soir*, and intends to launch a free morning daily, associated with *Le Monde*. French regional dailies have also had some difficulties. *Ouest France*, prevalent in the western part of the country, is the most important, and is profitable, with about 780,000 copies a day. This is not the case for many other regional dailies. *Le Monde* has been forging alliances with a few of them, in order to try and obtain financial and industrial synergies. In contrast to the dailies, French weekly and monthly magazines benefit from a stronger readership and from steady profits, even if advertising is slowly declining here in favor of the Internet.

Television magazines have had the highest circulation for decades: here, *Télé 7 Jours* has traditionally been the leader since the 1960s, with 1.7 millions copies a week sold in 2005 – about the same as pocket-sized *Télé Z*. But the free TV program guides included as supplements with some national and regional dailies at the weekend are threatening them: the highest circulation figure (4.5 million copies) is that of the weekend giveaway *TV Magazine*.

The new trend in recent years has been gossip magazines, with the successful launch of *Closer* coming after the success of *Voici*, *Public*, and *Gala* (with a circulation of 300,000–500,000 copies). Women's magazines are also very strong, with trendsetter *Elle* and also *Marie-Claire* (300,000–400,000 copies), but the leader is again an end-of-the-week giveaway common to several national and regional dailies, *Version Femina*, with a circulation peak of more than 3.6 million copies. *Femme Actuelle* is the biggest-selling regular popular women's magazine, with a circulation of more than 1.1 million copies.

The leading magazine publishers is Hachette Filipachi Media (HFM), a subsidiary of the Lagardere group, with its internationally known titles such as *Elle* or *Première*. Its main challenger is the German-origin Prisma group, created by expatriate Axel Ganz with considerable success. A third main publisher of French magazines, British-origin Emap/France, has recently sold its assets to Italian-bred Mondadori.

## RADIO

The economics of radio in France are still very much a consequence of its longstanding situation as a state monopoly. Of the four biggest radio groups, three remain the same as before the 1980s. First, there is state-owned Radio France, inheritor of the radio holdings of the former ORTF (i.e., the generalist France Inter, cultural France Culture, classical France Musique, etc.). Then there are two private radio groups, RTL and the Lagardere-owned Europe 1 group, that have been in existence since the 1950s: they were initially tolerated because they had been incorporated and were broadcasting in neighboring countries.

Their only recent contender is the NRJ Group, a popular radio station which arose from the hundreds of so-called “free radio” stations authorized in 1981, when the Socialists won the elections. Most of the other newly founded stations did not survive,

remained local, or did not manage to form a media group going much further than their main station. To compensate for their weakness, several so-called “independent” radio and television stations have formed a lobbying structure, the *Syndicat Interprofessionnel des Radios et Televisions Indépendantes* (SIRTI).

## TELEVISION

The structure of French television has changed considerably since the mid-eighties, although state-owned France Television is still a major player. But it is the TF1 group that is dominant, with its main asset, TF1, bought by industrialist Francis Bouygues when the 1986 conservative government decided to open television up to competition by privatizing the leading channel. The TF1 group is by far the most profitable television group, with TF1 audience market share steadily at between 30 percent and 40 percent, and its share of the advertising revenues at over 50 percent.

The two other major players in television are M6, initially dedicated to music but now a strong generalist channel, and Canal Plus, the first and dominant pay-TV channel. There is strong competition among these groups. State-owned France Television, TF1, and M6 even formed an alliance to build up a satellite pay-TV service, TPS, against Canal Plus’s satellite pay-TV programs, Canal Satellite. But in 2006, when the newly arrived free digital transmissions started to put satellite pay-TV in the shade, the three private groups, TF1, M6, and Canal Plus, formed an alliance, unifying their satellite and pay-TV subsidiaries under the banner of Canal Plus. They were joined by the Lagardere group; France Television had already left the alliance two years earlier.

## INTERNET

Here, the leader in terms of subscriptions is still Orange/France Telecom, the former monopoly in telecommunications, now privatized through its Internet subsidiary, also called Orange. An independent Internet player, Free, is a vigorous challenger, inventing a multimedia terminal, the Freebox, which is the first that can deliver ADSL broadband Internet and television (and now also Wi-Fi and phone) simultaneously, and for a much lower price than its competitors. Tiscali and Cegetel Internet subsidiaries are other important contenders in the market, while AOL’s French subsidiary completely misfired, and sold its operations in 2006 to Cegetel.

Thanks to the strong competition among Internet providers in price as in service, about 11.1 millions homes had broadband access at mid-2006, a figure more than 40 percent higher than a year earlier.

Less developed than in other countries, the cable providers have now all merged under the banner of UPC-Noos, but remain a minor player (about 6 percent of Internet access).

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► European Union: Communication Law ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Policy ► Privatization of the Media ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Satellite Communication, Regulation of ► Telecommunications: Law and Policy ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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# Francophonie

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Commonly, “francophonie” carries three meanings: linguistic (those who have French in common); geographical (the peoples whose mother tongue, fluency, or administrative language is French); and a more mystical meaning, signifying membership of a collective community. But “Francophonie” (capital F) designates the movement and institutions initiated by French authorities after World War II in favor of the French language, in the context of its former colonies’ independence. France tried to promote a French “commonwealth” and a special relationship with ex-colonies to protect the language. France was very often accused of maintaining neo-colonial relationships, but the movement for Francophonie was also supported by leaders of the new independent states as a means to build new relations with the former colonizer. Were these, then, actions to support the French language worldwide, or to protect French political and economic interests in its former colonies? This debate has been at the core of the history of Francophonie. Nowadays, through its institutions and agents, Francophonie strives to propose an alternative to a homogenizing globalization process, by promoting cultural diversity (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Globalization Theories).

## HISTORY OF FRANCOPHONIE

Invented at the end of the nineteenth century by French geographer Onésime Reclus in his book *France, Algérie et les Colonies*, to categorize French speakers on the national territory and in the colonies, the term immediately bore ambiguity: “We consider as Francophone all who are or appear destined to remain here, everyone who seems to stay or to become participants in our language: Bretons and Basques of France, Arabs and Berbers of Tell, of whom we are already the Masters.” However, even if the movement was initiated by the French state in the 1950s to contain its colonies’ demands for independence, its founding fathers were predominantly political leaders of the new African states.



Indeed, during the 1950s, France elaborated various projects to establish a French Commonwealth (such as the project of a French Community in 1958), which failed because of the strong desire for emancipation in the colonies. Concurrently with these state initiatives, numerous nongovernmental associations emerged to assemble French language specialists in various disciplines. In 1952 the International Association of French Speaking Journalists was created in Paris, and in 1954 the French Cultural Union. In 1961, the Association of Partly or Totally French Speaking Universities was founded in Montreal, which extended Francophonie beyond linguistic disciplines and marked Canada's entrance into Francophonie (Quebec proclaimed itself during the provincial elections of 1960 as a "French speaking nation"). In 1962, the French review *Esprit* published a special issue on "Francophonie," which consecrated the African continent to Francophonie through its herald, the poet and president of Senegal, Léopold Sedar Senghor. An institutionalization process then got under way, with international conferences of ministers of French-speaking countries (on education, sport, and youth), and the creation of administrative bodies (such as the High Committee for Defence and Expansion of the French language).

But the true foundation of the *political project of Francophonie* is due to the initiatives of three African political leaders who strove to foster close cooperation first within the African French-speaking area, then beyond Africa. In 1960, Léopold Sedar Senghor (Senegal), Habib Bourguiba (Tunisia), and Hamani Diori (Niger) proposed to gather together the newly independent countries wishing to keep relationships based on cultural and linguistic affinities with France. But this project was not welcomed by all the countries (Morocco and Algeria were reluctant or refused). In 1967 the International Association of French-Speaking Parliament Members (AIPLF) was created (the future Parliament of Francophonie). Finally, thanks to the initiative of the three African leaders, plus Prince Norodom Sihanouk (Cambodia), the Treaty implementing the Cultural and Technical Cooperation Agency was signed on March 20, 1970, the first intergovernmental organization of Francophonie. Yet the very first international "Francophone Summit" took place in Versailles only in 1986, which brought together 42 participants and set up the institutional basis of Francophonie.

### THE INSTITUTIONS OF FRANCOPHONIE

The Heads of State and Government Conference, with French in common, is called the "Summit" and is the highest authority of Francophonie. The Summit is held every two years. At the Quebec Summit (1987) five sectors were defined: agriculture; energy; culture and communication; scientific information and technological development; and language. The next summit added three additional axes of cooperation: education and training; the environment; and democracy and the rule of law. Succeeding summits were held in Dakar (Senegal) in 1989, Paris in 1991, Mauritius in 1993, Cotonou (Benin) in 1995, Hanoi (Vietnam) in 1997, Monckton (Canada) in 1999, Beirut (Lebanon) in 2002, Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in 2004, and Bucharest (Romania) in 2006. Quebec was scheduled for 2008. The summits establish the orientations of Francophonie, decide on admission of new members, and elect the Secretary-General of Francophonie.

The *International Organization of Francophonie* (IOF) is the key multilateral institution under the authority of the Secretary-General and acts through the Francophone Agency. The IOF implements the intergovernmental cooperation of Francophonie, supports the member states in elaborating or consolidating their national policies regarding Francophonie, and implements multilateral cooperation projects. The IOF acts also in favor of peace, democracy, and human rights among the Francophone members. As of 2007, it included 53 member states and 10 observer states on all continents. French (spoken by around 200 million people) is the official language, on its own or combined with other languages, in 32 IOF member states. In 2005, the IOF budget was €83 million, to which the main contributors were France (54.5 percent), Canada (21.5 percent), Quebec (4.1 percent), Belgium (8.6 percent), and Switzerland (6.6 percent). The IOF headquarters are located in Paris (with 367 agents of 36 different nationalities), but it has four permanent representatives, in Addis-Ababa (at the African Union, and the UN's African Economic Commission), in Brussels (at the EU), and in New York and Geneva (at the UN); and three regional desks (West Africa, Central Africa, and Indian Ocean).

The *other institutions of Francophonie* are the Permanent Council, in charge of preparing and following up the summits, chaired by the General Secretary and composed of representatives of member states; and the Conference of Ministers, which maintains policy continuity between the summits, composed of the Foreign Affairs or Francophonie ministers of member states. There are four additional *Francophonie agencies*: (1) the University Francophonie Agency (AUF), which aims to build academic cooperation in French by supporting faculty and student exchange programs among over 600 research centers and universities in 70 countries on all continents; (2) TV5 Monde, a multilateral TV channel based in Paris, which diffuses cultural programs, movies, and news in French in 202 countries, 24/7; (3) Senghor University in Alexandria, Egypt, an international French-language postgraduate university to educate top executives to work in development priority fields; and (4) the International Association of French-Speaking Mayors, which promotes decentralized cooperation, good governance, and the strengthening of local democracy.

### **DEBATES AND CONTROVERSIES: NEO-COLONIALISM OR CULTURAL DIVERSITY?**

Mainly initiated by pro-independence African leaders, Francophonie emerged as a large movement associating former French colonies and partially or totally French-speaking states across all continents. But the relationship between France and its former colonies was not unidimensional.

Since independence, their relationship has been ambiguous, where under cover of a special relationship involving privileged cooperation and technical assistance, political and economic interests were sought to be secured by playing the part of Africa's policeman. Development cooperation was not simply to preserve past advantages. It took place in a strong political project of power and influence urged by President de Gaulle. France used its aid policy and also its culture to transform a sovereign area into a zone of influence. Thousands of technical aid workers and French teachers were posted to the former

colonies to diffuse the language. But the intention was also to educate French-speaking elites who could become potential partners and clients for the future. These actions encouraged the newly independent states to adhere to French culture. Thus, French global cultural influence was a major instrument of its political influence.

But at the same time, it is interesting to point out that de Gaulle remained aloof from the Francophonie project, probably in order to avoid giving ammunition to those who attacked France's African policy as neo-colonialist. For over 40 years, this policy was maintained by hidden interests and clientelist networks, using Africa as France's "game-preserve," stigmatized by the term "Françafrique" (Verschave 1998). At the end of the twentieth century, France's Africa policy, with its involvement in episodes such as the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, was fiercely criticized. Those attacks led to formal institutional change in 1998, with the absorption of the ministry of foreign aid (for Africa) into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In the following years, Franco-African relationships lost their specificity with the decline of a specific development budget and a rise in multilateral projects. Cultural cooperation was also transformed in the same direction, with the emergence of new actors, such as nongovernmental organizations or local associations, which sought to promote different forms of cultural exchanges (Visier 2003).

The movement in favor of Francophonie has been influenced by the evolution of Franco-African relations and more broadly by the international context. The dynamics of globalization have generated new anxieties prompted by the growing decline of French language influence and the inexorable rise of English in global communication and international organizations. While the promotion and defense of French remain clear goals for the IOF, its new target has become to defend cultural diversity. The problem is not that English is imposing itself as an international language, but to protect and promote other living languages around the world. The Francophone authorities made this goal their chief priority. They strongly supported the → UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (adopted in 2005). This Convention is a binding international legal instrument (since March 18, 2007) which aims to reaffirm the sovereign right of states to draw up cultural policies, to recognize the specific nature of cultural goods and services as vehicles of identity, values, and meaning, and to strengthen international cooperation and solidarity so as to favor the cultural expressions of all nations (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services). Francophonie supported the Convention because it shared the same principles (IOF 2006). For some authors, Francophonie is a unique chance for globalization to encourage cultural diversity against the threat of standardization or cultural domination (Wolton 2006).

Along the same lines, Francophonie began a dialogue with other linguistic areas, notably Hispanophone, Lusophone, and Arabophone, to develop concerted initiatives to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in their own territories. At the national or sub-national levels, IOF seeks to support the global south in elaborating cultural policy in favor of traditional music forms, or training lawyers specializing in anti-piracy efforts. The IOF also supports the valorization of vernacular languages that coexist with French. Following sociolinguists' analyses, it supports states which wish to develop and protect the use of dialects or creoles, termed "partner languages," to facilitate their engagement in written forms in harmony with French (Calvet 1999). These initiatives take the form of publishing journals in vernacular languages or of French/Partner-Language dictionaries.

Recently, French-speaking novelists adopted a manifesto “for a world literature in French,” but freed of its exclusive pact with France (Rouaud & LeBris 2007).

From the postcolonial project of promoting French to the protection of cultural diversity, the Francophonie project has sought to renew its philosophy while developing its institutions. However, the means remain limited and dependent on contributions from richer member states of Francophonie. M. Abou Diouf, Secretary-General of Francophonie, commented sourly in an interview with *Le Monde* in March 2007 on the paradox of lukewarm interest in Francophonie among the French. At the same time, current French immigration policy was perceived in Africa as an ongoing disjuncture between the theory and the reality of Franco-African cooperation (*Politique Africaine* 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Organizations, Cultural Diversity in ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ UNESCO

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## **Free Flow of Information**

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The free flow of information has been a key policy as well as a political aspect in the US government's approach to → international communication since World War II. There has often been a conflation of the term between a principle of democratic governance found in many national constitutions and United Nations agencies' charters (→ UNESCO), and the political principle of promoting free trade status to the export of news and entertainment

content across national boundaries (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services). The historical review of the term “free flow of information” made by Schiller (1981) showed that the US Associated Press (AP) news agency had for decades before World War II argued against the European cartel of British, French, and German → news agencies that controlled the dissemination of international → news. At the end of World War II, the US emerged as the dominant economic and military power and began to promote the free flow policy as a universal principle of democracy for other nations. The US was among those nations that proposed and approved the inclusion of rights to free speech and information flow in the United Nations charter. As the Cold War got started in the late 1940s, the issue of free flow took on a whole new character, making it into an enduring political factor that included both the issue of government control of information and the export of news and entertainment to other countries.

The history of the term was complicated by the Cold War standoff between the US and the USSR but also by trade and technological developments. In the early 1960s the US launched experimental communication satellites that were geostationary, that is, remained in fixed positions over the equator at such a distance that they rotated in sync with the earth (→ Satellite Communication, Global). This meant that with three satellites the entire world could in theory receive messages from anywhere. By the late 1960s the US and other western countries had started such an international system with the consortium called Intelsat. The USSR and its allies saw this as a direct → propaganda threat that might feed unwanted → television programs into their territories. The fight within the United Nations was a standoff, but the consequence was that nations agreed to honor the territorial integrity principle in their satellite communication for the next two decades. At about the same time, the free flow principle emerged in another context within the United Nations agencies.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was an agency that had from its beginning in 1945 promoted the free flow principle and had also placed mass communications squarely into its most basic efforts to promote international development (→ Development Communication). As recently freed colonial countries joined the agency as members, the issues and focus began to change. The expansion of mass communication infrastructure, including communication satellites, was joined by the issue of the dominance of foreign content on the new television systems. The proposal to institute national communication policies to plan for more national news and entertainment content as well as limiting the import of foreign content touched on two important issues: the control or even → censorship of content by national governments, and the trade status of information that circulated among nations. The fact of US dominance in the international trade of both news and entertainment became a contentious point in the ensuing New International Information Order (NIIO) debate within UNESCO (→ New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]). The conflation of freedom of information and the free trade of content made for complications in settling the dispute. The US government, which through its State Department had promoted both free trade and freedom of information, opposed many of the policies proposed by the report of the MacBride Commission in 1980 (2004) to resolve the issues. Eventually the US withdrew from UNESCO in 1985, only rejoining in 2003.

In the aftermath of the withdrawal, many scholars analyzed the factors that led to this political decision. Giffard (1989) provided the most compelling data about the coverage of the NIO debates in newspapers and on television. He showed that there was biased coverage by the news organizations that subverted the very principle of free flow that these same organizations were vigorously advocating (→ Bias in the News). The issue of trade dominance in export of content remains unresolved although the World Trade Organization (WTO) has been moving in the direction of greater freedom for trade in information. The solution is not clear as there remain a number of national and regional policies that limit the import of foreign content based on cultural integrity, including Canada's "cultural exception" principle in the North American Free Trade Agreement and the European Union's Television Directive of 1989 (Communication Law and Policy: North America; European Union: Communication Law; NAFTA and International Communication). The issue of the right of countries to control access to content that is deemed dangerous culturally or politically confronts the increased availability of this content through free trade pressure as well as more sophisticated technologies. The resolution will not likely be easy.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ Development Communication ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ International Communication ▶ NAFTA and International Communication ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ Propaganda ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Television ▶ UNESCO

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## **Freedom of Communication**

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The *annaliste* historian Fernand Braudel asserts that dealing with the concept of liberty, "in all its connotations including 'taking liberties,'" is the distinguishing mark of western civilization, the socio-political problem that most persistently occurs from the fifth

century to the present. The liberty to communicate, to impart and receive information of all kinds, is at the heart of the western idea of liberty. “This process has never been peaceful; yet it is one of the secrets that explains Europe’s progress” (Braudel 1993). The struggle for the practice of free “mass” communication begins with the emergence of newspapers in the seventeenth century, but the press freedoms gained over the next 300 years have been limited to print (→ Newspaper, History of; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Even in the west a media-blind right of free expression has never been established, and newer media from film through broadcasting and beyond have been subject to the imposition, or the attempted imposition, of specific controls.

## ROOTS

Freedom of expression as a right was born in western Europe as a consequence of a desire to practice religion, within the bounds of Christianity, according to the dictates of one’s own conscience. The matter was not one of private thoughts and activities being policed. Rather, it was the making public of unorthodox opinions – the publishing of them – that was at issue. It was not that, for example, Galileo had privately observed proof of a heliocentric planetary system through his telescope in contradiction to the church’s teaching, but that he published his findings in *Nuncius siderius*, that caused him problems (Galilei 1980). The demand that publication in any form be permitted as a right received its first serious secular expression through the means of mass communication during the wars of religion between Protestant and Catholic in the early seventeenth century.

By then the ambiguities of the technology of the press were much in evidence. On the one hand, printing allowed for uncorrupted religious texts of the Bible and the Psalter and enabled authority more efficiently to communicate with its subjects; on the other hand, dissidents of all persuasions from heretics to astronomers could also use printing from type to promulgate their alternative views (→ Printing, History of). Authority attempted to control the press to its own advantage with licensing systems of various degrees of sophistication. Monopolies of licensed printers were established and the physical presses were also licensed. The texts to be printed were further subjected to control via → censorship procedures including vetting and registration. Despite all this, these censorship regimes were, as often as not, very leaky. Within a polity, unlicensed presses, being small enough to put on a handcart, were hard to discover and cross-border traffic in printed materials was equally difficult to monitor.

In 1644, during the English Civil War, the poet John Milton wrote an unlicensed pamphlet in praise of the then illegal procedure of divorce. After he was hauled before Parliament to explain himself, he published his defense, deliberately unlicensed: *The Areopagitica: A speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of UNLICENS’D PRINTING, to the PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND*. “Give me the liberty to know,” he wrote, “to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience above all liberties.” It was, he claimed, “as good almost kill a man as kill a good book” (Milton 1951). The *Areopagitica* was, however, no plea for unbridled free expression. Milton did not envisage, nor did the majority of those who succeeded him in holding free expression dear, a libertarian free-for-all. Necessary constraints upon expression would remain in place. The law would still move against those who directly harmed their neighbors by slanderous speech or libelous writing or

printing (→ Libel and Slander). Expression deemed to jeopardize the safety of the state was still sedition, and unorthodox religious opinions publicly expressed were blasphemy. Obscenity, variously defined, was still forbidden. The penalties for these crimes and civil actions remained, often draconian and sometimes capital. What was new in the seventeenth century was the demand that the operation of control take place through legal procedures after the expression had been published and not by censorship before.

This essentially permissive interpretation became the basis of press freedom – liberty from what came to be known as “prior constraint.” In 1695, MP Edward Clarke, using arguments furnished by his friend the philosopher John Locke, spoke in the House of Commons against an attempt by the crown to restore the pre-Civil War censorship regime exactly along these lines: because of the general law, he claimed, specific legislation “for the restraint of printing” is “very needless” (Winston 2005). This became common law doctrine but was significantly a more limited approach than that which radical opinion was beginning to formulate. In 1720, the London journalists John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, writing together under the pen-name “Cato,” argued for a more general right of free expression: “Freedom of speech . . . is the right of everyman, as far as by it he does not hurt or control the right of another; and this is the only check which it ought to suffer, the only bounds it ought to know” (Trenchard & Gordon 1995, letter 15). Such a broader principle, although still constrained by the injunction to do no harm, remained a matter of radical, if not revolutionary, demand, even where, as in Britain and its American colonies, the technical legal prohibition against prior constraint existed. Thus, although the British press was protected from censorship, the British stage, for example, was not. A court official, the lord chamberlain, was empowered by an act of 1737 to censor and license all public performances. This act was not abolished until 1968.

Despite the failure to establish a media-blind right of free expression, by the end of the eighteenth century the principle was being written into radical constitutions. Partially in Denmark in 1761 and more comprehensively in Sweden in 1766, right of free expression statutes were imposed on weak kings, albeit only to have them repealed when the kings in question died. Article XI of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, passed in August 1789 at the outset of the French Revolution, finally makes the rhetoric of “Cato” into law: “The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen can speak, write and publish freely, only to answer to an abuse of this liberty in a scheduled action at law.” Some three years later, this right was abruptly declared *interdit* by a new constitution. Free speech was over. Longest lived of these eighteenth-century statutory rights is the First Amendment of the constitution of the United States, adopted in 1791: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or of abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for the redress of grievances.” This is still in force.

## FREEDOM OF COMMUNICATION AND CONTROL OF MODERN MEDIA

With the coming of the new media of the twentieth century – → cinema, → radio, and → television – the tendency was to follow the model of the stage rather than of the press. The cinema was seen simply as a mechanization of the theatre and therefore the usual



range of prior constraints, the licensing of premises and of the films themselves, were put in place in essentially the same form in all western countries. Radio signals, unlike the press or cinemas, where a proliferation of publishers or sites could be established without overlap, demanded some form of centralized control if stations were not to interfere with each other. Moreover, the technology had emerged from naval experimentation and was initially of primarily military interest, another strong reason for state control. However, control of the infrastructure by the licensing of wavelengths did not automatically require further control of content. Yet control of content, as with the cinema, became the norm. All this was carried over into television, and various reasons were brought forward as to why what was “very needless” for the press was required by broadcasting (→ Radio: Social History; Television: Social History).

The underlying justification for the specific content controls that emerged is that the liberty afforded the press is inappropriate to these newer media. These, it is held, are far too persuasive and pervasive not to need special constraints. However, it can be argued that the press in the eighteenth century, for example, when at least 13 million newspapers a year were sold in Britain, had significant penetration into what was a much smaller literate elite. Certainly nineteenth-century newspapers could bring down a government. Other arguments for the specific control of modern media, such as the fact that broadcasting enters the home and could therefore be an “unwanted guest,” are even less compelling. The reasoning that holds that the regulation of infrastructure tends to create monopolies that need content control is a self-fulfilling prophecy, because such technological considerations have all too often resulted in unnecessarily centralized systems, even at the beginning of radio. With the proliferation of channels and platforms in the twenty-first century, these arguments become irrelevant. It is anyway illogical in societies that have supposedly adopted free speech as a human right to then put in place specific controls because media have influence. This is in effect to make free expression consequent upon its ineffectiveness. An Edward Clarke might well be justified in arguing that such controls are “very needless” in an age of media abundance just as they were in an age of comparative media scarcity.

The contradiction between a fundamental right of expression and the control of specific media remains unaddressed. Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights (1950), for example, states in a fashion to be found widely repeated in both international declarations and national laws since World War II (→ European Court of Human Rights): “Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.” Yet this article goes on in overtly contradictory language to allow a state to require “the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema entertainments” without specifically excluding content regulation by prior constraint (Anon. 1992). The conflict between basic principle and specific regulation can be seen as being at the heart of national broadcasting institutions such as the → BBC, which exist in the crease between free expression and state control, exactly reflecting the confusions of Article 10 of the Convention. It is therefore still the case that filmmakers and broadcasters are subject to specific content regulation and licensing via the agency of statutory or quasi-statutory bodies, such as the Office of Communications (OfCOM) in the UK or the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the US, although these

potentially overt censors are normally inhibited by the tradition of press freedom, despite the fact this does not apply and on occasion is ignored, albeit controversially (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). Moreover, it is not the case that new media – the → Internet, say – are, because of their technological formation, automatically free of specific control either. Witness Google’s or Rupert Murdoch’s relationship with the Chinese authorities or the action of the Iranian government in denying access to certain sites (→ Internet Law and Regulation). The systems for controlling the Internet are indeed leaky – but they exist and are in operation just as was the leaky system of controlling the press five centuries ago. And the controls constantly threaten to expand.

### **NEW THREATS TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION**

Up to the present the concept of free expression has remained limited, constrained by general laws and the principle that expression shall cause no legally measurable harm; by the nature of the medium involved; and by the changing social determinants of what constitutes expression sanctioned by community standards. These last are, of course, fluid and change over time. Hence the concept of obscene expression moved radically in the twentieth century. In the secularized west, laws against blasphemy are to all intents and purposes dead letters. Conversely, specific prohibitions against, say, publishing the names of children involved in legal proceedings or of rape victims have been enacted (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content).

This fluidity speaks to a more fundamental change as the west has become increasingly sensitized to the issue of human (and, it can be noted, even animal) rights in general. The old common law sense of “harm” being limited to demonstrable material damage is being rapidly amended to embrace nonmaterial damage, such as distress. At the same time the distinction between insult (which has no necessary harmful consequences) and incitement (which is designed exactly to produce such harm) is being eroded. Given the failure to establish a general right of free expression across all media, the new sensitivity to expanding the original concept of “hurt” to embrace an ever-greater degree of distress is a matter for concern. While obviously welcome in many ways, this growing sensitivity, and the changes it is bringing in train, have a chilling effect on the basic principle of free expression. It is a paradox that the test of the existence of free expression – that is, expression beyond upsetment but without some measure of demonstrable actual harm – has to be that society countenances it on occasion causing offense. If expression is never offensive, how can we be sure it is free?

Given that the principle of media-blind free expression has never been established, the moves toward controlling distressing speech, even if the anti-censorship mechanism of no prior constraint exists, has a chilling effect that might be considered threatening to the fundamental right. That this is underway at a time of extreme liberal community standards in certain areas, such as obscenity, is a further paradox. The liberalism of the one area of expression does not remove the threat of constraint to other, perhaps more significantly political, areas.

Alexander Hamilton, a Federalist father of the American constitution, had argued against the passage of the First Amendment that “whatever fine declarations may be inserted in any constitution . . . [Liberty of the Press] must altogether depend on public

opinion, and on the general spirit of the people and of the Government,” and that this could not be written down. Without this support Hamilton felt constitutional guarantees were worthless. There are worrying signs that this “general spirit” is not what it was. For example, a survey conducted on the bicentennial of the First Amendment in 1991 found that a majority of Americans felt that First Amendment protections should be watered down. Editorializing during a political campaign should not be automatically protected; nor should the press be allowed special privileges in covering the sexual behavior of politicians or publishing graphic photographs. Even the prohibition against prior constraint should be abolished for the reporting of security matters. Those surveyed “displayed an alarming willingness to remove legal protection from forms of free expression they merely disagreed with or found offensive” (Wyatt 1991). However much public appetite for sexual explicitness in expression drives the western media market, such a lack of an underlying appreciation of the principle of free expression, as well as the inappropriateness (as it might be argued) of continued media-specific content controls in an age of information abundance, are worrying signs that a four-century march toward establishing free expression as a general human right is in danger of being halted.

Hamilton’s essential point should not be forgotten: freedom of communication depends on the “general spirit”; technology, even global twenty-first-century computer-based networks, however sophisticated, can never be more than a necessary condition of free communication. It cannot, of itself, guarantee free communication, whose efficacy as an agent of freedom still depends more on societal forces than on technological wherewithal.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Activist Media ▶ American Convention on Human Rights ▶ Balance ▶ BBC ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Censorship ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Media History ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Radio ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Truth and Media Content

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# Freedom of Information

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During the latter half of the twentieth century, the world's established democratic nations – along with those nations seeking to adopt democratic principles – experienced a sea change in governance with the rise of transparency, the idea that the workings of government should be visible. This global movement is grounded in the accountability principle of a representative democracy – namely, that in an open and democratic society citizens must have a right of access to government-held information so they can hold government responsible for its actions, and make informed decisions pertaining to self-rule. As of 2006, a public right of access to the vast stores of information gathered by governmental administrative bodies has been created in 68 nations under the general rubric of “freedom of information” laws.

The general principle of transparency can be traced to the eighteenth century. Sweden was the first nation in the world to recognize openness as a constitutional right when it created its Freedom of the Press Act in 1766, which granted a right of access to official government documents. The notion that public officials and bureaucrats should be accountable to the public was explicitly stated in the Netherlands in its 1795 Declaration of the Rights of Man, which declared that the public has the right to require that “each functionary of public administration” disclose “an account and justification of his conduct.”

The legal bases for the modern right to freedom of information today vary widely from nation to nation. In some countries, freedom of information is embodied in laws that protect freedom of expression and freedom of the press. In other nations, it is a separate and distinct right. Some nations contain constitutional provisions for access to public records and documents, while others provide for transparency by legislation or in a statute. For example, the United States Supreme Court has ruled that a right of public and press access to government information and facilities does *not* have constitutional protection, unlike freedom of speech and freedom of the press. America's right of freedom of information was created by Congress in 1966 in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Additionally, open-records laws have been approved by legislatures in each of the 50 states and by the District of Columbia. On the other hand, many nations, such as Austria, Belgium, the Dominican Republic, Georgia, and Slovenia, to name a few, recognize a general principle of public access to information in their constitutions.

## **TRANSPARENCY LAWS VARY**

Typically, constitutional protection for freedom of information is stated in only general terms or as a principle. Therefore, nations with constitutional protection for freedom of information have also enacted a statute or other form of legislation that sets forth specific procedures to implement and enforce the constitutionally protected public right of access. Procedural examples include requirements that the government set deadlines so that agencies respond to information requests in a timely fashion; promulgate administrative

rules and regulations in a widely circulated official publication or on the Internet; and enumerate specific exemptions under which information can be withheld.

The United States has led the way in fostering the philosophy of freedom of information throughout the world and providing a model for an effective public records statute. The global spread of *public access laws* was slow, however. By 1986, 20 years after the US FOIA was enacted, fewer than a dozen nations had adopted a similar law. After the Soviet Union's collapse in 1989 and the emergence of fledgling democracies in Latin America and Africa, freedom of information laws began to proliferate. By 2006, when the US FOIA marked its 40th anniversary, 68 nations had enacted open-government statutes.

Generally, an effective freedom of information paradigm in the twenty-first century has several *fundamental characteristics*. The *first and guiding principle* behind a freedom of information law is a presumption of openness supported by a policy that the law is intended to provide full disclosure. The Republic of South Africa's public right of access, embodied in its 1996 Constitution, is one of the most progressive in the world because of the "profound mistrust the apartheid era instilled in people regarding government" (Mendel 2003). The stated purpose of South Africa's Promotion of Access to Information Act is to foster "a culture of transparency and accountability" and to "promote a society in which the people of South Africa have effective access to information to enable them to fully exercise and protect all of their rights."

Second, the right of access should be *available to "any person" and for "any purpose"*; the reason for a request should be irrelevant. "Any person" is granted a right of access to public records and documents under the US FOIA, Japan's Law Concerning Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs (1999), Bulgaria's Access to Public Information Act (2000), and Denmark's Access to Public Administration Files Act (1985), among many others. The Croatian constitution (1990) provided journalists with a right of access to information, but it was not until the Act on the Right of Access to Information was approved in 2003 that "any person" had a right to obtain government-held information. Some nations impose restrictions regarding who can gain access to information.

For example, the Parliament of India enacted the Right to Information Act in 2005. The legislation applies to records held by the central government and also to public agencies under state and local jurisdictions, but India's right of access is granted only to Indian citizens. Likewise, Canada's Access to Information Act (1983) is limited to Canadian citizens, permanent residents, and Canadian corporations. Similarly, in Israel, the Freedom of Information Law (1999) allows any citizen or resident access to government-held information, but it limits access to non-citizens and non-residents to matters related to their rights in Israel.

Third, an effective freedom of information paradigm allows the government to *refuse disclosure only if the requested information falls under clearly stated and narrowly drawn exemptions*. Narrowly crafted exemptions are necessary in order to limit discretion by officials. Exemptions vary considerably from nation to nation. Although nations' exemptions vary, the most common exceptions to disclosure fall under the categories of national defense, personal privacy, law enforcement investigations, information that may jeopardize an individual's safety or life, and proprietary business interests and trade

secrets. Under the United Kingdom's Freedom of Information Act (2000), for example, there are three general categories of exemptions and twenty specific exemptions. The United States FOIA lists nine exemptions. Mexico's Federal Law of Transparency and Access to Public Government Information (2002) parses its exemptions into five categories of documents and records that can be withheld if disclosure would harm the public interest – and separate exemptions for other kinds of information such as trade secrets, and some judicial and administrative records. Albania is unusual in that its Law on the Right to Information for Official Documents (1999) contains no exceptions; the government can withhold documents only if disclosure is restricted under other laws, such as laws on privacy or classified information.

### EXEMPTIONS TO DISCLOSURE

Fourth, a freedom of information law should provide for an independent review when government refuses to disclose information. In Germany, an appeal can be made internally to the agency denying disclosure. If that appeal fails, requesters can go to a federal commission on freedom of information. Requesters can also appeal to the courts. France and Bulgaria are examples of nations that have no internal appeals process. In France, complaints go directly to a national commission that is charged with freedom of information oversight; disputes must be decided by this national commission before an appeal can be made to the courts. In Bulgaria, appeals go directly to the courts. Under the US model, appeals are made internally to the agency, and, if unsuccessful, requesters can then go to the courts.

A review and *appeals process should comprise a two-step analysis*. First, a determination must be made to confirm that the requested information does, in fact, fall under the exemption claimed by the government. Second, a balancing test must be conducted to weigh the harm of disclosure against the public interest in disclosure. Harm standards vary. Ideally, the degree of harm should be substantial harm.

A fifth characteristic is an *affirmative duty to publish certain information without the need for a request*. The US FOIA, for example, requires that agencies publish – both in the widely available Federal Register and on the Internet – their organizational plans, regulations, annual reports, statements of agency rules and policy, and instructions on how to use the FOIA. The rationale behind affirmative disclosure is to guard against the development of agency “secret law” – rules and regulations known to government officials but not to the general public.

Finally, in keeping with the spirit of a right of access to “any person,” fees for copying records must be reasonable. Otherwise, information would be accessible only to those who can afford it. (A right of public access to meetings of official bodies is also an essential component of open government. However, provisions for the public to attend meetings of administrative bodies usually are covered under separate statutes, and are beyond the scope of this article.)

One of the most significant recent advances in freedom of information is the development of a public right of access to information *pertaining to the environment*. More than 40 nations, mostly European, signed the Aarhus (Denmark) Convention in June 1998. It was sponsored by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and

went into effect in October 2001. The Aarhus Convention provides a public right of access to environmental information. It has also been ratified by the European Union, which has begun applying Aarhus principles in its legislation.

An increasing problem in terms of gaining access to government-held information is the *clash between the equally legitimate and important rights of public access*, on the one hand, and personal privacy, on the other. This conflict arises when someone's need for a government record results in the disclosure of private information about an individual who is identified in the record. Privacy concerns have mushroomed as technological advances make it possible to gather personal, even intimate, information about people. Identity theft and the Internet's potential for the instant and mass dissemination of information that could invade one's privacy have also inflamed concern. Governments with freedom of information laws nearly all contain exemptions protecting personal privacy. The problem is that an administrative agency can withhold information that is embarrassing to the government, or information that contains evidence of inefficiency or corruption, under the guise of protecting someone's privacy.

Perhaps the most challenging obstacle to implementing a broad philosophy of full disclosure by governments is the *scourge of terrorism* worldwide. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, for example, the US government removed huge amounts of potentially sensitive information from the websites of dozens of agencies. Some of this information was of high public interest because it pertained to public health and safety.

Despite obstacles, freedom of information worldwide is on an upward trajectory. Increasingly, economic reasons are the bases for more freedom of information laws; as more developing nations seek to participate in international trade, they will be encouraged – if not required – by prospective trade partners or the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to make the workings of their governments visible. Nonetheless, the spread of government transparency will remain a process for a long time as both established and developing democracies seek to break free of the outmoded presumption of secrecy and replace it with a presumption of openness.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication and Law ► International News Reporting ► Journalism  
► Right to Know

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# Freedom of the Press, Concept of

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Virtually since the dawn of civilization and the establishment of authority-wielding institutions, what people can say and write has been challenged. There is a universal impulse to control expression, particularly statements or opinions contrary to the views, policies, or dogma of those in power (→ Censorship). As is typical within repressive regimes, a justification for the suppression (though not expressed publicly) is the desire to preserve power. This desire to control information continued up to and through the era of the modern press. The phenomenon is not restricted to authoritarian nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Even liberal-minded countries, such as the United States, that provide for some kind of speech and/or press freedom have histories of not only struggling with the interpretation and implementation of freedom of expression, but also histories of speech and press suppression (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information).

## WHAT KIND OF FREEDOM?

Any analysis of freedom of the press immediately begs several questions, among them: Freedom from what? Freedom to do what? These questions evoke the *concepts of negative and positive freedom*. Traditionally, freedom of the press is perceived negatively, as freedom from external restraint. But some perspectives, such as that articulated by Theodore Peterson (1956), suggest this negative approach is inadequate. A positive point of view advocates that freedom must also mean the liberty to attain goals. In the case of the press, this is generally summarized as the ability to inform and entertain. This positive perspective, which is more widely accepted in many nations in Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, moreover, asserts that press freedom is not a passive activity, but must be actively promoted – for example, through regulations that enable the press to attain its goals (→ Media Policy).

Returning to the question “Freedom from what?” and the notion of negative freedom, the source of external restraint at issue is typically in the form of a government (though throughout history, sometimes religious institutions also have assumed the role of information censors; → Censorship, History of). When the popular press emerged in western Europe, most governments were authoritarian. Thus, these controlling principles became the basis for a system of the press. An authoritarian press system, however, does not necessarily mean a state-owned press. Instead, it means a system in which the state can and does exert control and influence, insuring that the press supports and advances government policies. Censorship often occurs when criticism of government policies or officials is published or is about to be. Licensing of the press is also common within these systems.

## THE RISE OF LIBERTARIANISM

Historically, a rebellion against authoritarian control or influence (not merely of the press, but also of society and the citizenry, in general) ultimately led to libertarian press



systems coinciding with the establishment of democratic governments (→ Media History). These are in place today in many nations, including throughout western Europe, much of the Americas, and in several Pacific Rim nations.

While censorship's roots predate recorded history, Europe of the Middle Ages serves as a quintessential model, where both church and state exerted control of individuals. *England*, for example, was notorious both for its anti-sedition laws prohibiting criticism of the monarchy and laws requiring press licensing. That is, publishing required government approval. Accordingly, those who were granted permission to publish tended to be those predisposed to favor the crown. England's laws controlling both press and speech illustrate the inextricable link between these areas. Other nations followed similar patterns.

As attempts to suppress expression grew, in many instances becoming commonplace, intellectual voices began challenging that accepted wisdom. The benefits – to both societies and individuals – of writing and speech free of restraints were reasoned, usually in writing. Among the positive outcomes of free press that were articulated was the notion that people cannot fully develop as individuals absent the ability to express themselves. Societal benefits focus on self-governance – that people need to be able to openly discuss issues, including criticism of government and government officials, in order to exercise their votes wisely.

Many sources (e.g., Hatchen & Scotton 2006) agree that serious, intellectual reasoning against repressive institutions and their inclination to proscribe expression began with John Milton's 1644 work *Aereopagitica*. Published within the Age of Enlightenment, *Aereopagitica* not only ridiculed England's licensing, but also noted that a product of free expression is the discovery of truth. That is, by allowing all ideas and opinions to be expressed and then fully considered, only then can truth – or at least a close approximation – be realized. This notion of an open "marketplace of ideas" in which both spoken and written ideas are free to enter has remained a classic paradigm justifying free expression. John Stuart Mill picked up this torch in the nineteenth century, *On Liberty* being his exemplary work, and passed it to the US Supreme Court and Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. Holmes wrote in 1919 in a dissenting vote in *Abrams v. The United States*, "the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas – that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market."

This marketplace of ideas model and the attainment of truth is one of several rationales for free press and speech that have been articulated over time. Other perspectives include individual self-fulfillment, participation in decision-making, the ability to maintain a balance between stability and change, and the checking value that free expression can have in limiting the abuse of official power. Encompassing many of these models is one that recognizes the contribution that a free press makes to a self-governing democracy. This system of government assumes a citizenry that is informed and that considers issues rationally (→ Political Discourse; Public Opinion). A press that operates independently of government influence serves as a significant provider of the information required to make reasoned decisions.

Conversely, absent such a press system, citizens are likely to be uninformed because of a lack of information or, perhaps even worse, misinformed by information that is distorted through the lens of the government or other institutions. Without a full range

of information supplied by a free press, decision-making is weakened and often unsound. Moreover, when the suppression of ideas is permitted, it is possible that the truth will be among those censored. The importance of a free press to a democratic society is highlighted by the label the → “fourth estate,” a term attributed to eighteenth-century British philosopher and politician Edmund Burke. Not unlike the American Founding Fathers who followed him, Burke recognized the significance of the checking power of a free press, consequently bestowing on the press an unofficial status as a branch of government.

In addition to Burke and Milton, other *Enlightenment philosophers* are credited with developing a progression of thinking that challenged authority and the notion that societies were better off when the opinions of their citizens were silent and unprinted. John Locke suggested that rather than belonging to the state, individuals possessed natural rights. Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote that citizens enter into a sort of social contract with their government that requires sacrificing some liberties in exchange for the security government can provide. In turn, however, this contract places limits on the state, requiring it to provide not only protection, but also freedom. Voltaire also advocated individual freedom, but added that it was freedom of expression that enables citizens to participate in their government. Another prominent influence was a group of essays published in the 1720s under the pseudonym Cato. Written by two Englishmen, *Cato’s Letters* denounced tyranny and specifically advanced free expression as a means of criticizing government to make it more responsive to the will of the people. “Cato” asserted that freedom of speech was “the great bulwark of liberty,” protecting the people against tyranny by preventing and exposing abuses of power.

The expression and circulation of these ideas were influential in governments’ granting of various forms of rights protection, including England’s *Bill of Rights* in 1689. Though different in substance and scope, the document was a predecessor to the Bill of Rights, passed a century later, which amends the United States Constitution. In turn, the French government passed the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in 1789. Like the US rights, the French Declaration specifically included freedom of speech and of the press.

In establishing protection for the press, the architects of the *US Constitution* and its First Amendment were influenced by precedent, the writings of philosophers and statesmen (some described above), as well as how other governments considered handling the various issues. Thomas Jefferson, for example, voiced concern that a Constitution absent rights that protected individual liberties such as speech and press freedom was incomplete and improperly weighted. That is, merely outlining the structure of the federal government, as the body of the Constitution did, was inadequate; the anti-federalists also wanted protection for individuals from the power of that government. Specifically, Jefferson was a passionate advocate of a press free from government control or influence. Only when the press is free, he believed, can the people be well informed, and “whenever the people are well-informed, they can be trusted with their own government” (Koch & Peden 1972, 418).

## **FREEDOM OF THE PRESS NOT ABSOLUTE**

Even a libertarian perspective, however, can be illusory. First, professed freedom guarantees can mask authoritarian practices, both covert and overt. For example, in the US,

questions were raised regarding whether its news media were free in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Were they pressured to refrain from any questioning of government policy rather than voicing a healthy skepticism? The potential for repressive government influence was evident when, two weeks after the attacks, the White House press secretary responded to the words of a television commentator by saying that all Americans “need to watch what they say, watch what they do. This is not a time for remarks like that; there never is” (Fleischer 2001).

Second, and less subtly, governments may place limitations on press freedom through laws and regulations enacted by assemblies or agencies, approved by an executive, and upheld by courts when challenged (→ Communication and Law). These laws are meant to balance press freedom against other interests, many of which revolve around protection of individuals, other institutions, or society. For example, nearly every society makes the press liable, whether civilly or criminally, for → libel and slander, → privacy, and other personal harms. More often than not, the balancing process reflects the socio-political and cultural traditions of a country. In the US, libel law is exceedingly media friendly, whereas in the UK, it is far less so.

From an international and *comparative law perspective*, press freedom is still evolving (Fiss 1996). The journalist’s privilege to protect confidential sources as a right to free press is a case in point. While a growing number of democratic countries recognize the journalist’s privilege, the US backtracks on its actual or perceived protection of journalistic sources. As communication technology evolved beyond the publication and distribution of the printed word, freedoms and privileges granted to the press have often been extended to these newer mass media (→ Internet Law and Regulation). However, it is not uncommon that those freedoms are established at a lower level than those granted to printed publications. For example, in the US, the UK, and many other countries, the owners of broadcast stations must obtain a license from the government in order to operate in the public interest (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Pressure on the press can originate with nongovernment sources, as well. In some environments, the *economic marketplace* may serve to constrain press freedom as much as anything. Within press systems that are advertiser supported, the power to withhold or withdraw monetary sustenance can be significant. Similarly, the press may be inclined to self-censor for fear of alienating advertisers or audiences. In addition, another freedom-limiting dynamic may surface simply through the practice of another press perspective: social responsibility. It may be suggested that if freedom carries with it an obligation to be responsible, by definition, the acknowledgment and implementation of that obligation (for example, codes of ethics) obstruct freedom (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Commercialization of the Media).

The concept of freedom of the press is just that – a concept. Nowhere is the freedom absolute. It is a concept that many have suggested is worth striving for, but it remains elusive. Moreover, a press system that is absolutely free – that is, unchecked either by government, marketplace forces, or a sense of social responsibility – is undesirable, largely because of the absence of accountability. Even governments that choose to grant freedom to the press struggle with defining that liberty. The debate over how and where to place the boundaries that divide acceptable and unacceptable uses of the press is ongoing.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Fair Trial and Freedom of the Press ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Licensing of Journalists ▶ Media History ▶ Media Policy ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Privacy ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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# Friendship and Communication

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Communication within friendships is important for human development throughout life. Beginning in childhood, friendships shape and reflect developments in social cognition, perspective-taking abilities, moral comportment, and cooperation as equals. During adolescence and younger adulthood, friendships cultivate ethical sensibilities, and understandings and practices of intimacy, identity, and sociability. Across life people describe three benefits of close friendship: somebody to talk to; to depend on and rely on for instrumental help, social support, and caring; and to have fun and enjoy doing things with. Communication with friends relieves loneliness and contributes to physical and psychological well-being.

Despite consistent features, changes occur in the communication of friends across developmental periods due to differences in persons, their gender, concrete socio-cultural circumstances, and opportunities for and actual participation in friendship. Friendships persist to the extent that individuals treat each other in mutually fulfilling ways, according to shared definitions of required contact, evaluative standards, and appropriate actions. The interaction of friends helps us understand inherently valued communicative practices, as well as how and why people negotiate voluntary, free-standing allegiances with others or include a “friendship component” in diverse personal and social bonds including those with spouses, parents, siblings, children, relatives, neighbors, co-workers, and fellow citizens (→ Friendship and Peer Interaction).

## NATURE AND TYPES OF FRIENDSHIP

Robust friendships take time to develop and maintain, and the time available for friends fluctuates depending on the simultaneous demands of other normatively sanctioned relationships and commitments – such as school, family, and extra-curricular activities during youth; and career, family, and community ventures during adulthood. Despite their fundamental reliance upon private negotiation for continued existence, friendships are highly patterned culturally and contextually. While the ideals of friendship include free choice, personalized responsiveness to others’ intrinsic qualities, and equality, mutuality, and affection, actual patterns of friendship reflect social stratification and economic disparities (Rawlins 1992).

Gender-linked differences in friendship have been identified across life although they lessen in males’ and females’ closer and more enduring bonds (Monsour 2002). In general, females learn and practice emotionally supportive and personally involving friendships, termed a “communal” style, earlier in life than males. Women more frequently describe sustained attachment with close same-sex friends throughout their lives, even when married and working. Males typically describe their first intimate friendships somewhat later than females, and fewer males mention close same-sex bonds across life. Male friendships are typically not as disclosive, emotionally involving, or affectionate as female dyads. Whereas

female friendships emphasize interwoven lives and extensive self-disclosure, male bonds feature autonomy and activity-orientation, termed an “agentic” style, with married men often relying primarily on their wives for intimacy and close friendship. Depending on the socio-cultural circumstances of their earlier lives and adult relationships, women or men may develop friendships of either style or combining their attributes.

### CHILDHOOD FRIENDSHIPS

Children’s capacities to communicate with friends develop over the first 15 years of life, reflecting a dialectical interaction of cognitive abilities and concrete social experiences. Changes occur at somewhat different rates for particular children on the basis of their specific aptitudes, gender, and experiences. In contrast to surface perceptions of friends’ observable features and possessions, children develop a psychological appraisal of friends’ personal qualities. In the *early to middle elementary school* years, young persons typically choose friends of their age and gender, who share their physical characteristics and enjoy doing the same activities together (Smollar & Youniss 1982). Over time, discussions of subjective thoughts and feelings supplement talk about common activities or items. From a materialistic, object-centered basis for interaction, later childhood friendships evolve an intersubjective, person-centered core.

During the *later years of elementary school*, self-oriented and one-sided views of incidents between friends shift to mutually derived conceptions of interactions, emphasizing interdependence, shared experiences, and goals. Children learn how to see matters from their friends’ and society’s perspectives as well as their own (Selman 1981). The potential of peer friendships to comprise distinctive, mutually negotiated, moral spheres begins to emerge. For much of childhood, young persons must adapt themselves to patterns of interaction primarily determined by adults and older siblings. In contrast, friendships and peer interactions involve the collaborative and cooperative development of procedures for interacting between equals who lack the power to impose preferences unilaterally. The reciprocal exchange and perspective-taking necessary for such collaboration tend to enhance children’s sensitivity to others and their capacity for expressing and experiencing affection with an equal. A transitory conception of social relationships converts into an awareness of their endurance over time.

By *early adolescence*, around ages 12–14, young persons typically have developed the rudiments of friendship. Friends are equals deserving sensitivity and fair treatment; they reciprocally help and share with one another and may cultivate intimacy through personal discussions. Even so, friendships remain nested in same-sex cliques that exert strong conformity pressures and preferences for similar others.

Adolescent friendships transpire within the interconnected worlds of family, peers, school, and the larger society. Friendships provide contexts for learning about intimacy, developing one’s identity and sense of personal values, gaining autonomy from one’s family of origin, and dealing with multiple social orders and systems of evaluation (Youniss & Smollar 1985; → Intimate Talk with Family and Friends). In managing ethical issues and behavioral choices, young friends rehearse the moral alternatives of adult friendships. Adolescents learn that they are judged by the company they keep and their objective achievements; there are both societal and intimate constructions of self.

While pursuing the goals and expectations of self, family, school, and peers, adolescents negotiate various types of friendships across a continuum of personal and social domains. Since tensions between private knowledge and public exposure of self are fundamental concerns, adolescents are preoccupied with trust and confidence in their “true” or close friendships, which mediates their selection of friends and their distinctions among them (Rawlins 1992).

In their private discussions friends learn how to co-construct and respect discretionary boundaries between each other as well as between their friendship and other people. Importantly, friendships require an investment of self in their own production and articulation, and one’s choices of friends comprise significant judgments. Along with their possibilities for enhancing each individual’s sense of personal identity, adolescent close friendships can embody pro-social values and social responsibility and serve as a foundation for egalitarian relationships in adulthood (Berndt 1996).

The developments of puberty and sexual urges complicate adolescents’ feelings of affection. Participants and third parties may second-guess the caring experienced in same- and cross-sex friendships, viewing friendly feelings as possibly veiling sexual interests. How same- or cross-sex friends are treated once dating begins is a significant concern. Over time, culturally endorsed gender differences, and ideologies and practices of heterosexuality, homosexuality, and romantic love, transform the young person’s entire social arena.

### **FRIENDSHIPS IN YOUNGER ADULTHOOD**

During young adulthood persons explore the roles their friendships will play in adult life. Developmental tasks include preparing for and entering the adult world of work, developing personal relationships of varying degrees of intimacy and commitment, and integrating one’s identity. Friends may provide crucial input regarding one’s education, career options, romantic relationships and/or marriage, community involvement, and recreational activities. Individual and negotiated decisions regarding such matters influence self-conceptions and begin to articulate networks of human relationships within which one’s values and priorities are continuously enacted. Simultaneously, these pursuits also generate constraints shaping the forms and functions of one’s friendships at any juncture, owing to their contingent status and reliance on voluntary effort for continued existence.

Moral visions and friendship practices that transcend gender may thrive but also persistently align themselves with gender divisions. Consciously or not, normative roles and codes enacted in the workplace and associated by both sexes with marriage and raising children can reinforce these disparities. Consequently, the ways in which friendships are managed, the bases for distinctions among friends, and the overall significance of friendship in an adult’s social world are strongly indicative of that person’s self-defining values. Work settings may embody values that compete with the ideals of close friends as well as separate them in time and place. Marriage may introduce the couple as the unit of friendship, with compatibility now a matter of two pairs of people getting along. The ironic functions of friendships during young adulthood involve mutual enjoyment while helping each other make life decisions, which ultimately may constrict the opportunities for involvement with friends.

The adult years involve ongoing trials and impediments, which are socio-economically and culturally patterned although not strictly tied to age. Consciously and unconsciously, friends are sorted out, with social calendars, role commitments, and career moves functioning as both facilitators and disqualifiers of friendships (Matthews 1986). Negotiating busy schedules, physical separation, and friendship's voluntary and conditional standing in their role clusters, many adults' bonds persist because of the flexibility of their friendships. The friendship of spouses may assume importance during mature adulthood if or as they replace role-related perceptions of each other with an appreciation of each other's independence, companionship, and shared life experiences (Rawlins 1992). Work settings also persist as sources of friendships for women and men at least until retirement. Friends who have stood these "tests of time" and circumstances assume special status, and close friendships increase in stability across the life course.

### **FRIENDSHIPS IN OLDER ADULTHOOD**

As reservoirs of shared histories and experiences, old friends are narrators and curators of the long-term coherence and significance of each other's lives. In contrast, throughout life, new friends foster and reflect change and adaptation to altered conditions, while also being implicitly compared with a person's "populated biography" of past relationships (Matthews 1986). Talking and judging with trusted friends gets the weighty matters of adulthood off of a person's chest, helps articulate the meaning and implications of actions and choices, jointly establishes what is important to self and affected others, and provides nurturance and enjoyment to keep life's challenges and tragic inevitabilities in perspective.

Later adult friendships exhibit continuities and discontinuities with earlier patterns and normative contours evident across the life course. Friends are close enough in age to share analogous generational experiences; and they are usually alike in race, gender, and marital and occupational status, all of which promote comparable lifestyles and values. Modal gender differences in friendship activity are also evident in later life. Even so, friendship profiles remain diverse across this developmental period for many reasons. First, the period spans several decades. People also enact disparate personal styles, decisions, and initiatives in conducting their social lives. Friendship in later adulthood involves sustained connection with select individuals, consecutive sets of friends associated with changing residences and social circumstances, or a pattern of preserving certain long-term friendships as well as developing new ones as personal situations alter (Matthews 1986). Areas of diminishing individual control, such as persons' social capabilities, health, and mobility, as well as friends' proximity, abilities to interact, or mortality, become salient at varying junctures and are associated with continuities and discontinuities in friendship practices.

Functions, strains, and assortments of friendships persist in later life. Despite their limitations, friends typically play vital roles in sustaining older persons' feelings of well-being and life satisfaction. As long as personal capacities and situational factors allow, people turn to friends to talk about a wide range of topics, confide in and relate troubles, enjoy spending time together, and rely on for assistance and moral support. Contacting and being contacted by friends alleviates loneliness, connects individuals to larger communities, and fosters their ongoing enjoyment of life.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Friendship and Peer Interaction ▶ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ▶ Relational Dialectics ▶ Relationship Development

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## **Friendship and Peer Interaction**

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Friendship refers to a broad category of interpersonal relationships communicatively accomplished with peers and characterized by voluntary, reciprocated, nonromantic affection and good will. These relationships range in depth and duration from superficial, transitory bonds developed from situational associations, such as residential, educational, or workplace proximity, to profoundly dedicated lifelong attachments spanning time and distance.

### **NATURE OF FRIENDSHIP**

Friendships involve five characteristics to varying degrees, depending on social and cultural circumstances, interaction patterns, and individuals' inclinations. First, communicating as friends is voluntary; persons choose to view and treat other persons as friends (→ Friendship and Communication). While social stratifications dictate opportunities to interact, persons elect to communicate and experience another's behaviors as friendship. This feature contrasts with the blood bonds of kinship, contractual and economically determined associations such as labor relations or partnerships, and religiously and legally sanctioned bonds such as marriage. These relationships occupy social categories

with requirements transcending individuals' preferences. In contrast, friendships persist to the extent that friends fulfill each other's particularized expectations for interactions and may be unilaterally dissolved.

Second, friendship is a personal relationship involving regard for each other as a specific individual with unique qualities, not as a member of a category. Third, friendship involves nonromantic affection for another person. Friends display their affection through encouraging each other's freedom to fulfill themselves as individuals. This quality contrasts with the possessive and exclusive nature of romantic love or the self-gratification of sexual loving. Fourth, friendship strives for equality based on the corresponding validity of each person's subjective experiences. While friends may be unequal in certain objective respects or abilities, communicating as friends involves identifying the means and areas within the relationship to treat each other as equals. Fifth, friendship is a mutual relationship reciprocated between persons. Mutually shared good will, understanding, trust, and support are hallmarks of enduring friendship. One-sided offerings of friendship do not constitute a viable relationship.

Friendships are contextually negotiated between persons. Accordingly, friendships may be developed as free-standing relationships, or they may be pursued as an added dimension of other relationships already serving required functions within the social structure. Because of their minimally determined status in the normative hierarchy of role relationships, peers develop friendships that complement, fuse with, compete with, and substitute for other interpersonal relationships (Hess 1979). For example, communicating as friends may complement the daily activities of two co-workers but compete with the requirements of a superior-subordinate relationship. The behaviors and expectations of friendship can fuse so extensively with a spousal or sibling relationships that it becomes difficult to determine when and whether persons are communicating as spouses or siblings or as friends (→ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends). Finally, with no close kin nearby, friends may substitute for one's family.

## THEORIES OF FRIENDSHIP

Recognizing the significance of interpersonal communication in achieving and defining friendships between peers as well as the importance of communication as an activity friends enjoy sharing, researchers have devoted increasing attention to friendship over the past 25 years. This work displays differing *approaches* to defining friendship for research purposes. Investigators developing generalizable theories tend to specify the definitions of friendship employed by participants in offering their responses to research questions. In contrast, inquirers emphasizing that definitions and practices of friendship differ according to the context and relationship allow their participants to define the relationship for themselves in providing responses. A second issue distinguishing researchers is whether they examine specific behaviors, communication skills, personal attributes, or provisions associated with friendships, or they study more holistically a constellation of experiences or communicative situations recounted by participants. Some projects combine the assessment of specific indicators with general descriptions of participation in friendships.

As to the *empirical methods* employed, investigations of communication and friendships have utilized exclusively and in combination survey questionnaires with fixed and/or

open choices, structured interviews, open-ended and narrative-based interviews, participant journals, ethnographic field notes, and auto-ethnographic reflections, as well as audio- and video-taped activities of friends.

Research concerning communication in the formation, maintenance, and dissolution of friendships emerged in the 1980s in response to social attraction studies examining personality variables or residential propinquity as static features of friendships (→ Relationship Development). Prior to this time, friendship appeared mostly as a residual category of social participation in demographic and sociometric studies, contrasting friendships (often termed “other”) with family and work relationships. Scholars began examining friendship as a relationship with characteristic demands and benefits in conjunction with a developmental perspective on communication in interpersonal relationships. This view assumes that what brings people together may not ensure the continuation of the relationship and that communication in relationships changes over time. Static conceptions of relationships say little about what makes friendships function on an ongoing basis or why their continued interaction holds mutual significance.

Closely associated with a focus on the communicative development of friendships is the recognition of dialectical tensions shaping and emerging from their interaction (→ Relational Dialectics). Whereas earlier work typically described friendship in benign terms and conceived relational growth as a linear process of increasing breadth and depth of disclosure, time spent together, intimacy, and satisfaction, a *dialectical perspective* challenges such notions. It argues that relating as friends involves inherent contradictions, antagonistic features of relational life that simultaneously presuppose and oppose each other. Several dialectical tensions of friendship have been reported. The dialectic of the ideal and the real describes the tensions between the abstract ideals of communication associated with friendship and the troublesome realities or unexpected rewards arising from its ongoing, concrete accomplishment. The dialectic of the freedom to be independent and the freedom to be dependent describes the cross-cutting requirements of availability and obligation in light of friendship’s voluntary basis. Friends must continually reconcile autonomy and interdependence within their relationship as well as enveloping social connections and circumstances. The dialectic of affection and instrumentality describes tensions arising from caring for a friend as an end in itself or as a means to an end. Friends rely on each other for emotional and practical assistance, but different meanings of friendship arise when someone feels befriended primarily for utilitarian reasons vs unqualified personal regard.

The dialectic of judgment and acceptance involves the recurring dilemmas in friendship between providing objective appraisals of a friend vs unconditional support. People expect acceptance and encouragement from their friends but also look to them for tough truths and wise counsel. Compassionately objective reactions combining evaluation and support are experienced as constructive criticism. The dialectic of expressiveness and protectiveness describes opposing tendencies to speak candidly with a friend and relate private thoughts and feelings, and the simultaneous need to restrain one’s disclosures to preserve privacy and avoid burdening one’s friend. Many persons consider confiding a distinctive privilege of their closest friendships. But revealing sensitive information makes persons vulnerable, and the responsibilities imposed on others not to misuse intimate disclosures make confidence and trust problematic achievements. Friends develop

trust through carefully managing the conflicting requirements of expressiveness and protectiveness.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

Despite the challenges that friendships present as ongoing achievements, the communication of friends often distinctively embodies social ideals of shared good will, loyalty, trust, pleasure, assistance, personal validation, and moral comportment as equals. Considerable research examined how the outlook and practices of friendship are negotiated communicatively as dimensions of other relationships, and how other social bonds develop into relations that members consider friendships. For example, in the *family context* communicating as friends emerges between parents and children across the life course to the extent that they come to view their interactions as chosen and not compulsory; they address each other outside of the parenting role or the self-centered child's role; they speak more respectfully as equals; and they emphasize the pleasures instead of the obligations of interaction. Between siblings transitioning to friendship involves emphasizing personal validation and cooperation over competition and hierarchical, role-based interaction.

The *workplace* is an important site for making friends of varying degrees of closeness between peers. Persons in similar jobs often share physical proximity, overlapping work schedules, and common interests and projects, which can facilitate routine contact and friendship formation. How persons communicate their availability, caring, assistance, and judgment in workplace friendships affects their viability both as friendships and as occupational arrangements. The transition from co-workers to friends involves developing common ground and choosing to socialize outside the work setting; becoming closer friends involves discussing personal and work-related problems, sharing confidences about life events, and the passage of time (Sias & Cahill 1998). Despite the potential benefits of workplace friendships for individuals and organizations, the objective demands, occupational mobility, or disappointments of either person's job and conflicting expectations between friends can jeopardize and ultimately undo friendships, with negative repercussions for former friends and work settings.

*Gender-linked patterns* of communicating in friendships have been identified across the life course (→ Development, Gender, and Communication). Female same-sex friendships are characterized by extensive disclosure of personal thoughts and feelings, routine displays of affection, significant emotional involvement, instrumental assistance, and interweaving of daily lives and concerns. Talking together is considered a characteristic pastime of female friends. By comparison, male friendships are characterized by easy-going sociability, conversation about common interests, minimally binding instrumental help, and respect for each other's autonomy. Male friends enjoy doing shared activities with a secondary focus on emotional sharing.

Scholars disagree about the precise nature and extent of these gender contrasts. Some argue that these gender-linked patterns imply qualitatively different forms of friendship offering comparable satisfaction and potential for intimacy for their participants. Others observe that gender-linked contrasts in friendship diminish in the closer and more enduring bonds of both males and females throughout life. Moreover, specific same-sex

friendships of males or females may deviate significantly from these patterns depending on their social circumstances. While prevailing socio-cultural arrangements statistically link males and females with the patterns described here, the continual social construction of gendered relational practices in concrete circumstances and cultural systems of interpersonal relationships appears more crucial than biological sex.

Research addressing *cross-sex friendships* illuminates multiple issues in the communicative achievement of friendship. In such bonds females and males must negotiate desired communication styles and gendered practices for a person of each sex in a relationship including members of both. Meanwhile, a widely recognized benefit of cross-sex friendships includes gaining an insider's perspective on the other sex. Such relationships frequently must communicate boundaries between friendship and romantic love, address sexual desire, sexual orientations, and sexual identities, and orchestrate public perceptions of the friendship. Cross-sex friendships clearly illustrate the always contingent position of friendship in social life.

These understandings of friendship derive from research primarily addressing white, North American, middle-class participants. Until recently, Robert Brain's *Friends and lovers* (1976) presented one of the few surveys of cross-cultural and ethnic variations of friendship. Important areas of emerging and future research include: cultural and sub-cultural similarities and differences in meanings and practices of communication in friendships; how friendships shape and reflect individual and collective identities; the communicative achievement of interethnic and interracial friendships; communication skills for forming, sustaining, and withdrawing from friendships; the impact of communication technologies on friendships; the interrelationships of friendship and health; the roles of friendships in health care, education, and mentoring; and the contributions of friendship to community building and conflict resolution.

SEE ALSO: ► Development, Gender, and Communication ► Friendship and Communication ► Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ► Relational Dialectics ► Relationship Development

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# Frustration Aggression Theory

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Frustration is defined as a state that sets in if a goal-oriented act is delayed or thwarted. The instigation remains even though the chances of realization are constrained by interfering influences. Under these frustrating conditions aggressive behavior is stimulated to an extent that corresponds with the intensity of the instigation and the degree of blockage of goal attainment. Aggression is defined as the deliberate violation of an organism or an organism substitute. It is primarily directed toward the cause of frustration, but may be redirected toward any other people or objects. The inhibition of aggressive behavior represents in itself a factor of frustration and can reinforce aggressive tendencies.

In its first general definition the frustration aggression theory (or hypothesis, hence "FA-H") proposes that aggression is always the result of frustration (Dollard et al. 1939). This corresponds with the following two postulates: (1) aggressive behavior requires the existence of frustration, and (2) the existence of frustration leads to some kind of aggressive behavior. Manifest aggression reduces aggressive tendencies and results in "catharsis." However, this only applies to that part of aggression caused by inhibition of aggression, not to aggression caused by the original instigation. The latter lasts as long as the frustrating conditions continue. A "catharsis" in its comprehensive meaning will only be achieved if aggression eliminates exactly those obstacles in the way of the original goal (→ Catharsis Theory).

FA-H is based on Freud's and Hull's drive theories. In contrast to mere drive theories, FA-H presupposes a frustration-inducing external incident that can be interfered with. It thereby transcends the defeatism and the implicit justification of violence contained in biological approaches, explaining aggression via law of nature as a condition of self-reproducing physical privation. For decades, FA-H was seen as the ultimate aggression theory and has become part of commonsense knowledge. Its *scientific and socio-political attraction* results from the combination of an empirically tested universal causal explanation of aggression and a correspondingly high socio-technological importance: whoever wants to avoid aggression and violence has to change or abolish frustrating social circumstances. FA-H therefore offers good reasons for the development of social programs expected to prevent criminal behavior and political violence. In the 1960s, FA-H was used as an argument when criticizing repressive moral values, more recently it was used as an explanation for certain aspects of terrorism (Mirdal 2003; → Mediated Terrorism).

*Criticism of FA-H* concentrated mainly on the general → validity of the assumed relation between frustration and aggression. Baron (1977) shows that the blockage of goal attainment leads to aggressive behavior only if the blockage occurs unexpectedly (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of). Moreover, it seems to depend on mediating factors, such as proximity of the goal, whether frustration actually leads to aggressive behavior. Berkowitz (1989) therefore suggested a *reduced version of the hypothesis*: frustration increases the likelihood of emotional aggression. The absence of aggression after frustration can always

be traced back to thwarting conditions or to inhibition of aggression. However, better compatibility with empirical findings also provided critical arguments against a reformulation. Berkowitz's variant of the hypothesis was said to have been made irrefutable, thereby losing in explanatory value. There are types of aggression that are not linked to the condition of induced frustration: goal-oriented aggression in order to gain an advantage, martial acts, and so on. Today, therefore, frustration is seen as a possible condition for certain forms of aggression (primarily impulsive anger) with personality traits (general fear, locus of control, and others) determining if the reaction to frustration is aggressive or, alternatively, depressed.

In *communication research* FA-H became primarily relevant in the area of research on media violence. Berkowitz & Geen (1966) assume in their "eliciting-cue" hypothesis that every aggression has two roots: (1) the existence of frustration, and (2) the presence of aggressive cues (e.g., a violent movie). It is telling that Berkowitz does not rely on frustration alone or on media violence alone to trigger aggressive effects (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). The eliciting-cue hypothesis therefore reacts to empirical findings that reject a law-of-nature occurrence of aggression after frustration. At the same time, potential learning effects of the recipients of media violence are linked to the condition that there is already an aggression-inducing emotional disposition to frustration present. In order to measure the influence of filmic depictions of violence, test arrangements were chosen in which the subjects were first deliberately provoked by verbal abuse or electric shocks and then shown films with violent content (→ Test Theory; Experiment, Laboratory).

This test arrangement was also used by Feshbach to verify the catharsis thesis. Feshbach (1955; 1956) is still very much linked with drive theories insofar as he claims that pressure can be alleviated by aggressive acts. A third variant of this combination – this time with arousal – is offered by Tannenbaum (1972) and Zillmann (1982). The authors show that frustrated media recipients can be reinforced in their aggressive attitude by arousing film stimuli independent of the content (→ Emotional Arousal Theory).

The uncritical acceptance of FA-H as a universal aggression theory in media violence research led for a long time to the use of two-factor-test concepts, where the isolation of media influences and the separation of personal and situational influences are difficult. At the same time, pre-receptive measuring did not take place, and formal aspects as well as evaluation in context were largely neglected. This caused a situation where the effect quality of media violence could not be clarified despite extensive research (Kunczik & Zipfel 2006).

In *research on aesthetic and dramatic means*, different effects on the viewer led to new evidence regarding the topicality of FA-H. It was particularly in dramatic films where the recipients were not offered a satisfying solution after stressful victim scenes, such as punishment of the villain, that aggression was provoked. In such cases, media-induced frustration concerning the end of the film led to an increase in violent attitude. What causes the violent reaction of the recipients is the shift from empathy with the victim to an aversive attitude toward the villain ("Robespierre affect," Grimm 1998). In contrast to the postulates of the eliciting-cue hypothesis, these results indicate that it is not aggressive film cues such as successful perpetrator models and the availability of weapons that are relevant for the effects of media violence, but the aesthetic and dramatic contextualization of the depiction of the victim. The aggressive shift occurs as a result of emotionally

stressful victim images that, together with the lack of a satisfying filmic solution, induce frustration plus moral outrage. Both together then provoke aggressive behavior.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Experiment, Laboratory  
▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Test Theory ▶ Validity ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## **Functional Analysis**

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Functionalism regards society as an interdependent and self-regulating social system tending toward equilibrium. The goal of functional analysis is to establish to what extent the parts (subsystems) contribute to the functioning of the system as a whole (→ Systems Theory).



With functionalism, the theoretical emphasis moves from causes to consequences. No effort is made to derive a given social phenomenon from specific causes. Instead, the question becomes which functions have to be fulfilled, through particular social actions, so as to guarantee the maintenance of the system. The results of actions, thus, are interpreted *teleologically* in terms of their contribution to the stability of the system. According to Robert K. Merton (1968, 84), the theoretical framework of functional analysis requires a specification of the units for which a given social or cultural item – e.g., mass-mediated messages – may be functional, allowing for diverse consequences – functional and dysfunctional – for individuals, sub-groups, and the social structure and culture as a whole. Functional analysis, further, focuses attention on a causal loop through which the results of specific courses of action act back on the items and units under study, bringing about persistence or modification (Cosser 1976, 146).

### HISTORY OF FUNCTIONALISM

The origins of functional analysis can be traced back to the ideas of Herbert Spencer and Émile Durkheim. Spencer developed the view that society, like an organism, is a self-regulating system consisting of subsystems which have to contribute to the survival of the system. Spencer was probably the first to use the terms “structure” and “function.” Durkheim argued in *The division of labour in society* (*De la division de travail social*, Paris 1893) that social order should be explained not by the self-interest of individuals, but by social solidarity based upon collectively shared values. Social anthropologists Bronislaw Malinowski and Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown extended this idea to develop a method of “functionalism” in order to explain the contribution of customs to the maintenance of social systems. Societies were regarded as consisting of parts related both to one another and to society as a whole. Societies have stable structures and functions; i.e., the contributions of partial activities relate to the total activity of which they are a part, so that each custom has a function within the total society (system). In “On the concept of function in social science” Radcliffe-Brown (1935, 397) argued that the function of a particular social usage is the contribution it makes to social life in its entirety. He emphasized that a social system (the total structure of a society together with the totality of social usages in which that structure appears, and on which it depends for its continued existence) has a certain kind of unity, which he called functional unity.

Talcott Parsons, whose ideas had been strongly shaped by biologists, had a determining influence on structural-functional analysis. Parsons and Edward A. Shils (1951, 197) defined a social system as a system of the actions of individuals, the principal units of which are roles and constellations of roles. *Roles*, which are regarded as the junction points of individuals with the social system, are the elements building the structure of the social system. Internal differentiation, which is a fundamental property of all systems, requires integration. The existence of the system depends on the coordination of differentiated roles, either negatively in the sense of avoiding disruptive interference with each other, or positively in the sense of contributing to the realization of certain shared collective goals through collaborative activity. The integration of the value orientations of various actors can be regarded as one of the most important functional prerequisites for the maintenance of the social system.

Parsons wanted to develop an all-embracing functional theory. Merton (1968, 39), a student of Parsons, suggested that research is not yet ready for a total system of sociological theory. He focused attention on *theories of middle range*, i.e., theories intermediate between the minor working hypotheses that evolve in abundance during the daily routines of research, on the one hand, and on the other the all-inclusive speculations that make up grand conceptual schemes from which one may hope to derive a very large number of empirically observed uniformities of social behavior.

### KEY PRINCIPLES OF FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

The following basic assumptions of functional analysis can be outlined (e.g., Hagedorn & Labovitz 1973, 38–42; Kinloch 1977, 215; Merton 1968, 79–91):

- 1 The social system possesses an independent existence and consists of subsystems that mutually influence each other.
- 2 The system has a certain number of basic needs that must be fulfilled; otherwise, the system breaks down.
- 3 For the maintenance of the system's equilibrium, the needs of the subsystems must be met.
- 4 The subsystems can be functional (contributing to stability), dysfunctional (decreasing stability), or irrelevant with regard to the stability of the system as a whole.
- 5 A specific need of the system can be satisfied in different ways (through functional equivalents).
- 6 Society adapts to its environment while trying to control the environment.
- 7 Society is integrated by culture.
- 8 Only institutionalized (regularly recurring) patterns of behavior lend themselves to functional analysis.

Structural-functional analysis, Philip Selznick (1948) argued, is especially suited to the analysis of adaptive structures or processes, because this method places currently variable behavior (functions) in relation to an assumed stable system (structure). Functions are short-lived processes that quickly run their course. By contrast, structures are stable, long-lived processes. Functions are those observed consequences that make for the adaptation or adjustment of given structures; dysfunctions are those observed consequences that lessen adaptation or adjustment.

Merton (1968, 105) further distinguished between *manifest functions* (objective consequences contributing to the adjustment or adaptation of the system, which are intended and recognized by participants in the system) and *latent functions*, which are neither intended nor recognized. Latent functions, then, refer to the “unintended” consequences of various kinds of behavior. There has been a tendency, however, to use the concept of latent functions particularly as way of giving seemingly irrational behavior (e.g., prayers for rain) a rational basis (for instance, strengthening social solidarity).

A main weakness of structural-functional analysis is its lack of clear criteria for answering the question: what is functional; what is not? This occasionally results in an

uninformative formulation of the framework of interpretation. Consequently, there is a danger that the individual researcher's value orientations will determine the answers to the research questions. At the same time, the emphasis on systemic equilibrium implies that functional analysis contains within itself a conservative perspective, one justifying the status quo. If a specific social system, regardless of its degree of social injustice, is regarded as being in a state of equilibrium, then unrest, rebellion, and revolution will easily be classified as upsetting the equilibrium, and accordingly as dysfunctional (→ Critical Theory).

## FUNCTIONALISM AND MEDIA

The functioning of any social system depends crucially on the internalization of its dominant value patterns by individuals. The motives of the individual and the values of the culture must be in accord to a considerable extent; the value patterns also must accommodate the individual needs of social actors. A prerequisite for the continued existence of a social system is the integration of the system's demands in terms of values with the individual's dispositions in terms of needs. In this regard, every social system, according to Parsons, must resolve four basic issues: (1) adaptive functions (means), (2) goal attainment functions (values), (3) integrative functions (norms), and (4) latent pattern-maintenance and tension-management functions.

In complex social systems, each of these functions is ascribed to a specific subsystem; thus, to the economy, adaptive problems; or, to the law, normative directions. And it is assumed that social systems can differentiate themselves further in response to increased demands regarding the fulfillment of the four basic functions. In Parsons's framework, however, there is no specific subsystem of mass communication. The question arises, then, to what extent mass communication is to be regarded as an aspect of the subsystem of the economy (e.g., stabilization of demand through advertising), of policy (e.g., mobilization of political support through manipulation), of the integrative subsystem (e.g., media contributing to socialization), or of the subsystem of pattern maintenance (e.g., resolution of tension via escapism). Parsons and Winston White (1960), in one treatise, did concern themselves explicitly with mass communication but, interestingly, without reference to system-theoretical considerations.

Functionalist approaches to the relationship between mass media and society have sought to delineate the contribution of a *subsystem of mass communication* to the functioning of the social system as a whole. A strict functionalist position was formulated by → Harold Lasswell (1948, 118), who stated that he was less interested in dividing up the act of communication than in viewing the act as a whole in relation to the entire social process (→ Models of Communication). Lasswell emphasized the system-stabilizing function of communication, which (termed ideology) supports dominant value structures. He detailed the following functions of mass communication: *surveillance* of the environment, disclosing threats and opportunities that might affect the values of the community and its component parts; *correlation* of the components of society in responding to the environment; and *transmission* of the social heritage from one generation to the next. A function of entertainment was added by Wright (1960, 610), who formulated the "classic" question of functionalist mass communication research: "What are the (1) manifest and (2) latent (3) functions and (4) dysfunctions of mass communicated (5) surveillance

(news), (6) correlation (editorial activity), (7) cultural transmission, (8) entertainment for the (9) society, (10) subgroups, (11) individual, (12) cultural systems?”

Building on Merton's (1968) conception of functional analysis, Wright (1960, 606) called for an investigation of those consequences of social phenomena – such as media – that affect the normal operation, adaptation, or adjustment of a given system: individuals, sub-groups, social and cultural systems. Whereas allegations concerning the conservatism of functionalist approaches have often been rhetorical rather than substantial, the conservative orientation of Wright's analysis was manifest in his argument that the media's contribution to social stabilization should be categorized as functional, while he applied “dysfunctional” to news of better societies that might threaten stability. In a more descriptive and explanatory vein, Melvin L. DeFleur (1970) asked how television contributes to the stability and permanence of American society as a whole. He concluded that low-taste content on television can capture audience members' attention and persuade them to purchase the advertised goods. Low-taste content thus functions to maintain the financial equilibrium of a social system that is tightly integrated with the whole of the American economic institution.

A great number of *lists of the functions* of mass communication are found in the literature. As paradigms or models, they provide theoretical orientation and under certain circumstances structure the research process. Some studies have addressed the communication between groups actively participating in the socio-political process – lobbies, interest groups, political parties, and so on. Other authors locate the dominant functions of media in relation to the political system. Especially after the death of Parsons in 1979 and Merton in 2003, the influence of functionalism in the field of media and communication research has been reduced. Today, there exists a potpourri of theories of which functionalism forms only a part (Bryant & Miron 2004).

SEE ALSO: ► Critical Theory ► Lasswell, Harold D. ► Models of Communication  
► Structuralism ► Systems Theory

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# Fundraising

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Fundraising is an organizational function and high-demand occupation unique to nonprofits, or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Although the term *fundraising* sometimes is used to describe the act of raising capital for for-profit businesses, and fundraising is conducted to finance electoral campaigns for government positions, the function is identified most commonly with raising gifts for charitable nonprofit organizations. Thus, this entry concentrates on what most accurately can be called “philanthropic fundraising.”

Simplistically defined, fundraising is the process through which charitable nonprofits generate income in the form of gifts from individuals, foundations, and corporations. Recent developments in research and theory building provide a richer perspective. Scholars and practitioners now subscribe to the principle that fundraising is more about relationships than it is about money. Definitions, such as Kelly’s (1998), have gained increased acceptance: fundraising is the management of relationships between a charitable organization and its donor publics. The new perspective holds that fundraising concentrates on the juncture where the interests of donors and the organization meet. Rather than simply generating indiscriminate income, fundraising is a staff function that counsels senior management on how to most effectively manage environmental interdependencies with donors (→ Stakeholder Theory; Systems Theory). The purpose of fundraising, then, is not to raise money, but to help charitable nonprofits manage their relationships with donor publics who share mutual interests and goals.

## **HISTORY, INSTITUTIONS, AND FUNDRAISING SCALES**

Fundraising as an organized and organizational function marks its beginning at the start of the 1900s in the US (Cutlip 1990). It evolved through distinct eras of professionalism, with responsibility for the function moving from volunteers and general managers to external consultants to specialized staff practitioners. The first commercial fundraising

firms emerged at the close of World War I, and the first internal staff fundraisers were hired at the end of World War II. Today, there are an estimated 100,000 full-time fundraisers in the US and about 80 percent of them are employed as staff practitioners. Although fundraising has spread to almost all countries, it is more advanced and pervasive in the US, where a favorable tax system supports an extensive nonprofit sector and fosters philanthropy through exemptions and deductions.

Nonprofit organizations primarily are defined as being entities that are neither businesses nor government agencies. Often referred to by various names, including *third sector organizations*, nonprofits cover a diverse collection of organizations, ranging from local daycare centers to major research universities to international disaster relief charities. Their missions represent all aspects of society, including the arts, education, the environment, health, human services, and religion. Nonprofits share only a few common characteristics: (1) they are private, which distinguishes them from government, (2) they do not distribute profits to those who control the organization, which distinguishes them from business, and (3) they are voluntary and self-governing.

There are approximately 1.6 million nonprofit organizations in the US, of which more than 1 million, or 67 percent, are designated “charitable nonprofits.” Nonprofits are exempt from federal income taxes, as well as such other taxes as property taxes, and are classified into 27 categories under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code. Nonprofits that have been granted charitable status are usually classified under the 501(c) (3) subsection. The primary difference between them and other nonprofits, such as chambers of commerce, is that gifts to charitable nonprofits are deductible from donors’ taxable income, whereas gifts to non-charitable nonprofits are not. As stated earlier, fundraising is a function of those nonprofits classified as charitable. It is important to note that *charitable organization* is a legal term and does not mean that all organizations classified as such deal with charity, or alleviating suffering of the needy. Indeed, charity constitutes a small portion of the work of US charitable organizations; most deal with philanthropy, or promoting human progress. The largest charitable organizations in terms of finance are those with missions in education and health, and hospitals and universities employ the largest number of fundraisers.

Giving in the US totals billions of dollars each year (\$260 billion in 2005) and represents almost 2 percent of the country’s GDP. Individuals traditionally give more than 80 percent of all gift dollars, and foundations and corporations provide the rest. To sustain and increase this high level of giving, US fundraising is organized into four programs: annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, and capital campaigns. The first two are primary programs; the second two actually are strategies to raise major gifts. Focusing on the two primary programs, annual giving raises lower-level gifts, whereas the major-gifts program raises large gifts. Dollar amounts defining the two gift types differ among organizations; however, a common dividing point is \$10,000, although annual gifts typically are less than \$100 and major gifts often exceed \$1 million. For most charitable organizations, annual giving produces the greatest number of gifts, but the major-gifts program accounts for the vast majority of gift dollars. The “principle of proportionate giving,” based on the unequal distribution of wealth, dictates that approximately 80 percent of all dollars raised will come from 20 percent of all gifts. The principle has been upheld for almost a century and fundraisers design their work around it.

## RESEARCH ON FUNDRAISING

Research and theory on fundraising is very new. Serious scholarship on the subject dates back only to 1991, when several ground-breaking books were published (for example, Burlingame & Hulse 1991). Unlike other aspects of philanthropy and nonprofit management, fundraising had not been claimed by any academic discipline. Knowledge of the function came from practitioners and consisted primarily of “how-to” advice based on anecdotal evidence. Advances in public relations theory starting in the 1980s, particularly excellence theory and a paradigm shift to organization–public relationships (→ Excellence Theory in Public Relations; Organization–Public Relationships), provided a framework for building theory on fundraising. Several public relations scholars have contributed to advancing knowledge on fundraising, but Kathleen Kelly (1991; 1998) is most closely associated with the endeavor.

Kelly and others conceptualized fundraising as a *sub-function*, or specialization, of *public relations* (→ Public Relations), which was defined as the management of relationships between an organization and the publics on whom it depends for success and survival. Donors were identified as a strategic enabling public of charitable organizations, similar to investors of publicly owned corporations. To be effective, fundraisers should rely on two-way communication and strive for mutually beneficial outcomes, or symmetrical effects. Theory holds that fundraising generates gift income by ensuring that the organization develops and maintains relationships with donors, who give freely due to relationships built on commitment, trust, satisfaction, and control mutuality. Fundraising should be integrated with other sub-functions of public relations so the organization can effectively manage its interdependencies with all strategic publics, including consumers of its program services.

A few scholars, as well as many practitioners, approach fundraising from a *marketing perspective* (→ Marketing). However, they do not conceptualize fundraising as part of the marketing function of nonprofits, but as a function separate from others. The leading proponent of the marketing approach is Adrian Sargeant (2004), a British professor of nonprofit marketing who in 2007 came to the US to assume the first endowed chair in fundraising, which was established the same year at the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University. Sargeant has written several books and conducted research on various facets of fundraising, including public trust and confidence in charities (→ Trust of Publics), donor commitment, and branding. His greatest contribution thus far has been in the area of retention of annual-giving donors. He provides empirical evidence that building loyalty in people who already are giving saves organizations money and time. Regardless, the marketing perspective provides a limited view of fundraising. For example, Sargeant’s work concentrates on annual-giving donors and pays little attention to major-gift donors, who provide the majority of dollars raised in the US. The flaw is understandable given marketing’s traditional focus on mass consumers of products and services. Furthermore, in countries such as the UK, major-gift fundraising is only now emerging.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In the last 20 years, the practice of fundraising has grown dramatically around the globe. For example, the Association of Fundraising Professionals, headquartered in the US, has

16 chapters and almost 3,000 members in Canada. It has strategic alliances with the Institute of Fundraising in the UK and the Fund Raising Institute of Australia. Fundraising also has spread to developing countries in response to the rapid growth of NGOs.

The increase in nonprofit organizations was documented by a team of researchers from Johns Hopkins University's Center for Civil Society Studies, led by Lester Salamon (Salamon et al. 2004). The comparative nonprofit sector project, launched in 1991, is an ongoing effort to analyze the scope, structure, financing, and role of the nonprofit sector around the world. Findings from the first stages of the project showed that nonprofit organizations are present in virtually every part of the world and the nonprofit sector is a major economic force. Based on a cross-section of 16 advanced industrial countries, 14 developing countries, and 5 transitional countries in central and eastern Europe, the researchers found that giving as a share of GDP ranged from a high of 1.85 percent for the US to a mid-level of 0.41 percent for Slovakia to a low of 0.04 percent for Mexico (unavailability of data on giving to religious organizations reduced the latter's percentage). If expenditures of all nonprofits in the 35 countries were calculated as a separate nation, the nonprofit sector would be the seventh largest economy in the world, ahead of Italy, Brazil, Russia, Spain, and Canada and just behind France and the UK. The researchers concluded that a massive upsurge of organized, private voluntary activity was underway.

The growth of nonprofit organizations has resulted in a demand for fundraising practitioners that has outstripped the supply. It also underscores the need for more knowledge regarding the fundraising function. Theories developed in the US must be tested and adjusted to accommodate different cultures and their legal, social, and political environments.

SEE ALSO: ► Excellence Theory in Public Relations ► Marketing ► Organization–Public Relationships ► Public Relations ► Stakeholder Theory ► Systems Theory ► Trust of Publics

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# Gag Orders

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Governments prevent information from being made public through restraints on speech called “gag orders.” Government executive orders and court injunctions impose gags to restrict the flow of certain types of information to achieve specific government objectives. For example, many national governments enact laws or adopt executive orders to prevent the distribution of official government secrets, details of ongoing military actions, and national security data. Similarly, courts around the world impose injunctions and nonpublication orders to prohibit, or enjoin, public distribution of information that might prejudice the outcome of ongoing litigation. Gag orders are a form of prior restraint because they prevent the exchange of information before any harm occurs rather than imposing punishment in response to specific harms caused by speech. While some gag orders target individuals, many gags are imposed on the media as the messenger that disseminates information most widely.

Different nations and cultures have distinct histories and traditions related to the freedoms of speech and press (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). One foundational distinction rests upon a nation’s embrace of libertarianism or authoritarianism. More authoritarian nations tend to view press law as a means to advance the self-interest of the state, which includes maintaining law, order, and civility. More liberal nations see a more independent role for the press to provide external oversight of government to prevent political abuses and maintain an informed citizenry. These differences lead to divergent national presumptions about the costs and benefits of gag orders that suppress the exchange of information.

*Canada*, the *United States*, and *Australia*, for example, all trace their fundamental understanding of free-speech values back to England and share a strong common law presumption disfavoring prior restraints on speech (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America). In these nations, judges are required to protect the integrity of court processes and enforce procedural safeguards to limit their own discretion and the power of government officers to impose gags on the media. Nonetheless, Australian and Canadian courts presume that media coverage of ongoing trials prejudices jurors and irretrievably damages the fairness of proceedings. As a result, Australian and Canadian judges routinely impose gag orders on the media to prevent distribution of information about ongoing trials. In the United States, however, court orders preventing the media

from publishing information are presumed to violate the US Constitution and are subject to the most stringent standards of judicial review. US courts, therefore, commonly rely on prior restraints that stop attorneys, jurors, and other individuals engaged in the trial from sharing potentially prejudicial information with the media. In some instances, US courts uphold bans on reporters' access to public officials to prevent continued unfavorable coverage or disclosure of leaked government information.

Many governments consider official control of the content of speech to be a legitimate function of the state and impose prior restraints and prohibitions on a wide range of subjects. The Press Ordinance in *Palestine* and *Israel's* Defense Regulations give government the power to censor as well as to license, revoke, or suspend publications without court review. The *Philippine Press Institute* has fought government initiatives there to regulate media content by suspending or revoking broadcast authorizations. *Venezuela's* Law on the Social Responsibility of Radio and Television is a criminal statute that prohibits the press from attacking or insulting government and punishes journalists who undermine state values and ideology (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). Both German and *European Union* standards prohibit denial of the Holocaust (→ European Union: Communication Law), and *German* law permits prior restraints on the press to avoid harm. In *Paraguay* and *El Salvador*, judges have extensive authority to impose gag orders to protect public morals and state security.

In rare cases, prior restraints reach beyond national boundaries. US Presidents Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush imposed a global gag rule that prohibited any non-US family planning organization that received US funds from disseminating information about abortion or lobbying for relaxation of anti-abortion laws. Members of the US Congress, the Council of Europe, and family planning experts across the Balkans, Africa, and the Americas opposed the so-called Mexico City Policy for its chilling effect on free speech and its negative impact on global women's health.

National standards and policies related to gag orders are not static, yet overall trends are difficult to assess. In general, more restrictive laws are adopted by authoritarian governments and during periods of national strife or insecurity. Political shifts toward democracy and international engagement tend to relax national policies on gag orders. For example, *Panamanian* government officials at the start of the twenty-first century moved to repeal key provisions of its decades-old criminal defamation laws that gagged the press and imposed severe penalties for criticism of government. The laws had been enacted under authoritarian military rule. Similarly, *Thai* courts revoked injunctions that prevented media from criticizing government officials as a means to preserve public peace and order. In addition, the interconnection of nations through a global communication network undermines the utility and effectiveness of gag orders that prohibit only information flows within national boundaries. Particularly in high-profile situations, international coverage of banned information as well as national reportage on the ban itself may increase, rather than reduce, interest in and attention paid to the prohibited speech.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► European Union: Communication Law ► Fourth Estate ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Gatekeeping**

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Sociologist Kurt Lewin first used the term *gatekeeping* to describe how food purchasing habits of a population affected social change. After noting that not everyone had the same impact on which foods a population ate, he used “gatekeeping” to refer to those who transport, buy, and prepare food items because they acted as gates, allowing certain items to pass while holding back others.

### **THE CONCEPT**

The first to apply the term to news production was David Manning White (1950), who observed the news selection decisions of a US wire editor at the *Peoria Star* in Illinois. He concluded that “Mr. Gates” was “highly subjective” (→ Bias in the News; Objectivity in Reporting) in his decisions (p. 386). The editor did not allow some stories to run in his newspaper because they were “not interesting” or “B.S.” or because he didn’t care for them.

Since White’s study, gatekeeping has been a popular theoretical framework in communication. Researchers have examined the types of content that gatekeepers allow into the media, the selection process gatekeepers employ, and the background and biases of the gatekeepers themselves.

The area of research has a rich and extensive tradition, but also has several *shortcomings*. Much gatekeeping research has tended to be descriptive rather than analytical. Research has described the content produced through the gatekeeping process, for example, instead of rigorously testing propositions related to the process. The term “gatekeeping” has provided researchers with a convenient theoretical framework for their studies, and some analyses deal with gatekeeping only by assuming that content must have passed through a gatekeeper (→ Media Production and Content).

A second common criticism is researchers' tendency to view gatekeeping as a single stage in isolation from other factors. Pamela Shoemaker (1991), in a comprehensive discussion of gatekeeping, developed a model in which advertisers, public relations practitioners, pressure groups, → news sources, and news managers all influence content (→ Issue Management; Issue Management in Politics; Media Events and Pseudo-Events; Public Relations: Media Influence). Gatekeeping often involves group decision-making, with multiple editors deciding which stories will receive prominent coverage. Audience expectations and production costs also influence the process (→ Audience; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

### THE GATEKEEPERS

David Weaver and Cleveland Wilhoit have conducted several studies examining the personal backgrounds and opinions working journalists hold (most recently, Weaver et al. 2006). In general, they conclude that the typical US journalist is male, Protestant, liberal, college-educated and middle class. Research elsewhere has noted similar demographics. A survey of journalists at the *Times* of London found that many shared news values but that cultural differences could affect their news selection (Peterson 1979; → United Kingdom: Media System).

Weaver and Wilhoit also found that journalists see themselves as much more than mere gatherers and disseminators of factual information; instead they see their role as interpreting what is news (→ Journalists' Role Perception). Other survey research has found the same tendency, revealing that journalists incorporate sense-making and interpretation as key job functions, which arguably increased in importance with the emergence of the → Internet and its unlimited volume of information.

Recent studies of content production on the Internet suggest that the role of gatekeeper shifts to the individual user, who has ultimate control over the information being received. A comparison of journalists' weblogs and news stories (Singer 2005), however, found that journalistic standards appear to persist online. Although expressions of opinion appear in blogs, journalists seek to retain their gatekeeping role by linking mostly to other mainstream media sites (→ Blogger; News Story).

Scholars have applied gatekeeping to several areas of the newsroom. For example, an examination of visual gatekeepers, through a content analysis, personal observations, and interviews with photo editors (→ Photojournalism; Visual Communication), found that individual opinions, conventions, and organizational structure all affect the process (Bissell 2000). The study concludes that newsworthiness and objectivity were not as important as the subjectivity of the editors (→ News Values).

US television journalists surveyed about their attitudes toward international news indicated that two factors influence the gatekeeping process: market demands and local relevance (Kim 2002; → Television News; Supply and Demand in Media Markets; Local News). Network journalists held a more global view of the news, selecting stories with diverse themes, but local television journalists tended to select international news stories with local angles. Timeliness and US involvement were important values for both groups.

Gatekeepers at international news media have also been the focus of research. Foreign news editors at the *Times* of London held news values very similar to those proposed in

previous research (Peterson 1979). A recent examination of international news agency coverage of the debate before the Iraq war found that nonwestern news agencies included more nonwestern viewpoints (Horvit 2006).

Finally, recent studies have attempted to link gatekeeping with other theoretical areas such as agenda setting (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). A study comparing patterns for newspapers with either a large or a small percentage of females in managerial positions (Craft & Wanta 2004) showed that male and female reporters covered different categories of stories only in newsrooms with predominantly male editors. In newsrooms with a high percentage of male editors, men covered more hard news stories and women covered more feature stories, contrary to previous findings (→ Media Management; Gender and Media Organizations). A replication of White's study with a female wire editor found no effects of news selection bias attributable to the editor's gender, and another study discovered no differences in the sense of personal autonomy of male and female journalists based on the number of women in a newsroom (see Craft & Wanta 2004). Overall, studies comparing gatekeeper gender have produced mixed results (→ Gender and Journalism).

## THE PROCESS

Hundreds of studies have examined the news selection process, many published well before White's (1950) initial work, such as → Walter Lippmann, who wrote in his classic book *Public Opinion* about how the news media paint pictures of the world for readers to imagine (→ Media Effects, History of).

More recently, Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese (1996) proposed a *hierarchy of news* model, in which five levels of factors influence the content that ultimately appears in the media: journalists, their routines, media organizations, news outsiders, and society (→ News Routines). Shoemaker and Reese note key studies at each level. Journalists can influence media content merely by selecting certain potential story topics while ignoring others (White 1950). Journalistic routines include strategies such as demonstrating → balance and fairness, a process Gaye Tuchman calls a *strategic ritual*, which uses objectivity to defend the news product from critics. Management and the ownership structure of the place of employment constrain reporters by teaching them what is acceptable to avoid being fired and to win the rewards of raises and good assignments, through a process Warren Breed calls newsroom socialization (→ Ownership in the Media). Outside influences, such as advertisers (→ Advertising) and news sources, affect media organizations as businesses that must make money to survive. Finally, social influences occur as media organizations maintain the status quo by providing only content that hegemonic forces in society deem acceptable and appropriate (→ Political Economy of the Media). Much of gatekeeping research is concentrated in levels one or three of the model, examining individual gatekeepers and media organizations.

## THE CONTENT

Gatekeeping has an important influence on the information available to the public, as several studies have shown. Guido Stempel (1985) compared news content from several US newspapers and found that a few publications, notably the *New York Times*, influence

the news coverage of other media by acting as → opinion leaders (→ Newspaper Journalism; Agenda Building). Its morning edition has a significant influence on subsequent news coverage on evening broadcasts of US network news as well.

Several researchers have applied gatekeeping to international news flow. A → meta-analysis of the research found that traditional gatekeeper factors, along with newsworthiness, socio-cultural structure, and organizational constraints, affected news selection (Wu 1998). The gatekeeping process varies dramatically from culture to culture and country to country.

Online gatekeeping may differ from that of traditional media. An investigation of whether online newspaper gatekeepers provided readers with information identical to what traditional media provide found that online content tended to concentrate on local news (Singer 2005). Internet gatekeeping has also been examined in countries such as Greece, Egypt, and South Korea (→ Internet News; Egypt: Media System; South Korea: Media System).

Research on the gatekeeping process grows in importance as researchers move away from traditional media to examine content and the production process with information on the Internet. A focus on the production and the producers of media messages has had much to offer for half a century, and gatekeeping will likely continue as an important theoretical framework in mass communication research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Egypt: Media System ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ Gender and Media Organizations ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Issue Management ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Local News ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media Management ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ News Story ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper Journalism ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ South Korea: Media System ▶ Supply and Demand in Media Markets ▶ Television News ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ Visual Communication

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## Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies

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The subject of this entry is the field of study that examines the representation of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) people in the media. GLBT media studies employ theories and methods from the relatively new field of GLBT and queer studies that started to appear in academia at the beginning of the 1990s. It is concerned with how the sexual identity categories of "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," "transgender," "queer," and "straight" are constructed in the media; how minority sexualities are represented; and why they are so represented. "Queer media," "queer representation," "queer media representation," and "queer cultural production" are terms frequently used in the field.

### GLBT, LGBT, AND QUEER

The use of the initialism GLBT is still under much debate. One critical point of contention is that promoting the use of this term and its variants serves to reinforce a prevalent concept based on the binary opposition of "straight" as the norm against the rest as "the other," ignoring their inherent differences and the different issues faced by each group. There are variations to the term, which is an adaptation of the abbreviation LGB (or "lesbigay"). While it is used more in the United States and Australia, LGBT is more widely accepted and adopted by cultural and social service units catering to the needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender groups in most English-speaking countries.

In existence since the 1970s, when the gay liberation movement started to appear on the agenda, GLBT studies examine how sexual minorities have been represented in history and culture, and how gender and sexual orientation have been constructed. Considered very important to GLBT studies are two essays by Gayle Rubin, "The traffic in women" (1975) and "Thinking sex" (1984/1993), which establish the theory that gender difference is different from sexual difference, though the two are related. Judith Butler



further explores the interrelatedness of gender, sex, and desire in her ground-breaking text *Gender trouble* (1990), which has become very important in queer studies.

There is also much controversy regarding the term “queer,” which has been re-appropriated since the late 1980s as an umbrella term for the marginalized sexual minorities, from an expression of homophobic abuse in the past. The first theorist to use the phrase “queer theory” in print was Teresa de Lauretis, whose essay of that title was published in 1991. Meanwhile, the text considered most influential in the development of queer studies is Michel Foucault’s *History of sexuality* (1978). Foucault argues that sexuality is constructed through religion, politics, and economics, so that no form of sexuality can be something natural or universal (→ Discourse). Embracing fluidity, “queer” is an open entity. In its resistance to the normative codes of gender and sexuality, “queer” rejects binaries like heterosexual/homosexual. As such, there is no consensus as to who is included and who is not under the term. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1990) distinguishes “queer” as “universalizing” instead of “minoritizing.” As queer theory has developed in academic scholarship, “queer” has been interpreted not as a fixed category, but has instead been read all over culture. It is concerned with affirming otherness and differences that are characteristic of marginalized groups, rather than adhering to strict oppositional dichotomies.

The concern of GLBT studies and queer theory are somewhat different. First, the former has been occupied with the query of whether nature or nurture is the cause of homosexuality, while the latter is less interested in this. Queer theory looks at how the construction of the different categories of alternative sexualities functions in culture (→ Cultural Studies), while GLBT studies are more concerned with identity affirmation of the different sexual minority groups for the advancement of the GLBT political movement (→ Identity Politics). From the focus of GLBT studies on the social construction of categories of normative and deviant sexualities, queer theory has emerged to challenge essentialist notions of homosexuality and heterosexuality, questioning cultural assumptions that are often immersed in heterosexist presumptions (→ Heterosexism and the Media).

## **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES**

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender media studies investigate the ideological functions of GLBT and queer media representations by employing critical and theoretical methods from gender, psychoanalytic, semiotic, and film theories to interpret meaning in these representations (→ Film as Popular Culture; Film Theory). It is interesting that GLBT media studies have also engaged queer theory in media analyses, and there is a tendency for the former to appropriate the latter in order to contribute to the liberation movement (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media). With a premise quite different from earlier culture theories, like the Frankfurt School (→ Critical Theory; Culture Industries), which view → popular culture as immutable and audiences as passive receivers (→ Affects and Media Exposure; Audience Research), queer theory argues for the possibility of multiple readings because of the increasingly complex relationship between readers/audience/viewers and cultural productions.

Before the 1960s, there were very few representations of homosexuality in American films due to the Production Code (also known as the Hays Code) that had been in force since 1934. A set of industry guidelines, the Production Code gave details of what was and was not considered morally acceptable in the production of motion pictures for a public

audience. The “Particular Applications” of the principles forbade references to alleged “sex perversion,” such as homosexuality. The early 1960s saw the release and screening of a few daring British films in America which offered commentary about homophobia. The American gay rights and civil rights movements then started a heated discussion about the Code’s restriction of the representation of themes that included sexuality. When enforcement had become impossible, the Code was abandoned entirely in 1967 in favor of the new Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) film rating system, which went into effect on 1 November 1968, but which contains no reference to homosexuality or queer.

When GLBT representation started to appear in the *American cinema*, media studies work in this area began to flourish, with books published on the topic: *Screening the sexes* (Tyler 1972), *Gays and film* (Dyer 1977), and *The celluloid closet* (Russo 1981). The oldest lesbian and gay film festival in the world, the San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, was first launched in 1977. By the early 1990s, there was a body of queer films that won critical acclaim in the Sundance Film Festivals. They were grouped under the term “New Queer Cinema,” coined by theorist B. Ruby Rich, which was soon to be used arbitrarily to denote independent films with gay and lesbian content. Then, in an interview in May 2004, Rich proclaimed that New Queer Cinema was over, as its characteristic of defiance had been replaced by commercial blandness catering to a niche market. While the field of GLBT and queer film studies has been more developed, the most observant media watch concerning television, radio, popular music, advertising, and other forms of mass media has been offered by the gay, lesbian, and queer press in their reviews and articles (Doty & Gove 1997). That said, there is also a very powerful media watch organization in the US called GLAAD (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation).

Though Doty and Gove (1997) think that there has consistently been some kind of *queer representation on television* since the late 1940s, other media scholars have until very recently lamented the rarity of mainstream media depictions of GLBT people, especially on television (Gross 1995). In the first decade of the twenty-first century, gay and lesbian characters became common on US prime-time television. Also available are programs produced by and for gay and lesbian people on television and radio, and representations found in the popular music arena, advertising, magazines, and newspapers. There is now a profusion of mainstream, alternative, and “in-between” sources of GLBT and queer media representation, although journalism and comic strips remain in two completely separate media worlds of the heterosexual mainstream and the GLBT and queer alternative. Meanwhile, same-sex erotic passions are suggested or directly referenced in popular music for the effect of transgression. These preoccupations with and connotations about sex appeal to the GLBT community, who express an intense dedication to popular music (Doty & Gove 1997).

Regarding *research methodologies* typically employed by GLBT media scholars, Worth (1993) notes a tendency toward difference in research areas, with gay men often engaging in historiographic archival work, while lesbians appear to typically conduct textual analyses (→ Historiography). For more than twenty years from the post-Stonewall period in the early 1970s, both media scholars and critics had been preoccupied with the question of “positive” and “negative” representation, which investigates how stereotypes are portrayed in the media, and the range of GLBT images on offer (Dyer 1993; Gross

1995; → Stereotyping and the Media). Related to this critical approach are the differences in how gay and lesbian images are read and interpreted by the different groups of straight and queer audiences (Doty & Gove 1997; Erhart 1999; Raymond 2003). Doty & Gove (1997) explain that the gay, lesbian, and queer images on television can either be presented overtly in the text through dialogues or sexual behavior of the characters, or the queerness of a character's sexuality can be understood on the basis of other signs. Erhart (1999) details previous scholarly discussions of what constitutes a queer image or narrative. From these discussions, she provides an oppositional definition of "queer" as contrasted with "heterosexual," and which stands for the imagery of alternative sexualities that are found outside of hegemonic representation. Both Erhart (1999) and Raymond (2003) comment on the growing involvement of lesbian, gay, or queer writers, authors, and directors in the production of GLBT media images. Such programs could also be performed by actors who are openly queer, or whose sexual orientation is enigmatic. With such ambiguity, viewers are open to multiple levels of reading performances, resorting to their fantasies and imagination, while simultaneously decoding elusive references, to capture the "queerness" that is on offer by the images.

### CRITICAL DEBATES

The increasing number of gay and lesbian characters in the different English-language contemporary media, especially those of the US, has prompted the question of whether their visibility represents a certain kind of political victory. In an active challenge of the prevailing tenets of visibility politics, queer cultural production is seen to offer new possibilities for queer "world-making" (to use the term of Henry Jenkins [2006], meaning the creation process of multiculturalism to sustain consumer franchising). Yet, it is doubtful whether the significantly white, middle-class, and gender-conforming gay and lesbian images offered by the mainstream media in the west, e.g., *The L Word* (Showtime 2004–), result in the normalization of queerness to serve the economy-driven neo-liberal political agenda.

Raymond (2003) thinks television programming that includes homosexual content has to appeal to mainstream liberal viewers, who, though mostly heterosexual, must know one or two homosexual colleagues, friends, or relatives. Commonly found up until the 1990s, the stereotypical or negative representation of GLBT people "as victim or villain" (Raymond 2003, 101) has been replaced by this normative interpretation of sexual difference. In addition, as Kellner (1995) puts it, difference sells. As a sign of opposition, difference helps create desire and sell commodities. This points to the trend to promote gayness as a lifestyle, and gay personalities as fashionable, stylish, and having cultured tastes, as portrayed in the very popular US Emmy award-winning television reality program *Queer Eye (for the Straight Guy)* (Bravo TV 2003–2007) and the sitcom *Will and Grace* (NBC 1998–2006). Raymond (2003) argues that the subversive potential that media critics tended to consider for resistant interpretations found in the images once created by independent directors are now undermined and weakened by the mainstreaming of these images offered in the mass media.

As much as the media are part of culture, debates in GLBT media studies also arise from the intertwining differences in culture, gender, and sex. Despite the recent

development of lesbian and queer studies into established fields of studies in the western world, such progress elsewhere is still very much in the initial stages. If media representation is about power and identity, nonwestern viewpoints are very much different from the western ones. Media studies in these areas reflect public awareness and acceptance of the issues. *Islamic countries, India and Greater China*, for example, all have different cultural values in gender relations and family structures, as opposed to the Freudian–Lacanian psychoanalytic tradition of the west that centers on the nuclear family. Quite a few examples of films that have been produced in recent years by filmmakers from Israel, Iran, and India still depict the suffering of women as a result of the unfair treatment and reactionary misogynist attitude of the people because of the local cultures and religions. Meanwhile, Confucian teachings have effectuated a very closely knitted parent–child relationship on Chinese families. Chinese children have to fulfill the expectations of their parents to carry on the family name and lineage through heterosexual marriage and reproduction, so that the act of coming out by a Chinese gay man or lesbian with the parents is more difficult than coming out with friends. Moreover, the gender relations in Chinese societies still pertain to a male-privileged hierarchy.

With the debased social *status of women*, who are treated as the peripheral to men – the core – which is still very much the case in a large part of the world, lesbianism is doubly marginalized. For that matter, bisexual and transgender people are both more than doubly marginalized, and their identities even more submerged. Raymond (2003) comments on the absence of bisexuals even in prime-time US television programs, which are full of gay and lesbian characters, while Doty and Gove (1997) also assert that bisexual desires cannot be fully recognized in the gay and lesbian images offered by mainstream media. Considering power as the site of oppression, the power disparity is significant here. As such, gay and lesbian representations in the nonwestern mass media have to deal with quite different issues, putting aside the cultural productions by the local GLBT circles, for the reasons of low circulation in the public arena and too much self-awareness.

Because of globalization and the rise of regionalism, the one-way traffic of media flow from the US and European core to the periphery has been replaced by the increasing flow back of nonwestern media productions from the peripheral to the core (→ Globalization of the Media). For example, Mexican film productions are exhibited in Spain, while Chinese films have started to penetrate western markets; with very strong and nationwide distribution, Korean and Indian films have started to wear down the overseas markets of → Hollywood. As Arjun Appadurai (1990) puts it, the current mediascape is much more diversified than the cultural homogeneity found in traditional media theory. With the multifaceted media flow that is replacing the old dichotomy between Hollywood and the rest of the world, media studies have to accommodate different perspectives from nonwestern countries in relation to gay and lesbian representations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Audience Research ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Discourse ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Film Theory ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ Historiography ▶ Hollywood ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Stereotyping and the Media

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# Gaze in Interaction

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When communicators interact with one another, they necessarily gaze (or look) at each other or gaze separately or together at objects, artifacts, or events in the perceptual world. Gazing, scholars in language and social interaction have shown (→ Language and Social Interaction), is a fundamental mechanism through which people manage, coordinate, and choreograph their communicative activities. Gaze-in-interaction, then, is the term of choice to refer to these multiple activities, including the ways in which people use gaze as a resource for accomplishing specific interactional goals.

In general, people may gaze each other “in the eyes” (“mutual gaze”), gaze at specific bodily parts (e.g., a pointing gesture) or toward objects or artifacts, gaze at their own gestural behaviors to bring recipient’s focused attention to such activities (“gaze-shifts”; see Streeck 1994), or look in a direction established by another (sometimes called “triadic eye gaze”). These activities, researchers have shown, serve important functions; they “do” things.

When looking at another, a communicator may signal interaction readiness, thereby making himself or herself available, or asking the other, for human contact: this is a first *function of gaze* (Goffman 1963). A second function of gaze is to regulate interaction and monitor another person’s behavior (Kendon 1967). For instance, speakers cue recipients when it is their turn to talk (→ Conversation Analysis). Prototypically, a person looks away as they start to speak, presumably to hold their turn of talk, and gazes toward the recipient at the end of their utterance to relinquish the conversational floor or to enable participants to produce smooth transitions in turn-taking sequences. In some interactional contexts, speakers may precisely time their gaze toward listeners to provoke an audible feedback cue, and when a response is offered, their gaze is terminated (“gaze window”; see Bavelas et al. 2002). In short, participants gaze to regulate the flow of conversation. Third, people gaze to convey emotions and relational-intimacy-immediacy cues (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Depending on the duration, frequency, and intensity of a gaze, participants may display dominance, liking, or attraction, and when juxtaposed with other nonverbal behaviors such as facial expressions, gazing may convey myriad emotions such as anger or happiness. When people gaze, then, they do not just look at people or objects, but instead, subtleties about how looking is done will perform important, interactionally implicative functions.

In addition to serving multiple functions, gaze also is something people *interpret* in particular ways. Across cultures, we find, for instance, that people agree on the meaning of a stare by interpreting it as a sign of assertiveness, suggesting that maintaining gaze and averting or withdrawing may be taken as signs of dominance or weakness. Much work has been done to decipher how gazes may be interpreted. For instance, an early study by Burgoon et al. (1984) about the perceived communicative meaning of gaze evidenced that communicators interpret frequent eye gaze as conveying greater intimacy, immediacy, dominance, persuasiveness, and aggressiveness, while gaze aversion shapes interpretation in the opposite direction. As a later study (Burgoon et al. 1985) also showed, gaze aversion negatively influences job interviewers’ interpretive judgment about a prospective

employee, including his or her credibility, competence, or sociability, and decreases the likelihood that they will be hired. How people gaze, then, carries both relational and institutional consequences.

Although gaze activities shape cultural members' interpretive-perceptual judgment, some research has examined how people interpret, orient to, and react to a particular gaze in the course of naturally occurring interaction. One recent study, for instance, showed how children interpret and differentiate the meaning of caregivers' multiple kinds of gazing activities (Kidwell 2005). As the author illustrated, young children differentiate caregivers' "mere looks" from "the look" by orienting to the gaze's implication on subsequent actions, particularly the likelihood that caregivers will intervene on sanctionable activities. How to interpret a gaze, then, is not just a matter of perception, but becomes meaningful, and collaboratively achieved, in and through interactional actions performed "in the moment."

To date, research on gaze-in-interaction has offered a rich descriptive account of how people coordinate their communicative activities to accomplish particular interactional (e.g., taking turns at speaking), relational (e.g., cueing intimacy and attraction), and institutional tasks (e.g., disciplining children or being compliant with and resistant to therapy). Interestingly, findings about how gazing operates in human interaction have been influential, shaping the design of accurate gazing behaviors from conversational agents operating within virtual environments or mediated conversation.

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Gestures in Discourse ► Goffman, Erving  
► Language and Social Interaction ► Microethnography ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture ► Visual Communication

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## Gender and Discourse

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Scholarship on gender and discourse has a long, interdisciplinary history. Anthropologists in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries documented differences between women's and men's speech in non-European cultures. However, gender differences within cultures have never been sufficient to constitute separate women's and men's languages. Around the early twentieth century, academics' attention also turned to the English language. Gender and language variation was an early research topic for linguists. One bold but inaccurate view was that a larger variability in articulateness among men than women was evidence of men's greater intelligence. Psychological studies dating from the 1930s and 1940s charted the emergence of sex differences in language use. A longstanding but still controversial claim is that of an innate female superiority in verbal ability (Weatherall 2002).

A feminist concern with language and communication also has a long history (→ Feminist Communication Ethics). Publications from the first *women's movement* in the late nineteenth century noted the use of diminutive terms to address women and not men. The significance of women changing their name on marriage was also criticized. However, it was the second women's movement starting in the 1960s that generated research on the relationships between gender, language, and power. Feminists documented how language, in both structure and patterns of use, encoded dominant beliefs about women's inferiority. Outside feminist and academic circles there has also been a sustained interest in the topic. Journalistic articles are regularly published that discuss gender-related language issues such as the use of "Ms," marital name-changing, and the use of gender-marked terms (e.g., "air hostess" vs "cabin attendant"). Some self-help books offering advice on how to communicate better across the so-called gender divide have reached bestseller status. It should be noted these books are largely targeted at a female audience and they suggest changes to the ways women should talk, but not men.

### RESEARCH SUBJECTS

A landmark publication was Robin Lakoff's (1975) *Language and woman's place*. She argued that women's social place was reflected in their speech, which she described as ingratiating, hesitant, and weak. Women's secondary status was also revealed in reference terms, which were more frequently negative and sexual than were terms for men. Pairs of terms that illustrated the kinds of bias she documented include mistress/master, bachelor/



spinster, and tomboy/sissy. The two topics identified by Lakoff – gender differences in speech and sex bias in language – dominated scholarship until the last decade of the twentieth century. An important and ongoing debate straddling those two topics was whether language merely reflected gender inequality or whether it also maintained and reproduced sex-based discrimination. Scientific studies have shown that language customs can perpetuate discrimination. For example, jobs advertised using male words tend to attract fewer female applicants than the same jobs advertised using gender-neutral terms. Research on the significance of language bias has been used to support policies that prohibit sexist language practices such as the use of “man” to refer to people in general.

Over time there has been a diversification of subject matter in this area (e.g., Holmes & Meyerhoff 2003). For instance, *women’s talk* has been studied not just comparatively but for what it reveals about women’s lives – their relationships with each other and their unique gendered experiences as mothers, daughters, and so on (→ Women’s Communication and Language). Likewise men’s talk has been examined in investigations of maleness and masculinities. The study of gender in language has also broadened. For instance, different contexts such as sports commentary and wildlife documentaries are now studied. There is a general consensus that *changes in gender representation* have occurred. For example, women are no longer as invisible as they once were. Less encouraging is that representations of women and men continue to be overwhelmingly consistent with sex stereotypes (→ Sexism in the Media). A vital new area of research is gender and computer-mediated communication. A key issue is whether established trends in gender and language research are reproduced or transformed by the new technologies.

Another important way subject matter has expanded is a consideration of language in terms of “queer” or *non-normative gender and sexual identities* (e.g., Livia & Hall 1997). Gender is pervasively conceptualized as a binary, so there is a notable absence of ways of talking about those who are transgender or intersex. Furthermore, past research on gender and language has largely assumed heterosexuality. More recently consideration has been given to marginalized sexual orientations and language use. Some research on sexuality parallels that on gender and language by asking questions about what is distinctive about the speech of those who belong to gay communities and how homosexuality is marginalized as a topic in talk and texts. However, other queer-focused research is characterized by a new way of theorizing the relationship between language and social identities (→ Identities and Discourse).

### THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The new way of thinking about language and identity that is evident in some of the sexuality literature marks a fundamental theoretical shift in conceptual thinking (Cameron 1998). The change is part of a broader movement across the social sciences that has been referred to as the “discursive turn.” Here, “discourse” does not refer to the everyday sense of the term as conversation, nor does it carry with it the technical linguistic meaning of language structure above the level of the sentence (→ Discourse Analysis). Rather, it alludes to a rejection of ideas regarding language as a simple system of representation. Instead, language as discourse *produces* meaning and knowledge. Furthermore, this new

sense of “discourse” captures the idea of power as truth, manifest in cultural givens about, e.g., gender and sexuality.

Discursive research continues an earlier interest in the relationships between gender, language, and power but examines them in new and innovative ways. Instead of asking how language reveals and perpetuates gender-based inequality, a discourse analytic study might ask about the ways meaning systems produce and reproduce cultural values. For example, discourse analytic studies have examined how dominant cultural notions such as liberalism and individualism are mobilized to deny gender inequality in the workplace and to justify a lack of affirmative action (→ Discursive Psychology). An ongoing concern for those following the discursive turn is a current rise in neo-Darwinian ideas, which reifies biology as the cause of complex gender-differentiated behaviors such as those relevant to communication. A critique of those neo-Darwinian ideas requires two types of expertise: a mastery of scientific discourse itself and an appreciation of a discursive critique of that same science.

The discursive turn brings with it a landmark change in the way *gender* is conceptualized. Early work on gender and language rested on essentialist ideas whereas discursive work embraces constructionist ones. To oversimplify, gender essentialism posits that relatively stable biological and/or social factors cause differences between women and men. Questions asking about gender differences in speech are typically essentialist because they assume some biological or social origin of gender differentiation. In contrast, *constructionism* views gender differences as a *product* of cultural meaning systems. So knowledge and beliefs about gender are produced by historical and social practices organized by a two-sex system. According to a constructionist perspective a gender identity is accomplished, at least in part, by talking and behaving in ways that are consistent with the sex label one has been assigned.

An important source of support for constructionist ideas is transgender studies. That a person can successfully pass as a different gender is, at least, evidence that gender is not entirely something that one is. Rather it is a social accomplishment requiring cultural knowledge about gender and a high level of skill and competence at enacting that knowledge. In cases of individuals who are born intersex, Kessler (1998) considered medical practices for what they revealed about the power of cultural beliefs to “make sex.” For example, social norms regarding penis functionality (i.e., ability to penetrate a vagina) are used to guide surgical decisions to feminize babies born with ambiguous genitalia. So the study of non-normative gender identities has launched challenges to long-held assumptions about the naturalness and inevitability of sex. The theoretical concept of language as discourse helps highlight the power of culture to shape understandings of natural phenomena such as biological sex.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Methodological changes in research on gender, language, and discourse also cut across theoretical distinctions. Put roughly, there have been trends toward naturalistic data and an increasing use of qualitative analyses (→ Qualitative Methodology). Also there has been a move away from treating gender as a feature of individuals and toward analyzing it as a social identity that may be more or less relevant in different interactional contexts. Overall, a complex array of research approaches exists. An advantage of the theoretical

and methodological diversity is that it characterizes a vibrant and exciting field of research. However, a disadvantage is a lack of common ground upon which to base discussion and debate. For example, a lack of definitive answers to questions about gender differences in speech motivates some researchers to pursue studies of difference, but it is used by others to reject the legitimacy of the questions. Such fundamentally incompatible positions are seemingly irreconcilable.

Compatibility issues aside, a range of contemporary approaches found in the literature are worth briefly mentioning. One is a → Communities of Practice (CoP) perspective. Typically associated with sociolinguistics, a CoP approach investigates how speech patterns develop in relation to gender-differentiated membership of social groups. For example, specific workplaces have different gender divisions of labor. Detailed qualitative and quantitative analyses can reveal how gender-differentiated speech patterns are linked to particular job-related activities. The ways that gender, alongside other social identities such as age and ethnicity, influence speech styles in interaction is also a chief concern of research grounded in → Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), which is motivated by social psychological concerns. Another distinctive methodological approach evident in the published research literature is Conversation Analysis (CA), which attends to micro-features of talk-in-interaction. A CA study might examine when speakers observably orient to gender as relevant to the interaction, and might consider what those orientations accomplish in terms of social actions such as complimenting or complaining.

The richness and diversity of theory and methods in research on gender, language, and discourse belie simple predictions about possible directions future research might take. Currently, there is a substantive rift between language research based on essentialist ideas about gender and that based on constructionist ones. The establishment of *Gender and Language* in 2007, a journal devoted to publishing work on the topic, may help close that rift. Alternatively, approaches such as conversation analysis might gain ascendancy, approaches that side-step theoretical commitments about the nature of gender. Certainly, lay understandings of gender and its relationship to language largely rest on essentialist notions. Thus it behooves those endorsing constructionist ideas to make them more widely available and relevant to the concerns of contemporary society.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Communities of Practice ► Constructivism ► Discourse Analysis ► Discursive Psychology ► Feminist Communication Ethics ► Identities and Discourse ► Qualitative Methodology ► Sexism in the Media ► Women's Communication and Language

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# Gender and Journalism

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Gender and journalism became a popular area of study in the mid-1990s when gender in media studies gained recognition as a powerful variable defining feminine and masculine roles and behavior and structuring everyday life and work. Earlier feminist media studies had paid attention to women in journalism and their peculiar position in a male-dominated professional world with strong preconceptions about women journalists (Van Zoonen 1994). The growing realization that culturally determined gender role expectations exert influence led to the conceptual shift that added a *gender* perspective to journalism studies. Despite being common for years in gender studies (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), this perspective had not fully entered some fields such as media studies or organizational studies.

## RESEARCH HISTORY

In media studies this insight begins from the premise that gender notions color what journalists consider appropriate professional behavior for women and for men. Such notions may structure power relations in media work, influence the division of labor, determine access to promotion and status in media organizations, and affect journalists' interaction and communication with sources, colleagues, and supervisors.

Earlier accounts of women in the media were *autobiographies of female pioneers*, who related their survival strategies in an overwhelmingly male world. In the late 1970s and early 1980s other reflections on women in journalism began to appear, referring as well to alternative media. Several women initially excluded from journalism, who later gained acceptance on condition of surrendering to male newsroom norms, were motivated to develop their own media (→ Alternative Journalism).

In the 1970s, scholarly journals began to pay more attention to the *position and occupation roles of women in media hierarchies*. The 1975 Mexico Conference for the first UN Decade for Women helped set the research agenda in three areas: women's underrepresentation in the news (→ Gender: Representation in the Media), trivialization and sex-role stereotyping in content (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media), and women's underrepresentation in decision-making positions. The driving force behind these priorities was the belief that a greater presence of women in the media would influence the media agenda (→ Agenda Building), which, in turn, would stimulate the inclusion of more women's issues in public debate.

Studies during the 1970s and 1980s began to compare women's and men's *tasks and responsibilities in media organizations*, trying to identify possible differences in their performance. Did male and female gatekeepers respond differently to news stories about women? Did women's or lifestyle page editors turn out different final products? Did men and women show differences in job satisfaction? Did they have different goals and achievement orientations? Did female television news anchors perceive any career barriers? There was even a replication, 40 years later, of White's (1950) classic on → gatekeeping, referring this time to Ms. Gates.

Studies on gender in the early 1990s were mostly descriptive research on media, rather than on journalism. Initial research on gender patterns in media employment concentrated on descriptive accounts of male and female *presence in organizations*, with numbers and percentages dominating the discussions (Creedon 1993; Gallagher & Quindoza-Santiago 1994; Gallagher 1995). These studies painted an overall picture showing that in the media workforce of many countries women formed a minority, occupying a small fraction of middle management, especially in news organizations, and an even smaller fraction in senior management. This serious underrepresentation still exists, although some countries have made slight changes for the better. US women journalists gained managerial responsibility and influence during the 1980s, especially in weekly newspapers and magazines (Weaver & Wilhoit 1996). On the other hand, a lower percentage of women than of men have a great deal of influence where power really matters: in hiring and firing (→ Journalism).

In the late 1990s several authors attempted to correlate women's presence in media organizations with *qualities of content*, as some research topics of the period reflect. Did female writers choose particular topics for stories? Did they have different priorities? Did the greater presence of women's writing on some front pages have anything to do with what appeared to be a wider range of stories of special interest to women? The assumption that a greater presence of women in the media workforce would lead to changes in their portrayal seemed to oversimplify the relationship between producers and content. It ignored the influence of the culture of the work environment – the media organization – on content as well as on content producers (→ Media Production and Content; Quality of the News).

Most studies up to the late 1990s took the working environment of journalists as a gender-neutral condition; they conceptualized gender mainly as a fixed attribute within media organizations, and not so much as a relational quality within the organization. Until the mid- to late 1990s, authors noted a lack of systematic research on gender and media organizations, or gender and journalism, although organizational studies in general suffered from the same deficit.

In the late 1990s, organizational studies developed a more sophisticated approach by breaking away from the idea of organizations as gender-neutral entities and by recognizing that the behavior of employees is the outcome of much more complex processes involving interaction and practices (→ Organizational Culture). Gender is only one of the major determinants.

### **CURRENT RESEARCH FOCI**

Recent debates on gender and journalism also reflect this new approach, with less emphasis on counting bodies and describing employment patterns and more on gendered substructures shaping processes. To study gender and professionalism as variables in

media production, the catchphrases became “gender orientation in journalism” or “gendered professionalism.” “Newsroom culture” and “journalistic culture,” and more specifically, “gendered professional practices in the newsroom,” finally became a center of attention.

Professional values and newsroom practices, as part of newsroom culture, were seen to have an unavoidable gender bias, given the preponderance of male decision-makers. Studies began to identify gendered substructures, such as *topic selection*, in which male priorities set the media agenda, or *division of work* in the allocation of beats, because in many countries, sports, crime, or war are still topics that only men cover. Gender also influences the treatment of stories from particular angles and styles: women take up human interest features and men dig into hard news. News discourse, as part of newsroom culture, shows the selective privileging of masculine over feminine ways of knowing, preferring logic over emotion, or science over intuition (Kitzinger 1998).

Some gendered substructures are difficult to recognize in daily life; they have become part of the social fabric in newsrooms and are the norm – that’s-how-we-do-it-here (→ News Routines). Studies show that female journalists can make contradictory statements, indicating that gender has not been important in their careers but at the same time has had a negative impact on salary and on career opportunities, such as running into the *glass ceiling*. Sexual harassment in newsrooms, and sometimes from sources, continues for many female journalists.

The increasing personalization of news, sexualization of news presentation, growing emphasis on infotainment, and tabloidization of media, some say, have offered women more job opportunities. Others blame market-led feminism for promoting a materialistic version of femininity and feminizing news (→ Feminization of Media Content).

Perceptions by journalists of the core values and roles in their profession differ considerably worldwide, and sometimes even within one region, country, or media organization (→ News Ideologies). It may therefore be misleading to speak about gender and journalism as if journalism represents one set of orientations (→ Journalists’ Role Perception). A professional identity depends on individual, social, cultural, and economic factors. Looking at journalism through a gender lens magnifies the influence of cultural and economic conditions even more, because gender itself is a culturally specific social construction.

Studying a range of realities, through country or region studies, for instance, is important for understanding gender and journalism, but also exceptional (Gallagher 1995; Weaver 1998; De Bruin & Ross 2004; Chambers et al. 2004). Most research, however, has shown a bias toward resource-rich, first-world countries, with a serious underrepresentation of regions outside of Europe and North America.

Comparing the national and international studies is often difficult, not only because of the geographical imbalance, but because studies lack a common framework: some researchers focus on women’s overall share of media jobs and look at entire media organizations, but others limit themselves to news departments.

In recent debates about gender and journalism, three concepts figure prominently: professionalism, media organization, and gender. Debates use the terms *professional* and *organizational* inconsistently. Sometimes *organizational* refers to the newsroom but at other times to the whole media organization, and the two settings appear interchangeably. Searching for a conceptual framework, authors have now turned to another concept:

social identity. Identity offers a way to capture and explore the dynamics among gender identity, professional identity, and organizational identity.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Routines ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media

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## **Gender and Media Organizations**

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Theorizing about gender and organizations has proved a complex challenge, resulting in a body of literature that is "patchy and discontinuous" (Ashcraft & Mumby 2004, xiii). Yet, around the globe, feminist scholars tend to agree on one universal impediment to gender equity: reality emerges from the male standpoint, which shapes organizations and meanings. For the past 50 years, few organizations have attracted more scholarly attention with regard to gender dimensions than those of the mass media industry.

## ISSUES

Fundamentally, the relationship between gender and media organizations affects individual consciousness and collective social life (Tuchman 1979), so that the organizational milieus in which media products are created invite serious feminist analysis. Women's limited share in the ownership and control of media organizations, combined with their low employment in key decision-making roles, underscores why gender inequality undergirds the media industry worldwide (de Bruin 2000; Watkins & Emerson 2000; → Ownership in the Media). As a *minority in the middle- and senior-management media workforce*, women are unable to effect significant organizational change, shape media content, or influence hiring and firing decisions (Weaver & Wilhoit 1996). They want to keep their jobs, so they must please those with more power inside and outside of the organization. Overall, Milkie (2002) suggested that too little research systematically examines the struggles and processes of gendered media systems – the workings of cultural power.

For example, while the number of women employed in US media organizations' lower-level positions may have improved in recent decades after federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) legislation was enacted, scholars argue that the socio-economic organization of media and its *routines and conventions, which reinforce sexism*, have not. Social, technological, and economic change since the 1970s has forced media organizations to reinvent themselves in order to consistently show a profitable return on global conglomerates' investments – often by modifying strategies appealing to the female labor force. Also, mass media workers' routines shape media content, reinforcing gender stereotypes by constructing symbols and images that define gender and ultimately women's identities (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media).

## WOMEN IN DIFFERENT MEDIA

Women's marginalized workplace status and gender-stereotypical messages permeate a wide variety of mass media organizations. In particular, feminist scholars have been highly critical of five general mass media organizations and products: news, advertising, television, motion pictures, and magazines.

First, *newsroom* gender issues have culminated in numerous sex-discrimination lawsuits and out-of-court settlements. De Bruin (2000) described a "macho culture of newsgathering" – an environment that often excludes women journalists and positions them as inconsistent with the "true news professional." Since the 1970s, female workers' relegation to "women's pages" and support staff functions has been widely noted. Bagdikian (1990) argued that concentrated power and focus on profits detrimentally affect news content and inspired the news media's shift to entertainment mode. Importantly, this trend seems to offer women more opportunities in journalism – even though many researchers have noted gendered salary discrepancies and female reporters routinely assigned to cover soft news such as famous women with cancer (Corbett & Mori 1999; → News).

Second, the symbiotic relationship between *advertisers* and corporate media organizations has drawn sharp criticism from feminist circles. Advertising's omnipresent messages and



images demean women and perpetuate their disadvantage (→ Advertising). Clearly, media organizations are heavily dependent on advertising revenues, so they work hard to woo advertisers. Strategically, media organizations package content that fosters a “buying mood”: commodities that avoid upstaging the ads (Gamson et al. 1992). As a shortcut to satisfying advertisers, media organizations reproduce past practices, prevent innovation, and maintain the status quo. For women, this results in reinforced stereotypes, or → “symbolic annihilation” (Gerbner 1972). Women’s disadvantage is created and maintained through such narrow, harmful images that “enter everyday practices and discourses” (Milkie 2002, 839).

Third, → *television* in the 1970s saw an employment spurt for women – yet gender equity continues to elude television organizations. The foundation of television programming is gendered, in terms of structured time and space coordinates that determine network programming schedules (e.g., daytime, prime time, late night). A narrowcast philosophy of programming means that networks green-light content that will capture specific demographic audiences during specific time parts – and women represent a significant portion of network viewers. In addition, → genre forms and character types are gendered – so much so that televisual representations of gender have changed modestly since broadcast radio created the family sitcom and detective shows, gendered work roles, and character types such as dumb blondes and brawny males (Watkins & Emerson 2000). Unfortunately, television writers and executives invite only the most liberal of feminist traditions in sanctioning content that will appeal to advertisers and viewers. For example, a television sitcom’s female character may work as a lawyer, but she works a second shift as primary caregiver to her children.

Fourth, feminist scholars also have closely examined the *motion picture* industry, both as an employer of women and as a mass medium communicating gendered messages. Women may have dominated the screenwriting profession in → Hollywood during the silent film era, but men have controlled corporate channels of production, distribution, and exhibition since filmmaking became more industrialized. Consequently, numerous Hollywood actresses have reported limited career options. Rosanna Arquette’s documentary *Searching for Debra Winger* features interviews with international award-winning actresses – all of whom tell of gender and age discrimination, resolving that greater diversity in onscreen female types can occur only when women assume roles behind the camera and in film studio executive suites (Walters et al. 2004). Film actresses’ sentiments concur with the findings of feminist scholars who report that the organizational structures and routines of the film industry are more likely to reward those individuals whose work appeals to masculine sensibilities. In her seminal essay “Visual pleasures and narrative cinema,” Laura Mulvey (1975) introduced the notion of “the male gaze” in feminist film theory (→ Spectator Gaze). Mulvey argued that the male point of view is privileged; that the masculine perspective shapes the film-viewing experience and socializes women into identifying and complying with patriarchal ideologies that reinforce women’s marginalization.

Finally, a rich body of feminist scholarship has examined *women’s magazines* (→ Women’s Media Genres). Many US consumer magazines target a particular gender group, since marketers promote their products as gender specific. Researchers have found that editorial pages of women’s magazines focus more on dieting and weight loss than serious

health problems. Fashion magazine covers, ads, and editorial content imply that being thin is associated with being happier, sexier, and more loveable (Malkin et al. 1999). Thus, → magazines may propagate a slender ideal that – at best – elicits women’s dissatisfaction with their own bodies, and – at worst – influences unhealthful behaviors. On the other hand, women’s magazines tend to employ a large number of women – who claim to have little control over the images and page content. For example, editor gatekeepers described a “symbolic constraint” wherein photographers and artists set the standards for aesthetic judgment of femininity (Milkie 2002, 854). Magazine editors also have blamed advertisers and “culture” for establishing readers’ expectations. In fact, feminist and magazine publisher Gloria Steinem (1990) said she battled constantly with advertisers before dropping advertising from the pages of *Ms*.

### **RACE AND CLASS**

Feminist scholars have illustrated how gendered organizational forms also are raced and classed (e.g., Ashcraft & Allen 2003). Ashcraft & Mumby (2004) suggested that in gender-organization studies, gender becomes relevant to organizations only when (white) women enter them. In terms of television programming, feminists suggest that the liberal tradition often fails to acknowledge the race and class differences between women because it is defined mostly by white, middle-class women (Watkins & Emerson 2000).

Moreover, Hochschild (1990) argued that the mass media offer women and other marginalized groups extensive cultural prescriptions in the form of advice about how to look and act to please powerful groups – without considering harmful outcomes. Indeed, mass-mediated messages about disadvantaged groups may frame a gender or racial order as natural (Hill Collins 1991; → Black Feminist Media Studies; Latina Feminist Media Studies; Feminist Media Studies, Transnational; Popular Communication and Social Class).

### **GOVERNMENTS AND NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Both governments and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in recent years have recognized women-and-media issues around the globe. At the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (UNGASS) was adopted and signed by nearly 200 governments, identifying significant areas of concern – ranging from increasing women’s media access to eradicating gender discrimination. In 2000, a Global Women’s Media Team was organized at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session to review implementation of UNGASS. Worldwide, women also have formed NGOs in order to improve the position and portrayal of women in media. For example, NGOs work with and use media to promote women’s human rights across Africa, to encourage gender-fair reporting in Asia and the Pacific, to research the status of female media workers in Australia, to integrate a gender approach to policymaking in Arab countries, to support gender-sensitivity journalism training in Canada, to “invade” the → Internet with media by and for women in Europe, and to monitor mainstream media’s gender perspectives in Mexico.

In sum, greater awareness of media organizations' gendered nature is warranted – as is a systematic theory of deeply embedded gender and organizations. Importantly, it must be recognized that the creation of sexist media content is not gender specific. It has been argued that change happens far too slowly because organizational structures in industrial capitalist societies are erroneously viewed as gender neutral. Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes; rather, it is an integral part of those processes, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender (Djerf-Pierre 2005). According to Creedon (1993, 79–80), “[T]he cutting edge of feminism is no longer about convincing anyone that sexism exists . . . Women want to name their experiences on their own terms; they want to have their voices heard and make their own meaning.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Cinema ▶ Ethnic Journalism ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Film Production ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Magazine ▶ News ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Popular Communication and Social Class ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Television ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Media Genres

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## Gender: Representation in the Media

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The study of representations of gender in the media understands gender to be socially constructed – an ongoing process of learned sets of behaviors, expectations, perceptions, and subjectivities that define what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a man. The main assumption of these studies is that a cultural ordering that presents gender differences as biologically determined and “natural” conceals the working of patriarchal ideology. “One is not born a woman, but becomes one” is Simone de Beauvoir’s formative statement that captured the essence of this process (1989, 1st pub. 1949). Accordingly, gender is not viewed as something originally existent in human beings, but rather it is a representation produced by how we relate to our bodies through behaviors and social relations in the practices of daily life. As such, gender is distinct from the biological, sexual differences characterizing humans from birth. It is understood to be a product of “social technologies” (de Lauretis 1987), including media texts, the arts, and institutionalized discourses. For example, while it is a biological fact that women can give birth, it is a social construction (→ Constructivism) that women in most societies are expected to be better suited to be the dominant caregivers of children.

### **MEDIA AND GENDER**

The media are central mechanisms in this process of construction since representations of femininity and masculinity are produced, reproduced, and circulated by them as part of a shared culture. Media are deemed an influential socializing force through which people learn to define themselves and others by their gender and through which they develop their own subjectivities (→ Socialization by the Media). As a result, the media have become a central focus of analysis and critique by feminist scholars.

The *theoretical point of departure* is the premise that media representations are grounded in contemporary ideological assumptions and discourses about worldviews and belief systems, in general, and gender in particular. Thus, gender representations are understood to be signifiers of dominant modes of ideology in which they are rooted, as well as at the same time the practices of these ideologies. They have been blamed for reaffirming and supporting gender hierarchies existing worldwide, maintaining the social status quo and the general subordination of women by reproducing social perceptions that legitimize dominant ideologies (such as patriarchy, capitalism, and colonialism; → Media and Perceptions of Reality).

However, given that representations are discursive constructions, they are also assumed to be able to take different forms and meanings in different places and times, under varied political, cultural, social, and economical contexts, and within diverse ideologies. As a result, gender representations are understood to be dynamic – always being fluid, changeable, and contesting social practices and perceptions. Analysis of representations thus becomes a central way of understanding gender and part of the feminist project of problematizing and critiquing our ways of knowing.

## **REPRESENTATIONS AND REALITY**

The complex relationships between gender representations and reality have been the focus of much academic contemplation and debate, particularly in the → cultural studies tradition in general, and more specifically that which developed in the UK from the 1950s onwards, including attention to the formation of social and cultural feminist thought, drawing insights from → structuralism and poststructuralism. These approaches take the view that representations do not have an original, authentic “reality” that can be represented or misrepresented accurately, but rather that gender is a form of “performance” of expected social scripts (Butler 1990).

Since gender itself is understood to be a construction, rather than a material reality, gender representations in the media are understood themselves to be *representations of representations*, standing for the → meaning of the original subject, rather than the material subject itself (Rakow & Wackwitz 2004). In contrast to studies of sex-role stereotyping and images of women, it does not assume that there are right or wrong, good or bad ways of representing a woman or a man. Rather, this perspective moves the emphasis from concerns for individuals to the larger categories of femininity and masculinity and shifts the burden of responsibility from the critique of “accuracy” of representations to challenging the systems that construct and create them, their political economy, power hierarchies, ideological infrastructures, and goals (→ Media and Group Representations).

A related argument builds upon Spivak’s development of Marxist theorization and claims that gender representations in the media have two complementary meanings (Ganguly 1992). One meaning refers to representations as “portraits,” or the “making present” of women and men and their gendered realities in the media. This meaning of representation calls attention to those ideologies, interests, life circumstances, and privileges (be they class, race, sexuality, or others) that influence the way gender is constructed. The second meaning relates to “proxy,” or “speaking out for” women and

men. In this regard there is a need to ask: who gets a voice in the media? Who speaks on behalf of whom? And, who gets to represent themselves?

The difference between these two meanings and their interdependency can be illustrated by a discussion of *women and* → *news*. The first refers to women as subjects in the news – the ways in which they are being portrayed (e.g., as victims, as trophy wives, as celebrities). The second refers to women as producers of news (e.g., reporters, editors, spokespersons for organizations). These two meanings are clearly interrelated, combining issues of culture and politics and challenging dominating power systems that influence both how gender is “made present” and who is making it present, as well as who is “speaking for” themselves and others, and how they are “speaking for” them. Following Michel Foucault, the study of representations thus recognizes that power operates in cultures through its various discourses and is located in the analysis of the symbolic systems through which people communicate and organize their lives.

However, what unites many of the intellectual readings of representations is the premise that representations are related to subordination and oppression in the material world. More specifically, in regard to certain genres of representations, as in the case of pornography (→ Pornography, Feminist Debates on), the debate over the interrelationships between reality and representations becomes compounded, since in the process itself of producing pornography, women are abused, humiliated, harassed, and raped not only the symbolic but in the material world (Russo 1992).

## **FEMININITY VERSUS MASCULINITY**

A central critique of gender representations is the well-entrenched, historical construction of femininity and masculinity as binary as well as hierarchical oppositions (Cirksena & Cuklanz 1992). While men have been mostly presented as the “normal,” representing the majority of society, women have been presented as the minority “other,” the “second sex” – the exception, the incomplete, the damaged, the marginal, and sometimes even the bizarre. Such a dichotomization can be tied to other forms of dualistic thought rooted in the Enlightenment worldview, including such divisions as those constructed between rational/emotional, spirit/body, culture/nature, public/private, subject/object, west/east, modern/traditional. Systematically, men and women have been constructed as inhabiting the opposing sides of the dualities, with the masculine associated with the highly valued rational-spirit-culture-public-subject-west-modern, and the feminine with the devalued body-nature-private-object-east-traditional.

Critical examinations of media representations throughout the second part of the twentieth century revealed the existence of these very same fundamental principles of patriarchal thinking around the world, including relegating the feminine to the private sphere, restricting presentation of women to the bodily functions of sex and reproduction, and locating women within the world of emotions where rational thought is lacking and behavior uncultivated. Personality traits of women are depicted as being fundamentally different in nature from those of men: on the whole, women have been represented as less logical, ambitious, active, independent, heroic, and dominant.

In contrast, they have been represented as more romantic, sensitive, dependent, emotional, and vulnerable. Such representations have been accused by critics of perpetuating another

form of dichotomy – the one reserved in patriarchal culture for women: the “madonna” on one hand and the “whore” on the other. As “madonna,” women are cast in the role of mothers, the one who gives birth, nurtures, raises, sacrifices herself, and finally the one who mourns her loved ones. As “whore,” they are pressed into the mold of sexual object, the essence of whose existence is tantalizing and threatening to the male, and whose ultimate fate is to be punished as a victim of violence and exploitation. Such media representations, claim critics, legitimize the de-humanization of women and relate to them as objects lacking consciousness or individuality (→ Femininity and Feminine Values).

*Hegemonic masculinity*, too, has been constructed as a “natural” state of being, commonly conceived and framed within several normative expectations: physical domination and subordination of others (humans and nature alike); occupational achievements and a purposeful and rational attitude; familial patriarchy, the man being the protector and provider; daring and staying outside the domestic sphere; sexual lust with heterosexuality as the dominant model (Hanke 1998). Deviation from these norms is prohibited, both socially as well as psychologically, as any departure is seen to be threatening to hegemonic masculine identity.

As a result, media representations emphasize a masculinity associated with the public sphere and world of occupation, competition, achievements, and social status. In comparison with women, men have been largely portrayed as more rational, individual, independent, having difficulty with expressing emotion or displaying weakness. They are shown to be more culturally and technologically oriented than women, exercising self-restraint, and tending to dominate both women and nature. They demonstrate the bonding of “men in arms” through expressions of solidarity, loyalty, determination, and a sense of purpose. They are constructed in association with action, adventure, aggression, competition, and preoccupation with vehicles and weapons. Their subordination of women is presented as related to their sexual drive. In contrast to the emphasis on women’s appearance, men are defined by their action: women “appear” and men “do” (→ Masculinity and the Media).

One important mechanism through which these constructions of femininity and masculinity are maintained and perpetuated is the *development of social “myths,”* in the sense explained by Roland Barthes (1957). Accordingly, myths are understood to be ways of conceptualizing gender within particular historical and cultural contexts, in ways that make it seem natural, a taken-for-granted commonsense way of what it means to be a man or a woman. In this way, myths perform as mechanisms that disguise ideologies and the power systems behind them. The media produce and reproduce these myths in the gender representations they offer to their audiences (→ Popular Mythology).

One such prevalent myth is the most popular *beauty myth* (Wolf 1991). It constructs a certain kind of femininity and masculinity, and a relationship between them according to which women are defined by their beautiful appearance and men by their desire to conquer such women. This emphasis on a particular form of beauty (largely rooted in white femininity, and characterized by a limited range of physical attributes) has been accused of sending women on an endless quest for an appearance that is unattainable and guarantees a life of frustration, feelings of inadequacy, and a wasteful exploitation of emotional, intellectual, and material resources, as women’s happiness and self-fulfillment becomes dependent on her appearance.

The glorification of women's external appearance as the most central characteristic of a woman's essence is directly related to the media's overemphasis on portrayal of women as sexual beings whose central function is relegated to being objects of male sexual desire and pursuit. Thus, such dominant media messages continue to promote restrictive ideologies of femininity, glorify heterosexual romance as a central goal for women, encourage male domination in relationships, and stress the importance of beautification through consumption, while dismissing the validity of women's own sexual feelings and desires apart from masculine desire (→ Sexualization in the Media).

## DIFFERENCE AND DIVERSITY

However, developments in feminist theorizing recognize that gender is an unstable and highly contested social category, and that gender experiences and identities are heterogeneous, fluid, ambiguous, incoherent, and ever-changing. Gender is always situated in a particular cultural context and historicity, and conflated with other social categories such as race, class, ethnicity, religion, and sexuality. As a result, the process of gender representation is strongly linked to other socially constructed systems of difference and exclusion. The problematization and rejection of binaries, including Said's (1978) critique of east/west and traditional/modern divisions, brought to the forefront an interest in *multiculturalism and diversity*. The challenge to social systems that privilege men's representations of women and men speaking for women has been expanded and reconceptualized to include critique of other forms of subordination. This includes the analysis of texts in which the colonizer represents and speaks for the colonized, and the resulting process of "internalized colonialism" through which the subordinate incorporate such constructions into their self-imagined subjectivity. This way, as Stuart Hall (2003) argues, dominant regimes of representations have the power to impose on audiences a perspective on themselves as "other," much in the same way that women are taught to view themselves as "other" in relationship to men (Valdivia 1995).

Such contributions of postcolonial and postmodern theorizing to feminist studies of representation bring forward the need to confront the challenge of representing marginalized others, unraveling the relationship between diversity and inequalities, between representations and the power systems that make them possible (→ Postcolonial Theory). The discussion of a need to "decolonize" representations and for development of a transnational perspective (Hegde 1998) is also related to the question of representational "silences," i.e., what and who is not represented, what and who is missing (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). Critical analyses of "white femininity" as reproduction of the supremacy of white culture for example, as is evident in a variety of cultural icons (e.g., from portrayals of the late British Princess Diana, the American soldier Jessica Lynch, or the many prime-time American serials and commercial heroines traveling globally), highlight the conflation of gender and race and the complexities of the power systems involved. Women around the world do not have the same options and choices, as their location in the power structures vary. As a result, the gaps between popular representations and the life of the majority of women around the world are often inconsolable.

The growing diversity of gender representations and the construction of multiple variations for what it means to be a woman and a man in popular culture have resulted in



an array of gender options and contradictions (Meyers 1999; → Identity Politics). Attributes of such media representations that are often coined “postfeminist” include portrayals of females who are complex and distinct from one another on a variety of variables (including those mentioned above – such as race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, and religion – but also education, age, marital status, motherhood, personal abilities and disabilities, and the like; → Postfeminism). The breaking down of dualities include, for example, female characters who “want it all” rather than making a choice between family and career; who refuse to choose between feminism and femininity, i.e., leading an active and independent life but choosing to cater to traditional requirements of appearance, and the like. *Representations of “power feminism,”* moving away from women’s oppression to a celebration of women’s abilities and achievements, are becoming more commonplace in popular media. Deconstructing binary categories of gender and sexuality, in particular, and perceiving them to be flexible and indistinct, allows the growing experimentation with representations of gay, transgender, transsexual, and bisexual lives. Contemporary struggles faced by women are raised and examined, including explorations in issues of gender politics and feminism and its goals (Lotz 2001).

The emergence of innovative representations of women as well as men has also been explained by the *influences of commercial forces*. Such, for example, is the assertion that the growing emphasis on “career women” or “sensitive men” and the presentation of sexually active women and men as objects of desire reflect as much the pressures brought about by consumer culture as deep structural changes in ideological underpinnings (→ Commodity Feminism). As a result, the new type of strong woman is deemed acceptable as long as she is not only strong, but also sexy, and the new type of sensitive man is becoming more acceptable as long as it is clear that he is not only sensitive but also successful.

Despite such developments, change is rather slow, and there is an overall agreement in the study of gender representation that this form of patriarchal ideology serves to naturalize and justify male domination as well as contribute to the internalization of this ideology through the acceptance of differences between men and women as real, essentialist, and natural. It is argued that as a whole, this representational system has been detrimental to both women and men, in varying degrees, since it teaches both to adopt particular perceptions, roles, and practices that reinforce their differing placements in the social hierarchies as they continue to perpetuate the supremacy of white men. Feminist analysis of gender representations thus points toward a need to engage in reflexive critique and deconstruction not only of representations but also of the institutions that produce them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Commodity Feminism ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Meaning ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Popular Mythology ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Structuralism ▶ Woman as Sign ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## Generalizability

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The essence of generalization is simplification by omission of irrelevant details. *In logic*, a concept A is a generalization of concept B, if and only if every instance of concept B is also an instance of concept A, and there are instances of concept A that are not instances of concept B. For example, a cockroach is an insect, which in turn includes insects that are not cockroaches. Talking about insects omits the distinctions among cockroaches, beetles, flies, etc. Logical generalizations are based on sets whose instances have one or more attributes in common. They give rise to taxonomies, such as the Linnaean classification in

biology. Logical generalizability is the ability to find meaningful common attributes among disparate sets of instances. Except for their membership in the same set, this may not be easy. For example, it would be hard to find a common attribute among cockroaches, artifacts, poets, and scientific theories. The inability to find a conceptual basis for a set of instances limits logical generalizability.

According to *category theory*, A is the prototype of a category of instances B if and only if all instances of B belong to the same category, and A is judged to be the most typical among them. A prototype can be considered a generalization of B inasmuch as it possesses the defining characteristics of instances in B. Unlike in logic, where all members of a set are assumed to possess the same attributes, category theory acknowledges that membership in a category can be graded. For example in the US, among birds, robins turn out to be most typical, pigeons a little less so, with parakeets far from being prototypical. Penguins probably are the least typical birds, sharing few features with other birds. The prototypicality of the instances of a category can be obtained by systematic pair comparisons: "Which is the more typical bird, a or b?" Such comparisons identify the prototype as the most typical of its kind, surrounded by increasingly less typical instances, its periphery showing instances that may well belong to, and may therefore be easily confused with, other categories. Encyclopedias that illustrate a concept invariably choose something close to its prototype. Roles in movies are cast by typical mothers, typical criminals, typical heroes, whose deviation from their prototypes may have mere dramaturgical motivations. Not all sets of instances have meaningful prototypes. This led researchers like Eleanor Rosch (1978) to define three kinds of categories. Basic categories have visualizable prototypes, for example, chair, shirt, house, and spoon. Subordinate categories are distinguished by attributes of basic categories, for example, baby chair, dress shirt, outhouse, and serving spoon, whereas superordinate categories do not have clear prototypes and tend to be constructed logically, for example, furniture, apparels, buildings, and tableware. While cartoonists, advertisers, and political → spin doctors have a knack for finding prototypes of what they wish to promote, oppose, or generalize, category theory suggests how this ability is limited.

*In written discourse*, generalization concerns *propositions* and is a special case of logical generalization. A general proposition A semantically subsumes several lengthier propositions or complex narratives B, omitting irrelevant details while preserving what serves a particular purpose. A proposition concerning a ball generalizes propositions involving, for example, a soccer ball, made up of white hexagons and black pentagons. It retains only references to the attributes and behaviors of ball. Typically, scientific articles have a title and an abstract, followed by a body of text. Abstracts offer readers propositions that generalize the text. Titles may not be more than noun phrases abstracted from the text. Propositional generalizability is limited only by the meanings of the words available in language.

*In statistics*, a generalization A is sustainable by contrast to its logical complement  $\bar{A}$  if and only if the overwhelming majority of instances in B are instances of A as opposed to  $\bar{A}$ . Null hypotheses, for example, whether one variable has no effect on another, are meant to rule out that one falsely accepts a hypothesis when its logical opposite could be true as well. The measure of statistical significance expresses the probabilities of either hypothesis or generalization to be acceptable (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory).

*In sampling theory*, a sample A of instances, selected from a larger population B of instances, is taken to be representative of B, if all relevant attributes of instances in B occur in A as well and in the same proportion as in B. A sample is not usually considered the generalization of a population. However, it is a simplification that omits irrelevant details and allows the researcher to examine the sample in place of a population (→ Sampling, Nonrandom; Sampling, Random).

Generalizations are obtained by induction and are subject to any of the errors of inductive inference.

*Hasty generalization* is the fallacy of examining only a few instances and generalizing from them to the whole set of instances. For example, someone might conclude, “everyone likes this movie” after talking to a few friends. Sampling always entails the possibility of a hasty generalization. Statisticians seek to circumvent this fallacy by relying on the law of large numbers. This law states that the larger the size of a sample, the closer do the averages calculated from that sample approximate the averages in the population. Coupled with a measure of the smallest acceptable imprecision and an assumption of the probability of the rarest incidences in the population, the law suggests sample sizes that keep hasty generalizations within tolerable limits (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Election Surveys; Public Opinion Polling; Survey).

*Excessive exception* is the fallacy of a generalization that may well be correct but only under the condition of excluding a large number of its suggested instances. For example, “everyone can read the *New York Times* except children, the blind, and non-English speakers.” Using undergraduates as “human subjects” in psychological experiments can yield findings that are valid for this small population – although the researchers may have generalizations to humans in mind.

*Sampling bias* and *slanted propositions* occur when the method of sampling from a population favors incidences that support one or another hypothesis to be tested. For example, studying the literacy of a population by means of a written test systematically excludes those unable to read and write. Asking the members of one political party about the problems of their country biases the sample in favor of these party members’ opinions. Similarly, abstract propositions may be slanted by particular interests, for example, when polling data are interpreted by candidates for political office, or when literature on the effectiveness of a drug is selectively reviewed and published by its manufacturer.

*Part-whole confusion*, also called the fallacy of composition, is the mistake of generalizing knowledge across different levels of organization without considering the nature of the organization that integrates parts into their wholes. Examples are generalizing interpersonal relations to relations between countries, or using biological models to understand social enterprises (e.g., by distinguishing between functional and dysfunctional actions according to whether they preserve the existing structure of society).

*Concretizing the abstract* is the fallacy of attributing qualities to abstractions that belong to what the abstraction generalizes; for example, attributing agency to abstract concepts, such as in claims that unemployment caused unrest, a corporation failed to pay taxes, or “the White House says. . . .” Only people can create unrest, perhaps because they are without a job. Decisions to pay or not to pay corporate taxes are made by the employees of a corporation, and the White House cannot speak, only people can, and may do so in its name.

*Stereotyping* is the fallacy of taking the mean or mode of a distribution of the characteristics, usually of a group of individuals, by nonmembers, for that distribution, effectively ignoring the diversity of its spread. It confuses the mean or mode with a prototype; for example, claiming someone to be a “typical Frenchman” when there are millions of atypical Frenchmen living in France, or reporting the existence of correlation between particular variables at the expense of acknowledging how many instances do not fall on the regression line of that correlation (→ Correlation Analysis). Social scientific research can create → stereotypes when its findings are published and enter a population eager to accept theories as facts. For example, Marx’s theories of social classes created his oversimplified class distinctions. Stereotypes of minorities, professions, and pathologies may well be of scientific origin but can become exaggerated in use (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication; Stereotyping and the Media).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys  
▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Spin Doctor  
▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication  
▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Survey

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## **Genre**

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The English term “genre” derives – via French – from the same Latin root as “general,” “genus,” “gender,” “genesis,” “generate,” “genius,” and “gene.” Etymologically, then, it is bound up with the idea of generating complex configurations from a basic underlying pattern. The concept of genre is important to communication research because it designates not only specific kinds of messages, but also their characteristic social uses by audiences.

“Genre” was traditionally used in the arts to categorize texts with reference to their distinctive language and subject matter, such as poetry, drama, and the novel. The literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin held that the novel – irrespective of the great variety of novels – is one genre (Bakhtin 1981). In this broad sense, short stories and nonfiction forms such as autobiography (usually narrative) and essays (usually non-narrative) all qualify as

genres. Other scholarship has understood genres to be types of text *within* such broad categories of composition. Already in ancient Greece, tragedy and comedy were recognized as genres, being constituents of the wider genre, drama. These categorizations, further, existed alongside other kinds of textual definitions: the epic, for one, was categorized according to its composition as well as key themes such as heroism. In both narrow and wide conceptions of the term, however, genre refers to a set of basic textual patterns that generate many and varied concrete texts. The vast majority of traditional works about genre have aimed to identify such underlying textual formulae (→ Text and Intertextuality).

## HISTORY OF THE GENRE CONCEPT

Genre theory effectively stayed in a steady state for 2,000 years after Aristotle's death before accelerating into flux during the twentieth century. Mainly as a result of Aristotle's legacy, genre theory has sought not only to lay bare textual formulae, but also to provide prescriptions. Aristotle's fragmentary observations in the *Poetics* (c.330 BCE) framed the classic genres in terms of a best practice that could guide the act of composition as well as supporting post hoc evaluation.

After the rediscovery of Aristotle's works in the late Middle Ages, Renaissance poets and dramatists during the two centuries after 1450 re-envisioned the classical world from within their own spheres of interest. Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poesie* (1595) invoked a wealth of classical authorities to both defend poetry as such and prescribe a humanist conception of poetry. In the classical and Renaissance periods, genre theories operated with a limited number of genres. Different kinds of speech were commonly appraised in terms of rhetoric in both periods (→ Rhetorical Studies), and genre tended to be associated with written forms, or with those oral forms that had made their way into writing and now often appeared first in writing, such as poetry.

From the Renaissance onwards, print technology in Europe facilitated the growth and diversification of genres such as diaries, confessions, romances, novels, ballads, and newssheets. By the end of the nineteenth century, the novel had fragmented into a multitude of genres, catering to an expanding and increasingly socially differentiated readership. And, in the audiovisual media of the twentieth century – on radio, in film, on television, and in cyberspace – narrative genres flourished in unprecedented amounts and variants.

The most common understanding of genre in the contemporary world focuses on the many popular genres that are consumed in quantities not previously witnessed in history (→ Popular Communication). Such genres include romances, thrillers, science fiction, → soap opera, and fantasy in the realm of → *fiction*, but also → *news*, → *advertising* and documentary (→ Documentary Film): both factual and fictional genres can have narrative form. Furthermore, all these genres are distributed across a range of interrelated media: print, → radio, → television, film, the → Internet (→ Cinema; Intermediality). Also in everyday language, each genre is commonly said to consist of a characteristic "formula." This understanding may be reinforced by the media themselves when "genre" as a mode of expression and reception is conflated with "format" in the process of production. By the end of the twentieth century, the term served as a shorthand for movie-goers, novel readers, TV viewers, and others to classify and anticipate media texts.

## TWENTIETH-CENTURY GENRE STUDIES

The twentieth-century proliferation of genres stimulated genre theory and communication theory that was cognizant of genre. In general, genre theory took a synchronic and formalist perspective. Spread across a number of countries and disciplines in the humanities, this perspective was developed in the work of Vladimir Propp and the Russian formalists; C. K. Ogden, I. A. Richards, William Empson, and F. R. Leavis in Britain; the new criticism, → Harold Innis, → Marshall McLuhan, and Northrop Frye in North America; the structuralists in France (→ Structuralism); the Prague linguistic circle in Czechoslovakia; and the Copenhagen School in Denmark – all of whom made direct or indirect reference to the concept of genre. Much of this work, however, especially when couched in terms of “mass culture,” was resolute in its criticism of those industrial classifications of texts that seemed to use genre to package artifacts for mass consumption. In the writings of formalists, genre became not just a form of textual organization, but a patterning of meaning with critical social implications (→ Critical Theory).

The formalist understanding of genre changed when academia began to embrace film as a legitimate object of study. As → *film theory* matured, searching questions were asked of genres, such as whether they were constituted by visual elements (iconography), or by stock situations, or by plot elements; whether the industry repeated formulae by audience sanction, and whether individual *auteurs* were responsible for the construction of meaning also in genre films. Many studies of film as well as print genres such as the western, the thriller, and the adventure story, were indebted to Propp (translated 1958; in book form 1968). His key idea was that some texts have not so much a formula but a *structure* that can be repeated time and again with rather different contents. This might resolve the problem of explaining the variable and changing “content” of texts belonging to the same genre: perhaps “structure” is always the primary carrier of meaning that will ultimately shape the concrete “content” (e.g., Wright 1975).

However, the equation of genre with structure proved a dead end as the serious study of popular forms of culture indicated the complexity of, for instance, popular fiction. Two new understandings of genre arose, both of which recognized genre as a far more prevalent phenomenon than had previously been assumed, even before the twentieth century. First, genre should not be reserved to describe “artistic” communications. In everyday communication, speeches, technical instructions, debates, letters to the editor, telephone manner, oaths, new year resolution lists, road signs, and a whole host of other forms constitute genres, as emphasized by analysts of language and communication (e.g., Martin & Rose 2006). That notion had already been anticipated by Bakhtin, who named these communicative phenomena *primary genres* (1986, 65). This social reframing of genre was developed by sociolinguistics and → discourse studies, and became a major growth area in international research.

Second, also regarding “artistic” forms, genre theorists re-emphasized the content of texts as crucially important, not just to the producers of generic texts, but to their consumers. One impetus was contemporary investigations into the responses of audiences for both literature and mass communications, suggesting that readers will bring to texts – including generic ones – much background knowledge. This may make readers largely impervious to the structural messages of texts that academic textual analysis has believed

to be implicit and effective (e.g., Seiter et al. 1989). Moreover, such research has established that all texts, even the most lowly, carry a multiplicity of meaning or *polysemy* that makes them open to interpretation.

### FROM TEXTUAL TO SOCIAL GENRES

Some theories of readership still assumed that markedly generic texts were somehow exempt from polysemy, and scholars sometimes seemed to suggest that such texts were, in fact, eternally limited in meaning. The film theorist, Rick Altman, for example, argued that generic texts invite a form of reading that is “short-circuited” (1987, 4). However, as part of the general reorientation of contemporary genre theory toward readers and their social uses of texts, Altman also explicitly acknowledges the role of the reader in any process of short-circuiting. For Altman (1999), a genre is “made” through the actions of readers who harbour expectations about it. Audiences’ uses of the term “genre” probably grow out of their familiarity with primary genres, as identified by Bakhtin, but also with *secondary genres*, or the kinds of literary commentary and other discourses that are promulgated by the media industries producing narrative genres. Ultimately, audience expectations are the products not just of secondary publicity or primary genres but of social and cultural knowledge, values, attitudes, emotions, and pleasures.

The idea that a genre is a formula was traditionally paired with a view of genres as self-contained. Yet, clearly, many modern popular genres are hybrid in nature. In addition, some recent work has advocated abolishing strict boundaries between genres in favour of examining what may be “nomadic” tendencies in people’s reading of hybrid genres as well as of distinct, yet interrelated texts (Bloom 1996). Such work also implies that, in the multimedia environment of the present, it is important to promote audiences’ awareness of genres and their hybrids as a crucial component of → *media literacy*. In sum, whereas a genre was previously defined by its “formula,” so that an analysis of a generic text could be carried out as an immanent and neutral undertaking, genre now is understood more as an idea or expectation, implemented by readers through readings that are interested and contextual (e.g., Copley 2000).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Cinema ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Discourse ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Fiction ▶ Film Theory ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ Intermediality ▶ Internet ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Literacy ▶ News ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Structuralism ▶ Television ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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## Gerbner, George

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George Gerbner (1920–2006) was one of the most perspicacious students and critics of the social and political effects of television. Of half-Jewish descent, he grew up in Budapest as a recognized poet and lover of folklore. Forced to flee fascist Hungary to the US in 1939, he studied journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. After serving in the US military, Gerbner worked briefly as a journalist and then received a PhD in education from the University of Southern California. He taught briefly at a junior college, then from 1956 at the University of Illinois's Institute for Communications Research. In 1964, he became dean of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communications, where he remained until 1989.

On the surface, his perspective on media and influence was not that different from that of many Marxist-inflected political economists (→ Political Economy of the Media). But while Illinois colleagues such as Dallas Smythe, Herbert Schiller, and Thomas Guback were convinced they could best understand the American media by noting how the capitalist system shaped them, Gerbner focused on the actual materials that capitalism's industrial apparatus created. He believed it was crucial to look closely at what (echoing anthropologist Hortense Powdermaker) he called mass-produced daydreams because they likely influenced the hierarchy of values as they developed in people's minds (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). Gerbner insisted that because → popular culture is mass produced, it should be analyzed as a system of industrially patterned, rather than idiosyncratic or artistic, messages. With the "message system" as a central concept, communication research should pursue three fundamental goals: explore the forces that shape the pattern of messages, examine the overall nature of those message patterns, and understand the social roles or functions that those patterns play in society.

Through content analyses he showed that media themes and portrayals were sharply patterned (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). From his analyses of the media industries, he argued that the content patterns are not objective reproductions of reality. Rather, the mass media's "system of messages" results from media firms' need to satisfy advertisers

and politicians who benefit from showing people certain views of reality and not others (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality).

The patterned messages that served the goals of large symbol-making industries, he argued, were generally not those that would cultivate an educated and egalitarian society. His research found, for example, that pressures on television producers led them to consistently and inaccurately depict insane people as violently dangerous in ways that would undermine medical leaders' call for more humane approaches to the mentally ill. He showed that the industrially created popular culture's portrayals of teachers as either impotent or dangerous were part of a pervasive, enduring negative image of education. This "hidden curriculum" created an illusion of caring about education while actually serving private enterprise's interests in undermining schools' "political capital and popular aspirations for mobility, equality and social reform."

He stirred social controversy when he turned his attention to television violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). His critics pointed out that his definition of violence lumped together realistic cases of physical harm with humorous battles by cartoon animals. But Gerbner's definition derived from his view that the central problem was not that children and adults would commit violent acts as a result of seeing them on television; most, he noted, would not. Rather, he was concerned with what ideas TV violence reinforced about the world for most viewers. Gerbner and his colleague Larry Gross (1976) developed this concern into what they called → *cultivation theory*. Comparing → survey answers of individuals who watched lots of television with those who were light viewers, Gerbner, Gross, and colleagues consistently found that heavy viewers overestimated their chances of being victims of violence. Because heavy viewers were likely to see a great deal of violence in news and entertainment, they concluded that television was helping to reinforce and extend a view of the world as mean and dangerous (→ Cultivation Effects).

Critics pointed out that this causal explanation could easily be reversed: people who were afraid of the world would stay at home and watch a lot of TV, and the presence of TV violence had little or nothing to do with it. Gerbner and Gross replied to these critiques with elaborations on their cultivation model that have sparked much research.

Observers who dwell on these issues, however, miss a larger point: some of the later Gerbner and Gross studies, read carefully, reveal a far more critical, even subversive, conclusion about television violence. Gerbner insisted that the most widespread and socially significant negative consequence of a person's exposure to mass media is their reinforcement and extension of discriminatory cultural norms that serve the interests of elites and media industries while undercutting the democratic values they pretend to espouse. He saw media violence as the most elemental *form of symbolic control*. It didn't matter to him whether such actions were in news or dramas, live-action shows or cartoons. His cultivation studies suggested that they all presented a message of mayhem that led heavy viewers to worry excessively about their world (→ Fear Induction through Media Content).

Gerbner saw the hands of private and government power working together to amass symbolic influence. Violence attracted viewers for media firms and votes for politicians: insecure, angry people may be prone to violence but are even more likely to be dependent on authority and susceptible to deceptively simple, strong hard-line postures. They may

accept and even welcome repressive measures such as more jails, capital punishment, harsher sentences – measures that have never reduced crime but never fail to get votes – if they are likely to relieve their anxieties.

After his retirement from Annenberg, Gerbner started the Cultural Environment Movement to encourage grassroots activities that would demand greater public participation in decisions about cultural investment and cultural policy.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Survey ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Germany: Media System**

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Germany is the most populous country in Europe, with 81million inhabitants. Since 1990, it has been a federal republic consisting of 16 states. Until then the country had been separated into two states as a result of World War II (1939–1945). Next to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), established in the western occupational zones, there existed the German Democratic Republic (GDR) on the territory of the former Soviet zone of occupation. Through reunification in 1990, five new federal states were added.

Germany is a parliamentary democracy with a multi-party system. The administrative authorities are divided between the federal government and the federal state governments. This division of power is also of great importance for the German media system. According to the typology of Hallin and Mancini (2004), Germany is located in the area of the “north European or democratic corporatist model”: characterized by high newspaper circulations, external pluralism of the press, a great level of professionalization among journalists, and state regulation particularly with regard to the public broadcasting system.

### **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Germany is regarded as the birthplace of the modern mass media. In the city of Mainz, Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press around 1450 (→ Printing,

History of). And it was in Germany, at the beginning of the seventeenth century – after several preliminary stages – that the first periodical papers were developed (*Relation* in 1605, and *Aviso* in 1609; → Newspaper, History of). At this time the German Reich was a federation of more than 300 territories. As a result, more newspapers were published here than in all other European countries combined. At the end of the seventeenth century there were already about 70; at the end of the eighteenth century the number had risen to more than 200. Special periodicals emerged for a lot of interests.

As early as the sixteenth century, → censorship had been introduced as a means of controlling the printing profession, and it was also expanded to newspapers. In Germany, the implementation of freedom of press took longer than in England or the United States (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Censorship, History of). Only in 1874, after the German Reich had been founded as a nation-state, was the freedom of press legally guaranteed. When the Nationalist Socialists seized power in 1933 and erected a totalitarian regime, the press (together with all other media) was subjugated to a strict controlling system, which only came to an end after Germany's defeat in World War II.

The very first → radio program in Germany was broadcast on October 29, 1923, in Berlin. The telecommunications prerogative lay in the hands of the state, so that radio was put under the custody of the postal service. In 1923/1924 nine regional broadcasting organizations were established. Private investors also participated. Yet the majority of the stakes remained in the possession of the state postal service. The leading basic idea was to create a nonpolitical educational and entertaining broadcasting service. In 1932, the private investors were expelled and broadcasting was handed over completely to the state. This facilitated the takeover of the broadcasting system by the Nationalist Socialists in 1933. They centralized broadcasting and put it under the control of the propaganda ministry (→ Propaganda; Propaganda in World War II). The beginnings of → television also fell into the period of Nationalist Socialist rule. The first public presentation took place on March 22, 1935.

In 1945, a completely new period in the history of the German media system began. The fundamental decisions were made by the Allied victors. In the three western zones the occupying authorities wanted to set up a free and democratic media system to prevent future misuses by propaganda. In the Soviet occupational zone the media were again tied to the state government and the party leadership, in accordance with Marxist–Leninist theory. The western Allies issued licenses for newspapers (and magazines) to private investors. Thus, 144 papers had come into existence by 1949. In the Soviet occupational zone licenses were almost exclusively issued to parties and organizations. Private ownership of newspapers was prohibited.

At first, the occupying powers also organized radio services. In 1947/1948, still under the influence of the Allies, German laws for those radio stations were created. They were modeled on the British pattern of the public institution → BBC. For the supervision of programming, a broadcasting council (“Rundfunkrat”) consisting of representatives of socially relevant groups was deployed. Representatives of the state and of the parties were (at first) designated only in limited numbers. The public stations were given a programmatic mandate, which comprised information, entertainment, and education.

And they were obliged to provide a fair balance of content (internal pluralism; → Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Germany, founded on May 23, 1949, guarantees in Article 5 freedom of opinion as well as the freedom of the press, the freedom of broadcasting, and the freedom of film. Also guaranteed is → freedom of information; censorship is forbidden. These liberties are restricted only by the general laws, especially by personal rights and the protection of youth.

According to the regulation of competences in the constitution, the federal states are responsible for creating the judicial basis for broadcasting. The central government has only to provide the technical infrastructure. By developing the broadcasting system, the federal states have agreed to regulate certain aspects of electronic media in a similar or common way in accordance with the Broadcasting Treaty (“Rundfunkstaatsvertrag”). An important role for media legislation and the media structure is fulfilled by the Federal Constitutional Court (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

## PRINTED PRESS

Germany has a well-developed press system. Most prevalent are – in accordance with the federal tradition – regional newspapers, covering larger areas. They are predominantly delivered on subscription. Typically, these newspapers possess a more or less large number of local editions. Apart from this, there are only a few newspapers with a nationwide circulation (such as *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and *Die Welt*).

Also, the number of tabloid papers (→ Tabloid Press) sold on the streets is limited. The biggest of them is *Bild*, at 3.5 million copies the newspaper with the largest circulation in Germany. In 2004, 138 independent “editorial units” (“Publizistische Einheiten”) – i.e., independent newspapers that produce local, national, and international news independently in all editorial areas – were published in Germany. These editorial units produced a combined total of 1,538 different editions. The total circulation of the daily press amounted to 21.5 million copies. The number of readers per 1,000 is about 315, a figure between those for countries with high and low newspaper circulations.

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

For decades, an exclusively *public broadcasting system* existed in Germany. Initially after World War II there were six radio stations. The number increased to nine by the end of the 1950s. In 1960, two national broadcasting stations were established, too, one for West Germany and the GDR (*Deutschlandfunk*), and two foreign broadcast services (*Deutsche Welle* and *Stimme der DDR*).

In 1950, a consortium of public broadcasting stations (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten* or ARD) was founded. On this basis television in the Federal Republic of Germany was built up. The regular start of the first channel followed on November 1, 1954. The broadcasting stations of the federal states contributed

proportionally to the joint programming. In 1962, the federal states agreed to bring into being a joint second national TV station (*Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen* or ZDF), which started to operate on April 1, 1963. Since that time a public duopoly has existed in German television. The ZDF is also organized by the principles of public control by a supervising board with representatives of several social and political groups, associations, and parties.

New technologies gave the starting signal for the *dual broadcasting system* in Germany. Today it consists of two pillars: the still powerful public broadcasting organizations and the numerous private program providers. ARD and ZDF broadcast one main TV program each and a common culture, children's, and parliamentary channel. In addition both are also offering their own digital programs. Each of 11 broadcasting stations in the federal states possesses yet another TV channel. A joint venture by ARD and ZDF is *DeutschlandRadio*.

Besides the public sector there exists a multifaceted *private broadcasting* sector in Germany. The licenses are issued by a telecommunication agencies at the level of the federal states. These are also supervised advertising regulations and certain content requirements. Today, all in all more than 200 German radio programs and 30 German TV channels can be received. Nationwide operating radio stations have established themselves in part; however, there have also been attempts to introduce local radio stations.

Two big commercial TV organizations, RTL and SAT.1/ProSieben, emerged. In Germany *RTL group* (a member of the Bertelsmann group) owns, in addition to its main program channel, several other channels (RTL 2, Super RTL, Vox, and n-tv). The *SAT.1/ProSieben* media company owns the programs Sat.1, ProSieben, Kabel 1, and N24. This group constituted the core of the German media corporation of Leo Kirch, which went into insolvency in 2002. It was sold to American Haim Saban, who resold it in 2006 to other foreign investment groups. Apart from the full programs, there are also special news and sports channels (→ Media Conglomerates; Globalization of the Media).

A third pillar of the German TV system is *pay-TV*. Yet this format, due to the sheer size of the free TV market, has not managed to become widely accepted. The channel *Premiere* has been attempting since 1999, with a number of special interest programs (sports and movies), to gain ground in the pay-TV market and was listed at the stock exchange in 2005.

## INTERNET

In the mid-1990s, the Internet was introduced in Germany for general use, and it expanded quickly. In 2006, 60 percent of the population used the Internet at least occasionally. Differences do still exist according to age. Nearly all young people go online, but only 20 percent of people over 60 years old.

Today, almost all German daily newspapers and numerous magazines are present on the Internet with their own websites (→ Online Media). Yet in the beginning many publishing houses hesitated to go this way and did not invest too much, because they were afraid of "self-cannibalism." Radio and television stations developed their websites, too, the private ones with a lot of additional material, whereas the public stations are restricted to giving only material complementing their programming. Newcomers in the field intend to offer IPTV (Internet Protocol TV).

## CURRENT ISSUES OF THE GERMAN MEDIA SYSTEM

Since the middle of the 1950s there has been a growing tendency toward *press concentration* in Germany (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Today, the 10 largest publishing houses are responsible for more than half of the total newspaper circulation. The degree of concentration is particularly high in the new federal states of former East Germany, since former party papers were sold to newspaper proprietors from West Germany. Apart from losing advertising to the Internet, German newspapers have also constantly lost readers, particularly among the younger generation. The total circulation of the German daily press has seen a gradual decline.

The *radio and TV market* is also facing substantial problems. The public broadcasting organizations are trying to defend their privilege of double-funding by license fees and advertising revenues, particularly against the policies of the European Union (→ European Union: Communication Law). Their regular demands to increase the fees have always been a political issue. The competition for attractive programs requires high expenditures. Further, some critics have accused the public broadcasting organizations of neglecting their quality program obligations by adapting to commercial programming (“*convergence*”; → Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). The private providers are totally dependent on advertising revenue, which they would like to monopolize for themselves. The ownership structures are also in flux. Ownership in commercial TV is limited by a maximum audience share of 30 percent.

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Online Media ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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# Gestures in Discourse

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The communicative roles of gestures during talk in interaction are partly a function of their placement within unfolding turns and action sequences. Gestures occur both as free-standing unit-acts and as components of multimodal turns.

A *facial* gesture, usually enacted with eyebrows and/or the mouth, can occur in the role of operator on a concurrent or imminent unit of talk when it is performed by the speaker, and qualify its deontic and pragmatic status (e.g., serious or ironic, assertion or tease) and the *stance* that the speaker adopts toward it (eyebrow raises occur as components or minimal versions of shrugs and can display the speaker's distancing from a proposition), as well as the type of uptake it should preferably receive. When performed by listeners, facial gestures (e.g., a brief raising of the brows) may mark the status of an ongoing or just-completed utterance as new or old information, as surprising, amusing, or depressing: recipients' facial gestures often convey affective messages in addition to their discourse-organizational roles. Providing the speaker with ongoing feedback about the reception and effects of talk, facial gestures also contribute to its further course. While there has been a considerable amount of research on listeners' facial actions, we still know relatively little about the communicative work of the speaker's face (→ Facial Expressions).

*Head* gestures such as nods, shakes, and tosses are common conventional listener responses as well, notably in the roles of affirmation and negation, but also as "continuers" or acknowledgment tokens during ongoing turns at talk. There has been a considerable amount of research on these gestures, but we know less about other, more subtle motions of the head, e.g., tilts and turns that do not amount to signs of affirmation or negation (→ Gestures and Kinesics).

*Vocal* gestures, also called interjections and "response cries" are conventional vocal acts that are quite diverse in their functions; they can serve to beckon, to display an attitude toward what is being said or done, to comment upon one's own mishap as speaker, or to regulate the actions of another. Vocal gestures typically show phonological features otherwise uncommon in the producer's language; many are formed by *ingressives* (or *clicks*) – sounds that occur as phonemes only in a single language family of Southern Africa (→ Paralanguage).

One might also consider certain linguistic units as gestures, for example, tokens that are commonly placed at turn-beginnings, e.g., "well" or "okay"; agreement and disagreement tokens; and turn-completers and re-completers, e.g., *tags* such as "right?" "no?" "know-what-I'm-sayin'?" because they foreshadow illocutionary roles or regulate uptake – functions that they share with various types of bodily gestures (→ Discourse Markers).

The most important and, by far, most diverse kind of gestures in discourse are *hand* gestures, i.e., acts performed by movements of the hands. A number of different basic genres of communicative activities are carried out by motions of the hand, which can be distinguished in terms of the ways in which these motions figure in situated ecologies of action, cognition, and perception. Thus,



- 1 *pragmatic* gestures display the speaker's imminent or ongoing communicative act (its *illocutionary force*) or aspects of its structure and relation to prior discourse or the topic at hand;
- 2 *interaction-management* gestures mediate and regulate transactions, by allocating turns, displaying intended speakership, or establishing or marking relations between (the talk of) participants;
- 3 *conceptual* gestures or *cepts* manually construe ideational content that the speaker seeks to convey, without, however, showing how something looks;
- 4 *depictive* gestures depict phenomena in the real or some possible world; and
- 5 *indexical* gestures direct attention to and provide or reveal structures of objects and settings at hand, or of the world within sight, for example by various forms of pointing, tracing, and discerning.

Types 1 and 2 are about the processes of interaction and communication, 3 and 4 about the world that is thematized in the discourse, and 5 and 6 are about the proximal and distal setting within which the interaction takes place. Gestures of types 1, 2, and 3 are often metaphorical in that they construe abstract content or the process of communication according to models of manual action and experience in the physical world: they bring embodied knowledge – “haptic” knowledge of the world and manual know-how – to bear on communication and linguistic action.

It is important to realize that the term “gesture” refers to various orders of phenomena: to the practice of gesturing (when used as a mass-noun) or to individual instance of gesturing (when used as a count-noun). The latter, however, can be either a token of a type – when a conventional gesture is instantiated – or a creative, impromptu act of symbolic invention – this is often the case when speakers *ceive* or *depict* real-world or abstract phenomena. The fact that these distinctions are covert can lead one to falsely believe that all gesture is conventional, drawing from cultural repertoires (lexicons) of stable form–meaning pairs. But the improvisational character of much gesticulation – which does not seem to impede its intelligibility – is a feature that makes it particularly interesting for communication theory. It demonstrates, among other things, the importance of context and sequence to the ways in which bodily acts contribute to talk in interaction.

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Discourse Markers ► Facial Expressions ► Gestures and Kinesics ► Microethnography ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture ► Paralanguage

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## Gestures and Kinesics

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Kinesics is the study of bodily movement, including gestures, posture, and movement of the head, arms, legs, or torso (Birdwhistell 1970). Some scholars also include → facial expression and → eye behavior as kinesic behavior. However, because these behaviors are discussed elsewhere in this encyclopedia, this entry focuses primarily on gestures and bodily movement.

In their classic work, Ekman and Friesen (1969) argued that kinesic behavior can be distinguished on the basis of origin. Some kinesic behaviors are *symbolic* because there is an arbitrary association between the behavior and the referent (what the behavior refers to). For example, an up-and-down head nod means “yes” in many places around the world. However, the relationship between nodding and the word “yes” is arbitrary; indeed in some regions nodding to one side means “no” rather than “yes.” Like language, symbolic nonverbal behavior developed within specific cultures. Other kinesic behaviors are *iconic*, meaning that the nonverbal behavior resembles the referent. Pointing to the left when giving directions, reaching up to show how tall someone is, and pretending to swing a bat are all examples of iconic kinesic behavior. Because these behaviors resemble their referents, they are more easily understood across cultures than are symbolic behaviors. Finally, *intrinsic* behaviors, such as crying and smiling, have biological origins and often reflect people’s internal states. Intrinsic cues are therefore the most easily understood across cultures.

Ekman and Friesen also identified five general categories of kinesic behavior: emblems, illustrators, affect displays, adaptors, and regulators. These categories are based on the origins and usage of kinesic behavior. The five categories provide a useful framework for organizing both classic and contemporary work that examines how kinesic behaviors function in interpersonal and intercultural communication contexts (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture).

### EMBLEMS

Emblems are symbolic forms of kinesic behavior that function to substitute for or repeat verbal communication. Emblems are culturally specific and operate independently of speech. Take the following gesture as an example: the thumb and index finger are shaped in a circle while the other three fingers are pointed up with the fingertips curved slightly

downward. This gesture means “A-OK” or “all is good” in the US, “money” in Japan, and “worthless” in France. It is also an obscene gesture in some parts of the world. Similarly, the US “come here” gesture (which involves moving one’s fingers and palm back and forth toward one’s body) means “good-bye” in regions of Italy, China, and Colombia. In Algeria, the wave that signals “good-bye” and “hello” in North America and parts of Europe means “come here.”

As these examples illustrate, emblems have direct verbal translations. Like most verbal communication, emblems are processed primarily digitally (as a single word or phrase) in the left side of the brain rather than holistically as most other nonverbal messages are. Although emblems become symbolic within a given culture, they often have iconic origins. For instance, the “A-OK” gesture used in the US resembles the letters “O” and “K.” This same gesture represents a coin, the number “zero,” or private body parts, which correspond to various meanings of the gesture across the globe. Thus, although emblems become symbolic when they are integrated into the communication system of a particular culture, they often start out as iconic representations of the idea or object they represent.

Emblems substitute for spoken words when verbal communication is difficult or awkward. For instance, verbally saying good-bye to someone who is beyond the security checkpoint at a busy airport would be difficult, if not impossible. Waving accomplishes the goal of saying good-bye much more efficiently. Similarly, obscene gestures are often used to convey negative affect in situations where it would be difficult or inappropriate to verbally confront someone (e.g., while driving). Emblems can also serve a bonding function for couples and groups. Secret handshakes, emblematic signals between members of a minority group, and private messages communicated via gestures all send messages of solidarity.

## ILLUSTRATORS

Illustrators typically complement or clarify parts of a verbal message by adding description or emphasis. Examples include pointing in a certain direction, drawing something in the air, showing height or width, and pretending to kick a ball. *Batons* or *punctuation gestures* are a specific type of illustrator that emphasizes words or phrases. When people move their hand up and down while making an important point, they are using a baton gesture. Illustrator gestures are often iconic, making them somewhat interpretable across different cultural contexts. Yet there are cultural differences in how people use illustrator gestures. Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, South American, and Caribbean cultures display more frequent and expansive gestures than people from central Europe, northern Europe, and North America. Thus, the former cultures are regarded as more kinesically expressive. Kinesic expressiveness appears to be learned. For example, second-generation Italian Americans use fewer illustrator gestures than do first-generation Italian Americans, presumably because they have adopted the norms of the new culture.

Illustrators also send messages related to dominance and liking. Burgoon et al. (1996, 315) noted that “Large, sweeping gestures extend the individual’s spatial sphere of control and add an air of dynamic energy,” as do pointing gestures and a rapid walking pace. Other studies have shown that along with smiling and eye contact, illustrator gestures are a primary nonverbal cue associated with liking (e.g., Palmer & Simmons 1995). Illustrator gestures are also a nonverbal immediacy cue that shows interest and enthusiasm (→ Teacher Immediacy).

## AFFECT DISPLAYS

Affect displays show → emotion. As such, they are often intrinsic and understood across cultures. Planalp et al.'s (1996) research demonstrated that people rely on four types of kinesic cues to decode the emotional states of others: *facial cues* (e.g., rolling eyes, smiling), *body cues* (e.g., clenching fists, jumping up and down), *activity cues* (e.g., throwing things, going for a walk), and *physiological cues* (e.g., blushing, crying). Of these kinesic behaviors, people rated facial cues as the most important indicator of emotion, followed by body cues, physiological cues, and activity cues. All four of these kinesic cues were rated as more important for decoding emotion than was verbal communication. When people recognize that another person is experiencing an emotion, they often respond by showing emotions themselves. *Motor mimicry* occurs when a person displays emotion in response to something that happens to another person, such as wincing when a girl skins her knee or smiling when a colleague wins an award (Bavelas et al. 1986). *Emotional contagion* occurs when people “catch” the emotions of others, often through mimicking kinesic behaviors (Hatfield et al. 1994).

Research has also examined profiles of kinesic behavior associated with specific emotions (Guerrero & Floyd 2006). Affectionate emotions such as love and liking are associated with mutual gaze, smiling, general facial pleasantness, head tilts, direct body orientation, forward lean, and reinforcing head nods. During courtship, attraction is communicated via many of these cues plus primping or preening (e.g., touching up one's makeup or standing more upright) and demure downward gaze. Liking and equality are also communicated through *postural congruence*, which occurs when two people share the same posture or position, such as sitting with their legs crossed the same way or walking in unison. Hostile emotions, such as anger and contempt, are associated with attacks on objects (e.g., pounding a tabletop, slamming doors), furrowed brows, tight muscles, heavy walking or stomping, clenched teeth or jaw, threatening gestures, clenched hands or fists, defensive behaviors (e.g., arms crossed against chest), lack of eye contact, and the “evil eye.” Sadness is associated with narrowed or dull eyes, frowning, trembling mouth, juttled or trembling jaw, downward glances, reduced eye contact, slumped posture, defensive body positions, and less overall gesturing.

## ADAPTORS

Adaptors are idiosyncratic behaviors that help people release tension and feel more comfortable. These behaviors are typically used when people are bored, nervous, or physically uncomfortable. People often control their use of adaptors in public, especially when other people are watching them. Adaptors have been classified into three sub-categories. *Self-adaptors* involve manipulating one's own body, such as twisting a strand of hair, or biting one's nails. *Object-adaptors* involve manipulating an object that a person is wearing or holding, such as tugging on an earring or repeatedly tapping a pen on a tabletop. *Alter-adaptors* involve correcting another person's appearance (e.g., tucking a tag into someone's shirt collar; licking one's finger and removing a smudge on a child's face). Because alter-adaptors involve invading someone's personal space, they can be perceived as threatening, leading to angry responses (→ Proxemics). However, when a

person welcomes alter-adaptors, this acceptance usually signals that a relationship is intimate.

Adaptors can signal nervousness or boredom. Conversely, a lack of adaptors can reflect composure and confidence, especially when complemented by illustrator gestures. Relaxation and composure are communicated nonverbally through a set of nonverbal behaviors that includes less random leg and foot movement, fewer adaptors, less swiveling, more body openness, and more expansive gesturing. This same combination of kinesic cues is associated with perceptions of dominance.

## REGULATORS

Regulators function to manage interaction by initiating, maintaining, and ending interaction. Common kinesic behaviors that help initiate interaction include forward leans, walking toward someone, and making eye contact. Common leave-taking behaviors, which signal a person's desire to end an interaction, include decreasing gaze (which is sometimes preceded by mutual gaze), facing away from a partner, gathering possessions, and looking at one's watch or a clock. When a receiver fails to recognize a person's leave-taking attempts, the person in the leave-taking position sometimes displays adaptors, such as tapping one's foot. Similar behaviors have been reported during conflict situations when one partner wishes to withdraw from the interaction. Studies examining demand-withdrawal patterns in marital interaction have shown that husbands who withdraw exhibit more head turns away from their wives, less gaze, more head-down positions, and fewer open body positions. People also use adaptors when trying to withdraw from conflict.

Kinesic behavior also helps regulate turn-taking. People who want the conversational floor engage in behaviors such as leaning forward, raising one's hand, opening one's mouth slightly, and nodding rapidly. When people wish to relinquish their speaking turn, they often lean back and settle into a relaxed position and/or gesture toward the person who should speak next. People subtly refuse speaking turns by sitting back and nodding slowly to encourage a speaker to continue talking. Importantly, the ability to control the conversational floor is related to power and dominance. As Cappella (1985, 70) stated, power can be established and maintained "by controlling one's own and others' ability to present information." Kinesic regulators are one key to obtaining this type of control, just as kinesic cues in general are a critical component of effective interpersonal communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Emotion ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Proxemics ▶ Teacher Immediacy

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## Girl Culture

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Within the discipline of communication there has been a long history of studying the relationship between girls, media, and other cultural artifacts. Until recently, however, the focus of such studies has been almost solely on girls as consumers of media and other products and/or as passive victims of mediated portrayals of femininity (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). For example, the norm for academic studies of girls has, until recently, been to define girls as potential victims of the culture that surrounds them – a definition guiding much of the research examining how girls are affected by teen magazines, romance novels, popular music, and other cultural artifacts.

This tendency of the academy to label girls as victims of mass culture found a parallel in public discourse as well, a predisposition that was evident throughout the twentieth century and particularly during the 1990s. At that time several influential and high-profile studies of girls were published addressing such issues as girls' declining self-esteem, negative body image, and poor school performance. Paramount among these was Mary Pipher's controversial book *Reviving Ophelia*, in which Pipher argued that girls were living in a "girl poisoning culture" (1994, 12).

### “GIRLS' STUDIES” IN THE ACADEMY

What was missing, until very recently, however, were studies of girls as able to resist and negotiate cultural messages as well as girls as active producers of their own cultural artifacts. Indeed, recent scholarship, grounded more in → cultural studies and feminist theory, particularly in third wave feminism, has changed the way we in the academy think about and study girls (→ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture; Feminist and Gender Studies). Dubbed “girls' studies” (as opposed to simply studies of girls), this field has its roots in women's studies and represents “a sub-genre of recent academic feminist scholarship that constructs girlhood as a separate, exceptional, and/or pivotal phase in

female identity formation” (Wald 1998, 587). As a result, in the early years of the twenty-first century, girls have achieved a new visibility in the academy as a whole and within the discipline of communication in particular.

This visibility is groundbreaking since, until the latter half of the twentieth century, academic and clinical studies of females were virtually absent. Much of what we know (or thought we knew) about youth as a generation has come from male scholars studying male children and adolescents. As feminist scholar Carol Gilligan reminds us, those theories guiding the public and media discourse on youth development throughout much of the twentieth century told us nothing about girls as a distinct group. Gilligan’s own work, notably the groundbreaking *In a different voice* (1982), has gone a long way toward showing us the unique ways female youth develop as well as the ways in which girls and women communicate and reason, and notably that they speak in “a different voice” (→ Developmental Communication).

While Gilligan focused on the biases inherent in longstanding psychological theories of youth development, Angela McRobbie reminded us that these same biases and absences were extant in theories of youth culture, in particular youth subcultures. Grounded in both feminist and cultural theories, McRobbie’s own work on girls has expanded the dialogue about girls and girl culture and, like Gilligan’s, has had a profound influence on the development of girls’ studies as a field. Her book *Feminism and youth culture* (1991) is generally credited with laying the groundwork for cultural studies of girls’ lives.

In addition to shifting the focus of youth studies away from solely boys, Gilligan’s and McRobbie’s contributions to the development of girls’ studies have also been methodological, specifically advocating the need to listen to the voices of girls themselves rather than relying on adult academicians’ interpretations of girl culture. Girls’ studies scholars often rely on qualitative and cultural methods of studying girls, including focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and ethnographies. Such methods enable girls to speak for themselves.

## GIRLS AND POPULAR CULTURE

Paralleling and contributing to the growing academic and public discourse about US girls in the 1990s, girls proved to be a highly profitable audience for the media industries, a phenomenon initially attributed to the movie *Titanic*, whose financial success has been linked to repeat viewings by pre-adolescent and adolescent girls. But it was not just *Titanic* that benefited from a newly powerful young female audience (→ Audiences, Female). Girls helped insure both the financial and cult success of such youth-oriented television programs as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Party of Five*, and *Dawson’s Creek*, not to mention a new wave of pop music acts such as the Spice Girls, the Backstreet Boys, Britney Spears, and Christina Aguilera, to name just a few.

Given girls’ clout with the popular culture industries, it is not surprising that girl-oriented popular culture has generated extensive academic scrutiny. The television program *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, for example, has been the focus of countless articles, chapters, and entire books, many focusing on the role of the teenaged Buffy Summers as a transgressive and empowering role model for girls. Moving beyond knee-jerk reactions to controversial portrayals and/or messages, girls’ studies scholars typically offer nuanced and theoretically grounded deconstructions of such cultural texts.

This upsurge of academic studies of girls' cultural artifacts, while still grounded primarily in content analysis methodology, differs greatly from previous studies of cultural artifacts targeted at girls. First, they are not limited to studies of print media such as teen girl magazines, thereby acknowledging the range of media producing cultural artifacts representing and targeting girls. Second, they do not begin with an assumption that cultural messages are harmful to girls and that girls are the hapless victims of the culture industries. Indeed, it is this movement away from defining girls as victims that leads to the most compelling area of current girls' studies scholarship – studies that listen to the voices of girls themselves.

Following from Gilligan and McRobbie, many girls' studies scholars remind us of the need to go beyond even the most nuanced deconstructions of cultural artifacts, and to move toward including the voices of girls themselves in the dialogue – to hear how girls actively negotiate and even resist these cultural artifacts. Yet, while it is important to listen to the voices of girls as they tell us about their relationships to cultural artifacts that we, as adult scholars, would likely miss or misinterpret without their help, it is equally, if not more, important to listen to, to see, and to read their voices through the cultural products they themselves create. Technological innovations such as digital video/filmmaking and the → Internet have enabled young people to produce their own media messages – a phenomenon that is particularly prevalent in girl culture (→ Internet Use across the Life-Span). But even such low-tech pursuits as publishing a handmade zine that has been photocopied and handed out at a concert is an important form of cultural production for girls (→ Zines).

Nearly a decade ago, Mary Celeste Kearney (1998, 285) labeled the “emergence of girls as cultural producers” as “one of the most interesting transformations to have occurred in youth culture in the last two decades.” While writing at a time when others both in the academy and the media were focusing on girls as victims of media content, Kearney advocated seeing girls as active and capable of doing more than consuming media content. She reminded us, “If scholars involved in the field of Girls' Studies desire to keep current with the state of female youth and their cultural practices, we must expand the focus of our analyses to include not only texts produced for girls by the adult-run mainstream culture industries, but also those cultural artifacts created by girls” (1998, 286).

In response, the field of girls' studies has generated a plethora of studies documenting girls' active production of culture (both media and otherwise), including music, zines, websites and blogs (→ Blogger), films, the riot grrrl movement, and skater girl culture, to name only a handful of examples. But it has been the area of girls' creative production on the Internet that has generated the most prolific body of work. While at one time there may have been a gendered digital divide such that boys were more likely to use computer technology than were girls, that divide no longer exists, at least in the United States. In fact, in many ways US girls are more active Internet creators than are boys, especially when it comes to such things as blogs. According to a recent study conducted by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 38 percent of US girls aged 15 to 17, versus only 29 percent of US boys in this age group, create and share such self-authored content as photos, artwork, videos, and stories. While the first studies of girls and the Internet focused on websites created *for* girls or other Internet content *about* girls, recent scholarship has moved toward examining websites, blogs, and instant messaging created



by girls. Specifically, scholars have examined the Internet as a space fostering girls' self-expression, community building, identity play, and expressions of girl power (→ Cyberfeminism).

## GIRL POWER

Indeed, one cannot discuss studies of girl culture without addressing this highly contested and controversial concept of girl power. Certainly, the phrase has been associated with everything from the riot grrrl movement (a now international movement, grounded in feminist politics and a punk aesthetic, designed to empower girls and young women through music, self-publishing, and community building) to the Spice Girls to the animated *Powerpuff Girls* (→ Feminist Media). But its origins are less well known. The independent Welsh band Helen Love first included the phrase in a song, "Formula One Racing Girls," in 1993, and the pop-punk duo Shampoo released an album and single titled "Girl Power" in 1995. But no one did more to popularize and commodify the term and to link it to girl culture than did the Spice Girls – the prefabricated, all-girl, British pop group whose music was purposely targeted at young girls. Adopting the girl power slogan, the band has been criticized for redefining the phrase to focus on physical appearance, sex, and shopping. No matter what the phrase's origins, it is significant that the *Oxford English Dictionary* began including it in 2001, defining it as "a self-reliant attitude among girls and young women manifested in ambition, assertiveness and individualism" (BBC News 2002). Indeed, this definition captures the spirit of the way in which girls' studies scholars and girls themselves use the term.

In her call for girls' studies scholars to study girls as cultural producers, Kearney (2006) makes it clear that she is not dismissing the role consumerism plays in girls' lives. Rather, she is attempting to broaden our focus to include areas of scholarship and ways of defining girls' relationship with media that had been previously neglected. Specifically, such studies, she argues, enable us to redefine adolescent girls as active agents, acting on their world. As the culture, technology, and society evolve, so too must the questions we as academics ask and the methods we use to answer them. Indeed this has been one of girls' studies major contributions to the study of the relationship between youth and cultural artifacts.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Blogger ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Cyberfeminism ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Youth Culture ▶ Zines

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# Global Media, History of

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The first phase of a truly global media network ran from the 1860s through the 1920s. Two major interpretations of this era are available. One, long established, emphasizes how aggressive nation-states deployed communication firms to further their own economic and political goals in carving up the planet (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Another, more recent, reads the period as one of capitalist cosmopolitanism, noting the international cartels and other multinational enterprises that in actual fact dominated the growth of the first global technical infrastructure for communication. However, growing nationalism and protectionism over the 1920s put paid to early proposals for a constructively regulated global communication system.

## **BRITAIN'S INITIAL LEAD IN COLONIALISM AND GLOBAL COMMUNICATION**

The flow of → news and → information has followed channels of trade, migration, and cultural contact for millennia. Media historians, however, usually look to the period between the second half of the nineteenth century and the turn of the twentieth, when a global media system emerged consisting of a worldwide network of submarine cables and → news agencies interlinked with urban and national telegraph systems and national commercial press systems (→ Telegraph, History of; Telegraphic News). While access was limited to financiers, traders, diplomats, and military strategists, the rise of these global media coincided with the birth of the commercial press, whose mass appeal and extensive foreign news coverage, even by the standards of our own time, brought these facilities within reach of a larger general public (→ Newspaper, History of).

The maturation and consolidation of the telegraph industry in Britain, Europe, and North America by the mid-1860s led to the initial steps to wire the world. Expanding commerce, especially in the transatlantic economies, combined with the British Empire's commercial, diplomatic, and military reliance on fast and secure → international communications, added further momentum. For the first time in history, worldwide electronic

communication networks and the mass production and dissemination of news, financial information, and diplomatic correspondence brought distant events to far-flung communities almost instantaneously. This simultaneous shared experience of distant events provided at least a thin basis for a mediated global culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

British firms, especially the Eastern Telegraph Company – the biggest multinational of its time – led the efforts to create a sprawling network of telegraphs and submarine cables to Europe (1850s), to the Middle East, India, and North America in the 1860s, to South America and Asia in the next decade, and finally encircling Africa in the mid-1880s. Simultaneously, three European-based wire services – Reuters, Havas, and Wolff – emerged. These firms were early and prominent multinational corporations whose operations served as the informational underpinnings of global capitalist → modernity, or liberal internationalism as it was referred to by contemporaries. The news agencies, in essence, broadcast news over the wires to big city newspapers and their influence on press development was strong in Europe, the Americas, and the Middle and Far East. Their standardized service simultaneously underpinned the new journalistic principle of objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting) and attracted specialized and mass → audiences alike, while their policy of giving exclusive service to one newspaper per city (except in China) reinforced the drift toward local press monopolies (Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen, 1998; → Competition in Media Systems; Concentration in Media Systems). From as early as 1869, Reuters, Havas, and Wolff divided the world's news markets into mutually exclusive areas and set the rules governing news exchange and cooperation among them. The Associated Press was included in 1893 in recognition of its growing standing in North American and European news markets (→ News Agencies, History of).

The fact that the largest communications company – the Eastern Telegraph Company – and most powerful news agency – Reuters – were based in London gave Britain unparalleled hegemony over world communications. Control over both the medium and the message conferred enormous commercial and strategic advantages, a power that British officials refused to yield lightly. Britain's free trade policy was explicitly designed to attract cables and capital to London in a bid to reinforce its status as the world's communication hub. In foreign markets, British officials used diplomatic prowess and ties to local elites to preserve the monopolistic concessions acquired by British companies since the 1850s, which remained a prominent feature of the global media system until the 1920s. Huge subsidies were given to firms, mostly the Eastern Telegraph Company, to extend cable systems to commercially unviable places within Britain's vast territorial empire.

By 1900, however, France, Germany, Japan, and the United States began to build their own international communication systems, engaging, according to Hills (2002), in a "struggle for control of global communication." Communications media were "weapons of politics" for powerful nations in the worldwide competition for territory, wealth, and power (Headrick 1991). This was especially true following the "scramble for Africa" in the 1880s. Parts of Asia and the Caribbean met a similar fate. Fast, reliable, and secure communications became an essential element of imperial administration, diplomacy, and conflict among the imperial powers as well as between them and those they controlled. World War I magnified this strategic role, as surveillance, → censorship and → war propaganda became systematic elements in military conduct (→ Censorship, History of).

Britain was slowly displaced by the United States as the locus of world communication, initially as a consequence of the latter's rapid commercial, political, and military expansion, but also due to the ravages of World War I. This decline accelerated quickly after the costs and consequences of World War II led to the dismantling of British and European territorial imperialism.

### REVISIONIST HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

However, new historical scholarship suggests the need to refine this perspective. It is important to cast the analytical lens beyond competition between powerful nations, especially Britain and the US, for control of world communication and beyond conflating the history of global media with the history of imperialism (Bayly 2001; Jones 2005; Winseck & Pike 2007). Studies written after World War I reread the past through the excessively nationalistic prism that defined much scholarship and the public mood in the decades following. However, the half-century prior to World War I can be better interpreted as "cosmopolitan" in nature, an era of liberal internationalism that deeply shaped the structure and operations of the global media.

As Jones observes, "London was exceptional in the degree of cosmopolitanism in the nineteenth century, [but] the lack of concern about the nationality of ownership was general. This stance did not shift with the intensification of nationalistic rivalries in Europe before World War I" (Jones 2005, 282). The structure of the global media business exemplified his argument. First, while London was home to many important cable firms, in particular the Eastern Telegraph Company, just because capital poured into the city during the cable-building boom years (1870–1910) does not mean that the firms that emerged were British. Indeed, many of the most important firms contained a mixture of British, European, and North American capital, and their boards of directors reflected this fact. The French Atlantic Cable Company in the 1870s illustrates the point, with its combination of French and British capital and two boards of directors, one in London, the other in Paris. The Great Northern Telegraph Company, the Western and Brazilian Telegraph Company, and the Commercial Cable Company were other notable firms with similar features. This is obscured by most studies which refer generically to firms as British, American, German, French, Japanese, with the inference that they were tools of their respective states. In fact, many firms took an opportunistic stance toward their national identity. The Commercial Company was a master at this, claiming to be British when it successfully sought subsidies for two "British" affiliates that it owned – the Halifax and Bermudas Telegraph Company (1890) and Direct West India Cable Company (1898) – and "all-American" when standing before Congress to promote its bid to lay the first American-owned cable across the Pacific (1904).

From its inception in 1888 until the 1920s the Commercial Company displayed its indifference to national identity by leading alliances with several European cable companies in the transatlantic market, while joining with an affiliate of the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Anglo-Danish Great Northern Telegraph Company for its Far East operations. This reveals another crucial aspect of the cosmopolitan character of the global media: the *dominance of cartels*. Cable firms formed cartels throughout the world in the 1870s, cutting deeply across national lines. The ring-circle agreement of 1869 created a

global news cartel consisting of Reuters, Havas, and Wolff (and Associated Press from 1893). The big four commercial wireless firms – Marconi, Compagnie Générale de Télégraphie sans Fil, Radio Corporation of America, and Telefunken – adopted the same methods after World War I. Hogan (1977) calls these cartels “private structures of co-operation”; they were critical to efforts made by companies and governments to avoid “ruinous competition” and to negotiate among foreign policies of nation-states. The news cartel collapsed only in 1934, the wireless cartel in the mid-1940s, while the cable cartels have continued, albeit in different form, to the present day. All of this suggests that it was the *internationalization of control*, rather than the struggle for control, that characterized early globalization.

The most important communications and news markets were between Europe and North America, a few key cities in Atlantic South America, and in certain Chinese and Japanese cities (→ Markets of the Media). This is where the cable companies and news agencies focused their efforts. However, usually through state subsidies and sometimes through state-owned cables, these firms extended their operations into the zones carved out by Britain, European powers, Japan, and the United States in Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia, though these newer areas were some of the least-connected, worst-served places in the planet. In them too the collaborative nature of imperialism was on display, despite episodic flashpoints between the imperial powers. From the mid-1880s to just after the beginning of the twentieth century, the imperial powers worked together to a remarkable extent, most notably as France, Germany, Spain, and Portugal all gave subsidies to affiliates of the British-based Eastern Telegraph Company to meet the commercial and imperial communications needs in Africa.

### THE “EMPIRE OF CAPITAL” AND MOVES FOR REFORM

Beyond the colonized territories lay a much vaster capitalist imperialism, where “informal imperialism” intersected with national modernization discourses to shape the relationship between local and global communication media. These areas included the post-imperial nation-states of South America and the faltering regimes of the Ottoman, Persian, and Chinese empires. In each, nation-builders, business leaders, reformers, and technocrats vied with opportunistic cities, thieves, and culturally conservative forces to define the terms upon which telegraph systems and the nascent commercial press would be integrated into the global media system. Unlike those areas where either markets ruled or “territorial imperialism” rode roughshod over the local population, the empire of capital was based on a loose → discourse of modernity and of creating a harmonized global space for capital accumulation.

Initially, the terms upon which the countries just mentioned were integrated into the empire of capital involved long-term monopolistic concessions, high rates, and little attention to developing local telegraph agencies and the press. Over time, however, these countries began to gain greater control over the terms of cable concessions, to create their own telegraph administrations, and to oversee the emergence of a relatively vibrant, locally controlled press. Such achievements, however, were short-lived. A combination of financial debts and the perceived failure, in the eyes of western commercial and political interests, of these countries’ modernizing initiatives resulted in their fledgling media,

along with much else, often being brought under the de facto rule of foreign interests – a process not reversed for decades. This was not universal though. Argentina, Brazil, and Chile possessed wealthy and influential newspapers, such as *La Nación* and *La Prensa* in Buenos Aires, and by the 1910s a cadre of adroit officials who pushed to nationalize domestic telegraph systems, and to liberalize international communication markets. These countries benefited by playing the once all-powerful foreign cable companies and news agencies off against each other, and their efforts strongly influenced the rebalancing of power that took place among US and European cable companies and news agencies after World War I.

In short, the idea that imperialism meant one-way exploitation by imperial states and corporations is unduly simplistic. The politics of these global media involved local and foreign interests, and the dynamics differed between territorial and informal imperialism. It was not only “developing countries” that chafed at monopolistic concessions, cartels, and exploitative arrangements, but also individuals drawn from the ranks of social reformers that emerged across the North Atlantic countries between the 1880s and 1920s. Among these individuals were those drawn from parliaments, engineering, → journalism, academia, and other walks of life, who set their sights on the monopolistic telegraph and cable companies, cartels, and news agencies whose high rates and collusive behaviors they saw as choking the flow of information and preventing the new means of communication from being turned into vehicles of mass communication. Since the 1880s, this “global media reform” movement pushed to eliminate monopolistic concessions and cartels, for rate reductions, and sometimes for state-owned cables, with one testimony to their success being the state-owned Pacific Cable jointly constructed and owned in 1902 by the British, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand governments. While their gains were limited, the fact that they achieved a measure of support in, for example, the *New York Times*, *The Times* (London), and the conservative *Economist*, kept the cause alive and arguably put downward pressure on rates that had remained prohibitively expensive for nearly half a century. In 1912, the British government finally came to agreement with all transatlantic cable firms to implement new “cheap rate” services to enhance popular use of long-distance communication – a practice soon copied worldwide.

The reformers’ grievances were exacerbated by the extensive surveillance and censorship of cable traffic, and collusion among news agencies, press, and governments for propaganda purposes, during World War I. The movement was broadened among journalists, as Reuters and press barons revealed their willingness to continue to produce “tainted news” even afterwards. The reform movement agenda converged with a willingness to include communication issues within the 1919 Versailles peace talks. While Britain and Japan sought a narrowly focused review of how to deal with several German cables captured by the Allies during the war, the US, France, China, and a few others sought a more expansive review of the global media system. While the latter initiative has often been dismissed as a “cloud of high-minded rhetoric” (Headrick 1991, 174), this misses the point that many believed a comprehensive review of the barriers to world communication – monopolies, cartels, high rates, hidden subsidies, and propaganda – was long overdue. An agreement was reached for just such a review to be held in Washington in 1920, but continued wrangling over the agenda led instead to the issues being dealt with more bilaterally over the 1920s. In the end, this piecemeal approach and the overall relative failure of Versailles, coupled with a turn to a more nationalistic climate over the

following decade, signaled the end of an era. The 1930s Depression thereafter put the final nail in the coffin of early modern globalism, and with it the first period in which elements of a truly global media system were in place.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Information ▶ International Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Modernity ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Telegraphic News ▶ War Propaganda

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## **Globalization of the Media**

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Like many other spheres of contemporary life, the mass media have been profoundly affected by the processes of globalization (→ Globalization Theories). During the 1990s, the global media landscape was transformed as a result of the deregulation and privatization of broadcasting and telecommunication, enabling a quantum leap in the production and distribution of media products across continents and in real time.

The globalization of media, and especially of visual media, is helping to make → Marshall McLuhan's dream of a "global village" a reality. In the era of "real-time" communications, people all over the world can watch live as events unfold, such as the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September, 2001, the tsunami that overwhelmed southern Asia in 2005, or major sports events such as the football world cup or Olympics.

With the convergence of → television and the → Internet and the growing availability of broadband, media consumers today can share information and entertainment

programs and, with digital devices, even generate and distribute their own media content (→ Convergence of Media Systems). Whether the audience is enjoying sports or watching → news reports of military conflicts or natural disasters (→ Disasters and Communication), → music videos, → soap operas, or game and chat shows, the globalization of the media has enabled the creation of a thriving international market, which now encompasses the globe (Thussu 2007).

### **OPENING UP THE MEDIA MARKET**

It has been pointed out that the globalization of the media is not entirely new: during the nineteenth century the world was connected by cable and wireless telegraphy, and → news agencies such as Reuters were early examples of global media (Boyd-Barrett and Rantanen 1998). However, in almost every country, the media, historically, were considered a national institution. The state played an important role in the development of the private press (through subsidies) and especially in the growth of → radio and television, key media for national integration and a sense of cultural identity, with a remit to inform and educate as well as entertain. In the communist world, the mass media were considered part of the legitimate state → propaganda machinery. In many developing countries, too, the mass media were used by ruling elites to retain their hold on power (→ Development Communication). Before media globalization, with the possible exception of broadcasters from major powers such as the United States, television networks, for example, traditionally saw themselves as operating within and for the nation-state, making programs for citizens rather than consumers (→ Audience). With the globalization of the liberal model of the media, national broadcasters no longer have a monopoly on the airwaves. This has meant a dynamic media, challenging state → censorship and widening the → public sphere, while at the same time also leading to the concentration of media power in a few, unelected, transnational corporations (Herman and McChesney 1997; Baker 2007; → Concentration in Media Systems).

The political and economic opening up of markets at the end of the Cold War, through international agreements under the auspices of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in order to encourage privatization and deregulation, relaxed restrictions on media ownership. The subsequent rush of mergers and acquisitions led to the concentration of power in a few large media corporations mainly based in the USA and Europe (Herman and McChesney 1997; Bagdikian 2004; Boyd-Barrett 2006; Thussu 2006; Baker 2007). At the same time, new markets opened up: the former Soviet bloc and emerging economies in Asia provided a growing and increasingly affluent class of media consumers (→ Media Conglomerates).

Benefiting from globalization, transnational media corporations, such as → Disney, AOL-Time Warner (→ Time Warner Inc.), and → News Corporation, came to dominate the global media industry by virtue of their ownership of multiple networks and production facilities and the huge increase in transnational traffic in media products. The USA leads the field in the export of audiovisual products. Through its political and economic power, its media are made available across the globe in English or in dubbed or indigenized versions. From news and current affairs (→ CNN, available in 260 million households worldwide, and Discovery, available in 180 million households worldwide)



through youth programming (MTV, the world's biggest television network, reaching 418 million households), children's television (Disney), feature films (→ Hollywood), and sport (ESPN) to the Internet (Google; → Search Engines), the United States is the global giant (Thussu 2006).

The USA is particularly strong in exporting filmed entertainment: Hollywood films are shown in more than 150 countries worldwide and dominate market share in most countries (→ Film Production). In 2005, more than half of the US film industry revenues came from foreign markets. According to the Motion Picture Association, in 2004, the worldwide box office was worth \$25.24 billion, with the world's top 10 grossing films being produced by Hollywood (Miller et al. 2005).

### **SATELLITES AND THE GROWTH OF GLOBAL TELEVISION**

The globalization of the media has been made possible by digital technologies and the growing availability of affordable communication satellites (→ Digital Media, History of; Satellite Television). During the 1990s – the decade of globalization – more geostationary satellites were launched than in the previous three decades combined, enabled by international agreements on telecommunications, especially the WTO's Fourth Protocol (also referred to as the Basic Agreement on Telecommunications Services; Thussu 2006).

The resulting proliferation of satellite and → cable television has led to unprecedented growth in new television networks. In Latin America, for example, *PanAmSat*, the first private satellite service for the continent, launched in 1988, revolutionized broadcasting, providing direct-to-home (DTH) television services. In Asia, the launch in 1990 of *AsiaSat* made such broadcasters as STAR (Satellite Television Asian Region), part of News Corporation, a possibility. In less than a decade from its launch, STAR could claim to be setting the pace of media in Asia, broadcasting 40 services in eight languages and reaching more than 300 million viewers in 53 countries. In the Arab world, the regional satellite operator *Arabsat* enabled beaming of programs across the region and among the Arab diaspora, as with the pan-Arabic entertainment network Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC), as well as news organizations such as Al Jazeera (→ Arab Satellite TV News). All these networks are now supported by online and mobile delivery mechanisms (Thussu 2006).

One reason for the growing demand for transnational media is the result of a huge movement of people through migration (→ Migration and Immigration). According to a report of the UN Global Commission on International Migration, the world had nearly 200 million migrants in 2005, partly as a result of the globalization of commerce and communication (UN 2005). Transnational satellite broadcasters and online media companies have tapped into these emergent geocultural and linguistic groups (Chalaby 2005).

### **GLOBAL MEDIA: FLOW AND CONTRAFLOW**

The resulting growth of multichannel networks has made the global media landscape more complex: it is now multicultural, multilingual, and multinational (Sinclair et al. 1996; Thussu 2007). Digital communication technologies in broadcasting and now

broadband have given viewers in many countries the ability to access simultaneously a vast array of local, national, regional, and international media. A whole range of television networks is now available to viewers around the world: news (CNN, BBC World, France 24, CNBC, Bloomberg, → BBC World Service), regional news networks (Sky News, Star News Asia, the pan-Arabic news network based in Qatar, Al Jazeera), documentary (Discovery, National Geographic), sports (ESPN); and entertainment (Cartoon Network, Disney, HBO, Paramount, MTV), to name the most prominent genres (→ International Television).

Though the media flow from the west (mainly the US) to other parts of the world has increased, there is a small but significant flow in the other direction, from the *non-western world*. Such countries as China, Japan, South Korea, Brazil, and India have become increasingly important in the circulation of cultural products. Japanese → animation, film, publishing, and music business was worth \$140 billion in 2003, with animation, including manga (comics), → anime, films, videos, and merchandising products bringing in \$26 billion, according to the Digital Content Association of Japan. South Korea has emerged as a major exporter of entertainment – film, television soap operas, popular music, and online games – especially within east Asia, prompting commentators to speak of a Korean wave (the “*Hallyu*”) sweeping the region.

One key example of transnational media flow is the Latin American soap opera, the *telenovela*, which has become global in its reach: by 2005 the telenovela had developed into a \$2 billion industry, being broadcast in 50 languages and dialects and reaching 100 countries from Latin America to southern and eastern Europe, to Asia, Africa, and the Arab world (Martinez 2005).

Another major non-western presence in the global media market is the growing visibility of India’s \$3.5 billion Hindi film industry, which, in terms of production and viewership, is the world’s largest: every year a billion more people buy tickets for Indian movies than for Hollywood films. More films are made in India each year than in Hollywood, but their influence is largely confined to the Indian subcontinent and among the South Asian diaspora, though in recent years many “cross-over” films have changed this situation (Kaur and Sinha 2005). The unprecedented expansion of television in the 1990s and early 2000s has also boosted the movie industry, with the emergence of many dedicated film-based pay-channels. The globalization of → *Bollywood* has ensured that Indian films are increasingly being watched by an international audience as well as a wider diasporic one: Hindi films are shown in more than 70 countries and are popular in the Arab world, in central and southeast Asia, and among many African countries.

In the arena of news and current affairs, such *contra-examples* may include the pan-Latin American news channel *Televisora del Sur* (“Television of the South,” Telesur) based in Venezuela; Russia Today (RTTV), the round-the-clock English-language global television channel launched in 2005; and CCTV-9, the English-language network of China Central Television, in operation since 2003. Al Jazeera, which since its launch in 1996 has redefined journalism in the Arab world, is the most prominent example of contraflow in global media products. By 2006, this pan-Arabic 24/7 news network was claiming to reach 50 million viewers across the world, challenging the Anglo-American domination of news and current affairs in one of the world’s most geopolitically sensitive areas. If the live broadcast of the 1991 US military action against Iraq contributed to

making CNN a global presence, the “war on terrorism” catapulted Al Jazeera into becoming an international broadcaster whose logo can be seen on television screens around the world (Lynch 2006). With the launch in 2006 of *Aljazeera English* – and its claim of “setting the news agenda” – the global news-scape is likely to become more diverse.

## MEDIA GLOCALIZATION

Aljazeera English is an interesting example of media glocalization, drawing on the professionalism of the → BBC’s public service ethos but aiming to privilege a southern perspective on global issues. Such hybridization is not uncommon and helps in a better understanding of strategies being adopted by the major western media corporations to maximize their entry into emerging markets around the globe (Robertson 1992). Conforming to what Sony once characterized as “global localization” – content and services being tailored for specific cultural consumers – a glocal media product is an inevitable commercial imperative. Glocalization strategies exemplify how the global can co-opt the local in order to maintain its dominance. This localization trend is discernible in the growth of regional or local editions of western or, more specifically, American → newspapers or → magazines; the transmission of television channels in local languages, and even producing local programming, as well as having local-language websites.

Major Hollywood studios are increasingly using local production facilities in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Columbia TriStar, Warner Brothers, and Disney have set up international TV subsidiaries to produce English-language co-productions, to be followed by country-specific programming. Sony has contributed to local-language film production in Germany, Hong Kong, France, and Britain, and television programming in eight languages. Global media companies are particularly keen to consolidate their position in the world’s two largest, and hitherto not fully explored, markets: China and India. Cartoon Network has indigenized operations in India, producing a series based on the Hindu religious epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharat*, while Disney Consumer Products has established more than 1,800 “Disney Corners” in Chinese department stores.

STAR TV has aggressively adopted the policy of indigenization in offering localized channels, including STAR Chinese Channel (for Taiwan), STAR Japan, STAR Plus and STAR News (for India), and VIVA Cinema (for the Philippines). Among the business television channels, too, Asia is a priority area. By 2006, CNBC Asia, CNBC-TV18 (India), and Nikkei-CNBC (Japan) were available in more than 34 countries across the Asia-Pacific region. CNBC also had an alliance with China Business Network, a subsidiary of the Shanghai Media Group.

In the Middle East, western or westernized TV platforms such as Orbit and Viacom’s pay-TV joint venture Showtime are increasingly localizing their content, as well as using subtitles for American programming and moderating language and depictions of nudity and sex. In Latin America, prominent US brands include MTV Latin America, Canal Fox, CNN En Español, Fox Kids Network, and Fox Sports Americas.

In *print media* the localization process is well established. *Newsweek* has a network of local-language publications in Japanese, Korean, Spanish, Arabic, and Polish. The regional editions of major US business publications such as the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *Fortune Asian*, and *Fortune China* have a small but

influential pan-Asian readership. In Latin America, US presence includes the *Wall Street Journal Americas* as well as *Time* magazine, published as a supplement in leading newspapers in nine Spanish-speaking countries. *AmericaEconomia*, a Dow Jones publication, is Latin America's leading pan-regional business magazine, published bi-weekly in Spanish and Portuguese, while *Fortune* has a Latin American edition, *Fortune Americas*. Many international media brands publish multiple international editions of magazines, like *Reader's Digest*, *Esquire*, and *Good Housekeeping*. This localized content is supported by regionalized advertising, increasingly deploying regional and national languages and using cultural values to sell consumer and other products through the different media.

As US-led western media conglomerates have regionalized and localized their content to extend their reach beyond the elites in the world and to create the "global popular," many southern media organizations have benefited from synergies emerging from this process. Some have skillfully used their position within a media conglomerate, drawing on technological and professional expertise to grow into global operators. In addition, the globalization of western or western-inspired media has contributed to the creation of professional careers in media and cultural industries. The localization of media content and outsourcing of digital media for transnational corporations – from Hollywood post-production to animation and digital data management – have provided the impetus for the formation of important global hubs for creative industries: by 2005, for example, India had emerged as a key destination for outsourcing media content (UNESCO 2005).

### CHALLENGING DOMINANCE?

During the 1970s and 1980s, → UNESCO studies, conducted amid heated debates about the → New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), suggested that there was generally a one-way traffic, mainly in entertainment-oriented programming, from the major western exporting nations to the rest of the world, resulting in a global imbalance in the media.

In the era of globalization, it has been argued that the one-way vertical flow has given way to multiple and horizontal flows, as non-western media content providers have emerged to service an ever-growing geocultural market. However, a word of caution is advisable. The prominent examples of media flows from India, Brazil, and Qatar may give the impression that global media have become more diverse and even democratic. A careful analysis of the reality of global media flows would demonstrate a more complex process.

Despite the growing trend toward contraflow, the revenues of non-western media organizations, with the exception of Japanese animation, are relatively small, and their global impact is restricted to geocultural markets or at best to small pockets of regional transnational consumers. None of the Latin American telenovelas has had an international impact comparable with the cult following of *Friends* or *Sex and the City*, and, despite the growing presence of Indian films outside India, their share in the \$200 billion global film industry (valued in 2004) was negligible.

As trade figures demonstrate, the circulation of US media products still continues to define the "global." One result of the privatization and proliferation of television outlets and the growing glocalization of US media products is that American film and television

exports witnessed a fourfold increase between 1992 and 2004 – from \$2.5 billion to \$10.4 billion (US Government 2005). The extensive reach of US-based media, advertising, and telecommunications networks contributes to the global flow of consumerist messages, helping the US to use its “soft power” to promote its national economic and political interests (Nye 2004; → Americanization of the Media).

Critical theorists have argued that the transnational corporations, with the support of their respective governments, exert indirect control over the developing countries, dominating markets, resources, production, and labor (→ Critical Theory; Political Economy of the Media). In the process they undermine the cultural autonomy of the countries of the south and create a dependency on both the hardware and software of communication and media: “transnational corporate cultural domination” is how one prominent scholar defined the phenomenon (Schiller 1992, 39; → Dependency Theories).

In such an analysis of global media flows, however, the audience and media content were largely ignored: that the content can be interpreted differently by different audiences and that southern countries may be able to innovate and improvise on the western products were discounted. While some have argued that the global-national-local interaction is producing “heterogeneous disjunctures” rather than a globally homogenized culture (Appadurai 1990), others have championed the cause of cultural hybridity, formed out of an adaptation of western media genres to suit local cultural conventions (Kraidy 2005; → Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Such hybridization of the media takes shape within a broader new-liberal ideological framework. It could be argued that globalized media are contributing to a culture that celebrates the supremacy of the market and liberal democracy, as defined by the west. That the message is in local languages may in fact be a more effective way of legitimizing the ideological imperatives of a free market system: one that privileges the private and undermines the public media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Animation ▶ Anime ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Audience ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Bollywood ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship ▶ CNN ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Disney ▶ Film Production ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hollywood ▶ International Television ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Music Videos ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newspaper ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Search Engines ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Television ▶ Time Warner Inc. ▶ UNESCO

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# Globalization of Organizations

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Most generally, globalization is defined as “the widening, deepening, and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life” (Held et al. 1999, 5). Globalization is produced and maintained through communicative action. Political, cultural, social, and economic events are no longer bound by time or space. The free flow of goods, services, money, and ideas, facilitated by emerging technologies, strongly influence and are influenced by organizational communication practices. No longer circumscribed by socio-geographic borders, organizational identities transcend nation-states. The complexity of contemporary issues such as AIDS, global warming, and

terrorism implicates organizational interdependence. No matter what their mission, structure, or physical location, all types of organizations must address the complexities of operating within a multicultural communicative, legal, moral, and social context (→ Globalization Theories).

Although the word globalization first appeared in Webster's dictionary in 1961, it was not until the mid-1990s that globalization became a noteworthy concept in organizational communication studies. Until that time, organizational communication scholars primarily addressed issues of structural convergence (exploring how organizations were becoming more similar), or organizational divergence (focusing on cultural variability) (Stohl 2001). Little work addressed the dynamic tensions associated with increasing global interdependence and volatility.

Today, organizational communication literature addresses a broader range of *organizational types* than ever before, including multinational corporations, nonprofit, nongovernmental, and governmental organizations, and international institutions. Across organizational types and sectors, the need for flexibility, responsiveness, and speed, and efficient knowledge production, reception, and diffusion have resulted in the emergence of networks as the quintessential organizational form (Monge & Fulk 1999). Globalization theories highlight networks as “the new social morphology” of society (Castells 1996).

## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The ubiquity of globalization in all aspects of life has shaped a diversity of theoretical perspectives. In one perspective, globalization is framed as the triumph of capitalism, the free market, and democracy. New communication technologies, social exchanges, and competitive markets are seen to open up organizational processes. Within this perspective, research focuses on the dynamics of globalization that explain the macro-restructuring of global sectors and the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of specific types of micro-organizational networks (e.g., Doerfel & Taylor 2004; Shumate et al. 2005).

In contrast, scholars operating within a *critical theoretical framework* (→ Critical Theory) view globalization as a transformation in labor markets, immigration patterns, and communication structures that exacerbates the distance between the “haves” and the “have nots.” The enactment of inequality (Ganesh et al. 2005), the changing nature of corporate social responsibility (May et al., in press), and concern with how marginalized groups manage/resist tensions associated with the new world order and changing social contracts are major research topics (e.g., Papa et al. 1995).

Researchers who view communication as an interpretive symbolic process approach globalization as intersubjectively constructed. In their view, globalization contributes to new formations of identities that challenge traditional definitions of who we are and what we do (→ Corporate and Organizational Identity). Globalization transforms our work and our social lives. Workplace discourses represent processes of power and control (Holmer Nadesan 2001), and the shift to network structuring is theorized to result in the weakening of social bonds and the loss of trust and commitment.

Although theoretically diverse, most organizational communication scholarship reflects the *transformationalist thesis* of globalization (Held et al. 1999). Globalization is a central driving force behind the rapid political, social, economic, and cultural changes

taking place, but the valence of these changes is indeterminate. Organizational practices and collective actions are primary means by which individuals and groups influence the trajectory of globalization. Globalization is a dialectic process (Giddens 1990); organizations adhere to their own cultural patterns but simultaneously adapt patterns and structures to accommodate differences in and pressures of the global system. Globalization may marginalize and disempower large segments of societies, but the same dynamics may redress the imbalance of power and provide new opportunities that will improve the lives of all.

## DYNAMIC PROCESSES OF GLOBALIZATION

Across theoretical perspectives there are six globalization dynamics that have important implications for the study of organizational communication. Following the discussion of Stohl (2005) we can trace many pathways where communication scholars contribute to the understanding of organizing and globalization.

*Dynamic 1: Dramatic increase in economic interdependence.* Increasing interdependence means that new forms of cooperation are being forged across local and global contexts and organizational types. Organizational networks are dynamic and flexible, no longer locally bound by sector, geography, or past relationships. New types of partnerships are being forged among corporate and public sectors, NGOs and IGOs, and nonprofit and for-profit enterprises. Intersectoral collaborations are enacted without traditional forms of trust and connectivity (Stohl & Stohl 2005), thereby opening up possibilities for entirely new forms of alliance and coalition building.

*Dynamic 2: Intensification and deepening of material, political, and cultural exchanges.* The escalation of exchange has created enormous opportunity for multicultural learning and the expansion of local diversity, while, at the same time, increasing homogeneity and cultural convergence. The consolidation of media ownership (→ Globalization of the Media), for example, is associated with global news coverage and format becoming more similar and entertainment-driven. Yet, the enormous reach, resources, and influence of these organizations may be counteracted by increased exchanges found on the web and the explosion of e-magazines, blogs, and other alternative forms of communication.

The intensification of exchanges also means that many problems can no longer be solved within one nation or sector. There has been an exponential growth in international nongovernmental and governmental organization as people strive to cope with the challenges of globalization. Moreover, the escalation of global linkages through practices such as outsourcing and offshoring has created new forms of global cities. Distance may be disappearing, but location still matters. Places like Bangalore and São Paulo are becoming sites of increased immigration, diverse work cultures, and multicultural exchanges. These environments provide greater visibility for marginalized groups and potential opportunities for international labor movements and the development of civil society (Kaldor 2003).

*Dynamic 3: Global and rapid diffusion of ideas and knowledge enabled through new information technologies.* Network flows are the core of globalized social structures enabling rapid diffusion of information and ideas. New communication technology makes traditional models of knowledge management outdated. In this “global information revolution”



(Friedman 2005), organizations and their members have the potential to exchange information in ways that were never before possible. People need not be physically co-present, and work can be dispersed geographically and temporally. As a result, models of power, privacy, and surveillance have been altered.

The widespread availability of new communication technologies also means that individuals are no longer constrained by the high transaction costs of coordination. The relative ease and low cost of communicating with large populations lead to changes in strategies and meanings of organizational membership. Whether the transformation of contemporary organizing is linked to declines, increases, or new distributions of social capital is still unresolved (Bimber et al. 2005).

*Dynamic 4: Compression of time and space.* The invention of the telegraph resulted in symbols moving independently of geography and faster than mechanical means of transportation (Carey 1989; → Telegraph, History of). The widespread diffusion of → television enabled dispersed people to experience events at the same time. No longer reliant on organizational infrastructure, today's broadening reach and increased speed of communication have produced even greater changes in the way we organize, experience, and interpret events. Non-co-located individuals are able to simultaneously interact, influence, and interpret events.

Thus, globalization not only changes what it means to be present or absent but what is considered and experienced as inside and outside, home and away, them and us. Under these conditions, organizational and personal identities become more ethereal, volatile, and problematic (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

*Dynamic 5: Disembedding of events and institutions permitting new realignments and restructuring of social interaction across time and space.* Many globalization theorists note that more and more people "live in circumstances in which disembedded institutions, linking local practices with globalized social relations, organize major aspects of day-to-day life" (Giddens 1990, 26). Human interactions are "lifted out" of local contexts and repositioned within network flows, creating new linkages. Local organizations, which heretofore had primary responsibility for the inculcation of values, the establishment of civil society, the production of commercial partnerships, the education of the populace, and the development of relationships, are being replaced by distant linkage and "virtual" experience. Symbolic tokens and expert systems are able to distribute knowledge across far-flung groups of people who become connected in ways more powerful than those within their own local networks. Disembeddedness thereby contributes to the creation of new perceptions of ourselves, our organizations, and the world in which we live (Monge 1998).

*Dynamic 6: Increases in global consciousness through processes of reflexivity.* Most theories of globalization suggest that people today establish their identities and position themselves in relation to the global system, rather than to national or local sectors. Organizational choices and experiences are increasingly processed within a global perspective, challenging local cause and effect, expanding relevant stakeholders, and broadening legal and cultural constraints and opportunities. Even when individuals and groups consider themselves different from the rest of the world, they establish their position in relation to the global system, a process described as relativization (Robertson 1992). This reflexive dynamic is embodied in changes in discourses of identity and the constant re-examination of social practices in light of new identities, information, and relations.

Global reflexive processes are oppositional; a heightened appreciation of the global community is coupled with the organizing of social movements designed to counter the new world order. Organizational identifications transcend the nation and help establish an evolving global civic culture. At the same time communal identities are strengthened as people communicate inwardly, sharply distinguishing between in- and outgroups, and resist economic, social, cultural, and political integration (Castells 1996).

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Organizational communication scholarship and globalization theory require an understanding of past and present economic, socio-cultural, political, and organizational practices and a sensitivity to ethical and social consequences of organizational action. The complexity of the phenomenon calls for studies utilizing qualitative, ethnographic, survey, network, and parametric statistical approaches. Cross-cultural communication studies are particularly vulnerable to methodological parochialism, and it is a challenge to make sure that methods and data are comparable and appropriate across contexts. The interconnected nature of language and cultural identity highlights a methodological challenge and the significance of language in globalization studies. Understanding organizational communication will play a central role in how we address the challenges and opportunities inherent in globalization.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Collective Action and Communication ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Intergroup Dimensions of Organizational Life ▶ Interorganizational Communication ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Social Networks ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television

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## Globalization Theories

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An interconnected set of terms – globalization, global, globality – dominated analytic discourse toward the end of the twentieth century. The considerable disagreements among theorists are set out below. Then the specific issue of cultural globalization and its debates are addressed.

### KEY DEBATES ABOUT GLOBALIZATION

One argument queried whether globalization was an *old process, or a contemporary one*. The *Communist manifesto* of 1848 (Marx & Engels 1990) put forward an analysis of the dizzying reduction of space and time and of the transnational force of capitalist processes, as the growing bourgeoisie sought raw materials and labor power in the further reaches of the European empires. Some globalization skeptics, such as Hirst and Thompson (1999), have argued that, at least in international trade, the world was more globalized toward the end of the nineteenth century than at the outset of the twenty-first (→ International Communication). The exhibition *Venice and the Islamic World, 828–1797*, organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (Carboni 2007), provided vivid material evidence as to how much had been

lost in the two centuries since Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in terms of interaction and information between western Europe and the Middle East.

A second line of argument revolved around *globalization's chief components*. Social theorists agreed that it is best thought of as a skein of interlocking processes but not on what those processes might be. Appadurai (1990) developed the notion of a set of "scapes" – technoscape, ideoscape, ethnoscape, mediascape, financescape – to which further glosses included a sacriscape, a genderscape, and a linguascape. Giddens (1990) suggested that globalization involved industrialization, capitalism, the nation-state system, and technological diffusion, and that modernity's juggernaut pressed toward transnational connectivity (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). Held et al. (1999) suggested that four comparative spatio-temporal dimensions marked out the contemporary period: the extensity of global networks; the intensity of global interconnectedness; the velocity of global flows; and the impact propensity of global interconnectedness. Thus, globalization processes are argued to stretch political, social, and economic relations beyond clear territorial principles of organization, challenging the deeply embedded notion in the social sciences of the national society as the central unit of analysis. Yet the analytic issue remains: what is the *key* driver producing such effects?

A third line of argument hinged on *globalization's outcomes*. Many analysts saw globalization as the expansion of transnational practices, especially practices that originate with nonstate actors and cross state borders, or simply the development of global social relations. Some theorists considered the complex skeins of economic and cultural connectivity that tie different parts of the world together now constitute a new post-societal era (Urry 2000).

Some feared a homogenization of culture as western, materialist values and desires spread around the world, while others suggested hybridization to be a key process (Kraidy 2005); historicized argument recognizes that all cultures have been hybridized through time and questions the natio-centric definition of "culture" that often pertains in such arguments (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Hybridity Theories). Many theorists pointed to globalization's contradictory outcomes, producing both homogenization *and* heterogenization (Hannerz), deterritorialization *and* reterritorialization (Held), fragmentation *and* integration (Rosenau).

## GLOBALITY AND GLOCALIZATION

A closely allied term was "globality," coined and defined by Robertson (1991) as the increasing awareness that the *world is, indeed, a single place*. He argued that the consequences for new claims to identity formation were among the key issues facing the twenty-first century, so that an analysis was needed of new forms of collectivity and the individual. Thus, contemporary issues such as global warming and nuclear power were seen as problems that no single state could solve but which required coordinated action across the system of states, with involvement of the global citizenry. The notion of "global civil society" itself was challenged as a chimera (Sparks 2006), while others saw it as a "multitude," embodying and coordinating a wide range of ecological, peace, and social justice movements (Hardt & Negri 2000).

Another imagining of the "global" was of *spatial connectivity*, moving into the universe from the "I" outward through the local, the national, and the regional, to the ether, the

atmosphere that we all breathe. This was powerfully invoked by Castells' (1996) notion of the Internet as a global network whose functioning at any one point in time was probably impossible to map but which potentially connected individuals to others through a variety of forms of communication, the closest humanity has come to inventing a global brain. However, with the spread of Internet connectivity, there is little use in an analytic hierarchy of space that makes the global not only the largest spatiality but also the most remote: for those with access, the global is only a click away.

Everywhere in the world is impacted by globalization processes, even if the impacts are highly differentiated. Hence, macro-level globalization processes have to be studied in specific locales as place-specific. Robertson (1991) notes that it was Japanese economists in the 1980s who coined *dochakuka*, "glocalization," for the emerging Japanese business practice in which goods and services were produced and distributed globally according to particularistic, local criteria. This argument countered fears of homogenizing processes since any ideas or values must adapt to local circumstances if they are to stick. He honed "glocalization" to mean the simultaneity of universalizing and particularizing tendencies, echoing some arguments about hybridization processes.

### CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION AND SOCIAL THEORY

Theorizing about globalization triggered significant rethinking about the foundational notion of state, nation, culture, and society as homologous, neatly bounding the same terrain. With global migrations, what constituted the "national" also became diasporic for many people. Cultural products move even more easily across state boundaries, particularly in the form of mediated content. Older terms needed re-specifying, the "international" becoming more closely linked to solely state-based relationships. "Trans" emerged as a useful prefix, with "transnational" being used for movements of peoples and things across national borders, "transcultural" suggesting personal encounters, and "translation" opening up the analysis of linguistic exchanges and adaptations. "Cosmopolitanism" was increasingly invoked as a positive embrace of global multiculturalism.

Media and communications were centrally implicated. First, communications technologies of various kinds provided the visible and invisible *skeins of connectivity* on which other processes of globalization rely (→ Technology and Globalization). Global finance became the processing of digitized information, as did the scheduling of transnational travel and the purchasing and distribution of goods. Huge data-processing industries grew in Costa Rica and India, such as call centers and data archiving.

Second, press and broadcasting remain key carriers of → *news*, and were thus powerful *socializing agents of the new globality*. Here the problematic of the unequal political economy of international communication may still have resonance, as western → media conglomerates pump out content that circulates around the world carrying images of middle-class consumption and the prejudices of western countries (→ Political Economy of the Media). Resonances with the argument about cultural imperialism are evident (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories).

Yet there were many rapidly developing media industries in the global south (Brazil, India, China, Egypt), so that media analyst Jeremy Tunstall, who in 1977 had published *The media are American*, in 2007 published *The media were American* (Tunstall 1977,

2007). Indeed, the 2000s seemed to augur the severe erosion of US cultural hegemony, challenged by the new voices in the Middle East, such as the television stations Al Jazeera (Arabic and English), Al Manar, and Al Arabiyya, along with other forces (→ Arab Satellite TV News; China Central Television Channel 9 [CCTV-9]; Francophonie; Independent Media Centers Network; Internet Law and Regulation; Korean Cultural Influence; TeleSur).

A third argument regarding cultural globalization focused on *media formats*, especially in entertainment, where a western show transmutes to suit a different cultural location. Lebanon's *Star academy* TV show kept its contestants segregated by gender, though Bahrain's version of *Big brother* was cancelled in response to clerical outrage. Such translation of formats made the world's screens perhaps more similar than was once thought, while still producing a form of mediated hybridity (Kraidy 2005).

A fourth and final argument focused on *technological convergence* through digitization, whereby the dividing lines between the media industries, telecommunications, and computerization blurred and offered novel spaces for participation. Social network sites initially popular in the mid-2000s, such as *YouTube*, *MySpace*, and *FaceBook*, became showcases for global creativity, involving millions of nonprofessional content items, as well as platforms for political commentary and satire that could evade national censorship practices. Diasporas and home populations could actually share virtual spaces for engagement and dialogue, with unknown potential for reshaping national politics, while citizen journalists and bloggers challenged mainstream media content from their own countries and beyond (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Digitization and Media Convergence).

## THE CONTRADICTIONS OF GLOBALIZATION

Yet, while some celebrated a "borderless" world, others reminded us of inequalities of gender, class, and race within the power dynamics of globalization. It was argued that the neo-liberal globalization of western consumerism and mass production had increased inequality around the world, and that World Bank and World Trade Organization (WTO) policies exacerbated global inequality. In 2007, when the first person made a million US dollars selling virtual land on the *Second life* website, nearly three billion people still lived on less than two dollars a day, and it was estimated that the GDP of the poorest 48 nations was less than the wealth of the world's three richest people combined.

Yet despite or even because of its frequent use, "globalization" as a single word became an empty signifier. It now seemed to require a qualifying term, e.g., "economic globalization" or "cultural globalization," to anchor it. Perhaps the time had arrived to no longer praise globalization but to bury it. Increasingly it was recognized that to study the processes of globalization required analysis at the local level, the "glocal" (Hemer & Tufte 2007). We might anticipate more nuanced usage of the term and recognition that even if we all share some transnational processes, we do not all feel their effects in the same way. As global social justice movements grew, critical of neo-liberal policies, so global capitalist logics in China and India rapidly produced new wealth, greater integration into the world economy, and growing internal inequality.

While the economic logic of capital is a central driving force of globalization, as Marx and Engels recognized a century and a half ago, giving the term a hostile usage, its unfolding has produced contradictory impacts and responses, not least because of the

increased visibility of global processes via communications. Further analysis of grounded real-world processes of globalization should produce more refined theorization and the repudiation of simplistic totalizations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ China Central Television Channel (CCTV-9) ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Francophonie ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ Independent Media Centers Network ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Korean Cultural Influence ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ News ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ TeleSur

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## **Goals, Cognitive Aspects of**

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The term “goal” refers to a future state of affairs that a person wishes to attain or maintain. Goals prompt planning, which, in turn, serves as the basis for action. From

these simple premises, it is apparent that the core function of goals is to regulate behavior and that communicative goals and plans fall under the broader conceptual umbrella of behavioral goals and plans.

Theories that invoke the goal concept also embrace *three general principles* (Powers 1973). First, goals are arranged hierarchically and, therefore, necessarily vary in their level of abstraction. Second, regardless of hierarchical level, goal-directed behaviors are responsive to feedback concerning the discrepancy between the current and desired future states. Finally, goals are abandoned when they are achieved or when the expectation for success falls below some individually determined threshold.

### THE CONCEPT OF GOALS

A person's goals are structured in *hierarchies*. As an example of hierarchy, consider that a person who possesses the goal of maintaining good health might intend to consume fruits and vegetables, to exercise regularly, and to get periodic check-ups. Each of these aims, in turn, generates various lower-level goals: avoiding fast food, learning to cross-country ski, and making an appointment with the physician. Each of the action sequences associated with these lower-level goals can themselves be decomposed ad infinitum.

Goals also prompt action. When an action is carried out, the consequence of that action is compared to the goal. In this way, *feedback* is provided to the *cognitive system* that monitors progress toward the goal (→ Cognition). However, the fact that multiple goal-feedback cycles are occurring simultaneously at different levels in the goal hierarchy introduces a degree of complexity. To regulate behavior at any given time, the cognitive system needs to coordinate goal-feedback cycles across levels in the goal hierarchy. Difficulty arises because lower-level goal-feedback cycles occur more rapidly than higher-level goal-feedback cycles.

Coordination among the goal-feedback cycles at different levels is achieved through two means: top-down control and inhibition. One top-down process operates by activating cognitive mechanisms attuned to the goal. In the perceptual realm, this mechanism is captured by the adage, "All the hungry man sees is food." Goal-relevant information in memory also becomes more accessible once the goal is adopted. The second mechanism – inhibition – involves suppression of competing goals. This occurs by circumscribing action tendencies that might work in opposition to the prepotent goal.

Goal-based models of communication typically incorporate a comparative mechanism that assesses the discrepancy between the goal and the current state of affairs. When that discrepancy reaches zero, the goal has been achieved and no further effort is required. However, *goals may be abandoned* for reasons other than success. In particular, lowering the estimations of success may diminish motivation to achieve the goal. Such changes in likelihood often result when multiple attempts to achieve the goal are met with failure. Berger (1997) has demonstrated that our desire to conserve cognitive resources can work against the need to alter our behavior in the face of goal failure. Because of the greater effort required to change major components of the behavioral plan, individuals sometimes alter trivial elements (e.g., volume) that are unlikely to increase the efficacy of the action.



## GOALS IN ACTION

A cognitive perspective on goals emphasizes their psychological qualities insofar as they reside in individuals (→ Goals, Social Aspects of). On this basis, some writers have asserted that goals may explain action, but not interaction (e.g., Bavelas 1991). The argument is premised on the observation that individuals do not seek to attain their aims in isolation, but rather they must co-construct a conversation with another individual who surely has their own set of goals. From this perspective, then, goal-based explanations fail to illuminate communicative interaction because of their focus on the individual. They may explain monologue, but not dialogue. Such an argument makes sense only if we assume that individuals' goals remain static over the course of the conversation. Empirical research shows that this is a dubious assumption.

Waldron (1997) had dyads interact with one another for 8 minutes, after which time he separated the research participants and asked them to review a tape of their conversation. An experimenter stopped the tape every 30 seconds and participants rated the importance of five goals for the preceding time period. His analysis revealed that 30 percent of the intervals showed a significant shift in goal importance. Using a similar method, Keck & Samp (2007) found that 66 percent of the intervals in their investigation showed goal shift during a conflict interaction. The Keck & Samp study made another important contribution to research on goals by demonstrating the effect of partner behavior on individuals' goals. For example, when one person behaved in a distributive fashion, the other interactant subsequently rated their own other-identity goal as less important. In sum, just as goal-based theories of message production predict (e.g., Dillard 1990; Berger 1997), the evidence supports the notion that interlocutors adapt their goals and behavior to one another during conversation.

## GOAL FORMATION AND MULTIPLE GOALS

Cognitive models of → message production assume that individuals possess knowledge of a range of interaction goals as well as the circumstances that might facilitate or threaten goal achievement. This information is stored in → memory, where memory is modeled as an associative network (→ Memory, Message). Wilson (1995) proposes the existence of cognitive rules that link interaction goals to information about the situation that is relevant to particular goals (see also Greene 1997; Meyer 2000). Such rules are activated by a match between the situational features associated with the rule and the perceived features of the situation in which the actors find themselves. For example, a message source is likely to form the goal of "enforcing an obligation" when (1) an individual of lesser status (2) fails to perform a promised behavior that (3) has consequences for the source (Wilson 2002, 169). A goal is likely to be formed to the extent that there are more, rather than fewer, relevant features perceived to be present in the situation or, equivalently, to the degree that the circumstances *fit* the rule. In addition to the fit criterion, the likelihood that a rule will result in goal formation depends on the *strength* of the rule and the *recency* with which it has been activated. The strength of a rule can be conceived of as the degree to which the set of situational features demands a particular action.

Social interaction frequently requires interlocutors to manage *multiple goals*. Individuals are not only trying to achieve their objectives, but they may also be trying to demonstrate

respect, minimize imposition, control their anxiety, or avoid damaging the relationship. From this, it follows that coordinating multiple aims is a more challenging undertaking than the pursuit of a single objective. Indeed, there is evidence that, relative to single goals, managing multiple goals is more effortful and consumes more cognitive resources (e.g., Greene & Lindsay 1989).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Cognition ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Constructivism ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Message Editing ▶ Message Production

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## **Goals, Social Aspects of**

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A goal-oriented perspective on communication entails the assumption that social interaction is an instrument for achieving objectives. Communication is the means by which something gets done.

Goals have several *features*. They vary in their level of abstraction (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of). For example, a person who is seen typing at a computer may be writing a research paper, attempting to build a case for tenure, or contributing to communication science. Individuals have the capacity to form and maintain goals at varying levels of abstraction. Goals also show variability with regard to their importance. Certain aims are crucial to life satisfaction for some individuals, whereas others might view the same objective as trivial. Third, some goals are more challenging than others. Achieving a challenging goal demands more resources from the social actor, which may take the form of time devoted to planning.

A distinction can be drawn between *primary and secondary goals* (Dillard et al. 1989). The primary goal provides the explanation for the social episode. It is the answer to the question: what are the interactants doing? Secondary goals are all of the concerns that follow from consideration of the primary goal. For example, if one individual wishes to give advice to another person, the message source may be concerned about appearing overbearing and thereby giving offense.

*Primary goals* serve two social functions. One is motivational. They lie at the beginning of the goals-plans-action sequence. Thus, they are primary in the sense that they initiate the process that results in message production. Primary goals also serve a social → meaning function. They imbue the social episode with meaning by offering a culturally viable explanation for the communicative transaction. In so doing, they also enable individuals to identify the beginning and ending points of the social episode. Segmentation is valuable for making sense of what might otherwise be viewed as an undifferentiated outpouring of behavior. Although a goals perspective assumes that primary goals have the capacity to provide social meaning, it does not claim that they invariably do so. Sometimes, individual actors have different understandings of the meaning of a particular social episode. In other instances, one party may have a secret agenda that defines the interaction for him or her, but is not shared with the other actor. Finally, the end points of a social episode may be fuzzy. On certain occasions, individuals explicitly mark the start and finish of the episode, but other times they do not.

As noted, *secondary goals* are concerns that follow from the consideration of a primary goal. One such concern is face. When a speaker wishes to know the time, she may use various linguistic constructions to lessen the threat to the hearer. "I'm sorry to bother you, but . . ." recognizes that individuals have a right to be left alone and that a request for information intrudes upon that right. By including the phrase, the speaker has crafted a message request that will not only obtain the desired information, but also will achieve the goal of respecting the other social actor. Different writers have produced different sets of secondary goals (→ Message Editing).

Berger and Kellermann (1983) specify the existence of *two meta-goals*. Efficiency can be conceptualized as the ratio of outcome to effort, where higher values indicate greater efficiency. Social appropriateness is the degree to which a behavior is suitable or fitting in a specific interaction. Meta-goals are distinct from primary goals insofar as they are cross-situational concerns that influence how a primary goal is achieved. The notion of meta-goal shifts the focus from outcome to process.

There are three ways in which *primary and secondary goals relate to one another*. In the first case, goals are incompatible. One party may wish to end a relationship, but without

inducing any negative affect in the other. Another possibility is that secondary goals are irrelevant to the primary goal. Third, primary and secondary goals may be compatible. Relational initiation offers one context in which goal compatibility might occur. The norm of reciprocity demands that individuals repay favors provided to them by others. When one person asks another for help (e.g., a ride to the grocery store) that he or she cannot immediately repay, the message source is signaling a willingness to enter into a relationship in which reciprocity will occur over a lengthier time period. Such is a defining feature of friendships. The speaker may obtain a ride and, in so doing, also enhance a budding relationship.

The third case is the most desirable of the alternatives, but it is also the least common. Most interactions are a blend of cases one and two. Because there are multiple secondary goals, it is likely that some of them create opposition to the primary goal, while others will be irrelevant. In most instances, the *set of relevant secondary goals* will constitute a counter-dynamic to the primary goal. To the extent that concern for the set outweighs the desire to achieve the primary goal (and any compatible secondary goals), the individual may view engaging the other as unduly risky and choose not to engage the other person. Knowledge of the relationship between primary and secondary goals can help explain why individuals choose to communicate or to remain silent.

SEE ALSO: ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ► Interpersonal Communication ► Meaning  
► Message Editing ► Message Production

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## **Goffman, Erving**

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Erving Goffman was a sociologist, but what he studied was communication. He established the “interaction order” as a legitimate topic of study; in doing so, he provided the logic for why, and the method for how, to study face-to-face behavior. People construct the social world through language and interaction, he argued, so if we are to understand the social world, we must examine the act of social construction, i.e., specific behavior. His method was careful attention to details of naturally occurring contexts of *co-presence* (when people are physically together). Interaction socially constructs meaning, even when it appears nothing noteworthy is occurring. Language and social interaction (LSI) scholars analyze the same everyday behaviors, whether or not they explicitly acknowledge Goffman’s

influence (→ Language and Social Interaction). The main strands of research in LSI today are all different ways of studying Goffman's interaction order (→ Conversation Analysis; Ethnography of Communication; Ethnomethodology; Language and Social Psychology).

Goffman was born in Manville, Alberta, Canada, in 1922. In 1945 he received his BA from the University of Toronto. He received his MA in 1949 and his PhD in 1968 from the University of Chicago. He taught at the University of California, Berkeley, from 1958 to 1968, and then at the University of Pennsylvania until his death in 1982.

Goffman was an especially graceful writer who wove together his observations (often of the Shetland Isles or St Elizabeth's Hospital) with the reports of others. His emphasis on description over theory makes his work unusually accessible. He developed extensive taxonomies for understanding the structure underlying interaction. These attributes brought his work substantial attention; his books became bestsellers during his lifetime, remaining widely read today.

His publications all explored essentially the same topic: *the social construction of the self, relationships, and social reality through language and interaction*. He always used the same method of micro-analysis (attending to details of behavior). Each work emphasized a different aspect of interaction, providing new terminology for the study of the self, relationships, and social reality.

Goffman was intensely interested in the *self* as a social product. *The presentation of self in everyday life* (1959) introduced the concept of → impression management, attending to information one participant conveys to others (Self-Presentation). He divided behavior into information one *gives* (deliberately) and *gives off* (inadvertently). He distinguished between *front stage* (where the self is visible, as in the dining room) and *back stage* (where it is hidden, as in the kitchen). The social self can be examined in a wide range of contexts. *Asylums* (1961) studied selves within a *total institution* (a place to live and work, cut off from society); *Stigma* (1963) considered the plight of someone with a *spoiled identity* (any attribute that discredits them). Goffman occasionally examined the construction of social categories (gender, race, class), as in *Gender advertisements* (1979), but the majority of his work examined the self as constructed in public, in the presence of strangers.

For Goffman, social selves were always interacting with others; relationships connected individuals to the social world. *Behavior in public places* (1963) divided contexts of *co-presence* into *gatherings* (when people are co-present, but not necessarily interacting) and *occasions* (social events having temporal and spatial boundaries, with participants likely to interact). In either, *face engagements* exist as a joint focus, such as a conversation. Any time someone wishes to hide an activity or discourage involvement, they can make use of an *involvement shield*, such as reading a newspaper; use of shields permits *civil inattention* (not paying obvious attention to others). *Encounters* (1961) emphasized *social roles* (activities required by a position): people can stay *in role* (behaving appropriately) or *break role* (behaving inappropriately). *Strategic interaction* (1969) examined the various *moves* and *styles of play* available to the *players* of the game. *Interaction ritual* (1967) examined the *rules of conduct* binding actors together, specifically, *face* (positive social value a person claims) and *facework* (actions taken to maintain face), *deference* (actions conveying appreciation of others), and *demeanor* (nonverbal behaviors conveying one's desirable qualities). *Relations in public* (1971) examined the link between relationships and public life, introducing a *single* (person alone), a *with* (person obviously with another), and *tie-signs* (evidence of

relationship). He included *remedial work* (efforts to repair interaction) such as *accounts* (explanation of what occurred); he discussed *social identities* (membership in categories, including age, race, gender), and their associated *social norms, rules, and interpersonal rituals*.

Goffman also examined the construction of social reality more generally (→ Constructivism). First, he proposed three metaphors for understanding interaction: theatre, ritual, and game. These thread through various books; the major statement of life as theatre can be found in *The presentation of self*, life as ritual in *Interaction ritual*, and life as game in *Encounters*. The theatre metaphor is widely studied in communication as “dramaturgical theory.” Second, he analyzed how interaction rules create reality. *Encounters* distinguished between *focused interaction* (when people cooperate to sustain a focus of attention, as in conversation) and *unfocused interaction* (when people glean information through observation, as in noticing a stranger’s clothes). Because social rules are easily broken, our sense of reality can be easily shattered. Finally, he studied the *frames* (contexts within which language and behavior are understood) used to make sense of behavior. In *Frame analysis* (1974), his focus was on *keying* (the way in which a frame can be reinterpreted) and *strips* (a piece of the stream of behavior). In *Forms of talk* (1981) he introduced *response cries* (interjections, like “oops!”) and *footing* (participants’ alignment). Talk was always one of Goffman’s topics, for he took conversation to be the central act of communication; it was most clearly the focus in this, his final, book.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Constructivism ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Impression Management ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Self-Presentation

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# Government Speech, Law and Policy on

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Governments, by the nature of their functions and purposes, communicate with people inside and outside of their jurisdictions. This process may be called “government speech.” The “law and policy of government speech” in different countries typically depends upon the nature and type of each government and how much that government controls its press systems. Globalization and related changes to governments more and more influence how those laws and policies are shaped (→ Globalization Theories). Whereas the press during the twentieth century, particularly in the United States, was a “primary conduit for information” about government to the people, governments now regularly use media in alternative conduits to exert control over that information, with negative implications for democracy, as Braman and Nerone (1995, 162–176) have argued (→ Political Communication Systems).

The law and policy of government speech for a particular nation may in fact be defined by the limits that nation puts on the government for communication. “Government speech” is viewed in the context of the transition to democracy by numerous countries around the world. Fundamentally, the issue revolves around the limits on expression a constituency can put upon its own government. Government speech can at times be → propaganda, which has a more negative connotation than simple → persuasion.

And some governments – including the US government – explicitly have had checks and balances to minimize the propagation of propaganda to its own people. Legal issues arise, including the extent to which a country’s government can propagandize to its own people; the ability of a ruling party to do this may keep minority parties and other voices from being heard, and thus undermine democracy. While the particular nuances of government speech in US law may provide a template for discussion, each country in the world has unique characteristics in how it handles legally the issue of whether and how to control government speech.

## GOVERNMENT SPEECH IN THE UNITED STATES

Historically, the United States has provided checks and balances on its own speech. The Smith-Mundt Act (1948), for instance, has forbidden domestic propagandizing, though such restrictions might undermine the free “flow of information.”

Recent decisions by the US Supreme Court have given the federal government more latitude to express itself to its own citizens. And common practice is for the US government to fund a multitude of expressions like art, music, and broadcasting. But the Court also has narrowed the expressive rights of government employees. Generally, government speech in the United States has been addressed in a series of cases since *Rust v. Sullivan* (1991), when the US Supreme Court held that the prohibition on government funding of communication about abortion does not violate the First Amendment rights of those communicating about abortion. The Court reasoned that the federal government can hold and communicate a particular viewpoint, if Congress has approved that

viewpoint and its communication. In *Johanns v. Livestock Marketing Association* (2005), the US Supreme Court held that the funding of particular advertising by the federal government “was ‘government speech,’ not susceptible to First Amendment compelled-subsidy challenge.” The Court reasoned that, since Congress chose to fund the promotion of beef and related products as part of the political process and thus “subject to democratic accountability,” and since the government speech was not attributed to the respondents, the respondents’ First Amendment rights were not violated (→ Freedom of Communication).

The United States now has narrowed the free expression rights of government employees in particular circumstances, placing upon them the government’s controls if they speak as part of that government, even while criticizing it. In 2006, the US Supreme Court in *Garcetti v. Ceballos* used a two-part test from earlier cases to hold that the government could restrict the speech of one of its employees – despite First Amendment’s general guarantees of freedom of expression for even government employees – if the employee did not speak “as a citizen on a matter of public concern” and if the government had “an adequate justification for treating the employee differently from any other member of the general public.” The Court also said, “So long as employees are speaking as citizens about matters of public concern, they must face only those speech restrictions that are necessary for their employers to operate efficiently and effectively.” This appears to mean that government employees, speaking as government employees, have slightly diminished First Amendment rights and thus can be punished by the government if they express themselves in a way that undermines certain government purposes.

Thus, the US Supreme Court has established a precedent that government speech – as long as Congress has decided through the political process to fund or express that speech – does not violate the First Amendment rights of US citizens who may disagree. This has caused concern among scholars, who argue that the overwhelming power of the government could subsume other parties and violate constitutional rights.

## **GOVERNMENT SPEECH BY INDIGENOUS TRIBES IN THE UNITED STATES**

Indigenous tribes in the United States provide concrete examples of governments adopting policies of controlling the media to accomplish what they view as for the good of the tribes. This has raised concerns, though, about whether such controls violate the rights of freedom of expression for tribal citizens and for the tribal government employees who function as journalists, especially when those media outlets are owned and operated by those tribal governments.

Tribes in the United States are considered to be “domestic-dependent nations,” having at least some measure of sovereignty. The US Congress in 1968 guaranteed free expression rights for tribal members in the Indian Civil Rights Act, but the US Supreme Court in *Santa Clara Pueblo v. Martinez* (1978) held that tribes have the obligations to enforce those provisions. Thus, tribes may well decide to assert their own rights of government speech to control the expressions of others. This would be theoretically consistent with the US Supreme Court holdings that allow the federal government’s democratic decisions to fund certain speech, despite the claims by individuals and groups that such speech undermines their own expressive rights (→ United States of America: Media System).



## **GOVERNMENT SPEECH IN AUSTRALIA**

The High Court of Australia recently touched upon its law and policy of government speech in a case about whether the federal government had the necessary authority to pay for a nearly \$4 million advertising campaign to push reforms of industrial relations in Australia. In *Combet & Anor v. Commonwealth of Australia & Ors* (2005), the High Court held that the expenditure was indeed appropriate under constitutional taxation and spending provisions, and did not reach the question of whether the Australian government had the authority to engage in such blatant propaganda to its own people.

The *Combet* Court instead considered issues of efficacy, or whether the particular advertising campaign achieved its intended effects, which were argued to be necessary to justify the public expenditure. Justice McHugh argued that the advertising should have a “rational outcome,” or some measure of efficacy. The plaintiffs in the case had argued that the expenditure should have been authorized by Parliament, rather than by the administration of Prime Minister John Howard.

Though the case focused upon the power of expenditure of Parliament, some have voiced a common concern that government speech needs to have checks and balances. A minority opinion by Justice Kirby cited the US Supreme Court’s opinion in *Johanns* and a quotation from President Thomas Jefferson, who had said that “to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves, is sinful and tyrannical” (→ Australia: Media System).

## **GOVERNMENT SPEECH IN CHINA**

In China, the state views itself as the nexus for speech. Article 35 of the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (1982) guarantees freedom of press and speech, but Article 22 asserts the government as the primary impetus for “the development of literature and art, the press, broadcasting and television undertakings, publishing and distribution services, libraries, museums, cultural centres and other cultural undertakings, that serve the people and socialism, and sponsor mass cultural activities.” Chan and Qiu (2002, 36) note how this state control of expression has liberalized more and more because of “commercialization, improvisation, bureaucratization, internationalization, and technologicalization.” But this does not necessarily mean that China is adopting a libertarian model of the press.

In China, the state owns the media, but the media also are commercial. The Central Propaganda Department of the Communist Party controls the content and functions of all traditional media at all levels. Thus, there is no separation of press and state. Any speech is supposed to be government speech, under the Constitution and related statutes and cases. For instance, newspapers must “propagate the path and policies of the Chinese Communist Party and the People’s Republic of China,” according to one national statute (→ China: Media System).

## **THE CASE OF RWANDA**

An egregious example of government speech out of control is the role of a former Rwandan government’s use of the mass media to espouse hate speech and genocide

(→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms). Former Rwandan radio and newspaper executives Ferdinand Nahimana, Jean-Bosco Barayagwiza, and Hassan Ngeze – each with personal and professional connections to the former Rwandan government of President Juvenal Habyarimana – were appealing in 2006 their 2003 convictions of various crimes against humanity by a United Nations war crimes tribunal, the first such convictions of media personnel since Julius Streicher’s conviction and execution in 1946 for his role as a newspaper editor in promoting the genocide of Jews and others in Nazi Germany during the early twentieth century.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda noted that the president and the ruling party at the time primarily owned Radio-Television Libre des Mille Collines – the main tool of Nahimana, Barayagwiza, and Ngeze for promoting genocide (→ Africa: Media Systems).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Australia: Media System ▶ China: Media System ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Graffiti

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Broadly speaking, graffiti denotes the array of words, figures, and symbols illicitly inscribed in public space. Over the past three decades this phenomenon has taken on special salience as the graffiti of youth sub-cultures has emerged as a pervasive form of public communication. Because of this, graffiti has become perhaps the most potent and visible symbol of delinquency and danger, with political authorities and the public regularly associating public graffiti with gang activity. In reality, the contemporary role of graffiti as a form of public communication, and as a communicative component within youthful sub-cultures, is far more complex than a simple equating of graffiti and gangs (→ Popular Communication).

Throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and beyond, the most prominent and publicly visible form of contemporary graffiti is in fact not gang graffiti, but *hip hop graffiti*. Hip hop graffiti developed during the 1970s in the United States as a component of a larger hip hop youth scene that also incorporated rap music, break dancing, and other cultural innovations. As street-level alternatives to gang life and gang conflict, hip hop music, dance, and graffiti offered new media for contesting identity and acquiring status (→ Youth Culture). Then as now, hip hop graffiti “writers” and their “crews” wrote their “tags” (nicknames) in places of public visibility, and painted elaborate public “pieces” (murals), as markers of artistic innovation and sub-cultural “fame.” In this way hip hop graffiti came to operate as a stylized form of ongoing public communication, with writers employing graffiti to offer aesthetic challenges to other writers, to inscribe artistic declarations and manifestos, and to comment on the merits of existing graffiti (Cooper & Chalfant 1984; Ferrell 1996).

As hip hop graffiti has spread to Europe, Australia, and elsewhere (Chalfant & Prigoff 1987), its initial communicative dynamics have also continued to develop. Along with spray paint cans and ink markers, writers now utilize etching tools, stickers, and computer-generated images. They “tag the heavens” atop roofs and freeway overpasses to gain public visibility and to demonstrate sub-cultural commitment. Once attempting to “go citywide” with their tags and pieces, writers now “go nationwide” by tagging and piecing outbound freight trains, and “go worldwide” through hip hop graffiti websites and magazines (Snyder 2006). Increasingly functioning as the folk artists of ethnic minority communities, they also paint signs for local businesses and design “rest in piece” memorials for the departed.

*Gang graffiti* functions as a different medium of public communication, as youth gangs utilize graffiti to define membership status, demarcate contested space, and issue symbolic threat. Latino/Latina gangs, for example, often inscribe barrio walls with *placas* – stylized insignia that define gang and barrio boundaries, symbolize the collective presence of the gang, and warn away potential intruders. While such gang graffiti certainly signifies some sense of trouble or threat, it also references historical traditions of public communication and mural painting, and so signifies a sense of community solidarity and ethnic pride.

For other Latino/Latina and African American gangs, graffiti functions as a more direct demarcation of gang influence and power, and as a street-level advertisement of a gang's economic or territorial domination (Phillips 1999). Here the writing of a gang's graffiti is complemented by the symbolic degradation of rival gangs through coded threats or the "crossing out" of rival gang graffiti. Such symbolic provocations can invite physical violence – yet they can also displace the need for physical confrontation by demarcating urban space and setting cultural and territorial boundaries. The graffiti of skinheads and neo-Nazi youth, in contrast, seems clearly designed to communicate terror and threat while accompanying campaigns of physical violence against gays and lesbians, immigrants, and others.

The pervasive public visibility of hip hop and gang graffiti over the past three decades has spawned a variety of equally high-profile "anti-graffiti campaigns" or "wars on graffiti." Themselves exercises in carefully crafted public communication, anti-graffiti campaigns have been beset in particular by their persistent inability (and unwillingness) to distinguish hip hop graffiti from gang graffiti – or more specifically, their insistent definition of all graffiti as gang graffiti. Relatedly, these campaigns regularly propose that graffiti offers only a single public meaning: generalized threat and insecurity. This proposition not only misses the different meanings of hip hop graffiti and gang graffiti; it fails to note the multiple meanings that are negotiated *within* each of these graffiti types.

Two further developments reflect the persistent visibility of graffiti and the campaigns against it. First, anti-graffiti campaigns have often amplified the very phenomenon they have sought to suppress. For many hip hop graffiti writers, anti-graffiti campaigns have enhanced the public notoriety and illicit excitement of graffiti writing, and have pushed them toward greater anti-authoritarian militancy. The use of highly visible campaigns to police a highly visible form of youthful communication has also served to make graffiti increasingly prominent, and so to recruit new graffiti practitioners and to spread graffiti farther still beyond its origins (Ferrell 1996). Second, global corporations and their advertising agencies also have noted this proliferation of public graffiti – and in response have increasingly appropriated graffiti into clothing lines, CD covers, and advertising schemes in an effort to cash in on its illicit credibility (Alvelos 2004).

SEE ALSO: ► Art as Communication ► Collective Action and Communication ► Community Media ► Painting ► Popular Communication ► Visual Culture ► Youth Culture

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# Graphic Design

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“Graphic design” refers, in essence, to the artful arrangement of images and text on a variety of surfaces and in a range of forms. Typical pieces of graphic design include: posters; → books; CD, DVD, and book covers; brochures and flyers; → magazines and → newspapers; logos, trademarks, → branding and corporate identity systems; product packaging; annual reports; T-shirts; signage and way-finding systems; websites; and motion graphics (e.g., film title sequences, TV station identifiers, and promos). Related and sometimes overlapping activities include product design, exhibition and information design, type design and → typography, and design for interactivity (websites, kiosks, DVD-ROMs; → Design; Interactivity, Concept of).

Graphic designers might work individually, or in small-to-medium-sized studio partnerships, or in service-oriented departments within larger organizations, in sectors such as book publishing, the music industry, highways departments, computer software, or pharmaceuticals. Apart from their applied creative role, designers may have other duties: commissioning and overseeing printing, liaising with clients, or developing strategic plans for business, branding, or marketing plans.

Graphic design is an increasingly *professionalized practice*, with associations in many countries, such as D&AD (the Designers and Art Directors Association) in the UK, the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts), the SGDC (Society of Graphic Designers of Canada), and the SDGQ (Société des designers graphiques du Québec). The International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA) currently represents the interests of nearly 100 such entities in nearly 50 countries around the world. These associations cover only a fraction of those involved in the panoply of professional, trade, and artisanal practices that together constitute graphic design.

Despite these developments, the *term* “*graphic design*” has yet to receive broad acceptance and understanding beyond the confines of this emergent profession. As Mildred Friedman noted during her tenure as design curator at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis: “graphic design has played a key role in the appearance of almost all print, film, and electronic media, as well as architectural and urban signage. Today it literally dominates our visual environment. Yet . . . there is only nominal acknowledgement of the significance of this least recognized visual art form” (Friedman et al. 1989, 9–10).

## HISTORY

The terms “graphic design” and “graphic designer” are widely believed to have first appeared in print in the US as recently as 1922, in an article titled “New kind of printing calls for new design” (Dwiggins 1999). That said, the word “designer” – although somewhat undefined – appears in documentation produced by the US Bureau of the Census “as early as 1890” (Thomson 1997, 10).

Regardless, the roots of graphic design are both broad and complex. Influences and precursors in Europe and North America include: the creation of → propaganda posters

during two world wars; commercial art; and various art movements and schools, including Futurism, → Constructivism, Arts and Crafts, the Secessionists, DADA, Bauhaus, and De Stijl (Hollis 1994; Meggs 1998; Weill 2004). The “ukiyo-e” movement was singularly influential in the development of graphic design practice in Japan, given that country’s extended cultural isolation until the nineteenth century (Meggs 1998; Weill 2004).

Some commentators have located the origins of graphic design in the prehistoric cave paintings of Lascau, France (Meggs 1998); in the development of the art poster and its associated printing technologies in Europe in the early 1900s (Hollis 1994); and in the emergence of printing and allied trade practices in the US in the mid- to late 1800s (Thomson 1997; → Poster; Printing, History of). Accounts such as these are sometimes marred by a singular identification with the careers of “great men,” great works, sweeping chronologies, or the triumphs of technology.

The history of graphic design is inevitably bound up in the development of printing, photographic, and typographic technologies (Thomson 1997). As Thomson notes:

Technological advances in printing type and reproducing imagery were part of a larger development. The mechanization of paper manufacturing and printing, the invention and improvement of the rotary press, advances in ink chemistry, the use of wood pulp to replace rag in paper, at least partially, and the introduction of wood engraving occurred in the first half of the nineteenth century. At the end of the century the relation between design and production was recast. For the first time, letters and pictures, text and image, could be printed together. (1997, 12)

## GRAPHIC DESIGN, ART, AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES

Graphic designers have often complained that, in spite of the ubiquity of their work, the profession is rarely identified by name in popular cultural discourse. Similarly, graphic design has been addressed only fleetingly, and often anonymously, in the communication literature. One exception is Dick Hebdige’s discussion of the *Face* magazine (Hebdige 1988). That said, graphic design has been *used* in highly memorable ways in the communication literature, as in *The medium is the message* (McLuhan & Fiore 1967), a collaboration between Marshall McLuhan and the designer Quentin Fiore. Formal encounters between graphic design and communication theory have been rare. An early exemplar was the appearance of C. Wright Mills at the International Design Conference in Aspen (IDCA), where he gave a talk titled “Man in the middle: The designer” (Mills 1963). The IDCA, which still runs annually, has at times provided a novel, if somewhat elitist, forum for the discussion of issues rarely voiced in the day-to-day practices of architectural design, industrial or product design, and graphic design (see Banham 1974). Mills’s essay brought an early, and much-needed *sociological eye* to the activities of designers, and also anticipated Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of the cultural intermediary: an individual whose function is to provide a bridge, or *liaison*, between two distinct worlds that can be variously labeled production and consumption, or manufacture and distribution, or commerce and culture (Bourdieu 1984; Nixon 2002).

More recently, *art historical scholarship* has highlighted the formative tensions associated with the movement of trained artists into an emergent commercial design sphere. The

contradictions and conflicts inherent in these dynamics are neatly captured in Michele Bogart's phrase "art for publicity" (Bogart 1995, 4): the continual attempt to meld a highly personal mode of expression with the broader needs of sales and marketing (→ Art as Communication). Patricia Johnston's *Real fantasies: Edward Steichen's advertising photography* (Johnston 1997) focuses on one artist in particular: Steichen was extraordinarily successful in adapting his skills to the needs of commerce. If he initially had difficulties reconciling the ethical implications of this relationship, Steichen still ended up making his name (and his fortune) out of it.

The development of graphic *design as a distinct practice*, and in relation to the principles and priorities of Modernism, has been explored extensively in Allen (1983), Friedman et al. (1989), Meggs (1998), Jobling and Crowley (1996), and Margolin (1997). Among the major institutions referenced in these studies are the Bauhaus, the New Bauhaus Chicago (ultimately renamed the Institute of Design), and the International Design Conference in Aspen (Banham 1974).

A connection is often made in these historical studies between the activities of artists, illustrators, photographers, art directors, industrial designers, and graphic designers and visions of social, cultural, and political change. Indeed, idealistic sentiments and utopian urges perhaps find their most intense realization at these "borders of art" (Bogart 1995). Jobling and Crowley contend that:

[t]he expression of such aspirations for the future implied a messianic role for the modern designer to prefigure a better world where visual communication would enlighten rather than simply reproduce the prevailing taste, attitudes and conditions of the day. Graphic design would, in [Bauhaus designer László] Moholy-Nagy's words, be "part of the foundation on which the *new world* will be built." (1996, 143–144)

Some of these studies stress the erosion of the political tenets of modernist art and design as the movement gradually migrated from Europe to the United States (Wild 1989). This appears to have been located less in the specifics of graphic form or appearance than in formative impulses and underlying intent. Indeed, it is perhaps a peculiarity of graphic design that slippages of this nature routinely occur; that one can easily mimic a particular radical aesthetic without any recourse to the political or cultural moment that generated it – and often for the most mundane or normative of purposes.

## **DISCOURSE OF GRAPHIC DESIGN PRACTICE**

The discourse of graphic design practice is overwhelmingly celebratory, promotional, and technique-oriented; the trade literature far outweighs the available avenues for more reflective, critical perspectives. That said, newer, more supple approaches to history and criticism are also reflected in recent writing and scholarship about graphic design (see, for example, Blauvelt 1994/1995). In addition, the commercial and corporate investments of the profession periodically come under attack from designers themselves. The two iterations of the *First Things First Manifesto* (in 1967 and 1999) are a case in point (Soar 2002). In this instance, a group of influential designers and design writers produced a short polemic excoriating the profession for its narrowly conceived vision of design as a commercial (and often highly trivial) practice. The fallout was inevitably divisive: arguments ensued over the true role of graphic design, a perception that the signatories were simply exploiting

their position of privilege, and the connotations of professionalism. Regardless, some graphic designers continue to use their skills to draw attention to specific political, social, and cultural issues, or to produce independent work on a variety of highly personal themes (→ Activist Media).

Key here has been longstanding arguments about what graphic design *should be used for*. In the 1930s, Otto Neurath introduced ISOTYPE (International System of Typographic Picture Education), a highly formalized graphic method for presenting complex statistical information using only pictorial icons. The system was used to present comparative information on child mortality and unemployment rates, standards of living and factory productivity. This approach has been highly influential in the development of information graphics, international signage systems, and computer icons (→ Infographics).

The general theme of social engagement is not a consistent aspect of graphic design. Paul Rand, for example, was an iconic designer responsible for developing logos for IBM, UPS, NeXT Computer, and Enron (→ Trademarks in the Media). For Rand, and for many of his contemporaries, design professionalism meant honoring the communicative aspirations of the corporations for whom he worked (→ Corporate Design; Brands). Questions about, say, ethical standards or environmental records were beyond the scope of the designer's role. A rising skepticism about this narrow approach has most recently been fueled by critiques such as journalist Naomi Klein's book *No logo* (2000).

Unlike the historically related practice of advertising art direction (→ Advertising), it is evident that graphic design has a demonstrably broad range of potential cultural and political commitments: while it is also intrinsically about information and persuasion, what we now call graphic design has long been used as a form of personal and political expression in, for example, the protest posters of John Heartfield, Grapus, and Gran Fury, and the recent rise of culture jamming (see McQuiston 1993). Through its ad spoofs and activist campaigns, the Canadian magazine *Adbusters* has championed culture jamming as a kind of visually oriented form of dissent; more importantly, it has recently targeted graphic designers and ad creatives as the avant-garde in a culture jamming revolution. While perhaps an exercise in hyperbole, this perspective underscores the ubiquitous if generally unacknowledged role of graphic design in commercial or consumer culture.

Graphic designers have occasionally developed *niche activities* that draw on their understanding of the relationship between text and image, but which are not static or print-oriented. One such example is "motion graphics," a broad term encompassing film title design, broadcast graphics, and computer animation (→ Digital Imagery). A celebrated moment in this realm is the work of Saul Bass, a graphic designer who developed film title sequences for Alfred Hitchcock, among others.

Graphic design practice has changed markedly with the emergence and take-up of digital media production tools. For example, the task of preparing finished concepts for print has been greatly simplified, both for the designer, who used to have to create accurate artwork "mechanicals," and for the printer, who would typically have an entire department set aside for "prepress": the process of taking the artwork and preparing it for proofing and printing. The emergence of the world wide web has required the development of new skill sets focused on programming, interactivity, and the design of user interfaces (→ Digital Media, History of).



SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Book ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Constructivism ▶ Corporate Design ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Design ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Film Production ▶ Infographics ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Magazine ▶ Magazine, Visual Design of ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Photography ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Poster ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Propaganda ▶ Stock Photography ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Trademarks in the Media ▶ Typography ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation ▶ Zines

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## Grassroots Media

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Grassroots media are small-scale, developed by and accessible to members of a local community or group, and conceptualized as a key tool in the process of social change (→ Community Media). They have developed out of concerns with problematic representations of women and other marginalized peoples in mainstream media, as well as limited → access to the media and political participation for marginalized groups, especially women, around the world. Women’s movements worldwide have thus worked to develop grassroots media that are conceptualized and based locally and that operate very differently from mainstream commercial or state-run media. The goals of feminist grassroots media are varied, but generally involve the desire to strengthen the self-confidence of women and other marginalized peoples, and to empower them to challenge, change, and take charge of the media and their representations. Another increasing concern encouraging the development of grassroots media in the era of global capital is the protection and preservation of local cultures and cultural diversity.

### GOALS

Grassroots media have resulted from a vibrant history of struggle and research on gender and communication, focusing on representations of women and marginalized peoples in mainstream media and on women’s access to media. In Beijing in 1995, the media were included for the first time in the history of UN women’s conferences as a separate area of analysis, especially due to this history of concerns over lack of access to media and over mainstream media representations (Pandian 1999). Research has shown that there has been little improvement in recent years in the quality or quantity of news and information about women in the world’s news media, and that when such news does appear, portrayals of women are sexual in nature, focus on their victimization, or are confined to the private sphere (Gallagher 2005; Pandian 1999; → Sexualization in the Media; Women in the Media, Images of). In addition, feminists have continued to question the relevance of mainstream media content to the lives of women, arguing that it lacks useful information about women’s rights or the significant problems they face in their lives.

One result of these critiques has been the development of grassroots media that involve women and other marginalized peoples as central to their production. This is especially important as research on media and social change has led to the recognition that social change does not occur merely through the provision or diffusion of information via official or mainstream media channels. Social change, including processes of democratic decision-making, is best served through a variety of media, especially grassroots, participatory media that work to stimulate dialogue at the local level and to shift conceptualizations of power through empowering people at the grassroots (→ Social Mobilization; Planned Social Change through Communication). These shifting conceptualizations of power include the recognition of women and other marginalized peoples as significant social actors whose communication experiences and ways of communicating are varied, but always rooted in their daily experiences within specific social environments. These differences, therefore, must be recognized and heard in order to democratize the circulation of ideas and redistribution of power (Riaño 1994).

### PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION

The emphasis in grassroots media on bottom-up or lateral forms of communication and social change developed from a typology of women's participation in communication and social change, described by Riaño (1994) in *Women in grassroots communication: Furthering social change*. The history of these developments begins with top-down forms of → *development communications*, generally originating outside the control of the community and aimed at mobilizing a community to change their behavior. Such projects have been seen as one of the most serious obstacles to the development of grassroots media, as a result of their top-down nature. They have been critiqued for their conceptualization of the local community as subjects to be mobilized by outsiders in processes in which participation is understood as acceptance of the message and the proposed set of corrective actions. The primary aim of such projects is not to empower the community to control the projects themselves or to question the hierarchical position of the sender and receiver of media messages.

This model was followed by conceptualizations of *participation as development*, in which women are understood to be participants in a two-way interaction that is still primarily controlled by the information source (→ Participatory Communication). This model does not recognize differences in power and access to resources, on both personal and societal levels, that make it difficult for people to participate as equals. Projects conducted using this approach can result in unequal distribution of resources, prompting the question of who ultimately benefits.

Arising out of the critiques of development communications and participation for development approaches to media use have been *alternative communication* models that encourage participation for social change, promoting a more horizontal communication model in which women at the local level conceptualize and develop their own media uses and define for themselves the social change they are working toward. This model encompasses forms of popular communication, including community media, group media, grassroots media, and → "citizens' media" (Rodriguez 2001), which are owned

and operated by nonprofessionals, and emphasize access to and participation in the production of media (Riaño 1994; → Citizen Journalism).

## **WOMEN'S GRASSROOTS MEDIA**

The trajectory of research and experience that moved conceptions of media use from more top-down development communication models to alternative, community-based models of media nevertheless did not consider gender as part of the analytical framework (→ Development Discourse). The ways in which gender influences participation in media production or mediates experiences of subordination for men and women were not considered in these models (Riaño 1994). As a result, feminist communication research began including a gender perspective in these analyses, conceptualizing women as active subjects of struggle.

Women's grassroots media movements have shifted over time. Critiques of second wave feminism found fault with its problematic, essentialist notion of global sisterhood in which all women were assumed to share the concerns of white, professional-class western feminists whose goal was to gain legal equality with men through the integration of women into the patriarchal → public sphere. These efforts corresponded to conceptualizations of the relevance and success of alternative media in terms of the extent to which they challenged or changed the messages or structures of mainstream media (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). Feminism's "third wave" shifted focus from an essentialist understanding of women to a recognition of the need to embrace multiple identities, tactics, and causes. This led to the awareness of the impact of differences among women based on race, class, sexual orientation, and geographical location, and that everyone's different experiences of oppression affect their communicative interactions with others. The resultant emphasis on building solidarity across differences globally has occurred alongside shifts in structure from traditional social movements to new social movements, which are more loosely constructed and fragmented than earlier, more centralized structures, and to conceptualizations of grassroots media as key to the process of media democratization.

Many of these changes in theorizing communication and media have occurred in response to shifting conceptualizations of power, from a binary conception of the powerful and the powerless to more complex models of power as contextual, contested, and continually shifting. These more complex models conceptualize the individual as having multiple and shifting identities and degrees of power, depending on context. This view understands individuals as creating power by taking a stand when they engage in actions that shape and reshape their environments, rather than as passive recipients of rights provided and protected by the state. This model of power widens conceptions of political action to include efforts toward social change made in the quiet events of everyday life, a conceptual move that blurs the traditional public/private divide that has centrally concerned feminists.

Another fundamental shift in thinking about these issues is related to feminist critiques of the public sphere as conceptualized by → Jürgen Habermas. Feminists have critiqued the assumption that everyone can equally participate in the public sphere, arguing that such an assumption denies inequalities and differences and acts to strengthen patriarchal

hegemony in the public sphere. For example, Nancy Fraser (1992) has problematized the Habermasian notion of the public sphere. Her conceptualization of multiple public spheres and counter-publics provides a theoretical framework for understanding feminist grassroots media and how they interact with more traditional media and political structures to enact social change (→ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of).

A central contribution of women's grassroots media projects around the world has been the recognition that differences of race, class, gender, geographical location, and sexual orientation must be acknowledged in order to bring about individual and collective transformation. This has led to women's grassroots media movements around the world that are challenging existing hierarchies of power by foregrounding voices unheard in mainstream media, by providing women with access to resources, and by working to develop collective, consensus-based, and nonhierarchical → organizational structures.

### **PARTICIPATION AND OBSERVATION**

A major focus of grassroots media projects is their attention to process, where the emphasis is on marginalized people learning by doing through a process intended to be empowering to the community or the group involved. And yet this empowerment is arguably not the end stage of grassroots media production processes, which often give rise to complex new problems as the empowerment of previously marginalized peoples challenges existing power structures. The focus on process over product in grassroots media has included a challenge to the concept of objectivity and its tendency to dehumanize media representations, the blurring of the producer/audience dichotomy, the promotion of personal testimonials as valuable media content, and the recognition of indigenous knowledge as valuable (Cottingham 1989; Crafton Smith 1989; Riaño 1994; Sreberny-Mohammadi 1996; Werden 1996).

Grassroots media have incorporated participatory research methodologies as a means of involving women and other marginalized peoples in the process of identifying specific problems and coming up with possible solutions (→ Participatory Action Research). Media messages produced using participatory research methods involve collective processes in both the discussions that lead to problem identification and the collective production of media to address or solve problems at the community level. Grassroots media also promote participation in that they work to demystify the processes of production through training and skill-sharing workshops, so that the technologies become accessible to those who would otherwise not have access, including the illiterate. In just one example of many, grassroots video production has been very successful in the efforts of women, many of them illiterate, to increase their skills and advocate their rights. Producing → community videos has led women to develop themes centering on practical problems in their productions, which have then been used to influence policymakers.

### **PROSPECTS**

While research on grassroots media has demonstrated its usefulness for empowerment and individual and community identity-building, years of grassroots media activism do

not seem to have produced much noticeable change in regional or national communications policies, especially in the global south (Pandian 1999). Gender issues generally remain off the radar of mainstream media as well as the agendas of media policymakers globally. This includes development news, which remains a focus of much of the mainstream media in the global south and which does not often challenge the patriarchal attitudes of societies. The increasing privatization of media worldwide has not helped in this regard, either, as with increased privatization, the nation becomes less accountable to the concerns of its women regarding media (Pandian 1999). In addition, regional and national cultural differences regarding what kind of media content is seen as “decent” or “sexist” make it difficult to draft international or even regional codes of media conduct (→ Sexism in the Media). Nevertheless, the power of grassroots media to transform individuals and communities and challenge power structures continues to encourage the development of new grassroots media projects globally, as well as research on their impact in the age of globalization and → commercialization of the media (→ Globalization of the Media).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Activist Media ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizens’ Media ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Video ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Development Communication: Asia ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Development Communication: Middle East ▶ Development Communication, Planning of ▶ Development Discourse ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Development Institutions ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Participatory Action Research ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Social Mobilization ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Grounded Theory

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In its original sense “grounded theory” stands for a methodology, research program, and method of qualitative research. In a narrower but also more practical sense the term describes a qualitative technique of text analysis comparable to qualitative content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative) and → discourse analysis. Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss introduced grounded theory as a general research program for developing substantial (specific) or formal (general) theory by starting without (too) many assumptions and working immediately with the “data” (mostly text material) – this is what the term “grounded” refers to (→ Qualitative Methodology).

## BASIC ELEMENTS OF GROUNDED THEORY

Three observations are important to understand grounded theory adequately. First, several misunderstandings stem from the fact that the approach uses terms known from quantitative research in a totally different way. For instance, its authors speak of “data” not in the sense of a quantitative dataset, but in the sense of text (→ Text and Intertextuality) and even any material (“all is data”). Or authors speak of → coding not in the sense of measuring quantitatively but in the sense of summarizing and structuring, e.g., interview transcripts.

Second, Glaser and Strauss have walked different paths since their collaboration and their seminal book, published in 1967. Glaser still favors a strategy of strict induction and emergence – one might call this the “conservative” position of grounded theory. Strauss, however, favors a more “progressive” and practical position. Together with Juliet Corbin, he established grounded theory as a qualitative but nonetheless quite systematic method, e.g., for analyzing media coverage, interview transcripts, protocols of observations, and other material for the purpose of generating theory. Finally, grounded theory is a method of text analysis like qualitative content analysis or discourse analysis, but goes beyond these techniques since it also includes methodological aspects and a micro-sociological action theory. This becomes obvious, e.g., with the coding paradigm in the Strauss version of the approach.

As mentioned already, grounded theory aims at *generating theory from data*, i.e., mostly from text material such as observational protocols or transcripts of qualitative → interviews.

The discovery of a grounded, data-based theory comprises concepts and relations between them (e.g., causes of social action) in a set of hypotheses for a specific sector of reality. But the so-called substantive grounded theory generated by this is just a first step toward a formal grounded theory, the hypotheses of which claim to be general rules.

The crucial procedure of the approach is called “coding.” Here, one retrieves theoretical concepts (codes) from the text material (data) and provides examples (indicators) also from the text material. These provisional codes as well as indicators are continuously compared to the text material, which also changes as the research process progresses (theoretical sampling; see below). Concepts are classified and categorized step by step, and key concepts, called core variables (e.g., action pattern), emerge. Relations between these core variables are then expressed in hypotheses (e.g., about the causes of action). Strauss describes the principle of coding as neither inductive nor deductive but abductive, i.e., combining both perspectives in a research technique of parallel data sampling, data analysis, and theory development, with inductive and deductive steps supporting each other (→ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction). This research process comes to an end when the emerging theory does not change any more (theoretical saturation).

## CODING

There are *three types of coding*, which take turns in the process of theory development. This can be illustrated for transcripts of interviews: One starts with *open* coding usually, i.e., with conceptualizing transcripts line by line. In this stage of theory emergence, one conceptualizes a lot of phrases and obtains many codes, which are compared to other material, merged, renamed, and modified. Strauss recommends asking for sociological categories like role or action in order to avoid mere paraphrasing and to find substantive concepts. The second technique is called *axial* or *substantive* coding. Here, Strauss recommends using a coding paradigm that is a scheme of social action including categories like causes and consequences. For instance, one searches for phrases in the transcripts (e.g., about job problems) helping to explain the behavior (e.g., alcoholism) mentioned by the interviewee. In doing so, one generates links between concepts and tries to establish hypotheses. Concepts, indicators, and hypotheses are saved in memos, category lists, and diagrams. Computer programs like Atlas/ti were developed especially to support such memos, lists, and diagrams. While coding axially, usually one or two core categories emerge. Then one should continue with the third technique, called *selective* coding. Here, one looks only at those parts of the interview transcripts relevant from the perspective of the core variable. In addition, category lists and memos are ordered theoretically, concepts are related to the core variable(s), and links between concepts as well as vague concepts are finally specified. This process ends with the above-mentioned theoretical saturation.

## THEORETICAL SAMPLING

Theoretical sampling is a key feature in coding. This term is misunderstood by many researchers who do a selective rather than a theoretical sampling though pretending to do the latter. Selective sampling means defining the criteria of qualitative sampling before



one starts to analyze the sample material, which is “fixed” with the sample criteria (→ Sampling, Nonrandom). Theoretical sampling, however, means continuous sampling and transforming of sampling criteria during the whole research process. Whether to take this or that part of an interview transcript, for instance, depends on the stage of theory development: With open coding in the beginning all material is important at first. But when a core category has been found, new material is chosen with this category in mind.

Another core principle applied in coding is comparable to → cluster analysis in quantitative research. In their joint work of 1967 Glaser and Strauss described minimizing and maximizing strategies. The minimizing strategy calls for searching for similar concepts and indicators in the material. The maximizing strategy involves the opposite. This is comparable to homogeneity within a cluster and heterogeneity between different clusters in quantitative cluster analysis.

## **TWO VERSIONS OF GROUNDED THEORY**

With the coding paradigm and several examples for the three types of coding, Strauss has moved grounded theory close to qualitative techniques of text analysis. Thus, his version of the approach is “open-minded,” in the tradition of qualitative research methodology, but also tries to establish a more systematic and at least partly deductive research technique than the Glaser version. Glaser emphasizes more the inductive aspects of grounded theory. He demands that researchers avoid research literature before starting to generate the theory and thus be really “grounded” in the data instead of sticking to preconceptions.

Nevertheless, a literature review is useful at a later stage of theory development. Besides, Glaser considers talking about an emerging theory to be counterproductive before ending the research process, since supporting comments as well as disapproval would end the motivation for writing memos and for comparing and refining categories, concepts, and the emerging theory. In the Glaser version of grounded theory, theoretical memorizing – i.e., writing down all ideas about concepts and relations between them, rewriting them, and sorting them – is the key principle of creativity in developing a substantive or formal theory.

SEE ALSO: ► Cluster Analysis ► Coding ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ► Discourse Analysis ► Interview ► Qualitative Methodology ► Sampling, Nonrandom ► Text and Intertextuality

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# Group Communication

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The study of group communication focuses on (1) the nature and effects of symbol usage in relatively small collectivities (a minimum of three people) on individual, relational, and collective processes and outcomes, as well as (2) how groups and group processes themselves are products of such symbolic activity. The study of how groups employ communication and how that communication is affected by and affects phenomena is called a *symbolic-management focus*; the study of how the significant symbol of “group” and group processes result from communication is called a *symbolic-constitutive focus* (Frey & Sunwolf 2004). Both perspectives view a group as a significant site of communication; indeed, Poole (1998) argued that because a group is the minimum unit of analysis for the confluence of influence associated with both individuals and social contexts, the group should be *the* fundamental unit of communication research.

## THEORIZING GROUP COMMUNICATION

A number of theories have been developed to understand and explain communication in groups, including systems, functional, symbolic convergence, and structuration theories, as well as the symbolic-interpretive perspective. One of the most prominent ways of viewing a group is as a *system* comprised of *inputs* (variables that precede and potentially influence groups), *throughputs* (group interaction processes), and *outputs* (products resulting from group inputs and throughputs) (→ Systems Theory). From such a symbolic-management perspective, communication represents a throughput that is influenced by inputs (e.g., group members and relevant contexts) and affects outputs (e.g., decisions made and member satisfaction).

Another well-established symbolic-management theory that views groups through the input-throughput-output lens is *functional theory* (→ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of). Functional theory argues that effective group decision-making (the chief outcome studied) requires the satisfaction of fundamental tasks or requirements, called *functional prerequisites* (e.g., thorough and accurate understanding of the choice-making situation), with communication being the means of satisfying these critical requirements.

Symbolic-constitutive theories include (1) → *symbolic convergence theory*, which describes how recurring communication forms (e.g., fantasies, fantasy chaining, and fantasy themes) lead group members to share a common social reality (e.g., rhetorical visions), including the perception of being a group; and (2) → *structuration theory*, which draws on sociologist Anthony Giddens’s work to explore how group members’ enactment of structures (rules and resources) produces and reproduces the group system, a process called “structuration.” The *symbolic-interpretive perspective* is a more recent theory grounded in these and other theories (e.g., rhetorical and dialectical perspectives), and employing a variation of systems language to focus on relationships among symbolic predispositions (inputs), symbolic practices (e.g., specific forms of symbol usage such as narratives), and symbolic processes and products (e.g., developing group climate and culture, with processes and products linked to reflect their recursive and reflexive relationship).

## **STUDYING GROUP COMMUNICATION**

The study of group communication includes a focus on task and relational communication, investigations of laboratory and natural or bona fide groups, and the use of quantitative and qualitative methods.

### **Task and Relational Communication**

Historically, the study of groups emerged from an interest in (1) knowing whether groups (and group discussion) were more effective than individuals in solving tasks, and (2) employing effective practices to promote democratic group decision-making. Group communication scholars, thus, began by studying the relationship between communication and decision-making and problem-solving in task groups (→ Group Communication and Problem-Solving). *Process-oriented* scholars studied the communication processes by which decisions and solutions to problems developed, focusing, for instance, on distributional and sequential communication structures in decision-making groups, group developmental stages/trajectories, and group argumentation (→ Group Communication and Social Influence); *outcome-oriented* scholars studied the effects of communication on group decision-making, including group information processing, impact of group discussion procedures, and, later, effects of new communication technologies (e.g., decision support systems) on group decision-making (→ Technology and Communication).

Group researchers since the time of psychologist Robert Freed Bales have recognized, however, that groups also have a social or relational dimension. Historically, task and relational dimensions were seen as competing forces, but both are now viewed as necessary. Although some early researchers focused on how communication in laboratory decision-making groups affected outcomes such as member satisfaction, more recently, scholars have focused on relational messages (e.g., social support), processes (e.g., relationship development), and both positive (e.g., cohesiveness) and negative (e.g., groupthink) outcomes (see Keyton 1999; Barker et al. 2000) in many other types of groups, especially those in natural settings.

### **Laboratory versus Natural or Bona Fide Groups**

Although the study of groups in other disciplines, and some of the early studies in the communication discipline, focused on groups in their natural contexts, historically, because of its emphasis on the task, group communication was studied in the laboratory. For instance, Frey (1994) reported that his review of group communication research published during the 1980s, a prolific period because of the infusion of the theories described previously, revealed that the majority of that research studied student (72.3 percent), zero-history groups (64.1 percent), meeting once (72.3 percent), in a laboratory setting (59.6 percent); moreover, 50 percent of the research conducted in the field studied groups that were created for classroom purposes.

Although laboratory studies revealed much about group communication processes and their effects on decision-making and problem-solving, and some studies, such as those on new communication technologies were conducted in labs that mirrored natural settings

(e.g., technology rooms in organizations), numerous critiques of the external → validity of such research led communication scholars to start studying groups in their natural environments. In addition to natural task groups (e.g., organizational teams), researchers also started studying more relationally oriented groups, including families, friendship cliques, social clubs, support groups, children's groups, and church groups, as well as gangs, cults, terrorists, and other "dark-side" groups. These studies of natural groups led Putnam and Stohl (1990) to advance the *bona fide group perspective*, which challenged the typical "container model" of groups as relatively closed entities with fixed boundaries and borders and focused solely on internal group processes, by arguing that groups demonstrated two interrelated characteristics: *stable yet permeable group boundaries* and *interdependence with their relevant contexts* (→ Bona Fide Groups). Subsequent studies have explicated these two characteristics (see, e.g., the studies in Frey 2003).

### Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

In addition to conducting experiments and surveys to study group communication quantitatively, group communication scholars have led the way in the use of *interaction analysis*, the quantitative observational study of discourse. Starting in the 1930s, followed by the pioneering work of Bales's (1950) interaction process analysis (IPA), which coded for both task and relational communication, and Bales et al.'s (1979) extension of IPA, the system for the multiple level observation of groups (SYMLOG), and continuing to the present day, scholars developed numerous observational instruments to code and measure group interaction.

As scholars moved to the field to study natural or bona fide groups, they started employing more qualitative methods to study group communication; these include ethnographic methods (→ Ethnography of Communication), → discourse analysis, rhetorical analysis (→ Rhetorical Criticism; Rhetorical Studies), and performance studies. Today, many researchers conduct multi-methodological studies that combine various methods (→ Research Methods).

Studying group communication, however, poses some significant *challenges*, including: (1) a level-of-analysis issue of how much to focus on individual members versus the group as an entity (and the possible member relationships in between); (2) how to account for the fluidity and permeability of group boundaries and borders (as in the bona fide group perspective); (3) the unit of interaction to code (e.g., separate speech acts, complex combinations, or the entire group discussion); and (4) the designation of group variables (as the same construct, such as cohesiveness, can be an input, throughput, or output variable). Group communication scholars continue to debate how best to manage these methodological issues (see Poole et al. 1999).

### FACILITATING GROUP COMMUNICATION

Historically, the study of group communication was tied to practice – helping people to be more effective participants in democratic group decision-making. Scholars and practitioners have realized for quite some time that groups, when engaged in naturally occurring (free) discussion, often flounder and perform less effectively than might be

expected; consequently, groups need *facilitation* – which typically means employing *meeting procedures* that specify how a group should organize its processes to achieve a particular goal (→ Meeting Technologies). A plethora of group meeting procedures has been created, ranging from those that facilitate group creation, group conflict communication, group conversation or discussion, task group communication (e.g., from macro-level issues of planning, decision-making, evaluating, and promoting change to micro-level procedures that help groups to structure, analyze, create, and agree), to those that promote team communication (see, e.g., Sunwolf & Seibold 1999; Sunwolf & Frey 2005; Frey 2006). Research on the effects of those meeting procedures, however, has lagged far behind the development of procedures. What research does exist suggests that these facilitation procedures work because they structure the communication that takes place in ways that prevent groups from engaging in faulty processes and that harness the strengths of groups.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bona Fide Groups ▶ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Group Communication and Problem-Solving ▶ Group Communication and Social Influence ▶ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ▶ Meeting Technologies ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Symbolic Convergence Theory ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Validity

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# Group Communication and Problem-Solving

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Interest in the relationship between group communication and group problem-solving performance has a long and somewhat controversial history (→ Group Communication). Many trace interest in problem-solving in the group context back to the early work of Maximilian Ringelmann (1861–1931). Ringelmann first measured the effort of a single individual working alone, then measured how much more effort was achieved by two, and then three, people working together. He found that the triad exerted the most effort, but the intriguing aspect of this finding was that the addition of each person did not increase the performance by the average effort of a single individual. Triads, for example, only exerted 2.5 times more effort than individuals working alone. In short, Ringelmann discovered an *inverse relationship* between the number of people in a group and the magnitude of individual performance on additive tasks. This finding contradicts the notion that groups work harder than individuals, and became known as the *Ringelmann effect*. Subsequent work carried out by Ingham and colleagues (1974) essentially replicated Ringelmann's original findings.

Since the days of Ringelmann, group interaction and communication have taken on increasing importance in the study of group problem-solving effectiveness. The presumed importance of group interaction is clearly implied in Steiner's (1972) oft-cited formula: "Actual productivity = potential productivity – losses due to faulty processes." This

formula highlights the potential for communication to detract from the effectiveness of group problem-solving, though research suggests that some communication in problem-solving groups also contributes to the effectiveness of the group effort.

## DEFINITIONAL PARAMETERS

### Problem-Solving Group

Group scholars have historically defined a *problem-solving group* as a collection of individuals who interact with one another in their efforts to arrive at a solution for an unmet need or objective. The literature differentiates between two types of group problem-solving tasks: intellectual tasks and decision-making tasks. *Intellectual* tasks require a group to choose an alternative whose “correctness” can be determined by applying culturally accepted standards of coherence and rules of logic. *Decision-making* tasks, on the other hand, require a group to select an alternative whose “correctness” is determined by a “consensus about what is morally right or what is to be preferred” (McGrath 1984, 64; → Decision-Making Processes in Organizations). In short, groups working on intellectual tasks produce outcomes that can be proven (objectively) to be of high quality, whereas groups working on decision-making tasks produce outcomes that can only be judged (subjectively) to be of high quality.

### Group Communication

The terms → “interaction” and “communication” are often used synonymously in the group problem-solving literature, but there are technical differences worth noting (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). Group *interaction* occurs when two or more group members do something together. As such, interaction involves *mutual influence*; that is, the behavior of one member (A), verbal or nonverbal, is affected by (because it is usually a response to) the behavior of another member (B, C, and so forth) and vice versa (→ Group Communication and Social Influence). Hewes (1996) uses the following equation to present a formalized, and widely accepted, definition of group interaction:

$$\text{Prob}[x_b(t+n) \mid y_a(t)] = \text{Prob}[x_b(t+n)]$$

That is, interaction is said to occur in a group when the likelihood (Prob) of person B’s (*b*) overt physical/symbolic activity or behavior (*x*) at any given time (*t + n*), given the presence of person A’s (*a*) overt physical/symbolic activity or behavior (*y*) at some prior point (*t*), does not equal the likelihood that person B would produce behavior *x* in the absence of person A’s behavior *y*. Stated in simple terms, interaction is said to occur between persons A and B when person A’s activity has an influence on person B’s activity, and vice versa.

*Communication*, in contrast, refers to the achievement of common (or shared) understanding among two or more interacting individuals in regards to the meaning (or referent) of symbolic behaviors – verbal or otherwise – produced and exchanged by those group members. To the extent that communication and interaction are obviously

inextricably intertwined, many group scholars tend to view the terms as synonymous, and hence use them interchangeably.

## GENERAL FINDINGS

Research shows that group communication affects group problem-solving performance in at least three general ways.

*First*, communication allows group members to *distribute and pool* available informational resources necessary for effective decision-making and problem-solving. Studies have found that group communication is especially important for successful group problem-solving when the group is characterized by the unequal distribution of crucial → information. In particular, group discussion facilitates effective group performance when it results in the effective centralization of information in the hands of people who need it to help the group arrive at a high-quality decision (Stasser 1992).

*Second*, group communication allows group members to *catch and remedy errors* of individual judgment. According to Taylor and Faust (1952), the principal reason why groups generally outperform individual problem-solvers is because the discussion of ideas, suggestions, and rationales for preferred choices tends to expose informational, judgmental, and reasoning deficiencies within individual members that might go undetected if those individuals were solving problems on their own. Moreover, group discussion provides the opportunity for members to point out and correct these problems before they can contribute to regrettable choices.

*Third*, group communication serves as a means for intragroup → *persuasion*. Shaw and Penrod (1962) found that group discussion provides members with the opportunity to present and support their decisional preferences and, in so doing, convince others to go along with those alternatives. According to Riecken (1958), the overall quality of a group's solution will often depend on the solution preference of the group's most persuasive member(s). His findings indicate that the presence of knowledgeable group members does not necessarily lead to high levels of group performance unless those individuals are able to persuade others to accept and utilize the information they possess in arriving at a group decision.

## FINDINGS REGARDING GROUP COMMUNICATION AND PROBLEM-SOLVING

While research provides evidence that group communication is related to group problem-solving performance, the available evidence suggests that the relationship is more complex than initially believed. Studies show that group communication is more than a convenient channel that group members use to distribute information or make their preferences known to others in the group. Communication appears to have its own distorting and biasing effects on group problem-solving performance (Hirokawa 2003), and the relationship between group communication and group problem-solving performance seems to be affected by at least two task-related contextual factors: (1) information distribution, and (2) information-processing requirements (Orlitzky & Hirokawa 2001; Hirokawa 1996; → Information Processing).



The relationship between group interaction and group problem-solving performance appears to be affected by the *distribution of relevant information* among group members (Hirokawa 1990). When information is equally distributed among group members, communication appears to be unrelated to group problem-solving performance (Leavitt 1951). However, when the distribution of information is skewed so that only a few group members possess the information needed to solve the problem, a positive relationship between group communication and group problem-solving performance emerges (Shaw 1964).

The relationship between group communication and group problem-solving performance also appears to be influenced by the *information-processing requirements* of the problem-solving task. Information-processing requirements refer to the extent to which (1) the validity or accuracy of relevant information can be objectively verified, and (2) the relevance of available information is clearly evident to group members. Research indicates that group communication is unrelated to group performance when information-processing requirements are low – that is, when the accuracy of information can be verified, and when the relevancy of the information is clear (Argyle & Cook 1976; Williams 1977). When information-processing requirements are high, however, a positive relationship between group communication and group problem-solving performance emerges (Hiltz et al. 1986).

In summary, we can expect group communication to have the greatest impact on group problem-solving performance when the group task is characterized by unequal information distribution and high information-processing requirements. Under other circumstances, the relationship between group communication and group problem-solving performance remains less clear.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication: Definitions and Concepts ► Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ► Group Communication ► Group Communication and Social Influence ► Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ► Information ► Information Processing ► Interaction ► Persuasion

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# Group Communication and Social Influence

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When a decision-making group comes into discussion intending to choose among a set of possible courses of action, any disagreement among the members of the group regarding the best option normally results in some form of social influence. We assume that group members enter discussion having formulated a “pre-discussion preference” for a particular option, that these members leave discussion with a “post-discussion preference” among the options, and that the group as a whole reaches a decision about the best option. Social influence occurs when there is a difference between individual member pre-discussion and post-discussion preferences and/or when the group decision differs from what would be predicted based on the members’ pre-discussion preferences (→ Attitudes; Persuasion).

## EARLY RESEARCH

Research relevant to social influence within groups has a long history. In fact, perhaps the earliest quantitative research (→ Quantitative Methodology) study published in a speech communication journal examined the process of preference convergence due to group discussion (Simpson 1939). Although conducted in relatively unrealistic settings in which

aggregates of research participants only voiced judgments in one another's presence, two early studies of visual perception deserve special note. Sherif (1935) placed participants in an inherently ambiguous circumstance, and observed that voiced comments at the early stages of the task resulted over time in the emergence of a consensual framework that was applied during subsequent judgments.

This study instantiates one of two avenues for social influence in groups, *informational influence*, in which persuasion occurs as the result of the content of arguments made for and against various options during discussion. Asch (1951), in contrast, used a relatively unambiguous situation and noted that research participants believing themselves to be in disagreement with a majority often were persuaded by that majority, even though the participants' original judgments were obviously correct. In post-study interviews, many of these participants stated that, no matter what they saw, the very presence of a disagreeing majority was persuasive. These findings reflect the second pathway for social influence in groups, *normative influence*, in which persuasion is due to minority members coming to believe that the majority must be correct due solely to their majority status (→ Social Norms). Normative influence should not be confused with compliance, in which minority members voice the opinions of the majority but do not in actuality come to agree with that majority view. By the end of the 1950s, these and other studies had led to three empirical generalizations: that group discussion usually leads to convergence of members' preferences, that the group decision reflects that convergence, and that group minorities normally are persuaded to conform to the majority point of view.

These three empirical generalizations are evident, for example, in *research on jury decision-making* (Davis 1973). As data based on real jury deliberations are at best difficult to obtain and in many cases illegal to use for research, workers have turned to *mock juries*, experimental simulations of jury deliberations usually based on convenience samples but occasionally using people called for jury duty but not assigned to a real case. Studies comparing pre-discussion preferences with group decisions reveal preference convergence and majority rule, with a two-thirds majority for either guilt or innocence usually decisive for a group decision. Mock jury studies of communication content during deliberation have been rare (→ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of).

## GROUP POLARIZATION

An important step forward in our understanding of social influence in groups began in the early 1960s with the employment of a relevant research paradigm, the *choice dilemma*. In choice dilemmas, group members must choose between two possible courses of actions, one relatively attractive but with some likelihood of failure, the other sure to succeed but with less attractive consequences. Early studies led researchers to infer that groups made riskier decisions than individuals, but this inference was the incorrect consequence of a research artifact. What was actually discovered was that groups make more extreme decisions than individuals.

This *group polarization effect* can technically be defined as the tendency for group decisions to be in the same direction as but more extreme than the mean of the members' pre-discussion preferences. In addition, the mean of members' post-discussion preferences also shift toward the extreme, evidence that actual social influence rather than compliance

is occurring. By the late 1970s, two theoretical positions, one relying on normative influence and the other on informational influence, came to dominate attempts to explain group polarization.

The normative influence explanation was an extension of → Festinger's → *social comparison theory*, in which, upon discovering where one another stands on the issue, group members shift toward the majority view. This generally leads to group polarization due to the fact that, at least in this research paradigm, group majorities are usually more extreme than minorities. The informational influence explanation, *persuasive arguments theory*, hinges on the notion that discussion leads members to hear arguments favoring their pre-discussion preference of which they were previously unaware, in turn leading them to support that preference even more strongly. This account, however, only works if the content of discussion is biased toward the majority preference; if discussion content reflects both sides, then arguments favoring each side would counterbalance one another such that no preference shift would occur. Research evidence does indicate a discussion bias in favor of the majority point of view. Both the social comparison and persuasive arguments explanations boast considerable empirical support, and any comprehensive model of group polarization must include both processes (Lamm & Myers 1978).

Two major research programs exploring group polarization have been instigated by communication scholars. First, Boster and co-workers discovered that the inherent tendency of items to elicit risky versus cautious preferences predicted talk time supportive of each option, but that majority view predicted perceived strength of arguments; as a consequence, Boster and Mayer (1984) proposed a multi-stage model of polarization including both normative and informational influence components. Second, both social comparison and persuasive arguments explanations rely heavily on pre-discussion knowledge and preferences to predict group decisions; in response, structuralist theorists (Meyers & Seibold 1990) have attempted to demonstrate the sufficiency of discussion independent of pre-discussion processes (→ Structuration Theory). These efforts have been indecisive but resulted in research on the relationship between categories of discussion argument and group decision.

### HIDDEN PROFILES AND MINORITY INFLUENCE

The next major advance in our knowledge about social influence in groups was again the result of another research paradigm, the *hidden profile*. Hidden profiles exist when research participants are given information about different options, manipulated so that the information each participant received favors the same option but, taken in total, all of the information provided favors a different option. This can be accomplished by, for one of many possible examples, supplying each member of three-person groups with the same four items of information favoring option A but two unique items of information favoring option B. We would assume that each participant would begin the discussion supporting option A. If all the information came up during discussion, then group members would eventually become aware of all six “unshared” items of information and change their support to the “objectively correct” option B.

However, as with group polarization, research has repeatedly demonstrated that discussion is biased toward information relevant to the originally favored option, so that

group members continue to favor and generally choose the “objectively incorrect” option. This occurs if for no other reason than the fact that an item of information is more likely to surface if many people are aware of it. In addition, however, shared items of information are more likely repeated during discussion, an indication that shared items of information are considered more credible (Wittenbaum et al. 2004). As with group polarization phenomena, the manner in which decisions are made in the hidden profile paradigm likely includes both normative and informational influence components. Regarding normative influence, there is strong evidence that the larger the proportion of group members aware of an item of information, the greater the influence of that item on the group’s decision. In the case of informational influence, there is counterbalancing evidence concerning the impact of unshared items of information mentioned during discussion on group decisions. Winquist and Larson (1998) proposed a parallel process model in which informational and normative influence have independent effects on post-discussion preferences, with the situation determining which of the two has the larger impact (→ Extended Parallel Process Model).

As noted earlier, majorities are usually successful in persuading minorities to conform to their point of view. However, exceptions have long been noted, and during the 1960s procedures were developed that produce a relatively high proportion of group decisions in which majorities give way to minorities. This discovery inspired the growth of a research literature on *minority influence*. Although majorities find it easy to discount the arguments of a sole deviant, minorities of two or more people are more difficult to ignore, particularly if the members of that minority remain steadfast in their voiced opinions and provide reasons that are consistent with one another. Research has shown that, along with occasionally convincing majorities to change their mind, minorities can be successful in improving the overall level of critical thinking in a group, such that additional options beyond those originally supported by the majority and minority may be uncovered (Nemeth 1986).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Extended Parallel Process Model  
▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ▶ Persuasion  
▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Social Norms ▶ Structuration Theory

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## Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of

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The functional theory of group decision-making, while relatively recent as a formal theory, has origins dating well back into twentieth century (Gouran et al. 1993). One significant origin is the adaptation of American philosopher John Dewey's *method of reflective thinking* for use in the teaching of group discussion by speech teachers (Dewey 1997, 1st pub. 1910; → Speech Communication, History of). In Dewey's characterization, the method consists of five steps: (1) a felt difficulty; (2) its location and definition; (3) suggestion of possible solution; (4) development by reasoning of the bearings of the suggestion; and (5) further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection; that is, the conclusion of belief or disbelief. Early on, teachers interested in communication in groups converted these steps into a standard agenda for conducting decision-making and problem-solving discussions (see, e.g., Ewbank & Auer 1941). The presumption was that following these steps and cultivating the corresponding habits of mind would lead to better decisions (→ Group Communication; Group Communication and Problem-Solving).

A *second origin* of the functional theory of group decision-making was work by sociologist Robert Freed Bales (1950), who was a strong proponent of equilibrium theory as applied to groups. Bales posited that decision-making groups strive for equilibrium or balance in their efforts to satisfy task-related demands and the social and emotional needs of their members. Communicative acts, in his view, are the instrumentalities by which members of such groups become cognizant of any imbalances in the two domains and achieve equilibrium between them. Thus, communication has functional value for groups making decisions.

A third influence contributing to the emergence of the functional theory of group decision-making was Irving Janis (1972; 1982) and his inquiries concerning the causes

underlying some historically noteworthy and conspicuously poor American foreign policy decisions involving various governmental groups. Janis attributed these poor decisions to the *phenomenon of "groupthink,"* or the sacrifice of critical thinking that often accompanies the desire to promote harmony in groups. Specifically, Janis defined groupthink as "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of interaction" (1972, 9). Janis's research revealed that such decisions were almost invariably characterized by an absence of the attributes that Dewey (1997) identified as the method of reflective thinking.

Janis (1989) later introduced what he referred to as the *constraints model*, which he used to demonstrate how so-called cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints lead the members of groups to resort to mental shortcuts, or heuristics, that contribute to the relaxation of sound critical judgment in choice-making situations. For instance, a group might be unduly influenced by the heuristic, "Don't rock the boat," if challenging a member's judgment were to threaten to inject disharmony into a group discussion. The constraints model had a significant impact on the more recent development of the functional theory of group decision-making.

Gouran and Hirokawa, drawing on various strands of the lines of thought summarized above, introduced the functional theory of group decision-making and problem-solving groups in 1983. Following that introduction, the theory became an object of considerable research and underwent a good deal of evolution (see Gouran 1999; Poole 1999).

### ASSUMPTIONS AND PROPOSITIONS

At its most fundamental and general level, The functional theory of group decision-making is predicated on a single premise. Specifically, effective decision-making and problem-solving in groups, the referent for which is "choosing appropriately," is in direct proportion to the extent that communication serves to insure that the members have adequately satisfied the requirements posed by their tasks. An appropriate choice is the one that "a group is obliged to make in light of its purpose, the requirements of the task, and what the analysis of information bearing on the available alternatives establishes as reasons for endorsing and rejecting each" (Gouran 1988, 257).

In its present form, the theory rests on 10 assumptions and comprises eight general propositions, one of which has five components. The propositions all relate to the functions that communication should or does serve in order to heighten the probability that a decision-making or problem-solving group will choose appropriately. To the extent that communication fails to serve these functions under the conditions assumed, in general, it is less likely that a group will, or even can, perform effectively in the sense noted.

The *assumptions* underlying the functional theory of group decision-making are as follows:

- 1 The members of a decision-making or problem-solving group are motivated to make an appropriate choice.
- 2 The choice confronted is nonobvious.

- 3 The collective resources of the groups in respect to the particular task exceed those of individual members.
- 4 The requisites of the task are specifiable.
- 5 Relevant information is available to the members or can be acquired.
- 6 The task is within the intellectual capabilities of the members to perform.
- 7 One or more of the members must be capable of recognizing and interpreting the signs of unwanted cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints.
- 8 Communication is instrumental.
- 9 Members are aware of how well interaction is serving to satisfy fundamental task requirements.
- 10 Members will take steps to minimize and counteract sources of influence that limit prospects for adequately fulfilling fundamental task requirements (Gouran & Hirokawa 1996, 75).

Under circumstances in which the assumptions apply, the functional theory of group decision-making advances eight general *propositions*, positing that the likelihood of a group's arriving at an appropriate choice is at a maximum when the members:

- 1 make clear their interest in arriving at the best possible decision;
- 2 identify the resources necessary for making such a decision;
- 3 recognize possible obstacles to be confronted;
- 4 specify the procedures to be followed;
- 5 establish ground rules for interaction;
- 6 attempt to satisfy fundamental task requirements by
  - a. showing a correct understanding of the issue to be resolved
  - b. determining the minimal characteristics any alternative, to be acceptable (endorsable), must possess
  - c. identifying a relevant and realistic set of alternatives
  - d. examining carefully the alternatives in relationship to each previously agreed-upon characteristic of an acceptable choice, and
  - e. selecting the alternative that analysis reveals to be most likely to have the desired characteristics;
- 7 employ appropriate interventions for overcoming cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints that are interfering with the satisfaction of fundamental task requirements; and
- 8 review the process by which the group comes to a decision and, if indicated, reconsider judgments reached, even to the point of starting over. (Gouran & Hirokawa 1996, 76–77)

## RESEARCH

To date, research has focused on proposition 6. Hirokawa and Salazar (1999) have summarized much of the pertinent scholarship. Among the findings to which they point are correlations of the assessment of positive and negative qualities of decision options, problem analysis, and identification of criteria with the appropriateness of the choices



groups make. Providing less support for the proposition has been research concerning the generation of decision options, as the number groups have identified does not appear to be predictive of whether or not they make good choices. Not receiving attention thus far is the part of the proposition involving the extent to which the members of decision-making groups assess the alternatives under consideration in respect to the criteria they select – at least, not in any systematic way.

In respect of proposition 7, Janis (1989) identified 20 hypotheses embodying a variety of leadership practices, having as their aim to counteract the negative influence of cognitive, affiliative, and egocentric constraints, but communication-based research to test them has not been forthcoming. Despite that, they provide a ready-made scholarly agenda that lends itself to such research.

As the functional theory of communication in decision-making groups stands, its principal value has been that it aids in accounting for instances of defective choice-making (see, e.g., Gouran et al. 1986; Hirokawa et al. 1988; Gouran 1990). Its predictive promise has yet to be convincingly demonstrated (Poole 1999).

SEE ALSO: ► Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ► Functional Analysis ► Group Communication ► Group Communication and Problem-Solving ► Group Communication and Social Influence ► Speech Communication, History of

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## Gulf States: Media Systems

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The six Arab countries of *Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia*, and the *United Arab Emirates* (UAE) passed through similar development stages evolving comparable media systems. With the exception of Saudi Arabia, the smaller Gulf States had been British protectorates, gaining their independence only in 1971 (Kuwait in 1961). Since extensive oil production started in the 1950s, the region has been transformed from a remote area into one of the hubs of economic and technological globalization. Politically, it is still trapped between modernization and tradition. All six states are practically authoritarian, ruled by a dominating royal family despite established parliaments. Islam plays a major role in legislation and in the legitimization of the rulers. The contradiction between technological progress and political stagnation is reflected in the state-of-the-art media that may be privately owned but are normally loyal to the rulers and their politics (Rugh 2004). Because of a serious lack of skilled citizens, large numbers of expatriates work in the Gulf. Not only are they considerable target audiences for the media, fostering the development of English-language media and a pan-Arab orientation, but media production itself depends heavily on expatriate journalists, especially Arabs.

Compared to other Arab countries, mass media were introduced rather late, owing to a low level of development and small populations. Newspapers appeared in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in the 1960s, while the first dailies circulated in the other Gulf States in the 1970s. Radio was introduced first in Saudi Arabia in 1949, and last in Oman in 1970. TV broadcasting started first in Kuwait in 1961, last in Oman in 1974.

Every Gulf State has elaborate press laws. Publications have to be licensed and are exposed to censorship; nevertheless the governments tend rather to exercise indirect control by issuing subsidies and placing ads. The foreign press is subject to import controls. Taboo topics are the ruling family, religion, and the basic lines of governmental

**Table 1** Media distribution in the Gulf States

Country	Population (2004)	GNI in US\$ per capita (2004)	Literacy rate <sup>a</sup> (2004)	Daily news-papers per 1,000 people <sup>b</sup> (2000)	Radios per 1,000 people <sup>b</sup> (2001)	TV sets per 1,000 people <sup>b</sup> (2002)	Phones (fixed and mobile) per 1,000 people (2004)	Internet users per 1,000 people (2004)
Bahrain	715,820	14,370	87	117	–	440	1,175	213
Kuwait	2,459,534	24,040	93	374	570	418	1,015	244
Oman	2,533,843	9,070	81	29	621	553	413	97
Qatar	776,936	–	89	–	–	421	877	212
Saudi Arabia	23,950,032	10,170	79	326	326	265	537	66
UAE	4,320,000	23,770	78	156	330	252	1,128	321

<sup>a</sup> Percentage of population aged 15+.

<sup>b</sup> World Bank (2004).

Source: World Bank (2006)

politics. National news agencies disseminate official statements as guidelines for the media (→ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East).

As an effective tool to shape public opinion the *broadcasting* media were monopolized by the government. In each country except Qatar, the Ministry of Information still controls national broadcasting, normally operating one or two TV channels and several radio programs. The UAE have a federal system with each of the seven emirates operating its own channels. The exception to the loyalist rule is *Al Jazeera* news channel. Launched by the emir of Qatar in 1996, the channel has become the catalyst of a new Arab public demanding political reform (Lynch 2006; → Arab Satellite TV News).

The *press*, however, is predominantly privately owned, but passive in style and loyal to the government. Kuwait's press is the most liberal and diversified. The highest circulation is that of Saudi Arabia's *al-Riyadh* with 170,000 copies (Rugh 2004; see overview in Table 1).

The immense increase in oil prices in the 1970s boosted the Gulf States' revenues, resulting in the elites' search for new investment opportunities. The smaller Gulf States' determination to diversify their economy because of decreasing petroleum revenues in the 1990s ironically had similar effects: elites largely invested in media and information technology as a promising economic sector. Back in 1994, the Saudi government still prohibited ownership of satellite dishes, but the more effective means to control the media was to own them (Sakr 2001). Members of the Saudi Arabian royal family control the leading pan-Arab dailies *Asharq al-Awsat* (launched in 1978) and *al-Hayat* (1990), the ArabSat Satellite; the *MBC* broadcasting network (1991) including *al-Arabiya* news channel (2003) and the pay-TV networks *ART* (1994) and *Orbit* (1994). To avoid both arousing opposition from religious zealots and the strict national laws, these media were launched "offshore" from London and Rome. Furthermore, commercial pan-Arab media producers anticipate and obey Saudi Arabia's strict religious and political guidelines, since it is the largest and most profitable market in the region (→ Globalization of the Media; Satellite Communication, Global).

The smaller Gulf States are dependent on western and regional support and have adopted “a circumspect policy of cooperating with everybody” (Rugh 2004: 115). Comprehensive media freedom and tax exemption are guaranteed for international players in the 2001-inaugurated *Dubai Media City* (DMC) and *Dubai Internet City* (DIC).

The rapid expansion of the technological infrastructure in the Gulf – reaching standards like those in North America (Ayish 2002) – led to the highest *Internet* user rates in the region and a saturated telecommunication market. Nevertheless, the Internet is not free of control. With the exception of Kuwait, access to the Internet is only possible through a sole provider. Pornographic or un-Islamic content as well as sites from the political opposition are censored.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East  
▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Satellite Communication, Global

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# H

## Habermas, Jürgen

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Jürgen Habermas (born 1929 in Germany) is one of the leading philosophers of the second half of the twentieth century. He has had and continues to have a decisive influence on communication theory and research internationally through his work on the public sphere and his theory of communicative action, as well as his theory of deliberative democracy and public deliberation.

In his book on *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (originally published in German in 1962, but available in English only in 1989, several years after his *Theory of communicative action* appeared in English, in two volumes, 1984 and 1987), Habermas describes, in an ideal-typical fashion, the emergence of a bourgeois → public sphere in Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The bourgeois public sphere opened a space for rational-critical discussion between private individuals about matters of common concern and thus constituted a social sphere separate from self-interested interaction in the marketplace, on the one hand, and the authority of the state, on the other. Habermas portrayed the development of public communication since the mid-nineteenth century as a process of increasing commercialization of the mass media (→ Commercialization of the Media) and a growing tendency toward publicity aimed at securing mass loyalty rather than critical debate (a process he called “refeudalization” of the public sphere).

This conception of the public sphere was criticized on several grounds (for an overview, see Calhoun 1992). Some questioned the historical accuracy of the account, some objected to the neglect of non-bourgeois (plebeian) public spheres, others questioned the very demarcation of the public as opposed to the private and the subsequent confinement of the conjugal family to the private sphere, or rejected what they saw as an overly rationalist conception of public communication. In response to such criticism, Habermas (1992) made *some revisions of his original account* and further elaborated his normative conception of the public sphere in the context of an overarching theory of deliberative democracy (Habermas 1996; → Deliberativeness in Political Communication). He now acknowledges a more ambivalent role for mass-mediated public communication in democratic politics by stressing the capacity of civil society to procure and withdraw political legitimacy at least in exceptional phases of heightened political conflict. He sees the public

sphere as a “highly complex network that branches out into a multitude of overlapping international, national, regional, local, and subcultural arenas” (Habermas 1996, 372). And he emphasizes the importance of informal public opinions rooted in the life-world functioning as an antidote to what he sees as the colonization of the life-world by the systems of money and administrative power (economy and politics; → Public Opinion).

More fundamentally, Habermas has turned away from concrete historical instantiations of the public sphere (i.e., its bourgeois type) as a source of normative potential and has developed a *normative model of rational-critical discourse* that is rooted in a reconstruction of the implicit presuppositions that humans make in everyday communication (→ Political Discourse). According to Habermas’s “theory of communicative action” (1984, 1987), speakers implicitly follow the rules of an ideal speech situation by counterfactually presupposing that contributions in discourse are comprehensible, true, sincere, and morally right. Even though these rules are violated all the time, they serve to normatively regulate communicative behavior by privileging communicative action, i.e., “action oriented to reaching understanding,” over “action oriented to success” (Habermas 1984, 285). Violations of the rules of discourse can be addressed in different types of discourses in which the respective validity claims are problematized and discussed – a process that creates procedural rationality. And Habermas insists that it is this procedural rationality created in discourse (rather than some dubious kind of alleged substantive rationality) that confers legitimacy upon political decisions, actors, and institutions, and that facilitates societal learning processes (Habermas 2006). Public deliberation, therefore, is vital for democratic politics, and cannot be substituted by success-oriented strategies of → public relations. Habermas’s writings on the public sphere and public deliberation continue to inspire both theoretical reflection and empirical investigation, particularly in the field of political communication but also beyond (see Butsch 2007; Peters in press). In addition to his theoretical work, Habermas has also emerged as one of Germany’s most prominent public intellectuals and a well-known international figure – raising his voice and triggering public debate about a wide range of issues including, for example, revisionist accounts of the Hitler regime, the ethical implications of genetic engineering, or the value of a Constitution for the European Union.

SEE ALSO: ► Commercialization of the Media ► Deliberativeness in Political Communication ► Knowledge Interests ► Political Discourse ► Public Opinion ► Public Relations ► Public Sphere

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## Habituation

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Habituation is a decrement in response to repeated stimuli. It is a learning mechanism through which organisms are able to filter sensory inputs from their environment and thereby allocate scarce attentional resources to only the most relevant stimuli (Siddle 1991; → Attention).

Habituation involves both peripheral and central nervous system processes. In the peripheral nervous system, the orienting response that alerts humans to novel stimuli originates in the reticular formation, a complex collection of nuclei in the upper brain stem with connections to the thalamus, hypothalamus and cortex. The orientation response explains reflexive physiological manifestations of attention – such as bodily reorientation toward the stimulus, elevated heart rate, accelerated eye blinking, and “sweaty palms” – in reaction to breaking news events, blaring commercial interruptions, or attention-grabbing sequences of violent or sexual activity (→ Emotions, Media Effects on; Exposure to News). The orientation response must be suppressed, otherwise novel stimuli would never cease to be novel and completely occupy human attention, rendering the world a “buzzing confusion.”

Habituation of the orienting response is associated with a diminution of the P300 component (a cortical response that follows exposure to an external stimulus by 300 milliseconds) of the event-related potential in the brain’s cortex. Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and positron emission tomography (PET) scan studies indicate that the amygdala, hippocampus, and medial/inferior temporal cortex are the locations in the central nervous system responsible for habituation in the higher brain centers (Fischer et al. 2003).

Affective habituation responses, or reductions in stimulus-evoked affective reactions as a result of previous exposure, may explain the “wear out” of popular media. Repeated exposure to unfamiliar stimuli produces an inverted U pattern. Pleasure initially increases from repeated exposure through reductions in fear and uncertainty, followed by a slow and linear decrease in pleasure with numerous repeated exposures, or habituation (Bornstein 1989). However, unlike the neutral and unfamiliar stimuli often used in habituation studies, highly valued and familiar stimuli, such as favorite songs or TV programs, habituate after only a few exposures and with no further increase in pleasure. Habituation



of valenced, familiar stimuli is a conceptual process that readily generalizes to similar stimuli (Leventhal et al. 2007). Thus, the decline in the popularity of “reality programs” might be said to be the collective effect of individual-level affective habituation to individuals’ respective favorites from that genre.

Affective *habituation to unpleasurable stimuli* may explain → desensitization to violence when narrowly defined as a reduction in emotion-related physiological reactivity to real violence (Carnagey et al. 2007). Within the general aggression model (GAM; Anderson & Bushman 2002), desensitization is thought to facilitate violent behavior as a result of suppressing initially fearful and anxious reactions to violence by repeatedly presenting violence in a positive context. In a controlled experiment, Carnagey et al. found attenuated physiological reactions to real life violence following a 20-minute exposure to a violent video game. Desensitization is also a factor in the effects of violent television (Bushman & Huesmann 2001; → Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

Media habits, defined as media consumption behaviors that occur automatically without active self-instruction, are thought to result from the same *economies of attention* that drive other forms of habituation. While media consumers actively attend to initial media selections, they become inattentive to repeatedly enacted behaviors, diminish their self-regulation, and automatically repeat their media selections (LaRose & Eastin 2004). Media habits are found in uses and gratifications research as ritualized (as opposed to instrumental) gratifications (Rubin 1984). Excessive media habits have been characterized as addictions (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi 2002; → Addiction and Exposure), media habits that cause significant life crises. These studies have relied on self-reports of habit strength, while physiological measures of arousal are the norm in the psychological literature. Paper-and-pencil measures of habit strength that parallel those used by communication researchers have been validated against reaction-time measures that assess habit strength through word association tasks (Verplanken & Orbell 2003).

SEE ALSO: ► Addiction and Exposure ► Attention ► Desensitization ► Emotions, Media Effects on ► Exposure to News ► Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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# Hacktivism

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The simplest definition of hacktivism is that it represents the conjunction of technologically knowledgeable *hacking* techniques with the values and communicational strategies of political *activism*. Whilst hacking involves the imaginative and unorthodox use of computers and their systems, hacktivism is the application of those techniques in the pursuit of political agendas frequently associated with new globalized social movements (→ Technology and Globalization). Behind these initial, relatively clear definitions, however, lie more ambiguous and less easily separated relationships between old-style hacking and its new applications.

## DEVELOPMENT AND FORMS

Hacktivism arose in the mid-1990s largely as an attempt to remedy hacking's innate political limitations that resulted from hackers' over-identification with the technology. The advent of hacktivism coincided with the increasing number of new social movements seeking to engage with a politics of globalization in which material conditions on the ground in any one place are affected by immaterial, but nonetheless powerful, informational processes. It shares with its predecessor, hacking, an interest in the manipulation and exploration of technological systems. However, in contrast to hacking's tendency to enjoy these activities for their own sake, hacktivism translates a fixation upon technical means into a diverse range of technologically informed modes of political protest using its expertise with global communications systems (→ Communication Infrastructure).

At the most *destructive end of its spectrum*, hacktivism may involve methods of electronic vandalism such as computer worms, viruses, trojan horses, email bombs and the defacement of websites (→ Crime and Communication Technology). In these actions, the technology is foregrounded. More typically and constructively, however, hacktivism seeks to subordinate the prominence of the technological component in order to raise the profile of its political causes. *Tactical media* refers to the attitude of ingenuity hacktivism applies to the media in order to produce actions that have a wider social and political

impact than are normally seen within hacking. It is, however, based upon the adaptable and inclusive basic notion of the “hack” (see Taylor 1999, 14–19; Jordan & Taylor 2004, 5–9), with which hackers sought to reverse engineer the basic functionality of a range of artifacts (of which computers are merely the most socially significant). This is a new form of hacking in which the technological means are adopted, not as an end in themselves, but in order to promote a political purpose. Examples of such actions include: *virtual sit-ins and denial of service* (DoS) attacks – as part of an ethos known as electronic civil disobedience, the purpose is to replicate in cyberspace the physical presence of a large number of politically motivated people. The *Electronic Disturbance Theatre* (EDT) group originally developed a project called *Floodnet* which depended upon a concerted mass effort to request web pages in order to overload the computer servers of specifically targeted organizations. In later versions the process has become more automated.

Although usually considered separately from hacktivism, *culture jamming* illustrates the porosity of the definitional boundaries in this field. Drawing upon the French activist tradition of Situationism, it relates to the act of reverse engineering corporate advertising, in effect, hacking semiotic codes rather than those of computers. This link with previous hacking culture is reinforced by the relative simplicity with which powerful effects can be achieved. For example, huge advertising budgets and designs can be undermined by billboard protestors armed with nothing more than ladders and spray cans. In a form of semiotic aikido, a few well-chosen additions or blacking outs with a spray can produces the opposite message to that originally intended. Ron English is one of the most famous guerilla artists who superimposes his own acrylic paintings over a well-known advertisement, e.g. painting a bloated Ronald McDonald on an existing billboard. Other groups include *Adbusters* and the *Billboard Liberation Front*. Beyond the still image, some other groups engage in *precision targeted satire*, whereby various forms of performance are created to promote a subversive message. For example, *RTMark* is a group that mimics a conventional stock exchange except it promotes investment in subversive activities, while the *Yes Men* have targeted organizations such as the World Trade Organization with tongue-in-cheek presentations at formal gatherings in order to satirize their free market values.

*Open Source* and *Free Software* are two groups that seek to undermine capitalist values by creating software that does not follow the frameworks of conventional proprietary rights (→ Open Source). Software is produced on the basis of a collective effort and made freely available to all users. In the early days of hacking, computers were viewed as an essential tool for empowering the citizenry of heavily technologized societies by encouraging its greater access to information (→ Communication Technology and Democracy). For example, Apple Computers was largely founded upon a desire to bring computing power to the masses. While this strand of the early politics of information-for-all has been superseded by the commercial pressures that have made Apple Computers a highly successful global corporation, it remains a feature of hacktivism’s network politics.

In political and legal terms the line between hacktivism as legal activism and as illegal vandalism tends to lie in the eye of the beholder (→ Code as Law). Hacktivist protests against large multinationals tend to be received well when they are based on satire or nondestructive methods, but activists who are prepared to disrupt the Internet connectivity of others are viewed much less charitably by those labeled the *digitally correct*

(see below). As with their forebears, hackers, who became increasingly subject to moral judgment and legislative action (see Taylor 1999), hacktivists have also tend to evolve along with society's growing dependence upon the technological systems and informational resources being disrupted.

### THE POLITICS OF INFORMATION

While a major strength of hacking is the ease and familiarity with which it manipulates information, the history of the activity suggests that both the notion of free access to information and the “kick” that derives from technological ingenuity all too often became ends in themselves. A perceived political limitation of the original hacker movement was its failure to make the most political capital out of its unrivalled familiarity with informational networks. For a period of time, hacking was arguably hamstrung by its tendency to identify too closely with the technical means of communication over the purpose of the communication itself – it fetishized the medium over the message. There are strong grounds to suggest that hacktivism has successfully compensated for hacking's frequent lack of a political perspective. It has married computing expertise with ingenious manipulations of various forms of the mass media in order to create its own political discourse. However, the hacker tendency to over-rely on the technological means continues within hacktivism. The disputed relative importance of the role played by technology within hacktivist actions gives rise to the competing strands of mass action and digitally correct hacktivism.

*Mass action* hacktivism emulates traditional forms of protest and applies them within cyberspace. *Electronic civil disobedience*, for example, seeks to involve large numbers of people who carry out acts that are technically simple but which derive their strength from the sheer weight of numbers involved. In a mass action denial-of-service attack, for example, large numbers of people seek to crash computer servers by simultaneously requesting information from a targeted site. *Digitally correct* hacktivism, by contrast, uses the technical features of cyberspace to amplify its message without disrupting the communicational potential of the Internet itself – the technological means are not subordinated by the desired social ends. Mass action hacktivism is technically inelegant, but its deliberately simple, manual nature means that it is good at encouraging active political involvement. It creates networks of coordinated people rather than more sophisticated technical techniques that may achieve the same end but involve less people. Ricardo Dominguez of EDT, for example, uses the pejorative term “digitally correct” to accuse certain activist groups of being more concerned about digital rights and the maintenance of bandwidth than with the human rights of those suffering in the offline world (Jordan & Taylor 2004, 91).

### INCORPORATION BY THE SYSTEM

While it is clear that hacktivists are more overtly political than their hacking forebears, they share with hackers a potentially problematic relationship with the system they are seeking to manipulate. An accusation made against hackers is that they are parasitical upon the health of the technological systems on which they depend for the site of their

playful explorations, and that this dependency has continued into hacktivism with the rise of the digitally correct. Beyond the question of the basic nature of the relationship with the technical infrastructure, however, is a larger question about the likelihood of successfully using media technologies to undermine the values of a society largely constituted by those same media.

Just as the original maverick hackers were ultimately recuperated as microserfs (see Douglas Coupland's novel of the same name) into Microsoft's corporate system, so hacktivists are faced with the problem of maintaining their critical, radical edge in their use of the artifacts and systems for political purposes. For example, insofar as hacktivism uses the techniques of satire and culture jamming, their efforts to re-engineer are themselves vulnerable to re-engineering by the system they oppose. Satire and culture jamming can themselves be co-opted and translated into the edgy pastiche that is frequently the raw material for sophisticated corporate advertising, making it unclear as to whether any critical political point is in fact being made.

In *For a critique of the political economy of the sign* (1981) Jean Baudrillard refers to "the mortal dose of publicity" that tends to accompany events designed to make an impact within the media. Like Daniel Boorstin's (1992) notion of a *pseudo-event*, Baudrillard's interpretation is that creating "real" political events has become increasingly difficult because events reported within the media event contain their own particular grammar. Rather than promoting political action, publicity stunts designed to create a media stir tend to be processed according to the media's own internal logic (such as the "funny" or add-on item within a news program). The net effect may actually be reduction in political content as it is translated into images and stories for the media's own particular forms of discourse.

We have seen that there is an innate difficulty faced first by hacking and then by hacktivism in their desire to reverse engineer either systems that are purely technological or that are a complex imbrication of the social and the technical. There is a tendency for actions that seek to subvert the technological and media systems to be re-absorbed back into the system. There is a growing consensus among communication theorists that the new global informational order creates a pervasive environment outside of which it is extremely difficult to step. Arguing that hackers occupy an inevitably parasitic position, Gunkel (2001, 5) asserts that "The parasite occupies a structurally unique position that is neither simply inside nor simply outside. It is the outside in the inside and the inside outside itself." Similarly, in the context of hacktivism and social movements, Hardt and Negri (2000, 46) describe global capitalism in terms of an *empire* and argue that "We should be done once and for all with the search for an outside, a standpoint that imagines a purity for our politics. It is better both theoretically and practically to enter the terrain of Empire and confront its homogenizing and heterogenizing flows in all their complexity, grounding our analysis in the power of the global multitude." Compared to hacking, hacktivism is much better suited to answering Hardt and Negri's call but its ultimate ability to achieve this aim remains open to question.

SEE ALSO: ► Code as Law ► Communication Infrastructure ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► Crime and Communication Technology ► Open Source ► Technology and Globalization

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## Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms

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One of the most controversial topics that a democratic society faces is the issue of regulating the speech of its citizens. As Delgado and Stefancic suggest in *Must we defend Nazis? Hate speech, pornography, and the new First Amendment* (1997), the notion of “free speech” in a democratic society is a misnomer, as social institutions place controls on what can be said, to protect the public. This is certainly the case when speech is classified as obscene, defamatory, slanderous, or hateful, and holds a reasonable potential to be harmful (Lederer & Delgado 1995). Hate speech, for example, is a form of verbal aggression (→ Verbal Aggressiveness) that expresses hatred, contempt, ridicule, or threats toward a specific group or class of people (Asante 1998). Hate speech encompasses verbalizations, written messages, symbols, or symbolic acts that demean and degrade, and, as such, can promote discrimination, prejudice, and violence toward targeted groups. Hate speech often stems from thoughts and beliefs such as hatred, intolerance, prejudice, bigotry, or stereotyping (Allport 1954). Common forms of hate speech include ethnophaulisms, racial slurs and epithets, sexist comments, and homophobic speech (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication).

### FUNCTIONS AND EXAMPLES

Hate speech functions to distort the history of targeted groups, to eliminate the agency of targeted groups, to create and maintain derogatory cultural, racial, and ethnic illusions about targeted groups, and as a vehicle for expressing pejoratives (Asante 1998). This class of communication represents some of the most noxious and often hurtful forms of communication that exist (Kinney 2003; Leets & Giles 1997). Examples of hate speech can be found in our earliest written records, including the *New Testament* (Titus 1:10–16), where derogatory statements are made against a class of people:

[10] For there are also many disobedient, vain talkers, and seducers: especially they who are of the circumcision.

[11] Who must be reprov'd, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

- [12] One of them a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slothful bellies.
- [13] This testimony is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.
- [14] Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men, who turn themselves away from the truth.
- [15] All things are clean to the clean: but to them that are defiled, and to unbelievers, nothing is clean: but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.
- [16] They profess that they know God: but in their works they deny him; being abominable, and incredulous, and to every good work reprobate.

Perhaps the most harmful form of hate speech from the perspective of society manifests when representatives of well-established social institutions use it to espouse their positions by oppressing, ostracizing, and demeaning others for political or power purposes. This form of hate speech can be used to justify why another group must be removed, discriminated against, or killed, as the contents of the messages often cast the other as the enemy, as subhuman, as immoral, or not worthy of existence. The Nazis' use of anti-Semitic propaganda during World War II is perhaps one of the clearest examples of hate speech, although hate speech tends to surface during most wars as a way to instill hatred and incite violence toward the opposing force (→ Propaganda in World War II; War Propaganda). Use of the terms "terrorist" and "axis of evil" are examples of how speech is able to cast a class of individuals (or entire countries) into the role of enemy, motivating derogatory thoughts and potentially inciting violence against them. Thus, one conclusion that can be drawn about the nature of hate speech is that it provides a window through which we can view aspects of ourselves (Allport 1954). As Berkowitz suggests in *Aggression: Its causes, consequences, and control* (1993), when we experience aversive affective states we are often driven to express them outwardly (→ Frustration Aggression Theory).

Social scientists have examined some of the social issues that underlie hate speech. For instance, Allport (1954) argues that individuals develop prejudicial tendencies and beliefs early in life as a direct result of being exposed to these notions from others (→ Bandura, Albert). In 1989, the Prejudice Institute undertook a national assessment of the extent and consequences of ethno-violence and other forms of victimization in the United States. The Institute defined ethno-violence as acts motivated by prejudice that are intended to do physical or psychological harm to persons because of their actual or perceived membership in a social category. Results showed that ethno-violence occurred at substantially high rates, and that the rates varied by social setting (community, work, school) and by target group (black, white, Latino, Native American, Asian-American, etc.). In addition, most ethno-violent acts were not reported to officials, and, as a consequence, the magnitude and severity of ethno-violence and its aftermath are largely unrecognized. Finally, the study revealed that victims of ethno-violence suffer greater trauma than do victims of other types of violence that is committed for reasons other than prejudice. While this is just one study, it does support the notion that hate speech may be prevalent in American society and that its consequences, while severe, are largely unrecognized, and underreported.

### JUSTIFICATIONS FOR REGULATION

The consequences of exposure to hate speech have been examined by social scientists, and the evidence suggests that such exposure can harm individuals psychologically, socially,

and physically. Hate speech holds power over aspects of our well-being due to the way that it is able to infiltrate our thoughts, affecting how we perceive ourselves, and due to its ability to activate physiological and affective responses. While the process of infiltration is complex, it starts with exposure to a negative message. At this point a host of psychosocial theories (→ Social Identity Theory; Symbolic Interaction) help to explain how the negative message enters the psychological system to produce cognitive changes that may activate affect (e.g., Higgins 1987), cause pain, elicit psychological harm, and incite aggressiveness (Lazarus & Folkman 1984).

These effects potentially move hate speech from protected speech into arenas in which it may be regulated despite democratic principles promoting freedom of speech. However, there are significant problems when regulating speech, including determining what is offensive, being able to separate speech that expresses thoughts, however negative and egregious, from speech that solely functions to demean and damage, and then being able to assess harm accurately. While there are specific instances of words and phrases that most individuals recognize as taboo because they are inflammatory (e.g., racial epithets), even these words can be reclaimed and re-engineered by specific groups in ways that alter their meanings, making them less offensive for some.

Currently, justifications for the regulation of hate speech center on the idea that hate speech is detrimental to social and racial harmony and may lead to forms of harm against recognized groups of individuals. As a result, several countries have enacted *laws* that ban forms of hate speech (e.g., United Kingdom, Canada, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, France, USA). These laws are seen by some as a form of state-sponsored → censorship, and at the extreme end, a form of thought control. The most common form of regulation is to enact speech codes or codes of acceptable conduct (Lee 1997).

In addition to the socially oriented reasons to regulate hate speech, a second rationale for regulation is grounded in *social psychological theory*. Social scientists argue that motivations often influence behavior, and that motivations that activate strong emotions influence behavior more directly. Thus, the motives that tend to be associated with hate speech are seen as undesirable for individuals to harbor, including prejudice, bigotry, stereotyping, and cynicism. It is often the case that violence is driven by the motives that surround hate speech. As such, the cognitive consequences of these motives can breed discrimination and overt hatred, which can ignite anger and incite violence. Thus, if hate speech holds the power to instill hatred toward others, then hate speech holds the potential to promote overt and covert discrimination and violence, which suggests that it can be regulated.

### MESSAGE DESIGN ISSUES

The fact that we recognize that our self-concepts may be vulnerable to verbal and symbolic attacks and we are willing to develop and use forms of communication that target these vulnerabilities suggests that we understand how the self-concept is organized. The fact that we align ourselves along, and are connected to, our racial, ethnic, and national origins, our past, and our gender identification, makes us vulnerable to messages that attack these aspects of our selves. Understanding this connection makes us effective in being able to attack others. The use of hate speech suggests that the message source



believes that the target (1) deserves to be attacked, intimidated, or harassed, (2) is deficient or corrupt in some manner, and (3) is vulnerable to the message. These notions bring to the surface important aspects of communication research that allow for a deeper understanding of how messages do harm. The principles of message design are central to this area of communication scholarship, and research shows that the nature of the message makes an important difference in how it is interpreted and the type and magnitude of response that it generates (e.g., Calvert 1997). Thus, the design components of messages and the social contexts in which the messages are found are important areas to examine for communication scholars (→ Message Design Logics).

As societies become more diverse, manifestations of hatred can increase due, in part, to social tensions and perceptions of inequalities. In addition, technological advances that allow the dissemination of messages to mass markets in relative privacy serve to create new communication spaces where hatred can flourish, as is experienced on the Internet (→ Internet Law and Regulation; Mediated Terrorism; Terrorism and Communication Technologies). Empirical evidence suggests that exposure to expressed hatred and rejection can harm individuals (Rohner & Rohner 1980; Savin-Williams 1994). The effects illustrate that what others say and do holds tremendous weight. As such, the issue of hate speech is an important social phenomenon, but is especially controversial in democratic societies that must balance the rights of individuals against protecting the public from harm.

SEE ALSO: ► Bandura, Albert ► Censorship ► Frustration Aggression Theory ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Mediated Terrorism ► Message Design Logics ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Propaganda ► Propaganda in World War II ► Social Identity Theory ► Stereotypes ► Symbolic Interaction ► Terrorism and Communication Technologies ► Verbal Aggressiveness ► War Propaganda

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# Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of

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The transtheoretical model is an integrative model of behavior change, combining key constructs from other theories. The model describes how people modify a problem behavior or acquire a positive behavior. It has been very influential in guiding the design of behavior change interventions during the last two decades. The central organizing construct of the model is the stages of change theory (→ Stages of Change Model). The model also includes a series of independent variables, the processes of change, which are 10 cognitive and behavioral activities that facilitate change, and a series of intermediate outcome measures, including the decisional balance inventory, self-efficacy or situational temptations scale, and behavior measures (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in).

The transtheoretical model is a *model of intentional change*. The specific focus of the model is on behavior change and the key constructs are dynamic variables, i.e., open to modification, whereas more static variables such as gender and past history are included only as moderator variables. In addition, the model primarily focuses on the decision-making of the individual where other approaches to health promotion study social or biological influences on behavior (→ Planned Social Change through Communication). The model has been previously applied to a wide variety of problem behaviors. Smoking cessation has been the most widely studied application and will be used for illustration here.

## STAGES OF CHANGE: THE TEMPORAL DIMENSION

The stage construct is the key organizing construct of the model. It is important in part because it represents a temporal dimension. Change implies phenomena occurring over time. Behavior change was often construed as an event, such as quitting smoking, drinking, or overeating. The transtheoretical model views change as a process involving progress through a *series of five stages*.

*Pre-contemplation* is the stage in which people are not intending to take action in the foreseeable future. In smoking cessation, pre-contemplation is the stage where the person is currently smoking and not intending to quit in the next six months. People may be in this stage because they are uninformed or under-informed about the consequences of their behavior. Or they may have tried to change a number of times and become

demoralized about their ability to change. Both groups tend to avoid reading, talking, or thinking about their high risk behaviors.

*Contemplation* is the stage in which people are intending to change their behavior. For smoking, contemplation is the stage where the person is currently smoking but intends to quit in the next six months. Contemplators are more aware of the pros of changing than pre-contemplators but are also acutely aware of the cons. This balance between the costs and benefits of changing can produce profound ambivalence that can keep people stuck in this stage for long periods. We often characterize this phenomenon as chronic contemplation or behavioral procrastination.

*Preparation* is the stage in which people are intending to take action in the immediate future, usually measured as the next month. For smoking, preparation is the stage where the person is currently smoking but intends to quit in the next month. They also have made some changes in the target behavior in the last year, such as reducing the number of cigarettes or making a quit attempt. These individuals typically have a plan of action, such as consulting a counselor, talking to their physician, buying a self-help book, or purchasing a pharmacological aid such as nicotine replacement therapy.

*Action* is the stage in which people have made specific overt modifications to the behavior. For smoking, action is the stage where the person has quit smoking in the last six months. The person will make numerous changes to their personal environment to maintain the change and, since action is observable, the behavior change will be recognized by others. The action stage is defined as lasting for six months because of the relapse curves reported across a wide variety of behaviors but this definition may need to be modified for behaviors such as mammography screening where women are recommended to undergo screening every one to two years.

*Maintenance* is the stage in which people have maintained the change for at least six months. For smoking, maintenance is the stage where the person has quit smoking and has maintained that change for at least six months. People in maintenance no longer have to work as hard to maintain the change, are less tempted to relapse and are increasingly more confident that they can continue their change.

Two different concepts are employed to define the stages. Before the target behavior change occurs, the temporal dimension is conceptualized in terms of behavioral intention. After the behavior change has occurred, the temporal dimension is conceptualized in terms of *duration of behavior change*. Regression occurs when individuals revert to an earlier stage of change. Relapse is one form of regression, involving regression from action or maintenance to an earlier stage.

## **DETERMINING WHEN CHANGE OCCURS**

Theories often focus on only a single outcome measure of success. From smoking cessation research, point prevalence smoking cessation serves as an example of a single outcome measure (Velicer et al. 1992). These measures are not sensitive to change over all possible stage transitions. Point prevalence for smoking cessation would be unable to detect an individual who progresses from pre-contemplation to contemplation, from contemplation to preparation, or from action to maintenance. In contrast, the transtheoretical model involves a series of intermediate/outcome measures, proposes a multivariate

outcome space, and includes measures that are sensitive to progress through all stages. These constructs include the pros and cons from the decisional balance inventory, self-efficacy or temptation, and the target behavior (Velicer et al. 1996).

The two constructs of the *decisional balance inventory* (Velicer et al. 1985) reflects the individual's relative weighing of the *importance* of the pros and cons of changing. It is derived from Janis and Mann's (1977) model of decision-making. A predictable pattern has been observed relating the pros and cons to the stages of change. In pre-contemplation, the cons of smoking cessation far outweigh the pros. In contemplation, these two scales are about equal. In the advanced stages, the pros of quitting outweigh the cons. However, a different pattern has been observed for the acquisition of healthy behaviors.

The *situational self-efficacy/situational temptations* construct represents the situation-specific confidence that people have in order to cope with high-risk situations without relapsing to their unhealthy or high-risk habit (Velicer et al. 1990). This construct was adapted from Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. Research into relapse prevention can be measured with a confidence or temptations response format. The temptation format measures the intensity of urges to engage in a specific behavior when in difficult situations. The self-efficacy format measures the confidence of the individual not to engage in a specific behavior across a series of difficult situations.

The intermediate/dependent measure outcome space also includes *behavioral measures* that are specific to the problem ( $\rightarrow$  Attitude–Behavior Consistency). For example, in smoking cessation the behavioral outcome measure would include such widely employed measures as point prevalence smoking cessation, number of cigarettes, and time to first cigarette. These are sometimes described as measures of *dependence* or *problem severity*.

## INDEPENDENT MEASURES: HOW CHANGE OCCURS

The *processes of change* are the covert and overt activities that people use to progress through the stages. Processes of change provide important guides for intervention programs, since the processes are the independent variables that people need to apply, or be engaged in, to move from stage to stage. Ten processes have received the most empirical support in our research to date (Prochaska et al. 1988). The first five are classified as experiential processes and are used primarily for the early stage transitions. The last five are labeled behavioral processes and are used primarily for later stage transitions. Table 1 provides a list of the processes (together with alternative labels) with a sample item for each process from smoking cessation.

For smoking cessation, each of the processes is related to the stages of change by a curvilinear function. Process use is at a minimum in pre-contemplation, increases over the middle stages, and then declines over the last stages. The processes differ in the stage where use reaches a peak. Typically, the experiential processes reach peak use early and the behavioral processes reach peak use late.

## APPLICATIONS

The transtheoretical model has had a strong influence on all aspects of intervention development and implementation. It has been particularly appropriate for researchers

**Table 1** The processes of change, with alternative labels and sample items

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I. Processes of change: experiential	
1. Consciousness raising (Increasing awareness)	I recall information people had given me on how to stop smoking
2. Dramatic relief (Emotional arousal)	I react emotionally to warnings about smoking cigarettes
3. Environmental re-evaluation (Social reappraisal)	I consider the view that smoking can be harmful to the environment
4. Social liberation (Environmental opportunities)	I find society changing in ways that make it easier for the nonsmoker
5. Self-re-evaluation (Self-reappraisal)	My dependency on cigarettes makes me feel disappointed in myself
II. Processes of change: behavioral	
6. Stimulus control (Re-engineering)	I remove things from my home that remind me of smoking
7. Helping relationship (Supporting)	I have someone who listens when I need to talk about my smoking
8. Counter-conditioning (Substituting)	I find that doing other things with my hands is a good substitute for smoking
9. Reinforcement management (Rewarding)	I reward myself when I don't smoke
10. Self-liberation (Committing)	I make commitments not to smoke

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who want to intervene on total populations. One new intervention approach where the transtheoretical model has been widely employed is expert system or computer-tailored interventions (Noar et al. 2007; Velicer et al. 2006).

Use of the transtheoretical model can affect all aspects of an intervention: recruitment, retention, progress, and outcome. For recruitment, the model makes no assumption about how ready individuals are to change. It recognizes that different individuals will be in different stages and that appropriate interventions must be developed for everyone. As a result, very high *participation rates* have been achieved (see Velicer et al. 2006).

The model can produce high *retention rates*, since the model is designed to develop interventions that are matched to the specific needs of the individual. Since the interventions are tailored to their individual needs, people drop out less frequently because of inappropriate demand characteristics. The model can provide *sensitive measures of progress*, since it includes a multivariate set of outcome measures that are sensitive to a full range of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes and recognize and reinforce smaller steps than traditional action-oriented approaches. This is particularly important in the early stages where progress typically does not involve easily observed changes in overt patterns of behavior. The model can support a more appropriate *assessment of outcome*. Interventions should be evaluated in terms of their impact (recruitment rate X efficacy) since interventions based on the transtheoretical model have the potential to have both a high efficacy and a high recruitment rate.

The transtheoretical model should be viewed as a *work in progress*. It represents an attempt to integrate the diverse components of existing theories. One of the important advances that resulted from adding the temporal dimension, i.e., the stages of change, was that theories previously viewed as conflicting could now be integrated. However, an integrative theory cannot ever be viewed as finished, since an important new construct can emerge at any time, when a new version of the model will be required to integrate that construct. Beyond the addition of new constructs, the measures of the current constructs are being continuously evaluated and updated. New empirical evidence about the relationships between the constructs and the similarities and differences across different areas of application is an ongoing activity.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Stages of Change Model ▶ Tailoring, Communication and

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# Health Belief Model

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The health belief model (HBM), prodigiously researched, has enjoyed sustained popularity amid evolving social norms, theories and models, and the recent developments of advanced technology influencing health behavior change (→ Health Communication; Planned Social Change through Communication). Developed by US Public Health Service social psychologists in the 1950s, the HBM was conceptualized to model the failure of individuals to engage in disease prevention or detection programs (→ Prevention and Communication). Around 1974, and later in the 1980s, additional components (knowledge about the disease, self-efficacy or confidence in one's ability to perform the action of interest, cues to action), such as those examining responses to diagnosed illnesses and symptoms and adherence to medical regimens, were added to the model (Janz et al. 2003; → Health Literacy).

The HBM has been studied both as separate components and in its entirety, with multiple illnesses and preventive health behaviors, using various multivariate analytic techniques. The *four basic components of the HBM* are: (1) perceived risk or susceptibility (defined as one's perception of vulnerability to developing a disease; → Risk Perceptions); (2) perceived severity (seriousness of the illness or consequences of not completing the behavior of interest); (3) perceived benefits (perceived efficacy of the action or behavior change of interest) and perceived barriers (tangible and psychological obstacles to completing the action or behavior change of interest); and (4) cues to action (strategies to activate behavior change) (Janz et al. 2003). In later formulations of the model, self-efficacy, the confidence in one's ability to take action or complete the steps of behavior change, was adapted from → *social cognitive theory* (Bandura 1986). Socio-demographics and knowledge about the desired action or illness to be prevented were also added, and hypothesized to affect perceptions and subsequently indirectly influence individual behavior as a result.

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND MEASUREMENT

Rooted in cognitive and stimulus–response theories, the HBM can be understood as a value expectancy theory (→ Stimulus–Response Model). A value expectancy theory assumes that individual people are goal-oriented, and that the behaviors they perform in response to their beliefs and values are undertaken to achieve some end (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of). Value expectancy concepts, revised to fit within the paradigm of health behaviors, resulted in the present interpretation of the model. For example, examined within the context of breast cancer and screening using mammography, when individuals recognize breast cancer as serious (perceived severity), understand themselves to be at risk of developing breast cancer (perceived susceptibility), frame mammography as efficacious in detecting breast cancer (perceived benefits), identify few obstacles to

having a mammogram (perceived barriers) and are confident in their ability to complete all the steps necessary to have a mammogram (perceived self-efficacy), they will have a mammogram (→ Expectancy Value Model).

Descriptive, cross-sectional research on health behavior change usually assesses → perceptions and knowledge about a disease (e.g., cancer, diabetes, heart disease) and the behaviors that manage illness. Intervention studies investigate the effects of education about health promotion behavior using these key components of the HBM. For example, in a diabetes control or insulin adherence regimen study, education may be based on individuals' pre-education perceptions and knowledge. By changing perceptions and knowledge through a prescribed communication program, researchers expect to see post-education differences in perceptions and/or knowledge, and, correspondingly, an increase in adherence to insulin regimen.

### APPLICATIONS

There are many advantages to using the HBM as the *guiding framework for behavior change research*. First, the conceptualization of the various components of the model has been well established by application to a variety of diseases. Studies as varied as cancer screening, diabetes, exercise behavior, and smoking cessation have all been conducted using the HBM as the guiding theoretical framework. Most studies attempt to effect health behavior by changing → cognitions about relevant actions. Variations of the model, including the addition of culturally oriented variables, health-care access, and health service factors, have been published. Results have been mixed, with less than half of the variance in health behavior explained by the HBM framework. For example, the HBM variables together explain less than 50 percent of the variance in mammography screening behavior, leaving almost 50 percent of the variance unexplained. Unfortunately, the majority of the studies assess only linear relationships between HBM variables and outcomes, leaving unanswered questions about possible mediating or moderating relationships between variables (→ Statistics, Explanatory).

A second advantage of the HBM is that it can be adapted for use with other behavior change theories and models. For example, the key components of the *transtheoretical model of change* (TTM) and the HBM can be merged to predict or affect health behavior change (→ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of). According to the TTM, behavior change is not a dichotomous event; an individual progresses through a series of stages while changing behavior (from not thinking about it, to thinking about it, to taking action, then maintaining the change; Glanz et al. 2003). At each stage, research indicates that perceptions (such as those from the HBM) may differ significantly, allowing communication to be tailored or targeted to each stage. In mammography screening, for example, a woman in pre-contemplation (not thinking about having a mammogram) may report low perceived susceptibility and low perceived benefits; a woman in contemplation (thinking about having a mammogram) may indicate she has higher barriers than those in pre-contemplation (Champion et al. 2007). Given this information, researchers may focus on changing different perceptions at different stages to encourage forward movement.

Another example of the HBM being integrated with other theories is with the *precede-proceed model* (PPM). The PPM is a nine-phase framework for guiding community-based



health programs (Glanz et al. 2003). Various phases deal with the individual, the community, organizations, evaluation, and policy. At the individual level, predisposing factors are defined as antecedents that provide a rationale for behavior change. The variables under this factor are not specified but left to the discretion of the model user. Researchers have inserted perceptions from the HBM under predisposing factors; further, a cue to action may be seen as an enabling factor – defined as external resources that facilitate behavior change (at the individual level) (Menon et al. 2003). Health communication may then be aimed at affecting change in perceptions (predisposing factors) and providing a cue to action (enabling factor).

### LIMITATIONS

The HBM, however, also has limitations, especially in regard to accounting for *cultural differences* among the audience. As boundaries between countries blur and advanced technology makes cross-over even easier, it is important to consider health in the larger contexts of culture and globalization. The HBM makes no allowances for cultural variations in beliefs. The underlying assumption of the model is that individuals will engage in preventive health behavior given the right set of beliefs. However, in cultures where preventive health orientation is lacking, fatalistic views of life are prevalent, or religion influences beliefs about health and death, the HBM would predict little or no health behavior (→ Culture and Health Communication).

Furthermore, the HBM assumes that health promotion technology or *health-care is available* to individuals. However, in economies where preventive tests, such as mammograms and glucometers, are not available to people, regardless of perceptions, health behavior change cannot occur. Additionally, even in societies where health insurance exists and covers costs of health promotion, many individuals are underinsured or uninsured, and without access to health-care. In countries where free national health plans provide for all citizens, long waits and plan-stipulated delays may incur. In all such instances, cognitive perceptions may end up having little to do with a woman's decision to have a timely mammogram or adhere to an insulin regimen.

Given the long and widespread use of the HBM, the *operationalization of concepts within the model is widely variable*, even when studying the same health behavior. Thus, comparison of the predictive value of the HBM across studies remains difficult and findings have been rather inconsistent. For example, perceived susceptibility to breast cancer has been reported to have had a positive, a negative, and no effect on mammography screening. The operational definitions of susceptibility were different in these reports.

A final limitation is that the model has rarely been extended to examine *moderating or mediating effects*. The majority of multivariate analyses have investigated HBM variables in linear regression models. There remains the possibility that the HBM variables may moderate or mediate the effect of each other or other variables from other theories.

The answer to such limitations lies in further adapting the HBM to accommodate cultural and system variables such as fatalism and health-care access, among others. Planned in-depth analysis of curvilinear relationships within the HBM may further add to its utility as the basis for health communication. While some HBM constructs may not directly influence behavior, they may still act as mediators or moderators of the relationships between beliefs and the outcome. For example, while fatalism may not

directly influence mammography use, it may act as a mediator of the relationship of barriers or benefits to mammography use. Inconsistent results when using the HBM underscore the importance of standardization of operational definitions of HBM variables within various disease foci. Despite these constraints however, the HBM remains a popular model, guiding behavior change and health communications for over six decades.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Culture and Health Communication ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Literacy ▶ Perception ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Prevention and Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Strategic Communication

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## **Health Campaigns, Communication in**

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Health communication campaigns have long been a tool used to influence the health of the public in countries around the world. Campaigns are an organized set of communication activities to produce health effects or outcomes in a relatively large number of

individuals, typically within a specified period of time (Rogers & Storey 1987). The history of campaigns in the United States provides a window into how the general health communication campaign literature has progressed, and is now presented along with some important caveats.

While health communication campaigns in the US can be traced back as far as the 1700s, the modern history of campaigns began in the 1940s and 1950s, when large-scale campaign efforts were carried out and seemingly resulted in minimal or no effects. According to Rogers and Storey (1987), this was an *era of minimal effects*. The 1960s and 1970s then ushered in a “*campaigns can succeed*” era, in which campaign successes, most notably the Stanford 3-City Heart Disease Prevention Program, brought new optimism to the campaign literature. Campaign scholars began to blame ineffective campaigns, rather than the recipients of those campaigns, for a lack of effects. Such scholars also began to uncover and formalize principles of effective campaign design, which paved the way for a new era of campaigns. This latest era of campaigns has been referred to as the *moderate effects era*, and is the period from the 1980s until today (→ Media Effects, History of). During this period, many additional campaign successes have helped campaign designers to better understand how campaigns work, in terms of both what makes them effective and what their limits may be. While we have witnessed a greater accumulation of campaign successes in this era, campaign “failures” still abound.

Although this historical perspective, put forward by Rogers and Storey (1987), is often presented as a basic history of campaigns, some scholars have criticized it as overly general and missing some important caveats. For instance, while early campaign evaluators may have found minimal or no effects of campaigns, such researchers tended to look only at general population effects. In fact, it is likely that many campaigns had effects but only among particular sub-groups (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur 1976; Viswanath et al. 1991). From this perspective, it is not so much that early campaigns failed as that campaign effects were limited to particular sub-groups and this fact eluded many scholars at the time. Indeed, campaigns may have differential effects on individuals based upon a variety of factors, including social class (Viswanath et al. 1991), dependence on media (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur 1976), and personality factors (Zimmerman et al. in press). This realization has led to a much greater focus on audience segmentation in campaigns, which will be discussed below.

## **CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS**

While campaign effectiveness can be defined in different ways, typically determinations of campaign success are based upon whether a campaign’s goals were met and/or whether the campaign had a practical impact on the health issue at hand (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on). What kinds of outcomes are health communication campaigns typically focused on? And what types of effects are campaigns capable of? Health communication campaigns are often aimed at modifying one or more of the following outcomes: (1) increasing knowledge and raising awareness about a health issue; (2) increasing positive attitudes about a particular health practice; (3) reinforcing and/or changing social norms surrounding a health practice; (4) increasing individuals’ intentions to engage in a health practice; and (5) impacting the health behavior or practice itself.

Traditionally, campaigns were thought to only be capable of raising awareness and perhaps improving the attitudes and social norms of a particular audience. More recent work, however, has provided evidence that properly designed and implemented campaigns can impact health behaviors and practices (e.g., Hornik 2002; Snyder et al. 2004; Noar 2006a). In fact, a large research synthesis of numerous health communication campaign studies conducted in the US revealed that such campaigns have improved health practices including seat-belt use, oral health, alcohol use, smoking cessation, heart disease, mammography screening, and sexual and other behaviors (Snyder et al. 2004). While the effects of such campaigns have tended to be small (i.e., impacting, on average, 8 percent of individuals in the campaign community), the impact at the population level could be significant. Reviews that have focused on or included campaign studies from countries throughout the world reveal similar conclusions with regard to small but meaningful effects of health communication campaigns (e.g., Piotrow & Kincaid 2001; Derzon & Lipsey 2002; Bertrand et al. 2006).

## PRINCIPLES OF CAMPAIGN DESIGN

Perhaps the most valuable lessons being learned in the campaign literature are the conditions under which campaigns tend to be most effective. These can be referred to as principles of effective campaign design, and many were originally derived from the → social marketing literature. They include: (1) conducting *formative research* with the target audience; (2) *using theory* as a conceptual foundation for a campaign; (3) *segmenting one's audience* into meaningful sub-groups; (4) using a *message design approach* that is *targeted* at the audience segment(s); (5) utilizing effective *channels* and *strategies* widely viewed by and persuasive with the target audience; (6) conducting *process evaluation*; and (7) using a sensitive *outcome evaluation design*. These principles and their application have been often written about and discussed within the campaign literature (Rogers & Storey 1987; Salmon & Atkin 2003; Randolph & Viswanath 2004; Noar 2006a; Palmgreen et al. in press). Each principle will now be discussed as it is applied in the campaign literature (→ Health Campaigns for Development).

### Formative Research

Formative research has been defined as a two-phase process. First, *pre-production research* is carried out. This includes gathering data regarding audience characteristics, the behavior at issue, and message channels. Second, production testing, or *pre-testing*, is carried out. This includes testing initial campaign messages with target audience members in order to gain feedback on the appropriateness and persuasive impact of those messages (Atkin & Freimuth 2001). No matter what the audience, behavior, or channels to be focused on, formative research is thought to be crucial to truly understanding the target audience. Information gathered from such research can help insure that campaign designers understand the target audiences' perceptions with regard to the attitudes/ behaviors at hand, develop messages that resonate with the target audience, and place messages in channels that the target audience has a high likelihood of viewing. Insights gathered from such research are traditionally used to help make critical campaign

decisions regarding channels and messages and ultimately may have a great impact on whether a campaign is successful or unsuccessful.

### **Theory-Based Campaigns**

Theories serve as important conceptual foundations for any health communication campaign. In fact, theories serve a number of important roles, including suggesting: (1) important behavioral determinants that campaign messages might focus on; (2) variables for audience segmentation (discussed below); and (3) variables to be used in evaluating campaigns (discussed below). In the health communication campaigns area, numerous theories have been used. These include those focused on individual-level determinants of health behavior change, such as the → health belief model, → social cognitive theory, theory of reasoned action (→ Reasoned Action, Theory of), and the transtheoretical → stages of change model, as well as those from media studies research, including agenda setting (→ Agenda-Setting Effects), exemplification theory (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of), and the knowledge gap hypothesis (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Campaigns have also applied dual-model → persuasion theories such as the → elaboration likelihood model and heuristic systematic model as well as theories of community adoption such as diffusion of innovations (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

### **Audience Segmentation**

A key consideration in any campaign has to do with defining a target → audience. Who is the specific audience that is being focused on with the campaign? A target audience is typically formed using audience segmentation procedures. This is accomplished by dividing the population of interest into smaller, more homogeneous groups. The ultimate purpose of segmentation is to create groups that have similar message and channel preferences, and can thus be targeted with persuasive messages specifically designed for those audience segments.

Segmentation can be conducted on a variety of variables, including demographic, behavioral, theoretical, individual difference, risk factor, and other variables. At times simple segmentation strategies are utilized, such as defining a target audience based upon basic demographic variables alone (e.g., gender, age). At other times more complex segmentation procedures are used. For instance, after segmenting on demographics, campaigns may segment on additional individual difference (e.g., → sensation-seeking) and behavioral (e.g., those experimenting with the problem behavior) variables. The question of *how* homogeneous audience segments need to be can be a challenging one for campaign planners, and different campaigns may use very different segmentation strategies.

### **Message Design**

Once a clear audience segment (or segments) has been defined, messages thought to be persuasive and effective with the audience segment can then be developed. Health behavior change theories (mentioned above in the *Theory* section) are often used to inform the content of intervention messages. However, additional theoretical perspectives can be used in order to inform the creation of messages that have the greatest likelihood

of being persuasive with the target audience. There are a variety of approaches to message design that are applied in health communication campaigns. Some examples include: (1) *fear appeals* – this approach suggests that messages high in levels of both fear and self-efficacy (building individuals' confidence that they can carry out the recommended behavior) are most likely to be effective; (2) *emotional appeals* – this approach suggests that messages that elicit particular kinds of → emotions from viewers may be effective (e.g., warmth appeals); (3) *message framing* – this approach suggests that positive (gain-framed) messages are most effective in impacting preventive behaviors, while negative (loss-framed) messages are most effective in impacting screening behaviors. This is different from the widely used conception of framing as mental structures that help people to interpret the world around them, often examined in political and news-related research (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News; Strategic Framing); (4) *sensation-seeking targeting* – this approach suggests that messages high in novelty, intensity, drama, and a lack of preaching will be most effective with high sensation seekers; and (5) *narrative approach* – this approach, often used within an → entertainment education model, suggests that storylines that provide positive role models and reduce counterarguments may be most effective. Still other approaches that are not theory-based but that appear to have been effective include the Truth campaign's focus on the US tobacco industry's manipulative marketing practices and cover-ups by the industry.

### **Channel and Strategy Selection**

Health communication campaigns utilize a number of channels and strategies to reach and affect their intended audience. These include mass communication channels such as → television, → radio, and print media, as well as small media such as posters, billboards, bus signs, and other materials and outlets. Some campaigns include broader, community-wide components such as community events, workshops, → public relations activities, and coordination with school-based programs. Newer campaigns are increasingly taking advantage of the → Internet and creating campaign-related websites (→ Health Communication and the Internet), where television content can often be viewed and campaign-relevant articles and activities can be found. In addition, evidence exists that concomitant changes in the environment along with a campaign significantly increase the chances of campaign effectiveness, and campaigns sometimes use such a strategy (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication). For instance, seat-belt campaigns are more effective when seat-belt laws are enacted and enforced (Snyder et al. 2004), and anti-tobacco campaigns are more effective when taxes on tobacco products are increased in concert with a campaign (Randolph & Viswanath 2004).

Key decisions for campaign planners include *which* channels and strategies to use in a campaign as well as *how to* strategically place messages so that the target audience has multiple opportunities for exposure to the messages (Salmon & Atkin 2003). Multiple channels are often used in campaigns in order to try and increase the chances of reaching a large proportion of the audience segment. Traditionally, many campaigns have suffered from low campaign exposure (Hornik 2002; Snyder et al. 2004). Newer campaigns, however, have been increasing both *reach* and *frequency* of exposure to campaign messages. This has been achieved by well-funded campaign efforts that have the resources

to buy significant media time, and through strategic placement of messages within those media channels (Randolph & Viswanath 2004; Noar 2006a). The term *reach* is typically used to refer to the percentage of the audience segment exposed to any campaign message, while *frequency* refers to how often those individuals were exposed.

### **Process Evaluation**

Process evaluation refers to the monitoring and collection of data on fidelity and implementation of campaign activities. Campaign designers may have a good campaign plan, but whether that plan was executed properly is a question that process evaluation attempts to answer. Did campaign messages air in the channels (and specific placements within those channels) in which they were intended to air? Was a significant proportion of the target audience exposed to the campaign messages? With what frequency were individuals exposed? Are there any mid-course corrections that can be made to elements of the campaign to improve reach and/or frequency of exposure to the campaign? These are the kinds of questions that get asked during a process evaluation. The answers to such questions will inform mid-course corrections for the current campaign and improvements for future campaigns. In addition, process evaluation aids in the interpretation of why a particular campaign was or was not successful. If process evaluation is not conducted and a campaign fails, there may be few clues for campaign designers as to why.

### **Outcome Evaluation**

Outcome evaluation is concerned with assessing whether a campaign had its intended impact. For instance, if a campaign was focused on raising awareness and increasing knowledge about a particular health issue, an outcome evaluation asks if this was accomplished. Similarly, if campaign goals aimed to change health attitudes and behavior of a certain proportion of the target population, an outcome evaluation asks whether or not these goals were met.

Outcome evaluation is one of the most challenging aspects of any health communication campaign. Unlike other kinds of health-related interventions that may lend themselves to well-controlled experiments, campaigns are conducted “in the field” and do not lend themselves well to controlled evaluation designs (→ Experimental Design; Experiment, Field). Consequently, most of the evidence for the effects of campaigns comes from research studies that leave open many threats to internal → validity (Valente 2001; Hornik 2002). Indeed, one finds a variety of evaluation designs in this literature, including both standard evaluation designs and variations on such standard designs (Valente 2001; Noar 2006a). Popular designs used to evaluate health communication campaigns include post-test-only designs, where a campaign is followed by a post-only → survey assessing campaign exposure and campaign-relevant variables, and pre-test–post-test designs, where a pre-test survey is given, the campaign takes place and is followed by a post-test survey. Some campaigns use designs that are more rigorous and thus decrease threats to internal validity, such as pre-test–post-test control group designs, which include a control community for comparison purposes, and time-series designs, where multiple surveys are given both before and after a campaign is executed.

Most campaign evaluations use cross-sectional or independent samples (→ Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom), where *different* respondents are surveyed at one or more points in time. However, in some cases panel samples are utilized, which are those in which the *same* respondents are surveyed over multiple points in time. Occasionally, studies that evaluate campaigns using panel samples will also use cross-sectional samples to get two different viewpoints on the outcomes of a campaign. Both cross-sectional and panel samples have unique advantages and disadvantages (Valente 2001), suggesting that both kinds of evaluation are advantageous where possible.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR CAMPAIGN RESEARCH

Although health communication campaigns have been used to influence the health of the public for decades, researchers are still learning much regarding the effective design, implementation, and evaluation of such campaigns. First, campaign researchers are increasingly looking back over the many published evaluations of campaigns for lessons learned. Research syntheses or → meta-analyses have recently appeared and helped to quantify average campaign effects (e.g., Derzon & Lipsey 2002; Snyder et al. 2004), and more of these kinds of reviews are likely to appear in the literature in the future (Noar 2006b). Meta-analyses, however, often cannot make up for weaknesses in the original primary reports, and thus have limits to what they can reveal about the literature. Although theories of health behavior change have been widely applied in campaign research, there has been recent discussion regarding the need for additional communication theories that can be applied to message design (e.g., Noar 2006a; Slater 2006). Such theories might better explicate how certain message features affect health attitude and behavior changes, and could guide campaign designers in the creation of more effective health-related campaign messages. Moreover, campaign evaluators are increasingly recognizing the limits of certain evaluation designs and at the same time suggesting ways to strengthen those weaker designs (e.g., Hornik 2002). In addition, health communication campaign evaluators appear to be increasingly applying more rigorous outcome evaluation designs (Noar 2006a). Thus, a trend for the future may be better outcome evaluations of health communication campaigns, which could have the effect of increasing the quality of the resulting data and the value of this literature as a whole. Finally, a trend that will no doubt continue is in understanding the role of the Internet and other new technologies within health communication campaigns. These technologies unlock seemingly limitless possibilities in terms of potentially affecting health, and their role in health communication campaigns is just beginning to be explored and harnessed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Emotion ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Internet ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Persuasion ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Public Relations ▶ Radio ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom



- ▶ Sampling, Random
- ▶ Sensation Seeking
- ▶ Social Cognitive Theory
- ▶ Social Marketing
- ▶ Stages of Change Model
- ▶ Strategic Framing
- ▶ Survey
- ▶ Television
- ▶ Validity

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# Health Campaigns for Development

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Development communication engages strategic social change in a variety of areas, yet a great proportion of resources in this field are allocated toward the field of → health communication (Hemer & Tufte 2005; → Development Communication). There is no universal → strategic communication response to complex health-related challenges, but rather a framework of general principles, ranging from behavior change through mediated communication to advocacy communication directed toward policy and structural change, through the processes of → participatory communication (Nutbeam & Harris 2001). The practices engaged follow the standards invoked in → development communication campaigns (McKee et al 2000; → Media Advocacy in Health Communication).

In issues of health, a central challenge has been the replication of health campaigns across different communities and issues (Piotrow et al. 1997). The particular contexts of the health concern and the community at risk differ greatly. For example, the social marketing of individual behaviors (condom use) in family planning strategies in the 1970s and 1980s was very rapidly transferred into a dominant strategy in HIV/AIDS in subsequent decades. This happened in part due to HIV/AIDS being conceived as primarily a problem arising from certain kinds of sexual behavior. In more recent years there has been a growing recognition of the need to complement and replace → social marketing as the (exclusive) strategy in HIV/AIDS prevention, incorporating advocacy and → *entertainment education* approaches (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon 2000; → Prevention and Communication). Currently this issue has arisen in response to development campaigns addressing the health issue of avian flu. Many campaigns have attempted to reproduce behavioral strategies known from the earlier HIV/AIDS days by emphasizing consumer behavior at the expense of other potential approaches.

In the field of health, development communication campaigns might consider a variety of factors in articulating an appropriate strategy (Tufte 2007). First, a *distinction between types of health programs* should be made. For example, a communicable disease such as malaria would require a different approach from cardiovascular disease. The problem of malaria requires dealing with individual behavior vis-à-vis the risk of mosquito bites, but also attention to policies on access to both prevention (bed nets) and treatment, and ultimately and ideally attention to the waters where mosquitoes breed. Addressing cardiovascular disease, on the other hand, requires attention to lifestyle over time, physical activity, smoking patterns, food patterns, etc. It also requires attention to individual behavior, policies, and environmental factors. In other words, carefully tailored communication interventions should be based on a profound understanding of the health problem encountered while at the same time drawing on the generic options of individual behavior, policy, and environmental factors.

Second, *emergency diseases*, such as SARS or avian flu, need to be distinguished from more fairly *typical development-oriented health problems*, such as those directly related to conditions of poverty. This distinction relates to the difference between broad-based and narrow-based problems. With sexual or reproductive health, for example, one could focus

on a concrete practice, such as condom use, or more broadly based issues related to gender and power, poverty, and public health.

Development communication campaigns in the field of health should consider several criteria, beginning with the timing and duration of the intervention, from immediate and short-term to carefully (slower) planned long-term interventions. For example, emergencies require immediate and in the first instance short-term intervention, such as tackling food shortages in drought situations or required infrastructure to avoid cholera epidemics. In contrast, longer-term intervention is needed to insure sanitation in addressing long-term health issues.

Second, health campaigns in development need to consider the level of intervention, whether it is to be engaged at a local community, national, transnational, or global level. Third, the nature of the intervention – whether it should be addressed from a behavioral or from a socio-economic and political structural angle – should be considered. Fourth, the content of the intervention should be related to these issues, directing attention to specific messages or social processes, such as women’s empowerment and gender roles in considering family planning practices. Fifth, the expected outcome of the development campaign might include a recognition of the processes or focus on specific results.

Development communication campaigns in the field of health face *several challenges*. First, *more collaborative and comprehensive strategies* are needed to engage the complexity of health concerns. Many campaigns illustrate the fact that the core challenges of many health problems lie outside of the public health system and require cross-sectorial collaboration. The work of the FEMINA Health Information Project in Tanzania is one example. In countering the growing HIV/AIDS pandemic and other issues related to sexual and reproductive health, such as gender equality, they engage in formal and informal education, income-generating activities, and public debate (Fuglesang 2005). The South African health communication campaign “Soul City” is another example illustrating complex multilevel and multi-sectorial responses to HIV/AIDS. Responding to the complexity of health concerns has been acknowledged in WHO since the *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* was adopted in 1986 and even at a previous conference which resulted in the Alma Alta Declaration. The social determinants of health were already acknowledged at that time. However, the practice of health campaigns are still only gradually responding to these broader-based challenges. Second, a range of characteristics of *globalization* are today impacting upon health and will subsequently pose fundamental challenges in health campaigns for development (→ Globalization Theories). One case in point is the growing migration, for example in Africa, that is leading to the explosion of “modern” diseases, such as diabetes and obesity, in many developing countries. Another is the increased transnational mobility that leads to *epidemics traveling*, as in the case of SARS, avian flu, and HIV/AIDS. This requires stronger transnational collaboration in health campaigns.

SEE ALSO: ► Development Communication ► Development Communication Campaigns ► Entertainment Education ► Globalization Theories ► Health Communication ► Media Advocacy in Health Communication ► Participatory Communication ► Prevention and Communication ► Social Marketing ► Strategic Communication

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## **Health Communication**

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Health communication is the study and application of the generation, creation, and dissemination of health-related information, health-related interactions among individual social actors and institutions, and their effects on different publics including individuals, community groups, and institutions.

The challenges inherent in disease prevention and health promotion warrant a multidisciplinary and multilevel approach that examines the role of distal factors such as social and economic policies and health policies, near proximal factors such as neighborhoods and health-care organizations, and proximal factors such as individual lifestyles to explain individual and population health. Some have argued that communication is one thread that could connect the distal and proximal factors to explain individual and population health. Given this charge, health communication, though primarily a derivative field, draws from and contributes to such fields as mass communication, journalism, communication studies, epidemiology, public health, health behavior and health education, medicine, sociology and psychology, among others.

### **THE EMERGENCE OF THE CENTRALITY OF HEALTH COMMUNICATION**

The precise “origin” of health communication is difficult to pinpoint though its evolution could be traced to campaigns in public health to promote hygiene and immunization in

the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, persuasion studies during and after World War II, and the → development communication campaigns in the 1970s. At the same time, the importance of communication in health-care delivery and health services provided the foundation for health communication that focused on patient–provider communication. Some recent developments in health communication, however, have contributed to its emergence as one of the more dynamic areas in communication studies. In many countries these developments include reports by major academic think tanks and professional organizations calling for communication to be included in curricula in medical and public health schools, for funding to be available from major national and international agencies, and for the inclusion of health communication goals in governments' national health agenda.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM), a major research organization in the United States, published several reports that highlight the centrality of Communication in health, including *Speaking of health: Assessing health communication strategies for diverse populations*, and *Who will keep the public healthy?*, a report on the future of public health education that identified communication as a cross-cutting area of critical importance for training future public health professionals. The IOM also released several research reports including *Unequal treatment: Confronting racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare*, *Health literacy: A prescription to end confusion*, and *Fulfilling the potential of cancer prevention and detection*, among others that clearly identify a role for communication in the health-care continuum of prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, and survivorship or end-of-life stages.

Major funding agencies in the United States including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), agencies in Europe such as institutions of the European Union, and international bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), also known as the World Bank, have recognized the contribution of communications to population health and, accordingly, have begun major funding initiatives in this area. In addition, in the United States, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) of the NIH established a branch dedicated to health communication research, the Health Communication and Informatics Research Branch (HCIRB) whose presence provided the impetus for increased funding and large-scale initiatives in communication research.

Two such initiatives are worth noting: the funding of four Centers of Excellence in Cancer Communications Research (CECCRs) and the start of a national survey of health communication behaviors of American adults, the Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS). The latter, arguably, is the first public use dataset on health communication in the world. As a part of its “Futures Initiative,” the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently established the National Center for Health Marketing, with communication playing a central role. The presence of formal health communication programs at the NIH and CDC, coupled with major funding initiatives from NIH and the United States federal government on anti-drug campaigns, heart health, anti-tobacco, and AIDS/HIV prevention campaigns among others has attracted funding and interest from a variety of scholars from many different disciplines including communication, public health, psychology, sociology, and epidemiology among others. The United States federal government's action plan for health, *Healthy People 2010*, devoted an entire chapter of its report to health communication. Finally, there are now at least two

major journals, *Health Communication* and the *Journal of Health Communication*, that exclusively publish research in this area in addition to other journals in social sciences and health that publish health communication research. These developments have precipitated and accelerated the establishment of health communication specialization in academic disciplines in major American and European universities.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE FIELD

There is no simple or complete way to organize the field of health communication though several sub-fields have existed depending on one's research interests, as well as due to adventitious and historical circumstances. While not necessarily perfect, a more heuristic way to locate one's interest is *along levels of analysis*: individual, interpersonal, social network, organizational, and mass or societal levels. Such an approach is not meant to be comprehensive but is a way to organize the large amount of research, as well as to locate the interests of a variety of practitioners as well as researchers.

In general, at the *individual level*, the focus is twofold: (1) how health cognitions, affect, and behaviors influence and are influenced by, health communications; and (2) how interpersonal interactions between patients, family members, and providers, and with members of their → social network, influence health outcomes. At the *organizational level*, some have studied the role of communication within health-care systems and how organization of media and the practices of media professionals may influence population and individual health. Finally, at the *societal level*, the focus is on large-scale social changes and the role of communication with such changes. For example, one might examine how → strategic communications as well as natural diffusion of information impact individual and population health; or how communication mediates and is influenced by social determinants such as social class, neighborhood, social cohesion and conflict, social and economic policies, and how that impacts individual and population health.

Even as these levels provide a useful organizing framework, *two caveats* are warranted. First, policymaking and research related to health may affect more than one level. For example, one might be interested in how communication between patients and physicians may influence patients' adherence and compliance with medical regimens, satisfaction, and quality of life. At the same time, advertising of drugs, or "direct to consumer advertising" (DTCA), on television may motivate the patient to discuss the drug with the physician thus affecting their interactions. Thus, while organizing the field along the different levels may be utile, one must be cognizant of actions and outcomes occurring across levels of analysis.

Second, interest in a level of analysis and pursuit of work at one level is not inconsequential. Locating a problem at one level, and studying it at that level has implications for the kind of policy or practice that is likely to emerge from that research. For example, if a researcher finds that social norms may lead an individual to abuse alcohol, a solution may focus on addressing those norms at the individual or interpersonal level. On the other hand, if it was found that advertising is responsible for influencing social norms and subsequent binge drinking, solutions may focus on the environment including communication policies and regulation of advertising. In short, choosing one's level of analysis is neither trivial nor inconsequential.

## **DIMENSIONS OF HEALTH COMMUNICATION**

Several dimensions of communication have been studied at the individual level, both focusing on psychological factors within individuals, as well as the interactions between individuals and among small groups and how they affect health.

### **Models of Health Behaviors**

Several theories from psychology and communication inform how psychosocial determinants such as health → cognitions, → emotions such as fear, beliefs, motivations, and perceptions among others influence individual behaviors insofar as they affect health. There are a variety of individual-level theories that have informed the work in health communication. These include expectancy value theories such as the → health belief model, the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior (→ Reasoned Action, Theory of; Planned Behavior, Theory of), the protection motivation theory, and the transtheoretical model (→ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of), among others (→ Expectancy Value Model).

*Expectancy value theories* make a number of core assumptions. Health behavior is an outcome of a series of contingent conditions starting with beliefs and norms leading to behaviors. People have “expectancies” or beliefs about certain outcomes and these beliefs are either valued or not valued by them. In making their choices, people strive to maximize benefits and minimize costs. Individuals make rational choices affecting their health based on information available to them and the choices could be influenced by providing appropriate information pertaining to those beliefs. Fishbein et al. (2002) developed the “*integrated model*” of health behavior combining elements of several health behavior theories. They argued that there are only a finite number of determinants of behavior and they can be integrated to explain and predict health behaviors. An addition to the integrated model, self-efficacy from social cognitive theory, is worth noting.

While the expectancy value models treat environment as a background that works through individual norms, beliefs, and attitudes, → *social cognitive theory* (SCT) proposes that human behavior is a dynamic product of three sets of factors: personal, behavioral, and environmental (Bandura 1994; → Bandura, Albert). SCT assumes that humans are active agents capable of self-assessment, evaluation, and learning and react to, and in turn influence, their social environment. They can learn via “symbolic modeling” from the media or through interpersonal contacts. If they value a behavior and feel that it has positive consequences they are capable of imitating the behavior, but if they believe that it has negative consequences they may not adopt it. Lastly, they must believe that they are capable of engaging in the recommended behavior, i.e. have self-efficacy for the behavior in question.

### **Health Communication and Information Processing**

The impact of persuasive communications through communication campaigns, providers, or casual exposure to health information depends on how the information is processed by the recipient (→ Information Processing). Two dual-process models of information

processing, the → *elaboration likelihood model* (ELM) and the *heuristic systematic model* (HSM) (Chaiken 1980; Petty & Cacioppo 1996) have been popular in health communication. In essence, both models posit that change in one's attitude (in terms of both whether or not it happens and for how long) depends on the route through which the information has been processed, and the motivation and ability to process the information.

Many persuasive campaigns in health communications (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in) used the dual-process models to design and evaluate health communications. More recently, however, several advances in psychology call for a revision of conventional assumptions about attitude change (→ Attitudes; Persuasion), suggesting that: (1) there are multiple pathways in changing attitudes (e.g., Cohen & Reed 2006); (2) attitudes are less stable than originally assumed and they may vary across time and situation; (3) attitudes may be less enduring and may form quickly; (4) attitudes may be of two types: explicit attitudes reported more consciously and implicit attitudes that are more automatic and based on deeply held affect (Greenwald & Banaji 1995).

## INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Interpersonal communication, or communication among dyads or small groups, has a remarkable effect on several individual-level health outcomes (→ Interpersonal Communication). Much of the attention and energy has been focused on communication between health-care providers and consumers, and has attracted attention from a diverse range of disciplines including researchers from communications, health services, and primary care physicians, among others. Other dimensions such as the role of significant others in influencing social norms, providing social support, and social capital have also been pursued at this level.

### Consumer–Provider Communication

Extensive attention has been given to understanding the consequences of communication between physicians and patients on patient satisfaction, adherence, and quality of life. Even though most attention has been focused on the interaction between physicians and patients in a medical encounter, it is now recognized that the field of study should expand beyond physicians and patients to the context of the communication and the actors engaged in it (→ Patient–Provider Communication). For example, it is recognized that patients interact not just with physicians but also with other providers including nurses, specialists, pharmacists, patient navigators, and other clinical staff. In addition, patients are assisted by other family members whose presence influences medical interactions. Furthermore, larger social forces such as direct-to-consumer advertising and the burgeoning influence of the Internet are also influencing the nature of physician–patient interactions.

The research on patient–provider interaction runs along several streams. One theme is *who controls the interaction* between providers and patients, known as “relational control.” The traditional paternalist model, where the physician as an expert exercised greater control, is yielding to more participatory or consumer-oriented models, where patients seek a more active role in their treatment, leading some to focus on “patient-centered” communication.



A second theme focuses on the *outcomes of patient–provider interactions*. Extensive research has documented that patient–provider communication influences patient satisfaction which, in turn, is related to patient adherence and compliance to treatment regimens, ease of distress, physiological response, length of stay in the hospital, quality of life, and health status among others. In turn, providers also benefit from better communication where patients are less likely to change providers, fewer malpractice suits are initiated, and patients are more compliant with recommendations.

Third, recent examination of determinants of disparities in health-care paid attention to communications including patient–provider communications and *patient information seeking*. The health-care system is complex and patients typically are forced to deal with a remarkable array of health-care personnel making it difficult to navigate the system and negotiate care. Researchers have documented stark differences in patient preparation and access, and in care received and health outcomes, between social classes as well as racial and ethnic groups. For example, racial and class differences between providers and patients influence the duration and informative nature of discussions and the emotional support and question-asking by patients, resulting in shorter visits, less participatory decision-making, lower satisfaction, and lower compliance (Cooper & Roter 2003). This is likely to put the underserved groups at a disadvantage as they are much less likely to seek information from outside the medical encounter.

### **Social Support, Social Capital, and Social Networks**

The implications of interpersonal interaction in the context of families, friends, co-workers, and voluntary associations on health outcomes has emerged as one of the most dynamic areas of research in health communication. This topic has been pursued from diverse theoretical viewpoints by researchers focusing on social networks, social support, family communications, and social capital based on the researcher's disciplinary origins and research interests. It is a mistake to infer that social support and social capital are the same given their different theoretical underpinnings and intellectual interests. It is, however, reasonable to assume an overlap between these distinct areas.

In the context of patient health, *social support* mechanisms, through which relationships with others such as family members, friends, and co-workers eases stress, has a salutary impact on health (→ Social Support in Health Communication). Social support could be in the form of information on how to address problems, encouragement and support for behavior changes, or reinforcing healthy behaviors, and/or tangible support in the form of resources or services such as transportation to a clinic (House 1981). Patients endowed with such support generally do well and enjoy enhanced quality of life (QOL).

In addition to social support, interpersonal relationships among *social networks* may have other outcomes. Social networks can accelerate or decelerate diffusion of new information, and also influence how it is interpreted (Valente 1995). Members within networks can serve as role models for lifestyle behaviors such as in smoking and obesity.

Last, interpersonal interactions could *generate social capital*, defined as norms of reciprocity, interpersonal trust, solidarity, and cooperation, that seem to characterize most relationships within social networks or informal organizations (Putnam 2000; → Social Capital and Communication in Health). It is widely documented that social

capital is positively related to lower stress, lower risky behaviors, lower mortality, higher self-rated health, and lower psychological distress. Social capital is a product of interaction between two entities and the interaction is sustained by communication (Viswanath 2007). Social ties and the advantages emerging from those ties are related to media use, identification and involvement with the community, and promotion of interpersonal trust, allowing for the spread and interpretation of health information (→ Community Integration).

The emergence and spread of the → Internet has broadened the scope of interpersonal interaction and its influence in health communication by moderating the limits of geography. While one may still need geographical proximity to provide instrumental social support, the emergence of disease-focused support groups on the world wide web, provision of health information, and facilitation of electronic communication with family, friends, and physicians is a dynamic area that will attract more attention from health communication researchers.

### **Risk Communication**

Risk communication is a well-established area of research in health communication and its study cuts across all levels of analyses (→ Risk Communication). Risk is the probability of negative outcomes as a result of certain events or behaviors. Communication about risk may occur through interpersonal interactions from physicians, family members, and friends or through mass media. For example, a physician may try to communicate the likelihood, or “risk,” of a negative or adverse outcome to a patient. Or a news story on avian flu in the media may include discussion of the risk of its spread to humans. In general, the goal of risk communication is to increase the perception of risk, that is the possibility of negative outcomes with the hope of changing audience behavior (→ Risk Perceptions). As risk, by definition, deals with uncertainty, it involves explaining the determinants of risk, the likelihood of negative outcomes, and their consequences. The recipient of communication is expected to weigh these different components before deciding on a course of action. Clearly, this places a considerable burden on both the communicators as well the recipients. Much attention in risk communication has been given to communicating probabilities. Given that probabilities and other risk metrics are difficult for lay individuals to understand, alternative forms of communication are necessary.

Some work in risk communication has examined how community structural factors and social conflict (“outrage”) may influence how risk is framed and amplified, and the consequences of the coverage of risk in the media (→ Environmental Communication; Social Conflict and Communication). Overall, risk communication is an important area that connects conceptual work tightly with application.

### **MASS MEDIA AND HEALTH**

As will be evident from other entries in this encyclopedia, mass media emerged as one if not the most powerful agencies of socialization in the twentieth century. Mass media may be defined as organizations explicitly structured and organized to create or gather, generate, and disseminate news and entertainment, which distinguishes them from others

such as families, friends, or churches (Viswanath et al. in press). Media products range from strategic communications such as advertisements (→ Advertising) and press releases, entertainment products such as movies, → television programs and → books, and informational products such as news.

The *power and appeal of the media* stem from three sources. First, thanks to the technological revolution, media have penetrated the farthest corners of the globe, a reach that is virtually unrivalled to this point. Second, media institutions are organized to efficiently produce, process, and disseminate media products. Third, despite the strategic focus on catering to narrow segments of population sub-groups for marketing purposes, the appeal of media products, within reason, transcends boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, and class. These reasons, in combination with emerging media platforms such as the Internet, mobile phones, and other mobile technologies will likely maintain the power of media over other ways to communicate and socialize (→ Mobility, Technology for).

In health, media influence may occur in two ways: (1) exposure to messages through routine use of the media, leading to effects on people's cognitions, affect, and behaviors and on institutions and groups in reaction to media messages; and (2) strategic use of media in health promotion and disease prevention. Both routine use and strategic use of the media have a profound impact on individual and population health as well as on institutions involved in health.

### **Routine Use of Media and Health**

The incidental and routine use of media for → news and entertainment serves four functions in health (Viswanath 2006). The *informational function* is served when casual use of media for news or other purposes may expose the audience to developments on new treatments or new drugs, alert them to risk factors, or warn them of impending threats such as avian flu.

Media serve an *instrumental function* by providing information that facilitates action. For example, in times of natural disasters the audience may learn about places where they should take shelter. Information of this kind allows for practical action.

Media defines what is acceptable and legitimate, performing a *social control function* that has been widely used in health promotion. For example, media have been enlisted to create new → social norms (e.g., engage in physical activity) or change existing norms (e.g., discourage binge drinking or smoking).

The *communal function* is served when media provide social support, generate social capital, and connect people to social institutions and groups. Media may promote trust in local institutions through its coverage. As discussed earlier, social support and social capital are associated with better health outcomes.

### **Purposive and Strategic Use of Media**

Strategic or purposive use of media may take several forms. Individuals may deliberately seek information to learn more about a health topic that is of relevance to them or their referent other. Public health agencies have extensively used media alone or media as a part of a larger arsenal to promote knowledge, or to change beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that impinge on health (→ Social Marketing). Social movement groups, among others,

have engaged in *media advocacy* to draw the attention of policymakers to policies that affect population health (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication; Social Movements and Communication).

### *Information Seeking*

Information seeking, as a construct, has gained greater currency in recent times as more information on health has become routinely available because of greater coverage of health in the media, the spread of health-related content on the world wide web, or the consumerist movement in health that promotes informed or shared decision-making (→ Information Seeking). It is widely assumed that some people under certain conditions actively look for health information to seek a second opinion, make a more informed choice on treatments, and learn in greater depth about a health problem that afflicts them or their friends or family members.

However, not everyone actively seeks information. Some look less actively but indulge in *scanning* the environment for information because of perceived salience (→ Information Scanning). Some avoid information, often characterized as “blunting.” Others do not seek at all, often those from lower socio-economic status groups. The consequence of actively looking or scanning for health information is that such strategic use may result in greater attention to and processing of media messages and, as a result, greater learning and behavior change.

### *Media, Agitation, and Advocacy in Health*

Some have drawn lessons from social movements in using the media to agitate and advocate for changes that may affect the health of populations and communities and in health policies. The rich history of collective action when activist groups confronted powerful institutions and interests to correct social injustice and rectify inequities has provided a fertile ground for activists in health (→ Collective Action and Communication).

Activists have drawn lessons from the experiences of social movements to speed up or even change drug approval policies in HIV/AIDS; drawn attention to the profound disparities and inequities in health where certain population groups and communities suffer disproportionately compared to others (→ Health Disparities, Communication in); and frequently agitated to draw attention to environmental factors such as polluting factories that seem to affect the dispossessed and the disenfranchised much more than others. In the initial stages, mainstream media were seldom hospitable to activist groups and some groups have even been derided and their concerns delegitimized, an experience faced by many groups including women’s, civil rights, and green movements.

The media have been integral to the strategy of activist groups who strived to attract attention, frame issues, and influence public opinion (→ Framing Effects). Activists have used a variety of tactics to attract attention including creating dramatic events, holding sit-ins, and disrupting routines. Often, movements created their own vehicles such as songs and music, newspapers or magazines, documentaries, books and recently websites, which (1) help to present their point of view, and (2) serve to inspire and mobilize supporters and maintain morale. Over time, movements have evolved into legitimated institutions funding research, communicating with policymakers, and mobilizing supporters as in the case of breast cancer, heart disease, or tobacco campaigns.

*Health Campaigns*

The most visible and popular means of strategic communications is through health campaigns which have become a critical arsenal in health promotion. A typical health campaign attempts to promote change by increasing the amount of information on the health topic, and by defining the issue of interest in such a way as to promote health or prevent disease. For example, an anti-drug campaign may attempt to make visible not only a message against illicit drugs but also the reasons why drug use is undesirable and not normative. The outcomes of focus in health campaigns include raising awareness about a problem, increasing knowledge, changing beliefs around behaviors that impinge on health, influencing social norms, and changing and maintaining health promotive behaviors.

Expectations of the effects of health campaigns have always been high, though in reality their actual impact has been more modest (Snyder & Hamilton 2002; Fishbein 1996). Comparing expectations in the commercial world, Fishbein argued that while marketers may consider a 3 to 4 percent increase in market share as successful, in public health an effect size in this range may be considered failures. Moreover, the campaigns are not designed to detect such small effects. A collection of case studies of successful campaigns as well as a review of campaigns edited by Robert Hornik (2002b) clearly demonstrates that: (1) campaigns to promote change can be successfully mounted even with modest budgets, as was shown in the anti-tobacco, seatbelt use, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and heart disease campaigns among others; and (2) evaluation of campaigns calls for creative research designs that can document both intended and unintended changes.

Recent reviews of the vast literature on health campaigns have identified *conditions under which health campaigns can be successful* (Hornik 2002a; Noar 2006; Randolph & Viswanath 2004): (1) Insure “exposure” to the campaign messages, a problem that has plagued most health campaigns, which rely on limited budgets. In addition to exposure, it is essential that the definition of the issue at hand is favorable to the promoted topic. (2) Use social marketing tools to create the appropriate messages for distribution and dissemination, including formative research, audience segmentation, and creative media mix. (3) Develop messages, taking into account research in the areas of (a) executional elements such as message construction, and (b) determinants of health behaviors. (4) Facilitate changes in the environment that allow the audience to practice the recommended behaviors and reduce, if not eliminate, barriers to change.

In summary, strategic use of communications through health campaigns remains a promising means for practitioners to promote social change in health and for researchers to examine health-related social change.

### **Use of Media and Media Effects in Health**

At the outset, research has documented an association, of varying degrees of strength, between media use and media exposure and health outcomes, including beliefs and behaviors around sex, obesity, violence, smoking, and cancer screening among others. Research shows that exposure to violence on TV is associated with aggressive behavior in some children and acceptance of TV-portrayed reality, or *cultivation*, among adults (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects). Exposure to portrayal

of smoking in movies is positively related to experimenting with smoking among teenagers. Lastly, a plethora of studies report that time spent watching television is associated with obesity and being overweight, though the studies are fraught with methodological problems (→ Research Methods; Validity). Nonetheless, it is reasonable to assume that exposure to some media content under certain conditions is likely to have some effects on a subset of people some of the time. It is also plausible to argue that the effects found in studies with defined populations or in experiments with small groups could be considered serious when projected to population level, a fact that is often overlooked in the debates about media effects on health (→ Experimental Design; Experiment, Laboratory).

Part of the explanation for the effects was discussed earlier under the theories of health behavior. But, more to the point, the effects of media on health could be due to the broad reach and hence exposure to media content, and perhaps also to the very structure of media messages. Irrespective of the genre of media content – news, soap operas, talk shows, movies, or opinion pieces – there are certain common message elements that can potentially influence how the information is processed and its impact on people. Some common message elements, including format or structure (how the messages are constructed), that are attracting attention in health communication research at present include → sensation seeking, fear appeals, narratives, framing, and exemplars among others (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of). While an extensive treatment of these message effects can be found elsewhere in the *Encyclopedia*, a brief definition is in order.

*Framing* in health messages emphasizes the consequences of adopting or failing to adopt certain health behaviors. It has also been conceptualized as a way to define or construct a health problem. *Narratives* are stories with meaning that appeal to an audience and offer symbolic models for behaviors to emulate (e.g., smoking in movies; → Narrative News Story). *Fear appeals* are messages with high negative emotions that are aimed at increasing perceptions of threat and severity of risk but are effective only when accompanied by messages that tell the audience how to reduce the threat. *Exemplars* are used to represent a general class of events as typifications and purport to be more effective than factual presentation in recall and learning. Finally, *sensation seeking* is a personality trait that is characterized by thrill seeking, the search for novelty and intense stimulation, which may lead to potentially risky behaviors such as the use of illicit drugs or unprotected sex.

The outcomes of exposure to different media content and formats are discussed extensively in the literature on → media effects. For example, research on *cultivation analyses* has shown that sustained exposure to media images may cultivate mediated reality among heavy viewers. A fear of crime as a result of exposure to violent programs may discourage the viewer from engaging in physical activity outside the home (→ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children). Exposure to news programs may influence the priorities people assign to the topics that receive attention in the media; this is called *agenda setting* (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). In fact, the media may define or frame how an audience may want to think about a given health issue and what they should do about it. The *knowledge gap hypothesis* proposes that media effects, particularly learning, are actually likely to be not uniform but different across audience sub-groups subject to individual and social factors (→ Knowledge Gap Effects).

The role of the mass media and its offshoots such as the Internet remains a subject of intense interest to the communities of practitioners and researchers in communication,

public health, and medicine, and is a significant area of contention between industry and the public health community.

### **SOME MAJOR PUBLIC USE DATASETS**

In keeping with its emerging central role in health, both public and private sector agencies are beginning to invest in surveillance mechanisms that can track health communication trends in the population, particularly in the United States. This may be in the form of a few questions on national surveys such as the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or surveys devoted exclusively to health communication as with the NCI's Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS), a dataset devoted primarily to tracking communication behaviors with particular reference to cancer control. The Pew Internet and the American Life surveys, one of the most visible and prominent surveillance mechanisms in understanding the role of the Internet in the US, also fields occasional surveys that focus exclusively on health and the Internet. Finally, efforts are underway to develop the tracking of patient information needs and behaviors through clinical informatics systems, which is sometimes discussed under "e-health." These public use datasets, which serve academic as well as practical purposes, may provide health communication researchers and practitioners with some useful surveillance information similar to what the public health community has enjoyed for decades.

### **EMERGING CHALLENGES/DIMENSIONS**

Some significant developments in the field of biomedical sciences and information technology have important implications for health communication. Four are worth mentioning here: informatics, consumer movement and decision-making, increasing disparities and communication inequalities, and research dissemination.

The combined impact of computers and telecommunications on society, needless to say, has been transformative, impinging on almost every facet of human life including art, culture, science, and education. Health communication is no exception. *Consumer informatics* integrates consumer information needs and preferences with clinical systems to empower patients to take charge of their health-care, bring down costs, and improve quality of care (→ Consumer Informatics). For example, the integration of electronic medical records with communications should facilitate communications between patients and providers, send automatic reminders to patients to stay on schedule, and help patients navigate the health-care system. Informatics also allows for more precise tailoring of messages to the needs of the intended audience (→ Tailoring, Communication and). It remains for the implications of fast-emerging informatics systems for communication and health to be investigated.

Technological developments are coinciding with the consumerist movement in health-care. The paternalistic model that characterized the physician–patient relationship is slowly being complemented by alternative models such as *shared/informed decision-making models* (SDM/IDM), which in essence means expecting or allowing the patient to take a more active role in her or his care. Another approach that has been advocated is

patient-centered communication (PCC). Some evidence suggests that a more participatory role could have positive outcomes on health, including greater patient satisfaction and QOL. The SDM/IDM movements have been facilitated by new developments in technology that allow patients to access more information outside the clinical context and be more proactive in their own health-care.

The significant investments in biomedical research enterprise in the developing world, and movement toward more evidence-based medicine, have led to calls for translation of the knowledge from the laboratory to the clinic and the community. This movement to bring knowledge from “bench to bed” and “bench to trench” is researched under the areas of knowledge integration, knowledge transfer, and → *research dissemination*. Funding agencies in medicine and public health in North America and Europe are investing resources to develop a science of “translation and dissemination,” and the impact of this area on population as well as practitioners bears watching.

Lastly, an urgent and a moral imperative in health is addressing the profound inequities in access to health-care and the disproportionate burden of disease faced by certain groups. These disparities are prevalent between rich and poor nations as well as between the rich and poor within nations. Complementing the health disparities are communication inequalities: differences in access to information, the benefits that accrue from it and the ability to act on information at the individual level, and the differences between social groups in generating, processing, and disseminating information. While the idea of inequity is not new in communication, the formalization and integration of research into a theory of → communication inequality is. Research is beginning to accumulate that shows that inequalities in communication could exacerbate health disparities. The primary determinants, precise mechanisms, and ultimate consequences of communication inequalities are yet to be investigated.

Communication is a central factor in the four aforementioned developments and health communication researchers should be vigilant in monitoring and understanding these developments and their implications for health.

The biomedical and information revolutions that characterize our time will have a far-reaching impact on personal and population health. The possibilities for providing access to information, improving physician–patient interaction, empowering patients, influencing the information environment on health, blunting the negative effects of media, and promoting pro-social change have never been more promising. Practitioners and researchers are looking toward health communication, both its study and its practice, to be a key player in the unfolding scenario to promote individual and population health. It remains to be seen how health communication practitioners fare in this central casting role.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Book ▶ Cognition ▶ Collective Action and Communication ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Community Integration ▶ Consumer Informatics ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Emotion ▶ Environmental Communication ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ▶ Framing



Effects ▶ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ▶ Health Belief Model  
 ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Disparities, Communication in  
 ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Scanning ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet  
 ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Media Advocacy in  
 Health Communication ▶ Media Effects ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Narrative News  
 Story ▶ News ▶ Patient–Provider Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Planned Behavior,  
 Theory of ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Research Dissemination ▶ Research  
 Methods ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Social  
 Capital and Communication in Health ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Social Conflict  
 and Communication ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Social Movements and Communication  
 ▶ Social Networks ▶ Social Norms ▶ Social Support in Health Communication  
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## Health Communication, Ethics in

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Ethics is at the heart of → health communication. Ethical issues are embedded in a wide array of health communication activities that aim to influence people's health-related beliefs or behaviors. These activities include disseminating information about particular health risks, persuading people to adopt healthy lifestyles or to persuade others to adopt healthy lifestyles, and modeling healthy behaviors. Invariably, such health communication activities raise a multitude of ethical concerns, in particular because they deal with deeply held personal preferences and social values, or aim to foster social norms opposed by certain groups.

Perhaps because the general intent of health communication interventions is to promote the health of individuals or populations, ethical issues embedded in these activities are often unacknowledged. However, all aspects of communication aimed to influence people's health involve ethical issues, from the choices made regarding which populations should be the "target" of the intervention, to the strategic approaches used. Health communication also involves addressing issues such as responsibility, risk, and social and cultural values (→ Risk Perceptions; Risk Communication). Further, some critics maintain that because health communication interventions have such a strong presence in society, they compete – along with commercial advertising – in an appropriation of the political, social, and moral realms of the → public discourse.

### ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS

Prominent ethical theories and principles defining the moral duties and obligations of practitioners in the health-care context offer guidelines and principles for identifying and addressing ethical issues in health communication interventions. A particularly influential framework is presented by Beauchamp and Childress (2001), in the field of bioethics. These ethicists present a *series of moral obligations* for health-care practitioners: (1) to do the utmost to better people's health; (2) to avoid doing them any harm (whether on a physiological, psychological, social, or cultural level); (3) to respect autonomy and privacy; (4) to ensure equity and fairness; (5) to provide for those who are particularly vulnerable or who have special needs; and (6) to maximize the greatest utility from the health promotion efforts, especially when resources are limited.

Harm may occur when messages create undue anxiety, label, or stigmatize. Respect for personal autonomy and privacy is another central ethical obligation, based on the premise that individuals have an intrinsic right to make decisions for themselves on any matter that affects them, at least insofar as such decisions do not bring harm to others. This precept is rooted in the liberal western tradition, which places strong emphasis on individual autonomy, and it has been the foundation for the development of important medical care codes such as patients' rights and informed consent (→ Communication Modes, Western). Other ethicists note that the respect for individual rights is considered a fundamental principle of health-care, but that individual rights may be superseded when it is believed that the state should intervene in order to assist in the protection of these rights. Some criticisms of this framework are that it represents mainly a western approach to the conception of moral issues, that it draws too much on assumptions of individualism and universalism, that it may be removed from the socio-cultural milieu in which moral choices actually take place, and that it does not reflect diversity in moral reasoning.

Additional stipulations that can help identify ethical issues in health communication interventions can be found in ethical frameworks in the *rhetorical and persuasive communication literature* (→ Rhetoric and Ethics) and more recently also in those presented by scholars and practitioners involved in → *social marketing*. These include: (1) the obligation to be truthful and not base claims on hidden arguments; (2) acknowledging alternative ways of framing and prioritizing the health issues; (3) ensuring that issues are truly relevant to the intended populations and not made to seem relevant; (4) offering accurate, complete, and relevant information on the health issue; (5) providing reliable,

correct, and accurate claims; (6) not exaggerating negative consequences or the magnitude of the problem, even if this would positively influence the intended populations; (7) not modeling inappropriate behavior; (8) not offending certain cultural norms and beliefs; (9) providing fairness and balance; (10) not stigmatizing certain behaviors or groups; and (11) avoiding → stereotypes, even if doing so seems to serve the goals of the intervention.

## ETHICAL ISSUES IN HEALTH COMMUNICATION

### Informed Consent

Whereas consensus exists about the need to obtain patients' or their guardians' informed consent in medical practice, and in many health-care systems it is mandated by law, in health communication this is not the case. Practitioners and scholars do not have official guidelines for obtaining informed consent from populations for whom health messages are intended.

A significant challenge is identifying who represents an intended population, particularly when it is a large group or a community. Further, within one group, some may want the health messages to be disseminated, whereas others may find them offensive. One mechanism for obtaining the equivalence of an informed consent in community or population settings is the use of advisory boards, which are often mandated by governments or funding agencies. An ethical concern raised by this mechanism is that the board members may not represent marginal groups or that they may hinder the efficiency of the communication intervention.

### Targeting Certain Populations

A major strategic approach in health communication, which draws also from the social marketing approach, is to identify groups of people with shared characteristics as "segments," and narrow the focus of the health communication intervention by "targeting" these particular groups. This means that the issues, themes, messages, information, and other aspects of the process of communicating with this population are designed according to its particular needs, beliefs, values, and behaviors, or the communication channels it uses. The underlying rationale for this approach may be utilitarian – to improve the chances that the communication intervention will be more effective and efficient in utilizing resources. A *utilitarian approach* may also serve as the rationale for decisions to focus on those most likely to adopt the health-related recommendations.

Alternatively, the decision of whom to "target" may be based on *considerations of equity*, and the intervention would try to reach disadvantaged groups, in particular those considered "hard to reach" and thus less likely to adopt the health recommendations. "Targeting" thus can serve ethical obligations of maximizing utility as well as equity, by attending to the particular needs of vulnerable populations. However, a common ethical concern associated with targeting is that, despite its utility, it can be unfair by excluding certain populations. This raises ethical concerns similar to those raised when making policy decision on rationing health-care resources.

### **The Use of Persuasive Appeals**

In order to help people adopt health-promoting beliefs and practices, health communication scholars and practitioners have developed theoretical and tactical approaches on how to make effective persuasive claims and appeals (→ Persuasion). Ethical issues are embedded in each approach because a persuasive tactic, by definition, is an attempt to influence a person, and this may infringe on people's rights not to be manipulated. In support of using highly persuasive tactics, some health communicators argue that such tactics are the most efficient way to help motivate people to adopt recommended health practices.

Further, some communicators feel that because health communication often takes place in a media-saturated environment, they need to employ strategies that "break through the clutter" in order to gain people's → attention, and that this justifies the use of some form of exaggeration, misrepresentation of information, or strong emotional appeals (→ Selective Attention). However, this strategic approach is likely to conflict with their obligation to be truthful and to respect people's autonomy by not using manipulative techniques.

### **Messages on Personal Responsibility**

Personal responsibility is a central theme in health communication. It can be viewed as epitomizing people's sense of autonomy, but also raises ethical concerns characterized as *victim blaming*. The notion of responsibility may refer to, for example, an obligation to talk to your children about drugs or to ensure your spouse adopts a healthy lifestyle. Such messages may be associated with social roles and serve to reinforce moral commitments to others. Responsibility may refer to making prudent choices in your food consumption, leisure activities, and sexual relations. People may be warned that they will become a burden to their family, or to society as a whole, if they are not responsible in their lifestyle.

A major ethical concern is that such appeals may elicit feelings of shame and guilt among individuals, who find that they are not able to adopt the recommended practices for varying reasons. This is referred to as "victim blaming"; when health-related behaviors are often not fully within the volition of individuals but are influenced by factors such as work and housing conditions, access to health-care, or pollution. Responsibility messages thus raise concerns regarding violations of the precept of "doing no harm." Further, they can have an impact on public opinion and health policies, with the consequence of requiring those viewed as "irresponsible" to pay more for the expenses of certain health conditions or to receive a lower priority for their health-care services. A different type of ethical concern is that, as pointed out by sociologists and anthropologists, a discourse on responsibility is ideologically and culturally based, and what is considered irresponsible depends on each society's selection of what it considers risky and its definition of social roles, behavioral obligations, sanctions, and rewards.

### **Labeling, Stigmatizing, and Stereotyping**

Communication activities aiming to promote health may have inadvertent negative outcomes. By warning against the risk of contracting a stigmatized medical condition or

by a negative portrayal of those who do not adopt the health recommendation, the message can stigmatize individuals or groups. This may even contribute to the creation of new types of negative stereotypes. Even humorous uses of presumably harmless stereotypes in health messages may have ethical implications. Communication activities can also serve to label people as “sick” and can negatively influence their sense of identity. Some critics suggest that one possible way to meet the challenge of developing non-stigmatizing messages is to focus on social and environmental risk factors rather than on disability as the dreaded outcome.

### **Inequity and Social Gaps**

Communication scholars note that, because of socio-economic differences, considerable gaps can be found between groups of people in the acquisition of pertinent information; this has been characterized as the knowledge gap (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Occurrences of such gaps have been found regarding health information as well. Thus, the presumption that health communication activities invariably help to advance the health of disadvantaged groups may not be realized, and health communication activities may inadvertently serve to reinforce existing social disparities.

The perpetuation of social gaps can also occur when health communication recommendations call upon people to relinquish various practices they enjoy or that have cultural significance or emotional importance. Whereas those with economic means may find it easier to find substitutes for practices considered unhealthy, members of vulnerable groups may find that these “unhealthy” practices provide not only pleasure, but also they serve as an important coping mechanism that is not easily replaced.

### **CONSTRUCTING HEALTH AS A VALUE**

Scholars and health promotion ethicists have expressed concern that the growing profusion of health communication messages may result in people viewing health as a top priority, or turning the importance of health into an overriding value. This concern can draw on media studies that note that an important role played by the mass media is its “*agenda-setting*” capacity, and thus the coverage particular issues receive in the media, as well as the way they are framed, can result in the prioritization of these issues on the public and personal agendas (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Framing Effects). Good health increasingly signifies virtue, and health communication interventions can appear to color the pursuit of health with moral overtones. Another concern is that such a prioritization can come at the expense of prioritizing other social issues, and may contribute to escalating expectations from medicine and health-care providers and industries. Ethicists suggest that this raises questions of equity, because the more powerful groups will demand that health-care systems meet their escalating needs, whereas members of vulnerable groups will continue to receive relatively fewer services.

With the advancing *professionalization of the practice of health communication* interventions and the adjacent field of social marketing, interest in ethical issues is growing. Though an official code of ethics has not yet been proposed, discussions of ethical issues can be found in journal articles, book chapters, and a few books entirely devoted to the topic. However, conceptual approaches regarding ethical issues – in particular those that

address health communication interventions that utilize games and new media channels, or entertainment-education approaches that increasingly include reality shows – must be explicated and developed. Ethical approaches in health communication may need to draw further on communication theory and address issues concerning diversity, ethical relativism, and the role of health communication in social change.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attention ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and Journalism ▶ Health Disparities, Communication in ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Persuasion ▶ Public ▶ Rhetoric and Ethics ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Stereotypes

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## **Health Communication and the Internet**

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The functions of modern mass media to give → information, to provide orientation, and to promote health-related behaviors are widely recognized within the field of → health communication. The media of → television, → radio, → newspapers, and → magazines influence intentionally or unintentionally, and mass media health campaigns are used purposively and effectively to change health practices (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in). Nevertheless, the existing empirical research evidence is mixed. Content

analyses (Will et al. 2005) and → cultivation effects research (Brown & Walsh-Childers 2002), e.g., on media images of thinness and eating disorders, seem to prove many dysfunctional health effects, especially by television (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). Even though there is some controversy on the effects of mass media in health promotion, there is a large body of work that documents the effectiveness of mass media public health campaigns. So the → Internet as a new platform gave rise to many new hopes, especially because of its unique features like convergence, interactivity, information capacity, and global reach (→ Interactivity, Concept of).

### UNIQUE FEATURES OF THE INTERNET

The Internet allows *interactive communications*, giving and receiving information and advice between users and/or providers of health information. The persuasive potential of the Internet is especially enhanced because interactivity allows targeting of health messages to the special problems and needs of the individual user (→ Persuasion).

The Internet has the potential to give immediate *feedback* to its users similar to → interpersonal communication. This feature can be used to target the information given according to the user's needs, to foster motivation, and to strengthen the persuasive impact of health messages.

The Internet requires the potential user to *actively search* for information in contrast to traditional mass media, which are directed more toward passive → audiences. On one hand, this is an advantage as users “tune in” to health messages based on their motivation and involvement. On the other hand, it may limit its reach as usually the more educated and more active people access the Internet.

Internet-based health services have the capacity to economically reach large and geographically diffuse audiences. Furthermore, the Internet can be used anywhere (at home, in schools, clinics, or community centers) and at any time during day or night (*unlimited reach and flexibility*).

In contrast to traditional mass media, the quantitative capacity of the Internet as well as the depth and specialization of the health information provided by the Internet is almost unlimited (*information abundance*).

Besides these opportunities and strengths, there are *risks and threats* as well. One problem is the reliability and trustworthiness of the health messages offered on the Internet because information providers or sources behind the information are not clear. As a consequence, it is not easy for users to estimate the credibility of the source (→ Credibility of Content; Credibility Effects). So there is an ongoing discussion on how to assess the quality of health information on the world wide web and how to improve it, e.g., by so-called “quality labels” (Eysenbach et al. 2002; Trepte et al. 2005). Then, there are *ethical problems* such as protective → privacy of medical records and conditions.

### HEALTH PROVIDERS AND APPLICATIONS OF THE INTERNET

There is an enormous and ever growing number of public and private providers of health information on the Internet at local, state, and international level, and the range of information provided by them includes → news (e.g., disease outbreaks), statistics,



advice and health tips on lifestyles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Besides, there are even more providers in the private area, such as insurance companies, health advisory services, and pharmaceutical firms. And last but not least, a large number of discussion groups and forums exist where many different health-related topics are discussed, and health information and personal health experiences are exchanged. The use of the Internet supports traditional health services and applications, but new services have also been created in recent years in the areas of e-content (e.g., health information and orientation, medical databases), → e-commerce (e.g., online pharmaceutical providers, etc.), e-connectivity (intranets of hospitals), e-computer applications, and e-care (e.g., telehealth monitoring, teleisurgery).

As a result, health-related web pages and Internet addresses can no longer be overviewed and summarized. Nevertheless, the existing health-related content on the Internet can be broadly differentiated into three general types:

- 1 *Health content*: the Internet user can search and download health-related information that can be accessed easily in so-called general health portals in a unidirectional way and without the possibility of communicating with other Internet users.
- 2 *Health communities*: there is the opportunity of horizontal and two-way communication with feedback possibilities in countless general or specialized health-related news and support groups, such as chatrooms or community health information networks.
- 3 *Health provision*: direct contact between patients as clients and various providers of health services via the Internet, such as health consultants, physicians, pharmaceutical firms, insurance companies, etc., as a form of e-commerce. Here, cost, quality of care management, privacy, confidentiality, and security are important quality criteria.

### **USAGE AND EFFECTS OF THE INTERNET**

It is difficult to estimate the number of users of the Internet but surveys conducted in the US estimate that between 50 percent and 70 percent of online users have sought health information on the Internet. The figures for Europe are significantly lower (Härtel 2003). For example, according to the 2004 Univox survey in Switzerland, although 70 percent had access to the Internet, only 23 percent of online users looked for health information, and 14 percent looked for information on a specific health problem. Then there are socio-economic differences concerning the education and income of users; there is evidence that health is one of the few topics of Internet use where women outnumber men. On the other hand, there seem to exist significant knowledge gaps (→ Knowledge Gap Effects).

Even though it is widely acknowledged that the Internet is used to gather health information, its effectiveness in health communication requires more empirical work. Theoretically, given its hybrid nature of combining mass and interpersonal communication features, the Internet should be a powerful medium for health communication (Cassell et al. 1998). But this sender-oriented perspective has to be complemented by a view from the user as well. And here there are various challenges and risks, such as unequal access to the Internet – the → digital divide – and the skills to use it. Although most of the users of health information on the Internet so far seem to be satisfied with the health content they are looking for, and rate the searched information as helpful, giving

new insights, and even believe it (Houston & Allison 2002), there is only very limited evidence so far concerning the far-reaching consequences of the Internet as a new information source and service provider in the field of health communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Information ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Magazine ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Persuasion ▶ Privacy ▶ Radio ▶ Tailoring, Communication and ▶ Television

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# Health Communication and Journalism

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The news media are an important source of health information, not just for the general public, but also for patients, for doctors and the medical community, for entertainment producers in search of story ideas, and for policymakers and funding organizations (→ Health Communication). Journalistic practices favor the use of established sources, so public health and medical journals are one of the principal sources for health reporting. Fundamental differences between the institutional norms of → journalism and public health and medicine create potential sources of misunderstanding and confusion among news consumers. Nonetheless, studies have demonstrated the effects of news media on knowledge, health behavior, medical practice, and public policy (→ Media Effects).

## PATTERNS OF NEWS SELECTION ON HEALTH ISSUES

Journalistic practices facilitate the routine construction of news, and affect how medical and health information is presented. For example, journalists favor *established sources* because their credibility can easily be confirmed, and because they can provide a steady flow of information to the journalist, which is useful for the continuous development of new stories (→ News Sources; News Routines). Medical and public health journals are an important established source for journalists because certain rules and practices of the journals have facilitated their use as sources for reporters. These journals are peer-reviewed publications, which takes the onus of establishing source credibility away from the reporter (→ Credibility of Content).

Additionally, certain practices ensure the “*newsworthiness*” of a medical story (→ News Values; News Factors). For example, most prominent medical journals have what is known as “the Ingelfinger rule.” Established in 1969 by the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the Ingelfinger rule posits that a given journal will not publish any article whose content has been previously reported. Enacted in part to increase the journals’ profitability via → advertising, the Ingelfinger rule also assures journalists that the information about which they are reporting is timely, and that no other journalist has the opportunity to “out-scoop” them. Similarly, many medical journals have a policy of a “news embargo,” under which journalists receive advanced copies of the journal with the promise that nothing will be reported until the journal’s release date.

Another mechanism that enhances journalists’ reliance on medical journals is the *use of the press release*. Typically, press releases are written for several of the journal articles in each issue. A press release aids the reporter because it highlights “important” issues, and saves the journalist the trouble of translating what can often be difficult medical language. Journalists have reported that the availability of a press release does increase the likelihood of their reporting medical research, and research has shown that journal articles for which press releases have been written receive more news coverage than those without.

## TENSIONS BETWEEN MEDICINE AND JOURNALISM

There is a documented tension between medicine or public health and the media that is due in large part to the disparity of norms between the two institutions. In the book *Selling science: How the press covers science and technology*, Dorothy Nelkin (1995) chronicled the tension that stems from differences in the production process. Epidemiologic findings, and the scientific process more generally, are based on replication over time; journalism is based on timeliness of the news event. The *need for drama* in news stories often results in emphases on aberrant findings, scandals, individuals of public notoriety, or misleading headlines (→ Drama in Media Content). A reliance on short narrative structures and “newsworthiness” criteria (which include timeliness and the need for novelty and drama) govern the ultimate selection and framing of news stories.

The factors affecting story selection and format often hinder optimal presentations of science and medicine in the news media. In particular, journalists *oversimplify medical research*, often omitting important contextual information. There tends to be a lack of follow-up in news reporting, such that the reporter, and by extension the media consumers, may not know how much importance should be placed on one particular study. Inaccuracies resulting from the decontextualized and sensationalized manner in which stories are reported are known as “errors of omission” (→ Sensationalism). Faced with reporting on new medical research that does not place it in the proper historical context, the public often feels confused because so many recommendations, often contradictory, appear in the news. Hence, health news reporting potentially creates a knowledge gap (Tichenor et al. 1970; Gaziano 1997) whereby individuals with greater education are better equipped to sift through and interpret seemingly contradictory information from health news stories (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Accordingly, individuals with less education may become frustrated with health information in the news, and the gap between the health knowledge of high- and low-health-education individuals becomes exacerbated.

Errors of omission are conceptually distinct from, and tend to occur with greater frequency than, *factual errors*, known as “errors of commission.” For example, a study assessing the accuracy of breast cancer research reported in the news media found that 17 percent of stories contained erroneous information, while 38 percent contained errors attributed to misleading or decontextualized information (Moyer et al. 1995). Errors of any kind contribute to potential misunderstanding of medical information reported by the news media.

## EFFECTS OF MEDIA COVERAGE

Despite distortions in news coverage of health issues, there is an abundance of evidence to suggest that news coverage influences health knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors. Research to date suggests that frequent media users are more informed about health issues than their counterparts who do not have the same levels of media exposure. Beyond the informative dimension, media may also influence health behaviors. There are numerous pathways through which news coverage may affect health behaviors.

The news media are a primary source of health information for the general public. An *individual effects model* suggests that individuals exposed to news messages gain

knowledge about or change attitudes toward the behavior, with enough people exposed that changes can be seen at the population level (Hornik 1991). Alternatively, exposed individuals may share the information with others in their social network, who subsequently change their behavior. There is also a variety of other audiences for news messages: physicians and other health-care workers, policymakers responsible for passing laws and allocating funding for health, and entertainment producers in search of story ideas. Each of these audiences may indirectly influence health behaviors. Policymakers, for example, may be prompted by news messages about the dangers of drunk driving to introduce legislation for stricter drunk driving laws, which subsequently reduces the prevalence of drunk driving in the US (Yanovitzky & Bennett 1999; → Social Behavior, Media Effects on; Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models).

Evidence regarding the impact of news coverage on health behaviors can be separated into *short- and long-term effects*. A compelling event, such as a celebrity diagnosis of cancer, can generate substantial news coverage capable of producing temporary changes in health behaviors. For example, Katie Couric's public crusade to educate the public about colon cancer after her husband's death, including her on-air colonoscopy on *The Today Show* in 2000, resulted in increased colonoscopy rates after the program aired (Cram et al. 2003). Similar effects were demonstrated for mammogram rates following Betty Ford's and "Happy" Rockefeller's surgeries for breast cancer in 1974 (Fink et al. 1978), and for colorectal screening rates after Ronald Reagan underwent surgery to remove an intestinal tumor (Brown & Potosky 1990). In most cases, population changes in health behavior increase while media attention to celebrity illness is high, but decrease after the media spotlight wanes; i.e., celebrity effects on health behaviors tend to be of limited duration (→ Media Effects Duration).

The second conceptualization of news effects on health behavior entails more *gradual and cumulative effects* of exposure to health news. Comparable to agenda-setting research (→ Agenda-Setting Effects), the basic causal mechanism is that the quantity of news coverage about a health behavior produces changes in population-level behavior. However, in contrast to agenda-setting research, which posits that the amount of media attention influences perceptions of salience, some models of media effects on health behavior suggest that specific media "frames," albeit simplistic ones, produce different persuasive effects (Framing Effects; Framing of the News). For example, David Fan's ideodynamic model proposes that the population at any one point in time consists of adopters and non-adopters of beliefs, attitudes, and opinions with respect to a particular health behavior (Fan 2002). While the majority of individuals' beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors will only be reinforced by media messages, there is presumably a small population that would be induced to change because of news coverage. This persuasive force is a function of the ratio of messages supportive of healthy behaviors to messages advocating the unhealthy behaviors, which can function as deterrents to behavior change.

Studies of media effects on correlates of health behaviors include funding for AIDS research, → public opinion regarding AIDS and illegal drugs, and beliefs about AIDS transmission. Others studies have moved into the realm of health behavior and health outcomes, testing effects on breast cancer incidence, drunk driving, mammography utilization, cocaine use, marijuana use, and binge drinking. Slowly, evidence is

accumulating that news media messages affect secular trends in health behaviors. Mediating pathways through which behavior change may occur include public beliefs about performing the behavior; social norms; funding for medical research; and legislation.

## GARNERING MEDIA ATTENTION TO HEALTH ISSUES

The news media have the lofty goal of packaging and re-presenting medical and public health information to their audiences. There are different audiences among those affected, including “average” citizens, policymakers, and individuals in funding agencies (→ Audience Segmentation). Even those individuals in the medical profession reading medical journals are not exempt from being affected by the news media telling them what to think about regarding medical knowledge.

Journalists look for newsworthy medical research that will appeal to their readers. In so doing, the news media over-represent certain medical issues that conform to the normative necessities of journalism. For example, stories about prevention tend to receive less media attention than stories about treatment (→ Prevention and Communication). It may be that prevention does not conform to journalists’ conceptions of newsworthiness, including the need for novelty and drama. While there is no conceivable way to reconcile the conflicting norms between medicine and the media that contribute to imbalanced representations of illness and health, it is critical that public health practitioners keep a watchful eye on news producers by forging lasting relationships and taking steps to help shape the content of health behavior coverage.

In light of the growing body of evidence supporting news media effects on health behavior, the utility of *media-advocacy approaches* must be considered (see Wallack et al. 1993; → Advocacy Journalism). While media advocacy traditionally focuses on the strategic use of news media to advance a social or policy initiative, the term can be more broadly applied to include any purposive effort to help shape news coverage to positively impact health (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in).

There are numerous obstacles to garnering and sustaining media attention to an issue over time. There is a limited amount of time and space for health news, hence health issues must compete with each other for room on the media’s agenda. For example, while there has been an extraordinary amount of news attention to breast cancer, it has come at the cost of attention to other cancers. Moreover, the media tend to exhibit what has been termed the “issue-attention cycle,” whereby any given issue tends to receive substantial media attention for a limited time only, because journalists are motivated to constantly introduce new issues in an effort to maintain the interest of their audiences. While the successful implementation of media advocacy efforts often proves difficult, the potential for improving the public’s health provides a powerful incentive.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated

Models ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Prevention and Communication ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Social Behavior, Media Effects on

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## **Health Disparities, Communication in**

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Eliminating health disparities is one of the most pressing global health issues. In the United States, health disparities have been examined primarily as differences in groups based on racial, class, and ethnic classifications. Globally, the issue focuses on the differences between developing and developed nations in health status and access to state of the art treatments. Harshly put, wherever in the world you live, if you are poor and a minority, you live sicker and die sooner (→ Health Communication).

The causal paths leading to these disparities have been more controversial. In the United States, Kawachi and colleagues (2005) identified three paths frequently described

in the literature. The first views race as a biologically meaningful category and racial disparities in health as reflecting inherited susceptibility to disease. The second treats race as a proxy for social class and blames socio-economic stratification for disparities. The third approach, and the one the authors strongly support as the most useful, accounts for the independent and interactive effects of both class and race. According to this approach, race is neither a biologically meaningful category nor a proxy for class, but is a separate construct from class. This approach suggests that race should not be used as a proxy for class, neither should racial disparities be analyzed without also considering the contribution of class disparities, and finally, class-based health disparities should never be analyzed without also considering the contribution of race and ethnicity (Kawachi et al. 2005).

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF COMMUNICATION TO HEALTH DISPARITIES

While communication cannot solve the social, economic, and political issues underlying these disparities, it can make important contributions to reducing health disparities. First, we must acknowledge that there are racial and class disparities in communication as well as in health. The way information is generated, manipulated, and distributed differs among social groups. Viswanath and Emmons (2006) propose the idea of “communication inequalities,” that is, there are differences in the way social groups access and use, attend to, retain, and act on relevant health information. Almost every study of health knowledge and health protective behaviors shows gaps based on social class. Those from lower social classes tend to know less about the health risk and are less likely to adopt behaviors to protect against the risk. This problem has been particularly frustrating because attempts to close these gaps have often actually increased them (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Traditional health promotion programs are used more readily by those with more resources to act on the information. For example, rates of smoking fell far more quickly among the more educated following the US Surgeon General’s report on smoking, resulting in the current socio-economic status (SES) gradient in smoking (Adler & Newman 2002; → Planned Social Change through Communication).

Second, communication research needs to identify in much more depth the relationships between race and class and the responses to health risks of various kinds, the value placed on knowing more about the risk, the sources turned to and trusted when weighing what to do about a risk, and the way information is processed about the risk. Disadvantaged groups have poorer → information processing skills such as → health literacy (Kutner et al. 2006), may be more likely to use English as a second language, and have less experience with such communication skills as negotiation. They may be locked in an information ghetto where the only trusted information is internally generated and more likely to be inaccurate.

These disadvantaged groups often are portrayed as fatalistic people with a pervasive *sense of helplessness* (Bosma et al. 1999). They may use information channels differently than other social classes. While the disadvantaged have access to both informal and formal sources of information, they prefer the informal sources to meet specific information needs. Television is always reported as the source most frequently used by disadvantaged groups (→ Exposure to Television; Media Use by Social Variable). Much has been written about the way the → Internet has affected disadvantaged groups. The lower social classes



tend to have less access and less use, a phenomenon that is described as the → “digital divide.” There also is some evidence that social class impacts the way health risk information is processed. Several studies using quite different methodology have found evidence that lower social classes are more likely to process risk information heuristically rather than systematically.

Third, health communication scholars should examine the different strategies commonly used to enhance the health of individuals and communities to see what contributions they have and could make toward reducing disparities. The following sections begin this examination for health provider/client communication, social support, everyday interpersonal interactions, mass mediated health campaigns, entertainment education, media advocacy, and interactive health communication.

### STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE HEALTH

Street (2003) argues that the medical consultation is a socially constructed event and the primary activity is talk, i.e., the *interaction between the health provider and the client*. This talk between physicians and minority clients frequently misses the mark because of contrasting perceptions of physicians and patients, linguistic asymmetry, and self-fulfilling prophecy spirals (Perloff et al. 2006). Van Ryn and Fu (2003) suggest that providers may even contribute to health disparities by influencing clients’ views of themselves and their relation to the world, by differentially encouraging health promotion and disease prevention behaviors and services, and by withholding access to treatments or services and denying benefits and rights. They cite evidence of physician contributions to racial/ethnic disparities in both kidney transplant rates and cardiac procedures, in pain assessment and control, and in mental health services (Van Ryn & Fu 2003). They argue for interventions to help providers avoid these biases as one way to reduce disparities (→ Doctor–Patient Talk).

*Social support* is another communication behavior that has profound consequences for mental and physical well-being (Albrecht & Goldsmith 2003). Yet there is evidence that kinship support networks are deteriorating in low-income and minority communities due to unemployment, transience, and substance abuse. Virtual support networks are becoming increasingly important but access to the technology is an issue in underserved communities.

Cline’s (2003) argument for shifting the focus of interpersonal communication about health from formal to informal contexts such as *everyday talk* highlights a rich and untapped dimension of communication that could contribute to reducing disparities. These informal contexts occur much more frequently and these relationships may be much more significant to the individual. She focuses on HIV/AIDS to illustrate how the primary frameworks of meaning driving participants’ behaviors are social rather than health related. HIV prevention behaviors, for example, may be driven more by desire to avoid character judgments and relational discord than to promote health. These primary frameworks of meaning are embedded in culture and must be understood before effective interventions can be designed.

Segmenting audiences on the basis of race and ethnicity is one of the most common ways that *mass media health campaigns* address health disparities. Hornik and Ramirez

(2006) concluded after examining the race or ethnicity segmentation in health communication campaigns that there was no evidence that this segmentation, in any of its forms, reduces disparities. Yet they still defended segmentation as the most politically viable way of getting resources to reach disadvantaged segments of society. Even though race and ethnicity do not completely define disadvantage in US society, they may be the most politically respectable correlates of social disadvantage in a society where class politics are considered divisive (Hornik & Ramirez 2006). They do caution, however, that segmentation can have disadvantages – segmentation can increase costs, can be difficult to implement, and can have negative effects such as stigmatization on the people who are meant to be the beneficiaries.

Once audiences are segmented, messages need to be tailored for these segments (→ Audience Segmentation). Health communicators frequently equate culture in a simplistic fashion with race and ethnicity. The Institute of Medicine (2002) claims that culture has been poorly examined in the context of health communication, and asserts that to consider culture in health communication requires significant exploration beyond the typical variables of race, ethnicity, and SES. Resnicow and Braithwaite (2001) refer to this superficial approach as the surface structure of a culture. Addressing surface structure includes matching messages and channels to observable social and behavioral characteristics, including familiar people, foods, music, language, and places. They argue that it may be more important to address deep structure, which reflects the cultural, social, psychological, environmental, and historical factors that affect health for a minority community. Resnicow and Braithwaite (2001) argue that when health communication reflects appropriate surface structure, it increases the receptivity and acceptance of the campaign, but when it also addresses deep structure, it conveys true salience with the community it seeks to reach (→ Culture and Health Communication; Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

*Entertainment programming* on the media is a powerful way to communicate health information, especially for minority audiences, who are heavy consumers of this type of media (→ Entertainment Education). In developing countries, entertainment education frequently produces entertainment programming for the sole objective of influencing health behaviors. In the US, organizations exist that introduce important health topics to writers and producers and assist them in portraying these issues accurately to their viewers. Several research studies have demonstrated that even brief exposure to health information and behaviors can have strong effects. For example, in surveys conducted by Porter Novelli during 1999 and 2000, over half of regular prime-time and daytime drama viewers reported that they learned something about a disease or how to prevent it from a TV show. About one-third of regular viewers said they took some action after hearing about a health issue or disease on a TV show (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2006).

*Media advocacy* is the strategic use of mass media and its tools, in combination with community organizing, for the purpose of advancing healthy public policies (Institute of Medicine 2003, 338). It moves beyond the individual to address the social conditions that affect individual health. An early example of such a campaign is the Uptown Coalition in Philadelphia, which used the media and community organizing to defeat R. J. Reynolds' proposed campaign to market Uptown cigarettes in African-American communities (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication).

*Interactive technology*, “computer-based media that enable users to access information and services of interest, control how the information is presented, and respond to information and messages in the mediated environment” (Hawkins et al. 1997, 2), has created new opportunities for health communication (→ Interactivity, Concept of). These applications can eliminate barriers such as low literacy and expand the opportunities to tailor and personalize information. One of the pioneer applications of this technology, the Comprehensive Health Enhancement Support System (CHESS), has impressive research evidence of its potential for reducing disparities. Fifteen years of research on CHESS have shown consistently positive effects on low-income African-American women’s health informational competence (Shaw et al. 2006). Yet access issues prevent an effective approach such as CHESS from achieving its full potential in reducing health disparities.

Health disparities are insidious global problems that communication scholars can and should address. Sensitivity to the race and class issues underlying these disparities is essential when studying or designing health communication interventions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture and Health Communication ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Literacy ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Popular Communication and Social Class ▶ Rhetoric and Class

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## Health Literacy

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The association between education and health outcomes has been well documented, and education has historically been used as an indicator for socioeconomic status in epidemiological studies (Pamuk et al. 1998). Researchers hypothesize that education may protect against disease by influencing lifestyle behaviors, problem-solving abilities, and values. Other researchers have demonstrated a strong association between education and health by exploring three explanations for this association: (1) education influences work and economic conditions; (2) education influences social psychological resources; and (3) education supports a healthy lifestyle (Nielsen-Bohlman et al. 2004). Although the demonstrated evidence of the association between health and education is strong, the explanations for this association and the underlying mechanisms have not been extensively studied. In the past decade, researchers, mainly rooted in the US, have begun to unpack education in an effort to investigate the factors that may more precisely predict poorer health outcomes and help to explain aspects of disparity (→ Health Disparities, Communication in). Literacy, specifically health literacy, emerged as a distinct area of research and construct to be examined as one possible pathway for the link between education and health.

In the report “Healthy people 2010,” the US Department of Health and Human Services (2000) defined health literacy as *the degree to which individuals have the*

*capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.* Health literacy focuses on the *interaction* between individual level skills and structural factors such as health sector demands. The need for a health-literate public has become more critical than ever because of rapid innovations in biomedical sciences and the proliferation of information in a variety of media and the movement toward informed and shared decision-making that promotes involvement of the patients in medical decisions (Rimer et al. 2004; Viswanath 2005).

## LITERACY ASSESSMENTS

At the individual level, variables such as background knowledge, experience, emotional state, efficacy, and literacy skills affect one's overall health literacy. Most of the attention and research to date has been on functional literacy skills required for tasks needed in the workplace and for full participation in the activities of everyday civic life, including *interacting* with health-care systems. The National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) in the US and the International Adult Literacy Surveys (IALS) in 22 industrialized nations involved home-based interviews with 13,000 adults in the US and over 75,000 adults from other industrialized countries (Kirsch et al. 1993; Tuijnman 2000). The surveys examined adults' *functional literacy skills* – their ability to use the written word for mundane tasks such as locating information in a → newspaper or in a form. The tasks that adults were asked to perform ranged from fairly simple (locate a piece of → information in a text) to sophisticated (determine the amount of medicine to be given to a child of a specified age and weight based on a medicine label). The scores were reported for three different literacy scales: *prose literacy*, the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts that include editorials, news stories, poems, and fiction; *document literacy*, the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in materials that include job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and graphs; and *quantitative literacy*, the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, using numbers embedded in printed materials.

The findings from the 1992 NALS indicate that fully 47 to 51 percent of US adults have limited or low functional literacy skills and often cannot accurately and consistently locate and match information from newspapers, advertisements, or forms. This does not mean that they cannot read. Most of these adults can and do read.

In 2003, the National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAALS) was conducted as a follow-up to the 1992 NALS in the United States. Although the educational attainment of US adults had increased between 1992 and 2003, prose literacy had decreased for all levels of educational attainment. As was true in 1992, literacy was lowest for adults who did not complete high school (Kutner et al. 2005).

In one of the earliest attempts to examine *health-related literacy tasks* (HALS), researchers identified 191 health-related tasks among the NALS and IALS → survey data and analyzed the health literacy of US adults. (Rudd et al. 2004). They found that some 12 percent (23 million of US adults) are estimated to have skills in the lowest level (Level 1) on the HALS, while an additional 7 percent (13.4 million) are not able to perform even

simple health literacy tasks such as locate dosage information on a medicine label. Those performing below Level 1 are about evenly divided between US-born and foreign-born adults. The results are alarming for at-risk and vulnerable populations; for example, among adults who have not completed high school, almost half scored at or below the lowest literacy level. Similarly, almost half of adults over the age of 65 performed at or below the lowest level. Minority populations, including adults born outside the United States, scored significantly below white adults and adults born in the United States, on average.

## RESEARCH ON LITERACY AND HEALTH

In a critical examination of the link between literacy and health outcomes, it was found that the health of children in developing countries was related to the literacy of their mothers (Grosse and Auffrey 1989). Subsequent empirical research in the area of health literacy has been conducted mostly in the US and has documented the mismatch between the literacy demands of health systems and the literacy skills of the people using the system. For example, a variety of health-related print materials have been assessed over the years, and researchers report that an overwhelming majority of the materials score at reading grade levels that far exceed the reading ability of the average adult (which is equivalent to the fifth or sixth grade level). International assessments of health materials, focused mainly on informed consent documents, echo these findings (Mathew & McGrath 2002).

Researchers were able to move beyond assessment of materials to better define the association between literacy and health outcomes with the development of *health-specific reading assessment tools* such as the Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine (REALM) and the Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults (TOFHLA; Davis et al. 1991; Parker et al. 1995). These tools enabled researchers to assess patients' health-related reading skills and then correlate the readability/literacy levels with health outcomes in a clinical setting. This body of literature found that patients with low health literacy, defined as individuals with skills below the ninth grade level, are less likely to make use of health-care services such as screening (Davis et al. 1998), more likely to present in later stages of disease (Bennett et al. 1998), and more likely to be hospitalized (Baker et al. 1998), after adjusting for factors such as age, race, gender, socio-economic status, and self-rated health status. In addition, studies indicate that patients with limited health literacy skills who need to manage a chronic disease such as cancer (Merriman et al. 2002; Schillinger et al. 2002; Williams et al. 1998b) or asthma (Williams et al. 1998a) are less well-informed about the basic elements of their care plan and have measurable poorer health outcomes than those patients suffering from the same disease conditions but who possess higher levels of health literacy (→ Knowledge Gap Effects).

In addition to the ill effects on the individual patient, limited health literacy places a burden on health-care systems which in turn impacts the overall economic consequences to society. In the US, the National Academy on an Aging Society estimated that roughly US\$73 billion in additional health-care costs were attributable to low health literacy. This is due in part to higher rates of hospitalization and higher use of expensive emergency services.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As the field of health literacy evolves more research is required to rigorously examine the full breadth of the construct as illustrated in its definition: *the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions*. This definition goes beyond one's ability to read and identify health terms; it speaks more to one's ability to access health information, effectively navigate the information to retrieve relevant information, and then ultimately act on this information (→ Communication Inequality). To advance the field of health literacy, researchers must therefore go beyond the examination of reading skills and systematically assess and test interventions that address the other necessary skills, such as obtaining and using information as embedded in the health literacy definition. Health-care providers, creators of health information and education materials, and the health-care and public health systems bear a large part of the responsibility for having created materials, ways of communicating, and systems that are far too technical and complicated to meet the needs of the vast majority of the populations they serve.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Inequality ► Culture and Health Communication  
 ► Health Communication ► Health Disparities, Communication in ► Information  
 ► Information Literacy ► Knowledge Gap Effects ► Media Literacy ► Newspaper  
 ► Survey

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## Heraldry

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Heraldry is a traditional display system for family and corporate visual identity, originating in late twelfth-century western Europe, based on the complex of design-bearing units known in English as a coat of arms (→ Code). The word “heraldry” originally indicated the entire business of the heralds, court officials who at first recorded coats of arms and later (from the fifteenth century, when the various European jurisdictions began to attempt to regulate the sector) administered, designed, and licensed (“granted”) them. The late medieval and early modern system of heralds granting arms to proprietors on behalf of the state, which then guarantees some degree of protection for the design, survives in only a few countries: notably parts of the Commonwealth, South Africa, and possibly Ireland, though some post-communist republics of eastern Europe have revived versions of the system.

The principal, and only essential, unit in any coat of arms is a *shield-shaped frame* (the “shield”), displaying a supposedly unique design. This → design, being two-dimensional in character, can be used on other flat display vehicles such as flags. The next most significant unit is the “crest” (a word sometimes misapplied to the whole coat of arms), which is defined by its location above the shield; notionally three-dimensional in form, it represents an item modeled and worn on top of the helmet by a medieval knight, and in full representations of a coat of arms it is depicted on a helmet. In fact the vast majority of crests never have been or will be modeled, but their potential three-dimensionality continues, mostly, to inform their design. Crest designs are not, in some heraldic



jurisdictions, required to be unique, though they are frequently displayed alone, without the shield to which they are technically subsidiary.

Shield and crest may be supplemented in a full coat of arms by the following: “supporters” (animal or human figures depicted holding the shield); a motto (a slogan-like phrase depicted above or below the main design); and various direct indices of social rank or status, such as coronets and the insignia of awards and decorations, the display of which is often guided by heraldic convention without their being truly heraldic in themselves. Supporters function as indirect status indicators, inasmuch as all jurisdictions restrict their use to individuals of certain rank, large corporations, and official bodies.

It is the combination of design elements making up the shield, known as “charges,” that most clearly identifies a coat of arms (→ Graphic Design). The repertory of charges ranges from purely geometric forms derived long ago from the shape of the shield, through a large class of more or less stylized representations of beasts, birds, monsters, and medieval implements, to images of modern artifacts (→ Visual Representation). The category is unlimited and anything capable of standardized, simplified rendition in easily recognizable form is appropriate. The charges’ mutual spatial relationship – to describe which heraldry uses a semi-fossilized terminology called “blazon” – is equally significant, and heraldic conventions in this area have been taken by some scholars to provide an analytical key for works of art, particularly of the Renaissance and baroque periods.

Together, choice of charges and their relationship create the identity of an individual shield, viewed as a type of which specific representations – which may vary considerably in artistic style – form tokens. Heraldry’s approach to type-identity is broad, certainly when compared with newer areas such as that of corporate trademarks. Color definitions, too, are loose: a limited number of colors are used and standard shades of each are considered identical. Thus behind heraldry’s large graphemic repertory lies a vast range of heraldically insignificant graphetic variations (→ Emic vs Etic Research). Proprietors of coats of arms may, of course, apply their own, narrower restrictions to give their heraldic identity a more consistent look than heraldry itself requires. This often happens in the corporate world, where the desire for a coherent, closely managed visual identity can lead to the privileging of specific representations.

In systemic terms, heraldic designs impart relatively sparse information about their proprietors. It is often mistakenly assumed that they encode complex data, but any references they make tend to be transparent, and not specifically heraldic; a mixture of graphic metaphors from religious art (e.g., a pelican for Christian piety) and archaic professional references (e.g., checkers for accounting or banking) are the nearest that heraldry gets to a symbolic approach (→ Symbolism). Family arms frequently pun on the family surname, while corporate arms often indicate the main business of the corporation, or its location. Cross-reference within the system is frequent, with one design repeating elements from another to suggest a connection between their respective proprietors (→ Sign Systems). This haphazard and unsubtle approach was one of the factors in the rise of the more esoteric and elliptical “device” or *impresa* in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

In many ways the most eloquent statement made by a coat of arms about its proprietor is the extra-systemic one that this person or corporation is the sort to possess (and use) a coat of arms. Widely perceived associations between heraldry, social rank and conservatism color the usage of both corporate and private heraldry, and diminish the

potential reach and variety of the medium. It is perhaps surprising that in the early twenty-first century the two UK heraldic authorities should be required to grant as many as 250 to 300 new coats of arms a year. Still more indicative of the continuing prestige of heraldry, however, is the vast number of corporate trademarks in use across the world that, even if not actually well-formed expressions within the heraldic system itself, consciously resemble or recall coats of arms.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Design ▶ Emic vs Etic Research ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Symbolism ▶ Visual Representation

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# Hermeneutics

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“Hermeneutics” comes from the name of the Greek messenger god, Hermes – the patron of travelers, rogues, liars, and thieves. As the carrier of messages between gods and mortals, Hermes had to be fluent in both of their idioms. It was his task to build and maintain an interpretive bridge between alien worlds. Since he was also a trickster who could deliver messages in garbled form, the Greek verb *hermeneuō* meant to decipher cryptic or obscure meanings, and, more generally, to explain, translate, and express (Gadamer 1971). The term hermeneutics descends from this root, via the Latin *hermeneutica*, and has been used in English and German since the late seventeenth century. Today hermeneutics has two main senses: the art of reading texts, and the philosophy of textual interpretation and human understanding. However forbidding or exotic the term may sound, hermeneutics is a fundamental mode of inquiry into communication and its conditions. Indeed, hermeneutics and communication theory alike focus on how messages span the gaps of human togetherness (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy).

## **THE ART OF TEXTUAL INTERPRETATION**

Hermeneutics is traditionally understood as Biblical interpretation. However, it is an art relevant whenever a canonic text needs to be updated and applied to a concrete situation.

Any tradition of practical judgment anchored in classic writings calls for procedures of interpretation, whether in religion, law, or science. The hermeneutic problem is simple: how to draw dim and distant writings into the broad daylight of understanding? This problem faces any interpreter who is historically or culturally removed from a foundational text. Inasmuch as many cultures in the world have canonic texts, there is a great variety of hermeneutic traditions. Elaborate rules and methods of textual interpretation have developed, for instance, in Judaism, Christianity, neo-Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam. Such methods guide the temporally remote interpreter's practical relation to authoritative texts. The imperative of interpreting classics is not unique to religious traditions. Hellenistic scholars developed methods for reading Homer and other ancient Greek texts, methods whose central task was the interpretation of allegory. These methods deeply shaped how the Christian church fathers and Jewish scholars read the Bible – traditions that are known as patristics and rabbinics, respectively – and decisively stamped the intellectual history of the west for the past two thousand years.

Though any reading of an old text in a new situation can be understood as a hermeneutic act, perhaps the paradigm case is legal interpretation, in which a particular case needs to be judged in the light of a textual corpus. The need to check the source raises diverse complexities. Before knowing how to read, one must determine what sources are relevant, how to harmonize their contradictions, and what parts of them are superseded or still in force. Hermeneutics can have legal, religious, literary, historical, ethical, linguistic, and philosophical dimensions. In the rabbinic and Muslim legal traditions, for instance, it is impossible to separate legal, historical, and religious interpretations. In the Anglo American common law, legal interpretation is always a reading of historical precedent. Taken as the art of interpretation, hermeneutics is a set of methods for determining legitimate readings. It is a collection of techniques for bridging the communicative gaps between classic texts and novel situations.

## **THE THEORY OF HUMAN UNDERSTANDING**

Because textual interpretation has often raised larger philosophical questions, the deep history of hermeneutics can be traced to diverse sources. But taken as a name for a more ambitious theory of interpretation and human understanding, hermeneutics started around two hundred years ago in Germany. This tradition, often known as “philosophical hermeneutics” (Grondin 1994), expanded the scope of hermeneutics variously to a method for understanding history, a justification of the disciplinary uniqueness of the humanities, and an account of human existence.

The broader context for the rise of philosophical hermeneutics was near-universal literacy and the rise of positivist paper sciences such as classical philology and history in late eighteenth-century Germany. Classical philologists powerfully felt and systematically discussed their cultural and linguistic distance from classical oratory, literature, and jurisprudence. Their efforts to recover and restore distant texts and traditions shed new light on the problem of historical remoteness. Hermeneutics was the philosophical ancilla for the massive scholarly labor of source criticism in such sciences and arts of text-constitution as philology, papyrology, paleography, archaeology, and historiography. The extremely influential doctrine of historicism made anachronism a hermeneutic crime,

thus emphasizing the temporal expanse across which the modern interpreter had to travel. One could no longer receive the *Iliad* or *Genesis* as a direct message; one had to read them as ancient productions designed for alien worlds and full of strange notions. Access to meaning became mediated by consciousness of historical distance and cultural difference. Biblical “higher criticism” was one key expression of this distance.

The hermeneutic developments of Protestant theology and the philological traditions of classical scholarship came together in the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who added a strong dose of Kantian and post-Kantian philosophy to the mix. For Schleiermacher, hermeneutics was a theory of understanding other minds that are problematically remote in time, language, or culture. He argued that the primary object of understanding is not the meaning entailed in a given text (grammatical content), but the intentional consciousness of its author (technical-psychological content). However, because authorial intention can only appear as an interpretive reconstruction, meaning is always only a function of interpretation itself. This insight led Schleiermacher to the radical conclusion that understanding can never entirely escape the potential for misunderstanding. As a “productive repetition,” interpretation required both a holistic immersion in the world of the original text and a lively sensitivity to the demands of the present.

Schleiermacher’s phenomenology of understanding informed Wilhelm Dilthey’s defense of the human sciences against the emerging dominance of the natural sciences. For Dilthey, hermeneutics was a universal theory of interpretation in and through which to understand sciences that depend crucially on meaning or consciousness (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science). He called these sciences *Geisteswissenschaften* or human sciences, translating J. S. Mill’s term “moral sciences.” Unlike the natural sciences, which derive knowledge from observations of the outside world, the human sciences derive knowledge from “lived experience” (*Erlebnis*). Since the act of knowing is indistinguishable from the known object, the human sciences require *Verstehen* (interpretive understanding) in addition to *Erklären* (rule-based explanation) (→ *Verstehen* vs *Erklären*). For Dilthey, the task of hermeneutics was to disclose the vital link of subject and object in human knowledge, and in so doing to provide an epistemological-logical-methodological foundation for the human sciences. No longer would hermeneutics confine itself to transmitting the authority and normative validity of distant texts and traditions. It was Dilthey’s great achievement to redefine hermeneutics as the universal methodology for making sense of the entire social, historical, and psychological world.

Martin Heidegger took the argument one giant step further. If Dilthey used hermeneutics to free the *Geisteswissenschaften* from the *Naturwissenschaften*, Heidegger freed hermeneutics from the tradition of *Wissenschaft* altogether. The epistemological understanding of the human sciences, he argued, derives from a more basic hermeneutical understanding. Making sense of things was for Heidegger the ontological condition of human existence (*Dasein*). Understanding is “existential” because it is our fundamental, if often implicit, mode of being in, dealing with, moving through, and caring for the world. More specifically, understanding orients our ability to be in alternate positions in the world, our potential to pursue different life projects. Understanding is the being of this potentiality, and interpretation is its subsequent development. Prior to our possession of any given theoretical knowledge, Heidegger insists, we are inexplicitly yet affectively *involved* in the world. Thus, hermeneutics is not just a fancy name for what

scholars, judges, and clerics do with texts. It is what every human being does by living, thinking, choosing, and acting. Inasmuch as all humans live in time and have no choice but to choose, the human condition is hermeneutic.

More recent hermeneutic thought is dominated by Hans-Georg Gadamer (2004) and Paul Ricoeur (1981), who follow in Heidegger's wake. Both see hermeneutics as a unique justification for humanistic inquiry, and both see human existence as fundamentally communicative. In expanding the notion of "text" to include any field of enduring meaning, Ricoeur explicitly figures interpretation as an act of communication (→ Text and Intertextuality). Wherever there is unintelligibility, there is a hermeneutic problem. Hermeneutics, like communication, is the general theory of dealing with problematic meanings. It aims to decipher lost sense with an almost therapeutic mission of liberating meanings that have been frozen into muteness or madness by the passage of time or culture. Whereas the rhetorician asks, how will the audience receive this text (→ Rhetorical Studies), the hermeneut asks, how would the author have written this text if they were addressing us now? Hermeneutics is the talking cure for texts that have slipped into darkness, an inventory of ways to make them talk again – and yet again (McCormick 2003). For Ricoeur, hermeneutics is a form of dialogic textuality. It is like exchanging letters with someone who cannot write back, but whose old letters you treasure and whose voice you must supply (Peters 1999). Hermeneuts hold up both ends of a literary correspondence – the then of the text, the now of its recognizability. More specifically, they bridge historical, cultural, and linguistic gaps by mediating the original text through the production of another. In this sense, Ricoeur builds on Schleiermacher's insight that any reading is a "productive repetition."

### WIDER RELEVANCE AND CRITICISM

Philosophical hermeneutics has received diverse criticisms since the 1960s. For critical theorists, hermeneutics neglects the social conditions that sustain canonic texts and specialized interpretive labor, and thus has conservative political and methodological consequences (Habermas 1977; → Critical Theory). This criticism was echoed in the canon skirmishes of the 1980s with a more pointed gender and race dimension, claiming that hermeneutics enshrined an elite pantheon of European male authors. For poststructuralist media theorists, hermeneutics smuggles assumptions into its theories that are in fact reflections of communication systems; "humanity" and "literature" are historical by-products of data-processing networks (Kittler 1990; → Postmodernism and Communication).

For other poststructuralists, hermeneutics separates discourse too far from power (Said 1983), or problematically champions a metaphysics of presence (Derrida 1982). None of these critics denies the need for interpretation in some form; the debate is about its scope, assumptions, and mission. Partly responding to such criticisms, Ricoeur's notion of the "hermeneutics of suspicion" widens the field to include such central figures of modern thought as Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. The textually deconstructive ambition of this broader sense of hermeneutics complements – or radicalizes – the textually restorative ambition found in the tradition running from Schleiermacher to Gadamer.

Hermeneutics has had some recognition within communication studies, but perhaps not enough. It received a particularly warm welcome in the 1970s, due in large part to the

philosophical support it lent to → qualitative methodology. With a greater interest in power since the 1980s, communication scholars tended to turn to critical and postmodern theories, though interest in hermeneutics persists as a key to understanding the curiously distanced communicative situation of broadcasting, and abiding questions in rhetorical theory (Hyde 2001). If communication is fundamentally a matter of distance and its bridging, and human existence is fundamentally interpretive, then hermeneutics holds a key to understanding communication in general. Whether taken strictly or broadly, hermeneutics still has much to say about basic communication problems.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Verstehen vs Erklären

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## **Heterosexism and the Media**

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Heterosexism “refers to the belief and expectation that everyone is or should be heterosexual” and the term “heteronormativity” equates heterosexual experience with human

experience, in effect “render[ing] all other forms of human sexual expression pathological, deviant, invisible, unintelligible, or written out of existence” (Yep 2002, 167). Heteronormativity provides a larger context for understanding how heterosexism influences cultural and social institutions, such as the media (→ Behavioral Norms, Perception through the Media).

Historically, mediated portrayals of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender characters have been infrequent. When represented, they have tended to be portrayed negatively (e.g., as villains, as problems to be solved). Concurrent with the gay liberation movement, more positive portrayals emerged in the 1970s. By the 1990s, the frequency of media representation had increased dramatically. Yet, as critical media scholars point out, representation neither guarantees legitimacy, nor creates a panacea. Rather, visibility is complicated. Representations reflect the ideological frameworks and interests of agenda setters who generally appeal to an assumed heterosexist audience (→ Media and Group Representations).

Critical media analyses have begun to unmask how representations of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender characters, particularly on television, but also on film, often end up renormalizing heteronormativity by reinforcing heterosexuality as “normal” and taken for granted, simultaneously constructing homosexuality as aberrant and as abnormal (→ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies). One mediated stratagem that has been highlighted by research is referred to as the *gay male/straight female pairing*, portrayed on mainstream films and television sitcoms, of which the US series *Will & Grace* (1998–2005) has been the most studied. Battles & Hilton-Morrow (2002) argue that *Will & Grace* fortifies heteronormativity via the techniques of equating gayness with a lack of masculinity, relying on sexual tension and delayed consummation between the gay male/straight female, infantilizing characters who subvert heteronormative conventions, and emphasizing characters’ interpersonal relationships over their connections to the larger social world (e.g., gay politics). Shugart (2003) argues that the show’s subtexts renaturalize heteronormativity by presenting the gay character Will as heterosexual (e.g., dressing and acting conventionally masculine) and his relationship with the straight character Grace as romantic, and granting him control over female sexuality, similar to that which occurs in heterosexual male privilege. The sexual tension between Will and Grace appears to appeal to heterosexist audience members and sustains the show’s popularity (Quimby 2005).

A second stratagem can be seen in the US version of the reality/makeover show *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* (2003–present), where gay males are more competent in constructing conventional masculinity than the straight males they make over. Morrish & O’Mara (2004) argue that the show subverts the expectation that the gay male cast, the “Fab Five,” will feminize their subjects. Rather, by the end of each episode, the heterosexual male is rendered more confident in his masculinity, his heterosexuality, and made more pleasing to the heterosexual woman of his desire. *Queer Eye* repositions “White, urban, heterosexual masculinity as normative and dominant” (Clarkson 2005, 252).

Whereas most critical media scholarship examines mediated narratives that reinforce heteronormativity, analyses have begun to emerge arguing that selected mediated narratives can be read as denaturalizing heteronormativity. Cooper (2002) argues that the film

*Boys Don't Cry* (1999), which depicts the life story and eventual brutal murder of the transgendered teen Brandon Teena, normalizes Brandon's female masculinity and critiques conventional masculinity. In portraying Brandon Teena as a sympathetic individual, the film legitimates feminized masculinity, offering a challenge to heteronormativity's attempts to order a society that only accepts highly masculinized performances of male gender roles. Cooper & Pease (2002) critique an episode of *Ally McBeal* (1997–2002), "Boy to the World," that juxtaposes a narrative about a transsexual with a narrative about intolerance toward short people. This narrative structure equates bigotry toward short people with bigotry toward transsexuals, making society's intolerance for transsexuals seem as absurd as prejudice toward short people. In doing so, the episode challenges heteronormativity and validates non-normative (e.g., transsexual) sexual identities.

The US soap opera *All My Children* (1970–present) first introduced a storyline in 2000 about an out lesbian, Bianca Montgomery. The storyline disrupts the genre's underlying celebration of heterosexual romance. Whereas daytime television has historically led prime-time in addressing controversial issues, Bianca is the sole gay or lesbian character on network daytime (Harrington 2003). This storyline marks progress in that the producers have placed the storyline centrally (Bianca is the daughter of Erica Kane, one of the longest-running characters in daytime history) as well as written the narrative to normalize Bianca (e.g., depicting her in a gay bar; Harrington 2003). In doing so, the storyline destabilizes heteronormativity. However, the question remains whether other daytime shows will follow this lead, or whether the constraints of industry, genre, and audience expectations will effectively block additional positive (and potentially normalizing) representations of gays and lesbians on daytime television.

Communication scholarship examining heteronormativity and the media is sparse and most of it has been limited to examinations of US television programs and films. Much more research is needed that moves beyond the US media context. For instance, television networks in the UK, Australia, Spain, Italy, France, and Finland have all created their own versions of *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, with varying degrees of success. How might these versions of the same show, but for different audiences, vary in terms of how they fortify or call into question heteronormativity? Another area unexplored by communication scholars is heteronormativity in relationship to shows explicitly about gay and lesbian sexuality (e.g., the British or US versions of *Queer as Folk* [2000–present] and *The L Word* [2004–present]). Does the explicitly gay and lesbian-themed content of these shows offer alternatives to or replay heteronormativity?

SEE ALSO: ► Behavioral Norms, Perception through the Media ► Femininity and Feminine Values ► Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ► Gender: Representation in the Media ► Masculinity and the Media ► Media and Group Representations ► Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ► Sexism in the Media ► Sexualization in the Media ► Social Norms

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## Historic Key Events and the Media

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Historic key events are genuine events with historical importance. Four factors are important to consider in this regard. (1) Historic key events have a *short and distinct duration*. The event happens within a short time and it is clearly separated from later and earlier events. It is arguable whether wars and revolutions should be considered as historic key events; overall it seems best to regard them as chains of related historic key events (Wilke 1989). (2) Historic key events have a significant *impact on later times*. The historical dimensions of the political, social, economic, or cultural effects are sometimes obvious when the event happens, but at other times the importance of the event becomes clearer with the passing of time, when the significance of its effects can be evaluated differently. It is easier to regard political or economic events as key events than social or cultural events. (3) Historic key events are *not primarily created for media attention*. Their importance is independent of any media coverage. Even when some aspects of an event may have been planned in advance to attract media attention, its main purpose is not media effect. (4) Historic key events are *ambiguous and subjective* in many ways. Billy Wilder's film *One, Two, Three* (1961) started with a quote that provides a perfect illustration of the ambiguities of historic key events and media key events: "On Sunday, August 13th, 1961, the eyes of America were on the nation's capital, where Roger Maris

was hitting home runs #44 and 45 against the Senators. On that same day, without any warning, the East German Communists sealed off the border between East and West Berlin. I only mention this to show the kind of people we're dealing with – real shifty!" On the one hand, the mass media cover key events; on the other hand, media routines can be used for political or other purposes (→ News Routines). The ambiguous status of a key event is due to the point of view. The above quotation illustrates that the importance of a given event may be valued very differently: some events achieve the status of a historic key event, while others remain simply key events in media coverage.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF HISTORIC KEY EVENTS

Historic key events have to be *distinguished clearly from media events or pseudo-events*. A pseudo-event "is not spontaneous, but comes about because some one has planned, planted, or incited it . . . It is planted primarily (not always exclusively) for the immediate purpose of being reported or reproduced . . . The question, 'Is it real?' is less important than, 'Is it newsworthy?'" (Boorstin 1962, 11; → Media Events and Pseudo-Events). A historic key event is sometimes almost the opposite; some of them did not attract media coverage at all. The Hitler–Stalin Agreement on the division of Poland was a key event of twentieth-century history in that it gave Hitler the opportunity to start his war. Nevertheless, it was not covered by the media and even at the Nuremberg Trial the Soviet Union denied its secret amendment.

However, the importance of media in modern society means that most historic key events are *subjected to media coverage*. Under normal circumstances, the coverage of historic key events by the media is one indicator of the importance of the event in itself, but it is not the most important indicator. Media coverage simply indicates that the journalists consider a specific event to be relevant to their audience. For example, in 1996 a suicide bombing attack was covered over 72 hours nonstop on Israeli television. Television coverage of John F. Kennedy's assassination in 1963 lasted uninterrupted from November 22 to 25; it was the longest uninterrupted television coverage of an event until the events of 9/11. But not even in Israel is the suicide bombing of March 1996 recognized as being as important as JFK's assassination or the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Because key events are for the most part mediated events, they lead to follow-up coverage of minor events by the media (Kepplinger & Habermeier 1995), for example, even small incidents involving airplanes attracted greater media attention after 9/11 (→ Mediated Terrorism).

The status of an event as historic and key depends on its specific importance, which is *relative* not absolute. For example, in Egypt's modern history the assassination of Anwar El Sadat in 1981 was a key event, but its status as a key event in modern history in general may be doubted even though the international media covered the assassination broadly. Most of the historic key events of a particular nation are important for the nation's history but not necessarily for other nations.

The status of a key event also is related to the *bias of the significant effects* of the event in history. Many key events have positive effects for one interest group but create negative effects for others. The bias of the media coverage depends on the varying points of view (→ Bias in the News). For instance, that Sadat (together with Menachem Begin) was

awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (in advance) for his treaty with Israel in 1979 was commented on very positively by the press in Egypt, Israel, and in the west, but extremely harshly in Syria's *Al Baath* ("The Resurrection"), and in many Arab countries and in the east European communist press.

### THE ROLE OF SYMBOLISM

Historic key events become emblematic by way of the attribution of importance to them, which may be biased, and media coverage plays an important part in forging the → symbolism. The concentration of the distinct event in a short historic moment at a given place makes both media coverage and forging the symbol easy. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914, which led to World War I, was the symbolic end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. The murder of JFK marked the end of the American dream of "Camelot" in 1963. The raising and tearing down of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and 1989 marked the climax and the end of the Cold War in 1961 and 1989 respectively. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 upon the symbols of America's strength started the worldwide "war on terror" in 2001. Some key events were symbolic acts in themselves: in 1952 the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II began a Europe-wide taste for television spectacles.

Media coverage does overload some "historic" key events with symbolic weight. Whether they are really significant for the future may not yet be clear. The landing on the moon in 1969 serves as an example: it may be that in the distant future, when inter-planetary space travel has become routine, man's landing on the moon will be seen as the first important step toward other worlds, but so far the landing on the moon has not yet made any significant impact on life on earth. Other events were placed center-stage and overloaded with symbolism, for example, Chamberlain's return from the Munich negotiations in 1938: later "Munich" came to symbolize the opposite, not lasting peace but political weakness that led to war.

The most impressive key event of recent years, the terrorist attacks of September 11, confounds the rule that every historic key event is a genuine event. The symbolic nature of the attacks underlines its character as a media event: the Twin Towers as a symbol of US high finance, the Pentagon of its military strength, and the Capitol or White House of its political system indicate that 9/11 was arranged for the media. The attacks on America's symbols may not have been so choreographed in former times, when there were no TV networks or video cameras. If the terrorists had reckoned on this they had calculated on the routines of media coverage precisely. There is a time delay of a quarter of an hour between the impact of the first plane on the north tower of the World Trade Center and the impact of the second plane on the south tower: even if no TV cameras had covered the first impact the terrorists may have reckoned on quick and instant media reaction to capture the second impact, and they were right. The second plane crash was filmed live by many TV cameras in close-up and the pictures were broadcast all over the world.

### TRENDS IN MEDIA COVERAGE

In history media coverage of key events has followed some general trends. (1) The time delay between event and media coverage has been reduced dramatically. (2) Media

involvement in historic key event coverage has expanded. (3) The impact of the news media's coverage of key events on the audience has increased. (4) Key events are illustrated with the most impressive material. All these trends are related to changes in the media system itself.

### **Time Delay**

The media coverage of key events has progressively decreased to virtually *zero time delay*. At the beginning of the history of mass media, in early modern times, key events were covered with a delay of weeks or even a month. At the beginning of the twentieth century key events were covered by the next day or even within the same day. After 1920 foreseeable events were covered with little time delay. These days even the news of unforeseen events is disseminated throughout the world within minutes, as for example the events of 9/11 or the London bombings of July 7, 2005. Improvements in media infrastructure are the main cause of this trend.

At the beginning of early modern times most of the traffic on land and sea did not have a time schedule. Regular mail delivery was established as early as the sixteenth century on the main routes such as Amsterdam to Venice. These mail delivery systems expanded in the following centuries, and the frequency and speed of delivery improved. In the nineteenth century in many countries stage coaches ran according to schedules, and further improvements came with the development of the railway. The building of railroads after 1825 did not merely improve the speed of travel but (from the following decade) was also connected with the construction of telegraph lines: the new communication device helped to coordinate its schedule. Stockbrokers exchanged news of prices and news agencies spread news by the telegraph from the mid-nineteenth century onwards (→ Telegraph, History of).

Starting in the 1920s → radio communication by air wave enabled live reporting. Probably the first live report was transmitted even before regular radio stations were on air, and it was a false report: "All Titanic's passengers safe," in 1912. In the last third of the twentieth century multiplication of the channels intensified communication: satellites, cable and digital multiplexing wove a dense information network nearly all over the world. Today the infrastructure comprises not only the mass media but, due to the technological conversion, every mobile phone or video camera in private hands may become part of the infrastructure at any key event. The constant improvements have reached a point where no further minimization of time delay is possible (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

### **Increasing Involvement of the Media in Key Events**

A second trend the expansion of media coverage of historic key events. In general, the events are covered by all existing media, where up till the nineteenth century the news of events was disseminated by all kinds of press reporting. Regular newspapers and non-periodical broadsheets, magazines with or without pictures, chronicles and books covered major events like the beheading of Charles I in 1649 and of Louis XVI in 1793. In 1914 the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand was covered by all kinds of press, but also by newsreels. In the 1920s and 1930s live → radio reporting was added. When Neville

Chamberlain returned to London after the notorious Munich Conference, he delivered his famous speech on “Peace for our time” into radio microphones and waved the Munich Agreement in front of the newsreel cameras. In 1960s press, newsreel, radio, and the new television media spread the news of President Kennedy’s assassination and the landing on the moon around the world (→ Television News). While new media took over the actual coverage the older media switched to background coverage and specialized in “inside information” to deepen the audiences’ understanding of the event.

Any major event provides the public with special issues of newspaper or television magazines. The events of 9/11 provide an example of the broad approach of media coverage. After the first plane crash TV networks all over the world switched to live reporting. In Germany the highly respected public broadcasting system lost much ground to the private RTL station which went on air with the news within minutes and reported live for the rest of the day. The attacks were the main theme in the press and on television for nearly a month. But even very old media like books could be written and published quickly. Some of these did no more than reproduce rumors circulating on the Internet. The Internet itself became a major source of information, for example for those looking for missing relatives, but also for misinformation and conspiracy theories.

### **Increasing Effect of Media Coverage**

The third trend is related to the second: media coverage has become *more impressive, affecting and emotional* (→ Emotions, Media Effects on). Due to technological progress, the mass media’s capacity to address the human senses has improved. The press has traditionally used the written word to cover events, but it has also covered historic key events with pictures. These were printed using woodcuts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and high-quality copper plates and steel engravings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (e.g., events like the burning of Magdeburg in 1631 and the Lisbon earthquake in 1755). The reproduction of pictures became cheaper with lithography and wood engravings in the nineteenth century.

At the end of the nineteenth century Meisenbach’s autotype enabled photographs to be reproduced. Nevertheless, the poor quality of photographs and of their reproduction meant that many events continued to be illustrated by highly dramatic lithographs or engravings even at the end of the nineteenth century and on the eve of World War I, for example, in coverage of the explosion of the USS *Maine* covered by the Hearst papers in 1899 and the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914. Since the end of the nineteenth century historic key events were also captured on film. Because of the lack of authentic pictures sometimes faked material was used in news coverage. For example, Pathe’s newsreel on the Russo-Japanese War of 1905 illustrated the battles with ship models. As media technology improved, sound was eventually added: Fox Movietone Newsreel first combined picture and sound coverage of the news in 1927.

### **The Role of Pictures and Sound Bites**

A fourth and more recent tendency is the media’s reduction of a historic key event to its most *impressive picture or sound bites*. Examples are Winston Churchill’s “we shall never

surrender” and “blood, toil, tears and sweat” (1940); pictures of the assassination of JFK (1963); pictures and sound bites of Neil Armstrong’s first “small step” on the moon’s surface; and the the airplanes crashing into the World Trade Center. These and other examples are reproduced by the media so often that they begin to take on a life of their own. The use of the same pictures and sound bites depends on media routines and the expectation of the public (→ Photojournalism; Television News, Visual Components of).

The media need examples with great symbolic value and aims to depict events with the most impressive material. The public, captivated by such routines, gets so used to these examples that it constructs a direct connection between the historic key event and the most widely used coverage material. Some key events do not yield such impressive material because no media was present or because the event itself was very abstract. Media routines then tend to illustrate the event with material that has a connection not with the incident but with its consequences; for example, the Wall Street Crash of 1929 did not provide as impressive a photograph as long rows of unemployed workers.

## **FURTHER RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY**

At present the principal methodology employed in research in historic key event coverage is content analysis, which has been used to study isolated events (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). But because key events are a combined result of media coverage, impressive symbolism, and audience reception, this kind of approach cannot cover all aspects of the field. Content analysis may be suitable for examining the content of media coverage, but it does not explain the motives of the communicators.

Therefore, historic key event research should take into account a combination of content analysis, reception research, media structure analysis, and historical criticism – a method developed by historians from Leopold von Ranke, Gustav Droysen, and others. Historical criticism takes into account, among other things, the context, → meaning, social background, and personality of communicators, and considers that very important historical sources are always missing, especially when intentional communication processes are involved. For example, when the Prussian chancellor Otto von Bismarck launched a → propaganda machinery in 1882 a top-ranking bureaucrat wanted to know whether he had to preserve receipts of the money he had spent, Bismarck’s answer was “Definitely not.”

Research also lacks long-range diagnostics, which would be very helpful in attempts to define historic key events, which, moreover, change over time and differ between one nation’s history and another’s. Furthermore, research lacks international comparison, whose main obstacle is probably the lack of knowledge of many different languages. It is clear that this research program is very ambitious.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Collective Memory and the Media ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media History ▶ Mediated

Terrorism ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper, History of  
▶ Newsreel ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Political Communication ▶ Propaganda ▶ Radio  
▶ Sound Bites ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Symbolic Politics ▶ Symbolism ▶ Telegraph, History  
of ▶ Television News ▶ Television News, Visual Components of

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## **Historiography**

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The term “historiography” is used in a number of different ways. It can refer to writings that present the past as “history.” It can also refer to the way these writings are produced, focusing on the issues of method that are linked to the construction of history. Unlike historical novels, historiography is based on a systematic access to sources, and therefore often connected with a claim of truth. However, it should be considered that any evidence is revocable because new sources may be found and already known sources can be reassessed according to the present world’s interests (Jenkins 1995; Bentley 1999; Burke 2005).

Historical research that is conducted in the framework of a social science is confronted with *two problems*. First, studies of this kind will only be perceived as being in their particular discipline if links are established between the historical perspective and a systematic scientific interest in new findings for the discipline. Second, the acceptance of historical research is complicated by the fact that historians and social scientists have different viewpoints on science. This has an impact on the criteria used when assessing the quality of scientific work. Whereas most researchers in the social sciences, just like natural scientists, want to discover objective relationships and general laws, and search for knowledge that can be used practically, historical research is concerned with individual cases that are not repeatable, so that it can merely supply orientation knowledge that encourages reflection, e.g., upon one’s own existence or upon the basic values of a society (→ Research Methods; Communication Theory and Philosophy; Critical Rationalism;

Case Studies). Since historiography's interpretations are always subjective in nature, it cannot meet the social sciences' ideal of objectivity (→ Objectivity in Science). This explains why, in communication studies, the situation is anything but optimal for historical research (Curran 1991; O'Malley 2002).

Although communication studies in the German-language area were taken into the university by qualified historians at the beginning of the twentieth century, there is now a strong decrease in the number of historiographically based studies and in the number of professorial chairs dedicated to communication history or media history. Since the study of questions of method in historical research does not currently offer much benefit for an academic career in the discipline of communication, and since the techniques used were usually not addressed in studies dating from the discipline's founding period, this entry must necessarily be based upon the corresponding debate that has been going on in the discipline of history (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

### HISTORICAL METHOD

In order to make the results of historical research intersubjectively verifiable and thus to be able to legitimize history as a science, the discipline of history has developed a canon laying down *rules for the handling of sources* (Furay & Salevouris 2000; Burke 2005). Structured along the same lines as in the natural sciences, this body of rules is referred to in literature as the historical method. According to this method, anything produced by a human being is to be regarded as a source. The discipline of history distinguishes between unintentionally and intentionally transmitted sources. This distinction is important for the assessment of a source's value and for interpretation. Whereas intentionally transmitted sources owe their existence to the intention to provide posterity with information about certain facts or events and therefore have to be read in a particularly critical way (examples are chronicles, memoirs, or historiographical works), unintentionally transmitted sources originated under circumstances that become the focus of examination. Among these are material/object sources (buildings, works of art, articles of everyday use such as phonographic records or radio sets) and in particular all the documents written at some time in the past in order to satisfy the needs of the moment (records, legal instruments).

The distinction between *intentionally and unintentionally transmitted sources* is not always clear-cut; it also depends on how a question is formulated, as can be demonstrated with the daily press serving as an example. Editorials, for instance, were in the first place addressed to contemporary readers, and could therefore be classified as unintentionally transmitted sources and consequently as being of particular value for historiography (→ Editorial). The journalists knew, however, that the papers would be kept, and they also wanted to communicate "historical" knowledge about past events (→ Collective Memory and the Media; Historic Key Events and the Media) – these are indications of intentionally transmitted sources.

Since neither unintentionally nor intentionally transmitted sources give a direct picture of the past and since the results of historical research are greatly dependent on the type of sources that are used, the historical method provides rules for choosing, criticizing, and interpreting sources. These rules were developed as early as the nineteenth century. That is one of the reasons why they refer in the first place to written documents (official



records), but they can by analogy also be applied to other sources. The value of a source is mainly determined with the help of two criteria. First and decisive is the *proximity of the event* or the state that is to be explored. The word “proximity” refers here to time as well as to space. Normally, accounts from eyewitnesses or from co-acting persons that have been recorded immediately after an occurrence are of greater value than second-hand narrations. The second important criterion is *availability*. The value of a source always depends also on the kind of other additional sources that can be used. There is no point in producing one’s own sources by means of retrospective biographical interviews, for instance in the field of historical audience research, unless all transmitted sources are untrustworthy or do not allow a complete solution of the research problem under consideration (→ Qualitative Methodology; Interview, Qualitative).

*Criticism of sources* is the most important tool for historiography. The trustworthiness of sources has always to be questioned, and one has to ask about the relationship existing between the wording and the facts that are being described. In order to do so, one has to know the history of the origins of a given source – its purpose as well as the organization that has produced the writing – and the intentions of the author. In addition to source transparency, the central quality criteria applied in historiography are consequently: the diversity of sources, and the comparison of sources. In order to be able to open up and assess sources, the discipline of history has developed a number of complementary sciences such as genealogy (disclosure of descent) and paleography (decipherment of writings). In order to filter necessary information from sources, today one can also use the quantitative and qualitative techniques that were developed by the social sciences and, for some of them, also by the other humanities (→ Quantitative Methodology). That is why the historical method is usually a technique that combines several methods.

## **HISTORIOGRAPHY IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNICATION**

Within the discipline of communication’s framework, historiography deals with the historical dimension of public communication processes (→ Media History). In doing so, it can also examine isolated parts of these processes, the range extending from the origins of accounts to the media and media contents as well as to the audiences and to media effects (Stevens & Dicken Garcia 1980; Briggs & Burke 2002; O’Malley 2002). Examples of practical use are: the history of the journalistic profession (→ Journalism, History of), biographies of newspapers and magazines (→ Newspaper, History of; News Magazine, History of), the history of radio programs and radio institutions (→ Radio: Social History), as well as historical → audience and → media effects research. Through focusing on long-term contexts and by analyzing examples for particular cases, historical research can enhance the ability to perform reflection within the discipline and put the results of selective and short-term studies into a broader context.

Thornton (1998), for example, analyzed 45,000 “letters to the editor” in popular magazines and was thereby able to show how the *public discussion about journalistic quality in the USA* has changed. While at the beginning of the twentieth century the debate focused on public duty, 80 years later the credibility of the media was at the center of interest. Thornton knew for sure that his source did not provide an unfiltered view on the “voice of readers”; first, because only a distinct group of people writes letters of that

kind, and second, because the editorial office decides which of them are to be published. Thornton's arguments to support the use of this source were that the letters determined the agenda of the public discussion (→ Agenda-Setting Effects); furthermore, they represent what the readers were able to see; and beyond this, such letters "often [are] the only existing record of some public opinion" (Thornton 1998, 39), especially for more distant periods.

The historical audience research is confronted with similar problems. Using the case study of the introduction of television in Germany in the 1950s and 1960s, Meyen and Hillman (2003) discussed the *correlation between the use of media and the development of society*. What factors determine the changes in communication relationships and how do these changes affect society? The authors based their analysis on all available survey data from East and West Germany as well as the most important media services and a systematic cross-section of the media itself. They showed that the expectations of people in relation to the media are predominantly influenced neither by politics and media systems nor by concrete media contents. Primarily, their communication needs are dependent on working conditions and daily routines.

This second example shows that communication historiography has reacted to developments in the discipline of history. After a slight delay, communication historiography has reacted to developments in the discipline of history; it has opened itself up to the subject matters of social history and of everyday life history, and has also entered upon a discussion about method innovations (oral history, quantification).

However, unlike social scientists, most of the authors of historiographical papers still fail to disclose the way they proceed, and they do not submit their approach to discussion. In compensation they add a (usually implicit) reference to the historical method and an appropriate list of works consulted (this list being as extensive as possible). However, because of the success of the natural science model, the discipline of history, too, is now more conscious of the fact that no object exists without being the subject matter of research and that it is necessary to discuss the theoretical prerequisites and methodical steps that serve as a basis for historical interpretation. Moreover, historiography is unthinkable without historians. The questions that are put to history as well as the selection and interpretation of sources are never only determined by present-day interests, but also by the intentions of the authors and by their social position (Mruck & Breuer 2003). As historiography does not simply reflect upon a given past, the subjectivity of the authors should be discussed: their socialization, their conception of people and society, their relationship with the subject matter of the investigation, and the interests they possibly have. The historical method offers the best preconditions for undertaking this analysis. The criteria for dealing with sources that have been developed can be applied to theoretical elements, to methodical approaches, and to the subjectivity of authors.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience ▶ Case Studies ▶ Collective Memory and the Media ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Document Analysis ▶ Editorial ▶ Historic Key Events and the Media ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media History ▶ News Magazine, History of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Research Methods ▶ Television: Social History

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## **Hollywood**

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Hollywood is the metaphoric, if not exactly the geographic, center of the American film, television, cable, music, and digital media industry. Ripe with symbolic meaning for media consumers across the globe, Hollywood exists almost purely in the collective imaginary, since it is neither incorporated as a city, nor definable by strict borders as a geographic location within the city of Los Angeles. Even in terms of its real geography, Hollywood was only one of several industry centers: of the major film studios, only Paramount (Melrose Ave), RKO (Cahuenga and Gower), and Columbia (Gower Street) maintained production facilities directly in Hollywood, while Universal Studios was located in the San Fernando Valley (Universal City), Warner Brothers in Burbank, 20th Century-Fox in West Los Angeles (Westwood), and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) in Culver City. Nevertheless, millions of tourists flock each year to "Hollywood," which has also had its ups and downs as a piece of real estate.

### **EARLY HOLLYWOOD**

Located approximately ten kilometers northwest of downtown Los Angeles, Hollywood got its name in 1887, when Mr Harvey Wilcox registered his ranch with the LA County Records authorities. In 1903, Hollywood officially became a city with 700 inhabitants.

A year earlier, the Hollywood Hotel had been opened by Hobart Johnson Whitley (sometimes known as the father of Hollywood) at Hollywood Boulevard and Highland Avenue, but it was under the ownership of Myra Parker Hershey that it became one of the premiere hotels of Hollywood in the silent era. In 1910, Hollywood was officially annexed by the City of Los Angeles, a legal status that has remained to the present day.

Although film companies based on the east coast started shooting in and around Los Angeles, beginning in 1906, when the American Biograph Company sent location crews there in the winter months, it was pioneering film director D. W. Griffith who first shot scenes within the boundaries of Hollywood, for his film *In Old California* (1910). According to a myth now considered apocryphal, American film producers first began producing films in Los Angeles County in order to escape easily to Mexico from the goon squads of the Pinkerton Agency, which had been hired by the Motion Picture Patents Trust to enforce their monopoly on motion picture production. In reality, it was merely *sunshine and the diversity of topographies* that lured filmmakers from New York and New Jersey to southern California. In the early days of the film industry, producers shot on outdoor stages in natural light, rather than utilizing electric light, so that dependable sunshine was a must. Southern California's mixture of seascapes, mountains, desert, and other topographies in a relatively limited area was thus a plus.

The *first permanent film studio* in Hollywood was established in the Blondeau Tavern at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Gower Street by David Horsely's Nestor Film Company in 1911, when H. J. Whitley encouraged studio manager Al Christie to set up shop there. Within months, 15 other film production companies had established production facilities in Hollywood. A year later, the Idyll Hour Theatre, Hollywood's first → cinema, opened. Cecil B. DeMille directed his first feature film, *The Squaw Man* (1914), in Hollywood after leasing the Burns and Revier Studio at Selma and Vine; the "Lasky-DeMille" barn, which functioned as office and laboratory space, survives to this day as a museum across from the Hollywood Bowl. By 1913, then, Hollywood had over 8,000 inhabitants, many of them working in the budding movie industry.

### CLASSICAL STUDIO SYSTEM

By the 1920s, numerous companies and film producers had built permanent production facilities in Hollywood (→ Film Production). In 1913 William Clune opened a studio at Melrose and Bronson, destined to become a major rental studio in the 1920s, the Tec-Art Studios. This studio continued in the sound period under various banners (California, Enterprise, Horizon, Stanley Kramer, etc.); it still functions in the twenty-first century, as the Raleigh Studios. Today virtually all studio lots, including majors like Universal and Paramount, are also rental studios, catering to the demand of independent film and television. Fox opened its first studio at Western and Sunset in 1916, dedicating its expanded Westwood studio in 1928. Charlie Chaplin's mock-Tudor-style studio at La Brea and Sunset was opened in 1917 and is today home to Jim Henson Productions. Columbia Pictures built its studios in 1923 on Gower, the heart of what was considered "poverty row," where independent and low-budget "B" producers rented or owned small studios. Paramount established its presence in Hollywood relatively late (1926), having previously produced all its films in Astoria, New York.

Before 1903 producers sold their films outright by the foot, asking exhibitors to pay anywhere from \$50 to \$100 per title, which were run until the market was saturated. With programs changing at an ever-increasing rate, this system became economically untenable. According to conventional wisdom, Harry J. Miles of San Francisco came up with a solution to this dilemma in 1902 by purchasing films from the producer and then leasing them to individual vaudeville houses at half price. The development of exchanges meant that the distributor maintained film inventories, supervised the handling of films, and attended to the repair of damaged films. The exhibitor was thus relieved of these costs, without cutting into the profits of the producer. By 1907 more than 130 exchanges operated in various parts of the country.

In the cinema's earliest days, films had been projected only as an adjunct to live vaudeville performances. While it is still a matter of historical debate when exactly the first *store-front "nickelodeon" theaters* opened, some historians have credited Harry Davis of Pittsburgh, PA, with inventing the term "nickelodeon" in 1905, but it is probable that early store fronts opened in a number of locations in that year, bearing such colorful names as "Dreamland," "Bijou," "The Princess," "Electric," and "Bijou Dream." By early 1907 there were more than 2,500 nickelodeons in the USA. Many of the later movie moguls, including the Warner Brothers (who bought their first theater in Castle, PA, in 1906), Adolph Zukor (Paramount), Carl Laemmle (Universal), Louis B. Mayer (MGM), William Fox (20th Century-Fox), and Marcus Loew (MGM), began their careers as nickelodeon operators, eventually purchasing chains of theaters, exchanges, and production facilities. As the teens progressed, theaters increased in size and programs expanded. By the end of the 1920s, many movie palaces had been built on Hollywood Boulevard: Hollywood Theatre (1913), Fox Hollywood (1918), Sid Grauman's "The Egyptian" (1922), the El Capitan (1925), the Ritz (1925), Graumann's Chinese (1927), and the Pantages (1929). Such large-scale cinemas in Hollywood and in every other metropolitan area were soon controlled by the film companies. In the classical period from the 1920s to the 1950s, the film distributor supplied a complete program, including a "feature," a second short feature (B-film), a newsreel (important before the age of television), a short documentary (often a travelogue or educational short), and a cartoon (→ Film Genres).

Thus, by the time film production had been established in Hollywood, the *basic structure of the film industry* was in place, divided into production, distribution, and exhibition. The first vertically organized film combine, uniting all three levels of the industry, was formed by Paramount-Famous-Players in 1919, followed by Loew's-Metro in 1921 (→ Media Corporations, Forms of). The initial impetus for the Paramount merger was the growing strength of First National, a theater chain controlling over 639 screens, which had signed Charles Chaplin and Mary Pickford to production contracts, thus threatening Paramount's control over virtually all the major stars. However, it was a financial report by H. D. H. Connick to Kuhn, Loeb and Co. supporting a loan to Paramount that convinced company president Adolph Zukor of the wisdom of owning his own theater chain.

### **AN OLIGOPOLY INDUSTRY**

The 1920s, then, saw Hollywood and the American film industry dominate the world market by structuring itself as a vertically and horizontally integrated industry. Since the

huge American market allowed companies to amortize their product domestically, they could undersell the foreign competition abroad. No other country, except perhaps Germany, ever threatened *Hollywood's hegemony*. Hollywood became a worldwide brand name (→ Brands). In 1923, an enterprising real estate agent built in the hills above Franklin Street the now famous “Hollywood” sign, which originally read “Hollywoodland” in order to advertise a new housing development. In 1927 *the first Oscars* were staged at the Roosevelt Hotel. In the 1970s Hollywood, especially Hollywood Boulevard, degenerated to an area of drug pushers and prostitutes, but beginning in the 1990s, the street started to gentrify, and by the early twenty-first century had become prime real estate for redevelopment, again attracting legions of tourists.

One of the central ironies of the American film industry is that film production is both highly organized and ritualistic. While dependent on the exact coordination of literally thousands of people and the amassing of vast financial resources, the economic success or failure of a film is believed to be a matter of secret formulae, of luck smiling, of timing, talent, and guts (→ Communities of Practice). In its classical phase from the 1920s to the 1950s, Hollywood was a monolithic economic system, a multinational monopoly of corporations, whose structure of film production, distribution, and exhibition was based on laws of scientific management, an intense division of labor, the pioneering use of modern → advertising techniques, and complete control of the market (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Everything possible was done to minimize risk and maximize profits. Yet success was always thought of in magical terms. Naturally, as the captains of America's largest leisure industry, film producers were neither interested in exposing their own ruthless business practices, nor willing to undermine the social and economic status quo.

### CLASSICAL CODES

Hollywood's → discourse always supported a romantic mythology, because the very commodity this industry produced was fantasy and fictional narratives (→ Fiction). Film images sought to transport an audience from the real world into a universe of myth, where audience desires could find at least partial satisfaction (→ Uses and Gratifications). Long before economists thought in such terms, the film industry offered American consumers a service, leisure-time activity, rather than an industrial commodity, and thus foreshadowed the postindustrial, service economy of the late twentieth century.

Indeed, as early as 1917, according to most film scholars, Hollywood had instituted a highly conventionalized form for storytelling that is now subsumed under the label “classical Hollywood narrative” (→ Storytelling and Narration). In contrast to European “art films,” Hollywood movies naturalized the viewing process, imbedding the viewer through film technology and technique in the narrative, hiding artifice and any self-conscious reminders that the audience was indeed viewing a film (→ Visual Representation; Entertainment Content and Reality Perception).

In terms of film technique, this meant utilizing a *system of “invisible editing”* that would hide the breaks between individual shots, creating a seamless visual flow. Camera men and editors internalized a whole set of rules and regulations, including the 180-degree rule, the 45-degree angle rule, the use of establishing shots, and protagonist-centered plots. In terms of narrative, classical Hollywood demanded that character motivation and

plots followed the logic of generic convention and star persona, rather than a complex, three-dimensional reality: John Wayne appeared in Westerns, Judy Garland in musicals, Joan Crawford in melodramas (→ Stars). Dramatically, films had to traverse an arch from exposition to the building of conflict to a resolution through a happy end, with heterosexual union being the driving narrative force of practically every film story.

The “*star system*” had evolved in the early teens, just as Hollywood was ascending. While the Motion Picture Patents Trust discouraged naming actresses and actors in their publicity, in order to keep salaries low, the independent producer Carl Laemmle hired “the Biograph Girl,” Florence Lawrence, in 1910, successfully exploiting her name and image. It soon became apparent that selling “stars” was the most efficient means of selling films. By the late 1910s, stars such as Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and Charles Chaplin were so important that they could start their own company, United Artists (1919). In the classical studio period, every major studio had a table of stars, controlled through long-term contracts and an elaborate system of publicity to build them up (→ Celebrity Culture). With the rise of independent film production, stars became their own producers.

### INTERNAL CENSORSHIP

Given continual threats of public and private → censorship, beginning with the establishment of municipal and state film censorship offices in the 1910s, the industry created its own rigorous, internal pre-censorship system through the Catholic-dominated Motion Picture Production Code “Hays” office under Joseph Breen in the 1930s. Hollywood film producers thereafter privileged hetero-normative romance in their fictions as an efficient means of avoiding – with rare exceptions – political and social controversies, and thereby circumventing the crossfire of politically charged public discourse. This avoidance of the political was not just a matter of choice, but of law: in 1916, in a landmark Supreme Court decision *Mutual v. Ohio*, the Court held that the production and distribution of movies was a business, rather than a matter of communication, and therefore, unlike the theatre or newspapers, *not subject to First Amendment guarantees of free speech*. This ruling was not overturned until the 1970s, leading to a period of liberalization in sexual and social content, yet even today a “Rating” system, enforced by the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association (the same MPEA of the Hays Office), restricts access to the commercial media market (→ Censorship, History of).

### ANTITRUST ACTIONS

For approximately 30 years, the period known as the classical Hollywood studio era, film companies were allowed to earn unprecedented profits. Their flagrant violations of anti-trust laws were called into question by the US Justice Department as early as the 1920s. The courts continued hearing cases for almost 30 years, before the “Paramount Consent Decree” of 1947 effectively ended the monopolistic position of the majors. In 1921 the Federal Trade Commission had filed its first complaint against Paramount & Co. In 1929, after the acquisition of First National and the Stanley Theatre chain, Warner Brothers was sued under the provisions of the Clayton Act, which forbade the acquisition of any

competitor with the intent of creating a monopoly. In a criminal case based on the Sherman Anti-Trust Act, the Justice Department in 1935 charged that Harry Warner, Paramount, and Fox had conspired to deny a St. Louis independent theater owner any first-run films, thus forcing him from the market.

When the government lost the case, they continued to prosecute in civil suit in two further courts. On July 20, 1938, the Justice Department filed suit against the five majors, accusing them of 28 separate offenses in violation of the Sherman Act, including block booking, blind buying, and the acquisition of theaters for purposes of creating a monopoly. The case was settled out of court, when a “Consent Decree” was reached in November 1940, which limited some practices, but kept the status quo intact. Not until the Paramount Consent Decree did the motion picture companies begin the process of divorcement, separating production companies from exhibition. Paramount split in 1949, RKO in 1950, 20th Century-Fox in 1951, and Warners in 1953. At the same time, the growing television industry threatened Hollywood’s hegemony in the domestic media market (→ Television; Television: Social History), while demographic shifts with suburbanization brought a predominantly youth audience to cinemas. Hollywood was never again the same.

### MULTIMEDIA EMPIRES

It took a few decades, but Hollywood eventually reinvented itself as a group of transnational, multimedia conglomerates that dominate all forms of media: Walt Disney Company (→ Disney), Paramount Pictures (Viacom), Sony Pictures, Universal Studios (General Electric), and Warner Brothers (AOL/Time-Warner) control film, television networks, cable channels and providers, digital media, Internet portals, recorded music, billboards, newspapers, and radio stations. Leading the way was Lew Wasserman, who turned Universal (after MCA bought the company in 1962) into a powerhouse by initiating a system of independent production whereby agents and producers, at their own risk, developed and produced films that were then distributed by Universal.

Wasserman’s Universal was the first major studio to move into *television production and syndication*, allowing independent producers to shoot on the lot, but again at their own financial risk, while also pioneering the production of so-called television movies. Finally, with *Jaws* (1975), Universal created the “blockbuster,” opening a film in thousands of movie theaters across the globe at the same time, generating billions of dollars, not only in ticket sales, but also through product tie-ins (merchandising), and the sale of television and video rights (→ Popular Culture). As a result of this blockbuster mentality, the average price of a Hollywood feature film had climbed by 2006 to US\$75 million, and films that generate less than US\$100 million are considered flops.

### THE VIDEO AGE

In the 1980s, then, film distribution companies quickly moved into new forms of presentation, as theatrical movie attendance continued to dwindle, supplanted by other moving image media, especially home video and, subsequently, DVD platforms. By the turn of the century, income from electronic media far outstripped that of box office, so that the industry once again evolved structurally. Sony, the giant Japanese electronics



company, bought Columbia-TriStar and the Culver City studios of MGM to create Sony Pictures.

Viacom, a television and cable-television provider that also owns CBS, bought both Paramount and Blockbuster, the leading home video rental outfit. Disney purchased ABC, created the Disney Channel on cable, and differentiated its film product through subsidiaries Hollywood Pictures, Touchstone, and Miramax. Rupert Murdoch, owner of the giant international → News Corporation (→ newspapers, → satellite television, → radio) purchased 20<sup>th</sup> Century-Fox and created the Fox Television network. Warner Brothers, which was a subsidiary of the Time-Life publishing empire, also owning HBO and other cable networks, was bought by AOL in 2001. Universal Studios, after no fewer than three management changes in 10 years (Matshusta, Seagrams, Vivendi), was acquired in 2004 by General Electric (GE), which also owns NBC; GE's yearly revenue, in excess of US\$130 billion, would dwarf those of AOL-Time-Warner, Disney, and Viacom were they combined.

These companies control and dominate virtually all public communications media, from newspapers to television news, from book publishing to entertainment film and television, cable, and digital moving image media, from the Internet to satellite communications, from Broadway theatrical shows to video/Internet games, from all forms of amusement parks to billboards and electronic advertising, even political campaign media (→ Culture Industries; Media Conglomerates). It remains a central question and issue of communications research to ascertain if and just how the democratic process can or does survive, given the massive domination of virtually all communications media by a handful of gatekeepers.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Brands ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Cinema ▶ Communities of Practice ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Discourse ▶ Disney ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Fiction ▶ Film Genres ▶ Film Production ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Corporations, Forms of ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newspaper ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Stars ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Visual Representation

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# Hong Kong Cinema

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The term “Hong Kong cinema” refers both to an industry and to a phenomenon. In its most concrete sense it denotes the cinematic productions based in the former colony and now Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong. But in a larger sense it also refers to a stylistic and cultural movement, and the influence of that movement regionally and globally (→ Cinema; Popular Culture). As a cultural influence Hong Kong cinema has experienced several different stages.

Hong Kong first became internationally known for its *kung fu movies*, which displaced the sword-fighting *wuxia* genre once widely popular in Chinese communities of the 1970s (Teo 1997, 103; → Film Genres). In the previous decades the Hong Kong industry had been dominated by large Mandarin-language studios such as Shaw Brothers and Motion Pictures and General Investment Film Company (a.k.a. Cathay). These companies moved to Hong Kong from Shanghai after the postwar communist victory and produced films reflecting the commercial modernization associated with the 1960s.

The 1970s, however, saw the decline of the major Mandarin studios. Former Shaw Brothers executive Raymond Chow started Golden Harvest, the studio that signed Bruce Lee. Lee developed his own Cantonese version of martial arts films, with himself as kung fu star, in *The Big Boss* (1971), *Fist of Fury* (1972), and *Way of the Dragon* (1973), gradually superseding the popularity of the Mandarin-speaking films produced by the Shanghai directors in Hong Kong.

The brutal fighting scenes and anti-racist and anti-western nationalist themes highlighted in Lee’s movies not only appealed to Chinese communities but, paradoxically, won great popularity in western markets, particularly the US, and led to the co-production of *Enter the Dragon* (1973) by Hollywood-based producers and Lee’s Hong Kong production team (→ Film Production). Lee became an icon as an Oriental hero, and the Hong Kong action choreography was not only well received by international audiences but came to influence the staging of fight scenes in → Hollywood films as well. Lee’s premature death led to a temporary decline of western interest in martial arts films, but during the late 1970s, Cantonese cinema continued to have local appeal with the kung fu comedy films of Jackie Chan and Sammo Hung, and the comedies of Michael Hui, which satirized the growing urbanized Hong Kong society. The martial arts movies of Chan and Hung further popularized a kung fu “acrobatic” style that translated into big box office in North America and led to a Hong Kong-American international “action style,” represented by such films as *Kiss of the Dragon* with Jet Li (2001) and *Rush Hour 3* (2007) with Jackie Chan.

What should be emphasized is that the development of Hong Kong cinema is closely tied to the *socio-economic and political changes of Hong Kong*. Thus, though Hong Kong kung fu movies exercised global appeal, after the mid-1970s they no longer satisfied the first generation of local-born Chinese in Hong Kong, who were experiencing major socio-economic and political changes. Alongside the popular kung fu movies in the 1970s to mid-1980s were movies of the New Wave, including *Private Eyes* (1976) by Michael Hui, which exposed the hardships of the Hong Kong lower classes, *Jumping Ash* (1976) by

Leong Po-Chih and Josephine Siao, which explored drug trafficking and police corruption, and *Boat People* (1984) by Ann Hui, which depicted the tragedies of Vietnamese boat people seeking refuge in Hong Kong waters.

A major factor in the transitional period after 1984 was the Joint Sino-British Declaration returning the sovereignty of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China (PRC) by 1997. Fearful of impending communist control, a large number of Hong Kong movies portrayed Chinese mainlanders stereotypically (→ Stereotypes), as gangsters disrupting the law and order of Hong Kong (e.g., *Long Arm of the Law* [1984]), as people with insurmountable social and political differences (e.g., *Homecoming* [1984]; Yau 1994, 193–195), amplifying the sense of incompatibility between the pluralistic colony and the “uncivilized” motherland (e.g., *Her Fatal Ways* [1990]). These “realistic” movies, together with many local commercial movie fads about triad societies (e.g., *A Better Tomorrow* [1986] by John Woo), vulgar films featuring sex and gambling (e.g., films directed by Wong Jing) and the famous postmodern “meaninglessness” comedies of Stephen Chow (*Wulitou* [1997]; → Postmodernism and Communication) propelled Hong Kong cinema to its apex. Paralleling the global dominance of Hollywood, Hong Kong cinema had become another regional source of influence in Asia, especially Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and South Korea.

After 1997, Hong Kong cinema suffered a severe blow, ironically not due to political pressure but to the economic downturn resulting from the Asian economic crisis of 1997–1998. This was followed by the terror of the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) epidemic in 2002–2003. Many of the famous Hong Kong directors and superstars took attractive offers from Hollywood to continue their movie careers abroad (Dannen & Long 1997). Among those are John Woo, who directed *Mission Impossible II* (2000); Tsui Hark, who directed *Knock Off* (1998); Ringo Lam, who directed *In Hell* (2003); flight choreographer Dannie Yen, who participated in *Stormbreaker* (2006); and artist Chow Yun-Fat in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000). While the lure of Hollywood might be regarded as a brain-drain problem for Hong Kong cinema, many Hollywood films, in particular action movies, now carry the stylistic mark of Hong Kong cinema (→ Globalization of the Media).

In the face of this economic downturn some Hong Kong filmmakers risked producing films with high budgets. The most prominent of these was *Infernal Affairs* (2002), the script and high concept of which were acquired by Hollywood and transformed into the American version, *The Departed* (2006), winner of the Academy Award for Best Picture in 2006. Other local filmmakers sought to partner with Chinese national and private film companies (e.g., *Hero* [2002]) or with international financiers to produce high-budget quality films with a Chinese edge. For example, *Kung Fu Hustle* (2004) was jointly produced with Columbia Pictures Film and Stephen Chow.

Nevertheless, the pull of an expanding China market *poses a dilemma* for Hong Kong cinema: Can films be produced for the Chinese market – with its regulations regarding sex, violence, and politics – and still perpetuate a distinct Hong Kong genre and culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts)?

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Film Genres ► Film Production ► Globalization of the Media ► Hollywood ► Popular Culture ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Stereotypes

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## **Horse Race Coverage**

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Horse race journalism is a controversial form of political coverage. It means reporting on politics with the help of sports metaphors. Horse race journalism is particularly prevalent in election campaign coverage, mainly in the context of opinion polls (→ Election Campaign Communication; Political Communication).

Horse race coverage looks approximately like this: at the beginning of the campaign, a candidate goes into the race with a head start, soon gets tired, regains strength only after a quarter of the race, loses speed again and falls back at the back straight, only to make the home stretch by a short head and win the race in the end. The race is exciting from the beginning to the end (Broh 1980). Election polls are useful to journalists drawing on this metaphor, since they can tell the “spectator” who is ahead in the race and whether a candidate’s position is improving or deteriorating throughout the race. With the increasing diffusion of → election polls and forecasts since the 1940s, horse race journalism has been on the upswing (→ Public Opinion Polling).

However, it has been around much longer than modern opinion polling. As early as 1888, the *Boston Journal* used the horse race image in its election coverage (Littlewood 1999). It has been criticized ever since, and with the emergence of modern polling techniques, the criticism has also been directed against election polls and the way journalists use them (→ Polls and the Media; Political Journalists). The following statement is typical of the prevailing criticism: “Instead of covering the candidates’ qualifications, philosophies, or issue positions, polls have encouraged journalists to treat campaigns as horse races, with a focus on the candidates’ popularity, momentum, and size of lead” (Atkin & Gaudino 1984, 124).

According to its critics, horse race journalism *trivializes politics* by reducing it to a sports event with gladiators and spectators. Thrilling entertainment therefore takes priority over factual information in campaign coverage (→ Politainment). Horse race journalism thus contributes to depoliticization and trivial spectacle. Polling results are hardly used to analyze the voters’ motives, but rather provide the material for a credible description of the horse race in the campaign. Today, the horse race coverage outshines every other campaign topic of substance – more time and space is attributed to horse race coverage of the US presidential campaigns than to all other issues combined (Farnsworth & Lichter

2003; Patterson 2005). In all other western democracies, the horse race coverage is not yet quite as dominant, though it is on the rise there, too.

Moreover, horse race coverage leads to a *focus on the frontrunners* in the campaign (→ Personalization of Campaigning). Aside from reporting on candidates' positions in the opinion polls, the media also cover their character and the composition of their image (→ Candidate Image). "While the character of the candidates is obviously of crucial importance for a meaningful democratic choice, the horse-race metaphor runs the risk of emphasizing beauty – some horses are gorgeous animals – and neglecting differences on issues of substance" (Broh 1980, 520).

Representatives of horse race journalism defend this kind of coverage, claiming that many people are not particularly interested in politics. Describing "distant" and "alien" politics with familiar sports language could raise interest in political events. According to the proponents of this kind of journalism, most voters are primarily interested in who is leading and who is behind in the campaign. This, they say, does not necessarily exclude coverage on political issues. Horse race coverage could even serve as a door opener for issue-related coverage. In addition, it has another advantage: journalists have a natural interest in portraying a race as "open" for as long as possible, since the interest in its result would otherwise slacken. This reduces the danger imminent in the mass media, that a premature declaration of the winner turns the campaign into a self-fulfilling prophecy (→ Bandwagon Effect; Underdog Effect).

Horse race coverage employs a number of *stylistic devices*. Aside from the sports analogy, comparisons are used to portray the campaign as a dynamic event. More often than not, polling results from different points in time are compared with each other, portraying the candidates' ups and downs in the campaign. Even minor changes in the polls are dramatized with the help of the horse race frame (→ Framing of the News); erroneous interpretations of polling data by journalists are not a rarity (Patterson 2005).

Polls are also used to describe the influence of individual campaign events on the race – for example the impact of → televised debates. Journalists use such media events in order to illustrate trends and changes in the voters' support (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Changes in → public opinion are portrayed in conjunction with events. Incidents during the campaign therefore take on great significance for the candidate's position in the race: each and every mistake, appearance, and blunder can influence the candidates' image, boost them, or make them trip. Comparisons are also made between individual states or regions, so that the entire race is composed of numerous individual sprints.

SEE ALSO: ► Bandwagon Effect ► Candidate Image ► Election Campaign Communication ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Framing of the News ► Media Events and Pseudo-Events ► Personalization of Campaigning ► Politainment ► Political Communication ► Political Journalists ► Polls and the Media ► Public Opinion ► Public Opinion Polling ► Televised Debates ► Underdog Effect

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## Hostile Media Phenomenon

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The hostile media effect refers to a perceptual bias in which partisans – people highly involved with an issue or interest group – tend to see media coverage of that issue or group as unfairly slanted against their own position (→ Involvement with Media Content; Bias in the News; Balance). Thus, for example, groups on opposite sides of a controversial issue, such as supporters and opponents of abortion, will each judge news stories on the abortion issue to be biased in favor of the rival point of view.

Any individual's judgment of unfairly biased media coverage might be called a hostile media perception. That this phenomenon is a perceptual bias is evidenced when two groups see the same content in opposite ways, or when a partisan sees media bias where a disinterested observer sees fair and balanced reporting. Virtually all professional journalists can recount anecdotal evidence of the hostile media effect (also known as the hostile media perception), pointing to audience accusations that news coverage is unfair. Though such audience complaints may be valid, attacks coming from both sides – such as liberals' complaints of right-wing bias side by side with conservatives' accusations of a leftist slant – are cited as evidence that the news coverage must actually be on neutral ground.

### ROLE OF THE CONCEPT IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

A central aspect of the hostile media perception is that it dramatically illustrates the subjective interpretation of content: different people perceive the same content in different ways (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Information Processing). In this respect it fits squarely into the “active audience” paradigm, in which individuals on the receiving end of the communication process play a significant role in the construction of the message. The importance of this audience involvement also argues against simplistic early ideas about the undifferentiated mass audience, such as so-called “magic

bullet” or “hypodermic needle” models (→ Media Effects, History of; Models of Communication; Stimulus–Response Model).

The hostile media phenomenon adds a new piece to an interesting puzzle in social psychology: the apparently contradictory tendencies toward assimilation and contrast effects. In the contrast bias, individuals interpret information as increasingly divergent from their own positions; its counterpart is the assimilation bias, in which individuals see information as conforming more closely to their own point of view.

In communication research the *contrast bias* has generally been tested experimentally by using opposing groups of partisans and “neutral” stimulus material. Evidence for a hostile media perception, and the underlying perceptual bias, is claimed when both sides see bias in an “unfavorable” direction. Some research, however, has demonstrated a relative hostile media perception, in which there is a significant difference between group perceptions even though one group may not judge the content to have an unfavorable bias in absolute terms. This means that one group is not necessarily exhibiting the contrast bias per se, and the divergent judgments between groups become the focus of theoretical interest.

Some research findings suggest that identical information can stimulate either assimilation or contrast effects depending on the message context, and that the hostile media effect may be unique to mass media content. Experiments have shown that information presented to partisans in a mass media context, such as a newspaper article, elicits the hostile media perception (→ Experimental Design). But the same information presented in a format not intended for a mass audience, such as a college student essay, can eliminate or even reverse audience judgments of unfavorable bias, tending toward the assimilation effect (Gunther & Schmitt 2004). These findings suggest that, at least for a partisan audience, mass media may stimulate distinctive, perhaps defensive, processing mechanisms.

## THE PARTISAN AUDIENCE

In general, perception of disagreeably biased media content appears to be contingent on the individual’s involvement in the issue in question. Partisans, people who feel strongly about particular issues such as abortion or Middle East conflict or genetically modified foods, can be expected to see an unfavorable slant in media coverage of those issues, even though they consider media coverage more generally to be fair and balanced. People who feel neutral about, or do not attach great importance to, particular issues tend to find media coverage of those issues quite acceptable. Individuals who lean only slightly toward one side of an issue may find coverage more often in agreement with their own opinions.

Most research on this topic, particularly experimental research, has studied partisans by selecting them from groups that have a stake in the issues in question. Highly involved individuals can also be identified via sets of filter questions asking about the direction and strength of their opinions and then including for analysis only those with more extreme positions. It is generally accepted that partisans cannot be temporarily manufactured in a lab, since the intensity or depth of involvement needed to elicit the hostile media effect cannot be achieved via experimental manipulations (→ Experiment, Laboratory). Some research has included “neutral” participants, those without strong pre-existing opinions

on an issue, as control group members. Because identifying and recruiting partisans is often difficult and time-consuming, it is more labor intensive than most experimental research.

An additional difficulty is that, because partisans are recruited on the basis of their pre-existing opinions on an issue, it is impossible to exercise the principle of random assignment of individuals to groups, a characteristic of experimental research that is important for internal validity (→ Sampling, Random). As a result, there may be differences other than partisanship among partisan groups in an experimental design. These differences present potential rival explanations for differences in dependent measures. One remedy for this problem is to measure and test for other differences between groups – income, education, political, or religious positions would be some examples – and include them as co-variates in analysis.

An important question, however, is *what defines a partisan*. Or, more precisely, what defines the kind of partisanship that produces the contrast bias of interest here. Hostile media effect research to date has been more opportunistic than conceptually methodical in defining partisanship. It is not clear what level of involvement engages the contrast bias mechanism, nor what dimensions of involvement may be necessary or sufficient conditions. Such involvement may be related, for example, to extremity of attitude, to personal relevance, to perceived importance, to emotional engagement, or to other factors seemingly underlying the concept of partisanship.

## THEORY

Beginning with the earliest empirical study (Vallone et al. 1985), several explanations have been proposed for how and why the hostile media perception occurs (Fig. 1). The first group of explanations concerns how audience members process mass media content in a way that leads them to see disagreeable bias.

In one scenario an individual who favors gun control, for example, may be *more attentive* to, or simply notice more of, the content that supports opponents of gun control. Such disagreeable content may seem to receive more emphasis, as if appearing in boldface, or to take disproportionately more space. This mechanism has been called *selective recall*, though it might be better labeled as a type of selective perception. It implies that different individuals actually see a different reality in the same content.

A second mechanism, termed *selective categorization*, proposes that partisans may see the same content in the same way but categorize or evaluate it differently. For example, a phrase or sentence evaluated as neutral or unfavorable by a gun-control supporter may be judged favorable by a gun-control opponent.

The third mechanism, often called *different standards*, shares aspects of the latitudes-of-acceptance-and-rejection model associated with → social judgment theory. This mechanism proposes that, while partisans may see the same content and evaluate it the same way, they disagree about what constitutes acceptable, valid, or relevant material. In the range of facts, ideas, and arguments over gun control, for example, an opponent may argue that some content on the supportive end of the spectrum is false or irrelevant and that including such content in a news report unfairly favors the other side.



a. Information distribution in what a neutral observer would see as a balanced news story, with equal proportions of anti (A), neutral (N), and pro (P) content.



b. Selective recall; pro partisans remember disproportionately more unfavorable content.



c. Selective categorization; pro partisans evaluate relatively more content as unfavorable.



d. Different standards; pro partisans consider unfavorable content to be invalid or irrelevant.



**Figure 1 a–d** Illustration of the distinctions among three potential mechanisms for the hostile media effect; shown from the perspective of “pro” partisans

*Source:* Schmitt et al. (2004)

Since the mid-1980s, the definitions and measures of these mechanisms have been progressively refined, but evidence for them has been mixed. Selective recall has received little or no support, although recall-based measures may not be the best test for this perception-based hypothesis. Selective categorization, by contrast, has been supported in several studies (see Schmitt et al. 2004) as a mediating factor in the hostile media perception. In evaluating excerpts, one- or two-sentence morsels from the body of a news report, partisans on both sides of an issue perceived more excerpts as unfavorable toward their own attitudes and beliefs. The different-standards mechanism has also been dramatically evident in this body of research, but not as an explanation for the contrast effect. In two studies where the media (news article) vs non-media (student essay) sources respectively produced and erased the hostile media effect, evidence of a different-standards mechanism was equally robust in both conditions. This result suggests that people are indeed applying different standards in deciding what is acceptable content, but that it is not distinctive to the hostile media perception.

A second category of explanations concerns why partisans might process information differently when it appears in a mass media channel. One answer proposes that individuals bring a pre-existing belief in biased media coverage to their reading or viewing of issues in which they are highly involved (Giner-Sorolla & Chaiken 1994). Another view is that

the mass media context cues partisans to think about the potential impact of content on a vulnerable mass audience – an audience that may not be sufficiently well-informed and may thus be easily misled (Perloff 1989; Gunther & Schmitt 2004; → Third-Person Effects). Either or both of these conditions may put partisans in a defensive processing mode that causes them to perceive more disagreeable content.

## CONSEQUENCES

The hostile media perception is thought to have any number of consequences, most of them undesirable. For example, partisans who think media content is unfavorable may also think public opinion generally – presumably influenced by this “hostile” media coverage – will be less sympathetic to their own positions. It may also lead to increased polarization of extreme groups, and to an increased sense of alienation from other people and democratic processes.

Some studies suggest that the perception of hostile media coverage may cause partisans to lose confidence in conventional political avenues and resort to violence or other extreme actions (Tsfati & Cohen 2005). It is often argued that the information and ideas conveyed by mass media make an essential contribution to the quality of public discourse thought to be so essential to democratic processes. The hostile media perception presents a potentially important impediment to that contribution.

SEE ALSO: ► Balance ► Bias in the News ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Experimental Design ► Information Processing ► Involvement with Media Content ► Media Effects, History of ► Models of Communication ► Sampling, Random ► Selective Perception and Selective Retention ► Social Judgment Theory ► Stimulus–Response Model ► Third-Person Effects

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## Hovland, Carl I.

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One of the founding figures of communication science, Yale psychologist Carl Iver Hovland (1912–1961) was born in Chicago to Scandinavian parents. His mother, Augusta Anderson Hovland, had emigrated from Sweden, while his father, Ole C. Hovland, a child of immigrants from Norway who had settled in Minnesota, had left the family farm to become an electrical engineer and inventor in Chicago. Both parents were said to be deeply religious.

Hovland had a solid background in mathematics, physics, and biology, as well as in experimental psychology, receiving his BA (1932) and MA (1933) at Northwestern University (Shepard 1998). In 1934, he arrived at Yale University to become a member of faculty. He was recognized as an outstanding student, shy and self-contained, but gentle and musical (a piano player). He was found to be a very efficient administrator of research who never seemed to be bothered by details which he dealt with very quickly. He received his PhD with honors in 1936, under the prominent Yale learning theorist Clark C. Hull. Hovland rose quickly through the ranks of assistant professor (1937), director of graduate studies (1941), associate professor (1943, in absentia), to become full professor and chairman of the psychological department in 1945, at the age of 33, and Sterling professor in 1947.

During World War II, from 1942 to 1945, Hovland headed the Experimental Section of Samuel Stouffer's Research Branch under Major General Frederick Osborn's Information and Education Division of the War Department. The mission of the Experimental Section was to evaluate the training programs and films prepared for American troops in the United States and Europe. Hovland was responsible for guiding the work of more than 15 researchers, who did experimental work on problems of communication and social psychology (→ Experimental Design; Psychology in Communication Processes). The principal long-term researchers were Frances Anderson, John Finan, Irving Janis, Arthur Lumsdaine, Nathan Maccoby, Fred Sheffield, and M. Brewster Smith. The output of their research includes the highly influential book *Experiments on mass communication* (Hovland et al. 1949).

After his work for the War Department, Hovland returned to Yale to establish the *Yale Communication and Attitude Change Program*, on which he continued to work until his early death in 1961. Supported by the Rockefeller Foundation for over 15 years, the program, under Hovland, brought together over 30 co-workers and students who went on to become well-known professors of communication science or social psychology. Among the researchers were prominent names such as Robert Abelson, Norman Anderson, Jack Brehm, Jonathan Freedman, Irving Janis, Harold Kelley, Herbert Kelman, Abraham Luchins, Arthur Lumsdaine, William McGuire, Milton Rosenberg, David Sears, Fred Sheffield, Muzafer Sherif, and Philip Zimbardo.

The research program focused on how verbally presented messages change a recipient's attitudes, opinions, and beliefs as a function of experimentally manipulated variables, such as the credibility of the source, the order of presentation of arguments, the

recipient's prior position on the issue, the recipient's self-esteem, the recipient's emotions (especially fear), the time between presentation of a communication, and the assessment of attitude change (→ Credibility Effects; Order of Presentation; Sleeper Effect). The success of the Yale research program stems from Hovland's conceptual ability to deconstruct the complex relations between persuasive communication and attitude change and to reveal them using controlled laboratory experiment (→ Experiment, Laboratory). To this day the program remains a constituent part of → persuasion research even though further developments such as the elaboration likelihood model have advanced the field. By "establishing a structural-sequential mode of the input-mediating-output variables and processes involved, Hovland anticipated the later information processing approach that proved so valuable in cognitive psychology" (Zimbardo, quoted in Shepard 1998, 246). In the aftermath of Hovland's death, this body of work was acknowledged to be the largest single contribution to the field of communication ever made (Schramm 1963), the "biggest single force within psychology's communication-relevant attitude-change movement" (McGuire 1996, 43).

During his short life, Hovland published over 70 articles and was the editor or co-author of seven books. His activity was not restricted to within the university but also included consultancy work. He also played a crucial role in the formation of the *Bell Telephone Laboratories Behavioral Research Center* where he benefited from his early studies in the field of industrial psychology. He was one of the first leading figures to apply basic psychological research in an industrial setting.

SEE ALSO: ► Credibility Effects ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Experimental Design  
 ► Order of Presentation ► Persuasion ► Psychology in Communication Processes  
 ► Sleeper Effect

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# Human–Computer Interaction

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Every computational device must allow for some form of interaction with its user. Human–computer interaction is the discipline that studies how people interact with computational devices and the implications that the design of the human–machine interface has for this interaction. The discipline also investigates wider communal and social implications associated with user interface design and the use of digital systems and artifacts.

## TECHNOLOGICAL STEPS

The earliest user interface to a practical computer was the punched card system devised by Joseph Marie Jacquard in 1804. This system (remarkably like the punched cards used for data entry well into the 1970s) enabled weavers to instruct a loom in the design of a textile. The first modern computers emerged in the mid-1940s. Shortly thereafter, human–computer interaction leapt forward when Grace Hopper, an employee at Remington Rand Corporation, invented the compiler around 1950. The compiler allowed programmers to write in languages closer to English instead of in machine code (directly comprehensible in the computer’s binary system of understanding). A series of new programming languages followed. Many languages still in use today, such as Fortran and C, date from the 1960s and early 1970s (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

A number of breakthroughs in the 1970s began to open computing to non-programmers. Arguably the most revolutionary development was the invention in 1979 of *VisiCalc*, a *spreadsheet program* that moved accounting from paper ledgers to the computer. This program was embraced by ordinary people, who found countless uses for it from running small businesses, to planning the family vacation budget, to forecasting expenses in corporations. *VisiCalc*’s power was its user interface, which enabled people to view the rows and columns of numbers just as they would on paper. Even today spreadsheets are used by engineers, scientists, and businesses as a primary tool of calculation.

The other major development was a radical *redesign of the computer* to fit on a desktop. The Alto computer, invented at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center in California, not only fit on a desk, it incorporated ideas such as the mouse (developed by Douglas Engelbart at SRI in Menlo Park, California, in 1964), WYSIWYG editors, and bit-mapped graphical displays to provide a graphical view of the user’s data and applications (→ Domestication of Technology).

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE HUMAN–COMPUTER INTERACTION COMMUNITY

### Emergence of the Community

In 1982, the Association for Computing Machinery’s SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems was held in Gaithersburg, Maryland. This conference marked the

formal beginning of human–computer interaction as a distinctive intellectual community. Although the Conference referenced “human factors,” the concerns and methods of the human–computer interaction (HCI) community are only loosely connected to traditional human factors research, which is rooted in ergonomics and goes beyond computers.

The HCI community is a coalition of computer scientists, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, and artists, who share an interest in the design of technology as well as in analysis of its effects on people. Computer science and psychology are most heavily represented, but the community is open and interdisciplinary. It welcomes research from academia and industry as well as practitioners who confront issues of human–computer interaction in practical ways. The community is international, with many active members in North America and Europe, as well as in Japan, Latin America, and elsewhere. The HCI community, as it has developed since Gaithersburg, is best exemplified by scholars and practitioners who gather at conferences such as ACM SIGCHI (known as CHI), NordiCHI, Interact, and HCI International.

The proceedings of these conferences are a rich source of information on human–computer interaction. The CHI conference, for example, functions much as a selective journal (with a low acceptance rate) and showcases some of the most interesting work in human–computer interaction. The contributions of the human–computer interaction community can be roughly categorized in three areas: the design of new digital technologies, the evaluation of the usability of technologies, and cognitive and social analyses of the use of technology.

### **The Design of Technologies**

In 1998, Brad Myers at Carnegie Mellon University published a thoughtful review, “A brief history of human–computer interaction technology,” which addressed new technologies that have come from the HCI community (Myers 1998). Myers described the *provenance of familiar interaction technologies* such as overlapping windows, icons, drawing programs, text editors, hypertext, and speech recognition. He noted that tools for building user interfaces, such as user interface management systems and widget toolkits, are part of the legacy of the HCI community. Component architectures for user interfaces, predecessor to Web 2.0 techniques such as “mashups” (which combine data or procedures from more than one application) were pioneered at Carnegie Mellon in 1983 in the Andrew system. Myers observed that most important innovations were funded by government, primarily the US government, although industry also played a role. Practically all the inventions Myers analyzed were developed at universities, industrial research laboratories, or think tanks such as SRI or the Rand Corporation.

Since Myers’s review, one of the biggest successes from the HCI community has been *recommender systems* such as those used by Amazon.com to help prospective buyers evaluate potential purchases. Buyers are informed about what those with similar preferences purchase based on data which are clustered according to user characteristics. The earliest version of a recommender system was part of a project at Xerox PARC in the 1980s.

### **Usability**

The second major contribution of the HCI community is an activist one. Human–computer interaction researchers have insisted that computer users have the right to

well-designed applications that are easy to use. Don Norman has been especially vocal in defending the needs of users. The delightful cover of Norman's book, *The design of everyday things* (1990), depicts a teapot with the spout and handle vertically aligned. This image has become an icon for the need for sensible design.

Usability is held as one of the most important values of the HCI community. Several techniques for evaluating usability have been invented and are widely deployed in academic research and in industry. Formal, controlled laboratory studies are conducted in academic settings and at usability labs in companies such as Microsoft and Oracle. Other methods such as heuristic evaluation and cognitive walkthroughs provide less precise but more cost-effective results and have been shown to improve usability (Dix et al. 1993). Usability is not merely a good idea but a thriving practice that improves the products we all use. Of course, there is room for much improvement, and Norman described some of the organizational barriers in industry to usable design (Norman 1998; → Technology Assessment).

### **Analyses for Human–Computer Interaction**

The third contribution of the human–computer interaction community has been *cognitive and social analyses of human–computer interaction*. The most robust, integrated body of work is in computer-mediated communication, which examines how people communicate in digital media including email, video, instant messaging, blogs, wikis, websites, listservs, and social networking websites such as Facebook and MySpace (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology).

For example, it has been found across several studies conducted in different countries that in non-work contexts, users of cell phones, instant messaging, and social networking websites communicate primarily with small groups of well-known friends and family. These technologies do not expand social life but deepen it with those already known. Studies have demonstrated that, rather than isolating people, participation in online communities provides important social functions such as support for people (and their families) with unusual medical conditions, or casual socializing in online gaming communities (a substitute for the corner bar, which no longer exists in many North American cities and suburbs). A large body of cognitive research investigates the ways people interact with specific aspects of the user interface such as menus and scroll bars or how speech interfaces influence the user experience (→ Virtual Communities).

### **THEORIES OF THE FIELD**

The most theoretical work in human–computer interaction examines issues of cognition and sociality. The cognitive analyses of Card et al. (1983) laid the foundation for usability evaluation. More recently, as the purview of human–computer interaction is taken to be the wider social context in which people interact with digital technologies, new theories have entered the community, in particular, distributed cognition, activity theory, and actor–network theory (→ Online Media). Distributed cognition and actor–network theory posit flat networks in which both people and technologies are “nodes” or “actants.”

These theories are concerned with informational flows and the propagation of changing state across networks. Activity theory comes from a psychological tradition based on Vygotsky's (1986) work and views relations between people and technology more asymmetrically, with technology mediating reality for people. Human abilities differ from those of things; thus activity theory is more open to discussions of creativity, imagination, and invention, which are distinctively human (Stahl 2006). Actor–network theory and distributed cognition, on the other hand, have drawn attention to the agency of things. Kaptelinin and Nardi discuss these theories in the context of interaction design (2006), proposing an extension to activity theory based on notions of agency derived from actor–network theory.

Human–computer interaction is a young field that can claim considerable success. It has advanced our understanding of relations between people and digital technologies and provided many of the technologies that we encounter on a daily basis. A void in this tradition is critical analysis of digital technology. The HCI community has taken a positive attitude toward technology for a variety of reasons. The connection to industry is an obvious reason and the love of technology is another. This bias has meant that scholars who are perhaps in the best position to provide critical analysis because they have both deep technical understanding and an orientation to human use of technology, have not examined the costs as well as the benefits of technology. The attitude is that one designs technology and the “marketplace” will correctly choose those technologies that meet social needs (→ Information Society).

### CRITICAL ANALYSES

Critical analyses are therefore a needed counterpoint to the unexamined enthusiasm for ideas such as → ubiquitous computing, embraced by the human–computer interaction community. Certainly, we must ask if every human experience should be mediated by digital technology. Another pertinent issue concerns the hidden trade-offs between usability (ease of use) and human choice. There is little doubt that smooth user interfaces facilitate the use of computers and are inviting, in the sense of inciting people to explore the possibilities computational devices offer. However, technologies influence human behavior not only by means of what can be done with them but through what cannot be accomplished by the functionalities they offer (Kallinikos 2002, 2004). Simplifying the user interface often implies that some options are eliminated. Human–computer interaction techniques may unwittingly contribute to a narrowing of the space of possible options. The history of skills in the course of industrial capitalism suggests that removing complexity from the interface and stacking it “underneath” is a double-edged gesture (Mumford 1952). Very little is currently known about these trade-offs (→ Technology, Social Construction of).

Apart from the social ramifications, there are externalities such as the *toxic waste produced by digital devices*, which has been shown to pollute groundwater as billions of devices are eventually dumped in landfills. Promising work that addresses environmental concerns proposes creating a practice of “sustainable interaction design” (Blevins 2007). In the future, considerations of social responsibility in human–computer interaction should extend from current concerns with providing technology appropriate for people with



disabilities and on low incomes to more problematic issues of restraining and reshaping technology.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Domestication of Technology ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information Society ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Online Media ▶ Technology Assessment ▶ Technology, Social Construction of ▶ Ubiquitous Computing ▶ Virtual Communities

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## **Hybridity Theories**

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Theories of hybridity entered international communication research at a time when the cultural imperialism thesis was ceding ground to the media globalization paradigm (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; Globalization Theories). This has been controversial because “the idea of cultural hybridization is one of those deceptively simple-seeming notions which turns out . . . to have lots of tricky connotations and theoretical implications” (Tomlinson 1999, 141). Although usage of the term hybridity acquired critical momentum in Anglophone postcolonial studies – mostly focused on the British

colonization of India and its politico-economic-cultural aftermath, especially in the work of literary critic Homi Bhabha (1994) – the notion itself has many historical and scholarly antecedents (→ Postcolonial Theory).

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT OF HYBRIDITY

Historically, terms such as syncretism, creolization, *mestizaje* (Spanish), and *métissage* (French) have been used to describe various linguistic, racial, ethnic, and cultural mixtures in contexts as varied as ancient Egypt, post-independence Caribbean nation-states, and contemporary Latin America. Also, many scholars have used hybridity or variations on the term to explain artistic, cultural, and historical exchanges and mixtures in different parts of the world. These include the Argentinean-Mexican cultural theorist Néstor García Canclini (1995), the Spanish-Colombian media scholar Jesús Martín-Barbero (1993), the French historian Serge Gruzinski (2002), the French Guyanese literary critic Roger Toumson (1998), and the Saudi sociologist and novelist Turki al-Hamad (2001).

Although there is widespread recognition that cross-cultural fusions are historically and geographically pervasive, there is controversy about the meaning and implications of hybridity, which focuses for the most part on the nature of the connection between hybridity and power. In this regard, postcolonial theorists have sparred intensely about the advantages and pitfalls of using hybridity. Does the existence of cultural hybridity imply the subversion of political and cultural power? Does it merely celebrate the very specific experiences of migrant intellectuals? Or, more gravely, is the discourse of hybridity complicit with structures of inequality, as in the past it was a racist discourse used to justify colonial repression (Young 1995; Kraidy 2005)?

The field of communication imports its theories, methodologies, and some of its major debates and questions from the social and human sciences. It is not surprising, then, that the debate over hybridity in postcolonial studies translated into a parallel polemic in → international communication scholarship, where there have been major differences between, on the one hand, “dominance” perspectives and, on the other, “resistance” or “pluralism” approaches. After several decades where primary concerns were about → propaganda and then about → modernization and development, theories of cultural domination developed as a reaction to the western-centric assumptions of the modernization paradigm (→ Development Communication). “Cultural imperialism” and “media imperialism” approaches dominated discussions in the 1960s and the 1970s, but since the 1980s opponents have argued that dominance approaches rooted in the radical political economy tradition have lost their explanatory power due to the growing complexity of global communication and intercultural relations.

The result was an emergence of a variety of disconnected and sometimes contradictory lines of theory and research, most of them connected to the so-called “cultural turn,” a move away from political economy and social psychology and toward British → cultural studies, French poststructuralism, and American → film theory and criticism. The ensuing engagement with culture as a broad and important issue prepared the ground for the appearance of theories of hybridity at various levels in international communication research (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). From the perspective

of the traditional division of communication processes in terms of production, message, and reception, most hybridity research has emphasized media texts and reception, though a few studies have analyzed the links between production, message, and reception.

### THE CONCEPT OF HYBRIDITY IN RESEARCH

The British scholar Jeremy Tunstall (1977) may have been the first international communication scholar to use the adjective “hybrid” when he predicted three decades ago that regional media centers would produce “hybrid genres,” i.e., indigenized versions of programs developed in the west. Indeed, regional media production centers such as Brazil, Mexico, and Hong Kong have vindicated Tunstall’s prognosis and inspired research that engages with the notion of hybridity. One scholar identified four patterns of mixture in Hong Kong’s cultural industries: the *parrot* pattern described wholesale mimicry of foreign culture by local industries; the *amoeba* pattern referred to a modified cultural form with a non-changing content, such as the adaptation of a foreign movie for local consumption; the *coral* pattern reflected cultural products whose content is changed but whose form remains the same; and the *butterfly* pattern was a wholesale hybridization blending the local and the global (Lee 1991).

Some political economists of communication have toyed with the notion of hybridity, albeit indirectly, arguing that continental integration through free trade deals “does not portend a unitary North American monoculture” (Mosco & Schiller 2001, 4; → Political Economy of the Media). Indeed, hybrid cultural forms are compatible with the aims of globalization (Kraidy 2005), since market forces have shaped “an increasing hybridity of global culture, ever more complex and more commodified . . . everywhere more complex and more commodified in the same sort of way” (Boyd-Barrett 1998, quoted in Kraidy 2005).

One area of media research where hybridity has been a central notion is studies of migrant or diasporic media in western countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (→ Migrant Community Media). These include amateur, homemade media and the productions of professional media institutions. Migrants have used personal media such as video cameras and editing consoles, sound mixers, and increasingly blogs and the → Internet to represent the experience of migrant life (→ Blogger). For example, Croatian and Macedonian immigrants in Perth, Australia, produced videos of weddings and birthdays, video “family albums,” or raw scenes from the Yugoslav war to create “an iconic continuum” (Kolar-Panov 1997, quoted in Kraidy 2005) between host country and homeland. Similarly, media produced in “Tehrangeles,” the Iranian community in Los Angeles (Naficy 1993, quoted in Kraidy 2005), or media consumed by Punjabis in London expressed the tensions between two or more worldviews that shaped the hybrid culture of migrant life, drawing its affective energy from the native country while being concretely grounded in the host country.

The most nuanced treatment of hybridity in the context of communication processes is probably the Spanish-Colombian scholar Martín-Barbero’s expansion of the notion of *mestizaje* to include relations between ethnic groups, cultural expressions, social classes, and political constituencies, whose overlaps are best understood in the study of → popular

culture. According to Martín-Barbero, communication plays an important role in the formation of *mestizajes* because it is instrumental in the creation of meaning and not because of mere information transmission. As against media-centric theories of communication, Martín-Barbero (1993, 2) advocates an interdisciplinary approach more attuned to “the cultural realities of [Latin American] countries, the new combinations and syntheses – the *mestizajes* – that reveal not just the racial mixture that we come from but the interweaving of modernity and the residues of various cultural periods, the mixture of social structures and sentiments.” Hybridity in this case is a helpful entry point to understand media and popular culture as a struggle to define the social world, often drawing on myths from the past and aspirations for the future.

Hybridity has been useful for scholars in the field internationally. It remains a controversial notion, even though suspicions persist about its methodological practicality, theoretical usefulness, and ideological implications. In the end, it is still too early to determine whether theories of hybridity constitute a temporary fad or whether they will remain part of the debate over power and culture in international communication scholarship.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Cultural Imperialism Theories ► Cultural Studies ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Development Communication ► Film Theory ► Globalization Theories ► International Communication ► Internet ► Migrant Community Media ► Modernization ► Political Economy of the Media ► Popular Culture ► Post-colonial Theory ► Propaganda

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# Hypothesis

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Hypotheses are assumptions about empirical (observable) phenomena. They are formulated as empirical (experience-related) statements; thus they can be either true or false – i.e., they are testable. This implies that hypotheses are tentative: their validity (truth or falseness) is subject to empirical test.

In this general form, the definition also corresponds to the conventional, everyday meaning of “hypothesis.” In the social sciences – thus including social science-oriented communication sciences – the concept is more narrowly circumscribed: scientific hypotheses are empirically testable *universal* (nomological) propositions about *causal relationships*. They are stated in terms of either “if–then” or “the more–the more (or less)” propositions.

Example: “People learn from news media which are the most important problems facing their country” (→ Agenda-Setting Effects).

- This statement is an assumption which can be empirically tested.
- The statement can be translated into an “if–then” proposition: “If an issue is prominently discussed in the news media, then people will regard it as an important problem.” In this case, it can also be translated into a “the more–the more” proposition: “The more an issue is discussed in the news media, the more people will regard it as an important problem.”
- The statement applies not merely to a single media user, but to all media users; it is not limited in terms of time and place and is thus universal, and not singular.

Counterexamples:

- “Media use can lead to violent behavior.” Because of the “can,” this statement cannot be false and is thus not empirically testable (“If media are used, this may, or may not, lead to violent behavior”).
- “John likes to watch television.” This statement is testable, but it is singular and not universal.
- “Diversity of opinion is to be guaranteed.” This is a normative statement, not a proposition.
- “Everyone has the opportunity to get information from the mass media.” This statement does not refer to a causal relationship (if–then proposition) but describes an existing state.
- “The world wide web is a mass medium.” This statement is a definition and thus a denotation; unlike a hypothesis, it cannot be falsified (Definition). A corresponding hypothesis might read: “The world wide web is generally perceived as a mass medium.”
- “If television had not been invented, people would be more peaceful.” The if-component of this proposition is counterfactual and cannot be reproduced artificially. Therefore, the proposition cannot be tested empirically (many everyday claims about media effects have that quality).

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF HYPOTHESES AND THEORIES

In the realm of epistemology, the concept of “hypothesis” has a different meaning than in the context of social science methodology. In epistemological discourse, any testable proposition, according to the “general form” above, is called a hypothesis. That makes “hypothesis” a logically superordinate concept relative to “theory,” and indeed it is often used as a synonym, as, for instance, in Popper’s *The logic of scientific discovery*.

In social science discourse, the term “hypothesis” is reserved for specific statements rendered *directly* testable by virtue of measurements. A “theory” in this context is a system of (few) basic propositions and a large number of logical derivations. The basic propositions of a theory as well as the derivations must correspond to the fundamental form of social science hypotheses: they are universal propositions about causal relationships. This is a prerequisite for “backward” inference, from the results of empirical testing, via the derivations, to the fundamental propositions – i.e., the core – of the theory. A theory will, in principle, allow an unlimited number of specific hypotheses to be derived (deduced). Obviously, they cannot all be specified in advance. Therefore, specific hypotheses are spelled out only in the context of empirical studies.

The decision about the empirical validity of a derived hypothesis is tantamount to a decision about the validity (truth or falsehood) of the underlying theory in its current form; it is thereby *confirmed*, *modified*, or *rejected*. If a hypothesis derived from the basic propositions of the theory is confirmed, the theory is said to be *corroborated*. If the results of an empirical study contradict the hypotheses derived from the theory, it ought to be *rejected*. In practice, however, theories tend to be more robust than their derived hypotheses. Thus, if empirical results contradict the derived hypotheses, it is common practice to examine or discuss first the possibility of flawed derivations or faulty measurements, i.e., to examine whether logical or technical deficiencies might have occurred in conducting the test. If such deficiencies can be largely excluded, it still remains possible to *modify* the theory by adding limiting conditions which could explain the deviant observations. These added conditions, however, necessarily reduce the explanatory power of a theory since they restrict its range of applicability. If a theory cannot be “saved” by adding more and more limiting conditions, it will ultimately have to be rejected.

The decision about the validity of a theory is based on hypotheses derived from the theory. This principle is referred to as the hypothetico-deductive method.

## HYPOTHESIS TESTING

According to Popper’s *Logic of scientific discovery* (2006), the validity of universal propositions (general statements, including hypotheses) can never be proved (verified). To do this would require an examination of all conceivable objects to which the universal statement refers. This is logically impossible, if only because theories also refer to future observations.

While it is true that hypotheses are not verifiable, they are regarded as refuted (falsified) if specific observations contradict a hypothesis. Hypotheses always rule out some possible observations. The content, or power, of a hypothesis is based on the extent to which

conceivable observations are ruled out. A hypothesis is considered falsifiable if a *basic statement* can be formed which asserts the negation of the hypothesis. That is to say that a basic statement postulates the existence of at least one observable instance, anywhere or at any time (universally), that contradicts the hypothesis. Hypotheses, as universal propositions, refer to infinitely many phenomena and situations which can, in principle, never be tested in their entirety; but when a universal proposition – that is, a universal postulate of existence – can be verified, the hypothesis is falsified: “Whenever it is found that something exists here or there, a strictly existential statement may thereby be verified, or a universal one falsified” (Popper 2006, 49). Popper’s most famous example is this: the universal statement “All swans are white” is falsified if the universal existential statement “There exist (somewhere and sometime) non-white swans” can be empirically verified. Scientific research consists of the earnest search for observations which would falsify the hypotheses.

In this manner, the problem of falsification of a general hypothesis has been converted into the problem of verification of a falsifying existential statement. The question now becomes whether the hypothesis should be considered refuted by a single contradictory observation, or whether instead the validity of that observation should be cast in doubt. Since any observation is fallible, we should be trying to *replicate* it. A theory is considered to be falsified only “if a low-level empirical hypothesis which describes such an effect is proposed and corroborated (Popper 2006, 66).

Only universal existential statements can be replicated. Consequently, the confirmation of fundamental statements can be replicated, potential mistakes can be excluded with sufficient certainty, and theories thus falsified. Yet it will never be possible to confirm a sufficient number of existential statements (with errors safely excluded) to permit a universal statement, and thus a hypothesis, to be verified.

Observations, or empirical studies, can produce results of two kinds: the observations *correspond* or contradict the hypothesis. The principle of replication calls for repeated, independent observations in order to rule out errors with sufficient certainty. If the replications are in correspondence to the hypothesis, the *degree of corroboration* is rising. If the replications are in contradiction to the hypothesis, the *degree of falsification* is rising.

### Testing Social Science Hypotheses

The hypotheses derived from a theory are causal assumptions. Actually, causality is a rather demanding concept about temporally immediate cause-and-effect processes. If the assumed causal processes are in fact operating, they will induce corresponding relationships between variables in social science data (e.g., correlations or differences in means) that can be analyzed with the aid of statistical procedures.

In the physical sciences, hypotheses are statements that refer to individual instances. In the social sciences, by contrast, hypotheses are statements about quantities of cases. To illustrate, consider the agenda-setting hypothesis: “When an issue is prominently discussed in the media, there is a strong probability that it will be regarded as important by media users.” To falsify that hypothesis, it would not be sufficient to find *one person* who is using the media yet does not regard a media-emphasized issue as important. Statements about quantities of cases usually take the form of probability statements, and

they can be tested only in terms of empirical frequency distributions. Social science hypotheses are, therefore, tested on the basis of samples.

Potential samples, however, differ in terms of their composition. The set of all objects to which a hypothesis is to apply, called the population or sampling universe, determines the composition of the sample. The safest principle for generating a sample that represents the composition of the universe is a random sample. It implies that each element of the sampling universe has the same chance of becoming part of the sample ( $\rightarrow$  Sampling, Random). However, by using a random sample we no longer obtain exact measurements, but merely estimates of the assumed causal effects, with a specifiable degree of imprecision. Possible errors due to random deviations are represented and tested by means of statistical hypotheses.

### Statistical Hypotheses

By means of statistical hypotheses we can test whether observed relationships between two or more variables in the sample data might simply be the result of chance, i.e., of the random sampling procedures by which the sample was generated. This possibility, i.e., that *no* causal relationship exists in the population, is expressed statistically in terms of the so-called *null hypothesis*  $H_0$ . If the relationship in the data is very clear (*significant*), in a statistical sense,  $H_0$  is rejected, as that would represent a very unlikely case; instead, the (set of) statistical *alternative hypothesis*  $H_1$  – i.e., the substantive hypothesis that a causal relationship *does* exist – is maintained.

Regardless of whether or not  $H_0$  or  $H_1$  is accepted, an erroneous decision can never be ruled out with complete certainty. The two statistical hypotheses imply two possible types of error:

Type I error:  $H_0$  is true, but  $H_1$  is accepted erroneously;

Type II error:  $H_1$  is true, but  $H_0$  is accepted erroneously.

In the case of type II error, we draw no new inferences from the data. In the case of type I error, we are definitely drawing erroneous conclusions, as the apparent relationship observed in the data does not really exist in the population but is merely a result of chance fluctuations. The goal thus is to keep the *probability* of type I error (called  $\alpha$ ) as small as possible. When the probability of type I error remains below an acceptable level (in the social sciences commonly set at 5 percent), the statistical null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is considered to be falsified, and the statistical alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) will be maintained. In that case, a statistically supported substantive causal relationship is assumed to exist.

### HYPOTHESIS GENERATION

Thus far, this entry has been concerned with the question of how hypotheses in the social or communication sciences can be evaluated by means of empirical data. In epistemological terms, this is sometimes called the logic of scientific discovery. The following is concerned with what is sometimes called the *psychology* of scientific discovery. In terms of process, a hypothesis has to be devised before it is tested. It is the testing, however, that is



decisive, because only the strict rules of hypothesis testing lead to scientific knowledge. By contrast, the *generation* of hypotheses is not subject to such rules. Science is productive as long as the generation of hypotheses is free. This is where Feyerabend's "Anything goes" (Feyerabend 1993) is appropriate. It is of no relevance whether the idea for a theory or hypothesis arises from a researcher's subjective impressions, or an inspirational dream, or inductively as a result of analyzing data.

Although there are no rules for the generation of hypotheses, some recommendations may be offered. A researcher need not wait for ingenious intuitions or inspiring dreams; it is certainly *permissible* to derive hypotheses from the analysis of empirical observations. Indeed, the results of empirical studies can and should be exploited for the generation of hypotheses. One of the most famous communications researchers, → Paul Lazarsfeld, in his landmark study of "people's choice," tested and refuted the thesis of direct persuasion, and then proceeded to develop his theory of the "two-step flow of communication" inductively, on the basis of his empirical results.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Definition ► Generalizability ► Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ► Operationalization ► Reliability ► Sampling, Random ► Test Theory ► Validity

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# Iconography

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Iconography is both a method and an approach to studying the content and meanings of visuals (→ Visual Representation). In its colloquial use, the term “iconography” describes the motif of a particular picture or a specific group of artworks. A general distinction can be made between religious, mainly Christian iconography and secular or political iconography. In the context of visual research “iconography” is used to describe a qualitative method of visual content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative).

Originally devised in the context of sixteenth-century art collecting to categorize the particular visual motifs of paintings, iconography was first modernized by the art historian Aby M. Warburg (1866–1929) at the beginning of the twentieth century (Schmidt 1993; Diers 1995; Forster 1999; Rampley 2001). It was further refined by art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892–1968), who popularized this method of visual interpretation in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s.

Warburg used the term “iconography” in his early research, but in 1908 replaced this term with “iconology,” describing a particular method of visual interpretation (Schmidt 1993, 24). Panofsky, a colleague of Warburg, published a seminal article in 1932, introducing a three-step method of visual interpretation first labeled “iconography,” and later termed “iconology” (Panofsky 1955/1982). Panofsky himself did not give credit to his iconological predecessor (Schmidt 1993, 12), leading subsequent scholars to link the iconological method only with Panofsky’s name.

## **ICONOGRAPHY AS A METHOD**

Iconography can best be described as a qualitative method of visual content analysis and interpretation, influenced by cultural traditions and guided by research interests originating in both the humanities and the social sciences (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). In its Warburgian sense, iconography/iconology is an interdisciplinary comparative method, focused on the “visual interval” (Rampley 2001), both temporal and spatial.

Panofsky (1955/1982, 40–41) distinguishes between the first step, pre-iconographical description, the second step, iconographical analysis, and the third step, iconological interpretation. To this day, Panofsky’s three steps constitute the core of iconography as a

method. These three steps form the “act of interpretation.” Each of the three acts has a different “object of interpretation”; each needs different “equipment for interpretation” and follows a different “corrective principle of interpretation.”

*Pre-iconographical description* focuses on the primary or natural subject matter, which is usually the “world of artistic motifs.” *Iconographical analysis* is concerned with “conventional subject matter” – culturally shared visual → signs and connotations – and thus “the world of images, stories and allegories.” *Iconological interpretation* aims at unraveling the “intrinsic meaning or content constituting the world of ‘symbolical’ values” (Panofsky 1955/1982, 40; → Semiotics; Symbolism).

The “equipment for interpretation” changes from (1) mere practical experience and familiarity with depicted objects to (2) knowledge of literary sources to, finally, (3) “synthetic intuition,” “conditioned by personal psychology and ‘Weltanschauung’”

Panofsky’s (1955/1982, 41) reference to the German term *Weltanschauung* not only hints at his personal roots, but also reveals a primary influence on his thinking, fellow emigrant and eminent sociologist Karl Mannheim. In 1923, Mannheim published an article in German on “The interpretation of ‘Weltanschauung’” in which he not only defines *Weltanschauung* as “global outlook of an epoch” (Mannheim 1923/1952, 33) but hints at an interpretation method involving three levels of → meaning (“objective,” “expressive,” and “documentary”) as well as “objective correctives” of interpretation. Panofsky adapted Mannheim’s sociological method of interpretation to suit the needs of art history. Both sociology and art history are interested in understanding and unraveling how individuals as well as groups of people make sense of cultural artifacts and how, in turn, the visuals shape cultural belief systems at a given time. The method gives access to processes of meaning construction and meaning attribution to particular groups and motifs of pictures. Although systematic, iconography as a method is also highly subjective, raising questions about the validity of the interpretation result.

## ICONOGRAPHY AND ICONOLOGY

Many researchers use both terms interchangeably. But in Warburg’s and Panofsky’s understanding, iconology as a method went beyond iconography. While the iconographical analysis only constitutes the second of three steps in the interpretation process, iconology is the ultimate goal. Panofsky (1955/1982, 31–32) pointed to the difference between the two, hinting at the etymological origin of both terms. Iconography’s suffix “graphy” is derived from Greek *graphein*, meaning to write, thus stipulating that this is a merely descriptive method, aiming at an objective and neutral description and classification of depicted motifs (→ Objectivity in Science). Iconology, on the other hand, relates etymologically to the more encompassing concept of *logos*. Thus, Panofsky (1955/1982, 32) concludes, “iconology . . . is a method of interpretation which arises from synthesis rather than analysis.”

## ICONOGRAPHY AS AN APPROACH

Iconography in the Warburg tradition operates with a complex concept and understanding of the visual. Warburg himself enlarged the scope of art history by including “any visual

image,” regardless of its artistic quality. This meant that press photographs and other forms of mass-mediated imagery could be considered appropriate objects of study for art history (→ Art as Communication; Photojournalism; Visual Communication). The concept of iconography is closely linked to the German language. The key term of the German iconographic tradition – *Bild* (image, picture, visual) – cannot be fully translated into English. While the English language offers three different terms, there is only one word in German to describe visuals in the broadest sense. Warburg’s definition of *Bild* is twofold: any visual consists of a material and an immaterial dimension, in German conveniently labeled as *Abbild* (material image) and *Denkbild* (mental/immaterial image). For every material image, there are immaterial images corresponding to the material image. But not every immaterial image takes on a material form. Warburg was only interested in those visuals that have both dimensions, leading to the hypothesis that the material images can be used as sources to learn about the mental images of times past.

Scholars outside of art history have also used the terms iconography and iconology to denote not a method, but an approach. The most influential work in this respect is Mitchell’s *Iconology* (1987). He takes the word “iconology” literally, aiming at “a study of the ‘logos’ (the words, ideas, discourse, or ‘science’) of ‘icons’ (images, pictures, or likenesses)” (Mitchell 1987, 1). Van Leeuwen (2000) connects Panofsky’s approach with semiotics in the tradition of → Roland Barthes. Other works limit themselves to Christian religious iconography; that is, the classification and analysis of figures, poses, gestures, garments, colors, objects, and symbols that denote religious stories and theological concepts in European art (Büttner & Gott dang 2006; → Code; Religion and Popular Communication).

### POLITICAL ICONOGRAPHY

Largely unnoticed by the non-German-speaking academic community a “new Warburg school” has emerged since the early 1990s. The driving force behind this “Warburg revival” is the German art historian Martin Warnke, who, together with his Hamburg collaborators, initiated the renovation of the still existing original Warburg-Haus, which hosted the famous research center established by Aby Warburg – the Kulturwissenschaftliche Bibliothek Warburg (KBW). Warnke, inspired by Warburg’s image collection, recalibrated the iconological method to the topic of politics in its widest sense, creating an approach of his own, labeled *Politische Ikonographie* – “political iconography” (Warnke 1994). Warnke’s work is based on his collection of approximately 500,000 image cards, which are archived and accessible for researchers in the reopened Warburg-Haus in Hamburg. Due to the lack of translation, the international impact of this “new Warburg school” has been limited. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the combination of visual interpretation as a method and political pictures as a topic appears to be experiencing a revival, reflecting the need for explanation of visual phenomena like the terrorist instrumentalization of visuals (→ Mediated Terrorism), the publication of torture images at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq (Eisenman 2007), or the controversy about the publication of Muhammad cartoons (Müller & Özcan 2007; → Conflict as Media Content; Caricature; Cartoons).

Iconology has the potential to better understand and explain the meanings of contemporary mass-mediated visuals. Its holistic approach, intrinsic subjectivity, and cultural focus on western traditions are both its strengths and its shortcomings.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Caricature ▶ Cartoons  
 ▶ Code ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Culture:  
 Definitions and Concepts ▶ Meaning ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Objectivity in Science  
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## **Identification**

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Identification with media characters is a key component of viewers’ propensity to become engaged (→ Transportation Theory) and involved in media content (→ Involvement with Media Content). Identification is an imaginative process that is evoked as a response to characters presented in mediated texts, whereby → audiences feel as if they are part of

the world depicted by the mediated text (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). When identifying with characters, audience members experience the events described by the plot not as external viewers, but rather from the perspective of the character with which they identify, and as if they were part of the story. Zillmann (2002) argues that because viewers often respond to characters they are obviously responding to them as witnesses (i.e., experiencing them from the outside), but this criticism is valid only if one assumes that the responses to characters are constant over time and across viewers and can take only one form. Most likely, identification and other forms of response (such as → parasocial interaction and relationships) are intertwined and people move in and out of these varying forms as they view (Wilson 1993).

Identifying with a character means feeling an affinity toward the character that is so strong that we become absorbed in the text and come to an empathic understanding for feelings the character experiences (→ Empathy Theory), and for his or her motives and goals. We experience what happens to the characters as if it happens to us, while, momentarily at least, forgetting ourselves as audience members, and this intensifies our viewing experience (Cohen 2001). Thus, identification has both affective (empathy) and cognitive (understanding goals and motives, perspective taking; → Cognition) components. Though the relationships audience members develop with characters can take other forms (e.g., parasocial interaction, liking, attraction, imitation), identification describes the most psychologically involving relationship, but one that, unlike some of its counterparts, is a process that is temporary and intermittent even if its effects can be long-lasting.

Studies of → media effects and reception have found that identification with characters has important effects on audiences. Such identification has been related to more arousal, → emotion, and pleasure (Fiske 1989). Identification also affects how viewers interpret TV series and increases the persuasive effects of celebrities (Basil 1996; → Persuasion; Celebrity Culture). Ethnographic work (→ Ethnography of Communication) has found that teens do not adopt values portrayed by their television heroes, but rather their identification with TV characters allows them to explore possible ways of achieving the values and roles they adopt from their families (→ Socialization by the Media). In sum, it seems that Morley (1992, 209) was correct when arguing that: “One can hardly imagine any television text having any effect whatever without that identification.”

Somewhat less clear than the effects of identification are its *causes*. Intuitively it is suggested that one identifies more strongly with characters that are most similar to oneself. However, studies of how children choose favorite characters point to choices that are based on similarity to what children aspire to, rather than on actual demographic similarity. Other studies show mixed results, suggesting that for some audience members certain kinds of similarity may promote identification, but in many other cases people prefer and identify with characters that are different from them in very fundamental ways. Overall, audience members have been found to select and identify with characters across gender, class, and age. People’s capacity for identification with characters who are very different from themselves is demonstrated by their ability to identify even with animated and animal characters (→ Animation).

Other factors that influence identification have to do with the depiction of the characters themselves. Logically, we are more likely to identify with characters that are

portrayed positively (Hoffner & Cantor 1991). Viewers tend to identify more strongly with heroes than with villains, and character traits such as strength, humor, and physical attractiveness have been identified as important in favorite character selection. However, if the narrative structure of a story supports identification with villains, audience members have shown the capacity to identify with them (a notable example was the identification with the evil J. R. Ewing in the 1980s series *Dallas*).

Because identification is so heavily dependent on perspective and empathy, *how stories are told* can influence who becomes the target of identification and to what degree such identification will develop (Livingstone 1987). Literary scholars suggest that allowing a character to narrate the story can increase identification with that character. Possibly, using a first-person perspective in film can produce similar effects. More subjective narratives should, then, promote greater identification with a hero, as should suspenseful narratives. Indeed, our ability to identify with the characters in a story is often used as a measure of our opinion of the quality of the narrative and the skill involved in its creation. Finally, because identification occurs in the minds of audiences, it depends on the proclivities and capabilities of individual viewers, listeners, or readers. Gender and age have been found to be determinants of the intensity of identification, as have individual capacities for empathy and relationship styles. On the other hand, the intuitive assumption that lonely people are most likely to identify strongly with media characters as a compensation for their lack of satisfaction from their interpersonal relationships has consistently failed to find empirical support (e.g., Rubin et al. 1985; Tsao 1996).

Though the research on identification is no longer in its infancy, it has yielded only limited understanding of this phenomenon. Lack of conceptual clarity, use of inconsistent definitions and measurement, and heavy reliance on self-report methodologies have plagued this area of research. One can legitimately question the validity of people's insight into and reports about deep psychological processes such as identification. However, the continued scholarly interest in this area, and the recognition of the centrality of identification to the social and personal significance of media in modern living, promise a bright future for the study of identification. New research tools will lead to new paradigms and greater understanding of this important phenomenon.

SEE ALSO: ► Animation ► Audience ► Celebrity Culture ► Cognition ► Empathy Theory ► Emotion ► Ethnography of Communication ► Involvement with Media Content ► Media Effects ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Parasocial Interaction and Relationships ► Persuasion ► Socialization by the Media ► Transportation Theory

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## Identities and Discourse

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Social scientists are not interested in identity in the sense of an individual's unique name and address. They are interested in identity in the sense of the category that an individual belongs to (or is made to belong to). All languages have explicit names which allocate people to a category of person (e.g., *madre* in Spanish, *umm* in Arabic, or *mother* in English), an occupation (*ingeniero*, *mohandass*, *enginee*, respectively), or a position in society that has loose definitional criteria (*gamberro*, *'ozbagui*, *hooligan*).

### DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Much quantitative social science was (and is) devoted to “cover-sheet” identities like those, or still more general ones like gender, race, and class, and how they correlate with such variables as income, health, education, and crime. Social scientists who do qualitative research, however, take another tack. They believe that what is interesting about identities is how they are constituted – how society invents and perpetuates them. The way that society categorizes people, the laws it draws up, the visual images it promotes, the jokes it allows – all these are *discourses of identity*.

These discourses can be mapped in a descriptive way, to make a list of the features that society ascribes to any given identity category (one could, e.g., count the number of times the word “teenager” co-occurs with references to education, sex, television, and so on in the newspapers). Because that gives a rather static snapshot of the identity category, many



social scientists are turning instead to discourse as an active social practice – i.e., to seeing discourse not as static, but as doing some business rhetorically or interactionally. The emphasis is not on the list of features of the category, but on what it means to bring up the category at that place and that time, and in those terms. Most of that sort of research falls under the heading of → discourse analysis, which is a very varied set of analytic practices. Its five core features, applied to the study of identity, are these: (1) identities are to be understood not as essential and unchanging, but as subject to active *construction*, and liable to be imposed and resisted; (2) they appear in talk or text that is *naturally found* (in the sense of not invented or imagined by the researcher); (3) the identity words are to be understood in their *co-text* at least, and their more distant context if doing so can be defended; (4) the analyst is to be sensitive to the words' *non-literal* meaning or force; (5) the analyst is to reveal the *consequences* achieved by the identities conjured by the words' use – as enjoyed by those responsible for the words, and suffered by their addressees, or the world at large.

There are many ways in which those five criteria can be realized in the study of identity. I shall set them out in terms of their primary data; i.e., whether the discourse analyst looks for identities in people's own words in interviews, in the context of a locally researched site, in the wider political context, or in the organization of interaction.

### THE INTERVIEW AS RESEARCH METHOD

Interviews are still probably the method of choice for most qualitative researchers in the social sciences, on the proposition that they give respondents the freedom to express themselves, while at the same time allowing the researcher to probe specific questions that interest them. How one sets up the interview, and how one analyzes the resulting conversation, are a source of some debate in the literature. At one end are those who prefer the structured set of questions, and who treat the interviewee straightforwardly as an informant: thus a folklorist or oral historian might ask (say) community elders about their memories of their experiences as new immigrants, or about the customs of their particular sub-culture, and so on. The result is an enriched sense of identity issues as they are experienced by the people themselves, albeit filtered through memory and the demands of a retrospective interview.

At the other end are those researchers who look to the interview to provide evidence for further analytic work. The respondent's story might be subjected to a thematic analysis, a narrative analysis, an interpretive phenomenological analysis, or a free association method. These analyses differ among themselves, but they all look to find something "between the lines" of the respondent's account. A thematic analyst will look over a long account, or perhaps a set of accounts from different respondents, to find common themes of meaning – ways in which the respondent is making links between various parts of their identity. A narrative analyst will see how the respondent set her or his story out as a coherent narrative, using devices familiar from fiction to "plot" their life and people it with characters and events. The interpretive phenomenological analyst will use the interviewee's words to try to get "inside their head" and understand their phenomenological experience of themselves. A free association narrative method will approach

the respondent's words from a psychoanalytic perspective, trying to understand the inner forces that produce the person they express themselves to be (→ Interview, Qualitative).

## **RESEARCH CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Research in Local Context**

The ethnographically minded discourse researcher will be at pains to locate people's words in their context and culture. Interviews may form part of the researcher's toolkit, but principally as a way of informing the researcher of local meanings and codes; the analysis will be done on recordings of language as it is actually used, and identities as they come into play. Researchers in the ethnography of communication tradition, e.g., will look to see how speakers of different cultural identities signal those differences to each other, and how that affects (not always benignly) the success of their interaction.

Researchers in an ethnomethodological tradition will eschew interviews, and indeed any on-site material that is not brought actively into play by the speakers and participants themselves. The focus is on the ways that people publicly perform their reasonings about the world, such that they can prosecute their business with others: their reasoning is perforce available to all, without further interpretation or recourse to information not in the scene. So, e.g., in analyzing the way that a school student is judged to have a learning disability, Hugh Mehan (1996) analyzes not just the expert talk of the psychologist and the comparatively powerless talk of the parent, but also the props and furniture of the scene: the psychologists' notes and statistical tables, the boardroom and table, the seating arrangements, and so on.

### **Research in a Political Context**

Some discourse analysts prefer to approach their data from a given perspective on power and ideology in society, arguing that one must understand the social conditions of the production of a text before one can start reasonably to analyze it. The umbrella term "critical discourse analysis" shelters a broad family of analysts, but all are concerned to unpack the operation of power and ideology in discourse. Identities, their argument runs, are not always innocent, nor always under the control of the person identified; they can be oppressive, and the burden can be resisted.

Critical discourse analysts will not rely exclusively on one method or source of data. They may use research interviews with respondents, but their more common source of data on identities will be such "found" sources as newspaper and media accounts, political speeches, news interviews, and so on. The guiding principle will be to use linguistic and rhetorical scholarship to identify the metaphors, allusions, argumentative strategies, terminological choices, and pragmatic implications that converge to promote a certain vision of a group of people as falling under this or that socially significant identity. For example, a controversial identity like "asylum seeker" may be analyzed for how certain groups in society construct it to have – and other groups resist it having – politically and culturally negative implications. The work of the critical discourse analyst

is to find subtle expressions of racism and power, and to unravel their workings (→ Critical Theory).

### **Research in an Interactional Context**

Among those methods of analyzing discourses of identity that look first to what happens in interaction, the one that pays closest, and most exclusive, attention to the precise sequence of talk is → conversation analysis (CA). Its genesis was in the dissatisfaction of some sociologists in the late 1960s with the then dominant quantitative methodologies of their discipline, which were silent about how people actively realized the social world, in real time. In the 40 years since the pioneering work of the group around Harvey Sacks (whose lectures were published posthumously as Sacks 1992), CA has attracted a good deal of attention within sociology and outside it, and has developed into a multi-disciplinary enterprise.

CA's account of identities is to see them as being brought into active service in the particular moment of the interaction, for particular *interactional effects*. For a person to “have an identity” – whether he or she is the person speaking, being spoken to, or being spoken about – is to be cast (by a “membership categorization device,” which may be a term like “family” or the name of a profession, and so on) into a category with associated characteristics or features (the sort of thing you’d expect from any member of that category; their actions, beliefs, feelings, obligations, etc.). The force of “having an identity” is its consequentiality in the interaction – what it allows, prompts, or discourages participants to do or from doing next. For example, Dennis Day’s work (1998) on how people may allocate fellow-speakers to an ethnic group uncovers how mere hinting is enough to imply that someone is “not one of us,” and oblige them to take evasive action.

For CA, there is no need to go to the sort of abstract level favored by other kinds of discourse analysis, in their quest for the significance of identity talk: the speaker or writer’s use of (or hint at) an identity category is locally effective. If you call someone an asylum seeker (or hint that she or he is one) then you are doing it for local consumption, and the consequences will be interactionally visible. And this is true for mundane categories (like, say, “daughter”) as much as it is for more politically charged ones. In common with other discourse approaches, CA sees identities as constructed by language; its special emphasis is on language in use, at particular times and places.

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Critical Theory ► Discourse Analysis ► Discursive Psychology ► Ethnography of Communication ► Ethnomethodology ► Interview, Qualitative

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## Identity Politics

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Identity politics refers to the struggle for political recognition by marginalized social groups based on particular affiliations of individual identity, such as gender, sexuality, “race,” ethnicity, and nationality (→ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication; Symbolic Annihilation). Identity-based movements, as they grew in the west, challenged the limitations of political representation and citizenship offered within the liberal democratic state and institutions. Even as identity politics made visible more dominant social inequities, it also opened the door for rethinking and questioning within social movements based on identity, such as the movements for women’s liberation and feminisms in general (→ Social Movements and Communication). At the heart of feminist identity politics are the questions: who is the “woman” that is imagined as the subject of feminism or of women’s emancipation, and is there a singular significance to gender identity when the “woman” is embedded in a network of other social identities such as race, ethnicity, religious community, or nationality?

The Combahee River collective, an African-American lesbian feminist group, wrote one of the foundational feminist manifestos of identity politics, in which they insisted on the interlocking, intersecting nature of oppressions based on “race,” gender, class, and sexual identity. Gender politics, it followed from their argument, could not be analyzed through gender identity alone; it had to be mapped in and through the interlocked politics of racial identity, sexual identity, and class identity. Feminist work on “race” and gender in communication has constantly sought to unravel these intersections (see Bobo 1995), challenging work that solely focused on the white, middle-class, heterosexual woman as the subject of

feminist media studies. Rather than “race” becoming a marker for minority identity, the shifting colors of “whiteness” became important for feminist media studies.

Both British cultural studies and French postmodern theories of language and representation have played critical roles in the way the questions regarding identity politics have been rethought in gender and communication since the 1980s. The work of postmodern theorists such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, and postmodern feminists like Julia Kristeva, Eve Sedgwick, and Monique Wittig, questioned the very identification of “identity” with sameness and continuity of the individual self. Identity was reconceptualized not as an essence that belonged to the individual bounded by body and self, but as an *effect* of the working of language, modes of representation, and systems of signification that produce meaning (→ Postmodernism and Communication). Identity could no longer be thought of as the voice of individual or collective experiences; instead, identities themselves arguably emerged only through a play of differences in a network of signifying words and signs (Hall 1996).

For feminists, this was an important turning point, making it necessary to think not of sexual identity so much as sexual difference itself as an effect of language, representation, and signification. Clearly, this set the way for feminist media studies (→ Feminist and Gender Studies) to theorize media and communication processes as an important site for the construction of sexual identity and difference. The fluid, shifting constructions of sexual identities and differences through media representations, media texts, language, and symbolic systems that mutate in historical and cultural contexts became the single most significant theme in feminist media studies. New and emerging forms of femininities, sexualities, and sexual differences, as well as new cultural trends such as → postfeminism in the media could now be mapped through feminist critiques of representation (Dow 1996; McRobbie 2004). The concept of shifting, multiple, and contingent identities has proved to be particularly relevant to feminist research on new media (Sundén 2001).

The binary modes of thinking about sexual difference based on sex as biological nature, and queer theorists led by Judith Butler (1990), challenged gender as culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). These theorists argued that feminist identity politics could not be built on gender ontologies, or on foundational claims about gender that essentializes the differences between “natural” and “cultural” identities such as woman/man, feminine/masculine, homosexual/heterosexual, and lesbian/gay. The body, which had remained a biologically constant artifact for earlier feminisms, was no longer perceived to be a mute physical surface on which culture was inscribed (→ Body Images in the Media). Instead, the body was seen as something that fundamentally became intelligible only through sedimented knowledge, political contexts, and cultural meanings of sexual differences. Gender, Butler maintained, is performative; it is not a substantive reality belonging to the body nor is it a pre-existing social or subjective identity, but an act recreated through repeated performances by a body to produce cultural meaning. The argument led feminist scholars studying sexuality in communication to take both sexual subjectivities and the body as culturally constructed, and, as Henderson (2001) argues, as an arena for political struggle.

Given the centrality accorded to language and representation in postmodern feminism, women’s experiences were no longer authentic enough sources to validate feminisms. Thus, it became necessary to deconstruct the language of such experiences and subjectivities to show how they were mediated by history, culture, and politics. Since the

authenticity of experience was questioned, so were the feminist collectivities that relied on the shared experience of women's oppression as their ground, and the knowledge that was produced about women in academia. Processes of identification with another woman's experience were central to feminism's collective ground, and even to its academic knowledge production (→ Women's Movement and the Media). However, that was now open to question. Power relations between women of different classes or races were now regarded as just as significant as male/female power relations. This reflected on the world of learning, where women were privileged to produce knowledge about other women and to represent the experiences of other women. Feminist work in cultural anthropology, for example, has foregrounded the power relations between academic feminism and women who were the subjects of inquiry. In feminist media ethnography (→ Culture and Communication: Ethnographic Perspectives on; Ethnography of Communication), reflexivity, or the analysis of power relations between the woman academic and the women who formed the subjects of their research, became a key factor in the production of academic knowledge about women. The identity of the researcher, in terms of "race," class, gender, and sexual orientation was seen to significantly affect the research process itself.

If "race," gender, and sexual orientation were influential in creating discourses of identity politics from the start, postcolonial theory introduced a new dimension into the reconceptualization of identities (→ Identities and Discourse; Postcolonial Theory). Edward Said's work (1979) drew sharp attention to the frameworks of knowledge through which the west defined and produced an exotic, barbaric "Orient." Chandra Mohanty (1991) argued that colonial frames of knowledge that haunt feminist work represented the "third world woman" as a voiceless, passive subject of age-old tradition in contrast to her "liberated" western counterpart. Gayatri Spivak (1988), a central figure in postcolonial feminist theory, showed how the speech of the "third world woman" is impossible in the Anglo American academy (→ Communication Modes, African; Communication Modes, Asian; Communication Modes, Western). The voice of the "woman at the other end of the international division of labor," she argued, is forcibly muted through multiple filters of knowledge that the academy uses to understand her. Our knowledge about this underprivileged woman is always mediated by colonial or imperial ways of generating knowledge about the "east." Postmodern thought, which leans toward cultural relativism, can only highlight regional and national patriarchal ideologies of womanhood, so that the voices of marginalized women are not heard on their own terms. Spivak thus initiated postcolonial feminist criticism, which aims to expose not only colonial and imperial frameworks of knowledge, but also knowledge generated through regional and national patriarchies. While identity politics led Anglo American feminists such as Butler back to the body, postcolonial feminism now recast the body into its wider contexts of imperialism and globalization (→ Globalization Theories). In the context of the overlapping, multiple histories of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization, feminist work took on new, transnational dimensions that also questioned the first world location of feminist theory and practice. Transnational feminist media studies (Hegde 1998) involves the study of diasporic identities, immigrant identities (→ Migration and Immigration), and national identities inflected by transnational processes of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization, as well as by regionally dominant power networks that stabilize multiple patriarchies (Darling-Wolf 2004; → Feminist Media Studies, Transnational).

In the post-September-11 world, feminist media studies have particularly focused on how gender identity politics plays a role in the media's construction of the global "war on terror" (Cloud 2004) and in global militarisms (Weiss 2003). Identity politics is now being rewritten in feminist media studies over a very different map: one that no longer stops within Eurocentric boundaries of thought, and instead insists on theorizing gender through a transnational geopolitics of knowledge and location.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Culture and Communication: Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Cyberfeminism ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Social Movement Media, Transnational ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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# Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science

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For more than a century, two forms of explanation have been used in the social sciences: nomothetic and idiographic. These two kinds of explanation embody major differences in scientific logic, → *research methods*, and even understandings of how the world is constituted. The differences are so stark that they appear to some scholars to be unbridgeable, thereby threatening the prospect of achieving unity in the sciences. However, other scholars welcome both approaches, viewing them as complementary ways of studying and evaluating the same phenomena. At the heart of the nomothetic/idiographic debates is the question of whether the social sciences require different modes of explanation than the natural sciences. These debates persist to the present day, albeit at lesser intensity than before and with greater sophistication in the terms of the argument.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTS

While the roots of the duality reach back to Aristotle (Nagel 1961), the neo-Kantian philosopher Wilhelm Windelband is credited with creating and defining the terms. In a public address given at the University of Strasbourg, entitled “History and Natural Science” (1894/1998), Windelband set out to explore the question of where psychology fits as a discipline in relation to the natural sciences on the one hand, and the humanities on the other. Explanations in the humanities, he noted, take the form of an in-depth, descriptive account of “a unique, temporally circumscribed reality” (1998, 12). These explanations he called *idiographic*. In contrast, explanations in the sciences take the characteristic form of law-like statements about the mechanism for patterned, ever-repeating classes of events. These explanations, which enable one to predict the future occurrence of events, were called *nomothetic*. Importantly, Windelband characterized both types of explanation as empirical. Thus, psychology could use either the idiographic approach to interpret a person in all of his or her singular complexity, or the nomothetic approach to explain the regularities of behavior observed across many people.

Other contributions to the discussion followed in the early decades of the twentieth century. Max Weber argued that the nomothetic and idiographic did not necessarily correspond to scientific and nonscientific approaches, respectively. Rather, he viewed subjective meaning (or *verstehen*) as a unique object of study, with both nomothetic and idiographic approaches playing parts in advancing knowledge (Williams 2000; → *Verstehen vs Erklären*; Meaning). Gordon Allport’s *Personality: A psychological interpretation* (1937) reintroduced the idiographic/nomothetic distinction to modern psychology, where it had a significant influence on personality theory and research. Meanwhile, the social sciences at mid-century moved in two directions at once. The dominant movement was broadly positivist, and embraced the nomothetic goal of explaining behavioral and attitudinal regularities. A smaller movement of social inquiry began crafting idiographic strategies for studying self, society, and culture (→ *Symbolic Interaction*). Especially in anthropology, developments in ethnography elevated the importance of cultural interpretation (Geertz 1973).



By the 1970s, communication scholars began engaging in foundational debates about the theories, methods, and identity of the discipline. The nomothetic/idiographic distinction was often a main axis of these debates. Idiographic research in particular was vigorously championed – especially by scholars doing research under the broad umbrella of cultural communication studies (→ Cultural Studies) – as an alternative to the then dominant paradigms of behaviorism and functionalism (→ Functional Analysis). By the twenty-first century, a spirit of methodological pluralism in communication was ascendant, and open conflicts between proponents of nomothetic and idiographic approaches subsided. However, issues remain about the knowledge claims they produce, and how each relates to the other.

### NOMOTHETIC EXPLANATION

Nomothetic explanation in communication research and other social sciences is modeled on the natural sciences, especially the exact sciences of physics and chemistry. Other natural sciences, such as evolutionary biology and geology, are concerned with indeterminate processes and their theories lack the predictive power of physics. In addition, biologists and geologists often focus on historical records. Consequently, they tend to operate further to the idiographic side of the continuum. The nomothetic scientist seeks to explain human phenomena by means of a general law, often called a “covering law.” The structure of nomothetic inquiry is deductive (→ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction; Critical Rationalism), such that the explanandum (the event to be explained) is the logical outcome of a covering law and some initiating event or condition, which are the explanans (the propositions that do the explaining). The strong form of a nomothetic explanation is deterministic: Given the law, “If event A occurs, then event B must occur,” the appearance of A will always cause B to appear (Porpora 1983). Because a law has universal scope, the causal relationships it specifies should hold everywhere and at all times. Experiments and controlled observations are the primary methods of discovering and validating these relationships.

For a variety of reasons, scholars in communication and other social sciences have failed to discover covering laws. For one thing, *the causes of human behavior tend to be indeterminate*. Unlike the world of physics, in which events occur invariantly in closed, homogeneous environments, human action occurs in open systems (Monge 1973). The effects that arise in open systems are often due to multiple causal paths that vary from moment to moment, making it nearly impossible to adopt the strong form of nomothetic explanation (Bernstein et al. 2000). Related to this point, *people’s reasons for acting* often have to be taken into account; as Porpora (1983) noted, there is no limit to the reasons that an actor can produce. Epistemological issues also undercut the ability of social scientists to develop law-like statements. Couched as they are in natural language, *social science theories lack point-to-point correspondence with the phenomena they try to explain*. In addition, theoretical statements can be meaningful apart from any operational definitions that might be devised (O’Keefe 1975). Consequently, human behavior can be explained through many different types of scientific account.

Laws may be beyond their reach, but communication researchers continue to strive to produce findings that can be generalized to a population with a known probability. As a

result, *ceteris paribus* propositions – i.e., stating a predictive relationship between events, with the qualifier “all things being equal” – are fairly widespread in communication research. Of course, all things are never equal. The use of statistical models, such as the inductive-statistical and the deductive-statistical models (Bostrom & Donohew 1992), allows nomothetic science to go on, subject to certain conditions (→ Quantitative Methodology). This approach to empirical research has led over the decades to the construction of communication theories of considerable scope, precision, and complexity.

### IDIOGRAPHIC EXPLANATION

Idiographic explanation concerns the particulars of one case, be it an individual, a dyad, a group, an organization, or a cultural system. The idea that *no two lives are the same* is one of its bedrock assumptions. This is not exactly the same as saying that the individual is of ultimate importance. Rather, idiographic analysts study the contexts in which the individual finds meaning for his or her actions (Anderson 1987). Another major assumption is that *human action does not arise from determinate causes*. Unlike the world described by the physical sciences, humans create their own cultural environments and are able to make themselves objects in conscious thought. Human action emerges in large part from the *motivation to “make sense”* of social and physical circumstances. The process of making sense is not individualized or abstract, but comes into being through the situated use of language and other kinds of symbolization. Thus, idiographic analysts treat behavior as a semiotic act that must be interpreted (→ Semiotics). If causal claims arise at all in idiographic research, they are likely to be specific to the social rules and codes of the case itself.

Idiographic explanation is closely aligned with *verstehen*, a method that stresses empathetic understanding with others. To carry out this kind of project, the researcher often follows a long-term, participatory path which may culminate in an ethnography, case study, or life history. Like its counterparts in history and other humanities, the value of such studies depends in large part on their insightful descriptions of local scenes. It should be noted, however, that idiographic studies are not exclusively qualitative (→ Qualitative Methodology). For example, inferences about just one person or one group can be drawn from multi-method studies, or through the use of ipsative techniques like Q methodology. Regardless of the methods chosen, the process of idiographic research unfolds inductively, moving from closely observed particulars toward an interpretation.

Whereas the application of the nomothetic approach in the social sciences faces both logical and practical challenges, the idiographic approach mostly encounters questions about its value. *Case studies*, for example, are sometimes thought to be “pre-scientific” (→ Case Studies). That is, they are seen as a preliminary (or formative) step in the design of controlled experiments or surveys, or a pedagogical aid for learning how to conceptualize research problems. Idiographic studies are also criticized for focusing on rare or “deviant” cases, and for not being sufficiently concerned with the frequency of behavior. The most common criticism, however, is that idiographic research cannot generalize to a larger population (→ Generalizability). The utility of knowing a lot about one case seems questionable to scholars who prefer knowledge of wide, if not universal, scope.

Advocates of the idiographic approach answer these criticisms with several arguments. The understanding of a whole entity, it is claimed, has its own inherent value. Collectively, idiographic studies reveal some of the great diversity of humanity's customs, moralities, and ideologies, thus serving as a corrective to cultural misunderstandings. The problem of nongeneralizability, some argue, can be solved within the logic of idiographic explanation. For example, a thickly described case can sometimes enable people to decide whether the findings apply in their own contexts (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Moreover, a number of analytic tools, such as negative case analysis (Lincoln & Guba 1985) and cross-case analysis (Eisenhardt 1989), are used to extend knowledge claims. However, a recent review of the generalizability issue in ethnography (Williams 2000) concludes that *moderatum* claims about the "cultural consistency" in a social world is as far as one can go in the idiographic dimension. Ultimately, idiographic explanation provides the kind of holistic, "experience-near" knowledge that is typically missing from nomothetic research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Case Studies ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Generalizability ▶ Meaning ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Semiotics ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Verstehen vs Erklären

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# Illustrated Newspapers

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The *first illustrated* → *magazine* to be published in the world, according to Jackson (1885), was the *Penny Magazine* of Charles Knight, launched in London in 1832. This publication was promoted by the Society for the Development of Useful Knowledge, of which Knight was a founder. Inspired by encyclopedism, its content mainly concerned “useful knowledge,” namely, information that aimed at educating the public (→ *Magazine, History of*). Each issue of the magazine comprised dozens of wood engravings that contributed to the explosion of the market for papers, which, until then, had not been illustrated. The engravings also immediately boosted the publishing industry and the occupation of wood engravers. Engravers trained by Thomas Bewick were responsible for the prevalence of the English model in other countries. The French *Magasin pittoresque* and the German *Pfennig Magazin* had to hire English engravers for years before they could train their own. Consequently, they often published illustrations with English topics, which intensely annoyed their readers!

The importance of wood engraving increased even more in the *second generation* of the illustrated press (Bacot 2006), which began with the *Illustrated London News* in 1842. Doubling the size of the earlier format with the help of newly developed print technologies, this paper’s 16 pages included various sizes of illustrations, some of them even double-page spreads. It sold at a high price and exclusively on subscription, and became a model for many other illustrated periodicals, which sprang up in other countries. Among them, both *L’Illustration* in Paris and the *Illustrierte Zeitung* in Leipzig appeared in 1843. These papers offered a mixture of diverse subjects (news, novels, etc.). Progressively, however, they were transformed into *illustrated* → *newspapers* as their content was dedicated to reports on current events, thereby modifying the press industry once again. For instance, the European revolutions of 1848 forced these papers to create an illustrated news reporting service, with sketchers and draughtsmen working in the field, and a team of engravers handling the production process. Later, coverage of the Crimean War (1853–1856) reshaped the nature of reporting and, by extension, the structure of occupations in the publishing industry (→ *Newspaper, History of*; *Journalism, History of*).

Reporters producing illustrations worked in peculiar conditions. Pressed by time, they often simply sketched a scene roughly, as the assignment deadline did not allow them to finish the drawing. Hence, even the most accomplished artists were little more than journalists on the front, aiming at a literal representation of what they saw, which was more or less faithfully reproduced in the engravings published in the papers. The production of illustration in newspapers relied entirely on engravings. For papers such as *The Illustrated London News* or *L’Illustration*, large teams of draughtsmen and engravers worked on the

same picture at the same time. As soon as one section of the drawing was reproduced on wood, it was sent to the workshop, where it was engraved, while the draughtsman drew another section. At the end of this process the engraver-in-chief set all the pieces together and engraved the lines to make the parts of the picture look like a whole (Martin 2006). This type of assembly line did not produce the most artistic engravings but had the advantage of being very quick, which was of prime importance for a newspaper. It was the source of the progressive proletarianization of the occupation of engraver.

From the 1850s the *rise of nationalism* transformed the illustrated newspaper into a means of constructing national imaginaries, using stereotyped images representing “us” and “others” (→ Stereotypes). This was crucial during the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–1871 (Martin 2006), especially due to the growth of competition from cheaper papers in the early 1860s. Although few papers belonged to this *third generation*, these often had a very large circulation. Once again, London was the first to launch such papers, with the *Penny Illustrated Paper* in 1861, imitated by the Parisian *Journal illustré* in 1864 and the *Presse illustrée* in 1867 (both sold for 10 centimes; → Penny Press). These generously illustrated newspapers were barely less luxurious than their predecessors and much cheaper, which made them accessible to a popular mass readership. As a result, however, their workers gradually fell into anonymity.

Finally, in the 1890s, a *fourth generation* was born in France, that of the daily papers’ weekly *supplements*, especially the *Petit Journal* and the *Petit Parisien*. Sold for one *sous*, they attained a circulation of over three million. Despite the huge circulation of these publications, this should by no means be seen as the democratization of the press. It must be remembered that all of these papers were owned and edited by members of the middle classes, if not the bourgeoisie. The knowledge/information offered to their readers was undoubtedly top-down, and working class interests had little to do with the content, although people had to be satisfied enough to buy it regularly. Yet these newspapers did much to spread information in everyday culture by offering high-quality illustrations on current events. The intentions of the owner-editors generally went further than profits alone, as they were willing to offer a content that would “educate/inform” their readers. As such, these papers mostly promoted the interests of those who held the social, economic, and political power, but that did not prevent them from occasionally publishing “radical” ideas promoting actions for improving the well-being of the less fortunate classes.

While the distribution of illustrated newspapers mushroomed over the following decades, it took some time before engravings were replaced by photographs in periodicals. This was particularly true of popular papers, which tended to focus on violent events until World War I. It was only in 1936 that *Life* launched a new model from the United States, the news magazine, in which → photography was the only means of illustration (→ News Magazine, History of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Magazine ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Media History ▶ News Magazine, History of ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Penny Press ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation

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## **Image**

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One's image is a very important factor. For example, the oil industry came under fire in 2006 as profits rose along with gasoline prices. Actor and director Mel Gibson was roundly criticized for making anti-Semitic comments while intoxicated. Athletes such as track star Justin Gatlin and cyclist Floyd Landis came under fire for alleged use of illegal performance-enhancing drugs. First, the nature of our image influences our self-esteem; if we believe we have created an undesirable image, that can be an embarrassing and unpleasant experience for us. Second, our image can influence our relations with others. Our reputation influences our persuasiveness; people are less likely to be persuaded by those whom they believe to have undesirable images. For us to be persuasive, our audience must believe that we are knowledgeable about our topic (expertise) and they must have faith that we will provide them with unbiased information (trustworthiness) (→ Credibility Effects; Credibility of Content). Third, others may shun us and treat us badly when they form undesirable impressions of us. It is clear that a desirable image is important to create, maintain, and repair when tarnished (→ Self-Presentation; Image Restoration Theory).

It is not only people who need favorable images and suffer from image problems: groups and organizations, including businesses and countries, have images. Consider the reputations of Enron after the scandal, of the Catholic church following accusations of pedophile priests, of the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, of the United States in some parts of the world after the invasion of Iraq (and no weapons of mass destruction were found), or of Iran and North Korea (→ Corporate Reputation). Company officers, employees, stockholders as well as government officials and citizens can become disaffected by a poor image. Furthermore, companies have more difficulty persuading people to buy their goods and services when they suffer from undesirable images. Other companies may be less likely to sell supplies to companies with poor reputations (or may charge a premium to do so). Governmental regulators may create problems for companies with unfavorable images depending on the nature of the image problem. One country may have difficulty obtaining cooperation from other countries. Thus, creating and maintaining a positive image is an extremely important consideration, whether one is an individual, an organization, a company, or a country.

An image is a → *perception* that others have of a person or organization (Benoit 2000; Moffitt 1994). That images are perceptions means that they are not objective and may not accurately reflect reality; although, of course, what “reality” is and our understanding of whether that “reality” is good or bad are open to interpretation because reality is socially constructed (see Berger & Luckmann 1966; → Media and Perceptions of Reality; Perceived Reality as a Communication Process). The “facts” of the matter can help repair a damaged image, but the audience may not necessarily accept the accused’s version of the truth. Some images are very strongly held, but that images are perceptions, not objective parts of reality, means that we can alter images through communication.

Furthermore, that images are perceptions means that different people often have different impressions of the same person or organization. A clear example occurred during the 2004 US presidential election as Republicans and Democrats had distinctly different impressions of President Bush: 91 percent of Republicans but only 17 percent of Democrats approved of the job Bush was doing (Benedetto & Keen 2004). In this case one person gave rise to highly conflicted images in different audiences. However, we need to know how images are formed to have a good chance of predictably altering them.

Images are developed from messages about, messages from, and actions by a person or organization. That is, our impressions of, say, the United Nations arise out of things said about the UN, things said by UN officials, and actions taken by the UN. Of course, an image can be shaped only by information we have. One reason images vary from person to person is that we do not all hear the same messages or see the same actions. Another reason for varied images is that people have different values. For example, voters who thought terrorism was more important than unemployment were more likely to have favorable images of President Bush, compared with voters who thought unemployment mattered more than terrorism. Understanding the nature of image is essential to creating, maintaining, and, when necessary, repairing an image.

SEE ALSO: ► Apologies and Remedial Episodes ► Corporate Reputation ► Credibility of Content ► Credibility Effects ► Crisis Communication ► Image Restoration Theory ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ► Perception ► Public Relations ► Self-Presentation

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## Image Ethics

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Image ethics has never before been the subject of so much media criticism as at the present time. The use of violent images is questioned. Photographers that hound celebrities beyond propriety are criticized. Pictures that are manipulated and present misleading views damage the media’s credibility. Images that perpetuate negative stereotypes of individuals from various multicultural groups are noticed. Pictures that blur the distinction between advertising and journalism undercut journalism’s legitimacy. Visual messages can have tremendous emotional impact upon viewers. With proper contextualization, they can serve to inform and educate, as well as entertain and persuade. But used thoughtlessly or superficially, images can also offend, shock, mislead, stereotype, and confuse.

The apparent veracity of pictures, the sense in which they seem to simply reflect reality, often obscures the ethical choices involved in their creation. Yet the fact that images routinely employ visual metaphors means that media production is always subject to ethical considerations (Messaris 1996). Visual messages make rhetorical claims about the world, whether intentional or not, as part of → journalism, → advertising, and entertainment, and other fields. Image ethics attempts to foster accountability for visual messages (→ Rhetoric and Visuality; Ethics of Media Content; Accountability of the Media).

When a violent picture of a dead victim of a tragic event is presented to the public in either the print or screen media, many are repulsed and offended. Nevertheless, violence and tragedy are staples of the media. Published, posted, or broadcast images are expected as part of a media system that professes to cover and reflect the world we inhabit (→ Violence as Media Content). Visual journalists often defend such images as a way to warn others of the dangers of modern living – for instance, to urge drivers to wear seat belts. Yet despite such explanations, sensational images of violence and victims are shown as much for economic as utilitarian reasons. Ethical considerations require active consideration of, and debate over, the purposes of images in media presentations and what motivates their use (→ Ethics in Journalism).

An oft-debated area of image ethics involves determining appropriate divisions between public and private life. Ordinary citizens or celebrities who are suddenly thrust in front of the unblinking lens of a camera almost always voice privacy concerns. Since the nineteenth century → photography has been employed in police and government surveillance,



as well as by the tabloid press to expose the private lives of public figures (→ Photojournalism; Tabloid Press; Tabloidization; Voyeurism). In some nations private citizens have more strictly enforced rights to → privacy than celebrities or political figures, but this is not so in other countries (→ Communication and Law). France explicitly protects privacy in its constitution, and the EU directive 95/46/EC clearly regulates the collection and processing of personal data on individuals, but in the US the limits of privacy continue to be debated in the courts. Inconsistent concepts of personal privacy from culture to culture are but one example of the complicated and often relative nature of ethical determinations and the difficulty of establishing unemotional, objective, and reasoned journalism principles.

Another prominent area of ethical debate involves stereotypical or offensive portrayals of social or cultural groups, whether distinguished by ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual preference, physical characteristics, age, class, or occupation (→ Stereotypes; Stereotyping and the Media; Social Stereotyping and Communication; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Women in the Media, Images of). The concern for stereotyping relates to images in entertainment and advertising as much as journalism (→ Television, Visual Characteristics of; Television News, Visual Components of). The globalization of communication networks and → media conglomerates has increased cultural friction over the propriety of public imagery (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Globalization of the Media). Examples of recent ethical controversies in this regard include the case of the Danish editorial cartoons caricaturing Muslims and the prophet Muhammad. In this case, ethical considerations pitted principles of religious and ethnic respect against ideals of freedom of expression (→ Freedom of Communication).

In other cases, the popular misunderstanding that photographic media simply record the way things are often complicates image ethics. For example, US magazines and newspapers publish few photographs of African-Americans, but when they do, those shown are disproportionately depicted as athletes, entertainers, or people charged with crimes (Lester 1994). Because published pictures are inevitably a small selection of all available images, every pictorial selection by a photographer and an editor involves a potential stereotype with an ethical dilemma.

Advertising relies as much as journalism on the credibility of visual messages to persuade viewers of the legitimacy of its claims. Entertainment utilizes the → realism of visual media to construct convincing simulated worlds from its stories (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of; Film Theory). With names such as “advertorials” and “infomercials,” advertisers mimic the production cues of print and screen journalists to present appeals as information (→ Public Relations Ethics). In advertising of all types, commercial and political (→ Political Advertising), images are often intentionally constructed to be misleading. Through art direction, staging, and photo manipulation, they easily and purposefully lead readers or viewers to draw false or irrelevant inferences and connotations. When public relations directors or news editors use flashy covers and front-page layouts as advertisements for the news, they easily fall into the same practices. The inherently ambiguous nature of pictures in such mass media contexts make image ethics a daily concern.

Digital technology has added yet another layer of complexity to the ethical use of visual messages (→ Digital Imagery). Image manipulation did not begin with computer

technology, but digitalization has greatly expanded the speed and power with which alterations can be made. Digital manipulations are relatively easy to accomplish, are hard to detect, and can change the original image so that verification of authenticity becomes impossible. Only a serious commitment to ethical standards prevents the wholesale fabrication of pictures (→ Visual Representation). Few would argue that images used in journalism contexts should have the same low level of credibility as those pictures used in advertising. However, without close attention to image ethics, such a situation may become the norm.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Ethics ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Film Theory ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Privacy ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Realism ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Television News, Visual Components of ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation ▶ Voyeurism ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## **Image Restoration Theory**

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Image restoration theory – referred to as “image repair theory” in recent literature, to imply that an image might be improved but not completely *restored* – addresses the question of what a person or organization can say when accused or suspected of wrongdoing. Our reputation is vital both for our self-esteem and because reputation influences how others

will treat us. Ken Lay (Enron) and Congressman Gary Condit (who appeared uncooperative in the search for missing intern Chandra Levy) failed to repair their images. Tylenol, on the other hand, did repair its image after its capsules were poisoned. Countries also engage in image repair: Saudi Arabia placed a series of advertisements attempting to distance itself from the 9/11 tragedy (many of the terrorists were from Saudi Arabia, including Osama bin Laden). Clearly, a favorable → image is desirable, and tarnished images need repair.

Image restoration theory begins by noting that accusations or suspicions have two components: responsibility (blame) and offensiveness. An image is at risk only when an offensive act has occurred and one is believed to be responsible for that act (→ Crisis Communication). Those accused or suspected of wrongdoing have five general options, which are related to responsibility and offensiveness. *Denial* argues that the accused is not responsible for the offensive act. A second general option is to *evade responsibility* (partially reducing blame), with strategies such as claiming the offensive act was an accident, that one was provoked into performing the act, or that one lacked the ability or information necessary to prevent the offensive act. A third group of strategies address the second component, attempting to *reduce offensiveness* by minimizing the damage or attempting to justify the offensive action (e.g., I stole to feed my starving family). *Corrective action* attempts to fix the problem (or prevent it from happening again), addressing offensiveness. Finally, *mortification* admits responsibility and asks for forgiveness (→ Apologies and Remedial Episodes). Altogether image restoration theory identifies 14 strategies, which are individually defined and illustrated in Benoit (1995; 1997).

Those who want to repair tarnished images should begin by identifying the key target audience. For example, a company accused of polluting the environment faces many potential audiences, including local residents, environmental activists, customers, reporters, governmental regulations, and stockholders. These groups have different interests and most likely would not respond equally well to the same message, for example, local residents would like to hear that a company will spend whatever it takes to stop all pollution, but the same message might not bring joy to its stockholders. Second, the accused must identify the specific accusations or suspicions. One may choose to ignore an accusation that is unimportant to the target audience, but it is a serious mistake to accidentally overlook an important accusation. Third, one must understand the target audience: What do they know (or think they know) about the accusations? What needs and interests matter to them concerning the accusations (what things do they value most)?

The persuader should select from among the 14 image repair strategies with the accusations, the target audience, and the facts of the case in mind. It is not necessary to use all 14 strategies (indeed, some options, such as provocation, have not been found to be very persuasive). Some strategies go together well, for example, “I apologize” (mortification) and “I will fix the problem” (corrective action). On the other hand, some strategies do not work well together, for example, “I did not steal” (denial) and “I stole for my starving family” (justification, or transcendence). Finally, it is important to realize that the “facts” matter in image repair. One who is innocent probably should use denial (although, unfortunately, not all genuine denials are believed). One who is guilty probably should confess. Telling the truth is, of course, the right thing to do; however, the two main considerations of corporations are often the best way to repair their image, and how they can avoid costly lawsuits. Furthermore, not all denials are equally effective. One

must implement the selected strategies in a message using the “facts” (evidence, such as statistics or examples) that are likely to be persuasive to the audience.

One important tension often arises. In general, people do not like to admit wrongdoing: confession threatens one’s face. On the other hand, audiences usually want wrongdoers to admit their mistakes (and clean up their mess). So, the option that is most likely to persuade audiences – mortification – tends to be shunned by those accused of wrongdoing. However, we must keep in mind that a false denial is often found out, at which point the offender will have committed two wrongs: the original offensive act and then the lie.

SEE ALSO: ► Apologies and Remedial Episodes ► Crisis Communication ► Image  
► Public Relations

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## **Imagined Interactions**

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Imagined interactions are a type of social cognition and mental imagery (→ Cognition; Information Processing), theoretically grounded in symbolic interactionism (→ Symbolic Interaction), in which individuals imagine conversations with significant others for a variety of purposes (Honeycutt 2003). The imagined interaction construct has provided

a beneficial mechanism for studying intrapersonal and interpersonal communication (→ Interpersonal Communication). Imagined interactions are a type of daydreaming that has definitive characteristics and serves a number of functions including rehearsal, self-understanding, relational maintenance, managing conflict, catharsis, and compensation. They often concentrate on ongoing or important events in individuals' daily lives and are associated with a variety of emotions (Klinger 1990).

Imagined interactions are mindful activities (Honeycutt & Ford 2001). Langer et al. (1978) showed how people sometimes process information by not attending carefully to information in their immediate environment. Mindlessness occurs when individuals rely on routine ways of thinking and use scripts such as saying "Hi" as a greeting ritual. Honeycutt and Cantrill (2001) have discussed how scripts (→ Schemas) are a type of automatic pilot providing guidelines for how to act when encountering new situations. Scripts are activated mindlessly and created through imagined interactions, as people envision contingency plans for actions. In contrast to mindless processing, engaging in imagined interaction requires conscious cognitive processing.

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Imagined interactions are different from instances of self-talk and private speech. A common example of internal monologue is an individual practicing a speech who only envisions what he or she will say while ignoring feedback or audience reactions. Internal monologues are speech directed toward the self from the self while imagined interactions are directed toward someone else. Private speech occurs when an individual speaks aloud to himself or herself. Roloff and Ifert (1998) discuss how private speech may occur in isolation as well as in the presence of others. When enacted in the presence of others, private speech may not elicit a response from an interaction partner because the partner perceives the speech is not directed toward himself or herself.

Honeycutt (2003) distinguishes imagined interactions from fantasy. He clarifies the difference by stating that imagined interactions simulate communication encounters that a person expects to experience or has experienced during his or her interpersonal life. Fantasies involve highly improbable or even impossible communicative encounters. For example, imagining chatting with an idolized movie star would be quite unlikely to occur, and thus would qualify as pure fantasy. These imagined encounters would not, or at least would rarely, serve as the basis for actual communication. Research supports the notion that imagined interactions do not occur with strangers or celebrities but with real-life significant others. Honeycutt (2003) cites studies indicating that college students had most of their imagined interactions with romantic partners (33 percent), followed by friends (16 percent), family members (12 percent), authority figures (9.4 percent), co-workers (8 percent), ex-relational partners (6 percent), and prospective partners (4 percent). Imagined interactions with rivals occur sparingly.

### FUNCTIONAL THEORY OF IMAGINED INTERACTIONS

A functional theory of imagined interactions explains their purpose in everyday encounters. When assuming a functional approach to analyzing imagined interactions, it

is assumed that there may be therapeutic benefits at some level, whether it is increased self-awareness, relief of tension, or having pleasant thoughts about the imagined interaction. Support for this assumption is available in studies reviewed by Honeycutt (2003), particularly in the use of mental imagery to alleviate depression.

There are six functions of imagined interactions. First, they *maintain relationships*, as intrusive thinking occurs in which the partner is thought about outside of his or her physical presence. It has been found that they occur with friends, family members, intimate partners, roommates, and co-workers (Honeycutt 2003). They also occur among geographically separated couples.

A second function of imagined interactions is *rehearsing and planning messages* (→ Strategic Communication). Individuals report how they prepare for important encounters and even think of various messages depending on their interaction partner's responses. Except for lonely people, rehearsal is often helpful even when there are discrepancies with actual conversations. Rehearsal allows people to develop rapid response contingencies more quickly compared to no-rehearsal. It is helpful in preparing for job interviews and in stress situations such as having to tell someone bad news. The rehearsal function acknowledges the vital role communication plays in converting plans to action. Berger (1997) notes that when individuals engage in the planning process by themselves, they likely engage in internal dialogue as a means of testing out several alternatives before enactment. In essence, the individual can rehearse the plan(s) mentally prior to activation.

A third function of imagined interactions is *self-understanding*, as imagined interactions allow people to clarify their own thoughts and promote understanding of their own views. Imagined interactions' role in bettering self-understanding has been revealed in research assessing their use by couples experiencing geographical separation. Geographically separated couples indicate they experience imagined interactions as a means for increasing self-understanding compared to couples that are not geographically separated (Honeycutt 2003). These results suggest that such couples have a greater need to develop better understanding prior to interaction because of the limit on interaction time due to their geographic circumstances.

The fourth function, *catharsis*, allows people to release emotions and vent feelings of frustration or joy. There is tension relief and anxiety reduction. This often occurs in conjunction with the fifth, *compensation*, function, in which individuals compensate for the lack of actual conversations. For example, a person may imagine giving his or her supervisor a "piece of their mind," which momentarily relaxes them. Yet, they realize to do this may result in reprisal or sanctions; hence, both compensation and catharsis are used. For example, compensating for the lack of real interaction in long-distance relationships may be used to keep the relationship alive as well as rehearsing what will be said at the next telephone conversation.

The final function is *conflict management*. Individuals may relive old disagreements and arguments while simultaneously imagining statements for ensuing encounters. Hence, disagreements may pick up where they left off from prior interactions. The study of imagined interactions explains why there may be long-term, recurrent conflict and particular themes that characterize encounters between relational partners. Imagined interactions link a series of encounters together, as individuals replay what was previously said and anticipate what may be said in the future. Conflict is maintained by reliving old

arguments and imagining future conversations so that subsequent encounters may become self-fulfilling prophecies as interaction expectancies are enacted (Honeycutt 2003). More specifically, conflict is managed for productive outcomes by having positive imagined interactions in which positive thinking overwhelms pessimism.

The conflict management function of imagined interactions explains recurring conflict in personal relationships. Honeycutt (2003) has presented three axioms and nine theorems for managing conflict, with numerous studies supporting them. Some therapists lament how counseling and intervention may not result in longitudinal benefits in getting couples to communicate constructively. Conflict may be maintained through retro- and proactive imagined interactions that link a series of interactions (Honeycutt 1995). People may experience negative emotions as they “replay” such encounters. The conflict management function of imagined interactions helps explain why instruction on rational models for conflict resolution often fail, as people regress to old ways for resolving conflict (e.g., “I win, you lose”). Old interaction scripts that are nonproductive may be mindlessly retrieved from long-term memory. Thus, conflict episodes may pick up where they last left off, despite a period of physical separation. In the meantime, conflict is maintained in the mind using the retro- and proactive (rehearsal) features of imagined interactions. In this regard, imagined interaction conflict management theory explains why popular “time-out” strategies advocated by educational interventionists may fail regularly.

## MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS

The study of imagined interactions presents researchers with several problems. As is true of cognitive research in general, investigators of imagined interactions must largely infer the existence of internal cognitive states from external behavior (Ericsson & Simon 1980). While physiological measures may allow researchers to document the occurrence of mental states, they tell us little about these states beyond the physiological level. The *Survey of Imagined Interaction* is used to measure the characteristics and functions of imagined interactions, and journal accounts and interviews have also been used to study imagined interactions.

Individuals describing their imagined interactions utilize verbal, visual, or mixed imagery. Verbal imagery concerns the content of messages. Visual imagery involves “seeing” the scene of the interaction. Those reporting a mixed mode also indicated more pleasantness than did those reporting primarily verbal modes (Honeycutt 2003).

The Survey of Imagined Interactions has proved to be a reliable measure of imagined interactions. When assessing imagined interactions in various situations, it is important for researchers to contextualize or reword the items to reflect the context of interest. For example, if someone is interested in how often imagined interactions occur in an organizational setting with a co-worker, the survey participants need to be explicitly told who is being referred to, such as a supervisor, co-worker, or subordinate.

“Talk-out-loud” procedures, in which individuals role-play what they would say to a relational partner about an important relational issue (e.g., financial management, sexual relations) that they have chosen as problematic in their relationship, have been used in imagined interaction research. Using interviews as a means of studying marital couples

and their use of imagined interactions, Honeycutt (1995) found that couples recall old arguments that are experienced as retroactive imagined interactions, and these have just as much meaning to them as actual conversations. However, other couples reported that the imagined interactions serve as a mechanism for dealing with suppressed conflict that is not being discussed openly. Individuals have a better memory for imagined interactions involving conflict (Honeycutt 2003).

Research suggests lonely individuals have imagined interactions that are discrepant from real conversations (Edwards et al. 1988). Imagined interactions may perpetuate their lonely state because of limited access to conversational scripts. Discrepancy is negatively correlated with communication competence (Honeycutt et al. 1992–1993).

*Physiological responses* while experiencing imagined interactions related to aggressive driving are being studied through the analysis of blood pressure, heart rate per minute, inter-beat interval, and somatic activity. Persons report on their imagined interactions before engaging in a motivated driving task on driving simulators that state troopers use to train themselves for a variety of traffic conditions. Physiological responses are measured while persons imagine arguments with partners and while they actually argue with them. Results reveal some relationships between heart rate variability and imagined interaction conflict management.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Information Processing ► Interpersonal Communication  
► Schemas ► Strategic Communication ► Symbolic Interaction

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# Impersonal Effects

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Impersonal effects is an increasingly influential paradigm in media effects research (→ Media Effects). It argues that media are powerful in shaping our → perceptions of what anonymous others are feeling and experiencing, and that such perceptions, in turn, influence our → attitudes and behaviors in a variety of areas. The effect suggested by the theory is, thus, indirect: exposure to media affects the audience's perception of the collective conditions or the opinions and attitudes of people they do not know personally (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). Cognitive and attitudinal responses to these perceptions are the measurable changes constituting the effects.

## ORIGINS

Claims and speculations regarding impersonal effects date back to De Tocqueville (1956, 1st pub. 1835), who argued that newspapers help isolated audiences see and feel each other, and facilitate the perception that single, individual experiences are sometimes collective, and thus political. However, conceptualization and empirical investigation of impersonal effects are relatively recent (Brosius & Bathelt 1994; Mutz 1998; Gunther & Storey 2003).

The term “impersonal influence” was coined by Diana Mutz (1998), who demonstrated significant differences between people's perceptions of their own conditions and their assessments regarding the collective conditions. People tend to perceive that they are better off than others and that the collective conditions are worse than they are in reality (as documented by statistical indicators). According to Mutz, these perceptions are affected by media coverage. For example, an impersonal influence occurs when media coverage causes people to think that crime is rising, even when public records show that there has been no increase in the crime rate. Impersonal influence theory argues that, in their behaviors, “people are responding to a media constructed pseudo-environment rather than their immediate personal experiences or those of friends and acquaintances” (1998, 6).

Mutz demonstrates, for example, that exposure to newspaper coverage of unemployment trends and to media reports about unemployment rates are associated with audience perceptions of unemployment at the collective (state and national) level (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Social Perception). The methodology used to demonstrate such impersonal influence effects is correlational, but also experimental and quasi-experimental (→ Correlation Analysis; Experimental Design). Evidence further demonstrates that media-facilitated perceptions regarding collective-level conditions are more important for political decision-making than people's perception of their individual-level conditions. Furthermore, when media coverage of impersonal, collective-level conditions in a certain area is heavy, and when the coverage coincides with personal-level judgments, the weight of these experiences in shaping political attitudes, such as presidential approval, increases.

## THEORY

The theory of impersonal influence shares several assumptions with other theories of the mass society. Audiences are perceived as relatively disconnected from each other, and media replace traditional mediating mechanisms in providing people with information about their surroundings (→ Audience). Developments in the content of → news over the past century have increased the frequency with which people encounter information about remote and generalized others. Thus, impersonal influence theory also corresponds with technological theories: mass media provide the technology through which indirect associations can be established and impersonal collective information can be obtained.

Much of the effect of media on audience perceptions of what others are feeling and experiencing takes place because of the perception that media are influential. Impersonal influence encompasses what is known as the → *third-person effect* (Davison 1983) or “the influence of presumed media influence” (Gunther & Storey 2003). According to this line of research, people’s perceptions of media influence lead them to adjust their attitudes and behaviors in accordance with the perceived effect.

In a landmark article, Davison (1983) discussed the possibility that the perceived influence of Japanese → propaganda materials in World War II, targeted at Afro-American soldiers, had an impact on the white officers’ decision to withdraw the Afro-American unit from the front. He also speculated that perceptions regarding media impact underlie the association between news reports and fluctuations in the stock markets: that such reports are perceived by investors to cause others to sell (or buy) certain categories of shares; therefore they themselves sell (or buy) in anticipation of the others’ action. In addition, Davison suspected that when media report about irregularities in the supply of consumer goods, some people rush to the stores because they believe the media reports will influence others who will try to stock up “before the hordes remove all goods from the shelves” (1983, 13; see Tewksbury et al. 2004 for a test of this hypothesis in the context of media reports about the millennium bug panic).

The consequences of believing that media have a strong impact on others could lead to several generalized outcomes (Gunther et al. 2006). *Prevention* refers to the impulse to thwart an apparently harmful message. For example, it is well established that people who believe that harmful media content (e.g., violence or pornography) exerts an influence on audiences are more inclined than others to espouse censorship (Perloff 2002; → Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of).

*Accommodation reactions* refer to any other behavioral adjustment, including compliance with or defiance of perceived → social norms that are presumably shaped by media. One example of the compliance category would be adolescents who, believing that pro-smoking messages make their peers regard smoking in a more positive light, start to smoke themselves (Gunther et al. 2006). In this case, as in other compliance cases, individuals engage in an activity because they feel that media cause other people to view the activity in a positive way (→ Compliance Gaining). Defiance, the second category of accommodation, describes a situation in which individuals who believe that media influence the opinions and behaviors of others react *against* those perceived trends (Tsfati & Cohen 2005). When survey respondents felt that political advertising might persuade others to vote for the wrong candidates, they were more likely to report they intended to vote,

supposedly to mitigate the negative influences by trying to sway the election in favor of their preferred candidates (→ Communication Accommodation Theory).

*Withdrawal* is the third type of response. In this case, believing that media foster a social norm can cause people *not* to do something they would have done otherwise because they think other people would *not* like it. Noelle-Neumann's (1993) "spiral of silence" process falls into this type of behavioral consequence of the presumed media influence. Her theory describes people *not* speaking their mind because they feel that media influence *others* to have divergent opinions.

*Oblige*, the fourth and final type of behavioral consequence of perceived media influence, takes place when people feel obligated to respond to the fact that others are affected, regardless of their personal compliance or noncompliance with the norm. Such an effect occurs especially when these individuals are serving or protecting dependent others. For example, doctors who perceived that direct-to-consumer (DTC) prescription drug advertising had negative effects on their clients were more likely to refuse to prescribe these DTC drugs (→ Health Communication; Doctor–Patient Talk).

While the theory of impersonal influence offers an innovative pathway to investigating indirect media effects, there are still doubts about the causal direction implied in the theory. Perhaps people's attitudes and behaviors shape their perceptions of the collective conditions or of media impact, not the other way around. Yet another theoretical shortcoming relates to the fact that the theory sometimes provides conflicting predictions. We cannot predict exactly what kind of perceived effects will lead people to defy or comply with perceived social norms. Theories of normative influence on behavior should probably be useful in clarifying this issue and the theoretical mechanism underlying impersonal influence.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Audience ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Health Communication ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Perception ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Social Norms ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Implicit Personality Theories

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Considered by many scholars to be a historically significant conceptual development in the study of → social cognition, implicit personality theories are cognitive structures utilized during → social perception and in social interaction. The knowledge contained in these structures specifies sets of personality traits perceived to be interrelated. Applied during social perception, implicit personality theories are key to impression formation, allowing a perceiver to make trait inferences, or, infer from a few, initially observed traits that a person will probably have a number of additional, implicated traits. Applied in social interaction, implicit personality theories are a source of person knowledge, a type of knowledge seen as essential to communication skills and achieving communication goals (→ Goals, Social Aspects of; Interpersonal Communication), as is knowledge of the self, roles, contexts, emotions, and how to put together one's messages (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

Gestalt psychologist Solomon Asch introduced the precedent to implicit personality theories in 1946, the year he published experiments testing his *configurational model of impression formation*. Asch proposed that given the observation of several initial or stimulus traits, a perceiver would configure the traits to form a gestalt impression of another's personality. Some traits, particularly those with strong positive or negative connotations, would be more central to the configuration than others, thus dominating both the impression and a perceiver's inferences of additional traits. A few years after Asch published his → paradigmatic experiments, Bruner & Tagiuri (1954) offered an alternative to the idea of trait configuration during impression formation. They proposed that impressions and trait inferences might proceed more immediately from naïve "implicit theories of personality," or from already developed, organized ideas of the possible interrelationships among personality traits.

Ensuing efforts to examine perceived interrelationships have, to some degree, clarified the possible content and organization of implicit personality theories. According to Sedikides & Anderson (1994), investigations of implicit personality theories usually represent one of three views: the associationistic view, the dimensional view, or the person types view.

*Associationistic scholars* view the interrelationships as a simple perceived co-variance among certain traits. Correlational analyses of traits perceived across different stimulus persons and by different perceivers have provided some evidence of perceived co-variation, although according to Anderson (1977) there are considerable weaknesses to using correlational measures for estimating the interrelationships (→ Correlation Analysis).

Scholars advocating a *dimensional view* maintain that the perceived co-variances represent underlying dimensions of personality that may be organized hierarchically in relation to each other. Dimensions are obtained using → factor analysis or other multidimensional scaling techniques on intertrait correlations. Using a multidimensional scaling procedure, for example, Rosenberg & Sedlack (1972) located two dimensions – “intellectual” and “social” – underlying study participants’ perceived co-variations among traits. The poles of each dimension reflected valued or good traits versus nonvalued or bad traits. Traits such as skillful, industrious, and intelligent, perceived by participants to be co-varying, were located dimensionally as being highly intellectual and good. Traits such as honest, modest, and tolerant were clustered closely together as social and good. Traits such as warm were perceived by participants to be good socially but bad intellectually, with the trait of cold perceived oppositely, i.e. as bad socially but good intellectually.

Scholars from the *person types view* generally use → cluster analyses of participant ratings of others’ personalities to determine the interrelations. According to Anderson & Sedikides (1991), cluster analysis is able to detect clusters of traits not identified by either correlational analysis or multidimensional scaling techniques. In addition, these authors have provided some evidence that certain interrelationships among traits are causal and bidirectional. Study participants may perceive, for example, that being depressed creates the traits “unhappy” and “pessimistic,” while unhappiness and pessimism are, in turn, traits leading to loneliness. Of the three views, the most recent is the person types view, and to some extent implicit personality theories have been replaced conceptually by other cognitive structures such as person prototypes and stereotypes (→ Information Processing: Stereotypes). Both person prototypes and stereotypes represent prototypical knowledge of person types and have an advantage over implicit personality theories in that they contain knowledge of typical behaviors and typical features of appearance in addition to typical traits. Unlike implicit personality theories, person prototypes and stereotypes are able to explain the initial inference of traits from a person’s behavior and appearance.

Irrespective of their view as to whether implicit personality theories are organized (1) as sets of co-varying traits, (2) as traits arranged according to dimensions, or (3) as traits organized as person types, some scholars are still debating whether the perceived interrelationships among traits are “real” or “ideal.” *Realists* maintain that the perceived interrelationships originate from people’s experience of actually co-occurring traits. *Idealists* propose that the interrelationships are affected by people’s tendencies toward illusory correlations or even semantic relationships among trait labels, as illustrated by Thorndike’s (1920) halo effect.

According to Schneider et al. (1979), research evidence primarily supports a middle ground between the realist and idealist positions. While at least one study has found that people are sensitive to and can recognize actually co-varying traits, other studies suggest that the strength of the co-variation is most likely to be exaggerated. Thus, while implicit personality theories may be an important source of person knowledge during interaction,

this knowledge introduces at least some degree of bias in our perceptions and inferences of others' personalities.

SEE ALSO: ► Cluster Analysis ► Correlation Analysis ► Factor Analysis ► Goals, Social Aspects of ► Information Processing: Stereotypes ► Interpersonal Communication ► Paradigm ► Psychology in Communication Processes ► Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction; Social Cognitive Theory ► Social Perception

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## **Impression Management**

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As a fundamental interpersonal process, impression management is an important concept in any communication context. Impression management refers to the process of editing, packaging, and communicating information to control one's own images as perceived by other people. Studies have shown that people use impression management to influence others, and that it eventually affects the overall quality of one's life. Even when people have no direct reason to influence others' behaviors, people are motivated to impression-manage for the following two reasons. First, impression management influences

their own self-esteem and reduces negative emotions. Second, it enables people to construct and maintain their private identities. Impression management has been used to define diverse interpersonal communication phenomena, including encounters between strangers, job interviews, friend relationships, romantic relationships, and doctor–patient relationships. The term “impression management” is commonly used interchangeably with → “self-presentation,” although some studies differentiate between the two with regard to intended goal direction and authenticity. While impression management focuses on goal-directed social activity to enhance one’s own image and power, self-presentation focuses on self-relevant or authentic presentation (Leary & Kowalski 1990).

### **EMERGENCE OF IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT AND THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

The origin of scientific interest in impression management began with the book *The presentation of self in everyday life* (Goffman 1959). Goffman’s basic assertion was that social behaviors should be understood through the overt appearances people create for others. Hence, the original focus was on public images attained from others’ judgments and reactions in social life. Jones (1964) focused on how we control others’ impressions of our personal characteristics, sparking psychologists’ interest in impression management. During the 1960s and 1970s, studies of impression management remained relatively peripheral in social psychology, although the topic had been steadily adopted by interpersonal communication researchers. With respect to research methodology, Goffman, as a sociologist, used anthropological field observations. On the other hand, Jones, as a social psychologist, investigated specific factors affecting impression management processes in designed laboratory experiments. Over time, an increasing number of studies reported that a wide range of human behaviors are governed by one’s desire and tactics to control others’ perceptions of one’s self. By the 1980s, impression management had become one of the main research agendas in the field of interpersonal communication.

Scholars have developed various typologies and strategies to analyze impression management styles. A taxonomy of self-presentation strategies, including self-promotion, ingratiation, exemplification, intimidation, and supplication, was suggested. Others suggested two distinct self-presentation tactics – defensive and assertive. Studies have expanded this taxonomy by identifying a number of tactics including excuse, justification, disclaimers, self-handicapping and apology, ingratiation, intimidation, supplication, entitlement, sandbagging, enhancement, and blasting. Three aspects of perfectionistic self-presentation namely perfectionistic self-promotion, nondisplay of imperfection, and nondisclosure of imperfection, were also suggested. Schlenker and Britt (1999) suggested beneficial impression management, where the presenters focus on others as well as themselves. Beneficial impression implies strategic control of information to help close friends make desired impressions on significant audiences. The researchers assert that the success of a close relationship is associated with the use of other-benefiting impression management. While various typologies have been developed, self-enhancement and self-effacement are the most commonly discussed. Some studies have focused on what is termed bragging and on positive and negative self-presentation (Kim et al. 2003).

## FINDINGS AND MEASUREMENT

People have an inherent predisposition to be concerned about how others perceive them. Whenever people are in the presence of others, usually it is in their best interest to convey particular types of impressions. Generally, people are motivated to manage their image in order to maximize rewards and minimize punishments. Situational, dispositional, and audience factors affect the motivation to manage impression and in turn affect social anxiety (Schlenker & Leary 1982). The size of the audience increases the motivation to impress others, and people are more likely to become motivated to impress an audience that is perceived to have more authority. However, a discrepancy can exist between the desired image and reality, with the result that social anxiety will occur when impression-relevant outcomes are lower than expected. As such, impression motivation is closely related with, and is considered a necessary condition for, social anxiety (Leary 1995).

How people present themselves to others is influenced by the private self, specifically the self-concept, self-esteem, and desired and undesired self. Self-concept – the set of beliefs about oneself – is the composite of ideas, feelings, and attitudes people have about themselves. The self-concept influences people's behavior primarily through the phenomenal self and conscious self-awareness. Phenomenal self implies the portion of one's self-beliefs in conscious awareness at any particular time. The most common dilemma in impression management occurs when desired image differs from one's own self-concept. People usually use authentic, deceptive, and exclusionary impression management to respond in such dilemmas. Baumeister et al. (1989) reported that people use different styles of impression management according to their impression management motivation as determined by their self-esteem. In other words, people with high self-esteem are motivated to make favorable impressions and show acquisitive impression management. In contrast, people with low self-esteem are motivated to avoid failure and show protective impression management.

People consciously or unconsciously pursue various styles of impression management to elicit socially desirable responses (→ Social Desirability). Among diverse positive responses, people have a strong and pervasive desire to be liked and respected by others. Jones and Pittman (1982) suggested that self-presentation is a twofold process of ingratiation, where one wants to be liked, and self-promotion, where one wants to be evaluated as competent. Being liked is the most basic and general impression people want to make because it garners them diverse social rewards such as friendship, social support, companionship, romance, and status. Attributions of likeability include being perceived as friendly, intelligent, attractive, fun, outgoing, and easy to talk to (Leary & Kowalski 1990).

Receiving respect, or being judged competent, is also the most basic impression people want to make because "being perceived as competent" can mean higher status, more influence on others, and better jobs. Being perceived as competent is more complicated than being liked, and it may include such diverse attributes as past achievements and self-confidence. With regard to perceived competence, the following two phenomena are especially important. The first is the so-called "self-promoter's paradox," which suggests that when people excessively claim their own strengths, they may in fact be perceived as



less competent than without the claims. The second is that there could be a negative correlation between being liked and being perceived as competent. That is, when people emphasize their own strengths, they are likely to be seen as “arrogant and conceited,” which are unfavorable traits. As such, self-presentation may face “a constant trade-off between favorability and plausibility” (Tice et al. 1995, 1120).

Some studies have shown that positive self-presentation is more favorably perceived than bragging; a negative presentation of oneself tends to be the least favorably perceived. Also, bragging and positive presentations are considered signs of competence, unlike negative presentations. Researchers have concluded that the effects of different impression management styles are usually influenced by people’s own designed self-image, people’s social role, audience’s characteristics, other people’s existing impressions of the people, the context in which self-presentation is implemented, and presenter’s and audience’s gender.

Several studies have developed measurements for impression management. For example, Roth et al. (1988) reported a scale for indicating negative characteristics (repudiative tactics) and affirming positive characteristics (attributive tactics). A self-presentation tactics scale measuring individual differences in proclivity for using 12 self-presentation tactics was also developed. In this model, a two-component model of defensive and assertive self-presentation was suggested and 12 tactics such as excuse, justification, and ingratiation were developed. Scales measuring the tendency for respondents to engage in impression management include the self-monitoring scale, the social desirability scale, and the public–private self-consciousness scale. While these scales analyze some aspects of the proclivity to engage in impression management, they are not adequate to measure the construct of impression management.

## **CULTURE AND IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT**

Cultural psychologists assert that different cultures shape different values in achievement, power, hedonism, respect for tradition, conformity, and contents of self (Schwartz & Bilsky 1987). Recognizing significant weakness in the culture-level approach, researchers have advocated an individual-level approach to explain cross-cultural differences (Kitayama et al. 1997). The self-construal concept was originally developed to explain cultural differences in behaviors and attitudes in individual levels. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), the central difference between the two self-construals of independence and interdependence is the belief one maintains regarding how the self is related to others. Those who construe themselves as independent see themselves as separate from others and emphasize autonomy, whereas those who see themselves as interdependent perceive that they are connected with others and emphasize conformity. People from western cultures tend to have higher levels of independence, while those of Asian cultures have higher levels of interdependence. Asian people tend to evaluate modesty and self-effacement more highly and have less tolerance toward bragging than those of western cultures. The impact of culture on impression management has been inadequately explored. Increased globalization will drive the need for more studies comparing impression management processes across cultures.

SEE ALSO: ► Self-Presentation ► Social Desirability

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## Independent Media Centers Network

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The global network of Independent Media Centers (IMCs), or “Indymedia,” is a groundbreaking example of the power of an online, multimedia network providing for instantaneous, decentralized global communication, unique in that it involves a network of nonprofit, autonomous media collectives. These new technological capacities are shifting the nature of news consumption and provoking debates about the nature of → news, its construction, and what constitutes a newsmaker. In addition, IMCs have been experimenting with hierarchy-leveling organizational processes and interactive software in the interests of furthering democratic goals and providing a more diverse set of discussions than

corporate media currently offer (→ Media Democracy Movement). Indymedia discussions also critique the global hegemony of the neo-liberal and unilateral policies of the United States and its allies.

## **FOUNDATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The network was pioneered by activists wanting an alternative to corporate news coverage of the protests against the World Trade Organization in November 1999 (→ Activist Media). Activists provided up-to-the-minute accounts with text, photographs, streaming audio and video, and hyperlinks to alternative information sources with few gatekeepers. Their turnaround time often directly challenged mainstream media coverage (Downing 2001; Kidd 2003a), and even Reuters and → CNN linked to the Seattle IMC site, which received about 1.5 million hits over four days (Kitaeff 2003).

Since its inception, the network grew quickly, and became the primary organizing mechanism and news source for the global social justice and antiwar movements. Local IMC chapters worldwide operate in most cases as an alternative → public sphere loosely affiliated with politically progressive social movements (Downing 2003). The network also became a source of information for the wire services, especially during meetings of the IMF, G8, and other global organizations, and the protests accompanying them (→ News Agencies).

Indymedia in the mid-2000s consisted of over 160 nonprofit collectives forming IMC chapters, some regional in nature, publishing in more than 20 languages throughout Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, Oceania, and Africa. The chapters were still concentrated primarily in the United States, Canada, and Europe, but Latin America and Oceania each had a strong showing, and new chapters continued to form worldwide. Each IMC collective was autonomous, controlling its own mission statement, finances, and decision-making processes. Network decisions were made through virtual working groups using a consensus decision-making process. Some IMC chapters were primarily websites maintained by a few people, while others involved many volunteers in a variety of projects and media. And although Indymedia was entirely volunteer-run, with no headquarters, formal governing structure, or regular funding sources, its size and reach outstripped even the largest news organizations, both geographically and in terms of labor.

While each IMC was different and the network provided for a wide variety of political opinions, Indymedia generally challenged the neo-liberal paradigm championed by western governments, and was committed to the nonhierarchical, nonsexist, and nonracist practices emphasized in the network's Principles of Unity (Indymedia Documentation Project 2000) and Draft of Membership Criteria. Indymedia was also committed to open publishing and consensus-based processes of decision-making intended to be inclusive and to provide for multiple voices (Indymedia Documentation Project 2002). In open publishing, anyone with → Internet access can post a story, and the process of creating news is transparent to the readers, making it easier for them to get involved. To increase participation, Indymedia used both electronic mailing lists and wikis (websites that anyone can access and edit), and all were linked through the network's global site, [indymedia.org](http://indymedia.org).

## **INDYMEDIA.ORG AND ITS MAJOR FEATURES**

As Indymedia's virtual headquarters, [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org) showcased feature stories culled from local IMC websites worldwide, each linked to the global site. Features usually consisted of a short summary text with a series of links, and ended with the option to "add your own comment," often provoking lengthy discussions. Local IMC groups drew many of the features they posted from writings posted to the open-publishing newswire, usually to the right of the features on local IMC sites. Local features then fed into the global newswire, from which a global editorial group determined which stories would become global features. According to the global website, the Indymedia network as a whole received an estimated 500,000 to 2 million hits per day, depending on what was occurring worldwide. During the first few days of the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, for example, some local IMC sites (such as IMC Italy) were receiving about half a million page hits a day. While a wide variety of local, national, and international events were reported on and debated, some common themes throughout the network included the consequences of neo-liberalism worldwide, local labor, human rights and environmental issues, and the limitations of corporate media and their approach to → journalism.

### **Connecting the Local and Global**

Different IMCs connected local and global events to varying degrees, perhaps most obviously when the visceral realities of protest fueled the virtual information mill. Even in the chaotic midst of police raids or protests, activists posted information about ongoing actions of police, paramilitary, and military groups, and made connections between these actions at the local and global levels. Indymedia faced harassment, arrests of its journalists, legal challenges, and confiscation of its materials and tools (Morris 2004). It was a target of hate mail and spammers, but also national and international security agencies; several IMC sites were shut down, and others systematically hacked (Kidd 2003a, c; Free Press 2004). After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, there were also attempts to define more radical elements of the global justice movement as terrorists (Morris 2004). For IMC activists, daily events, ranging from their own lifestyle choices to the operations of locally based businesses, connected in important ways with the global maneuvers of governments and multinational corporations, a prime example being the war in Iraq (Brooten 2004a, b, 2006). Indymedia's emphasis on local-to-global analysis remained virtually invisible in corporate media news.

### **Challenging Corporate Media and Journalism**

IMC online discussions often refer to the military–industrial–*media* complex and to a lack of open, democratic discussion both in the US and between the US and "the rest," due directly to the limitations of corporate media coverage (Brooten 2004a, b). Indymedia challenged corporate media hegemony through the use of open publishing, made possible by the efforts of the free software or → open source movement, which aims to keep software free and source code open for collective development and use (Stallman 2002;

Pickard 2006). Many members of the Indymedia technical staff were associated with this movement (Arnison 2001; Kidd 2003a). As the Internet became dominated by private interests, the open source movement was as much an effort to keep the net open and navigable by as many as possible, as a software development process (Kidd 2003a). This struggle was seen as key to determining who controls the stories the public is able to tell and is told.

Many IMCs openly challenged the concept of “objectivity,” arguing that it is better to be honest about one’s biases (→ Bias in the News; Objectivity in Reporting). A page on the IMC global site suggested to readers that “You should look at all reports you read on the Indymedia site with a critical eye, just as you should look at all media before you in a discerning manner.” Nevertheless, there are many IMC activists who do subscribe to the ideal of journalistic objectivity, but argue that credible writing must go beyond the airing of the different “sides” of an issue. Textual analysis of IMC websites suggests that writers gained credibility in features and discussions when they presented ample evidence to back up the claims they made, in the form of links and citations, and when they had had direct experience with an issue, often by being an eyewitness (Brooten 2004a, b). Many participants called on reporters to contextualize their stories and provide the historical perspective they felt lacking in corporate media reporting.

### **Indymedia as a Process of Collective Critique**

Indymedia became a tool for exploring the process of media representation itself, encouraging a collective public process of both textual and visual analysis (Brooten 2004a, b). IMC sites offered readers alternative sources of information and a means to track and critique that information, add to it, or reject it, and to do so collectively and on a global scale. The process as well as the information became the focus of the collective, unfolding story, which attended to how and why the story got told. This called for an unusually sophisticated engagement with media. In this way, Indymedia offered a model for others, and supported the claim that web use can encourage a collective process of critique in which “the sum of connections makes a content greater than the sum of its parts” (Jones 2000, 178).

### **CHALLENGES FACING INDYMEDIA**

Indymedia faced several significant challenges, including uneven participation, north-south tensions, overemphasis on technical work, and English dominance. Despite Indymedia’s focus on inclusion, those capable of volunteering for significant periods of time tended to be young, white, mostly male North Americans and Europeans (Kidd 2003a; Pickard 2006). This, in tandem with unequal global access to the Internet, limited participation in specific gendered, class, and racialized ways, including the male-dominated nature of tech work, problematic meeting dynamics, and an online rhetoric of harassment. Tensions also emerged between freedom of expression and the need to maintain safe and respectful online spaces. And while the consensus process is ideally nonhierarchical, some argued it tends to further silence those already marginalized (Ballowe 2002; Brooten & Hadl in press).

Indymedia had to rethink its policy of open publishing in the face of a slew of hateful, sexist, and racist postings throughout the network (Kidd 2003b; Pickard 2006; Brooten & Hadl in press). Individual IMCs adopted a range of editorial policies to help counter such postings (Langlois 2004). Some argued Indymedia should provide a space for such discussions, however contentious, while others argued that where power is unequally distributed, open publishing tends to extend it to those who already wield it.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ CNN ▶ Community Media ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Democracy Movement ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Open Source ▶ Public Sphere

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## India: Media System

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India, with a population of more than a billion, is a multiethnic, multilingual, multi-religious, pluralistic society. Politically it is a union of states (28 states and 7 union territories) and a sovereign, secular, democratic republic with a bicameral, multi-party, parliamentary system of government based on a universal adult franchise. It is governed by a written constitution, adopted by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949, which came into force on January 26, 1950.

### HISTORICAL STAGES

India is an ancient civilization. There is evidence of human activity in India at least from 20,000 BCE (Bhimbetka Rock paintings); of farming from 7000 BCE; and of city life from 2700 BCE (Harappa). Alexander the Great was in India 326–325 BCE. South Indian empires began in 200 CE, with the Gupta Empire 320–467, the Harshvardhan 606–647, and the Mughal 1526–1757, followed after the battle of Plassey by East India Company rule 1757–1858. India was under the British crown 1858–1947; independence and partition into India and Pakistan came in 1947. In terms of public writings, India had the Rock Edicts of Emperor Asoka (c.273–236 BCE), writings on leaves and barks mentioned by Uzbek scholar Al-Biruni (973–1049 CE) in his book *Kitabu'l Hind* (1030 CE), and newsletters (“akhbar”) mentioned by Emperor Zahiruddin Muhammad Babur in 1527, before the modern printing press landed in India on September 6, 1556.

When James Augustus Hicky started his *Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser* on January 29, 1780, there was no law or regulation governing the press in India. When Hicky criticized Warren Hastings, the governor-general, the first known order against the press was issued in India from Fort William, Calcutta, on November 14, 1780, which stopped circulation of Hicky’s *Bengal Gazette* “through the channel of the General Post Office.”

*Pre-censorship* (→ Censorship, History of) was first introduced in Madras (now Chennai) in 1795. When newspaper publishing was confined to Europeans, deportation was often the ultimate punishment. Licensing was introduced in Bengal in 1823 but was replaced by the Metcalfe Act of 1835, which applied to the entire territory of the East

India Company and required that the printer and publisher of every newspaper declare the location of the premises of its publication. Licensing was, however, reintroduced in 1857 by Lord Canning and was applied to all kinds of publications. This was the year when Indians fought their war of independence against the East India Company, after which the British crown took over the territories of the Company.

In 1860 the Indian Penal Code passed into law. Among more general matters, this laid down offenses that any writer, editor, or publisher must avoid – those of defamation and obscenity. The Code was amended in 1870 to introduce the offense of sedition, giving convenient grounds for sending many freedom fighters to jail for their writings in newspapers, including political heavyweights like Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Mahatma Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The Press and Registration of Books Act passed in 1867, a regulatory measure, still survives after some amendments. The Official Secrets Act of 1923 is another old law still surviving, though now diluted by the Right to Information Act of 2005. During the British period there were many repressive laws directed specially at the press from time to time, like the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, the Newspaper (Incitement of Offences) Act of 1908, and the Indian Press Act of 1910. In 1922, these Acts of 1908 and 1910 were repealed, but the provisions of seizure and confiscation of seditious publications were incorporated into the Sea Customs Act and the Post Office Act. Civil disobedience in 1931 provoked the government to issue an ordinance to control the press, which was replaced by the Press Emergency Powers Act of 1931. Originally a temporary law, it was made permanent in 1935.

The British passed the *Indian Telegraph Act* in 1885 and took all the powers necessary to operate and control Indian telegraphy. The government had exclusive privileges under this Act in respect of telegraphy, among them the power to grant licenses. The definition of telegraphy in this Act is very wide, as it later covered all other means of communication depending on electromagnetic waves, thus including telephone, fax, radio, and television.

*Radio* came to India in 1921 and was initially in private hands. It was mainly enjoyed by the European community as a means of entertainment (→ Radio; Radio: Social History). First there were Radio Clubs and then the Indian Broadcasting Company, which went into liquidation in 1930. There was public pressure to which the government bowed by starting the Indian State Broadcasting Service, which was rechristened All India Radio (AIR) in 1935. Meanwhile, the princely states of Baroda, Hyderabad, Jodhpur, Mysore, and Travancore set up their own radio stations with authorization from the government of India.

Before the creation of Pakistan, pre-partition India in 1947 had nine radio stations and a dozen transmitters, with 275,955 radio sets for a population of over 300 million. Radio broadcasts covered less than 10 percent of the area with medium wave. After partition, AIR had a network of six stations and a complement of 18 transmitters. The coverage was 2.5 percent of the area and just 11 percent of the population. Television came to India in September 1959 as an educational experiment involving → UNESCO (→ Television; Television: Social History).

## NORMATIVE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Article 19 (1) (a) of the Constitution of India provides that all citizens shall have the right “to freedom of speech and expression,” and the courts have interpreted this as including



freedom of the press. The Press Law Enquiry Committee was appointed to examine the existing laws at the time of independence in relation to fundamental rights. After the report of this committee the Press Emergency Powers Act of 1931 was replaced by the Press (Objectionable Matter) Act of 1951. However, the mood was so much in support of freedom of the press that this Act was allowed to lapse in February 1956 and repealed in 1957. There is a statutory Press Council of India, which is toothless against newspapers but has been used by the press against the government in cases of discrimination in advertising etc. With the exception of the Internal Emergency of June 26, 1975, to March 21, 1977, there has been no → censorship (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Communication).

Broadcasting remained a government monopoly after independence until September 15, 1997, when Prasar Bharti, an autonomous corporation, came into existence to run AIR and national television (Doordarshan). Satellite television, which entered Indian skies in 1991, was left unregulated (→ Satellite Television; Satellite Communication, Regulation of). The Supreme Court, in the Cricket Association of Bengal case in 1995, declared that the “airwaves are public property.” The issue of broadcast regulation has emerged since then. The Broadcasting Bill of 1997 and the Communication Convergence Bill of 2001 were introduced in Parliament but did not become law. Meanwhile, in 1995 the Cable Television Networks Act was brought in to regulate the cable business and its operations, and guidelines were issued for uplinking TV channels, direct-to-home (DTH), FM radio, community radio, etc. (→ Cable Television). Drawing lessons from the experiences of the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the US and OFCOM in the UK (→ United Kingdom: Media System), the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has put up a draft of the proposed Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill on its website.

## PRINTED PRESS

The Indian press, serving a multilingual, diverse society, is independent and competitive, with various forms of ownership ranging from individuals, firms, and joint-stock companies to trusts. Distribution is dominated by hawkers and agents delivering press products to homes, though it also includes newsstands, street sales, and postal subscriptions. In 1950 there were 214 daily → newspapers, with 44 in English and the rest in Indian languages. The number of dailies has since increased to 1,834, with 799 in Hindi and 181 in English. On March 31, 2005, there were 60,413 registered newspapers and periodicals on the record of the Registrar of Newspapers for India. The Gujarati daily *Mumbai Samachar* (also called *Bombay Samachar*), which started in 1822 as a weekly and became daily in 1855, is the oldest surviving newspaper. The *Bombay Times*, which started in 1838, became the *Times of India* in 1861. Other nineteenth-century papers surviving today include the *Pioneer* (1864), the *Statesman* (1875), the *Hindu* (1878), the *Tribune* (1881), and *Malayala Manorama* (1890). Many newspapers have a web presence and regional or even district editions, and some offer a franchise.

The National Readership Study (NRS) of 2006 (NRSC 2006) noted that over the preceding three years the number of readers of dailies and → magazines put together among those aged 12 years and above had grown from 216 million to 222 million. Two

Hindi dailies had more than 20 million readers each: *Dainik Jagran* (21.2 million) and *Dainik Bhaskar* (21 million). The *Times of India* was the most read English daily, with 7.4 million readers, but the *Hindu* had taken the second spot with 4.05 million readers, pushing the *Hindustan Times* into the third spot with an estimated readership of 3.85 million. While no single newspaper accounted for even 2 percent of all-India copy sales, there was dominance in specific sub-markets (→ Readership Research).

Though under discussion, there is no cross-media ownership restriction yet, and foreign investment has been allowed to differing degrees according to the nature of the media product. For example, Bennett and Coleman owns the *Times of India*, the *Economic Times* (a financial daily), Radio Mirchi (an FM radio network), Planet M (a chain of music stores), Zoom (a lifestyle television channel), Times Now (a television news channel with Reuters), and Internet portal Indiatimes. Its magazines *Femina* and *Filmfare* are now published in association with the BBC.

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

AIR, the public radio network run by Prasar Bharti Corporation, has 233 broadcasting centers, with 143 medium frequency (MW), 54 high frequency (SW), and 161 FM transmitters covering 91.42 percent of the area and 99.13 percent of the population of the country. AIR uses 24 languages and 146 dialects in home services. In external services, it broadcasts in 17 Indian and 10 foreign languages.

AIR remained a monopoly until May 2000, when the government opened the sector for participation by private FM broadcasters and offered 108 frequencies in 40 cities for open bidding. Of these, 21 private FM stations are now on the air in 12 cities. In 2005, another 336 channels in 90 cities were offered for bidding to private companies. Community radio stations have been allowed, to be run by educational institutions. Private and community stations cannot broadcast news as yet.

Doordarshan, the public TV network run by Prasar Bharti, has a monopoly of terrestrial broadcasting, with 64 studio centers and 1,400 transmitters, and operates 24 channels: four national channels (DD-1, DD-News, DD-Sports, and DD-Bharati), eleven regional language satellite channels, eight state networks, and one international channel. The flagship DD1 channel reaches some 400 million viewers. There are over 250 private and foreign channels available in India. The National Readership Studies Council (NRSC 2006) puts the number of homes in India with TV at 112 million, those with cable and satellite (C&S) at 68 million, and satellite TV viewers at 230 million.

Indian media companies are also expanding in foreign markets. For example, Zee claims to serve more than 300 million viewers in more than 120 countries across the globe in seven different languages. Direct-to-home (DTH) was cleared by the government in 2000 and currently there three players: Doordarshan's DD Direct +, Dish TV from Zee network, and Tata Sky, an 80:20 joint venture between TATA and STAR.

## THE INTERNET

Despite being a software superpower, India is still on the wrong side of the → digital divide. Important traditional media outlets have an → Internet presence, but the growth

of new media is limited by access. According to NRS 2006 data (NRSC 2006), 13 million persons have access to the Internet and of these only 1.8 million reside in rural India. The number of Internet users in urban India grew by 35 percent over the preceding year, while in rural India it stagnated. However, the office was no longer the main place of access, as 34 percent of users surfed from cyber-café and 30 percent from home. Mobile phone companies have also introduced the Internet, and broadband connectivity is expanding.

E-governance initiatives are in full swing, but there is a long way to go before Indian print media enjoy a level of freedom comparable to that in any liberal democracy. Though there are large numbers of private TV news channels that are aggressively independent, like the newspapers, private and community radio stations are not allowed to broadcast news yet. Terrestrial television is under a public corporation still, though the decks are being cleared to allow private players as well. In DTH, public and private are competing and cooperating. There are still limits to foreign investment in news channels and newspapers. Thus, in the typology developed by Hallin and Mancini (2004), the Indian media system is close to a “liberal model,” as there is a relative dominance of market mechanisms and of commercial media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Readership Research ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History ▶ UNESCO ▶ United Kingdom: Media System

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# **Individual Differences and Information Processing**

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“Individual differences” (also known as “differential psychology”) is the area of psychology concerned with the scientific understanding of how, why, and to what degree

people differ. Its two major objects of study are personality and intelligence, though → emotion, motivation, vocational interests, and creativity also represent important, and increasingly researched, topics. Thus, individual difference factors attempt to describe and explain the nature, causes, and consequences of any psychological differences between individuals. Typically, such differences are quantified and measured or assessed via psychometric tests (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham 2005).

“Information processing” is a paradigm that originated within the cognitive psychology movement of the 1940s to explain human thinking via a series of mainly computational or cybernetic metaphors (e.g., human brain acting as hardware vs human mind acting as software). More generically, → information processing refers to the psychological mechanisms by which humans perceive, encode, decode, acquire, retain, and retrieve information; in simple terms, how we make sense of the perceptual and symbolic world around us.

While the core aspects of information processing are, by definition, ubiquitous in the human species (this is largely the premise of cognitive and experimental psychologists), individuals do differ in their processing of information. In fact, differential psychologists have attempted to link specific patterns of behavior, thought, and emotionality to different aspects, and modalities, of information processing. Thus, individual differences in information processing explain and *highlight variability*, rather than similarities, between people, or the psychological causes that make information processing different in different individuals.

Affect – whether its ephemeral and object-based version of emotion, or its longer-lasting, object-free version of mood – and cognition are known to be influenced by individual differences. For instance, information processing is very different under positive and negative affects.

Crucially, people differ in their likelihood and predisposition to experience both positive and negative affect (Watson & Tellegen 1985). Some individuals are more likely to be happy or cheerful, while others seem sad and pessimistic most of the time and quite irrespective of the situation. These two, opposite, types of individuals will also differ in their characteristic patterns of information processing: one may interpret a situation as positive, while the other interprets the same situation as negative.

Individual differences in stable personality traits influence people’s patterns of behavior, thought, and emotionality. In particular, neuroticism seems to exert a strong influence on individuals’ tendency to experience negative affect, whereas extraversion predisposes people to experience positive affect (Costa & McCrae 1992).

The interaction between individual differences and information processing is often complex. *Appraisal theory*, one of the dominant psychological approaches to the study of stress, postulates that emotions are largely a function of an individual’s interpretation of (1) the event (in the case of stress, the level of threat posed by it), as well as (2) their capacity to handle that event (e.g., cope with the threat; → Appraisal Theory). As such, stress is more influenced by individuals’ subjective evaluations (appraisals) of an event than the event itself. This explains why certain individuals may experience high levels of stress in situations that are experienced as pleasant by others (see Lazarus 1999).

*Traits*, such as neuroticism and extraversion, “distort” (bias) individuals’ interpretations of events and, in turn, lead to individual differences in vulnerability to experiencing stress. While the experience of stress itself produces similar information processing patterns

in all individuals, the vulnerability to experiencing stress is a function of individual difference factors (Matthews et al. 2003).

Another example of the interplay between individual differences and information processing is reflected in so-called “cold” tasks (e.g., math problems, IQ test performance, and target detection). When individuals complete such tasks, their performance is affected by a variety of cognitive and affective states. Many of these states are “task-irrelevant” in that they do not advance or help, but actually hinder, task execution, diverting attention away from the target stimuli and taxing working memory (see Szalma & Hancock 2005 for a recent review).

Cognitive approaches to individual differences in information processing tend to investigate *intellectual abilities*, particularly the biological or “fluid” aspects of intelligence (→ Communibiology). This line of research dates back to the very beginnings of ability testing, notably to J. M. Cattell’s (1890) attempts to quantify individual differences in tactile, weight, and hearing discrimination. More than a century later, there is wide consensus among mainstream IQ researchers that these aspects of information processing represent the very essence of individual differences in intelligence, serving as “raw” and universal measures of brain efficiency.

Indeed, intelligence researchers have long speculated on the possibility of IQ being ultimately a measure of neural efficiency or neural speed (Jensen 1998). The idea underlying this approach is that more efficient brains should be capable of faster and more accurate processing, which, in turn, is advantageous for information acquisition. However, measures of reaction time, information processing, perceptual speed, or inspection time, as measures of neurophysiological activity, are poorer predictors of learning ability and educational/occupational outcomes than are broader intelligence tests, such as those including verbal, mathematical, and logical problems.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aging and Cognitive Processing ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Communibiology ▶ Emotion ▶ Information Processing ▶ Perception

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# Infographics

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An infographic (or information graphic) is a visual explanation – for example, a chart, map, or diagram – that aids in the comprehension of text-based content. The infographic designer does not merely illustrate given information, but must actively interpret given content in order to present it in a manner that effectively visually communicates to the viewer. A designer does this by progressing through a number of steps, each time further processing and refining information (→ Design; Graphic Design).

Rajamanickam (2005) identifies *three steps in the design of infographics*: first, the designer must clearly understand what type of information is being communicated (spatial, chronological, quantitative, or a combination of all three); second, the designer must conceive of a suitable representation for that information as a cohesive whole (a whole that is more than the sum of its constituent parts, such as charts, diagrams, maps, timelines, etc.); and third, the designer must choose an appropriate medium for presentation (static, moving, or interactive). For example, this information may be a set of instructions, e.g., how to exit a building; it may be the visual explanation of a complex verbal concept, e.g., the science of how light is reflected by a mirror; it may be the visual companion of verbal content, e.g., a map of a country displaying the distribution of votes for different candidates; or any number of other visual devices that are used to convey meaning.

One *distinguishing characteristic of infographics* is their attempt to communicate a specific → meaning or content via the conscious, rational effort to provide an exchange of information using any number of visual techniques. There are some concepts that cannot be communicated through pictures, and others that can be said only with great and lengthy difficulty through language. But in certain situations, pictures, or a combination of pictures, words, and numbers, can speak more clearly and with a greater chance of a message being understood and remembered than solely with numbers or words. Because the images used in infographics tend to be simplified to essential or general characteristics, they tend to be universal in their interpretive qualities – they are stripped of cultural and realistic representation in favor of abstraction. This culturally neutral or universal aspect of information graphics makes them particularly effective for use in large-circulation media like newspapers, weekly news magazines, and news television, where a heterogeneous, culturally diverse public all expect to receive a shared clear and concise message.

The twentieth century saw the greatest degree of development in the *evolution of information graphics*. Two examples are of particular note: Otto Neurath (1882–1945) was a pioneering innovator in the development of visual education. Neurath founded Isotype (International System of Typographic Picture Education) in 1934 alongside illustrator Gerd Arntz (1900–1988) and his future wife Marie Reidemeister (1898–1959). The Isotype group promoted the use of simple pictographs to convey information (→ Symbolism). Living in Vienna after World War I, his “Vienna Method,” as it was originally called, was a way to effectively communicate social and economic information to a postwar

public, many of whom were illiterate. Neurath's rigorous methods of graphically presenting information had a profound influence on the design of statistically based information.

A second significant development was made by British engineering draftsman Henry C. Beck (1903–1974) in 1933. Beck redesigned the London Underground railway map and in so doing simplified a complex map by eliminating all extraneous details (→ Cartography). Focusing on the fact that a commuter's main concern is the destination and how to get there, Beck divorced above-ground geographic information from the Underground lines, station stops, and transfer points. The map capitalizes on the fact that the system operates underground and therefore the commuters need not be burdened with faithful adherence to topography: Beck eliminated a true representation of distance between station stops and simply listed the stations as they are encountered along their respective lines. The only surface feature to be included on the revised map was the River Thames. Beck designed the map using only simple vertical, horizontal, and 45-degree lines (which ensure an uncluttered layout), color (which differentiates the lines), clear typography (which makes text easy to read), and symbols (which differentiate stations from interchanges; Rajamanickam 2005).

Other prominent infographic designers include Katsumie Masaru, whose groundbreaking abstract technique for the design of different pictograms for the athletic events of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics became part of the standard signage technique for subsequent Olympics; Otl Aicher, symbol designer for the 1972 Munich Olympics and 1976 Montreal Olympics; Nigel Holmes, former designer for the American news weekly *Time Magazine*, who coined the term “explanation graphics” to describe the function of his profession; Paul Mijksenaar, designer of wayfinding signage systems for airports, railway stations, and hospitals (→ Sign Systems); Edward Tufte, former Yale professor and prolific writer on the subject; and Richard Saul Wurman, who coined the term “information architect” to describe his practice.

As graphic design splinters into ever-increasingly specialized forms of knowledge, information design itself is quickly becoming a leading discipline in its own right, complete with its own techniques, language, and thought processes. Infographics are one such specialized tool used by the visual communication and information designer.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cartography ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Design ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Iconography ▶ Information Literacy ▶ Meaning ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Symbolism ▶ Visual Communication

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# Information

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Common linguistic habits render information as an attribute of messages or data, or as the purpose of human communication – as if information were an objective entity that could be carried from one place to another, purchased, or owned. This conception is seriously misleading. Gregory Bateson (1972, 381) defined information as “any difference which makes a difference in some later event.” Acknowledging that differences do not reside in nature, but are the product of distinctions, leads to the following definition: information is the difference that drawing distinctions in one domain makes in another.

Written messages, for example, vary in very many dimensions – the size and quality of the paper, typefaces, typography, vocabulary use, grammatical constructions, and time of arrival. The number of distinctions that one could possibly draw among these features (and the differences they could possibly make elsewhere) may well be innumerable large. However, psychological, situational, linguistic (→ Linguistics), and cultural contingencies tend to render only some distinctions meaningful and others irrelevant. This keeps the amount of information that readers actually consider within manageable limits.

Information operates in an empirical domain other than where the distinguishable features reside. Bridging these domains is a matter of abduction, an inference relating data to conclusions. For instance, tree rings inform the forester of the age of a tree. Tree rings become meaningful (→ Meaning) only when one knows how trees grow rings and informative only when the number of rings correlates with a tree’s age. Abduction is informative; deduction and induction, however, say nothing new (→ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction).

The paradigm case of conveying information is answering questions. A question implies several answers. Knowledgeable respondents select the most appropriate one among them, which resolves some or all of the uncertainties that prompted the question.

Information “in-forms” – literally – by making a difference within the circularity of → cognition and action. Information is not a message effect (→ Message Effects, Structure of). It can be sought or ignored. It involves active reading, deciphering, and inferring, which are intentional acts. Receiving something a second time does not add information to the first, but is redundant, save for what had been forgotten. Information may qualify



information from previous communications, for example by discrediting its source (→ Credibility Effects), revealing overlooked inconsistencies, or rearticulating its context. Information is situation- or context-specific. What provides information at one time may be irrelevant at another. What is information for a stockbroker may not be information for an engineer. Talking about one thing excludes talking about something else.

Information is always tied to human agency, to the ability to vary something and make sense of variability. It is absent when one cannot draw distinctions or recognize choices made by others.

## INFORMATION THEORY

No theory can accommodate all intuitive uses of the word “information.” Early measures of information include Harry Nyquist and R. V. L. Hartley’s effort in the 1920s to quantify the capacity of telephone cables, and the statistician Sir Ronald Fisher’s proposal in the 1930s of a measure of information in data. In 1948, Claude E. Shannon published several measures and a widely applicable calculus involving these. To avoid the diverse associations that the word “information” carried, he titled his work “A mathematical theory of communication.” “Information theory” is what others call his theory.

*Shannon’s theory*, subsequently published with a popular commentary by Warren Weaver (Shannon & Weaver 1949), provided the seed and scientific justification for communication studies to emerge in universities, often consolidating journalism, mass media studies, rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies), social psychology, and speech communication (→ Speech Communication, History of) into single departments (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). Shannon’s work was instrumental in ushering in the information society we are witnessing, characterized by digital communication, massive electronic data storage, and computation. Today, information theory is a wide-ranging discipline in applied mathematics.

In his second theorem, Shannon proved that the logarithm is the only function by which two multiplicatively related quantities become additive. This formalizes the intuition that two compact disks (CDs) can store twice as much data as one and that the capacities of separate communication channels or computers can be added.

While the base of a logarithm is arbitrary, Shannon chose the smallest sensible base of 2,  $\log_2$ , as the unit of his calculus. This unit enumerates the number of yes-and-no answers to questions, the number of 0s or 1s needed to store data in a computer, or the number of distinctions or binary choices required to locate something in a finite space of possible locations. Shannon called that unit of enumeration “*binary digit*” or “bit” for short:

1 bit			$= 2^1$	$= 2$ possibilities
1 byte		$= 8$ bits	$= 2^8$	$= 256$ possibilities
1 decabit	$= 10$ bits	$= 10^1$ bits	$= 2^{10}$	$= 1,024$ possibilities
1 hectobit	$= 100$ bits	$= 10^2$ bits	$= 2^{100}$	$= 10^{30}$ possibilities
1 kilobit	$= 1,000$ bits	$= 10^3$ bits	$= 2^{1000}$	$= 10^{301}$ possibilities
1 megabit	$= 1,000$ Kbits	$= 10^6$ bits	$= 2^{1000000}$	$= 10^{301029}$ possibilities
1 gigabit	$= 1,000$ Mbits	$= 10^9$ bits	$= 2^{1000000000}$	$= 10^{301029995}$ possibilities
1 terabit	$= 1,000$ Gbits	$= 10^{12}$ bits	$= 2^{1000000000000}$	$= 10^{301029995664}$ possibilities

To exemplify, the well-known party game “20 questions” can exhaust  $2^{20} = 1,048,576$  or over a million conceptual alternatives. With an array of 20-by-20 light bulbs, one can display  $2^{400}$  or  $10^{120}$  distinct patterns. The human retina has not 400 but about a million independently responsive receptors. Contemporary laptop computers have in the neighborhood of one gigabyte of memory.

The following sketches three concepts of information – logical, statistical, and algorithmic. While Shannon’s original work developed statistical conceptions only, all three acknowledge his second theorem and use bits as units of measurement.

### THE LOGICAL THEORY OF INFORMATION

This theory (Krippendorff 1967) concerns the logical possibilities of moving on, which depend on the situation S in which one finds oneself. Let U measure the uncertainty one is facing:

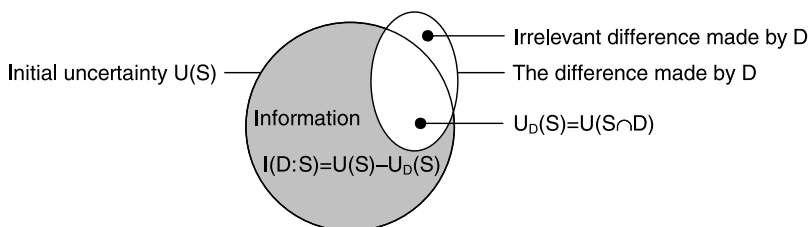
$$U(S) = \log_2(\text{Number of uncertain possibilities in } S)$$

Information I, the difference made by drawing distinctions D, can be expressed as the difference between two uncertainties – before a message was received and after drawing distinctions in it:

$$I(D:S) = U(S) - U_D(S)$$

Accordingly, information I is not an entity or thing, but a change in two states of knowing. It measures the difference between two uncertainties of a situation, as Figure 1 suggests. Information is positive when the distinctions drawn in the domain of a message reduce the uncertainty in the situation. It is zero when either no distinction was made, or the distinctions did not make a difference in the domain of interest, be it because the message did not make sense, was already known, or pertained to something irrelevant to the current situation.

Yehoshua Bar-Hillel (1964) took this to be a semantic theory, as the drawing of distinctions among possible patterns in a message makes a difference in a domain other than the message itself, whether that difference concerns references, connotations, decisions, or actions. For example, the driver of a car who is uncertain about where to turn will be looking for signs that reduce this uncertainty. Typically, drivers face numerous patterns, most of which are irrelevant, perhaps even distracting, and therefore are ignored.



**Figure 1** Information as the difference in situation S made by distinguishing D

Extreme fog prevents making distinctions and information is unobtainable. The latter suggests an important information-theoretical limit to human communication: *The information that a message can provide is limited by the number of distinctions one can draw concerning it* – the most basic one being the presence or absence of a message. Moreover, both quantities are limited by the uncertainty of the situation, on the one side, and the uncertainty of all identifiable patterns in the message, on the other side:

$$U(S) \geq I(D:S) \leq U(\text{Message})$$

In human communication, information is largely acquired sequentially, in small, comprehensible doses. For example, each scene in a movie adds something toward its conclusion. For any set of messages,  $M_1, M_2, \dots, M_z$ , the total amount of information is:

$$I(M_1 \& M_2 \& \dots \& M_z : S) = U(S) - U_{M_1, M_2, \dots, M_z}(S).$$

It can be expressed as the sum of sequentially available quantities of information:

$$I(M_1 \& M_2 \& \dots \& M_z : S) = I(M_1 : S) + I_{M_1}(M_2 : S) + I_{M_1, M_2}(M_3 : S) + I_{M_1, M_2, M_3, \dots}(M_z : S)$$

Two messages are logically independent of each other if their separate information quantities add to what they inform jointly:

$$I(M_a \& M_b : S) = I(M_a : S) + I(M_b : S)$$

Two messages are redundant to the extent they jointly convey what each would convey separately:

$$R(M_a, M_b) = I(M_a : S) + I(M_b : S) - I(M_a \& M_b : S)$$

Information can also be expressed in terms of logical probabilities. If  $N$  is the number of uncertain possibilities before drawing distinctions  $D$ , and  $N_D$  after  $D$  were drawn:

$$I(D:S) = U(S) - U_D(S) = \log_2 N - \log_2 N_D = -\log_2 \frac{N_D}{N}$$

As a function of the logical probability  $N_D/N$ , the amount of information is upwardly limited by  $1/N$ .

## **SHANNON'S STATISTICAL THEORY OF INFORMATION**

For Shannon, “the fundamental problem of communication is that of reproducing at one point, either exactly or approximately, a message selected at another point” (Shannon & Weaver 1949, 3). While this does not address meaning, reliable reproduction of messages at distant points is a prerequisite for all meaningful use of information and communication technology, whether using letters, telephone, fax, or electronic messaging.

Unlike the logical or semantic theory, Shannon's theory is a statistical one and concerns itself with averages, with how observed probabilities in one domain relate to observed

probabilities in another domain. Shannon called the statistical uncertainty “entropy” and defined it for a particular distribution of probabilities  $p_a$  in a variable A by:

$$H(A) = -\sum_{a \in A} p_a \log_2 p_a$$

The possibilistic uncertainty  $U$  is that special case of the entropy  $H$  in which all probabilities  $p_a$  are the same, i.e.,  $1/N_A$ .

Applied to the simplest case of a channel of communication between just two communicators A and B, Shannon’s basic quantities are the entropies  $H(A)$  and  $H(B)$  for each variable separately, and the entropy  $H(A,B)$  when observing them together:

$$H(A,B) = -\sum_{a \in A} \sum_{b \in B} p_{ab} \log_2 p_{ab}$$

wherein  $p_{ab}$  is the probability of a and b co-occurring, say, in a cross-tabulation of a sender’s and a receiver’s distinctions. From these entropies, the amount of information transmitted between A and B becomes:

$$T(A:B) = H(A) + H(B) - H(A,B),$$

which expresses the degree to which a sender’s choices determine the receiver’s choices.

If this amount is zero, then, the sender’s choices do not affect the receiver’s – regardless of the existence of a physical channel between them. When the quantity of transmission equals the entropy of the receiver, then the sender’s choices fully determine what the receiver can see. Otherwise, noise can enter or equivocation can leave a communication channel. Noise provides the receiver with choices that are unrelated to the sender’s choices. The amount of noise is:

$$H_A(B) = H(A,B) - H(A),$$

which is the entropy that remains in the receiver when the sender’s choices are known. Equivocation, by contrast, is the entropy in the sender when the receiver’s choices are known:

$$H_B(A) = H(A,B) - H(B)$$

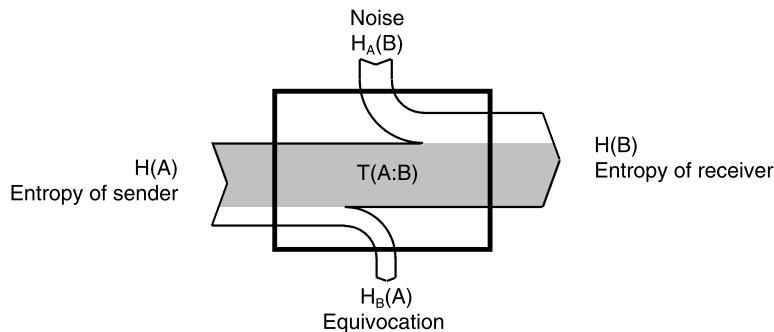
Noise and equivocation relate to transmission by:

$$T(A:B) = H(B) - H_A(B) = H(A) - H_B(A)$$

Accordingly, the number of bits transmitted is the entropy in the receiver not due to noise, or the entropy in the sender not lost by equivocation. Figure 2 depicts these entropies.

The capacity  $C$  of a channel of communication is:

$$C = \min[U(A), U(B)] \geq T(A:B)$$



**Figure 2** Transmission, noise, and equivocation in a communication channel

In serial transmissions from A to Z, noises always add up:

$$T(A: \dots :Z) = H(Z) - H_A(B) - H_{AB}(C) - H_{ABC}(D) - \dots - H_{ABCD\dots Y}(Z)$$

That increase cannot be reversed, as illustrated by repeated copying of documents: copies of copies become worse. Here, Shannon's theory corresponds with the second law of thermodynamics, according to which entropy always increases over time. In fact, it has been suggested that thermodynamics is a special case of Shannon's statistical theory of communication.

Shannon's eleventh theorem addresses the possibility of designing error-correcting codes making use of unused capacities for communication, called redundancy:

$$R = \min[U(A), U(B)] - T(A:B)$$

Redundancy is evident in repeatedly saying the same thing, avoiding words otherwise available, transmitting images with large continuous areas, and communicating the same message over several channels of communication. In human communication, redundancy protects communication from disturbances; examples are postal addresses with personal names, streets, cities, and states, as opposed to telephone numbers and zip codes, where any one incorrect digit is not correctable. Natural language is said to be 70 percent redundant, allowing the detection of spelling errors, for example.

Shannon's twenty-first theorem concerns communication in continuous channels. The approach taken is to digitize them. Tolerating an arbitrarily small error makes digitized media less susceptible to noise. This has revolutionized contemporary communication technology ( $\rightarrow$  Cybernetics).

## KOLMOGOROV'S ALGORITHMIC THEORY OF INFORMATION

Examining the complexity of computation in the 1960s, the Russian statistician Andrei Nikolaevich Kolmogorov (1965) came to conclusions similar to Shannon's. He equated the descriptive complexity or algorithmic entropy of an object, such as a text or an



Instead, he wrote of entropies, theorized communication, carefully avoiding issues of meaning, and refusing to name his theory “information theory.”

Another misconception stems from reading a “schematic diagram” (Shannon & Weaver 1949, 5) that Shannon used in his introduction to contextualize his theory, showing unidirectional arrows from a sender through a channel to a receiver, as “the Shannon model of communication” (→ Models of Communication) However, this diagram is certainly not a model of his theory. At Bell Laboratories, where Shannon worked, nobody could have failed to see the two-way nature of telephone communication, and Shannon’s concept of a channel is perfectly symmetrical. Critics of linearity have a point, though not the one they are making: Shannon’s calculus, grounded in probability theory, blinded him to circular communication, e.g., from A to B to C to A. However, Klaus Krippendorff (1986, 57ff.) extended Shannon’s theory to include such and more elaborate recursive communication structures.

Other critics impute underlying purposes: the intention of senders to control receivers. However, Shannon’s theory concerns reproducibility in the face of interferences and breakdowns, not control. Reliable communication technology is the foundation of contemporary information society. Its capacity to store, compute, and communicate is measured in bits or bytes and paid for accordingly, and has expanded ever since.

The failure of communication researchers to differentiate engineering and everyday distinctions in human interfaces with communication technologies has created a false barrier against Shannon-type theories. The fact that the number of bits transmitted to television images far exceeds the number of concepts that ordinary viewers have at their disposal to see these images is no justification for privileging the former as objective quantities and dismissing the latter as subjective phenomena. The difference is due to meaningful equivocation, which can be studied.

A more reasonable complaint concerns the conception of uncertainty. Mathematical theories can be quite rigid whereas the uncertainties that people experience are fluid. Nevertheless, human information processing has been examined in communication research, for example, by → uncertainty reduction theory, which received its impetus from information theory.

Finally, information theory is not meant to predict behaviors. It theorizes limits to what can be done – just as thermodynamics does. Whereas the logical theory addresses possible distinctions and explores the differences they could make elsewhere the statistical theory concerns capacities of communication media and investigates ways to improve their reliability, and the algorithmic theory concerns computations and examines their efficiencies. Their common unit of measurement concerns essential human activities: distinguishing, conceptualizing, inferring, and deciding among alternatives.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Message Effects, Structure of ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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# **Information and Communication Technology, Development of**

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The commercial information and communication technology (ICT) industry accounts for a large fraction of economic activity. It has spread to include an extraordinary range of economic undertakings. What drives economic change in this market? A variety of market-driven incentives play a salient role.

## **TECHNOLOGY PUSH**

The invention of the transistor did not lead in a linear way to the invention of computing and related ICTs. However, the invention of the transistor, and then the integrated circuit, did alter what equipment makers could build cheaply and what users could operate reliably. In popular discussion, advances in ICTs have become almost synonymous with advances in microprocessors. This is due to an observation by Gordon Moore, who co-founded and eventually became chairman at Intel. In 1965, he foresaw a doubling of circuits per chip every two years. This prediction about the rate of technical advance later became known as “Moore’s Law.” In fact, microprocessors and dynamic random access memory (DRAM) have been doubling in capability every 18 months over the last three decades.

A similar pattern of improvement – though with variation in the rate – characterizes many other electronic components that go into producing a computer, server, or other equipment complementary to ICTs in many standard uses. This holds for disk drives, display screens, routing equipment, and data-transmission capacity, to name a few (Flamm 2003). In the majority of these technologies, economic motives intermingle with



many others to produce frontier-stretching inventions (Greenstein 2006). For example, in the late 1940s the transistor came out of Bell Laboratories, which at that point was among the best-funded private laboratories where researchers examined cutting-edge issues in electronics. The majority of advances thereafter came from an array of firms, such as Motorola, Texas Instruments, IBM, and notably the numerous “descendents” of Shockley Instruments in Santa Clara, California, such as Fairchild, National Semiconductor, and Intel. Economic motives played a role, but so did the inventors’ desires for fame or professional respect, and the aspiration to build an intellectually satisfying work environment that addressed frontier issues in solid state physics and material science.

The pathway from invention to commercialization also shaped developments in the technical boundary of ICT equipment for sale. For example, Ethernet built on years of university research in data communications. It was nurtured at the Palo Alto Research Center, a private lab funded by Xerox, which chose not to commercialize the technology. It received an endorsement from the standard-setting organization, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), a nonprofit consortium with representation from industry (whose committees also endorsed two competing technologies at the same time). Ethernet eventually became part of a suite of commercial products sold by many firms, including 3Com, a company founded by Bob Metcalfe, inventor of Ethernet, and which competed against alternative specifications developed by other firms, such as IBM.

Another example illustrates how new inventions take multiple pathways into use. The Uniform Resource Locator (URL) originated in Tim Berners-Lee’s labs at the Organisation européenne pour la recherche nucléaire (CERN) in Switzerland, labs whose primary mission involves research in high-energy physics. The URL’s use was popularized in the first widely used browser, Mosaic. The programmers founded the company Netscape, an event that motivated a wave of investment in Internet-related applications. Simultaneously, the browser was licensed to many firms, including Microsoft, which developed Internet Explorer to compete against Netscape’s products (→ Media Economics).

## DEMAND PULL

ICTs aid the automated tracking of transactions, a function that is used, e.g., in automating billing, managing the pricing of inventories of airline seating, and restocking retail outlets in a geographically dispersed organization. It also facilitates the coordination of information-intensive tasks, such as the dispatching of time-sensitive deliveries or emergency services. Moreover, computer-based applications enable the improved performance of advanced mathematical calculations, useful in such diverse activities as calculating interest on loans and generating estimates of underground geologic deposits. Computer-aided precision improves the efficiency of processes such as manufacturing metal shapes or the automation of communication switches.

Such widespread use has supported an extensive search for innovative activities to generate additional revenue. Historically, the demand for *military applications* was quite important for the direction of early inventions. In ICT markets today, however, incentives are greatly shaped by market-oriented incentives (Jorgenson and Wessner 2005). These demand-oriented incentives must be understood in the context of the dispersion of technical knowledge across a wide set of firms. Firms devote considerable resources to

resisting becoming a supplier of a commodity available from many vendors without distinction. Pricing at multiples above unit cost requires something special. That induces the search for, and creation of, useful and profitable assets. Firms take a variety of approaches to developing these assets in technology markets, even if they remain unique only for a short period.

For example, one strategy relies on marketing a novel approach or a fad among fanatics. Many of the software gaming firms have tried this, and the Palm also started this way. A second strategy is to expand beyond a niche into a broad product line. Hewlett-Packard (HP) has accomplished this in its laser printer line of products. HP has kept its lead for over a decade and a half and remains very profitable. A third strategy requires the lowest cost and highest volume. Dell computer accomplished this in the 1990s through a combination of volume manufacturing, low distribution costs, and customization to user niche needs.

### PLATFORM COMPETITION

In any given era, ICT markets are organized around platforms – a cluster of technically standardized components that buyers use together to make the aforementioned wide range of applications (Bresnahan and Greenstein 1999). Such platforms involve long-lived assets, both components sold in markets (i.e., hardware and some software) and components made by buyers (i.e., training and most software). Important computing platforms historically include the UNIVAC, the IBM 360 and its descendents, the Wang minicomputers, IBM AS/400, DEC VAX, Sun SPARC, Intel/Windows PC, Linux, and, recently, TCP/IP-based client-server platforms linked together.

Vendors tend to sell groups of compatible products under umbrella strategies aimed at the users of particular platforms. In the earliest eras of ICT markets, the leading firms integrated all facets of computing and offered a supply of goods and services from a centralized source. In later eras, the largest and most popular platforms historically included many different computing, communications, and peripheral equipment firms, software tool developers, application software writers, consultants, system integrators, distributors, user groups, news publications, and service providers.

Until the early 1990s, platforms helped define most market segments. These were distinguished by the size of tasks to be undertaken and by the technical sophistication of the typical user. These segments stood in for clusters of technical skills at firms and clusters of operations at users. Mainframes, minicomputers, workstations, and personal computers (in decreasing order of size of installation needed to effectively use the computer) constituted different size-based market segments. Trained engineers or programmers made up the technical user base, while the commercial market was geared more toward administrators, secretaries, and office assistants.

The most popular platform in the late 1980s and 1990s differed from the prominent platforms of earlier years. The *personal computer* (PC) began in the mid-1970s as an object of curiosity among technically skilled hobbyists, but became a common office tool after the entry of IBM's design. Unlike prior computing platforms, this one has diffused into both home and business use. From the beginning, this platform involved thousands of large and small software developers, third-party peripheral equipment and card developers, and a few major players.

The networking and Internet revolution in the late 1990s is responsible for blurring familiar distinctions. These new technologies have made it feasible to build client-server systems within large enterprises and across ownership boundaries. Today such networking employs Internet-based computing systems networked across potentially vast geographic distances, supporting the emergence of a “network of networks.” Proprietary network providers, sponsored by firms such as Microsoft, SAP, and Oracle, compete with each other and with software built around open source, such as Linux, Apache, and MySQL.

### **CHANGES IN COMMERCIAL LEADERSHIP**

Why do incumbents or entrants take advantage of technological opportunity sometimes and not others? Sometimes incumbents either cannot or will not do the same as entrants. Why? There is a seemingly anomalous pattern. Despite frequent and sometimes dramatic technical improvements in specific areas of technology, many features of the most common platforms in use tend to persist or change very slowly. This is because many durable components make up platforms. Though they lose their market value as they become obsolete in comparison to frontier products, they do not as quickly lose their ability to provide a flow of services to users. Consequently, new technology tends to be most successful when new components enhance and preserve the value of previous investments, a factor that creates demand for “backward-compatible” upgrades or improvements. It also creates a demand for support and service activities to reduce the costs of making the transition from old to new.

*Control* over changes to design and other aspects of technical standards shapes the backward compatibility for key components. Control of these decisions is coincident with platform leadership – determining the rate and direction of change in the technical features of components around which other firms build their businesses. In each platform, it is very rare to observe more than a small number of firms acquiring leadership positions. In more recent experience, control over the standard has completely passed from IBM to Microsoft and Intel. Microsoft produces the Windows operating system and Intel produces the most commonly used microprocessor. For this reason the platform is often called Wintel. Other firms, such as SAP, Oracle, and Cisco, also have dominant positions in other areas of the most common platforms in use.

### **FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS SUPPORTING INNOVATION**

In technologically intensive markets, forward-looking firms cannot (or do not) presume that they are certain about the source of market value. Incumbent firms and new entrants get a high rate of return from learning about future technical and market opportunities. A number of institutions, such as venture capitalists, support innovative activities by entrants, often in contraposition to an incumbent firm that has failed to learn to take advantage of new commercial opportunities.

Leading firms have developed numerous mechanisms to elicit cooperation from innovative entrants, even when innovation takes place outside the organizational boundaries of an incumbent. With similar assessments of market opportunities, incumbents and entrants are likely to jointly pursue these opportunities in a manner which reinforces the

incumbent's position. Cisco's repeated acquisition of small firms during the Internet boom was one such example.

While the spawning of new ICT businesses in North America has tended to be concentrated in a small number of locations, other facets of the supply chain for ICTs involve firms headquartered and operating in a much wider set of locations. Entry into facets of the ICT market has become an important phenomenon world wide. The supply chain for many complementary components has also been associated with firms in western Europe as well as in India, Israel, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and China (Bresnahan and Malerba 1999). Even more widespread are computing service firms, which follow business and home users dispersed across the globe.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Media Economics ▶ Open Source

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# **Information and Communication Technology, Economics of**

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Information and communication technology or technologies (ICT, ICTs) may be considered as a clear exemplar of the salient features and ingredients of a path-dependent and complex process based upon an array of complementary localized technological changes. Indeed,

the path leading to the generation and adoption of ICT emerged out of a collective and interactive process induced by relevant changes in the economic environment. This stimulated the creative reaction of an array of learning agents based in a fertile context characterized by effective knowledge governance mechanisms and positive feedback magnified by local externalities.

### **DETERMINANTS**

Beginning in the late 1960s, 20 years after World War II, the US experienced a progressive erosion of its economic and technological leadership. The combined effect of the convergent catching up of competing countries, the international diffusion of mass production and science-based technologies (Nelson & Wright 1992), and the exhaustion of technological opportunities in the chemical and engineering technologies resulted in a strong decline of US international competitive advantage and a productivity slowdown (Griliches 1980; → Diffusion of Information and Innovation). This decline in performance induced a myriad of interdependent, sequential, and creative efforts directed toward the introduction of complementary technological innovations. These were based upon the exploitation of locally abundant production factors, favorable conditions of use, and access to a large knowledge commons and localized learning processes (Antonelli 1999).

The main result of these developments has been the creation of a new technological system with a strong skill bias (Acemoglu 1998). In the decades following their introduction, ICTs have improved considerably, and have slowly acquired the features of a general-purpose technology (GPT). These technologies have a high degree of fungibility, that is, usability in many different contexts, strong complementarities, and considerable spillover effects. Along with the improvements, the diffusion of ICT across US firms stemmed from a process of sequential, creative adoption (Lipsey et al. 2005). The full exploitation of the benefits of the introduction of ICTs, for instance in terms of higher firm productivity, is possible, however, only in those contexts that are able to replicate the specific endowment of production factors in which the new technologies originate, such as the strength of the academic skills in the US economy.

### **CHARACTERISTICS**

The development of ICTs is typical of a Schumpeterian gale of innovation characterized by increasing convergence between and integration of a variety of localized innovations, generated in a wide range of industries and firms. *Technological convergence* is driven by the introduction of a number of innovations, such as Internet services, enhanced broadband fiber optics, Asynchronous Digital Subscriber Lines, digital television, and the Universal Mobile Telecommunications System, opening up the possibility of integrating a variety of content, services, technologies, and applications (Fransman 2002). As a result, ICTs, and the related technological knowledge, are both composite and fungible. ICTs embody the outcome of the recombination of a variety of knowledge modules that cannot be fully confined internally by the firm and that require the coordination of technological complementarities within the broad ICT technological system (Antonelli 1999; → Communication Infrastructure).

The integration of the array of interdependent, localized, and sequential innovations, characterized by substantial indivisibility, has been shaped by the implementation of: (1) economies of localized learning due to the increasing specialization in specific technological areas, the advantages of the growth in the number of users (network externalities), and the gains from the accumulation of know-how in complementary technologies (knowledge externalities); (2) qualified user–producer and business–academic interactions; and (3) organizational innovations, such as standardization committees (→ Communication Technology Standards), technological platforms, and technological clubs and alliances, to improve the dynamic coordination of the wide range of actors, products, and technologies into a single working system. This has resulted in the complementarity, compatibility, and interoperability of a variety of new localized technologies (David & Steinmueller 1994; Shapiro & Varian 1999; Antonelli 2001).

### EFFECTS

The effects of the introduction of ICT have been powerful. The US economy has been enjoying a new surge in productivity since 1995. The ICT industry has played a key role in this as a result of the rapid technological developments in the semiconductor industry. The persistent and steep decline in the price of semiconductors has been transmitted downward in the value chain, affecting the semiconductor user sectors, and especially the producers of telecommunication equipment and software (Jorgenson 2001). The productivity gains stemming from the spread of ICTs are due both to increases in efficiency in upstream industries and to the flows of creative adoptions of ICTs in downstream sectors. These technologies have enabled knowledge spillovers to the rest of the system, and as a result of intense competition, the new upstream industries have been unable to retain the full stream of benefits stemming from the new technology. This has engendered a flow of pecuniary externalities (David 2001a).

Strong US technological leadership encouraged a new *international division of labor*, which reversed the situation that prevailed in the 1980s. The US quickly became the main producer and user of ICTs, while the rest of the advanced countries engaged in creative adoption involving adapting the technology to the idiosyncratic conditions of their markets and industrial structures.

Because of the strong directional skill bias of ICTs, a → *digital divide* is emerging between countries that are “properly” endowed, that is, that have the “right” amount of human capital and access to the knowledge commons. These “properly” endowed countries are able to participate in the process of cumulative technological change and creative adoption. Other countries can, at best, adopt ICTs passively and enjoy fewer chances to take advantage of the new opportunities for productivity growth. ICTs are global in character because they bring about increases in productivity and efficiency, such that their adoption is profitable across a great array of products and processes, and regions. Nevertheless, asymmetric effects stemming from the strong skill bias and the different endowments of human capital must be accounted for in examining these effects (Antonelli 2003).

Since the early 1990s the adoption of ICTs has made possible the emergence of *global corporations* based on distributed coordination processes, selling worldwide customized products, manufactured and assembled in a variety of regions, while retaining the

skill-intensive activities in their home countries. This trend is especially evident in the new service industry and, in particular, in the new knowledge-intensive-business service sector (Dunning 1993; → Technology and Globalization).

Specialization in *new knowledge-based services* that rely heavily on the quality and variety of advanced digital communication characterizes the transition to the new knowledge economy in advanced countries (→ Knowledge Management). ICTs are increasingly important for a wide scope of knowledge services that range from entertainment to health and financial services to education and logistics. The advent of digital technologies changes the context in which knowledge-based services were traditionally supplied. ICTs allow remote interaction between different actors, while in traditional services, any interaction implied physical proximity. ICTs change the way in which services are delivered and used, and the way in which services are provided to final users. ICTs are crucial also to changes in the way new knowledge services are utilized and contributed to by final and intermediary users (→ Virtual Communities; Network Organizations through Communication Technology). Significantly, the development of open source software is the result of online interactions within the community of users who create and implement new modules of the software (Von Hippel 2005).

The complex nature of ICT, and the complementarity among different physical devices and platforms, has led to the identification of two notions. First, the notion of “essential facility” defines telecommunication networks as essential resources that are fundamental to economic development and thus need to be freed up and accessed by the largest possible share of firms and citizens. Second, according to the notion of “economies of density,” production and distribution costs of telecommunication services decline with an increase in the number of users, leading to a steep reduction in the price of telecommunication services for both firms and citizens. The application of these notions in antitrust law has led in some countries to the splitting up of monopolies, for example, in the telecommunication industry (→ Antitrust Regulation). The separation between property and use rights is necessary when a facility, essential to other competitors, is owned by a monopolist. In this case the monopolist must provide reasonable access to the facility, if its duplication is not possible. Dedicated authorities have been established since the late 1980s to implement the right to interconnection, and mandatory access has become well established in antitrust law (Baumol & Sidak 1994).

The introduction of ICT can be viewed as both the cause and the consequence of the emergence of new financial institutions, like venture capitalists and the related creation of markets dedicated to the transaction of knowledge-intensive property rights. Empirical evidence shows that the spread of venture capitalism took place during the 1970s and 1980s in parallel with the ICT revolution. The wide scope for improvements and the large range of new technological opportunities engendered a strong increase in the birth of new high-tech companies based on venture capital to mitigate the traditional problems of credit rationing for innovative ventures. The strong demand for investment in ICT-based start-ups favored the development of the new venture capital industry (Gompers & Lerner 2001).

## EVALUATION

The emergence and evolution of the new ICT system can be seen as the result of the interplay between the strong idiosyncratic features of the context in which firms are

embedded and the firms' innovative strategies. Firms characterized by limited and specific technological abilities and by irreversibility in their productive choices can face up to the mismatch between expectations and their performance by means of a creative reaction, building on their own localized learning processes. However, this occurs only when the structural characteristics of their environment are fertile and able to provide access to a complementary knowledge commons.

In systems such as those of the US, and to a lesser extent the European Union, where human and technological capital, financial resources, and high-skilled labor have been abundant and accessible, firms were able to address their declining performance in the late 1970s and 1980s with the introduction of an array of new technologies. The convergence of the localized efforts of a myriad of innovating firms led to the emergence of a radical innovation in a cumulative and self-reinforcing way. When those systemic conditions are more difficult to find, such as in many developing countries, firms are more likely to be passive adopters of ICT, rather than innovators (Antonelli 2008).

ICTs represent a clear case of a path-dependent complex process based upon the complementarity of a myriad of localized technological changes. At any point in time the structure of the existing endowments, industries, and regions, and the networks of communication flows in place among innovative agents, exert strong effects on their creative efforts so as to shape the direction and the rate of technological change. When effective knowledge governance mechanisms are in place, the result may be a sweeping gale of innovations (David 2000, 2001b).

SEE ALSO: ► Antitrust Regulation ► Communication Infrastructure ► Communication Technology Standards ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Digital Divide ► Knowledge Management ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► Technology and Globalization ► Virtual Communities

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## Information Literacy

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New information and communication technologies (ICTs) pose significant challenges for their users. They require the rapid development and continual updating of diverse skills, competences, and knowledge, from the most familiar to the brand new, and from the most basic to the highly sophisticated. In academic research, these skills and knowledge requirements are increasingly brought together under the rubric of information literacy. By using the term “literacy,” the skills needed to operate ICTs are related to the ability to read and write, although the concept is still being developed (→ Human–Computer Interaction).

The specific nature of key information literacy skills is still under debate. However, at a minimum these skills include the abilities to access, navigate, critique, and create the content and services available via ICTs. As these abilities become ever more critical to effective participation in employment, education, and society, both governments and researchers are finding that understanding, tracking, and enhancing them are of growing importance.

### KEY CONCEPTS

The study of information literacy has developed separately from the study of → media literacy, but the two traditions are beginning to converge. The information literacy

tradition emphasizes the access, identification, location, evaluation, and use of information materials while the media literacy tradition generally stresses the understanding, comprehension, critique, and creation of media materials. These are similar but not identical definitions. One reason for the difference in emphasis is that ICT-based information sources have been less accessible, both because they are unequally distributed in society (→ Digital Divide) and because these information sources are more complex to find and use than the typical content of television or radio (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Exposure to the Internet). Another reason is that, since media materials are largely commercially produced, there has been greater emphasis in media literacy on critique than there has been in relation to information literacy. As the natures of information and media materials diversify and converge, it is useful to address both definitions by focusing on four key concepts: access, navigation, critique, and creation.

The first key element of information literacy is *access*. Access seems simple, but in fact it is a complex concept. First, it includes the physical possession of a piece of hardware, such as a computer or mobile phone, as well as the time to use it. Next, and equally importantly, it includes a range of the skills and competences required by the public to sustain and update their access to fast-changing media and communication technologies, to regulate the information accessible to them, and to manage the information available to others about individuals.

The second key element of information literacy is *navigation* – the ability to find relevant content. Information literacy researchers are coming to recognize that navigation and understanding are fundamentally linked in the online atmosphere of media plenty. In this, the → Internet differs from print and audiovisual texts. These texts were traditionally produced in a context of scarcity, with few people having access to the systems of production and distribution. This maintained a strong distinction between producers and consumers, with key filters operating to select material to be distributed in accordance with criteria of cultural quality, editorial values, professional production conventions, and political or market pressures. While this pre-filtering and organization of written information placed fewer demands on the individual's critical/information skills in terms of locating an authoritative source, information literacy instead centers on understanding the operation and consequences of these filters.

*Critical literacy* is the third key element of information literacy. Almost anyone can produce and disseminate Internet content, with fewer and different kinds of filters, so critical literacy, or the ability to evaluate and assess content for oneself, is fundamental to the ability to “read” the Internet. On the Internet, the information-literate person must be able to find the information he or she wants by searching among a wide range of relatively disorganized sources and be able to compare and evaluate them, sorting authoritative from non-authoritative and relevant from irrelevant documents. A less information-literate person faces difficulties in navigating online, even if he or she has some technical skills, precisely because of a lack of skills for comparing and evaluating information. For example, adults using the web face challenges to the values they have learned to associate with (printed) texts in school. Instead of the authoritative and carefully selected texts that one might find in a library, a huge variety of primary sources confronts the often under-prepared user online. In addition, people's rather broad searching strategies, which

work well in a closely monitored database such as a school library, for example, are unsuitable for large-scale → search engines, which return a vast number of irrelevant results.

The fourth element of information literacy is *creation*. Print literacy has always included both reading and writing skills. However, examination of content creation skills is just beginning to be included in research on information literacy. With the rapid growth of peer-to-peer networking, the creation of information (as “user-generated content” of various kinds) is transforming the range of information available online (→ Personal Publishing). This sets new challenges for research and policy, raising questions about the quality or originality of people’s information creation. With a burgeoning of multimedia artwork, music, and moving images, it also raises questions regarding the ethical or, conversely, harmful, nature of some material (as in the growth of racist or hostile material, as well as in the expansion in peer-to-peer advice and support). Information creation also opens up new possibilities for civic or political processes of deliberation, transparency, and organizing.

### MAIN AREAS OF RESEARCH

The conceptual foundations of information literacy lie in → information processing, the study of how symbols become information and how information, in turn, becomes knowledge. Drawing on this approach, which is based in cognitive psychology, a range of experimental studies has been conducted in which tasks are performed and user reactions are tested and tracked. These studies investigate users’ attitudes and beliefs, and researchers have attempted to develop psychological instruments to measure literacy.

Information literacy is linked historically to computer skills (sometimes called computer literacy), and so research also examines people’s (generally, adults’) ability to manipulate hardware and software in order to find information efficiently and effectively. The related field of human–computer interaction, although it may not mention the concept of information literacy explicitly, treats literacy as an interaction between skilled users and well-designed interfaces.

Researchers in the fields of education and library studies have been instrumental in distinguishing technical skills (for example, the ability to open a web browser on a computer) from information skills (for example, the ability to assess whether the information on a web page is reliable). These researchers have focused on motivation and the appropriateness of content as key barriers to use, rather than attributing poor usage to deficient technical skills. Other researchers in this tradition focus on problems of comprehension, understanding, and the evaluation of information.

These areas of information literacy studies overlap in practice. Many of the studies that have been conducted are couched in a context of work and competitiveness, either personal or national. The implication is that the information-literate person is able to participate fully in the world of work, for example, by being an “information worker” or a “knowledge worker.” Conversely, the person who lacks information literacy risks being undervalued by or excluded from an increasingly competitive, information-oriented labor market.

## MEASURING INFORMATION LITERACY

Literacy has never been easy to measure. However, practitioners in information science have worked to develop *literacy standards* to help assess the levels of competence, typically of adult learners. For example, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in the USA has developed a series of standards, performance indicators, and outcomes for information literacy in higher education. Each level is associated with performance indicators and outcomes, and specifies that the information-literate student should be able to determine the nature and extent of the information needed (level 1); access required information effectively and efficiently (level 2); evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporate selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system (level 3); use information effectively, individually or as a member of a group, to accomplish a specific purpose (level 4); and understand many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and use the information appropriately (level 5).

In the UK, the Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL) has formulated an alternative model based on *seven pillars of information literacy*. In this model, information literacy consists of the following skills, on each of which performance can be graded at levels from novice to advanced beginner, competent, proficient or expert: (1) recognize information needs, (2) distinguish ways of addressing gaps, (3) construct strategies for locating information, (4) locate and access information, (5) compare and evaluate information, (6) organize, apply, and communicate information; and (7) synthesize and create information. This model differs from the ACRL model by including basic library and ICT skills as foundational elements, and also by stressing strategies for the location of information and for enhancing the creative dimension of information literacy.

This specification of standards is clearly crucial if education, skills, and training programs are to be developed and evaluated (NIACE 2004). While several standardized measures of computer literacy have been proposed, basic library skills – the other set of foundational skills in the SCONUL model – have not been adequately assessed in the adult population.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND INFORMATION LITERACY

A UNESCO-funded multinational gathering of experts organized by the US National Commission on Libraries and Information Science and the National Forum on Information Literacy (Information Literacy Meeting of Experts 2003) describes information literacy as “a prerequisite for participating effectively in the Information Society” and “part of the basic human right of life long learning.” This strong language is echoed in policy papers in several countries. For example, in the UK, the White Paper, *21st century skills: Realising our potential* (Department for Education and Skills 2003), makes a similar commitment to help adults gain ICT skills as a third skill for life alongside literacy and numeracy, in order to “learn effectively online, become active citizens in the information age and . . . contribute productively to the economy” (Office of the e-Envoy 2003, 11).

Information literacy is primarily promoted and supported for its benefits in the training of a highly skilled workforce, thereby advancing employment and economic

competitiveness. While funding is plentiful for this work, how people critically understand texts, crucial to the ideal of the “informed citizen” (prominent in media literacy research), receives a low priority in relation to information literacy initiatives.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Health Literacy ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information Overload ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Personal Publishing ▶ Search Engines ▶ Sense-Making

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## **Information Overload**

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*Practical Action*

Information overload is a term first used in the early 1960s to indicate limits to human information handling capacity (Meier 1962) and later by Toffler (1970) as one dimension

of “future shock,” by which he broadly meant too much change in too short a time. Computer communications and the → Internet have contributed to the realization of this “shock,” sometimes also referred to as “techno-stress” (Weil & Rosen 1997). The term “information overload” has its roots in the context of computer-mediated communications (→ Human–Computer Interaction), where it might typically be applied to an individual who receives a large number of emails per day and who experiences some difficulty in processing the volume of information. Lest one is tempted to think of information overload as a new problem, let us recall the words of T. S. Eliot (1934), “where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?”

### DIMENSIONS IN INFORMATION AND INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Eliot reminds us that turning information into knowledge is not easy and is far from automatic (→ Information Processing). It is important to understand the process by which data is or can be transformed into knowledge. Since the advent of computer-based data processing there has been a vast increase in the capacity and capability for storing data and transforming it into information that can be used in decision-making (→ Information Society). The definition suggested by Ackoff (1989, 4) that “information is data that has been given meaning by way of relational connection” is confirmation that information contains meaning. A further way of looking at this is to suggest that the processing of data into information helps to answer questions of “who,” “what,” “where,” and “when.” Knowledge is used to answer “how” questions. Wisdom is, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “experience and knowledge together with power of applying them.”

The very possibility of information overload appears paradoxical in the sense that conventional wisdom has it that more information leads to improved decision-making. So just what are the dimensions of the problem of information overload? One perspective is to examine the *growth of information*. A study by Lyman and Varian (2003, 1) at the University of California at Berkeley found that “print, film, magnetic, and optical storage media produced about 5 exabytes of new information in 2002. Ninety-two percent of the new information was stored on magnetic media, mostly in hard disks. . . . If digitized with full formatting, the seventeen million books in the Library of Congress contain about 136 terabytes of information; five exabytes of information is equivalent in size to the information contained in 37,000 new libraries the size of the Library of Congress book collections.”

This quantitative perspective on information overload needs to be complemented with a qualitative viewpoint. Is there some confusion about data and information? What is the *quality of the information received*? Was the information relevant, timely, accurate, and complete? Some manifestations of information overload could be due to irrelevant, incomplete, or inaccurate information. In other words, some information overload could more properly be classified as information pollution (Nielsen 2003).

A further perspective is to consider the *reach of information overload*, in other words, as between people who have access to digital technologies and those who do not. This can be considered from either a national or an international perspective. The former tends to be based on socio-economic issues and the latter on geographical boundaries, with a very low

proportion of the population of developing countries having access to information and communication technologies. Information overload tends to be a problem for those living in relatively prosperous countries who work in knowledge-based sectors of the economy.

Finally, there is a sense in which overload can be a symptom of *too many information channels* open at any one time. For example, in an office environment email, telephone, mobile phone, instant messaging, VoIP, and SMS all compete for our attention. Recent research suggests that it takes several minutes to recover from an interruption. This phenomenon has been called interruption overload (Rigby 2006). Potentially there is a sense in which the presenting problem of information overload could be a symptom of either information pollution or interruption overload.

### CONSEQUENCES OF INFORMATION OVERLOAD

Saying less often communicates more. There is a tendency with electronic communications for there to be more detail, from which users have to extract useful information. The danger is that some users may “tune out” and thereby miss important information contained in the mess (Nielsen 2003).

For human-to-human communication (→ Interpersonal Communication) to be successful there is a need to supply a context to transform the data into information (Kimble et al. 1998). In face-to-face communication, this happens quite naturally. However, in electronic communication many contextual clues are missing. Grimshaw et al. (1997) focus on the concept of context as a key to transforming machine data into human information. Taking Wilson’s (1984) definition of information as data plus context, we can conclude that meaning is conferred in a particular context. Here, context is discussed in relation to meaning, highlighting problems where failures in communication or “breakdowns” occur.

Another way of dealing with information overload may involve, in the future, notions of *pervasive computing* (Kenny 2006; → Ubiquitous Computing). A possible scenario for the future is one where computer technology becomes so pervasive that it is embedded in everyday objects such as clothing, traffic signals, passports, etc. There would then be so-called “traces” left by people who move around undertaking transactions. Profiles of activities and individuals could thereby be drawn up much more easily. The notion is that greater contextual knowledge of activities would lead to information that could be assimilated and used more effectively. In this way information overload would be reduced. Or, in other words, an increase in information would not lead to indigestion; rather it would lead to enlightenment.

However, the above approach might be perceived to involve threats to the → privacy of individuals. As more information about individuals, especially related to their transactions and movements, is captured there is a danger that such information could be abused.

### KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

One of the key research issues in this area is the development of → *search engines* that can be sensitive to context, meaning, and validity. As we produce more information there is a

corresponding need to search, find, and evaluate the results of searches. Arthur (2006) points out that the Google search facility will often lead to a Wikipedia page. Since the top of the results list gets 42 percent of the click-throughs, this raises important questions for the validity of the results. Academic research, for example Montebello (1998), argues that information overload is essentially an information retrieval problem. However, there are two parts to this issue: first, an effective search strategy, and, second, a means of discriminating between the results on the basis of relevance, timeliness, and accuracy.

Some authors, including Maes (1994), have suggested that using *intelligent agents* will be the solution to information overload. This is essentially the application of artificial intelligence to help the user search through information. The key issues here revolve around the need to be able to know when to trust the agent and the agent itself being able to acquire the knowledge needed to interpret the information.

A further question to ask is: do some media lead to more information overload than others? For example, it might be that the use of email, compared to an intranet, leads to higher levels of overload. This might be because, in general, most people prefer to “pull” information rather than have it “pushed” to them.

Information overload has been a recognized feature of computer-mediated communications for the past 30 years. With clear evidence that more information is being held on computers each year, will information overload continue to be a problem or will the increasing power of computing bring with it techniques and methods that begin to reduce overload? Whatever the answer to that question might be, we can begin to manage our own individual information overload by ensuring that we filter for quality, relevance, timeliness, and accuracy. The ultimate goal of reaching wisdom depends on how each of us manages information in relation to our experiences in life.

SEE ALSO: ► Human–Computer Interaction ► Information Processing ► Information Society ► Internet ► Interpersonal Communication ► Privacy ► Search Engines ► Ubiquitous Computing

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## Information Processing

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Information processing is an approach to the study of behavior which seeks to explain what people think, say, and do by describing the mental systems that give rise to those phenomena. At the heart of the information-processing perspective is the conception of the mind as a representational system. That is, the mind is viewed as a system that (1) holds information in some form, and (2) processes (i.e., utilizes, transforms, manipulates) that information in some way in carrying out its input-processing and behavioral-production activities. To be more precise, the mind is viewed not as a single representational system, but as a collection of subsystems, each coding information in its own way, and each carrying out its own particular operations on that information. The basic idea, then, is to describe how information is held in one or more subsystems, and how that information is processed in those subsystems, in order to explain the perceptual, mental, and behavioral phenomena of interest. The goal of the information-processing approach is to explain the link between what a person hears, sees, tastes, feels, and smells and what he or she thinks, says, and does.

The information-processing perspective has proven to be enormously important in advancing our understanding of a wide range of phenomena of interest to communication scholars. In part this is because so much of what is involved in fundamental processes of meaning-giving and message-making transpires in the mind. As the entries in the "Information Processing and Cognitions" area of this encyclopedia illustrate, this approach has touched virtually every corner of the field. The list of the phenomena and processes encompassed by information processing is a long one, indeed, but, just as examples, it includes the following: → attention, → listening, → comprehension, → memory, learning, planning, decision-making, → emotion, language acquisition (→ Language Acquisition in Childhood), skill acquisition, → message production, and creativity.

## INTELLECTUAL FOUNDATIONS

Philosophers have concerned themselves with the nature of knowledge and thought since ancient times – a tradition of inquiry that reached full flower during the Enlightenment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the work of philosophers such as Descartes, Hume, and Kant. Systematic, empirical investigations of mental processes date as far back as the late 1800s, most notably with the seminal studies of Wilhelm Wundt, who founded the first experimental psychology laboratory in 1879 (→ Experimental Design). In the United States, William James’s two-volume *Principles of psychology*, published in 1890, addressed numerous topics that remain of keen interest today, including localization of specific functions in various brain systems, consciousness, and the nature of the self.

Beginning in the period 1915–1925, experimental psychology came to be dominated by *behaviorism*, a stance most closely identified with John Watson. The desire to pursue a purely objective science of behavior, based solely on observable stimulus–response relationships, led Watson to argue that appeals to mentalistic concepts had no place in psychology (→ Objectivity in Science). A successive generation of scholars, the *radical behaviorists*, including most notably B. F. Skinner, were willing to admit mental states and processes, but deemed such internal events tangential and ultimately unnecessary to understanding human behavior. Even during the heyday of behaviorism (c. 1920–1950), however, there were other prominent voices that were not so willing to dismiss appeals to internal states and processes. Among their ranks were the *Gestalt psychologists* like Wolfgang Kohler, and the eminent developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. Similarly, *social psychologists* from the 1930s on accorded a central role in their theorizing to the individual’s construal of the environment and conceptions of attitudes and attitude-change processes. And, as a final example, during the 1940s, scholars who came to be identified with the nascent discipline of mass communication made ready use of cognitive conceptions such as attention, perception, and message memory (Dennis & Wartella 1996; Rogers & Chaffee 1997).

The period between 1950 and 1970 witnessed the emergence of a new experimental psychology, one that, in contrast to behaviorism, accorded central prominence to mentalistic structures and processes. This *cognitive psychology* drew from an array of disciplines, including → linguistics, → information theory, and artificial intelligence, in advancing a view of the mind as an information-processing system, i.e., one in which stimulus inputs were subjected to a series of processing stages, culminating in overt responses. Thus, a rudimentary information-processing model might propose that inputs pass through stages of “attention,” “pattern recognition,” “working memory,” “long-term memory,” and “response formulation” (see below). Central to the approach were issues of *representation* and *processing* – at each stage, information represented in some way was assumed to be manipulated or transformed via processes that both made that information available for subsequent stages and left a “footprint” of their presence and operation which was discernible in overt responses. Measures of reaction time, memory recognition and recall, response errors, verbal reports, and so on were examined, then, in order to shed light on the nature of these intervening processing steps.

The notion of the mind as an information processing system came to exert considerable influence on thinking in communication and cognate disciplines such as organizational behavior, anthropology, and educational and social psychology. But the disciplinary influences have not been unidirectional. Two trends are particularly noteworthy. Rather than a lone subject responding to laboratory stimuli, scholars have increasingly come to embrace conceptions of the socially embedded information processor – one whose cognitive processing reflects interpersonal and cultural influences. Second, advances in real-time neurophysiological assessment have opened new avenues for understanding what transpires between inputs and responses. These and other influences have given rise on one hand to a *cognitive science* that draws from numerous traditional disciplines, and on the other to a broad intellectual landscape, extending well beyond the boundaries of cognitive science, that is permeated by concerns with information processing and cognition.

### INTENTIONAL, DESIGN, AND PHYSICAL STANCES

The domain of information processing and → cognition is enormously heterogeneous, reflecting a wide array of both general conceptual approaches and specific characterizations of theoretical mechanisms, aimed at explicating a near limitless list of behavioral and mental phenomena, and drawing upon a variety of sources and types of data. No single overarching conceptual framework is likely to encompass the breadth of the domain, but, at least with respect to conceptual approaches and theoretical mechanisms, it may be possible to develop a rudimentary organizational framework that can accommodate many of the most important contributions by drawing upon the work of Daniel Dennett (e.g., 1987).

Dennett distinguishes three approaches for *apprehending and predicting the behavior of complex systems* like chess-playing computers, or human beings. The “physical stance” seeks to understand the behavior of such systems by recourse to their physical constitution, i.e., the solid-state electronics of the computer or, for people, their neurophysiology. A second approach, the “design stance,” seeks to apprehend a system’s behavior in terms of functional (rather than physical) mechanisms. That is, in order to behave as it does, the system must carry out various functions, and the task is one of characterizing the nature of the mechanisms by which those functions are executed. And, importantly, the same function can be carried out in two systems with very different physical constitution, a fact that makes the physical character of a system of secondary concern to theorists pursuing design stance accounts. Finally, the “intentional stance” seeks to understand and predict a system’s behavior by ascribing to that system various beliefs, goals, expectations, and so on. Thus, the system’s behavior is seen to reflect choices made in order to accomplish goals in light of information at the system’s disposal.

These three approaches, then, suggest a framework for organizing a survey of key conceptual and theoretical developments in the domain of information processing and cognitions, but with the important caveat that it is probably best to think of Dennett’s three stances as “pure types,” and in practice it is possible to identify numerous hybrid approaches that combine elements of two, or even all three, of these perspectives.

## THE INTENTIONAL STANCE AND “ORDINARY MENTAL CONCEPTS”

As noted above, the intentional stance seeks to apprehend a system's behavior in terms of its goals and beliefs. Fundamental to this approach is an assumption of rationality, i.e., goals and beliefs are useful in explaining and predicting behavior only as long as the system does what it *should*, given its objectives and knowledge. Intentional stance accounts of human behavior typically reflect a corollary assumption of self-awareness: the individual is assumed to be aware of his or her own mental states and activities. So, people know what they are trying to accomplish; they are aware of the information that they are able to bring to bear on those goals; they are conscious of their expectations, deliberations, and decision-making. Following from this assumption, the terms of intentional accounts tend to be the sort of mental states and contents that are (presumably) consciously available to the individual. Intentional accounts, then, make ready use of ordinary mental concepts, or “folk psychology” – concepts and terms afforded by everyday language and central to people's lay understanding of their own behavior and that of others (Churchland 1988; Flanagan 1991). To illustrate, consider just three examples of intentional stance constructs: attitudes, goals, and plans.

Among the most prominent of ordinary mental concepts is that of → *attitudes*. As an element of folk psychology, people commonly rely on inferred attitudes to explain and predict the behavior of others and to give accounts of their own behavior. But beyond this, the attitude construct has held a central place in social scientific study of human behavior for the better part of a century (Eagly & Chaiken 1993). Precise definitions of “attitude” are numerous and varied, but in general they have in common the notion of an evaluation of a person, thing, etc. that typically carries with it behavioral implications.

A second example of an intentional stance construct with both widespread folk and social scientific application is that of *goals* (along with attendant notions of desire, objectives, etc.; → Goals, Cognitive Aspects of; Goals, Social Aspects of). On one hand, as a motivational construct, goals are seen to play a key role in output processes such as decision-making, behavioral regulation, and emotion (Austin & Vancouver 1996). Moreover, imputing goals to others is central to input processes such as attribution, interpersonal uncertainty reduction, and comprehension (Schank & Abelson 1977; → Attribution Processes; Discourse Comprehension; Uncertainty Reduction Theory).

Finally, closely related to conceptions of goals is that of *plans* (and planning) – a series of projected steps leading to accomplishment of some end. As with other ordinary mental concepts, lay persons have phenomenal experience of their own plans and also readily ascribe plans to others. And, in advancing intentional stance accounts of human behavior, social scientists often resort to conceptions of plans and planning (Berger 1997). One particularly prominent application in the field of communication has been the goals–plan–action (GPA) framework wherein goals are held to give rise to plans, which in turn guide a person's behavior (Wilson 2002).

Because the constructs of intentional stance theories are generally assumed to be phenomenally available to the individual (i.e., the person presumably knows his or her attitude toward some object, is aware of his or her goals, can articulate his or her plans), the most common method of intentional stance approaches is simply to ask people to report on their thoughts, using paper-and-pencil assessment instruments (e.g., attitude

scales), think-aloud protocols, etc. The reliance on such self-report techniques has prompted scrutiny of the conditions under which such data are likely to be more or less accurate (Ericsson & Simon 1984).

## DESIGN AND HYBRID INTENTIONAL/DESIGN STANCE APPROACHES

### Method, Data, and Domain

As noted above, while intentional stance accounts seek to explain a system's behavior in terms of beliefs, goals, etc. ascribed to that system, the aim of design stance approaches is to explain behavior by recourse to the functional design of systems assumed to give rise to the behavioral phenomena of interest. So, for example, if people exhibit the ability to remember, many years later, events from their college days, then there must be some mental system that preserves these episodes over extended periods of time; if people can recall the general plot of the last novel they read, but not the book's exact sentences and their order, there must be some memory system that preserves the gist of a narrative, but not its surface form; if people's ability to monitor the road and other traffic is diminished while talking on a cell phone, then there must be some system that limits the number of activities a person can execute at one time. And importantly, on the design stance, explanation and prediction do not depend upon the assumption of rationality, nor are the mental processes of interest necessarily consciously available to the individual.

The fundamental *method* of design stance approaches has been characterized as that of "transcendental deduction" (Flanagan 1991). This simply means that the theorist observes some input-output regularity and posits the nature of the system that would produce such a regularity. For example, to observe that people get faster in executing a skill as they continue to practice that activity might lead the theorist to posit some sort of memory structures that are "strengthened" with repeated use. As noted above, the theoretical terms of pure design stance approaches are cast at the level of mind rather than brain. Thus, rather than talking about neuroanatomical structures and neurochemical control systems, the theorist pursuing design stance accounts invokes conceptions of working memory, associative networks, → scripts, and so on – structures and processes that have some instantiation in the hardware of the brain, but that are not identified with specific neural structures.

The *data* from which design stance theorizing proceeds include self-reports like those employed in intentional stance approaches, but because the contents and operations of functional systems may not be consciously available to the individual, other types of data are critical (Greene 1988). Among these are measures of memory recognition and recall, which in the field of communication have proven particularly important in studies of mass media processing (→ Memory, Message; News Processing and Retention) and interpersonal communication (→ Implicit Personality Theories; Memory, Person). Because cognitive processes unfold over time, measures of reaction time (i.e., how long it takes a person to produce a response) are held to yield essential cues about the nature of those processes. And, by extension, assessments of speech-onset latency, speech rate, and so forth provide insights about the temporal characteristics of message production processes (→ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors). Most (though not all) cognitive models assume a

finite pool of processing resources that can be flexibly allocated to various processing tasks, but that limits performance when demands on resources exceed what is available (→ Limited Capacity Model). Assessments of slowed responses and performance decrements, then, can be used to shed light on the processing demands of various tasks. A final example of data plumbed in design stance approaches is performance errors (Fromkin 1980). The mechanisms at work in human perception, memory, and behavioral production tend to produce errors that are recurrent, even predictable (as in familiar visual illusions); conversely, there are other sorts of errors that, though conceivable, virtually never occur. As a result, phenomena such as memory intrusions and speech errors provide important clues to understanding underlying mental processes.

One implication of the method of transcendental deduction is that virtually any sort of mental or overt behavioral phenomenon is seen to be amenable to study from the design stance. In other words, because the essential task is that of positing a model of the mechanisms linking inputs to outputs, almost anything people can think and do falls within the purview of this approach (although, in the main, work conducted within this framework has been concerned with the behavior of so-called “normal” populations and has not focused on groups with various neurological and mental disorders). So, for example, theorists study mental operations like attention, listening, manipulation of mental images, imagining interactions, reasoning, and creating novel thoughts. And, in the realm of overt behavior, they examine phenomena such as language acquisition, speech production, skill development, and problem-solving. Moreover, as is developed in greater detail below, the terms of folk psychology (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, goals, plans, etc.) common to the intentional stance can be explicated by recourse to design stance mechanisms.

Two additional points concerning the method of transcendental deduction merit mention. First, because the theorist’s objective is to posit some mental mechanism that gives rise to particular input–output regularities, it is possible to develop multiple, alternative models, each equally capable of accounting for the phenomena of interest. Second, in seeking to understand a design stance model, it is important to distinguish the “data” from the “domain” – that is, to distinguish the measures made to test a theory from the mental and behavioral phenomena that the theory purports to explain (Greene & Graves 2007). To illustrate, a theorist might posit a model of the processes involved in recognizing facial expressions of emotion, and in order to test the model, assess reaction times to make judgments about the emotional expressions of strangers presented via computer display. In this case, the domain of the theory (i.e., what the theory seeks to explain) is emotion recognition processes, and the data are the reaction time measures collected to test the theory.

### **Systems and Mechanisms**

Central to the information-processing perspective are the interrelated conceptions of the mind as a series of stages linking inputs to outputs and the mind as a representational system in which information, held in some form, is processed at each of these stages. Within this perspective, models can be developed at varying levels of detail and sophistication. At the most rudimentary level are those models which simply specify a series of

stages or systems that information passes through between input and output with little attempt to specify in detail the nature of the mechanisms operating at each stage. Such an approach, sometimes termed “white boxology” or a “box and arrow model,” provides a general framework of the mind, and there is some consensus about the major systems comprising such models, as the following:

- *Sensory registers* (including echoic and iconic memory systems): buffers that hold sensory information for very brief periods of time before it is passed on to subsequent processing stages.
- *Pattern recognition system*: integrates sensory information with previously acquired knowledge to permit stimulus identification, as, for example, in the case of letter recognition.
- *Working memory* (or short-term memory): a limited-capacity system in which a relatively small amount of information can be held and manipulated (Miyake & Shah 1999). Working memory is the site of planning, decision-making, message editing, and so on, and the contents of working memory are generally thought to be available to conscious awareness.
- *Long-term memory*: a very large repository where information is held virtually indefinitely. Long-term memory is typically partitioned into various subsystems, including *declarative* versus *procedural* memory. Declarative memory is *knowledge that* – i.e., the factual information one has acquired. In contrast, procedural memory is *knowledge how* – i.e., information used in executing skills such as riding a bicycle, swimming, or tying one’s shoes. The declarative memory system can be further partitioned into *episodic* and *semantic* memory stores. As the name suggests, the episodic memory system is memory for the episodes or events of one’s life; it is essentially autobiographical – the store of information about what one has experienced (although these memories need not be veridical). The semantic memory system, in contrast, contains information abstracted from specific experiences – such as one’s knowledge of the capital cities of the world, the boiling point of water, and, especially, words and their meanings.
- *Effector system*: the system responsible for the preparation and execution of motor programs. On balance, design stance theorists have given less attention to this component of the mind, but it has been the subject of considerable scrutiny from those interested in mechanisms of speech production (Rosenbaum 2005).

Again, there are insights to be gleaned from such general characterizations of the information-processing system, but the real strength of the design stance comes from specification of the mechanisms by which the operations at each stage are carried out. Describing these mechanisms involves addressing issues of *structure*, *content*, and *process*. Following from the basic conception of the mind as a representational system, concerns with structure and content involve *how* and *what* information, respectively, is represented in the mind. And, on the assumption that the mind is an information-processing system, issues of process concern how information is transformed and used. To illustrate, consider the familiar conception of “scripts.” A script is a long-term memory structure that consists of a series of scenes representing familiar events. Moreover, a particular script (e.g., eating in a restaurant, going through airport security) represents specific

content relevant to that type of event. Processes pertaining to memory structures like scripts would include operations such as activation (i.e., retrieving the script from memory), implementation (e.g., using the script to generate expectations for what will happen next), and alteration (e.g., learning new scenes for the script).

As noted above, the methods and data of the design stance permit (at least hypothetically) a nearly limitless range of specifications of mechanisms to account for mental and behavioral phenomena, and theorists have, indeed, proven enormously imaginative in developing structure–process–content descriptions. Nevertheless, there are certain conceptions of underlying cognitive mechanisms that have found widespread acceptance and application, and, partly for this reason, they provide useful examples of design stance theorizing.

*Productions* are elements of the long-term procedural memory system that preserve knowledge of situation–action relationships in an IF–THEN format. For example, a production for properly addressing another person might be:

IF: You are greeting a person of higher status

THEN: Use his/her title plus last name.

Production systems have found widespread application in psychology (Klahr et al. 1987), but have been less prominent in the field of communication. At the same time, various communication theories have relied upon production-like structures, as in the conception of *procedural records* in Greene’s original formulation of → action assembly theory, and in Wilson’s (1995) and Meyer’s (1997) models of communication goal generation.

*Schemas*: a number of different specific conceptions of → schemas have been developed, but in general the term refers to knowledge structures, typically of declarative memory, but in some cases in procedural memory, that have been abstracted from past experiences. Schemas are held to be general representations in the sense that they apply to entire categories of similar persons, objects, etc. As such, schemas are similar to the aforementioned conception of scripts, and, indeed, in some treatments scripts are viewed simply as a special case of schemas, i.e., those that pertain to familiar sequences of events (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction; Relational Schemas).

*Associative networks*: as with schemas, a number of distinct conceptions of associative networks have been advanced, but they have in common the idea that long-term memory (either declarative or procedural) consists of nodes, corresponding to some sort of conceptual entities, and links, or associations, between those nodes. In some theories, in addition to relatively abstract symbolic representations, nodes may also correspond to low-level perceptual or motoric features. Associative links between nodes are established when the individual processes some relationship between nodes, as, for example, when the concept “dog” becomes linked to “barks.” In most models, links between nodes are held to vary in strength, where strength is a function of the recency and frequency with which that link has been accessed. *Activation*, a kind of energizing force, can spread along associative links such that activating one node will cause other linked nodes to become activated as well.

As previously noted, mechanisms described in design stance models can be unpacked at successively more fine-grained levels of specification. Thus, for example, the IF–THEN relations represented in productions can be recast in associative network terms, and,



indeed, both the Meyer (1997) and Wilson (1995) models mentioned above are formulated in this way. Similarly, macro-structures like schemas and scripts can be conceived as networks of nodes and links.

*Connectionist models* (or *neural networks*, or *parallel distributed processing models*): an alternative (or still deeper) explication of long-term memory structures proposes that memory consists of elemental units and connections, but unlike associative network models, the units of connectionist models do not correspond to symbolic entities. Instead, rather than being represented in a single node, a symbolic entity (e.g., “dog”) is represented as a *pattern of activation* over a large set of units. Learning, or concept acquisition, in such models involves adjusting the weights of the connections on the basis of feedback. Connectionist models have found a wide range of applications in psychology (Rumelhart & McClelland 1986a, b), including analyses of language perception and production, but to date, their use in the field of communication has been somewhat limited (but see, for example, O’Keefe & Lambert 1995).

### **Hybrid Intentional/Design Approaches**

Distinguishing “intentional,” “design,” and “physical” stance approaches is a useful convenience, but, as was noted above, these categories represent “pure types,” and, in practice, it is common to encounter hybrids that combine elements of multiple approaches. This is particularly true in studies of social cognition and communication, where hybrid intentional/design models are numerous. Typically, the thrust of these models is to explicate the nature and dynamics of intentional stance terms by recourse to “deeper” design stance mechanisms (in much the same way that, as discussed above, design stance formulations may be unpacked in successively more detailed ways). The example of approaching “goals” from the design stance has already been mentioned, and examples such as “self-concept” and “attitudes” can be used to further illustrate the point.

As a typical term of ordinary folk psychology, people possess a commonsense conception of “self-concept” as one’s collection of beliefs about one’s personal attributes, social roles, and so on (→ Information Processing: Self-Concept). And we commonly perceive that elements of self-concept play a role both in input processing of information and in guiding behavioral responses. An important conceptual advance, however, came with the development of design stance models of the representation and processing of self-relevant information in long-term memory (Baumeister 1998). In this vein, Markus and her associates proposed that the self is essentially schema-like, organizing an individual’s knowledge of him- or herself in various domains (Markus 1977). Such design stance formulations gave rise to numerous experimental investigations that shed light on phenomena such as people’s memory for self-relevant events, their ability to maintain seemingly inconsistent perceptions of themselves, and conditions under which people are more likely to rely upon their beliefs and attitudes in making behavioral decisions.

In much the same way as commonsense conceptions of self-concept, theorists have explicated “attitude” in design stance terms. One prominent example is found in the work of Fazio and his associates (Fazio & Roskos-Ewoldsen 2005), who proposed that attitudes can be understood as associative networks linking an attitude object (e.g., “roller coasters”) with an evaluation (“fun”). And again, pursuing an explication of attitude

structure and processing from a design stance perspective, which in this case emphasizes strengthening of associative relations with repetition, has given rise to examinations of the role of attitudes in guiding perception, interpretation, and behavior that were not suggested by lay conceptions of the attitude construct (→ Attitude Accessibility).

## THE PHYSICAL STANCE

As previously noted, design stance approaches seek to explicate the functional architecture of the mind, and such models typically accord little consideration to the physical architecture of the brain. In contrast, physical stance theories and models pursue explanations cast at the level of neuroanatomical systems and processes. The physical stance, then, is characteristic of fields such as neurophysiology and neuropsychology, and especially, *cognitive neuroscience* (Gazzaniga 1995). Cognitive neuroscience maintains the essential conception of the mind as an information-processing system, but seeks to explicate the functional architecture of that system in physical terms. In essence, cognitive neuroscience is an attempt to bridge the gap between the physical and the mental; that is, to understand how the brain gives rise to the mind.

The data that theorists in this tradition draw upon include studies of individuals who have suffered damage to specific regions of the brain – on the assumption that examination of corresponding functional deficits will shed light on the plausibility of possible functional systems and on functional/physical interfaces (Rapp 2001). Similarly, in light of neurophysiological changes occurring during development and old age, investigations of perceptual, memory, and behavioral performance by infants, children, and the elderly are employed (Nelson & Luciana 2001; Hedden & Gabrieli 2004). Most prominently, functional neuroimaging, by use of positron emission tomography (PET), and, more recently, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) are used to examine brain metabolism under various sorts of experimental tasks and conditions.

At this point, studies of phenomena traditionally of interest to scholars in the field of communication from the perspective of cognitive neuroscience are only beginning to emerge. For example, researchers have begun to examine brain activity while viewing media violence (Anderson & Murray 2006). Other avenues of research have applied neuroimaging techniques in studies of processing facial expressions of emotion (Phelps 2006) and in investigations of language production and processing (Gernsbacher & Kaschak 2003; Beatty & Heisel 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Attention ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Comprehension ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Emotion ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Implicit Personality Theories ▶ Information ▶ Information Processing: Self-Concept ▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Linguistics ▶ Listening ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Memory, Person ▶ Message Production ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Relational Schemas ▶ Schemas ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structure, and Social Interaction ▶ Scripts ▶ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Information Processing: Self-Concept

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Self-concept plays an important role in → information processing by facilitating the processing of self-relevant information, enhancing retrieval of relevant information, and influencing interpretations of information. As the more comprehensive construct, “self” includes identity, relationships, roles, personality (→ Personality and Exposure to Communication; Personality Development and Communication), and the physical body, as well as notions of agency and consciousness. “Self-concept” refers to one’s personal identity or the body of knowledge that an individual holds about himself or herself, including self-esteem or self-evaluation. Varying attributes and conceptions of the self can explain differing responses in social situations.

### ORIGINS

Concern with the self and self-concept is generally traced to the symbolic interactionists of the early 1900s (→ Symbolic Interaction). In *Human nature and the social order*, Cooley (1902) introduced the notion of the “looking glass self,” which arises in response to the opinions of others about the self. In constructing a self, the individual imagines his or her → image in the mind of another person, imagines the other’s judgment of the self, and responds emotionally in a positive or negative way. George Herbert Mead, author of

*Mind, self, and society* (1934), argued that the structure of the self is a reflection of social processes. Each interaction partner calls forth a different “self” as a result of the unique responses that are communicated by the other (→ Self-Presentation). An individual’s self-concept is, at least in part, a function of how the individual believes that others view him or her. In *Identities and interactions* (1966), McCall & Simmons distinguished between personal and social identities. They highlighted the role of the social actor in devising a role-identity, which has a conventional dimension (the role) and an idiosyncratic dimension (identity). The conventional dimension is tied to generic expectations of social roles whereas the idiosyncratic dimension is the actor’s unique interpretation of the role.

The self and self-concept are important concepts for communication researchers. In the 1970s and 1980s, theorists recognized the role of individuals in the communication process. The self-concept was identified as a mechanism that gives regularity to interpersonal communication. Research investigated self-concept and self-esteem in public-speaking situations, ethnic identities, self and the use of technology, individual-level variables such as communication apprehension, and the role of speech in the development of self-concept. This research and theorizing revealed that variables related to the self and self-concept mediate communication and information processing.

### **INFLUENCE OF THE SELF ON INFORMATION PROCESSING**

The self and self-concept influence information processing in several specific ways. First, information that is relevant to the self-concept is retrieved more rapidly and successfully than other information (→ Memory; Memory, Message). Second, the self-concept is used as a frame in person → perception. Traits that are important to the self are used in judging others. Third, individuals actively seek situations and relational partners who provide feedback consistent with their self-concepts (→ Consistency Theories). Fourth, individuals interpret information in a way that is consistent with their self-concepts and personalities (→ Individual Differences and Information Processing).

Individuals are motivated to maintain their self-concepts because the self is central to their understanding of the world. They do so using a combination of behaviors and cognitions called self-verification processes (Swann 2005). Research on self-verification reveals that social actors maintain their sense of self by seeking out interaction partners who perceive them the way they perceive themselves. For example, individuals with negative self-views prefer partners who give them negative feedback. When their interaction partners do not confirm their sense of self, individuals engage in behaviors designed to shape the perceptions of the partners so that those perceptions will be consistent with the social actor’s own view of self. Finally, if social actors are unsuccessful at conveying their self-concepts to their interaction partners, they may withdraw from the situation. College students, for example, are more likely to leave roommates who do not validate their self-conceptions.

### **THE ROLE OF SELF-ESTEEM**

Self-esteem is one of the most highly investigated components of the self-concept. Self-esteem refers to an individual’s affective evaluation of the self as positive (high self-esteem)

or negative (low self-esteem) (Baumeister et al. 2003). Self-esteem is relatively stable (a trait dimension) but fluctuates around a baseline in response to success and failure (a state dimension). Self-esteem is *positively related* to self-reported communication competence. Individuals with higher self-esteem are happier and more satisfied with their lives than those with low self-esteem, who experience more depression. Individuals with high self-esteem report better interpersonal relationships than individuals with low self-esteem, but objective measures do not provide evidence for their assessments. Self-esteem is positively related to academic success; it appears to be a consequence of success rather than a cause of it. Individuals seek out relational partners and contexts consistent with their self-evaluations.

Psychological research reveals that high self-esteem can have *negative consequences*, such as a greater susceptibility to ego threats. Individuals with high self-esteem become less likeable when threatened, seemingly because they become more independent. High self-esteem is also associated with higher levels of prejudice and derogation of outgroup members. In response to ego-threats, individuals with low self-esteem become more likeable, perhaps because they become more interdependent following a threat.

Research on self-esteem is complicated by the diversity of individuals with high self-esteem. The category includes narcissists and individuals with defensive self-esteem as well as those who genuinely accept their shortcomings as well as their strengths. In addition, the effects of self-esteem on ego threats may depend on the bases for self-esteem. One approach to the bases of self-esteem suggests that individuals with contingent self-esteem ground their appraisals on meeting external expectations or standards; their self-esteem is fragile and associated with conflict and anxiety. Noncontingent self-esteem reflects unconditional self-acceptance and is associated with intrinsic motivation and effective coping following failure.

Another approach to the bases of self-esteem suggests that individuals base their appraisals on specific domains or contingencies of self-worth (e.g., on academic competence or God's love), and that these contingencies vary from internal (e.g., virtue) to external (e.g., approval from others) (Crocker et al. 2006). Individuals are motivated to validate themselves in the domains or contingencies of their self-worth, but the motivation may also be a source of stress and actually undermine their success. Communication research examining self-esteem has not incorporated concerns with negative consequences or explored the complex nature of self-esteem.

## SELF-SCHEMAS AND SELF-CATEGORIZATIONS

Two competing views of self-concept are self-schemas and self-categorizations. The concept of self-schema is rooted in schema theory ( $\rightarrow$  Schemas); a *self-schema* is a collection of memories or a knowledge structure about the self that allows individuals to understand their social experiences (Markus 1977). Individuals are "schematic" with respect to a trait if they perceive the characteristic to be true of them and important to their self-definition. Thus, a self-schema is a relatively stable structure composed of characteristics that are most important to an individual's self-definition. More recent formulations of the self-schema incorporate a working self-concept in addition to the self-schema. The working self-concept is more variable and influenced by situational constraints whereas the self-schema is a more stable and chronically accessible self-definition.

In contrast to the self-schema approach, the *self-categorization approach* (Turner 1987) draws a distinction between personal identity and social identity. Personal identity refers to the characteristics that define an individual when compared to other members of the same group (e.g., a woman perceives herself as competitive compared to other women). Social identity refers to the characteristics that define an individual when compared to members of a relevant “outgroup” (e.g., as a woman, she sees herself as less competitive than men). According to this formulation, self-concept is the identity (personal or social) that is salient at any given time; it is dependent on situational cues rather than simply a function of a stable knowledge structure about the self. The self-categorization approach has roots in → social identity theory, which assumes that individuals strive to evaluate themselves positively. Because individuals are members of groups, they generally assign positive values to their groups in order to achieve a positive social identity. Individuals are inclined to favor their own group and, under certain conditions, discriminate against outgroups.

*Self-construal* (Markus & Kitayama 1991) is another dimension of the self that may be implicated in information processing. Underlying the concept of self-construal is the idea that individuals have multiple selves that concern their relationships with others and their individuality. According to this approach, the cultural dimension of individualism–collectivism is manifested in the self-construals of independence and interdependence. Individuals with independent self-construals view themselves as unique and autonomous. These self-construals are associated with individualistic cultures, such as that of the US. In contrast, individuals with interdependent self-construals define themselves in terms of their reference groups. Interdependent self-construals are associated with collective cultures, such as those in Asia. Research examining this concept has provided mixed results, most likely because of problems with measuring self-construals (Levine et al. 2003).

Whereas much research on self-concept focuses on the content of the self-definition (e.g., as outgoing or a member of a particular group), the concept of self-complexity is concerned with the structure of the self-concept. Self-complexity refers to the extensiveness of the self-concept, conceptualized as the number of unique characteristics used to define the self. Individuals who are more sensitive to feedback are higher in self-complexity (Edwards 1990), and most groups of teenagers who watch high levels of television are lower in self-complexity (Harrison 2006). Self-complexity is implicated in information processing by serving as a buffer against stressful events (Linville 1987).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Image ▶ Individual Differences and Information Processing ▶ Information Processing ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Perception ▶ Personality Development and Communication ▶ Personality and Exposure to Communication ▶ Schemas ▶ Self-Presentation ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Symbolic Interaction

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## Information Processing: Stereotypes

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Stereotypes are typically conceived of as cognitive categorizations of people into groups that are accompanied by descriptors of group members (→ Stereotypes). Early discussions of stereotypes referenced them as “pictures” of groups or “types” of people (Lippmann 1922/1965). According to researchers, many attributes are used as a basis of stereotype-based categorization, including race, sex, age, class, religion, and body type (see, e.g., Schneider 2004). Stereotypes provide cognitive benefits, much like other schemas (Fiske & Taylor 1984). As a form of categorization, for example, stereotypes function as energy-saving devices (Macrae et al. 1994) and cognitive tools (Gilbert & Hixon 1991) that preserve → information-processing resources, because they allow people to “chunk” information into familiar and, therefore, meaningful units (Hamilton & Sherman 1994).

### FUNCTION OF STEREOTYPES

Although valuable because of their cognitive efficiency, stereotypes become detrimental when they have undesirable consequences for those who use the stereotypes or for members of the groups they target. These consequences may occur when stereotypes provide an inaccurate or false basis for judgment or when they lead to unwarranted prejudice and



discrimination. Stereotypes facilitate prejudice when they foster “an averted or hostile attitude toward a person who belongs to a group, simply because he belongs to that group, and is therefore presumed to have the objectionable qualities ascribed to the group” (Allport 1954/1979, 7). Stereotypes are discriminatory when they extend prejudice into behavior (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication; Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). Thus, whereas stereotypes as a cognitive structure are neutral, stereotypes-in-use may have more tangible social consequences (Fiske 1998).

Additionally, stereotype-based information processing itself may be biased in some ways. For example, Hamilton and Gifford (1976) asserted that some stereotypic judgments may be explained by *illusory correlation* (i.e., erroneous inferences made about the relationship between two categories on the basis of their perceived common co-occurrence). To test the illusory correlation, Hamilton and Gifford provided participants with considerably more information about “Group A” than about “Group B.” Moreover, the information they provided about Group A was commonly associated with desirable characteristics. The results suggested that when an association occurs frequently (i.e., Group A often has desirable characteristics), it is likely to be more recognizable than other associations. Moreover, once recognized, this association (and not others) is used as a basis of comparison. In Hamilton and Gifford’s study, participants polarized Group A and Group B by attributing desirable and undesirable characteristics to each group respectively. The authors argued that this polarization was based on an illusory correlation produced by participants in that it was not supported by the initial information their participants had about these groups.

Researchers have also found other types of bias in information processing. For instance, stereotype-consistent information is more likely to be remembered than stereotype-inconsistent information, unless the inconsistent information is especially salient (i.e., stands out as noticeable; Lyons & Kashima 2003). Similarly, negative content is more notable than positive content, and is therefore more likely to be part of stereotypes (Schaller & Conway 1999).

## **INTEGRATING STEREOTYPED COGNITIONS AND COMMUNICATION**

As forms of (sometimes biased) information processing, stereotypes are directly integrated with communication in several ways. First, they affect the ways we communicate. Second, we communicate about stereotypes (i.e., they may be the content of our talk) as part of interaction. Third, communication about stereotypes works to teach, perpetuate, and change stereotypic beliefs. Each of these is discussed briefly in the following paragraphs.

*First*, stereotypes may *affect the ways in which we communicate* with others. In some cases, the manner in which this occurs can be construed as beneficial. Manusov, Winchitz, and Manning (1997), for example, conducted a study in which US students interacted with students from other countries. Prior to their interactions, each student’s attitude toward the other students’ nationality was assessed. Coding of behaviors from the video tapes of the subsequent interactions showed that US participants who had more positive stereotypes of their interaction-partner’s nationality tended to gaze at their partner more (→ Gaze in Interaction) and use more direct body orientation than those who held less positive stereotypes (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Overall,

more positive stereotypes appeared to play out in relatively affirming – if biased – communicative ways. Likewise, positive behaviors resulting from stereotypes appear to affect other judgments, also in a manner that seems to benefit the interaction. Le Poire and Yoshimura (1999), for example, found that participants who smiled more with female than with male confederates perceived the former as more pleasant than the latter. This occurred although both confederates were instructed to show the same facial expressions and demeanor. The researchers concluded that gender stereotypes predicting that women are friendlier and smile more often than men explained these findings.

Other times, however, the link between stereotypes and communication may be much more problematic. For example, Olaniran and Williams (1995) showed that visa-application interviewers use stereotypic expectations to determine whether an applicant should be approved for a requested visa. In one instance, an interviewer's interpretation of averted eye gaze as indicative of lying, exacerbated by stereotypes of Africans as "sneaky," was consequential for a West African applicant whose own cultural norms prescribed that he show respect for authority precisely through averted eye gaze. In conjunction with other cues from the application process, the interviewer denied the applicant's request for a visa.

A *second integration* between stereotype-based cognitions and communication occurs whenever people hear others talk about stereotypic beliefs and observe stereotypes embedded in others' actions. One application of this form of connection between stereotypes and communication comes from researchers who study *ethnophaulisms*, which are terms that malign racial or ethnic groups and become part of the cultural lexicon (see, e.g., Mullen 2001; Tracy 2002). More generally, researchers have begun to explore the myriad ways that communication about stereotypes is situated within interaction. Mokros, for example, explored how stereotypes communicated in everyday interaction may help to negotiate and construct identity and, more generally, → meaning (→ Social Identity Theory). He used video-taped ethnographic research data (→ Ethnography of Communication) to gain insight into "how otherness [in the form of stereotypes-in-talk] is employed to resolve practical problems of identity within interaction" (Mokros 2003, 255).

The *third form of integration* between stereotypes and communication discussed here involves the processes through which stereotypes are *learned through communication*. Communicating about stereotypes works to create and maintain those categorizations within a larger social system making them "publicly accessible situated knowledge structures" (Semin 2000, 603). We even learn values about the stereotyping process itself through communication. For example, in many cultures, stereotyping is considered "an unsavory practice to be avoided or concealed" (Bodenhausen & Macrae 1996, 232), and this value is taught through communicative means. The general term given to the reproduction of stereotypic knowledge over time through communication processes is *stereotype maintenance* (Kenrick et al. 2002). Research in this area has focused largely on the cognitive processes that underlie this reproduction.

More recently, however, Kurylo (2006) emphasized the role that → interaction plays in this reproduction. For example, in addition to more obvious forms of talk that involve stereotypic beliefs, Kurylo found that stereotypes may be communicated in an implicit form when the group, descriptors referenced by the stereotype, or both are omitted (e.g., "You know what they're like"). This finding provides support for Boss (1979) who argued

that, when communicated, stereotypes often require others to interpret their meaning in order to make sense of the stereotype. Those who witness a stereotype communicated become complicit in the stereotyping process if they acknowledge they have understood the stereotype. This is one means through which we work together to reproduce stereotypic knowledge as meaningful, regardless of whether we communicate the stereotypes ourselves.

Whereas stereotyping is conceptualized primarily as a form of information processing, it is linked with communication in several ways. In itself, the process of stereotyping is benign. But given its ties to cultural mores, problematic associations, and prejudicial behavior, stereotyping-in-use is best understood within its larger social framework.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interaction ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Meaning ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Social Perception ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotypes

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## Information Scanning

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Information scanning concerns information acquisition from routine patterns of exposure to mediated and interpersonal sources. The essential idea is that even when individuals are not actively seeking information on a specific topic, routine use of media and interactions with other people yield exposures to information that affect knowledge, beliefs, and behavior. For many issues and behaviors, scanning may be far more frequent than active information seeking. While influence per scanned exposure may be less than for each instance of sought exposure, the cumulative effects of scanning may often be greater, given their greater volume (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Selective Exposure; Information Processing).

### CONCEPTUALIZATION

Information scanning studies stand in juxtaposition to two related topics: → information seeking and → media effects. Models of information seeking typically assume that an individual has uncertainty ('should I obtain a mammogram?') and engages in active seeking of information to reduce or resolve that uncertainty. The information scanning perspective asserts that often uncertainty is not salient enough to drive active seeking, but an individual has enough foundational knowledge and interest to produce → attention and retention when information flows by. Routine exposure to a magazine article, for

example, may provide relevant information about benefits (or costs) of mammograms, or it may affect whether a woman thinks about the issue. It then may influence whether a woman asks her physician about getting a mammogram or is willing to comply with a recommendation that she obtain one.

Information scanning is also *related to the media effects tradition* (→ Media Effects, History of). Media effects studies are concerned with the effects of particular content, such as portrayals of violence or unrealistic body images. Like media effects research, information scanning is concerned with what people learn about the world from their use of media and how that affects their behavior. However, scanning research often starts with a behavior, like getting a mammogram, and asks whether routine exposure to information sources affects it. Media effects research, in contrast, often starts with the content of media (e.g., the frequent portrayal of violence; → Violence as Media Content) and then considers what its effects might be (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). In addition, scanning research is not concerned solely with media effects, but considers the influence of information scanned from both mediated and interpersonal sources (such as friends, family, or doctors). Nevertheless, the distinction between the media element of scanning and other areas of media effects can be overstated – there is clearly overlap in both the basic questions addressed and the research methods used.

There is a literature directly related to information scanning, sometimes using other terms (Case 2002; Niederdeppe et al. in press.) Related concepts include incidental or mere exposure (Shapiro 1999), casual seeking (Johnson 1997), browsing (Dutta-Bergman 2004), passive information acquisition (Berger 2002), routine information acquisition (Griffin et al. 1999), and prior use of the term “information scanning” (Kosicki & McLeod 1990; Slater 1997).

The distinction between seeking and scanning is not identical to that between active and passive use of sources. While seeking is defined by activity, scanning may not be passive. Scanning includes reading newspaper articles because a headline catches a reader’s eye, staying tuned for the health minute on the local → television news when a promo for it mentions a topic of interest, or asking a follow-up question to a friend who describes a colonoscopy. In each case there is an active decision to engage with a source. These activities are considered scanning because they occur in the context of routine exposure to sources, not because the individual is completely passive in the process.

The intrinsic nature of a source may not determine whether it is used for seeking or for scanning; It is not invariable that, for example, people will seek from the → Internet and scan television news. Casual Internet surfing may produce scanned information acquisition, while planned television viewing of personally relevant programs (e.g., a public television documentary about cancer survival) would be classified as seeking.

*Information-processing theories* are also relevant to scanning. Those models differentiate high-effort and low-effort processing (→ Elaboration Likelihood Model), with effortful processing seen as more likely to result in → persuasion. This is one basis for the expectation that sought information may be more persuasive than scanned information. Nonetheless, these models recognize that learning and persuasion can result when processing effort is low. For example, information that results from scanning may gain credibility because of its link to a trusted media source, and might be absorbed without elaboration of counterarguments because it comes from the routine use of media.

Scanning can be detailed in terms of its breadth (the number of different sources from which information was acquired), depth (the richness of information gleaned), and frequency of exposure. A story with broad coverage might signal the topic's importance and suggest substantial social support for the behavior; a story with depth might encourage careful balancing of benefits and costs; a story with high frequency over time might signal importance and social support for the behavior, and, because of its continuing availability, remain salient for people whenever they were making a decision. These distinctions are critical for efforts to assess the influence of information scanning on cognitions and behavior.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

There are two fundamental research questions for information scanning research: "What influences whether people will gain relevant information from scanning behavior?" and "What effects does information gained from scanning have on behavior?" There are five types of hypotheses about the possible determinants of how much information on a particular topic comes from scanning. (1) *Intrinsic characteristics of the topic*: information about some topics and not others may be readily assimilated without effortful processing. Information that aspirin use by children is risky is easy to absorb, but detailed information about the alternative methods to help quitting smoking may not be absorbed without active seeking. (2) *Sheer availability of information*: information about some behaviors is much more likely to be available from sources that are routinely used. Information about mammograms and dieting to lose weight may appear in media and in personal conversations more often than information about genetic tests for rare diseases. (3) *Enduring individual differences*: education, gender, and other enduring personal characteristics may be associated with varying patterns of information use. Some people have styles of processing information which make them likely to attend to and retain information, across topics. (4) *Topic-specific individual differences*: some people bring substantial interests and background to particular issues. They have prior cognitions that make them likely to notice and engage with information as it flows by. (5) *Access to and habitual use of sources*: people who watch television news or read health magazines have more opportunities to scan information. People who have social links with many people have more opportunities to discuss a topic, particularly if the topic is relevant for the network.

There is a substantial conceptual basis for the expectation that information scanning will have *effects on behavior*. If one follows the logic of expectancy value theories (→ Reasoned Action, Theory of; Expectancy Value Model), information learned from scanning may affect beliefs about the benefits and costs of behaviors. Scanning may affect the perception of injunctive norms (the level of social support for behaviors) or descriptive norms (perceived frequency of others' behavior). Scanning may likewise influence self-efficacy if people see others successfully engaging in a behavior (→ Bandura, Albert; Social Cognitive Theory). Scanned exposure to media content may also *affect the salience*, or cognitive accessibility, of a topic. That information would then be more likely to be called on in making decisions. Agenda-setting theory also argues that repeated exposure to media content can make an issue more salient, and thus lead to higher salience for it in making decisions (→ Agenda-Setting Effects.)

There is no guarantee that scanning will lead toward adoption of a behavior. Scanners may note only information consistent with a prior decision, may miss essential information, or may be exposed to such a welter of information that they are left more confused than well-informed. Still, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the intensive scanner will make a different decision than the non-scanner.

Conceptualization of scanning is relatively straightforward compared to its measurement. At least four issues are relevant to choosing *appropriate measures* of information scanning (or scanned information exposure). First, scanning suggests that routine media and interpersonal exposures provide information relevant to subsequent decisions about other behaviors. Then scanned information would need to be minimally encoded in memory and made accessible for recall at a later time. If assessment of individual scanning behavior relies on self-report, it will vary with individual ability to recall and articulate encoded information. Second, scanned information is specific to a particular decision. As such, general questions about exposure to overall sources (e.g., television) or to a broad topic (e.g., health) may not capture exposure to information relevant to a particular decision. Third, information can be scanned from multiple sources (mediated and personal – breadth); sources can offer detailed or superficial knowledge (depth); and sources can be scanned once or multiple times (frequency). If breadth, depth, and frequency of scanning make some difference in the effects, measures should differentiate these dimensions. Fourth, scanned exposure, by its nature, may not stand out in → memory. It may be difficult for individuals to report specific sources and specific times, even though they may recall having generally heard about an issue from the media or from discussion with others.

Scanning measurement and analysis of effects has much in common with the measurement of media exposure for media effects studies. *Three approaches dominate.* (1) Measuring availability of specific content in heavily used media, and assuming that people are exposed to that content (both through direct exposure to these sources and through the diffusion of information through interpersonal sources). Variation in availability of content can be compared to variation in outcomes of interest across time or between geographical units. (2) Measurement of individual differences in exposure to known relevant sources (e.g., television, the Internet). Comparisons on outcomes can be made between individuals more or less likely to use those sources. (3) Measurement of individual differences in recall of exposure to specific information from specific sources. Individual differences in level of recall can be associated with matched outcome behaviors.

Only the third approach captures all of the requirements of the construct of scanning. However, it faces the difficult issue of the ability of individuals to recall and report scanning exposure in detail. In all three approaches, analyses of scanning effects depend on eliminating typical rival hypotheses concerning influences of potential confounders and the possibility of reverse causation. Scanning conceptualization, measurement, and effects analyses are in the early phases of their development.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attention ▶ Availability, Cognitive ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Memory

- ▶ Persuasion ▶ Planned Behavior, Theory of ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Television ▶ Violence as Media Content
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## **Information Science**

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Information science (IS) is a multidisciplinary field concerned with “facilitating the effective communication of desired information between human generator and human user” (Belkin 1978, 58). IS became established as an academic discipline with the creation of the American Society for Information Science in 1937 (now abbreviated ASIS&T) and the UK Institute of Information Scientists in 1958.

Previously, work on scientific and technological → information had been called *documentation*, and had its roots in French and US universities at the beginning of the twentieth century. The foundation for quantitative analyses of scholarly communication (scientometrics, bibliometrics) was laid in studies by pioneers like A. J. Lotka (on scientific productivity and publication ratios, 1926), G. K. Zippf (on rank and frequency



of terms in large text corpora, 1932 – later applied to automatic indexing in information retrieval research), and S. C. Bradford (on the distribution of academic articles about a scientific topic across journals, 1934). These pioneering efforts were accelerated by the digital computer. From the 1950s, former laboratory scientists began, as information scientists, to develop, manage, and evaluate systems for the retrieval and use of technical and scientific information, as well as to analyze the impact of information and information technologies (IT) on scientific communication. The invention by the chemist E. Garfield of global citation databases for the sciences is typical of this period, as are the works by Derek De Solla Price and Robert K. Merton on the communication of scientific knowledge.

Throughout its history, IS has witnessed a struggle between technological and human-centered perspectives on communication. For almost two decades (roughly 1960–1980), an *identity crisis* of sorts followed from the awareness that theories of IS are not founded on mathematical or natural laws. Several attempts were made to construct a foundation, drawing on, for example, computer science or communication theory. In the former approach, IS became IT-driven, designing and maintaining abstract or full-text databases or, more recently, developing web retrieval systems. However, since the end of the 1970s, IS increasingly has been regarded as a social science discipline affiliated with communication research, as evidenced by a growth in user-oriented approaches attempting to have IT “fit humans.”

This shift of focus coincided with a new generation of IS researchers who originated not from the sciences, but from IS departments established by the pioneers. Today, the communication approach is predominant especially in Anglo American and Scandinavian university IS departments and schools. Since the 1970s, research and education in IS has also been concerned with librarianship, information studies, and library and information science (LIS). In the US, a recent phenomenon is *I*-schools, i.e., university departments merging communication, IT, and LIS into information schools.

There are several central research areas in IS. *Information retrieval* (IR) is the mainstream R&D area of IS. It addresses algorithmic retrieval and evaluation experiments regarding performance in retrieving document contents, including unstructured texts, images, sound, speech, music, and multimedia. It also undertakes search engine development, interface usability, and field investigations of interaction between information searchers and knowledge sources in context. *Knowledge organization* concerns epistemological (macro-level) and applied (micro-level) ways of representing documents by (algorithmic and/or human) indexing. It also works with classification methods and systems, and thesaurus/ontology architectures, across genres, media, and scientific as well as other social domains of application. *Bibliometrics and informetrics* covers quantitative studies of both scientific and everyday communication, and of technological innovation (e.g., patents), including citation analyses and research evaluation (scientometrics) and analyses of such Internet structures as links (webometrics). *Information seeking behavior* studies the search for and use of (informal) information sources and communication channels. *Library research* examines the role and impact of public, university, or digital libraries, open access journals and repositories, and other knowledge centers in local communities and wider society, including information literacy and studies of selected user groups. *Knowledge management* addresses economic and organizational techniques

for managing information resources and (tacit) knowledge sources and sharing in institutional contexts (→ Knowledge Management; Information Literacy).

*Information* is one of the key concepts of IS and is commonly understood as an intentional transformation of certain actors' → cognitions, presented as a message in the form of signs that transforms the recipients' state of knowledge. Information, thus, becomes an increment of knowledge, always situated in a context, as the message is perceived and interpreted by particular recipients. In a semantic sense, a message can provide the same information to many recipients. In a pragmatic sense, information is the result of individual interpretations in context.

*Information need development* refers to both individual and collective information needs. In order to solve a perceived task (at work or in daily life), actor(s) may require information. If they do not acquire information, they will encounter cognitive-emotional problems, developing a state of uncertainty that is associated with an information gap or need. When actors have a loose understanding of their tasks or problem situations, or a low awareness of their information needs, they tend not to take full advantage of IR systems, e.g., by communicating very few or broad search keys to the systems or by replacing systems entirely by human knowledge sources.

*Relevance* is intuitively familiar, but difficult to measure during IR experiments. One relevance typology (Borlund 2003) distinguishes subjective, intangible relevance from objective, tangible relevance. Objective relevance is defined either through an algorithmic calculation of the best fit within the IR system for a searcher's request, or by so-called socio-cognitive relevance. Over time, collective assessments are made of the value of an item, e.g., via citations or links to recognized work. Subjective relevance is established through assessments of topicality, pertinence, and situational applicability. Topicality considers the correlation between the contents of available documents and what the searcher asked for (their common "about-ness"); pertinence concerns the relationship between document contents and the searcher's intrinsic information need; and situational relevance captures the association between the meaning of the document contents and the perceived underlying task of the actor.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Computer–User Interaction ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Human–Computer Interaction ► Information ► Information Literacy ► Information Seeking ► Interaction ► Internet ► Interpersonal Communication ► Knowledge Management ► Open Access Journals ► Organizational Communication ► Technology and Communication

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# Information Seeking

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Information seeking may be considered as at the heart of much communication. It includes deliberate, intentional pursuit of further knowledge, as well as the more casual skimming of messages and accidental observations and encounters. Scholars in communication research have employed the term in a variety of contexts – for instance, interpersonal relationships, → organizational communication, personal health issues, mass communication, → political communication, or database and Internet use (→ Interpersonal Communication; Health Communication; Internet; Exposure to the Internet). The following overview is structured by these areas. An overarching methodological problem in information-seeking research is that individuals may often be unable or not willing to report their information-seeking behavior with the accuracy and precision required. Fortunately, new communication technologies have provided not only new forms of information seeking but also new ways to observe and measure it, for example through log files (→ Log-File Analysis).

## **INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION CONTEXT**

A research domain that has examined information-seeking behaviors is interpersonal communication. Information seeking in this context has been categorized into using passive, active, and interactive strategies to gain information about others, in particular in episodes of initial interaction between strangers (Berger 2002). In short, passive strategies involve no interactions between those who seek information about others and these targeted individuals. The information seeker simply engages in unobtrusive observation of the target person. Active strategies include indirect gathering of information without interaction with the target individual. Lastly, interactive information seeking happens through face-to-face communication between information seeker and target individual. However, not all information acquisition happens intentionally, and even information about others that the individual intended to avoid may be picked up accidentally. The extent of information-seeking behavior has been hypothesized to be a function of the uncertainty about the target individual. This assumption is included in → uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese 1975). In general, people seek to increase their ability to predict their partner's and their own behavior in situations. One other factor which reduces uncertainty between communicators is the degree of similarity individuals perceive in each other (in background, attitudes, and appearance). More recently, information-seeking behaviors in close relationships have also been examined more closely.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION CONTEXT**

Predictors and effectiveness of information seeking in organizational settings have also been studied (e.g., Morrison 2002). Obviously, newcomers who have just entered an organization need to acquire a lot of information to perform adequately. Organizations

typically aim to provide the needed information. However, the information provided is often incomplete, and uncertainties may exist regarding role expectations, co-workers, organizational matters, and own performance. Furthermore, individuals differ in their information needs, and also in their tactics and use of sources when seeking information. Information-seeking behaviors vary depending on type of sought information, as task- and performance-related information is more likely to be sought from supervisors, whereas social and normative information is more often sought from peers. Apparently, while trying to reduce uncertainty through information seeking, the newcomers also weigh the potential costs of effort and for self-presentation. With regard to all members of an organization, research has also examined factors affecting the seeking of feedback information (→ Feedback Processes in Organizations; Knowledge Management). It is fostered by concerns about goal attainment and own development, by perceived credibility and expertise of the feedback source, as well by expectations of positive feedback. Thus not only do rational goals of reducing uncertainty and improving own performance govern the seeking of feedback information, but considerations about ego threats and social image also play into these processes (Morrison 2002).

### **HEALTH COMMUNICATION CONTEXT**

Seeking of health information is generally viewed as a highly desirable behavior. The informed patient should be in a better position to understand diagnosis and to decide on and support treatments, as well as to prevent health problems. For many complex diseases such as cancer or diabetes, gathering information beyond what is offered by the physician should often be advantageous for the patient. Health campaigns aim to increase knowledge levels and to instigate further information seeking. Individuals differ strongly in their interest in health information, and as a consequence gain information from different sources. Health-oriented people seek information from interpersonal communication, print media, and the Internet, whereas low interest in health is associated with citing → television and → radio as primary sources for a more accidental health information exposure (Dutta-Bergman 2004; → Health Communication and Journalism). Research about factors influencing health-information seeking has shown that a key barrier to information seeking is that health information is often perceived to be distressing. Especially when the information relates to a severe health threat for which prevention or treatment appears difficult, the individual is said to rather avoid information about the issue (Witte 1992). For example, an obese person who has failed to achieve permanent weight loss in the past may find information about the combined health threats resulting from obesity very distressing and should be motivated to avoid it, if weight loss seems out of reach. Overall, the research suggests that an enormous variety of factors influence health-information seeking, which has produced inconsistent findings.

### **MASS COMMUNICATION AND POLITICAL COMMUNICATION CONTEXT**

A key function of the mass media in a democracy is to provide information about public affairs and issues to citizens. The → audience, on the other hand, is confronted with an overwhelming amount of content in diverse channels and formats and thus must be

selective in attending to the available information (→ Information Overload; Selective Attention). Determinants of individuals' overall information exposure are rarely examined, aside from the socio-demographic characteristics known to be associated with higher information consumption (high education, male biological sex, older age group, → news audience). A key research question is why people attend to certain kinds of media information while avoiding others, and furthermore what factors produce situational and interpersonal differences in this information-seeking processes.

Explication of the term → information in this research area is scarce; it usually refers to → news and political content in the mass media (→ Political News), excluding fictional content and entertainment genres (→ Fiction; Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Information seeking includes a great variety of media-use behaviors, which can be categorized in two broad types: information receptivity and information search. The former is an openness to a question resulting from encountering cues during habitual → information scanning of media messages; if the message-induced question arouses cognitive uncertainty, selection of detailed information occurs (Atkin 1973). The latter characterizes deliberate, intentional seeking of information that is potentially capable of reducing uncertainty, of satisfying curiosity, and of problem-solving (→ Information Processing).

Uncertainty is construed as a lack of knowledge about events, situations, and issues (→ Uncertainty and Communication). Such a lack of knowledge is assumed to impede formation of the → attitudes needed for appropriate behavior (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency). Acquisition of further information does not always reduce uncertainty, because it can increase issue complexity and render the formation of attitudes more difficult. Uncertainty reduction thus may only be expected for information that improves comprehension of issues and that can support the construction of attitudes for effective action in the particular context.

Much of the research on information seeking from the mass media has focused on information *neglect*. The initial research on → selective exposure to information was guided by Festinger's (1954) → cognitive dissonance theory. The theory predicts that messages that contradict the currently held attitudes instigate an unpleasant state of cognitive inconsistency, labeled dissonance; in turn, the individual is motivated to avoid exposure to such dissonance-arousing content. In this area of research, emphasis was thus placed on the avoidance of information rather than on the active pursuit thereof. Of the available research, only a small portion actually examined information seeking from the mass media and, overall, the findings were inconsistent. In communication textbooks, the notion that dissonance avoidance governs information seeking is nonetheless discussed with regularity, but usually dismissed because of the ambiguous research findings.

Early dissonance research produced results that showed → informational utility to foster selective exposure despite the dissonance-evoking capacity of messages. Accordingly, the concept of informational utility was introduced (Atkin 1973) to describe the characteristics of information that potentially and primarily serves to improve comprehension of happenings of interest. Knobloch-Westerwick and collaborators (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwick et al. 2005) explicated the construct of informational utility by suggesting the sub-dimensions of magnitude, likelihood, immediacy, and efficacy, which foster more information exposure the more the aspect applies. Information about events with strong and important impacts is said to have high magnitude. If the individual is likely to be

affected by them, the likelihood dimension is high. If the events and their consequences appear to materialize in the near future, immediacy is high. Furthermore, if the individual perceives his or her own influence as strong, the information provided also carries more utility and will thus instigate longer exposure. For example, if a campus newspaper reports that the university will increase tuition substantially (high magnitude) for all students (high likelihood for student readers) for the next term (high immediacy) but that students' veto can prevent the tuition increase (high efficacy), the students on this campus should spend more time reading this news story compared to a story about a small, remote, and unavoidable tuition increase.

In the context of political communication research, the concept of  $\rightarrow$  opinion leaders (Weimann 1994) is of interest for information seeking. Some individuals, the so-called opinion leaders, are more likely to influence others, and their opinions are also often sought as advice. They function as information brokers in their  $\rightarrow$  social network, and thus both information seeking and giving are key aspects of this social role. Opinion leaders generally seek more information from the media and follow news and print media in particular, but they are also more likely to be involved in interpersonal discussions about political issues. In a two-step flow process ( $\rightarrow$  Two-Step Flow of Communication), opinion leaders disseminate information sought from the media to others who pursue their insights. However, in the modern media-saturated environment, direct seeking of political information may have become more convenient, and exposure to political content online has emerged as a research topic ( $\rightarrow$  Internet News).

## INFORMATION SCIENCES CONTEXT

Research about information seeking goes beyond communication research. In  $\rightarrow$  information science and library science, as well as in computer and  $\rightarrow$  human-computer interaction research ( $\rightarrow$  Computer-User Interaction), ample theories and studies about information-seeking behaviors are to be found (e.g., Marchionini 1995).

SEE ALSO:  $\blacktriangleright$  Attitude-Behavior Consistency  $\blacktriangleright$  Attitudes  $\blacktriangleright$  Audience  $\blacktriangleright$  Cognitive Dissonance Theory  $\blacktriangleright$  Computer-User Interaction  $\blacktriangleright$  Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking  $\blacktriangleright$  Exposure to the Internet  $\blacktriangleright$  Feedback Processes in Organizations  $\blacktriangleright$  Fiction  $\blacktriangleright$  Health Communication  $\blacktriangleright$  Health Communication and Journalism  $\blacktriangleright$  Human-Computer Interaction  $\blacktriangleright$  Information  $\blacktriangleright$  Information Overload  $\blacktriangleright$  Information Processing  $\blacktriangleright$  Information Scanning  $\blacktriangleright$  Information Science  $\blacktriangleright$  Informational Utility  $\blacktriangleright$  Internet  $\blacktriangleright$  Internet News  $\blacktriangleright$  Interpersonal Communication  $\blacktriangleright$  Knowledge Management  $\blacktriangleright$  Log-File Analysis  $\blacktriangleright$  News  $\blacktriangleright$  News Audience  $\blacktriangleright$  Opinion Leader  $\blacktriangleright$  Organizational Communication  $\blacktriangleright$  Political Communication  $\blacktriangleright$  Political News  $\blacktriangleright$  Radio  $\blacktriangleright$  Selective Attention  $\blacktriangleright$  Selective Exposure  $\blacktriangleright$  Social Networks  $\blacktriangleright$  Television  $\blacktriangleright$  Two-Step Flow of Communication  $\blacktriangleright$  Uncertainty and Communication  $\blacktriangleright$  Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Information Society

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The designation “information society” presupposes that → information plays a defining role in the way we live today. For many commentators it is because information is more pervasive than hitherto that it is appropriate to characterize the present as self-evidently an information society. There is obviously more media output, more education available, more information and communications technologies about, more information occupations than before. Accordingly, it is obvious that we live in an information society. Such thinking is tautologous.

### INCREASING QUANTITY OF INFORMATION

It cannot be doubted that there is a great deal more information than ever before. But so too is there an enormously increased amount of food available, yet we do not designate ours as the “food society.” In terms of expenditure, families now spend a small proportion of their incomes on food, whereas 50 years ago it was the major item of expenditure after rent. Food is cheaper than ever, much more plentiful, and there is a hugely increased range of foods available. Indubitably, food is essential to how we live, and it is cheap and available in ways that even our recent predecessors could scarcely dream about. Indeed, excess of food is now a major health hazard – obesity and associated morbidities such as heart disease and diabetes are well known to be tied to abuse of food. Yet no one seems to want to define our times as the “food society.”

This undeniably serious issue allows one to propose that, just because there is more of something, this does not mean that one should conclude that, by virtue of this increase, the phenomenon itself comes to define the society. Quantitative increases do not necessarily indicate the qualitative change that is intended in designating a distinctly new type of society. In fact, it is possible to argue plausibly that relatively small quantitative changes can lead to major transformations such as the arrival of an information society. For instance, it might be mooted that expert knowledge has become central to the functioning of the modern world, that only a small minority of such experts is required to maintain the system though they command axes of change, while the vast majority of people are surplus to requirements. This is a theme of many scientifically educated authors such as Aldous Huxley, H. G. Wells and Isaac Asimov, as well as of theorists such as J. K. Galbraith (1972), who identified the emergence of an advanced society where a “technocracy” exercises power by virtue of its command of knowledge.

We might get to a similar point by observing that information refers to the record or communication of an event, subject or fact. This neutral meaning has almost, but not quite, superseded an older notion of information, which involves the formation of mind or character, as in the novice becoming instructed in information necessary for entry into the professions such as the law or the clergy. This sense of information connotes a superior condition, as in someone being *informed*. Between the widespread use of the word “information” as a noun, and the less common but still recognizable use of the term “informed” as an adjective, is the gulf between quantitative and qualitative measurements.

It is possible to designate a society as having vastly increased information, but for the people in that society to be poorly informed. Neil Postman (1931–2003), argued this in his critique of television, *Amusing ourselves to death* (1985). The proposition that we are informationally saturated but uninformed is often advanced. For instance, in 2003 a survey for *Whitaker’s almanack* found that 47 percent of the people in Great Britain could not identify the Deputy Prime Minister, while the majority could name several characters from the TV soap *EastEnders* (Ezard 2003). Similarly, the United States, informationally the most generously endowed nation, has enormous numbers of citizens incapable of locating France or Italy on a map of the world while being knowledgeable about Homer Simpson’s escapades. It is a moot point whether these societies have been “dumbed down” by modern media, but one may be assured that many of their citizens lack the quality of being informed about major spheres of life while they are immersed in information about personalities, celebrities, and sports fixtures (→ Political Knowledge).

## DEFINITIONS OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Almost all commentators adopt a quantitative measure when considering the phenomenon of the information society. They move on from that to the assertion that we have entered a new type of society because of the expansion of information in its various guises. This implies that a qualitative change should follow from the quantitative increase in information, an argument that does not necessarily follow.

Far and away the most common form of definition of an information society is the one that takes *technologies* as the marker of informational increase (→ Technology and Communication). What this means precisely changes over time, but there can be no doubt



that, since the mid-1990s, it has been information and communications technologies (ICTs), and the Internet especially, that are taken to identify the coming of the information society. Other observers might add to this digitalization of television and other new media such as the iPod and mobile telephone (→ Mobility, Technology for). Technology does appear to be a robust measure of the information society, not least because it is obvious that technological innovations are occurring at a rapid rate and their diffusion is remarkable. Indeed, their presence is so palpable that many observers do not bother to argue that ICTs might bring into being an information society. Rather, their analyses presume that this is so, that technological change announces the new epoch.

There are several difficulties with this. One is the reminder that prior to the Internet others announced an information society on the basis of rather different technologies. In the early 1980s the defining technologies were microelectronic devices and the personal computer. Later, when access to the Internet set wireless and wired methods against one another, a key concern came to be technologies of communication. The question arises, which technologies ought we to privilege in our accounts? A second problem is the *lack of causal analysis* of the actual relation between technology and the coming of the information society. We need to know clearly how, if at all, technologies have ushered in the information society. A third problem is the challenge of *technological determinism* that is evident in such accounts. A technology is introduced and it then *impacts* on society to change things radically (→ Technology, Social Construction of). This approach is routinely criticized by social scientists for its linear causal logic (it can be plausibly suggested that social factors influence technological development, e.g., military imperatives and market factors) and its presumption that technology impacts on society as an extra-social force (Dickson 1974; Webster & Erickson 2004).

We might also see problems with a technological conception of the information society by considering the *economic* argument. This suggests that an information society arrives when the significance of information in an economic sense becomes of major consequence. Analysts would calculate the economic *value of information businesses* such as education, entertainment, and publishing and compare them over time. The identification of the value of information here will include businesses that are involved in the information technology realm, but the economic measurement is not a technological one (Porat 1977) but rather a measure of the business of information. It requires an estimation of the proportion of gross domestic production that goes toward information. Thus, as steel and engineering decline in comparison to, say, education and the City of London's activities in finance, banking, and insurance, then so there develops a case for suggesting that an information society is being brought into being as the relative value of the latter increases. This is different from a technological measure, but *prima facie* equally legitimate.

A third definition is the *occupational* one. This suggests that as jobs in information increase while those in industry and agriculture decline, then so emerges an information society because it is in the information domain that most people find work. This appeals to sociologists, who point to the radical changes in occupations. It was pioneered by one of the earliest conceivers of the information society, Daniel Bell (1919–), in his theory of postindustrialism. Over recent decades we have seen a transition from male-dominated manual occupations to feminized and information-saturated occupations. The expansion of white-collar occupations and the diminishment of manual labor (though by no means

its disappearance) means that we are witnessing the dominance of jobs that function with information as their key resource (Bell 1973). In this sense we have an information society because *information work* predominates. This theorization, presented somewhat conservatively by Daniel Bell, was given a left-wing slant by Alain Touraine (1971). It remains a popular conception, where emphasis is now placed on phenomena such as the “creative industries” (media, design, the arts) and “weightless” occupations such as found in finance, law, and business consultancy (Coyne 1997).

This is neither a technological nor an economic measure of information. Most white-collar workers do use computer terminals, but this is by no means the most important element of their work, since relations with clients and customers and the knowledge developed by extensive education will probably be more consequential. Moreover, in the most important white-collar occupations, the upper professionals, it is likely that practitioners will have subordinates who undertake the “merely technical” aspects of their work. It should also be noted that information occupation growth cannot be regarded as synonymous with increases in the economic import of information since some domains are information-occupation-intensive yet economically of limited significance (e.g., counseling services, teaching) while others are economically important yet involve relatively few information jobs (e.g., foreign exchange dealing). This occupational index of the emergence of the information society operates with a quantitative definition: as information occupations grow in number, so does there emerge a new society, the information society.

A fourth definition focuses on *networks* to emphasize the flows of information between people and places. This comes close to a technological measure since an ICT infrastructure is essential for the operation of networks, but much more is needed (e.g., competencies on the network and soft skills such as problem solving and communicative abilities). A core notion here is that networks enable the transformation of time and space, allow the acceleration of activities, and mean that processes of globalization are encouraged (→ Technology and Globalization). It is an approach closely associated with the work of Manuel Castells, whose trilogy *The information age* (1996–1998) detailed the heightened significance of networks and ways in which they transform business, politics, and culture. This is also a quantitative measure, one that insists that the growth of networks signals the coming of the information age. It too is subject to sharp criticism (Garnham 1998).

A final definition involves the increase in *culture*, broadly conceived (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). This centers on the massive increase in symbols, from fashion to media, to emphasize that we inhabit nowadays a world in which we are saturated in signs – from the architecture of cities to the decoration of the body, from round-the-clock television to always-on broadband Internet services (→ Popular Communication). It is an approach to the information society that has appeal especially to postmodern adherents, who may envisage a bounty of signs accompanied by a collapse of meaning precisely because they are ubiquitous, variable, and fast changing (Poster 1990). Living in a global city such as London, one recognizes this easily: signs everywhere, but little sense of coherence or comprehension. We recognize too that this is a quantitative measure, even if the measure is never actually made. It is simply asserted that the expansion of culture signals that we now inhabit a new world. To repeat: quite why this should be so is not demonstrated.

Reviewing these varying definitions of the information society, what becomes clear is that they are either underdeveloped or imprecise or both. Whether it is a technological, economic, occupational, spatial, or cultural conception, we are left with highly problematical notions of what constitutes, and how to distinguish, an information society, in spite of the fact that large numbers of commentators offer the concept as a means of understanding the world today.

It is important that we remain aware of these difficulties of definition. Though as a heuristic device the term “information society” has some value in helping us to explore features of the contemporary world, it is far too inexact to be acceptable as a definitive term. For this reason, though one may readily acknowledge that information plays a critical role in the present age, one has to remain suspicious as regards information society scenarios and maintain skepticism toward the view that information has become the chief distinguishing feature of our times. The term “information society” may have its *uses as a metaphor*, insofar as it helps us to think more intensively about the salient features of our times, but we ought not to succumb too readily to the belief that information is the defining feature of the world today.

SEE ALSO: ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Information ► Mobility, Technology for ► Political Knowledge ► Popular Communication ► Technology and Communication ► Technology and Globalization ► Technology, Social Construction of

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# Informational Utility

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In the context of → information seeking through mass media use, the concept of informational utility has been developed to predict which information items an individual will attend to and which will be ignored. The concept of utility of information emerged in the discussion about cognitive dissonance (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory), and related predictions were corroborated in a few empirical investigations as early as the 1960s (e.g., Canon 1964; Freedman 1965). A more detailed elaboration of informational utility, though without specific empirical exploration, was provided by Atkin (1973). He suggested four domains of informational utility and conceptualized information to potentially meet needs of surveillance, performance, guidance, and reinforcement. Information needs were taken to result from uncertainties in how to respond to everyday environmental requirements. Thus, information is needed for adaptation to the environment, cognitive adaptation (surveillance), behavioral adaptation (performance), affective adaptation (guidance), and sometimes defensive adaptation (reinforcement). Cognitive adaptation (surveillance) has attracted most attention in subsequent research.

On surveillance as an informational utility facet, Atkin stated that the individual “maintains surveillance over potential changes that may require adaptive adjustments, monitoring threats or opportunities and forming cognitive orientations such as comprehension, expectations, and beliefs” (Atkin 1973, 212; → Cognition). More specific predictions on surveillance needs, as they may guide selective exposure to information, can be derived from a more detailed model of informational utility (e.g., Knobloch et al. 2003; most recently, Knobloch-Westerwick et al. 2005) that projects information relating to individuals’ immediate and prospective encounter of threats or opportunities to have utility for these individuals, the degree of which increases with (1) the perceived *magnitude* of challenges or gratifications, (2) the perceived *likelihood* of their materialization, (3) their perceived proximity in time or *immediacy*, and (4) their perceived *efficacy* to influence the suggested events or consequences. Hence, depending on the extent to which these dimensions characterize reported events, the news report carries utility for the recipient. The increased utility of messages, in turn, fosters longer exposure to information. Hence, it is the perceived utility of information that motivates exposure; low-utility material is passed over in favor of attention to material of higher utility. Drawing on the classic approach/avoidance dichotomy, these impacts are suggested for both negative and positive news reports, as information on both threats and opportunities should carry utility. (For comparisons of the informational utility model with other approaches, such as the → elaboration likelihood model and other models and concepts such as salience, involvement, or relevance, see also Knobloch et al. 2002, 2003.)

An example may serve to illustrate these dimensions. (1) News about a new and deadly disease holds more utility than a message about an illness that causes just a minor indisposition because the former indicates consequences of higher magnitude. (2) If the

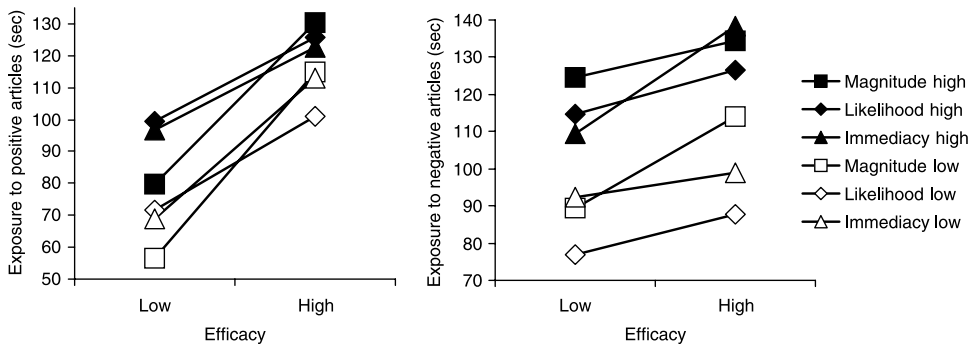
disease spreads on the US east coast, related media messages have more utility for news consumers living on the east coast than for those living on the west coast, as their likelihood of being affected is higher. (3) If the disease is spreading very quickly, consequences of reported events evolve in the very near future, and being in the know has more instant value and thus higher utility due to this immediacy. (4) Options to prevent infection that are highly effective will suggest the information has higher utility than will indications that no prevention means are available. Whenever media messages feature high levels of these dimensions of informational utility, news consumers should be more prone to expose themselves to the information, as it carries higher utility for them and helps them to adapt to environmental requirements.

### RELATED CONCEPTS

*Persuasion theories* have also incorporated dimensions largely in line with elements of the informational utility model ( $\rightarrow$  Persuasion). Several persuasion researchers (most recently, Roskos-Ewoldsen et al. 2004) have included magnitude and likelihood dimensions in their model and also postulated efficacy as an additional dimension. For instance, Rogers (1975) suggested in his protection motivation theory that (1) probability of occurrence descriptions in a message lead to perceived susceptibility (parallel to the informational utility dimension of likelihood); (2) magnitude of noxiousness in the appeal produces perceived severity (magnitude); and (3) depictions of the effectiveness of the recommended response and characterizations of an individual's ability to perform the recommended response result in perceived efficacy (efficacy) to cause cognitive mediation in processing fear appeals.

The dimensions in approaches related to *protection motivation theory* are in part parallel to the informational utility model. However, the former approach was formulated to predict the effects of persuasive messages on cognitive processes and, more importantly, on protection behavior, whereas the latter was formulated to predict selective exposure to media. Protection motivation theory (Rogers 1975) and related communication models such as the  $\rightarrow$  extended parallel process model imply that individuals' perceived efficacy to combat a threat would result either in danger-control behavior to prevent risks when efficacy is high, or in fear-control behavior to deny risks when efficacy is low. Whereas this logic was initially applied to information processing, an extension to information-seeking behavior appears highly appropriate: individuals' perceived efficacy to combat a threat results either in seeking out further information about the risk, when efficacy is high, or in avoiding further information on the threat, when efficacy is low. In the former case, information may be construed as useful; in the latter, the same information may only seem distressing.

Predictions of *selective exposure* to information derived from the dimensions of this model have been supported by empirical evidence, as explained below. In these studies, selective exposure was operationalized as time spent on information, although selectivity has been discussed on various levels ( $\rightarrow$  Selective Attention; Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention). This approach is in line with that of Atkin (1973, 209), who suggests that "amount of exposure [is] simply defined as number of messages and the length of exposure."



**Figure 1** Impacts of efficacy and intensity of magnitude, likelihood, and immediacy as informational utility dimensions on observed selective exposure to positive and negative online news

Source: Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2005)

## EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Two experiments (Knobloch et al. 2003) using negatively valenced stimuli supported the suggested impacts of the first three utility facets. These effects were also observed to be additive, as no interactions emerged. News readers indeed devoted more exposure time to negative news reports that were linked to higher levels of magnitude, of likelihood of being affected, and of immediacy of consequences of covered events than to articles featuring lower utility levels on these facets. Investigations by Knobloch et al. (2002) provided initial explorations into these informational utility dimensions as they impact selective exposure to positively valenced news. In these studies, German high-school students were to sample from either positive or negative reports that varied along utility dimensions. The findings demonstrated that likelihood and immediacy affected selective exposure to positive articles significantly, and magnitude and immediacy influenced self-guided exposure to negative articles. More recently, a cross-cultural experiment in the US and in Germany demonstrated the robustness of predictions derived from the informational utility model, as hypotheses about selective exposure to both positive and negative news were fully supported in both cultural settings (Knobloch-Westerwick 2005). Finally, Knobloch-Westerwick et al. (2005) corroborated the positive impact of higher efficacy as utility dimension for selective news exposure, both for positive and negative news and in interplay with the first three utility dimensions, as illustrated in Figure 1.

While selective exposure to information can be investigated on various levels (e.g., choosing between media consumption and alternative activities, choosing between different media channels), the summarized investigations looked at selections on the level of specific messages consisting of news reports. More specifically, selective exposure time was measured by software to serve as key dependent variable. As media users will oftentimes not be aware of their reasons for selecting some content while avoiding other messages and may furthermore not remember their selections correctly, observations of actual selection behavior are preferable in comparison to other measures to study selective exposure to information.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory  
 ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Extended  
 Parallel Process Model ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Persuasion ▶ Selective Attention  
 ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention

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## **Infotainment**

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The term *infotainment* refers to a cluster of program types that blur traditional distinctions between information-oriented and entertainment-based genres of television programming. Primarily a pejorative term, infotainment is often used to denote the decline of hard news and public affairs discussion programs and the corresponding development of a variety of entertainment shows that mimic the style of news. At the same time, however, the early years of the twenty-first century have seen the increasing emergence of programs that more thoroughly blend the content and form of various genres of public affairs and entertainment. This has created a complex spectrum of hybrid programming with a potentially wide range of implications for public information, political communication, and democratic discourse.

Much scholarly concern with the phenomenon of infotainment has focused on the encroachment of entertainment on the domain of news. In his seminal work, Postman

(1985) feared that we were “amusing ourselves to death” by forsaking print-based, rational-critical information in favor of entertaining televisual spectacle with its short attention span and dramatic storylines. Altheide (2004) has argued that news and politics must now conform to an entertainment-driven → “media logic” and are disseminated to the public through an “infotainment news perspective” that packages events and issues into narrative form. Graber (1994) has identified several dramatic elements that have become common to routine news, including an emphasis on conflict, emotion, evocative visual imagery, and interpersonal interaction. The conflation of news with entertainment – what Graber called the “infotainment quotient” in television news – also is indicated by news producers’ frequent use of music, fast-paced editing, and a variety of visual and aural effects to build a sense of drama in the news story; a disproportionate interest in celebrity, sports, and lifestyle topics; and a celebration of individual newscasters as marketable personalities.

Recently, scholarly attention has turned to the other side of infotainment: the increasing penetration of news form and content into entertainment programming. A number of factually based entertainment shows now *look like* news, featuring “anchors” who read voice-over copy and introduce reporter packages, often with the ubiquitous graphic box over the shoulder. Further, a range of fictional programs construct storylines that refer to, draw from, or dramatize politics, current events, or issues of contemporary social importance. Delli Carpini and Williams (1994, 2001) argue that such programming challenges the familiar dichotomy that sees news and entertainment as oppositional terms, offering both entertainment and an alternative location for informational content and political discourse. They suggest infotainment is best understood as a phenomenon of border-crossing that problematizes common assumptions that news is necessarily serious and that entertainment shows contain little in the way of socio-political significance. Further, they and others argue that infotainment calls into question a number of other traditional distinctions, including those between politics and show business, public affairs and popular culture, and even factual and fictional media forms.

## EMERGENCE

The emergence of infotainment has been enabled by a confluence of technological, economic, and cultural changes that have created a media landscape structured by the competing forces of fragmentation and integration. In terms of technology, the large-scale adoption of → cable television, the development of satellite and digital delivery systems, and the continued expansion of the → Internet have led to an unprecedented multiplicity of channels and informational sources. Further, advances in personal computer-based technologies of media production have significantly lowered barriers to entry, in terms of both the capital and expertise required to create and distribute informational content. This has resulted in a diverse communicative sphere marked by the segmentation of the audience, the circulation of a potentially infinite range of text, images, and video, and the fracturing of the hegemony of US network television and European public service broadcasting systems over the informational environment.

Economically, the turn toward source multiplicity and audience fragmentation has been countered by the consolidation of ownership into the hands of a small number of giant corporate conglomerates (→ Media Conglomerates). Driven by the interest of increasing



shareholder value, conglomeration has been accompanied by widespread commercialization – the reconceptualization of all media forms not as public service, but as for-profit products (→ Commercialization of the Media). Owning a wide variety of previously distinct media outlets, contemporary media companies further seek to maximize economic efficiencies through the sharing of resources, personnel, and approaches to content across what were once considered to be incompatible forms. The line between informational and entertainment programming, once a hallmark of media practice, has been obscured by the synergistic interweaving of content across multiple channels and genres.

All of this has occurred within a wider cultural context defined by multicultural diversity and a recognition of the relativism of many cultural traditions and standards. Contemporary media function in a cultural environment marked by disagreement over the modernist ideals of objective inquiry and dispassionate expertise that once authorized the serious national news broadcast. So too have many become wary of the paternalism of public service broadcasting and its assessment not just of *what* the public needs to know, but also of *how* they should know it. The conventions governing public discourse have become porous, with the logic of “hard” news no longer assumed to be the privileged way of talking about and making sense of social and political reality. Instead, television programming and public discourse have become shaped by hybridization: the thorough melding of once-differentiated discourses of news, politics, show business, and marketing in a media landscape defined by the permeability of form and the fluidity of content.

### INFOTAINMENT SCALE

It is difficult to consider infotainment a singular, clearly definable → genre. Brants (1998) instead suggests an “infotainment scale” that takes into account the topical focus of a given program as well as its format and style. On one end of the continuum are those programs that contain factual content about policy matters packaged within a serious format that makes minimal use of televisual style. On the opposite end are shows that emphasize dramatic, personalized content within an informal and heavily stylistic format. Those two poles, however, are idealized types, with various infotainment programs occupying a wide range of positions in between. In US media, these include, among others, the “news lite” offered by network television and 24-hour cable; talk radio; local, tabloid, and other forms of → “soft” news (→ Tabloidization); contemporary documentary such as Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 9/11*; daytime talk shows; late-night comedy news such as *The Daily Show*; and issue-oriented prime-time dramas such as *The West Wing*. Any typology – including this one – inevitably is incomplete, however. The integration of news and entertainment varies across national media systems and continually shifts with each new programmatic innovation. Even similar program types (e.g., late-night comedy) can articulate the conjunction of information and entertainment in markedly different ways.

### SIGNIFICANCE

The difficulties in precisely defining infotainment likewise render it a challenging object of study. Scholarly approaches to infotainment can be grouped broadly into two camps,

which vary in methodology but share the goal of identifying the significance of the phenomenon for public information, political communication, and the democratic process. Scholars working within the domain of media effects are interested in the outcomes of exposure to various types of infotainment content. Specifically, empirical studies have examined the effects of infotainment consumption on factual political knowledge, candidate evaluation, issue salience, and political engagement, the last including voting, volunteering in campaigns, and discussing politics with family and friends. Findings have been relatively consistent: that infotainment does have the potential to reach people who otherwise would pay little or no attention to news and political information, that exposure can result in increased factual knowledge among the otherwise politically disengaged (e.g., Baum 2003), and that consumption can correlate with increased levels of political engagement among certain types of audiences (Moy et al. 2005). However, studies equally show that any direct effects are moderated by prior levels of political sophistication, partisanship, and individual-level differences. Further, the wide diversity of infotainment programming resists efforts to generalize effects across specific programs.

The second scholarly approach turns from a focus on individual effects to a concern for political culture: to popular understandings of the democratic system, political authority, and the nature of citizenship as constructed through various discourses of infotainment. A number of scholars have argued that infotainment is incompatible with the needs of a democracy, degrading the *quality* of public information, dissuading from critical inquiry, and transforming rational argument into emotive spectacle. The result, some argue, is a “crisis of public communication” (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995) – a citizenry that lacks both the discursive resources to functionally participate in the political process and any interest in doing so.

An expanding body of scholarship, however, is developing the counterargument: that infotainment is not just good for democracy, but perhaps necessary. Various forms of this argument suggest that infotainment is democratizing political discourse by legitimizing narrative and affective forms of reasoning, acknowledging the irreversible interconnection between politics and popular culture, and drawing linkages between politics and the audience’s everyday lives (Corner & Pels 2003). Here infotainment is seen as a counterweight to traditional expert- and insider-dominated forms of political talk that have little apparent relevance to the life-world of the audience (Jones 2005; van Zoonen 2005). Others suggest that particular forms of infotainment are offering a corrective to a news discourse that has become co-opted by political communication professionals and seeded with scripted sound bites and spin (Baym 2005). Finally, infotainment is argued to have the potential to make news and politics pleasurable, which itself may be a prerequisite for political participation.

Despite uncertainty about its effects and disagreement about its significance, it is clear that infotainment is becoming an increasingly important phenomenon for democratic politics and public information. Informative and entertaining formats continue to become more deeply integrated; politicians have embraced such hybrid programming in their efforts to influence the citizenry; and for their part, members of the public continue to turn to the full range of program types in their efforts to learn about the world around them and to make political decisions. In turn, communication scholars increasingly are

recognizing the need to develop sophisticated theoretical and methodological approaches to grapple with the fundamentally changing nature of mediated information.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Cable Television ▶ Commercialization of the Media  
▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Genre ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates  
▶ Media Logic ▶ News as Discourse ▶ Politainment ▶ Postmodernism and Communication  
▶ Public Sphere ▶ Soft News ▶ Tabloidization

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## **Ingratiation and Affinity Seeking**

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People often try to get others to like them when initiating and intensifying romances, friendships, and even brief encounters. When they do this they are engaging in affinity seeking (→ Interpersonal Communication).

For decades, scholars interested in relationships focused primarily on static variables associated with liking. For instance, research has long demonstrated that people who share similar attitudes and values like each other more than those who do not (→ Interpersonal Attraction). Studies also demonstrate that people are attracted to better-looking individuals. (Of course, there are exceptions to this focus on static variables – ingratiation comes to mind immediately.)

The affinity-seeking construct (Bell & Daly 1984) highlighted a more dynamic and strategic notion suggesting that people intentionally engage in certain behaviors in hopes of engendering liking. For instance, people might systematically highlight their similarity on some attitudes with someone to make the other person see them positively. Or, they might dress up, fix their hair, and even exercise hoping to get another person's attention (Daly et al. 1983). The key move made in the affinity-seeking construct was emphasizing the strategic intentionality of behaviors that people use to ingratiate themselves to others.

### CONCEPTUALIZING AFFINITY SEEKING

Affinity seeking falls under the broader rubric of → impression management (→ Self-Presentation). In Bell and Daly's (1984) framework, affinity seeking has four major components: (1) antecedent factors such as people's goals (e.g., to persuade, to generate liking) and the degree to which people are aware they are ingratiating themselves to others; (2) constraints that affect affinity seeking such as personality characteristics, social skills, and various contextual characteristics; (3) specific affinity-seeking strategies; and (4) the responses of others that are the outcomes of individuals' attempts to generate affinity.

In early research on affinity seeking, Bell and Daly (1984) found 25 *major strategies people typically use* when they engage in ingratiation. These strategies fall into seven more general clusters: (1) control and visibility (e.g., presenting an interesting self, being dynamic), (2) mutual trust (e.g., being open, appearing trustworthy), (3) politeness (e.g., following conversational rules, conceding control), (4) concern and caring (e.g., listening, confirming the other's sense of self), (5) other involvement (e.g., including the other, engaging in nonverbal immediacy), (6) self-involvement (e.g., including oneself, influencing perceptions of closeness), and (7) commonalities (e.g., highlighting similarities, assuming equality).

These seven clusters fall along *three dimensions*: (1) activity: active/passive (e.g., being dynamic is active, listening is passive); (2) aggressiveness: aggressive/nonaggressive (e.g., physical attractiveness is aggressive, being supportive is nonaggressive); and (3) orientation: self-oriented/other-oriented (e.g., assuming control is self-oriented, including others is other-oriented).

### ASSESSING AFFINITY-SEEKING SKILLS

Affinity-seeking skills and competency are assessed via observation, peer ratings, and self-ratings (→ Research Methods; Scales and Indices). The majority of research on the construct has used a single composite measure of affinity seeking – either self-report (Bell et al. 1987b) or other-perceived. Studies conducted using the composite measure have demonstrated, for example, that people who report using more ingratiation strategies are

better liked by others, seen as better conversationalists, and have greater potential as friends.

Rather than employ the composite measure, some research has examined individual affinity-seeking moves. These studies have found, for instance, that people who engage in active trust-building behaviors are more successful in developing relationships than those who do not. Yet another strand of research has looked at the variety of ingratiation strategies people use. This work has indicated that people who employ a wider assortment of strategies are better liked than individuals who latch onto only one or two strategies and use those in every exchange.

### **CORRELATES OF AFFINITY SEEKING**

Using a number of different measures and methods, researchers have found that successful affinity seeking typically has positive consequences in relationships (e.g., affinity seeking is correlated with greater relationship quality) and interactions (e.g., affinity seeking is correlated with how satisfied people are in conversations). Affinity seeking, done well, works – people like you more. Scholars have also found that ingratiation takes place in a variety of contexts.

For example, *in the workplace*, the affinity-seeking skills of supervisors are positively and significantly correlated with subordinates' satisfaction with both supervisors and work. In classrooms, students' abilities to engage in ingratiation are positively and significantly related to teachers' judgments of their academic and social performance. Similarly, teachers who are better at affinity seeking receive higher evaluations from students, are seen as more credible and competent, have better classroom climates, and have students who voluntarily attend their classes more often and do better academically in their classes.

Affinity seeking is also correlated with many *personality traits*. It is positively and significantly associated with variables such as extroversion, assertiveness, and interaction involvement, and inversely and significantly related to constructs such as communication apprehension, loneliness, and neuroticism. When individual ingratiation strategies are correlated with various personality characteristics the picture is quite interesting. For instance, assertiveness is positively associated with more active affinity-seeking strategies (e.g., assuming control, dynamism) and inversely correlated with more passive moves (e.g., supportiveness, conceding control). People who are more cognitively flexible have a greater repertoire of ingratiation strategies, and people who manifest secure and clingy love styles demonstrate more affinity-seeking behaviors than do those with casual, uninterested, and skittish love styles.

Other research has found that, as Bell and Daly (1984) suggested, there are *constraints that affect ingratiation*. For instance, Flint (1992) found that teenagers varied their use of different affinity-seeking strategies as a function of their age as well as the person with whom they were interacting (mother vs father). Some research has revealed gender differences in the use of specific strategies (e.g., females report using listening, physical attraction, sensitivity, and elicitation of other's disclosure more than do males; males more often report using assuming control and presenting an interesting self). Studies have also hinted that each gender may not be particularly good at judging what the other

gender does to engage in ingratiation (Daly 1994). Tolhuizen (1989) found that people use different strategies at different stages of their romantic relationships.

Other related work has examined the *affinity-testing function* – what people do to determine if someone else is interested in them as a potential romantic partner (→ Initial Interaction). This research (Douglas 1987) identified eight moves people use to test others' affinity: confronting, withdrawing, sustaining, hazing, diminishing self, approaching, offering, and networking. These strategies fall along two dimensions: social appropriateness and efficiency.

Some research has expanded upon the original 25 strategies specified by Bell and Daly (1984). For instance, Ganong et al. (1999) examined affinity seeking among stepparents and their stepchildren and found 31 strategies. They also raised the important issue of when and how people recognize ingratiation moves. Sometimes stepchildren failed to recognize stepparents' attempts to build affinity. Later studies have continued to use the affinity-seeking construct in stepfamilies and have found evidence that when stepparents are perceived by their stepchildren to engage in active affinity seeking, their relationship and marital quality between parents, is better.

Soon after the affinity-seeking concept was introduced, Bell et al. (1987a) proffered the related concept of *affinity maintenance* (→ Relational Maintenance). Affinity maintenance behaviors are strategies people actively use to maintain, as opposed to establish, positive relationships with others. Bell et al. asked married individuals to describe how they maintain positive feelings in their relationships. Twenty-eight strategies emerged and most were similar to those found in the affinity-seeking research. Four affinity-seeking strategies were not reported by married individuals – assuming control, personal autonomy, comfortable self, and nonverbal immediacy. In addition, the following strategies appeared in the affinity maintenance project that were not part of the affinity-seeking work: faithfulness, honesty, physical affection, self-improvement, and third-party relations. In contrast to the strategies that were not reported, this latter group of strategies are clearly more relevant in established relationships than in initial interactions. All 28 moves were individually, and as a whole, positively correlated with marital quality (the strongest correlations with relational quality were with openness, sensitivity, and verbal affection). Further, women in the study felt they engaged in significantly more affinity maintenance than did their spouses. A closely related construct – labeled relational maintenance – appeared almost simultaneously with Bell et al.'s work and scholars have focused most of their attention on that construct in work since 1990 (Weigel & Ballard-Roach 1999; Stafford et al. 2000).

SEE ALSO: ► Impression Management ► Initial Interaction ► Interpersonal Attraction ► Interpersonal Communication ► Relational Maintenance ► Research Methods ► Scales and Indices ► Self-Presentation

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## Initial Interaction

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When people first meet, → interaction is likely to be guided by issues associated with uncertainty and → self-presentation. Both mutual uncertainty reduction and effective presentational management are seen to be necessary but not sufficient conditions for relational growth. Significantly, these goals may become mutually exclusive when, for example, social actors seek to hide negative or intimate aspects of the self from another, thereby remaining opaque.

Because uncertainty is seen to undermine relationship development, persons are posited as using a variety of *strategies to reduce their uncertainty* about each other and so increase the predictability and fluency of the interaction (→ Uncertainty Reduction Theory). Outside of face-to-face meetings, persons may observe others and/or ask third parties about future interaction partners. However, during conversation, interlocutors are seen to rely upon two primary strategies: question-asking and disclosure. The rate of *question-asking* is highest at the very outset of interaction and decays rapidly as the interaction progresses. Preliminary question-asking generally focuses on non-personal issues, such as name, place of work, knowledge of others in the situation (e.g., at a party), and so on, so that information exchange is both symmetrical (i.e., partners seek and provide the same information) and synchronous (i.e., partners provide the information across contiguous talking turns).

As conversation continues, question-asking gives way to *self-disclosure* as persons begin to provide more personal information, including their likes and dislikes, their experiences, their ambitions, and their opinions. Although this information is generally more personal than that accrued from question-asking, talk typically remains noncontroversial. As well, because disclosure is often diffuse and imprecise, talk turns usually become more extended and the exchange of information may become asymmetrical and asynchronous (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication).

Both question-asking and disclosure are likely to be more effective to the extent that interlocutors feel at ease. Hence, conversation partners may invoke tactics designed to relax each other. For example, they may enact behaviors intended to make them appear friendly, approachable, receptive, and/or non-threatening. Such behaviors may be both verbal (e.g., identifying and extending mutually engaging conversation topics) and nonverbal (e.g., direct eye gaze; → Gaze in Interaction).

When persons first meet, uncertainty may vary for a variety of reasons. First, levels of *global uncertainty* (i.e., the level of uncertainty persons bring to the encounter) vary. Perhaps as a function of recent or otherwise salient first encounters, some persons are more uncertain than others. For example, persons who have experienced substantial negative outcomes during past first meetings, especially to the extent they are salient in memory, may be expected to be both more attributionally uncertain and more behaviorally uncertain than persons who have experienced generally positive outcomes. Similarly, persons unused to first meetings with potential romantic partners (such as persons recently divorced) are likely to be more uncertain about such encounters than persons for whom such meetings are a relatively common feature of social life. Of course, because of the variability of initial interaction, global uncertainty varies within as well as across individuals.

Uncertainty may also vary across *interaction contexts*. For example, a person may participate frequently and successfully in first meetings with business contacts and so feel minimally uncertain in those situations. In contrast, the same person may be considerably more uncertain during social encounters, not only because they may be less practiced but because social interaction is typically less conversationally circumscribed than business-related meetings.

Likewise, persons' uncertainty is seen to vary as a consequence of whether or not they expect to *meet a conversation partner again*. When future interaction is anticipated, actors appear to feel an increased need to "get to know" each other and so engage in relatively high levels of information seeking. Conversation lasts longer than when strangers expect not to meet again, although persons continue to exchange relatively non-personal information. At the same time, interactants exhibit higher levels of cooperation and are more likely to temper their own opinions than when they expect not to meet again, suggesting both increased salience of self-presentation goals and a subsequent tradeoff between information seeking and social appropriateness.

A similar tradeoff may occur when persons interact with another who has the *ability to reward or punish* them. Such power can accrue from another's status (as in job interviews) or, more informally, from another's perceived reward value (as in emergent romantic relationships or when interacting with a target who has a significantly more extensive friendship network). In these situations, it is likely that self-presentational goals compete



with those associated with uncertainty reduction so that, again, actors' levels of question-asking and disclosure are relatively suppressed.

Finally, persons are likely to become increasingly uncertain during conversation to the extent that others behave in ways that are perceived as *deviant*. Such deviance may occur as a function of interlocutors violating rules governing conversation content (e.g., making personal disclosures) and/or process (e.g., monopolizing conversation) and elevates the unpredictability of interaction. Because this occurs during rather than prior to interaction, co-interlocutors may withdraw from the conversation rather than elevate their efforts to "get to know" the partner.

In sum, initial interactants typically pursue two sets of objectives: those associated with uncertainty reduction and those associated with self-presentation. Generally, persons behave in ways that allow mutual fulfillment of conversation goals, although, under some circumstances, this may not be possible.

SEE ALSO: ► Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ► Gaze in Interaction  
► Interaction ► Self-Presentation ► Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## **Innis, Harold**

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Harold Adams Innis (1894–1952) was a Canadian economic historian turned communication theorist, whose research focused on the role of the *medium* in communication processes. His work – historical in method (→ Media History) and ecumenical in scope – demonstrated the centrality of communications in social, political, and cultural development. Together with his junior colleague, → Marshall McLuhan, he is considered a founding father of a medium-focused school of communication theory, variously known as the "Toronto School," → "media ecology," or → "medium theory." It holds that communications media are the key to understanding the co-development of mind, culture, and society.

Born in 1894 and raised on an Ontario farm, Innis earned his BA and MA degrees from McMaster University. After recuperating from an injury suffered in World War I, he completed a doctorate in economics, on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, at the University of Chicago in 1920, and began teaching at the University of Toronto. He would spend his entire academic career there, first as professor of political economy, then as chair of the department, and later as dean of the graduate school. Widely hailed as Canada's foremost economic historian and political economist, he was active, as royal commissioner, in shaping Canada's transportation and economic policy. Innis passed away in his prime, in 1952, while working on "History of Communication" – a monumental study that recast world history as a story of civilizations and their media.

Innis's turn, late in his career, to the study of communication can be seen as an extension of his major contribution to Canadian economic history, the "*staple theory*." In detailed studies of Canada's major staples – from furs and codfish to wood pulp – Innis traced their role in the broader frame of the intercontinental economy. He found that the flow of staples could chart political, economic, social, and even cultural links. He then switched his perspective: rather than focusing on the staples, he zeroed in on the *networks and interfaces* themselves. Innis's scholarly background left its traces on his thinking about communications. The most distinctive was the residual presence of the staple: he, and following him the rest of the world, call it the "medium." Whether a pyramid, a papyrus, or a mobile handset, the process of communicating, according to Innis, is anchored in a staple – just as staples are moved in a field mapped by communications. And media obey economic principles, such as the dynamic of oligopoly.

According to Innis, particular technological attributes of a dominant medium (→ Technology and Communication), or a mix of media prevalent in a given society, condition the practice of communication in that society, the institutions and socio-cultural arrangements associated with those practices, and further afield affect its political, economic, social, and cultural portrait. Although this is occasionally misunderstood as simplistic technological determinism, Innis was in fact suggesting "inverted determinism," namely, that societies develop, reshape, and adopt particular media according to their perceived needs and goals.

Innis suggested that media serve to enhance the development of society in one of two general orientations, or "biases": an *emphasis on time or on space*. A time bias would characterize a society oriented to its past, to religion, magic, ascribed status, hereditary rule, primary occupations, and so forth. A space bias would imply an orientation to commercial and military power, science, achieved social status, bureaucracy etc. He believed that a balance between these biases optimized the social good, but was seldom achieved in history, with classical Greece as an outstanding exception.

According to Innis, media technologies paralleled and affected societies' time or space bias. He observed that there is an inverse relation between the durability and transportability of media. For instance, a pyramid can maintain knowledge for millennia but is not suited for transportation, while a papyrus is easily transportable but is not durable. The time-binding potential of media and their space-binding capability are complementary variables. Society can only balance its communicative act by consciously blending a variety of media into a stable media ecology.

Related to this notion, and one of the most broadly applied of Innis's ideas, was his analysis of *monopoly of knowledge*. He found that when certain media, knowledge

products, or communicative skills dominate society's communication environment, the peculiar dynamics of oligopoly make for amplifying and perpetuating the hold on society of those media and the bodies of knowledge associated with them. Since media affect ideology and consciousness, a communication environment biased by monopoly will be resistant to change, and hence cannot endure.

Innis provided one of the richest bodies of thinking on the *meaning of communication media and society*, and one of the most broadly construed attempts at understanding the dynamics of their historical co-evolution. Still, Innis's legacy has yet to be meaningfully seized on. One reason for this relative neglect is the complexity and difficulty of his writings. Further, until quite recently his ecumenical level of analysis did not fit the prevalent trends in communication research. Finally, his historicity has represented a barrier. It did not find a significant following among social scientists interested in communication. Yet Innis's pioneering work has the potential of reorientation, from looking backward to understanding the present and future.

SEE ALSO: ► McLuhan, Marshall ► Media Ecology ► Media History ► Medium Theory ► Technology and Communication

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## **Institutional Theory**

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Institutional theory is a theoretical framework for analyzing social (particularly organizational) phenomena, which views the social world as significantly comprised of

institutions – enduring rules, practices, and structures that set conditions on action. Institutions are fundamental in explaining the social world because they are built into the social order, and direct the flow of social life. They are the constants that determine the rules of variation. Institutions condition action because departures from them are automatically counteracted by social controls that make deviation from the social order costly. These controls associate nonconformity with increased costs, through an increase in risk, greater cognitive demands, or a reduction in legitimacy and the resources that accompany it.

Institutions are not everywhere and for everyone; rather, they are situated within specific social contexts and condition action within those contexts. Consequently, institutional research typically focuses on the *institutional context* – sets of institutions and their relationships and effects that are relevant in a situation. Institutional contexts provide cognitive frameworks for social actors, and these frameworks both constrain and enable action. Institutional contexts constrain action by enacting rules that are often invisible, having a taken-for-granted status among actors in that context. At the same time, these contexts enable action by making the world understandable and actions meaningful.

The resurgence of institutional theory in the 1970s began with investigations of the effects of institutional contexts on the structures of organizations (Meyer & Rowan 1977) (→ Organizational Structure). Over time, researchers began to theorize the dynamics of the institutional context itself. For instance, they examined how a social fact can reach the status of an institution, i.e., become institutionalized. They also addressed many fresh questions, e.g., how institutions die, how they change, how they relate to each other, how social actors can affect their institutional context. These efforts have expanded institutional theory to constitute a wide range of social research.

## EARLY HISTORY AND FOUNDATIONS

The effects of great institutions such as language, government, religion, laws, and family are so clear and widespread that one can hardly imagine social research that would not attend to them. Consequently, the history of institutional theory is as long as the history of social theory. The first systematic attempts to theorize what institutions are and how they influence action and structure, however, are found in the writings of two classical scholars: Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. Although *Weber* did not use the term institution, his notion of cultural rules or systems is close to our present understanding of the concept of institution. The interpretive approach of Weber highlighted the idea that action is social in the sense that the actor attaches a subjective meaning to it. So meanings always mediate social action. Therefore, the role of beliefs or cultural systems becomes clear: they provide a set of meanings required to interpret actions.

For *Durkheim*, institutions are symbolic systems: systems of knowledge, belief, and moral authority (→ Meaning). He highlights the idea that these symbolic systems are subjective products of human interaction, but experienced by people as objective. So institutions exist and play a role in people's lives in the same way as external facts. Moreover, institutions possess moral authority and are backed by religion-like sanctions. For instance, collective representation is vital to institutions in the same sense that rituals and ceremonies are vital to religious systems, because action enacts belief.

The study of institutions and their origins and effects continued gradually until the foundations for dramatic progress in institutional theory were laid down by two academic movements: → phenomenology and → ethnomethodology. The seminal work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) in *phenomenology* revealed the structures of meaning shaped in social interactions. They argue that it is through linguistic processes that common definitions of reality are constituted, accepted, and legitimated. Institutions, as constituted by reciprocal typifications of habitualized action, are essentially cognitive constructions that control social action independent of any form of sanction.

*Ethnomethodology* investigates the nature of practical knowledge, the tacit background knowledge people employ in daily interactions. Garfinkel (1967) showed that the cognition used in everyday interactions is not a rational quasi-scientific process but a routine that relies on conventional practical reason that functions beneath the level of consciousness. Garfinkel also argues that norms are cognitive guidance systems, and actors employ them flexibly with a great capacity for negotiation and innovation. Together, phenomenology and ethnomethodology paved the way for institutional researchers to theorize how action is influenced by institutional context.

### LATE HISTORY AND DEBATES

The new wave of academic interest and attention to what became known as *neo-institutional theory* started with two seminal works in the area of organization theory. First, Meyer and Rowan (1977) argued that, in modern societies, organizations are in a highly institutionalized context of various professions, policies, and programs, which serve as powerful myths. Many organizations ceremonially incorporate these products, services, techniques, policies, and programs, because they are understood to produce rationality. In this way, organizations do not necessarily make their structures more efficient in terms of task-performing functions. Rather, organizations align their structures with the institutional context, and in so doing gain legitimacy, resources, stability, and better survival chances. The key idea established in this work was that the formal organizational structure has a symbolic aspect in addition to its functional aspect, and this symbolic aspect is influential both in the decision to adopt a structure and in gaining legitimacy and better survival chances for organizations.

The second key work that established neo-institutional theory was DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) analysis of the institutional processes by means of which the institutional context forces organizations to be *isomorphic* – similar to each other, in form and practice. The article introduces three isomorphic processes: *coercive*, *mimetic*, and *normative*. Coercive isomorphism results from formal or informal pressures exerted on the organization by the government, other organizations, or the cultural expectations of the environment. Mimetic isomorphism is associated with uncertainty in goals, technology, or market dynamics, which leads organizational decision-makers to adopt structures and practices that model other leading organizations in their fields. Normative isomorphism results from the standards and cognitive frameworks that are created and controlled by professions and other moral standards-making bodies. By means of these three processes, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that rational actors of institutionalized fields make their organizations more similar.

Since these seminal works in the neo-institutional movement, extensive work has been published under the banner of institutional theory, particularly in the area of organization studies. Within this tradition, researchers have challenged the classic themes of study by introducing new concepts and units for analysis. Most critically, the *concept of a field* – as the set of all the organizations that form a recognized area of institutional life, including key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, organizations with similar products or services, etc. – has become perhaps the central focus of analysis in neo-institutional theory (e.g., DiMaggio 1991; Fligstein 2001; Greenwood et al. 2002). Other key concepts include institutional logics (Friedland & Alford 1991; Thornton & Ocasio 1999), institutional change (Greenwood & Hinings 1996; Seo & Creed 2002), and institutional entrepreneurship (Eisenstadt 1980; Fligstein 1997; Greenwood & Suddaby 2006).

Although it springs from largely interpretivist roots, institutional theory has been employed in many areas with a variety of methodological and epistemological approaches. Researchers from both realist and social constructionist traditions (→ Constructivism) now locate their work within the institutional theory umbrella, creating two quite distinct styles of institutional theory and two different lines of inquiry. The realist researchers tend to see the world as stable and try to find an explanation when they confront a change. In contrast, social constructionist research tends to expect change everywhere and tries to find an explanation when it confronts stability. Likewise, researchers with both quantitative and qualitative methods have employed institutional theory. As a result, institutional theory is understood as compatible with many different perspectives and research questions, and has no common set of constructs or methods.

Despite, or perhaps because of, its wide acceptance, institutional theory is associated with intense, unresolved debates around key constructs and issues. The meaning of the concept of an institution, for instance, is considered by many researchers, particularly from realist traditions, to be overly ambiguous and thus lacking in terms of being a reasonable construct for research. Those researchers argue that this ambiguity is the result of lack of both theoretical and methodological elaboration on the process of institutionalization. Other researchers doubt if phenomenology and ethnomethodology can provide a useful micro-sociological foundation for institutional theory. While some researchers are attempting to find a better micro-foundation drawing on the works of Pierre Bourdieu, others argue that institutional theory is basically a macro-perspective and there is no need to elaborate much on the micro-level. Finally, there is debate with respect to the intellectual boundaries of institutional theory, with some researchers arguing that institutional theory has expanded beyond its proper domain.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Two new directions have been proposed for the development of institutional theory, and provide promising avenues of development for both theory and empirical research. The first addresses the question of how social actors may purposively influence their institutional context. This line of research was initiated by the introduction of the concept of *institutional entrepreneurship* and has attracted a great deal of attention in recent years. Organizational researchers are particularly attracted to the concept because of their

interest in power and agency – the ability of organizations to strategically alter the institutional context could undoubtedly be a source of power and superiority for organizations. This issue has recently been developed as the more general concept of *institutional work* – purposive action aimed at creating, maintaining, or disrupting institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby 2006).

The second direction for future research focuses on the development of *endogenous explanations for institutional phenomena*. In contrast to much of the earlier work, which emphasized exogenous shocks as underlying institutional change, researchers in this new tradition argue for the need to explain institutional dynamics in terms of closed causal loops. Some primary attempts in this direction have begun and are focusing on the development of endogenous understandings of rationalization (Meyer & Jepperson 2000).

It should also be noted that as a future direction for the literature of organizational communication, researchers have just started to employ institutional theory for their explanations of *macro-phenomena*. The underlying idea for this direction of research is that both institutional effects on organizations and the organizing processes of institutions are mediated by communication processes. Therefore, organizational communication researchers are increasingly recognizing the institutional context of organizations because that is where the communication processes are situated (Lammers & Barbour 2006).

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► Ethnomethodology ► Language and Social Interaction ► Meaning ► Organizational Communication ► Organizational Structure ► Phenomenology ► Symbolic Interaction

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## Instructional Television

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The term “instructional television” (ITV) is multidimensional, with definitions varying widely, depending on context, time period examined, and other factors. The term is frequently related or used interchangeably with other terms in this encyclopedia, including → Classroom Instructional Technology, → Distance Education, and → Educational Media, among others. At the most basic level, ITV refers to the use of the medium of → television to deliver instructional content to one or more viewers, but the multiple interpretations of the term are tied directly to delivery/reception variables, content variables, and viewer variables.

ITV has existed as long as the medium of television itself, since some of the earliest experimental demonstrations of the medium in both Great Britain and the United States were for the purpose of instruction. When the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the US (→ United States of America: Media System) authorized noncommercial educational television in 1952, a number of the licenses subsequently awarded were assigned to boards of education, school districts, and other instructional agencies that developed the medium of television for direct formal instruction in the classroom setting. Even community licensees that were generally referred to as “educational television stations” devoted their daytime schedules to delivering “in-school services,” another term for ITV programming.

ITV programs ranged from hour-long courses that ran daily for an entire semester to a single instructional program that was broadcast in conjunction with the commemoration



of an historical event (→ Historic Key Events and the Media) or as an instructional supplement to a current happening, such as the inauguration of a president. In some situations the utilization of ITV was almost incidental to the regular, teacher-delivered classroom curriculum, whereas in other situations ITV played a far more dominant role. For example, the use of ITV in American Samoa, South Africa, and Bogotá, Colombia, led to a major restructuring of the entire public school curriculum. The impact of ITV as a contributor to formal instruction has been felt from kindergarten through high school and college to adult education. ITV has been credited with teaching youngsters how to cope with life-threatening illnesses while bedridden in hospitals, with helping prison inmates earn their high-school diplomas, and with teaching immigrants to learn English and prepare for their citizenship examination.

While some ITV programming has been broadcast over the airwaves, much of the ITV coursework on college and university campuses utilizes a “closed circuit” delivery system, in which a number of television channels are fed from a central control room or “head end” to multiple classrooms through the use of coaxial cable or fiber optics (→ Television Technology). One well-known ITV project in the midwestern US during the 1960s – Midwest Program on Airborne Television Instruction – actually used airplanes to transmit courses to more than 2,000 elementary and secondary schools over a six-state area. Video tapes of ITV programs have been distributed internationally by such organizations as the Great Plains National Instructional Television Library. Today, ITV programs may reach the viewer via the → Internet, world wide web, DVD, or video cassette (→ Video), as well as by closed circuit, instructional television fixed service (ITFS), broadcast, or satellite transmission. Viewing of so-called “telecourses” or other ITV programming may take place in a regular classroom, in a dormitory room, at home, or under a tree in a public park via a wireless laptop computer.

ITV in one form or another is an important part of the curricular offerings of virtually every modern school, college, and university in the world today. Research established early on that television was an effective means of delivering information to students, and that when content was properly designed, viewers could learn as much from ITV as from a classroom teacher. The classroom of the twenty-first century is rich in media resources, regardless of the grade level or subject area. The fundamental production principles developed by ITV pioneers continue to be utilized today, as visual and auditory content or “videos” pervade the seemingly countless delivery and reception platforms of our mediated instructional environment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Distance Education ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Historic Key Events and the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Sesame Street ▶ Television ▶ Television Technology ▶ United States of America: Media System ▶ Video

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## Instrumental Actualization

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Instrumental actualization is first and foremost an approach to journalists' news selection. The notion was formulated by Hans Mathias Kepplinger to explain the effect of journalists' (political) opinions on news content. As an approach to news selection, instrumental actualization continues and complements approaches such as → gate-keeping, → news factors, and → news values.

The theory of instrumental actualization makes *four basic assumptions*. First, it assumes that journalists hold opinions, share values, and advocate positions. Second, it holds that all (or most) events have inherent in them a political or conflict-related valence. That is to say, they are helpful for one side of a political issue, and bad for the other. For example, a news story on the failure of an educational program issued by an administration would provide the critics of this administration with arguments and be considered a challenge for its supporters. In other words, the central object of a conflict is linked to any number of events that have different instrumental qualities related (objectively or subjectively) to the central object. Thus, the instrumental quality of a news story is to be distinguished from its evaluation. Third, consciously or (much more often) subconsciously, journalists will ascribe a higher news value to stories that support their worldviews and conflict positions. According to the fourth assumption, the differential news values will show in the journalists' news selection.

The approach explains bias in the news on different levels: the individual journalist's news selection, the selection decisions of a particular medium (if the journalists employed there share certain worldviews), and even the new content of a whole media system (if worldviews are not distributed evenly among a country's news journalists). Rejecting the separation of news and commentary, this approach holds that the opinions of a newspaper's writers will affect its news selection (→ Separation of News and Comments).

The development of the approach was inspired by Klaus Schönbach's (1977) work on the synchronization of news and commentary (→ Synchronization of the News). Other inspiration came from → consistency theories, especially Milton Rosenberg's (1956) variant, from earlier work on how the news media covered political conflicts (→ Conflict

as Media Content), and from work on the effects of journalists' opinions on media content.

Instrumental actualization was developed in the 1980s by Hans Mathias Kepplinger. The author used representative → surveys among news journalists and quantitative content analyses of media content to prove his hypotheses (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). The surveys corroborated the hypothesis that the journalists' own position on a political issue influenced the news value of issue-related news items. When presented with news items speaking either in favor of or against a certain issue position, the respondents significantly attributed a higher news value to those news items that were in line with their own issue position.

Content analyses of real media content, comparing editorials and news, showed that each newspaper tended to prefer news that was in line with its editorial position as expressed in the commentaries ("synchronization"). The newspapers also tended to prefer stories that were harmful to the issue position they did *not* share, rather than stories that were beneficial for their side in the issue. This latter finding contributes to media negativism and can be explained by the higher news value and higher credibility of negative stories, and by lower selectivity with regard to them (→ Negativity; Credibility of Content; Credibility Effects; Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Selective Attention).

According to these findings, different media positions on political issues and conflicts are thus created by giving different weight to them in the news, rather than by differently evaluating more or less similar events. Instrumental actualization thus becomes a strategy in efforts to affect the media coverage of a subject: Activists can get the media either to evaluate matters differently (strategy of reevaluation) or to put matters more beneficial to the advocated position in the spotlight (strategy of instrumental actualization; → Political Marketing; Public Relations).

Several other results from content analyses that were not conducted in the framework of the theory of instrumental actualization can nevertheless be explained by this theory. An example is the instrumental use of experts in the news, that is, the tendency of media to give space and airtime to experts who share their views in conflicts (Lichter et al. 1986; Hagen 1992).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Commentary ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Negativity ▶ News ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Public Relations ▶ Quality Press ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Separation of News and Comments ▶ Survey ▶ Synchronization of the News

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## Integrated Marketing Communications

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In the 1960s, Chevrolet spent almost its entire US television media budget on one program – the *Dinah Shore Show*. At that time prime-time viewers had only three network channels to choose from and an advertiser could reach 80 percent of US households on any given evening by running commercials on CBS, NBC, and ABC programs (→ Television Networks). Newspapers were a primary source of information, and → cable television and the → Internet were decades away from development.

Currently there are over 400 cable TV channels in the US, TV audiences have declined at the rate of approximately 2 percent over the past decade, and cable now commands a larger audience than networks. The Internet has experienced unprecedented growth, and → advertising can be seen on one's mobile phone, in bathrooms, and almost every conceivable (or inconceivable) location imaginable. Product placements and integrations have increased dramatically. Erwin Ephron – a media consultant – estimates that in the 1980s a media planner had nearly 1,250 scheduling options on television alone. In the 1990s, with 100 broadcast and cable channels to choose from, the number of options rose to 1.25 quadrillion. With over 400 channels, the number of options is incalculable (Mandese 2005).

Now add to this the fact that there has been a proliferation of new media including the Internet, interactive wireless, podcasts, video on demand, blogs (→ Blogger), and more. Traditional media, like → public relations, sponsorships, event marketing, and product placements, have taken on a new perspective. Advertising is no longer king, as some of the largest TV advertisers (GM, P & G, American Express, among others) are shifting more and more dollars to the “new” media. In 2006, Pontiac introduced its new G-6 using only Internet advertising. Many others initiate their new product launches with an emphasis

on public relations. Still more use sponsorships, guerilla marketing tactics, and other nontraditional approaches.

As a result of these factors – as well as other changes in consumers' lifestyles, technology, etc. – marketers have had to dramatically change the way they attempt to communicate with their existing and potential customers. Communications programs now require the use of a variety of media to reach markets, as well as the integration of these media to put forth a unified and consistent message. It is now obvious to marketers that it is no longer “business as usual,” and that a new and different way of managing the communications environment is required. Integrated marketing communications addresses the issues involved in managing this changing media environment, while at the same time providing a framework for establishing communications objectives to be used to guide the communications program and assess its effects (→ Marketing; Marketing: Communication Tools).

### **INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS (IMC)**

The changing communications landscape has led to the adoption and growth of integrated marketing communications (IMC). As noted by the American Association of Advertising Agencies, IMC is: “A concept of marketing communications planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communications disciplines – for example, general advertising, direct response, sales promotion, and public relations – and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communications impact” (Belch & Belch 2007, 10).

As can be seen, this definition – now over a decade old – notes the integration of what might be considered “traditional” media, with no mention of the myriad of channels that have surfaced since its inception. Nevertheless, the point is that the strategy calls for a comprehensive plan, specific roles for each medium, and the integration of these media to maximize communications impact. IMC is based on the expectation that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, with the synergy of multiple media increasing the communications effects of the overall program.

IMC combines and coordinates a variety of marketing communication tools and techniques to reach the customer and present the product or service in a favorable manner. It also emphasizes the need for all of a company's marketing promotional activities to project a consistent and unified image. All forms of marketing communication must strive to present the same brand message and convey that message consistently across all points of contact with customers (→ Brands; Branding). All marketing communications must, in other words, “speak with a single voice,” whether they be new or traditional forms.

### **THE GROWTH OF IMC**

Kitchen (2005) has referred to the growth of IMC as the major communications development of the last decade of the twentieth century. While some academicians may disagree with this perspective, practitioners have completely embraced the concept. There are very few, if any, large-scale communications programs that do not involve the use of multiple media, leading to the rapid adoption of the IMC approach. In his book *The end of marketing as we know it*, Sergio Zyman, the former head of marketing for Coca-Cola,

declares that traditional marketing “is not dying, but dead” (1999, 1). Jim Stengel, global marketing director for Procter & Gamble, notes that “There must be – and is – life beyond the 30-second commercial”(Zyman 1999, 13), calling for the advertising industry to embrace and develop new media to reach their audiences. These are but a few of many examples of the new perspective required.

In addition to the previously mentioned changes in the communications environment, a number of other factors have also contributed to the rapid growth of IMC. There has been *a shift in marketplace power from manufacturers to retailers*: large retailers such as Wal-Mart are using their clout to demand larger promotional fees and allowances, which siphons off monies from advertising and increases the focus on short-term promotions. *Database marketing has grown*: marketers are increasing their use of databases. These are then used to target specific consumers through telemarketing, direct mail, and other forms of direct response. Companies develop customer relationship management (CRM) programs to reward their most loyal customers through sales promotions, discounts, and other tools, all of which increase costs. There have been *demands for greater accountability*: an increased demand for accountability and focus on return on investment (ROI) have led advertisers to consider a variety of tools that may enhance the cost–benefit relationship. It is no longer acceptable to say that one does not know how well the advertising program is working, as too many other options for the use of these dollars now exist. *The Internet has grown rapidly*: as previously noted, the Internet is just one of the numerous new media to become available to marketers. Perhaps no other medium since television has had such a dramatic impact on the media landscape. The Internet continues to evolve, becoming more and more like television. Combining this with the advent of interactive TV, wireless, podcasts, and other new media, marketers have had to rethink their traditional media strategies.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF IMC

The adoption of an IMC perspective necessitates a new way of thinking. Traditional means of conducting business must give way to adapting to the new communications environment. One of the most critical requirements is to recognize that consumers’ exposures to media and messages are now under their control – not that of the sender. Technological changes leading to the development of new media are just one of the factors that have enabled receivers to obtain information when *they* want it, not when the marketer sends it.

Second, marketers must recognize and accept the dramatic shift in media usage that has occurred – particularly among younger demographic segments (→ Audience Segmentation). Besides watching less TV, younger demographics subscribe to fewer magazines (most of which are specialty magazines as opposed to general news), rarely read the newspapers, and rely religiously on the Internet for music, news, and information for everything from phone numbers to the announcement of sales, comparative-price shopping, and upcoming events.

To successfully adopt an IMC orientation, companies must accomplish the following tasks. They must recognize that consumer perceptions of a company and its brands are a *synthesis of all the messages* consumers receive or contacts they have with the company. The advertising messages sent, the media in which they appear, interactions with the sales

force, the website, public relations, and publicity all help shape the perceptions of the company, its products, and its brand image. Companies must *identify all of the sources of contacts* that a customer or prospect has with the company. These contacts can include media advertisements, websites, articles and stories in → newspapers and → magazines or on → television or → radio stations, word of mouth, sponsorships and/or events, and product placements, among others. The IMC process starts with the customer or prospect and then works back to determine the best ways to reach them.

Companies also must consider the *strengths and weakness* of the various communication channels and of the marketing communication tools that form an effective IMC program. For example, mass media advertising – such as television – works well for building overall awareness but is less effective for communicating detailed information. Publicity lends credibility to a communication but is not always under the marketer's control. The Internet, while excellent for providing information, is less effective than other media for achieving reach. Selecting the appropriate media is critical to IMC success. Companies must create a *consistent unified message* to current and potential customers. All forms of marketing communication should focus on the same key selling points, theme, and positioning platform, and strive to have one look and one voice.

Companies also have to focus attention on the *achievement of communications objectives*, which will ultimately lead to the attainment of marketing goals. After years of discussion and research, marketers are only slightly further along in determining the ROI of various media in sales, market share, or other market objectives than they were decades ago. It is time to recognize the specific objectives communications are designed to accomplish, and to understand how achievement of these objectives will lead to the attainment of marketing goals. Companies must develop new ways to *evaluate the effectiveness* of IMC programs in producing outcomes. New metrics must be developed and used. These metrics must be validated and consistent to allow for proper measurement. The outcomes should include traditional measures such as recall and recognition, but must also incorporate new criteria such as increasing website traffic, or other media-specific measures.

Finally, companies have to *reorganize the department or agency* responsible for communications. In most companies and agencies today, communications silos continue to exist. Those responsible for advertising and media buying often compete, rather than cooperate with, those in public relations, promotions, and/or new media. Rather than working toward a unified goal, these departments continue turf battles to compete for budgetary dollars, inadequately communicate internally, and do not understand the specific roles each should assume to contribute to the overall effort. The education and training of specialists in integrating marketing communications and the integration and/or elimination of these silos will be critical to the success of the program.

## THE FUTURE FOR IMC

The debate as to the merits of IMC, whether it is a marketing fad or viable management strategy, etc., has given way to acceptance of it as a required means of developing effective communications programs. As consumers' needs and media habits continue to change, media continue to proliferate and evolve, and clients continue to demand accountability, the need for an integrated approach will increase accordingly. The

degree to which IMC advances, however, will be dependent upon acceptance by those involved in the communications arena. This acceptance, itself, will be predicated on changes in internal and external management thinking, the development of new metrics for assessing communications effectiveness, and continual adaptation to changing marketing conditions.

There is no doubt that integrating marketing communications is here to stay. There is also no doubt that those who adopt this approach will achieve a competitive advantage over those pursuing a more traditional approach.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Blogger ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Cable Television ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Marketing: Communication Tools ▶ Newspaper ▶ Public Relations ▶ Radio ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks

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# **Intellectual Property Law**

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Today, the law of intellectual property encompasses the legal concerns represented by → copyrights, trademarks, patents, design rights, trade secrets, and related concerns. This area of law focuses on protecting the rights of the owners of intellectual property to control when and if a work is reproduced, related adaptations of the work, and distribution and performance of the work.

Intellectual property law is in a more dynamic state of tension than ever before. The situation is driven by two historic and interrelated phenomena of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The fact that most intellectual property has been both internationalized and digitalized is transforming the field dramatically and rapidly. The works of any nation's creators are now marketed worldwide like never before. And most of those works can be digitally copied and distributed anywhere in the world, in unlimited numbers and virtually instantly via the → Internet, satellite transmission, and other media (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Digital Media, History of).



Those two factors represent agents of change with incalculable impact. They offer both opportunities and challenges of staggering proportion to the owners of intellectual property and to the industries built upon its marketing. Intellectual property law today races to keep pace with an epic clash between modes of access. The deeply entrenched and immensely profitable business model in which mass-produced works were relatively easily protected from unauthorized copying battles to survive in an electronic economy in which digital technology makes such protection a sharply escalating and far more expensive proposition. Thus, an age-old struggle over what rights creators shall have in relation to their works has reached a point of unprecedented conflict over the direction intellectual property law should evolve in response to the revolutionary technological changes of the age.

### INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Since the earliest days of mass production, authors, inventors, and the industries that capitalized on their works have sought to prevent unauthorized replication of their creations. Quite simply, profitability is critically linked to the degree of control one has over the production and distribution of creative works. And the idea of rewarding a creator for providing society with something new and useful is an ancient one. It has been grounded in two main schools of legal thought. *Natural law* maintains a concept of creators having a moral right to their intellectual property, and thus the taking of it without compensation is wrongful. The other main philosophical basis for intellectual property rights has been the utilitarian concept that such rights are rewards for the effort involved in creating original works, providing incentives for such creation and thus benefiting the greater society through pursuit of those incentives. That is not to say, however, that other concepts related to the ownership of ideas have not been historically and culturally important in some parts of the world. Even today, many arguments that strict intellectual property rights create monopolies that encroach upon mankind's common heritage of knowledge focus on the tendency for such regimes to disproportionately benefit developed societies while slowing progress in developing nations (→ Communication Technology and Development).

The United States produces and consumes more intellectual property than any other nation, and has pushed the development of related law in the United States and internationally. But the production and consumption of creative works are increasingly matters of global concern. Most nations now have established their own bodies of intellectual property law and have joined treaties that protect the intellectual property rights of all who are parties to the agreements beyond their own national borders. The process has yet to realize a seamless, universal system, and variations in enforcement mean that international → piracy of creative works remains commonplace in many parts of the world. But the process continues intensely, because the financial considerations at stake are immense.

Multinational efforts to work out *arrangements for protection of intellectual property* began more than a century ago. But those efforts have been vastly advanced in recent years. The *Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works*, an international copyright agreement first instituted in 1886, is the oldest and most important

international copyright treaty. Its provisions and membership have evolved substantially since its beginning, with some 160 nations now committed to protecting the copyrights of each other's creators. The *Madrid Agreement concerning the International Registration of Marks* (known as the Madrid Protocol) has standardized international systems of trademark across the borders of more than 60 signatory nations. The *Paris Convention on Industrial Property and the Patent Cooperation Treaty* establish international rules on patents. As part of the Uruguay Round of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations of 1994, the Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property (TRIPS) was adopted. It requires developing nations to recognize and enforce intellectual property rights, though the enforcement provisions are subject to national laws and judicial systems. Nevertheless, TRIPS is considered the most significant strengthening of international norms in intellectual property law to date.

### BASIC ELEMENTS

Copyright protects creative expression in many forms, including literary, musical, dramatic, audiovisual, pictorial, graphic, sculptural, etc. It does not protect facts or ideas, but rather the way in which they are fixed in a tangible medium of expression from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated. Examples include → books, → newspapers, → magazines, movies, song compositions and recordings, artworks, computer software, architectural drawings, advertisements, etc. The copyright owner can be the creator of the work, or ownership can be transferred contractually. Intellectual property rights in works created by regular employees within the scope of their employment in most cases belong to their employers. Intellectual property rights in works created by freelance or contract employees in most cases belong to the freelancer unless a work-for-hire agreement contractually assigns the rights to the employer. Registration provides additional protections for the copyright owner, but is not required in order to own a copyright. Copyright today begins when expression is fixed in a tangible medium, and lasts for a specified period of time. However, it has become common to repeatedly expand the length of that period by statute. The life of the author plus several decades (a minimum of 50 years under the Berne Convention, though it is longer in many nations) is a typical standard today. A work on which the copyright has expired is considered to be in the public domain, and is free of copyright restrictions.

*Trademark law* is concerned with the many permutations of the phenomenon broadly referred to today as → “branding” – symbols, logos, shapes, slogans, jingles, sounds, smells, etc. Their use enhances the commercial value of the products and services they distinguish from those of others. Trademark protects not original expressions, but rather marks established in commerce as distinctive. Trademark law is focused on preventing competitors from unfairly capitalizing on the investment that mark holders have made to associate marks with products and services. Critical issues in assessing alleged infringement of marks are the likelihood of confusion and the dilution of distinctiveness related to the unauthorized use. Marks last as long as they are used commercially, but can be lost if companies fail to maintain their use over time or allow generic use by others.

Broadly speaking, copyright and trademark law are concerned with how things look, while patent law deals with how things work. In that context, patents are less directly

related to communication law, and therefore are not included as a significant topic of this discussion. But it should be noted that patent law today deals with a tremendous range of entities, including machines, processes, and compositions of matter (as well as new uses of all those); the ornamental and/or esthetic design elements of inventions/products; and even plant organisms (in bio-engineering, for example).

The concept of *fair use* in US intellectual property law has sought to permit some exceptions for limited copying of protected expression for comment and criticism, without permission or payment. A core principle has been that in order to qualify as fair use, the copying must add something new – an original contribution of transformative expression, meaning, or message – to that which is copied. To that end, statutory and judicial assessments concerning fair use have focused on the purpose and character of the use, the nature of the protected work that has been copied, the amount and substantiality of the portion used, and the effect upon the work's potential market value. Although the measures tend to be subjective, fair use has generally been more likely when it is for reporting, criticism, commentary, teaching, scholarly or technical research; when only a small part of the overall work is copied, and when the use does not have a negative impact on the copied work's potential market value.

### **CONTINUING CONFLICTS**

The great many recent legislative efforts to toughen intellectual property protections in recent years have generated considerable criticism that corporate commercial interests are locking away too much of the world's creative capital. Although it was once relatively common for creative works to fall into the public domain over time, lengthened copyright terms and other protections have slowed that process. The argument goes that recent trends are undermining the traditional balance between encouraging creators to produce by protecting their work in limited ways and encouraging further creativity through sharing of common cultural stock. That is, rather than a tradition in which ideas are passed along freely enough so as to maintain their ongoing evolution through common access to them, society is shifting to a new system in which so much creative expression is owned and tightly controlled that most people can participate in the culture only through the permission of those who own it.

Owners of protected works, however, increasingly argue that the value of their intellectual property rights can be dramatically diminished by technologies that make possible virtually unlimited copying and distribution of their works without permission or compensation. The music and motion picture industry reports they have lost several billion dollars annually in recent years through unauthorized copying of their works (→ P2P Networking; Open Source). Estimates of worldwide piracy of all intellectual property have calculated losses many times larger than that. The music and motion picture industries have increasingly initiated aggressive legal actions against individuals engaged in, for example, unauthorized downloading of music and films via the Internet, as well as against the providers of software that enables such practices.

The law of intellectual property will continue to evolve in relation to technological developments, and conflicts will continue between those who seek to protect their rights

in such property and those who strive to maintain wide access to society's common heritage of culture and ideas.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Book ▶ Branding ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Copyright ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Open Source ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Piracy ▶ Trademarks in the Media

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## **Interaction**

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The term *interaction* is used in diverse social-scientific as well as natural-scientific fields of inquiry to identify a pattern of reciprocal influence or exchange among two or more entities. In physics, scientists have identified such fundamental mechanisms as gravity and magnetism by which particles exert mutual influence on one another. In communication studies and textbooks, perhaps surprisingly, the term is found rather

infrequently. While the core idea of interaction is very close to the concept of communication, a terminology of interaction tends to suggest a particular set of preferred epistemologies, methodologies, and analytical objects in communication research.

### INTERACTION AS EPISTEMOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

Interaction in communication scholarship most often signals a counterpoint to what is still widely perceived as a dominant one-way transmission model of communication effects, typically associated with such early researchers as → Harold D. Lasswell and Claude Shannon. In comparison, → cultural studies scholars, for instance, frequently emphasize the way in which audience members interact with – actively interpret and appropriate – the symbols and ideas that are prevalent in popular culture, rather than simply being influenced by them (→ Interactivity in Reception).

The understanding of interpretation as interaction within communication theory resonates with a much older recognition in philosophy, namely, that symbolic exchange among humans invariably involves a great deal of *ambiguity*. As John Locke put it in introducing a modern conception of human communication, “Words in their primary or immediate Signification, stand for nothing, but the Ideas in the Mind of him that uses them . . . Every man has so inviolable a Liberty, to make Words stand for what Ideas he pleases, that no one hath the Power to make others have the same Ideas in their minds that he has” (quoted in Peters 1999, 84). The analytical attention to ambiguity has been elaborated and systematized, first, in semiotic approaches to communication study (→ Semiotics), exploring the contextualized and fragile character of the semantic meaning that is established in the interaction between signs and interpreters (Leeds-Hurwitz 1993). Second, an interactive perspective is at the forefront of hermeneutic epistemology, which has been drawn into communication research from literary theory and criticism (→ Hermeneutics). Hermeneutic and interpretive terminologies have served to organize reviews of the field of communication theory by, for example, Anderson (1996).

The idea of interaction has also influenced communication research at a social-systemic level. Because interaction is critical to the frameworks of some of the most distinguished social and cultural theorists, especially those with an interest in the cultural reproduction of inequality, several of these have developed neologisms to capture the specific role of interaction processes in their theory-building. In each case, however, the motivation has been to reject a simple one-way causality and to acknowledge a multi-directional behavioral phenomenon. Anthony Giddens (1984), for one, with his influential notion of *structuration*, emphasized what he calls a duality of structure. Society and culture, accordingly, do not simplistically determine individual perception or behavior. But, if cultural traditions resonate with a freely initiated human agency, they function to reproduce the social structure, which survives and evolves in interaction with successive generations of human actors. Jensen (1995) summarized this complex idea in noting that human agency and social structure are enabling conditions for each other. Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu’s (1991) reflexive sociology extended the concept of *habitus* from anthropology to contemporary social theory in an effort to capture the subtle

interaction of social subjects' perceptions and actions in concrete contexts. And Niklas Luhmann (1995) adapted the concept of *autopoiesis* from cybernetics to suggest how the culturally significant selections that are made by individuals out of a wide variety of phenomena in their environment gives a particular social structure its defining character.

## INTERACTION AS DIALOGUE

When communication scholars do refer to interaction, it is frequently in the tradition studying → interpersonal communication, i.e., the micro-analysis of routinized, contextualized, and usually dyadic exchanges between individuals (→ Language and Social Interaction). Everett Rogers (1973) noted that there is a gaping cultural divide between interpersonal and mass communication scholarship, suggesting that perhaps both areas are less well off as a result.

In the tradition of interpersonal communication, researchers typically draw on models such as Giles et al.'s (1991) → communication accommodation theory, which tracks how individuals continuously adjust their speed and style of speaking as well as associated physical postures in conversation as a response to others. Also influential has been Burgoon et al.'s (1995) → interaction adaptation theory, which notes how a speaker may either mirror or compensate for the behaviors of other speakers.

In the 1950s, Gregory Bateson initiated what was to become known as the Palo Alto School, an unusually far-reaching, interdisciplinary group of medical and social researchers. The aim was to develop an elaborate theory of communication as interaction, drawing on cybernetics, systems theory, cultural anthropology, and psychiatry. Its influence is still felt in studies of the psychology of communication and in linguistics.

## SYMBOLIC INTERACTION

A specific position, in the study of communication as well as other research fields, is the symbolic interactionist perspective (→ Symbolic Interaction). The term was coined and popularized by sociologist Herbert Blumer as a tribute to the insights of his mentor, George Herbert Mead. Mead's *Mind, self, and society* (1934) was a highly influential, philosophically grounded book which inspired a generation of social scientists at the University of Chicago and elsewhere. But it was Blumer's essays on methods and his critique of deterministic behaviorism that concretely affected the practice of research. The perspective continues to inform a small but vigorous community of researchers with several journals, perhaps most closely associated with sociology, even if it carries a family resemblance with the understanding of communication as a multidirectional process.

Further, → Erving Goffman's dramaturgical sociology emphasized the micro-analysis of situated human interaction. Although Goffman did not himself use the term "symbolic interaction," his notion of frame analysis continues to influence students of communication who practice observational research of interaction in its social and cultural frames or contexts. Likewise, → ethnomethodology covers a related tradition of research that emphasizes the importance of examining how people rely on mundane "methods" to accomplish communication in everyday contexts.

## STATISTICAL INTERACTION

Statistical interaction refers to a set of research techniques that, except for the terminology of interaction, has been entirely independent of the theoretical and analytical traditions noted above. In fact, these techniques enter into the kind of quantitative analyses of communication effects that, from an interactionist perspective, would typically be characterized as insensitive to the complexity of how humans negotiate meaning with each other and within their environment. Still, statistical interaction may in time provide one methodological bridge between two currently separate scholarly worlds.

Statistical interaction refers to a phenomenon in which the value of a third variable appears to influence the relationship between two other variables. To exemplify, if it is evident that young children are likely to purchase a particular product in response to repeated exposure to an advertisement, while older children are not, then age would be identified as an “interactive variable” modifying the apparent impact of the advertisement.

A reliance on statistical interaction could be considered in the spirit of an interactionist perspective. Because more sophisticated structural models address issues of nonlinearity, they, in turn, become more contextually sensitive. Asking the research question – under what conditions do any observed patterns of correlation appear to hold – it becomes possible to specify more of the constituents of human communication, including those constituents of meaningful interaction that do not necessarily lend themselves to verbalization or explication by participants (→ Statistics, Explanatory).

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INTERACTIVITY

The systematic study of how humans interact through the exchange of symbols and reciprocal interpretation predates modern scholarship by centuries – from classical rhetoric to the modern conception of communication by Locke and others. Yet, as noted, the term *interaction* appears only irregularly in current communication scholarship. That seems likely to change in the decades ahead, as new interactive technologies of mediated communication, including the Internet, digital information retrieval and control systems, and video games, grow and spread (→ Human–Computer Interaction; Interactivity, Concept of). As the traditional divide between the micro-level analysis of dialogic human conversation and the macro-level study of mass-mediated technologies in the public sphere increasingly collapses or is reconfigured, interaction may serve as a common denominator for what people do with various types of media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Dialogic Perspectives ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Interaction Adaptation Theory ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ▶ Semiotics ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Structural Equation ▶ Symbolic Interaction

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## Interaction Adaptation Theory

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In interpersonal encounters, people are usually responsive and adaptive to others (→ Interpersonal Communication). Their gestures, voices, and words take on the quality of a dance as they mesh with one another to create a coordinated interaction. Interaction adaptation theory (IAT; Burgoon et al. 1995b) predicts and explains how, when, and why people adapt to another's verbal and nonverbal communication (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture) in similar or dissimilar ways. It focuses on how pairs of communicators – actors and their partners – coordinate their communication styles with one another in ongoing conversations.

### DEFINITIONS OF ADAPTATION AND RELATED PROCESSES

The process of interaction adaptation is complex, nonobvious, and at times invisible. It can take a variety of forms, some of which are defined in Table 1 (see also Bernieri & Rosenthal 1991).

Matching need not be adaptation if people are responding to the same external factor. For example, two people may both have the jitters because they are seated in a very cold room or are nervously waiting for medical test results. Reciprocity and compensation



**Table 1** Forms and examples of adaptation

Term	Definition	Example
Matching	Verbal or nonverbal behavioral similarity between two or more people	A and B both speak loudly
Mirroring	Visual nonverbal similarity between two or more people	A and B both sit with their arms crossed
Complementarity	One person's verbal or nonverbal behavior is the opposite of the other's	A speaks loudly and B speaks softly
Convergence	One person's verbal or nonverbal behavior becomes more like another's over time	A uses formal language and B uses informal language at time 1; A becomes increasingly informal by time 2
Reciprocity	Changes in one person's verbal and/or nonverbal behaviors are met with similar behavioral changes of comparable functional value by the other(s)	Person A makes affiliative overtures by increasing gaze; Person B reciprocates by leaning forward
Compensation	Changes by one person's verbal and/or nonverbal behaviors are met with opposite behaviors of comparable functional value by the other(s)	Person A makes affiliative overtures by increasing gaze; Person B compensates by leaning backward
Interactional coordination/synchrony	Degree to which behaviors in an interaction are nonrandom, patterned, or synchronized in both timing and form	Person A's and Person B's gestures beat in time with Person A's verbal-vocal stream
Nonaccommodation/nonmatching	A communicator makes no change in his or her communication behavior in response to changes by another	Person A shifts from dialect-free speech to using a southern accent; Person B maintains dialect-free speech

(→ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction), which are the two patterns of greatest interest to IAT, are adaptive in that one or both parties are directing their actions toward the other person and responsive to what the other is doing. Behaviors that are interchangeable or substitutable (e.g., smiling and warm voices to signal liking) can be used to reciprocate or compensate for one another as long as they are part of the same collection of behaviors that signal the same general meaning or serve a particular purpose, such as signaling attraction (→ Interpersonal Attraction) or expressing an emotional state (→ Emotion).

## FOUNDATIONS OF INTERACTION ADAPTATION THEORY

IAT draws upon assumptions about interpersonal communication from other theories (Burgoon & White 1997). It assumes that humans are biologically programmed to attune (→ Attention) to other members of the same species and that adaptation has survival value. Infants, for example, synchronize their own biological systems to a mother's heartbeat; courting couples exhibit intricate, hidden patterns of flirtatious actions and reactions to one another (Grammer et al. 1998). Communication is made possible by

humans calibrating their messages to one another, and human social organization is thought to depend on a “norm of reciprocity” whereby society’s members are expected to trade good for good and avoid doing harm in exchange for safety from harm. All of these perspectives point to humans adapting in reciprocal ways.

Other biopsychological perspectives lead to predictions that humans will sometimes respond with compensation rather than reciprocity. Like other species, humans are equipped with reflexive fight–flight and approach–avoidance tendencies that may lead to withdrawal in response to another’s approach. An aggressive move forward may be met, for instance, with a submissive step backward or a threat stare may be responded to with downcast eyes. As proposed by → communication accommodation theory, yet other compensatory actions may be deliberate and strategic rather than reactive. Responding to another’s casual language with hyper-formal language may be intended to create social distance. IAT predicts the conditions under which compensatory versus reciprocal responses are expected.

### COMPONENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF IAT

Adaptation patterns depend on three classes of communication-relevant factors that comprise what is called an actor’s *interaction position* (IP). These factors are an actor’s (1) requirements, (2) expectations, and (3) desires. *Requirements* are basic needs or drive states such as refuge, sustenance, comfort, privacy, and insulation from overstimulation. *Expectations* are the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns that people anticipate from others based on what is typical for a given context, setting, or social roles. General expectations (e.g., people should be generally pleasant and involved during social conversations) can be adjusted for knowledge of individual differences (e.g., knowing that a friend is usually shy and subdued). *Desires* refer to communicators’ own goals, plans, and personal preferences; they are the “valence” or evaluative component of IAT. They are what people want as opposed to what they expect. Job applicants may want a relaxed and light-hearted environment for a job interview yet expect it to be a formal and sober occasion.

An actor’s requirements, expectations, and desires – RED for short – together form the net index or quotient called the IP. The IP is a summary estimation of how an interactant (usually self) is projected to behave at any given point in an interaction. IAT spells out circumstances under which requirements supersede other factors, and expectations supersede desires. For example, if someone is extremely tired, the requirement for sleep will override that person’s ability to show expected levels of interest and energy. Or, if a situation calls for formal decorum, that expectation will override one’s desire to show exuberance. When there are no pressing requirements to distract someone, then expectations and desires prevail.

The IP is compared to the actual behavior (A) exhibited by the partner on some behavioral continuum such as conversational interest or pleasantness. Suppose that a behavioral continuum ranges from a low end of complete detachment and disinterest to high involvement and interest. IAT predicts that if the partner’s A exceeds the actor’s IP (i.e., is located closer to the positive end of the continuum), the actor will reciprocate the partner’s behavior. If the partner shows higher interest (A) than what the actor expects

(IP), the actor is predicted to reciprocate the partner's higher interest level. Conversely, if the IP exceeds the A – the actor expects moderately high interest but the partner is detached and disinterested, IAT predicts that the actor will compensate by displaying the behavior expected and desired of the partner (higher engagement). Another example: if the actor desires a pleasant conversation (IP) but the partner appears to be in a bad mood (A), the actor will attempt to change the partner's bad mood by becoming even more pleasant. If the partner responds in the desired fashion, both parties are predicted to converge toward the other's behavior and arrive at a point where the IP and A are essentially the same.

Where it is infeasible for actors to change their behavior, IAT predicts that actors will use nonaccommodation (maintaining their current behavior) as a way to resist the partner's undesired or unexpected demeanor. Over time, however, if compensation fails to bring about the desired level of behavior from the partner, IAT predicts actors will adjust their RED factors and with it, the IP. For example, a person should eventually lose the desire to have a pleasant interaction with someone who is unpleasant and should eventually reciprocate the partner's negativity. Thus, interactions are expected to be dynamic, cyclic, and evolving events with requirements, expectations, and desires both guiding and responding to what transpires in the interaction.

IAT also takes into account people's individual communication abilities and behavioral repertoires (→ Communicator Style; Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills) as well as environmental constraints that may limit the extent to which adaptation is possible. Stated formally, a person's degree of adaptation is predicted to be a function of (1) own current behavior, (2) own social skills and behavioral repertoire, (3) own previous behavior (which results in some consistency over time), (4) partner's current behavior, and (5) environmental constraints.

## TESTS OF IAT

Tests of IAT have taken a variety of forms and have considered adaptation in such varied circumstances as interactions among dating partners, deceptive interactions (→ Deception in Discourse; Deceptive Message Production), and simulated medical interviews. Floyd and Burgoon (1999) experimentally manipulated expectations to create different IPs related to liking and then had participants interact with a confederate who showed liking or disliking. Participants who expected, desired, and received liking displayed more liking toward their partner than those who expected, desired, and received disliking. Those whose IP exceeded the A – they expected and desired liking but received disliking, or expected and desired disliking but received liking – compensated relative to those for whom A equaled or exceeded the IP. Thus, results provided consistent and strong support for IAT.

Other experiments (e.g., Burgoon et al., 1995a, 1995b; Le Poire & Yoshimura (1999) have produced a preponderance of reciprocity but also compensation or nonaccommodation under conditions that could be interpreted as creating negative arousal and discomfort. For example, people interacting with an uninvolved, unpleasant partner showed an average dampening of their own involvement, i.e., they reciprocated, but over time they compensated by increasing their own involvement. Thus, pleasant and desirable behavior

generally begets responses in kind whereas unpleasant and undesirable behavior begets a mix of responses (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of).

Guerrero and Burgoon (1996) examined how people's various forms of attachment to caregivers or significant others affect adaptation patterns. The majority reciprocated their romantic partner's increased involvement and compensated for decreased involvement, but, as predicted, patterns varied according to attachment style. Those who were preoccupied with their romantic relationship conformed the most to these reciprocity and compensation patterns; those who had ambivalent feelings about their relationships were the most variable. Other individual differences and contexts for interaction have yet to be tested.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Deception in Discourse ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Emotion ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction

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# Interactional Sociolinguistics

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Interactional sociolinguistics is concerned with how speakers signal and interpret meaning in social interaction. The term and the perspective are grounded in the work of John Gumperz (1982a, 1982b), who blended insights and tools from anthropology, linguistics, pragmatics, and conversation analysis into an interpretive framework for analyzing such meanings. Interactional sociolinguistics attempts to bridge the gulf between empirical communicative forms – e.g., words, prosody, register shifts – and what speakers and listeners take themselves to be doing with these forms. Methodologically, it relies on close → discourse analysis of audio- or video-recorded interaction. Such methodology is central to uncovering meaning-making processes because many conventions for signaling and interpreting meaning in talk are fleeting, unconscious, and culturally variable.

## ORIGIN AND THEORY

Interactional sociolinguistics was developed in an anthropological context of cross-cultural comparison, and the seminal work that defined interactional sociolinguistics focused largely on contexts of intercultural miscommunication (→ Intercultural and Inter-group Communication; Comparative Research). It is in such contexts – where unconscious cultural expectations and practices are not shared – that the perspective has the most salient explanatory value. The perspective has been extended to cross-gender communication, most notably by Deborah Tannen (1990), and it has also been applied to the performance of social identity through talk. The framework can be applied to any interaction, however, and much of the empirical work that falls under the rubric “discourse analysis” in communication, linguistic anthropology, sociology, discursive psychology, and socially oriented linguistics owes a debt to this perspective.

The key *theoretical contribution* of interactional sociolinguistics is to illustrate a way in which social background knowledge is implicated in the signaling and interpreting of meaning. While ethnographers of communication have long emphasized that talk is contextually and culturally embedded, they have not specified how sociocultural and linguistic knowledge are systematically linked in the communication of meaning (→ Ethnography of Communication). Gumperz’s interactional sociolinguistics operationalizes a dimension of this relationship. His program shows that socio-cultural knowledge is not just beliefs and judgments external to interaction, but rather is embedded within the talk and behavior of interaction itself. At a theoretical level, this undermines a “conduit metaphor” or “information theory” notion of communication, in which context is presumed to be discrete and separate from communicative content.

Gumperz argued that we communicate rapidly shifting interpretive frames through conventionalized surface forms, which he calls *contextualization cues*. These contextualization cues – “constellations of surface features of message form” – are “the means by which speakers signal and listeners interpret what the activity is, how semantic content is

to be understood and *how* each sentence relates to what precedes or follows” (1982a, 131). These surface forms range across semiotic modes, including such varied phenomena as prosody, code and lexical choice, formulaic expressions, sequencing choices, and visual and gestural phenomena. They are united in a common, functional category by their use, commonly in constellations of multiple features. They cue interpretive frameworks in which to interpret the propositional content of utterances, which can otherwise be ambiguous.

An example can illustrate the dual functioning of the communicative stream as both referential content and a context in which to interpret that very referential content. In American English, the utterance “Nice tie!” can represent a sincere compliment, or it can represent a joking insult, i.e., that the speaker finds the tie somehow inappropriate. Contextualization cues within the performance of the utterance can suggest the frame in which the utterance is to be interpreted. A broad smile and marked intonation accompanying the words “Nice tie!” can serve as contextualization cues that channel inferential processes toward a particular interpretation. Contextualization cues do not *directly* index or refer to a specific interpretive frame, but rather serve as prods to inferential processes. A smile, for example, does not always indicate a joking insult frame for the talk that it accompanies. The functioning of a given cue is made even more ambiguous by the fact that such cues typically occur in constellations of features, e.g., a smile *and* a marked intonation contour, in which the constellation of features channels inferential processes differently than any one feature, in isolation, might.

The functioning of such cues also depends on the broader *socio-cultural context*. A “joking insult frame” is more likely to occur in some US settings than in others, e.g., in informal interaction between male friends. Inferring a “joking insult” meaning of the utterance “Nice tie!” thus involves interpreting both the external, socio-cultural context of the interaction and the moment-to-moment interpretive contexts created within the stream of communicative behavior itself. Such cues and inferential patterns are acquired through prolonged and intensive face-to-face interaction in particular cultural settings, typically as part of one’s primary language socialization. Contextualization conventions vary across cultures and sub-cultures, just as languages and accents vary across social groupings. They thus form part of one’s socio-cultural background, just as other cultural practices and beliefs do.

## CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

Cultural differences in contextualization conventions can undermine intergroup communication insidiously because individuals tend to be unconscious of this dimension of interaction. Contextualization cues have several characteristics that make them difficult to recognize. They tend to be scalar, i.e., they vary along a continuum, such as pitch, rather than existing as discrete forms, such as individual lexical items. Most such cues are nonreferential, i.e., they carry no direct propositional information, but rather serve meta-communicative framing functions. Finally, their meanings are a function of the context of their use, so that individual cues cannot be analyzed in isolation from their use or assigned a single, stable function or meaning. It is thus very difficult for individuals to recognize these cues or the roles that they are playing in communication. While individuals from different

cultures may well be aware of speaking different languages or dressing differently, they are seldom aware of the ways in which slight differences in contextualization conventions can create interactional difficulties.

Gumperz (1982a, 173) reports, e.g., how intonation in uttering a single word led to misunderstandings that damaged relations between South Asian immigrant cafeteria workers and Anglo British workers at a British airport. When an Anglo British cafeteria server in this workplace offered gravy to a person in line, she would say “Gravy?” with a rising intonation contour. Anglo British workers used this prosodic information to interpret the utterance as an offer or question: “Would you like gravy?” In contrast, when recently-immigrated South Asian cafeteria workers asked employees if they wanted gravy, they said “Gravy” with falling intonation. Anglo British workers interpreted the falling intonation as contextualizing a statement (akin to “This is gravy – take it or leave it”), which they found redundant and rude. Neither Anglo British nor South Asian workers were able to articulate the role that intonation played in their problematic interactions until it was pointed out by outside trainers. Thus, while two groups may “speak the same language,” i.e., share syntax, phonology, and vocabulary, they may differ in the ways they meta-communicatively define the moment-to-moment activities in which they are engaging.

Because socio-cultural differences in contextualization conventions are unconscious, they are not a readily available explanation to participants for breakdowns in communication or stilted, asynchronous interactions. When a person recognizes an apparent communicative breakdown or disjuncture in interaction, a psychological idiom is readily available to explain an interlocutor’s behavior, i.e., the other’s behavior can be accounted for in terms of rudeness, insensitivity, selfishness, or some other personality trait. When such problematic interactions come to be associated with interaction across ethnic or cultural lines, it can result in pejorative stereotyping of entire groups and the reinforcement of intergroup boundaries.

## METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

Isolating and defining the functions of contextualization cues requires the use of electronic recordings and systematic elicitation techniques to recover native speakers’ perceptual and inferential processes. In the example of “Nice tie!,” native consultants can be asked such questions as: “How do you know that this was meant as a joking insult rather than a compliment? What was it about the way that Speaker A said it that makes you think it is an insult? Can you say it to me in a way that would be an insult and then say it to me in a way that would be a compliment?” Such techniques allow one to link specific surface forms of discourse (prosodic patterns, code switches, visual phenomena, etc.) to communicative effects and interpretive patterns. When consultants from a given social group provide consistent interpretations of a communicative sequence and consistently draw attention to the same empirical communicative features as bases for that interpretation, it provides evidence for socio-culturally specific contextualization conventions.

The tools, methods, and implicit theory of interactional sociolinguistics are eclectic. It shares with → conversation analysis an insistence on careful, line-by-line analysis of recorded, naturally occurring talk, but it diverges from conversation analysis in exploring

inferential processes and social and cultural worlds outside of that talk. With anthropology it shares a focus on cultural variation and the meanings that participants themselves attribute to their lives and actions. From philosophy of language and linguistics it borrows such notions as implicature and speech acts, but it attends to real people in their actual, messy interactions. With research in communication, it shares an interest in actors' apparent strategies and intended meanings in talk, and it overlaps with strands in many of these disciplines that attend to communicative frames and meta-discursivity in talk and interaction.

Some scholars have criticized interactional sociolinguistic accounts of intercultural miscommunication, arguing that apparent miscommunication is more a function of social and political inequality than of divergent patterns for linking surface communicative forms and meanings. Problematic interactions are thus seen not as "misunderstandings," but as a form of communication that highlights ongoing differences in perspective and socio-political interests. Many studies of intercultural miscommunication *have* failed to attend to the role of inequality in such interactions. This is not a shortcoming in the perspective of interactional sociolinguistics per se, but a limitation of such studies themselves. Interactional sociolinguistics is first and foremost a method for analyzing how social knowledge and linguistic knowledge intersect in creating meaning in talk. Such a method can be used to show how inequality and conflicting interests are negotiated in talk just as it can be used to show how cultural and linguistic differences can play out in such interaction.

Interactional sociolinguistics, with its notions of contextualization cues and conversational inferencing, provides a powerful framework for examining meaning-making at the intersection of talk and culture. Like other perspectives, such as indexicality, that focus on the intersection of talk, culture, and meaning, interactional sociolinguistics is fundamentally interpretive, rather than predictive. With its eclectic toolbox and unabashedly functional orientation, interactional sociolinguistics lacks the theoretical austerity of many approaches to interaction and meaning. However, it makes up for this lack of theoretical elegance with its usefulness and its insights into the social and cultural nature of communicative action. It helps to account for how different dimensions of communicative behavior are related, e.g., prosody and words, and to explain the achievement, or lack of achievement, of intersubjective understanding in particular instances of interaction.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Comparative Research ► Conversation Analysis ► Ethnography of Communication ► Intercultural and Inter-group Communication ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Speech Codes Theory

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## Interactivity, Concept of

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Interactivity is a relatively new, evolving, and still elusive concept in the study of communication, most frequently associated with new digital media technologies (→ Digital Media, History of). The concept's elusiveness may result from the common use of the term to identify a loosely defined bundle of attributes rather than a single attribute or phenomenon. At its core, interactivity refers to the phenomenon of mutual adaptation, usually between a communication medium such as the Internet or a video game and a human user of that medium.

A seminal, if somewhat *technical, definition* of interactivity was offered by Rafaeli (1988, 111): "Formally stated, interactivity is an expression of the extent that in a given series of communication exchanges, any third (or later) transmission (or message) is related to the degree to which previous exchanges referred to even earlier transmissions." The key element is *responsiveness* – what one says or does depends on another – a notion clearly rooted in human face-to-face conversation. However, given the rich possibilities of human-machine communication, Rafaeli warned that a model narrowly based on dyadic human conversation would be too simplistic and reductive. Interactivity, to Rafaeli, is a quintessential concept regarding the nature of communication.

In his original account of interactivity, Rafaeli considered the term "intuitively appealing but underdefined." Similarly, Jensen (1998) found it "frequently used but seldom understood" and "outrageously complex," while Sundar (2004) characterized it as "much touted but undertheorized." In a review of the literature, Bucy (2004, 373) concluded that "interactivity has been identified as a core concept of new media, yet despite nearly three decades of study and analysis, we scarcely know what interactivity is, let alone what it does, and have scant insight into the conditions in which interactive processes are likely to be consequential for members of a social system."

### KEY CRITERIA OF INTERACTIVITY

From more than a dozen published typologies of interactivity, one can derive four common themes, even as terminologies vary. The first and perhaps most straightforward criterion is the *directionality* of communication. Throughout most of the late agricultural

and industrialized eras, mass communication was a distinctly one-way process with centralized and usually elite-dominated publishing and later broadcasting from the few to the many. Newspapers, for example, will publish occasional letters from readers, but the limited technology and large number of readers make feedback from audience to source extremely constrained (→ Newspaper, History of). Broadcast spectrum scarcity imposed even more severe constraints on the number of broadcasters through government licensing. Citizens' Band and amateur radio represented fascinating, but marginal, exceptions to the one-way flow (→ Radio: Social History). Advanced digital systems and the Internet changed these conditions fundamentally, as every audience member was empowered to send as well as receive data, text, audio, and video (→ Internet). The propensity for average users to download more than they upload generally is the result of individuals' limited cognitive and social resources, rather than an outcome of the technology itself.

The second criterion is *selectivity* – the breadth of choice that is available to the user in terms of both types and formats of information and entertainment. Selectivity depends on the quantity of material on offer, but also on the quality of its structure and, hence, the ease with which it can be accessed.

The third criterion is *responsiveness* – the rapidity with which and extent to which a medium responds to user input. Some analysts emphasize the speed of response, notably with video games. Others focus on the frequency or flexibility of an interaction, i.e., the interruptibility of a given stream of communication content.

The fourth criterion is *awareness*, defined as the degree of reciprocal awareness of system states and user reactions. As specified by Rafaeli (1988), later interactions of an exchange can reflect an awareness of earlier ones, as typified by human conversation. Heeter labeled this phenomenon self-monitoring (1989). Describing awareness as “actions and reactions with an understanding of context and meaning,” van Dijk (1999) noted that such a genuinely reciprocal awareness on behalf of both user and system is still relatively rare at the current level of technology.

## INTERACTIVITY, HUMAN INTERACTION, AND TEXTUAL INFORMATION

Most analysts acknowledge that the evolving interactive media are implicitly and often explicitly modeled on human social interaction. The *Turing test of machine intelligence* from 1950, for example, proposed to determine if a human conversing with a remote computer via a keyboard could determine whether the answering entity was another human being at a keyboard. If the questioner cannot determine this, the machine could be said to have passed the test of having “human intelligence.” In the following decades, a variety of so-called chatterbot programs, notably Weizenbaum's Eliza program, proved successful in posing as human communicators (→ Avatars and Agents). Reeves and Nass (1996), more recently, documented experimentally people's propensity to assign human qualities to media technologies in the course of interaction (→ Media Equation Theory). And computer games now routinely permit players to select human traits such as strength, bravery, and agility in building identities for themselves as well as their on-screen allies or adversaries (→ Video Games).

Also, *one-directional mass communication*, for example, broadcast television, can produce an experience of interacting with other humans on-screen. In the phenomenon

of parasocial interaction, audience members may derive comfort and pleasure from the sense of having familiarity or even a personal relationship with fictional characters and media celebrities (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). First identified in 1950s research, such mediated “intimacy at a distance” has remained a staple of communication studies.

Even the process of *reading traditional texts* might be understood as active human communication, paralleling human conversation and anticipating human–computer interactivity (→ Interactivity in Reception). Hermeneutic and semiotic traditions have drawn attention to the subtleties of interpretation and anticipation as a reader progresses through the elements of a narrative. Reading is not a one-way flow even if there is no explicit feedback loop from reader to author. The conception of interactivity as an entirely new phenomenon in computer media, thus, may reflect an incomplete understanding of how users interact dynamically with both old and new media.

### **TOWARD AN OPERATIONALIZATION OF INTERACTIVITY**

Researchers have debated whether interactivity is best studied as a property of a media system or, instead, as a human user’s psychological perception of the responsiveness of the medium. Bucy (2004), among others, made the case that interactivity should be conceptualized exclusively as a *perceptual variable*, arguing that the perceived reality of participating is more important than the technical reality of users’ actual input or control: “Routinizing interactivity by designating it as a perceptual variable (albeit with social, behavioral and technological correlates) should encourage the concept’s theoretical development by enabling empirical measurement through attitudinal and emotional scales and qualitative elaboration through focus groups research and open-ended questions, allowing systematic knowledge about interactivity to accumulate” (Bucy 2004, 377). Sundar (2004) and others, in contrast, have insisted that the perceptual variable approach is a tactical mistake. They argue that the vagaries of psychological perception and misperception will muddy the conceptual waters, and that it is at least necessary analytically to separate user inclinations and skills from the technical capacities of systems.

Perhaps in time communication research will acknowledge several components of interactivity in a multilayered model: (1) the technical affordance of interactivity (or components thereof), (2) the user’s perception of an interactive potential, (3) the actual use of the affordance, and (4) behavioral outcomes resulting from either perception or use. The potential importance of examining these levels independently was suggested by a study that revealed, surprisingly, no correlation between the affordance and perception of interactivity (McMillan 2002).

### **THE DESIGN AND EFFECTS OF INTERACTIVITY**

The literature on interactivity has been more utopian than dystopian, tending to celebrate the benefits of presumed higher levels of attention, engagement, learning, and satisfaction. In historical perspective, however, this might be akin to arguing that if there are more books in libraries, the populace will be better informed. The interactive affordances of new media systems may indeed contribute significantly to positive outcomes, but only under certain conditions of expectation and motivation, with appropriate designs, and

for certain types of users. Overly complex designs and overwhelming choice opportunities generally have proven frustrating. Some forms of narrative interactivity show themselves to be engaging and enjoyable to users with high cognitive capacities, but not to those with lower capacities (Vorderer et al. 2001).

Future research might even establish a curvilinear pattern identifying an optimum level of interactive affordances under specified conditions for specified types of users (Bucy 2004). In order to understand interactivity in practice, it is important to study the motivations of and constraints on information providers as well. In the socially important area of political communication, Stromer-Galley (2000) found that not only did the campaign staffs managing political candidates' websites have limited resources to respond to every query, but they also expressed significant ambivalence concerning how much information might be in the candidate's best interest to convey.

Increasingly, what was once a narrow technical sub-field of computer science – → human–computer interaction addressing the design of graphical and textual interfaces – has come to draw from and contribute to the understanding of human communication more broadly defined. The practical need to improve interface designs in new media provides problems, funding, and intellectual energy to the broader practice of communication research. It is widely recognized that a better general understanding of human attention, perception, and memory – as they affect, for instance, interactivity – is required for the field to progress (Nardi 1995).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affective Disposition Theories ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Interaction ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Internet ▶ Media Equation Theory ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Technologically Mediated Discourse ▶ Video Games

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# Interactivity in Reception

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*Interactivity* is regarded as one of the most critical concepts in new media theories due to the increasing popularity of interactive media such as the → Internet, computer games, and computer-mediated communication (CMC) media (→ Video Games; Human-Computer Interaction). Despite the explosion of theoretical discussions on the concept of interactivity, a precise explication of the concept is yet to be accomplished. As a result, this concept often implies different things to different people in different contexts.

## PREVIOUS DEFINITIONS

Three main views of interactivity – technology-oriented, communication-setting-oriented, and individual-oriented views – can be categorized from the previous literature. First, *technology-oriented* views regard interactivity as a characteristic of new technologies (usually containing a computer as a component) that makes an individual's participation in a communication setting possible and efficient. For example, Steuer (1992, 84) defines interactivity as “the extent to which users can participate in modifying the form and content of a mediated environment in real time,” and argues that interactivity is a stimulus-driven variable determined by three technological structures of the medium: speed (the rate at which input can be assimilated into the mediated environment), range (the number of possibilities for action at any given time); and mapping (the ability of a system to map its controls to changes in the mediated environment in a natural and

predictable manner). Similarly, Heeter (1989) proposes six dimensions of the technological structure of interactive media determining the level of interactivity: complexity of choice available; effort users must exert; responsiveness to the user; monitoring information use; ease of adding information; and facilitation of interpersonal communication. Although technology-oriented approaches have been most popular in academic discussions, they have inherent problems in that even the same medium can be considered as having a different degree of interactivity according to the way it is actually used by an individual. For example, if a user has competence in using every command of a computer game, the user may feel much more interactivity in playing the game than a novice user. Therefore, the notion of interactivity as a characteristic of a particular medium is null in that a medium itself cannot have a fixed degree of interactivity.

Second, *communication-setting-oriented* views consider interactivity as a process-related characteristic of a communication setting. Rafaeli (1988, 111) defines interactivity as “an expression of the extent that in a given series of communication exchanges, any third (or later) transmission (or message) is related to the degree to which previous exchanges referred to even earlier transmissions.” Focusing on the diverse content styles of communicated messages, Chaffee and his colleagues (1985) propose seven dimensions of interactivity according to which the level of interactivity varies: acknowledgment (simple acknowledging of previous message); monitoring (keeping track of all previous messages); processing (paraphrasing and summarizing); interpreting; evaluating; challenging (response in opposition to previous messages, or suggesting alternatives); and eliciting general affect (moving beyond the specific topics and giving a general statement). Communication-setting-oriented definitions, which emphasize mutual exchanges of information, also contain problems in that they make unrealistic assumptions that every participant of a communication setting wants the same level of information exchange and that the actual exchange of information is the first condition for interactivity. However, a symmetrical flow of information is rare and interactivity can occur without the actual exchange of information. For example, in a massive multi-player game, a participant may feel a high level of interactivity by merely observing and reading other players’ behaviors and text messages, even when she or he is not actively participating in virtual social interaction. Most fundamentally, these definitions cannot explain the fact that interacting participants in the same communication setting could have different levels of interactivity. That is, these definitions cannot explain why players of the same computer game can feel different levels of interactivity even when they are part of the same communication setting.

Finally, *individual-oriented* views define interactivity from a technology user’s perspective. Emphasizing individual differences in communication needs, Ha and James (1998, 461) define interactivity as “the extent to which the communicator and the audience respond to, or are willing to facilitate, each other’s communication needs,” and propose five dimensions of interactivity according to five fundamental communication needs: playfulness (entertainment experience); choice (availability of choice and freedom from restrictions); connectedness (feeling of connection to the world); information collection (data gathering); and reciprocal communication (two-way communication). This shift of attention from technology to individual users opens a space in which to generate theories that can cut across different technologies. Existing individual-oriented

views of interactivity, however, cannot be successfully applied to human–machine (or human–computer) interaction settings, because they were made in the context of human-to-human communication settings (i.e., mediated interpersonal communications) in which at least two interacting humans are required. Therefore, a possible human–machine interaction, such as that between a game player and an autonomous software agent in a game world, cannot be easily explained by existing individual-oriented definitions.

### CONCEPT EXPLICATION

In order to solve the various problems of the early definitions, interactivity should be regarded as a perceived characteristic of a communication act, which varies according to a communicating actor's perception. That is, interactivity is not just a given characteristic of a particular medium or a communication setting, but a constructed characteristic of a communication act according to an individual's perception (Vorderer 2000).

Interactivity has two Latin roots – “*inter*,” which broadly means “between or among” and “mutual or reciprocal,” and “*act*,” which means “do.” Together, “interact” means to act upon each other and to have → reciprocal effects or influences. Therefore, interactivity can mean “the state of acting upon each other and having reciprocal effect or influence.” This nominal definition makes it clear that interactivity requires two fundamental conditions: at least two interacting partners (usually two persons, or in the case of human–machine interaction, a person and an artifact), and reciprocal effects of an interacting participant's act on the communication process. Based on the two fundamental conditions raised above, the conceptual meaning of interactivity can be defined as a perceived degree to which a person in a communication process with at least one more interacting partners can bring a reciprocal effect to other participants of the communication process by turn-taking, feedback, and choice behaviors (Lee et al. 2006).

The term “perceived” means that the interactivity defined here is more concerned with the individual's subjective perception than with objective technology characteristics. “Communication process” means a type of communication act such as interpersonal conversation, TV watching, playing computer games, using a computer, and so forth. “Interacting partner” can be a person or an artifact such as an avatar, a software agent, or a robot. “Reciprocal effect” means that an act by an interacting partner should bring a result in the form of visible changes to the acts of other interacting partners in that communication process. “Turn-taking” means the change of role between and among interacting partners. It is different from feedback in that it is over a longer time period and requires interacting partners to formally take the other's role. “Feedback” means interacting partners' reactions to the other interacting partners' messages or behaviors. “Choice” means interacting partners' selection from various sets of available options or possibilities provided by technologies.

This definition of interactivity can be applied to broad areas of communication settings, including interpersonal, mediated, and even human–machine interaction situations. It assumes that the level of interactivity varies quantitatively across individuals and each given communication process. Therefore, using the same technology or being in the same communication setting does not guarantee the same level of interactivity. For instance, computer game players can feel different levels of interactivity depending on their experience

and behaviors during the game. The level of interactivity becomes higher as players acquire more confidence about the process through their own efforts and experiences.

## MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS

Reflecting the three approaches to concept explication, there have been three major methods of concept measurement (Kioussis 2002). Measurements based on *technology-oriented* views try to objectively examine the technological properties of a system (or a medium) on the basis of key technological dimensions such as speed, range, mapping, modality, and usability or easiness of the system. Studies in this tradition tend to manipulate the objective level of interactivity by changing the technological features of a system (e.g., the length of delay in feedback, the number of available channels for interpersonal communication, the number of options available for maneuvering a virtual world). Measurements based on *communication-setting-oriented* views focus on the flow and changes of communicated messages, and examine processes of joint actions between and among interacting partners. For example, through content analyses (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), researchers identify the level of spontaneity, patterns of turn-taking, degree of reflection on prior messages in overall messages, level of agreement among interacting partners, and pattern of changes in message content (Rafaeli & Sudweeks 1997). The third set of measurements emphasizes *user experience*, and tries to measure perceived level of interactivity. Through → interview and questionnaire, researchers ask how users evaluate the interactivity of a particular communication system or a → medium. Usually, items for measuring perceived interactivity are about the degree of similarity between nonmediated and mediated interaction, level of psychological proximity among interacting partners, and subjective evaluations of a system's interactive features (e.g., speed, range, and mapping of the system) and usability. In some cases, the perceived level of interactivity can be objectively and indirectly measured by physiological symptoms of psychological involvement such as heart rate, skin conductance, and blood pressure. Extra caution should be observed in interpreting physiological measures because they are only proxy (→ Physiological Measurement).

Prior studies indicate three general effects of interactivity: attitudinal, cognitive, and behavioral (Sundar 2004; → Attitudes; Cognition). The attitudinal effects of interactivity are more feelings of → presence, social responses to systems or media (→ Media Equation Theory), more intense involvement in communication process and message, and positive attitudes toward advertised products (→ Advertising) and political candidates (→ Election Campaign Communication). Some findings on threshold effects of interactivity, however, suggest that the relationship between the level of interactivity and positive attitudes toward advertised products or political candidates might not be linear (Sundar et al. 2003). Cognitive effects are more attention to and memory of communication content, enhanced cognitive processing of messages, and more learning in an educational context (→ Educational Communication; Learning and Communication). Too much interactivity, however, can cause cognitive overload and disorientation, and eventually hinders learning (Ariely 2000). The behavioral effects of interactivity are heightened interactions among interacting partners, physiological excitation, elimination of unnecessary communication caused by misunderstanding, and even more buying in commercial websites.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cognition ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative  
 ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Human–  
 Computer Interaction ▶ Internet ▶ Interview ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Media  
 ▶ Media Equation Theory ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Presence ▶ Reciprocal  
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## **Inter-American Court of Human Rights**

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The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, established by the → American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), is the leading regional human rights court in the Americas. The Court consists of seven judges, elected by secret ballot by member states of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Cases may be referred to the Court only by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights or a member state and only where the state in question has voluntarily

submitted itself to the Court's jurisdiction. Cases may be contentious individual or group complaints of a violation of a right, complaints by a state that another state has violated a right, or a request by a state for an interpretation by the Court of the ACHR, outside of the context of a contentious dispute (known as *advisory opinions*). Most contentious individual cases are referred to the Court by the Commission, which may do so only after it has itself received and processed an individual or group complaint and the state in question has not taken the necessary steps to remedy the violation.

Where it finds a violation, the Court may order such measures as are necessary to restore respect for human rights, and may also order compensation to be paid to the victim. The decisions of the Court are legally binding and, under the ACHR, states formally undertake to comply with them, although there is little the Court can do if states refuse to comply. For the most part, however, states do respect the decisions of the Court.

The ACHR provides, among other things, a very strong guarantee for freedom of expression. The Court has issued a number of significant rulings in freedom of expression cases. Perhaps the most significant case decided by the Court, and also one of its earliest, was an advisory opinion referred to it by Costa Rica to determine whether a law requiring journalists to be licensed was compatible with the guarantee of freedom of expression. This case has been referred to frequently in the Court's later jurisprudence.

In its 1985 decision, the Court made a number of important general observations about the ACHR guarantee of freedom of expression. It described freedom of expression as a "cornerstone" of democracy. It also held that the right has a dual nature, protecting not only the right of individuals to express themselves, signaled by the term "impart" in the guarantee, but also the right of others to receive information and ideas, signaled by the term "seek, and receive." Specifically, the Court stated: "Its second aspect, on the other hand, implies a collective right to receive any information whatsoever and to have access to the thoughts expressed by others." The Court also noted the particular importance of the mass media in making "freedom of expression a reality" and of the need for the media to be pluralistic to achieve this goal.

The Court rejected claims by the government that the licensing of journalists was necessary for the protection of public order and to maintain professional standards, holding instead that respect for freedom of expression was the best guarantor of public order. Importantly, the Court held that the practice of journalism is the "primary and principal manifestation of freedom of expression" and that, as such, it could not be treated in the same way as other professions. The licensing system represented a serious limitation on freedom of expression that could not be justified by reference to an overriding public or private interest.

In another important case, decided in 2001, the Court provided a strong interpretation of the ACHR's rule against prior censorship, holding that the refusal of the authorities to permit the airing of a movie – *The Last Temptation of Christ* – on religious grounds was a form of prior censorship and hence a breach of the right to freedom of expression. Although limited prior censorship to protect children was permitted under the ACHR, the religious grounds invoked by the authorities in this case did not bring it within the scope of that permission.

In two cases decided in 2004, the Court took a strong stand against criminal defamation laws, while stopping short of ruling outright that they breach the right to

freedom of expression. In both cases, the Court held that the statements on which the national criminal defamation convictions were based related to matters of public interest. These decisions make it clear that, in the case of such statements, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to justify a criminal defamation conviction. In the first case, the Court also made it clear that a journalist should not be expected to prove the truth of statements that were originally reported in respected foreign newspapers.

Finally, in a seminal case decided late in 2006, the Court held that the right to freedom of expression as guaranteed under the ACHR includes a right of everyone to access to information held by public bodies. This decision represents a significant breakthrough in this area, going beyond what has been decided by other international courts. In its decision, the Court noted the close relationship between access to information and expression, holding that both are essential for effective participation in governance. Restrictions on access to information may be imposed, subject to the same conditions as apply to restrictions on imparting information, and the state bears the burden of showing that any such restrictions are legitimate.

SEE ALSO: ► American Convention on Human Rights ► Censorship ► Communication Law and Policy: South America

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# Intercultural Communication in Health-Care

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In the twenty-first century mankind lives in a more multicultural environment than ever before. For many health practitioners this means they have to interact with people from different cultures. Good communication is vital to effective health-care, so communication problems in intercultural encounters have the potential to lead to patient misdiagnosis. In such encounters health practitioners not only face the natural barriers of communicating with patients who may be unfamiliar with the health practitioners' language, but they may face an extra challenge when patients have culturally different health belief systems (→ Health Communication; Doctor–Patient Talk).

Researchers have noted that much research on health-care communication has been atheoretical (e.g., Thompson 2003). Research into intercultural communication and health-care is no exception. Thus, one approach adopted by researchers of intercultural communication and health-care is to focus on the development of skills. When health-care professionals achieve good communication skills and intercultural understanding, *intercultural communication competence* (ICC) follows. The underlying assumption of ICC is that communication predominantly occurs at the interpersonal level and through training individuals gain knowledge and appreciation of other cultures, and *cultural sensitivity* develops (→ Intercultural Communication Training). A second approach, which is less commonly adopted in health-care, takes as its starting point the notion that intercultural communication is essentially intergroup rather than interpersonal; this tradition comes from a socio-psychological perspective and is referred to as *intergroup communication* (→ Intergroup Contact and Communication).

## INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

ICC researchers see a need for individuals to move beyond *ethnocentrism* in order to improve their intercultural communication (for a discussion, see Kreps & Kunimoto 1994). Through training, health professionals can acquire the appropriate intercultural communication skills to achieve effective patient interactions regardless of cultural backgrounds.

Researchers have identified the key cultural differences that health practitioners need to take into account when treating patients from cultures other than their own (Kleinman 1980; Brislin 1993; Kreps & Kunimoto 1994; Davis 2006). Health providers need to be cognizant of both *culture-general* and *culture-specific* concepts. While there may be general health expectations across populations regardless of nationality (e.g., the ability for individuals to perform their day-to-day tasks), different cultures attach different meanings to these common concepts. In their concept of “health,” for example, Brislin noted that western cultures may be more concerned with the absence of bacteria or viruses while eastern cultures may concentrate on harmony and balance – each culture believing that

the opposite of their definition brings ill health. Such differences may lead to health practitioners' best practice recommendations being resisted or misunderstood by patients. Related to cultural-specific beliefs is the way that people of different cultures may show different symptoms for the same illness. Health providers need an understanding of how *somatization* manifests in different cultures (Kreps & Kunimoto 1994; Davis 2006).

Relatedly, Davis (2006) discusses the implications of *collectivist* and *individualistic* cultures. Such cultures have respectively high and low context styles of communication. Davis notes that because most health professionals are trained in the western individualistic tradition, they need to be aware of the importance that many eastern collectivist cultures place on developing a trusting relationship over time. Modern curricula now teach health practitioners to consider issues such as those raised above (e.g., Carrillo et al. 1999).

### INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION

This second tradition focuses on each group's socio-historical context and the relationships that exist between groups. Researchers from this tradition argue that skills training without an understanding of the dynamics that underpin *intergroup communication* is insufficient.

Intercultural communication can refer not only to interactions between individuals from different nations and ethnic groups but also between people who come to the interaction from a different cultural experience (Kreps & Kunimoto 1994; Gudykunst & Mody 2002). In the health context, "intercultural" may thus refer to communication between individuals from different social groups (e.g., nurse, physician, physiotherapist, and patient) who interact with each other from different "role" experiences (→ Disability and Communication; Social Stereotyping and Communication).

Communication accommodation theory (CAT) is a theory of communication that can be applied to intercultural communication in health-care (→ Communication Accommodation Theory; Intergroup Accommodative Processes). In CAT, interactions between health providers from different social groups, or between health providers and their patients, are understood as intergroup encounters that occur at the interpersonal level. The theory makes explicit how constructs such as health professionals' understanding of their professional role, status, and cultural values influence their interactions with other health professionals, who have their own values. Similarly, patients' previous positive or negative health experiences will serve to shape their perceptions of interactions with health professionals. Thus, using CAT, health communication researchers take account of how interactions are driven by interactants' motivations and cognitions, which, if not acknowledged, can undermine an approach that focuses only on skills training. CAT provides a model of communication that explains and predicts effective communication both between health professionals and between patients and health professionals.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Culture and Health Communication ► Disability and Communication ► Doctor–Patient Talk ► Health Communication ► Intercultural Communication Training ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Intergroup Contact and Communication ► Social Stereotyping and Communication

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# **Intercultural Communication Training**

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Major social changes of the twentieth century include international air travel, global business expansion, increased migration across national boundaries, and recognition of the civil rights of various minority groups. This means that individuals will frequently come into contact with people from other nations and from other cultural groups within a large and diverse nation such as the United States or Canada. When people consciously prepare for such contact, they may benefit from intercultural communication training programs.

Intercultural training programs are planned efforts that have the goal of preparing people to interact effectively with culturally different others (Brislin & Yoshida 1994; Bhawuk 2001; Landis et al. 2004). *Programs are:* budgeted, staffed by experts, sensitive to the needs and prior experiences of participants, scheduled for a time and place, and evaluated to determine if program goals have been met. Planned programs can be contrasted with an alternative, unfortunately still in existence. This is the “sink or swim” approach, where people are simply given international assignments, presented with an airplane ticket, and then have to survive in another country on their own.

There are four goals in an intercultural communication training program. The same goals apply to international assignments (e.g., overseas business in Japan) and to intercultural assignments within a large country (e.g., teachers assigned to communities with large numbers of Spanish speakers in the United States). For convenience only, examples will be drawn from international assignments and people on such assignments will be referred to as “sojourners.” The first goal is that people *enjoy and benefit* from their experiences with people from other cultures (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication). They can increase their chances of doing this if they understand culture, cultural differences, and culturally guided behaviors (Hofstede 2001). The second goal is that these positive

feelings be *reciprocated by host nationals* with whom sojourners work. Sojourners, then, must learn to be sensitive to the reactions of others and to learn culturally appropriate behaviors that allow smooth interactions with hosts (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture).

The third goal is that sojourners be able to *manage the stress* that is inherent in overseas assignments. Most often called “culture shock” when applied to extensive intercultural interactions, stress accumulates due to the many unfamiliar behaviors sojourners must learn in a very short time. Overseas businesspeople, for example, must adjust their leadership style, make sure their family is provided for, fit their work into organizational goals, and so forth. These and other tasks become overwhelming, leading to the frustration and helplessness that are the hallmarks of culture shock.

The fourth goal of training is that people *accomplish the tasks* called for in their work assignments. International students should complete their degree work on schedule, diplomats should make progress on intergovernmental treaties, and businesspeople should establish joint trade agreements.

*Five basic training methods* have received extensive attention (Brislin & Yoshida 1994; Bhawuk 2001). Most actual programs use a combination of the five approaches. The first approach is called *cognitive*, and it refers to the formal presentation of information that should be useful in assisting sojourners with their adjustment (→ Cognition). International students in the United States, for example, should be told that they will be expected to “speak up” in class and especially in seminars, and that silent note taking will not insure success. The second approach, *attribution*, refers to conclusions that people in different cultures make about similar behaviors. Using the same example of international students, American professors often view silent note takers as unimaginative. The students might view their own behavior as showing respect for the professor’s greater wisdom.

The third approach, *behavioral*, starts with the premise that people seek out rewards and avoid punishments. They are asked to list behaviors they find rewarding in their own culture and also to list behaviors they avoid. Then, with the help of the training staff, they are encouraged to think through how they can carry out and avoid the behaviors, as appropriate, in the culture to which they are assigned. Culturally specific information can be integrated. People might want to make new friends quickly, but the training staff can alert them to the fact that, in many countries, relationships develop slowly and that people should be patient and wait for overtures from the host nationals. The fourth approach is *role-playing*, where people act out short scenes that are likely to occur on their actual assignments. Some scenes can be quite structured, as with typical patterns of exchanging business cards in Japan or Korea. Others can be unstructured, as with businesswomen making sure they are taken seriously during business negotiations in countries where almost all executives are men.

The fifth approach is called *experiential*, and it builds on role-playing to incorporate many aspects of life in the other culture that occur simultaneously. In a long training program of two weeks or more, an entire day might be devoted to behaving as if the sojourners are actually on assignment (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). They must use the host national language, eat the food, interact with others in socially appropriate ways, figure out ways around bureaucratic hurdles, carry out a teacher–parent conference according to host norms, and so forth (→ Intercultural Norms). The

experience can be frustrating, but staff members can point out that it is better to go through these multiple experiences in the presence of supportive trainers than it is to stumble through them unprepared on actual assignments.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Cultural Patterns and Communication ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Intercultural Norms ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture

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## **Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework**

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Competent intercultural conflict management depends on many factors. One of the key factors is to increase our awareness and knowledge concerning diverse conflict styles and facework issues. Intercultural conflict can be defined as any implicit or explicit antagonistic struggle between persons of different cultures due, in part, to cultural or ethnic group membership differences. Beyond cultural group membership differences and intergroup historical grievances, differences in situational expectations, goal orientations, conflict styles, facework tendencies, and perceived scarce resources (e.g., time, power currencies) may further complicate an already complex conflict situation.

Some prominent sources of intercultural conflict include cultural/ethnic value clashes, communication decoding problems, and identity inattention issues. Cultural value clash issues can involve the clash of individualistic “I-identity” values with collectivistic “we-identity” values (Triandis 1995), with one party emphasizing “self-face-saving” and the other party valuing “relational-face-compromising” (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). In connecting national cultures with face concerns, for example, research reveals that while individualists (e.g., US respondents) tend to use more direct, self-face concern conflict behaviors (e.g., dominating/competing style), collectivists (e.g., Taiwanese and Chinese respondents) tend to use more indirect, other-face concern conflict behaviors (e.g., avoiding and obliging styles) (Ting-Toomey et al. 1991; Cai & Fink 2002). In addition, *self-face concern* has been associated positively with dominating and emotionally



expressive conflict styles. *Other-face/mutual-face concern* has been associated positively with integrating, obliging, and compromising styles.

*Self-face concern* is the protective concern for one's own identity image when one's own face is threatened in the conflict episode. *Other-face concern* is the concern for accommodating the other conflict party's identity image in the conflict situation. *Mutual-face concern* is the concern for both parties' images and for the image of the relationship (Ting-Toomey & Oetzel 2001). Conflict style is defined as the broad-based verbal and nonverbal responses to conflict in a variety of frustrating conflict situations. Whether we choose to engage in or disengage from a conflict process often depends on our ingrained cultural conflict habits and how we negotiate various *face concerns*. *Face* is really about identity respect and other-identity consideration issues within and beyond the actual conflict encounter. It is tied to the emotional significance and estimated appraisals that we attach to our own social self-worth and the social self-worth of others (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi 1998).

### **INTERCULTURAL CONFLICT: A FACE-THREATENING COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

When our face image is being threatened in a conflict situation, we are likely to experience identity-based frustration, emotional vulnerability, guilt, shame, hurt, resentment, anger, or even the desire for vengeance. The threats to face can be on the group membership level or the individual level. The *conditions of an intercultural face-threatening process (FTP)* can include the following. First, the greater the importance of the culturally appropriate facework rule that is violated, the more severe is the perceived FTP. Second, the larger the cultural distance is between the conflict parties, the more mistrust or misunderstanding cumulates in the FTP. Third, the more important the conflict topic or imposition of the conflict demand, as interpreted from distinctive cultural angles, the more severe is the perceived FTP. Fourth, the more power the conflict initiator has over the conflict recipient, the more severe is the FTP perceived to be by the recipient. Fifth, the more harm or hurt the FTP produces, the more time and effort is needed to repair the FTP. Sixth, the more the actor is perceived as being directly responsible for initiating the conflict cycle, the more that person is held accountable for the FTP. Finally, the more the actor is viewed as an outgroup member, the more severe is the perceived FTP (Ting-Toomey & Takai 2006). Face concern becomes incrementally more salient if several of these conditions are present in a face-threatening communication process (→ Language and Social Interaction).

For example, individuals are likely to move toward self-face saving emphasis as they perceive the escalation of the various face-threatening conditions directed at them. However, cultural factors come into play in terms of which strategies count as self-face saving or other-face saving. For individualists, self-face saving responses can include strategies such as verbal aggression and verbal defensive mode; other-face saving responses can include remaining calm and sharing personal viewpoints. For collectivists, self-face saving responses can include pretending the conflict does not exist and verbally sidestepping the conflict issue, while other-face/mutual-face saving responses can include giving in or seeking help from a high-status third party (→ Strategic Communication). In response to the heavy reliance on the individualistic western perspective in framing

various conflict approaches, Ting-Toomey (1988) developed an intercultural conflict theory, the *conflict face-negotiation theory*, to include a collectivistic Asian perspective to broaden the theorizing process of various conflict orientations.

### CONFLICT FACE-NEGOTIATION THEORY: KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

In a nutshell, Ting-Toomey's (1988, 2005) conflict face-negotiation theory assumes that: (1) people in all cultures try to maintain and negotiate face in all communication situations; (2) the concept of face is especially problematic in emotionally threatening or identity vulnerable situations when the situated identities of the communicators are called into question; (3) the cultural value spectrums of individualism–collectivism and small/large power distance shape facework concerns and styles; (4) individualist and collectivist value patterns shape members' preferences for self-oriented facework versus other-oriented facework; (5) small and large power-distance value patterns shape members' preferences for horizontal-based facework versus vertical-based facework; (6) the value dimensions, in conjunction with individual, relational, and situational factors, influence the use of particular facework behaviors in particular cultural scenes; and (7) intercultural facework competence refers to the optimal integration of knowledge, mindfulness, and communication skills in managing vulnerable identity-based conflict situations appropriately, effectively, and adaptively (→ Interpersonal Communication).

In a direct *empirical test of the theory* (Oetzel et al. 2001; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey 2003), the research program tested the underlying assumption of the face-negotiation theory that face is an explanatory mechanism for the influence of cultural membership on conflict behavior. A questionnaire was administered to 768 participants in four national cultures (China, Germany, Japan, and the US) in their respective languages asking them to recall and describe a recent interpersonal conflict. The major findings of the study are as follows. First, cultural individualism–collectivism had direct effects on conflict styles, as well as mediated effects through self-construal and face concerns. Second, *self-face concern* was associated positively with dominating style and *other-face concern* was associated positively with avoiding and integrating styles. Third, *face concerns* accounted for all of the total variance explained in the dominating style and some of the total variance explained in the integrating and avoiding styles. Fourth, German respondents reported the frequent use of direct, confrontational facework strategies and did not care much for avoidance facework tactics; Japanese respondents reported the use of different pretending strategies to act as if the conflict situation did not exist; Chinese respondents engaged in a variety of avoiding, obliging, and also passive aggressive facework tactics; and Americans reported the use of upfront expression of feelings and remaining calm as facework strategies to handle problematic conflict situations (→ International Communication).

While past conflict studies have consistently conceptualized the “avoidance” conflict style as low concern for self/low concern for other-interest in individualistic western cultures, studies conducted under the face-negotiation umbrella have consistently found that the avoidance style is related to other-face identity consideration issues and mediated by situational factors. Furthermore, emotionally expressive style, passive aggressive style, and third-party help-seeking style emerged as additional styles that need further research testing. It is evident that different conflict styles have different culturally based and

individually based meanings and interpretations in different conflict situations and in different cultural communities. Current research (Merkin 2006) has also started to integrate the small/large power-distance value dimension with the individualism–collectivism value dimension in explaining face-threatening response messages and conflict styles. For example, Kaushal and Kwantes (2006) uncovered that “high concern for self/low concern for others” (i.e., the dominating conflict style) was positively associated with both vertical individualism and vertical collectivism. The methodological technique of Imagined Interactions (II) may also be a fruitful direction for future research into intercultural facework interactions (McCann & Honeycutt 2006).

Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) also examined the influence of *ethnic background factors* on conflict styles among four US ethnic groups. Major findings include: (1) Asian- and Latino Americans tend to use avoiding and third-party conflict styles more than African-Americans; (2) Asian-Americans tend to use more avoidance conflict tactics than European Americans; additionally, (3) individuals with strong ethnic identities (i.e., identifying with their ethnic ingroup memberships) tend to use more integrating conflict strategies than individuals with weak ethnic identities; and (4) individuals with bicultural, ethnic, and assimilated identities tend to use more compromising conflict tactics than individuals with marginal identities. It is critical that the role of ethnic diversity issues in a culturally pluralistic society be taken into serious consideration in future facework theorizing efforts.

Ting-Toomey et al. also found that the *personality trait* of independent self-construal was associated positively with self-face conflict concern. The personality trait of interdependent self-construal was associated positively with other-face conflict concern. Situational and relational features such as time constraints and the cultural identity of the other were found to moderate the conflict style choices as predicted by cultural or ethnic membership, in a study of Australian expatriates working in east Asia (Brew & Cairns 2004). For example, the east Asians only managed conflict more indirectly than the Australians when dealing with a superior, particularly a western superior. Current face-negotiation theory effort has been directed to testing family socialization processes and situational features in explaining cross-cultural face concerns, conflict styles, and particular facework strategies.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Modes, African ► Communication Modes, Asian ► Communication Modes, Hispanic ► Communication Modes, Muslim ► Communication Modes, Western ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► International Communication ► Interpersonal Communication ► Language and Social Interaction ► Strategic Communication

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## **Intercultural and Intergroup Communication**

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Social groups, such as adolescents, police, and ethnic groups, very often have their own distinctive cultures that include such ingredients as specialized foods and utensils, customs and rituals, dress styles, art, music, dance, rituals, literature, and so forth, while other intergroup situations (e.g., artificially constructed laboratory groups) constitute social categories that cannot claim such cultural artifacts (Fortman & Giles 2006). Reading, thinking, and research are needed at interfaces between the all too independent fields of intercultural communication on the one hand, and intergroup communication on the other (see, however, Gudykunst et al. 1988). Intercultural communication is not subsumed under, or even a special case of, intergroup communication, but rather the two are parallel traditions capable of significant coalescence.

As just indicated, when comparing many cultures and social groups with relevant and contrastive others, we see that they vary from each other in a plethora of important ways, many of them inherently communicative. Prime among these are their social values, norms, nonverbal behaviors, and negotiating styles, as well as their attitudes toward each other's communicative practices (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication; Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework; Intercultural Norms; Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts). In fact, perhaps the most general and essential attribute of culture *is* communication, since cultures could not adapt, develop, survive, change, or flourish without it (McQuail 1992).

The way a group or culture – knowingly or not – expresses its unique identity through a language, distinctive dialect, specialized jargon, argot, nonverbal demeanor, or posture and gait is fundamental to a healthy social identity (Giles 1977), and to one (under differing conditions) that group members can vigorously and creatively sustain, protect, promote, and proliferate (→ Disability and Communication; Collective Action and Communication). Indeed, the successful movement of an individual from one culture or group *into* another is accomplished not only by accessing the other's media and communicative networks, but by being able to consistently and authentically adopt the other community's communicative habits (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication; Bi- and Multilingualism). In this regard, one of us has been frequently told by locals that, despite being naturalized (an interesting term in and of itself) as a US citizen, he can never be regarded as a true American until he *speaks like one!*

Not infrequently, some of us are referred to in terms of larger-scale category labels like “Caucasian” or “Middle Eastern” that themselves encapsulate and camouflage a wide range of competing social entities (→ Communication Modes: African; Communication Modes: Asian; Communication Modes: Hispanic; Communication Modes: Muslim; Communication Modes: Western). Indeed, as we know from ethno-religious rivalries in Iraq, Rwanda, Northern Ireland, and elsewhere, conflict can be exceedingly intense between (to an outsider) apparently similar groups subsumed under such superordinate labels. Often these cultural groups possess different resources in terms of their numbers and are variously represented in political arenas, the media, written histories, and so forth (→ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication; Media and Group Representations). The disparities in existing institutional support usually reflect power differentials between the groups that are often the nexus of intergroup conflict (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). Yet intergroup research has shown that the distribution of socio-economic resources is not the only or even a necessary cause of conflict. Merely and immediately creating meaningful social categories with which people can identify (e.g., being a “Mac user” versus a “PC-er”) can by itself give rise to social discrimination (Tajfel 1978). Highlighting but one popular culture example: in the movie *The Life of Brian*, observe the (admittedly tongue-in-cheek) antipathy between the so-called People's Front of Judea and the Judean People's Front, disunited even in the face of a despised colonial presence.

In other words, although cultural diversity is often held out as a valued goal in many societies, anxiety, uncertainty, stigma, and stereotyping can be regular concomitants of intercultural and intergroup relations, with harmful communications being ubiquitous and pernicious characteristics of these (→ Diversity in the Workplace; Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory; Marginality, Stigma, and Communication; Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication; Social Stereotyping and Communication; Hate Speech and

Ethnophaulisms). For instance, opening up cultural and national boundaries within the European Union has, arguably, caused more social problems and strife than it has garnered any common group identity. Indeed, difficulties with and barriers to the acculturation of immigrants are evident in these and many other societies (→ Migration and Immigration). Hence, while encouraging education about, training with, and communication between members of different cultures and groups clearly can work under certain circumstances, it can also yield zero effects on improving relations in some cases – and even boomerang by undermining them in yet others (see Fox & Giles, 1993; → Intergroup Contact and Communication). Even promoting bilingualism and bilingual education has been disparaged by some influential public figures in the American media. “Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich equated bilingual education . . . with ‘the language of living in a ghetto’ and mocked requirements that ballots be printed in multiple languages . . . In 1995, for example, he said bilingualism poses long-term dangers to the fabric of our nation” (Hunt 2007). Strong words indeed.

All this notwithstanding, social gains are gratifyingly evident from current increases in interracial dating and friendships, especially among the youth of today (Britt-Gibson 2007; → Interethnic Relationships in Families) and the growing ways in which some social categories are becoming sensitive to, adjusting toward, and respecting each other (→ Intergroup Accommodative Processes). Understanding the highly complex and changing dynamics of intercultural and intergroup relations is of the utmost societal importance for maintaining public safety and security, encouraging responsible tourism, prolonging health and occupational productivity, enjoying and learning from old and new media, to name but a few (→ Ethnic Media and their Influence; Intercultural Communication in Health-Care; Intergroup Dimensions of Organizational Life). The potential that intercultural and intergroup communication theories can have for understanding, and in the long run alleviating, intractable interethnic conflicts is obvious, albeit rarely studied (Ellis 2006; Nagda 2006).

The 33 other entries in the “intercultural and intergroup” area of this Encyclopedia are necessarily diverse, thematically and methodologically (→ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on; Intergroup Communication and Discursive Psychology). They demonstrate well how far *communication* research in this domain has advanced over the past 25 years, both empirically and theoretically. Despite their diversity, however, the choice of the particular entries in this research area indicates that there is some synergy for them under a common rubric of intercultural and intergroup communication research.

## THE HISTORY OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Intercultural communication (ICC) has been studied for over 50 years and Leeds-Hurwitz (1990) has provided a synopsis of its early development. She describes the work of E. T. Hall and noted that he focused on practical and applied intercultural training and not on theory and research development. Hall worked with the American Foreign Service Institute (FSI) after World War II. He explored the micro communication behaviors that distinguish cultures and coined the term *proxemics* to describe how people from different cultures vary in their management of personal space and their levels of tolerance for physical closeness. Hall argued that much could be learned by concentrating on face-to-face

interactions, where tone, gestures, and proxemics by each speech partner were critical to effective communication (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture).

The work conducted at the FSI, led by anthropologists and linguists, concentrated on training diplomats to communicate with the different cultures they met outside of the USA. This practical training component remains a central tenet of intercultural communication research today. Following on from this early work, Wiseman (2002) detailed the far reaching applications of ICC competence to assist individuals from differing cultures to communicate effectively with one another. Much of the current ICC literature embraces a skills training approach and, as was underscored by Gudykunst (2002), is dominated by American positivistic stances (see, however, Kim 2002). Incorporated in the training is the notion that individuals must have knowledge of the culture with which they engage, the motivation to effectively communicate (including intercultural sensitivity and empathy), and appropriate communication skills. A guiding principle of ICC is that individuals engage with each other for the purpose of achieving meaningful and mutual understanding. Importantly, interactions are viewed as activities that occur at the interpersonal level (see also Rogers & Hart 2002).

Cargile & Giles (1996) examined the extant intercultural training literature and, without decrying the enormous importance of this perspective, proposed a new theoretical framework for trainers. They raised a number of questions about these training programs (→ Intercultural Communication Training). Some of their comments suggest that the two perspectives of intercultural and intergroup communication can combine to create a more robust position. First and foremost, Cargile & Giles noted the neglect by trainers of the intergroup dynamics that exist between some cultures. While ICC competence highlights an interpersonal focus, it paradoxically emphasizes the importance of understanding the mores of intercultural groups. Its focus also begs the question of whether individuals who engage in conversation with others from a different culture see themselves as talking to an individual or a representative of that culture. Investigating how individuals differ according to one disposition or the other has not been a key research question for ICC theorists.

Cargile & Giles argued that eclectic training programs may have limited value, to the extent that they do not take sufficient notice of trainees' attitudes to other cultures as well as their beliefs about the historical relationships existing between them. In simplest terms, if trainees harbor negative attitudes toward individuals from another culture, this can impede interaction outcomes. Cargile & Giles proposed a model of cross-cultural training that recognized the critical role that attitudes and stereotypes play in engagements with members of intercultural groups. They pinpointed the fact that individuals have a tendency to avoid counter-attitudinal, counter-stereotypical, and counter-affective information, and often lack the capacity to see beyond the cultural prototype to the individual characteristics of someone from another culture. Thus, providing new cultural knowledge about an outgroup to trainees does not guarantee acceptance of this information, especially if it violates previously held assumptions and if there is an imbalance of power between the groups.

## **THE HISTORY OF INTERGROUP COMMUNICATION**

In contrast to ICC, intergroup communication (IGC) evolved from a focus on group relations, discrimination, prejudice, and conflict. It is a much younger field of research,

and only in the last few years has the → International Communication Association (ICA) recognized intergroup communication as a distinct research interest area in its own right (Giles & Reid 2003). To understand the evolution of intergroup communication (see Harwood & Giles 2005; Reid & Giles 2005), it is necessary to describe the work of social psychologists interested in group processes.

The development of social identity theory (SIT) by Henri Tajfel (1978) was a watershed for social psychology and intergroup processes (→ Social Identity Theory). Drawing on Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison, Tajfel argued that social comparison connects the process of categorization with social identity. However, whereas Festinger argued that only when an opinion or characteristic could not be objectively tested did one rely on social consensus, Tajfel proposed that social consensus was always a valid method for testing one's beliefs. Both theories have in common the basic assumption that individuals use social comparison to fulfill a need to view themselves positively. In sum, SIT states that individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups and have a need to compare themselves with others, as a way of attaining a positive self-concept.

By its own definition, SIT is more concerned with social identity (or identity derived from group membership) than from personal identity (or identity based on individual characteristics and relationships). However, the theory recognizes that, at times, one's self-image is more personally defined (and correspondingly group comparisons are less salient) than at others. Tajfel and Turner (1979) suggested that interpersonal and intergroup salience may be considered as two ends of a single continuum. Later, scholars have proposed that interpersonal and intergroup are two correlated dimensions comprising high and low gradations along the two continua (e.g., Hewstone & Giles 1986).

In tandem with SIT, self-categorization theory (SCT) explores the underlying mechanisms (and cognitions) for categorizing ourselves and others into particular social groups (Turner et al. 1987). Once an individual categorizes another person in this way, that other is to some extent depersonalized; that is, the other takes on the core facets of what it means to belong to that group. SCT proposes that there exist prototypical group members, and that an individual can possess varying degrees of the characteristics and traits that define such prototypicality. The individual makes these judgments through an understanding of what it means to be a member of a particular group. Individuals are depersonalized as their group identity becomes salient. SIT and SCT, however, are not communication theories but, rather, represent theories of intergroup behavior and cognitions. SIT has proved to be a useful framework for understanding very different kinds of intergroup communication (Harwood & Giles 2005).

We seek to favor our own groups (ingroups) compared to groups to which we do not belong (outgroups). If we wish to become a member of an outgroup, we communicate with outgroup members in ways that may gain us membership to that group. In this way we may seek to use the strategy of social mobility, in order to "pass" into the privileged group. If this strategy is not open to us, then we can reinvent the identity of our group and, through intergroup comparisons, construct new positive aspects to our group. A third option is to socially compete against a privileged group to improve status and/or power. These strategies have linguistic and communicative implications for managing our communication with outgroups (Giles 1977), such as when individuals might emphasize,



say, their gay or straight identities and or at the more macro level when a group, such as Catalonians, resoundingly elevate the visibility and influence of their language in Spain. Not only have communication theories – for example, → communication accommodation theory – attended to the above-mentioned cognitive processes to explain behavioral outcomes, they have also begun to articulate the ways in which communication in discourse can determine and reshape these very psychological constructs in the first place (see Abrams et al. 2002).

Because this research area in communication is very young, it is still of course developing. Gallois et al. (2005) note that its strength will lie in its ability to take account of *multiple* identities in intergroup contexts, and particularly when those identities can sometimes be conflictual for incumbents (as, for example, in the case of some British Muslims). How we manage our different identities – be they cultural, generational, gender, or whatever – as we move through interactions with others requires considerably more research attention. For instance, during an interaction between two health providers (each a physician from a different speciality), the interactants may make salient their shared identities such as (general) health provider or specialist physician, as well as team coordinator (another medical role each has). In addition, they may have different personal identities based on their own idiosyncrasies. How they manage and negotiate these identities through discourse, and how the identities interact, requires detailed mapping of actual communication behavior (Hecht et al. 2005).

### **MUTUALLY EXPANDING ICC AND IGC**

From an intergroup perspective, Brabant et al. (2007) note some *common factors* that are assumptions within ICC theories that are not held in IGC. These are: that strangers to a new culture will take on an ethno-relativist position; that strangers need to be educated in the new culture and its values and norms; and finally, that when strangers possess knowledge of the culture and use expedient communication skills, effective communication will prevail. Brabant et al. note that there is no extension within ICC theories to predict and explain when *misunderstanding* could in some cases be inevitable, despite any one individual's excellent skills and cultural knowledge. Socio-psychological theories that emphasize the intergroup nature of intercultural communication, rather than only its interpersonal aspects, directly address miscommunication with the attendant issues of prejudice and intercultural tensions. The challenge is to move toward bringing these two theoretical viewpoints together in order to explain and predict the variables that determine effective and ineffective interactions. We need to untangle situations where individuals interact in intercultural situations as individuals qua individuals or as individuals representing cultural groups.

IGC is highly cognizant of how *status and power differentials* impact communication behavior. As noted earlier, power is not a key consideration in ICC, so its effects on interactions are not emphasized and the implicit overarching assumption is that competent communication is the main communication goal. However, when two individuals from different cultures with a history of power differentials and consequent perceived injustice come together for a meeting, effective and competent communication may not be their mutual goal. Relatedly, a focus on training and skills to achieve effective communication

does not take account of the fact that culturally salient power differentials may dictate what is appropriate communication. For example, in a ward round where a consultant is providing diagnosis and treatment plans and a more junior doctor is taking notes, “effective” communication, such as checking the consultant’s meaning through paraphrasing, may not be accessible to the junior doctor because such behavior is viewed as inappropriate. Other researchers have noted that it is often nurses who act as intermediaries for patients when they translate the doctor’s “medical language” into “everyday language” that the patient can understand (Bourhis et al. 1989).

That said, an interaction where intergroup salience is patently evident need not be a negative experience. In a clinical context where the health professional is perceived by a patient as the “expert,” the heightened intergroup salience may be comforting to the patient (Watson & Gallois 2007). In an interview context, the interviewer, who has the greater power, may speak slowly and for only short durations. The interviewee, with less power and wishing to appear competent and knowledgeable, may speak more quickly and for longer durations (Street 1991). This strategy, known as *speech complementarity*, highlights the individual’s awareness and acceptance through speech and behavior of the social norms concerning power and status (Giles et al. 1991). The subtleties in behavior that emerge when power relations are highlighted demonstrate the value of applying an IGC focus. However, understanding that these subtleties exist is but one part of understanding power relationships; we must also focus on the wealth of skills training knowledge that comes out of the ICC perspective. Combining these two perspectives would provide a model of intercultural and intergroup communication that is incisive, applied, and theoretically sound.

The *socio-historical context* of any given group can be a key activator that guides individuals’ initial and ongoing discourse with a group, but it is not commonly featured in ICC (see, however, Martin & Nakayama 2007). While cultural norms and values are acknowledged, historical relationships between cultures are seen as relevant only insofar as they guide behavior. It is this relational history that ultimately may predict competent and effective communication. There is an important distinction here: the macro-history, or the organizing historical relationships that actually existed between two cultures, and the micro-history, an individual’s understanding and experience of the other group/culture. In this sense, it is important to recognize that two groups can, of course, afford very different meanings to the same events. Witness here how many Estonians now construe the end of World War II differently from Russians and wish to move monuments depicting the latter’s war heroes to more peripheral physical settings. Many other incongruities are apparent elsewhere as in the disputes of what happened in the Holocaust and about comfort women in Asia.

Not to take account of social history and the contexts within which it is given meaning is to seriously undermine opportunities for effective communication. For instance, in the mid-1980s, there was a very public awareness of homosexuality because of the emergence of AIDS; some heterosexuals who may have been indifferent to homosexuals began to see them as a threat. Heterosexual relations were not immune from this homosexual illness, because homosexuals were potentially HIV carriers and to be avoided. Where this kind of fear and bias exists before individual heterosexuals and homosexuals meet, the basis for effective communication is severely compromised. Relatedly, Iwakuma & Nussbaum (2000)

discuss intercultural views on disability and, in so doing, make explicit the importance of the socio-historical context. They depict how cultural attitudes lead to group stigma and discriminatory communication. For example, in Thailand it is shameful for disability to exist in the family. Thus, communication between disabled and nondisabled people has its own socio-historical baggage that influences the way an interaction unfolds.

At the outset, we alluded to the fact that ICC – beyond national and ethnic groups – can truly embrace an array of different categories including older people, homosexuals, bisexuals, or academicians from different disciplines, as well as those embedded in youth, gang, religious, political, drug, sports, or organizational cultures (see Harwood & Giles 2005). They may all represent different cultural groups, because they have characteristics that include values and social norms that place them in a particular “set.” Importantly, their members may view themselves as belonging to a group that owns specific characteristics and traits that set them apart from others. IGC theories distinguish between “me” in an interaction as an individual and “us” as a representative of a group. While intercultural as well as intergroup perspectives have sometimes been infused into studies in such contexts, there is much more room for invoking each other’s positions.

This brings us to a final and critical issue. Thus far, we have focused on how IGC could beneficially impact ICC theory and practice. However, *the relationship and resources are really symbiotic*. Given that culture is “a blueprint for all life’s activities” (Porter & Samovar 1998, 456), it is curious that IGC rarely addresses, in its analyses of bona fide groups, the *cultural* parameters involved. In this respect, Fortman & Giles (2006) pointed to various dimensions of so-called cultural vibrance (e.g., the extent to which you display cultural artifacts in your home and have the smells of ethnic food pervade it) that could be orthogonal to group identification but that can have the potential to underlie intergroup communication strategies. For instance, high cultural vibrance would be indicated by a group having a long documented and rich cultural past and one that has adapted successfully to social and technological changes, be they modernization or colonialization. In addition, having a visible presence in the community where the group’s language (as in Chinatowns in the USA and elsewhere) is reflected ubiquitously on road signs and in shop windows (Landry & Bourhis 1997), a culture can display its unique style of fashion and dress as well. In addition, individuals who perceive a close connection with other members of their group as being a *community* in terms of mutual care, long-term security, and “give and take” will likely be very different contributors to intergroup communication from those who feel low on such features, irrespective of how strongly they report affiliating with their group. As Fortman & Giles (2006, 100) argued: “Just because a person self-identifies with a group strongly does not mean that person embraces its culture. Indeed, the group may not even have evolved one yet. Correspondingly, just because certain people do not publicly espouse strong affiliations with a social group, does not necessarily imply that they do not have any commerce with that group’s culture (through cuisine, aesthetic preferences, and so forth). Indeed, such inclinations may contribute to the person’s attributed individuality. Until we separate these dimensions empirically, it is possible that our predictive power in terms of communicative outcomes . . . could be unreliable and insufficient.”

Not only has the study of intergroup communication, for the most part, seemingly neglected such cultural buoyancies, it has also ignored occasions when attributions about

cultural complexity (or its absence) could be socially important. Take, for instance, parents who interpret their teenage child's peculiar behaviors as a reflection merely of a transitory development stage, compared to others who judge these behaviors to be a manifestation of an inaccessible and legitimate *culture*. Our guess would be that the parents' reactions to the teen would be very different and have quite an impact not only on the teens' respect for them, but also be a significant component of how they negotiate their relationships together.

In line with other scholars, Wiseman (2002) acknowledges that we need to be clear about what we mean by the term "culture." The traditional view of culture was based on geographic or ethnic differences. Nontraditional approaches have a broader understanding of what a cultural group might be (Hecht et al. 2005). Thus, while I may not see my nationality as ever being important, and so would never invoke my national identity, my professional role may represent a crucial dimension of who I am and be highly salient in my workplace. Similarly, a person's identity as "someone who is deaf" may overlap across their work and personal life; research on the culture of deaf people makes clear that such groups and cultures coexist (Reagan 1995). In any case, IGC could draw on notions such as the cultural vibrance of a group for its members as an important ingredient to the social meanings of ingroup identity and salience. IGC could gain further momentum by recourse to notions of intercultural competence, awareness, and sensitivity. IGC could also redress its relative lack of investment in exploring the social consequences when personal and relational identities assume interactional predominance in potentially volatile intercultural settings (see Gallois 2003; Wright et al. 2005). Indeed, the commonly found situation where *both* personal and social identities are salient in an interaction has yet to be fully explored in terms of its implications for communication. For instance, a student unexpectedly meeting her professor in a bar one evening and briefly talking about their love of wine; although the chat is highly personal, there are the pushes and pulls of knowing they belong to social categories with differential powers in other contexts.

From the ICC perspective, when an individual recognizes that he is engaged in an intercultural interaction, the focus remains on competent interpersonal communication. Specifically, an interactant's psychological response is focused on communication with an individual from a different culture, rather than on communication between two intercultural representatives. In contrast, IGC provides for a focus on interactants as individuals, as well as representatives of their respective cultures. This explicit acknowledgment that at times our intergroup identities take precedence has important implications for any interaction. Individuals who perceive that their personal identity is salient may engage in different communications strategies from those who believe they are representative of a particular group. Whether individual or group identities, or both, are made salient will shape the communication process in different ways which, in turn, can reconstruct the very nature of those identities. Indeed, how we come to subjectively define a situation in the first place as interpersonal or intercultural (or both) doubtless comes about by negotiating, perceiving, and interpreting *communicative* cues in interaction.

SEE ALSO: ► Acculturation Processes and Communication ► Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ► Bi- and Multilingualism ► Collective Action and Communication ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Communication Modes, African

► Communication Modes, Asian ► Communication Modes, Hispanic ► Communication Modes, Muslim ► Communication Modes, Western ► Cultural Patterns and Communication ► Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ► Disability and Communication ► Diversity in the Workplace ► Ethnic Media and their Influence ► Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ► Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ► Intercultural Communication in Health-Care ► Intercultural Communication Training ► Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ► Intercultural Norms ► Interethnic Relationships in Families ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Intergroup Communication and Discursive Psychology ► Intergroup Contact and Communication ► Intergroup Dimensions of Organizational Life ► International Communication Association (ICA) ► Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ► Marginality, Stigma, and Communication ► Media and Group Representations ► Migration and Immigration ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Social Identity Theory ► Social Stereotyping and Communication

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## Intercultural Media Effects

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In the 1940s, → Paul F. Lazarsfeld defined international communication as a study of the “processes by which various cultures influence each other” (Lazarsfeld 1976, 485). The term culture has been defined in a variety of ways over the years. An all-encompassing definition of culture was given by Kroeber: culture “is a way of habitual acting, feeling and thinking channeled by a society out of an infinite number and variety of potential ways of living” (Kroeber 1952, 136; → Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Intercultural media effects denotes the idea of change or modification to the culture of individuals living in a given society induced as a result of their exposure to media content produced in another society. Since → television is still the most popular and prevalent form of entertainment media around the world, this entry will be confined in scope to the cross-cultural impact of entertainment television (→ Television: Social History; Entertainment, Effects of). The question here is: Can the culture of individuals in a given society be changed or modified as a result of their exposure to entertainment television programs produced in another society (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication)?

### STRONG EFFECT PARADIGM

The various perspectives about this topic that have emerged during the last 40 years can be categorized according to their assumed strength of impact: strong impact and contingent impact. When critics of imported television discuss its influence, they do so within the framework of *cultural imperialism* (CI; Schiller 1969; 1991). According to its proponents, CI is “a verifiable process of social influence by which a nation imposes on other countries its set of beliefs, values, knowledge and behavioral norms as well as its overall style of life” (Beltran 1978, 184; → Cultural Imperialism Theories).

Television is seen by CI proponents as the means through which powerful states influence weaker states. CI advocates utilize an inductive process for drawing conclusions about the contemporary international intentions and behaviors of states using conspiracy

theory as their premise (see Schiller 1976). CI proponents set out to document the presumed conspiracy that underlies the behavior of powerful states in their quest to dominate weaker states. The conspiracy assumption itself is most probably a projection of the historical motivations of rulers (i.e., kings, princes, emperors, and governments) as observed via their documented predatory behaviors throughout human history. CI draws especially on the economic dependencies that existed between European colonizers and their colonies. Colonialism is seen as a direct antecedent of the economic dependency that characterized the relationship between colonies and colonizers with the former depending on the latter. The economic inequities among states observed in the postcolonial era that followed World War II are seen as a direct effect of the desire of more powerful states to maintain their control over weaker states. Assuming conspiracy and aiming to uncover it in the postcolonial era, CI advocates perceive stronger states as intending to perpetuate the economic dependency of weaker states that prevailed during colonial times (→ Postcolonial Theory). They believe that the mass media (including television) are the remote-control tools with which more powerful countries dominate the populations of weaker countries. According to this perspective, the specific role of the mass media is to alter the culture of the local inhabitants of weaker countries and modify their behaviors in ways that benefit the more powerful countries (→ Dependency Theories).

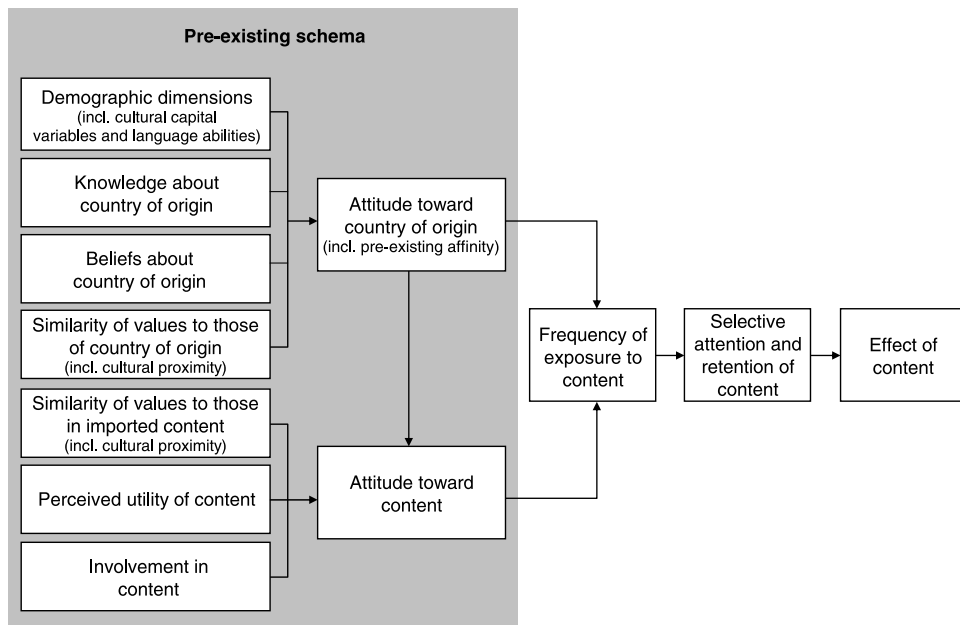
The advocates of this perspective claim that CI is an effect that stems from the documented flow of television programs from western countries and the mere presence of these programs in the television schedules of developing countries. According to Elasmir and Bennett (2003), with respect to the influence of imported television, the implicit assumptions of the CI process are: (1) the presence of foreign programs in domestic TV schedules will lead domestic audience members to watch these programs; (2) imported television content will be similarly processed by all audience members who are exposed to it; and (3) exposure to imported television programs will result in strong and homogeneous effects across audience members (→ International Communication; Americanization of the Media; Cultivation Effects).

### CONTINGENT IMPACT PARADIGM

Several perspectives that challenge the CI framework have emerged over the years. Each addresses one or more of the implicit CI assumptions noted earlier. In the *hybridization approach*, researchers take a macro approach to the topic of imported media effect. Pieterse defines structural hybridization as “the emergence of new practices of social co-operation and competition” and cultural hybridization as “new translocal cultural expressions” (Pieterse 1995, 64). The implicit argument here is that imported media do not have a homogeneous impact on their viewers. In lieu of the cultural domination and destruction arguments made by cultural imperialism advocates, proponents of the hybridization perspective believe that the likely impact of imported media is the creation of hybrid cultures among its consumers (→ Hybridity Theories).

The *cultural proximity perspective* focuses on the audience’s active decision to select and consume imported television content. Straubhaar advances the notion that, when given a choice, audience members are more likely to select imported TV programming that is embedded with values more similar to their own: “Audiences in many countries are . . .





**Figure 1** The susceptibility to imported media (SIM) model (Elasmar 2003)

clearly expressing a preference for both national production and, particularly in smaller countries, for intraregional exports, seeking great cultural proximity at both levels” (Straubhaar 1991, 55). Thus, the cultural proximity perspective focuses on the barriers that prevent imported media from having a wide-ranging and homogeneous effect on its viewers. The implicit argument here is that strong effects are impossible since the content that is chosen is embedded with values similar to one’s own.

The *susceptibility to imported media (SIM) perspective* focuses specifically on the variation that exists among individual audience members of imported television programs (Elasmar 2003). The SIM model is designed to: (1) illustrate the process of imported media influence, (2) understand the conditions under which imported media can be influential, and (3) identify the type of effect (i.e., affective, behavioral, etc.) that imported media are most likely to achieve. The idea here is that some viewers are going to be less susceptible while others more susceptible to being influenced by imported TV programs (→ Selective Exposure). The viewers’ susceptibility will depend on their pre-existing beliefs and attitudes and on the interrelationships that exist among specific cognitive components (see Fig. 1).

The term → “schema” is commonly used in the field of social cognition to denote the set of cognitive components that are activated in response to a specific social stimulus. According to the SIM model, one needs to understand the interrelationships among specific cognitive components present in a viewer’s schema in order to determine whether this viewer will be affected when exposed to specific imported entertainment media content. With respect to the type of effect likely to occur as a result of a viewer’s exposure to imported television content, the SIM model ranks effect types from those most likely

to occur to those least likely to occur as follows: knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and values (→ Attitudes; Information Processing). For all these effect types, the literature suggests that the most likely impact of imported television programs would be that of reinforcing pre-existing states. The least likely impact would be to radically change these pre-existing states.

The perspective of *media-accelerated cultural diffusion* focuses on a conspiracy-free label that ought to be given to the influence that might result from a viewer's exposure to imported media content. Elasmr (2003) proposes the term "media-accelerated cultural diffusion" when such an impact is detected. This notion is an extension of the cultural diffusion perspective that existed in anthropology in the early 1900s. Cultural diffusion or borrowing occurs when an individual "faced with a situation in which the shared habits of his own society are not fully satisfactory, copies behavior which he has observed in members of another society" (Murdoch 1971, 325).

How frequently does cultural diffusion occur? Smith contends that "in almost everything we use in our daily life and in most of the things we do . . . we display our indebtedness to the world's civilization in its full range" (Smith 1933, 8). Writing in the early 1900s, long before the advent of worldwide electronic communication networks, Smith aptly states that: "The diffusion of culture is not a mere mechanical process such as the simple exchange of material objects. It is a vital process involving the unpredictable behavior of the human beings who are the transmitters and those who are the receivers of the borrowed and inevitably modified elements of culture. Of the ideas and information submitted to any individual only parts are adopted: the choice is determined by the personal feelings and circumstances of the receiver" (Smith 1933, 10). He adds that the ideas that are borrowed are transformed by the receiving communities as they adapt them to fit their particular needs (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). While throughout history humans have interpersonally channeled cultural diffusion, today electronic media that span the globe at tremendous speeds can potentially contribute to the diffusion of culture. When exposure to imported television programs is found to influence some aspect of a local viewer's culture, an appropriate label for this effect is media-accelerated culture diffusion (MACD).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ Information Processing ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ International Communication ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Schemas ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History

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## Intercultural Norms

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Normative conduct is a major component of systems of culture. Each culture has its specific norms for everyday social interaction. Differences in norms and cultural expectations often become grounds for intercultural miscommunication and misunderstanding (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication; Nonverbal Communication and Culture). There are innumerable definitions of norms in the social science literature. For example, norms are defined as “rules of conduct,” “blueprints for behavior,” and “cultural expectations.” Comparing existing definitions, Gibbs (1965) finds three attributes of a norm: “(1) a collective evaluation of behavior in terms of what ought to be; (2) a collective expectation as to what behavior will be; and (3) particular reactions to behavior including attempts to apply sanctions or otherwise induce a particular kind of behavior” (→ Intercultural Norms; Social Norms).

Sumner (1906) divides norms into *three categories*: folkways, mores, and laws. *Folkways* are those pervasive everyday activities widely accepted by the people of a culture. Folkways include such actions as the way we greet others, the way we eat, and other such actions. *Mores* are those norms placing strong moral demands on an individual’s behavior. Examples of mores include commandments derived from religious doctrine, incest taboos, and rules about what is acceptable to eat (e.g., in the United States it is unacceptable to eat the meat of dogs and cats). *Laws* are norms codified by a political entity such as a country, province, or city. A law may be derived from the folkways or the mores of a culture.

The existence of a norm becomes most evident when it is *ignored or violated*. Individuals who find themselves in a foreign environment, dealing with an unfamiliar culture, are likely to have this experience involuntarily. Such missteps are often milestones along the way toward becoming socialized to a new environment. The violation of any norm may bring down some form of sanction against the person committing the violation. The sanctions may range from a disapproving glance to loss of life. The sanctions imposed for violation of a folkway are through interpersonal channels. For example, if you were to “slurp” your soup in public in the United States, you probably would receive only disapproving glances from the people who heard you. On the other hand, if you do not slurp your soup in some cultures, you may receive disapproving glances (Gudykunst & Kim 1984).

The violation of mores, in contrast to that of folkways, attracts more severe sanctions. An example in the United States is that men do not hold hands. If you do, the response may range from surprise to ostracism to, in extreme cases, homophobic lynching. On the other hand, it is acceptable, though not customary, for men in India who are merely friends to hold hands. Violations of laws, obviously, bring about legal sanctions. These legal sanctions can range from a verbal reprimand to the death penalty.

Most popular books on intercultural norms take a direct approach to cultural adaptation: we ask the local people and/or other expatriates how a foreigner is supposed to behave. We ask, in other words, to be taught the dos and don'ts of the culture. The “dos and don'ts” approach is necessarily situational. Only a fixed number of situations can be presented, and then only in the most general manner. “Don't start talking business with a Saudi,” we may be told, “until you've first made considerable small talk, and otherwise spent ten to fifteen minutes exchanging pleasantries.” But what if this is the second or third meeting we have had with that person that day? (Storti 2002). The same action may have different meanings in different situations. Relying solely on this strategy is not effective since the number of possible events is unlimited. Effective behavior in a cross-cultural situation is best achieved from a position of sound cross-cultural understanding. Norms are relevant only to specific situations, and, therefore, have limited explanatory power (Kim 1994).

That said, confronting normative differences offers the possibility of personal growth or cultural change. Generally, when we interact with people from the same culture, our expectations are not often violated, because people of the same culture share similar expectations. When we communicate with “outsiders,” however, our behavioral expectations may be violated with greater frequency because those strangers probably learned a different set of norms in their culture (→ Intergroup Contact and Communication). When our expectations are violated, we can gain tremendous insight into the norms of our own culture, and how those norms influence our behavior. In addition, we are confronted with alternative behavioral patterns, which we might actually come to prefer (Gudykunst & Kim 1984).

Ethical relativism is an approach that holds that morality is relative to the norms of a given culture. The same action may be morally right in one society, but morally wrong in another. For the ethical relativist, there are no universal moral standards, i.e., standards that can be universally applied to all peoples at all times. The only moral standards against which a society's practices can be judged are its own (Herskovits 1973). Even if we do not

accept this relativist approach, it must be acknowledged that it raises important issues. Ethical relativism reminds us that our sense of right and wrong is deeply influenced by our culture. It also encourages us to explore the justifications underlying norms that differ from our own, while challenging us to examine the reasons for subscribing to our own norms.

SEE ALSO: ► Cultural Patterns and Communication ► Intercultural Norms ► Inter-group Contact and Communication ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture ► Social Norms

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## **Intereffication Approach in Public Relations**

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The intereffication model focuses on the relationship between → public relations (PR) and → journalism (Bentele et al. 1997). It was designed in a research project in 1996–1997 that focused on the PR activities of two East German cities, Leipzig and Halle. Unlike the *determination hypothesis*, the intereffication model stresses the interconnectedness of PR and journalism (→ Determination Theory in Public Relations). The authors describe the model as a complex relationship of mutual influence, mutual orientation, and mutual dependence. Intereffication means that neither PR nor journalism would be able to function properly without the existence of the other (Latin *efficare* = to make possible). The authors invented the word intereffication in order to create a neutral term, one free of the connotations associated with more metaphorical terms like symbiosis and Siamese twins.

### **THE MODEL**

The model describes the mutual processes going on between PR and journalism as “adaptation” and “induction.” *Adaptation*, on the one hand, means that one system

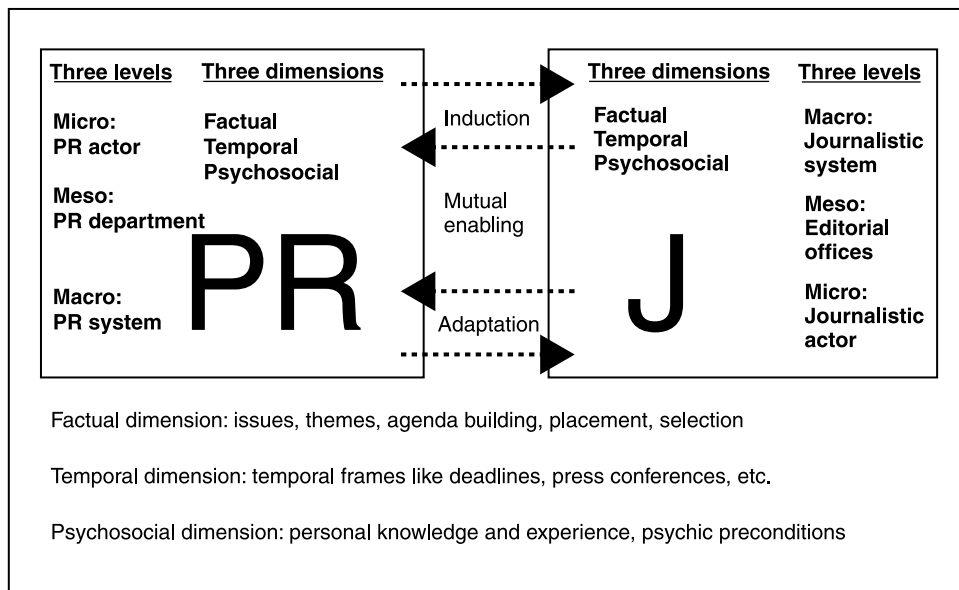
orients its activities and routines toward the other system in order to successfully place its messages. Adaptation can be defined as “communicative and organizational processes of adjustment” (Bentele & Nothhaft 2007). In order to be more successful in placing topics, actors like PR practitioners or entire PR departments adapt themselves to environmental constraints. Processes, on the other hand, that are able to influence the other system are called induction. *Inductions* are defined as “intended and directed communicative stimuli which result in observable *resonances* in the respective other system” (Bentele et al. 1997, 241). Resonances can be observed and partly measured as, for instance, media coverage (PR-induced coverage).

Both induction and adaptation happen in three dimensions: factual, temporal, and psychosocial. The *psychosocial dimension* consists of journalists’ and PR practitioners’ personal relationships. From a micro-perspective, it is important for both journalists and PR practitioners to know each other personally so that each can anticipate how the other will react to specific messages or questions. Gaining trust is another process in this dimension. Gaining trust is possible through a continuous flow of correct → information and → interaction only. If, on the one hand, PR managers lie, their trustworthiness is lost. Betrayed journalists will no longer believe them. On the other hand, journalists lose their trustworthiness if they do not report the entire story but pick up only a certain part that looks sensational.

In the *temporal dimension*, PR practitioners orient their timing toward the routines of journalism (→ News Routines). For example, knowing the editorial deadline is important for sending out press releases and for arranging press conferences. This example shows that adaptations and inductions form two sides of the same coin: according to the model, the deadline itself is a journalistic induction, while keeping this deadline in mind and acting in line with journalistic routines are processes of adaptation. Journalists, in return, are more successful at getting information if they know the daily routines of PR managers. If a journalist knows that the PR manager of the biggest company in town usually has internal conferences from 9 to 11 a.m. and usually takes a lunch break from 1 to 2 p.m., then the journalist can anticipate the best time to call the manager.

In the *factual dimension*, sending out press releases is an inductive activity designed to influence the journalistic system. Press releases represent mainly thematic inductions. However, there are a lot more PR inductions in the factual dimension: press releases issued at conferences, facts and figures from annual reports, personal dialogues between PR practitioners and journalists, etc. Journalistic induction occurs when journalists select, place, assess, and comment on information. Another example of journalistic induction is when journalists force companies to hold an ad hoc press conference.

A great many adaptive processes go on in the factual dimension. Again, press releases are a good example: professional PR people write releases in a journalistic style according to routines like → news factors or the “SIN” rule (the topic must be significant, interesting, and new), the inverted pyramid etc. Bentele and Nothhaft (2007) give an illustrative example of journalistic adaptation to PR routines and rules: journalists not only have to adapt to rules of accreditation and professional codes of conduct but also to the rules of war reporting such as the “embedding” of journalists into the operation “Iraqi Freedom” (→ Embedded Journalists).



**Figure 1** The intereffication model

According to the model, processes of adaptation and induction take place not only in three dimensions (psychosocial, temporal, factual) but also on three levels (Fig. 1). By looking at the mutual processes that go on between a journalist and a PR practitioner, the model describes the relationship of journalism and PR on the *micro level*, the level of individual actors. By focusing more on the level of PR departments' editorial offices or entire media organizations, one switches to the *meso* level. The model also claims to be a sufficient framework on the *macro* level of functional social systems, but it is not necessarily in line with the latest macro models of systems theory (Schantel 2000).

## MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS

In recent years, the model has been employed in a number of research projects, mostly dissertations or master's theses. Bentele and Nothhaft (2004, 2007) have summarized the major findings. The model was initially tested in the field of local politics. Subsequent studies applied the model in regional politics (Donsbach & Wenzel 2002) as well as in the fields of business and of labor unions (→ Labor Unions in the Media). Unfortunately this research does not cover all of the model's dimensions. As with the empirical research in the tradition of the determination hypothesis, these projects – as well as the master's theses summarized by Bentele and Nothhaft (2004, 2007) – operate from a PR-centered perspective. They analyze the relation of PR-induced coverage to editorially induced coverage (input–output studies) with regard to single organizations (such as the regional German broadcasting station MDR) or certain areas of interest (such as politics in

Saxony). Like Baerns' (1979) study (the determination hypothesis), most of the studies show that roughly two-thirds of the analyzed articles are PR-induced. However, more than half of these PR-induced articles are not induced by press releases but by other PR activity. Other PR activity means, for example, a reference to a press conference in the text of the article. It is obvious that the data here are not unambiguous. Given that uncertain cases were treated as not induced by PR, there is evidence for a substantial influence of PR on journalism. However, this research tradition shows that the design of the research has a major impact on the results.

As Baerns's determination thesis postulates that PR determines not only the topics but also the timing of media coverage (Baerns 1991, 98), most of the empirical research projects also analyzed the *temporal dimension*. To determine whether PR is able to influence the timing of media coverage, one has to measure the time between the PR activity and the media coverage. The data show that daily → newspapers utilize the majority of press releases within three days of receiving them.

## CRITIQUES

There is still a lack of empirical research that covers the full range of the model. By using a PR-centered operationalization, most research labeled as intereffication is little more than modern determination research. Furthermore, personal or social factors that are the core of the psychosocial dimension are rarely analyzed. This lack of analysis is as much regrettable as it is understandable given the difficulties of measuring this dimension. Complex personal observation studies would be needed to gather data on this dimension. Research that focuses on journalistic induction and adaptation is also missing. The model should be broadened in three dimensions. First, the recipient should be included. This could improve the model through describing the entire process of agenda building and agenda setting. Second, the economic impact of the relationship between journalism and PR, which can affect inductions and adaptations in all dimensions of the model, should be integrated. Third, the model could be linked with frame analysis: shared frames or conflicting frames would suggest how the data/information might be interpreted and reported differently, and might even cause relationships to deteriorate (→ Framing of the News).

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda Building ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Determination Theory in Public Relations ► Embedded Journalists ► Framing of the News ► Information ► Interaction ► Journalism ► Journalists, Credibility of ► Labor Unions in the Media ► Media Logic ► Media Relations ► News Factors ► News Routines ► News Sources ► News Values ► Newspaper ► Political Communication ► Professionalization of Public Relations ► Public Relations ► Public Relations: Media Influence ► Public Sphere ► Systems Theory

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## Interethnic Relationships in Families

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Historically, family scholarship has been guided by a Eurocentric perspective including the notion that families are ethnically homogeneous. Over the last few decades, a shift in social acceptance of interethnic relationships coupled with changes in national laws (e.g., a 1967 US Supreme Court ruling abolished the last legal barrier to interracial marriages) has resulted in an increase in interethnic families. Ethnic identity is a sense of affiliation with a specific ethnic group manifested in communication patterns, cultural and religious traditions, political ideologies, peer networks, or family roles (Phinney 1990). Thus, interethnic families are family systems where partners and/or children *identify* with different ethnic groups.

### ETHNICITY AND MULTIETHNIC FAMILIES

Specific demographic information or historical comparisons on interethnic families can vary due to the national practices of documenting race and ethnicity. Yet, many countries still do not document interethnic marriages or multiethnic identity. However, data from national census reports indicate the prevalence of these relationships. For example, according to the 2000 US Census, 7.4 percent of marriages are interethnic relationships with African-American/Euro-American and Hispanic/Non-Hispanic as the most common type of relationship. However, other sources have estimated this to be from 5 percent to

10 percent of the married population. Likewise, the Office of National Statistics reports a multiethnic population exceeding 675,000 in the United Kingdom. Further, interethnic families are more common in regions with diverse populations. For example, an estimated 36 percent of the married population in Hawaii is comprised of interethnic couples and, overall, interethnic families are more common in the western United States (e.g., California). Likewise, western Europe has larger populations of interethnic families compared to eastern Europe. In these national regions, the increase in interethnic families over the last decade is well documented.

The terms *interracial*, *intercultural*, and *interethnic* have been used interchangeably to describe relationships in which the different racial/ethnic identities can create unique experiences and challenges. However, the term *intercultural* may be too broad as it can refer to a variety of contexts where divergent orientations other than race/ethnicity (e.g., nationality) influence interactions. Conversely, employing the term *interracial* can be limiting in that it may fail to capture the breadth of these relationships. Whereas many people perceive race to be socially constructed, race can also imply strict biological and physiological constraints. For example, the US Census allows for 57 interracial combinations based on five specific racial categorizations. However, these combinations do not account for Hispanic/non-Hispanic families or interethnic families within one race (e.g., Japanese-American/Chinese-American). Hence, the term *interethnic* is more inclusive as it highlights ethnic variations in both interracial and intraracial relationships.

As Gudykunst & Lee (2001) suggest, ethnic identity (e.g., Chinese-American) should not be confused with panethnic identity (e.g., Asian-American) because doing so would minimize the importance of the heterogeneity of ethnic groups. Moreover, cultural identity should refer to identification with the dominant culture in which they live. Hence, communication in interethnic families is characterized by various “layers” of influence: the idiosyncratic personal characteristics of the individual family member, salience of the ethnic identity of the family members, and the macro-cultural influence.

The primary *method of inquiry* for research on interethnic families has been in-depth interviews with small samples due to availability and willingness of family members to participate in research (→ Interview, Qualitative). Further, a majority of the research has focused on African-American/Euro-American relationships as these are common interethnic relationships and the most socially scrutinized relationships. However, more recent scholarship is being conducted with larger, survey-based studies, which also include more diverse samples of interethnic couples or families (→ Survey).

A common perception of interethnic families is that they face unique challenges that make it difficult to achieve harmonious relationships. Whereas interethnic families obviously have unique experiences, they are not inherently problematic. The nature of family communication is what differentiates positive and negative family functioning. In fact, research has shifted from a focus on demography and challenges of interethnic families to an emphasis on *communication* and the multiethnic family experience (Socha & Diggs 1999).

## COMMUNICATION IN THE MULTIETHNIC FAMILY SYSTEM

Communication goes well beyond issues of language differences that may impede proper family functioning. Intergroup and interpersonal factors may affect communication in

interethnic families (Gaines & Liu 2000). In one sense, interactions may be influenced by norms and modes of communication characteristic of an ethnic identity. Alternatively, interactions may be influenced by the shared family communication practices and standards reflective of a more interpersonal orientation (→ Family Communication Patterns). Hence, a common ingroup identity of family may supplant the potential conflict associated with separate ethnic identities.

Because family members' *communication modes* may be influenced by their ethnic identity, the extent to which couples accommodate the communicative needs and desires of family members may be associated with a shared family identity (→ Communication Modes, Western; Communication Modes, African; Communication Modes, Asian; Communication Modes, Hispanic; Communication Accommodation Theory; Intergroup Accommodative Processes). For example, adapting communication to a partner's preferences may transcend differences stemming from divergent ethnic identities which, in turn, could highlight the common family identity as the interactions are more personalized. Conversely, failing to adapt communication behavior may accentuate differences. At times, this behavior may be a strategy for intentionally highlighting one's ethnic identity. Hence, creating and maintaining a shared family identity by recognizing and/or transcending ethnic difference is an important aspect of positive family functioning. Yet, in doing so, family members may experience a shift in their ingroup/outgroup communication practices outside of the family as the shared family identity blurs the boundaries of what constitutes an ethnic ingroup/outgroup (Foeman & Nance 2002).

Because ethnic identification includes a sense of shared histories and experiences, recurring discussions may center on these divergent worldviews which can create challenges when discussing issues such as discrimination, historical oppression, and segregation. In fact, early stages of relational development for interethnic couples often include discussions of societal perceptions of racial/ethnic groups and the partner's experiences (Foeman & Nance 2002). The process of negotiating and maintaining a family identity includes overcoming these challenges, although research does not point to a single, prescriptive method for achieving this goal. Some couples have open discussions in an attempt to compromise on these issues whereas other couples may explicitly recognize and accept these differences, realizing that they may not be understood or validated by their partner (Killian 2001).

In addition to the everyday talk and recurring discussions, *family rituals and narratives* serve as communicative acts that can create a shared family identity and/or maintain individual ethnic identity (→ Storytelling and Narration). For example, creation of new, unique family rituals or sharing "origin of family" narratives may transcend ethnic difference by highlighting the couple/family identity (Killian 2001). Conversely, family members may choose to maintain individual ethnic identity by highlighting specific cultural rituals in important events (e.g., wedding customs) or sharing stories of history and experiences relevant to a particular ethnic group.

Communication with the larger family system (e.g., parents, siblings, grandparents) can also create unique challenges, as lack of support or explicit disapproval from the larger family can act as a relational stressor (Negy & Snyder 2000). For couples, disclosing the relationship to family members is an important aspect of relational development (Foeman & Nance 2002) and, obviously, contains elements not present in intraethnic relationships. For example, a couple must not only disclose the relationship, but also communicate the importance of their different ethnic identities as a way of establishing their couple/

family identity. The reaction of the larger family and peers creates one of the more common challenges for maintaining the relationship, but can also serve as a catalyst for bonding between the couple or family.

### **PARENT–CHILD COMMUNICATION IN MULTIETHNIC FAMILIES**

As a means of transmitting cultural ideals from one generation to another, family communication plays an integral role in ethnic socialization and identity development of children. Although identity is influenced by social class, ethnic makeup of peers, physical appearance, and our societal expectations for possessing a monoethnic identity, family communication plays the major role in identity development. For multiethnic children, this process may be more complex since their identity can be influenced by various ethnicities. The extent and nature (i.e., positive versus negative) of a parent's discussion about their ethnic heritage as well as the partner's heritage is influential in a child's identity formation. Rockquemore's (1999) discussion on identity "options" for biracial persons is relevant to multiethnic individuals. Specifically, individuals can identify with one specific ethnic/racial group, embrace their multiethnicity, shift ethnic identity based on context, or transcend ethnic identification. Hence, multiethnic children may have an ethnic identity that differs from one or both parents (i.e., identifying as multiethnic). Thus, in family interactions, multiethnic individuals negotiate and/or maintain their own ethnic identity. Therefore, it is not simply a matter of how children identify, but how they *communicate* their identity to their family, peers, and community.

Historically, it has been assumed that there were negative consequences for the emotional well-being of multiethnic individuals. Specifically, family counselors and scholars claimed that the lack of a specific, singular ethnic identity frame of reference results in a lack of affiliation or sense of belonging. Although this is still the case for some, multiethnicity can also be a positive attribute in that individuals may be better able to adapt to intercultural interactions, have greater intercultural competence, and have lower tendencies to express ingroup favoritism, for example, discrimination (Navarrete-Vivero & Jenkins 1999). In fact, while some interethnic couples may be concerned about their children's well-being, many view the children's experience with various ethnic influences as a positive aspect of their relationship (Negy & Snyder 2000). Still, depending on the norms of the maternal and paternal families, children may experience complicated and, hence, confusing, expectations of communication. Although language may be the most obvious example, even cultural norms of verbal and nonverbal communication may differ depending on the family member with whom the child interacts. The extent to which a child feels "trapped" or forced to choose a singular identity may be associated with a loss of ethnic identity which is related to negative well-being. Therefore, for the well-being of children and to foster an environment for development of a multiethnic identity, ethnic socialization involves clearly transmitting communicative norms and expectations as well as customs and traditions related to the socio-cultural heritage of the paternal and maternal family (Navarrete-Vivero & Jenkins 1999).

The limited scholarship on children in multiethnic families has focused on biological children of interethnic couples. However, families formed through international and transracial adoption also create a context where communication about family, ethnic, and cultural identity are important in the identity development process for the children. For

example, sharing adoption stories, creating and maintaining the family identity, discussing ethnic/racial identity, and socializing to cultural norms are all important in the development of the family and children's identity (Galvin 2003).

Whether formed through the union of individuals with divergent ethnic identities or through adoption, interethnic families exemplify the diversity in family forms common today and illustrate the constitutive nature of communication in creating and maintaining personal, ethnic, and family identities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Hispanic ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Intergroup Accommodative Processes ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Survey

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## **Intergenerational Communication**

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The term “intergenerational communication” applies to interactions involving individuals who are from different age cohorts or age groups. Families provide ready examples of

individuals whose communication would be classified as intergenerational: parent and child, grandparent and grandchild, aunt and niece, to name a few. These interactions stand in contrast to intragenerational communication or communication between individuals from the same generation or age cohort, such as siblings. Intergenerational communication occurs outside the family context as well. Any interaction between a child and an adult, a young person and one who is middle-aged or older, or a middle-aged person and an older person, fits the definition of intergenerational communication. As a result, much communication in daily life – in the workplace, social settings, and the home – is intergenerational in nature.

Although common, intergenerational communication carries a strong potential for miscommunication and unsatisfying interpersonal interactions. This occurs not only because people from different age cohorts vary in their life experiences, but also because people at different points in the life-span vary in their communication goals, needs, and behaviors (Williams & Nussbaum 2001). Other challenges to satisfying intergenerational communication come from age stereotypes and social role expectations (Hummert et al. 2004), which can also vary across cultures (Zhang & Hummert 2001; → Social Stereotyping and Communication).

### **AGE AND COMMUNICATION GOALS, NEEDS, AND BEHAVIORS**

Individuals belong to age cohorts and age groups. Age cohorts are defined by shared experience of historical events during youth and young adulthood that are viewed as formative of shared values (Williams & Nussbaum 2001). Examples include the “greatest generation,” which came of age during the Great Depression and World War II; baby boomers, who experienced the Cold War and the Vietnam War; generation X, or the children of the baby boomers who saw the end of the Cold War and the space shuttle *Challenger* explosion; and generation Y, who are currently young adults and whose experience may be shaped by the terrorist attacks of September 11 and the events following them. Age cohorts map onto human history. In contrast, age groups map onto the human life-span: child, adolescent, young adult, middle-aged adult, and older adult. Although the exact boundaries between age groups are difficult to specify, childhood is generally associated with the pre-teen years, adolescence with the teenage years, young adulthood with the twenties and early thirties, middle age with the late thirties through the fifties (and even the early sixties), and older adulthood with age 65 and beyond (Williams & Harwood 2004).

Some intergenerational communication problems, even conflicts (→ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span), can be tied to the participants’ being from different age cohorts. Examples include the divergent life experiences reflected in the differing value placed on thriftiness by members of the greatest generation and baby boomers, or the importance placed on political activism by baby boomers versus generation Xers. Focusing on these cohort differences can be informative in understanding some aspects of intergenerational communication. A counselor, for instance, might use knowledge of cohort differences to mediate an intergenerational conflict within a family or organization. The *cohort approach* to understanding intergenerational communication has a critical limitation, however. It presumes that individuals are, to an extent, prisoners of their

history, and therefore does not consider the role of individual development across the life-span as an influence on intergenerational communication.

The *life-span developmental approach* offers an alternative to the age cohort approach to intergenerational communication. The developmental approach recognizes that communication needs, goals, and skills change as individuals move through the various age groups from childhood to older adulthood (Williams & Nussbaum 2001; → Developmental Communication). Laura Carstensen's *socio-emotional selectivity theory* illustrates how communication needs and goals differ for those early and late in the life-span (Carstensen et al. 1999). According to socio-emotional selectivity theory, young adults face life tasks (e.g., choosing a career, finding a mate) that make new experiences and new communication partners their primary communication goals. They seek variety and novelty in communication, which increases their risk of experiencing some encounters with negative emotional consequences (→ Emotion). Older individuals, in contrast, seek to maximize their positive emotional experiences through an emphasis on interactions with a few well-known communication partners. Socio-emotional selectivity research shows that this drive toward positive emotional experiences reflects awareness of the approaching end of the life-span, which occurs most often, though not exclusively, among those in the older adult age group (→ Death, Dying, and Communication). These differing communication goals of young and older persons can also lead to misunderstanding and intergenerational conflict, especially within families as they negotiate the amount of time spent together, topics of conversation, etc.

Two communication behaviors have been especially associated with advancing age: reminiscence (Bluck & Aleia 2002) and painful self-disclosures (Coupland et al. 1988; → Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). Both may reflect developmental processes. *Reminiscence* involves recalling and describing past life events. Usually reminiscence focuses on significant events in the speaker's childhood, youth, and adulthood, and often takes the form of a long, well-practiced narrative delivered to friends or family intimates. *Painful self-disclosures* involve revealing personal information about a problem or negative life event in conversation with a relative stranger. Examples include the death of a spouse or child, personal illness, financial difficulty, etc. Such self-disclosures could be considered a specific form of reminiscence distinguished by their *painful* topics, tangential relationship to the ongoing conversation, and the lack of intimacy between the speakers and the recipients. Both reminiscence and painful self-disclosures may serve developmental functions. Reminiscences can be part of a life review that would help older individuals achieve Erikson's ideal of ego integrity (Erikson et al. 1986). Painful self-disclosures may be used by older speakers to establish their status as individuals, perhaps to reveal to listeners critical events that have shaped their identities or as a means of coming to terms with their identities (Coupland et al. 1988; → Age Identity and Communication).

Although these two communication behaviors may share developmental origins, they have different effects on intergenerational communication. Reminiscences are more likely to be associated with wisdom and satisfying intergenerational conversations than are painful self-disclosures (Williams & Giles 1996). In fact, Coupland et al. (1988) labeled these self-disclosures *painful* because they caused discomfort to listeners, not because they were necessarily causing distress to the disclosers at the time of the conversation.

## AGE STEREOTYPES AND INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Because age groups are social groups, intergenerational communication can also be examined from an intergroup perspective (Williams & Harwood 2004). Communication accommodation theory (Giles et al. 1991) provides a framework for understanding how → stereotypes about members of other age groups lead to expectations about appropriate communication behaviors in intergenerational interactions (→ Communication Accommodation Theory). The communication predicament of aging model (CPA; Ryan et al. 1986) and the age stereotypes in interactions model (Hummert 1994) illustrate how young individuals may adapt their communication to negative age stereotypes of decline by speaking more slowly, more loudly, and/or more simply to older people than they would to other young people. That is, they *over-accommodate* their communication to the negative stereotype, whether or not the older person needs that accommodation (→ Intergroup Accommodative Processes). In other cases they might *under-accommodate* to older listeners by ignoring their wishes or by directing them to behave in a particular way. These forms of communication have been termed *patronizing* (Hummert 1994) because they imply that older people are less competent than younger ones (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span). Within the CPA model, these forms of talk are linked to dissatisfying intergenerational communication and the promotion of age stereotypes, with the potential to encourage older people to conform to negative age stereotypes in their behavior. Patronizing communication to older people has been observed in many different intergenerational contexts, including not only nursing homes and hospitals but also family and social settings (Hummert et al. 2004). It can even emerge in the workplace as younger workers underestimate the communication abilities of their older colleagues (McCann & Giles 2002).

Although the link between negative stereotypes of older people and patronizing communication has received the most research attention, age stereotypes of young people appear to be associated with patronizing communication from older people as well (Williams & Nussbaum 2001). Young people report that older people commonly speak to them in ways that they view as patronizing, primarily by being *under-accommodative* to the desires of the young people. Those behaviors include offering unsolicited advice, ignoring their viewpoints, and making negative comparisons between the younger generation and their own.

## SOCIAL ROLES AND INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Just as stereotypes can affect intergenerational communication, so can communication expectations for social roles. First, social role expectations may conflict with age role expectations. Second, long-term role relationships may evolve over the life-span. Both can contribute to problematic intergenerational communication.

As an example of the first case, supervisors are expected to provide instructions to their staff and to give feedback on staff performance. When the supervisor is from an older age group than the staff, this relationship fits cultural notions of age hierarchy. That is, supervisors' authority to provide instruction/evaluation derives not only from their position in the organizational hierarchy but also from their expert knowledge gained



through experience (→ Power in Intergroup Settings). When the supervisor is from a younger age group than some (or all) of the staff, the mismatch between the organizational hierarchy and the age hierarchy may be reflected in workplace communication to the extent that the mismatch is salient to either supervisor or staff. Consequences could include tentative communication behaviors on the part of younger supervisors, which would further undermine their legitimate authority, or confrontational communication between supervisor and staff (→ Organizational Communication).

The parent–child relationship illustrates the second case. The nominal familial roles stay the same across the life-span. That is, the parent is always the parent and the child is always the child, whether the parent is 40 and the child is 10 or the parent is 80 and the child is 50. On the other hand, the nature of the intergenerational communication changes as the relationship between parent and child evolves across the life-span (Hummert & Morgan 2001). There can be many transitions for parents and children that affect their relationship and play out in their communication, including the child becoming an adult, parenthood for the child (and grandparenthood for the parent), death of another family member, retirement of the parent, and advancing age and frailty of the parent, to name a few. Two of these are noteworthy because they require a redefinition of normative expectations for parent and child roles, represent profound disruptions to the established parent–child relationship, and demand new ways of interacting to maintain satisfactory intergenerational relationships: the transition that occurs when the child moves through adolescence to adulthood and that which occurs as the parent becomes frail with advancing age. In the first transition, the parent must relinquish authority to the developing autonomy of the adult child, resulting in a more egalitarian relationship than had existed when the child was younger. In the second transition, the parent and child must negotiate how to maintain the autonomy of the parent as the parent's need for assistance grows. Both require balancing competing needs for independence and dependence through appropriate intergenerational communication (Hummert & Morgan 2001). Intergenerational ambivalence (Pillemer & Luscher 2004) about normative behaviors in the parent and child roles can lead to intergenerational conflict during these transitions. However, conflict and ambivalence may be minimized in families that have developed a conversational family communication style (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002), i.e., one that embraces nonjudgmental and open discussion of sensitive topics (→ Family Communication Patterns).

### **CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

To the extent that cultures differ in their values, they can also have different age stereotypes, norms for social roles, and standards for acceptable intergenerational communication behaviors (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Social Norms). East Asian cultures place greater emphasis on harmony, age hierarchy, and filial piety (i.e., the obligation of young people to respect and support older people) than do western cultures (Zhang & Hummert 2001; → Intercultural and Intergroup Communication; Communication Modes, Asian; Communication Modes, Western). These values might be expected to result in more satisfactory intergenerational communication than in western societies. However,

research shows that intergenerational communication problems are not only found in eastern cultures, but they are at times perceived as more dissatisfying by those in eastern cultures than by those in the west (Williams & Harwood 2004). One explanation offered is that young people in the east feel compelled by their cultural values to act politely toward their elders, but do so reluctantly, perhaps because of the influx of egalitarian western values into Asian cultures. In addition, Zhang and Hummert (2001) point out that the same intergenerational communication behavior may be dissatisfying or satisfying within western and eastern cultures, but for different reasons. They offer as an example older people's reaction to being addressed in familiar terms by young people. While older participants from western cultures find this behavior patronizing because it indicates over-accommodation to negative age stereotypes of weakness and dependence, older participants in China view it as patronizing because it is under-accommodative to the positive age stereotype of experience and high status that underlies the cultural values of filial piety and age hierarchy. These findings illustrate the role of cultural values in standards for intergenerational communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Age Identity and Communication ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Death, Dying, and Communication ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Emotion ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Intergroup Accommodative Processes ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Power in Intergroup Settings ▶ Social Norms ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotypes

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## Intergroup Accommodative Processes

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We constantly interact with people from different social groups to our own: cultures, ethnic groups, genders, ages, occupations, organizations, even clubs (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). We may wish to affiliate with another person or group, or to distinguish ourselves from them. We express this motivation through language and communication, and through our interpretation of others' communication. The main communication dimensions considered here are intergroup (versus interpersonal) and accommodation (versus nonaccommodation). The main theory describing and explaining them is → Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT: Giles 1973; see Gallois et al. 2005, for a review).

### DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH INTEREST

Interest in intergroup processes originated in cross-cultural communication studies by linguists, sociologists, and psychologists. Most people in the world speak two or more

languages, many using different languages for different purposes (*diglossia*). Even monolingual people change accent or communication style in different social contexts. Language and style change to signal important group memberships.

For example, a French–English bilingual in Canada may switch from English to French to signal the importance of being French Canadian, and may even refuse to speak English to an English Canadian. Other choices include changing accent, using more or less formal language, jargon or slang, or particular nonverbal behavior. Similarly, people making changes may be judged by members of their own group (*ingroup*) or another (*outgroup*) as friendly, ingratiating, hostile, arrogant, or stubborn, depending on the context.

Sociologists and sociolinguists have long been interested in the ways that people use language and communication to mark group memberships, and how these change depending on the situation: who, what topic, where, when (Fishman 1971; → Language Varieties). These scholars describe the subtle markers of group and social networks in language. The concept of accommodative intergroup processes, in contrast, derives from the social psychology of language, where there is a stronger emphasis on motivation and perception. Thus, instead of detailing actual language features, social psychologists of language explore the impact of identity, goals, interpersonal and intergroup history, and perceptions on communication. This work is linked to language attitudes (→ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts).

## INTERGROUP PROCESSES AND IDENTITY

Intergroup processes include all aspects of social behavior, including communication, in interactions between members of different groups. They are contrasted with interpersonal processes, or social behavior between people where group membership is not salient or important. Intergroup processes – social judgments, decisions, attributions, and particularly communication – are closely tied to *social identity*, or a person's sense of self as a group member, with the accompanying norms, values, and characteristics (Tajfel & Turner 1979; → Social Identity Theory). People differ in the strength of their social identifications; for one person, gender may be the most important identity, whereas for another gender may matter little but occupation be very important. Salience, or how close and influential an identity is to awareness and behavior, varies across situations. Social identity is salient whenever groups are in conflict or rivalry, whereas personal identity and interpersonal processes tend to be salient in friendly or ingroup contexts.

*Social categories* range from relatively fixed groups like culture, ethnicity, gender, social class, or age to relatively unstable ones like club or organization. Social identity is flexible depending on the intergroup history and its salience in a given context. For example, we may be very aware of cultural membership at the Olympics, but more aware of age in a discussion of retirement planning, and health in a discussion of disability. Likewise, we may be motivated to show identification with another group in one context (e.g., a potential employer during a job interview) and hostility toward that group in another (e.g., a dispute between union and management).

*Accommodative processes* refer to the ways we reflect our attitude and identity through language and communication. We may use expressive language and communication to show friendliness, identification, or solidarity, and thus to bring another person psychologically

closer to us (accommodation). Alternatively, we may communicate hostility, disliking, or rivalry (counter-accommodation), reflect a (perhaps unintentional) patronizing or ingratiating attitude (over-accommodation), or mark our own social identity distinctly from another's (under-accommodation). These three processes indicate *nonaccommodation*. Motivation and perception start the process. Nevertheless, the communication process from motivation through expression to perception and interpretation is not one-way or linear, as these psychological variables change with little conscious awareness. Indeed, social identities are negotiated through the course of intergroup interactions.

Originally (Giles 1973), CAT was called Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT). It described intergroup processes, particularly interethnic or interclass contexts, where people signaled liking for and identification with another by making aspects of speech (e.g., accent) more similar to the other person's. This process is called *convergence*. On the other hand, to signal hostility, rivalry, or dislike, people can make their speech as different as possible from the other's (*divergence*). One common form of divergence is to maintain key markers of one's own group (*maintenance*).

SAT involved a model, related to similarity-attraction theory (Byrne 1971), where liking leads to convergence and disliking to divergence at an interpersonal or intergroup level. Experimental research showed that listeners judge the language and accents of their ingroups more positively than salient outgroups, and prefer members of outgroups who converge to ingroup language or accent. They are likely to diverge when outgroup members make derogatory or hostile remarks about their group. Norms are important, so that people appreciate convergence to the accent and style of a higher social class in job interviews but not in some other situations.

It soon became clear, however, that often communication as measured by outsiders did not reflect communicators' perceptions. For example, in mixed-gender conversations, men and women may adopt exaggerated versions of their own gender's behavior, but perceive themselves as converging to the other gender. Gender-based norms prescribe accommodation through behavior that is objectively divergent. In other cases, people believe they are converging, but lack the linguistic or communicative skills to do so. SAT (and later CAT) distinguished between objective (measurable) and subjective (perceived) accommodation, as well as between linguistic and psychological accommodation, positing that subjective and psychological accommodation are the better predictors of behavior (Giles et al. 1991).

As SAT took more account of contextual subtleties, norms, and perceived behavior, it also expanded beyond intercultural and interclass encounters to include other intergroup interactions. One of the first was *gender*. Later, communication in intergenerational encounters came under scrutiny, and age-related attitudes were found to be signaled by a wide array of linguistic, nonverbal, and discursive moves (Coupland et al. 1988). In this extension, accommodative strategies were expanded beyond convergence, divergence, and maintenance to *nonapproximation strategies* (see below). Contexts examined include health, disabled or able-bodied status, organization and occupation, and cross-institutional encounters. In 1987, to indicate its expansion to diverse intergroup contexts and behaviors, SAT was renamed CAT. CAT then underwent a process of expansion in comprehensiveness and complexity. In 2005, a new version of CAT aimed to retain comprehensiveness with a simpler explanatory framework and propositions (Gallois et al. 2005).

## ACCOMMODATION IN INTERGROUP ENCOUNTERS

Communication accommodation in intergroup contexts is described as a dynamic process between interactants. It begins with *socio-historical context*, including intergroup and interpersonal history along with the larger society's norms and values (→ Intercultural Norms). Socio-historical context mainly characterizes long-term, relatively stable intergroup relations. At the individual level, it is reflected in *initial orientation*, both intergroup and interpersonal, including strength and salience of social identity. Initial orientation is short term and changes from one situation to another. These aspects lead to each person's *accommodative stance*, or motivation to accommodate (or not) to the communicative needs and desires of the other person.

Accommodative stance is expressed in *accommodative strategies*, which each person plans and employs. These include *approximation* – changing communication to be more like the other person (convergence) or emphasizing one's own group markers (divergence or maintenance; see above); *interpretability* – communicative behaviors intended to make the encounter easier or harder for the other person to participate in (e.g., simple language or technical jargon, familiar or unfamiliar topics for the other person); *discourse management* – whether each person communicates to share the conversation (e.g., equal talk or domination, formal or informal language); *interpersonal control* – whether each person treats the other as an individual of equal status (e.g., use of role-bound titles); and *relational expression* – intended to maintain or threaten the relationship or another's status and face (e.g., reassuring language, attacks on face). Overall, stance is aimed toward a more or less intergroup interaction.

Strategies are translated into behavior and tactics, which change across the interaction. There is no one-to-one correspondence between strategies and tactics, or between them and specific behaviors (Jones et al. 1999). Indeed, the same behavior (e.g., smiling or gaze) can indicate accommodation or nonaccommodation, depending on what else is happening in the interaction. In interaction, behavior is perceived and labeled by other interactants, and people make attributions about each other's motives and goals. Finally, these attributions result in intentions about whether and how to interact with the other person or the person's group in the future.

In the twenty-first century, the study of accommodative intergroup processes has moved to close examination of encounters, particularly organizational behavior. One of the most interesting developments examines accommodative processes between police officers and members of the public (e.g., Giles et al. 2007). A key finding is that accommodation by police is likely the strongest predictor of attitudes toward police by people in different cultures and social classes. A challenge for CAT, and for understanding intergroup communication, is the complexity of the theory and whether it can be fully tested. CAT has recently been streamlined, but intergroup communication is a complex and complicated domain that does not lend itself to simple models. In the future, research will need closer links with qualitative approaches to identity and intergroup relations, particularly involving discourse analysis (→ Discourse Analysis). The fascinating area of intergroup accommodation has generated much research over the past three decades, and will generate much more over the next 30 years.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Discourse Analysis ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Intercultural Norms ► Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ► Language Varieties ► Social Identity Theory

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## **Intergroup Communication and Discursive Psychology**

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Relationships and communication between social groups of all kinds is an increasingly pressing topic in a globalized world in which there are conflicts of resources, religions, and ideologies. Discursive psychology's distinct contribution is to try to understand this topic through studying how discourse works in the practical settings in which intergroup issues become live (→ Discursive Psychology). These might include major public events such as a parliamentary debate on migration and asylum, institutional interaction such as where the police interview a suspect who has been accused of racist violence, and everyday talk, such as conversations about politics and nationality over a family meal.

A key point of this tradition of work is that social groups often do not communicate and understand one another directly; instead, social groups become live entities as they are invoked in practical settings through the telling of stories, descriptions, and other constructions in talk and texts. This means that if we are to fully understand conflict and racism we need to understand these discourse processes. That is, we need to describe the building blocks which people draw on to assemble their talk and texts as well as the practices through which the building is done in specific settings. The resources are at their simplest words (“immigrant,” “asylum seeker”), but they can also be broader explanatory units such as the “interpretative repertoires” that Potter and Wetherell describe (1987).

### **DISCOURSE AND RACISM**

A foundational study in this tradition (Wetherell & Potter 1992) studied the talk of professional members of the white majority group in New Zealand (bankers, teachers, and so on) in open-ended interviews, newspaper editorials, and parliamentary debates. These are people who had flown below the radar of traditional research on racism because of its focus on working class authoritarians, yet they are people with power in a society as they are key figures in educational and legal institutions (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication). These people are often caught in a dilemma. They do not wish to support social changes that will transfer power, money or privileges to minority groups (Maori, Polynesian Islanders), yet they do not wish to be heard as bigoted. The study looked at the way these people managed this dilemma using a weave of symbolic resources that Billig (1992) has called the kaleidoscope of common sense.

For example, the members of the white majority group would draw on varied repertoires of culture. At times, a “culture-as-heritage” repertoire could be used to discount Maori political critique as a product of cultural dissatisfaction. At other times, majority group members would draw on a “culture-as-therapy” repertoire to represent young urban Maoris as deficient as Maoris, and in this way they undercut legitimate protests about sovereignty and land as mere psychological disturbance. What this study shows is that although culture discourses can be publicly spoken and treated as positive and sensitive to minority groups, they can nevertheless be used like more traditional racist discourse to maintain notions of natural group differences and to privilege in-group explanations of inequality over intergroup ones.

Billig (1996) has pointed out that in any social group, at a particular time in history, certain phrases or commonplaces have a taken-for-granted quality. They can be spoken with little chance of contradiction. Wetherell and Potter mapped the use of these “maxims of practical politics” across their corpus of interviews, editorials, and debates. They found recurrent uses of phrases like:

Everyone should be treated equally.  
You can't turn the clock backwards.  
Injustices should be righted.  
You have to live in the modern world.  
You have to be practical.



Who could disagree? Who would wish to argue that you need to live in the past or strive for impracticality? Yet the study showed that in practical settings this tissue of maxims was flexibly used in arguments against radical social change and advancement for Maoris. This research highlights how hard it is for anyone who wishes to combat arguments using these resources. Attacking these commonplaces directly risks appearing to attack common sense itself!

### **CONTACT AND DESEGREGATION**

Discursive psychology provides a different way in to considering classic issues of contact, segregation, and integration. Durrheim and Dixon (2005) did extensive work in postapartheid South Africa, combining observational work (→ Observation) in public settings with interviews (→ Interview, Qualitative). In the observational studies they found that there was extensive de facto physical segregation between ethnic groups even without the legal and political framework of apartheid to support it. They interviewed members of the different groups and looked in particular at the way they explained and justified segregation. What was striking was that the white participants still drew on crude racist stereotypes, but in an oblique manner. At the same time they expressed strong support for the principle of desegregation; however, they opposed the manner of its practical implementation. These contrary conversational moves blended together progressive and traditionally racist elements. This is an example of a more general pattern identified in discursive psychological work where egalitarian social arrangements (based around race, gender or age) are strongly supported in principle while their practical implementation is criticized.

Durrheim and Dixon (2005) studied what they called the “lay ontologizing” of their research participants. This involved the justification of segregation through building specific versions of the nature of ethnic groups. Segregation was presented as an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of the basic nature of ethnic groups rather than an irrational outcome of racist thinking. In the course of particular arguments, interviewees drew on what they presented as “anthropological universals” about the way cultures operate to validate segregation. Although this work was carried out in South Africa, similar conclusions have been drawn from American work. Buttny (1999) found that US college students who watched the documentary *Racism 101* about segregation and racism on campus offered a weave of accounts of segregation to make their separateness appear rational and sensible.

### **THE ISSUE OF ESSENTIAL GROUP PROPERTIES**

One of the key issues for social scientists over the past 100 years has been what makes up a social group. Discursive psychologists emphasize a rather different aspect of this question. For them, a key issue is how participants *construct social groups*. How do they treat group members as the same and how do they accentuate differences within the group (Billig 1985)? Another key question is: how are groups treated as having some kind of natural and timeless essence? Indeed, when we talk about “intergroup communication”

it is very hard to do so without assuming a notion of distinct groups that can communicate with one another.

While for social identity theorists the key issue is the cognitive salience of group memberships, for discursive psychologists the issue is how category terms are used in conversations and texts, and how they are made relevant to whatever interaction is happening (Edwards 1998; → Social Identity Theory). That is, how are social groups described in ways that are relevant to actions (justifying segregation, say) and how is an individual's membership of one social group rather than another made something that is relevant to the interaction (→ Identities and Discourse)? For example, when a police officer is interrogating a suspect, when and how does the identity "Muslim" become relevant, say, or "male," or "foreign" (for either the police officer or the suspect)? These are delicate issues to explicate. Edwards (1998) did so in a study of talk in relationship counseling sessions. He tracked the use of categories such as "girls" and "married women" through the material, and identified the way they were invoked very differently by different parties as elements in different actions.

In a different approach to this issue, Verkuyten (2003) studied the way in which Dutch interviewees (from majority and minority groups) drew on ideas about social groups that treated them as having essential and timeless properties. He found that there was a complex relationship between this kind of "essentialist" talking and other kinds of constructions that suggested changing characteristics of social groups, and changing relationships between culture and ethnicity. Speakers drew selectively on these very different ways of treating social groups as they addressed questions of assimilation, group provision, and cultural rights (→ Accounting Research).

Condor (2006) has considered these issues in relationship to nations and nationalism. One important arena for intergroup communication is *communication between nations*. She studied vernacular constructions of nationhood in an English sample. She found that participants could construct the nation as a set of persons, as an object or a geographical location, or as some mix of these things. This mix allowed participants to manage the potential to be heard as assuming national stereotypes by making a distinction, for example, between the past national characteristics and current state structures and policies. Condor's research in particular highlights the subtlety and sophistication of lay reasoning about social groups, while showing also, like Verkuyten, that this complexity can be used in both relatively negative and relatively progressive ways (promoting or impeding social change, for example).

### **GROUP ACTIONS**

One of the characteristics of much of the discursive psychological research on intergroup communication is that it has worked primarily with interview material. This has been particularly effective for uncovering ideological organizations of discourse, notably the way particular constructions of groups, say, are used to legitimize inequality or, in Billig's (1992) metaphor, used to "settle" the populous into particular social relations. However, there is an increasing interest in exploring how these themes are played out in actual interaction (→ Conversation Analysis).

For example, Eriksson and Aronsson (2005) studied classroom lessons in a Swedish schoolroom, where “booktalk” was used to raise cultural issues. This is a formative arena of intercultural socialization, where cultural identities are constructed through a series of more or less implicit contrasts between “us” and “others.” As a final illustration, Augoustinos et al. (2007) studied both the controversy about, and the (failed) enactment of, the Australian government’s apology to indigenous Australians for the forced removal of their children in the 1950s. They showed how the then Australian prime minister, John Howard, mobilized a range of interpretative repertoires emphasizing “togetherness,” “culture,” and “nation,” combined with a number of self-sufficient arguments about practicality, equality, and justice to develop a version of reconciliation that sustained rather than reduced existing inequalities between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians.

From a discursive psychological perspective, issues of intergroup communication are not sufficiently understood using the apparatus of social cognition, prejudice, and attitude theory (→ Attitudes; Social Cognitive Theory). Rather, it is necessary to study both the sets of discursive resources that underpin such communication and the flexible and contradictory use of those resources in practical settings.

SEE ALSO: ► Accounting Research ► Attitudes ► Conversation Analysis ► Discursive Psychology ► Identities and Discourse ► Interview, Qualitative ► Observation ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Social Cognitive Theory ► Social Identity Theory

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# Intergroup Contact and Communication

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Intergroup contact occurs when a member or members of one social group come into contact with member(s) of another social group. Research has focused on whether such contact can influence attitudes about social groups, and whether certain types of contact yield the most positive prejudice-reduction outcomes (→ Attitudes; Stereotypes). Typically, the specific group memberships have significance in the local social milieu (e.g., in North America, race and sex would constitute meaningful dimensions for intergroup contact, whereas hair color would not).

To qualify as “intergroup,” the contact event generally requires at least minimal awareness of group difference among the participants (see “Typicality/Salience,” below). An interaction between a Catholic and a Protestant in Northern Ireland in which both were *completely* unaware of the other’s religious affiliation would not constitute intergroup contact (unless/until they became aware). Work in this area typically makes reference to ingroups and outgroups. Ingroups are the groups in which individuals would categorize themselves, or into which they might legitimately be categorized by others. Outgroups are those to which the individual does not belong (e.g., for a Muslim man, outgroups might include Hindus, women, or children). The primary focus of this entry is on the implications of intergroup contact for intergroup attitudes: does having contact with members of an outgroup change how someone feels about that outgroup (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication)?

## INTERGROUP CONTACT THEORY

The organizing framework for answering this question has been intergroup contact theory, initially elaborated by Allport (1954; for review see Brown & Hewstone 2005). Allport claimed that intergroup contact did indeed have the potential to improve attitudes toward the outgroup, but that facilitating conditions had to be in place: group members should have equal status in the contact situation, they should be cooperating and working toward common goals, their contact should have the support of relevant authorities. This list of *facilitating conditions* was supported by extensive (largely socio-psychological) research over the decades following the publication of Allport’s work. Recent meta-analysis appears to have put the central question to rest: contact *can* change attitudes in a positive direction (Pettigrew & Tropp 2000).

For instance, individuals with more positive relationships with their grandparents tend to have more positive attitudes about older adults in general (Harwood et al. 2005). Various theoretical perspectives have developed under the umbrella of contact theory. Miller (2002) has focused on the extent to which dealing with others as individuals facilitates contact; simply ignoring social categorizations can have positive effects, at least temporarily. Gaertner and Dovidio (2000) have focused on the role of superordinate identification in overcoming intergroup hostilities – moving to a higher level of categorization can shift the focus of an encounter from intergroup to intragroup (e.g., “we’re all

humans"). This same effect can be achieved with cross-cutting categorizations (Brewer 1996); most intergroup situations can be reframed as *intragroup* (e.g., a Muslim man and a Christian man might overcome religious tensions by focusing on their shared gender).

### THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

*Communication* processes have received relatively little attention in intergroup contact research. As noted above, some types of contact are clearly more likely to yield positive outcomes than others. At a most basic level, satisfying, friendly contact should have more positive outcomes than hostile contact, and indeed contact within close relationships (e.g., friendships) is gaining attention as a crucial area for contact theory research (Pettigrew 1998). The socio-psychological work has tended to focus on structural features of the situation (cooperative task, equal status, potential for future contact, equal numbers of ingroup and outgroup members, etc.), but intergroup contact is by definition a communicative event, and specific communication processes might yield different outcomes.

For example, recent work has examined *self-disclosure* as an important communication variable in this context (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). Individuals whose intergroup relationships are high in self-disclosure have less negative attitudes about outgroup members than those with more superficial intergroup relationships (Ensari & Miller 2002; Soliz & Harwood 2006). Self-disclosure develops *depth* in relationships, and reveals more detailed information about the outgroup member. Presumably, this increased information refutes simplistic stereotyped notions concerning the outgroup, thus making it unlikely that straightforward negative perceptions of the outgroup can be maintained (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication).

Related work shows that self-disclosure is associated with perceptions that the outgroup is more heterogeneous (diverse). That is, individuals who engage in extensive reciprocal self-disclosure with an outgroup member find it more difficult to maintain the idea that all members of the outgroup are the same as one another (Harwood et al. 2005). Little work has examined other specific communication processes, but practices such as social support, direct expressions of affection, and accommodation processes would seem ripe for examination as determinants of attitudinal change (→ Intergroup Accommodative Processes). Examining communication will provide one means of specifying the *process* by which contact influences attitudes. As noted by Pettigrew (1998), contact research has done little to specify exactly how it is that contact influences attitudes.

### TYPICALITY/SALIENCE

As discussed in the introductory paragraph, some level of awareness of group memberships is a defining feature of intergroup contact. However, the *extent and nature* of that awareness has been the focus of considerable theorizing and research in recent years. Hewstone and Brown (1986) and Rothbart and John (1985) both presented perspectives arguing that group awareness needed to be relatively high for attitudes about an outgroup member to translate to attitudes about the outgroup as a whole (*generalization*). In addition, much of this work suggests that the specific outgroup member must be seen as

in some way typical or representative of the group for generalization to occur. When outgroup members are perceived as *atypical* of their group, they are likely to be treated as exceptions, and hence will not be influential in determining more general intergroup attitudes (“How *remarkable* that he’s *still* running marathons at age 83!”). This phenomenon is known as subtyping (Brown & Hewstone 2005).

Similarly, when group memberships are not salient, there is little likelihood of a cognitive association developing between the affect induced by the outgroup *individual* and the affect associated with the outgroup *more generally*. Unfortunately, group salience/typicality is often associated with more negative contact experiences, a fact often explained in terms of the anxiety that can be engendered in intergroup situations (Gudykunst 1995; → Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory). Thus, the contact that is most likely to generalize is not the contact that is most likely to yield positive attitudinal outcomes. This seeming paradox has yielded interesting theoretical and empirical developments in recent years, and has been the focus of communication research aimed at uncovering interaction patterns that might yield positive, yet group-salient, contact (Harwood et al. 2006). Unfortunately, research suggests that negative communication may *causally* raise group salience, thus rendering positive outcomes of intergroup contact less likely (Greenland & Brown 1999; Paolini et al. 2006). This work suggests that the positive conclusions of previous contact theory researchers may only occur when contact is defined as “positive” contact (or manipulated to be positive). Real-world intergroup contact, on the other hand, may tend to have negative effects because it is predominantly negative, and negative contact enhances the salience of categories (thus affecting attitudes, but in a negative direction).

### INDIRECT CONTACT

The issue of indirect contact covers three diverse areas of research. First, Wright et al. (1997) showed that knowledge of an ingroup friend’s intergroup relationships can contribute to positive attitudes (the “extended contact effect”). Thus, it is not essential to have intergroup contact oneself. If one’s friends or family have close relationships with outgroup members, the positive affect from one’s knowledge of those relationships appears to extend to the outgroup. Second, Schiappa et al. (2005) have demonstrated a media contact effect, whereby exposure to outgroup members in the media (e.g., Will, a gay character on the show *Will and Grace*) can have positive implications for outgroup attitudes (homophobia). Schiappa et al. provide an explanation for this effect that is focused on the learning about the outgroup that media portrayals can provide. Ortiz and Harwood (2006) provide supporting data for the effects of viewing *Will and Grace* on homophobia, as well as data supporting a different process for the effects which is grounded in social learning theory (→ Media and Group Representations; Social Cognitive Theory).

Third, research has examined broader cultural contact. For instance, Wright and Tropp (2005) demonstrate that bilingual education reduces prejudice, even controlling for other aspects of intergroup contact (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication). In other words, contact with other groups’ cultures can improve attitudes, even when that contact does not include actual people. All these effects are important because *indirect*

contact can maintain relatively high levels of group salience while avoiding intergroup anxiety (precisely because no direct contact is occurring). The media effects are particularly compelling for mass communication scholars, and they also have resonance for those interested in broad social change, given the media's power to reach massive numbers of people.

SEE ALSO: ► Acculturation Processes and Communication ► Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ► Attitudes ► Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ► Media and Group Representations ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Social Cognitive Theory ► Social Stereotyping and Communication ► Stereotypes

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## **Intergroup Dimensions of Organizational Life**

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Organizations are intergroup in nature in that they are collections of people working together to achieve a common set of objectives. These objectives are typically around the creation of innovative products and services that meet the needs of customers, and organizations are always searching for new ways to deliver products and services that offer better quality, more innovation, and higher value than do their competitors. Communication within and across the organization is the central means by which individual and group activities in organizations are coordinated to devise, disseminate and pursue such objectives (→ Bureaucracy and Communication; Control and Authority in Organizations).

Organizational communication involves the sharing of ideas, knowledge, feelings, and perceptions between employees from different parts of the business (→ Organizational Communication). It is even argued that organizations do not exist independently of their employees, but rather they are created and recreated each day by the acts of communication by their members (Jones et al. 2004). Given these key roles of communication, the leaders and managers of organizations are highly focused upon reducing any barriers to effective communication both within the organization and with other companies and their customers (→ Leadership in Organizations). Assisting managers are the efforts of organization and communication researchers who are examining the ways in which organizational structures and their internal environments influence communication.

### **THE INTERGROUP NATURE OF ORGANIZATIONS**

The intergroup nature of organizational life is reflected especially in their structures and cultures. These structures and cultures facilitate but also hinder effective organizational communication (→ Organizational Structure). The major *challenge for managers* is to devise communication strategies and channels that work best in these different structures and cultures so that employees and work teams can achieve corporate goals. Their further challenge is that the process of communication is itself inherently constrained, inefficient,



and flawed (Coupland et al. 1991). The most common organizational structures are the organization of employees into work groups according to their specializations (e.g., in hospitals, such specializations include nurses, doctors, allied health professionals), around departments that bring the various specializations together to deliver various services (e.g., outpatients, surgery, emergency); these departments are often organized as larger collectives known as divisions (e.g., Divisions of Medicine, Surgery, Mental Health, and Clinical Support Services). To produce the integrated services and products that customers increasingly demand, modern organizations use a wide range of formal and informal mechanisms to create horizontal and vertical flows of communication between individuals, teams, departments, and larger divisions (→ Diversity in the Workplace; Learning Organizations).

The other intergroup feature of organizational life is that each work group, department or division has its *own organizational culture* that influences how employees perceive the communication from their managers, supervisors, suppliers, and customers. According to Schein (1990), an organizational culture is a system of shared beliefs and values that develops within an organization or within its sub-units, which influences the behavior and performance of its members. Organizational cultures can be strong socializers of employee behavior, and in turn, employees identify with the cultural roles and rules that influence a wide range of behaviors, including the timing, methods, and styles of communication from superiors, co-workers, and customers.

Studies of *higher performing organizations* (Gulati & Kletter 2005; Pfeffer & Veiga 1999) reveal that they are more adept at creating structures and associated organizational cultures that motivate employees to communicate and to work in more efficient and cooperative ways than the employees of their competitors. High-performing organizations recognize the intergroup nature of organizational life and facilitate communication through policies, structures, and communication technologies that encourage employees to work across boundaries. According to Pfeffer (2005), such organizations use self-managed teams and decentralization as basic elements of organizational design. In addition, in order to make all employees feel important and committed, they attempt to reduce the status differences that separate individuals and groups (→ Organizational Conflict). Communication is enhanced by making opportunities for employees from different parts of the organization and of different status to interact and to meet in less formal settings. Importantly, there are a number of theoretical concepts that can assist organizations in designing communication strategies and policies that operate across this variety of organizational categories and memberships.

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

To describe how communication is influenced by the intergroup nature of organizations, communication and organizational researchers have developed a range of concepts that highlight what needs to be identified, and what needs to be managed if organizations are to achieve their stated financial and other objectives. A key concept is *social identity*, the part of the individual concept which derives from our membership of social groups such as families, communities, clubs, and organizations (Tajfel & Turner 1986). Social identity is a fundamental psychological variable that shapes individuals' attitudes and behaviors.

In the workplace, employees can hold multiple identifications with social groups that include being members of teams, departments, and the organization (→ Social Identity Theory).

The targets of this identification for most organizational members are the individual (e.g., personal interest), one's occupation, the work group, and the organization. Based on categorization principles, when people define or categorize themselves as a member of a self-inclusive group (e.g., a work team), distinctions between the *ingroup* and *outgroup* members are accentuated, and differences among ingroup members are minimized. In particular, as a consequence of the motivation to enhance their self-esteem, employees aspire to belong to groups at work that are judged to be better in terms of valued attributes like status or their role in the organization (Amiot et al. 2006; Hogg & Terry 2001). This motivation to enhance the reputation of one's ingroup can result in employees favoring the attributes, behaviors, and activities of their ingroup over outgroups. At worst, such strong memberships and ingroup bias can completely disrupt and distort communicative relationships.

Significantly, these theoretical concepts around social identity and intergroup processes help us to understand the problematic nature of communication in organizations, and the role of employee identities in explaining why different meanings are attached to the same communication from a manager or supervisor. A number of broad *integrative models and studies* (Scott et al. 1998; Hogg & Terry 2001; Jimmieson et al. 2004) show that levels and targets of employee identification are linked to employee perceptions of organizational communication, perceptions of threat to them and their groups, their choice of coping strategies, and outcomes such as employee well-being, job satisfaction, and commitment. In particular, the application of social identity concepts to communication at work reveals that employees judge the effectiveness and quality of communication during times of organizational change differently depending upon the groups they identify with, and their perceptions of the negative impacts of change upon the status and well-being of their group memberships (→ Change Management and Communication; Organizational Change Processes). In turn, these perceptions of threat and communication influence employees' choice of coping strategies, and also impact upon their levels of job satisfaction and intentions to stay in their jobs.

Despite such evidence, according to Jones et al. (2004), research into organizational processes from an intergroup perspective is still modest. Conceptually, the research area still lacks a theory of intergroup communication that underpins the field, and the field of intergroup communication in organizational settings relies heavily at present upon the use of aspects of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1986). However, this theory is concerned with intergroup relations and not intergroup *communication* per se. One result is an imbalance in favor of interpersonal and intragroup studies over investigations of intergroup communication.

In terms of the *methods* used to investigate the intergroup nature of organizational communication, the vast majority of studies use → surveys completed by lower- to middle-level employees (→ Research Methods; Interview, Quantitative). These self-administered questionnaires using multi-item rating → scales ask employees to report upon their perceptions of the organization, their identification with various groups and aspects of the organizational culture, and their levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Criticisms of this field also point to the need for more longitudinal studies, as well as a greater use of multiple methods to collect employee

opinions, including the application of interviews, observational studies (→ Observation), → discourse analysis, and action research methods to investigate the opinions of more diverse groups of employees than at present. In particular, more interpretative and empirical work is needed into the examination of communicative expressions of identification, and the social processes in organizations through which employees build and manage multiple and shifting identities, especially in response to structural and cultural change to organizations.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE**

There are a number of *key messages* for managers and supervisors in how to design the nature of their communication to their employees. Employees' levels of identification with various groups like their teams and professions, or with the organization itself, do influence their perceptions of organizational communication, and outcomes for employees such as their levels of job satisfaction and their intentions to stay or leave. Identification with groups at work is related to employees' attitudes toward communication, organizational change, the likelihood of intergroup conflict, and the psychological well-being of employees. Well-designed organization-wide communication strategies that use a broad range of communication channels are more likely to reinforce employees' feelings of organizational identification, increasing their commitment to the organization and their intentions to stay (Jablin 1987).

In addition, feelings of workplace uncertainty today that are often associated with continuous change are reduced by providing employees with timely and accurate information concerning the likely impact of changes to them as well as to their groups, either through formal or informal communication channels. Employees who receive higher levels of change-related information report higher levels of psychological well-being, client engagement, and job satisfaction (Jimmieson et al. 2004). This provision of communication is especially important to lower-status groups of employees, who feel more threatened by any announcement of change and who show more heightened sensitivity to conditions that alter the status relationships in their workplaces (Terry et al. 2001).

SEE ALSO: ► Bureaucracy and Communication ► Change Management and Communication ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Control and Authority in Organizations ► Discourse Analysis ► Diversity in the Workplace ► Interview, Quantitative ► Leadership in Organizations ► Learning Organizations ► Observation ► Organizational Change Processes ► Organizational Communication ► Organizational Conflict ► Organizational Structure ► Research Methods ► Scales ► Social Identity Theory ► Survey

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## Intermediality

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Intermediality refers to the interconnectedness of modern media of communication. As means of expression and exchange, the different media depend on and refer to each other, both explicitly and implicitly; they interact as elements of particular communicative strategies; and they are constituents of a wider cultural environment.

Three conceptions of intermediality may be identified in communication research, deriving from three notions of what is a medium (→ Media). First, and most concretely, intermediality is the combination and adaptation of separate *material vehicles* of representation and reproduction, sometimes called *multimedia*, as exemplified by sound-and-slide shows or by the audio and video channels of television. Second, the term denotes communication through several *sensory modalities* at once, for instance, music and moving images. Third, intermediality concerns the interrelations between media as *institutions* in society, as addressed in technological and economic terms such as convergence and conglomeration.

As a term and an explicit theoretical concept, intermediality has perhaps been most widely used in reference to multiple modalities of experience (→ Modality and Multimodality), as examined in aesthetic and other humanistic traditions of communication research (→ Aesthetics). Crediting an 1812 use of “intermedium” by the British poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in 1965 Dick Higgins reintroduced “intermedia” to art theory in the context of the Fluxus movement (Higgins 2001). In accordance with an avant-garde orientation, the intermedia terminology has been employed to stress the innovative or transgressive potential of artworks that articulate their message in the interstices of two media forms. In comparison, *mixed media* suggests a more neutral, instrumental combination, whereas *Gesamtkunstwerk*, attributed to the composer Richard Wagner, holds out the promise of reintegrating, originally, the theater, music, and visual arts of ancient Greek drama. In media studies, an aesthetic focus on intermedia relations has been placed in historical perspective by research on how a given medium “remediates” other media (Bolter & Grusin, 1999; → Remediation).

The interrelations between media as material vehicles of social interaction have been explored, to a degree, in empirical media history, even if single-media histories may still be more common than broad-based cultural histories centered in the media (→ Media History). Instead, the differences, similarities, and complementarities between historically shifting media have been the focus of so-called medium theory since the foundational work by Harold Innis and Marshall McLuhan (Meyrowitz 1994; → Medium Theory). This tradition seeks to account for the distinctive characteristics of various media, simultaneously as physical resources, sources of psychological experience, and means of social organization across space and time, including the interplay between face-to-face and technologically mediated communication.

As institutions, the modern media are evidently interrelated, both with each other and with other key social entities. The news media, arguably, make up a fourth estate and a common forum of debate regarding other institutions of power; entertainment media provide packages of content, rather than single messages, as illustrated by feature films that become television series, books, and computer games. Just as media texts enter into a cultural web of intertextuality (→ Text and Intertextuality), the media can be said to jointly constitute a social infrastructure of intermediality.

The various “inter” structures of media are currently being reshaped as part of an open-ended process of digitization. What used to be understood as separate media – at least in terms of their technological bases – might, in the future, be produced, distributed, and consumed as one (inter)medium. Current forms of *hypertext* and *hypermedia* (Nelson 1965) indicate how the interrelations between texts and media may increasingly constitute explicit and operational means of navigation, rather than being primarily matters of audience interpretation and use. At the institutional level, however, the jury is still out on the wider tendencies towards a *convergence* or *divergence* of media in terms of their technological development and social applications (Gordon 2003). Also, the potential combination and interchangeability of different sensory modalities in various forms of technologically mediated communication are unresolved.

While it has become almost common sense to think of society as a mediated network of information and communication – an information (Porat 1977), control (Beniger 1986), or network (Castells 1996) society – the specific status of the “media” category

remains in question. Historical developments continue to challenge theoretical systematics. The 1960s witnessed the coming of a general media concept as well as early considerations about intermedia relations. Digitization represents an opportunity for research to revisit past, present, and future definitions of media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media ▶ Media History ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ Remediation ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# **International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)**

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The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) is an international professional organization in the field of media and communication research. Its aims are to promote global inclusiveness and excellence in research, to stimulate interest in media and communication research, to disseminate information about research results, and to provide a forum where researchers can meet to exchange information about their work.

## **HISTORY**

The history of the IAMCR is closely linked to the development of a proposal first initiated by the → UNESCO Committee on Technical Needs in the Mass Media in 1946.

This committee drafted a constitution for an “International Institute of the Press and Information, designed to promote the training of journalists and the study of press problems throughout the world.” The United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information (held in 1948 at Geneva), in its resolution no. 34, took note of the proposal submitted by UNESCO to establish under the auspices of that agency an International Institute of Press and Information, and, considering that such an institute could be conducive to the improvement of the quality of information, requested “the Economic and Social Council to invite Governments and professional organizations, national and international, to examine together the possibility of implementing this proposal and, if it is found practicable, to co-operate in carrying it out” (United Nations 1948; Wells 1987, 59–80).

Actively involved in this 1948 conference were Fernand Terrou (who became the first president of the IAMCR, Jacques Kayser (the first vice president), and Jacques Bourquin (IAMCR president from 1964 to 1972). All three played an important role in the drafting of article 19 (on freedom of information) of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Fernand Terrou, director of the Institut Français de Presse, was the leading advocate of the idea that an international association should be created, “responsible for promoting throughout the world the development of the scientific study of problems relating to the important sources of information (press, cinema, radio, TV, etc.)” (quoted in Santoro 1992). In the view of Terrou no scientific progress was possible without extensive international exchange and collaboration.

The 1952 UNESCO General Conference authorized the director general to proceed with the proposal, and two lines of action were developed as a result. One culminated in the establishment of *training centers for journalists*, the first being established in Strasbourg in 1956. The other development led to the establishment of a separate international organization for the promotion and exchange of scientific research (→ Journalism Education). In 1953 a UNESCO expert meeting began the compilation of a list of *projects in mass communication research* around the world, and in 1955 a study entitled *Current Mass Communication Research* was published. In November 1956 the UNESCO General Conference authorized the director general “to promote coordination of activities of national research institutes in the field of mass communication in particular by encouraging the establishment of an international association of such institutes” (UNESCO 1956). In December of that year an international conference took place at Strasbourg where a committee (with Mieczyslaw Kafel from Poland, Marcel Stijns from Belgium, and David Manning White from the US) was formed that prepared the constituent assembly of what was to become the IAMCR. This constituent assembly took place on December 18 and 19, 1957, at UNESCO headquarters. Fernand Terrou of France was elected as the first president with Jacques Kayser (France), Jacques Bourquin (Switzerland), and Raymond Nixon (US) as vice presidents. It is remarkable that, at the height of the East–West ideological confrontation, colleagues from both western and eastern Europe were involved in the establishment of this international research organization, in which academics from developing countries also participated. The main aim of the association was to facilitate the exchange of methods and findings between research institutes, and to promote personal contacts among individual members. A related objective was to seek recognition for mass communication as a subject for independent scientific investigation.

The first general assembly was held in October 1959 in Milan, where Raymond Nixon (US) became president. The first leaders of the association came mainly from journalism, journalism training, and the print media, and particularly from European countries. The first priorities became the enrolment of researchers from various disciplines, the broadening of the geographical distribution of members to 60 countries, and the increase of numbers to 1000 members. In the course of the 1990s this expanded further to the representation of some 80 countries through some 2000 individual and institutional members.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH UNESCO AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS**

From its constituent assembly onwards the IAMCR has maintained a close consultative affiliation with UNESCO. This relationship includes active contributions to expert meetings, to the production of key documents such as the 1968 “Media and Society” study (Halloran 1970), providing consultative services for the MacBride Commission, among others, participation in meetings of the General Conference and in programs such as the International Program for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

At most IAMCR meetings representatives of UNESCO are present as observers. In the 1980s and 1990s the IAMCR also developed working relations with other UN bodies, such as the ECOSOC and WIPO. In the 1990s links were established with regional research and education associations such as the Asian Media and Information and Communication Centre (AMIC), the Latin American Association of Communication Researchers (ALAIIC), the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), the Caribbean Communication Association (CARICOM), and the European Communication Research and Education Research Association (ECREA). Associate memberships were established with, among others, the → International Communication Association (ICA), the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), the International Federation for Information and Documentation (FID), and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

In the early 1990s the name of the association was changed to the International Association for Media and Communication Research. This change of name reflected the widening scope of the association’s research interests.

## **ACTIVITIES**

Over the fifty years of its existence the aims and scope of the association have remained focused on the creation of a global forum where researchers and others involved in media and communication can meet and exchange information about their work. The association wants to stimulate interest in media and communication research, to disseminate information about research, and to create a broad constituency of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers (→ Communication Research and Politics).

The association has organized biannual *scientific conferences* and in the intermittent years smaller conferences. Due to its global commitment conferences were successively held in western Europe, the third world, and eastern Europe, e.g., in Leicester, Buenos Aires, and Prague. Among the key themes of the biannual conferences were: information



and national development, mass media and the individual, information and social integration, communication and development, peace and communication, intercultural communication, communication and democracy, mass communication and cultural identity, communication technology, and mass media and international understanding.

The leading decision-making organ of the association is the representative body of the membership at large, the general assembly that meets biannually. Decisions for the general assembly are prepared and executed by an international council (that meets annually) under the leadership of the president and the vice presidents. From its beginning the IAMCR has been linked with the *protection of freedom of expression and opinion* (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The first IAMCR president, Fernand Terrou (the French delegate to the UN conference on Freedom of Information in 1948), and the third president, Jacques Bourquin, made important contributions to the definition and later codification of the international right to freedom of information. During the first General Assembly at Milan in 1959 President Terrou addressed the need to review the basic right to freedom of information and put it in the context of real-life social conditions within which this right has to be realized.

Throughout its history the association has at different moments adopted public statements on such issues as the protection of journalists, the right to communicate, freedom of research, support for international communication policies in the service of democratic development, and the need to overcome underdevelopment of communication facilities in the third world (→ Development Communication). The concern about the public presence of communication research and its role in public life has been a leading motive throughout the years. This became very concrete in the contributions the IAMCR made to the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003 (Geneva) and in 2005 (Tunis) (→ Information Society).

The public presence of the IAMCR has, over the years, given rise to controversial *debates on the politicization of research*. Two intellectual positions clashed. On the one hand there was the position that demanded explicit political choices, and on the other hand the position of those who feared that taking public political positions would threaten the independence of academic research.

The *identifying characteristics of the association* can be summed up as its ecumenical nature (in the sense of interdisciplinary and multi-method approaches to research topics), its global inclusiveness, which is reflected in its use of three official languages (English, French, and Spanish), and the active encouragement of the participation of young scholars, women, and researchers from economically disadvantaged regions of the world.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia  
 ► Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication Research and Politics ► Development Communication ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Information Society ► International Communication Association (ICA) ► Journalism Education ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► UNESCO

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## **International Communication**

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The definition of “international communication” is constantly in flux. Whether we have in view sociologist Émile Durkheim’s suggestion in his classic work *Elementary forms of religious life* (1917) that relations between different Aboriginal tribes constituted international communication, or historians’ and political scientists’ studies of diplomacy among modern nation-states, or the rush of contemporary theorizing on globalization processes and the roles of communication media within them (→ Globalization Theories), it is wise to be cautious before consecrating our assumptions as to how this field of study should be framed. In order to try to avoid that trap, this entry begins with a brief history of this research area. It will mainly focus on more recent research, which arguably has been conducted within ten categories. At the end, brief pointers will be thrown up to suggest some ongoing problems.

The ten proposed categories are: (1) theories of international communication; (2) core international communication processes; (3) global media firms; (4) global media policies; (5) global news flows; (6) world cinema; (7) → development communication; (8) the → Internet; (9) → intellectual property law; and (10) nonhegemonic communication flows. Items 6–9 in this list have been organized under separate editorial categories, so will receive only passing attention here. Analysis of intercultural interpersonal communication is also highly relevant, but to date mostly takes place under the heading of nonmediated communication, so is reserved for entries under that aegis (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication; Interpersonal Communication).

These categories are of course permeable. For example, → Arab satellite TV news, the emergence of → China's Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) global English-language TV news services, and the attempt to create a regional Latin American satellite service (→ TeleSur) have implications both for the study of global news flows and processes, and for analyses that argue American cultural influence is saturating the globe. The global advertising industry has profound implications for the future of most media (→ Advertising: Global Industry), over and above its intrinsic cultural influences (themselves almost infinitely disputable).

A critical issue requires flagging immediately, namely the distinction between "international" in the comparative sense (e.g., different national media systems), and in the rigorously global sense (e.g., global media firms such as → Disney, or diasporic media that serve migrant communities; → Migrant Community Media). The distinction is useful, but may dissolve somewhat in the process of analyzing actual cases (Downing 1996). Do the global music industry, global → public relations firms, and global tourism firms (→ Tourism Industry) operate homogeneously because they are global, or is it essential for their success to have their operations molded by specific regional and local cultural realities? Comparative research might productively be conducted not only between nation-states or among minority-ethnic media projects in different places, but also within a single global media corporation (→ Comparative Research).

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

In terms of a concerted wave of interest in international communication, it would be fair to say that the propaganda operations of the great powers in the twentieth century's two world wars were mostly responsible for generating sustained interest in this field.

### **Earlier Research Decades in the USA**

Some of the best-known US founding names in communication research, such as political scientist → Harold Lasswell, first addressed the → propaganda issue early in the 1920s. The rise of dictatorships after World War I, their successful deployment of then-new media, and the emergence of the long Cold War after World War II entrenched this issue in government-funded research priorities. At that juncture, the research term of choice was "psychological warfare" rather than "propaganda," because of its seemingly scientific and less biased connotation (→ War Propaganda). Wilbur Schramm, another major US figure in the earlier history of communication research, was one of a number of individuals, including → Daniel Lerner and Lucian Pye, who contributed many studies to this area, most of them government-classified at the time (Simpson 1994; → Schramm, Wilbur).

Comparative media systems analysis received its first major book-length study in the USA in the shape of *Four theories of the press* (Siebert et al. 1956). The theories in question were normative, representing the supposedly official views of what media should strive to achieve in four contrasting polities: authoritarian, libertarian, Soviet, and "social responsibility." "Authoritarian" and "Soviet" were distinguished from each other in terms of the readiness of sovietized dictatorships to harness media for political goals, rather than simply

keep them from disturbing the political order, alleged to be their typical role in non-Soviet dictatorships. “Libertarian” meant a parallel free market in goods and ideas (not the rigorously free market philosophy of contemporary Libertarians). “Social responsibility” signified media, rather than simply being commercial enterprises or a state monopoly, as a public trust. Much critiqued in later decades for its Cold War and other assumptions, the book nonetheless provided a beginning for further comparative media research (→ Political Communication Systems).

Given the competitive dynamic of the Cold War for global leadership, and perhaps especially the long furor within the political class in the west following China’s 1949 adhesion to the Soviet bloc, a third major stimulus to international communication research was “third world” development, often framed at the time, as Escobar has vitally demonstrated, by the → “modernization” schema (Escobar 1994). Unless the west could assure “modernization,” the presumption went, more and more nations might fall under the Soviet–Chinese spell and risk being lost to the west. The most influential international media study proceeding from this assumption was Daniel Lerner’s 1958 analysis of Turkey and five Arab states, *The passing of traditional society* (Lerner 1958). Lerner defined media as pivotal to successful “modernization.” In 1962 his book was followed by → Everett Rogers’ *Diffusion of innovations*, currently in its 5th edition (Rogers 1962/2003), which became virtually the “bible” of American foreign aid projects involving development communication on how to propagate “modernization” in practice in so-called underdeveloped societies (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

### Established Paradigms Attacked

Challenges to these international communication paradigms began to emerge at the close of the 1960s. The first was Herbert Schiller’s *Mass communications and American empire* (1969/1992), the first in a series of publications presenting a radically different perspective that culminated in his much-cited essay “Not yet a post-imperialist order” (Schiller 1991). In the 1980s Schiller’s work turned to the newly developing international circuits enabled by information technologies, adding to his earlier mass-oriented research. As opposed to the authors already cited, who saw US global involvement as fundamentally benign, Schiller argued that mass-exported US culture and new information technologies were part and parcel of US – later, transnational – global corporate hegemony and military interventionism.

A second challenge to the then-dominant paradigm came from research by Belgian sociologist Armand Mattelart. Living in Chile since 1962 as representative of a Vatican project for development, he co-authored with his wife Michèle Mattelart an analysis of US-funded mainstream and local oppositional media during the 1970–1973 experiment in Marxist social democracy undertaken by Chile’s Popular Unity government. It was published first in Spanish (1973), then in French (1974), and finally in English (Mattelart & Mattelart 1980). It raised very basic issues, regarding the international politics of media communication in a situation of extreme crisis, which were far removed from the assumptions of political stability and economic affluence implicitly underpinning mainstream media research in the USA and western Europe.

Armand Mattelart's and Chilean novelist Ariel Dorfman's *Como leer al Pato Donald* ("How to read Donald Duck"; 1971), an analysis of underlying conservative ideologies in Disney comic books published in Latin America, was another notable intervention from outside the globally dominant US communication research establishment. This book, despite the difficulty of its conceptual language, aroused deep passions. While the Chilean dictator who overthrew the Popular Unity government had all Spanish-language copies burned, the Disney Corporation nearly succeeded in getting the US Customs to ban the import of the English-language version, arguing it infringed their copyright. It was, nonetheless, translated into a dozen languages.

Schiller's work was frequently dismissed by leading US communication researchers as either conspiratorial or implicitly pro-Soviet or both, but his analyses penetrated far and wide internationally, even among those who disagreed with them. Mattelart's work, either singly or in combination with Michèle Mattelart, and heir to a Catholic social justice tradition, took longer to penetrate the Anglophone research community because of translation issues, but much of it is now translated into English. It is substantial, including studies of international advertising, Nicaraguan media during the Sandinista period (1979–1989), the history of international communication, and communication and multicultural policies. His work pays much more attention to cultural dimensions than Schiller's, which restricted itself to political economy (→ Political Economy of the Media). In many countries outside the USA at present, Schiller and Mattelart are at least as well known as, and often more highly regarded than, Lerner, Siebert et al., Schramm, or Rogers.

### **Results and Newer Trends**

Whatever position may be taken on the respective merits of these competing paradigms, there can be little doubt that the clash opened up the field of international communication to a much wider set of perspectives and arguments. Since then, and as an additional result of scholarly reflection and research on the momentous international potential of satellite communications and computer networks, the field has continued to grow apace (→ Satellite Communication, Global).

Global communication policy initiatives, often targeted in some fashion on the ongoing crises of development around the planet, have further underscored the importance of international communication to the contemporary world (→ Free Flow of Information; International Communication Agencies; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; UNESCO). The rise of the global Internet and the spectacular global explosion of intellectual property issues in the digital communication era have equally pushed international communication issues increasingly to the top of the research agenda (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services; Internet: International Regulation).

### **World Cinema**

A paradox remains: world → cinema, although perhaps the aspect of international communication to be studied earliest along with foreign diplomacy, was analyzed within a very singular framework in the west, at least until quite recently – one dominated by

specialists trained in literary method. Thus, textual analysis of national cinemas or of individual film directors' works was the primary focus. The political economy of global distribution and empirical studies of reception have only recently come to get the attention they equally deserved.

Indeed, the field long followed a certain global pecking order, with Hollywood center frame, along with the art cinemas of Europe, the Soviet bloc in its heyday, and Japan, whereas Indian, Latin American, Chinese, Arab, and African cinemas were barely recognized (some Iranian cinema work has recently been admitted to the canon). Cinema was frequently studied out of relationship to television, befitting its western-university definition as an art, in contradistinction to television, which was defined as a mass commercial product. For all these reasons, it is only with the emergence of → cultural studies approaches, and the more recent revival of interest in cultural economy and the political economy of culture, that global cinema is coming to be integrated within the general flow of international communication research (e.g., Miller et al. 2005; Badley et al. 2006; → Bollywood; Hong Kong Cinema).

## RECENT INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION SCHOLARSHIP

### Theories of International Communication

The three major “lenses” through which recent scholarship has sought to analyze international communication processes are cultural imperialism, cultural hybridization, and globalization (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; Hybridity Theories).

The first of these three was central to the rather binary debates between mainstream US communication researchers summarized above. It came in different forms, with “media imperialism” being a perhaps more cautious subset of the larger term “cultural imperialism.” The latter could cover education, religion, business practice, consumerism, law, governmentality, dress, marriage customs, and still other cultural dimensions as well as media. The fundamental argument was that cultural transmission was an integral component of colonialism along with military conquest and economic exploitation, so that even after the demise of formal colonial rule in the post-World War II decades, the cultural impact established during colonial days was both intact and continually refreshed. The argument also incorporated the rise of the US as a global superpower, and proposed that it had followed in the footsteps of Britain and France in pursuing cultural domination. The roles of media for the US imperial project were argued to be all the more paramount as the twentieth century proceeded, and a media-saturated environment began to emerge (→ Americanization of the Media). Nonetheless, it was possible, by using the term “media imperialism” as a metaphor for US global media influence, to acknowledge that reality without necessarily linking it to the larger claim that the USA is an empire.

The approach began to come under serious fire with John Tomlinson's *Cultural imperialism* (1991). Tomlinson argued that the concept of cultural imperialism required two assumptions, the first being a directing center, a cultural imperialism planning agency so to speak, and the second that “third world” audiences and readers were peculiarly malleable and gullible, incapable of interpreting western media fare in their

own ways in the light of their own cultural formations. Since these two assumptions were very far from proven, he proposed instead that discourses of cultural imperialism were a form of expressing discontent at the juggernaut of modernity and the widespread sense of impotence in its path. A detailed case study of a two-decade-long US cultural propaganda endeavor in western Europe provides a nuanced and highly illuminating counterpoint to both cultural imperialism theories and to Tomlinson's critique (Saunders 1999).

The hybridization metaphor represented a different approach to critiquing the notion that western or US cultural imperialism was busy flattening all in its path, homogenizing everything, so-called McDonaldization. Instead, it insisted on a degree of agency among global audiences, not simply in Tomlinson's sense of disputing global passivity in principle, but much more in researching just how global audiences massaged foreign cultural products and perspectives and hybridized them (Kraidy 2005). Argentinean sociologist Néstor García Canclini (1989/1995) is only one of a number of Latin American scholars to emphasize the forms of hybridization and cultural challenge evident in everyday life, derived from Latin America's own long cultural history of Aboriginal, European, and African exchange, as well as more recent US cultural penetration. This is one of many instances that could be cited of how immersion in a non-western culture helps to frame scholarly research on international communication in important ways.

At the same time, both Kraidy and García Canclini stress how cultural hybridization does not evacuate asymmetrical power in a happy balance. Straubhaar (1991), in a much-cited article, argued fairly similarly that "cultural proximity" often counterbalanced the weight of US cultural exports in determining audience TV rankings, and defined Latin American media culture as one of asymmetrical interdependence with the USA. Sinclair, likewise, has developed arguments based upon the success or failure of television exports in particular geolinguistic regions, which may or may not be contiguous, as in the case of the Anglophone countries (Sinclair 1999). Overall, analysis of global television flows tends strongly to confirm these perspectives (→ International Television).

"Globalization" became a tremendous "buzzword" in the later 1990s and into the next decade, a sure sign that it meant different things to different scholars. For some it was virtually a synonym for cultural imperialism, for others for the spread of → modernity or "postmodernity," and for others its primary referent was economic, the spread either of free markets, or of fundamentalist free-market economic doctrine (→ Postmodernism and Communication). However the term was defined, the roles of computer networks, satellites, and global media firms were plainly central to the processes under review, as was the growth of major cities as global communication nodes, "technopoles" (Castells 1996–1998). At this point, too, contemporary urban geography and international communication scholarship frequently found themselves face to face. At the same time, some critics continued vigorously to dispute the utility of the term, especially as applied to the media and information sectors (Sparks 2007).

### **Core International Communication Processes**

The overall fabric that recent international communication research has focused upon involves its historical antecedents, the growth of communication satellite uses, the advertising industry, public relations (→ Public Relations: Global Firms), the → music

industry, the tourism industry, international radio and television (→ International Radio), global surveillance (→ Security and Surveillance Agencies), and the thesis of Americanization. War propaganda closes the list.

The first entry noted is significant in relation to “*globalization*” theories, in the sense that rather too many discussions of the term presume it is self-evidently a very recent phenomenon. Its analysis of the initial phase in the latter nineteenth century of laying submarine oceanic cables for telegraphy, and later for telephony, is an important corrective to ahistorical analyses (→ Telegraph, History of). Optical fiber oceanic cables continue to serve crucial roles alongside satellites. The entry also references recent historical scholarship that calls into question the notion of competitive colonialism as the driving force in the ocean cable-laying process.

The next four entries listed above – advertising, public relations, music, and tourism – are important correctives to conventional discussions of international communication in a different way. While considerable attention is almost always paid to television, then radio, and then satellites and cable, and more recently to the Internet, it is curious that advertising, in particular, with its centrality to media finance in most countries, is so often omitted. Public relations firms, commercial and political, are also crucial sources of global news as well as of the technology of winning elections (or attempting to) that is spreading across the planet (→ Election Campaign Communication).

The *global music industry* is often marginalized by older scholars as a youth culture phenomenon, which in significant part it is, but the question of precisely who is marginalizing whom in this process is worth considering carefully. The global tourism industry is on one level the point at which individuals and groups from different nations meet physically and in certain senses communicate with each other, though generally the communication is narrowly structured in terms of specific services, and often the construction of tourist enclaves is sharply different from life in general for local inhabitants. In all four cases, however, the concepts of cultural imperialism, hybridization, and globalization raise interesting questions about the international communication processes involved.

*International radio broadcasting* may look to some eyes rather passé in the twenty-first century, but that would likely signify the usual geographical location of the reader. Radio continued to be, at the latter end of the 2000s, the communication medium par excellence in most parts of the world and for much of the world’s public. Its relative cheapness, portability, and lack of literacy requirement would continue to keep it a very live option for many. Only in commercially advanced nations is radio basically an adjunct of the recorded music industry. Furthermore, in order to understand the twentieth century, never mind the twenty-first, omitting the international radio broadcasters, whether the → BBC World Service, → Voice of America, → Radio France Internationale. or still others, would seriously distort our grasp of global communication processes.

On a more somber note, international communication also involves *mass surveillance*, which digital technologies have made ever more sophisticated. Voice recognition and filtering software for telephony has progressed in leaps and bounds in recent decades, and email is very hard to protect against the really advanced decrypting devices available to security services (Bamford 2001). Closed circuit TV in public places has become routine in commercially advanced nations. The legitimation for this dramatic expansion has



rested upon crime, undocumented immigration, and terrorism, all of them real, but policy debates continue to reverberate, with claims and counterclaims about the dividing line between protection and privacy (Lyon 2007).

*War propaganda* is hardly a new phenomenon (Knightley 2004), but most would concur that it developed newly exigent requirements during the two twentieth-century world wars and the Cold War. It took two forms, one the projection of external propaganda to the enemy nation, both to its general public and to its troops in combat, the other domestic propaganda, typically representing the enemy as subhuman and unnervingly aggressive. Dower's remarkable study of the domestic propaganda processes in both the USA and Japan in the Pacific war confirms this (Dower 1986). The US propaganda apparatus represented the Japanese as rats, apes, and insects, and the Japanese apparatus portrayed the Americans as both vicious and effete.

### **Global Media Firms**

The leading global players (→ Bertelsmann Corporation; News Corporation; Samsung Corporation; Sony Corporation; Time Warner Inc.) operate in multiple countries, even if they maintain head offices in one, and usually have a considerable variety of media interests (e.g., cinema, publishing, music, video games, theme parks), not only one (→ Global Media, History of). Contrasted with firms outside the media and information sector such as General Motors or ExxonMobil, these companies, though very large, are considerably smaller in financial terms. Nonetheless, although media products are tradable commodities, it would be conceptually sloppy even to try to establish a ratio of cultural impact to the quantity of money spent on producing, distributing, or using them.

These are not the only major global media firms, a number of which are discussed in other entries. Some Internet firms, notably Google at the time of writing, and computer firms (Microsoft, Intel, Oracle, Sun Microsystems) play huge and seemingly ever-growing roles as well. Taken together, these corporations represent the leading players in the cultural and information industries sector worldwide. This marks a sea change from some decades earlier, when in many nations cultural and media policies were the province of Ministries of Information, Culture, and/or Communication.

The crucial question, almost certainly due to be debated for a considerable time to come, is how far this shift of communication power toward very large corporate enterprises on the international as well as national scale represents an expansion of citizenship options, or their decline. An effective answer to this question will require a careful disaggregation of the issues involved. From arguments summarized already, it is clear that many would dispute the argument that planetary cultural homogenization, whether commercial, consumerist, or Americanized, is overwhelmingly in process. The Korean cultural wave phenomenon is testimony to this (→ Korean Cultural Influence), as are the dynamics of cultural exchange among Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong (Iwabuchi 2002). That, however, is not likely to be the end of the debate, since there are multiple other dimensions to citizenship and media than cultural flattening. In the end, the debate is likely to revolve around some version of the "social responsibility" thesis, namely are media suitably defined purely as commercial entities, or does the → "public goods" argument rightly complicate their standing for democratic polities?

### Global Media Policies

In the years before and since World War II, the US government worked in a sustained manner to promote the “*free flow of information*” policy. This was an attempt to challenge British domination of ocean cable traffic in particular, but also the ascendancy of Britain’s Reuters news agency. Then, over the 1970s, and again over the early 2000s, attempts were made to forge partly noncommercial global communication policies in the form of the New World Information and Communication Order proposals, and the 2003 and 2005 World Summits on the Information Society (WSIS).

There are also now a number of *trade regimes and international agencies* that have some influence, or the potential for it, over international and national communication policies, such as the World Trade Organization, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the European Union, UNESCO, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) (→ Francophonie; NAFTA and International Communication). Of these, a number have historically served as forums for negotiating national economic priorities, and thus have been substantially influenced by major corporate lobbies. Others, such as UNESCO, ITU, WIPO, and ICANN, have a more mixed history, representing to a certain degree the concerns of transnational publics and social movements (→ Transnational Civil Society).

Within this context, the European Union is a uniquely ambitious experiment in *multinational integration*. The question of media and collective identity, whether “European,” national, or sub-national (e.g., Scotland, Catalunya), has continued to exercise EU communication policy discourses. Within Europe, France has provided a militant lead in favor of exempting cultural products from routine trade criteria (the so-called “cultural exception”), while the UK has actively supported the contrary position, in line with the US government. The results to date have been mixed and mostly tentative, often confused through being based upon political shibboleths rather than clear-headed analysis, and inevitably complicated by the continuing expansion of membership (Schlesinger 1997, 1999). NAFTA represents a very different case.

*Francophonie* consists of a cluster of sustained attempts over nearly 50 years by France, as a former colonial power, to combine defense of the French language and culture against the dominance of US culture. At the same time, the project was energetically supported in its earlier years by certain postcolonial leaders of newly independent states, notably by Léopold Senghor, first President of Senegal in 1960. Some have argued Francophonie to be Janus-faced, insistently resisting the tidal wave of US cultural products while content to oil the wheels of France’s neo-colonialist African policy. However, the organization’s recent overtures to Arabophone, Hispanophone, and Lusophone nations to encourage their involvement in projects to defend their own linguistic and cultural heritages may yet prove to be a significant vector in the global politics of culture and communication.

Thus, global media and information policy, like public policies of all types, has been marked by clashing agendas (Raboy 2002). Up through the early 1970s, it would be fair to say that the clashes were primarily those of national economic interest among those states with financial muscle, or the Cold War, or sometimes a combination of the two. In that

decade, however, prompted by calls for a New International Economic Order to address the vast disparities between commercially advanced nations and the rest, pressure began to be voiced in international assemblies for a comparable restructuring of global media communications of all kinds. The digital technology era was at the doors, and the potential of new information and communication technologies for the global south's development was already being debated. The chasm between the profusion of all forms of communication technology in the global north and their feeble distribution in the global south was, and remains, a major development issue.

After some time, a package of proposed communication policy shifts in favor of the global south was assembled by an international task force convened by UNESCO. They were presented in the 1980 MacBride Report, *Many voices, one world* (MacBride Commission 1980). The policy proposals came to be entitled the New World Information and Communication Order. They fell hostage, however, to a concerted hostile press campaign in the USA and the UK, whose governments withdrew from UNESCO in the mid-1980s, publicly citing the Report as a primary reason for doing so. There were internal weaknesses in the Report, notably its assumption that communication policy was exclusively a matter for national governments. Paradoxically, however, there was no proposal whatsoever in it for government licensing of journalists (a serious risk for press freedom), even though the hostile news media campaign in the USA assiduously asserted this to be one of its main planks. Nonetheless, the UNESCO process was a first step toward global public discussion of citizens' communication needs and entitlements.

In the World Summits on the Information Society in Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005), initiated by the United Nations and convened this time by the ITU, issues of global communication inequities resurfaced in the first fully international forums addressing them since the UNESCO debacle. This time, there emerged a very slight change, albeit resisted by a number of governments and corporations. The ITU at that point had but recently opened its doors to communication corporations as official participants, rather than only to states, for the first time in its over 100-year history. But the UN charge to the ITU had also signaled that "civil society" organizations should also have a voice in the WSIS deliberations. In a very small and often grudging way, this was conceded at the Summits.

All this could, no doubt, be read as simply an obscure exercise in acronym juggling. Notwithstanding, however, the impracticalities of global representation of the public interest outside of the conventional system of states (a process itself marked by considerable deficiencies), this could also be read as a first tentative step toward inclusive global policymaking for international communication. It remained to be seen what might be the next moves.

### **Global News Flows**

These were one of the many global communication disparities articulated in the MacBride Report. The pattern was rather clear: most international news coverage emanated within the global north and reported on its doings. International news about the global south, when available at all, strongly tended to focus on disasters, natural or political (→ International News Reporting). This made for an under-informed citizenry across the planet,

paradoxically at a point in history when the world was becoming ever more economically and politically interconnected (Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen 1998).

However, the turn of the millennium witnessed new international broadcasting interventions. Established stalwarts, such as the BBC World Service, Voice of America, → CNN International, → Deutsche Welle, Radio France Internationale, and → Vatican Radio, were joined by Arab satellite news, China's English-language global TV channel CCTV-9, and Latin America's fledgling experiment, TeleSur.

These varied international projects raised challenging questions for conventional professional journalistic claims to objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting), especially when the mission of a given broadcasting project was officially defined as → "public diplomacy" on behalf of a nation-state. The differences in their news agendas were significant. Sometimes they were even visible within one and the same organization: following a basic editorial decision some months previously, CNN International broadcast pictures of wounded and dead Iraqi civilians following the US invasion in 2003, while CNN Domestic avoided doing so. On the face of it, however, the international sources of supply of broadcast news were expanding. It remained to be seen whether the public would take the trouble on a regular basis to compare more than one such source.

### **Nonhegemonic International Communication Flows**

So far the focus has been on mainstream channels of international communication. The picture would be seriously incomplete without reviewing other media projects outside these conventional channels. In the twenty-first century mediascape, and given the increasing activity of global social movements of many kinds, it appeared likely that smaller media would not only continue to operate, but would become a growing force.

Already there was evidence of the intensification of women's participation in these nonhegemonic projects, a vector that sharply distinguished this zone of the mediascape from mainstream media (→ Social Movement Media, Transnational). The tremendous increase in global labor migration across borders over recent decades, and the widespread emergence of settled diasporic communities, had as one effect the creation of many media projects linking them with their countries of origin as well as engaging with their new locations. The Kurds, mostly settled in eastern Turkey, but with significant enclaves in Syria, Iraq, and Iran, had a conflicted history of trying to use satellite broadcasting to connect with their migrant communities in western Europe as well as to combat the Turkish state's long ban on the use of Kurdish in broadcasting inside Turkey.

The emergence of the Qatar-based news broadcaster Al-Jazeera was a further example of nonhegemonic international communication, in two senses: it challenged the conventional and deferential state broadcast news services of the Arabic-speaking world, and it also challenged official US government definitions of Middle Eastern affairs. The TeleSur project, originating in Venezuela, sought to fulfill a somewhat analogous role in the Latin American region.

Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, the latter now defunct, served a distinct role during the postwar decades up to the end of the Cold War. In both cases, the commitment was absent to a neutral and bland style of news reporting that largely characterized the BBC World Service and Deutsche Welle. Both stations set themselves the particular task

of functioning, not as the Voice of America – even though they were largely CIA-funded – but as though they were domestic news services inside the Soviet bloc nations, yet operating without Soviet censorship. They quite often broadcast underground texts from the clandestine opposition. Thus, their style often was highly confrontational, and sometimes appreciated more inside the Soviet bloc than the careful cadences of the BBC World Service (→ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty).

Two more examples will suffice of the nonhegemonic international media sector. First, → *Le Monde Diplomatique* is a French monthly world affairs magazine some 50 years old, which today appears in 26 languages, has a global readership of some 2 million, and appears in some countries on paper, in others digitally. Its contents are in-depth feature articles on countries and issues around the world, written partly by its very highly educated editorial staff, and partly by university specialists in a variety of countries. Over the past 30 years, “*Diplo*” has provided a consistent location in which the inequalities and inequities between global north and south are at center stage and exhaustively analyzed. It has served over the past decade and more as the global social justice movement’s *foreign affairs or foreign policy* magazine.

The second example is the Independent Media Centers movement (→ Independent Media Centers Network). Emerging at the 1999 WTO confrontations in Seattle, by 2007 it had grown to number toward 200 hyperlinked nodes of social justice activists around the world, though mostly concentrated in North America and western Europe. Sites varied in productivity, but normally ran frequently updated and interlinked news stories on challenges to global and national capitalist institutions, and very often on the repression these met. Photo, audio, and video files were routinely used. English was the predominant language, but national and in some cases sub-national languages were also visible on a number of sites. Each site was independent, and only if taken over by a group radically hostile to its global social justice mission, or engaging in campaigning on behalf of a particular political organization, would the site be de-linked from the others.

International communication research continues to be hampered by the monolingualism of many researchers, especially in Anglophone universities. This means that research achievements and insights from many countries do not enrich multinational scholarly dialogue to the degree they should. It is also a field poorly represented or not at all, to the time of writing, in most standard undergraduate communication textbooks used in the USA, which discourages the flow of future US researchers to this area in a field the USA has not ceased to dominate. Its importance in our shrinking planet, for good or for ill, remains unabated.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising: Global Industry ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ Bollywood ▶ China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ▶ Cinema ▶ CNN ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ Development Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Disney ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Francophonie ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Global Media, History of ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hong Kong Cinema ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ Independent Media Centers Network ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup

Communication ▶ International Communication Agencies ▶ International News Reporting ▶ International Radio ▶ International Television ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Korean Cultural Influence ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Le Monde Diplomatique ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Migrant Community Media ▶ Modernity ▶ Modernization ▶ Music Industry ▶ NAFTA and International Communication ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ News Corporation ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Diplomacy ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Global Firms ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Samsung Corporation ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Security and Surveillance Agencies ▶ Social Movement Media, Transnational ▶ Sony Corporation ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ TeleSur ▶ Time Warner Inc. ▶ Tourism Industry ▶ Transnational Civil Society ▶ UNESCO ▶ Vatican Radio ▶ Voice of America ▶ War Propaganda

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## **International Communication Agencies**

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Several emerging and existing international communication agencies spearhead the governance of the global media and communications environment. International communication agencies have both specialized and collective responsibilities to advance multilateral and multi-stakeholder cooperation and collaboration on the broad issues of global media governance, including the development of regulation instruments and guidelines for intellectual property, media concentration and ownership, communication

and network infrastructure, as well as promoting communication in the interests of human rights and economic, social and cultural development objectives (→ Copyright; Concentration in Media Systems; Ownership in the Media; Development Communication; Development Support Communication). International communication agencies either fall under the aegis of the United Nations, or emerge as independent, international authorities, entities in and of themselves (→ United Nations, Communication Policies of).

The multilateral jurisdiction for many of these agencies has evolved alongside the globalization of media and communications, which is now a complex terrain where management, ownership, commercialization, and consumption of media collectively challenge traditional models of regulation and governance (→ Commercialization of the Media). Radio and television, for example, have traditionally been governed under national broadcasting policies (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). Today, however, the landscape for both radio and television is complicated by → satellite television and the → Internet, the growing concentration in media cross-ownership, and the technological convergence of media communications (→ Media Conglomerates; Digitization and Media Convergence). In this complex environment, international communication agencies find their mandates to develop laws and rules on issues such as copyright, ownership, and the promotion of diversity of media (Ó Siochrú & Girard 2002; Raboy 2002a; 2002b; → Plurality). The emerging framework for these agencies is one that brings together multiple stakeholders, including governments, the private sector and civil society, to influence, inform, and direct decision-making for relevant policy matters.

International efforts to formalize the regulation of cross-border communication date to a series of conferences in the 1860s, called to deal, first, with postal services and, soon after, with the new technology of telegraphy (→ Postal Service, History of; Telegraph, History of). A conference in Paris in 1863 laid the foundation for an international postal system and, soon after, the world's first permanent intergovernmental organization, the International Telegraph Union (ITU), was set up in 1865 to provide a framework for development of international telegraph and telegram services. The Treaty of Berne (1875) created the General Postal Union (now the Universal Postal Union, UPU, a specialized UN agency), and an international convention on copyright was also adopted in Berne in 1886. With the emergence of point-to-point and point-to-mass sound communication in the early twentieth century, a whole new range of issues arose that required international agreement. In 1927, the Washington Radio Conference drafted a set of international regulations on radio and this was followed by a second conference in Madrid in 1932, at which the convergence of telegraph and radio technologies was recognized in the broadening of the ITU, renamed the International Telecommunication Union.

## **THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION POLICIES**

The creation of the United Nations Organization in 1945 opened a new era in international communication. The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO) was established the same year. In 1948, the UN adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which included the standard-setting Article 19 establishing freedom of expression as a fundamental human right. Communication issues



were also present on the periphery of the Bretton Woods agreements, which created institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In the commercial sphere, the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) after much debate, accepted the legitimacy of foreign film import quotas (the GATT is now managed by the World Trade Organization, created in 1995). While the politics of the Cold War set the tone for much of the debate within international communication agencies between 1945 and 1989 (→ Free Flow of Information; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]), the tension between culture and commerce has since become the dominant theme (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services; Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

The ITU, UNESCO, UPU, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) are specialized international communication agencies within the United Nations. Each of these institutional bodies provides leadership and guidance on a specific mandate related to international communication, and each has evolved both institutionally and programmatically alongside the dynamic shifts occurring in the global media and communications environment. Moreover, in recent years, the inextricable link between communication and development has been aggressively pursued as an important mechanism that can help achieve internationally recognized aims such as the Millennium Development Goals, and broader sustainable development and poverty reduction agendas. In this regard, communication is considered a tool for capacity building, advocacy and awareness-raising, empowerment, accessibility and outreach, and local knowledge promotion and protection. The ITU, UNESCO, and WIPO are all involved in international development cooperation activities that aim – at least nominally – to reduce the → digital divide and eliminate disparities in access to information and communication technologies (→ Access to the Media).

## OVERVIEW OF INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES

The *ITU* is the only UN agency that deals exclusively with issues of communication and is considered the first ever international communication agency (Ó Siochrú & Girard 2002). The ITU was developed as a collaborative platform where government and private sector representatives could discuss, negotiate, and coordinate the development of communication technologies. This became increasingly vital as tele- and radio communication systems became more sophisticated, and as the basis for the multifaceted operation of global telecommunications grew more complex. The ITU currently consists of 191 member states and over 600 sector members. Sector members include industry representatives, research and development organizations, manufacturers, and others (ITU 2004).

*UNESCO* has a rich and textured history in international communication. UNESCO's mission is to promote international collaboration in education, the natural and social sciences, culture, and communication. Together, these domains of activity create the basis and serve as a catalyst for UNESCO's "culture of peace." The rise of multilateral involvement in global media and communications was marked by a historic debate that took shape in UNESCO's corridors between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s. It was spearheaded by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a group of UN countries that called for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). The NWICO debate was never fully resolved, but was significant in that it brought the agenda of

international communication to the forefront of multilateral diplomacy and politics. The work of UNESCO's communication and information sector is grounded in UNESCO's constitution and is driven by three principal objectives: promoting the free flow of ideas, promoting expressions of pluralism and cultural diversity, and promoting access to information and communication technologies (UNESCO 2005). UNESCO has developed a number of normative instruments, including conventions, declarations, and recommendations in support of these principal objectives.

WIPO was established in 1967. It is the sole UN agency dedicated to the promotion and protection of intellectual property worldwide (→ Intellectual Property Law). Intellectual property consists of two broad categories: industrial property, such as patents and trademarks, and copyright, which protects creative endeavors like film, music, novels, and visual art. An idea alone does not need copyright. However, in a digitized media environment, the specific expression of an idea (e.g., through film or television) is subject to the terms and conditions of copyright (Ó Siochrú & Girard 2002). WIPO upholds 21 different conventions and treaties in support of intellectual property rights. These instruments provide the overall framework for WIPO's service, resource, and program activities. While WIPO is the central international authority for intellectual property, it does not have a mandate for treaty or convention enforcement. WIPO is currently governed by 184 member states. Civil society and industry groups can apply for observer status in WIPO meetings. As of the mid-2000s, there were 250 stakeholders with observer status (WIPO 2004).

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was initiated by the UN General Assembly. It marked the most important global gathering to date, concerned specifically with information and communication. WSIS was held in two phases: the first took place in Geneva, December 10–12, 2003, and the second in Tunis, November 16–18, 2005. Each phase was preceded by a lengthy preparatory process that mobilized a diverse array of stakeholders, including governments, the private sector, civil society, and other international communication agencies. The objective of the first WSIS phase was to develop a statement of political will and to address the most pressing issues arising from the establishment of a global information society, while at the same time respecting divergent interests. The first phase resulted in two documents: the Geneva Declaration of Principles and the Geneva Plan of Action. Over 11,000 participants from 175 countries participated in this first phase. During the second phase, participants were tasked with committing to the steps necessary for the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action as well as pursuing discussion and reaching agreement on a range of other issues, most notably Internet governance. The outcomes of the second phase are outlined in the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society (WSIS 2006).

In April 2006, the United Nations chief executive board instituted the UN Group on the Information Society (UNGIS). This inter-agency mechanism has as its objective to promote policy and program coordination within the UN regarding the implementation of WSIS outcomes (UNGIS 2006). Advancing the platform for communication and development was also a major theme at WSIS and catalyzed the establishment of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development (GAID). The Alliance is considered a multi-stakeholder global forum and platform for policy dialogue on the use of ICTs for poverty reduction and development goals (GAID 2006). Another direct outcome of WSIS activities, and specifically the Tunis Agenda, is the

Internet Governance Forum (*IGF*). The IGF was conceived in Tunis as a platform for multilateral and multi-stakeholder policy dialogue on timely and emerging issues pertaining to the Internet. The first IGF was held in Athens in 2006. In support of the format and intent of the IGF, a number of “dynamic coalitions” formed on issues such as privacy, open standards, access to knowledge, and an Internet bill of rights (IGF 2006). The IGF will meet annually for five years, after which time its status will be reassessed.

Other international agencies that devote some energy to international communication include the UN Research Institute for Social Development (*UNRISD*). UNRISD is an autonomous UN agency that undertakes multidisciplinary research on global development issues to foster dialogue and debate on contemporary policy matters (→ Transnational Civil Society). Created in 1963, UNRISD identifies a set of broad program areas to guide its research. The program in the mid-2000s included six research areas and special events: social policy and development; democracy, governance, and well-being; civil society and social movements; markets, business, and regulation; identities, conflict, and cohesion; gender and development (UNRISD 2005).

The International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium (*INTELSAT*), is the only international communication agency that started as part of the UN, but was later privatized. INTELSAT was established in 1961 after the UN General Assembly introduced a resolution stating that global satellite communications should be made available on a nondiscriminatory basis (→ Satellite Communication, Global). Satellite communications would be developed in collaboration and in cooperation with nations around the world. In 1965, INTELSAT established the first commercial satellite communication system. Today, INTELSAT provides media, telecom, and government satellite services and has the most extensive satellite network worldwide. In 2001, INTELSAT became a private company (Intelsat 2007).

International communication agencies have also emerged outside of the UN system. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (*ICANN*) is an international, nonprofit corporation that is responsible for various functions of Internet protocol, including the technical coordination of address space allocation on the web (→ Internet: International Regulation; Domain Names). ICANN also undertakes the allocation of generic and top-level domain country codes, which facilitate Internet navigation as well as domain name system management (Ó Siochrú & Girard 2002). These responsibilities were initially carried out by the US government under the aegis of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA).

A robust global media governance environment has taken shape, with international communication agencies assuming a significant role therein. What invigorates and challenges this environment all at once is the need to balance sector-specific interests and transparent decision-making processes, with efficient governance for the global public’s interests in information accessibility and dialogic communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Copyright ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Support Communication ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Domain Names ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Global-

ization of Organizations ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ International Communication ▶ International Radio ▶ International Television ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ NAFTA and International Communication ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Plurality ▶ Postal Service, History of ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Transnational Civil Society ▶ UNESCO ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of

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# **International Communication Association (ICA)**

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The International Communication Association (ICA) began more than 50 years ago as a small association of US researchers and is now a truly international association with more

than 4,000 members in 76 countries. With its headquarters in Washington, DC, the ICA publishes four refereed journals (a fifth will begin in 2008), a yearbook, and a monthly online newsletter; sponsors a book series; and holds regional conferences and an annual conference. The annual conference meets around the world on a geographical rotation in the Americas, Asia, and Europe. The ICA's diverse structure of 21 divisions and special interest groups represent sub-fields of communication research (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). Since 2003, the ICA has been officially associated with the United Nations as a nongovernmental association (NGO).

The overall purposes of the ICA are to advance the scholarly study of human communication and to facilitate the implementation of such study in order to be of maximum benefit to humankind by: (1) encouraging the systematic study of theories, processes, and skills of human communication, and (2) facilitating the dissemination of research through an organizational structure responsive to communication study areas, a program of organizational affiliates, regular sponsorship of international meetings, and a commitment to a program of scholarly publication.

Because of its complexity, the ICA does not lend itself well to the typical “names, dates, and times” model when relating its history. Organizational development models provide a more useful way of understanding its history (→ Organizational Change Processes). Specifically, the Weick & Quinn (1999) approach of considering both episodic and continuous change within the same organization is most relevant. The ICA clearly exemplifies both change that is intentional and change that is unintentional or a product of forces outside the organization's control.

## **EMERGENCE**

Organizations emerge, change is constant, and the organization evolves. The ICA officially emerged in the US on January 1, 1950 as the National Society for the Study of Communication (NSSC). Like many births, this was the result of a long labor, a few complications, and some confusion as to what was actually occurring at any given moment. A review of letters, notes, and meeting minutes clearly reveals that several members of the parent organization, the Speech Association of America (SAA, now the National Communication Association), had concluded that committees within the SAA were about to recommend against the inclusion of basic communication in SAA, keeping its resources focused on rhetoric (→ Speech Communication, History of; Rhetorical Studies). The founders of the NSSC, led by such individuals as Elwood Murray, Paul Bagwell, Ralph Nichols, and Wesley Wiksell, not only saw the beginnings of growth in basic communication at universities and colleges throughout the United States, but also led the way in conducting, presenting, and publishing some of the initial research in the discipline. They were active in encouraging speech departments to embrace, rather than avoid, the new trend of communication.

The founding core of scholars identified the *objective of the new organization* as “fostering methodologies, philosophies, courses and curricula in so-called basic communication, speech, journalism, radio and other mass media (including English, etc.) which would implement training more directly for the needs of human relations at all levels” (Weaver 1977, 608).

With this objective, the NSSC began what has thus far been a 57-year process of modification and change, which on many levels continues today. The key objective of the new society was to study communication. The NSSC was also unique in that it would do original research through a committee structure while supporting the research of individual members through publishing, conferences, and networking. Ultimately this structure collapsed under its own weight. Too many committees were established initially with too many rules and regulations, and, rather than researching problems or questions already posed, the committees were to develop new questions or problems, some of which may not have had any intrinsic value nor piqued enough interest in the committees or in individual researchers. The struggle, described by Weaver (1977, 610) as “furious battles in the National Council” with the committees and their various charges continued for over 13 years and consumed the energy of the leadership. Basic functions continued but the organization showed little growth.

### **REORGANIZATION IN THE 1960S**

In 1967 the society engaged in an intentional, episodic organizational development stage: It began discussions on changing its name and formally separated from the SAA. This separation, coupled with the general feeling that the primary focus of the NSSC had changed, led to numerous discussions about a new name for the organization. In 1969 the group coalesced around the moniker of the International Communication Association. “At that time, the organization had more than 150 members from 27 foreign nations” (Weaver 1973, 615). Membership began to grow and with increased numbers came new leadership ideas. New scholars began to assert their influence and, in the words of past President Frank Dance, “there indeed was the beginning of the changing of the guard” (Weaver 1973, 372).

With increased membership, the ICA continued to evolve. The membership diversified and for the first time achieved an early goal of the old NSSC, that of being an *interdisciplinary society*. To reflect this new, broader makeup, ICA’s by-laws called for the creation of divisions based on more narrowly defined research interests. This was to be a renewal mechanism for the association and provide a place for like-minded scholars to gather. Unlike the NSSC structure, committees would be generated by the divisions only if they were needed to solve specific issues. Guidelines, such as those requiring divisions to maintain a certain level of membership, were designed to prevent a proliferation of divisions and a loss of focus. The debate on this issue continues as the original 4 divisions have increased to 21 divisions and special interest groups as of 2007. This growth reflects the complexity of the world in which the association finds itself today, as well as the global nature of much of communication study and research.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

A healthy and vibrant association requires both episodic and continuous change and the ICA has experienced both. For an academic, scholarly society, one measure of such changes is its publication program. The International Communication Association (still as the NSSC) produced the first issue of the *Journal of Communication* in 1951. Initially

published in-house, the journal grew with the association such that, by 1967, submission rates had increased and the acceptance rate had declined. Historical documents draw correlations between the prestige of the journal and the prestige of being a member of the association. As the membership developed and the research interests of its members broadened, so did the publishing program. The association has added journals and other publications to address the ever-changing field of communication and the research being done by scholars in the field. The addition of new journals, and of editorial boards representing more diverse research interests, offers more publication opportunities for varying points of view and the different areas and types of scholarship being produced by the membership.

In 1973 the ICA launched *Human Communication Research* to focus on “quality research and scholarship in human communication” (Weaver 1977, 614). *Communication Yearbook* began in 1977 as a combination of selected conference proceedings and annual reviews from within the field. It was intended to address the state of the art of the discipline of communication. *Communication Theory*, begun in 1991, was to provide a forum, both interdisciplinary and international, for original theoretical contributions to the discipline. According to the founding editor, Robert T. Craig (1991, 1), “the appearance of *Communication Theory* [marked] the coming of age of an academic field.” In 2003, the ICA acquired the *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, an online journal. This marked the association’s entry into online, open-access journal publishing. The ICA continues to expand its publication program as the need dictates.

## **DEBATES ABOUT STRUCTURE**

Questions and debates continue to challenge the ICA leadership – and create the probability of future change. One such question regards whether the association structure should allow for the proliferation of special interest groups and divisions or maintain fewer but broader areas of scholarship interest. Another centers on the size and structure of the annual conference. Clearly, a primary goal of the association is to provide opportunities for members to present research for the dual purposes of receiving feedback on the research and of enhancing and advancing a member’s academic career. Yet, the ICA has retained a smaller, more intimate association than some others in the field. After four decades, the perception of the ICA as having a narrow empirical social science scope has given way to a perception of being open to a broader range of research approaches. Again, this is evocative of an organization for which change has been constant, evolving, and cumulative.

During the 1980s and 1990s the *membership* remained constant overall but developed a cyclical pattern. Membership, and to some degree the financial health of the organization, rose and fell as members flowed in and out depending on whether or not they had a paper or panel accepted for the annual conference. Any conferences held outside North America had a ripple effect, drew fewer scholars submitting and presenting, and membership numbers declined significantly when conference attendance was lower. The ICA had entered a practical phase of its history. Attending a conference and presenting a paper required funding from the members’ institutions, many of which had policies that severely limited funding for conferences held outside the US. In the past two decades, the

membership has remained largely US-based. As the ICA entered the twenty-first century, however, this pattern no longer held.

## **INTERNATIONALIZATION**

The international identity of the ICA has been a key issue since the name change in 1969. Several debates about what it means to be international – or how to put the *I* in ICA – have been documented in board and committee minutes. The most significant change began in the late 1990s when the ICA purposefully set about to change itself from a US-based organization that happened to have international members to a truly international organization that happened to be based in the US. In the mid-1990s, the ICA board of directors established a global connections committee (later renamed the internationalization committee) to consider this objective. Four significant initiatives originated in this committee and, with implementation of these initiatives, the association continued on its evolutionary path.

The most significant innovation was to change the composition of the *board of directors* to reflect the international mission of the association. The ICA needed to look international on all of its public faces, which meant that members of the board, of committees, and of editorial boards needed to have representation and active participation from all areas of the globe. As it did with many of its decisions on internationalizing, the organization searched for a foundation and rationale as the basis of its decisions. The United Nations and World Bank classifications became the basis for the structural evolution of ICA.

In 2000 a change in by-laws established five *regional at-large board seats*. Discussions reported in committee and board minutes indicate that these positions were created with no specific charge assigned to them. As a group, the regional at-large members have struggled to define their role and have been inconsistent in representing their geographic areas. They now constitute some of the membership of the internationalization committee, the descendant of the global connections committee. A review of governance documents demonstrates as well a concerted, purposeful effort to have at least one non-North American on every committee and subcommittee. Beginning with the election of division officers in 2003, almost half the board of directors were from countries other than the US, a strong indication that the ICA's stated objective of becoming truly international was being realized. The turn of this century also saw a second episodic change aimed at specifically addressing the international image of the association. Three decades ago, the association settled into offices in Austin, Texas with a paid staff of one. This arrangement met the needs of the organization for many years but did not present an international image or allow the degree of interaction with relevant agencies and other scholarly associations that the board felt was needed. The ICA relocated to rented office space in Washington, DC in 2001, and shortly thereafter began searching for permanent central offices to manage the growing association and provide long-term stability for the organization. In 2006, the association realized another goal with the purchase of an office building in Washington, DC, which will provide a *permanent home for the organization* and its records. With this move, the association evolved from one that, like many professional associations in their early history, required each president personally to store and maintain association documents to one that had "arrived," with a home of its own and the visibility that comes with it.



With its new emphasis on internationalization, the board also restructured membership in 2002 with two purposes in mind. The first was to stabilize the membership by aligning the membership year with the fiscal year. This began to move the organization beyond one directly tied to conference presentation to one that provided a number of consistent services and benefits in addition to those centering on the conference. By 2004, membership in ICA had grown to over 4,000 scholars in 76 countries, and the cyclical pattern ceased to be the focus of governance meetings.

The second purpose was to recognize the differing resources of scholars around the world. Using the World Bank ranking of national economies, the ICA developed a tiered dues and conference registration structure. With these changes, the membership again demonstrated a significant increase, largely from non-US countries. Other outreach activities began at approximately the same time. ICA newsletters published columns that addressed international issues and profiled communication scholarship in various regions of the world.

### **EXPANDING PUBLICATIONS**

With greater diversification in membership, scholarly focus, and research methodologies has come the search for meaningful participation and discourse. Once again, the focus was on the publication program. As in the early 1970s, the organization experienced increased criticism about a perceived narrowness in editorial decisions and responsiveness to alternative methods of research deemed acceptable for publication. A review of newsletter articles, meeting minutes, and personal memory of conversations suggested that ICA publications were open to all scholarship with no inherent bias or discrimination toward any scholar, group of scholars, or research methodology. A look at the annual reports of each of the journals and the yearbook would lead one to the same conclusion. Yet, there was clear disagreement from some scholars about the extent to which editorial decisions were biased against methodologies and international work generally.

In its drive to take on an international face, the ICA focused on committees, task forces, and the composition of the board, but failed to look at the areas that fell outside the typical organizational structure. The editorial boards of the various journals were neglected. When scholars look to publish their research, it is natural to look for “like-minded” individuals on a review panel or editorial board. The ICA’s publications did not have the international look and therefore received relatively few submissions from outside of North America. Those that were received often had difficulty finding reviewers who understood or accepted the methodology utilized.

To address this issue and others, beginning in 2005, the association embarked on its largest expansion of the publication program. It began by selecting an entrepreneurial publisher for its journals, which gave the organization better press coverage and more financial resources to develop other projects and programs. It revised its *Guide to Publishing* and launched a handbook series and a book series on communication in the public interest. An ad hoc task force studying specific criticisms suggested creating a new journal, *Communication, Culture, and Critique*, to provide an “international forum for critical, feminist interpretive, and qualitative research examining the role of communication from a cultural and historical perspective.” The ICA board of directors adopted this recommendation and the new journal was scheduled to be launched in 2008.

As an organization, the ICA was, and continues to be, one that fully demonstrates Weick and Quinn's (1999) theory of organizational change. It is an organization of continuous change that highlights the fluid nature, improvisation, and cyclical process without any seeming end state. At the same time, it continues to engage in the clearly purposeful, infrequent, and divergent behavior that is symptomatic of episodic change. The two processes have served the organization in complementary fashion. The history of the International Communication Association will continue to be a good story, and will continue to reflect the nature of those who call it their scholarly home.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication Professions and Academic Research ► International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ► International Communication ► Leadership in Organizations ► Organizational Change Processes ► Organizational Culture ► Organizational Structure ► Rhetorical Studies ► Speech Communication, History of

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## **International News Reporting**

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International news reporting evolved with the advent of the telegraph in the mid-1800s (→ Telegraph, History of). The explosion of foreign news that followed largely supported the colonial empires; it also focused on international conflicts involving them (while all but ignoring others).

The concept of international reporting is itself contentious, beginning with the definition of → “news.” Galtung and Ruge conducted a study in 1965, which remains influential, for it succinctly described what international news is, and is not, for leading news organizations. They described numerous news priorities, but most crucially observed that the more the event concerns elite nations, the more the event concerns elite people, the more the event can be seen in personal terms, as due to the action of specific individuals, the more probable it is that it will become a news item. And the more negative an event is in its consequences, the more probable that it will become a news

item (→ News Factors; News Values). These findings have been routinely replicated in research (Galtung & Ruge 1970).

### **MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS IN INTERNATIONAL NEWS REPORTING**

Only a relatively small number of large media organizations routinely engage in international reporting. These include the global news services such as the → BBC, → CNN International, and → news agencies (Reuters, Associated Press, Agence France-Presse), and large newspapers and broadcasters from the world's wealthiest countries, such as the *New York Times*, *Le Monde*, NHK, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Until the 1990s, the US broadcast networks ABC, CBS, and NBC were vital in drawing American and global attention to international issues, but their foreign operations were scaled back in the 1990s (→ Television Networks). An exception among news → magazines is the multilanguage monthly → *Le Monde Diplomatique*.

Where the largest news organizations once provided occasional (even if mostly negative; → negativity) coverage from developing countries and infrequently covered nations, since the 1990s even this has declined as those organizations concentrated their diminishing allocation of resources on hard-to-cover mega-stories like conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Kosovo, and the Middle East. News agencies, especially, pulled staff from the rest of the world to establish huge semi-permanent reporting teams for these stories. Thus, they became the leading international story day after day, whether anything significant was happening or not, because nobody was left to provide news from elsewhere, and the big investment had to be justified.

Surveys indicated that foreign editors saw little need to increase international coverage, even as other research pointed to public demand for it (Utley 1997; Parks 2002; Pew Research Center 2002; Philo 2004; → Survey). Foreign coverage is most often provided, if at all, through news agency subscriptions or the purchase of syndicated stories from larger organizations. Only the rare international journey is undertaken, usually to find a “local angle” on a massive story receiving saturation coverage by the global press, like the Iraq war of 2003. Both editors and journalists from wealthy nations still typically regard with suspicion reporting from local journalists in developing countries, even as they grow increasingly dependent upon it when their own budgets are cut.

### **FORMS AND STYLES**

A classic critique of international reporting bore the label “parachute journalism,” signifying the practice of jetting correspondents into breaking stories around the world, where they would spend just hours or days before moving on to the next. They had no access to local languages, no opportunity to develop expertise on the stories they were reporting, and would usually rely on the most accessible sources for information and interviews – often professional peers or their own national embassy staff. Some news organizations have offered a partial counter to such critiques by having specialists cover vast regions, like all of Latin America or Africa. While this might somewhat offset the previous invisibility of those regions, the “parachute” approach necessarily remains.

However, as international coverage increasingly became conflict reporting, especially conflicts involving the US, parachute journalism evolved into “rooftop” journalism, where inaccessible military action a great distance away was described to international television audiences by correspondents encamped on the roofs of luxury hotels, where their cameras and satellite dishes could be safely stationed (→ Conflict as Media Content). It provided an illusion of live coverage, but “on-scene” reporters knew only what the military and local journalists would tell them (Van Ginneken 1998; Allan & Zelizer 2004; Paterson & Sreberny 2004; → Embedded Journalists; War Correspondents).

In his research on the culture of news production in the US, Gans observed that American international correspondents tended to judge “other countries by the extent to which they live up to or imitate American practices and values” (Gans 1979, 42). Dahlgren and Chakrapani (1982) described western ways of seeing the “other,” finding reports about developing countries tended to display prominently the “definitive motifs” of social disorder, flawed development, and primitivism. These authors argued that western news readers contentedly see themselves as the opposite of these things, providing, in the commercial marketplace, an incentive for such stereotypes to persist (Said 1978; Dahlgren & Chakrapani 1982).

Foreign correspondents were once regarded as the nobility of → journalism – what journalists and journalism students aspired to be. The best international reporters still exhibit broad knowledge of the politics and cultures of other nations (often specializing in particular nations or regions), are linguistically adept, empathize with people different from themselves, and often possess a taste for adventure, if not outright danger. But such professionals are increasingly rare, given contemporary media corporations’ financial priorities. There remains no shortage of freelance journalists willing to risk all to bring interesting stories from abroad. BBC journalist David Loyn described the exploits of some prominent and influential freelance journalists of the 1990s in his book *Frontline*. In the process he provided a trenchant critique of current mainstream, television-driven, international reporting (→ Television News).

## **REPRESSION OF MEDIA: VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS**

Journalists acknowledge the critiques, but point out that their work often displeases people, and at times of conflict may be especially dangerous. Numerous journalists have been expelled from countries by having their visas or work permits revoked, but given the high numbers of journalists killed in recent years, this is now regarded as a mild penalty – if not a badge of honor (→ Violence against Journalists). A number of nongovernmental organizations – many sponsored by major media outlets – work to document repression of both foreign and local reporters by governments and others, to free imprisoned journalists, to independently investigate casualties among journalists, and to lobby for greater press freedom and protection (see for example, [www.newssafety.com](http://www.newssafety.com), [www.rsf.org](http://www.rsf.org), [www.ifj.org](http://www.ifj.org), [cpj.org](http://cpj.org), and [article19.org](http://article19.org)).

As the number of journalists killed continues to escalate in the 2000s, safety has become an increasingly pressing concern, and a small industry of safety training courses for journalists has developed. Government involvement in the murder of journalists is often suspected, but can rarely be proven. When Russian human rights journalist Anna

Politkovskaia was murdered in 2006 after covering very extensive human rights violations in Chechnya, many feared the return of Soviet-style repression. In other parts of the world attacks on journalists also grew worse, as when Zimbabwean television cameraman Edward Chikombo was murdered after photographing the opposition leader's injuries following a beating by police. Foreign journalists had been banned from Zimbabwe, but days after this local photographer's images reached the international media, he was dead.

Over 1999–2007, an even more disturbing trend in news media repression began as the US government – long a leading advocate of press freedom – began accumulating in other countries an extensive record of arrests and killings of media professionals. Over those years, as many as 40 media professionals were killed by the US military in Serbia, Afghanistan, and Iraq, and dozens were detained without charge in Afghanistan and Iraq. Reuters reported some of its staff had been tortured by US forces, and at the time of this writing a cameraman for Al-Jazeera television (→ Arab Satellite TV News) had been held in the US prison at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, for six years. As of 2007, no US troops had been held to account (Paterson 2005; International News Safety Institute 2007).

### **TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE**

Crucial technological change in international reporting has come about since the mid-1990s, driven mostly by the ability to compress, and therefore transmit more cheaply, streams of digital information, including high quality television pictures (→ Television Technology; News Production and Technology). In the 1980s, a few minutes of transmission of television pictures from the scene of a remote news event might have cost thousands of dollars and required massive satellite dishes, but by the mid-2000s, the same transmission cost well below 100 dollars and required equipment no larger than a briefcase.

Smaller and better cameras, satellite telephones capable of transmitting video, and laptop computers enabling the writing of stories and editing of pictures in the field have revolutionized the logistics of news gathering, and allowed journalists to provide video, sound, and text (allowing distribution by → television, → radio, → newspaper, → Internet, and, increasingly, mobile phone) from nearly anywhere on earth. But it still costs a great deal to get media personnel to most parts of the globe (those any distance from an airport), and to keep them there for any length of time – and that still significantly constrains what is defined as international news.

### **OUTLOOK**

As the first decade of the new millennium draws to a close, international news reporting seems more important than ever in an increasingly interconnected but polarized world. With the Korean news organization OhmyNews in the lead, nonprofessional journalists are proving that global reporting does not require global news organizations (→ Citizen Journalism); and those global organizations are struggling to cover the largest stories as their personnel are targeted. Some journalists have been influential in calling for fresh approaches to reporting, such as Bell's journalism of attachment or Lynch's → peace journalism, which challenge journalists to focus on, respectively, the human toll of

conflict and solutions to conflict (Bell 1998; Lynch 2004). For now, the stories of the world most people see and read are still determined by just a few international news services and from a very limited perspective.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ CNN ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Embedded Journalists ▶ Foreign Correspondents ▶ International Communication ▶ International Television ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Le Monde Diplomatique ▶ Magazine ▶ Negativity ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ News Factors ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newsreel ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Peace Journalism ▶ Radio ▶ Survey ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News ▶ Television Technology ▶ Violence against Journalists ▶ War Correspondents

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## International Radio

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Since → radio broadcasting was launched shortly after World War I, it has served two culturally different, almost paradoxical, functions in relation to its distribution. On the one hand, it turned out to be one of the more effective instruments in the nation-building process, and on the other it was from its initial years distributed on a global scale. Benedict Anderson's concept of "imagined communities" would express the role of radio broadcasting not as a tool for national identity-shaping within a nationalist ideology, but more as a way to encircle a common feeling or a sense of "Englishness," "Danishness," etc. Although in public debate about the cultural role of the electronic media it is often claimed they dilute national culture, in a historical perspective it is clearly the other way round. Over the past century, radio in large part shaped a national sense of shared imaginations and frames of reference, and at the same time also maintained its position as an international medium.

### **POLITICAL INSTRUMENT AND DISSEMINATOR OF CULTURE**

During the 1930s radio was perceived as one of the most powerful media to influence → public opinion. The Nazis described it as "the most modern, the strongest and the most revolutionary weapon which we possess in the battle against an extinct world" (Hendy 2000, 21). American, British, and other European broadcasters – public, state, and private – shared the assessment of radio as an instrument of strong political influence. The counter-propaganda from BBC foreign-language services to occupied Europe during World War II was not only an instrument of → propaganda, but also served as a "secret messenger" for underground resistance groups (→ BBC World Service). During the Cold War there was a further expansion of radio as a global propaganda instrument, not least from the USA and the Soviet Union, the former running stations like → Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, and the latter constantly jamming western signals, but also broadcasting more than 2000 hours per week via Radio Moscow. The impact of these propagandist initiatives on the fall of the communist regimes in eastern Europe has been disputed, but in 1994 under the Clinton administration all America's overseas broadcasting was organized according to a new International Broadcasting Act, including

the veteran station → Voice of America, a new service called Radio Free Asia, followed in 1998 by a pan-African service entitled Radio Democracy for Africa, and the Middle East service Radio Free Iraq (Barnard 2000, 238).

Apart from this interventionist use of radio as a political instrument, often funded directly or indirectly by governments or their intelligence agencies, you will also find services related to areas closer to the export and dissemination of cultural values and commodities. In the mid-2000s, the BBC World Service, → Deutsche Welle, and → Radio France Internationale were mainly serving these functions. Radio Luxembourg was the most prominent example of a truly international station without any specific national flavor, introducing the American-style format of commercial pop music radio to Europe from the 1950s onwards, serving as an open window for European youth otherwise subjected to the music and taste restrictions of the European public service monopoly institutions, most of them not deregulated until the late 1970s or 1980s.

In his study of international broadcasting, Browne (1992) lists *eight goals*: instrument of foreign policy, advertisement for the national culture and civic values of the mother country, a symbolic presence (for example, as a symbol of a country's newly independent status), a force for converting beliefs (for example, on behalf of ideologically motivated regimes or religious movements), a force for coercing or intimidating people (for example, through threats of annihilation during wartime from clandestine stations), educator, entertainer, and a seller of goods and services, such as Bibles (Hendy 2000, 22).

### RADIO USES IN EVERYDAY LIFE

But going back to the early European days of radio broadcasting, radio was international in another sense. Due to the scarcity of stations and programs, many of the early radio adapters were taking in sounds, voices, and music from places far away, because the AM signal could travel hundreds of miles, and the shortwave band even further (→ Radio Technology). With the introduction of the FM band from around 1960, radio grew into a more defined position as a national medium. The FM band is limited to a range of 50 miles, but has a better hi-fi sound quality than AM, and thus was an excellent vehicle for the expanding popular music industry (→ Popular Music; Music Industry). With the growth of commercial radio, this national and local character was strengthened, not only because of the introduction of the FM band, but mainly because radio, compared to → television, has very low entry and running costs. Regional or local stations showed themselves able to survive with relatively low → advertising revenues and smaller → audience shares (Hendy 2000, 23; → Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). A major change in the functions and social uses of radio at the same time was a result of the invention of the transistor. The radio set could now be moved out of the living room and be present in other rooms of the house, and it switched from a center for family attention to a companion for the individual as part of the routines of everyday life, in the garden or the car, or at the beach, to routines mainly connected to the immediate surroundings of the community, the locality, and the nation (Scannell 1996).



### **THE NEW DISTRIBUTION PLATFORMS: A REVIVAL OF INTERNATIONAL RADIO?**

During the late 1990s, the digital revolution reached radio broadcasting and opened up new means of production and distribution of radio, including a new opening for the international dissemination of radio (or rather, perhaps, of audio services). Three major platforms for radio distribution were now adopted, or announced as imminently available: *analog broadcast radio*, where the content provider still composes the program output (the well-known “flow” radio); *digital audio broadcasting*, where the electronic program guide offers a mixture of pull and push program deliveries and the listener is able to compose his or her own program menu during the day and combine radio output with written, supplementary information; and *radio on the Internet*, where the listener is able to compose different media elements from the website, often parallel “broadcasting” of the analog channels, streaming audio (music, jukebox function), supplementary written information, video clips, downloading of programs (podcasting), etc.

Radio on the → Internet offers new dimensions for radio production and consumption. Here the audience for any radio station is in principle global, whether its programs or content were originally produced for a local or a national audience. On the Internet, radio stations are able to establish a worldwide presence, and the commercial potential is obvious, for example through banner ads, sales promotions of music CDs, and direct, online sale of music tracks, etc. Public service radio broadcasters often use the Internet platform to promote their noncommercial functions, especially the participatory features for “user-generated content,” e.g., chat, blogs (→ Blogger), audio and video clips (→ Music Videos; Video), etc. (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). Grassroots and civic organizations have also included Internet radio both as a supplement to community activities and as a way to connect to peer organizations or movements on a global scale (→ Citizens’ Media; Community Media; Grassroots Media; Telecenters).

### **FROM RADIO BROADCASTING TO AUDIO DISTRIBUTION?**

The consequences for radio of the growing diversity in digital distribution platforms is not easy to foresee. What are the contemporary technological options for digitization of audio media and what would be the consequences of the different alternative paths of development? Will the future of radio be more in traditional-style, free-to-air broadcasting or will radio turn into a medium where people have to pay directly for what they want to listen to – and see?

Ten years ago, the future of radio seemed to be rather obvious. The European digital platform, digital audio broadcasting (DAB), was – at least in Europe – considered the radio technology of the digital age, which would extend radio media into new dimensions and provide answers to all the problems of analog radio, like the lack of spectrum for new services. However, this pan-European idea of digital radio was rejected by the US and Japan almost at the same time as the Internet made its breakthrough, and already by the end of the 1990s the digital future of radio had become much more complicated. Instead of one universal digital radio approach, there were now a few rival digital radio technologies, both terrestrial and satellite, while new radio-like services through the Internet,

combining audio and multimedia, were able to redeem the original promises of extending the radio experience (→ Digital Media, History of).

As of 2007, there were only a few clear and obvious things about the future of radio. First of all, the audio medium which we know as radio would not die, although it is currently getting into a period of major transition. Second, it seemed that at least a part of the future of radio was still analog, mostly because of the huge numbers of analog receivers and the good quality and low price of analog radio operations. However, in the long run, the future of radio would be digital, but this will probably mean also multiple simultaneous platforms of digital audio delivery. Besides DAB, there were other, alternative digital technologies for audio broadcasting, like Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) and high definition (HD) radio. In addition, digital radio was already available also in a digital television network, DVB-T (Digital Video Broadcasting – Terrestrial), while the new mobile multimedia technologies like DVB-H (digital Video Broadcasting – Handheld) and DMB (Digital Multimedia Broadcasting) would bring digital broadcast television and radio into mobile hand-held devices. On the other hand, also the Internet and mobile phone networks provided a basis for new nonbroadcast or hybrid audio media services like web streaming, podcasting, or visual radio.

The increasing number of possible radio platforms and new radio and radio-like audio and music services were severely challenging the traditional business model of commercial broadcast radio. Since the 1950s, it had been based on creating audiences for the advertisers with free and open delivery of entertainment and playlist-controlled music. Now, when audiences are becoming more and more fragmented, digital music outside of the playlists can be easily obtained and managed for personal use with rather small cost, and direct advertising is increasingly easy to avoid in digital audio consumption, commercial operators are developing different strategies for charging their audiences, i.e., users. Some people were also willing to pay for radio, as the success of US satellite radio has proven. Moreover, mobile phone manufacturers and operators are interested in these new markets (Ala-Fossi & Jauert 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Music Industry ▶ Music Videos ▶ Popular Music ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Radio ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ Radio News ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Telecenters ▶ Television ▶ Video ▶ Voice of America

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# International Television

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During the latter half of the twentieth century, most discussions about international television tended to focus on national media systems and relations of exchange among those systems. Since the 1990s, however, television has increasingly been studied as a global phenomenon. Although national systems still figure prominently, research and policy debates now explore the ways in which television participates in broader processes of globalization (→ Globalization of the Media; Globalization Theories).

Originally, → television, like → radio before it, emerged as a quintessentially national medium. In almost every country, television was introduced in hopes of fostering national unity, social development, public enlightenment, and cultural preservation. Using their power to limit the number of broadcasters, governments carefully controlled access to the airwaves, either by creating public service broadcast systems or by licensing commercial systems that pledged to serve the national interest (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Telecommunications: Law and Policy; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). With the exception of the western hemisphere, most nations around the world opted for public service television during early years of the medium (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). In countries like France, the government organized centralized networks that focused on the promotion of national culture, while in poorer countries like India and China, television was adopted as a means to economic and social development. Whether a commercial or public service, audiences in most countries had few channels to choose from during this early period and broadcasters consequently placed their first priority on serving the national mass audience.

## PERIOD OF CHANGE

During the 1980s, however, economic reversals in Europe put pressure on the budgets of public service broadcasters, which coincided with emerging political challenges from groups that traditionally were marginalized by national TV services. Women's organizations, labor unions, peace groups, environmental advocates, and ethnic and regional movements all criticized public service media for focusing on mass audiences and failing to represent a diverse range of perspectives. This *crisis of legitimacy* was exacerbated by

growing competition from transnational satellite services that fell outside the domain of national broadcast regulation (→ Satellite Communication, Global; Satellite Television). Businesses supported these new technologies since they promised to expand the availability of television advertising time and diminish government control over the airwaves. Cable and satellite channels initially targeted two groups: *transnational niche viewers*, e.g., business executives, sports enthusiasts, and music video fans, and sub-national niche groups, e.g., regional, local, or ethnic audiences (→ Cable Television). These trends soon spread beyond Europe to countries such as India, Australia, and Indonesia. Meanwhile, in countries where national commercial systems had long prevailed, existing broadcasters likewise found themselves challenged by a growing number of niche competitors.

Changes in television were further stimulated by a new generation of corporate moguls – such as Rupert Murdoch (→ News Corporation), Ted Turner (→ CNN), and Akio Morita (→ Sony Corporation) – who aspired to build global media empires that integrated television, music, motion picture, → video games, and other media enterprises. These conglomerates aimed to serve a wide variety of mass and niche markets in both information and entertainment (→ Media Conglomerates). Although national audiences continued to play an important role in their calculations, companies such as News Corporation increasingly strategized about transnational and sub-national audiences, hoping to develop new market niches.

This “*neo-network era*” of multiple channels and flexible corporate structures has also fostered the growth of commercial media conglomerates outside the west, such as Zee TV in India and Phoenix TV in China. And it has forced western corporations, such as Viacom, to adapt their content to local and regional markets around the globe. For instance, MTV now operates more than a dozen distinctive channels in Asia alone, offering various mixes of global, regional, and local programming. Thus, globalization has paradoxically fostered the production and promotion of transnational media products as well as localized niche products aimed at sub-national audiences (→ Hybridity Theories). Unlike the classical network era when TV institutions tended to focus exclusively on national mass audiences, media conglomerates today are flexibly structured to accommodate marketing strategies aimed at a variety of audiences, sometimes without regard to national boundaries. The scale and competitive power of these new television institutions have seriously undermined public broadcasting in some countries, but not all. In India, for example, new competitors have encouraged Doordarshan – the public service broadcaster – to improve program quality, conduct systematic audience research, and diversify its services.

## GLOBALIZATION OF THE MEDIA

Television’s changing character worldwide is part of a broader process of globalization that has been unfolding for at least five hundred years. Globalization refers on the one hand to the increasing speed and density of interactions among people and institutions around the world, a trend that manifests itself in the dynamic interdependence of global financial markets, the transnational division of labor, the interlocking system of nation-states, and the interconnection of communication and transportation systems. On the other hand, globalization also refers to changing modes of consciousness, whereby people

increasingly think and talk about the world as one place. Sociologist Roland Robertson suggests that rather than the world just being itself, we increasingly imagine the world being “for itself.” We speak of global order, human rights, nuclear disarmament, and world ecology as shared experiences and collective projects. We reflect upon information from near and far and we often deliberate as if we have a stake in both local and global events. Not everyone joins in these conversations and certainly all voices are not equal, but these discussions nevertheless span greater terrain and include more people than ever before, and the outcomes of these interactions often have effects that transcend local and national boundaries.

Globalization has been facilitated over the past 150 years by electronic communication technologies like the telegraph, telephone, radio, cinema, television, and computer. Moreover, the deployment of these technologies has been linked to specific historical projects, such as European imperialism, Cold War struggle, and most recently neo-liberal, supra-national capitalism. This last project, which intensified after the end of the Cold War, is most centrally concerned with trade liberalization, as countries around the world are being pressed to eliminate restrictions on the transborder flow of goods and services, including cultural products (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services). Consequently, no society today can confidently say that it stands outside the field of global commerce. A similar observation might be made about popular culture, since the commercial flow of goods and ideas around the world has escalated dramatically in recent times. Thus, the globalization of television is part of a longer historical trajectory. It builds upon related developments, yet it also has contributed significantly to the escalating pace of change.

Debates about transnational media flows began as early as the 1920s. In fact, most national broadcast systems, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), were put in place as a bulwark against foreign media influences, particularly Hollywood films and US popular music. Throughout the twentieth century, preserving and promoting national culture over the airwaves was characterized as a key element of national sovereignty in Europe, Latin America, and especially in the newly independent states of the postcolonial world, such as Ghana, Pakistan, and Indonesia. Scholars such as Herbert I. Schiller, Dallas Smythe, and Armand Mattelart were especially strong critics of US TV exports, claiming that they played an important role in sustaining an international structure of economic and political domination (→ Political Economy of the Media). They furthermore contended that the huge flood of media messages exported from the core industrialized countries served the interests of a western ruling class by squeezing out authentic local voices and promoting a culture of consumption. This “media imperialism” thesis emerged in the 1960s and enjoyed widespread acceptance into the 1980s (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories).

### **NEW ATTRACTION TO DOMESTIC PROGRAMS**

Although many scholars still adhere to its central tenets, others, such as Joseph Straubhaar, began to notice the erosion of → Hollywood’s dominance as the productivity of local TV industries increased. For example, in Latin America, domestic programs generally tend to draw larger audiences than imported products. Scholars furthermore point to the increasing amount of television trade within Latin America and note that

when audiences tune to a foreign program, they generally prefer a show that has been imported from a country with a similar language and/or culture. In Venezuela, for example, viewers are most likely to prefer a show imported from Mexico's Televisa or Brazil's Globo rather than a Hollywood production. Likewise, Taiwanese audiences seem to prefer Japanese or Hong Kong serial dramas, and Kuwaiti audiences prefer programs from Cairo or Beirut. Consequently, the dominant power of Hollywood exporters has been attenuated by more complicated patterns of distribution (→ Francophonie; Korean Cultural Influence).

One indication of these new patterns of TV flow can be gleaned from the *emergence of global media capitals*, such as Bombay (now Mumbai), Cairo, and Hong Kong, each of them now competing for growing shares of the global media market (→ Bollywood; Hong Kong Cinema). Such locales have developed transnational logics of production and distribution, ones that do not necessarily correspond to the geography, interests, or policies of particular nation-states. For example, Hong Kong television is produced, distributed, and consumed in Taipei, Beijing, Amsterdam, Vancouver, Bangkok, and Kuala Lumpur. Similarly, Mumbai, once the home of the national Indian film industry, is now the center for transnational media enterprises that operate across the film, television, and music industries. For example, Zee TV – South Asia's most popular Hindi-language commercial satellite channel – also provides a satellite service to Europe, distributes music videos in Los Angeles, and mounts film productions targeted at audiences around the globe. As numerous critics have noted, Indian television services are going global, seeking out new audiences, new financing, and fresh sources of creative talent.

Finally, even in countries where the presence of US programs is pervasive, the *impact on viewers* remains a matter of speculation. Cultural studies researchers such as David Morley, Ien Ang, Marie Gillespie, and James Lull have shown how audiences make unanticipated uses of television programming, often reworking the meanings of transnational television texts to accommodate the circumstances of their local social context. Consequently, the homogenizing effect of transnational television flows has been called into question.

### NEW CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

These challenges to the media imperialism thesis have formed the foundation of globalization studies of television and they have opened the door to new critical perspectives. John Tomlinson suggests, for example, that television scholars should shift their attention from the analysis of international television to a critique of global capitalist modernity. Such an approach would still be alert to questions of power and dominance, but it would no longer fetishize local cultures nor would it make sweeping assertions about the function of the medium as an unqualified tool of capitalist domination. Television studies should instead emphasize the ways in which electronic media alter our sense of connection to people, events, and institutions in distant locales. By fostering a web of complex connectivity, television participates in the production of new opportunities as well as new anxieties. Our increasingly “glocal” popular culture may, in fact, lay the foundations for nascent transnational political movements around issues such as labor, ecology, and human rights.

Similarly, Ien Ang points to the global/local dynamics of television, arguing that despite the growing prominence of media conglomerates, the actual uses that audiences make of popular texts is far more diverse than previously imagined. The play of power in global television is to be found in the ways that media conglomerates attempt to set structural limits on the production and circulation of meaning, and contrarily on the ways in which viewers both comply with and defy these semiotic limits. This play of power requires an understanding of industries and audiences, as well as the diverse social contexts in which the contest over meaning arises.

The study of international television today examines programming, audiences, and institutions, but it also encourages us to consider the role that electronic media have played for almost two centuries in the longer trajectory of globalization. Writing shortly before the first television satellite launch in 1962, → Marshall McLuhan hyperbolically heralded the arrival of a “global village.” Perhaps more modestly today, we might suggest that television facilitates processes whereby villages around the world increasingly perceive their circumstances in relation to global issues, forces, and institutions, as well as local and national ones.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bollywood ▶ Cable Television ▶ CNN ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ Francophonie ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hollywood ▶ Hong Kong Cinema ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ Korean Cultural Influence ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ News Corporation ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sony Corporation ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Video Games

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# Internet

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The Internet is a network of computer networks. In that sense, even though the content provided can often be similar to that offered by radio or television networks (→ Radio; Radio Networks; Television; Television Networks), a more appropriate structural analogy should probably be to telephone or telegraph networks (→ Telegraph, History of). The Internet, telephone, and telegraph networks all originated as electronic means of communicating in a point-to-point context. In relation to content, as well, early experiments with the telephone (in the 1880s and 1890s) connected performers and audiences in multiple locations and varied content, such as sports contests, musical programs, and vaudeville shows, and provided a kind of conceptual forerunner for what was to come with radio, television, and the Internet.

The Internet, though, owes its existence to developments in computers and communication between computers. The US military developed a number of precursors to the Internet, the best known of which is ARPANET. ARPANET use was restricted to military and scientific personnel. The National Science Foundation (NSF) originally provided administrative oversight of the Internet, but in 1995, the NSF ceased its administration of the Internet, and commercial use was permitted. The world wide web (WWW), developed by Tim Berners-Lee, soon replaced file transfer protocol as the most common application used on the Internet. The WWW is a program that allows the use of multimedia – graphics, audio, and video. As a result, the WWW offered a much more intuitive sense of being in a particular location, and of navigating from one site to another. By 2000, 80 percent of all traffic on the Internet came through the WWW (→ Internet, Technology of).

## CHALLENGES OF INTERNET RESEARCH

Today, Internet content is as diverse as those who use it. In broad categories, some of the more popular uses of the Internet are telecommuting (working at a distance from an office but using a computer and the Internet to perform one's job), electronic commerce (advertising, buying, selling, and even distributing via the Internet; → E-Commerce), customer service, → electronic mail (email), news reports (→ Internet News), file sharing, TV and motion picture distribution directly to homes, online chat, friendship sites (such as MySpace), dating services, weblogs or blogs (→ Blogger), online auctions, and video submission sites, such as YouTube.

Studying Internet content presents some of the same challenges as studying media content, except that some of the issues are exaggerated. As is typical in studying the media, the content that is most relevant for study is the content that is seen, heard, or read by an → audience. In the pre-cable days of television, virtually any program offered by major networks would attract millions of viewers, so nearly all broadcast content was relevant for sampling. With the Internet, the content has to be found, and a decision



needs to be made about how relevant the website is to the purposes of the study, regardless of how relevant the content of the website may be. That is, if no one visits the site, there is not much reason to study the content, even if it does exist (see McMillan 2000, for other issues in content analysis of Internet material; → Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative).

A different kind of problem exists with studying Internet content from the perspective of → interpersonal communication. Typically, interpersonal communication scholars make comparisons to face-to-face communication. However, some aspects of communication over the Internet simply do not exist in face-to-face communication (e.g., smiley faces or exclamation points), so some studies are simply trying to document the type of communication that is occurring (Waseleski 2006).

A couple of issues make studying Internet content a particular challenge over traditional media. One of these issues is a sampling limitation due to the size of the Internet and the commercial software used to search it. There are so many different websites that → search engines have to be employed to find particular kinds of content, and these only pick up a certain portion of the websites that might be available. Although search engines existed even before the commercialization of the Internet, advertisers and content providers have helped make search engines the most heavily used sites on the Internet (Hargittai 2007). Google and Yahoo! are the two most popular search engines as of this writing (2007). Because of the volume of traffic, search terms can be tracked and plotted over time, and most search engines today offer the opportunity to see the most popular searches. Google Trends, for example, provides a ranking of the top 100 search terms over the previous 24 hours. Typically, as one might expect, given the fairly short time frame, the most popular searches are related to current news events (especially entertainment-related news) and are a reflection of people trying to learn more about a certain topic (→ News).

Inevitably, the most popular search terms tend to be names from the entertainment or political world following a death, arrest, or scandal of some sort. However, even lists of search terms do not necessarily reflect what people are actually searching for, or what they actually visit. Due to links within sites, a particular searcher may find links that are not exactly what they are looking for, but one of those sites may have further links that are more relevant. In this way, a search term was able to help the person move to a site that linked to a site holding relevant content, but the search term was not an accurate description of what the person was looking for. In addition, because results are ranked based on a number of factors, results are not necessarily in order of most relevant to a user's query. Other considerations are that some websites are built with popular keywords embedded within them, some search engines accept payment for placement of results, and some provide special slots to those willing to pay for them, so that searchers may not visit the most relevant sites, but instead visit those with the greatest financial means.

A second biasing factor is that the Internet changes drastically each day. The things that make it most interesting – speed and currency – also make it extremely difficult to study in any way that generalizes beyond a particular day's results. Under such conditions, studies of Internet content can quickly lose relevance. Since much of the material available on the Internet has been made available by a person, rather than an organization, it can disappear without a trace. Some organizations have attempted to gather a historical archive (e.g., the Internet Archive's "Wayback Machine"), but, in addition to the

monumental task and storage problems, there are some legal issues involved and it is not certain how they will be resolved (→ Archiving of Internet Content).

### Subjects of Research

To combat such sampling problems, most studies of Internet content focus on particular types of content: political blogs, online computer games, online → newspapers, etc., and a particular time frame for that content (e.g., the 2004 US presidential election). Many of those studies examining news or political content compare online content to similar content in more traditional media (e.g., Bichard 2006; Hoffman 2006), but because the Internet is quite different from traditional media in how it is used, the content tends not to be directly comparable. Other studies take traditional research concerns and apply them to Internet content (e.g., Cho & Cheon 2005; Jha 2007). Studies of blogs, for instance, do not really have a counterpart in traditional media. Opinion pieces in a newspaper might be considered similar, but they are printed only after following particular editorial policies, and are surrounded by the credibility of a newspaper (→ Commentary). A blog does not have either of these aspects. One could consider that whatever was visited before the blog is “next to” it in perception, but no guiding editorial policy or human editor has had a hand in deciding whether it should be made available to the public. In light of these kinds of issues, Reese et al. (2007) studied relationships between blogs and “professional” news media to examine the place of blogs in the news and information landscape.

In some senses, the Internet has invigorated research on some older concepts in the field of communication, and may be bringing the study of interpersonal and mass communication closer together (Waseleski 2006). The Internet serves both as a point-to-point medium and a “broadcast” type medium, depending upon the site the user is visiting and the software he or she is using. Some studies attempt to use more traditional communication concepts to study how Internet content may fit within the broader area of communication content (→ Media Production and Content). Other studies have focused on the Internet as a particular setting for interpersonal communication or mass communication to take place. Interpersonal researchers have focused on the Internet in relation to friendship development, relationship maintenance, love, attraction, and a host of variables that focus on traditional interpersonal communication ideas (→ Communication: Relationship Rules; Relationship Development). While very few studies of media use were conducted by interpersonal communication scholars before the arrival of the Internet, hundreds have been conducted since that time. Mass communication scholars, who have been interested in the relationship between mass communication and interpersonal communication for many years, have now found a medium that seems to make the connections between them explicit.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Archiving of Internet Content ▶ Audience ▶ Blogger ▶ Commentary  
 ▶ Communication: Relationship Rules ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Exposure to the Internet  
 ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Internet News ▶ Internet and Popular Culture ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Interpersonal Communication

▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News ▶ Newspaper  
▶ Online Journalism ▶ Online Media ▶ Online Relationships ▶ Online Research  
▶ Radio ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Search Engines ▶ Sex  
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## **Internet: International Regulation**

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The first 25 years of → Internet governance began with technicians at the helm. The 1990s saw an emerging struggle over the US government's escalating attempts to dominate the Internet. Initial opposition came from the Internet's technical community, but later a number of national governments also began to challenge the US strategy. The European Union (EU) largely backed the US. While some issues were resolved by the mid-2000s, others were likely to stay contested for a considerable time. (Many acronyms, all explained below, were generated in this process.)

### **GOVERNANCE WITHOUT GOVERNMENTS**

When the term "Internet governance" was introduced in the 1980s, it was used mainly to describe the specific forms of the technical management of the global core resources of

the Internet: → domain names, IP addresses, Internet protocols, and the root server system. The term “governance,” rather than “government,” signaled the difference between Internet regulation, mainly technical in nature and self-organized, and the legal regulation of telecommunications and broadcasting (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Internet, Technology of).

Internet pioneers rejected any government role in the emerging cyberspace. MIT’s Dave Clark proclaimed in 1992: “We believe in: rough consensus and running code.” Tim Berners-Lee (1998), world wide web inventor, insisted: “Our spiritual and social quest is for a set of rules which allow people to work together in harmony.” Many of these individuals had been shaped earlier by the 1960s. They feared government would restrict freedom of expression and the right to privacy, and would slow down or block Internet innovation (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). In the Internet’s first 20 years, regulation of codes, standards, and protocols was thrashed out among technicians in a bottom-up policy process (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

Although in 1979 the Pentagon’s Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) had initiated the “*Internet Configuration Control Board*” – later renamed “Internet Architecture Board” – to enable collaboration on technical development, DARPA kept a loose rein on the Board. The Board, however, oversaw several key civil society entities: the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), the main body for standardizing Internet protocols; the policy process (RFC Editor) server; and the Internet Research Task Force (IRTF). Mostly IETF activists created the Internet Society (ISOC) as a nonprofit in 1992 to fund the RFC Editor, and as a forum on the Internet’s social implications (→ Communication Technology Standards). The domain name system was managed until the early 1990s by a single person, Jon Postel, from the University of Southern California. He also allocated the blocks of IP addresses to the new private Regional Internet Registries, and delegated the management of Top Level Domains (TLDs), including country-code-based domains (ccTLDs).

In 1988 the US government encouraged Postel to bring more stability and security to the process. Thus, the “*Internet Assigned Numbers Authority*” (IANA) was established at Postel’s university institute. However, in 1990 oversight was switched from DARPA to the National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA), a unit of the Department of Commerce (DoC). Postel’s institute continued to manage the system until the 1998 foundation of the *Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers* (ICANN).

In 1990, given the new world wide web, Postel proposed adding 150 new “generic Top Level Domains” (gTLDs) to the system. Network Solutions Inc. (NSI), a private company that managed .com, .net, and .org, as well as the A-root server, lobbied the US Congress and DoC in opposition. In 1992 the DoC contracted with NSI as sole domain name registrar for its three gTLDs. Postel then proposed to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to bring together technical organizations, private sector institutions, and intergovernmental organizations, launching a bottom-up Internet development process, and to create an “*Interim Ad Hoc Committee*” (IAHC), which was formed in 1996. Members were ISOC, IANA, the Internet Architecture Board (IAB), the International Trademark Association (INTA), and the World Intellectual Property Organization

(WIPO). By inviting the latter two, Postel wanted to address national governments' growing concerns about their role in Internet governance.

In 1997 IAHC members signed a Memorandum of Understanding proposing a *Policy Oversight Committee* (POC) to manage Internet core resources. A Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) would give other stakeholders an opportunity to provide advice to the POC. Within the POC, the technical community, with six representatives, could outvote the two governmental members (ITU and WIPO) and the three private sector members. The plan was to launch seven new generic domains (gTLDs), to license registrars for domain name registration in the gTLD name-space, and to move the A-root server from Virginia to Lake Geneva.

The US government and NSI were vigorously opposed. The Clinton administration invited proposals for a new private nonprofit corporation (NewCo) to manage Internet core resources. The EU supported this in principle, but criticized US-centrism. Ira Magaziner, US President Clinton's Internet adviser and ICANN's main architect, accepted the idea of an "international representative body" and proposed that the NewCo board of directors represent the Internet's diversity. This enabled EU Commissioner Martin Bangemann to support DNS privatization. In September 1998 Postel's draft by-laws for a NewCo, entitled Internet Assigned Names and Numbers Corporation, got a "green light" from the US Congress.

In November 1998 ICANN was formally incorporated under the "California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law for Charitable and Public Purposes." Simultaneously, ICANN signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the DoC. (Postel's untimely death some days later abruptly ended his prominent role.) ICANN was designated as a multi-stakeholder organization. Initially the board of directors was to consist of nine private sector and technical community representatives, and nine from the At-Large membership (Internet users and civil society). Government representatives were ineligible, but the 190 UN member states were invited to form a "Governmental Advisory Committee" (GAC) to give the Board nonbinding advice.

### **ICANN, WSIS, AND WGIG**

ICANN started in spring 1999, with independence planned for the end of 2000. It rapidly opened up domain name registration, and a system to resolve domain name conflicts, but elsewhere progress was slow. There was confusion in particular on how to elect the nine At-Large directors. Furthermore, the relationship was tense between the ICANN board and the ccTLD managers. The majority operated under their countries' national jurisdiction, and only wanted ICANN's informal technical assistance. And out of nearly 100 proposals for new gTLDs, ICANN provisionally adopted just 7 (.info, .name, .biz, .coop, .museum, .pro, .aero). It was clear ICANN was not ready for independence. In October 2000 the Clinton administration passed on the issue to the next administration.

For the Bush administration, supported by established industrial interests rather than the Silicon Valley companies behind former vice president Gore, it was a low priority. Then 2001 saw the terrorist attacks on the USA, and ICANN, originally in part a "cyberdemocracy" project, now became a "cybersecurity" project. Within 12 months its

by-laws were rewritten. Now, if the ICANN board rejected GAC advice, it had to tell the GAC why. The GAC could then require “consultations.” If these failed, ICANN had to report the fact to the global Internet community. Moreover, governments reserved their right to act independently from ICANN’s decisions, effectively instituting a government veto.

The new by-laws eliminated the nine At-Large directors and grouped all Internet users into an “*At-Large Advisory Committee*” (ALAC), which could nominate just one nonvoting board director. The Internet Protocol Supporting Organization was retitled the “*Technical Liaison Group*” (TLG), which, like the new “*Stability and Security Advisory Committee*,” could nominate just one nonvoting director to the board. A new Nominating Committee (NomCom) was created with the right to select half the board.

However, in the run-up to the UN-sponsored World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in December 2003, more and more governments reviewed the political implications of these moves. A substantial number criticized ICANN for being under US government control and called for broader involvement in decision-making. The Chinese government, supported by a majority from developing countries, argued for an International Internet Treaty and the formation of an Intergovernmental Internet Organization (→ Censorship; China: Media System).

The governance issue dominated final preparations for the Geneva Summit, intensified by the unclear definition of Internet governance. Some meant by it the management of technical Internet core resources and wanted private sector leadership, while others included all public policy dimensions and urged enhancing the roles of the ITU and governments. Yet even purely technical questions affected market developments and Internet security and stability. The US and EU governments vigorously supported private sector leadership. China and the Group of 77 called for governmental leadership. Both groups officially agreed that all stakeholders – governments, the private sector, and civil society, as well as intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations – should have a role, but not on which role.

The compromise was to ask the UN Secretary General to establish a “*Working Group on Internet Governance*” (WGIG) to define Internet governance, the public policy issues, and stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities. According to para. C6.13b of the Geneva Plan of Action, the group should be set up “in an open and inclusive process that ensures a mechanism for the full and active participation of governments, the private sector and civil society from both developing and developed countries, involving relevant intergovernmental and international organizations and forums” (WSIS 2003).

## THE WORKING GROUP ON INTERNET GOVERNANCE

WGIG stated that no single entity should govern the Internet, but that it needed better coordination and cooperation. WGIG recommended a high-level “Internet Governance Forum” (IGF) without any decision-making capacity, but could not agree about the oversight function and the specific role of the US government. The recommendations became the basis for the final negotiations during the third meeting of the WSIS Preparatory Committee (PrepCom3) in September 2005.

In advance of PrepCom3, the DoC reiterated *four basic principles*: “The United States Government intends to preserve the security and stability of the Internet’s Domain Name and Addressing System (DNS). Given the Internet’s importance to the world’s economy, it is essential that the underlying DNS of the Internet remain stable and secure. As such, the United States is committed to taking no action that would have the potential to adversely impact the effective and efficient operation of the DNS and will therefore maintain its historic role in authorizing changes or modifications to the authoritative root zone file.” While the DoC acknowledged other governments’ interests, it reasserted ICANN’s role as main manager of Internet core resources, but supported a continuation of dialogue on Internet governance.

The formal recognition of governments’ national sovereignty over domain name-space as defined by its ccTLD was crucial for the Chinese government and many third world governments, which feared the US government might interfere with their national Internet policies and even block the publication of the ccTLD zone file in the Internet root. The US government assurance that it had no such intention significantly eased subsequent negotiations.

During PrepCom3, China, Brazil, and India dropped or did not strongly pursue earlier positions. Only the EU proposed a “new cooperation model,” based on a public–private partnership concept (→ European Union: Communication Law). Day-to-day operations – previously ICANN’s job – should be the private sector’s responsibility, but governments should be more active on the “level of principle.” The US argued that this blurred “principle” and “day-to-day operations,” risking a silent mission creep by a new intergovernmental body leading to UN-style control over the Internet. This US–EU controversy quickly ascended to the highest levels in Washington and Brussels. The debate became overheated when some US senators announced they would reject any UN Internet takeover. In fact, neither WGIG nor the EU had proposed any such takeover. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan publicly rejected the idea, as did EU leaders. These declarations helped prepare for a compromise in the final negotiations before the November 2005 Tunis WSIS summit.

## **WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY AND THEREAFTER**

Just hours before the Tunis summit, all parties agreed on some basic governance principles, as well as an Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to help launch enhanced cooperation. The principles recognized national sovereignty over ccTLD domain names, the involvement of the private sector, civil society, and governments in all Internet governance, especially “that all governments should have an equal role and responsibility for international Internet governance and for ensuring the stability, security and continuity of the Internet” (WSIS 2005, para 68). This statement was a victory for governments critical of US control over the Internet root and ICANN. However, there was no procedure to downsize the overall accretion of US power in Internet matters.

The IGF was constituted for five years, was designed as a multi-stakeholder forum with no decision-making capacity, and substituted for the proposed intergovernmental body. It was anticipated it would produce important input to official organizations, such as ICANN for domain names, the IETF for standards, the ITU for infrastructure, and

→ UNESCO for multilingualism, as they prepared projects and treaties. It would meet annually under the UN Secretary General's aegis. "Enhanced cooperation" was not defined and disguised fundamental dissent. The US government interpreted it simply as more effective collaboration among existing organizations (e.g., the ITU, WIPO, ICANN, IETF), but other governments saw it as leading to a "new cooperation model" as proposed by the EU.

After Tunis, a "Joint Project Agreement" (JPA) between ICANN and the US substituted for the Memorandum of Understanding, giving ICANN more independence from the DoC. It had to report annually to the global community, but no longer periodically to the DoC, only to "consult" with it regularly. The JPA would terminate in October 2009 and ICANN was expected to be fully independent beyond that date. The EU welcomed the JPA as a move to reducing government involvement in day-to-day management.

ICANN itself over 2006 and 2007 opened more regional offices and created a network of 13 regional liaisons. It also improved its ccTLD relationships with key ccTLD managers. It enlarged the At-Large membership through contracting Memoranda of Understanding with regional At-Large organizations from Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. And it finalized policies for introducing new gTLDs and for internationalized domain names. Closer cooperation in working groups and task forces strengthened the relationship between the GAC and the ICANN board. However, the .xxx TLD, and the WHOIS database, the special register with domain name holders' contact details freely accessible (in particular to law enforcement and the music industry), remained controversial.

The first IGF took place successfully in November 2006. Over 1,500 experts, representing all stakeholder groups from developed and developing countries, discussed key issues such as openness, diversity, access, and security. The IGF's multi-stakeholder mechanism was seen as a real innovation in international politics. There were no special name badges, reserved seats or special speaking rights for the individual stakeholder groups. Governmental and nongovernmental experts debated on an equal footing. The decision not to draft a final document removed the pressure to agree on certain issues by the meeting's close. Another innovation was the voluntary "dynamic coalitions" among representatives from governments, private sector, and civil society on individual issues (e.g., spam, cybersecurity, privacy, freedom of expression).

Finally, enhanced cooperation started through informal consultations, mainly among governments. The ITU *Plenipotentiary Conference* in 2006 resolved to request the ITU Secretary General to ask member states and sector members about their approach to enhanced cooperation. While the Secretary General said the ITU had no intention to govern the Internet, he would host a "World Telecommunication Policy Forum" on Internet issues in 2009. In 2010 the Joint Project Agreement would terminate, the IGF mandate would end, and the ITU would hold its next Plenipotentiary Conference. Probably issues such as internationalized domain names, alternative roots, net neutrality, cyber-crime, e-commerce, and individual human rights will dominate discussion. Global debate on how the Internet should be managed will continue.

SEE ALSO: ► Censorship ► China: Media System ► Communication Technology Standards ► Domain Names ► European Union: Communication Law ► Freedom of



the Press, Concept of ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of  
 ► Internet ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Internet, Technology of ► UNESCO

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## **Internet Law and Regulation**

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The → Internet is a global network of computer networks linked by various information and telecommunication infrastructures and technologies. The Internet and the technologies which transmit its rivers of information around the globe are conceptualized and regulated by all countries of the world within the framework of their political, economic, social, and cultural systems. Each country has an attitude toward the Internet, especially those parts of the Internet within its national territory. This multiplicity of regulatory approaches to the Internet essentially transforms cyberspace into a series of interconnected jurisdictions where each country attempts to apply its rules, regulations, and culture on the networks within its territorial jurisdiction. Internet law and regulation

is further complicated by the convergence of several media – information technology, telecommunications, print media, sound, still images, and motion pictures – which are regulated differently by different countries (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Communication and Law; Media Policy).

## HISTORY OF THE INTERNET

The Internet grew out of the communications network survivability concerns of the United States Department of Defense during the Cold War era. In effect, after the Soviet Union launched the first artificial satellite into orbit in 1957, the United States launched the Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) in 1958 to compete with the Soviet Union in space technology. In 1969 ARPA developed ARPANET, a computer network that linked the Pentagon's global military resources through a redundant "system of systems," or network of computer networks, exchanging information in self-contained packets. This new technology increased the speed of digital transmissions by several orders of magnitude. As part of America's command, control, and communications network, ARPANET was designed to be redundant and capable of surviving a Soviet nuclear strike.

No other communication medium has had such an explosive growth in such a relatively short span of time. The lightning speed with which the Internet has grown and diffused around the world is due in part to the invention, in 1990, of the world wide web, at the European Center for Nuclear Research (CERN) in Geneva, Switzerland, and its release, free of charge, to the computer science community. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the end of the Cold War, led to the transformation of the Internet into a global, technologically converged, multi-communication platform. The American government contracted the running of the Internet first to the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), and eventually to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), a nonprofit corporation formed by stakeholders of the Internet community. ICANN handles Internet protocol address space allocation, protocol parameter assignment, and domain name and root server system management (→ Domain Names). Thus, governance of the infrastructure and protocols of the Internet does not fall under the ambit of international law. Indeed, the development of the architecture of the Internet, and control of Internet evolution and operation lies with the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), an international community of network designers, operators, vendors, and researchers (→ Internet, Technology of; Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

## INTERNET LAW AND POLICY TYPOLOGY

Since the Internet is a global multi-communication space on which information and communication technologies converge, its regulation is multilayered. The basic unit of Internet regulation is code, the programming software or logic that makes the Internet function. In his highly acclaimed book, *Code and other laws of cyberspace*, Lawrence Lessig conceptualized Internet regulation as space dominated by corporate commercial technologies and the logic of their underlying computer codes, operating within the framework of the rule of law. Indeed, by creating protocols such as those designed to protect children from

harmful content on the Internet and by setting standards for anything from HTML to peer-to-peer music exchange, the Internet community clearly regulates the Internet.

Additionally, through code, information and communication technologies are used to regulate the behavior of Internet users on a global scale, in accordance with the values, ideals, and ethics of manufacturers, controllers, and hardware and software designers. Additionally, regulators around the world employ architectural, software, and hardware solutions to address cyber-crime, network security, reliability, → privacy, and intellectual property issues.

Since the Internet became a global multi-communication medium in the 1990s, countries all over the world have enacted laws aimed at regulating the segments of the Internet within their jurisdictions, or at least bringing those parts of the network within the ambit of their systems and legal jurisdictions. The result is a range of Internet regulatory models at the international and national levels.

## **MULTILATERAL OR INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS**

International regulation of the Internet consists of a “basket” of conventions, United Nations resolutions, declarations, and plans of action. International regulation of the Internet covers electronic commerce and electronic signatures, child pornography, and intellectual property.

### **Electronic Commerce**

The linkage of information and communication technologies led to the creation of a global information economy. According to the Global Information Infrastructure Commission, the infrastructure of the knowledge economy was set in place by a series of agreements: the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Telecommunications Policy Forum of 1996, which reached agreements on satellite development and inter-connection; the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Meeting of 1996, which committed countries to eliminate tariffs on information technology products; and the 1997 WTO Agreement on Basic Telecommunications Services, which called on nations to liberalize their telecommunications markets (→ E-Commerce).

Additionally, electronic commerce was officially endorsed by the United Nations, and globalized within the framework of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). The Commission set out to bring the multibillion-dollar global electronic commerce under international trade law through its Model Law on Electronic Commerce, and its Model Law on Electronic Signatures. UNCITRAL conceptualized its model laws as tools for harmonizing the disparate trade laws that obtain around the globe in order to facilitate electronic commerce.

### **Child Pornography**

Areas of Internet content that are covered by international law include child pornography, data protection, and intellectual property. The legal basis for the suppression of child pornography on the Internet is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

As child pornography became prevalent on the Internet, the UN General Assembly adopted the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. The United Nations called for worldwide criminalization of the production, distribution, exportation, transmission, importation, and intentional possession and advertising of child pornography. Additionally, the International Labour Organization (ILO) fights against child pornography on the Internet under the “Worst Forms of Labour Convention” of 1999 (→ Child Protection, Media Regulations for; Pornography, Media Law on; Sex and Pornography Online).

### **Intellectual Property and Domain Names**

One of the most significant multilateral Internet agreements was carried out within the framework of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), an organization with a membership of 171 countries. WIPO’s Internet Domain Name Process involves holding extensive international consultations with a view to making recommendations on the management of Internet domain names and addresses worldwide. The WIPO process also involves the settlement of disputes arising from intellectual property issues associated with domain names. The goal of the WIPO process is to apply multilaterally agreed standards of intellectual property protection to the Internet (→ Intellectual Property Law).

The WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonographs Treaty of 1996 made international copyright law applicable to the Internet and laid the groundwork for a multilateral approach to the resolution of intellectual property disputes. One of the most important provisions of the treaty is the criminalization of measures taken by hackers and other unauthorized persons, to circumvent digital anti-piracy counter-measures embedded by authors and copyright holders in intellectual property ranging from software to compact discs. Furthermore, the treaty calls on signatory countries to take legal actions against those who knowingly remove or alter electronic rights management information. To underscore the importance the United States attached to the WIPO treaties, the American Congress passed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 to implement them.

## **THE NEO-MERCANTILIST MODEL**

### **Origin**

The American political and economic system is premised on the notion that the United States is a marketplace of ideas (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). As such, except in the narrowest of circumstances, the government may not regulate speech on the basis of its content. These principles are the foundation of the country’s neo-mercantilist Internet law regime. Congress has funded supercomputers and networks in the United States based on the premise that computer infrastructures were similar to the American interstate highway system, which provided the infrastructure for transportation and communication but allowed the free market to determine the cities that would benefit the most from the system.

In 1997, the Clinton–Gore administration offered the world a framework for the expansion and regulation of electronic commerce. The administration conceptualized the Internet as a global capitalist marketplace, and appealed to governments to assume a minimalist regulatory posture toward electronic commerce. The Clinton–Gore framework favored self-government, decentralization, bottom-up governance, private-sector networks, public–private sector partnerships, and international agreements as values that should guide Internet regulation. The Clinton–Gore framework was aimed at creating a seamless global market economy with a fluid exchange of finance, goods, services, and information. It essentially globalized America’s libertarian principles (→ Americanization of the Media; Globalization of the Media): the marketplace of ideas, laissez-faire economics, free trade, and the free flow of information, goods, and services. The international Internet law regime promoted by the United Nations and the WTO adhere to these principles.

### **Child Pornography under American Internet Law**

The only exception to this global free market economy is child pornography. With the transformation of the Internet from an instrument of military and research communication to a general-purpose educational, cultural, social, and commercial platform, the medium soon became a magnet for pornography of all kinds, including child pornography. The accessibility of online adult pornography to children, as well as media stories of predators who sought unsuspecting children on the Internet, led to passage of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 in the United States.

This act was challenged in court, and in the ground-breaking case *Reno v. ACLU*, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the Internet has First Amendment protection comparable to that enjoyed by the print media. As a result, pornography involving adults has constitutional protection. However, obscenity (material that presents human sexual and toilet functions in a highly offensive manner without any redeeming value to society) is not protected. Some researchers claim that the United States Supreme Court’s decision in *Reno v. ACLU* essentially globalized the First Amendment. The Supreme Court of the United States has also held that a blanket ban on computer-generated images of children or adults who appear to look like children indulging in sexual activities is unconstitutional.

### **Regulation of Electronic Signatures**

Transformation of the Internet into a virtual multi-marketplace created a need for software and infrastructure that ensure the security, reliability, privacy, and authentication of online transactions. The most common method of Internet security and authentication is the electronic signature, which can range from typed email signatures to digital signatures (a unique string of numbers or characters, or a combination of both, that are linked to another series of numbers generated through complex mathematical algorithms or operations that are made possible by encryption technology).

In order to ensure the confidentiality, reliability, and security of Internet identification systems, the United States enacted the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce, or E-Sign, Act of 2000. The Act was designed to promote global electronic

commerce. The E-sign Act does not oblige unwilling participants to accept electronic signatures. However, it stipulates that electronic signatures, contracts, or records may not be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability just because they are in electronic form. Additionally, under the Act, the United States adopted a nondiscriminatory approach to electronic signatures and authentication methods from other countries.

### **Peer-to-Peer Music Exchange on the Internet**

One of the most contentious issues of the Internet age is online peer-to-peer exchange of copyrighted material. The first free music exchange company, Napster, was shut down when federal courts in the United States found that users who participated in the peer-to-peer music exchange promoted by the company infringed on the exclusive reproduction and distribution rights of musicians and record companies (→ P2P Networking).

The courts held that unauthorized use of copyrighted musical recordings within the framework of Napster's peer-to-peer music exchange business was not "fair use." In 2005, the Supreme Court of the United States held in *MGM v. Grokster* that companies whose free software allowed peer-to-peer distribution of lawful and unlawful copyrighted material on the Internet by third parties were liable for acts of infringement facilitated by the software.

### **THE CULTURALIST MODEL**

Many countries have the impression that their cultures are besieged by the globalization of American popular culture. Transformation of the Internet into an American-dominated commercial and multi-communication space, whose architecture closely mirrors America's socio-cultural and political logic, has caused concerns in many parts of the world. Some countries have enacted Internet laws that are designed to protect their national cultures.

France is an example of the culturalist state. The French government has always defended what communication scholar Armand Mattelart calls "cultural sovereignty." Under its ideology of *exception culturelle* ("cultural exception"), France does not want its culture subsumed within an undifferentiated "western" culture. Since the 1970s, French law has classified the French language and the French media and telecommunications infrastructure as part of its cultural heritage that should be jealously protected against Anglo-American domination. This culturalist perspective has also been applied to the Internet. France views the Internet as a cultural rather than a commercial platform, and regulates it within its protectionist framework.

The French view is expressed by Mattelart, who claims that over-commercialization of the Internet has led to a clash of two freedoms: the freedom of expression of citizens versus the freedom of commercial expression, a clash between human rights and commercial rights. Therefore, in France, laws mandate that websites located in the country be in French and that Internet content accessible to French citizens on French territory abide by the country's content-based free speech regime. An American company, Yahoo! was fined for violating French Internet content laws. In order to protect French national identity, language, and culture on the Internet, new terminology spawned by technology is systematically replaced with French neologisms. For example, in 2003, the General

Commission on Terminology and Neology officially approved replacement of the English word “email” with the French equivalent, *courier électronique* (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe; France: Media System).

### **THE GATEWAY MODEL**

Under this model, a governmental agency serves as the de facto or de jure gateway to the Internet. Usually, the government creates a national intranet that insulates and isolates the country domain from the rest of the Internet. These intranets are often protected by firewalls and proxy servers that filter undesirable websites. Access to the Internet, or sections thereof, is thus granted or denied in the name of national security, culture, morality, or some other governmental interest (→ Access to the Media).

The gateway model of Internet regulation can be described as a “command and control” regulatory posture. This model is most evident in countries with authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes like Russia, China, Burma, Cuba, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia (→ China: Media System; Communication Law and Policy: Asia; Russia: Media System). In these countries, the government is both the Internet operator and regulator. The thinking behind the gateway model is that the Internet is an electronic conveyor belt for western decadent culture and political subversion, which could potentially infect religions, political systems, and cultures.

### **THE DEVELOPMENTALIST MODEL**

With the diffusion of the Internet around the world in the 1990s, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), United Nations specialized agencies like → UNESCO and the ITU, and aid agencies like the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) conceptualized the Internet as a catalyst for economic and social development in the third world.

Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations, said that by connecting to the Internet, African countries would become part of the global economy, leaving behind decades of stagnation and poverty. African countries were told that by connecting to the Internet, they would be able to bypass expensive information and telecommunications technologies. Most countries liberalized their telecommunications systems, and privatized state-owned telecommunications operators. While all African countries are now connected to the Internet, most of them do not have an adequate regulatory framework to deal with issues like online child pornography, Internet gambling, advance fee fraud, hackers, and phishing or identity theft. For example, in Nigeria, advance fee fraud solicitations through the mails are punishable under Decree No. 419. However, the Nigerian government has watched helplessly as this illegal activity has migrated to the Internet. Despite the legal vacuum in many African countries, regional economic groupings like the South African Development Community are taking steps to collectively regulate the Internet to suit the economic and cultural reality of the continent (→ Communication Law and Policy: Africa; Africa: Media Systems).

As the typology shows, global treaties, and conventions regulate the Internet at the international level while individual regions and countries have laws and policies that seek

to shape “their” respective sections of the network to reflect their cultures, socio-political, and legal realities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Child Protection, Media Regulations for ▶ China: Media System ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Domain Names ▶ E-Commerce ▶ France: Media System ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Internet News ▶ Internet and Popular Culture ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Media Policy ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Privacy ▶ Russia: Media System ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ UNESCO

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## **Internet News**

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Between the release of the world wide web (WWW) standard in 1991, the start of the first online news publications worldwide in the mid-1990s, the *Kidon Media-Link* international



database of 18,318 online news media in 2006, and the emergence of 70 million or more weblogs and podcasts, of which about one-tenth focus on news, one could say the web has become a widely accepted and used platform for the production and dissemination of news – by both professional reporters and amateurs (or “citizen journalists”). Not only thousands of professional news media have started websites, millions of individual users and special interest groups have used the web as an outlet for their news as well. Correspondingly, trade and scholarly publications have focused extensively on journalism as it is produced online, resulting in a sprawling field of research dealing with one or more aspects of Internet news. A particular focus on news as it is gathered on, produced for, and distributed via the Internet seeks to disconnect it from the hardware of personal computers, technological appliances, and digital networks, thus enabling a more specific focus on online journalism as a distinct social practice.

Journalism is and has always been dependent on technology. For the profession to achieve public status and reach a “mass” audience, it relies on technologies for the gathering, editing, production, and dissemination of information. Ever since the first newspapers appeared in Europe during the seventeenth century (→ Newspaper, History of), technology has enabled journalism to organize itself around its basic premise: to deliver relevant public information in a timely and usable manner. If one considers the history of technology in mass media journalism, one could argue that the nineteenth century belonged to (the rise and establishment of) print newspapers, the twentieth century belonged to broadcast media, and the twenty-first century belongs to (wireless) digital multimedia (→ Media History). Journalism has evolved and professionalized accordingly, developing specializations in print (newspaper and magazine) journalism, radio and television journalism, and online journalism (→ Journalism, History of). During the first years of the twenty-first century, a multimedia journalism has emerged – both in education and training programs, as well as in converged organizations’ newsrooms (Quinn 2006). The literature in the field of journalism studies is largely informed by the standards of research, education, and practices set by print journalism. Scholars from a variety of backgrounds – such as sociology, social and mass psychology, anthropology, political science, and economics – flocked to communication and media studies as mass media became ubiquitous and pervasive in society, and as the lives of many peoples around the world became saturated by media.

### **ONLINE JOURNALISM STUDIES**

Studies looking at → online journalism emerged since the mid-1990s, as the → Internet made its way into newsrooms and became both a reporting tool as well as a platform for news dissemination. Surveys among journalists in several countries show convincingly that a vast majority of journalists are now using the Internet regularly in their daily work. Several scholars have studied the effects of this adoption process, including the practices of computer-assisted reporting (CAR; defined here as using the Internet as a reporting tool), concluding that beyond benefits (more information, more sources, more checks and balances freely available), many reporters and editors feel nervous and concerned about the “omnipresence” of the Internet in daily reporting (Garrison 2000), as well as about the increasing “technization” or “cybernetization” of news work

(Heinonen 1999). Another aspect related to CAR which affects all journalists is distinctly ethical: how to deal with online communication such as email, posts in newsgroups and discussion forums, weblogs, and instant or chat messages (including SMS and MMS via cell phones) in an environment where the verification of information is extremely difficult due to the often anonymous, fast-paced (or instantaneous) communication involved (Deuze & Yeshua 2001). Credibility is seen by most media workers and researchers as a core issue when assessing the relevance and meaning of the role the Internet plays in journalism. Several studies also signal the worrisome fact, that the introduction of the Internet in reporting accelerated the news process, sometimes even causing journalists to spend more time at their computer instead of going “out on the street.” Such considerations contribute to an instrumental view on the role new media play in news. The focus is on established practices and ways of doing things in the average newsroom, thus ignoring or marginalizing the disruptive nature of new media such as the Internet.

Since the late 1990s, scholars have started to map the changes taking place in the way news companies are reorganizing to make room for online newsrooms (Singer 1998). Although most news outlets used the Internet as an outlet for their news from the mid-1990s, many did not consider their websites as much more than just an advertisement for the print or broadcast mother medium. With the decline and graying of traditional audiences, the preference for the web among global youths, and a growing interest among advertisers for cross-media marketing and online ads, significant investments were made in online journalism (Boczkowski 2004).

As a distinct professional practice – a fourth type of journalism – online journalism should be seen as journalism produced more or less exclusively for the world wide web (the graphic user interface of the Internet). Online journalism has been functionally differentiated from other kinds of journalism by using its technological component as a determining factor in terms of an operational definition – just like the fields of print, radio, and television journalism before it. The online journalist has to make decisions on which media format or formats best tell a certain story (multimediality), has to consider options for the public to respond, interact or even customize certain stories (interactivity), and thinks about ways to connect the story to other stories, archives, resources and so on through hyperlinks (hypertextuality). One can safely say the field of online journalism has achieved a separate status both in the profession and in academia, and furthermore is considered to be important by the institutions of the field: schools, universities, research centers, professional organizations, and news companies.

The field of online journalism studies has been informed largely by the distinctions made between the production, content, and consumption of news and information on the Internet. This has resulted in a sprawling field of research consisting mostly of surveys and in-depth interviews with online media professionals (reporters, editors, producers) and end-users, as well as large- and small-scale content analyses of websites and home pages. Theoretical discussions on the evolving relationships between new media and journalism generally consider the emerging formats, genres, and practices in online journalism in terms of how these challenge traditional functions and goals of (print) journalism, such as the gatekeeper role (→ Gatekeeping), the role of online journalism in shaping and sustaining community (for example by embracing the online genre of weblogs or “blogs”;

→ Blogger), digital elements of journalistic storytelling, or online journalists as a distinct professional group more or less in control of the production and dissemination of editorial news content. The field can thus be typified as a social scientific study of *practice*: it concerns people living and working in the context of existing and evolving structures, including emerging new technologies.

The research agenda of online journalism and Internet news studies traditionally focuses on how the production, content, and consumption of media messages evolves online. Pavlik (2001), for example, discusses the impact of new media on news and society in terms of four distinct implications: how it affects news content, how it affects newsroom and media industry structures, how it affects the way journalists do their work, and how it affects relationships between stakeholders in the news: media companies, journalists, publics, competitors, advertisers, and sources. These kinds of approaches fit in the wider field of (new) media and society research. This does not necessarily mean that applying “old” theories or paradigms is wrong when studying online journalism – it just means that researchers predominantly study and interpret the role of the Internet in journalism in terms of the role mass media have traditionally played in society (Hall 2001). In that particular context, the key characteristics of Internet news – its convergent, interactive, and networked nature – challenge an interpretation of online journalism as exclusively part of a “mass” media system.

### **A TYPOLOGY OF INTERNET NEWS**

Internet news comes in many shapes and sizes. Although news organizations tend to share certain conventions about the design and structure of their online presence, the way the online journalists in their daily work articulate the characteristics of the new medium differs widely. These differences and similarities can be considered across two dimensions. Journalism has traditionally been about providing content to audiences, whereas online, interactivity becomes a more salient feature of news work (→ Interactivity, Concept of). Research shows that online journalists are more likely than their offline colleagues to consider interactivity-related issues (such as providing a forum for public debate) among the most important aspects of their job. Internet news thus exists somewhere on a continuum between professionally produced content and the provision of public connectivity. In the latter case, journalists primarily act as facilitators of people telling each other stories – such as through comment boxes, discussion platforms, registered user blogs, or user-submitted news. The second dimension represents the level of participatory communication offered through a news site. Arguing from open to closed, a site can be considered to be “open” when it allows users to share comments and posts, and upload files without moderating or filtering intervention. At the other end of the spectrum, “closed” participatory communication can be defined as a site where users may participate but their communicative acts are subject to strict editorial moderation and control. Onto these dimensions it is possible to map four more or less distinct categories of Internet news, corresponding with a typology of four online journalisms: (1) mainstream news sites, (2) index and category sites, (3) meta- and comment sites, and (4) share and discussion sites (Deuze 2003). The most widespread form of Internet news is the mainstream news site, generally offering a selection of (aggregated) editorial content and a minimal, usually filtered or moderated,

form of participatory communication. Hyperlinks on sites like these tend to point inward, referring only to other pages under the umbrella of the same brand. Index and category sites are generally operated by net-based companies such as certain search engines, marketing firms, Internet service providers, or enterprising individuals. Here, online journalists offer (deep) links to existing news sites elsewhere on the world wide web. Those hyperlinks are sometimes categorized and even annotated by editorial teams, thus generally featuring more or less contextualized (or contextually presented), aggregated content. Meta- and comment sites contain numerous examples of Internet news that either serves as a platform for professionals and amateurs to exchange and discuss news published elsewhere online, or offer an outlet for so-called “alternative” and otherwise critical, non-mainstream or nonprofit news (→ Alternative Journalism). Share and discussion sites, finally, are places where any meaningful distinction between the producer and the user, the news professional and the amateur reporter, or between opinion and fact for that matter, is lost. In terms of concrete examples, this mapping exercise would start with the websites of daily newspapers (such as the *New York Times* or *O Globo*) and broadcast news organizations (as in the *BBC News* or *ABC News Online*), ending with collaborative communities and citizen journalism sites (such as *Nettavisen*, *OhmyNews*, *Wikinews*, and *JanJan*).

The degree of openness and connectivity-focus of Internet news is highest in types 3 and 4 news sites which are often net-native, whereas types 1 and 2 are most likely to be relatively closed, top-down news operations of mainstream media organizations. It is important to note that when adding public connectivity elements to a news site operating in closed participatory communication with its publics, the site as a whole changes. The same goes for when such a site relinquishes its editorial control over communicative interventions by (members of) the audience. Adding (or subtracting) certain elements has consequences for the typology of the news site *as a whole*, and subsequently for the way Internet news gets made. As most Internet news outlets are extensions of offline media companies, it is possible to suggest that the different kinds of journalism online are not necessarily exclusive or unique to the web – these journalisms are indeed part of an existing journalistic culture that finds various new ways to express itself in emerging professional identities online.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Blogger ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Gatekeeping  
▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Media History ▶ News ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Online Journalism

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## Internet and Popular Culture

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Communication created and shared through the → Internet has proliferated since the mid-1990s, with more people adapting to the web's creative spaces through easy-to-use technology (→ Exposure to the Internet). Indeed, much popular communication today is likely also to be classified as computer-mediated communication. The Internet not only provides access to web spaces where people view or listen to digital video, photographs, music, and stories, but also allows people to produce and disseminate their creative materials to mass audiences (→ Photography; Popular Music). In this respect, the Internet serves as a literal "circuit of culture," a theory explaining human identity, production, consumption, regulation, and representation of the cultural objects of everyday life (→ Information Society).

In the mid-1990s when Internet access became more widely available, a cultural divide existed between those who understood Internet protocols and creative conventions, and those who were learning. As these so-called "newbies" flooded existing virtual communities, clashes occurred, prompting calls for patience and "netiquette" as more people participated in new online environments. The culture made possible by interactive technologies – sometimes called *cyberculture* or *technoculture* – at first appeared rigid and rule-bound, but new computer protocols soon leveled distinctions between long-time and newer users. At the same time, the global nature of Internet communication became more prominent, with more opportunities for cultural exchange of ideas and artifacts within a decentralized communication system (→ International Communication). Whether it is for discussion of international human rights or for participation in multi-user virtual worlds using alternate identities, people find variety, affinity, and personal satisfaction on the world wide web (→ Internet, Technology of; Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

The most common *popular communication software* for the Internet includes instant messaging, Internet chat, and → electronic mail messages. In the mid-1990s, with new technology, email attachments containing *computer-generated images* began to be exchanged among private individuals, with some attachments achieving incredible popularity. One such phenomenon, the animated "Dancing Baby" or "Baby Cha-Cha" in 1996, provides

an example of the Internet's circuit of culture. It was first produced as a computer-animation demonstration, sent as an email file to friends by its creator, and then disseminated throughout cyberspace by email and on websites. Other people mixed music or additional images with the file, and eventually the dancing baby appeared in early 1998 as a hallucination on *Ally McBeal*, a popular US television show.

*Networking web pages* – weblogs, message boards, and social websites such as Facebook.com or MySpace.com – allow users to share opinions within a community of interest while also displaying personal content (→ Blogger). *Weblogs*, or “blogs,” appear as a kind of reverse chronology public journal featuring entries that may be created by one or more participants. Blog sites such as Blogger.com and LiveJournal.com provide webpage templates to make postings easy for users. Social networking sites such as Facebook.com, started in 2004 by a Harvard University student, also provide templates for users, who create personal websites listed on a directory and are thereby linked to networks of real-world friends, academic peers, and ultimately new online acquaintances (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology).

Personal and collaborative websites – where users are encouraged to upload their own digital art, music, photography, video, and written text through peer-to-peer file sharing – serve a variety of interests including mass media, religion, politics, education, and celebrity → fandom. In terms of electronic text, news media, and information technology websites served as some of the first spaces, or portals, allowing users to post letters to the editor or messages within topical online forums. Online literary efforts include hypertextual novels, websites that allow children to write more about their favorite characters from the *Harry Potter* series, and fan-written television scripts. Joke Hermes (2005) believes this synthesis of mass media and the computer screen “aids a more fluid sense of who we are,” and that individuals are working to build identity in these activities. In this sense, computer users oscillate between identities as consumers and as producers, a cycle in which fans' values are sold back to them (Hills 2002).

*Celebrity sites*, some operated by companies and others by dedicated fans, have become repositories of thousands of photographs submitted by fans and photographers worldwide or copied from other websites. Since replication and dissemination of these digital images are easy, copyright laws and privacy issues are often ignored. Producers of all digital creative products, whether photos, animation, video, or music, face similar challenges (→ Celebrity Culture).

*Peer-to-peer file sharing* has produced the most acrimonious debate among musicians, corporate music producers, and fans (→ P2P Networking). Sites such as Napster, which allows music fans to download audio files, often illegally, were forced for a time to cease operations. Yet these sites' existence forced musicians and music companies quickly to respond to fans' demand by providing the means for legal file sharing. Borrowing from the culture of rap and hip-hop music, fans also remix or “mash” tracks of existing popular music to produce their own music creations, sometimes adding video to these original mixes. Again, with fans leading the way, musicians and corporate producers expanded their products, releasing extra remixes of songs and other digital ingredients to meet this demand.

Cheaper and easier digital video capabilities have encouraged amateurs and professionals to post documentaries, films, promotional footage, and snippets of everyday life on sites

such as YouTube.com. This video-sharing site, started in 2005 with the tagline “Broadcast Yourself,” capitalizes on the culture of web cameras, voyeurism, reality television, tiny handheld video cameras, and ever-present camera phones.

When video, music, and more static art forms exist on websites, their essence is made similar, because genres blur and all are “subsumed to the universal medium of the bit” (Andrejevic 2004). At Rhizome.org, an electronic media arts site, artists have been uploading their own digital artworks since 1996. These artists have now been joined by digital musicians, videographers, and photographers who no longer have to wait to be discovered by corporate interests, but can try to build their own fan base via the Internet.

Copyright and control of intellectual property continue to be debated as file-sharing networks on the Internet continue to mutate and proliferate (→ Intellectual Property Law; Copyright). A political parody produced at JibJab.com about the 2004 US presidential election sparked legal action by another company claiming to own copyright to “This Land is Your Land,” a folk song used in the animated parody. While JibJab.com prepared its defense of the parody, millions of Internet users viewed the animation, and television shows broadcast the cartoon. Ultimately, the song was deemed to be in the public domain. Later, however, JibJab.com sued a private blog which had used a few seconds of the parody in a music video mix, forcing the blog’s author to remove the link to the digitized media product.

Other challenges involve balancing free speech rights with hate speech laws, when electronic messages, web postings, and digital art or music include potentially obscene, libelous, or threatening material.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Blogger ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Copyright ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Fandom ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information Society ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Photography ▶ Popular Music ▶ Technology and Globalization

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# Internet Ratings Systems

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Internet ratings systems, such as those provided by Nielsen//NetRatings or comScore Media Metrix, measure and rank the popularity of different websites and are used extensively in setting online advertising rates (→ Internet; Exposure to the Internet). The three typical online metrics are *unique visitors*, *page views*, and *reach*. In theory, these are simple measures: *unique visitors* measures the number of visitors to a website (analogous to the “audience” of a television show), *page views* measures the number of times a web page has been seen, and *reach* represents the percentage of the audience who have visited the website during the period under question (typically monthly). In practice, each of these elements is subject to some controversy due to a lack of agreement about measuring methods and differing sources of data. In addition to the main variables of unique visitors, page views, and reach, ratings companies also report on the *demographic profile* (age, sex, race, location, occupation, education, income, etc.) of visitors for different websites. Ratings agencies may also report directly on the frequency and volume of advertising placed on different websites.

Rating data are of high *significance* for television and radio because they may determine whether shows are renewed or canceled (→ Nielsen Ratings). Online, this is rarely the case, although the use of Internet ratings data is widespread: media companies use online ratings to compare the popularity of their products to those of their competitors, and advertisers and advertising agencies use ratings to plan their advertising spending. Also, companies traditionally considered as advertisers (for example, manufacturers or retailers) use online ratings to assess their websites’ effectiveness as a direct means of customer communication. Thus, Ford may subscribe to Nielsen//NetRatings “Automotive” ratings group in order to assess its position against GM or Toyota.

Despite their widespread use, data from ratings agencies are not the only or even the primary source of information about website audiences. Every website also automatically generates a record of which pages are requested and by which computers, known as a *log file* (→ Log-File Analysis). By analyzing their own log files, publishers can develop their own picture of their audiences. Website publishers therefore have three potential sources of information about the size and composition of their audiences: their own log files, comScore numbers, and Nielsen numbers. These three figures rarely agree and, indeed, according to industry reports, are often extremely divergent. For example, the online magazine *Slate* reported that for the month of December 2005, Nielsen//NetRatings put its page views at 41 million, comScore at 27 million, and its own log files at 61 million. Discrepancies like these have led to the methods of the Internet ratings agencies being questioned by publishers. A satisfactory resolution has yet to be found, with publishers, advertisers, and ratings agencies continuing to debate the issues.

*Methodologically*, online ratings are based on a mix of two types of data, demographic data and behavioral data (→ Rating Methods; Research Methods). The ratings companies recruit a random sample (or *panel*) of volunteers (→ Sampling, Random). Panel members



are required to fill out questionnaires about demographic data. Panel members also install software on their computers, which monitors computer usage and sends data to the ratings agency via the Internet. Each time the computer is used, the panelist selects his or her name from a list of people in the household, so that different individuals' behavior is tracked separately. The panelist's behavior is then extrapolated to the population as a whole by matching the demographic profile of the panel to data derived from the census. This process is very similar to that used for television ratings (→ Nielsen Ratings).

There are, however, areas where the established methodology faces *challenges*. First, Internet traffic is not distributed on a normal or bell curve. Instead, a very few websites have the vast majority of the traffic while nearly all websites have very little traffic – this is known as a “*long tail*” *distribution*. The consequence of the long tail is that for any one website the number of panelists who visit and use the website is likely to be very small; in fact, probably small enough to be statistically insignificant. In order to overcome this problem, comScore has begun to create nonrandom samples to assess behavior on particular websites. These nonrandom samples are then weighted to resemble a random sample, but the methodology has yet to be widely accepted.

Second, in contrast to most other media, the Internet is used as much at work and at educational establishments as at home. This has led the ratings companies to establish “*at work*” and “*at home*” *panels*, and has also led to new issues in trying to quantify the level of duplication between the panels, so that a single panelist accessing the Internet both from work and from home is not counted as two people.

Third, Internet usage is not typically confined to a single national context. Internet ratings agencies are therefore struggling to develop panels that will allow them to provide accurate ratings on a *global scale*. Typically, US panels are the most robust and there are some questions about standardization globally, with different factors being used to extrapolate to the whole population for the US as opposed to other countries, and different methods for “at work” and “at home” panels in US versus non-US panels.

Finally, Internet ratings agencies by 2007 were not assessing traffic from platforms other than a personal computer – such as a mobile phone, gaming device, or handheld device, and this remains a methodological challenge for the industry.

While television and radio ratings have received a wide range of academic study, Internet ratings systems have yet to generate comparable discussion or critique. Many questions therefore remain to be answered. For example, how appropriate and accurate are the new methodologies with which these companies are experimenting? How much, and under what conditions, do publishers and advertisers rely on agency data versus internal sources? How much do these data influence publishing decisions? As the global online media market develops, it seems inevitable that ratings agencies will come under greater scrutiny by industry and academy alike.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Internet ▶ Log-File Analysis ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Online Media ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sampling, Random

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## **Internet, Technology of**

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Internet technology has developed in a rapid series of leaps to become one of the most fundamental communications infrastructures in modern society. When referring to the → Internet as a communication infrastructure it is important to remember that the Internet is in reality a technological base upon which a multitude of software applications rely in order to provide users with the communication tools they desire. Despite this it is important to realize that the Internet is not a single thing. It is a name that collects a cluster of technological innovations, groups of infrastructure(s), applications, and social organizations, which we commonly refer to as the Internet. The Internet is not one innovation, but a rapid series of steps, innovations, and collaborations within the field of communication technology. In addition to this the Internet, as a phenomenon, is constantly technically evolving.

Among the reasons for the prominence of the Internet as a communication infrastructure is the multitude of design choices that have been made out of necessity and conviction by groups of developers over half a century. This entry provides an overview of these developments and some of their implications.

### **THE INTERNET AS A COMPLEX INNOVATION**

First it is important to clarify the difference between the Internet and the software applications that are used. Understanding this difference is important since the two levels of technology are regularly confused with each other. As early as 1998 Tim Berners-Lee, the father of the world wide web, realized that there was a need to make this distinction when he wrote (1998, n.p.):

The Web is an abstract (imaginary) space of information. On the Net, you find computers – on the Web, you find documents, sounds, videos . . . information. On the Net, the connections are cables between computers; on the Web, connections are hypertext links. The Web exists

because of programs that communicate between computers on the Net. The Web could not be without the Net.

Thus, the Internet is made up of the hardware (e.g., the computers, routers, cables, and modems) and the protocols required to enable communication between the machines. The Internet is therefore the base infrastructure used by software applications such as email, the world wide web, messaging, and file sharing (→ Communication Infrastructure).

The Internet is more than one technological system, artefact, or innovation; it is a whole range of technical, social, and organizational innovations in the field of information technology, which have erratically and drastically evolved into our present-day information and communication infrastructure (Castells 1996; 2001). The haphazard manner in which this information infrastructure (Hanseth 1996) has evolved plays a significant role in the way it is used, controlled, and developed.

In addition, the open nature and unplanned development (Ciborra 1992; Dahlbom & Janlert 1996; Hanseth 1996) has led to a haphazard development of a so-called autonomous technology (Winner 1978). In other words, the development of technology through open standards leads to a technology that lacks, or seems to lack, conscious control and definition. When we write about the Internet we indulge in a simplification or a convenient fiction (Kling et al. 2005) as we reduce the different aspects and complexities until we achieve a manageable subject.

The fundamental idea underpinning the Internet infrastructure is the creation of a nondiscriminatory mode of transportation. This is defined as the end-to-end principle of the Internet protocol (IP). It states that, whenever possible, communication-protocol operations should be defined to occur at the end points of a communication system (Saltzer et al. 1984). The development of this idea led to the creation of a communication system that was not concerned with the content of what was being transported as long as what was transported followed the correct transportation procedure. The effect of this is that social interaction that is conducted via the Internet is in some sense “freer” than many alternatives since it is not constrained by the technology. To put it another way, the constraints and enabling factors of the technology are nondiscriminatory with respect to the designs of the user (Lessig 1999). A helpful image is that of the freight container, which can be used to transport just about anything that fits into its standardized requirements.

Since the Internet provides for open, nondiscriminatory transportation of data it has the ability to be used as a platform for a seemingly endless array of content. With the addition of speed the exchanging of content becomes more or less instantaneous and this brings with it the appearance of computer-supported simultaneous interaction.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Computers were connected together prior to the Internet, but most computers had a limited ability to communicate to outside networks. In certain situations networks could be connected through gateways or bridges but these were often technically limited or built for a single use. A common networking method was linking terminals by leased lines to a central mainframe computer.

Researchers were aware that such technological constraints would be overcome in the future, as indicated by Licklider’s observations (1960, 7):

It seems reasonable to envision, for a time 10 or 15 years hence, a “thinking center” that will incorporate the functions of present-day libraries together with anticipated advances in information storage and retrieval and the symbiotic functions . . . The picture readily enlarges itself into a network of such centers, connected to one another by wide-band communication lines and to individual users . . . In such a system, the speed of the computers would be balanced, and the cost of the gigantic memories and the sophisticated programs would be divided by the number of users.

In 1962 Licklider was the head of the US Department of Defense’s information-processing office, the Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). DARPA had access to three different computer networks, each with different user commands. In order to communicate across networks DARPA officials had to physically move to a different terminal and use the specific commands for that network. The need for inter-networking was evident. The solution was to create a terminal that would enable users to communicate with different networks without needing to physically change to another terminal or to implement network-specific commands.

An important component in resolving the inter-networking issue was the ability to connect the separate physical networks to form a logical network. In part this problem was solved in the 1960s by a group of researchers who developed and implemented the idea of packet switching. The origins of packet switching lie in theoretical ideas of advanced network decentralization. The purpose of this was to decrease network vulnerability by ensuring that communication networks functioned even if parts of the network were damaged (Baran 2002). This is the source of the persistent idea that the Internet was developed to survive a nuclear attack.

## **ARPANET**

The first implementation of Licklider’s idea of an inter-networking system was the ARPANET. An inter-networking system joined the University of California, Los Angeles, the Stanford Research Institute, University of Utah, and the University of California, Santa Barbara, in a four-node network by the end of 1969. This original four-node network developed into the ARPANET, and by 1981 the number of hosts was 213, with a new host being added approximately every 20 days (Hafner 1998).

## **Requests for Comments**

The ARPANET was to become the technical bed of what would eventually be the Internet. Its technical development was based upon a loose consensus among developers. This consensus was, and still is, put forward and discussed in a system of documents known as RFCs (Request for Comments). The focus of the RFCs is on proposing and distributing Internet protocols and systems.

## **Early International Networking**

Early international inter-networking was slow in developing, with Europeans focusing on developing the X.25 packet-switched networks. However, there was an international ARPANET collaboration in 1972 with the Norwegian Seismic Array (NORSAR), in 1973

with the Swedish Tanum Earth Station (via satellite links), and with University College London.

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) further developed packet-switching network standards and incorporated them in the X.25 and related standards. By 1974, X.25 formed the basis for the SERCnet network between British academic and research sites (later to become JANET). In 1976 the ITU Standard on X.25, based on the concept of virtual circuits, was approved.

The British Post Office, Western Union International, and Tymnet collaborated to create the first international packet-switched network, referred to as the International Packet-Switched Service (IPSS) in 1978. This network grew beyond Europe and the US to cover Canada, Hong Kong, and Australia by 1981. By the 1990s it provided a worldwide networking infrastructure.

A major difference between X.25 and the ARPANET was that X.25 was open to commercial use. X.25 would be used in the first dial-in public-access networks (e.g., CompuServe and Tymnet). In 1979 CompuServe became the first to offer electronic mail capabilities and technical support to personal-computer users. The company broke new ground again in 1980 as the first to offer real-time chat with its CB Simulator. There were also the America Online (AOL) and Prodigy dial-in networks and many bulletin-board system (BBS) networks such as FidoNet.

### **Unifying Networks**

With the growth and development of many networks, a system was needed to unify them. The problems created by the many differences between the diverse network protocols were overcome by 1973 with the development of a common inter-network protocol, and instead of the network being responsible for reliability, as in the ARPANET, the hosts became responsible (Leiner et al. 2003).

The advantage of the inter-network protocol was that the role of the network was reduced and it became easier to join most networks together via this protocol. The TCP/IP protocol, a development of the 1974 TCP (Transmission-Control Protocol), was introduced by 1978. Three years later the associated standards were published as RFCs 791, 792, and 793, and adopted for use. On January 1, 1983, TCP/IP protocols became the only approved protocol on the ARPANET, replacing the earlier NCP (Network-Control Protocol; Postel 1981).

The first use of the term “Internet” was in the first TCP-related RFC (Cerf et al. 1974). The term soon came into more general use, with “an internet” meaning any network using TCP/IP. “The Internet” came to mean a global and large network using TCP/IP.

### **REGULATING THE INTERNET**

By creating an inter-networking system to enable collaboration across networks, the technological choices were based upon a model that transports data irrespective of the content of that data. This model ensured the rapid growth of the Internet since new networks could be connected to the Internet through the TCP/IP protocol.

The technological decisions made to facilitate inter-networking and the resulting rapid growth of the Internet created a digital environment with large potential for open and free forms of communication. This created an illusion that the Internet and the software applications built a virtual space free from conventional rules and regulations (Johnson & Post 1996).

The Internet was seen as being a technological creation that, through a deterministic evolutionary process, created an environment of liberalism. Early users experienced this freedom through the lack of regulation and primarily the lack of governmental intervention. However, this lack of governmental intervention was to be short lived, and soon regulations would threaten the perception of freedom online. The early users attempted to protest governmental involvement; the most famous of these attempts was the writing of *A declaration of the independence of cyberspace* (Barlow 1996).

The openness and freedom of the Internet was not deterministic, however. The lack of regulation was the result of the legal complexity created by the novelty of an open global-communications network and the legal questions it raised. Reflection on its history suggests that the Internet should not be seen as a deterministically defined technology moving toward ever-greater freedom, but as an example of autonomous technology (Winner 1978). This is a situation in which a technology has been built upon several small decisions, each driven by human choice, giving the overall impression of a technologically determined development (→ Technology, Social Construction of).

The Internet is not an inherently open, democratic technology. Technology itself is neutral and therefore can be used both for democratic and nondemocratic purposes. The desire to equate communication technology with democracy is not unique to the Internet (Winner 2005; → Communication Technology and Democracy). Many communication technologies have been celebrated as being democratic but it is important to remember that communication alone is an insufficient basis for a democracy (Winner 1986).

The discourse on Internet regulation has early roots in the technology though most researchers point to the seminal article by Johnson and Post (1996) as the start of the wider discussion on the regulation of the Internet. The issues that lie at the heart of this discussion are the ability of the state to regulate and the ability of users to circumvent regulation. This conflict raises a host of other questions such as the legitimacy of state regulation, the effects of regulation on users unwilling to be regulated, and the ability and cost of enforcing regulation that users can circumvent (→ Internet Law and Regulation; Communication and Law).

The technology brought into question one of the traditional pragmatic approaches to regulatory theory, i.e., the concept of *command and control* regulation, which can best be described as a system of statutory rules backed by sanctions (Black 1997). The fundamental idea is to create regulation that is “compliance oriented” (Baldwin 1995) with rules designed in such a manner as to promote the ease with which they can be adhered to.

The technology created an environment where the law, as expressed in the law book, may not be the most effective means of regulation (Lessig 1999; → Code as Law). The Internet is susceptible to control by other means and the greatest threat is the control of the computer code that constitutes the environment. By controlling the fundamental

infrastructure that creates the digital environments, i.e., the software or code, the regulator can ensure compliance to regulation.

The freedom experienced by the early Internet users has been replaced by a growing amount of regulation. Regulatory bodies have enacted regulations to cope with a diverse set of problems such as pornography, hate speech, computer viruses, and gambling (→ Crime and Communication Technology; Pornography, Media Law on). Yet with each regulatory step, the freedom and openness of the Internet are diminished slightly and many argue that aspects of the advantages of this communication technology are diminished.

The future role of the Internet as an open communication infrastructure is not in question. It is clear that this technology is being used for social interaction on a wide scale and that it will not cease to be even if the regulation of its use seriously curtails certain activities. Whether regulatory institutions will embrace the technology as an important source of interaction and development or whether the technology will become over-regulated is an open question. Embracing free and open communication technologies requires that the regulators become more tolerant of the technology and permit wide-scale use. Over-regulating the technology entails more limited use but fails to recognize the full potential of the Internet as an important agent of free and open communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code as Law ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Crime and Communication Technology ▶ Domain Names ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Technology, Social Construction of

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## Internet Use across the Life-Span

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Internet usage refers primarily to the online activities of visiting web pages and using email (→ Electronic Mail). It is reasonable to expect differences in online activities between different age groups. However, international Internet data frequently excludes age as a variable, making age-based analyses more challenging (Findahl 2004). To accurately evaluate the data that does exist, both general and specific Internet usage needs to be considered when comparing age groups and Internet usage. General usage simply refers to going online. Specific usage refers to what activities are performed online (→ Internet).

### GENERAL PATTERNS OF AGE AND INTERNET USE

The biggest demographic difference in general online usage is between those aged 65+ and those under 65 (→ Exposure to the Internet). This pattern holds across a wide array of countries including those with high (e.g., South Korea and Sweden) and low penetration (e.g., China and Mexico) of Internet usage. The pattern in the US is typical, with only 34 percent of those 65 and older engaging in online activities. That number decreases as age increases. Only 26 percent of those aged 70 to 75 were online and only 17 percent of those 76 and older (Pew 2004). In Sweden, 24 percent of those aged 65 to 74 engage in online activities and the figure drops to 7 percent for those over 75 (Findahl 2004). In Germany, only 5 percent of those over 60 are online while in Japan the figure is 15 percent (Chen & Wellman 2003).



Those aged 50–64, the baby boomers who represent the next generation of seniors, typically report usage similar to the younger demographics but still represents a smaller percentage of users. Studies in Sweden, the UK, and the US provide the most detailed age-based data. General online usage for those aged 55–64 compared to those 35 and under is 49–72 percent in Sweden, 14–89 percent in the UK, and 73–80 percent in the US (Chen & Wellman 2003; Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). Internationally, the trend has been for the percentage of those aged 50–64 to move closer to the younger demographic percentages. One exception is South Korea. Data there shows an increasing gap between those under 50 and those under 35 (Soe 2002). Still, the number of users aged 50 and older continues to increase, but just not at the same rate as those aged under 35. Globally, the number of online users over the age of 50 continues to increase. In general usage, the difference between those aged under 35 and those aged 50–64 is shrinking globally.

### REASONS FOR AGE DIFFERENCES IN INTERNET USE

One possible reason for the age difference in Internet usage is that those aged 50–64 have used the Internet as part of their work. Around the world the percentage of people who report accessing the Internet at work has increased steadily (Chen & Wellman 2003). Moreover, those aged over 65 who have not been online say they have never learned how and that it's too complicated. These two reasons are found across data in different countries (Chen & Wellman 2003; Kaiser Family Foundation 2003).

The → *digital divide and physical access* issues complicate general online usage for those over 65. The digital divide holds that those with low incomes and less education will be unlikely to have and to use online access. An eight-country study found that socioeconomic factors did help to account for a digital divide in China, Germany, Italy, Germany, Mexico, South Korea, the UK, and the US. Education and income appeared to be the most important socio-demographic factors for explaining the global digital divide (Chen & Wellman 2003). The Kaiser study in the US examined online usage by age and both income and education. For those aged over 65, people whose income is below US\$20,000 a year are much less likely to go online (15 percent) than those whose income is above US\$20,000 (40 percent) or over US\$50,000 a year (65 percent). Seniors with a high school degree are far less likely to use the Internet (18 percent) than those who have been to college (45 percent) or have a college degree (60 percent) (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). Physical access is another concern. Websites and computers are designed by the young and generally do not account for the effects of aging on usage. Keyboards can be difficult to use, small font sizes are an issue, and certain color contrasts are difficult for seniors to see (National Institute on Aging 2001).

Age does account for some differences in Internet activities but not for email use. Internationally, email usage for those online remains high regardless of age groups (Pew 2004; Soe 2002). However, teens are far more likely to add instant messaging (IM) and social network sites such as MySpace to their Internet activities than older Internet users (Noguchi 2006).

More pronounced differences emerge across age groups when *specific Internet activities* beyond email are examined. Younger Internet users, those aged 12–28, are more likely to engage in instant messaging (IM), online gaming, downloading music, and downloading

videos than those aged 29 and older. Younger Internet users around the world are entertainment-oriented (Dessewffy et al. 2003; Pew 2004; Soe 2002). Those aged 13–21 prefer IM to email even though they still use email. IM is not popular among older Internet users and decreases rapidly with age (Gonsalves 2005). Those aged 29–69 are more likely to use the Internet to engage in online activities that require some capital such as making travel reservations and banking online. Online banking appears frequently as a top online usage of older Internet users globally (Dessewffy et al. 2003; Pew 2004; Soe 2002).

## **INTERNET USE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION**

Research in the UK and the US has examined the use of health information online by age group. Those aged 50–64 and over 65 share an interest in online health information. The relevance of health information searches warrants further attention (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span).

For those aged 50 and older, health information is the most searched topic online. Two studies in the US found that 69 percent of those 50 or older with Internet access have searched for health information (Merck Institute of Aging and Health 2005; Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). The top health topic searched was prescription drugs (37 percent) followed by nutrition or exercise (30 percent). Once again the age divide between those aged 50–64 and those 65 and older emerges. Those aged 50–64 trust Internet health information (58 percent), which for them is the number one source of health information, while those who are 65 and older do not trust online health information (46 percent), which for them is the fourth most used source of health information (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). A UK study found similar results, as health was the top online topic for those aged 50 and over (50+ Health 2005). Information seeking in general is consistently near the top of the list of reasons people around the world give for going online. A closer look at the types of information being sought should reveal a similar pattern of older users centering their online searches on health information wherever the Internet is used (→ Information Seeking; Health Communication).

That older users seek health information online should be a special concern. Information providers need to make the information and searches as easy to access and use as possible for older users. A Merck study conducted with the American Federation of Aging Research found significant negative responses from those aged 50 and over who had searched for health information, and 70 percent wanted to learn more about finding reliable health information on the Internet (→ Health Communication and the Internet). The two groups have created the Health Compass, a website designed to help people find and assess the credibility of online health information (Merck Institute of Aging and Health 2005). This is one example of how older online users can be helped in their search for health information (→ Health Literacy).

Globally, those aged 50–64 have general online usage patterns similar to the younger age groups, but Internet usage drops dramatically for those aged 65 and older. As Internet users age, their specific usage shifts from entertainment (e.g., downloading music) to capital expenditures (e.g., banking and travel) and a concern for health. The emphasis on health information increases as a focus for Internet users as they age. According to

predictions, Internet usage by those aged 50 and over will continue to rise around the world and spread to the higher age brackets as more computer-literate people age. Internet content providers would be wise to do more to adapt content and page layout to older users. Internationally, those aged 50 and older are a growing audience and market for online information and services.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Health Literacy ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Online Relationships ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Interorganizational Communication

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Interorganizational communication (IOC) emphasizes relationships organizations have with external constituents as opposed to relationships that occur internally. IOC research considers issues like information flows, information sharing, reputation, cooperation, competition, coalition building, and power. IOC theoretical developments are substantially multidisciplinary. Communication researchers often emphasize the understanding of who communicates with whom and about what. Economists and sociologists tend to see linkages in terms of some exchange with limited interest in the content of communication within that exchange. This emphasis by communication scholars reflects the assumption that interorganizational relationships are enacted by individuals' communicative actions (→ Organizational Communication).

## RESEARCH FOCI

Much IOC research considers the interplay between micro-level processes (e.g., organizational representatives' actions) and macro-level structures (e.g., overall system qualities). Structure reveals qualities of the system and offers a context for understanding emergent patterns and systematic variation among its members. Regardless of whether macro-level or micro-level issues are in the foreground of the scholarship, research and theory development concerns itself with organizational roles within some social structure (created by some form of communication or exchange), and how that structure influences and, in turn, is influenced by organizational power, reputation, dependency on others, market share, social influence, and so on (→ Control and Authority in Organizations). Because of the emphasis on the structures that form as a result of organizations partnering, clustering, and/or remaining isolated, a substantial component to research about interorganizational communication involves understanding such relationships from a → social networks perspective (→ Communication Networks).

The interorganizational context is a space in which individual organizations act as well as an emergent manifestation of that action. Social → network analysis is a way to identify an overall system structure and within that context, the nature of the role of individual organizations within it. *Network concepts* such as "group member," "isolate," and "liaison" are roles that describe the extent to which each organization is connected to others in the system. Clusters of group members often indicate coalitions; organizations that are isolated are seen as relatively marginal to the system; liaisons are seen as the connectors or gatekeepers that have the power to enhance or thwart information flows throughout the system. Each of these roles is a way of categorizing the continuous *measure of centrality*. Highly central organizations are well connected in the system (e.g., group members and liaisons), whereas those at the low end of the centrality spectrum tend to be peripheral, on the fringe, or relatively isolated.

While centrality is seen as an operational concept that describes organizational roles in the network, it also contributes to theoretical developments in interorganizational communication.

Research across disciplines consistently confirms that centrality is positively related to power, influence, prestige, and reputation. It is theorized that having ongoing alliances with key others in the network is a way of obtaining social capital, which then relates to such ancillary benefits as having access to future potential exchange partners. For example, Flanagin et al. (2001) showed that creators of a Spanish federation were most central and had greater advantages than those members who “only” participated in the collective.

### **MACRO-LEVEL ISSUES AS THEORETICAL FOREGROUND**

Macro-level theory development involves analysis of the greater interorganizational contexts in the pursuit of uncovering idealized structures, understanding dynamics of inter-organizational systems, and investigating how collective systems are formed and maintained. Scholars consider topics such as the degree to which information sharing and linking with other organizations creates an efficient and effective information flow. Communication scholarship typically identifies individual *organizational actions* (who communicates with whom and what they communicate about) and their subsequent contribution to a greater context of relationships. Sydow and Windeler (1998) showed how → structuration theory can be used to explain how structures shape and reproduce processes and network effectiveness. Key theory development is in the area of organizational reputation, social influence, cooperative/competitive relationships, and evolutionary dynamics.

Overall network configurations (interorganizational structures) are assessed with a variety of *methodological approaches* and theory development is tightly coupled with such methodologies (→ Research Methods). Density, for example, is a way of identifying the percentage of actual links to possible links that can occur in a system. Dense networks of local organizations indicate substantial social capital. Borrowing from → evolutionary theories about ordered systems, some suggest that moderate density is an indicator that an emergent system is approaching order out of chaos.

Burt (1992) developed *structural holes theory*, arguing that a structural hole is a place in the social network where a tie that can potentially connect organizations or sets of organizations is absent. Structural holes theory contends that organizational systems are best when there is a balance of efficient and effective contacts. Stohl and Stohl (2005) showed that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that fill structural holes strengthen their respective positions in the global network, and in the process of filling structural holes NGOs simultaneously contribute to the quality of the entire network and the nation-state. The structural holes framework warns that an organization that attempts to fill all structural holes in a system may wipe out its resources in futile attempts to maintain those relationships. On the other hand, an organization that avoids filling structural holes puts itself at the mercy of its key partners. Strategically networking (i.e., selecting network partners that offer effective and efficient access to other system resources) to fill structural holes provides firms with informational resources and enhanced reputational power and influence.

### **MICRO-LEVEL ISSUES AS A THEORETICAL FOREGROUND**

In connecting micro-level action to macro-level dynamics, *alliance theories* suggest that organizations network with others in order to manage uncertainty and relationships.

Analyses of NGOs show that core functions of NGO networks include communication and information exchange. Extending the notion of information sharing to seemingly more altruistic intentions, *public goods theory* attempts to unravel the nature of organizational activities that contribute to overall collective benefits without necessarily offering instantly observable advantages to participating organizations. Examples of organizational-level activities include collaborative efforts such as coalitions, trade groups, and associations. Early developments reflect the underlying principle that interorganizational relationships are often marked by the simultaneous existence of cooperative–competitive relationships. Such studies showed the evolution of cooperation and communication activities that facilitated sharing resources without realizing instant reward for such behavior (e.g., Browning et al. 1995). Monge et al. (1998) more recently contributed to this theoretical framework by integrating communication technologies as a resource for supporting information sharing and collective action. Findings suggest that ongoing collaborative activities create a neutral “space” for information sharing, and that information sharing begins with small contributions with transformation toward more collective and cooperative ventures. Future research is directed toward understanding the IOC processes that facilitate such collaborative endeavors and result in collective advantages (→ Public Goods).

In emphasizing micro-level actions in the macro-level context, the term *cooperation–competition* is deliberately used to reflect the underlying tension that can exist in the formation of interorganizational relationships. Several studies demonstrate the importance of trusting relationships in developing consortia and coalitions. A consideration of cooperation–competition, then, is a way of describing the nature of the link between networking partners and also contributes to theory development about the tensions between needing to cooperate with others to sustain organizational viability yet having to (possibly) compete with the same partners for needed, and sometimes scarce, resources. Cooperation and competition tensions complement resource dependency theory.

*Resource dependency theory* attempts to explain the influence of organizations’ roles in their environment relative to the extent to which they are resource wielders or needy of resources. Research consistently shows that the organizations that are more reliant on others for resources are more likely to cooperate with others, comply with external demands, and engage in activities that aid in obtaining resources. Meanwhile, by virtue of their holdings, resource-wielding organizations reap additional benefits such as improved reputation, power, and social influence. Doerfel & Taylor (2005) showed that the extent to which an organization is seen as cooperative with other organizations relates to the extent to which the organization needs more key information and financial resources. Flanagan et al. (2001) demonstrated the advantages associated with early entrants to newly formed cooperative ventures in that founding members experienced greater reputational benefits and more social influence in the ongoing activities than later system entrants.

An analysis of interorganizational communication must also consider the *concept of stakeholders*. Stakeholders can be other organizations but can also be those who care about (“have a stake in”) the focal organization such as volunteers, internal employees, and external publics (→ Stakeholder Theory). Lewis et al. (2003) have integrated both stakeholder theory and resource dependency theory in understanding communication

strategies used by organizations in planned change scenarios (→ Organizational Change Processes).

Much of the afore-mentioned IOC research has a common link that consistently demonstrates the extent to which “history matters.” Cooperation–competition theory shows that past cooperative acts beget subsequent cooperation, while competitive acts often reap subsequent competition. Similarly, reputation and social influence emerge as a result of past contributions to the public good. New directions in IOC theory emphasize longitudinal and multilevel analyses. For example, evolutionary models of interorganizational dynamics borrow from Charles Darwin’s theory with an eye toward understanding the factors that drive the emergence, sustainability, and possible decay of an interorganizational system. Researchers also see interorganizational alliances as potentially evolving into knowledge networks. Recent theoretical essays and empirical analyses promote a multi-theoretical, multi-level model that attempts to advance knowledge about psychological, social, and communication theory (multi-theoretical) jointly with how individuals, groups, and organizations interact (multi-level) to develop and sustain knowledge networks.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Evolutionary Theory ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Institutional Theory ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Network Analysis ▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Public Goods ▶ Research Methods ▶ Social Networks ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Systems Theory

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# Interpersonal Attraction

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Philosophical, empirical, and popular inquiries into what causes people to be attracted to one another are as old as humanity. As early as the fourth century BC Aristotle examined the forces of interpersonal attraction. Research on interpersonal attraction surged in the 1960s with two seminal publications (Berscheid & Walster 1969; Byrne 1971). Interpersonal attraction was conceptualized initially as a relatively stable attitude that leads to positive sentiments for another person and that serves as the catalyst for initiating interpersonal interaction. It is now viewed as a dynamic, affective force that draws people together and permeates all stages of interpersonal relationships (→ Dating Relationships; Initial Interaction; Ingratiation and Affinity Seeking; Relationship Development). McCroskey & McCain (1974) identified three types of interpersonal attraction. *Task attraction* refers to our desire to work with someone, whereas *physical attraction* occurs when we are drawn to a person's physical appearance. *Social attraction* reflects our desire to develop a friendship with that person. Other types of attraction include sexual attraction, which reflects the desire to engage in sexual activity; relational attraction, which refers to the desire to have an intimate relationship with that person; and fatal attraction, which occurs when the very qualities that initially drew us to a person eventually contribute to relational deterioration.

## DETERMINANTS OF INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

Judgments of *physical attractiveness*, particularly facial attractiveness, are one of the top predictors of interpersonal attraction. Apart from culturally idiosyncratic beauty norms, evolutionary researchers have detected several universal physical attractiveness features. Whereas body and facial symmetry are viewed as universally attractive in men and women, a strong jaw line, broad shoulders, and a waist-to-hip ratio of slightly less than 1.00 contribute to judgments of male physical attractiveness. A soft jaw line, full lips, and an hourglass figure are preferred female attractiveness features. These physical features are attractive presumably because they indicate fertility, health, and consequently genetic fitness.

Although men tend to view physical attractiveness as more important than women, both sexes are biased toward beauty and tend to perceive physically attractive people as more rewarding than physically unattractive people. There are several reasons for this *beauty bias*. The first is aesthetic appeal; beautiful people provide sheer viewing pleasure. A second reason for the beauty bias is that people tend to overgeneralize from beauty and assume that it is associated with positive personality characteristics and social skills. This bias is dubbed the “what is beautiful is good” stereotype or the “halo effect,” and is based on implicit personality theory. Not surprisingly, studies testing the veracity of this halo effect found that physically attractive people are *not* blessed with more virtuous personality characteristics than are less attractive people. However, attractive people might actually be more socially skilled than unattractive people, because attractive people



receive more attention and thus more opportunities to hone their skills. A final source for the beauty bias is the assumption that the mere association with a beautiful person will elevate one's own physical attractiveness and social status. This "rub-off effect" is partially supported, e.g., men are viewed as more attractive in the presence of beautiful women, whereas the same does not hold for women in the presence of attractive men.

A second factor that influences interpersonal attraction is *similarity*. As early as 1870 Sir Francis Galton postulated that spouses tend to be similar on a range of attitudes and socio-cultural characteristics, a principle he dubbed homogamy. Byrne's (1971) reinforcement-affect model explains this phenomenon and suggests that similar others are attractive because they serve as universal reinforcers of our worldview. With respect to similarities in levels of physical attractiveness in particular, Berscheid et al. (1971) speak of the matching hypothesis: people are attracted to others who match them in physical attractiveness. At first blush, the matching hypothesis seems to contradict the beauty bias, but the difference lies in what people ideally desire and what they can realistically attain: while we are attracted to beautiful people, in the end, we tend to seek out those who match us in physical attractiveness because these people are realistically attainable.

The association between attitude similarity and attraction has perhaps generated the fiercest debate among scholars. Byrne (1971) developed the "bogus stranger" experimental paradigm to test whether attitude similarity leads to attraction. In that experimental set-up participants first assessed their own attitudes. They were then presented with an attitude set of a bogus stranger and were asked to evaluate the extent to which they were attracted to that stranger. Byrne found that participants tended to be attracted to those who possessed similar attitudes. However, Sunnafrank & Miller noted that this design completely eliminates social interaction (see Sunnafrank 1991). In a modification of the bogus-stranger design, these researchers asked participants who varied in attitude similarity to talk with one another in a five-minute conversation prior to their attraction evaluations. Interestingly, the association between attitude similarity and attraction disappeared once people began to talk with one another. These findings have by no means resolved whether "birds of a feather flock together" or whether "opposites attract." Consistent with relational dialectical theory (→ Relational Dialectics), some scholars point to the importance of difference and novelty as sustaining features in close relationships.

Several *communication qualities* seem also to play a crucial role in interpersonal attraction; among them are warmth, sociability, and competent communication (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). Warmth is communicated verbally through a positive attitude and concern for others, and nonverbally through smiling and direct eye contact (→ Eye Behavior). Sociability and competence are communicated through expressive behaviors, behavioral relaxation, and conversational dexterity. Aside from these positive qualities, there are several "darker" communication characteristics that influence interpersonal attraction, among them dominance, expressed as relaxed posture, showing a lack of interest, and talking loudly, quickly, and clearly. Women particularly seem to be drawn to men who show a certain degree of assertiveness and dominance, presumably because these men display strength and potentially genetic fitness.

*Proximity* and *familiarity* are two final predictors of attractiveness. Several studies found that people who live close to one another are more likely to become friends. The

power of proximity is stimulated by familiarity; we feel comfortable and secure around people who are close and familiar, and who provide us with repeated opportunities for social interaction. Byrne (1971) actually speculated that the “mere exposure” to another person breeds attraction.

## THEORETICAL APPROACHES

Integral to the vast majority of interpersonal attraction studies is the assumption that we find others attractive if we perceive them to be rewarding, an idea that has been drawn from *social exchange theories* (→ Social Exchange). Berger and Calabrese’s → Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) contends that it is not perceived reward value per se that causes attraction; rather it is the extent to which we are able to reduce our initial uncertainty about others that attracts us to others. People reduce uncertainty by gathering information that is initially superficial but becomes increasingly idiosyncratic and personal in nature in ongoing interactions. As the amount of verbal exchange increases, uncertainty tends to subsequently decrease and it is this decreased uncertainty that kindles interpersonal attraction. The need to reduce uncertainty might not always be the driving force of future interactions. Sunnafrank’s (1991) *predicted outcome value theory* (POV) proposes that the positive or negative information we receive, as well as the potential reward of future interactions (i.e., predicted outcome values), influence the extent to which we are attracted to others and subsequently increase or decrease communication.

The central tenet of all social exchange theories is that interpersonal attraction progresses in a linear fashion, but attraction levels might actually fluctuate over the course of a relationship. The relational turning-points model, itself grounded in relational dialectical theory captures this aspect and suggests that attraction evaluations rise and fall with positive and negative relational events people experience in interpersonal relationships.

A final theoretical approach that has been used to explain the causes and outcomes of attraction is *social evolutionary theory* (Buss 1994). The central idea of this theory is that humans, like all mammalian species, are driven to advance the species by mating with those who are most genetically fit. Genetic fitness is manifested in phenotypic features such as physical attractiveness and other personality characteristics. Consequently, people are drawn to those who possess advantageous phenotypic features because these features suggest strong genes and thus provide a survival advantage.

## MEASUREMENTS OF INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

Assessing interpersonal attraction is not as simple as it may seem. Several nonverbal indicators of interpersonal attraction have been explored (e.g., eye gaze, proximity, attention), but these measures tend to be contaminated by factors unrelated to attraction. Researchers have also frequently measured interpersonal attraction by summing two items taken from Byrne’s (1971) interpersonal judgment questionnaire, including the extent to which people (a) like a target person and (b) would enjoy working with that target person. A similar measure of interpersonal attraction is the simple question “How much do you like or dislike X?” that is usually answered on a semantic differential or bipolar scale.

However, this measure bears not only methodological problems common to single-item scales, but also does not take into account that positive and negative affect are relatively independent constructs. Thus, this measure cannot detect the ambivalence of the two emotional states when people evaluate the attraction of another person. McCroskey & McCain's (1974) interpersonal attraction scale (IAS) is perhaps the most extensively developed scale in interpersonal communication and assesses social attraction, physical attraction, and task attraction (described above).

*Future research* will undoubtedly continue to reveal additional attraction motives, as well as moderating influences among these motives, in the context of initial and ongoing interpersonal relationships. Fundamentally, two key issues will likely drive future research in interpersonal attraction. The first issue is conceptual in nature: while we know quite a bit about the determinants of interpersonal attraction, we have yet to examine how exactly attraction works. It is tacitly assumed that attraction is an interpersonal dynamic. Thus, future theoretical work will likely build on interpersonal communication theory to expand the conceptual definition of interpersonal attraction beyond current definitions that target attraction predominantly as a force that draws people together. Apart from clear conceptualizations of interpersonal attraction, a second research direction concerns methodological issues in assessing interpersonal attraction. Because interpersonal attraction has frequently been examined in initial encounters, another fruitful avenue of future research lies in the longitudinal study of interpersonal attraction in ongoing relationships.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Ingratiation and Affinity Seeking  
▶ Initial Interaction ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills  
▶ Relational Dialectics ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Social Exchange ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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# Interpersonal Communication

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Interpersonal communication concerns the study of social interaction between people. Interpersonal communication theory and research seeks to understand how individuals use verbal discourse and nonverbal actions, as well as written discourse, to achieve a variety of instrumental and communication goals such as informing, persuading, and providing emotional support to others. Although interpersonal communication has been traditionally conceived of as a process that occurs between people encountering each other face to face, increasingly social interaction is being accomplished through the use of such communication technologies as computers and mobile phones, thus adding a new dimension to this area of communication inquiry.

## RESEARCH HISTORY

The study of interpersonal communication developed during the years following World War II and grew out of two distinct areas of social-psychological research that appeared during and after the war. One of these areas concerned the role communication plays in the *exercise of persuasion and social influence*, while the other area, known as group dynamics, focused on social interaction within groups. Group dynamics sought to illuminate how group interaction processes influence conformity to group norms, group cohesion, the exercise of social power and the decisions that groups make. During the 1960s most interpersonal communication research addressed the role that various source, message, channel, and receiver factors play in changing audience members' attitudes and behavior; although studies of speech anxiety, communication apprehension, and group decision-making also appeared in the interpersonal communication literature of that era.

Most of the communication and persuasion research appearing during this time did not examine social influence in the context of ongoing social interaction; rather, experimental studies in which audience members were individually exposed to persuasive messages that systematically varied different source and message factors were used to investigate the effects of persuasive communication on recipients' attitudes and opinions. As elegant as this experimental approach to the study of persuasion was, in that it allowed for the experimental control of extraneous factors, unfortunately it did not allow researchers to investigate the reciprocal influence processes that occur when people engage in face-to-face interaction. In social encounters, social influence is not a one-way street; individuals who enter such encounters hoping to influence their co-interlocutors instead may encounter resistance or find themselves being influenced by their partners.

Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, interpersonal communication research perspectives expanded beyond the communication and persuasion domain to include the role *social interaction* plays in the development, maintenance, and deterioration of personal relationships. Interpersonal communication and interpersonal attraction in romantic and friendship relationships began to become a focal point of study; at the same

time interpersonal communication researchers became interested in the study of self-disclosure (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). This period was also marked by a significant increase in attention to the study of nonverbal communication (→ Environment & Social Interaction; Eye Behavior; Facial Expressions; Gestures and Kinesics; Paralanguage; Proxemics), and during the latter part of the 1970s interpersonal communication research began to reflect a concern to understand the cognitive structure and processes that underlie social interaction with respect to both message production and message processing (Berger 2005). Deceptive communication was another research focus that emerged during this period. In the ensuing decades, each of these research areas has continued to attract considerable attention.

During the 1970s, communication researchers in general and the interpersonal communication researchers in particular expressed considerable frustration over the lack of original theories designed to explain various interpersonal communication phenomena. As a consequence, beginning in this decade, interpersonal communication scholars began to engage in dialogue about the *nature of communication theory*, and they increased their theory development efforts. Since that time, interpersonal communication researchers have proposed a variety of theories concerned with explaining such phenomena as relationship development, nonverbal communication, message production, interaction adaptation, and deceptive communication.

As the theoretical and research trends set in motion in the 1970s continued to play out during the 1980s, interpersonal communication researchers became increasingly interested in illuminating the *communication strategies* individuals use to achieve a wide variety of goals, such as acquiring information, gaining compliance, making requests, comforting others, and seeking affinity. In conjunction with this focus on the functions that social interaction serves in the strategic pursuit of such goals, some interpersonal communication researchers began to develop theories and models of message production for the purpose of explaining how such strategic interaction works. This theory development work continued through the 1990s and into the new millennium.

As a sub-field of the communication discipline, interpersonal communication can be divided into six unique but related *areas of study*, each representing a relatively coherent body of theory and research. These six areas are concerned with uncertainty, interpersonal adaptation, message production, relationship development, deceptive communication, and mediated social interaction. In addition to these theoretical domains, interpersonal communication researchers have addressed specific topics such as emotion and social interaction, although these specific topics are not as well developed as the six domains. Nevertheless, some of these specific topics will be considered as each of the six research areas is described below.

### **UNCERTAINTY IN INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION**

Few would disagree with the proposition that when individuals engage in social interaction with each other, they cannot be completely certain of their conversational partners' current emotional states, beliefs, attitudes, and future actions, even when their interaction partners are familiar and perhaps even well known to them. That is, it is impossible to predict accurately all of these internal states and potential future actions at any given point in time. Consequently, when individuals engage in social interaction they

do so under conditions of more or less uncertainty, but uncertainty is probably never completely absent. In addition, because individuals harbor uncertainties about co-interlocutors, they must, of necessity, have uncertainties about how they should act toward their partners; consequently, individuals experience uncertainty with respect both to themselves and to others. These uncertainties are maximal when strangers meet, but uncertainties can also arise in close relationships of long duration (Planalp & Honeycutt 1985). Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT; Berger & Calabrese 1975; Berger & Gudykunst 1991) proposes that individuals must reduce their uncertainties to some degree in order to be able to fashion verbal discourse and actions that will allow them to achieve their interaction goals. The theory's propositions describe relationships between verbal and nonverbal communication and information seeking, self-disclosure and interpersonal attraction (→ Uncertainty Reduction Theory).

Berger (1979) identified three general classes of *strategies for reducing uncertainty*. Passive strategies do not entail social interaction between parties; rather, they involve the unobtrusive observation of others for the purpose of acquiring information about them. Active strategies also do not involve face-to-face social interaction between information seekers and their targets. Acquiring information from third parties about a target person falls into this category. Finally, interactive strategies such as asking questions, disclosing information about one's self, and relaxing the target may be used to acquire information when interaction occurs. These strategies vary with respect to their efficiency and social appropriateness.

For example, acquiring personal information from another by asking questions might be an efficient strategy, but it could become socially inappropriate if too many questions or excessively personal questions were to be asked. Conversely, relaxing the target person might be perceived to be highly appropriate socially but, at the same time, might be highly inefficient for acquiring specific pieces of information from the target. A person who is more comfortable might say more than one who is less so but still not reveal the desired information. Studies have also examined the strategies individuals use to resist revealing information about themselves to highly inquisitive co-interlocutors (Berger & Kellermann 1994). URT has been found to have some purchase in explaining social interaction in intercultural (Gudykunst 1995) and organizational (Kramer 2004) communication contexts. Moreover, some have argued that individuals not only harbor uncertainties about themselves and others as individuals, but also may experience uncertainty with respect to their relationship with each other (→ Relational Uncertainty).

Some researchers have argued that individuals may not necessarily be motivated to reduce their uncertainty when they anticipate experiencing negative outcomes by so doing. For example, individuals who have their blood tested for the presence of the HIV virus because they suspect that they may be HIV positive may choose not to obtain their test result, presumably because they are fearful of it. That is, they will maintain their uncertainty in the service of avoiding hearing bad news. Similarly, married people who suspect that their spouses are cheating on them may elect to avoid reducing their uncertainty in this regard in order to avoid projected negative consequences that might follow from this knowledge. According to this perspective, then, uncertainty is something to be managed rather than necessarily reduced (→ Uncertainty Management). Although there are a number of examples of situations in which some people might avoid reducing

their uncertainty, the degree to which these uncertainty reduction avoidance maneuvers portend optimal adaptation to the environment is open to question. In the long run, ignorance may not always be bliss (Berger 2005).

### INTERPERSONAL ADAPTATION

Students of social interaction have long recognized that when individuals converse, they show strong proclivities to reciprocate each other's verbal and nonverbal behaviors. The *norm of reciprocity*, which states that in the conduct of social intercourse people are obligated to help and not harm those who help them, provides a potential explanation for the ubiquity of reciprocity in social interaction. However, behavioral reciprocity has been observed between very young infants and their caregivers, suggesting a biological basis for reciprocal behavior (Burgoon et al. 1995).

Evidence for the operation of the norm of reciprocity was found in early studies of self-disclosure published in the 1950s and 1960s. This manifestation of the norm was labeled the "dyadic effect." When individuals disclose information about themselves at a particular intimacy level, their co-interlocutors are likely to disclose information about themselves at a similar intimacy level. Moreover, as individuals increase the intimacy of their self-disclosures, their co-interlocutors tend to increase the intimacy level of their self-disclosures (Burgoon et al. 1995). It is not that individuals reciprocate the same information about themselves; rather, individuals tend to match the intimacy level of their disclosures. In addition to reciprocity at the level of message content, early studies demonstrated reciprocity of nonverbal behaviors in interview situations. As interviewers purposively increased or decreased their speech rate or the number of pauses in their speech, interviewees were observed to respond by adjusting their speech or pause rate in the direction of the interviewers' (Burgoon et al. 1995).

Although the forces for reciprocity in social interaction are both highly pervasive and particularly strong, there are conditions under which interacting individuals will show compensation in response to each other's behaviors. Compensation occurs when a behavior displayed by one person is not matched in some way by another. For example, in the domain of nonverbal communication a smile by one person might be met with a frown by a conversational partner, or an attempt to begin a conversation by moving closer to an individual might be responded to with eye-gaze aversion, signaling an unwillingness to converse. In the smile–frown case, compensation occurs within the same nonverbal communication channel, facial expressions; in the second case, the compensatory behavior is expressed in a different channel than is the initiating behavior.

A number of *alternative theories* have been devised to illuminate the conditions under which reciprocity and compensation are likely to occur during social interactions, especially with respect to nonverbal behaviors. Although Expectancy Violations Theory, Arousal Labeling Theory, Discrepancy-Arousal Theory, and Cognitive Valence Theory differ in terms of their explanations for reciprocity/compensation, they share a common assumption that when expectations for nonverbal behavior are violated, individuals tend to experience arousal (→ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction). For instance, when people try to converse at inappropriately close conversational distances, they are likely to create arousal in their co-interlocutors. Arousal Labeling and Discrepancy

Arousal theories suggest that when the experience of this arousal is pleasant, reciprocity is likely to occur; however, when the arousal is experienced negatively, compensation is likely to follow.

Research comparing these theories has been inconclusive and has prompted the development of → Interaction Adaptation Theory (IAT) (Burgoon et al. 1995). This theory argues that when an individual's interaction position matches a co-interlocutor's behavior, reciprocity or matching is likely to occur, but when an individual's interaction position is discrepant from the other's behavior, compensation is likely to occur. Interaction position is determined by the individual's basic drives and needs, their cognitive expectations concerning social norms and behavior, and their goals and preferences. Although IAT offers a potentially more comprehensive explanation of interaction adaptation than do the other theories, its scope is quite ambitious, thus making it difficult to evaluate.

## **MESSAGE PRODUCTION**

The notion that language is a tool or an instrument for attaining everyday goals has enjoyed long acceptance among students of language and communication. Given the uncontroversial nature of this proposition, it is but a small step to contend that social interaction, like language, is a tool or an instrument for goal achievement (Berger 2003; Dillard et al. 2002; Wilson & Sabee 2003). Consistent with this proposition, beginning in the 1970s and continuing through the 1990s, constructivist researchers endeavored to determine the characteristics of messages deemed to be effective for achieving a variety of goals, most of them concerned with persuasion (→ Constructivism; Constructivism and Interpersonal Processes); although, a parallel line of research concerned with the goal of providing emotional support also developed within this tradition (Burleson 2003; → Comforting Communication).

A robust finding from this line of research is that when given the task of devising messages to achieve such goals, individuals with high levels of cognitive complexity tend to generate messages showing greater evidence of social perspective taking than do their less cognitively complex counterparts. Within this research perspective, cognitive complexity is indexed by the number of psychological constructs individuals typically used to construe other persons (cognitive differentiation) and the degree to which the constructs they use are abstract (construct abstractness). Greater numbers of highly abstract constructs contribute to higher cognitive complexity levels. Because highly differentiated individuals' messages take into account their co-interlocutors' goals, emotional states, and potential responses to their messages, their messages are, as a result, deemed to be potentially more effective than the more egocentric ones generated by their less cognitively complex counterparts.

Beginning in the 1980s, a more comprehensive and abstract message production theory labeled → Action Assembly Theory (Greene 1997) was developed to explain how individuals produce actions and discourse, and during the same period theories featuring such knowledge structures as scripts, plans, and memory organization packets (MOPS) were devised (Berger 1997; Kellermann 1995). In the case of these latter theories, sometimes referred to as Goal-Plan-Action (GPA) theories (Dillard et al. 2002), scripts,



plans, and MOPS are conceived of as hierarchically organized knowledge structures representing action sequences that will bring about the achievement of goals. Once goals are activated, these knowledge structures serve to guide actions toward their attainment. These knowledge structures vary with respect to their abstractness and level of detail, and they can be made more complex by including contingencies that anticipate points at which projected actions in them might fail (→ Relational Schemas; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction). Individuals who plan ahead during conversations, anticipate their co-interlocutor's future conversational moves, and develop plan contingencies to meet these future actions are more likely to attain their social interaction goals than are individuals who do not engage in such planning activity while they converse (Waldron 1997).

A potential shortcoming of GPA theories is that they do not provide a detailed account of how goals arise in the first place; i.e., they begin with the assumption that social actors have a goal or goals to pursue. However, there are at least two examples of attempts to formulate and test theoretical explanations for how goals arise during social interaction (Meyer 1997; Wilson & Sabee 2003). Because much of everyday social interaction is aimed at satisfying recurring goals, much of everyday conversational interaction is routine (Berger 2005). Nonetheless, important questions can be asked about the conditions under which specific goals are activated and the consequences that follow from the disruption of these routines once they are undertaken. Interference with the completion of these routines should provoke annoyance and other negative emotions because it prevents the efficient achievement of recurring goals; however, there may be circumstances under which the disruption of social interaction routines provides relief from boredom or from an undesirable situation such as a routine conflict with another person.

People sometimes imagine social interactions with others (→ Imagined Interactions). These imagined interactions may occur before an encounter, as when employees imagine what they might say to their bosses, but imagined interactions can take place after a particular encounter is over. Under certain conditions, imagining what one might say to another person before an actual interaction with them takes place can reduce the amount of apprehension that the person who has imagined the interaction shows during the actual encounter. Moreover, imagining interactions may help those who imagine them cope with negative emotions they have experienced in their relationship with the person or persons with whom they imagine conversing (Honeycutt 2003). However, imagining interactions before they take place may have the effect of encouraging individuals to commit themselves prematurely to a particular plan for the actual interaction and, as a result, render them less inclined to recognize potential problems that arise during the actual conversation, and to consider contingent actions that might be undertaken to deal with these problems (Berger 2005).

## **RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The idea that interpersonal communication plays a critical role in the development, maintenance, and deterioration of social and personal relationships is one that has gained widespread acceptance over the past 35 years (→ Relationship Development). Although a great deal of research attention has been paid to the development of romantic

relationships during this period, probably because college students, who are frequently used as research participants, are likely to be involved in such relationships (→ Dating Relationships), researchers have also investigated relationships between friends, spouses, and family members.

A central question researchers have sought to answer is why some relationships become closer over time while others grow distant and perhaps end (→ Relational Maintenance). Social exchange theories have frequently been invoked to explain why relationship growth and deterioration occur (Rolloff 1981; → Social Exchange). In general, these theories suggest that individuals experience both rewards for and costs of being in relationships with each other, and not only assess their own rewards and costs, but estimate their partners' levels of rewards and costs. Rewards may be material (wealth) or emotional (emotional support), and costs may be similarly material (lack of money) or emotional (undesirable personality). Each individual puts these reward and cost estimates into ratio form (rewards/costs) and compares the two ratios (self: rewards/costs vs partner: rewards/costs).

Individuals will feel *equity* in their relationship to the degree that the reward/cost ratios match; however, if the self's ratio is less favorable than the partner's, the individual will feel inequity and thus dissatisfaction with the relationship. Dissatisfaction arising from felt inequity is sometimes expressed verbally when people say, e.g., "I am putting more into this relationship than I am getting out of it." In general, these theories suggest that favorable relative reward/cost ratios fuel relationship growth, whereas unfavorable ratios are associated with relationship deterioration. It is not the absolute levels of rewards and costs that determine equity but the degree to which the two ratios match. Individuals might perceive their partners to be receiving more rewards from their relationships than they are, but because their partners may be perceived to be incurring greater costs for being in the relationship, the fact that they are receiving greater rewards does not lead to feelings of inequity.

Some have argued that social exchange theories and other relationship development perspectives have made the processes of relationship development and deterioration appear to be much more continuous and linear than they actually are. These researchers contend that the development of relationships is fraught with dialectical tensions that may serve to pull individuals in opposite directions simultaneously (Baxter & Montgomery 1996; Montgomery & Baxter 1998; → Relational Dialectics; Friendship and Peer Interaction). For example, individuals may at once feel interdependent and autonomous with respect to their partners, and because the tension between these polarities shifts over time, relationships are in a constant state of flux. There are a number of possible dialectics such as predictability–novelty, openness–closeness, and autonomy–connection; thus, these contradictions can interact with each other through time. Given the dialectical nature of personal relationships and their dynamic interplay, proponents of this perspective contend that the complete merger of relationship partners is not possible.

Although social exchange theories and the relational dialectics perspective provide explanations for the growth and deterioration of relationships, they do not centrally address the effects of messages exchanged between people. That is, in the case of social exchange theories, individual's judgments about relative rewards and costs are presumed

to be residues of verbal and nonverbal interaction; similarly, the dialectical contradictions that individuals report experiencing in their relationships ostensibly arise from communicative exchanges with relationship partners; however, actual message exchanges between partners are generally not examined.

Nevertheless, although not necessarily strongly motivated by theory, there has been considerable research interest in → *interpersonal conflict* in general and *marital conflict* in particular, much of it based on direct observations of partners engaged in social interaction (→ Marital Communication; Relational Control). Such studies have found that couples who display a demand–withdraw pattern of message exchanges when interacting with each other, such that one person makes a demand of the other and the other person responds by withdrawing, report lower levels of relational satisfaction than do couples who acknowledge and respond to each other’s demands in a conciliatory way. In addition, because emotional communication plays an important role in many different types of relationships, there is increasing interest in how the regulation of → emotions affects relationship development (→ Emotion and Discourse).

### DECEPTIVE COMMUNICATION

Many interpersonal communication researchers subscribe to the view that deception is an integral part of social interaction. So called “white lies” are commonplace in everyday social commerce. Some researchers have gone so far as to argue that deception is an important lubricant that enables the smooth operation of the social interaction machine. Many times these lies are told to help co-interlocutors save face when potentially embarrassing circumstances arise in social situations. For example, dinner guests might tell a host that the food they have just consumed was “wonderful” when, in fact, it was utterly horrible, and persons might tell acquaintances that new articles of clothing the acquaintances are wearing “look good,” when their true evaluation of the new clothing is highly negative (→ Politeness Theory). *Deception by commission* occurs when proffered information is at variance with the “true” state of affairs, as in the previous examples; however, deception may also occur by omission; i.e., individuals may intentionally withhold critical information so that others will draw erroneous inferences, as when a used car salesperson fails to reveal known mechanical defects present in a car to a prospective car buyer. The prospective buyer is left to infer that the car is mechanically reliable.

Although interpersonal communication researchers have expended considerable research effort on examining deceptive communication, there are relatively few theories of deceptive social interaction (Berger 2005; Miller & Stiff 1993). Nonetheless, there are at least two enduring questions concerning deceptive communication that have attracted considerable research attention over the years. One of these questions concerns the degree to which engaging in deception alters nonverbal behaviors; i.e., do truth tellers’ nonverbal behaviors differ systematically from those of individuals who are telling lies? The research germane to this question has focused on nonverbal behaviors because it is generally assumed that when people engage in deceptive communication, they can carefully monitor what they are saying but cannot necessarily control their nonverbal behaviors in ways that will make them appear to be telling the truth while they are lying.

Those employed in such fields as law enforcement and the military, as well as those who perform psychological counseling, have a great deal of interest in knowing when individuals are providing truthful and deceitful answers to their questions. In general, research findings suggest that no one nonverbal behavior – e.g., eye-gaze aversion, excessive leg movements, fast or slow speech rate, or changes in body posture – can be used as an indicator of deceptive communication across all individuals (→ Deception Detection Accuracy; Deceptive Message Production). Specific behaviors may be diagnostic of deceptive communication in specific individuals; however, no universal nonverbal indicator of deceptive communication has yet been identified.

Another enduring question investigated by interpersonal communication researchers is the degree to which individuals are skilled at detecting deception as they interact with others. In this case research has generally shown that most individuals are not very adept at detecting deception, even those whose professions frequently require them to ascertain whether people are lying or telling the truth, e.g., judges, counselors, and law enforcement personnel. One explanation for the apparent inability of most individuals to detect deception is the pervasiveness of the “truth bias.” The *truth bias* arises from the fact that in the conduct of everyday interpersonal communication, individuals must routinely assume that their conversational partners are telling the truth.

For example, when one friend tells another, “I went to the movies alone last night,” under most conditions it would be quite odd for the friend to reply, “Can you provide me with evidence to support that assertion?” Individuals involved in social interactions must assume that others’ utterances are truthful; after all, requiring co-interlocutors to provide evidence for the truthfulness of every statement they make in most conversations would make even mundane social interaction a torturous activity. Consequently, because individuals routinely assume others are telling the truth, it is difficult for them to detect deceit when it is being perpetrated. There is some evidence that deception detection accuracy can be improved with practice, but these improvements appear to be confined to those specific individuals who are observed on repeated occasions; there is little evidence of generalized improvement beyond those individuals who are observed.

### **MEDIATED SOCIAL INTERACTION**

Increasingly, social interaction is being accomplished through such communication technologies as computers with email and chat-room capabilities and mobile phones with text messaging and other communication features. Teleconferencing has become a commonplace in business communication. As the use of these technologies has become progressively more widespread, there has been a concomitant increase in research aimed at understanding their potential individual and social effects (→ Mediated Social Interaction; Online Relationships). However, technologically mediated social interaction is hardly a new phenomenon, having been possible on a wide scale since the advent of the landline telephone.

As was the case after traditional mass media such as film, radio, and television were introduced, research has investigated the potential deleterious effects of Internet use, such as Internet addiction and increased social isolation and loneliness, although evidence for the latter association is both scant and equivocal (Berger 2005). An inherent

difficulty in examining such effects is establishing causal directions of influence: Do high levels of Internet use induce people to feel socially isolated and lonely, or do people who are already socially isolated and lonely, for reasons other than Internet use, gravitate to the Internet to help them alleviate or cope with these unpleasant feelings? Do people with “addictive personalities” simply find Internet use to be another activity to which to become addicted, or does use of the Internet itself induce addictive behavior? Yet another, and perhaps more realistic, possibility in each of these examples is that both causal directions occur and interact with each other in a complex, reciprocal fashion.

Some researchers have observed that when individuals engage in anonymous computer-mediated communication (CMC), as they might in an Internet chat room or on email, they are more likely to act in ways that they would not if they were interacting with others face to face (FtF) or if their identities were known to others in the CMC context. Researchers have postulated both positive and negative possibilities in this regard. On the positive side, anonymous individuals communicating with others by CMC might assume new identities, personalities, or both that could help them cope with personal problems. For example, highly introverted and shy people who wish to overcome their social inhibitions might “try on” a highly extraverted and outgoing persona whilst engaging in CMC. The effect of this experimentation might be to move such individuals in the desired direction of becoming less shy and introverted. However, on the negative side, others have noted that this same cloak of anonymity may serve to embolden individuals to insult and attack others or to “flame” them, behaviors they would not normally display in most FtF interactions or in CMC if their identities were known to their co-interlocutors.

Just as the advent of television prompted both considerable speculation and research aimed at comparing the then-new medium’s potential effects, especially with respect to its visual channel, with those of older media such as radio, so too the appearance of CMC has precipitated considerable research aimed at determining how CMC and FtF interaction differ with respect to various outcomes associated with their use (Walther & Parks 2002). Because text-based CMC, as currently used in electronic mail (email), news groups, and chat rooms, filters out many nonverbal cues typically available to people engaged in FtF interactions, it is presumed, e.g., that communication via text-based CMC is more task focused than is FtF communication. Moreover, while relatively cue-deprived, text-based CMC venues may be quite useful for initially encountering and screening potential friends and romantic partners, they apparently do not afford sufficient information for developing close relationships. Individuals who initially meet in the text-based CMC world usually elect to communicate with each other through other channels, e.g., phone and FtF encounters.

These alternative communication channels afford their users potentially more rich and comprehensive samples of each other’s behavior. Although the ability to send pictures and live video in the CMC context may overcome some of this cue loss in the visual realm, there are certain nonverbal communication channels such as touch, pheromones, body temperature, and smell that are at once both highly significant in most close romantic relationships and currently difficult or impossible to instantiate in CMC. The unavailability of these channels in current, commonly used incarnations of CMC raises questions about

this medium's ability to help sustain close, romantic relationships over long distances (→ Long-Distance Relationships).

Because text-based CMC may serve to filter out personal information that might be used to understand people as individuals rather than as group members, some researchers have suggested that when groups use CMC to communicate with each other, the lack of individuating information about group members may foster stronger ingroup identity. Increased ingroup loyalty may serve to "deindividuate" people to the point where they are willing to stereotype outgroup members and behave negatively toward them. Although research has supported this possibility (Postmes et al. 2000), some have observed that these findings are limited to the domain of group-based CMC and may not apply in situations in which people are using CMC to interact with others on an individual basis (Walther & Parks 2002). Beyond the realm of CMC, under the aegis of human-computer interaction (HCI), considerable research evidence has been adduced to support the idea that people tend to treat computers and other communication technologies as if they are human agents, even when users know that they are interacting with a machine (Reeves & Nass 1996). Apparently, technology users cannot help imputing human-like qualities to the communication technologies they encounter in their everyday lives.

Given the rapid rate at which new communication technologies that enable mediated social interaction between people are being made widely available to the public, understanding how the use of these technologies affects communication in these modes and how prolonged use of the technologies may alter the nature of FtF interaction represents a challenge to communication researchers.

### OTHER RESEARCH AREAS

The six areas just considered do not exhaust the entire domain of interpersonal communication research. In addition to these theoretically defined areas are specific concepts in which interpersonal communication researchers have had an enduring interest. A few of the more important of these are now considered.

Everyday experience suggests that some individuals are consistently better able than others to achieve their goals during their social interactions. Some people appear to be able to induce others to like them (→ Ingratiation and Affinity Seeking; Impression Management) and others seem to be very effective at persuading others and getting their way (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction). The skills associated with success in these and other social interaction domains can be subsumed under the term *communication competence* (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). Much has been written about the communication competence concept, but there remains considerable ambiguity concerning its meaning; moreover, there has yet to be a theory that elaborates the concept. Some have suggested that communication competence might profitably be viewed as a theoretical term or domain of study rather than a single theoretical concept (Wilson & Sabee 2003).

There appears to be some agreement that communication competence refers to the degree to which individuals are able to reach their goals (effectiveness) and the extent to which goal achievement is accomplished in an appropriate manner (social appropriateness). In addition, some have suggested that efficiency may be another component of

competence; i.e., how quickly individuals are able to achieve their goals. Another point of convergence is that communication competence is not a generalized skill but is specific to different kinds of communication goals and situations. Thus, a parent might be very persuasive when conducting high-level business negotiations on the job but, at the same time, be quite ineffective at inducing a resistant son or daughter to finish his or her homework. Similarly, an individual might be very effective at offering social support and comfort to others (→ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication) but very ineffective at gaining compliance from others. Although most interpersonal communication researchers acknowledge that communication competence is goal- and situation-specific, as yet there is no typology of goals and situations that enables us to determine specific skill sets that are associated with various classes of goals and situations. This typology development task is one in need of attention.

As noted previously, much of everyday social interaction is organized around recurring goals that arise in the course of everyday living. The routines associated with everyday family and work interactions, and with daily transactions in business and commerce, encourage the development of communication routines in order to reach these recurring goals effectively and efficiently. If people had to plan consciously how to reach each of these recurring goals every day, the pace of social life would slow to a crawl. Instead, communication is routinized and can be enacted automatically when the occasion arises. Routinization of language use is pervasive; it has been estimated that up to 70 percent of adult language is formulaic (Berger 2005). The notion of communication routines may be related in some ways to communication competence. Competent communicators may be those who, in a given situation, have rapid access to communication routines that generally eventuate in goal achievement. Of course, the relationship between the availability of communication routines and communication competence rests on the assumption that the routines accessed are both effective and socially appropriate. A given situation may be nonroutine and require conscious planning effort; thus, the discerning communicator must be able to differentiate between those social situations that are routine and those that are not. This requirement for astute social discernment suggests that competent communicative action involves more than the production of effective messages. Accurate perception of others' circumstances, moods, and emotional states is a vital prerequisite to competent social conduct.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Constructivism  
 ▶ Constructivism and Interpersonal Processes ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Deception  
 Detection Accuracy ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal  
 Communication ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Environment and Social  
 Interaction ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Friendship and Peer Interaction  
 ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Imagined Interactions ▶ Impression Management ▶ Ingratiation  
 and Affinity Seeking ▶ Interaction Adaptation Theory ▶ Interpersonal Communication  
 Competence and Social Skills ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Long-Distance Relationships  
 ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Online Relationships  
 ▶ Paralanguage ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction  
 ▶ Proxemics ▶ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ▶ Relational Control  
 ▶ Relational Dialectics ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relational Schemas ▶ Relational

Uncertainty ► Relationship Development ► Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ► Social Exchange ► Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ► Uncertainty Management ► Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## **Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills**

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Every act and artifact of communication is open to evaluations of its quality, i.e., how well it was accomplished. Because such evaluations involve individual and social judgments of communicative performance, especially in interpersonal contexts, and because virtually all relevant achievements of interpersonal communication depend on performance and subsequent evaluations, a theory of interpersonal communication competence is tantamount to a theory of interpersonal communication itself. Interpersonal communication competence and social skills are concerned with both the performance of communication and the evaluation of its quality.

*Interpersonal communication competence* is typically defined either as the ability to enact message behavior that fulfills requirements of a given situation, or as the subjective evaluation of the quality of message behavior. The first conception views competence as a set of abilities that enable repeated, goal-directed behavior that fulfills task demands of a particular communication context. If the context is a job interview, competent communication consists of the ability to perform the various behaviors identified as essential to a good interview. The judgment of what constitutes a good interview, however, brings with it a perceptual dimension that necessarily connects the ability perspective to the subjective evaluation perspective. What distinguishes good from not so good performance will necessarily vary somewhat from interviewer to interviewer, organization to organization, and culture to culture. *Social skills* are similarly defined as either the ability to perform various requisite behaviors in everyday interpersonal encounters, or the evaluation of the quality of performance in such encounters. These terms have been used

as synonyms, and historically the choice of one over another label has been determined more by their disciplinary origin (social skills in psychology, interpersonal competence in communication) than by any substantive distinctions.

## **HISTORY AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS**

The study of interpersonal communication competence and social skills developed as relatively independent literatures until the 1980s, when their mutual relevance began to be recognized. Many related terms evolved, including grammatical competence, referential competence, linguistic competence, conversational competence, social competence, developmental competence, psychosocial competence, interactional competence, literacy, and relational competence.

Both interpersonal communicative competence and social skills reflect highly diverse intellectual origins and research methodologies. Although the rhetorical tradition dating back to Aristotle (384–322 BCE) was most concerned with public oratory, it was in this tradition that the assumption took root of systematically codifying, learning, and adapting communication strategies to specific contexts, tasks, and audiences to produce desired impressions of the communicator (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Ethos and Rhetoric). Some of the ancient rhetorical scholars after Aristotle explicitly took up concern with more interpersonal kinds of contexts. Cicero (106–43 BCE), e.g., emphasized the importance of tact in ordinary conversation, and Quintillian (35–95 CE) emphasized the general art of speaking well (→ Rhetoric, Roman).

By the time of the Renaissance and after, stratification in society led to an interest in establishing codes of social conduct. Manuals for instruction in polite society reinforced attention to everyday social behavior as well as social boundaries and the distances between bourgeois and working-class (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance). Parallel to some of these developments, the rediscovery of the ancient rhetorics by scholars in the 1700s and 1800s and the rise of the modern university led to an interest in teaching the art of rhetoric. Around 1900, at the point at which a split occurred between teaching English through writing and teaching it through oral performance, the communication discipline rediscovered its emphasis on performance instruction and evaluation. By the 1960s, traditional interest in public speaking expanded to include the study of communication in other contexts, including interpersonal communication (→ Speech Communication, History of).

In the field of psychology, interest in the nature of personality and its disorders, particularly the nature of mental illness, led to an ongoing interest in the nature of normality (Wine 1981). By the late 1800s, interest in mental hygiene and competence had produced the concept of the intelligence quotient, or a measure of a person's mental competence. By the 1920s, the concept of social intelligence was introduced as an analog, and early measurement efforts sought to determine its value as an index of deficiencies in basic social functioning. By the 1960s deficit models of social competence began to give room to more positive models of self-actualization and optimum performance. In particular, the assertiveness movement spurred extensive research in the specific behaviors entailed by a model of confident interpersonal self-expression and achievement of personal goals through interaction (Phillips 1985).

Parallel with these twentieth-century intellectual developments, the discipline of anthropology was beginning to identify the nature of different cultural codes of expression, varying across and within tribes, societies, and cultures (→ Speech Codes Theory). In linguistics, an interest developed in identifying the factors that enable coherent construction of grammar and sentences across languages. This interest ultimately split into studies of the psycholinguistic abilities (mental faculties describing potential and actual utterances) and sociolinguistics (linguistic enactments in actual social contexts).

A host of other disciplines independently developed interest in the assessment, instruction, and enhancement of social skills. Child development scholars seek to understand the developmental trends in communicative competence (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span). Education scholars seek better instructional methods for teaching the social skills of students (→ Student Communication Competence). Business schools seek to better understand the communicative competencies required for employees, and the relationship of such abilities to organizational outcomes.

These diverse disciplines share a common assumption that interpersonal communication competence is integral to desired social outcomes. Individuals, peer relationships, marriages, families, friendships, organizations, communities, societies, nations, and international relationships are all assumed to function more optimally to the extent people are more interpersonally competent. This assumption led scholars to posit social skills as a model not only of individual mental health, but of the transformation of societies into more rational and democratic institutions (→ Habermas, Jürgen). A wealth of evidence does indeed link interpersonal communication competence and social skills to manifold social outcomes, including higher intelligence, happiness, psychological adjustment, peer status, educational attainment, marital satisfaction, job satisfaction, socio-economic status, and lower likelihood of depression, drug abuse, delinquency, criminal activity, conflict, stress, morbidity, and mortality (Spitzberg & Cupach 1984, 2002).

## **DIMENSIONS AND COMPONENTS**

Most approaches to interpersonal communication competence vary in the extent to which they attend to affective (motivation), cognitive (knowledge), behavioral, outcomes, or evaluation aspects of competence, or some combination of these. *Motivational approaches* tend to focus on social anxiety (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety) or goals (→ Goals, Social Aspects of). Whereas anxiety tends to be a factor that leads to communication avoidance and incompetent performance, goals are the terminal objectives communicators approach through their behavior. These factors tend to lie on opposite ends of the approach/avoidance continuum, but both can coexist (e.g., a person can be anxious about a job interview, but approach it nonetheless).

*Knowledge approaches* tend to focus on the mental processes by which communicative action is produced (→ Action Assembly Theory; Message Design Logics). One of the early and influential distinctions in studying the knowledge underlying communication was articulated by Noam Chomsky (1965), who argued for a dichotomy between competence (i.e., knowledge of language) and performance (actual use of language in specific contexts). Performance is contingent upon many factors, including motivation, skills, and environment. A theoretical model of language knowledge, in contrast, would describe

how an ideal speaker-hearer knows what verbal constructions would make a coherent sentence (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

*Skills approaches* tend to focus on the behavioral contents or abilities that represent quality performance. Two common tributaries of skills approaches have emerged. The coding approach involves quantifying specific behaviors (e.g., gestures, eye contact, questions, assertions, etc.) and examining the extent to which these relate to partner or third-party impressions of competence. The factor-analytic approach (→ Factor Analysis) analyzes perceptual groupings across behavioral items (e.g., “She or he makes eye contact when interacting with others,” “\_\_\_\_\_ is good at asking relevant questions during interactions,” “I can assert myself and my opinion when I want to,” etc.) that presumably represent underlying skills such as attentiveness, interaction management, expressiveness, or confidence.

Finally, *outcomes approaches* tend to focus on the extent to which communication fulfills or violates expectancies (→ Expectancy Violation), or the subjective dimensions by which communication quality is evaluated (→ Implicit Personality Theories). The study of communication outcomes highlights the importance of the criteria by which competent performance is evaluated.

Most of the debate about criteria of interpersonal communication competence and social skills has revolved around a relatively small number of *evaluative dimensions*. Among the candidates proffered are understanding (or clarity, accuracy, fidelity, co-orientation), attractiveness, credibility, and efficiency. The two criteria most commonly associated with interpersonal communication competence are appropriateness and effectiveness. Effectiveness refers to the extent to which relatively preferable outcomes are achieved through communication. Appropriateness generally refers to the extent to which communication is viewed as legitimate within a given context. Most scholars accept the importance of both criteria, under the rationale that communication that achieves preferable outcomes through simultaneously appropriate interaction is likely to be optimally competent.

## RESEARCH MODELS AND CONTEXTS

There is no consensus on a particular organizing theoretical model of interpersonal communication competence and social skills. Michael Argyle (1969) brought together some of the concepts operating in cybernetics and feedback process models of the time into a model of social skills. In this model, an interactant’s motivation or goal instigates a process of translating perceptions into behavioral (motor) responses that effect changes in the social world that provide feedback to the person, who can then incorporate such changes into ongoing behavioral adaptations. This model was later elaborated by McFall (1982) through the addition of decoding skills (reception, perception, interpretation), decision skills (response search, response time, repertoire search, utility evaluation), encoding skills (execution, self-monitoring), and an observer’s subjective evaluation of the resulting performance. This model is more elaborate in contemporary communication models of interpersonal strategic interaction and message production.

Two influential articles posited essential *sets of component skills*, including empathic communication, descriptiveness, owning feelings, self-disclosure, behavioral flexibility

(Bochner & Kelly 1974), and affiliation/support, social relaxation, empathy, behavioral flexibility, and interaction management (Wiemann 1977). Spitzberg & Cupach (1984) popularized a motivation, knowledge, skills, context, and outcomes model to organize the diverse traits and processes necessary to explain competent performance and evaluation.

Exemplary research on interpersonal communication competence examines its role in phenomena such as depression, loneliness, and drug abuse (e.g., Segrin 2001). Other research on interpersonal communication competence in particular contexts examines its role in the intercultural adaptation of sojourners (e.g., Bradford et al. 2000), adapting to interpersonal or group differences (→ Communication Accommodation Theory; Intergroup Accommodative Processes), or adapting face-to-face skills to a computer-mediated context (e.g., Spitzberg 2006).

*Measurement* work is ubiquitous, and illustrates that there is little consensus regarding the assessment of interpersonal communication competence. Over 100 measures have been identified, and depending on the particular purpose of research, there are approximately a dozen measures available with sufficient research traditions to recommend their use (Spitzberg 2003; Spitzberg & Cupach 1989). Examination of the measures of interpersonal communication competence and social skills produces a list of well over 100 distinct skills attributed to competence (Spitzberg & Cupach 1984, 1989, 2002). Efforts to reconfigure interpersonal skills suggest that there may be more parsimonious models (e.g., Benjamin 1996; Spitzberg & Cupach 2002; Wish et al. 1980). Other approaches hope to reduce the lists of skills through the application of factor analysis techniques to identify a set of underlying dimensions (Bubaš 2001).

For example, any list of behavioral skills could include any or all of the following: topic initiation, open-ended questions, sentence completions, use of verbal reinforcers, intonation, use of gestures, gaze, eye contact, response latency, head nods, interruptions, touching, body posture and orientation, paralanguage, speaking rate, vocal volume, vocal quality, verbal fluency, self-references, facial expression, emotional disclosure (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication), expressing opinions, clarifications, seeking clarification, use of humor, laughing, ownership statements, relative talk time, agreement, disagreement, apologies (→ Apologies and Remedial Episodes), and compliments.

Clearly, however, these labels are a gloss on the microscopic details of the composition of such behaviors, and just as clearly, this is only a partial list of potentially relevant skills. Furthermore, these skills are often not the meaningful units people use to make sense of their social interaction. More meaningful units are likely to occur at more molar levels of abstraction, such as adaptability, empathy, disclosure, attentiveness, → listening, comforting (→ Comforting Communication), immediacy (→ Empathy Theory), assertiveness, confidence, aggressiveness (→ Verbal Aggressiveness), conflict (→ Conflict Resolution), and so forth. That the former molecular skills map in some systematic way onto the more molar categories or inferences about performances is one of the leading measurement concerns of research (see, e.g., Dillard & Spitzberg 1984; Pavitt 1989).

There are five persistent *challenges to assessment of interpersonal communication competence*. The first problem is identifying the appropriate domain of skills. If there are over 100 skills, there is no consensual basis to determine which to include and exclude. A second problem is that skills exist at different levels of abstraction, so it is not obvious whether assessment should occur at the level of molecular skills (e.g., eye contact) or

more molar skills (e.g., assertiveness). A third challenge to assessment is whether to measure competence as a trait or state. It is not obvious whether interpersonal communication competence is highly variable or relatively stable across different kinds of contexts and times. A fourth problem is identifying the most appropriate judge of interpersonal communication competence. The locus of judgment can be a person-evaluated self, a person judging a conversational partner (i.e., an involved interactant), a person being evaluated by an uninvolved third party (e.g., a trained rater evaluating an anonymous interactant), or a person being evaluated by an expert judge (e.g., a client being rated by a counselor or instructor). A fifth persistent challenge is the differentiation between objective and subjective evaluations. There is no consensus on whether to measure behaviors through a coding process for their frequency of occurrence, or to forgo such labor-intensive approaches and rely on interactant subjective reports of their competence.

Future research may show promise from advances in theory development, such as expectancy theories of competence inference or theories of message production, in which the content of competence may be more specifically articulated. Progress may also result from application of the analysis of experts. Individuals identified as expert communicators in certain targeted interpersonal contexts (e.g., managers, negotiators, etc.) could be systematically studied to determine the skills they master that differentiate them from those more novice communicators in such domains.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Apologies and Remedial Episodes ▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Ethos and Rhetoric ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Implicit Personality Theories ▶ Intergroup Accommodative Processes ▶ Listening ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Speech Codes Theory ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Student Communication Competence ▶ Verbal Aggressiveness

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## Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in

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Few topics interest lay people and scholars more than how men and women might differ from each other. *Sex differences* refer to behavioral variations between men and women based on biological differences; *gender differences* refer to behavioral variations between people due to cultural, sociological, and/or psychological differences. This entry focuses on the manner in which *sex differences* affect interpersonal communication behavior (→ Gender and Discourse).

Opinions abound regarding sex differences. Some scholars assume that men and women differ until proven otherwise, whereas others assume that men and women are similar until proven otherwise. And reputable scholars represent each side of the coin.

One way of deciding which side of the debate is more accurate involves the use of statistical tests to determine whether or not differences between men and women for a given sample might be generalized to a larger population. In general, the likelihood of finding statistical differences is relatively low. However, scholars who are prone to think that there are substantial differences between men and women often use nonstatistical, anecdotal evidence and qualitative analyses (e.g., Tannen 1990). Scholars who are prone to view women and men as being similar often point to large sample statistical summaries that frequently report small and inconsistent sex differences (e.g., Dindia 2006).

One should not look for sex differences everywhere, nor should one be too skeptical about sex differences. The pivotal issue concerns which behaviors reflect sex differences and under what conditions they occur. As one can imagine, sex differences have been explored with respect to many behaviors. Five domains of behavior illustrate where sex differences have been profitably examined in interpersonal communication: self-disclosure, relational maintenance, conflict management, supportiveness, and nonverbal messages. We briefly review each and offer related theoretic explanations for the findings.

### **SEX DIFFERENCES IN SELF-DISCLOSURE**

Generally speaking, *self-disclosure* refers to information about oneself that is shared with others (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). Since Jourard's (1961) early work on self-disclosure, numerous scholars have shown interest in sex differences in self-disclosure. Much research suggests that women self-disclose more than do men to friends, parents, spouses, and strangers. For example, women self-disclose more intimately and discuss more topics than do men in their friendships, and men and women differ in their expectations for intimacy in romantic relationships.

Although sex differences in self-disclosure appear to be consistent, the significance of those differences is debatable since the effect sizes reported in studies are generally small. Dindia and Allen's (1992) meta-analysis revealed that women generally disclose more than men to same-sex and opposite-sex partners; however, the average effect size across all studies accounted for less than five percent of the variance in disclosure behavior. Furthermore, sex differences appear to be moderated by the measure of disclosure. For example, larger sex differences were found for perceptions of a partner's self-disclosure, as compared to self-reports and observational ratings of self-disclosure (Dindia 2000).

### **SEX DIFFERENCES IN RELATIONAL MAINTENANCE**

*Relational maintenance behaviors* refer to ongoing actions and activities undertaken to keep one's personal relationships as one wants them to be (→ Relational Maintenance). Various maintenance strategies have been examined, but five common strategies are *positivity* (being upbeat and spontaneous), *openness* (discussing one's goals and relational agreements), *assurances* (stressing one's love and commitment), *social networks* (involving friends and family), and *sharing tasks* (doing one's fair share of the work). Several studies have found that women report using more openness and sharing tasks to maintain their close involvements than do men, and some research indicates that men are more likely to rely on positivity and assurances (Canary & Wahba 2006). Overall, however, a slight tendency



exists for women to engage in maintenance actions more than do men. Moreover, women's maintenance behaviors appear to affect both partners' relational quality more powerfully than do men's maintenance behaviors.

Equity theory concerns how fairly people treat each other and offers one explanation for the use of maintenance behaviors. People who are fairly treated tend to engage in behaviors to sustain their personal relationships to a greater extent than do people who are under-benefited or over-benefited (→ Social Exchange). Importantly, women's assessments of fairness are more salient than men's when predicting whether either person will engage in maintenance behaviors; that is, women's reports of how fair the relationship is tend to offer a more robust predictor of whether both partners use maintenance behaviors (Canary & Wahba 2006).

### **SEX DIFFERENCES IN CONFLICT COMMUNICATION**

Research involving conflict in personal relationships does not support the widely held stereotype of men as assertive animals and women as passive caregivers (→ Interpersonal Conflict). Rather, in contexts where they have familiar footing, women appear to be equally or more assertive and confronting than are men. Assertive behaviors include such tactics as attempts to discuss the problem, identifying causes for the conflict, self-disclosure, and so forth. Confronting, assertive behaviors include showing anger, blaming the partner, and putting down the partner. Men tend to engage in more avoidance tactics, including withdrawing from the situation and denying the problem.

Various explanations have been offered as to why women are more confronting than men (Canary & Emmers-Sommer 1997). One explanation focuses on how boys and girls tend to segregate into groups in the playground, with boys involved in team sports that rely on clearly defined rules of the game and girls engaged in less structured games that focus on relational interaction in lieu of scoring points. Because, on this view, girls develop their conflict negotiation skills whereas boys do not, women tend to want to discuss relational issues and details and men prefer to avoid them. An alternative explanation is that because women are less benefited in conjugal relationships with men, women have more to complain about (e.g., the division of household labor is often unfair to women). Unfairly treated women attempt to change the status quo that men defend through avoidance. A third explanation resides in how men tend to be very sensitive to their own physiological reactions to conflict and withdraw as the result of trying to retain self-control. Women, however, tend to ignore physiological reactions in their focus on attempts to solve relational problems.

### **SEX DIFFERENCES IN SUPPORTIVE COMMUNICATION**

*Supportive behaviors* occur when people enact communication to provide or to seek help (→ Comforting Communication; Social Support in Interpersonal Communication). Research has revealed sex differences in men's and women's supportive behavior, although men and women are more similar than different regarding supportive communication (Burlison & Kunkel 2006). Generally speaking, women are more likely than men to seek and provide emotional support (e.g., expressions of sympathy), attend to the other's

feelings, and engage in more highly person-centered (HPC) comforting messages (Burlleson & Kunkel 2006). Person-centered messages reveal an awareness of the various forces that impact the other individual. HPC comforting messages legitimize the other's feelings, whereas low person-centered (LPC) comforting messages criticize and deny the legitimacy of the other's feelings. A message's level of person-centeredness is a common criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of comforting messages. Both sexes report that HPC comforting messages are more feminine, sensitive, and effective than LPC comforting messages; however, studies have consistently reported that women view HPC messages somewhat *more* favorably and LPC comforting messages somewhat *less* favorably than do men.

Regarding partners' communication skills, both sexes report that relational partners' expressive skills are more important than their instrumental skills (e.g., advice-giving). Women tend to value expressive skills and men tend to value instrumental skills. Moreover, women rate the importance of pursuing emotion-focused goals in supportive situations slightly higher than men do, and evidence clearly indicates that both sexes prefer to discuss problems with, and seek and receive support from, women.

Scholars have examined sex differences in supportive communication using several theoretical frameworks (e.g., evolutionary, social role, skill specialization). Perhaps most central and controversial to the study of supportive communication is the different cultures thesis (DCT), which argues that men and women value relational features differently (e.g., instrumental or relational goals), and have distinctive speech communities that engage in cross-cultural communication (Tannen 1990). Opponents of the DCT indict its failure to account for sex similarities and argue that other theories, including social role theory and the skill specialization model, can account for sex differences in supportive behavior that are predicted by the DCT (e.g., Burlleson & Kunkel 2006).

## **SEX DIFFERENCES IN NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR**

Performing a meta-analysis of nonverbal behavior, Hall (2006) found that women display more nonverbal sensitivity and smiling than do men. That is, women tend to be more capable than men at reading cognitive and affective meanings conveyed nonverbally. This effect is largely due to women's superior reading of facial expressions but not vocal or postural variations. In a related manner, Andersen's (2006) review of the literature also pointed to women's ability to decode nonverbal meaning. In addition, Andersen found that men can decipher spatial nonverbal behaviors and mapping better than can women. For instance, men appear to be more capable at navigation and rotating three-dimensional objects mentally. And men appear to be more dominant when it comes to defining interpersonal distances used during interaction.

Explanations for nonverbal differences between men and women have relied on social as well as biological theories (→ Gestures and Kinesics). Social role theory (Eagly 1987) proposes that the division of labor has led to differences in how men and women relate to other people. Being the primary caretakers of the home and family, women tend to adopt a less assertive role in society and become relationally adept. On the other hand, men focus more on instrumental gains and take a less communal approach to other people. An alternative theoretic explanation derives from evolutionary theory, which posits that

men's larger size required them to hunt and to battle competitors (Andersen 2006). Due to their ability to breast-feed and to their smaller size, women remained at home and took care of children as well as injured warriors, which involved learning how to ascertain the meaning of nonverbal messages. And a combination of social role theory and evolutionary theory has been offered (Wood & Eagly 2002).

Sex differences certainly exist, but where and when they occur needs to be theoretically explained and not simply presumed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Social Exchange ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication

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# Interpersonal Conflict

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Interpersonal conflict occurs when individuals perceive their own self-interest to be incompatible with another person's interest, and the other person's actions undermine the achievement of self-interest. Such incompatibilities are commonplace in all kinds of interpersonal relationships, including those among friends, romantic partners, family members, and co-workers. Ironically, the opportunities for conflict are greatest in relationships characterized by interdependency and intimate exchange, such as marriage. It is through communication that conflicts are recognized, expressed, and managed.

## ISSUES AND SOURCES OF INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

Numerous *sources of perceived incompatibility* can trigger interpersonal conflict. Sometimes one person's goal clashes with another's (→ Goals, Social Aspects of). Other times parties disagree about the means to achieve a common goal, or they mistakenly perceive incompatibility due to miscommunication or lack of communication. Conflicts often emerge when behavior violates expectations (→ Expectancy Violation) or runs contrary to social or relational rules (→ Communication: Relationship Rules). Under such circumstances, one person perceives another's behavior as annoying, inappropriate, interfering, offensive, or otherwise dispreferred.

Conflict issues can be inferred and expressed at various *levels of abstraction* (Braiker & Kelley 1979). At the most concrete level, conflicts stem from particular behaviors. These can range in seriousness from a one-time trivial irritation, to a cumulatively annoying habit, to a serious relational transgression. Meta-conflict occurs when disagreement pertains to the manner in which conflict is enacted (e.g., "I don't like it when you yell at me when we discuss our differences"). More abstractly, conflicts can reflect broader relationship issues such as power, intimacy, privacy, respect, trust, and commitment. Conflicts can also be about disagreeable personality traits. Conflicts about relationship issues and personality tend to be more serious and more difficult to resolve than conflicts about particular behaviors. One study found, for example, that the frequency of conflict regarding issues of power and trust was associated with relational dissatisfaction (Kurdek 1994).

A particular episode of conflict can revolve around multiple and sometimes complex issues, although they may not all be expressed. One person's complaint about another's particular behavior (e.g., failing to do laundry) might reflect a *hidden agenda*; that is, an unexpressed dissatisfaction regarding a broader relationship issue such as power or intimacy (e.g., who has more control in the relationship). Occasionally the source of conflict is not about the incompatibility that is expressed. In such cases the confrontational person creates a conflict to vent latent (and perhaps subconscious) dissatisfaction unrelated to the expressed conflict. For instance, a friend may criticize a companion's behavior, but the real source of discontent is a bad mood due to a stressful day at work.

## DIMENSIONS OF INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT BEHAVIOR

One common distinction used to characterize conflict behavior is its constructive versus destructive nature (Deutsch 1973). *Constructive conflict* conveys neutral or positive affect, assumes a collaborative orientation, and tends to be relationship preserving. Constructive conflict is reflected in behaviors that focus on problem solving, show respect, save face, share information, and validate each person's worth. *Destructive conflict*, on the other hand, conveys negative affect, assumes a competitive orientation, and tends to be relationship undermining. Behaviors that demean, ridicule, attack, and coerce are typically destructive (→ Verbal Aggressiveness). For example, Gottman (1994) identified a common destructive pattern of behavior in marital conflicts (→ Marital Communication). He found that distressed marital couples, compared to nondistressed couples, engage in personal criticism, which elicits contempt, characterized by bitter scorn and disdain. Contempt, in turn, leads to defensiveness marked by a whining tone, making excuses, and denying responsibility for untoward behavior. This can lead to stonewalling, which conveys smugness, icy distance, and unwillingness to participate in the conflict. When these behaviors become habitual and reciprocated, they undermine relationship satisfaction and are highly predictive of eventual divorce (→ Relational Termination).

Although negative conflict behaviors undermine interpersonal relationships, particularly when they entail the reciprocation of negative affect, there is also evidence that positive behaviors play a role in preserving relationships. Nondistressed married couples, regardless of whether they exhibited a high or low frequency of disagreements, tended to enact five positive behaviors for every one negative behavior during conflict interactions. Among distressed couples the ratio of positive to negative behaviors was roughly one-to-one (Gottman 1994). Partners prevent conflict interactions from escalating into chains of reciprocating negative behavior through *accommodation* (Rusbult et al. 1991). When a negative pattern of behavior emerges, one partner accommodates by resisting the impulse to respond destructively and makes an effort to put the discussion back on a constructive course. In addition, the negative effects of recurring serial conflicts are mitigated when partners provide reassurance by conveying relationally confirming messages (Johnson & Roloff 2000). Aside from the satisfaction that positive behaviors engender, they also help nullify the adverse relational consequences of negative behaviors.

When individuals perceive a conflict, they can choose either to confront the issue or avoid it. Although confrontation is most commonly associated with the occurrence of conflict, it is also common for individuals to avoid the expression of disagreements. In particular, people withhold their dissatisfactions when the issue is relatively trivial, when they see little hope of resolving the conflict, or when they feel that confrontation will yield irreparable damage to the relationship. The manifestations of conflict avoidance are varied, and include withholding complaints, deflecting another's attempt to confront, giving in to another's demands, repeatedly dodging a sensitive subject, and withdrawing from interaction.

Neither confrontation nor avoidance of conflict is always constructive or destructive. Effective confrontation can yield a host of positive consequences. These include promoting desired change, finding fair and creative solutions to problems, creating opportunities for mutual gain, defusing negative arousal, attaining mutual understanding, and developing

solidarity and a mutual sense of accomplishment. When confrontation goes awry, it can lead to polarization, stalemate, relationship damage, enmity, and even physical violence. Thus, strategic avoidance of some conflicts is necessary for interpersonal relationships to develop and be maintained (→ Relational Maintenance; Relationship Development). However, systematically withholding complaints is damaging to relationships when the avoided issues are important, recurring, and foster growing feelings of resentment.

One commonly studied pattern of conflict behavior, the *demand–withdraw sequence*, involves a dyadic combination of both confrontation and avoidance behaviors. During episodes of demand–withdraw, one person issues criticism and pushes to gain compliance while the other person resists confrontation and attempts to avoid the issue. Either demanding or withdrawing can initiate the sequence; demanding can lead to withdrawing, but withdrawing can also lead to demanding. Research indicates that chronic demand–withdraw patterns are often, but not always, associated with relationship dissatisfaction and dissolution (e.g., Caughlin & Huston 2002).

### FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE HOW PEOPLE RESPOND TO CONFLICT

People's beliefs about conflict in general can influence their orientation toward it. Some individuals, for example, regard conflict as negative. They believe that disagreement is destructive and confrontation should be avoided. Individuals with such beliefs respond to interpersonal conflicts in ways that damage their relationships, and they experience lower relational satisfaction compared to those who do not endorse these beliefs.

Individuals possess *mental schemas* that shape their expectations for how different types of relationships ought to operate (→ Relational Schemas; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction). These schemas guide how individuals behave in their relationships, including how they manage conflict. For example, Fitzpatrick (1988a) demonstrated that there are different types of marriages, and different couple types possess different expectations about how to manage conflict (→ Marital Typologies; Fitzpatrick 1988b). *Traditionals*, who possess a conventional ideology of marriage and value closeness and interdependence, engage in overt conflict on particularly important issues, and exhibit less negativity in confrontations compared to other couple types. *Independents* hold an unconventional ideology of marriage and value both autonomy and interdependence in their marriage. They prefer to resolve disagreements through overt confrontation. *Separates* hold a conventional ideology of marriage and value autonomy over interdependence in marriage. Consequently, they prefer to avoid confrontation. Research regarding the role of schemas in conflict has been largely confined to marital relationships. Future inquiry should reveal how schemas in other kinds of interpersonal relationships (e.g., between friends, co-workers) influence conflict tendencies.

Relationship climate tends to foster a self-fulfilling character to conflicts. Satisfying relationships are marked by constructive management of conflict, which perpetuates the stability of the relationship. This is partly attributable to the tendency to possess positive illusions about one's partner (Holmes & Murray 1996). When the overall relational frame is positive, individuals idealize characteristics of their partner and downplay their faults by interpreting them in optimistic and trusting ways. These perceptual tendencies naturally militate against destructive conflict tendencies. In similar fashion, relationships

that are troubled are more likely to exhibit destructive behaviors and reciprocity of negative acts and negative affect. Such relationships lack the benevolent and optimistic appraisals that preserve relationships by diminishing the likelihood and intensity of negative perceptions and behaviors.

The causal and responsibility attributions one makes about another's conflict behaviors exert a particularly potent influence on how one responds to that behavior (→ Attribution Processes; Bradbury & Fincham 1990). Compared to individuals in stable and satisfying relationships, individuals in distressed or troubled relationships are more likely to view their partner's conflict behavior as global rather than confined to a single issue, stable rather than fleeting, and personality-driven rather than context-driven. Moreover, they perceive their partner's conflict behavior as intentional, blameworthy, and selfishly motivated. These chronic interpretations foster defensive, hostile, and otherwise destructive responses, which in turn, further erode relationship satisfaction and stability.

*Personality* also exerts an influence on how one responds to conflict. Individuals can manifest a conflict *style* that transcends situations and relationships. Some people behave in ways that are dispositionally competitive, cooperative, or avoidant. Agreeable individuals tend to enact constructive conflict behaviors whereas neurotic individuals tend to enact destructive conflict behaviors. Individuals who are characterized as verbally aggressive tend to engage in personal attacks, teasing, ridicule, and insults more than their less aggressive counterparts (→ Verbal Aggressiveness). Some people are thin-skinned and predisposed to take conflict personally. Because they feel persecuted, threatened, and hurt by interpersonal conflict, they avoid it (Hample 1999).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Communication: Relationship Rules ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Marital Typologies ▶ Negotiation and Bargaining ▶ Organizational Conflict ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relational Schemas ▶ Relational Termination ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Verbal Aggressiveness

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## Interpretive Journalism

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Interpretive (or interpretative) journalism goes beyond the basic facts of an event or topic to provide context, analysis, and possible consequences. Interpretive journalists must have unusual familiarity with and understanding of a subject, and their work involves looking for patterns, motives, and influences that explain what they are reporting (Keller 1997).

For 150 years, interpretive journalism has waxed and waned, but levels of interpretation have generally risen since the beginning of the twentieth century, at least in US journalism (Barnhurst & Mutz 1997; → Journalism, History of). In other countries where news work developed primarily as a literary occupation, interpretation began and remained at the forefront. In Latin America, southern Europe, Africa, and elsewhere, the main content occupying key positions in newspapers, for example, is always interpretive rather than straight → news, which journalists in these regions consider mere chronicles.

Interpretive journalism overlaps with other forms of reporting (→ Investigative Reporting; Advocacy Journalism), in which journalists themselves, after interviews and reviews of



documents and data, assert who committed wrong or what caused failure. As in explanatory or narrative journalism (→ Narrative News Story), reporters make judgments regarding the most reliable sources and most trustworthy information.

Newspapers in the nineteenth century engaged in an early form of interpretive journalism by explaining events according to the ideology of an affiliated political party (→ Partisan Press; Party-Press Parallelism). A modern form of interpretive journalism began once the press became industrialized and independent of party control. During the muckraker era in the United States, for instance, reporters exposed unethical government and business practices and assigned blame for corruption (→ Muckraking). At the same time, the push to report facts without comment advanced within some newspapers and through wire services (→ Objectivity in Reporting; News Agencies; News Agencies, History of).

Journalists challenged the ideal of → neutrality and argued that the informational model did not provide citizens with an understanding of events such as World War I. Day-to-day journalism especially gave descriptive accounts that lacked context. So newspaper journalists began to incorporate original research into stories and express a point of view about events. The journalist → Walter Lippmann in 1920 urged reporters in *Liberty and the news* (Lippmann 2007) to base their work on facts combined with analysis. Journalism professor Curtis D. MacDougall encapsulated those concepts in his 1937 textbook *Interpretative reporting* (1987). He proposed that journalists explain what events mean and approach reporting aware of their biases, while offering a balanced viewpoint.

Some politicians criticized journalism that provided interpretation, saying that trivia, entertainment, and → commentary were replacing substance in reporting. By the 1950s, objectivity had come back into fashion in the United States and left unchallenged political demagogues, such as Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, who made false allegations against citizens. The lack of substantial questioning by the press led, in turn, to greater resistance to journalists acting as mere stenographers who hold up a mirror to events.

By the 1960s, interpretive journalism had moved toward personal and literary styles (→ New Journalism), so that the ideal of the detached bystander gave way to acknowledging journalists as participants in events. Investigation and advocacy then re-energized in the United States and Europe through the late 1960s and the 1970s.

During the US civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, traditional reporting of official statements without background served to promulgate misinformation, and journalists adopted an independent model of interpreting news, conducting adversarial interviews to challenge authority. The trend culminated in the investigative reporting that brought down the Nixon administration (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media; Watergate Scandal). In subsequent years, particularly the 1980s, investigative reporters became more assertive and bolstered their interpretations by analyzing large databases (→ Precision Journalism).

Critics say interpretive journalism permits baseless comment and bias (→ Bias in the News), but journalists internationally may bring a strong point of view and stated politics to their work. For example, journalists in Nigeria and other African countries intersperse commentary and opinion throughout news articles. In western Europe, objectivity was never a central professional value, and German journalists in particular have seen opinion as superior to news (Donsbach & Klett 1993). Award-winning British reporter Robert Fisk urged journalists not to hesitate about expressing opinions in writing or challenging

government officials' assertions. Yet, in some cases, overstatements and fabrications by reporters or literary journalists have undercut interpretive journalism (→ Journalists, Credibility of). The reluctance of corporate media to offend the public also pressures reporters to limit interpretation in regular coverage (→ Commercialization of the Media; Commercialization: Impact on Media Content).

Commentary in broadcast news increased significantly toward the end of the twentieth century, especially for politics (→ Americanization of the Media). Echoing earlier complaints, media critics say the trend and journalists' negativity have exacerbated public skepticism. Surveys show that broadcast journalists in commercial media systems worldwide may spend more airtime analyzing a politician's comments than on giving the comments themselves, and growing negative coverage of political candidates has made voters cynical (Patterson 2002; → Negativity).

Today, leading journalists say the public will need more interpretive journalism because the → Internet offers complex information and unsupported opinion (→ Internet News; Citizen Journalism). Journalists suggest they can best sift through, organize, and present information understandably by offering factually backed judgments. Questions about impartiality will continue to dog interpretive journalists. Some media observers suggest that objectivity and impartiality will become more important as journalism globalizes, but journalists should pursue impartial reporting while recognizing their own cultural biases (→ Globalization of the Media).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ Commentary ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Performance ▶ Muckraking ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ Negativity ▶ Neutrality ▶ New Journalism ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Watergate Scandal

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# Interview

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The term “interview” allows for several definitions. In this entry, all forms of the socio-scientific interview – also called → survey – are dealt with. The interview – along with content analysis and observation – is one of the three basic empirical instruments of data collection. It is defined as a planned and systematic situation in which knowledge is gained by human subjects. The aim is to generate individual answers, which in their entirety lead to the clarification of a (scientific) question. This method has been in use since the end of the eighteenth century. Significant impulses for its establishment and development in the field of mass communication were set by several mainly sociological studies. These were conducted in both scientific (by a group around → Paul F. Lazarsfeld) and applied (by George Gallup; → Election Surveys) contexts. Socio-scientific interviews are conducted to elicit subjective evaluations, judgments, attitudes or interpretations of an issue. Interviews are also conducted to measure both cognitive contents and behavior that cannot be observed. In mass communication, interviews are central to measuring the process, evaluating, and studying the effects of mass media use (→ Media Effects), as well as to examine the state and trend of → public opinion.

The interview’s basic idea is to give respondents the opportunity to express their personal views. In principle, this method is comparable to everyday communication. In an interview, however, this communication follows certain defined rules. Using specific linguistic stimuli, the respondents are motivated to react in a specific way (stimulus–response approach) – either in their own words or by using multiple-choice answers. The ruling principle is to measure communication by communication. This is at the same time the great strength and the great weakness of the method: the interview’s strength lies in its ability to measure a person’s mental state; its weakness is the respondent’s reactivity, which is caused by the communicative situation and the interaction between interviewer and respondent. An interview has two prerequisites: first, respondents must be articulate; second, they must be able and willing to provide information on the subject in question. Thus, they have to be conscious of their answers, or at least become conscious of them during the interview.

## THE SITUATION OF THE INTERVIEW

It is the social situation of the interview that sets this method apart from other forms of data collection. Interviewer and interviewee meet – either in person or via the telephone – in a seemingly everyday situation. The interaction, however, is not the same as in a normal conversation, where social roles are usually not so clear-cut. As opposed to natural social situations, it is necessary to avoid establishing social standards that create conformity. This, however, is hardly possible because besides the actual question – which

is considered the stimulus – several other parameters of the situation (e.g., mood, atmosphere etc.) can exert significant side-effects. Every question initiates a cognitive process in the interviewee that leads to an answer. More often than not, this process is related to certain personal assessments or judgments. Thus, instead of simply recalling attributes (i.e., reacting to the stimulus), the respondent acts according to the situation. That means the respondent perceives the parameters of the situation, rates them according to perceived possible consequences and expectations, and finally chooses the reaction that – in his or her opinion – best serves the goals.

Depending on the subject in question, specific situational parameters can have a “distorting” effect. Such a bias may stem from the interviewer or the respondent. An answer is described as biased when it is influenced by such a parameter and not just by the respondent’s attitude. Biasing attributes – the so-called interviewer effect – can have various forms. They may be apparent: such as the age, gender, education and profession, and ethnic or religious affiliation of the interviewer. Psychosocial attributes, however, can be of influence as well – the expectations and attitudes of the interviewer, for instance. In addition, the conduct of the interview itself, including verbal conditioning, eye contact, body language, and gestures, may have influence. To minimize such effects interviewers must be thoroughly trained. Some authors suggest that interviewers should be matched closely to respondents in vital personal characteristics wherever possible. As far as the respondents are concerned, particularities of the real situation – such as the presence of a third person – have effects on the answering behavior. Another form of bias is due to so-called response sets that are independent of any content. Most important here are acquiescence (the respondents try to give the seemingly accommodating answer) or the tendency for evasion. Another important influencing factor is the phenomenon of social desirability, which can be both person-related and situation-related. Social desirability may distort answers because of a perceived but unspoken norm (→ Social Desirability). None of these three phenomena can be avoided completely. Intelligent wording of the questionnaire, however, can at least minimize the problem.

## STANDARDIZATION OF THE INTERVIEW

There are many types of interviews. They can be distinguished on several dimensions: the degree of standardization, the number of persons interviewed at the same time, the chosen method, and the frequency of administration. With regard to standardization, one can differentiate between completely standardized, semi-standardized, and nonstandardized interviews. Thus, the roles of both interviewer and interviewee are framed by the type of interview. In the case of a completely standardized interview, the course of the interview is precisely predetermined. Both the questions and the multiple-choice answers are accurately phrased. The interviewer is obliged to follow the instructions accurately. Thus, all respondents receive the same stimulus so that their responses are based on exactly the same conditions. Attempts are made to control or eliminate any factors that might influence the responses, such as unwanted additional stimuli from the interviewer, or changes during the communication situation caused by the presence of a third person or similar (→ Interview, Standardized).

Semi-standardized or semi-structured interviews are often called guided interviews or, because they are often conducted by experts, expert interviews. This type of interview is

less well defined. The course of the interview is planned, but the interviewer is not bound to follow it strictly. The basic questions are written down beforehand, but only to remind the interviewer to raise the topics. He or she can decide upon the question order and the wording – just as the situation and the interviewee demand. Thus, he or she is able to adapt to the situation whenever necessary. At the same time, the respondents have ample scope to develop their answers and to contribute to the interview situation – and the research question. The advantage is that such an interview leaves room for spontaneity, unforeseen notions, subjective wording, and the individual behavior of the respondents. Despite the increased scope they allow, semi-structured interviews are comparable to one another. Non-standardized interviews are not structured at all and more closely resemble a “normal conversation” than other types of interviews. Only the essential subject is defined beforehand. The course and content are dependent on the situation and on the persons participating in the interview (→ Interview, Qualitative).

These three basic forms of interview can be conducted in different situations and in different ways. In principle, all forms can be used for individual as well as for group interviews. The standardized group interview, however, is restricted to filling out a standardized questionnaire. It is important to note that the social situation is different when an interview is conducted in a group situation. In addition to the relationship between interviewer and interviewee, interactions among group members can influence the situation dramatically. In principle, the same interview can be conducted only once with each respondent (cf. the problem of reactance of the respondents and its effects on the → reliability). Therefore, most interviews are conducted as one-time cross-sectional surveys. Nevertheless, some issues, particularly those on development and diversification, require repeated measurement. There are two basic approaches: (1) repeated interview on the same subject with different respondents (trend or tracking study) and (2) repeated interview of the same respondents at different times, which is called a panel (→ Longitudinal Analysis).

## **INTERVIEW MODES**

The traditional form is the oral interview conducted personally face-to-face. Depending on the research goal and the interviewees, other forms of communication are possible: via telephone or in a written form. Within these types of interview, there are different alternatives, particularly because of the increasing use of computers and the Internet (online interview). The choice of method depends first and foremost on the kind of information required and on the subject. The degree of standardization also plays an important role. The higher the degree, the simpler is the use of supplementary media such as paper, telephone or computers. Whereas guided interviews can also be conducted via telephone, this channel does not apply to open qualitative interviews. The choice of method is also determined by the budget, the time schedule of the study, and the information relevant to choosing the sample. In a face-to-face interview, the interviewer and respondent face each other. The interviewer asks the questions and records the respondent's answers. Thus, in a personal interview the social situation has the strongest effect. Face-to-face interviews offer a wide range of possibilities. The social presence allows for complex questions and those requiring mutual trust. Apart from linguistic stimuli, the interviewer is able to present nonverbal, visual, and optical stimuli (e.g., lists, brands, logos,

products, objects or other supporting material). At the same time, however, the interviewer is particularly responsible for the correct conduct of the interview. It is difficult to control the interview situation from outside; this involves both the presentation of questions and the logging of answers. Measures to secure the quality of the sample – particularly relevant in quantitative surveys – are also highly dependent on the interviewer.

In recent years, the computer has become increasingly important for conducting surveys, mostly for quantitative interviews. If computers replace paper and pencil questionnaire in personal interviews, the technique is called Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). Normally, in a CAPI interview the respondents do not sit in front of a computer monitor, but the interviewer enters the answers for them on a keyboard (usually a laptop or hand-held computer). Some answers, however, can be keyed in by the respondents themselves to ensure privacy. The use of computers in a face-to-face situation offers both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are the technical processing of the questionnaire and the accurate presentation of the questions. The disadvantages are a consequence of the medium itself – the possibility of technical failure, and the presence of the technical device itself altering the communication situation. In telephone interviews, interviewer and respondent talk to each other on the phone. Interviewers can fill out paper questionnaires or the interview can be conducted as a “Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview” (CATI). As telephone interviews are conducted swiftly, they are mainly used to measure spontaneous reactions to current events, to represent a current public opinion or a trend in the population. The telephone can also be used for expert interviews, particularly to facilitate recruitment and appointment. Apart from these aspects, the main advantages of the telephone are the speed of data collection and the low costs. A disadvantage, however, is that it is not possible to use any stimuli other than linguistic ones. Complexity as well as questionnaire length has to be adapted to the interview situation. Thus, the range of application is somewhat limited. In the case of international comparative studies, it has to be considered that in many countries outside the western world, telephone penetration is far from 100 percent.

The self-administered questionnaire differs most from personal and telephone interviews by the absence of an interviewer. The social situation is thus completely different, defined only by the respondents and their social environment. That means that the use of written interviews depends on the literacy of the country in which the interview is conducted. The questionnaire, together with a cover letter, can either be sent via mail to a sample of respondents or it can be delivered to them in person. In the case of an audience survey at a public event, interviewers may also hand over questionnaires directly to potential respondents. It is also possible to insert a questionnaire in a journal (reader survey) or leave it in a public place for people to take away (e.g., for visitors’ surveys). If completion of the questionnaire has to be “controlled,” it can be distributed to individuals or groups in a “classroom survey,” and respondents complete the questionnaire in the presence of a supervisor. A special type of interview is the survey via the Internet, the so-called online survey. The questions are presented online – i.e., on the world wide web or via email. This demands, however, that the respondents are familiar with the technique and that they have easy access to it. Written presentation can only be used in standardized or semi-standardized surveys. In answering the questions, the respondents are left to their own devices. They decide on the time and order of completion. Questions measuring spontaneous

reactions cannot be used here whereas questions demanding longer contemplation or even research of cognitive contents or facts work quite well. At the same time, though, the respondents' high self-determination is a disadvantage of the written interview. Self-selection of the respondents, i.e., the decision to participate, happens without any further personal persuasion to cooperate. The high level of nonresponse threatens the sample quality.

Additionally, some specific types of interviews have been established in media and communication research. A → Delphi study is a specific form of group communication with experts to predict particular circumstances. With the help of a (usually standardized) Delphi questionnaire, selected experts interact with each other anonymously. The goal of a Delphi survey is to jointly develop answers to specific problems by a repeated exchange of the results achieved. Mostly the aims are prognoses about the future (of communication, for example). A central difficulty of surveys in communication and media research is that they are mostly conducted independently of the actual media use in question. Usually, the respondents are interviewed after watching television or reading a newspaper, which demands a high ability to remember and to generalize. This is a problem because media use often takes place in low-involvement situations. Therefore, respondents may have difficulty reproducing their attitudes, behavior, motives or even emotional states with validity. Diaries can be used to solve this problem. A diary study is a written form of survey, which records the daily (media) behavior. The advantage of this method is that the respondents are only dependent on their short-term memory. The comparatively high effort necessary for this time-consuming method – for both the researcher and the respondents – is problematic, however. To avoid problems of retrospective measurement, the “Experience Sampling Method” (ESM) can be applied. The ESM requires the repeated application of a written questionnaire. Respondents are reminded (via telephone or SMS). The times of measurement are predetermined and chosen at random. Unlike the diary method, ESM mostly analyzes the quality of media use and tries to relate this to personal characteristics and/or situations.

### **SAMPLING AND METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS**

Almost without exception, all quantitative (and to a lesser degree, qualitative) surveys are conducted with samples. Thus, the quality of a survey is also highly dependent on the sampling method. Determination of the → reliability and → validity of an interview are problematic in principle, due to the high reactivity of this survey method. That means that the instrument has influence on the measured object, which is in consequence modified. It is impossible to conduct the same interview with the same respondents without the first interview influencing the second. Also, processing and problems of comprehension of the respondents influence the validity of the measurement. These problems cannot be solved – but they can be addressed with the use of high-quality interviews or by conducting → meta-analyses.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Delphi Studies ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Reliability ▶ Research Methods ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Survey ▶ Validity

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## **Interview as Journalistic Form**

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Within journalism, the interview is traditionally known as a tool for gathering story material (→ News Sources), but it is also a finished news product in its own right, a basic form journalists use to package → news for public consumption. This mode of news presentation was marginal in the newspaper era, when verbatim interviews only occasionally appeared in print, but has become more prominent since the advent of broadcasting and the emergence of public affairs programs organized around live or taped interviews. In moving from the backstage to the frontstage of journalistic practice, the interview has become a key component of the public face that journalism presents to the world.

The journalistic or “news interview” is a familiar and readily recognizable genre of broadcast programming. Its basis in comparatively spontaneous interaction distinguishes it from the fully scripted narratives and stories characteristic of traditional news programs. The news interview also differs from other interaction-based genres of → broadcast talk (such as celebrity talk shows or panel discussions) in its distinctive mix of participants, subject matter, and interactional form (→ Interaction). In a prototypical news interview, the interviewer is known as a professional journalist rather than a partisan advocate or celebrity entertainer (→ Advocacy Journalism; Celebrity Journalists). Interviewees are public officials, experts, or others whose actions or opinions are newsworthy (→ News Values). The discussion normally focuses on current events, is relatively formal in character, and progresses primarily through questions and answers. Close relatives of the news interview include the partisan interview, the celebrity interview, and the news conference.

### **ORIGINS AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION**

The news interview brings together representatives from two important social institutions – journalism and politics – and the history of the news interview intertwines with the co-evolution of these institutions (→ Journalism, History of).



Although it now seems natural for journalists to interview elected officials, political candidates, and other public figures (→ Political Journalists), it has not always been so. Interviewing for the record was virtually nonexistent in most societies prior to the mid-nineteenth century. In the United States, for instance, institutions of national government only gradually became publicly accessible, and even as the House of Representatives and later the Senate granted journalists access, verbatim quotations were normally prohibited. The aloofness of government officials was matched by the disinterest of most journalists. Newspapers during this period were financed by political parties and were vehicles for editorial opinion rather than reportage (→ Partisan Press).

The practice of interviewing began with the rise of the American → penny press in the 1830s, the first papers to devote themselves primarily to “news rather than views” and to employ reporters devoted to the task of news gathering. But published interviews with public figures did not become common journalistic practice until the late nineteenth century. This new form of journalism first expanded rapidly in the United States, and then more slowly in England and other western European countries, in part at the prompting of American journalists in Europe. This expansion did not occur without controversy; interviewing was frequently attacked as an artificial and unduly intrusive journalistic practice (Schudson 1994).

Although these criticisms would not disappear entirely, the news interview became more accepted as a journalistic practice in the early decades of the twentieth century. This development roughly coincides with the growing stature of journalism (→ Professionalization of Journalism), and the shift within government from backstage intra-governmental negotiations to → public relations as tools of governance. Accordingly, the three US presidents most responsible for institutionalizing the presidential press conference – Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Roosevelt – were all progressive reformers with ambitious political agendas, aiming to build public support for their policies. The advent of television made news interviews more prominent, as regular news programs became devoted to the questioning of public figures. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, news interviews and news conferences expanded in the emerging democracies of eastern Europe.

In short, what was once considered extraordinary has become standard practice across a range of democratic societies. Just as journalists once faced criticism for questioning public officials, now public officials face criticism if they fail to make themselves sufficiently accessible to journalistic interrogation. This development has, in turn, displaced the traditional story form of news (→ News Story), yielded a new generation of reporters and politicians skilled at asking and answering – or at least responding to – questions, and made individual journalists into celebrities.

## CONTEMPORARY NORMS AND PRACTICES

The news interview is not merely a reflection of journalistic and political institutions; it is also a *social institution in its own right*. A complex matrix of norms and conventions govern conduct within the news interview (→ News Routines), largely organized around the roles of interviewer and interviewee (Clayman and Heritage 2002a).

The most fundamental and pervasive characteristic of news interview interaction is that it unfolds as a series of questions and answers. This empirical regularity typifies news interview talk and is also a social norm that participants are obliged to uphold. The question–answer framework may seem obvious, but its very obviousness constitutes the news interview as a recognizably distinct form of interaction. Underlying this normative framework is a far less obvious substrate of practices necessary to produce interaction in manifest compliance with the question–answer norm. These practices include the systematic avoidance of acknowledgment tokens and other responsive behaviors (such as “Uh huh,” “Yeah,” “Right,” “Oh,” or “Really”), which pervade ordinary conversation but become incongruous in a context where the parties are supposed to restrict themselves to questioning and answering. Interview participants usually take for granted both the question–answer norm and the practices that underlie it, but they may become more fully conscious of the ground rules at contentious moments, at times appealing to such rules as a means of complaint or self-defense.

In building questions, interviewers are sensitive to two further journalistic norms that are difficult to reconcile. On the one hand, they are supposed to remain formally neutral in their conduct (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Absolute neutrality is an unattainable ideal, but interviewers do strive to maintain a neutral posture by restricting themselves to the action of questioning, avoiding overt forms of agreement and disagreement, and avoiding flat assertions except as prefaces to a question or as attributed to a third party.

On the other hand, interviewers are supposed to be adversarial and should not allow public figures to use the interview as a personal soapbox (→ Fourth Estate). Interviewers pursue the adversarial ideal in part through the content of their questions, raising alternative viewpoints and subjecting interviewees’ previous responses to challenge. They also pursue this ideal through the underlying form of their questions – designing questions in ways that narrow the parameters of an acceptable response, tilting questions in favor of one particular response over others, and encoding presuppositions that are difficult for the interviewee to counter or refute. Interviewers can enhance these adversarial elements by including statements before a given question. Prefatory statements are accountable as providing background information necessary to render the question intelligible to the audience, but the interviewer can mobilize them in ways that enhance control over the discussion agenda and exert pressure on recalcitrant interviewees.

The balance struck between the neutral and adversarial ideals is a signature that distinguishes individual interviewers, the news programs where they appear, and historical periods in the evolution of journalism. These ideals also balance differently during panel interviews involving multiple interviewees with divergent or partisan perspectives. The panel interview creates a division of labor that helps to reconcile the ideals of being neutral and adversarial. Partisan interviewees can play the role of adversary with one another, leaving the interviewer free to act as an impartial catalyst.

Interviewees, in responding to questions, face a different set of cross-cutting pressures. Adversarial questions create an incentive for evasive responses, encouraging interviewees to be less than forthcoming or to shift the discussion in a more desirable direction. However, the normative question–answer framework obliges interviewees to answer straightforwardly, so that failure to do so can be costly. Interviewers may counter such maneuvers with probing follow-up questions and negative sanctions; audience members

may infer that the interviewee has some ulterior motive for avoiding the question; and subsequent news coverage often singles out acts of evasion. Interviewees almost always design their evasive responses so as to minimize these consequences. They may choose to sidestep the question in an overt or explicit manner, which allows for equally explicit forms of “damage control,” the justificatory accounts and displays of deference to the interviewer. Or, when sidestepping the question covertly, they may take steps to obscure what is transpiring and thus maintain a facade of responsiveness.

### EVOLVING STYLES OF QUESTIONING

Comparative research on the news interview demonstrates that styles of questioning have changed substantially since the advent of broadcasting (→ Broadcast Journalism; Questions and Questioning). Journalists’ questions to public figures have become *less deferential and more aggressive* during this period. In US presidential news conferences, this shift is apparent not only in the growth of adversarial question content but also in formal properties that exert pressure on recipients (Clayman et al. 2006). Simple one-sentence questions have given way to increasingly complex questions with extended prefatory remarks embodying greater initiative by the journalist. Questions have also become more blunt or direct, and more assertive in their propensity to favor a particular answer. If this pattern reflects a general trend in interviewing, then journalists have come to exert greater pressure on interviewees to address inconvenient, unflattering, or incriminating topics.

The rise of more vigorous questioning appears to have developed somewhat differently in America and Britain (Clayman and Heritage 2002a). In Britain, a robust tradition of government regulation of broadcast journalism combined with the absence of competition before 1958 to foster a highly deferential style of questioning in 1950s → BBC interviews. When the BBC monopoly ended, the competition from a second channel fueled a sudden and dramatic increase in aggressive questioning. In America, where government regulation of broadcasting has been minimal and competitive pressures have been present from the outset, aggressive questioning has grown more steadily from a higher baseline. But for the case of presidential news conferences, the growth in vigor has been discontinuous. Questioning since 1968 has been substantially and consistently more aggressive than questioning in previous years, suggesting a paradigm shift in the White House press corps in response to the socio-political upheavals of the late Vietnam and Watergate era that has endured for several decades (→ Watergate Scandal).

Whatever its causes, the rise of aggressive questioning has transformed the journalistic interview into a more formidable instrument of public accountability. It is now more difficult for politicians to make purely self-serving statements in the context of a news interview. This revolution has stimulated a counter-revolution among politicians in the form of increasingly sophisticated tactics of prevarication and evasion, as well as strategic use of alternative communicative forms and media outlets (Jones 1992).

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► BBC ► Broadcast Journalism ► Broadcast Talk ► Celebrity Journalists ► Fourth Estate ► Interaction ► Interview ► Journalism, History of ► News ► News Routines ► News Sources ► News Story ► News Values

► Objectivity in Reporting ► Partisan Press ► Penny Press ► Political Journalists ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Public Relations ► Questions and Questioning ► Watergate Scandal

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## **Interview, Qualitative**

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At first sight, a scientific → interview resembles a common conversation, a qualitative interview even more so than a standardized one. Unlike a day-to-day conversation, however, such an interview takes place in an artificial situation, follows specific rules, and is conducted to reach a predefined goal. An open-ended interview can be conducted for two different reasons. It may be *explorative*, which means that it is used to gather a first understanding of a topic, a deeper insight into the relevant dimensions in question, and an idea of the terms used in describing these dimensions. An explorative interview is only the first in a series of other, usually standardized, research steps. A *qualitative* interview, on the other hand, is a method of inquiry in its own right. It is theoretically rooted in symbolic interactionism and Max Weber’s *verstehender Soziologie* (→ Symbolic Interaction; Verstehen vs Erklären). The great value of open-ended interviews lies in the fact that

respondents are allowed to tell it “their way” with a minimum of direction, thus offering their understanding of the topic in question in the context of and from their social position.

## **THE INTERVIEW SITUATION**

In an interview both participants actively construct some version of the world. Hermanns (2005) describes the interview as a stand-up “interpersonal drama” consisting of three dilemmas: first, the dilemma of vagueness: the interview has to contribute to answering the research question although its structure is and has to be quite vague; second, the dilemma of fairness: the interviewer must try to find out as much about the interviewee as possible without becoming disrespectful; and third, the dilemma of self-presentation: the situation must be as natural as possible although the interviewer is enacting a specific naïve role without disclosing his or her own self. To enact a successful drama, the interviewer has to create a situational frame by briefing the interviewee about the purpose of the interview and its rules. Furthermore, he or she must establish a rapport, creating space for the interviewee to open up and let the “drama” develop itself. As the interview situation is hardly standardized, the interviewer has to be familiar with the study’s aims and research questions. Furthermore, he or she has to be trained in the field of interviewing.

## **TYPES OF INTERVIEWS**

The rules of interviewing, noted above, vary from one type of interview to another. A fundamental difference exists between individual and group interviews.

### **Individual Interviews**

*Individual interviews* can be differentiated in terms of standardization. A classical standardized interview imposes a certain structure on the situation as it selects the theme and the topics of conversation, question order, and question wording (→ Interview, Standardized). Although qualitative interviews never follow a strict question–answer scheme, there are semi-structured and unstructured types of interviews. The former select a theme and certain topics without a strict order and specific wording. The latter do nothing like that, which leads to a more interviewee-controlled situation. All forms, however, have one thing in common: the essence of a qualitative interview is that it seeks to discover what may account for certain kinds of behavior. It seeks deeper understanding of factors, sometimes covert, that influence behavior, media use or certain attitudes. It is an intrinsically subjective technique. It cannot and does not seek to produce statistical evidence but it is able to provide unique insights into the motives and aims of a certain kind of behavior or the foundation of a specific attitude. Qualitative interviews, especially individual ones, offer the possibility of retrieving unconscious motives, attitudes, and goals. In talking, the interviewee may give himself or herself certain cues that elicit comments or statements that would not have surfaced in a standardized interview. Types of semi-structured interview are the topic-guide interview and the problem-centered interview, a mix of topic-guide questions and narrative episodes. Interviews with experts usually use a topic guide as well and can thus be subsumed under this point. Merton and

Kendall's focus interview is semi-standardized as well. As it is used as a group technique more often today, it will be discussed under that heading, below. Unstructured, open-ended interviews aim at understanding the respondent's notions and attitudes. They are also called in-depth interviews, a term that derives from clinical interviewing. There are several types of in-depth interviews. Narrative interviews, for instance, reconstruct social events as first-hand experience via storytelling. The underlying notion is that stories are rather based on actions and plots and less influenced by ex post rationalizations. Biographic interviews aim at understanding people's lives, and ethnographic interviews are usually integrated into studies of participant observation to provide so called "thick descriptions" of the complexities of everyday life.

### Group Interviews

Lunt and Livingstone (1996, 80) describe the *group interview* method briefly as bringing together a group of subjects to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator, who ensures that the topic of discussion stays in focus, while eliciting a wide range of opinions on that issue. It is important that he or she does not lead one-to-one conversations but stimulates a dialogue between the group members. The moderator's role varies depending on the research goals. He or she will intervene less if the discussion is more explorative. Usually group discussions are face-to-face-interviews. Due to technical developments, online discussions are possible as well (chats). It is important to note that a group interview is not an easy way to elicit a range of opinions from different people at the same time and, thus, a means of speeding up social research. Group dynamics will interfere with every single opinion. Group interviews should, therefore, only be conducted if the research topic in question has to do with social interaction (like notions of → public opinion). Interview groups can consist of existing social clusters that already share common experiences. Thus, the discussion is more authentic. Groups can be established specifically for the research situation. Such ad hoc groups are usually more flexible in terms of topic. They may be heterogeneous or homogeneous as regards relevant, usually socio-demographic, categories. The former may have different conversation styles, inhibiting the discussion. On the other hand, different perspectives are brought into the discussion. Interview groups usually comprise 6–10 persons and take place in a rather informal setting. The moderator has to monitor "a complex social situation, encourage contributions, and manage disruptions, diversion, and other problematic group dynamics" (Lunt & Livingstone 1996, 82). He or she usually uses a discussion schedule comparable to a topic guide in an individual interview.

Usually each group discussion is conducted once, although one can repeat meetings of the same group if necessary. One should run discussions to the point of theoretical saturation, i.e., until the last group has nothing new to add. The "right" number, therefore, depends on the topic at hand and the productiveness of the groups. The origin of group interviewing lies within the Frankfurt School and their concept of "group opinion." This opinion is said to be the product of collective interactions rather than the sum of individual beliefs. Group opinions can be made visible in a group interview situation. Two basic approaches can be distinguished. Merton (1987) coined the term "focus group" to describe a method of generating hypotheses and research questions in a

group situation. He used a focus, usually a short film or an ad, to concentrate the respondents' attention on a particular issue or topic. Focus groups, to him, offer the possibility of identifying the salient dimensions of a complex topic to complement further quantitative research (explorative approach). In the realm of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS; e.g., Morley, Willis), another understanding was established, that of "group discussions." This approach was based on the notion that meaning is created socially. The interactive nature of a group discussion makes this process both visible and understandable. The groups are representatives of real social entities such as classes, and thus share common interpretative codes that are represented within the discussions. Commonly, group discussions like this are very much open-ended and try to document the rise of certain theoretical aspects with limited interference by the moderator. The main difference between the focus group approach and the group discussion is that the latter enables the representation of results that can thus be generalized.

### **ANALYZING QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS**

The interviews, be they individual or group discussions, should be audio- or video-taped in an unobtrusive way and later transcribed. The level of detail of the transcript depends on the aim of the study, as well as on the involvement of paralinguistic features like voice tone or pauses. The transcripts are analyzed manually or by using specific software. Two ways of analyzing can be distinguished, theoretical and thematic coding (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). The latter uses a priori categories; the former works on the material to built categories (open coding; Glaser & Strauss 1967; → Grounded Theory). In both the guiding principle is the exchange between the material and the (emerging) theory in terms of a circle. The main focus varies between interpretative sensitivity and systematic coding (Lunt & Livingstone 1996). The aim is the reduction of complexity and the finding of structures. This method is rooted in Foucault's theories, and analyzes the dependence between conversational actions and social structures.

### **SAMPLING IN QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWING**

Qualitative studies usually search for the special rather than the general. Therefore sampling does not strive for representativity. As the population is usually not known beforehand, this would be a problem anyway. More relevant sampling criteria are accessibility and typicality, as the aim is not to generalize but to generate variance. Two sampling methods are used in qualitative studies: classic and theoretical sampling. The former uses an a priori matrix based on specific characteristics to choose the subjects. The latter evolves while the research is in progress based on the collected findings. A convenient and therefore frequently used way of sampling is the so-called snowball method, where one research subject gives the names of other possible participants. This method is convenient but often leads to clustered samples.

SEE ALSO: ► Coding ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Grounded Theory ► Interview  
► Interview, Standardized ► Public Opinion ► Qualitative Methodology ► Symbolic Interaction ► Verstehen vs Erklären

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## **Interview, Standardized**

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Quantitative surveys are usually comprised of standardized interviews that are conducted using a questionnaire. The term “standardization” describes the pre-determination of the course of the interviews. In a fully standardized questionnaire each respondent is presented with the same stimulus, i.e., an equal question. Therefore, the reaction (i.e., the answer) is comparable to that of another respondent. The aim of a standardized interview is to avoid disturbing factors as far as possible. Usually, however, not all bias can be eliminated, which is why one should at least try to keep it constant. In standardized quantitative surveys, this means that the wording of all questions and response items is identical for all respondents. Furthermore, the sequence of the questions is specified exactly and the social situation should be constant in every interview.

Standardization aims at comparability of results as an important prerequisite for generalization and representativity of the whole survey. Quantitative surveys are able to produce results that are considered representative for the part of the population that participated in the interview. Besides using a specific sampling technique, this is achieved by a high degree of standardization and by complying with specific criteria regarding selection, training, and control of the interviewers. In media and communication research, quantitative interviews are a central → survey instrument because representative results are often sought. Quantitative surveys are used for large samples and to make



(representative) statements about the population as a whole or specific parts of it. This, for instance, may be the case in the field of political communication (e.g., election research; → Election Polls and Forecasts; Election Surveys) as well as in reception and effects research (→ Media Effects).

### **MODE**

Several modes or methods of conduct are possible when implementing a quantitative interview. The main differentiation is the communication channel used. Quantitative interviews can be conducted orally, either in person (face-to-face interview) or via telephone. They can also be carried out in writing. All three forms may be supported by use of the computer (→ Interview). The interview situation will change significantly according to the use of the different modes.

### **INTERVIEW SITUATION**

In a standardized survey, researchers collect socio-scientific data using a highly formalized instrument. The resulting communication situation has a functional character that is strictly defined beforehand. This leads to an artificial social situation in this type of interview that differs distinctly from other kinds of everyday communication. As a rule, strangers meet in an asymmetrical communication relationship – one person asking questions, the other one providing answers. Moreover, both the situation itself and the respondent's answers are socially without consequences. Also, because of the required degree of standardization, the interviewer acts in a highly functional and formalized manner and, thus, quite unnaturally. The wording of the questions and response items is accurately defined, as is the question sequence, and the use of lists, card games (to support the answering process) and the like.

### **INTERVIEWER AND RESPONDENT**

Compared to qualitative interview forms (→ Interview, Qualitative), in a quantitative interview the interviewer has hardly any scope. This is necessary to make sure the standardization serves its purpose. To narrow the scope even more, researcher and interviewer are usually not one and the same person. Interviewers should scarcely know about the purpose of the survey so that they will not be able to influence the respondent (interviewer bias). Instead, they are restricted to the role of a professional interviewer who is able to motivate the respondents to participate and to handle the questionnaire technically well. Their purpose is to set the stimulus. The question then directly activates a multilevel cognitive process consisting of at least five steps (Schwarz & Oyserman 2001, 129). The interviewee has to (1) understand the question, (2) recall the relevant behavior, (3), make inferences and estimations concerning this behavior, (4) adapt his or her answer to fit the response format, and (5) edit the answer for reasons of social desirability. This process implies that “people know what they do and can report on their behavior with candor and accuracy, although they may not always be willing to do so” (Schwarz & Oyserman 2001, 129).

## **STEPS OF A STANDARDIZED SURVEY**

A quantitative survey is normally based on a particular research question and conducted according to a specific pattern. The question is divided into dimensions and those relevant for the study are selected. By using indicators, these dimensions are operationalized and transferred into the questionnaire. The final version of the questionnaire is subject to a pre-test and afterwards submitted to the selected sample. Subsequently, the data are transferred into a data processing program and statistically analyzed.

Each of these steps is prone to error and has to be conducted meticulously to guarantee methodological quality. The → operationalization of the research question, i.e., the wording of the questionnaire, is a particularly important step. In a quantitative interview, formalized questions are asked to collect information. It is important that all respondents should understand these questions in the same way. Normally, though, different parts of the population have a different understanding of the same term. Also, different frames of reference are possible. Additionally, in most cases one cannot directly ask what the researcher is interested in but one has to use the indicators defined beforehand.

Therefore, particular attention has to be paid to the question phrasing in a quantitative survey. The research question has to be properly “translated.” First, this requires the predefinition of the indicators that have to be collected. Second, they have to be phrased in a language comprehensible to all respondents. In a good questionnaire, the researcher’s frame of reference – i.e., the dimensions of the question that are to be considered – is transferred into questions that are adequate to the respondents’ frame of reference. In methodological research, this aspect is the subject of many studies because the survey’s → reliability and → validity depend on the quality of the questions and the respondents’ understanding of them.

## **UNWANTED EFFECTS IN QUANTITATIVE SURVEYS**

When wording questions, unwanted effects may arise. These effects can be the result of response order and so-called “non-opinions.” An order effect occurs when respondents choose an answer because of a formal reason instead of a content-related one. For instance, they tend to prefer either the first (primacy effect) or the last (recency effect) item in a long list. The unwanted effect called non- or pseudo-opinion occurs when respondents tend to answer questions although they do not have (or cannot have) an opinion about the subject. This problem can only present itself when using closed questions, of course, because multiple-choice answers enable the respondents to venture a guess. When they are asked to give evaluations with the help of a → scale, they often tick a medium position. If no middle position is given, new problems of pseudo-opinions may arise when respondents choose an answer at random.

Unwanted effects may also arise due to the sequence of the items because questions (and their answers) can influence the answering behavior in subsequent questions (context effects).

## **TYPES OF QUESTIONS**

Survey questions have to be clear and concrete, explicit, and nonsuggestive. Generally, there are two types of questions: open-ended (also “free answer”) and closed ones. In

open-ended questions, no alternative answers are offered; the question itself provides the frame of reference. Within this frame, respondents can express themselves freely. Such questions should be used sparingly in a standardized interview. They may be useful if the range of possible answers is too broad to be given (e.g., “year of birth”) or if the respondents’ exact choice of words is to be maintained, if the range of answers or spontaneity is important. One has to be aware that analyzing open questions in a standardized interview is very time-consuming. Also, open-ended questions are laborious for both respondents and interviewers, and the responses obtained are not always significant.

Therefore, mostly closed questions are used in standardized interviews. Unlike open-ended ones, all alternative answers are presented next to the question itself. Closed questions enable the researcher to compare respondents as the answers define the frame of reference. Thus, these categories guide the respondents more strongly and constrain them at the same time. Therefore they are regarded as more valid and reliable. Considering the cognitive process described above, the response items should be worded at least as meticulously as the questions. Respondents infer the respective significance from the questions and response items, and use them as a source of information on “usual” behavior (Schwarz & Hippler 1987).

There are various forms of closed questions. They may be simple alternative questions, multi-choice questions with a range of possible answers, ranking scales to measure order, or rating scales to measure intensity. The scale types can be classified as nominal, ordinal, or interval according to the data level they produce. Scales are used to measure attitudes, evaluations, and opinions but also activities. Using scaling techniques allows the measurement of non-observable states “within” a person, such as hypothetical constructs or emotions, preferences or evaluations. Rating scales may be presented as verbal scales, numeral scales, or visualized versions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Media Effects ▶ Operationalization ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Research Methods ▶ Reliability ▶ Scales ▶ Survey ▶ Validity

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# Intimate Talk with Family and Friends

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Intimate talk with family and friends can be examined as a product, process, or resource. It is a product of a relationship that has become intimate over time. This is the focus of studies involving social penetration (Altman & Taylor 1973) or social exchange theories (Thibaut & Kelley 1959), which find that as one person self-discloses, the other may reciprocate and the relationship becomes closer or more intimate. A different understanding comes from seeing intimate talk as process: speakers co-construct meaning and through talk create the relationship. This is the focus of scholars interested in → conversation analysis. Standing between these two approaches is intimate talk as resource, whereby speakers are competent in the performance and interpretation of certain forms of talk, such as joking or greeting, and intentionally use these to create, index or point to, and sustain intimate relationships. This is the focus of studies in such fields as sociolinguistics and the → ethnography of communication.

## INTIMATE TALK AS PROCESS

In an oft-cited study, the prominent conversation analysts Jefferson, Sacks, and Schegloff (1987) studied laughter in everyday conversations (→ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter). They found laughter occurs at strategic points, e.g., at the completion of speaker turns. Laughter may occur as a component of “improper” talk, or talk that is marked as rude, obscene, or profane, and marks a move from non-intimate to intimate talk. That is, when one speaker utters such words as “orgasmic” or “diarrhea,” the other speaker may laugh at length and show appreciation, or laugh and show “affiliation” by carrying on and contributing to the talk. For example, when one person said “syphilitic,” the other laughed and then said, “I keep running tests onyuh I know yer not” (Jefferson et al. 1987, 167). This indicates topics considered “improper” are evaluated and marked through laughter, which may signal the process of moving to more intimate talk among friends.

A study by Kitzinger (2005) also looks at intimate talk as process. In a classic lecture, Sacks (1972) explained the sentences, “The baby cried. The mommy picked it up” as providing speakers with membership categories upon which they decide appropriate activities. That is, upon hearing these sentences, the reader assumes the baby belongs to the mother and thus it is appropriate for her to pick it up. Kitzinger (2005) applied this to an analysis of recorded telephone conversations between patients and “after hours” doctors in the United Kingdom. (“After hours” doctors are those with no specialization who work 24-hour shifts answering phone calls from unknown patients.) She found that when the caller utters a kinship term, such as daughter, wife, or husband, the doctor assumes the caller lives with the patient and has intimate knowledge of the sick person’s condition. However, when other kinship terms are used, such as grandson or boyfriend, or non-kinship terms such as friend or “the lady,” the doctor does not assume intimate knowledge of the condition. Thus, these terms play a role in how speakers make on-the-spot

evaluations of the degree of intimacy of relationships, demonstrating how talk is co-constructed as a process.

### INTIMATE TALK AS RESOURCE

Hymes (1974), who first articulated the ethnography of communication, helps us understand intimate talk as resource. As children mature into adulthood it is necessary that they develop “communicative competence.” They must learn not only the language of their community, but also the rules and norms which guide the performance and interpretation of speech. One important part of communicative competence is to know how to perform “speech acts,” a minimal unit of speech such as a joke or greeting. One well-known example of a speech act as a resource of intimate talk comes from Basso’s (1979) observations of talk among the Western Apache. Over several years he observed joking imitations of “the whiteman.” In each performance the speaker code switched from Apache to English and selected a status-role of Anglo American (e.g., doctor or tourist) and contrasted it with a Western Apache one (e.g., patient). The Anglo American role was exaggerated and marked by verbal and nonverbal behaviors that contrasted with proper Apache behavior: pointedly and loudly asking, “How are you?” while shaking the hand in an accentuated up-and-down fashion, speaking loudly, inquiring about the other person’s health. Each performance would end with the evaluative comment, “White men are stupid.” Basso found these joking performances were considered to be both funny and dangerous. They were dangerous because the joke could be taken in the wrong way and they functioned as a social commentary on proper Apache behavior. These jokes were performed among people who were family members or intimate friends. Such jokes were a resource of intimate talk, both indexing the nature of the relationship – because we are close I can joke with you – and building the relationship – by joking I make our friendship stronger.

Another example of a speech act (→ Linguistic Pragmatics) for intimate talk is found in a study by Sandel (2002). He looked at greetings involving the use of kinship terms in Taiwan. When visitors enter a home or place where adults and children are present, be they kinfolk or familiar others, children are instructed to “address” the visiting adult with an appropriate kinship term, such as *A-yi* (auntie) or *Shu-shu* (uncle). Following this greeting, the child may be praised – “You are so well-behaved!” – conversation among the adults may begin, and the child is then free to remain or leave. It is not required that the adult reciprocate and use a kinship term to address the child. Adults in Taiwan see this speech act as important because it demonstrates the child is polite and has been taught well; it shows the child understands what is proper behavior and is grasping moral teachings of right and wrong; and the child learns that he or she is a member of a world inhabited by family members related to one another, indexed through a complex system of kinship terms based on generation, birth order, and gender. For example, members of younger generations must use the appropriate kinship term to address their elders, while elders may address younger by name; the term for older brother (*gege*) is not the same as younger (*didi*); and the term for mother’s sister (*A-yi*) is not the same as brother’s sister (*Gu-gu*). Finally, when children do not use kinship terms to address family members, this is interpreted as indexing problems with the relationship. For example, one boy’s parents

moved to the city to work and he remained in the country where his grandmother cared for him. During holidays or weekends when his parents returned, the boy did not address his parents as “daddy” or “mommy.” His inability to utter these words was interpreted as his lacking an intimate relationship with his parents.

The above examples draw attention to cultural differences when looking at how intimate talk is performed and interpreted. Many other examples of culturally shaped talk can be found. Among the Beng of West Africa, young children, like those in Taiwan, are taught to properly greet others in the community using kinship terms (Gottlieb 2004). However, unlike children in Taiwan, they are also taught to tease and use “dirty names” with certain relatives. For example, a mother will call her son, “Shit prick!” and a young child is considered “cute” when shrieking “You red balls!” to his grandfather (Gottlieb 2000). These are utterances used as resources to create intimacy not only with kinfolk, but with anyone in the village who can be considered as kin. Likewise, Schieffelin (1990) found that among the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea, mothers instruct children how to interact with their siblings, using different methods according to sex. A mother will encourage same-sex siblings to ask for company and assistance. Boys, however, are taught to tease and provoke their sisters. Schieffelin explains that these ways of interacting are carried on into adult life as brothers who live in the same village cooperate on a number of tasks. Sisters cooperate in gardening and household tasks as they grow up, but upon marriage usually move to other villages, where they establish cooperative networks with other women. Thus, children’s knowledge of how to interact becomes a resource they use in adulthood to guide competent and cooperative communication.

### **CODE SWITCHING IN INTIMATE TALK**

A final way for understanding intimate talk with family and friends as resource is informed by studies of code switching. As a majority of people in the world speak more than one language, the ability to code switch, or shift from one language to another, is a common, everyday practice. Communication accommodation theory (Giles et al. 1973) finds that among bilinguals, the more effort a speaker makes to converge, the more favorably this is evaluated, and the greater the sense of social and individual integration. For example, if I am a Canadian bilingual, and I speak French with a Canadian who identifies as Québécois, our speech will converge and our sense of solidarity grow.

Taiwan is another context where most people are bilingual and code switching is used as a resource for creating intimacy (Sandel et al. 2006). While *Tai-gi* (also called *Hokkien*, Taiwanese) is the Chinese language spoken by the majority of the population, Mandarin Chinese (mutually unintelligible with *Tai-gi*) is Taiwan’s official language. Furthermore, from 1945, when control of Taiwan was handed over to the Chinese Nationalists, until 1987, when martial law was lifted, the government pursued a language policy actively promoting Mandarin and limiting and repressing “dialect speaking.” In recent years the political climate has changed and the government is now promoting the learning of “mother tongues” in addition to Mandarin, as many children grow up learning to speak Mandarin only. These language policies and practices affect people’s everyday interactions. For example, it is common for a bilingual adult to see an elderly person and speak to her

in Tai-gi, and a child in Mandarin. However, when talking to another middle-aged adult, the choice is not always clear. The conversation may begin in Mandarin; a switch to Tai-gi, however, may occur if the speakers discover they are both *benshengren*, or native-born Taiwanese. This then changes the nature of the relationship as the feeling becomes “more intimate” and the relationship is drawn closer. In sum, we find that intimate talk with family and friends can be understood as product, process, and resource.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Communication: Relationship Rules ► Conversation Analysis ► Ethnography of Communication ► Interactional Sociolinguistics ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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# Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition

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Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and volition are important constructs in research on → selective exposure to media. Building on recent psychological theories of action (Gollwitzer 1990; Heckhausen & Kuhl 1985), media exposure results if a person develops an (intrinsically or extrinsically motivated) intention and invests sufficient volitional effort to carry out the intention.

A general aspiration to turn to a medium is developed in a *motivational* phase that precedes any action (sometimes termed the “deliberative phase”). In the motivational phase, a mere wish to acquire a certain psychological or material outcome is translated into an *intention* to acquire that outcome via media exposure (called a “behavioral intention”; Gollwitzer 1993; Vorderer 1993). Expectancy-value-based evaluations underlie the formation process (→ Expectancy Value Model; Uses and Gratifications; e.g., Babrow 1989). Knowledge derived from one’s own prior experiences (→ Habituation) and → information obtained by the observations of others feed the translation from a wish to a general behavioral intention. For example, a vague wish to feel socially engaged could result in the intention to go out to the movies, as prior knowledge exists that the movie characters and other movie-goers effectively provide a social atmosphere. Accordingly, the individual would both deem it very likely that he or she would feel socially integrated when watching a movie (expectancy) and evaluate this outcome very positively (value). Consequently, it is probable that the individual would develop an intention to watch a movie (Ajzen 1991; Rise et al. 2003).

In a subsequent phase, called the *volitional* phase (or the “implementation phase”), an individual picks the strongest or most convenient intention from the list of existing behavioral aspirations. Intentions to choose a → medium are likely to be implemented if the user has properly identified when, where, and how to carry out the exposure to the medium (for implementation intentions, see Gollwitzer 1993 and Rise et al. 2003; for instrumental media use, see Rubin 1984), and if the current situation does not allow for pursuing alternative goals (e.g., eating, accomplishing a job task, etc.). In addition, intentions that led to successful behavior in the past (e.g., a strong entertainment experience; → Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking) are more likely to be implemented, as they build on stronger attitudes and can be automatically triggered by external cues (Bargh et al. 2001).

Users intentionally turn to the media because they strive either for intrinsic or extrinsic outcomes (Eccles & Wigfield 2002). *Intrinsically* motivating outcomes are achieved immediately in the course of the exposure to the medium through diverse pleasurable experiences (Vorderer et al. 2006; Sherry 2004). “Someone who is seeking entertainment usually does so for its own sake, i.e., in order to experience something positive, like enjoyment, suspense, amusement, serenity” (Vorderer et al. 2006, 6). Atkin (1985, 63)



addresses intrinsic media gratifications as “transitory mental or emotional responses providing momentary satisfaction at an intrinsic level.” According to self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan 1985 and 2000), intrinsic pleasure rests on experiences of autonomy, competence, and social relatedness; situations that effectively inform an individual about related capabilities (e.g., being competent or being socially related to others) are pleasurable. In a similar fashion, media can activate the pleasure pathways of the human user (Bryant & Miron 2002). Consequently, drawing on self-determination theory, it has been argued that media users frequently turn to the media following an intrinsic motivation to feel autonomous, competent, and socially included (Vorderer et al. 2006).

Users also turn to the media to achieve *extrinsic* outcomes, sometimes referred to as uses (Atkin 1985) or utilities (Sherry et al. 2006). Extrinsic behavior exists in two distinct situations: either “when people engage in an activity to comply with an externally pressuring demand” (e.g., a task) or when they try to “meet internally pressuring feelings of guilt, shame, and self-aggrandization” (Vansteenkiste et al. 2005, 484). Accordingly, extrinsically motivated media use is task-oriented (cf. instrumental media use; Rubin 1984 and Noble 1987) and driven by the struggle to meet external and/or internal pressures. For example, the intention to write an email at work might result from the expectation of receiving praise from the boss or avoiding a reproach. Or the intention to write a daily SMS in a romantic long-distance relationship might build on the extrinsic goal not to feel guilty.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Expectancy Value Model ▶ Habituation ▶ Information ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Informational Utility ▶ Media ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Invention and Rhetoric

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In classical rhetorical theory, invention was one of the five essential canons and referred to the activity or process of creating a message (a speech, an essay, a poem, etc.). (On the other canons, see → Arrangement and Rhetoric; Delivery and Rhetoric; Memory and Rhetoric; Style and Rhetoric.) Over time, rhetoricians have explored some recurrent questions, such as whether or not invention can be described and systematized, what is the precise nature of the process of invention, and what exactly is the scope and function of inventional activity. Scholars have identified four dominant approaches to explaining and guiding this activity/process: romantic, systematic, imitative, and social (Kennedy 1963; Jasinski 2001).

Rhetoricians typically credit Plato with introducing a romantic approach to invention that emphasizes an individual's psychic interior as the appropriate source for ideas and inspiration (LeFevre 1987). With its emphasis on imagination, emotional spontaneity, and individual creative genius, late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century romanticism represents a particularly strong version of this approach to rhetorical invention. But the romantic emphasis on psychic interiors, many scholars maintain, remained a fixture in twentieth-century speech and composition classrooms (Crowley 1990; Bawarshi 2003). Critics of modernist rhetorical and “current-traditional” composition theory argue that

the romantic focus on the individual is epistemologically suspect and effectively privatizes the process of invention. Various “social” approaches to invention attempt to rectify these perceived problems.

As Kennedy (1963) and others have noted, classical rhetorical theorists developed a number of systematic analytic procedures that could be used to generate persuasive messages (→ Persuasion). Stasis theory, Lauer (1984) suggests, was the earliest framework developed in classical thought, designed to help legal advocates generate persuasive arguments. Deliberative stock topics are a much more recent and very popular extension and adaptation of classical stasis doctrine to the realm of policy → discourse. By illuminating the recurrent points of dispute that organize and shape policy controversies, the stock topics identify the issues that policy advocates must address. But the most widely recognized systematic approach to the composition process is the *doctrine of topoi or topics*. The Greek terms *topos/topoi* (in Latin *locus/loci*) referred to a sense of place, space, or region. Message producers were taught to access various *topoi/loci* in order to investigate an issue or subject and discover things that might be said or arguments that might be made about this issue or subject. Composition and speech teachers discussed topical frameworks well into the twentieth century (Corbett 1971; Wallace 1972).

Imitation, the third approach to explaining how people generate messages, was central to the thought of numerous ancient teachers and theorists, including Isocrates, Longinus, Cicero, Quintilian, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Kennedy 1963). More recent scholarship extends classical scholarship to engage some perennial questions: Can imitation help message producers generate rather than replicate an original model? Can imitation engender novelty or creativity? (e.g., Copeland 1991; Leff 1997). These scholars argue that while it might seem paradoxical, imitating the structure, style, and/or argument and language strategies of precursor texts is often a complicated process that can help writers and speakers adjust old ideas and patterns to new and changing circumstances.

The *imitative model of invention* at least implicitly locates speakers and writers in a world of other texts and voices that help generate and shape discourse production. Recent scholarship in composition theory (LeFevre 1987; Bawarshi 2003) and → linguistics (Kamberelis & Scott 1992) emphasizes the centrality of other texts, genres, and voices to the process of inventing discourse. Scholars subscribing to a social approach insist that since language, the raw material of discourse practice, is a social (and not individual) phenomenon, rhetorical invention must be understood as similarly social in nature. Implicit in this social approach to rhetorical invention is the image of a “bricoleur”: a person who acts by making do or improvising with the materials that are available in a particular situation. Message producers are in effect language “tinkerers,” who stitch together bits of linguistic material and persuasive strategy to meet the demands of the specific occasions. Additional theoretical commitments frequently follow when a scholar adopts the social approach. For example, Bawarshi (2003) and Kamberelis and Scott (1992) argue that as people generate messages, they simultaneously create (or “co-articulate”) specific texts *and* self-identity.

SEE ALSO: ► Arrangement and Rhetoric ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Discourse  
► Linguistics ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Memory and Rhetoric ► Pathos and Rhetoric

► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetorical Studies ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Investigative Reporting

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Investigative journalism is the product of independent work by reporters and editors, which reveals a public or social issue that would otherwise remain unknown. Reporters produce original investigations for → newspapers, → magazines, → books, broadcast outlets (→ Television; Radio), newsletters, and news websites (→ Internet). The process of investigation may take days, months, or years and include reviewing public documents, conducting multiple interviews, surveying public opinion, analyzing databases, or the like. Investigative reports are usually comprehensive and much longer than other → news stories.

Investigative reporting goes beyond official statements and meetings of government, business, and other institutions to reveal information these groups would keep secret from the public. The reports expose abuse of power, corruption, criminal activity, human rights violations, miscarriages of justice, or official neglect. Some investigations have an ideological perspective and aim to bring about the reform of government, business, or institutional policies and programs. Reporters have conducted these investigations in the United States, the United Kingdom, and western European democracies since the late nineteenth century, but the practice has spread elsewhere in the world since the 1990s. In 2002, more than 300 journalists from 44 countries attended a conference on investigative journalism.

In the United States, the public has generally shown strong, widespread support for investigative reporting since at least the early 1980s (Opt & Delaney 2000). Anecdotal evidence suggests similar support in other countries. In the former Soviet Union, when a little-noticed weekly magazine exposed government corruption in the late 1980s, its circulation jumped from 260,000 to 4.6 million. In Venezuela, a 1995 book exposing corruption in the judicial system became a national bestseller and sold so quickly that copies were difficult to find.

US journalists founded *Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc.* (IRE), in 1974 to provide training and encouragement for investigative journalists. Since the late 1980s, IRE has helped reporters in other countries establish similar groups. By 2006, organizations modeled after IRE had formed in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Mexico, the Philippines, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and other countries. In 2003, 50 investigative journalism organizations from more than 30 countries established an international network, Global Investigative Journalism, to share resources.

Investigative journalists may go undercover, employ hidden microphones and cameras, use the surveillance techniques of private detectives, stage sting operations, or hire accountants and scientists to conduct analyses. After computer analysis became common in the 1980s, journalists could investigate trends in government programs by probing tens of thousands of entries from electronic databases.

In Honduras, reporters searched a US General Accounting Office database to reveal US military aid to their country that government officials refused to acknowledge. In the United States, reporters from the *Philadelphia Inquirer* examined 1,200 court case files and talked to hundreds of individuals in 1973 to document harsher sentences for blacks and poor defendants as well as judges who were overly lenient. In Thailand, a TV journalist talked to more than 100 individuals to show that police had wrongly charged a man with murdering children on a school bus.

Investigative reporting may act as the *conscience of society* (Ettema & Glasser 1998). By naming the names of perpetrators and identifying victims, investigative reporters contribute to a dialogue about public virtue that can encourage a community or society to demand improvements. Investigations have revealed unfair tax laws and mismanaged school systems, exposed illegal pollution and police brutality, and documented unfair business practices and City Hall corruption. Investigative reporters have helped spur governments to free wrongly convicted inmates, topple corrupt politicians, enforce health and safety regulations, and pass new laws.

The traditional view of investigative journalism suggests what some researchers call the *mobilization* (or → *muckraking*) *model*: the media reveal a wrong, which stirs the public

to demand correction, which leads government to respond (Molotch et al. 1987). Other studies show that investigative reporting sometimes spurs public policy changes regardless of whether public opinion demands change. Reform sometimes takes place because investigative reporters discuss the problems with policymakers before publication of their stories (Protest et al. 1991).

The most famous episode of investigative reporting in the United States was the → Watergate scandal during the mid-1970s. Reporters from the *Washington Post* revealed crimes in the White House, ultimately resulting in the resignation of President Richard Nixon. Jose G. Burgos, Jr., writing in an underground Manila newspaper, exposed corruption within the ruling regime in the Philippines, leading to the ousting of dictator Ferdinand Marcos in late 1985. Investigative journalists in Belgium revealed inept police work that undermined public confidence in the country's justice system in the late 1990s.

Investigative reporting can have *undesirable consequences*. Even when done well, investigations can undermine public confidence in, and lead to cynicism about, social and political institutions. When done poorly, investigations can focus public attention on insignificant concerns. A 1997 study of prime-time TV newsmagazines found that only one in ten investigative stories dealt with traditional subjects of investigative reporting (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2006): economics, education, foreign affairs, the military, national security, politics, or social welfare. The other nine reported on behavior, celebrities, consumerism, health issues, or personal lifestyle.

Investigative reporting faces *many obstacles*. In open democracies, most government documents are available, because of laws such as the US Freedom of Information Act mandate public access. In less democratic countries, government and business secrecy impedes access to records. In some countries, targets of investigations can file lawsuits to take revenge on reporters for publishing stories. In authoritarian regimes, reporters have faced imprisonment or murder. Violence against investigative reporters remains relatively rare in Europe and North America but continues to be a threat elsewhere. Drug dealers and mobsters, as well as political extremists, have killed dozens of investigative reporters in the United States, Ireland, Colombia, Mexico, Russia, and Iran, among others (→ Violence against Journalists).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Book  
▶ Fourth Estate ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Muckraking  
▶ Newspaper ▶ News Story ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Radio ▶ Television ▶ Violence  
against Journalists ▶ Watergate Scandal

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## Involvement with Media Content

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Involvement is included in numerous theories and empirical studies of → information processing, → persuasion, → advertising, knowledge acquisition, and other → media effects. It is mainly linked with or defined as more elaborative, self-determined, active, and in-depth acting with and processing of media content.

In origin, involvement is rooted in three major research traditions. In the work of Sherif and Cantrill (1947) concerning *social judgment theory*, ego-involvement plays a central role. If a topic activates central values of the self-concept, a person becomes personally involved in the situation. Ego-involvement is the relatedness of an issue to a person's self-picture and self-identity (Salmon 1986; → Social Identity Theory). According to social judgment theory, a belief change becomes less and less probable the more a person is ego-involved. Furthermore, these authors distinguished task-involvement from ego-involvement. Task-involvement results from the experimental manipulation performed by the researcher and is assumed to be rather volatile (→ Experimental Design). In short, involvement can be described in this context as activated relevance for an issue (Salmon 1986).

In the framework of the *dual process theories on persuasion*, highly involved recipients are motivated to process the arguments of the message (central route or systematic processing), whereas low-involved recipients use heuristics and select rather peripheral stimuli for a superficial judgment (Chaiken & Trope 1999; → Elaboration Likelihood Model). Finally, for Krugman (1965), involvement is the number of *conscious bridging experiences, connections, or personal references* that a viewer makes per minute between his or her own life and a stimulus.

Stimulated by these roots, audience and effects research began to pick up involvement. Specifically, media usage under low-involvement conditions seemed to be of particular interest. The usage of electronic media (radio, television; → Exposure to Radio;

Exposure to Television) often occurs only incidentally, in a way that is habitualized and without much → attention. Alternatively, within the → Uses-and-Gratifications approach, involvement is explicitly integrated as a part of the *concept of audience activity*. In the three-phases model of Levy and Windahl (1984), before media exposure, involvement is expressed as intent of usage. During media exposure, involvement is understood as the degree to which the individual interacts psychologically with a medium or its message (→ Exposure to Communication Content). After the person has been exposed to the medium, involvement can be conceptualized as a long-term identification or parasocial relationship (Levy & Windahl 1984; → Parasocial Interactions and Relationships).

In modern communication research, conceptualizations of involvement are multifaceted. Thus, a distinction should be made between different references or “targets of involvement” (for example, the message of the media, the advertised product, a protagonist of a film, a program, or an issue), the “persistence of involvement” (enduring, persistent versus situational, short-term, and volatile), the “components of involvement” (cognitive, affective, conative/motivational), the “valence of involvement” (negative or positive), and the “intensity of involvement” (Wirth 2006). For example Greenwald and Leavitt (1984) discern four intensity levels of involvement: pre-attention, focal attention, comprehension, and elaboration. At least in older conceptions of involvement, there is also a differentiation regarding the locus of involvement: according to this, involvement can be seen as an attribute of a medium, a topic, a situation, or the reception process. At least from the perspectives of reception research and media psychology, in most cases involvement is interpreted as an internal state or process.

Taking all these differentiations together, one can distinguish between a broader and a more confined concept of involvement. Involvement as a meta-concept encompasses a family of related though distinct concepts that inform us of how users are occupied with the media and their content in diverse ways, and how they engage with them in a cognitive, affective, conative, and motivational way (Salmon 1986). In this view, involvement is rather a framework or a research perspective; its multiple interactions with other concepts of media usage and effects can be studied and related to each other systematically.

On the other hand, a concept that includes cognitive responses, felt emotions, attention, recall, information seeking, *and* discussions about a topic seems to be not very useful and frequently results in contradicting empirical results. Therefore, a more confined sense of involvement would be advantageous. According to this, involvement is an attribute of the information processing itself (Cameron 1993; Greenwald & Leavitt 1984; Slater 2002; Wirth 2006). The process-oriented definition of involvement directly refers to the phase of media usage and encompasses the intensity of an individual’s cognitive, emotional, or conative engagement with the media message. In a similar way, some authors conceptualize involvement as a mode of reception as opposed to a distanced or analytical mode of media usage (e.g. Vorderer 1993).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attention ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Information Processing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Persuasion ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Uses and Gratifications



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## **Iran: Media System**

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The Islamic Republic of Iran (population approx. 67,500,000 in 2004; adult literacy rate 77.1 percent) was established as a result of Iran's revolution in 1979. The political system blends republican elements (i.e., regular parliamentary and presidential elections) with the idea of the "government of the Islamic jurist" (*velayat-e faqih*), developed during the 1960s and 1970s by Ayatollah Khomeini, the leader of the revolution and the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Most political power thus lies in the hands of a Shiite cleric, the "Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution" (*rahbar-e moazam-e enqelab-e eslami*).

The history of Iran's *press* is determined by successive phases of authoritarian rule and rare episodes of political liberalization. The first → newspaper was published in 1837 under the Qajar dynasty. At the advent of the Constitutional Revolution in 1906, exile and clandestine periodicals gained considerable importance for the dissemination of modern political ideas. The subsequent years witnessed a flourishing of publications that ended when Reza Shah took power in 1925. The central state authority weakened again in 1942–1953, providing room for a dynamic and politicized press. The reinstated monarchy of Mohammad Reza Shah subjected the press once more to limitations.

*Radio* was introduced in 1940 by the government following experimentations with wireless transmissions throughout the 1920s (→ Radio). The first → *television* channel opened in 1958 on the initiative of a private entrepreneur. Its merger with a second state-owned station in 1971 created the National Iranian Radio and Television organization. By the mid-1970s, Iran had developed the second biggest broadcasting system in Asia after Japan, reaching more than half the total population.

In the Islamic Republic, the constitution grants freedom for the mass media within the framework of religious principles. The constitution further stipulates the media's educational mission for the propagation of Islamic culture. The press law requires all publications to be licensed and prohibits articles violating the fundamentals of the Islamic Republic or offending religious authorities. The principal institutions that shape culture and media politics are the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution.

Ideological restrictions on the media were especially severe during the Iran–Iraq war between 1980 and 1988. From the mid-1990s on, a relaxation of governmental politics allowed for a growing number of press publications to express alternative views. However, the press became the target of a judicial campaign backed by conservative factions, leading to the closure of over 100 publications from 2000 to 2006.

The majority of the press as well as radio and television are based in Tehran. Newspapers are comparatively cheap due to governmental subsidies for paper and advertisement. About 1,700 periodicals were published in 2005, including 136 dailies and more than 700 specialist publications. The main news agency is the governmental *Islamic Republic News Agency* (IRNA).

The current national radio and television organization, the *Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting* (IRIB), has been under the direct control of the Supreme Leader since the revision of the constitution in 1989. The organization is funded by the state, though advertisement constitutes a growing share in its budget. IRIB has considerably expanded its structure and programming since 1994. A major factor in the rise of entertainment and foreign content in the programs was the attempt to counter the increasing influence of satellite television, perceived as a cultural onslaught by the regime.

Radio provided seven national channels in 2006, partly specializing in culture, youth, sports, and religion. IRIB offers extensive regional radio broadcasting and its world service transmits programs in 25 languages. There are two main national TV channels, while a third targets youth, providing sports and films. The fourth channel offers religious and instructive content; the fifth is a regional channel for the capital and other cities; and there are further educational and news channels. IRIB has also launched several satellite organizations. Since 1997, *Jam-e Jam* has been broadcasting three mainly Farsi channels for the Iranian diaspora. *Sahar* transmits two channels in different languages (English, Kurdish, and Urdu), and the Arabic *Al-'Alam* seeks its audience particularly in neighboring Iraq.

Attempts to create private television have failed so far. Receiving *foreign* → *satellite television* is officially forbidden though currently tolerated. Estimates of the number of Iranian households equipped with satellite dishes go from 3 million to 5 million. Governmental projects to provide centralized access to chosen satellite channels have not yet been realized. About 15 stations broadcasting in Farsi and mainly run by the US-based exile community opposed to the current regime can be received in Iran.

The → *Internet* was introduced in 1992. The estimated number of users increased noticeably between 2000 (200,000) and 2006 (7 million). Access is provided by over 500 ISPs working under the close supervision of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology and of the national Telecommunications Company of Iran, owned by the state and working under the control of the ministry. Ambitious state programs seek to enhance Internet accessibility and connection quality. The government concurrently developed a sophisticated system of online censorship, controlling both the content and usage of the Internet, which had become an instrument for expressions of political and cultural discontent.

The evolution of Iran's media is, therefore, constantly affected by the politics of a strong state. Despite significant cultural assets and a long history of journalism, the country has not yet developed an appropriate and independent media system.

SEE ALSO: ► Internet ► Media Policy ► Newspaper ► Radio ► Satellite Television  
► Television

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## **Israel: Media System**

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Israel, a young democracy, established in 1948, with a 120-member unicameral parliament elected officially every four years in universal, proportional, nationwide elections, is located in the Middle East, along the eastern coastline of the Mediterranean Sea, bordered by Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. It lies at the junction of three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa.

From the outset, Israel's media system took shape in the shadow of an extended conflict with Arab states and the Palestinian people that culminated in several military clashes – 1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982, 1989, 2000, and 2006. According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2005, the country's population exceeded seven million, consisting of 5,313,800 Jews (76.0 percent of the population); 1,140,600 Muslims (16.3 percent); 146,600 Christians

(2.1 percent), of whom 118,700 are Christian Arabs; 1,115,200 Druze (1.6 percent); and 272,200 with no religious affiliation (3.9 percent). The country's founders overtly aspired toward creation of a modern, western, democratic state. As such, the concept of social responsibility had a decisive influence on the development of mass media in the fledgling democracy.

During Israel's six decades of independence, its media institutions have undergone extensive structural change, shifting from a centralized, monolithic system to a decentralized one that integrates traditional and new media and boasts a well-developed telecommunications infrastructure. Besides the printed press – dailies, local papers, and magazines – and dozens of radio and cable and satellite television channels, a variety of online newspapers enriches the media map. Furthermore, four mobile telephony service providers offer a wide range of programs, while old broadcast media and new entrepreneurs are examining options for the Internet.

### THE PRE-STATE PERIOD (UNTIL 1948)

The media first struck roots in the British Mandatory period, before the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Cultural capital – and especially commitment to the press and books – was the chief resource borne by Jewish immigrants. Although only modestly endowed economically, the pre-state Jewish community (*Yishuv*) was blessed with an extensive supply and variety of publications, about half of them published regularly, including some 40 dailies of varying life-spans. These were generally unassuming publications of a few pages each, appearing at varying intervals and functioning as ideological organs of political movements and schools of thought.

On March 30, 1936, in the best colonial tradition, the Mandatory authorities in Palestine inaugurated radio broadcasts in three languages – English, Hebrew, and Arabic – on a station called the *Voice of Jerusalem*.

### THE TRANSITION PERIOD (1948–1967)

The second stage extends from the country's initial, formative years until the Six-Day War (1967). The political-party and foreign-language press flourished during the state of Israel's first decade, as mass immigration underscored the urgent need for newspapers in the languages of incoming immigrants: Yiddish, Polish, Romanian, Hungarian, French, and others. Moreover, the demographic processes engendered by immigration were conducive to the emergence of popular dailies eager to maximize circulation (→ Migration and Immigration). Leading papers *Maariv* and *Yedioth Ahronoth*, along with several morning papers, most of them party organs, challenged the population's traditional reading habits.

Initially, the professional infrastructure installed by the British was reorganized as the Voice of Israel. Experienced broadcasters staffed the state radio network that began operation as the Israel Broadcasting Service under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office. In 1965, radio broadcasts were institutionalized as part of the Israel Broadcasting Authority (IBA).

The vision that guided Israel's state radio system, which bore just a soupçon of paternalism, also sought to promote educational goals among the young immigrants who

comprised the country's army. In 1950, the Israeli government decided to launch an additional radio station, under the auspices of its armed forces, called *Galei Zahal*. In 1966, Israel Educational Television, financed by the Rothschild Foundation, began broadcasting programs to strengthen education and enrichment for children, especially those living in development towns and frontier localities.

### **CONTROLLED PLURALISM (1967–1986)**

This period is characterized chiefly by the reinforcement of a moderate, liberal atmosphere, a controlled pluralistic structure, and varied regulatory arrangements concerning reciprocal relations between the media institution and its surroundings. Immediately after the Six-Day War, traditional opposition was lifted and Israel Television was given the green light (→ Television). Regulations declared that programming time would be divided between two languages, Hebrew and Arabic, on the same channel, which would be subject to public supervision within the framework of the IBA (Katz 1971; → Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

The postwar economic boom hastened decentralization of the printed press and yielded a flourishing local press industry (Caspi 1986). At the same time, the status of privately owned publications was enhanced at the expense of party organs and the foreign-language press, largely due to the accelerated integration of immigrants, most of whom switched to Hebrew-language media. Social growth processes were particularly kind to private → newspapers, which began to consolidate and take shape as → media conglomerates owned by three families: Mozes, Nimrodi, and Schocken. Each had a flagship daily (*Yedioth Ahronoth*, *Maariv*, and *Haaretz*, respectively) and produced numerous publications, including → magazines, local papers and → books.

In 1973, “peace pilot” Abie Nathan launched the *Voice of Peace* radio station, transmitting from a ship anchored, at least officially, outside the territorial waters of Israel (→ Radio).

### **OPEN SKIES (1987–)**

The fourth and current stage, which reflects the Israeli government's neo-liberal policies, features extensive regulation, particularly concerning broadcasting channels, as well as an open-skies policy, accelerated development of telecommunications infrastructures, and increasing signs of a decline in the status of the printed press.

August 1986 saw the completion of Amendment No. 4 to the Telecommunications Law, the legal device required for regulation of → cable television. At first, cable broadcasting was divided regionally among five franchisees. These five firms later merged into three and eventually became one company, HOT, as a result of competition with the sole satellite television service provider in the early 2000s. Cable television enhanced the supply of programming, primarily by providing dozens of foreign-content channels, including English-language news networks such as → CNN, SKY, and the → BBC, as well as sports, music, film, and entertainment channels.

In 1993, seven years after the start of experimental broadcasting and three years after Knesset ratification of the relevant law, a franchise for a commercial television channel,

*Channel 2*, was issued. At the same time, franchises were awarded to 14 regional radio stations, which were also supported by → advertising. In early 2000, the firm YES received a franchise for provision of satellite television service, which increased the supply of foreign channels in the same format as cable television. Two years later, in 2002, another commercial television channel, *Channel 10*, went on the air. By the start of the third millennium, Israel's broadcasting map had changed markedly, displaying an abundance of radio and television channels (Caspi et al. 2002).

The multiplicity of channels supported by advertising was the first palpable threat to the printed press. Small newspapers closed down and the three major dailies anxiously sought ways to persevere, consolidating themselves as media conglomerates and expanding → cross-ownership of other media. At first, each conglomerate intensified its hold on the local press through a network of local papers dispersed throughout the country, seeking to exhaust the financial potential of local advertising. Subsequently, the media barons joined forces with the country's economic powers. Three of them – Arnon Mozes, Ofer Nimrodi, and later Eliezer Fishman – secured shares in the Channel 2 franchise groups. The *Yedioth Ahronoth* conglomerate even has a hand in the vibrant Russian-language press, which has flourished because of mass immigration from the former Soviet Union since the late 1980s, as it owns the only Russian-language daily, *Vesty* (Caspi et al. 2002).

Over the past few years, increased → Internet access has given rise to online journalism in all its many shapes and forms, threatening the status quo once again. In 2006, about 3.7 million Israelis aged 13 and up browsed the web, and 86 percent of them were exposed to online newspapers. Three types of online newspapers can be differentiated. The first is online editions of printed newspapers, such as the *Globes* financial daily, which launched an English-language Internet version for foreign investors in 1996 and later added a Hebrew version as well. Immediately thereafter, *Haaretz* launched its own site, as did other newspapers. Second are separate online and printed newspapers: the two most outstanding sites are *Ynet*, launched in 2000, which belongs to Israel's most popular daily, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, and *nrg*, belonging to the daily *Maariv*. Third, there are independent online newspapers: *Zman Merkazi* is a pioneer in this category, to which *News First Class* belongs as well (→ Online Media).

Over the past few years, other media have also found the Internet to be a fertile field for experimentation. Broadcasting stations have learned to provide Internet broadcasts along with conventional transmission.

## THE ARAB MEDIA

The Arab media map in Israel, like its Jewish counterpart, took shape in the shadow of the bitter conflict between Israel and its neighbors. By one count, there are over 100 Arabic publications in Israel (Adoni et al. 2006), most of them suffering from low circulation and irregular publication. A majority of the regularly published Arabic periodicals are supported by political, public, or religious factors. In 2006, only two Arabic dailies were published in Israel: the Communist Party organ *al-Ittihad*, and the independent *al-Fajr al-Jadid*, first published in 2004.

The first original and successful initiative emulating the private newspaper model occurred in 1983, when local advertising agency owner Lutfi Masha'our decided to

publish a local newspaper in Nazareth, *al-Sanara (The Fishing Rod)*. Another venture, *Kul al-'Arab (All the Arabs)*, under Arab–Jewish joint ownership, was also economically dependent on an advertising agency.

Private weekly newspapers apparently succeeded in establishing and reinforcing reading habits, as three additional weeklies were subsequently published regularly: *Panorama* in Taibeh (since 1987), and *al-Midan (The Square)* and *al-A'ain (The Spring)* in Nazareth (since 1999 and 2000, respectively).

The new political and nationalistic spirit led to the emergence of nationalistic Arab political parties and their respective organs: *Al-Watan (The Homeland)* – Progressive Party for Peace, 1983; *Sawt al-Haq wal-Huriyya (The Voice of Truth and Freedom)* – weekly, Islamic Movement, Umm el Fahm, 1989; and *Fasl al-Maqal (Unequivocal Words)* – weekly, National Democratic Alliance, Nazareth, 1996 (→ Partisan Press; Party Political Communication; Party–Press Parallelism).

The broadcast media, by contrast, enjoyed significant prosperity and stability thanks to generous government support. Most Arab radio and television broadcasts remained under the auspices of the IBA, which also supervised their content. Technological developments challenged the Jewish majority's control of Arabic broadcasting channels. Pirate radio stations began operating in several Arab towns despite meager human, financial, and technological resources; their transmitters were weak but sufficed to cover concentrated Arabic-speaking areas, offering a refreshing alternative to partisan *radio-for* broadcasts. In October 2002, a new license was awarded to the *Radio al-Shams* group, which began as a Jewish–Arab group.

When a designated commercial Arabic television channel was approved, the concession was again granted to an ostensibly “mixed” group controlled by Jewish businessmen who guaranteed its *television-for* nature. As of summer 2006, however, this group has not succeeded in carrying out the project, which has apparently been hampered by a lack of serious investors.

Similarly, the advent of cheap satellite dishes enabled many citizens to watch television stations from elsewhere in the region rather than Israel Television's Arabic broadcasts. As of 2006, nearly 25 Israeli Arab reporters are employed by satellite stations in Arabic-speaking countries (Al Jazeera, Abu Dhabi, al-'Arabiyya, Egyptian satellite television, etc.), and most are also connected to leading newspapers in Arab countries (*al-Ahram*, *al-Mustaqbal*, *al-Khaleej*, and *al-Sapir*) and in the west (*al-Sharq al-Awsat*, *al-Hayat*, and *al-Quds al-'Arabi* in London).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ BBC ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ CNN ▶ Cross-Ownership ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Newspaper ▶ Online Media ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Party Political Communication ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## Issue Management

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Issue management is a systematic procedure that helps organizations to identify, analyze, and respond to external or internal concerns that can significantly affect them. On this note, strategic issue management is a managerial function, which creates the information bases for a proactive examination of (potentially) critical themes that can limit strategic scope (→ Strategic Communication). It has to be accentuated that issue management does not solely relate to the effects of a crisis or a conflict. For a full understanding of this aspect of the discipline, we need to also consider the positive and negative repercussions concerning promotional themes in regard to a → brand or a company image.

Issues are debatable topics of → public interest that are connected with controversial opinions, expectations, or problem solutions by an organization and its stakeholders. Issues have actual or potential effects on the organization. An issue is an immediate problem requiring a solution (Heath 2006, 82–83). There is a wide variety of models for the issue management process. Most models differentiate between five or six key stages (see in particular Chase 1984; Dutton & Jackson 1987).

*Issue identification:* it is important to observe the environment systematically, continually, and comprehensively, in order to identify weak signals that point to a conflict topic as early as possible. Scanning is the inductive observation of the environment by using, e.g., media content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative), → surveys, or expert → interviews. In a second step, potential issues as well as known issues are observed more closely (monitoring). Scanning and monitoring deliver a variety of kinds and quality of information about different stakeholders, their views on issues, and suggestions regarding the implications that their views could have for the status of an issue.

*Analysis and interpretation:* once issues have been identified, they must be prioritized with respect to their relevance, exigency, and consideration of the amount of resources dedicated to deal with the issues. Furthermore, the future trend of the issue will be forecast on the basis of its current and past development.

*Selection and prioritizing of key issues:* analysis and interpretation provide those key issues for which the organization must develop action decisions and issue positions. The key issues need to be further researched and observed. A research document identifying the history, status, potential development, and policy options open to the organization



needs to be compiled and circulated among decision-makers. The permanent compression of information obtained in this process makes an adjustment of the current scanning and monitoring possible.

*Development of the strategy:* the results of the analysis are the basis for the development of the strategy and tactics. There are five main strategic options: reactive, adaptive, proactive, initiative, and interactive strategies. Issue management aims at influencing public and media attention in regard to particular themes, including processes of not making something a subject of discussion as well as the attempt to keep themes out of media coverage (→ Agenda Building). Furthermore, framing is of great importance, e.g., the impact on interpreting themes via accentuation and attribution concerning single aspects of a theme (→ Strategic Framing). In addition, direct exchange and collaboration with stakeholders is denotative, contingent on the specific issue and the level of action potential of the affected stakeholders (→ Stakeholder Theory). In general, it is necessary to formulate a coherent position and a coordinated message. Usually for this purpose, a task force from the different departments and business units concerned with the issue is formed.

*Program implementation:* once a course of action has been decided upon, a program to achieve the desired objectives must be implemented. The program must effectively communicate the organization's position and messaging to key stakeholders.

*Program evaluation:* any program instituted must be evaluated after completion regarding its effectiveness and quality. The evaluation of the output and outcome of issue management is a great challenge, since successful issue management shows up finally in the fact that an issue is not escalated or has not become public. Successful issue management does not leave any measurable issues. For this reason, indicators and models that can measure and evaluate the results of the issues management in a valid way are absent (→ Public Relations Evaluation).

Issue management needs interdisciplinary cooperation within the whole organization and the issue task force. There is no standard denomination of the different *roles of issue management* in literature and in practice, but the role descriptions are similar: “networkers” are specialized experts from the different departments and business units of the organization. They observe their area of expertise with respect to critical themes. “Issue leaders” are persons who lead the task force and are responsible for the issue treatment regarding content. “Theme experts” are specialized experts from different departments. They analyze and execute specific aspects of the issue. Further experts complete the task force, e.g., lawyers and members of top management (→ Public Relations Roles).

However, issue management is no isolated procedure, and it is not simply an operational instrument for environmental monitoring. Its effectiveness and performance depend on whether and to what extent issue management is established as a process and a thinking attitude in the whole organization. The organizational structure and culture must foster trans-sectoral cooperation and internal information networks. They must sensitize all members of the organization to the relevance of environmental monitoring and the early identification of critical issues.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda Building ► Brands ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Crisis Communication ► Framing Effects ► Interview ► Issue

Management in Politics ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Evaluation ▶ Public Relations Roles ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Survey

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## **Issue Management in Politics**

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Issue management in politics refers to the process by which politicians, campaigns, parties, and other political groups identify, prioritize, develop, and convey positions on key issues. A fundamental early step in effective political issue management involves formative research where groups investigate the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of target audiences concerning policy preferences and problems. Some of the major research techniques used to gather such information include → surveys, focus groups, content analysis, and in-depth → interviews (→ Research Methods; Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative; Interview, Standardized; Interview, Qualitative). These same approaches are also used to evaluate the success of communication efforts for issue management purposes.

From a theoretical standpoint, the concepts of agenda building and agenda setting are useful for understanding the process of political issue management. The core proposition of agenda-setting theory is that the issues made salient (or prominent) in news media often become the issues that are considered important in public opinion, though the effect is not universal (McCombs & Shaw 1972). For over three decades, extensive empirical support for agenda-setting influence has been collected in local, state, national, and international settings (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). While agenda setting concentrates on the relationship between news media and the public, the broader concept of agenda building suggests that issue salience is determined by several groups in addition to media and voters, such as politicians, organizations, and activists (→ Agenda Building). Thus, an integral part of successful issue management entails developing strategies for dealing with these diverse sets of stakeholders.

A vital factor impacting the issue-management process involves meaningfully classifying different types of issues. Research has offered several systems for categorizing issues. For example, the difference between obtrusive issues (those with which citizens have direct experience) and unobtrusive issues (those with which citizens have little direct experience) has proved critical with regard to media influence on public perceptions of issue importance (Zucker 1978). Research suggests that mass-media impact is greatest for unobtrusive issues. A similar distinction has been drawn between abstract and concrete issues, with empirical work documenting stronger media influence on perceptions for the latter issue type (Yagade & Dozier 1990). Beyond issue type, the tone and frames associated with issues are germane for issue-management purposes because they shape *how* issue portrayals are generated and their subsequent effects on various constituencies (→ Framing Effects).

The use of information subsidies by political groups or organizations to exert influence on news media, voters, and other audiences represents a pervasive approach for effective → issue management. Among the most commonly used information subsidies are news releases, interviews, news conferences, and “op-ed pieces” (i.e., opinion editorials by contributors who are not necessarily affiliated to the publication). Research has shown that these kinds of political communications are valuable for shaping the salience of issues. For example, multiple studies have demonstrated that the issues emphasized by political campaigns in news releases often become the political issues stressed in media content. One study of the 2002 Florida gubernatorial race found a close correspondence between the salience of issues in campaign news releases and media coverage of the election (Kioussis et al. 2006). This finding is noteworthy because it shows that campaigns can indirectly have an impact on public opinion by altering the salience of issues covered in news content. Although not typical, some studies have found strong correlations between issue importance in news releases and public opinion, as well as linkages among news releases from competing campaigns (Tedesco 2005).

Though often image oriented, political advertising also wields considerable influence on issue management in politics. Research has shown that → political advertising affects the perceived salience of issues among voters. Further, voters can become more knowledgeable about candidate positions on issues from exposure to political spots. Finally, news media issue agendas have been reported to closely correspond with those in political advertising, offering yet another indirect route for impacting voters and other political groups.

Much of the scholarly and applied interest in political issue management is based on the premise that issue perceptions and opinions sway elections (→ Election Campaign Communication; Issue Voting). The concept of priming provides some insight into how this influence transpires. According to this perspective, media affect attitudes and opinions toward political candidates by shifting the criteria by which politicians are judged, through the media’s emphasis on certain issues at the expense of others (→ Priming Theory). Thus, if news media stress the economy, then voters are likely to assess politicians on the basis of their performance on that issue as opposed to others. As a result, political campaigns and groups aim to influence the news media agenda by highlighting issues with which their organizations or candidates perform well. Issue-ownership theory indicates that certain political parties are thought to handle some issues more competently than other parties. For instance, research has suggested that Republicans in the US are seen as being better on

defense, while Democrats are viewed as handling education more competently. As such, priming is a paramount part of understanding political issue management.

Because political power in modern media democracies has become a function of public approval, political actors are now required to go public and influence public opinion (→ Media Democracy). This makes issue management a central element of the political process and a key aspect of → political communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Issue Management ▶ Issue Voting ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media Logic ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Communication ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Research Methods ▶ Survey

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## **Issue Voting**

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The notion of issue voting refers to electoral choices that are based on the substance of politics – collective problems for which solutions are expected from governments. That responsibility for solving problems is ascribed to the political system is not self-evident. Political cultures differ with regard to the extent to which the state is commonly held responsible for dealing with citizens' grievances. Media reporting can stimulate the politicization of individually experienced problems by conveying the impression that they are not merely private concerns but shared by many people (Mutz 1994).

Although solving problems of political communities by means of binding decisions is the very essence of politics, most models of electoral behavior assign issues only a limited

role. The Michigan School's attitudinal model of voting behavior sees *voters' orientations toward issues* as one of three factors that determine vote choices (Campbell et al. 1960). Along with electors' *party identification* – a longstanding emotional tie to a party originating from early processes of political socialization – and *candidate assessments*, issue orientations can direct people's votes toward certain parties or candidates. Importantly, partisanship is seen as a deeply internalized, stable core of the political personality that colors perceptions and evaluations of both candidates and issues, so that these three components do not operate independently of one another. Empirically, issues appear as the least important of the model's components. Although the decline of partisanship over recent decades has made room for stronger independent effects of issues on vote choices, no such trend could be empirically confirmed so far.

To develop orientations toward issues that can be translated into electoral preferences is *a demanding task for voters* (→ Political Persuasion). For lack of motivation, knowledge, and/or cognitive capability, not many voters can be expected to manage this (→ Political Cognitions; Political Knowledge). Many issues concern complicated policy problems that are difficult to understand. It is far easier to form impressions about candidates. A precondition for an issue to gain significance at an election is some familiarity with it on the part of voters. Only members of specialized "issue publics" possess the necessary awareness of many issues (→ Publics: Situational Theory). To become relevant for voting, an issue has also to be ascribed some importance, and voters need to form opinions about it. Furthermore, electors need to identify links between this issue and the competing candidates or parties (→ Candidate Image). Even if all these preconditions are fulfilled, an issue can still become a meaningful point of reference for electoral choices only if voters additionally perceive parties or candidates to be somehow different with regard to it.

According to the Michigan model, it is crucial whether voters see differences in the *competence of parties* or candidates to deal with an issue. If they feel that one competitor is more able than another to solve a particular problem that they consider important, they may come to choose this party or candidate at the polls, even if it is not the one they identify with. However, selective exposure and perception often lead them to conclude that it is their own party or its candidate that is most competent on most if not all issues (→ Selective Exposure; → Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Hence, what looks like issue voting is sometimes ultimately guided by partisanship.

Although rooted in a different theoretical context, the notion of *priming* ties in well with this strand of research (→ Priming Theory). According to this hypothesis, by setting their audiences' issue agenda, the mass media influence the criteria for evaluating parties and candidates (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Election Campaign Communication). An important implication of this mechanism is that the perceived relevance of issues is not idiosyncratic but systematic – it reflects the media's and other organized communicators' decisions about which themes to highlight and which to neglect (→ Agenda Building). If many voters believe that a particular issue is most pressing, a party that is widely seen as the one most able to deal with it will be advantaged at the polls. In fact, issues are often "owned" by certain parties, in the sense that voters have learned that this party is the one that will perform best with regard to this particular problem (→ Issue Management in Politics). For instance, Social Democratic parties typically "own" the issue of social

welfare. Parties usually profit from election campaigns during which “their” issues are most salient (Budge & Farlie 1983).

Originating from rational choice theory, the *spatial model* is another important conception of issue voting. According to Downs (1957), voters have distinct positions with regard to which policies they prefer to see enacted on issues. When casting a vote, they choose the party or candidate whom they perceive as being located closest to their own policy preference. This model is even more demanding with regard to voters’ cognitive and motivational capacity, as it requires them to develop very clear and detailed ideas about which political measures fit their interests best, and how well all the parties’ past or promised future policies match these policy ideals. Empirically, the proximity variant of the spatial model is only weakly supported, especially when compared to the competence model. A recent attempt to arrive at a more realistic understanding of spatial issue voting is the “directional” model, which requires voters only to have a rough idea of the general policy directions they prefer.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda Building ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Candidate Image ► Election Campaign Communication ► Issue Management in Politics ► Political Cognitions ► Political Knowledge ► Political Persuasion ► Priming Theory ► Publics: Situational Theory ► Selective Exposure ► Selective Perception and Selective Retention

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## **Italy: Media System**

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Italy (population 58.4 million) is one of the founding members of the EU. It is a parliamentary republic; general elections are held every five years. The electoral system, formerly a mix of majoritarian rule and proportional representation, was changed to

purely proportional before the general election of 2006. Governments and political parties have always displayed an acute sensitivity over issues of communication and information, and have produced legislation and regulations that have allowed political power to exert tight control over the broadcasting media and to keep the press in check, mostly by means of the *lottizzazione*, a partitioning of the political parties' grasp on all sectors of communication. The "political parallelism" model (Hallin & Mancini 2004) explains such close connections between politics and news media in Italy.

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Until the mid-1970s the country's media landscape was made up of the radio and television channels of the public broadcasting company *Radiotelevisione Italiana* (RAI; → Public Broadcasting Systems) and of a dozen publishing houses that printed hundreds of newspapers and weekly magazines. After a historic pronouncement by the Constitutional Court in 1976 that allowed private companies to enter into the formerly monopolized broadcasting market, the situation changed rapidly and radically. Between 1976 and 1990, more than 500 local television and about 2,500 radio stations were established. It is in those years, interestingly with an almost total lack of legislation, that an entrepreneur who had struck gold in real estate and construction, *Silvio Berlusconi*, entered into broadcasting and in a short time put up three nationwide television networks, which are still today the backbone of his multifaceted communication empire.

RAI gradually lost its central position, even though it grew hugely, stimulated by the competition of Berlusconi's commercial networks, but eventually contained by the thresholds to advertising imposed by the law. The 15 years of wild deregulation ended in 1990 when Parliament passed a broadcasting act that essentially legitimized the Darwinian evolution of the domestic broadcasting system. This meant the recognition of a duopoly between RAI and *Mediaset* (Berlusconi's company), each with three networks. The law failed to introduce measures to leave the door open to other players in the domestic market, and the situation remained the same until Berlusconi's government, in 2004, passed a controversial law that not only strengthened the existing duopoly but also extended it to the new digital television sector.

## NORMATIVE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Reform is in prospect at the time of writing, but meanwhile, the media system is regulated by several laws and regulations, not always clear cut and easily applicable. It is worth noting that, in the context of the instability of legislatures and governments over the years, and the inconsistency and discontinuity in law-making on the part of the political world, the Constitutional Court played a key role in implementing some critical measures regarding the media system. Its ruling in 1976 that allowed commercial broadcasting showed the courage to start deregulating broadcasting despite RAI's strong position. Several other Court decisions, not always implemented by government and Parliament, deeply affected the development of the regulation of the media sectors.

The following laws have had a strong influence on the structure and development of the Italian media system. A law passed in 1975 reformed RAI, transferring control from

the government's hands to Parliament. The law created a bi-cameral commission representing all political parties, with significant power in appointing the governing body of RAI and in issuing guidance for public service programs. The *Press Law* passed in 1981 rescued the newspaper industry from financial crisis by providing public subsidies to publishers, and introduced legal barriers to concentration of ownership in the hands of industrial trusts. In 1990 Parliament passed a law that preserved the role of public service broadcasting, and entrusted it to a publicly owned company; it also recognized the rights of private enterprises to run broadcasting activities and allowed RAI and Berlusconi to own three television network licenses each.

In 1997 the *Authority for Communications* was established as an independent body with several tasks in the fields of telecommunications and electronic and printed media, a body whose president, however, is appointed by the prime minister. The law introduced restrictions on the number of licenses (down from three to two) for terrestrial television (never enforced, due to political stalemate). In 2000 the *Par condicio* (equal opportunity law) introduced strict regulation for political broadcasts particularly during campaigns and elections. Finally, in 2004 the *Gasparri Law* (named after the minister of communications) was passed. It inaugurated digital terrestrial television, reinstated the possibility of owning three licenses for television networks, and set out the various steps and conditions for a partial privatization of RAI.

The regulatory bodies of the broadcasting sector are the above-mentioned Authority for Communications (AGCOM), with a wide range of tasks from telecommunications to new media; the Authority for Competition (AGCM), with anti-trust functions; and the Parliamentary Commission of Vigilance on RAI, with authority only on matters concerning the public service. An interesting peculiarity of Italy's journalism is the regulation of the profession by a law (No. 69/1963). To be admitted into the official list of "professional journalists" one has to pass a public examination. Various attempts to reform the law, in light of the liberalization of professions, failed and the "Ordine dei giornalisti" continues to condition access.

## PRINTED PRESS

Overall there exist about 140 daily → newspapers in Italy, owned by a dozen publishing companies, the most important of which are Gruppo RCS (*Il Corriere della Sera* and *La Gazzetta dello Sport*), Gruppo L'Espresso (*La Repubblica*), Gruppo Caltagirone (*Il Messaggero*), Gruppo Monti (*Il Resto del Carlino*), Editoriale La Stampa (*La Stampa*), and *Il Sole 24 Ore*, some of which run also several regional and city newspapers.

Italy does not excel in newspaper circulation and readership rates. In addition there is no tradition of a popular or tabloid press. In 2004 the copies sold per 1,000 inhabitants were 149, in contrast to the 650 of Norway and the 67 of Greece (WAN 2005). The average daily circulation in 2005 was 5.9 million (FIEG 2005), whereas the number of readers in an average day is 20.9 million, i.e., 41 percent of the adult population. The free press (three major dailies) is a recent and successful phenomenon, which reached a circulation of 1.6 million copies in 2004. Experts have very diverse explanations for the low penetration rate of the daily press: from the too "literary" flavor (Hallin & Mancini 2004) of much Italian printed journalism, to an excess of political content in the news, to the competition of



other outlets, among which the new media like the → Internet play a considerable role. On the other hand, the market for the tabloid press is quite lively and achieves higher readership penetration rates, with 67.6 percent (33.9 million) readers.

## BROADCASTING

The RAI-Mediaset duopoly and the competition between the two is reflected very clearly in the picture and the figures of the domestic → television market. RAI runs three major channels: *Rai Uno*, *Rai Due*, and *Rai Tre*. Mediaset runs *Canale 5*, *rete 4*, and *Italia 1*. The public broadcasting company draws most of its revenues from the license fee (57.7 percent of the total returns in 2005) and from advertising (41 percent). Mediaset, being a commercial venture, lives only on advertising and on sale of rights. Beside the two giants other minor companies operate in the domestic market, the most important of which are Telecom Italia Media and Sky Italia (owned by Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, and mostly in the business of pay-TV). Most of the channels offer generalist content, i.e., a mix of news, entertainment, and fiction. RAI channels carry significant quotas of educational and cultural programs, though, according to critics, not enough to live up to its peculiar public service mission. To compete with commercial channels, RAI has scheduled a large number of entertainment programs, often very similar to those of its commercial competitors.

The Italian → radio sector is more fragmented, with hundreds of local stations, mostly associated in different forms with fewer than 20 nationwide networks. The networks of the public radio have the lion's share, but a few commercial/all-music channels have very high audience rates as well (AGCOM 2006).

## NEW MEDIA

The Gasparri Law in 2004 launched terrestrial *digital television* and set the date for an end to analog television in 2008. To make this possible the Berlusconi government subsidized the buying of decoders. By the end of 2005, the number of decoders was 3.5 million. However, the new digital channels have rapidly turned into a sort of pay-TV, competing with satellite TV for premium contents (football, games, movies, TV series). The government elected in 2006 stated its intention to introduce major changes in the development of the digital television sector and to delay the switch-off of analog signals to 2012.

The use of the *Internet* and especially of broadband has registered significant increases since the early 2000s. In 2005 there were 9.2 million households with access to the net and 18.3 million web users. The diffusion of broadband (6.8 million more users 2004–2005) is associated with an increase in the demand and supply of innovative applications such as VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and IPTV (Internet Protocol TV). In the latter sector, Telecom Italia is seeking joint ventures with information and content providers like Murdoch's News Corporation.

Italy's mobile telephone market is one of the largest and liveliest in Europe. The overall value of this sector was €19.6 billion in 2005. The UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications System) services of the four mobile companies had been subscribed to by 10 million people at the end of 2005 with a forecast of 25 million by the end of 2007. The 2006 soccer World Cup opened the way to the new venture of mobile television

(with DVB-H [Digital Video Broadcasting – Handheld] technology). The enthusiastic acceptance by users of this new service has prompted analysts to issue optimistic forecasts for future development in this sector.

Overall, the Italian media system shares most of the features of other European media markets, while being sharply distinctive in what has been termed an “anomaly” in the European landscape, i.e., the unique concentration of television channels and other media in the hands of one single trust with strong interests also in the political arena. The “Berlusconi factor” deeply marked the development of both Italy’s media and political systems, bringing about a contamination that to a certain extent has always been typical of the national “parallelism” between politics and the media. This has raised a great deal of concern for the quality of the democratic process in Italy, even if it was an exaggeration to fear a “videocracy” when Berlusconi took power in 1994 and in 2001 (Mazzoleni 1995, 2004). Berlusconi lost the elections in 1996 and in 2006, notwithstanding his exceptional media power. Nevertheless, the weakness of the Italian media system lies in its strong connection with the political powers (no matter what coalition runs the country), which makes it dependent on the political system even in its industrial policies, in the ambiguous legislation that has left large margins for abuses, and in the limited power of the regulatory bodies.

SEE ALSO: ► Internet ► Newspaper ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Radio ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Television ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## Japan: Media System

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Japan is an advanced industrialized country whose GNP/GDP is the second largest in the world. Its population is 127 million, which is the ninth largest in the world. The political system is a parliamentary democracy with the emperor as the state figurehead. The literacy rate is nearly 100 percent, and the per-capita income is about the same as that of other advanced industrialized countries. The income disparity is small for a capitalist economy, leading most people to believe that they belong to the middle class.

The first general election was held in 1890, and the National Diet, Japan's parliament, opened soon afterwards. However, Japanese democracy from 1890 through 1945 was unstable and had many systemic problems. Due to these problems, the government was taken over by the military around 1937, and what was in effect a military dictatorship continued from then until the end of World War II in 1945. The new constitution, which was drawn up under the guidance of the American occupation forces, removed all those failures inherent in the prewar constitution. The new constitution guarantees complete freedom of expression and prohibits government censorship. The Japanese media system naturally reflects Japan's history as well as its social and cultural characteristics.

### **MEDIA OWNERSHIP STRUCTURE**

Most major newspaper companies in Japan hold their shares internally. Japan's corporate law allows this internal stock holding in order to prevent external editorial influence and acquisition. Partly because of this, no large media conglomerates are owned primarily by non-media corporations, unlike in other industrialized countries (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Cross-Ownership; Media Conglomerates). Another reason for the difficulty in "taking over" any Japanese media company is that there exist several media *keiretsu* or groups that are closely intertwined in terms of both stock holdings and personal relationships. In 1996, Rupert Murdoch attempted to purchase one of the major Japanese television networks but failed because of this complex "cultural barrier."

The key actors in the *keiretsu* are the five national newspapers, each of which has close financial and personal ties to one of the five commercial television networks. Regional and local newspapers also own one of the regional and local television stations in their circulation areas. Although this *keiretsu* structure may sound monopolistic or oligopolistic, there exist a large number of magazines, radio stations, and tabloid newspapers that are independent of this mainstream system.

## PRINTED PRESS

About 70 million copies are published each day by 108 newspaper companies in Japan, which is second to China (96 million, → China: Media System). In terms of per-capita circulation, Japan ranks the highest in the world (633 copies per thousand): more than twice that of the US and six times that of China. General newspapers in Japan can be categorized into three kinds: national, regional (called “block”), and local. There are five nationals (the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, the *Asahi Shimbun*, the *Mainichi Shimbun*, the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, and the *Sankei Shimbun*). Each has a circulation of more than 2 million and is regarded as a quality paper (→ Quality Press). The *Yomiuri* publishes 10 million morning and 4 million evening papers. The second largest, the *Asahi*, publishes a total of 12 million copies a day. The *Nihon Keizai (Nikkei)*, which publishes 4.5 million copies daily, has the largest circulation for an economics paper in the world.

Most newspapers, including blocks and local newspapers, publish morning and evening editions, which is one of the particular characteristics of Japanese newspapers. Another characteristic is a heavy reliance on a home-delivery system. In total, 94 percent of all general newspapers are delivered to homes every day by exclusive distributors.

Four national newspapers (all but *Nikkei*) and all three block newspapers publish sports newspapers, which are sports- and entertainment-oriented and fall into the category of → Tabloid Press. *Nikkei*, in turn, publishes three trade papers. All the nationals have publishing divisions and issue weekly or monthly magazines as well as books. In addition, the *Yomiuri* and the *Asahi* own two of the top ten advertising agencies in Japan.

## BROADCASTING

*Television* service is provided by a dual broadcasting system consisting of the public broadcasting corporation and commercial broadcasters. The public television service *Nihon Hoso Kyokai* (NHK) is the second largest broadcasting corporation in the world after the → BBC (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). Supported by viewers’ fees, NHK broadcasts two channels nationwide through a network of 54 stations. It also conducts satellite broadcasting with two channels. Although NHK is not state-run, its annual budget and executive personnel proposals must be approved by the Diet, the Japanese parliament.

The five commercial broadcasters based in Tokyo, who are all affiliated with major national newspapers, are *Nihon TV* (NTV, affiliated with the *Yomiuri*), *TV Asahi* (affiliated with the *Asahi*), *Tokyo Broadcasting Systems* (TBS, affiliated with the *Mainichi*), *Fuji TV* (affiliated with the *Sankei*), and *TV Tokyo* (affiliated with the *Nikkei*). These broadcasters are network stations (key stations) affiliated with regional and local stations (→ Television Networks). The key stations provide their affiliated stations not only with news, but also

with programs that account for 80 to 90 percent of local broadcasting time. Of the 127 commercial stations, only 13 are independent in the strictest sense. Digital satellite broadcasting began in 2000 with 10 channels, two of which are operated by NHK. All analog terrestrial broadcasting is to be completely digitalized by 2011. Another important actor in Japanese broadcasting is *Dentsu*, the largest advertising agency in the world. Dentsu actively participates in program creation. Its influence in the media system is incomparable with any western advertising firms. It accounted for 40 percent of all television advertising (and 20 percent of newspaper and magazine advertising) in 2005.

There are 110 commercial *radio stations* in Japan: 47 AM, 53 FM, one shortwave, and nine satellite (community radio stations are not included). Of the 47 AM stations, 34 are operated by television stations. FM stations are independently operated. Many radio stations, like television stations, are also affiliated with major newspaper companies. NHK provides two AM networks and one FM network for its domestic audience from its 54 stations. It also operates international shortwave broadcasting.

## THE INTERNET

As of 2005, the diffusion rate of the Internet is 67 percent. In terms of broadband diffusion rate, Japan is ranked eleventh in the world, with a diffusion of 17 percent in 2005. It is particularly worth noting that most mobile phones are equipped with Internet access in Japan. Mobile users are able to not only make a phone call and send emails but also access the sea of information on the web. In 2006, television service for mobiles was introduced.

In terms of online news media, Japan's mainstream media are reluctant to be fully committed to Internet service. Major newspapers and NHK have started and keep developing their own news sites. But the information provided on their websites is very limited, both in terms of amount and in terms of depth, because they are not sure whether they can maintain their existing business scale by switching from "paper" subscription to web subscription. They are also afraid that the web-subscription system will drive thousands of existing newspaper distributors all over Japan out of business.

## CONFORMITY AND DIVERSITY

Major national newspapers and television networks are relatively homogeneous in agendas, or news items (in straight news), but diverse in opinions (in editorials). The contents of major national newspapers and television networks tend to be similar because of the organizations' deep commitment to impartiality and neutrality stipulated in their code of ethics. Major newspapers and television networks do not endorse a specific candidate or political party in general elections.

One of the reasons for so much conformity in the news agenda has to do with the *kisha* (reporters) club system, which is unique to the Japanese news media industry. *Kisha* clubs are attached to nearly every government office and major organization all over Japan. Large *kisha* clubs in Tokyo were established more than 100 years ago. As there are many small and informal ones, especially in small cities, it is impossible to count the exact number. A rough estimation is 1,000 nationwide. There are no standard rules, but membership is usually limited to reporters from newspaper companies and television stations that belong to the *Nihon Shinbun Kyokai*, the Japanese association of newspaper publishers and

editors. Until the mid-1990s, foreign-media reporters were not allowed to join most major clubs, and Japanese magazine reporters and freelance journalists are still largely excluded.

Since most Japanese reporters belong to one or more clubs, 80 to 90 percent of news comes from *kisha* clubs. This fact contributes to conformity in the news agenda because (1) the reporters receive the same official announcements, press releases, and background briefings, and (2) regarding unimportant news, reporters at *kisha* clubs discuss when and how the news should be published. These practices, especially the second one, comprise a “news cartel” and have been severely criticized by journalism experts (→ Journalism: Group Dynamics). It has often been a point of discussion in how far the contents of the Japanese news media are determined by the government through the *kisha* club system. It should be noted, however, that *kisha* club reporters face competition from non-*kisha* club media such as the foreign media and tabloids, as well as weekly and monthly magazines. When the news is important, especially if it is scandalous, it is impossible for club reporters or the government to control it in any way. To compete with each other, newspaper and television companies mobilize large numbers of reporters not affiliated with any particular club. The small, cozy “club cocoon” thus easily crumbles. As a result, at least three prime ministers (since 1945) have had to resign in disgrace due to revelations of, and a continuous stream of news about, scandalous conduct.

Another stereotype concerns the homogeneity of Japan’s media content. However, although Japan is racially and culturally homogeneous, the same cannot be said with regard to ideological viewpoints. For example, in the National Diet, the Japan Communist Party, the Komei Party (Buddhist party), and the Japan Democratic Socialist Party (renamed from the Japan Socialist Party) are all represented. The *Asahi Shimbun* is also known for being sympathetic to socialist parties, including the Japan Communist Party, and the *Sankei Shimbun* often carries articles expressing the views of anti-democratic right-wing intellectuals, especially in its monthly magazine *Seiron*.

In Japan, there are intellectuals of any standing who overtly question the values of democracy, although the number of these is very small. They claim that democracy, especially “sengo minshushugi,” or postwar democracy, is too “American” and “alien,” and is therefore incompatible with Japanese culture and tradition.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► China: Media System ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Cross-Ownership ► Journalism: Group Dynamics ► Media Conglomerates ► Neutrality ► News Routines ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Partisan Press ► Political News ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Quality Press ► Tabloid Press ► Television Networks

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# Journalism

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Journalism is a constellation of practices that have acquired special status within the larger domain of communication through a long history that separated out news sharing from its origins in → interpersonal communication. Telling others about events in one's social and physical surroundings is a common everyday activity in human cultures, and news as a → genre of such interactions has the primary characteristic of being new to the listener. A main difficulty for sharing intelligence is ascertaining truth, or, put the other way round, distinguishing intelligence from gossip (Froissart 2002; → Rumor; Small Talk and Gossip; Truth and Media Content). Telling about events, supplying novelty, and, from the process, discerning factual truth are the main rudiments that came to define journalism as a cultural practice.

Journalism, however, is a modern-era phenomenon (→ Journalism, History of), which began its *separation from ordinary communication* first with correspondence, in the form of newsletters sent out in multiple copies to existing → social networks (→ Media Content and Social Networks), a custom available to those with literacy, leisure, and means to write (Zboray & Saracino Zboray 2006). Newsletter authors also required some facility to produce more than one copy and to distribute the result, as well as sufficient social status to make such activity appear to have value for recipients (→ Credibility of Content). This latter quality has been the source of constant attention in journalism (→ Journalists, Credibility of). From the beginning, journalism also depended upon the existence of a delivery means, such as a common courier, to convey news to readers (and in turn to auditors, when the recipients then read the news aloud; → Listening). With the advent of the printing press, some early newsheets imitated hand-made newsletters, but the primary model for all printing was the book as → printer-editors incorporated the sharing of new intelligences into their line of business. The precursors to journalism thus added writing, mechanisms of production, and a system of distribution to its definition, along with issues of status within an economic and social system.

The main claim to distinction for journalism has come through a *close alliance with political life* (Popkin 1989; Pasley 2001). Politics impinged on printing from the beginning in the form of government controls, and printing itself quickly became a political act, of either cooperation with or defiance against the powerful, or the state (→ Censorship;



Communication and Law). Journalism developed at the nexus of negotiating boundaries to demarcate private life, civil society (or the market), and the state from each other, and in some perspectives that zone became a special or sacred space (→ Privacy; Public Sphere). It was a short step, then, for the emerging press to become enmeshed in politics, an alliance of two initially (and perhaps continually) unsavory activities (an irony often lost on practitioners and scholars; → Partisan Press). The relationship began with partisan politics clearly having the upper hand (Weber 1958/1991), but eventually turned adversarial as journalism escaped state and party control, moving more firmly toward the ascendant and eventually vying for discursive dominance.

In the nineteenth century, the advance of literacy and growth of (often national) markets, along with government-created information systems (especially the post and the census), joined with industrialization to turn newspapers into the central mode of news as an economic activity (Ward 2005; → Newspaper Journalism). The term “journalism” proper emerged to refer to the resulting group of occupations involved in generating and preparing news content (→ News Workers). Publishers remained in control, but journalists became chief among workers involved in industrial news production and distribution (Hardt & Brennen 1995). A further development in news manufacture was the founding and growth of → news agencies to generate and distribute content across (often competing) outlets, which developed either among publishers (in commercial systems) or from central or government initiative (in noncommercial systems). Agencies replaced the informal exchange of news (printers merely copying content from other, distant printers) with a market exchange of a commodity specifically formulated to fit into the press regardless of partisan (or national) affiliations.

Owners and practitioners (and some scholars) normally claim technology – printing, the telegraph, radio and television broadcasting, and subsequent equipment (→ Broadcast Journalism; News Production and Technology; Online Journalism; Telegraphic News) – as a key impetus in the evolution of journalism, but studies find news organizations to be not leading but mainstream or late adopters of new techniques in most cases (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001). After resisting initially, they have so far found ways first to turn technical change to their economic advantage and then to trumpet themselves as innovators (although the outcome always remains in doubt midstream).

A more important component in the success of journalism, whether in commercial or public service media systems of the world, has been a willingness to engage with existing power relations, whether pandering to parties or markets, crusading for political stability or change, or doing some combination of these options (→ Advocacy Journalism; Muckraking; Yellow Journalism). One measure of the cultural power of journalism is the violent reaction against its practitioners throughout its history (Nerone 1994), especially in periods of social controversy and change (→ Violence against Journalists; Violence and the Media, History of).

## ASPECTS OF PRACTICE

Journalism emerged around the same time as the modern novel, and both forms share a basis in narrative (→ News Story; Narrative News Story). The two have borrowed liberally from each other in a long-running, usually tacit, dialogue, and the relationship

between news and fiction is thus antagonistic only at a superficial level. News storytelling involves more than employment, with actors performing their roles at a time and place or scene that reaches climax and resolution (White 1973; Ricoeur 1984), but also re-enacts deeper myths that express a society's view of good and evil, or of who deserves to win and who to lose (Lule 2001; → News Myths; Popular Mythology).

Separating the occupation of journalist from author is one marker of a project under way by the early twentieth century to make journalism into a particular kind of profession (→ Professionalization of Journalism). Other markers include the emergence of acceptable practices, training programs, associations, and codes of ethics (→ Ethics in Journalism; Journalists: Professional Associations). In many parts of the world, journalism remained part of and firmly aligned with literary work, and even in nations where the professional project predominated, such as the United States, movements of long-form and literary journalism arose (→ New Journalism).

Although fiction writing occasionally imitates news, journalism differs fundamentally in practice. Reporters turn to sources outside journalism for information and judgments (→ News Sources), even when writing opinion or analysis, although the practice may veil the journalist's perspective, at least partially (Schiller 1981; → Objectivity in Reporting; Instrumental Actualization). Journalists invented a particular kind of interview, which differs from ordinary interaction, especially in the case of broadcasting (→ Interview as Journalistic Form). Government and other leaders have developed specific presentational tools for getting and holding the attention of journalists (→ Press Conference; Public Relations). These activities, unlike the work of other authors, operate in predictable rounds growing out of news genres and processes of production, so that weekly news magazines, daily newspapers, multiple television newscasts, and hourly radio news updates set workflow into motion in → news cycles akin to the hours of medieval monastic orders. Journalists experience these cycles as *deadline pressures*, a central aspect distinguishing news practice.

From its birth in the industrialized newsroom, journalism developed customary patterns for all aspects of work (→ News Routines). The best-known example is the *beat*, which combines location and process so that a reporter goes through a set of routines to gather information from predictable and reliable places (Tuchman 1978). Because they share experiences, if not training, journalists within a mainstream (usually national or regional) system respond to each other and to the world in similar ways (→ Journalism: Group Dynamics). For example, the collective mentality that leads journalists to gather around certain public occurrences or figures has acquired the name "pack journalism." This pejorative term, along with others such as "paparazzi," the photographers who hound celebrities, forms a system of policing the boundaries between journalists and others who do similar work but lack the insider status that, in general, only institutions in the industry have the power to confer (→ Photojournalism; Celebrity Culture).

Other terms convey the *pattern of competition*, such as the "scoop" and the "exclusive," which reinforces standard practices and keeps practitioners in a state of perpetual anxiety. Unionization has been the principal force mediating between the power of news institutions and journalism workers, but all involved, even corporations and state bureaucracies, subscribe to a competitive discipline that defines practice (→ Standards of News). Journalism awards and prizes (operating primarily at the national level) formalize competition and

reify the abstract quality assumptions about news work (→ News Ideologies). A set of *news elements* (the five Ws – who, what, when, where, and why) underlies a broader set of → news values, which go by a plethora of terms in training manuals and in practice, but may correspond roughly with the elements: prominence (who), peculiarity (what), novelty (when), proximity (where), and significance (why). Like other practical ideals (such as *principles of design* among graphic designers; → Graphic Design), news values inherently come into conflict with each other, which keeps news work interesting. But the patterned responses to practical principles not only help national and regional news cultures define themselves but also help guide individual journalists in their self-assessment (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

News cultures have tended through the twentieth century toward consensus around two main ends, one supervisory at its core and the other advisory. As news managers, journalists operate as gatekeepers, handling what they perceive as a growing flow of information and providing an altruistic service for audience members (White 1950; → Gatekeeping). These news manager-supervisors apply the principles to select and reject potential content, although decisions about what the public needs tend to occur without much recourse to the people themselves (Dennis 1978). As news advisors, journalists operate as advocates, promoting particular understandings of the world, again as a public service. Journalism is promotional and managerial in a vocational rather than commercial sense, and news systems blend these tendencies, which act as poles pulling practice in apparently opposite directions, advisory versus supervisory. Both, however, may tend to enhance journalism by directing attention away from journalists and toward their expressed public service vocation.

In the broadest sense, the ends of journalism point toward more general theories, such as the possibility of democracy and realities of power and authority (McNair 2000; → Media Democracy; Power and Discourse). Journalism is thus a construction that embodies ideals about society and the world, and these theories provide pictures of social, political, economic, and cultural organization, through the lens of journalism and its view of itself (→ Journalism: Normative Theories).

### DIFFERENTIATION AMONG JOURNALISTS

As an occupational category, journalism in the nineteenth century merged several kinds of tasks: principally the *editor*, who managed some aspect of content from a central office, the *correspondent*, who ventured out as a worldly traveler and (perhaps imperial) observer of affairs, and various forms of *news hounds*, who did piecework as local scavengers to fill the editorial hole by the inch, often pursuing a particular topic or venue such as crime or the docks. As journalism emerged as a professional project, specialization produced new bundles of tasks. A foreign location, for example, allowed some journalists to build expertise through experience in a distant location (→ Foreign Correspondents). Government control remained one of the main difficulties for journalists crossing boundaries into media systems outside their own. Another specialty focused on wars and conflicts (→ War Correspondents), and although such a pattern of assignments might enhance the status of the journalists exposed to risk, the professional in these roles also faced the drudgery of frequent deadlines and routine coverage typical of scavenger work, which

earlier correspondents might have avoided. The tradeoffs between professional autonomy and state protection re-emerged as military authorities invented and elaborated on systems of control (→ Embedded Journalists).

Journalism has embodied and reinforced concepts of the mainstream and the other, another form of differentiation that plays out on two levels: in the structure of news businesses and in the agency at work within these organizations. Ethnic groups that share a heritage, language, location, and the like (Riggings 1992), especially when excluded from mainstream institutions, began forming their own newspapers early in press development (→ Ethnic Journalism). The minority press has likewise tended to emerge in the wake of geopolitical boundary formation and international migration (→ Minority Journalism). These journalisms at the margins may begin in advisory mode, promoting group solidarity in opposition to the mainstream, but here again joining the professional project of journalism can shift their emphasis toward a neutral form of information management. Although women have generated publications throughout news history, the level of agency has been especially evident in their fate in journalism (→ Gender and Journalism). Early feminist histories focused on remarkable women journalists, and recent work has shifted emphasis to the gendered division of labor and topics and then to gendered identity (De Bruin & Ross 2004).

The relationship of journalism to politics has also seen differentiation. Groupings of news workers covering national capitals and heads of state have acquired special status as a *press corps*, including their own organizations and rituals, and wield considerable influence but identify with and rely on official sources (→ Political Journalists), in contrast to the ethnic, minority, and women's, along with the underground and oppositional, groupings of journalists (→ Alternative Journalism). The latter groups represent alternative political ideologies, and they may espouse specific positions on issues (→ Peace Journalism), but in general they take an active, advisory stand with their audience members (Downing 2001). Mainstream journalists focused on information supervision have turned to investigating public officials since the nineteenth century (Ettema & Glasser 1998; Waisbord 2000), but their exposing of corruption and mismanagement tends to reinforce dominant ideologies by implying that small institutional changes and responsible individual behavior are sufficient to set things right (→ Investigative Reporting). A recent movement to make reporting more answerable to civic and community needs strikes closer to reform within the political culture of journalism (Rosen 1999; → Public Journalism).

Other kinds of differentiation have grown out of the main currents of a society. Examples include journalists focused on topics such as → science journalism and on modes of delivery such as visual journalism (→ Visual Communication). The growth of computer networks and increased accessibility of large databases about public issues have contributed to a corresponding specialization for journalists in countries rich in the necessary resources and skills (→ Precision Journalism).

These same currents may have contradictory outcomes for the professional project of journalism. The production of news content has become more portable across traditional print and broadcast media as the tasks journalists perform *converge on digital technology* (→ Cross-Media Production). The changes might point to multimedia journalism or instead to a de-skilling of practice, as the tools shift from professionals into other hands. In many countries, citizens can now tell each other their own news by writing and

distributing it electronically from home or from a community center or library (Rodríguez 2000; → Citizen Journalism). Despite hopes for broader democratic participation, online forms of journalism have so far reproduced existing alignments in politics and emerged along existing economic and cultural cleavages (→ Blogger).

Journalists, however, have accumulated considerable cultural capital in more than a century of existence. As a cultural practice, journalism has shed some of its unsavory past, but not all, as long as scandal and titillation continue (→ Sensationalism), and in fact practitioners themselves can acquire fame (Corner & Pels 2003; → Celebrity Journalists). Journalists have become central interpreters in public discourse, and even in the United States, where a denotative journalism of facts and events took early and deep root, the quantity and degree of interpretation within the mainstream news media have grown continually for more than a century (Barnhurst & Mutz 1997; → Interpretive Journalism).

### NEWS WORK AND THE ACADEMY

Scholarly inquiry on journalism emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century in Europe, where works of history, economics, and sociology identified the press as a force in the dynamics of public and political life (Dennis & Wartella 1996). German economist Karl Knieves wrote in 1857 on the relationship of the telegraph and the press, and Karl Bücher at Leipzig, in *Kultur und Presse*, expanded the idea that news moved between localities through complementary exchange relationships. Historians of the same period traced the liaison of literature and the press in France, and Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* examined newspapers in the making of associations. The German sociologist Emil Loeb applied systematic concepts to newspaper organization and content as well as journalism practices. Max Weber, in his well-known essay "Politics as a vocation," observed the roles and status of journalists. He tried to make journalism research a greater priority for German scholarship, proposing that the National Sociological Society conduct a large empirical study of the ideological determinants of news content, the relation of journalism to public life, and the impact of press ownership on the distribution of power, among other issues.

Alignments between industry and the academy for the purposes of job training helped shape journalism research (→ Journalism Education). The first *university journalism programs* grew from the organized efforts of publishers and press associations to harness academic work to the project of making journalism respectable. European programs combined sociological research on the press with training for journalism practice, oriented in relation to concepts of the public, but the practice of journalism remained aligned with humane letters, especially in the southern tier of Europe. In the United States, journalism programs grew from English departments (Dressel 1960), but industry demands for news production skills came into conflict with liberal arts (Hutchins Commission 1947), especially with existing curricula oriented to the study of literature. As a result, journalism programs became administratively independent and more vocational. Speech programs followed a similar route, becoming separate entities that eventually took a role in training for broadcasting work (Wallace 1954). The contest of job skills versus liberal arts was not peculiar to journalism but informed wider debates about academic specialization, pitting expertise (for journalists) against generalist training (for

citizens) in the early twentieth century. Because specialization could allow interested elites to corrupt the academy, Canadian scholar → Harold Innis (1946) suggested preserving the university tradition against particular vocational training and against narrow empiricism inherent in the rising new definitions of social science. For journalism as an academic field, professionalism especially seemed inappropriate for organizing university inquiry (Carey 1978; → Communication as a Field and Discipline).

Generally, the study of journalism remained *scattered among academic disciplines* and dependent upon the particular research projects of investigators. Journalism likely did not come into focus for research because the surrounding institutions focused on practice. In Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Deuze 2006), industry associations were instrumental in creating journalism schools as occupational centers, founded, for example, in China by 1918 (Lee 2000), Egypt by 1935 (Murphy & Scotten 1987), Argentina by 1934 (Knudson 1987), and Russia by 1947 (Morrison 1997). Researchers might use materials from newspaper offices, as did an early study in Poland (Thomas & Znaniecki 1927), or encounter journalism as an aspect of daily life, as did the mass observers in 1930s Britain (Madge & Harrison 1938), but the result did not place journalists in sharp focus. The famed Chicago School paid considerable attention to news in community life (e.g., Fenton 1911) and included at least one professor with practical journalism experience, Robert Park (Lindner 1996), but then Chicago sociology for many years disappeared from view in the academic study of journalism.

Professors' organizations growing out of university departments founded the first scholarly periodicals to focus on journalism research. The earliest was probably *Zeitschrift für Zeitungskunde*, which Bücher founded shortly after 1916 (Dennis & Wartella 1996). Elsewhere, the American Association of Teachers of Journalism in 1924 founded *Journalism Quarterly*, a publication that endured organizational changes and mergers. (The *Journal of Broadcasting*, which the University Association for Professional Radio Education founded, later followed a similar path.)

Following World War I, *propaganda analysis* became a leading academic and popular way to understand journalism (Sproule 1997; → Propaganda). Contributors included journalists such as → Walter Lippmann as well as academic researchers. Scholarly debate on propaganda and journalism in the interwar period eventually divided between those taking a propaganda practitioner approach (e.g., Lasswell 1927) and those taking a propaganda criticism approach (e.g., Lee & Lee 1939/1979; Lynd 1939/1964), based on normative ideas of journalism and its place in democracy. The work of propaganda analysis helped establish institutional foundations for studying journalism.

World War II disrupted organized academic activities in Europe and elsewhere, and some scholars whose work touched on journalism, including Herta Herzog and Herbert Marcuse, among others, moved to the United States. Government agencies involved in monitoring and analyzing enemy broadcasts and designing propaganda campaigns sometimes involved academic researchers in journalism topics. For example, → Harold Lasswell (1946) conducted content analyses that provided evidence for prosecuting German-American publishers (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). Another strand of research influencing the understanding of journalism emerged from connections to industry through market studies (→ Marketing). Paul → Lazarsfeld applied the concept of *Handlung* (action) from German humanistic psychology to marketing research as an

inquiry into purchasing choices (Lazarsfeld & Kornhauser 1935; Lazarsfeld 1939; Czitrom 1982), seen as parallel to the decisions of voters and news audiences.

### SCHOLARLY STUDY AND PROSPECTS

By the late 1940s, empirical social science became the dominant paradigm for academic inquiry into journalism, organized generally around the concept of “mass communication.” Early PhD programs emphasizing journalism had emerged in the US midwest during the first half of the twentieth century, with the general tendency toward the social sciences (Weaver & McCombs 1980). Programs at the universities of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, as well as Stanford, eventually incorporated sociology from Lazarsfeld, political science from Lasswell, and social psychology from → Carl Hovland to treat journalism as a social object of study (Zelizer 2004). Journalism research thus acquired a growing emphasis on means of → observation, systematic documentation, and → generalizability of results (e.g., Hovland et al. 1949; Breed 1955). Humanities approaches to journalism fell behind as the status of social science grew, so that, for instance, studies employing quantitative methods went from 10 to 48 percent of the news media research in *Journalism Quarterly* in the decades from 1937 to 1957 (Schramm 1957; → Quantitative Methodology). Although earlier research had treated journalism as a powerful force in defining social problems and in propagating government ideas and fomenting public support, the dominant thinking among scholars by mid-century was more functionalist and had come to see journalism as limited in its effects (e.g., Berelson et al. 1954; → Functional Analysis; Media Effects).

By the 1960s, however, objections began to arise. Intellectual currents such as → semiotics began to influence thinking about journalism (Eco 1965/1972; Barthes 1967). Social scientists in the United Kingdom developed an interest in the study of journalism, led by Jeremy Tunstall (1971), who pursued inquiries into journalists’ autonomy from surrounding forces. By the 1970s, fault lines emerged in the dominant social scientific paradigm, after research found that greater effects could occur among distinct social groups as opposed to the masses and that journalism had influence in setting the public agenda among political elites especially (Greenberg & Dominick 1969; McCombs & Shaw 1972). In Britain once → cultural studies emerged, Stuart Hall (1973, 1974) and others analyzed journalism texts, and social critics such as Ralph Miliband (1969/1973) described how capitalist ownership and shared values among media professionals helped support class domination. US sociologists examined news and conducted fieldwork among journalists (e.g., Molotch & Lester 1974; Gans 1979), and communication scholars began incorporating cultural approaches, led by James W. Carey (1976, 1989; Allan 1999).

In the early 1980s, when the communication discipline underwent a period of ferment, a new vector also extended into journalism study. *Agenda-setting effects*, along with → *priming theory* and → *framing effects* (e.g., Iyengar & Kinder 1987), developed as a research approach to journalism, particularly related to political life (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Framing of the News). Under the emerging conditions of postmodernism, attention to news was declining among youth (Bogart 1989; Barnhurst & Wartella 1991), and journalism as a professional project entered a conscious period of crisis (Hallin 1992;

→ Postmodernism and Communication). Journalists became aware of declining audiences related to the aging of the population and also faced industrial changes such as the liberalization of state-controlled media in some countries and the proliferation of cable, talk radio, and other alternatives to traditional news outlets in countries with commercial systems, accompanied by the rise of new populist media and spread of tabloid journalism globally.

As intellectuals debated the process of globalization, scholars of journalism engaged in *political and economic critiques* that examined the relationship of media organizations to centers of social control (Hess 1984; Manoff & Schudson 1987; → Globalization Theories; Globalization of the Media; Media Economics). US practitioners responded with the civic journalism movement and joined with their counterparts in industrialized countries and with some academics in adopting a view of news as a contributor to the public sphere (Habermas 1962/1989; Dahlgren 1995). The rise of political-economic criticism (e.g., Herman & Chomsky 1988/2002; → Political Economy of the Media), on top of the cultural criticism of the 1970s, prolonged the moment of crisis in journalism practice, which intensified after the Cold War ended in 1989. Among scholars, the crisis concentrated attention on journalism and exposed its underlying realist assumptions (Hartley 1982, 1996). Journalism studies, incorporating concepts of narrative and myth, ideology and hegemony, as well as approaches such as professional critique, political and economic analysis, and sociological observation, took institutional form in anthologies of canonic scholarship (O'Malley & Bromley 1997; Tumber 1999), in new scholarly journals such as *Journalism Theory, Practice and Criticism* and *Journalism Studies* (both founded in 1989), and in the creation and rapid growth of a Journalism Studies Division in the International Communication Association.

In a sense, then, the vectors of journalism study followed general intellectual movements of the latter twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and paralleled the increasing differentiation in journalism practice. At the beginning of the new century, critical scholars argued that → access to the media varies by social group (especially given the → digital divide), that capitalist ownership shapes news values, and that market-driven news practices benefit the already privileged (Curran 2002). Liberal pluralist scholars tended instead to align themselves with journalists' definition of a positive and realist social role for journalism as an extension of (or a means essential to) the public sphere, aligning these concepts with journalistic training (Bromley 2006). Although the definition of journalism itself varies across academic disciplines and across dominant and alternative forms of practice, the main issue facing journalism is power. While scholars debate the power relations of journalists in media and political systems, journalists see multiple threats to their powers to practice in safety, to retain political autonomy, and to resist losses in their tenuous professional status.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Blogger ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Celebrity Journalists ▶ Censorship ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Cross-Media Production ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Embedded Journalists ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethnic Journalism ▶ Foreign



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 ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Myths ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Routines  
 ▶ News Sources ▶ News Story ▶ News Values ▶ News Workers ▶ Newspaper  
 Journalism ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Observation ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Partisan  
 Press ▶ Peace Journalism ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Political Economy of the Media  
 ▶ Political Journalists ▶ Popular Mythology ▶ Postmodernism and Communication  
 ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Press Conference ▶ Priming Theory  
 ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Privacy ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public  
 Journalism ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Rumor  
 ▶ Science Journalism ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Small Talk and Gossip ▶ Social  
 Networks ▶ Standards of News ▶ Telegraphic News ▶ Truth and Media Content  
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## Journalism Education

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Journalism education is instruction for work in the news departments of media organizations, both print and electronic. The instruction can take place before journalists enter the workforce, during early employment, and at later career stages. It can involve practical training in the skills of the journalist and broader education about the context of that work (→ Professionalization of Journalism). The training can cover reporting (information gathering and evaluation), writing (language use and storytelling techniques, including photography and graphics), and editing (including story presentation and integration into the news format) skills. Education about the context of journalism can include topics such as the social setting and impact of news, journalism history and law, and news ethics.

### MAIN TRADITIONS

Education for entry-level journalism has followed three main traditions, which reflect not only the historical evolution of journalism education, but also the control from, and involvement of, media businesses themselves. The earliest journalists learned their skills *on the job*, usually beside a journeyman. That tradition has persisted until now, most notably in Great Britain. A tradition usually associated with the US centers on *university instruction* before entering the workforce. A tradition associated with continental Europe houses journalism instruction in *training institutions* other than the university and

separate from the industry. Variants of these traditions exist in nearly every country even today.

Most research on journalism education is descriptive, such as the → UNESCO project that mapped the field (Gaunt 1992). Variants in journalism education tend to reflect the history, traditions, political structure, and economics of each national press system.

Proponents view journalism education as important because it gives journalists skills and values that affect what they do, e.g., expertise to be better gatherers and interpreters of information, writing and video-shooting skills to fashion better reports, which audiences will more likely attend to and understand. The outcome should be a better-informed citizenry (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). Although the evidence for that assumption is largely anecdotal, news media companies support it in their habits. Larger organizations employ journalists specialized to cover medicine, transportation, legal affairs, defense, and the like, because they believe that specialized knowledge, acquired through training or on the job, makes for better reporters and editors, to the benefit of citizens.

The employing media organizations believe that journalism training supplies more productive members of the workforce. A journalist who knows which sources to approach, how to conduct an interview, how to write in news style (→ News), and how to work under deadlines will likely produce the news product quickly and cost-effectively. A journalist trained in libel and other legal constraints on news (→ Libel and Slander) will likely help the employing organization avoid legal problems. From education, the employer gets a type of certification of a journalist's basic skills.

Journalism education frequently has been a means of political control. In Eastern European countries under communism, for example, journalists generally could not hold the top news leadership positions unless one of a few university journalism programs had trained them. The training guaranteed that journalists followed the techniques and values of the state information system. The values of the host society always influence journalism, and journalism education is necessarily one means to exert social control over journalism practice.

## **JOURNALISM EDUCATION IN THE US**

University-based journalism education began in the US in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when departments of English began offering courses in basic writing and reporting skills for print journalism. In 1908, the University of Missouri established the *first School of Journalism*, a distinct academic unit designed to educate students for careers. Enough journalism programs were in operation four years later to see the founding of the American Association of Teachers in Journalism, which developed into today's Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, a largely US-based organization (Emery & McKerns 1987).

Journalism education fitted well into the US university, which, more than its European contemporaries, included instruction in entry-level skills for persons preparing to join the labor force (→ News Workers). American universities expected students to participate in courses across multiple fields – a type of liberal arts education that most European countries included in pre-university curricula – and American students could also study to be nurses, teachers, engineers, and even agricultural workers, as well as journalists.

Despite this integration of journalism education into the core of American universities, a division has always existed between programs fully integrated into, and those drawing on but separate from, that liberal arts core (Reese 1999). Proponents of the former position, called the *Wisconsin model* after the university where it originated, argue that journalism programs should be housed in the core of the university. Proponents of the latter model, associated with the University of Missouri, argue that journalism education should stand outside that core. Most US journalism programs follow the Wisconsin model, a minority follows the *Missouri model*, and some follow another variant.

Another persistent division in US journalism education is between instruction for entering newspapers and magazines, and instruction for entering radio and television. When US radio broadcasters began to need trained workers, they turned to universities with programs in oral communication. These units, mainly departments called Speech Communication (→ Speech Communication, History of), educated students in the techniques of argumentation and debate as well as voice and articulation. The close alliance of the newspaper industry with existing journalism programs and the competition between newspaper and radio made a separate source for radio talent an advantage. Television followed this same path until the 1960s, when news operations began to expand and needed workers trained in journalism. Existing print journalism programs then began to provide journalism instruction for broadcasters.

In the 1970s, journalism programs at US universities began to expand their curricular offerings to include instruction for careers in public relations and advertising (→ Advertising; Public Relations; Professionalization of Public Relations). Advertising had been a part of the University of Missouri journalism program from the beginning, and many students likely studied journalism to enter public relations either immediately or later as their careers unfolded. Today, advertising and public-relations instruction is common in US journalism programs.

The division between speech communication and journalism still exists at many US universities, although others have brought these programs together in an umbrella organization, a college or department of communication. About 1,200 US universities offer some form of instruction in communication, and roughly 450 of them include journalism in their curriculum.

Efforts to create standards for journalism education (→ Standards of News) in the US began as early as 1917 and culminated in 1945 with the founding of the American Council on Education for Journalism, today called the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC; Emery & McKerns 1987). The accreditation standards, a by-product of discussions between journalism educators and the media industries that employ their graduates, cover curriculum, faculty qualifications, facilities, governance, and the like. In 2006, ACEJMC accredited 109 programs in the US and one in Chile.

## **JOURNALISM EDUCATION IN OTHER AREAS**

In western Europe, few universities until recently offered curricula to train students in the practice of journalism. Usually instruction came from other institutions of higher education focused on specialized trades and occupations. The universities instead offered

courses to examine critically how journalism operates, often from the point of view of political science or sociology. The University of Leipzig taught such courses as early as 1762.

Despite similarities within Europe, countries have pursued different approaches to journalism education (Gaunt 1992). In *France*, a body representing the government, the journalism union, and the media industries accredits programs. Consistent with the French tradition in journalism itself, instruction focuses on a literary tradition. In the Netherlands, specialized institutions have training journalists as their sole mission. Many *German* media organizations run training internally. Graduates may seek employment outside the organization, but the organization can observe their work over time and offer contracts to the most promising students. Large German media organizations value specialized knowledge and hire journalists with doctoral degrees in their areas of specialization. The new democracies of *eastern Europe* have tended to follow the American models for journalism education, although several countries house journalism within political-science colleges.

Former British colonies in *Asia* and *Africa* followed the tradition of on-the-job training initially, but have moved more recently toward university-based education. Other countries have followed the traditions of their colonial masters as well. In the Philippines, for example, universities offer journalism curricula very similar to those of the US.

Beijing University in 1918 offered the first journalism courses in *China*. Other universities, many headed by American missionaries, began similar instruction. With the creation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, journalism education came under state control. As China became more open to the west at the turn of the twentieth century, journalism instruction also came less under central control and reflected the American trends more.

Journalism education in *Latin America* is an amalgam of US and European influences. The programs emerged in the 1950s and 1960s and followed American university-based models, but often included a political component. Practical skills training is less prominent than theoretical analysis of the role of journalism in society, reflecting the countries' strong literary and humanistic traditions.

### MID-CAREER TRAINING

Post-employment training for working journalists has become common in many countries. In Denmark, for example, union contracts guarantee training opportunities for journalists. In the US, approximately 130 such programs operate. As part of media assistance, donor countries around the world commonly include training for working journalists. The employer, an educational institution, or an independent organization may offer *mid-career* training.

The programs, running from a few hours to several months of intensive study, may take place at work or at another institution. Specialized journalism training organizations offer some programs, and universities offer others, as extensions of existing journalism curricula. Programs may focus on specific skills, such as software use or government databases, or on general knowledge, such as health research methods. Web resources increasingly supplement the programs, and some training takes place exclusively online.

Working journalists may know about and regard the programs highly, but little systematic information exists about the *effectiveness of the training*. Some research suggests that mid-career training can give journalists new ideas and sources for writing and producing stories (Becker et al. 2006). Promoters say that participants have more motivation and advance in their careers. Sharing experiences may improve individual performance and journalism in general. Research does suggest that long programs give journalists a respite, a time to gain new enthusiasm for work and for subsequent stages of their careers.

The competencies of journalists, acquired through education before and after employment, may affect the news construction process, but research has not yet documented to what extent. More important, research has not examined how variants in journalism education affect news work. Do university- and industry-based programs produce reporters with different value systems? Do journalists educated in the humanities produce a different version of news than those educated in the social-science tradition? Research needs to pursue these questions to understand journalism education.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ News ▶ News Workers ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Public Relations ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Standards of News ▶ UNESCO

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## **Journalism: Group Dynamics**

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Several factors shape journalists' everyday news decisions, their general concepts of what is newsworthy (→ News Factors; News Values), and their understanding of quality



(→ Quality of the News), as well as long-term changes in reporting. One of the most important factors is the close interaction and frequent communication among journalists, or *co-orientation*. Co-orientation comprises several kinds of dynamic processes within journalism. In the era of 24-hour news channels, the Internet, and shortening production cycles (→ News Cycles), the dynamic processes within journalism are not only occurring faster but are also becoming more important.

### TYPES OF INTERACTION AMONG JOURNALISTS

The basis of journalist group dynamics is their close interaction and communication in professional and private contexts, their *ingroup orientation* (Reinemann 2004). Across different contexts, causes, functions, and effects, the types of interaction among journalists fall along two dimensions: the *modes of interaction* (interpersonal vs via mass media vs virtual or cognitive) and the *constellations of interaction* (journalists of the same organization vs those of different organizations).

First, among the *modes of interaction*, journalists can interact directly. Reporters have interpersonal interaction on their news beats, at → press conferences, in reporter pools for foreign and war correspondents, or during election campaigns with candidate tours (Crouse 1973; → Election Campaign Communication). Beat reporters develop a good rapport and solidarity among themselves, based on cooperative arrangements. Second, journalists also communicate indirectly via mass media, such as when they read each other's work in the morning newspaper. Finally, a purely cognitive or virtual form of interaction takes place when journalists anticipate their competitors' future news decisions and react to them in their own reporting. As a consequence, journalists may choose stories because they *expect* a competing medium to do so.

Among the *constellations of interaction*, interaction among journalists may occur within the same or across different media organizations. In the same organization, the interaction involves discussions among peers in the staff, among corporate supervisors and journalists, and among reporters and editors. The discussions serve to make new colleagues familiar with the professional norms of a medium (*professional socialization*), to establish and stabilize principles of news making, or to decide whether and how to cover a specific story (*editorial control*). The most important institutionalized form of communication in news organizations is the *editorial conference* (→ News Routines). Interaction among journalists working for different organizations also is intense. Using other news media is the most frequent form of journalistic interaction for newsroom journalists. Reporters of different media are more often interacting interpersonally at their news beats. Journalists may also be members of journalist unions or read professional journals (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

All these forms of interaction might be means of news gathering, of observing competing news organizations, or of keeping up with the latest trends in the profession. Indirectly, the interactions also establish an intermedia consensus on the criteria of newsworthiness and reporting quality. The importance and implications of discourse and informal contacts among journalists are central to the concept of journalists as *interpretive communities* (Zelizer 1993; → News Ideologies; Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in).

Most types of journalistic interaction have undergone empirical study. Observational and survey studies have investigated professional socialization and structures of influence within newsrooms, journalists' media use, the direct interaction and networking among journalists of different news organizations, and the like. In observational studies, researchers have looked at, for example, how intense communication was in newsrooms, when and how other media were used, and the extent to which competing media served as points of reference in editorial conferences. Survey studies have asked journalists how often and for how long they use other news media; what influence their supervisors, colleagues, competing media, important newspapers, or wire services have on their concept of newsworthiness; what influence other media have on their post-publication evaluation of their own work; and the like. The studies have shown that journalists spend a lot of their time monitoring other media, which they regard as important for their everyday work (*routine reliance on other media*) (Shoemaker & Reese 1995). Some studies found differences among journalists of different ages and editorial positions, as well as differences among those working for different media (Reinemann 2004; Weaver et al. 2006).

### WHY JOURNALISTS INTERACT CLOSELY

Scholars studying co-orientation in journalism offer several reasons why colleagues and other media matter so much to journalists. Some of the rationales concern features of the news production process, but others concentrate on the characteristics that distinguish colleagues and media from other journalistic sources (→ News Sources).

Some authors argue that, because journalism lacks *rational* criteria for news decisions, journalists must make decisions under uncertainty. Journalists also face constant time pressure and must make decisions quickly. In these circumstances, colleagues and the coverage of other news media fulfill the journalists' need for a *social validation* of their news decisions (Donsbach 1999). Other authors argue that uncertainty itself can serve to explain only a strong need for information, but not why journalists rely so much on co-orientation. Among the variety of sources available, other journalists may become points of reference because of their special quality as journalistic sources (Reinemann 2004).

The importance of other media for journalists may result from a missing or disturbed relationship between journalists and their audiences. In other words, because journalists neglect their audiences, their colleagues remain their main point of reference. This view gains support from studies showing that journalists write primarily for themselves, for their editors, and for other journalists. On the other hand, the spread of → audience research has increased journalists' knowledge about their audiences, and economic concerns pressure journalists to take seriously what their audiences need (→ Competition in Media Systems; Readership Research). Co-orientation among journalists and orientation toward audiences are not mutually exclusive phenomena. Other media may be important for journalists because a previous publication on a topic indicates that it has audience appeal. Journalists may rely heavily on other media for story ideas not *for lack of* interest but instead *because of* that very interest in the audience. Another reason may be that the media must meet the expectations that come along with their position in the daily news cycle. For example, an evening newspaper can succeed only if it picks up the stories from morning papers and radio news, adding the latest information (McManus 1994).

Competition among media may be the main reason for the intense interactions among journalists. In this view, tracking the products of competitors is a way of controlling the environment of the news organization. From the journalists' perspective, the control is necessary because they think that success depends on providing more timely, comprehensive, or exclusive reporting than their competitors. In fact, some evidence suggests that journalists do follow only a limited number of media closely, mostly those that compete directly with them. The competition does not seem to be equally intense for all kinds of stories. For example, Herbert Gans (1979) found at the magazines he investigated that competition was most intense for cover stories. The processes of economic concentration, which lead, for example, to media monopolies in local markets (→ Concentration in Media Systems), also reduce the need to monitor competitors.

Other research stresses the qualities of journalists and media as information sources: perceived reliability, saturation with news factors, correspondence with journalistic styles of presentation, constant availability and low cost, as well as their usefulness in various stages of news production. These qualities make other media especially valuable sources. Other media can provide an overview about what is on the news map, can be an indicator of audience interest, and can provide background information or new angles for a story. Colleagues also play a central role, post-publication, in evaluating the quality of individual stories or the appropriateness of the placement and weight a topic receives. No other source is so *multifunctional* (McManus 1994; Reinemann 2004).

### EFFECTS OF JOURNALISTS' GROUP DYNAMICS

Close interaction and mutual observation in journalism lead to dynamic processes within and between news organizations. Most studies argue that these processes may lead to homogeneous concepts of newsworthiness and, as a consequence, of news content (→ Consonance of Media Content). There may be a → mainstreaming effect on the general attitudes of journalists. News organizations foster professional socialization and establish editorial control through interpersonal discourse, through editing each other's work, and through monitoring the reception of the medium. Interactions between journalists from *different* media can also lead to dynamic intermedia processes.

In processes of *intermedia agenda setting*, journalists pick up stories or issues covered in another medium (→ Agenda Building). A possible consequence of the processes is the *focusing* of the media agenda; that is, a consonance of the issues covered in the media. Warren Breed (1955a) was the first to describe this process. His seminal study led authors to look at several issues, such as the influence of scientific journals on media serving a general audience or the differences in agendas of national and regional media at specific points in time (Shaw & Sparrow 1999).

In *intermedia frame setting*, journalists adopt the perspective or story angle used in another medium in their reporting (→ Framing of the News). In periods of *routine coverage*, the repeated reception of certain news frames in other media reinforces their use by the recipient journalists. In phases of *orientation*, such as after surprising key events when no known news frame is easy to apply, intermedia frame setting can establish a perspective for reporters throughout the media system (Scheufele 2006).

In *intermedia opinion leading*, the reporting and commentary of one medium affects not only other journalists' agendas or frames, but also their opinions and evaluations of persons, issues, or events (→ Opinion Leader). A conformity of issues discussed in the media may be functional for democratic processes, but a consonance of opinions may instead be dysfunctional in pluralistic democratic societies, where the media should present a diversity of viewpoints on political issues (→ Plurality). Some authors argue that the socio-psychological processes that → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann described in her theory of public opinion (→ Spiral of Silence) can help explain the processes of consonance building within the media system.

One special type of intermedia process is the *wave of coverage*, also called *media hype* or *feeding frenzy*, in which the media pick up an issue and respond to each other in a spiral of peeking coverage, before largely dismissing the issue. The amount of coverage often does not reflect the importance of the issue or the real development of the problem. Key events or scoops spark media hype, which differs from ordinary day-to-day intermedia agenda setting in intensity and dynamics. Similarly, in a *feeding frenzy*, a critical mass of reporters jumps on a prurient or shocking matter and pursues it with excessive intensity (Sabato 1991). This kind of reporting is also called *pack journalism*, a term referring to the crowds of journalists trying to get information from a source, who may act like hounds pursuing their prey.

## OPINION-LEADING MEDIA

Studies investigating intermedia processes try to identify the most influential media in a system or in the context of a specific issue or event. These media take the role of *opinion leaders* (Breed 1955b). Like interpersonal opinion leaders (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication), the so-called *prestige* or *quality media* (→ Quality Press) are trendsetters that present and interpret topics in ways that generate a chain reaction in other media (Noelle-Neumann & Mathes 1987). Because agenda setters do not necessarily set frames or opinions at the same time, no consensus exists about which media most influence a media system. The evidence from content analyses and surveys of journalists is mixed.

In the mid-twentieth century, Warren Breed (1955a) postulated a clear direction of influence in intermedia processes from larger to smaller newspapers. Since then, several studies have come to differing conclusions. Some authors found *spillover effects* from alternative to mainstream media (→ Alternative Journalism). Others found not only *top-down processes* from national to regional but also *bottom-up processes* from regional to national media. Still other studies observed top-down processes for some issues but not for others. Evidence regarding influences between TV and the press is also ambiguous. Some studies found a stronger impact from the press, but others found varying directions of influence, perhaps because the structure of influence differs among TV, daily newspapers, and news agencies for specific aspects of an issue. When media hype occurs, even the most influential journalists and media may fall in line with the mainstream.

Finally, countries seem to vary in the *types* of media regarded as most influential within the media system. National quality newspapers traditionally held that position, but changes in a society and its media system can alter the assessment of influence. In some countries, news magazines, TV newscasts, or even tabloids seem to have a strong impact

on journalists working in other venues. Famous individual journalists have emerged in recent years as media opinion leaders in some countries (→ Celebrity Journalists).

Although strong evidence supports the relevance of intra- and intermedia dynamic processes in journalism, several questions remain. Although journalistic co-orientation appears important for journalism around the globe, international comparative studies need to look for differences in factors such as the intensity of media use and the role of influential media organizations. Most studies restrict themselves to political or general news journalism, although different processes and influential news organizations may exist for different types of media or for different areas of reporting, such as the economy, sports, or culture. Because media content is far from consonant all the time, systematic studies need to explain under what circumstances consonance emerges or media hype develops. Current explanations for intermedia processes deserve reconsideration. Competition can prevent intermedia agenda setting when journalists either try to get exclusive stories or come to the conclusion that their audience has seen enough of an issue. The circumstances when journalists choose adoption or differentiation also deserve thorough investigation. Finally, 24-hour news channels, the Internet, and shortening news cycles likely have made dynamic processes within journalism change. Whether and to what extent those changes have occurred are important subjects for future studies of journalist group dynamics.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Audience Research ▶ Celebrity Journalists ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Mainstreaming ▶ News Cycles ▶ News Factors ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Plurality ▶ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ▶ Press Conference ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Quality Press ▶ Readership Research ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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## Journalism, History of

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The history of journalism, inclusively defined, encompasses the history of news and news media, including, among other things, the history of print, broadcast, and computer technology; of news work, news routines, and news workers; and of news organizations, including newspapers and other media outlets as well as wire services and feature syndicates. Defined more narrowly, the history of journalism refers to the emergence of a set of values and explanations that discipline, regulate, and justify news practices (→ Journalism). Journalisms are socially constructed (→ Constructivism), and appear in different guises at different times in different national cultures in reference to different media. The history of journalism examines their construction in national and international settings, as well as anticipating their future prospects.

### JOURNALISM AS HISTORICAL CONSTRUCT

Commentators on political discourse began to apply the term "journalism" to some of the content of → newspapers in the early nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, journalism came to refer to a specific kind of reportage in the various national

cultures of the modern west. A form of the word “journalist” appears first describing the highly opinionated and politicized newspaper writers of post-revolutionary France. The word then appeared in English news reports but continued to refer to French essayists. It was subsequently applied to English and US essayists, but continued to refer to opinion writing until the second half of the century. Then it began to be applied to news-gathering practices, which were becoming increasingly routinized (→ News Routines).

This capsule history of the word underscores the fact that journalisms tend to exist within national systems, even though the history of journalism is really an international one. Printed newspapers first appeared in Europe at the beginning of the seventeenth century (→ Media History; Newspaper, History of). They were a late feature of the so-called printing revolution, the long set of transformations that scholars like Elizabeth Eisenstein (1980) argue the invention of the printing press inaugurated and intensified (→ Printing, History of). Among other things, these scholars assert that the ability of the printing press to mass produce ephemera helped standardize vernacular languages and create national publics. Benedict Anderson (1991) argues that a particular variant, print capitalism, was essential to the rise of modern nationalism.

Early newspapers responded to religious and economic concerns. Most governments, anxious to keep public affairs out of the hands of ordinary people, created systems of censorship and tried to suppress political news (→ Censorship; Censorship, History of). But practicalities made this difficult. Recurring periods of intra-elite conflict produced breakdowns in censorship systems, as when, for instance, the English Printing Act lapsed in 1695 because dueling parties in Parliament were unable to reach agreement on appropriate measures (Siebert 1952). The division of Europe into many warring jurisdictions meant that neighboring countries could host publications: the first English-language newspapers appeared in Amsterdam, and Swiss publishers readily served readers in France (Darnton 1979).

As censorship systems failed, the various nations of western Europe and North America developed what → Jürgen Habermas (1989) has described as a bourgeois → public sphere. In this formulation, such a public sphere appeared as a space between civil society and the state and worked both as a buffer zone, preventing state interference in private life, and as a steering mechanism, allowing citizens to deliberate in an uncoerced manner to form → public opinion, which would then guide the governing process. Scholars disagree on most aspects of Habermas’s formulation, but it seems clear that by the beginning of the nineteenth century in the modern west the major function of the press was its involvement in governance.

The newspaper became a key part of a system for representing public opinion. At first, opinion pieces in newspapers maintained a careful decorum, including the use of pseudonyms and the maintenance of an appearance of personal disinterest, meant to give the impression of *rational* deliberation. The most famous example of this was the publication of the Federalist Papers, co-authored by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay but published pseudonymously over the name of Publius, arguing in favor of the ratification of the US Constitution in an apparently neutral and dispassionate manner. This decorum was always somewhat deceptive, and in some political situations, including the factional politics of the early United States, wore thin quickly. Shortly into the nineteenth century, a frankly partisan model of newspaper politics (→ Partisan Press)

prevailed in western Europe and North America. It was this style of newspapering that occasioned the first use of the word *journalism*.

## INTERNATIONAL PATTERNS

Although it is hard to generalize across national media systems, journalism seems to have a shared history in gross terms in the modern west. In most national histories, there was first a transition from opinion to factual observation, followed by a split between correspondence and reporting, followed by the emergence of a professional journalism centered on objective expert reportage (→ Objectivity in Reporting). And, in most countries, this history was complicated by the emergence of pictorial journalism (→ Illustrated Newspapers; Photojournalism), followed by broadcasting (→ Broadcast Journalism). What distinguishes these national histories, however, is the different experiences with censorship and other forms of media regulation, as well as the differing states of political development. In the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, the west exported its models of journalism to other regions of the world.

The *shift in the meaning of journalism* from opinion to fact came about in the context of the emergence of a mass daily press. This shift centered on the British Isles and North America. The United States was an early leader in newspaper circulation because it avoided censorship and taxes on knowledge, as well as because of positive Federal postal policies and a national commitment to create a media system that would allow for the representation of a dispersed and diverse citizenry as a unified public. By the 1820s, the United States had a partisan press system with a high popular readership. In the 1830s, cheap daily newspapers, or *penny papers*, began to circulate in urban centers (→ Penny Press); at the same time, the content of all newspapers shifted toward the sorts of event-oriented news that one associates with the modern concept of journalism. In Great Britain the growth of a popular press was delayed by the various stamp taxes on newspapers, which were finally repealed in 1851. The adoption of new production and transmission technologies furthered the growth of news audiences. Beginning as early as the 1810s but taking off in the 1830s, printing presses adopted first steam power, then rotary cylinder plates, followed by stereotyping, and finally linotype typesetting in the 1880s. And, beginning in the late 1840s, the telegraph enhanced the commoditization of news and the growth of wire services and press agencies (→ Telegraph, History of; Commodification of the Media; News Agencies; News Agencies, History of). Jean Chalaby (2001) has argued that it was only at the moment of industrialization that the figure of the journalist emerged in something like its modern form.

In earlier newspaper systems, news gathering had been done by correspondents (→ Foreign Correspondents; War Correspondents), a term for letter-writers who dispatched reports from distant places. Correspondents were often amateurs, sometimes paid, sometimes under contract to a single news medium but often also contributing to many. Correspondents' reports had a personal voice to them, though they were often written over a pseudonym or a set of initials. Readers expected that a correspondent's observations would be inflected by strongly expressed attitudes.

As newspapers became more commoditized – that is, as they began to think of themselves and their content more as items sold to consumers than as interventions in



public life – they began to hire reporters (Baldasty 1991). Reporters were meant to faithfully record facts: to transcribe speeches, to present minutes of meetings, to compile shipping lists and current prices, to relate police court proceedings. Early penny papers, for instance, often emphasized crime news. In a typical late-nineteenth century newspaper, reporters worked for city editors whose aim was to make the flow of news copy rational and predictable – and often sensational. In most western countries, the late nineteenth century saw controversies over → yellow journalism (→ Muckraking). Journalism historians often trace this term to Richard Felton Outcault’s cartoon strip “The Yellow Kid,” which appeared in both Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst’s *New York Journal*, the two most famous of the US yellow dailies. A more international pedigree for the term may reside in the quick discoloration of the cheap pulp newsprint these papers were printed on, or might refer even further back to the color of the paper bindings of earlier sensational cheap books devoted to crime and adventure. In some languages, crime novels are still referred to as *yellow*s.

Industrialized news practices came into conflict with the established norms and values for public communication (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). Industrializing newspapers adopted a set of norms that distinguished between their high-value or sacred mission and their more profane work of earning success in a competitive marketplace (→ Markets of the Media; Supply and Demand in Media Markets; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). In most western nations, the sacred mission of the press was to create an informed public that could contribute to its own governance in a constitutional state – usually but not always democratic in some measure. But the profane work of the news seemed to produce a misinformed public whose tastes and intellect had been affected by → sensationalism. And the competitive marketplace seemed to favor greedy and increasingly monopolistic industrialists with a political agenda of their own.

## MODERN CONSTRUCTIONS

The modern notion of journalism mediates between the sacred and profane work of the press and applies to an occupational structure that merges the work of the correspondent and the reporter. In Anglo-American history, the key term in this journalism has been objectivity. Objective journalists are expert professionals, who are always aware of their own subjectivity – like the correspondent – but police it, separating their own values from impersonal reports. Michael Schudson (1978) has described this form of objectivity as arising from a dialectic of naïve empiricism and radical subjectivism. A similar dialectic is evident in the rise of pictorial journalism. Raw material for illustrations came from a variety of empiricist techniques, including photography and sketch artistry, which seemed to promise fidelity to an objective reality. Master engravers then turned these observations into lucid and often interpretive visual reports.

A tribe of indicators can trace the *rise of professional journalism* in the west. Canons of journalism ethics (→ Ethics in Journalism) began to appear at the beginning of the twentieth century, along with professional associations and schools of journalism (→ Journalists: Professional Associations; Journalism Education). The forms of professional journalism – the byline, the inverted pyramid form and summary lead (which counterintuitively tells stories from end to beginning rather than from beginning

to end), and the habit of balancing and sourcing (→ Balance; News Sources) – became familiar around the same time. The excesses of World War I intensified the drive for professionalization inside and outside of the news industry (→ Professionalization of Journalism).

Professionalization coincided with the invention of journalism history as a scholarly activity. There had been a tradition of anecdotal and autobiographical histories of printers and other newspaper entrepreneurs since the beginning of the nineteenth century, but professional journalism education called for histories that emphasized the progressive development of standards, tied in with a genealogy of press autonomy from public and private power (→ Standards of News).

By the 1920s an alternative model of professionalism had appeared, first in the Soviet Union, then in other anti-capitalist states. In the most important cases – the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China – the creation of a *statist professional journalism* followed a long history of attempts by bourgeois journalism to overcome government censorship. When revolutions inspired by Marxist-Leninist philosophies overthrew authoritarian states in Russia and China, they adopted some notions of bourgeois professionalism, wedded them to vanguardism, and institutionalized the resulting construct in state monopoly institutions. Among the adopted elements were a claim of independence for journalists, a rhetorical commitment to serving ordinary people, and an adversarial mission mutated into the concept of self-criticism. A bright line separated journalists, trained and certified as professionals, from ordinary citizens.

Or at least this was the ideology or theory of communist journalism. In practice, the journalism of communist societies rarely achieved the professional autonomy called for in theory. At best, such journalism achieved some standing as an agency of independent but loyal criticism. At worst, it functioned as a fully dependent propaganda wing of the party and state, a role in no way justified by Marxist philosophy. Such practice led critics to compare communist journalism with fascist totalitarian media systems in Hitler's Germany or Mussolini's Italy, regimes that dictated advancing the interests of the state as the role for journalism, with only incidental regard to accuracy and completeness.

In the capitalist countries and elsewhere in the world, other alternative forms of journalism had appeared (→ Alternative Journalism; Minority Journalism; Advocacy Journalism). Usually alternative journalisms were tied to a group within the larger society, whether based on some aspect of identity (gender, race, ethnicity, class) or on the advocacy of a particular position. General interest news media tended to look down upon these alternative journalisms in the same way that they looked down upon sensationalism – as nonprofessional and potentially pernicious (→ Feminist Media; Grassroots Media; Activist Media; Citizens' Media; Community Media).

Globally, the twentieth century saw the rise of broadcast journalism. In some countries, particularly in North America, broadcast media, although state-licensed, were privately owned; in others, there were monopolistic national broadcast authorities (→ Ownership in the Media). In either case, broadcasting seemed to intensify the process of professionalization. The paradigm case might be the → BBC, with its high degree of independence and autonomy. But in other cases (such as Italy) state broadcasting was allotted along party lines (→ United States of America: Media System; United Kingdom: Media System; Italy: Media System).

By the end of World War II, the modern notion of journalism had taken root in most of the world. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the report of the MacBride Commission enshrined freedom of the press (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information) as an international value, though these formulations were subject to varying interpretations. Many observers questioned the relationship between journalism and the supposed free market that had become a staple of western and especially US formulations.

## PROSPECTIVE

Forms of news considered distinctive to the Anglo-American tradition continued to spread in the late twentieth century. Investigative journalism spread to Latin America, for instance (Waisbord 2000; → Investigative Reporting). The retreat of state-supported broadcast authorities in Europe brought the introduction of more commercial television news programming. The collapse of the Soviet bloc sparked a wave of commercial media ventures in eastern Europe, often alongside a revitalization of partisan journalism.

Meanwhile, within the west, the end of the twentieth century saw the erosion of what Dan Hallin (1994) has called the “*high modernism of journalism*.” The decline of the Cold War as a news frame (→ Framing of the News), the rise of ethnic and racial diversity within and among countries, the feminist movement (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), and the renewed philosophical questioning of the value of objectivity undermined the credibility of journalism as an institution. The same trends occurred in the media environment itself, with the rise of the 24-hour television news service (→ Newscast, 24-Hour), of new so-called personal media like talk radio and the blogosphere (→ Blogger), of the tabloid form (→ Tabloid Press; Tabloidization) and a hybrid journalism, especially in the Scandinavian countries, and of a new form of partisan media power associated with broadcast entrepreneurs like Silvio Berlusconi and Rupert Murdoch (→ Media Conglomerates). With the erosion of the high modern moment came calls to rethink the role of the press as an institution within the governing process, on the one hand, and calls for a new → citizen journalism or → public journalism on the other.

News practices are always in flux, and the journalisms that explain and govern them must therefore be continually reinvented. Journalisms come a beat after the news revolutions they regulate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Balance ▶ BBC ▶ Blogger ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizens’ Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Foreign Correspondents ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Illustrated Newspapers ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Italy: Media System ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media History ▶ Minority Journalism ▶ Muckraking ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Agencies,

History of ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newspaper  
▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media  
▶ Partisan Press ▶ Penny Press ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Pro-  
fessionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public  
Sphere ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Standards of News ▶ Supply and Demand in Media  
Markets ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ United Kingdom:  
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## **Journalism: Legal Situation**

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“Knowledge is power,” said English lawyer and philosopher Francis Bacon (1561–1626). But sometimes journalists have the knowledge while the government has the power. This can lead to clashes that, unfortunately for journalists, can sometimes lead to imprisonment and even death (→ Violence against Journalists). While civil libel suits against journalists remain the media’s biggest financial danger, that danger pales in comparison to loss of freedom or life (→ Libel and Slander).

### **JAILING JOURNALISTS FOR THEIR MESSAGES**

Traditions of press freedom are not universal (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Stifling ideas by stifling those who wield pens has been common in closed societies but has also occurred in societies known for openness. Dissident writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn languished in prison in the Gulag Archipelago before the fall of the Soviet Union. But the United States has stifled expression of opinions as well. While the First Amendment of the US Constitution proclaims: “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press,” that freedom has not proved absolute.

When government believes that ideas threaten its existence, then government is tempted to wield its power. In February 2007, an Egyptian appeals court overturned the one-year jail sentence of Ibrahim Eissa, a newspaper editor convicted of libeling President Hosni Mubarak. He had to pay a fine instead. In April 2007, Azerbaijani newspaper editor Eynulla Fatullayev was sentenced to two and a half years in jail for criminal libel; Hong Kong journalist Ching Cheong passed the two-year mark in a Chinese prison, where he is serving a five-year sentence on charges of spying for Taiwan. Rwandan editor Agnes Nkusi-Uwimana received a one-year sentence for criticizing her government. Ecuadorian journalist Nelson Fualta received a 60-day jail sentence for insulting Pujili’s mayor. Paris-based Reporters without Borders said that Cuba’s jailing of Oscar Sanchez Madan raised the number of journalists in Cuban jails to 26.

Murder is also a problem for journalists. The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists says that 13 reporters have been murdered in Russia since Vladimir Putin took power, while Reporters without Borders places the number at 21.

Historically, some governments acted much more brutally than they would today. England used to stifle dissent by shedding blood. One example is John Twyn, who in 1663 printed a book saying that the people had the right to revolt and even execute the king. Twyn did not write the book, but he refused to say who did write it and so was subjected to the standard treatment for treason. He was sentenced to be hanged, emasculated, disemboweled, quartered, and beheaded. Unfortunately, Twyn’s punishment was not unusual.

A lesser crime than treason was seditious libel – the crime of criticizing government or its officials. In England, seditious libel charges could land a person in front of the Star Chamber, a court that heard seditious libel cases from 1487 to 1641. Among its punishments for seditious libel were putting the convicted person in a pillory and ordering that prisoners’ ears be cut off and that their cheeks be branded with the letters “SL” for seditious libel.

### **US HISTORY OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE PRESS**

While the United States avoided most of the bloodier aspects of dealing with dissent, its history includes imprisonment for dissent well into the twentieth century. Congress passed the Espionage Act of 1917. Under the Act, people could be punished for such things as obstructing military recruitment or causing disloyalty or insubordination within the armed forces. Also, the law allowed the Postmaster General to exclude seditious material from the mail. The following year, 1918, Congress also made it a crime to urge reduction of production of necessary war materials, such as ammunition.

This set the scene for the confrontation that began the interpretation of the First Amendment by the US Supreme Court in 1919 in *Schenck v. United States*. Schenck was the general secretary of the Socialist Party of the United States. He and some other defendants mailed some leaflets out to draft-age young men, saying that the draft violated the 13th Amendment of the US Constitution, which prohibits slavery or involuntary servitude.

The US government said that these leaflets were illegal because they encouraged obstruction of the draft and that the defendants unlawfully used the mail to disseminate the leaflets. Found guilty of violating the Espionage Act, Schenck and his co-defendants appealed, claiming that their leaflets were protected by the First Amendment.

The US Supreme Court upheld the convictions. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, writing for the Court, articulated his “clear and present danger” test: “We admit that in many places and in ordinary times the defendants in saying all that was said . . . would have been within their constitutional rights. But the character of every act depends upon the circumstances in which it is done. The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic.” Congress had the right to stamp out words that created a “clear and present danger,” Holmes concluded. “It is a question of proximity and degree. When a nation is at war many things that might be said in time of peace are such a hindrance to its effort that their utterance will not be endured so long as men fight.”

Later in 1919, Holmes dissented when the Supreme Court upheld Espionage Act convictions in *Abrams v. United States*. In the summer of 1918, the United States had sent marines to Siberia as a strategic move against the Germans on the eastern front. But Abrams and his friends thought that this was a US attempt to crush the Russian Revolution. So they put out pamphlets that verbally attacked the special American expeditionary force, which they mistakenly claimed was sent to Russia to defeat the new communist revolutionary government.

The majority opinion said of Abrams and his friends that “even if their primary purpose and intent was to aid the cause of the Russian Revolution, the plan of action which they adopted necessarily involved . . . defeat of the war program of the United States.”

In his dissent, Holmes said, “In this case sentences of twenty years imprisonment have been imposed for the publishing of two leaflets that I believe the defendants had as much right to publish as the Government has to publish the Constitution of the United States now vainly invoked by them.” Holmes added, “[W]hen men have realized that time has upset many fighting faiths, they may come to believe . . . that the ultimate good desired is better reached by free trade in ideas, – that the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the competition of the market.”

In 1940 the US Congress passed the Alien Registration Act, also known as the “Smith Act,” which prohibited advocating violent overthrow of the government, printing anything that advocated violent overthrow of the government, or conspiring with others to do so.

In 1951, the US Supreme Court heard its first case arising under the Smith Act, *Dennis v. United States*. Eleven defendants were charged with conspiring to organize a Communist Party to advocate violent overthrow of the government. The Court considered both the “gravity of the evil” and the probability that evil would occur in order to decide how much invasion of free speech was warranted. The Court concluded that a highly organized conspiracy created a clear and present danger that justified the convictions.

Because *Dennis* upheld the convictions, the government continued to prosecute communists under the Smith Act, including lower echelon communists. But in 1969, the Court majority decided that the danger should indeed be “imminent,” that is, that the danger should be just on the verge of happening before speech could be prohibited. In *Brandenburg v. Ohio*, the Court said, “[C]onstitutional guarantees of free speech and free press do not permit a State to forbid or proscribe advocacy of the use of force or of law violation except where advocacy is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such actions.” In short, mere advocacy may not be punished, the Supreme Court said. More is required. Advocacy must meet the subjective test of being directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action, and advocacy must also meet the objective test of being “likely to incite or produce such actions.”

The *Brandenburg* test protects orators, distributors of leaflets, editorial writers, and anyone expressing ideas that might arguably “incite” others to commit harmful acts. The *Brandenburg* test protected the late Tupac Shakur when a widow claimed that his “gangsta rap” incited a teenager speeding down a Texas highway to shoot and kill her husband, a Texas trooper. *Brandenburg* protected Ozzy Osbourne and Judas Priest against claims that their suicide music incited teenagers to kill themselves. It has protected producers of TV shows, magazines, ads, and games. It protected Oliver Stone against claims that he incited copycat murders with his movie *Natural Born Killers*. News reports have also inspired copycat crimes, including murders, and the journalists involved would receive *Brandenburg* protection, if needed.

While journalists, like everyone else in the United States, receive protection from incitement charges under the *Brandenburg* case, this does not mean that they can advocate anything they want. The prohibitions under which Schenck and others were convicted in 1919, obstruction of military recruitment, is still a crime under federal law, with a possible 20-year imprisonment. And advocating overthrow of the government, under which Dennis and many other communists were convicted, is likewise still a federal crime with a possible 20-year sentence.

### **SHIELDING JOURNALISTS WHO PROTECT THEIR SOURCES**

While few journalists in the United States have been put in jail recently for what they say, they have been going to jail for what they refuse to say. When federal judges order journalists to appear before federal grand juries and to reveal confidential sources of information, journalists who refuse risk jail time as well as fines (→ Source Protection).

For example, Josh Wolf, a “videographer,” spent 226 days in captivity in California. Wolf refused to testify before a federal grand jury and hand over his raw video tape of a G8 Summit protest that resulted in injury to a police officer in San Francisco in July 2005. As part of an agreement for his own release, he released the video tape.

Broadcast journalist Jim Taricani spent four months under house arrest in 2004–2005. He refused a federal judge’s order to reveal the source of an FBI video tape showing a Providence official accepting an envelope full of cash from an undercover FBI agent.

*New York Times* reporter Judith Miller spent 85 days in jail in 2004–2005 after refusing to reveal the source of a leak of the name of a CIA undercover agent, Valerie Plame. The US Supreme Court refused to hear her case.

In 2001, Vanessa Leggett, a freelance, spent a record 168 days in jail for refusing a federal judge's order to hand over notes and tapes of interviews she had made while writing a book about the murder of a Houston socialite, Doris Angleton.

Why do journalists fight to protect their sources? Some object that compelling disclosure of sources is equivalent to turning journalists into investigators for the government or a party in a lawsuit. More importantly, some fear confidential sources will dry up, obstructing the → free flow of information to the public. Journalists' primary goal in promising confidentiality to a source is to gain information that the journalist could not gain in any other way. The source is either the only individual or part of a small group that knows the information. The source is divulging information to the journalist despite the fact that it would be adverse to the source's self-interest if he or she were known to be the source. The adversity that the source would experience if his or her identity became known could perhaps include criminal prosecution, loss of a job, loss of esteem in the community due to the source's participation in wrongdoing or the source's being viewed as disloyal, or, in the most egregious circumstances, even loss of life.

Not revealing the identity of a source is considered by responsible journalists to be a matter of fiduciary duty. This fiduciary duty to the source is an obligation of the highest order because of the enormous personal risks the source may be taking in furnishing information. The source is placing his or her trust in the journalist based on the journalist's promise of confidentiality. The source's confidence that the reporter will keep the promise is thus key to the source's divulging sensitive information. In short, confidence in confidentiality is imperative because a breakdown in confidence leads ultimately to a loss of information for society. A gap in information will occur, and the effect on society of that gap will depend on the importance of that lost information.

The problem for American journalists is that there is no federal law to shield reporters from being forced to divulge sources to grand juries. While Congress has considered such a law over the years, none has passed. But a majority of states (34 out of 50, along with the District of Columbia, as of mid-2007) do have shield laws. Some state shield laws give better protection than others, depending on how broad or narrow they are. For example, does a shield law only cover sources, or does it also cover confidential information? How broad is the definition of a journalist? When does the privilege apply? Does it apply when a journalist is compelled to appear before a grand jury, a court, or a legislative committee? Does it apply when a journalist is on trial for libel? Is the privilege absolute, or is it a qualified privilege where a judge balances interests?

In 1972, the US Supreme Court in *Branzburg v. Hayes* said in a 5–4 decision that the First Amendment does not give journalists shield protection. In balancing interests, the Court simply concluded that the obligation to appear in front of a grand jury and give testimony when ordered to do so outweighs First Amendment considerations. The Court held, "We cannot seriously entertain the notion that the First Amendment protects a newsman's agreement to conceal the criminal conduct of his source, or evidence thereof, on the theory that it is better to write about crime than to do something about it."

The *Branzburg* Court recognized that some sources may dry up, and there may be some constriction of news, but how much is "speculative," the Court said. Also, the Court mentioned a practical consideration: if it granted a "constitutional newsman's privilege,"



then sooner or later the Court was going to have to define who qualifies as a “newsman.” The Court did say, however, that the federal government and the states could fashion statutory privileges for journalists.

Federal judges have, indeed, granted journalists protection from revealing sources in cases not involving grand juries. But so long as the federal government does not pass a shield law, journalists subpoenaed to appear in front of grand juries will continue to go to jail in order to protect sources.

A problem remains concerning who should qualify as a journalist, especially in the Internet age of → bloggers. A narrow definition would only include persons working for newspaper, magazine, or broadcast companies. A broad definition would cover any person wishing to gather information for the purpose of disseminating it to the public through any means, including the → Internet.

Clearly, confidential sources can provide information that can make a big difference in the functioning of a government. Arguably, the most famous such confidential source from the United States was “Deep Throat.” Reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein published stories in the *Washington Post* linking aides of then-president Richard Nixon to a break-in at the Democratic National Headquarters in Washington, DC. No federal judge ordered the journalists to reveal their source. But in May 2005, Mark Felt, a former FBI deputy director, revealed himself as “Deep Throat.”

The threat of jail sentences for refusing to reveal sources is not a purely American phenomenon. In 2005, two Australian journalists from the *Herald Sun*, Michael Harvey and Gerard McManus, were threatened with imprisonment for refusing to reveal a source. This has helped prompt calls for passage of strong shield laws in Australia.

### **JOURNALIST’S PRIVILEGE: AN INTERNATIONAL AND FOREIGN LAW PERSPECTIVE**

Journalists in some other countries do receive protection from revealing confidential sources. For example, in October 2006, Japan’s Supreme Court protected a reporter from the Japan Broadcasting Company. Presiding Justice Toyozo Ueda ruled that a reporter’s protection of confidential sources is a form of protecting one’s occupation.

Sweden is another example. In Sweden, the journalist’s privilege is a constitutional right under the Freedom of the Press Act, which is one of the three parts of the Swedish Constitution. The Freedom of the Press Act, first adopted in 1766, established the right of anonymity of “authors” in 1812. When it was strengthened in 1949, it protected news sources, especially for the print media. Singularly significant is that the Swedish shield law, one of the strongest in Europe, empowers sources to take criminal prosecution against journalists if their confidential identity is revealed without their authorization. It further forbids public officials to inquire about the journalistic sources. If public officials violate the law, they face fines or up to one year in jail.

Most importantly, international law on the journalist’s privilege is far more media-friendly than US law. Two international courts have accepted claims that the confidentiality of journalistic sources is part of a right to freedom of expression. The → European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) declared in 1996 that journalists have a right not to disclose their sources unless an overriding countervailing interest outweighs the confidentiality of

news sources. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) held in 2002 that war correspondents cannot be compelled to testify about their sources, except under extraordinary circumstances.

Still, going to jail seems to be an occupational hazard for journalists worldwide. Sometimes the offense is criticizing government or its policies. Sometimes the offense is refusing to reveal confidential sources. Sometimes, some journalists might say, the offense is merely speaking the truth. Truth sometimes has the power to set one free, as the adage goes, but sometimes it is government that has the power and it is the truth teller who loses freedom.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Censorship ► Communication and Law ► European Court of Human Rights ► Free Flow of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Gag Orders ► Internet ► Libel and Slander ► Privacy ► Source Protection ► Violence against Journalists

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## **Journalism: Normative Theories**

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Normative theories of journalism concern ideal functions of the press, what the press *should* do. These purposes are best understood in relation to larger claims about the *good*

*society*. In principle, there are as many normative theories of journalism as there are political systems, from Marxism–Leninism to diverse conceptions of democracy. Nonacademics as well as academics may express these theories, which are relatively coherent conceptions that cluster together specific ideals (such as representation, deliberation, accountability, and the like) in different combinations with varying emphasis (→ News Values; Standards of News; Journalists’ Role Perception). Such broad theories are, to a certain extent, artificial constructs, because no one, from politicians to ordinary citizens, is entirely consistent in adhering to only one of them. Journalistic practice likewise does not always accord with normative theories of journalism, but these theories remain an important component of professional training (→ Journalism Education). Institutions and the state draw upon theories of journalism, implicitly or explicitly, when shaping media policies that carry real incentives or penalties for deviant behavior.

Scholars attempting to classify normative theories (Siebert et al. 1956; McQuail 1983, 2005; Baker 2002; Ferree et al. 2002), as well as less systematic reflections about media and democracy, have identified nondemocratic theories, including authoritarian, totalitarian, Marxist–Leninist, and developmental, as well as democratic theories, including libertarian, social responsibility, democratic elite, democratic participatory, public sphere, and postmodern.

### NONDEMOCRATIC THEORIES

*Authoritarian theory* holds that journalism should always be subordinate to the interests of the state in maintaining social order or achieving political goals (Siebert et al. 1956). At a minimum, the press is expected to avoid any criticisms of government officials and to do nothing to challenge the established order. The press may remain free to publish without prior censorship, but the state retains the right to punish journalists or close media outlets that overstep explicit or implicit limits on reporting and commentary.

Under more extreme authoritarianism, or *totalitarianism*, a closely censored press proactively promotes and extends a totalizing state control over society. In the context of the Cold War, the Soviet communist theory stood out (Siebert et al. 1956), an approach perhaps best understood today as a variant of totalitarianism that includes Islamic and other forms of religious fundamentalism. Since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, versions of Marxist–Leninist, or *Soviet*, theory have survived in North Korea, Cuba, and Vietnam, and to a certain extent in China, as the most coherent, self-consciously elaborated examples. The Soviet normative theory of journalism posits that media should not be privately owned, should serve the interests of the working classes, and, most importantly, should provide a complete, objective view of the world following Marxist–Leninist principles, as defined by the communist-party-controlled state.

Another nondemocratic normative theory is partly a product of western communication scholarship and foreign development projects. *Development theory* is authoritarianism *for a good cause* (→ Development Journalism), supporting the economic development and nation-building efforts of impoverished societies (Schramm 1964; McQuail 1983). In the context of western dominance in international news gathering (→ News Agencies) and in cable news, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO) has also framed development theory in cultural pluralist terms as the right

to communicate (MacBride Commission 1980) and, most recently, as the defense of global cultural diversity (→ Right to Communicate; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; Rogers, Everett; Schramm, Wilbur).

The western press and communication research generally portray these nondemocratic theories negatively, as anti-democratic, whatever their potential merits. Outside of the west, however, purely anti-democratic justifications of journalism have grown more rare. The Chinese government, for instance, defends a *market socialist* approach to the media, which combines limited market freedoms with continuing state control (→ China: Media System). Certain ideals in nonwestern societies are not necessarily anti-democratic, such as the poetic or literary ideal of the Arabic press (Mellor 2005; → Iran: Media System; Egypt: Media System; Gulf States: Media Systems). Democratic normative theories have been motivating forces behind emerging nonwestern media outlets such as the Qatar-based Arabic-language cable news channel Al Jazeera (modeled after the BBC and CNN) (→ Arab Satellite TV News). Even in the most repressive authoritarian states, the language of democracy has become commonplace.

## DEMOCRATIC THEORIES

Where authoritarianism stresses the importance of maintaining social order, libertarianism aims to maximize individual human freedom. John Locke and other liberal philosophers of the eighteenth century conceived of the libertarian theory (Siebert et al. 1956), which relates closely with *laissez-faire* capitalism. In the oft-used metaphor, the press should offer a *marketplace of ideas*, pursuing profits in a natural process believed to support democracy. *Libertarian theory* sees the government as the primary if not the only threat to press freedom. Perhaps the best-known embodiment of the ideal is the First Amendment to the US Constitution, which specifies: “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.” This formulation expresses the ideal only in negative terms, as a freedom *from* state intervention. Presumably the press, left to its own devices, will represent diverse voices and hold government accountable, but the only requirement for the press is to pursue its own economic interests. Far from a caricature, this pure form of libertarianism is alive and well in the public pronouncements of many news media owners and managers, as well as of some journalists (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

Observers and activists who perceive that a pure market orientation does not necessarily support democracy have argued that the press must instead assume *social responsibility*. In the 1947 Hutchins report, the US Commission on a Free and Responsible Press conceived the chief responsibilities as factual accuracy, promotion of open debate, representation of diverse views, and protection of individual rights by serving as a watchdog that guards against government abuses of power.

Any theory that the press has a voluntary duty to perform positive functions could belong in this category, but social responsibility theory, as originally described (Siebert et al. 1956), clearly upheld the US journalistic ideal of *objectivity*, which stresses factual (especially investigative) reporting over commentary, the *balancing* of opposing viewpoints, and maintaining a neutral observer role for the journalist (Schudson 2001; → Objectivity in Reporting; Investigative Reporting). This ideal has become dominant globally, even among journalists in countries where highly polarized political cultures

make it difficult to put into practice (Hallin & Mancini 2004; → Party–Press Parallelism; Convergence of Media Systems).

Social responsibility theory lacks any systematic critique of capitalist media ownership and funding (Baker 2002; cf. McQuail 2005). Most journalistic professional exhortations about *ethics* are social responsibility theories in this sense (→ Ethics in Journalism), including not only traditional defenses of investigative journalism but also the recent US movement for civic journalism (→ Public Journalism). Armed with enough courage, individual journalists are assumed capable of performing their democratic responsibilities.

Other democratic normative theories also concern social responsibilities, but emphasize some more than others. Legal scholars, philosophers, and social scientists, rather than journalists, largely produced these theories, which may not share the assumption against state intervention as a legitimate means to orient journalism democratically.

Representative liberal theory (Ferree et al. 2002) or *democratic elite theory* (Baker 2002) proposes that democracy works best with highly educated elites and specialized technicians in charge. The primary duties of the press are to chronicle accurately the range of competing elite perspectives, to examine the character and behavior of elected officials, and to monitor closely their activities for corruption or incompetence (the *watchdog* function). In other words, the press should adopt a critical, serious tone in covering public affairs, defined as the activities primarily of government but also, in principle, of business or other powerful social institutions. Democratic elite theories tend to be skeptical, however, of whether the press can adequately report and analyze complex issues (e.g., Lippmann 1922; → Lippmann, Walter).

Pierre Bourdieu's (1998) critique of journalism argues for a democratic elite theory from a sociology of knowledge perspective. He values most highly those forms of intellectual and artistic production sheltered from external economic or political pressures. By analogy, his critique esteems the specialized forms of journalism that maintain the greatest *autonomy* from external pressures (→ Science Journalism). He would generally prefer that journalism loosen its *monopoly* over public communication so that non-journalist experts could directly transmit their knowledge as they see fit. However, Bourdieu's ideal of complete autonomy could lead journalists (as well as non-journalist experts) to pursue only their own narrow interests and ignore legitimate concerns of wider publics (Schudson 2005).

In *democratic participatory theory*, journalism is called upon to promote actively the political involvement of citizens. The theory emphasizes principles such as popular inclusion, empowerment, and full expression through a range of communicative styles (McQuail 1983; Ferree et al. 2002). Its theorists emphasize diverse viewpoints and active citizen involvement more than the quality of the discourse (whether reasoned, critical, serious, or the like). They disagree on the best means to achieve these goals. Tabloid forms of journalism (→ Tabloid Press; Tabloidization), for example, might provide a bridge leading formerly apathetic citizens to an interest in politics (McNair 2000), or the mainstream press might provide news from more perspectives (Gans 2003). In participatory theory, however, small-scale, *segmented* media, commercial as well as nonprofit, are best for promoting grassroots citizen involvement (e.g., Keane 1991; → Grassroots Media; Citizens' Media; Citizen Journalism).

With his ideal of the → public sphere, the German sociologist and philosopher → Jürgen Habermas (1989) combines concerns for the quality (reasoned, critical debate) with the quantity (broad representation and participation) of discourse that journalists mediate (Calhoun 1992). However, *public sphere theory*, also referred to as the *discursive* (Ferree et al. 2002) or *republican* (Baker 2002) ideal, places the greatest emphasis on quality, narrowly conceived: the press should create a domination-free environment where the better argument can prevail in a quest for social consensus (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication). The public sphere should be free from the state as well as the market (→ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere). Societies seem most likely to achieve the ideal during periods of democratic revolutionary effervescence, as in France and the United States at the end of the eighteenth century or in the Soviet Union and east-central Europe during the late 1980s.

By adaptation (and perhaps taming), public sphere theory can fit the conditions in western democracies. Public television, for example, armed with legal guarantees of autonomy from political intervention (→ BBC; Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy), may be the best embodiment of the ideal (Garnham 1986). French and other continental European traditions of a journalism of ideas (→ France: Media System; Comparative Research), rather than of raw information, are also consistent (Albert 1998). The ideal inspired the US movement among journalists to redefine their role, from simply providing information to promoting reasoned and civil public debate among ordinary citizens (Glasser 1999).

Emerging in part as a critique of Habermas, postmodern or *constructionist theory* (Ferree et al. 2002), like democratic participatory theories, is more tolerant of diverse styles and forms of discourse that journalists mediate. Feminist scholars such as Nancy Fraser say that the ideal of reasoned critical debate may embody masculine domination and that the ideal of social consensus may suppress ineradicable identity differences (Calhoun 1992). Building on the motto, “the personal is political,” postmodern theory privileges personal narratives and emotion over abstract reason, celebrating grassroots media that facilitate the playful search for identity or the articulation of counter-hegemonic interests (→ Advocacy Journalism; Radical Media). A postmodernist ideal is also evident in Kevin Barnhurst and John Nerone’s (2001) critique of rationalized, modernist newspaper design form and the hegemonic aspiration of professionalized journalism to map the social world (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of). Postmodern theory insists on a journalism open to the widest range of narrative styles and perspectives, especially those emerging from the margins of society.

## THE NEED FOR NORMATIVE THEORIES

Are normative theories of journalism necessary, as Hallin and Mancini (2004) ask? The best-known texts in normative theory, such as *Four theories of the press* (Siebert et al. 1956), may promote ethnocentrism and justify the US model of market-oriented, ostensibly objective, journalism (→ News Ideologies). The assumption that other approaches are inferior has dampened intellectual curiosity about the practice of journalism in other parts of the world. The market model has also influenced international organizations such as the World Association of Newspapers and the Inter American Press Association.

Freedom House, for instance, rates national press systems as free, partly free, or not free, based primarily on political rather than economic criteria. US-centrism, however, is not inherent to normative reflection on and critiques of journalism.

One promising alternative approach, *complex democracy* (Baker 2002), acknowledges the shortcomings of any type of news media in the face of diverse democratic purposes and seeks to encourage the greatest variety of journalistic practices. A working model includes multiple sectors (Curran 2000): a core sector of public service television, a supplementary private enterprise sector, a professional sector under the control of journalists, a civic sector supported by social organizations, including political parties, and a closely related sector of ideologically or culturally marginal media that operate in the market with partial subsidies from the state.

Through broad reflection on the many strains of political theory, or through comparative research on media systems, normative theorizing can continue to play a key role in communication education and research (→ Professionalization of Journalism). Value judgments guide all research, and it is important to make implicit normative theories explicit. Plural normative *theories* rather than any singular *theory* can help clarify the range of policy and ethical choices available to guide the practice of journalism (→ Media Policy).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC ▶ China: Media System ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Egypt: Media System ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ France: Media System ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Gulf States: Media Systems ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Iran: Media System ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Policy ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Radical Media ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Science Journalism ▶ Standards of News ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Tabloidization ▶ UNESCO

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## Journalists, Credibility of

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Credibility is a central professional value for journalists. For audiences, perceived credibility of the media affects choices of and responses to the news. Scholars and journalists disagree about what constitutes credibility, but agree that it relates primarily to the truthfulness and accuracy of the facts journalists report. Credible journalism is reliable and believable. However, scholars, mostly in the United States, argue that credibility goes beyond believability (Metzger et al. 2003), and demonstrate that it encompasses fairness, lack of bias, → accuracy, completeness, and trustworthiness (Meyer 1988; → Bias in the News; Credibility of Content; Fairness Doctrine; Quality of the News).

The broader definitions of credibility describe a relationship between → audiences and journalists, under uncertain conditions, where audiences cannot fully verify the character and intentions of the journalists and the veracity of their reports. Audiences expect that credible journalists will act according to shared norms of honesty and fairness, and expect reading and watching the news to be worthwhile activities. These expectations depend on secular norms such as professionalism, which vary from one place to another. In the United States, for example, *credible* journalists who live up to the standards of their profession are expected to tell the whole story in a sincere, precise, fair, and truthful manner, reporting to serve the public good, not personal or partisan interests (→ Ethics in Journalism;



Standards of News). In Europe, by contrast, professional culture puts somewhat less emphasis on objectivity and neutrality (→ Neutrality; Objectivity in Reporting).

### **CREDIBILITY AS A JOURNALISTIC NORM**

Surveys of journalists worldwide have documented the importance of credibility as a norm for journalists and editors. All national US journalists surveyed by the Pew Research Center in 1999 said that “getting the facts right” was a “core principle” for journalism, and almost all (98 percent) said the same for “getting both sides of the story.” Large majorities of journalists in several other nations, including Chile, Hong Kong, Germany, Taiwan, and Mexico, rated credibility most important (Weaver 1998).

Journalists’ codes of ethics also make credibility a central tenet (Tsfati 2004). In these documents, credibility is the rationale for many journalistic dictates, even for not accepting gifts. The ethics codes mention audience trust as *an asset* that journalists may now enjoy, but could lose through misconduct. Journalistic discourse almost everywhere treats trust as the *raison d’être* for the profession.

Reactions of journalists to events that could damage trust in the profession also suggest that credibility is central. US journalists felt *assaulted*, *humiliated*, and *befouled* in the wake of the Janet Cooke scandal, involving a Pulitzer Prize winning series, because the author faked the existence of a specific source, in violation of the credibility norm (Eason 1986). A similar professional discourse followed in Germany after journalist Gerd Heidemann published the forged *Hitler Diaries* in *Stern* magazine in 1983, and in the United Kingdom after the James Forlong scandal, involving a faked Sky News report about a missile firing during the 2003 Iraq war.

### **CREDIBILITY AS SEEN FROM THE AUDIENCE PERSPECTIVE**

In the occupational culture of journalists, credibility plays a role as a goal, a tool, an asset, and a rationale behind most professional creeds. For journalists themselves, audience assessments of their credibility are associated with their adherence to professional norms.

However, US scholars have examined credibility mostly from the perspective of the audience, not of journalists. Findings demonstrate that audiences attend to more mainstream news if they consider the mainstream news media credible. Those who rate journalists low on credibility tend to diversify their news diets and attend to more alternative news. Perceived news credibility was found to moderate an array of media effects, including agenda setting, priming, and the perceived → climate of opinion (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Credibility Effects; Media Effects; Priming Theory). In other words, the news media exert more influence on audiences who perceive them as credible and less influence on those who remain relatively skeptical about their credibility.

What factors underlie audience perceptions of media credibility? The perceptions may result when audiences take cues from elites (Watts et al. 1999), when the media pay more attention to the blunders of journalists, or when audiences are exposed to cynical or strategic media framing of politics (→ Framing of the News). The perceptions of media credibility may also result from psychological mechanisms, such as when involved partisans categorize and recall selectively (Vallone et al. 1985; → Hostile Media Phenomenon), from

political variables, such as the extent of political involvement, and from interpersonal factors, such as the prevalence of conversations with like-minded individuals (Eveland & Shah 2003).

## RESEARCH ON CREDIBILITY

### Dimensions of Credibility in Classic Research

Research on the concept of credibility takes place in three principal domains: the source, the message, and the medium. Hovland et al. (1953) initiated the first, *source credibility*, by focusing on the communicator – an individual, group, or organization. With his Yale colleagues, Hovland related credibility to the judgments perceivers make about whether the source is believable. Since the 1960s, scholars have emphasized *message credibility*, by focusing on what characteristics could make messages more or less believable. The third domain is the channel that delivers content, *media credibility*, focusing on which media are most believable and what makes them so (Kioussis 2001). In early research, respondents rated TV news more credible than newspapers. In subsequent studies, respondents rated Internet news more credible than other media.

The main dimensions of source credibility are expertise (a communicator's qualifications for knowing the truth in a certain area) and trustworthiness (a communicator's motivation to tell the truth about that topic). Later research found evidence that secondary dimensions, such as dynamism, composure, and sociability, support source credibility (Berlo et al. 1969). Liking, and perceiving oneself as similar to, a speaker tend to make him or her seem more trustworthy. The main dimensions of *message credibility* include structure (the organization of a message) and content (including language intensity and the fluency and speed of delivery).

### Recent Developments

Hovland and his colleagues thought of credibility as a static and objective characteristic of the source. Gradually, scholars began to shift attention to the audience and, by the 1980s, were measuring credibility as a dynamic and subjective experience that varies across individuals. The concept was relabeled *perceived news credibility*. Early persuasion research examined *any* communication sources, relying on experiments, but recent research deals with *mass media news sources*, using surveys. The main dimensions of media credibility include *credibility* and *social concerns*. Typically, respondents rate a media outlet on whether it is fair, unbiased, accurate, comprehensive, and trustworthy (Meyer 1988), for credibility. Social concerns include whether the outlet has the public interest at heart.

Some research asks news sources to locate factual errors in articles that mention them (Maier 2005). The findings were that the error rate in US newspapers had increased from almost half (46 percent) in 1936 to well over half (61 percent) in 2005 (although scholars used different newspapers throughout the years). Higher frequencies of errors accompanied lower perceptions of the credibility of the story and the newspaper. The trend overlaps longitudinal polls, which show declining confidence and trust in mainstream US news in recent decades (Moy & Pfau 2001). The share of those having

little confidence in the press grew from 14.6 percent in 1973 to 44 percent in 2004. Scholars, journalists, and media pundits interpret these poll results as a credibility crisis for mainstream journalism (Gaziano 1988).

The concept of credibility has sparked a large amount of research, much of it from → interpersonal communication and → persuasion and very little in the context of journalism. Future research should include the perspectives of journalists and of the audience, as well as examining the credibility of the message and the medium. Such integrated studies would broaden understanding of credibility and its consequences.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Effects ▶ Neutrality ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ▶ Persuasion ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Standards of News ▶ Trust of Publics

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# Journalists: Professional Associations

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Joining a professional journalist association usually requires gaining one's main livelihood by working fulltime in the editorial department of a media organization. News gathering may involve documentation, detective work, outright research, or combining findings from existing databases. Other specialists such as photographers, technicians, designers, and the like are central to producing content but are not responsible for the full journalistic text. Furthermore, media work involves observing events and images or fetching information from outside sources, transcribing or transforming the information, and finally editing and framing the information into a preset template (→ Magazine, Visual Design of; Newspaper; Photojournalism).

It is difficult to pursue → journalism outside editorial departments. Getting hired by a publisher is still one of the main criteria for entering journalism and for being admitted to a professional organization. "Professionalism" is often defined as the mastering of themes, forms, and routines, which regularly occur in journalism. As part of their stylebooks, media companies set the standards for their publications, but unlike medicine, journalism practice does not draw on scientific research for authority. Instead, journalism has depended, for long periods of its history, more on artistic effort than on professional routines (→ Professionalization of Journalism).

*Codes of ethics* serve as a combination of abstract principles and guidelines to professional values and conduct, which unite journalists working under different conditions. Codes began to appear in the 1920s, but most codes emerged after World War II (EthicNet; → Ethics in Journalism). The Society of Professional Journalists in the US revised its code of ethics in 1996 and did not mention, as in previous versions, *objectivity* of journalistic texts as the cornerstone for professionalism (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Instead the code now emphasizes journalists' active role in the mediating process: seeking truth, minimizing harm, acting independently, and being accountable (<http://spj.org>). The growing importance of professional standards helps journalists identify more with their job than with their media organization, but no wide agreements exist on how to staff a media organization and edit content, or on what minimum quality standards apply to journalistic products. The power to reorganize media organizations still rests with the publisher.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The formation of associations for journalists followed a sequence resulting from changes in the newspaper industry in each country and from the ensuing changes in journalists' position within the work organization of newspapers, as well as from changes in the social standing of journalists (→ Journalism, History of).

The first generation of associations was social in character and had no specific vocational purpose. The groups served mainly as a forum for mutual respect and gave the members an opportunity to discover who worked where. The American newspaper

industry, for example, had grown so complex by the end of the nineteenth century that even those with long experience in the press had lost the broader view (Dicken-Garcia 1989).

The next generation of organizations had more vocational ends: first, publishers seeking to regulate competition (→ Competition in Media Systems) and to produce relevant data about the industry and advertisers (→ Advertising), and, later, journalists negotiating for better wages and work conditions. Only recently have organizations been active in pursuing professional objectives beyond the codes of ethics.

Journalists started to organize in the late nineteenth century. Associations appeared on local, national, and international levels: in Germany in the 1860s and 1870s, in Scandinavia in the 1880s and 1890s. In Great Britain the pioneering Newspaper Society had already formed in 1836. The National Association of Journalists, with more professional aims, came into being in 1884 and formed the Institute of Journalists, which received a Royal Charter as a professional organization in 1886. In the US associations did not include publishers, editors, and journalists within one organization as early European associations sometimes did. The American Newspaper Publisher Association came into being in 1887. News workers began to organize in the 1890s and finally founded the Newspaper Guild in 1933, which eventually became effective for wage negotiations. In Scandinavia the multiparty press from the 1880s organized journalists, editors, and publishers in parallel organizations, which rarely cooperated across party lines, which delayed the formation of national or regional organizations and also prevented any real accord on professional standards.

### **SOCIAL STANDING AND TRAINING**

The social standing of journalists has been ambiguous throughout journalism history and still varies widely for at least three reasons: because journalism covers many different jobs, from manual to intellectual (→ Journalists' Role Perception), because their control of what gets published varies greatly, and because journalists' characteristics are hard to describe. These ambivalences, made acute by censorship in many systems, help explain the slow development of professional journalist associations.

At first the printer served in the capacity of editor and principal contributor. The printer's job was dirty, literally speaking, and also low in esteem (→ Printer-Editors). As democratic governance increased and rudimentary party systems followed, many printer-publishers used the growing importance of newspapers to gain social status and, sometimes, political office (Pasley 2001; → Media History; Printing, History of; Newspaper, History of). In many countries the early press also accommodated a *mix of vocations*. General literati, essayists, professors, and members of the free professions were among the forerunners of the journalist today (→ Literary Journalism). All worked part-time for newspapers, often as contributors but sometimes as editors. In countries where the press has not yet become a mass medium, much of journalism is still highbrow, literary, and intellectual.

In the early nineteenth century much of the news gathering and manuscript editing still occurred outside the printer's shop. The network of regular contributors included out-of-town correspondents as well as legmen roaming the streets in metropolitan cities, visiting courts, harbors, and the like, hunting for news. Editors and printers met in coffee houses or taverns (→ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere), and only with the advent of a mass press in the 1860s did newspapers regularly hire editors and journalists fulltime.

Beginning in the late 1850s production of books increasingly separated from newspapers, because the poor quality of pulp newsprint on rotary presses did not meet the standards of book publishing. Like journalism, book authorship appeared as a possible career. When the literati and intellectuals left newspapers, they also left the emerging journalistic profession in a social vacuum. The old profile of *haute bourgeoisie* could no longer characterize journalists, who instead became *proletarian professionals*, at least in the case of the US (Kaul 1986).

Around the end of the nineteenth century, when reporters moved to offices sheltered inside newspaper headquarters in metropolises around the world, their qualifications also changed. Newspapers came to emphasize a daily → news cycle that demanded continuous surveillance of sundry events. Efficiency in writing all sorts of copy became the main qualification of journalists, making journalism more a job for handymen and wordsmiths than for specialists or independent intellectuals. At the same time the editorial hierarchy grew, adding layers of subeditors, rewriters, reviewers, and special correspondents, threatening to de-skill journalism in an industrial environment (Hardt & Brennen 1995).

The unsettled question of *talent versus knowledge* has allowed publishers to recruit journalists from any educational background. The resulting difference in education among their members reduced the motivation of journalist associations to set professional standards. Mostly, outsiders took the initiative to establish regular courses in journalism, first in America at the University of Missouri in 1908 and then at Columbia University in 1912. The University of Leipzig established the first German chair in *Zeitungskunde* in 1916, and Finland introduced a two-year course in journalism at college level in 1925. Chinese universities also began teaching journalism in the 1920s. Colleges of journalism and university programs of media studies became common in Europe only in the 1950s and 1960s (→ Journalism Education).

## INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

What journalists, publishers, and editors could not fully agree on at the national level apparently became easier at the international level. The *International Union of Press Associations* worked between the 1890s and World War I with ideas of education for journalists and a code of professional ethics (Björk 1994), but first World War I and later the totalitarian regimes in the Soviet Union and Germany disrupted these international efforts. Today about 30 international associations for journalists and editors work mainly on questions of press freedom, codes of conduct, and the safety of journalists who work either on assignment in dangerous areas or on topics generating serious conflicts. The best known are the International Press Institute, World Association of Newspapers, International Federation of Journalists, Reporters without Frontiers, and World Association of Press Councils.

Studies of journalists' attitudes in two political systems in economic and political transition, China and Russia, reveal widespread uncertainty. Journalists in mainstream media are torn between professional autonomy and mandatory loyalty to politically and financially elite owners. No one believes that professional associations can change the state of affairs. The party used the old communist unions to control journalists and left a

legacy of distrust in professional associations. The lack of organized protection makes individual journalists vulnerable to external and internal pressures (→ Censorship).

Ownership of media in *China* still remains with the communist party. Rather than giving subsidies, the state allows media companies to compete for higher ratings or larger circulation and thus for more advertising. Censorship has become milder, but opposition to the party can still lead to an early retirement. Journalists may pursue popular journalism outside the realm of politics, but they still face restrictions in reporting public affairs (Lee 2005; → China: Media System).

In *Russia* the old guard among journalists from the Soviet era still considers the media an instrument of power to serve the state and the public or society, but the larger group of post-communist, often untrained, journalists, emphasize entertainment and sensationalism (Pasti 2005; → Russia: Media System).

Despite the comprehensive international network of professional associations, little or no agreement has yet emerged on the key characteristics of journalism (Weaver 1998). Comparisons between the Anglo-American traditions of *objectivity* in journalism and the German or Continental tradition of opinionated journalism emphasize a lack of accord on professional conduct. The two traditions have clearly different attitudes toward sources of information (Köcher 1986): British journalists are more aggressive toward authorities than are German journalists. The opinion editor and commentary are the height of the profession in Germany (Donsbach & Klett 1993).

A cross-national survey of journalists in 22 nations revealed their values and practices, but hardly any consensus either about the duties of journalists toward their sources or about the purpose of journalism. Transmitting news as soon as possible was the only value journalists accepted universally. The study concluded that no place has a monopoly on journalists' professionalism (Weaver 1998).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Censorship ▶ China: Media System ▶ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Literary Journalism ▶ Magazine, Visual Design of ▶ Media History ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Russia: Media System

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## Journalists' Role Perception

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An important concept to apply in describing how journalists in different cultures and media systems understand their work and its social function is *role perceptions*. These can have a strong influence on journalists' professional behavior and thus can explain differences between news cultures. The term "role" originates from theater, and sociology adopted the term to designate the whole set of expectations that other people have of the holder of a certain social position. Those expectations then create the perceptions that the holders of the roles have in their social environment and accept as legitimate, and consequently their perceptions guide their attitudes and behaviors. Thus, journalists' role perceptions can be defined as generalized expectations which journalists believe exist in society and among different stakeholders, which they see as normatively acceptable, and which influence their behavior on the job.

Journalists' role perceptions have been studied primarily for news workers involved in covering politics and current affairs. The research assumes that the way journalists understand their role will influence considerably the way they interact with news sources and make decisions about news selection and presentation. In a causal model of factors influencing news decisions, role perceptions become an intervening variable that moderates the influence of primary variables such as the news value of people or topics in the news, or subjective beliefs. For instance, journalists who see themselves as a common



carrier of the news might try to suppress the influence of their own preferences on the coverage of a political figure. Conversely, journalists who see a role for themselves in political activism would allow such a subjective influence.

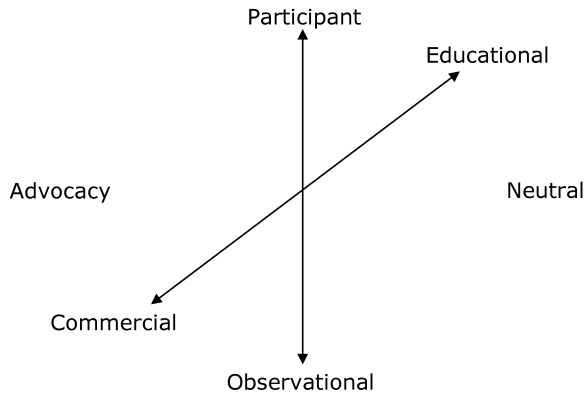
## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

To describe journalists' role perceptions, communication researchers have developed a variety of concepts, some as *ideal types*, some as *normative standards*, and some as *empirical typologies*. According to sociologist Max Weber, ideal types develop from observing reality but do not exist in reality in their pure form. They usually occupy the end points of a given dimension and thus form helpful markers. Siebert et al. (1956) presented the first spectrum of this kind in their four theories of the press: the authoritarian, the Soviet, the liberal, and the socially responsible. Although used to distinguish between press systems, these four theories can also be regarded as ideal-type descriptions of different journalistic role perceptions.

One of the most widely recognized pairs of ideal types for role perceptions was identified by Morris Janowitz (1975), who distinguished between the *gatekeeper* and the *advocate*. These types differ particularly along two dimensions: their picture of the audience, and their patterns of news selection. Journalists adhering to the advocacy model may assume that many members of the audience cannot either recognize or pursue their own interests in society (→ Advocacy Journalism). These journalists therefore believe that their major task is to act on behalf of this part of the audience. Consequently, they select the news according to its instrumentality for the social groups they support. In contrast, the gatekeeper regards audience members as mature and able to pursue their own needs and thus selects the news exclusively according to professional criteria, such as the perceived news value. Similar but not identical is the distinction between the *neutral* and the *participant* journalist (Johnstone et al. 1976) in a survey of US journalists. The *active* versus the *passive* journalist, the *liberal* versus the *partisan* journalist, and the *mediator* versus the *communicator* are similar ideal types.

Several normative typologies highlight specific social tasks that the public can or should expect journalists to perform. The typologies serve a heuristic purpose in research. For instance, Patterson (1995) distinguished between the roles of *signaler*, *common carrier*, *watchdog*, and *public representative*. As signalers, journalists represent an early warning system for society. As common carriers, they channel information between the government and the people. As watchdogs, they monitor institutions and issue warnings to the actors in politics and commerce, and as public representatives, they become spokespersons on behalf of public opinion.

Several normative proposals for journalistic role models have triggered discussions in the academic as well as in the professional world. In the 1960s and 1970s, several authors suggested a different and more active role for journalists in developing countries, arguing that the state of social structures and of the media system in such countries would require that journalists become themselves agents of change and collaborate to a certain extent with the authorities (→ Development Journalism). In the USA a widely recognized debate about journalists' professional tasks began with the proposal of the new role: public journalism (→ Citizen Journalism). Although the term lacks a universally accepted definition, it



**Figure 1** Dimensions in journalists' role perceptions

usually assigns journalists the role of motivating or enhancing public deliberation and getting the public more engaged. Along a different dimension Philip Meyer (1991) suggested that journalists should see themselves more often in a role equivalent to that of the social scientist, applying research methods such as polls and statistical analyses of data sets to describe social reality (→ Precision Journalism).

Finally, different patterns of role perceptions have emerged from surveys of journalists and subsequent data analyses, usually by factor analysis (→ Statistics, Descriptive). In the first of a series of surveys of US journalists, Weaver and Wilhoit (1986) extracted from their data the roles of *information dissemination*, *interpretative-investigative*, and *“adversary.”* An international comparative survey of British and German reporters and editors (Köcher 1986) labeled the role perceptions of the German respondents as those of *missionaries* and the British as those of *bloodhounds*.

The common denominator of these typologies is that they ask what social goals journalists should pursue and how they should behave on the job when collecting and processing the news. For democratic countries, the existing theoretical role models differentiate three dimensions, all of them interrelated (see Fig. 1). On the first dimension (participant–observational), journalists can choose between actively seeking to influence the political process and trying to function as impartial conduits for political reporting. On the second dimension (advocacy–neutral), the alternatives are expressing subjective values and beliefs and maintaining strict neutrality and fairness to all sides. Finally, on the third (commercial–educational), journalists can strive either to reach the widest audience by serving its tastes and patterns of media exposure or to make news decisions based on what is good for democracy and public discourse. Journalists in all countries acquire elements of all these dimensions from the available role models. Scholars can usually explain the differences between journalistic cultures when comparing countries or between individual journalists in a single country by examining which of the alternatives prevails.

### EMERGENCE OF ROLE PERCEPTIONS

How journalists perceive their professional role depends on many factors, including the collective influence of the professional culture of a given country, the individual influence

of other journalists, or both. Historical development is one of the most decisive factors for differences in journalism between countries. For instance, economic and social changes in the US population in the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as the commercial motivation of publishers to reach the widest possible audience, together drove US newspapers to adopt a less partisan position, to become oriented more toward news and less toward opinion, and to develop basic professional standards such as the norm of objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting). It was “the triumph of the news over the editorial and facts over opinion, a change which was shaped by the expansion of democracy and the market, and which would lead, in time, to the journalist’s uneasy allegiance to objectivity” (Schudson 1978, 14). The role model of a neutral observer of ongoing social and political processes still permeates today the way most US journalists see and carry out their job.

Journalism in the United Kingdom showed similar patterns of historical development because of early press freedom and commercialization (→ Penny Press), but the professional role models in most of the continental European countries developed differently. In Germany, for instance, the absence of press freedom until the twentieth century led journalists to see themselves as individual freedom fighters and adversaries of authority. As a consequence, many journalists consider it more important to voice their opinion than merely to cover the news.

The development of professional standards also influenced journalists’ role perceptions, often as a consequence of media history and the emergence of professional organizations (→ Journalists: Professional Associations; Professionalization of Journalism), as did the training and socialization of journalists. While in some countries, such as the USA, a majority of journalists have studied a journalism or similar university program with standardized modules conveying specific professional norms, in most other countries news workers come from many different fields and lack a common basis of knowledge and norms. Aside from these intercultural differences, the role perception of journalists within a given media system can also differ according to their individual training, socialization, institutional demands, or personal job motivations.

## MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS

Communication researchers have applied a variety of methods and empirical indicators to assess journalists’ role perceptions. Surveys in which the respondents answer questions about their norms and behaviors are the method used most frequently by far. Analyses of media content allow researchers to infer role perceptions from the work product. Participant observation in the newsroom allows researchers to witness the behavior of journalists on the job in day-to-day practice.

Most frequently researchers have asked explicitly how journalists define their roles or tasks, for example whether they see themselves as neutral reporters or as proponents of specific values and ideas. Questions about journalists’ general motivations in their work can reveal their ambitions, that is, which goals they want to pursue while working in journalism. Questions about qualifications and skills necessary to do the job well can indicate where journalists see the core competence of the profession. Questions about basic norms such as fairness, objectivity, or distance from sources can reveal the

normative basis of their practice. Questions on their picture of the audience can show whether they see themselves in a position elevated above or equal to the public, which in turn can indicate an educational role perception.

Comparative investigations are particularly valuable because they allow benchmarking with other professional cultures and can help interpret and evaluate the role perceptions measured in one country or in one professional sector. Although journalists in western democratic societies operate under similar legal, political, economic, and cultural conditions and share a professional orientation, their media systems, news organizations, political structures, and general cultures differ and thus affect their norms and behaviors. International comparative research on journalists' role perceptions began with the so-called professionalization studies that Jack McLeod and colleagues initiated in the 1960s. The researchers had developed a scale for measuring how the professional attitudes of US journalists compared to those of traditional professions such as medicine and law. Surveys later applied the scale to journalists from other countries, allowing international comparisons (Donsbach 1981). Several other research programs contributed to comparative evidence on role perceptions. A questionnaire first used for US journalists in the 1980s was later applied in 20 other countries (Weaver 1997). In the early 1990s a survey conducted almost simultaneously in five countries measured the role perceptions and professional norms of journalists involved in daily news decisions (Donsbach & Patterson 2004).

These international comparative studies show that professional cultures differ considerably even among countries otherwise similar in the structural patterns of their media and political organization. In the study of journalists mentioned previously, German and Italian respondents said far more often than their British, Swedish, and US colleagues that "championing values and ideas" was an important aspect of their work as journalists, thus indicating a role perception more open to advocacy. German and Italian respondents rated professional standards such as objectivity or neutrality as less important and readiness to influence the political process as more important. For Germany, a higher advocacy role perception also clearly correlated with the influence of subjective beliefs on actual news decisions in a quasi-experimental design that accompanied the survey. These cross-national differences describe news systems that also have much in common, including their primary task: gathering and disseminating the latest information about current events. Western news systems are more alike than different, although their differences are important and consequential. Besides differences based on mean values for these countries, role perceptions can differ considerably among individual journalists and media organizations.

Role perceptions within the countries have also changed over the years. In some cases the changes have occurred through crucial events, such as the Vietnam War or the Watergate scandal in the USA, which made US journalists more skeptical or even cynical toward politics and political leaders. Content analysis of Swedish news media over a period of 80 years showed a sharp increase in negative news (Westerstahl & Johansson 1986), leading to the conclusion that the general role model of journalism changed in the 1960s from the ideology of paternalism to the ideology of criticism, and surveys and content analyses in other countries (Lang et al. 1993; Patterson 1993) support that interpretation. Some evidence suggests that the increasing commercialization of the news media worldwide has started yet another, more global process of changing role models,

so that for many journalists the possibility of advocating specific goals and norms has become less important in the face of an increasing necessity to reach the widest audience. More evidence from empirical studies is needed, however, to verify this hypothesis.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Citizen Journalism ► Development Journalism  
 ► Journalists: Professional Associations ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Penny Press  
 ► Precision Journalism ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Statistics, Descriptive

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Over the past five decades, Elihu Katz (born in New York in 1926) has made a major contribution to the analysis of mass communication. Best known for the concept of the “two-step flow of mass communication” (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication) and for the theory of → “uses and gratifications” obtained by media audiences, Katz’s work examines the relation between the individual and the group in the process of mass media influence, contributing to the understanding of the active television viewer, the diffusion of innovations (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation), → media effects, → public opinion, and media imperialism. Professionally, Katz has divided his time between America (first the University of Chicago, later the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California, then the University of Pennsylvania) and Israel (where he founded the Communications Institute at the Hebrew University, headed the Institute of Applied Social Research, and directed the task force charged with introducing television to Israel in the 1960s; → Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel).

His work began with the publication of *Personal influence* in 1955 (with his mentor at Columbia, → Paul F. Lazarsfeld) and two books on the diffusion of innovation: *Medical innovation* (1966), with James Coleman and Herbert Menzel, and *The politics of community conflict* (1969), with Robert Crain and Donald Rosenthal. These were followed by the founding statement of uses and gratifications theory, *The uses of mass communications* (1974), edited with Jay Blumler, which stressed the active and selective nature of audiences’ responses to the media (→ Selective Exposure). His equally influential investigation into the cultural conditions of audience reception of the American soap opera *Dallas*, *The export of meaning* (1990), with Tamar Liebes, took him in a more cultural, interpretive direction (→ Intercultural Media Effects; Soap Operas). More recently, he published a groundbreaking analysis of media events, *Media events* (1992), with Daniel Dayan (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events).

Other books include a reader on *Bureaucracy and the public* (1973), edited with Brenda Danet; *The secularization of leisure* (1976) with Michael Gurevitch; *Broadcasting in the third world* (1977) with George Wedell, a cross-national account of media and modernization; *Social research on broadcasting* (1977), a report on the role of research in understanding the audience for the BBC; *Almost midnight* (1980) with Itzak Roeh, Akiba

Cohen, and Barbie Zelizer, on the changing nature of television news; *Mass media and social change* (1981), edited with Tamas Szecsko; *Election studies* (2001) with Yael Warshel; and, most recently, *Canonic texts in media research* (2003), edited with John Durham Peters, Tamar Liebes, and Avril Orloff, which re-examined canonical (or “should be” canonical) figures in the history of media and communication research (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects; Opinion Leader).

According to the two-step flow hypothesis, opinion leaders seek out mass media messages relevant to their expertise and disseminate these through vertical or horizontal flows in their local community, especially during periods of uncertainty, resulting in a selective transmission process, which either resists or facilitates social change, depending on interpersonal relations in primary groups. Looking more broadly at the question of media influence, Katz (1980, 119) argued that “the history of empirical work on the effects of mass communications can be written in terms of two concepts: selectivity and interpersonal relations.” Thus, “the ‘power’ of the media rises and falls, conceptually, as a function of the importance attributed to the intervening processes of selectivity and interpersonal relations” (Katz 1980, 120), an importance which he shows to oscillate over six decades of research on “effects.”

In a famous exchange, Todd Gitlin (1978) articulated the classic critique of media effects research, attacking its focus on measurement, quantification, and short-term effects, its marketing orientation, and its claim to scientific objectivity and political neutrality: in short, its grounding in functionalist sociology. Katz and Lazarsfeld, claimed Gitlin, drastically underplayed the power of the media as regards long-term ideological effects, particularly those that reinforce the status quo. Notwithstanding attempts from Katz and others to rebut these criticisms (Peters 1989; Simonson 2006), the debate between Katz and Gitlin became emblematic of the struggle between administrative and critical scholars during the 1970s and 1980s (→ Critical Theory).

Yet Katz has consistently advanced an agenda of convergence across often warring divisions in the research field – seeking to integrate methods, political positions, academic disciplines, and research traditions. Drawing on social psychology, sociology, and political science, his commitment to convergence is also evident in his various academic and practice-oriented collaborations, as expressed in a series of articles designed to build bridges across intellectual divides.

Katz’s work furthers the understanding of the complex relations between public opinion, media, and social interaction (→ Interpersonal Communication). Influenced by the social theorist Tarde, Katz points out that, insofar as Tarde argued for the rationality of public opinion as contrasted with the mindlessness of the masses, he may be seen as the originator of the active/passive viewer (or voter) debate in media and communications research, with the notion of the two-step flow (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955), foreshadowed in Tarde’s social psychological essay of 1898, “La conversation” (Katz 1992). Last, Katz has always been committed to the usefulness of social science research in public policy terms, seeking ways to ensure that his research on media effects, media institutions, public opinion, and audiences benefits society, especially journalism, broadcasting, and public policy.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Israel ► Critical Theory ► Developmental Communication ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Functional Analysis ► Intercultural Media Effects ► Interpersonal Communication

- ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects
- ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention
- ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Knowledge Gap Effects**

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Building upon early research from rural sociology, diffusion of innovations, public opinion poll data, and information campaigns, Tichenor et al. (1970, 159–160) posed the hypothesis: “As the infusion of mass media information into a social system increases, segments of the population with higher socioeconomic status (SES) tend to acquire this information at a faster rate than the lower status segments, so that the gap in knowledge between these segments tends to increase rather than decrease.” The less advantaged were predicted to gain knowledge but at a slower rate than more advantaged groups. The gap can be studied at one time point or over time. Tichenor et al., also known as the Minnesota Team, focused on public affairs and scientific knowledge (→ Political Knowledge). They assumed that knowledge growth was irreversible (although forgetting can occur) and that ceiling effects occurred at varying rates for different SES groups or else had not been reached (→ Media Campaigns and Perception of Reality; Media Use by Social Variable).

The most frequent indicator of SES is level of formal education (→ Operationalization; Scales; Scales and Indices), although researchers also have used income and, less frequently, occupation (Viswanath & Finnegan 1996; Gaziano 1997). Missing data are a greater problem with income questions than education or occupation measures, and occupation



can be difficult to code. *Knowledge* is defined as information acquired and retained by people through learning processes. *Gap* means the relation between SES and knowledge. Knowledge has been measured as simple awareness or as in-depth knowledge, either in open-ended or closed-ended questions, or both. Incidentally, awareness knowledge gaps can be narrowing while in-depth knowledge gaps are increasing, and knowledge measured with open-ended questions does not necessarily decrease the relation to SES, compared with closed-ended questions with objectively defined answers. Additionally, media use, attention, or publicity should vary because the prediction concerns changing levels of media information diffusion.

*Operational definitions of knowledge gap* include differences in mean knowledge scores among SES groups, differences in proportions of SES groups possessing any knowledge, correlations between knowledge and SES (Viswanath & Finnegan 1996; Gaziano 1997), statistical interactions between education and news media use in hierarchical multiple regression analyses of cross-sectional data (Kwak 1999; Eveland & Scheufele 2000), and comparisons of communities that vary in structural characteristics (Tichenor et al. 1980; Donohue et al. 1986). Inaccurate information is seldom examined; it tends to circulate more often among lower SES groups than higher SES groups (Gaziano 1997).

### **CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH GAPS INCREASE OR DECREASE**

The Minnesota Team reported that *differentials decreased* when (1) conflict was associated with issues (bringing them to the attention of all social groups), (2) levels of media coverage were high and sustained over time, (3) levels of interpersonal discussion about topics were high, (4) community structures were relatively smaller and more homogeneous, as opposed to larger, heterogeneous structures (that tend to have more groups active on issues and greater complexity of communication channels), (5) issues had high levels of basic concern to communities, and (6) forgetting occurred over time among all groups (Tichenor et al. 1980; → Memory). Other work corroborated and extended these findings (Viswanath et al. 1995).

The majority of studies find knowledge inequalities (Viswanath & Finnegan 1996; Gaziano 1997). Conditions under which gaps tend to arise include those in which topics have differential appeal to SES groups or in which there are high levels of organized group activity, which tend to create greater interest in issues, although group ability to define issues or control information dissemination can lead to restriction of information (Tichenor et al. 1980; Holst 2000). Knowledge gaps can develop between small, homogeneous communities and larger, more heterogeneous communities as metropolitan newspapers pull back from regional coverage in order to maximize profits (Donohue et al. 1986). Smaller communities can be less attractive markets to metropolitan dailies because of rural location, agricultural orientation, and lower-income populations.

### **THEORETICAL MODELS**

Ettema and Kline (1977) and Dervin (1980) were early *critics* of the knowledge gap perspective; however, analysis of their critiques showed that their models, units of analysis, and assumptions were different from those of the Minnesota Team, leading to different kinds of hypotheses

and different explanations (Gaziano & Gaziano 1999). The Minnesota Team conducted a systematic program of research spanning nearly three decades that located cause in the social stratification of collectivities (especially communities) and that saw knowledge gaps resulting from social control processes, with knowledge control by elites and/or pressures for social change as potential outcomes (Tichenor et al. 1980; Viswanath & Finnegan 1996).

Ettema & Kline (1977) were concerned with social-psychological, individual-level causal factors, audience-related elements (skills, motivation, media behavior) and message-related elements (ceiling factors), in order to explain knowledge differentials as “communication effects gaps,” in terms of “differences” rather than “deficits.”

Dervin’s (1980) model was an intra-individual, cognitive-processing model with cybernetic and library science elements (→ Information Processing). She characterized data on gaps as “numeric myths” with a “blame the victim” perspective. Her unit of analysis was the “gap-bridging instance,” and she perceived the debate in terms of “information gaps” and “sense-making.”

A fourth model brought the concepts of culture, belief systems, community networks, and other networks to center on knowledge differentials among social groups (Gaziano & Gaziano 1999; → Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

## **FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

The relative contributions of print and broadcast media to knowledge inequities have been little studied, particularly → radio, → magazines, and the → Internet. Use of television and, to a lesser extent, → newspapers contributed to smaller knowledge gaps when campaign interest and key demographics were controlled in an analysis of national election data (Eveland & Scheufele 2000). After controlling for demographics, Kwak (1999) found that high exposure to television news was related to smaller knowledge differentials during the 1992 presidential campaign in Dane County, WI, a pattern for television corroborated by Liu and Eveland (2005) with national data (→ Television News). Kwak (1999) also found that close attention to news of the campaign in newspapers among those who were the most interested in the election diminished the education-based knowledge gap. Eveland and Scheufele (2000) expected that newspaper use would lead to larger knowledge gaps because newspaper access frequently depends on education, but they found the opposite result. In contrast, Liu and Eveland (2005) observed an influence of newspaper use and attention on increased knowledge disparities.

Since most knowledge gap work involves cross-sectional data, future research should include more panel or time-trend studies to better study change (Holst 2000; Holbrook 2002; → Survey). Also needed is more study of factors that reduce gaps, such as motivation, including the conditions under which motivation is related to SES and when it is not (Kwak 1999); new communication technologies, especially the Internet; childrearing patterns and family communication styles (Gaziano 2001); school curricula oriented toward enhancing adolescent-parent communication and political learning (McDevitt & Chaffee 2000); and different communication (Eveland & Scheufele 2000) and cultural (Gaziano & Gaziano 1999) contexts. In addition, more study is needed of measurement issues, such as improved knowledge measurement and increased number of indicators of key concepts (Viswanath & Finnegan 1996; Liu & Eveland 2005; → Measurement Theory).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Health Disparities, Communication in ▶ Individual Differences and Information Processing ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Campaigns and Perception of Reality ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Memory ▶ Newspaper ▶ Operationalization ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Radio ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Survey ▶ Television News

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# Knowledge Interests

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The term “knowledge interests” (*Erkenntnisinteresse*) was coined by German philosopher and social theorist → Jürgen Habermas in his work *Knowledge and human interests* (Habermas 1968/1987). Habermas distinguished three kinds of knowledge interests constitutive for particular object domains and their scientific investigation. According to him, the interest of *control through prediction* is constitutive of the natural sciences, while the interest of *hermeneutical understanding* characterizes the humanities. The social sciences, in turn, follow the knowledge interest of *emancipation* in that they create awareness of the contingency and changeability of the social world and thus of societal alternatives (Jensen 1995, 93–95).

In his later writings, Habermas has replaced this threefold typology of knowledge interests with a theory of communication that distinguishes *four different types of action* and corresponding “relations to the world” (Habermas 1981/1984, 75–101; 2001, 15). Teleological (goal-directed) action presupposes an *objective* world (as the totality of all entities about which true statements are possible); normatively regulated action presupposes the objective world as well as a *social* world (as the totality of all legitimately regulated interpersonal relations); and dramaturgical action presupposes the objective world (including social facts) as well as a *subjective* world (as the totality of the experiences of the speaker, to which he or she has privileged access). Communicative action, finally, comprises all three types of relations to the world in a reflexive manner, i.e., acknowledging the possibility that truth claims concerning objective reality, claims of moral rightness concerning the social world, and claims to sincerity and truthfulness in relation to the subjective world can be contested by other speakers and must be rationally justified.

The earlier typology of knowledge interests constitutive of particular object domains has thus been transformed into a typology of actions with particular validity claims and pragmatic relations to the world, which, according to Habermas, implicitly lie at the heart of every act of communication. From this later perspective, the specificity of social–scientific inquiry can be seen in the fact that it makes truth claims as well as claims to moral rightness concerning social relations, or, in other words, that it is empirical–analytical and (at least implicitly) normative at the same time. The normative content of social–scientific knowledge does not derive from a more or less arbitrary political stance of individuals or groups of researchers, but must be rationally justifiable in the light of opposing claims to rightness in the scientific community.

In (mass) communication research, traces of such normative content can be found even in the most basic concepts of the field, namely the models of communication that (mass) communication researchers employ (McQuail 2000, 52–58; → Models of Communication). The dominant model of communication is the *transmission model*, according to which meaning is transmitted from a sender through a channel to one or many receivers. It follows the perspective of the sender and his or her intentions, and sees communication as goal-directed action aiming at some effect on the side of the receiver (e.g., issue

awareness, persuasion). In this sense the model aims at control through prediction of effects. The *ritual model*, by contrast, sees communication as the representation of shared beliefs (Carey 1989) and communicators as participants in a shared experience. This model involves dramaturgical as well as normatively regulated action. The *publicity model* aims at maximizing the attention in audiences by optimizing techniques of display. Like the transmission model, it is teleological and further corresponds to the logic of advertising and commercial media use research, where the contact with a medium or message constitutes the basic goal. Finally, the *reception model* of communication places particular emphasis on the preferences of audiences and the latitude they possess in interpreting media texts and developing their own readings. It involves all types of action and is in line with intentions found in cultural and media studies to value popular tastes and media perceptions (→ Cultural Studies), sometimes at the expense of a critical view on those tastes and perceptions. All of these basic models of communication are inevitably imbued with particular knowledge interests that are only rarely justified and discussed explicitly.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Discourse

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# **Knowledge Management**

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Knowledge management (KM) is a key concept in today's business world. While there is an element of fashion in its appearance toward the end of the 1990s (Swan et al. 1999), many of the world's most successful corporations, businesses, and organizations are investing considerable resources in this enterprise (Alvesson & Karreman 2001). These knowledge projects include setting up intranets, using collaborative or workflow software, mentoring, and sharing information on best practices. Deeply rooted in practicality and typically tied to organizational objectives, these practices seek to identify, create, represent, and distribute knowledge throughout the organization (→ Organizational Communication).

A number of considerations motivate organizations to embark on a KM program. Perhaps first among these is to gain and maintain the competitive advantage that comes with improved or faster learning and new knowledge creation. In a business environment characterized by radical and discontinuous change, successful companies are those that anticipate changes, consistently create new knowledge, disseminate it widely throughout the organization, and quickly embody it in new processes and products. Potential benefits of KM programs include: managing the proliferation of data and information in complex environments; allowing employees rapid access to useful and relevant knowledge resources; greater innovation; shorter product development life cycles; leveraging the expertise of people across the organization and thus benefiting from “network effects” (as the number of productive connections between employees increases); facilitating organizational learning; and increasing the responsiveness or resilience of organizations to environmental change (→ Learning Organizations).

## DEFINING KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

One aspect of KM, knowledge transfer, has always existed in one form or another. The actual study of KM is much more recent, however, and has its roots in areas such as business, management, sociology, and economics. Most working definitions suggest that KM is about identifying and harnessing intellectual assets, either in the form of explicit knowledge held in artifacts or as possessed by individuals or communities. A recurrent theme is that KM provides a framework that builds on past experiences and creates new mechanisms for exchanging and creating knowledge. Implicit is the recognition that knowledge, and not simply information, is the primary source of an organization’s innovative potential.

In considering KM, it is important to distinguish between *knowledge* and *information*. Generally, information becomes knowledge when it is seen in context or interpreted. A more process-oriented view of knowledge focuses on knowing and anchors it as a social accomplishment. Orlikowski (2002), for example, refers to knowledge as procuring the “capacity to act.” As the KM field has matured, there has been increasing academic debate on epistemological questions of this type and the emergence of a critical perspective on what began as a practical, management-based movement (e.g., Styhre 2003).

There are *three general perspectives on KM*: the cognitive perspective, the networking perspective, and the social, community-based perspective. The dominant perspective is the *cognitive perspective*, in which knowledge is a commodity and an asset, something that can be accounted for and managed. Typically, there are a number of processes involved: knowledge identification, capture or acquisition, generation, validation, diffusion, storage, retrieval, and use or reuse. Variations of the cognitive model of KM are practiced by most organizations with formal KM processes in place. Some prominent cognitive models of KM are the SECI model described later (Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995) and discussions of intellectual capital, the intangible assets that contribute to an organization’s value (Bontis 1999). Some scholars argue that the cognitive model of KM may be most applicable to the reutilization of knowledge. From this perspective, IT tools are used to codify, store, retrieve, and transfer knowledge.

*Networking perspectives* on KM emerge parallel with the theories of the network organization (→ Communication Networks). From this perspective, knowledge acquisition

and sharing is a primary lever for organizational learning, which enables organizations to choose and adopt new practices where relevant. The network perspective acknowledges that individuals have social as well as economic motives, and that their actions are influenced by networks of relationships in which they are embedded. Information technologies are extremely important as facilitating tools for maintaining and building knowledge sharing and transfer networks. In practice, network models of KM try to integrate collaboration patterns and IT networks in order to control the flow of information and forge strategic alliances both within and across organizations (Contractor & Monge 2002).

Both the cognitive and network perspectives on KM suppose a high degree of planning and formalization. An alternative strategy to encoding and retrieving knowledge from knowledge repositories such as databases is for individuals to ask their knowledgeable co-workers questions as needed. This *social, community-based perspective* to KM has much in common with → communities of practice and narrative or storytelling approaches in organizational communication (→ Storytelling and Narration). The community perspective builds on the notion that knowledge and practice are inseparable. Community members work together to re-create and apply transferred information in locally situated, appropriate ways. The response from the expert individual is highly contextualized to the particular problem being addressed and personalized to the questioner. Knowledge is generated locally and collectively, through the social construction of new meanings and understandings. In this perspective, IT-based solutions play a secondary role. The challenge for organizations approaching KM from this perspective is to encourage enabling organizational practices, such as providing spaces for exchange and a nurturing environment (Cook & Brown 1999; Iverson & McPhee 2002).

## KEY CONCEPTS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) widely cited model of knowledge creation and dissemination distinguishes between *tacit* and *explicit knowledge*. If "tacit," knowledge is unarticulated, and thus indescribable. Polanyi's (1967) famous example of bicycle riding is a case in point: the ability to ride is demonstrated not through explanation, but through presentation. "Explicit" knowledge, on the other hand, can be expressed linguistically in artifacts (through writing, drawing, programming). In its explicit form, knowledge lends itself to recombination and thus becomes accessible to others. Only when it is externalized can tacit knowledge become useful to the group.

Nonaka's *model of knowledge creation and management* has served as a foundation for much of the research in KM (Nonaka 1994; Nonaka & Takeuchi 1995). Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) argue that a successful KM program must, on the one hand, convert internalized tacit knowledge into explicit codified knowledge in order to share it, but also enable individuals and groups to internalize and make codified knowledge personally meaningful once it is retrieved from a KM system. The model describes a continuous process of dynamic interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge through a sequence of *four modes of knowledge conversion*. In the first mode, "socialization," tacit knowledge is shared through interaction between individuals. Because tacit knowledge cannot be articulated, the key to acquiring it is experience. Apprenticeships are one example. The second mode, "externalization," involves developing ways to embed this shared tacit

knowledge, and enable its communication. “Combination,” the third mode, involves reconfiguring different elements of externalized information through sorting, categorizing, adding, and recontextualizing it in new ways. Finally, “internalization” occurs when explicit knowledge is integrated into and becomes part of the individual’s knowledge base (a mental model). This sequence of steps from socialization, to externalization, to combination, to internalization is known as the *SECI process*.

According to the model, various triggers, such as interaction, dialogue, the use of metaphors, or experimentation, induce shifts between modes. The result is a *dynamic spiral*, which widens as it moves from individual to group to organization levels, explaining how individual knowledge is transformed into organizational knowledge and vice versa. The successful organization is one that best enables the knowledge creation spiral from socialization (tacit-to-tacit) to externalization (tacit-to-explicit) to combination (explicit-to-explicit) to internalization (explicit-to-tacit), thus capitalizing on the intellectual capital of individual employees (Bontis 1999).

## TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Information technology is a key enabler of KM programs. The earliest KM technologies were online corporate yellow pages (expertise locators) and document management systems. With the development of collaborative technologies such as *Lotus Notes* in the mid-1990s, KM systems expanded rapidly. Workflow systems and status tracking tools also added impetus to the movement, as did semantic technologies for search and retrieval and content management.

Several issues cloud the application of technological tools to KM. IT tends to reduce the complexity or richness of knowledge in order to be able to code it. Organizations sometimes store large quantities of information or data and mistakenly think they are fostering the flow of knowledge. There is a tendency to focus on individuals as the source of knowledge. Finally, existing KM systems have difficulty dealing with tacit knowledge.

As technologies gain in sophistication, they are progressively more capable of providing meaningful support for knowledge sharing in organizations. For example, discussion forums and the scaffolding structures they provide can be seen as KM tools. Intelligent information filtering and extraction (such as recommender systems) have become commonplace in the past five years. Social computing tools such as blogs and wikis provide a more unstructured approach to knowledge transfer and knowledge creation (→ Blogger). Such tools are still primarily text based, however. Developments in visualization techniques such as concept mapping and image indexing provide new opportunities for distilling meaningful, reusable knowledge from their content.

As the KM field has matured, it has become apparent that advanced technologies cannot solve all KM problems, however. Database entries in knowledge repositories are only valuable if they correspond with users’ sense-giving processes. Constructing an information technology infrastructure for knowledge does not, in itself, guarantee that organization members will use the system. The literature on best practices in KM suggests that fostering an environment conducive to knowledge sharing and open communication is vital in any KM strategy. Other considerations are a shared vision, committed leadership, and a strong link to business priorities.



SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Communication Networks ► Communities of Practice ► Learning Organizations ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► Organizational Communication ► Sense-Making ► Storytelling and Narration

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## **Korean Cultural Influence**

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South Korea has emerged as a center of pop culture throughout Asia: its scope of cultural influence encompasses Eurasia (e.g., Uzbekistan, Mongolia, and Russia), East Asia (e.g., China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, and Japan), Southeast Asia (e.g., Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia), and even extends beyond Asia. Korea's cultural products – notably, its blockbuster movies, television programs, → fashion, and → popular music – have become favorites among Asians and even among Latin Americans. The so-called “Korean wave” (or *Halryu*, a term first coined by Chinese reporters in 1999) refers to the growing appeal of Korean → popular culture in other Asian countries (Koh et al. 2005), while the Korean government's rhetoric of the “digital

Korean wave” is an attempt to ride the wave of Korea’s cultural influence by simultaneously promoting Korea’s high-tech electronic companies such as Samsung Electronics (→ Samsung Corporation).

Korean → television programs and → cinema have gained a “pan-Asianist” value (Dator & Seo 2004; Kim 2007), and the scope of their cultural influence in the global market has become similar to the pan-Iberian/Latin American *telenovela* culture, which is relatively independent from the monolithic cultural dominance of the → Hollywood empire (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Korea’s pan-Asian appeal can be theoretically explained by “cultural proximity,” a phenomenon first identified by empirical studies of Latin American TV watching patterns, which verified the export success of channels such as Mexico’s Televisa and Brazil’s TV Globo and noted their function as a counter to worldwide cultural standardization by global media firms (Sinclair 1999). “Cultural proximity” is created by such factors as local culture, language similarity, local market strength, and other cultural variables (Straubhaar 1991).

The “Korean wave” in Asian regions bears some similarity to the cultural influence of the *telenovela* in Latin America, and the new pan-Asian culture signifies the “non-linear, fractured nature of cultural globalization” (Ang 1996, 154), the so-called “hybridity” of global culture (→ Hybridity Theories), as distinct from theories of the propagation of uniformity by the western-dominated media market. The cultural proximity among Asian countries lacks linguistic proximity, unlike Spanish and Portuguese, and hence the “Korean wave” in Asia is less firmly grounded than the influence of *telenovela* culture in Latin America. In an attempt to ensure that the “Korean wave” is not merely a passing fad, Korea moved beyond exporting its TV programs and films to invest in television and film production in China and Taiwan, and also to become involved in co-producing such entertainment with these countries. Moreover, to alleviate the antagonistic responses from some Asian regions to the dominant penetration of Korean popular culture, Korea has launched government-driven public relations programs which aim at promoting Korea’s image as harmless: the government has been establishing “Korea Plazas” in the major Asian regions, which are used for teaching the Korean language, previewing Korean TV programs, films, and other cultural commodities, and eventually promoting tourism. As another way to lessen some negative responses to Korean popular culture, over the past ten years the government has also invited and sponsored 1,000 Asian artists, entertainers, and cultural activists every year. The government expects these public leaders in Asian countries to promote Korea’s public image among their own peoples (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2005).

Korea’s effort to *promote culture as a business* originated from government policies promoting the domestic cultural and → tourism industries. Under the pressure of the 1997 IMF-driven financial crisis, the government shifted to radical adoption of neo-liberal economic policies and to privileging the information and culture industries over labor-intensive heavy industries. Since that time, culture in Korea has been widely regarded both as a key dimension of economic globalization and as a creative industry for earning foreign dollars and creating a new job market. Under the administrations of Dae-jung Kim (1998–2003) and of Moo-hyun Noh (2003–the present), policy plans for the cultural or creative sector have been predominantly driven by reducing cultural products to pure commodities.

This has been addressed by encouraging foreign exports of Korean music, television, and film, promoting Korean entertainers in the Asian entertainment market, and establishing international trade fairs or film and leisure/sports festivals in major cities designated as international culture or tourism sites (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The neo-liberal yet interventionist cultural policies initiated by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism plan to place Korean culture in the first tier of the pan-Asian cultural/creative industries, along with promoting the rapid incorporation of national and local development into the global economic system. Ironically, however, as of August 2006, Korea paid almost twice the amount of royalties to the Hollywood empire as it earned in entertainment dollars from Asian regions. The “Korean wave” thus signifies the Korean culture industry’s ambiguous position vis-à-vis the global Hollywood system.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cinema ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Fashion ▶ Hollywood ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Popular Music ▶ Samsung Corporation ▶ Television ▶ Tourism Industry

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## **Kurdish International Broadcasting**

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Med TV, the first Kurdish satellite TV channel, began its standard broadcasts in May 1995 from its head office in London and its main studios near Brussels. It was created by people close to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which had been conducting an armed struggle against the Turkish state since 1984. On the one hand, this channel was seen as an instrument in the struggle against Turkish media, which were used in the conflict by

the Turkish army according to “psychological warfare” requirements. On the other hand, it was seen as a means of opposing the homogenization policy of the Turkish nation-state, which banned the use of Kurdish in broadcasting. Europe, where a considerable Kurdish migrant population lived, constituted a human and material resource-base favorable to creating a satellite network in Kurdish (→ International Television).

Faced with cross-border television, the Turkish authorities began to operate a strategy whose first aspect consisted of interrupting broadcasts with the help of technical interventions. On 14 December 1995, Med TV broadcasts were stopped by a jamming transmission to the satellite hosting the signal (→ Satellite Television). The channel’s programs continued to be jammed in the years that followed, in order to prevent their reception.

A second aspect of the state’s strategy relied on diplomatic interventions with western countries to get the channel banned. Thus, in 1996 the Turkish government succeeded step by step in obtaining the cancellation of contracts of Med TV’s satellite broadcasts, thanks to its diplomatic efforts with the French and Polish governments. Between July and August 2006, the channel was forced to interrupt its broadcasts for 45 days until it was able to sign a new transmission contract with a satellite firm.

The countries that hosted Med TV’s head office and studios were further targets of Turkish diplomacy. Following multiple negotiations, on September 18, 1996 the Belgian, German, and British police began Operation “Sputnik” against the channel. Med TV’s head office and studios were searched simultaneously in all three countries. The trial of the TV station’s directors, which began in Belgium on September 19, 2003, seven years after Operation “Sputnik,” ended in an annulment.

The Turkish state’s diplomatic pressures were equally focused on the UK’s Independent Television Commission (ITC), which had authorized the satellite channel broadcasts (→ United Kingdom: Media System). On March 22, 1999, the British body suspended Med TV’s license for three weeks. Finally, on April 23, the ITC announced it was revoking the license for incitement to violence, following the Turkish authorities’ arrest of Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK leader, the previous February. British prime minister Tony Blair’s intervention with the ITC was pivotal to this decision.

From May 1999, Kurdish television continued, however, to transmit for several hours a day on the CTV frequency, a British-based channel. And on July 30, 1999, a new channel, *Medya TV*, saw the light of day from France. In February 2004 the Turkish state succeeded a second time in getting Kurdish television banned by France’s Supreme Broadcasting Council (Conseil Supérieur de l’Audiovisuel). For this body, *Medya TV* was a successor to Med TV and close to the PKK.

Nonetheless on March 1, 2004, *Roj TV* emerged in *Medya TV*’s stead. Although its main studios were near Brussels, its head office was in Copenhagen. The Turkish government immediately switched its pressure to the Danish authorities in order to obtain its closure. The US also intervened with the Danish government on its Turkish ally’s account, requesting the channel should be banned within the framework of anti-terrorism cooperation. Despite this, the Danish government, with the support of European Union leaders, refused this request and allowed transmissions to continue in the name of press and speech freedom (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

*Roj TV* is a general-purpose channel, its programs angled to audiences of all ages. It broadcasts cartoons, documentaries, and news magazines in Kurdish and Turkish, along

with debates in which PKK – now Kongra-Gel – leaders participate by phone. Moreover MMC, a music channel created in 2006, continues to be broadcast from Copenhagen. Some of the videos on this channel are even produced by Kongra-Gel supporters.

Over and above these two channels, Rojhelat TV, Komala TV, and Tishk TV began broadcasting in 2006, together with Newroz TV in 2007. All these originated in Iranian Kurdish political movements. Finally, aside from these Europe-based satellite channels, Kurdistan TV, Kurdsat, and Zagros TV were transmitting from northern Iraq.

SEE ALSO: ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► International Television ► Satellite Television ► United Kingdom: Media System

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# Labor in the Media

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When labor is in the news media, it reveals – perhaps more than any other subject – the economic, political, and professional conflicts between the practice of → journalism and the business of media. The problem of the news media’s coverage of organized labor is that the news media are both the social institutions designated to practice democratic communication, and capitalist entities designed to generate profits for their corporate executives and stockholders (→ Commercialization of the Media; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). As the literature reveals, all too often the news media fail to act as independent storytellers about labor, and instead align their journalism with the generally anti-labor interests of multinational corporations, which often include the news media themselves and their advertisers (→ Advertising).

But news media organizations that serve their own corporate interest risk undermining their greatest asset: people’s trust. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001) argue normatively that the first loyalty of journalism is to citizens, not media owners. Because of the significant stakes for corporations, labor, and citizens, news organizations’ coverage of labor has long invited criticism of the media’s credibility and institutional loyalties.

## **CORPORATE MEDIA AND LABOR**

The corporate news media’s posture toward labor unions is often evident in their own labor practices. For example, in the US many of the most highly regarded multinational news media corporations – including the → News Corporation, → Time Warner Inc., → Disney, Gannett, the Tribune Company, the Washington Post Company, and the New York Times Company – have a long record of anti-labor activities, including efforts to break their labor unions and prevent new ones from forming (Martin 2004). Moreover, media workers are increasingly treated like disposable entities, subject to the same kinds of outsourcing and instabilities as other workers in the global economy (→ Labor Unions in the Media).

In the logic of capitalism, it follows that news businesses would not report – or would avoid reporting favorably – on issues such as labor that might damage their bottom line. Not only do the mass media work to help themselves in this manner, but they also serve to express and reinforce the dominant cultural, political, and economic system (Miliband

1969; → Political Economy of the Media). Thus, the pro-capitalist function of the mass media necessarily involves anti-labor sentiment because organized labor infringes on the decision-making power of capital and may inhibit capital's profit margins. Herman and Chomsky (1988) see the mass media as a system of → propaganda, but one that is disguised by a free market configuration of private ownership (→ Ownership in the Media) and periodic exposure of corporate and government malfeasance in the name of free speech and citizen interest. Of course, labor is sometimes covered, even in favorable terms, by the news media. The capitalist mass media require some level of credibility to draw their audience, gain the professional commitment of journalists, and maintain public support for a free press (Curran 1991).

### **NEWS MEDIA AND LABOR BIAS**

Some studies argue that the news media are biased against business, although none conversely concludes that the news media are biased in favor of labor. More common are complaints in the US from the political right that the news media represent the views of a liberal elite (→ Bias in the News). In the view of Lichter et al. (1986), an elite, liberal, east-coast media strongly influences the general tone of America's national news coverage. This elite group is generally in favor of liberal social positions, which are out of step with business leaders' opinions. The authors therefore conclude the media are biased against business. But the authors' conclusion of an anti-business bias is problematic, particularly in the case of labor, because they also find that the media elite are broadly in favor of policies and ideas that support the US capitalist system. Large majorities of the elite news workers responded that they believed "people with more ability should earn more," "private enterprise is fair to workers," and "less regulation of business is good for the U.S." (Lichter et al. 1986, 29). Thus, the elite media workers' liberalism does not seem to extend to the concerns of labor.

The news watchdog organization Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) came to a similar conclusion in 1998 when it found that on a wide variety of economic issues – including the expansion of NAFTA, taxing the wealthy, concern over corporate concentration of power, and government-guaranteed medical care – the press was to the right of the public's views (Croteau 1998). Media critic Eric Alterman's (2003) extensive study of bias in the news also found a clear slant against labor coverage, even on America's presumably left-leaning, nonprofit, government-supported National Public Radio (→ Public Broadcasting Systems), which offers a number of programs and features focusing on business and finance.

### **MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS**

A large area of emphasis in the study of labor in the media is representation. Observers of the US labor movement have been critical of news media coverage of strikes and labor activities for more than a century.

Anti-labor sentiment in the US press can be traced back at least as far as the 1870s, when English-language dailies in Chicago were generally hostile to picketing, strikes, and class-based movements (Bekken 1993). Accurate reports on labor and strikes were difficult to find; most press reports from this era marked unionists as violent radicals, regardless of any factual evidence. Most notably, Chicago's English-language daily newspapers

hailed the execution of the alleged Haymarket conspirators, four working-class radicals who were convicted on questionable evidence of bombing a Haymarket Square rally in 1886.

In his 1920 book *The brass check*, Progressive Era → muckraking journalist Upton Sinclair identified several decades of dishonest newspaper stories designed to discredit labor unionists and paint them as anarchists and terrorists. Sinclair reserved particular ire for the Associated Press (AP) wire service, which was a dominant force in the US press (and is now the largest news organization in the world). He observed that if strikers are violent, “Capitalist Journalism” puts the story on the wire services, and if they are not violent, the strike gets no wire coverage.

Stereotypical portrayals of striking laborers as violent thugs still persist, but as labor battles have become more legalistic, the language of media representation has adapted (→ Stereotyping and the Media). For example, three major studies by the Glasgow University Media Group (1976, 1980, 1982) on British television’s coverage of industrial news demonstrated poor coverage of labor issues. The Media Group found that events reflecting negatively on management, such as industrial accidents, were consistently underreported, whereas labor’s reasons for striking were reported irregularly or not at all. The British studies also showed that the credibility of labor’s position was always in question, compared to management, in the news discourse of industrial conflicts (→ News as Discourse). The news characterized management’s statements positively as *offers*, and conversely portrayed labor’s statements negatively as *demands*. Parenti (1986) catalogued similar representations of labor in the media. Puette (1992) also found negative representations of labor in the news media, as well as in films (→ Cinema), entertainment → television, and newspaper → cartoons (→ Popular Communication and Social Class).

More recent research has focused on the ways in which news organizations seek to *maintain credibility* while working within the political and economic confines of the corporate mass media (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Journalists, Credibility of; Credibility of Content). First, journalists can avoid appearing biased in favor of labor or management positions by framing reports on labor relations from a consumer perspective (→ Framing of the News). For example, stories about transit strikes typically focus on the problems of the people who are stranded, and dismiss labor–management concerns as secondary to the quick resumption of service to customers. This consumer point of view on labor stories functions as an “objective” position in that it appears to be dispassionate about labor and management positions, but it ultimately has the effect of helping capital, as it submerges issues of citizenship, political activity, and class relations and elevates issues of consumption and a mythology of class-free social relations (Martin 2004).

Second, news organizations can minimize labor news by simply excluding the labor beat from reporter assignments. Because *beat assignments* help the news-gathering bureaucracy define what becomes news, not staffing certain beats diminishes regular coverage of that topic. For example, in the United States and Canada, national commercial broadcast and cable news networks have no regular labor beats. In the print media, the labor beat has almost disappeared in recent decades as editors have cut labor reporting while increasing business coverage. Labor reporters, who generally cover unions and worker associations, the labor movement, and issues like job equity and discrimination, have been replaced in the US and Canada by workplace reporters and columnists, whose assignment focuses more on lifestyle issues – such as getting along with bosses, telecommuting, or the ethics of workplace romances.



The decline in the labor beat is connected to newspapers' general shift away from working-class news readers to a more affluent readership since the 1980s. This is a shift that moves journalism away from its loyalty to all citizens in order to appeal to a select group of consumers and increase advertiser interest and news organization profits (Martin in press). Directing journalism to "upscale" consumer audiences (to the detriment of labor) is evident around the globe. For example, European-based Metro International, the distributor of the free *Metro* commuter newspaper in major cities around the world, which has become the world's largest global newspaper, targets affluent young adults.

### THE LABOR NEWS MEDIA

Given the shortcomings of labor coverage in the mainstream media, it is no surprise that labor activists have often taken the matter into their own hands by publishing labor-oriented newspapers.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the US labor movement circulated hundreds of local, regional, and national labor newspapers, in dozens of languages (Bekken 1993). Partisan publications with pro-union messages were as popular as commercial newspapers. For example, *Appeal to Reason*, a socialist newspaper, was the largest-circulation weekly in the US, reaching a peak circulation of more than 760,000 copies by 1913. During the Great Depression, the *Daily Worker*, the Communist Party newspaper, had a circulation of 100,000 (Pizzigati & Solowey 1992). The high circulation of these weeklies (significant even by today's standards) was difficult to sustain, especially with government-led anti-radical campaigns that included banning certain publications from the mail, destruction of presses, and deportation of editors. By the end of the twentieth century, local, independent working-class newspapers in the US had mostly faded away. The remaining union-sponsored publications typically have limited readership, and have most often served as undemocratic mouthpieces for union leaders. The International Labor Communications Association has called for the opening up of labor publications to dissent, and the International Association of Machinists has proposed a labor satellite/cable television channel.

Outside of unions, closer to the mainstream, but still on the margins, reside independent labor monthlies in the US like *Labor Notes*, websites like Workday Minnesota, public affairs magazines of the left (including the *Nation*, the *Progressive*, *In These Times*, and *Z Magazine*), radio news programs like *Democracy Now*, the syndicated radio service Workers Independent News, and satellite/cable channels like Free Speech TV and Link TV. London-based LabourStart.org offers the broadest global labor news on the Internet. These news organizations – not beholden to the commercial constraints of the corporate news media – provide the most consistent and accurate coverage of the labor movement.

To date, most of the focus of research on labor in the media has been on the US, UK, and Canada. There is a great deal of research to be done on labor in the media outside of these countries, especially as the labor movement grows around the globe.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Bias in the News ► Cartoons ► Cinema ► Commercialization of the Media ► Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ► Credibility of Content ► Disney ► Framing of the News ► Journalism ► Journalists, Credibility

of ► Labor Unions in the Media ► Muckraking ► News Corporation ► News as Discourse ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Ownership in the Media ► Political Economy of the Media ► Popular Communication and Social Class ► Propaganda ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Stereotyping and the Media ► Television ► Time Warner Inc.

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## **Labor Unions in the Media**

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Labor unions have been a feature on the world's media landscape for close to two centuries. Depending on the era and the locale, they have certified the skills of content providers and production workers, bargained collectively for wages and benefits, trained and disciplined members of the craft, and fought with employers and the state over freedom of expression, workplace health and safety, protection of intellectual property,

and access to information. In general, they have attracted relatively little scholarly attention. Nonetheless, they have had a significant impact on media institutions and on the societies in which they operate.

Calculating the number of unionized media workers around the world is virtually impossible. In part, that is because the definition of what constitutes the media continues to evolve. Meanwhile, many unions have transformed themselves into sector-wide communications unions that include but are not limited to media workers. Finally, statistical agencies define and tally media work in different ways. Globally, an International Labour Organization (ILO) survey of 92 countries estimated that union density – the proportion of workers who were organized into trade unions – stood at just under 20 percent, though this varied widely from country to country (International Labour Organization 1997). In the media, union density also varies tremendously. In many areas of Europe and North America, it is higher than among other private-sector industrial workers. It also tends to be higher at national public broadcasters than at private broadcasting networks and stations. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), a confederation of national journalists' unions and professional associations in more than 100 countries, estimated that 1.5 million people were working as journalists in 2006. IFJ members accounted for 500,000 of them. The bulk of IFJ membership was in Europe, where the union represented more than 230,000 members.

Unionized media labor includes technical and production workers as well as journalists, performers, and other content providers. The activities of media unions have an impact well beyond their immediate membership. Wages and working conditions negotiated in unionized newspapers, for example, tend to set the pattern for nonunion shops. Similarly, the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) requires producers working outside the United States to be signatories to its contracts if they wish to use SAG members – a policy that has ripple effects among performers' unions in those countries. National media workers' unions are active members of national labor federations and many are active in international federations as well, including the International Federation of Musicians, the International Federation of Actors, the IFJ, and the Union Network International (UNI). The varied activities of media unions ensure that their influence in the workplace and in the policy realm is often far greater than union density would suggest.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA UNIONS**

Trade unionism in the media originated with printers' organizations, which began to appear in Europe and North America in the eighteenth century. *Printers* were the earliest knowledge workers, manufacturing ideas and debate rather than simply material goods. They were highly skilled and literate at a time when most workers were not. Printers' unions, originally conceived as mutual support organizations, transformed themselves over the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries into locally based unions, and then into national unions. For much of the nineteenth century, these were the only national media workers' unions in most countries. That changed with the massive expansion of the periodical press in the second half of the nineteenth century. New unions formed, often by way of separation from the original printers' unions, to represent the various crafts in publishing (bookbinders, press operators, stereotypers, and so on).

By the middle of the twentieth century, as many as eight or nine unions might represent various groups of production workers in the same newspaper. In general, the printers' unions were the strongest (→ Printing, History of; Printer-Editors).

Some attempts to organize newspaper reporters occurred in the nineteenth century, but in most areas stable journalists' unions were a feature of the twentieth century. Britain's National Union of Journalists (NUJ) was founded in 1907, for example, while the American Newspaper Guild appeared in the 1930s. The *International Federation of Journalists* was founded in 1926 and relaunched in 1952 with a mandate of promoting press freedom, professional development, and recognition of trade unionism.

The combination of professionalism (→ Professionalization of Journalism) and trade unionism has been a feature of journalists' unions in many countries, where the unions fulfill a professional certification function by issuing national press cards, setting industry-wide codes of ethics, and contributing actively to the education of journalists (→ Ethics in Journalism). Freelances account for about one-quarter of the members of European journalists' unions and about one-half of those in Central and South America. In North America, by contrast, the unions operate mainly as collective bargaining agents for permanent employees. In authoritarian countries, journalists' unions have also served as a means to control the dissemination of information, and the journalists themselves (→ Censorship; Censorship, History of). Nonetheless, almost all journalists' unions, historically and in the present time, see part of their mandate as devoting attention to professional issues like freedom of expression, copyright, and training.

Unions representing *film and broadcast* workers developed in parallel with those technologies and industries, appearing in the 1920s, 1930s, and beyond. These included unions of technicians as well as unions representing performers and broadcast journalists (→ Broadcast Journalism). Broadcast unions often developed separately from print journalists' unions. In the United States, broadcast journalists were organized as part of a broader union of radio performers. Film performers, meanwhile, organized their own union. In many countries, including Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, union amalgamations or consolidations have resulted in unions representing both print and broadcast journalists.

In the 1960s, *digital technology* began to erode traditional union jurisdictions in all areas of the media. Very soon, it was apparent that technology would hollow out the production process, leading to significant job reductions among technical and production workers and threatening the existence of several unions. The unions responded in a number of ways, including confrontations with employers and other unions over jurisdiction, mergers with other trade unions, and attempts to trade lifetime job guarantees for going along with employers' plans for technological change. Lengthy newspaper strikes over new technology occurred in a number of countries in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Perhaps the definitive industrial dispute of the era began in 1986 when Rupert Murdoch (→ News Corporation) secretly moved his London newspaper business to a fortress-like plant in Wapping, precipitating a long, bitter, and ultimately unsuccessful printers' strike. The development of smaller, lighter video cameras and nonlinear editing systems led to similar reductions among broadcast production workers. Because broadcast technicians' unions were not, in general, as entrenched as printers' unions, technological change in broadcasting tended to result in fewer high-profile strikes than in newspapers (→ Commercialization of the Media).

*Concentration of media ownership*, an increasingly significant feature of media systems in many parts of the world, further challenged media unions in the 1990s (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Many corporations began pursuing strategies of convergence, using digital technology to integrate their various media holdings. Some unions responded with their own strategy of convergence, forming larger and broader unions that represent a range of communication workers. The 700,000-member Communications Workers of America is perhaps the foremost model of this kind of union. It began as a telephone workers' union but now includes newspaper editorial and production workers, broadcast journalists and technicians, telephone and telecommunications workers, and workers in the difficult-to-organize high-tech industries. In part, this reconfiguration is a defensive move, but it also represents an attempt by media workers' unions to take advantage of synergies brought about by growing convergence in their work. Because they represent workers who are increasingly involved in producing for a converging electronic information services or knowledge arena, these unions see improved opportunities for organizing and for bargaining. The ILO noted in 2004 that mergers among unions at the national level were common in the media, cultural, and graphics sector.

### ISSUES AND TRENDS

Structural changes in the media that gained momentum in the last quarter of the twentieth century continue to challenge unions in the twenty-first century. These include concentration of media ownership, which has an impact not just within national borders but also beyond them. Employers have accelerated the pace of shifting work from higher-paid areas to lower-cost locales, through a practice known as outsourcing. At the same time, many media employers have sought to replace permanent employees in their core holdings with a contingent workforce of freelance or contract workers, and to create a nonunion workforce in their new media holdings.

The unions have responded with a range of activities designed to maintain or perhaps even increase labor power. These include *inter-union cooperation*, the creation of new federations of unions, and attempts to extend organizing to new locales and to new types of workers. The Hollywood-based entertainment unions, for example, have worked in coalition to combat the phenomenon they call "runaway production," or filming stories intended for a domestic audience in lower-cost international locales. Much of their activity has focused on lobbying US federal and state governments for film subsidies. Significantly, however, they worked with film unions within those "runaway" locales to improve wages and working conditions.

While informal coalitions are common, there have been developments at the international and national federation level as well. In 2006, the *Union Network International* – created in 2000 by a merger among the Media and Entertainment International, the International Graphical Federation, the Communications International, and the white-collar and services federation FIET – represented 15.5 million members in 900 unions from more than 140 countries. Five of its twelve sectors covered workers in the converging media, communications, and information businesses, which together are becoming increasingly significant in the global economy. In 2005 North America's leading labor federation, the AFL-CIO, set up an industry coordinating committee covering 10 unions in the arts,

entertainment, media, and telecommunications. The committee's goal is to build more power for workers in these industries in the face of rapid media consolidation and massive technological shifts.

Media unions continue to work to assert their jurisdiction over the array of new media products and services that are characteristic of an information economy. They are also stepping up efforts to organize new groups of workers in the information industries. The twenty-first century has also seen a rise in social movement unionism among the knowledge worker occupations, particularly through the formation of worker associations. The Washington Alliance of Technology Workers (WashTech), originally created to organize temporary workers at Microsoft, has emerged as the leading voice in the US opposing outsourcing of information technology jobs to the developing world. Meanwhile, a French film workers strike in 2003 helped launch a movement that drew attention to issues surrounding intermittent or precarious labor not just in the media but in other sectors of the economy too.

Labor convergence and the rise of worker movements can be seen as encouraging developments for media unions. Nonetheless, these are perilous times for the unions as the very definition of media work comes increasingly into question. For example, the rise of so-called → citizen journalism has forced journalists' unions to ask questions about what journalism is, and what the unions' role should be in certifying credentials or negotiating pay rates. Production and content workers' unions, meanwhile, struggle with an ever-expanding array of digital products. At the same time, they continue to grapple with important traditional questions, such as how to promote freedom of expression, safety in the workplace (including, for journalists, in war zones), and independent trade unions.

SEE ALSO: ► Broadcast Journalism ► Censorship ► Censorship, History of ► Citizen Journalism ► Commercialization of the Media ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Convergence of Media Systems ► Ethics in Journalism ► Labor in the Media ► News Corporation ► Printer-Editors ► Printing, History of ► Professionalization of Journalism

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# Language Acquisition in Childhood

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Language learning starts before babies utter their first words. Even in the womb, they jump in response to noises, such as fireworks and loud bands; they eavesdrop on their mother's conversations. Within just hours of birth, newborns recognize their mother's voice, along with stories and songs they've heard in the womb. They can even distinguish their native language from a foreign one (for example, French versus Russian). They enter our world prepared to learn any of the 7,000 languages spoken and signed around the globe.

Though language begins as a flowing melody of sounds and sights (for signers), babies quickly learn to find meaningful patterns in the speech they hear. Where does one word end and the next begin? How do building blocks like words come together to form sentences? Research suggests that by 4.5 months of age, they're on the way to finding words in the stream of speech that washes over them. They start by recognizing their own name ("IRVing" is different from "AnnETTE"); in very little time, they distinguish their name (e.g., "IRVing") from other names with the same stress pattern ("WILson"). Their names and other frequently occurring words – like "mama" – serve as anchors into the speech stream (Bortfeld et al. 2005).

Babies also *compute statistics on the sound stream* to find the words. In one classic study, 8-month-old babies heard a string of nonsense sounds ("bidogolabidomanelamebido") for just 2 minutes; surprisingly, they learned that the combination of sounds "bido" occurred together and more frequently than "gola". As tiny statisticians, they use these skills to find the sounds that together make up words (Saffran et al. 1996). Babies also use their keen detective abilities to find the beginnings and ends of sentences. For example, the word "book" is pronounced differently in the following two sentences: "He took the book off the shelf" and "Off the shelf, he took a book". Babies of just 4.5 months know that the vowel gets stretched in a word when it occurs at the end of the sentence (Jusczyk et al. 1992).

However, *attention to sounds* takes babies only so far. They next need to figure out what the sounds mean. By six months, infants attach the word "mama" to their own mother and not to just any woman. As their internal vocabularies expand, learning what words mean can be complicated. A classic example is what might happen if we were in a foreign country and saw a rabbit hop by. A native might say "gavagai" and we must determine what that means. "Rabbit" seems the obvious guess, but it might not be right. Among other possible candidates, "gavagai" could refer to "hopping" or "ears." Despite the daunting nature of this task, by 12 months of age, babies seem to interpret words as labels for whole objects (like rabbits) as opposed to parts (like ears) or actions (like hopping). And once they learn a cadre of object words, they then turn their attention to words for actions (verbs) and properties of objects (adjectives). Most babies say their first words

around 12 months. By 18 months, many have a vocabulary of 50 or more words in their repertoire and understand twice that number.

*Learning words* is a stunning achievement that starts out slowly and gains pace between 18 and 21 months when children seem to become what Pinker (1994) called “vacuum cleaners for words.” It is at this time that they also take the first step that marks true language acquisition: they begin to put words together to make sentences. They know more about their language than what they can say – just as you could understand more in a foreign language than you could speak. So while their first spoken words appear at around 12 months of age, they may already understand hundreds of words.

By 18 months, toddlers can understand five- and six-word sentences when they may be saying only one or two words at a time themselves. One example of their grammatical abilities comes from a study looking at whether toddlers pay attention to the order of words. English is very sensitive to order as a clue to meaning. History would be quite different if “Caesar killed Brutus” rather than “Brutus killed Caesar.” Picture an oversized TV screen, split between two moving images. The left image shows the Cookie Monster hugging Big Bird, the right image Big Bird hugging Cookie Monster. Babies watch the screen with rapt attention. When they hear “Where’s Big Bird hugging Cookie Monster?” they look more at the right side of the screen than at the left. This indicates that toddlers are *sensitive to grammar*. They use the order of the words in English to figure out who is doing what to whom.

Language learning progresses as children learn the rules of grammar, the ways in which words can be reassembled to make questions from statements (“You can go” versus “Can you go?”) and the ways in which markers are added to contradict a statement (“You can NOT go”). These facts about sentences take time to learn. Another example is learning to use *wh-words* in the English language. The word “what” requires a response about an object (Question: “What did you eat last night?” Answer: “Steak”), but words like “why” and “how” require entire explanations (Question: “Why did you eat a steak?” Answer: “I could have eaten a bear”). And *wh-words* can only appear in certain places within sentences. Children don’t use and understand these words until well into the third year of life.

Babies are sponges when it comes to learning languages. There is much more going on than what we see. And remarkably, they are as good at learning two or more languages as they are at learning one. Before they can tie their shoelaces or be left alone, children are solving one of the most complex tasks in human nature, acquiring an ability that distinguishes us from all other species on the planet: they are learning language.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Skills across the Life-Span ► Developmental Communication ► Family Communication Patterns ► Media Use and Child Development

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## Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts

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Although there is no consensus as to what *precisely* an → attitude is, language attitudes may be defined as embodied dispositions toward various and wide-ranging language behaviors (e.g., intensity, politeness, rate, accent, dialect; → Language Varieties). Correspondingly, language attitude research represents a broad-scale, multidisciplinary effort to assess diverse reactions to language behaviors (Cargile & Bradac 2001). Within intergroup contexts, language attitudes often represent the indirect expression of prevailing intergroup attitudes and relational norms. Thus, both a response in Catalan to a query made in Spanish and the characterization of mainstream US English speakers as “intelligent” by African-American respondents epitomize the terrain of language attitudes in intergroup contexts.

Language is a human capacity that evolved to aid in the reduction of uncertainty (→ Linguistics). This *informational function* of language is critical and yet complemented by an equally important *communal function* – language plays a central role in both creating and maintaining community. A common language binds people together often more effectively than other markers of group identity (e.g., skin color, dress, artifacts, etc.) because language behaviors are attributed “internally” (as conscious decisions about how to self-project) rather than “externally” (as historical accident). For example, that is why, despite his Croatian ancestry, Spanish-speaking Joseph Morgan was allowed to reign as godfather of the Mexican mafia in Los Angeles.

At the same time that language helps draw pro-social group boundaries, it also erects barriers. Linguistic *shibboleths* help separate the ingroup from the outgroup, friend from foe. When the Soviet empire crumbled along nationalistic fissures marked by language, the central press reported that a young Russian was murdered in Kizil after failing to reply in Tuvian to the question, “Do you have a smoke?” Language can be used to gatekeep not only individuals, but also entire groups. Language policies (e.g., *NBC handbook of pronunciation*) can be set to exclude nondominant “others” from political or economic access in a practice termed *elite closure*. Because language is a malleable dividing line, outgroup members may find the high-prestige language or dialect an ever-shifting target to pursue (Chambers et al. 2002).

Since language is central to (inter)group life, attitudes toward its use typically function as a heuristic summary of intergroup relations. If two groups are antagonistic competitors,

the chances are that members will not be favorably disposed to the others' way of talking (e.g., Israelis and Palestinians). Conversely, if two groups share favorable relations (e.g., Australians and British), or if one group's subjugation is obscured by a dominant ideology (e.g., Mexican-Americans in the US; → Cultural Imperialism Theories), then ingroup members may be inclined to favor outgroup language behaviors, at least in certain circumstances (Preston 1989). Although the actual macro-context is complex and multifaceted (not to mention complicated by factors in the immediate social situation, e.g., the hearer's emotional state or formality), the study of intergroup language attitudes has normally relied on two relevant, interrelated socio-structural dimensions: standardization and ethnolinguistic vitality (Giles & Coupland 1991).

*Standardization* is a relatively static dimension, and it describes the extent to which norms for correct usage have been codified, adopted, and promoted for a particular language variety. *Ethnolinguistic vitality* is more dynamic, and reflects the range and importance of functions served by a given language variety and the social pressures toward shifts in language use. Although both dimensions are conceivably "objective," language attitudes are affected by the interlocutor's "subjective" or perceived assessment of such factors. Generally, the more standardized and vital a language variety is perceived to be, the more likely it is that speakers of that language will be judged favorably on traits related to competence, intelligence, and social status. Conversely, the less standardized and vital the language, the less likely these same judgments will follow. It is important to note, however, that speakers of such a subordinate language variety may be judged favorably on traits related to kindness, solidarity, and overall attractiveness if the dominant group's ideology includes the *tokenism* of nondominant groups. *Ethnolinguistic identity theory* explains how individuals respond to and negotiate this terrain of judgment depending on their group membership and perception of the macro-context.

If language attitudes represent a predisposition informed by the history and character of intergroup relations, what do they predispose us to? With its modern inception in the 1960s, language attitude research, like most intergroup research and theory, has been motivated by practical problems (e.g., strained relations between French and English Canadians). Consequently, using a variety of research techniques (→ Field Research; Experiment, Laboratory), studies have explored outcomes of judgment and a host of other pragmatic behaviors associated with these predispositions. Such behaviors include communication convergence/divergence, cooperative assistance, language policy planning, employment and housing decisions, and modes of classroom instruction. For example, De la Zerda and Hopper (1979) found employment interviewers in Texas less likely to hire Mexican-American applicants with nonstandard (Chicano English) accents as supervisors, but more likely to hire them as unskilled workers compared to applicants who spoke standard US English. Of course, the relationship between our language attitudes and our behaviors is never quite so simple or direct (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency). Even so, the study of these predispositions reminds us that *how* we say something is equally if not sometimes more important than *what* we say.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Field Research ▶ Language Varieties ▶ Linguistics

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## **Language and the Internet**

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Language and (or “on”) the → Internet refers to human language (or language intended to be human-like, such as the linguistic output of artificial intelligence agents) produced and displayed through computer-mediated communication (CMC) systems that are mostly text based and mostly reciprocally interactive, such as email, listserv lists, newsgroups, chat, instant messaging, text messaging via mobile phones (SMS), blogs, and wikis. The term “Internet language” is somewhat of a misnomer, in that some of this communication takes place on intranets and some is mediated by mobile technologies, rather than by the global networked infrastructure known as the Internet per se (→ Internet, Technology of). “Internet” is used here in an extended sense to include these related communication technologies. Variant terms for Internet language include computer-mediated language, computer-mediated discourse, online discourse, and electronic discourse (→ Technologically Mediated Discourse). All of these are intended to distinguish language- and discourse-related phenomena as a focus of interest from the broader phenomenon of computer-mediated communication, of which they form a part.

### **INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT**

Language in the form of typed text is one of the most pervasive and visible manifestations of Internet use. Internet language has attracted the interest of scholars, educators, and the general public, and has been at the center of controversies in each domain. Linguists have argued about how it should be classified; ethnographers and ethnomethodologists have grappled with how to apply the methods of their disciplines to it (→ Ethnography of Communication); and sociologists and communication scholars have debated the status

of linguistically performed online identities (→ Identities and Discourse) and of virtual communities whose group identity is constructed and maintained through online discourse (→ Virtual Communities). Educators and language purists have expressed concern about the nonstandard, informal nature of the language found in chat rooms and text messaging, and have wondered whether and how to teach the new mediated language varieties. And despite warnings in the mass media about deception in online dating sites (→ Deceptive Message Production) and the risks of revealing too much information about oneself in other online social contexts, people frequent such sites in large numbers, managing their self-presentation through language and images.

The concerns of scholars are mainly descriptive – they seek to describe, classify, and interpret language online as it is actually used – while those of educators, language purists, and the mass media are largely prescriptive – they seek to provide direction for how online language should (or should not) be used. As with traditional written and spoken language, tensions arise between these two approaches, especially as concerns the Internet and language change. From a *prescriptivist perspective*, the nonstandardness of much Internet language and its alleged effects on nonmediated language indicate a dangerous trend toward a decline in the overall quality of the language (which is usually English in these debates, although prescriptive concerns have also been raised about other languages, especially Greek). There is a tendency to attribute this trend to the medium itself, consistent with a belief in technological determinism (Baron 2000). *Descriptivists*, in contrast, are interested in documenting trends and understanding the factors that influence them, whether those factors are technical, social, or a combination of both, and they do not assume that nonstandard language is degenerate. On the contrary, they often characterize such language as playful, creative, and performing useful social functions (Cherny 1999).

Moreover, linguists, in particular, are cautious about assuming that variation in online language will necessarily lead to *long-term language change*. They distinguish between practices primarily restricted to online environments – including acronyms such as “ttyp (talk to you later) and “l33t speak” (from “leet,” a shortening of “elite”), which employs letters, numbers, and non-alphanumeric keyboard characters to represent words – and practices that have extended to offline language. In the latter case, they distinguish further between relatively superficial lexical changes – a shift in meaning of words such as “spam” and “lurk”; the addition of new vocabulary such as “email” and “emoticon”; new word formative elements such as the prefixes “e-” and “cyber-” – and deeper, syntactic change, of which there is little evidence as yet (Stein 2006).

## MAJOR AREAS OF RESEARCH

In addition to, and cross cutting, the issues identified above, research on language on the Internet may be grouped into the five major areas discussed below.

*Classification research* aims to characterize and label computer-mediated language. Much early research focused on the relationship of computer-mediated language to the modalities of speech and writing. Like the latter, it is produced and read as text, but like the former, Internet language tends to be informal and context-dependent, especially in

synchronous modes, and message exchanges can feel like conversation, leading some scholars to characterize Internet language as “written speech.” Others consider it to be a distinct, third modality (“Netspeak”, see below). Another level of classification differentiates among modes or genres of computer-mediated discourse, such as Instant Messaging, web boards, and blogs, noting that different language practices are characteristic of each (→ Genre). A more fine-grained approach classifies computer-mediated discourse samples according to a set of features, such as synchronicity, participant structure, and topic, that cut across modes (Herring 2007).

Historically and continuing to the present time, the most popular area of language and Internet research has been the *structural features* of Internet language, especially typography, orthography, and neologisms (new word formations). Crystal (2001) has popularized the term “Netspeak” to refer to the use of abbreviations, emoticons (combinations of keyboard symbols that represent, for example, a smiling face), and playful typography that is claimed to characterize Internet language as a unique language variety. Most structural analyses of Internet language catalogue lists of features or speculate about the reasons for their existence; as Androutsopoulos (2006) notes, there has been little systematic study as yet of language variation involving such features.

Internet language also manifests a rich variety of *discourse patterns* (Herring 2001). These include pragmatic phenomena such as politeness (and rudeness, including “flaming”; → Verbal Aggressiveness), violations of relevance, and the performance of various speech acts (→ Linguistic Pragmatics); interactional phenomena such as turn-taking, repairs, topic establishment, maintenance, and drift (→ Conversation Analysis); and register phenomena such as gender styles, regional dialects, and ingroup language practices characteristic of particular online communities (→ Language Varieties). These phenomena necessitate the analysis of language in context.

Internet language has also proven to be a useful *lens through which to study human behavior* more generally. Most online activity, whether information exchange, political debate, online learning, making friends, or flirting, is instantiated through typed text (→ Personal Communication by CMC). The discourse of each of these activities has characteristic properties and can be mined for patterns (→ Discourse). Internet language in this sense has attracted the interest of non-language scholars whose goals are not to describe language for its own sake but rather to use it to gain a purchase on otherwise elusive but theoretically rich concepts such as collaboration, community, democracy, identity, influence, performance, power, reputation, and trust (Herring 2004).

Finally, *languages and language ecologies* have increasingly attracted attention as the Internet expands its global scope. The Internet has been claimed to accelerate the ongoing spread of English and perhaps other large regional languages such as Chinese and Spanish, although commentators disagree as to whether this is at the expense of smaller languages. While the numerical domination of English-language users has decreased considerably over the past decade, the use of English as a *lingua franca* appears to be growing as speakers of different languages come into contact via the Internet and use English as a common language. At the same time, differences across languages and cultural contexts are increasingly being documented, ranging from structural features such as emoticons

and script-conditioned typography to gender patterns in online interaction (→ Gender and Discourse; Danet & Herring 2007).

## **CHANGES OVER TIME IN INTERNET LANGUAGE AND ITS TREATMENT**

The order of presentation of the five areas above corresponds approximately to the order in which each emerged as a strand of language and Internet research, since the time of the first studies in the mid-1980s, although all of these areas continue to attract attention. A general trend can be noted, from a fascination with the technologically conditioned features of Internet language in the early years, to a growing awareness that social and contextual factors shape online language use, much as they do offline language, and that culture and geographical setting may condition more variation than originally envisioned (Georgakopoulou 2003).

Simultaneously, from the two basic modes of email (asynchronous) and chat (synchronous) that were popular in the early 1990s (→ Electronic Mail), the types and capabilities of CMC systems that support linguistic communication have expanded to include web-based modes such as blogs, wikis, and social network sites; semi-synchronous modes such as instant messaging; graphical modes such as avatar-based virtual worlds; and Internet telephony (Voice over IP). Inevitably, Internet language research lags somewhat behind these developments. Audio communication, in particular, has been little researched to date.

## **METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH LANGUAGE AND THE INTERNET**

Internet language offers a number of advantages for research, including an abundance of naturally occurring (i.e., non-experimental) data that, unlike speech, does not require transcription and that can be readily analyzed using computational means (→ Log-File Analysis). The ability of researchers to “lurk” in online environments without their presence being visible or salient to participants is another advantage, especially for studies of social interaction, albeit one that raises ethical issues (→ Research Ethics: Internet Research).

From the *linguist's point of view*, text-based Internet language is lacking in sound, and therefore questions of phonetics and phonology, which are central to linguistics, can not be addressed directly (→ Linguistics). Variationist sociolinguists are challenged to apply their methods, because it is often difficult or impossible to ascertain the demographics of text producers, which typically constitute the independent variables in studies of linguistic variation. Researchers interested in online multilingualism (→ Bi- and Multilingualism) or in describing online discourse in other languages may encounter the confounding effect of English influence on those languages, especially as regards borrowed vocabulary and popular abbreviations.

An ongoing challenge associated with language and the Internet is the rate at which new technologies continue to be introduced. Since the affordances of media can affect language use through those media, it is necessary to consider each new CMC mode first on its own terms, a situation that has distracted attention somewhat from the development of theory about online language. At the same time, the ready availability of new modes provides a rich opportunity to study the emergence of language practices,

norms, and social behaviors as expressed through discourse, and to theorize about emergent language phenomena.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH, THEORY, AND METHODOLOGY**

There is a need to move beyond description to theorize CMC effects on language. Theories should also be tested empirically on large corpora of contextually classified (i.e., tagged) computer-mediated language samples that can be compared systematically across modes, contexts, and languages. Related to this is a need for Internet language preservation efforts, particularly in the case of synchronous data that are not automatically logged, and for longitudinal studies to investigate mediated language change. It is likely that computer-mediated language will be perceived as just plain language by future generations who have grown up with it; it will thus need to be studied to address broader questions of language change.

Future language research will almost certainly devote increased attention to spoken and visually enhanced modes of networked and mobile communication. At the same time, the ascendancy of multimedia CMC over text-based CMC has been predicted for nearly a decade, yet text remains the most popular format. Whatever else the future holds, it seems certain that people will continue to use new media to communicate and that they will do so using human languages, and thus that the study of language and digital media will be relevant for years to come.

SEE ALSO: ► Bi- and Multilingualism ► Conversation Analysis ► Deceptive Message Production ► Discourse ► Electronic Mail ► Ethnography of Communication ► Gender and Discourse ► Genre ► Identities and Discourse ► Internet ► Internet, Technology of ► Language Varieties ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Linguistics ► Log-File Analysis ► Personal Communication by CMC ► Research Ethics: Internet Research ► Technologically Mediated Discourse ► Verbal Aggressiveness ► Virtual Communities

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## Language and Social Interaction

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Language and social interaction (*LSI*) refers to the area of communication research that studies how language, gesture, voice, and other features of talk and written texts shape meaning-making. LSI includes a loosely bounded set of topics and intellectual commitments. In contrast to the domain-of-life approach (e.g., political, interpersonal, or organizational communication) that is the typical way of categorizing scholarly expertise areas in communication, LSI defines itself by *how* it investigates questions about communication. It is the commitment to qualitative study of social life in its culturally inflected, complex, and context-sensitive particularity that makes LSI work so distinctive and recognizable. To be sure, LSI has a space for other research approaches (e.g., laboratory studies, quantitative coding; → Experimental Design; Content Analysis, Quantitative), but these approaches are minority voices in the LSI community.

In the International Communication Association, one of the major academic organizations in communication, LSI is one of a small set of divisions responsible for selecting the papers, panels, and workshops that will be programmed at annual conferences. On a practical level, then, LSI is a group of people who form an institutionally recognizable academic community. Most LSI scholars are housed in departments of communication, but a goodly number come from sociology, psychology, anthropology, and linguistics, as well as a smattering of other fields. This multidisciplinary character of LSI is reflected in its scholarship, with particular LSI sub-areas making ties with one or another of these contributing disciplines. As is true with any institutional category, the LSI community shapes decisions about appropriate content for college courses in its area; how university-level faculty positions should be defined and who should be hired into them; and what research should be published in journals and books.

To understand LSI as an area of communication research, including both its dominant and its minority voices, its scholarly work needs to be considered proceeding from both bottom-up and top-down directions. Reviews and handbooks of LSI research (e.g., Fitch & Sanders 2005), of which there are many, usually adopt a top-down approach, dividing LSI into its major theoretical–methodological camps. A top-down view of LSI, provided in the next section, draws attention to key theoretical concepts, intellectual commitments, and important scholars. The distinctive character of LSI work, however, would be obscured if explication were restricted to prominent theoretical approaches. The particulars of social interaction and language use are the very heart of LSI work. In the second section



LSI research is examined from the bottom up. Scholarly activity is viewed from three complementary grounding points: (1) LSI research as focused on understanding the basic units of language and interaction; (2) LSI as committed to explicating functions that talk serves; and (3) LSI's interest in identifying the discourse strategies and structures of particularly important sites of interaction.

## APPROACHES TO LSI

### Sociologically Shaped Approaches

One particularly influential tradition in LSI is that of → conversation analysis (CA). Developed by sociologists Harvey Sacks (1992), Emanuel Schegloff, and others in the 1960s, CA was committed to building an observational science of social life. Departing radically from sociological research of the time, CA's first step was to go out and collect tapes of ordinary talk. Telephone calls between intimates or in institutions, dinner conversations, meetings of all kinds, courtroom interrogations, medical or business consultations: all became data for analysis. To study these taped exchanges, CA then creates a detailed transcript. Because it is impossible in advance to know which features of talk contribute to people's meaning-making, CA has seen it as important to capture as many features of talk as possible. Toward this end, Gail Jefferson, another key CA scholar, developed a transcription system that captured how people actually speak. Jefferson's system includes such features as whether a speaker breaks off mid-word; whether they utter uhs, ums, and interjections; the cadence of speech and whether it is markedly loud, soft, fast, or slow; and if one person's talk overlaps with other participants' (→ Transcribing and Transcription). Many different transcription systems have been developed; the CA transcription system (or a simplified version of it), however, has become the standard system used in most strands of LSI research.

In studying scenes of social interaction, CA works to describe the interactional machinery, identifying and naming sequences of action that cut across many social situations. An example of one influential CA idea is the notion of *conversational preference*. Conversational preference refers to a structural preference built into conversation for an utterance of one type to be followed by an utterance of a second type. For instance, a request ("Do you want to come to lunch?") prefers an acceptance (done quickly with a brief remark such as "sure," or "yep, where to?") over a decline as the second utterance. Dispreferred second utterances will be performed by speakers in a much more elaborate fashion than preferred ones. In response to a request, for instance, communicators are likely to pause, preface what they say with "uhs" or "well," and say "no," while offering an account. Because dispreferred utterances are performed differently than preferred ones, conversationalists are often able to project that their partner is going to decline a request in the short pause that precedes a person's response before a single word has been uttered.

An especially important commitment of CA research is to make visible people's sense-making practices. This commitment can be traced to the influence of Harold Garfinkel (1967), the father of ethnomethodology and one of Sacks's teachers. CA is the most visible strand of research emanating from what can be thought of as a larger ethnomethodological enterprise (→ Ethnomethodology). A second scholar who strongly influenced CA scholarship was another of Sacks's teachers – Erving Goffman. Goffman, a scholar responsible

for developing a large set of influential LSI concepts (e.g., face, footing, frame, interaction order, frontstage/backstage) (→ Goffman, Erving) contributed to CA by modeling and legitimating study of ordinary exchanges in their messy particularity. Until Goffman, ordinary interaction had been seen as an undeserving object for communication study.

As video-taping technology became widespread and accessible, more and more LSI scholars opted to video-tape interaction rather than just audio-tape. Related to this change, one school of LSI researchers extended CA work to address distinct research questions about social life that become apparent when one starts looking as well as listening. Video-taping makes visible the fact that social actions are not merely audible talk, but are embodied actions in material environments that contain particular artifacts. Understanding how meanings are made, where the contributions of gaze, gesture, and artifacts are given their due, is what → microethnography, the name for this new approach, is all about. Microethnography has been especially useful in studying interaction in classrooms and in a range of workplace settings.

### Anthropological–Linguistic Approaches

A second set of influential LSI approaches is composed of those approaches that draw upon and extend some combination of ideas from anthropology and linguistics. Ethnography of communication (EOC), the name for the most visible tradition, extends the anthropological work of Dell Hymes (1972), using his SPEAKING mnemonic (setting, participants, end, act, key, instrumentalities, norms, genre) as a central interpretive tool to guide inquiry (→ Ethnography of Communication). EOC studies work to show how a community of people speak, interpret others' actions, and, more broadly, understand what it means to be a person and have relationships. EOC studies combine analysis of transcripts of interaction with participant observation and informant interviews, and have primarily focused on studying ethnic and national communities (e.g., Colombian, Mexican, American).

A key figure in EOC scholarship is Gerry Philipsen (1975), whose study of Teamsterville, a white working-class American community, brought the EOC tradition into communication research. In the last decade and a half, Philipsen has extended EOC to develop the idea that sets of people have *speech codes* (→ Speech Codes Theory). Speech codes theory draws attention to the systematic nature of the symbols that communities use to talk with each other and to comment on the communicative conduct of self and others.

In addition to the EOC tradition, there are two other anthropologically inflected traditions influential in LSI work. The first, → interactional sociolinguistics, developed by John Gumperz (1982), is centrally interested in making sense of why miscommunication occurs between people from different cultures. His idea of contextualization cue – the notion that vocal intonation and other low-awareness features of talk cue important aspects of social meaning – has been especially useful in explaining interactional trouble. A second and more recent tradition is the idea of a → community of practice that has been developed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (Wenger 1998). In contrast to the national/ethnic group focus in most EOC research, communities-of-practice studies focus on interaction among people sharing pursuit of an activity, such as is to be found in schools, workplaces, and recreational groups. The idea of community of practice is also shaped by cognitive theorizing.

### Psychologically Inflected Approaches

If one were to offer a generalization about LSI research, it would be fair to say that much of it is anti-cognitive. LSI work is interested in what happens in interaction among people – not what goes on in their minds. This anti-cognitive thread is particularly visible in a tradition developed by British psychologists Jonathan Potter and Derek Edwards (Edwards 2005). Discursive psychology explores how everyday psychological terms are used in discourse and how psychological matters are managed rhetorically (→ Discursive Psychology). A person’s remark that she can’t remember, for instance, is treated not as a straightforward account of a mental state, but rather, an utterance designed to manage an interactional sensitivity.

Although much LSI work eschews cognitive explanations of meaning, not all does. Recently the debate about cognition’s role in studying social interaction has become especially lively (→ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to). One particularly novel idea, put forward by Stephen Levinson (2006), is that of the *interaction engine*, which is a “very special kind of cognition” underlying talk “on which discourse is built” (p. 86). The interaction engine explains universals, such as people’s ability to “mind-read” (i.e., interpret actions in terms of people’s intentions) and culture-spanning rituals such as greetings and leave-taking.

A longstanding tradition of LSI research, currently in the methodological minority because of its use of quantitative methods, is → Language and Social Psychology (LSP). LSP has worked to make language an important topic for social psychologists – something not typically so – and to bring issues of strategy and motivation to language research. Communication Accommodation Theory, developed by Howard Giles, accounts for the subtle, largely out-of-awareness ways communicators quickly adapt to each other (→ Communication Accommodation Theory). In a short conversation, for instance, communicators often become more similar to each other in speaking rate, pause length, and dialect features.

### Linguistically Flavored Hybrid Approaches

Unsurprisingly, the field of *language* and social interaction has been shaped by ideas about language and meaning-making from philosophy and linguistics, two academic disciplines in which language is a focus. Several enduring starting points come from work in the philosophy of language. Philosophy of language theories, while generally not foci of current communication scholarship, infuse LSI’s intellectual landscape, shaping contemporary research in a myriad of ways. Two particularly important ideas are that of the *cooperative principle* and of *speech acts* (→ Linguistic Pragmatics).

The philosopher H. P. Grice proposed that the purpose of talk is to share information efficiently. Conveying information, Grice argued, is facilitated by all parties orienting to a cooperative principle whose meaning rests on four accompanying maxims (quality, quantity, relevance, and manner). Importantly, the cooperative principle does not so much govern what people do, as speakers routinely say too much or too little or make off-topic remarks, as it explains how interpreters make sense of what speakers must mean by saying what they do.

A second family of ideas that has been influential, that of speech acts, was developed by language philosophers John Austin and his student John Searle. Reacting to other philosophers who treated the purpose of language as primarily geared to making representational statements about the world, Austin argued that speech always, and often centrally, is performing actions in social life. Searle went on to propose the main categories of action that speech can perform, with two speech act categories being directives (to direct others' actions) and expressives. Grice, Austin, and Searle's ideas have shaped thinking in LSI study. In addition, they form the backbone of the area in linguistics that studies language in use, which in turn shapes multiple strands of current LSI research (Arundale 2005).

Politeness theories, of which Brown and Levinson's (1987) is the most well known in the field of communication, begins with Grice's analysis of communication's purpose as being information exchange and Searle's speech act units (→ Politeness Theory). This theoretical framework is then integrated with Goffman's notion of face (the public image each person claims in interaction) to explain why communicators deviate from maximally efficient communication, frequently speaking indirectly, including small comments such as "I hate to ask you but," and "Wow, great haircut, could you give me a ride to . . ." Politeness theory, which claims to be universally applicable, has been strongly criticized by communication and linguistic scholars. The breadth of politeness theory's claims and the parts of the theory that have been strongly supported, however, maintain it as a much-used frame in communication research.

Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis (AIDA), an approach to discourse study developed by communication scholar Karen Tracy, reflects multiple intellectual influences, including politeness theory (→ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis). Similar to other LSI traditions, AIDA foregrounds talk as its central data. What distinguishes it from other approaches is its rhetorical spirit. Centrally interested in describing discourse strategies that are used in identifiable communicative practices, AIDA research takes as a goal developing ideas about better and worse ways to talk in the practices it studies. AIDA studies typically focus on explicating the problems of a practice, the conversational strategies of key kinds of participants, and participants' normative beliefs about good conduct in that site. Practices studied have included emergency calls, public community meetings, and consultations between doctors and patients.

Another hybrid approach that brings a normative commitment to theorizing is that of → Design Theory. Developed by Mark Aakhus and Sally Jackson, Design Theory draws on linguistic pragmatic ideas in conjunction with ideas from argument theory to consider how participation and conduct in a range of communicative practices, for example mediation for divorcing couples or groups using decision-support systems, ought to be designed.

In the past decade or two, the ideas of the Russian literary scholar → Mikhail Bakhtin, who had been writing in the early years of the twentieth century but has only recently been translated, have gained attention. Bakhtin proposed that: (1) the *utterance* is the basic unit of social life; (2) *heteroglossic* (multiple, fragmented) meanings are part of all talk and texts; because (3) all words and utterances have a *dialogic* character, invariably carrying meaning traces from earlier uses, as well as generating in-the-moment, novel meanings. Bakhtin's ideas have been adopted in communication and blended with ideas from other traditions to understand particular discursive contexts.

A final linguistically inflected LSI approach that deserves mention – Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) – is actually a family of approaches, with key scholars in the different schools (e.g., Deborah Cameron, Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, Ruth Wodak) combining linguistic pragmatic traditions with a variety of other influences. Shared by all CDA programs are the practice of close study of social interaction or written texts, and a political commitment to expose how power gets naturalized. Because scholarship can never be politically neutral, CDA researchers work to show how language and discourse practices are marshaled to suggest objectivity while all the time systematically advantaging those who have power at the expense of parties who do not (→ Discourse Analysis). An example of CDA is Thurlow and Jaworski's (2006) analysis of how airlines create "elite" identities through frequent-flyer programs, and in so doing solidify notions of good taste and social class ideologies that further privilege moneyed, traveling people.

### **BASIC CONCEPTS AND FINDINGS**

LSI examines people talking with others in a range of social occasions to accomplish complementary and antagonistic purposes. LSI studies of people interacting generally accomplish three things: (1) they identify distinctive features of language and/or interaction; (2) they describe the interpersonal, organizational, or political functions that talk is serving; and (3) they show how the particulars of (1) and (2) come together to create interactional sites that are communicatively distinctive. Particular research studies often foreground one feature over the others, but it is important to keep in mind that the three are intertwined, not actually separable.

### **Basic Units of Language or Interaction**

When people speak a language, they always speak a particular dialect or variety of it (→ Language Varieties), whether the language be Spanish, Korean, or English. These varieties of a language differ in many ways and connect to speakers' social identities. Features of pronunciation ("going" vs "goin") and grammar ("she is attractive" vs "she be attractive"), for instance, are used differently by communicators of different social classes, geographic regions, and genders. In addition, all speakers vary how they talk based on the relative formality of a situation. A feature of talk that is especially sensitive to the relationship between parties, as well as the newness of a topic, is that of → discourse markers. These little tokens ("yeah," "wow," "anyway") are crucial devices for creating smooth, well-functioning stretches of interaction.

Another small bit of talk that is ubiquitous and especially likely to appear at interactionally sensitive moments is the meta-discursive comment (→ Meta-Discourse). Meta-discourse labels the communicative acts (e.g., "an argument," "gossip") or assessments (e.g., "He's just giving you constructive criticism") of oneself and others, and makes visible everyday speakers' beliefs about how communication is working.

If one were to tally what aspects of talk have been studied particularly extensively, the most researched talk unit would undoubtedly be the question. Questions, and the responses that follow them, are bread-and-butter actions of institutional encounters. Questioning is the central vehicle in health-care exchanges, policing and the courts, and

numerous other sites in which professionals work with clients (→ Questions and Questioning). Besides the rather obvious goal of gaining information, questions serve a range of other functions. How questions are designed and sequenced with other questions is part of how speakers claim status for self or give deference to the conversational partner. LSI research documents these particulars.

Another interesting, multipurpose unit of talk is the narrative or story (→ Storytelling and Narration). Narratives are extended units of talk in which a person recounts a memorable event. Stories can be told to entertain or they may be in the service of doing sensitive actions such as disagreeing. In a study of an organ transplant support group in a hospital, Hsieh (2004) found that support-group members told stories of their experiences with hospital personnel both as a way to endorse the views of others and as a way to disagree with other group members' assertions. Bamberg (1997) underscores that stories have multiple purposes: besides a story's "very referential and informative functioning it may entertain, be a piece of moral advice, extend an offer to become more intimate, seek audience alignment for the purpose of joint revenge, and serve as a claim as to 'who I really am' – and all that at the same time" (p. 341).

By and large communication researchers have been especially interested in understanding how people design and vary speech acts that are sensitive in some way (Tracy 2001). Studied acts have included: (1) → directives, where one person seeks to direct the actions of another, whether it be done forcefully, as in commanding, or gently, as in hinting; (2) apologies, in which a communicator admits to doing a wrong or hurtful act (→ Apologies and Remedial Episodes); and (3) accounts, in which a speaker seeks to make reasonable his or her choices, often to another who is questioning whether those choices are reasonable or not (→ Accounting Research).

In addition to language-based units of discourse that are relatively discrete and easy to name, talk always has a particular sound (→ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter), and is carried out in conjunction with eye gaze (→ Gaze in Interaction) and facial and bodily gestures (→ Gestures in Discourse). All of these aspects of language and interaction function together to create the particular situated meanings that participants actually arrive at. Mirivel (in press), for instance, examined how a cosmetic plastic surgeon used his gazing and aversion of gaze, along with a tape measure and very particular kinds of touches to persuade a woman during a physical examination that her entering assessment of her breasts being problematic and in need of (expensive) surgery was, in fact, an accurate judgment.

### Functions of Talk

Information-giving is recognized by ordinary speakers, as well as LSI scholars, as being an important function of talk. There is, however, a whole range of less immediately apparent functions. It is to these less visible functions that LSI scholars have given the lion's share of attention. One function of talk is to strengthen bonds of connection and affection between people. Originally described by the anthropologist Malinowski as *phatic communion*, it is now more often referred to as *small talk* (→ Small Talk and Gossip). Small talk occurs in hallways, at the beginning of meetings, and around coffee pots in workplaces. The content of small talk is weather, sports, and a whole host of other routine life topics.

In contrast to the largely below-the-radar status of small talk are conversations that occur when a person is experiencing significant trouble. Breakups, illness, negative evaluations at work: all of these are occasions when it is common to seek social support, either from friends and family or from crisis centers and helping professionals (→ Support Talk). Talk that gives a person support is ideally designed in ways to avoid offending the party to whom it is offered. LSI scholars have been interested in these design features. In addition, the role of talk in conveying what speakers are feeling about a topic, another person, or the situation is an ongoing function of talk that communicators regularly monitor. What features of talk and interaction people use to infer that an observed person is experiencing certain feelings is a question that LSI scholars have pursued (→ Emotion and Discourse).

Another function of talk is to enact who the conversing parties are (Tracy 2002). Talk does identity-work. Every time a person speaks, her talk presents the kind of person she is and altercasts the other (i.e., presents how the other is seen; → Identities and Discourse). For instance, the greeting “Wazup?” suggests that a speaker sees the other differently than if he had said, “Good morning, Ms Kim, how are you today?” The kinds of identities that talk implicates include personal, idiosyncratic ones (e.g., being serious, mean-spirited, funny, sharp-tongued, articulate), role- and performance-related ones (e.g., a fair referee or a disorganized meeting participant), and those related to what are assumed to be more enduring features of personhood (race, ethnicity, age, gender, nationality). A controversy about the link between identity and talk that has become especially heated in English-speaking countries, and the US in particular, concerns the language people speak (e.g., English or Spanish) and their national identity (→ English-Only Movements). To frame the issue as a question, we could ask: “What is or should be the link between speaking English and being American?”

Of all the kinds of identity that have been examined, none has received as much attention as what it means to talk like a woman or a man (→ Gender and Discourse). Gender is constructed through how people talk. LSI researchers have investigated the degree to which men and women talk similarly and in what ways they communicate differently. Much recent work has identified that the performance of gender is strongly shaped by a speaker’s social class, race, and national culture, as well as situation-specific factors. There is no single female or male communicative style. Gender differences, many scholars have argued, are more a result of the power relations among people than of a person’s gender (→ Power and Discourse). A female expert witness in a courtroom will talk more like her male counterpart than another female who is a lay witness. Similarly, male lay witnesses speak more like females of that status than male experts.

A claim that power affects how people talk is not particularly newsworthy because it is so self-evident, but how to observe the expression of power in interaction is not at all straightforward. It is difficult to know which differences, among the vast number of talk features that can be found to vary in situations, should actually be attributed to power differences. LSI scholars see it as important to problematize the many generalizations about power and talk that are taken for granted. Generalizations that people with more power speak more often and for longer time periods, that they interrupt, and that they change the topic frequently are sometimes true. But at other times they are not. LSI sees it as crucial to specify carefully the contextual boundaries of power’s working and identity-talk claims.

A function of talk that occurs frequently in decision-making groups as well as arenas of public life is that of argument. Argumentative talk is discourse in which people dispute each other's claims. These claims could be internationally consequential, as can be seen in disputes between Sunnis and Shiite Muslims in Iraq, or they could be relatively routine and minor, as is the case in many sibling spats (→ Argumentative Discourse).

A final function of talk worth mentioning, and one that is almost always presumed to be negative, is talk as a vehicle to purposefully deceive others (→ Deception in Discourse). Researchers have extensively studied where this happens and how it is done. Admittedly, deception is usually problematic, but a study by Mattson and Roberts (2001) found an interactional site in which deception became a desirable and promoted action. In counseling patients about safe-sex practices, health-care professionals suggested deception as a reasonable discourse strategy to certain clients. When clients were adamant about not revealing to their long-term partner a sexual encounter they had had with another – and hence why they needed to use condoms – the health-care professionals would suggest that clients lie to their partner about why they now needed to use condoms. Mattson and Roberts' study illustrates how looking carefully at talk can make visible places in social life where the usual generalizations about good and bad conduct need to be tempered with attention to situational particulars.

### **Discourse Sites: Their Strategies and Structures**

Interaction in health-care settings where nurses, doctors, or counselors are talking with each other or with patients, either face-to-face or on the telephone, is one institutional site to which LSI researchers have given a lot of attention (→ Doctor–Patient Talk). Advice about how patients should talk with their doctors or how doctors should communicate with patients is easy to find. LSI studies often lead to a more complicated picture about how talk happens and ways patients and doctors could try talking differently than one gets from advice guidebooks.

Although not every kind of interaction has been studied, many have. LSI studies reveal particulars of what is going on in consequential communicative contexts that would not have been noticed if the careful looking and listening that characterizes LSI work had not happened. One example of this is Tracy and Durfy's (2007) study of an American community's contentious school board meetings. In these public meetings, citizens used a variety of discourse strategies to convey negative sentiment. The strategies included describing community events limned with negative feeling, straightforward avowal of feelings, rhetorical questions, reported speech, and an argumentative discourse strategy (use of god terms) that implied that the proposal a speaker was advocating was concerned about "the children," whereas those who were against it had no concern about the district's children. In community school-board meetings, "children" functioned as a god term. Everyone agreed that the good of the children was what school districts should be all about; no one ever explicitly argued against "the children." In this context, then, speakers' appeals to the good of the children, or characterizing others as not having this concern, were how participants sought to advance the proposals they favored and hinder those they did not (→ Public Meetings).

Discourse sites that LSI scholars have most extensively studied include:

- 1 intimate exchanges among family members and friends from a variety of national cultures (→ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends);



- 2 courtroom interaction, including attorney–witness exchanges and judge communication (→ Discourse in the Law);
- 3 exchanges that occur in a range of alternative dispute-resolution practices, but especially mediation;
- 4 the talk that occurs in business, including meetings of all types and sales exchanges (→ Business Discourse);
- 5 conversations on the telephone between intimates and for institutional services such as emergency calls (→ Telephone Talk);
- 6 television chat shows and call-in radio (→ Broadcast Talk); and
- 7 old as well as new forms of → technologically mediated discourse.

Language and social interaction is a distinctive area of communication study. Its trademark is the use of excerpts of talk to make claims about important units of talk or interaction, the structure of social action, how identities and institutions are constructed through interactional moves, how culture is displayed discursively, and so on. As Tracy and Haspel (2004, 807) conclude in a journal review of LSI research:

Whatever the particular issues are that LSI scholars tackle, our main mission is to render the “small” or mundane features of talk (such as conversational routines) large, to make the invisible (such as background knowledge or expectancies) visible, to make abstract concepts (such as “agency” or “strategy”) observable, and to make what matters most to communicators (such as “respect”) understandable to those who study and teach communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accounting Research ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Apologies and Remedial Episodes ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Business Discourse ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Communities of Practice ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Deception in Discourse ▶ Design Theory ▶ Directives ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Discourse in the Law ▶ Discourse Markers ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ English-Only Movements ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Language Varieties ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Meta-Discourse ▶ Microethnography ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Public Meetings ▶ Questions and Questioning ▶ Small Talk and Gossip ▶ Speech Codes Theory ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Support Talk ▶ Technologically Mediated Discourse ▶ Telephone Talk ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Transcribing and Transcription ▶ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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## Language and Social Psychology

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Social psychology is conventionally defined as the scientific study of how the actual or imagined presence of others influences an individual’s thoughts, feelings, and behavior. The social psychology of language (SPL) concentrates on the role of language in the dynamics between individuals and their social world; language use is argued to affect and be affected by both psychological and social variables. Scholarship in SPL has incorporated aspects of the broader discipline, including a theory- or variable-driven approach, along

with its preferred quantitative methods, particularly survey techniques and laboratory experiments (→ Survey; Experimental Design). Unlike mainstream social psychology, SPL has also welcomed contributions from other disciplines, including communication studies, sociolinguistics, anthropology, and other disciplines. Correspondingly, constructivist perspectives and qualitative methods, which are better recognized in these other disciplines, have found a receptive community in SPL (→ Qualitative Methodology; Constructivism). Furthermore, SPL scholars herald from around the world, and different “schools” of scholarly activity have developed in many regions, including Canada, the United Kingdom and Europe, Australasia, and the United States. Because of the range of perspectives that inform SPL, it cannot be said that any single paradigm characterizes this field of inquiry; indeed, a hallmark of research in this area is its variety of theoretical and methodological approaches.

Although language was an integral part of Wundt’s *Völkerpsychologie*, rather little systematic investigation of the role of language in social interaction was carried out by social psychologists in the first two-thirds of the twentieth century. Notable exceptions include the work of Mead, → Erving Goffman, and others whose work was more prominent in sociological social psychology. During the 1960s and 1970s, with the decline in behaviorism and the rise of cognitivism in psychology, the subdiscipline began to grow, although it generally remained on the margins of mainstream social psychology (→ Information Processing). Institutional support in the form of journals (e.g., *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, established 1982), textbooks and handbooks (e.g., *Handbook of Language and Social Psychology*, 1990, 2001), regular specialist conferences (International Conference on Language and Social Psychology), and professional associations (e.g., the International Association of Language and Social Psychology, established in 1997) served to organize a community of scholars and to substantiate SPL’s legitimacy as an important area of scholarly concern.

### TENETS OF SPL

In the following, some general tenets of SPL are outlined, along with some examples of prominent research topics. Two themes are evident. First, consistent with the cognitive orientation of social psychology, a prominent theme in SPL is how the production and reception of language behaviors are associated with cognitive processes, including attitudes, attributions, self-concepts/identities, and so on (→ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to). A second theme concerns the importance of social motivation for interpersonal interaction.

People enter social interactions with the *purpose of influencing another person* to achieve a goal. Sometimes this purpose can be determined from the literal content of an utterance, but often it is conveyed indirectly through nonverbal behaviors, the form of the utterance (e.g., question, command), and so on (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of). For instance, a speaker’s vocabulary choices can subtly lead a listener to particular inferences about the causes of an event. According to Semin (2004), more concrete terms indicate situational causes and tend to be used to describe less expected events (e.g., “Jamie touched the man”). More abstract forms tend to indicate that the person is the cause of the action and tend to be used for expected events (“Jamie is friendly”; “Jamie is intrusive”). Concrete terms are often used to describe negative events regarding oneself or a positively valued person or group to imply their irregularity, and abstract terms are used

for positive events to imply their ordinariness. The opposite is true for negatively valued persons or groups. Although both speakers and listeners may be unaware of this practice, such word choices shape how listeners understand an event and their reactions to it.

Speakers recognize that listeners come to the interaction with different understandings and feelings about the topic at hand, different perceptions of the context in which the interchange takes place, different experiences with the speaker, and so on. To achieve desired goals, the speaker must assume the perspective of the listener in order to formulate a message that the listener can readily comprehend. An intriguing effect of attuning a message to another's perspective is that it can have implications for the speaker's own understanding of that topic. For instance, by framing a positive message for an audience that is known to evaluate that person positively, the speaker may come to also evaluate that person more positively (i.e., the "saying-is-believing" effect; see Higgins 1992).

The listener is also an active participant in the communication process, who strives to *determine the speaker's goals and intentions*. To this end, listeners attend to utterances that are contrary to their expectations. According to Grice (1975), participants in a conversation expect that the interaction will be structured to promote the efficient exchange of information; a speaker will clearly and concisely convey all of the necessary, relevant information (→ Linguistic Pragmatics). Violations of this principle suggest to the listener that additional interpretation is necessary to determine the intended meaning of the utterance in that context, and he or she uses the contextual cues in the situation (e.g., the speaker's social status) and in the conversation (e.g., the sequence of conversational topics) to do so. These types of violations are often committed in the interest of politeness, to save the face of one or both of the interactants, and as such signal the nature of the relationship between interactants (see Holtgraves 2002, for review).

Listeners also use *paralinguistic features* to deduce the speaker's identity and his or her relationship to the listener. In his seminal research, Lambert and his colleagues (Lambert et al. 1960) developed the matched guise technique to investigate how listeners evaluated speakers of different languages. Participants in these studies listened to tape recordings of bilingual speakers using one or another language and were asked to evaluate each of the speaker's guises on several dimensions. By using the same speakers and the same message in all recordings, personality and message differences were controlled and only language was evaluated. The results showed that speakers using French were evaluated less positively than the same speaker using English, and this was true regardless of whether the listener was a native English or French speaker. Numerous variations of this technique have been carried out to look at a *range of speech characteristics*, including languages, dialects, and accents; speech rate; lexical diversity, etc. With some consistency, certain speech styles are regularly associated with impressions of status, solidarity, dynamism, and other dimensions. Importantly, the impressions that listeners form of speakers have implications for how they behave toward those speakers. For example, compared to their counterparts who use standard dialects, speakers of nonstandard dialects may be regarded by their teachers as having poorer educational prospects, by their employers as less suitable for higher-status occupations, and by jurors as more culpable of particular crimes.

Although communication has been portrayed thus far as an exchange between speaker and listener, communication is much better described in terms of interactants who continually adapt to one another. *Theories of adaptation* in interpersonal interaction

portray communication as a process of mutual influence in response to perceptions of the other and assessments of the goal of that interaction. As an example of theories of this type, → Communication Accommodation Theory suggests that individuals strategically use verbal and nonverbal characteristics to signal their identities and to create more or less social distance from their interlocutor, depending upon whether they evaluate that person positively or negatively (cf. Gallois et al. 2005). When language behavior becomes more similar, termed convergence, it generally reflects a more positive evaluation of that person, and when it becomes dissimilar, termed divergence, it tends to signify a negative evaluation of that person. These speech patterns indicate to the partner the identity claims of the speaker, eliciting in turn a psychological and behavioral response from the partner. Over time, these adaptation patterns establish and maintain a particular level of social distance between interactants.

Perspective-taking and mutual adaptation are crucial for the coordination of action between interactants, and coordination is essential for the achievement of communicative goals. In order to effectively coordinate their actions, participants must stand on “common ground” – that is, have a shared understanding of their mutual knowledge, beliefs, and suppositions. Clark’s (1996) *collaborative model* maintains that interactants ensure, through questions, back channeling, and other strategies, that they have comparable understandings of each utterance before they move on to the next utterance. Such a perspective of language use as joint, or social, action emphasizes that meaning lies not within the minds of individuals, but is created through the interaction between them.

### **LINKS AMONG THE INDIVIDUAL, SOCIETY, AND LANGUAGE**

SPL is a developing field that has been shaped by diverse influences. As a result, there are divergent opinions on how the interrelations between the individual, society, and language should be framed and examined. These discussions point to directions for future inquiry. Because of its emphasis on social cognition, SPL has been suggested to be overly focused on mental processes, with too little attention given to examining language behavior per se. Others suggest that SPL research has inappropriately adopted the individual as a unit of analysis, and that a more appropriate unit would be dyadic or group interactions. It has been argued that SPL research has been overly reliant on quantitative methods, such as self-report surveys and laboratory experiments, in which language use is abstracted from naturally occurring situations. Qualitative methodologies (→ Discursive Psychology; Conversation Analysis; Ethnography of Communication) could better investigate language use as it unfolds in uncontrived settings, complementing the more commonly used techniques. At times these discussions regarding the proper conceptual and methodological approach are heated and adversarial. Perhaps a more constructive approach to understanding language and its place in the social world would evolve from dialogue between disparate viewpoints. Although harmonious complementarity may be elusive, multiple perspectives are crucial for a field that is still defining itself. Moreover, through their dialectic, each perspective ensures that the others stay humble regarding their truth claims.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Constructivism ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches

to ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Experimental Design  
 ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Information Processing ▶ Intergroup Accommodative Processes  
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## **Language Varieties**

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The term “language varieties” covers “language” and “dialect.” A variety may be characteristic of a particular social group, or associated with a particular speaking style across groups of speakers in a community (→ Communities of Practice). “Variety” makes no direct or indirect assertions about the relative status of the linguistic system being described (“dialect” often refers with negative overtones to nonstandardized varieties).

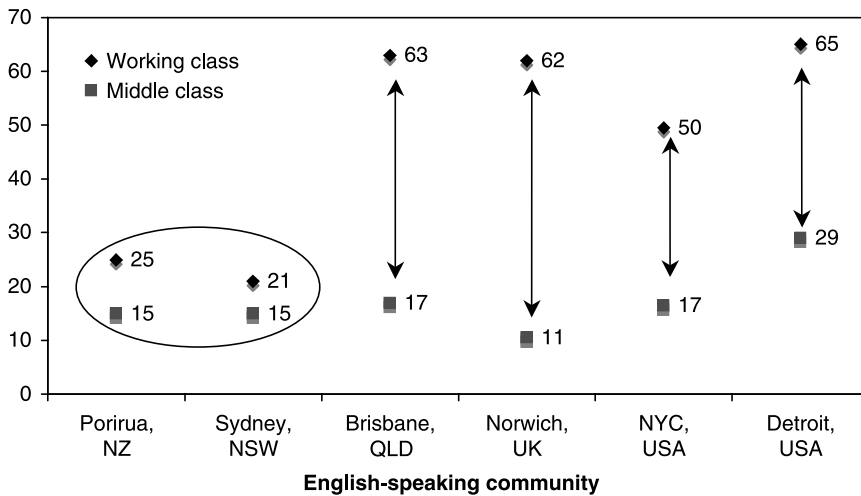
The relationship between language, social groups, and styles reflects present-day and historical factors that are unique to each community (→ *Ethnography of Communication*). Good variationists use qualitative research to decide which correspondences between language and society to examine quantitatively. Some social groupings are common across societies, presumably because such group distinctions are generally salient to people the world over. These include identities and networks based on age, gender, social class, or very local communities of practice. Speakers systematically, though often sub-consciously, differentiate members of different social groups by using a wide range of linguistic resources. These can be subtly different pronunciations of the same words, different patterns for organizing new and old information in sentences, or different pitch and intonation patterns. In earlier work on sociolinguistic variation, these correspondences were sometimes discussed as if the social categories with which speakers could be identified determined their use of particular linguistic variants. This is viewed critically now, and the relationship between linguistic forms and social identities is considered to be more complex, and mutually constitutive.

William Labov, considered the founder of variationist studies of language, demonstrated that variation of a feature of talk (e.g., *gonna* vs *going*) may not be categorical, but is systematically and probabilistically constrained by linguistic and social factors. (In most linguistic variables, the linguistic constraints account for more of the observed variation than social or individual factors do.) This means that synchronic variation, i.e., that which occurs at a particular moment in time, can be studied as a complement to historical linguistics.

Not all linguistic variation is the first step in language change. Some variables are stable over time. Stable variables and changes in progress have different profiles across different age groups of speakers. Variationists infer change from differences in the distribution of variants across different age groups (“apparent” or “generational” time as opposed to real/chronological time). The robustness of apparent time has been validated by real-time checks of some studies. For changes proceeding below speakers’ conscious awareness, apparent time seems to be reliable. However, apparent time data are not good indicators of the speed with which a change is taking place.

More conservative variants are often retained in formal or careful speech styles longer than they are retained in informal or casual speech. Sociolinguists differ in how they understand individual styles (→ *Interactional Sociolinguistics*). Labov argued for a model based on whether a speaker was giving more or less attention to the act of speaking. Howard Giles argued that style shifting reflected different (real or imagined) addressees, to whom the speaker was converging (accommodating) (→ *Communication Accommodation Theory*), and Allan Bell developed this further as “audience design.”

There are often striking parallels between the way variants are distributed across individuals’ styles of speaking and across different *social classes*. Typically, the variant that occurs most in more casual styles, or more ingroup speech, also occurs more often as one moves down the social spectrum. For example, the suffix “-ing” (“*walking~walkin*”) occurs as “-in” most in working class speech overall, and most in all classes’ casual ingroup style. The parallelism between class and style suggests that ideologies about class and style (whether operationalized as attention to speech or attention to others) are very deeply intertwined.



**Figure 1** Class stratification of *-ing* in six English-speaking communities: fine stratification in Porirua and Sydney; broad stratification in others  
*Source:* Meyerhoff (2006, 169)

It has been suggested that broad social class stratification (i.e., major differences in relative frequency of a variant in the speech of different social classes) reflects relatively rigid social class divisions at the societal level. However, evidence supporting this is limited (Fig. 1). The fine stratification observed in New Zealand and in Sydney might fit with Australasian ideologies of social mobility, but we find similar patterns of broad social class stratification in Brisbane as we do in Norwich (UK) and Detroit (USA).

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Communities of Practice  
 ► Ethnography of Communication ► Identities and Discourse ► Interactional Sociolinguistics  
 ► Language and Social Interaction ► Linguistics ► Rogers, Everett ► Social Networks

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## Lasswell, Harold D.

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Harold Dwight Lasswell (1902–1978), American political scientist with a specific interest in the symbolic aspects of politics (→ Political Communication; Symbolic Politics), is considered one of the founders of mass communication research in the United States. Although his wide-ranging and prolific writings on theoretical and methodological issues regarding politics, personality, and culture remained rather peripheral to communication research, his approach to the effects of mass communication (→ Media Effects) helped define and strengthen a quantitative approach to questions concerning media and communication in the political arena (→ Quantitative Methodology). Lasswell studied at the University of Chicago with George Herbert Mead, Robert E. Park, and Charles Merriam, while being influenced by John Dewey and American → pragmatism. He also taught at Chicago (1922–1938) and served as chief of the Experimental Division for the Study of War Time Communications at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC, during World War II before joining the Yale law school (1946–1970).

Among early contributors to the field of communication studies, Lasswell was particularly knowledgeable about Freudian psychology and Marxist ideology. His insight into the structure of the latter provided a comparative perspective for the analysis of political behavior, long before many of his American colleagues acknowledged its relevance (→ Comparative Research). His efforts at integrating classical and empirical political science solidified the quantitative approach to different aspects of communication flows, ranging from psychiatric reports to propaganda campaigns. By denying the dualism of individual and society, and by applying Freudian analysis to society, he established the importance of considering the social totality as a symbolic context, thus anticipating later directions in social theory and analysis. Lasswell acknowledged the implications of culture and language for the study of political communication, aided especially by the interdisciplinary nature of his inquiries.

Lasswell's (1948) definition of communication was a powerful and influential contribution to conceptualizing communication as transmission (→ Models of Communication). In making it, he not only identified the major elements of the communication process – communicator, message, medium, receiver, and effects – but also labeled the corresponding areas of communication research – control, content, media, audience, and effect analysis. His descriptive model revealed a primary interest in persuasive communication, but also referred to broader functional equivalences between an organism and the body social within an approach dominated by the intent of the communicator and the effect of messages (→ Functional Analysis). As such, his definition of communication (who – says what – in which channel – to whom – with what effect?) harks back to the stimulus-response model, rooted in learning theory, which became a significant force in the rise of mass communication theory in the United States and in post-1945 Europe.

Emerging from Lasswell's work is the realization of a growing social and political need to study and understand mass communication phenomena, particularly in the realm of

politics, including the uses of → propaganda in the practice of democracy. His ideas about effects, his contributions to content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), and his humanistic inflection of behaviorism, in particular, helped shape communication studies, even if the field was dominated at the time by the disciplinary interests of American sociology (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Political Communication ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Propaganda ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Symbolic Politics

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## **Latina Feminist Media Studies**

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Latina feminist media studies addresses the intersectional themes of gender, ethnicity, nation, and media in relation to that recently constructed category of Latina/os, i.e., a segment of the US population of Latin American origin (→ Identity Politics). As such, this category both differs from, and overlaps with, “Latin American,” as many US Latinas experience transnational lives through personal travel and migration, enduring family and community connections, and media consumption of both US and Latin American cultural forms. In media studies, there is a strong corpus of research about this subject, with a range of scholarship from Chicano and Puerto Rican studies of film and performance. Falling between “black/Afro-American media studies” (→ Black Feminist Media Studies) and “media studies” (which tends to center on whiteness), Latina feminist media studies

explores the production, consumption, content, and effects of media from perspectives that foreground gender and ethnicity (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational).

Fregoso's (1993) and Valdivia's (2003, 2005) work on the production of media – at the individual, organizational, and institutional levels of analysis – demonstrates that most mainstream media production remains in the hands of white, male producers (→ Media Production and Content). The rules that govern the production of media, as well as the values and beliefs that shape both organizations and individuals, contribute to a media production that tends to marginalize the input and narratives of Latinas. Celebrities such as Salma Hayek, Jennifer Lopez, and Gloria Estefan stand out as examples of exceptional Latinas who are involved in the production of media. The highly acclaimed prime-time US television show *Ugly Betty* (→ Soap Operas) has won numerous awards for its portrayal of a non-normative young Latina in the fashion industry, and the pop singer Shakira's cross-over success echoes transnational flows of people, music, style, and culture across all continents.

The vast majority of research on Latinas focuses on *representations and content* (→ Media and Group Representations). Racialized and gendered media representations render feminized images less valuable and powerful than masculine ones (→ Feminization of Media Content; Gender: Representation in the Media). Feminist media scholars have studied all narratives, particular bodies, and types of media. As a signifier of difference and the arrival of the Latina body, Jennifer Lopez's butt has been a focus of research interest (Negrón-Muntaner 1997; Barrera 2000; Molina Guzmán & Valdivia 2004). Molina Guzmán and Valdivia (2004) find that “the female ethnic subject is othered through its categorization and marginalization in relation to dominant constructions of Whiteness and femininity . . . Latinas fall beyond the margins of socially acceptable femininity and beauty” (p. 206).

Mainstream popular culture creates and adheres to tropes in its representations of Latinas. Frances Aparicio and Susanna Chávez-Silverman (1997) identify “tropicalization” as a dominant trope used to signify Latinas. Tropicalization renders Latinas as hot, dynamic, nearly combustible, and hyperfertile. Most notable as a figure in this vein is the actress Carmen Miranda, whose representation endures in myriad advertising campaigns. María Victoria Ruiz (2002) has studied popular fears of the hyperfertile Latina in both medical literature and freeway signs. Ruby Tapia (2005) extends this analysis to a study of teenage-pregnancy campaigns wherein the implicit pregnant body is Latina.

Latina feminist media studies also includes research on popular music, magazines, children, and girl culture (→ Popular Culture). Jillian Báez (2006) explores individual performers such as Ivy Queen and hybrid cultural forms like “reggaetón” in terms of gender, ethnicity, and nation. Research on salsa by Frances Aparicio (1998) informs much of the contemporary study of Latina feminist popular music of other stars, such as Celia Cruz and La India, and Valdivia's (2003) work on salsa as a form to construct Latinidad in the midwest US. In magazine studies, both Katynka Martínez (2004) and Melissa Johnson (2003) explore the construction of femininity and masculinity in *Latina* magazine as well as the development of models of acculturation in Latina women's magazines. Research on *American Girl* dolls and products conducted by Acosta-Alzuru and Roushanzamir (2003) and the analysis, conducted by Harewood and Valdivia (2005), of the chat streams linked to the children's television show *Dora the explorer*, examine the

highly profitable commodification of girl-culture and its incorporation of Latinas. Much less studied is radio. Here Inés Casillas's (forthcoming) work on masculinity in talk radio in the Los Angeles area stands out.

Audience interpretation is underresearched (→ Audience Research). Little is known about what kind of media Latinas use, how they identify with characters and interpret themes and narratives, or how Latina characters are interpreted by wider audiences. Viviana Rojas's (2004) work on Spanish-language television found ambivalence and recognition on the part of a number of Latinas, and Mayer's (2003) work on San Antonio girls found that class limited their ability to engage with media and popular culture. Vargas (forthcoming), like Mayer, also finds that girls use transnational media to retain a connection to their recent or ancestral countries of origin.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## Latitude of Acceptance

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Social-judgment theorists (Sherif & Hovland 1961) assume that → attitudes concerning important topics are bipolar. People have an internal reference scale. The initial attitude on an issue with high ego-involvement influences the reaction to a communication representing a different view (→ Involvement with Media Content). The discrepancy of a communication from one's own position is decisive for the amount of change achieved by a source because message discrepancy affects the perception of the quality of a message. More discrepant messages are perceived as being more unfair, more illogical, more boring, etc. In order to explain whether a person will change toward or away from a position advocated by a source, Sherif and Hovland (1961) segmented an attitude on a pro and contra issue into three parts (assimilation-contrast theory): latitude of acceptance, latitude of non-commitment (zone of indifference), and latitude of rejection (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Cumulative Media Effects; Hovland, Carl I.).

Within the *latitude of acceptance* (on an attitude scale the position most acceptable to a person on a given topic plus other positions which are considered acceptable), a source's opinion is distorted perceptually as being more similar to one's own opinion than it really is ("assimilation effect"). Attitude change is unlikely because the source's point of view is perceived as being similar to one's own. The reinforcement of one's already existing attitude will be the most likely effect (→ Media Effects, Strength of).

Within the *latitude of rejection* (the positions one finds objectionable), a source's opinion is perceived as further removed from one's own stand than it really is ("contrast effect"). The changing of attitudes in the direction of the source's position is extremely unlikely because the discrepant communication will be perceived as being more discrepant than it is. One's opinion is most likely to remain unchanged or even to change in a contrasting way ("boomerang effect"). While accepting and rejecting certain

positions concerning an issue, the *zone of indifference* (latitude of non-commitment) allows an individual to remain neutral (moderate) regarding certain positions. With opinions neither accepted nor rejected, perceptual distortions are least likely to happen. In this zone of indifference, attitudes are most likely to be changed in the direction advocated (→ Propaganda).

In a series of studies that addressed nontrivial topics (e.g., US presidential elections in 1956 and 1960, labor-management issues, or the Arab Unity issue; see Sherif & Sherif 1969, 357ff.), it was established that the size of the three latitudes varies according to the position an individual upholds. A study by Hovland et al. (1957) tried to answer the question of how a person's initial position on a certain issue influences reactions to a communication representing different views. The theme addressed was the question of lifting an alcohol ban, which was controversial in Oklahoma (then a "dry" state) at the time of the study. The subjects' positions ranged from "dry" via "moderate wet" to "wet." The subjects were confronted with messages that strongly or weakly contradicted their own views. It was found that where discrepancy was great, the credibility of the communicator was doubted (→ Credibility of Content). And with increasing distance, the communication was perceived as propagandistic and unfair. Moreover, communications with more deviant opinions were perceived as more distant from one's own views than they actually were ("contrast effect"). Communications with less deviant opinions were perceived as more similar than they actually were ("assimilation effect"). It was also found that moderate subjects changed more in the direction advocated. If the source's position is highly discrepant, one is less likely to be influenced and develops doubts about the credibility of a communicator. Bochner and Insko (1966) could demonstrate that greater credibility gives the chance to advocate more discrepant opinions successfully. Opinions of sources with low credibility are more likely to be rejected.

The (relative) *size of the latitude of non-commitment* is an indicator of the extent of ego-involvement: the smaller the indifference zone, the greater the ego-involvement. A large latitude of non-commitment is typical of an individual who is not deeply involved. The size of the latitude of non-commitment also proves to be an index of susceptibility to change (Sherif & Sherif 1969, 482, 491). The greater the importance of a topic (involvement), the greater the resistance to attitude change. The width of the latitude of acceptance, according to Hovland et al. (1957), is dependent on the importance of the issue: the more important an issue, the smaller the latitude of acceptance. When compared with a moderate person, an individual with high involvement had a narrower latitude of acceptance and a greater latitude of rejection. The latitude of acceptance of intensively involved persons is significantly smaller than the latitude of rejection and the latitude of non-commitment (Sherif & Sherif 1969, 297). On the other hand, non-partisan individuals with low involvement have a latitude of acceptance and a latitude of rejection of nearly the same size, and a relatively large latitude of non-commitment.

Concerning the discrepancy between communication content and recipient attitude, linear assumptions (that the greater the distance, the smaller the attitude change) are too simplistic (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis). With unimportant themes and with credible communicators, greater discrepancy can cause more change; greater importance, in other words, implies a greater resistance to change. The following *hypotheses* can be made:

- 1 No effect of persuasive communication intended by the communicator is expectable in the rejection zone, but rather a boomerang effect, especially since distorted perception is very likely because of the contrast effect.
- 2 Attitudes are most likely to be changed in the non-commitment zone.
- 3 In the acceptance zone, attitude change – even gradual – is unlikely because, within this zone, communications are perceived as similar to one’s own position.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Propaganda

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## **Lazarsfeld, Paul F.**

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Paul Felix Lazarsfeld (1901–1976), Vienna-born sociologist, influenced by Ernst Mach, Henri Poincaré, and Albert Einstein, and intellectually close to the Vienna Circle of logical positivism, called himself a “European positivist.” He was the founder of modern empirical sociology and a major figure in twentieth-century American sociology. His contributions to the study of communication grew out of his collaborative work at the *Bureau of Applied*

*Social Research*, which he had founded at New York's Columbia University in 1937. His position was firmly established with the publication of *The people's choice* (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944) and *Personal influence* (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955), which set the stage for the social scientific exploration of communication in modern society. Lazarsfeld's work is also an example of the intellectual contributions made by emigré scholars to American scholarship during and after World War II.

Lazarsfeld's research on the social and political impact of radio as a new medium (→ Radio: Social History) reinforced his leading role in forging the direction of mass communication studies after World War II, and further illustrates his understanding of what he termed *administrative research*. His response to the spread of literacy and the rise of a centralized system of mass communication was a call for a philosophical grounding and a systematic approach to research techniques (→ Research Methods), suggesting a role for communication research as an important source of → media policy and social philosophy. Lazarsfeld saw the problem of media and society in technological terms, dealing with the inevitability of industrialization, the massification of audiences, and the effects of mass media on people (→ Media Effects). His understanding of the role of *critique* within the social sciences was grounded in a perceived need to provide a social scientific rationale for an adjustment to the dominant forces in society (→ Critical Theory). Thus, his own complex intellectual interests and his lifelong commitment to applied research kept him involved in assessing methodological and substantive contributions to the creation and transfer of knowledge. In Lazarsfeld's view of mass society, one challenge for social scientists was to help improve the standards of living for people under the conditions of industrialization. Yet his notion of critical research remained within a populist, reformist questioning of authority.

Lazarsfeld helped to fashion communication research into an important methodological specialization, leading to the legitimization of American communication research as a socially and politically relevant academic undertaking (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). This position was premised on a widespread and commonsensical understanding of social problems as being related inescapably to media performance. Consequently, questions about communication or the role of media tended to be reduced to practical issues, while theoretical interests in the development of a communication-based theory of society surfaced outside the sociological mainstream. Lazarsfeld's influence extended after World War II to Europe, where his work played a role in the rise of media studies as a social scientific project.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Policy ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Research Methods

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## Le Monde Diplomatique

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*Le Monde Diplomatique* (LMD) is a French monthly → newspaper created in 1954 by Hubert Beuve-Méry, then editor of the Parisian newspaper of record, *Le Monde*. It is large format and typically runs to 32 pages, including color artistic photographs and art reproduction. It offers feature and political analysis articles, mostly of one to two pages in length. Sometimes a particular issue will contain a cluster of articles on the same issue or country, running to several pages. It also has short book review pages, mostly of nonfiction, but always including at least one or two novels, generally by global southern authors.

Today, LMD is one of the most important global anti-capitalist newspapers, with worldwide influence, especially in countries where people speak Romance languages or Arabic. The newspaper was translated into 26 languages, as of 2006, and had a total circulation of almost 2 million paper copies. Even though the newspaper has never taken sides in a French electoral campaign, the editorial line can be defined as to the left of the French Socialist party. However, LMD was never monolithic and three broad historical tendencies have been in play during its history: leftist Christians (some of them leading resistance fighters during World War II), internationalists (most of them former Communists), and leftist nationalists (some linked to the Eurosceptic political party *Mouvement Républicain et Citoyen*, led by former interior minister Jean-Pierre Chevènement). The leftist Christians had all retired by the time of writing, but the two latter tendencies were still present in the newsroom. However, notwithstanding these political dissensions, all the journalists were close to global justice movement (*altermondialiste*) perspectives and were unanimous in denouncing the European Constitutional Treaty proposal in 2005.

In the mid-2000s the newspaper worked with a small editorial staff of nine journalists. These editors had a remarkable level of cultural capital, with seven having doctoral degrees. The majority of the articles were written by outside contributors, mostly foreigners, and academics or independent journalists. The newspaper may be regarded as a strategic institutional location for leftist intellectuals writing on international issues.

As with other worldwide media such as the *International Herald Tribune* or the *Financial Times*, when we observe the sociological composition of its journalists and its readership, *LMD* has always belonged more to “class media” than “mass media” or “popular media” (→ Popular Culture and the News Media). A study done in 1998 showed that 75 percent of *LMD*'s subscribers had higher education and 40 percent of them were senior executives. Some articles resembled academic popularization rather than journalistic news, and readers needed a high degree of cultural capital to master the contents. It also had the peculiar feature of including both professional journalists and academics on its staff.

In its early beginnings, *LMD* did not have a radical leftist editorial line. The newspaper was only a supplement of the daily newspaper and it aimed particularly at a readership in the diplomatic arena. The newspaper had only one or two permanent journalists and most of the articles were written by *Le Monde*'s foreign correspondents. The two newspapers kept the same editorial line until 1973, adopting a neutralist position in the Cold War, and dominated by center-left Christian staffers. Nevertheless, *LMD* had the ambition to become a successful newspaper of record, with an austere image and the goal of objectivity.

In 1973, *LMD* changed its editor, its style, and its editorial line. The newspaper adopted a third-world position and a critical view of the western bloc during the Cold War. As academics and former communist journalists joined the editorial staff, the newspaper switched course and adopted an anti-capitalist editorial line. The content also changed enormously. Before 1973, *LMD* was overwhelmingly interested in international relations, diplomatic circles, and possibly the national politics of foreign countries. With its new editor, *LMD* began to be interested in cultural and social news. Also, in the early 1980s, Claude Julien, the editor of *LMD*, had been elected editor of *Le Monde*, but a subsequent vote reversed the election. Julien then returned as head of *LMD* with more legitimacy and greater autonomy, conceded by *Le Monde*'s new editor to smooth over the ousting.

The *degree of autonomy* increased and was institutionalized in the late 1990s by *LMD* becoming a subsidiary company, where *Le Monde* kept 51 percent of the newspaper, with the other 49 percent being shared by editorial staff and readers. *LMD* needed money and asked readers to become shareholders. The association Les Amis du Monde diplomatique (“*LMD*'s friends”) was created for this purpose, and many local associations started to organize conferences and debates with *LMD*'s journalists and external contributors. It is a top-down association with a charter that allows the editorial staff to control the election of its national executive committee. The nomination of local coordinators is done by this national executive committee and local committees are not allowed to take any public position.

Editorial autonomy had been respected since the beginning of the 1980s and the new subsidiary company was able to protect the newspaper against *Le Monde*'s future editorial interference. Readers and staff together held more than 33 percent of the shares, the threshold needed in French corporate law for protecting statutes that guaranteed autonomy of internal functioning and editorial line. Nevertheless, *LMD* is a capitalist firm that has to be profitable. In contrast to the alternative media sector's typical economic weaknesses, *LMD* uses similar marketing strategies, market research, administration, and financial planning to those used in mainstream media.

Until the late 1990s, *LMD* had a radical editorial line but was not literally activist. However, after the major 1995 wave of strikes in France, the newspaper decided to participate directly in the creation of some activist associations (→ Activist Media). Most of these associations were created in a similar way. The first was the *Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions for the Aid of Citizens* (ATTAC, in French), one of the leading associations in the worldwide campaign against “rightist globalization.” The idea to create this association originated in 1997 in an editorial by *LMD*’s editor Ignacio Ramonet. The newspaper rapidly received a significant number of letters from readers who wanted to become members of an association of this kind. The inaugural assembly was held soon after the famous editorial. A similar strategy was adopted for the creation of two other *altermondialiste* organizations: the *World Social Forum* (WSF) and *Media Watch Global* ([www.mwglobal.org](http://www.mwglobal.org)). Some *LMD* journalists also became leaders of anti-globalization organizations.

SEE ALSO: ► Activist Media ► Newspaper ► Popular Culture and the News Media

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## **Leadership in Organizations**

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Leadership dynamics significantly shape communication in organizations. By defining leadership primarily as a process of → persuasion, many scholars place communication at the very heart of leadership dynamics. The complex organizational relationships between leaders and followers can crucially influence the nature and extent of communication. Equally, the nature and extent of communication often reflects and reinforces the quality of the relationships between leaders and followers. Within organizations, leadership and communication frequently interact in complex, mutually reinforcing and sometimes contradictory ways.

Within the literature there is a growing recognition that leadership in organizations can occur at various hierarchical levels and is best understood as an inherently social, collaborative, and interdependent process. Leadership is the responsibility not only of

those who occupy senior positions such as entrepreneurs, owners, chief executives, and senior managers, but also of all those engaged in supervisory functions. These insights are suggestive of new forms of organizational communication. Rather than the traditional top-down model of command and control, there is a growing view that, especially in high performance organizations, communication is dispersed through team-based interdependencies and fluid, multidirectional social interactions and networks of influence (→ Organizational Communication; Organizational Structure).

## MAINSTREAM PERSPECTIVES

Over the past fifty years researchers have developed numerous theories about leadership dynamics, most of which concentrate on leaders themselves and the qualities and behaviors deemed necessary to be an “*effective leader*.” Situational leadership (e.g., Hersey and Blanchard 1996) holds that effective leaders should communicate by deploying a mix of directive and supportive behaviors compatible with followers’ “developmental levels.” Path-goal theory (e.g., House 1971) suggests that leaders must choose leadership styles best suited to followers’ experience, needs, and skills. Transformational studies (e.g. Lord and Brown 2003) argue that charismatic leaders can inspire followers to greater commitment by satisfying their needs, values, and motivations. Leader-member exchange theory (e.g., Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995) observes that leaders tend to be open and trusting with “ingroup” followers, but distant with “outgroup” members. Recent interest in “emotional intelligence” suggests that effective leaders need to develop greater awareness of the emotional dynamics of leadership processes.

Within the leadership communication literature there is growing interest in the *role of social identity* (e.g., Van Knippenberg & Hogg 2003). Informed by the idea that leadership is primarily a group process, social psychologists argue that leadership is contingent upon the degree to which leaders are perceived as “prototypical” of the group’s identity. They predict that followers will endorse leaders who quintessentially embody the values of the group (→ Group Communication). Relatedly, some researchers argue that when communicating with followers, leaders do and should manipulate their identities through → impression management strategies.

Researchers also suggest that by focusing on followers’ identity, *charismatic leaders* can profoundly transform subordinates’ commitment so that they perform above and beyond the call of duty. Arguing that people are motivated by concerns to express themselves and enhance self-esteem, these writers contend that charismatic leaders can validate followers’ identities by, for example, acting as role models and encouraging followers’ psychological identification and value internalization. From this perspective, leadership has been defined as a social process through which the leader changes the way followers envision themselves (e.g., by shifting the salience of different elements of subordinates’ identities or by creating new aspects of their self-concept) (→ Information Processing: Self-Concept).

The degree of leader “distance” is also a growing area of leadership research (e.g., Antonakis & Atwater 2002). Early writers argued that psychological leader distance was a precondition for sustaining charisma. More recent research reveals that distance between leaders and led can take many different forms. Distance may, for example, be social,

hierarchical, physical, and/or might be defined by interaction frequency. On the one hand, retaining a distance may be necessary for leaders to maintain a strategic overview, make “hard” decisions, and communicate “difficult” information. On the other hand, however, leaders can become so detached from the led that their “motivational” messages are no longer effective.

Although the foregoing leadership theories have produced useful insights, particularly about leaders’ behaviors, competencies, and skills, studies have sometimes been so concerned to produce law-like, universal generalizations about what constitutes effective leadership that they have undervalued the specificities and nuances of the contexts in which these processes occur. Some mainstream leadership perspectives have been criticized for relying on gendered, heroic images of the “great man.” Meindl et al. (1985) highlighted a tendency in the literature to “romanticize leaders” by developing overly heroic and exaggerated views of what they are able to achieve. Collins (2001) found that successful organizations tend to be led not by “larger-than-life” charismatic egoists, but rather by leaders who are quiet, modest, reserved, unpretentious, relatively humble, and self-effacing.

### CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES

Recently, more critical and “post-heroic” perspectives have questioned the tendency of mainstream studies to conflate leadership with leaders and to underestimate context. They argue that mainstream studies have sometimes underestimated the importance of followers and their relationships with leaders. In prioritizing leaders as the active agents, mainstream studies have viewed followers largely as passive recipients who will be susceptible to certain leader messages and behaviors. Critical approaches suggest that communication between leaders and followers is rarely neutral, usually embedded in asymmetrical power relations, and typically shaped by control practices that are historically specific (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches; Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches).

Informed by various perspectives (from labor process theory to radical psychology, poststructuralism, and feminism; → Feminist and Gender Studies), critical leadership writers recognize that leaders’ power can take multiple economic, political, and ideological forms (Grint 2005). They show how control is not so much a “dependent variable” as a deeply embedded and inescapable feature of leadership structures, cultures, practices, and communication. Leaders in organizations can exercise control through, for example, constructing corporate visions, shaping structures and cultures, intensifying and monitoring work, and by making key strategic and HR decisions.

Critical writers reveal how leaders can also exercise control by “*managing meaning*” and defining situations in ways that suit their purposes. They contend that leaders’ hierarchical power enables them to provide rewards, apply sanctions, gain access to expertise, and secure followers’ consent. “Toxic leaders” (Lipmen-Blumen 2005) may exercise power in coercive, dictatorial, and narcissistic ways. The recent case of Enron revealed how the company’s leadership acted in highly self-interested and manipulative ways, suppressing dissent and promoting conformity with disastrous consequences for the organization and its employees (Tourish and Vatcha 2005).

Critical researchers also suggest that forms of control (particularly coercive practices) can produce *follower resistance* (→ Control and Authority in Organizations). Post-structuralist and feminist perspectives in particular highlight how followers may draw on strategic agencies and cultural resources to express disaffection in the workplace, exercise a degree of control over work processes, and/or construct alternative, more positive identities to those prescribed by the organization (Collinson 2005). They reveal how oppositional practices can take numerous forms, including strikes, “working to rule,” output restriction, “whistleblowing,” and sabotage. Even in the disciplinary context of the military, there is a long history of outright rebellion, mutiny, and spontaneous acts of follower dissent. In exceptional cases, subordinates may even successfully depose leaders.

Viewing control and resistance as discursive and contested, poststructuralist perspectives treat such dialectical practices as mutually reinforcing and simultaneously linked, often in contradictory ways. While not all follower dissent is aimed specifically at leaders, critical researchers suggest that employee resistance does frequently focus directly on the leaders of organizations, and particularly on the change programs they seek to instigate (→ Organizational Change Processes; Change Management and Communication). This is especially the case when followers believe they have not been consulted, perceive leaders to be “out of touch,” and when they detect discrepancies between leaders’ policies and practices. Research in a UK truck manufacturer, for example, demonstrated that a corporate-culture campaign introduced by the new US senior-management team to establish trust with the workforce had precisely the opposite effect (Collinson 2006). Further, while followers might be highly critical of leaders’ practices, they may decide, for fear of reprisals, to censor their views and camouflage their actions. Subtle subversions such as absenteeism, foot-dragging, disengagement, and even irony and satire can be disguised and ambiguous and thus difficult for leaders to address.

Feminist poststructuralist researchers argue that gender is a very important and frequently neglected feature of leadership dynamics. Observing that men tend to remain dominant in leadership positions, they reveal how masculinity continues to shape the styles, language, cultures, identities, and practices of leadership. A number of feminist researchers suggest that leaders themselves may engage in oppositional actions. Sinclair (2007) focuses on the “subversive leadership” of two Australian leaders, a woman chief commissioner of police and an aboriginal school principal, who achieved radical change in moribund systems. Meyerson (2001) shows how senior managers can attempt to effect (gender) change while working within the organization. “Tempered radicals” are frequently women in senior positions who are committed to their organization, but also to a cause that is fundamentally at odds with the dominant workplace culture. These feminist poststructuralist studies suggest that, within complex workplace power structures, leaders typically retain a degree of discretion that can, in certain circumstances, facilitate their own opposition to dominant organizational imperatives.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It is likely that future research on leadership communication will extend the foregoing critical insights into the ambiguities, paradoxes, and dialectics of leadership. Recent poststructuralist and feminist interest in identity/identities is likely to inform more

research on the multiple, shifting, contradictory, and ambiguous identities of “leaders” and “followers.” Exploring how these subjectivities are negotiated in practice within complex organizational power relations will further enhance our understanding of leadership dynamics. *Research on followership* is also likely to become more prominent, with future studies building on the work of a small number of writers who highlight the importance of “exemplary” and “courageous” followers for “successful” organizations. This research is likely to enhance understanding about followers’ proactive agency as well as the potentially oppositional role of both followers and leaders themselves.

The *significance of context(s)* could also become much more deeply understood in future leadership studies, with greater awareness of the impact of specific settings on leadership and communication dynamics (e.g., leadership in the context of multinational corporations, new technologies, and the pressure to create sustainable environments). It is very likely that the foregoing emergent themes will facilitate new ways of thinking about the complex and paradoxical dynamics of leadership, raising a number of currently underexplored issues about what it may mean to be a “leader” and a “follower” within the organizations of the future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Change Management and Communication  
 ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity  
 ▶ Dissent in Organizations ▶ Diversity in the Workplace ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies  
 ▶ Group Communication ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Impression Management ▶ Information Processing: Self-Concept ▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Structure  
 ▶ Persuasion ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Postmodernism and Communication  
 ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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# Learning and Communication

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The study of learning has been undertaken since the beginning of the twentieth century and has been heavily influenced by psychology. Although multiple definitions exist, learning has been generally defined as a persistent change in behavior or performance as a result of some stimulus. This definition encompasses both behavioral and cognitive aspects of learning. Behaviorism, which postulates that the environment has a direct impact on behavior, dominated roughly the first half of the twentieth century. In the latter half of the twentieth century, cognitive theories challenged behaviorism by asserting that learners process information obtained from the environment and that behavior is the result of how the information is processed. Learning theorists focused on understanding the process of learning, whereas other scholars sought to develop methods for measuring and assessing learning.

## THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF LEARNING

One of the first efforts to assess learning systematically was led by Benjamin Bloom (1956), who put forth a *taxonomy of cognitive learning*. This taxonomy was intended to classify “the changes produced in individuals as a result of educational experiences” (Bloom 1956, 12), or in other words, *learning*. The taxonomy is hierarchical in nature, with each successive level subsuming the preceding one. The six major classes of learning are knowledge (lowest), comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (highest). A primary purpose of the taxonomy was to facilitate the assessment of learning by creating common terminology and definitions for specific student behaviors.

In 1964, Krathwohl et al. extended the taxonomy of cognitive learning to include the *affective and psychomotor domains*. The affective domain emphasizes “a feeling, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection” (Krathwohl et al. 1964, 6) and includes receiving (attending), responding, valuing, organization, and characterization by a value or value complex. Similar to the taxonomy of cognitive learning, the taxonomy of affective learning is also hierarchical. Krathwohl et al. noted that affective objectives are



often assumed to have been accomplished if cognitive objectives have been obtained. However, they argued that, similar to higher levels of cognitive learning, affective learning develops when appropriate learning experiences are provided to students, and, therefore, affective learning – like cognitive learning – must be facilitated.

In 2001, Anderson and Krathwohl, with their colleagues, revised Bloom's taxonomy, creating a *two-dimensional taxonomy* consisting of the cognitive process and knowledge dimensions. They identified four organizing questions in education: (1) what is important for students to learn? (2) how should instruction be delivered? (3) how should learning be assessed? and (4) how can learning objectives, instruction, and assessment be aligned? The second question – how instruction should be delivered – has been the focus of the communication discipline.

### THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF LEARNING

Learning has been measured using performance and self-report methods. Performance methods usually involve some type of test of ability to recall information. A problem with this method is that students may score well on a test of knowledge not because they have learned the content, but because they already knew the information. Writing ability, anxiety, and other factors can also impact students' scores, reducing the validity of so-called *objective* tests. The self-report method involves asking individuals how much they think they have learned. Psychology and education scholars have favored performance methods because of their reliance on the experimental method, whereas communications scholars have relied more heavily on self-report methods.

Communication scholars have focused on how teacher communication behavior influences student learning, and have sought to make generalizations about teacher behavior across disciplines and age groups (→ Teacher Communication Style). In order to make generalizations, students' perceptions of their own learning have frequently been used. The use of self-reported learning is based on the assumption that adult students are aware of their learning and can self-report the general quantity they have learned from a class. The *measurement of learning* by self-report measures has been a contentious issue in the communication discipline, particularly the measurement of cognitive learning. However, at this point, the desire to generalize findings has overridden concerns about the self-report method. The two most commonly used self-report measures of cognitive learning are the cognitive learning measure (McCroskey et al. 1985) and the learning indicators scale (Frymier & Houser 1999). The McCroskey et al. measure consists of two questions. The first asks students to estimate how much they have learned on a scale from 0 to 9, and the second asks them to estimate how much they could have learned with an ideal teacher on the same scale. The answer to the first question is subtracted from that to the second to address students' lack of confidence in their ability to learn the content. The learning indicators scale consists of seven questions that ask how frequently students engage in behaviors believed to be a part of learning, such as relating content to other courses.

The *measurement of affective learning* also utilizes a self-report methodology. The construct of affective learning has been embraced in communication, and students' self-reported attitudes toward the content and the teacher have been the most common way

of measuring learning in communication. Affective learning was first measured in the late 1970s. In 1998, Mottet and Richmond examined both the conceptualization of affective learning and its measurement, and expanded the measurement of affective learning from six to eight constructs. Their instrument contains six constructs that measure affect toward the content and course and two that measure affect toward the teacher. The measurement of affective learning has been considered a reliable and valid measure and has been used in numerous studies.

## THE IMPACT OF COMMUNICATION ON LEARNING

A great deal of instructional communication research has focused on how teacher communication behavior impacts student learning. Learning is the most commonly used outcome variable in instructional communication research. However, other student outcomes, such as motivation and satisfaction, have also been studied. Because of the interest in generalizing across disciplines, instructional communication scholars have focused on general teacher communication behaviors rather than on discipline-specific teaching strategies. Six teacher communication behaviors (immediacy, affinity seeking, power, clarity, relevance, and humor) and one student characteristic (communication apprehension) have received significant research attention and are associated with student learning, particularly affective learning.

### Teacher Variables

Teacher *immediacy* has received the most research attention and has consistently been related to positive student outcomes (→ Teacher Immediacy). Immediacy is defined as a perception of physical and/or psychological closeness between people (Richmond et al. 1987). Jan Andersen (1979), the first communication scholar to examine teacher immediacy, found teacher use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors to be associated with affective (but not cognitive) learning, and this finding has been replicated consistently over time. The correlation between nonverbal immediacy and affective learning has typically been moderate to moderately large, indicating a consistent and substantial relationship between nonverbal immediacy and affective learning. The relationship between immediacy and cognitive learning has been less certain. Immediacy has consistently been positively related to self-reported cognitive learning, and has also been associated with a higher rate of recall in a handful of experimental studies, negating Andersen's (1979) finding to the contrary. Immediacy appears to impact primarily students' attitudes and motivation, which, in turn, has some impact on cognitive learning. For a thorough review of the construct of teacher immediacy, see Richmond et al. (2006).

A second teacher variable, *affinity seeking*, was first discussed by McCroskey and Wheelless (1976), who defined it as a positive attitude toward another person. Later, Bell and Daly (1984) expanded and refined the construct of affinity seeking and identified 25 affinity-seeking strategies. The affinity-seeking typology was applied to the education setting, both to see if teachers used affinity seeking in the classroom and to examine the impact of affinity seeking on student learning and motivation (→ Teacher Affinity Seeking). Although the body of research is not large, multiple studies have concluded that

both K-12 and college teachers use affinity seeking to gain student liking, and that some affinity-seeking strategies are associated with student affect and motivation. Although conclusions vary somewhat on which strategies are the most appropriate and effective in the classroom, some – facilitate enjoyment, optimism, assume equality, conversational rule-keeping, comfortable self, dynamism, elicit other's disclosure, altruism, listening, and sensitivity – have consistently been identified as useful for teachers. For a more thorough review of affinity seeking in the instructional context, see Frymier and Wanzer (2006).

How teachers go about influencing students to do specific tasks is referred to as *compliance gaining* in general, which is a concept that is rooted in the construct of power (→ Classroom Power). McCroskey and Richmond (1983) were the first to examine teachers' use of power in the classroom. Subsequent research has found that students' perceptions of teacher use of referent and expert power are positively associated, while those of teacher use of coercive and legitimate power are negatively associated, with affective learning. How teachers enact power in the classroom was examined by Kearney et al. (1985), who identified 22 compliance-gaining strategies used by teachers, which they refer to as behavioral alteration techniques (BATs; → Classroom Management Techniques). Most of the BATs can be classified as enacting one of the five power bases (reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert). Consistent with the research on power, the BATs based in referent, expert, and reward power are associated with affective learning, and those based in coercive and legitimate power are negatively associated with affective learning. Plax et al. (1986) replicated these relationships and found that nonverbal immediacy moderated the effect of BAT use on students' affective learning. For a more thorough review of power and learning, see Roach et al. (2006) and Richmond & McCroskey (1992).

Immediacy, affinity seeking, and power are primarily relationship variables that influence the teacher–student relationship. How a teacher presents content and structures messages also influence student learning (→ Pedagogy, Communication in). One such variable is clarity (→ Teacher Clarity). Clarity refers to teacher behaviors that contribute to the fidelity of instructional messages (Chesebro & Wanzer 2006). When teachers are clear they do things such as use examples, stress important points, and use organizational cues to facilitate student note taking. Clarity can also include having a clear syllabus, clear assignments, checking for understanding, repeating important points, and using nonverbal behaviors to facilitate student understanding. Clarity has been operationalized in numerous ways, making it difficult to draw specific conclusions about its impact on learning. However, clarity, in its many operationalizations, has been consistently associated with positive outcomes for students and has been linked to both cognitive and affective learning.

Another aspect of how a teacher presents content is how *relevant the message* is to students. When students perceive the instructor's message as relevant, they see the content as satisfying personal needs, personal goals, and/or career goals (Keller 1983). There has been a limited amount of research on relevance as a communication phenomenon. Relevance strategies have been associated with on-task behavior, and perceived relevance has been associated with self-reported learning (affective and cognitive). However, research on relevance in communication has been stymied by difficulties in manipulating relevance. The existing research indicates that when students perceive a teacher's message as relevant

to their interests or needs, their learning is enhanced. However, the specific behaviors that lead students to perceive a teacher's message as relevant are not well understood. For a thorough review of the research on relevance, see Chesebro and Wanzer (2006).

*Humor* is a communication variable that teachers can use to enhance their relationship with students, as well as being a strategy for presenting content (→ Teacher Use of Humor). Humor has been studied extensively both in and out of the classroom. The first way in which humor has been studied is in experimental designs where humorous messages are manipulated. A problem with this approach is that there are so many different forms of humor and only one or two of them can be used in any one experiment, making generalizations difficult. A second method has focused on describing what types of humor messages are used by teachers. This line of research has been useful in describing how humor is used, and has provided an understanding of the vast array of humor messages used by teachers. A third method has been to focus on humor as a personality characteristic, or more specifically, humor orientation. Humor orientation refers to a predisposition to use humor in a variety of situations (Booth-Butterfield & Booth-Butterfield 1991).

The results of these different approaches have revealed that the use of humor is associated with learning, that teachers use a variety of humorous messages (some of which are inappropriate), and that students report learning more from teachers who are perceived as humor oriented. Research has just begun to compare the impact of a humorous message in relation to how the humor is delivered by a teacher. Humor is one of the more complex communication variables studied in the classroom because of the number of forms a humorous message can take, the role of delivery by the teacher, and individual student differences in perceiving the humorous message. At this point, research indicates that humor, when used appropriately, is a useful teaching tool. However, it should be used to enhance other teaching strategies such as immediacy, clarity, and pro-social use of power, and not as a standalone technique. For a thorough review of humor in relation to learning, see Chesebro and Wanzer (2006).

### **Communication Apprehension**

Although teachers have a major impact on the classroom environment and on how students behave in the classroom, students also impact the learning environment. How students impact the classroom and their own learning has received little attention, with the exception of the → communication apprehension (CA) construct. CA is the fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication (McCroskey 1978). CA has consistently been negatively associated with student learning and other student outcomes (→ Communication Apprehension). Highly apprehensive students learn less, receive lower grades, and have lower ACT scores. Many teachers in the United States expect students to interact in the classroom, and they base grades and other evaluations on students' oral communication in class. While there are treatment options available to students with high levels of CA, skills training alone (e.g., requiring students to take communication-intensive courses) is not an effective treatment (→ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques; Reticence). For a thorough review of the impact of CA on students, see McCroskey & Richmond (2006).

Beginning in the 1970s, communication scholars have examined the role of several communication variables in learning environments. This research has been based on the premise that teaching is communicating and to be an effective teacher, one must be an effective communicator. Scholars in this area have purposely avoided studying the presentation of specific content. Rather they have focused on identifying effective communication behaviors that go across disciplines. Verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors that communicate approach, liking, caring, and interest in students have consistently been found to be positively associated with affective learning and motivation, and to a lesser degree, cognitive learning.

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Management Techniques ► Classroom Power ► Communication Apprehension ► Communication Apprehension ► Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ► Pedagogy, Communication in ► Reticence ► Teacher Affinity Seeking ► Teacher Clarity ► Teacher Communication Style ► Teacher Immediacy ► Teacher Use of Humor

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## Learning Organizations

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A learning organization is most simply described as an organization in which learning has become a part of the → organizational culture. As Lehr and Rice (2002, 1062) state, “organizational learning is most often treated as an extended process through which organizations grow, change, adapt, and improve to remain viable.” Interest in learning organizations can be tracked to the early interests in → organizational change processes, organizational culture, and organizational improvement.

The goals of learning organizations include maximizing the organization’s potential, adaptability to turbulent environments, and flexibility for change, increasing knowledge sharing among employees (→ Knowledge Management), and creating strong organizational cultures. Learning organizations are contrasted with stagnant, unyielding, and overly bureaucratic organizations. The organizational learning literature is significant and growing (see Daft & Huber 1987; Weick & Ashford 2001).

Learning goes beyond information sharing to include understanding and “know-how” (Yanow 2004), involves application, is situated (Raz & Fadlon 2005), and involves various levels and types. For example, Argyris and Schön (1978) differentiate between simple problem–solution thinking (single-loop learning) and a more reflexive learning where the underlying assumptions, thinking, and even organizational processes come into question (double-loop learning).

## ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

Some theorists emphasize that communication is an important instrument of learning. The role of communication is to share information by making it explicit (Lehr & Rice 2002), as a mechanism to build trust (Barker & Camarata 1998), and to provide a means to overcome barriers to organizational learning. Weick and Ashford (2001), for example, treat clear communication as critical for message differentiation, as in the case of a pilot asking for “takeoff power” (an increase in power) who is heard by the engineer as asking to “take off power” (a decrease in power), resulting in a crash. Communication is the way information and “learnings” are moved around the organization. Communication is examined from a linguistic perspective as a resource for examining mistakes to enhance future learning (Jones & Stubbe 2004). While the instrumental perspective provides insights into organizational learning and offers communication as a mechanism to increase organizational learning, this view risks restricting communication to a role as only the conduit of information and a variable reflected in word choice.

Another view grounds organizational learning as a socially constituted, communicative *process* rather than merely an instrument of learning, critiquing the instrumental view as “divert[ing] focus from relational development, community-building and cultivation of dialogic processes in favor of a more traditional emphasis on organizational knowledge products” (Bokeno & Gantt 2000, 240). The creation of open dialogue and empowerment that defines the organizations in terms of relationships characterizes the desired culture of learning organizations (→ Dialogic Perspectives). A learning organization looks to build relationships throughout the organization so that knowledge from workers on the front lines and outside the organization can be incorporated into decision-making (Yanow 2004). Styhre et al. (2006, 84) examine learning as “embedded in verbal and symbolic interaction.” The process view focuses on organizational learning as a result of communicative interactions and relationships such as storytelling, mentoring, and communities of practice.

Organizational learning from an *interactive perspective* focuses on the development of open relationships. One mechanism is dialogic mentoring, which meets the goal of learning organizations by letting the learners learn through relationships that enhance the processes of framing, support, modeling, argument, experimentation, and innovation (Bokeno & Gantt 2000). Dialogic mentoring emphasizes openness, welcoming, contradiction, and tension as healthy processes that energize learning. This relationship is primarily dyadic, with one mentor and one protégé. Mentoring can be productive, but is limited to organizations where those relationships can be developed.

*Communities of practice* offer another communicative approach that incorporates assumptions about empowerment, openness, and creating an organizational environment that cultivates learning in the organization (→ Communities of Practice), but shifts the focus from the dyadic to the group level of → interaction. Within communication literature, communities of practice are considered mechanisms of organizational learning that are primarily communicative. Zorn and Taylor (2004) indicate that communities of practice serve as models for the way organizational knowledge is communicated in the organization. Iverson and McPhee (2002) note three elements of a community of practice that exemplify an active process of learning. First, members must share a repertoire or set

of skills that are continually learned, rehearsed, and adjusted through the process of practice. Second, the members mutually engage with one another by communicating about their practices and by practicing together. Third, the members negotiate their joint enterprise through empowered interaction. Participation in decision-making about the nature of the practice is what allows the learning to become an organizational process. The negotiation of a joint enterprise encapsulates the ability to learn, give new directions, and even engage in double-loop learning that gives the reflexivity of organizational learning.

Learning organizations (including communities of practice) cannot be managed by command and control, but instead need to be cultivated by valuing their learning, providing resources and time for learning to occur, and encouraging participation. Learning organizations can be cultivated through communication practices of celebration by recognizing accomplishments, articulation through storytelling and putting knowledge into words, and collaboration by creating a collective, cooperative environment. Celebration, articulation, and collaboration provide conditions that nurture the learning culture through communication processes.

Organizational learning has been *explored* through measurement instruments as well as relational mechanisms to enact organizational learning. The *Organizational Learning Profile* is one representative instrument that considers the factors of information-sharing patterns, inquiry climate, learning practices, and an achievement mindset (Pace 2002). Information sharing examines the amount of information and the means of sharing, while inquiry climate focuses on the challenging, questioning, and experimenting behaviors that attempt to make improvements in the organization. The achievement mindset is “the perspective that organization members have regarding their desire to achieve in the organization” (Pace, 2002, 460).

## CRITICISM

Organizational learning can include so many different activities, processes, and goals that the construct can become *devoid of meaning*. Thus a learning organization becomes more of a stated goal than an achieved state.

Another criticism emerges from the tendency to treat learning as an *unquestioned good*, ignoring the risks of enacting large organizational learning schemes. Critics focus on the ideology of learning that serves management and its potential for abuse. Organizational learning asks for more effort and output from members, often with few extra rewards. Engaging in learning communities can lead to participatory surveillance (Driver 2002; → Control and Authority in Organizations), when a team pressures fellow employees. Thus, it is important to accept the limits of organizational learning and minimize the negative outcomes of transforming to a learning organization through transparency and reflection.

Overall, organizational learning emphasizes the need for organizations to cope with changing environments and new technologies, and to find ways to improve performance. Organizational learning either focuses on communication as an instrument of learning or recognizes that learning happens through communicative interactions and relationships. Research in communication has focused on measuring learning, creating learning systems,



and building relationships through mentoring and groups such as communities of practice. Whether organizational learning is genuine reform or creates new forms of managerial control depends on the context and enactment of these programs.

SEE ALSO: ► Communities of Practice ► Control and Authority in Organizations ► Dialogic Perspectives ► Interaction ► Knowledge Management ► Organizational Change Processes ► Organizational Culture ► Organizational Identification ► Organizational Structure ► Participative Processes in Organizations

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# Legitimacy Gap Theory

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Sethi (1975) defined a “legitimacy gap” as an expectancy gap indicating a discrepancy between an organization’s actions and society’s expectations of this organization. Legitimacy gaps can threaten an organization’s image and reputation, and ultimately its existence as a legitimate member of the business community and society (Bridges 2004; → Corporate Reputation; Organizational Image). Hence, legitimacy theory asserts that organizations avoid conflicts and ensure that they operate within the boundaries and norms of their respective societies, so their activities are perceived as legitimate (Sethi 1977). While legitimacy has been frequently studied in sociology, organizational studies, and political science, Heath (2001) asserts that legitimacy gap theory will play a more important role in → organizational communication due to an increased focus on dialogue and relationship management between organizations and their stakeholders (→ Stakeholder Theory).

Legitimacy gap theory is tied to the broader concept of → issue management and social contract theory, which posits that organizations are bound by social contracts to conduct socially desired actions in return for approval of their objectives and other rewards. Most notably, legitimacy gap theory is closely related to the concept of → *corporate social responsibility*. Society’s expectations of an organization can address various issues and practices, such as an organization’s recruiting and employment policies, environmental impact, marketing and communication ethics, and accounting practices. Such expectations are grounded in social norms and values that are changing over time (Heath 1997). Organizations that are not able to honor these norms and values and adapt to new expectations from society at large or from specific stakeholder groups are at risk of losing their “license to operate” (→ Trust of Publics).

Recent prominent examples exemplifying this risk include the case of Shell, which wanted to dump its oil platform *Brent Spar* into the Atlantic (1995); the bankruptcy case of Enron – one of the world’s leading electricity, natural gas, pulp and paper, and communications companies – due to accounting fraud (2001); and the financial fraud scandal and bankruptcy of Europe’s biggest dairy and food company, Parmalat (2003).

Since the late 1960s, a growing amount of research addressed the ethical and philanthropic responsibilities of organizations, as companies should no longer just satisfy the needs of their shareholders, but should consider the social needs of other stakeholders (Carroll 1991). By proposing activities that facilitate awareness of potential legitimacy gaps, legitimacy gap theory has contributed to proactive research that seeks to analyze the organization’s perception by its stakeholders in order to prevent organizational crises (→ Crisis Communication). Several researchers emphasize that increased social performance can improve employee morale and community trust; and ultimately can have positive effects on the financial performance of organizations (Margolis & Walsh 2001).

Organizations can apply → strategic communication in order to establish, maintain, extend, or defend their legitimacy and reputation. Such *strategies include*: (1) continuous

and consistent reports about the organization's environmental, ethical, and social performance; (2) information from stakeholders about behavioral changes in attempts to adapt to changing social norms; (3) engagement in social causes that affect stakeholder perceptions positively (e.g., cause-related marketing and sponsorship of social causes); (4) engagement in dialogue about expectations and creation of alliances with stakeholder institutions and organizations that possess a strong positive reputation (e.g., NGOs); (5) alteration of existing social definitions of legitimacy without changing behavior; (6) modification of external expectations to concur with current organizational practices; and (7) application of rhetorical response strategies in legitimacy crises. From a communication ethics perspective, all of these strategies can be applied with the intention of either creating more transparency and legitimacy or manipulating stakeholder expectations toward a perception of the legitimacy of an organization.

As social expectations toward the legitimacy of organizations have constantly been increasing over recent decades, it can be expected that legitimacy gap theory will be developed further in the future. Such future development might well receive further inspiration from other disciplines, such as from gap analysis between intended and actual corporate images in corporate branding research or from research on social and environmental accounting.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Issue Management ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Trust of Publics

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# Lerner, Daniel

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Daniel Lerner (1917–1980) was the author of *The passing of traditional society: Modernizing the Middle East* (1958), a study of Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey that provided the first comprehensive statement of the role of mass communication in the process of modernization for postcolonial countries (→ Egypt: Media System; Iran: Media System; Postcolonial Theory). The general theory posited a model of societal transformation for poor countries made possible by embracing western manufacturing technology, political structures, values, and systems of mass communication. In Lerner's model, increasing urbanization led to the growth of mass media (as people demanded news and information) and literacy (as more and more schools were built), which in turn resulted in greater public participation in economic activity and politics. Lerner maintained that mass communication was the key factor in helping traditional societies to become modern (→ Media Effects; Modernization). Lerner theorized that radio, television, magazines, and newspapers were important catalysts of the modernization process (→ Development Communication; Development Communication: Middle East; Radio for Development; Television for Development). The mass media provided information about the modern west and vicarious experiences of modern lifestyles to audiences in the postcolonial world. Audience members with highly empathic personalities – those who could easily imagine themselves in different circumstances – would begin to think and behave in ways that helped transform their countries from traditional societies to modern ones modeled primarily on the United States. Empathy, a key psychosocial factor in the modernization, is perhaps Lerner's key contribution to the area of development communication (→ Empathy Theory).

Lerner was born in Brooklyn, New York, on October 30, 1917. After earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees from New York University, Lerner was inducted into the army. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in November and took additional training in civil affairs and signal intelligence before shipping out to France where he worked with the French Forces of the Interior (FFI). Lerner was wounded in August 1942 and, after a period of recuperation, was transferred to the Psychological Warfare Division (PWD) in Paris. At PWD, he edited the daily compilation of intelligence field reports, working closely with Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz, leading American sociologists. Lerner's supervisor was Murray Gurfein, a lawyer who was to become well known as the judge who issued the injunction to prevent publication of a US government study of how the country became involved in the Vietnam war ("Pentagon Papers", 1971). Lerner was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star by the US military and the Croix de Guerre by the French military for his work with the FFI.

After the war, Lerner took a position at Stanford University's Hoover War Library (later renamed the Hoover Institution) on a research project called Revolution and the Development of International Relations (RADIR). The project analyzed journalism

in a large number of countries to determine their orientations toward the United States, the USSR, and other key players in postwar international relations. RADIR was supervised by → Harold D. Lasswell, who became Lerner's lifelong friend and mentor.

While at Stanford, Lerner completed a dissertation at New York University on the effects of Allied propaganda on the German people. He discovered that Allied propaganda had been most effective among a certain group of Germans, using a modified version of a categorization scheme developed in part by his former PWD colleague Shils to divide the German targets of propaganda into three types: the "hard-core Nazis," who were impervious to Allied propaganda; the "anti-Nazis," who were already converted to the Allied viewpoint; and the "nonpoliticals," who were ambivalent about the Allied perspective. He concluded that the best use of Allied propaganda had been to target the ambivalent group because they were the hearts and minds most likely to be won over (→ Propaganda in World War II; War Propaganda).

Lerner gained his doctorate in American civilization and social science in 1948. While in New York for his dissertation defense, Lerner met with → Paul F. Lazarsfeld at Columbia University to ask about recruiting scholars for the RADIR projects at Stanford. Lazarsfeld subsequently invited Lerner to Columbia's sociology department as a visiting professor in January 1951. During that semester, Lerner worked on a research project at Lazarsfeld's Bureau of Applied Social Research (BASR), examining the effectiveness of → Voice of America (VOA) broadcasts in several Middle East countries. In a report he wrote about Turkey, he divided the Turkish listeners into three categories, much as he had done in his dissertation on German targets of Allied propaganda: the "modern," who were already more or less pro-western; the "traditional," whose personalities were constricted by backwardness and a narrow range of experiences; and the "transitional," an ambivalent group who exhibited some traditional and some modern orientations. The ideal policy for VOA, Lerner concluded, would be to target the transitional group, for they were most ripe for conversion to western views. In his report Lerner also briefly introduced the idea of projection, the notion that mass media content could help certain listeners project themselves into unfamiliar roles and surroundings (Lerner et al. 1951, 20). This relationship was later elaborated more fully in *The passing of traditional society* as the concept of empathy.

In 1958, the year *The passing of traditional society* was published, Lerner was named the Ford Professor of International Communication at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He wrote prolifically about propaganda and war, social science methods, and communication and development (Lerner 1963; Lerner & Schramm 1967). Lerner retired from MIT in 1977 at the age of 59. In 1978, he and his wife Jean moved to Santa Cruz, California, where he was an adjunct professor of sociology at University of California, Santa Cruz. Lerner died of bone cancer on May 1, 1980.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication: Middle East ▶ Egypt: Media System ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Iran: Media System ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Modernization ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Television for Development ▶ Voice of America ▶ War Propaganda

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## **Libel and Slander**

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The law of defamation targets false communication, whether by words, pictures, gestures, or music, that causes one's reputation to be harmed among a respectable segment of society. The law, especially in Euro-American nations, traditionally distinguished between libel (written) and slander (spoken). Recovery for slander generally required proof of special damages, or monetary loss, because the mere spoken word was thought to carry less potential for harm than the written word.

In many jurisdictions, including the United States, the distinction between libel and slander has been blurred and no longer holds great importance. In jurisdictions that maintain the distinction between libel and slander, however, an important and unresolved question is whether defamatory → Internet communications constitute libel or slander.

The law of defamation in a society reflects, to a great extent, assumptions about the relative value of reputation versus freedom of expression (→ Freedom of Communication). For example, the US Supreme Court in *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* takes a constitutional “actual malice” approach to protecting unknowing false and defamatory statements about public officials and public figures. Few nations follow the uniquely media-friendly approach of American libel law, but contemporary defamation laws around the world tend to protect freedom of expression more so than in the past.

Sanctions for libel and slander date to the *earliest recorded history*. For most contemporary common-law and civil-law systems, the roots of libel and slander may be traced to the Roman Empire. Roman law greatly influenced development of early European civil law systems. By about the twelfth century, Spanish municipal codes began to prohibit verbal insults, listing prohibited words.

Roman law likewise influenced development of common-law libel and slander. During the reign of Henry III (1216–1272) in England, libel was defined as “the use of abusive language addressed to a man publicly or the act of inciting a crowd to beset a man's house or to mob the man himself.” In the sixteenth century, the infamous Star Chamber of England determined to stamp out dueling by vigorously prosecuting the sending of challenges. The Star Chamber propagated both civil and criminal punishments for defamation.

## **CRIMINAL AND CIVIL SANCTIONS FOR DEFAMATION**

Under the Star Chamber, civil actions for defamation replaced physical confrontation. Meanwhile, the Star Chamber also punished defamation as a crime in order to prevent sedition. Under this criminal defamation law, truth was no defense. In fact, true statements were more likely than false ones to provoke breach of the peace.

Criminal libel fell into disuse in America in the twentieth century as most state legislatures and judges viewed the proper sanction for defamation to be monetary damages rather than incarceration. But criminal libel remains on the books in more than a dozen US states even into the twenty-first century. Significantly, however, Mexico decriminalized libel to protect freedom of the press in 2007.

A 1990 *global survey* concluded that more than 100 nations punished, as a crime, the “insult” of government and government officials. Insult laws differ from criminal libel laws in that insult laws do not require the information to be false and instead focus on protecting “honor and dignity” even in the face of true but reputationally harmful statements.

## **DEFAMATION IN DIVERSE JUDICIAL SYSTEMS**

### **Basic Elements of Defamation and Defenses under US Approach**

In US law, a plaintiff must prove that the statement in question was (1) false, (2) likely to cause reputational harm among right-thinking members of society, (3) factual in nature rather than mere opinion or incapable of objective verification, (4) made “of and concerning” the plaintiff, (5) communicated to a third party, and (6) made with the requisite degree of fault (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America). The United States, like many nations, allows not only individuals but also corporations to sue for libel; remedies may be available for product disparagement.

After US Supreme Court holdings in *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* and subsequent cases, the First Amendment to the US Constitution prohibits liability for statements about public officials or public figures unless the plaintiff can prove “actual malice,” defined as knowledge of falsity or reckless disregard for the truth. Liability may be imposed for statements about private individuals with a showing of mere negligence, but the First Amendment prohibits strict liability.

Media defendants may invoke several common-law privileges. The fair report privilege prevents liability for fair and accurate descriptions of judicial, executive, and legislative proceedings, even if the original statements made in those settings turn out to be false. Opinion, or fair comment, is also privileged as long as statements are purely opinion and not factual in nature.

### **“Responsible Journalism” as a Libel Defense in England**

At English common law, certain statements – accusing someone of lying, committing a crime, or having a loathsome disease – were libelous *per se*, meaning they were not capable of innocent meaning and required no additional information for defamatory meaning to be evident (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe). Libel *per quod*, on

the other hand, required extrinsic evidence: stating that a woman is pregnant would not harm her reputation unless additional information (that she is married but her husband has been out of the country for 10 months, for example) is known. Practically speaking, contemporary sanctions do not differ for libel *per se* and libel *per quod*.

With respect to falsity, English common law required only substantial truth, meaning minor inconsistencies were excused. The substantial truth doctrine is preserved today in the United States, but England and most nations other than the United States place the burden of proving truth on the communicator. A 2006 international libel and privacy handbook documented that truth is an absolute or qualified defense in 15 of 19 nations surveyed.

In 1999 the British House of Lords, in *Reynolds v. Times Newspapers Limited*, established “responsible journalism” criteria to measure whether media are entitled to a qualified privilege to report potentially defamatory information. The criteria include seriousness of the allegation, extent to which the matter is of public concern, source of information, steps taken to verify information, and presence of claimant comment, among others. English media defendants still must overcome the presumption of falsity and damage.

In the 2006 case *Jameel v. Wall Street Journal Europe*, the House of Lords wrote in *Sullivan*-like language that a newspaper’s story about US monitoring of a Saudi businessman’s bank accounts was not defamation because the matter was one of public interest, the defamation was justified, and reporting methods were responsible. *Jameel* strongly endorsed application of the *Reynolds* criteria to protect responsible → investigative reporting on matters of public concern notwithstanding reputational harm and falsity.

### **Communist China: Socialist Approach to Libel Law?**

While guaranteeing freedom of expression as a right, the Chinese Constitution of 1982 explicitly protects a right of personal dignity that includes liberty from insult and false incrimination (→ Communication Law and Policy: Asia). In China, where the media are part of the state power in a communist society, libel is a tort of strict liability (→ China: Media System). The law punishes as defamation not only false statements of fact but also malicious tarnishing of another’s image and insulting of another’s reputation. Significantly, however, no injury to reputation is presumed.

Chinese law does not require that an individual be identified by name or image in order to sue for libel. Accounts cloaked as fiction but based on reality are potentially defamatory if a specific person is readily identifiable by acquaintances. Group libel and libel of the deceased are recognized.

As in the common law countries, the fair report privilege, and fair comment have been accepted as libel defenses. But prominent individuals are not held to a higher standard in proving fault, and expression on matters of public interest are not afforded a greater degree of protection. Defamation is present if the communicator acted with negligence, in that he or she failed to live up to the standard of care that would have been expected from one in his or her position.

The one-party China strictly forbids seditious libel, as the 2002 Regulation on the Administration of Press and Publication states. Further, the media are required to follow



directives from the Chinese Communist Party on what should not be published, including criticism of the Party.

### **Japan: Confucianism in Libel Law**

As compared with the Anglo-American concept of reputation as a right of individuals, Japanese look at their reputational interests in relation to the groups to which they belong. Thus, Japanese view defamation as a loss of face to their familial group on the basis of Confucian tradition.

The present Japanese Constitution was modeled after the US Constitution. It guarantees freedom of expression, but that freedom can be qualified under the “public welfare” justification for its restriction. Truth is no defense to criminal defamation unless it relates to the public interest. The Civil Code makes defamation an unlawful act, i.e., tort. It provides for pecuniary compensation and other “suitable measures,” such as public apology and injunction. The US “actual malice” doctrine has not been accepted in Japan.

Compared with the United States and other western liberal democracies, libel litigation in Japan is relatively rare, although it has become an increasing concern to news media in recent years. One explanation for the relatively small number of libel cases in Japan is socio-cultural: many Japanese still feel they should not trouble the media, a powerful institution in society, with claims for reputational injury. Interestingly, criminal libel is often preferred to civil libel because criminal libel prosecution is less costly and more prompt.

### **International Law on the Sullivan Libel Rule**

International human rights tribunals, including the → European Court of Human Rights, long resisted the adoption of a *Sullivan* “actual malice” rule. But in the 1986 case *Lingens v. Austria*, the European Court found that the criminal libel conviction of an Austrian journalist for criticizing a government official was in violation of the free-expression provision of the European Convention on Human Rights. In 2004 the → Inter-American Court of Human Rights, based in Costa Rica, reached similar conclusions in two cases of criminal libel convictions. The Court applied the American Convention on Human Rights; although the Court stopped short of adopting the *Sullivan* “actual malice” standard, it applied a test that produced a similar result.

### **TECHNOLOGY’S EFFECT ON LIBEL AND SLANDER**

Contemporary problems of libel and slander include jurisdictional and other issues brought on by Internet communication. In the landmark 2002 case *Dow Jones and Co. v. Gutnick*, the High Court of Australia held that an Australian could sue an American publisher in Australia for defamation, based on the publication of online statements. In other words, the defamation occurred at the place of reception and not only at the place of publication.

Another thorny problem has involved the effect of the Internet on the common-law rule that a republisher of libel or slander was just as culpable as the originator. The US Congress in 1996 adopted a provision protecting Internet service providers from liability

for libels propagated by users in electronic mail messages or on electronic bulletin boards. But few countries have gone that far in immunizing providers altogether.

SEE ALSO: ▶ China: Media System ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism ▶ News

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## **Licensing of Journalists**

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For the purposes of this entry, licensing of journalists is understood to mean a system whereby individuals are required to apply to an external authority for permission to practice journalism, which permission may be refused or revoked. Closely related to licensing are regimes whereby journalists are required to belong to a certain professional association, such as a journalists’ syndicate, and where such associations may refuse or revoke membership (→ Journalism; Journalism: Legal Situation).

In some countries, the law places certain *minimum conditions* on who may practice journalism, such as minimum age or training criteria, or citizenship requirements.

Formally, this is not licensing as it does not involve the possibility of permission to practice journalism being refused or revoked. However, where the conditions go beyond the purely technical, for example by removing the right to practice journalism upon conviction for criminal defamation, this system starts to reflect some of the key problems associated with licensing.

*Accreditation*, on the other hand, is quite different from licensing, although the two are sometimes confused. Accreditation involves the granting of special privileges, most commonly access to restricted areas such as legislatures and courts, to journalists on the basis that they will inform the wider public about these proceedings. Where accreditation is abused on political grounds, for example to deny access to critical or independent journalists, it can take on some of the negative features of licensing. The general question of whether it is legitimate to ban someone from the practice of journalism was addressed early on by the European Commission of Human Rights in the case of *De Becker v. Belgium* (January 8, 1960, Application No. 214/56). De Becker had been convicted of collaborating with the German authorities during World War II in his role as editor of a Belgian daily. His death sentence was commuted and he was released from prison, but a ban on him exercising certain rights, including working as a journalist, remained in effect for life. De Becker challenged this ban on the basis that it breached his right to freedom of expression (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The commission held that the ban on de Becker breached his right to freedom of expression because it was inflexible and permanent. Although the commission did not entirely rule out the possibility of a ban, the decision has to be understood in light of the extreme circumstances of the case, namely, that de Becker had committed treason while Belgium was at war and under enemy occupation. This suggests that prohibiting access to journalism through a mere licensing system could never be legitimate.

International standards support this view. The main issue in an advisory opinion of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Compulsory Membership in an Association Prescribed by Law for the Practice of Journalism* (November 13, 1985, Series A. No. 5), was whether or not compulsory membership in a statutory journalists' association was legitimate. Three arguments were advanced in support of the system. First, public order required such regulation of the profession, which was also "normal" for all professions. Second, membership would promote high professional and ethical standards, supporting the right of the public to receive full and truthful information. Third, compulsory membership would help protect the independence of journalists in relation to their employers. The court accepted that mandatory membership could contribute to public order, understood broadly to include the idea that journalists should "act in good faith and in accordance with the ethical demands of the profession." However, public order in this broad sense was dependent upon strict respect for freedom of expression, as the court noted: "Freedom of expression constitutes the primary and basic element of the public order of a democratic society . . . It is also in the interest of the democratic public order . . . that the right of each individual to express himself freely and that of society as a whole to receive information be scrupulously respected." The court concluded that restricting access to the journalistic profession did more harm than good to public order.

In rejecting the argument that all professions are subject to licensing regimes, the court distinguished between journalism and, for example, the practice of law or medicine. In

contrast to those of lawyers and doctors, the activities of journalists are specifically protected as a fundamental human right (→ Professionalization of Journalism). The court also rejected the argument that the system would promote professional standards and protect the public's right to be informed. It held, rather, that the public welfare is best served by promoting the "greatest possible amount of information" and that conditioning freedom of expression on the truthfulness or quality of information was open to abuse and "violates the right to information." The court also found that the goal of protecting media workers against their employers could be accomplished through less intrusive means than restricting access to the profession and, as a result, the licensing scheme could not be justified.

Some national courts have taken a similar point of view. For example, in August 1997, the High Court of Zambia held that any attempt to establish a statutory body to regulate journalists would breach the right to freedom of expression, regardless of the form it took (*Kasoma v. Attorney General*, August 22, 1997, 95/HP/29/59). The three special mandates for protecting freedom of expression – the UN special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, the OSCE representative on freedom of the media, and the OAS special rapporteur on freedom of expression – adopt a Joint Declaration each year setting out standards relating to important freedom of expression issues. In their Joint Declaration of December 18, 2003, they stated quite clearly: "Individual journalists should not be required to be licensed or to register."

SEE ALSO: ► Ethics in Journalism ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Inter-American Court of Human Rights ► Journalism ► Journalism: Legal Situation ► Journalists: Professional Associations ► Professionalization of Journalism

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## **Limited Capacity Model**

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The limited capacity model of motivated mediated message processing (LC4MP) is the most recent version of a data-driven model (→ Models of Communication) that tries to

explain how human beings process all types of mediated messages (A. Lang 2000, 2006a, 2006b; → Information Processing). This model differs from the vast majority of communication theories in a number of ways.

First, it is *not an effects theory*. That is to say that it makes no effort to examine the relationship between some specific type of content in a media message and a later behavioral action. Second, it is not a theory about a specific type of media content (violence, politics, sex, advertising, health). Instead, its goal is to *generalize to all types of content* and to completely describe the realm of possible contents through psychologically relevant independent variables such as emotion, difficulty, relevance, redundancy, narrative strength, etc. Third, this theory is not *limited to a specific medium* but is meant to be relevant to all currently existing media and those not yet invented. Again, this means that media are described not by their names (radio, TV, computer, video game) but instead by a set of psychologically relevant variables (channel of information presentation, range of structural features, luminance, content forms, movement, etc.). Finally, the theory is *data-driven*. This means that it is constantly evolving so as to remain compatible with the state of knowledge in related disciplines and in the field of communication.

The broad outline of the theory is simple. It involves five assumptions, three sub-processes, two systems, and automatic and controlled resource allocation mechanisms. Each aspect of the theory has at least one validated operational definition. The complexity lies not in the overarching framework of the theory but rather in the task of explicating the specifics of the theory in the myriad of contexts to which it applies.

### THE FIVE ASSUMPTIONS

The five assumptions of LC4MP arise primarily from theories of information processing and theories of emotional processing (→ Emotion). The *first assumption*, a primary tenet in most cognitive psychological theorizing, is that humans are limited capacity information processors. This means that human beings have a fixed pool of resources with which to process their environment. If the demands of the tasks in which they are engaged exceed this limit then some of those tasks will be done less well. This assumption gives rise to the fundamental concept of *cognitive overload*. Cognitive overload is defined as a state that arises whenever the demands of an information-processing task exceed one's available processing capacity.

The *second assumption*, from emotion research, is that people have two motivational systems that produce fundamental drives to approach positive stimuli and avoid negative ones. These two systems, the *appetitive* and the *aversive motivational systems*, function automatically and independently to protect and maintain the individual. Together these first two assumptions lead to a second central concept in LC4MP, embodied motivated → cognition. This concept maintains that the brain is not just riding around on top of the body telling it what to do, but instead is one of many organs in the interconnected biological system that makes up a human being and functions as a primary influence on the cognitive system.

The *third assumption* in this theory is that all functioning in the system occurs over time. Each part of the system responds within its own characteristic time frame to specific types of inputs. At any one point in time, the functioning of any one aspect of the system

is multiply determined by the state of the system in the moment preceding the point of interest, the current psychologically relevant characteristics of the environment, and the limits of the system.

The *fourth assumption* is that mediated messages are made up of continuous streams of variably redundant information being presented in one or many perceptual channels using a variety of symbol systems. Messages are not defined by industry descriptions related to technology, content, or genre. Instead, they must be defined in terms of psychologically meaningful variables (e.g., rate of change, movement, luminance, etc.).

*Fifth*, communication is the interaction between the motivated cognitive system, the context in which the interaction occurs, the psychologically relevant aspects of the medium that carries the message, and the psychologically relevant aspects of the content of the message.

Taken together, these assumptions lay the groundwork for a theory that tries to explain the dynamic interaction of the motivated cognitive system with the psychologically relevant aspects of the medium's structure and the message's content to determine how a message is attended to, encoded, stored, and subsequently retrieved.

## THE SUB-PROCESSES

As previously noted, LC4MP is a limited capacity information-processing model. Information processing is thought to involve both automatic and controlled processes. Processes are conceived of as requiring cognitive resources. Automatic processes occur without conscious awareness, require few cognitive resources, and cannot be stopped. Controlled processes require a fair number of cognitive resources and can be consciously initiated and terminated.

Processing a mediated message is theorized to involve at least three cognitive sub-processes: encoding, storage, and retrieval. The theory maintains that resources are allocated independently to the three sub-processes through both controlled and automatic mechanisms. Thus, in the absence of a voluntary intention by a media user to pay attention to or remember a specific type of content, automatic processes allocate resources to encoding, storage, and retrieval as a function of the psychologically relevant aspects of the media message. However, media users can, through controlled resource allocation, improve or inhibit how these automatic processes function by intentionally altering their message processing behavior.

The *encoding* sub-process involves creating a mental representation of the information in the message. This process is not thought to be veridical. Messages are not encoded either exactly or completely. This is because at any given point in time most messages contain more information than can be completely encoded. As a result, a continuous process of selection and encoding occurs. The selection process is guided by both automatic and controlled processes. Some elements of messages are selected because they engage automatic resource allocation mechanisms through the manipulation of psychologically relevant variables. LC4MP theorizes two primary routes to automatic resource allocation. First, elements of messages that create novelty by introducing new information to the message (e.g., cuts, edits, video graphics, sound effects, etc.) or are signals that viewers have learned indicate important content (e.g., slow motion, words,

etc.) elicit orienting responses, which are automatic attention mechanisms resulting in the allocation of cognitive resources to encoding the message. Second, emotional, or motivationally relevant, content also results in the automatic allocation of resources to encoding (→ Selective Attention).

The second sub-process, *storage*, is conceptualized as the process of connecting new information to already stored information. LC4MP does not subscribe to a specific memory theory or architecture; it conceptualizes memory within the general framework of associative network spreading activation models. When one is aware of stored information, its representation is thought to be active. Links are formed when two representations are concurrently active. Activation spreads automatically through the links from active to related inactive information. Stored information can be partially activated through spreading activation making that information more accessible. Within this framework, storage is conceived of as the process of creating links between incoming information and previously stored information. When more resources are allocated to storage, more and stronger links are forged between old and new information. The allocation of resources to the storage process is also influenced by automatic and controlled resource allocation mechanisms. Motivationally relevant information is thought to result in the automatic allocation of resources to storage. Viewers can also increase the allocation of resources to storage through controlled processes and cognitive effort (→ Memory; Memory, Message).

The third sub-process is *retrieval*. Retrieval plays two roles in this theory, first as online or real-time retrieval and second as delayed retrieval of the information presented in a mediated message. In either case, retrieval is the process of fully activating a stored representation. Online retrieval is the process of activating previously stored information in order to make sense of an incoming message. Much of this retrieval occurs automatically through the process of spreading activation. As the media message is perceived, it activates relevant representations already stored in memory, and previously stored information relevant to the topic is fully activated or retrieved. Second, there is the process of retrieving the information being presented in a message at a later date. It is thought that the better the information in the message is stored the more likely it is to be retrievable at a later point in time.

## THE SYSTEMS

The two underlying motivational systems, appetitive and aversive, are integrated into the current version of LC4MP based on the theoretical conceptualizations found in John Cacioppo's dual system theory (Cacioppo & Gardner 1999) and P. J. Lang's dimensional emotional theory (Lang et al. 1997). Each system is theorized to have its own activation function. These functions are characterized by two variables called the positivity offset and the negativity bias.

Positivity offset is the tendency of the appetitive motivational system to be more active in a neutral environment, and the negativity bias is the tendency of the aversive system to activate more quickly than the appetitive system in response to moderately arousing stimuli. LC4MP theorizes that activation in the appetitive motivational system results in increased allocation of resources to encoding and storage, while increased activation in

the aversive motivational system elicits an increase in resources allocated to storage, and an increase followed by a decrease (at very high levels of activation) in resources allocated to encoding. Thus, LC4MP predicts that at very high levels of activation, positive stimuli should be encoded and stored well, whereas negative stimuli are thought to be stored extremely well but encoded less well.

## MEASUREMENT

Each process in LC4MP has at least one validated operational definition. The three memory processes are measured using three different *memory protocols* – encoding is indexed through recognition measures (including latency, accuracy, and signal detection measures); storage is assessed using cued recall protocols; and retrieval is measured using free recall measures. Resource allocation is measured using secondary task reaction time methodology or by measuring heart rate. Heart rate can be analyzed beat by beat to measure orienting responses to a specific aspect of a message, or its long term deceleratory or acceleratory trend can be assessed to index cognitive effort. Appetitive activation is indexed by inhibition of the startle response, increased activation in the zygomatic and orbicularis oculi muscles, and facilitation of the post-auricular response, and through self-report ratings of positive emotional experience. Aversive activation is indexed by startle facilitation, increased activation in the corrugator muscle, and increased self-reported ratings of negative emotional experience. The level of activation in the motivational systems is indexed by skin conductance and self-reported level of experiential arousal.

The use of this theory and measures allows one to analyze media and media messages in terms of the structural and content features they contain that lead to increased or decreased levels of resources allocated to encoding and to storage. By measuring the level of information introduced over time within messages in conjunction with automatic calls for resources, it is possible to identify – over time – the points at which the system is overloaded (and therefore encoding and storing less information) and when it is functioning optimally. This theory also provides a framework on which to investigate the extent to which motivational activation alters the message processing functions and ultimately influences later actions, attitudes, and behaviors.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Comprehension ▶ Emotion ▶ Individual Differences and Information Processing ▶ Information Processing ▶ Listening ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Models of Communication ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

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# Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis

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Communication researchers often gather quantitative data – for example from surveys, content analyses, or experiments – and then generate mathematical models to represent or summarize those data (→ Survey; Content Analysis, Quantitative; Experimental Design). These models are used in two basic ways: first, to generate *predictions* about certain variables; and second, to study *relationships* among some number of variables (Allison 1999). In some cases, the goal is to obtain as accurate a prediction as possible, without much regard to the particular variables used to make the prediction. In most cases, at least in communication research, the focus is on the pattern of relationships among particular variables, and especially on *testing hypotheses* made in advance about how variables are expected to interrelate (→ Hypothesis; Statistics, Explanatory).

## MODELS

Models represent the relationship between a dependent or outcome variable and one or more independent or predictor variables, by stipulating the former as some mathematical function of the latter. Models contain parameters that express the function, usually a set of weights applied to independent variables.

The vast majority of the models used in communication research are *linear models*, which represent the functional relationship as a line (in two dimensions) or as a linear surface (in three or more dimensions). For example, a simple linear model explaining the number of times a child behaves aggressively (the dependent variable) by the hours of violent television watched (the independent variable) would be a line representing the predicted number of aggressive acts per each hour viewed (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

In some cases, we may find that a straight line or linear surface is inadequate to represent the functional relationship. For instance, the outcome could grow exponentially with increases in a predictor variable, or the outcome could at first grow with increases in

a predictor up to some point, but thereafter stop increasing, or begin to decline with further increases in a predictor variable. In such instances, *curvilinear* or *nonlinear models* would better represent the data.

While both are commonly termed “nonlinear,” curvilinear and nonlinear models are distinguished mathematically. *Curvilinear* models, like polynomial functions (for instance, where aggressive behavior is modeled as an additive function of both hours viewed and the *square* of hours viewed), predict outcomes falling on a curved line, but the predictions are still actually a simple linear function of the weights (or parameters) assigned to each variable. These sorts of curvilinear models are “nonlinear in the variables, but linear in the parameters.” *Nonlinear* models, on the other hand, posit more complex functional relationships stipulating that variable weights of other parameters themselves depend on the values of predictor variables. These models are “nonlinear in the parameters” (Cohen et al. 2003).

## MODEL ESTIMATION

A model, then, specifies a particular functional relationship (e.g., linear, curvilinear, or nonlinear) between a dependent variable and some set of independent variables. These models are then fit to empirical data using some *estimation method*, that is, a particular algorithm used to estimate model parameters or coefficients (such as the slope of a prediction line). Estimation methods typically define some mathematical quantity that is to be minimized, which is known as a *loss function*. For instance, one of the most commonly used estimation methods, known as ordinary least squares (OLS), fits a predictive model to a set of observed data by minimizing squared deviations of each observed data point from the points predicted by the model.

The same model can be fit to data using different estimation methods. Whatever method is used, the process usually involves calculating *standard errors*, which are estimates of the degree of random variation one would expect in coefficient estimates for samples of a given size (→ Sampling, Random). These standard errors are critical in hypothesis testing, because they offer an estimate of the chances that certain hypothesized relationships, as reflected in calculated model coefficients, may have been generated by random processes alone. Evaluating these chances is known generally as *significance testing*.

To make sound interpretations of model estimates, researchers must also assess how well the stipulated model fits the data. Appraisal of fit is often based on the proportion of variance in the dependent variable predicted by the model, or on comparison of the model’s prediction errors to those generated by some baseline, such as a random model (Lewis-Beck 1980).

## THE LINEAR REGRESSION MODEL

Multiple-variable linear regression, using OLS estimation methods, is one of the most popular ways of fitting a linear model to observed data (→ Regression Analysis). It allows researchers to estimate how much variation in a dependent variable is uniquely predicted (or “accounted for”) by one out of a set of independent variables. For example, we may be

interested in the effect of viewing violent television on aggressive behavior, but recognize the possible influence of other factors, such as gender or socio-economic status, on both the amount of viewing and aggressive behavior. In generating the slope estimate for aggression on hours of viewing, linear regression removes from consideration the portions of the variance in aggression that can be attributed to other variables in the model. The effects of numerous variables can thus be disentangled, and if comparisons are desired, then standardized slopes or coefficients, which put change in standard deviation metric, are used. Each has an associated standard error, which can be used to conduct statistical tests of differences between slopes for different variables.

### **Curvilinear Regression Models**

Standard regression results can be misleading if a straight-line relationship does not properly characterize the data. Consider, for instance, two variables perfectly related in a U-shaped pattern. Fitting a straight line might lead one to conclude, quite incorrectly, that no relationship exists.

Researchers can adapt the standard linear regression model to account for such curvilinear relationships. One approach involves using *dummy variables* (Allison 1999); that is, variables that categorize observations according to where they fall along the distribution of a given independent variable (e.g., low or high). If we think, for example, that with increasing amounts of exposure to children's TV programming, young viewers gain verbal knowledge, but that this relationship reverses and becomes negative once viewing time passes a particular threshold, we might include dummies that identify the appropriate viewing ranges and capture the change in slope that occurs relative to verbal scores.

Another common approach is to specify a curved functional form, and then to apply *transformations* of the variables (e.g., by taking their logs, reciprocals, squares, or cubes), such that the model remains linear in its parameters, although it is nonlinear in the variables (Berry 1993). Such transformations allow the use of OLS linear estimation with a few complications that can be mitigated. Sometimes researchers will fit a variety of functional forms and test for improvements in overall model fit (Kleinbaum et al. 1998).

### **THE GENERALIZED LINEAR MODEL**

Variable transformations are an important feature of the *generalized linear model* (GLM), a generalization of the standard linear regression model to cover many different contexts, including curvilinear models and some, but not all, nonlinear models. There are two components of the GLM: a *link function* transforming variables so that the dependent variable becomes a linear function of the independent variables; and an *error distribution* reflecting the assumed behavior of a model's prediction errors (Dunteman & Ho 2006). The standard linear regression model is just a special case of the GLM, in which the link function is the identity, since there is no transformation of the dependent variable, and in which errors are assumed to be normal. Other GLMs rely on different link functions and error distributions, enabling researchers to capture a wide variety of functions.

### Analysis of Variance Models

Another special case of the GLM, which also assumes the identity link and the normal error distribution, is the analysis of variance (ANOVA). Commonly employed with planned experiments, ANOVA models group differences (Keppel & Wickens 2004). ANOVA is estimated with OLS and is very closely related to standard linear regression, to the point that almost any ANOVA design can be analyzed in a linear regression model (Allison 1999). Still, many find it easier to apply ANOVA to certain data, particularly those gathered in randomized experimental trials (→ Experiment, Laboratory).

### NONLINEAR MODELS

Although many communication processes and effects can be well described using linear or curvilinear models, others are inherently nonlinear. For instance, research on the ways in which ideas diffuse or gather strength through communication over time strongly suggests that these processes are nonlinear (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). In some cases, the appropriate nonlinear model can be transformed and analyzed within the GLM by way of appropriate link functions and error distributions, but many others cannot.

Methods for estimating nonlinear models differ from those used in linear regression and ANOVA, where the loss function can be solved analytically. Nonlinear estimation instead requires iterative estimation methods. The process involves choosing “start values” for model coefficients, running these through a maximization (or minimization) function to improve the coefficients, and then running these back through the function again until stable estimates are realized. There are a number of such iterative methods, such as *nonlinear least squares* or *maximum likelihood* (ML), which estimates model parameters that maximize the probability of generating the observed data (Dunteman & Ho 2006).

### Logit, Probit, and Poisson Models

Several widely used nonlinear models can be reformulated within the GLM and estimated using ML or other iterative methods. A number of these predict categorical or binary variables; for example, whether or not a person is able to recognize a particular news story. In such cases, OLS linear regression is problematic, since neither a linear relationship nor a normal distribution of prediction errors can be safely assumed (Hosmer & Lemeshow 2000). These issues can be solved in the GLM by using a *logit* link function, which describes an S-shaped growth in the dependent variable over the range of a predictor, rising monotonically to an asymptote. The logit transforms this function into one that is linear in its parameters and can be analyzed using a binomial distribution to model prediction errors. Closely related to the logit model are the *logistic regression model*, which predicts continuous outcomes ranging between a lower and an upper limit, *multinomial* or *polytomous* logits for nominal dependent variables with more than two categories, and *ordered* logit models for ordinal data. *Probit* models are a slight variation, which may be appropriate when the outcome represents a continuous latent construct

rather than a true binary. For count data, such as the number of times a particular event occurs, researchers might use a *Poisson regression*.

### **Nonlinear Regression**

Most communication researchers rely on linear or curvilinear models estimated through standard linear regression, ANOVA, or nonlinear models such as logistic regression that can be handled within GLM. Additional nonlinear models, including many that cannot be transformed so that they are linear in the parameters, can also be stipulated and estimated using iterative, nonlinear optimization techniques specifying an appropriate loss function. David Fan's ideodynamic model (1985) is one such model. It predicts opinion change in a particular population as a dynamic, nonlinear function of the amount of media information available, the "decay rate" of that information, the proportion of people already on different sides of an issue, and other factors (→ Cumulative Media Effects).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Survey ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Linguistic Pragmatics**

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The origin of linguistic pragmatics as a discipline can be traced back to an article titled "How to make our ideas clear," written by Charles Sanders Peirce in 1878. In this essay,

the founder of semiotics, the science of signs, presented a general principle of inquiry, which was later identified by William James as the first formulation of “pragmatism.” Although Peirce did not use the term *per se* in his original piece, it is in this essay that he presented the thesis according to which the meaning of a concept or statement is to be found in all its possible *practical* bearings. Although this thesis had a tremendous influence on key philosophers such as William James or John Dewey, creating as a result the American philosophical movement called “pragmatism,” the influence that is of interest to us regarding its linguistic dimension is the one it exerted on Charles W. Morris (1901–1979).

### THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE

Morris proposed three ways of studying signs: syntactic studies, which analyze the relation between a sign and other signs; semantic studies, which investigate the relation between a sign and what it is supposed to refer to; and pragmatic studies, which examine the relation between a sign and its users/interpreters. While Morris’s reflection was devoted to the functioning of signs in general, Rudolf Carnap started to use this trichotomy to speak of the different manners of studying natural languages, pragmatics being for him a type of investigation focusing on language use in specific situations. The term “linguistic pragmatics” therefore refers to a sub-branch of linguistics that focuses on such usage. As it is often the case, there exist many different ways of defining linguistic pragmatics, but the most common way is to speak of it as “the study of language usage” (Levinson, 1983, 5). From this very broad definition, at least five phenomena tend to qualify as typical objects of linguistic pragmatics: speech acts, presuppositions, conversational implicatures, politeness, and indexical expressions.

Historically, it seems fair to say that pragmatics has not been a very hot topic in communication research *per se*. Communication scholars are, of course, often aware of Searle’s speech act theory, Grice’s cooperative principle, or Brown and Levinson’s politeness theory (see below), but the students typically interested in the detailed study of interaction tend to be more familiar with the research agendas put forward by ethnographers of communication, conversation analysts and ethnomethodologists. There are, however, some important exceptions, like the work of Mark Aakhus on the language–action perspective (LAP), Robert B. Arundale on conversational implicatures, Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson on argumentation (→ Argumentative Discourse), Robert E. Sanders on the sequential dimensions of interaction, and Robert T. Craig, Karen Tracy, and Frances Spisak on → politeness theory. Since most of these communication studies stem from speech act theory and the model of conversational implicatures, it is these two specific theories that will now be briefly introduced.

### SPEECH ACT THEORY

Although John Austin (1911–1960) never spoke about pragmatics *per se* in his posthumously published William James Lectures titled *How to do things with words*, his reflection on the action dimension of language is one of the pillars of pragmatics research. Austin started his lectures by deploring philosophers’ tendency to exclusively focus on

statements and other descriptive sentences, which prevented them from accounting for other uses of language. This led him to create a first opposition between what he called constative and performative utterances. A typical constative utterance would be “This painting is beautiful,” which consists of noticing or reporting a specific state of affairs, while a typical performative utterance would be, “I name this ship the *Queen Elizabeth*,” which consists of performing a specific action, i.e., naming a ship the *Queen Elizabeth*, if these words are pronounced in the right circumstances by the right person.

As his reflection progressed throughout his lectures, Austin started to express much discomfort with this opposition, especially when he realized that even constative utterances could be considered as having performative dimensions. For instance, he noticed that utterances like “This painting is beautiful” also consist of “doing things with words” (e.g., *asserting* something). This led him to approach all utterances in terms of performance and to identify three types of action: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. While a locutionary act simply consists of *saying something*, the illocutionary act is what is done *in* saying something. In saying, “This painting is beautiful,” A is asserting something about a painting. Depending upon the context, A could also be said to be performing other illocutionary acts simultaneously. For instance, if a friend is accompanying her in the museum and says, “I just don’t get it,” we could then say that in uttering “This painting is beautiful,” A is also retorting to or contradicting B. Finally, Austin proposes the notion of perlocutionary act to account for the consequences of a given illocutionary act. For instance, if, upon hearing A saying, “This painting is beautiful,” B starts to look more carefully at the Picasso, we could then say that A’s response *made B look* more carefully at the painting, which is the perlocutionary act.

Although Austin provided a very detailed classification of illocutionary acts, it is the one of his student John Searle that is the most renowned. Searle proposes a typology of five speech acts, which he calls assertives (i.e., holding something to be true, as in “This painting is beautiful”), commissives (i.e., committing oneself, as in “I will come”), directives (i.e., getting someone to do something, as in “Give me a hand!”; → Directives), expressives (i.e., expressing a psychological state vis-à-vis something previously performed, as in “I apologize for calling so late”), and declarations (i.e., transforming the world by making it conform to what is declared, as in “I hereby declare you husband and wife”). This classification, according to him, exhausts everything that can be done *in* saying something. Furthermore, Searle proposes a theory explaining the functioning of what he calls *indirect speech acts*, i.e., illocutionary acts by which one says more than what is literally said in the utterance produced. For instance, when A says to B “Do you know who is going to tomorrow’s meeting?” A might not only be literally asking B if he knows who is going to tomorrow’s meeting, but also asking him to tell her who is going to that meeting.

Interestingly enough, this theory can also elegantly explain how pre-sequences function (see Cooren 2005), i.e., sequences by which speakers prefigure another sequence for which they invite collaboration on the hearers’ part (Levinson 1983). For instance, “Do you know who is going to tomorrow’s meeting?” can be used not only to indirectly ask who is going to that meeting (indirect request), but also to literally check if the interlocutor indeed knows this piece of information. In this case, this question can then function either as a pre-announcement or a pre-request. This explains how the same utterance can end up accomplishing many different things depending on the situation.

## CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES

It is also through the William James Lectures that H. Paul Grice first introduced the topic of conversational implicatures, a key phenomenon in linguistic pragmatics. Although his lecture was given in 1967, it was not until 1975 that it was published as an essay titled *Logic and conversation*. In this essay, Grice put forward what he called the cooperative principle, which is phrased as follows: “Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.” There is a general presumption that when people interact with each other, they intend to abide by this principle. Thus, if the literal content of what an interlocutor says appears to deviate from this principle, there is then an inference that this person might mean something else; hence the idea of implicature.

Grice presented four specific maxims to specify the cooperative principle: *quantity* (“Make your contribution as informative as it is required”), *quality* (“Try to make your contribution one that is true”), *relation* (“Be relevant”), and *manner* (“Be perspicuous”). Each time an interactant appears to breach one of these maxims in communicating, this can be interpreted as implicating something else. For instance, if A says “That’s very clever!” to comment on a behavior that appears obviously stupid to the participants, it is then understood that A is willingly breaching the maxim of quality and is therefore implicating that this behavior is stupid. In other words, implicatures function because it is presupposed that people cooperate to convey meaning.

This model remains a great source of inspiration for many scholars, e.g., Brown and Levinson and their theory of politeness. For them, interactants are endowed with two properties – rationality and face – which explain why people tend to adopt politeness strategies when interacting with each other. While the idea of face is explicitly borrowed from Erving Goffman, the rationality ascribed to interactants derives from Grice’s cooperative principle. By face, Brown and Levinson (1987) mean that interactants are considered to be endowed with two specific wants: the wants to be unimpeded (negative face) and approved of (positive face). By rationality, they mean that interactants will reason from ends to the means that allow them to achieve these ends. In other words, linguistic strategies will be considered “means satisfying communicative and face-oriented ends.” Given that many speech acts can be considered face-threatening-acts (FTA) – e.g., asking something, advising, reminding – interactants will tend to develop politeness strategies, called “facework,” to minimize the face-threatening dimension of what they say (for further development, see Arundale 2005; Craig et al. 1986; Fitch & Sanders 1994).

## PRAGMATICS AND COMMUNICATION

Although communication studies and linguistic pragmatics have somewhat neglected dialogue with each other, a lot could be learned should their respective agendas converge more often. One interesting path of convergence is the parallel work of several communication scholars who have insisted on the constitutive aspect of communication in meaning production and interpretation. While the traditional literature in linguistic pragmatics tends to focus on the cognitive aspects of meaning production, scholars like



Arundale (2005), Cooren (2005), and Sanders (1987) have insisted on the limits inherent in any attempt to reduce the question of meaning to what speakers intend to mean in a specific interaction. These scholars thus propose, in their respective agendas, approaches that tend to focus on the dynamic that is at stake at any moment of given interaction. It is in the recognition of such a dynamic that communication scholars can indeed expect to productively contribute to the field of linguistic pragmatics.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Directives ► Goffman, Erving ► Politeness Theory ► Semiotics

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## **Linguistics**

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Linguistics is the study of language. Because linguists disagree on the scope of “language,” definitions of linguistics have varied. Descriptively, the study of language has gone from a search for relationships between specific languages to current interest in the biological bases for language and in language use. Methodologically, linguistics has changed from an empirical discipline to one admitting a priori suppositions and personal introspection in model building.

Regardless of theoretical bent, students of language generally divide linguistic inquiry with respect to several conceptual parameters. Linguists distinguish between looking at language at a specific moment in time (synchronically) as opposed to tracing historical language change (diachronically). A second parameter decomposes language into multiple levels for analysis: phonology (sounds), morphology (units of meaning that combine to form words), and syntax (how words are combined to form sentences). In addition, linguistics entails semantics (word and sentence meaning), discourse analysis (connected speech), and pragmatics (language structure and meaning in nonlinguistic context).

## LANGUAGE, SEMIOTICS, AND COMMUNICATION

In defining “language,” it is useful to understand the relationship between language and other systems of signs in which material forms (such as a yawn or the Italian word *grazie*) are paired with meanings (here, “I’m tired” or “thank you”). The broadest domain for studying signs and their meanings is → semiotics (literally, “the study of signs”). Semiotics includes the analysis of human languages, but it also encompasses animal communication and inanimate signs (e.g., a cloudy sky portending rain). The other end of the spectrum of sign-based inquiry is linguistics, traditionally limited to human spoken languages.

Less clearly defined is the middle ground: communication. Conventionally, communication includes all meaningful behavior emitted and perceived by sentient beings, including animal communication and human languages. However, linguists disagree over which particular forms of communication also constitute language. One issue is whether only the speech stream counts as language or whether such paralinguistic features as kinesics (body language) and proxemics (physical distance between interlocutors) belong to linguistics proper. Another issue has been whether language includes writing and the sign languages of hearing-impaired communities.

## THE EVOLUTION OF LINGUISTIC THEORY

The roots of modern linguistics trace back to a lecture delivered in Calcutta in 1786. Sir William Jones, a British judge serving in India, hypothesized that Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin must all have sprung from a common source – what today we call Indo-European. In the mid-nineteenth century, Jacob Grimm explained how German phonology systematically differed from the sound systems of such languages as Latin and Sanskrit. Soon thereafter, the *Junggrammatiker* (neogrammarians) created a linguistic research agenda for comparing languages in the Indo-European family, predominantly focusing on phonology. By the early twentieth century, linguistics had largely become the diachronic study of Indo-European sound systems.

Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss neogrammarian, moved linguistics from a strictly historical enterprise to also *exploring modern language structure*. Saussure was heavily influenced by the growing movement of structural approaches to social phenomena, appearing, for example, in the work of the sociologist Émile Durkheim. Structuralism sought to discover how social systems work as wholes that are organizationally greater than the sum of their individual parts (→ Structuralism). Saussure used this model to analyze

language as a system of signs. Saussure's analysis of linguistic signs remains foundational in the field of semiotics and influential in social, literary, and cultural theory.

Contemporaneous with Saussure, the newly emerging field of *anthropology* found language to be an important tool for understanding nonwestern cultures. Bronislaw Malinowski's work on the construction of meaning among indigenous peoples of the western Pacific provided a framework for subsequent British anthropological linguistics such as the work of J. R. Firth. In America, Franz Boas used his analyses of Native American languages to argue that their speakers had sophisticated cultures and could not be dismissed as "primitive peoples." Building upon Boas' initiatives, a linguistic tradition grew up in the US during the first half of the twentieth century, alternatively known as American Structuralism or American Descriptivism. This tradition strove to create research methodologies for uncovering the structure of unwritten languages. Rooted in empiricism, American Structuralists admitted as data only those spoken utterances that had been observed. Practitioners included Leonard Bloomfield, Charles Hockett, and Zellig Harris – Noam Chomsky's friend and teacher.

In the mid-1950s, Chomsky proposed a new goal for linguistic theory. Rather than using empirical evidence to "discover" the structure of languages, Chomsky drew upon his background in philosophy to create a *rationalist approach* to linguistic theory. Chomsky's aim was to explain the intrinsic linguistic abilities of native speakers, using introspection in lieu of discovery methods and attempting to characterize the knowledge of "ideal speaker/hearers" rather than the empirical productions of real-world language users. Following René Descartes, Chomsky argued that language is uniquely human (thereby excluding animal communication from linguistics). He also maintained that human language is sufficiently complex that it cannot be learned by beginning with a blank mental slate. Rather, the core of linguistic abilities must be biologically innate. Given his interests and presuppositions, Chomsky took linguistics to be the study of abstract linguistic knowledge, especially of syntax. Chomsky did not deem language use part of linguistic inquiry.

Over the past half-century, Chomsky's original model (known alternatively as transformational grammar or generative-transformational grammar) has strongly shaped linguistic research internationally. Yet during this same period, a number of social scientists eschewed the Chomskian limitation of linguistics to abstract human linguistic ability. The field of *sociolinguistics* emerged in the 1970s, represented by such practitioners as Dell Hymes and William Labov, who argued that linguistics must include the study of language in social context (→ Language and Social Interaction). The field of child language acquisition was redefined in the 1970s and 1980s, as psychologists and linguists such as Jerome Bruner, M. A. K. Halliday, and Jean Berko-Gleason reasoned that children learn language not as a standalone system but in social context and for social reasons (→ Language Acquisition in Childhood).

A second major challenge to Chomskian linguistics came from psychologists and linguists, who argued that nonhuman primates possess many of the linguistic abilities Chomsky assumed unique to *Homo sapiens*. From the sign-language-based studies of the chimpanzee Washoe (by Allen and Beatrice Gardner) to Sue Savage-Rumbaugh's use of symbol boards and spoken language recognition with Kanzi (a bonobo chimpanzee), a cadre of researchers argued that linguistics should include the communicative behavior of at least the broader primate family.

## CURRENT DIRECTIONS IN LINGUISTICS

Today, ideological battles have largely been replaced by a proliferation of approaches to linguistics. The number of free-standing linguistics departments in universities has historically been small. Linguists are commonly housed in foreign language or English departments, in anthropology or sociology, in education or computer science, and often adopt the perspectives of their disciplinary homes. More importantly, since no individual has emerged with the visionary stature of Chomsky, linguists have little impetus to align themselves with a specific model of language or definition of linguistics.

That said, there is no shortage of scholars who employ linguistic theories and methodologies. The following three broad areas of inquiry illustrate the contemporary linguistic enterprise. *Social discourse*: continuing the anthropological tradition of studying language in social context, sociolinguistic research often centers on → discourse, specifically considering gender, age, ethnic, or class-based differences in language use. Sociolinguistic perspectives are also widely employed in such domains as first-language acquisition, second-language acquisition, bilingualism, and cross-cultural communication (→ Bi- and Multilingualism). *Writing and technology*: interest in writing as a linguistic process, distinct from speech, has grown in recent decades. Linguists such as Roy Harris, Deborah Tannen, Wallace Chafe, and Douglas Biber have examined written language both as a medium in its own right and in comparison to speech. Linguistics has also become a tool in the hands of researchers studying language conveyed via computer systems such as the Internet (known as computer-mediated communication, CMC). Linguistic analyses of chat, email, instant messaging, and text messaging on mobile phones complement sociological studies of how people use these messaging systems (→ Language and the Internet). *Artificial intelligence, cognition, and language*: with the unfolding of artificial intelligence research in the 1960s and 1970s, linguistics became a valuable instrument for processing natural language (i.e., using computers to analyze spoken or written sentences) and for performing machine translation between languages. Given the importance of global communication, along with the explosive growth of the Internet, both natural language processing and machine translation will continue to be important research issues for the foreseeable future.

The 1990s witnessed a surge of interest in the *neurological bases of language*. With the development of sophisticated imaging technology, it is possible to measure brain activity while subjects are performing linguistic tasks. This research has, for example, yielded neurological evidence for differences in the way speakers of English produce regular past-tense forms (e.g., *walked*) vs irregular forms (e.g., *went*), and has suggested gender variation in language processing, as well as neurological distinctions between bilinguals and monolinguals (→ Cognitive Science).

## LANGUAGE IN SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT

While roughly 6,000 different languages are spoken today, the number continues to decline as new speakers born into minority-language communities eschew learning ancestral languages and remaining speakers die out. Linguists have begun partnering with social activists to document and support endangered languages. At the same time, others

are questioning the dominant role that former colonial languages, especially English, are playing on the global stage. Now that non-native speakers of English outnumber native speakers, a growing number of voices argue for replacing the notion of “world English” with that of “world Englishes.” Moreover, some argue that non-native speakers should have primary say in defining the linguistic make-up of those Englishes, rather than adhering to prevailing British or American English norms. These attitudes are increasingly reflected in the way that English is taught to speakers of other languages. In recent years, the emphasis has shifted from concentrating on correct grammar to nurturing communicative abilities. Similarly, there is a move away from accent reduction and toward teaching for phonological intelligibility.

Beyond its core function of enabling people to communicate with one another, language is always potentially a political tool. A century ago, the issue was imposition of colonial languages upon subjugated populations. Today the range of political concerns includes sexist or racist language, along with policies regarding bilingual education and the status of national languages. Regardless of one’s theoretical stance about the proper scope of the field, linguistics offers a powerful instrument for addressing these real-world problems.

SEE ALSO: ► Bi- and Multilingualism ► Cognitive Science ► Discourse ► Language Acquisition in Childhood ► Language and the Internet ► Language and Social Interaction ► Language and Social Psychology ► Language Varieties ► Semiotics ► Structuralism

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# Link Analysis

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With the increasing migration of communication and information provision to the web, new research methods are emerging to cope with the challenge of understanding the implications of this change. Link analysis is the *study of hyperlinks* between websites in order to discover (1) why they were created and what they are used for, (2) online networks or patterns of behavior, or (3) insights into reflected patterns of offline behavior.

Hyperlink analyses have been conducted on themed collections of websites or web pages, such as those owned by a selected group of politicians, universities, or nongovernmental organizations campaigning around a specific issue. Link analysis is particularly suitable for gaining rapid initial insights into offline topics that have an online reflection (e.g., left-right political debates) and for analyzing how the web is used for communication in particular situations (e.g., elections). The strength of hyperlink analysis is the ease with which practitioners can gain fast insights into a topic of interest, especially with the new generation of free link analysis software. The main drawback is the casualness with which links are often created (or not created), which inhibits making strong inferences, forming generalizations, and making future predictions.

It is useful to distinguish between different *types of links*. A “site outlink” is a hyperlink that points to a page in a different website, whereas a “site self-link” points to a page within the same website. Site self-links are usually ignored because the connections between different sites are more interesting. Site outlinks may expose such things as the site owner’s collaborators and information sources. Similarly, the “site inlinks” of a website are the links pointing to it from other websites. Site inlinks may reveal the importance or uses of a website. Alternatively, the site inlinks may also give information about how important the organization owning the website is and the types of other organizations that link to it. The links within a collection of websites may reveal informative patterns of interconnectivity, such as which is the most central site in the network, and whether there are any clear sub-groups. Potential applications include revealing the interconnection structure of related pressure groups on the web, or exploring politicians’ websites for differences in online networks and uses of the web across the political spectrum.

For a hyperlink analysis, *relevant links* must first be identified. The most straightforward data collection methods are to browse websites to manually identify links or to use a link search command in a commercial search engine. For example, the query `linkdomain:wlv.ac.uk – site:wlv.ac.uk` in Yahoo! (→ Search Engines) returns a list of web pages that link to any page in the University of Wolverhampton website (`www.wlv.ac.uk`) and all other domains ending in `wlv.ac.uk`, such as `www.scit.wlv.ac.uk`), but excluding pages within the University of Wolverhampton website. Given a set of websites to study, as long as it is not too large, the links between all possible pairs of websites can be counted by entering a series of queries like the one above. A second way to get link data is to use software that automatically downloads the web pages from a list of URLs (uniform resource locators), or downloads all of the pages in one or more websites. Free online

software for this includes Issue Crawler, LexiURL, SocSciBot, and VOSON. It is also possible to automatically submit queries to search engines from LexiURL Searcher and VOSON, which is useful for counting links to or between a large set of websites.

Once the link data has been downloaded there are four main *alternative investigative methods*: visualizations, summary statistics, comparison with other data sources, and content analysis of link types. The above software typically produces visualizations such as network diagrams of the interlinking websites or pages, and forms of summary statistics, such as the total number of links to and from each website and the commonest sources and targets of links broken down by website, page, or top-level domain (e.g., .edu, .de). The data can also be imported into social network analysis software such as UCINET to obtain a wider range of statistics. Moreover, UCINET and standard statistical analysis software can compare the link count data with other sources of data (e.g., via correlation tests). For large-scale counting studies, particularly for academic websites, sophisticated link counting methods (Alternative Document Models) have been developed to prevent results being dominated by spurious or repeated links.

In contrast to the quantitative approaches described above, a descriptive or *comparative content analysis of links* may reveal why they have been created and what they are used for. This is particularly useful because the web and links are used for such a wide variety of purposes that it is easy for intuition to fail when hypothesizing about why hyperlinks are used in any given context, e.g., in politicians' websites. The content analysis typically takes the form of classifying link types through the page containing the link and perhaps also the page that is the target of the link. The categories are often inductively defined, partly on the basis of a pilot study and partly on that of the research question or theoretical perspective underpinning the research. One finding from this type of research is that surprisingly many links are created primarily to acknowledge a relationship, such as funding or collaboration, rather than to be used by visitors. In addition, while there is a degree of copying and uniformity between similar websites about the types of links used, there are still significant variations, indicating that in many cases website usage and creation strategies are continuing to evolve and innovate.

SEE ALSO: ► Archiving of Internet Content ► Search Engines ► Technology and Communication

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# Lippmann, Walter

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Walter Lippmann (1889–1974), political columnist and confidant of several presidents, public intellectual and winner of two Pulitzer prizes, remains an important voice among critics of → public opinion and the role of the press. In early twentieth-century America, he was an essential contributor to American political thought and the American way of life, whose path he observed with authority. Lippmann also represents a rare intellectual tradition in American journalism; his weekly column, “Today and tomorrow,” became a powerful and effective response to the political scene in Washington.

*Public opinion* (1922) provides a pessimistic assessment of the idea of liberal democracy and the condition of public opinion. As such, it stands in contrast to John Dewey’s *The public and its problems* (1927) a few years later. Lippmann’s consideration of public opinion was influenced by political realities at home and abroad, including the rise of mass democracy in light of the advancements of science and technology and the rise of totalitarianism between two world wars. He understood the close relationship between democracy and media and regretted the political consequences of approaching mass communication as a form of mass consumption. His arguments concerning the failure of prevailing theories of democracy, and, implicitly at least, the failure of communication to initiate, support, and perpetuate the democratic experience, was advanced in a series of books, beginning with *Liberty and the news* (1920) and *The phantom public* (1925). His readings of Sigmund Freud and the influence of George Wallas, further, led him to reassert the importance of the irrational in politics and to argue for reconsidering bias, prejudice, and feelings as factors in how people attempt to grapple with notions of fact or reality (→ Emotion).

Lippmann engaged in a thoughtful and challenging critique of contemporary democracy, including the role of the media, and never abandoned his search for answers, finally calling for a return to the ideals of western civilization in the guise of a public philosophy. Here, he drew on a Platonic notion of people as followers of decisions that are made by a capable and informed intellectual elite, in order to offer an alternative to liberal democracy as a prophetic vision. Lippmann’s writings are central to understanding the dilemmas of communication in modern society in general and in politics in particular (→ Political Communication). They return research and public debate to the question of power in a democratic state, and address both the position of institutions and the role of individuals in the creation of knowledge, including the responsibility of the press to serve the truth, to inform and to educate, rather than to excite or amuse.

SEE ALSO: ► Emotion ► Political Communication ► Public Opinion ► Public Sphere

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## Listening

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It was the Greek Stoic philosopher Epictetus who first observed that nature had provided two ears but one tongue that we might hear from others twice as much as we speak. While the wisdom and practical values of listening have been understood throughout history, attempts to study listening as a social science and to include listening instruction in curricula are relatively recent phenomena, gaining some popularity with the early work of Ralph Nichols, including his groundbreaking text *Are you listening?* (Nichols & Stevens 1957). Nichols and Stevens describe an early study conducted by Paul Rankin that divided the act of communication into four distinct behaviors: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In this survey, listening was used more extensively than the other communicative modes. Similarly, Shannon and Weaver's (1949) model of communication included the receiver as an independent component in the communication process (→ Models of Communication). Possibly due to the focus of this early work, listening was reified as distinct and unique, functioning independently of other communicative behaviors.

### LISTENING AND INFORMATION PROCESSING

Over time, the view of communication as a linear process, neatly divisible into speaker, listener, and message components, gave way to the conceptualization of communication as a transaction in which meaning is constructed and message encoding and decoding occur simultaneously. Similarly, efforts to measure listening as a distinct behavior (as listening comprehension) were deemed invalid (Kelly 1967). Scholars began to describe listening in terms of multiple forms of → information processing, such as hearing, → attention, → memory, and various aspects of message interpretation and evaluation. Because listening was originally conceived as unitary and distinct, while our current understanding is that it involves a large number of information-processing skills, efforts to define listening have been numerous and agreement on a common definition does not exist. In an excellent review of these issues, Bostrom (1990, 7) concludes simply that “the term, ‘good listener’ has become a synonym for a caring, other-oriented person.”

Educators who teach and study listening have tended to engage in certain arbitrary short cuts: studying message reception in relative isolation from message encoding, or studying the auditory (hearing) aspects of message reception in relative isolation from the visual aspects of communication. However, there are practical benefits to be gained from this approach: it permits educators to focus on specific information-processing behaviors that can be improved, which has proven fruitful (Brownell 1990). Today, many listening texts continue to be more practical than theoretical: oriented toward improved relationships, improved message comprehension, and improved retention of information. The expectation is that this practical study will reap rewards in school, at work, and in one's circle of friends and family.

### MEASUREMENT

Early attempts were made to measure listening as a simple, unidimensional concept of message comprehension (actually, message retention). When the → validity of these tests came into question, several multidimensional tests of listening effectiveness were developed. Among these are the Kentucky Comprehensive Listening Test (Bostrom & Waldhart 1980), the Watson-Barker Listening Test (Watson & Barker 1983), and the Communication Competency Assessment Instrument (Rubin 1982).

Each of these approaches involves measuring several types, or aspects, of listening: for example, following instructions, remembering information presented in short talks, recognizing central ideas, correctly inferring the meaning of statements from both verbal context and nonverbal cues, resisting distractions, and differentiating facts from opinions. All three tests require participant responses to specific auditory and visual recorded stimuli. Thus, an objective test rather than simple self-assessment is utilized. Significant questions concerning the validity and the reliability of listening assessment remain and need to be addressed by future research. Doubtless, as previously discussed, many of the methodological issues trace back to the difficulty in defining and operationally conceptualizing a construct as expansive as listening.

### LISTENING AND EMPATHY

It would be remiss of any review of the term “listening” to not include a *humanistic perspective*. In common parlance, listening is often used synonymously with terms such as empathy, decentering, or human compassion. To listen is to attend, to care, and to value. An effective listener not only processes information effectively, but also and often more importantly demonstrates interest in the speaker. While this approach has frequently been the subject of scholarly inquiry and reflection (Weaver & Kirtley 1995), it is most often seen in clinical and instructional materials in areas such as counseling, interviewing, mentoring, mediation, and general → interpersonal communication. There have been efforts made to develop psychometric instruments useful in determining listening empathy and empathic styles (Drollinger et al. 2006).

An excellent example of this applied, humanistic approach to listening is Carl Rogers's *active listening* (Rogers & Farson 1973). This general approach to listening (Rogers strongly resisted terming it a “technique”) is also widely known as nondirective therapy

and has been cited in literally hundreds of books and articles in the fields of communication, psychology, education, and business. The approach stresses the elimination of any evaluation of the speaker or the speaker's comments, the importance of an appropriate level of empathy, and the avoidance by the listener of directive communication such as substantive comments and questions. Instead, the listener is encouraged to use mirror statements (repeating a few of the speaker's words) and to paraphrase the speaker's meanings and apparent feelings. Active listening has met with widespread acclaim for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is its sensitivity to the maxim "First, do no harm." Today, it has become pervasive in the field of clinical psychology (Bozarth et al. 2002).

### CURRENT TRENDS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

One of the most notable trends in the study of listening is its conceptual integration with the study of social cognition (→ Cognition; Social Perception). Research and instruction in listening can benefit dramatically from the theoretical sophistication found in social cognition research. In turn, social cognition scholarship tends to be composed primarily of pure, or conceptual, research, and may benefit by application in the practical, everyday contexts of listening. In short, social cognition research can provide the conceptual depth lacking in the field of listening, and listening can provide the real-world contexts sorely needed in social cognition research.

An example can be shown in the area of *information load*. Nichols's original assertion that there was a thought-speed/speech-speed differential that led to problems in listening was accepted without question for many years. In other words, since listeners' minds (presumably) were capable of processing information at much faster speeds than normal spoken communication rates, listeners tended to daydream. In addition, it was assumed that spoken material could be time-compressed to almost twice normal speed with little or no loss of comprehension (→ Individual Differences and Information Processing).

This "accepted fact" stood in stark contrast to capacity theory (Kahneman 1973) and other advances in information-processing theory. King and Behnke (1989) demonstrated that, while increases in communication load (information divided by time) did not affect listening tasks relying on short-term memory or interpretation of paralinguistics, load increases had a direct, linear relationship to listening tasks involving long-term memory. In other words, any increase in the speed of the stimulus led to a concomitant decrease in retention. The implications of this finding are very important in an academic discipline where debaters regularly speak at extremely high rates of speed, wrongly assuming that such delivery has no impact on audience listening.

Increases in communication load have also been shown to impact levels of affect and anxiety toward the information being presented. Finally, the effect of communication load on listening has been shown to vary during a specific listening assignment (probably due to the build-up of a cognitive backlog), with higher levels of anxiety and lower levels of affect being experienced the longer one listens (King & Behnke 2004). Interestingly, this pattern of listening behavior is a mirror opposite of the patterns of anxiety and affect normally experienced during public speaking. In a world where information overload has become a daily frustration, such research may prove valuable.

*Future research* should seek to integrate listening, or the cognitive processes typically associated with message reception, into research that simultaneously deals with social cognition and message encoding. In fact, scholars are now examining the nexus between message decoding and encoding, and have documented differing patterns of language when thinking for (the purpose of) speaking and thinking for listening (Dipper et al. 2005). And just as theories of message production and processing account for nonconscious message encoding (Greene 1997), understandings of message reception should account for largely automatic forms of listening behavior.

The topic of listening, however defined, has become enormously popular. Proficiency in listening is a major concern in business and industry (Wolvin & Coakley 1991). Formed in 1979, the *International Listening Association* supports the professional activities of members from 49 US states and 15 other countries. The association sponsors a scholarly journal, the *International Journal of Listening*, and holds an annual convention. Listening instruction, once neglected, has become increasingly common. So, in response to Ralph Nichols's original question, "Are you listening?" the answer today is a qualified "yes."

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Comprehension ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Individual Differences and Information Processing ▶ Information ▶ Information Overload ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Memory ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Social Perception ▶ Validity

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## Literary Journalism

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Literary journalism is a form of writing characterized by a particular aesthetic self-consciousness more usually associated with literary creativity than with fact-driven journalism. While conventional descriptions of journalism stress objectivity and clarity (→ Objectivity in Reporting), descriptions of literary journalism often focus on qualities more usually associated with literary texts. Literary journalism aims to combine a desire to present information objectively with one to do it stylishly, therefore giving it a different kind of impact to the regular fare of newspapers. Some argue that one of its characteristics is that the quality of its craft means that it will be still read in years to come, whereas much journalism has, and is intended to have, a short shelf life.

As a term, “literary journalism” is both more, and less, than the sum of its parts. The first word of the term implies its proximity to kinds of writing conventionally thought of as literature: chiefly fiction, plays, poetry. Yet at the same time the second word seems to contradict, even rule out, the first. If it is → journalism, how can it also be literary? This may be one reason why the term “creative nonfiction” is also increasingly being used as a less burdened and more precise description. Such a synonym does not run the risk, as “literary journalism” does, of implying that such writing must concern itself with the literary in some way.

Other related terms include “new journalism.” This was originally coined in the late nineteenth century to describe developments in → newspaper writing within a newly technologized industry, produced for a reading public with different expectations from their daily reading than their predecessors had (→ Journalism, History of). It was made still more famous by Tom Wolfe’s groundbreaking book *The new journalism* (1973), which argued for a form of journalism that could be read like a novel. Wolfe cited many novelists who were also celebrated journalists, and was a pioneer in the kind of journalistic writing often cited as an example of the best kind of journalistic practice. Others whose work also crossed over in this way include Stephen Crane, Charles Dickens, and George Orwell.

Uglove (1998) has argued that the term “literary journalism” needs to be considered historically in order to understand its shifting and sometimes conflicted relationship to the larger sphere of cultural production. Certainly, thinking about it in this way allows for a broader consideration of the relation between literary journalism and the → public sphere more generally. Literary journalism, some proponents claim, helps to create and sustain debates about a range of subjects in a manner that commands a wide readership and is likely to do so for a long period. It does this by its adherence to the best qualities of both journalistic endeavor, such as truthfulness and objectivity, and literary texts. In short, it reads like the best kind of fiction, but it is not made up. Whether, finally, the term “literary journalism” or “creative nonfiction” is most appropriate, the qualities that characterize it remain the same.

SEE ALSO: ► Fiction ► Interview as Journalistic Form ► Journalism ► Journalism, History of ► New Journalism ► New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century ► Newspaper ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Public Sphere

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## **Lobbying**

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*Lobbying* is a strategic process through which groups and organizations carry out activities intended to influence policymakers and the formation of laws and regulations. In the nineteenth century, the term described how agents of interest groups gathered in the lobbies and hallways of the US Capitol in Washington and US state capitols to

advocate with legislators during meeting breaks. This kind of face-to-face advocacy between representatives of interest groups and policymakers constituted the act of lobbying. Today, lobbying is often seen to include many other communication strategies and tactics, ranging from presentations of research reports and committee testimony, to media relations activities, issue advertisements, grassroots campaigns, and even litigation.

Groups that engage in lobbying represent diverse types of organizations, ideologies, and levels of political resources. They include businesses, labor unions, nongovernmental organizations, social movements, single interest groups, trade groups, think tanks, professional associations, religious groups, foreign governments, and specialized institutional agencies like health-care and education (→ Social Movements and Communication). Such political actors are collectively referred to here as *interest groups*, though they are often categorized somewhat differently in the literature as firms and economic organizations, membership groups, peak associations, and so forth. However, they are all interest groups in that they conduct strategic activities that aim to influence policymakers and thereby advance their own agendas and goals.

Lobbying occurs in local, state, regional, national, supranational, and international political decision-making arenas and forums, and communication activities may be carried out by registered lobbyists, interest group officials and representatives, public affairs personnel, coalition representatives, trade and association personnel, and highly specialized agencies. Professional lobbyists are viewed with skepticism in some countries, especially the US, given the enormous amounts of money that flow into lobbying activities and periodic ethical scandals involving lobbyists.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND CONCEPTS**

Lobbying is most often practiced and studied in democratic-type nations and political forums in western Europe and North America, where professional lobbying has a long tradition. In democracies, interest groups are seen to play an important role in the political process, and political theory developed around the concept of interest groups in the US in the mid-twentieth century (Truman 1951). The theory suggested that governmental decisions and policies grow out of the public's identification and discussion of social issues and problems. The role of government is to listen to these multiple voices, arbitrate conflicts, encourage compromise, and act in the best interests of "the people." The voices of competing interest groups, expressed through lobbying activities, help shape policy decisions.

However, Mancur Olson's (1965) theory of collective action highlighted the difficulties groups faced in organizing members and engaging in concerted action, which prevented some groups from having an equal voice in policy debates. Statist and elitist perspectives also challenge pluralistic conceptions of interest groups and policymaking. Statist theories (Skocpol 1988, 1992) in the 1970s and 1980s posited that government policymakers, far from responding to pressure group voices and lobbying activities, are powerful actors in their own right and exert considerable influence on policy decisions and implementation. In the elitist view (Mills 1956), certain groups and organizations (e.g., corporations and the wealthy) exert a disproportionate influence on policymakers because they possess and use more political and economic resources, and are linked with policymakers through

common social circles, education, group memberships, and ideology. Comprehensive studies have found consistently that economic producers are heavily over-represented in Washington-based lobbying associations and groups (Herring 1929/1967; Schattschneider 1960; Schlozman & Tierney 1986).

Researchers have also conceptualized policymaking as a communicative process in which groups select and use lobbying tactics and approaches to compete for political action and attention. Social movement theorists (Benford & Snow 2000) and political communication researchers (Reese et al. 2001) have developed and used framing theory to help explain how collective action groups construct and frame their messages and advocacy efforts, how such frames change over time, and how they may be used to attract or mobilize group members (→ Framing Effects). Berger et al. (2002) contended that three interrelated communication processes bear heavily on policy decisions: (1) the framing of social problems, (2) the selection or identification of certain social issues to be addressed by policymakers (agenda setting), and (3) the use of → issue management approaches through which organizations engage in the public policy formation process (→ Issue Management in Politics). Collective action groups monitor their environments, identify issues for political action, set goals, and select and carry out various lobbying strategies and tactics.

## RESEARCH DIRECTIONS AND FINDINGS

Lobbying and the dynamics of political action communications overlap a number of disciplines, including political science, political communication, issue management and public affairs, economics, sociology, and organizational behavior. Political science researchers have long been interested in influence in the political process and have conducted many studies to ascertain whether lobbying and political action committee (PAC) contributions in the US influence policymaking. These variables are frequently used in studies because campaign finance reform laws in the 1970s in the US provided new databases of business lobbying and PAC expenditures. The findings in such studies are inconsistent: reviews of 23 lobbying and 68 PAC studies concluded that such influence attempts appeared to sometimes strongly affect policymaking, sometimes marginally, and sometimes not at all (Baumgartner & Leech 1998; Smith 1995).

Some inconsistencies are due to the use of different methodologies and statistical tests, as well as a lack of direct measures of lobbying and influence in the studies. In addition, many other variables come into play in the policymaking process, and these often go unexplored and uncontrolled in studies. Such variables include the public salience of issues, public opinion about issues, the type of issue up for discussion, the scope of issue conflict, the stage of issue development, the presence of other lobbying tactics, the nature and extent of opposition from contending interest groups, election factors, party affiliation, and various contextual, institutional, and cultural factors.

Communication, sociological, and political communication researchers have studied the particular lobbying strategies and tactics that interest groups use. These studies have yielded a greater consistency of findings, suggesting that most interest groups and organizations use a variety of similar tactics to attempt to influence policymakers. Berry (1977) developed a typology of four lobbying strategies, which are groups of tactics



selected for use in specific political contexts. *Information strategies* employ such tactics as public relations media campaigns, congressional testimony, and presentation of data and research results formally or informally to policymakers. *Confrontation strategies* include the tactics of demonstrations, protests, other staged events, and aggressive media activities. *Constituency strategies* include grassroots campaigns and political contributions, while *legal strategies* use litigation tactics and other forms of administrative actions. The selection of strategies appears to be based on the characteristics of the interest group, the amount and type of its resources, the scope of the issue conflict, and the political and institutional contexts of decision-making arenas.

According to the findings of six major surveys, face-to-face discussions with policy-makers and presentations of research and information at committee meetings were the two most common lobbying tactics used by interest groups in Washington, DC and US state capitals (Baumgartner & Leech 1998). Other frequently used tactics included informal contacts with officials, coalitions, → public relations and → advertising initiatives, drafting or advising on regulations or legislation, constituent or grassroots campaigns, and legal actions (→ Political Advertising). Protests, demonstrations, and election support activities, i.e., campaign contributions and candidate endorsements, were used least often.

## LOBBYING IN EUROPE

Practiced in some European nations for many years, lobbying activities, and research into them, accelerated sharply in the 1980s and 1990s due to the Single European Act and the emergence of Europeanization and corresponding EU policymaking. As the number of lobbying offices and lobbyists multiplied in Brussels, research focused on case studies of particular groups and issues, lobbying styles and tactics, policy networks, and the growing Europeanization of interest groups, trade associations, and nongovernmental organizations. More recent research has taken an institutional approach, examining how lobbying activities and practices are shaped by the political contexts and institutional frameworks in which they take place. These include the EU Commission and Parliament, political ministries, legislative committees in nation-states, civil services, party systems, supranational agencies, and rules of the game that affect law-making processes, protocols, and timetables (McGrath 2005). Such research focuses on relationships between institutional constraints and opportunities and the interest groups that operate within the institutions, the tactics and strategies they employ, and the extent to which they are successful.

European researchers are also interested in similarities and differences between the US and the EU regarding lobbying tactics, practices, and policy-formation processes. Woll (2006) found that lobbying on both sides of the Atlantic had increased sharply in the past several decades and that lobbyists everywhere seek to gain access to policymakers, influence policy decisions, and advance the goals of their groups. In addition, coalition approaches continue to increase, and both European and American lobbyists most often use research presentations and formal and informal consultation to attempt influence. However, the style, characteristics, and instruments of lobbying differ to some extent. Lobbying in the US is more aggressive and confrontational, whereas in Europe the approach is lower-key and more consensus-oriented. US lobbying is also more competitive and fragmented and seems less focused on developing long-term relationships with

policymakers. US lobbyists also use legal and financial instruments, which are limited tactical options in Europe, and employ public relations and advertising approaches to a far greater extent.

## FUTURE RESEARCH

Past research has provided a great deal of descriptive data about lobbying through interest group case studies, framing analyses, domain studies, examinations of group lobbying tactics and strategies, and quantitative studies of lobbying and campaign contributions. However, theory development has lagged, and future research is likely to be directed toward studies that better explain how, why, and when interest groups select particular lobbying strategies and tactics, and in what contexts and under what conditions they successfully influence policymakers. The most promising research approaches in Europe and the US appear to be international comparative studies and institutional and cultural studies that shed light on the many complex contextual variables that shape lobbying practices, influence strategic and tactical choices, and affect policy decisions.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Framing Effects ► Issue Management ► Issue Management in Politics ► Political Advertising ► Political Communication ► Political Persuasion ► Public Affairs ► Public Interest ► Public Relations ► Social Movements and Communication

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## Local News

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The term “local news” is often used to refer to news with coverage of events in a local context, which would be contrasted with news of other localities, or of national or international scope (→ International News Reporting). The geographic characteristics of local news have been regarded as forces with influence on shaping local media markets, labor, and media technology, which in turn affect local → news values. The geographic local boundary assumed to be influential in the process of local news production is easily connected to the socially constructed “community” concept. Thus, local news is expected to play a role in networking the local community and serving local interests (→ Community Integration).

Local news has been studied both from the perspective of journalistic functions and roles for the local community and concerning changes in the local media market and technology (→ Journalists’ Role Perception). The former approach deals with the problem of local news conveying a “chamber of commerce attitude” (Breed 1958, 111), rather than representing civic opinions and interests. The latter covers the consolidation of local news ownership into a handful of regionally based monopolies, which leads to a separation of journalists from their local readers and community. Also, local news faces challenges by new digital technologies, which are viewed more often than not as depriving local media of “locality” (→ Digital Media, History of).

Within the local context, news embraces *two contradictory journalism models*: civic journalism vs booster journalism. The goals of “civic journalism,” or → “public journalism,” as a normative journalism model, include improving civic attitudes, reinvigorating public debate about issues of concern to citizens, and improving participation in civic activities, such as voting, belonging to community organizations, or participating in community problem solving (→ Political Discourse; Public Sphere). Local news is expected to play a role in creating avenues for people to connect with each other and their public institutions by bringing awareness of problems, issues, and potential solutions to people in a community. Local news may stimulate growth of knowledge, enhance civic attitudes, and increase participatory behaviors. Local news provided by community media has been termed “the thing that democracy has been made of” (Park 1925, 13).

But a different view of the local media portrays it as an instrument of social control within the local community. Within the geographic boundaries of community, local news is not produced independently of local political and economic interests, but is

interdependent with local power elite. Local media have interests in economic growth in terms of circulation and advertising revenues, and the success of local news, as products, depends on the interests and acceptance of community members (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media; Media Economy). Thus, the local media are inclined to help boost the local economy, while they frequently omit “undemocratic power of business elites” (Breed 1958, 111). Logan and Molotch’s (1987) local growth coalition model explains how the local media become an active contributor to enhance economic value and growth potential in the local community rather than to seek to promote aesthetic and lifestyle values. While the growth coalition is constructed with property owners at the core, along with local government, developers, financiers, universities, various cultural institutions, and so on, the local media enter the growth coalition by selectively reinforcing, legitimizing, and endorsing the accepted views. Whereas communities within a region or landowners within a single community may compete directly with each other, the local news endorses only the overarching position common to all community elites: that growth is desirable. Local news preserves the objective reporting principle, yet underlies more boosterism than quality of life in local communities.

The *public’s expectations of local news* have changed from the traditional “watchdog” role toward “good neighbor”: caring about the community, reporting on interesting people and groups, understanding the local community, and offering solutions (Poindexter et al. 2006). The gap between the public’s expectations of local news as good neighbor and the public’s disaffection with the press’s watchdog role, however, should be investigated further. The good neighbor and the watchdog model do not appear to be contradictory but complementary.

Local news has been affected by overall reduced news consumption (→ Exposure to News). The number of local newspapers has declined, and readerships and circulations of local media have diminished. But paradoxically, the regional or local newspaper business is reported to be booming. The readership size and advertising revenue in individual local media entities in the UK, for example, have increased in recent years (Franklin 1998). This resulted from the consolidation of local newspaper ownership into a handful of monopolies.

The consolidation has led to a reduced number of local newspapers (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Consolidation of Media Markets). It sustains profitability by centralizing production in large regional centers, which, in turn, separate journalists from their readers and local community. The media group also has further minimized production costs by reducing the number of journalists employed, which increases local papers’ editorial reliance on news agencies and public relations sources based in local and central government, as well as other local interest groups. Whereas local media businesses survive and prosper to some degree, the journalistic value of “locality” is at risk.

*New digital technologies* create economic and journalistic challenges and opportunities for local news by increasing local communities’ access to news via the Internet and mobile telephony. The traditional local media, such as newspapers and broadcasting, face detrimental challenges by a significant and troubling migration of news users and advertising to new media sites. The traditional “spatial” localism may no longer provide a beneficial community sense for local news in the new media environment, where new communication technologies such as → Internet, satellite, and digital mobile broadcasting (DMB) defy geographic boundaries. On the other hand, the new digital technologies enable any news service, national or local, to adapt more easily to specific localities. The

technologies give the media the chance to provide news on demand in local communities. A variety of ways of commissioning user-generated content from individuals and organizations in more segmented local communities are being tested around the world.

The term “hyperlocal” has begun to be used to refer to news coverage of community-level events usually overlooked by mainstream media outlets (→ Community Media). The locality in hyperlocal news covers not only the hitherto geographic local area, but local cyberspace communities, such as newsgroups and Internet café blogs (Lindgren 2005). Hyperlocal news contents are more widely available not only to news users in the hyperlocal community but also to ones residing beyond the cyber-boundaries through the new digital network.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Community Integration ▶ Community Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Exposure to News ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economy ▶ News Values ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Sphere

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## **Log-File Analysis**

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Log-file analysis uses the records stored in the transaction logs of information retrieval systems, web → search engines, and websites to offer valuable understanding of the interactions between these systems and people. This understanding informs system design,

interface development, and information architecture. Log files (or transaction logs) are an unobtrusive and relatively easily method of recording significant amounts of usage data on a considerable number of users at low cost.

A log file or transaction log is a record of the interactions between a system and the users of that system. Rice and Borgman (1983) present transaction logs as a data collection method that automatically captures the type, content, or time of transactions made by a person from a terminal with that system. Peters (1993) views transaction logs as electronically recorded interactions between online information systems and the people who search for the information found in those systems.

### NATURE AND GOALS OF LOG-FILE ANALYSES

Once one has collected and recorded the data in a log, one must analyze this data in order to obtain useful information. The process of conducting this analysis is *transaction log analysis* (TLA) or log-file analysis. TLA can focus on many issues and questions, but it typically addresses issues of system performance, information structure, or measurements of user interactions. Peters (1993) describes TLA as the study of electronically recorded interactions between online information retrieval systems and the persons who search for information found in those systems. Blečić et al. (1998) define TLA as the detailed and systematic examination of each search command or query by a user and the following database result or output. Spink and Jansen (2004) also provide comparable definitions of TLA but with a web focus.

The goal of TLA is to gain a clearer understanding of the interactions among searcher, content, and system, or the interactions between two of these elements. The research questions are the drivers for the particular study. From this understanding, one achieves some stated objective, such as improved system design, advanced searching assistance, or identifying user information searching behavior.

TLA is conceptually based on a  $\rightarrow$  *grounded theory* approach (Glaser & Strauss 1967), although one could also view it from a purely quantitative approach. Grounded theory emphasizes a systematic discovery of theory from data using methods of comparison and sampling. The resulting theories or models are grounded in observations of the real world, rather than being abstractly generated. Therefore, grounded theory is an inductive approach to theory or model development, rather than the deductive alternative.

### COMPUTER–USER INTERACTION

Using TLA as a methodology, one examines the characteristics of searching episodes in order to isolate trends and identify typical *interactions* between searchers and the system. Interaction has several meanings in information searching, addressing a variety of transactions including query submission, query modification, results list viewing, and use of information objects (e.g., web page, pdf file, video). TLA addresses levels one and two (*move* and *tactic*) of Bates's (1990) four levels of interaction, which are move, tactic, stratagem, and strategy. Saracevic (1997) views interaction as the exchange of information between users and system. Increases in interaction result from increases in communication content. Hancock-Beaulieu (2000) identifies three aspects of interaction,

which are interaction within and across tasks, interaction as task sharing, and interaction as a discourse (→ Computer–User Interaction).

Interactions are the physical expressions of communication exchanges between the searcher and the system. For example, a searcher may submit a query (i.e., an interaction). The system may respond with a results page (i.e., a reaction). The searcher may click on a uniform resource locator (URL) in the results listing (i.e., an interaction). Therefore, for TLA, interaction is a mechanical expression of underlying information needs or motivations.

Discussing TLA as a methodological approach, Sandore and Kaske (1993) review methods of applying the results of TLA. Borgman et al. (1996) comprehensively review past literature from different methodologies employed in these studies. Several researchers have viewed TLA as a high-level designed process, including Cooper (1998). Other researchers, such as Hancock-Beaulieu et al. (1990), Griffiths et al. (2002), and Hargittai (2002), have advocated using TLA in conjunction with other research methodologies or data collection. These other methods include questionnaires, interviews, video analysis, and verbal protocol analysis.

In terms of strengths, log-file analysis provides a method of collecting data from a great number of users. Given the current nature of the web, transaction logs appear to be a reasonable and non-intrusive means of collecting user–system interaction data during the web information searching process from a large number of searchers. One can easily collect data on hundreds of thousands to millions of interactions, depending on the traffic of the website. One can also collect this data inexpensively. The costs are the software and storage. The data collection is unobtrusive, so the interactions represent the unaltered behavior of searchers. Finally, transaction logs are, at present, the only method for obtaining significant amounts of data within the complex environment that is the web.

### **LIMITATIONS TO LOG-FILE ANALYSIS**

Researchers have critiqued TLA as a research methodology (Blecic et al. 1998; Hancock-Beaulieu et al. 1990; Phippen et al. 2004). Kurth (1993) comments that transaction logs can only deal with the actions that the user takes, not their perceptions, emotions, or background skills, and further identifies three methodological issues with TLA: execution, conception, and communication. Kurth states that TLA can be difficult to execute due to collection, storage, and analysis issues associated with the hefty volume and complexity of the dataset (i.e., the significant number of variables). With complex datasets, it is sometimes difficult to develop a conceptual methodology for analyzing the dependent variables, from a positivist framework. Communication problems occur when researchers do not define terms and metrics in sufficient detail to allow other researchers to interpret and verify their results. This issue also occurs during the data collection period.

Certainly, any researcher who has utilized TLA would agree with these critiques. However, upon reflection, these are issues with many, if not all, empirical methodologies. Further, although Kurth's critique is still generally valid, advances in transaction logging software, standardized transaction log formats, and improved data analysis software and methods have addressed many of these shortcomings.

There are certainly limitations that do exist. Transaction logs are primarily a server-side data collection method; therefore, some interaction events are masked from these logging

mechanisms, such as when the user clicks on the back or print button on the browser software, or cuts or pastes information from one window to another on a client computer. Transaction logs also, as stated previously, do not record the underlying situational, cognitive, or affective elements of the searching process.

Another limitation is that there may be certain types of data not in the transaction log, individuals' identities being the most common example. An IP (Internet protocol) address typically represents the "user" in a transaction log. Since more than one person may use a computer, an IP address is an imprecise representation of the user. Search engines are overcoming this limitation somewhat by the use of cookies. In addition, there is no way to collect demographic data when using transaction logs in a naturalistic setting. This constraint is characteristic of many nonintrusive naturalistic studies. However, there are several sources for demographic data on the web population based on observational and survey data. From these data sources, one may obtain reasonable estimates of needed demographic data.

In addition, a transaction log does not record the reasons for the search, the searcher motivations, or other qualitative aspects of use. This is certainly a limitation. In the instances where one needs this data, transaction log analysis can be used in conjunction with other data collection methods. However, this invasiveness then intrudes on the unobtrusiveness that is an inherent advantage of transaction logs as a data collection method.

Finally, the logged data may not be complete due to caching of server data on the client machine or proxy servers. This is a relatively minor concern for web search engine research because of the method by which most search engines dynamically produce their results pages. For example, a user accesses the page of results from a search engine using the back button of a browser. This navigation accesses the results page via the cache on the client machine. The web server will not record this action. However, if the user clicks on any URL on that results page, functions coded on the results page redirect the click first to the web server, from which the web server records the visit to the website.

Overall, transaction logs are powerful tools for collecting data on the interactions between users and systems. Using this data, TLA can provide significant insights into user–system interactions, and it complements other methods of analysis by overcoming the limitations inherent in these methods. With respect to shortcomings, where feasible TLA can be combined with other data collection methods or other research results to improve the robustness of the analysis. Of course, although transaction logs many times "reside in the background" for most searchers, there are privacy concerns that the researcher must be aware of when using this method of data collection. Even with these shortcomings, TLA is a powerful tool for web searching research and the TLA process can be helpful in future web searching research endeavors.

SEE ALSO: ► Computer–User Interaction ► Grounded Theory ► Internet, Technology of ► Online Research ► Research Ethics, Internet Research ► Research Methods ► Search Engines

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## Logos and Rhetoric

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*Logos* (plural *logoi*) is a polysemous Greek term, which generally has been used in rhetoric to refer to the component of persuasion grounded in logic or reason as opposed to that based on emotion or character, although these distinctions are not entirely unproblematic. The Greek noun *logos* derives from the verb *legô* (to speak), and has many derivatives and cognates in several Indo-European languages. *Logos* is found infrequently in Homer (eighth century BCE), coming into wide usage only in the prose writers of the sixth century, with the primary meaning of a “speech” or “tale.” It quickly became a common Greek term, with many meanings, including “word,” “story,” “speech,” “reputation,” “ratio,”

“book-keeping tally,” “rumor,” “rule,” “explanation,” “argument,” and “reason.” *Logos* tends to signify uttered thought, rather than specific words; barbarians and Greeks are described as using different types of sound (*phônê*) or word (*rhêma*) to express the same *logos*. In its senses as both reason and speech, *logos* was used in ancient Greek to refer to that which distinguished humans from beasts. In much of Greek thought, rationality and speech were considered interdependent.

As long prose compositions were termed *logoi*, prose writers, including historians and those employed in the lucrative, if moderately disreputable, profession of ghost-writing speeches for law courts, were referred to as “logographers” (*logographoi*). A related compound, *logopoiios* (derived from *logopoiêô*, to write, invent, or compose stories or speeches), found in Herodotus (c. 484–425 BCE), Thucydides (c. 460/455–c. 399 BCE), Plato (427–347 BCE), and Theophrastus (c. 371–287 BCE), is used, inter alia, neutrally to signify a composer of prose stories or tales or pejoratively to indicate a spinner of tall tales.

Particularly significant for rhetoricians is Gorgias’ (c. 483–c. 375 BCE) paradoxical “Encomium of Helen,” which argues that Helen was not culpable because she did not leave her husband voluntarily, but was compelled by a superior force, being either abducted forcibly by Paris or overcome by the powers of love, fate, or persuasive speech. Gorgias emphasizes the power of *logos* (in the sense of language in general, speeches, or verbal persuasion) as deriving from its magical effect, which acts like a drug, on its hearers, and thus has the force of a compulsion (→ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic).

The term *logos* takes on distinct technical senses in fourth-century BCE rhetorical theory. Plato uses *logos* for a speech or account as a whole, a sentence, and a supporting reason or argument, as well as for reason in general, and opposes *logos* to *muthos*. For Alcidas (fourth century BCE), *logos* refers to a speech, and *enthymeme* to an argument (of any sort). In *On Sophists*, Alcidas distinguishes those who produce written speeches (*logographoi*) from true orators, who speak *ex tempore*.

Aristotle (384–322 BCE) defines *logos* as “meaningful speech (or sound) [*phônê sêmantikê*]” (*On Interpretation* 16b), and in his *Prior Analytics* calls a syllogism a type of *logos*. Often cited by rhetoricians is Aristotle’s tripartite division of intrinsic proofs: “The proofs provided from the *logos* [either “speech” or “argument”] are of three types; they are those from the moral character [*êthos*] of the speaker, those from disposing the hearer in a certain manner [*en tô ton akroatên diatheinai pôs*], and those from the *logos* itself [*en autô tô logô*], in so far as it demonstrates or appears to demonstrate something” (*Rhetoric* 1356a1). In contemporary rhetorical theory, this is often described as proof from “*êthos*, *pathos*, and *logos*” with “*logos*” being defined as abstract reasoning, although such an interpretation depends on reading back Aristotle’s subsequent explanatory material into this passage. For Aristotle, intrinsic rhetorical proof appears based on abstract and universal reason (e.g., the relationship of lesser to greater or part to whole) rather than fact, the latter being antecedent to the activity of the orator and thus extrinsic to the speech (→ Rhetoric, Greek).

The *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, usually attributed to Anaximenes of Lampsacus (fl. 380–320 BCE), specifies: “There are two types of proof: there are those drawn from the deeds and persons and words [*logôn*] themselves, and those supplementary to the things said and things done” (1428a17), a distinction similar to the one Aristotle makes between intrinsic (*entechnos*) and extrinsic (*atechnos*) proof.

In Hellenistic and later rhetoric, the derivative terms *logismos* (rare in the sixth century, but widely used in the fifth and subsequently) and *logikos* (only becoming common in the fourth century) are used to indicate reasoned argument, with *logos* most often referring to either a speech as a whole or a distinct unit of speech, e.g., an enthymeme being defined as a type of *logos* (*Anonymous Seguerianus* 157–159).

Another important use of the term *logos* found throughout antiquity is the antithesis between words (*logoi*) and deeds (*erga*). The best known Homeric instance of this contrast does not actually use the term *logos*; Phoenix describes himself as having taught Achilles to be a speaker of words [*muthôn*] and doer of deeds [*ergôn*]” (*Iliad* 9.442–443). From the classical period through late antiquity and beyond, this distinction appears in rhetorical theory (and often in oratorical practice) as the *logoi-erga topos*, which contrasts (mere) words (*logoi*) with deeds (*erga*).

*Logos* as a rhetorical term was not carried over into Latin or vernacular rhetorics to any great degree until the revival of Aristotelian rhetoric and logic in the nineteenth century. It became increasingly important with the separation of Communication departments from English in the United States in the early twentieth century, with the concomitant self-definition of Communication Studies as a field rooted in the classical traditions of oral communication and argument. Argument from “*logos*”, in the sense of logic or reason, is clearly distinguished from that from “*ethos*” (the character of the speaker), and “*pathos*” (the emotions of the audience) in twentieth- and twenty-first-century American neo-Aristotelian speech and writing pedagogy, and the three Greek terms are routinely used in Anglophone rhetorical theory and instruction.

SEE ALSO: ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Logic ► Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic

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## **Long-Distance Relationships**

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Relationships are considered long-distance when opportunities for communication are restricted due to geographic constraints. Long-distance relationships (LDRs) are of interest given the implicit assumption in much interpersonal scholarship that relationships

without frequent face-to-face contact are not as “close” as those with such contact (Stafford & Merolla 2007). LDRs exist in opposition to norms for shared residences and/or proximity among romantic partners, family members, and close friends. LDR participants hold expectations for continued close involvements and usually anticipate residing in geographic proximity at some future time (Stafford 2005).

LDRs occur due to educational or career pursuits, employment demands, military deployment, incarceration, divorce, or nonmarital parent-child arrangements. The number of LDRs is unknown. Outside of the military, long-distance families are not officially recognized. Estimates indicate that approximately 50 percent of college students may be involved in long-distance dating relationships (LDDRs). When considering friendships, sibships, and adult-child-parent relationships as forms of LDRs, most people in the US are likely involved in at least one LDR (Stafford 2005).

The idea that LDRs are relationships with restricted contact has been used to expand the conception to include “cross-residential” relationships (Stafford 2005). These occur when families span households (e.g., bi-nuclear or some multigenerational families) although distance between households might be minimal. Proximity or shared residences are not goals for these and many other LDR forms such as friendships (→ Friendship and Peer Interaction), and some romantic couples prefer a continued LDR status (Levin & Trost 1999).

In western research, study of LDR family interactions began with deployed military personnel (Hill 1949). Hill reported roller-coaster-like cycles of separation and reunion, and identified family coping patterns. Though couples have long been apart due to traditionally male-dominated occupations, the 1970s saw the rise of “dual-residence dual-career” marriages, prompting research into “commuter” couples. Such couples choose to live apart, maintaining two residences, so both can pursue career opportunities that would be limited otherwise (Gerstel & Gross 1984). Although long-distance friendships and kinships have received some attention, most research in the fields of communication and relational studies has focused on heterosexual LDDRs, beginning with Stephen (1986).

The main focus of western research on LDRs is maintenance during separation (→ Relational Maintenance). Among family and romantic relationships, attention has been given to adjustment and coping during separation, the effects of parental absence (with recent emphasis on maternal absence), the use of new communication technologies during separation, and issues encountered with reunions. Among extended family and friendships, research has addressed the strength of ties or the ability of the relationship to meet needs. Stress and coping difficulties have been presumed to be inherent in romantic LDRs, though this has been questioned in regard to civilian dual-residence and LDDRs. These couples have reported benefits of LDRs alongside difficulties. Despite an emphasis on maintenance during separation, recent research indicates that LDDRs are at risk for dissolution upon reunion. Findings indicate that LDDRs are as satisfying and stable as geographically close relationships; LDR friendships are as strong as proximal ones; and extended family networks meet numerous emotional support needs. Geographic distance has generally been considered the defining feature of LDRs. However, there is difficulty in operationalizing LDRs. Long-distance status has been considered a given for some populations (deployed military personnel). For other romantic relationships, long-distance status has been based on participants’ reports of the distance between them, of

their residence in different cities, of the number of nights a week they spend apart, their inability to see each other every day, or simply their own self-classification as long-distance. Parameters for defining other types of LDRs are more ambiguous.

Most research has been atheoretical (however, see Sahlstein 2006). Focus has been on the frequency and mode of interaction, including computer-mediated communication (→ Mediated Social Interaction). Little work has examined the content, nature, and substance of communication (→ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends). Consideration of the means of connection aside from communication (e.g., rituals and cognitions; → Imagined Interactions), additional influences in the lives of the LDR participants (e.g., proximal networks; Stafford 2004; → Social Networks), and markers of success aside from relationship stability is warranted. Study of the maintenance of relationships and issues faced by individuals separated by incarceration, national borders, and foster care arrangements, and populations beyond military personal or middle-class commuter couples and college students is also needed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Friendship and Peer Interaction  
▶ Imagined Interactions ▶ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Online Relationships ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Sibling Interaction ▶ Social Networks

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# Longitudinal Analysis

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For many inquiries in the field of communication research, the analysis of change is of great value. Classic diffusion research in the communication sciences deals with the diffusion of information in society, and it is important to know the dynamics of the diffusion process, as well as the factors that influence it (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). Media research considers media effects mostly as individual changes caused by media content. Therefore, methods that allow the analysis of these changes are of particular importance in communication research.

There is a fundamental distinction between cross-sectional studies and longitudinal studies. In the case of cross-sectional studies, a → survey is conducted only once. Longitudinal studies, on the other hand, are those studies in which the same survey is conducted several times at certain intervals. Only this second type of study allows for a dynamic approach, a longitudinal analysis. There are two distinct types of longitudinal analysis: trend studies and panel studies. The difference between these two types of surveys is that a trend study employs different respondents with each survey, while a panel study implies the use of the same respondents each time for a multiple survey. In other words, a trend study employs a new sample for each measuring time, while a panel study employs the same sample over a series of measuring times. The two different types of longitudinal studies have a variety of advantages and disadvantages, and accordingly call for, as well as permit, different analytical techniques.

## TREND STUDIES

Trend studies can be conducted in relatively quick succession. This helps establish with relative accuracy the point in time when changes of specific variables occur. It is also possible to conduct an analysis according to sub-groups, and to examine in which social groups the development shows a greater dynamic. A larger number of data measured at regularly spaced intervals allows for the application of → time-series analysis.

However, trend studies have certain limitations. Trend studies draw new independent samples at different points in time, which, nevertheless, have to come from the same population. This does not permit the study of changes at an individual level, but only at an aggregate level. It is therefore impossible to assess which people have changed their opinion over time. Moreover, there may be differences between the samples drawn at different survey times that have nothing to do with changes in the population, but rather stem from time-related variations in the effect of the sampling error. Fluctuations between different survey times may therefore be coincidental. Pertinent statistical analysis may, however, help establish the likelihood of these coincidental differences, and the degree of certainty with which one may interpret the differences found.

## PANEL STUDIES

Panel studies have traditionally played an important role in communication research. This probably has to do in part with the fact that some of the pioneering communication studies are panel studies, the first among them being *The people's choice* (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948, 1st pub. 1944; → Lazarsfeld, Paul F.). Their importance, however, is due particularly to the considerable strategic advantages this survey method offers for communication research (Lazarsfeld & Fiske 1938; Lazarsfeld 1940).

The repeated questioning of the same respondents allows for the collection of more data about them. It also permits the building of trust between surveyor and respondent, which in turn may make the posing of more intimate questions possible (→ Interview). There is greater reliability in the assessment of changes, since in the comparison of two independent samples the selection error, which can have a different effect on each of the samples, always has to be taken into account. Panels are an especially useful method to help answer central questions in the communication sciences. Measuring data at certain intervals facilitates the analysis of changes at the individual level as well as the statistical analysis of the conditions under which such changes are most or least likely to occur. This is particularly important for media effects research.

### Advantages of Panel Studies

Panel studies have an important analytical advantage in that they can uncover gross changes. As a rule, social situations are subject to opposing forces. The actual dynamic of social changes can therefore be grossly underestimated. A marketing campaign, for example, may lead to a better assessment of the product in question by a sector of the population while causing negative reactions in another sector. If in this case we compare two independent samples, we will underestimate the actual change caused by the marketing campaign. Only a panel that measures individual changes will provide a clear picture. The example given here shows this clearly (Tables 1 and 2). Table 1 shows the net change in a similar way to a trend study. The picture is one of relative stability. If we consider the sum of all changes, the net change amounts to no more than 5 percent.

An analysis based on individual changes as provided by a panel study provides a more dynamic picture (Table 2). The diagonal thereby represents stability, i.e., here we find the respondents whose position has not changed. This shows that only 62 percent of respondents did not change their opinion. The respondents in the other categories have all changed their opinion. This shows clearly that substantial fluctuations can occur in a seemingly very stable situation. Only in the sum do these fluctuations cancel each other out almost completely. These analyses stress the ways in which panel studies can improve the description of social dynamics.

Panels are generally considered to be a useful method for the analysis of causal relationships. In this context we have to distinguish between two different types of questions. On the one hand, there are the quasi-experimental inquiries (→ Experimental Design). These are analyses that evaluate hypotheses about the influence of one variable on another. Typical questions in media research, for instance, are concerned with assumptions regarding the influence of television on particular cognitive patterns. In this

**Table 1** Analysis of trends in attitudes toward the census  
 Question: "In general: are you in favor of or against the census?"

	Panel wave 1	Panel wave 2	Net change wave 2 and wave 1
In favor	25	26	1
Against	35	33	2
Undecided/no answer	39	41	2
Total	100	100	5

N = 1062, German Census Panel, 1986 to 1987, wave 1 = Jan/86, wave 2 = Apr/86.

**Table 2** Analysis of the actual change in the panel  
 Question: "In general: are you in favor of or against the census?"

	Wave 1		
	In favor (%)	Against (%)	Undecided/no answer (%)
Wave 2	16	3	7
	2	22	9
	7	10	24

N = 1062, German Census Panel, 1986 to 1987, wave 1 = Jan/86, wave 2 = Apr/86.

case the analysis follows experimental research models, in that one differentiates two groups, one of which has, for example, watched relevant television programs while the other one has not. The research focus here is on potential differences in the development of these two groups. This type of process is of course only quasi-experimental, since first of all these groups are self-selected and, moreover, the researcher has not manipulated the experimental stimulus.

On the other hand, the panel study is useful in deciding between conflicting hypotheses about the causal relationship between two correlated variables. In this context the panel study essentially follows the logic that causal relationships can be transferred over into time-related ones, and that cause precedes effect. This means that from the occurrence of the cause, predictions can be made regarding the future effect, while occurrence of the effect does not allow a prognosis regarding a future occurrence of the cause. Thus, if the condition of the variable *Y* at the point in time  $t + 1$  can be more easily predicted from the condition of the variable *X* at the point in time  $t$  than the other way around, then *X* is considered the cause and *Y* the effect. Pertinent analytical procedures based on this logic are, for example, Lazarsfeld's 16-fold table (1972), Coleman's calculation of transition probabilities (1964), and the cross-lagged panel-correlation analysis (CLPC; see Campbell 1963; Campbell & Stanley 1963). This last one can be considered to be the standard method in causal analysis in panel studies (McCullough 1978).



CLPC analysis compares the time-lagged correlations of the variables. Its purpose is to find out whether the relationship between variable  $X$  at time  $t$  and variable  $Y$  at time  $t + 1$  is stronger than the relationship between  $Y(t)$  and  $X(t + 1)$ . If it is true that  $X(t)Y(t + 1) > Y(t)X(t + 1)$ , then  $X$  is considered to be the causative variable. However, it is important to calculate only cross-correlations that have been adjusted for the autocorrelation of the respective dependent variable. Otherwise the stationary correlation at time  $t$  influences the result.

### **Problems with Panel Studies**

A problem with panel studies is that the method requires a greater willingness to cooperate on the part of the respondents. They have to be available for repeated questioning and give their permission for their private address information to be collected. It is often the case that respondents do not take part in all surveys, so that the sample size progressively decreases. This phenomenon is called panel mortality. Panel mortality presents a problem for two reasons. On the one hand, the first sample has to be substantial to ensure it is still large enough at the end of the study. On the other hand, panel mortality presents a serious problem if dropouts are not coincidental but systematic. In such cases panel mortality distorts the sample results.

The terms “panel effect” and “conditioning effect” describe the phenomenon that respondents change their answers due to repeated questioning in the panel. We distinguish two types of panel effects: those in which respondents actually change their position and those in which they merely change their answering behavior. In the first case we have to assume that respondents may have become more critically aware or sensitive regarding the topic of the survey or that they may have become more stable in their opinion. There are very few studies concerning these effects. As a rule, these “conditioning effects” are considered to be very small (Holt 1989). In the second case, it is assumed that the quality of the answers has improved (Waterton & Lievesley 1989). The respondents learn the requirements of the survey interview procedure and build up trust in the surveyors. This can be seen on the whole as a positive effect, but it can also have negative consequences. If the quality of answers improves, this also means that change cannot be assessed with precision. If change occurs we do not know whether it is due to an actual change or merely to the fact that answers have become more precise.

SEE ALSO: ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Experimental Design ► Interview ► Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ► Survey ► Time-Series Analysis

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# M

## Magazine

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No other popular mass medium rivals magazines for timelessness, permanence, and scope. Magazines reflect and mold the issues, opinions, and trends of the present; they also interpret and shape society's collective memory of the past (→ Collective Memory and the Media). Although critics fret about celebrity journalism and advertising pressure on editorial content, the diversity of magazines makes them a voice for the old and young, men and women, liberals and conservatives, the mighty and the marginalized.

Consumer magazines cover a broad array of topics of interest to the general public. They can be divided into general-interest magazines, which appeal to broad readerships, and special-interest magazines, which target niche → audiences. Trade magazines, also known as specialized business magazines or business-to-business magazines, serve specific industries and professions. Uses-and-gratifications studies indicate that readers of trade magazines and news weeklies prefer insight and information, while readers of consumer magazines seek diversion (→ Uses and Gratifications). For many readers, magazines play a social role, constructing a community or affinity group in which they consider themselves members. Magazine editors, in turn, stay attuned to their readers. Major publishers conduct extensive research so they can tailor content to readers' needs and interests (→ Markets of the Media).

Histories of the American magazine by Frank Luther Mott (1930) and Theodore Peterson (1964) established periodicals as a legitimate field of scholarly inquiry (→ Magazine, History of). More recently, Norberto Angeletti and Alberto Oliva (2004) offered a detailed analysis of eight history-making magazines: *Time*, *Life*, *People*, *Reader's Digest*, *National Geographic*, *Der Spiegel*, *Paris Match*, and ¡*Hola!* David Abrahamson's (1995) benchmark anthology of *The American magazine* sets forth theoretical and methodological issues. Content analysis, the most popular approach to this area, provides insights into the characteristics and meaning of magazine articles and advertisements (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). Historical, feminist, visual culture, and other perspectives seek to understand different dynamics, such as the decline of a magazine or the relationship between an editor's opinions and a magazine's content.

Magazines mirror the social, political, and economic values of their time and place. By positioning their subjects in a specific time period, scholars draw connections among

a publication's producers, content, and environment. Intellectual historians have traced successful magazines to dynamic visionaries, such as Time Inc. co-founder Henry Luce and *Cosmopolitan* editor Helen Gurley Brown. Social historians have examined the interaction of economics and society (→ News Magazine, History of). The decline of many popular general-interest magazines in post-World War II America, for example, has been attributed to competition from television, poor management, and failure to adapt to a changing readership (Abrahamson 1996). Research on the economic forces that shape the magazine industry focus on the business aspects of publishing, such as emerging technologies, revenue streams from advertising, subscriptions, and newsstand sales, and gender as a factor in → marketing and readership (→ Gender and Journalism; Gender: Representation in the Media). Joan Barrell and Brian Braithwaite (1988) view women's magazines in the United Kingdom from a business perspective, while Ann Gough-Yates (2002) traces changes in production, advertising, and marketing practices, and analyzes how a variety of titles have fared in the global marketplace.

Historians first explored the role that gender plays in the positioning of editorial content and advertising, especially during the nineteenth century. Although scholars have begun to examine the relationships between gender and quantitative measures of magazine publishing, such as circulation, publication frequency, and advertising costs, much research about current trends appears in industry reports and trade journals. Most studies of *gender role portrayals in magazine* advertising have focused on US publications, thus limiting generalizations about their effects (→ Advertising). Traditionally, women appeared as entertainers, as decorative objects, or in stereotypical roles, for example as mothers, homemakers, and teachers. Although females today are also shown in occupational roles, they are still often depicted in sexually explicit ways (→ Women in the Media, Images of; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). Portrayals of males have shifted from stereotypical businessmen and servicemen to more varied roles – as decorative objects, as entertainers and sports figures, and in family-oriented roles, such as washing dishes or doing laundry.

Gender role portrayals in international magazine advertisements also reveal cultural values, biases, and → stereotypes. In some countries, men and women are more likely to be portrayed in decorative roles, while in others they appear in recreational and family roles. Stereotypes cut across national borders. Women are generally portrayed as more concerned with appearance than men and are not depicted as product authorities. Advertisements rarely feature older models, even in magazines targeted at older readers or in Asian countries where the elderly command respect.

Academics debate whether international advertisers should adapt their messages to *reflect cultural differences* in their target markets or standardize their → brand for a more homogeneous global market. US advertisers generally tailor messages to the magazine's editorial mission and target audience. In the tug-of-war between advertising pressure and editorial neutrality, for example, magazines that advertise cigarettes tend to shy away from articles about health issues associated with smoking (→ Advertising, Cross-Cultural).

Scholars pay a great deal of attention to the *depiction of young women*, especially in terms of socialization, body image, and ideal body shape (→ Body Images in the Media). Janet Cramer's (2002) bibliographic essay describes how a lot of research about US women's magazines concentrates on representations of identity. Several studies of sports

photographs reinforce the sexual differences between female and male athletes, with an emphasis on the body aesthetic (→ Photojournalism). Magazine articles tend to reinforce stereotypes of older women by portraying them more often in a negative light (as slow or helpless) than in a positive one (as trustworthy or wise).

Analyzing non-US magazines can enhance the potential for cross-cultural comparisons. Studies of images of Soviet women, Japanese women, and British women illustrate how a particular socio-political environment might affect meaning and content for readers (Cramer 2002). Other potential topics for cross-cultural comparisons include censorship issues, political posturing of the press, and social issues like AIDS.

While newspapers practice daily, fact-based, deadline-driven journalism generally rooted in a geographic area, international licensing and joint ventures have fostered the spread of magazine brands around the globe. Their diverse subject matter, thoughtful analysis, depth of coverage, breadth of information, and engaging presentation make magazines more complex than newspapers – and harder to throw away. In today's rapidly changing media world, these enduring qualities will help insure their survival.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Advertising, Cross-Cultural ► Audience ► Body Images in the Media ► Brands ► Collective Memory and the Media ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Gender and Journalism ► Gender: Representation in the Media ► Magazine, History of ► Marketing ► Markets of the Media ► News Magazine, History of ► Photojournalism ► Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ► Stereotypes ► Uses and Gratifications ► Women in the Media, Images of

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# Magazine, History of

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A “magazine” is a type of periodical characterized by entertaining and miscellaneous matter written by more than one author, often with illustrations. It is usually distinguished from a newspaper by containing less news coverage and by a lower frequency (weekly, monthly, or less). In the nineteenth century magazines were distinguished from reviews or quarterlies by an emphasis on light entertainment, and by the inclusion of → fiction. From around 1910 the term “little magazines” came to denote low-circulation periodicals produced by and for the avant-garde. Since the twentieth century, “magazine” has been used above all to denote entertainment periodicals with a high visual content.

## TYPES OF MAGAZINES

There are various ways of classifying magazines. The closest to the core meaning of “magazine” for most people today comprise the expensive “glossies” on high-quality, glossy paper. These promote consumer culture, sometimes with global reach and national variations (*Cosmopolitan* [1886–], *Vogue* [1892–], *GQ* [1958–], *Time Out* [1968–], *NME* [1952–]). Related but usually less glamorous are the highly specialized or local publications such as *Book and Magazine Collector* (1984–), *Kent Life* (UK, 1962–), and *Metropolis* (Tokyo, 1994–). They mainly derive profits from advertising revenue.

Glossies are often differentiated from “pulp,” printed on low-quality wood-pulp paper. These latter comprise mainly cheap mass-market fiction magazines, and derive profit from high circulation. They vary between themselves as much as the glossies, from the story papers aimed at older people, such as the various national versions of *Reader’s Digest* (1922–) or the Scottish *People’s Friend* (1869–), to the energetically illustrated Filipino *Liwayway* (1922–) aimed at the general public or the youth-targeting British *Boy’s Own Paper* (1879–1967), *Magnet* (1908–1940), and *Peg’s Paper* (1919–1940). Such magazines often elicit readers’ contributions to keep down costs. The term “pulp,” however, mainly refers to 1920s–1950s periodicals such as the American science fiction *Amazing Stories* (1926–2005) or the “hard-boiled” fiction *Black Mask* (1920–1951).

Other categorizations of magazine may be made based on the demographic of the target audience (“lads,” “girl teens,” “computing,” “football,” and so on) and/or on the genre of material covered (e.g., *Argosy* [1882–1978], an American “sweat” which ran men’s adventure stories). “Trade” magazines (e.g., the *Builder* [1842–], the *Grocer* [1862–1978]) and, more recently, those associated with specific retail outlets can be thought of as further sub-categories of the demographic model. Comics and Japanese manga, although strictly a subset of magazine, are usually dealt with separately (→ Comics).

These categorizations evolved historically and are culturally specific, depending on printing and paper-production technologies, distribution capacities, work and leisure practices, and high standards of living and literacy rates. For this reason, magazines are principally read and produced in the industrially developed world, with the USA, UK, Germany, and Japan among the highest consumers.

## HISTORY

There is no exact equivalent for “magazine” in other languages unless the word and meaning are directly imported from English, such as in German or French. While related words may be used to translate it, they almost always have different associations (e.g., *rivista* in Italian and *zasshi* in Japanese indicate both “magazines” and academic journals).

“Magazine” derives from an Arabic word denoting a storehouse and came to have its common meaning from being used metaphorically. Book titles had used “magazine” before (e.g., Robert Ward, *Animadversions of Warre; or, a Militarie Magazine . . .* [1639]), but the *Gentleman’s Magazine* was the first periodical to claim the word for itself. In the advertisement for its first issue (January 1731) it justified its title by claiming that it “treasured up, as in a Magazine, the most remarkable Pieces” copied or abridged from texts then being printed in Britain.

While the *Gentleman’s Magazine* is often stated to be the first magazine as regards format, it imitated previous periodicals, most notably the *Gentleman’s Journal* (1692–1694) and the *Mercure galant* (1672–1724). Other predecessors include key periodicals of the Enlightenment: the German *Erbäuliche Monats-Unterredungen* (1663–1668), the British *Philosophical Transactions* (1665–), and the French *Journal des Sçavants* (1665–1753), which all provided abstracts of books for learned readers. The *Gentleman’s Magazine* did not take over the practices of what is erroneously called the first magazine, Richard Steele’s *Tatler* (1709–1711). This latter originally comprised an original single-author essay on a topic of the day (and so resembles a blog more than a magazine; → Blogger).

Despite its predecessors, the *Gentleman’s Magazine* may still usefully be regarded as the first magazine since it spawned many imitations, both within and outside London, including the *Scots Magazine* (1739), the *American Magazine* (1741), and Benjamin Franklin’s *General Magazine* (1741). Other colonies were slower in producing their own. The weekly *Gazette de commerce et littéraire* (1778–1779) has been called Canada’s first, succeeded a decade later by the English-language *Nova Scotia Magazine* (1789–1792). Colonial India already had its *Oriental Magazine or Calcutta Amusement* (1785) and Australia produced its *Australian Magazine* in 1821.

*Blackwood’s* (1817–1980) was a notable six-shilling British monthly that sought to differentiate itself from the then culturally dominant quarterly “reviews.” Running fiction and scurrilous series on topics of the day, it sustained a circulation of only a few thousand, its importance stemming from the social positions of its readers and contributors.

More influential in terms of → design and price was the *Penny Magazine* (1832–1845), the flagship publication of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge. It contained no fiction, but, making use of stereotype technology, graced its articles with high-quality woodcuts. It inspired many imitators, including the *Pfennig-magazin* (1833–1842) and *Le Magazin pittoresque* (1833–1914). In the 1840s newer, less didactic, rivals appeared – the fiction weeklies *Family Herald* (1842–1940), *London Journal* (1845–1928), and *Reynolds’s Miscellany* (1846–1868). These sustained circulations of 200,000–500,000 in the 1850s, enabled by the new railway distribution networks. Analogs included the American *New York Ledger* (1847–1903) and the Philadelphia *Saturday Night* (1865–1901); in New Zealand the *Colonists’ Family Herald* (1864–1865), the *Penny Auckland Journal* (1867), and *Saturday Night* (1874–1850); and in Australia the *Australian Journal* (1865–1965).



These magazines often ran the same serials, sometimes at the same time, indicative of the beginnings of a global Anglophone entertainment culture from the 1850s (→ Globalization of the Media).

Most of these proto-pulps used stereotype to combine images and words on the same page. More up-market British fiction magazines, such as the shilling *Cornhill* (1860–1975), favored full pages of text with separate high-quality prints. This was not the case in the US, where *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (1850–) and later *Scribner's Monthly* (1870–1930) integrated word and image by exploiting the new process of half-tone illustration. By 1880 *Scribner's* was pioneering a fluid layout whose influence spread across the Atlantic to the *English Illustrated Magazine* (1883–1913) and the famous *Strand* (1891–1950). By the 1880s photographs appeared regularly in the press, and celebrity in a modern form was established. The new formats were glamorous, and magazines that adopted them derived larger proportions of their income from adverts, providing clear precedent for modern glossies in their financial organization as well as their layout, and helping establish national markets for brand-name products (→ Brands).

Through their emphasis on conspicuous consumption, women's magazines were key in the evolution of the glossy. Originating in the eighteenth century, they were aimed at tiny elite groups until the Beeton's *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* (1852–1881), which appeared when living standards for the first time allowed large numbers of women to spend money on leisure, fashion, and the home. The oppositional feminist magazine began almost simultaneously, the American Amelia Bloomer having launched the *Lily* in 1849 (–1855). In Britain the most significant examples were the *Englishwoman's Journal* (1858–1864) and the *Englishwoman's Review* (1866–1910) (→ Women's Movement and the Media). In the 1880s long-lasting women's consumer periodicals were born, including, in the US, *McCall's* (1880–2002), *Good Housekeeping* (1885–), and the *Ladies' Home Journal* (1883–).

“Little magazines,” although they can be traced back to the American *Dial* (1840–1844) and the *Germ* (1850) of the British Pre-Raphaelites, are a phenomenon particularly of the early twentieth century. Promoting what the editors perceive as artistic quality over commercial expediency, and often “sponsors of innovation, the gathering places of . . . ‘irreconcilables’” (Hoffman et al. 1946, v), they rarely achieve a circulation of more than a few hundred. Wyndham Lewis's *BLAST: A review of the great English vortex* (1914) is a typical instance, with work by Ezra Pound and others set in a revolutionary modernist design. Although descendents survive (*Poetry Review* was begun in 1912), few have the potency of these early shockers. Japanese *dojinshi*, which took inspiration from little magazines, are issued by groups united by interest in minority arts, but they are not necessarily avant-garde. *Dojinshi* in turn inspired magazines such as *Blithe Spirit* (1991–), the organ of the British Haiku Society, which has a circulation of less than 300. Mutants of “little magazines” are the self-published fanzines of the late twentieth century (→ Zines).

The early twentieth century saw an intensification of trends already established in the nineteenth, with technological innovations such as color printing (established by 1914) and offset lithography enabling ever greater variety of layout. This in turn allowed the revitalizing of the notion of the “digest” for the busy citizen in the form of photojournals, e.g., *Time* (1923–), *Newsweek* (1933–), *Life* (1936–), and *Picture Post* (1938–1957).

While high national circulation remained important, reflected in the publishing industry's responses to new media (e.g., the British *Radio Times* [1923–] and the American *TV Guide* [1953–]), new kinds of niche magazine emerged, enabling more specific targeting of consumers by advertisers. Whereas hitherto technology had helped expand the magazine industry, television began to rival it. As a result, several of the major photojournals went under or specialized in in-depth reporting. Others, such as *Paris-Match* (1949–) and the German *Bunte* (1948–), became celebrity magazines relying on paparazzi photographs.

Advertising became ever more the bedrock of magazine finance. New techniques enabled the production of small print runs as cheaply as large, in turn rendering profitable the targeting of specialized audiences. The fragmentation of the market was counterpointed by the dominance of global publishing empires such as EMAP, IPC, and Hachette Filipacchi Medias. The size of these companies meant that experiments targeting new demographics could be made, e.g., *Computer and Video Games* (1981–2004), *Loaded* (1994–), and *Nuts* (2004–). However, privately owned and independent publishers remain strong. Some target specific audiences (e.g., *Gay News* [1962–] and *MS* [1972–]), whereas others, such as *Hello!* (1988–, an outgrowth of Spanish *¡Hola!* [1944–]) or those magazines owned by the German firms Bauer and Hubert Burda Medias, aim for mass-market profit.

Trade magazines (e.g., *PRWeek* [1984–], *Campaign* [1978–]) continue to occupy a major slice of the industry worldwide. Significant new developments in the late twentieth century lock magazines into consumerism ever more tightly. They include magazines aimed at customers of particular retail chains or services (e.g., the supermarket *Sainsbury's Magazine* [1993–]). These are glossy developments of nineteenth-century catalogues and publishers' "house magazines," such as *Macmillan's* (1860–1907). Magazines that form supplements to newspapers, the first of which was the *Sunday Times Magazine* in 1962, were introduced both to extend advertising space and to compete with glossies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Blogger ▶ Brands ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Comics ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Design ▶ Fiction ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Illustrated Newspapers ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ News Magazine, History of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Penny Press ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Women's Movement and the Media ▶ Zines

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## Magazine, Visual Design of

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Magazines use the aesthetic and rhetorical strategies of graphic design to produce style codes, which define the identity of the magazine as a recognizable title, and establish relationships with their audiences. The → magazine combines text and image to publish → news, information, editorial content, and → advertising. The structural components of the printed magazine include the cover (composed of masthead or title, and image), editorial and contents pages, single pages, and double-page spreads. Magazine design employs the underlying structure of the grid (including columns and modules) to order arrangements of typographic, photographic, and illustrative elements on the page. The formal strategies of → graphic design, including proportion, balance, symmetry, color, rhythm, sequence, scale, and movement, are employed to produce visually persuasive texts (Frost 2003; Hurlburt 1978). As historical documents, magazines provide a record of relationships between → visual representation, identity, and consumption, across a vast spectrum of lifestyles, societies, and cultures (→ Magazine, History of).

*Early magazine design*, the domain of printers, was aligned to the production and design of newspapers and ordered through column and grid structures (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of; Printer-Editors). Framed images, text columns, and framed advertising were some characteristic features. Specific typefaces and visual systems determined the distinct identity of the publication, an early feature that remains a priority in magazine design (→ Typography). Mid-nineteenth-century advances in *mass imaging technologies* opened the way for the inclusion of images in magazines and intaglio methods of reproduction were replaced by lithographic and photographic methods, reducing production time (→ Printing, History of). The pictorial news magazine emerged in the mid-nineteenth century as a result of these advances. The subsequent rise of the picture magazine in the twentieth century strengthened the relationship between photography and magazine design and secured the place of the photo essay as an influential mode of storytelling (→ Picture Magazines; Photojournalism).

The *Bauhaus* and successive schools of design formalized and disseminated an understanding of page design organized by the grid and constructed from units of typographic and other elements. The combination of photography and typography in the Bauhaus curriculum taught by Moholy Nagy, Beyer, and others, in the form of the

“typophoto,” influenced applied magazine design. The understanding of proportion, balance, symmetry, and scale drew on both experimental and classical principles explored by modernist avant-garde artists, designers, photographers, and filmmakers.

These visual languages and aesthetic strategies evolved into powerful modes of visual rhetoric used by magazine designers and art directors after World War I. The use of the *double-page layout* created opportunities for compositional and typographic experimentation with photomontage, collage, cropping, scale, asymmetry, color, and repetition. The sequential nature of the pages and the influence of the film sequence prompted magazine designers to explore visual movement, dynamism, and rhythm to generate fresh visual strategies.

European émigré designers in the United States applied this design knowledge in the rapidly growing areas of commercial magazine design and photography. The 1930s saw the rise of the *profession of the magazine art director*. Magazine design also flourished in postwar Holland and Switzerland, and distinct regional stylistic approaches evolved. Some of the iconic publishing houses and magazine titles were established in this period. Magazine production and circulation grew rapidly post-World War II, and innovative design flourished in this period. European approaches at this time were characterized by clarity and order, while the New York school advanced graphic communication through visual metaphor (Heller 2002; Moser 2003b; Owen 1991; Remington & Hodik 1989).

*Digital technologies*, including hardware, digital image and typographic software, and digital printing processes, have had a significant impact on both design production processes and aesthetics in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (→ Digital Media, History of). Aesthetic strategies have included the postmodern critique of the grid and rationalist approaches to design, closely followed by a neo-modernist reclaiming of the grid, order, and clarity (Leslie 2000; Moser 2003a; White 2003). Visual semiotic theory, now an integrated component of many design education programs, has highlighted the importance of specific style coding in identifying and communicating with magazine readerships (→ Semiotics). As graphic languages have multiplied and expanded to fill almost every possible identity niche, the magazine has proliferated as a commodity in its own right, its appeal linked to its design, production, and paper-based material qualities. As a pleasurable form of visual consumption, it represents and reproduces a wide spectrum of consumption-based lifestyles and identities, through targeted form, content, and advertising strategies. Magazines provide a symbolic link between the world of consumer aspiration and imagination and that of actual consumption. The advent of the web → zine and magazine design in networked and time-based environments enables new, multimedia delivery modes, which coexist with and supplement print media (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). The place of design in building reader communities remains central.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Magazine ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ News ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Semiotics ▶ Typography ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation ▶ Zines

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## **Mainstreaming**

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A corollary of cultivation theory, the concept of “mainstreaming” implies that heavy television viewing contributes to an erosion of differences in people’s perspectives that stem from other factors and influences. It is based on the argument that television serves as the primary common storyteller for an otherwise heterogeneous population. As the source of the most broadly shared images and messages in history, television represents the mainstream of the common symbolic environment into which children are born and in which we all live out our lives. From the perspective of cultivation analysis (→ Cultivation Effects; Cultivation Theory), television provides a relatively restricted set of choices for a virtually unrestricted variety of interests and → publics; programs designed for broad and diverse groups are watched across social and demographic boundaries. People who otherwise have little in common besides television are brought into the same dominant mainstream by cumulative heavy viewing (→ Audience).

Cultivation analysis, developed by → George Gerbner and his colleagues, is the study of the contribution of long-term, heavy television exposure to viewers’ conceptions of social reality. The *basic hypothesis* guiding cultivation analysis is that people who spend more time watching television are more likely than lighter viewers to see the real world in terms of television’s dominant and repetitive images and representations of life and society (→ Reality and Media Reality; Exposure to Television). In the late 1970s and 1980s, cultivation researchers and critics found that associations between amount of television viewing and people’s assumptions and perspectives were not uniform across demographic sub-groups. Associations were stronger in some groups and weaker or nonexistent in others. It was further observed that these variations could very often be explained by the concept of mainstreaming.

Among light viewers, people who differ in terms of background factors such as age, education, social class, political orientations, and region of residence tend to have sharply different conceptions of social reality regarding violence, interpersonal mistrust, gender-role stereotypes, and a broad range of political and social outlooks. Yet, among heavy viewers across those same groups, those differences tend to be much smaller or even to disappear entirely (→ Media Use by Social Variable).

For example, Gerbner et al. (1980) found that low-income respondents were more likely than those with higher incomes to say that “fear of crime is a very serious personal problem.” Among low-income respondents, the amount of television viewing was not related at all to perceptions of crime (→ Fear Induction through Media Content). In contrast, higher-income respondents as a group were less likely to think of crime as a serious personal problem, yet the heavy viewers among those with higher incomes were much more likely than the light viewers to be especially worried about crime. In other words, heavy viewers with higher incomes had the same perception as all of those with lower incomes; among heavy viewers, the difference stemming from income was sharply diminished. Similarly, among lighter viewers, those with more education were found to express more “progressive” attitudes about gender roles, but this difference disappeared among heavy viewers; more educated heavy viewers expressed the same “traditional” beliefs as did those with less education.

Subsequent studies have explored the *political implications of mainstreaming*. As television seeks to attract large and heterogeneous audiences, its messages are intended to disturb as few as possible. Therefore, television programs tend to “balance” opposing perspectives, and to steer a “middle course” along the supposedly non-ideological mainstream. In studies done over 20 years, it has been consistently found that heavy viewers are substantially more likely to call themselves “moderate” and to avoid labeling themselves as either “liberal” or “conservative.” The mainstream is not “the middle of the road,” however, in terms of the specific political attitudes that people take. Looking at such topics as racial segregation, homosexuality, abortion, minority rights, and other issues, the expected differences between liberals and conservatives are mainly evident among those who watch little television. Among heavy viewers, liberals and conservatives are much closer to each other than they are among light viewers. While mainstreaming bends toward more conservative positions on many political and social questions, it leans toward more liberal stances on economic issues (e.g., demanding more government spending on social services and programs), reflecting the influence of a marketing orientation and setting up potential conflicts of demands and expectations (→ Political Communication; Political Cognitions).

These patterns imply that cultivation is like a *gravitational process*, in which the angle and direction of the “pull” depend on where groups of viewers and their styles of life are with reference to the line of gravity, the mainstream of the world of television. Mainstreaming thus represents a relative homogenization and absorption of divergent views and a convergence of disparate viewers. Cultivation researchers contend that television contributes to a blurring of cultural, political, social, regional, and class-based distinctions, the blending of attitudes into the television mainstream, and the bending of the direction of that mainstream to serve the political and economic tasks of the medium and the institutions that subsidize it (→ Political Socialization through the Media).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Public ▶ Reality and Media Reality

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## **Malaysia: Media System**

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Malaysia is a federation of 13 states covering an area of 329,750 square km. A parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy, Malaysia shares a border in common with five of the 10 ASEAN countries, namely Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, and the Philippines. It has a population of 26.6 million, comprising the three major ethnic groups, Malay, Chinese, and Indian, and smaller ethnic minorities. The literacy rate is 93.5 percent, and newspapers are published in the Malay, English, Chinese, and Tamil languages. Radio and television programs are also broadcast in these languages.

The British had a great influence on the development of print and broadcasting in Malaysia, as well as the laws related to its press. It was the third European power to colonize Malaya after the Portuguese (1511) and the Dutch (1641). While the Portuguese and the Dutch confined their interests largely to Malacca (present-day Melaka), the British acquired the island of Penang in 1786, and expanded their influence to Singapore (1819), Malacca (1824), and from 1874 the Malay states. British interests introduced the press to Malaysia 200 years ago, and created a press system based on laws and regulations. The first newspaper, the *Government Gazette*, was published on March 1, 1806. Following the practice in the three East India Company presidencies in India, the editor had to submit proof sheets of his newspaper before publication to the government for censorship (Mohd Safar 1996).

The Printing Presses and Publication Act 1984, the law governing the press, can be traced to the Indian Act No. 11 of 1835, a law to repeal all laws and regulations pertaining to censorship of the press in Bengal, Bombay, and Madras which was extended to Singapore, Penang, and Malacca. The law required owners of *printing presses* to register their equipment, in effect creating press freedom in the colony (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). It was in force until 1920 when, following “lawlessness” involving vernacular newspapers, the Straits Settlements government in Singapore reintroduced licensing of the printing presses by turning it into Printing Presses Ordinance. A similar law was enacted in the Federated Malay States in 1924. Later, in 1939, the government further amended the ordinance to include the requirement of a publishing permit to counter Japanese → propaganda. These two landmark provisions continue to this day in Malaysia (Mohd Safar 1996).

In February 2006, some 67 publishing permits of newspapers were issued by the Ministry of Internal Security, a requirement under the Printing Presses and Publication Act 1984. Of these, 58 newspapers are in publication, five are still pending, three have ceased publication, and one was suspended indefinitely by the government for reprinting → caricatures of the prophet Muhammad previously published by a Danish newspaper (the owners themselves also decided to cease publication following the incident). There are 26 newspapers in Chinese, 14 in English, 14 in Malay, and 4 in Tamil. Most of the 34 newspapers are based in peninsular Malaysia, while nine are based in Sabah and 15 in Sarawak. Leading newspapers are the *Star*, the *Sun* (free newspaper), *New Straits Times* (in English); *Utusan Malaysia*, *Berita Harian*, and *Harian Metro* (in Malay); *Sin Chew Daily* and *Nanyang Siang Pau* (in Chinese); and *Tamil Nesan* and *Malaysian Nanban* (in Tamil). Political parties publish party newsletters using special permits. Such newspapers include the *Rocket* of the Democratic Action Party, the *Harakah* of the Pan Malaysian Islamic Party, and *Suara Sosialis* of the Parti Rakyat. The Keadilan Party also publishes a newsletter, *Suara Keadilan*, without a permit, as its application for one has not to date been approved by the government (→ Party Political Communication).

*Broadcasting* in Malaysia began in 1921 as an amateur effort by nearly a dozen wireless societies in Malaya. This early experiment led to the formation of the Radio Service Company of Malaya (RSCM) in 1933, and two years later the British Malaya Broadcasting Company (BMBC) was set up. After the Japanese occupation, the British set up Radio Malaya in 1946. Following the unsuccessful communist revolt in 1948, radio became an important source of communication with the people. *Radio* broadcasting has come a long way since then, with government and commercial radio stations operating side by side. In 2006, the Malaysian government operated 30 radio stations at national, regional, and local levels in various languages and dialects. There are also 26 commercial radio stations, including Astro's eight channels (Media Guide 2006).

Initially, *television* was owned and operated by the government through Radio and Television Malaysia (RTM). It started with black and white broadcast on December 28, 1963 which was followed by a second channel six years later in November 1969. With the introduction of an international standard satellite earth station in Kuantan, Pahang in 1970, a television link was established to Sabah and Sarawak (→ Satellite Television). Color television arrived on December 28, 1978. The private commercial station TV3 started in 1984, ending the government monopoly. Ten years later, in 1995, the government licensed



two more private TV stations: Metrovision and Mega TV. The first was a terrestrial UHF channel in the Klang Valley. The second was a 10-channel (initially five-channel) cable TV station. Astro, Malaysia's first satellite broadcasting station, with 23 TV channels and eight radio channels, joined the competition after Malaysia launched its first satellite, Measat 1, in January 1996, followed by Measat 2 a little later. Another commercial TV station with nationwide coverage, NTV7, began operation in 1998. Another station, Channel 9, was also approved but its operation was delayed. Metrovision (Channel 8) went through a hard time and was eventually bought over by Media Prima, but Mega TV closed down.

Broadcasting is now concentrated in *three major entities*, the government, the Media Prima group, and the Astro group. The government operates RTM1 and RTM2. Media Prima is the only group to own print publications as well as radio and television stations, i.e., TV3, Channel 8, Channel 9, and NTV7, while Astro owns the satellite channels. Astro doubled its number of channels in 2007 with the launch of the Measat-3 satellite on December 12, 2006, and its full commissioning on January 26, 2007. The new satellite not only increased the capacity of its key orbital location, but expanded the three Measats' "footprint" to over 70 percent of the world's population across three continents. Two newcomers in the broadcasting scene are MiTV (interactive TV) and Fine TV. MiTV is the second pay, or subscription, television channel in Malaysia, using digital terrestrial broadcast and IP or UHF technology, while Fine TV is an interactive on-demand pay television channel, the third in Malaysia, which went on air on December 26, 2006.

Most newspapers also have an online version but *Malaysiakini* is the only online newspaper apart from news portals and blogging sites. Malaysia's Multimedia Bill of Guarantee provides for no censorship of the Internet.

SEE ALSO: ► Caricature ► Communication Law and Policy: Asia ► Development Communication: Asia ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Party Political Communication ► Propaganda ► Satellite Television

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# Marginality, Stigma, and Communication

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Goffman (1963) popularized the concept of *stigma* through his well-cited book, *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. He defined it as “an attribute that is deeply discrediting,” which reduces the bearer “in our minds from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one” (Goffman 1963, 3). Stigmatizing attributes include “abominations of the body,” “blemishes of individual character,” and “tribal stigmas of race, nation, or religion” (Goffman 1963, 4). Current research supports the theory that people are stigmatized, and ultimately marginalized, because of mental and physical illnesses; behavior that is considered deviant, immoral, or illegal; and personal characteristics such as race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. Alonzo and Reynolds (1995), for example, noted that stigma associated with HIV or AIDS comes about because moral judgments often are made about personal responsibility and deviant behavior (e.g., gay sex or drug use) and because the disease is associated with contagion and death (→ Intercultural Communication in Health-Care).

Although Goffman referred to stigma in terms of attributes, he recognized that it was a *relational or social concept*; that is, stigma comes about through interactions with others. Several theoretical perspectives reinforce the idea that stigma has a social or group basis. In social identity theory, stigma is considered a function of the “widespread knowledge of negative stereotypes and devaluation of some social identities within the culture” (Crocker et al. 1998, 511). Based on intergroup perspectives (→ Intergroup Accommodative Processes), ingroup–outgroup categorization is the basis of the problem: people who are stigmatized are considered outgroup members because they are different from the ingroup or “normals” (Tajfel & Turner 1986). Stigmatized attributes often lead to individuals being excluded from the dominant group, or being *marginalized* (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication). Marginalization can lead to less access to society’s resources and “normal” channels of communication (e.g., Dutta-Bergman 2004).

*Fear of stigmatization* can interfere with the daily lives of people when these judgments are salient. For example, research has shown that people avoid health-care settings if they have an illness that might result in stigma. They also may avoid self-care behaviors that could reveal their illness to others. Rintamaki et al. (2006) found that perceptions of stigma were associated with treatment adherence problems for people living with HIV, which can lead to strains of the virus that are resistant to further treatment. They speculated that the association between nonadherence and stigma resulted because those individuals for whom stigma was salient were less likely to disclose their illness, which made them more likely to skip doses when they felt they needed to hide their medications.

Stigma can be the basis of *dysfunctional communication patterns*. Communication about outgroups may help strengthen the “us–them” thinking that reinforces stereotypes and stigma (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication). Pittam and Gallois (2000) reported that framing of HIV and AIDS among young adults in Australia involved language strategies that maximized intergroup differences, so that their ingroup was less

to blame for HIV transmission and their own risk was deemed less salient. Similarly, the use of racist or sexist speech can establish outgroup difference and ingroup preference. Communication with outgroups also may be perceived as problematic. Giles et al. (2003) found that young adults across a variety of cultures rated interactions with same-age peers (ingroup) more positively than those with family and nonfamily elders (outgroup). Intergenerational communication, therefore, can be problematic, even in cultures in which respect for elders is a commonly espoused value. Even within a traditionally marginalized group, ingroup/outgroup status can emerge (e.g., young gay men versus older gay men; see Hajek & Giles 2002).

Future research should focus on how individuals who are stigmatized or marginalized resist those processes. For example, as Rintamaki et al. (2006) suggested, strategies are needed to help patients overcome fear of stigma about their illnesses. Activist or self-advocacy behaviors may help people fight the effects of stigmatization (e.g., Brashers et al. 2004), and providing avenues for dialogue with marginalized communities may enhance opportunities for distributive justice (e.g., Dutta-Bergman 2004). Communication, therefore, can be a vector for stigmatizing behavior, but it also may hold solutions for managing stigma and discrimination. Continued research is needed to understand the complex connections between communication and stigma.

SEE ALSO: ► Intercultural Communication in Health-Care ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Social Stereotyping and Communication

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# Marital Communication

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Marital communication refers to the communication and social interaction that transpire between spouses. However, the study of marital communication is often informed by and extended to a range of couples in a “marriage-like” setting such as cohabiting and same-sex couples. In most industrialized societies as many as 90 percent of the population marry, and in many of these societies, up to 50 percent divorce. Many people feel that communication is the key to marital success, and therefore interest in marital communication is often undertaken to discover why some marriages fail and how to help couples maintain a happy and successful marriage.

## THEORIES ON MARITAL COMMUNICATION

There are several prominent theoretical viewpoints that guide the study of marital communication. *Behavioral* theories tend to focus on communication behaviors emitted by husbands and wives that are either rewarding or aversive. Behavioral theorists are also interested in how spouses might reward or punish each other for enacting certain communication behaviors. For example, if one spouse becomes verbally aggressive and the other responds by being conciliatory and compliant, a behavioral theorist would observe that the aggressive spouse’s aversive behavior was rewarded by the other and this in turn should prompt more verbal aggression in the future. Behavioral theorists will thus often rely on behavioral observation (also known as behavioral assessment or interaction analysis) as their primary methodological tool. Most behavioral observation is done in a laboratory setting where couples are instructed to engage in a conversation that is recorded and later analyzed.

*Cognitive* theories of marital interaction hypothesize that people hold certain beliefs and exhibit distinguishing perceptual and interpretive patterns that have a strong impact on the couple’s communication patterns and ultimately on the quality of their marriage. A robust finding from this research tradition is that distressed couples often exhibit maladaptive attributional patterns in response to each other’s behavior. That is, distressed couples tend to dismiss their partner’s positive behaviors to situational and transitory factors (e.g., “you just told me that you loved me because you want something from me”) and make stable and internal attributions for their partner’s negative behaviors (e.g., “you won’t agree with me on this point because you are a stubborn jerk”). Research guided by cognitive models of marital interaction often uses self-report measures to assess partners’ attributions for each other’s behaviors in real or imagined social interactions.

*Family systems* theorists believe that marital communication behavior can only be understood by analyzing the larger interpersonal and social context in which it occurs. Systems theorists assume that the communication behavior of spouses is *interdependent* and affected by *mutual influence* processes. They also assume that the whole of a marital relationship is more than just the sum of its parts. This is the basis for the concept of *emergent properties*. This implies that the quality of a marital relationship emerges from

the nature of the couple's communications, which amount to something more than the mere sum of all their messages. In research settings, systems theorists tend to rely on a combination of self-report and behavioral observation techniques, sometimes in the home setting and with other family members such as children present.

### TYPES OF COMMUNICATION BEHAVIORS

Researchers have been able to identify distinct types of marriages on the basis of couples' communication behaviors, and these different marital types all have comparable success rates. Fitzpatrick's (1988) couple typology describes three distinct types of marriages. *Traditional* couples hold conventional values toward their marriage, are interdependent, and are willing to engage in conflict when serious issues emerge. In contrast, *independent* couples are unconventional in their marital ideology, somewhat interdependent, and generally unrestrained in their conflict engagement. Finally, *separate* couples are the most autonomous and least likely to engage in conflict, while also holding somewhat conventional values. Of the three, separates are the least expressive. Gottman (1994) presented findings on a comparable typology of marriages, based largely on the nature of couples' conflicts. *Validators* tend to be mostly positive during their conflicts, showing mutual respect and validation of their partner's emotions and perspective. *Volatile* couples tend to be more explosive and argumentative, as they pursue marital conflicts with vigor while also expressing substantial positivity. In sharp contrast, *avoiders* prefer to minimize their disagreements and avoid discussing them altogether. Gottman observed obvious connections between his marital typology and that of Fitzpatrick (i.e., traditionals = validators, independents = volatiles, and separates = avoiders).

Like all other forms of interpersonal communication, marital communication is multidimensional. Perhaps the most obvious dimension of marital communication is the content of the talk exchanged between spouses. There are a number of *verbal* behaviors, such as complaining, validation, and criticizing, that have proven to be remarkably consequential for spouses' satisfaction with their marriage.

Another important dimension of marital communication is the couple's nonverbal behaviors (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of; Nonverbal Communication and Culture). How something is said is often more consequential for spouses than exactly what is said. *Nonverbal* behaviors such as eye contact, vocal tone, and facial expression can be powerful indicators of sarcasm, warmth, concern, or anger. These expressions appear to be a better indicator of couples' adjustment than the actual content of their speech.

The expression of *affect* or emotion between spouses also plays a vital role in marital communication. Communications that have a negative emotional tone reflective of anger, sadness, or anxiety are particularly common among distressed couples. Sentiment override occurs when a spouse has a particularly dominant emotional reaction to his or her partner's behavior, regardless of the actual content of that behavior. For example, distressed spouses will often respond negatively to virtually any communication from their partner, even those that appear to have an objectively positive tone.

The *cognitive* dimension of marital communication refers to how couples plan their own messages as well as how they interpret and explain the behavior of their partner. The

attributions that spouses make for each other's communication can exert a strong influence on marital satisfaction, particularly when spouses make maladaptive attributions for their partner's negative communication behaviors (Johnson et al. 2001).

Finally, researchers are beginning to document important *physiological* phenomena that occur during marital communication that are predictive of positive and negative marital outcomes. During marital conflict, some people become overwhelmed by arousal and emotion and are unable to effectively cope with this uncontrolled acceleration of arousal. This phenomenon is known as flooding and it portends a troubled future for the marriage. Conversely, if spouses are able to sooth their own or their partner's arousal during heated conflicts, they are more likely to experience positive marital outcomes. Chronic arguing with a spouse or feeling misunderstood by a spouse appears to put a great deal of wear and tear on the nervous system. This stress on the nervous system, known as allostatic load, appears to predispose people to a number of serious health conditions such as lowered immunological fitness and poor cardiac functioning.

### CONFLICT IN MARITAL COMMUNICATION

The study of *conflict* has a privileged status among many marital communication researchers because of the general belief that effective conflict management is vital to marital success and that excessive conflict is destructive to marriage. For this reason, much of what is known about marital communication comes from studies of conflict and problem-solving interactions. However, in many marriages conflict is not a very frequent occurrence. Furthermore, many marriages (e.g., volatile or independent) seem to function quite well despite relatively high levels of conflict. It is not conflict per se that is harmful to marital satisfaction, but how conflict is handled.

One particularly damaging pattern of marital communication is known as *demand-withdrawal*. This occurs when one spouse (the demander) presents a complaint or criticism to the other (the withdrawer) who becomes defensive and avoids discussion of the topic. The demand-withdrawal pattern of marital communication is reliably associated with marital dissatisfaction. Naturally, this pattern of communication makes it difficult for spouses to truly resolve their differences.

In distressed marriages, the expression of negative affect in one spouse often prompts a comparable expression of negative affect from the other. This phenomenon is known as *negative affect reciprocity*. One example of this is when couples engage in cross-complaining, whereby one spouse presents a complaint (e.g., "You don't ever take me out to dinner anymore") and the other spouse responds with a complaint of his or her own (e.g., "Well you can't ever save up enough money so we can afford to go out"). As spouses exchange criticism after criticism, negative emotions escalate and the content of the behavior associated with the criticism is never actually addressed. Instead, the spouses essentially move on to another topic. Satisfied spouses are able to calm their partner and to deflect negative affect by showing support, agreement, and validation, and sometimes even injecting humor into their problem-solving discussions.

Extensive research on married couples' conflict interactions has revealed an important *cascade of communication behaviors* that are highly predictive of later divorce. A

cascade is a sequence of events in which enactment of one stage of the cascade is associated with a very high probability of progressing to the next stage with little possibility of altering the sequence. Couples headed for divorce tend to exhibit a cascade of noxious communication behaviors that Gottman (1994) characterizes as “the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.”

The cascade starts with a behavior Gottman calls *complain/criticize*. This is the commingling of a complaint or expression of dissatisfaction with criticism of the partner. This criticism often takes the form of blaming statements with character attacks expressed in terms such as “you always” and “you never.” The next step in the behavioral cascade is *defensiveness*. When people get defensive in marital interactions they try to protect themselves from criticism and avoid blame by denying any responsibility for wrongdoing. When spouses refuse to accept responsibility for any wrongdoing, conflicts remain unresolved. The third link in this chain of corrosive communication behaviors is *contempt*. When people express contempt, they mock or insult their partner. Their communication sends the message “you are stupid” or “you are incompetent.” Contempt is also communicated nonverbally through a particular facial expression that involves pulling back one corner of the mouth and perhaps rolling the eyes. The last of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse is *stonewalling*. When people engage in stonewalling, they show no signs of receiving messages from their partner. Their facial expressions are often blank and they may not even make eye contact with their spouse. Often, stonewalling is a manifestation of emotional divestment from the marriage. People stonewall when they no longer care enough about the relationship to put forth the effort to engage in conflict.

Although marital communication research has identified a number of negative communication behaviors that are deleterious to marriage, certain positively toned behaviors can contribute to marital success. One is *spousal support*. Happily married couples will often exchange messages that show support, acceptance, and validation toward their partner – even during conflicts. Such expressions make partners feel valued and cared for, which has obvious benefits for marriage. Also, well-adjusted spouses tend to make *repair attempts* during their conflict interactions. Repair attempts involve efforts to tone down negativity during heated discussions by accepting responsibility, agreeing with a partner’s appraisal (e.g., “OK, you’ve got a point there”), and even using humor, or making statements that provide a temporary diversion from the conflict.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Marital Typologies ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction

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## Marital Typologies

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Marital typologies are classifications of marriages based on systematic differences among them. An assumption underlying the study of marital typologies is that within any given sample of marriages, a few discrete, meaningful types can be discerned. Marriages are categorized into types in order to understand the communication that occurs between husbands and wives (→ Interpersonal Communication; Marital Communication). Typologies of marriage range from vague, non-theoretical formulations to elaborate conceptual models that include empirically testable statements. Researchers have adopted logical, intuitive, and empirical approaches to classify marriages to explain changing family forms over time, to help therapists working in clinical settings with troubled couples, and to aid researchers reflecting post hoc on data collected for other purposes. The resulting typologies, which focus on qualitative dimensions of relationships, have been theoretically interesting and heuristically valuable in sorting marriages.

One of the early distinctions made in the literature, for example, is between *institutional and equalitarian marriages* (Adams 1971). Institutional marriages emphasize the value of law, conventional morality, and authority structures, whereas equalitarian marriages emphasize the values of mutual affection, common interests, and consensus. These two types differ fundamentally in the source of social control that regulates the marital relationship (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction). Levinger (1965) categorized marriages into one of four types based on placement of the *marriage as high or low on stability and satisfaction*. That is, the first dimension focused on the boundaries of a relationship or the strong or weak external stability forces holding a couple together. The second dimension involved marital satisfaction, happiness, or the attractions of a relationship. The resulting four types of marriages represented the first indication in the literature that marital stability and marital satisfaction might be independent of one another. Using clinical interviews collected for other purposes, Ryder (1971) developed a typology of marriage that included 21 marital types involving various combinations of 5 conceptual dimensions. One was the Competent Husband–Incapable Wife pattern. The husbands in this couple were viewed as effective whereas the wives were evaluated as unable to cope with the demands of life.



The scientific model for formatting typologies, however, involves both the rules for classifying cases as well as the actual assignment of empirical cases to particular types. Marital typologies follow the conventional logic of classification in that the categories on which the system is based must be mutually exclusive and comprehensive. In other words, the typology must permit every marriage to be assigned unambiguously to one and only one type. Furthermore, to advance the understanding of interpersonal dynamics of marriage, the attributes on which the discriminations are based need to include significant dimensions of marriage or those capable of explaining marital behavior and communication (→ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction).

*Monothetic classification schemes* for marriage are a yes/no affair. That is, a marriage is happy or unhappy; stable or unstable; traditional or nontraditional. Although this approach was appealing in the early stages of the work on marriage, it became clear that many characteristics of a marriage, however, are not simply present or absent but are those that the marriage possesses to a greater or lesser degree. Furthermore, simple discriminations along one or two dimensions did not capture the range and variety of marital styles. In contrast, *polythetic classification schemes* place individuals in the same type when they share a large number of characteristics. *Polythetic schemes* propose a series of important dimensions of marriage and subsequently allow the empirical clustering of dimensions to define the types of marriages. Fitzpatrick (1988) classified marriages according to three basic dimensions: ideology, interdependence, and philosophy of communication. These dimensions interact to form three different types of marriages: traditional, independent, and separate. Traditionals value sharing and companionship in the marriage and are capable of handling their disagreements. Independents engage in conflict, open expressions of positive and negative feelings, and bargaining. Separates maintain psychological distance in the marriage and avoid open conflict (→ Interaction; Relational Control).

Two key *methodological issues* emerge consistently in this research. The first issue concerns the aggregation of data from the individual to the couple level. That is, in describing marital types or systems, the unit of analysis is *the marriage*, which is not simply the sum of the individual behaviors or perceptions. The second issue is one of data structures and analysis. In dealing with data collected from the self-reported responses or the interaction of husbands and wives, the correlation/dependency in the data can affect the validity of the statistical tests, and must be taken into account in the model.

Typologies are of interest only if they can be associated in a predictive and explanatory way with a wide variety of communication behaviors and outcomes, aside from those that define the categories. This is the key direction for future research and theory.

SEE ALSO: ► Interaction ► Interpersonal Communication ► Marital Communication  
► Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ► Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ► Relational Control

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## Marketing

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Commonly, people associate selling and → advertising with marketing. In the old interpretation, this understanding of marketing was quite right, as marketing primarily comprised making a sale. But today, there is more to marketing than selling, promoting, advertising, and publicizing. Selling and advertising are only two of the many tasks of marketing management. Briefly, marketing is about “meeting needs profitably” (Kotler & Keller 2006). But although marketing can be summarized in such simple terms, there are many tasks behind it.

Today, marketing can be defined in the sense of market-oriented business leadership. This market orientation is characterized by all relevant activities and processes of the company that focus on consumers’ needs and wants (Esch et al. 2006). To focus on consumers and the market, it is one of the basic tasks of marketing to actually find out about relevant consumers’ needs and wants (Kotler 1967). Therefore, it is important to thoroughly analyze consumers. If marketers know consumers’ needs, the next step is to develop products and services that satisfy them (Drucker 1954).

### THE SCOPE OF MARKETING IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Marketers have to be very flexible, since markets are very dynamic. The management guru Peter Drucker (1954) once stated that a company’s winning formula for the last decade will probably be its undoing in the next decade. To be able to react to changes in the environment rapidly, it is important to permanently scan and monitor for signals of upcoming changes. In the twenty-first century, companies face changing customer values, which are observably getting more diverse. Even one and the same person can have different needs in different situations. The phenomenon of “*hybrid consumption*” is rapidly emerging. Firms try to react to specific needs by offering customized products. Obviously, this customization and segmentation leads to higher marketing costs and lower profit contributions of each brand and product.

Another challenge is *increased global competition*. In the wake of globalization and liberal markets, new competitors are penetrating the market (→ Globalization Theories). In particular, the liberalization of the Chinese market led to many new brands popping up. Also, western companies are trying to establish their products in new, attractive markets like China, with annual growth rates of about 10 percent (Pitsilis et al. 2004). This trend is intensified by new information and communication technologies like the → Internet, which make it easier to sell products worldwide (→ E-Commerce).

Along with a growing number of companies competing for customers, *communicating activities have soared*. Worldwide, there are more than 47,000 → radio stations and 21,000 → television stations (Lyman & Varian 2003). In addition, the Internet, events, sponsoring activities, product placement, and other types of below-the-line marketing are used to communicate with consumers.

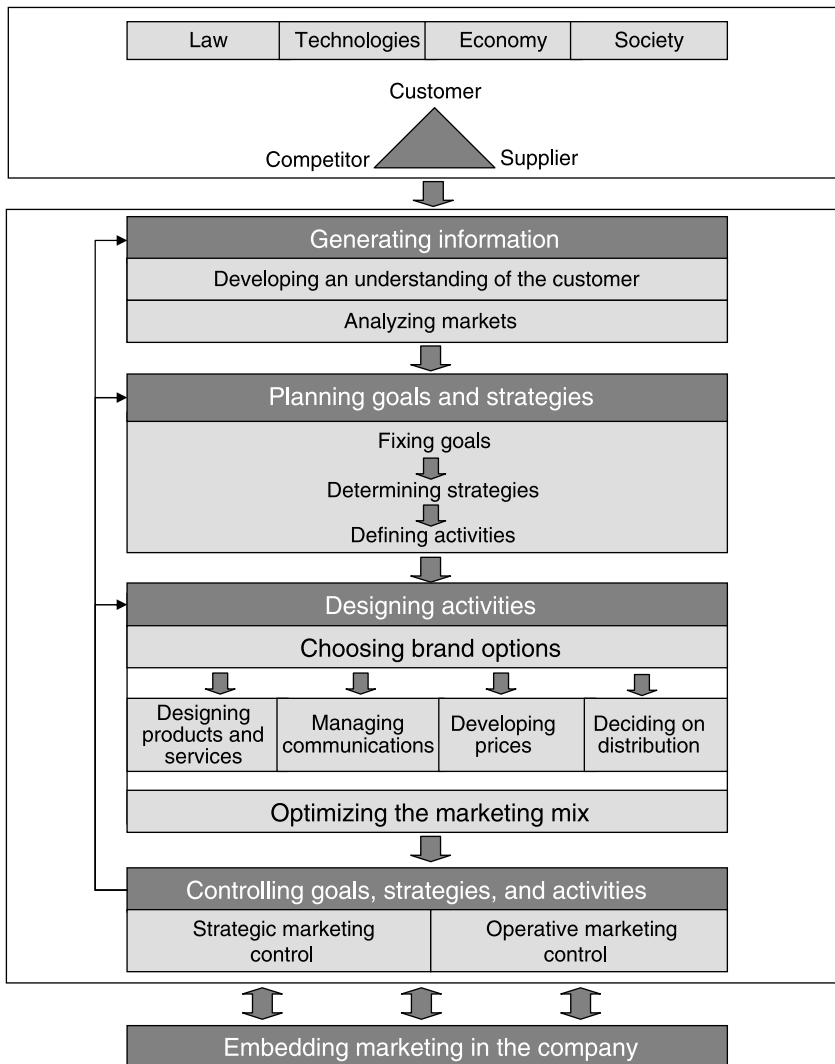
For consumers, the world has become more complex, because of too much information pelting down on them. Due to limited capacities to process information, considering all alternative products would lead to an → *information overload* (→ Information Processing). This trend is accompanied by products being outdated sooner (Lim & Tang 2006). In this environment, launching new products successfully is a real challenge. In 2002, around 27,000 new products were listed in food retailing stores in the USA. But after one year had passed, only half of those products were still on the market (Lim & Tang 2006).

## **DESIGNING MARKETING STRATEGIES**

As markets become more complex and dynamic, *systematic strategic planning* is more critical than ever and marketing management becomes even more important (Ansoff 1965). A marketing plan, as the core of marketing management, is the central instrument for directing, synchronizing, and coordinating all marketing activities. Figure 1 gives an overview of the marketing management process, which can be defined as planning, coordinating, and controlling all market-directed activities of a company (Esch et al. 2006).

First, it is important for marketers to develop an understanding of their customers. Without a deeper understanding of consumers' needs and wants, it is not possible to manage marketing successfully. Psychological processes in consumers' minds and social processes between consumers and their environment need to be analyzed and understood. This analysis is the basis for influencing consumers' decisions effectively. In a second step, information about the market needs to be generated, which means the general conditions of the market, the development of the market, and the company's current and potential competitors. These market conditions are best detected, described, and explained by market research. Based on this information, marketing activities can be specifically designed and the success of activities taken can be controlled by gathering relevant data.

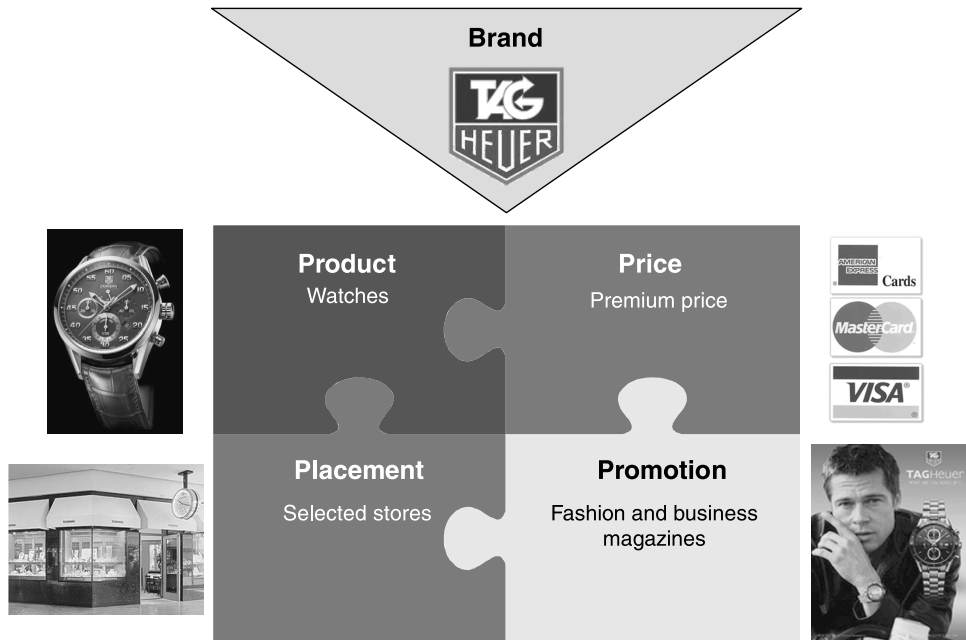
Based on this knowledge, goals and strategies must be determined. In this context, there are three levels that need to be planned systematically: (1) the marketing goal, which represents the situation strived for, (2) marketing strategies, i.e., the roads leading to that goal, and (3) marketing instruments necessary to "walk the road" (Esch et al. 2006). In a different determination, the first two levels are called "strategic marketing planning," since they lay out long-term goals, and target markets and value propositions on the basis of the markets' opportunities and threats. The lowest level represents the tactical side.



**Figure 1** An overview of the marketing management process

Here, marketing tactics, like product features, communication strategy, or pricing, are specified. Therefore, it is important to synchronize different instruments to meet the challenges of the market in an optimal way (Kotler & Keller 2006). After defining the goals and strategy, activities must be designed that enable the company to reach its goals. The classic set of marketing activities is summarized by the *4Ps* (*product, price, placement, promotion*), which are described in more detail below (McCarthy 1960).

In our understanding, the *4Ps* are the pillars of marketing, while → branding is its base, on which all marketing activities are built. Therefore, it is crucial to base marketing strategies on a thoroughly planned branding strategy (Esch et al. 2006; see Fig. 2). These activities need to be thoroughly designed and synchronized, for the whole is more than



**Figure 2** Integrated branding strategy

the sum of its parts (Esch et al. 2006). To meet consumers' needs, marketers need to adjust all instruments of the marketing mix to their target group (Borden 1964). They have to decide on what to sell, through which channels, at what price, and how they will give consumers information about the product and evoke a need for it.

To ensure that the activities taken help the company to achieve its goals, it is important to control activities, strategies, and goals regularly. Without monitoring their effectiveness, it is pointless to define goals. In this context, progress in the achievement of the company's objectives has to be measured. Besides controlling the effectiveness of strategies and activities, marketers should revise whether the marketing goals are still worth striving for or whether they are outdated (Esch et al. 2006).

To manage marketing efficiently, marketing should be embedded in the company. This embedment in the company comprises the operational as well as the organizational structure of the company. The organizational structure must be designed in such a manner that it supports an optimal allocation of work, competencies, and responsibilities. The crucial point of this organizational structure is its orientation toward the products and brands of the company, the customers, and the relevant regions. In a complementary manner, the operational structure should be organized in a way that forwards processes to reach the marketing goals.

## THE BRAND AS THE BASE FOR MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Brands are central creators of value in companies, with which companies obtain extra price and quantity (→ Brands). Additionally, strong brands have a positive impact on all

metrics of economic success. According to Interbrand (2007), Coca-Cola's brand value amounts to 65.3 billion US dollars. Therefore, strong brands have notably high brand values (Esch 2007). About 67.0 percent of the corporate value is ascribable to the *brand value* (PricewaterhouseCoopers & Sattler 2006). In this respect, it is no wonder that brands are used to create value, e.g., by conquering new markets or groups of customers, by brand extensions, or by brand alliances. The aim of brand management is to build and sustain strong brands with high brand values (Esch 2007). Brand value can be defined from two points of view. First, the *financial perspective* defines brand value as the net present value of future discounted cash flows that can be obtained by the brand. This financial perspective refers to the economic success of the brand. Second, the *consumer-based perspective* describes brand value as the result of consumers' reactions to marketing and branding activities in relation to identical activities taken by a fictitious brand due to consumers' brand associations (Keller 2003). This view on brand value captures the reasons for a brand's success.

A brand can be defined as a mental → image in the minds of the target group that leads to identification and differentiation and affects people's choices (Esch 2007). An example of a brand's image affecting people's behavior is Coca-Cola. Whereas in blind tasting, participants have a bias toward Pepsi, Coca-Cola is favored when the brand name is shown (de Chernatony 2001). Feelings like soulfulness or the "American way of life" that are commonly associated with Coca-Cola have an impact on consumers' perception of taste. But creating a successful brand takes time and must be thoroughly planned.

*Brand identity and brand positioning* are the pivotal points for all brand decisions. In contrast to brand image, which refers to the perception of the brand, brand identity and positioning are in the company's sphere of action. As the positioning of a brand is based on its identity, it is important to first determine a brand's identity. Only exact knowledge of the brand's central characteristics enables marketers to manage and design all marketing activities in conformity with the brand (Esch 2007). Brand identity expresses what the brand stands for. It captures those attributes that are essential and characteristic for the brand. These attributes of the brand comprise hard facts as well as soft facts like feelings and emotions. Moreover, attributes can be both verbal and nonverbal, e.g., consumers associate the "swoosh" with Nike, the "drum bones" with Intel, and the "contour bottle" with Coca-Cola. The aim of capturing a brand's identity is to get a complete and holistic picture of the brand.

To create unique mental images in consumers' minds, it is important to concentrate on only a few *differentiating characteristics of the brand*, which are captured by brand positioning. Positioning aims to create brands that are attractive to consumers and differentiate themselves from competitive brands in such a way that consumers are biased toward these brands (Esch 2007). Positioning therefore aims at clearly differentiating a company's product from its competitors by linking the product with unique associations in consumers' minds (Esch 2007). To successfully position a brand, it is important to focus on only a few attributes that differentiate the brand from its competitors (points of difference). Other attributes need not be better than those of competitors (points of parity).

*Strategic brand decisions* are on the agenda when companies consider branding new or newly acquired products and when existing brand systems need to be restructured (Esch

2007). Principally, companies face three basic options to lead their brands: (1) product brands, (2) family brands, and (3) corporate brands. Using a *product brand* strategy, every product of a company forms an own-brand; this means “one brand = one product = one brand promise” (e.g., Procter and Gamble, with brands like Pringles, Ariel, and Pampers). This strategy is favorable if the array of products is heterogeneous and aims at diverse target groups. By using different brands, each product brand can be tailor-made for its target group. But this obviously leads to high costs, as there are no synergies between the brands.

A *family brand* comprises several products under one brand, e.g., Maggi or Nivea. The advantage of this strategy is that all offerings of a brand profit from its existing brand image. As the range of products offered under one brand is relatively homogeneous, it is still possible to pointedly position a brand. Additionally, synergies can be exploited as marketing costs are born by several products. One of the major disadvantages of this strategy is the risk of distending the brand too much, when new products offered under the same brand no longer go with the identity of the brand.

*Corporate brands* are used for all products of a company. The prior aim of this strategy is to profile the company and its competencies. Corporate brands are advantageous if the range of products and services is too wide to employ product brands (e.g., General Electric), if the target groups and positioning of the offerings are relatively homogeneous (e.g., Allianz), and if the array of products undergoes fluctuations in short cycles (e.g., Armani).

The advantages of a corporate brand strategy are similar to those of family brands. Its disadvantages must be seen in the limited possibility to position the brand precisely and to fit it perfectly to its customers.

In practice, one scarcely finds these basic brand strategies in their classic form. Brand architecture describes the arrangement of a company’s brands for the determination of their positioning, and the relationships between brands and products from a strategic point of view (Aaker & Joachimsthaler 2000; Esch 2007). Brand architecture focuses mainly on the arrangement and the roles of two or more brands on different hierarchical levels to realize synergies by employing the corporate brand, while family and product brands still preserve a necessary degree of uniqueness. In this context, it is important to logically arrange brands and their relationships. The advantage of this strategy is the possibility to seize spillover effects. Brands on all hierarchical levels can benefit from the other brand’s image, if consumers perceive a relationship between these brands. The realization of the positioning idea requires integration of the various marketing instruments to build unique images in consumers’ minds (Esch 1998). Each instrument of the marketing mix leaves the consumer with a certain impression and influences the image of the brand (Lindquist 1974).

### **RAISING CONSUMERS’ BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND IMAGE WITH COMMUNICATION**

To catch consumers’ → attention for a brand and make them need it, its level of awareness must be raised. With communication activities, consumers’ attention can be revived and demand created. Additionally, communication is an effective instrument to build unique brand images in consumers’ minds. To communicate a brand’s image and to heighten its

awareness, several instruments can be used, e.g., commercials and advertising, personal communication, promotion and publicizing, direct marketing, sponsoring, events and exhibitions, product placement, and guerilla and viral marketing. These instruments can be brought in line with the means of integrated communication (→ Integrated Marketing Communications; Marketing: Communication Tools).

Integrated communication is understood as the integration of form and content of all communication activities, which unifies and reinforces the impressions made. Through repetition of more or less identical impressions and information, the brand message is not only processed faster by the consumer, but the targeted image is imprinted in consumers' minds. Communicating alternating and diverging impressions decelerates or even hinders learning processes. The perceived positioning of the brand is then far from its ideal. Finally, integrated communication saves costs, as the intended goals can be reached more effectively (Esch 2006).

In integrated communication, verbal as well as nonverbal elements can be used. These either transfer distinctive image associations (BMW is sporty and dynamic) or form an anchor to enhance brand awareness, for example, by using a particular color code (Orange uses orange dominantly in its communication) or symbols (Marlboro continually presents the cowboy). The first case is an example of semantic integration, the second of formal integration. Additionally, integrated marketing communication consists of integration over time and integration between different kinds of communication. In the first case, positioning contents of the brand need to be conveyed to continually realize learning effects and construct brand knowledge. If there is to be integration between different kinds of communication, it is necessary to translate the message and the means of integration into another kind of media.

To insure that the messages communicated are perceived, processed, and understood by consumers, communication must follow socio-technical principles. First of all, communication must succeed in contacting consumers to insure that the advertising message is perceived. Following that, emotions must be imparted and consumers' understanding should be obtained. Finally, the advertising message is to be embedded in consumers' minds.

Catching consumers' attention is getting increasingly harder due to barriers of contact. Every day, consumers are confronted with an overload of information, which cannot be processed. Therefore, communication activities must be designed in such a way that they attract attention. This is possible by using *activating stimuli* that are physically intensive (e.g., loud colors and sounds), surprising (e.g., a person with the head of an animal), or emotional (e.g., the face of a child, a woman's body). The use of these techniques depends on the recipient's involvement, which can be defined as the degree of attention a person turns to a stimulus or an activity (Kroeber-Riel & Esch 2004). Especially in mass communication, recipients mostly have low involvement. Only consumers who are about to buy new goods and are actively searching for information are highly involved (Zaichowsky 1985). Generally, it must be stated that the lower the involvement of a person, the more activating the marketing communication should be (Kroeber-Riel & Esch 2004).

*Frequency techniques* aim at a frequent repetition of the communication message in one and the same communication medium as well as in different kinds of media. By this



repetition, the likelihood that consumers have contact with the advertising message is raised (→ Advertising Frequency and Timing).

Furthermore, marketers need to ensure that consumers process the advertising message. This includes factual as well as emotional information. Due to low involvement, consumers often interrupt contact with an ad after only a few seconds. A one-page ad in a → magazine is looked at for approximately two seconds. To succeed in communicating the message, it is important to communicate information hierarchically as well as use pictures, as these are perceived, processed, and remembered easier and faster than verbal information.

Understanding a brand's message is important for the success of the campaign, but should not be overestimated, as it only refers to direct processing of information. Moreover, consumers also process their own reactions and thoughts provoked by the ad. Emotions especially play a major role, as the emotional impression precedes understanding. *Emotional communication* can have two effects on consumers: (1) atmospheric effects, which influence the general ambience, and (2) emotional consumption experiences, through which a brand differentiates itself from its competitors. The aim of either effect is to generate acceptance of the product (Kroeber-Riel & Esch 2004; → Advertising, Emotions in; Emotion).

As a basic principle, communication instruments can be divided into *personal and mass communication*. Personal communication refers to those communication instruments that allow interaction between two people. Due to this interaction, people can respond to their communication partner's needs. In contrast to mass communication, personal communication is not only verbal through spoken and written language, but also nonverbal. People additionally get information from their communication partner's *mimics, gestures, tones of voice, or symbols* used in the conversation (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture; Rhetoric, Nonverbal). Mass communication addresses a large crowd of people. To diffuse information, mass media are used. Latterly, developments in mass media, such as the Internet, enable people to converse directly and respond to each other.

Regarding its impact on a single person, personal communication has an edge over mass communication. Personal communication distinguishes itself by greater credibility of the communicator, the possibility to respond to the listener's needs, and the information conveyed by nonverbal communication (→ Credibility of Content; Credibility Effects). Moreover, personal communication offers higher flexibility. As the communicator can respond to the recipient's queries, the recipient gets information that is tailor-made for his or her needs. In spite of these advantages, mass communication is prevalent. Because of its reach, mass communication can address more people in different places at the same time. Therefore, the costs per person addressed are as a rule lower than those of personal communication.

Regarding the *buying cycle concept*, neither of these two alternatives supersedes the other. The best strategy is to combine both kinds of communication. A customer's buying cycle can be broken down into four different stages. The buying cycle starts when a consumer gets in touch with a product. This first contact happens through mass communication, e.g., through commercials on TV. These commercials often create demand for a certain product. Hence, in the second stage of the buying cycle, the consumer starts gathering

more information. In this stage, personal communication is very important. Due to higher credibility, potential customers are more easily convinced to buy the product. Additionally, mass media can be used to offer detailed information in special-interest magazines. When a customer is finally buying a product, personal communication is essential. The assistant should give advice about special features and different models of the product. After the customer has bought the product, many companies are of the opinion that their business is finished. But quite the contrary, while the customer is using the product, a company should stay in touch with the customer. Brochures, events, or telephone calls by the company help the company to get feedback about its product and services. Moreover, the company knows in time if the customer is planning to replace the product. By providing him or her with information about new versions, companies can succeed in creating demand for a new product. If the customer is appropriately accompanied in this stage of using the product, it is very likely that he or she will also buy the new version from this company. If the company succeeds in satisfying its customer, the buying cycle starts anew (→ Advertising Effectiveness).

### **OFFERING BENEFITS THAT MEET CONSUMERS' NEEDS**

A company's array of products complies with consumers' actual and potential needs. Activities taken in this array can take four major forms. The aim of product variation is to deliberately change a product's attributes or benefits, whereas its main benefits remain unchanged (Esch et al. 2006). Principally, product variation aims at modifying symbolic or aesthetic features, like design, color, or shape. By varying products, companies can meet changes in consumers' needs and wants as well as adapt to changes in legal policies.

Product differentiation refers to adding further products that are modifications of existing products in the line. The reason for the popularity of this strategy lies in the possibility to meet each market's specifics. But product differentiation can also bring cannibalization of company-owned products. Therefore, it is important to carefully examine the new product's substitution effects in advance. A third option is product elimination. If products are outdated and are no longer successful on the market, it is best to eliminate them. Through this elimination, companies' gain space on retailers' shelves for new, successful products, though it must be considered whether the eliminated product is complementary to another product in the company's line.

To ensure a company's long-term success, product innovations play a pivotal role. Just recently, Nokia managed to raise its profits by 43 percent worldwide due to new products. A product innovation describes a company's offering that consumers perceive to be a novelty and that differs widely from current products on the market. Before introducing a new product to the market, marketers need to thoroughly plan its communication, pricing, and distribution strategy.

### **ASSESSING CONSUMERS' PRICE ELASTICITY**

The size of a company's profits depends generally on its costs, its turnover, and the prices of its products and services. These three variables are interdependent. If a company sets a

low price, its turnover goes up. As a rule, with higher turnover and higher production volumes, unit costs decrease. High turnover and lower production cost make it possible for companies to sell their products for a low price. But this strategy does not work out for all products and brands (Simon et al. 2006).

To find out what price leads to maximal profits, managers should estimate the demand and costs associated with the alternative prices and choose that price that leads to the highest estimated profits. There are many factors that affect a company's cost and turnover functions; e.g., pricing has an effect on further variables, like competitors and their reactions, the product's and brand's image, as well as consumers' reactions (Urbany et al. 2000). A major criterion that influences consumers' acceptance of prices is their price elasticity. To assess the change in demand due to changes in prices, marketers need to know about consumers' *price sensitivity and price elasticity*, which describe changes in demand due to a 1 percent rise in price.

In the first case, consumers' price elasticity is relatively high, as an increase in price leads to a substantial decline in demand. Regarding the company's profits, an increase in price cannot compensate the drop in sales. In the second case, it is quite the contrary. The same increase in price leads only to a small decrease in demand, as consumers are not very sensitive to changes in price. Therefore, the increase in price is likely to overcompensate the decline in demand, so that the company's profits are liable to rise (Hanssen et al. 1990). Consumers' price elasticity is low if there are hardly any substitutional products available or if consumers are reluctant to buy a different product. The second factor in particular can very well be influenced by companies. Due to customer relationship management and effective brand leadership, consumers' loyalty can be increased and their price sensitivity lowered. Beyond that, brands offer additional benefits that justify higher prices from the consumers' point of view.

But not all consumers are equally sensitive toward price. Even one and the same person perceives price differently dependent on the situation. For instance, people have a lower willingness to pay for beverages in a supermarket than in a restaurant. To seize these differences in price sensitivity, marketers should consider the instrument of price differentiation.

*Price differentiation* refers to selling principally the same products to different consumers or groups of consumers at different prices. The aim of this strategy is to skim as much as possible of the *consumer surplus*, which can be defined as the difference in consumers' willingness to pay and the price actually paid.

As the willingness to pay differs between consumers, consumer surplus can be better skimmed by setting different prices for single consumers or groups of consumers. Pigou (1960) has identified *three different forms of price differentiation*. According to first-order differentiation, prices are set individually for each customer to perfectly skim his or her willingness to pay. Obviously, this strategy is not realizable in consumer markets. But in b2b markets, where a company addresses only a small number of potential buyers, custom-made pricing is possible. Examples of second-order differentiation are airlines and theaters. Passengers decide for themselves whether they want to fly economy, business, or first class; theatergoers choose where they are seated. According to second-order differentiation, consumers decide independently to which price category they belong.

By contrast, third-order differentiation does not enable consumers to choose their category themselves. Segments and the respective prices are pre-arranged by the company. Prevalently, consumers face this third-order price differentiation in cinemas or museums, where students, pupils, and pensioners typically pay lower admission fees. Another criterion for price differentiation is time of day. In some places, prices for telephone services or electricity are lower at night than they are during working hours. In practice, price discrimination often occurs relative to the amount bought by consumers. In this case, the overall sum is not linear to the number of units bought.

Another kind of price differentiation is price bundling, where the price of a bundle of mostly complementary products differs from the overall price of those products bought separately. The aim of this differentiation strategy is to better skim the consumer surplus of heterogeneous customers. Moreover, consumers are easily tempted to buy more than they originally wanted when products are offered in bundles.

To assess consumers' reactions to changes in prices, it is important to analyze their price behavior, which generally comprises four aspects: interest in prices, knowledge of prices, functions of prices, and the evaluation of prices (Diller 2000; Esch et al. 2006).

## **DEVELOPING AN OPTIMAL DISTRIBUTION STRATEGY**

Planning a company's distribution strategy involves all actions and decisions that need to be made to get the product to the customers. Establishing a distribution system takes several years, so it must be thoroughly planned as it cannot be changed abruptly (Esch et al. 2006). Distribution is an instrument of the marketing mix that is often underappreciated. But distribution is more than getting products to potential customers. A well-planned distribution strategy can support a brand's image and evokes certain associations in consumers' minds (Li Lam 2001). For example, luxury goods would no longer be strived for if they were obtainable everywhere. When planning their distribution strategy, marketers must decide on whether to sell their product directly or indirectly to the ultimate consumers, and whether their product should be distributed universally or selectively (Bowersox et al. 1980). Choosing a certain distribution strategy supports a company in addressing specific target groups and consistently communicating the positioning of the brand.

Companies that distribute their goods directly sell their products to the ultimate consumer without interposing any external distributors, like, for example, Avon with its salespeople or Body Shop with its own shops. Indirect distribution, on the other hand, takes place, if a distributor acts as an intermediary between company and ultimate consumer. Different kinds of indirect distribution exist on the market, which differ in the number of intermediaries involved. Supermarkets are often one-tier distribution systems, whereas pharmacies and florists are two-tier systems, consisting of retail and wholesale. A special form of indirect distribution is franchising, where a company's products are distributed by legally and economically independent firms, whose relationship to the producing firm is agreed by contract. The franchiser (e.g., McDonald's or Avis) provides the franchisee with procurement, retailing, and organization concepts against the payment of hires and shares of the franchisee's sales.

One of the major *disadvantages of intermediaries* is the producer's loss of control, i.e., how the products are presented in the stores. As the company does not have direct contact with the users of the product, it becomes harder to get information about their satisfaction with it. On the other hand, by using intermediaries, their distributor's competencies and know-how of selling can be used, so that these tasks can be done more efficiently and more economically. From the consumers' point of view intermediaries lead to more convenience. Stores where products of different brands and firms are sold make it easier for consumers to compare price and quality of the different products. Furthermore, if all brands contacted their potential customers directly, their information overload would be even higher (Coughlan et al. 2001).

Beside the number of tiers of the distribution system, marketers must decide on their selection of intermediaries. Companies can either distribute their goods universally or selectively. By choosing universal distribution, marketers pursue the target of their product being obtainable everywhere. It depends on the retailers whether they list the company's products in their stores. This strategy is used especially for basic and everyday necessities. Furthermore, universal distribution is also favorable for goods with a low purchase risk and products that are often bought spontaneously. For these products it is important that consumers are often confronted with them.

If a producer carefully chooses the intermediaries that fit with their brand and their customers, the company follows a "selective distribution strategy." Selection criteria, among others, are the size and business situation of the retailer, the quantity of units ordered, and the retailer's service quality and promotion activities. For "exclusive distribution" the selection criteria are even stricter. This special case of selective distribution is prevalently paired with exclusive licenses in trading areas. Additionally, the cooperation is closer and conditions are well defined.

By distributing a product only via handpicked retailers, marketers try to ensure that the intermediaries do not oppose the company's or the brand's image. Moreover, although this approach secures the product's presence on the market, it also ensures that it does not have the image of an ordinary, commonplace product.

To meet consumers' benefits effectively and, therefore, to succeed in the market, marketers must not look at the instruments of the marketing mix as isolated tools. Quite the contrary; it is the interaction and orchestration of these instruments that make the company thrive. For instance, strong brands with a unique positioning are often distributed exclusively. In these exclusive stores, these products are available at a premium price. Besides, customers are attended to most attentively. They are offered additional services and are contacted regularly after their purchase. If marketers appropriately align all instruments of the marketing mix, the basis of the product's success in the market is laid out.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising, Emotions in ▶ Advertising Frequency and Timing ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Attention ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Emotion ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Image ▶ Information

Overload ► Information Processing ► Integrated Marketing Communications ► Internet ► Magazine ► Marketing: Communication Tools ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture ► Perception ► Positioning Theory ► Public Relations ► Radio ► Rhetoric, Nonverbal ► Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ► Television ► Visual Communication

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## **Marketing: Communication Tools**

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For the sponsoring organization, the role of marketing communications includes distributing information, promoting image and reputation, creating and stabilizing product and service demand, emphasizing features and benefits, providing competitive differentiation, generating sales leads, ensuring customer retention and loyalty, and motivating staff. To accomplish these and other objectives, there are many marketing communication tools available. They include advertising, direct marketing and relationship marketing, sponsorship, event marketing, sales promotion, public relations, and other, alternative strategies. Contemporary media are the most commonly utilized “vehicles” to get the message out, including print, broadcast, outdoor, digital, direct, online, and other technologies. Historically, markets were largely places one could barter or trade commodities with another individual. Amazingly, Ancient Egypt survived for thousands of years without money, the structure of their society being based on provisions for the workers in return for support of the ruling dynasty and religious temples. Only later did specie or currency come into existence as a commonly accepted and convenient measure of utility or wealth – most evident during the relatively peaceful years of the Roman Empire now called the Pax Romana. European society in post-Roman times largely devolved into feudalism, under which workers were restricted from travel and tied to the land. Industrialism was a significant change because it broke the choke-hold of localism, bringing with it the expansion of the middle class as an important market. Barter still existed, of course, but residents of emerging cities now labored for money rather than products. Those that made or controlled products could sell more distantly, over time creating intermediaries (such as wholesalers, distributors, and retailers). The growth of river and oceanic trade, development of canals, construction of railroads, and other improvements contributed to more capitalistic societies.

The promulgation of literacy, invention of the telegraph, and automation of printing presses for mass production of → newspapers and → magazines (followed by later media such as film, → radio, and → television) also facilitated the evolution of the marketing process. Increased production also meant that manufacturers needed to differentiate their offerings from competitors by literally → branding shipping boxes and commodities. According to David Ogilvy, famous advertising copywriter and ad agency founder, a

brand's personality and reputation are "an amalgam of many things." These include "its name, its packaging, its price, the style of its advertising, and, above all, the nature of the product itself" (Ogilvy 1983, 14). A brand also includes intangibles such as the images, words, and qualities that people associate with the organization or product.

Linked with branding is the rise of advertising agencies in the mid-nineteenth century. Their emergence reflected the need for better promotion as new competitors entered the marketplace, forging a system of collaboration between business and media that continues up to the present (→ Advertising; Advertising, History of).

Public relations developed in the early twentieth century in support of business interests (→ Public Relations). Facing regulation because of the excesses of monopolistic trusts, corporate leaders recognized they needed to communicate their story to an enlarged middle class of educated consumer voters (→ Mediatization of Society). The necessity to persuade as well as inform became the dominant model (→ Advertising as Persuasion; Persuasion). In a business context, most advertising and public relations responsibilities appear on organizational charts under a → marketing or → corporate communication title (→ Organizational Communication).

Marketing as we know it is thus a relatively recent phenomenon. The classic 4-Ps of the marketing mix refer to the product, pricing, place (distribution), and promotion policies that guide an organization's sales effort. Marketing communications falls under the rubric of promotion, or the strategic effort by the seller to build contact with potential and existing customers (→ Strategic Communication). Businesses use promotion as a means of informing customers about product(s) and attracting customers to buy from them.

## **MARKETING COMMUNICATION**

Marketing communication involves the ongoing process of relationship building with target audiences on all matters that affect marketing and business performance. Targeted are those groups of people an organization needs to communicate with in order to meet goals and objectives. In this sense, marketing communication is a continuous dialogue between an institution, its → brand(s), and consumers (→ Consumer Culture).

Market research is a key part of the marketing planning process, which involves a business determining who the users and potential users are, knowing who else has influence over sale of their products and services, and finding out what these groups want and expect. After a creative strategy is crafted, media research subsequently decides which communication vehicles are most appropriate given the available budget, followed by evaluation of their effectiveness (→ Advertisement Campaign Management; Advertising Effectiveness; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of; Advertising Frequency and Timing; Advertising Strategies; Media Effects; Media Planning).

A number of marketing communications options are available that help companies build and maintain audience, increase market share and market awareness, acquire new business, and build more fruitful relationships with existing clients. While nonprofit organizations may have different goals, the process is essentially the same. In addition to advertising and public relations, marketing communication tools also include publicity, direct marketing, sponsorships, organizational/corporate communications, personal selling, promotional products, sales promotions, and Internet word-of-mouth or grassroots



marketing efforts. Although in some instances, one medium may be appropriate to reach a niche audience, marketing communications most often involves utilization of a variety of media to disseminate a chosen message (→ Cross-Media Marketing). Making management decisions about how to effectively marshal resources and select the appropriate media mix is not an easy responsibility. Given problems with message clutter and oversaturation, many traditional forms of advertising and promotion (such as broadcast and print) are losing ground to newer media.

Proponents of → integrated marketing communications (IMC) stress that a company's promotional activities should speak with a single voice to increase synergy. In other words, all marketing communications should consistently work together to project a unified brand image across all points of customer contact. This would seem to be common sense. In practice, however, the results of IMC programs have proven mixed.

### **Advertising**

Understanding the content and pervasive influence of advertising in the modern world remains an important task since, for better or worse, advertising is an integral and influential part of our lives. The advertising process encompasses the consumer domains of (1) *industrial technology*, from which issues an endless flow of new products; (2) → *popular culture*, into which are embedded applied psychological appeals and conventions through which socialization occurs; and (3) *the media*, which unify the flow of symbols, images, and motivational messages that audiences choose to “decode” from what they see or hear.

Advertising is a planned communication activity that utilizes controlled messages carried by the media to persuade audiences. Any form of nonpersonal one-way communication about products, ideas, goods, or services paid for by an identified sponsor can be grouped under the advertising umbrella. Typically advertisements are self-contained, although the growth of product placement (in which a brand is incorporated into a broadcast or film storyline) indicates marketers are embracing alternative strategies.

All advertising is subject to → censorship. However, most advertisements aimed at potential buyers – unlike conventional news releases issued by public relations firms – are generally not edited or changed by media gatekeepers; before they reach their intended target audience (→ Gatekeeping). Mass and niche media include *print* – magazines, newspapers, brochures, flyers, outdoor ads, direct mail, Yellow Pages; *broadcast and film* – radio, television, cable, satellite, product placement; *new technologies* – Internet, mobile phone, podcasting; and *other alternative media* – promotional products, skywriting, etc.

Advertising commonly dramatizes companies and their products, building brand image. Psychologically, research indicates that consumers tend to perceive advertised goods as more legitimate. Another key advantage is that advertising typically reaches large, geographically dispersed audiences, often with high frequency (→ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience). Although overall costs are high, advertising rates can be low per exposure.

### **Public Relations (PR)**

Reflecting the fragmented nature of the many components that comprise what is loosely referred to as the practice of “public relations,” there are numerous widely promoted

definitions outlining the operating philosophy and set of techniques used to integrate organizations and the people they depend upon. Among the best is that of Denny Griswold, founder of *Public Relations News*, who stated that public relations is “the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action [incorporating communication] to earn public understanding and acceptance” (Griswold & Griswold 1948, cited in Seitel 1995, 7; → Public Relations Planning).

In practice, public relations is most associated with maintaining good relationships with the company’s various publics by obtaining favorable publicity, promoting a good “corporate image,” and effectively minimizing unfavorable rumors, stories, and events. Since public relations appears in many forms (as news reports, sponsored events, etc.), it tends to be highly credible with audiences and reaches many prospects missed via other forms of promotion. Despite being cost-effective (certainly not “free” as many people think), public relations is often the most underused element in the promotional mix (→ Public Relations: Media Influence).

Conceptualizing the process of public relations has led to many theories of public communication. Some researchers stress the role of public relations in determining whether it primarily involves management counseling or technician-oriented communications. The most influential theory in recent years has been the “four management models” approach, first devised by James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt in their book *Managing public relations* (1984) and subsequently elaborated on. Using a systems theory approach, they analyzed the organizational structures and communications strategies most widely used by practitioners to derive the following categories: *one-way press agency model*, emphasizing the generation of favorable publicity in the mass media (→ Media Relations); *one-way public information model*, stressing more journalistic dissemination of relatively objective information through controlled media (brochures, newsletters, direct mail) as well as mass communication vehicles; *two-way asymmetrical or → propaganda model*, involving greater use of social science research so the organization becomes better at persuasion; *two-way symmetrical or conflict resolution model*, engaging in caring, research-based dialogue to establish mutually beneficial partnerships with strategic publics. This last approach is the only one in which the negative implications of manipulation are minimized.

Connected with this four-part outline has been the notion that each model represents an ethical stage in the evolution of public relations, from primitive to advanced. However, scholars recently have begun to dispute this Darwinistic assumption.

## Publicity

Publicity messages are conveyed to the public through the mass media, but unlike advertising are not paid for by the organization. Publicity is a component of public relations linked to press agency – heavy-handed (but shrewd) efforts to promote clients. Often publicists resort to hype (bombastic hoopla and oversell) to promote their clients. Normally, this commercial communication is designed to bring about positive coverage or “ink.” Sometimes, however, backdoor disinformation strategies are utilized to attack opponents and force them into the spotlight of unfavorable publicity.

### **Direct Marketing**

Any communication to carefully targeted individual consumers designed to generate an immediate commercial response is direct marketing (i.e., an order, request for information, or sales visit). Direct communicators want not only to obtain on-the-spot feedback but also to cultivate lasting customer relationships. To do this, they maintain their own databases of current and prospective customers, or rent lists of prospective buyers identified by demographic and psychographic lifestyle profiles from firms specializing in such information (→ Psychology in Communication Processes). All direct-response advertising is structured around three basic elements: (1) the message communicates a definite offer; (2) the recipient is given the information necessary to make a decision; and (3) the ad makes it easy to say “yes” immediately by including one or more response devices (a coupon, free telephone number, preaddressed order form, envelope, bounce-back card, etc.). Infomercials are one of the most popular direct-response television formats (→ Direct-to-Consumer Advertising).

### **Sponsorships**

Event sponsorship in which a business is linked to a popular sporting event is what most people think of when discussing sponsorships. However, the practice is much more widespread. Sponsorships are defined as payment (in fees, goods, or services) in return for the rights to a public association with another organization and/or event (naming rights, onsite banners, cross-advertising, etc.). Cause-related marketing (or cause branding) is another strategic sponsorship approach, connecting a company or brand to a relevant social cause or issue for mutual benefit. When this is done well, the corporations and the social causes they support both emerge with a “win-win” experience (→ Social Marketing). For the company it is a way of reinforcing loyalty, building reputation, enhancing its image of → corporate social responsibility, and increasing market share or sales. For the social cause or issue, having access to corporate resources contributes to prompting public awareness and engendering support. In total, US companies spent an estimated \$1.34 billion on cause-related marketing sponsorships in 2006, a 20.7 percent increase over 2005.

### **Personal Selling**

Most businesses have a sales force whose members make personal presentations to persuade a prospective customer to commit to buying a good, a service, or even an idea. The seller generally interprets brand features in terms of buyer benefits, and the salesperson can be critical when the number of potential customers is limited and the product is technical and/or expensive. The common stereotype of a sales practitioner is that of a pushy, annoying individual. In reality, many customers value direct contact and find salespersons helpful in meeting on-the-job challenges. Rather than being order-takers, most effective salespersons often provide consultative services that establish a relationship, and concentrate on the buyer’s needs. A key advantage of such person-to-person communication is that the receiver is more attentive, with the potential buyer providing immediate feedback through words, expressions, and gestures. Such relationship-

oriented interaction allows for adjustments in the sales approach. Personal selling is a very effective investment for building buyers' preferences, convictions, and actions (including loyalty). However, maintaining a sales force represents a long-term commitment and is thus among the most expensive of the promotional tools.

### **Promotional Products**

Promotional products are now an \$18.8 billion industry in the US. According to the Promotional Products Association International, promotional products comprise an advertising, sales promotion, publicity, and motivational communication medium that displays the sponsoring organization's name, logo, or message on useful articles of merchandise. The imprinted products, called "adcentives" when given away free, or "premiums" when recipients have to make a purchase or contribution before receiving the item, are often personalized to better target those people who are most important to the marketer. Four major business groupings make up the specialty advertising and promotional products industry: suppliers; distributors; direct-selling houses; and trade organizations. There are literally tens of thousands of different types and styles of promotional products. Examples of common promotional products include apparel, writing instruments, calendars, drinkware, and many other items. Popular programs cited most often by industry consultants are business gifts, employee relations, orientation programs, corporate communications, and presence at tradeshow to generate booth traffic. They are also effective for attracting new customers or new accounts, in dealer/distribution programs, co-op programs, nonprofit fundraising, public awareness campaigns, and for promotion of brand awareness and brand loyalty. Other uses include employee incentive programs, new product or service introductions, and marketing research for survey and focus group participants.

There has been a debate on whether promotional products constitute advertising or sales promotion. Actually, such items can be both and more simultaneously. For example, consider the person who occasionally drinks a particular brand of soda and, responding to a sales promotion campaign, receives a T-shirt complete with commercial art message. He or she wears the shirt when out with friends, providing more exposure for the brand. Additionally, according to research in psychology, the consumer's positive attitude toward the brand will be strengthened as a result of publicly wearing the shirt. Regardless of the advertising or sales promotion labels, promotional products have the potential of providing high impact to a tightly targeted market niche. They can also deliver long-term advertising value beyond short-term sales promotion objectives. The key to success in such endeavors is in matching the adcentive-based elements to the interests of the audience segment – that is, targeting true prospects rather than suspects.

### **Sales Promotions**

Sales promotions are defined by the American Marketing Association as those activities other than personal selling, advertising, and publicity that stimulate consumer purchasing. Sales promotions are typically short-term field marketing and merchandising incentives to encourage purchase or sale of a product or service. Examples of point-of-sale and business sales promotion vehicles include contests, coupons, rebates, refund offers,

sweepstakes, etc. One advantage of sales promotions is that they may be targeted at the trade or ultimate consumer. By effectively attracting attention, sales promotions offer strong purchase incentives, stimulate quick response, and boost sagging sales. The downside is that such efforts are short-lived, and have not been proven effective at building long-term brand preferences.

### **Internet Word-of-Mouth and Grassroots Marketing Efforts**

Word-of-mouth has long been recognized as the most effective form of communication. The problem has been how to stimulate branded product conversation. The potentially huge number of viewers who can take action is one attraction of → Internet campaigning. A well-placed link on a popular website, or passed from friend to friend, may generate millions of page “hits” very quickly. The impact of Facebook, YouTube, and other web locations has caught the attention of major marketers. By tapping into these “virtual communities” on the Internet – individuals who share common identification – companies are finding they can mobilize interest through “viral marketing” techniques (→ Internet, Technology of). In a way analogous to the quick progression of an epidemic, viral marketers seek to exploit pre-existing social networks to produce exponential increases in brand awareness. By identifying opinion leaders in a market segment and providing them with special incentives, sponsors are also creating “buzz” within target groups. Marketers typically incorporate edgy humor and a mix of pop culture references to catch the user’s attention and build interest, especially among younger demographics. Music and compelling visual images that are already “part of the conversation” help convey their message. From a grassroots marketing perspective, embracing brand “co-creation” means that marketers invite consumer sub-cultures to help shape a brand’s persona, ideology, use, and persona. The more involved consumers become with a branded product as part of their “grassroots” lifestyle, the greater the likelihood they tell others about their experience (→ Grassroots Media).

Although email marketing has been subject to widespread abuse, it remains a powerful communication tool. Rich email (graphically designed email that is forwardable and trackable) is among the new Internet-based technologies for → e-commerce. Evidence indicates rich email achieves higher receipt and response rates and the tracking information results in useful lead generation. Really simple syndication (RSS) blogging technologies make it easy to create an online journal. More corporations are especially using blogs by their executives, helping personalize the firm and establishing thought leadership in a market. Voice-casting platforms empower business clients to support their sales and marketing campaigns through a personalized audio message that is then narrowcast to thousands of business-to-business phone numbers. Other tools are coming online all the time.

### **FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

The accelerating changes we see in communication technologies are evidence of a fundamental shift in society as a whole. Many commentators argue we are at a historical turning point similar to that which marked the introduction of movable type in Europe and the rise of industrialism. No one is yet sure what “globalism” really means in terms of the way we live or how we conduct business. Shifts that give consumers greater control

over messages they pay attention to are definitely changing the notion of the marketplace. Combined with the erosion of older models of how media deliver audiences, these developments are temporarily causing consternation among many marketers who are still groping to find what works. Given past performance, they are likely to be successful.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Advertising Frequency and Timing ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Censorship ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Cross-Media Marketing ▶ Direct-to-Consumer Advertising ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Internet ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Planning ▶ Media Relations ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Newspaper ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Propaganda ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Public Relations Planning ▶ Radio ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Television

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# Markets of the Media

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Markets are where media function. They also provide the foundation of economic analyses, providing the context and mechanisms for explaining and predicting media and audience behaviors. Economists define markets broadly as any context in which goods and services are offered and purchased. Markets are thus defined by a set of goods or services, the set of firms and individuals that offer them for trade (supply), and the set of firms and individuals that seek to acquire them (demand, or in media terms, audiences). The context of markets includes their scope (reach) and a variety of structural features, including the particular attributes of media technologies and organizations, their products, and their distribution systems. Law and policy often play a role in defining markets, by influencing or even defining some of those structural features and costs.

Being able to define media markets, and to understand how particular markets function, is critical to understanding, explaining, and predicting media operations. Being able to discern and predict shifts in markets and consider their implications is similarly critical to media survival in an increasingly competitive environment (→ Media Economics).

## MARKETS IN ECONOMICS

### Defining Markets

Markets are at the heart of economic theory and analysis, where supply and demand functions interact to determine market outcomes. Supply functions are defined in terms of the willingness of producers to offer goods at various prices. Similarly, demand functions are defined by the willingness of consumers to purchase products at various prices. A critical first step in looking at markets is to clearly define them. There are various ways to define or characterize economic markets.

Markets can be *defined in terms of the good*, defining supply as those offering the good, demand as those interested in acquiring the good, and the market scope delimited by the ability to actually engage in the exchange. Where goods are highly differentiated, as in many media markets, the market is more appropriately defined by the range of close substitutes. Substitutes are defined as products that consumers see as potential alternatives, and might choose to consume in lieu of the primary good. For example, one could define a market by a specific good, say copies of today's edition of a specific newspaper. Or one could define the market as all newspapers available locally, or in terms of media outlets offering current news, depending on how close a substitute is being considered.

Markets can be *defined geographically*, by the area in which the product is distributed, and made available for acquisition. This can delimit those considered as viable suppliers and consumers for a particular product. For some media, like broadcasting, this can be determined in large part by policy, through licensing and designation of technical standards. For others, like cable, it can be constrained by licensing and the area covered

by the physical distribution networks (→ Cable Television; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). For other media, market scope is more flexible, and can be influenced as producers search for audience and the costs of reaching various potential market areas change over time.

Markets can also be somewhat *defined in terms of various barriers to entry*, on both the supply and demand sides (→ Supply and Demand in Media Markets). Conditions may exist where some potential suppliers or demanders are unable to participate in the market, restricting the scope of the particular market. Barriers can exist in the form of high costs of entry, in terms of the lack of access to required skills or complementary products (as with the → digital divide), or through law and policy limitations (such as limiting the availability of required licenses, as in broadcasting, cable, and telephony). In most cases, markets are defined by some combination of product range and geography. In some cases these are heavily influenced by regulatory actions and various entry barriers.

### Market Operations

Once defined, market operations can be addressed. Market operations, and the behaviors of those on the supply and demand sides, are considered largely through the interaction of supply and demand curves. Defining the market delimits whose supply or demand functions get aggregated. At that point, structural factors that may affect valuation (and thus supply and demand curves), or can directly influence the movement of supply or demand curves, need to be considered.

A number of factors can impact on valuation. *Incomplete information* about the product and its potential utility (a common issue with media and information goods) can create uncertainty and reduce perceived value. Law and policy can influence value by adding costs through mandates or taxation, or can reduce them through various forms of subsidy. The presence of substitutes or complements can influence valuation and impact on supply and demand shifts. Substitutes provide alternative outlets for satisfying demand, and can moderate the reaction of demand curves to price changes. Complements refer to other goods whose use and value are linked to the primary product. They include situations where use of one good requires use of others, or where use of one affects the perceived value of others. Changes in one market have ripple effects in supply and demand for complementary goods.

*General market structure* can influence market behaviors by providing differing potentials to influence supply or demand. Four basic types of market structures have been identified: perfect competition, oligopolistic, monopolistic, and monopolistic competition. These structures differ primarily in the degree to which each provides a degree of market power (the ability to influence prices) to suppliers or consumers. A perfectly competitive market is defined as one where an undifferentiated good is offered by a large number of suppliers to a large number of potential consumers, with no barriers to entry. In the absence of market power, market equilibrium determines prices, theoretically at a socially optimum level. Markets are rarely perfect, though, so it is more typical to think in terms of competitive markets, defined as situations where neither potential suppliers nor potential consumers have any meaningful ability to influence supply and/or demand curves (and thus prices) in the long run.



The other three structures vary in terms of the *degree and source of market power*. Market power permits some control over prices in order to extract any consumer surplus in the market. This is generally seen as socially harmful, and has widely resulted in a range of → antitrust regulations that attempt to limit the application of monopoly power. In a *monopolistic market*, there is a single supplier (or purchaser) of the good. Being a single source allows the monopolist a high potential for market power through its ability to control supply or demand. *Oligopolistic structures* exist when a few sources dominate supply or demand. Their contribution to market supply or demand is large enough that their decisions influence (although do not completely determine) market levels, giving them a degree of market power. Oligopolistic structures also facilitate collusion, as the major players know one another and their actions. Collusion can increase the potential for market power. Monopolistic competition occurs when sources of supply or demand can sufficiently differentiate their product to the point where they can carve out a sub-market that exhibits monopolistic or oligopolistic structures. This gives them market power within the sub-market, although it is moderated by the larger market.

Market power is also influenced by the presence of substitutes and complements. The presence of substitutes moderates the ability to benefit from controlling prices, as price shifts lead to greater demand shifts and reduce the ability to capture surplus value. This is the main source of the moderating power of the wider market in monopolistic competition. This can focus on shifting values (consuming a book may impact on the likelihood of seeing a movie based on that book), or when the ability to acquire and use some product is based on having certain other pre-existing skills or products (watching TV requires access to a television set and electrical power).

Still, being able to adequately describe markets and the range of factors that can affect supply, demand, and their interaction over time can provide a foundation for explaining and predicting market behaviors, and the impacts of changes in market factors.

## MARKETS OF THE MEDIA

Media produce products, and interact in markets with those who desire those products. From a media perspective, the main products of interest are the media goods – the → newspapers, → books, movies, and broadcast programming (→ Radio; Television). Media markets were, in that sense, widely identified by those products and the geographic area in which a set of products was made available. The attendant distribution system thus contributed to defining geographic boundaries by constraining the ability to get the offered goods to potential consumers. The scope of many markets emerged as tradeoffs between maximizing potential reach and the costs of producing and distributing media goods and services. Economies of scale play an important role in determining efficient or viable reach, and thus market size. For other media, market definitions were effectively imposed by limits of technological design and standards, or through law and policy. Potential audiences, and thus demand, were identified largely in terms of that geographical area.

### Characteristics of Media Goods and Services

This helped to identify media markets as being largely synonymous with media. In fact, and in practice, identifying markets of the media and using them to examine media

behaviors are much more complicated. Some of the problem emerges from the particular characteristics of media goods and services. First, *media goods and services almost always have complements*. Some require acquisition of specific skills or equipment before they can be consumed. For example, print media require a degree of literacy, and DVDs require both a player and a display device, both of which also require access to, and consumption of, electrical power. Further, consumption of media products takes time, a limited and costly resource (→ Audience; Audience Research). The presence of complements can limit markets, but more critically from the perspective of examining market operations, it means that supply and demand curves are influenced by conditions in the markets for those complementary goods and services.

Media goods and services also tend to be *highly differentiated and innovative*. While helping to continue demand over time, this also means that there tend to be a number of potential substitutes, and a fairly high level of uncertainty about value of specific goods. Media goods also tend to exhibit a *degree of perishability*, where the value of the product declines over time, or with multiple uses. Finally, media products tend to exhibit certain characteristics associated with → public goods, particularly *nonexcludability and nonrivalrous consumption*. Nonexcludability refers to the situation where it is difficult to exclude those who do not pay from consuming the product, and nonrivalrous consumption refers to products where use by one consumer does not greatly affect the ability of others to use it.

In addition, the use of information products can have *impacts outside of the particular market*. When these impacts are not considered in the individual supply and demand functions, they create externalities that can impact on considerations of broader social efficiency. When products exhibit some or all of these characteristics, it can make it difficult for the markets to operate efficiently, and to achieve “optimal” solutions. Aspects of market structure, such as the presence of monopoly power or barriers to entry, can also contribute to sub-optimal solutions. Concerns about media concentration and conglomeration are based on arguments that they tend to increase the potential for exercising monopoly power, resulting in less than socially optimal markets (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Media Conglomerates).

### Market Failures in Media Markets

As media goods and markets tend to exhibit many of these characteristics, media markets are often perceived as exhibiting “market failure.” Market failure in this sense does not indicate that markets do not work; rather, it is an economic concept that suggests that the market may fail to achieve what are considered socially optimum outcomes. This does contribute to concerns about the broader social impact of market operations and whether media markets provide the proper supply and mix of information goods and services. Perceived market failure also provides a rationale for using law and policy to “correct” apparent market failures, even though law and policy often contribute to the factors causing the “failure” (→ Media Policy).

To illustrate, → copyright and intellectual property policy are a reaction to one set of market failures (the public good characteristics; → Intellectual Property Law). The solution, though, is the creation of monopoly rights and the granting of monopoly power to the owner of those rights, which happens to create a different kind of market failure, of possibly greater consequence (Lessig 2004).

Additionally, media confound things by *operating in multiple markets*. Media often can be said to operate in multiple product markets, and media products can often be marketed to different sets of potential consumers. Broadcasters and newspapers, for example, use their basic media good (the paper or signal) as an intermediate good in two very distinctive markets. In the audience market, the firm uses the information content of their good to attract the attention of audiences, who compensate the firm through some combination of their time and attention, and fees paid to access the content. The media firm then takes the audience's time and attention, and offers it to those who seek to communicate with the audience. Different groups may seek access to that audience, and to the extent that the various groups exhibit different demand characteristics, they may constitute separate markets (→ Audience Commodity; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). For example, broadcasters and newspapers often differentiate between local and national sales markets for advertisements, while others seek access through provision of press releases and other content. In addition, broadcasters and newspapers also operate in the market for content, producing some, acquiring others through various markets. Finally, media incorporate distribution networks, which in some cases can also be used to distribute other goods and services, providing another potential market.

The audience good and its markets display many of the same basic characteristics of the markets for media goods and services. There is uncertainty in terms of actual audiences reached, substitutions galore in → audience segmentations, and the variety of media options available for those who seek to reach audiences. Motivations for demand may be commercial, or the seeking of social or political influence. In either case, there are clear externalities. While having much of the same potential for market failure, efforts to regulate audience markets in western states have been moderated by concerns about possibly infringing on freedom of information.

*Media markets are complex*, often comprising multiple affiliated markets, and are marked by a broad range of competing influences driven by the presence of substitutes, complements and externalities, market structures, and regulatory policies. This has restricted the ability to fully articulate markets of the media, and thus to be able to understand and predict market behaviors and results. This is likely one reason for the apparent inability of some communication law and policy to achieve their stated goals. If policymakers do not understand the full market, efforts to correct perceived market failures can contribute to further market distortions, aggravating rather than solving conditions. Complexity and uncertainty have also made it more difficult to predict the impacts of changing market conditions, such as can be brought on by new technologies, convergence, increased competition, and so on.

### **EMERGING MARKET ISSUES**

The growing convergence of media markets and the growth of cross-media marketing also contribute to the growing complexity of media markets, expanding the range of substitutes and blurring market boundaries (→ Convergence of Media Systems). Contributing to this is shift in audience focus from media to content, further blurring (or converging) media markets from the demand perspective. The growing complexity, flexibility, and uncertainty of media markets led Lacey (2004) to suggest the embrace of at least a degree of uncertainty through the concept of “fuzzy markets.”

*Technological innovation*, particularly in the fields of digital technology and telecommunications, is starting to transform markets of the media. It is contributing to convergence, reducing old market boundaries and barriers. It is leading to the rise of new media forms and content, and new distribution systems (→ Digitization and Media Convergence; Technology and Communication). It is expanding market boundaries, and reducing distribution costs, creating global markets. In the → Internet, there is the potential for the emergence of a global market that is radically different from traditional media structures, and offers a number of advantages over them. At the very least, this emerging market for media and information goods and services will provide strong competition. The inherent cost structures are such that they have the potential to transform how value is associated with products, and possibly radically transform supply and demand functions, leading to new ways of thinking about market functions.

A final emerging issue comes from *current trends in copyright and intellectual property law*. Current policy focus tends to be on extending rights, and protecting against unauthorized uses through enhanced legal protections and penalties and the use of technological protection measures. Such activities add costs to media products, and can impact on their perceived value, shifting supply and demand functions and distorting markets. In general, the impact is negative, suggesting reduced use of media, which will also impact on audience markets. The cost of technological protection measures can significantly impact on distribution costs, even to the point of affecting economic viability. Current copyright and intellectual property policy is focused on content creators and owners; it needs also to consider the broader impact on markets and society.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Copyright ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Distribution ▶ Diversification of Media Markets ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Corporations, Forms of ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Management ▶ Media Policy ▶ Newspaper ▶ Online Media ▶ Piracy ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Privatization of the Media ▶ Public Goods ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Subsidies for the Media ▶ Supply and Demand in Media Markets ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## Masculinity and the Media

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The focus of this entry is upon representations of masculinity in one medium only, television, while making it evident that the approach adopted could be applied equally well to newspapers, magazines, radio, and film (→ Television as Popular Culture).

Three broad phases can be identified in the evolution of *televsual masculinities*, a term coined to reflect the breakup of the *stereotypical masculine narrative* over the past three decades (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). It acknowledges that masculinity is far from monolithic and uniform but is rather composed of a number of “masculinities,” of ways of “doing” masculinity. Another factor that should be borne in mind at the outset is the massive growth today in the amount and variety of television (including the current development of Internet-delivered television) increasingly available to viewers throughout the developed world. What Creeber (2006) aptly terms “tele-visions” are a barometer of social and cultural change, and any assumption that the medium today remains male-dominated (or its representations of masculinity unchanged) should be treated with considerable caution. Finally, reference below is made to many programs that, although originating in the US or Britain, have subsequently been dubbed and exported and have thereby contributed to the emergence of an embryonic global media culture (→ Globalization of the Media).

### PHASE 1: WHEN MEN WERE MEN AND WOMEN WERE WOMEN

From the mid-1950s up to the late 1970s, the depiction of gender on British, European, and American television was highly stereotypical. “Real men” were inevitably presented as dominant, rational, and competent, whereas their antithesis (that is, desirable, compliant, irrational, domesticated women) featured mostly in comedies and soap operas. In fact, male displays of any feminine characteristics were rare and occasions for comedy.

Unsurprisingly, second wave feminists mounted a trenchant critique of television from the mid-1960s on, accusing it of playing a major role in the continuing denigration of women by constantly depicting them as weak and overdependent upon men (→ Sexism in the Media). A dominant *male gaze*, they claimed, pervaded both the production and consumption of television. Yet a little over a decade later, Hearn and Melechi (1992, 231) confidently pointed to television’s key role in “assisting the fragmentation of (traditional) masculinity.”

## PHASE 2: A WEAKENING OF THE MASCULINITY MOLD

Throughout the 1970s, western popular culture gradually eroded the still relatively intact *masculine paradigm*, so much so that it has been described as a decade marked by “a desire to play about with masculinity” (Mort 1996, 203). Television continued as a major vehicle for this throughout the 1980s, as narrow stereotypes were challenged and more dramas with central female protagonists appeared on both sides of the Atlantic, as, for example, in *Juliet Bravo*, *Silent Witness*, *Cagney & Lacey* and *The Gentle Touch*. Male leads increasingly combined toughness with a degree of sensitivity, even vulnerability (as in *Inspector Morse*), while female ones became less reliant on men. The change was particularly noticeable in television advertisements and where masculinity could be most readily reshaped and men lampooned as comically incompetent. Meanwhile, displays of male bonding and *homosocial buddy relationships*, accompanied by a degree of emotional disclosure, grew in popularity on prime-time television, perhaps best epitomized by the US series *Starsky & Hutch*. Elsewhere, in other popular series (like, for example, *thirty something*), male friendships become even closer and ambiguous.

Men, too, were becoming increasingly fashion conscious: *Miami Vice* was a prime example of the male incorporation of the pleasures of appearance and style, albeit without any real diminution of masculine power. MacKinnon (2003, 82) sees 1980s American television as characterized by the conflict between *old and new masculinities*: for example, if the *A-Team* was a post-Vietnam reconstruction of the masculine, *thirty something* promoted a softer and more sensitive (and middle-class) masculinity more appealing to women. At the same time, conventional masculinity was increasingly being held up to ridicule in what Hanke (1998) terms “mock macho sitcoms.”

It is undeniable that by the late 1980s the former mask of cyborgian toughness and emotional reticence had been lowered, if not finally discarded, as *macho masculinity* increasingly began to be viewed more as a handicap than as a strength. During the 1990s, rigid gender stereotypes were further eroded in such series as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Friends*, *Absolutely Fabulous*, and *Sex in the City*. Moreover, ridiculing pompous men had become an increasingly popular format in situation comedy since the 1960s. In the UK, examples include the character Alf Garnett (*Till Death Us Do Part*), Captain Mainwaring (*Dad's Army*), Del Boy (*Only Fools and Horses*), Basil Fawlty (*Fawlty Towers*), and the latest in line, David Brent (*The Office*). Brent daily bullied and humiliated his workforce, but was really a vain, sexist, egotistical, and ultimately ludicrous figure. In such characters, the veneer of control and authority is soon undermined by their absurd actions and the consequences that follow: in short, they are to be laughed at more than laughed with. Meanwhile, another way of rendering (particularly young) men absurd from the 1990s has been through the depiction of *laddish masculinity* in, for example, *Men Behaving Badly*, *Fantasy Football League*, and *They Think It's All Over*.

As is evident, then, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, television undoubtedly made a significant contribution to the deconstructing and repackaging of masculinity. Indeed, Gauntlett (2002) is of the opinion that modern media have a more complex view of gender and sexuality than ever before. He identifies a number of programs that he feels were particularly influential in transforming gender representations over this period, among them *Ally McBeal*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *NYPD Blue*, *Friends*, *Frasier*, *ER*,

*Dawson's Creek*, and *The West Wing*. Meanwhile, in the groundbreaking UK police series *Prime Suspect*, a woman (Detective Chief Inspector Jane Tennison) eventually triumphed over the *masculinist culture* in which she worked.

### PHASE 3: POSTMODERN TELEVISION

In the contemporary, postmodern era, there is not only more television than ever before but also a proliferation of programs with less structured formats (→ Postmodernism and Communication). An increasing number of televisual texts resist semantic closure, being less linear and more ambiguous than previously and demonstrating what Creeber (2006) terms “semiotic excess” and “inter-determinacy” (an apt example is the recent US series *Lost*).

If structuralism was inclined to prescribe meaning, poststructural textual analysis stresses the polysemic and open nature of such rich visual and auditory texts (→ Structuralism in Visual Communication). The widening portrayal of gender they convey is, however, more and more driven by a rapacious (and increasingly globalizing) → *celebrity culture* that manufactures dreams and sells “stars,” and in which consumerist imagery is everything (Holmes & Redmond 2006).

### REAL OR COSMETIC CHANGE?

It is quite clear that representations of gender on television have changed considerably over the past 50 years (→ Gender: Representation in the Media) in that a far wider range of masculinities (and femininities) has today replaced the earlier relatively uniform and stereotypical representations of masculinity (and femininity). Indeed, what Connell (1987) describes as “*hegemonic masculinity*” is now held by many to have multiple coexisting, rather than subordinated, versions. However, there are at least two interpretations of the nature of such changes.

The first is that masculinity on television today in the west has been largely stripped of its hegemony and is more open to alternative representations. Gill (2007) is the latest to record the increasing fragmentation and proliferation of masculinities and of their representations. Meanwhile, Gauntlett (2002, 7) argues that television today is “full of information about being a man in the here and now,” mirroring postmodern times in which gender is more unstable than ever before. Similarly, Creeber (2006, 54) sees television attempting to “play around with, subvert, ridicule, investigate, resist and even transcend *traditional male heterosexual ideologies*.” Soaps everywhere (from *Coronation Street* to *EastEnders* to the once ultra-macho Brazilian telenovelas) have widened the array of masculinities they parade before their audience.

The second interpretation is that whatever changes may have taken place are misleading in that all that has really happened is that a new set of stereotypes have been brought into play, and that “underneath what appear to be radically different images of women and men are some very familiar, very traditional themes” (Wood 2003, 262). A good illustration of this in the 1990s is the previously cited British police drama series *Prime Suspect*, where the lead character, DCI Jane Tennison, repeatedly draws upon her feminism to survive the police canteen culture (Creeber 2004). However, in order to earn credibility, she has to adopt many of the attributes of her misogynistic colleagues. Brunson

(1998, 234) argues that as a result *Prime Suspect* still preserves the basic ingredients of the conventional masculine narrative in that Tennison, in order to succeed, is forced to become “fully integrated into the language of the lads.” Likewise, McQueen (2001) maintains that British situation comedy is still largely dominated by men, while Mills (2005, 111) goes even further, claiming that “television humor has been largely co-opted as a male trait.” In similar vein, MacKinnon (2003) argues that surface changes should not blind us to what remains constant, in that representations of men as soft, sensitive, and caring can ultimately function to reinforce male privilege. Another factor to bear in mind is that while the production process may well have resulted in more diverse and open texts, the ethnographic evidence on television reception is that consumption patterns still remain strongly gendered (with men generally opting to watch factual programs, documentaries, sport, and high-action dramas).

Perhaps the ultimate litmus test of how open television is to actual, as opposed to cosmetic, change is how it portrays *gay masculinity* (→ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies; Heterosexism and the Media). Does it adequately reflect the shifts in attitude in the west toward homosexuality over the past three decades? Many argue that television lags behind in that gay men are still crudely stereotyped. An early, groundbreaking camp figure on British television was Mr. Humphries in *Are You Being Served?* His legacy has endured, a notable recent descendant being Dafydd (“the only gay in the village”) in the successful BBC comedy series *Little Britain*. Mills (2005, 126) points out that the gradual growth in gay characters on television “has done nothing to undermine the recurring use of campness as an indicator of homosexuality.”

While comedy is one of the few places on television where homosexuality even has a presence, its representation continues to be limited, with campness still to the fore, so much so that “in British comedy campness is funny, not homosexuality: the latter hardly exists” (Mills 2005, 125). Mills illustrates his argument by reference to two sitcoms, both featuring James Dreyfus. In the first series (*The Thin Blue Line*), an attempt is made to disentangle homosexuality and campness. Constable Goody is heterosexual, but camp, whereas in Dreyfus’s follow-up series (*Gimme, Gimme, Gimme*) he played an openly gay character by drawing heavily upon the camp stereotype. If the former series contradicted (even confused) viewers’ expectations, the latter confirmed them, leading Mills (2005) to conclude that gay characters continue to be caught in a rigid representational trap.

To conclude, it is claimed that increasingly gender-literate television writers and directors are more prepared than ever to experiment with nontraditional and subversive representations of gender. Many would like to see television become more proactively involved in promoting masculinities firmly based on personal qualities and quality relationships rather than upon physical power, action, achievement, and possessions. While Bignell and Lacey (2005, 6) argue that television has the potential to articulate “radical defamiliarizations of familiar sights, sounds, ideas, places and moments,” others would regard this as somewhat utopian and, instead, be more inclined to conclude that as a medium it continues to reflect, rather than instigate, meaningful and enduring social change.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies  
▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ International Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postmodernism



and Communication ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media  
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## **Mask**

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A mask is a facial representation worn by performers and exists in a continuum with puppetry, which often represents the same characters (Harlequin, Punch, Devil, etc.; → Visual Representation). Emigh (1996, 3, 7) theorizes masks as “transitional objects” that bridge gaps through strategies of play and argues that though in the west the mask is “generally regarded as a cosmetic disguise,” in some non-western areas the mask is “an instrument of revelation, giving form to the ineffable and providing a nexus between the individual and communally defined forces.”

In social, ritual, and theatrical masking, the mask is a “liminal” in Turner’s (1969) sense of the word, doing things the face cannot. Masking normally involves an animal/

humanoid head representing a human, animal, ancestral, divine, or demonic figure. In social use the mask is often seen as hiding the reality of the animator underneath, and this mask is most customary in western usage in the post-Renaissance period. In this mode of thinking the mask is conceived of as a “trick” or “lie.” However, in ritual and theatrical use in Asia, Africa, and Oceania, the mask is often seen as a tool meant to reveal an ideal that the material world masks. It represents a hidden and greater “truth.”

The mask transforms the face, helping the wearer signify grotesque, animalistic behavior or inspiring awe. *Social uses of the mask* invite freedom from everyday decorum. We see masks used in rites of reversal, which may range from the medieval festivals of fools to the modern carnival or Halloween mask. The mask of the devil, animal, ghoul, or clown on the common man eases everyday constraints. Authority is disrupted, sexual and animal behaviors exalted, and death and destruction are put temporarily at bay by the anonymity of the carnival mask. The *Fastnachtspiele* of Germany or the English Whitsunday appearances of horses, phallic clowns, and cross-dressed men are European models. By temporarily reversing social mores these aberrations may reinforce the non-holiday hegemonies of class and culture (→ Cultural Studies). These “safety-valve” uses of the mask may allow the lower-status person (commoner, child, woman) to put on the mask to critique the higher-status one (aristocrat, adult, male). Half masks allow verbal critique. Full masks may invite the mime of sex and mayhem. Mask may also enforce social hierarchy through awe. Male secret societies have sometimes used masks this way. The *duk-duk* dancers of New Guinea were members of secret societies who wore cone-like masks to visit those who defied the mores of the group. Ku Klux Klan hoods seem an American variant of such a masked society (→ Socialization by the Media). In such examples, only the initiated (insider males) can wear the mask; audiences (women, children, outsiders) remain passive observers of the power of the image (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events).

As *ritual use* the mask is popular in shamanic traditions: altering the performer, it allows the viewer to visualize the spirit, illness, or ancestor for whom the shaman/medium temporarily speaks. The *thovil* exorcist of Sri Lanka dances 18 demons/masks of disease in his healing rites, diagnosing the “devil” which beset the patient. The elaborate costumes of the *teyyam* trancer of India transform the spirit medium, who then is possessed by the god. Representations of ancestral or totem figures allow groups from northwest America; north, south, and southeast Asia; Melanesia; and Africa to commune with animal or spirit worlds, for social cohesion, ceremony, or healing (→ Media and Group Representations). The mask visually “others” the performer, making it useful in ritual performance (→ Rituals in Popular Communication). Even when groups abandon shamanic beliefs, traditional masks linger. Lion dances continue in Buddhist cultures without the exorcising power they once held. Alligator and reptilian figures (*naga*) remain important from India and China through the Pacific. Deer and horned masks are associated with helpful fertility in Scandinavian, Khmer, and southwest American (Yaqui Indian) celebrations. Horned masks with their phallic associations in Christian Europe, however, became linked with devils. Ritual trickster types, which may have color imagery of dark and light or white, appear in both the theatres and village ceremonies of south and southeast Asia. Their iconography and coloring may link to both traditional puppet clowns of Europe and the *commedia dell'arte* (→ Iconography).

The transformative possibility of the mask has made it a *useful theatre device*, allowing an actor to play multiple roles (→ Theatre). The use of masks is strong in theatres that prefer a solo artist. The *dalang* (puppet-master or masker) of Java and Bali is traditionally conceptualized as a solo performer (though in contemporary times multiple performers are the norm). The five major masks of the *topeng Cirebon* of the north coast of Java represent the five directions (the cardinal points and the center), the five ages of man, the five elements (earth, fire, water, air, ether), etc. Voice, movement, character traits, etc., are associated with each mask. Dances allow the individual performer to understand the correlations between the microcosm (*dalang*) and the macrocosm. Though the performances of the present are theatrical rather than ritual, ideas of a solo artist using diverse masks to portray a story remain strong where Hinduism and Buddhism have migrated (→ Religion and Popular Communication). Indonesian *topeng* (mask) theatre, Japanese *noh*, Korean *talchum*, and Thai *khon* are important mask theatres where mask dancers use multiple masks to tell culturally central stories. The mask image, not the physicality of the performer, defines the character. One performer presents many characters via the mask image.

Greek theatre found masks similarly useful, allowing three actors to play multiple roles. The stylized expression could be “read” over the distance of the amphitheater. Grotesque masks were used in Greek and Roman comedy and the *commedia dell’arte* of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries favored masks for clowns and old men, while the more realistic ladies and lovers were unmasked. The wart-marked, pug-nosed Harlequino and the sharp-nosed, jowl-cheeked merchant Pantalone dominated the stages of Europe before realistic tastes unmasked them in the 1800s. These characters have sparked other explorations of mask work in the acting training of twentieth-century western teachers like Jacques Lecoq (France) and Carlo Mazzone-Clementi (Italy). But a preference for faces correlates with the current western orientation toward secularism and realism. Theatre masks can represent demons, gods, and animals. They are useful for letting us see ourselves as better or worse than in real life, and work well with music, dance, and poetic flights (→ Art as Communication). Masks make the wearer appear bigger and rougher, or thinner and more refined. But when the aesthetic involves individual psychology, everyday speech, and representation of the real world, the actor’s face and not the mask may be more appropriate (→ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Iconography ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ Religion and Popular Communication ▶ Rituals in Popular Communication ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Theatre ▶ Visual Representation

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## McLuhan, Marshall

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Marshall McLuhan is best known for his theories on the impact of media apart from the specific content/messages they convey. McLuhan linked major historical shifts, social trends, and changes in psychological and sensory orientations to the influence of changes in communication media and other technologies (→ Technology and Communication; Media History). McLuhan ridiculed typical concerns about message imitation and persuasion in his most famous pun: “The medium is the message.”

Herbert Marshall McLuhan was born in Edmonton, Alberta in 1911 to a Scottish-Irish Baptist family. He earned degrees at the University of Manitoba and Cambridge University. He converted to Catholicism in 1937. His early training and lifelong passion were in English literature. But in trying to bridge the gap he perceived between himself and his students at his first US teaching job at the University of Wisconsin, he turned his attention to pop culture. His first book, *The mechanical bride* (1951), was on the content of advertising, a message-based approach he later rejected in favor of studying media environments. McLuhan began teaching at the University of Toronto in 1946 and founded the Centre for Culture and Technology there in 1963. He died in Toronto in 1980.

At the University of Toronto, McLuhan was influenced by the work of political economist → Harold Innis, who argued that communication media have a major impact on societies by shaping patterns of information flow. Yet, while Innis was very concerned with issues of media monopolies and political power and control, McLuhan focused more on the ways in which new media experiences lead to perceptual shifts, such as a changing ratio of the senses. Citing Innis’s work in a proposal to the Ford Foundation, McLuhan and anthropologist Edmund Carpenter used part of the resulting grant to publish *Explorations* (1953–1959), an eclectic journal concerned with changes in media.

In 1962, McLuhan published *The Gutenberg galaxy: The making of typographic man*, which describes the ways in which writing, and especially print, transformed oral cultures, encouraging linear thinking, categorization, and individualism. In 1964, he published his best-known book, *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. In it, he focused primarily on the shift from print culture to electronic culture, which he saw as entailing a “retribalization” of society. McLuhan did not envision (or desire) that books and printing would disappear, but he argued that print-encouraged forms of perception and social organization were in dramatic decline. *Understanding media* also defines “media” broadly to include inventions such as clothing, houses, money, and the automobile (→ Media).

McLuhan coined the phrase “the global village” to describe the ways in which electronic media involve people in each other’s experiences across vast distances, leading to new connections, but also to new forms of tension and violence. He explored *media as extensions* of human senses or processes (e.g., the wheel extends the foot, the microphone extends the ear, electronic media extend the nervous system) to describe how we can be transformed by our own creations. He described how different types of content and behavioral styles succeed in different media and how people react differently based on whether a medium is *hot* (high definition) or *cool* (low definition). In talks and articles in the 1970s, McLuhan developed a *tetrad* model (published posthumously as the 1988 book *Laws of the media*, co-authored by his son Eric) to describe a medium’s impact by answering four questions: What processes does the medium enhance? What does it retrieve from a deeper past? What does it reverse into when pushed to its limits? What does it obsolesce?

Late in his career, McLuhan became increasingly interested in the functions of the left and right brain hemispheres and how their differences related to forms of human expression, media, and art. In a tragic irony, a stroke a year before his death left him unable to read, speak, or write.

McLuhan’s skyrocketing fame in the 1960s was accompanied by withering *attacks from critics* that he was a charlatan. McLuhan’s fans saw him as an “oracle of the electronic age,” while his critics saw him as a dangerous denigrator of literacy, rationality, and other hallmarks of western civilization. The praise and condemnation often grew from the same foundations. McLuhan promulgated the notions of “media” and “information” in an era when books and other communication forms (such as radio, movies, and TV) were not generally grouped together as one sort of thing. McLuhan’s employed an unusual “oral,” nonlinear, aphoristic style of writing in presenting what he called “probes” about media, where being absolutely correct concerned him less than being insightfully provocative. Consistent with his theories about the influence of new media on the organization of knowledge, he also ignored the traditional boundaries of academic disciplines, to the delight of some and to the horror of many “experts.”

Citations of McLuhan’s work are filled with mischaracterizations of his theories by both fans and critics, some of whom believe incorrectly that McLuhan was advocating an end to literacy or presenting a utopian thesis of global harmony. McLuhan has been criticized more legitimately for downplaying issues of power, propaganda, and class conflicts. Many scholars have dismissed McLuhan for presenting an overly deterministic model of single-factor and unidirectional causation. But defenders of his work, such as Donna Flayhan and Paul Grosswiler, discern in it an underlying dialectical method.

McLuhan’s reputation declined significantly in the 1970s and 1980s, most of his books went out of print, and his name disappeared from the majority of media textbooks. A major revival of interest in his work occurred following the rise of the world wide web and the recognition of social changes that resemble what McLuhan had predicted. McLuhan is now seen as an early postmodernist theorist and a prime herald of the “information age” and “globalization” (→ Globalization of the Media; Postmodernism and Communication). McLuhan’s reputation is solid as a central figure in a larger interdisciplinary area of research called → Medium Theory.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ Media ▶ Media Ecology  
▶ Media Effects ▶ Media History ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Technology and Communication

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## **Meaning**

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The title of a widely influential 1923 volume, *The meaning of meaning* (Ogden & Richards 1989), suggested the difficulty of capturing the complex connotations of the concept of meaning. The contents of the volume, authored by a linguist and a literary critic, with appendices by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski and medical doctor F. G. Crookshank, underscored the interdisciplinary roots and relevance of the concept. Meaning applies to issues of perception, cognition, and interaction across the natural, human, and social sciences. In contemporary communication research, meaning is perhaps most commonly associated with humanistic perspectives on the texts of communication and their interpretation by culturally specific audiences. If → *information* denotes a social scientific conception of those specific differences which communication makes in later events, *meaning* refers to the cumulative and unitary experience that humans derive from participating in processes of communication.

### **THREE CONCEPTIONS OF MEANING**

At least three different notions of meaning have fed into communication research from the history of ideas, paralleling three different understandings of human knowledge (Kjørup 2001, 20–22). First, in the domain of individual experience and existence, meaning implies a *saturated sense of self*. Meaning constitutes an identity, a presence, and an orientation toward other people and projects in the world (→ Identities and Discourse). In ordinary language, one connotation in this regard is “the meaning of life,” as articulated in human consciousness and communication, whether in religious or

secular terms. In different forms of communication research, meaning as experienced has been examined as a psychological, sociological, and aesthetic phenomenon. Notwithstanding suggestions by postmodernist philosophy that human subjectivity has no such center or self-identity (→ Postmodernism and Communication), everyday as well as scholarly practices normally presuppose a meaningful frame or horizon within which individuals understand “how to go on” (Wittgenstein 1958, no. 154).

Second, meaning is the outcome of innumerable communicative exchanges in a culture or collective, manifesting and being sanctioned through *tradition* (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). On the one hand, traditions are meaningful insofar as they tap classic or authoritative insights that have proven their relevance and value over time. On the other hand, traditions become meaningful in relation to the current contexts in which they lend themselves to tasks, interactions, and reflections. If the first conception of meaning is expressed in the Delphi oracle’s admonition to “Know thyself,” this second conception focuses attention on how individuals come to know themselves with reference to meanings beyond themselves.

Third, in the modern period, meaning has become an emphatically contested terrain – an object and a source of *reflexivity* (Beck et al. 1994). A terminology of “meaning production,” while sometimes used metaphorically, has also been applied literally to both cognition and communication: subjects produce meanings and, by extension, identities for themselves, and, in communication, they jointly accomplish meaningful social realities. Particularly constructivist strands in communication research, such as symbolic interactionism and cultural studies, have emphasized how everyday meaning production not merely reproduces, but also challenges and changes cultural conventions and social structures. In this perspective, meaning is a constitutive component of modern culture and society as such, and the category through which both can be reimagined, whether in political dialogue, aesthetic expression, or scientific thought-experiments.

### MEANING AS AN OBJECT OF COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

While all three general notions of meaning – individual–mental, collective–cultural, and contingent–constructivist – enter into diverse traditions of communication research across interpersonal, organizational, and systemic levels of analysis, each notion has lent itself to a variety of definitions. In the domain of individual experience, for example, a cognitivist approach would emphasize procedural aspects of how meaning emerges in consciousness (→ Cognitive Science), whereas a phenomenological position rather takes meaning as a preparatory condition of conscious experience (→ Phenomenology). As a manifestation of cultural tradition, meaning may be approached in relatively consensual terms as a shared outlook on the world and as a matter of interpretation between cultures, as in intercultural communication studies, or it may be perceived, as in cultural studies, as a hegemonic position to be contested. And in the perspective of the ongoing structuration of modern society and culture, meaning has been examined as a comparatively stable, if preliminary, meaning *product*, as embodied in discourse, or as a *process* orienting people in contexts of action.

As an analytical object, moreover, meaning has been operationalized in distinctive ways. Figure 1 indicates four ideal-typical ways of examining meaning (Jensen 2002, 30).

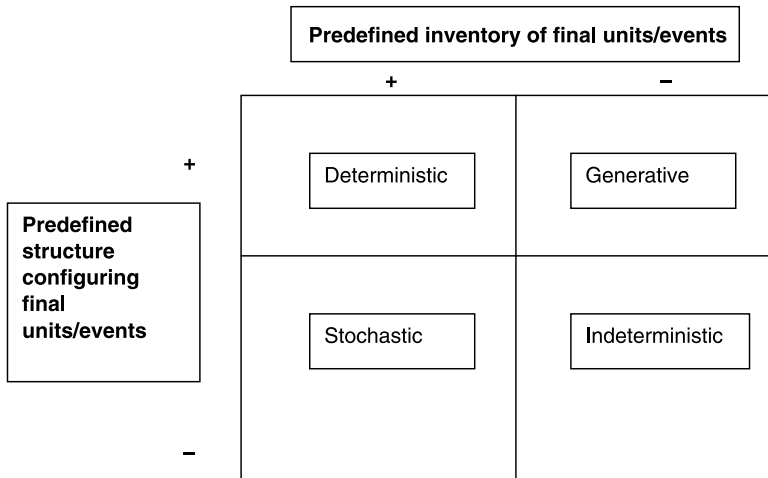


Figure 1 Four ways of examining meaning

The two dimensions of the model address the constituents of meaning and their interrelations, respectively. Meaning arises from the selection and combination of certain elements, even if their characteristics may vary considerably across different forms of expression; for instance, speech, images, and gestures. As a combinatorial structure, the two dimensions give rise to four types or models of meaning. On the one hand, the structure may, or may not, be a fixed matrix configuring the potential outcomes of meaning production. On the other hand, the constituents may, or may not, make up a pre-defined inventory anticipating the units that could possibly result from meaning production. In addition, the terminology of “units/events” allows for empirical research that operationalizes meanings as either vehicles or processes of interchange.

The two main models of meaning in current media and communication research, arguably, are the stochastic and generative types. The *stochastic* type is witnessed in the prototypical social scientific study in survey, experimental, or content-analytical settings, relying on a hypothetico-deductive methodology (→ Critical Rationalism). Given a pre-defined range of content or response units, the question is which of these, and in which configurations, will enter into a particular event space, as measured by an appropriate statistical technique. In other words, the question is when and where – in which discourses and minds – particular meaningful messages manifest themselves.

The *generative* type is associated with humanistic media studies, typically qualitative analyses of media texts, but also of audience reception and, to a degree, the production of media content, for example, in newsrooms or user-generated content on the Internet (→ Qualitative Methodology). These forms of analysis depart from a pre-defined expressive repertoire – what linguistics and literary theory know as a “deep structure,” for example, grammatical categories or standard components of fairy tales. At the “surface” level of concrete sentences or connected discourse, this matrix may produce an almost infinite variety of meanings (→ Structuralism).

Even while few researchers explicitly align themselves with either deterministic or indeterministic conceptions of meaning, such models continue to inform the practice of



research, sometimes unwittingly. Deterministic models tend to underlie work assuming a direct impact of media on audiences (e.g., Postman 1985). And postmodernist theory implies that both the textual content of media and its interpretation by audiences amount to free-floating, indeterministic processes of meaning (e.g., Fish 1979).

### WHERE AND WHEN IS MEANING?

Like information, meaning is often considered as some entity that resides in messages and minds. Rather than asking, “Where is meaning?” – in which spatial location, material vehicle, or psychological domain – it is helpful to ask, “When is meaning?” (Jensen 1991). Just as information theory has refocused attention on the (communicative) difference that (discursive) differences may make in later events, a theory of meaning must address those contexts and practices in which meaning is actualized. In accordance with much twentieth-century philosophy, from Ludwig Wittgenstein to J. L. Austin to Jürgen Habermas, meaning is increasingly associated with action. Whereas meaning may still primarily connote the representation and contemplation of reality, meaning is performative.

A further set of distinctions pertains to the interrelations between meaning and action. First of all, it is important to distinguish between *declarative* and *procedural* aspects of meaning as well as of knowledge (Thurlow 2006) – knowing *that* something is the case, and knowing *how* to engage this something (Ryle 1949). In empirical communication studies of, for example, attitudes, the declaration of a political preference does not equal an orientation toward action, as in voting. Communication is one way of acting, but people do not necessarily enact what they communicate.

In addition, the distinction between *manifest* and *latent* meaning poses notorious difficulties in communication research. The tradition of content analysis was founded on the identification of manifest meanings in media messages (Berelson 1952). Yet one ambition of media studies has been to extract the latent implications of such manifest structures and, next, to establish the uptake of both by audiences. Importantly, latent meanings, while sometimes difficult to ascertain in intersubjectively reliable research designs, are key to diverse cognitive and behavioral consequences of communication. The relationship between manifest and latent meanings has been studied extensively in qualitative communication research, frequently with reference to the concepts of *denotation* and *connotation*, which are conceptual analogies to manifest and latent meaning.

Finally, the scale from *intentional* to *incidental* meaning involves analytical problems regarding the “when” of meaning: when, specifically, does meaning arise in a process involving senders, messages, and receivers? A core notion of meaning, and of communication as such, is the presentation of intentions by humans to other humans, who may recognize such intentions in one or several turns. In social interaction, however, a communicator is rarely able to control any number of incidental (or perhaps latent) meanings that an audience will add or attribute to his or her intentional (usually manifest) meaning. More or less incidental meanings also abound in natural as well as cultural environments, for example in architecture, which is a socially meaningful organization of people and objects in space. In this regard, human bodies as well as

their material environments cannot *not* communicate (Watzlawick et al. 1967). The main challenge of communication research remains one of specifying how humans and their extensions in information technologies serve as media of meaning in communication.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognitive Science ► Critical Rationalism ► Cultural Studies ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Identities and Discourse ► Information ► Modernity ► Phenomenology ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Qualitative Methodology ► Structuralism ► Symbolic Interaction

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## **Measurement Theory**

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Thinking about measurement brings to mind an old adage, “If it exists, it is measurable.” However, in research, we tend to go beyond that adage, saying “If it exists, it must be measurable” (Leedy 1997). Most researchers will likely agree that measurement is a pillar of social and behavioral sciences research (Guilford 1954).

## WHAT IS MEASUREMENT?

Given this, what exactly is measurement? The things that come to mind when we think of measurement are rulers, yardsticks, and → scales, to name a few, but in research, measurement takes on a whole new meaning. Leedy (1997, 26) defines measurement as “limiting the data of any phenomenon – substantial or insubstantial – so that those data may be examined mathematically and according to an acceptable qualitative and quantitative standard.” Similarly, Babbie (2001, 199) views measurement as “careful, deliberate observations of the real world for the purpose of describing objects and events in terms of the attributes composing a variable.”

In other words, scientists make a deliberate decision to observe, are equally deliberate about what they will observe, take precautions against erroneous observations, and record their observations carefully as measurements. Ultimately, measurement is the process whereby a thing, concept, or object measured is *compared against a point of limitation*. For example, in the social and behavioral sciences, we frequently compare the results of research against statistical norms such as the normal curve, point of central tendency, and degree of dispersion for quantitative data, and across data sources, methods, and time for qualitative data (Leedy 1997). Measurement, therefore, is a tool by which data is inspected, analyzed, and interpreted so that the researcher may probe to discover or attribute meaning (→ Quantitative Methodology; Qualitative Methodology).

The fundamentals of measurement are quite simple: A researcher assigns numerals to objects, events, or properties according to systematic rules (Kerlinger 1986; Wimmer & Dominick 2003). Examples of measurement are everywhere: we turn on the television and see an advertisement for toothpaste with the slogan “9 out of 10 dentists recommend . . .” Sometimes measurements are numerical or quantitative, such as “students purchased sandwiches from the Sub Shop 2.4 times more than the previous month.” Other times they are qualitative, such as “the motorist expressed annoyance on being told the emergency road service closed at 5 p.m.” (Wimmer & Dominick 2003).

## CONCEPTS OF MEASUREMENT

In measurement, there are three central concepts: numerals, assignment, and rules (Katzer et al. 1998; Kerlinger 1986; Wimmer & Dominick 2003). *Numerals* are symbols such as S, 5, 10, or 100, and have no explicit quantitative meaning. When a numeral has been given quantitative meaning, it becomes a number and can be used in mathematical and statistical computations. *Assignment* is the designation of numerals or numbers to certain objects or events. An example of a simple measurement system would be to assign the numeral 1 to the people who obtain most of their news from television, the numeral 2 to those who get most of their news from a newspaper, and the numeral 3 to those who receive most of their news from the Internet. *Rules* specify the way that numerals or numbers are to be assigned. Rules are the foundation of any measurement system, so if the rules are faulty the measurement system will be faulty too. For some research studies, the rules often seem to be obvious (i.e., a stopwatch and standardized message may be sufficient to measure reading speed). In other research studies the rules may not be

apparent. For example, before a researcher can measure “enjoyment of televised sports” or “attitude toward violence,” he or she must articulate thoughtful measurement techniques.

### MEASUREMENT AND “REALITY” ISOMORPHISM

In addition, measurement systems also strive to be isomorphic to reality. Basically, isomorphism means identity or similarity of form or structure (Kerlinger 1986; Wimmer & Dominick 2003). To strive for isomorphism, researchers must define the sets of objects being measured and the numerical sets from which we assign numerals to those objects, and check that the rules of assignment or correspondence are tied to “reality.” To assess isomorphism to reality, researchers ask the question “Is this set of objects isomorphic to that set of objects?” In the physical sciences, for example, isomorphism is not a problem, because there is usually a direct relationship between the objects being measured and the numbers assigned to them: if an electric current travels through a substance with less resistance than it does through a different substance, it can be concluded that the first substance is a better conductor than the second. Additionally, testing more substances can lead to a ranking of conductors, where the numbers assigned indicate the degrees of conductivity. In this example, the measurement system is isomorphic to reality (Wimmer & Dominick 2003).

In the social sciences, this assessment is not as clear cut or obvious. For example, researchers must ask the question “Do the measurement procedures being used have some rational and empirical correspondence with ‘reality?’” (Kerlinger 1986). The ultimate question that must be asked is “Is the measurement procedure isomorphic to reality?” The only problem is that we rarely discover easily the degree of correspondence to reality of our measurements. Unfortunately, many researchers often do not know whether they are measuring what they are trying to measure. Even so, researchers must find a way to test the isomorphism with reality of the measurement numbers game they play.

### LEVELS OF MEASUREMENT

In 1946, Stevens suggested a hierarchy of levels for the measurement of data that has become a classic of categorization for statisticians and researchers. Stevens suggested four levels, or types, of measurement, which he called (1) nominal, (2) ordinal, (3) interval, and (4) ratio.

The word *nominal* comes from the Latin *nomen* meaning “a name.” Thus, we can measure data by assigning names to them. In other words, by assigning a specific name to a concept or object, we have restricted that thing to the meaning of its name (Leedy 1997). Nominal measurement is the weakest form of measurement and identifies variables whose values have no mathematical interpretation. Examples of nominal-level measurement are gender, ethnicity, occupation, religious affiliation, social security number, license plates, and so on. They must be mutually exclusive (only check one) and exhaustive (everyone can be classified into a category).

In the *ordinal scale* of measurement, we think in terms of the symbols  $>$  (greater than) or  $<$  (less than). The ordinal scale implies that the entity being measured is quantified in terms of being of a higher or lower or a greater or lesser order than a comparative entity. In measuring on the ordinal scale, the relationship is always asymmetrical. For example, something is always greater than, less than, older than, younger than, more intelligent than, more desirable than, more tactful than, etc. (Babbie 2001; Leedy 1997; Wimmer & Dominick 2003). In other words, the numbers assigned to cases specify only the order of the cases, allowing for greater than/less than distinctions. Examples of ordinal-level measurement are a student's academic level, and socio-economic status.

The *interval scale* of measurement is characterized by two features: (1) it has equal units of measurement, and (2) its zero point has been established arbitrarily (Leedy 1997). Thus, it includes the characteristics of the nominal and ordinal scales, and in addition the numbers indicating the values of a variable represent fixed measurement units. In the interval-level measurement there is no absolute or fixed zero point. The most familiar example of interval-level measurement is temperature: in both the Fahrenheit (F) and Celsius (C) scales, each degree is equal to the others and the zero point has been established arbitrarily. For instance, it takes the same amount of heat to warm an object from  $30^{\circ}$  to  $40^{\circ}$  as from  $50^{\circ}$  to  $60^{\circ}$ . Also, since heat does not begin at  $0^{\circ}$  on the Fahrenheit scale,  $60^{\circ}$  is not twice as hot as  $30^{\circ}$ . A common use of interval measurement is in the rating scales employed by many businesses, survey groups, and professional organizations.

The highest level of measurement is the *ratio scale*. Ratio measurement is also the measurement ideal of the research scientist. It possesses the characteristics of the nominal, ordinal, and interval scales, and in addition it has an absolute or natural zero point that has empirical meaning (Leedy 1997). If a measurement is zero on a ratio scale, then we can say that the object in question has none of the property being measured. Since there is an absolute or natural zero point, all arithmetic operations are possible, such as multiplication and division, and the numbers on the scale indicate the actual amounts of the property being measured. For example, if a ratio scale of achievement existed, then we could say that a student with a score of 8 had an achievement level twice as great as a student with a score of 4. Other examples of ratio level measurement include driving speed, weight, hours of coursework completed, age, and the balance in your checking account.

Interestingly, Senders (1958, 51) has summarized the four levels of measurement in the following test for various kinds of data measurement. If you can say that: one object is different from another, you have a nominal scale; one object is bigger or better or more of anything than another, you have an ordinal scale; one object is so many units (degrees, inches) more than another, you have an interval scale; one object is so many times as big or bright or tall or heavy as another, you have a ratio scale.

Taken together, we see that measurement is crucial to any research project. Without good measurement, we have faulty research. Measurement involves the assignment of numerals to objects and concepts according to rules. Then researchers decide the appropriate level of measurement and also assess whether the measurement procedure is isomorphic to reality. To be useful, a measurement must be both valid and reliable. Measurements begin with observations, but these raw materials must often be refined and clarified.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Coding ▶ Observation ▶ Operationalization ▶ Qualitative Methodology  
▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Reliability ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Scales  
and Indices ▶ Validity

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## **Media**

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The term media refers broadly to the range of *tools* that humans have used throughout history to communicate with each other about a shared reality. The most common reference is to the set of modern *technologies* – from the printing press to the Internet – which facilitate communication across space, time, and social collectives.

### **HISTORY OF THE MEDIA CONCEPT**

The *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (OED) (accessed January 5, 2006) notes that while classical Latin *medium* referred to some middle entity or state, in postclassical Latin and in British sources from the twelfth century onward, medium and media also came to denote the *means* of doing something. On the one hand, a medium could be understood as a more or less incidental presence, linking natural phenomena of this world and some metaphysical realm. On the other hand, a medium can serve as an intentional instrument of human action in a modern sense. In the latter respect, the OED distinguishes two conceptions – medium as an artistic modality, material, or technique; and medium as a channel of mass communication – both of them from the mid-nineteenth century. This was the period when a general idea of communication took hold (Peters 1999), partly in response to new technological means of communication with important social and

aesthetic implications, from telegraph and telephone, to film, radio and, later, television (→ Communication: History of the Idea). It was not until the 1960s, however, that media came into general use as a term covering diverse technologies and institutions, most commonly in the sense of mass media, communicating from one center to a mass of dispersed and anonymous receivers.

By the mid-twentieth century, medium in the sense of “any physical material (as tape, disk, paper, etc.) used for recording or reproducing data, images, or sound” (OED) also had become common, as represented by digital media with diverse input and output options. In the course of the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, the terminology of *mass media* increasingly was replaced by one of *media*, in everyday as well as research contexts, this time in response to more differentiated digital media. The shift was registered in the naming of one of the main international communication associations – the IAMCR. Founded in 1957, at a time when the “old” mass media, with television at the forefront, were consolidating themselves as social institutions, it originally was known as the International Association for *Mass Communication Research*. As of 1996, it came to be called the International Association for *Media and Communication Research*. In the intervening period since the 1950s, when the field of media and communication research has been taking shape (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline), three main concepts of media have informed theory development and empirical work.

### THREE DISCIPLINARY ROOTS

Each media concept implies a particular understanding of the basic communication model of sender, message, and receiver. The first concept, articulated in *Lasswell's paradigm* (Lasswell 1948) – who says what, in which channel, to whom, with what effect – approached the medium as a neutral conduit for the dissemination of information of all kinds. In order to assess the effects and implications of a given medium, such as a newspaper or a radio station, scholars might focus their attention on the strategies of the sender, the selectivity of the communicated message, the reach of the medium in question, or the susceptibility of the receivers to particular ideas. A great deal of subsequent work has questioned Lasswell's focus on separate stages of communication, as associated with separate forms of media analysis. In fairness, Lasswell further emphasized the function of media as mechanisms of surveillance at a macro-level (→ Lasswell, Harold D.). Media are means of monitoring a society as well as its surroundings with a view to self-protection, self-regulation, and long-term stability. In this regard, media can be understood in social scientific terms as a particular set of *institutions* in society.

The second variant was stated in the *mathematical theory of communication*. Its basis was Claude Shannon's research and development regarding the physical and technological conditions for the transfer of signals in telephone systems. A number of the insights were presented in a joint publication with Warren Weaver (Shannon & Weaver 1949), and it was this volume that influenced a good deal of theory development on media. In fact, Shannon was addressing the material aspects of how to design a communication system. In its popularized form, however, the underlying model of engineering was applied to humans as a description of social interaction. Although such applications have regularly been criticized as metaphorical and imprecise, the model has remained an important part

of the heritage of communication theory. This may be due, in part, to the obvious point that media are concrete vehicles whose affordances and constraints condition their potential role in human communication. The attempt to account for media as *material technologies* with social implications has continued to occupy communication researchers (→ Technology and Communication).

The third concept derives from humanistic perspectives on media as aesthetic means of expression and as carriers of cultural and historical meaning. Rooted in centuries of rhetorical and hermeneutic scholarship, this *discursive media concept* received an influential formulation in Roman Jakobson's (1960) model of communication (→ Discourse). While carrying an outward resemblance to the models of Lasswell and Shannon and Weaver, Jakobson's model grew out of literary theory, highlighting the various communicative functions of different linguistic and aesthetic choices by authors. Jakobson further made a distinction between the *channel* (what he termed *contact* – the material relation, such as book, newspaper, or Internet) and the *code* (the modalities or forms of expression, such as speech, writing, music, moving images, etc.). Compared to both Lasswell and Shannon and Weaver, however, Jakobson stayed entirely within the boundaries of the text or message, calling for an immanent analysis of how communicative functions manifest themselves in concrete textual structures, and bracketing the social contexts and uses of, for instance, literature or advertising. Much humanistic scholarship, accordingly, has approached media as forms of expression that are externalized and available for study in the form of *discourses*.

### AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCEPT

Particularly since the 1980s, much media research has been characterized by efforts at combining and integrating these concepts as dimensions within some form of theoretical systematic. A common position is that all three perspectives are necessary, and none of them sufficient, for a scientifically valid and socially relevant field of media studies. Interdisciplinary research and debate has explored not least the relationship between social sciences (media as institutions) and humanities (media as discourses) (for overview, see Jensen 2002b). Until recently, there appears to have been relatively less theory development devoted specifically to the interrelations between media as material technologies and media as institutions and discourses – despite the wealth of research on new media technologies as well as a growing interest in the distinctive affordances of different media technologies and their historical uses. Digitization has provided an impetus for reconsidering how, concretely, the materiality of media shapes, and is shaped by, culture and society (→ Digital Media, History of).

The individual media can be understood as characteristic configurations of the human potential for communication at a given historical time. These configurations are organized along three dimensions – materials, modalities, and institutions – as identified in the three conceptions of a medium.

#### Materials

Media are physical materials which – in a particular cultural shape – enable forms of communication that previously had not been possible. Sound recordings, from the late



1800s, made possible the preservation of parts of the cultural heritage that until then had disappeared into the air. From the 1910s, recorded sound became mobile with the introduction of portable gramophones. And, from 1979, media users wearing a Walkman were able to create soundscapes that were at once mobile and private.

### Modalities

It is through specific forms of expression and experience that media enable human communication – language, music, moving images, etc. These modalities, on the one hand, are grounded biologically in the human senses. On the other hand, modalities have been subject to millennia of differentiation and cultivation. In modern media technologies, the modalities have entered into shifting and evolving genres – from novels and radio serials, to music videos and virtual worlds (→ Modality and Multimodality).

### Institutions

Media, finally, constitute distinctive institutions in society: through media, individuals and collectives can describe and reflect upon themselves as well as the rest of society. Media and other social institutions have jointly reproduced each other under changing technological and cultural circumstances (→ Medium Theory). Print and electronic media extended cultures in space and sustained nation-states over time; nation-states and international treaties regulate the legal limits of public communication and the economic bases of each new medium. Television, for example, was developed as a consumer good for the home, financed by advertising or license fees, even though the material technology might have been framed socially on the model of cinema as a public or community activity.

In comparison with other meaningful cultural artifacts and social arrangements – from interior decorating to business transactions – the media that constitute the objects of analysis in media and communication research, are distinguished by their *programmability*, being uniquely flexible resources for the articulation of information and communicative interaction as part of an ongoing social structuration (Giddens 1984).

Whereas programmability is most commonly associated with the various levels of the digital computer, other communication platforms also lend themselves to combinatorial configurations. First, the *modalities* of media amount to semiotic registers of language, music, images, etc., allowing for an immense repertoire of genres and discourses, and engaging the human senses in selective and culturally conventional ways. Thus, media make possible the rendering of and interaction with worlds past and present, real and imagined. Second, the *technologies* of media provide the material substratum of such representations, not as fixed conduits, but as resources for accomplishing particular social and aesthetic ends. Third, media communicate to, about, and on behalf of social *institutions*, which, again, are shaped and reshaped through communication. As combinatorial systems, media and societies can be said to mutually program each other – a notion that, for example, systems theory has elaborated and formalized (→ Systems Theory). The degrees of freedom that condition this entire process, in three dimensions, help to account for the relative indetermination of the structures and outcomes of

mediated communication, and continue to challenge research on the question of what difference the media make.

### MEDIA OF THREE DEGREES

The coming of digital media has stimulated renewed research interest in the duality of mediated and nonmediated communication. For one thing, ordinary human conversation, while nonmediated by *technologies*, is mediated by aural–oral *modalities*, in addition to body language, broadly speaking. For another thing, computer-mediated communication – email, chat, online gaming – often carries a stronger resemblance to interpersonal than to mass communication. In order to assess the implications of digital media as emerging social and cultural *institutions*, much ongoing work has begun to address the interrelations between different media types (Bolter & Grusin 1999; Manovich 2001; Lievrouw & Livingstone 2002). One explanatory framework would distinguish between media of three degrees (Jensen 2002a).

*Media of the first degree* can be defined as the biologically based, socially formed resources that enable humans to articulate an understanding of reality, for a particular purpose, and to engage in communication about it with others. The central example is verbal language, or speech, as constitutive of oral cultures and subcultures – additional examples include song and other musical expression, dance, drama, painting, and creative arts generally, often relying on mechanical techniques such as musical instruments and artistic or writing utensils as necessary elements. Importantly, such media depend on the presence of the human body in local time–space. While one might identify (spoken) language, or the human voice, as the medium, it is helpful to differentiate between, for instance, speech and song as media with reference to their different modalities, sharing the same material substratum, but commonly addressing different social institutions, contexts, and practices.

*Media of the second degree* come under the classic definition by Walter Benjamin (1936/1977) of the technically reproduced and enhanced forms of representation and interaction which support communication across space and time, irrespective of the presence and number of participants. Whereas Benjamin emphasized photography, film, and radio, media of the second degree range from early modern examples, including the standardized reproduction of religious and political texts by the printing press, to television and video. The common features are, first, one-to-one reproduction, storage, and presentation of a particular content and, second, radically extended possibilities for dissemination across time and space. These technologies had important consequences for major social institutions – from the breakup of the Catholic church to the rise of the nation-state. Also, modalities from media of the first degree were refashioned. In radio talk shows, conversation took on new conventions, just as acting styles were adapted from the theater stage to cinema and television.

It is debatable whether manuscripts, which fix speech, drawing, music, and other human communication in a stable format, should be considered a separate media category, partly in view of their epochal significance. In historical perspective, Meyrowitz (1994, 54) suggested that its comparatively inefficient forms of reproduction and distribution made handwriting a transitional cultural form. For a systematics of media,

and from the perspective of media and communication research as a field, it can be argued that the production of manuscripts, like other media of the first degree, is embodied and local, laborious and error-prone; that their distribution is commonly selective rather than public, within established institutions, as supported by oral commentary; and that the constitutive role of handwriting in the reproduction of cultural tradition and social institutions has been taken over by media of the second degree.

*Media of the third degree* are the digitally processed forms of representation and interaction. Digital technology enables reproduction and recombination of all media of the second degree on a single platform: computers, thus, can be understood as meta-media (Kay & Goldberg 1977/1999). The central current example is the networked personal computer, although this interface, like that of mobile telephones, is likely to change substantially as technologies are adapted further to the human senses, and integrated into both common objects and social arrangements. Whereas classic mass media, such as illustrated magazines and television, combined modalities to a considerable degree, the scale and speed with which digitalization facilitates their incorporation and reconfiguration suggests that digital media may represent a qualitative shift from media of the second degree that is comparable to the shift from first-degree to second-degree media. The media types have not replaced each other – they recirculate the forms and contents of shifting cultural traditions in social contexts (→ Intermediality; Remediation). They do, however, offer distinctive and ascending degrees of programmability in terms of adaptable technologies, differentiated modalities, and institutions transcending time, space, and social collectives.

### THE DOUBLE HERMENEUTICS OF MEDIA

The development both of the concept of media and of media studies indicates that media are understood in historical context. The modern, general concept of communication was, in part, a response to nineteenth-century analog technologies (Peters 1999); current debates about the concept of media may be a response to twentieth-century digital technologies. This interplay of social and conceptual changes has been called a double hermeneutics (Giddens 1984): changing social realities challenge research to deliver new interpretations and explanations – which, in turn, may change society, for example, through the design and regulation of media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Discourse ▶ Intermediality ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ Remediation ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Technology and Communication

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## Media Advocacy in Health Communication

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Media advocacy is the strategic use of mass media to support community organizing and to advance public policy that improves health (→ Health Communication; Strategic Communication). The purpose of media advocacy is to put pressure on policymakers by setting the agenda and shaping debate to include policy solutions in news coverage of health issues. Media advocacy equips people to become active in the political process of making change.

Media advocacy grew from a collaboration of public health groups working on tobacco and alcohol with → public interest and consumer advocates in the 1980s. The public interest and consumer groups brought strategies and tactics that were more common in political campaigns than in public health efforts. The public health perspective provided a solid basis in science and theory for creating change. The result has been an approach that blends science, politics, and advocacy to advance public health goals.

Rather than intervene at the personal level to change behavior, media advocates practice at the political level to change policy. Media advocacy relies on theories and research from fields such as political science, social psychology, and mass communications, such as

agenda setting and framing (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Framing Effects). This research is applied in the context of community organizing, coalition building, and policy advocacy.

Media advocacy campaigns progress through *four layers of strategy*. First is *overall strategy*, a plan for environmental change. Advocates develop the overall strategy by determining: What is the problem? What is the solution or policy? Who has the power to make the necessary change? Who can be mobilized to put pressure on the primary target(s)? The “target” for media advocacy will be a policymaker or a body (such as a city council) that has decision-making power. This is a different strategy than is used in most health communication campaigns, where the focus is on individual change.

Second, the *media strategy* uses mass media to direct attention to the policies that can reshape systems, institutions, and environments. Many public health communications campaigns are based on the idea that poor health outcomes result from a lack of information or motivation; media strategies are then devised to fill the “information gap” or “motivation gap” (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Media advocacy focuses on the “power gap,” viewing health problems as arising from people’s lack of power to create change in the broader systems and environments that influence health. Media advocacy strategies are designed to increase community participation in the policy process.

Third, the *message strategy* links public health problems to inequities in social arrangements rather than to flaws in the individual. Media advocates refer to this as “framing for content” because they attempt to create news stories with content reflecting the importance of using policy to improve health environments. Framing for content is a formidable challenge for media advocates because research on the news suggests that public health issues are rarely portrayed in ways that illustrate the underlying causes of problems or their potential policy solutions. Health stories, like other news, often obscure factors outside of individual choice. This is in part because most news is framed episodically, like a portrait, focused on people or events, rather than as a landscape, focused on the context surrounding people and events (→ Framing of the News). About 80 percent of → television news and well over half of newspaper stories are framed this way. Consequently, the news usually reinforces values of individualism and personal responsibility rather than the core value of public health, collective obligation to the social good. This pattern in news is important to media advocates because it means that routinely they will have to reframe news stories from portraits to landscapes so public debate can focus on the policies and institutions that shape the circumstances determining people’s health.

Finally, the *access strategy* aims to garner news and editorial attention. Media advocates refer to this as “framing for access” since they emphasize what is newsworthy about their issue at the moment to attract reporters. Media advocacy uses media relations tactics that practitioners of other communications strategies use: news releases, pitching stories, piggybacking on breaking news, monitoring the media, and creating news. But these practices alone are not media advocacy. Media advocates also use paid → advertising, as their issues are usually too controversial to rely on public service advertising (→ Advocacy Journalism).

Media advocacy continues to be used by tobacco control advocates, most recently in China. Children’s advocates used media advocacy to pressure national policymakers to prevent childhood lead poisoning. Disability rights advocates used media advocacy to

fight for accessible public transportation. In New Zealand, alcohol control advocates used media advocacy to increase support for alcohol policies. In the US, affordable housing advocates used media advocacy to reframe technical policy discussions into stories that reflected their values and the values that resonated with policymakers. Violence prevention advocates used media advocacy to enact policies that reduced morbidity and mortality from firearms. Nutrition advocates have used media advocacy support laws that limit soda and “junk food” in schools. Common to all these media advocacy campaigns is a focus on policies that change the environment in which people live and make their health decisions.

Media advocacy has several *limitations*. Media advocacy requires a clear policy target. If the strategy is not clear and the target has not been well defined, the media advocacy effort will be diffused and ineffective. Since media advocacy is about raising community voices to demand change, it often focuses on policy advocacy, which can require lobbying that public agencies and some nonprofit organizations are prohibited from conducting. The political nature of media advocacy means that some practitioners will not be able to participate in all aspects of a media advocacy campaign. A final limitation is that the reach and promise of media attention – the idea that so many individuals can be reached at once with a single message – can be a distraction from the policy target. Media advocacy should be thought of as a tool in service to policy advocacy and community organizing, not as an approach that stands alone.

Media advocacy, used as a tool to accelerate and amplify community organizing and policy advocacy, directs public and policymaker attention to the policies that can reshape the social and physical environment so that it fosters health.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Media Effects ▶ Public Interest ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Television News

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# Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality

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Humans act, at least partly, on the basis of how they think others expect them to act. This means that humans have the capacity to know what others think or expect them to do. Some researchers have argued that understanding what others think is essential to social life and that successful human relationships depend on our ability to read the minds of others (Gavita 2005; → Symbolic Interaction). How good are we, though, at knowing what others think or expect us to do? Data show that there is often a negative correlation between our perceived ability to know what others are thinking and what they are actually thinking (Davis & Kraus 1997). In other words, those who are more confident about their ability to know what others are thinking are, in fact, less accurate, compared to those who are less confident. Accuracy, however, may not be important in this context because what we choose to do usually depends on our perceptions more strongly than on objective reality (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Social Perception).

Most communication-based campaigns, at their core, have the central mission to change people's perceptions of reality, whether that reality pertains to something external (such as a political issue, an organization, etc.) or internal (self-concept). For example, political campaigns seek to change people's perceptions about a particular candidate or issue, commercial campaigns strive to alter people's attitudes toward a product, and health campaigns seek to alter people's perceptions about their self-image, ability, or self-worth, just to name a few (→ Advertisement Campaign Management; Election Campaign Communication; Health Campaigns, Communication in). In many instances, the ultimate goal of the campaign may be to change individuals' *behaviors*, but changing people's perceptions with regard to their attitudes or beliefs is thought to be an important pathway for doing so (→ Development Communication Campaigns; Health Campaigns for Development; Population Campaigns).

## SYSTEMATIC MISCONSTRUING OF PERCEPTIONS OF REALITY

Research shows not only that people are often inaccurate in their assessment of others, but also that people's misperceptions follow *systematic* patterns (Fields & Schuman 1976). People make predictable errors when asked to assess where others stand on a particular issue, how much at risk others are to various threats, and how much others are influenced by the media. Many of these patterns have been empirically studied by scholars, and those with particular relevance to media campaigns are summarized below.

Although it has been defined in many ways, → *pluralistic ignorance* was first articulated by Allport (1924) as the tendency of people to overestimate the public support for norms deemed to be socially desirable. In classic studies of this phenomenon in the United States in the 1970s, researchers found, for example, that, although people themselves believed in

racial justice, they also perceived that their peers harbored more racist attitudes than they actually did (O’Gorman 1979). Similarly, people have been found to report greater concern for environmental causes in comparison to their estimates of how much their peers are concerned with the same issues. Pluralistic ignorance has also been found in the context of college students’ perceptions about the prevalence of alcohol consumption among their peers. Most students tend to hold exaggerated beliefs about how much alcohol their peers consume (Perkins & Berkowitz 1986), and they believe that regulations against alcohol will be resisted by others more strongly than by themselves.

The cognitive mechanism underlying the effects of pluralistic ignorance is not fully known, but researchers have asked questions about how people come to internalize the incorrect information about public perceptions. There is some evidence to indicate that the frequency with which people hear about a particular opinion – even if it comes from a single source – tends to increase perceptions about how widely the opinion is held by the larger public (Weaver et al. 2007). This seems to indicate that pluralistic ignorance may be linked with the accessibility of opinion – ones that are cognitively more accessible are thought to be held by many others (→ Attitude Accessibility). If so, it would further seem that, to the extent that an issue garners a great deal of media attention, pluralistic ignorance around that issue would be high.

The → *false consensus effect* and pluralistic ignorance are similar in that both pertain to patterns of misperception; they are different in that the false consensus effect is the tendency to overestimate the extent to which others share or are in support of one’s own attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors (Ross et al. 1977). Furthermore, the greater the relative deviance of the behavior one engages in, the greater the magnitude of the false consensus effect. In other words, paradoxically, individuals’ tendency to misperceive the presence of consensus among their peers is stronger if the behavior in question is practiced less often (that is, less normal). The false consensus effect is also thought to be a special case of social projection, whereby people validate their beliefs by projecting their characteristics onto others (Holmes 1968). Hence, the greater the need to validate the beliefs, the greater the pressure to perceive that others holding similar beliefs are in larger numbers. When beliefs are *actually* held by a great many people, there would be less of a need to validate those beliefs; social pressures would be greater to justify holding on to unpopular beliefs.

Because the false consensus effect is thought to be a motivational drive to restore an internal balance, its impact should be greater among those who are more concerned with projecting a normatively appealing image of themselves. When individuals are less concerned about how they appear to others, they should experience weaker drives to exhibit the false consensus effect. This predicted moderating effect of self-monitoring has, indeed, been empirically supported (Bauman & Geher 2002).

People’s tendency to believe that the media have greater influence on others (i.e., third persons) than on themselves has been termed the → *third-person effect* (Davison 1983). Accordingly, this concept has been implicated in people’s proclivity to institute strict → censorship of media content (especially when it comes to pornography and other deleterious effects on children; → Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of)



because of their belief that others will not possess the requisite mental faculty to remain unharmed. It is generally believed that third-person effects arise because of an exaggerated perception about effects on others as well as an underestimation of the effects on oneself. Furthermore, there are certain conditions that exacerbate these effects, including the perception that the source of the message is biased or that the content is harmful or negative.

The “*influence of presumed influence*” (Gunther & Storey 2003) is an extension of the third-person effect in that it posits that people modify their behaviors in response to their beliefs that the media have had an impact on others. In other words, because of the third-person effects, people come to believe that others have been influenced by the media, which results in people modifying their interactions with those they believe have been so influenced. Gunther and Storey (2003) first observed this phenomenon as a result of a radio-based intervention in Nepal that targeted health-care workers. Because lay persons were also exposed to the program, the lay persons came to believe that their health-care providers would have been influenced by the program and hence they expected greater service and more professionalism when they interacted with the health-care providers. This form of influence is particularly relevant when the recipients of a media intervention comprise individuals who were not directly targeted by the campaign.

*Optimistic bias* is the tendency to view oneself as being less vulnerable than others to various diseases and risk factors (→ Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism). We tend to believe that others, in comparison to ourselves, are more susceptible to risks and negative life events. Since Weinstein (1980) first articulated this term, researchers have found the existence of optimistic bias across a variety of health domains, and this finding seems to be robust across cultures. The magnitude of its effects decreases, however, when the target (the average other whose risk is being assessed relative to one’s own) is portrayed as being similar or when the risk factor in question is perceived to be uncontrollable.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR CAMPAIGNS

The systematic way in which people misperceive reality has a number of implications for campaigns seeking to change individuals’ opinions and behaviors. Misperceptions can act as impediments to social change. Theories of normative influences predict that when people (falsely) believe they are in the minority (as in the case of pluralistic ignorance, for example), they are likely to underestimate the social support that they would receive in seeking social change, they would view their own stance as being abnormal, and they would be less willing to take on challenging tasks for fear of sanctions. Similarly, as the false-consensus effect would predict, individuals engaging in certain deviant behaviors may erroneously believe their behaviors are normal (thus obviating the need to change) when, in fact, they are not. Thus, campaigns seeking to bring about social change need to focus on understanding the extent to which their audience members harbor misperceptions about their social reality. This is also the approach adopted by interventions seeking to reduce college students’ alcohol consumption. These campaigns, based on what is known as the “social norms approach,” seek to educate students about the actual level of alcohol consumption on campus, under the assumption that students’ consumption will decrease once they realize that drinking moderately is the norm, not the exception.

The patterns of misperception described here also speak to the frame of reference that people use in making judgments about the need to make changes in their lives. If the frame of reference is well calibrated, the need to change may be well informed. If, however, the frame of reference is biased to support inaction (as when people engaging in high-risk behaviors perceive that their activities are within the norms of acceptable social practice), then there may be few motivations for change. One explanation for the existence of optimistic bias, for example, is that people use others (who are more at risk to a disease) to make assessments about their own relative risk (Rimal & Morrison 2006). Similarly, the third-person effect may exist because individuals judge their invulnerability to media influences in relation to others who, in their minds, are more susceptible. Hence, it seems that media campaigns need to understand which frames of reference people use to make assessments about the appropriateness of their own status. The biases that have been documented in the literature could be attributed to the inaccuracy of individuals' judgments. They could also be attributed to the inappropriate frames of reference that people invoke in making such judgments, and, if so, it seems that interventions need to focus not so much on providing the appropriate source of information.

There is now an extensive body of work that documents the various misperceptions that are brought to bear when individuals are asked to gauge the opinions, beliefs, and behaviors of others. A lot of work has also been done in articulating the conditions that either exacerbate or ameliorate the patterns of these misperceptions. What is now needed is work that specifically seeks to determine how campaigns can reduce these misperceptions so that individuals are able to make decisions based on accurate information about others' attitudes and behaviors. Furthermore, this work needs to be done through controlled studies that take temporal order into account as much of the extant literature is based on cross-sectional data that make it difficult to delineate cause from effect.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Censorship ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Disowning Projection ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Extended Parallel Process Model ▶ False Consensus ▶ False Uniqueness ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Health Communication ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Population Campaigns ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Social Perception ▶ Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Media Conglomerates

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The issue of media conglomeration, or the phenomenon of a vast amount of cultural (media) production being controlled by a relatively small number of corporations, has generated heated debates among communication scholars, policymakers, and industry practitioners. In these debates, the concept of media conglomeration primarily refers to ownership structures within media and communications industries, as well as to the nature and organization of this type of cultural production. The phenomenon of media conglomeration, though, touches upon a much broader set of interrelated issues – ranging from questions on diversity, competition, and control in a tightly oligopolistic market, to concerns over the wider societal implications of a situation where huge conglomerates dominate the global communications system (→ Globalization of the Media).

Drawing upon → public sphere theories, scholars working within a critical research tradition have been asking questions about how far and at what price a communication system can be dominated by a handful of corporations, and how this might affect the diversity of information and argument needed for effective and well-informed citizenship (McChesney 1997; Bagdikian 2004; → Critical Theory). Sharp political economic analyses on how the corporate structure and strategy of media conglomerates tend to homogenize cultural production and restrict critical media content have been opposed by advocates of

the free market (Compaine 2005). Media conglomeration is also an important concept in the academic field of international communication and in debates on media, internationalization, and globalization (Thussu 2000; → International Communication). Because much of today's communications industry is under the control of multinational corporations with cross-media activities in most parts of the world and with their headquarters in the USA, western Europe, Australia, or Japan, the issue of media conglomeration is often associated with older arguments about Americanization, Eurocentrism, or cultural imperialism (Tomlinson 1999; → Americanization of the Media; Cultural Imperialism Theories).

## BACKGROUND

Although an unparalleled series of international acquisitions and buy-outs of media and entertainment companies in the 1980s and 1990s fueled the debate, it is clear that the issue of media conglomeration is not a new phenomenon. During the second half of the nineteenth century, new technologies such as the telegraph, facilitating the transfer of information over a long distance, created the first modern media corporations with an international scope. Telegraph operators, advertising companies, and world news agencies emerged and spread their activities to many parts of the world (→ News Agencies, History of). In the twentieth century, the growth of other new media sectors went hand in hand with vertically integrated and internationally active companies. The film industry, for instance, quickly saw the emergence of oligopolistic structures, first with French companies (Pathé, Gaumont) and later with Hollywood-based majors (Paramount, Warner Bros., etc.), which tried to control most levels of the industry (production, distribution, exhibition), increased their interests in the wider leisure industry (music, radio, etc.), and operated in an international environment. In the postwar period, the filmed entertainment industry saw several waves of mergers and concentration, completely transforming the production, distribution, and exhibition of motion pictures. Mainly from the 1950s onwards, with the advent of television, Hollywood majors diversified their activities and increased their interests in the broader entertainment industry, including the production of television series or the exploitation of theme parks (Wasko 2003, 59). In the mid-1960s, a major wave of takeovers took place, leading to several Hollywood studios being absorbed by ever-larger media and entertainment formations (e.g., Paramount was taken over by Gulf and Western in 1966). In the 1980s, the rapidly expanding global entertainment market led to a new wave of concentration. The availability of new delivery systems, the development of new markets and technologies (e.g., home video, pay-TV), combined with a more liberal regulatory policy (or deregulation), all resulted in a further cycle of mergers. A spectacular flurry of concentration moves emerged, mainly because film and television companies, as well as other players with interests within the audiovisual scene, sought to gain control of the new technologies and the expanding entertainment market. In 1985, for example, Twentieth Century Fox was engulfed by Rupert Murdoch's global entertainment empire News Corporation. In 1989 Sony purchased Columbia for \$3.4 billion. One year later, another Japanese electronics manufacturer, Matsushita, purchased MCA/Universal for \$6.9 billion, while in that same year Warner Communications and Time Inc. merged.

This trend toward greater corporate entities did not stop in the 1990s; more recently, there have been spectacular mergers, such as the creation of *AOL/Time Warner* in 2001,

considered to be the largest entertainment group in the world (→ Time Warner Inc.). This very big, vertically integrated media corporation with total revenues of \$38 billion (in 2005) has a dominant position in the media, communications, and entertainment sectors, ranging from Internet services (mostly under the heading of AOL) to film production, distribution and marketing, publishing, music, and cable and network activities. The group's most well-known subsidiaries are Warner Bros. Pictures, New Line Cinema, AOL, CNN, *Time* magazine, and HBO, but many more brands and companies fall under the umbrella of AOL/Time Warner. Although most of its activities are located in the USA, it is clear that the corporation has worldwide interests, not only for the sales of its products, but also through a structural network of control and ownership of divisions in Europe and elsewhere. At the time of the big merger, AOL/Time Warner was seen as the perfect illustration of the importance of new delivery technologies and the Internet as a driving force behind the media conglomeration tendency. It was also presented as a clear example of synergy potentials, or the tendency whereby different divisions within a media corporation develop cross-promotional activities and use their outlets to sell a common product or a recognizable brand (e.g., the exploitation of New Line Cinema's *Lord of the Rings* through books, gadgets, DVDs, and merchandising within the Time Warner group). The monstrous AOL/Time Warner merger, however, did not work out completely as the corporation's managers and observers had expected. In its first year, AOL/Time Warner faced a big loss, while the market value of AOL (and other Internet companies) decreased. In 2002, the corporation was renamed Time Warner, while many more transactions were made in an attempt to reduce the debt load.

Another dominant US-based media group, often quoted for illustrating corporate trends of cross-media synergy, internationalization, and expansion, is *Viacom*. The Viacom Group, which goes back to CBS, grew heavily through mergers and acquisitions from the 1970s onwards. In 2005, Viacom's empire ranged from cable network and television to interests in the publishing, radio, video, and filmed entertainment industries. Besides the activities under the Paramount label (film library of more than 2,500 titles including *Titanic*, film production, distribution, film theaters, home video), Viacom is mostly associated with cable and television networks such as Showtime, the MTV chain, and CBS, as well as with television and film production companies. In March 2005, it was announced that the media conglomerate had decided to split up into two separately traded public companies. The split, which was inspired by internal rivalry between managers and shareholders and which tried to revitalize Viacom's stagnating stock price, took effect at the end of 2005, leading to the emergence of *CBS Corporation* and (the new) *Viacom*. The latter now comprises high-growth assets, namely the cable networks (MTV in particular) and movie studios (Paramount Pictures and DreamWorks). The other company, CBS Corporation, includes the CBS and UPN broadcast TV networks, the CBS, Paramount, and other television production operations, the Simon & Schuster publishing activities, Paramount amusement parks, as well as activities in radio, digital media, and advertising. The reorganization went further after the split, with the sale of some other assets (e.g., the Paramount parks were sold in 2006).

A third major corporation is the *Walt Disney Company*, often quoted as one of the most synergetic players in the media and entertainment field (→ Disney). Founded in 1923 by

the brothers Walt and Roy Disney, the small independent film production company managed to become a major with interests in many directions. Following a difficult period after Walt Disney's death in 1966, the company struggled to survive, but since the 1980s Disney has been the driving force behind many new successful initiatives (Touchstone Pictures, the Euro Disney resort near Paris), mergers and acquisitions within the field (e.g., Miramax in 1993, Capital Cities/ABC in 1996, Pixar in 2006), and the strategic use of new technologies. The corporation, which is claimed to be valued at \$32 billion, is best known for its activities in (animation) feature film production, distribution, and exhibition (e.g., Miramax, Walt Disney Pictures), record labels (Buena Vista Music Group), an empire of theme/amusement parks and resorts, as well as in cable, television, and radio network activities (ABC, ESPN, the Disney Channel). The corporation's products are heavily marketed and circulated in other forms, such as books and interactive media (Buena Vista Games), as well as a wide range of merchandise.

The world of the big media conglomerates does not only consist of US-based corporations. A clear example is *News Corporation*, controlled by Australian born, but naturalized American Rupert Murdoch and his family (→ News Corporation). News Corporation, whose revenue is estimated at around \$24 billion, has its roots in publishing, the newspaper industry, and television in Australia, but Murdoch soon moved to the UK and the USA. The conglomerate now controls dozens of magazines and newspapers in Australia, the UK (including leading tabloids such as the *Sun*, and the quality paper *The Times*), the USA (e.g., the *New York Post*), and Asia. Murdoch's adventure in the American audiovisual industry started in 1981, when the tycoon purchased half of the Twentieth Century Fox film studio. In 1986 Murdoch launched an attack on the "big three" television networks by creating the Fox Broadcasting Company. Fox Television grew from an independent broadcaster to a much criticized, but successful, network in the USA. The Fox empire now comprises a range of thematic cable network programming in the USA (Fox News, Fox Movie Channel, etc.), where it also controls some of the leading film and television production companies (e.g., Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation). News Corporation's television interests reach from the USA to Australia, Latin and South America, Asia, the Eurasia region, central and eastern Europe, and the UK (e.g., BSkyB). News Corporation is now one of the three largest international media groups, operating in most sectors and most continents. Besides its television, film, magazine, and newspaper activities, the corporation also has major interests in book publishing (HarperCollins), radio, music, advertising, and the Internet and interactive media.

The list of major media conglomerates also contains some French-based groups, including the *Lagardère Média* company, which is mainly active in the press and book publishing industry (under Hachette Filipacchi Médias), the music industry and record shops (Virgin Megastores in different parts of the world), radio, television, and new media (Table 1). Another major French player with a tumultuous history is *Vivendi*, which is active in publishing, music, television and film, telecommunications, and the Internet, as well as video games. Vivendi, now estimated at nearly \$20 billion, grew out of the French water and energy company CGE. In 1998, CGE was renamed Vivendi and began to invest in the telecommunications sector and the mass media in Europe and

**Table 1** Major media conglomerates (2005, revenues in \$ billion)

	Film and programming	Broadcasting and cable programming	Music	Publishing	Multimedia and Internet	Cable and telecom	Others
Time Warner	11,853	9,054		5,565	8,692	8,484	
Viacom/CBS Corporation	5,055	17,180					1,880
Disney	8,713	11,788		2,511			7,750
News Corporation	5,187	9,230		5,680			862
Lagardère Média		679		3,549			4,366
Vivendi Universal	3,170	4,876	6,801		647	1,545	3,467
Bertelsmann		6,644	3,469	8,724			5,116
Sony	6,857		2,328		6,821		50,906

Source: EAO (2006)

North Africa (e.g., the Canal+ Group). Two years later, Vivendi acquired the Canadian-based Seagram's entertainment division. Through this acquisition, Vivendi came to control some of the most prestigious American media icons such as MCA, Universal Studios, and the Universal theme parks, as well as the PolyGram and Deutsche Grammophon record companies. However, the new *Vivendi Universal* conglomerate discovered that this rough acquisition and diversification strategy was not as rewarding as expected. The company started a strategy to sell nonstrategic assets. In 2004, some 80 percent of the Vivendi Universal entertainment branch was sold to General Electric's NBC, now forming the powerful *NBC Universal* group, which controls a wide array of news and entertainment television networks, film and television companies, theme parks, etc. After slimming down its assets considerably and changing its name again to *Vivendi* in 2006, the French conglomerate is still an important player in the music industry (Universal Music Group), television, and the games and telecommunications industry, while maintaining a 20 percent part of *NBC Universal*.

Another major conglomerate with European roots is the German-based *Bertelsmann*, which started as a book publisher (→ Bertelsmann Corporation). After World War II, Bertelsmann grew into a major German multimedia group with interests in the film, music, newspaper, and magazine industries. In the 1980s, the group started to develop a clear international strategy, acquiring American and other music labels. Ever since, the Bertelsmann group, with its revenue of nearly \$18 billion, has been among the leaders in the world's media and entertainment scene, with major interests in the publishing, music, television, and new media industries. The conglomerate consists of six divisions, including RTL (a powerful network of television channels in Europe),

Gruner + Jahr (the biggest European publisher, with major interests in the USA), Random House (one of the leading publishers of popular books worldwide), Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG, a key player in the music industry), and Direct Group (a network of book clubs and other assets with a global reach).

A final player, exemplifying the corporate strategies of conglomeration, is the media and entertainment division controlled by *Sony* (→ Sony Corporation). This Japanese multinational with a leading position as a hardware manufacturer of electronics, games, videos, computers, and information technology, started to increase its interests in the media and entertainment arena at the end of the 1980s. After the acquisition of CBS Records (transformed into Sony Music Entertainment), it purchased Columbia Pictures in 1989 for \$3.4 billion, using it to build the Sony Pictures Entertainment unit. In recent years Sony has been active in many more mergers and joint ventures, increasing its position in the film, television, and audiovisual scene (interests in the MGM Company) and the music industry (with BMG).

## DISCUSSION

This picture of a continuously changing world of major media conglomerates is far from complete and should pay attention to internal rivalries, as well as alliances and the position taken by other players in the field. The latter includes powerful conglomerates controlling an increasing amount of cultural production within national or even wider boundaries (e.g., the Spanish *PRISA*, Brazilian *Globo*). Referring to the extreme case of *Fininvest*, the holding company built around the former Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, with its established market leadership in sectors ranging from commercial television and advertising to the film and publishing industries, it is clear that the issue of media conglomeration goes further than questions dealing with the structure of the media market. The case of Berlusconi exemplifies wider concerns related to the possible implications of media conglomeration.

A first bundle of wider questions deals with how far a market can be controlled without harming competition in terms of production, dissemination, and consumption of media products or content. Critical voices in the debate argue that the emergence of strong conglomerates with holdings in several media with an international scope reduces the diversity of cultural goods in circulation. From this perspective, conglomeration might have a restricting effect on media content while it tries to offer more variants of the same basic themes and images (Murdock & Golding 2005). Critics argue that media conglomerates seek content that can move fluidly across different media and channels (synergy), while they ignore creative talent and content in favor of commercial viability. Market-oriented media systems make no distinctions between people as consumers and as citizens, while the commodification tendency transforms messages into marketable products and tends to deny the free access and distribution of other content. This critical analysis is countered by arguments claiming that a free market has led to a decreasing oligopoly and the emergence of new players, while consumers enjoy more choice than ever (Compaine 2005). This position refers to the growing amount of television and other media providers since the 1980s, the emergence and the growing use of the Internet as a



source for information and entertainment since the 1990s, as well as the notion of counterculture audiences who do not accept what major media conglomerates offer. The answer to this position is that a key to understanding the media conglomeration phenomenon is that major players in the field continuously try to absorb viable alternatives through mergers in order to extend their scope and consolidate their position.

A second set of questions refers to a higher level of implications, dealing with the role of the media as a central political and societal institution in democracy. Inspired by public sphere theories in relation to the media, critics of media conglomeration notice that the traditional worries about the power of press barons and media moguls in controlling the flow of information and open debate in society, have only increased since the 1980s. The case of Italy, where Berlusconi openly used his media empire to influence the political arena and public debate, is used to underline the fear that the growing power of media conglomerates might restrict information and harm democracy. Opponents claim that the danger to democracy is a myth given the extension of choice and the survival and even emergence of new alternative sources of information. Also, it is argued, managers of major media conglomerates are not “fostering a political ideology or suppressing an ideology through the media properties they program” (Compaine 2005, 46). Referring to the American debate on the role of Murdoch’s Fox Television and the absence of critical information on the Bush administration’s foreign policy, it is clear, however, that this issue remains open for debate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Disney ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ International Communication ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ News Corporation ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Sony Corporation ▶ Time Warner Inc.

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# Media Content in Interpersonal Communication

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Although today's mixture of theories and approaches combining interpersonal and mass communication is a two-sided one (incorporating researchers with training in both fields), virtually all of the accessible research on media content in interpersonal communication has arisen from researchers primarily trained in the effects tradition of mass communication research, rather than from interpersonal communication researchers studying the content of conversation.

Early in the history of media research, scholars investigating the effects of motion pictures through the Payne Fund studies (Blumer 1933) and even earlier (Phelan 1919) found that there was a great deal of interpersonal discussion about the content before, during, and after viewing (→ Interpersonal Communication; Media Effects). While the primary research objective was to understand how media were affecting individuals, it was clear that there was a social component to the process of media attendance and enjoyment. Over its history, research on media content in interpersonal communication has led to *four major ideas*: (1) interpersonal discussion has an impact on selection of media content, (2) media content provides material for interpersonal discussion, (3) interpersonal communication alters a number of the effects of media by amplifying or dampening them, and (4) interpersonal discussion affects the enjoyment of the media experience.

## SELECTION OF MEDIA CONTENT

Herbert Blumer found evidence for all four of the aspects of interpersonal discussion of media content listed above. Similar results were found for various media research efforts through the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. During and after World War II, the notion of → selective exposure became an important one for researchers studying persuasive properties of the media. Notable research in the 1940s and 1950s echoed Blumer in noting the impact of interpersonal discussion of media content on content selection (Riley & Flowerman 1951; Friedson 1953; Zimmerman & Bauer 1956). McCombs (1972) also noted that the interpersonal exchange of information typically precedes media content selection in a political campaign (→ Election Campaign Communication).

Current research on selective exposure has focused more on psychological aspects of the audience member than on interpersonal discussion, either assuming or neglecting the role of interpersonal discussion in the selection process. However, research only tangentially related to selective exposure continues to document the impact of interpersonal discussion in selection of media content (Mohr 1979; McLeod et al. 1982; Nathanson 2001).

### MATERIAL FOR INTERPERSONAL DISCUSSION

While interpersonal communication can serve as a mechanism influencing the choice of media content, media content can also be the topic of discussion before or after a viewing experience. Riley and Riley (1951) provided a label – *social utility* – for the idea that media content served a function in everyday interpersonal interaction. What was watched or listened to in the media could become the topic of conversation later. That label was continued and adopted by → *uses and gratifications* researchers during the 1970s and continues today. In a political campaign context, Chaffee and colleagues noted that voters were more likely to ask for campaign information (brochures) if they expected to talk about the election with friends (Chaffee et al. 1971). They described this as the “communicatory utility” of mass communication content, and saw it as a motivator for media use. While Chaffee (1972) saw this as evidence that media information enables one to talk with others at the level of peers, Bernard Berelson (1949) saw something else. Berelson had recognized the same phenomenon but described it as a “social prestige” factor because reading newspapers enabled people to appear more informed than others in social gatherings. Berelson noted that it was not that the content is good in itself, but that it is good *for* something – to impress those with whom we talk. The term “social prestige” for this idea was also provided by Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948).

Leo Bogart (1955) suggested that media content provided impersonal material that helped develop bonds between people. Dervin and Greenberg (1972) found that television content provided a major topic of conversation for the urban poor, with more than half indicating that they talked about TV content two or more times per week. At that time, Dervin and Greenberg indicated that plenty of data was available related to the frequency of interpersonal interactions about television, but no data was available related to how talk about TV is used in social interactions. Only a handful of relevant studies have been published since that time. Most involve children talking about media, and nearly all of those are analyses of responses to interviewers’ questions rather than observations of interpersonal conversations between children or between children and adults.

### ALTERING THE EFFECTS OF MASS MEDIA

A notable exception to the lack of research studying media content as used in interpersonal interaction can be seen in the literature on → *parental mediation* of children’s viewing and → *co-viewing*. Although early research indicated that the mere presence of others in a viewing situation was enough to alter the effects of TV content on children, by 1982 McLeod and his colleagues had concluded that conversation was required to mediate the effects of TV on children. By the late 1990s, this area of research had led to mixed results in terms of whether adults’ co-viewing leads to positive or negative outcomes for children, although Nathanson concluded that there is increasing evidence that co-viewing suggests to the child that the parent approves of the content, even if that content is violent (Nathanson 2001). If Nathanson is correct, then that interpretation helps to explain a number of both negative and positive effects attributed to co-viewing of TV content (McLeod et al. 1982; Nathanson 2001).

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) also focused on the idea that interpersonal communication could dampen or amplify media effects. In their “two-step flow” hypothesis, they noted that an individual’s response to a media campaign cannot be understood without understanding his or her social environment and interpersonal relationships. They suggested that interpersonal communication is the key link in a chain of intervening variables that promised to promote the *convergence of mass communication and social relations*. Research in the intervening years has not been overly kind to the two-step flow analysis. As Chaffee (1972) noted, it is probably more useful to think of the two-step flow as a factor that should not be overlooked than as the powerful hypothesis it claims to be. In his review, Chaffee suggested that the bulk of the evidence indicates that direct flow from the media is the rule for most people, rather than the exception. He notes that, even in the original Katz and Lazarsfeld study, 58 percent of reported opinion changes came about without involving other people. Following from Katz and Lazarsfeld and extending into today, others have noted the effects-altering aspects of interpersonal communication, especially in the area of political communication. Considerable thought has turned to understanding how conversation about political topics alters the effects of media presentations.

As noted above, in the selection of media content for interpersonal discussion, the focus is on the media experience. Interpersonal communication leads to selecting content that will be enjoyable, educational, and stimulating, or that will supply any of a number of gratifications which the communicators share as a motive for attending to the content. In providing material for interpersonal discussion, the focus is on reacting to or anticipating a media experience that produces a shared gratification.

With → *political communication*, however, researchers typically focus on a content that exists independently of the medium or the ongoing discussion – content related to the evaluations of candidates or factual information about candidates’ positions – rather than on discussion of candidates’ appearance in the media (Scheufele 2002; Eveland 2004). Political communication researchers typically focus on the discussion of specific political topics – local government, presidential debates, current events, etc. – rather than specific media topics (actions portrayed, motivations of major actors, etc.), and the frequency of occurrence of interpersonal discussion rather than the gratifications or motivations for such discussion. These are subtle distinctions, but are responsible for major differences because research in political communication is often about decision-making related to the content – i.e., choice of a candidate. Choice in regard to selection of media content might be seen as comparable at first glance, but selection of media content typically does not involve exclusion of other choices, as does political decision-making. Nor does political knowledge necessarily lead to increased prestige in social groups, as those supporting a different candidate can fairly easily discount such knowledge, knowing which candidate the speaker supports.

## ENJOYMENT OF THE MEDIA EXPERIENCE

An unspoken assumption for much of the research on mass communication is that selection and use of media content in interpersonal discussion lead to increased enjoyment of the media experience, either by content that provides increased gratification being selected or by the experience being relived and enhanced through discussion

afterward (→ Emotional Arousal Theory; Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Similarly, an unspoken assumption of much interpersonal discussion research is that enjoyment is the motivating factor. A handful of early studies considered the impact of others on enjoyment of mediated content (e.g., Hylton 1971; Hocking 1982), but only recently has enjoyment as a result of media use (Vorderer et al. 2004) or interpersonal discussion (Step & Finucane 2002) been studied. Within the few recent studies of media enjoyment, some are beginning to focus on the enjoyment that arises from the *social situation of using media in groups* (Denham 2004; Raghunathan & Corfman 2006). However, and somewhat surprisingly, most current studies including both media enjoyment and interpersonal communication tend to assume interpersonal discussion rather than measure it. The Raghunathan and Corfman research stands out as one study focusing on the role of congruent or incongruent comments about media content, and the effect of those comments on enjoyment. Their study generally confirms that positive comments made about ongoing media increase enjoyment of that content, but that it is the perception of shared opinions about the content that enhances enjoyment, while perception of differing opinions detracts from enjoyment.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although Raghunathan and Corfman's study involved adults' perceptions of TV ads, it ties nicely with Nathanson's (2001) contentions regarding parental mediation. Coming from a long history of media research on the use of media content in interpersonal discussion, much of what was assumed to be the case might be questioned. If nothing else, recent research has demonstrated that our understanding of media effects must take into account the social context of media consumption. Future research on media effects will need to deal not only with the frequency of interaction about content but also with the nature of the conversation if we are to be able to predict the effects of media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Co-Viewing ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media Effects ▶ Parental Mediation Strategies ▶ Political Communication ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Media Content and Social Networks

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In *The people's choice*, → Paul F. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues laid out many of the key issues that disciplines such as communication, political science, and sociology continue to struggle with when modeling the intersection of mass media and social networks (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948). More specifically, they offered two key constructs to explain the interplay of mass-mediated information, → social networks, and political → attitudes that are still relevant today: opinion leadership and political cross-pressures (→ Opinion Leader).

Lazarsfeld and his colleagues saw *opinion leaders* as nodes in social networks who provided critical connections between mass media and citizens. Opinion leaders, they argued, were citizens “who are most concerned about an issue as well as most articulate about it” (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948, 49). Subsequent research has refined the → operationalization and measurement of opinion leaders (e.g., Noelle-Neumann 1985; Weimann 1994). But little has changed about the original interpretation of the construct and of the role that opinion leaders likely play in social networks (Katz 1957). Most importantly, opinion leaders provide a critical link in what Lazarsfeld and his colleagues called the “two-step flow of information” (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication). Specifically, opinion leaders tend to rely less on interpersonal sources for their own information seeking than the average public (→ Interpersonal Communication). Instead, they turn to mass media for new information. And given their position as influentials in the community, they pass along this information to non-opinion leaders who rely less on mass media and more on interpersonal networks.

Subsequent research supported much of Lazarsfeld et al.'s original theorizing in the context of contemporary social structures. Weimann (1994), for instance, found opinion leaders to have higher levels of interest, knowledge, and social recognition than non-leaders. And most recently, Scheufele and Shah (2000) linked opinion leadership directly to life satisfaction, levels of social trust, and engagement in one's community.

According to Lazarsfeld et al. (1948), the two-step flow of information in social networks is especially effective since interpersonal channels (rather than mass-mediated ones) can counter and circumvent initial resistance to information, based on partisan preferences (→ Selective Exposure). More recent research, however, suggests that the likelihood of exposure to attitude-inconsistent information in modern democracies is much higher in news media than in most interpersonal contexts (Mutz & Martin 2001; → Consistency Theories; Cognitive Dissonance Theory). Regardless of where exposure to attitude-inconsistent information takes place, however, the question remains if the resulting *cross-pressures* are a desirable outcome.

Lazarsfeld and his colleagues (1948) suggested that exposure to cross pressures resulted in individuals attempting to avoid politics, which in turn delayed citizens' voting decisions and made them less likely to vote. More recently, Mutz (2002) distinguished two interrelated processes that undermine political engagement among citizens who are exposed to cross pressures. First, individuals who are part of social networks that expose

them to frequent discussions with non-like-minded others steer clear of politics in order not to threaten the harmony of their social relationships. Mutz calls this a “*social accountability*” effect. Second, her study showed that “exposure to those with political views different from one’s own also creates greater ambivalence about political actions, and thus makes it more difficult to take decisive political action” (Mutz 2002, 851). She labels this effect “political ambivalence.”

Scholars like Scheufele et al. (2004), in contrast, have suggested that exposure to attitude-inconsistent information in one’s social networks and the resulting cross pressures are an important and normatively *desirable part of opinion formation*. In particular, they argue that exposure to such information can have important informational and mobilizing benefits. First, frequent exposure to attitude-inconsistent information may lead to greater → political knowledge and learning, simply by exposing citizens to information and viewpoints that they were not aware of before. Second, and more importantly, discussions with other citizens who hold different viewpoints can result in network members having to compromise between different viewpoints, motivating them to re-evaluate those issues where conflict occurs. This exposure to discussion disagreement is therefore likely to produce greater cognitive activity or additional → information seeking, forcing individuals to learn about alternative perspectives, and reflect more carefully on what they already know (Scheufele et al. 2006). In turn, recent findings suggest, citizens who are exposed to more attitude-inconsistent information tend to have greater argument repertoires (Cappella et al. 2002) and be more participatory in politics overall (Scheufele et al. 2004; 2006).

Most recently, some researchers have suggested that citizens may begin to rely on *online forms of communication* to supplement or even replace face-to-face interactions in their social networks (→ Exposure to the Internet; Online Media). In particular, findings by Hardy and Scheufele (2005) showed that mobilizing effects from traditional news media during campaigns were significantly stronger for citizens who participated in online discussions about campaign issues with others than for those who did not (→ Election Campaign Communication). In other words, citizens either used online discussions to help them make sense of information that they had been exposed to in traditional media, or processed information from traditional media more carefully in anticipation of their online discussions with potentially non-like-minded others. Ultimately, the emerging interplay between geographically defined face-to-face networks, online interactions, and traditional mass-mediated information will require a new paradigm for how we think about social-level influences on opinion formation and political participation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Online Media ▶ Operationalization ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Social Networks ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Media Corporations, Forms of

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Just as there are numerous kinds of media – from electronic to print, local to worldwide – so too are there many different forms of media corporations. There are corporations that are vast multinational conglomerates operating in unrelated industries and spanning the globe (→ Media Conglomerates), and those that focus on a single medium in a solitary market. There are those that are closed or private corporations, owned and controlled within a limited group without shares for sale, and those that are public corporations, with stock traded on the open market. And there are public corporations with dispersed ownership spread across millions of shareholders, and those with a single individual or group with sufficient ownership to exercise control over the business. While there are countless differences between corporations, there are also important characteristics they have in common (→ Media Economics).

Investors and entrepreneurs often form joint stock companies and incorporate them to function as a business, but corporations can also be formed for political, religious, or charitable purposes and can be for-profit or not-for-profit organizations. The modern business corporation emerged in the United States in the 1800s, when most states passed general incorporation acts that granted perpetual life and extended to shareholders limited liability, two defining characteristics of corporations. The late 1800s featured the rise of the large, multi-unit business enterprise, and the acceptance of this structure was evident in 1914 when US president Woodrow Wilson declared that “the antagonism between business and government is over.” Wilson embraced the foundations of what became known as *corporate liberalism*, which accepted the large business corporation as permanent and desirable. The significance of this period is clear, since it was on Wilson’s watch that the US government orchestrated the pooling of broadcast radio patents and the creation of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA).

## ECONOMIC DOMINANCE OF CORPORATIONS

Large corporations are now the fundamental organizing unit of the capitalist economy, although not the most common business enterprise. In 2002, a total of 26.4 million businesses reported to the US Internal Revenue Service, and 21 million or 80.1 percent of those were nonfarm sole proprietorships or partnerships, compared to just 5 million corporations (US Census Bureau 2006). In spite of this imbalance, corporations still generated the bulk of business receipts, accounting for 83.6 percent of \$22.6 trillion in total revenue in the United States in 2002. Graham Murdock (1982) documented how the merger movement that accelerated after the mid-1950s resulted in media firms becoming a part of larger corporations, and this is evident in the US sample. Corporations were even more prominent in the “*Information*” group within the industrial classification system used by the US Census Bureau, which includes the most prominent media sectors. In that group, corporations accounted for 32.3 percent of total firms and 86.9 percent of total revenue.

The forms of corporate ownership in the US provide a framework for discussion, with basic elements evident in other settings. In the US, a corporation is a legal distinction that establishes rights and obligations of individual persons that are separate from those of its shareholders. This is an important difference from other business structures. In a sole proprietorship or partnership, an individual or group of individuals contributes the working capital for business, and risks not just their investment but also their personal assets. In such a legal structure, investors are liable to third parties that are injured by the proprietorship or partnership, so their liabilities are unlimited. That is not the case with corporations. Unless there is fraud or malfeasance, investors in a corporation are exposed to *limited legal responsibilities* and are shielded from the indebtedness and other liabilities of the corporation. A corporation assumes other aspects of personhood, including the ability to own property, sign contracts, and pay taxes. In 1978, the US Supreme Court even extended First Amendment rights to freedom of speech to corporations.

An ownership structure that sits between limited partnerships and corporations is a *limited liability company* (LLC). This business configuration is evident in some of the independent production and distributions companies in the US motion picture business, including the Weinstein Company after Harvey and Bob Weinstein split from Miramax, and DreamWorks SKG and Newmarket Films before they became part of Viacom and → Time Warner Inc., respectively (→ Hollywood). One of the advantages of this ownership structure is that an LLC exists as a separate legal entity, which gives its owners the same liability protection from business debts and claims as with a corporation. There are, however, clear differences between an LLC and a corporation. Flexible profit distribution and flow-through taxation for LLCs mean that profits, losses, and expenses flow through the company to the individual members.

### **PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE OWNERSHIP**

A second distinction can be made between public and private corporations. A *public corporation* is one that issues securities, such as common stock, that represent equity in the company. These securities are then traded on the open market. This process enables public corporations to generate capital for investment in new endeavors or continuing operations. The sale of shares can occur in multiple markets. Firms incorporated outside the US can create American Depository Shares that represent securities in their domestic market. Sony Corporation, for example, is incorporated in Japan and shares are sold on the Nikkei stock exchange (→ Sony Corporation), but it is also traded on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). The same is true of Spanish-language television giant Grupo Televisa, which is traded on the Mexican stock exchange and the NYSE (→ Mexico: Media System). A privately held corporation can also issue shares that represent a percentage of ownership, but these are not traded on the open market.

Most large media companies are public corporations, but there are exceptions, such as the empires of the Cox family in the US and the Marinho family in Brazil. *Cox Enterprises* is prominent in three different media sectors in the US, with ownership of 17 daily newspapers, and 15 local television stations and cable systems that reached over 6 million basic subscribers in 2005. James M. Cox acquired his first newspaper in Dayton, Ohio, in 1898, but expanded in the 1930s with horizontal integration in the newspaper business

through the purchase of the *Atlanta Journal* and diversification into broadcast radio with the launch of WHIO in Ohio. A century later, the Cox assets remained within the family, with Barbara Cox Anthony and Anne Cox Chambers in control of the corporation.

The roots of the *Marinho empire* are in newspapers, as well. *O Globo* was first published in Rio de Janeiro in 1926, and that fueled diversification into → radio in the 1940s and → television in the 1960s. The latter was the venture that defined the Marinhos, as TV Globo became a dominant force in Brazil. When Roberto Marinho died in 2003 at the age of 98, control of the corporation passed on to his three sons. Organizacoes Globo controlled Brazil's largest broadcast television network, the third-largest newspaper, and a collection of businesses that included cable and pay-TV services, radio networks, record labels, and the Editora Globo publishing house (→ Brazil: Media System).

The largest privately held media corporation in the world is *Bertelsmann AG* (→ Bertelsmann Corporation). Carl Bertelsmann founded the corporation in 1835 with a focus on publishing hymnals and religious materials, but Reinhard Mohn, a fifth-generation descendent, transformed it into a diversified media conglomerate. In the mid-2000s, Bertelsmann owned Random House, the most prominent trade group publisher, 50 percent of Sony BMG Music Entertainment, and controlling interests in magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr and European television broadcaster RTL Group, as well as other companies. After a stock buy-back in 2006, the Bertelsmann foundation controlled 76.9 percent of the corporation, with the Mohn family owning the rest.

## PUBLIC CORPORATIONS IN THE MEDIA BUSINESS

There are various incentives for private corporations to make public stock offerings. The founders of a corporation will often go public to generate cash that can then be used for other purposes. Another reason for a public offering is the desire to generate working capital that can be used for new investments or continuing operations. Such an offering comes with a price, however. For instance, public corporations trading in the US must comply with Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) laws and policies. These rules include the disclosure of persons or groups that have beneficial ownership of more than five percent of the voting shares of any class of stock. The SEC also mandates that corporations disclose extensive financial information and liabilities. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 added teeth to such requirements, since it mandated that corporate executives personally certify that filings are accurate and complete.

The evolution of Cox Enterprises reveals the different sides of the public/private equation. In the 1960s, James M. Cox, Jr established a publicly traded corporation, Cox Broadcasting, which included the firm's broadcast and cable assets, while organizing its newspaper interests in a private corporation, Cox Enterprises. The development of → cable television systems is resource intensive, and the public offering was one route to raise needed capital. In 1985, the Cox family took the broadcast and cable business private and merged it with Cox Enterprises. That structure lasted for a little more than a decade, when Cox Cable merged with the cable systems of Times Mirror in 1995 to create Cox Communications, Inc., a publicly traded company. In 2004, the Cox family completed a cash tender offer and once again took its cable business private.

The public corporation is much more common in the media industries, but there is *no single model*. Some are diversified conglomerates with vast holdings in unrelated industries. In the case of General Electric, NBC Universal was one of six operating segments in 2005, with the Infrastructure and Industrial units combining for close to 50 percent of total revenue compared to just under 10 percent for its media division. Some are diversified conglomerates with holdings in media-related industries. The Time Warner portfolio, at that time, included Internet services and cable systems, filmed entertainment, broadcast and cable networks, and publishing. Other media corporations focus on a pair of related news and information industries, with the newspaper and television holdings of Gannett Co. Inc. and Tribune Co. prime examples. There are still others that focus more or less on a single industry – newspapers and broadcast radio, respectively, in the cases of the McClatchy Co. and Cumulus Media.

### **GOALS AND CONTROL IN DIFFERENT FORMS OF OWNERSHIP**

The organization of media companies as public corporations can be seen as quite problematic, since placating Wall Street and investors mandates a focus on the bottom line. For instance, when General Electric acquired NBC in 1986, chairman Jack Welch bristled at claims that broadcast → television networks were a public trust, believing that the same public trust applied to making an air conditioner as running a broadcast network (Auletta 1992, 19). For Welch, the main obligation was not to the public who owned the airwaves, but to the shareholders who owned General Electric stock. General Electric's conglomerate form also intensifies concerns since it is involved in what Murdock (1982) has called "socially and politically contentious areas" such as nuclear power and military aviation engines. The impact of corporate ownership on media content has been the focal point of extensive research in the communications field (Murdock 1982; Herman & Chomsky 1988; Wasko 1994; Barnouw 1997; McChesney 1997; Hesmondhalgh 2002; Bagdikian 2004; Croteau & Hoynes 2005; → Bias in the News; Commercialization: Impact on Media Content).

### **Concentrated versus Dispersed Ownership**

Public corporations, large and small, must adhere to the same rules and regulations, but there are significant differences in the nature of corporate ownership. The most obvious distinction is between firms with concentrated ownership and those with dispersed ownership. This is an important difference according to the arguments made in regard to the separation of ownership and control in modern corporations. According to one perspective, this separation has severed the ties between the elite families and the means of production and distribution, and has transferred control to a managerial class that represents the capitalist class, but has different interests.

The significance attached to this supposed separation is profound. In 1933, Adolph Berle and Gardiner Means argued in *The modern corporation and private property* that the dissolution of the "old atom of ownership" into two parts, control and beneficial ownership, destroyed the "very foundation" upon which the economic order had rested for three centuries (Berle & Means 1933, 8). The central tenet of an economic order based on

private enterprise was that the self-interest of the property owners was tantamount. The ownership interests of those who control modern corporations in the twentieth century was so minimal, it was argued, that the “return from running the corporation profitably accrue to them in only a very minor degree” (Berle & Means 1933, 8–9).

Such a shift in motivation would be a profound change for communication corporations, given the role assigned to the media in democratic theories of the press and the potential for media outlets to educate (→ News as Discourse; Public Sphere). Berle and Means argued that the rise of groups in control of corporations that were independent of owners placed the “community in a position to demand that the modern corporation serve not alone the owners,” but the society as a whole (Berle & Means 1933, 355–356). They argued that,

Neither the claims of ownership nor those of control can stand against the paramount interests of the community . . . It is conceivable – indeed it seems almost essential if the corporate system is to survive – that the control of the great corporations should develop into a purely neutral technocracy, balancing a variety of claims by various groups in the community and assigning to each a portion of the income stream on the basis of public policy rather than private cupidity.

There are prominent media corporations where stock ownership is dispersed and the separation that Berle and Means envisioned is evident. In the first quarter of 2006, the members of the board of directors and executives of Gannett Co., Inc., the largest newspaper publisher in the US, owned just 2.2 percent of the common stock. The stock ownership of the directors and executives in the Walt Disney Co. was even less, as the same groups controlled less than 1 percent of the common stock (→ Disney). Other large media corporations represented very different ownership structures. The separation of Viacom in 2006 split its various media assets into two corporations, Viacom Inc. and CBS Corporation, but Sumner Redstone retained power over both with beneficial ownership of over 70 percent of the common stock of each through National Amusements, the private corporation that his family controls.

### **Allocative versus Operational Control**

There is another level of control that defines corporations, and that is the difference between allocative and operational control. The separation that Berle and Mean advanced and which Daniel Bell (1960) supported, arguing that there was no longer a power-holding elite with both an “established community of interest and a continuity of interest,” requires such a partition. *Allocative control* resides in the board of directors of a corporation and consists of the power to define the overall goals of the firm and decide how resources are distributed. *Operational control* is wielded within the parameters set at the allocative level. Once such decisions are made, managers determine the most effective use of the resources that the board has allocated and the implementation of policies it has established.

There are media corporations where there is a clear line between allocation and operational control, and some where such a detachment does not exist. General Electric, the parent corporation of NBC Universal, shows the clearest separation. In the first

quarter of 2006, there were 15 members of the board of directors, and just 3 of those were executives within the corporation. The outside directors were strategic choices, including the chief executive officers of two prominent advertising agencies, current or former chairpersons of six Fortune 500 companies, and the former chair of the Armed Services Committee in the US Senate. In another case, the makeup of the board of → News Corporation, the parent of Twentieth Century Fox and Fox Television Network, was quite different. The 14 members of the board included 2 members of the Murdoch family, Rupert and his son Lachlan, and 3 senior executives from within News Corporation or one of its subsidiaries. There were three additional board members who were long-time lieutenants to the elder Murdoch, so he had close ties to 8 of 14 board members. The Murdoch family, moreover, controlled around 30 percent of the News Corporation stock.

### PROCESS OF CONSOLIDATION

While there are various forms of media corporations, more and more prominent media properties are contained within ever fewer conglomerations. In the first edition of *The media monopoly*, published in 1983, Ben Bagdikian concluded that ownership of most of the major media in the United States was consolidated in 50 national and multinational corporations. Two decades later, when *The new media monopoly* was published, that number had dwindled to just five (Bagdikian 2004).

The extent of corporate ownership is evident at each turn. In the mid-1980s, federal regulations in the United States limited a single individual or corporation to the ownership of just seven local television stations and seven AM and seven FM radio stations nationwide. In 2006, Clear Channel Communication owned 1,182 local radio stations, including 8 in 12 different markets, while CBS Corporation owned 39 local television stations, with multiple stations in 10 markets. More generally, although there are cases in which media content is produced by sole proprietorships and partnerships or corporations of modest size, the large corporation is the dominant form of business organization in the mass media.

SEE ALSO: ► Bertelsmann Corporation ► Bias in the News ► Brazil: Media System ► Cable Television ► Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ► Consolidation of Media Markets ► Disney ► Globalization of the Media ► Hollywood ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Economics ► Mexico: Media System ► News Corporation ► News as Discourse ► Ownership in the Media ► Political Economy of the Media ► Public Sphere ► Radio ► Sony Corporation ► Television ► Television Networks ► Time Warner Inc.

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## Media Democracy

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The term “media democracy” insinuates that the media and mediated communication are of central relevance for modern democracies due to their decisive influence on (or consequences for) political institutions (macro level) and political actors (meso level) as well as individual citizens (micro level). Theoretically associated with the media democracy concept is the notion of a “media society.” This idea implies that traditional mass media, as well as the new online media, are pervading all spheres of society and social life and have thus become the central precondition of exchanges and interactions among individuals and organizations of society (→ Mediatization of Society).

The media society can be seen as the result of a process of functional differentiation making the media increasingly independent of their former sponsors which were, in the European tradition, primarily the churches and the political parties. The media now operate according to a specific → media logic and, due to economic necessities, guided by commercial rules in order to maximize their audience shares. Part of this evolutionary process took place following the development of communication technologies (→ Commercialization of the Media). But to a certain degree the process is also influenced by general tendencies of social change.

### CHANGING POLITICAL SYSTEMS

The media democracy concept signifies special aspects of the transformation of politics, in analogy to the notions of “media-centered democracies” (Plasser 2004), “mediated politics” (Bennett & Entman 2001), and the → mediatization of politics (Mazzoleni &



Schulz 1999). These terms imply fundamental political changes, particularly structural transformations of the → political communication system and the → public sphere leading to what Blumler & Kavanagh (1999) have termed “the third age of political communication.” According to Blumler and Kavanagh, in this still emerging age of media abundance political communication is reshaped by an intensified professionalization of political publicity, increased competitive pressures on political actors, diversification of political communication forms, and changes in how audiences receive politics.

The changes attributed to the influence of mass media are leading to *phenomena* such as → media events and pseudo-events, → mediated populism, → mediated terrorism, and → symbolic politics. Governments, parties, and other political groups or organizations, with the aid of → political consultants and → spin doctors, are trying to influence the public issue agenda through professionalized strategic communication (→ Issue Management in Politics; Professionalization of Public Relations). Some forms of public relations activities that are targeting the political elite affect the democratic core of political organizations (Jarren & Donges 2006). Further, as content analyses show, the media’s presentation of politics has become more complex, more negative, and also more sensational and entertaining (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Horse Race Coverage; Negativity; Tabloidization). There is concern that, in the long run, this is affecting people’s images of politics, their attitudes toward democratic institutions, and their willingness to participate in politics (→ Political Cynicism; Political Efficacy; Video Malaise).

A key role in these processes is ascribed to → *television as the “lead medium”* in public communication. Television through its visual images is said to have the power to shape and to distort reality (→ Construction of Reality through the News; Media and Perceptions of Reality; Television News, Visual Components of). Moreover, a growing personalization of politics is assumed to result from televised reporting of political events, particularly during election campaigns (→ Personalization of Campaigning). The expansion of commercial television intensified the critical debate about suspected political changes because the commercial programs cover comparatively little institutional politics and instead concentrate on entertainment formats thus abetting → politainment and the entertainization of politics. Like television, most other media are also subject to a creeping commercialization process. Since they are dependent on advertising, sponsoring, and PR material, they have to adapt to economic actors and cater to the interests of specialized target groups. As a consequence of commercialization, the differentiation and fragmentation of the media system continues to accelerate (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content).

### **REASONS FOR CHANGES IN THE MEDIA–POLITICS RELATIONSHIP**

Initially the change processes were regarded as *Americanization* tendencies, particularly in western Europe where in the 1980s most countries deregulated their broadcasting markets and introduced commercial radio and television, with a subsequent decline in the importance of public service broadcasting (→ Americanization of the Media; Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). Today, the predominant view is that it would be more useful, rather than talking of Americanization, to understand the changes as a

process of → *modernization* which takes a similar progression in many western democracies (Swanson & Mancini 1996).

In *explaining the changes in the media–politics relationship* several authors assume that the media have become a functional prerequisite for the political system and its actors. Kepplinger, for example, holds that there has been a fundamental power shift at the expense of political institutions and in favor of the mass media. Moreover, because of feedback loops from the media coverage of politics to the political events and issues covered, politics became “mediatized” and to some degree a media construction: “What the media present as politics is partly the consequence of the conditions set by the media” (Kepplinger 2002, 983). Furthermore, because of the media’s focusing on political conflicts and scandals, they evoke a negative image of politics and the “dismantling of politics.” Similarly, Meyer (2002) observes a change from party democracy to media democracy with political institutions increasingly losing credibility. He posits a “colonization of politics” by the media leading to what he calls a “mediocracy.” This line of arguing was earlier highlighted by the seminal publications of Edelman (1964), Nimmo & Combs (1983), and Blumler (1990) which provide rich insights into the transformations of the media–politics relationship; yet these authors do not explicitly use the term “media democracy.”

Most theoretical explanations draw on → systems theories postulating a functional relationship between the political and the media systems. Three different explanatory paradigms may be distinguished: (1) redistribution of powers (the media emerging as the → “Fourth Estate”); (2) domination and dependency (of media over politics or vice versa); (3) interdependency or symbiosis of media and politics.

Whereas the first paradigm implies the presumption of media autonomy, the second is rooted in specific conjectures about power and control, particularly regarding the changing possibilities of both media and politics to maximize influence. The third explanation assumes a mutual interrelationship, in which under varying circumstances, either the media or politics prove the stronger influence. The three paradigms are explicitly or implicitly based on different normative ideas about the specific societal functions of politics and the media and their respective degree of power and autonomy.

In spite of the limited empirical evidence available for these hypotheses about macro phenomena it seems clear that the sole responsibility for the structural transformation and functional differentiation associated with the notion of media democracy cannot be attributed to the media, that is, these changes cannot be seen (only) as effects of the media. As for the micro and meso levels, it seems fruitful to redefine the media–politics relationship again and again empirically, starting from the premise of interdependency.

## **MEDIA DEMOCRACY IN CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Several gloomy implications of the media democracy concept may be contested. For example, speaking of *the* media and thus implying a homogeneous mass media institution is quite unrealistic. Instead, in all modern democracies we find a highly differentiated and specialized media system with a large diversity of content supply. Mass media are still expanding, offering ever greater choices of political information. Moreover, political actors are disseminating information themselves via → Internet and employing new means of

→ strategic communication, for example by appearing in entertaining media formats. These changes may be expected to result in increasing political media use and political learning, at least among some groups of society (→ Political Media Use; Political Knowledge).

Generalizations about media democracy are quite frequently based on singular phenomena in a specific national and historical context, often during election campaigns. Yet → comparative research shows that political systems and media systems differ considerably, with corresponding implications for political actors and processes. It is also apparent that political actors and organizations adapt to the changing media environments and develop institutional arrangements that compensate for a loss of autonomy (Schulz 2004). Moreover, the model of democracy is also changing (as it is, e.g., indicated by the substitution of the “government” concept by “governance”). These changes have not yet been adequately considered in the media democracy discourse.

The consequences of mediatization for institutional structures and processes in politics, particularly at the meso level, deserve greater attention in empirical research and theory development. Institutionalism approaches seem to be particularly promising (Donges 2006). Political actors do not only adapt to environmental changes; they also have an impact on the rules for other actors, which can trigger institutional changes. On this background, it seems useful to start out from a view of → *political communication cultures* as relatively stable social arrangements. That the media are taking over the functions of political institutions, as some authors claim, is not in sight. Even in media democracies collectively binding decisions are made by the actors of the political system. And while it can be established that mass media have an influence on political decisions, other societal groups and actors are also participating in the decision processes.

Although the media democracy concept has been increasingly used in political communication research since the mid-1990s, its analytical usefulness is still contested. The concept is hardly more than a cipher for various phenomena that can be observed empirically and that are – within communication and political science – reflected theoretically. However, it has served to stimulate the discussion about the transformation of the media–politics relationship and its societal consequences and about the normative grounds for political communication in modern democracies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Internet ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Modernization ▶ Negativity ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Efficacy ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Political Personality in Media Democracy ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Symbolic Politics ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Television ▶ Television News, Visual Components of ▶ Video Malaise

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## Media Democracy Movement

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For a political system to be democratic – for ordinary people to have a meaningful role in the formation of public policy – an active citizenry must have the means to communicate their views about ideas and issues, among themselves and to political leaders. In a period of unprecedented advances in communication technology – more ways for more people to send more information ever more rapidly to others – one might assume that such changes mean more democracy. The post-World War II experience in the United States suggests that such an assumption is unwarranted. The increased capacity for communication does not automatically deepen democracy, and can in fact be an obstacle to attempts to deepen democracy when elite-run economic institutions have a dominant role in the development and deployment of technology, and when other social and cultural forces work to undermine active public involvement.

Hence the paradox: The final decades of the twentieth and first years of the twenty-first centuries have seen an atrophying of meaningful democracy along with the refinement of radio and television broadcasting technology; a dizzying expansion of → cable television and satellite channels (→ Satellite Television); changes in printing technologies to make high-quality publications more affordable; and the creation of the → Internet and a dramatic expansion of its scope and use. Citizens concerned about the inability of existing mass-media institutions to enhance and expand democracy have responded by creating what is often described as the media democracy movement.

### **PARTICIPANTS AND GOALS**

The movement has no central headquarters, single dominant organization, supreme leader, or unified platform. Instead, the term “media democracy movement” typically is used to describe a number of loosely affiliated groups that share a goal of expanding participatory democracy by (1) challenging the dominance of corporately owned media and (2) fostering the growth of independent or alternative media (→ Activist Media; Citizens’ Media).

On occasion, groups from a wide range of political positions in the US – from the conservative National Rifle Association to the liberal National Organization for Women – have come together to support a specific policy proposal, such as resistance to attempts by the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to loosen regulations that limit concentration of ownership in broadcasting (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; United States of America: Media System). But in general, the media democracy movement is a liberal, progressive, and/or left formation rooted in some degree of critique of the concentrated power of corporations in capitalism and the way in which those corporations tend to dominate the political process. Among the most prominent US groups in this movement are the Free Press, Center for Digital Democracy, Media Access Project, Center for Media and Democracy, Prometheus Radio Project, Common Cause, Reclaim the Media, and Media Alliance.

These groups share a *central goal*: to slow, stop, and eventually reverse the consolidation of media ownership in the hands of a small number of mega-corporations. These conglomerates have holdings in multiple forms of media, including production companies and distribution outlets. While commercial media have never been ideal vehicles for independent journalism and creative entertainment programming, these trends toward consolidation have tended to lower the quality and critical edge of journalism, while pushing entertainment programs toward a lowest-common-denominator dullness, both in comedy and in drama (→ Media Conglomerates).

### **POLICY PROPOSALS**

Attempts by citizen groups to influence media policy are complicated by the power of the media corporations to intervene in the political process. In addition to the political influence any corporation can wield through campaign contributions from its executives and political action committees, media corporations also can use the threat of negative news coverage to seek to control politicians and influence policy. And by refusing to provide substantive crucial issues about legislation that benefits big media corporations,

these companies can help keep citizens uninformed about the consequences of consolidation, as was the case with the 1996 Telecommunications Act. This law, the most far-reaching modification of policy since 1934, was virtually ignored by mainstream media in the US, and typically treated – when there was coverage – as a business story of interest only to industry insiders (→ Commercialization of the Media).

One clear example of this power of media corporations concerns the proposal labeled “*free airtime*.” Under the fundamental law governing broadcasting, first laid down in the Communications Act of 1934, radio and later TV broadcasters are granted licenses to use the frequencies of the public airwaves at no cost but are instructed to work in the “public interest, convenience, and necessity.” In the 1990s, interest began to build in the idea that to help fulfill that public obligation, broadcast television stations could be required to offer to bona fide political candidates free airtime to articulate their political platforms. This would enhance democracy by lowering the amount of money candidates need to raise to pay for expensive TV commercials, while at the same time elevating the level of → political discourse by giving politicians a more expansive setting for debate and discussion than a short commercial (→ Election Campaign Communication). The National Association of Broadcasters, the industry’s main lobbying group, has opposed the measure, which would reduce their income from the lucrative political ads. Critics have also suggested that broadcasters reflexively reject any notion that their licenses, which are granted free of charge, should come with any such public obligations (→ Media Policy).

Among the *other policy proposals* that are supported by some or all of the groups in the media democracy movement are: the establishment and funding of low-power, noncommercial community radio and television stations; a commitment to localism in commercial broadcasting’s programming, to guarantee that communities have adequate channels for news and public affairs; a reversal of the trend in copyright law, which has been to extend the length of time corporations can claim exclusive rights to material; resistance to the commercialization of the Internet, in an attempt to insure a free flow of information and prevent the emergence of a two-tiered system, in which the profit-generating and subsidized political websites run on cutting-edge networks while noncommercial sites are relegated to slower, and hence less attractive networks; bridging the → “*digital divide*,” making sure that broadband Internet access, and training in the use of the Internet, are available to people in low-income communities; greater restrictions or an outright ban on television advertising aimed at young children; stemming the tide of ever-increasing commercialization of the culture, such as the expansion of product placement in television programs and films, which effectively turns entertainment programs into advertisements; exposing the growing use of sophisticated public relations techniques, such as the production of video news releases produced by companies to promote their services and products, which some television stations air as if they were news produced by the stations’ journalists; and media literacy education, beginning in grade school, to help people understand how to analyze media content, especially the image-based, highly commercialized television programs.

To advance these goals, media democracy groups have focused on critique of the existing media systems; political organizing for legislation to democratize the system; and the creation of alternative media to challenge the dominance of corporate media. The

movement tends toward local, decentralized, grassroots strategies, though there have been national organizing efforts, especially to affect FCC policies. In addition, in the first decade of the twenty-first century there have been national media reform conferences, spearheaded by the Free Press, to attempt to focus the diverse movement on common goals. Those conferences revealed both the broad interest in making media policy a central issue in progressive politics, and the divisions in underlying theory and politics among the groups, with some groups comfortable with a liberal or reformist position, and others pushing for a more radical analysis of fundamental economic and political structures. Divisions also have emerged as groups representing the interests of people of color have challenged the predominantly white movement on diversity issues.

Despite these differences, virtually all the groups and people identified with the media democracy movement reject the notion that market systems in capitalism will serve the needs of a democracy polity. While policy proposals may differ, the growing strength of the movement into the twenty-first century suggests that media policy will continue to be a focus of progressive politics.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Cable Television ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Policy ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## **Media Diplomacy**

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Media diplomacy has become a major instrument of foreign policy, and journalists are more frequently and more intensively engaged in diplomatic events and processes. Sometimes they even initiate diplomatic processes. There are several ways in which the media can help or hinder diplomacy. The media functions both as an independent actor and as a tool in the hands of policymakers and journalists. Knowledge about media diplomacy is still very limited, and scholars from the fields of communication, international relations, and diplomatic studies should be encouraged to conduct multidisciplinary research on this topic.

Media coverage of negotiations and summit meetings among leaders transformed traditional, mostly secret, formal, professional diplomacy. The new diplomacy became a dominating ingredient in contemporary international relations due to three interrelated revolutionary changes in mass communication, politics, and international relations. First, the revolution in communication technologies created all-news global networks such as International, BBC World, Sky News, and Al Jazeera (→ Arab Satellite TV News; BBC; CNN; Newscast, 24-Hour), capable of broadcasting, often live, almost every significant development in world events to almost every place on the globe (→ International Communication; International Television). The → Internet has also revolutionized communication among peoples, communities, and organizations around the world. Second, the revolution in politics has generated growing mass participation in political processes and has transformed many societies from autocracy to democracy. Third, the revolution in international relations has transformed the goals and means of foreign policy. Favorable image and reputation around the world achieved through attraction and persuasion (soft power) became more important than territory, access, and raw materials obtained through military and economic measures (hard power). Today, → image and reputation determine the status and influence of states, leaders, and nonstate actors more than military and economic strength (→ Foreign Policy and the Media).

Politicians, diplomats, and scholars have suggested that the convergence of these revolutions created new types of interactions between media and diplomacy, and new terms to describe them, such as → *public diplomacy*, *media diplomacy*, *television diplomacy*, *populist diplomacy*, *instant diplomacy*, *headline diplomacy*, *teleplomacy*, *photoplomacy*, and *telediplomacy*. Several experts have argued that global television news now drives foreign policy, and have even developed a hypothesis, the “CNN effect,” to describe and analyze this phenomenon (Gilboa 2005a). Several of these terms are no more than lingual gimmicks, but they all represent an effort to capture the growing place of the media in diplomacy.

## THEORETICAL APPROACHES

The first scholarly attempts to define and explain media diplomacy were vague and confusing. Karl (1982) equated media diplomacy with open diplomacy – the mere exposure of diplomacy to the media and public opinion – or with public diplomacy – the use of mass media like the → Voice of America to influence → public opinion in a foreign society. For Ramaprasad (1983, 70) and Ebo (1996, 44) media diplomacy is just the role the media plays in diplomacy and foreign policy. Van Dinh (1987, 51–52) equated “television diplomacy” with → propaganda, but most of his examples – the televised ultimatum John F. Kennedy sent to the USSR during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, Richard Nixon’s visit to China in 1972, and the 1977 visit of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem – were designed to resolve crises and promote conflict resolution, and were not propaganda.

Ammon (2001) promoted media diplomacy to the status of a new paradigm. He claimed that paradigmatic changes in both communication and diplomacy produced a new paradigm of world politics, which he called “telediplomacy.” He explained that the emergence and expansion of real-time global news coverage caused the shift in



communication, while the “new diplomacy,” mostly characterized by openness, caused the shift in foreign policymaking. The result, telediplomacy, has displaced existing diplomatic methods, and for the first time in human history, under certain conditions, it also drives policy and determines diplomatic outcomes. Ammon went too far because his evidence and case studies do not support his paradigmatic claims.

Several scholars have offered much more specific and sophisticated definitions and approaches. Cohen (1986, 7) suggested that media diplomacy served three policymaking tasks: conducting public diplomacy, sending signals to other governments, and obtaining information about world events. This approach, however, seeks to characterize media diplomacy both as a part of and as somehow distinct from public diplomacy. Rawnsley (1995) distinguished between public diplomacy and media diplomacy: in the first, policymakers use the media to address foreign publics, and in the second they address government officials. Gilboa (2000) distinguished between three uses of the media in diplomacy: *public diplomacy*, where state and nonstate actors use the media and other channels of communication to influence public opinion in foreign societies; *media diplomacy*, where officials use the media to investigate and promote mutual interests, including conflict resolution; and *media-broker diplomacy*, where journalists temporarily assume the role of diplomats and serve as mediators in international negotiations. In this conceptual scheme, media diplomacy refers to uses of the media by leaders to express interest in negotiation, to build confidence, and to mobilize public support for agreements.

## USES OF THE MEDIA

Media diplomacy is pursued through various routine and special media activities, including press conferences, interviews, leaks, visits by heads of state and mediators to rival countries, and spectacular media events organized to usher in a new era (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). The media are used for several different purposes in international politics.

### Signaling

In the absence of adequate direct channels of communication, or when one side is unsure about how the other side might react to conditions for negotiations or to proposals for conflict resolution, officials use the media, with or without attribution, to send messages to leaders of rival states and nonstate actors. Using the media without attribution to sources is particularly efficient when policymakers wish to fly a “trial balloon.” They can avoid embarrassment and disassociate themselves from an idea that may receive a negative response. After the 1973 Arab–Israeli war, Henry Kissinger perfected the use of the media for signaling and pressure purposes during his famous and highly successful “shuttle diplomacy.” He often gave senior American diplomatic correspondents aboard his plane background reports, information, and leaks, mostly intended to extract concessions from the negotiating parties and to break deadlocks. Sometimes attitudes towards journalists of the other side send an important signal. Usually, the Syrian leader Hafez al-Assad and his foreign minister Farouq al-Shara barred Israeli journalists from attending their press conferences, but reversed this policy when they were interested in negotiations with Israel (Gilboa 2002).

### Communication

During grave international crises or when all diplomatic channels are severed, the media provide the sole unblocked channel for communication and negotiation between rival actors. During the first phase of the 1979–1981 Iranian hostage crisis, the US communicated with the terrorists holding the hostages exclusively through the media. A similar case occurred in the 1985 hijacking of a TWA jetliner to Beirut. During the crises preceding the 1990–1991 Gulf War and the 2003 war in Iraq, American presidents and the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein hurled messages back and forth via the global news networks. In 1990, US Secretary of State James Baker delivered the last ultimatum to Hussein through CNN, and not through the US ambassador to Iraq. Baker chose CNN not only to save time but also to persuade the entire international community that the US was exhausting peaceful means to resolve the crisis and was determined to use force only if Hussein ignored the ultimatum.

Leaders use reliable third parties to secretly explore intentions of the other side, but sometimes simultaneously they also use the media to support the secret exchanges and to further indicate that their approach is serious. In the 1990s, the parties to the conflict in Northern Ireland conducted dialogues and exchanged messages through the media because formal negotiations among them were neither possible nor desirable. The media dialogue helped the sides keep the peace process alive and exchange significant messages (Sparre 2001). In recent years, leaders have used global communication more frequently to deliver messages intended to alter an image or to open a new page. They pursue this task through press conferences, interviews, leaks, and attitudes toward journalists of the other side. For example, in January 1998, the newly elected Iranian president Mohammad Khatami chose CNN to send a message to the US.

### Negotiations

Media events represent classic manifestation of media diplomacy. They include summit diplomacy: meetings between protagonist leaders seeking an opening for conflict resolution and possibly even longer-term reconciliation. Media events are broadcast live, organized outside the media, preplanned, and presented with reverence and ceremony (Dayan & Katz 1992). Live coverage of media events interrupts scheduled broadcasting and attracts wide audiences around the world. Media events have trivialized the role of ambassadors but they also help to break diplomatic deadlocks, create a climate conducive to negotiations, and promote favorable conditions for sealing an accord. Leaders can use media events to cultivate public support for a peace process *after* the conclusion of the initial phase but *before* moving on to the next phase (Gilboa 2002). This typically appears in cases where a breakthrough has been achieved, but the sides still have a long way to go before translating principles into a permanent legal peace agreement. Such an intermediary effect can help in mobilizing sufficient public support inside the societies involved for the next phase in the negotiations. The effects of media events gained vivid expression in summit meetings between the US and the Soviet Union during the Cold War and in Arab–Israeli talks. The media, however, may hinder negotiations by applying too much pressure on diplomats to make either too many or insufficient

concessions, by prematurely revealing sensitive information, and by creating unrealistic expectations.

### **Media-Broker Diplomacy**

The communication and information revolution has inspired journalists to assume, directly and indirectly, mediation roles in complicated international conflicts (Gilboa 2005b). Journalists pursue direct intervention when they actively help parties to begin official negotiations. Walter Cronkite of CBS News helped to arrange the historic 1977 visit of Anwar Sadat to Israel. In bridging, journalists facilitate a virtual stage for talks between enemies and attempt to help them realize the value of negotiation to resolve their conflict. Ted Koppel of ABC News frequently performed this role on *Nightline*. Journalists were also engaged in critical secret mediation. John Scali, diplomatic correspondent for ABC News, helped to end peacefully the 1962 Cuban missile crisis through secret talks with a high-ranking Soviet official. Media-broker diplomacy raises professional and ethical issues. Critics argue that journalists should cover events, not create them. Additionally, while serving in diplomatic roles, journalists continue to cover diplomatic events, and they may provide distorted coverage because of personal interest in a successful outcome.

SEE ALSO: ► Arab Satellite TV News ► BBC ► CNN ► Foreign Policy and the Media ► Image ► International Communication ► International Television ► Internet ► Media Events and Pseudo-Events ► Media as Political Actors ► Newscast, 24-Hour ► Propaganda ► Public Diplomacy ► Public Opinion ► Satellite Communication, Global ► Voice of America

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## Media Ecology

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Media ecology is a multidisciplinary field that studies the evolution, effects, and forms of environments. Media ecology is most often defined as both the study of *media as environments* and the study of *environments* – such as situations or contexts – *as media*. Scholars work within expansive definitions of media, ecology, and technology. Although “medium” is often conceptualized in terms of transportation or a pipeline, the term actually means “environment.” Media therefore include not only communication technologies but also such entities as the brain and body, a lecture hall or galaxy, and languages, symbols, and → codes (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Media ecologists study all types of technology, not just communication technologies, and often use the terms “media” and “technology” interchangeably. “Ecology,” too, encompasses a complex range of meanings for media ecologists, who draw on → systems theory to analyze the co-evolution of the human organism and technologies. In addition, media ecologists are concerned with the general role of technology in society (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods).

Media ecology as a field distinguishes itself from communication per se, positing an open, dynamic, interdependent, and living system of forces. When studying human communication systems, media ecologists work from an inclusive perspective, exploring the creation, exchange, mediation, and dissemination of information, as well as the reciprocally influential relationship among means/content of communication and communicators/users (→ Language and Social Interaction). Media ecologists frequently employ a model of four major media environments and concomitant cultures: oral, scribal/manuscript/chirographic, print/typographic, and electronic.

Lance Strate, co-founder and president of the 10-year-old Media Ecology Association (MEA), categorizes media ecology as a field of study, eschewing the concept of discipline or even cross-disciplinary study in favor of inviting overlap among multiple disciplines in search of holistic theoretical approaches and explanations for communication phenomena. For example, media ecologists might ground theory in the traditionally distinct ideas of Aristotle and Plato, science and art, or → journalism and literature (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). The goal – and indeed the genesis – is complementarity and

simultaneity rather than separate, oppositional categories. Strate stresses that media ecology is “an intellectual tradition, a perspective and a shared sensibility . . . a network of related literature, a series of conversations and arguments that span the centuries” (Strate 2006, 2).

## HISTORY

Neil Postman is credited with coining the term “media ecology” in 1968. However, the history of this expansive approach to studying meaning-making and dissemination is often traced back to ancient times, with particular attention to analyzing contemporary media forms in context with the oral traditions of early humans. Media ecologists point to communication forms external to the body – such as gesture, cave art, speech, and in particular writing – as evolving from and influencing the evolution of communication forms that are internal to the body – such as mental structures, patterning, memory, and creativity (→ Gestures and Kinesics; Evolutionary Theory; Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to). A *foundational hypothesis* is that each form of communication simultaneously evolves from and affects the nature of thought itself and therefore affects message content and perception. This idea is most famously expressed through → Marshall McLuhan’s axiom “The medium is the message.” Asked what happens to content in such an approach, Eric McLuhan responds, “My father was asked that many times. His answer? The user is the content.”

The three foundational theorists in contemporary media ecology are Marshall McLuhan, Walter Ong, and Neil Postman. Although McLuhan’s first book, *The mechanical bride: Folklore of industrial man* (1951), laid the groundwork for future theory through its scrutiny of popular culture as revealed through advertising and other media imagery, his *Understanding media* (1964) expresses a number of influential themes: media extend the body, media transform the user, media transform other media, media transform culture, and the medium is the message. Among the major influences on McLuhan were political economist → Harold Innis and anthropologists Edward T. Hall and Edmund Carpenter.

Walter Ong, who studied with McLuhan, emphasized evolution of media environments and intersections of consciousness, communication, and culture. One of his best-known works, *The presence of the word* (1967), presented his conceptualization of primary orality, or communication before the time of writing, and secondary orality, or communication influenced by writing and subsequently by electronic forms of media. Ong’s *Orality and literacy* (1982), which further explores differences between oral and literate societies in terms of communication and cognition, has been particularly influential.

Neil Postman, who founded and directed the Media Ecology Program at New York University until his death in 2003, has been influential in both scholarly and public arenas. An advocate of the need for schools to preserve print-based literacy as a way to preserve cultural values, he also achieved fame as a media critic. He is known for a number of books, including *The disappearance of childhood* (1982) and *Amusing ourselves to death* (1985), in which he admonishes television and electronic media for their negative effects on culture and language. The Media Ecology Association, led by scholars who began their careers under the tutelage of Postman, meets annually.

A common theme among the works of McLuhan, Ong, and Postman is that the development of writing, and in particular the Greek alphabet, significantly altered how humans think, behave, and make meaning. The scholars asserted the value of written communication over other forms of mass media, crediting “the word” with helping humans develop a sense of individuality and intrapersonal communication. A related theme is the influence of communication systems on social organization and culture. In this vein, notation and writing systems are linked with the origins of civilization, the city and empire. The visuality and linearity of the Greek alphabet, for example, are viewed as primary determinants of western civilization, including laws and systems of government. Media ecology literature frequently refers to the influences of the alphabet and Gutenberg’s printing press on the development of such modern-world concepts as nationalism and individualism. In turn, the pervasiveness of contemporary electronic media now undermines nationalistic boundaries. Another common thread is the idea that we now live in an “acoustic age,” in which media dimensions extend beyond the visual through sound and emotion, fostering multi-sensory experiences.

Other major scholars from disciplines ranging from linguistics to sociology to physics form a nucleus of the literature providing key threads of theory supporting and influencing media ecology scholarship. Frequently referenced are Edward Sapir, George Herbert Mead, Lewis Mumford, Benjamin Whorf, Edward T. Hall, → Erving Goffman, Daniel Boorstin, Jacques Ellul, Eric Havelock, Buckminster Fuller, and Gregory Bateson. Particularly influential is Susanne Langer, whose *Philosophy in a new key* (1942) expanded the concept of symbol to include art, music, and sensory perception. Other thinkers who have influenced the field include Noam Chomsky, Niklas Luhmann, Susan Sontag, Humberto Maturana, Francisco Varela, Ilya Progogine, Isabelle Stengers, Jay David Bolter, Richard Grusin, Robert Logan, Joshua Meyrowitz, James Carey, Denise Schmandt-Besserat, David Altheide, and Kathleen Hayles.

## METHODS

Media ecologists employ cultural history, seeking to discern historical patterns that illuminate the present and offer insight into the future. In *The myth of the machine* (1967), Lewis Mumford explained: “If we do not take the time to review the past we shall not have sufficient insight to understand the present or command the future: for the past never leaves us, and the future is already here” (1967, 13). Additional methods include ethnography; case study; context, textual, aesthetic, philosophical, and critical analysis; and creative literary and artistic forms used as probes to facilitate awareness, understanding, and innovative exploration. Media ecologists occasionally employ traditional quantitative methods, particularly in triangulation with qualitative methods.

One method unique to media ecology scholarship is application of the *tetrad* to interpret and predict media effects on society and culture. Articulated by Marshall McLuhan and Eric McLuhan in *Laws of media: The new science* (1988), which Eric McLuhan completed after his father’s death in 1980, are four laws, or questions: What does a medium enhance or extend? What does it obsolesce or background? What does it retrieve? And what does it reverse into when pushed to the extreme? Eric McLuhan describes the tetrad process as similar to playing a musical chord in which a medium’s effects are experienced synchronally,

dynamically, and through multiple dimensions. Another presentation of the tetrad is found in Marshall McLuhan and Bruce Powers' *The global village: Transformations in world life and media in the twenty-first century* (1989), which Powers completed after his colleague's death. This version illustrates the four laws via a Möbius strip through which media forms and effects continually shift or resonate. Both versions emphasize simultaneity, complementarity, and an endless, nonlinear, dynamic process of transformation. Recent work extends application of the tetrad to the analysis of practices, institutions, and concepts.

## KEY ISSUES

A number of major themes and issues can be identified: (1) Tension between organisms as technologies and organisms as creators of technologies; (2) co-evolution of organisms and technologies, though scholars such as Mumford emphasize development of brain over development of external tools; (3) influence of a medium on content, users, and cultures; transformation through and because of technological use; (4) multidisciplinary, in which art/science, literature/journalism, fiction/fact, popular/elite, internal/external, figure/ground, and visible/invisible reciprocally inform and transform; (5) concern about deterministic aspects of potentially out-of-control technology, particularly in relation to humanistic values and global sustainability; (6) tension between understandings of word and image, oral and written, visual and acoustic, organism and machine; (7) holistic, contextualized views of particular occurrences; (8) emphasis on synchronous and complementary, rather than distinctive and oppositional, processes and influences; (9) inclusive topics of study ranging from autism to artificial intelligence; (10) playful exploration balanced with theoretical commitment to relationships among organisms and ideas; (11) openness to creative approaches and intellectual risk-taking in the interest of discovery.

In his keynote address to the first conference of the Media Ecology Association in 2000, Neil Postman asserted that media ecology “exists to further our insights into how we stand as human beings, how we are doing morally in the journey we are taking.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Evolutionary Theory ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Innis, Harold ▶ Journalism ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Metaphor ▶ Systems Theory

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## Media Economics

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Media economics is the application and study of economic theories and concepts to the media industries. Media economics encompasses all forms of media, including traditional media such as print, broadcasting, music, and film, and new media forms such as the Internet. Media economics scholarship is broad and diverse and includes such topics as policy and ownership issues, market concentration, practices and performance of media firms, and political economy of the media. This entry reviews the historical development of media economics, the key theories and paradigms in media economics research, and the contributions of media economics to the broader area of communication science.

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA ECONOMICS

The development of the field of media economics began with the study of economics itself. The earliest literature on economic thought began to evolve with the study of mercantilism in the sixteenth century in western Europe. *Mercantilists* equated wealth with the accumulation of precious metals like gold and silver. If nations lacked mines, they could acquire products through trade and commerce. This led to political intervention in the market via tariffs and subsidies, elevating commercial interests to national policy and tying economic activity to political interests. The *French physiocrats*, a group of eighteenth-century philosophers, rejected mercantilism in favor of agriculture, and represent one of the first groups to call for a policy of *laissez-faire*, or minimal government involvement in the market. This group was among the first to view the economy as a constant flow of inputs and outputs.

The philosopher *Adam Smith* is credited with providing the first syntheses of economic thought with a large collection of writings that became a seminal work entitled *The wealth of nations*. Smith identified land, labor, and capital as the three most important factors of production and the key contributors to a nation's wealth. Smith referred to the



growing discipline as “political economy,” which became the early name for the study of economics. In addition to Smith, David Ricardo, Thomas Malthus, and John Stuart Mill collectively formed what is known as the classical school of political economy. The work of these authors centered on the interplay of economic forces, the operation of markets, and the cost of production.

The classical school would later be challenged by new ideas: *marginalist* economics and Marxism. While the classical scholars believed that price was determined primarily by the cost of production, marginalists equated prices with demand. The marginalists contributed the basic analytic tools of demand and supply, consumer utility, and the use of mathematics as analytical tools – all forerunners to the development of the area of economics known as microeconomics. Marginalists also argued that, given a free market economy, the factors of production (chiefly land, labor, and capital) were important in understanding the economic system.

The *Marxist school*, built on the works of Karl Marx, identified labor as the source of production. Marx rejected the idea of a market system that allowed capitalists (the owners of factories and machinery) to exploit the working class and deny them a fair share of the goods produced. Marx predicted the eventual fall of capitalism, believing that the disenfranchised labor class would ultimately rebel, overthrow the capitalists, and seize the means of production.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, institutions of higher learning embraced the growing field and dropped the word “political” in favor of the single word “economics,” used to represent courses of study in both North America and Europe. But another more important shift was occurring, as economic research moved from a classical approach to that of neo-classical economics. *Neo-classical economics* differed by its use of both analytical tools and mathematics (primarily calculus) to examine market behavior and price determination. Yet another important contribution of neo-classical economics was its refinement of demand theory, since much of classical economics tended to focus only on the concepts of production and supply. Many principles developed in the neo-classical era became the basis for the broader study of microeconomics.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the study of economics was further enhanced by a number of important contributors. Alfred Marshall emerged as one of the most prolific economic scholars, influencing countless graduate students during his tenure at the University of Cambridge. Marshall is credited with refining many aspects of economic theory, and also made key advances in the study of industry supply, consumer surplus, elasticity of demand, and allocation of resources.

Edward H. Chamberlin, another key scholar, theorized a new form of market structure during this period called *monopolistic competition*. Monopolistic competition centered on the concept of product differentiation, with application to a number of different markets where multiple suppliers offer products that differ slightly from one another. Joan Robinson, one of the few female scholars in the neo-classical era, developed the theory of imperfect competition, which examined price discrimination among monopolists as well as the market for labor. Welfare economics, the examination of how economics can be used to promote better social policy, also came of age during the neo-classical period.

Significant changes in twentieth-century economic thought were further realized with the development of *macroeconomics*. Here the focus shifted to aggregate economics,

which encompasses the entire range of monetary and market principles. Macroeconomics became a catalyst for numerous fiscal policy decisions in both western Europe and the United States during the 1950s and 1960s. John Maynard Keynes, a student of Alfred Marshall and the eventual founder of Keynesian economics, became the best-known scholar of macroeconomics.

Keynes's thinking and research would provide the rationale for the use of government spending and taxation to stabilize the economy. Keynes believed the government should increase spending and decrease taxes when private spending was insufficient and threatened a recession; conversely, government would reduce spending and increase taxes when private spending was too great and threatened inflation. Keynes's focus on the factors that determine total spending remains at the core of modern macroeconomic analysis.

Other scholars who helped influence macroeconomics as an area of study included Irving Fisher (money, price, and statistical analysis), Knut Wicksell (public choice), A. C. Pigou (welfare economics), and Milton Friedman (economic policy and consumption). The study of macroeconomics is now concerned with many topics, including economic growth, employment, aggregate production, consumption, inflation, and political economy. Still other areas of study that coincided with this time period included the development of international economics, improving methods of applied economics, and the adoption of more powerful analytical and statistical tools through another sub-field known as econometrics.

Economic theories and economic thought are constantly changing and evolving. By the 1970s, growing inflation and changes in productivity pushed economics in new directions such as monetarist theories, which re-emphasized growth in the money supply as a determinant of inflation. Rational expectations anticipate government intervention; the theory argues that the market's ability to anticipate government policy actions limits their effectiveness.

The study of supply-side economics revisited a concern expressed in the classical school regarding economic growth as a fundamental prerequisite for improving society's well-being. Supply-side economics emphasizes the need for incentives to increase consumer savings and investment if a nation's economy is to prosper, and the danger of canceling out those incentives through high taxation.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA ECONOMICS**

This review of major historical developments in economic thought illustrates the rich diversity of scholarship and theories in the field of economics. As the study of economics became more refined, scholars began to investigate many different markets and industries, applying economic concepts and principles to different fields, including media. The interest in this area would lead to the development of media economics.

The growth of the mass media paved the way for the study of media economics, with some of the earliest research emerging during the 1950s and flourishing through the twenty-first century. The media industries featured all of the elements necessary for studying the economic process. Content providers offering information and entertainment represented suppliers, with consumers and advertisers forming the demand side of the market (→ Supply and Demand in Media Markets). Regulatory and policy agencies (e.g., → Federal Communications Commission [FCC], Federal Trade Commission, and other

entities) affected macroeconomic market conditions, while the relationship among suppliers in various industries created microeconomic market conditions.

Many of the early media economics studies addressed microeconomic concepts, with → newspapers, → radio, and → television the primary industries under examination. Much of this early research is descriptive in nature, reviewing topics like ownership, advertising revenues, the structure of the market, and competition with other media (→ Advertising, Economics of).

*Concentration of ownership* emerged early in the field as a critical topic, and continues today. Concentration of the media impacts both regulatory and social policy, and there is a considerable body of literature on media concentration available on all segments of the media industries. Concentration is synonymous with ownership, another area of concern for media economics research (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Ownership in the Media). Ownership studies also can be examined from a media management perspective, illustrating the interdependence between media management and media economics. Other studies have examined media competition, consumer expenditures and the principle of relative constancy, barriers to entry for new firms, advertiser and ownership demand, and consumer utility.

In 1988, the field of media economics became further established by the debut of the *Journal of Media Economics*. Over time, the *Journal of Media Economics* has emerged as the premier journal for the latest research in the field. In addition to articles in scholarly journals, a number of books and edited volumes have contributed to the development of media economics.

## **THEORETICAL DIMENSIONS OF MEDIA ECONOMICS**

Media economics research utilizes a variety of theoretical approaches. In terms of theoretical development, the field can be broadly classified into three major areas that account for much of the knowledge regarding media economics: microeconomic theories, macroeconomic theories, and political economy, which may also be identified as critical theory (→ Political Economy of the Media). Much of the historical literature base deals with microeconomic trends and issues, which is particularly suited for media economics research as it centers on specific industry and market conditions.

Macroeconomic studies by their very nature take a much broader focus, examining such topics as labor and capital markets, gross domestic product, and policy and regulatory concerns (→ Labor in the Media). In comparison, the literature base utilizing macroeconomic theories is much smaller than the literature drawing on microeconomic theories.

Political economy of the media is itself broad and diverse, emerging as a response to positivist approaches in mainstream economic theory. The mass media became a natural area of inquiry for political economy research, drawing scholars from fields such as political science, sociology, and economics as well as communications. This section of the essay focuses on micro and macroeconomic theories used in media economics research.

### **Microeconomic Theories: The Industrial Organization (IO) Model**

The most widely used framework for the study of media economics is the industrial organization model, developed by a number of neo-classical economists. The model

offers a systematic means of analyzing many of the abstract concepts encountered in the study of a specific market. The industrial organization, or IO, model is built around three main variables: market structure, market conduct, and market performance. As such, the model is also identified as the SCP model, used as a tool for analysis in the study of media markets and industries.

In its simplest form, the IO or SCP model posits that if the structure of the market is known, it allows explanation of the likely conduct and performance among firms. Each of the three areas (structure, conduct, and performance) can be further defined and analyzed by considering the specific variables associated with each part of the model. For example, in regards to market structure, the variables often used for analysis include an examination of the number of sellers and buyers in the market, the degree of product differentiation, the barriers to entry for new competitors, cost and pricing structures, and the degree of vertical and horizontal integration.

The market offers great utility for media economics scholarship. Some scholars have focused on just one part of the model, such as market structure, while others take a holistic approach and analyze all parts of the model. The model recognizes the interdependent relationships that exist between how the market is structured, and the resultant conduct and performance expectations. There has been criticism that media economics scholars rely too heavily on the IO model, and that the IO model does not capture all of the nuances associated with new technologies and the convergence of markets. However, the model still offers great utility to researchers and remains one of the key theoretical foundations in microeconomics research.

### **The Theory of the Firm**

Efforts to refine an understanding of market structure led to the development of what is known as the theory of the firm. The theory of the firm is an expansion of the industrial organization model, with the goal of gaining a more thorough explication of the most common types of market structure: monopoly, oligopoly, monopolistic competition, and perfect competition. Most media markets tend to be dominated by oligopoly and monopolistic competitive structures. Perfect competition is rarely identified in the media industries (one exception being websites), and monopoly tends to be limited to areas like newspapers and cable television.

The appeal of this approach lies in its simple and parsimonious nature. However, the defining of a market structure has become increasingly complicated due to rapid consolidation across the media industries and technological convergence (→ Consolidation of Media Markets). For example, the market for radio can be considered as simply the market for broadcast radio, but it can also encompass a much wider definition that includes high definition (HD) and satellite radio, Internet radio, and even podcasting. Many scholars suggest that market structure cannot clearly be defined using these broad and simplistic labels.

### **Media Concentration**

Another area of theoretical development with significant implications for both public and social policy is *media concentration*. In the United States, antitrust laws are designed to

promote competition and limit concentration, making this a controversial topic of study. Media concentration tends to be examined in one of two ways. Researchers gather existing data on firm or industry revenues to measure the degree of concentration by applying different methodological tools such as concentration ratios, or other indices. The other approach is to track concentration of ownership among the media industries. Regardless of the approach, research has clearly shown there is increasing consolidation across all areas of the media industries with many facets reaching the levels of “highly concentrated” status, indicating that a limited number of firms control the revenues or ownership in a market. Globalization of the media industries has contributed to media concentration, with a global oligopoly of media firms controlling the majority of what people around the world see, hear, or read (→ Globalization of the Media). Media concentration research can be studied at all levels of analysis, from local markets to global markets.

### **Media Competition**

The study of how the media compete with each other has also captured the interest of media economics scholars (→ Competition in Media Systems). Much of this literature draws upon niche theory, which originated in the field of biology and the study of ecosystems. Competition studies typically take one of two forms: competition within an existing industry, or competition across media industries. Various indices are used in this area of research to measure the breadth, overlap, and superiority of one media form over another.

### **Relative Constancy**

The principle of relative constancy sought to understand the relationship of consumer spending to media consumption. This research first appeared in the 1970s, and stressed that on average households spend around 3 percent of their disposable income on media services and products over time. Some later studies on relative constancy were conducted over the next few years, but the topic has not been revisited for some time.

### **Macroeconomic Theories in Media Economics**

There is a much more limited body of literature involving macroeconomic analysis in the field of media economics. Most of the macroeconomic research is related to policy and regulatory analysis, usually conducted at a national level of analysis. Policy studies usually attempt to analyze the impact of regulatory actions and decision-making on existing markets and industries (→ Media Policy; Communication and Law).

Labor and employment trends in particular media industries are another area of study that is often approached from a macroeconomic perspective. Much of this research tends to be centered on the print (newspaper) or broadcast (television and radio) industries (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Another area of focus centers on *advertising revenues and expenditures*. Often these types of studies build on aggregate data from specific countries and regions of the world to determine their economic impact. For example, many studies in this area consistently

show that the bulk of advertising dollars are located in what is known as the triad, the regions of the world representing North America, western Europe, and Japan and the Pacific Rim nations. Due to many trade pacts and the rise of the World Trade Organization (WTO), analysis and tracking of advertising data is of interest to researchers in media economics.

In its early stages, much of the media economics research was labeled as atheoretical. This criticism was justified as many of the early studies lacked any theoretical foundation, but since the 1970s the field has witnessed considerable theoretical growth and development, although there is still room for greater expansion and refinement of theory.

### METHODOLOGIES USED IN MEDIA ECONOMICS RESEARCH

Media economics research embraces many different types of methods to answer research questions and investigate hypotheses. However, most of the existing literature tends to utilize one of four methods: trend studies, financial analysis, econometrics, and case studies.

*Trend studies* are used to compare and contrast data over a time series. In assessing media concentration, scholars typically study concentration indices over time to gauge the impact of policy decisions or other significant actions on media ownership. Most trend studies tend to use annual data as the unit of analysis. Trend studies are helpful due to their descriptive nature and ease of presentation, and aid in analyzing media company and industry performance. Trend studies can be applied to virtually any media industry (→ Survey; Research Methods).

*Financial analysis* is another common tool used in media economics research. Financial analysis can take many different forms and utilize different types of data. The most common data includes information derived from company financial statements, along with the use of financial ratios. In the USA, all publicly traded companies must file financial statements with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Individual companies distribute annual reports to their shareholders that contain financial statements. The → *Internet* has become a very important source of financial data for researchers, making it much easier to collect and analyze financial data. Financial analysis is much more challenging in research on privately held companies, which are not required to disclose any financial information, as well as companies domiciled outside the US where accounting practices and currency exchange rates vary.

*Econometric analysis*, drawn directly from economics, involves the use of *statistical and mathematical models* to verify and develop economic research questions, hypotheses, and theory. Econometrics is more prevalent in the general economic literature, because most media economics researchers coming from communication or journalism backgrounds lack the mathematical expertise needed for econometric modeling (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory).

*Case studies* represent another extremely useful method in media economics research (→ Case Studies). They are popular for researchers because they embrace different methodological approaches as well as types of data. For example, a case study of a particular company might combine in-depth interviews, financial information, and analysis of company reports over a series of years. Case studies in media economics research tend to be very targeted and focused examinations. They are not limited to just companies and

industries; they can investigate topics such as management styles, marketing and branding strategies, and consumer behavior.

Methods used in media economics research are not limited to these approaches. Researchers can also employ policy analysis to investigate regulatory action on media companies, markets, and industries. Historical research is occasionally represented in the literature, and may be combined with approaches like trend studies.

*Critics of media economics research* contend that too much of the research remains descriptive in nature, and that the variety of methodological approaches is limited. There are also complaints that researchers tend to spend too much time studying only the major companies, and that too much attention has been expended on traditional media industries like television and newspapers, and not enough on new media forms and enterprises.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR MEDIA ECONOMICS RESEARCH, THEORY, AND METHODOLOGIES**

There are a number of steps researchers and scholars need to address in their efforts to further develop and shape the field of media economics in terms of research, theory, and methodologies. Each of these areas has equal priority given the rapid pace of change and evolution occurring across the media industries.

#### **Media Economics Research**

One of the most pressing research issues in the field of media economics is reconceptualizing and defining what constitutes a market and expanding our *understanding of the key variable of market structure* (→ Markets of the Media). Media economics research must grapple with the evolving definition of how to define a media market, a critical issue given the convergence and consolidation taking place across the media industries. Markets are no longer defined cleanly. Media companies supply products in many different markets and sub-markets, in competition with other providers. Yet the tendency among policy-makers and researchers is still to treat markets using traditional labels, such as television, newspapers, or motion pictures. This approach fails to recognize the realities of the media marketplace, and can lead to inaccurate assumptions over which firms dominate a particular market. In reality, each of these media is undergoing significant change in terms of how their products are distributed and their content. The trend for many media companies is toward becoming multimedia enterprises. Newspapers have websites that feature video and audio clips (“podcasting”) while television stations offer streaming media and links to partnership newspapers and print products (→ Convergence of Media Systems).

One answer to this dilemma is to consider the functions of a firm rather than focusing on just the final product. If for example, → Disney is considered a company with multiple brands engaged in content creation and distribution, it perhaps offers a clearer interpretation of what the company is about and how it seeks to be a leader in many different markets like network television, program syndication, cable networks, radio, and feature films (→ Distribution; Diversification of Media Markets). Such an approach considers the totality of media operations, and provides researchers with a more accurate picture.

In addition to clarifying and refining key concepts, media economics research must also expand into new arenas. No doubt, studies on television, newspapers, and other traditional media will continue to be conducted, but there are new areas where research is needed. Among the areas where new understanding and investigation are required are online phenomena like blogging and podcasting, as well as exploring new emerging industries like satellite and HD radio, online video distribution, and the use of search engines to deliver media content (→ Blogger).

It is also time to revisit the relation of consumer spending to the media. Knowledge of this area is limited to the principle of relative constancy introduced earlier. Research is needed to build upon this principle, to see if the early patterns identified with consumer spending have been maintained, or to determine to what extent they have changed.

### Media Economics Theory Development

Media economics research has relied heavily upon microeconomic concepts and principles, most of which build on the industrial organization model. While this emphasis has helped to clarify the relationship of various concepts in microeconomic analysis, it has also limited the development of the field. Other economic theories, which have possible application to the media industries, have been ignored, especially those found in macroeconomics. Macroeconomic approaches can be used to strengthen our understanding of areas such as the factors and patterns of global consolidation of media markets. The impact of global consolidation on topics like employment, economic development, and inflation are just three possible topics of interest.

In addition to drawing upon the diversity of existing economic theory, media economics scholars should consider *new theoretical inquiries* that could draw upon multiple methods of investigation. The interplay of business structures, government regulation, new technology, and social policy implications across the media industries offers a unique opportunity for scholars to generate new theories and hypotheses. Researchers must be willing to move away from simply describing specific firms' structure and performance, take some risks, and produce more analytical and investigative analysis.

In addition to the need to understand the concept of the market better is a need to *redefine the theory of the firm*. Media economists have functioned primarily within the three areas most prevalent in the mass media: monopoly, oligopoly, and monopolistic competition. But other types of structures are evolving across the industries. Duopoly, the structure identified with two primary firms, is becoming more common in media markets, such as with satellite radio (between competitors XM and Sirius) and multichannel video (between cable and satellite providers).

In many media industries what we really have is a two-tiered market structure, with a limited oligopoly of firms (from three to seven) controlling between 75 and 90 percent of the revenue/market share, and a number of smaller firms on the other tier competing for the remaining market share. Media industries representing this type of hybrid structure are the motion picture, recording, television network, radio, consumer book publishing, and magazine publishing sectors. Exploration of the variables that describe these new and evolving market structures is badly needed in the field of media economics.



### Improving Methodological Tools

Improvements in developing theory and redefining and conceptualizing the media market and market structure must be realized in conjunction with enhancements in methods and methodological tools. No area deserves attention more than measures used to assess competition and concentration.

Measures to assess competition and concentration have relied primarily upon one of two available tools: descriptive concentration ratios and the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI), used by the US Department of Justice. Concentration ratios provide a parsimonious way to measure concentration, using either the top four firms or the top eight firms in a market. If the top four firms control at least 50 percent or more of the market revenue, or if the top eight firms control at least 75 percent or more of the revenue, the market is labeled “highly concentrated.” While the measure is useful, it fails to address the possible inequality of market shares. For example, using a four-firm ratio, one could encounter one firm dominating the market with 40 percent of the revenues, while the other three firms hold a combined 10 percent. Such a market would be considered highly concentrated, but there is a clear dominance by the top firm (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

The HHI index is more rigorous. It squares the market share for each firm, and then aggregates a total from all the firms. Researchers need data on *every* firm in the market in order to calculate the index. Researchers in the academic sector often lack access to data from all firms, especially privately held companies. Further, calculating the index can be unwieldy.

But more problematic for both these measures is that they are designed only to measure concentration *within* a particular market segment. There are no generally accepted measures available to assess concentration *across* markets yet, although some researchers have attempted to offer some solutions. Time Warner (→ Time Warner Inc.), → News Corporation, → Sony Corporation, Disney, Viacom and other media giants may have a limited market share within individual market segments, but no tools exist to measure their combined influence across markets. With so many multi-product firms engaged simultaneously in many different media markets, measures need to be developed to assess within-industry concentration and competition.

Media economics provides theories and tools to understand the activities and functions of media companies as economic institutions. An understanding of media economics strengthens our overall understanding of the role and function of the media in society. At a theoretical level, media economics complements existing communication theory by adding important dimensions regarding the structure, conduct, and performance of media firms and industries, the interplay of economics, policy and regulation, and audience behaviors and preferences. Media economics research will continue to evolve as it attempts to analyze and evaluate the complex and changing world in which the mass media industries operate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Blogger ▶ Case Studies ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Disney ▶ Distribution ▶ Diversification of Media Markets ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets

► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Globalization of the Media ► Internet  
 ► Labor in the Media ► Markets of the Media ► Media Management ► Media Policy  
 ► Mergers ► News Corporation ► Newspaper ► Ownership in the Media ► Political  
 Economy of the Media ► Radio ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Research  
 Methods ► Sony Corporation ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Statistics, Explanatory ► Supply  
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## **Media Effects**

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The concept “mass media” is a collective term that stands for a broad variety of print media like → newspapers, → magazines, → books and electronic media like → radio, → television, and the → Internet. The concept “newspaper,” in turn, comprises daily and weekly newspapers, and “magazines” publications like news magazines, fashion magazines, sports magazines, etc. All mass media offer different features – news analysis, → news, → editorials, commercial messages, and so on – and deal with a broad variety of topics – including domestic and foreign politics, economy, arts, sports. Some mass media present only visual information (printed media), some only acoustic information (radio), some primarily moving images (TV, movies), while some present them all (Internet).

The concept of the effects of mass media is also a collective term for the effects of different signals like verbal messages and nonverbal signals (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of); of the style of coverage (→ Order of Presentation; Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of); depicted behavior like violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of), sex and pornography (→ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of); and of

coverage of different topics like politics, economy, and sports. Therefore, when we discuss the effects of mass media we would be interested in the specific effects, for example, of the news on specific topics, of entertainment programs, of visual images, and so on.

### **TYPES OF EFFECTS**

The mass media can produce a broad spectrum of effects. Among them are physical effects (→ Physical Effects of Media Content), effects on beliefs (knowledge), effects on attitudes and values (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on), effects on emotions (→ Emotions, Media Effects on), effects on social behavior (→ Social Behavior, Media Effects on), effects on public opinion (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on), and effects on the reputation of people covered by the media (→ Social Capital, Media Effects on; Reciprocal Effects). These effects may be the consequences of media use, but they may also be a result of interactions with people who have used the media and subsequently been influenced by prior media exposure (→ Opinion Leader; Two-Step Flow of Communication; Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). Alternately, the media may intensify or change existing beliefs, opinions, or attitudes (→ Persuasion). Media effects may also be manifest in the acquisition of knowledge or in the imitation of behavior depicted by the mass media (→ Observational Learning). In some instances, the mass media may also influence the conclusions drawn by the recipients of media messages, which might actually exceed the information presented (→ Priming Theory).

Media effects may be present after just a single contact with an article and may occur within a short period of time. Alternately, observable effects of media exposure may also be the result of ongoing multiple contacts with several related articles and may set in only after a certain lapse of time (→ Cumulative Media Effects). The effects of mass media may erode quickly in some cases, or they may last for a long time (→ Media Effects Duration; Sleeper Effect). Furthermore, media effects are often proportional to the intensity of coverage or the frequency of media exposure. Thus, effects may already be very strong after only a few articles (contacts) or may set in only if the media have reported often on a subject (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis).

The effects of mass media may be limited to singular aspects such as beliefs or emotions or there may be interdependencies between various effects. For example, media information may arouse emotions that contribute to an increase in the credibility of consistent information (→ Appraisal Theory). However, because of the multitude of possible causes and effects, general statements on the effects of the media cannot be made. The type and strength of media effects depend on the respective production techniques and consumption conditions.

### **HISTORY OF MEDIA EFFECTS RESEARCH**

The effects of the mass media have been and are still being examined by a considerable number of researchers who have made substantial contributions. Some of them are outstanding and deserve special attention, among them → Albert Bandura, → Steven H. Chaffee, → Leon Festinger, → George Gerbner, → Carl I. Hovland, → Elihu Katz, and → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann. Following the work of these pioneers, the history of media

effects research is often roughly divided into three phases: the phase of strong media effects (c.1910–1945), that of weak media effects (c.1946–1970), and that of moderate media effects (c.1971 onwards).

The *first (strong effects) phase* is characterized by case studies based on outstanding events. Two of the most notable are the panicky reactions to the Orson Welles radio play *War of the Worlds* (Cantril 1940) and Kate Smith's radio campaign for the sale of war bonds that yielded US\$39 million within 15 hours (Merton 1946). Even after the end of the first phase, strong media effects were documented most thoroughly by Hovland and his colleagues. Their results, however, were relativized because of the limited external validity of their laboratory experiments where there was no possibility of selective exposure and unnaturally high attention levels among subjects.

The *second (weak effects) phase* started with Lazarsfeld et al.'s (1944) study on the 1940 presidential election in the USA. The election was a recurring routine event and the coverage was less spectacular and the effects far less dramatic. The authors offered a range of explanations for what was at the time a surprising result. Most prominently, they introduced the two-step flow of communication model, the influence of opinion leaders, and the role of selective media use (→ Selective Exposure).

The *third (moderate effects) phase* started with McCombs & Shaw's study on "The agenda-setting function of mass media" (1972) and Noelle-Neumann's programmatic article on the "Return to the concept of powerful mass media" (1973). McCombs & Shaw shifted the attention of researchers from media effects on attitudes and opinions to their effects on beliefs. Noelle-Neumann introduced three ground-breaking concepts: the consonance of the media (→ Consonance of Media Content), their cumulative effects, and their influence on the → climate of opinion. These constructs became the basis of the → spiral of silence theory. The theoretical reorientation of the field was accompanied by a growing number of long-term studies based on content analyses of media coverage and representative surveys. Thus the development of media coverage and public opinion could be categorized and statistically analyzed.

From today's point of view, the differences in effects in the three phases were smaller than they have historically appeared. As far as such differences actually existed, they can be explained by the specifics of the events covered as well as by theoretical and methodical innovations in research. In cases of outstanding events, the effects today are at least as strong as the effects that were detected during the first phase of media effects research. For example, two weeks after the attacks of September 11, 2001 on the World Trade Center, American celebrities collected US\$116 million for the victims within two hours by holding a benefit concert that was broadcast on TV and radio. For routine events, the effects correspond approximately to what was actually determined in the second phase of media effects research. That is, in the case of long-term thematization of facts and opinions, the beliefs of a remarkable part of the population follow the media's tenor.

## THEORIES OF MEDIA EFFECTS

The effects of mass media can be described by *models* (→ Stimulus–Response Model; Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models; Models of Communication) and explained by theories (appraisal theory, → Catharsis Theory; Emotional Arousal Theory; Excitation

Transfer Theory; Frustration Aggression Theory; Media System Dependency Theory; Social Judgment Theory). Theories on the effects of the mass media can be roughly categorized into two general types: learning theories and cognitive theories.

Despite numerous similarities between the two theoretical bases, there is one important difference. Specifically, learning theory approaches address the correct reproduction of information, and therefore divergences between beliefs and information provided by media are considered learning deficits that may also be interpreted as a lack of media effects. In contrast, cognitive theories do not necessarily understand deficits as a lack of media effects, but rather as the result of predictable contributions of recipients who process the information provided. Thus, because of this essential difference the two theories are treated separately even though they share certain similarities.

### **Learning Theory Approaches**

#### *General Assumptions*

According to learning theory, learning is based on the association (conditioning) of stimuli and reactions. In the present context, *operant conditioning* is most significant. This describes the accidental co-occurrence of a stimulus and a reaction that is established as a unit if the reaction is rewarded (reinforcement). In the area of media effects the reward could, for example, be the social recognition awarded by friends and peers for knowledge about political incidents a viewer gathered from a news program watched by chance. Presumably, such processes are important motivators for individuals to become more vigorous media consumers.

A variation of learning theory is the *theory of observational learning*, which is relied upon above all to explain the acquisition of aggressive behavior. Accordingly, observers learn patterns of aggressive behavior in mass media that they later apply under certain conditions of action. In most effects studies oriented to learning theories, the key variables – objective contents and subjective understanding, attentiveness and effects, cognitive and emotional aspects of the effect, and others – are not differentiated and recorded separately. This is because, in existing studies available for secondary analyses, the required data are often missing, and measuring them all simultaneously in primary studies would be too difficult and expensive.

#### *Remembering Media Content*

No one can remember all the media reports they have read, heard, or seen. This raises two related questions. First, what percentage of media information on current events is retained? Second, what percentage of knowledge about current events is based on media information? Research has been shown that immediately after watching → television news, viewers remember an average of two to three news stories out of 15. From this and similar results it can be concluded that a single report about an event normally leaves nearly inconsequential effects on the memory. Only repeated reports are effective, and the number of repetitions has to exceed a critical threshold.

From the poor recollection of single reports, it may be assumed that media coverage generally has a small influence on the beliefs a population holds about current events. This assumption, however, is wrong. Evidence has shown that about two-thirds of what

ordinary people know about current events derives from media reports (Früh 1992). The reason for the apparent contradiction is the large number and frequency of media reports on all important events, which therefore structure the dominant beliefs of the population (→ News Processing and Retention; Memory; Memory, Message).

#### *Influence on the Perceived Relevance of Issues*

Media coverage on current affairs has an influence on the public's assessment of the significance of social problems and the urgency for solving those problems (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). The theoretical basis of the agenda-setting hypothesis is the notion that the media have no strong influence on *what* the recipients think, but a considerable influence on what they *think about*. Two main research designs have been established in agenda-setting research. The first constructs a comparison of all issues on the media's agenda with the population's agenda over a short period of time such as a few weeks. The second examines a comparison of the development of media coverage on single issues with the development of the population's beliefs over a longer period of time of several years or more.

The original formulation of the agenda-setting hypothesis includes the unspoken assumption that public opinion follows the ups and downs of the emphasis placed on issues by the media. This assumption, however, does not apply to all cases. For example, the population often remains worried after massive reports on serious disasters even after the coverage has already decreased. In these cases there is no linear relation between the media coverage and public opinion. If correlations that assume linearity between variables are calculated, the results paradoxically demonstrate weak effects. To avoid this error several nonlinear models have been developed.

#### *Influence on Assessment of Risks*

Individuals generally have good judgment concerning the relative frequency of causes of death. They are aware of causes of death that are more likely and those that are less frequent. They typically make two mistakes, however, by overestimating the occurrence of rare fatalities and underestimating the occurrence of frequent causes of death. The concept of *availability heuristic* explains how this is related to media coverage. Since exceptional events have high news value the media report intensively on rare causes of death such as tornados, poisoning, lightning strikes, and so on, but relatively seldom on frequent causes of death including heart attacks, lung cancer, diabetes, and other common life-threatening diseases.

People focus less on the real frequency of causes of death and more on the emphasis in current media coverage. Therefore, the beliefs of the population on chances and risks follow the representation of unlikely but possible damages rather than the development of the actual number and size of damages (→ Risk Communication).

#### *Influence on Beliefs about the Distribution of Opinions and Behaviors*

Media reports contain two types of information on the distribution of opinions and the relative frequency of behaviors. One type common in media coverage is quantitative information, such as used in reporting polls where a certain percentage of respondents share a position. The other type is reports on individuals who represent different behaviors and opinions. The presentation of individuals has a stronger influence on the

beliefs about majority opinions than quantitative statements. If, for example, a report specifically over-represents members of the minority, many recipients consider the minority to be the majority even if the same report contains quantitative statements on the actual majority opinion.

#### *Influence on Suppositions about Effects*

Most people estimate unwanted (negative) media effects to be higher on others (alter) than on themselves (ego). The concept of → third-person effects was introduced by Davison (1983). The occurrence of the effect was confirmed by several surveys and experiments, which also found that the power of third-person effects increases with the social distance between alter and ego. Third-person effects are also enhanced when the sizes of the comparison groups are greater.

The source of the third-person effect may be an overestimation of media effects on other individuals, an underestimation of the effects on oneself, or a combination of both. The third-person effect presumably has important consequences, but these remain relatively unexamined. There are indications that it reduces the disposition to present one's own opinions in public controversies. Also, third-person reasoning has been shown to promote the demand for banning certain media content that is believed to have undesirable effects, such as pornography.

#### *Influence on the Distribution of Knowledge in Society*

In the 1940s it was already well known that there was a connection between education and the use of information presented by the media. In simple terms, more educated individuals make better use of information offered by the media. Nevertheless, social scientists in the 1950s continued to assume that the distribution of the media would improve the knowledge of the population in general. This optimistic assumption was called into question by Tichenor et al. (1970) and their discovery of the knowledge gap (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). This framework identified the growing gap between the knowledge of higher-educated and lower-educated groups that develops over the course of coverage on singular events or issues.

#### *Influence on the Perception of the State of Society*

The cultivation hypothesis developed by Gerbner and his colleagues is based on the assumption that the media – and above all TV – are an important factor of cultural and political socialization (→ Cultivation Theory). Through both information and entertainment TV conveys ideas of the state of society in which people live (→ Entertainment, Effects of). The more frequently and intensely people watch TV, the stronger the influence of its presentation of reality. The influences of information and entertainment presented on TV co-mingle and therefore have to be regarded in conjunction.

On the individual level, intensive use of TV leads to inaccurate beliefs in the frequency of violent acts in society. On the societal level, widespread intensive use has been linked to the homogenization of beliefs and opinions on current issues (→ Mainstreaming). In contrast to the significantly more limited knowledge-gap hypothesis, which examined shorter periods of time and singular issues, the cultivation hypothesis deals with longer periods of time and general beliefs, opinions, and attitudes.

## Cognitive Theory Approaches

### *General Assumptions*

Cognitive theories generally inquire as to how people perceive their environment and themselves, how they interpret it in a reasonable way, and how they experience it emotionally. These theories are centered on human information processing and its triggers, which include media presentations. Beliefs, opinions, attitudes, emotions, and actions are thereby considered interrelated parts of a system. Cognitive theories are based primarily on two assumptions that were first outlined by Fritz Heider in the 1940s, but initially received scant attention in research.

The first assumption, which became the basis of consistency theories was that people do not perceive reality surrounding them as single elements, but as prestructured units (→ Consistency Theories). The second assumption, which later became the foundation of attribution theories is that people intuitively attribute causes to occurrences (→ Attribution Processes). According to cognitive theories, beliefs and opinions are not merely copies of media presentations; in fact, most clearly go beyond the presentations but are based on them. Differences between media presentations and public beliefs do not indicate a lack of effects, but rather signify information processing predictably triggered by media reports.

### *Influence on Schema-Conducted Processing of Information*

Schema theory is based on the assumption that media recipients do not take up individual pieces of information independently of one another and derive meaning from them, but interpret them consistently according to a predetermined schema (→ Schemas and Media Effects). Schema theory was introduced into effects research by Graber (1984). Schema-induced information processing can be controlled by media reports that present events from a certain perspective (→ Framing Effects).

For example, differently framed crime news (possibilities of fighting against crime, suffering of victims, or the responsibility of government, for example) stimulates public interpretations that correspond to the respective frame. Thus, personal schematic information consistent with the frame of news is retained better than information that contradicts it. In addition, readers, listeners, or viewers tend to believe they have received information consistent with the frame even when such information was not actually included in the reports.

### *Influence on the Relevance of Individual Characteristics of Politicians*

Priming theory is based on the assumption that certain emotions, thoughts, and memories can be seen as knots in a network that are more or less closely connected to other parts of the network. Information activates parts of the network and sensitizes them for similar information. Thus, such information that follows will be consumed more attentively and processed more intensively.

The theory was introduced into media effects research by Iyengar and Kinder in 1986 and included several crucial assumptions. Citizen assessments about politicians and voting intentions are based in part on beliefs about politicians' competence. Repeated coverage of issues sensitizes recipients to some issues and makes solutions to the issues seem especially urgent. Thus the presumed ability of politicians to deal with the issues becomes more significant, contributing to a positive or negative image of them. General



opinions as well as voting intentions may therefore change, although judgments about the individual characteristics of politicians may remain constant.

#### *Influence on the Interaction of Cognitions and Emotions*

Appraisal theory (Nerb et al. 1998) combines elements of attribution theory and emotional arousal theory. Appraisal theory operates under conditions where media reports on great damages trigger high attention and evoke great excitement.

Descriptions of events trigger predictable emotions. If the damage is attributed to uncontrollable natural forces, the event evokes sadness, but if it is attributed to a person acting in a controlled way, it evokes anger. The extent of reactions is enforced or diminished by the interaction of emotions and cognitions. Therefore, emotions are not only effects of media coverage but also causes of beliefs and vice versa.

#### *Influence on Public Opinion*

According to Aristotle, people depend on the society of others and therefore fear social isolation (*zoon politikon*). The basic ideas of this notion were introduced into media effects research by Noelle-Neumann (1984), who suggested that people constantly monitor their environment to stay abreast of popular majority opinion in order to avoid social isolation.

Therefore individuals often draw on their interactions with other people and personal observation as well as media presentations. Each of these resources can incidentally stimulate correct or incorrect ideas about the distribution of opinions. Nevertheless, in the long term most people will be influenced more strongly by media presentations than by their personal observations. People who consider themselves in the minority tend to withhold their opinions in public. In so doing, the presumed majority opinion is artificially inflated, which in turn increases the pressure on the actual or alleged minority.

#### *Influence on Opinion Formation in Public Controversies*

The theory of cognitive affective media effects incorporates elements of Rosenberg's (1956) affective cognitive consistency theory and applies them to the analysis of public controversies (Kepplinger et al. 1991). According to the authors of cognitive affective media effects theory, all conflicts comprise events or factors that favor one side or the other (issue ownership). In this sense, the events have an instrumental quality where opponents and unsympathetic media coverage emphasize information that marginalizes competing claims (→ Instrumental Actualization; Negative Campaigning).

Readers, listeners, and viewers prefer information supporting their own view, but are confronted with a considerable amount of contradictory information. The knowledge of information that favors one side, or is against the other side, influences opinions about the opponents. This in turn increases or diminishes the range of legitimate behavior and thereby minimizes the chances of success of the opponents (→ Media as Political Actors; Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality; Scandalization in the News).

### **De Facto Effects**

In studies based on learning and cognitive theories, the information provided by mass media is identified and the processing strategies analyzed. This procedure is based on a

significant reduction of the complexity of coverage, since in reality the relevant information is not isolated but presented as part of a mixture of correct and incorrect assertions of facts, presumptions, and opinions. Furthermore, there are many ways in which recipients of mediated reports might be influenced. For example, individuals can develop and form their opinions by perusing statements of opinion from journalists and other sources, but they can also derive their opinions from neutral information. Accordingly, the beliefs and opinions of recipients may be influenced by a broad variety of sources that can hardly be isolated in the flow of media information and that converge to create a more or less consistent picture of reality. Such effects are called “de facto effects,” or the → trap effect.

De facto effects may always be assumed when the formation of opinion follows the media tenor. In these cases, effects of media coverage have to be assumed, despite the fact that they cannot be traced back to single sources and explained by specific theories. Examples of de facto effects include the development of opinions about the state of political parties or about the chances of parties and candidates in election campaigns. Other examples involve opinion development about public officials, such as the American President George Bush or the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, or about issues like the development of the economy and ecological scandals. In this context, studies on cultivation theory must also be considered.

### DOUBTFUL AXIOMS

Most studies in the effects of mass media are based on three doubtful, mostly unspoken, axioms. These axioms have a considerable influence on the design of effects studies, the relevance of theories for the explanation of media effects, and the interpretation of the social importance of the results of effects research.

The first axiom is: *Events happen, media cover*. According to this axiom, current events on which the media report happen independently of the media. The validity of this axiom, however, is doubtful because a number of events on which the media report are the result of previous coverage. Furthermore, in conflicts and crises, people and organizations on which the media report change their behavior as a result of media coverage. For example, if coverage by influential media is critical, politicians may change their strategy, parties may withdraw parts of their agenda, governments may change their mind about the implementation of changes in laws, or companies may phase out or otherwise modify their products. When the media follow up and report on these decisions, strictly coverage often speaks about the effects of previous coverage. Another reason why the first axiom is untenable is because many of the events on which the media report would not take place or happen in the way they do if the actors did not expect media coverage. This applies to all press conferences, but also to party congresses, sporting events, and other planned media-centric events.

There are three different *types of events* that can be distinguished. First, some events happen independently of the media, such as natural disasters, accidents, or terrorist attacks (genuine events). Second, certain events would happen without media coverage, but their character is modified by media coverage (mediated events). Third, there are events that happen only in order to generate media coverage (staged events), such as press

conferences (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). After spectacular events, a large proportion of the press reports is not devoted to the key events that had originally triggered media coverage. Instead, media reports tend to focus on staged and mediated events that are thematically related (Kepplinger & Habermeier 1995), which is partly due to the reciprocal effects of the mass media. That is, the subjects of media reports frequently adapt their behavior to meet the conditions of successful portrayal in media coverage (→ Mediatization of Politics; Mediatization of Society). The subjects of coverage are a comparatively small number of people, most of whom wield considerable influence. Thus, decisions influenced by media reports may affect many more people indirectly.

The second axiom is: *No effect without change*. This suggests that the reinforcement of existing beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors cannot be regarded as an effect of media coverage. The axiom holds true only under two conditions. First, even if the media did not support the existing beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of its audience, these characteristics and attributes would still exist. At most this assumption applies to attitudes and habits, but it is not true of most beliefs and opinions. An example is public assessments of the most important problems facing the nation: if the media report less frequently than they used to on a particular issue, fewer people consider it to be a problem.

The second condition under which the axiom holds true is that the relevant beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors have developed independently from previous media use. This assumption, however, also applies only in part. One example is the processing of TV news, where there are two kinds of effect. First, where viewers don't know anything about the events or individuals covered, new knowledge and opinions are at least partly the effects of TV coverage. Second, where viewers already know the events or individuals covered and have opinions on them, their knowledge and opinions are mostly based on previous media reports. Thus, it is primarily the mass media that establish the context for the interpretation of the news on current events, which in turn reinforce and supplement the context (Kepplinger & Daschmann 1997).

The exclusive interpretation of reinforcement as evidence for a lack of media effects is a result of a static and thereby unhistorical approach. Such an interpretation does not do justice to the actual role of the media in the development of individuals and societies. In reality, the status quo is often a result of previous media effects. From these theoretical notions one has to conclude that existing beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors can also be regarded as effects of previous media coverage. Thus, insofar as these beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors would vanish without ongoing media coverage, reinforcement must be regarded as a central and important effect of media coverage.

The third axiom is: *No effect without contact*. This axiom is acceptable if at least one of the two following conditions is fulfilled: first, existing attitudes and peer bonds largely prevent the reception of dissonant information; second, dissonant information that is received from the mass media will be reinterpreted in such a way as to correspond to existing attitudes. If one or both conditions are fulfilled, the opinions and attitudes of media users are an efficient protection against the transmission of dissonant information to others. In this case, effects implied by the conveyance of information from the media must be attributed to the conveyors. Only then do conveyors work as filters that marginalize the

effects of media on third parties considerably. However, when conveyors or opinion leaders also use and pass on dissonant information, the effects should be attributed at least partly to the media.

There are several reasons why the assumption that people exclusively use consonant media information and exclusively pass on consonant media information to third parties is incompatible with the findings of empirical research. One is that attitudes have only a small influence on the use of most mass media, especially TV newscasts, which are the most important and frequently utilized source of information. Another, related reason is that media recipients do not use negative information about people and organizations that they respect in a selective way. Additionally, the tendency toward the selective use of positive information can be overcome by journalistic means of design. Among these are big or spectacular headlines, long and well-placed articles, and ostentatiously illustrated reports (Donsbach 1991; → Cognitive Dissonance Theory).

For these reasons, the preference for consonant information does not present an impermeable barrier for dissonant information on any level of selection. Even though media effects may be reduced by such preferences, the effects of the mass media are certainly not eliminated. Accordingly, predispositions and selective exposure do not represent an efficient protection against the reception of dissonant information. Therefore, the *no effect without contact* axiom is untenable. Opinion leaders and other interlocutors do not restrain the influences of media reports, but rather extend them in unique ways to those who lack direct contact with the same media coverage.

The model of indirect media effects has consequences for the interpretation of multilevel effects processes. This concerns, first, studies that have shown an influence of interlocutors on the beliefs and opinions of other people. Provided that no theoretical reasons or empirical facts suggest that the interlocutor relied on sources independent of the media, the effects must be assigned to the media. Second, it also concerns studies in the → diffusion of information and innovation and in the change of social values and norms. Opinion forming mass media with a low distribution level may alter the perceptions of minority groups, which may then be adopted by media with high distribution levels and thereby shape the beliefs of the majority. Third, the consequences of the model of indirect media effects concern contemporary studies of the role of the mass media in historical developments. This addresses mainly questions as to whether and how the opinion-forming media shape public opinion, restrict the scope of decision-makers, or predetermine which kind of decisions are deemed legitimate and appropriate.

The model of indirect media effects outlines a basis for discussing the role of the media as a catalyst, amplifier, and moderator of dynamic complex processes that hitherto lay outside the interests of recipient-fixed effect research. At the same time, it points out connections to questions and approaches of other disciplines such as political science (studies in decision-making), sociology (studies in conflicts and crises), and economics (studies in consumer behavior, development of supply and prices). The more general the questions asked, the further removed the causes (i.e., media coverage) become from the effects (e.g., decisions made by politicians as a consequence of media coverage), and the greater the number of intervening variables that have to be taken into account (such as opinion leaders who derive their opinions from the media and might influence decision-makers). The disadvantages of such studies are in the inevitable reduction of the level of

evidence, but what is important is that the advantages include a realistic estimation of the media's role in modern societies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Audience Research ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Book ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Chaffee, Steven H. ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Collective Memory and the Media ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Editorial ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Frustration Aggression Theory ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Historic Key Events and the Media ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Intercultural Media Effects ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Magazine ▶ Mainstreaming ▶ Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Media System Dependency Theory ▶ Mediating Factors ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ Negativity ▶ News ▶ News Audience ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Newspaper ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Order of Presentation ▶ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ▶ Perception ▶ Persuasion ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Physical Effects of Media Content ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Radio ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetoric, Nonverbal ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sleeper Effect ▶ Social Behavior, Media Effects on ▶ Social Capital, Media Effects on ▶ Social Judgment Theory ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Stimulus-Response Model ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Trap Effect ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Victimization, Secondary ▶ Video Malaise ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects

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The term “indirect effects” denotes the consequences of direct effects on individuals who are not exposed to media content. According to Seymour-Ure (1974, 22), “a primary [=

direct] effect takes place when the person affected has himself been involved directly in the communication process. A secondary [= indirect] effect takes place when individuals or groups not involved in the communication process are affected by changes in individuals who are.” The concept of indirect effects extends the effect of the mass media beyond the users and to nonusers in two ways. Individuals exposed to media content spread information and opinion provided by the mass media, as far as they transmit them unchanged (→ Opinion Leader). Such individuals may also transform the information and opinion provided by the mass media into action, as far as their action is predictable on the basis of media coverage (→ Priming Theory; Appraisal Theory).

Three types of indirect effects can be distinguished. First, there are *administrative reactions*, i.e., direct effects on a large number of recipients of media content affect the behavior of a small number of decision-makers. For example, the negative tone of coverage about a politician’s plan decreases support for him or her (direct effect), which stimulates the politician to give up the plan (indirect effect). Second, there are *public effects*, i.e., direct effects on a small number of decision-makers who are the subject of media coverage (→ Reciprocal Effects) lead them to make decisions that affect a large number of people. For example, media coverage about the potential side-effects of pharmaceuticals cause the producer to take it off the market (direct effect), which has positive and/or negative consequences for a large number of patients (indirect effects). Third, there are *snowball effects*, i.e., direct effects on a large number of recipients of media content affect a large number of people not exposed to the relevant media content. For example, a new TV show has impressed a large number of viewers (direct effect) who stimulate their friends to watch the next episode (indirect effect).

For several reasons, the concept of indirect effects denies the adequacy of the axiom that there is “no effect without contact.” People’s attitudes have no significant influence on their use of TV news and only a moderate influence on their use of national quality newspapers (Kepplinger et al. 1991). The selective use of media does not exclude the use (Donsbach 1991) and transmission (Deutschmann & Danielson 1960) of dissonant information. Therefore, people exposed to the mass media may play two roles. As far as they transmit exclusively consonant information, they act as *filters*. As far as they transmit dissonant information, they act as *amplifiers* of media effects.

Because of the axiom mentioned above, indirect effects of mass media have not been a major topic of research. Nevertheless, several quantitative and qualitative studies document a broad *variety of indirect effects*. Pre-trial publicity may bias jurors against defendants (direct effect) and thus might disadvantage them (indirect effect; Brusckie & Loges 1999). Intensive coverage of terrorism (Weimann & Winn 1994) may stimulate additional violence (direct effect) and cause additional victims (indirect effect). The dominant tone of media coverage may discourage recipients from speaking out in public (direct effect), which may push others into falling silent (indirect effect; Noelle-Neumann 1993). Media reports indicating a lack of supply may increase demand (direct effect), causing a shortage that harms other people (indirect effect I) and stimulating political activity (indirect effect II; Kepplinger & Roth 1979; → Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality). Media coverage of the availability of pornography or violence might stimulate concern about antisocial effects on others (direct effect I; → Third-Person Effects), increase support for censorship (direct effect II); and bring into office politicians planning to change

the law (indirect effect; Shah et al. 1999). Before World War II the pro-German coverage in *The Times* most likely had an impact on the British and German politicians who negotiated the Munich Treaty (direct effect), which had far-reaching consequences for people living in Czechoslovakia (indirect effect; Seymour-Ure 1974; Holbert & Stephenson 2003).

Direct effects of media reports can be identified using → survey or observational data (→ Observation; Research Methods). One can relatively easily identify direct effects of media reports. By comparison, indirect effects – i.e., the consequences for the behavior of subjects who are influenced by media coverage – are more difficult to identify and more difficult still to link to media coverage directly. First, one has to establish a direct effect upon the relevant subjects. In doing so, one has to take into consideration the decisions that have been taken and those that have been avoided because of the mass media. Second, one has to demonstrate that the event under investigation is in fact a consequence of a direct effect. Here, the concepts of necessary and sufficient causes of effects are useful. In many cases, the media might be a necessary but not a sufficient cause of indirect effects (Seymour-Ure 1974; → Mediatization of Politics).

SEE ALSO: ► Appraisal Theory ► Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality ► Mediatization of Politics ► Observation ► Opinion Leader ► Priming Theory ► Reciprocal Effects ► Research Methods ► Spiral of Silence ► Survey ► Third-Person Effects ► Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Media Effects Duration

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In view of the preponderance of published research on the effects of the communication media, it is astounding, if not disconcerting, how little attention has been given to the systematic examination of the duration of these effects, and, as a result, how little is known about their duration. Such apparent neglect does not necessarily reflect lack of interest, however, but derives from principal and practical challenges associated with the assessment of the duration of media effects.

Among the principal difficulties are, first, the time discrepancy between cause and effect, and, second, extrinsic influences during the time course of the effect. The *time discrepancy* results from imprecision in the termination of causal stimulation and the onset of the frequently delayed effect measurement. Such imprecision has mostly plagued the assessment of quasi-immediate and potentially short-lived effects. *Extrinsic influences*, in contrast, have mainly complicated and often compromised the assessment of media effects of potentially long duration. The effect-duration measurement requires that extrinsic influences be assessed alongside the course of presumed media effects, such that the effects of these influences can be extracted. However, extrinsic influences are often accepted as unavoidable consequences of an ecologically valid environment in which media effects of any duration manifest themselves (→ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models).

Another principal consideration is that the repeated assessment necessary to establish the duration of media effects may modify these very effects. Such likely distortion accrues to all obtrusively obtained assessments, as they create cognizance of the effects being measured.

The practical issues with the measurement of effect duration are primarily economic. Repeated taking of measures obviously requires a greater investment of resources, both labor and funds, than does a single effect measure. The likely attrition of respondents over repeated assessments is a further impediment.

The various indicated aspects of duration measurement are exemplified in the following research demonstrations.

## **DURATION OF SHORT-LIVED EFFECTS (SECONDS, MINUTES)**

Media research abounds with demonstrations of immediate and potentially short-lived effects of various kinds. A process known as priming is most frequently invoked to explain these effects (Jo & Berkowitz 1994). Briefly, an episode of media content is construed as a *prime* that activates particular neural networks and, as long as the activation persists, influences subsequent prime-related thoughts and actions. Following exposure to scenes of violence, for instance, the prime is expected to facilitate ensuing anger and aggression mainly because it activates related constructs. The research on such contingencies of prime and subsequent behavior has generally failed, however, to ascertain the time course of either prime activation or contingent behavior. As a result, the

duration of immediate media effects has remained a matter of conjecture (→ Priming Theory).

Although systematic assessments of the duration of priming effects are lacking, it is widely held that these effects are short-lived, perhaps spanning minutes. But it has also been suggested that the flow of media and alternative environmental stimuli defines a chain of primes, the effect of the last presented one superseding that of all prior ones. In this conceptualization, the effects created by particular primes may be limited to seconds. The resolution of this issue obviously awaits detailed duration measurements.

Theories of emotional reactivity gave more attention to effect duration. For instance, → excitation transfer theory projects that excitation, however induced, decays slowly, and, as long as residues persist, intensifies subsequent affective experiences and behaviors. As the enduring excitatory residues are the mediators of the effects, duration measurements became crucial.

An early investigation explored the enhancement of music appreciation (Cantor & Zillmann 1973). After pre-arousal by exposure to films, respondents listened to musical selections. Transfer facilitation was observed up to 5 minutes. After that period, residues had decayed and facilitation was no longer in evidence.

Another excitation transfer study determined the duration of aggression facilitation after exposure to differently arousing films (Zillmann et al. 1974). Following a highly arousing erotic film, but not a less arousing violent film, transfer effects were observed for up to 11 minutes.

Other investigations examined the *distractive effects* of stark emotional reactions, such as elicited by exposure to news footage of a suicide. Three counterbalanced reports about issues of general interest, each 90 seconds long, followed a distressing report. Information acquisition was greatly impaired for the first and second of these reports, but not for the third. The effect of emotional distraction thus lasted for 3 minutes (Mundorf et al. 1990). A follow-up, methodologically parallel, study examined the impairment of information acquisition from commercials and offered the same conclusions about effect duration (→ News Processing and Retention).

Recent technological developments in computer-assisted data collection have made more systematic assessments of effect duration possible. In selective exposure research, for instance, automated procedures have been devised to measure exposure in second or minute intervals (→ Real Time Ratings [RTR]).

In an exploration of the *effects of moods on the choice of music*, respondents were placed into good or bad moods and then allowed to listen to music (Knobloch & Zillmann 2002). Unbeknown to the listeners, their choices were automatically recorded at minute intervals over a period of 10 minutes. It was observed that persons in a bad mood, compared to those in a good mood, decided more quickly on their preferred music and then stayed with their choice of energetic, joyful music for the rest of the recorded period.

An investigation of the *effects of headline framing* on reading of the associated articles used the same fully automated procedure (Zillmann et al. 2004). The framed headings, displayed in the overview of an electronic newspaper, were factual or indicated human conflict, misfortune, agony, or economic circumstances. After initial sampling across frames for about 4 minutes, respondents' choices became focused and stabilized. The

reading of articles whose leads suggested conflict and agony dominated the reading of articles with other leads for the remaining 6 minutes.

Given the indicated new means of assessing the duration of effects automatically and without the creation of cognizance of research objectives, progress in effect-duration measurement seems finally at hand.

### **INTERMEDIATE DURATION OF EFFECTS (HOURS, DAYS, WEEKS)**

Some research on the *effects of media violence and pornography* employed a design of repeated exposure and delayed effect assessment. Respondents were exposed to material in consecutive daily sessions throughout a week, and effects were ascertained days or weeks after exposure. Delays were used to ensure that measured effects were not short-lived ones immediately after the last exposure (→ Cumulative Media Effects). Repeated exposure to media violence was found to exert effects 1 day after exposure, strengthening aggressiveness and increasing hostile behavior (Zillmann & Weaver 1999; → Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

The measured effects of repeated exposure to pornography, at times one exposure session throughout a month, extended to 1 through 8 weeks (Zillmann 1989). After 1 week, various perceptual and dispositional consequences were in evidence. After 2 weeks, shifting erotic preferences were observed. A habituation decline of physical aspects of sexual arousal persisted up to 8 weeks (Howard et al. 1971; → Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of).

Research on the perceptual and judgmental *effects of single exposure to news reports* has ascertained effects over periods from 1 to 3 weeks. Reports that differently framed the economic and environmental consequences of livestock farming, for instance, were found capable of altering perceptions of the issue immediately after exposure (Tewksbury et al. 2000). A repeated assessment after 3 weeks indicated a weak residual effect (→ Framing Effects).

The perception of issues presented in the news was also examined in terms of exemplification theory (Zillmann & Brosius 2000). Respondents were exposed to reports, and their assessments of the issues were recorded either immediately or after a delay of 2 or 3 weeks. None of the assessments was ever repeated (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of).

One investigation employed a factual report on small-farm economics that featured either a representative distribution of interviews with successful and failing farmers or involved only farmers in financial difficulties. The immediate measurement of issue perception showed that the one-sided exemplification produced a particularly bleak view of family farming. The 2-week delayed measurement yielded the same result, indicating that the created perceptions were stable over at least such a period (→ Sleeper Effect). A parallel study explored the *effects of pictorial exemplars*. Instead of textual exemplars, photographs of successful or failing farmers were interspersed in the report. The effects were ascertained immediately versus 10 days later. The effects were again stable over time.

Using the same basic design, an investigation of *risk perception* concerning carjackings involved a factual report that highlighted different consequences for victims. Victims were

presented either as having come to minor harm, as having suffered considerable bodily injury, or as having been killed. The immediate measurement showed that the respondents' apprehensions about the crime of carjacking increased with the severity of injury suffered by the exemplars of the news report. The 1-week delayed measurement revealed that the apprehensions not only persisted but had actually increased (→ Risk Communication; Risk Perceptions).

Again using the same design, an investigation of *health concerns* indicated prolonged and potentially growing effects. Exposure to a program explicating the risks of skin cancer involved either threatening or rather innocuous images of the cancer's visible manifestations. Immediately after exposure, the difference in imagery failed to produce appreciably different effects on risk perceptions, presumably because the effect of the imagery was overpowered by the immediacy of the textual message. In contrast, 2 weeks after exposure the threatening imagery showed a stronger, increased effect on the respondents' assessment of the threat of this cancer to others and to themselves. Whereas much of the text's influence had apparently been lost, the recalled imagery could at later times dominate the message's influence (→ Health Communication). To safeguard against possible extrinsic influences during the delay period, issues were chosen that, during data collection, were not on the media agenda. Additionally, pre-tests ensured that respondents had little, if any, knowledge of the selected issues.

The duration of most of the described effects may be substantially longer than reported. In the absence of further delayed assessments, this remains conjecture, however.

### **DURATION OF LONG-TERM EFFECTS (MONTHS, YEARS)**

Research on health-promoting messages often ascertains effects in repeated assessments over extended periods.

An investigation into the effects of different *appeals in a campaign* aimed at improving sun-protective behavior, for instance, found that particularly direct and unmitigated language fostered more compliant behavior than alternative means of expression (Buller et al. 2000). This effect was not only observed immediately after message reception, but also 6 months later.

In another study, aimed at increasing fruit and vegetable consumption, messages were tailored or not tailored to the respondents' personal situation (Heimendinger et al. 2005). Interviews were conducted after 5 and 12 months. Compared to an untailored appeal, tailored messages, especially multiply applied ones, proved longitudinally more effective in improving dietary behavior.

Concerning long-term effects of exposure to *media violence*, a 1-year study was conducted with nursery-school children (Singer & Singer 1981). The children's viewing habits and their aggressive behavior were recorded during several selected periods and compared in cross-lagged fashion. In some of these periods, earlier viewing was correlated with later aggression, but earlier aggression was also correlated with later viewing. The pattern thus suggested reciprocal influences.

The ultimate longitudinal investigation on these effects spanned 22 years (Huesmann & Eron 1986). Both the preference for violent media content and the aggressive behavior of 8-year-olds was assessed. A 10-year follow-up was applied to many of these children.

Cross-lagged analysis revealed a significant correlation between boys' earlier violence viewing and later aggression. The reverse correlation between earlier aggression and later violence viewing proved negligible, however. This finding was interpreted as suggesting that exposure to violence eventually causes violent behavior. The final follow-up explored effects after 22 years. A cross-lagged analysis again showed the indicated pattern. At the age of 30, aggressive men seemed to have succumbed to the influence of 22 years of watching violent television programs.

Later research, conducted in different countries and cultures, spanned 4 years and yielded further corroborating evidence (Huesmann & Eron 1986). A 3-year research project with school children and adolescents aged 7 through 16 failed, however, to lend unequivocal support to the causal interpretation of violence watching and aggressive behavior (Milavsky et al. 1982). Regression analysis revealed that, although numerous aspects of the examined relationship were positive, they were of negligible magnitude. A causal relation between the extended consumption of media violence and aggressive behavior could consequently not be considered substantiated, and the debate over the impact of media violence continues despite the considerable investment in longitudinal assessments (Cook et al. 1983).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Health Communication ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Message Effects, Structure of ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Real Time Ratings (RTR) ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sleeper Effect ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Media Effects, History of

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The established history of media effects research is characterized by a series of phases marked by fundamental paradigm shifts (see McQuail 1977, 72–74; 2005, 457–462; Lowery & DeFleur 1983, 22–29; Severin & Tankard 2001, 262–268; Baran & Davis 2006, 8–17). Each of these phases is associated with particular concepts, researchers, studies, and historical circumstances that influenced ideological development regarding media effects (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

### THE FOUR PHASES OF MEDIA EFFECTS PARADIGMS

The *first phase*, from World War I to the end of the 1930s, was characterized by the assumption that the effects of the media on the population would be exceedingly strong. The media were credited with an almost limitless omnipotence in their ability to shape opinion and belief, to change life habits, and to mold audience behavior more or less according to the will of their controllers (McQuail 2005, 458). The power of media messages over unsuspecting audiences was described in drastic terms: the mass media supposedly fired messages like dangerous bullets, or shot messages into the audience like strong drugs pushed through hypodermic needles. These descriptions gave rise to the “*hypodermic-needle concept*” (Berlo 1960, 27), the “*magic bullet theory*” (Schramm 1973, 243), and the

“transmission belt theory” (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1982, 161). Instinct psychology and the theory of mass society were interpreted to show that people in urbanized and industrialized society were rootless, alienated, and inherently susceptible to manipulation. As a result, they were defenseless against and at the mercy of the capricious stimuli of the media – particularly as early ideas maintained that the mass media were run primarily by people and organizations that were deliberately trying to exert a targeted influence upon recipients (→ Stimulus–Response Model).

The *second phase* of the standard history lasted approximately from the end of the 1930s to the end of the 1960s and was distinguished by the assumption that the media were largely not influential. The research group of → Paul F. Lazarsfeld ushered in the deconstruction of the bullet theory. The results of their empirical, social-scientific election study, *The people’s choice* (1944), moved interest away from what the media did to people and toward what people did with the media. Rather than seeing a society of fragmented individuals receiving all-powerful messages from the mass media, the view shifted to one of a society of individuals who interacted within groups and thus limited the effects of media messages. Early on, Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) defined all three key concepts that Joseph T. Klapper (1960) later united and used as the basis of his *limited effects theory*. These three concepts also characterized the second phase of effects research. They state that: (1) people use → selective exposure and selective perception to protect themselves from media influences, accepting almost exclusively only such information as corresponds to their previously established attitudes (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention); (2) → opinion leaders initiate a → two-step flow of communication by absorbing ideas and arguments from the mass media and then communicating these – transformed – ideas to less active individuals; (3) social group formation enhances the role that → interpersonal communication plays in protecting an individual member from a change of opinion, as members do not wish to lose membership in their relational group (→ Katz, Elihu).

The *third phase*, from the end of the 1960s through the end of the 1970s, was characterized by the *rediscovery of strong media effects*. According to standard media effects history, an essay by → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann entitled “Return to the concept of powerful mass media” (1973) may be considered to have set the program for the movement into the third phase (see Severin & Tankard 2001, 264; McQuail 2005, 460). A number of highly regarded studies showed that it was possible for the media to overcome some selectivity processes in a television-saturated environment. Near the end of the 1940s Herbert Hyman and Paul Sheatsly (1947) published a study in *Public Opinion Quarterly* entitled “Some reasons why information campaigns fail”; then, a quarter of a century later, Harold Mendelsohn (1973) used the same forum to proclaim the exact opposite: “Some reasons why information campaigns can succeed.” Three distinct features are attributed to this phase: more sophisticated methods of analysis (→ Research Methods), more specific hypotheses, and more highly differentiated theoretical approaches. Thus, survey data and content analysis data could be combined long-term with the help of time-series analyses or panel design studies (→ Survey; Content Analysis, Quantitative). In addition, effects research since that time has been less focused on crude changes in attitude or behavior, and more interested in subtle changes in our *perception* of the world.

The *fourth phase* of the standard media effects history extends through to the present time and is characterized by “*negotiated*” or “*transactional*” effects (McQuail 2005, 461). Now the central premise maintains that the media exert their greatest influence when they become involved in the process of constructing sense and meaning. Typical theories connected with this new approach are social → constructivism, → cultivation theory, framing (→ Framing Effects), and → information processing theories. McQuail considers research in this vein to be driven by two insights:

First, media “construct” social formations and even history itself by framing images of reality (in fiction as well as news) in predictable and patterned ways. Second, people in audiences construct for themselves their own view of social reality and their place in it, in interaction with the symbolic constructions offered by the media. The approach allows both for the power of media and for the power of people to choose, with a terrain of continuous negotiation in between, as it were. (McQuail 2005, 461)

### CHALLENGES TO THE FOUR-PHASES MODEL

The oversimplified account of the received view of media effects history has been criticized harshly in recent times. Lang and Lang (1993, 93) called the alleged sequence of phases unrealistic “paradoxes” that feigned contradictions that had never existed. Instead, they maintained that “a considerable continuity” had been prevalent in the research community over the decades (Lang & Lang 1981, 662). Even proponents of the phase model felt forced to play down its heuristic value as time progressed (see McQuail 2005, 460). It seems that the model was able to establish itself so firmly because it offered a clear summary of a complex developmental process. However, current thought considers it evident that, in every period, studies could be identified that indicated limited or powerful effects – depending on what → operationalizations, conceptualizations, definitions, measurements, designs, and variables were used (→ Measurement Theory; Media Effects, Strength of).

Likewise, careful reanalyses of research literature from the first phase of effects studies show that “few, if any, reputable social scientists in the pre-World War II era . . . worked with what was later described as the hypodermic needle model” (Lang & Lang 1981, 655). Even the empirical findings from the second phase, upon closer inspection, show no justification for an overall verdict of media impotence (Lang & Lang 1981, 659). Instead, numerous studies from that time indicating the presence of media effects can be identified. Due to the prevailing opinions of the time, however, no notice was taken of these findings. Two main factors explain the successful run enjoyed by the “*minimal effects myth*”: first, there was an exaggerated concentration of a limited range of effect types (especially short-term attitude change during election campaigns); second, there was a one-sided and inappropriate interpretation of the results of three key studies, which further secondary literature adopted without additional review.

In the first of these key studies, Lazarsfeld et al.’s *The people’s choice* (1944), the data in no way unequivocally supported both central investigative findings – the importance of interpersonal communication (“two-step flow”) and of reinforcement instead of chance (“minimal effects”). In spite of the fact that 61 percent of the interviewees named newspaper (23 percent) and radio (38 percent) as their “most important sources” of



information during the election, the authors alleged that it is not the media but *people* who can move other people (although less than one fourth cited a personal source as important). Moreover, in spite of the fact that 8 percent of those questioned did indeed alter their voting decision because of media influences, the authors interpreted this as evidence for a lack of effect (see Chaffee & Hochheimer 1985, 273, 279). Not only is 8 percent a considerable change, it should also be noted that the authors were concerned only with voting intention and ignored other possible political effects where media impact might have been even greater (→ Election Campaign Communication).

In the second key study, *Personal influence* (1955) by Katz and Lazarsfeld, an inappropriate claim was made to the effect that all previous effects research had been based on the following framework: “that of the omnipotent media, on the one hand, sending forth the message, and the atomized masses, on the other, waiting to receive it – and nothing in between” (1955, 20). In retrospect, Katz (1987, S35) admitted that early empirical communications research seems not to have based its efforts on the idea outlined in 1955, which propounded an omnipotent media and the stimulus–response model arising from this assumption. Nevertheless, Katz and Lazarsfeld’s book created a mythos that has definitively influenced the history of this field even up to today (see Delia 1987, 65–66).

### BIASED PERCEPTIONS OF MEDIA EFFECTS

From Klapper’s synopsis *The effects of mass communication* (1960), the third key work of that era, secondary literature adopted primarily those conclusions that pointed to minimal effects, failing to subject these inferences to review. However, Klapper did also clearly define conditions under which the media could develop strong effects. Even so, since he provided only very few pieces of evidence and examples for these in his one-sided presentation, they made no impression on the readers of the time or on later generations of research (see Perse 2001, 25). In addition, Klapper worked as director of social research for CBS, one of the largest media corporations in the United States (→ Television Networks), and media companies were uninterested in evidence supporting the strength of the media. Quite the contrary: they were interested in evidence proving the insignificance of media effects and used Klapper’s book to argue against regulation (Perse 2001, 28).

The apparent change of mind leading to the rediscovery of strong effects may also be better explained by factors outside of, rather than within, the research world. The rapid spread of television during the 1960s and 1970s lent a political dimension to the field of effects research (→ Television: Social History). Influential commercial and political forces increasingly accused the media of failing to respect these entities’ interests and, consequently, of distortion. Such allegations drew heightened public attention to the effectiveness of the media.

Today, a growing number of scholars agree that the established standard history of the field is misleading because it tends to ignore those findings that do not fit neatly into the stage-by-stage scenario. Many authors (e.g., Lang & Lang 1981; Chaffee & Hochheimer 1985; McLeod et al. 1991; Wartella 1996; Bryant & Thompson 2002) have thus concluded that the development of mass media effects research did not move in pendulum swings from “all-powerful” to “limited” to “rediscovered powerful” to “negotiated” effects. Bryant and Thompson (2002, 42, 58) argue that the body of media effects research from

the beginning showed overwhelming evidence for significant effects. Thus, the sum total of all these considerations yields the conclusion that the history of media effects research still waits to be written (see Wartella 1996, 179).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Constructivism ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Operationalization ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Research Methods ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Survey ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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## Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models

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The study of media effects has driven mass communication research for most of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Scholars have developed, tested, and supported various theories of → media effects. The key to this research is uncovering the explanation for the way mass media exposure translates into effects. Over the history of our field, the study of media effects has been driven by generalized views about how media effects occur. These general views serve the field as models, or simplified representations of the media effects process. Different models about media effects place different weight on either media content or the audience in providing the central explanation of media effects. Moreover, different models focus on different variables as central to understanding media effects (→ Media Effects, History of).

The *first model* of media effects emerged in the early twentieth century. This model was grounded in sociological views of the mass society and psychological interests in stimulus–response models. This first model has been termed the “hypodermic needle” or direct effects model, because mass communication was seen as an effective stimulus to evoke predictable responses from isolated and helpless audiences.

A *second model* developed around 1940. This model, limited effects, reflected researchers’ beliefs that media’s dominant effect was reinforcement. According to this model, because of the audience’s tendency toward → selective exposure, attention, perception, and recall (→ Selective Attention; Selective Perception and Selective Retention), most media messages were filtered and rejected unless they supported pre-existing beliefs and attitudes (e.g., Hovland et al. 1949; Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955).

A *third model* grew out of the rapid adoption of television in the 1960s (→ Television: Social History). Television viewing grew steadily and content analyses revealed that there were few thematic differences in the content of the three dominant channels. Scholars began to believe that television could overcome selectivity processes. That is, exposure to television insured exposure to particular themes and images. This model is characterized as a return to the era of powerful effects.

The widespread adoption of → cable television, remote control devices, and the broadband world wide web (→ Internet) have shifted media use away from a static, time- and-space-bound delivery mode to one that allows the audience to select what media to

use whenever they choose. Now, media researchers accept that audiences can be powerful and dominant in the media effects process. Effects, however, are not viewed as limited. Instead, they are enhanced when media content intersects with audiences' interests and personal characteristics.

## FOUR GENERAL MODELS OF MEDIA EFFECTS

Our field is now marked by four dominant models of media effects: direct effects, conditional effects, cumulative effects, and cognitive automatic effects.

### Direct Effects

The direct effects model focuses on the impact of media content variables to stimulate fairly automatic and predictable responses in the audience. The audience is viewed as reacting involuntarily and automatically to certain features of media content. This model is not to be confused with the outdated hypodermic needle model of the early part of the twentieth century. People are not necessarily viewed as helpless, as in the early years of the hypodermic needle model, but they are seen as unable to resist the attentional "pulls" of some aspects of media content. The direct effects model focuses research attention on aspects of media content that impact audiences' → perceptions and feelings (→ Emotion).

Most research focuses on the impact of *structural features of media content* that stimulate automatic responses, such as the orienting response (involuntary attention), visual attention to the screen, sounds that stimulate attention and evoke automatic responses, and media content that evokes fear. Other research has focused on aspects of media content that increase automatic arousal (→ Excitation and Arousal), or physiological energizing responses. Still other research considers how the degree of realism depicted in the media can lead to audience effects.

Theoretical approaches that fall under this model of media effects include the → limited capacity model of message processing (e.g., Lang 2000), which focuses on structural and content aspects of media that elicit automatic motivational and cognitive responses; salience theory, which focuses on how location and placement of promotional messages affect attention (e.g., Eastman & Newton 1998); research on attention to and memory for "bad" news (e.g., Newhagen & Reeves 1992); and research on "presence" (e.g., Lee 2004), which focuses on how the sensory and personal realism of media content can evoke a sense of "being in" an environment or "being with" another (→ Information Processing).

### Conditional Effects

The conditional effects model places emphasis on the audience as the location of understanding media effects. Like the limit effects model of the mid-twentieth century, this model focuses on *audience selectivity* (selective exposure, attention, perception, and recall), social influence, and individual differences. This model differs from the limited effects model in that it recognizes that media effects are common, but conditional on aspects of the audience. That is, audience characteristics can determine whether and how

media content will have an impact. Media effects are not uniform; different people can be affected quite differently by the same media content.

This model is *audience-centered*, so important variables all relate to aspects of the audience. Traditional variables, such as demographics and social categories (e.g., sex, age, education), are important because they represent common frames of reference, common experiences, and common interests of similar groups of people that can facilitate or moderate media effects (→ Audience). Social relationship variables (e.g., group membership, audience makeup) are useful in this model because they represent the social connections and interpersonal interactions that can facilitate or mediate media effects. Individual difference variables (e.g., personality, prior experiences, mood) allow researchers to uncover how unique attributes and experiences can be conditional forces in media effects (→ Mood Management). Theories of media effects that fall under this model include knowledge gap (Tichenor et al. 1970, in its focus on socio-economic status; → Knowledge Gap Effects), social learning theory (e.g., Bandura 2002, in its focus on observer attributes; → Observational Learning), and → uses-and-gratifications approaches to media effects (e.g., Rubin 2002).

### **Cumulative Effects**

The cumulative effects model focuses on *consonance and repetition* of some themes, images, and frames across media content that override the ability of the audience to avoid exposure (→ Consonance of Media Content; Framing Effects). This model grows out of the third model in the history of media effects research, which recognized the power of television to overcome selective exposure. Cumulative effects are not based on a single exposure; instead effects emerge over time, on the basis of repeated exposure to consistent messages across channels or across media. Effects are typically cognitive; i.e., cumulative exposure leads people to develop beliefs based on the content they consume. These beliefs mirror media content.

Media content's presentation is central to this model. Cumulative effects are based on consistently presented images, themes, and frames that are presented over time and across media channels. Two theories exemplify the cumulative effects model. *Agenda setting* (e.g., McCombs & Shaw 1972; → Agenda-Setting Effects) holds that news media have the power to set the audience agenda because of the consistency of news coverage across different channels. Cultivation (e.g., Gerbner & Gross 1976) is based on the evidence of content analysis that some of television's content presents a world quite different from the real one. As a result, heavy viewers of television begin to believe that the real world is similar to the television world. This model's assumption that some media content is so ubiquitous that it cannot be avoided needs to be tested in new media environments of increased channels and media outlets and the greater content control afforded audiences.

### **Cognitive Automatic Effects**

This model applies the notion of *priming* to the media effects process (→ Priming Theory). Priming refers to the activation of mental concepts as a result of exposure to media content. This model recognizes that much media use grows out of desires for relaxation and entertainment, which suggest that the audience is less mentally active

during exposure. The less active audience tends to engage in more automatic and effortless mental processing. Media content can serve as a potent prime to activate thoughts that affect interpretation and reaction to related environmental stimuli. The *cognitive automatic model* encompasses the several theoretical approaches used to explain priming effects: spreading activation, schema activation, and mental models (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al. 2002) as well as heuristic or peripheral processing (Petty et al. 2002; → Elaboration Likelihood Model). This model has been used to explain short-term effects of media violence, effects of a media agenda on presidential approval ratings, short-term effects of stereotypical media content, and cultivation effects.

Variables important to this model are ones that increase the priming potential of media content. In general, more salient content is likely to prime. Salience is reflected in prominence, intensity, movement, repetition, realism, and emotion. Salient audio and visual content can both prime automatic processing. Audience variables are less important to this model, because the audience is viewed as less cognitively active.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience ▶ Cable Television ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Emotion ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Mood Management ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Perception ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Media Effects, Strength of

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Twenty-first-century mass communication scholars rarely question the existence of media effects. Research has presented significant and consistent evidence that the mass media have noticeable and meaningful effects. Evidence comes not only from the accumulation of the body of different studies, but from the various meta-analyses that organize various research studies and combine their findings to assess the direction and strength of media effects. In general, research finds that media effects are modest, small to moderate in size. Conclusions about the strength of media effects, however, must be tempered by considerations of → research methodology (laboratory compared to more natural settings), the effects of different types of media content (pro-social compared to antisocial; → Media Production and Content), and the effects of routine compared to unusual content (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of).

### THE STRENGTH OF MEDIA EFFECTS

*Meta-analysis* is the primary method for determining the strength of media effects. Meta-analysis is a research technique that locates published and unpublished studies about different media effects. Then, the results from those studies are combined and averaged to ascertain the overall size of effects, across a range of studies conducted by many different researchers at different times, in different places, and with different samples (→ Meta-Analysis). The strength of this approach is its cumulative character; combining a range of studies allows not only for conclusions about strength of impact, but also for researchers to begin to be able to generalize about the types of people affected and to identify the different variables that might enhance or mitigate media effects.

Meta-analyses reveal that media effects can best be described as small to moderate. Two statistical measures are typically used to describe the strength of media effects. Pearson's correlation ( $r$ ) ranges from  $-1.00$  to  $1.00$ , where values closest to either end point are the most substantial. Values close to  $0.0$  mean that there is no connection between media exposure and the effect. A second measure,  $d$ , is a measure of the difference, in standard

deviations, between the control group and the experimental group. Larger values for  $d$  indicate larger effects ( $\rightarrow$  Statistics, Explanatory).

In some cases, media's impact is fairly strong. Recent meta-analyses (see Preiss et al. 2007), for example, show that the  $\rightarrow$  *agenda-setting effect* is among the largest of our field. Overall, across 90 studies, the relationship between the media and audience agendas is  $r = 0.53$ .

Various meta-analyses have identified moderate effects of *media violence* ( $\rightarrow$  Violence as Media Content, Effects of). In 1986, exposure to television violence accounted for about 0.3 of a standard deviation ( $d = 0.30$ ) in negative effects. Updated meta-analyses find that impact has grown a bit larger. In 1994, scholars found that the effect size of television violence was  $d = 0.65$  ( $r = 0.31$ ). Replication of meta-analyses of the effects of media violence on observed aggressive behavior also reveal a small increase in effect sizes. A 1991 meta-analysis located an effect size of  $d = 0.27$ ; the updated 2007 meta-analysis found an effect size of  $d = 0.35$ .

Other media effects are a bit smaller. The negative effects of *pornography* range from  $r = 0.11$  to  $r = 0.22$  ( $\rightarrow$  Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of). The connection between playing video games and aggression is  $r = 0.15$ . The effects of stereotyped media content and sex-role stereotyping range from  $r = 0.11$  to  $r = 0.31$  across surveys and experiments as well as studies conducted in the US and other countries.

Media content has *pro-social effects*. Pro-social messages targeted toward children have a moderate effect:  $r = 0.23$ . Media campaigns designed to encourage people to adopt healthy behaviors and practices have stronger impacts ( $r = 0.12$ ) than those encouraging cessation of unhealthy behaviors ( $r = 0.05$ ).

## INTERPRETING THE EVIDENCE

The statistical evidence for media effects is modest, considering the amount of *time spent with various media*. Here is a context for interpreting the size of media effects. Meta-analyses in other fields have found that the effect of gender on height is  $d = 1.20$ ; the effect of one year of elementary school on reading ability is  $d = 1.00$ ; tutoring on math skills is  $d = 0.60$ ; drug therapy on psychotics is  $d = 0.40$  (Hearold 1986). For  $r$ , squaring the value allows us to see how much of the variance between two variables is accounted for. So, meta-analyses show that exposure to pro-social messages accounts for 5.3 percent of the variance in pro-social actions in children.

There is evidence the *strength of media effects varies*. Effects of media violence are larger in laboratories ( $d = 0.80$ ) than in the real world ( $d = .35$  in natural experiments and  $d = 0.38$  in surveys). The control and precision of the laboratory experiment magnifies the effects of exposure to media content. There is also evidence that effects of pro-social media content are larger than those of antisocial media content. Moreover, effects can be stronger when encouraging adoptions (such as seat belt use, fruit and vegetable consumption) than when promoting behavior cessation (e.g., smoking, alcohol use;  $\rightarrow$  Observational Learning). Clearly, media have a larger impact on socially encouraged attitudes and behaviors and those that are easier to enact. There is also evidence to suggest that unusual media messages are likely to have a greater impact than routine ones. Research on Magic Johnson's 1991 announcement that he was HIV-positive had much larger effects



on knowledge about HIV and AIDS, attitudes toward HIV-positive people, and desire for more information about HIV than more routine messages (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of). Salient, or atypical messages, are likely to have greater impact.

The effects of mass communication might be small to moderate, but they are certainly quite meaningful because of the size of the audience and the importance of the outcomes. While the effects of media health campaigns, for example, are smaller than the effects of clinical interventions ( $r = 0.09$  compared to  $r = 0.27$ ), media campaigns are more cost-effective and reach far more people (→ Health Communication). The small effects found for media health campaigns cannot be dismissed, because even small effects sizes mean that large numbers of people have been influenced. Those who conduct research on television violence estimate that eliminating television violence could reduce aggression in society by small but significant amounts. Small effects of mass communication translate into large groups of people being affected.

### PROBLEMS IN INTERPRETING EVIDENCE OF MEDIA EFFECTS

Despite the presumption of media effects and the evidence drawn from meta-analyses, there are still some *areas of disagreement regarding media effects*. The most substantial media effects are found in laboratory experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory). There is a good deal of value in conducting laboratory experiments because researchers can control the type and amount of media exposure and assess time order, or causation. The control of laboratory settings, though, is also a weakness. Exposure to media content in a laboratory setting is unnatural and cannot account for selective exposure. Experimental participants might be shown television content (e.g., violence or sexual content) that they would never seek out on their own. Much media content is consumed in the presence of friends and families, who are not able to exert influence in laboratory settings (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). Moreover, the dependent measures used in laboratories are often quite artificial. Hitting Bobo dolls or pushing buttons to “shock” people don’t translate to real-life actions. Hovland (1959) also points out that experiments typically focus on short-term effects, measured fairly soon after exposure to media content. The nature of experimental control cannot assess the endurance of effects after the experimental session (→ Media Effects Duration).

Laboratory experiments can also introduce *experimenter effects*, or effects that are due to the actions of the experimenter, rather than the experimental stimulus. When an experimenter presents content to research participants, they might assume that the experimenter approves of the content, even if it is violent, sexual, or stereotypical. As Hovland (1959) noted about persuasion research, messages presented in a laboratory are likely to have stronger effects because of the credibility of the experimenter. Participants might also assume that the various actions presented to them in a laboratory, even if they are inappropriate or undesirable, are also sanctioned by the experimenter. Finally, Hovland explains that researchers often select media content designed to magnify differences between experimental and control conditions. These extreme selections are often atypical of media content seen in the real world. Rosenthal (1979) estimated that various experimental effects range from  $d = 0.23$  to  $d = 1.78$ . So, experimental effects could account for much of the media impact of laboratory settings.

## ARE MEDIA EFFECTS STRONGER THAN EVIDENCE SUGGESTS?

Despite concerns about the problems with laboratory research, most scholars agree that media effects are substantial and meaningful. There are several reasons to believe that research underestimates media effects because of methodological imprecision and conflicting theoretical forces.

Outside of the laboratory, *measures of media exposure are imprecise* and subject to a good deal of measurement error (Webster & Wakshlag 1985; → Readership Research; Rating Methods). Media use is typically a private activity and often inattentive. Assessing media exposure by asking people to estimate how much time they spend is fraught with inaccuracy. Even observations of media use cannot assess level of attentiveness. Media effects might be stronger if researchers could access accurate measures of attentive media use.

For ethical reasons, researchers often *limit dependent variables* to those that cannot harm research participants (→ Research Ethics). So, studies rarely give participants opportunities to enact behaviors that might reflect media impact. Instead, researchers assess attitudes, perceptions, and reactions to hypothetical situations (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). These “diluted” measures might not be the most valid and accurate ways to assess the impact of the mass media.

Most theories of media effects assume a linear relationship between media exposure and impact, that is, as exposure to media increases, so will the likelihood of the effects of that content. Nonlinear processes are often not explored. Some media effects processes might be curvilinear, that is, effects might increase to only a certain point (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis). Or, there might be a threshold process, so that media content has no impact until a threshold level of exposure is reached. Greenberg (1988) proposed a *drench hypothesis* of media effects. Instead of media content having a “drip, drip” cumulative effect, Greenberg suggests that some media images are so powerful that they command attention and have strong effects.

The main reason, however, that media effects appear limited is that it is *impossible to isolate media’s impact* in most developed societies. It is nearly impossible to find someone who has not been exposed to mass media. And, even those people who don’t watch much television or read newspapers or surf the world wide web interact regularly with others who do. Media’s influence can go beyond direct exposure to the media; it is filtered through other social contact.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Health Communication ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Readership Research ▶ Research Ethics ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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# **Media Equation Theory**

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The term “media equation” means that → media equal real life. It implies that people (→ Audience) process technology-mediated experiences in the same way as they would do nonmediated experiences, because an “individual’s interactions with computers, television, and new media are fundamentally social and natural, just like interaction in real life” (Reeves & Nass 1996, 5). In 1996, Reeves and Nass first introduced this theory, and carefully summarized their previous media equation studies in the seminal book *The media equation*. Since the publication of this book, Nass, Reeves, and their colleagues have expanded the domain of the theory from traditional communication settings to radically different areas, from e-commerce to human–robot interaction.

## **TWO THEMES**

In general, media equation studies can be categorized as having one of two themes: (1) audience responses to physical features of traditional media (→ Audience Research), and (2) user responses to social characteristics of computers and software agents (→ Human–Computer Interaction; Computer–User Interaction; Avatars and Agents). Reeves and his colleagues have usually worked on the first issue, whereas Nass and his lab members have focused on the latter issue under the research paradigm of “Computers Are Social Actors (CASA).”

### **Audience Responses to Physical Features of Traditional Media**

Media equation studies on audience responses to physical features of traditional media can be categorized into two parts: media and → emotion; and media and form.

With regard to *media and emotion*, Reeves and his colleagues provide convincing results that the emotional valence (good vs bad) of media stimuli has the same effect on the brain as real-life stimuli in terms of electroencephalogram (EEG) activities. In addition, they found that negative events on the screen (→ Negativity) are disliked yet remembered more, just as negative real-life events are processed in human brains. In terms of arousal (→ Excitation and Arousal; Emotional Arousal Theory), they found that arousing media events are remembered more on both short-term and long-term bases in the same way that arousing events in real life are remembered better (→ Memory).

Studies on *media and form* have focused on audience responses to five physical characteristics of media forms: size; fidelity; synchrony; motion; and scene changes. With regard to audience responses to image *size*, the studies found that big objects on the screen yield more arousal, better memory (descriptive, not image recognition), and more positive social responses (e.g., social attraction, credibility) than smaller ones even when the content is identical (→ Visual Communication; Cinematography). These results confirm general human attention to and preference for big objects in real life. In contrast to audience responses to image sizes, the *visual fidelity* of a scene does not bring significant differences in arousal, attitudes, and memory. These results indicate that both virtual and real-life objects are visually processed in the same way in which objects and environments are mainly processed through the peripheral vision field, rather than the foveal vision field. With regard to the *synchrony* factor, Reeves and his colleagues found that asynchrony between audio and video signals generates negative evaluation of speakers on screen, in the same way people distrust speakers with inconsistent verbal and nonverbal cues. Finally, *motion* and *scene changes* on screen cause strong visual orienting responses from audience just as moving objects in real life do (Reeves et al. 1985). As a result, objects shown after the movement on screen are remembered better.

### **User Responses to Social Characteristics of Computers**

In the CASA research paradigm, Nass and his colleagues have studied user responses to social characteristics of computers and software agents (→ Interactivity, Concept of). Contrary to the commonsense view that people's interaction with computers or machines is not social, Nass and colleagues theorize that individuals consistently apply social interaction and categorization rules to computers (although users acknowledge that it is absurd to do so). As a result, the paradigm proposes, computers become social actors to their users. This research paradigm is based on the idea that when confronted with a machine that has anthropomorphic cues related to fundamental human characteristics, individuals automatically respond socially, are swayed by the fake human characteristics, and do not process the fact that the machine is not a human. Primary cues that appear to be important are words for output, interactivity, filling of roles traditionally held by humans, and voice (Nass & Moon 2000). These kinds of cues automatically invoke → schemas associated with human–human interaction, without the need to psychologically construct a relevant human. The first-generation CASA studies reported in *The media equation* (Reeves & Nass 1996) focused on user responses to three major social characteristics of computers: manners; personality; and social roles. With regard to user responses to the social manners of computers, Nass and colleagues found that users evaluate

computers positively when the computers behave politely, flatter them, and criticize themselves (as opposed to blaming others), in the same way that people like other people who are polite, flattering, and/or self-criticizing. With regard to the personality of computers, the researchers found that users can successfully identify the personality of computers or software agents. Moreover, users apply complicated personality-based social rules, such as the similarity-attraction and the consistency-attraction rules, when they interact with computers (or agents) manifesting a particular personality. Plus, users like a computer adjusting its personality to imitate the personality of the users. With regard to the social roles of computers, they found that users easily identify the gender, voice identity, and ingroup-ness of computers that they are interacting with. On the basis of the identified social roles of computers, users apply various social rules (e.g., gender stereotyping; ingroup favoritism) in their interaction with the computers.

The second-generation CASA studies expanded the domain of research to → e-commerce, voice user interfaces, and human–robot interaction. In the area of e-commerce, Moon at Harvard Business School found that customizing the message style of a computer according to user personality can increase the computer’s social influences on users (Moon 2002). She also reports that consumer self-disclosure in e-commerce sites can be enhanced by having a computer disclose itself first, because people unconsciously reciprocate computers (Moon 2000). Since *The media equation*, Nass and his colleagues have focused on the issue of voice user interfaces. The impressive line of evidence on social responses to computers in the context of voice user interfaces is well documented in *Wired for speech* (Nass & Brave 2005). Most notably, the researchers found that even with conscious knowledge of the nature of synthetic voice, humans keep responding to the synthetic voice as if it were a real human voice and apply various social rules (e.g., multiple source effect, personality identification, racial and gender → stereotypes, consistency preference) to the synthetic voice. Finally, Lee and his students at USC Annenberg School for Communication combined two research traditions – social → presence and CASA – in the study of human interaction with artifacts, and investigated human interaction with robots. They found that people feel high social presence and respond socially to a robot when it manifests compelling personality (Lee et al. 2006) and long-term artificial cognitive development (Lee et al. 2005).

### WHY THE MEDIA EQUATION OCCURS

The impressive amount of empirical findings on media equation phenomena calls for a fundamental question: “What makes human minds *not* notice the virtuality of mediated and/or artificial stimuli?” (See Lee 2004 for a detailed explication of the concept of virtuality.)

The main reason is that human brains evolved in a world in which all perceived objects were real physical objects and only humans possessed human-like shapes and human-like characteristics such as language, rapid interaction, emotion, personality, and so on. Therefore, to human minds, anything that seemed to be real was real and any object that seemed to possess human characteristics such as language was a real human. When people use media such as television and computer, people usually do not overcome the evolutionary limitation of accepting everything on the media at its face value. As a result,

people respond to simulations of social actors and natural objects as if they were in fact social and natural. Another fundamental reason for the media equation phenomenon is that humans have a strong tendency to promptly accept any incoming stimuli as if true, unless there is strong counterevidence (Gerrig 1993). Throughout human evolution, prompt reactions to situations have been much more critical for survival than accurate yet delayed judgments; inaccurate and unnecessary reactions to situations result in the waste of energy, whereas accurate yet delayed reactions could cause death or serious harm (Mantovani 1995). Consequently, mediated and/or artificial objects are processed as if real first, before coming under careful scrutiny. Put together, the media equation theory has successfully demonstrated how hardwired information-processing mechanisms in our Stone-Age brains continuously influence our responses to modern media and computer technologies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Cinematography ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Media ▶ Memory ▶ Negativity ▶ Presence ▶ Schemas ▶ Virtual Reality ▶ Visual Communication

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# Media Events and Pseudo-Events

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The terms “pseudo-event” and “media event” refer to the phenomenon that in modern societies many events are created with the sole aim of getting media coverage, or rather that events are staged in a way that lends itself to media coverage.

Boorstin (1961) created the term “pseudo-event”. He sees pseudo-events as “synthetic news.” They do not occur spontaneously but are planned mainly for the purpose of getting media coverage. Most pseudo-events are basically strategic communication and public relations exercises (→ Advertising; Marketing; Public Relations). Press conferences are a typical example of pseudo-events. Boorstin distinguishes pseudo-events from spontaneous events. Spontaneous (or “genuine”) events are never, or hardly ever, influenced by the mass media. However, while the media do not in any way influence the structure of genuine events, such events may nevertheless be newsworthy and highly relevant for media reporting. Ecological disasters or crime are typical examples of genuine events.

Pseudo-events are staged to attract media attention. A media-friendly design is therefore one of the most important aspects of pseudo-event planning. As a result, pseudo-events differ from genuine events in several respects. Pseudo-events are expected or announced in advance so that the media can prepare for reporting. The timing and duration of a pseudo-event follows the rhythm of mass media coverage. The pseudo-event basically has to be designed according to the media’s selection criteria. As the event itself often lacks newsworthiness, it has to be artificially enhanced to make it more interesting (→ News Values; Media Logic). This can be done by involving celebrities or by adding dramatic effects to the announcement or presentation of the event.

Pseudo-events serve a purpose. They aim at promoting specific interests and needs. Lobbies try to attract attention to their interests or bring about a certain atmosphere through staging such events. In this way political candidates during election campaigns often arrange pseudo-events to convey a feeling of confidence in winning to their supporters. Campaign speeches and televised debates are typical examples of pseudo-events. For the media this raises the question of what the underlying purpose of these events is. The manner in which the media report on the intended effect in their coverage depends mainly on the importance attached to such events. Routine coverage is more likely to contain no comment on the aims of the event. However, when the event is of more importance then it is quite likely that the media will not only cover the event but also engage in a “meta-coverage” of its purposes and the reasons behind it.

Pseudo-events are not the only events that are staged with an eye to getting media coverage. It is often the case that events that would occur independently of the mass media are heavily influenced by the desired media coverage. Big sports events, political party conventions, and big trade fairs are examples of these media-driven events. Dayan and Katz (1996) differentiate between “media events” and “news events.” *News events* are events that cannot be foreseen but are nevertheless reported live and are extremely

newsworthy. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attack in Manhattan, for example, was a typical news event. It was unforeseeable, but the media was reporting live within a very short time (→ Mediated Terrorism).

*Media events* are very newsworthy as well, but typically have a ceremonious character. They are subject to media-related staging, to a *mise-en-scène* by the media for the viewers, to the telling of a story. The main purpose is to facilitate virtual participation in the events on screen. A media event in itself has a high social relevance and a festive character. The media intensify this festive character and through live coverage make it available to a wide audience around the world. Events such as political summit meetings, the Academy Awards in Hollywood, or the Olympic Games are typical media events. They are predictable for the media and are staged to gain the highest possible media interest. A characteristic of such events is the ceremonial flair gained by rituals such as signing political treaties, hoisting up national flags and singing national anthems, or introducing award winners with the renowned phrase “And the Oscar goes to . . .” Media events are increasingly used for managing international political relations (→ Media Diplomacy).

The concepts of pseudo-events and media events imply a presumption about mass media effects on society (→ Media Effects). The mere fact that media exist and might report certain events already changes these events and thus affects our social reality (→ Reciprocal Effects). This is the case if political or other actors embroider events and make them more attractive for the media in order to get better media coverage. Moreover, many events are created for the sole purpose of attracting media attention. Thus the media themselves, just by offering the possibility of publicizing events, set in motion processes resulting in social changes. Although pseudo-events and media events are designed to reach a wide audience, the social effects they are producing are not conditional on the audience’s media contact or reception of media messages.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Issue Management in Politics ► Marketing ► Media Diplomacy ► Media Effects ► Media Logic ► Mediated Terrorism ► News Values ► Public Relations ► Reality and Media Reality ► Reciprocal Effects ► Strategic Communication

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# Media and Group Representations

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Research examining the influence of media exposure on audience members has long revealed that both the frequency and the nature of messages play a role in determining the outcomes of exposure. Consequently, documenting the manner in which different groups are represented in the media (alongside the rate of these depictions) is critical to understanding the possible implications for consumers, as exposure may be associated with the formation and application of group-based cognitions (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

## GROUP REPRESENTATIONS IN TELEVISION

Despite the proliferation of new media alternatives, television continues to dominate among audience members of virtually all ages and races. Indeed, Nielsen (2006) reported that daily household television viewing in the US had reached a record high of 8 hours and 14 minutes per day, with daily prime-time viewing additionally increasing to 1 hour and 54 minutes. Who, then, are viewers likely to encounter when tuning in to the wide variety of television offerings, and what features are associated with these representations?

Content analyses of current US prime-time television depictions of *African-Americans* indicate that they are presented at a rate exceeding their proportion of the population of the US (at approximately 12 percent) (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). On average, African-Americans constitute approximately 14 percent of characters appearing on prime-time television (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz 2005). Research suggests that African-Americans can be found nearly exclusively in sitcoms or crime dramas. In dramas, they appear most often in mixed-race casts whereas in sitcoms they are most often found in casts comprised principally of African-Americans (Children Now 2004).

A sketch of the typical African-American seen on prime-time television depicts a regular cast member who is a middle-class male law enforcer or professional, in his thirties, discussing topics related to work (Children Now 2004; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz 2005). In addition to demonstrating average levels of both job authority and social influence, African-American characters are among the least aggressive on prime time (Mastro & Greenberg 2000). They also are rated more hot-tempered, more provocatively dressed, and less professionally attired than their white peers on television.

The picture of *Latinos* on contemporary US prime-time television is less favorable. Latinos are grossly underrepresented when compared with real-world demographics, representing only 4 percent of the prime-time population compared with 13 percent of the US population (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz 2005). Like African-Americans, Latino characters are confined primarily to sitcoms and crime dramas (Children Now 2004). They appear most often as family members, conversing frequently about crime-related topics. Generally speaking, Latinos are depicted as younger, lower in job authority, more provocatively dressed, lazier, less articulate, and less intelligent than their peers on

television. Alongside African-Americans, Latinos are deemed the most hot-tempered characters in prime time. Moreover, when compared with other female characters on TV, Latinos are rated the lowest in work ethic and highest in verbal aggression.

The near invisibility of *Asian-Americans* and *Native Americans* in contemporary prime-time television often excludes them from quantitative assessments. In terms of numeric representation, Asian-Americans make up 1.5 percent of the characters on prime time (and 4 percent of the US population) and are depicted primarily in minor and nonrecurring roles (Children Now 2004). Native Americans represent less than 1 percent of the characters seen on prime time and approximately 1 percent of the population of the US (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz 2005). Their infrequent roles often are based in a historical context (Merskin 1998). Similarly, 0.2 percent of newspaper articles and 0.2 percent of films portray Native Americans (Fryberg 2003). When they are represented in the media, they are characterized in limited roles as spiritual, as warriors, and as a social problem.

Little more than the mere quantity of characters is known when it comes to images of *Arabs/Middle Easterners* and *Indians/Pakistanis* in prime-time television (Children Now 2004). Arabs/Middle Easterners represent 0.05 percent of prime-time television characters. Nearly half of these characters (46 percent) are portrayed as criminals. Indians/Pakistanis make up 0.04 percent of the television population. In terms of the nature of these roles, they have yet to be documented.

Research assessing the representation of *age groups* in prime-time television dramas and sitcoms reveals variations in the number and nature of portrayals based on the age of the character (→ Age Identity and Communication). In terms of numeric representation, Harwood and Anderson's (2002) results indicate that characters between the ages of 0 and 9 make up only 1.9 percent of the prime-time population. Those ranging from ages 10 to 19 constitute 9.7 percent of TV roles. Characters aged 20–34 comprise nearly 40 percent of roles seen on television. Those falling between the ages of 35 and 44 represent approximately 27 percent of actors. Adults in the age range 45–64 make up 18.7 percent of the world on prime time. Finally, those over 65 constitute 2.8 percent of the prime-time population. When these figures are compared with US census data, several discrepancies emerge. Adolescents and children, particularly younger children, are severely under-represented. The same is true of seniors, who are seen at rates well below that of their proportion of society. On the other hand, characters ranging in age from 20 through the early 40s are depicted at levels far exceeding that of the US population.

In terms of the features associated with these different age groups, Harwood and Anderson's (2002) findings reveal that the favorability of portrayals declines with age. In other words, more positive images are linked with younger characters. This decrease in positive evaluations appears to be a function of diminishing perceptions of attractiveness as the characters age.

In the main, images of *racial/ethnic minority children* on prime-time television are uncommon. Only about 3 percent of the characters portrayed on prime time are children, and among these approximately 77.5 percent are white, 15.5 percent are African-American, 3 percent are Latino, 2 percent are Asian-American, and less than 1 percent are Native American (Children Now 2001, 2004). Beyond the sheer number of portrayals, little more has been documented regarding the portrayal of children on prime-time television.

Although *women* outnumber men in the US population, on prime-time television nearly two-thirds of the characters are male (Children Now 2004; → Women in the Media, Images of). In terms of the features associated with men and women, Glascock (2001) notes that female characters are more likely to be depicted as married and parents than are male characters. The type and status of occupations also varies based on the gender of the character. Women are less likely than men to be depicted as bosses and are seen in a smaller variety of roles than men. In particular, although both men and women are often portrayed as police officers, men are also frequently depicted as professionals such as judges, doctors, etc. Alternatively, women are seen in service roles such as secretaries and waitresses, as well as in traditionally female roles such as nurses.

Looking at the features of males and females on prime-time television reveals that, on average, women are younger than men, dressed more provocatively, and are more affectionate. Men, however, are more physically aggressive than their female counterparts on TV, particularly in dramas.

Images of *gays and lesbians* on contemporary prime-time television are infrequent, comprising slightly more than 1 percent of the prime-time television population (Children Now 2001). When depicted, these characters are most often white and are generally male. Typically, gay and lesbian characters are seen in situation comedies. On these shows they are mostly recurring characters (appearing in either primary or secondary roles). When seen in dramas, gay and lesbian characters are commonly found in one-time, nonrecurring roles.

Characters with disabilities are exceedingly rare on prime-time television (Children Now 2001). Only about 1 percent of all prime-time characters are portrayed with some type of disability. When these images do emerge, they are evenly divided between recurring and nonrecurring roles. Among these, over half of the disabled characters are white and the preponderance is male.

## **GROUP REPRESENTATIONS IN ADVERTISING**

Consistent with findings on representations of race on prime-time television, content analyses of minority portrayals in television → advertising reveal that many of these groups also are underrepresented compared with the US population (Greenberg et al. 2002). Mastro and Stern's (2003) investigation of *racial/ethnic depictions* in prime-time commercials found that whites make up approximately 83 percent of the characters seen in television ads, African-Americans 12 percent, Asian-Americans 2 percent, Latinos 1 percent, and Native Americans 0.4 percent. Although the sheer number of minority portrayals is low, these groups fare better when examining the proportion of ads in which minorities appear. Taylor and Stern (1997) noted that although whites are depicted in nearly all television commercials (98 percent), African-Americans are found in 32 percent of television ads, Latinos in 9 percent, and Asian-Americans in 8 percent.

The types of commercials in which different racial/ethnic groups appear have been found to vary. African-Americans are depicted most often in food/beverage commercials as well as in ads for financial services. Comparatively, whites are seen in a variety of

commercials, most frequently those for cosmetics, technology, and food. Asian-Americans are primarily found in ads for retailers (Taylor & Stern 1997) and technology (Mastro & Stern 2003). Latinos are represented most often in banking/finance ads, and ads for soaps/deodorants. The infrequent Native American images in television commercials are found in ads for macro-retailers and automotives (Taylor & Stern 1997; Mastro & Stern 2003).

The roles associated with different characters also appear to differ based on the race of the character. Asian men are seen most frequently at work whereas Asian women are ordinarily outdoors. Latino men are found both at work and outdoors, with Latino women mainly shown outdoors. Both black men and women are most often featured at work. In contrast, white men and women are most often depicted at home (Taylor & Stern 1997; Mastro & Stern 2003).

Assessments of the manner in which different racial/ethnic groups are portrayed in commercials additionally exist. Content analytic research indicates that racial/ethnic minorities appear most commonly in minor or background roles as well as in group settings (Taylor & Stern 1997) and are less often seen in roles as parents or spouses (Coltrane & Messineo 2000). White characters in commercials also are far more likely to give orders than African-Americans, Latinos, or Asians (Coltrane & Messineo 2000; Mastro & Stern 2003). In addition, Coltrane and Messineo's (2000) research finds that African-American characters, males in particular, are more likely than whites to behave in an aggressive manner. Mastro & Stern (2003) obtained parallel results looking at African-American females. Their findings also reveal that Latinos are depicted in a more sexualized manner than their counterparts on commercials, engaging in sexual glances, displaying alluring behavior, and wearing provocative attire.

## GROUP REPRESENTATIONS IN TELEVISION NEWS

Television news coverage portraying racial/ethnic minorities has been largely unfavorable and unrepresentative compared with real-world indicators, particularly for African-Americans. Although *racial/ethnic minorities* and whites appear with relatively equal frequency in news stories unrelated to crime, minorities are nearly twice as likely as whites to appear when the news topic is linked to crime. In these stories, African-Americans are typically characterized as threatening and unkempt, and are frequently shown in restraints.

In particular, when assessing portrayals of race on television news, content analysis findings show that African-Americans and Latinos are depicted as perpetrators at a higher rate than whites. Comparing these rates of representation with real-world crime reports reveals that African-Americans are over-represented as perpetrators on television news, Latinos are underrepresented, and whites are presented either at a rate comparable to that in the real world or are underrepresented (Dixon & Linz 2000a, b). In addition, 91 percent of police officers shown on television news are white and only 3 percent are African-American (Dixon et al. 2003). These figures are discrepant from US Department of Labor statistics, which identify 80 percent of officers in the US to be white and 17 percent to be African-American.

African-Americans and Latinos are also seen as victims on television news less frequently than whites. When these television victimization rates are compared with

real-world crime reports, the results show that whites are substantially more likely to be portrayed as victims of homicide on TV than in the real world, whereas Latinos are less likely to be depicted as victims on TV than to be homicide victims in real life (Dixon & Linz 2000b). The rate of African-American victimization on television is nearly equivalent to that of the real world.

### TELEVISION NEWSMAKERS

Numeric disparities also are evident in the racial and ethnic breakdown of on-air television newsmakers and those working off-air. In 2005, it was reported that the overall proportion of the racial/ethnic minority TV news workforce (21 percent) as well as the percentage of minority TV news directors (12.5 percent) had dropped slightly from previous years (Papper 2005). Although the proportion of African-Americans in the broadcast news workforce has remained relatively stable in recent years (at 10 percent), the percentages of Asian-Americans (2 percent), Latinos (9 percent), and Native Americans (0.3 percent) are down. Among news directors, the percentage of African-Americans has risen modestly (from 3.2 percent to 3.9 percent) over recent years whereas the number of Asian-Americans has remained constant (at 1.3 percent). The number of Latino and Native American broadcast news directors has dropped recently (at 6 percent and 1.0 percent, respectively). In addition, the vast majority of TV news general managers are white (93 percent).

Among on-air appearances, whites account for 77 percent of newsmakers and African-Americans 22 percent – with Asian-Americans and Latinos combined at 1 percent (Gant & Dimmick 2000). Moreover, white newsmakers appear as experts/professionals significantly more often than African-Americans.

Taken together, these data indicate that in terms of the quantity of African-American depictions on entertainment television and in advertising, this group has achieved equivalence when compared with their proportion of the real-world population. The same cannot be said, however, for other racial/ethnic minorities and social groups. Simply put, these groups scarcely exist on television. When attention is directed at the manner in which different groups are portrayed in the media, the picture becomes even less promising. Although African-Americans in fictional programming appear, to a degree, to be represented in more favorable roles (at least when compared to decades past) this is in stark contrast to their depiction in the news, where their images are largely unfavorable and unrepresentative compared with real-world indicators. Portrayals of the remaining groups are difficult to classify systematically, given their scarcity. When considering the significance of media representation in terms of designating group status, strength, and social standing, these disparities are indeed consequential, and warrant greater research attention.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Age Identity and Communication ► Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ► Stereotypes ► Women in the Media, Images of

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## Media History

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Media history as a concept in its own right possesses a relatively recent lineage. In the early decades of the twentieth century, when references to “the media” – newspapers,

magazines, cinema, radio, and the like – were entering popular parlance, university academics tended to be rather skeptical about whether these institutions were important enough to warrant scholarly attention. Historians, in particular, were inclined to be dismissive. Matters would gradually improve over the course of the century, due to a number of factors (several of which will be identified below). Even today, however, media history continues to occupy a contested terrain between the principal disciplines informing its development, namely media studies (broadly inclusive of communication, cultural, and journalism studies) and history.

Pertinent scholarship is more likely to be found in schools of journalism than in history departments. Media history, when defined narrowly within the terms of press history, benefits from the perceived centrality of the news media to the governance of modern societies (→ Journalism, History of). At the same time, though, much of this research has been criticized for relying upon conceptions of history where the press is regarded as advancing unwaveringly in the cause of freedom over the centuries. In order to overcome the limitations of this “Whig interpretation” of journalism history, as it has been described, media historians have begun to diversify their sources and methods. Moreover, some are striving to look beyond the views of the powerful and privileged so as to recover and interpret the experiences of those who have been traditionally defined as “marginal, deviant and rebellious” where the making of media history is concerned (Carey 1985; see also Williams 1998; Gorman and McLean 2003; Chapman 2005).

Definitions of media history stretching beyond the press have frequently encountered resistance from those who regard the entertainment media as too inconsequential to public life to justify investigation. Serious reservations have been expressed by some historians about the very legitimacy of media history as a “proper” academic subject when it encompasses ostensibly trivial, ephemeral media items (advertisements, comics, graffiti, soap operas, paperback fiction, music videos, computer games, and the like) within its purview. Others have challenged this perspective, insisting that such value judgments be avoided so as to engage with the whole spectrum of emergent media in all of their complexity.

## **DEFINING MEDIA HISTORY**

Depending on how one chooses to define “the media,” a case can be made that media history properly begins in the earliest days of human social life and communication. For researchers interested in the emergence of media in oral or pre-literate communities thousands of years ago, for example, the insights of archaeologists and anthropologists have proven invaluable. The advent of reading and writing is of particular significance, enabling the dissemination of “news” or information at a distance, and thereby helping to sustain a shared sense of social order (Innis 1986; Stephens 1998; → Innis, Harold). Studies have examined the emergence and use of various media facilitating communication, ranging from “pictographs” written on clay tablets, to papyrus, paper, and eventually the movable type of the printing press (Eisenstein 1979; Fang 1997; → Printing, History of).

For many media historians, it is the connection between emergent media of communication and the creation of democratic society that is particularly fascinating. In this

context, Anderson's (1983) analysis of the rise of print as commodity in western Europe illuminates the emergence of nationality – “the personal and cultural feeling of belonging to a nation” – toward the end of the eighteenth century. In conceiving of the nation as an “imagined community,” he points out that it is possible to “think the nation” to the extent that certain media products are available to “re-present” its characteristics. He singles out for attention in this regard the fictional novel and the → newspaper, arguing that the corresponding print languages helped to engender national consciousness in important ways (→ Book; Newspaper, Antecedents of).

Complementing this line of inquiry into how print enriched the ability of people to relate to themselves and to others in new ways have been efforts to understand how these media shaped the formation of → public opinion. Here researchers have found the notion of a → “public sphere,” as theorized by → Jürgen Habermas (1989), to be useful, especially when investigating how spaces for public discussion and debate were initiated and sustained. Habermas identifies a range of institutions facilitating this process, with special attention devoted to coffee houses and the newspaper press (→ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere; Newspaper, History of). This normative conception of individuals participating in reasoned dialogue and debate about the conduct of social life, and thereby compelling “authority to legitimate itself before public opinion” (Habermas 1989, 25), highlights a range of intriguing issues for exploration (see also Starr 2004; Zaret 2000).

For media historians, the broad historical sweep of Habermas's treatment has served as a conceptual backdrop for more narrowly focused inquiries. Related studies have highlighted the ways in which various media forms and practices helped to give shape to new kinds of public sociability. Such studies include examinations of advertising, art, music, street literature, exhibitions in → museums and galleries, as well as reading and language societies, lending libraries, and the postal system, among other concerns (→ Art as Communication; Postal Service, History of).

Media historians continue to rehearse contrary views on the extent to which the normative ideals of a public sphere have been realized in actual terms, a debate which continues to percolate. Nevertheless, there is general agreement that a consideration of the relative freedoms espoused by these ideals throw into sharp relief many of the factors that have acted to constrain public discussion over time. Most successful in this regard have been the efforts of journalism historians, many of whom – from the nineteenth century onwards – have helped to formalize the more influential conceptual and methodological frameworks broadly indicative of modern media history. Even here, though, various problems have beset the craft, several of which have come to the fore in recent years.

“The study of journalism history remains something of an embarrassment,” Carey (1974) wrote in an essay titled “The problem of journalism history,” widely regarded as a classic appraisal of the field in the mid-1970s. Even efforts to justify its ambitious objectives, he remarked, have to acknowledge a doubt about the value of its contribution thus far. “Each generation of journalism historians has been dissatisfied with the nature of our knowledge and the forms of our presentation,” he continued, before making the point that “the existing critiques of journalism history are superficial: they fail to get at a deeper set of historiographical problems” (1974, 86, 87). In his view, historians have



chosen to define their craft too modestly, thereby narrowing the range of questions examined (and claims derived from their analysis) to an unnecessarily restrictive degree. This tendency, in turn, has made it more difficult to refute other, related types of criticisms, namely that journalism history “is dull and unimaginative, excessively trivial in the problems chosen for study, oppressively chronological, divorced from the major current of contemporary historiography, and needlessly preoccupied with the production of biographies of editors and publishers” (1974, 87). In conceding that there is some truth in these charges, Carey issues a call for the guiding assumptions of history writing to be examined anew (see also Briggs & Burke 2005; Czitrom 1982; Solomon & McChesney 1993; Uricchio 2004; Winston 2005).

Matters have improved considerably in this regard since the time of Carey’s intervention, although answers to several of the questions he raises have proven stubbornly elusive. In a British context, Curran (2002) echoes these concerns, maintaining that media history continues to suffer from its marginalized status in relation to the dominant paradigms of media research. “It is now the neglected grandparent of media studies,” he observes: “isolated, ignored, rarely visited by her offspring” (2002, 3). Media historians “labour in the shadows,” with much of the research they produce being overlooked in favor of studies engaged with seemingly more pressing concerns. This neglect is regrettable, not least because media history “sheds light on the central role of mass communications in the making of modern society” (2002, 3). In so doing, it provides a range of alternative ways of thinking about the nature of that relationship, helping to render explicit issues that would otherwise remain difficult to discern from a contemporary perspective.

### **COMPETING NARRATIVES OF MEDIA HISTORY**

In seeking to make the case for a revitalized conception of media history, Curran charts a series of competing narratives that, taken together, usefully elucidate certain core themes. Specifically, seven narratives are identified – liberal, feminist, populist, libertarian, anthropological, radical, and technological determinist – each of which highlights its preferred reading of media history consistent with its vantage point. In the course of briefly outlining the principal features of these narratives, additional studies will be referenced so as to provide an even wider survey of relevant research in media history.

#### **Liberal Media History**

Easily the most pronounced of the seven is the liberal narrative, the tenets of which revolve around the presupposition that the media have played a central role in the democratization of the political process unfolding over the last three centuries. Two key arguments are especially important here, Curran suggests.

First, the media – long pitched in a struggle with government to be free – have successfully secured their independence. Much scholarly attention has been devoted to the liberty of the press in this regard, with a range of studies focusing on efforts to regulate media content in different national contexts. Examples identified by Curran include challenges to the political agenda espoused by the British Board of Film Censors

(BBFC) which, from 1912 onwards, aimed to manage issues of censorship with regard to what was shown in cinemas. What began as a “voluntary” system of self-regulation evolved into a “tyrannical system of ideological control” endorsed by the state. “During the interwar period,” he writes, “the BBFC banned films criticizing the monarchy, government, church, police, judiciary and friend foreign countries” (2002, 4). Related studies of broadcasting in this context have similarly underscored the extent to which certain rights and freedoms have been wrested from the state.

The second key argument builds on this first one, namely by contending that free media empower people in a manner that promotes the democratic project. The media are seen to provide the information necessary for citizens to engage with public affairs, subject authority to critical scrutiny, represent public opinion to government, and – especially in the case of public service broadcasting – encourage social communication, and thus cohesion, among different groups in society (→ *Public Broadcasting, History of*). In essence, then, this liberal tradition relates media history “as a story of progress in which the media became free, switched their allegiance from government to the people, and served democracy” (Curran 2002, 7).

### **Feminist Media History**

The feminist narrative, Curran suggests, “views the development of the media in terms of a chequered, incomplete but nonetheless ground-breaking movement towards the liberation of women” (2002, 14). Research in this area, most of it conducted in recent decades, takes as its central concern the ways in which the media have connected with the social revolution promoting women’s advances in public life. In this regard, the ways in which patriarchal values are embedded in popular culture, for example, have been privileged for critique.

Pertinent investigations include those of women’s magazines published between the eighteenth century and 1918, where a certain ideal of domestic femininity was articulated, such that patriarchal ideology was effectively conflated with social morality (→ *Magazine, History of*). This ideal, Curran writes, “became part of the discourse of class, in which femininity was associated with refinement, delicacy and elegant domesticity, while lack of femininity was identified with work-calloused hands, roughness, coarseness, lewdness, the ‘male’ world of paid work” (2002, 10). Further examples of media representations under feminist or gender-sensitive scrutiny include advertisements, women’s and girls’ magazines, romantic fiction, newspapers, popular films, and television programs, among others.

Accordingly, research in this area has not only spoken to silences in conventional media history in important ways, it has also created spaces for feminist media historians to contribute to academic debates previously defined in predominantly male terms.

### **Populist Media History**

The populist narrative has emerged even more recently than its feminist counterpart. Interestingly, Curran characterizes it as possessing a “villain and a hero” at its center. “The ‘villain’ is the Victorian intelligentsia, and their heirs, who sought to foist their cultural tastes on the people,” while the “‘hero’ is the market which made the media more responsive

to popular demand” (2002, 14). These tensions, played out in a variety of cultural contexts, correspond with the decline of social deference, and with it the erosion of the values of hierarchy in favor of an increased social egalitarianism. The media, as a result, become more responsive to popular demand, in effect being transformed into major sources of popular pleasure.

The rise of the market as a democratizing force, a central theme celebrated by advocates of this narrative, is described as having a profound influence in opening up the cultural experiences of the few to the many. “The response of the cultural elite to the rise of mass culture is thus portrayed as either taking refuge in obscure intellectualism or enlisting the power of the state to impose elite preferences on the people,” Curran writes. “Much of populist history is devoted to revealing gleefully how this latter strategy came unstuck” (2002: 17). Relevant studies have investigated, among other topics, the emergence of the public library system, the rise of “new journalism” from the 1880s onwards, the populist pressures brought to bear on elitist conceptions of radio and television broadcasting, or the ways in which cinema responded to the rise of social democratic values (→ *New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century; Radio Networks; Television Networks; Documentary Film, History of*).

This narrative, in portraying the media as evolving from paternalism to consumerism, similarly highlights the ways in which they connect with the everyday lives of their audiences. “Above all,” Curran observes, “this tradition offers a rather compelling account of how each new medium – film, radio, gramophone and television – was the object of widespread wonder and excitement, became absorbed into the rituals of family and social life, and was the staple of everyday conversation” (2002, 22; → *Radio: Social History; Television: Social History*).

### **Libertarian Media History**

The libertarian narrative revolves around a clash between the liberal or “modern” tradition of tolerance and moral pluralism on the one hand, and moral traditionalism (often expressed in religious terms) on the other. The media’s development is described by the libertarian narrative as a “Manichean struggle” between these respective traditions. Periodic “culture wars” bring these contending traditions to the fore, a struggle “often contested in relation to symbolic ‘out’ groups: members of youth cultures, from 1920s flappers to 1970s punk and moral ‘deviants,’ from sexual minorities to unmarried mothers. These battles marked out where the outer perimeter of the ‘acceptable’ lay” (2002, 24).

Pearson’s (1983) cultural history of hooliganism is illustrative, showing as it does that from “the outcry against ‘street arabs’ in the 1840s and ‘garrotters’ in the 1860s right through to the denunciations of ‘Teddy Boys’ in the 1950s and ‘muggers,’ in the 1970s, these cyclical outbursts bore little relationship to the changing rate of crime.” Time and again, Curran adds, “they identified the same sinister processes at work: moral deterioration among the young, malign foreign influence and the ill-effects of the media (whether this be the Victorian music hall, the Edwardian comic 1920s film, or television)” (2002, 23).

Historical accounts of these and related moral crises have succeeded in revealing, in turn, the ways in which the moral regulation of the media has been caught up in this

larger conflict between liberals and traditionalists. In addition to opposing definitions of public morality, those of taste, permissiveness, obscenity, among others, have similarly figured prominently in varied instances of media prejudice and discrimination on the basis of age, class, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality (→ Women's Movement and the Media; Civil Rights Movement and the Media).

### **Anthropological Media History**

The anthropological narrative takes as its theoretical point of departure Anderson's (1983) conception of the nation as an "imagined political community" (as discussed above). In conceiving of the nation in this way – and thereby attending to the interweaving of narrative strands revolving around different languages, religions, histories, traditions, and identities – the importance of the media is underscored, not least with regard to their role in forging collective terms of social identification.

Examples discussed by Curran range from print-based media in the eighteenth century – promoting "the view that Britain was a freedom-loving, constitutional, Protestant country in contrast to the tyrannical, Catholic nations of Europe" – to the imperialistic pretensions of British virtue promulgated in → BBC radio broadcasts to the Commonwealth, and beyond. In the case of British cinema during its "golden age" (1930–1970), for instance, a framework of shared national experience (and thereby common talking points) encouraged cinema-goers to visualize the country within these terms. "It portrayed the nation in terms of geographically defined archetypes – canny Scots, lyrical Welsh, plain-spoken northerners, dodgy but loveable cockneys, simple West Country people – that made the nation seem both knowable as a community and also a familiar object of affection" (Curran 2002, 29–30).

In tracing the changing nature of national identity, advocates of this perspective on media history have sought to explicate its constructed nature, that is, the ways in which ideologies of nationalism facilitate the projection of unity out of diversity.

### **Radical Media History**

In marked contrast to the five narratives discussed thus far, all of which exhibit varying degrees of optimism about the progressive nature of social change, stands the more pessimistic account of the radical narrative. Habermas's (1989) assessment of the ascension and decline of the public sphere, as noted above, is an exemplar of this latter tradition.

"The early part of Habermas's history is loved by liberals," Curran writes, "while the latter part is relished by radicals. This is because Habermas offers an impeccably liberal history, with an unhappy ending derived from the Frankfurt school" (2002, 44). A radical treatment of the public sphere model, it follows, places its emphasis not on the rise of new spaces for "rational-critical debate" (with their attendant forms of exclusion, including those based on gender discrimination), but rather on its decline from the 1850s onwards. The "forward march of the people," advocates of this narrative contend, gradually came to a halt soon after, with certain crucial gains effectively reversed. In this light, the so-called "free" media, a central tenet of the Whiggish orientation of much media history writing (see above), are shown to be increasingly subject to elite control.

Studies of twentieth-century media have focused on topics such as the emergence of → propaganda, → public relations, the alternative, underground, or dissident press, and media events, including elections, sports, and royal occasions (Williams 1998), so as to show how systems of control have converged, much to the detriment of free expression (→ Underground Press; Historic Key Events and the Media; Elections and Media, History of). This radical tradition underscores the contention, therefore, that “the media came broadly to support the social order as a consequence of controls exerted through the market, state and elite cultural power” (Curran 2002, 39; see also Solomon & McChesney 1993).

### **Technological Determinist Media History**

The seventh and final narrative in this schematic is typified as the technological determinist tradition. Its “sprawling literature,” Curran maintains, can be condensed into four key arguments.

First, the advent of new means of communication – ranging from hieroglyphics carved in stone to, say, wireless telegraphy – alters dimensions of space and time, thereby influencing the larger organization of society. Second, there is a corresponding change in the nature of human senses and perception. Third, the structure of interpersonal relations is altered by the evolution of the media, creating different forms of social identification. And, fourth, new types of media disturb pre-existing flows of communication and influence, thereby impacting on (possibly subverting) established authority relations.

Over recent years, the influence of the technological determinist account on media history has proven to be considerable, with some advocates – citing theoreticians such as → McLuhan (1962) in support – believing that it renders more traditional forms of history writing redundant. This approach belies a number of weaknesses, including a tendency to overstate the influence of communications in relation to other determining influences. “This either takes the form of simplistic mono-causal explanations or, more often, mono-track interpretations which monitor only the effects of communications technology,” Curran contends. Moreover, this tradition “tends to view communications technology as an autonomous cause of change,” that is, as possessing “some inner technological logic,” rather than accounting for the ways in which the invention, development and application of new communications technology are shaped by the wider context of society (2002, 53). This is not to deny that it can generate important insights nonetheless, such as with regard to histories of the → Internet.

These seven narratives, taken together, facilitate efforts to map the broad contours of much media history research and writing. Each of these narratives has its relative strengths and limitations: none is above criticism, while each has something significant to contribute. Future work in the area, he believes, will repay efforts to find ways to interweave these narrative strands together, for it is through their synthesis that the excessive over-specialization of media history can best be overcome. “Instead of telling a story of things getting better or worse,” Curran observes, a commitment to synthesis “offers a more contingent view of ebb and flow, opening and closure, advances in some areas and reverses in others. The contextualization of media history dissolves linear narratives – whether of progress or regress” (2002, 51).

## RESEARCHING MEDIA HISTORY

The importance of media history may appear to be self-evident. More often than not the merits of a historical approach are justified with reference to familiar sayings, such as: “Those who cannot learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” This admonition, and variations of it, reminds us that a study of the past better equips us for engaging with the future. For media historians, the rationale for their craft is often expressed as a commitment to interdisciplinarity so as to situate the evolution of media forms, practices, institutions, and audiences within broader processes of societal change. “The history of the media,” writes Nerone (1993), “cannot be understood apart from the history of the social and cultural contexts within which media developments occurred; the proper unit of study is not the individual medium, but the whole set of media within a particular ecology.” It follows, he adds, that “the history of the media should be written as social history: as the history of societies” (1993, 39).

Briggs and Burke (2005) concur, pointing out that the “immediate intentions, strategies and tactics of communicators need at every point in the story to be related to the context in which they are operating – along with the messages that they are communicating.” That said, they acknowledge that it is always difficult to identify, even with the benefit of hindsight, “the long-term effects, especially the unintended and sometimes surprising consequences of the use of one means of communication rather than another one” (2005, 5). Compounding this difficulty, of course, is the recognition that media processes can be ephemeral, and thereby elusive in conceptual and methodological terms. In any case, their very normality, that is, the extent to which they are simply taken for granted as a part of everyday life, means that efforts to de-normalize them face considerable challenges.

Media historians, it follows, must strive to be sufficiently self-reflexive about their chosen strategies when gathering source material and interpreting evidence, especially where questions related to “effects” or causation are being addressed. Pertinent in this regard is the status of electronic media, for example, which may pose particular problems for the historian seeking to establish relations of significance. Not only are the actual texts under scrutiny – e.g., an early radio play or television broadcast – unlikely to be amenable to more traditional, print-based methods, but issues with regard to such logistical considerations as access, physical → artifacts (microphones, receiver sets, and the like), and format-compatibility (changes in formats can make playback difficult) may surface. In addition, an investigation into a creative production environment will necessitate a different type of evidential basis being secured. “In many cases,” as Godfrey (2006) observes, “media records may be compared and substantiated against existing production records, such as scripts, rough drafts, site maps, organizational outlines, production notes, oral histories, and written materials utilized in creating a program or series.” It is precisely this type of documentation, he adds, that enables the media historian to discern the array of factors giving shape to the program, and to help interpret their relative importance. “Peeling away the layers of production reveals those illustrative historical facts and enhances analytic understanding of the creative process itself” (2006, 14).

At the same time, media historians recognize the ways in which such programs can simultaneously provide valuable insights into their audiences. “From this body of evidence,” Benjamin (2006) writes, “researchers can deduce attitudes, assumptions, and

values of both (creators and their audiences) from past programming.” She proceeds to point out that “listening to an audiotape or viewing a videotape of a speech, for example, provides a more accurate experience than reading a printed copy. Voice inflection, body posturing, and other nuances add rich texture to the speech” (2006, 44). For these and related qualities to be analyzed, new methods are being crafted to address the specificities of electronic media in historical terms.

The advent of digital technologies is already engendering similar types of issues for media historians (→ Digital Media, History of). Thrown into sharp relief are certain assumptions about how intellectual work proceeds, many of which are derivative of print-based culture (Stephens 1998). Print, the Victorian historian Lord Acton wrote in 1895, “gave assurance that the work of the Renaissance would last, that what was written would be accessible to all, that such an occultation of knowledge and ideas as had depressed the Middle Ages would never recur, that not an idea would be lost” (cited in Briggs & Burke 2005, 16). This presupposition no longer holds true in a digital age, where media history scholarship increasingly entails finding alternative ways to manage, interpret, and preserve the extensive array of materials available across different storage systems.

The sheer volume and range of these materials, coupled with continuing innovation in hardware and software (the obsolescence of technology rendering some types of data difficult to retrieve), can make for challenging decisions about how to maintain libraries, archives, databases, and other repositories of information (→ Archiving of Internet Content). New questions are being posed in this regard by electronic records, including items such as emails, voicemail messages, word-processing documents, Internet websites, message boards, blogs, and the like, all of which are highly perishable (→ Electronic Mail).

These questions have been anticipated, at least to some extent, by media history research concerned with still → photography since the early 1990s, when analogue formats began to give way to digital ones. Digitization can make the verification of photographic records very difficult (Wardrip-Fruin & Montfort 2003). A variety of digital editing tools enable the easy manipulation of a digital photographic file’s pixels, in marked contrast with the relative immutability of analogue records (where alteration is usually detectable). Seamless edits may include, for example, the removal of a person or object from a photograph, or more subtle effects at the level of framing, shading, or hue – all accomplished with a click of the computer mouse. For the media historian, then, new tests of authenticity need to be determined for visual (and aural) evidence (Beadle 2006).

Precisely how media history research will evolve invites thoughtful consideration. Current efforts to build on the foundations set down by the press histories of the nineteenth century are making progress, not only by enriching these traditions, but also by pursuing new directions that recast familiar assumptions – sometimes in unexpected ways. The types of criticisms of “standard” media history identified by Carey (1996), namely that its arguments were based on “nothing more than speculation, conjecture, anecdotal evidence, and ideological ax grinding” (and where conclusions were not “theoretically or empirically grounded; none was supported by systematic research”), no longer aptly characterize the field (1996, 15–16). Indeed, it is reasonable to suggest, on the basis of the range and depth of the research surveyed above, that there is every indication that media history will continue to develop in ever more methodologically

rigorous – and intellectually exciting – directions. Still, while there are grounds for optimism, much work remains to be done.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Archiving of Internet Content ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Artifacts  
 ▶ BBC ▶ Book ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media  
 ▶ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Documentary Film,  
 History of ▶ Elections and Media, History of ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Freedom of  
 Communication ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Historic Key Events and the Media ▶ Innis,  
 Harold ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ McLuhan,  
 Marshall ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Museum ▶ New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century  
 ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Photography  
 ▶ Postal Service, History of ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Broad-  
 casting, History of ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Radio  
 Networks ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television: Social History  
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## Media Literacy

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Media literacy has been defined as “the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages across a variety of contexts” (Christ & Potter 1998, 7). This definition, produced by the USA’s 1992 National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy, is widely accepted, although many alternative and competing conceptions also exist. As the subject of academic research, educational initiatives and communication policy (Potter 2004), media literacy research reflects enduring tensions between critical scholars (→ Critical Theory) and policymakers, educationalists and technologists, defenders of high culture and defenders of public morals. Associated with media literacy is a variety of related concepts – advertising literacy, Internet literacy, film literacy, visual literacy, → health literacy etc. – these reflecting the range of media forms that demand, or assume, knowledge about media on the part of the → audience or → public.

### **MEDIA LITERACY AMONG CHILDREN**

The relationship between children’s age and the development of media literacy is well established. Drawing on Piaget’s theory of cognitive development (Valkenburg 2000), reviews of empirical research on how children of different ages understand media content (usually television programs and advertisements) tell a fairly consistent story. Notwithstanding some concerns regarding the cross-cultural validity and normative assumptions of a “stage”-based theory of development, this research generally maps stages in the development of media literacy onto Piaget’s pre-operational stage (ages 2–7), concrete operational stage (ages 7–12), and formal operational stage (age 12+) of cognitive development.

It seems that before about 3 years old, children see not only life but also → television as William James’s famous “blooming, buzzing confusion” – a potpourri of colors, music, movement, faces, and repetition – though there is beginning to be more research on very

young infants' understanding of media. Before about 5 years old, children tend to regard television as a window on the world, though they begin to distinguish television from reality. Nor do they understand that → advertising is persuasive rather than informational, though they are already sensitive to gender cues in television content.

Between about 7 and 11 years old, children are in a transitional phase as regards media literacy. By about 7 or 8 years old, children have begun to distinguish genres of programs; they tend to find the realism of the → news more frightening than → cartoons; they have begun to recognize the persuasive intent of advertisements. After around 8 years old, children are generally competent in “putting the narrative together” – making inferences about sequencing, causality and morality in narrative, for example. Further, they show a growing interest in production, being critical of content, making more subtle comparisons between television and reality (recognizing that content can be fabricated and yet still make “real” claims about the world if the portrayal is “possible”; Dorr 1986; → Fantasy–Reality Distinction).

By 10 or 11 years of age, children enjoy critiquing the acting, decor, and narrative aspects of television content, increasingly drawing on their own social knowledge to judge the realism of television content. Lastly, from about 12 years old, children's critical judgments are of growing sophistication: they show awareness of bias and → stereotypes; they make subtle aesthetic judgments (→ Aesthetics), being aware of different styles of → realism; and they have a stronger understanding of the purpose of advertising and → branding, often becoming skeptical or distrustful of advertising (van Evra 1998).

## **MEDIA LITERACY AMONG ADULTS**

Media literacy research and initiatives have focused more on children than on adults, and the theory of children's development of media literacy is more developed than that for adults. For children, there are developed media education programs that specify age-appropriate skills, progression across levels, and methods for evaluating the delivery of a formal curriculum according to age-graded levels of achievement. Yet media literacy is important across the life-span (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span). One challenge is how to reach people, to promote media literacy, if they are not in the formal education system. Another is how to measure media literacy and evaluate the success of media literacy initiatives. Further, theories of media literacy say little about standards and progression, and despite the existence of a media education curriculum for children, formal expectations regarding adult media literacy are rarely formulated (by contrast with targets set for print literacy in many nations).

## **POLICY RELEVANCE: MEDIA EDUCATION AND MEDIA REGULATION**

Policy initiatives in relation to media literacy fall into two categories. In the field of education, there have long been attempts to establish media literacy as a required part of the school curriculum, arguing that, while reading and writing (i.e., print literacy) have long been accepted as central to education, the ability to understand and communicate in the realm of audiovisual and, more recently, computer-based or online literacies must also be recognized as important.

In addition to the resource limitations that limit the success of these efforts, the contested philosophy behind media literacy has also impeded educational initiatives worldwide. Educators differ regarding their valuation of media content: put simply, is media literacy best understood as a means of inoculating children against the potential harms of the media or as a means of enhancing their appreciation of the literary merits of the media (Buckingham 1998; Hobbs 1998)?

The second category of policy initiative concerns media and communication regulation (→ Communication and Law). In the UK, for example, section 11 of the 2003 Communications Act requires the regulator, Ofcom, to “promote media literacy” among the UK population, and in order to implement this, the regulator has drawn on academic work to define media literacy as “the ability to access, understand and create communications in a variety of contexts.” The Council of Europe similarly encourages media literacy training for children to enable the benefits of the changing media and communication environment and to reduce the risks of harmful content and contact (→ European Union: Communication Law). In this context, media literacy represents a tool to empower the public to manage the increasingly complex media and information environment and, arguably, permits the legitimate deregulation of the media content industry.

### **THE VALUE AND PURPOSES OF MEDIA LITERACY**

Media literacy research depends partly on the discipline of those who study it. Those more influenced by the arts and humanities see media literacy as a route to enhancing the public’s appreciation of, and ability to contribute creatively to, the best that the cultural and audiovisual arts have to offer. The focus is on pleasure and interpretation, creativity and diversity, originality and quality. By contrast, the social science approach sees media literacy as a form of defense against the normative messages of the big media corporations, whose commercialized, stereotyped, unimaginative, and parochial worldview dominates mass culture in capitalist societies. The focus is therefore on → uses and gratifications, influences and → cultivation effects, and everyday cognitive and social mediations of mass culture (Livingstone et al. in press).

As media and communication technologies increasingly mediate many spheres of activity, not just leisure and entertainment but also work, civic participation, education, and community, there is growing consensus that media literacy is important for (1) democracy, participation, and active citizenship: in a democratic society, a media-literate individual is more able to gain an informed opinion on matters of the day, and to be able to express their opinion individually and collectively in public, civic, and political domains, while a media-literate society would thus support a sophisticated, critical, and inclusive public sphere; (2) the knowledge economy, competitiveness, and choice: in a market economy increasingly based on information, often in a complex and mediated form, a media-literate individual is likely to have more to offer and so achieve at a higher level in the workplace, and a media-literate society would be innovative and competitive, sustaining a rich array of choices for the consumer; and (3) lifelong learning, cultural expression, and personal fulfillment: since our highly reflexive, heavily mediated symbolic environment informs and frames the choices, values, and knowledge that give significance to everyday life, media literacy contributes to the critical and expressive

skills that support a full and meaningful life, and to an informed, creative, and ethical society.

These goals may seem uncontentious. However, significant differences of opinion persist, for example, over whether media literacy should be conceived as an individual accomplishment or a social and cultural practice, how much emphasis should be placed on critiquing the media, and whether media literacy is better achieved through education or citizenship initiatives. For some purposes, a cognitive approach that prioritizes the acquisition of clearly defined skills is preferable, being most easily promoted, implemented, and evaluated. Others, those drawing on a long history of cultural critique of the uses and misuses of print literacy, would take a more macro-social position, arguing that literacy concerns the historically and culturally conditioned relationship among three processes, no one of which is sufficient alone: (1) the symbolic and material representation of knowledge, culture, and values; (2) the diffusion of interpretive skills and abilities across a (stratified) population; and (3) the institutional, and especially the state, management of the power that access to and skilled use of knowledge brings to those who are “literate” (Luke 1989).

### **THE CHANGING NATURE OF MEDIA LITERACY**

Thus far, most media literacy research has been conducted on broadcast media, and as yet very little exists for new media (e.g., → Internet, digital television, mobile communications). The priority now is to develop a subtle and detailed account of how people understand, trust, and critically evaluate information and communication contents delivered on new platforms, and disseminated and regulated in unfamiliar ways, that can match the analysis already developed for audience’s understanding of (mass, broadcast) television content.

By contrast with the related term → “information literacy,” the media literacy tradition generally stresses the understanding, comprehension, critique, and creation of media materials, whereas the information literacy tradition places more emphasis on the access, identification, location, evaluation, and use of information materials. One reason is that the media literacy agenda was developed at a time when, in developed countries at least, access was not seen as a significant problem or source of inequality, but media ownership and content have been regarded more critically – hence the importance to this tradition of critical literacy. As the media and communication environment diversifies, issues of access and inequality merit increased attention.

By contrast with print literacy research, which has always balanced the study of reading with the study of writing, media literacy research has paid more attention to questions of access, selection, and understanding than it has to the creation of content, since opportunities to create broadcast or printed content have been severely limited for ordinary people. In the changing media and communication environment, opportunities to create content are transformed. It is important, therefore, that all dimensions of the definition of media literacy – access, understand, and create – are valued, for otherwise research risks positioning the audience as recipient rather than, as is increasingly possible, also producer. Producing content may be conceived fairly minimally – e.g., visiting chatrooms – or more ambitiously, in a manner generally not possible for audiovisual

media, precisely because in relation to the Internet the limitations on volume and accessibility of content, and on the tools to produce content, are modest. The world wide web includes many sites constructed by ordinary members of the public, both as individuals and as part of their local or community roles. Consequently, questions of equality and exclusion, and of authority and quality, are all on the agenda for future media literacy research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Audience ▶ Branding ▶ Cartoons ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Health Literacy ▶ Information Literacy ▶ Internet ▶ News ▶ Public ▶ Realism ▶ Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Television ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Media Logic**

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Altheide and Snow (1979) were the first to use the term “media logic” to identify the specific frame of reference of the production of media culture in general and of the news in particular. They define media logic as a way of seeing and interpreting social affairs.

Elements of this form of communication include the various media and the formats used by them. Formats consist, in part, in how material is organized, the style in which it is presented, the focus or emphasis, and the grammar of media communication (Altheide & Snow 1991). The underlying idea is that of a dominant form, a representation of reality, and content definitions to which media producers conform (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). By identifying these “formats” it is possible to better understand what lies behind the process of media production. According to Altheide (1985), formats are also relevant to issues of the social influence of the media, for they affect the perception of reality acquired from the media.

The production processes of media raw materials normally imply a certain extent of standardization, reflecting the goals, traditions, and routines of a given media organizations and an adaptation to the demands of the audiences. Media organizations maintain a set of specifications, which may be economic, technological, and cultural, to assure that content produced and distributed responds to efficiency criteria. The term “media logic” captures the whole of such processes that eventually shape and frame media content.

The mass media institutions, either public or private, have their own specific nature that distinguishes them from other institutions that produce culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Public media outlets implement a logic that reflects the statutes of these institutions that cater to the general interest. Private-run media respond chiefly to industrial and commercial imperatives and implement logics that reflect corporate goals and audience tastes and expectations. From this stems a mixed approach by media organizations to political events. For example, *public service broadcast media* are more likely to give space to a plurality of voices and to represent a plurality of views (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). However, at the same time, they cannot avoid packaging political news in appealing formats or yielding to a certain degree of sensationalism, amplifying certain personal traits of political leaders, or making some editorial inroads into the political arena. “Infotainment” programs run by public broadcasting organizations around the world are just one example of this response to “media logics.”

The *commercial news media* have no obligation to present a pluralist and fair treatment of politics, and typically privilege the “populist” dimensions and features in the production processes of political stories. Furthermore, commercial media usually seek the sensational in the news-gathering process, and events lacking spectacular or uncommon features tend to be ignored (→ Sensationalism; Tabloidization). They rather adopt a style of political narrative that emphasizes personalities and penalizes ideas, oversimplify complex issues, focus on confrontation rather than on compromise, and show preference for what has been called the “game schema” or the “horse race” aspects of political life and election campaigns.

The concept of “media logic” is also closely linked to the issues of *bias* and *frames* in media content (→ Bias in the News; Framing of the News) insofar as industrial, cultural, or political pressures contribute to mold the specific character of the product placed on the market. In fact, this concept – often overlapping with that of commercial logic – has been particularly useful to illustrate and explain the process of “news production.” The classical routines of news gathering, selection, and presentation are geared to implement this (commercial) logic in the construction of reality worked out by the news industry.

Journalists are driven by organizational and industrial goals and implement the professional values, norms, and practices of the news organization. Certain issues, topics, and events are “manufactured into news” if they fit the news value system. Novelty, drama, personalization, human interest, timeliness, and conflict are the familiar components of the newsworthiness of an event (→ News Routines; News Factors). Competition for ratings and for advertising resources has increased news professionals’ craving for sensational events, scandals, crime, and sex stories.

In the political communication domain, media logic has been contrasted with “political logic” (Mazzoleni 1987), and seen as an engine of the “*mediatization*” of politics (Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999; → Mediatization of Politics). Politics performed publicly has increasingly adapted to the canons of media discourse; successful politicians have to be media-genic and media savvy; personalized leadership has become more important than parties (and ideologies); election campaigns tend to be media-driven and spectacular; and voters get their image of politics and politicians from the media representation, which responds primarily to media logic. These trends are indicators also of an objective power of the media to shape political reality that politics and politicians can hardly resist.

SEE ALSO: ► Bias in the News ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Framing of the News ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Mediatization of Politics ► News Factors ► News Routines ► Political Communication ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Sensationalism ► Tabloidization

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## **Media Management**

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The core task of media management is to build a bridge between the general theoretical disciplines of management and the specificities of the media industry. Media management is, however, neither a clearly defined nor a cohesive field but rather a loose agglomeration of work by researchers from various scientific fields. The syllabi from the

rash of media management courses that have sprung up over the past decade all over the world exhibit very few commonalities, and an enormously diverse range of theories, topics, and core readings. Notable is that very few of these courses stem from management or business schools. The majority come from mass communications and journalism or economics institutions (Küng 2007).

In contrast to media economics, which since its emergence in the 1970s has acquired an established set of theoretical approaches and an extensive body of literature, media management is still embryonic; the *International Journal of Media Management* was established only in 1998, the *Journal of Media Business* in 2004, the European Media Management Association (EMMA) in 2003, and the International Media Management Academic Forum in 2004 (→ Media Economics).

### SCOPE OF THE FIELD

As Albarran and colleagues have observed, the field of media management “crosses interdisciplinary lines, theoretical domains, and political systems” (2005, 3). This, combined with its newness, has given rise to a fragmented body of literature, one that covers all the major dimensions of management theory – strategy, finance, marketing, operations, technology, human resources, and so on – but falls short of constituting a robust basis for understanding the practice of management in the media sector. It is therefore not possible to provide a clear overview of the scope of media management. But a number of strands can be discerned. In the main, these reflect the “host” disciplines of the scholars responsible.

To date, the major contribution to the field has been from *media economists*. While there is much overlap between media management and media economics, the former tends to focus on the activities of individual media organizations while media economics tends to work at an aggregate level – usually sector or market – with a focus on industry structures and the deployment of resources, particularly financial ones, to meet the needs of → audiences, advertisers, and society (→ Advertising). A number of media economists have strayed purposefully into the field of media management. Here, they have focused on issues related to strategy formulation and implementation by large media organizations, most often applying rationalist models from the industrial organization (IO) school, and looking particularly at the antecedents and/or consequences of change in the sector and alignment between firms’ environment, structure, and performance (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Convergence of Media Systems).

The work of *political economists* and scholars in *communication* has supplied understanding of the broader strategic environment of the media industry (→ Political Economy of the Media). These scholars combine economics, politics, and sociology perspectives to analyze the structure of the media industries, and regulatory and policy issues, looking particularly at the economic determinants, ownership structures, and political allegiances (→ Media Conglomerates). Typical examples would be Tom Burns’ seminal study of the BBC (1977), Michael Tracey’s study of how political, technological, and economic forces have undermined public service broadcasting (1998; → Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy), or Jeremy Tunstall and Colin Palmer’s study of media moguls (1991).



*Marketing theory*, itself a substantial constituent part of management theory, has been applied with increasing frequency to the media in recent years (→ Markets of the Media). Branding is a particularly prominent issue, as media organizations seek to find ways to make their products stand out from an increasingly competitive field (→ Branding; Brands). A more pragmatic set of economically influenced insights on trends, practices, and defining characteristics of the media industry comes from *analysts and consultants* who have worked in the industries. These include texts such as Michael J. Wolf's *Entertainment economy* (1999) and Harold Vogel's *Entertainment industry economics* (2007).

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

From a historical perspective, study of media management reflects changes in the strategic environment of the media industry. The 1980s and 1990s were characterized by liberalization, deregulation, and globalization, and scholars responded by focusing particularly on issues of industry structure, the growth of the conglomerates, and transnational management in the sector (→ Globalization of the Media).

Toward the end of the 1990s, a first and second tier of global media conglomerates became established. These were multiproduct, divisional entities that presented a more complex management task, and scholars began to focus on the specific challenges they presented, applying tools such as the resource-based view (RBV; Chan-Olmsted 2006), theories of organizational culture (Küng 2000), and multiproduct business models (Picard 2002a, b).

The turn of the millennium saw dramatic developments in the media industry's underlying technologies. This gave rise to a flurry of research looking at the emerging digitally based distribution architectures and their ramifications for the public and the established media industry (Shapiro & Varian 1999; Evans & Wurster 2000).

### CURRENT RESEARCH EMPHASES

Management is an applied discipline and current research foci are driven by developments in the industry (→ Applied Communication Research). This, when combined with the diverse backgrounds of researchers in the field, means that current research strands flow in many different directions. In terms of media management, three topics are prominent currently.

The first is *creativity*. Creativity has always been central to the media industry – cultural goods can rarely be standardized on a long-term basis and this, combined with the fickle nature of customer demand, means there is an incessant need for novelty. However, technological advances have increased the number of media products available to consumers and led to the emergence of entirely new product categories. This has increased both competition and need for creativity, since the higher the levels of ongoing creativity, the greater the potential for competitive advantage (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

A second area of research looks at *new content forms* and their implications. While the largest players in the industry are focusing on blockbuster products that can be reformulated

for many different platforms and marketed globally, some of the most energetic growth in the sector is coming from contradictory trends. The first is niche products. Technology now allows specialized content to be matched with specialist audience niches, and consumers are showing a preference for targeted products over generalized ones (→ Audience Segmentation). This is giving rise to a process of “demassification,” where the appeal of “mass” products is dwindling and that of niche products growing. The second is the growth in user-created social-network-spawned media. A vast amount of information is now being created, stored, and shared by users, often in social networking sites that combine personalized content with a participatory context. This type of content represents both a growth opportunity and a challenge for established industry players.

The media industry is, however, not just about content. It is also deeply and symbiotically *linked with technology*. It was born out of technology and adjusting to technological change has been a consistent and longstanding challenge. However, while technological advance has always been present, the volume and velocity of the changes now under way have created a peculiarly challenging environment (→ Technology and Communication). The third research stream analyses these changes and explores their ramifications for the industry and audiences.

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The field of management in and of itself represents a number of intrinsic challenges to researchers. First, there is the *problem of breadth*. The body of scholarship relating to matters of management is an enormously dispersed body of literature. Second, there is the *problem of pluralism*. Over recent decades, a profusion of new concepts, approaches, and schools has developed, leaving the field more and more fragmented, differentiated, and complex. Third, there is the *problem of compartmentalism* – or incommensurability.

The various concepts and theories within the field are not only diverse but contradictory and inconsistent, and do not lend themselves to the creation of a solid, coherent foundation for media management. If we add to this the fact that the media industries themselves are far from monolithic, representing a diverse set of industries, operating in all kinds of geographic segments, and catering to many different types of audiences, considerable conceptual and contextual breadth of expertise is required by the researcher.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH AND THEORY

As said, the field of media management is new and unformed. There have been relatively few attempts to apply mainstream management theory to the media industry in a rigorous way. Much basic groundwork remains to be done in the shape of systematic application of management concepts to the industry, highlighting the specificities of the sector and concepts of particular relevance.

In terms of strategy, many insights have come from application from the *rational school*. This will certainly continue: issues such as strategic positioning, competitive dynamics, and diversification strategies are not likely to lose relevance. But with the increasing dynamism and complexity of the media industry’s environment, it is increasingly difficult to make the necessary assumptions to carry out such research. Therefore, a wider

set of tools needs to be adopted, specifically concepts that link the environment, strategy, and the organization. Many of these can be found in adaptive and interpretative areas of management theory.

As its name suggests, the *adaptive school* is concerned with strategic change. It seeks to understand the systems and processes by which an organization responds to changes in the environment. Particularly relevant to the media sector are concepts concerning the interplay between technological change and organizations.

The *interpretative school of strategy* focuses on the less obvious elements of organizations that influence strategic outcomes, namely the deeper, “hidden” aspects such as mindset and belief systems, values, motivation, and emotions. These elements are often sidelined by researchers because they are subjective and/or unconscious phenomena that are difficult to access and interpret. However, they are particularly important in media organizations, partly because the individuals who choose to work in the sector are often motivated to do so because of their own “higher order” needs, and partly because of the tremendous influence that the media industries exert over our lives and societies. There is ample evidence of the relevance of concepts from this school: for example, culture is an important factor in established firms’ ability to respond to new technology, and mental models can lead incumbents to reject such technologies, as evidenced by the music majors’ responses to the Internet.

Applying such models will require a *broadening of research methodologies*, specifically the use of contextualist, constructivist, processual, and pluralist approaches. A contextualist orientation includes the organization’s internal and external environments in the widest sense, and particularly social and historical influences (regulatory and technological ones are well covered) in the research frame. A constructivist perspective is necessary because organizational realities do not exist independently of their observers: environments, organizations, and strategies are constructed rather than natural objects (→ Constructivism). Processual approaches do not assume a linear relationship between formulation and implementation, but rather seek to understand strategic processes, including the multiplicity of nonrational elements that can affect them. Finally, pluralism is necessary because both the industry and the changes taking place in it are complex phenomena. Multi-lens analysis can accommodate the untidy, idiosyncratic, and dynamic inter-relatedness of organizations and their strategic activities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Constructivism ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## Media Marketing

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In an age of rapid technological innovation it would seem counterintuitive to assume that marketing and advertising techniques would remain stagnant; to survive and prosper, as in all aspects of business, marketers need to adapt their strategies and activities and advertisers need to evolve in terms of style, content, and media application (→ Marketing; Advertising). Media, both as a self-perpetuating entity and as a facilitator of others' marketing goals needs to respond to changes in environment and strategic perspective. Indeed, media are currently witnessing great flux in marketing approaches. Marketers are being forced to rethink traditional paradigms and re-evaluate fundamental tenets right down to the bedrock definitions including markets, what constitutes an “ad,” and what is meant by “media.”

### MEDIA MARKETING DEFINED

Media are entities used for communicating; they physically transmit information over space and time. They link sender to receiver. Mass media are venues whereby a sender can transmit to many receivers simultaneously (DeFleur & Dennis 1994).

Traditionally media have been divided into two categories, electronic and non-electronic. Historically electronic media were → radio and → television; non-electronic media included → newspapers, → magazines, direct mail, business papers, and outdoor (billboards, murals, etc.). Using electronic/non-electronic as a way to discriminate among various media is still largely valid but within these categories we have witnessed great change. In the non-electronic sector we have seen the rise of national newspapers as a supplement to local newspapers and the ownership of local papers increasingly by national and international → media conglomerates with a concomitant effect on both → news and advertising content (→ Global Media, History of; Globalization of the Media). General interest magazines have by and large given way to a plethora of magazines that much more narrowly target specific audiences. Outdoor advertising, which essentially was billboards, has morphed into a new category – *out of home*, which includes not only billboards and murals but advertising on the sides of buses and taxi cabs, ads in public venues (airports, sports arenas, shopping malls, etc.), and many other applications. Major changes in electronic media include the conglomeration of local radio, the proliferation of → cable television, an increase in the usage of product placement in television and motion pictures, and the rise of the → Internet.

Marketing as a concept has been variously defined both narrowly and broadly. It has been defined in terms of activities – product conception, pricing, promotion and distribution strategies. Marketing has also been defined in terms of orientation – product orientation, sales orientation, or market orientation (Enis 1974).

When considering the *nexus of media and marketing*, marketing can be defined as all those activities aimed at facilitating and expediting exchanges between entities (Pride & Ferrell 1980). Media, from a marketing perspective, are the intermediaries through which exchanges between entities are facilitated, i.e., media provide a means for producers and sellers to communicate with consumers, both actual and potential. Obviously, the principal, or at least most palpable, way that media facilitate exchange is by running the advertisements of third parties. However, media also engender a favorable culture for marketers via news stories and entertainment programs. It has long been argued that the media in its forms and content encourage and proliferate a consumer culture. Finally, media, particularly electronic media, spend a significant amount of effort in self-promotion. Programming promos, logos on TV screens, “news” stories, event sponsorship, virtual ads during programming, etc., all serve to promote programs, stations, and networks.

As media accommodates marketers and modifies its own marketing strategies the media will necessarily change, *mutatis mutandis*. Due to a confluence of events we may, in fact, be on the cusp of such a mutation. The factors currently driving this polygenism are an increased emphasis on market segmentation and technological innovation and a general proliferation in both media and advertising (→ Marketing: Communication Tools).

## MARKET SEGMENTATION

The practice of market segmentation, dividing the potential audience into relatively homogeneous sub-groups, is neither a new or a revolutionary development. Audiences have long been segmented based on various factors, and strategies have been formulated

to appeal to these varied segments (→ Audience Segmentation; Segmentation of the Advertising Audience). What is different about today's segmentation efforts is the unprecedented ability of marketers to gather information about consumers and the profusion of media outlets in large part designed to appeal to specific market segments. The media is in the process of reorganizing itself to reflect this emphasis on segmentation. While the number of newspapers, largely a general interest medium, is contracting, radio stations are growing in number, the number of special interest publications have grown significantly since the 1970s, and cable television networks have proliferated.

Special interest magazines targeting specific user groups and radio stations with their differing content certainly exhibit the ethos of segmentation but cable television is particularly representative of both the desire to segment and the growth of segmentation strategy. Where once the television market was dominated by a few over-the-air broadcast networks, cable has grown by leaps and bounds. There are now shopping networks, home and garden networks, home improvement networks; networks for women, for history buffs, for those interested in science, weather, travel, fitness, religion, food, government, the legal system, and even jewelry; entertainment networks devoted to comedy, sports, and various genres such as animation, science fiction, and westerns. The mantra of all these media outlets is the viewer demographic. Who is watching? What do they purchase? And how can we appeal to them?

## TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

Digital technology offers virtually infinite opportunities for marketers to promote products. Television stations and networks digitally impose their company logo or call letters in a corner of the screen continually. Promos (words and pictures) routinely scroll across the bottom of the screen announcing upcoming programs and events. Corporate sponsors' logos are digitally displayed on the screen during entertainment programs and sporting events. These "ads" can be changed many times over the course of the programs and games.

*Product placement* has adopted digital technology to create what has been termed virtual product placement. Traditional product placement requires actually displaying or using the physical product in a scene. Virtual product placement digitally inserts the product in the scene after the fact. Not only does this allow for more products to be placed, but it also allows for multiple placements during the lifetime of the entertainment. For example, a feature film contracts with Coca-Cola to have its product placed in the film during theater exhibition. The producer then contracts with another soft drink manufacturer, e.g., Pepsi, to have their product placed during the movie's release on pay cable. The Coke can is digitally erased and a Pepsi can inserted. Similar digital alterations can occur when the film appears on cable, over-the-air, DVD, etc. The same process can be utilized on television for first-run and syndication (→ Digital Imagery).

A second technological innovation that is fueling the increasing emphasis on product placement in television is the digital video recorder (DVR). Increasingly television viewers are not required to watch program offerings at times dictated by broadcasters, rather they can record and watch desired programs when it is convenient. A consequence of this time-shifting behavior is that viewers of recorded programs routinely zap, or fast

forward, through commercial breaks. Ergo, to reach viewers marketers must resort to other methods such as product placement or digital banners that appear during programming.

## **PROLIFERATION**

As advertising demand grows media adapt by exploring new and different ways to present ads within existing media and by creating new media forms to accommodate the demands of marketers. Advertisements are everywhere: chalked on sidewalks, on shopping carts in stores, in airports, on buses and taxis and all manner of public transportation, on closed circuit televisions in public spaces, in public restrooms, etc., not to mention all manner of outdoor signs and billboards.

The Internet, while not created as an advertising medium, has quickly adopted the advertising perspective. It is currently the fastest-growing medium in terms of percentage of advertising volume. In other words, of all money invested in advertising the Internet is increasing its share of total volume more than any other medium. As previously stated the number of radio stations is growing as the industry attempts to further segment the listening audience. Similarly it seems inevitable that cable television will continue to expand its reach. In addition marketers continue to search for other media to utilize. The growth of mobile phones has created one such opportunity. Mobile phone advertising, banner ads running across the bottom of phone screens, is increasing exponentially. It is estimated that by 2011 annual mobile phone advertising will exceed US\$11 billion worldwide (→ Mobility, Technology for).

Product placement continues to expand. In addition to television and motion pictures there have been examples of product placement in video games, in novels, and in popular songs. The DVR has not only spurred the growth of product placement on television but is also causing discussion of expanding the technique in a practice referred to as product integration. Product integration involves sponsorship of an entire program whereby the advertiser controls the content of the program if not actually produces the show. This is, of course, not strictly new. In the early days of radio and television programming was often produced by advertisers who controlled the content of the programs. However, bringing this practice back will controvert the paradigm that has existed for over 40 years where networks create the programming and sell advertisers commercial time.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN MEDIA MARKETING**

Media marketing involves a bipartite construct where on the one hand the media markets itself – to consumers (audiences) and to marketers of other businesses as a viable intermediary – and on the other hand serves to facilitate the marketing efforts of advertisers. The goals of these two sides of the media marketing equation do not always converge. Programs that generate large audiences may not always be attractive to advertisers (e.g., shock radio) and advertising clutter may discourage viewership.

If the architectural bromide “Form follows function” pertains, it should be expected that media will organize itself to accommodate marketers. Recent developments in terms of segmented media offerings (cable TV, radio, targeted magazines) seem to give credence

to this point of view. However, at what point will media compromise their own existence by acceding to marketing prerogatives? For example, will rampant product placement or product integration compromise programming quality? Will shows become little more than infomercials and will this result in reduced consumption of media? The Internet promises to be instructive as it struggles to evolve. Certainly it is attractive to users and offers value as an intermediary to marketers. It holds the promise of what might be called the ultimate segmentation strategy – tailored appeals to individual consumers. But how the Internet will ultimately be organized and who will control content will certainly involve a struggle between individual, business, and government interests (→ Markets of the Media).

Some media do not rely on advertising for funding. Magazines that support themselves solely through subscriptions or state-supported radio or television networks serve as examples. To the extent that these media do not have to make themselves attractive as advertising intermediaries they avoid some of the issues cited above. However, whether supported in whole or in part by advertising (corporate sponsorship often muddies the clear delineation between advertising- and non-advertising-supported media) the issues of market segmentation, technological innovation, and media proliferation still pertain. Even if media need not deliver audiences to advertisers they still need audiences to claim relevance (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

Media marketing is in a state of flux. Both content and delivery are mutating. Mobile phones, which have been transformed from an instrument of personal communication to a mass medium generating billions of dollars of advertising revenue in a very short time, illustrate the stakes involved and the rapidity with which the media environment is changing.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Global Media, History of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Marketing: Communication Tools ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Television

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# Media Messages and Family Communication

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Media use is a central leisure-time activity for many families worldwide. Given the considerable time investment of family members in media use collectively and individually, and the fact that the family is the context in which young people are first exposed to media, it is important to study how family dynamics shape the use of media and the ways in which media messages are understood (→ Exposure to Communication Content). A related question is how communication within the family is influenced by the presence of media in the home (→ Media Effects).

While → television and → radio are the most pervasive media in households worldwide, in economically developed countries the home is the site for increasing numbers of televisions, radio, audio, and → video playback devices, computers, the → Internet, and video-game systems (→ Video Games). Media management is recognized as an important task of contemporary parenting, albeit with a wide-ranging set of practices within and across cultures (see Livingstone & Bovill 2001 for a comparison of media environments for children across 12 European countries).

## **MEDIA-RELATED PRACTICES IN THE HOME**

Research on media and families has identified several key media-related practices initiated by parents in the home: “restrictive mediation” (or rule making), “social co-viewing” (or, more broadly, co-use of a medium), and “active mediation” (or the role that parents play as mediators or interpreters of media content for children through active discussion). Most of this research emerges from American studies on the medium of television, but more recently, Nikken and Jansz (2006) point to the applicability of these three forms of interaction to other media such as video games.

*Restrictive mediation* – parental control over children’s media use through the establishment of rules about time spent with media or permissible media content – is a common practice with children under 7 years old. While parents of children of all ages voice concerns about sexual content (→ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of), violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of), and adult language in television, video games, and music, the majority of parents with children aged 8 years and older do not enforce rules related to content or time spent with media (Roberts et al. 2005). Restrictive mediation is associated with parental fears about the ill-effects of media (Nathanson 2001).

Use of media by parents and children together is more typical with younger children, and when parents have positive attitudes about a given medium and are frequent users themselves (→ Co-Viewing). Recent trends, however, point to declining co-use of media due to the development of technologies that are more adapted to individual use and the increase in the type and numbers of media present in the home. These factors, added to

the social changes that lead children to spend more time indoors and to exert more control over their lifestyles and activities, have resulted in increasing numbers of children with their own media systems in their bedrooms, a trend that is associated with increased solitary media use (Livingstone 2001; → Media Use by Children). The diminishing opportunities for parents and children to share media experiences together are of concern because they suggest missed occasions for discussion and interaction (→ Mediating Factors), even though most research finds limited parent–child communication about media experiences (Austin 2001).

*Active mediation* has been shown to have several positive outcomes for children. It leads to greater learning of concepts from media, enhances or reinforces information presented, can mitigate internalization of fears and worries and the modeling of antisocial behavior (→ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children), and helps children form accurate judgments about the realism or accuracy of media information (van Evra 2004; → Media and Perceptions of Reality). Active mediation has been associated with parental concerns about the potential impact of media whether it be perceived to be positive or negative (Nikken & Jansz 2006).

While the typical emphasis in family and media research has been on the actions initiated by parents vis-à-vis their children, other relationships among family members are also of scholarly interest, including the ways in which children's media preferences and use affects parents' media use, the use of media among siblings, and the role media play in the functioning of the family as a system in general (→ Media Use across the Life-Span).

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Communication scholars have examined how more general communication styles within families affect media-use patterns, including how media are regulated and how content is discussed and interpreted. McLeod and Chaffee (1973) developed a widely used model of → *family communication patterns* that related to media use in the family. The research revealed two communicative styles within families: socio-orientation (an emphasis on avoidance of controversy and conformity among family members) and concept-orientation (an emphasis on openness to exploring ideas and accepting controversy or differences of opinion). While the conceptualization and measurement of these communicative styles have evolved over time, research has found that more concept-oriented families tend to view television more critically and engage in discussions that both affirm and negate media messages, while socio-oriented families tend to watch more television in general, and draw attention to television messages that affirm their values (Austin 2001).

*Family systems theory* offers another framework to explain how media are used within the family context. This approach takes a holistic view of the family, putting the emphasis on studying the family as the primary unit of analysis rather than studying the behaviors of family members separately. Media use is seen as an extension of the norms, values, and beliefs that define the family system (Jordan 2002). Media research from a family systems perspective includes examinations of how media fit in with the structure of families (e.g., how families organize themselves temporally and spatially within the home), interaction patterns (e.g., how media use facilitates or inhibits communication), and the roles that members

of the family assume in relation to one another (e.g., mother's role as family manager extending to media). Family systems theory, while underutilized, is seen as an important direction for media and family studies because it moves away from a more linear, causal model of how families use media to a more interdependent and complex conceptualization of the family unit and the role played by media in the home (Bryant & Bryant 2006).

The study of *roles* – the recurrent patterns of behaviors of family members – in the home has also been undertaken within a more critical or → cultural studies framework of communication research, with a focus on how media may help maintain or change power relationships. David Morley's (1986) research on British families drew upon this approach, and his in-depth → interviews with family members revealed how traditional gender roles played out in mothers' and fathers' use of television. Specifically, fathers exercised their privilege as breadwinners to come home and control their leisure environment, making more decisions about the content of what was watched on television and viewing with more attention. Mothers, on the other hand, tended to watch television as a more social act, accompanied by other household activities or conversation. In addition to gender, media may help reinforce or change other roles within the family (Bachen 2007). Of particular interest with newer media such as computers and the Internet are role reversals, whereby teens assume the role of the "expert" with parents taking the role of "learner." As work-related media (computers, Internet, fax, mobile phones) erode the boundaries between work and home, the home becomes a contested site where the roles of parent, spouse, and worker are increasingly challenging to negotiate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience ▶ Co-Viewing ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ▶ Internet ▶ Interview ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Mediating Factors ▶ Radio ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Television ▶ Video ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Media and Perceptions of Reality

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Communication scholars, psychologists, sociologists, and other social scientists have long been interested in how individuals interpret the real world around them. Although some of the information we receive in our daily lives is first-hand, much of what we know about our communities, states, countries, and the world comes to us through second-hand sources. Perceptions of reality, rather than actual observations of reality, guide human beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. These perceptions often are solidified into normative versions of what “ought” to be. Because there are often concrete expectations of reality in one’s mind, the effects from this perceived view of the world can be just as real as effects of actually experiencing that reality. Importantly, social perceptions arise through processes of communication, resulting in a social world that appears comparable to the physical world that surrounds us. *Misperceptions* of reality can produce a distorted version of the real world, and it is these misperceptions that have been the focus of much attention in public opinion and communication research.

### UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL REALITY PERCEPTIONS AND EFFECTS

Perceptions of reality, or social reality, can be conceptualized as an individual’s conception of the world (Hawkins & Pingree 1982). What intrigues many social scientists is the exploration of the specifics of these → perceptions and the ways in which they are developed. As Lewin suggested, reality is not an absolute; it differs depending on an individual’s social surroundings and perceptions of those surroundings (Lewin & Grabbe 1945). Social

perception has been considered from both individual- and social-level perspectives. Scholars investigating perceptions at the individual level rely heavily on the works of John Dewey, Charles Horton Cooley, and George Herbert Mead, while those considering the social level draw from Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Elihu Katz, and Theodore M. Newcomb.

The individual-level conception of social reality – or, as McLeod and Chaffee (1972), refer to it, *social* reality – derives from Cooley's, and later Mead's, conceptualization of society: an affair of consciousness that is necessarily social (Mead 1930). This definition suggests that others exist in one's mind as imaginations, and it is only in these imaginations that others have an effect on the individual. Cooley (1902) referred to these imaginations as the "solid facts" of society. Dewey's work concerning social perception emphasized the importance of bringing the social world into studies of human behavior and cognition. He suggested that instincts, such as fear and sexual desire, are necessary but not sufficient explanations for human behavior. Any instinctual impulse, he argued, is potentially influenced by its social surroundings.

Importantly, these early scholarly works defined communication as a central mechanism through which humans exist and develop (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). In this sense, the mind itself arises through communication (Mead 1930). Because individuals are not capable of experiencing all reality through direct observation or physical experience, they must rely on communication with others or experience this "reality" through the mass media. Since individuals' communication experiences differ, their "cognitive maps" (McLeod & Chaffee 1972) also will differ (→ Cognition). In this way, individuals view their own social reality as self-evident and factual. As a result, researchers cannot easily identify which components of one's social reality are based upon direct observation and which are based upon social learning.

The second perspective of social *reality* (McLeod & Chaffee 1972) defines the social system as the unit of analysis. Scholars exploring social *reality* from a social-system perspective focus on understanding commonly held perceptions shared in society. They often base their exploration on individuals' perceptions of what others think, or whether an individual believes that an opinion or attitude is shared by others. When individuals perceive that others share their own views of the world, the opinion or attitude can become "real" in that particular group, community, or society. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) suggested that individuals obtain information from their social environment, observe whether others agree with that information, and then assume that is the "reality" (→ Information Processing; Stereotypes).

Research on social *reality* has tended to focus on degrees of consensus or agreement among members of a system. This literature often draws from work in social psychology on normative sanctions (Newcomb et al. 1965). These sanctions are rules that specify which individuals are supposed to act in which ways in a society. How individuals are to be rewarded or punished depends on whether they abide by those sanctions. Current research in this area is driven by two main theses: (1) the behavior of individuals is affected systematically by various forms of social influence, and (2) this influence is embedded within a particular context. What differentiates this approach from the focus on *social* reality is the emphasis on groups and situations rather than individuals.

Because the media, in particular, provide individuals with indirect representations of reality, communication scholars have been particularly interested in how individuals

**Table 1** Causal mechanisms of the perceptions and misperceptions of social reality

	Individual explanations		Individual–other explanations		Social explanations	
	Motivational	Cognitive	Social harmony	Public expression	Social context	Media
<b>Pluralistic ignorance</b>						
Overestimate of consensus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
False consensus	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Silent majority				✓	✓	
Disowning projection	✓	✓				
Looking-glass perception	✓	✓			✓	
Social projection	✓	✓				
<b>Media perceptions</b>						
Third-person effect	✓	✓		✓		
Impersonal influence	✓	✓		✓		✓
Hostile media phenomenon	✓	✓			✓	
Persuasive press inference	✓	✓			✓	
Impersonal impact	✓	✓			✓	✓
Spiral of silence	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Cultivation		✓				✓

develop cognitions of social reality based upon their use of and attention to the media. As noted earlier, much of the information we receive comes from other people and the mass media. McLeod and Chaffee (1972) noted that these sources seem no less valid than direct observation because a large proportion of this information is shared by others around us. In this sense, individuals find themselves thinking that everyone ought to see things the way they do, a normative sharing of “oughtness” that defines social reality.

There are a number of *effects* associated with perceptions of social reality. One category of effects draws heavily from those effects outlined in the social psychology literature, without reference to the media in particular. These phenomena describe perceptions and misperceptions of some generalized other. The second category, outlined later, focuses on media effects in particular. Finally, the mechanisms driving these effects are described and outlined in Table 1.

### GENERAL PERCEPTION EFFECTS

Several phenomena describing perceptions (and misperceptions) of social reality have been outlined in the literature. These effects are pluralistic ignorance, overestimate of consensus, false consensus, silent majority or false idiosyncrasy effect, disowning projection, conservative and liberal biases, looking-glass perception, and social projection.

The term → *pluralistic ignorance* is often used as an umbrella to describe all misperceptions of others' opinions (Fields & Schumann 1976; O'Gorman & Garry 1976; Eveland 2002). Research in this area is primarily concerned with the factors that lead to

individuals being more or less accurate about reality, focusing on the discrepancy between individual perceptions and actual reality. Pluralistic ignorance is most likely to occur when people have differing opinions on a divisive issue, but also results from individual factors such as fear of embarrassment, social desirability, or social inhibition. The primary assumption underlying this and other misperceptions is that individuals have a “quasi-statistical sense,” which suggests that people infer public opinion from their own intuitive sense of their environment, even without access to specific public opinion information (Noelle-Neumann 1993; → Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth).

*Consensus* is the core concept of several social reality phenomena. Consensus occurs when homogeneous opinions exist across a group of individuals. Complete consensus on an issue exists where there is reciprocal understanding among the members of a group concerning some issue. Importantly, this concept makes no provision for individual perceptions of agreement; it simply describes a state of affairs. In and of itself, consensus does not refer to social reality. However, some research has extended this concept and suggested that an *overestimate of consensus* occurs when individuals perceive greater consensus on their own opinion than exists in reality. In this way, overestimation of consensus is “absolute” because it is objectively false (Eveland 2002).

The concept of → *false consensus*, originally developed by Ross et al. (1977), describes the perception among group members about others in their group or those to whom they have similar attributes. Specifically, this concept refers to the individual tendency to see one’s own behaviors and opinions as normal and those of others as deviant or inappropriate. This phenomenon is best described as the exaggeration of the prominence of one’s own opinions. It differs from overestimation of consensus in that it is a misperception that is relative to others, rather than a misperception of reality. Hypothesis tests have consistently demonstrated this effect to be highly statistically significant with a moderate effect size (Mullen et al. 1985).

The *silent majority* or *false idiosyncrasy effect* is a specific instance in which the majority group perceives its position as the minority. This phenomenon occurs when some individuals support a position on an issue vocally and prominently, while those opposed to the issue – even if they are in the majority – remain silent. The result is that the vocal position is incorrectly perceived as the predominant one, while the silent position is incorrectly perceived as the minority. As such, the misperception is an outcome of an overestimation of the pervasiveness of the vocal opinion (Korte 1972).

The → *disowning projection* refers to the tendency toward attributing selfish motives, evil intent, or ignorance to others and denying these characteristics of oneself (Cameron 1947). This is comparable to the social desirability effect in survey research: individuals may perceive there is a “right” answer to a question and therefore attribute “wrong” behaviors, attitudes, or opinions to others.

*Conservative and liberal biases* have also been documented in public opinion literature (e.g., Fields & Schumann 1976). However, Glynn et al. (1995) argue that, depending upon which phenomenon is being tested, these ideological biases could be described as false consensus or pluralistic ignorance. Moreover, these biases serve more as descriptive patterns occurring in the data, rather than concepts in and of themselves.

The *looking-glass perception* occurs when people see others as holding the same view as they themselves hold. The looking-glass perception is different from the false consensus

effect because a divisive issue is not a precondition for the phenomenon to occur. Moreover, the perception is not by definition inaccurate but could be an accurate reflection of reality. Importantly, this phenomenon occurs quite separately from any actual distribution of opinions or attitudes in reality. The looking-glass perception is likely to arise for noncontroversial issues when people do not care much about the issue or even if there is almost universal agreement (Glynn et al. 1995).

*Social projection* is generally defined as the psychological phenomenon that drives each of these inaccurate perceptions. Broadly, this concept refers to individuals' reference to self-reactions in order to describe others. Some research has suggested that social projection can actually increase individuals' accuracy about others' views, which counters findings on the false-consensus effect. That is, *more* projection, rather than less, can lead individuals to have more accurate perceptions of the social environment around them (Jones 2004). The phenomenon is quite robust and generates moderate to large effect sizes (Mullen et al. 1985; Robbins & Krueger 2005).

## **MEDIA-SPECIFIC PERCEPTION EFFECTS**

Although each of the effects described above can result from perceptions or misperceptions of media content, they do not refer to the media in any consistent way. In fact, some of the effects predate mass media as we now know it. As a result, a second way of understanding perceptions of social reality has developed in response to the advent of media and mass communication research. Eveland (2002) divides these media-specific perceptions of social reality into two categories. The first covers perceptions of media content or impact, while the second maintains perceptions of social reality as the effect, but defines mass media as the primary causal mechanism.

### **Perceptions of Media Content or Impact**

This category of media-specific perception effects focuses on individuals' perceptions about media content or its influence on others. The third-person effect and impersonal influence emphasize that individuals do indeed have perceptions about media's impact on others. Those phenomena specific to media content (the hostile media phenomenon and persuasive press inference) focus on individuals' perceptions that the media are biased or slanted in some direction.

The → *third-person effect* predicts that individuals exposed to a persuasive message will perceive greater effects on others than on themselves. The term was coined by Davison (1981), who based the proposition on personal experiences with journalists who were convinced that editorials had an effect on others' attitudes, but not on people like themselves. The effect has since been delineated into two components: perceptual and behavioral. The former describes the perception alone; the latter builds on the perceptual component and suggests that the biased third-person perceptions will result in some behavioral action. The most commonly studied behavioral outcomes are support for censorship and willingness to speak out.

*Impersonal influence* describes the influence derived from anonymous others' attitudes, experiences, and beliefs (Mutz 1998). From this perspective, media do not need to be



universally consonant or even personally persuasive in order to impact individuals' perceptions of media influence (→ Consonance of Media Content). The underlying assumption of this phenomenon is that the number of indirect associations among individuals has increased while direct associations have decreased. Moreover, there has been a tendency among the general public, as well as policymakers, to attribute much power to the media, which results in real consequences, even if the media's influence has been overrated. As with the third-person effect, impersonal influence includes both the perceptual component and a behavioral component. This behavioral component is enhanced by the indirect nature of individuals' interaction with the political world. The outcome of impersonal influence is perceptions of collective conditions obtained through the media that in turn influence individuals' own attitudes and behaviors.

The → *hostile media phenomenon* suggests that partisans see news media coverage of controversial events as portraying a biased slant, even in news coverage that most nonpartisans label as unbiased. An underlying assumption of this phenomenon is that media coverage is essentially unbiased (→ Bias in the News). However, the seminal work on the hostile media phenomenon relied upon highly involved partisan subjects (Vallone et al. 1985). Not all scholars agree on the assumptions proposed by Vallone et al. (1985), and Gunther and Chia (2001) have suggested that the "relative hostile media phenomenon" is a broader conceptualization that does not require neutral news coverage or highly involved partisans.

The *persuasive press inference* hypothesis draws from the hostile media phenomenon and third-person effect and places the effects into one process. Specifically, this theory assumes that individuals (1) scan the media environment for issues of interest, (2) form impressions about the valence of media coverage, (3) infer that the news resembles what they have personally observed, (4) conclude that this media coverage influences others, and (5) perceive public opinion as corresponding to the perceived news slant (Gunther 1998). As a result of this process, people overestimate the impact of news coverage on public opinion and because of this misperception, estimates of public opinion are inaccurate. Perceived news slant, which draws from the hostile-bias phenomenon, acts as a mediating variable in the process (Gunther & Chia 2001). Although the media have indirect influence in this process, Gunther argues that these perceptions can ultimately have a self-fulfilling effect because individuals assume that the media influence those around them (Gunther 1998; Gunther & Storey 2003).

### **Perceptions of Social Reality with Media as the Primary Causal Mechanism**

Other research on perceptions of social reality has emphasized mass media as the primary causal mechanism explaining perceptions of social reality. Impersonal impact, spiral of silence, and cultivation are the principal theories associated with this category.

Because few people have direct personal experience with politics, mediated information has the ability to influence individuals' perceptions of social reality at the collective level. That is, media enhance the salience of social-level judgments in addition to influencing perceptions of public opinion. This is called *impersonal impact* (→ Social Perception: Impersonal Impact). This phenomenon historically resided in social psychology, where Tyler and Cook (1984) distinguished between two levels of judgment: personal (beliefs

about one's own conditions and risks) and societal (beliefs about conditions of the larger community). A prominent finding in related research is that the media affect societal-level judgments rather than personal ones. Research has suggested that these effects are conditional, with media impact operating differently for various issues and individuals.

The → *spiral of silence* theory is perhaps the most popular – and critiqued – theory on perceptions of public opinion (→ Climate of Opinion). At the heart of this theory is the idea that because the climate of opinion is always vacillating, individuals are always uncertain about the opinions around them. Thus, people turn to the media to understand the climate of opinion. However, Noelle-Neumann argues that the media present biased viewpoints in a uniform way. The result of this biased news media content is that individuals perceive a majority perspective, and this perception either promotes or prevents them from speaking out. The perception of public support for a position increases individuals' confidence in the legitimacy and strength of that position. In turn, this perception fuels their comfort in expressing that position in a public setting. The opposite effect occurs if individuals perceive themselves to be in the minority, judging a position as receiving little public support and legitimacy. Noelle-Neumann draws heavily from research in social psychology – particularly that of Solomon Asch – to support her hypothesis that people will conform to group pressure.

*Cultivation* implies that, over time, people are influenced by the content on television so that their perceptions of reality come to reflect those presented on television (→ Cultivation Effects). Cultivation research is rooted in the work of George Gerbner and colleagues, whose Cultural Indicators project has generated both public and academic debate (Gerbner & Gross 1976; Gerbner et al. 1978). This theory purports that media content, which has been systematically studied for decades, displays distorted estimates of social reality. Among these distortions are the rates of crime and violence; estimates about personal risk of crime and violence; estimates of like risks from lightning, flooding, and terror attacks; estimates about the number of people who serve as police officers or lawyers; and estimates of the number of elderly, among other distortions.

Cultivation effects are commonly delineated into first-order and second-order effects (Hawkins & Pingree 1982). First-order effects refer to the correlations between television viewing and distorted estimates of social reality. Second-order effects refer to individuals' perceptions of a mean and scary world as a result of these distortions. First-order effects have found much support, while second-order effects remain in doubt. Research has also demonstrated a weak relationship between first-order and second-order effects, suggesting that the social relevance of first-order effects is still unclear (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects).

Two modifications have been made to the original cultivation theory. First is the concept of “mainstreaming.” This concept suggests that individuals' own experiences can moderate the cultivation effect. In particular, those whose experiences are more discrepant from television's representation of the world are more susceptible to cultivation effects. The second modification is the moderating effect of “resonance.” Resonance predicts an interaction between television viewing and individual experience, such that those whose life experiences are *more* congruent with the television world are most susceptible to cultivation effects. In this sense, mainstreaming and resonance can be viewed as competing hypotheses that occur when certain conditions are fulfilled (Shrum & Bischak 2001).

## **CAUSAL MECHANISMS FOR SOCIAL REALITY PERCEPTIONS AND MISPERCEPTIONS**

The previous section and extant literature suggest that the impersonal impact, spiral of silence, and cultivation hypotheses label the media as a primary mechanism for affecting individual perceptions of social reality. However, the perception effects described here can be attributed to one or more other causal mechanisms, including individual cognitions and motivations, social harmony and public expression norms, and social context, as well as the media. Each of these six mechanisms can be categorized under three broader categories: individual, individual–other, and social explanations. By linking each of the social reality perceptions with their corresponding causal mechanisms, one can better understand how these perceptions operate in a mass-mediated world. Importantly, these explanations are not mutually exclusive; that is, one or more mechanisms might be at work for each concept, theory, or approach. Table 1 outlines the social reality perception effects and the individual, individual–other, or social explanations that can be applied to each.

### **Individual Explanations**

This category of causal mechanisms includes individual motivations and cognitions that lead to perceptions or misperceptions of social and media reality. Nearly all of the theories, concepts, and approaches outlined here can be attributed to either motivational or cognitive mechanisms, or both (see Table 1).

#### *Motivational Mechanisms*

Some individuals may be motivated to interpret their surroundings in a biased way because of a need for social support and validation, or a desire for self-enhancement. One example of this motivational mechanism is the phenomenon of social projection. When a need for social connectedness is made salient, individuals might interpret their surroundings in a biased way.

In other cases, individuals might be driven to see themselves as either unique from others or sharing common views, depending on the context. Prentice and Miller (1993) label this phenomenon “impression management” and suggest it is a self-serving bias that drives individuals to misperceive their surroundings. In this way, some people are motivated to maintain control over their environment (the *effectance motivation*). Additionally, people are often motivated to believe that unfortunate events are more likely to happen to others rather than to themselves (*unrealistic optimism*). Finally, *ego defensiveness* is a motivation that protects one’s self-concept from counterattitudinal or threatening messages. All of these motivations serve as important causal mechanisms in the third-person effect.

The false consensus effect also is based primarily on motivational mechanisms. For instance, individuals may be motivated to see similarity between themselves and what they perceive as an attractive or desirable group or person. In this case, individuals are driven by a desire for self-enhancement. Additionally, individuals with stronger needs to justify or support their own views or behavior may display false consensus because of a need for social support and validation.

The impersonal influence hypothesis can be explained by several mechanisms, but research has suggested that a primary mechanism is the “bandwagon motivation” (Mutz

1998). This occurs when individuals are motivated to affiliate with a winning team or candidate in order to enhance their own public image in the eyes of others. The third-person effect can also be explained in part by motivations.

Motivational explanations can also be applied to those theories that claim media as the primary causal mechanism. For instance, Noelle-Neumann cites *fear of isolation*, or a motivation not to be in the minority, as a driving force behind the spiral of silence. The underlying assumption of this mechanism is that people keep their opinions silent when they feel marginalized. Taylor (1982) and Hayes et al. (2005), however, have provided alternative motivational mechanisms to this fear of isolation. Taylor suggested that individuals examine the incentives and *benefits of speaking out* in certain circumstances, while Hayes and colleagues found that the *willingness to self-censor* can predict willingness to speak out.

Importantly, motivational mechanisms are not necessarily conscious or intentional. For example, one study suggests that individuals who are more prone to feelings of fear are subconsciously motivated to overestimate the prevalence of fear among their peers in order to feel more comfortable (Suls & Wan 1987).

### *Cognitive Mechanisms*

Cognitive mechanisms are perhaps the most common explanations for social reality and media perceptions. Outcomes described in this category tend to rely on the rich literature in information processing. One possible mechanism in this category of cognitive explanations is the *accessibility bias*, or the tendency to derive estimates of others' views based upon that information that is most accessible in one's memory. Social projection has often been explained by this accessibility bias, in addition to motivational mechanisms (see Table 1).

A related mechanism is the *availability heuristic*, which describes the tendency to use the ease with which something is recalled as a representation of that thing's probability (Mullen et al. 1985; → Availability, Cognitive). This heuristic might explain false-consensus effects when experimental subjects are asked to consider opposing points of view (as is the case in many experiments testing these effects). Additionally, unintentional selective exposure, attention, and retention can be defined as cognitive explanations for perceptions of social reality. For instance, individuals are likely to expose themselves to information that is agreeable to their position, attend to it, and recall it later, explaining the false-consensus effect (Sherman et al. 1984).

The hostile media phenomenon and third-person effect are each in part based on cognitive mechanisms. For instance, partisans on different sides of an issue might process the same media content, but in very different ways. They might recall information that was most hostile to their own opinions, explaining the hostile media phenomenon in some cases (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention). A cognitive explanation for third-person effects draws from *attribution theory*, suggesting that people have an innate – albeit naive – need to explain their social world. In turn, when it comes to the media, individuals adhere to a simple “magic bullet” explanation of media effects, assuming that others are easily influenced by media content.

The third-person effect also is explained by cognitive “errors.” The actor–observer attributional error occurs when individuals underestimate the extent to which others

account for situational factors, and overestimate their own attention to these factors. In this way, people see themselves as more cognizant of media influence and others as easily manipulated. A second cognitive error explanation of the third-person effect is that people project negative effects onto others in order to avoid the discomfort caused by admitting that such content affects themselves. This explanation suggests that although individuals may perceive themselves as also susceptible to media effects, they push these concerns out of mind by attributing them to others.

The persuasive press inference also can be explained by individual cognitions. Research suggests that people are likely to think that their own sample of news media coverage is similar to what others see. This cognitive mechanism is based upon the law of small numbers bias, in which such a sample of news content is considered similar to the population. Additionally, impersonal influence draws from cognitive explanations. Specifically, the “cognitive response mechanism” proposes that individuals might shift their attitudes upon learning the opinions of others, because knowing these opinions encourages them to think about arguments that might explain those opinions.

Cognitive mechanisms also apply to those theories that claim media as a primary causal mechanism. For example, some scholars have proposed that cognitive mechanisms may be better explanations for cultivation effects – particularly for heavy viewers of television. Hawkins and Pingree (1982) suggested that people actively learn facts from television and in turn construct judgments about the real world based on these facts (→ Observational Learning). Alternatively, Shrum and O’Guinn (1993) asserted that relevant information is more accessible and, as a result, overestimates of frequency or probability can be explained by the accessibility bias. The outcome of such heuristic processing is that media play a larger role in judgments about social phenomena with which subjects have less direct experience.

### **Individual–Other Explanations**

Some individuals might be motivated to perceive social reality in certain ways that benefit their social interactions with others, or they might feel pressure to publicly misrepresent their opinions in order to comply with the pressures and norms of social interactions (→ Interpersonal Communication; Language and Social Interaction). These mechanisms can be defined as social harmony and public expression mechanisms (see Table 1).

#### *Social Harmony Mechanism*

Because conflict is not palatable to many people, there may exist motivation to see others’ positions on issues as more like their own in order to avoid argument or dissonance. Although this explanation can be considered a motivation, it specifically pertains to the anticipated future interaction with others. Therefore it is categorized separately from the above-mentioned *individual* motivations.

One example of the social harmony mechanism at work applies to both the false-consensus effect and the spiral of silence. The divisiveness of some issues might influence whether individuals choose to speak their opinions in social interactions. In such an instance, the motivation to maintain accord with others in the future might overrule truthful expression of opinions. Similarly, if individuals expect to interact with other

people in the near future, they may be motivated to view others as more like themselves so that the interaction is more agreeable.

#### *Public Expression Mechanisms*

Misperceptions of social reality at the individual–other level also can arise from either intentional or unintentional misrepresentation of one’s opinions in public. Prentice and Miller (1993) proposed two explanations to address both intentional and unintentional misrepresentations. The *differential interpretation hypothesis* describes a conscious decision to publicly misrepresent one’s opinion. The *differential encoding hypothesis* does not assume intentional misrepresentation, but suggests that some individuals suffer from an “illusion of transparency,” mistakenly believing that their own and others’ opinions are accurately expressed publicly.

One example of this mechanism applies to the impersonal-influence hypothesis and third-person effect (see Table 1). For instance, an individual voter might desire to influence the outcome of an election through strategic or tactical influence. This voter might assume that the media have greater influence on others than on himself or herself. In turn, the voter might publicly express preference for one candidate over another in order to counter that media influence. Such misleading public expression can clearly lead to misperceptions of social reality.

### **Social Explanations**

The social explanations described below and outlined in Table 1 are based upon what McLeod and Chaffee (1972) referred to as social *reality*. That is, a context or situation serves as the causal mechanism underlying individual perceptions of social reality.

The *social context of the issue* – or the distribution of opinions on either side of a public debate – can serve to create misperceptions of social reality. If an issue is particularly divisive, for example, individuals are prone to the false-consensus effect because they see one side as more similar to themselves and the other side as deviant or uncommon. Alternatively, if the issue is not particularly divisive and there is general agreement, one might be prone to the looking-glass perception and exclude alternative perspectives on the issue.

The literature on mass communication and perceptions of social reality has given increased attention to *media as causal mechanisms*. One way to define media as a causal mechanism comes from the spiral of silence theory, which purports that the news media present viewpoints that are consistently biased toward the majority. Noelle-Neumann (1993) suggests that because these biased media messages are consonant, cumulative, and ubiquitous, they have widespread impact on those in the minority. According to the theory, mass media serve as agents of social control through which information about societal norms is conveyed. It is noteworthy that this media mechanism is not based on any specific content, but on a general assumption about media favorability toward the majority.

An additional way of defining media as a causal mechanism is through an understanding of journalistic content and professional norms. The news media apply different journalistic approaches to presenting information about opinion distributions and social reality in general. For example, content analyses have found that social reality is represented in the media through base-rate information, exemplification, or a combination

of both (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). Base-rate information is the use of statistics and factual information to describe public opinion or social reality. Exemplification, or the use of “exemplars,” relies on personal examples and interviews. Although base-rate information tends to be more accurate in that it represents a larger portion of the population, news audiences attend to and recall social reality perceptions more often from exemplars (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of). This suggests that the content of media predicts when and how the media influence perceptions of public opinion, and is consistent with the predictions in the persuasive press inference. This mechanism is also closely tied with cognitive mechanisms, in that exemplars are said to have superior accessibility, and thus greater impacts on perceptions of social reality.

A final way of defining this media mechanism is specific to cultivation. In cultivation studies, television content has been found to overestimate the amount of crime and violence that exists in the real world. Television content also misrepresents the proportions of blacks, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans, and the elderly. As a result, specific media content – rather than the consonant, cumulative, and ubiquitous media of the spiral of silence theory – influences perceptions of social reality over time.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL REALITY PERCEPTIONS FOR COMMUNICATION RESEARCH: BEHAVIORAL OUTCOMES**

Although many scholars will contend that perceptions are in and of themselves important outcome variables, others have suggested that a link between these perceptions and individual behavior is necessary in order to establish the social relevance of such research. In this vein, several areas of research have established behavioral effects that result from social reality perceptions.

First, the third-person effect has received much support not only in its perceptual component, but also in its behavioral component. Specifically, research has found that misperceptions of media influence are related to greater support for censorship (Eveland 2002). Second, studies of pluralistic ignorance have demonstrated that misperceptions of social reality are associated with individual behavior. For example, Prentice and Miller (1993) found that misperceptions of alcohol use on a college campus positively predicted drinking behavior. This effect has been replicated with other risky behaviors such as tobacco use and marijuana use, as well as risk judgments. Third, perceptions of opinion climates are related to opinion expression, as hypothesized by the spiral of silence, although support for this relationship is weak. These perceptions have also been related to forms of political participation.

### **RECONSTRUCTING SOCIAL REALITY**

It is important to note that social reality is not a finite reification. Instead, it is a dynamic construct that can change over time and across individuals. McLeod and Chaffee (1972) outlined several ways in which social reality can be reconstructed.

Individuals are able, and likely, to move from one social reality to another at some point in their lifetime. This shift can occur when there are systematic changes in an individual’s social reality, such as a change in his or her reference groups. Such changes

also can take place at critical junctures in the life course – college, marriage, children, for example – that encourage the individual to rethink or actually modify their social reality. These changes might be likely to occur in crisis situations, when individuals are more motivated to communicate effectively and seek out unambiguous information. Changes in the structure of an individual's communication patterns also can reconstruct one's social reality. When people communicate with different or unusual others, or pay attention to different media sources, their perceptions of social reality are likely to change.

It appears that social reality is best conceptualized as a dynamic process with both perceptual and behavioral outcomes that is influenced on an individual level by motivations and cognitions; on an individual–other level by social harmony and public expression motivations; and on a social level by social context and media mechanisms. While research on perceptual outcomes remains highly supported, research on behavioral outcomes, as well as the mechanisms and moderating factors that produce those outcomes, require further research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Availability, Cognitive ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Disowning Projection ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ False Consensus ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Perception ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Perception: Impersonal Impact ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## Media Performance

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The term *media performance* has a broad reference to the assessment of mass media according to a range of evaluative criteria and primarily employing “objective” methods. In practice most attention has been given to the *product* of mass media, its *content* as sent and received (→ Media Production and Content). The criteria applied are mainly derived either from professional goals and standards or from considerations of the → public interest as specified in certain evaluative concepts (→ Standards of News). The methods are mainly those of the social sciences, aiming to be systematic, reliable, and leading to some degree of generalization (→ Research Methods). We are thus speaking of a particular field of media research with several different aims and purposes (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). Apart from general description, these purposes include the wish to improve the media in some way, to support a line of criticism of media, to explain variations in quality of performance, and to identify causal factors.

### ORIGINS AND HISTORY

Although the origin of the term *media performance*, as used here, is uncertain, it was employed for many years to classify topics of articles (mainly content analyses of news; → Content Analysis, Quantitative) in *Journalism Quarterly*, the official publication of the American Association for Education in Journalism (AAEJ). This positions media performance in close relation to → journalism education and journalism criticism (→ Journalism). James Lemert’s book *Criticizing the media* (1989) is a key work in establishing an identity for media performance research. It is essentially a plea for *empirical criticism*, deploying various concepts of quality of media structure and performance. Lemert distinguished empirical criticism from three other theoretical schools: a Marxist-oriented critique; cultural/critical studies; and social-responsibility-oriented criticism (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy). He also advised against exclusiveness and recommended cooperation between theory and empirical inquiry. His own suggested topics for inquiry included the effects of chain ownership on editorial independence and activity, the coverage of environmental problems, news coverage of rape, and the consequences of

relying on official sources. Each of these could result in recommendations for improvement, reflecting a positivistic inclination, although not necessarily a preference for “administrative” over critical research approaches.

It is not easy to draw *boundaries around performance research*, since many other kinds of research can help in assessing performance. This applies to: ratings (→ Rating Methods) and → readership research; economic and market evaluations of particular media and their products; and criticism in the form of reviewing of other media or the very large literature that has emerged dealing (mainly) with the many alleged social, cultural, political, moral, and aesthetic failings of mass media. Despite this approximate boundary, for certain purposes of media performance assessment both economic and audience data can be relevant and even “subjective” forms of evaluation can be taken into account. Generally, the field of media performance has expanded and diversified in method, especially where attention is given to the full range of output of a (national) media system (or a general television network), as has been the case in the tradition of cultivation analysis (Signorielli & Morgan 1990; → Cultivation Effects).

The earliest phase of media performance research was, as noted, shaped by a concern to improve the professional quality of journalism, with primary reference to various ideas about news objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Bias in the News). The main criteria applied were those of accuracy and completeness in reporting relevant facts, reflection in news of the external “reality” being reported, lack of personal or political bias in the news report, and avoidance of → sensationalism in tone and presentation. The more complex topic of editorial or journalistic independence was also covered, as well as certain media ethical issues (→ Ethics of Media Content).

From the late 1960s onwards, media performance research was more influenced by external social and political criticism than internal professional criteria, following the rise of radical and antiwar movements in North America and Europe. The rise of → television news to a central position in the media system by the 1970s was also a factor, not only because of its reach and believed impact but also because of high public expectations of neutrality, truthfulness, and informative power. Much effort was made on both sides of the Atlantic to assess the balance of attention in news between various competing actors, political parties, and points of view, with strong suspicion of hidden ideological and manipulative motives and equally strong denials. This trend in research was associated with the intensification of efforts to create and manage news by competing economic or political interest groups and also with a critique of monopoly tendencies in media (→ Concentration in Media Systems). For the most part, this research was done by way of content analysis (e.g., Efron 1971; Westerstahl 1980; Glasgow Media Group 1976), but there was also a significant growth during the 1970s in studies of news organizational practices that shed light on the shaping of news (e.g., Tuchman 1978) and thus indirectly on “media performance.”

An important advance in media performance research was the program directed at measuring media quality under the auspices of the *Japanese Broadcasting Corporation (NHK)* (see Ishikawa 1996). This program worked with a framework of three different levels at which problems of media quality can be identified: the whole media system; the channel (or equivalent); the content (e.g., program). It also identified four different perspectives from which media could be viewed and evaluated: of the state, of the society,

of the audience, and of media professionals. This framework can encompass many criteria and find a way of integrating different kinds of evidence. For the first time, perhaps, systematic account was taken of the views of professionals about qualities that might escape social scientific methods (→ Quality of the News). At about this time, Shoemaker and Reese published their first edition of *Mediating the message* (1991), which systematically examined influences on the production of news content, drawing on empirical research examples. The main relevant causal factors for news performance (quality) were identified as stemming from the personal characteristics of journalists, the organizational routines of news-making, external economic and institutional influences, or ideology and power distributions in society.

### FOCUS AND THEMES OF RESEARCH

One of the main roots of critical research, as noted by Lemert, lies in ideas about the social responsibility of media to society, first given expression by the American Commission on Freedom of the Press (Hutchins 1947) and then taken up in postwar Europe, where both press and broadcasting were made subject to public criticism, inquiry, and policymaking on grounds of their claimed social obligations (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). This is the background to another effort to erect a framework for research, McQuail's *Media performance* (1992), which assembled a number of basic criteria of media performance from theory and practice held to be "in the public interest" and reviewed relevant methods and examples of performance research.

Other perennial topics for media evaluation inspired by → critical theory of one sort or another have included: the representation of women and of gender roles in the media; the portrayal of ethnic and other minorities; the distribution of attention in foreign news to places and countries outside the circle of rich and developed, mainly western, countries; the reporting of insurgent *terrorism and war*. The case of terrorism raised rather complex issues, with competing journalistic norms of freedom and responsibility (→ Mediated Terrorism). The case of war reporting is not so different, since there is great pressure from government and military to insure favorable coverage and deny any propaganda success to the enemy (→ Conflict as Media Content). Inevitably, also, the independence of journalists is compromised. These issues have taken research beyond the scope of news journalism and often into the territory of fiction and entertainment.

Media performance research has at times been inspired by acute public concern about its potentially harmful effects (→ Media Effects). For instance, it played a part in inquiries into the causes of crime and violence (Baker & Ball 1969), into urban rioting in the United States in the 1960s (Kerner 1968), into pornography (Einsiedel 1988; → Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of). Most recently there has been heightened concern about the availability of pornography on the Internet, especially where it involves children. In many of these cases, there are conflicting norms for identifying quality.

An abiding focus of performance research is to be found in the field of → *political communication*, dating back at least to the study of the 1940 US presidential election (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944). A core element in election research has been the measurement of time and space allotted to different candidates, parties, or issues, according to criteria of

amount and direction (e.g., Hofstetter 1976). More recently, performance research has been stimulated by the complaint that the mass media are failing the democratic political system by not providing information of substance, by presenting politics in a negative light, and by diverting citizens from active participation (Capella & Jamieson 1997; → Negativity; Video Malaise).

## RESEARCH METHODS AND PROBLEMS

The extension of evaluative attention from printed newspapers to television and non-news content has long called for new thinking and new methods, especially methods for dealing with audiovisual content. Researchers had already encountered difficulty in dealing with news photographs and other images, whose precise meaning cannot be either known or interpreted with any certainty (→ Photojournalism). In assessing print news content, the assumption had usually been that the meaning of words in natural languages is knowable and thus interpreted by its audience as intended by news writers. Readers were also assumed to be familiar with conventions of presentation (space and headlines, etc.) that are guides to interpretation (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative).

Even so, there are considerable obstacles to inferring “meaning” or “learning” that have undermined the claim to objectivity of assessment research. There have also been practical problems of accessing television news after the event (gradually eased by better recording methods) and of devising reliable coding frames for multimedia messages. Theoretical developments in → linguistics, → discourse analysis, and semiology posed fundamental challenges to the very notion of assigning fixed meanings to media content, almost vitiating the whole enterprise. Despite these difficulties, a variety of strategies and research approaches have been developed to achieve some practical results. These developments include: the invention of software for qualitative analysis of content; the specification of recurrent visual codes in news; new ways of assessing the direction of evaluation of content, based on knowledge of language; the application of the notion of “framing” (and also of “schemata” as employed by journalists and audiences) to understanding the intention and direction of news content; the use of ethnographic methods to record variations in the pattern of audience interpretation. All this has tended to make media performance evaluation more possible, but also more costly.

## CRITERIA OF EVALUATION

Although media performance can be evaluated according to many different standards, depending on circumstances and expectations, in practice there is a fairly limited set of criteria that recur, most of them indicated above. They emerge from diverse sources, but especially from one or other of the following: media professionals themselves; government, law and policy (→ Communication and Law); → public opinion; various interest groups and institutions affected by the media; the public as audience; various social critics and moral guardians. The most commonly encountered evaluative concepts to be found in the field include the following: *objectivity*, with its component elements as described above; *diversity*, which is a key value in most pluralistic democracies and underlies expectations that media will pay attention, or give access and expression, to a range of

persons, groups, ideas, and events that are broadly reflective of the social, cultural, and political environment in which they operate (→ Plurality); *cultural quality*, with reference to accepted aesthetic or ethical standards or the prevailing tastes and interests of the public (→ Ethics in Journalism); *freedom*, which here means mainly the independence of media as reflected in a willingness to speak out, to be critical or original, without deference to the power of government, business interests, or (in some cases) the media's owners.

It should be stressed that such higher-level concepts are not applied directly but by way of a variety of more precise indicators related to these concepts. There are, of course, many negative criteria that are either the observed absence (or reversal) of the standards mentioned or relate to undesirable effects.

### THE FUTURE OF MEDIA PERFORMANCE RESEARCH

The last decade or two of media and social transformation have been typically characterized by a reduction in external control of mass media and also by a great expansion of existing and new media, with attendant commercial pressures. The greater reliance on media self-regulation has increased the salience of media performance evaluation, sometimes as a substitute for public policy. The criteria of "good performance" have not, however, changed greatly and the same research apparatus can still serve, but there are significant new challenges. These arise most obviously from the enormous volume of supply transmitted by the → Internet (and other new means). Such content is also often multimedia in character and may not conform to established genres and the conventions of presentation of traditional media. It is difficult to sample, to generalize about, and to codify, making the methods developed for mass communication inappropriate. New indicators of performance are called for. Crude forms of assessment of Internet flow are already appearing, but the task of performance assessment has barely begun.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Linguistics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Negativity ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Plurality ▶ Political Communication ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Readership Research ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Standards of News ▶ Television News ▶ Video Malaise ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Media Planning

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Media are a crucial part of any advertising campaign. Selecting the most effective media gets the advertising message across to the intended target group. Media are also the most expensive part of advertising campaigns. In a typical media campaign, the media costs account for 80–85 percent of the advertising budget (Kelley & Juggenheimer 2003). In deciding how to allocate the advertising media budget, we have to ask several questions: How many people of the target group do we want to reach? How many times do we want to reach them? Within what time frame do we want to make contact? Which contexts are most suitable to get our message across? These questions refer to four key topics in media planning: reach, frequency, timing, and context (→ Advertisement Campaign Management; Advertising Strategies).

### REACH

The question of how many people an advertiser wants to reach forms the basis currency in media planning. Reach is defined as “the number of target audience individuals

exposed to the advertising or promotion, in an advertising cycle” (Rossiter & Percy 1998, 447). Reach is a form of audience accumulation and a measure of how many different audience members were exposed at least once to one or more media vehicles over a period of time (Sissors & Bumba 1991, 73). Reach can also be expressed as a percentage of the target audience, provided that the base number of target audience individuals is clearly specified (→ Audience; Audience Research; Audience Commodity).

The number of contacts – being three individuals having contact with one issue, or one individual having contact with three issues – increases when more magazines (or other media) are scheduled. This is called *gross reach, or gross rating points (GRP)*. The GRPs of a media schedule are the sum of the percentage of contacts of each advertising cycle. One GRP means that the advertisement or commercial reaches 1 percent of the target audience; 10 GRPs means that the insertion reaches 10 percent; and so on (Rossiter & Percy 1998, 447). GRPs are an estimate of the total number of exposure opportunities (OTS) per 100 target audience members in an advertising cycle, without regard to whether the individuals receiving these OTS were the same or different people. The net reach in a medium plan is the number of persons that are exposed at least one time. In other words, the gross reach minus the overlap.

In most industrialized countries, → “people-meters” are used for television ratings, → surveys are used to determine the number of readers of → newspapers, → magazines, mail, and outdoor advertising (→ Exposure to Television; Nielsen Ratings). Diaries are used to estimate the number of listeners to radio stations. Surveys give insights into the reach of mailbox and outdoor advertising (for an overview of these methods see Kent 1994). Media planners use these figures to select the best media for their campaigns.

However, reach figures for various media are *difficult to compare*. Data for print media, for example, indicate the number of people reading the various titles, not the number of people who have seen an advertisement in that title. Television data, on the other hand, refer to the number of people watching specific content, such as television commercials. Comparing data for print and for television, therefore, is like comparing apples and oranges. Furthermore, note that “reach” figures do not tell us how advertisements are processed, and the effect they have on brand attitude and behavior.

## FREQUENCY

How often should people be reached with a message? Decisions with respect to frequency of exposure are important because media costs are high and campaigners want to avoid wasting money due to a too-low frequency (no effects reached) or too-high frequency (unnecessary costs). Most theories assume that repeating the message is useful because it adds to the effects of the campaign. However, after a certain number of repetitions the effects decline, or can even become negative. What frequency is best?

One of the most influential theories on the optimum number of exposures is the *three-hit theory* of Herbert Krugman (1972). According to Krugman, a cognitive reaction dominates the response of the audience during the first confrontation with a commercial. The receiver asks himself: “What is it? What is it all about?” During the second confrontation, an evaluative reaction dominates: “What is in it for me?” The third



confrontation is the real reminder. The viewer knows what it is all about and can take action. However, according to Krugman, it is possible that a commercial brings the receiver to his second response (“What is in it for me?”) after, for example, the twenty-third confrontation, in other words, in this example the twenty-third confrontation is psychologically perceived as the second one.

Based on a literature review, Michael Naples (1979) wrote, on the authority of the American Association of National Advertisers (ANA), that one confrontation with an advertisement would have little or no effect, except in extraordinary circumstances while two confrontations (within a purchase interval) are effective. The optimal frequency would be at least three confrontations within a purchase interval.

John Philip Jones (1995a; 1995b) concluded that a successful campaign is effective from the first confrontation. In other words, the response curve has no threshold. He also concludes that the first confrontation will have the greatest effect and that the next confrontations will have less effect (diminishing returns). Jones analyzed Nielsen-panel data which record buying behavior and looked at short-term effects of established brands in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. His conclusions are thus valid only for these cases.

Twenty years later, Colin McDonald (1996) wrote a follow-up of Naples’s review and reached other conclusions. He subscribed to Jones’s ideas with respect to the short-term effects of advertising for established brands. However, he concluded that new messages, for new → brands, do show a threshold. Furthermore, the shape of the response curve depends, according to McDonald, on a number of factors: in other words, there is not one rule for optimal frequency. The following factors have an influence: share of voice, activities of competitors, market share and status of the brand, quality of the advertisement, time until the purchase, target group, and type of product (→ Advertising Effectiveness).

## TIMING

Within what time frame do I want to make contact? The most important decision in answering this question about the timing of the message is the choice between “bursting” (large media exposure over a short period) on the one hand and “dripping” (spreading small media exposure over time) on the other hand (Zielske & Henry 1980). Heflin and Haygood (1985) concluded that media schemes with an average concentration showed the best results. They explained the bad results of the high-intensity schemes by the fact that concentrations irritate and satiate the audience. The bad results of the very low-intensity schemes were explained by the “forget effect.”

Ligthart (1999) concluded that combining burst and dripping worked best for the brands he studied. According to him, the answer to the question “bursting or dripping?” is dependent on a number of factors. First, if a large audience can be reached quickly, a burst is to be preferred. Second, the greater the forget effect, the more effective dripping becomes. A final factor is the budget: when the budget is substantial, an effective combination of burst and dripping (“maintenance”) is possible (Ligthart 1999, 56). The forget effect is strong when many competitors are advertising, when the ad stock is low, or when the quality of the commercial is low. Ligthart’s findings contradict those of Jones who stated: “we should redeploy media funds towards continuous advertising at relatively

low pressure, in preference to concentrated bursts with gaps in between” (Jones 1995b, 29; → Advertising Frequency and Timing).

## CONTEXT

In order to answer the question “Which contexts are most suitable to get my message across?” it is necessary to first mark out what context is about. Advertising context is a multifarious concept, consisting of many elements that may influence advertising effectiveness. A division can be made between context characteristics related to the receiver of the advertisement and those related to the vehicle carrying the advertisement: the medium context.

The *receiver context* can be described as the situational circumstances in which a person is exposed to an advertisement (Pieters & Van Raaij 1992). This includes the person’s physical environment (e.g., at home, at the kitchen table), the social environment (e.g., in the company of three family members), the time frame (e.g., during breakfast), and the mental state a person is in prior to exposure to the medium content (e.g., an early morning mood). Although it has been shown that each of these aspects can influence advertising effectiveness substantively, receiver context aspects are less relevant for media planning because planners have little or no ways of influencing them.

Of course this is different for the *medium context*. The medium context concerns the environment of the ad provided by the vehicle carrying it, such as a television program, an issue of a magazine, or an Internet site. A distinction can be made here between editorial context and commercial context. Studies on commercial context have predominantly concentrated on the effect of the amount and nature of other commercial messages in the environment of an ad, referred to as clutter and competitive clutter. It has been shown that, as the number of ads in the environment of the target ad (referred to as clutter) increases, the effectiveness of the target ad decreases, especially when the other ads are directly competitive (referred to as competitive clutter) (Kent 1993; 1995).

Part of the medium context is the *editorial context*. Studies on editorial context have predominantly concentrated on the question on whether the same source delivering the same message to the same audience on separate occasions might produce different effects depending on the differing programming or editorial contexts in which the message appears (Norris & Colman 1992). In particular, context-induced psychological responses, such as involvement elicited by a documentary, happiness caused by a sitcom, or sadness generated by a drama series, are considered to have an important impact on advertising processing (DePelsmacker et al. 2002; Moorman et al. 2001; 2002; 2005).

At the heart of all theoretical explanations regarding the influence of context-induced psychological responses on advertising processing lies the assumption that mental reactions toward the editorial context do not cease when the editorial content is interrupted by advertisements, but that these reactions “carry over” to the advertisements. These carried-over reactions, in turn, influence advertising processing. For example, it has frequently been found that advertisements placed in editorial contexts that induce positive feelings are evaluated more positively. Furthermore, it has been shown that context-induced involvement has an influence on attention for advertisements and memory for advertisements. However, it is still a subject of debate whether this effect is positive or negative.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Frequency and Timing ▶ Advertising Strategies ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Brands ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ People-Meter ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Survey

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# Media Policy

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Media policy involves policymaking – and the associated policy research – directed at a wide range of substantive issues and technological contexts, and employing a diverse array of theoretical and methodological perspectives. It is important to note, however, that in the communications field there are a large number of somewhat indistinct policy arenas that overlap with the media policy field, each employing distinctive terminologies and each reflecting somewhat different (and in some cases, broader) areas of emphasis. These affiliated policy arenas range from telecommunications policy (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy) to communications policy to information policy to cultural policy.

## MAPPING THE FIELD OF MEDIA POLICY

While it is beyond the scope of this entry to define all of these concepts and to articulate their points of intersection with and distinction from media policy, it is important to recognize that the field of media policy rests within a broader policymaking milieu that includes substantive areas such as regulation and policy related to telecommunications infrastructures, information access, and cultural expression (McQuail 1992). And, perhaps most important, it is necessary to recognize that the boundaries separating these concepts are not always clear and are, in fact, becoming increasingly porous as the digitization, convergence (→ Convergence of Media Systems), and globalization of communications technologies (→ Globalization of the Media) blur traditional technological and regulatory distinctions.

The term “media,” however, remains prominent in this converged policymaking environment. Critics of the term tend to insist on associating it only with traditional “mass media” and thus argue for its diminished relevance in a technological environment in which it frequently has been argued that traditional mass media are in decline. Such a narrow interpretation neglects the centrality of “mediation” to a wide range of communications processes, regardless of the specific technology at issue or communication dynamic involved (i.e., interpersonal versus mass communication). Thus, newer communications technologies such as hand-held devices and the → Internet all fit within the parameters of media policy given the centrality of specific mediating technologies. Similarly, the boundaries of media policy extend beyond the electronic media (though they tend to be the most heavily regulated), into the realms of print media, recorded music, and motion pictures. In these ways, the field of media policy certainly intersects quite frequently with other related policy arenas such as telecommunications and cultural policy.

As should be clear in any case, the meaningful boundary lines of media policy are not determined by particular communications technologies or dynamics. Rather, it is more appropriate to define the field in terms of its emphasis on particular substantive communicative concerns. This perspective is well reflected in Braman’s (2004, 179) definition of media policy, in which she defines the field as specifically dealing with issues of “freedom of expression and participatory decision making regarding the fundamental structures of

society” (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Media Democracy). As this definition suggests, media policy is firmly grounded in both the political and the cultural dimensions of communicative processes (McQuail 1992). This definitional focus for media policy will become increasingly clear as the contours of the field and its theoretical underpinnings are outlined here.

Reflecting the wide-ranging concerns that fit within the definitional focus of media policy, it is perhaps to be expected that the field is characterized by a tremendous degree of *methodological diversity*. Historical research has examined the interplay of various stakeholder groups across a wide range of media policy issues in an effort to inform contemporary policy deliberations (e.g., Horwitz 1989; McChesney 1993). Effects research has informed longstanding policy debates such as the issue of the regulation of violent or indecent content and the development of educational content for children (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). Audience behavior research has addressed the dynamics of media consumption in ways intended to inform policymaking related to both established and new technologies (e.g., Hindman 2007; Webster 2005). Content analyses have explored the relationship between the structure of media organizations and media markets and the nature of the content provided in an effort to inform policy issues related to ownership regulation, content regulation, and license allocations (e.g., Hamilton 2000a; → Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative).

All of these methodological approaches build upon a body of economic-grounded and legally grounded analyses that continue to provide the analytical core of media policymaking, despite persistent criticisms that such emphases on the part of policymakers neglect the full range of political and cultural concerns that are at the core of media policy (Baker 2001; Stucke & Grunes 2001). Indeed, if there is one enduring trend in terms of the interaction between the communications field and media policy, it is that the field as a whole has been largely dissatisfied with the extent to which it is able to shape and inform policy debates.

This dynamic reflects a broader tension that long has characterized media policymaking – that between economic policy objectives (such as competition, consumer satisfaction, and efficiency) and political/cultural policy objectives (such as fostering a diversity of viewpoints, as well as a media system that serves the needs and interests of local communities; Entman & Wildman 1992). To the extent that economic policy objectives have, over the past three decades, become an increased priority for media policymakers (van Cuilenburg & McQuail 2003), it is perhaps not surprising that the communications field has experienced some marginalization from the policymaking process, given that the field’s expertise lies more in the political/cultural, rather than the economic, realm (→ Communication as Field and Discipline; Applied Communication Research). Yet when we explore the field of media policy and its major theoretical underpinnings, the centrality of political/cultural policy objectives becomes immediately clear, such that questions about the appropriateness of contemporary policy emphasis inevitably arise (Napoli 2001).

## **THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MEDIA POLICY**

Media policy is framed, first and foremost, by a number of guiding normative theoretical constructs, all of which are subject to divergent interpretations. These constructs provide

the theoretical underpinnings for the development of baseline criteria for assessing the performance of media systems and for crafting policies that enhance the system's performance (see McQuail 1992). Across different national contexts, the specific criteria are likely to vary somewhat, or the terminology may be somewhat different, but the core principles outlined here can be seen as the fundamental building blocks of effective media policy, and, consequently, as central criteria that inform and guide media policy research.

### Free Speech

As was noted above, free speech is one of the core components of contemporary definitions of media policy. In US contexts, the free speech principle arises from the First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech, with analogs to be found in various international contexts (see, e.g., Youm 2002). In some international contexts, where a government-granted right to speak freely is not always as explicitly articulated, we have seen in recent years a free speech movement grounded in the notion of a → “right to communicate.” Regardless of the specific national context, in most cases the centrality of free speech as a media policy principle arises from notions of the core function that mediated communication serves in the democratic process. That is, free speech is presumed to guarantee the free flow and widespread dissemination of ideas and viewpoints that are essential to creating a well-informed citizenry capable of accurately ascertaining their best interests and voting accordingly (Fiss 1996). In these regards, the role of free speech in media policy-making is tightly intertwined with the role of the media in the democratic process (Sunstein 1995).

Media policymaking is, somewhat paradoxically, both empowered and constrained by the free speech principle. The empowerment is derived from the fact that many media policies are motivated, at least in part, by a commitment to enhancing the speech opportunities available to the citizenry. Thus, for instance, policy efforts directed at maximizing broadband deployment are premised, at least in part, on bolstering the extent to which individual rights to communicate are maximized. Similarly, efforts to diversify media ownership (→ Ownership in the Media) are premised in large part on maintaining a wide distribution of the uniquely influential speech opportunities associated with the ownership of media outlets (see Baker 2007). The constraints are derived from the fact that many media policies – even those directed at enhancing the speech opportunities available to the citizenry as a whole – can simultaneously impinge upon the speech rights of particular individuals or groups. Thus, for instance, the same efforts to diversify media ownership on behalf of enhancing free speech can be seen as impinging on the individual speech rights of those owners of media outlets seeking to obtain additional outlets and bring their voice to markets or communities that they have yet to reach (Napoli 2001).

This somewhat paradoxical situation illustrates what is perhaps the *central tension associated with the role of free speech* (be it in terms of the First Amendment or of a broader right to communicate) in media policymaking – the issue of the appropriate distribution of this speech right on the part of policymakers. That is, to what extent should speech rights be oriented around the rights of the individual speaker rather than around the rights of the collectivity of speakers and listeners (see Napoli 2001)? This

tension is particularly well illustrated by the current state of broadcast regulation in the United States, where regulation of the industry traditionally has been grounded, in part, in the notion that the speech rights of the listeners or viewers are as important as – if not more important than – the speech rights of the speakers, given the unique technological and institutional contexts in which broadcasting operates (see Barron 1967). That is, to the extent that broadcasters utilize a scarce public resource – the broadcast spectrum (many scholars have criticized the validity of the “scarcity rationale”; see Coase 1959) – that is allocated by the federal government at no meaningful cost to the recipient, then those broadcasters forfeit some of their First Amendment rights in the name of serving the rights of the citizenry to be well-informed and to have access to a diverse array of sources and viewpoints – key elements of a vibrant speech environment in which the right to receive information is placed on comparable footing to the right to speak (→ United States of America: Media System; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

It is on grounds such as these that a wide range of *content regulations*, ranging from limitations on indecency to affirmative content requirements such as children’s programming, balanced programming (→ Balance), and preferential access to political candidates, have been based (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content). For the most part, such requirements would not be able to withstand First Amendment scrutiny in other technological contexts – a fact that illustrates the important point that, traditionally, the scope of the protection of speech rights has been dependent, at least in part, on the characteristics of the particular technology via which communication is taking place (see Pool 1983).

The approach to free speech reflected in the US broadcast regulation model clearly emphasizes a “*collective*” *approach to speech rights* over a more traditional “individualist” approach, with the government regulating individual speakers with (presumably) an eye toward magnifying the collective free speech benefits of the citizenry as a whole. Such an approach clearly conflicts with more traditional approaches to the notion of free speech to the extent that individual rights become subservient to the collective good – and it is this clash of often conflicting priorities in the allocation of speech rights that is at the core of the role of free speech as a guiding media policy principle.

### **The Public Interest**

The concept of the → public interest has a long and contentious history in media policy-making (see Napoli 2001). The inherent ambiguity of the term is, no doubt, the primary reason for its contentiousness. To the extent to which the public interest serves as the primary benchmark against which most media policies are assessed, it is not surprising that this normative principle long has been contested territory. The concept of the public interest represents the standard that most media policymakers often are expected to adhere to in their decision-making. That is, policy decisions should not reflect or cater to the interests of individual interest groups, but rather should reflect a broader awareness of the policy outcomes that would best serve the populace as a whole.

As McQuail (1992) illustrates, the concept of the public interest can have embedded within it a wide range of specific normative criteria, ranging from diversity, competition, and pluralism to access and objectivity (→ Plurality; Access to the Media; Objectivity

in Reporting). The specific criteria with which the public interest concept is invested will of course vary across nations (e.g., Hitchens 2006; McQuail 1992). These criteria also have varied over time (see Aufderheide 1999; van Cuilenburg & McQuail 2003), as regulatory philosophies and structural and technological conditions have changed. The criteria can also vary at any given time across different stakeholder groups, which of course contributes to the concept becoming highly contested territory within individual policy debates.

But what is perhaps most important to recognize is that the public interest concept traditionally has served as a normative guidepost not only for policymakers in their decision-making, but also, to a certain degree, for media organizations in their decision-making, to the extent that the political and cultural dimensions of media industry performance generally require attention to concerns beyond revenues, profits, and efficiencies (see Napoli 2001). Thus, the public interest concept perhaps represents the most direct mechanism via which policymakers, media critics, and researchers assess and pass judgment upon the performance of individual media markets or entire media systems, and upon which advocacy for change is most frequently premised.

### **The Marketplace of Ideas**

The notion of a well-functioning marketplace of ideas – and the appropriate role of policy in promoting and protecting such a marketplace – is perhaps where the tensions between the economic and the political/cultural rationales for media policymaking have been the most pronounced, as it is also the guiding metaphor out of which both analytical perspectives toward media policy have largely originated. Thus, like each of the core theoretical constructs for media policy discussed thus far, the marketplace of ideas also is subject to multiple, potentially conflicting, interpretations. But certainly, the metaphor contains within it a rather comprehensive conceptualization of the scope of media policy as both a professional practice and a field of academic inquiry.

Policy scholars grounded in economics naturally interpret the marketplace of ideas metaphor in a way that emphasizes the “invisible hand” and that prioritizes a reliance on marketplace incentives over government interventions to achieve desired social outcomes, but also in a way that generally cedes tremendous authority to the marketplace for determining desired social outcomes (see, e.g., Owen 1975). This analytical perspective has been expressed perhaps most famously in the articulation by Mark Fowler, chairman of the Reagan-era US → Federal Communications Commission (FCC), of a “marketplace” approach to broadcast regulation in which “the public’s interest . . . defines the public interest” (Fowler & Brenner 1982, 4). Of course, such an analytical perspective naturally leads to strong opposition to government regulation of media markets in favor of large-scale deregulation.

It is worth noting, however, that in recent years in the US there has been something of a retreat from this rather extreme perspective, even from among those who have traditionally adopted a primarily economic stance toward media policy issues (see, e.g., Stucke & Grunes 2001). Deregulatory arguments today are now more often couched in First Amendment theory or in assessments of the media marketplace that emphasize the growing importance of new media technologies, the diminished significance of the traditional regulated media, and, consequently, the irrelevance of contemporary efforts to



continue regulating what is perceived as an increasingly shrinking and struggling component of the overall media system (see Baker 2007).

Political/cultural approaches to the metaphor of the marketplace of ideas have, as one might expect, a very different theoretical grounding, drawing not from economic theory but rather from democratic theory, particularly the work of John Milton and John Stuart Mill, who articulated *notions of truth* as being achieved via the free competition of ideas and the greater social good as being served via the wide dissemination of ideas and viewpoints (Schwarzlose 1989; → Truth and Media Content). From a media policy standpoint, of particular importance is the application of this perspective to the democratic process, where emphasis traditionally has been placed on the centrality of the competition between diverse and antagonistic viewpoints to an informed citizenry and effective self-governance (e.g., Meiklejohn 1972).

Media policy, from this perspective, therefore needs to prioritize the extent to which the media system serves the informational needs of the citizenry and facilitates the effective functioning of the democratic process. Out of this interpretive approach grow emphases on diversity, pluralism, and localism as key elements of a robust marketplace of ideas (see Hitchens 2006; van der Wurff 2005).

### KEY ISSUE AREAS FOR CONTEMPORARY MEDIA POLICY

The theoretical constructs outlined above inform three broad substantive areas of concern for media policymaking. These substantive areas are intended to be inclusive of the range of policy issues and concerns that characterize the media policy field. These substantive areas are: (1) content, (2) structure, and (3) infrastructure. *Content* can be thought of as policymaking directed primarily at directly influencing the nature of the content provided by media outlets. *Structure* refers to policymaking directed primarily at influencing the structural elements of media markets, such as competitive conditions, ownership patterns, and related dimensions of the characteristics of content providers. *Infrastructure* refers to the distribution technologies and networks by which content is disseminated.

Each of these issue areas is described in greater detail below; however, it is important to emphasize at the outset that these substantive areas are not wholly distinct. Issues of infrastructure policy bear on issues of content (Yoo 2005), as do issues of structure (van der Wurff 2005). For instance, policies directed at the operation of communication networks can indirectly impact the nature of the content that is produced (Yoo 2005). Structural policies, in fact, frequently have been implemented with the intention of indirectly impacting content (and thereby circumventing possible First Amendment/free speech impediments to more direct efforts to affect content; see Napoli 2001).

#### Content

Content-related policy concerns generally seek to either protect the citizenry from potential harms associated with particular types of media content, or to benefit the citizenry via the imposition of affirmative requirements on content providers to offer certain types of content deemed to be socially valuable.

Protective policies typically have focused on *content deemed to be potentially harmful* (particularly to children) or at least potentially offensive to the sensibilities of the typical media consumer. Thus, for instance, there is a long tradition of content regulation in broadcasting that focuses primarily on constraining indecent language and sexuality. Media violence (→ Violence as Media Content) also has been a longstanding concern in the media policymaking arena (Hamilton 2000b). Policymakers have been concerned about the effects of violent content – particularly on children – across a wide array of media, ranging from comic books to motion pictures to (perhaps most prominently) television and (most recently) the Internet. Given these concerns, media effects research examining the possible relationship between the consumption of violent media content and violent behavior has maintained a position of prominence in media policymaking circles throughout each wave of technological development. This has led to efforts such as V-Chip legislation, which requires that television manufacturers place a device in new televisions that facilitate viewer or parental blocking of both indecent and violent programming.

V-Chip policies are reflective of more indirect (and often industry-initiated; → Self-Regulation of the Media) approaches to content regulation that have characterized non-broadcast media (where First Amendment protections generally are stronger) such as → video games, recorded music, and motion pictures (→ Cinema), where ratings systems have been put into place to facilitate restricting children's access to certain types of content and minimizing accidental exposure to such content by audience members who might find the content offensive. More direct forms of content restrictions tend to remain confined to terrestrial broadcasting, though efforts to impose a more broadcast-oriented content regulation model have been attempted in the online context (→ Internet Law and Regulation), and policymakers have initiated preliminary inquiries into extending such an approach to other media such as → cable television and satellite broadcasting (Congressional Research Service 2005; → Satellite Television). Whether such efforts could ever survive First Amendment scrutiny is doubtful. And, of course, the global nature of the Internet offers tremendous challenges to any nation seeking to impose such content restrictions in the online realm.

Another important form of “protective” policies relating to media content involves *national restrictions on the importation and exhibition of foreign content*. Such policies typically are grounded both in cultural concerns related to preserving and promoting domestic cultural values, traditions, and expressive opportunities in the face of an increasingly globalized media marketplace, and in economic concerns related to protecting and promoting domestic media industries from foreign competitors. Limitations on television programmers' ability to air foreign-produced content can be found across a wide array of nations, ranging from Canada, Australia, and France to China, Malaysia, and Singapore. Similar restrictions can be found in many nations pertaining to motion picture importation and theatrical exhibition.

Turning to affirmative content requirements, policymakers also frequently have seen fit to require media outlets to *provide certain types of content* – typically content judged to enhance the political, intellectual, or cultural development of the citizenry. In the US, such requirements have been in decline over the past three decades (Napoli 2001), though affirmative requirements for broadcasters related to educational children's

programming remain, as do requirements for cable and satellite systems to devote certain amounts of channel capacity to local, noncommercial, and educational content providers. Similar content requirements (often focusing on issues of children's programming and localism) can be found in other nations. In Australia, for instance, certain broadcast licensees must provide explicit quantities of educational children's programming and of programming dealing with material of local significance (→ Educational Media Content).

Obviously, whether the context involves restrictions on what type of content can be provided or requirements regarding the provision of certain types of content, such government involvement in the content arena represents the most aggressive and potentially the most invasive and problematic mechanism available to media policymakers, as such approaches can be seen as running counter to the free expression principle at the core of media policy.

### **Structure**

Structural policy concerns focus primarily on issues related to the ownership patterns and structure of media systems. That is, policymakers across a wide array of national contexts have approached the regulation of the ownership and structure of media outlets as a primary mechanism for preserving and promoting the various normative principles that reside at the core of media policy. Thus, diversifying the ownership of media outlets and restricting foreign ownership have been seen as an important means of maintaining a robust, pluralistic marketplace of ideas in which principles of free speech and a media system that best serves the public interest can be realized. Questions of the effectiveness and appropriateness of such policy approaches have, however, become increasingly prominent in recent years, as technological change, the blurring of traditional industry distinctions, and the globalization of media markets all have contributed to a reassessment of the appropriate approach to structural regulation of the media.

In the US, for instance, there has been, in recent years, an ongoing debate over policies pertaining to *local and national ownership limits* for media outlets. Ownership policy has become particularly contentious, perhaps because of the extent to which the issue straddles the economic and socio-political terrains of media policy. That is, ownership policy directly engages traditional economic policy concerns such as competition and efficiency to the extent to which such policies impact competitive conditions in media markets, and the extent to which media owners can take advantage of potential economies of scale associated with the ownership of greater numbers of media outlets (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Ownership policy also directly engages socio-political policy concerns related to the diversity of sources of information available to the citizenry, the extent to which media outlets are locally owned and oriented, and, perhaps most important, the extent to which the speech opportunities associated with the ownership of media outlets are widely versus narrowly disseminated. The extent to which the media ownership issue resides firmly in the camps of the two traditionally distinct analytical perspectives that have been brought to bear on media policy (Entman & Wildman 1992) is, no doubt, the primary reason for the fact that this policy issue has become highly politicized, highly contentious, and, ultimately, very difficult to resolve.

Other national contexts where the issue of media ownership has been particularly pronounced include Italy, where the election of the nation's most powerful media owner, Silvio Berlusconi, to the office of prime minister raised a wide range of questions regarding the relationship between media ownership and the political process, and the appropriate policy responses to managing this relationship (see Doyle 2002). Australia and the UK, like the US, have been immersed in contentious debates regarding the reform of media ownership policies, and, as in the US, the trend appears to be one of a gradual relaxation of these rules (Hitchens 2006).

Another important structural dimension of media policy involves the *commercial versus noncommercial orientation of outlets* serving individual media markets. In Europe, in particular, there has existed a strong tradition of public service television and radio (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy), though over the years most European media markets have – via the efforts of policymakers – become increasingly privatized, and, by association, increasingly commercialized (Hitchens 2006). Similar processes have taken hold in other parts of the world as well. It is important to recognize that concerns regarding privatization and commercialization, and the appropriate policy responses, extend into the new media realm as well (Mueller 2002).

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure, in this case, refers to the transmission mechanisms for media content. In some instances, these infrastructures have historically been under governmental control, in which case the allocation of access to the particular infrastructure becomes a fundamental policy issue. Thus, for instance, *spectrum policy* has been – and continues to be – a core concern in the media policy arena. Early spectrum policy concerns involved establishing the key components of a regulatory apparatus, as well as the mechanisms for license allocation (Hazlett 1990; McChesney 1993). In recent years, the nature of spectrum policy concerns has changed dramatically, reflecting the increased flexibility of spectrum uses brought about by the process of digitization, as well as a stronger governmental commitment to privatization of the spectrum. This privatization process has itself become a major source of policy debate, as have issues related to licensed versus unlicensed spectrum uses, and to spectrum usage priorities that are most efficient and that best serve the public interest.

In other instances, policymakers have seen fit to institute policies in an effort to *spur the growth of certain infrastructures* (→ Communication Infrastructure). Most recently there has been substantial attention devoted to the issue of the broadband infrastructure and possible mechanisms for accelerating its build-out and, perhaps most important, insuring that the infrastructure reaches – and is reasonably accessible to – sectors of the citizenry facing significant barriers to access. Such concerns reflect a longstanding policy tradition of concern for widespread access to key elements of the information infrastructure, whether it be in terms of universal service policies for telephone service or Internet access (→ Digital Divide), or of insuring the allocation of broadcast licenses to even the smallest of communities (see Napoli 2001). Widespread access to the various infrastructure components of the media system has been, and remains, a core media policy issue.

## CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES FOR MEDIA POLICY

Media policymaking must navigate an *increasingly complex technological environment*, with new media technologies not only introducing new forms and sources of content into the media mix, but also providing new mechanisms for the delivery of traditional media content. In such an environment, effectively defining media markets becomes increasingly difficult, as does maintaining an accurate sense of the roles and functions of the different media in the lives of the citizenry. For instance, policymakers must come to grips with how the migration to increasingly interactive media platforms, and the associated increased prominence of user-generated content, might impact policy approaches to media (Benkler 2006). To the extent that we are witnessing technology-driven “deinstitutionalization” of the media, the question arises as to how this process should be reflected in media policies, which traditionally have been directed at large-scale media institutions and formulated with such institutions in mind.

These increased analytical challenges facing policymakers (and policy researchers) are accompanied by changing dynamics regarding the placement of the *burden of proof in the assessment of individual policies*. That is, individual policies are coming under increased scrutiny by policymakers, stakeholder groups, and the courts, in terms of the extent to which they legitimately achieve the objectives that motivated their introduction. No longer is much deference granted to the predictive judgments of policy professionals. Rather, contemporary media policymaking involves increasingly ambitious efforts to systematically assess the impact of individual policies, as well as to test the underlying assumptions upon which individual policies may be based.

Such developments, of course, point to an *increasingly influential role for research* in the media policymaking arena – particularly in relation to the stakeholder battles (e.g., between industry groups and public interest/advocacy organizations) that remain a prominent component of media policymaking. But such developments also raise the question of whether the full range of policy impacts always will be discernible by available empirical methods, and if not, whether policies reflecting values that perhaps should be considered self-evident potentially suffer in the face of increasingly evidence-based policymaking. The implications of such questions are magnified by contemporary dynamics involving the role of research in policymaking that suggest that a fairly narrow spectrum of research perspectives contributes to policymaking (Mody et al. 2005), and that resource imbalances among the various stakeholder groups can further skew the nature of the research that ultimately impacts policy decision-making (Napoli & Seaton in press).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Balance ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Service

Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Self-Regulation of the Media ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Truth and Media Content ▶ United States of America: Media System ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Media as Political Actors

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Political advocacy is not journalists' main concern. They are chiefly in the business of gathering and disseminating the daily news, and they define themselves more by their professionalism than by their partisanship (→ Journalists' Role Perceptions). According to McQuail (1994, 145), "The height of [journalists'] professional skill is the exercise of a practical craft, which delivers the required institutional product, characterized by a high degree of objectivity, key marks of which are obsessive facticity and neutrality of attitude" (→ Professionalization of Journalism; Quality of the News; Standards of News).

Even the political frames that journalists apply to political coverage do not routinely center on the interests at stake in politics. Political conflict and gamesmanship are among journalists' preferred frames (→ Conflict as Media Content; Framing of the News; Horse Race Coverage). In many democracies, questions of policy, rather than being at the center of the news, are often a backdrop to the struggle for political advantage.

It is a mistake, however, to dismiss partisan advocacy as an insignificant component of modern journalism. Many of the national dailies in Europe and elsewhere are associated

with a particular party or ideology. Of course, they differ in important ways from old-time partisan newspapers. Financed by circulation and advertising revenues rather than government or party subsidies, their news is professionally produced. Nevertheless, the vitality of these newspapers flows from their partisan leanings and the loyalty of their partisan readers. Nor are broadcast organizations completely outside the fray of partisanship. In Germany, Italy, and Korea, to cite a few examples, broadcasting at times has been structured in ways that allow partisanship to enter into news decisions.

Colin Seymour-Ure (1974) proposed the concept of “press–party parallelism” as a way of expressing the relationship between news organizations and political parties. In their recent work, Hallin and Mancini (2004) describe a tighter link between press and party in Mediterranean countries than in northern and central European countries, which, in turn, have a more → partisan press than do English-speaking countries (→ Party–Press–Parallelism).

Even where ties between news organizations and parties are weak or nonexistent, journalists themselves may promote partisan agendas through their news decisions. Allegations of “hidden” bias have surfaced in many countries, partly because surveys have found that most journalists lean toward the left politically (→ Bias in the News). Although studies have not produced uniform results, the weight of the research evidence points to the existence of this form of bias. Kepplinger et al. (1991) found, for example, that journalists’ partisan leanings affect their choices about which issues and positions to highlight. They use the term → “instrumental actualization” to describe this pattern. Patterson and Donsbach’s (1996) five-country survey found in each country that journalists’ partisanship was statistically related to their responses to hypothetical news decisions. The authors conclude, however, that partisan bias is a much smaller influence on news decisions than are journalism norms and conventions (→ Political News).

In some instances, news journalists and organizations serve to legitimize the views of those in power, regardless of party. Bennett (1990) found that the news is “indexed” to elite debate rather than to public opinion. Unless there is substantial disagreement among political authorities, news coverage is likely to highlight the official position only. In such instances, as Entman (2003) notes, the news media act nearly as a propaganda wing of the government.

On the other hand, the absence of an elite consensus widens the range of voices, including nongovernmental voices, brought into the news. Elite disputes also unleash criticisms by journalists of those in power. Major studies of US, UK, German, and Swedish news have found that attack journalism is on the rise. When governing authorities are at odds, journalists’ deference to those in power often gives way to criticisms of leaders of both sides. Their motives, methods, and effectiveness are questioned. Based on their Swedish study, Westerståhl and Johansson (1986) see this development as a “news ideology” premised on the assumption that politicians are self-serving and rooted in the notion that journalists are professionals whose responsibilities include keeping watch on those in power (→ News Ideologies). The effect, as the research of Cappella and Jamieson (1997) suggests, is to weaken the public’s support of political leaders and institutions.

In one area, the politics of the media is one-sided. Given their dependence on advertising revenue, mainstream news outlets tread lightly when it comes to business



exposes. The news, as Hamilton (2004) remarks, is an “information good,” a thing to be sold to advertisers and audiences. Although major corporate scandals get news coverage when they break, news organizations do not invest heavily in investigating private-sector actions (→ Investigative Reporting). News organizations and journalists do not so much promote corporate power as they ignore it, allowing business leaders wide leeway in their dealings, thus helping to maintain a distinction between marketplace power and governing power.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Framing of the News  
▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Investigative Reporting  
▶ Journalists’ Role Perceptions ▶ News Ideologies ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Party–Press  
Parallelism ▶ Political News ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Quality of the  
News ▶ Standards of News

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## **Media Production and Content**

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Research in the sub-field of media production and content seeks to describe and explain the symbolic world of the media with reference to a variety of contributing societal, institutional, organizational, and normative factors. It draws boundaries around a large and diverse body of research efforts, predominantly social science, but also including more interpretive cultural analysis. If much of the communication field has concerned itself with the effects of media, and the process by which they are produced (→ Media

Effects; Exposure to Communication Content), this more recently emerging area has treated the media map of the world itself as problematic, something to be understood and predicted through an awareness of underlying forces. These forces provide the context of “media production,” which is examined for its systematic ties to “content.” Understanding these “messages” that constitute the symbolic environment is an ambitious task, given the multitude of factors influencing the media. But locating these questions within such a conceptual framework has begun to allow the field of communication to devote the same sustained research to the creation, control, and shape of the mediated environment as it has to the effects on audiences of that environment. The same research tools used so extensively to examine media effects can be turned on those media and their links with the culture of other organizations and institutions (→ Research Methods).

### MAPPING THE FIELD OF RESEARCH

Of course, in such a contentious domain, examining what “is” takes place within the context of what “should be” or what “could be.” The highly normative and politicized questions of media operation, bias, and control have moved to the center of the public arena, with an increasing number of media-literate citizens developing and promoting their own views (→ Media Literacy). Thus, these scholarly research questions are closely related to press criticism that circulates among activists, policy elites, and media professionals themselves. Questions of empirical social science are guided by political, legal, and ethical concerns to yield results with direct implications for social policy (→ Communication and Law; Media Policy). Systematic scholarly research helps at least to provide a solid factual basis for the contending interests.

The *Glasgow Media Group* is a model in many ways for this style of research, diligently collecting since the mid-1970s media transcripts and broadcasts, carefully examining their messages regarding issues of labor, war, and other controversies, and linking them to media and social structures (Glasgow Media Group 1976, 1980). Although such research has become more commonplace, government and media professionals reacted at the time with strong criticism, sensitive to the claim that they played a role in shaping the news. Such scholarly work has helped make the point that media content can be structured and framed in ways that support certain interests, without any one person or group intending or conspiring to do so. This area of the field takes seriously the proposal advanced by Thompson (1990) that in order to understand media in modern culture, we must examine media in specific social-historical contexts, consider the relevant cultural objects, and then interpret how they are connected (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative).

This research area is also often broadly referred to as “*media sociology*” (reviewed in Berkowitz 1997; Schudson 2001, 2003). Certainly, many of the participant observation ethnographies of newsrooms and other media are so labeled, particularly given their use of traditional sociological fieldwork methods (e.g., Tuchman 1978; Gans 1979; Fishman 1980; → Ethnography of Communication). But the area also encompasses the more psychological studies of individual media workers, and how their personal traits affect their decisions (e.g., Weaver & Wilhoit 2006; → Journalism; News Workers). Many media critics lodge the blame for press bias (→ Bias in the News) squarely with individual

journalists, or find fault with the entertainment industry because of “out-of-touch” Hollywood producers. But the most important explanation for these communication products lies in structural bias, not individual prejudice.

Indeed, as the production of communication messages has become a huge financial enterprise, it is now a natural step to begin applying the same explanatory models we would use to understand other industrial production. Although media organizations – including those supported by the state – employ many creative professionals, the work of those individuals is routinized and structured to yield a predictable product (Bantz et al. 1981). Even the news, which should by definition be the unexpected, must be controlled, anticipated, and packaged to allow the organization to manage its task effectively: in Tuchman’s (1978) phrase, “routinizing the unexpected” (→ News Routines). Outside of the US fieldwork tradition, media sociology has been used in other international contexts – particularly Europe and Latin America – to refer to the entire context of media production and performance, the entire social structural context (McNair 2006). That is the sense in which it is used here.

### **ANALYZING THE BASIS OF MEDIA POWER**

In an influential article critical of the media sociology of the time, Gitlin (1978) took the field to task for overemphasizing the short-run, marketing-oriented, attitudinal, and behavioral responses of the media audiences (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). The result of this relatively micro-, individual level definition of influence was to conceptually render the media powerless (and thus not a social problem of great concern), with audiences relatively resistant to persuasion (→ Media Effects, Strength of; Media Effects, History of). Casting the media effect of “reinforcement” as a profound one rather than an indication of impotence, Gitlin argued, opened up important terrain for research: what effects do the very presence and structure itself of media have for what gets defined as normal and legitimate? This version of media power is perhaps best exemplified by Herman and Chomsky (2002) in their propaganda model writings, in which they argue that media content is the result of a number of filters, such as → advertising, ownership, sourcing of news to elites (→ Ownership in the Media; News Sources). These filters yield only that material serviceable to the status quo and create a double standard of portrayal for “us” versus our “enemies.” The questions in the area of media production and content, then, take a perspective somewhere between the two extremes. Media are neither unproblematic and benign, a mere forum for messages from which the audience can choose, nor are they simply tools of the corporate state for producing serviceable propaganda. Media have their own logic and must be examined within the context of their own relative autonomy (→ Media Logic).

*Historically*, studies proliferated in the early post-World War II communication field, continuing to the present, describing various features of news and media content, but often these have been largely unconnected and lacking a consistent conceptual framework (e.g., Tamborini et al. 2000). Beginning in the 1950s Warren Breed (1955) and David Manning White (1950) were among the first scholars to examine the influences on content in a more direct way, with their examinations of social control in the newsroom and the story selections of an editor, described as the news “gatekeeper” (→ Gatekeeping).

But others did not follow their lead in communication until much later, a peculiar thing considering the subversive insight that news is, in White's terms, "what the gatekeeper says it is," and bearing in mind Breed's finding that organizational policy was used to screen out certain happenings from getting into the newspaper.

Reese and Ballinger (2001) took a closer look at these forerunner studies and their reception by other scholars to explain why they did not generate more follow-up research. The reason, they suggested, lay in how the findings were interpreted within the field at that time: the gatekeepers were deemed to be representatives of the larger culture, and news policies were assumed to help identify as news those events of interest to the community – rendering the production and control issues unthreatening to the public interest and, as a result, of less interest to researchers. Eventually, however, these questions returned to the fore, particularly given growing public skepticism about the performance of media and awareness of their corporate and technological constraints (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

The traditional mass communication field was associated with → surveys and controlled experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory), isolating an effect of interest within the audience, whereas the media production and content domain is much more diverse and ranges across many levels of analysis and research traditions, making it more difficult for any coherent overall "theory" to emerge. Not all questions of media content and control can be reduced to such straightforward linear relationships as those between message and receiver (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis). Many such questions are qualitative, interpretive, and naturally resistant to being described in more quantitative, variable-analytic terminology. But at least conceptualizing them together helps us to assemble previously disparate strands of research and serves to connect, within a consistent style of explanation, the audience-and-effects side of the field with the shaping and control of content. From the intuitively appealing idea of media agenda-setting, for example, it is an easy rhetorical step to ask "what sets the media's agenda?" (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Just by asking such a question within the framework of communication research gives it a certain legitimacy (see Reese 1991).

## LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

In understanding how the symbolic environment is shaped, or "constructed," it is useful to have a way to classify the many kinds of forces at work. The *hierarchy of influences model* describes the multiple levels of influences that impinge on media simultaneously and suggests how influence at one level may interact with that at another (Shoemaker & Reese 1996). Within the realm of newsmaking, for example, the personal bias of individual journalists may affect their reporting (→ Instrumental Actualization), but journalists of a particular leaning often self-select into organizations because of their pre-existing policies, history, and organizational culture. The news organization and its employees, in turn, must function within other institutional relationships and ideological boundaries set by the larger society. Thus, the individual functions within a web of organizational and ideological constraints. This model organizes various theoretical perspectives on the shaping of media content, including the suggested categories of Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980), set out below.

*Content is influenced by media workers' socialization and attitudes.* This is a communicator-centered approach, emphasizing the psychological factors impinging on an individual's work: professional, personal, and political.

*Content is influenced by media organizations and routines.* This approach argues that content emerges directly from the nature of how media work is organized. The organizational routines within which an individual operates form a structure, constraining action while also enabling it.

*Content is influenced by other social institutions and forces.* This approach finds the major impact on content located external to organizations and the communicator: economic, political, and cultural forces. Audience pressures can be found in the "market" explanation of "giving the public what it wants" (→ Media Economics; Media Events and Pseudo-Events; Spin Doctor).

*Content is a function of ideological positions and maintains the status quo.* The so-called hegemony approach defines the major influence on media content as the pressures to support the status quo, i.e., to support the interests of those in power in society (→ News Ideologies).

Refining these perspectives, the hierarchy of influences model sets out *five levels of influence*: individual, routines, organizational, extra-media (institutional), and ideological (socio-cultural). As a guide to research, it helps explicate key concepts on which research is based and unpacks those multiple levels of meaning (Reese 2001). Particularly for journalism, such a model helps to untangle many of the criticisms of press performance (→ Quality of the News), identifies their implicit normative and theoretical assumptions, and suggests appropriate kinds of evidence. For example, conservative media critics have located the source of bias with the individual journalist, calling for more balance in hiring practices and regularly scolding specific news anchors. Left-leaning critics, on the other hand, find fault more with the structure and ownership of the commercial media system, arguing for more public control and protections from the corruption of big advertisers. The irony is that journalists give respectability to attacks from their right flank, which even if targeting them as individuals at least attribute to them the professional latitude to create bias in the first place. By relegating journalists to mere tools of a larger corporate system, the left critique is less professionally satisfying. Both critiques can be more easily understood when we know from which level they are mainly conceived.

With this rough outline of the field in mind, the entries that are associated with it can be sorted into some key categories. They describe research exploring the media–reality connection and the specific shape of the media map. This leads to a set of normative questions concerning what that map *ought* to look like (→ Media Performance). Beyond those questions, in turn, are those entries concerning how that map is produced in practice – and in the various kinds of media, with their different professional routines and organizational dimensions. Many researchers come to these questions with a particular medium of interest: whether television, radio, or the most recent technological innovation. Others are concerned with a particular practice or genre of content that cuts across media forms, such as crime, violence, tabloid news, soap operas, or news. In either case, the media forms and their practices are closely interrelated.

## THE SYMBOLIC ENVIRONMENT

The compelling *point of departure for this sub-field* is the idea that media content provides a map of the world that differs from the way that world really is, making the research task one of explaining those discrepancies. Concepts such as “accuracy,” “balance,” and “bias” all imply some assessment of the success with which media adequately portray the subjects at issue. Elements of “truth” and “credibility” further underscore the benchmarking of media against some external standard of reality. Because of its social importance to the political system, news and public affairs content has been given special emphasis in this regard and raises a host of normative issues. Concepts, such as “neutrality,” signal the desirability that media not intrude into what would otherwise be freely expressed “reality” within a community (→ Neutrality). In political science, for example, some studies (e.g., Patterson 1993) implicitly assume that media professionals should not interfere with the ability of political actors to communicate with the electorate (→ Political Communication; Political Journalists). If, contrary to this neutrality, these professionals intrude to shape the symbolic environment, then we may question along what lines they do so. Is there enough information provided for citizens to act effectively in a democracy? Are they given content that is degrading to the culture? Are media portrayals for good or ill with respect to the overall health of the society?

Historically, there have been different expectations for news and entertainment, but the current mix of news, entertainment, and reality shows blurs these normative categories. Nevertheless, similar questions can be asked and examined across the entire array of media content. Although by definition not seeking to correspond directly with an object in reality, fictional accounts speak to larger truths, the human condition, archetypes grounded in reality – even if they are not bound by the same expectations we have of nonfiction, news accounts, and other documentary media portrayals (→ Fictional Media Content). Both forms constitute a map of the social world, and they possess certain regularities and typical features that can be empirically described. These media forms both speak to what matters, who is important, and where the action is. They both tell stories to the culture, with the fictional being no less “truthful” just because it did not actually “happen.” That is why, conceptually, this area of the field often speaks to a larger media symbolic environment, using similar language and models to describe how a picture of the world, a “manufactured reality,” is created across the media spectrum.

The problematic issue of media content has become not only a basic scholarly premise but an article of faith among the many media watchdog groups that monitor press performance – and who fault those media for not adequately representing the “reality” they have in mind. In both scholarly and popular discussions of media content, particularly news content, there is a tendency to ask how “objectively” it reflects reality. The “*mirror*” hypothesis – the expectation that media reflect social reality with little distortion – is no longer taken seriously, although this lack of distortion may be vigorously defended in self-serving attempts by media professionals to argue the accuracy of their work, in holding up a “mirror to society.” Historically, the neutral, objective journalist model favored in the US gave implicit support to this idea, although it now seems rather quaint and self-evidently untrue. In a more subtle version, media are rendered neutral or “objective,” by reflecting the self-regulating and balancing compromises between those

who sell information to the media and those who buy it (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Extra-Media Data). A concise statement of a related view was expressed in the British context by the Committee of Inquiry on the Future of Broadcasting in 1977 (although the same view is still to be heard from defensive media executives there and elsewhere): “What protects the public against manipulation of news reporting is not the centralisation of editorial decisions. It is the variety of news outlets and of editorial judgments, both in broadcasting and in the press, which is maintained in the nation” (Annan 1977, 17.30; → Journalism: Normative Theories).

### THE MEDIA–REALITY RELATIONSHIP

To better understand the different research approaches in this field, it is helpful to grasp some key philosophical ideas concerning the media–reality relationship. The idea itself of a “reality” out there with which to compare media is problematic, and different research styles take such an epistemological issue as a point of departure. An empirical approach assumes that media representations have their correspondence to objects in the real world. The notion of bias itself, used by many press watchdog groups, suggests that media deviate in some measurable way from a desirable standard that can be independently known (Hackett 1984; → Postmodernism and Communication). Traditional measures have involved assessing the relative balance of news accounts, including the time and space devoted to different candidates in electoral races. This assumes that the ideal pattern is evenly split between (in the US context) the two major parties, with any deviation a function of political bias. Research has often designated some other reality benchmark to determine how media accounts deviate from it (e.g., violent crime is over-represented in news and media accounts, compared to its actual statistical occurrence; → Violence as Media Content).

Viewed another way, media content is fundamentally a *construction* (→ Constructivism), and, as such, can never find its analog in some external benchmark, a “mirror” of reality. Media-constructed reality has taken its place alongside other social constructions, whether mental illness, criminality, sexuality, gender, race, and other identities no longer considered self-evidently “natural.” If content is a construction, understanding its special quality requires understanding of the construction process (→ Construction of Reality through the News). That assigns greater importance to the research in this sub-field, which takes as its basic premise that the media necessarily exert their own unique shaping power to the symbolic environment, a shaping that is open to explanation using various theoretical perspectives. The constructionist perspective assumes that “reality” is made in the process of our attempts to apprehend it, cannot be separated apart from those efforts. Journalists, for example, “see” things because their “news net” is set up to allow them to be seen (Tuchman 1978; Fishman 1980). Expressed another way, news does not reside somewhere in the environment waiting to be discovered; news does not become news until sources promote “occurrences” into “events” (Molotch & Lester 1974).

A number of concepts imply the relationship media do or ought to have with reality. *Studies of bias*, as mentioned, have targeted news media for deviating from some appropriate standard, whether some evenly balanced distribution of partisan attention or reflection of the demographic distribution of various ethnic and racial groups. Coverage

of electoral politics in the US has typically been found to hew close to a balanced approach, at least with regard to time and attention, especially given the tight watch the political parties keep over it (D'Alessio & Allen 2000). Media are not monolithic, of course; newspapers, for example, vary in their stance on issues, including such polarizing subjects as the Israeli/Palestinian question (Zelizer et al. 2002), and bias does intrude in more subtle ways. Fictional portrayals, particularly on television, have also been examined to determine if they privilege, exclude, or stereotype certain groups. The cultural indicators studies of → Gerbner and colleagues, for example, have involved extensive research into prime-time television to show what behaviors and groups are over- or underrepresented – all with implicit external benchmarks (Gerbner et al. 1978; → Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects).

### **PATTERNS OF MEDIATED “REALITIES”**

Gerbner and other scholars have been influential in articulating a coherent map of the world that cuts across specific programs and networks. As a result, it is possible to make a number of generalizations about the shape of the overall media *symbolic environment*.

In general, media accounts – whether news or entertainment – do give more prominent attention to *groups with greatest privilege*: whites, men, urban dwellers, and professionals. In his often-cited work on national news, Gans (1979) refers to these as the “knowns.” They are known for being known, and their fame underscores the appropriateness of their further visibility. When less powerful groups, the “unknowns,” enter the symbolic arena, they do so via deviant behavior, whereas the “knowns” are present by the mere routine performance of their official duties. Thus, media police the boundaries of the culture with a dialectic interplay between the normal and the abnormal (e.g., Hall et al. 1978; Ericson et al. 1987). In his cultural indicators project, Gerbner and colleagues focused on prime-time television to show who is allowed to exert their will over others, with violence being the symbolic act of power. Men, for example, are shown more often as the perpetrators of violence and women the victims (Gerbner et al. 1994). In news accounts, Entman (1990) shows that blacks are more often portrayed in a negative context. Compared to whites charged with similar crimes, they are more likely to be shown in the grasp of the police, unidentified, unmoving in the visual image – all suggesting a less “human” image. Thus, representations through media are deeply rooted in the prevailing social order (→ Media and Group Representations; Stereotyping and the Media; Crime Reporting).

Beyond this “benchmarking”-type research, analysis has turned to *how stories are framed*, or structured, based on certain organizing principles guiding journalists. The framing approach to content is more likely to take a constructionist view – everything is framed in some aspect. Framing more usefully expands upon the bias concept to emphasize the organizing principles underlying media representations that work to bring coherence to media accounts, both in the minds of media professionals and, as a result, in the audience exposed to such frames (→ Framing of the News; Framing Effects). Moving toward framing and away from bias directs attention away from some impossible goal of perfect representation and toward the more complex shared cultural understandings that media professionals develop as a function of their work and share with others in society (→ News as Discourse).



On a practical level, regardless of philosophical perspective, researchers find it useful to compare “media reality” with “social reality” – that is, that view of the world that is socially derived, what society knows about itself. And to the extent that media reality differs in systematic ways from these other forms of social self-knowledge, we can draw important conclusions about the structures underpinning these differences. Research is concerned with the systematic patterns of those mediated realities, and the extent to which they have real consequences for citizens and media consumers (→ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses).

### **NORMATIVE ISSUES FOR THE MEDIA MAP**

Given their important societal role, the performance of media has been a central normative issue within this field. In a democratic society, the media are expected to be accountable, relatively free of undue intrusion from the state, and provide an opportunity for various members and groups to be reflected fairly (→ Accountability of the Media). In much of the developed world, this accountability is closely tied to market forces. Media products must find markets, consumers willing to pay directly through subscriptions or indirectly via their attention to advertising (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Internal normative guidelines are also upheld by professional and ethical imperatives followed by practitioners. External to the media, the state acts on behalf of citizens to regulate media and oversee them, as in the case of state-run or publicly owned media. In terms of Habermas’s (1989) → public sphere, the media serve as a surrogate for that idealized place where discourse on public issues can occur on the basis of reason without being unduly influenced by either the state or the market. Thus, it concerns us if only those with economic resources are allowed to have a voice, or only those who already occupy positions of state authority. The evidence used to support claims should be clearly available, transparent, and uncorrupted by conflicts of interest. The extent to which media contribute to this ideal functioning of the public sphere is a normatively guided question for research. The tools of social science are engaged, along with the more humanities-based methods of media criticism and legal and ethical analysis.

The North American tradition of objective journalism and commercial media has located the responsibility primarily within the media themselves (Hallin 1996). In exchange for relative freedom from government intrusion, they are expected to be socially responsible, fair, and unbiased in news accounts, and the professionals within those media are expected to adhere to guidelines for taste, morality, and avoid undue sensationalism. With the *proliferation of media* through satellite, Internet, and other technologies, the key gatekeepers are no longer so easy to identify among a handful of important media organizations (→ Satellite Communication, Global; Internet; Internet News). In that respect, performance and accountability issues are more challenging for scholars given the wide array of content. It was easier in the past to describe the media map, taking as a surrogate measure, for example, the front page of the *New York Times* or the prime-time programs on the three traditional US television networks. “Taste” and responsibility issues are still relevant mainly for those broadcasters who are still obliged to please the government oversight agencies (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content).

Fining a broadcaster for an inadvertent display of a performer’s breast during a US Superbowl broadcast seems quaint now considering the graphic sex and violent content

easily available over the Internet. Although what are thought of as “the media” operate largely within large organizations, the rise of the *blogosphere and other Internet-based zones of communication* have, it is argued, strengthened the public sphere and the discourse that flows outside of large institutional structures (→ Blogger; Citizen Journalism). It has also increased the capacity for public monitoring of media decision-making, cross-checking news reports, and the overall transparency of the media production process. The ability of ordinary citizens to express their own critique of media performance adds to the ability to hold violators of important norms of truthfulness and fairness up for public scrutiny (Reese et al. 2007).

Other research takes a more external perspective on media performance, considering whether the media system itself is *functioning to the benefit of society*. While the commercial media are taken for granted in the US as the natural way of supporting media content, state-funded public media are more highly regarded in Europe and elsewhere. The relative merits of these systems have been a topic of concern. A critical perspective emphasizes the extent to which the media reinforce the definitions of the powerful, marginalizing and rendering invisible those voices that threaten the status quo. In spite of the seemingly vast array of television channels and publications, research into the political economy of media has examined the extent to which ownership of these outlets is still concentrated in a handful of corporations (Bagdikian 2000; → Political Economy of the Media).

### **MEDIA EXPLANATORY FACTORS**

On a “routines” level, research has often considered the general problems associated with producing a certain kind of message, such as news. For example, in order to solve the problem of “what is news,” journalists have found it useful to assume news is what officials say it is (Sigal 1973), even as technology allows for more event-driven news (Livingston & Bennett 2003). Understandings of these general tendencies are based largely on the media sociology carried out in the US and the UK, with a significant body of research in Germany, especially concerning → news values (→ News Factors). Given the wide variation among media round the world, however, generalizations about production and content must be made with caution.

Now that more → comparative research has begun to emerge, it is easier to distinguish between those practices common across countries and those peculiar to one or the other. Esser (1999), for example, compared newspapers in the UK and Germany on the basis of their → “tabloidization,” the tendency to lower journalistic standards in favor of sex, scandal, and sensationalism (→ Scandalization in the News; Sensationalism). British papers are more prone to tabloidization given their greater competitive environment, weaker legal protections for personal privacy, and lesser support for journalistic standards. Rather than claim that one country has a tabloid press and another does not, this kind of comparative research helps find general features of media production, ascertains the extent to which they are found in certain settings, and explains why they differ from place to place.

Although there are broad generalizations to be made concerning the symbolic map of the media, there are also important *differences across the various media*. These more

“organizational” issues involve the technological imperatives, audience considerations, economic and other dictates, as well as the regulatory environment that they each face. Each medium, whether radio, television, newspapers, or magazines, has its own unique problems to solve in providing a product to a reader, viewer, or listener. Each has its own historical and technological evolution within the host society. As the newest entry to the media environment, the Internet subsumes within it all of the previous media: audio, visual, and verbal. Its business model, qualities of scope, relative speed, and reach impose their own stamp on the nature of Internet news, entertainment, and other content.

### INTERNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE ISSUES

Media production and content presents challenges in attempting to summarize research internationally, given the great variety of media operations and cultural norms. The highest level of the hierarchy of influences model, the ideological or socio-cultural, considers how the media function within a society, by virtue of there being a certain kind of system – which necessarily binds them to the prevailing social order usually associated with nation-states. These considerations often require a more interpretive analysis given the difficulty in statistically manipulating the presence or absence of a certain kind of system. Such an ideological analysis may consider how the media reinforce the definitions of the powerful, with this dynamic being common to a variety of national contexts, even if manifesting itself in different ways. Definitions of the situation are naturalized within news texts (Hall et al. 1978), which can be linked to media production practices that support them. More empirical comparisons can be made of comparable cases, treated differently by news accounts because of ideological state interests, as Entman (1991) showed in differing news coverage of the shooting down of airliners by the Soviets and the US.

A *macro-level of analysis* directs attention to cross-national comparisons of media production, where important patterns can be found. Shoemaker and Cohen (2006), for example, have successfully shown that news has a number of common patterns across nations, rooted, as they argue, in socio-biological needs. As media seek global markets, certain stories and programs travel more easily than others (Herman & McChesney 1997), and as news is coordinated across national boundaries, certain stories are consistently preferred for practical reasons (Cohen et al. 1996).

News has a certain consistent set of topics and actors featured across a variety of countries, even if these are filtered through specific national cultures (→ International News Reporting). *Global changes* in media ownership, new ways of carrying out gatekeeping across national boundaries, and emerging shared norms of professionalism all give greater emphasis to this perspective (→ Globalization Theories). Given the international reach of the current media, “global events” are increasingly the subject of research (→ Globalization of the Media). When globally significant events take place, such as the handover of Hong Kong from the British to the Chinese, they are nevertheless filtered through the national prisms of various news organizations (Lee et al. 2002) or locations where the world’s journalists converge to cover the same event or institution. So, under the continuing processes of globalization, this area of research faces the challenge of identifying the universal aspects of media and social representation, the enduring particularities of individual national contexts, and the increasing interactions between these levels.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Constructivism ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Extra-Media Data ▶ Fictional Media Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media Performance ▶ Media Policy ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Neutrality ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Factors ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ News Workers ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Political Journalists ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Research Methods ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Survey ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Violence as Media Content

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# Media Relations

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News media are the dominant way in which organizations of society disseminate information and persuasion to the general public (→ News). Networking, relationship building, and producing works to be published in the media are daily work for most public relations (PR) practitioners. The relation between the PR industry and the news media is therefore of interest for research in both → public relations and → journalism (→ Corporate Reputation; Trust of Publics).

The relation between the groups can be studied from at least two starting points. One is functional and instrumental, with the aim of improving the knowledge and skill of PR practitioners on how to deal with the press, and is often taught in handbooks. The other is research in social and political science, together with cultural and rhetorical studies, with the purpose of depicting and explaining the relation as well as discussing its implications for society and democracy (→ Cultural Studies; Rhetorical Studies; Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations).

Several researchers argue that a media focus has, in fact, grown in importance to the PR industry, especially pertaining to those active on the scene of policy shaping in the broader sense. Manning (2001) argues that media work has become a more central part of political activity in recent years, in line with Blumler's earlier findings that publicity advisers, PR experts, and campaign consultants "immerse journalists in what appears to be an increasingly manipulative opinion environment" (Blumler 1990, 104; → Issue Management; Political Communication; Political Marketing). Other researchers notice an increased interest from commercial groups in strategically mobilizing communicative power and attaining media space (→ Determination Theory in Public Relations; Public Relations: Media Influence).

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Though the concept of PR is built on relationship development, this perspective has only recently become central to PR research, which has mostly preferred an organizational and management perspective. Ferguson (1984) proposed that relationships should be the unit for the study of PR and the best way to conceptualize it. Some researchers have formulated models for public relationships management – models exploring relations with all types of publics and stakeholders, not only the media (Broom et al. 2000; Ledingham & Bruning 2000; Jahansoozi 2006; → Stakeholder Theory).

One can easily see two levels of relationships, organizational and interpersonal relations (→ Interpersonal Communication; Organizational Communication). In the first case, organizations interact, as when a company sends a press release in its name to the media. In most cases and in everyday practice, the relations are likely to be mostly found at the interpersonal level, where, for example, a PR practitioner makes contact with a journalist or editor to promote a new idea. In the developing PR theory, media relations can best be

understood through research in interpersonal or relational communication (Wood 2000). Ledingham and Bruning (2000) present another typology with three types of relationships: interpersonal, professional, and community relations.

Most relations between the two groups result from actions taken by different interest groups with the aim of influencing the media to publish certain promotional items as news. Theories and concepts relevant to this fact are therefore interesting when studying and analyzing the PR–media relationship.

*Agenda-building theory* was developed by Cobb and Elder in 1972, but became the foundation of *agenda-setting theory* the same year (McCombs & Shaw 1972; → Agenda Building; Agenda-Setting Effects). While the agenda-setting theory refers to the question of how the media direct public awareness and debate, agenda-building theory discusses the question of where the agenda really is initiated – whether it is constructed by the media or earlier, by actors as political and organizational leaders. Weaver and Elliot (1985) formulated this question in more concrete words by asking who sets the agenda for the media, meaning that “it is not quite accurate to speak of the press ‘setting’ agendas if it is mainly passing on priorities set by other actors and institutions in society” (Weaver & Elliot 1985, 87). Recently, McCombs (2004) incorporated this thinking into his theory, when he discussed a third agenda level, other agendas (besides the media and public agendas), advanced by organizations, political campaigners, and PR professionals. Media agenda has become a dependent variable instead of the earlier independent variable (McCombs 2004, 98). Other researchers argue that the agenda is being set in a dynamic process where interest groups, actors, the media, and the public influence and are influenced by each other.

The influence toward the media from different interest groups and PR agents appears in many different shapes in daily life. It involves anything from traditional → press conferences and press releases to various ways of more or less successful long-term agenda-setting-related activities. Among other things, strategies for controlling the news agenda are based on producing and serving the media with material that promotes the instrumental purposes of the senders’ interests. This type of media influence and strategies for controlling the news agenda are today often referred to by the concept *news management* (Pfetsch 1998).

Meanwhile, news material from sources outside the media may also be seen as a contribution to journalistic work and as a way of cutting editorial costs (→ News Sources). Observations in line with that point of view have made way for the theory of *information subsidy*, meaning “efforts by policy actors to increase the consumption of persuasive messages by reducing their costs,” in the words of Gandy (1992, 142).

## DEVELOPMENT

Several reasons can be traced for the fact that the relations between the PR industry and the media and between PR actors and journalists are rather poorly researched, except for studies with the purpose of education on “how to do” the PR profession best. One reason is that PR is a relatively new research field, and another, as mentioned above, is that the research has addressed organizational and managerial questions.

However, the media have in many studies been analyzed in relation to other objects and phenomenon. There is, for example, extensive research about the relation between the media and institutional representatives such as politicians and authority leaders.

In recent years, studies of the relations between PR and the media have been published, most of them by European researchers and some of them with a societal/political and critical perspective (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches).

## **MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS**

Researchers in the field of PR have applied several different methods in the study of the relations between PR and their publics. Surveys have been constructed to measure relations with publics by featuring openness, trust, involvement, investment, commitment, satisfaction, and mutual control. Other studies have been conducted through personal interviews with PR practitioners and journalists, often together with document analysis. Studies of the results and effects of relationship have applied content analysis to determine what the media have published; sometimes studies compare what the PR industry and other sources have delivered to the media and what the media publish (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative).

Even though the PR–media relation is an underdeveloped research area, studies show that the two groups often establish close relations in order to fulfill a mutual interest (Davis 2002; Larsson 2005). The reason is to be found in the need for both parts in their occupational behavior and task fulfillment – the demand to get promotion and instrumental information published on the one (organizational) hand, and the need to get news material to fill the news pages and programs on the other. A traditional exchange theory can thus be seen to explain the relation phenomenon, as well as a negotiating theory. The two parts are mutually dependent.

The situation is similar to what research has found about the relation between the media and institutional representatives such as politicians and government leaders (Sigal 1973; Gans 1979; Ericson et al. 1989). Here the relation is described as symbiotic, with Gans' metaphor "it takes two to tango" as the most well-known illustration. Some even talk about a love–hate relationship (Hess 1981).

The political sphere and official institutions are those organizations giving most attendance to the news desks and getting most publicity, in line with the media's obligation to inform in a democratic society. Several studies show at the same time that it is more difficult for the business and private company sector to achieve publicity as news in the media, except for business and trade media. On the other hand, some researchers claim that business in recent times has increased not only its ambitions but also succeeded in getting more publicity. One reason, discussed in a Swedish study, is that this sector seeks to give its promotional material a broader political and cultural approach and character, rather than being single-product launching and marketing (so editors accept it more easily without classing it as "text advertising"), as for example when a medicine company and its PR consultants inform about how to cure a disease instead of presenting a new medicine. This study also reveals at least two differences compared to the politicians/institutional–media relation. One is that the contact and relation building between the PR industry and the media is more one-sided, with the former as the active part. The other is that the relation is to a much lesser degree characterized by direct personal contact and is executed more via mail and telephone contacts (Larsson 2005, 2006).



Several studies have shown that a reasonably large proportion of published articles originates from *external sources* – in fact, most of the studies conducted show that more than half of the published articles studied stem from material originating from outside sources (for an overview, see Cameron et al. 1997).

The theory of information subsidy has, according to several scholars, increased its relevance to everyday journalism reality as a consequence of the financial and personnel cutbacks many news organizations have undergone lately (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). Some analysts claim that this type of contact and exchange has forced journalism to become increasingly dependent on, and more easily affected by, outside influences – a transformation of the professional conduct that has resulted in a more alienated journalism (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995; Bennett & Manheim 2001). According to Davis (2002), the cutbacks are one explanation of the fact that PR practitioners have come to strongly influence today's news agenda. He argues that the material they present has become extremely successful in passing itself off as "real news," and thereby, to a great extent, PR people have "worked to erode the autonomy of journalists at the micro level" (Davis 2002, 172). Other researchers follow this line:

what passes for news of politics is often an inextricable mixture of messages from different sources. Advertising, PR, reports of opinion polls, and propaganda become mixed up in the news product along with facts and editorial opinions . . . It certainly tends to undermine any simple faith in the reliability and independence of news. (McQuail et al. 1998, 253)

The view of media professionals as manipulated by representatives of the PR industry leads to questions about the media's position as a fourth estate (→ Spin Doctor; Spin and Double-Speak). The media's role as a public function in this regard might be discussed as a consequence of the activities conducted by, among others, PR practitioners: "the liberal description of the fourth estate media, based on an image of independent autonomous journalists seeking out news, has been severely undermined" (Davis 2002, 173). In accordance, Street reasons that "journalists are the lapdogs of partial interests, not the watchdogs of the public interest" (Street 2001, 146). Contrary to this view, McNair (2000) argues that editorial staff are fully capable of evaluating and disregarding material sent to them by the PR industry. The academic debate about the implications for society of the relationship between the PR industry and the media will certainly continue.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Determination Theory in Public Relations ▶ Intereffication Approach in Public Relations ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Issue Management ▶ Journalism ▶ News ▶ News Sources ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Press Conference ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Spin and Double-Speak ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Trust of Publics

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# Media System Dependency Theory

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As early as 1974, Ball-Rokeach presented the first in a series of papers that would unfold the concepts and assumptions of media system dependency (MSD) theory (Ball-Rokeach 1974). The paper was titled “The information perspective.” Its basic premise was that media effects flow from the information resources of the media system that are implicated in the everyday life requirements of people (micro), groups or organizations (meso), and other social systems (macro) to act meaningfully in ambiguous or threatening social environments. Thus, this paper launches the argument that the media system is best viewed as an information system whose powers vis-à-vis effects rest on the scarcity or exclusivity of their information resources – the creation/gathering, processing, and dissemination of information. Media information spans classical news and entertainment genres.

## THE CONTEXT OF MSD THEORY FORMATION

At the time of the initial formulation of MSD theory, the media system was relatively stable and bounded (→ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968). The prevailing → media effects thesis (Katz & Blumler 1974) was that people are pretty much in charge of the gratifications they seek and find through their media uses (→ Uses and Gratifications; Media Effects, History of). MSD theory emerged, in part, as a felt difficulty with the proposition that the media per se had, at best, weak effects. Rather than trying to posit a powerful media effects alternative, such as was being developed in Gerbner’s → cultivation theory (Gerbner et al. 1980), MSD theory emerged to reframe the effects question to ask: “Under what societal and individual conditions do/don’t media have substantial effects?” The work was informed by other scholars’ attempts (especially those of Gerbner, Rosengren, and Wright) to move the discussion away from the largely social-psychological or micro-level of analysis – where selectivity processes and interpersonal influence were said to operate to conserve audiences’ established beliefs and behavior (→ Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Two-Step Flow of Communication). The aim was to develop a multilevel approach that might have greater phenomenological correspondence with people’s everyday experiences of media effects in periods of rapid social change and conflict (see Ball-Rokeach 1998).

## MAJOR CONCEPTUAL COMPONENTS: THE EARLY YEARS OF MSD THEORY

A point of departure was that media effects could not be accounted for in terms of the characteristics of the audience and/or the characteristics of the message, but required a multilevel ecological theory to capture an effects process wherein individuals and media are situated in their larger social environs (→ Models of Communication). The media production system operates in an environment where it has dependency relationships

with other social systems, and these relations not only affect the media's behavior but also contour the relationships individuals can develop with the media (Ball-Rokeach 1985). For example, media systems in the United States (→ United States of America: Media System) emerged initially in the context of a relationship with the political system such that the goals that individuals could attain via MSD relations were largely limited to things political. Over time the scope of media production expanded, through new dependency relationships formed with economic, religious, educational, recreational, health, and other systems, such that individuals could pursue like goals through MSD relations.

The dependency relation thus exists at multiple levels of analysis. In essence, it reflects the extent to which resources controlled by one entity (the media) have to be accessed by another party (other social systems, organizations, individuals) to attain fundamental goals. Thus follows the notion that effects are by-products of dependency relations more than they are by-products of clever persuasion or the characteristics of audience members. These dependencies arise when individuals, organizations, or other systems consider media information resources – the gathering/creating, processing, and dissemination of information both in → news and in entertainment genres (→ Entertainment, Effects of) – to be essential or preferable to alternative modes of achieving their goals. Of course systems, institutions, and organizations control resources that the media system and its constituent organization must access to attain their goals; that is, dependency relationships at these levels of analysis are two-way, varying from asymmetric (one party needs the resources of the other more than the other way around) to symmetric. They are also situated in a dynamic environment where the struggles for control of scarce resources, diffusion of new technologies, changing political economies, etc. effect change in the structure of MSD relations.

By taking an ecological approach, the theory places the emphasis upon the characteristics of the dependency relationship. It is not, for example, that individuals are dependent per se, but that they have a dependency relationship with the media that affects the likelihood of media effects. Most of the empirical testing of MSD theory focuses upon the media–audience (macro-to-micro) relation (see Meshkin 1999 for a review). That relation is conceived to be asymmetric and invariable in structure; that is, media resources are implicated in individuals' goals of understanding (themselves and their social environs), orientation (acting and interacting), and play (solitary and social) more than the resources of most individuals are implicated in media goal attainment. The media–audience-member dependency relation is variable with respect to intensity and scope. Intensity is conceptually defined in terms of how exclusive media information resources are and empirically assessed in terms of perceived helpfulness in goal attainment. Resource scope in the media–individual dependency relation is usually invariant – largely limited to the dissemination resource – as most individuals, in contrast to many organizations, do not try to control media information-gathering/creating and information-processing resources. Referent scope refers to the number of media forms (→ Television; Newspaper) implicated in a particular case. Goal scope is the most frequently addressed scope dimension and refers to the breadth of goals implicated in individuals' MSD relations.

Another major component of the theory is the view of individuals as embedded not only in interpersonal networks that tend to conserve shared beliefs and behavior, but also in a larger context, often marked by ambiguity, threat, conflict, and change, that tends to

open the door to media effects. The origins of the structure, intensity, and scope of individuals' MSD relations are thus grounded in their social as well as their interpersonal and personal environs (Ball-Rokeach 1985). Those environs are dynamic, i.e., changing over situation and time. Put briefly, the more problematic people's social environs, the more likely it is that the media information system will be a, if not the, major resource in people's efforts to understand and act meaningfully in those environs (→ Attending to the Mass Media). The prime condition for media effects, then, is when there are problematic social environs that prompt asymmetric, intense, and broad-goal-scope MSD relations. It is in this sense that media effects are conceived to be an outcome of the nature of media–audience–society relations (Ball-Rokeach & De Fleur 1976).

While the nature of the social environs is a key determinant of individuals' MSD relations, it is not the only determinant. There is substantial variation in how people respond or adapt to the same social environs. Under conditions of ambiguity, for example, some will actively seek to resolve the ambiguity, while others may seek to escape or withdraw (Ball-Rokeach 1974). In this case, the more active are also the more likely to experience media effects, because the media system is usually positioned as the best or most accessible information system through which ambiguity may be addressed. These active problem solvers, thus, would have more intense and probably broader-goal-scope MSD relations. How active an individual is at any one point in time and place will depend on major sources of individual variation. Most important are variations in goals or priorities that implicate media, variations in structural location or the degree to which people have access to alternative information systems (e.g., experts), and variation in interpersonal network discursive agendas.

### **MAJOR CONCEPTUAL COMPONENTS: ELABORATION OF MSD THEORY**

As MSD theory developed over the years, the macro-/micro-focus was expanded with increased attention to intervening meso-level forces; specifically, the interpersonal network (→ Interpersonal Communication; Social Networks). While interpersonal discussion of media topics had been incorporated into the theory early on (e.g., Ball-Rokeach et al. 1984), it was later incorporated in a somewhat different way. Instead of the more usual effects-buffer role, interpersonal discourse on media topics was conceived as a variable that could lessen or intensify media effects. The reasons for this unpredictability were made more explicit in subsequent work (Ball-Rokeach 1998), where the interpersonal network was conceived as also having dependency relations with the media for much the same reasons as had been argued for individuals. For example, when the social environs are ambiguous due to rapid social change, the network must also access the best information resources available to make sense of the members' shared environment. Established beliefs affect information processing, but because they may not be sufficient for understanding, the door may be open to new or altered beliefs. The discourse agenda of interpersonal networks of friends, co-workers, neighbors, and the like is likely to include topics that are a product of MSD relations. It was at this point in the development of MSD theory that Ball-Rokeach incorporated agenda-setting processes (→ Agenda-Setting Effects) into her MSD model of media effects.

More than 30 years after the initial foray into MSD theory, the theory is still employed and elaborated in empirical research. Most studies examine the intensity of individual

MSD relations, but there are also case studies of macro-level issues, such as the evolution of MSD relations under conditions of social change (see Meshkin 1999). However, major changes in media production resources suggested the need for fundamental elaboration of the theory to take into account the less bounded and more chaotic media landscape of the twenty-first century. Obvious examples include the implications of going from three dominant television networks to hundreds of television channels, the emergence and blending of the → Internet with traditional media, the explosion of ethnic media (→ Ethnic Media and their Influence; Ethnic Journalism), and the multimedia and increasingly centralized ownership structure (→ Media Conglomerates; Ownership in the Media).

### **FROM A MEDIA TO A COMMUNICATION ECOLOGY THEORY**

In response to these changes, MSD theory has become even more ecological, moving away from a conception of the bounded media system to a communication ecology where traditional media, new media, ethnic media, the media of community institutions, and interpersonal discourse operate in the context of each other. They become information system alternatives for people to select according to which one or which combination of alternatives best serves particular goals. Another major change has been to drop the term “dependency” and replace it with the term “connectedness.” While “dependency” had a sound theoretical basis in Emerson’s notion that power is the flipside of dependency, the term all too often connoted a dependent personality. Especially when considering the more complex communication ecology, it is helpful to speak of people, groups, and organizations as having connections with alternative information production systems.

The expanded version of MSD theory has been incorporated into communication infrastructure theory (CIT; see Kim & Ball-Rokeach 2006). Some researchers continue to use the earlier version of MSD theory when they are examining the effects of a particular media form(s) and this is appropriate. As any good ecological theory should, MSD theory has evolved over time to adapt to changing environments, including insights and knowledge introduced by other theorists and researchers, especially Elihu Katz, Jack McLeod, and Lewis Friedland. At present the primary effects addressed by CIT are civic engagement, health literacy and disparities, the important roles played by ethnic media in diverse urban communities, the connections between virtual and place-based communities, and the effects of communication environments on the strength of neighborhood storytelling networks (→ Storytelling and Narration).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Ethnic Journalism ▶ Ethnic Media and their Influence ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Models of Communication ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Networks ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Television ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ United States of America: Media System ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Media Use and Child Development**

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Traditionally, research into the effects of television has assumed that children are passive recipients on whom television has a powerful influence. Since the mid-1970s, however, media effects research has increasingly recognized the child viewer as an active and motivated explorer, rather than a passive receiver (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of). Recent research suggests that children are critical evaluators of what they see in the media. Even very young children have been shown to actively screen media offerings for attractiveness and understandability and make an effort to interpret television images in their own terms (→ Audience; Audience Segmentation; Media Use by Children; Media Use across the Life-Span).

### **THE RESEARCH AREA**

Media use and child development are mutually related: not only does children’s media use influence their development, but children’s developmental level also determines their media uses and preferences. According to research that has been conducted thus far, developmental level is one of the most important predictors of children’s media uses and preferences. This entry will focus on the question of how children’s developmental level influences their

media use and preference. The question of how children's media use influences their child development will be discussed in other entries (→ Educational Television, Children's Responses to; Computer Games and Child Development; Fantasy–Reality Distinction).

In the past decades, several media-effects researchers have suggested that the *concept of optimal level of stimulation* might be central to understanding young children's media uses and preferences (e.g., Anderson & Puzles Lorch 1983). These authors assume that children prefer to look at stimuli that they can at least partially incorporate into their existing comprehension schemas, and that they show less preference for extremely simple or extremely complex stimuli. This moderate-discrepancy hypothesis predicts that at any given age, a moderate level of stimulus complexity is preferred and that this level increases as the child matures.

The *moderate-discrepancy hypothesis* predicts an inverted-U-shaped relationship between program comprehensibility and content preference: Children's attention to media should be highest for content that departs only slightly from what they know or are capable of (Anderson & Puzles Lorch 1983). The moderate-discrepancy hypothesis offers a viable explanation of why the media uses and preferences of children in various age groups differ so greatly. After all, the perceived simplicity and complexity of media content change dramatically as children mature. Media content that is only moderately discrepant and therefore attractive to 4 year olds may be overly simple and thus unattractive to 10 year olds. The next section explains some typical developmental characteristics of preschool and young elementary school children and argues how these characteristics might affect their uses and preferences for media content. In the section after that, I will do the same for children in middle childhood.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD: AGES 2 TO 7

Around 2 years of age, most children watch television on a daily basis, and from this age their attention to program content increases dramatically. A study by Anderson and colleagues (1986) demonstrated that 1-year-old children have their eyes on the screen for only 12 percent of the time a television is on, whereas for 5 year olds this figure is 70 percent (which seems to be the maximum, because the average time that older children have their eyes on the screen also fluctuates around 70 percent).

The rapid increase in attention to television programs between 1 and 5 years of age reflects the proportionally rapid increase in children's understanding of television content. From 2 years on, children start to develop a genuine interest in the storyline of media productions. In an observation study by Valkenburg (2004) among toddlers and young preschoolers, almost half of the children asked the → co-viewing researcher questions while viewing in order to improve their understanding of the program's content. This asking of questions started at around the age of 2.5 years.

For preschoolers and young elementary school children, there is an unclear *demarcation between fantasy and reality*. Virtually anything is possible in this child's imagination: A sponge can become a rock, bears can talk, and the wind can pick the child up and take him or her away. Research by Morrison and Gardner (1978) has demonstrated that between the ages of 3 and 10 years, children gradually become more accurate in distinguishing fantasy from reality on television. At first, children believe that everything on television is real. Jaglom and Gardner (1981), for instance, observed that 2–3 year olds ran to get a



paper towel to clean up an egg they saw break on television. In addition, most 4 year olds who participated in a study by Sue Howard (1998) were convinced that Big Bird and Bugs Bunny were real.

Children's failure to distinguish fantasy and reality can affect their preferences for media content in important ways. First, because fantasy and → cartoon characters are perceived as real, they can be just as engaging as real-life characters for young children. Second, some special effects or stunts, such as a character vanishing in a puff of smoke, can have a great impact. Because young children cannot put these events in perspective by understanding that they are cinematic tricks, they are more strongly affected by them.

Another quality of preschoolers' thinking is their tendency to center attention on an individual, striking feature of an object or image, to the exclusion of other, less striking features. Piaget (1954) has referred to this tendency as "*centration*" or "*perceptual boundedness*." A study reported in Acuff (1997) is illustrative of this tendency of young children. In this study, girls were presented with three dolls. Two of the dolls were very expensive, had beautiful and realistic faces, and came with sophisticated mechanical effects. The third doll was cheaply made, but this doll had a big, red sequined heart on her dress. To the surprise of the researchers, the majority of the girls preferred the cheap doll with the sequined heart. This choice is typical of children in this age group. When judging a product or media content, they focus their attention on one striking characteristic, and they therefore have little eye for detail. Their descriptions of television characters tend to fix on single, physical attributes, without integrating them into an overall picture. Young children pay less attention to what characters are doing or saying, and pay most attention to simple, brightly colored visuals and colorful, uncomplicated, nonthreatening characters (Valkenburg 2004).

Children seem to have an innate *tendency to respond to language*. They enjoy listening to songs, rhymes, and music. In a study by Cupitt and colleagues (1998), almost half of the mothers of 2.5 year olds reported that their child had imitated music, rhymes, or songs from television. This study also showed that nearly all of the 2.5 year olds had interacted with television programs while watching, for instance by singing, dancing, or clapping hands. It is no surprise, therefore, that songs, rhymes, and music are often used successfully in educational and entertainment programs for young children.

Because of their immature cognitive capacity, children in this age group need more time than adults to *interpret and make sense* of information and television images. This is the reason why young preschoolers often respond best to programs with a slow pace and with lots of repetition, for example *Barney and Friends* or *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*. For the same reason, young preschoolers often prefer familiar contexts and visuals, and objects and animals that they can label, such as a cat, a dog, or a horse. According to Lemish (1987), they like to watch programs that show babies and young children, and they adore nonthreatening real or animated animals, such as kind birds, friendly dinosaurs, and babyish creatures like the Teletubbies.

By the time they are 4–6 years old, children begin to develop a preference for more fast-paced programs. By that age, they become more responsive to verbally oriented shows, with more sophisticated forms of humor, like *The Simpsons*. And they often find slower-paced programs with friendly characters boring or childish. At that time, they begin to prefer more adventurous themes located in foreign countries or in outer space, and more complicated characters.

## MIDDLE CHILDHOOD: AGES 8 THROUGH 12

In contrast to preschoolers, the fantasies of 8–12 year olds more often entail realistic and plausible themes. In this period, children develop a sincere, sometimes even exaggerated, *interest in real-world phenomena*. They can be highly critical of television programs and commercials that lack realism. According to Mielke (1983), children in middle childhood continue to like animals, but they are mainly interested in real-life animals. Because most fantasy characters have been demystified, children in this age group tend to become attached to real-life heroes, such as sports heroes, movie stars, and action heroes.

With the developing ability to “decenter,” children come to *appreciate details*. As explained earlier, a preschooler may focus on only one striking detail of a toy – a doll’s clothing, for example. For the 8–12-year-old child, many characteristics of a toy may be carefully observed, from the face and body to details of the doll’s clothing to how it moves. At this age, children become progressively critical of television programs of low quality, such as those that are poorly produced or repetitious. They are no longer content with simple, salient characteristics, such as a colorful cartoon character. Unlike younger children, who are greatly impressed by special effects and characters with special powers, older children seem to agree that special effects by themselves are not enough.

During middle childhood *peer interactions* become increasingly sophisticated (→ Friendship and Peer Interaction). Because children in this age group develop such a strong sense of commitment and loyalty to the norms of their peer group, they are increasingly sensitive to the thoughts, opinions, judgments, and evaluations of other children, and become very sensitive to what’s “cool” and what’s “in.” They therefore become alert to how to behave in public and how to avoid being ridiculed with respect to what they wear, or prefer to watch on television. For example, older children feel the need to firmly demonstrate their aversion to programs designed for younger children or for shows that feature characters younger than they are.

Current media theories assume that children purposely select and expose themselves to media content to satisfy specific needs. These theories also assume that any effect of media content on children is enhanced or mitigated by how the child perceives it. Research has shown, for example, that the effect of television violence on aggressive behavior is mediated by the extent to which a child likes to watch violent programs (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). To understand media effects on children, then, it is crucial to gain insight into children’s uses of and preferences for media content. This entry has discussed how age affects children’s media uses and preferences. Future research should focus on how other child characteristics, such as personality characteristics and emotional development, may affect children’s media preferences and selective exposure to television content.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cartoons ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Co-Viewing ▶ Educational Television, Children’s Responses to ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content in Children ▶ Friendship and Peer Interaction ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## **Media Use by Children**

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Media play an important role in the lives of adolescents and children. Especially as they age, today's children and adolescents are very frequently connected to each other by means of some medium such as email, instant messenger, mobile phones, and beepers. However, when other media such as → television, the → Internet, → video games, and music (→ Popular Music) are added to the list of → interpersonal communication devices, children and adolescents are not merely perpetually linked but perpetually plugged in. In the US, for example, approximately 25–33 percent of adolescents use multiple media “most of the time.” Therefore, the amount of media to which children are exposed may be increasing even faster than the sheer hours spent with media (→ Media Use and Child Development). This trend seems to be occurring in both the US and in Europe (Valkenburg & Peter 2007); little evidence exists that children and adolescents in less affluent countries are as media-saturated.

As Andreason (2001) has pointed out, the continual convergence of media technology, such as accessing television programs from a computer screen or using a mobile phone to retrieve email messages, makes defining categories of media somewhat complicated

(→ Technology and Communication). Therefore, researchers interested in children's media use sometimes refer to computers, television, videos, and DVD use simply as "screen time." In a given day, 61 percent of children under 1 year old spend time with television or videos and DVDs. By the time children are 2–3 years old, 88 percent spend time in front of a screen daily (Kaiser Family Foundation 2006). Among older children, as they gain facility with media and parent controls decline, media use increases. Screen time for 8–10 year olds averages 5 hours per day; 11–14 year olds spend approximately 5½ hours with a screen and 15–18 year olds slightly less (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). These patterns are relatively consistent in the US and in Europe (Valkenburg & Janssen 1999).

### TELEVISION USE

Television still occupies the largest proportion of time spent with media for children in every age group. With a greater than 90 percent saturation rate in countries ranging from Finland to Jordan to Tunisia (World in Figures 2006), many children live in a home with a television, making it easily accessible for children of most income levels, especially in North America and Europe. Based on research conducted in the US, children below the age of 1 watch approximately an hour of television daily, whereas children aged 2–6 watch approximately 1½ hours (Kaiser Family Foundation 2006). Children aged 8–14 watch approximately 3 hours; however, by the time children hit 15, viewing decreases to approximately 2½ hours of television per day (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

Demographic variables other than the age of the child also seem to affect the amount of time spent watching television. For example, parents with higher levels of *education* tend to have children who watch less television. In addition, black children watch somewhat more television (approximately 4 hours per day) than either Latino children (approximately 3½ hours) or white children (approximately 2¾ hours). Ultimately, however, the strongest predictor of children's television use seems to be parents' own use of the medium (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). Parents who watch more television consequently have children who watch more (→ Exposure to Television; Media Use by Social Variable; Attention).

In terms of *content preferences*, approximately half of the children aged between 1 and 6 watch both educational and entertainment children's programs (→ Educational Media Content; Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Among preschoolers, approximately 15 percent watch adult shows at least some of the time. However, as children enter middle childhood, 39 percent of the 8–10 year olds watch adult shows such as → situation comedies. As they begin to watch more adult programs, they watch fewer educational programs, with 47 percent of the 8–10 year olds watching educational programs but only 21 percent of the 11–14 year olds doing so. Instead, older children seem to prefer reality shows, dramas, and movies (→ Reality TV; Drama in Media Content). Moreover, older children in particular appear to shift at least some of their screen time to computers (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

The greatest difference in content preference appears to be between boys and girls, rather than between European and American children. For example, boys in both the Netherlands and the US prefer programs that contain action and violence; whereas girls in both the Netherlands and the US prefer programs that they deem comprehensible (Valkenburg & Janssen 1999). In fact, the most notable finding in their cross-cultural

study was that US and Dutch children were remarkably similar in their likes and dislikes regarding entertainment programs.

## COMPUTER USE

Although children's computer use is on the rise, there remains considerable variation in computer ownership worldwide. For example, Switzerland has the highest rate of ownership, with 71 computers for every 100 persons, 66 for every 100 in the US, and only 20 per 100 in Spain. Rates in Africa and some parts of Asia are unknown, although thought to be significantly lower (World in Figures 2006).

Among children, approximately 75 percent of the US children *under the age of 6* have a computer in the home, with approximately 30 percent having high-speed Internet access (Kaiser Family Foundation 2006). There is limited information available about what these very young children do with their computer time; however, the available evidence suggests that many preschoolers visit websites for children; whereas some also spend time on the computer playing games (→ Computer Games and Child Development). It appears that it is not until children are somewhat older that they use computers to communicate with their friends, do homework, and listen to music (→ Age Identity and Communication; Electronic Mail).

Children between the *ages of 8–10* spend approximately 40 minutes per day on a computer and half of that time is spent playing computer games (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005). They also visit websites, but the time spent in other activities such as chat and email is negligible (< 3 minutes). As they age, the time spent on a computer increases and most of that increase results from increased time communicating via a computer. For example, 11–14 year olds spend an average of an hour a day on a computer, and although they still play almost 20 minutes of computer games, they now spend approximately 30 minutes communicating using email, chat, or instant messenger; whereas 5–18 year olds spend nearly 30 minutes using instant messenger, another 10 minutes in chatrooms or using email, and almost 20 minutes visiting various websites (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

*Gender differences* exist as well. Boys play more computer games (22 minutes per day to girls' 15 minutes), whereas girls spend more time visiting websites (16 minutes to boys' 12 minutes; → Girl Culture). Girls are also more likely than boys to spend time using computers to communicate (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

There are also differences between *children in various countries*. For example, although Internet access and use is on the rise across Europe, children in the US have somewhat higher access rates (Valkenburg & Soeters 2001) than children in the Netherlands. In addition, differences exist within Europe regarding parents' attitudes towards computer and Internet use for their children. Some 81 percent of German parents think that the most positive impact of the Internet for their children has been its effect on children's eventual ability to enter the job market; parents in the UK (73 percent) are more likely to state that the Internet has had a favorable effect on their children's homework. Lastly, parents in France (71 percent) are more likely to value the impact of the Internet on their children's interest in hobbies.

In both the US and in Europe, both computer access and Internet access are positively associated with parental income (Livingstone & Bovill 1999). Consistent with this trend,

children in less affluent countries, such as Rwanda, Libya, and Nigeria have consistently lagged far behind in their access to computers and the Internet. As a result, programs such as OLPC (one laptop per child), a nonprofit, UN-backed organization, have delivered millions of cheap wind-up computers to these countries to bring information technology to communities with no electricity (*The Times* 2007).

### CONSOLE AND HAND-HELD VIDEO GAME USE

In the US, only 11 percent of children under the age of 6 play *video games* on an average day and those children play for slightly less than an hour (Kaiser Family Foundation 2006). However, by the time children reach 8–10 years of age, 59 percent play some video game daily. Following a pattern similar to their television exposure, video game play then begins to decrease in late childhood. By the time children are 15–18, only 39 percent play a video game daily, although when computer games are included, a total of 65 percent of the 8–10 year olds and 49 percent of the 15–18 year olds play some type on interactive game (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

Children also differ in their console and hand-held game play by sex, by race, and by education of the parent. For example, more boys than girls play console or hand-held video games every day (63 vs 40 percent). Furthermore, boys tend to prefer action games whereas girls prefer fantasy or puzzle games (Buchman & Funk 1996). African-American children spend significantly more time playing video games (1 hour 26 minutes) than Hispanic children (1 hour 10 minutes) and than white children (1 hour 3 minutes). Differences also exist based on the education of the parent. Interestingly, children whose parents attended but did not complete college spend significantly less time playing video games than children of parents who either completed high school or who obtained college degrees (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

### USE OF OTHER MEDIA

Although *mobile phone* use is on the rise worldwide (World in Figures 2006), the majority of the research looks at adults or simply overall use. However, a recent study conducted in New Zealand suggests that children's use of mobile phones is also increasing (Census at School 2005). The largest increase was for 9 year olds who were the youngest children surveyed. Among this age group, the number of children who owned their own mobile phone increased by 120 percent since 2003. Among 14 year olds, 84 percent own their own mobile phones. Although parents may give their children mobile phones to use in an emergency, it seems unlikely that use is limited to that. The primary complaint parents have about their children's mobile phone use is large mobile phone bills.

Children as young as 1 year old spend time *listening to music* on the radio, on CDs, tapes, and MP3 players. In fact, 0–1 year olds spend slightly more time (1 hour 4 minutes) listening to music than 2–3 year olds (1 hour) and than 4–6 year olds (53 minutes; Kaiser Family Foundation 2006). 8–10 year olds spend almost an hour (59 minutes) daily, and that length of time increases as children enter their teen years. 11–14 year olds listen to 1 hour 42 minutes daily and 15–18 year olds 2 hours 24 minutes daily (Kaiser Family Foundation 2005).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Age Identity and Communication ▶ Attention ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Girl Culture ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Popular Music ▶ Reality TV ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Video ▶ Video Games ▶ Youth Culture

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## **Media Use, International Comparison of**

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Mass media content is created for audience consumption. Without at least a small audience, the communication process remains unilateral and incomplete. Despite its relevance for media production, regulation, and → marketing, data on media use is systematically collected only in a few (mostly western) countries of the world. Hence the

international comparison of media use patterns remains fragmentary. Evidence provided by global research agencies is often difficult to interpret because a standardized definition of *media use* is lacking. In some cases, data on the distribution of media offerings (e.g., circulation figures) replaces genuine data on media use because the latter is not recorded. With usage patterns changing over time, this overview focuses on the description of valid sources rather than presenting research results that might soon be outdated. Nevertheless, the picture drawn for purposes of exemplification refers to the data available as of 2006 (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

## FACTORS INFLUENCING MEDIA USE

Globalization of the media as a core issue in academic discourse includes the assumption that even remote areas of civilization are characterized by a substantial amount of media use. However, individual usage patterns always develop within a framework of societal boundaries. Usage patterns depend on several factors that influence the conditions under which media can be used at all, and apply differently to nations worldwide.

Among these is, first, the *system of government*. Constitutions of nations in the western hemisphere enshrine freedom of speech (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information). Other political systems hold a different perception of media regulation, including → censorship or access barriers, while their cultural or religious background may enhance the tendency to self-censorship among communicators. This may limit the range of media available for use. *Communication style* in a society affects media use. Cultures (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts) are characterized by different rules and social conventions regarding how media are used, which media are used and for what purpose. For example, religious practices may inhibit media use in certain situations. Also, societies based on mutual respect and courtesy may force their members to use media appropriately. Media use depends also on → access to the media, which have different prerequisites for proper distribution (*infrastructure for distribution*). Newspapers and magazines require physical transport and so roads, boats, airplanes; audiovisual media require technical equipment such as broadcasting stations or satellite transmission.

Beyond technical considerations, access is constrained by individual predispositions, particularly by *individual prosperity*. Print media as well as pay-TV stations and → Internet providers charge their customers for media use. The amount people are able (and willing) to spend for media varies with individual living conditions. Media use is pointless when users are unable to understand the meaning of the offerings (→ *media literacy*). When illiteracy is widespread in a society, media based on written text will not be very popular compared to audiovisual media relying on the power of the image or the spoken word. Beyond the mere decoding of the content, making sense of it becomes an issue as well: understanding media coverage requires a fundamental knowledge among potential audience members for a meaningful interpretation of messages.

*Digitalization and mobility* also play a role (→ Digital Media, History of). Media use always occurs in a particular situation with its own spatial arrangement. If using a certain medium requires a special device (like a TV set or a computer) the opportunity for its use is limited by how much time and which times those devices are available or accessible for. Wireless devices such as mobile phones exploit the digital revolution and provide



ubiquitous but expensive access to sources. At the same time, online database technologies allow for individual consumption of content according to one's own schedule.

The analysis of media access and media use in different countries should *avoid two misinterpretations*. The first is that the diffusion of "new" media inevitably follows a linear process that ultimately leads to a saturated audience. From this point of view, regions with a lower distribution wrongly may be perceived as laggards compared to more advanced regions. The second misunderstanding refers to the assumption that the use of a certain medium has the same meaning or influence in different cultures. Moreover, the use of a certain medium and its meaning develop in a process of appropriation and domestication (Morley & Silverstone 1990).

### USE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF MEDIA

Despite an increasing media convergence ("media meshing"; see European Interactive Advertising Association 2006), media use patterns can still be described following a segmentation of media types. Moreover, the data available are organized accordingly; the countries mentioned in this section serve as examples, as the list of potential instances is long. Detailed information on nation-specific media use patterns can be found in Johnston's (2003–) *Encyclopedia of international media and communications* and in "The world factbook" in the category on "communications" (CIA 2006).

#### Television Use

Infrastructural preconditions for TV access as well as program supply differ substantially between different parts of the world. Data on the role of television in more than 35 countries (based on local surveys) is collected by the annual *international key facts* study (IP International Marketing Committee 2005).

In western democracies such as the US or European nations (see Interview-NSS 2006), but also in technically more developed parts of Asia (Japan, South Korea, and even China), 95 percent and more of households are equipped with a TV set. On the other hand, India (44 percent) and South Africa (68 percent) are examples of the larger group of countries in which television-equipped households are much less prevalent (data for 2002). Television diffusion may even vary between different areas within the same country, notably rural and urban environments. An important factor is marked by the technical basis of TV distribution – by networks or cable or satellite channels. While the latter allow for the reception of a broad variety of channels in several languages, terrestrial broadcasting is usually limited to a smaller range of channels (→ Television Networks; Cable Television; Satellite Television). Another difference is marked by the availability of additional pay-TV programs within a system.

On the basis of time devoted to TV use, the leading role of television as a dominant mass medium is confirmed for most countries. Average time spent in front of the screen exceeds 4 hours in some cases (e.g., Macedonia, US, Poland, Italy), with a large proportion of national mean values ranging between 3 and 4 hours (including Japan, China (Beijing), Germany, and most other EU countries). In poorer and densely populated areas such as parts of India and Southeast Asia, average viewing time may drop to 2 hours and below,

but the same is true for the highly developed South Korean audience. In the Arab world, too, TV has taken the role of the most relevant and most influential medium in society. Satellite television has introduced liberal entertainment programs and, with *Al Jazeera*, a leading outlet for political information, according to surveys in these countries. The USA holds the pole position with adults viewing TV for 297 minutes per day on average. US digital TV reception exceeds 85 percent of all households nationwide, while 70 percent of the population can choose from 100 channels (→ Exposure to Television).

### Radio Use

With its ubiquitous availability and its limited technological requirements, radio has established its role as an unobtrusive companion in the daily life of a global media audience. Daily coverage reaches more than 80 percent in many countries, with a listening time that often exceeds that of television (see IP International Marketing Committee 2002). The popularity of radio is closely tied to its subsidiary use characteristic: Demanding only limited attention, radio programs can easily be listened to while pursuing other activities, even in the workplace or in a car. As a consequence, a substantial part of radio use takes place outside people's homes and while doing other things. Mobility has always been an important factor of radio use.

Beyond this general description, national differences in usage patterns should not be neglected. Taking *Europe* as an example, use in the workplace peaks in Finland while the share of radio consumption in the private home reaches almost 90 percent in Belgium, against the worldwide trend toward out-of-home use. Other differences refer to the daily routines of listeners, with radio serving as a complement to TV use. In some countries, radio use peaks early in the morning, followed by a steady drop-off during the day and almost negligible figures in the evening when TV prime time begins (e.g., in the UK or in Germany).

While the general level of radio use is equally high throughout Europe, dissimilarities can be observed in other regions of the world. Looking at *Asia*, access still is an issue, with 15 percent or less of inhabitants owning a receiver in, e.g., Myanmar, Cambodia, or Laos. It should be mentioned that in some areas it is still common to attach speakers to high trees or poles to play music and to read out newspaper articles in order to provide a radio-like program. Although in Japan and South Korea, there is an available receiver for every person, the actual use figures rank only third after TV and the Internet (e.g., Japan: 94 minutes per day in 2004). In the Arab world, radio is rated higher due to the strong oral traditions in these cultures. Recently, religious content has become increasingly important, with listeners being confronted now with prayers outside the mosque, and, as a sideline, female users accumulating religious knowledge, which contributes to strengthening women's civil rights to a certain degree (→ Exposure to Radio).

### Newspaper and Magazine Use

The use of daily → *newspapers* is related to audience literacy and thus varies heavily among nations. At one end of the range, in countries such as Cameroon, only one newspaper copy is available for 1,000 inhabitants on average, but nevertheless intense sharing means those papers reach 19 percent of the population (data for 2000). At the other end, in

Scandinavian countries, Sri Lanka, Singapore, and the UK almost 90 percent of the population look into a newspaper at least once a day. Furthermore, the informational basis for these figures differs substantially. For example, Norway's high reach is caused by 23 different newspapers available per 1 million inhabitants, while the same number of Japanese and Chinese readers has only one newspaper on average to choose from. Few newspapers in these countries show an extremely high circulation (World Association of Newspapers 2005).

The *global downward trend* of newspaper use has continued unchanged in recent years, although for newspaper use statistics the insight is particularly true that figures may tell a different story according to what is considered to be a newspaper (see also Schneider & Schütz 2004 in detail). The tradition of subscribing to a newspaper is not common in every media system, although the permanence of a newspaper delivered to one's home increases the probability of newspaper use, as well as daily routines including newspaper use (such as the morning breakfast, commuting periods, or work breaks). For rural areas in Africa, reliable distribution is a major obstacle, combined with widespread illiteracy, lingual fragmentation, and poverty. Therefore newspaper use is limited almost exclusively to larger cities. A completely different situation can be found in Latin America, where the press has always played an important role in political conflict.

Related to the newspaper market is the field of → *magazines*, though differing in that there is a positive trend in audience interest and China is the world leader in production (8,135 different titles in 1999). In all regions of the world, the number of magazine titles is steadily increasing, while the total number of copies sold, indicating users' interest, remains rather stable, reducing the audience of a single outlet permanently (Distripres 2006). Thus, more than any other, the field of special interest magazines is dominated by the production of similar formats in different languages for similar target groups in different countries (see below; → Picture Magazines; Exposure to Print Media).

## **Internet Use**

Since the mid-1990s, the Internet in general and the world wide web in particular have attracted an increasing audience worldwide (UCLA Center for Communication Policy 2003). Closely tied to an efficient technical infrastructure, dynamics have been more intense in developed countries. Penetration rates (2005) peak where 75 percent and more of the population report that they have used the Internet within the last week, such as in Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, South Korea, or the US (Eurostat 2006, 186). Due to the technical requirements, Internet use in developing countries in Africa and Asia is still considerably lower, with mobile technologies opening an option to overcome the dependency on cost-intensive landline cables.

Although the share of Internet users among the population is low in China and India, they already contribute substantially to the estimated more than one billion users worldwide. Given the high population growth rates especially in China, it is expected that English as the lingua franca of the Internet will soon be complemented by Chinese. Recent technical innovations and the emergence of the so-called "Internet 2.0" have changed usage patterns dramatically: Individual blogging of content (→ Blogger), peer-to-peer exchange of data, and interactive gaming (→ Computer Games and Reality

Perception) have intensified the traffic on the global net and, at the same time, increased the hardware and software standards (European Interactive Advertising Association 2006).

Individual use patterns differ according to the places where access is available – in countries with low diffusion rates, public access points (e.g., Internet cafés) are more important than in countries with a high penetration rate, where the personal home is the dominant access point (→ Digital Divide). Still, the workplace and/or educational institutions (schools, universities) are important access providers, and they are also used for private purposes. Data from the Nielsen Internet Panel (including 11 countries) suggest that in late 2006, the average Internet user had 34 private Internet sessions with about 30 hours of Internet use in total, which equals a 1-hour-session per day (→ Exposure to the Internet).

### **Use of Mobile Communication Devices**

In 2004, more than 1.7 billion mobile phones (→ Telephone Talk) were distributed worldwide, most of them in Asia (41 percent) and Europe (33 percent). The availability of prepaid phone-cards contributed substantially to the diffusion of mobile devices. Penetration is highest in European countries, where each person owns (on average) more than one mobile phone. Due to technical constraints and a different billing system, penetration is lower in the US and in Australia (International Telecommunications Union 2006). For this type of media, it is highly relevant to distinguish between distribution of devices and their actual use: In Norway, for instance, 102.4 mobile phone contracts were registered among 100 inhabitants, but still more than 10 percent of the population does not use mobile phones at all. On the other hand, studies from Tanzania suggest that more than 85 percent of the population actually use mobile phones by sharing them, while only five contracts can be found among 100 persons.

In the case of *mobile phones*, the term “use” covers a whole range of different activities. Calling and answering the phone represent only a small portion of activities. In 2004, sending and receiving text messages cumulated to more than 35 billion within three months. Other multimedia functions include Internet access, photography, making short films, playing music or video games, and of course sending and exchanging data files (Kearney 2005). In fact, current mobile devices have become portable microcomputers that accelerate the process of convergence between different media application. Moreover, the distinction between mass media and individual communication gets increasingly blurred, and the same is true for public and private use of media applications (→ Mobility, Technology for).

### **CROSS-NATIONAL MEDIA FORMATS**

With regard to media content, international use can also be generated by cross-national distribution of the same or similar products. On the level of entire channels, transnational television is a common phenomenon in Europe. Beyond simple cross-border broadcasting, which seems unavoidable for territorial reasons, several channels expressly address a transnational audience. According to Chalaby (2005), such channels can be classified as

(1) ethnic, (2) multi-territory, (3) pan-European, and (4) networks. The example of Al Jazeera mentioned above illustrates the relevance of satellite TV for making content accessible to cross-national audiences (→ Arab Satellite TV News). Although few studies are available, this type of content is ideal for an international comparison of media use.

Furthermore, economic globalization (→ Globalization Theories) also *implies trading with successful media products and formats*. Two different business practices are dominant in this field and can best be explained for the TV market: First, producers simply sell their program to a channel in another country, where it is dubbed, subtitled, or broadcast without modification. The global distribution of serialized fiction programs (predominantly from the US) such as *Dallas* or *Dynasty*, or more recently *Emergency Room* and *CSI*, follows this strategy.

Second, national broadcasters *buy the idea* of a specific format and adapt it to their national audience with major or minor changes. This concept is pursued in the case of, e.g., *Big Brother* or *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, and more generally in the field of nonfiction entertainment. Nevertheless, the plots of successful telenovelas or → soap operas are also sold and copied worldwide. The result remains the same: a global audience (which might reach a size of 110 million people watching the different local versions of the *Idols*-shows) confronted with a roughly similar media offering (→ Globalization of the Media; Americanization of the Media).

### COMPARATIVE ACADEMIC RESEARCH ON MEDIA USE

Most of the empirical evidence presented earlier was collected by market research agencies interested in commercially relevant data on the success of media offerings. Academic institutions have contributed only marginally to the level of knowledge in the field, as cross-national research is costly and national grants are often only allowed if funding from different countries is available.

According to the standards of scientific argumentation, international comparisons of media use should be developed against the background of a theoretical approach including or explaining media use as a factor. For example, the “digital divide hypothesis” proposes, among other things, national differences in the use of online media with an emphasis on the dynamics of the process (Norris 2001). However, access figures should not be confused with use and usage patterns, which depend heavily on the media literacy of users.

Comparative empirical studies are mostly limited to the audience analysis of one media application in some selected countries. For example, Jensen (1998) compiled evidence on TV news viewing in seven states: Belarus, Denmark, India, Israel, Italy, Mexico, and the USA. Obviously, substantiating the selection is crucial for the significance of the results: as the sample is not random, but each country stands for a larger set of nations, one could argue that often *international* research on media use in fact is *cross-cultural*, with nations as indicators for the culture they represent.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Blogger ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet

► Exposure to Print Media ► Exposure to Radio ► Exposure to Television ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Globalization of the Media ► Globalization Theories ► Internet ► Magazine ► Marketing ► Media Literacy ► Mobility, Technology for ► Newspaper ► Picture Magazines ► Satellite Television ► Soap Operas ► Telephone Talk ► Television Networks

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# Media Use across the Life-Span

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A common finding in media research is that age groups differ in the amount and functions of their media use. Communication scholars have pointed out two possible explanations for such differences. First, there are life-cycle or maturational explanations: media use is supposed to change across the life-span in response to an individual's development. Second, there are generational explanations: people who are born in a certain period are supposed to adopt particular patterns of media use. For example, research shows that older people spend more time watching television than do younger age groups. It may be that older people watch more television than when they were younger because their situation and needs have changed. Alternatively, older people may watch more television than younger people because television is more important to their generation than it is to younger generations.

Theoretical considerations have focused on age. Empirical research shows relations between media use and age. However, researchers writing on life-cycle explanations have argued that this "chronological age" has its limitations as a concept, because it is not the factor that explains the changes in media use across the life-span. In the example: older people watch more television than when they were younger not because their age has changed but because their situation and needs have changed. Therefore, researchers came up with alternative concepts, such as *life-span position* and *contextual age*, that are more insightful regarding developments across the life-span. In generational explanations, the concept of "formative years" is important. Generations are supposed to acquire a strong attachment to the media that they use during these socializing years. For example, the generation growing up in the 1990s (sometimes referred to as generation y or the net generation) witnessed the introduction and popularization of information technologies such as the → Internet, email, and mobile phones (→ Electronic Mail; Mobility, Technology for) in their younger years; this may lead to a continuing strong affection for these media during later stages of their lives.

There are methodological problems in trying to disentangle these life-cycle and generational influences on media use. Fortunately, cohort analyses have been conducted that provide some insight into these coexisting influences ("cohort" is the methodological term for people who are born in a certain period; → Longitudinal Analysis). These theoretical and methodological issues regarding media use across the life-span will be discussed below. Information on research that focuses in more depth on media use at a particular stage of life can be found in other entries (→ Media Use and Child Development; Media Use by Children).

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The basic notion in life-cycle explanations is that media use is related to biological, cognitive, and social development across the life-span. The general idea is that when

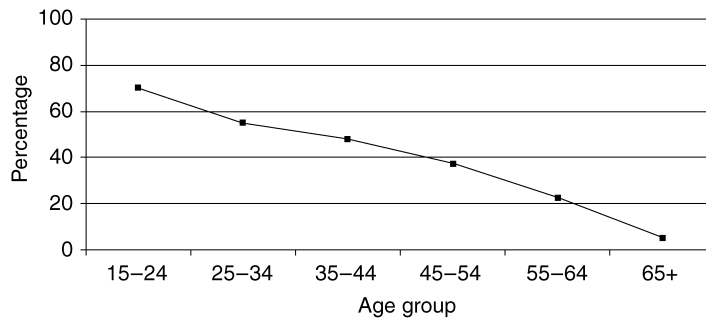
people pass through the stages of life they experience changes and therefore their media use changes as well. Several authors (e.g., Dimmick et al. 1979; Rosengren & Windahl 1989) have described this process using the → uses and gratifications paradigm. Central to these descriptions is that *developmental events and processes create needs as well as resources* (such as physical or material resources). Subsequently these needs and resources bring about certain types of media use. For instance, several developments can take place in old age: many older people retire and experience physical aging, and some are confronted with losses in their social networks. These developments may lead to new needs, such as the need for activities to pass the newly available time or the need for company. Changes in resources are also apparent. These changing needs and resources may lead to new patterns of television use, for example spending more time viewing or using television more for company than before (van der Goot et al. 2006).

This developmental perspective implies that it is not chronological age that explains changes in media use. The term “life-span position” (Dimmick et al. 1979) has been used to indicate that it is more insightful to think about the relation of media use to life stages such as childhood than to study the relation of media use and age. This raises the question of how to measure people’s position in the life-span. Rubin and Rubin argued (e.g., A. M. Rubin & Rubin 1986) that it would be better not to use age, but to assess indicators of life position directly. Therefore they developed the concept of *contextual age*. This construct includes six dimensions relevant to defining aspects of people’s situation: physical health, interpersonal interaction, mobility, life satisfaction, social activity, and economic security. A young person and an older person have the same contextual age if they score the same on these variables. However, chronological age is still commonly included in audience research. It is considered to be a marker variable, an indicator of the stages of life.

The main assumption in generational explanations is that the circumstances under which a generation grows up determine to a large extent this generation’s behavior later in life. Scholars argue that experiences during socialization or during adolescence, the so-called *formative years*, leave long-lasting impressions on values and attitudes, and continue to influence behavior at later stages of life (Peiser 1999). Generations are supposed to be different from each other because they have grown up in different societal, political, and economic circumstances. Similarly, scholars have argued that generations are different with regard to media use. Generations may adopt specific patterns of media use when they are young and remain faithful to those throughout the life-span (Mares & Woodard 2006). In other words, generations that are young when a particular medium becomes popular may have a stronger attachment to that medium than do previous or later generations.

Several *generations* have been identified in the twentieth century, with regard to America and to a lesser extent other western countries. The names and birth years are debated, but this identification approximately concerns the following: the pre-war generations (born before World War II); the baby-boomers (born between 1946 and 1964); generation X (born between 1965 and 1976); and generation Y (born between 1977 and 2001). Moreover, generations have been defined in terms of the media they grew up with. So far, a television generation and a net generation have been distinguished. The television generation consists of those people that were young during the introduction and spread of television. A definition in terms of years of birth should be country-specific depending on the diffusion of television. In the United States those born in 1950 or later are supposed to be





**Figure 1** Percentage internet users by age group  
*Source: Eurobarometer 56.0 (2001)*

the television generation; in a study in Germany the television generation was operationalized as the people who were born after 1965 (Peiser 1999). The television generation is supposed to have a stronger affection for television and to be less inclined to read than previous generations. The term “net generation” is used for the generation growing up with information technology, most importantly the Internet. This generation has been defined as the people born between 1977 and 1997 (Tapscott 1998). So in America the television generation partly coincides with the baby-boom generation, whereas “generation Y” and “net generation” are different names for roughly the same generation.

## EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Ideally, research would provide a picture of the changes in media use across the life-span and the ways in which this media use is influenced by people’s formative years. To gain insight into these life-span and generational influences on media use, it is necessary to have information about the media use of several generations from their childhood to old age. However, this involves methodological problems that will be discussed below. Subsequently, research will be discussed that sheds some light on media use across the life-span. Cohort analyses have been conducted with regard to time spent on television watching, and motives for viewing have been studied in relation to age. Content preferences across the life-span are discussed in other entries (→ Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span; Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span; News Processing across the Life-Span). Research on Internet use will be discussed briefly below, because so far this research leans toward generational explanations (→ Internet Use across the Life-Span).

Most empirical research is cross-sectional, which means that it consists of data collected at one point in time. *Cross-sectional research* shows differences between age groups, but the problem is that older age groups represent both people in old age and older cohorts. This problem can be illustrated with the cross-sectional finding that younger age groups use the Internet more than do older age groups (see Fig. 1). The group aged 15 to 24 years refers to people in their late adolescence and early adulthood, but in Figure 1 it also refers to the group of people born between 1977 and 1986. This means that it is not possible to determine whether this age group uses the Internet more because they are at this stage of life, or because they were born in those years. In methodological terms: it is impossible

to determine whether the differences are caused by life-cycle (age) effects or cohort effects.

In cross-sectional research, scholars can only try to come up with theoretical arguments for life-cycle or cohort effects. Are there reasons to assume that this age group of 15 to 24 years uses the Internet more because it fits better with the needs and situations of adolescents than with the needs of people at later stages of life? Such life-span explanations would mean that part of this group would stop using the Internet later in their lives, because later in life it would be less suitable to their needs. Alternatively, it could be argued that this age group of 15 to 24 years uses the Internet more than do older groups because they are part of the generation that has grown up with the Internet, whereas the older groups are part of generations that did not grow up with this technology. This generational explanation would mean that a large share of this age group would continue to use the Internet when they grow older.

Because cross-sectional research cannot disentangle life-cycle and cohort effects, other methods, such as *cohort analysis*, have been designed. To conduct a cohort analysis, data have to be available for several cohorts at a variety of life stages. It is necessary to have cross-sectional surveys with comparable variables on media use, and that have been carried out at different times of measurement. These data are hard to find, and therefore only a few cohort analyses on media use have been conducted (e.g. Danowski & Ruchinskas 1983; Peiser 1999; Mares & Woodard 2006). Moreover, scholars will have to wait many more years to be able to witness how media use develops across the life-span for the baby-boomers and for generations X and Y. The baby-boomers will turn 65 from 2011 onward, and it will be interesting to see how their media use will change when they retire.

The cohort analysis by Mares and Woodard (2006) provides some insight into the development of the amount of television viewing across the life-span. The researchers used six measurement times (1978, 1982, 1986, 1990, 1994, and 1998) from the General Social Survey in which respondents were asked how many hours they watched television on an average day. Mares and Woodard found that throughout the life-span there are differences in viewing that are not explained by cohort effects. Even after controlling for cohort, period, sex, and education levels, there appeared to be an effect of age on the amount of viewing. Viewing was moderate among 15 to 28 year olds, declined throughout the late twenties, thirties, and forties, and gradually increased again in the fifties, and viewers aged over 60 watched more than younger age groups. Moreover, many cross-sectional surveys since the 1950s have found that older people watch more television than younger people. Therefore, scholars have emphasized life-cycle explanations in the case of time spent on television watching.

Mares and Woodard tested such life-cycle explanations for the finding that older people watch more television than younger people. It appeared that some older people watch more television than younger people because they do not have to go to work. To a lesser extent, some older adults watch more television than younger adults because of poorer health. Mares and Woodard stress that these descriptions apply only to some older people, because of the variability among older viewers. Older people turned out to be even more heterogeneous than younger age groups. Viewing levels were varied in early adulthood, became relatively stable in middle adulthood, and became more variable again as viewers got older (→ Exposure to Television).

Also, this cohort analysis yields some support for the concept of a television generation. Cohorts born just after the turn of the century (before 1905) watched the least television across the six measurement times. Later cohorts watched more, especially those born between the late 1940s through the 1960s. More recent cohorts showed something of a decline. This means that the cohorts that were in their childhood and teens during the introduction and popularization of television seem to have the strongest attachment to this medium.

The *relation between motives for television viewing and age* has been studied in some cross-sectional studies (e.g. Ostman & Jeffers 1983; Gunter 1998; Mundorf & Brownell 1990). Ostman and Jeffers formulated hypotheses on how motives for viewing would vary with the age of viewers. In this survey (N = 140, age 18 to 87), three motives for using television were positively related to age (to learn things; to overcome loneliness; to find something to talk about), whereas two motives were negatively related with age (to forget; to pass time when bored). Also, Rubin and Rubin (e.g., R. B. Rubin & Rubin 1982) conducted several surveys among adult and older samples in which they included their contextual age variables and variables on television viewing motives, program preferences, and viewing behaviors. These studies showed correlations between aspects of contextual age and aspects of television use. However, the research available so far does not present a clear picture of how motives for television viewing change across the life-span.

The Internet was introduced in the 1990s. From its introduction until now, many cross-sectional surveys have shown that older people have less access to the Internet and use it for a narrower array of activities than do younger people (e.g. Loges & Jung 2001). The concept of the → *digital divide* (→ Exposure to the Internet) has been used to indicate the gap between groups that are ahead in using new technologies and groups that lag behind. Within western societies, age is one of the factors associated with this gap. Most scholars lean toward generational explanations: the current generation of younger people will continue to use this technology when they grow older and therefore the age divide will probably disappear with time. On the other hand, other authors (Loges & Jung 2001) are cautious in ascribing the divide to a generational effect. They suggest that older people in 2040 may be similar to older people now. Therefore, differences between the Internet use of old and young people may survive.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising: Responses across the Life-Span ► Attention to Media Content across the Life-Span ► Audience Research ► Communication Skills across the Life-Span ► Developmental Communication ► Digital Divide ► Electronic Mail ► Exposure to the Internet ► Exposure to Television ► Internet ► Internet Use across the Life-Span ► Longitudinal Analysis ► Media Literacy ► Media Use and Child Development ► Media Use by Children ► Mobility, Technology for ► News Processing across the Life-Span ► Uses and Gratifications

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## Media Use by Social Variable

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It is a phenomenon that can be observed in all industrialized societies that media use is connected with demographic factors. As a rule, people from different social backgrounds also use the media differently. On the other hand, people from similar social backgrounds also show similarities in their use of the media. Thus, there is a significant difference between the way women and men, older and younger people, and people with higher or lower levels of education use the media. Similarly, people from different ethnic groups differ in their use of the media. Another factor that is closely linked to media use is opinion leadership.

There are some *examples* of the influence of socio-demographic factors that can be observed in almost all industrialized countries. Men and people with a low income, for instance, spend more time watching → television, while people with a higher standard of education tend to read → newspapers. The importance of age for media use is particularly well documented (van der Goot et al. 2006). Analyses conducted in the USA by the General Social Survey and in 12 European countries by the European Social Survey basically show similar results for the use of television. With the exception of Romania, people from the age of 60 (in the USA) or 65 (in Europe) use television more frequently than all other age

groups. On the other hand, older people use the → Internet far less frequently than younger people (Loges & Jung 2001).

## THEORETICAL MODELS

From the point of view of the communication sciences, the mere description of socio-demographic variables of media use is unsatisfactory. The question that needs to be asked is what we *really* know once we have established, say, that women give preference to different types of media than men. We cannot part from the assumption that gender has a direct influence on media use. Women do not show a specific behavior in their use of the media due to the mere biological fact that they are women, but because their sex is linked to other factors. The question we are facing is therefore not a biological but rather a sociological one; it is a question of gender, not a question of sex. An example given by Westerik et al. (2005) shows that pertinent analyses can be very complex. They observed that women start watching television earlier in the day than men. This, however, is mainly due to the traditional role allocation. Women spend more time at home and therefore can watch television more often. If this is taken into account, analyses will show that in similar circumstances – that is, when they are at home – men also start watching television earlier.

This example shows that socio-demographic variables are indicators for specific social situations and that the relation between them and media use is a complex one. An analysis of how social variables affect media use requires a theoretical analysis of the factors that motivate people to use the media in the first place and allow people to use media. If these factors are related to specific social situations they can explain the relationship between socio-demography and media use. Based on these considerations, we can distinguish some characteristics of social situations that are relevant to media use: needs, media images, resources, competence and skills, values, and expectations related to social roles.

The exact nature of the relation is a contentious issue. One approach is the *deterministic model*, i.e., that media use results from the social situation with a certain inevitability. In a different approach, media use is not interpreted as the result of a social situation but rather as *part of a way of life*. Modern sociological approaches are based on the assumption that social stratification can no longer be seen as the main structural characteristic of postindustrial societies. A variety of different life plans and ways of life has taken the place of a clearly recognizable social structure. This process is usually described as individualization. In fact, a new social order is developing that on the one hand allows the individual more freedom of choice, but on the other hand also forces the individual to make a choice and, thus, creates a need for guidance.

This social order can be described on the basis of aesthetic schemas of everyday life. Due to an improved standard of living, striving for the satisfaction of material needs has given way to the wish for an aesthetically satisfactory way of life, for a beautiful life. Not surviving, but living a fulfilled life has become the most important issue. The main characteristic of a so-called experience society (*Erlebnisgesellschaft*) is that experience orientation is its basic collective motivation (Schulze 1992). Individuals are offered more and more options in their everyday life. The choices they make are usually not factual but aesthetic or a matter of taste (→ Aesthetics). Everyday activities are seen as a sign and

expression of personal taste and style. This lifestyle is at the same time a means of distinction and a means of integration. It affects different aspects of life. It is reflected in the choice of clothes as well as leisure activities, the consumption of culture, and also in media use. Groups that share the same aesthetic everyday life schema can be identified empirically and distinguished from other groups that share a different schema. Aesthetic everyday life schemas are collective codes of experience. They limit the infinite number of possible aesthetic everyday life behaviors, including media use, and can be identified by members of the collective.

Thus, new groups, i.e., new social structures, develop and options multiply in such a way that individuals have to choose and combine them to “compose” their lives. Eventually milieus emerge that can be identified and differentiated according to their aesthetic everyday life schemas (Schulze 1992). However, as Bourdieu (1984) has shown, it is an illusion that lifestyles can be freely chosen. In fact, lifestyles are dependent on variables of social stratification. According to Bourdieu (1984), social structure is based on three sorts of capital: the economic, the social, and the cultural capitals. Social classes are formed according to the availability of these and can be differentiated according to their cultural customs and expressions of taste, and therefore also according to their media use.

## EXPLANATORY FACTORS

### Needs

The → uses and gratifications approach is a standard theory of media use (Blumler & Katz 1974). This theory is based on the assumption that the media are used for the satisfaction of needs and therefore compete with other sources of gratification. It is assumed that users are aware of their motivation and relate specific media contents to their perceived individual needs. In other words, the users themselves decide for what purposes they use the media. Rosengren (1974) differentiates between the terms “need” and “problem.” Problems result from the interaction of individuals, situational needs from the structure of society (Rosengren 1974, 270f.). A problem can therefore be described as a special kind of need that is dependent on the factors mentioned above. The term “need” refers to needs in general as part of human nature, whereas the term “problem” refers to the different forms of specific individual and situational needs. This makes clear that the occurrence of needs is related to social situations.

The *need for* → *escapism* occurs more often in situations that are perceived as stressful. There is, for instance, an obvious connection between a person’s need to relax and their workload. It can be assumed that the less control a person has of their work and the more alienated from their work they feel, the more they will turn to the media to satisfy compensatory needs. Some authors assume that older people have less need to relax or seek distraction because they are retired and do not suffer from work-related stress any more (van der Goot et al. 2005). Similarly, the different use of the Internet by older and younger people can be explained by their different needs (→ Internet Use across the Life-Span). Older people use the Internet with a small set of motives. Young people, on the other hand, use the Internet for social interaction, which for older people is less important. Older

people go through “a process of disengagement” (Loges & Jung 2001, 540). While younger people see this as useless isolation, it is quite possibly just a normal process for the elderly.

Jeffres (2000) describes the interdependence of *ethnic integration* and ethnic media use. Members of ethnic minorities use ethnic media more intensively if they are deeply rooted in their ethnicity. This leads to a strengthening of their ethnic identity. It can be assumed that in a minority situation the need to strengthen the ethnic identity will be pronounced and that this is the reason for ethnic media use. “Ethnic media appear to act as vehicles that help ethnics to retain attachment to their culture over time” (Jeffres 2000, 522; → Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication).

### Media Images

Apart from needs, *expectations of the media* play an important role in the uses and gratifications approach. People turn to the media expecting them to be able to provide the gratification they are looking for; that is, on the basis of media images. If there is a specific need and the expectation that the media can meet this need, we will find a motive for media use.

Age, or rather the fact that a user belongs to a specific generation, can play an important role here. Specific age groups share specific expectations of the quality of the media. This expectation that the media will be able to meet certain needs is acquired; that is, it results from the individual’s media biography. It is influenced by key events in the media as well as dominant media contents during biographically relevant periods of life (Dimmick et al. 1979).

### Resources

Human behavior, also in regard to media use, cannot be understood only from the underlying motivation. We also need to take into consideration what possibilities an individual has to act and what restrictions they are subject to. In respect to media use, this means that a potential media user is not completely free to use the media but is restricted by a possibly limited offer, and by laws and other normative regulations (→ Communication and Law). The most important restriction is the cost that is connected with certain actions. Media use is regarded as a low-cost situation (→ Media Economics). Nonetheless, in specific situations, media use can be limited by lack of available relevant resources. In the communication sciences cost–benefit analysis has played a role particularly in the analysis of information obtainment (Downs 1957; Atkin 1973). Here, costs for information obtainment include monetary costs as well as time and cognitive effort (Atkin 1985).

Resources are *external possibilities to act*. They are not personal characteristics of the individual, but the individual can make use of them. Usually resources can be used up and tapped again. Their influence on media use is twofold. On the one hand, the potential media user must have access to necessary resources to be able to afford media use. With regard to the resource of time, for instance, this can be problematic for many potential users. But also material resources often present a problem. It is currently being discussed whether large parts of the world population are excluded from the use of new media technology due to lack of material resources (→ Digital Divide). On the other hand,

available resources dictate what other possibilities there are to meet specific needs besides media use. The connection between resources and socio-demographic variables is obvious. Factors like employment and income determine time and financial resources. There is an evident connection between income and use of daily papers. Higher income leads to more frequent use of daily papers. This also remains true when the influence of education is taken into account (Lauf 2001). It seems that a certain income is required to be able to afford a daily newspaper.

### **Competence and Skills**

Competence and skills are, as opposed to resources, internal possibilities to act. They form part of the individual's personality. As a rule, competence and skills can be acquired or neglected, but they cannot be used up. There is a rather simple connection between competence and skills and media use: a user must be able to read to use a newspaper, or must be an experienced and skilled reader to be able to read more demanding literature. The ability to read, however, is closely linked to age and level of education, i.e., to demographic factors. Nussbaum et al. (2002) assume that the development of communicative competence is a lifelong process. One of the reasons for the – lately weakening – connection between the level of education and newspaper use probably is that people with a higher standard of education are more competent readers (→ Exposure to Print Media).

### **Values**

Blumler (1985, 50) stresses the influence social values have on media use. The expected effect of media use has to be looked upon favorably by the user. It does not suffice to expect to be entertained and amused by the media; entertainment itself must be seen as something valuable (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Therefore, every decision to use the media is a value judgment. Moreover, specific media contents or manner of presentation can clash with the moral values of potential users.

It is reasonable to assume that some users may expect some gratification from pornography in the media but reject it on moral grounds. Different social groups can have different sets of values. Social milieus often share homogeneous moral concepts that differ from those of other milieus. Age is also an important variable. Different cohorts have experienced a different socialization and have been formed by different biographies, resulting in different moral values. Different ethnic groups in modern multicultural societies in most cases have distinct sets of values.

### **Age, Gender Roles, and Expectations**

Different demographic variables are connected with different social roles. We use the term “gender” to describe the fact that sex is not merely a biological, but more importantly a social fact, as it allocates different roles to men and women. Old age and youth are also in a certain sense social roles. Social roles lead to expectations regarding behavior. Society defines what the socially accepted behavior is for an older or younger person, a man or a woman. Dimmick et al. (1979) suggest that media gratification is



influenced by expectations regarding socially accepted behavior of people in a specific “life span position.” Such expectations can also influence media use.

Video games, for instance, are better suited to meet a boy’s need for inclusion and affection than a girl’s. The need for inclusion and affection is equally strong in both sexes. However, it is socially less acceptable for girls to play action games and therefore using these games is not as satisfactory for them as it is for boys (Lucas & Sherry 2004; → Video Games).

### **A Special Case: Opinion Leaders**

Opinion leadership is distinct from socio-demographic factors like age, gender, and education. While these, as shown above, describe a specific social situation, opinion leadership describes a social position in a given social context (→ Opinion Leader). Lazarsfeld et al. (1944), who discovered this phenomenon, parted from the assumption that opinion leadership exists in all social classes and that it is therefore independent of demographic factors like education and income. Research, however, shows that there is a positive correlation between opinion leadership and socio-demographic variables. This might be due to a measurement error. It is possible that opinion leadership measurement is more accurate in higher social classes, but is inadequate to assess opinion leadership in the lower classes.

Opinion leaders use the media differently. They use the information media more frequently and more intensively than others. However, the relation between opinion leadership and media use is a special one. Media use is constitutive to the exercise of opinion leadership. Opinion leadership appears to be not the condition for media use but its cause. In this aspect it also differs from demographic variables. Using the media does not change a person’s sex or age or the fact that a person belongs to a certain generation. Under certain circumstances media users can become richer or more educated through media use.

This entry argues that demographic variables are useful to describe mass media audiences, but without a theoretical framework those variables do not work as explanatory concepts. Demographic variables are indicators for specific social situations. These situations differentiate in regard to values, resources, competences, media images, needs, and social expectations. These are the actual explanatory factors at work behind the demographic variables.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Escapism ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Newspaper ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Pornography Use across the Life-Span ▶ Television ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Video Games ▶ Women’s Media Genres

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## Mediated Populism

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Populism, a notoriously ambiguous concept, is a political ideology emphasizing the central role of the “ordinary people” in the political process. Populist leaders “see themselves as true democrats, voicing popular grievances and opinions systematically ignored by governments [and] mainstream parties” (Canovan 1999, 2–3). “Mediated populism” means

the outcome of the close connection between media-originated dynamics and the rise of populist sentiments, and eventually of populist movements.

Comparative research points out the existence of a sort of complicity between the news media and political populism. The increasing commercialization of the news industry has further intensified the media's natural search for mass audiences, and their craving for → sensationalism, scandal, and conflict (→ Commercialization of the Media). This inclination of the media has been also identified as "media populism." In various countries the media – "by engaging with people's moods, catering to their entertainment needs and harping on negative stories that might spread social and political malaise" (Stewart et al. 2003) – have objectively created widespread sentiments and opinion climates on controversial issues like immigration, unemployment, and crime that have been promptly exploited by populist movements (→ Populism and Responsiveness). The question of whether, and to what extent, this complicity is intentional on the part of the media is open to different interpretations, which may vary along with political cultures.

The great diversity of news media makes it difficult to draw broad generalizations. In most of the cases that have been studied, several news media have displayed what Entman (1989) defines as "production bias," the inevitable slant embedded in all news-making processes (→ Bias in the News). This has meant a largely accidental convergence between the media's corporate ends and the political action engaged by populist leaders, movements, and parties. The rise of certain populist forces has been facilitated by the sheer implementation of → news routines. Nevertheless, in a number of other cases, some news outlets have openly and intentionally voiced people's discontent and malaise with the purpose of mobilizing and generating electoral support for populist politicians.

In general, the available evidence shows that tabloid media – which respond primarily to commercial imperatives (→ Tabloid Press) – are more keen to lend direct and indirect support to populist sentiments and claims, by engaging in sympathetic coverage of populist leaders and their rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies), whereas the elite media (with significant exceptions) – which tend to be mouthpieces of the ruling classes and paladins of the status quo – usually display overt antagonism and treat negatively populist politicians and their political action. In the latter case, beside the production bias, an "evaluation bias" can be seen at work, which reflects the views of the establishment.

On their part, populist leaders and parties engage in intense relations with the media, resorting to different strategies to court the media and/or to secure their media attention (→ Mediatization of Politics). These strategies comprise playing the underdog (that is, exploiting to their advantage the unfriendly coverage of certain media outlets); using professional expertise; addressing and rallying crowds using abrasive speech; looking for free media publicity, which is easily obtained by bullying against the government and raising blazing issues; staging newsworthy, controversial events; and putting pressure on journalists and editors.

Mediated populism takes different shapes depending on the stage of development of the populist phenomena. Research has envisaged a four-stage life cycle (Stewart et al. 2003). In the *ground-laying phase*, the media may be engaged in providing a dramatic portrayal of the country's illnesses, denouncing corruption in government, highlighting immigration-linked crime stories, and the like. This media coverage in the long run is likely to diffuse social malaise and to trigger popular anger and political disaffection. This

domestic political climate represents the ideal milieu for the rise of political figures voicing social discontent and for the dissemination of the populist message. This was clearly the case of Austria's Jörg Haider, whose success was to a significant extent buttressed by the "newsroom populism" (Plasser & Ulram 2003) of the tabloid newspapers, which fuelled a favorable opinion climate. In the *insurgent phase*, populist movements attempt to enlarge and consolidate their popular and electoral support by exploiting more intensely the communication resources that media make available (unintentionally or not). This is a stage when populist leaders – often media-savvy figures – seek to secure media attention by displaying a wide variety of communication tactics. Italy's Northern League's neo-Celtic liturgies, Haider's remarks on the Nazis, and The Netherlands' Pim Fortuyn's outspoken statements on Islam are the type of newsworthy realities that the media covet and cover, thus granting populist actors an enormous and free publicity. The *established phase* is the stage when the movement obtains full legitimization in the country's political system, with seats in parliaments and even in cabinets. This often means loss of newsworthiness for the leaders and their stances, as they take on more ordinary political roles in the political arena, with the consequent lessening of media attention. Some movements have experienced also a *decline phase*, like Ross Perot's Reform Party USA, and Pauline Hanson's One Nation Party in Australia. The attitude and behavior of the media vary widely in this phase. Their spotlights might be suddenly switched on by the political fall of formerly transgressive (and at times "media darlings") populist leaders. The murder of Pim Fortuyn in the 2002 election campaign was followed by a short-lived electoral success. However, his movement lacked his personal charisma and media savvy, and eventually did not survive, among other things, the fall of media interest.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ News Routines ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Populism and Responsiveness ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Tabloid Press

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# Mediated Social Interaction

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Mediated social interaction refers to the interaction between two or more individuals, normally separated in time and/or space, enabled by various communication technologies. Mediated social interaction may take many different forms, depending on how many people are involved in message construction and reception (e.g., one-to-one vs one-to-many); whether participating individuals are required to be present at the time of message transfer (e.g., synchronous vs asynchronous); what kinds of modalities are being used (e.g., text vs full motion video); and so forth.

Technology-mediated communication has been with us for many years. However, it is the proliferation of personal computers and the Internet that has spawned considerable research on mediated social interaction. Not only has computer-based communication created unprecedented opportunities to form, develop, and maintain interpersonal relationships, but it has also altered the ways in which people collaborate in work groups. Thus, the following sections are devoted to computer-mediated communication (CMC), and especially how it differs from face-to-face (FtF) interaction in terms of communication processes and outcomes.

## KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION

Although recent technological advancements support a wide array of communication modalities beyond the exchange of simple texts, the most common form of CMC is still text-based. Thus, compared to FtF interaction, CMC typically lacks social context cues, ranging from nonverbal cues (e.g., facial expressions and gestures) to paraverbal cues (e.g., volume and pitch) to interpersonal cues (e.g., age, physical appearance; → Nonverbal Signals, Effects of; Nonverbal Communication and Culture). According to social presence theory (Walther & Parks 2002), when deprived of visual and auditory cues, people become less aware of their interaction partners and perceive them to be less sociable, warm, and friendly. In this view, reduced social presence renders CMC less effective and appropriate than FtF for socio-emotional communication.

Second, cue deficiency fosters perceived *anonymity*. With their identities hidden, people tend to feel freer from social constraints and become less concerned about → impression management than in FtF encounters. Thus, anonymity might promote uninhibited behaviors, such as strong and inflammatory expressions (i.e., flaming). At the same time, anonymity can serve to democratize communication by liberating individuals from power differences manifested through various status cues (Joinson 1998). For example, an opinion deviate or a low-status individual might find it more comfortable publicly expressing his or her unpopular opinion anonymously, an opinion which might have been suppressed in FtF discussions.

Lastly, CMC does not require participating individuals to be co-present in the immediate environment. Rather, many variants of CMC, such as email, listserv, and

newsgroups, support asynchronous interactions, allowing people from remote locations to send, read, and respond to a message at their convenience. Freed from geographical and temporal constraints, the boundary of an individual's social network has been substantially expanded.

### **SELF-PRESENTATION AND PERSON PERCEPTION**

Studies have reported that people engage in greater spontaneous self-disclosure in CMC. Several explanations exist for why people reveal more about themselves during mediated communication. First, anonymity reduces perceived risks in disclosing potentially embarrassing aspects of self. Thus, those who have stigmatized identities (e.g., non-mainstream sexual preferences or political views) can find similar others more easily in chatrooms and online newsgroups and share their experience. Second, physical separation and the lack of sensory cues lead people to focus more on their inner feelings and thoughts (private self-awareness), while lowering concerns about public evaluations (public self-awareness). Supporting this view, research found that individuals' currently possessed, but not usually expressed traits ("true self") became more accessible in their mind after CMC than after FtF interaction, and these traits were better acknowledged by CMC partners (Bargh & McKenna 2004).

Not only do people speak more about themselves, but they also speak better of themselves in the cue-limited environment. Although people usually present more of their ideal-self qualities to strangers than to their friends or co-workers, text-based CMC allows greater room for strategic self-presentation by eliminating a number of distractions, such as environmental stimuli, simultaneous cues from the partner, and their own physical back-channeling. Consequently, people can concentrate on message construction, making sure that their messages reflect preferred characteristics they wish to present. This selective self-presentation fosters overly positive perceptions and exaggerated interpersonal ("hyperpersonal") expectations. Indeed, after semester-long interactions with remote partners, those who saw their partners' photos formed less positive impressions than did those who communicated without photos (Walther & Parks 2002). In addition, not knowing that they actually interacted with the same person twice, people reported greater liking for their partner after CMC than after FtF interaction (Bargh & McKenna 2004).

One benefit of text-only interaction is the potential nullification of social stereotypes. Because these are often linked to physically salient features, such as gender and race, visual anonymity might suppress social stereotypes. Despite the absence of physical indicators, however, some social category cues seem to remain in text-only CMC. For example, mirroring gender-linked language differences observed in FtF interaction, men's postings to newsgroups showed self-promotion, sarcasm, insults, and strong assertions, whereas women's messages revealed supportiveness and personal orientation. Likewise, female-only discussion groups displayed more self-disclosure, personal opinions, and coalition language than did male-only or mixed-gender groups, and women relied more on graphic accents to express emotions (e.g., smiley faces) than men (Thomson & Murachver 2001; → Language and the Internet). Another implicit gender identity cue is gender-specific knowledge or interest. When judging the target's gender in anonymous

CMC, people relied mostly on the conversation topic and interaction content. Moreover, even when avatars (graphical representations of a person in virtual space) were randomly assigned, in the absence of legitimate gender cues, participants inferred their partner's gender from these arbitrary characters (Lee in press).

Once the interaction partner's category membership is revealed, the information restrictions of the medium can amplify the category's influence (Lee in press). For example, when the interviewee's race was known, people rated Asian-American women as more introverted than African-American women after an email interview, although no such difference was found in telephone interviews. Apparently, to compensate for the interpersonal information filtered out in text-only communication, people turned to social stereotypes and filled in the missing information. Similarly, when gender stereotypes were activated, people exhibited stereotype-congruent behavior only when they were unable to individuate one another; when they exchanged brief biographical information with other group members, the activation of gender stereotypes had no significant effect. Taken together, these results indicate that the limited channel capacity can promote self-stereotyping, as well as category-based person perception (Postmes et al. 1999).

### **GROUP PERFORMANCE AND NORMATIVE INFLUENCE**

In work groups, CMC has the potential to address problems common to FtF discussions: evaluation apprehension and production blocking. By allowing anonymous and simultaneous input from participating individuals, group support systems can lower concerns about negative reactions and prevent a particular member from dominating the floor. Supporting this idea, electronic brainstorming was found to be more effective for idea generation, especially when the group size was large. When group decision-making is concerned, however, a meta-analysis (Baltes et al. 2002) showed that FtF groups generally outperformed their CMC counterparts; that is, FtF groups made higher-quality decisions, took less time to reach a consensus, and yielded greater member satisfaction. Moreover, the advantages of FtF groups were more pronounced when there was a time limit and when the group size was large. Interestingly, anonymity had opposite effects on subjective and objective measures of performance, such that it decreased member satisfaction, but improved the decision quality of CMC groups (→ Meeting Technologies).

Some studies, however, have challenged the notion that anonymity weakens normative concerns in CMC. According to the social identity model of deindividuation effects (SIDE), when there is a common group identity, the lack of individuating information ("deindividuation") can reinforce group-oriented behaviors (Spears et al. 2001). That is, in the absence of interpersonal information that highlights individual differences within the group, people come to perceive themselves and their interaction partners as representatives of a group. Thus, they are more likely to conform to group norms and exhibit ethnocentrism. In fact, when group members were primed with certain social behaviors (i.e., efficiency vs pro-social norms), anonymous groups made prime-consistent decisions in the following discussion, whereas identifiable groups did not. Likewise, people preferred an ingroup (same university) member to an outgroup (different university) member for future collaboration only when no individuating cues were available (Tanis &

Postmes 2003). Collectively, these findings suggest that normative group influence still operates in mediated interaction and can become even stronger with a salient group identity.

### **DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

To understand how CMC affects the ways in which people communicate, make sense of others, and collaborate, researchers have compared CMC with FtF interaction, treating the latter as a gold standard. An implicit assumption underlying this approach is that certain features of the communication channel (e.g., anonymity) influence individuals' perceptions and behaviors in a rather uniform manner, representing technological determinism (→ McLuhan, Marshall). However, as social information processing theory posits, people are capable of adapting to the restrictions of the medium (Walther & Parks 2002). Specifically, users have devised various graphical accents to express their feelings (emoticons) as substitutes for nonverbal cues missing in CMC. In addition, to compensate for the limited opportunities to observe others unobtrusively or to gain information about the target from a third party, CMC participants relied more upon interactive strategies than their FtF counterparts, asking more personal questions (→ Uncertainty Reduction Theory). Consequently, although it might take longer, CMC users can eventually develop as intimate interpersonal relationships as those based on FtF contacts (→ Online Relationships).

Recent studies also demonstrated that different individuals use the same medium differently to different effects. For example, CMC reduced interpersonal influence by temporarily heightening the self-focus, but such an effect was found only for those who chronically experience a high level of private self-awareness. Moreover, when the task posed interpersonal risk (e.g., asking for a date), individuals with low self-esteem had a stronger preference for email over FtF communication than those with high self-esteem. Therefore, to understand better the psychological and social effects of CMC, it seems crucial to investigate how individuals' dispositions moderate the uses and effects of the medium (Lee in press).

Due to the paucity of longitudinal studies, little is known about long-term effects of repeated engagement in CMC. For example, the SIDE model predicted and found that deindividuation amplifies the effects of group identity, but it remains unclear what will happen as people get to know each other better over time. It may be important to examine how prolonged CMC experience alters the nature of non-mediated interaction. Although some researchers have studied how online interaction influences the frequency and amount of offline interaction, it is not known how the communication procedures and conventions associated with CMC might influence the way people carry on FtF interactions, an area which awaits more research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Impression Management ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Meeting Technologies ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Online Relationships ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Social Interaction Structure ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory



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## **Mediated Terrorism**

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Following the September 11, 2001 massive attacks on the United States, the issue of political terrorism has assumed a priority stance in the political agenda of several countries. Once fairly disregarded by scholarly research and analysis, the phenomenon has gained wide attention since the events of that day and those that took place in Iraq, as well as in Bali, Madrid, Beslan, and London. All of these tragic events had in common huge coverage by the media, which amplified the psychological impact on public opinion in the respective nations and worldwide. Extensive and emotion-stirring media coverage is a common feature of modern terrorist events. It has been observed in relation to other breeds of terrorism, such as the IRA in Ireland and the UK, ETA in Spain, the Red Brigades in Italy and the Rote Armee Fraktion in Germany, the Kurdish extremists in Turkey, and domestic US terrorism (the Oklahoma bombing), and others.

Terrorism, whatever definition is given, has been closely associated with communication and → propaganda, to the point that there cannot be envisaged any terrorism without some kind of media-conveyed visibility. The primary goal of terrorist organizations

is, in fact, to “send a message,” usually to target governments, the victims being the instruments to pursue the goal. This message may take the form of violent acts, often with bloodshed, but also of personal threats to political leaders, blackmailing of public authorities, and verbal attacks on political or corporate policies. According to Schmid and de Graaf (1982) “terrorism [itself] can best be understood as a violent communication strategy” (→ Strategic Communication).

In the global village, the mass media and the new media play a pivotal role in the terrorist scheme. Thanks to the new communication technologies, today’s terrorism has undergone an epochal change: it is “less centralized, less structured, and less organized, yet far more dangerous than the terrorism of the late twentieth century” (Weimann 2006, 5). Terrorists can count on global media networks to seize the worldwide public arena. In particular, the most notorious terrorist organization, Al-Qaeda, has demonstrated a shrewd exploitation of media outlets and the → Internet, securing a global impact for its “message.”

The goals of terrorist groups of securing vast publicity for their actions can be defied only in part by the counteractions of government authorities, which might impose bans on the diffusion of violent or subversive messages, and even → censorship on printed and broadcast news, but cannot regulate the Internet, which remains the most resourceful communication means of postmodern terrorism (→ Violence as Media Content).

By means of the Internet, political terrorism succeeds in attaining several *strategic purposes*. First, the Internet serves the practical purpose of planning and coordination and to ensure networking and circulation of key information. Through the Internet, affiliated, semi-independent cells, often “sleeping” ones, scattered around the world are able to maintain contact with one another and to plan common actions. Second, it ensures cheap publicity and diffusion of ideological and motivational messages. All sorts of groups, movements, causes, and parties can resort to the Internet to post their propaganda. Third, it makes fundraising easy and safe: terrorist websites can provide bank account numbers where donations can be wired, with information about donating by credit card and forms to initiate monthly donations via automatic withdrawal from the donor’s bank account. Fourth, its worldwide reach provides receptive audiences among which to recruit new followers and activists. Fifth, it can be used to wage psychological warfare, amplified by the mainstream media organizations that draw on Internet materials (videos, pictures, documents) to feed their news outlets. Finally, search engines and similar technologies have made isolated information quickly and easily retrievable by terrorists, who can attack vulnerable public infrastructures via the web.

Beside the Internet, the traditional media may also become instrumental to terrorism in several ways. One question that has often been debated among public opinion worldwide is whether there occurs a sort of inevitable “complicity” between the news media and terrorists, especially in political contexts, such as liberal democracies, where censorship is not tolerated by the media. The widely accepted news selection practices and rules, such as “bad news is good news,” tend to privilege the uncommon and the dramatic. Terrorist attacks, like disasters, perfectly fit the news value criteria of newsworthiness such as sensationalism and negativism – the more violent and spectacular, the better (→ News Values). With the increasing commercialization of the news profession, terrorist incidents may fit more than ever the infotainment mold that the media industry

increasingly prefers, by offering the sorts of villains and heroes on which the entertainment industry itself thrives in its search for box-office hits (Nacos 2002).

This raises in many cases excruciating *dilemmas* on the part of the free media, battling between the professional imperative of covering what makes the news and the resolution to defend democratic institutions and social peace. Despite the efforts especially of mainstream media to avoid supporting terrorists even indirectly, it appears inevitable that information and communication outlets, from the traditional mass media to the online media, offer groups and individuals with violent agendas and messages of hate extensive and inexpensive opportunities to spread their message and to accomplish their search for political legitimization and popular support. Today the information that is not delivered by one medium is inescapably and immediately provided by another. The Arabic television station Al Jazeera and the Internet have often served as disseminating channels for news, announcements, videos, and other materials produced by terrorist organizations which other outlets around the world had intentionally decided to ignore (→ Arab Satellite TV News). Nowadays terrorists may not have access to weapons of mass destruction but clearly can command a large array of arms of mass communication.

SEE ALSO: ► Arab Satellite TV News ► Censorship ► Internet ► News Routines  
► News Values ► Propaganda ► Strategic Communication ► Terrorism and Communication Technologies ► Violence as Media Content

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## **Mediating Factors**

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Mediating factors are the psychological and social conditions in the communication process that moderate the effects of persuasive mass communication. The concept was

first introduced by Joseph T. Klapper in his influential book *The effects of mass communication* (1960). Sifting through empirical studies available in the late 1950s, Klapper identified five mediating factors that explain why media messages tend to reinforce rather than change existing attitudes. The consideration of moderating variables in media effects research marks a shift from the hypodermic needle or → stimulus–response model to the stimulus–organism–response model.

### INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT

Klapper developed the concept of mediating factors in his review of the state of the art in media effects research. According to the empirical evidence minor change, short of conversion, occurs far less frequently than *reinforcement*, and conversion is particularly rare. Klapper (1960) concluded that “mass communication ordinarily does not serve as a necessary and sufficient cause of audience effects, but rather functions among and through a nexus of mediating factors and influences.” Mediating factors were thus conceptualized as integral elements of this nexus that typically contribute to reinforcement rather than change or conversion of existing attitudes.

Klapper supported his claims with empirical evidence from a wide range of studies on attitude change covering two decades of research activity. Two studies, conducted by → Paul F. Lazarsfeld (his academic teacher at the Columbia University) and his colleagues received particular attention and have ever since served as main evidence for the reinforcement thesis. The first study (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948) investigated the role of the media during the election campaign of 1940. Employing a panel technique, the research team found 5 percent of the respondents to definitely have been converted. They crossed party lines regarding their voting intentions. More than half of the respondents, however, after being exposed to several months of persuasive campaign messages, were found to have reinforced their previous attitudes. The second study (Berelson et al. 1954) examined the media’s role in the decision-making process of the residents of Elmira, NY in the 1948 campaign. Again, a panel design was employed, and the study found that 8 percent of the respondents had been converted.

### THEORETICAL CONCEPT

Trying to explain why persuasive communication is more likely to reinforce than to change attitudes, Klapper focused on the factors external to the communication itself. He claimed that *five factors mediate the mass media’s influence*. The mediating factors are: (1) predispositions and related processes of → selective exposure, perception and retention (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention); (2) groups and their norms; (3) interpersonal dissemination of communication content; (4) opinion leadership (→ Opinion Leader; Two-Step Flow of Communication); and (5) the nature of mass media in a free enterprise society. Drawing upon empirical findings, Klapper discussed how these factors might interfere with the process of media effects. Particular attention is directed on the findings regarding the predisposition of recipients.

*Selection:* People tend to expose themselves to content according to their existing attitudes and to avoid content inconsistent with their attitudes (selective exposure).

Furthermore, even if they do use media content not consistent with their attitudes, they might find alternative cognitive processing strategies for inconsistent content (selective perception) or tend to forget it more easily (selective retention). It represents a threat to their existing opinions. New issues, however, present a better chance for direct media effects since no predispositions have yet been developed (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948).

*Groups:* Rather than being atomized, individuals forming the mass society people are embedded into social groups whose norms shape their opinions and behavior (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955). The norms of groups to which an individual belongs or wants to belong have proved to be particularly resistant to change. Intragroup discussion appears to intensify or reinforce these attitudes and inhibit opinion change.

*Interpersonal communication:* Much of what is disseminated through the mass media does not reach the respondents directly but is transmitted by other media users (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). Since interpersonal communication about a certain topic is more likely to happen between individuals with shared opinions on that topic, it tends to have a reinforcing effect. This supplements the reinforcing quality of persuasive communication because it represents a secondary selection of attitude-consistent media messages.

*Opinion leadership:* Opinion leaders can be described as particularly representative members of a group. They stand for the group's relevance assignments and attitudes. They are characterized by heavy media use. Mass communication is frequently mediated by the opinion leaders. They selectively transmit the media messages to the followers, interpret them in accordance to group norms and thereby reinforce the norms held by the group (Lazarsfeld et al. 1948).

*Nature of mass media in free enterprise societies:* In their attempt to maximize their audience, commercially competitive media try to refer to universally shared norms. Thus content that contradicts dominant social and political values is unlikely to be disseminated by media in free enterprise societies. The content is thus unthreatening to the audience members and supports existing opinions rather than promotes change. Even though this argument relates to fiction rather than political campaigns, it can be applied to information as well.

Klapper emphasized that the specific mediation through these factors all work in the direction of reinforcement. He pointed out that all five mediating factors are characteristics of normal communication situations, even though they might not always be active in the communication process. In his review of empirical evidence Klapper also found incidents of modifications of opinion, especially in laboratory studies, which were considered as minor change. He observed that minor change was not as affected by mediating factors as conversion because fluctuations of opinion do not constitute a psychological threat for the individual. He also conceded that at times and under specific conditions the mass media might provoke change. Several such conditions were discussed. Persuasive communication might promote attitude change if the selective process lacks perfection due to conflicting predispositions, cross pressures in the reference group of an individual, or if individuals chose a new reference group (→ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of). Whether or not persuasive communication leads to change also depends on the degree of *ego involvement* of the attitudes. Ego-involved attitudes are attitudes that are particularly relevant for the individual. They were found to be particularly resistant to change. Direct media effects might also be observed in the case of

attitudes regarding new issues where attitudes have not yet been developed (→ Involvement with Media Content).

## IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA EFFECTS RESEARCH

Klapper's work had far-reaching *consequences for the further development of media effects research* in several ways. First, the formerly dominant stimulus–response model or hypodermic needle model of media effects was replaced by the stimulus–organism–response model. The consideration of mediating factors in communication research thus marks a crucial shift in the media effects paradigm (→ Media Effects, History of). Second, the widespread assumption of strong media effects had to be modified with regard to the specific conditions under which media may or may not have effects. The reinforcement thesis became the dominating thesis regarding media effects.

Yet, Klapper's work has hindered rather than promoted research and theoretical discourse on media effects. Although Klapper had not explicitly or implicitly ruled out media effects entirely – but only specified the conditions under which media produce either reinforcement or change – his publication was frequently taken as discouragement of further studies on media effects. Scholarly attention tended to shift away from effects research in general, and from effects on attitudes in particular. It increasingly focused on media use and cognitive effects. This shift in attention, however, threatens to underestimate the power mass media may develop under particular conditions.

By and large Klapper is to be credited for two things in particular. He drew attention to the role of predispositions and the related mechanisms of selective exposure, and he emphasized the role of interpersonal communication and the idea of opinion leadership as two crucial dimensions in the communication process. Although media effects models have become increasingly complex, incorporating a vast number of variables, these two mediating factors have remained key concepts in media effects research. It may be expected that future research will contribute to a further specification of the exact way mediating factors moderate the effects of mass communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Group Decision-Making, Functional Theory of ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Mediatization of Organizations Theory

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Almost everything the general public knows of corporations and other organizations is mediated by the mass media. This is especially the case regarding strategic decisions, policymaking, and managerial behaviors. Consequently, the mass media seem to be used by organizations as key publics for → public relations in building trust, especially since people tend to trust the media more than they do corporations or political parties (→ Corporate Reputation; Trust of Publics). *Eurobarometer 61* (European Commission 2004) shows that 71 percent of the European public trusts the radio (up from 63 percent in 2001), 61 percent trust television (up from 56 percent in 2001), and 56 percent trust newspapers (up from 40 percent in 2001).

Despite booming public relations efforts in all European countries (Van Ruler & Verčič 2005), 60 percent (in 2004, up from 57 percent in 2003) of the public in the European Union countries said that they do not trust big corporations. Only political parties ranked lower in this *Eurobarometer* (European Commission 2004). In the USA, trust in the news media is lower; Gallup polls show that only about 50 percent (in 2003) of the American public has confidence in the news media, down from about 70 percent in the 1970s. In 2004 only 30 percent of the American public said they had trust in newspapers and television news. Although these numbers are lower than in Europe, US trust in the media is still ahead of trust in big corporations, and American organizations also see the mass media as a key public, subsidizing journalists with all kinds of information (Geary 2005; → Credibility of Content).

## ORGANIZATIONS AND THE MEDIA

The use of public relations subsidies by journalists seems to be enormous. The term “public relations subsidy” is used to describe the activities public relations and public information professionals undertake to provide journalists with information for free. In exchange for this service journalists are expected to make the given information public and thereby legitimize its content (Prenger & Van Vree 2004; Sallot & Johnson 2006). Hallahan (1999) talks about 50 percent of the news coming from these information subsidies; Merten (2004) even speaks of 80 percent. “The relationship between sources and journalists resembles a dance,” as Gans had already said in 1979 on the basis of his empirical studies of the news, “for sources seek access to journalists and journalists seek access to sources. Although it takes two to tango, either sources or journalists can lead, but more often than not, sources do the leading” (Gans 2004, 116).

It is, however, also clear that journalists do not act merely as a pipeline to publics, as many public relations authors as well as professionals tend to believe (Van Ruler 2003). That is why Bentele (2005) talks about the reconstruction of the organizational news by journalists into a final portrayal of the organization. In other words, there seems to be a *complex relationship between organizations and mass media*. In public relations literature,

building trust is nowadays seen as a key issue in the field, replacing issues like supplying information and image building or creation (e.g., Grunig 2001; Bentele 2005). The press plays an important role in this process of building trust, and the interdependence of organizations, the mass media, and the → public sphere has been called a “*ménage à trois*” by Van Ruler (2004). In public relations literature, the complex relationship between organizations, the press, and the public sphere has not yet been described or conceptualized in detail. To conceptualize this *ménage à trois*, the theoretical concepts of mediaization and mediatization can be helpful.

### **MEDIAZATION OF CULTURE**

The concept of mediaization describes the influence of media and of media organizations on the cultural transformations associated with the rise of modern societies (Thompson 1995). This mediaization of culture is seen as a process of cultural change, mainly explained by the increasing number of the mass media and their omnipresence in (post)modern societies. A lot of interaction in today’s society is mediated by some kind of media (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

In the last decades of the twentieth century, mediaization extended, especially within the media field. Thompson (1995, 110–111) writes that “it has become common for media messages to be taken up by other media organizations and incorporated into new media messages . . . There is a relatively high degree of self referentiality within the media, in the sense that media messages commonly refer to other media messages or to events reported in the media.” Because of this “extended mediaization,” the mass media’s role as an intermediary between actors in society, facilitating communication, is diminishing, and some say the media are actively creating a reality of their own: a media reality. The concept of extended mediaization resonates with other theories and notions about the mass media such as media logic, media worlds (Altheide & Snow 1979, 1991) and media hypes (Vasterman 2004).

### **MEDIATIZATION OF INSTITUTIONS**

Some say that mediaization as described above is not only a cultural change but has also led to a change within the institutions of the modern society (e.g. Altheide & Snow 1979; Altheide 2004). Following German sociologist Max Weber, who described how the rationalization of institutions was preceded by the rationalization of culture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the mediaization of culture in the twentieth century might lead to a mediatization of the institutions of (post)modern society. The economic sector could be one of the first sectors of society where such a change is visible, because of the quest of private and public organizations for customers, profits, trust, and legitimacy. The concept of mediatization (see Kaase 1998; Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999; Kepplinger 2002; Schulz 2004; Schrott 2005) might therefore be useful to understand how organizations are coping with the mediaization of culture and their portrayal in the mass media. The question is how organizations cope with media logic and how media logic influences organization logic (Van Ruler 2004) and vice versa.



The term “mediatization” can be used to describe the *penetration of mass media and their logic into other social systems*, e.g., organizations in society (Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999; Kepplinger 2002; → Media Logic). Schulz (2004) has said that mediatization is not only the accommodation of media logic by actors and organizations in society. He suggested explicating mediatization further “with reference to basic performances and function of the medium in communication processes” (Schulz 2004, 98) in order to make the concept applicable to not only the traditional mass media, but also the new media and the role they play in society. Schrott (2005) has taken the concept of mediatization a step further again and proposed an analytical concept of mediatization for empirical research in the political field. Here mediatization is understood as an institutionalization process by which media logic is established as a pattern of orientation and interpretation within political institutions. These patterns of orientation are seen as implicit regulation systems, which overlay or even complement political or economic or scientific regulation systems (Schrott 2005).

Schrott (2005) proposes to operationally define *mediatization in five dimensions of institutionalization*. These five dimensions are (1) causes of and criteria for conforming to media rules and media logic; (2) the context in which these causes and criteria evolve into orientation frames for actors; (3) sanctions and control in order to enforce conformism to media logic; (4) the externalization of contingencies, so that only those problems will be dealt with that can be solved with media logic; and (5) concurrence with regulation patterns other than media logic for interpretive power.

Schrott proposes “a non-normative and therefore neutral definition” (2005, 17) of mediatization as an analytical model for mass communication research in a wide range of empirical contexts, for example in the fields of politics and science. This concept of mediatization also seems promising for the analysis of mediatization processes in the economic field, raising the empirical question of how organizations cope with their portrayal in the mass media and how this influences their patterns of orientation and interpretation as an institution.

SEE ALSO: ► Corporate Reputation ► Credibility of Content ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Legitimacy Gap Theory ► Media Logic ► Media Relations ► Organization–Public Relationships ► Public Affairs ► Public Relations ► Public Relations: Media Influence ► Public Sphere ► Trust of Publics

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## Mediatization of Politics

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Mediatization of politics is a complex process that is closely linked to the presence of a → media logic in society and in the political sphere. It is distinguished from the idea of “mediation,” a natural, preordained mission of mass media to convey meaning from

communicators to their target audiences. To define politics as “mediated” is a simple truism, in that communication and mass media are necessary prerequisites to the functioning of political systems (Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999). Some scholars, such as Deutsch (1963), even hold that politics *is* communication. Certainly, politics and the way it is performed and communicated have been widely affected by the rise of mass media between the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. Such media-driven influence in the political environment is the core of the concept of mediatization. The media have become indispensable actors within the political domain. They have gained a central position in most political routines, such as election campaigns, government communication, public diplomacy and image building, and national and international celebrations.

The centrality of the media in the political arena is a peculiarity of modern democracies, which are strongly characterized by interconnecting forms of mass communication (→ Media Democracy). The media’s rise to a pivotal place in the political processes has caused significant changes and developments in politics as a whole, to the extent that politics is often considered by political communication scholars as media dependent. The concept of dependence, however, is not supported by solid empirical evidence. The interdependence of media and politics seems to constitute a better pattern to represent the actual nature of the relationships between them. The media are nevertheless frequently credited with exercising overwhelming influence on political events, persons, issues, and opinions, and, at the same time, politicians are aware of the media’s attention rules, production routines, and selection criteria, and adapt their communication behavior to media requirements.

## EFFECTS OF MEDIATIZATION

Research has pointed out several effects of mediatization, among which are the capacity of the media to set the agenda of the political debate, the spectacularization and personalization of political communication, the fragmentation of political discourse, and the “winnowing” effect.

### Agenda Setting

The mass media, especially the information outlets, are acknowledged to have significant power to *structure and frame political reality* by determining what is relevant for public discussion, by raising issues, and by providing criticism (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). By pointing their spotlights on certain political events and by investigative reporting, the news media are in a position to drive the public debate, influence the campaign agenda, and prompt political figures to focus and take stances on the issues raised. This power is exalted or mitigated by the nature of the political milieu in a given national context. For example, in political systems that grant large autonomy to the media, political communicators are less successful in neutralizing the agenda shaping of the media. However, in political milieus where media–politics relations are characterized by close interdependence, the political agenda is more likely to be the joint output of the interaction of both actors (Semetko et al. 1991).

### Spectacularization and Personalization of Politics

The spectacularization of politics is an effect especially linked to the influential presence of television on the political scene. The “grammar” of television language has increasingly changed the patterns of political communication (→ Political Communication Culture). By becoming the target of an incessant dramatization on the part of commercial media, political activity has been driven to adjust its traditional forms of communication to the new canons of a media-centered environment (Mazzoleni 1987). This fact has entailed a recasting of the symbolic and expressive devices of political representation. In addressing citizens and voters, political communicators no longer rely on the mediation of militants. They can no longer “use the rhetoric of mobilization of supporters, but the rhetoric of seduction of the masses” (Lecomte & Denni 1990). In other words, the most significant effect of the mediatization/spectacularization of politics is somewhat equal to a “genetic mutation” of → political discourse. No politician can communicate successfully without molding his or her message to suit the most preferred and most popular language schemes of the mass media, especially those of entertainment, showbiz, and advertising. By dramatizing politics, the news media “take advantage of the popular propensity to believe in things as they seem rather than as they are,” and jointly with politicians who have swiftly embraced the imperatives of mediated communication, the media contrive to “construct politics as spectacle” (Nimmo & Combs 1990).

A necessary condition of spectacularization is the tendency of mass media, especially those that are commercially oriented, like the tabloids (→ Tabloid Press) and their equivalent in broadcast media, to personalize political information by focusing on who and how, rather than on issues, context, structure, and interpretation. “Average news consumers prefer to read about other people, not about abstract groups or remote bureaucracies and government agencies. To cater to these preferences, news stories, especially those that appear on television, are routinely framed from the point of view of central actors . . . Inevitably, stories about groups are transformed into stories about group leaders” (Davis 1990). Political players on the contemporary post-ideology political stage seem to respond enthusiastically to this media-driven tendency. They adjust willingly to media personalization, responding to the demands of visibility, look, and image (→ Personalization of Campaigning). Television is once more the *deus ex machina* of this adaptation: “Political figures cannot help subjecting themselves to the rules of TV popularity, obliged as they are to be either stars or nullities . . . Television is indeed the medium that resorts more to personalisation and relies a lot on rivalry among politicians” (Mouchon 1989).

A side-effect of personalization is what could be termed the “leaderization” of politics. In certain political milieus political leadership is strongly personalized, either for institutional reasons (as in a presidential system such as that of the US) or induced by the influence of the mass media. Political leaders extend their personal charisma (or idiosyncrasies) to the whole political process, setting themselves against collective actors such as parties or any shared expression of authority. The natural preference of the media for personalized political discourse provides a powerful support to the process of the strengthening of leadership in modern politics, and also in contexts where collective, impersonal, party-centered political action is the traditional pattern.

The media exert a further strong influence on political messages when these messages are carried on the mass communication channels. During this process, political debate fragments into “pills and clips.” “Audiovisual communication tends to propose a political speech which is fleeting, fluid, instantaneous, privileging verbal tricks rather than discursive strategy, in like manner of jingles-ads” (Courtine 1993). The well-known practice of sound bites favors the coverage and reporting of short and preferably catchy sentences at the expense of information on perhaps more substantial topics and issues in the domestic political debate. Like personalized framing of stories, sound-bite communication makes politicians into the accomplices, whether willing or unwilling, of media producers. In doing so, politicians attempt to adjust to the velocity of contemporary broadcast news, squeezing up their speech and thus increasing their chance of being covered by the media.

### **Fragmentation of Politics**

This sort of fragmentation of political discourse, triggered mostly by highly commercialized broadcast news media, has different national intensities, according to the strength of local newsmaking traditions. For example, in a number of European countries, such as France, Germany, and Italy, the news media still allocate a great deal of space to the complex dialectics between the many political contenders, and European politicians still exhibit a preference for articulated and somewhat lengthy declarations. Even if political discourse in these countries still enjoys significant attention in the media, there are several signals of an “Americanization” in the news coverage, thanks to the proliferation of channels and the sharp increase in competition between them for the conquest of audiences (→ Americanization of the Media).

### **Effects on Recruitment of Political Personnel**

A final effect of the mediatization of politics is the selection (“winnowing”) of political elites through the imposition of media-driven requisites and coverage formats upon political communication as a whole (Matthews 1978). There is also some indication of a progressive weakening of party organizations in many western democracies. For example, there has been a transfer of methods for recruiting political personnel (leaders, activists, candidates, mayors, etc.) from party machines to external agents – mostly communication experts, spin doctors, and media professionals – that implement tactics and follow criteria that collide with those of traditional professional politics.

The actual selection of political personnel and candidates is to a certain extent affected by the degree of media attention. Leaders chosen in this manner respond to the media’s predilection for telegenic, controversial, and possibly colorful personalities. Politicians who are natural newsmakers are assured of significant public visibility, while the media ignore those who are not “media-genic” talents. “Those who eventually succeed in election contests are no more local notables, but ‘mediatic personages,’ individuals who master better than others communication techniques; . . . a new breed of communication specialists takes the place of militants and of apparatchiks” (Manin 1995).

Vis-à-vis the rapid diffusion of online media, Schulz (2004) questions whether the traditional patterns of mediatization of politics will disappear to leave room for new ways

of interdependence between the new media and political players. In fact, the new communication environment created by the → Internet and other new media is likely to challenge the media logic that characterized the era of mass communication, and consequently its clutch on political communications. Schulz's argument is that there is not yet an end of mediatization as we have known it to date: "Since the new media do not displace the old media, the mediatization effects of the latter endure in the new media environment." In addition, the new media bring along *new patterns of mediatization*. Clearly, the new media logic will affect politics and political discourse, but the adaptation process will be mutual, not simply on the part of the political players, thanks to interactivity, a feature that conventional media do not possess.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Communication Research and Politics ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Media Diplomacy ▶ Media Logic ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Tabloid Press

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# Mediatization of Society

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From a very general point of view, “mediatization of society” is a concept that indicates the extension of the influence of the media (considered both as a cultural technology and as an organization) into all spheres of society and social life. In this broad sense, the way the media influence social life is linked to the larger process of culturalization, that is, the process by which culture – considered as the complex of signs, symbols, meanings, and values circulating within and between societies – has become increasingly central to the operation of all social institutions (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Thus, “mediatization of society” can be roughly considered as a process involving all the spheres of society, from the structure of the family to the aging process, from gender relationships to power, from the political apparatus to the economic structures, from everyday life to globalization processes. Moreover, it is a concept that examines the ways in which the media, which are vehicles of various types of messages (by which → meaning is exchanged and negotiated), and society have made themselves mutually indispensable and unavoidably interrelated.

## **MEDIA AND CHANGES IN SOCIAL LIFE**

Arguing that the media have a significant role in all the spheres of society and social life means stressing the importance of the media system in the transformation processes of society itself. According to Schulz (2004) four main processes of change represent different aspects of mediatization. At the first level, the media are considered to *extend* the natural limits of human communication capacities; in this sense the media are “extensions of man,” according to → McLuhan’s famous expression, providing means of communication that bridge spatial and temporal distances. At a further level, the media tend to *substitute* social activities and institutions, thus changing their characteristics (suffice it to remember the changes in private communication brought by phone and email). Third, the media *amalgamate* with different non-media activities. This is an important feature of the media–society complex, as since media-centered and non-media-centered everyday activities mingle with one another and media use becomes a normal aspect of social life, the media’s definition of reality becomes part of the social definition of reality. Finally, all sectors of society (including social actors in their everyday life) tend to *accommodate* to the way the media operate, produce texts, and provide vehicles for meanings. In short, several sectors of society must take into account the → media logic of electronic media (above all television), thus following the logic and the formats that are typical of media language and organizational practices, such as the ways the contents are organized and put together, the styles they are presented in, and the grammar (syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) of mass media communication.

*Media logic* has played an important role in the processes that shape the nature of the changes brought by mediatization. Media logic is the combination of several

technological, organizational, and cultural elements. The most important element is commercial logic, which involves the commercialization of both the media institutions (→ Commercialization of the Media) and society as a whole, followed by such elements as industrial logic (the media are an important industry), technological logic (referring to the importance of technologies in producing and reproducing contents), and cultural logic. We can find the logics of the mediatization processes particularly at the commercial and technological levels.

The *commercial level*, in both its economic and industrial dimensions, refers to the processes of standardization of mass media products and contents, which is accompanied by a continuous self-reinforcement of the media system and a growing circularity of media messages, ending in a series of “feedback loops” from the media coverage to the events covered (Kepplinger 2002; → Consonance of Media Content; Media Production and Content). Thus, from standardized production, which makes media contents almost ubiquitously available at relatively low costs, we arrive at a general dependence on mass media products, explained by such theories or hypotheses as the → media system dependency theory (Ball-Rokeach & DeFleur 1976), → agenda-setting effects, the priming effect (→ Priming Theory), or → cultivation theory.

The *technological level* has much to do with the fact that the media are technologies of communication that embody the ways messages are constructed, presented, and circulated, which also affect the ways they are interpreted by their audiences (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). This is at the core of → “medium theory,” according to which every single medium embodies a “bias” that affects the message itself (this is the meaning of McLuhan’s famous statement “the medium is the message”). Authors like Meyrowitz (1985) have extended this process not only to effects on the audiences’ patterns of consciousness, but also to changes in the patterns of the social actors’ everyday interaction rituals, thus providing a theory of social behavior that represents an important connection between social interactionism à la Goffman and “medium theory” à la McLuhan. Moreover, these technological constraints lead to mediation theory, where, again, media logic is at stake: the media’s technological characteristics contribute to the shaping of media messages and contents according to a specific “logic” that involves specific production routines and content formats. According to these technological (and commercial) characteristics, the media encode and format their contents in a way that reinforces specific patterns of human perception and information processing.

### **MEDIATIZATION /IN SOCIETY**

In brief, the concept of “mediatization of society” indicates an extension of the influence of the media into all societal spheres. Therefore, it is important to see what are the (main) domains that are influenced by the media system (remembering that the media system is both a cultural technology and an economic organization). In broad and general terms, all the main societal domains are affected by the connection between media and society: sex/gender and generational relationships, deviance, control and surveillance, religious and ritual dimensions, power relationships, urban environment and city life, localization and globalization processes, and so on.



As far as gender relationships are concerned, Meyrowitz (1985) argues that in contemporary western society men are becoming more woman-like and women more man-like. The so-called “private sphere” of men is becoming less private and more open to the gaze and knowledge of women – and vice versa. Meyrowitz sees this movement toward a unisex lifestyle as influenced by the advent of media images that the two genders had previously kept separate (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). The author claims that the same is true for generational relationships: due to the media, younger people gain access to the so-called “adult world,” thus gaining more information than ever in the history of childhood (→ Age Identity and Communication; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

As far as *deviance* is concerned, an important dimension that highlights the processes of interplay between forces of social reaction and control, the media, and certain forms of deviant activity is that of “moral panic,” while the processes of control and surveillance are more and more “mediatized” thanks to the new information and communication technologies. The concept of “war” itself is undergoing a mediatization process, from “media diplomacy” to “infowar.” The concept of “*mediatization of war*” refers not only to the relationship between war, media system, and political and military system, but also to the use of media languages and codes to define and frame war. In fact, the information technologies play a leading role in the development of the forms of contemporary conflicts. The war cycle is fulfilled within an IT logic, from remote sensing (a satellite surveying the territory) to “photo finishing” (the photos after the raid; → Conflict as Media Content).

Even the *religious and ritual aspects of society* are undergoing a continuing process of mediatization. If the “mediatization of religion” is a topic raised by McLuhan, who pointed out the importance of electronic and technological devices for changes in the Roman Catholic liturgy, the mediatization of the ritual dimension is demonstrated by Dayan and Katz (1992) and by their definition of media events. By “media event” Dayan and Katz mean an event that is broadcast “live” and is “remote” from its audiences, and that is a real event occurring at the society’s “center,” not set up by the media themselves. The effect of the media event is to enhance the symbolic importance of social ceremonies, while at the same time reaffirming the social bond through the media process.

If → *mediatization of politics* has been much studied and analyzed (Mazzoleni 1987; Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999), and it is now clear that political actors have to adapt to the rules of the media system in order to increase their publicity (at the price of a loss of autonomy), other spheres of society are undergoing a growing process of mediatization. It is the case in *sport*, where it is evident that sport and the media, two separate institutions, have come to be intimately involved over the past decades, with economic, political, and professional forces united in the making of media sport culture (→ Sports and the Media, History of). Other societal domains where we can detect a growing mediatization are those of urban life, with the rise of the “digital cities” of the “network society” (Castells 1996), or in architecture itself: as Colomina (1994) argues, while conventional criticism portrays modern architecture as a high artistic practice in opposition to mass media products, the mass media are the true site within which architecture is produced, as architectural discourse is the intersection of a number of systems of representation (such as drawings, models, photographs, books, films, and advertisements) that presuppose a new sense of space, one defined by mass mediated images rather than walls.

Lastly, the mediatization of society is evident in the processes of *globalization* (→ Globalization Theories) and cultural identities, where the mass media have become a proliferating resource for the production and the reproduction of identities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Age Identity and Communication ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Consonance of Media Content ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Media System Dependency Theory ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Sports and the Media, History of

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## **Medium Theory**

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Medium theory stands apart from more generic “media theory” in its exploration of the influences of communication technologies in addition to, and distinct from, the specific content (messages) they convey. Medium theorists argue that media are not simply channels for transmitting information between two or more environments, but are themselves distinct social-psychological settings or environments that encourage certain types of interaction and discourage others (→ Media). Medium theory analyzes differences among communication environments.

Medium theory focuses on the characteristics of each medium (or of each *type* of medium) that make it physically, socially, and psychologically different from other media. Thus, medium theorists study how television differs from radio, but also how electronic media (including TV and radio) differ from print media (such as books, magazines, and newspapers). Medium theory also examines how communications through a particular medium or type of medium compare and contrast with face-to-face interaction. The singular “medium” is used in the name of the theory to highlight the focus on the particular characteristics of each medium.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MEDIA

In comparing and contrasting modes of communication, medium theorists explore the influences of such characteristics as the *type of sensory information* the medium can and cannot transmit (e.g., visual, aural, tactile, etc.; → Modality and Multimodality); whether the medium is *uni-sensory or multi-sensory*; the nature of the medium-conveyed *form*, or forms, of information within each sense (e.g., picture vs. written word as distinct types of visuals, or Morse-code clicks vs. voice as distinct types of sound); the *speed and degree of immediacy* of communication through the medium; whether the medium affords *unidirectional vs. bidirectional vs. multidirectional* communication; whether interaction through the medium is *simultaneous or sequential* (as in the difference between telephones and CB radio); the *physical requirements for using the medium* (e.g., whether one has to stay in a certain location or look in a certain direction to attend to the medium); the *degree of control the user has over reception and transmission* (such as when readers choose their own pace and order of reading articles in a newspaper vs. the fixed speed and sequence of a news broadcast); the *scope and nature of dissemination* (e.g., how many people in how many different locations can attend to the same message at the same moment); and the relative *ease or difficulty of learning to use the medium* to code and decode messages (including whether one tends to learn to use the medium all at once or in stages over time).

Medium theorists see such characteristics as fostering unique uses for each medium and different responses to the same content when experienced through different media. Medium theorists have described, for example, how the Bible in restricted-access *manuscript* form served to support the medieval church’s monopoly over the word of God and access to salvation, while the Bible in widely available *print* form became a tool of Martin Luther’s sixteenth-century Protestant Reformation, which weakened the power of the Catholic church. Another classic medium theory example is how US radio audiences and television audiences in 1960 apparently responded very differently to the same set of events, the Nixon–Kennedy debates. Although no one thought to carry out a definitive medium research project during the debates, it was widely observed at the time that radio listeners tended to think that Nixon (with his ministerial voice and superior verbal debating skills) had won, while TV watchers (with access to images of a haggard, sweating, lip-licking, and eye-darting Nixon, contrasted with a tanned and composed Kennedy) were much more likely to think that Kennedy had won (→ Televised Debates).

## MICRO VS. MACRO MEDIUM THEORY

Medium theory operates on at least two levels: the micro (individual situation) and the macro (cultural). On the micro level, the key issue is how the medium selected by a person or group for a specific purpose influences a particular situation or interaction. On the macro level, the primary medium theory question is how the addition of a new medium to a society's existing matrix of media may alter social interactions, thinking patterns, social roles, social institutions, and social structure in general.

Micro- and macro-level medium theory questions are interconnected. On the micro level, a medium analyst might ask how the presence of a camera and/or microphone affects the specific behavior of a particular politician. On the macro level, a medium theorist might ask how electronic media alter political styles in general, shift the criteria used to judge candidates (thereby altering the range of viable candidates), and change the public's overall perception of politicians and world leaders. The dramatic increase in state, corporate, and citizen surveillance technologies in public and private settings in recent years raises similar micro and macro questions about the average person's behaviors. On the micro level, we might ask how behavior in a particular situation is affected by the presence of a camera and/or microphone, while on the macro level we could ask how general conceptions of private and public spheres and "appropriate" behavior are being reshaped by ubiquitous visual and aural monitoring and replay.

The most interesting – and most controversial – medium theory deals with the macro level. *Macro-level medium theory* is typically the most different from analyses of media content. One of the most popular media questions over the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries has been a content-related one: do children imitate what they see on TV, such as TV violence? Medium studies, in contrast, explore such factors as the influence of structural changes in the boundaries of experience rather than the imitative and persuasive impact of media messages. The role-system form of medium theory suggests that changes in media alter the balance of what different types of people know about, and compare to, each other. Because young children are rarely able to read adult books, for example, books for parents about what to tell and not tell children tend to reinforce parental power. Yet a television show with the same content, a medium theorist would argue, undermines parental authority because thousands of young pre-literate and partially literate children are able to listen in, learning about the very topics that are being recommended for restriction from them, and learning the biggest secret of all – the "secret of secrecy" – the fact that adults conspire over what to tell and not tell children (Meyrowitz 1985, 226–267). Medium theory would argue that child–adult roles and interactions are thereby transformed, changing not just children, but what we, as a culture, mean by childhood and adulthood (→ Developmental Communication).

Similar contrasts exist between content-related questions and medium questions regarding gender and minority roles. Content questions about television, for example, might focus on the imitative and persuasive power of sexist and racist role portrayals in the medium, while medium questions would more likely look at the different ways in which various media restrict or expand the experiential worlds of women and minorities. Medium theorists would point out, for example, that the dire content-based prediction

that young girls growing up watching sexist TV would embrace limited roles for themselves has been falsified by the dramatic call on the part of women who grew up in the television era to integrate into what were once considered the “male spheres” of culture: business, sports, medicine, law, and the military – spheres that were exposed to, and demystified for, young girls and homebound women in television households (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality).

By exploring the potential impact of the characteristics of various media on the macro level, medium theorists have also developed arguments about how different dominant media tend to encourage different modes of thinking (e.g., print encouraging abstract, linear thinking vs. television encouraging concrete, nonlinear thinking); different human sensory balances; different relationships between physical location and experience; different layouts of houses, stores, offices, and cities; different forms of individual and collective memory; different perceptions of war; different conceptions of self vs. other (e.g., localism vs. nationalism vs. globalism or a multilayered sense of identity); different conceptions of privacy and of public etiquette; changes in relative social statuses; and different value systems (including shifting assessments of the relative merits of various media of communication).

### THE HISTORY OF MEDIUM THEORY

The term “medium theory” was coined in the 1980s (Meyrowitz 1985, 16) to give a unifying label to the work of a number of mid-twentieth-century scholars in a variety of fields (including history, anthropology, political economy, philosophy, religion, the classics, and communication), who were exploring how the different characteristics of different media encourage unique forms of interaction. The roots of medium theory, however, go back much further. Indeed, throughout history, each major development of a new medium has stimulated a new form of medium theory (→ Media History). In ancient Greece, Socrates complained that writing differed from oral dialogue in several key ways. Written texts, he argued, were incapable of answering questions put to them, reached audiences for which they were not intended, and weakened the memories of those who relied on them. Ironically, Socrates’ critiques of writing are well known today only because his student Plato recorded them in his written dialogues. Plato continued the medium theory tradition, but with a reversal of value judgments about at least some modes of orality versus text: Plato was enthusiastic about writing but wanted to banish the oral poets from his Republic.

In the fifteenth century, Johannes Gutenberg touted the ways in which his own invention of movable type differed in method and potential effects from the work of the scribes. And in the sixteenth century, Martin Luther and his followers consciously exploited the revolutionary potential of print via the first mass-mediated publicity campaign.

The rise of the film era in the early twentieth century encouraged film theorist Rudolf Arnheim to defend film as a potential art form (rather than a simple mechanical reproduction of reality). He proposed a form of medium theory that he called *materialtheorie*, which suggested that artistic and scientific descriptions of reality were shaped as much by the peculiarities of the chosen medium of representation as by the reality being portrayed.

As the influence of electronic media grew in the 1940s and 1950s, political economist → Harold A. Innis dramatically advanced the development of medium theory with two densely written books that extend the principles of economic monopolies to the study of information monopolies, *Empire and communications* (1950) and *The bias of communication* (1951). Innis rewrote the history of civilization, from early Mesopotamia and Egypt to the British Empire and the Nazis, as the history of communication media and their influences.

The increasing dominance of television in the 1960s set the stage for the most famous and controversial medium theorist, → Marshall McLuhan, who burst on the popular-culture scene with his second medium theory book, *Understanding media*, published in 1964. McLuhan, who was influenced by Innis's work, attracted the wrath of the literati and many scholars, not only by suggesting that television and other electronic media were having a major (and not necessarily negative) impact on the culture as they diminished the social significance of literacy, but also by presenting his ideas in nonlinear, aphoristic form, with little respect for what he saw as print-encouraged disciplinary boundaries and scholarly style. McLuhan defined media broadly to include not only print, the telegraph, movies, telephone, radio, TV, and computers, but all technologies, including clocks, motor cars, and weapons. In a form of argument that paralleled his approach to communication media, McLuhan claimed that the spread of the railroad (and later the airplane) fostered the development of “new kinds of cities and new kinds of work and leisure,” regardless of “whether the railway functioned in a tropical or a northern environment, and . . . quite independent of the freight or content of the railway medium” (1964/1994, 8).

Walter J. Ong, who both studied with McLuhan and influenced McLuhan's own work, was one of a number of other scholars who deepened the analysis of the shifts from orality to literacy and from literacy to what he called the “secondary orality” of electronic media. One of the major themes in Ong's multifaceted works from the 1950s to the 1990s is how shifts in modes of communication fostered changes in forms of human thought and consciousness. Recent decades have seen explosions in both new generations of electronic and digital media and in the number and types of medium theorists.

### **SUB-GENRES OF MEDIUM THEORY**

While medium theorists tend to share a common view of general communication history, they also divide into sub-genres of medium theory. Harold Innis, for example, presented a theory based on media “biases,” such as the tendency of a medium either to last a long time (“time biased” media such as stone hieroglyphics) or travel easily through space (“space biased” media such as papyrus). Marshall McLuhan's medium theory focused on media as extensions of the human senses, with differential effects on the human sensorium and the balance among the senses. Joshua Meyrowitz has developed a role-system medium theory based on how different media change the structure of social information systems, including “who knows what about whom” and “who knows what compared to whom,” thereby restructuring roles of group identity, socialization, and hierarchy. Ronald Deibert's “ecological holism” medium theory shifts the focus away from the “inherent effects” of each medium to the ways in which pre-existing social forces and trends are

either favored or not favored by the new communication environment. He analyzes the unintended consequences of technological change, when a “chance fitness” between medium and message brings ideas at the margins of society to the center.

### STRENGTHS AND LIMITS OF MEDIUM THEORY

By exploring the influence of modes of communication, medium theory provides insights into social and psychological processes that are invisible in traditional content-based approaches to media. In that sense, medium theory is similar to studies of industrialization, which suggest that the means of production are as important, or more important, to examine than an inventory of the products that are produced. Medium theory, like industrialization theory, looks at the structural changes in human relations, social identity, institutions, conceptions of labor, changes in rural and urban settings, and so forth.

Nevertheless, some critics dismiss all medium theory as a simplistic and mechanistic form of “technological determinism,” where autonomous technologies are viewed as reshaping people and societies in predetermined and monolithic ways. Yet, an accurate reading of most medium theory work reveals a much subtler argument: about *tendencies* rather than absolutist mechanisms, about interactions between media and society rather than media wholly shaping society. Most medium theory, rather than advocating a simple causal view, describes how the characteristics of a widely used medium foster, enable, and encourage certain communication patterns while discouraging others. Even Marshall McLuhan, whose provocative, aphoristic style has led him to be tagged more than other medium theorists as a media determinist, said, “There is absolutely no inevitability as long as there is a willingness to contemplate what is happening” (McLuhan & Fiore 1967, 25).

Medium theory has been criticized more legitimately for tending to start with an analysis of existing forms of media rather than delving into the socio-political and economic forces that lead to the development of some types of media rather than others. Television’s initial development as a unidirectional form of mass communication from the few to the many (rather than as an interactive community medium), for example, certainly favored the economic and political interests of corporate and state elites over those of the public at large. Yet, most medium theory gives insufficient attention to critical theory concerns about who has the most power over the dominant media in society and how that control limits and shapes the design and uses of media (→ Critical Theory). Medium theory also offers few insights into how to counter dominant cultural narratives that permeate most of the media in a society, including the highly selective “stories” that are told across media to shape public perceptions of “enemies” and war. In general, most medium theory does not challenge the political and economic status quo, including corporate ownership of mass media.

In looking at the ways in which media may shape societies, medium theory tends to give less attention to how significant variations among cultures (e.g., differing perceptions of time, space, and of human–human, human–nature, and human–technology relationships) may differentially shape the use of media in different societies. Ironically, while medium theorists examine media as types of “environments,” very few of them examine the ways in which “advances” in technology may lead to the depletion of natural resources and an

increase in toxic environmental waste. Similarly, most medium theorists do not examine how third-world countries and impoverished communities in western countries bear the brunt of the exploitation of resources and labor, disruption of sustainable economies and food supplies, and hazardous techno-waste. Nevertheless, medium theorists typically do a good job at analyzing the long-term unintended social consequences of media, including the ways in which technologies such as the Internet, mobile phones, camcorders, and so on have been embraced by third-world and other activists to protest and undermine the neo-liberal agendas that fostered the development of these technologies in the first place.

The current era of hypermediation has created a milieu of enhanced appreciation for medium theory. The growth of the world wide web, mobile telephony, WiFi, blogs, video surveillance technologies, virtual communities, radio frequency identification (RFID) tags, social networking web sites, and many other mediated environments has led to broader acceptance of the basic medium theory premise: that such media must be looked at as creating new social settings, settings whose influence cannot be reduced to the content of the messages transmitted through them.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Theory and Philosophy ► Critical Theory ► Developmental Communication ► Innis, Harold ► McLuhan, Marshall ► Media ► Media Ecology ► Media History ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Modality and Multimodality ► Televised Debates

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# Meeting Technologies

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In an effort to enhance the functioning of the much-maligned meeting, a variety of technological solutions have been introduced. These *meeting technologies* represent part of a rapidly growing industry focused on improving the millions of meetings held daily across the globe (→ Technology and Communication). Indeed, the increased use of collaborative teams (→ Group Communication), the growing number of virtual workers (→ Telework), the rising “costs” of travel, pushes toward globalization (→ Globalization of Organizations), and the declining expense associated with these technologies have all created an environment ripe for the use of meeting technologies in workplaces, educational settings, and other contexts.

Meeting technologies typically refer to end-user computer-based communication tools used by groups as they conduct, participate in, and coordinate meetings. Historically, they are used for more formal/planned, same-time meetings with participants either co-located or dispersed across multiple locations. Meeting technologies, in this sense, do not typically include non-computer-based tools (e.g., agendas, facilitation) that are sometimes referred to as technologies, nor do they apply well to more informal one-on-one interactions. Meeting technologies can be usefully grouped into three categories: electronic meeting/conferencing systems, meeting room technologies, and meeting management tools.

## **ELECTRONIC MEETING/CONFERENCING SYSTEMS**

The most recognizable category of meeting technologies is the various conferencing systems allowing people to connect and interact when not co-present. These include video, audio, and computer (or web) conferencing (Collins 2003). Most electronic meeting/conferencing systems require additional training and tools; as a result, these meetings are usually planned in advance, are relatively structured, and may demand the help of technical assistants. These meeting tools provide the opportunity for two-way exchange, though they can also be used for broadcast purposes.

*Video conference meetings* come in several forms: (1) dedicated rooms complete with cameras, monitors, speakers, microphones, and other equipment housed in a specific location, (2) mobile systems that typically include at least a camera and monitor on a cart, and (3) personal systems such as desktop video or video phones (though these often facilitate only point-to-point connections and are not as useful for meetings involving multiple participants). Although video conferencing has been plagued by slow industry growth, user discomfort, and technical challenges, it now appears ready to become a key collaboration tool (Ogden 2004).

*Audio conference meetings* are especially feasible for many given the ubiquity and mobility of phones, and these meetings also occur in several ways. Basic conferencing can use speakerphones between multiple people at each site and/or three-way conference features to connect one or more people at up to three locations. Operator-assisted

conferences can include a moderate number of participants, with each being contacted by the operator and then added to the conference. Another service provided by large companies and many conferencing providers is supply of a number and access code, which invited participants may call to join the meeting. Audio conferences may involve people at a variety of remote locations, but may also include some co-located individuals gathered around a speakerphone or a dedicated audio conferencing system (complete with multidirectional microphones, multiple speakers, and keypad interface).

A new player to the conferencing scene is *web conferencing*, the fastest growing of all conferencing technologies (Ogden 2004). Web conferencing tools are usually focused around a shared environment on a web browser, which may be used to show presentation slides, pictures, or other material. As a result, many web conference meetings involve people at their desktop or with their mobile laptop, though such sessions may also occur in a meeting room. Many web conferencing tools also allow for sharing of documents or collaborating in a shared space, which can facilitate interaction usually not possible in mediated meetings. The most interactive of web conferences may be supplemented with online chat, polling questions, and/or an audio link. Today's web conference tools in some ways represent the evolution of early computer conferencing systems that pre-date the world wide web.

In addition to these conferencing systems, *group decision support systems* (GDSSs; also known as group support systems [GSSs]) represent a special type of electronic meeting system that combines computer, communication, and decision-making technologies to support teams. Unlike conferencing tools, which link participants who usually are physically separated, GDSS participants are often co-located in a decision room; however, their interaction still takes place primarily online. This is done for two primary reasons (Scott 2003). First, having participants type their comments rather than speak allows for parallel input – providing approximately equal opportunity for participation and avoiding meeting problems associated with turn-taking and conversational domination. Second, the online nature of these systems allows for anonymous input, which may be useful when brainstorming, discussing controversial issues, and voting – especially when meeting participants are of different status and may be unable to speak openly otherwise.

## MEETING ROOM TECHNOLOGIES

Another set of meeting technologies are those designed to supplement the face-to-face interaction that occurs in more conventional meetings. Many of these technologies are focused on improving information presentation. Such technologies range from microphones and speakers that allow presenters to be heard, to projectors and document cameras, and even to presentation screens and plasma monitors that display images. Also available are smartboards, or interactive whiteboards that allow for the creation and capture of drawings and words. These are often mobile units that can be moved to various meeting rooms, though some dedicated meeting facilities may have built-in boards or entire walls with such capability. In addition to this hardware, presentation software has become commonplace in many business and educational environments.

Other technologies may be used by non-presenting meeting attendees. Participants may use various mobile devices (laptops, BlackBerries, etc.) to take notes, explore related information online, or exchange messages with others during meetings. Another type of

meeting technology one might find in large community forums or with large audiences are various keypad response systems. Such systems, which today are usually wireless radio frequency devices, allow participants to take part in polling questions or provide other feedback during meetings.

## MEETING MANAGEMENT TOOLS

A final set of less frequently mentioned *meeting tools* consists of those that assist with the coordination and management of meetings. In many workplaces, groupware features provide shared calendars that assist with scheduling and meeting reminders. Such programs may also facilitate email exchanges and online document sharing before, during, and after meetings. On a much larger scale are various meeting management tools used by large corporations and industry/trade associations to assist with site selection, online registration, attendee management, marketing, meeting emails, reports, customized websites, etc. (Chapman 2003).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

With the exception of a substantial body of research on GDSSs, only limited research exists on the use of these technologies by actual task groups in their usual meeting environments (→ Bona Fide Groups). Reviews of conferencing/meeting technologies suggest several *general conclusions* about these tools (Scott 1999). First, technology-supported meeting participants generally outperform participants in face-to-face meetings – especially when using a GDSS, but not necessarily with audio/video conferencing. Second, technology-supported group meetings are generally more efficient than face-to-face group meetings – but, again, this is truer for GDSS users than for users of other technologies. Third, satisfaction with the meeting process is often less in the technology-supported groups when compared to face-to-face teams; however, this is somewhat less true for GDSS meetings, where findings are rather mixed. However, much of the existing research is limited because of differences between laboratory and field settings where the technology has been studied, and due to a general lack of research on actual web conferencing and video conferencing meetings.

Research on various meeting technologies has also been conducted in educational settings. A recent review of the immensely popular presentation software *PowerPoint* noted that even though such tools are preferred by students, they do not necessarily enhance learning (Levasseur & Sawyer 2006). Similar “no significant differences” have been found when comparing traditional classroom meetings with various forms of mediated learning. A meta-analysis revealed only the slightest of differences in performance when comparing the two environments, and the type of channel used did not account for those differences (Allen et al. 2004).

Research and practical use of meeting technologies has also suggested a number of *guidelines* for effective and appropriate use of such tools in workplace and educational environments. With conferencing tools, meeting organizers are generally advised to determine meeting length and agenda in advance (and stick to it), be mindful of time zones, inform participants of technological requirements, keep participant and technical

help numbers at hand, and look for ways to increase interactivity. Other meeting attendees are well advised to ensure they have the necessary technology in place in advance of the meeting, listen carefully during the meeting, and focus on the meeting itself (rather than multitasking during these mediated sessions). Video conference participants need to pay special attention to clothing and background visuals, and must become comfortable talking to the camera (as well as sometimes seeing themselves onscreen).

Audio conference participants should always announce who is “on speakerphone” and should generally mute phones when not speaking to minimize background noise. Because many GDSS meetings occur with participants co-located, guidelines here have tended to focus more on encouraging appropriate use of the tools (e.g., not trying to determine who made an anonymous comment) and facilitating an appropriate mix of offline and online conversation. In all cases, the meeting facilitator, technical staff, or meeting leader plays a vital role in encouraging appropriate use. In distance-learning environments using conferencing and other technologies for class meetings, providing opportunities for interactivity – between student and instructor, student and student, and students and other experts – is an important element to include. Finally, a number of guidelines have been advanced for the appropriate use of computer-generated slides in various contexts, with the general advice that too much information actually reduces effectiveness (Levasseur & Sawyer 2006).

A number of developments related to meeting technologies are already under way. Advances in mobile technologies making them more portable, powerful, and affordable are increasingly making it possible to have meetings anywhere (→ Mobility, Technology for). Convergence of technologies is increasingly allowing for meetings that readily combine audio, video, shared web-based interfaces, polling, and more. Increased use of the Internet and Internet 2 (→ Internet, Technology of) as the infrastructure for audio and video helps facilitate this convergence as well. Development of tele-immersive environments that present increasingly realistic and even holographic images of others also holds the potential to enhance meetings. Such advancements also hold potential for involving greater numbers of meeting participants, allowing for greater citizen participation in community forums and important political processes as well as in more traditional meeting contexts (→ Communication Technology and Democracy).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bona Fide Groups ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy  
▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Group Communication ▶ Internet, Technology of  
▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telework

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# Memory

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When most people think of memory, they tend to think of a place in which information is put and stored until it is needed, much like a library. Unfortunately, this metaphor is quite misleading in that it implies a static, veridical process. Nothing really happens to library books while sitting on the shelf; they may grow musty, they might be misshelved, but once one has the book, the contents are identical to the last time the book was consulted. In contrast, human memory is a dynamic, fundamentally reconstructive set of processes that enable previously encoded information to affect current and future performance.

## CONSTRUCTION AND RECONSTRUCTION

Memory works like perceptual and other cognitive processes: people use whatever cues and information are available to achieve a sensible interpretation of the information processed (→ Information Processing). Consider the case of recalling what happened at the college football game last week. The first time a retrieval attempt is made, there are three sources of information: (1) from the event itself, (2) from similar events, and (3) from general knowledge of what happens at football games. All three sources of information are involved in the construction of a memory. The spectator might remember a specific play, which most likely comes from memory of the event itself. But if asked whether he remembers the coin toss that starts the game, he might mistakenly recall a coin toss from the previous week's game, or he might base his response on his general knowledge that a coin is tossed to determine which team goes on offense first. Note that the information from general knowledge or from a different event might be accurate, even though it has been retrieved from a different source (→ Memory, Message).

The second time a retrieval attempt is made, there is an additional source of information: memory of the previous recollection. Memory is said to be reconstructive in that each time a particular event is recalled, a new version is constructed based on the cues and information available at that particular time. The constructed version is then a potential source of information for subsequent recollections.

## Remembering Things that Did Not Happen

One consequence of the reconstructive nature of memory is that it is quite easy to create a situation in which people recall events that did not happen. Unfortunately, this has been given the name “false memory.” There are two problems with this term. First, it suggests a dichotomy between those memories that are true and those that are false. The problem is that because all memories are a combination of details recalled about the event and information from other sources, at least part of every memory is likely to be “false” because at least some details are not of the original event. Second, it suggests that the memory system stored false information. This obscures the important point that the memory system is not like a library; rather, memory is dynamic and continuously changing, as the examples below demonstrate.

There are now so many laboratory demonstrations (→ Experiment, Laboratory), that show that people are easily led to remember events that did not happen that it is beyond doubt that this also happens with great frequency in everyday life. For example, people see a list of items (“molehill,” “valley,” “summit,” “goat,” “ski,” “bike,” “peak,” and so on) that are all related to a critical word. When people try to recall such lists, they usually recall the word “mountain.” More important than the fact that they recalled a word that was not presented is the finding that they are convinced that this word was in fact on the list. The explanation is that all the words in the list are related to “mountain,” and presumably the person thinks of this word often during list presentation. At test, the person has the same sort of evidence that “mountain” was presented as any of the other words.

Memories can be created (or implanted) in everyday settings also. One common paradigm is to get family members to play a game of “remember when.” Here, an older sister, for example, might ask a younger brother whether he remembers getting lost at a mall when he was about 5 years old. At first, he says no for the reason that this never happened. About a week later, however, he will now have some “memories” of this event. This is known as an *attribution error*: the memory of being lost is attributed to a real event rather than to a discussion held with a sibling a week ago. Like the laboratory demonstrations, this memory has the same characteristics to the brother as genuine memories. Simply showing a photograph in which a person’s face has been digitally implanted (such as a photograph of the person taking a hot-air balloon ride) can lead the person to begin to recall aspects of the event.

## Eyewitness Memory

Because memory is so malleable, and because eyewitness memory can have such important consequences, there has been much research on how to assess whether a particular memory is accurate or inaccurate. The general conclusion is that in the absence of objective evidence, there is no aspect of a person’s recollection that predicts whether the memory is likely to be accurate or inaccurate. This conclusion comes from both laboratory studies and “real-world” studies. In particular, factors that have been shown to be unrelated to the accuracy of a memory include: the emotionality of an event; the duration of an event; the importance of the event to the person; the amount of detail also

recalled about the event; the speed at which the event is recalled; and the accuracy of other related memories. Because of this, many countries do not allow for criminal prosecution if the only evidence is from an eyewitness.

If an eyewitness to a car crash is asked how fast the cars were going when they “hit” each other, the eyewitness will report a much lower estimate than if asked how fast the cars were going when they “smashed into” each other. People act as if they are making an inference: for cars to “smash” into each other they must be going fast, therefore the estimate is higher. Answers to subsequent questions are also affected by these initial answers. When asked if there was broken glass, people who receive the “smashed” question are more likely to report there was broken glass than those who receive the “hit” question.

It is important to note that in laboratory studies, it is assumed that the witness is trying to be as honest as possible and is trying as hard as possible to recall details. In the legal system, this may not be a valid assumption, which makes interpretation even more difficult. It is also important to note that this does not mean that all eyewitnesses are recalling information inaccurately or even that memory of an event cannot be accurate. What it does mean is that there is no way to assess the accuracy of a particular memory: It could be very accurate, it could be very inaccurate, or it could be somewhere in between.

### **Hypnosis and Memory**

In studies of the effect of hypnosis on memory where there exists objective information that allows the researcher to assess the accuracy of recall, there is no evidence that hypnosis per se facilitates recall. On the contrary, people under hypnosis are easier to mislead than non-hypnotized people, and they have difficulty distinguishing between what happened under hypnosis and what happened when not hypnotized. Moreover, there is evidence that whereas hypnotized people are no more accurate than non-hypnotized people, they often express far greater confidence in their recollections.

Related to the finding that people have difficulty distinguishing between events that happened while hypnotized and those that happened when not hypnotized are compelling results from a slightly different paradigm. People are asked to perform a task or are asked to imagine performing the task; in another version, they are shown pictures of objects or asked to imagine a picture of the object. At test, they are asked to categorize the test items as either real (they performed the action or saw the picture), imagined (they imagined performing the action or imagined the picture), or new (the item was not part of the experiment). The judgment of real versus imagined is much more difficult than the judgment of whether the item is new or not. Items are more likely to be judged as “real” when they were imagined than the other way round.

### **THE ENCODING RETRIEVAL INTERACTION**

One of the primary determinants of recollection is the relation between the conditions at encoding (when the information was acquired) and the conditions at retrieval. If a person is happy when studying a particular set of information, more information will be recalled

if the person is happy at test than if unhappy. More information will also be recalled if a person is unhappy at both encoding and retrieval than if the emotional state differs. Similar results are found with environmental context and with pharmacological state. People taking scuba-diving lessons need to learn decompression tables that tell them how to ascend to avoid decompression sickness; they will do much better if they learn the information underwater, the same environment in which they will need to recall the information, than if they study only on land. In general, information acquired under a particular pharmacological state (e.g., alcohol intoxication) will also be better recalled under the same state than when sober.

The reason is that items and events are not processed in isolation but rather as part of ongoing mental processes. People who are happy (or underwater or intoxicated) will process words and events differently than if they are unhappy (or on land or sober). Thus, when trying to access information originally processed in a different state, people will generally be trying to process the information inappropriately.

There is a very important consequence of acknowledging that whether something will be remembered depends on the relation between the conditions at encoding and the conditions at test: one cannot make absolute statements about the mnemonic properties of an item, a process, or a cue. This means, for example, that one cannot say recognition is easier than recall, or pictures are easier to remember than words, or one particular cue is better than another kind of cue. It is always possible to change the retrieving conditions to render the absolute statement false.

## THEORETICAL ACCOUNTS OF MEMORY

There are two basic theoretical accounts of memory. One views memory as a set of different memory systems (the systems or structuralist account) whereas the other views it as a single system and emphasizes the role of processing (the processing or proceduralist perspective).

### The Multiple Systems View

Among proponents of the systems view, most hold that there are five different memory systems. *Working memory* (also known as short-term memory) is used for the temporary storage and manipulation of information. Long-term memory is made up of two systems, *episodic memory* (also called autobiographical memory) and *semantic memory* (also called generic memory and general knowledge). The difference between the two lies in whether the rememberer recollects just the fact itself or whether there is also awareness of the context in which the information was learned. For example, most people know that Paris is the capital of France, but they have no memory of when they learned this. In contrast, imagine that you are just told that the capital of Samoa is Apia. In addition to knowing the fact itself, you have information about when you learned it (you read it in the *International Encyclopedia of Communication*, you were sitting in a library, and so on). In short, you can place yourself back at the learning situation. Episodic memory is sometimes described as having the property of mental time travel: you can project yourself backward into particular episodes. Thus, there is no difference in the type of information stored in



the episodic and semantic systems; the sole difference is whether the information is accompanied by awareness of the learning episode.

The last two memory systems differ from the preceding three in that they are not part of the declarative group of memory systems. A rule of thumb is that if one can say that one *knows that* something (e.g., one knows that  $2 + 2$  is 4, one knows that the capital of Assyria was Nineveh), it is in a declarative memory system. If, on the other hand, one *knows how* to do something, then it is in a procedural memory system. A mother may know how to ride a bicycle, but this information cannot be usefully communicated to her son. She can say, “Balance, peddle, and steer,” but he will most likely fall off. The two nondeclarative memory systems are *procedural memory* and the *perceptual representation system*. Both of these are sometimes referred to as *implicit memory*.

Implicit memory is the term used to refer to situations in which memory is affected by prior events but the rememberer has no awareness of this influence. People with anterograde amnesia, who have difficulty remembering new information, often demonstrate unimpaired implicit memory. For example, such people might not remember the name of their physician even though the same physician has treated them for months. However, they can acquire and use information implicitly. The Tower of Hanoi (also called the Tower of London and the Tower of Babylon) problem has three pegs and a number of different-sized disks that must be moved from the first peg to the last peg. A larger disk cannot be put on a smaller disk, and only one disk can be moved at a time. People with anterograde amnesia demonstrate that they can learn this task: each time, it takes them fewer trials to succeed. However, they often claim to have never performed the task before and to not know the rules.

Episodic memory requires conscious awareness of the original learning episode. Semantic memory requires awareness of the information, but not of the original learning episode. Nondeclarative memory requires no awareness of the information at all.

### **The Processing View**

According to the systems view, the mnemonic properties of an item depend on the memory system in which it resides. According to the processing view, the mnemonic properties of an item depend on the relation between the conditions at encoding and the conditions at test. According to the former view, one cannot make generalizations about memory as a whole because each memory system operates according to different rules. According to the latter, there are important principles of memory that apply to all memory regardless of the type of information, the type of processing, the hypothetical system supporting the memory, or the time scale.

The *difference between the two approaches* can be readily appreciated from Table 1, which characterizes short-term memory (STM; also known as working memory) and long-term memory (LTM; also known as episodic memory). When an item is in STM, it will be stored using an acoustic code (how it sounds), the capacity will be limited to seven plus or minus two items, and the items will decay within about 20 seconds. In contrast, when an item is in LTM, it will be stored using a semantic code (what it means), the capacity will be (almost) unlimited, and the item may never be forgotten.

**Table 1** Short-term and long-term memory characteristics

System	STM	LTM
Format	Acoustic	Semantic
Duration	20 s	Indefinite (?)
Capacity	7 ± 2	Infinite (?)

A proponent of the processing view would agree with almost everything in the table, with one exception: what does the top row in the table add to our understanding? In other words, we could delete the top row and still have a complete and accurate description of memory. When words are processed on the basis of how they sound, there will be a very small capacity and the information will not be available for long. When words are processed on the basis of what they mean, however, there will be an enormous capacity, and the information will be available for a long time.

### TRANSFER-APPROPRIATE PROCESSING

The leading processing account is known as transfer-appropriate processing and it states that memory will be best when the processing done at encoding is appropriate for the processing required at test. Consider two types of tests commonly used in academic settings: multiple choice and short answer. Each requires a different kind of processing at test. In multiple choice tests, students are given all of the key terms, and the task is to be able to generate definitions of those terms and concepts. Thus, studying for a multiple choice test should include practicing generating definitions of key terms and concepts. Reading and re-reading notes is *not* a good study technique, as this is not appropriate for the kind of processing required at test. For a short answer test, students are more likely to need to be able to generate not only information about key concepts and terms, but also those terms and concepts themselves. Therefore, studying for this kind of test should also include practice generating the key ideas.

### Mnemonics

Transfer-appropriate processing naturally lends itself to helping people improve memory. Keep in mind that the goal is to anticipate the kind of processing that will be required at test, and then organize studying around it. For example, how can memory for people's names be improved? At test, the only constant is typically the person's face. Therefore, the face should be used as the retrieval cue, and studying should be built around that. Second, information can be recalled only if it is encoded. Get into the habit of repeating the person's name as soon as the introduction is made. Third, form a link between the cue (i.e., the face) and the name. Fourth, use the person's name a couple more times before moving on to the next person.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Information Processing ► Memory, Message ► Memory, Person ► News Processing and Retention ► Schemas ► Scripts

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## **Memory, Message**

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Memory is critical to communication (→ Memory). The near-instantaneous understanding of a familiar word in a conversation, recognizing an advertising image, mentally disagreeing with a politician's speech, feeling sympathy for a → soap opera character, understanding why today's events in an ongoing news story are important, and countless other responses to communication are all connected in some way with what we have stored in our nervous system. In many ways our personhood and our interactions with the world are defined by the memories we store and use.

### **THE FUNCTION OF MEMORY**

Three decades ago investigators focused on message and viewer characteristics that influenced message recall. Communication scholars now understand this focus does not

capture the complex interactions between messages and memory. Messages are not just stored. When we process messages, their nature can influence how we process them. But what we already have in memory influences how and what we process. For example, highly arousing messages (→ Excitation and Arousal) are processed differently than messages that are not arousing, and how arousing a message seems depends on what is already stored in memory. Retrieving a memory is not just a matter of pulling something out of a mental file. Judgment is important in memory.

Much of what we remember is a *reconstruction* based on inferences about what usually happens. This works well much of the time, adding to the efficiency of memory, but it also means we sometimes remember things more the way we expect them to be than the way they really were. Memories also vary in strength. Sometimes we are willing to believe we remember a weak memory. Other times, when the consequences of a mistake are greater, we may hesitate to act on a stronger memory. You might be willing to guess at a waiter's name in a restaurant, but you may not want to guess at your employer's spouse's name.

Also, different measures of memory reveal different things about memory. Early studies of memory for television focused on recall. That is, offering few cues, investigators asked people what they remembered about a message. Recall is difficult and only measures some aspects of memory. Today, in addition to recall, researchers use measures that can separate judgment from memory strength (signal detection), measures that detect traces of memory we are not aware of (implicit measures), and measures of how quickly and efficiently we can retrieve a memory (latency measures). Thus, scholars now look at memory as a complex interaction among the nature of the message, our perceptions, conscious and unconscious mental processes, and what we already know.

The memory phenomena associated with communication are almost unlimited. A few are discussed below. One way to look at this is by examining what it is about communication that influences what gets stored, and how what is stored influences what we get out of communication.

## MEMORY FOR NEWS

Memory for news was one of the earliest concerns of modern communication scholars. While early studies looked at relatively crude differences such as whether print was better remembered than television, contemporary scholars know that a variety of structural and audience characteristics influence memory for news. Keep in mind that there are many things that can be remembered from the news, including visual information and text.

In general people better remember stories that are perceived as negative, relevant, and vivid, contain contextual information, are of human interest, and are about personalities. Considerable research indicates that for both print and → television news, congruence and redundancy between visuals and verbal elements help memory (→ News). Stories that are heavily covered are also better remembered. Audience members who are better educated and more informed remember more. Memory may actually increase over time if people continue to think about a news story. The current trend is to see these structural and audience characteristics in light of how the information is processed (→ News Processing and Retention).

## STRUCTURE, PACING, RECALL, AND RECOGNITION

Psychologists have known for many years that at any given moment (a moment in this case is usually between about two-tenths of a second and about a second) people can process only a limited amount of information (→ Information Processing). This is known as *limited capacity* (→ Limited Capacity Model). Such processes happen too fast for conscious control; they happen automatically. According to Lang's limited capacity model (Lang 2000) there are *three stages to memory*, depending on how much mental effort a person reflexively exerts and how much limited mental capacity is available. First, material passes through a short-term store. It is then encoded and, finally, stored. Typically, encoding is assessed using recognition memory measures (such as true/false or multiple choice) and storage is measured using recall measures (such as cued recall). One interesting phenomenon is that getting viewers to work harder at first improves their memory performance, but if they have to work too hard memory performance gets worse. If we choose to watch television, for example, both the nature and the pace of the message are out of the viewer's control.

The limited capacity model says that while viewing television we must process both the structure and meaning of the message. As a result, several interesting things happen related to memory. Many things in a message can cause a viewer to automatically allocate more processing capacity to a message. Such message features include novel or unexpected information, new information unrelated to the old information, and arousing content, as well as other features. These features initially cause the viewer to mentally work harder and remember more. However, at some point the capacity needed is greater than the capacity available for processing. Tradeoffs occur. Since storing material takes more mental effort than encoding the material, storage tends to suffer first. If the demands are great enough, encoding may also diminish.

## IMPLICIT MEMORY

Recognition and recall tests of memory ask explicitly if the viewer was aware something was seen or heard. Exposure to information can also influence performance on a variety of tasks that do not refer to the information to be remembered. This apparent memory without awareness has been called implicit memory. Implicit memory is measured using tasks such as word completion or indicating a preference. In some cases there is evidence of implicit memory, but not of explicit memory. For example, brands that were central to the plot of a television show were best remembered using explicit recall and recognition measures (→ Branding). Brands that were not central to the plot were less likely to be explicitly remembered, but were more likely to be selected when given a choice of brands (→ Advertising Effectiveness). Similar results were found after children were exposed to messages containing soft drink brands. The children became more likely to select a particular brand after seeing it in a film (Auty & Lewis 2004).

## RETRIEVING MEMORIES

Even under the best conditions, what is retrieved from memory is a complex interaction between the actual memory traces and our judgments and expectations. Memories are

not just available or not available. Often we are uncertain about whether we remember something (e.g., did you remember to lock your house this morning?). Our judgments about memory seem to depend not just on the strength of the memory but also on our judgments and motivations. If you live in a high-crime neighborhood you may want to be more certain you remembered to lock your house than if you live in a low-crime neighborhood.

One advantage of recognition measures of memory is that they can be used to mathematically separate the signal-strength aspect of memory from the judgment aspect, using signal detection theory. From correct recognition of true items (hits) and mistaken recognition of false items (false alarms), one can calculate a measure of the strength of the memory (sensitivity) and a measure of judgment about the memory (criterion bias). In some cases what appears to be poor memory may simply represent a more conservative judgment about memory. For example, Shapiro and Fox (2002) found that while it appears that typical information in a story is remembered better over time, that is a consequence of people using a much more conservative criterion judgment for atypical information.

Memory sensitivity for *atypical information* is actually better than for typical information over time. Signal detection has also been used to show that redundant visuals in television news result in better information discrimination than dissonant visuals, even though that difference doesn't appear in more conventional recognition memory tests. Also, it has long been known that retrieved memories are shaped by our expectations, and that our recalled memories are a combination of actual memory traces and inferential processes about what we would expect to be in that memory trace. Schemas are mental structures that reflect a person's knowledge and expectations of the world. Memory retrieval is often contaminated by what we expect to happen.

### CONTEXT EFFECTS, AROUSAL, AND ACCESSIBILITY

Along with memories of events, we store the *context of those events*. That context can be used as a memory retrieval cue and to characterize the memory. The source of a memory appears to be stored with memories of media events (Mares 1996; Shapiro 1991). How well people remember where an event memory came from can influence how those memories are used in making judgments based on those event memories.

Memory, both recognition and recall, appears to be much better for *arousing messages* than for less arousing messages. Several studies indicate that this may be one explanation for why negative messages are often more memorable: negative messages are usually more arousing. However, arousing messages also increase the allocation of processing resources to those messages. In some cases, the combination of arousal and other message features that increase allocation of processing resources (such as a large number of scene changes) can overload limited capacity and reduce memory for the message (→ Emotional Arousal Theory).

How easily a memory comes to mind (→ Attitude Accessibility) can influence a variety of decision processes. For example, when a public service announcement about HIV made it seem easier to retrieve memories of ways in which HIV is transmitted, participants' perceptions of their own risk increased. That effect disappears, however, if recovering such a memory is made to seem more difficult (Raghubir & Menon 1998). One can also

measure how quickly a memory comes to mind. Samu and colleagues (1999) timed how quickly people associated a product category and a particular brand to test competing advertising strategies.

*Future studies* are likely to focus less on memory as an outcome of a message and more on the interaction between memory and other mental processes. New methods of measuring memory and complex learning network models of memory are likely to increasingly influence studies in communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Branding ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Information Processing ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Person ▶ News ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Schemas ▶ Scripts ▶ Television News

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# Memory, Person

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Researchers who study person memory examine how perceivers store and recall information about a social target in order to understand how that information is structured in the perceiver's mind ( $\rightarrow$  Memory). Understanding the structure and organization of social information is important because it influences the way we perceive and process subsequently encountered targets, making it a crucial part of person perception ( $\rightarrow$  Media and Perceptions of Reality; Information Processing).

The study of person memory assumes that we have *concepts* stored in memory. A concept (sometimes called a  $\rightarrow$  schema) is a mental representation of a category, where a category is defined as a group of items perceived to fit together (Kunda 1999). Concepts contain the set of features thought to define a category, as well as specific examples of category members. We have concepts for all sorts of objects, including types of people. An "athlete" concept, for example, might contain the notion that athletes have excellent physical skill and a competitive nature, as well as specific examples of athletes like Michael Jordan, Babe Ruth, etc.

The usefulness of concepts is twofold. First, a concept helps us identify new stimuli. When we see a furry, meowing animal, we can identify it as a cat, even if it is a cat we have not seen previously. Second, having applied the concept to the object, we can infer its characteristics to guide how we should interact with the object. Once an animal is identified as a cat, we may infer that it is friendly, is soft, and can be petted, even if we have not directly observed that it has these features. Notice that one can only make these inferences to the extent that the concept contains information about its attributes, and that those attributes are linked together in some fashion. The person-perception process relies on the concepts that are brought to mind when one encounters a person. If features of an interaction partner trigger the concept "university professor," we may form quite a different impression than if the features trigger the concept "plumber." This is because these different concepts will likely contain different attributes that inform the impression we create.

## THE STRUCTURE OF CONCEPTS IN MEMORY

Two broad classes of models have been developed to describe how social memories are organized: associative networks and connectionist networks.

*Associative networks* suggest that each concept in memory is represented by a node, and that nodes that are conceptually related have links between them. Whenever a concept is directly perceived, the corresponding node receives a certain amount of "activation." When the activation in a node reaches a threshold, that concept becomes part of consciousness. In addition, activation spreads from the perceived concept to any other concepts to which it is linked. If enough activation passes through the links, concepts that are not



present in the environment may become part of consciousness. Even if the activation is not enough to bring a linked concept to consciousness, the incoming activation brings the linked node closer to its threshold, making it more likely that the concept will enter consciousness in the near future.

*Connectionist networks* represent one of the newest ways of thinking about person memory. These networks are composed of nodes and links, just like associative networks, but represent information in a different way. Connectionist networks do not associate particular concepts with particular nodes. Instead, a concept is portrayed by a pattern of activation over the entire set of nodes. This type of pattern is known as a “distributed representation.” This is similar to the way that an image of an actor is portrayed by different levels of electricity in the pixels on a TV set. There is no “Clint Eastwood” pixel stored anywhere in your television. Instead, we recognize that Clint is on our screen by the particular pattern displayed across all the pixels.

One important advantage of distributed representations is that they use the same nodes to represent all possible concepts, so the model never has to build new nodes when it encounters novel objects. As in associative networks, memories in connectionist networks are represented by the links between the nodes. Most connectionist models incorporate rules for adjusting the links after presenting a concept to make the network more likely to instantiate that concept again in the future. This allows the model to recreate the full representation of a concept even when it later encounters a stimulus that generates a partial pattern across the nodes.

## **INFERRING CONCEPT STRUCTURE FROM MEMORY MEASURES**

Although a single, definitive cognitive architecture of social information has not been identified, researchers have used a variety of measures to uncover what bits of knowledge are related in memory and the strengths of those relations. Below are examples of different types of memory measures and how they illuminate the structure of person memory (→ Research Methods).

### **Free Recall and Clustering**

In a free-recall measure, participants are presented with information and later asked to write down or recite as much as they can remember. In a seminal work, Hastie and Kumar (1979) used *free recall* to examine the organization of individual behaviors in memory. They created a personal expectancy by presenting participants with a list of traits that described an individual (e.g., “intelligent”). Participants then were presented with behaviors supposedly performed by that same person. Some behaviors were consistent with the expectation (i.e., were intelligent actions), some were inconsistent, and some were unrelated. Later, participants recalled the behaviors. The proportion of behaviors recalled was greatest for the inconsistent behaviors, followed by consistent and unrelated behaviors.

Based on these and related findings, Srull and Wyer (1989) developed an *elaborate model* to explain how such social knowledge is organized in memory. This model suggests that when participants have a pre-existing trait expectation about an individual, perceivers will form an “evaluation-based” representation of the person, wherein the

social target is represented by a person node that is linked to separate nodes for each behavior the target performed (Srull & Wyer 1989, 64). Links from the person node to the consistent behaviors should be stronger than links to the unrelated and inconsistent behaviors, making them easy to recall. This occurs because perceivers think about the consistent behaviors in relation to the person node to further solidify the original expectancy. However, links will also form between behavior nodes as behaviors are thought about in relation to one another. This will happen most frequently for the inconsistent behaviors, as the perceiver tries to reconcile their incongruence with expected behaviors. Therefore, the inconsistent behaviors will have more linkages emanating from them, improving their memorableness. These mechanisms allow the model to explain why both consistent and inconsistent behaviors should be better recalled than expectation-irrelevant behaviors, and why inconsistent behaviors will sometimes have a recall advantage over consistent ones (→ Consistency Theories; Cognitive Dissonance Theory).

Researchers have also investigated the *sequence* in which information is retrieved. Hamilton et al. (1980) presented participants with a list of behaviors. Those who read with an intent to form an impression showed more “clustering” in their recall than did those instructed to memorize the behaviors. That is, they showed a greater tendency to recall behaviors that shared the same trait implication at roughly the same time. To explain this finding, Srull and Wyer (1989) suggest that when initially forming an impression, participants encode behaviors in terms of what traits they exemplify. Doing so results in the formation of “trait–behavior clusters,” with a node representing the trait, linked to separate nodes representing each of the associated behaviors (Srull & Wyer 1989, 66).

### Implicit Measures

Free recall tells us a great deal about the structure of social information, but relies on participants’ ability to consciously recollect past experience (e.g., that a person performed an intelligent behavior). However, past experiences may foster connections in memory between social constructs and attributes, even when the perceiver lacks the ability to recall those experiences and is unaware of those connections. Free-recall measures are often not sensitive enough to detect these types of “memories.” Fortunately, so-called “implicit measures” can. Below are examples of implicit measures and how they have influenced thoughts about person memory.

Many implicit measures are used to understand what attributes or evaluations are associated with social groups. As one example, Fazio et al. (1995) exposed participants to photographs of black and white faces on a computer screen. Immediately afterward, an adjective appeared and respondents categorized it as positive or negative. Participants’ *response times* for these decisions were analyzed. Compared to baseline response times to the words when presented without the photos, white respondents made decisions faster when positive adjectives followed white faces and when negative adjectives followed black faces. Black participants showed the opposite pattern. These findings suggest a linkage in memory between one’s own group and positive evaluations.

Similarly, the *implicit association test* (Greenwald et al. 1998) has been used to explore unconscious associations with social groups. In this task, participants use a single pair of keys to make distinctions between two types of stimulus. As an example, when using

this procedure to examine implicit associations with blacks and whites, the first type of stimulus would be black and white names, whereas the second type would be positive and negative words. In one block, respondents press one key if they see either a black name or a negative word, and press a different key if they see either a white name or a positive word. In a separate block, these key mappings are reversed. White participants typically respond faster to the block pairing white names with positive evaluations than to the block pairing black names with positive evaluations, suggesting an association in memory between negative evaluations and black names.

## IMPLICATIONS OF CONCEPT ACTIVATION FOR IMPRESSION FORMATION

Person-memory models imply that the perception of a stimulus is determined jointly by information available in the environment and information available in memory. The extent to which memories of past experiences influence the impression of a newly encountered person or situation depends on several factors.

One factor receiving much empirical attention is *accessibility*. To examine the effect of concept accessibility on impressions, researchers expose perceivers to a concept (typically a trait) in one context and then ask them to form and report an impression of a social target presented in an unrelated context. Exposure to the trait concept in the initial context is said to “prime” (or make more accessible) that construct (→ Priming Theory). Researchers consistently find that trait-priming influences impressions of social targets. For example, Bargh and Pietromonaco (1982) showed that participants subliminally primed with the trait “hostility” judged the ambiguous actions of another as more hostile than did those not primed.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Cognitive Dissonance Theory ► Consistency Theories ► Information Processing: Stereotypes ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► Memory ► Memory, Message ► Priming Theory ► Research Methods ► Schemas ► Scripts

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# Memory and Rhetoric

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For several decades now the role of public memory in shaping the present has occupied the attention of scholars across the humanities. From Holocaust studies to architecture, literature and → visual culture, colonialism, and queer theory, students of the subject are seeking to explain how and to what ends we avail ourselves of the past. Among the most recent and instructive contributions to this enterprise are those issuing from the study of rhetoric, which attends in particular to the discursive and strategic dimensions of public memory (→ Rhetorical Studies).

Historians of the art will note that the relationship between rhetoric and → memory is scarcely novel; indeed, it may be traced to antiquity, when early theorists counted memory as one of the five canons of rhetoric (the others being invention, arrangement, style, and delivery). It may be seen as closely related to Aristotle's system of topical recall, for example, and Cicero held it to be crucial in the education of the orator (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman). Significant modifications of this relationship in the present age, however, warrant a new set of considerations (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). The following offers a brief definition of the subject and three suggestions for framing it as a rhetorical phenomenon.

*Public memory* may be defined as a cultural process in which a shared sense of the past is created from the symbolic resources of human community (→ Symbolism). This understanding is provisional and shaped by the vested interests and aspirations of its members. From a rhetorical perspective, such a view presupposes that public memory is never neutral, natural, or without consequence. It is rather constructed, both a process and product of human ambition (→ Constructivism). Because we can only know the past as it is symbolically mediated, any given representation of it must be partial; and because memory is the form of knowledge through which we access the past, it too is necessarily selective and purposive. Public memory, therefore, may be taken as intrinsically rhetorical.

As a symbolic construction, public memory embeds itself in culturally available forms of mediation, or texts (→ Text and Intertextuality). These texts may range from monuments to orations, rituals of remembrance, photographs, quilts, tattoos, music, and so on. But whatever the various modes of expression through which memory speaks itself, they collectively serve to align the present to the past and the past to the present. And because public memory is created through such symbolic resources, any given message it is designed to communicate remains open to interpretation, debate, and revision, evidence for which may be found in the interminable contests over Holocaust revisionism, history textbooks, and public monuments.

As situated in *contexts of power and politics*, public memory raises serious questions as to its authority, ownership, and influence (→ Power and Discourse). Who or what is invested with the power to determine a given version of the past? To what political ends does a particular memorial practice operate? What are the differences between official and vernacular forms of public memory? Such questions lead invariably to contests over sanctioned memorial practices and those that seek to challenge them. Any comprehensive

understanding of public memory thus requires a principle of counter-memory, or those practices that aim to disrupt or extend in ways unintended by the powerful. Examples of such counter-memorial practices include African-American “5th of July” celebrations, Gay Pride parades, and European counter-monument movements.

As a form of production, public memory entails a *key paradox*. Stated axiomatically, this paradox holds that every act of remembering is also an act of forgetting. That is to say, the construction of one memory may well displace, elide, or otherwise erase a competing sense of the past. Here indeed is the political rationale for much memory work: to install and sanction a version of history thought to be advantageous to a given interest. The emergence of the “lost cause” tradition in the post-bellum south, for example, is thought by many historians to have obfuscated the legacy of slavery and the ends for which the Civil War was undertaken.

For the ancients, memory was taken to be a technology of recollection (Yates 1999). That function still exists, of course, but the terms in which we now understand memory have expanded greatly. To understand public memory from a rhetorical perspective in our time is to grasp it as symbolically constructed, as situated within contexts of power and politics, and as inherently related to the process of forgetting.

SEE ALSO: ► Arrangement and Rhetoric ► Collective Memory and the Media  
 ► Constructivism ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Memory  
 ► Power and Discourse ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and History ► Rhetoric, Roman  
 ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetoric, Vernacular ► Rhetorical Studies ► Rhetorics:  
 New Rhetorics ► Style and Rhetoric ► Symbolism ► Text and Intertextuality  
 ► Visual Culture

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## **Mentoring**

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Defined as a communication process involving a seasoned professional who counsels, guides, and tutors a protégé (Waldeck et al. 1997), mentoring within the instructional context refers to a teacher–student relationship. In this context, mentoring consists of a

communication relationship between teachers and students, where the teacher provides academic, career, and social support to the student. Mentoring often extends beyond academic advising, fulfilling important personal and professional functions for the student. Mentoring provides students with invaluable information on university policies and politics, explicit and implicit rules and regulations, and other faculty in their program of study. In short, effective mentoring relationships promote personal growth as well as a professional development for protégés.

Central to the mentored relationship is the personal connection between the teacher and the student. The mentor usually has much to offer the more inexperienced protégé. Having achieved professional success, the mentor provides the protégé with both covert and overt practices to assist him or her in becoming successful (Kalbfleish 2002).

Research on mentoring relationships has identified a range of mentoring functions or mentoring roles. An overview of the literature points to two major functions: career and psychosocial (Clawson 1980). Career functions are more task-oriented and focus on ways the student might advance professionally. Psychosocial functions are more person-centered and focus on enhancing students' personal growth and sense of identity. Together, both functions assist students in their abilities to adapt to the challenges of their personal and professional lives.

The benefits of mentoring within the academy are numerous (Kogler-Hill et al. 1989). Important to student retention, academic progress, and graduation is student face time with faculty (Ewell 2005). Initiating and sustaining relationships between faculty and students increases the opportunities for face time and subsequent counseling. Mentored students most likely have more face time with faculty. As a result, they are more likely to stay in school and graduate. Mentored protégés tend to secure better jobs, achieve higher incomes (Whitely et al. 1992), gain in self-confidence, empowerment, and self-worth, become more skilled, and are exposed to greater professional networks.

Mentored students typically characterize their relationships with their mentors as "extremely pleasurable, meaningful and productive" (Waldeck et al. 1997, 105). They further perceive their personal relationships with their mentors as "very close, warm, relaxed, and friendly" (1997, 105). In fact, Waldeck et al. found that for graduate student mentoring, the psychosocial function predominates over the career function. Students who developed social, personal ties with their professors also reported their work relationship to be more satisfying.

The effectiveness of the mentor-protégé relationship resides primarily within the communication skills of the participants (Kalbfleisch & Davies 1993; Waldeck et al. 1997). Individuals high in communication competence and self-esteem are more likely or more willing to engage in mentoring relationships (Kalbfleisch & Davies 1993; → Student Communication Competence). Correspondingly, these same individuals experience greater levels of satisfaction with the mentored relationship. Conversely, those individuals who may need mentoring the most are less likely to seek mentoring experiences. Waldeck et al. (1997) report, e.g., that students representing minority groups in the United States (e.g., African-Americans, Latinos, Asian-Americans) are noticeably underrepresented in mentored relationships. Moreover, student attempts to initiate mentoring relationships are perceived to be especially difficult. Graduate students, e.g., indicate that their initiating

attempts are relatively ineffective, often requiring additional communication strategies and attempts before securing a mentor.

In response to these research findings, more formalized mentoring programs are needed. Faculty could be assigned protégés, reducing the need for either mentor or protégé initiation attempts. Without formal mentoring programs, faculty need to proactively recruit protégés who require academic or social guidance. Whereas much of the mentoring that occurs focuses on the task or career function, students need support and guidance about their personal and social requirements. Face time with students is perhaps the most important mentoring tool that instructors can provide. Interacting with students beyond the classroom opens opportunities for student discussions about those issues that most concern them. Kram (1988) makes similar recommendations in her guides for action for promoting mentoring relationships in organizations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Scholarship of Teaching ▶ Student Communication Competence ▶ Teacher Affinity Seeking ▶ Teacher Comforting and Social Support ▶ Teacher Communication Concern ▶ Teacher Confirmation ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Influence and Persuasion ▶ Teacher Self-Disclosure

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# Mergers

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In the late 1970s and early 1980s two books were published that tracked the growing concentration of ownership in the media industries (→ Concentration in Media Systems). The first, published in 1979 by Benjamin M. Compaine, was titled *Who owns the media?* The first edition of Benjamin H. Bagdikian's book *The media monopoly* was published in 1983. Over the following years subsequent editions of these books continued to show how mergers between media corporations were creating a situation where a smaller and smaller number of media corporations controlled an increasing proportion of the media products audiences consumed. At the beginning of the new millennium, both series of books found it necessary to issue heavily revised editions to take account of the growing speed of change in the media industries (Compaine & Gomery 2000; Bagdikian 2004; → Media Conglomerates; Media Corporations, Forms of; Media Economics).

There are many reasons why media corporations have sought to grow in size through mergers and acquisitions. *Technological convergence*, particularly as a result of a shift toward digital technologies, has led some media industries to compete in ways that were impossible before. For example, → cable television companies now want to provide their subscribers with telephone service and high-speed → Internet access through their digital networks. Similarly, telephone companies now look to various broadband services as a way of expanding the services they provide their customers. Merging with a company already active in the new media sector you want to enter is often an attractive strategy (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

But it would be wrong to suggest that it is only technological change that has intensified the urge to merge. A *search for synergy* and economies of scale has also been an important catalyst. Synergy is the ability of one part of a media corporation to promote the products of another. For a time during the 1980s and early 1990s, synergy became the "holy grail" of corporate strategies. Industry executives stared enviously at the ability of → Disney's television properties to promote the activities of its theme parks, while the theme parks could introduce new generations of children to characters from Disney's growing archive of animated movies (Wasko 2001).

There was also a belief that, by growing ever larger, media corporations could enjoy economies of scale that would *increase their profitability*. This was intensified by the fact that in many media industries, the initial costs of production are very high while the costs of creating copies and distributing them are comparatively low (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

It should also be noted that the *growing globalization* of media industries convinced many governments that they needed to allow their media corporations to merge in order for them to become big enough to compete on a global, or at least regional, scale (→ Globalization of the Media). Thus, in the United States regulations stopping a corporation operating in one industry sector, such as local telephone service, from operating in another sector, such as cable television, were progressively weakened or



eliminated. And the portion of an industry sector that a single corporation could control was increased, relying mostly on antitrust laws, rather than sector-specific regulations, to protect the public from anti-competitive behavior (→ Antitrust Regulation). All of these governmental actions contributed to the momentum for mergers in the media industries.

Not everyone was convinced that these media mergers benefited anyone other than the individual media corporations. Against the tide of neo-liberal thinking, which argued that media industries should be treated just like any other industry, a growing undercurrent noted that, unlike many other manufactured goods, media products contribute to the collective culture and our understanding of the world around us and our place in it. Therefore, while a media merger might not create a situation where the merged corporation could use its new market power to fix prices, and thus attract the attention of antitrust authorities, there might still be a concern that the diversity of viewpoints and voices would be diminished (→ Plurality). Additionally, the merged media corporation might now feel unwilling to report critically on the activities of its new corporate parent.

But these concerns were countered by other observers. They noted several ways in which the creation of increasingly large media corporations could be beneficial. For example, if a community's newspaper was owned by a large corporation headquartered in some distant city, it might be less open to pressures from local elites to cover the news in ways that served the interests of those elites rather than most members of the community. Similarly, on a global scale, a transnational media conglomerate might be more willing than an organization based in that country to challenge restrictions placed on its operations by a government trying to restrict the flow of information to maintain its power.

SEE ALSO: ► Antitrust Regulation ► Cable Television ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ► Cross-Ownership ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Disney ► Framing of the News ► Globalization of the Media ► Internet ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Corporations, Forms of ► Media Economics ► Ownership in the Media ► Plurality ► Public Sphere

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## Message Design Logics

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The major premise of message design logics is that individuals have different ways of reasoning (“design logics”) about communication. These individual differences affect how messages are structured to achieve goals (→ Message Production; Goals, Cognitive Aspects of; Goals, Social Aspects of). As such, message design logic provides a “rational goal analysis” of a speaker’s understanding of means–end relations in communication, which results in a range of variations evidenced in messages across a spectrum of complex situations (O’Keefe 1988). Typically, rational goal analyses, such as Brown and Levinson’s (1978) work on politeness or O’Keefe and Shepherd’s (1987) work on arguments, see message variation in terms of “strategies.” The theory of message design logic extends rational goal analyses by arguing that strategy choice in the pursuit of goals can reflect underlying differences in fundamental premises individuals hold about communication (→ Interpersonal Communication).

O’Keefe (1988) argues that there are at least three different design logics that can explain message variation. These design logics, in order of functional and developmental sophistication, are labeled expressive, conventional, and rhetorical. An *expressive design logic* is the simplest logic and reflects the premise that language is primarily a vehicle for expressing thoughts and feelings. Expressive communicators generate messages that are often blunt and more or less straightforward articulations of their current mental state. They speak very literally and interpret incoming messages by the same logic. Because communication is presumed to be the vehicle for thought, messages generated by this logic often contain irrelevant or pragmatically useless content, unnecessary redundancies, and stylistically inappropriate forms of expression. The expressive communicator, therefore, is guided by an internal mandate to “say what you think.”

In contrast, a *conventional design logic* sees communication as a “game played cooperatively, according to social conventions and procedures” (O’Keefe 1990, 91). In other words, messages are seen as actions in the service of achieving goals in acceptable ways as defined by the situation in which they occur and according to common social norms and rules for behaving in that situation.

Finally, a *rhetorical design logic*, the most sophisticated, involves a conception of communication that goes well beyond viewing messages as expressions of thought or rule-governed responses to social situations. Rather, it views communication as the creation of social selves and situations. Social situations are not predefined entities to

which one responds. They are, instead, entities that are defined through messages that articulate a view of what could be. Messages are structured by rhetorical design logics in ways that can facilitate defining situations to be consistent with desired goals.

Not all communicative situations permit discernible manifestation of these logics. However, they do become evident in complex communication environments where multiple goals are relevant and, often, at odds. Message design logic has also been associated with other individual differences and message effects. For instance, individuals with more sophisticated design logics are more cognitively complex (O’Keefe 1988). Also, messages produced by more sophisticated logics are considered more effective and the message producers are perceived as more socially attractive than those with less sophisticated design logics (Lambert & Gillespie 1994; O’Keefe & McCornack 1987; → Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

The theory of message design logic provides an alternative perspective on message variation that extends traditional notions of message production as “strategy selection.” It provides a framework for linking messages to the goals they seek to achieve, and it provides a methodology for identifying the operative design logic that is at work within a message producer and accounts for the structure and effectiveness of those messages.

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ► Goals, Social Aspects of ► Individual Differences and Information Processing ► Interpersonal Communication ► Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ► Message Editing ► Message Production ► Politeness Theory

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# Message Discrimination

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Message discrimination is a self-report measure of media exposure (→ Audience Research; Exposure to Communication Content; Information Processing; Cognition). In survey interviews, respondents are asked to recall → information about a particular topic that they have encountered in various media in the recent past. For example, respondents might be asked, “What have you seen or heard on television about family planning in the last month?” Open questions like this are repeated for other media (e.g., → newspapers, → radio, → magazines, → books). Responses are recorded verbatim and coded into “messages.” The message discrimination measure is the sum of messages reported by a respondent for the topic of interest across all of the media.

The term was coined by Peter Clarke and F. Gerald Kline (1974) in an article introducing the measure and its use in research on → media effects. The approach appears to have been presaged in the work of Edelstein (1974). His comparative research in the United States and Yugoslavia involved asking respondents (→ Interview; Survey) to nominate important problems confronting their local area and the world. Respondents were then queried about the sources of information on these problems (media), what solutions had been proposed, and what actors were involved in addressing the problems. Message discrimination features this “respondent-centered and open-ended” approach, as Clarke and Kline termed it. Clarke was a colleague of Edelstein at the University of Washington prior to joining Kline on the faculty at the University of Michigan in the early 1970s. Clarke and Kline (1974) illustrated the message discrimination measurement approach with a small study that employed Edelstein’s “problem – solution” questioning design. In subsequent research, the recall of information about solutions to a respondent-nominated problem was replaced by recall of information about a topic supplied by investigators.

## MOTIVES FOR USING MESSAGE DISCRIMINATION MEASURES

The rationale offered by Clarke and Kline for the use of open recall of information as a measure of media exposure rests on two claims. First, they asserted that frequently used measures of media exposure, which focus on reported time expenditure or frequency of contact with a medium, are too crude to capture what might be called “meaningful” exposure to the channel. At most, such measures denote the *potential* for exposure to particular content. Because they are so gross, the standard “exposure” measures are unlikely to show much predictive power when used as independent variables in media effects research. Clarke and Kline argued that media effects had been generally underestimated in the literature because “time spent” or “frequency of use” measures were so commonly employed as predictors (→ Exposure to Television; Exposure to Print Media; Exposure to News).

The second rationale for the message discrimination measure was normative. Clarke and Kline struck a decidedly egalitarian note when they declared that previous media research had relied too much on “researcher” definitions of media exposure and outcomes.

They contended that the extensiveness of respondents' cognitions should define exposure and that respondents' reported "information-holding" should replace elite "textbook knowledge" as the likely outcome of exposure. Thus, message discrimination may be seen as part of a more general reaction in mass communication scholarship in the early 1970s against the "limited media effects" viewpoint that had dominated in the previous two decades (see Klapper 1960; → Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968; Media Effects, History of). In sum, the contention was that genuine media effects had been overlooked in research to date because the independent and dependent variables had been erroneously defined.

### APPLICATIONS IN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

An example supporting the latter argument may be seen in Clarke and Fredin (1978). This study involved analysis of data from the 1974 National Election Study post-election interviews (→ Election Surveys). The hypothesis examined was that message discrimination about the campaign and about respondent-nominated problems facing the country would better predict "information-holding" (in this case, the number of reasons offered for supporting or opposing senatorial candidates) than would estimated frequency of television news viewing or number of daily newspapers read. Message discrimination measures for television and newspapers did predict the number of reasons offered by respondents better than did the number of newspapers read or the frequency of television news viewing, controlling for education and political interest. A finding for which the authors had no ready explanation was the fact that the number of messages discriminated from television was a *negative* predictor of information-holding. But the principle that exposure measured through message discrimination should predict knowledge better than exposure measures based on frequency of use was buttressed.

Two field experiments (→ Experiment, Field) prominently featured message discrimination in their assessments of media use. The first study, conducted in Flint, Michigan, and Toledo, Ohio, focused on adolescent learning (→ Educational Communication) about such topics as family planning and drug abuse. The second experiment was conducted in several Minnesota cities and concerned heart disease prevention. Example publications from these studies are Kline et al. (1974) and Jacobs et al. (1986). There is some irony in the observation that the "respondent-centered" message discrimination measure received its major application in the evaluation of "researcher-driven" information campaigns (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in).

Finnegan et al. (1989) examine aspects of the measurement technique in detail. The authors note that there was considerable operational variability in the approach across studies. While some investigations focused the message discrimination sequence with respondent-nominated issues, the field experiments queried respondents about topics of mass media campaigns (e.g., family planning, heart disease). Kline et al. (1974) asked respondents what they had seen, heard, or read about the topic of interest, repeating the question for each of several media. Jacobs et al. (1986) asked a more general question: "What specifically have you read, seen or heard about heart attack and stroke during the past few months from any of these sources?" (Respondents were handed a card listing various media.) The reference period for recall also varied across studies, with some

delimiting a particular time frame (“the past two weeks” or “past month”), while others asked about more vague periods of time (“past few months” or “lately”). Thus, while the several studies that have employed message discrimination shared the free recall approach – allowing respondents to report on media exposure “in their own words” – there is a case to be made that message discrimination is not one measurement technique, but several.

### **LACK OF ADOPTION OF MESSAGE DISCRIMINATION MEASURES IN RESEARCH**

As Finnegan et al. (1989) note, the message discrimination approach has not supplanted the time-based or frequency-of-use media exposure measures in reaction to which Clarke and Kline offered their alternative. Apart from research in which they, their colleagues, and their students were involved in the 1970s and 1980s, message discrimination has not played a role in the literature. This situation obtains despite the undeniable weaknesses of the standard exposure measures and some empirical support for the proposition that message discrimination better predicts information gain. It is worth speculating on why this is the case.

One reason may be ambiguity in the measurement of the concept. Message discrimination is supposed to measure media exposure, but it does so by asking respondents to recall information that they have received via the media. This means that exposure is confounded with information gain, which is usually treated as a dependent variable in media effects research (→ Measurement Theory). The confounding is intentional – Clarke and Kline argue that exposure is topic-specific and that it has not occurred without evidence that the putative audience member has “discriminated some symbols” relevant to the topic (→ Symbolism). But how are these “symbols” to be distinguished from knowledge about the topic that is the *outcome* of exposure? Clarke and Kline assert that message discrimination is distinct from “information-holding,” the dependent variable in their model of media effects. As Salmon (1986) observed, however, both message discrimination and information-holding rely on long-term recall of information. There is nothing in the measurement procedure as applied to date to ensure that message discrimination picks up information that is antecedent to knowledge, or even to ensure that the “symbols” recorded are actually the result of contact with media. Unlike Southwell et al. (2002), who assessed exposure to a health information campaign through *recognition* of campaign messages, researchers who have employed message discrimination have not verified that *recalled* messages originated in the media. While in some instantiations of the message discrimination technique, respondents have been asked to recall information that they encountered in different media – as noted above – the “messages” reported were not checked against a compendium of media content so as to validate the reports.

Another, maybe more powerful reason for the lack of widespread adoption of the message discrimination measure is that it is more laborious and expensive to execute than the time-allocation or frequency-of-use measures. Like any open questioning approach, message discrimination involves questioning, probing, and careful recording of responses. Interviewers must be extensively trained and the interviews they conduct will take longer than ones that rely on closed questions. Interviewer variance is apt to be

greater for this sort of measure than for closed question approaches. Once obtained, the responses must be unitized (“messages” must be identified) and placed in categories by coders (→ Coding). Inter-coder → reliability is an additional concern. The message discrimination approach can be burdensome to respondents too, despite the claim that it allows them to “speak in their own words.” Responding to open questions often requires more difficult comprehension, retrieval of relevant information, organization of thoughts and articulation than is involved in responding to closed questions. Greater familiarity and ease of use probably gave an advantage to the traditional media exposure questions that Clarke and Kline sought to replace with message discrimination.

Advances in survey technology and computational → linguistics could make application of message discrimination measurement more tractable for media effects researchers. Computer-assisted interviewing, voice recognition, and automated content analysis software (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative) could reduce the burden and expense of collecting and summarizing reports of information gleaned from media sources. Validation of these reports and clear differentiation of them from outcome measures of media effects is required for the message discrimination approach to achieve more widespread adoption.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Book ▶ Coding ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Information ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interview ▶ Linguistics ▶ Magazine ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Reliability ▶ Survey ▶ Symbolism

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# Message Editing

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Message editing is the process whereby speakers review and sometimes revise a message plan prior to speaking. At lower levels of linguistic output, a not-yet-spoken clause might be checked for consistency with phonemic, syntactic, and/or lexical rules. At more abstract planning levels, the acceptability of a message plan could be assessed by comparing it against a set of editing criteria, and/or by anticipating outcomes of the message (→ Goals, Social Aspects of; Message Production).

In order to investigate message editing at the phonemic and lexical levels, Motley and his colleagues conducted a series of experiments using laboratory-induced speech errors (Motley et al. 1983; → Experiment, Laboratory). In studies designed to elicit spoonerisms, for example, participants read aloud target word pairs, such as *shoe store*. When a target pair was preceded by a word pair containing a reversal of the initial phonemes in the target pair (*stoop short*), participants often produced a spoonerized version of the target pair (*stew shore*) (Motley 1985). Spoonerized versions more often contained lexically legitimate words than lexically anomalous words (“lexical bias effect”). To explain these findings, as well as other contextual influences on lexical selection, Motley et al. (1983) proposed a *model of pre-articulatory editing*. The model holds that the everyday production of error-free speech relies on an editor that reviews message plans for linguistic legitimacy prior to output. If the editor detects a linguistically anomalous construction, the plan may be vetoed or repaired.

In the mid-1980s, the notion that speech efficiency is due to pre-articulatory editing began to give way to the view that lower-level planning “decisions,” such as lexical selection, are often determined by the activation levels of nodes in an associative network. In a review of evidence from naturally occurring and laboratory-induced speech errors, Motley (1985) notes that speech errors at phonemic, lexical, and syntactical levels can result from highly activated competing output plans (→ Speech Communication, History of). He concludes that initial lexical selection depends on the activation levels of nodes in a spreading activation lexicon. As nodes do not exist for lexically anomalous items, the system is biased toward the production of speech errors containing lexically legitimate items (also see Dell 1986).

The editing of message plans at abstract, tactical levels of representation has been the focus of a program of research on *cognitive editing* conducted by Hample and Dallinger (→ Information Processing). In a typical study, participants read messages (arguments) that might be used to seek compliance in a hypothetical situation and indicate whether each message is acceptable. They also indicate reasons for finding messages unacceptable. The reasons (editing criteria) have been assessed using open-ended questions, checklists, and rating scales. Hample and Dallinger have found that the editing criteria fall into seven general classes. An argument might be rejected because it *would not work* (effectiveness criterion); is *too negative* (principled objection criterion); could *harm the speaker’s image*, *harm the target*, or *harm the relationship* (person-centered criteria); is *false*, or is *irrelevant*



(discourse competence issues; Hample 2005). Most of the editing criteria have also emerged in think-aloud protocols.

Cognitive editing research indicates that the frequency of use of editing standards depends upon both the individual and the situation. For example, use of the effectiveness, harm-to-other, and principled objection criteria, as well as the number of messages endorsed, are influenced by gender, verbal aggressiveness, and interpersonal orientation (Hample & Dallinger 1987). A secondary analysis of data from nine earlier studies showed that situational features, such as target dominance, relational consequences, and resistance, influence the use of editing standards and the likelihood of endorsing messages (Hample & Dallinger 2002). In requests following a rebuff, editing standards appear to change, such that aggressive messages are viewed as more acceptable. A comprehensive discussion of cognitive editing research and its relation to cognitive theory and other lines of inquiry is provided by Hample (2005).

A third approach to the study of message editing has explored factors that influence whether speakers become aware, prior to speaking, that a message would have an *unwanted outcome*. A cognitive model developed to account for such processes is described by Meyer (1997). The model holds that linguistic actions in message plans can become matched to the action components of implicit action-consequence rules. Once such a rule is activated, activation spreading from the action component makes the consequences of the action more accessible. Accessible consequences can activate beliefs about the relevance of the message to the speaker's goals. Such knowledge is initially activated preconsciously. The likelihood of becoming consciously aware of the knowledge is thought to increase with its level of activation and available processing capacity. The model predicts a positive relationship between the situation-specific importance of a secondary goal and the likelihood of realizing that a not-yet-spoken message would conflict with the same goal. Meyer (2005) found partial support for this relationship.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Information Processing ▶ Message Production ▶ Speech Communication, History of

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## Message Effects, Structure of

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Message effects fall into at least three categories: behavioral (actions caused by a message), cognitive (thoughts caused by a message), and emotional (feelings caused by a message). By message, we mean any kind of symbol perceived by an individual to have some sort of meaning, be it through the printed, spoken, or felt word via intrapersonal, interpersonal, mass media, or other means. A message can affect behavioral, cognitive, or emotional outcomes separately or simultaneously. The large body of research on fear appeals, for example, shows that a message produces thoughts about a threat, feelings of emotional arousal, and behavioral actions (Witte & Allen 2000).

A message contains (1) content, (2) stylistic, and (3) extra-message features. The content of a message refers to the words and/or symbols used in the message. For example, message content can focus on anecdotal versus statistical evidence, or loss versus gain frames (→ Framing Effects; Instrumental Actualization). Often, the content of message research focuses on latent constructs, such as susceptibility, severity, response efficacy, self-efficacy, barriers, norms, social capital, and so forth. Latent constructs cannot be directly measured and thus must be clearly defined and operationalized before being used in a message (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative).

*Stylistic features* of a message refer to the elements *within* a message that can be manipulated to determine the strength of its words or symbols (→ Style and Rhetoric). Stylistic features include such variables as language intensity, vividness, personalization, color, size of font, volume, etc.

*Extra-message features* have the capacity to influence outcomes but are outside the actual content or symbols used in the message. That is, those things that can be separated from the message content itself and can include features about the source of the message (credibility, dynamism), construction of a message (one versus two-sidedness, primacy/recentness effects, order of constructs in a message), medium of message, message repetitions, and length/duration of a message (→ Credibility Effects; Credibility of Content).

Typically, if people are motivated and able to process a message, they process the content features of a message thoughtfully and in depth (i.e., systematic or central processing). Extra-message and stylistic features act as cues about how to respond to a message (i.e., heuristic or peripheral processing; → Elaboration Likelihood Model). For example, if an important person gives a message (high source credibility), this is a cue that what she or he says is true and to be trusted. Petty et al. (1981) found that when people were

motivated to process a message (a high-consequence condition), strong arguments produced more attitude change than weak arguments, and source expertise had no effect on attitudes. In contrast, when people were not motivated to process a message (a low-consequence condition), the opposite occurred – source expertise (a cue) produced attitude change while the quality of the arguments (strong or weak) had no influence on attitudes.

In message effects research, typically message content or extra-message features are manipulated to assess effects on behaviors, → cognitions, or → emotions, and the stylistic features are used to strengthen or weaken the manipulations. It is fairly clear how to manipulate extra-message features (e.g., one versus three repetitions), but researchers need to clearly define and operationalize the content of message constructs (e.g., susceptibility or self-efficacy) in order to represent them as strong or weak in a message (→ Operationalization). Further, to prevent confusion, one must make sure that messages have similar styles, content/constructs, and extra-message features before manipulating key variables of interest.

Content, stylistic, and extra-message features all were addressed in a multimedia gun safety program in Michigan. The content of the message focused on the → *extended parallel process model's* (EPPM's) latent variables of susceptibility, severity, response efficacy, and self-efficacy. Stylistic variables such as vividness and personalization were focused on in the susceptibility and severity messages in order to increase the strength of these messages. For example, Michigan residents who had personally experienced traumatic gun accidents showed their serious injuries. Extra-message features also were addressed by presenting the threat message first, followed by the efficacy message (order effects), as well as offering multiple repetitions of the message by highly credible sources. The campaign successfully influenced behaviors, attitudes, and intentions toward using trigger locks to prevent gun accidents and won multiple awards (Roberto et al. 2000).

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Credibility of Content ► Credibility Effects ► Elaboration Likelihood Model ► Emotion ► Entertainment Education ► Extended Parallel Process Model ► Framing Effects ► Instrumental Actualization ► Operationalization ► Persuasion ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Message Production

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The object of research on message production is to answer the question, “Why do people say what they do?” The academic sources on this topic come from across the academy, notably → cognitive science, discourse studies (→ Discourse Analysis), and artificial intelligence, and from several specializations in communication, especially → persuasion, → interpersonal communication, and argumentation (→ Cognition; Compliance Gaining). Unconnected research was done by many investigators for decades, but the project solidified with the publication of Greene’s (1997b) *Message production*. From that point on, message production became an explicit topic for research and graduate seminars.

This work is now mainly done in the discipline of communication, which was originally framed by the classical tradition of rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies). The first canon of rhetoric is invention, which refers to the generation of content for a speech. Message production research is mainly relevant to this canon, although it makes little use of the ancient doctrines of *topoi* (the “places” from which orators can draw material) or *stases* (the logically required “resting places” of a controversy). For the most part, message production work is only beginning to address the remaining canons of rhetoric. Organization (the second canon) has received no attention at all, style (the third canon) is just starting to be a focus of research, and delivery (the fifth canon) has been treated to a small degree by nonverbal scholars. Memory (the fourth canon) is the chief exception because it is a continuing theoretical basis for message production theory (→ Memory).

### THE GOALS-PLANS-ACTION (GPA) MODEL OF MESSAGE PRODUCTION

The goals-plans-action model, first articulated for the message production community by Dillard, is straightforward at its kernel. The idea is that, upon encountering a situation that calls for communication, people spontaneously form communication goals, which stimulate message plans, and the message (or action) involves acting out the final plan. The most basic hypothesis, robustly supported, is that the message will be in service of the goals, and this relationship is mediated by the plan. As the research has grown more sophisticated, however, so has the GPA model.

## Situation

In the original formulation, the GPA model's initial processual focus was on goals. These were understood to have been activated by a match between a subjective situation and the person's cognitive stores. Little effort was made to theorize situations, although some work was done to identify dimensions of persuasive situations. Experimenters supplied respondents with an instruction (e.g., "you need to persuade a friend to give you a ride"), and simply assumed that the respondents understood the situation in the same way as the experimenter (→ Experiment, Laboratory; Experimental Design).

A notable advance was Dillard and Solomon's (2000) *conceptualization of situations as "social densities."* Just as the universe is mainly vacuum interrupted by densities of gravity and mass, so our social world contains recognizable clumps of social significance. An exploratory space vessel might aim at a particular mass, and similarly, people orient to repetitive kinds of interaction. These social densities are stored in long-term memory as nodes, which may well be labeled with a particular name (e.g., persuade, acquaint, etc.). Dillard and Solomon continue to formulate these social densities in terms of their goal structures.

Some other points of view appear in the literature. Hample (2005) suggests these omissions: obstacles, barriers, climates, and perception of both self and other. He believes that messages will be produced in respect to these situational elements, as well as to goals. O'Keefe (1988) objects to viewing goals only as subjective. Her idea is that situations have objective constraints, regardless of whether they are subjectively noticed. Persuasion, for instance, is inherently threatening to the face of the target, and a persuader who is oblivious to this will be punished, perhaps with ineffectiveness or disdain. And other scholars notice that not all communication-relevant situations actually generate messages (Berger 2004; Dillard 2004; Hample 2005).

## Goals

Message production is said to be under personal control, and therefore responsive to subjective goals. Dillard's initial formulation of the GPA specified that two sorts of goals would be activated. The first is what he calls the *primary goal*, which frames the situation, or defines it as a particular type (e.g., as influencing, comforting, joking, etc.). *Secondary goals* modify that frame, bringing to bear various other motivational issues, such as anxiety, protection of personal resources, and, most importantly, politeness. The secondary goals may be so immediately important that they overwhelm the primary goal (e.g., a person worried about giving offense might actually decline to try to persuade), but the situation remains subjectively defined by the primary goal (e.g., influence). No typological theory of specific goals is in wide use, although several have been suggested. Influence is the primary goal most often studied, because communication research on message production is a direct outgrowth of work on compliance seeking (Wilson 2002). The most common set of secondary goals concerns politeness (→ Politeness Theory).

Several investigators have explored the consequences of having multiple goals. Greene and his associates have shown in several studies (e.g., Lindsey et al. 1995) that people are

less articulate and more hesitant when producing messages that respond to two goals, as compared to single goal instructions. In Greene's work, the second goal is in some way inconsistent with the first (e.g., to give unwelcome information while ensuring that the other person is not offended). Samp and Solomon (2005) assess goal complexity (the number of activated goals) and goal strain (whether both pro-social and antisocial goals are activated). They find that both complexity and strain increase the number of clauses in messages. Thus, multiplicity of goals increases cognitive load, resulting in both immediate nonfluency and more eventual effort.

### Plans

A plan is a projected sequence of actions that is intended to achieve a goal. Messages are held to emerge from plans, which may be conscious but are much more likely to consist of unconscious assemblies and intentions (e.g., Greene & Graves in press). Berger (1997) is the leading scholar on this topic.

The plan is the point in the message production process at which content comes into play. For a message, many of the plan steps consist of things one will (or may) say. These items are understood to pre-exist in one's cognitive stores, and constitute a repertoire of possible messages or message elements. They might be understood as personal topoi, that is, places or resources. A plan, perhaps conceptualized as a memory organization packet (Kellermann 1991), assembles repertorial elements into sequences prior to utterance. Berger explains that one may have a simple sequence in mind, but may also have imagined a more complicated pattern that might even have various branch points at which choices must be made. Complicated situations may well require highly textured plans, but Berger has shown that complex plans reduce the fluidity of message production (→ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors). He has also demonstrated that a given plan exists simultaneously at several hierarchically organized levels of abstraction, ranging from general intention down to the physical requirements of pronunciation and performance.

Berger is aware that plans change during the course of invention and interaction. The planning stage is therefore also the site of → *message editing* (Hampe 2005). Berger shows that the least effortful available changes are those first attempted. Meyer (1997) says that cognitive stores contain two key kinds of associations: those between the situation and the message, and those between messages and their outcomes. The situation–message association system generates an initial draft of a message. Once a potential message is assembled and activated, it may in turn stimulate notice of various likely consequences (e.g., cursing causes social disapproval). These consequences reflect the presence of secondary goals, particularly politeness issues. Should the consequences have sufficient activation levels, they may stimulate message revision or abandonment. Rehearsing a message plan improves the fluidity and quality of the resulting message.

### Messages

Most message production research to date has a limited theoretical domain, mainly going either from one element of the GPA model to the next, or from one early component directly to the message. The main findings, which are robust, are that situationally

activated goals predict messages' apparent objectives, and that plan content predicts message content. These results are rather general, however.

Some more specific work has generated useful, if partial, descriptions of messages. Scholars have explored the fluidity of message production, focusing on onset latencies, pauses, and semantic variety. They relate these matters mainly to plan or goal complexity, respectively. Either sort of complexity increases cognitive load, interfering with ease of expression. Samp and Solomon's (2005) research program explores message embellishment, length, and focus (e.g., on self or other), linking these outcomes to goal strain and goal complexity. Both strain and complexity lead to longer and more elaborate messages. The *obstacle hypothesis* (Francik & Clark 1985) connects message content and phrasing all the way back to situation, so that requests acknowledge the situational feature most likely to impede a favorable reply (e.g., "If you're not too busy, could you find me a map?"). Repertoire features (e.g., degree of attention to face or argumentative issues) reappear as the parallel message features across topics. Not one of these research projects, however, spans every key component of the GPA model, and collectively their message characterizations are somewhat unconnected.

### INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

The message production project is essentially a cognitive one, developing theories that are intended to apply with equal force to any competent person with an ordinary cognitive system. Distinguishing among people on the grounds of personality or cognitive differences has not been a central priority. People are certainly understood to have different goals in similar situations, for instance, but the theoretical impulse has been to say that whatever the goal is, it will be subjected to essentially the same cognitive dynamics as any other goal, by any other person. Nonetheless, some work has used individual difference measures as ways of understanding which goals, which plans, which revisions, and which messages will appear.

When people react to a situation, they act and think in response to the *subjective situation*, not the objective one. Wilson (2002) shows that people exposed to what was apparently the same situation form different interaction goals, and that this difference is traceable to their interpersonal differentiation levels (→ Constructivism). The usual theory of situation-to-goal process says that goals will be activated according to how well they fit situational features, how strongly associated the goal and situational features are, and how recently the goal has been activated. Several researchers have explored how stable individual differences affect these matters, especially fit and strength.

*Personality traits* are understood as indicating what interaction goals are chronically accessible (i.e., strong). Introverted people will commonly activate avoidance goals, and other-oriented people will readily form relational and identity goals. Meyer (2005), for instance, shows that people high in verbal aggressiveness are less likely to reject potentially offensive messages, because relational goals are not chronically accessible to such people. Berger (1997) reports that high self-monitors produce more complex plans, because they are more oriented to their interactional partners. Research connects message behavior to argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness (Rancer & Avtgis 2006). Other trait measures have been associated with editorial behavior,

predicting whether people will edit their messages at all, and if so, on what grounds (Hample 2005).

Individual differences other than personality traits have also been investigated. Interpersonal construct differentiation is a key variable. Other non-trait measures that have garnered some attention by message production researchers include cognitive speed and capacity, age, creativity, and academic ability. Several research programs have determined what beliefs or naïve theories people have about communication, and have shown that those belief sets predict various features of message production.

### **DYADIC INTERACTION**

The bulk of message production work has studied solitary communicators, who generate either a written message or an oral monologue. The lack of attention to dyadic or group interaction has been criticized by Waldron (1997), and his objections remain forceful.

Applying the theory and results bearing on a solitary communicator to individuals engaged in interaction may not be simple (Greene & Graves in press). Conversation has its own structure, to which people almost inevitably respond (→ Conversation Analysis). So a question creates an answer slot, a challenge calls out a defensive reply or a concession, and so forth. One's plans must be adaptable in the instant, because every action by the interlocutor alters the situation, and so may stimulate new goal configurations or plans. The finding that the power of individual difference variables evaporates once an interaction is under way is not uncommon. Once engaged in conversation, people's messages appear to respond mainly to what the other person says and does, rather than to private, pre-existing goals and plans. A few studies do show that people persist when the other person is uncooperative, forming more aggressive goals, and revising their plans in predictable ways. However, joint development of communicative action is not yet a substantial research topic, and neither is adaptation to topic changes. A fruitful approach to these difficulties may be that of Bruce and Newman (1978).

### **PROSPECTS FOR MESSAGE PRODUCTION RESEARCH**

This entry has featured the GPA model, which summarizes (or at least is compatible with) nearly all the current research. Several other theories either do not connect with the GPA very well, or go into remarkable detail about matters that are not otherwise prominent in the GPA. These include the local management of meaning theory (O'Keefe & Lambert 1995), action assembly theory (Greene 1997a), and O'Keefe's (1988) message design logic theory (→ Action Assembly Theory; Message Design Logics). This entry also omits mention of biological work on message production because such work is only beginning (→ Communiobiology). The prominence of the GPA has perhaps unfairly limited scholarly attention to these interesting approaches. Many scholars and teachers also integrate material from lines of research that are not explicitly about message production, for instance work on social support or self-disclosure. This sort of research is very helpful in moving message production work beyond its roots in persuasion.

In the last decade, message production has become an important topic among communication scholars. How people generate their utterances and writings is obviously



a fundamental matter, and it should not have been neglected for as long as it was. Potentially, the communication discipline could well be reorganized into three main divisions: message production, messages, and message reception. Academic tradition and inertia will probably prevent this, but the fact that it is sensible should immediately display the importance of this topic.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Communi-  
biology ▶ Compliance Gaining ▶ Constructivism ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse  
Analysis ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Interpersonal Communi-  
cation ▶ Memory ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Message Editing ▶ Persuasion  
▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors

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## Meta-Analysis

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Meta-analysis is a set of methods and statistical analyses for summarizing the findings of an existing empirical literature. As the name implies, it is a study of studies. It provides a way to do a quantitative literature review that involves cumulating effects across studies (→ Quantitative Methodology). The purpose of a meta-analysis is to ascertain if the findings from a collection of studies investigating some specific issue lead to some consistent result and, if so, to estimate the magnitude of that finding. If not, it serves to reconcile findings that appear to offer mixed support for a hypothesis. Meta-analysis is also useful in identifying the reasons why findings are inconsistent from study to study (→ Generalizability) and to identify theoretically important moderators. Meta-analysis will likely play an increasingly important role in making sense out of social science research.

### THE USES OF META-ANALYSIS

The value of meta-analysis is particularly apparent when contrasted with the typical narrative review of sustained research on a topic. Due to the nature of social scientific research, the results of different studies investigating the same question will inevitably vary from study to study. Some of this variability is attributable to sampling error. That is, because studies seldom, if ever, include the entire population, estimates drawn from samples will likely depart from population values by some amount, with greater departures possible with smaller samples. Results can also vary across studies because of methodological artifacts (→ Validity). For example, differences in measurement and design validity, induction strength, and measurement → reliability affect results. Finally, results can vary from study to study for substantive reasons. That is, for theoretically meaningful

reasons, a finding might be stronger in some populations or contexts than in others. Thus, individual and contextual differences can produce differences in results because no two studies are done with exactly the same sample participants, in the same location and context, at the same time, etc. Put differently, known or unknown moderators can exist and cause variation in results from study to study. Because of variability attributable to sampling error, methodological artifacts, and unidentified moderators, it can be difficult to make sense of the findings in a literature through a narrative review. Most often, the collection of existing studies on a communication topic provides a collection of mixed results that makes a coherent account of the findings difficult. So, the existing research investigating some topic often contains studies that appear to lead to contradictory conclusions.

The picture is further clouded by the reliance on null hypothesis significance testing ( $\rightarrow$  Hypothesis). Analyses show that typical effect sizes are meager in many social science literatures (Richard et al. 2003) and that the statistical power to detect typical effects is low (Cohen 1962). Because of sub-optimal statistical power, true population effects may not always be detected. Given the variance in sample sizes used from study to study, even when consistent effects are observed across a set of studies, some studies would achieve significant results while others would yield nonsignificant findings simply due to the sensitivity of the dichotomous decision rule (significant vs. nonsignificant) to sample size. This makes literatures with consistent results appear inconsistent, and creates the false impression of mixed support. In practice, however, findings actually do vary because of sampling error, methodological artifacts, and substantive moderators, and this variability is further complicated by sub-optimal statistical power. This makes doing head counts of significant and nonsignificant results in the literature a problematic way of assessing the consistency of support a hypothesis has received across studies (Meehl 1978).

Meta-analysis provides a way to overcome a number of these problems. Because results are cumulated across studies, low statistical power is less of an issue. Meta-analysis focuses attention on effect sizes, and relies less on significance testing. The degree to which sampling error explains study-to-study variability is estimated, and corrections for many methodological artifacts are possible. Substantive moderators can also be tentatively identified.

## **PRACTICE OF META-ANALYSIS**

### **Procedure**

So, how is a meta-analysis done? Meta-analysis involves several steps. First, the relevant and usable studies investigating a topic are collected. Then, the findings of each study need to be converted to some common metric so that the results can be cumulated. Relevant study features are also coded. Next, an average effect across studies is calculated, and study-to-study variability is examined. Analyses are also done to see if and how coded study features affect results.

The first step is to gather relevant and usable existing studies, which serve as the data for the meta-analysis. Authors of meta-analyses typically will develop criteria for study inclusion. It is important that all the studies included test the same issue or hypothesis. It

does not make sense to average across apples and oranges, so to speak. This does not necessarily mean, however, that all studies must have used the same experimental inductions or measures. So long as there is consistency at the conceptual level, operational differences need not be considered cause for exclusion. Operational differences can be coded to determine later if those differences caused heterogeneity of study results (→ Coding). Studies must also report sufficient information so that an effect size can be calculated. Once the criteria for inclusion are determined, a search method is specified. Typical searches will include those studies already known to the authors, the use of relevant search engines and databases, and examination of reference pages of found studies. The goal is to collect all existing research meeting the inclusion criteria.

Once previous studies have been collected and determined to meet the inclusion criteria, the findings from each study need to be converted to a common metric, usually some unit of “effect size.” The most common metrics used in meta-analysis are  $d$  and  $r$ , where  $d$  is the standardized mean difference, and  $r$  is the correlation coefficient (→ Correlation Analysis). So, for each test of a hypothesis in the literature, an effect size (i.e.,  $d$  or  $r$ ) is obtained. If the previous studies report effect sizes, this is straightforward. But, unfortunately, many studies do not do so. Fortunately, however, a variety of conversion formulas exist (Rosenthal 1991; Rosenthal et al. 2000; Levine & Hullett 2002; Hullett & Levine 2003). For example, if either sufficient descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations, and cell sizes; → Statistics, Descriptive) or significance tests with degrees of freedom are reported, effect sizes can often be calculated. The effect sizes collected can be corrected for various methodological artifacts, such as measurement error, restriction in range, artificial dichotomization of continuous measures, and deviations from perfect construct validity (Hunter & Schmidt 1990). It should be noted, though, that some scholars argue against those corrections (Rosenthal 1991).

Once a set of effects has been collected reflecting the findings in the literature, the findings are cumulated and tested for homogeneity of effects. Findings are cumulated simply by averaging, although the average is usually weighted by study sample. This produces an across-study average effect, and this average effect can be considered an estimation of the population effect. The across-study average can be tested to see if it is likely different than zero, using confidence intervals calculated around the average. Because across-study average effects are based on much larger and more diverse samples than any one study, they provide a better and more stable picture of the findings than is obtained from individual studies.

In addition to examining the across-study average effect, meta-analysis considers the dispersion of effects; that is, how much the studies vary from one another. Given how much findings vary from study to study and the sample sizes of those studies, the extent to which the different findings might be attributable to sampling error is estimated. If the dispersion of effects is found to be similar to what would be predicted by sampling error alone, this means that all the findings from all the studies appear to be drawn from the same population, and the set of studies is considered homogeneous. When the results are homogeneous, then the average study effect can be meaningfully interpreted as summarizing the findings of the existing research. Heterogeneous findings mean that the results vary substantially more from study to study than can be attributed to sampling error alone. Heterogeneity can be caused by methodological artifacts in some studies but

not others that differentially impact results, theoretically important moderators, outliers, reporting errors, and/or the inclusion of some studies that are not assessing the same issue as other studies. The homogeneity/heterogeneity of effects is often tested with chi-square or Q statistics. If heterogeneity is found, the meta-analyst will attempt to resolve it with a moderator search.

### **Search for Moderators**

When studies are collected, they may be coded for study features. For example, some studies might use students while others might use working adults; some might use self-report measures while others might use open-ended coding. Any identifiable subject, context, or method feature could be coded. Although these features can be coded using a continuous metric (e.g., year of publication), one frequently sees moderators assessed categorically. In the latter case, analyses of the effects of moderators are accomplished simply by sorting effects into groups depending on some coded study feature, then calculating average study effects separately for each feature. If the feature makes a difference, then the average effect size will be different under one condition than under another. This is partial evidence of a moderator. The other key indicator of a useful moderator is that the average variance of the effects within each sub-group is substantially less than the variance of all the effect sizes when treated as a whole. Given these two conditions, the sub-groups are tested again for homogeneity. Ideally, all heterogeneity can be resolved by finding the cause of study-to-study variance, meaning that no further moderators are operating. Once a moderator has been identified with meta-analysis, it is good practice to design an experiment to test the moderator with original research.

### **Challenges**

A number of challenges face meta-analysis. One major challenge is that the results of meta-analysis are no better than the quality of the studies used. For example, if some common bias was evident in all studies of a given topic, then that bias would be reflected in the meta-analysis results and it would be undetectable. A second challenge is a publication bias favoring supportive (often, statistically significant) results. If supportive studies are published and nonsignificant findings are not, then the results of meta-analyses will show an upward bias. A third problem arises from having only small numbers of studies within a research domain. Just as any single study derives more credibility from having larger samples, meta-analyses provide more meaningful results when they incorporate larger numbers of studies representing larger numbers of participants. A meta-analysis of, say, five or six studies each with only 100 participants probably cannot be considered as providing a definitive statement about the nature of effects in a population. Finally, there is the question of what do to with heterogeneous effects. If heterogeneity cannot be resolved with moderator analysis, then it is questionable if average results can be meaningfully interpreted.

SEE ALSO: ► Coding ► Correlation Analysis ► Generalizability ► Hypothesis ► Quantitative Methodology ► Reliability ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Validity

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## **Meta-Discourse**

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Meta-discourse is talk about talk. The common term → *discourse* refers to the pragmatic use of language (including nonverbal signs such as → paralinguistic and → gestures in discourse) in extended texts or episodes of communication. *Meta*-discourse refers to the pragmatic use of language to comment reflexively on discourse itself. The prefix “meta” (from a Greek word meaning with, across, or after) here denotes a shift to a higher-order frame of reference. Meta-discourse shifts the focus of attention from ongoing communication, putting some stretch of discourse in a context or frame designed to influence the meaning and practical conduct of communication.

The frame shift performed by meta-discourse is most often local and momentary, as when a speaker uses the word “*first*” to frame an immediate following point as the first in a series of points, or says “*I understand completely*” to mark another’s statement as understood and accepted. Extended episodes of meta-talk also occur, for example, when a couple sits down to talk over a problem in how they have been talking with each other. Discourse about discourse-in-general is also meta-discourse. People trading stories about poorly run business meetings or writing newspaper columns about rules of etiquette for the use of mobile phones in public are engaged in meta-discourse with a relatively broad scope. So are scholars writing academic books and articles about media, discourse, and communication. All of these forms of meta-discourse participate in the ubiquitous social processes through which norms and meanings for communication are continually

negotiated (Craig 1999, 2005). With a growing cultural emphasis on the importance of communication in modern societies, explicit talk about talk seems to have become increasingly prevalent. A “communication culture” has evolved that “generates large quantities of meta-discourse” (Cameron 2000, viii).

Researchers have identified a wide array of linguistic devices used in meta-discourse. “Discourse markers” are used to indicate relations between segments of discourse (“*and*,” “*because*,” “*on the other hand*”), interpersonal relations (“*sorry*,” “*but*,” “*you know*,” “*as a friend*”), and cognitive attitudes toward what is being said (“*I mean*,” “*in a sense*,” “*certainly*”; → Discourse Markers). “Linguistic action verbs” are used to describe the social actions performed in discourse (“*she asked*,” “*don’t threaten me*”), and, in some cases, simultaneously to carry out those actions in “performative utterances” (“*I promise*,” “*I tell you*”). “Reported speech” (direct or indirect quotation) purports to represent for some present purpose something that was said previously (Lucy 1993, 18–21). “Indirect reported speech” highlights the effective content of what was said (“*Margaret told me that you would be late*”), whereas “direct reported speech” highlights the precise way in which something was said (“*Margaret told me [the following spoken in mock imitation of Margaret’s voice] ‘Of course, he will be late, as always!’*”).

Verschueren described these and many more linguistic devices as indicators of *meta-pragmatic awareness*. Insofar as all pragmatic language use involves making linguistic choices more or less consciously, “*all verbal communication is self-referential to a certain degree*” (1999, 187–188, italics in original). Reflexivity thus being a matter of degree, meta-discourse ranges along a continuum from the relatively blatant verbal framing moves just illustrated to relatively unconscious cues (such as a slightly noticeable word choice, vocal emphasis, or facial expression) in which meta-discourse may be hardly distinguishable from first-level discourse. Some of these subtle framing devices have been described as *contextualization cues* and it has been noted that they can be highly culture-specific (→ Interactional Sociolinguistics)

Although there are functional similarities in meta-discourse across languages (Verschueren 1989), meta-discourse also reflects communicative forms and *speech codes* specific to particular cultures (→ Ethnography of Communication; Speech Codes Theory). Speech codes comprise systems of concepts, beliefs, and rules of conduct pertaining to communicative practices, personhood, and social relationships. Cultural groups develop *meta-communicative vocabularies* (Philipsen 1992) that express their speech codes. Although a speech code may not be followed consistently in practice, the meta-communicative vocabulary is used rhetorically in meta-discourse to interpret, evaluate, or justify communicative acts. For example, the declaration that “we need to sit down and talk” about a problem may have a certain rhetorical power for the participants that depends on a specific meaning of “*sit down and talk*” in a cultural speech code.

Speech codes and meta-communicative vocabularies overlap with the more critically toned concept of *language ideologies*, “habitual ways of thinking and speaking about language and language use which are rarely challenged within a given community” (Verschueren 1999, 198; see also Jaworski et al. 2004). From this critical standpoint it becomes apparent that cultural speech codes incorporate historically contingent practices, beliefs, and standards of “correctness” that systematically favor more powerful segments of society over others, for example by stereotyping and devaluating the communication

of women, lower classes, and immigrant groups (→ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts; Social Stereotyping and Communication).

Academic theory and research on communication, language, and media are forms of meta-discourse. Along with other forms of meta-discourse in mediated, public, and private interaction, academic meta-discourse participates actively in the social construction of communication practices (Craig 1999, 2005). Commonplace normative beliefs about communication – whether regarded as speech codes or language ideologies – provide much of the basis for academic theories (Taylor 1997). Critical scholarship is needed to illuminate, and thus open to contestation, the unreflective cultural assumptions and ideologies at work in all forms of meta-discourse, including academic forms. But communication theory also has a positive role to play as a source of carefully considered, alternative ways of talking about talk that can be useful for addressing practical communication problems.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Cybernetics ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discourse Markers ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Language Attitudes in Intergroup Contexts ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Linguistics ▶ Paralanguage ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Speech Codes Theory

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## **Metaphor**

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Metaphor is widely regarded as a basic linguistic form in nearly all types of → discourse (→ Linguistics). In contrast to early thinking about metaphor, which emphasized its role



as a stylistic embellishment used for rhetorical effect, modern theories consider metaphor to be an essential feature of thinking itself. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (1980) identified a variety of metaphor types that interconnect to structure how people conceptualize their experiences with their physical and social environments. This cognitive perspective on metaphor has stimulated scholarship on metaphor phenomena in a great many disciplines, including communication, organizational theory, political science, art, philosophy, computer science, and law. The role of metaphor in → persuasion is of particular interest to communication scholars. Research findings suggest, for example, that → advertising containing metaphors receives greater → attention from readers and evokes more positive affect toward the ad (McQuarrie & Mick 1999; → Advertising as Persuasion).

### FUNCTION OF METAPHORS

Metaphors present two ideas or terms in relationship to one another such that one is used to organize or conceptualize the other. For example, the statement “encyclopedias are gold mines” uses the idea of gold mines to clarify or modify the reader’s conception of encyclopedias. Various names have been given to the two terms that are combined in a metaphor. In the example just given, the subject of the metaphor, encyclopedias, is often called the topic or target. The idea that is used to transfer new → meaning to the topic (e.g., that encyclopedias store riches) may be called the vehicle or metaphor source.

For a metaphor to accomplish its work, there are two additional conditions that must be met. First, the *two terms must share some properties* and those common properties need to be at least minimally relevant to the claim made by the metaphor (i.e., A is B). Otherwise, the attempt at creating an analogy will seem implausible to the reader. Some metaphor theorists refer to the process of transferring the properties of the source to the target as one of “mapping” relevant aspects of the source onto the target (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). In this view of metaphor effects, the source transfers both some of its properties to the target and a structure for articulating the relationships among those properties. A somewhat different theoretical perspective is called “conceptual blending” (Turner & Fauconnier 1995). There, the metaphor is said to create a unique conceptual structure in which selected aspects of the source and target are combined.

The second essential condition for a metaphor to work is that the attempt to combine properties of the source and target must seem at least *mildly incongruous or initially nonsensical* to the reader or viewer. That is, the proposition that A is B cannot be literally true. An effective metaphor creates tension by intentionally violating norms of language use or the reader’s beliefs about the world (→ Rhetoric and Language). The interplay of simultaneous similarity and incongruity in an effective metaphor stimulates a problem-solving response in the reader or viewer and a higher degree of engagement in the process of decoding the meaning of a message. Greater engagement with the text is thought to facilitate the persuasion process.

### NONLINGUISTIC METAPHORS

The preponderance of metaphor research has been conducted with linguistic expressions. In recent years, however, researchers have turned their attention to nonlinguistic forms of

metaphor phenomena. Two primary emphases in the field of visual metaphor studies are metaphors in the visual arts and metaphors in advertising. Examples in the first category include studies of *metaphors in painting, sculpture, graphic design, architecture, and movies*. Trevor Whittock (1990) identified symbolic elements in popular films that created metaphoric effects through context, image distortion, or juxtaposition of one object with another (→ Film Theory). As an example of a visual metaphor created through context, Whittock cites the famous scene in Hitchcock's *Psycho* when the female lead takes a shower after a lengthy day of trying to flee the scene of the crime in which she had stolen a substantial amount of money. In the context of the emotions of guilt and remorse portrayed by the character prior to that scene, the shower becomes a visual metaphor for spiritual cleansing (→ Semiotics; Symbolism). In this example, the visual presentation of the metaphor adds little to what might have just as effectively been expressed through linguistic means. Other examples of metaphoric content in films are more distinctly *visual* in the way they achieve their effects (→ Visual Representation). Whittock describes a scene in *Dr Strangelove* in which a wide angle lens was used to distort the faces of a flight crew in such a way that the images of the men appear to merge with the shape of the military aircraft that they were commanding. In this visual metaphor, the airmen are made integral with the instrument of death that they operate.

Research by Kaplan indicates that visual metaphors are widely used in *product advertising*, appearing in one-third of ads for beverages, automobiles, and fashion products (1992, 2005). The visual presentation of metaphors varies from simply showing the source and topic side by side in the picture (e.g., in an ad for a car, the product is seen next to a fighter plane) to those in which the physical form of the topic is transformed such that certain features of the metaphor source become incorporated in the pictorial representation of the product. The first type is a visual version of "simile," while the second type is a visual metaphor of the form "A is B." Charles Forceville (1998) identified various formal features of metaphors in print advertising. Forceville's theory of visual metaphor in advertising distinguishes those cases in which only one of the two pictorial elements in a metaphor (either the topic or the source) is visually presented versus those in which both parts of the metaphor are depicted. When only one of the two parts of the metaphor is visually presented, the other metaphor term is supplied by text accompanying the ad or the reader's cultural knowledge. Forceville also describes visual "similes" and he differentiates these from metaphors by the degree of literalness in the comparison between the two elements (→ Visual Communication). Because visual similes are more literal, their effects presumably require less decoding effort on the part of the viewer.

*Architecture* is a type of visual text that combines elements of art and persuasion (→ Art as Communication). This dual function of architectural design was the focus of Kaplan's (2006) metaphor analysis of the effort to rebuild the World Trade Center site after the 2001 terrorist attacks. Visual metaphors were found to play a central role from initial planning efforts through the selection of architectural designs. Shortly after the attacks on the World Trade Center towers, extensive public hearings were held to solicit ideas for an apt architectural response to the tragedy. One image that emerged early in the process was the idea of memorializing the foundations of the absent twin towers. The visual metaphor of the buildings' "footprints" acquired rhetorical power for gaining

public acceptance of the master plan for the site and for a permanent memorial that integrates the footprints into its design (→ Rhetoric and Visuality).

### SOME CURRENT ISSUES

While there is general agreement on the similarities between linguistic and nonlinguistic metaphors, attention has also been paid to distinguishing characteristics between the two types. The *phenomenon of directionality* is one distinction that has been suggested. In common usage, linguistic metaphors are rarely reversible. That asymmetry is reflected in the use of terminology like “source” and “target,” and sentences containing metaphors are typically stated as “A is B.” However, metaphors in visual form may be more likely to be multidirectional. Hausman (1989) suggests that reversibility may be a common occurrence in painting and sculpture. But in the case of advertising, contextual cues generally leave little doubt as to the intended direction of a metaphoric combination because the advertiser’s goal is usually to invest the product (i.e., the metaphor target) with favorable properties borrowed from the metaphor source (→ Rhetoric, Nonverbal). Further research should be done on visual metaphors that occur in ambiguous contexts to determine how viewers determine which is the likely source and which is the target.

*Metaphor and irony* are generally thought of as similar in their construction and interpretation. Both metaphor and irony present an incongruous relationship between the two things being compared and invite the reader to discover similarities. However, for irony to be correctly interpreted, the reader must take the additional step of trying to guess if the speaker really meant the opposite of what appears to be the meaning of the statement. Thus, irony involves a second-order interpretive process in which the reader must assess the speaker’s intent. Colston and Gibbs (2002) found evidence for this second-order interpretive process in experiments in which readers took longer to process irony than metaphor. Little is known about *visual irony*. Are the cues for decoding irony in pictorial form different than is the case with linguistic irony (→ Code)? What are the contextual cues that seem to be useful? Again, advertising may be a good place to start research in this area. Advertisers sometimes introduce self-mockery in their presentations in order to deflect criticism of their industry or to appear more credible. Irony could also be used to discredit competing brands within a product category.

Most of the research on visual metaphor has involved static images, such as those found in a print advertisement. But the *movement of pictorial elements* in a visual frame could have independent metaphoric effects (→ Cinema). Another important area for future research is visual metaphors in multimedia presentations, including those where some degree of interactivity is possible. What happens, for example, when the viewer has a measure of control over the timing and order of a visual presentation? Similar questions arise regarding visual metaphors that might be created through linking in web-based media (→ Digital Imagery).

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Advertising as Persuasion ► Art as Communication  
 ► Attention ► Cinema ► Code ► Digital Imagery ► Discourse ► Film Theory  
 ► Linguistics ► Meaning ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Language ► Rhetoric, Non-

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# **Metonymy**

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On an evening newscast a news story about the US president includes a file photo of the White House in the frame over the news anchor's left shoulder. The picture of the White House is meant to cue the audience to the fact that the story is about matters associated with the president's office. The White House, a prop associated with the president, is used to signify the complex institution of the presidency. This mode of signification, in which a part or single characteristic of something is used to signify a more complex entity, or greater whole, is referred to as metonymy.

Metonyms are one of the many ways in which → signs work at the second order of signification, that is, when the denotative sign, the sign at the first order of signification, is interpreted in relationship to the particular cultural contexts and experiences of the user. Metonyms work by activating in the mind of the reader or viewer a chain of stereotypical associations that he or she has acquired through socialization (→ Information Processing: Stereotypes; Scripts). So when we use the expression “the *crown* has decided to sell of some of its lands,” the audience comes to understand the *crown* as a reference to the monarchy. We use a part of something to signify the imagined whole.

We can better understand how metonyms operate by distinguishing them from the common use of another trope, → *metaphor*. Much of our communication is made through analogies. When signifying meaning through metaphors, we create analogies – transposing the attributes of one object to describe a different and separate object. So when we describe a person’s insatiable sexual appetite by saying “he is an animal,” we transfer the sexual wildness of an animal to represent the man’s sexual behavior. While metaphors create their meaning by transposing attributes from different and unassociated spheres of reference, metonyms work on the same plane of reality, by associating objects that have a proximate or physical relationship. Metaphors cause us to understand one thing in terms of something different; metonyms cause us to refer to one thing (A) by using something (a) that is physically part of A or part of the world of A.

Metaphors and metonymy are different kinds of processes. Metaphor is principally a way of conceiving of one thing in terms of another, and its primary function is understanding. Metonymy, on the other hand, has primarily a referential function, that is, it allows us to use one entity to stand for another. But metonymy is not merely a referential device. It serves the function of providing understanding. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 36)

Drawing analogies through metaphors may be a common and useful way to create meaning in daily language, but metonyms may have an even more essential role in creating meaning because, as Fiske notes, “representation of reality inevitably involves metonymy: we choose a part of the ‘reality’ to stand for the whole” (1990, 95; → Visual Representation; Film Theory). In taking a photograph, editing a news story, or constructing a narrative film, we select pieces of a continuous reality (candid or staged) and elliptically join them together in an ordered, condensed, and oftentimes dramatized form to represent that “reality” (→ News Story; Narrative News Story). Thus, virtually all representations of reality are metonymic. When we tell stories, we do not relay all the details of the events in the story. We facilitate efficient storytelling by selecting only portions of the event narrative to convey the larger story (→ Storytelling and Narration; Rhetoric and Narrativity).

Invariably the metonymic selections we make in representation powerfully delimit and shape the way we come to understand the larger whole. In → news, metonymic selections frame important public issues for the audience (→ Framing of the News; Framing Effects). For example, images of “precision bombing” dominated television news representations of the first Gulf War. Metonymically, precision air-bombing became emblematic of the entire execution of the war. Its impact was to create for viewers an impression of a bloodless war, de-emphasizing collateral damage and human costs.

Metonymic images of precision bombing function as indexical signs, because of their existential relationship with the war itself. The photographic images trace actual reflections of light from the war captured on film, video, or charge-coupled devices (→ Video; Digital Imagery). In this way, metonymic representations exploit the “truth factor” associated with indices, and naturalize their meanings as truthful representation, even though we know the war as an event is much more complex than the narrow range of images we see (Griffin & Lee 1995). And metonymic representations function mythically, stimulating the viewer to construct a chain of associations related to the myth of modernization, technology, and progress. The images of precision bombing are seen as part of the world of progress through technological development, in which precision bombing reduces the human tragedy and collateral damage associated with even as tragic an event as warfare.

In → advertising and in → cartoons, metonyms are also used indexically, as a shorthand to activate mythical and stereotypical meanings socialized through acculturation (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication). For example, in a Boucheron perfume ad, an image of the perfume “Trouble” is juxtaposed with a bust-shot of a woman with a snake wrapped around her neck. Through socialization, we recognize the woman with the snake as an indexical sign that references the myth of temptation in the Garden of Eden. The image therefore metonymically associates seductive taboo with the perfume “Trouble.”

Similarly, editorial cartoons utilize a single frame to activate stereotypical associations in the viewers. Caricatured drawings of President Clinton with a long nose, during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, not only exaggerated a pronounced feature of his face to physically identify him, but indexically referred to the story of Pinocchio, identifying Clinton with Pinocchio as a liar (→ Caricature).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Acculturation Processes and Communication ▶ Advertising ▶ Caricature ▶ Cartoons ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Film Theory ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes ▶ Metaphor ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News ▶ News Story ▶ Rhetoric and Narrativity ▶ Scripts ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Video ▶ Visual Representation

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## **Mexico: Media System**

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Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1810, and in 1822 it became a republic. Of the history prior to the 1910 revolution, the war between Mexico and the United States in the mid-nineteenth century needs to be mentioned, in which the former lost almost half of its territory – this became a permanent source of friction in the relations between the two countries. Nowadays Mexico is a federal republic with 31 states and a federal district constituted under specific provisions. It has a presidential system in which the

significance of the legislative branch is increasing. It has a population of 107 million people – to which around 20 million people living either legally or illegally in the United States should be added – with a per capita income of US\$6,230 per year, and almost 90 percent of Mexicans are Catholics. Nevertheless, the influence of evangelical groups is increasing. The presence of indigenous groups is another important factor. Mexico is the only Latin American member country of the OECD and it is shaping up as a booming developing nation. However, its development has always been hampered by overwhelming social and economic inequality.

During recent years, the Mexican media system has experienced significant modifications. These may be explained by the strong interdependence between the media and the country's democratization process. After almost 70 years of de facto hegemony by Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), the election of Vicente Fox Quesada in 2000 meant that an opposition politician became head of state for the first time. This trend was confirmed in 2006. As a consequence, Mexico has a pluralistic media environment, particularly in its press. Within this scene, the audiovisual media system – primarily television – is shaped by oligopolistic structures.

### **LEGAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

In Mexico, the rights of journalists and the media lack a modern context because their legal framework dates from 1917 (→ Journalism: Legal Situation; Media Policy). Also, many Articles are not enforced and this leads to arbitrariness. In 2003 a step forward was made by setting forward the *Ley de Transparencia* (Transparency Act) and the constitution of the Instituto Federal de Acceso a la Información (IFAI). The recent decriminalization of slander (→ Libel and Slander) constituted another improvement for the media. Nevertheless, users of the media lack rights such as that of rebuttal (→ Right of Correction; Right of Reply).

Notwithstanding, based on the number of journalists murdered, Mexico is one of the most dangerous countries for representatives of the press. It is necessary to highlight that the perpetrators and planners of crimes against the press are seldom searched for and prosecuted. According to the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), 10 out of 150 media representatives subject to violence during 2006 were from Mexico. The state has been incapable of protecting and ensuring freedom for the media and their representatives (→ Violence against Journalists).

On the other hand, the economic conditions under which many journalists live lead to a decrease in the quality of their work. Many of them need to have several jobs at a time so that they can gain a decent way of life. This is why they are the privileged targets of corruption. The lack of job alternatives, particularly outside the capital, leads to risks for journalistic professionalism and independence.

### **PRINTED PRESS**

The social division that exists in the biggest Spanish-speaking country in the world has a strong influence on the media and on the benefits it confers to different parts of the population. Thus, printed media continue to be elitist and expensive. In some regions, the high percentage of illiteracy is also an exclusion criterion. According to available data,

the average Mexican reads half a book a year. The → book market has between half a million and seven million readers. The circulation of most of the 300 → *newspapers* is low, with the exception of a few tabloids (→ Tabloid Press), and they are concentrated within the biggest cities. In the capital there are 21 newspapers with very pluralist features.

Circulation numbers are still kept secret by the newspaper owners, and their economies do not reflect a need for autonomous control mechanisms. However, newspapers as influential as *Reforma* sell no more than 200,000 copies a day. Free newspapers are offered on street corners and on buses and the subway. Public opinion polls show that more than 40 percent of Mexicans never read a newspaper. Outside of the biggest cities, many of the printed media only survive by means of state → propaganda, which assures influence for both federal and state governments (→ Advertising). This “carrot and stick” situation also obstructs objective coverage (→ Objectivity in Reporting).

### BROADCASTING

Generally speaking, Mexico’s → television market is shared by the *Televisa* and *TV Azteca* networks. The former clearly gets the most significant benefits. *Televisa* owns the main cable TV supplier, *Cablevisión*. The Azcárraga family, linked to PRI for decades, holds the majority of shares in *Televisa*. *TV Azteca*, founded in the 1990s as a result of the privatization of two highly indebted channels, belongs to Ricardo Salinas Pliego. About 65 percent of concessions, along with 70 percent of commercial profits, fall on these two companies, which hold the majority of the 465 commercial television frequencies.

The remaining 257 additional suppliers are state-directed and provide educational and cultural content (→ Educational Media; Educational Media Content). Currently, a debate exists around the possibility of issuing licenses for the establishment of a third national broadcasting television network. This initiative has been strongly resisted by the “main actors,” who have used every resource available. At the federal level, only channels 11 and 22 enjoy national broadcasting, while inside the states the state-owned channels are opinion generators only because people lack alternatives (→ Communication Law and Policy: South America).

While this happens, *television* constitutes the main information and publicity medium on which much political-institutional and party propaganda are concentrated. During the 2006 presidential campaign, parties invested 82 percent of their extensive budgets in spots in *Televisa* and *TV Azteca*. Around 80 percent of Mexicans are reached daily by television programs, followed by 70 percent reached by → radio. The contents of television programming are mainly focused on entertainment, dominated by the popular → soap operas (telenovela), talk shows, and sports programs (→ Sports and the Media, History of; Sports as Popular Communication). News programs have a place of their own, but most of the time local and regional events of minor importance are overemphasized. Most of the content – 61 percent – is from Mexico, with 31 percent American, and between 2 and 5 percent Latin American and Japanese. Based on the research of José Carlos Lozano, from *Tecnológico de Monterrey*, Europe’s presence in the programming is only 0.4 percent. Rating is most important – and here public broadcasters are at a disadvantage.

In *radio*, there are 1,164 commercial channels, 306 of which are state-owned and have educational content. The latter are financed by the budget held by the Ministry of Public



Education or by universities. However, the number of channels cannot be compared with the variety of programs. Like television, commercial radio is dominated by certain networks, such as *Radiorama*, *ACIR*, *Grupo Radio Centro*, and *Cima Somer*, to which more than 100 stations belong. This is possible because there are no limits on the concentration of media ownership (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Ownership in the Media).

Just like in the rest of Latin America, the noncommercial sector of audiovisual media is both underdeveloped and underfinanced. This sector is made up of channels that, in one way or another, are under the direct influence of the state. This is why it is impossible to talk about open structures that guarantee freedom. These qualities do not apply to the NOTIMEX news agency either (→ News Agencies). What is more, public broadcasting depends on state subsidies for it cannot profit from advertising. Instituto Mexicano de la Radio, *Radio Educación*, and a broadcasting system for 13 million Mexicans with indigenous origins share radio stations – the latter broadcasts its programs in some of the 62 indigenous languages of Mexico (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

An alternative medium of information is represented by what is referred to as “community radio,” the survival of which is made difficult due to legislative conditions (→ Community Media). These radio broadcasters lack state funding and do not have access to the commercial market. Such a situation has resulted in the illegal operation of many stations.

## PROBLEMS AND TRENDS

The current reform to the Ley Federal de Radio y Televisión (Radio and Television Act), which dates from 1960, was the result of intense debates within the Supreme Court of Justice, which reversed some of the Act’s establishments. In general terms, only Mexicans can be the owners of broadcasting concessions, with the exception of the churches and the political parties. Commercial suppliers get licenses and other suppliers get broadcasting permits. Those who supported the initial reform argued that the participation of Mexico in technological development depended on it. Most of this was related to *triple plays*, which is the interconnection of television with telephone and Internet services.

However, this modification and its almost unanimous and immediate approval in the electoral year of 2006 were referred to as the “Ley Televisa” (*Televisa Act*). The objections of experts, important civil organizations, and media associations and federations were completely ignored. The preference for commercial networks became clear when 20-year concessions (internationally uncommon) were granted to them. Also uncontrolled, nearly automatic extensions and access to new media services were granted. Even more, it is possible that the commercial networks benefited from their strong economic position, for new licenses were to be called for bid and then granted to the highest offer. These parliamentary actions demonstrated to Mexican society the power held today by the electronic media.

Complaints were expressed by 47 senators from the main political parties. After the Supreme Court declared in June 2007, surprisingly, that the Act was unconstitutional, the senators and the representatives had to retake and reconsider the issue. For the Justices of the Court, the radio spectrum is a “common good” that should be organized in accordance with the standards of plurality and freedom of expression and information. One of the central questions in the upcoming reforms will be how the autonomy of the Comisión Federal de Telecomunicaciones (COFETEL, the Federal Telecommunications Commission)

should be guaranteed, how their members are to be appointed, and how the legislative branch can ensure its right to participate. Currently, the Ministry of Telecommunications and Transportation is in charge of granting and managing the frequencies. The lack of transparency, the climate of favoritism, and the direct influence from the executive branch are among the most highly criticized aspects of the conservation of this process (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

## NEW MEDIA AND THE INTERNET

Mexican youth in particular began to use the → Internet as an alternative medium. Based on current figures, around 15 percent of Mexicans have access to the web. Social differences are also reflected here (→ Digital Divide). What is more, → cable television offers a pluralist – both the Congress and the Supreme Court have a channel of their own and international suppliers have a presence in several channels – but only a reduced number of Mexicans can afford them. Most of the population has to turn to the abovementioned channels and thus plurality is restricted.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Community Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Media Policy ▶ News Agencies ▶ Newspaper ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio ▶ Right of Correction ▶ Right of Reply ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Sports and the Media, History of ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Violence against Journalists

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# Microethnography

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Microethnography, sometimes called video-based ethnography, addresses “big” social and organizational issues through careful analysis of “small” moments of human activity. Working at a particular site or institution, such as an archeological dig or an investment banking firm, researchers create video recordings of activities as they naturally occur, i.e., activities that would have happened whether or not a camera was present. These recordings are then analyzed repeatedly and rigorously, with attention to both the participants’ talk (who says what, when, and how) and their embodied behaviors (the relative location, movement, and orientation of people and things). Video analyses are combined with other kinds of information, such as ethnographic data gathered through observations and interviews, altogether providing a variety of macro- and micro-views of social activity.

Microethnographic research claims are grounded in the empirical details of actual behavior that are captured on video tape and made available to the scrutinizing audience. Researchers show how people interactively create and sustain the social and organizational realities that they inhabit. Although researchers may avoid explicit claims about the generalizability of site-specific findings, microethnographers assume that patterns and practices in one place will have relevance to other contexts.

## A HISTORICAL SKETCH OF MICROETHNOGRAPHY

Microethnographic research is a convergence of competencies from multiple disciplines, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, and communication. In 1942, anthropologists Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead published a ground-breaking book, *Balinese character*, which included more than 700 photographs that were arranged to show recurring patterns of social life. Their account of Balinese culture was grounded in the visible details of everyday behavior: how people walked, attended to their surroundings, moved their hands when eating or dancing, and so forth. This photographic analysis was a precursor to work in the 1970s, when social scientists started to use video tape (a new technology) to capture human behavior in “the wild.” For example, scholars concerned about social inequality in public schools used video tape to examine “micro-behaviors” (talk and movement) as the building blocks of micro-cultures that developed within a particular classroom or school (e.g., Mehan 1979). The term *microethnography* was picked up as a label for this new approach to research.

From the field of sociology came the influence of → Erving Goffman, whose “micro-studies of the public order” focused on the social rather than the psychological, on the interaction rather than the individual. Goffman used fragments of human behavior from a variety of sources (e.g., excerpts from field notes, snippets from overheard conversation, lines from novels) to illustrate his theory about the fundamental order of social life. He was especially interested in ritualistic forms: the small verbal and nonverbal

behaviors that individuals use to show appropriate respect for one another during daily encounters.

The strongest influence on microethnographic research has been → conversation analysis, a research perspective developed by sociologist Harvey Sacks, in collaboration with Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. As a challenge to the cultural determinism of Goffman's views, Sacks emphasized the *sequential emergence* of social life. He used audio recordings of real conversation to uncover the orderliness of everyday talk and to identify the micro-processes or "mechanisms" whereby social actions (e.g., greetings, assessments, questions/answers) are interactively accomplished. Sacks argued: "Whatever humans do . . . there is order at all points [and] a detailed study of small phenomena may give an enormous understanding of the way humans do things and the kinds of objects they use to construct and order their affairs" (Sacks 1984, 22–24). Conversation analysis has a kinship with → ethnomethodology, which is a revolutionary perspective promoted by sociologist Harold Garfinkel that regards social order as an ongoing product of people's sense-making practices and procedures.

Although microethnographic research regularly employs conversation analytic assumptions and procedures, the methods diverge in three important ways. First, conversation analysts typically create collections of some recurring phenomenon that they have found in a variety of contexts. For example, a study of assessments within conversation might include instances taken from telephone conversations, classroom discussions, medical consultations, and so forth. By contrast, microethnographies are typically case studies of a particular setting (e.g., a police department) or activity (e.g., a weekly board meeting). Second, rather than seeking to build generalized claims about what people do and how they do it, microethnography works to provide a rich description and a thorough account of scenes of social interaction. "How does a detective incrementally extract a confession from a suspect during a two-hour interrogation?" is the kind of question microethnography addresses. Third, conversation analysis has primarily focused on talk with less attention to visible interaction, including people's use of tools, artifacts, objects, architecture structures, and so forth. More often, microethnographic research has attended to the embodied features of human activity, including the subtle interrelationships between vocal and visible forms of interaction.

Microethnographic analyses of visible (nonverbal) behavior have been influenced by "context analysis," an approach pioneered by psychologist Albert Scheflen during the 1960s and 1970s. Scheflen carefully documented people's behaviors during therapy sessions, showing how their postural shifts marked phases of their meeting, and how their location and orientation in the room displayed interpersonal relationships. He also studied thousands of photographs of people within situations such as parties, hallway encounters, and office meetings. He explained the interactive affordances of different body parts and explicated social activities in terms of distance, orientation, and postures of the participants (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Context analysis was further developed by Adam Kendon, who advanced a more interactionist and sequential approach. Context analysis is more reliable than the notion of "body language" that became popular during the 1960s and 1970s: rather than treating an isolated behavior (e.g., folded arms) as inherently meaningful (e.g., defensiveness), context analysis examines the social relativity and sequential unfolding of visible forms and interaction.

Microethnographic work is making a unique contribution to communication studies by addressing “big” social, organizational issues through careful analysis of “small” interactional moments. For example, Goodwin (1994) conducted a frame-by-frame analysis of the courtroom activity that led to the acquittal of the Los Angeles policemen who beat Rodney King. The study showed how defense attorneys organized the jury’s perception of the video-taped beating so that King, rather than the policemen, was seen as the aggressor. Similarly, LeBaron and Streeck (1997) used computers to analyze a covertly video-taped interrogation at a police station with a history of getting confessions from suspects later found to be innocent. Their study showed how interrogators constrained talk at the same time that their spatial maneuvers literally backed the suspect into a corner. Such attention to vocal and visible behavior, including people’s use of objects and artifacts, combined with concern for “big” social and organizational issues, resonates across sub-fields of communication.

### HOW TO CONDUCT MICROETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Although microethnography takes different forms, depending on the interests and practices of the researcher, it generally involves five steps.

(1) *Select a research site.* Selecting a site depends on the nature of the research project. Although an Internet chat room might be a legitimate place for research, sites are typically physical locations where people move and talk in ways that collectively constitute recognizable action. Traditionally, ethnographers have chosen sites without knowing what they will observe or discover. Basic communication research – that is, discovering and documenting features of the interaction order – could be conducted almost anywhere because patterns of interaction found in one place, such as a beauty salon, might also occur within a courtroom, a boardroom, and so forth. Increasingly, site selection is guided by a specific agenda or question that the researcher wants to pursue, such as, “How do surgeons at a teaching hospital work to save the life of a patient and at the same time instruct a junior apprentice?”

(2) *Collect data.* Participant observations, field notes, interviews, and field recordings (audio and video) are all considered premium data for microethnographic research. However, video has become the staple because it provides empirical grounding for interpretive claims, captures subtle details of interaction that analysts can review and others can verify, and helps researchers attend to both vocal and visible phenomena socially orchestrated. A variety of cinematic decisions influence the “quality” of video-taped data. Simply turning a camera “on” or “off” is an interpretive act – a decision about what is important or worth recording. The camera’s scope is often a dilemma: a wide-angle view that includes all participants will not include close-ups of facial expressions and other subtle behaviors; a close-up view of someone’s hands will exclude the eye gaze or facial orientations that direct the attention of others. Cameras necessarily embody a perspective. They must be placed and pointed, and analysis is always contingent upon the perspective a camera provides.

Thus, microethnography diverges from other research traditions: it does *not* rely on hypothetical data that depend on someone’s ability to imagine; on survey and self-report data that depend on a subject’s ability to remember; or on laboratory data in which the

subjects are removed from the people and things associated with their everyday lives (→ Research Methods).

(3) *Analyze video data.* By watching video-taped data carefully and repeatedly, analysts can identify patterns of interaction that provide empirical grounding for research claims. Occasionally, a video-taped moment “jumps out” as obviously noteworthy, but usually the significance of a moment emerges slowly as it is examined. Throughout this inductive process, an analyst’s eyes are unavoidably guided by research interests, as well as informed by existing literatures within the field of language and social interaction. Once a particular phenomenon is identified, induction may give way to abduction as the analyst looks for additional instances. Sometimes analysts work in groups (called “data sessions”), making rapid progress through synergistic observations and immediate evaluations of each other’s claims. In the end, research claims must agree with what can be seen and heard in the video-taped data.

(4) *Digitize and transcribe key moments of interaction.* When analysts become serious about examining a particular video-taped moment, they may use various computer software tools to transcribe the talk and study the frame-by-frame unfolding of visible behaviors. The computer offers different “views” of digital data: for example, the video can be slowed down or zoomed in, or different slices of behavior can be easily juxtaposed on the computer screen for comparison. New technology cannot replace the eyes and ears of a well-trained analyst, but it can support smart and rigorous research. Transcripts reduce interaction to a two-dimensional page to highlight (precisely) details of talk and nonverbal behavior. Transcription is a process of observing more exactly.

(5) *Describe and report research findings.* Microethnographic research is literally empirical. Analysts examine the visible and vocal behaviors that subjects make available to each other during their interaction, then make these data available to the reader. Research claims routinely appear on the same printed page as transcripts (featuring vocal behavior) and corresponding video frames (showing visible behavior). Recently, microethnographic reports have been published with a computer disk or Internet address that gives readers access to the raw video data (e.g., Jones & LeBaron 2002). Video-based claims are supplemented by ethnographic insights and evidence from participant observations, field notes, interviews, and so forth. Admittedly, these methods are fundamentally interpretive: social scientists are unavoidably symbol-using and meaning-making beings. However, video-based research is more rigorously empirical than traditional ethnography, as claims are grounded in the raw data that readers can see and scrutinize.

SEE ALSO: ► Conversation Analysis ► Ethnomethodology ► Gaze in Interaction  
 ► Gestures in Discourse ► Goffman, Erving ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture  
 ► Research Methods

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## Migrant Community Media

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The term migrant community media, also known as ethnic or diasporic media, refers to the print, broadcast, and Internet-based operations of ethnic minorities. They have emerged in recent decades as a significant category of global media (→ Globalization Theories). Previously, such media operated by minority groups in various countries were treated as being of minor academic interest. For a long time, migrant community media were usually underfunded and marginal to the mediascapes of most countries. However, ethnic media operated by community groups have increasingly become channels for transnational media flows (→ International Communication). Their relative prominence has come about due to a combination of factors, including the growing wealth of minority communities, the rising acknowledgment of ethnic media among host societies, and the increasing technological possibilities for “narrowcasting.”

Migrant community media are no longer confined within borders of nations but have transnational → audiences. The dispersed nature of diasporic settlements within countries and across continents has spurred them to adopt cutting-edge media technologies in order to develop links among themselves. Live or same-day programming is available from the homeland for its diasporas living around the world. Migrants who previously lived in the same neighborhood are also able to reassemble in cyberspace. But whereas the new technologies are becoming prevalent around the planet, diasporic individuals living in developing countries have less access to them than their fellows in the west. The growing corporatization of what were previously community-run ethnic media is also increasingly leading to the commercialization of diasporic media content (→ Community Media). Nevertheless, diasporic media do provide an alternative to the longstanding western dominance of international media flows (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; Cultural

Products as Tradable Services; Free Flow of Information; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]).

## TYPES OF MEDIA FOR MIGRANT COMMUNITIES

The mass media, which usually look to serve the largest demographic groups, tend to exclude the cultural expressions of the smaller ones. This is often the reason why migrant groups establish distinct media organs to serve their members. These ethnic media are viewed as serving two primary purposes – they contribute to cultural maintenance and ethnic cohesion, and they help members of minorities integrate into the larger society (Riggins 1992; Husband 1994; Browne 2005).

*Newspapers* are the most common form of migrant media. There are hundreds of ethnic → newspapers in countries around the world. They usually tend to be in the language of the group that produces and consumes them, but some are also published in the language of the country of settlement. There are large variations in the form, quality, and frequency among ethnic newspapers. Some are well-staffed, established dailies that compete with mainstream papers; these print media usually have full-scale production facilities and strong → advertising revenues. Others may be very small outfits run by enthusiastic individuals out of their homes – such ventures tend to have fairly irregular production cycles and do not have a long life. They appear and disappear quickly, only to be replaced by other similarly short-lived publications.

The usually tight regulation of *broadcasting* by governments has historically made it more difficult for migrant groups to disseminate → radio and → television programming (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). When ethnic broadcasters manage to obtain small time slots on the schedules of existing stations, they are often at the most inconvenient times for their potential audiences. “Vernacular services” of government broadcasters in Africa have allowed for some inclusion of migrant programming (→ Africa: Media Systems). In the UK, Channel 4’s public service remit includes the dissemination of programming which appeals to a culturally diverse society (→ United Kingdom: Media System). In Canada and the USA, community and campus stations have historically proved to be more accommodating, but ethnic minorities are also making inroads into commercial broadcasting (→ Canada: Media System; United States of America: Media System). Certain governments have taken strong initiatives to ensure the presence of the cultures of minorities on the airwaves. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission has been steered toward facilitating the development of radio and television programming for minority communities. It has developed an ethnic broadcasting policy, which specifies the conditions under which the dissemination of ethnic and multilingual programming can be carried out (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America). In Australia, radio, television, and Internet content is distributed by the publicly owned Special Broadcasting Services in some 70 languages (→ Australia: Media System). The largest Spanish-language US television network has hundreds of affiliates and is available to the vast majority of Hispanic households in the United States (→ NAFTA and International Communication). In a time of fragmenting audiences, niche marketers in an increasing number of countries look upon advertising on minority-ethnic electronic media as a way to reach growing minority populations.



Dávila (2001) has conducted a critical examination of these developments for the US Latino population.

## **THE OPPORTUNITIES OF NEW TECHNOLOGY**

The relatively small and widely scattered nature of migrant communities has encouraged diasporic media to seek out the most efficient and cost-effective means of communication. Technologies that allow for narrowcasting to target specific audiences rather than those that provide the means for mass communications have generally been favored. Minority-ethnic media have frequently been at the leading edge of technology adoption due to the particular challenges they face in reaching their audiences.

### **Satellites**

Digital broadcasting satellites are providing remarkable opportunities for diasporic communities (→ Satellite Communication, Global). Ethnic broadcasters, previously having limited access to space on the electromagnetic spectrum in northern countries, are finding much greater options opening up for them through digital broadcasting satellites. For example, France's main broadcast authority, the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel, was actively encouraged by a center-right government to exclude Arabic stations from licensed cable networks in the 1990s (→ France: Media System). The response of a significant number of Maghrebi immigrant families was to subscribe to digital broadcasting satellite services, which provided them programming from North African countries from across the Mediterranean Sea (Hargreaves & Mahdjoub 1997).

Diasporic programming using this technology has grown exponentially in the past decade, well ahead of many mainstream broadcasters. Even as mainstream networks in Europe were making plans to introduce digital broadcasting, the Arab-owned and operated Orbit TV in Rome had begun by 1994 to provide extensive programming via digital broadcasting satellites to Arab communities in Europe and the Middle East. Med TV, a Kurdish satellite television station, is a case of a diaspora within and without the divided homeland attempting to sustain itself and to counter violent suppression with the use of communications technology (Hassanpour 2003; → Kurdish International Broadcasting). In examples of "reverse flow" of programming to home countries, Univisión and Telemundo, the two largest Spanish-language networks in the US, have been more successful than mainstream US media in exporting programming to Central and South America. Strong Indian diasporic subscriber bases exist for competing channels carrying material from → "Bollywood." Cable and satellite television services in northern countries have realized the viability of ethnic channels and are making them an integral part of their offerings (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television).

### **Internet and Online Media**

*Internet*-based media, which are able to support ongoing communication in the widely separated transnational groups, seem especially suited to the needs of diasporic communities (→ Internet). In contrast to broadcasting's highly regulated, linear, and capital-intensive

characteristics, the decentralized, interactive, relatively inexpensive, and easy to operate online networks prove attractive to migrant communities. In addition to extensively using online media like email, usenet, listserv, and the world wide web, diasporic groups are also publishing content in offline digital media such as CD-ROMs. The contents of diasporic electronic communications largely consist of cultural, heritage, genealogical, religious, and institutional information. Recent migrants separated from family and friends are placing notices on newsgroups giving particulars of individuals with whom they want to re-establish contact or to search for marriage partners. A number of web sites have established global directories of community members that include categorization under alumni of colleges, professionals, and businesses. The medical necessity to find human marrow donors from one's own ethnic group for the treatment of more than 60 blood-related diseases has extended these searches into cyberspace.

In facilitating global accessibility to Asian, Latin American, and African views of the world, community online networks provide a small but important counterweight to the enormous production and export capacities of the cultural industries of developed countries. This becomes a way to mitigate the effects of cultural imperialism and to foster worldwide cultural diversity. A primary motivation for migrant communities to go online seems to be survival in the face of the overwhelming output of the dominant culture and the limitations of immigrants' access to the cultural industries in their countries of settlement. Isolated members of diasporas who are using online media can participate to some extent in cultural production rather than merely consume media content. Information about reunions, festivals, and worldwide locations of community institutions facilitate the physical gathering of diasporic individuals. Current events and new publications of materials relating to the transnational group are regularly discussed in online news groups. Diasporas are increasingly turning to blogs (web logs) to engage in discussion with each other on contemporary political and cultural issues. Social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook are also providing for diasporic community members to interact with each other.

The global dispersion from the home country over a period of several generations is seemingly reversed by bringing together disparate members of the ethnic group to interact in an electronic chatroom. For example, Sindhis, a South Asian ethnic group whose members were dispersed by the partition of colonial India and by migration patterns outside the subcontinent, and white settlers who remained in Zimbabwe after independence and those who emigrated, have sought to recreate their community electronically. A website operated from Germany provided extensive hypertext links to Iranian universities, research organizations, information resources, cultural industries, literature, art collections, media, sports groups, businesses, political and religious organizations, government agencies, discussion groups, and individuals, located inside and outside Iran. Cooperative arrangements between students and professionals of recent Chinese origins working in high technology sectors in Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom have led to the emergence of online magazines that express their particular concerns. These new arrivals feel that their information needs are not met by the content of the thriving print and broadcast Chinese ethnic media, which is produced largely by older groups of immigrants from China. The restrictions of national borders therefore appear to be partially overcome in this alternative form of globalization.

A number of diasporic websites are designed to correct what are considered misperceptions by outsiders and to mobilize external political support. Several groups also use online media to challenge hate propaganda and to carry out polemics against other websites. Some anti-government organizations have taken even more strong action with the use of electronic technology. One Tamil group electronically disabled the websites of several Sri Lankan embassies that it viewed as disseminating propaganda. The speed of simultaneous, worldwide demonstrations in March 1999 by Kurdish protestors, who reacted immediately to the capture of a guerrilla leader by Turkish forces, was enabled through the Internet links maintained by that global community.

However, the ability of global communities to maintain and extend effective electronic links began to be affected by the controls that governments started to exert ever more intrusively over online networks, especially post-9/11 (→ Internet Law and Regulation). Additionally, as national borders came to be sealed more tightly in order to prevent terrorism and to allay political hostility to undocumented migration, transnational communication became increasingly difficult for migrants.

The extensive presence of the communications conglomerates that were increasingly buying up diasporic print and broadcast media, and the growing commercialization of online media were also having an effect on the kinds of material they carried (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Commercialization of the Media; Media Conglomerates). Whereas the improvements in infrastructure and software may have benefited transnational groups, commercial priorities risked overwhelming community considerations in the organization of communication networks and in the production and distribution of content. Participation by members of global diasporas in communication networks is far from equal. Migrant communities living in wealthier parts of the world have considerably more access to media technologies than their counterparts in developing countries.

Nevertheless, it is clear that diasporic connections have become integral to the networks of transnational communication. Even as diasporic media are piggybacking on the communications infrastructures established and maintained by states and corporations, they are also engaging in the further development of the means of global communications.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Audience ▶ Australia: Media System ▶ Bollywood ▶ Cable Television ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Community Media ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ France: Media System ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Kurdish International Broadcasting ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ NAFTA and International Communication ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## Migration and Immigration

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With immigration and its attendant population diversity on the rise all around the world, how do we understand why people migrate, what they do when they arrive at their destinations, and what happens to the places they left? While immigration and migration are potentially rich sites of communication inquiry, communication theory and research is not well represented in the immigration studies literature.

There are excellent reviews of the wide scope of immigration literature (Foner et al. 2000; Joppke & Morawska 2003; Waldinger 2001). Our present aim is to focus upon two important *areas of overlap between immigration and communication research*: (1) models of cultural adaptation, namely the rejection of the 1940s static linear model of assimilation in favor of dynamic models of adaptation (→ Acculturation Processes and Communication), and (2) the negotiation of identity in places with relatively easy contact with the home country via new communication technologies and/or relatively inexpensive travel. Immigration scholars of the 1960s and 1970s shifted from the assumption of powerful structural constraints to assimilate (à la powerful media) to the idea that people could simply and with abundant agency transplant the home culture to the host country context. From the 1980s forward, we see more refined models of adaptation that privilege neither the host nor the home culture, but the dynamic and multidimensional process by which immigrants located in macro-structural contexts – but also in meso-level contexts of media, family, and social networks – negotiate their identities (Alba & Nee 2003; Morawska 2003).

Variations in preferred level of analysis are readily apparent in immigration studies. For example, a major debate centers on the issue of what we should call the *immigrant identity negotiation process*. Some ethnographers who study the daily practices of new immigrant groups characterize their identity negotiations as instances of “transnationalism”; that is, the bridging or linking of two societies (Levitt 2001; → Ethnography of Communication).

Others take exception to the term transnationalism, citing the absence of any implication of state-to-state relations (macro) and the presence of “highly particularistic attachments” to “here” and “there” (micro) that might be better characterized as “bi-localism” (Waldinger & Fitzgerald 2004).

The unanswered question is whether the immigrants of today will behave like the immigrants of yesterday. Will they construct a hybrid identity that is neither their “home” nor the “host” identity, but a dynamic product of the two? Is there any general pattern or do different groups living in different spaces (e.g., a global city or a suburban enclave) negotiate identity differently? Or will some, due to race, education, or other characteristics, be afforded upward mobility opportunities and, thus, appear to assimilate, and others be locked into the lower and underclass, and thus appear to resist assimilation (Morawska 2003)?

Communication processes and practices are the milieu through which identity negotiations, individual and collective, occur (→ Collective Memory and the Media). The consumption and production of what used to be called immigrant media (Park 1922), but are today more commonly called minority, ethnic, or geo-ethnic media (Kim et al. 2006), are central to processes of identity negotiation (→ Ethnic Media and their Influence; Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication; Migrant Community Media). The shift in terminology from immigrant to ethnic media is telling – *immigrant* suggesting that the problematic is assimilation, while *minority* or *ethnic* refers to group identity and boundaries that seemingly proliferate in a globalizing world where movements of peoples over space is one of the hallmarks. Immigrant social networks are constructed and maintained through interpersonal communication in kin and household networks and hometown associations, through ethnic media that afford a shared negotiation of home/host gaze, and through new communication technologies.

Communication research programs that seem particularly well positioned to contribute to immigration studies include the growing body of *social and personal networks research* (e.g., Monge & Contractor 2003), which affords a multilevel framework for tracking the communicative actions of immigrants and their consequences (→ Communication Networks). Consequences would include migration decision-making, identity construction, and the effects of continued communication between networks back home and in the new place (→ International Communication). For communication researchers to become more involved in immigration studies, they should broaden their focus (typically upon mainstream traditional media or Internet- and computer-based media) to include the world of ethnic media of traditional and new media forms. The multilevel and ecological communication infrastructure perspective (Kim & Ball-Rokeach 2006) reflects such broadening, and affords a grounded methodology for observing the everyday practices of adaptation among new immigrants and between new and old immigrants, a central feature of the globalization of everyday life.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Acculturation Processes and Communication ▶ Collective Memory and the Media ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Ethnic Media and their Influence ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ International Communication ▶ Migrant Community Media

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## Mindlessness and Automaticity

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Mindlessness is the automatic (nonconscious) management of behavior. Mindless behavior is studied under many varied and related names: mindlessness, → automaticity, tacit knowledge, implicit learning, implicit cognition, nonconscious processing and, as one recent popular book puts it, “blink” (Langer 1978; Lewicki 1986; Reber 1993; Bargh & Ferguson 2000; Gladwell 2005; Litman & Reber 2005). Langer introduced mindlessness into social psychology nearly three decades ago (Langer 1978). As editor of *Communication Monographs*, Judee Burgoon devoted a five-article “Chautauqua” to the concept in 1992 (see, e.g., Kellermann 1992).

### MINDLESS AND TACITLY LEARNED BEHAVIOR

*Mindless behavior* is automated because it is familiar and overlearned; the behavior no longer needs conscious monitoring. Kellermann (1992) argued that communication is

inherently strategic and mostly automatic due to familiar and overlearned → schemas and → scripts guiding → message production and comprehension. Such overlearned and mindless behavior can be beneficial or hurtful. For example, intimate partners may fall into mindless, habitual patterns of disagreement or withdrawal in which they fail to consider even the simplest alternative pathways toward resolving their interpersonal issues. These partners also might develop a morning greeting ritual that starts each day on a positive note (→ Marital Communication). Increasing mindfulness is studied as an antidote to communication problems arising from mindless behavior (Burgoon et al. 2000).

Unlike mindless behavior, which requires prior conscious monitoring, *tacitly learned behavior* is acquired without ever being consciously mediated. Such automatic behavior is acquired implicitly and used unconsciously (Lewicki 1986; Reber 1993). Natural language, interpersonal perceptions, and nonverbal behaviors are believed to be mostly acquired and used implicitly (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture; Rhetoric, Nonverbal). Many aspects of complex language structures are unconscious and best learned implicitly rather than explicitly. The human ability to produce previously unheard-of lexical patterns such as sentences, or a child's quick mastery and use of untaught or unlearned grammatical rules (without even the adult being able to explain these rules), are illustrations of tacit learning in human communication (see, for review, Lewicki 1986; Kellermann 1992; Reber 1993; → Linguistics; Language Acquisition in Childhood).

### RELEVANCE OF AUTOMATICITY FOR SOCIAL BEHAVIORS

Mindless and tacit links exist between → *social perceptions* and *social behaviors*. A definitive connection exists between → stereotype activation and subsequent behavior in accordance with the content of that stereotype (e.g., McCann et al. 2005). For example, Bargh and associates (1996) explored the hypothesis that “what you perceive is how you behave,” by using priming mechanisms (elderly stereotypes such as wrinkle, sentimental, Florida) to activate single and multiple trait perceptions in elderly test subjects. Participants primed with the elderly-related material walked more slowly down the hallway after leaving the experiment, thus activating the stereotype by unconsciously thinking about it. Initial automatic evaluations of an individual, which could be based on age, gender, or even choice in hairstyle or clothing, can have far-reaching implications for future interactions with that individual due to a positive or negative evaluation of their behavior (Hill et al. 1990; Ferguson & Bargh 2004). Studies have extended work on nonconscious activation to cultural ideologies, power differentials, and corruption.

*Situations* alone can even be enough to automatically activate group norms and subsequent group evaluations (including ingroup biases) and behaviors. Decades of → media effects studies explore how viewing a film with violence or aggression can automatically activate tendencies to behave in the same manner as represented on the screen, and automated nonverbal and verbal mimicry have been tied to outcomes as diverse as persuasibility, conflict resolution, and group harmony.

### CONSEQUENCES FOR COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Considerations of mindlessness, tacitness, and automaticity can profoundly affect the way communication scholars approach areas of inquiry. Numerous interpersonal theories

invoke various types of automatic mechanisms. Action assembly theory maintains that lower-level actions are automatically assembled, allowing a role for mindful behavior at higher levels (Greene 1997; → Action Assembly Theory). Research on memory organization packets (MOPs) argues that conversations between strangers are mostly mindless, while remaining flexible and adaptable (Kellermann 1995). Berger's planning research places a fundamental role on the internal workings of individuals' cognitive systems during social interaction (Berger 1997). Some persuasion theories assume automaticity (e.g., conditioning theories), some assume mindfulness (e.g., cognitive dissonance), and some allow for both (e.g., → Elaboration Likelihood Model).

Assumptions about tacit and/or mindful processing affect what phenomena are studied and the perspective taken on what is studied. For example, conscious efforts to try to interfere with implicit processes for the acquisition of linguistic rules have been found to decrease, rather than increase, the quantity of what is learned (Reber 1993). The implications of this finding are not only that complex structures such as languages are best learned implicitly rather than explicitly, but also that conscious regulation of the resultant highly regulated linguistic behavior is difficult. Implicitly learned linguistic rules unconsciously prime particular linguistic behaviors.

In recent years, some researchers have shifted focus from mindlessness to mindfulness, outlining health, business, education, and communication improvements due to mindful behavior (Burgoon et al. 2000; Langer & Moldoveanu 2000). By contrast, Gladwell (2005) argues for the power of thinking without thinking in everything from social perception to policing, discussing problems of mindful interference in automatic processes. Automatic behavior can be powerful or problematic, and present-day researchers are teasing out the conditions driving each.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Automaticity ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model  
▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Linguistics ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Media Effects  
▶ Message Production ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Rhetoric, Nonverbal  
▶ Schemas ▶ Scripts ▶ Social Perception ▶ Stereotypes

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## Minority Journalism

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In a social context, scholars conceptualize minority groups on the basis of social status. Whether from a domestic or an international perspective, minority status is not predicated on numerical representation within a culture; it has to do with social or cultural difference, based on language, religion, or other cultural practices (→ Ethnic Journalism). When language differences exist, the dominant social group considers the news reports minority groups themselves produce as “foreign-language journalism.” Most scholars discount biological theories of race, which attempt to mark minority groups on the basis of physical characteristics, but some attempt to differentiate between racial or ethnic minorities. Even so, the key relationship between the minority group and the dominant social group is that the former is subordinate to the latter. As a result, members of minority groups frequently do not enjoy the same access to education, economic or political power, or other cultural capital as do members of the dominant social group (→ Access to the Media; News Ideologies).

The scholarly research literature on the history of minority journalism reveals an especially rich history in the United States, where nearly all nationalities and language groups have supported their own press (Wittke 1957). Minority journalism, especially when written in a culture’s native tongue, fulfills a vital function for its → audiences. At a minimum, the foreign-language press provides news of the homeland and its relationship with the host country. Such media can also keep the language alive, preserve cultural ties with the homeland, bring immigrants together in their new land, and socialize newcomers to

the cultural and other traditions of their host countries (→ Advocacy Journalism). The concept of minority journalism seems specific to the United States. Other countries tend to subsume the idea into ethnic, partisan, or political categories of journalism.

The characteristics of minority media include not only a desire to educate and improve the lives of their audiences but also an overtly activist mission (→ Activist Media). Racial and ethnic minority media often strive to protect the group's civil rights as well as to monitor the economic, cultural, social, political, religious, and economic development of the community (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media).

The first foreign-language newspaper in the United States was published even before the Declaration of Independence was signed (→ Journalism, History of). The first of many successful German-language newspapers, *Philadelphia Zeitung*, appeared on May 6, 1732. In 1789, the US French-language press was born (with the *Courrier de Boston*). By the mid- to late 1800s, minority media had mushroomed: newspapers appeared in Norwegian, Chinese, Czech, Ukrainian, Polish, Italian, Yiddish, Hebrew, and many other languages. The period of rapid growth included Spanish-language newspapers. The first two such publications, *El Misisipi* (1808) and *El Mensajero Luisianés* (1809), served the New Orleans Spanish-speaking community.

Most historians consider the *Cherokee Phoenix* the first Native American newspaper. Published by the Cherokee Nation, this bilingual newspaper appeared on February 21, 1828 (→ Bi- and Multilingualism). African-Americans owned and operated *Freedom's Journal*, which appeared a year earlier, on March 16, 1827, when editors Samuel Eli Cornish and John Brown Russwurm launched the US black press (→ Black Feminist Media Studies).

When the new media of *radio and television* came onto the scene, activist functions and aspirations frequently carried over. Initially, minority broadcasts aired through what were called *time-brokering* arrangements (→ Broadcast Journalism). Less powerful radio stations often divided their day into discrete segments, which they sold to members of ethnic or racial minority groups to use as they saw fit. Time-brokering yielded a kaleidoscope of programming in Polish, Lithuanian, Greek, Spanish, Italian, and other languages. Many communities were served, but not at any given moment.

The first full-time Spanish-language radio station in the United States (KWKW, Los Angeles) took to the air in 1942. The first radio station fully committed to serving the African-American audience was WDIA, launched on October 25, 1948, in Detroit. Its white owners were desperate, not altruistic. When other formats had failed, the owners put the station on the market. One last-ditch experiment with what they called *Negro programming* ultimately launched a legend. WDIA became a powerhouse, and though it served the black community, it remained under white ownership. Though less of a powerhouse, WERD (Atlanta, Georgia) was the first black-owned US radio station. It wasn't until 1977 that the first Native-American-owned commercial radio station (KMDX, serving Parker, Arizona) launched.

Many societies have created a social structure that marks minority groups by their language, religion, or other traditions. Continued research into the historical use of the mass media by minority groups, across many societies and from a domestic and international perspective, can help reveal the social relationships between the minority and dominant social groups. Such research should examine whether the journalistic

output of minority groups using new communications technologies continues to reflect the activist goals and mission observed in the earliest minority journalism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Audience  
▶ Bi- and Multilingualism ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Broadcast Journalism  
▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ Ethnic Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of  
of ▶ News Ideologies ▶ Television

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## **Mobility, Technology for**

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Within a decade of its commercialization, mobile communication is now often used more than landline telephony. In the early 1990s, only the privileged few used mobile communication, but by the mid-2000s, approximately one-third of the world's population had a mobile telephone. This period of seemingly effortless adoption has been accompanied by changes in our sense of safety and security, the way we coordinate everyday life, the way teenagers experience their coming of age, and the way we use and experience the

public sphere. The use of voice communication and the growth of texting have revised the way we think about interpersonal communication.

## **TECHNICAL HISTORY**

Mobile, radio-based communication, including what is known as mobile telephony, has its origin in the work of Marconi and radio telegraphy. The ability to modulate voice signals allowed for the development of services such as police radio, which first appeared in the 1920s in Detroit. This use of radio to “dispatch” various services expanded to include police and fire departments, taxis, and even rural veterinary services.

Radio-based communication in the switched telephony era had to wait until after World War II. Some of the first experiments with radio-based telephony – the so-called wireless local loop – were carried out in the eastern Colorado town of Cheyenne Wells in the United States. Local farmers, living as far as 30 kilometers outside town, were tied into the traditional telephony system via a radio link to their homes. The calls were manually routed via an operator in town, but the essentials were there, i.e., a radio link that was “switched” into the traditional telephone system. At this time, the so-called radio cell was many kilometers in diameter.

The next advance was the development of cellular technology whereby a conversation was “handed” from one relatively small radio cell to another; hence the name cellular telephony. The ability to support this type of routing of signals led to the current form of mobile communication. The first true cellular telephone system that used multiple radio cells and a handoff was the Amtrak Metroliner between New York and Philadelphia in 1969. Miniaturization of handsets and the digitalization of communication resulted in today’s mobile telephony systems.

The future development of mobile communication is likely to see movement away from circuit-switched to packet-switched communication. Traditional telephony (both landline and mobile) relies on a specific circuit that is established for the duration of the conversation. With the development of the Internet, a different approach is used. Instead of monopolizing a fixed circuit, the conversation is broken into smaller packets that are routed through the communication network and reassembled at the end address. This is the essence of VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) communication, and it has the advantage of making more efficient use of radio spectrum bandwidth.

## **SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF MOBILE COMMUNICATION**

Several consequences of mobile communication are discussed in the literature, including its role with respect to safety and security, the micro-coordination of everyday life, teenager emancipation, its disturbance of the public sphere, the growth of texting, and mobile communication in the developing countries.

### **Safety and Security**

Many people adopt mobile communication to enhance their personal safety or their sense of security. The mobile telephone gives people the chance to call for assistance when they

find themselves in difficult settings. A crisis need not be major or life-threatening. A crisis may simply be that a car breaks down or that someone is marooned with no possibility of finding a taxi, or becomes lost, or forgets a PIN code to a bank card, or – in the case of parents – a concern for the well-being of children. A mobile phone may also simply be a latent type of insurance should a problem arise, as in the case of people with chronic medical conditions. Mobile communication allows contact with others when there is a need for assistance or information.

While mobile communication provides security and safety, it can also be used in ways that threaten public safety. The mobile telephone has been used to organize criminal activities and by terrorists and insurgents to manage their affairs. On a mundane level, the use of the mobile telephone while driving has been shown to be dangerous. Thus, while mobile communication helps to avoid crises of various types, there are other aspects of its use that have negative consequences.

### **Micro-Coordination**

Perhaps the most profound impact of mobile communication is the ability to call individuals regardless of where they are. Rather than having to call specific geographic locations on the chance that an individual is there, an individual can be called, no matter his or her location. This allows for fleeting and subtle forms of coordination. In the case of landline telephony, there is no guarantee that the caller will reach an intended interlocutor. Agreements regarding meetings or the execution of errands are agreed upon and are relatively inviolable. Should something come up that makes a commitment difficult to keep, there are few means of rearranging encounters. Mobile communication changes this in that there is less need to make specific agreements, which instead can be made in an ad hoc way. If there is a traffic jam that causes a delay, we simply call ahead and let others know the situation.

It is sometimes asked whether this flexibility comes at the expense of treating such agreements responsibly. There is a difference between a firm attitude toward commitments and toward punctuality and loose understandings that are firmed up as a situation coalesces. A variety of power issues, courtesies, and potentially awkward situations may arise. Regardless of how these work themselves out, the ability to contact individuals and the resulting changes in the way we organize and coordinate everyday life are the most profound changes introduced by mobile communication.

### **Teen Emancipation**

One of the unexpected social consequences of inexpensive mobile communication has been its impact on the teenager emancipation process. During the emancipation process, teens move from being securely within the sphere of the family to being, in many ways, independent of their parents. In this process, the peer group serves as a sort of midwife, and the role of the mobile phone is important in this process. The ability to contact peers via a communication channel that the teen himself or herself controls allows for immediacy in interactions. This immediacy helps to integrate the peer group and it contributes to the emancipation process.

There is also a fashion dimension. The ownership and use of a particular type of mobile telephone have become a fashion statement. As with other artifacts (shoes, baseball caps, purses, the cut of clothes, etc.), the model and style of the mobile telephone tell the observer something about the user's taste and style. The establishment of a personal style, one that also resonates with that of the peer group, is part of the emancipation process. Given that mobile communication provides for inter-peer communication and is an expression of style, it is not surprising that teens have established themselves as the quintessential mobile communicators (→ Youth Culture).

### **Disturbance of the Public Sphere**

Telephone calls are being made and received in places that, only a short time ago, were not sites for this type of interaction, and this is a change in a social norm. It has given rise to new rules of social interaction and new ideas as to where and when it is appropriate to use the telephone. There is even a new urban legend that plays on public unease about the public use of mobile telephones. Examples of this include the inappropriate use of a mobile phone at a gas station causing a fire, or a case where a diner at a restaurant becomes so enraged by a fellow diner's use of the mobile telephone that he or she grabs it and throws it on the floor. In each case, the use of mobile communication results in a spectacle.

The growth of texting has reduced the disruptions created by mobile communication to some degree. We can silently send and receive messages without causing offense to others in the social setting. In addition, users may be becoming more adroit at managing their calls and those in the immediate area are learning to "turn a deaf ear" to the use of mobile communication in public places.

### **Texting**

Mobile communication has occasioned the growth of texting. The popularity of this feature cannot be overstated. Many hundreds of millions of text messages are sent every day. They include the exchange of information, coordination requests, endearments and other pleasantries, and a wide variety of other content. Their popularity also has encouraged the emergence of a variety of new linguistic forms. It is likely that the technology for sending and receiving text messages will change, but mobile, text-based messaging has found a niche in society, making this one of the great contributions of mobile communication (→ Text and Intertextuality).

## **MOBILE COMMUNICATION IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD**

Mobile communication has grown surprisingly quickly in many areas of the developing world. In the mid-1990s the International Telecommunication Union statistics indicated that about half the world's population had never used a telephone. The introduction of mobile communication has helped to address this problem. A mobile communication system is often easier to install and maintain than a landline system. There is no need for an extensive network of telephone lines to originate or terminate calls. In addition,

batteries and solar recharge equipment can be used where other sources of electrical power are unreliable or absent. While it can still be expensive to purchase a mobile telephone, mobile communication is increasingly seen as a way to ensure access to communication networks. In many developing countries there are now more mobile subscribers than landline telephone customers.

In addition to access, mobile communication supports new forms of entrepreneurship. As with its use in the industrialized countries, the ability to be available to customers regardless of location, the ability to gather information on market prices, and the ability to arrange financial transactions mean that mobile communication is a useful tool that supports entrepreneurial activity in developing countries (→ Development Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Development Communication ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Technology as Fashion ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Youth Culture

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# Modality and Multimodality

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The modalities of communication – speech, song, writing, images, etc. – constitute general registers of human expression and experience. As such, they lend themselves to different forms of technological mediation, both individually and in combination as multimodal communication.

The various modalities are at once biologically conditioned and culturally shaped. On the one hand, the human senses enable people to identify particular *affordances* (Gibson 1979) or possibilities for action in their environment. On the other hand, representations of this environment are realized in culturally conventional forms, in embodied as well as technologically mediated communication. Such representations, further, come to constitute affordances in their own right. Research on, for example, computer-mediated communication has examined media as cultural artifacts with specific affordances for social interaction (Norman 1990). Hutchby (2001) identified distinctive affordances of interaction that takes place either face-to-face, via telephone, or in online chat. In a perspective of media and communication theory, the modalities can be considered potentials of the human senses for meaningful discourse in and about the natural and cultural environment – potentials that are extended through information and communication technologies.

While everyday language, like Aristotle, distinguishes five main senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch – communication research has focused special attention on aspects of sight and hearing in social interaction, even while recognizing, for example, the role of touch in interpersonal communication and experiments integrating smell into cinema (“odorama”). A key issue is how to *typologize modalities* in relation to sight and hearing: how many modalities are there? With reference to face-to-face interaction, Stivers and Sidnell (2005) employed a main distinction between a vocal–aural and a visuospatial modality, sub-dividing the latter into gesture, gaze, and body posture (→ Gaze in Interaction; Gestures and Kinesics) and the former into lexico-syntactic, vocal, and prosodic channels, because each of these could be said to make a difference in the process and outcome of communication. From a perspective of technologically mediated communication, Kress and Van Leeuwen rather suggested that language as such is a modality or mode, “because it can be realised either as speech or as writing,” adding that writing is itself a semiotic mode that can be realized as “engraving in stone [or] print on glossy paper” (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2001, 6).

In a *historical perspective*, modalities can be understood as an intermediate category between the material vehicles of communication – human bodies and information technologies – and its discursive vehicles – texts or messages (→ Media; Text and Intertextuality). Technologies – from writing to the Internet – have separated and recombined modalities in specific ways. As brought home by → McLuhan (1964), the material and modal forms of messages affect their interpreted contents (→ Medium Theory). In an oral culture, face-to-face communication is, by definition, multimodal, involving several



sensory registers at once. Writing and print focus the vision of the individual reader into a communicative gaze on texts, although reading aloud and subvocal reading persist. Radio reproduces a different, secondary orality (Ong 1982), and simultaneously integrates multiple modalities of language, music, and soundscapes. Cinema and television, in public and private contexts of reception, recreate a rich experience of natural and social settings, and of other humans, in sound as well as vision. Digital media, such as online virtual worlds, arguably, take multimodal communication to the next degree, simulating features of face-to-face interaction.

While it may, thus, be argued that communication history has witnessed a trajectory from multimodal, via tendentially monomodal, and back toward multimodal media, the configuration of modalities in any given period has been complex, both within the available technological media – for instance, illustrated books and magazines – and in the multistep flows involving such media and face-to-face communication (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955). All along, language has been a master modality of sorts, providing both a model for other communications and the means by which all other modalities could be redescribed and explained (→ Linguistics). As noted by Émile Benveniste (1969/1985, 236), “the signs of society can be interpreted integrally by those of language, but the reverse is not so.” Also in this regard, language can be considered a key component of individual psychological development (→ Language Acquisition in Childhood) as well as of self-reflective cultures.

The concept of modalities remains relatively undeveloped in media and communication research. The coming of more explicitly and emphatically multimodal digital media technologies may be an opportune moment to reconsider the definition and operationalization of modality, also in historical studies of analog media. A renewed round of sound media studies has raised questions, for instance, of whether music and speech should be considered media, or modalities that are realized in different media (Cook 1998; Jensen 2006). In retrospect, “new” multimodal media can throw light on “old” media, their aspects and degrees of mono- and multimodality (→ Digital Media, History of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gestures and Kinesics  
▶ Intermediality ▶ Language Acquisition in Childhood ▶ Linguistics ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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## Models of Communication

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A model is a simplified description in graphic form of some aspect of reality. A model of communication seeks to show the main elements of any structure or process of human social action and the relations between these elements, plus any flow or exchange that takes place. The main benefits are to organize disparate elements and observations and to give a simplified picture of the underlying dynamics. The purpose of such models is thus primarily *heuristic* – an aid to the description and explanation of communication. To a lesser extent, they can help in predicting the outcomes of certain communication processes and situations by drawing attention to factors to take into account and forces at work. In this way, they are useful as a source of hypotheses, a guide to research, and a format for ordering the results of research.

To exemplify, the concentration of research effort in the early decades on the unintended effects of mass media violence and aggression led to a model (Comstock et al. 1978) that organizes the result of many findings. The form of the model is that of a typical sequence, beginning with “exposure” to some mass media representation of violence, with varying degrees of arousal and a probability of imitation of the violence depicted depending on the degree of perceived realism, the perception of consequences of imitation, and the opportunity to carry out imitation.

The term “model” can be used in other senses. For instance, *statistical* models are developed from empirical research to provide a precise account of the strength and direction of co-variance or causality (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory). A model can also be developed as an *ideal type* to represent a certain concept, accentuating key or typical features. Similarly, it can help in creating typologies of sub-concepts, derived from certain fundamental dimensions. Models do seem to play a more central part in communication than in other social sciences as well as humanities. In humanistic traditions, the influence of Roman Jakobson’s (1960) model, deriving from linguistics and poetics, and re-emphasizing the role of a symbolic *code* over and above the channel or contact, is comparable to that of Shannon and Weaver (1949) in social-scientific traditions (→ Media). One possible explanation is that time, space (distance), and direction are key variables in many communication processes, and all three lend themselves to graphic representation especially in combination.

## EARLY MODELS

The beginnings of communication as a separate branch of study or discipline date from the early 1950s, mainly in the United States or under its influence. This phase was marked by a search for a unifying concept of communication (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). Although no agreed definition could be found, it resulted in the formulation of a simple graphic representation of communication as a process linking a sender and a receiver by a channel carrying messages from one to the other. Shannon and Weaver (1949) are usually credited with this invention, inspired by and intended for wireless or telephone transmission, but providing an embryonic model that could be applied to a wide range of situations, ranging from interpersonal conversation to mass communication on a national and even international scale. Their “mathematical” model was meant for calculating capacity and efficiency of communication (→ Information).

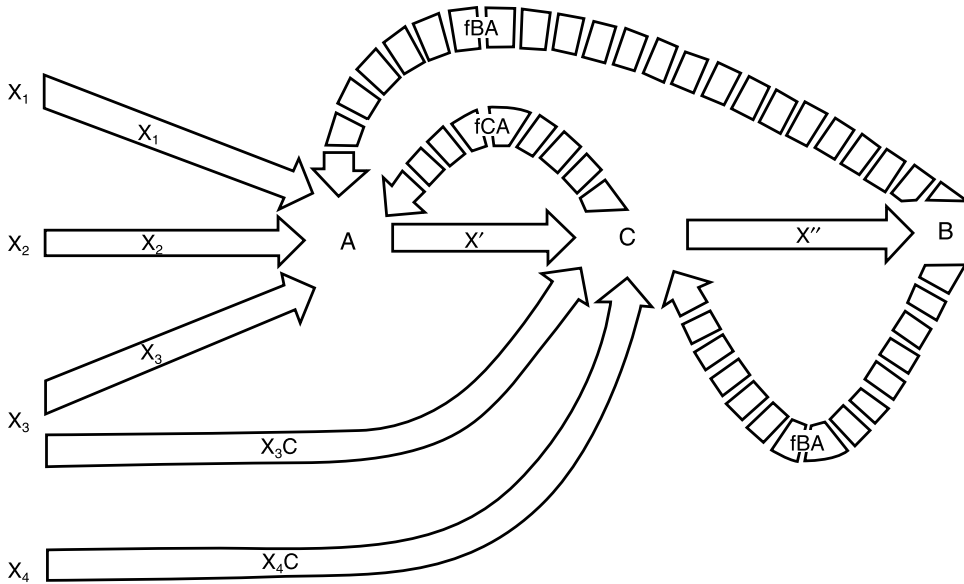
In this version, communication is represented as a linear, one-way process, concentrating on what is physically observable or measurable. In fact, this bias suited practitioners of mass communication research at the time, since they focused primarily on the *effects* (intended or not) of messages from the mass media, which were typically considered as strong, direct, and one-directional (→ Media Effects, History of).

The initial tendency of communication researchers was to elaborate this basic model to make it more appropriate to a fuller notion of human communication, especially by way of the mass media as characterized by center–periphery transmission, multiple channels, standardized content, and very large audiences. Wilbur Schramm (1954; → Schramm, Wilbur) drew on the work of Charles Osgood to redraw a basic model of communication as a circular process of exchange of messages, requiring a process of *interpretation* (encoding and decoding) at each stage, with a potential interchangeability of sender and receiver roles.

Probably the first elaborated “general” model of communication was that proposed by → George Gerbner (1956). This included a number of new elements, especially the process of perception of some event that precedes the formulation of a message, and also a recognition of the fact that messages are formulated in varied forms and by varied symbolic means (linguistic, aural, visual, etc.; → Modality and Multimodality). The process of reception was represented in the model as a repetition of the initial act of perception (the message being now the “event” perceived). This model was intended to apply not only to human but also to “machine” communication.

In the early phases of developing a viable model of communication, there were a number of innovatory ideas that have had a later application. For instance, F. E. X. Dance (1967) argued for a *helical model* to reflect the fact that communication is an essentially dynamic and exponential process that changes participants, as well as contexts and the future probabilities of communication, as a result of its own operation.

Another fundamental principle that has entered into later theory is that of *balance*, based on the observation that communicative exchanges are governed by the relationships of like or dislike between participants and by the attitudes of like and dislike toward objects of communication. Newcomb (1953) was the first to formulate these ideas into a simple model, known as the ABX model, with A and B being two persons and X an object of attention. According to this theory, flows of information (amount and content)



**Figure 1** Westley and MacLean's (1957) conceptual model for mass communication research, in which a channel role, C, is introduced between sender A and receiver B

will be governed by a “strain to symmetry” with reference to X. Discrepancies or differences will stimulate communication in order to reduce mental discomfort, a notion related to Festinger's (1957) theory of *cognitive dissonance*. In relation to mass communication, the main adaptation of the idea of balance can be found in Westley and MacLean's (1957) “conceptual model for communication research.” This displays the mass media as playing a mediating role between potential communicators and potential receivers, their activity being governed by the need to balance the motives and interests of senders with those of receivers. In this model (Fig. 1), we observe important *feedback* loops from audiences to original sources as well as to the mass media. For their part, the mass media have to orient themselves to sources, the audience, as well as to the environment in which they operate and the objects of media attention in that environment. Like some early models, this represents the mass media as essentially neutral and without purpose of their own.

### SPECIALIZED MODELS

As the field of communication diversified, there was a move away from general models and toward models applicable in particular sub-fields of research or theory. An early example was the modeling of influence in persuasive campaign situations, as in elections or advertising. The idea advanced by Katz and → Lazarsfeld (1955), on the basis of research into voting and consumer behavior, that influence does not typically flow directly by way of the mass media but indirectly by way of personal contacts, was very readily captured by a *two-step flow* model of communication (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication), in which the intermediaries were identified as *opinion leaders* or *gatekeepers*.

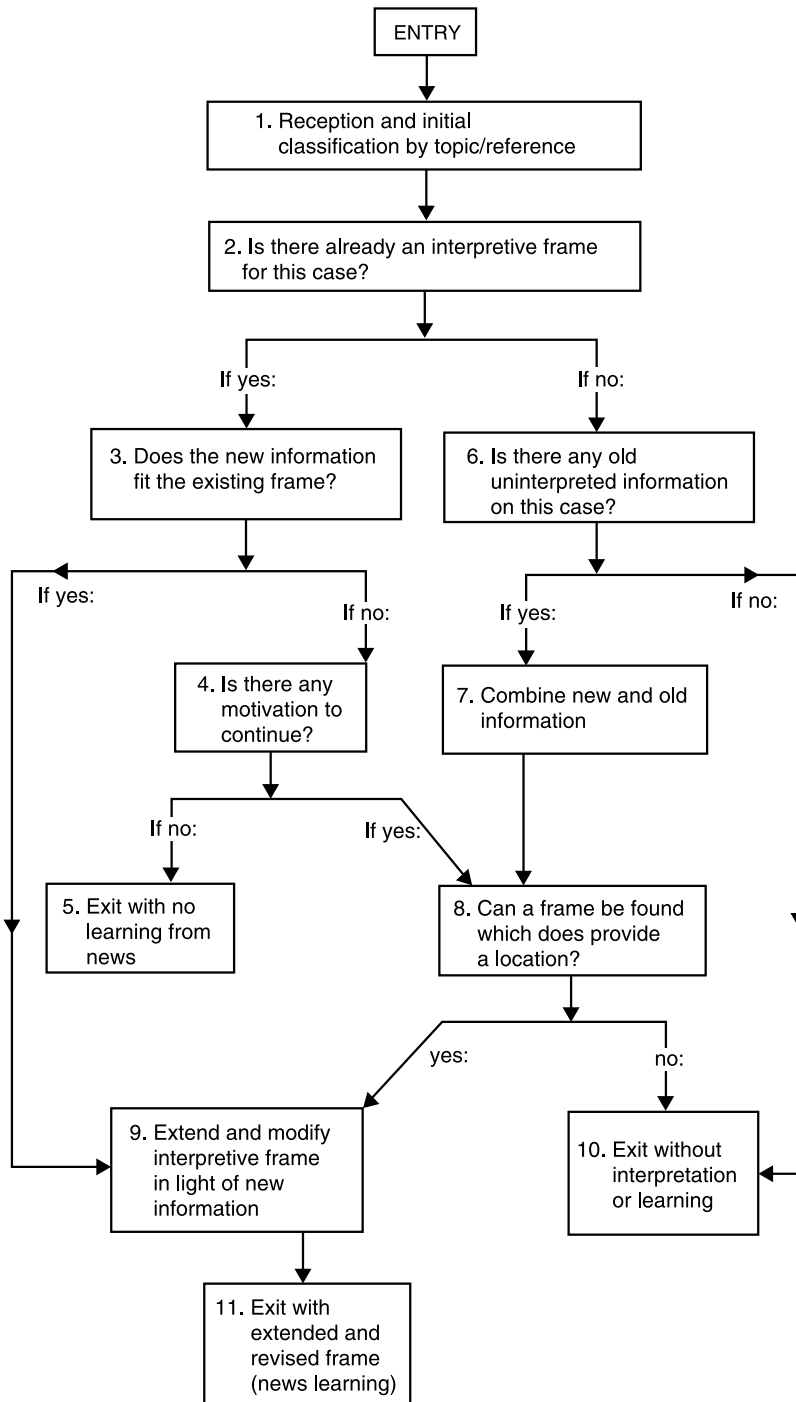
More elaborate models were developed to deal with the larger issue of the relations between types of society and types of media system. An early example is the *dependency* model proposed originally by Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), positing a relation between the degree of stability of a social system, the capacity and type of its information system (especially mass media), and the degree of dependence of the mass audience on the information system (→ Dependency Theories).

The concept of *diffusion* – the spreading of knowledge, awareness, or behavior within a population – is another key aspect of communication processes that has lent itself to modeling (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Rogers, Everett). Research and theory led to a model for diffusion of innovations in developing countries that took account of a number of variables beyond those of sender, message, and recipient. Rogers and Shoemaker (1973) sketched a basic general model of four stages of successful diffusion (from knowledge to persuasion to decision to confirmation), influenced at various stages by a set of key variables, including characteristics of the target group, characteristics of the (local) social system (including the location of opinion leaders), and perceived characteristics of the innovation in question. The model, however, was still one of linear or even top-down influence. Subsequently, Rogers abandoned this approach in favor of a “convergence” model in which successful communication would have to involve a mutual co-orientation and mutual understanding (Rogers 1976).

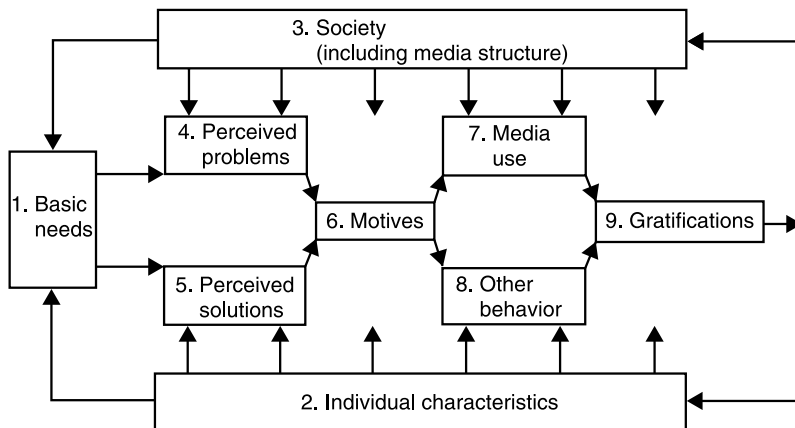
Also, the spreading of news from media to people and from person to person has been fruitfully modeled. Large differences in rates of diffusion of knowledge have been found according to differences between people, countries, and categories of events. A key point of variation is the relative extent to which news is diffused by word of mouth rather than only by mass media. The *J-curve of diffusion* expresses a finding arrived at by Greenberg (1964) regarding the 1963 Kennedy assassination and later exemplified in the diffusion of news of the 9/11 attacks in the US: the higher the proportion aware of an event, the higher the proportion who learned it from a non-media source.

Diffusion aside, both news production and reception have been modeled. Regarding production, the scheme of Ericson et al. (1987) displayed a complex sequence of activities, beginning with ideas for stories and input from sources and ending with a news page or news bulletin (→ News Routines; News Sources). Most models adopt a “transmission” approach, similar in kind to Comstock’s model of media effects, seeking to account for the potential success or failure of news learning as if the news were purposeful instruction. The alternative of looking at news through the eyes of the audience member requires a different kind of model. Graber’s (1984) model, based on constructivist “schema theory” (Fig. 2; → Constructivism; Schemas; Schemas and Media Effects), suggests that news learning proceeds by way of frames of interpretation in people’s heads.

Latterly, research has paid more attention to the receiver than to the sender in assessing or planning for “successful” communication. A popular model, proposed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), envisages the processing of information by two broadly different “routes,” one a “central” route that pays attention to the logic of argument and facts as presented, another a “peripheral” route, in which there is no close attention and outcomes are determined more by associations, images, and incidental learning. The choice of routes is made by the receiver, although the would-be communicator may usefully choose which to expect and exploit (→ Persuasion).



**Figure 2** Schema-theory news-processing model  
 Source: Adapted from Graber (1984)



**Figure 3** Paradigm for uses and gratifications research  
 Source: Rosengren (1974)

The topic of audience selection and attention has also lent itself to models that either express propositions of explanatory theory or help to make sense of audience research data. The theory of audience → *uses and gratifications* rests primarily on the view that audience choice of media content is active, purposeful, and subjectively rational, and that media use is structured according to various perceived needs and gratifications sought, deriving from the social background of the individual, modified according to a number of individual differences. Media use is only one of the means available for achieving the goals sought. A general model of media use along these lines (Rosengren 1974) is given in Figure 3.

### POTENTIALS AND PROBLEMS OF MODELS

It is clear from the examples that models have various purposes, and can suit alternative theoretical perspectives. Even so, they seem most suited to representing planned communication efforts, where there is some underlying logic and sequence, with discernible criteria of success or failure. This implies the *transmission* view of communication (Carey 1975), much criticized for its narrowness and simplicity, which is not remedied by inserting some feedback loop. Carey's *ritual* view of communication offered an alternative in which the core meaning of communication is not purposeful action, but sharing, celebrating, and maintaining identities, beliefs, and relations through many forms of cultural expression. By its very essence, this open-ended, constructivist, and interpretive approach defies the efforts of the model-builder – it also reminds the field of the boundaries to the sensible deployment of its dominant models, including the tendency toward linear, causal, and mechanistic conceptions of communication.

There are few areas of communication research that have not produced at least one theory or concept that can be described in terms of a model (McQuail & Windahl 1993), including some of the most current approaches, such as gatekeeping, agenda setting, and news “framing” (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Framing Effects), as well as entire areas such as international communication. It is likely that fundamental changes in public and

private communication stemming from technological convergence and the rise of the Internet will stimulate yet more models (→ Technology and Communication). Already Bordewijk and Van Kaam's (1986) model of information traffic has led to an important typology of modes of communication. This differentiates four communicative relations: allocation (mass communication), consultation (of a database), conversation (exchange), and registration (at a central node). The increasing importance attached to the idea of a *network society* is favorable to the use of models of communication (→ Network Analysis).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Constructivism ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Information ▶ International Communication ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ Network Analysis ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ Persuasion ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Schemas ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Modernity

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Since the 1990s, academic debates have revived modernity as a key concept. Tomlinson (1991) argued that much of what was labeled “cultural imperialism” (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories) was in fact a broader spread of a globalized pattern of modernity. This discourse argued, in particular, that beneath much of what was seen as Americanization or westernization lay a more general, deeper globalization of capitalism, “the broader discourse of cultural imperialism as *the spread of the culture of modernity itself*” (Tomlinson 1991, 89–90, original italics; → Americanization of the Media; Globalization Theories).

A related question is whether modernity is a singular tendency or one with many possible versions and outcomes. A number of aspects of globalization tend to standardize certain kinds of economic modernity, such as financial institutions, trade rules and regimes, and commercial media models (→ Media Economics). However, Tomlinson (1999) also argued later that a “decentering of capitalism from the west” was taking place. A number of writers, e.g., Iwabuchi (2002), argued for distinct Asian or Japanese versions of both capitalism and media/cultural modernity. China has also steadily emerged as a major site and alternative form of capitalist production in the current neo-liberal system (Harvey 2005), with many features of current global capitalist modernity, but with a distinctly different emphasis. The fact that China has refused western prescriptions for the sort of democracy that is supposed to accompany modern capitalist development presents a long list of contradictions to traditional notions of modernity.

One problem with this new modernity-focused analysis in globalization, which relies on a rather *systemic notion of modernity* as the key concept, is losing sight of real issues of differential power between different parts of the world in economics, in politics, and in cultural industries such as television. Some forms of cultural production, e.g., commercial → television genres such as → soap opera, could be analyzed either as forms of capitalist production or as manifestations of modern approaches to media. The two angles offer somewhat different insights. Both imply limits placed on – and resources available to – cultural producers (television networks) and cultural consumers (television audiences; → Audience; Audience Commodity). One virtue of cultural imperialism is that it reminds academics to consider that different actors within the world system have different resources and levels of power.

One problem with classic, neo-Marxist approaches, in contrast, is that they tend to reduce too many things to *linear conceptions of political economic power* (→ Political Economy of the Media). For some authors, e.g., Schiller (1969) and Herman & McChesney (1997), the power of ownership is paramount, but as the Chinese government's limits on Murdoch's attempts to enter China's television market shows, simply owning a → media conglomerate, even one as apparently powerful as Star TV, is no guarantee of obtaining access to a nation's audience. In fact, this example shows that while China may be pursuing its own version of modernity, using television as a tool, it is seemingly trying to avoid as far as possible dependency on outside actors like Murdoch.

SEE ALSO: ► Americanization of the Media ► Audience ► Audience Commodity  
 ► Cultural Imperialism Theories ► Globalization Theories ► Media Conglomerates  
 ► Media Economics ► Political Economy of the Media ► Soap Operas ► Television

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# **Modernization**

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As in other social sciences, modernization was the dominant paradigm in communication studies that sought to understand and define the role of communication in development in the late 1950s and 1960s. Modernization was originally proposed as synonymous with development. Development was understood as a transition toward a social order that mirrored the politics and economy of the west, namely, liberal democracy and capitalist and industrialized economies. Modernization's time of intellectual and policy ascendancy was the postwar years during the period of decolonization. Western scholars and powerful policymakers viewed modernization as an unavoidable and desirable transition for non-western societies (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline; Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968; Development Communication).

As a theory, modernization offered both an explanation and a prediction for social change. As a process, modernization was used to describe the experience that so-called

“developing” countries had to undergo in order to achieve the levels of economic and political development found in the west.

### **COMMUNICATION AS MODERNIZATION, MODERNIZATION AS DEVELOPMENT**

One of modernization’s central ideas was that culture should be considered the independent variable that accounts for specific outcomes (e.g., political, economic, social). Drawing from classic sociological theories, namely Max Weber’s and Emile Durkheim’s views on culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts) and social change, modernization posited the existence of a necessary fit between culture and a specific economic and political order. Culture had the capacity to switch developmental tracks. Cultural change was proposed as a precondition for political and economic change. The low rate of agricultural output, the high rate of fertility and mortality, or the low rates of literacy found in underdeveloped countries resulted from the persistence of traditional values and attitudes. Modernization theory concluded that values such as individualism, rationalism, and secularism had been intrinsic to the consolidation of modern capitalism in the west (→ Modernity). Because it held up the western experience of development as the model on which non-western countries could break away from poverty and tyranny, it suggested that the rise of “modern” societies in “developing” countries had to follow the same path (→ Planned Social Change through Communication; Secular Social Change).

If culture was viewed as the obstacle in the way of modernization, then, instilling “modern” values was crucial for change. Modernization’s call for cultural change as the necessary harbinger of social change was embedded in functionalism, then dominant in the social sciences (→ Functional Analysis). From this perspective, communication was assigned a crucial role in spearheading cultural changes through the dissemination of “modern” information, values, and innovations through “modern” communication technologies (→ Communication Technology and Development; Technology and Communication).

As theorized by → Daniel Lerner (1958) and → Wilbur Schramm (1964) in their seminal works, communication basically referred to the transmission of → information. Among other factors (e.g., urbanization, increased literacy), exposure to mass media was seen as the catalyst of modern attitudes. From this perspective, development communication as a field of practice in support of international aid programs was assigned the role of introducing media technologies to promote modernization, and the widespread adoption of mass media such as → newspapers, → radio, → cinemas, and → television (→ Radio for Development; Television for Development).

Modernization largely reduced communication to the mass media. Such reductionism was based on the premise that large-scale media were central agents for the diffusion of modern culture. Also, the media indicated the degree of modernization of any given society. The numbers of television and radio sets and the level of newspaper consumption were taken as proxy of levels of development (Lerner 1958, Inkeles & Smith 1974). Researchers found that where people were more exposed to modern media, they were more likely to hold favorable attitudes toward modernization and development.

Everett Rogers's study on the "diffusion of innovations" became one of the most influential representatives of modernization thinking (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Rogers, Everett). Rogers's intention was to understand the adoption of new, modern behaviors. The premise was that innovations diffuse through five stages: awareness, knowledge and interest, decision, trial, and adoption/rejection. Populations were divided into different groups according to their propensity to incorporate innovations and their timing in actually adopting them. Rogers proposed that early adopters act as models to emulate and generate a climate of acceptance and an appetite for change, and that those who are slow to adopt are laggards. This latter category was assumed to describe the vast majority of the population in the third world.

For Rogers, the culture of the peasantry offered important psychological constraints on the incorporation of innovations, and consequently on development. His view on development reflected the transmission bias also found in Lerner and Schramm. According to Rogers, development communication entailed the transfer of information from a source to a receiver with the intent to change behavior. The goal was to change knowledge and attitude in order to modify behaviors. Diverging from the media-centrism and "magic bullet" theory of effects that underpinned earlier analyses (→ Media Effects, History of), Rogers and subsequent "diffusion" studies concluded that the media had a great importance in increasing awareness, but that → interpersonal communication and personal sources were crucial in making decisions to adopt innovations (Rogers 1983).

### Critics and Legacies

In the mid-1970s, main representatives of modernization theories considered it necessary to review basic premises. In a widely quoted article, Rogers (1976) admitted "the passing of the dominant paradigm." Schramm and Rogers recognized that early views had individualistic and psychological biases. It was necessary to be sensitive to the specific socio-cultural environment in which communication took place, an issue that had been neglected in early analyses. To a large extent, these revisions resulted from the realization that the "trickle-down" model that was originally championed was limited.

Critics charged modernization on various fronts. One of the most powerful critiques called attention to its profound misunderstanding of communication. Modernization sidestepped a long tradition that understood communication as a process of community-building. Communication cannot be reduced to a diffusionist, media-centered process. Communication is not about the use of modern technologies to disseminate ideas and values; instead, it fundamentally entails different forms and spaces where people meet to discuss common concerns. More importantly, such a misconception of communication was problematic on conceptual and political grounds. It had ideological implications that conveniently fit prevailing conceptions of development as a top-down, exogenous process. Challenging its analytical premises was not just an academic exercise, but a way to question the kind of development politics that modernization justified.

In response to these criticisms, Rogers (1976) suggested that communication should not focus on → persuasion (the transmission of information between individuals and groups). Instead, he proposed that communication had to be understood as a process by

which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding.

Modernization theory presented other problems in understanding the role of communication in development. The theory's focus on individual changes downplayed the influence of structural dynamics at both national and global levels that affect development. As long as communication is seen as a matter of changing individual attitudes under the assumption that they will translate into positive and wider social processes, political and economic forces are ignored. In reaction to modernization's culturalist bias, a substantial literature has argued that "underdevelopment" is not a matter of countries having the "wrong" cultural equipment to achieve better health and literacy, or higher agricultural productivity. As *dependentistas* and Marxists put it, historical global economic and political linkages explain "underdevelopment." Consequently, answers to redress problems cannot be limited to spreading the "right" cultural values. Instead, what is necessary is to analyze the complex dynamics (e.g., trade, political relations, domestic politics) that are responsible for poverty and marginalization in the south.

This premise informed studies that criticized modernization theorists for approaching the mass media without considering their relation to economic and political dynamics. For so-called "media dependency" positions (→ Dependency Theories), the media are not a set of technologies that function independently, nor do they necessarily contribute to development. Rather, they are political and economic institutions whose functioning is linked to the dynamics that perpetuate underdevelopment (→ Political Economy of the Media).

Another shortcoming of modernization theory was its patronizing, ethnocentric tone. Modernization's prescriptions were based on the deep conviction that only western ideas could spearhead global development. Modernization posited development as the irreversible process of progressive westernization of the world that would absorb, if not eliminate, indigenous cultures. While critics lamented that process of cultural change on the grounds that it represented the imposition of western values, modernization celebrated it. The latter viewed traditional cultures as nothing but obstacles in the way of modernity, and dismissed local knowledge as a likely casualty in the unstoppable march of western progress.

Several questions have been raised about these ideas. First, experience shows that traditional cultures are resilient. Cultural change is certainly possible, but it is not a necessary process. The modernization juggernaut that, according to its crusaders and critics, would change cultures forever has had dissimilar impacts around the globe. Thus, the question becomes, under what conditions might cultural change occur?

Second, cultural change does not follow a pre-determined, direct path according to western models and experiences. Rather, it is unpredictable, elusive, and full of contradictions.

Third, there has been a slow yet growing realization that solutions to development challenges are ultimately based on local knowledge and capacity. Modernization's disparaging views (and, at times, outright forgetfulness) of indigenous knowledge revealed its underlying universalistic premises. Championing western solutions to a myriad of development challenges is problematic for two reasons: it is ethically deplorable, for it assumes the inherent superiority of western-based forms of knowledge; and it is analytically misguided, for it ignores multiple ways of knowing, engaging, and addressing social problems.

Along this line of argument, one should also point out that modernization was largely inattentive to racial and gender issues. While offering an explanation for how social change was possible among non-European populations, modernization deracialized both knowledge and action. Also, while modernization implicitly discussed how the lives of third world women could change (e.g., in matters of education and health), gender remained conspicuously absent from the theory (→ Development, Gender, and Communication). Modernization failed to address the power dynamics underlying class, gender, race, and ethnic relations that largely account for unequal access to social services and persistent levels of poverty.

Although its intellectual and policy heyday may be past, key modernization concepts are still present in contemporary thinking and practice in development communication. Current policies and studies that uncritically embrace the latest information technologies follow in the footsteps of modernization's brand of optimistic techno-futurism. Technologies have proven to be useful to facilitate different types of communication if they are properly integrated into social and political processes that drive change. However, they are not cure-all solutions to deep-seated problems of power and exclusion.

Shades of modernization's culturalism are also visible in studies and development interventions that aim to modify cultural norms to promote social change. Just to give some examples: programs that aim to prevent early marriage among young girls, eliminate female genital cutting, increase female education, or change gender relations around sexuality confront the challenge of radically transforming cultural norms. Certainly, such interventions are informed by a myriad of theoretical and ideological frameworks. However, they share with modernization the belief that cultural changes (e.g., changing expectations about the proper roles of women) are crucial for effective social changes.

It is worth noting that programs that aim to catalyze cultural changes are less likely to be imbued with deterministic and media-centric views as found in modernization. In fact, it has been recognized in the literature that such changes are difficult. They require a combination of communication processes. Neither the purposeful diffusion of "modern" ideas nor the demonstration effects that result from exposure to alternative norms (e.g., through the media) inevitably lead to cultural and social changes.

That modernization has significantly less influence in contemporary development communication is not only a reflection of its overall falling fortunes in the social sciences. It is also the result of the fact that some of its key arguments fit today's sensitivity in the field of communication uneasily. Modernization's unbounded optimism about cultural change, its uncritical view of media technologies, and its confidence about the inevitability of social change seem incompatible with prevalent views in development communication. Current studies and programmatic evaluations advocate the integration of various forms of interpersonal and mediated communication, offer a moderate realism about the contributions of communication to social change, and are skeptical, if not critical, about prescribing other people's experiences to improve the lives of marginalized populations in the global south.

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ► Communication Technology and

Development ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Information ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Modernity ▶ Newspaper ▶ Persuasion ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Radio ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Secular Social Change ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television for Development

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## **Mood Management**

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The term “mood management” stands for a theory that aims to predict people’s choices from media messages. The audience is confronted with an enormous diversity of media channels and messages, thus selectivity in media use is inevitable. Hence, a classic key question in communication research is what drives the choices made by media users.

Mood-management theory (Zillmann 1988) has been proposed by Zillmann and Bryant and was initially called the theory of affect-dependent stimulus arrangement (Zillmann & Bryant 1985). The core suggestion is that media users’ moods have a strong influence on media content choices because the individual aims to manage or, more specifically, optimize his or her feeling state. This motivation then drives what media content is selected, as different messages produce different effects on mood. This

proposed pattern pertains to all media channels and genre types such as → news, music, movies, and online content (→ Internet) – even a → documentary film can be employed to enhance mood as the current “frame of mind.”

### THREE DIMENSIONS

Mood-management processes involve three dimensions on which the individual’s feeling state can be described and that are also linked to mood-enhancing media choices (Zillmann 2000, 104): “the indicated hedonistic objective is best served by selective exposure to material that (a) is excitationally opposite to prevailing states associated with noxiously experienced hypo- or hyperarousal, (b) has positive hedonic value above that of prevailing states, and (c) in hedonically negative states, has little or no semantic affinity with the prevailing states” (→ Selective Exposure).

The first dimension relates to regulation of stress and boredom. Media messages are excellent means of lowering *arousal*. For instance, most people will find watching a peaceful wildlife documentary relaxing. On the other hand, many types of media content are designed to heighten arousal; for example, fast-paced rock music typically has this effect and might even be chosen for a workout for that reason. Hence, depending on current arousal level and the personal appraisal thereof, media users select relaxing or exciting content. When stressed from work, choosing an innocuous comedy might help to unwind, a movie type that could be considered lame under other circumstances of mood. In contrast, after a boring uneventful day, many will turn to a suspenseful thriller for some excitation (→ Emotional Arousal Theory; Excitation and Arousal).

The second dimension of *mood valence* looks at whether the media user is in a positive or negative mood. Negative feeling states call for improvement through selective media use, for example by watching a movie with a “guaranteed” happy ending. When in positive moods, media users will try to maintain that state by choosing content that does not disrupt it and reinforces it instead. However, concerns have been raised (e.g., Knobloch-Westerwick 2006; also Zillmann 2000) because the theory seems incommensurate with any selective exposure to decidedly sad content, e.g., tragedies like the movie *Titanic* or Holocaust documentaries.

Finally, pertaining to the *semantic affinity* dimension, when in a negative feeling state, the individual will avoid all media portrayals that remind him or her of the source of the ongoing distress. For example, a student who has just failed badly at an exam (and cares about it) should avoid watching a campus comedy, according to mood-management theory. Even though the general tone of such a movie would be uplifting, under circumstances of stress caused by campus-related events, that association would ruin the amusement and thus not serve mood optimization.

### MEDIA FEATURES RELEVANT FOR MAKING CHOICES

Mood-management theory outlines the characteristics of media messages that are relevant for choices. The *excitatory potential* of a message relates to its capacity to either increase or decrease arousal levels. For example, fast-paced music typically has a high excitatory potential, whereas slow-paced music is usually low on that dimension.



The *absorption potential* may have some overlap with the first aspect, yet does not fully converge with it. For example, a newscast with many display elements in the style of *CNN Headlines* (→ CNN) is more absorbing than a more traditional newscast with just a news anchor and very few additional elements. The former type may be preferable for enhancing a negative mood, simply by distraction.

Furthermore, very much related to the aspects of media users' moods, the *hedonic valence* of media content will obviously affect whether it will be selected or avoided, depending on prevailing feeling state. The hedonic valence characteristic can be easily explained with some news stories – large-scale disasters such as the tsunami catastrophe in 2005 will be unanimously considered bad news and depressing, whereas reports about a newly found cure for a frequent and deadly disease are good news to most of us and might brighten our day.

Lastly, the *semantic affinity* is an aspect of the message that is very much related to the individual's perspective and assessment of his or her situation. When the current mood is positive, semantic affinity might actually be welcome. For instance, a teenager who is happily enamored might especially prefer watching a movie about a happy romance. In contrast, a teenager in unrequited love will avoid this movie type as rubbing salt into open wounds, and instead might actually go for an action thriller without any connections to the cause of personal misery.

Although mood-management theory is applicable to choices of any media content type, it has gained the most prominence in the context of entertainment exposure. In fact, it can be seen as the overarching theory for the entertainment context (Knobloch-Westerwick 2006) that can explain why we turn to a great variety of different entertainment media, designed to play on our → emotions, and furthermore offers specific predictions about actual choices.

## SELECTED RESEARCH FINDINGS

In the following, some selected research findings from the mood-management framework are presented. In a classic study, Bryant and Zillmann (1984) induced different levels of stress in their participants by having them perform tedious mechanical tasks or challenging test assignments under time pressure. Then, in a purportedly unrelated situation, participants were free to 'surf' some television channels on which pre-categorized programs, being either high or low in their excitatory potential, were shown. The TV set provided was set up to record the choices unobtrusively. The selective exposure patterns clearly differed according to induced stress level. The stressed participants spent more time on soothing programs, whereas the bored individuals allotted more time to the exciting programs.

Meadowcroft and Zillmann (1987) examined whether the menstrual cycle influenced women's reported preferences for TV genres. In a survey, female college students indicated their intention to watch various TV programs, presented in a list, on the same evening. At the end of the questionnaire, they were asked to report information regarding their menstrual cycle. Premenstrual and menstrual women showed higher interest in comedy than other females in the midst of their cycle. The authors concluded that women aim to overcome noxious mood states, resulting from hormonal phases, by watching comedy. Helregel and Weaver (1989) presented parallel results for mood states during pregnancy.

Anderson et al. (1996) examined questions that go beyond the original mood-management claims but are very much in line with the overall perspective. These researchers conducted a field experiment in which participants reported stressful events and also recorded their television consumption. This field dataset revealed that stress resulted in longer TV consumption. Stressed participants furthermore spent more time on TV entertainment, such as comedy, while neglecting news and documentaries under such circumstances. Apparently, entertainment programs hold more promise to counteract such negatively experienced arousal levels. Men and women differed in their choices when under stress – stressed women watched more game shows and variety programs, while stressed men preferred action programs.

Knobloch and Zillmann (2002) used yet another research design by conducting a computer-based experiment. The first part consisted of an ostensible test with bogus feedback and actually served as an induction of moods of difference valence. In the second part, respondents were asked to select from current pop songs available on the computer while exposure was recorded by software. As expected, participants who had received the pre-assigned negative test feedback spent more time with joyful, energetic music than participants who had received more positive feedback and who were thus in better moods. These more positive moods obviously made efforts to enhance the feeling state through consumption of joyful music less relevant.

### **POTENTIALS AND LIMITS OF THE APPROACH**

This review shows that the overall notions of mood-management theory have been supported by a variety of research designs. Additional studies have examined selective exposure to news and world wide web content. More recently, the mood-adjustment approach, an extension of the theory, has been proposed by Knobloch-Westerwick (Knobloch 2003; Knobloch-Westerwick & Alter 2006).

This perspective suggests that we do not always aim to optimize our mood but sometimes try to instigate a mood that we consider appropriate or desirable in a given or anticipated situation. For example, when preparing for a sports competition, an athlete might not listen to a song that would distract him or her from the upcoming stressful situation, although not thinking about the competition would probably be more enjoyable. Instead music that actually helps to focus on the event might be preferred in the interest of better performance. Such exposure patterns are also likely to change across time, as the anticipated event approaches. Indeed, in an empirical investigation, music exposure across time of those participants who anticipated a tedious task after a music-listening period differed significantly from listening choices of those who anticipated a joyful game (Knobloch 2003). Apparently, the anticipation of different upcoming situations instigated different efforts at adjusting one's mood to them.

Overall, mood-management theory is a key perspective in → media effects and selective exposure research. Empirical evidence for it has accumulated over the years. Some criticism has emerged because of difficulties in explaining selective exposure to upsetting content such as tragedy or horror. Furthermore, in its beautiful parsimony, mood-management theory does not offer straightforward explanations for the commonly found gender differences in media choices (→ Women's Media Genres) and in studies investigating the theory (Knobloch-Westerwick 2007).

SEE ALSO: ► CNN ► Documentary Film ► Emotion ► Emotional Arousal Theory  
► Excitation and Arousal ► Internet ► Media Effects ► News ► Selective Exposure  
► Women's Media Genres

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## **Morality and Taste in Media Content**

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Tensions and contradictions abound in claims about media content and its relationship to popular taste and public morality. Media, especially mainstream media, reinforce prevailing norms of taste and morality by catering to them, but they also legitimize new and different standards of good and bad by circulating provocative and unorthodox material. Media coverage of scandals focuses on what is self-evidently or demonstrably wrong and thus conserves the status quo, except when the scandal involves the media themselves, in which case the theme of the coverage can conveniently shift from what is

right to do, properly the domain of ethics, to the right to do it, properly the domain of law (→ Scandalization in the News). In many parts of the world, particularly at times when audiences condemn what they crave, the producers of media content struggle to navigate a course between serving the public interest, typically a high-minded standard crafted by media practitioners or promulgated by the state, and serving the public's interest, a baser standard established by market forces (→ Media Production and Content).

One of the classic accounts of the effects of media content on taste and morality comes from an essay, first published in 1948, by two Columbia University sociologists, → Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert Merton. "Mass communication, popular taste, and organized social action" set an agenda for decades of research by articulating, mostly in response to concerns about the "ubiquity and potential power of mass media" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948/2004, 230), three broadly distinguishable "*social functions*" of the media, two of which bear directly on questions of morality and taste (→ Functional Analysis). The "status conferral" function of mass media refers to the "enhanced status that accrues to those who merely receive attention in the media" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948/2004, 233). An explicit judgment in favor of someone or something – an editorial → endorsement, for example – counts as status conferral, but media also confer status "on public issues, persons, organizations and social movements" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948/2004, 233) regardless or in the absence of any judgment about them, which amounts to a process that can be fairly described as a "charismatic transfer of positive social value" (Simonson & Weimann 2003, 28).

The "enforcement of social norms" refers to the power of media to "reaffirm social norms by exposing deviations from these norms to public view" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948/2004, 235), a process that functions to close the gap between "private attitudes" and "public morality." Media enforce social norms, then, not simply by informing the public about breaches of morality, for often the public is keenly aware of these violations; rather, media bring *publicity* to these violations, which invites the public to confront their private tolerance of what they know to be wrong. "Publicity," Lazarsfeld and Merton explain, "exerts pressure for a single rather than a dual morality by preventing continued evasion of the issue. It calls forth public reaffirmation and (however sporadic) application of the social norm" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948/2004, 234; → Public; Public Opinion; Public Sphere).

Decades ago, Lazarsfeld and Merton worried that the "certified knowledge" about these social roles and their effects on society was "impressively slight" (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1948/2004, 231), but a considerable body of research now documents, clarifies and refines the basic proposition that, as Roger Silverstone (2007, 7) put it, media, new and old alike, "are an increasingly significant site for the construction of a moral order." Media aid in the construction of a moral order as they confer status on some groups and not others, a vitally important issue in multicultural societies where minority groups struggle for visibility and political parity. While media enforce social norms as they expose violations of them (Gans 1979), media also interrogate these norms by deciding which to ignore and which to accentuate, which in part accounts for – to take but one prominent example – a shift in the American press "toward a more rigorous standard of personal conduct among politicians" (Bird 1997, 118).

Still, the *role and responsibility of media* in the crafting of a moral order remains a difficult and unpleasant topic for many media practitioners, especially journalists, who cling to a view of themselves as “professional communicators,” whose sense of independence and autonomy turns them into adversaries of accountability. To even raise a question about the content of expression threatens their freedom of expression (→ Accountability of the Media; Accountability of the News; Journalists’ Role Perception). Remarkably, but not surprisingly, when in 2005 the *Economist* ran a cover story on the controversy surrounding a Danish newspaper’s decision to publish several cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad, which prompted massive and at times deadly protests throughout the Middle East and elsewhere, the editors downplayed questions of morality and taste and instead framed the issue as “the battle for free speech.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Endorsement ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Public ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Scandalization in the News

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## **Muckraking**

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US President Theodore Roosevelt in 1906 admonished writers who exposed the wrongdoings by business, industry, and government. Borrowing a phrase from John Bunyon’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, he called them “muckrakers,” who only rake the muck of life and never see the stars. Irish dramatist George Bernard Shaw later put another spin on the

term, making it synonymous with → investigative reporting, saying journalists see the stars and want to cleanse the muck so others can see as well (→ Journalism, History of).

Associated with American journalism, muckraking flourished during the Progressive Era, roughly 1902 to 1912. At the time, nine-tenths of US wealth was owned by one-tenth of the population, some of whom became known as “robber barons,” with controlling interests in railroads, steel, banking and finance, and meat-packing. They were also able to gain control of some state legislators, who succeeded in erecting high protective tariff walls. Freed from foreign competition, American manufacturers could make large profits and force higher prices on the consumer. They also benefited from immigration policies providing cheap labor. Unskilled western Europeans, some of whom faced poverty, lack of education, and political persecution, became workers in the US manufacturing mills. Immigrants filled the great manufacturing cities; families crowded into cellars or tenements without windows, light, or ventilation. Drunkenness, vice, and crime flourished, leading to a *new power-structure America* (Cook 1972): the political machine with an all-powerful boss. New York boss William Marcy Tweed, for example, set an unsurpassed record for public thievery. Politics became increasingly depraved.

The muckraking writers *focused on three issues*: corruption in government, irresponsible trusts, and exploitation of women and children. These “reformer-reporters” included professionals and amateurs, stylists and tyros, who shared concern for the physical and moral well-being of a nation dominated by laissez-faire thinking, dedicated to the status quo, and paying homage to the dollar as a symbol of success. They felt urgency to alert fellow citizens to what went wrong and the need to put things right (→ Scandalization in the News). Reporter-reformers were unique because, for the first time, a group of writers and a concentration of → magazines hammered away at the ills of American society. No comparable, relentless drive for exposure has emerged in US periodical literature before or since. Muckrakers exposed crooked politicians; criminal police; child labor exploitation in mills, mines, and factories; malefactions by capitalists; food adulteration; fraudulent patent claims; interstate prostitution; and unscrupulous businesses.

Thirty years later, muckrakers had more reach through national magazines and daily newspapers. Unlike earlier writers of exposure, Progressive-Era muckrakers reached broad → circulations and had large research resources (Hofstadter 1955). The *great muckrakers* included Ida Tarbell, whose 17-part series on the Standard Oil Company resulted in the breaking up of the oil giant (Tarbell 1904); Lincoln Steffens, whose investigations saw corrupt politicians removed from office in several cities (Steffens 1904); David Graham Phillips, whose *The treason of the Senate* brought about a constitutional amendment giving voters the direct election of US senators (Phillips 1964); and Upton Sinclair, whose *The jungle*, about horrible conditions in meatpacking, ushered in Congressional passage of the Meat Inspection Act, protecting the public from poisoned meat (Sinclair 1906).

Many factors contributed to the *decline of muckraking*. Some, particularly Phillips, went too far, and readers tired of confronting the ills of society. Since then, US literature of exposure has faced vast public apathy and an unwillingness to think about the unpleasant, especially anything attacking establishment values (→ Advocacy Journalism). Few want to interfere with the pursuit of money or pleasure. Newspapers as bearers of bad news (→ Negativity) face attack, and, ironically, magazine and book writers who substitute facts for fiction have more credibility.

During World War I, Americans turned their attention from national to international issues. Meanwhile, President Woodrow Wilson worked to resolve the problems the reformer-reporters exposed. US newspapers considered themselves in a better position in Washington once the new president came out in favor of pitiless publicity for public business. He backed this conviction by instituting the first formal, regular White House → press conferences (→ Objectivity in Reporting).

However, muckrakers retreated in the face of counterattacks from business, organized through → advertising and → public relations. Ad revenue became too important for magazines to continue their activism (→ Advertising, Economics of). *Everybody's* magazine, for example, when running a series on the beef trust, lost seven ad pages for ham, preserved meats, soap, patent cleaners, fertilizers, and a railroad (Fellow 2005).

Muckraking did not die out entirely but spread internationally in other forms (→ Sensationalism). *Washington Post* investigations helped topple US President Richard Nixon (→ Watergate Scandal) and put other corrupt political and business practices under scrutiny. More recent English and Italian investigations decried the antics of their prime ministers. However, no literature exists from other parts of the world on the muckraking movement itself, which was an American phenomenon.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Advertising ► Advertising, Economics of ► Circulation ► Investigative Reporting ► Journalism, History of ► Magazine ► Negativity ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Political Communication ► Press Conference ► Public Relations ► Radical Media ► Scandalization in the News ► Sensationalism ► Watergate Scandal ► Yellow Journalism

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# Multitasking

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Multitasking may be defined as the performance of two or more → information-processing activities simultaneously. The term originated in computer science as a description of a central processor performing two or more tasks at the same time. In the context of communication and media studies, multitasking is the term used for the situation in which an individual is using a → medium while doing one or more other information-processing tasks at the same time. If multitasking pertains to using two or more media simultaneously, for example the combination of watching → television and reading the → newspaper, one can speak of “media multitasking” (e.g., Foehr 2006) or simultaneous use of (multiple) media.

## ASSUMPTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

Although most people are used to doing more than one thing at a time, the term “multitasking” generally applies only to combinations of information-processing activities, with the (unspoken) assumptions that (1) combining non-information-processing tasks, such as smoking a cigarette while washing the dishes, is easy, whereas (2) combining information-processing tasks, such as doing homework while watching TV, is more difficult, and information might get lost.

The second assumption is based on the “limited capacity” information-processing model (e.g., Basil 1994; Kahneman 1973; Lang 2000; → Limited Capacity Model). This model holds that people are continuously busy with selecting and processing (i.e., encoding, storing, and retrieving) information and that the ability to process information is limited. Information might get lost because a person chooses to allocate too few resources to a task, or because a task requires more resources than the person has available. In multitasking, the tasks compete for limited information-processing resources, which might result in an overload of information (→ Information Overload) exceeding the processing capacity, so that only part of the information can be processed and the rest of the information is lost.

Limited-capacity theorists hold two alternative views to explain capacity overload when people are multitasking (Bourke et al. 1996). One view is that there is a general processing capacity that can be exceeded: information processing might suffer when two or more tasks require more capacity than is available in our general resources. Another view is that resources work more specifically. Overload might occur when two tasks compete for the same specific information-processing resource and the capacity of the specific resource is exceeded, a phenomenon called “structural interference” (Bourke et al. 1996). According to this view, tasks might interfere with each other even if the total processing capacity is not exceeded. Structural interference may arise, for example, when reading is combined with watching a talk show, because both activities require the processing of linguistic information.



A supplementary explanation as to why multitasking might lead to loss of information is that some messages elicit “*orienting responses*” (Lang 2000). Orienting responses involve automatic allocation of resources to a medium as a reaction to novel or interesting stimuli such as sound effects, visual complexity, movements, cuts, and zooms presented in a television program (Lang 2000). If a medium elicits orienting responses, most or all of the processing resources are allocated to the newly presented stimulus, with the result that fewer or no resources are left to process the former (non-eliciting) information-processing task(s).

A distinction should be made between *primary and secondary information-processing tasks*. An example is when a person is reading a newspaper (primary task) while using the → radio as a background medium (secondary task). Another example is a student doing homework while having the TV on in the background. The idea is that people choose to focus most of their attention on the primary task and little attention on the secondary task. During multitasking, primary tasks may become secondary and secondary tasks may become primary when the originally secondary task asks for more attention. An example is when a person (almost) stops reading the newspaper because most of their attention is focused on an interesting song on the radio.

## EMPIRICAL STUDIES

There are two types of studies on multitasking. One type of study pertains to the question of whether multitasking is done frequently, whereas the other type focuses on possible problems in information processing during multitasking. A recent study among American 8–18 year olds (Foehr 2006) shows that for young people multitasking is very common. This conclusion is based on two types of data: → survey data collected among a representative US sample ( $N = 2,032$ ) and diary data collected among a sub-group of the sample ( $N = 685$ ). When asked how often additional media were used when using each of four media (print, TV, music, and computer), a majority of the adolescents (53 percent or more) reported media multitasking “most of the time” or “some of the time.” Depending on the type of media, only 12–19 percent said they “never” engaged in media multitasking. The diary data, in which time spent with multiple media use was measured regardless of primary or secondary use, showed that for 17 percent of the time, television viewing was combined with another medium. Much higher percentages were found for media combinations while using email (83 percent), visiting websites (74 percent), instant messaging (74 percent), playing computer games (67 percent), and doing homework on the computer (60 percent).

Additional data that did make a *distinction between primary and secondary media use* showed that television (to which young people still devote the biggest amount of time) is the least likely and computer the most likely primary medium to be shared with other media. For example, of the total time devoted to computer use as a primary activity, 27 percent was spent doing secondary tasks on the same computer (i.e., computer-based multitasking), 13 percent on listening to music, 8 percent on reading, and 7 percent on doing homework (not on the computer). There is some evidence that media multitasking among young people is increasingly popular: whereas in 1999 children aged 8–18 spent 16 percent of their media time on multiple media use, in 2004 the percentage had risen to 26 percent (Roberts et al. 2005). Adults are also engaged in media multitasking: one study estimated

that almost 24 percent of adults' media time is spent with more than one medium (Papper et al. 2004).

Until now, although there was earlier psychological research on distraction effects of background noise or speech (e.g., Broadbent 1979; Salamé & Baddeley 1989), few media studies focused on possible *distraction effects when multitasking*. A series of studies conducted by Armstrong and colleagues indicated that background television might cause performance decrements in reading comprehension and spatial problem-solving (Armstrong & Greenberg 1990), and that deleterious effects on reading arise during the encoding process (Armstrong & Chung 2000). A series of experiments conducted by Pool and colleagues showed that the content of the media background is influential, with radio music and → music video clips (such as shown on MTV) not leading to decreases in homework performance (Pool et al. 2000, 2003a), but background TV soaps causing a decreased performance on difficult tasks and extension of the time needed to complete the tasks (Pool et al. 2003b).

### OPEN QUESTIONS

Many questions about multitasking are still unanswered. Does multitasking really involve doing more than one task simultaneously or does it involve switching between tasks? Observational data indicate that when concurrent tasks ask for much attention, people switch between tasks (e.g., Pool et al. 2003b; Schmitt et al. 2003), although some monitoring attention may be focused on the secondary task while doing the primary task.

To what degree does experimental research on media effects overestimate effects now that we know that in daily life people are frequently multitasking? What are the effects of media multitasking? As compared with media behavior 50 years ago, nowadays the explosion of new forms of communication seems to have reshaped our media behavior, with many more media concurrently competing for our attention.

SEE ALSO: ► Information Overload ► Information Processing ► Limited Capacity Model ► Media ► Music Videos ► Newspaper ► Radio ► Survey ► Television

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## Museum

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The visitor to a museum engages in a dialogue, enters a political space, or constructs a visual legacy, all of which signify membership in a larger community that links past, present, and future. Membership in such a community is made possible through communication. Whether one views the museum as an exchange of information or as the construction of a shared identity, communication serves as the starting point. The museum offers a public space, distinct from the mundane activities of everyday life, designed to communicate a sense of time and place distinctly different from workplace and home (→ Public Sphere).

One can think about the museum in terms of specific tasks: for example, the role of the guide, curator, designer, fundraiser, or conservator. One can also consider the specific tasks of communication: for example, to display objects within a space, to explain the significance of the display, or to educate the viewer about the historical implications of the display.

Yet communication includes more than merely making the right choices for the layout of a display or the design of a brochure to illustrate that display. Just as a museum is much more than a collection of objects, communication is more than a collection of skills. In this context, communication as a field of study offers a theoretical perspective for understanding why the design and construction of some environments lend themselves to engagement while those of other environments do not.

Understanding the complex ways in which the structure of the museum depends on communication can reveal the *essential features of the museum*. The concept of museum and the concept of communication stand as reciprocal terms (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). The museum deals with the cultural transmission of information, typically through the conservation and presentation of objects. The study of communication is also concerned with the ritual transmission of cultural information (Carey 1992). For example, the museum curator may be interested in the study of indigenous tools. In like manner, the communication scholar may be interested in the ways in which the rituals of communication construct cultural identity. These are related activities; understanding how the tools of an earlier era identified the workman with a guild suggests that artifacts symbolically structure both past and present relationships (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Prior to the earliest museums, there were private collections of art and artifacts that served to display the wealth and prestige of kings and aristocrats. The *first public museums* opened in Europe during the Age of Enlightenment. As the concept of public museum took hold, the private collections were slowly replaced by art-historical arrangements. The concept of the museum encouraged a new way of thinking about art as a necessary component of every society, rather than as a luxury for a privileged few (Duncan 1995).

Today the museum offers not only new ways of thinking about art, but also new paradigms to encourage innovation, interdisciplinary teaching, and learning (e.g., the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum, Skidmore College). Displays, exhibits, presentations, and lectures enlarge our understanding of education and provide opportunities to develop robust educational models. As museums have moved from modern to postmodern configurations, the opportunity for engagement has expanded to include virtual tours, hypothetical constructions such as the experience of the coal mine (Museum of Science and Industry, Chicago) or the internal plumbing of the human anatomy (Franklin Institute, Philadelphia).

Collections of valuable artifacts can *teach the viewing public* about the significance of everything from rare butterflies (American Museum of Natural History, New York) to the Japanese tea ceremony (Asian Art Museum of San Francisco). This requires that the curator carefully consider not only the conservation of such objects, but how best to display and represent the essential qualities of those artifacts. The space is constructed for a particular effect, thoughtfully arranged to engage the eye, heart, and mind of the visitor. The museum can serve as a training ground for the communication scholar who is interested in → *visual culture* (→ Visual Communication). Though the experience of the museum may be described as sometimes auditory or kinesthetic, it is often primarily a visual experience. At the center of the museum experience resides a profound riddle that has long fascinated communication scholars: how is the image different from the word? One's experience of the museum embodies crucial questions relevant to the study of communication. How does the grammar of the text capture and yet fail to capture the visual display? How does the visual display move different viewers to a verbal understanding of their cultural history?

Consider the exhibit of the Book of Kells (Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland). This rare manuscript required a display under dim lights and glass, making it very difficult to examine the detailed design of script and decorative elements. Trinity College wisely provided

a second room with large copies of the text plus translations, displayed with full lighting. The juxtaposition of the two rooms, one with large prints and the other with the cherished manuscript under dim lighting, provided a delightful contrast that engaged the viewer.

Whether large or small, urban or rural, the museum *preserves shared memories* through the critical use of artifacts and displays. The varied spaces of museums often create an educational experience, sometimes offer exploratory play, and inevitably provide a sense of social engagement. Despite the diverse types of museums and variations in mission, all museums share common elements, which can best be illustrated through the study of communication.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication: Definitions and Concepts ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Image ► Public Sphere ► Visual Communication ► Visual Culture

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## **Music Industry**

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The music industry is a term most commonly deployed in reference to the activities of the four largest transnational record corporations – often designated as the “majors” or the “big four,” namely SonyBMG, EMI (Electric and Music Industries), the Warner Music Group (WMG), and the Universal Music Group (UMG) – which collectively account for approximately 75 percent of all legal commercial music sales globally (→ Bertelsmann Corporation; Sony Corporation; Time Warner Inc.). All of these corporations are umbrella organizations linking smaller music labels, subsidiaries, and supplementary organizations together through complex corporate ties to larger transnational → media conglomerates (→ Global Media, History of; Globalization of the Media). Emerging from a long series of mergers occurring over the past century, these music corporations wield significant influence over the contemporary global music market.

Consequently, many scholars point to the ways these corporations “control” global music production, sustaining their position through the technological, political, and economic power they bring to bear on the ways music operates transnationally as culture

and commodity. Other scholars, however, suggest that the complexities behind this term are not properly engaged within such arguments. Still others critically point to the ways in which the term *music industry* has come to stand in for all global music practices, ignoring the significant ways music is produced, consumed, and circulated beyond the immediate logics and power of the big four. While debates on specific aspects of the power, identity, and future of these entities continue, their impact on the historical growth and development of music as a global commodity is not in question.

## HISTORY OF THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

The term “music industry” initially referred to activities surrounding sheet music publishing and its ancillary industries (theaters, music education institutes, publishing houses, etc.), responding to a growing general interest in music in European societies in the sixteenth century. The economic relationships surrounding music became further enhanced with the advent of music → copyright protection, which additionally regulated and stimulated music market commerce. By the end of the nineteenth century, the use of music had morphed from being primarily a secular pursuit of the wealthy or local communal activity to being structured through a range of commodities (e.g., sheet music, concerts, instruments, etc.) commonly bought, engaged, and enjoyed through market practices. Through the increasing intersection of these disparate markets and technological developments, the “recording industry” came into being.

Music recordings were initially but one of many kinds of recorded performances utilized to sell gramophone machines, the initial objective of the nascent “*gramophone industry*.” However, the transnational sales success of Enrico Caruso’s recordings in particular steered this industry to focus on music as its primary venture with these machines. Caruso’s success demonstrated that recorded music sales could transcend local markets and served to establish global production strategies as the industry norm early on. Anglo-American music products were positioned for success through these strategies due to the ways in which western colonialism established and directed global flows of culture and communication. Some local music cultures were simultaneously developed as a means to nurture gramophone sales in regional markets, while others were ignored for cultural or economic reasons (e.g., Sub-Saharan Africa), allowing them to subsequently develop alternative dynamics to their music cultures.

## EMERGENCE OF DOMINATING COMPANIES

Several companies – the Gramophone Co. (UK), Deutsche Grammophon (Germany), and Pathé Frères (France) in Europe, and the Victor Talking Machine Co., Edison, and Columbia (CBS) in the USA – quickly emerged to dominate the developing global music market, for several reasons. First, the increasing consumer pool and demand that materialized in industrialized countries (where all were headquartered) meant *greater profits* for these companies (as opposed to those in developing markets), and in turn, greater assets and a stronger potential for broader investment globally.

Second, these companies intentionally developed *extensive global* → *distribution* channels and networks for their products, understanding quickly that rapid delivery of

products to meet/create demand in more markets was the key to building their operations. Third, by producing *complete systems of recording technology* (recording equipment to records), these companies controlled access to most of the scarce and expensive music pressing facilities and recording technology of the time. Fourth, these companies possessed and fostered *active research and development divisions*, which kept them at the cutting edge of technological innovation and market developments (→ Marketing). Finally, the undeveloped retail sector for records and gramophones placed *constraints on market competition*, further strengthening the dominant position of these companies, while demand for records was skyrocketing.

Consequently, the emerging global music market quickly became an *oligopoly* by the time of World War I. Local record production remained vibrant, however. Small market activities were often regulated through the regional factories, network subsidiaries, and licensee agencies the dominant companies had established in these outlying areas. Consequently, global music production was structurally “filtered” by these companies, a position only strengthened by the transnational extension of patent and copyright law through international treaties and agreements regarding the circulation of cultural products.

However, despite largely controlling the emergent infrastructure surrounding global music commerce, these companies’ attempts to dictate or predict the sale of records were consistently thwarted by *local cultural proclivities*. A series of market fluctuations occurred in the 1920s and 1930s, initiating several mergers and moves toward consolidation in the industry. The global shift in interest toward American culture, coupled with developments in media and technology (radio, jukeboxes, the 33 and 45 rpm, etc.) and the USA’s increasing presence and power in global affairs after World War II served to stabilize the global music market oligopoly once again.

By the 1950s, the six biggest companies – now RCA-Victor, Columbia, Decca, Capital, MGM, and Mercury – accounted for 50 percent of global sales. By 1960, four companies (RCA-Victor and CBS in America; Decca and EMI in Europe) dominated the global market, expanding their influence by extending their distribution and financial networks and consolidating their power by forming music corporations. Growth and integration continued in the global music market as trade barriers were relaxed, standards of living increased in developing nations, and music technology and products spread farther and faster than ever before.

The majors facilitated and kept a careful watch on global trends, as their advantages in capital, distribution, production capabilities, and market influence positioned them more effectively to exploit product potential across a wider spectrum of interest and markets. As such, by the mid-1960s, the majors had commonly become characterized as bloated impersonal corporations interested only in producing superstars, blockbuster albums, and profits, despite releasing and promoting a wide array of records, artists, and musical genres.

## GLOBAL EXPANSION

The 1970s brought new investment in the music industry from larger entertainment media entities, which viewed the industry’s profits as a means to bolster their corporate bottom lines. Polygram and Warner joined EMI, RCA, and CBS to become “the big five.”

Industry growth into the 1980s was fueled by the eventual co-optation and incorporation of *disparate sub-cultural genres* (disco, punk, new wave, reggae, ska), the development of communication technologies and networks (the Sony Walkman, MTV, the compact disc), and the integration of international markets and disparate voices (“world music”). All of these extended the commercial logics related to music ever deeper into the global realm. The emergence of internationally oriented perspectives – stimulated by the extended reach of communication technologies and the ways in which transnational corporations began to conceptualize “global” culture, markets, and strategies – served to intensify the means with which, and the scale on which, the majors approached their business.

The *concept of the global music superstar* was redefined after the success of Michael Jackson’s *Thriller*. The subsequent transnational success of other stars (Madonna, Prince, Bruce Springsteen, etc.) coupled with the increasing awareness of music’s profits in international markets only solidified emerging conceptions and ideas regarding global music trends and the “logic” of marketing English-speaking global superstars transnationally. The enormous profits generated in the 1980s reinforced the power and priorities of these companies.

The switch to *digital technologies* as the industry standard generated another series of mergers and acquisitions, with several foreign companies entering the arena in search of further integration and synergy (→ Digital Media, History of). At the close of the 1980s, six integrated music firms – Warner, EMI, Polygram, MCA, Sony, and BMG – controlled 66 percent of the global music industry. The dawn of the 1990s brought developments in media synergies, cross-media marketing strategies, and initiatives to further exploit music profitability in many new markets (e.g., China, the former Soviet bloc; → Cross-Media Production). Sales soared and optimism abounded, with the industry recording an all-time high profit of \$40 billion in 1995. The euphoria, however, was short lived.

## THE INDUSTRY IN CRISIS

By 1998, it became clear that the industry dynamics were changing. Sales began to stagnate, music piracy increased, and Polygram divested its music divisions, leaving Universal, EMI, BMG, Sony, and Warner as the big five in 2000. Digital formats and technological innovations allowed for the confluence of organized hard piracy networks, CD-R technology, the Internet, and peer-to-peer file sharing to present a dramatic, extensive, and sustained threat to the majors.

The big five’s hold over global distribution – its primary source for profits – was substantially undermined despite the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement (1994), the US Digital Millennium Copyright Act (1998) (utilized to enforce global rights management policies at the state level), and a proliferation of lawsuits against file-sharing companies, individual users, and → Internet servers (→ Internet Law and Regulation). Judicial progress was most often offset by the arrival of new and more advanced file-sharing technologies and networks, and efforts to develop digital rights management (DRM) software and legitimate online distribution or subscription networks often caused more difficulties than solutions, disrupting integrated marketing capabilities and angering customers and industry professionals alike (→ P2P Networking).

In 2004, the latest successful merger out of several ongoing attempts between the majors produced *SonyBMG*, rearranging the field into the big four. Despite downsizing,



restructuring their organizations, and reconfiguring their business models, the majors' situation remained dire: 2006 marked the industry's sixth consecutive year of losses. In light of virtually unabated music piracy and file sharing, the imminent demise of the CD and most specialized retail music stores, and shifts in practices and capabilities related to music production, consumption, and distribution (e.g., Pro Tools software, the rise of the iPod and the single format preference, ring tones, MySpace.com, YouTube), the majors were forced to aggressively pursue alternative income streams (e.g., commercial and television song placement) as a means to offset their losses.

### EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

It remained to be seen how the big four would adapt to the new media landscape. Although the majors retained for the time being a dominant position with regard to global retail market share and their ability to impact developments related to global music culture and commodities in general, scholars have begun to reconsider the complexities related to their contemporary situation and how the global dynamics regarding music are being reconfigured. For some, this means reconceptualizing the big four: exploring the complexity of these organizations' networks, procedures, and strategies on multiple levels, so as to ascertain a more intricate understanding of how they actually "dominate" global music production, and also how the current global "crisis" for these corporations is related to the nexus of cultural identity, globalization processes, and neo-liberal policies and practices. These studies equally address how (on multiple levels) ideas of structure, culture, determination, agency, music, identity, geopolitics, and corporate power are conceptualized and enacted.

Others have begun to focus on how music is produced, used, and circulated transnationally within and beyond the reach and logics of the big four, suggesting that conceptions of the global music industry need to be broadened. Still others are considering how alternative spaces, innovative technologies, new "products," and emerging policies are redefining the commercial use and value of music. As these research trajectories suggest, much work remains to be done with regard to understanding the emerging dynamics surrounding music as both symbolic culture and transnational commodity in relation to how the music industry – as a cultural industry – is globally organized.

SEE ALSO: ► Bertelsmann Corporation ► Copyright ► Cross-Media Production ► Cultural Imperialism Theories ► Culture Industries ► Digital Media, History of ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Distribution ► Global Media, History of ► Globalization of the Media ► Intellectual Property Law ► Internet ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Internet, Technology of ► Marketing ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Policy ► Music Videos ► P2P Networking ► Popular Music ► Sony Corporation ► Time Warner Inc.

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## Music Videos

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“Music video” commonly designates a short audiovisual text in which a recorded song is accompanied by moving images. The term “music video” refers, as well, to the broader phenomenon of video clips and the television programs or networks that show them (→ Television Networks). Research on music video has typically used the video clip as an example with which to investigate larger issues concerning the status of image and music within media forms of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. It should be noted that large numbers of so-called music videos are, in fact, shot on film rather than tape-based or digital video (→ Digital Imagery).

The *first wave of scholarship* on music video followed shortly behind the introduction in 1981 of MTV (Music Television), a cable-based specialty television network operating in the United States (→ Cable Television). In the 1970s, short films had been produced by the → music industries to promote artists and recordings, through playback in record stores and on television programs typically shown late at night (e.g., Wagman 2001). The launch of MTV was inspired by the availability of such films, and by the enormous growth in specialty television services over the previous decade. MTV’s birth and subsequent rapid rise to popularity came in a decade marked by the growth of → cultural studies and theories of postmodernity within Anglo-American media scholarship (→ Postmodernism and Communication). Music video quickly became a popular focus of such scholarship, in a wave of writings published in the late 1980s. Chang (1986) and Kaplan (1987) were among the first scholars to use music video as a privileged example in broader diagnoses of the state of contemporary media. It was common, in this first wave of writing, to see

the video clip as evidence of a new, image-saturated culture of celebrity (→ Celebrity Culture), or as exemplifying the fleeting, fragmentary assemblages of sound and image seen to characterize media under the conditions of postmodernity.

These claims receded in the 1990s, as more focused studies of the phenomenon were published (e.g., Goodwin 1992), and as the reach and popularity of music video programming on television changed. By the end of the 1990s, music video networks were available throughout most of Europe, Asia, Australasia, and the Americas, reaching national and transnational communities through satellite or cable distribution systems (→ Satellite Television). During this same period, the novelty and appeal of programs based on the unbroken flow of video clips declined. Many music video networks (such as MTV) moved to develop new programming forms (such as reality shows) to hold on to their youthful → audiences. Video clips themselves were now more easily available on the → Internet (on sites devoted to individual performers or upload-based sites such as YouTube) and in DVD packages sold at retail. By the early 2000s, the music video clip had become both a ubiquitous tool for the promotion of music and a familiar cultural form that seemed to inspire little controversy or high-level academic theorizing.

Academic treatments of music video have pursued a variety of issues since the 1990s. Historical studies have sought to locate music video within a longer history of interaction between popular music and the film or television industries. Ongoing work has focused on experiments in combining music and moving images that extend back to the early days of → cinema and challenge well-entrenched beliefs about the “coming of sound” to cinema. The musical shorts produced by Pathé and Warner Brothers in the first half of the twentieth century are now seen as precursors of music video, as are the Soundies (musical shorts) and Scopitone visual jukeboxes of later decades (Herzog 2004). Since the 1980s, the increased use of songs within the soundtracks of motion picture and video games is viewed as having reduced the specificity of music videos, which are now seen along a continuum of cultural forms combining image and music.

Feminist media scholars have devoted considerable attention to music videos, addressing the ways in which their visuality foregrounds the *role of gendered and racialized bodies* within popular music (e.g., Railton & Watson 2005; → Stereotyping and the Media). Ethnographic research on the making of music videos has described a complex production process marked by ongoing tensions between the personal visions of directors, the promotional imperatives of record companies, and the desire of musicians for creative autonomy (Vernallis 2004; → Ethnography of Communication).

Since the early 2000s, a body of scholarship on music video has examined its role within *cultural diaspora*, such as those of Vietnamese immigrants to Australia or transnational communities of South Asian background. Music videos are increasingly seen as elements within complex assemblages of image and sound that circulate the world and are recombined within a variety of diasporic media, from satellite television networks through DVDs and Internet video clip sites, such as YouTube. For many scholars of the area, music videos function within cultural diaspora as part of their “interocularity” – matrices of images that sustain identities and identifications across several media.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Cable Television ► Celebrity Culture ► Cinema ► Cultural Studies ► Digital Imagery ► Ethnography of Communication ► Internet ► Music

Industry ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Satellite Television ► Stereotyping and the Media ► Television Networks

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# N

## NAFTA and International Communication

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Media flows between countries have always been controversial. Fears of cultural consequences if imbalances occur and concerns about the symbolic value of cultural and media products have historically been at the heart of academic and political debates as well as public policies from governments (→ New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; UNESCO). These dimensions of culture and media have generated great numbers of exceptions and qualifications in regional free trade agreements.

This was precisely the case when Canada, Mexico, and the United States signed a trilateral trade agreement that came into effect on January 1, 1994. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) had as *main goals*: (1) to facilitate the cross-border movement of goods and services among the three territories; (2) to promote conditions of fair competition in the free trade area; (3) to increase substantially investment opportunities in the territories of the parties; and (4) to provide adequate and effective protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights in each party's territory. Lack of consensus with respect to cultural industries among the three countries left these, by and large, out of NAFTA, although the implicit approach has been to treat media and cultural products like any other commodity (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services; Culture Industries).

*Canada*, historically overwhelmed by US imports due in part to the lack of cultural discount (particularly in Anglo-Canada) and the economies of scale of the American market, included an exemption for its cultural industries "to prevent the cultural standardization of content and the complete foreign control of distribution" (McAnany & Wilkinson 1996, 65). The United States, advocating the view that cultural industries produce commercial goods no different to any other, reluctantly agreed to the clause, but added a "notwithstanding" one that allowed it to take countermeasures of equivalent commercial effect if Canada were to introduce a cultural measure that would be inconsistent with the provisions of NAFTA. This clause has had the effect of dissuading Canada from resorting to legislative or regulatory measures that are inconsistent with NAFTA, prompting it to, in the case of the film sector, abandon any intervention concerning film distribution and, in the case of the magazine sector, agree to a settlement with the United States.

In contrast to Canada, *Mexico* decided not to ask for a cultural exemption clause. The dominance of local content in the broadcasting sector, due to the existence of large

conglomerates like Televisa and TV Azteca, and the cultural discount of most US cultural products due to linguistic, historical, and cultural factors, inclined Mexico not to seek an exemption clause (→ Mexico: Media System; Media Conglomerates). In addition, Spanish-language audiences in the United States were very attractive to Mexican media industries, and the government was interested in avoiding barriers to that important market, not only for commercial reasons, but also for the political objective of preserving cultural and linguistic ties with the large number of Mexicans living and working in the United States.

After the NAFTA pact, *media flows* grew steadily between Canada and the United States and between Mexico and the United States, but not between Canada and Mexico. The growth seems to be explained mainly by factors unrelated to the provisions of the Agreement. In Mexico, the United States dominated the distribution and exhibition of films in theaters, with around 90 percent of the screening time (in the first years of NAFTA, Mexico decreased the quota of Mexican films' screening time from 50 to 10 percent). In the first 10 years of NAFTA, the production of films in the country decreased from around 100 to fewer than 10 per year (Ugalde 2004). Also, most paid television channels came from the United States, dominating the supply of contents available for viewers. However, local contents accounted for more than 60 percent of global and prime-time schedules of over-the-air television (still dominant in Mexico, since only 20 percent of the population had access to pay-TV) and got much higher ratings than US imports.

In Anglophone Canada, audiences tended to prefer imported television contents over local contents by a factor of two to one (Statistics Canada 2007), though in Quebec local Francophone TV drama was popular (→ Canada: Media System; Francophonie). Despite Vancouver's position as the second largest film and television production center in North America after Los Angeles (→ Hollywood), the situation of the Canadian film industry closely resembled the Mexican case. US companies controlled 83 percent of the share of theatrical exhibition revenues and 48 percent of home video distribution revenues (Leong et al. 1996). In the federal capital Ottawa, around 90 percent of total exhibition time was devoted to US or US co-produced movies (Martínez 2007), while Anglo-Canadian films accounted for less than 1 percent of Canada's box office (Seguin 2007). In the United States, by contrast, foreign imports were almost nonexistent, both on television and in theaters. For instance, out of total screenings in commercial movie theaters in the federal capital Washington, DC, foreign films accounted for a meager 10 percent, of which 30 percent originated in Canada and none in Mexico (Martínez 2007).

With NAFTA, Canada, the United States, and Mexico formed the world's largest free trade area. This economic integration, plus technological developments and the globalization of culture, has influenced the structures, flow, contents, and processes of consumption of the mass media. But what García Canclini (1996, 146) argued three months after NAFTA became law continued to hold: the changes in culture and media are "part of a longer process of the national and international reconstitution of cultural markets . . . in relation to the new requirements of production and international commerce." Focusing exclusively on creating a free trade zone and not on cultural integration measures, as in the European Union, where regional bodies or cooperation projects were created to stimulate the audiovisual industries, NAFTA ended up legitimizing the treatment of culture as a simple commercial product, ignoring its socio-

cultural, ideological, and symbolic implications (→ European Union: Communication Law; Free Flow of Information).

SEE ALSO: ► Canada: Media System ► Cultural Products as Tradable Services  
► Culture Industries ► European Union: Communication Law ► Francophonie ► Free  
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## **Narrative News Story**

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The term “narrative news story” refers most broadly to any sort of nonfiction storytelling, but more specifically to a → news story that begins with an anecdote rather than a summary lead and then is organized in temporal sequence rather than either by inverted pyramid style or analytically (→ News). Narrative news has a long and varied history, an interesting connection with literary history, a vibrant present, and a hopeful future (→ New Journalism).



Many of the earlier formats of news were narrative in form (→ Newspaper, Antecedents of). Ballads and newsbooks dwelled on spectacular events – shipwrecks, murders, executions – and told their stories from beginning to end. One common form of narrative, especially for crime, was first person, as in the standard “gallows speech.” This form was common enough to work as a template for fictional narratives, the most famous being Daniel Defoe’s *Moll Flanders*.

Newspapers also featured items in narrative style. Early newspaper content tended to be composed by printers and other non-writers (→ Printer-Editors); stories appeared in vernacular form. Reports often included the provenance of the information – “The ship xxx, captain yyy, arrived Wednesday, carrying a letter from a gentleman in Warsaw, which states that . . .” (→ Journalism, History of; Newspaper, History of).

Though common sense to early modern readers, this form, which takes so long to get to the point, became cumbersome by the mid-nineteenth century. Three developments encouraged a less intuitive style: pictures, popular journalism, and bureaucratic efficiency, which in turn promoted the *inverted pyramid style*.

Pictorial journalism (→ Illustrated Newspapers) developed quickly in the middle of the century in the various western countries. Using engravings, usually woodcuts, rather than photographs, these news pictures compressed time and freely combined elements to allow for narrative effects and a pointed representation of character. Only at the beginning of the twentieth century did narrative illustration yield to → photojournalism, a less lucid form of picturing that provides traces of a story rather than a full account.

At the same time, *mass circulation newspapers* appeared – in the 1830s in the US, and in following decades in other western countries where taxation and censorship (→ Censorship, History of) retarded their appearance. These papers featured more routinized forms of earlier narrative content, especially crime news – the police court reports of the *New York Sun*, for instance. War correspondence – the Crimean War for British papers, the Civil War for US – and a second wave of “penny papers” in the last quarter of the century intensified the development of narrative style by coupling it with the persona of the reporter (→ Penny Press).

This “*story model*” of journalism competed with an “information model” that came to rely on the inverted pyramid style (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Although it became common only in the 1890s, examples of the inverted pyramid style appeared earlier in newspapers in items like the Civil War dispatches of war secretary Edwin Stanton. Designed for efficiency, it became the preferred style of bureaucrats first and then reporters, as they became subject first to the rigors of the newsroom and then to the teachable styles of the new university-level journalism courses and schools (→ Professionalization of Journalism). The inverted pyramid style never fully conquered journalism, though. It was resisted by a verbose tradition of reporting, by the cross-fertilization of journalism with literature seen in the careers of storytellers like Charles Dickens and Mark Twain, and by magazine journalism (→ Magazine, History of), especially as practiced by the great muckrakers, like Lincoln Steffens and Ida Tarbell, who focused on telling compelling stories and often inserted their own pursuit of the truth into the story (→ Muckraking). The narrative news story survived in the twentieth century, though it was eclipsed by long-form expert journalism, which became the new gold standard in the high modern period. Narrative inspired innovations in the theory and practice of

journalism, including emerging styles of broadcast journalism, especially live journalism, long-form documentary, and the literary work of the so-called “new journalists.”

Narrative currently is experiencing a *revival in print media*. As newspapers recede further from mass circulation and breaking news, they have developed a new openness to narrative and literary styles. Harvard’s Nieman Center has hosted annual conferences on narrative news since 2001, and among other US newspapers the *Virginian-Pilot* has a narrative news team. The revival of narrative follows a generation of theoretical analysis of how narratives are constituted across a range of literary genres. Although scholars of journalism are occasionally attentive to this literature, the impulse toward storytelling in the working press comes from more pragmatic sources – the desire to captivate readers foremost among them. But the construction of a storyline out of reporting raises inevitable questions about accuracy and detachment and invites the perception of a blurring of the line between fact and fiction. The enduring fascination with narrative classics like Joseph Mitchell’s *Joe Gould’s Secret* and Truman Capote’s *In Cold Blood* underscores the liminal status of the form.

As a result, the narrative form remains on the margins of hard news reporting, deployed more for color or human interest than for public affairs reporting, which still prefers the more apparently neutral inverted pyramid style, with its obvious capacity for balancing sourced opinions and quotations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Illustrated Newspapers ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Literary Journalism ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Muckraking ▶ New Journalism ▶ News ▶ News Story ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Penny Press ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Professionalization of Journalism

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## **Navigation**

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The concept of navigation refers to the interpretation of user actions in hypermedia as a movement through virtual space. Navigation can thus be seen as → selective exposure to

hypermedia on a micro-level. Hypermedia commonly includes graphics and fragments of audio, video, and plain text (nodes), which are all knotted via hyperlinks. Navigation research is dedicated to the study of personal, situational, and media influences on how users move through hypermedia, select links, search for → information, and learn from hypertext contents (→ Learning and Communication).

The *standard situation while navigating* in hypermedia can be characterized as follows: information about the destination of a link is mostly marginal, while structure is decentralized. Moreover, the paths of decision are rather long. At each step, there are a large number of available alternatives. All of these produce low transparency and high uncertainty. On the other hand, users can determine the way information will be processed and the speed at which it will do so, which leads to high situational control. Additionally, it does not require much effort to revise a wrong decision; users only need to click on the “back” button. Therefore, navigation can be described as a low-cost situation (time, money, physical effort). Finally, without the active selection between given alternatives (hyperlinks), the reception process will not proceed. Therefore, navigating hypermedia is associated with high selection pressure (contrary to other forms of media, such as television; → Exposure to Television).

The majority of recent research is *based on information-processing theories* (mental and situational models and a → limited capacity model). Some researchers deploy more specific approaches, like psychological decision theory, problem-solving theory, or text → comprehension models. Typical research questions deal with typologizing search strategies and selection behavior, task differences, the effects of the structure of hypermedia on learning and understanding, individual differences (→ Individual Differences and Information Processing), and problems of disorientation and cognitive overhead. Methodologically, one can roughly distinguish between the two types of studies. On the one hand, there are non-reactive web server log studies with large data samples but little insight into the mental states of users. On the other hand, there are experimental or quasi-experimental studies (→ Experimental Design) with smaller data samples but extensive information on user strategies, → emotions, motivations (→ Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition), and → cognitions. The latter studies use quantitative or qualitative questionnaires (→ Qualitative Methodology; Quantitative Methodology), observational and think-aloud methods (→ Observation), and, sometimes, → physiological measurements. Several researchers try to combine both types of study.

There are several attempts to *systemize search strategies and selection behaviors*. By emphasizing the differences between single actions or action sequences, formal patterns, such as paths, rings, loops, spikes, and hubs-and-spokes, can be found rather frequently. For example, stressing the structure of a (well-advised) information-seeking process, Marchionini (1995) describes eight stages: (1) recognizing and (2) defining the problem; (3) choosing a search system; (4) formulating a query; (5) executing a search; (6) examining the results; (7) extracting information; and (8) reflecting on the results.

It is expedient to distinguish between *different search tasks* (Chen & Rada 1996). “Closed tasks” are information retrievals where a single type of information can be found (e.g., name, year, or date). “Open tasks” are retrievals where an undefined amount of information about an issue or a problem can be found and cognitively integrated (e.g.,

information about a country or historic event). Finally, scan browsing or “serendipitous browsing” is a more explorative navigation with no or weakly defined goal-orientation that enables the user to discover new and surprising information. Results suggest that closed, as opposed to open, tasks are conducted faster and more efficiently. However, it seems that at times types of tasks and task complexity are confounded.

Additionally, navigation depends on the *structure of hypermedia*, or how the information (e.g., the web pages) is linked. There are linear and hierarchical network structures, as well as several hybrid forms. Hierarchical structures provide some advantages regarding clarity and orientation. However, they hamper explorative and associative browsing and make serendipity effects less probable.

Studies focusing on *individual differences* in navigation behavior deal with the effects of involvement, motivation, age, gender (→ Gender and Discourse), domain expertise, Internet (or search engine) expertise, and cognitive styles (Chen & Rada 1996) on navigation behavior. For example, experts in domain knowledge possess more comprehensive and better-structured mental representations of the concepts in the domain. Structures set by novices are less organized and more chaotic. Foremost, novices tend to achieve an overview using breadth-first strategies, while experts are able to locate detailed information by navigating through specific content links (depth-first strategy). In contrast, the differences between more or less experienced Internet users (→ Exposure to the Internet) are of little consequence for information seeking or learning success, but Internet experience interacts with domain expertise. On the one hand, missing domain knowledge can hardly be compensated for; on the other hand, double experts (domain and Internet experts) are apparently most successful in searching and learning information on hypermedia (Hoelscher 2002).

Empirical studies identify *problems* of interaction with hypermedia, particularly disorientation and cognitive overhead. Both contradict assumptions that a structural isomorphism between the structures of hypermedia (nodes and links) and the structure of human memory as an associative network postulates advantages for information processing and learning in a hypermedia environment. *Disorientation* (often referred to as being “lost in hyperspace”) emerges as a result of navigation behavior in complex hypermedia environments. Usually novices report more disorientation than experts.

*Cognitive overhead* describes the idea that under the assumption of limited cognitive capacity, users spend cognitive effort navigating instead of comprehending tasks in order to orient themselves (Zumbach 2006). Both problems seem to be more severe for users with low prior domain knowledge and those navigating less structured environments. Disorientation may be reduced, especially for novices, by appropriately using tools like advisements, advance organizers, human support, graphical overviews, and structural cues (Chen et al. 2006). Alternatively, providing learners with adequate content structures will also lessen disorientation.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Emotion ► Experimental Design ► Exposure to the Internet ► Exposure to Television ► Gender and Discourse ► Individual Differences and Information Processing ► Information ► Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition ► Learning and Communication ► Limited Capacity Model ► Observation ► Physiological Measurement ► Qualitative Methodology ► Quantitative Methodology ► Selective Exposure

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## **Negative Campaigning**

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Negative campaigning is a widespread technique, using the method of comparison and attack. It does not focus on one's own strengths, but rather on the alleged weaknesses of one's political opponent. The attacks can be directed at the platform of the political opponent or at his or her personality. Whenever the attacks aim at personal integrity, address aspects of someone's private life, and "go below the belt," it is also called "playing dirty" or "mudslinging."

Negative campaigning is a common practice in US election campaigns (→ Election Campaign Communication). It is most frequently applied in close races: the tighter the contest, the meaner the campaign (Ansolabehere & Iyengar 1995). But in other western democracies the tactic has been used as well (Kaid & Holtz-Bacha 1995). Negative campaigning is generally more accepted in countries with a competitive culture and less so in countries with a consensus-based political culture.

Negative campaigning rests on the conclusion that voters perceive negative messages less selectively than positive messages (→ Media Effects; Political Persuasion). It is therefore easier to demobilize the supporters of one's political opponent with the help of

negative messages than to convince them of one's own merits through positive messages. Negative messages are more likely to be perceived and remembered than positive messages (→ Memory; Memory, Message; Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

Campaign managers choose the type of messages they intend to send according to an analysis of strengths and weaknesses of their own candidate and their opponent (→ Political Marketing). When candidates' own positions on a variety of issues are largely in sync with the majority of public opinion, putting them on the road of victory, they will mainly run their campaign on positive messages about themselves. They will avoid negative campaigning, since attacks on their opponents would only create publicity for them. Candidates are more likely to resort to negative campaigning when they are relatively unknown, trailing behind in the polls, or their platform positions are contested (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Election Surveys). It allows them to increase their profile, divert attention from unfavorable issues, and try to put their political opponents under pressure (→ Candidate Image). More often than not, challengers employ negative campaigning against incumbents. Candidates also use it when they have much less access to campaigning resources than their opponents, trying to reach the mass media's attention with the help of negative campaigning (→ Negativity).

For attacks on the political opponent, the method of choice is → television ads (→ Political Advertising). The ads blame the rival for being dishonest, untrustworthy, inexperienced, or lacking in leadership qualities. In the case of incumbents, campaigners often use political or personal records as "proof" for such accusations. Negative campaigning is a tightrope walk. On the one hand, the tactic creates public attention; on the other hand, the attacks can turn into a boomerang. Such a backlash is likely whenever the candidate's personality is under assault. In order to reduce this risk, the candidates do not execute the attacks themselves. Instead, they leave this job to seemingly independent or third-party groups that are in fact close to them. Campaign professionals also try to leak information to the media that discredits the political opponent, without revealing the source of that information.

Negative campaigning corresponds to the attention logic of the mass media (→ Attention; Media Logic). It focuses on conflict and argument, on candidates' personal characteristics, and it provides a competition story (→ Conflict as Media Content; Horse Race Coverage; Personalization of Campaigning). All of this relates to journalists' news selection criteria, especially to negativism (→ News; News Factors; News Values). The fight itself often becomes the story (Ansolabehere & Iyengar 1995).

Negative campaigning and the journalistic coverage of the attacks have led to fierce criticism. According to critics, the mudslinging sheds a bad light on politicians and the political system as a whole. Negative campaigning and its enhancement through media coverage may lead to voter alienation and → political cynicism. According to some studies, negative campaigning manages to mobilize the loyal supporters of a party, but it keeps the undecided from voting (Ansolabehere et al. 1994). But these results are contested (Lau et al. 1999; Kaid 2004). Other studies show that negative campaigning has the potential of increasing interest in a campaign. Fierce fighting between political opponents is a signal to the voters that the stakes at the elections are high. According to the proponents of negative campaigning, it can put important topics onto the political agenda (→ Agenda Building), thereby offering some orientation to the voters through

direct comparison. “If negative commercials persuade voters that the choice between the candidates is an important one, then they are likely to increase rather than decrease turnout” (Wattenberg & Brians 1999, 896).

Yet the accusation that journalists acquiesced to being used, thereby contributing to increasing political cynicism, has led to some rethinking (→ Journalism: Normative Theories; Journalists’ Role Perception). So-called ad watches have become relatively common in recent US campaigns. In them, journalists critically scrutinize and analyze the messages transmitted by the TV ads. But this practice has been criticized, too: taking up and repeating the negative ads over and over again only reinforce their messages, critics say. Thus the negative TV ad rather than its analysis gets planted in the recipients’ conscience.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Attention ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Logic ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Negativity ▶ News ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Television

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## **Negativity**

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Negativity is the tendency of humans to pay → *selective attention* to events and behaviors that could have a negative impact on themselves or their group. Selective attention to negative events by primary observers, such as journalists, may result in overly negative reports to those who were not witnesses, which may result in anger or fear (→ Fear Induction through Media Content).

Whether events, people, behaviors, or gestures – abstractly called objects – are negative or positive is easily judged by humans, as is apparent from our ability to rate almost every object on scales with a positive pole (e.g., good, beautiful, trustworthy) and a negative counter-pole (e.g., evil, ugly, untrustworthy). The semantic differential → scale is based on this ability. Experimental research shows that humans are able to build positive and negative impressions within milliseconds, for example about whom should be distrusted or trusted (Todorov et al. 2005). This suggests already that first and casual observations are important, but when someone or something could become dangerous, impressions may be updated continuously, with great weight being placed on the most recent observations. Thus, in addition to continuous “online” monitoring, a *primacy effect* and a *recency effect* are observed (→ Availability, Cognitive). The underlying rating scales (e.g., good vs. bad, beautiful vs. ugly, strong vs. weak) are deeply rooted in the vocabulary of every human language, as is evident from thesauri with synonyms and antonyms, such as *Roget's thesaurus* for English.

The tendency to pay selective attention to negative events, as well as the tendency to report selectively about them, probably arose from the need of *Homo sapiens* to use the human language as a warning system when predators or competing tribes entered the scene. One of the foremost important human reactions to societal danger is alerting others by shouting rather indiscriminately, which may produce a mobilization effect and may additionally frighten predators. Crying out negative emotions is also a good means when the aim is to drum up companions who could possibly help to overcome a danger for oneself, as when a baby cries loudly. “Negative news” – in its varieties of shouting and crying – strengthens the tendency to pay selective attention to negative events. Men appear to be more hardwired for selective attention to negative news than women (Grabe & Kamhawi 2006). Negative news may foster mobilization in the case of a societal danger and the impulse to come to someone's aid in the case of individual neediness. Differential effects of societal and personal dangers have been demonstrated experimentally (Shah et al. 2004). It should be noted that other species have developed quite different reactions to danger. An ostrich will stay where it is, only hiding its long neck. A hare will jump away, zigzagging in all directions. A sheep will run toward the flock, which will prompt the complete flock to start running in one direction.

## NEGATIVITY IN VARIOUS DOMAINS OF COMMUNICATION

Negativity poses a variety of different challenges for each of the major fields of communication: for interpersonal communication and media entertainment, for organizational communication and public relations, but especially for mass communication.

### Interpersonal Communication

In → interpersonal communication and in media entertainment (e.g., the enjoyment of books, movies, stage plays, and games), negative or positive first impressions of characters are often counterbalanced by later impressions (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Tension may result when both negative and positive observations are available “top of mind,” and thus when → *cognitive dissonance* is apparent, e.g., when only a Samaritan is



willing to help a Jew, or when only a small David dare challenge Goliath, or when a character is beautiful but evil, or trustworthy but ugly (→ Consistency Theories). Since deeper thoughts and additional observations are required to solve the inconsistency, inconsistency gives rise to *increased attention* for its sequel. In media entertainment the combination of negativity with tension is therefore a well-known device for raising viewing figures, circulation, and sales. While watching television, the tension raised by a particular program diminishes the likelihood of viewers zapping to another channel.

Research on the effects of negativity in media entertainment has concentrated on the impact on aggression of violence on television and in video games. Meta-analysis of research results indicates a moderate relationship indeed (Bushman & Anderson 2001).

### **Organizational Communication**

In → organizational communication negativity in the workplace (→ Dissent in Organizations) is counterbalanced by → communication management, or corporate communication (a term more often used in business administration). Negativity in organizations may originate outside or inside the organization. Negative external circumstances such as falling profits or innovations by competitors do not necessarily lower morale when communication management succeeds. Internal circumstances resulting in negativity are less easy to tackle. A negative mood throughout an organization may arise from a variety of internal issues, such as boredom at work, a lack of career prospects, organizational injustice, incompatible personalities, imprecise or impossible tasks, inconsistent performance criteria, poor leadership, or conflicting sub-cultures. Communication audits, analysis of internal → communication networks, and analysis of leadership communication (→ Business Discourse) may help to achieve a precise diagnosis of the origins of negativity and dissatisfaction.

### **Mass Communication**

In *mass communication*, negativity is prevalent at every layer of the communication process (→ Media Production and Content). For journalists, negativity of events is one of the guiding principles of news selection (→ News Factors; News Values). The negativity bias in the news is quadrupled by news consumers, who usually pay selective attention to dramatic, negative news reports. Since many journalists' powerful sources, such as ministries, political parties, politicians, companies, and CEOs, are generally not dependent on the ratings of news consumers, but on their rankings (e.g., which investments are least risky, which product is least expensive, which presidential candidate is least incompetent), they may adapt to the media logic that negativity increases newsworthiness with newsworthy negative attacks on their competitors (Kepplinger 2000).

## **NEGATIVITY IN THE PRODUCTION OF MEDIA CONTENT**

The negativity bias in the news entails that, for example, the news will not report upon every fire, but will focus on fires that cause a lot of damage. The negativity bias becomes less transparent, however, when additional criteria for newsworthiness play a role also, as

was spelled out in a seminal article by Galtung and Ruge (1965). Geographical proximity, and the involvement of powerful actors, for example, render events newsworthy also, which means that heavily negative events abroad must compete for attention with negative domestic events. Heavy negativity abroad – for example, famine or tribal wars in third-world countries – will not become newsworthy unless its profile is raised by media events created by powerful domestic actors. The selective indignation about domestic negativity combined with the relative indifference about negativity abroad easily contributes to negative → stereotypes about outsiders.

The possibilities and the readiness for disclosing and disseminating negative news depend on social and political structures. Authoritarian regimes will typically censor negative news about domestic events, while encouraging negative news stories about foreign enemies. In democratic nations the negativity of the news depends on → journalists' role perceptions. As early as the nineteenth century, Alexis de Tocqueville suggested in *De la démocratie en Amérique* that newspapers may shift from a partisan style of news reporting, with positive news about a preferred party, to a more detached, sensational style in order to attract more readers. Especially during recent decades, a shift toward a more negative, interpretive style of news reporting has been observed in many democracies, including the United States (Patterson 1993). When the media became the foremost important battlefield for politicians and businesspeople to compete for voters or consumers, the arrogance of journalists toward them increased. Newspaper journalists and television talk show hosts alike have arrogated the right to introduce and to interpret extensively the games that politicians and businesspeople play, to the detriment of news attention for issue news about policy aims and policy results or about business plans and products.

Negativity has also become one of the research topics in the study of the new media. Interactive media such as emails, Internet discussion forums, and blogs provide an opportunity to express one's thoughts and to reveal one's emotions. One of the consistent findings in computer-mediated communication is that the web enhances the disclosure of personal feelings. Flaming, defined as an uninhibited expression of hostility, such as swearing, name-calling, ridiculing, and hurling insults toward another person, is a common practice (Kayany 1998).

### EFFECTS OF NEGATIVITY

Research results are inconclusive when it comes to the question of whether fear or anger is the primary reaction to negativity. Negative news, e.g., news about the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US, has the effect of making one's mortality salient, which may result in a sudden fear of death. Protecting oneself by rallying behind the flag after dramatic negative events such as 9/11 is explained in *terror management theory* as an attempt to suppress the fear of death (→ Mediated Terrorism). Other studies indicate, however, that especially fearful citizens will be critical of aggressive counterattacks, which suggests that anger rather than fear is a motive to support indiscriminate aggression in one's own group.

Much research has been done to establish whether negative, conflict-oriented news raises feelings of apathy and → political cynicism among the public in the long run (Cappella & Jamieson 1997). The empirical evidence is mixed. On the one hand, negative news may indeed decrease trust in particular companies or parties, although this effect

may not become apparent immediately (Kleinnijenhuis et al. 2006). Patterson found that negative impressions of presidential candidates increased step by step with the increase in negative coverage (Patterson 1993). On the other hand, many studies indicate that exposure to the news, negative or otherwise, has a mobilizing effect on political participation (Norris 2003).

SEE ALSO: ► Availability, Cognitive ► Business Discourse ► Cognitive Dissonance Theory ► Communication Management ► Communication Networks ► Consistency Theories ► Dissent in Organizations ► Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ► Fear Induction through Media Content ► Interpersonal Communication ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Media Production and Content ► Mediated Terrorism ► News Factors ► News Values ► Organizational Communication ► Political Cynicism ► Scales ► Selective Attention ► Stereotypes

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## **Negotiation and Bargaining**

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“Negotiation” is derived from a Latin term that means “to conduct business,” and a great deal of research is focused on economic transactions such as sales and collective bargaining.

Over time, the use of negotiation has expanded to other contexts such as marriage (→ Marital Communication; Marital Typologies) and hostage negotiations (Rogan et al. 1997), and in addition to its traditional role as a tool for creating exchange agreements (→ Social Exchange), it is now recognized to be an important component of conflict management (→ Conflict Resolution). Because of its widespread use, negotiation research is conducted throughout the social sciences including anthropology, communication, economics, management, political science, psychology, and sociology.

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Negotiation is a process by which at least two parties interact in an attempt to reach an agreement. Negotiators are acting in “good faith” as long as they are honestly trying to reach an accord. Negotiation is *goal driven* (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of; Goals, Social Aspects of). At a minimum, successful negotiation occurs when the parties agree to the terms of a contract or informal understanding, and negotiators often have an agreement bias in which they are willing to accept inferior terms just to avoid a deadlock. However, negotiation objectives extend beyond simply reaching agreement. Frequently, negotiation goals are focused on gaining resources and reflect the specific amount that negotiators wish to obtain as well as the least they are willing to take rather than reaching no agreement. These tangible goals often reflect underlying interests such as the desire to enhance one’s well-being, establish a particular type of relationship, or control the negotiation process and values (Lax & Sebenius 1986).

During negotiation, individuals *focus on issues* (Putnam & Holmer 1992). Price is often a critical issue in buyer–seller transactions just as wages, benefits, and productivity are often key issues in collective bargaining. The positions that negotiators express reflect the manner in which they frame the issue. Frames constitute their understanding of issues and can be cognitive biases (Thompson et al. 2004). These include the “fixed pie bias,” which reflects the tendency of negotiators to assume they want the same things, to overlook issues about which they agree, and to focus primarily on disagreement. Gain frames are focused on the benefits of a proposed agreement and may cause a premature commitment, whereas loss frames arise from perceived costs and prompt negotiators to prematurely reject agreements in the hope that better ones will come along.

Negotiation involves a complex *set of communication processes*. During negotiation, individuals bargain by exchanging offers and counteroffers. Arguments are made in support of positions (→ Argumentative Discourse). Information is exchanged about priorities and goals (→ Questions and Questioning). Negotiators try to establish a certain type of relationship through their communication (Donohue & Ramesh 1992). Finally, coercion is used as a measure of last resort (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction). These processes often reflect distributive and integrative strategies. Distributive strategies are attempts by negotiators to gain the best deal by demanding outcomes of greater value. These strategies can involve making an extreme opening offer, making few and small concessions, attacking each other’s positions while defending their own, disclosing supportive information while withholding damaging data, acting as though hostile or indifferent to each other, and making a take-it-or-leave-it offer. Distributive strategies can be successful, but when reciprocated, they often lead to deadlock. Integrative strategies

focus on integrating the needs of all parties by creating solutions that are valuable to all sides. These strategies could involve offering concessions on low-priority issues in exchange for concessions on higher-priority ones, disclosing information about interests and priorities, focusing on the benefits and workability of proposals, expressing mutual concern, and developing alternatives to reaching an agreement. Integrative strategies allow both parties to meet their needs.

Negotiation processes may *change over time* (Weingart & Olkeans 2004). Goals and strategies are not fixed and individuals often adjust and adapt them as negotiation unfolds. Negotiators may find their original goals are unrealistic or their initial strategies are ineffective. In addition, some negotiators may find it useful to start negotiations by strongly justifying their position and demanding outcomes of great value. By doing so, they communicate strength and may cause their counterpart to take them seriously. To avoid a deadlock, they then shift to an integrative approach and try to create a solution that benefits both. Alternatively, negotiators may shift their orientation throughout a negotiation depending on factors such as resistance.

Negotiations are influenced by the *context* in which they occur. Negotiating on the behalf of others can make negotiators more distributive and require them to negotiate simultaneously with the opposition and their own constituency. Time pressure limits the ability of negotiators to consider alternatives, and instead, they may rely heavily on distributive strategies.

## MEASURES AND FINDINGS

Researchers have developed schemes for coding the content of negotiations. These have been used to study the strategies that are used during the negotiation, and some have examined both the strategies that are used and the responses to them (Weingart & Olkeans 2004).

Most researchers are interested in *integrative agreements*, which afford high joint benefits and are often creative. The integrativeness of an agreement is often evaluated relative to other possible agreements that could have been reached. Hence, the most integrative agreement is the one that affords both parties the highest benefits. Compromises such as “split the difference” are moderately integrative since both parties give up something. Integrativeness is lowest when both parties do poorly, such as when they reach deadlock or one party wins while the other loses.

Alternatively, some researchers have focused on the type of integrative agreement. Costcutting agreements are those that allow another negotiator to save face, sometimes by providing a symbolic concession. Logrolling agreements occur when all parties receive what they want on high-priority issues but make significant concessions on those of low priority. Bridging agreements involve the creation of novel solutions that frequently result from approaching the problem in a counterintuitive fashion. Nonspecific compensation occurs when negotiators provide each other with resources that are not specifically part of a contract. Contingent agreements reduce risk by specifying future conditions that must be met before resources are exchanged, or the reopening of negotiations at a future time so as to modify the agreement.

The dual concern model has guided a great deal of integrative negotiation research (Pruitt & Rubin 1986). To discover integrative agreements, individuals must be willing to exert considerable energy during negotiation so as to discover each other's needs and to

formulate creative agreements that are mutually beneficial. To do so, they must be rigidly committed to achieving their goals while flexible as to the means of doing so. Hence, integrative bargainers resist giving up their objectives but are willing to consider alternative ways of meeting them that will also serve the needs of their counterpart (De Dreu et al. 2000). This dual concern facilitates reaching integrative agreements by prompting negotiators to ask questions, share information about priorities, logroll, discuss the merits and problems associated with proposals, and build rapport. Individuals with a dual concern avoid blaming one another and making threats.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Negotiation is a tool for exerting influence, and individuals want to become effective negotiators. Researchers are therefore beginning to investigate the critical cognitive and behavioral skills required to be a *successful negotiator* (Roloff et al. 2003). Beyond cataloguing skills, researchers are investigating how best to train individuals to be more skillful, including the use of case studies and other training methods.

Because of the pervasiveness of electronic media, researchers are also exploring *mediated negotiation* (→ E-Commerce; Mediated Social Interaction; Personal Communication by CMC). This includes the degree to which face-to-face negotiations differ from those occurring through email and other electronic media (McGinn & Croson 2004).

With increasing globalization, negotiation researchers are becoming interested in *inter-cultural negotiations*, and especially those involving business transactions (→ Globalization of Organizations). This research focuses on cultural norms for negotiation as well as identifying cultural differences in the manner in which negotiators frame negotiations and the strategies they use (Brett 2001; → Intercultural and Intergroup Communication; Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework). Perhaps the most important focus for future research arises from the need to understand how negotiation can be used to *resolve intractable disputes*. Individuals, groups, and nations often have difficulty resolving their disagreements, and these can escalate into prolonged aggressive encounters. Researchers are beginning to turn their attention to such disputes with an eye to identifying how they might be made ripe for a negotiated settlement (Putnam & Wondolleck 2003). This means expanding the focus of negotiation to include third-party interventions such as mediation, facilitation, and arbitration.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Goals, Social Aspects of ▶ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Marital Typologies ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Questions and Questioning ▶ Social Exchange

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## Netherlands: Media System

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Despite its open borders and its central location between big European countries, the Netherlands (with a population of 16.3 million) has its own tradition with respect to both press and broadcasting, a tradition that is closely related to the country’s overall socio-political structure during most of the twentieth century. In the early years of the twenty-first century we notice, however, that this “Dutch model” is eroding rapidly and beginning to follow a more “European” or even “global” media model, in which concentration (→ Concentration in Media Systems) and internationalization have become paramount.

In terms of Hallin and Mancini’s typology (2004), the Dutch media model fits into the “democratic corporatist” category, relying heavily on the role of organized social groups in society, as against a more individualistic concept of representation in the “liberal” model and considerable levels of politicization, state intervention, and clientelism in the “polarized pluralist” model (→ Public Broadcasting Systems).

## PRESS

The Dutch press has a strong tradition of private enterprise, and the basic model of Dutch press policies is, as elsewhere in the western world, one of freedom from state intervention (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The Dutch press tradition goes back to the seventeenth century, when the relatively tolerant and prosperous Dutch republic served as a safe haven for → newspapers that could not be published in other, more absolutist countries (e.g., *Gazette de Leyde*, 1677–1811; → Newspaper, History of). At the end of the nineteenth century the abolition of the “newspaper stamp” (1869), the introduction of the rotation press (→ Printing, History of), and the rapid rise of literacy finally created favorable conditions for the modern mass press. Next to the traditional liberal-bourgeois papers, calling themselves “neutral,” so-called “tendency papers” arose, representing the “pillarized” (denominationally segregated) Protestant, Catholic, and socialist emancipation movements. In the 1960s we notice a major trend toward concentration, triggered by rapidly decreasing revenues as a result of the introduction of broadcasting → advertising and of the erosion of the old socio-political pattern (“depillarization”). In the period between 1970 and 2004 the number of autonomous newspaper publishers was further reduced from 35 to 9, and the number of editorial independent titles from 54 to 31 (Bakker & Scholten 2005, 18). The market share of the four largest newspaper publishing houses rose from 54 percent in 1974 to 95 percent in 2000. In most regions and cities the pluralism of several “pillarized” newspapers has been so reduced that they are “one-paper cities.”

This process of press concentration has raised serious concern, both in the media sector and in society at large, as to its potential negative impact on press freedom and pluralism. The most important instrument for support for newspapers in difficulties is the *Bedrijfsfonds voor de Pers* (Netherlands Press Fund), founded in 1974. It supports newspapers on the condition that the loan is temporary and that the profitability of the newspaper will eventually be restored. Another important instrument of press policy is restrictive rules on press mergers. After a fierce political debate, a gentlemen’s agreement was made in 1993 – following earlier suggestions by the government and the Press Fund – to forbid mergers that would lead to any publishing house having a market share of over 33.3 percent, and to monitor market shares between 20 and 33.3 percent (→ Antitrust Regulation). Only five years later a new, general competition law replaced this internal code and installed a new supervising body, the *Nederlandse Mededingingsautoriteit* (NMa, Netherlands Competition Authority). But in practice, the limitation of the market share seems to have worked well; after the most recent takeovers each of the three major publishing houses has a market share of close to but not more than 33 percent (→ Markets of the Media; Consolidation of Media Markets).

All national newspapers are now in the hands of one or two more or less specialized newspaper holdings (four out of five national newspapers are owned by PCM, and one is owned by *Telegraaf*), and the regional newspaper market is to a large extent in the hands of just one company (*Wegener*). All these three companies happen to have an overall market share of about 30 percent, the politically acceptable maximum. The total → circulation of paid-for newspaper copies is stagnating recently and penetration is decreasing, especially among young households. On the other hand the new, free-tabloids



*Metro* (Swedish based) and *Sp!ts* (owned by Telegraaf) have proven to be a big success, especially among young people.

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

Broadcasting in the Netherlands started as early as 1919. The Dutch public broadcasting system is unique in the sense that broadcasting as a public service is in the hands not of private corporations or national organizations, but of associations of viewers and listeners. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Roman Catholics and Calvinist Protestants, and later also socialists, opposed the hegemony of the Liberal-Conservative establishment of the time. Their efforts to achieve emancipation for their followers led to the creation of “pillars”: parallel, closed compartments in society for each belief or ideology, which applied their own way of thinking and living to all areas of life, and created a socio-cultural “pillarization” ranging from their own political parties and trade unions to schools, hospitals, and leisure associations (Bardoel 2007). When → radio started up in the 1920s, NCRV (Protestant), KRO (Roman Catholic), VARA (socialist), VPRO (liberal Protestant), and AVRO (neutral) were established, broadcasting over two radio stations, Hilversum 1 and Hilversum 2. Advertising was not allowed, and until World War II there was no license fee; the organization’s members paid for radio broadcasts.

The introduction of → television in 1951 was left to the radio broadcasting organizations. The first television channel, Nederland 1, was soon followed by a second, Nederland 2, in 1964. After numerous attempts to introduce commercial television (→ Commercialization of the Media) by legal and illegal initiatives and even the fall of a government in 1965 on this issue, a political compromise was laid down in the first *Broadcasting Act* (1967). First, commercial television had proven to be a bridge too far, but instead commercial block advertising between programs was introduced. Second, next to the traditional pillarized broadcasting, new organizations that could prove they represented a social stream in society and had substantial membership were allowed to enter (and leave) the system. Airtime on television and radio was allocated on a proportional basis, corresponding to the number of members of each association. The first new entrant, TROS in 1966, was the successor of the pirate station TV North Sea, previously operating from an offshore oil platform. Later an orthodox Protestant broadcasting association (Evangelical Broadcasting Association [EO], 1970), intended as a counterweight to growing secularization, and a popular but illegal pop station also operating from the North Sea (Veronica, 1975) joined the system. The third component of the compromise implied the strengthening of the cooperation in Hilversum through the foundation of NOS (Netherlands Broadcasting Corporation). NOS began to broadcast a “joint program” (news, sports, events, etc.), to pool studios and other technical facilities, and also to become the coordinating body for policy matters and international issues.

The 1980s also witnessed ruptures in the system, this time caused by external challenges. A cable penetration of over 90 per cent opened up new opportunities for commercial interests to undermine the public hegemony (→ Cable Television). During the 1980s, national initiatives to introduce commercial broadcasting in the Netherlands, by publishing houses such as VNU and Elsevier as well as independent producers, were denied access to the market by the omnipresent Christian Democratic Party. Ten years

later, in 1989, an attempt by Luxembourg-based RTL was successful thanks to the liberalizing nature of the European “Television without Frontiers” directive (1989; → European Union: Communication Law). The newly adopted *Media Act* of 1988, which attempted to modernize the broadcasting system but left the public monopoly intact, had to be almost immediately overhauled directly after its publication. On October 2, 1989, RTL-Veronique, soon to be called RTL 4, began broadcasting via satellite-to-cable. Within a year it had become the market leader in the Netherlands. The market share of the three public television channels fell from 85 per cent in 1989 to 50 per cent in 1994. RTL 4’s success acted as a catalyst for the large number of private television channels that emerged in the 1990s, the first of which was RTL’s second channel, RTL 5, in 1993. Another international player, SBS, also entered the market in 1995 with the launch of SBS 6, and in 1999 a second SBS channel was launched, Net 5. The market for independent production companies also emerged rapidly. One of these was Joop van den Ende’s company, which brought together program formats, stars, and production potential under one roof. After a merger with the equally successful John de Mol in 1994, Endemol Entertainment was created and became the largest independent producer in the Netherlands, and a major global player with a catalog of highly successful formats including *Big Brother* (→ Media Conglomerates).

At present three large parties dominate the television market (Bardoel & Van Reenen 2004; Commissariaat voor de Media 2005). The public broadcasting system, HMG, and SBS have three nationwide channels each. Commercial television in the Netherlands is owned by foreign companies that enjoy minimum program obligations, other than the provisions of the “Television without Frontiers” directive. There is a total of 19 national channels, 10 of which are generalist and mainly operated by the three large groups; the other 9 are thematic channels operated by other commercial broadcasters. In 2005 John de Mol, one of the founders and by this time former owners of the Endemol production company, launched a new channel, Talpa (later renamed “Tien” or “Ten”), which has a market share of about 5 percent.

## NEW MEDIA AND THE INTERNET

The Netherlands is a very densely cabled country; 95 percent of homes with TV are connected to cable, and 5 percent have satellite dishes (→ Satellite Television). As a result of the liberalization policy of the 1990s, most local public cable nets were sold to specialized private cable companies. At present the three major operators, UPC, Essent, and Casema, cable 86 percent of homes with TV. In 2003 Casema was sold to Anglo-American investors, which leaves only Essent still in Dutch hands. To counter the distribution market dominance of the cable operators, the government wants to stimulate competition from other infrastructures like satellite and digital terrestrial TV. The DTT operation Digitenne started in April 2003, but audience interest was modest.

Pay-TV has been offered since 1984 in the form of subscription television, but after 20 years the present provider, Canal Plus, was still not profitable. In 2000 its digital package (→ Television Technology) started, with a roster of European channels, thematic channels, the public and private Dutch stations, and a classic movie channel. The number of subscribers to the digital services is slowly growing.

According to the latest figures about 65 percent of the Dutch have access to the world wide web, and about 75 percent have access to a PC. Internet usage in the Netherlands is among the highest in Europe, in third position out of the 15 European countries covered (→ Internet). Time budget research shows that PC and Internet usage is at the expense of both listening (radio, records, etc.) and reading (→ Book; Magazine) and not so much at the expense of watching TV. Only among the young (12–19 years) is watching television considerably reduced.

For public broadcaster NOS, the Internet and thematic channels – 17 by now – are the spearheads of its new media policy. Therefore, the Association of Netherlands Newspaper Publishers (NDP) and the commercial broadcasters have put in a complaint with the European Commission about the “excessive support” the Dutch government gives the Internet activities of public broadcasters, whereby press organizations are forced to reduce their own Internet activities. Commercial television channels have shown less interest in developing full-blown Internet strategies, but they have been keen to add phone calls, SMS messaging, and games to television programs, which sometimes bring in more profit than the original program itself. The first and most famous example of such a multimedia production is *Big Brother*, first aired in the Netherlands by Endemol.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Circulation ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Technology

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# Network Analysis

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The term “network” denotes a central concept in the social sciences. The underlying idea of a structure that consists of elements (sometimes also called points, nodes, or vertices) and their relations (called lines, edges, arcs, or connections) has been used to illustrate and explain such diverse things as human action, information exchange in communication processes, peer groups, social formations, organizational coordination, markets and even whole societies, to name but a few of the application contexts. In many of these cases, the term “network” is used in a purely metaphorical sense, which remotely refers to a web-like phenomenon. However, it can also stand for a clearly defined analytical concept, which can be described on the basis of a formal mathematical language. By applying mathematical network logics to the analysis of social phenomena, researchers gain insight into their structures, i.e., the arrangement of the constituent elements and their connections. Furthermore, social phenomena can be compared on the basis of their (structural) network properties when using a standardized mathematical description language and uniform measurements.

## ROOTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NETWORK IDEA

As with many approaches in social sciences, there is not just one historical source of network analysis. Some of the mathematical and logical foundations were laid in the eighteenth century with so-called graph theory. As early as 1737, Leonhard Euler introduced some basic ideas in a mathematical proof, including the concept of the “graph” – a figure consisting of points and lines, whose structural properties can be transformed into mathematical formulas. Since then, these fundamental assumptions have been further developed, resulting in a unique mathematical and logical perspective, offering descriptions and explanations of complex phenomena, in both the natural and the social sciences.

The more specific roots of network analysis in social analysis are diverse, to say the least, and various opinions on the lineage of network analysis exist. In social anthropology and social psychology, network approaches have been discussed by several schools of thought, starting in the first half of the twentieth century. To the public, probably one of the best-known psychological approaches in this field is Jacob Moreno’s sociometry, with origins in the 1930s. Moreno introduced the sociogram, a way of visually depicting the structure of social groups in the form of points (the persons) and directed lines (the social relationships). There were also other psychologists at that time, like Kurt Lewin and Fritz Heider, who were working on the interrelations of social structures and the behavior of individuals or groups (→ Group Communication; Group Communication and Social Influence).

In contrast to psychologists, who mostly focused on smaller groups of people, social anthropologists were interested in the structure of larger social entities. Alfred Reginald Radcliffe-Brown in the 1930s was one of the first actually to use the term “network” – still

in a metaphorical way – to describe social structures (→ Social Networks). In the following decades, Radcliffe-Brown's basic network approach was developed both in the US by scholars like Lloyd Warner, Elton Mayo, and George C. Homans, and in the UK by John A. Barnes, J. Clyde Mitchell, and others. Barnes's studies on kinship and community structures in the 1950s, in particular, can be seen as an important step in expanding the approach toward a modern network analysis, since he understood networks as a structural and logical concept rather than a metaphor. In some later works of his Manchester colleague Mitchell, the social scientific tradition finally met the mathematical approach again: Mitchell applied and developed ideas of graph theory in his sociological studies. In the years since then, network analysis has embraced mathematical models, for example in Harrison C. White's works on block modeling in the 1970s; recently, the rapid development of computer technology has offered further possibilities, especially in the analysis of large networks.

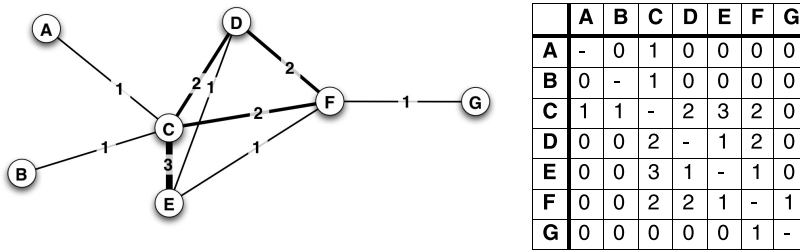
In communication studies, network analysis still plays a minor role, especially when compared to the number of studies based on traditional data analysis. For example, Schenk has analyzed the importance of interpersonal networks for opinion building and the relationship of social networks and mass media, starting in the 1980s (→ Communication Networks; Media Content and Social Networks). However, it was not until lately that the network idea became more popular in communication studies – a development maybe somewhat related to the growing importance of computer networks in the discussion of media and communication processes.

### **NETWORK DEFINITION AND CONCEPTS OF ANALYSIS**

As described above, the term “network” has a clearly defined meaning in social network analysis:

- A network is a specific structure, consisting of a number of points and their connecting lines.
- In most cases, the points refer to individuals, sometimes also groups or companies, and the lines depict their relations (based on the analysis of friendship or hate, power and influence, economic partnerships, to name but a few of the relationships that have been used in network analysis). That said, social network analysis is not necessarily restricted to actor or group networks – the researcher is certainly free in the choice of elements, and some have already proven that network analysis can be applied to other types of networks as well (like action networks, which focus on human action instead of the relations between human beings or social entities).
- The network structure can be described using formal mathematical language and depicted using network graphs (Figure 1).

Certainly, networks can be further qualified beyond this very rough outline. For example, one can differentiate between a directed and an undirected network. While the latter just focuses on the existence of relations, thus depicting them in the network graph via lines, the directed version includes information on the direction of relations, for example if point A influences point B (usually depicted with an arrow instead of a simple line).



**Figure 1** A network graph and its corresponding adjacency matrix

Relations and influences cannot only be identified by the connections of the elements and the direction of these lines, though – they can also be described by their intensity. If information about the relation’s intensity is included in the network graph (for example, by adding a number indicating the strength of a line), one speaks of valued graphs, in contrast to binary graphs, which only hold information about whether a line exists or not. Last but not least, there are not only networks that combine elements of one type. Sometimes, researchers are interested in the links between different elements (for example, individuals and certain events). The resulting “mixed” networks, which combine two distinct groups of elements, are called “bipartite.”

In many publications, network researchers use depictions of networks in the forms of graphs. This information can also be contained in data matrices equivalent to the graphs. For data (re)organization and analysis, these matrices are much more important than the actual graphics, which are limited by the possibilities of two-dimensional visualization. In contrast to standard statistical datasets, network matrices contain information on the relations of elements, rather than various variable values in columns and cases in rows (or vice versa). The most important type of organizing relational data is the so-called adjacency matrix (see Fig. 1). Here, all points of the network are organized in both rows and columns. In the individual cells, one can find a number that represents the relation between the row and column elements, which can be binary (existing/not existing) or valued. Another type of matrix is the affiliation matrix, which shows the relations between elements of different types (like actors and events, as described above).

On the basis of data matrices, the researcher can calculate various indices focusing on specific network properties. There are mathematical descriptions for the characteristics of individual elements, network structures, and the attributes of a whole network. Using these, the researcher can answer questions like: How important or central is an element in the network? Are there areas of high density in a network, hinting at strongly connected social groups? How big, dense, and centralized is a given network in comparison to another network? While the mathematical analysis of network data offers interesting solutions, there are still some areas in network analysis that need to be developed further. For example, there are no common measures for dynamic networks – most network analysts merely focus on static networks, which are very often just snapshots of a social situation. While there are solutions (for example, measures of network stability), they are

not widely accepted so far. So network analysis is still seeing many changes and innovation, unlike other, more conventional, approaches to social reality.

### **APPLICATIONS OF NETWORK ANALYSIS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

While network analysis has been successfully applied in the larger field of social sciences, there have not yet been many reports in communication studies that use this approach, at least when compared with other methods of analysis. As described above, there has been some empirical work on interpersonal networks. These researchers chose to follow the classic approach of network analysis, which defines humans as elements of the networks and focuses on the relations of these actors. In a similar vein, there are also several studies on the structure of media markets that apply a network logic, in this case with the basic elements of corporate actors (media companies) (→ Markets of the Media; Media Economics). When going below the level of individual actors or groups as elements, one could use the network logic as well, for example when trying to find relations between human actions or communicative acts. However, the approach is not restricted to groups, individuals, or their actions; it can also be useful whenever there is relational data, as described above. For example, textual information could be analyzed in this way as well, looking for links between information elements. It will be interesting to see how network analysis develops in the future, both in theory and in empirical practice.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Networks ► Group Communication ► Group Communication and Social Influence ► Interaction ► Internet ► Interorganizational Communication ► Markets of the Media ► Media Content and Social Networks ► Media Economics ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► Research Methods ► Social Interaction Structure ► Social Networks

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# Network Organizations through Communication Technology

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Network forms of organizations are characterized by reciprocal, lateral communication ties. They are often contrasted with hierarchies, which are vertically organized, and markets, which exhibit an atomistic structure of buyers and sellers. Powell (1990) and Nohria (1992) provide classic statements of the comparisons. Networked organizations are often viewed as more flexible and “intelligent” than hierarchies and markets. From the 1990s to the present, computer-mediated communication technology has been increasingly employed to extend the scale and scope of networked organizations in order to “connect multiple organizations and people into new entities that can create products or services” (Contractor et al. 2006, 682).

*Key attributes* of computer-mediated communication technology for networked organizations are that they: (1) reduce physical, organizational, and social constraints on communication, and (2) create a digital record of communication for processing and preservation. Widespread use of these technologies increases reciprocal, lateral communication within organizations and between an organization and its external constituents – customers, suppliers, and partners. Both internally and externally, networked organizations are characterized by the increasing use of distributed work processes and knowledge-sharing processes (→ Communication Networks; Technology and Communication).

Internally, employees who are separated by geographic or functional distance can use communication technology to contribute to common goals and projects. In distributed or virtual work teams, employees use communication and project management software to coordinate their work on a common project. *Distributed work teams* can bring employee expertise to bear on a project independent of the employee’s geographic location. When employees are located across the globe, distributed work teams can make progress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. As employees on one continent are finishing their work day, they electronically hand off their work to team mates on another continent who are beginning their work day.

Effective deployment of virtual work teams requires careful attention to their *social psychology and group dynamics*. Many laboratory and field studies have demonstrated that people who work together electronically have a relatively difficult time developing common ground and interpersonal trust (Kraut et al. 2002). Misunderstandings and coordination difficulties can compromise work quality and delay work completion. Nevertheless, as organizations increasingly deploy employees across the globe, distributed work teams allow them to flexibly deploy their workers across geographic and functional boundaries.

Networked organizations make use of *knowledge management systems*, which are information technology systems developed to support and enhance the organizational processes of knowledge creation, storage/retrieval, transfer, and application (Alavi &



Leidner 2001). Three *common applications* include capturing and sharing best practices, creating corporate knowledge directories, and creating knowledge networks. Capturing and sharing best practices encourages knowledge transfer and reuse among organization members, while corporate knowledge directories help map the expertise of employees. Knowledge networks provide opportunities for relevant employees or organizational units to interact and transfer knowledge electronically. In all cases, employees can contribute to and access these applications independent of their geographic or functional location, thereby diffusing knowledge broadly across internal organizational boundaries.

Two pragmatic *challenges* for internal knowledge management systems are inducing contributions from employees and ensuring the quality of these contributions. Contributions to knowledge management systems are often represented as a public goods problem, in which everyone benefits from other people's contributions, but the incentives to contribute one's own knowledge are weak (e.g., Thorn & Connolly 1987). In practice, employees contribute to these systems out of feelings of loyalty to the organization, altruism, or generalized reciprocity more than because of expectations of private gain. Mechanisms for quality control typically rely upon visibility of contributions, which are subject to informal peer review.

Networked organizations increasingly use *communication technology* to reach beyond the formal corporate boundary. Whereas a focal organization has always had supply-chain relationships with vendors and suppliers, current communication technologies enable one organization to virtually embed its processes (for delivering and billing goods, for example) within another organization's processes (for sales or manufacturing and inventory management, for example). For example, proprietary electronic data interchange (EDI) technology allowed more efficient supply-chain management relationships, but was very expensive and available only to select organizations and industries that could afford the technology. The increasing ubiquity of the → Internet now allows many more organizations to participate in supply-chain networks. Interorganizational supply-chain networks support just-in-time manufacturing and lean inventory sales from the focal organization's perspective. These networks also deliver benefits to suppliers and vendors by providing real-time information on customer requirements. General benefits to all organizations include increased bandwidth of communication across organizational boundaries and decreased response time in information exchange.

*Increased networked communication* can change the relationship between an organization and its customers. Some organizations use the Internet to actively involve customers in product design. Communication technology enables customers to share their innovations with other customers through discussion groups, as well as with manufacturers. "Lead users" have always been a source of product innovation, but with increasing connections among organizations and their customers, the scale and scope of customer contribution to the product design process can increase (von Hippel 2005). Other organizations use the Internet to involve non-employees in customer support. Particularly within the computing industry, technical support activities are increasingly accomplished through voluntary technical support groups on the Internet. Whereas some organizations may assign employees to monitor electronic communication for quality control, many organizations rely upon the norm of voluntary peer review to sustain quality.

The most ambitious forms of networked organizations are those that use communication technology to link multiple formal organizations in the collaborative *design and production of complex products* (→ Interorganizational Communication). The Boeing 777, the most technologically advanced commercial aircraft of its time, was produced by a consortium of more than six independent organizations working on three continents, which relied extensively upon communication technology to perform their work. Digital records of the work process – from design specifications to engineering analyses to contracts – were produced, distributed, and accessed via communication technologies. The resulting networked collaboration was so successful that the collaborators transitioned from digital representations directly to an airworthy prototype without building any of the heretofore-required costly, full-scale mockups (Committee on Advanced Engineering Environments 1999).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Internet ▶ Interorganizational Communication ▶ Mobility, Technology For ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ Telework ▶ Virtual Communities

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## **Neutrality**

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Neutrality is a concept deployed for safeguarding one's position in the complex and sometimes hazardous world. Since the fourteenth century, the word neutrality has

predominantly denoted *nonalignment* in the realms of politics, diplomacy, and war, in which no firm ground for neutrality can be assured. Thus, neutrality as nonalignment is dependent on the political judgment of others: whether they acknowledge one's neutrality to be sincere or expedient to *their* interests. The history of politics shows that in some cases the neutral political status was accepted (for instance, Switzerland since the Congress of Vienna in 1815) and in others it was not (Laos during the Vietnam war).

Another understanding of neutrality is derived from natural sciences. Here, neutrality is anchored in the facts of nature, which are independent of the individual investigating them. Thus, in natural sciences neutrality can be warranted, insofar as one sticks to the methodological rules set by science and does not allow any value-laden interests to interfere with one's relationship with the object. Neutrality *as allegiance* to the set of rules, too, can be charged methodologically and/or politically. It is particularly vulnerable to questions about the ethics of supposedly neutral actions. Currently, the neutrality of natural sciences is a hotly debated issue in connection with biotechnology.

In communications, neutrality is rarely connected to fiction, but it is treated as more or less indispensable to fact-based news. For news(papers) the concept was first introduced by the commercialization of the press, which took different forms at different times in different parts of the world (→ Commercialization of the Media). The most widely documented case is the emergence of the → penny press in the US from the 1830s (Schudson 1978; Altschull 1984; Barnhurst & Nerone 2001; → Journalism, History of). Neutrality as nonalignment was aspired to by publishers, who sought to reach larger audiences and greater advertisement revenues by conveying information, not opinion. Gradually, this distinction enabled the emergence of "professional communicators," who began to understand themselves as brokers in symbols, and in this role the messages they produced had no necessary relation to their own thoughts and perceptions (Carey 1969, 27–28). Consistent with the frailty of neutrality, the nonalignment of news and journalists had to be acknowledged by "the modernizing societies," and this was not a straightforward process.

A natural scientific version of neutrality was introduced to → journalism by the acceptance of positivistic epistemology and photographic realism in the late nineteenth century. This resulted in the development of *objectivity* as professional doctrine (→ News Ideologies; Objectivity in Reporting). It presumed "a world prior to all imposed values and rendered the periodic construction of accurate and universally recognizable copies of events as the newspaper's fundamental business" (Schiller 1981, 87). This naïve empiricism was soon to be superseded by the emergence of the public relations industry, which asserted that absolute neutrality was unattainable. Facts were there to be manipulated: the only issues were who did the manipulating and to what ends (McNair 1994, 27).

In a more modest understanding of objectivity, it was admitted that news and truth are not the same thing, and must be clearly distinguished (Lippmann 1922/1963, 226) (→ Lippmann, Walter). In this framework, neutrality and words with parallel meanings – "unbiased," "nonpartisan," and "disinterested" – did not refer to epistemology, but to a style of journalistic expression in which the journalist distances himself or herself from a subject, and leaves the resolution of the disagreement to the parties whose voices figure in the story. In the sociology of news, neutral styles of journalism became known as strategic rituals, which were said to aim at enhancing the credibility of news, diminishing allegations of bias and avoiding dangers of libel suits (Tuchman 1978, 83).

This perspective marked a strong critique towards news journalism and its insistence on neutrality. In Europe, this criticism was to a great extent organized around critical cultural studies, which argued that neutrality is an effective tool in sustaining dominant ideologies and the status quo in society. In the same vein, the neutrality of news has been questioned by gender studies and multiculturalism (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). Their general argument is that allegedly neutral practices of news more or less systematically regard the male or the cultural majority as the standard and the female or minorities as deviants from it. These lines of argument aim at (re-)politicizing the neutrality of news. It is claimed that the legitimacy of neutrality of news should be submitted to open scrutiny by the social institutions and groups that are talked about in the news.

The mounting criticism notwithstanding, neutrality still enjoys a special status in the news. Journalists regard neutrality as indispensable to their task of truthful and fair reporting, and some researchers contend that neutrality in the news is an important element for the common language that makes collective life possible (Adam & Clark 2006, 155). One should still note that the interconnection of neutrality and news holds appropriate to one particular news genre: hard news. Outside this genre the neutrality of news is less of an issue.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ News Ideologies ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Penny Press

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## **New Journalism**

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The term “new journalism” commonly refers to a style of literary reportage created in the 1960s by predominantly young American nonfiction writers such as Tom Wolfe, Norman

Mailer, Gay Talese, Joan Didion, Hunter Thompson, George Plimpton, Truman Capote, and Michael Herr. Commentators have periodically declared other moments in the history of journalism as new. Most famously, the term was used in 1880s Britain to describe the popular newspapers of George Newness and W. T. Stead, then later applied in the 1890s to the mass circulation dailies being published by Alfred Harmsworth in Britain and by Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst in the United States (→ New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century). More recently, one commentator (Boynton 2005) has referred to writers such as Susan Orlean and Ted Conover as members of a generation of “new new journalists” influenced by the literary experiments of the 1960s (→ Journalism, History of).

In its time, the new journalism of the 1960s proved contentious, especially among journalists, because it seemed to call into question the profession’s most cherished values. Critics condemned the extravagant language of Wolfe because it brought reporters into the limelight, focusing readers’ attention on their literary performance rather than on the events being covered. Critics similarly objected to the personalism of writers like Mailer and Thompson – their habit of implicating themselves in the events being chronicled – because it undermined the profession’s claim to objectivity and impartiality (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Others worried about what they considered the carelessness of the new journalists’ research methods, especially their seeming habit of *blurring the boundary between fact and fiction* in works such as Wolfe’s satire of the “tiny mummies” who wrote for the *New Yorker*, Capote’s “nonfiction novel” *In cold blood*, and Herr’s use of composite characters in his Vietnam reports (→ Accuracy). Still others argued that the much-vaunted literary devices of the new journalism – scene-by-scene construction, attention to symbolic detail, experimentation with point of view – were nothing new. They argued that earlier writers such as Stephen Crane, George Orwell, Lillian Ross, John Hersey, Joseph Mitchell, and A. J. Liebling had used all those techniques (→ Literary Journalism).

And yet, journalists around the world have subsequently emulated the research methods and literary strategies employed by the new journalism. The work of Talese and Wolfe established the value of in-depth, immersive reporting (→ Interpretive Journalism). The *storytelling techniques* thought avant-garde in the 1960s have become a mainstay of the newspaper feature story, Sunday supplement article, and magazines (→ Narrative News Story). Although new journalists’ willingness to consider humans’ accounts of reality as tentative, provisional, and contingent once vexed professional journalists who hoped to discover a more stable truth in the flux of experience (→ Construction of Reality through the News), the new journalists’ acceptance of ambiguity has resonated with many writers in other countries. Latin American writers who work within fabulist traditions of literature have acknowledged the new journalists as philosophical *compadres*, and eastern European writers such as Ryszard Kapuściński have found the blurring of fact and fiction a plain description of the experience of living under communist rule.

In retrospect, the new journalism looks like one more sign of the social and economic changes transforming the journalism profession (→ Professionalization of Journalism). By the mid-1960s, disillusion with the American daily newspaper ran deep and wide. Many journalists found it personally difficult to find a neutral position from which to report contentious social issues such as the Vietnam War, civil rights, and the counterculture. As

the increasing prosperity and education of the reading public made readers more critical and discriminating, newspaper editors found themselves assailed from all sides by accusations of bias.

Magazine journalism faced its own challenges (→ Magazine). The decline of once-popular publications such as *Collier's*, *Life*, *Look*, and *Saturday Evening Post* encouraged a search for edgy new voices to help magazines recover their cultural standing and financial health. Magazines such as *Esquire* used the new journalism as a marketing strategy to attract the hip, up-scale readers whom advertisers coveted. The freedom granted writers by editors such as *Esquire's* Clay Felker and Harold Hayes made that magazine a showcase for top talent, which in turn helped those writers win lucrative book contracts that freed them from the intellectual and literary constraints of daily journalism. Capote's bestselling 1965 book *In cold blood* taught journalists this single lesson: that one might make an independent and lucrative career writing book-length journalism.

The term "new journalism" thus marks a turning point in the history of journalism: an influential moment of self-criticism and an acknowledgement of the cultural contradictions of objective news. What the new journalism bequeathed was not only a different way of telling stories, but also a commercially compelling strategy for making a living as a journalist in a rapidly changing media market.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Interpretive Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Literary Journalism ▶ Magazine ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Professionalization of Journalism

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# New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century

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“The New Journalism,” a phrase made famous by cultural critic Matthew Arnold in 1887, refers to a wide range of changes in British → newspaper and → magazine content and format, aimed at making print culture more accessible to working class and female readers. The controversial changes, some influenced by American practice, included formatting innovations, such as headlines, and new types of content, such as interviews, human interest stories, celebrity features, and a shifting emphasis from opinion to → news, facilitated by the emergence of Reuters and other → news agencies. Lengthier columns were replaced by paragraphs, often derisively called “snippets,” and the tone grew more personal. To its detractors (such as Arnold), the New Journalism entailed a challenge to the mid-nineteenth-century daily newspaper’s authority and political seriousness. To its defenders, including such innovating editors and proprietors as T. P. O’Connor, George Newnes, and Alfred Harmsworth (subsequently Lord Northcliffe), the New Journalism represented an awareness that life was broader than parliamentary politics and the belief that press content should reflect readers’ actual tastes rather than an elite’s conception of readers’ needs (→ Exposure to Communication Content; News Audience).

Although the mid-nineteenth-century daily morning newspaper had certainly been based on commercial motivations, many observers in the 1880s and afterwards perceived a decided heightening of commercialization. To be sure, the expansion of readership following the repeal of paper, → advertising, and newspaper taxes between 1853 and 1861, and significant innovations in print technology, changed the economics of publishing and paved the way for newspaper chains to begin emerging in the 1870s, a trend that expanded even further in the twentieth century (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Media Economics; Printing, History of).

The resulting economies of scale allowed a dramatic expansion of circulation, while the growth of advertising revenues ultimately allowed newspapers to lower their sale price below the cost of production; the *Daily Telegraph* had emerged as a penny daily in 1855, but the *Daily Mail* in 1896 pioneered the half-penny daily paper. By this point, selling newspaper copies to readers was no longer the most important financial transaction; rather, newspaper companies were selling circulation to advertisers. Whereas in 1856 *Reynolds News* and *Lloyds Weekly* had both become the first (weekly) papers to reach sales of 100,000, the *Star* reached 200,000 in the 1880s, and by 1900 the *Daily Mail* reached nearly a million. To the horror of many champions of the mid-century “educational” daily press, a venerated cultural icon had been turned into a mere commodity, an impression only magnified by a trend toward using contests and giveaways to attract purchasers (not necessarily readers). This type of practice reached a peak in the “circulation wars” of the 1930s. Champions of the sober educational press worried not only about the impact on readers of the popular press, but also about the danger that even such elite papers as *The Times* and the *Manchester Guardian* would be influenced by the New Journalism.

While many critics lamented the commercialization of the press, and many defenders scorned the idea that newspapers should be viewed differently from any other product for sale, the New Journalism also had champions who insisted that the press's transformation had truly *democratic consequences*. Not only did such defenders doubt that very many people had actually read, say, the lengthy verbatim parliamentary reports in *The Times* and other mid-century elite papers, but they also argued that high circulations gave newspaper editors a daily democratic legitimacy that Parliament could not match. For W. T. Stead, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, a London evening paper, a daily paper could publicize wrongs that needed addressing, acting as a people's tribune and forcing Parliament's hand. Putting these views into practice, his 1885 campaign to raise the age of sexual consent did not offer reasoned legal opinions, but instead featured sensationalistic and melodramatic tales of aristocratic rakes ruining innocent and helpless young women and forcing them into a "white slave" trade, as well as a "stunt" that landed him in prison: the purchasing of a virgin in order to demonstrate how easily it could be done. For the controversial Stead, this (successful) crusade showed that campaigning journalism could blur the line between politics and entertainment, giving the New Journalism just as serious a purpose as its mid-century predecessors. On the other hand, it would be hard to find any political significance in Lord Northcliffe's 1920 campaign to create a *Daily Mail* hat (→ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in).

The early scholarly response, including that of R. A. Scott-James (1913), R. C. K. Ensor (1992, 1st pub. 1936), and Alan J. Lee (1976), tended to reaffirm the Arnoldian view of a fairly rapid introduction of largely frivolous new qualities. More recently, Jean Chalaby (1998) has argued that the 1855 repeal of the Newspaper Stamp Tax marked the decisive break between a press oriented toward political "publicity" and a new commercial product deserving of the name "journalism." On balance, though, the past generation of scholars has demonstrated considerable continuity between the New Journalism and its predecessors, as well as challenging the distinctions between popular and elite forms in the late nineteenth century. For example, Raymond Williams (1961) and Joel Wiener (1988) have shown that many of the qualities offensive to the New Journalism's critics were borrowings from the working-class Sunday press of the mid-century, while Kate Jackson (2001) and Michelle Tusan (2005), among others, have shown that methods of the New Journalism could be employed in the service of the education and advocacy more commonly associated with mid-nineteenth-century daily newspapers. This scholarship shows that the undeniable transformations in format, style, and content that characterized the New Journalism should be seen as gradual changes, dating perhaps from the 1840s through the 1930s, rather than sudden products of the 1880s. For contemporary critics and defenders, though, the New Journalism was above all a concept through which to debate the merits of an emerging mass democracy.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Infotainment ▶ Interview ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media History ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Audience ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Penny Press ▶ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Quality Press ▶ Yellow Journalism



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## **New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)**

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The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) is the result of a political proposal concerning media and communication issues emerging from international debates in the late 1970s. The term originated in discussions within the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), following the proposal for a “new international economic order,” and became the expression of the aspirations of many countries in the global south to democratize the international communication system and rebalance information flows worldwide. UNESCO played a major role in fostering the debate until the early 1980s, especially through the work of an independent commission chaired by Irish diplomat Sean MacBride (→ UNESCO). The commission’s report, *Many voices, one world* (MacBride Commission 2004), outlined the main international problems in communication and summarized NWICO’s basic philosophical thrust. It was adopted at the twenty-first general conference of UNESCO in Belgrade (1980) and still remains a milestone in the history of global debates around communication issues.

### **THE CONTEXT**

In order to fully appreciate the relevance and implications of the NWICO debates it is important to stress the political climate of the time. Confrontations between the Soviet

and western blocs were paralleled by the growing importance of north–south confrontations: a large number of former colonies had gained political independence over the 1950s and 1960s and corresponding political weight in international institutions such as the United Nations. These states formed the NAM (initiated in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955) and began to question the constraints of the Cold War climate on their development perspectives. Between the market-oriented western model and the state-centered communist paradigm, they attempted to develop a “third way,” by criticizing the international economic system as well as structural imbalances in flows of information and culture.

Information and communication issues were not new to international debates (Carlsson 2003; Raboy 2004; Vincent 2005); yet the changes in power relations in the 1970s due to the global south’s new strategic relevance (following the 1973 and 1979 oil crises and the position of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC]), allowed for a strong coalition of social forces contesting imbalances in information flows between global north and south. Access to communication technologies in development processes and the need to protect cultural diversity became defined as crucial for genuine autonomy on the international scene. Starting from the Tunis Non-Aligned Symposium on Information (March 1976), a series of regional meetings was held between 1976 and 1979 in which the need for a “new international (later, world) order on information and communication” was developed (→ International Communication).

Notwithstanding evident differences among NAM members, the NWICO platform allowed for a unified front, but the whole discourse became hostage to the Cold War climate; western states, especially the United States, saw in NWICO a potential threat to their cultural industries’ global opportunities, and an attack on the doctrine of the → *free flow of information*, their basic normative reference. On the other side, the USSR took advantage of the situation to promote state control over information flows and reduce the capacity of communication satellites to interfere with Soviet-bloc media control.

## KEY ISSUES

Several problematic trends were addressed in those debates: from imbalances in information flows, summarized in the *one-way-flow formula* (indicating the univocal direction of news and cultural flows from the north to the south), to the threats to cultural identities in the global south; and from the monopolistic positions of trans-national communication corporations to the inequitable distribution of communication resources (such as satellite orbital spaces). Communication systems were accused of serving the industrialized countries’ interests instead of helping developing countries, whose national communication infrastructures were poorly developed.

The content of the debates has been effectively summarized in a “4 Ds” *formula* (Nordenstreng 1984). There was a request to *democratize* the international information and communication system, overcoming univocal flows and promoting the right of peoples to acquire a comprehensive picture of the world while participating in the international exchange of information. There was a request to *decolonize* the system, reducing dependency on northern countries by fostering self-determination and local cultural identities. There was a need to *demonopolize* the system, reducing the influence exercised

by transnational corporations so that every state could develop their own independent information systems. There was finally a transverse challenge, that of *development*, to be faced through the creation of national communication policies, information infrastructures, national and regional information agencies, and journalism training institutions (→ Development Communication).

These general themes were articulated in terms of different types of information and all kinds of media. They also emerged as constitutive components of a new overarching principle: a → *right to communicate* conceived as a new social right, more extensive than the right to information (D'Arcy 1969).

### UNESCO AND THE MACBRIDE COMMISSION

Being responsible for “assuring everyone . . . the free exchange of ideas and knowledge” and for facilitating “the free circulation of ideas by means of words and images” (UNESCO Constitution, preamble and art. 1), UNESCO was entitled to deal with communication and information matters as a specialized UN agency, and to operate within its different roles – development assistance, fact finding, and norm-setting – to bring third world countries’ perspectives into the broader international arena. It did so through its general conferences from the early 1970s, when the focus of debates shifted from freedom of information and development assistance in communication technology to new perspectives that challenged prevailing principles (Carlsson 2003).

In 1976, during the nineteenth general conference in Nairobi, a “*Mass Media Declaration*” was drafted, and the director-general, Mathar M’Bow, opened the session by calling attention to the global nature of communication and the efforts made by third world countries toward regional cooperation in communication and information. Western states and media, however, saw the declaration as an attempt to limit the free flow principle. The whole NWICO discourse was conceived as inspired by the USSR in order to foster its own agenda internationally. There was great tension during the conference. No declaration came out of that conference, but an International Programme for Development in Communication (IPDC) was initiated, reflecting a technical-assistance approach to the problems under discussion. Nevertheless, an *International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems* was set up with the mandate to “analyse communication problems . . . within the perspective of the establishment of a new international economic order and of the measures to be taken to foster the institution of a new world information order” (UNESCO work plan 1977–1978).

Chaired by Sean MacBride and composed of 17 scholars, media professionals, and policy-makers from different regional and cultural contexts (seven from NAM countries), the commission was to study contemporary communication problems, and identify possible solutions according to the specific needs of developing countries. It organized several seminars, addressing a variety of communication processes as central to human societies, not just developing ones. It also engaged experts to produce specialized reports on specific issues (over a hundred works), all of which would analyze current trends while identifying constitutive elements of a new information order.

Attempts were made to define NWICO as “an international exchange of information in which states, which develop their cultural systems in an autonomous way and with

complete sovereign control of resources, fully and effectively participate as independent members of the international community” (Hamelink 1979). The commission produced a final report, *Many voices, one world* (2004), where data and analysis were accompanied by 82 concluding recommendations arranged in thematic chapters. Throughout the text a comprehensive vision of communication prevailed, linking media institutions, organizations, and audiences with a strong development perspective that resonated with the NAM proposal. The report can be considered as the highest point in the NWICO debate; it created awareness, consolidated existing knowledge, and influenced the academic field of international communication.

The report was presented at the twenty-first UNESCO general conference in Belgrade (1980) and adopted with a unanimous vote for Resolution 4/19, paragraph 14 of which set out the NWICO essentials: the elimination of information imbalances and of the negative effects of media concentration (→ Concentration in Media Systems); the removal of obstacles to a free and better-balanced dissemination of information and ideas; the → plurality of channels of information; and the need for developing countries to improve their equipment, personnel, and infrastructures, with the support of developed countries (→ Communication Technology and Development). The right of all peoples to their cultural identity was emphasized, as was the right to participate in communication and international exchange of information on the basis of equality, justice, and mutual benefit.

## **FOLLOW-UPS AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS**

Following the Belgrade conference, controversies on NWICO continued, led by western agencies at a big 1981 conference in Talloire, France, promoted by the US World Press Freedom Committee. Meanwhile, with the election of President Reagan, the shift to unilateralism, and his administration’s strong pro-market push, the NWICO discourse began to fade from view. The MacBride recommendations did not influence UNESCO’s 1984–1989 plan, and the US mentioned the organization’s implication in NWICO as one of the reasons for its withdrawal in 1984 (soon followed by the United Kingdom and Singapore). This led to a severe restriction of the organization’s budget and to a depoliticization of communication-related issues. The focus remained on practical and technical development assistance, as promoted by the IPDC, but funding remained a major problem.

NWICO debates underlined the centrality of information and communication developments to societal transformation as the twenty-first century approached. Yet the global shift toward a purely market logic, the interplay between eastern and western superpowers, the lack of political will to address unequal information structures concretely, and the incapacity to engage a wider public in discussions, did not allow this global debate to live up to the many expectations it had raised. By the end of the 1980s NWICO had been left to scholars and communication specialists and to some civil society organizations (Traber & Nordenstreng 1992).

Yet international communication issues have again been discussed in world fora fostered by the UN-promoted World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS, Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005). Nonetheless a major historical silence was evident: no mention was

made of previous international efforts (from the MacBride report to the 1985 Maitland report on telecommunication policies and development priorities, promoted by the International Telecommunication Union). According to some observers (Padovani & Nordenstreng 2005) this lack of historical depth in facing contemporary global communication challenges reflects a problematic tendency to understand them as complete novelties, thereby fostering superficial policy approaches. Much was learned through the NWICO experience that is of great relevance to contemporary world communication realities.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Development ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Development Communication ► Free Flow of Information ► International Communication ► Plurality ► Right to Communicate ► UNESCO

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## News

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News is a genre of mass media content resulting from journalists' information gathering and editors' decisions and following professional practices and norms (→ Ethics in Journalism; News Routines; Standards of News). News is the product of teamwork in media outlets. According to functional-structural social theory, news content is information that seeks to meet social needs by observing the natural and human universe in order to help people survive in their physical and social world (→ Functional Analysis). News is the product of mass media, which began with the printing press and later developed into → radio, → television, and the → Internet (→ Media History; Newspaper; Newspaper, History of). The main critical question regarding news is whether there is a consensus on how news is defined and who creates and controls news production and news content. Is it the media proprietors, the government, interested sources, political and/or economic social and cultural elites, the hegemonic majority, public relations agencies, spokespersons of the business community, advertisers, journalists/editors, or the → audience and the → public (→ Advertising; News Sources; Ownership in the Media; Public Relations)?

Some *theories and critics* credit the end product of news to one or more of the related actors in defining, producing, and disseminating mass media news. Other theories are concerned with the organizational and social environment, and the constraints of news production. Some address media and communication technologies or news sources (→ Technology and Communication). Some scholars believe in the good intentions of the actors and explain imperfect or unprofessional outcomes by revealing the constraints of news production, while others attribute imperfections to ill-meaning actors who deliberately bias news to suit their goals, with news the product of conspiracy and manipulation based on ideology or other political, economic, and social interests (→ Bias in the News). The five main components of the system of news production and dissemination are: (1) journalists and news editors (producers and decision-makers); (2) media organizations (the organizational, professional, and social framework); (3) the social systems in which journalists and media organizations operate (the political/economic/idiosyncratic and universal culture/legal systems); (4) the news product; and (5) the news audience/consumers.

## VIEWS ON THE NEWS

News can be examined from four main *viewpoints by the participants* in news consumption and production concerning these major components. First, the audience-needs perspective relates to ideas on the meaning of news and its production, and normative expectations of what news should be and how it should meet the public's needs (not as consumers or advertisers). Second, the journalists-as-professionals perspective involves insights, perceptions, and opinions on the professional process and finished product. Third, the intellectual perspective concerns the opinions and criticism of news by intellectuals in and outside academia. Intellectuals provide the normative definitions of what news should contain and how it can respond to important social needs. It focuses on the "watchdog" role of the media in a democracy and the special role of the news in providing public information and criticism of the government and its organs. And, fourth, the academic-theoretical and research perspective examines the conceptual constituents of news and explains news and its social implications. Research aims to corroborate or refute the intuitive insights of the other three perspectives.

*News theories* stem from sociology, psychology, and social psychology. They examine newsroom decision-making, professional socialization, and news creation and production (→ Journalism Education; News Production and Technology). Some research uses participatory → observation, quantitative and qualitative → surveys of journalists and editors, and product content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). Other studies perform sociological surveys to map journalists' social and educational characteristics and professional training and attitudes, in an effort to understand professional decisions (Weaver 1998). Other studies survey the psychological needs of journalists, and conclude that journalists' decisions reflect a desire for social validation of perceptions of reality and reinforcement of stereotypical beliefs. The journalist's reference group is mostly other journalists and the media (→ Journalism: Group Dynamics). Contrary to the popular myth, they tend to prefer publishing predictable items and news published by others (Donsbach 2004). Zelizer (1993) sees journalists as a community of commentators and a source of reinforcement of decisions and interpretations of reality.

## WHAT MAKES NEWS?

The first academic research to pose the question "what is news?" was as early as 1920. In his pioneering work, → Walter Lippmann (1922) sought to see news as something that could be described as a "natural phenomenon." Lippmann believed that news had certain characteristics that made it news and as such different from other phenomenon. He saw journalists as scientists, working with a mental guide (like a plant guide), applied to observations of physical and social reality helping assess what is and is not news. This requires certain steps that resemble the steps scientists or judges take to evaluate facts and determine the truth (→ Truth and Media Content). A related approach is to assign qualifications criteria to phenomenon, which decide what makes events "news." Events can thus be defined as "news" based on inherent factors: → news factors and their → news values. Following the seminal study by Galtung and Ruge (1965) to determine the structure of foreign news coverage and the role of → news agencies in the process, studies continued

to map the factors that define events as news in general and foreign news in particular. Harcup and O'Neill (2001) contributed an accurate map to this discussion of the news factors that influence coverage selection. The ten factors they identified include a fresh presentation of some of the twelve factors suggested by Galtung and Ruge (e.g., → negativity, celebrity, audience relevance, and follow-up). Shoemaker and Cohen (2006) took this approach a step further by seeking common cross-cultural factors helping to predict the end product of news. They identified two primary criteria that classify events as newsworthy: deviance (often negative) of the event from the norm, and social significance.

## NEWS AS A PRODUCT

Contrasted with the “natural” approach to news, other approaches conceive of news as a product of actions by interested parties, ranging from journalists’ independent and regular sources through sources with vested interests that leak scandals (Molotch & Lester 1974; → Scandalization in the News), to public relations agents who actually “create events.” Today, professionals who create and exaggerate events for commercial and political clients are called → spin doctors (→ Spin and Double-Speak). Boorstin (1964) described spin as pseudo-events, and argued that they already constitute the lion’s share of the news (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events).

Research has investigated the media outlet, the journalist’s work and workplace, and the journalists’ and editors’ roles as “gatekeepers” of news selection and producers of the media’s view of social reality (→ Gatekeeping). News selection occurs on several levels and journalists have professional guidelines and standards that mediate their subjectivity. They function within media organizations, each with its own priorities, in a matrix of other organizations. Media organizations also function in the wider social sphere of “the social institution of communication,” with its reciprocal relations and influence by other social institutions (the “social system”): the political, economic, and cultural institutions or fields. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) proposed a hierarchy of influences model, ranging from individual media workers to larger societal forces affecting the news message (Reese 2001; → Media Production and Content).

## MAIN THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF NEWS

The theoretical approaches to news vary widely. The *normative professional-functional approach* focuses on news production, and argues that although journalists and editors follow professional norms, the economic, political, and cultural environment for news distorts the end product. Constraints on editors and journalists, not conspiracies or manipulation, account for any news bias. A general *political-economic approach* argues that news is used by capital and government to maximize business and political interests (→ Political Economy of the Media).

More *critical approaches*, including Marxist and neo-Marxist, regard news as a capitalist tool for preserving the social and economic status quo, and ask the question of whether the news helps explain and clarify events in the real world or mystifies and obscures them (→ Critical Theory). The Glasgow University Media Group analyzed news on strikes, the Falklands, and nuclear defense, as well as other political and work relations issues



(Glasgow University Media Group 1985; → Labor in the Media), while others researched the news coverage of the new left movements in the US (Gitlin 1980; → Social Movements and Communication). Among the way news helps governments to survive, in this view, is to provide alarming news, destabilizing the public's sense of personal safety – and for journalists to survive, they must, in this view, adapt to the system's demands (Herman & Chomsky 1988).

A *cultural approach* recognizes the many different ways news can be presented, even within capitalist organizations and nation-states (→ Cultural Studies). The media, for example, treat events differently, depending on whether a conflict is internal (concerning the media's nation-state) or external (not concerning the media's nation-state; Cohen et al. 1990; Nossek 2004; → Conflict as Media Content).

According to some schools, the audience is a passive consumer, manipulated by media owners, and offered increasingly → soft news stories or → infotainment. However, recent approaches (see, for example, Wall 2005) recognize that audiences are increasingly active in producing news via the Internet, photos, video footage, mobile phones, etc., and might change the definition of news as a product of media outlets and journalistic professional norms and news work.

### **NEWS AS PROFESSIONAL AND CULTURAL NARRATIVES**

There are two basic forms of narrating news: the chronicle and the story. Chronicle serves an informational function, presenting details of an occurrence in a direct fashion, providing a basic record of society's goings-on. Story, on the other hand, involves more of an entertainment function that couches information as something akin to the folklorist's work (Bird & Dardenne 1988; Nossek & Berkowitz 2006). Story is most like the cultural narrative, blending past cultural meanings with present events (→ Narrative News Story).

News as a professional narrative involves two important factors: journalistic practices and cultural background. First, professional journalism has a professional ideology of objectivity, with norms and procedures to eliminate subjective bias – supposedly presenting only the facts (Schudson 2001; → Objectivity in Reporting). Ironically, these norms produce a consistently stylized form of news. Journalists learn to polarize issues and define their parameters as they gather information from “expert” sources – sources with allegedly factual rather than self-interested information (Shoemaker & Reese 1996). Studies of → journalists' role perceptions show a close but distinct relationship between their professional and domestic-cultural attitudes (Weaver 1998). Journalists use news frames to create instant meaning for the data they collect, which they organize into stories comprehensible to their audiences (Entman 1991; → Framing of the News). The second factor in professional narrative is cultural context. As part of their cultural role as storytellers, journalists “manufacture” news by tapping into cultural narratives. Journalists are both part of their culture and its storytellers. They construct narratives based on conventions that resonate culturally with them personally and their audiences.

Cultural narratives are also referred to as “myths,” enduring yet dynamic conceptions of society, its social institutions, and values (Lule 2001; → News Myths). They are stories with identifiable narrative structures (Roeh 1989). They resonate culturally because they suggest meaning to the present in terms of the past in a way that will have impact on the

future (Nossek & Berkowitz 2006). Myths are marked by definable narratives, which are familiar, acceptable, and reassuring to their host culture and can also be interpreted as ideological forms – cultural symbols evoking taken-for-granted interpretations about what a society has been and should be.

### **ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF NEWS**

Although much of news originates from within large media organizations, alternative forms are widely available. The underlying premise of “alternative news” is that media ownership, with its bias toward capital and government, is an impassible barrier to news of public importance (→ Alternative Journalism). Editors and journalists cannot operate independently according to their professional norms and ethics. Therefore, the only way to produce and distribute adequate news is by alternative routes: through media that is not subject to ownership, capital, or government interests and/or control, where journalists do not owe their livelihood to these groups or consider them part of the establishment. Also called community, development, civic, and peace news, the idea is that it is possible to change the quality of news by curtailing the role of the “gatekeepers” or by re-educating journalists and editors to seek alternative criteria for identifying and publishing “good,” “constructive,” or “positive” news (→ Community Media; Development Journalism; Peace Journalism). The main question in regard to these activist approaches to the news is the extent to which this kind of journalism and news production is possible as a permanent and visible product.

The growing phenomenon of open news publication is a transparent, interactive process of creating, producing, and reading news (Platon & Deuze 2003). Journalists and audiences work together creating, editing, and distributing news, with no commitment to a single truth or to following up items, yet coexisting with professional journalists as the formal gatekeepers of conventional news organizations (→ Access to the Media; Citizen Journalism; Citizens’ Media; Public Access Television). Interestingly, research shows that despite the promise of openness and freedom, “open” sites are still censored and each organization has a way of dealing with articles considered problematic (Platon & Deuze 2003).

### **MEDIA GLOBALIZATION AND THE DEFINITION OF FOREIGN NEWS**

Following changes in the world communication map and the advent of new media technologies, especially the advent of global news channels, it has been necessary to reassess foreign news flow. Thus, for example, the focus in foreign news on issues perceived as “bad news” is most marked in the west’s coverage of the third world. Regarding foreign news flow, a study from the late 1970s initiated by UNESCO stressed two important findings. First, it found that most foreign news coverage was political, economic, and security related (“hard” news; it also established that most actors in foreign news items were political figures). Second, it identified a “continent-based orientation.” The study also exposed a consistent imbalance in international coverage, with the United States and western Europe as the main producers of news, developing countries appearing mainly in the context of tension and crisis, and vast geographical regions receiving no coverage at all (Sreberny & Stevenson 1999).

A follow-up study of some 40 countries was conducted over a two-week period in September 1995. This → International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) sponsored study investigated whether changes since the 1970s had affected foreign news flow. The comparison showed similar localization trends despite the persistent increase in global information sources. Although news organizations use new technologies to communicate information, they still tackle foreign news from a local angle. This indicates an inherent bias in foreign news reporting resulting from the local “lenses” that news editor “gatekeepers” use (Nossek et al. 2007).

### CURRENT RESEARCH AND PROSPECTS

Current research asks whether new types of events (e.g., new kinds of political violence, especially atomic, biological, and chemical warfare, terrorist attacks, and the enormous number of casualties in dramatic attacks such as those of 9/11), new media technologies, economic globalization, media outlets, and audiences will change the traditional definitions of news (see, for example, Katz 1992, on the CNN effect on the news coverage of the Gulf War of 1991).

Potentially, new communication technologies allow journalists a more meaningful role not only in shaping the news agenda, but in influencing the orientation of news stories. Another question is whether news will cease to be a product of professionals and media outlets and become an interactive process produced by audiences with no editors or censors, but with no control or accountability for its evidential truths, as is the case of blogs and → bloggers on the Internet, writing their personal stories and observations as news (Singer 2003; → Accountability of the News).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Advertising  
 ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Audience ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism  
 ▶ Citizens’ Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies  
 ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Functional Analysis  
 ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Infotainment ▶ International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR)  
 ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics  
 ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Labor in the Media ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events  
 ▶ Media History ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ Negativity ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO)  
 ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Factors ▶ News Myths ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Routines  
 ▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting  
 ▶ Observation ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Peace Journalism ▶ Political Economy of the Media  
 ▶ Public ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Public Relations ▶ Radio ▶ Radio News ▶ Scandalization in the News  
 ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Soft News ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Spin and Double-Speak  
 ▶ Standards of News ▶ Survey ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television News  
 ▶ Truth and Media Content

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## News Agencies

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News agencies are transnational media organizations that write and distribute stories and their components, such as images and interviews, to the news media (→ News). Audiences see their words and images upon almost every exposure to news, without usually knowing it. The original news agencies formed between 1835 and 1850 to fill the growing newspaper industry demand for stories. They later distributed photographs and eventually merged with newsreel companies or their successors, coming to dominate the distribution of television news images as well (→ News Agencies, History of).

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS ON NEWS AGENCIES

The *practices* news agencies follow to create the international affairs journalism that the public are exposed to every day is an underresearched area of journalism studies and international communication, perhaps because two research traditions failed to intersect. The sociological tradition began in the 1970s with ethnographic research projects in newsrooms (Tuchman 1978; Gans 1979) but declined without extending to news agencies. Also in the 1970s, scholars of international communication subjected previously little-known news agencies to scrutiny as potential agents of cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Their role as the dominant sources of news from developing countries highlighted imbalances in the flow of news and the power of these institutions to shape perceptions of other cultures (especially those least able to mold their own images) (→ New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]). But then interest in news agencies also declined, and the two research traditions have rarely combined, leaving little understanding of production within these influential institutions.

News agencies exist around the world at the national and local levels, some publicly funded, some commercial, but in the production and distribution of global *wholesale news* (Boyd-Barrett 1980), only two companies dominate: UK-based Reuters and US-based Associated Press (AP). Many factors led to the emergence of a duopoly in international news provision. Agence France-Presse (AFP) competes in some spheres, but its presence online and on television is small. The formerly powerful American agency

United Press International once spurred greater investment in international reporting from the AP (Boyd-Barrett 2000), but after numerous ownership changes and its eventual takeover by the Unification Church, now has little influence or credibility among journalists. AP and Reuters dominate global news distribution in text (newspaper and websites), in still pictures, and in video; they are the only multimedia, fully international news services providing original reporting on events worldwide.

Critics often accuse news agencies of producing a bland product, devoid of color and enterprise reporting, and dependent on official definitions of news. But in the realms they know well, such as conflict zones and developing regions, the agencies frequently break stories that other media miss. Even so, research has demonstrated a constrained, homogeneous content dictated by the ideology, structure, and culture of these organizations (Wallis & Baran 1990; Hjarvard 1995; Cohen et al. 1996; Paterson 1998).

### NEWS AGENCY PRODUCTION

Recent large-scale research on news agencies is rare. Two major studies published in the 1980s did not include extensive research on the production process (Boyd-Barrett 1980; Fenby 1986). A later study of global news wholesalers was mostly interview based (Johnston 1995). The most recent published scholarship examines television agencies (Paterson 1998), focusing on video news production but not on the processing of photos or, more crucially, text. The remaining literature includes master's dissertations, brief insider accounts of agency work, and some features in other media. For example, two disenchanted Reuters journalists wrote about the financial woes of the company (Mooney & Simpson 2003), but revealed little about the news production process. The existing observations and anecdotal evidence, along with earlier research, allow some generalizations about agency news production (→ News Production and Technology).

News agencies claim to follow the interests of the news media they serve, but they frequently lead that interest, or set the news agenda, by providing the first coverage of breaking stories. A story the agencies deem unworthy is unlikely to gain global exposure through other means. The agencies have separate *divisions* for text, photography, and video, which occasionally coordinate their work but more often act autonomously to distribute their product quickly. Whether the ability to deliver these previously distinct media forms in a unified digital transmission from anywhere in the world will challenge that autonomy remains to be seen. Speed drives everything in news agencies, and observation of rival agencies (and major broadcasters like the BBC and CNN) is the key determinant of what is fast enough. To their credit, agencies continue to maintain standards of accuracy that some media outlets have sacrificed.

Each major news agency maintains about 200 *bureaus around the world*. Although many of these are little more than a one-person operation, the largest employ hundreds of journalists. The role of the bureau is to send information and images as quickly as possible to a central processing and distribution point, generally the London, New York, or Paris newsroom, and follow up soon after with further details and interviews.

The *central newsrooms* will assist in that process or commission other coverage, as long as the bureaus deliver some information and images rapidly to get something out to clients in (literally, at times) seconds. Bureaus and the central newsrooms also monitor

other media for information and story ideas, and take coverage requests from client media. As with newspapers, writers work quickly to craft stories with basic, verifiable information, and then send it on to an editor for review. That editor will then put it out to clients. The difference with video is that editors must select and edit the images coming in and then send them, with a list of shots and the accompanying textual information, to clients by satellite.

In a 2006 two-part series for the Poynter Institute, a trade organization based in Florida, media business analyst Rick Edmonds writes that practices are evolving to replace what AP staff call “the fire hose”: the massive, continuous stream of content pumped to clients in the mode of the old clattering wire service teleprinter once present in every newsroom worldwide (Edmonds 2006a, b). Television journalists call the overload of news agency images “video wallpaper.” Agencies have always trusted clients to select and sort the news themselves, as in the classic research by White (1950). Now an agency can use new technologies to deliver to specific clients the specific content they want, and can devote more resources to specialized topics than to the old bread-and-butter of political news and international conflict.

News agency workers commonly speak of *moving* the images (whether still or video) to their clients, a term that trades on the myth of objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting). It enables agency workers to imagine themselves as simple conduits for information and pictures, rather than determinants of *the news* (a more onerous responsibility). But in the classic response, even choosing where to put the camera is making a subjective choice. The term obscures the process of story choosing and framing, deciding news-gathering approaches, selecting and editing images, determining what information does and does not accompany images, and choosing which client sees which image.

In the television divisions of agencies, bureau chiefs (who often are also producers or videographers) strive to obtain television pictures of interest to their editors in London (or in regional hubs like Hong Kong) by whatever means possible. When the ideal – having a staff photographer at the scene – is impossible, the bureau chiefs or London editors try to obtain pictures through other means, including bidding for images from anyone who might have them. Such decisions have a secondary or incidental effect, because expensive footage purchased today may require the bureau to drop some costly coverage from the agenda tomorrow.

The headquarters of television agencies typically divide labor between *intake* and *output*; the former is focused on bringing in information and images via satellite links, the latter with figuring out how and where to disseminate it. An Editor of the Day oversees the development of story coverage and resource deployment around the world and determines minute-to-minute priorities (while seeking also to control costs). A Managing Editor, sometimes in cooperation with senior executives, determines the agency’s focus on larger stories (a process media scholars might call *framing*) and decides on the most sensitive issues, such as how to deploy the staff in dangerous areas.

Morning and afternoon editorial meetings ensure that everyone is working toward common goals and knows what coverage needs are coming up. A similar process unfolds through the day in the photo and text divisions of each company, although these may have offices in other parts of the world. In the 1990s, Reuters held a weekly meeting between senior television and text journalists to plan and coordinate future coverage.

Most *news* is really *olds* – that is, expected and planned for, especially internationally (Galtung & Ruge 1970). Key to news agency coverage, to a greater extent than for other media, is *future* or *forward* planning. The manager assigns several journalists to this task, assembling complex diaries of anticipated events and briefing editorial meetings about them. On lesser stories, how sure the journalists are about a story's prospects can make the difference in whether an event reaches the newsrooms of the world or not. Planning is especially crucial at news agencies because other media use the planning diaries that agencies circulate to decide on their own world and national coverage.

The importance of planning at news agencies highlights the considerable power that agency coverage budgets have over what does and does not become the news of the world. It also highlights the probably dominant role of *pseudo-events* (Curran & Seaton 1997): the scheduled, staged media events of key actors seeking to be the dominant voice on some issue of international importance.

### CONSTRAINTS ON PRODUCTION

The production processes of news agencies permit them to be efficient news factories, but also perpetuate many general problems scholars have identified with the standard western model of journalism (→ Bias in the News; News Factors). For instance, to meet the expectations of their clients, agencies typically seek out news elites for interviews and so legitimate the status quo and further exclude alternative perspectives in international affairs (Galtung & Ruge 1970; Golding & Elliott 1979).

Management and news processing structures in news agencies, at least in television divisions, seem designed not to insulate a journalist's decisions from commercial considerations but to insure that these prevail (Gitlin 1980; Paterson 1998). In television news agencies, the main concerns were the preferences and cultural biases of the wealthiest news agency clients and, to a lesser extent, the European public broadcasters with whom they collaborate in the Eurovision News Exchange (Cohen et al. 1996). The power of the Exchange is fading, and agencies now provide video straight to consumers online, in competition with their traditional television network clients.

News agencies are unique entities because a fairly homogeneous core cadre of news workers commissions, processes, and edits – that is, has control over – an enormous flow of words and images from around the world. Each news agency promotes its internationalism and lack of allegiance to any single cause or nation, but patterns of prioritizing particular nations, news actors, and values are clear (Schiff 1996). News agency workers do tend to be exceptionally knowledgeable and cosmopolitan, as well as culturally and linguistically adept. Their isolation from commercial pressure is generally more genuine than is typical of commercial newspapers and broadcasters.

Reuters and the AP are equally ubiquitous in cyberspace, but they have pursued different online strategies. Reuters moved away from the distribution pattern of its roots, while the AP has remained mostly tied to the subscription model it has relied on for 150 years. Consistent with its origins, the AP provides links to its content only through the websites of member newspapers, as a means of protecting the print media that own it. Reuters still depends on subscriptions in its agreements with media organizations that receive video, audio, and text feeds, but it has also gone into competition with its



subscribers, becoming an online news service marketing directly to the consumer and supplying its branded stories through news websites.

In 2006, Reuters announced a partnership with Yahoo! to bring in photographs from the general public and circulate newsworthy ones internationally. The announcement seems a striking contradiction to Reuters' long-held line that its essential value lies in the professional creation of the news product, but it may represent one more necessary adaptation to a changed media world. And, as Edmonds describes, agencies increasingly call on journalists to produce a multimedia product, just as other kinds of newsrooms do (Edmonds 2006a, b).

In 2004 Reuters announced that it would shift some news production for its business services to India. It argued that writing about the press releases of small US companies could be accomplished more cheaply there than in the UK or US, but also promised no job losses as a result. It is reasonable to expect news agencies to continue to shift more mundane aspects of news production to low-wage countries, further decentralizing production, without decentralizing command and control.

A crucial aspect of news agency production is safety. News coverage for some of the most common agency stories, those of international conflict, is becoming so risky that new and probably less effective news-gathering strategies must be developed. In Sierra Leone in 2000, guerrilla fighters killed two of the leading news agency journalists in an ambush, one from Reuters, the other from AP. Some leading *hotspots* are proving that in war, no journalist is safe and no side in the conflict can be counted upon for protection. The efforts at censorship, the direct violence, and the imprisonments have imposed an especially high price on news agency journalists.

The Palestinian government, for example, confiscated video tape of a cheering Palestinian crowd, shot by an AP television news photographer on September 11, 2001, and deleted portions of the tape, presumably to stop the international exposure of images that could fuel a backlash against Palestinians after the attacks in the US. For its part, the US military is known to have killed four Reuters journalists in Iraq (Paterson 2005). US forces have held news agency workers for long periods without charge, and Reuters alleged in 2004 that some were tortured. The US government has labeled each case justifiable or accidental, but the calls for independent investigation continue. Journalists are under threat in many parts of the world, but in Iraq the toll for news agencies has been unusual. Being a news agency photographer in proximity to military activity in Iraq is clearly a risky endeavor.

In other ways, governments show a growing sophistication in their understanding of global news distribution. The government of Saddam Hussein in Iraq, shortly before it fell, banned CNN from Baghdad and permitted Reuters to remain only on condition of refusing to feed images to a most valued client, CNN. Reuters agreed, in deference to the remaining clients around the world. Agency journalists admit privately that the threat of manipulation or outright bans prevent them from engaging in the investigative or highly critical journalism about host governments that other media might attempt.

News agencies create much of the public image of the world. It is nearly impossible to consult a national or international story online or in a newspaper without reading the words of AP, Reuters, or AFP, and one is unlikely to watch television for long without seeing images from these agencies (although rarely identified as such). After 150 years of news agencies shaping the public image of the world, scholars still know little about how

and why they cover what they do, report as they do, and disseminate their journalism as they do. The processes of convergence and the demands of the new media environment are changing news production processes and expanding the influence of news agencies while further limiting public understanding of these institutions (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Framing of the News ▶ International Communication ▶ News ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ News Factors ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ Newsreel ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ War Correspondents

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# News Agencies, History of

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News agencies are among the oldest electronic media, having survived as a genus at least since 1835, the year that the French agency Havas was established. Havas was the first of the world's agencies to engage in significant international activity. It was followed by Associated Press (AP) in the USA in 1846, Wolff in Germany in 1849, Tuwora in Austria in 1850, and Reuters in the UK in 1851. Very soon there was a national news agency in almost every European country. Outside Europe the pace of development was slower, but no less comprehensive. Generalist and specialist news agencies operating at international/global, regional, national, and sub-national levels have constituted a networked system of news gathering and news distribution for well over one hundred years (→ News Agencies; International News Reporting).

## TYPES OF AGENCIES

Rantanen and Boyd-Barrett (2004) identified at least *four major phases in the development* of the major news agencies: (1) global domination of international news flow by a European-based formal news cartel dominated by Reuters (UK), Havas (France), and Wolff (Germany), 1870–1917; (2) dissolution of the cartel, 1918–1934, and the rise of the US agencies AP and United Press International (UPI); (3) market domination by the “Big Four” (AP, Agence France-Presse [AFP], Reuters, and UPI) in the 1980s–1990s, and (4) dissolution of the “Big Four” domination from the 1980s onwards. In the latest phase, AP and Reuters continue to dominate among the older generation of “wholesale” news agencies. UPI is no longer a major global player. Reuters, transformed by 1980 into a primarily financial news agency serving financial and business markets, has been significantly challenged by US financial news agency Bloomberg. Additionally, there has emerged a new generation of news media, primarily audiovisual, claiming global market reach.

Throughout this period there were always strong *national news agencies* engaged in significant international news gathering and distribution, although not on the same scale as the majors, nor, in some cases (e.g., TASS in the Soviet period), operating on a commercial basis. Their number in recent decades has included China's Xinhua, Germany's Deutsche Presse Agentur (DPA), Japan's Kyodo, Russia's TASS, and Spain's EFE. From time to time throughout the history of the global news system, there have emerged regional agencies, sometimes in the form of consortia of national news agencies, such as the Pan-African News Agency (PANA) providing news of Africa for Africa and the world since 1979, or involving entirely new formations, such as Inter Press Service (IPS), which started as a cooperative of journalists focusing primarily on news of and for developing countries. Some strong national or regional agencies have claimed to provide news services that are *alternative* or even oppositional to the news services of the major (western and big power-based) agencies. The scope for alternative news services has magnified with the development of the Internet.

News agencies such as AP and Reuters were classically defined as “*wholesale*” media, gathering news for the purpose of distributing it to other – “*retail*” – media, mainly newspapers and broadcasters, which packaged news agency news for their own distinctive readers and audiences. Until recently, news agencies did not have direct access to individual news consumers; their services were *mediated*, subject to the selection and rewriting practices of their media subscribers, which repackaged agency news for local audiences.

In addition to their traditional “wholesale” role, news agencies have become increasingly important as “retail” sources of information not only for media, but also for *individual consumers* who access news agency services through the Internet and may pay nothing for the privilege. Though they may go direct to news agency sites, Internet consumers more typically access news agency stories through secondary, or “retail,” agents consisting of general-interest portals (e.g., Yahoo!), corporate websites, and the websites of newspaper and television stations.

Some media that were once “retail,” servicing discrete geographical markets, have launched themselves as distributors of news services across major regions of the world or around the entire globe. The best-known examples of this phenomenon included BBC World (headquarters in London, UK), and → CNN (headquarters in Atlanta, US) in the 1990s (→ BBC World Service); Al Jazeera (headquarters in Qatar) joined their ranks a decade later, and others will follow (→ Arab Satellite TV News). Distribution of these global or regional broadcast services is typically mediated through satellite and cable operators, which package them along with other channels for the benefit of individual consumers in local markets. In this sense, therefore, global broadcasters have become “wholesale” news providers. Additionally, their services frequently become sources of footage and information for local media, sometimes on a paying basis, another sense in which they have become “wholesale” providers. Many Internet news providers have also emerged, of which some, but by no means all, are online editions of established “old” print and broadcast media, their services of value to both individual news consumers and other news producers. Internet sources have sometimes become sources of news for “old” print and broadcast media.

With the weakening of semantic boundaries, the term “news agency” has become more diffuse, sometimes used as indistinguishable from “news media” in general.

### GLOBAL NEWS AGENCIES

The number of traditional agencies that can be described as “global” has diminished: at one time, some scholars spoke of the “Big Four,” meaning AFP, AP, Reuters, and UPI (Boyd-Barrett 1980). These were headquartered in London, Paris, and New York. To their number could be added the Soviet-era TASS, headquartered in Moscow. By the mid-1990s it was clear that there were only two powerful agencies, Reuters and AP, headquartered in London and New York, respectively, of which one, AP, was operating on the basis of a “not-for-profit” model that constricted its business strategies. These two were followed by a third, the French AFP, while both TASS and UPI had significantly reduced the scale of their operations. In the field of news agency television news, there were only two significant contenders by 1998, Reuters Television News and Associated Press Television News (APTN), the latter being the result of a merger between AP’s APTV and Disney’s WTN, both headquartered in London.

News agency identity, therefore, has a variety of geographical markers. Most celebrated of the genre are the major global news agencies, including AFP, AP, and Reuters. These built their reputations by means of print-based news services delivered to press and broadcasting clients, later expanding their operations to include photo, audio, moving image, and Internet services. While these large agencies do operate globally, gathering news independently from most countries of the world, and selling it to clients in most countries of the world, each of them also has a long-established national identity (though Reuters rather less than the other two), and two of the “Big Three” have a strong European identity. Once a private limited liability company owned by the national and provincial daily newspaper press of the UK and Ireland, Reuters is today a commercial company quoted on the London stock exchange. Over 80 percent of Reuters’ revenue is denominated in non-sterling currencies. Europe is the principal source of its revenues, but all major global markets are important. Reuters’ major competitors in the financial news markets include Bloomberg LP and Dow Jones, both of which also combine financial with general news. AP is a not-for-profit cooperative news agency owned by most of the daily newspapers of the US (and extending associate membership to broadcasting and overseas clients). AFP is a public entity constituted according to French law, with headquarters in Paris and controlled by a governing council on which is represented the French newspaper press, the agency’s journalists, and its major state clients. State clients, including both government agencies and government-owned or government-controlled media, still accounted for approximately half of the agency’s revenue in 2005, while the remainder derived from private media and other clients. The world of television news agencies (providing “wholesale” footage to “retail” media) has shrunk to two major players, Reuters Television News and APTV (which absorbed what had been the third largest player, WTN, in 1998). The cooperative Eurovision News Exchange is another significant source, but one that also purchases footage from the other agencies.

The global news agencies represent the archetype of “syndication,” and in this way they raise questions about whether the apparent diversity of “retail” media is much less than it seems if those same diverse media are in fact drawing from the same sources of supply. The argument applies not only to the *number* of supply sources but also to how far these can claim to be meaningfully representative of all the major divisions of interest among peoples around the world. Similar concerns extend to content. The so-called “international” news agencies – AFP, AP, and Reuters – reflect the usual “western” news values (e.g., priority to elite nations, elite sources, recent events, negativity), values which today probably influence the news selection practices of most mainstream media in most parts of the world (Galtung & Ruge 1965). They are primarily in business to provide news of major “national” stories of economic, political, and military affairs, and sport – the stories thought most likely to interest international audiences – as well as news of international relations and conflict. They have been critiqued for focusing on *events* more than *processes*.

### **NATIONAL NEWS AGENCIES**

The global news agencies are sometimes regarded as the most significant players of a global news system made up of global, national, and city news media. Global news

agencies monitor local media; they often develop stories that have first been identified in local media, and they customize local news for distribution to and consumption in global markets. Their local clients include national news agencies, with which they often maintain close ties. National news agencies are popular: most nation-states have them, and new nation-states are generally quick to establish them. They may be seen as component parts of the iconography of nationhood (Boyd-Barrett 2000). National news agencies are sometimes the largest domestic news-gathering organizations, connecting central and peripheral media in a network with the national agency at its center, collecting news from the different provinces, and compiling a service of national and regional news for national dissemination. Some national agencies were originally established directly by or with the aid of the global agencies, and many were junior partners in a global network of news exchange in which the global agencies were dominant.

The global agencies typically supply their international news services to national agencies. Directly, or indirectly through national agencies, national media take international news from the global agencies (which are often the sole first-hand news sources for such news), and their news priorities are influenced by the global agencies. Local media usually have access to other sources of international news, including the international press and broadcasters (much of them North American and European, including publications such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, and the *International Herald Tribune*, or broadcasters such as the BBC or CNNI). These international “retail” media are not necessarily first-hand sources, since their international coverage will have been influenced by, and to a varying extent drawn from, the global news agencies, even while they are also adding valuable and sometimes more in-depth coverage of leading news events and issues.

Many national news agencies demonstrate some features of “cooperative” structure, inasmuch as they depend on the cooperation of different and possibly competing media that share a common interest in securing a cheap and reliable source of news, or, sometimes, on the cooperation of private media, public media, and state agencies. Cooperative agencies often experience tensions that result from multiple conflicts, including the interests of their owners in saving money as against the interests of their managers in improving/conserving service. National news agencies that have or have had strong ties to their respective national governments, among them the agencies of central and eastern Europe, face a somewhat different range of problems. Just as dependence on government for subsidy or for custom is itself a problem for agencies that are dependent on such funding, equally so, and for different reasons, are reductions in government subsidy or custom, a worldwide trend in the wake of processes of deregulation and political transition. Globalization, deregulation, privatization, and commercialization are all processes that have changed the nature of the relationship between state, agency, and media clients, in particular driving news agencies to provide for more fragmented broadcast, satellite, cable, and Internet news markets, more concentrated print media markets, and overall more “infotainment-ization” of news.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC World Service ▶ CNN ▶ International Communication ▶ International Communication Agencies ▶ International News Reporting ▶ News Agencies

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## **News Audience**

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The news audience is the sub-group of the general media → audience that is exposed to → newspapers, news magazines, → television news, → radio news, or online news (→ Internet News). Analyses of news audiences usually deal with their size and their structure. This can be done on the micro-level (audiences of particular newspapers, news broadcasts, etc.) or on the macro-level (audiences of news in general). On the micro-level, looking at the distribution of particular newspapers or the ratings of particular news broadcasts is especially important for commercial reasons. Just as in the case of any other magazine or television program, potential advertisers like to know where to place their ads in order to attract their intended audience (→ Audience Research). On the macro-level, dealing with news audiences in general is especially important for democratic reasons. Because in democracies citizens are expected to keep informed about political life, it is important to know whether they really do so and which kinds of media they use for that purpose. In this case, for example, the size and structure of news audiences in different parts of the world or trends in news consumption can be analyzed.

Although there are several academic studies on news audiences, data on the micro-level typically comes from commercial organizations like Nielsen Media Research (→ Nielsen Ratings). The most extensive data on the macro-level comes from surveys, more or less regularly carried out by governmental and nongovernmental organizations like the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press in the USA, or Eurobarometer in Europe. During the 1990s, organizations collecting these kinds of data have also been established in Latin America (Latinobarometro), Eastern Asia (Asia Barometer), and some parts of Africa (Afrobarometer).

In 2006 about 80 percent of US Americans aged 18 or older were exposed to any kind of → news on an average weekday. Conversely, a significant number of Americans (about 20 percent) were not exposed to news at all. This percentage is somewhat lower in most European countries (about 10 percent) but significantly higher in most countries in Latin America and Africa. Comparing the primary source of news in 34 countries, Plasser & Plasser (2002) found that in almost all countries under examination most people's primary news source is television, followed by newspaper. This holds true for North and Latin America, Europe, Australia, and East Asia but not for Africa. The primary source of news for most people in Africa is radio. Looking at trends in the size of news audiences, it is obvious that especially in the USA news consumption is in decline. While in 1994 72 percent of US Americans watched television news on an average weekday, in 2006 only 57 percent did so. The number of people reading newspapers and listening to radio news is shrinking to about the same extent. On the other hand, due to technical developments more and more Americans use the Internet as a source of news. About the same trends are visible in many other western democracies, although in most of them the decline is not that sharp. In contrast, due to technical progress in Latin America, Asia, and Africa news audiences – especially the number of people watching television news – are increasing further.

Analyses of the structure of news audiences usually focus on recipients' characteristics, like age, gender, education, income, and political interest (→ Media Use by Social Variable). When comparing the characteristics of those who are exposed to news with the characteristics of those who are not, several constant patterns occur in most countries worldwide. First, older people are clearly more exposed to news than younger people (→ Media Use across the Life-Span). This holds especially true for reading newspapers but is also the case when watching television news is concerned. In contrast, just like the average online user the average online news consumer is rather young (→ Internet Use across the Life-Span). Second, men are somewhat more exposed to news than women. This holds especially true for reading newspapers, listening to radio news, and consuming online news. In contrast, there are almost no differences between men and women when television news consumption is concerned. Third, better-educated people are clearly more exposed to news than more poorly educated people. This is most obvious in respect to online news consumption but holds true for every kind of news media except television news. About the same results have been found for income and for socio-economic status, which is a combination of both variables. Fourth, those who are interested in politics are clearly more exposed to news than those who are not interested in politics. This, again, holds especially true for reading newspapers and news magazines, and consuming online news. While the connection between political interest and news consumption is quite strong,



the direction of causality is unclear. In most studies, a reciprocal causality is assumed: political interest leads to news consumption and vice versa.

Although some general patterns have been found, the field of news audience research is still in motion. More and more people will have access to more and more media. Three questions especially will have to be answered by future research. The first is whether the decline in news consumption in western democracies can be stopped. The second is whether the increase in media supply in Latin America, Asia, and Africa will also lead to a further increase in the size of news audiences. The third is whether the increase in media supply also improves recipients' abilities to engage in elaborative news processing (→ Information Processing; News Processing and Retention).

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Audience Research ► Exposure to News ► Information Processing ► Information Seeking ► Internet News ► Internet Use across the Life-Span ► Media Use across the Life-Span ► Media Use by Social Variable ► News ► News Processing and Retention ► Newspaper ► Nielsen Ratings ► Radio ► Television News

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## **News Corporation**

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News Corporation (or “News Corp”) is an international media company with annual revenues of more than \$28 billion, making it the third largest entertainment and → media conglomerate behind → Time Warner Inc. and → Disney (Hoover’s Company Records 2007). The company produces and distributes filmed entertainment for the theatrical (→ Cinema) and → television markets as well as being a leader in direct broadcast satellite (DBS) distribution (→ Satellite Television). News Corp is a major competitor in the print category with holdings in → magazines, → newspapers, and → books. While it is an international company, more than 50 percent of revenues were generated in the United States and Canada (→ United States of America: Media System; Canada: Media System). The Murdoch family owned 30 percent of News Corp as of 2007.

While News Corp began as an Australian company in the late 1970s, it became an American company, having been incorporated in the United States in 2004. The company’s chairman, Rupert Murdoch, was famous for producing racy newspaper headlines and titillating photographs of women to sell newspapers around the world. He

brought that successful marketing strategy with him as he acquired an increasing number of media properties within the United States. In the satellite television business, as well, Murdoch transferred international successes – BSkyB in the United Kingdom (→ United Kingdom: Media System) and STAR in Asia – to the US market, acquiring 39 percent of DirecTV in 2003.

Mr Murdoch was famous for shaking up the industries in which News Corp competed. In 1986, Murdoch launched Fox Broadcasting – the first new broadcast network in almost 40 years. Eight years later, the Fox Broadcast Company forced the realignment of the American television landscape when the company acquired New World Communications, a television station group made up of major network affiliates (→ Television Networks). New World affiliates became Fox-owned and -operated stations, forcing the Big Three (the television networks ABC, CBS, and NBC) to find comparable stations in major markets throughout the United States. Simultaneously, Fox purchased the rights to air National Football League games – a bold move by a start-up network and one that led to significant growth for the fledgling network. Murdoch also shook up the 24-hour news business (→ Newscast, 24-Hour) in 1996 with the ultra-conservative Fox Newschannel, demonstrating that viewers would watch a channel with a definitive point of view. A major strategic misstep, however, was the purchase of *TV Guide* magazine. The combination of a recession and high interest rates led to decreased sales, and Murdoch was forced to sell most of his US magazine holdings in 1991.

As of 2007, News Corp had eight divisions, including filmed entertainment, television, cable, DBS, magazines and inserts, newspapers, books, and other assets, which included sports, outdoor, and → Internet properties.

Filmed entertainment included both motion picture and television production and was the largest division, representing 25 percent of the organization's revenues annually. Twentieth Century Fox produced three of the top five bestselling pictures of all time – *Titanic*, *Star Wars*, and *Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace*. Other hits included *X-Men*, the animated feature *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, and *Walk the Line*. This division was also one of the major suppliers of programming for prime-time broadcast television as well as syndicated product. Notable shows include *24*, *Bernie Mac*, and *King of the Hill*, as well as syndicated fare such as *Divorce Court* and *Judge Alex*.

Fox Broadcasting was made up of its on-air networks – Fox Broadcasting and My Network – as well as its station group. Fox was the largest US television station group, with 35 stations reaching 38 percent of the country (Albiniak & Downey 2007). Fox held duopolies – markets where they own more than one station – in nine markets, including New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. The Fox Network grew to be a major broadcaster by using a strategy of cutting-edge programming. The network appealed to a younger target audience (18–34) than the traditional networks of ABC, CBS, and NBC, which served adults (18–49). My Network TV was created in 2006 after CBS surprised the television industry by announcing the → merger of Warner Brothers and United Paramount Network (UPN) into the *CW Television Network*, a joint venture of CBS and Warner Brothers Entertainment. Fox had been a major owner of UPN affiliates because of its 2001 purchase of Chris Craft, a company that had founded UPN with Paramount. Rather than change these affiliates back into independent stations, Fox developed a new network, MyNetworkTV, so named to be synergistic with MySpace.com, another News Corp

property. This network presented 12 hours of programming per week, which consisted mostly of prime-time *telenovelas*, a popular international → soap opera format.

Like its broadcast division, *Fox Cable* was known for edgy programming (→ Cable Television). Fox Newschannel, the home of Bill O'Reilly and *Hannity & Colmes*, was until recently the highest-rated news channel (→ Television News) on cable, using the marketing line "Fair and balanced," a claim perceived by some as perfectly accurate, and others as perfectly absurd. FX, the organization's entertainment outlet, was home to highly acclaimed programs such as *The Shield*, *Rescue Me*, and *Nip/Tuck*, which pushed the envelope in terms of sexual and violent content. In addition, the company had a movie network, Fox Movie Channel, as well as numerous sports networks including Fox Sports Net, Fox Soccer Channel, and Fox College Sports. Fox Family, a children-oriented network, was sold to Disney in 2001 for close to \$5.3 billion, and became ABC Family. News Corp also planned to launch a business news channel in late 2007 (Angwin 2007).

*DirecTV* is News Corp's direct satellite television service, as of 2007 a duopoly in the United States. DirecTV leads DISH, a division of EchoStar, with 13.5 million subscribers to DISH's 10.5 million. To be competitive with cable systems that offered bundled services of television, cable modem, and phone service, News Corp created alliances with regional phone companies, such as Verizon and BellSouth, to provide comparable services to customers. In 2006, however, the company decided to exit the DBS category. DirecTV went to Liberty Media in exchange for Liberty's 20 percent voting shares in News Corp. This deal solidified Murdoch's control over News Corp while extricating the company from a slow-growth business.

News Corp also had *magazine, newspaper, and book properties*. While magazines had been a large segment of the company's business, by 2007 most of its holdings in this area were newspaper inserts, including SmartSource® coupons. Its newspapers were primarily in Australia and Britain, with just one newspaper – the *New York Post* – in the United States. HarperCollins and Zondervan, a Christian book publisher, made up the book division.

News Corp's other assets were a smattering of media properties, but most important was Fox Interactive Media. Twentieth Century Fox began selling downloadable movies through this division as well as through AOL. The most significant holding in this division was MySpace.com, an online networking site. There are also a number of online sports outlets including FoxSports.com, whatifsports, and Scout.com, a sports site with an emphasis on recruiting. In September 2005, News Corp also purchased IGN Entertainment, a community-based site for digital media, primarily video games. While News Corp stayed away from the dot-com space during the run-up of the early 2000s, through these recent acquisitions they made a significant commitment to increasing their online presence.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ Cinema ▶ Disney ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Mergers ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newspaper ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News ▶ Time Warner Inc. ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## **News Cycles**

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A news cycle is a round of coverage once measured in the number of hours between each issue of a newspaper (→ News Production and Technology). The term originated in the United States, and the *Oxford English Dictionary* dates the earliest use to a 1922 *Los Angeles Times* article. Major metropolitan newspapers back then published multiple editions daily, but smaller local and most international newspapers followed a cycle of 24 hours, publishing at about the same time daily, either morning or evening (News; Newspaper). The Associated Press (AP) sent stories to its member organizations designated AM or PM, indicating whether the member belonged in, and could publish the content in, a morning or afternoon slot. AP sent corrections and updates over cable (first the wire, then computer) as news broke (→ News Agencies). Broadcast news initially scheduled programs in daily time slots, although stations did interrupt regular programming for breaking news (→ Television News; Radio News).

The transition to shorter cycles emerged slowly. With the introduction of *The Today Show* on the US ABC network in 1952, the broadcast news cycle added a morning to its existing afternoon arc (→ Newscast; Radio Networks; Television Networks). The 24-hour news channel → CNN launched in 1980 (→ Newscast, 24-Hour), and in the UK Sky News followed in 1989. Al Jazeera (→ Arab Satellite TV News) began broadcasting on its pan-Arab network in 1996, and the → BBC's News 24 channel began in 1997. Responding to the way news outlets were delivering information, the AP in 2000 replaced AM and PM designations with BC, signifying *both cycles*, which some considered continuous.

The phrase “24-hour news cycle” emerged in the 1980s to express the idea that satellite transmissions (and, later, Internet postings) produce a nonstop flow of news updating events internationally (→ Satellite Television; Online Journalism). Journalism practitioners and scholars have expressed concerns about a negative impact on news, because the rush to publish limits how much sourcing, fact checking, and editing news producers can do and allows rumor and speculation to disseminate (e.g., Merritt 2006; → Accuracy). Faster news cycles may not lead to better-informed citizens.

The global, *continuous, or rolling news cycle* has redefined – although not done away with – the traditional daily round of print or broadcast journalists (→ News Routines).

They update the website throughout the day (→ Internet News), while still reporting and writing within the daily production framework (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Cross-Media Production; Digitization and Media Convergence). In March 2007, the UK *Guardian* became a web-first newspaper, publishing “Principles of 24/7 Working” ([www.cyberjournalist.net](http://www.cyberjournalist.net)) to address the challenges journalists face when reporting news instantly.

Some researchers suggest that increasing how fast the media push a story to audiences decreases how much context journalists can provide (Kansas & Gitlin 1999; → Media Production and Content). Others say faster news cycles have replaced the competition for scoops (winning the race to publish news first) with a competition for immediacy (→ News Values). Immediacy favors spectatorship over investigation and creates the *feeling* of discovery while doing little to enhance understanding (Lewis et al. 2005). The websites of major newspapers may be doing more to exploit immediacy than depth in their reporting. Researchers conclude that constant, live coverage encourages questionable strategies to compensate for a lack of new facts to report (→ Quality of the News). They point to a strategic use of silence, not just the absence of talk or sound but a metaphorical silence that covers up the lack of new (by incessantly repeating old) information. The live broadcast shifts news from reporting to keeping in touch with the audience, a more interpersonal function (Jaworski et al. 2005).

The nonstop cycle may degrade news in other ways (→ Standards of News). “*Breaking news*,” the very kind that ongoing cycles would seem best suited to serve, may devolve into firsts only because no other channel finds the stories worth reporting. The content of broadcast news becomes more focused on trends and lifestyles, because scheduled newscasts are less current than the stations’ own websites or the cable channels (Montopoli 2005).

The research literature explores news cycles in Europe and North America but rarely in other parts of the world. The so-called *CNN effect* suggests that global 24-hour media have an impact on political and military behaviors in other countries. Despite the lack of strong empirical evidence, the effect continues to be a topic of interest (Hess 2002; Livingston 1997).

Although news may always be on the air or online, the constant flow is not necessarily proof of a continuous cycle. The repetition of most news outlets turns the news cycle, in some ways, into the news *recycle*. Google News on one day offered access to about 14,000 stories from its front page, but these recounted the same two dozen news events (Project for Excellence in Journalism 2006). On cable, just half the stories in a 12-hour span were new, suggesting that the notion of an all-day, all-week news cycle is an exaggeration. That said, news organizations face relentless time pressures in the speed required to produce news and in the stretches of time and space online requiring filling (García Avilés et al. 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC ▶ CNN ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Cross-Media Production ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Internet News ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Newscast ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newspaper ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Radio News ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Standards of News ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News

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## News as Discourse

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“News as discourse” marks a theoretical framework for the analysis of news. News is considered as a complex communicative event – as discourse – including the social context of news reports (→ Discourse; Political Discourse). Rather than exclusively focusing on text properties such as the thematic structure of news reports, the actors, and the opinions addressed in the reports, the framework directs attention to the participants, the production, and the reception processes, as well as to the possible effects. “News as discourse” starts from the assumption that texts are a “result of social and professional routines of journalists in institutional settings, on the one hand, and an important condition for the effective cognitive processing of news texts by both journalists and readers, on the other hand” (van Dijk 1985, 70). Investigating text and context, the approach aims to assess the systematic relationship between the two.

The theoretical framework of news as discourse differs from more traditional approaches to news analysis by its holistic perspective. It integrates findings from linguistics, cognitive and social psychology, speech communication, micro-sociology, and ethnography. The methodological basis of the framework is referred to as → discourse analysis. It mainly draws on linguistic and → information processing approaches in order

to reconstruct the meaning that is established in the news (→ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to; News Processing and Retention). It is complemented by a special emphasis on social and cultural differences between groups and individuals that characterizes the concept of social cognition. This concept bridges the gap between psychological and more sociological approaches since it sees journalists or audience members not as unique individuals but as social actors and group members (van Dijk 1988a, 20).

The discussion of the power structure in news discourse adds a critical dimension to the approach. Journalists are considered part of a dominant cultural elite who often contribute to the expression and legitimation of the national and international power structures. The approach examines how the press reproduces this power (→ Power and Discourse).

News as discourse also implies a critical attitude toward quantitative content analysis. It employs a more qualitative content analysis and tries to reconstruct the underlying meaning and the effects of the news (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). Since this approach is limited to small amounts of data, however, it often draws upon additional, more traditional, methods of analysis when emphasizing general structures like the imbalance of the international news flow (→ International News Reporting).

The approach was developed by Teun van Dijk, a linguist by education, who was heavily engaged in the investigation of the organization of news text and the related processing strategies. In cooperation with Walter Kintsch, he developed the concept of mental models as a conceptually driven strategy for discourse comprehension (van Dijk & Kintsch 1983; → Discourse Comprehension). The respective ideas were also incorporated in his investigation of the structures of international news discourse (van Dijk 1988a,b). In dealing with international news discourse, however, van Dijk adopted a broader perspective by taking the social and cultural context of news into account.

By integrating textual properties and contextual conditions, the framework shows considerable similarity with → cultural studies approaches. The same applies to the clear preference for a predominantly qualitative methodology. Yet the framework is strongly rooted in cognitive psychology and linguistics, and frequently employs quantitative content analysis, if appropriate. The critical perspective to news as expression and legitimation of the existing power structures also relates to cultural studies, in particular to the French and British Marxian analysis (van Dijk 1985, 72). The conceptualization of news as narrative is another research area closely related to the framework of news as discourse (→ Narrative News Story). These approaches not only relate formal news structures and typical topics to traditional story patterns, but they also emphasize the functional character of those narrations for the development of societal self-conception (Fiske & Hartley 1985; Fiske 1987).

The thematic framework can be applied to a variety of topics in news discourse. It addresses turn-taking or strategic moves in interviews or talk shows, the structures and textual functions of headlines or leads of news reports in the press, and the style, ordering, and thematic organization of media stories, as well as the subtle meaning constructed in the discourse and the functions of this discourse in society. The most prominent application is the analysis of news on the assassination of Gemayel of Lebanon in 1982, a study conducted for UNESCO (van Dijk 1988a, b). It included a more general

analysis of possible differences in international news coverage among 15 first-world and 15 third-world papers, as well as a number of smaller studies of marginalized groups in national news reporting. Results show that the theoretical framework serves as a useful tool to relate contextual properties of news such as social, economic, and institutional conditions of news production to various structural properties of news reports.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Information Processing ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Power and Discourse

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## **News Factors**

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The term “news factors” denotes characteristics of news stories about events and topics that contribute to making them newsworthy (→ News; News Values). Other than events (e.g., the attacks on the US of September 11, 2001) and topics (terrorism), news factors like “damage” are scientific constructs, which can be related to all kinds of events or topics. News factors are regarded as – among other things – causes which make news stories newsworthy: the more news factors a news story carries, the more newsworthy is it. For example, a news story about a well-known actor killed in a car accident (two news factors: “prominent person” and “damage”) is more newsworthy than a news story about an unknown person killed (one news factor: “damage”). Besides the number of news factors, their intensity has an influence on the newsworthiness of news stories. A news story on three people killed is more newsworthy than a news story on one person killed.

### **HISTORY OF THE CONCEPT**

The concept was first used in the seventeenth century by the German author Stieler (1969), who particularly elaborated on the importance and proximity of events and on



the relevance of damage (war) and deviation (crime; → Negativity). After Lippmann (1961) had published his reflections on the newsworthiness of events, Merz (1925) presented the first quantitative analysis of news factors in the press (→ Lippmann, Walter). A decade later, the term “news factor” was familiar in the US and catalogs of news factors had become a standard element of textbooks for journalism students (Warren 1959). They had become aids for the training of students and the processing of news in the news media (→ Journalism Education). From there, the term spread into public discourse about the production of news, offering a plausible and socially desirable explanation for a complex phenomenon (→ News Ideologies; News Routines).

In the mid-1960s, Östgaard (1965), and Galtung and Ruge (1965) presented catalogs of news factors that were not only inspired by previous contributions, but were also parts of elaborated theories of newsworthiness. According to Östgaard, one set of news factors is “foreign to the news process” (influences of news sources, publishers, etc.) and another set is “inherent in the news process” (simplification, identification, sensationalism, etc.). Later, only the second set was regarded as news factors; the first was dealt with in different contexts. According to Galtung and Ruge, culture-free news factors, such as unexpectedness, and culture-bound news factors, such as reference to elite people, can be distinguished; that is, not all news factors are of the same relevance in different cultures. These news factors have different news values. Östgaard describes a “news barrier,” and Galtung and Ruge a “threshold,” which has to be surmounted before an event gets a chance to become a news story, and before a news story has any chance of being published. A similar assumption can be found in theories of media effects (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis).

Until the mid-1970s, many authors used the terms “news factors” and “news values” synonymously. Schulz (1976) explicitly distinguished news factors from news values as indicated by the placement and space or time devoted to a news story. In addition, he developed Likert-type → scales, which indicate the intensity of news factors, for example the degree of damage. According to Schulz, the news value assigned to a → news story is a function of its “news value index.” The latter is defined as the sum of news factors weighted with their intensity. A similar concept was presented by Shoemaker and Cohen (2006), who proposed a second-order factor called “complexity,” which indicates the number of deviant and/or socially significant dimensions in news items.

## CATALOGS OF NEWS FACTORS AND THEIR USE IN RESEARCH

Whereas most authors derived their catalogs of news factors more or less explicitly from psychological theories, Shoemaker (1996) presented a partly new catalog derived from theories of biological and cultural evolution. In addition to known news factors, it includes three types of deviance (statistical, normative, and social change). Catalogs of up to 22 news factors have been developed. They can either be exactly measured (geographical proximity), or fairly well identified by multiple indicators (cultural proximity, reach/relevance, continuity), or approximately estimated (success, failure, controversy/conflict, unexpectedness) (Staab 1990; Eilders 2006). In the course of time, all extrinsic news factors – that is, news factors “foreign to the news process” – have been excluded from the catalogs, leaving only intrinsic factors. An example is the history of the news factor

“consonance.” It was introduced by Galtung and Ruge (1965) with two sub-categories – consonant to expectations (neutral) and consonant to ideals or wishes (normative). It was excluded by Schulz (1976) for methodological reasons: both sub-categories cannot be reliably coded using quantitative content analysis. This methodologically reasonable decision, which was accepted by other researchers, had significant theoretical consequences: it totally excluded a potential influence of the individual perspectives of journalists on the selection of news and thus reduced it to a technical process guided by professional norms (→ Professionalization of Journalism).

Some news factors have repeatedly been shown to correlate significantly with the place, space, or time devoted to news stories: relevance/reach, damage/controversy/aggression/conflict, elite person/prominence, continuity, proximity, elite-nation, and complexity, as defined by Shoemaker and Cohen. Some news factors have repeatedly been shown to correlate with the selection of news by the audience: relevance/reach, conflict/controversy, elite person/prominence, continuity, and unexpectedness (Eilders 2006). Most authors regard significant correlations between the number and/or the intensity of news factors and the presentation of news in the mass media as evidence for a causal relation between both variables. For three reasons, this is questionable. First, most studies present no clear evidence that the journalists processing the news attribute the same news values to news factors as social scientists do. They support their assumptions with plausible arguments, but do not present empirical evidence for them. Second, most studies present no clear evidence that news items selected for publication display more news factors than those that are disregarded. Third, as far as the news coverage at different points in time or in different countries has been analyzed, in nearly all studies a possible influence of occurrences in reality is neglected (→ Extra-Media Data). This is in line with neither → journalists’ role perceptions, nor recipients’ expectations.

SEE ALSO: ► Conflict as Media Content ► Crime Reporting ► Crisis Communication ► Disasters and Communication ► Extra-Media Data ► Journalism Education ► Journalists’ Role Perception ► Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ► Lippmann, Walter ► Negativity ► News ► News Ideologies ► News Routines ► News Story ► News Values ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Scales

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## News Ideologies

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“Ideology” has two related definitions: a set of shared ideas that order group life, and the ways that such a set of ideas reinforces existing power relations (Barnhurst 2005). Following the first definition, an *occupational ideology* refers to a system of beliefs characteristic of a particular group of workers, including but not limited to their processes of producing meanings and ideas within the group (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). In news, a diversity of approaches across cultures has produced distinct journalisms in different locales, as for example documented in more than twenty countries all over the world (Weaver 1998). Regardless of cultural specificities, the existence of an increasingly isomorphic news ideology has consistently been documented in international journalism studies (Westerstahl & Johansson 1986). Research thus suggests that news workers around the world have in common an occupational ideology consisting of a generally shared system of ideal-typical values (Deuze 2005).

In the course of the twentieth century, the professionalization of news media work consolidated thinking among journalists in different countries. Journalism scholars see professionalization as a distinctly ideological process (→ Professionalization of Journalism). The emerging ideology continuously refined a consensus about who was a *real* journalist (→ Journalists’ Role Perception) and what (parts of) news media at any time qualify as examples of *real* journalism. Through such definitional debates, and through the processes of legitimizing or excluding particular participants in these discussions, journalists establish (largely informal) barriers of entry to the profession (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

In electoral democracies, journalists speak of similar values in the context of their daily work, but they apply these values differently. *Objectivity* for American journalists may, for example, primarily mean doing their work without interference from marketers, whereas in China journalists actively use market-driven values to wrestle some editorial control away from the political stamp of the ruling party (Pan 2000; → Objectivity in Reporting). Because journalists in all media types, genres (Van Zoonen 1998), and formats share similar values, it is possible to speak of a dominant occupational ideology of news. Most news workers base their professional perceptions and praxis on that ideology (→ Journalism: Group Dynamics), but interpret or apply it differently across media (Shoemaker & Reese 1996).

Reporters and editors use news ideology as a *strategic ritual* to position themselves in the profession and in relation to media critics and the audience (Tuchman 1971). They use ideology as an instrument to naturalize the structures of news organizations or media industries (Soloski 1990). When faced with criticism, journalists apply ideological values to police themselves or to legitimate their recurring selections and descriptions of events and views (Golding & Elliott 1979).

Five *ideal-typical values* give legitimacy and credibility to what journalists do (→ Journalists, Credibility of): public service, objectivity, autonomy, immediacy, and ethics. Journalists provide a public service as watchdogs or newshounds, active collectors and disseminators of information. They strive to be impartial, neutral, objective, fair, and (thus) credible (→ Balance; Neutrality). They must be autonomous, free, and independent to do their work effectively. They have a sense of immediacy, actuality, and speed inherent in the concept of news (→ Standards of News). And they have a sense of ethics, validity, and legitimacy (→ Ethics in Journalism).

In its second definition, ideology is a process of constructing → meanings in the *service of power*. News ideology is a global factor influencing journalistic decision-making, and scholars analyze how symbolic content in the news media connects with larger social interests. One way journalists exercise power is by defining what “real” journalism is, a process enacted, for example, through mainstream debates about journalistic quality (→ Quality of the News). By legitimating self-appointed arbiters of professional debates and by excluding sources, stakeholders, and audiences from positions of power, news ideologies also serve to advance the status and internal coherence of an occupation.

Journalists generally do not see inconsistencies or contradictions as they integrate these ideal-typical values into debates about the character of the news. News executives and journalists regularly revisit issues of commercialization, bureaucratization, new technology, audience declines, and ownership concentration (→ Commercialization of the Media; Concentration in Media Systems). In all these debates, they deploy ideological values to maintain control on internal operations and to keep outside forces at bay.

Through news ideology, journalism continuously reinvents itself. Changes in society and fast-paced developments in technology, as well as the ongoing convergence of companies, genres, and media in the field, translate into anxiety about the state of the profession. Journalists, along with scholars and educators, inevitably explore news ideology whenever they ask themselves: what is journalism?

SEE ALSO: ▶ Balance ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Meaning ▶ Neutrality ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Standards of News

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## News Magazine, History of

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The concept of → news as a component of a → magazine's editorial content is as old as the medium (→ Magazine, History of). The *Gentleman's Magazine* is regarded by magazine historian Frank Luther Mott (1938) and others as the first to use the word as part of a periodical's title; it was begun in 1731 by a London printer, Edward Cave, and contained tidbits of doings in the royal court and around the town. But the idea of devoting an entire magazine to in-depth articles and interpretive features on recent events worldwide is far more modern. To remain topical, news magazines had to be weekly or at least fortnightly. Their introduction had to await an array of historical developments, including an efficient postal service, faster printing presses, and general literacy. This article deals only with the genre in print and not the labeling of television or radio shows as “newsmagazines” (→ Television).

Depending on definition, the first news magazine (or “newsmagazine,” as a single word, in much contemporary writing) was either British or American. Earlier periodicals of other sorts were almost certainly a continental innovation, such as Johann Rist's *Edifying Monthly* (Hamburg, 1667) or Denys de Salls's *Journal des scavans* (later *savants*; Paris, 1665), but these concentrated more on fashion, theology, and philosophy, confining recent events to digests of the news or satirical comments. News was thought to be too unsophisticated for most writers, as well as their audiences, particularly women.

### EUROPEAN ORIGINS

Originally an Arabic word meaning a “storehouse for valuables,” magazines have always distinguished themselves by their ability to get the news and context needed to particular groups of readers. Business and trade, mixed with politics, were an early driving force for

periodicals in general. Those people concerned with these topics, and educated enough to read and appreciate such news, became the core → audience. In England, from its beginnings in September 1843, *The Economist* has concentrated on these subjects, only recently mixing in science and technology, personalities, and aspects of popular culture. Arguably it is the oldest continuously published news weekly. Even in the modern, multimedia era, *The Economist* occasionally refers to itself as a “newspaper,” but there is no doubt that in its glossy appearance and content, as well as in the minds of its more than a million transatlantic readers, it is a magazine, whether encountered in print or online.

The founding editor, James Wilson, came from a family of Scottish Quakers and was self-educated. Ironically, he failed in international investment, losing most of his fortune in the indigo trade during the 1837 depression, but recovered nicely to start both a bank and the magazine while also becoming a successful politician. Wilson was a Liberal member of the House of Commons and a member of several British governments. From the outset, his magazine took strong positions on most issues, opposing, among other things, the secret ballot and a privileged position for the Church of England.

The modern *Economist* continues to be known for its unequivocal stances, which have caused it to be banned in China, Zimbabwe, and elsewhere, as well as for its precise writing, laced with dry wit. Its international studies and analyses are widely quoted and well respected for their in-depth, independent research; and today are often published separately in books and online. Articles rarely identify authors, unless the writer is not on the staff. There is no masthead and, by tradition, not even the editor is listed. John Micklethwait, who previously edited the US edition, became editor-in-chief in 2006. Past *Economist* editors have included the constitutional scholar Walter Bagehot (1861–1877), after whom the weekly UK column is named. The philosopher Herbert Spencer worked as a sub-editor under the founding editor, Wilson.

While the current politics of the magazine are unstated, it favors globalization and is generally favorable to the Anglo American alliance (→ Globalization of the Media). Its criticisms are handed out to both sides of both US and UK politics, and its editorial independence is part of *The Economist's* tradition. It is one of the few European-published magazines, other than specialized journals such as the *Lancet*, to make a success in the United States. Feisty independence is thought to enhance its credibility (→ Credibility of Content). For example, the editor can only be removed with the permission of an independent board of trustees, not the publisher or stakeholders.

Generally, news magazines worldwide carry a strong social or political philosophy. International success depends on demographic factors, such as widespread diasporas, but also on quality reporting and writing (→ Quality of the News). In this category come such well-regarded weeklies as Germany's *Der Spiegel*, started in 1947, France's *L'Express* (1953), and *Le Nouvel Observateur* (1964). England's popular *The Week* (1933), begun as a frankly Marxist periodical, has not been continuously published. Its current life, much more apolitical and popular, began in 1995; it also publishes a North American edition. Other news periodicals throughout the world, influential within regions or nations, include Brazil's *Veja* (founded 1968), censored and repeatedly closed by a military regime in the early 1970s, Mexico's *Proceso* (1976), founded by left-wing journalists and invariably critical of government, and *New African* (1966), published in London but popular at African kiosks for its aggressively post-colonial, anti-imperialist approach to world events.

### UNITED STATES BEGINNINGS

Journalism scholars (Mott 1938; Scott & Sieber 1992; Kitch 2005) have made the argument that the modern newsmagazine is an American invention. Their rationale centers on the departmentalized editorial formulae, publishing profits, and continuing multi-million circulations of three periodicals aimed at a heterogeneous audience: *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report*.

In terms of publishing success and international prominence there has been nothing to surpass the publication founded in March 1923 by two young Yale University graduates, Henry Robinson Luce and Briton Hadden. With a circulation exceeding four million, *Time* is the largest-circulation newsmagazine in the world. It is also the flagship of one of the three largest media companies in the world, Time-Warner Communications.

In their prospectus for *Time* Magazine, Luce and Hadden (who died in 1929) caught the flavor of their product well. "People in America are, for the most part, poorly informed . . . To say with the facile cynic that it is the fault of the people themselves is to beg the question. People are uninformed because no publication has adapted itself to the time which busy men are able to spend on simply keeping informed." Both the writing of the magazine's articles ("Time-speak" as it is sometimes called) and the positions it took were heavily those of Luce for more than three decades. The son of Christian missionaries to China, Luce lobbied the US government to recognize Chiang Kai-shek's Taiwanese government. A frequent guest at the White House, he advised Republican President Dwight D. Eisenhower on Asian affairs, United Nations policy stances, and anti-Communism. *Time* readers were never in doubt about where its publisher stood, even though his byline never appeared. In point of fact, the magazine did not carry bylines until the 1990s.

*Time*'s distinctive, red-bordered cover was soon joined on newsstands by a number of rivals. Two continue in a triumvirate that has remained among the top 20 circulated US magazines for generations. *U.S. News and World Report* began in 1933 as *U.S. News*, which merged with *World Report* in 1948. Founded by David Lawrence, a Washington, DC, "insider," it is now owned by Mortimer Zuckerman, owner of the tabloid *New York Daily News*. *Newsweek*, established in 1933 by Thomas J. C. Martyn with a hyphenated logotype (*News-Week*), appeared in New York City in the same year. Each carries more advertising and has more readers, in the United States and worldwide, than any of its rivals in other nations. Their circulations have remained relatively stable since a brief circulation war ended in 1990: *Time* at the top with just over four million readers, *Newsweek* next with over three million and *U.S. News* (it downplays the title tail) at about two million.

The circulation détente persists because each takes a different approach to the news and draws a somewhat different reader to its pages. *Newsweek*, purchased in 1961 by Katherine Graham and her *Washington Post* company, displayed in the late twentieth century a more liberal approach than Luce's product. In addition to Democrats, it attracted somewhat younger, upwardly mobile readers. In contrast, *U.S. News* discovered its most comfortable audience "inside the Beltway" with government insiders and bureaucrats, and in school libraries, where students pored over its extensive tables and charts for their own reports. This distinction has begun to fade.

News periodicals have been less studied by scholars than newspapers or broadcast media. Many studies use content analysis to determine how news magazines reflect or promote social issues, from women's rights to free trade, anti-smoking to computer games. The covers of *Newsweek* and *Time*, particularly the latter's "man of the year" (now "person of the year"), have been a particular point of focus. Perhaps the most-cited work is that of the Columbia University media sociologist, Herbert J. Gans. His 1979 study, *Deciding what's news: A study of CBS evening news, NBC nightly news, Newsweek, and Time* (2005), placed news weeklies firmly in a hierarchy of influential opinion-making and of setting the agenda for public issues among elites in particular. Gans blamed these influential news media for underreporting and even ignoring some segments of society through their "unwritten rules." On the twenty-fifth anniversary of his classic work, he insisted this was still the case. But much else has changed.

### TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY CHANGES AND CHALLENGES

While retaining their print editions, modern newsmagazines are turning to the online world and to other products (→ Online Media). This is particularly true in the United States, where general-circulation magazines are yielding to specialized periodicals. *U.S. News* has become known for its special reports on various institutions, particularly its annual ranking of American colleges and universities, first compiled in 1983 and now an object of annual attention, controversy, and institutional envy. *Time* and *Newsweek* both have international editions, whose major articles and advertisers, as well as their commentaries, are often stridently different from what domestic readers encounter. All three magazines also offer a variety of regional and demographic "split runs" that carry specialized ads and sometimes editorial matter to various parts of the United States, to students, to physicians and lawyers, and to those in the highest socio-economic groups. All of this is in an effort to compete with specialized purveyors of news, from sports to business, delivered in print and online.

First *Newsweek* and then *Time* broke tradition in the last two decades by carrying bylined articles. Now, not only columns, but all articles except the briefest items, carry the names of journalists who, the editors believe, will attract a following of readers. In common with most other magazines, the US rivals have undergone multiple redesigns, primarily aimed at attracting the attention of a younger, TV-oriented generation. In January 2007 *Time* announced that, after more than 50 years, it was changing its publication day to Friday in order, as managing editor Richard Stengel explained, to "set the news agenda, not just mirror it." Media observers believed the purpose was equally to attract the leisurely weekend reader, and not those Luce and Hadden envisioned as needing the news during their working week. Media usage studies reflect that for immediate news needs, broadcasting and the Internet are now favored by audiences. In his same editorial, Stengel directed readers to *Time.com*, calling the interactive website and the print magazine "complementary halves of the TIME brand."

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, in common with daily newspapers in the United States, newsmagazines laid off hundreds of staff members. They also closed overseas bureaus and fired international correspondents worldwide. Alarmed commentators worried that this signaled a narrowing, even trivialization, of news magazine reportage,



or even the impending death of a publishing genre. Evidence from other nations suggests otherwise. As they emerge and stabilize, the economies of individual nations appear to include an expressed need for the kind of in-depth reports carried in newsmagazines (although sometimes the travails of emergence get in the way). Examples include Brazil's *Veja*, mentioned above, which despite a decade of military censorship now boasts a weekly circulation of more than a million; and *New African*, which is distributed and read throughout the continent.

The most frequently consulted online directory of news-oriented periodicals, [www.world-newspapers.com](http://www.world-newspapers.com), indicates that the family of newsmagazines, particularly those linked with politics, continues to grow. The trend appears to be strongly toward those that have a global or at least a multi-national perspective, and that have both print and online products. The method for encountering the "storehouse for valuables" has not changed the essential role of the newsmagazine.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Credibility of Content ► Globalization of the Media  
 ► Magazine ► Magazine, History of ► News ► Online Media ► Quality of the News  
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## **News Myths**

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Myth is a concept used to explore the storytelling practices of journalists. From this perspective, myth is not a false belief or an untrue story, nor is it contrasted with reality. Myth is a story that a society produces by drawing on archetypal figures and forms to express prevailing beliefs, ideals, and values. Journalists appear to apply these fundamental forms and narratives as they compose their stories (→ Narrative News Story; News Story; Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on).

By extension, myth is also useful for examining the social role of the news media (→ Popular Culture and the News Media). Because myth is an essential aspect of social life, the news media fulfill the roles and functions that myth-making institutions fulfilled in ancient societies. Journalists, like ancient storytellers, offer accounts of the origins of things. They tell stories that instruct and inform. They present portrayals of heroes and villains. They warn of disaster and disease. They offer dramas of order and disorder, of justice affirmed and justice denied. In doing so, the research suggests, journalists' stories fulfill the social role of myths (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

Study of news as myth has a rich tradition. Scholars of American studies in the mid-twentieth century, such as Henry Nash Smith and R. W. B. Lewis, made connections among myth and modern cultural forms (→ Popular Mythology). Writers such as Mircea Eliade, in *Myths, dreams and mysteries* (1960) and other works, extended such inquiries by linking myth to modern mass media narratives, including news. The French philosopher and writer → Roland Barthes explored the ideological implications of news as myth in *Mythologies* (1957), arguing that news, as myth, is political speech that attempts to make a particular ideology seem beyond question.

Based in part on these early, disparate works, researchers have adapted myth to study the role of journalists in society. For analytical purposes, the research might fall into two distinct but overlapping traditions. One emphasizes *social and cultural links between news and myth*. American → cultural studies have produced notable analyses of the capacity of news as myth to express culture. For example, James Carey (1975) understood the news story as a dramatic presentation of a shared reality. Reading a newspaper, in his evocative metaphor, is less like sending or gaining information and more like attending a mass, a setting where one learns nothing new but witnesses a particular view of the world portrayed and confirmed. The works of journalists are symbolic narratives that represent cultural values and beliefs one may affirm or contest. Researchers have used Carey's work to study the mythological role of journalism (Lule 2001).

A second tradition of research on news and myth, following Barthes, emphasizes *political and ideological dimensions of journalists' stories*. These scholars argue that news, like myth, has a primary function to create, shape, and sustain an ideological order. News and myth are inherently social and political narratives that support the status quo and maintain social order. Much of this work has come out of the British cultural studies tradition. Stuart Hall (1982), for example, found that news, like myth, draws from the prevailing codes of a culture, so that writers unknowingly maintain the dominant ideology. Just as the tellers of a myth may be unaware of the basic elements they use to generate their particular version, Hall says, so journalists may be unaware of the frameworks and ideological inventories that shape their stories.

Studies of news and myth continue in these research veins. Scholars have found, in particular, that the news reporting of terrorism is fertile ground for exploring news and myth (→ Mediated Terrorism). Overall, however, the research has remained isolated in pockets of cultural studies, American studies, political science, and sociology. Myth is understood in many different ways and the research has not yet produced an organizing framework to encompass these varied approaches (Coman 2005). Yet study of news as myth offers rich opportunities and can situate journalists in the long line of storytellers and scribes that have always informed human societies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Barthes, Roland  
▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Narrative  
News Story ▶ News Story ▶ Popular Culture and the News Media ▶ Popular Mythology  
▶ Storytelling and Narration

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## **News Processing across the Life-Span**

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The → news is like lifeblood to democratic societies. The information provided daily through the major mass media → television, → radio, → newspapers, and increasingly the → Internet – keeps citizens up to date with the latest political, economic, and social developments, world events, natural and man-made disasters, lives of famous public figures, scientific breakthroughs, and sports and weather. It serves to keep electorates apprised of the performance of their elected political representatives, helps people to cope with bad news, and also provides a sense of continuity in an increasingly varied media landscape and a sense of security even during times of extreme adversity (→ Journalism: Normative Theories).

### **FUNCTIONS OF THE NEWS**

The news media bring governments and politicians to account, expose scandals and antisocial behavior, and remind citizens of their own responsibilities within democratic societies (→ Investigative Reporting; Objectivity in Reporting). In non-democratic and developing regions of the world, the news media are used to maintain social order, but may also lead the people to question the actions and motives of their leaders

(→ Development Journalism). Where citizens display a lack of engagement in democratic processes, however, as evidenced for example by falling turn-outs in major political elections, attention often turns to the role and performance of the new media. On such occasions, questions may be raised about the failure of news media to capture the interest and attention of news consumers and to provide them with the types of information and a style of delivery that are palatable (Hargreaves & Thomas 2002).

In particular, questions are raised about whether the news media provide the news that the people want. Such questions, however, have been asked over many years. One observation – fueled by empirical evidence – is that news appetites vary across media consumers. The extent to which media audiences, as citizens or consumers, process news often displays a developmental pattern linked to age and experience. What adds to the complexity of news impact, though, is that while the appetite for news evolves with age, greater maturity eventually brings psychological deterioration, which results in reduced news-processing capacity (→ Developmental Communication). News is appreciated and consumed more by older members of the audience than by younger ones. At the same time, the ability to effectively process complex new information in single packages declines with age (see Gunter 1987).

An examination of news processing across the life-span can be articulated in terms of patterns of news consumption; relationships between news exposure and news and political awareness; and ability to recall information from specific news packages.

## NEWS CONSUMPTION ACROSS THE LIFE-SPAN

The main sources of news have consistently been identified as television, followed by newspapers, then radio (Towler 2003). Since 2000, the Internet has emerged as a key news source that rivals other news media in the extent to which it is endorsed (→ Internet News; Digital Media, History of). Such macro-level findings disguise variations in news consumption that occur with age. Children, teenagers, and young adults exhibit less interest in mainstream news provision than do middle-aged and older adults. For children, mainstream news on television and in newspapers tends to be articulated in a style that holds little appeal. Attempts to produce news broadcasts targeted at the younger audience, though, such as *Newsround* (produced by the BBC in the UK), have met with some success in both attracting young news audiences and creating an appetite for news with this age group.

What has also emerged is that young media consumers in the twenty-first century turn to newer information sources such as the Internet for their news. Evidence that audiences switched from major news media such as television over the final years of the twentieth century indicated that those aged 25 to 44 turned away more than did older adult news consumers, and more than did those aged 16 to 24 (Hargreaves & Thomas 2002). By way of compensation, though, younger news consumers outstrip older consumers in their use of the Internet and of interpersonal communications networks to find out about news. (→ News Audience; Exposure to Communication Content)

In general, therefore, it is an oversimplification of the research evidence to conclude that young people lack interest in the news and that news appetites only really emerge in later life. Young people do possess interest in the news but their consumption is driven by

the way in which the news is presented. The convenience of news sources in terms of when and where they are available holds paramount importance for the young consumer, who does not wish to be constrained by the fixed news formats and times of availability associated with traditional “old” news platforms such as mainstream television and newspapers.

### **NEWS AWARENESS**

The news media potentially bring a wealth of information into people’s homes. To what extent awareness of the issues and events that the media report upon is enhanced through news exposure is a debatable question. In the case of young media consumers, knowledge of recent news and of political affairs in general has consistently emerged as poorer than that found among older adults (→ Political Knowledge). While the news tends not to be named among children’s favorite content, they do begin to tune into news increasingly as they pass through their adolescent years. (Chaffee et al. 1973).

Even before they reach their teens, young people may display some elementary likes and dislikes in relation to prominent political figures, though it is not always clear whether these opinions have been rationalized or are simply imitated from influential adult role models in their immediate environment. It has long been known that the more children report consumption of televised news and newspapers, the greater their civic awareness (Conway et al. 1975; → Citizen Journalism).

Pre-teenage children who acknowledged an interest in the news, who watched it on television, and who discussed news with their friends tend to exhibit greater knowledge of current news issues and have a greater political awareness. Further, research that has tracked such links over time has indicated that news exposure tends to lead to political knowledge growth (Atkin & Gantz 1978). Children were found to pay attention to news about local conflicts in Northern Ireland. Greater reported exposure to news about such events was linked to greater awareness of them (Cairns 1984).

### **RECALL OF NEWS PACKAGES**

Another way in which news processing can be assessed is to investigate more directly how much information people remember from specific news packages. In this context, a news “package” could be a news broadcast or a printed news story. Researchers have used survey interviews and interventionist experiments (→ Experimental Design) to explore this type of news impact (→ News Processing and Retention).

Comparisons of news recall via different media among children, teenagers, and young adults have produced conflicting findings. Many early studies consistently reported that print presentations yielded better content recall scores than audiovisual or audio-only presentations (e.g., DeFleur et al. 1992). Later research found, in contrast, that television-style presentations could yield better news recall among children than printed versions of the same content, especially if the narrative in the televised versions occurred alongside supportive pictures (Gunter et al. 2000; Walma van der Molen & van der Voort 1997). The essential feature was that the pictures should contain the same basic propositional meaning as the text.

Research with American children aged 8 to 13 years found that their learning from a television news story presented to them in the classroom improved with age and was also associated with how much they enjoyed the item (Drew & Reeves 1980). A follow-up study found that 10–16-year-olds recalled news stories better if they were presented with film footage rather than simply with “talking head” formats (Drew & Reese 1984). Television news programs, such as *Channel One* in the USA, made especially for young people have been found to enhance their political knowledge (Brand & Greenberg 1992). Across the age-span, advancing years can eventually bring a decline in memory capacity that undermines news consumers’ ability to process complex news packages, especially if they have poor verbal abilities (Dixon et al. 1984).

With emerging new technology platforms that have opened up a wider array of new news sources and an increased diversity of news presentation styles, there is a need to discover more about the news processing demands of different news media. The growth in news sources and the greater convenience in terms of news availability of new news sources may be regarded as positive developments by those who believe it is important to find new ways of engaging the public interest in news. For older news consumers, however, some new formats may prove to present significant barriers to effective news processing.

SEE ALSO: ► Citizen Journalism ► Development Journalism ► Developmental Communication ► Digital Media, History of ► Experimental Design ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Internet ► Internet News ► Investigative Reporting ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► News ► News Audience ► Newspaper ► News Processing and Retention ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Political Knowledge ► Radio ► Television

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## News Processing and Retention

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Of the numerous functions the news media perform in contemporary society, perhaps none is so basic as their role in distributing information. In many democratic theories, broad and equitable distribution of timely → news is viewed as necessary for sound → public opinion and popular decision-making (→ Political Discourse). Students of journalism, mass communication, and politics have consequently invested considerable effort in studying the ways people process news stories and how much information – and what types of information – they retain as a result.

While democratic concerns animate much of the research in the area, however, its significance extends well beyond this particular normative framework. Because news processing and retention are centrally implicated in mass learning and → persuasion, they are critical in any social system, no matter the governing ideology of the state. Learning from the media is often conceptualized as an essential first step in many models of media effects.

### RESEARCH APPROACHES

#### Methods

In seeking to understand the ways people learn from the news, most studies adopt an information-processing perspective (→ Information Processing). By the “processing” of news, researchers generally refer to an interrelated series of cognitive and behavioral phenomena, including exposure to news stories, paying attention, encoding information, comprehending and interpreting its → meaning, rehearsing or elaborating content, and storing some information relevant to the stories in memory (→ Cognition; Exposure to News). By “retention,” researchers refer to the ability of audience members to keep stored

memories of the news over time, and to retrieve that information when necessary (→ Attending to the Mass Media; Comprehension; Memory, Message).

Studies of news processing and retention have employed a variety of methods, mainly relying upon either general population → surveys or laboratory experiments (→ Research Methods; Experiment, Laboratory). The former allow researchers to estimate basic relationships between self-reported news exposure, audience characteristics, and knowledge of the news (→ Political Knowledge), and to make generalizations about patterns in news retention among heterogeneous mass audiences. When coupled with assessments of news coverage (e.g., through content analysis), survey data also allow comparative assessments of learning about different types of stories. However, surveys are of limited value in examining cognitive processes. For examining the way people interpret and process news, then, researchers typically turn to experimental methods involving manipulation of exposure to stories that can be systematically varied along dimensions of theoretical interest, such as narrative structure, print, audio or visual characteristics, pacing, message complexity, and the like (→ Experimental Design). Laboratory studies also permit examination of message processing, sometimes employing physiological as well as self-report measures, and memory for particular story elements.

### Conceptual and Measurement Issues

Sound measurement of exposure and retention is central to the study of learning from the news. Surveys depend on self reports and thus face a variety of significant measurement challenges, which are especially pronounced with respect to assessing news exposure. Use of many mass media, particularly television (→ Television News), may be a low-salience affair and thus difficult for people to estimate and report. The exposure experience may also vary considerably across different media – newspapers, television, radio, or the Internet – rendering comparisons across outlets problematic. For example, relying on simple self-reports of exposure frequency, such as hours per day or days per week spent using various media, may underestimate the learning benefits of television news relative to newspaper reading, since the latter typically demands higher levels of attention. Taking into account both self-reported exposure and attention paid to news may thus produce “fairer” comparisons and appears to explain more variance in news knowledge (Chaffee & Schleuder 1986). Refinements in standard questions about news media exposure and attention have aided survey researchers considerably, although most acknowledge that surveys are limited by necessity to rather gross and indirect measures of news media use. One of the principal values of experimental methods, despite the potential loss of sample generalizability, is the reliable manipulation of exposure to particular news stories and some degree of control over the attention paid to those stories.

When researchers turn to measuring news *retention*, several options are available in either survey or experimental contexts. “Recognition” measures expose people to parts of a news story, for example a visual frame from a broadcast news item, asking for a report of whether they remember having seen it. “Free recall” measures simply ask for open-ended reports of information that was contained in a story, while “cued recall” offers some content-related stimuli to assist in information retrieval from memory.



Other measures aim to assess *comprehension* of a message by asking not for retrieval of discrete memories, but instead about the gist or meaning of a story. Because the interview or questionnaire is generally a verbal exchange, measures are most often aimed at retrieval of verbal information, though recognition measures incorporate visual memories as well. The particular manner in which knowledge is assessed is of critical importance when drawing inferences about learning from the news. In experimental studies, for instance, television news exposure produces different effects on free recall, cued recall, and recognition outcomes. Verbal knowledge tests may privilege certain groups, for example those who are better educated. Conventional approaches to measuring public affairs knowledge may also fail to reflect outcomes of online processing of news, whereby information processing results in updating evaluations and opinions, after which the information itself is discarded (Graber 2001).

## EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Research indicates, as one would expect, that the amount of coverage given to a particular story in the news predicts the rate at which audience members are able to recognize and recall the story (Gunter 1987). However, the impact of news coverage varies considerably across different types of media outlets, across various kinds of news, and among different audience members. Price and Czilli (1996) found, for example, that domestic news is better remembered than foreign news among US audiences, and that stories involving identifiable persons (such as celebrities) are better remembered than other stories, particularly for those who are low in prior knowledge of public affairs. In general, studies have focused on *four main sets of factors* that influence news processing and retention: audience characteristics, differences among various news media; specific message features, and characteristics of news stories.

### Audience Characteristics

A number of studies have examined characteristics of audience members that facilitate or impede learning and retention of news (→ Audience Research). Among the strongest facilitators is *pre-existing knowledge* of general public affairs, which has been shown to be a consistent predictor of awareness and recall of specific news stories, indeed often a stronger predictor than news media exposure (Price & Zaller 1993). In some cases, survey researchers have failed to find any news media effects on learning after prior political knowledge and other variables are controlled. Knowledgeable people tend to be more engaged and attentive news consumers than their peers, and also have more developed → schemas for processing information contained in the news. There is some evidence that general knowledge may interact with the nature of news stories in predicting recall as well. Less knowledgeable members of the audience appear to be more strongly affected than their more knowledgeable peers by stories receiving large amounts of coverage, personality-based stories, and stories that have a domestic rather than international focus.

Learning from the news is associated with *motivated and active processing* of media content. Research in the → “uses and gratifications” tradition finds that people who use the news for surveillance or informational purposes have higher levels of political

knowledge and news recall than do those who report mainly entertainment-related or boredom-reduction uses of the news media. Surveillance appears to affect knowledge through increased attention to and elaboration of news content (Eveland 2001). However, motivated media use, while it facilitates learning, is not a necessary condition: There is also evidence for incidental learning from the news.

Because surveillance motivations and pre-existing knowledge tend to be higher among people of higher socio-economic status, “*knowledge gaps*” in the population are common. The knowledge-gap hypothesis, proposed in 1970 by Tichenor and colleagues, submits that when new information enters a social system, those who are advantaged by socio-economic status take up that information at a faster rate than those of lower status, widening gaps in knowledge (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Measured relationships between media use and knowledge are consequently stronger for people with more education, and the knowledge gap appears most pronounced for stories disseminated through print media and the Internet. Knowledge gap effects, though common, may be diminished when those of lower socio-economic status are interested and motivated to follow the news (Kwak 1999) or when information is distributed primarily through more accessible channels such as television news.

### Differences among Media

A number of studies have compared *newspapers and television* as sources of public affairs knowledge. A sizable body of survey research, mostly conducted during political campaigns (→ Election Campaign Communication), indicates that newspaper reading is the superior predictor, with television news exposure appearing to have little predictive value (e.g., Robinson & Levy 1986). There are, however, some exceptions to this pattern. In particular, it appears that television news – aside from local news, which typically does not seem to contribute much to knowledge – performs on a par with newspapers when attention to news is considered along with exposure. Differences in the effect of newspaper and TV exposure are sometimes less evident in experimental research, but a series of experiments by Furnham and Gunter (e.g., 1989) find better recall following exposure to print than audiovisual channels.

With the growth of the → *Internet*, researchers have undertaken comparisons of learning from conventional print newspapers and online news (→ Internet News). The research is somewhat equivocal, but several experimental studies suggest that news recognition and recall are higher for print than for online news (Tewksbury & Althaus 2000), and survey research suggests only a minor role for Internet news use in political learning.

Beyond the mass media, *interpersonal channels* of information dissemination have also been examined. Discussing the news appears to improve learning outcomes, with surveys finding that self-reported frequency of conversation predicts knowledge about as well as or better than reported news media exposure. Studies of the interactive effects of media use and discussion have produced mixed effects, with some suggesting interpersonal discussion might weaken the effects of media use on knowledge, and others finding that frequent discussion enhances learning from news media (Scheufele 2002; → Two-Step Flow of Communication; Interpersonal Communication).

### Message Features

A number of studies of television news have demonstrated that *complex production formats* and complicated narratives may interfere with learning. These generally find that fast production pacing decreases recognition and recall, relative to slow or medium pacing, and that using a variety of audio and visual elements decreases story recall (e.g., Lang et al. 2003). Tabloid-style production features increase arousal and attention but do not necessarily improve levels of recognition or recall. Slower pacing, simple language, concrete imagery, matched audio and video, recapping strategies, and presenting stories in chronological order all tend to increase the accuracy of recall. Recent studies of Internet news also indicate that complex formats may produce confusion and interfere with learning. Interactive website features that permit nonlinear navigation across news stories, for instance, can increase confusion and result in reduced acquisition of factual knowledge.

The *interplay of audio and visual elements* of news stories has received significant research attention (→ Television News, Visual Components of). Findings suggest that the audio track typically dominates audience's understanding of audiovisual presentations and that redundancy of the audio and visual elements enhances learning (→ Dual Coding Theory). When stories are non-redundant, viewers attend to the video at the expense of the audio and comprehension suffers (Drew & Grimes 1987). There is mixed evidence regarding the relative advantage of talking-head formats and filmic or pictorial formats. Pictures can impair learning recall of concurrently spoken information, but enhance recall of information presented in talking-head lead-ins that preceded the pictures. Film has been found to enhance recall compared to a talking-head format; however, a varied presentation combining a talking head and film is better than a uniform presentation of either type (Brosius 1991).

### Story Characteristics

Often message features are dictated by the nature of new stories themselves. Some stories, for example those related to violence or disaster, naturally produce arousing and emotionally evocative material. Such materials influence viewers' processing of information, though not always in consistent ways. *Violent news* appears to increase recall relative to nonviolent news, although this may depend in part upon the viewer's gender (→ Violence as Media Content). While arousing content increases viewers' attention, it has mixed effects on recognition and recall. Some studies find that arousing television messages increase cued recall but decrease recognition (→ Excitation and Arousal); others find that arousing content increases recognition and free recall of news stories, but decreases cued recall (Grabe et al. 2003). Although visual materials in general may improve overall recall of story content, *emotionally evocative visual imagery* may lead to recall errors, likely because they narrow and focus viewers' attention (→ Emotion). Compelling negative imagery has also been found to reduce memory for the information that precedes it in a news story and to decrease long-term recall. The *type* of emotion induced by a visual image may also affect memory for news. Stories containing emotional images inducing an approach reaction, like anger, seem to be better remembered than those with emotional images evoking an avoidance reaction, like disgust (Newhagen 1998).

Story content may *interact* with formal message features in influencing processing and retention. When stories are focused on personalities, for example, more complex and extensive reports including redundant information appear to increase recognition, while event-centered news seems to be best conveyed using simple formats. When television stories are not particularly arousing, recognition and recall increase with faster production pacing, typical of tabloid-style production; when stories *are* arousing, on the other hand, faster pacing reduces both recognition and recall (Lang et al. 2003). The way in which news is framed, for example around human-interest elements, or conflict, or game or strategy aspects in the case of election news, also has consequences for audience processing and recall (→ Framing of the News). Cognitive responses generated in response to a news story tend to mirror the frame used in organizing that story, and there is some evidence that human-interest frames or strategic-campaign frames may result in lowered rates of recall relative to other types of news frames (e.g., Valkenburg et al. 1999).

The emergence of so-called → “*soft news*” outlets for candidate communication during the 1992 US presidential campaign – including late-night comedy, talk shows, and music television – attracted the attention of empirical researchers (→ Infotainment). Little evidence was found, however, to suggest that these alternative news sources produced much learning, either in the 1992 election or in the 1996 presidential elections. More recently, Baum (2003) found that soft news exposure predicted knowledge of information that was a primary focus of soft news coverage, although Prior (2003) found that a preference for infotainment did not predict knowledge measures, even when the latter reflected issues typically covered on such programs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Audience Research ▶ Cognition ▶ Comprehension ▶ Dual Coding Theory ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Emotion ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Meaning ▶ Memory, Message ▶ News ▶ News Audience ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Research Methods ▶ Schemas ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Soft News ▶ Survey ▶ Television News ▶ Television News, Visual Components of ▶ Two-Step-Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Violence as Media Content

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## News Production and Technology

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The term “news production and technology” describes the process and the tools that are necessary for formatting and disseminating journalistic content to an audience. Communication always needs a medium – be it air, paper, or electricity – to travel from

producer to recipient, and the advance of technology has had a deep impact on forms of communication. Any kind of communication that goes beyond direct, local, interpersonal oral or visual interaction depends on a means of technology as a medium. The development of modern mass media, allowing journalists to reach dispersed, large audiences, is interrelated with technological innovations such as the invention of printing and electricity (→ Media History). Thus, production of media content is largely dependent on and shaped by technology, which in itself can be seen as a *necessary condition* for journalism as a profession and its economic as well as social and political relevance (→ Communication Technology and Democracy).

## HISTORY

The invention of movable type for book printing around 1450 by Johannes Gutenberg (1394?–1468) is usually seen as the advent of the age of modern mass communication – despite the fact that block printing and movable type had been used in Korea and China hundreds of years earlier (→ Printing, History of). However, Gutenberg’s invention laid the basis for the mass (re-)production of media content. The “Gutenberg Revolution” – an expression coined by media historians such as → Marshall McLuhan (1962) – marked the beginning of a new age. Besides flyers and pamphlets, the first periodical newspapers were established in Strasbourg and Augsburg at the beginning of the seventeenth century (→ Newspaper, History of). Printing was taken to the level of industrialization when Koenig developed a steam-powered high-speed cylinder printing press. The *London Times* was the first newspaper to be printed on it in 1814. Innovations in the field of printing, such as the rotary printing press (1863) and the Linotype typesetting machine (1886), allowed for even faster production – essential for up-to-date news media. More advanced layout became possible through the embedding of pictures and color. The introduction of personal computers in the 1970s caused yet another revolution. Today, digital newsrooms use desktop publishing (DTP) and computer-to-plate (CTP) technology, which has increased speed and quality dramatically and rendered many job profiles – such as typesetter – obsolete.

The invention of the electrical telegraph in the first half of the nineteenth century and the telephone in the second half paved the way for the rise of wire services and → news agencies (→ Telegraph, History of). Today, the global news flow has shifted from telegraphy to emails and the Internet.

Wireless transmission of signals became possible by the modulation of electromagnetic waves (→ Radio Technology). Guglielmo Marconi (1874–1937) is often referred to as the “father of radio” (Kleinstauber 2005), but many other scientists, such as Braun, Popov, and Tesla, contributed to the new monodirectional medium. From about 1920, private households were able to receive newly founded private and public radio stations, which broadcast not only news but also music.

It was only a relatively small step from radio broadcasting to television. Karl Ferdinand Braun (1850–1918) had built the first cathode ray tube as early as 1897, but the rise of television did not set in until after the end of World War II. Terrestrial television only allowed for a limited number of channels and was broadcast in black and white until the introduction of color TV in the 1950s and 1960s (→ Television Technology). Other

developments were stereo sound and videotext. In the 1980s, cable and satellite TV evolved. The transmission of signals via coaxial cable or the direct connection to a geostationary satellite dramatically increased the broadcasting volume and thus enabled the rise of private commercial channels.

Both radio and television broadcasting have long been taking place in analog mode. However, broadcasting has successively switched to digital since the 1980s for quality and capacity reasons – several digital signals can be transmitted on the frequency needed for a single analog one (→ Digital Media, History of). Today, all types of media are produced digitally, i.e., computer based. Content can easily be interchanged. Thus, the term “Age of Digitization” not only refers to the binary codes that computers are based on, but also to the convergence of media. The best examples are online media, which include aspects of all three previous types of media.

Online media represent the fourth and most recent category of media. Its infrastructure – the Internet – evolved from the ARPANET, a network of connected computers at research institutes and universities created by the US Department of Defense in 1969. Today, the network spans the whole world and consists of academic, business, domestic, and government networks, which themselves connect many single computers, which “communicate” through the standard Internet protocol (IP; → Internet, Technology of). The Internet provides hardware and space for the content of the world wide web – be it text documents, images, or multimedia – including the “classical” three media forms. With the evolution of the Internet, email has become one of the central channels of worldwide communication and fuels globalization. The end of the 1990s saw a process of Internet hype, which eventually led to the so-called dot-com bubble. Nevertheless, the availability of broadband connections (as opposed to slow dial-up modems) has led to yet another stage, known as “web 2.0,” in the twenty-first century.

## **RESEARCH AND THEORY**

Mass media and communication scientists have underestimated the relevance of research on media technology for decades. Especially in Europe, this field was left to the natural sciences while the social sciences focused on other factors as variables defining media content: political systems, economy, culture, etc. This perspective, known as the indeterministic view, models technology as a neutral element. The opposing deterministic view accepts technology as a decisive factor determining the shape of media content and thus the content itself. This view was supported by Canadian scholar Marshall McLuhan, who coined the expression “the medium is the message” (McLuhan 1967). Some communication scientists have tried to classify media technologies by the relation of senders and recipients, and thus describe their evolution stepwise from one-to-one communication (oral or written) to one-to-many (through printing or broadcasting) to many-to-many (the interactive world wide web) (Neverla 2005).

## **CURRENT AND FUTURE MEDIA PRODUCTION**

History shows that whenever new technologies become available, they are immediately implemented in the media production and dissemination process. In return, the

availability of new technologies spawns new genres and forms of media. For example, the development of photography and the possibility of including photos in the printing of newspapers allowed for the rise of yellow press or tabloid media (→ Tabloid Press; Yellow Journalism).

The production processes of today's media are defined by the technology they use. The use of computers in particular has led to a digital revolution, which has proved to be as relevant as the first printing of books. In the modern newsroom, a journalist controls everything – the electronic gathering of information (e.g., through an online news ticker), the text processing software, the layout, and the printing. In fact, a single computer can serve as an entire newsroom. Satellite modems allow foreign correspondents to produce and broadcast with almost no time delay from the most remote spots of the globe. Obviously, today's journalists need to know not only how to research and write stories, but also how to handle their electronic equipment.

In → television, the age of digitization brought a huge increase in the number of channels. This affects media economy as well as journalists' work: there is a huge difference between producing a full program as opposed to a niche channel, and pay TV is a relatively new economic model. Content production is affected on yet another level: modern digital cameras and camcorders are much easier to handle than their bulky predecessors and allow for a more "natural" feeling in TV content. The direct electronic transmission of the material allows broadcasting practically without time delay, both on air or online. Through digital editing, content can even be altered or generated from scratch. While this may serve a good purpose, e.g., for explaining complicated matters in animations or infographics, it creates ethical issues, which journalists and audiences have to be aware of – manipulation has always existed, but it has never been so easy.

There is no doubt that the world wide web has changed not only the media, but the world. Its success has been dependent on several technological factors. Even electronically stored content takes up space – server capacities have to be provided. This goes along with a certain connection speed, the software to run the network, technical resources in the hand of the recipient, and the knowledge to handle them. The fascination of the Internet stems from its decentralized network structure, its global reach, and its ability to adopt any known form of communication, from oral interaction (voice over IP) to content providing to text messaging to genuine news media in text, sound, and (moving) pictures. This integrative aspect leads to a convergence of formerly independent media types (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). Today's journalists have to be capable of cross-media content management and promotion – a factor that alters classical job models. Apart from the combination of media, the web offers new possibilities such as interactivity. Since technological barriers for access to the Internet have become relatively low (cheap equipment, usability of software, fast bandwidths, internet cafés), user-generated content plays an increasingly important role. The idea of citizen journalism had been made popular in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but its potential became clear when phenomena such as blogging (web-logging) emerged. This is even more important as the web not only spans the globe but is also accessible through wireless devices such as PDAs, mobile phones, and notebooks. Defining professional journalism becomes increasingly difficult. For example, online journalism calls for a certain organization of content through hyperlinks but at the same time easily links into non-journalistic spheres such as



advertising. Whether the “classical” media will eventually merge into one online medium – as debated at the beginning of the twenty-first century – will depend on the technology to come.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Communication Technology Standards ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Domestication of Technology ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media History ▶ News Agencies ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television Technology ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## **News Routines**

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News routines are repeated practices and forms that make it easier for journalists to accomplish tasks in an uncertain world while working within production constraints. The routines journalists employ serve functional ends for journalists, news organizations, and audiences. Routines also result in dysfunction.

All work relies on routines, but tasks become more routine in organizations that produce on a mass scale, that face little environmental uncertainty, and that do not seek innovation. Journalists face uncertainty, but predictable mass production is more important

than innovation for news organizations. To manage work and insure a flow of incoming information, news organizations have adopted factory-like practices and processes (Berkowitz 1997; → Organizational Communication).

*News routines emerged* where the organization and the social environment intersect, say journalism historians. The development of western democratic market societies and the rationalization of economic life in the 1800s led to the pursuit of wide audiences, increased scale of production, and larger news organizations (Schudson 2003). As staffs increased, management attempted to control production bureaucratically. Rules and new technologies facilitated control, as did professional routines such as balancing sources and writing in a neutral style, which serve organizational purposes (Berkowitz 1997). Rivalry with other occupations also prompted routinization. To differentiate itself from public relations, journalism embraced detached neutrality as a professional value, encouraging mechanized, impersonal processes (Schudson 2003; → Journalism, History of).

Routines persist because they are familiar and deeply naturalized. Change is difficult and risks undermining professional legitimacy, as publics and other institutions identify with, and even depend on, journalism's routine practices (Ryfe 2006).

Scholars depict these macro-social influences on journalism organizations as hierarchical models. Although the levels differ, all the models propose that influence grows from the individual communicator through the organizational and environmental (community, government) to the social and cultural (e.g., Shoemaker & Reese 1996). Higher levels constrain decision-making at lower levels and encourage routines. For example, using official sources reflects an organizational need for easily available information, but also reflects the power officials have to shape the community agenda.

Different routines across press systems exemplify the social-cultural level. The highly differentiated, mechanized structure of large British and US news organizations constrains individual journalists more than do German news organizations of similar size, which have more-redundant roles and less-formal processes (Esser 1998). Russian journalists differ by routinely including analysis in news stories, likely a consequence of their historical association with elite intelligentsia (Wu et al. 1996; → Journalists' Role Perception).

Other news routines are more consistent across cultures. One way journalists deal with the clash of organizational constraints and macro-social uncertainty is through *typification*. Because they cannot control the stream of real-world events, they reconstitute it (→ Phenomenology). They typify news into discrete categories such as hard vs. soft and spot vs. developing, thus gaining greater predictability of production. Typification eases work processes but may blind journalists and audiences to rival interpretations of issues (Tuchman 1978).

The routines of *objectivity* and *news beats* also cross cultures (Hafez 2002). Objectivity routines require balanced sources, personal detachment, factual reporting, and authoritative sources. These practices help news organizations gain wide audiences and avoid criticism, but may lead journalists to ignore non-official voices (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Balance; Bias in the News). Coverage routines establish *news beats* around officials with reliable supplies of information, decreasing uncertainty but letting officials shape the media agenda (Tuchman 1978; → News Sources).

Routines exist in *news production* as well. Journalists write hard news in inverted pyramid style, leading with content they think readers will find compelling (→ News; News Story; News Production and Technology), and page designers regularly anchor layouts with dominant photos (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of). Both routines reveal a marketing orientation, itself a consequence of higher-order economic factors.

Scholars find that routines aid journalists and news organizations in practical ways. Routines protect journalists by allowing individuals to assign the consequences of routinized decisions to a system. Shared conventions and routines also help journalists establish agreed-upon criteria for evaluating professional status (→ Professionalization of Journalism). Routinization aids managers in hiring. More widely accepted routines make the work of assessing job candidates easier, although perhaps leading to homogeneous candidate pools. Agreed-upon conventions, such as making the inside page less consequential than front-page stories, help journalists perform despite uncertainty about audience preferences. Conventions also ease audiences' interpretations of news but may delimit their understanding (Altheide & Snow 1979; → Media Logic; News Audience).

However, routines that free journalists from investing in repetitive tasks can also stifle their creative expression (Ettema & Whitney, 1982; → News Workers). If practices become too routine and easy for others, journalists' jurisdictional authority over news work may erode. Thus journalists tend to portray their work as highly uncertain, subject to the whims of the "world out there."

SEE ALSO: ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Logic ▶ News ▶ News Audience ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Sources ▶ News Story ▶ News Workers ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Professionalization of Journalism

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# News Sources

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Sources are the individuals that reporters interview to obtain information. It is on this information that news stories are based. Because no standard definition exists for what constitutes a source, documents such as accident reports, corporate press releases, and even other news media reports sometimes serve as sources, providing information that becomes part of, or the basis of, news stories (→ News).

Sources also originate news. They call reporters, send press releases, or provide documents in an attempt to disseminate their views through the mass media. By originating news stories and providing viewpoints to reporters, sources have a major influence on the framing of news stories (Sigal 1973; → Framing of the News).

## TYPES OF SOURCES

Studies have examined the types of sources used by reporters in countries such as New Zealand, Hong Kong, the United States, Great Britain, and Denmark, and the results show similar sourcing patterns in most cases. Individuals interviewed and identified in stories are called *on-the-record* sources. Reporters are expected to quote and identify these sources accurately. Reporters have been dismissed for falsifying sources' identities and quotations (Quill 2004).

Different types of news stories use different sources. With breaking news, which concerns unplanned events, reporters locate individuals who were involved in, or who observed, the event. The term *breaking news* originated in television and refers to *breaking into* other programs to report on an important, unfolding event. In breaking news about accidents, crimes, and disasters, sources may include victims, police, relatives, or bystanders, who give the reporter their understanding of the event. The use of multiple sources gives news stories a multidimensionality they would lack if they relied on a single source. Reporters can also turn to so-called *expert sources*, who provide insights not available on the scene (Albaek et al. 2003; Soley 1992). For example, in the case of natural disasters following a hurricane, reporters interview meteorologists, oceanographers, or other scientists who can explain the causes. Typically, breaking news stories use a wider variety of sources than do routine, beat news stories.

For *beat news*, reporters cover a particular topic, government branch, or industry they consider newsworthy (→ News Factors; News Values). Typical beats include city government, the legislature, political campaigns, and education. As beat reporters cover the issues, they develop and maintain relationships with sources of information, who usually have an appointment in a government agency, a trade association, a political campaign, or a public relations department of a corporation. These individuals are referred to as *routine sources*. A reporter depends on regular interaction with these sources, who in turn rely on the reporter to disseminate their views. The two have a reciprocal relationship that meets the needs of both (→ News Routines).

In the United States, for instance, routine sources are not typical of the general population, tending to come from businesses, the professions, and government. For example, studies

of routine sources quoted in news stories show that over half are government officials, and the next largest group is made up of spokespersons for businesses and industries (Berkowitz & Beach 1993; Brown et al. 1987; Comrie 1999). These sources tend to be higher-status white males with more influence than the average citizen, which is why news tends to reflect the viewpoints of those in power. Entrenched, powerful institutions are the focus of news stories, and reporters predominantly draw on sources from these institutions. Studies of news sources show that women, minorities, labor union representatives, and other less powerful groups are underrepresented compared to their numbers in the population (Freedman & Fico 2005; Manning 2001; Whitney et al. 1989).

Another reason why news sources in the United States tend to be white, male, higher-status, and more influential than the general population is that reporters tend to locate and interview sources who are like themselves. As sociologist Herbert Gans observed, journalists “find it easier to make contact with sources similar to them in class position, as well as race, age, and other characteristics” (1979, 125). This contention is born out by research showing, for example, that women reporters are more likely to use women as sources than are male journalists (Zeldes & Fico 2005).

Studies of reporters show that they are also college graduates, and as the prestige of the medium for which they work increases, so does the prestige of the college from which they took their degree. In the United States, Washington reporters, who represent many of the most prestigious national media, are predominantly men from the northeast who attended highly selective universities such as Columbia, which explains why their sources have similar characteristics. European journalists are demographically similar to US journalists, being male, white, and well educated (Manning 2001).

### IDENTIFICATION OF SOURCES

Journalists usually identify most sources by name and official position in news stories, but not always, particularly in Washington, DC, where officials prefer to speak with anonymity. When anonymous, the sources cannot be held responsible for their statements. Reporters may describe such anonymous sources in news stories as a “high-ranking official” or a “senior official.”

Many news media have *policies on using anonymous sources*. The Associated Press (AP) wire service “Statement of news values and principles” advocates using anonymous sources only when (1) the information provided by the source is fact rather than an opinion, (2) the information would not be available otherwise, and (3) the source is reliable and has direct access to the information. Even under these conditions, reporters “must get approval from their news managers before sending the story to the desk.”

These principles developed in the United States because presidential administrations anonymously provided reporters with information that later turned out to be false. This happened so much during the Nixon years that *Washington Post* editor Ben Bradlee temporarily banned reporters from using unnamed sources in their stories (Bagdikian 2005).

However, non-US media and journalism associations (→ Journalists: Professional Associations) have similar policies. The Finnish Union of Journalists’ “Guidelines for good journalistic practices” (2007) states that the “identity of a person providing confidential

information cannot be disclosed without permission,” but also warns that sources “must be treated critically,” particularly in controversial matters: “the information source might have personal interests or the intention to cause damage.”

### RULES FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

Anonymous sources provide reporters with information in several ways, including “off the record” and “on background,” although there is no accepted definition of these terms. In response, some news organizations have developed their own definitions, which they expect their reporters to use. According to the AP (2007), “off the record” means that the information “cannot be used for publication.” For *U.S. News & World Report* reporter Edward Pound, “off the record” means that he “can’t use it unless I can get it elsewhere” (Shepard 1994, 23). AP journalists can publish *background* information along with a description of the source’s position, but without the direct identity of the source. They can also publish *deep background* information, but without identifying the source in any way. Those providing deep background are sometimes called *confidential sources*.

Despite differing definitions, anonymous sources are generally unavoidable, but must be used cautiously, because the information they provide would simply not be available if they had to identify themselves. One reason for caution is that they cannot be held publicly accountable for what they say. The confidentiality agreement between the reporter and source can also interfere with the reporters’ responsibility to the public to provide as much information as possible. US courts, however, using *Branzburg v. Hayes* (408 U.S. 665, 1972) as precedent, can order reporters to break their confidentiality agreements (→ Source Protection).

In the early 2000s US courts displaced a lenient interpretation of *Branzburg*, asserting that they can now require journalists to divulge information about sources. In contrast to those of the United States, courts of other countries, including Australia and Great Britain, have concluded that the confidentiality of news sources is necessary to protect the public right of access to information about government.

### CONTROVERSIES ABOUT NEWS SOURCES

Several other controversies surround news sources, including reporters’ use of supposedly *expert sources*, who are not themselves participants in news events. The reporters interview these sources to gather either background information or predictions about the outcome of still-unfolding events. Research suggests that expert analysts, whom reporters refer to with such titles as Political Scientist, Scholar, or Economist, influence public opinion because journalists present them as well-informed, detached observers rather than as biased participants (Elliott & Sothirajah 1993; Page et al. 1987).

Although presented as unbiased experts, many such analysts are neither experts nor unbiased. Among many examples, one frequently quoted US expert, described as “the coauthor and editor of twelve books on government,” had actually coauthored only one book (Cooper & Soley 1990, 24).

Like Washington reporters, expert sources tend to be elites or have appointments at so-called *think tanks*. Think tanks are institutions whose primary purpose is to influence

public policy and public opinion. The London-based Royal Institute for International Affairs (now called Chatham House), the Tel Aviv-based Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies, and the Cairo-based Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies house experts that reporters interview for stories in those countries.

Most think tanks have ideological orientations, but the news consumer usually remains unaware of their ideologies. For example, analysts from the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank in Washington, DC, appeared frequently in interviews about the 1990s Gulf War (Kurtz 1991). The news reports, however, failed to reveal the conservative bent of the think tank and its sources of funding, which included the Pentagon and other government agencies, along with corporations holding large military contracts.

A related controversy surrounds the *revolving door* between sources and the news media, where the news media later hire influential sources to work as journalists. The practice raises the question whether partisan spokespersons can shed their party politics and become non-partisan journalists. In the United States, television hosts and reporters for ABC News and NBC News worked, and served as spokespersons, for government leaders (including US presidents and the partisan leadership of Congress) before being hired to work as journalists.

SEE ALSO: ► Framing of the News ► Journalists: Professional Associations ► News ► News Factors ► News Routines ► News Values ► Source Protection

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## News Story

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A *news story* is the standard format that journalists employ for producing the texts they publish in the media. In contrast to feature narratives or subjective reviews and editorials, the news story aims to give a direct, succinct, and fact-based account (→ Objectivity in Reporting), but instead the news story does political work and gives orientation in a complex world (Schudson 1982). This difference causes problems not only for storytellers but also for news researchers.

The news story is an invention that responded to commercial necessities. When news wire services emerged around the middle of the nineteenth century, they needed to sell the same stories to newspapers with competing party alignments (→ News Agencies). Neutral and brief factual stories were less likely to offend partisan sensibilities. The first news stories of this sort probably appeared from the New York Associated Press, forerunner of the Associated Press (AP), which served both Republican- and Democrat-leaning newspapers.

Since then news agencies such as Reuters and Agence France-Presse have influenced practices for news story writing (→ Standards of News). Many newspapers or agencies have their own stylebooks that guide the practice of news writing, including the best-known *AP Stylebook* (updated annually by the AP).

### ELEMENTS OF PRACTICE

Journalists consider themselves *news people*. Interviewing, note taking, and research are daily duties, whether they work in a television newsroom full time or for a small local newspaper freelance. Among the accidents, games, press conferences, scandals, and other incoming occurrences, they decide which are worth telling in a news story (Molotch & Lester 1974). From an idealistic point of view, journalism practice involves what reporters



and editors call “checking a story out” with a “nose for news.” They also come up with their own story ideas and initiate investigations (→ Investigative Reporting).

From their notebook, they try to tell an interesting story. The usual task is to produce a short, informative report, which itself limits the range of storytelling elements possible. Journalists have developed routines for checking and quoting sources and composing what editors consider a good news story (Mencher 1983).

One standard for the story is to begin with a summary *lead* sentence. Here the technical means of distribution may have constricted the roots of news story practice. Newspaper editors had always clipped stories from other sources to republish, but telegraphy formalized the sharing of news (Barnhurst & Nerone 2002). In the lore of journalism, putting the summary first was a safeguard in case the telegraph lines did not function correctly. The lead might have resulted from such organizational imperatives, but not all media scholars accept the popular explanation (Pöttker 2005).

Another standard is to choose the most important facts of a story. Other information then follows in descending order. Journalists display their analytical competence by answering the five Ws (and one H): *Who* did *What*, *Where*, *When*, and *Why* (and *How*)? The standard of presenting facts in priority order produces a form called the *inverted pyramid*. Journalism handbooks say the form allows editors to shorten stories quickly by cutting from the end of a text, following another organizational imperative to fit copy into limited space.

When producing a story, journalists keep in mind several reference groups, including editors, co-workers, outside sources, colleagues at other media, politicians, interest groups, friends, family members, and a generalized audience (Darnton 1975).

Journalists also adjust the news story to fit the intended medium. Different narrative structures and forms have emerged in print, broadcast, and interactive media. Journalists consider radio, for example, a fleeting medium consumed as a background, and so they write in short sentences and accept some repetition, especially for names and numbers. For newspapers, in contrast, journalists may write in a more elaborate style, but they tolerate less redundancy because they know the reader (unlike a radio listener) can consult the text a second time. Newspaper journalists write to accommodate pictures and graphics, and television journalists also integrate moving pictures with audio. Studies reveal a gap between pictures and text on television (Griffin 1992), with video images reverting to symbolic pictures such as politicians shaking hands.

Internet journalists work in a *multimedia* setting, which can combine elements of all previous media on the computer screen. Hypertext allows individual users to follow links to find background or related information online. The inverted pyramid model makes less sense in the online story, but research has not yet documented the impact of the Internet on the form and practice of the news story (Weischenberg 2001).

Specific topics of journalism emphasize different aspects of the news story. Sports journalists working live on TV or radio, for instance, narrate the play-by-play or chronicle of an event, but those reporting for print media tend to write a *next-day* story, with more explanation. Arts topics call for formats that integrate subjective judgments into otherwise fact-based reports about performances or events.

Writing the news story thus involves creating a text genre that follows standards (objectivity, summary leads, inverted pyramid, and the like), attends to different constituencies, and adapts to the medium and the topic at hand. Journalists consider the

resulting stories neutral and professional. News agencies see these qualities as desirable for attracting and retaining customers, especially small-town newspapers. The resulting journalism aims to focus mainly on information rather than interpretation.

## RESEARCH THEORY AND METHOD

The news story is one of the main objects of journalism and communication study. News stories are central to how news workers interact (→ Journalism: Group Dynamics), how the gatekeeper works (→ Gatekeeping), and how newsrooms function (→ News Routines), among other aspects of journalism practice. News stories are the product of news selection decisions (→ News Factors) and manifest news judgments (→ News Values). Most journalists do not reflect on these factors or values, but instead follow the routines that have become habit through the process of professional socialization.

A key issue for producing news stories is truth. Press freedom protects the media from direct influence of the state over the news they can offer the public (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Walter Lippmann's book *Public opinion* (1991) made it clear that news and truth are not the same (→ Lippmann, Walter). The media present only those occurrences chosen according to established criteria, and how journalists reformat and present them depends on work routines. In the process, media workers construct realities, and their work matters to the degree that it influences public perceptions (→ Constructivism).

Because of that influence, journalists bear a responsibility toward society. The objectivity norm of professional journalism is an ideal to encourage journalists to minimize the gap between news and truth (Schudson 2001). They achieve a symbolic objectivity by following such routines as using neutral expressions, presenting opposing positions and actors, and making quotations from others distinct from their own voice or prose. These markers of objectivity lend authority to their output (Zelizer 1990).

A central element of journalism ethics is to draw a clear distinction between fact and fiction. A journalist writing a news story above all does not invent facts. A further, formal separation divides fact from opinion. Officially, opinion appears on pages and in locations designated for such expressions. The forms for presenting news stories thus reinforce the emphasis on information in the standard news story.

Since its emergence in the early twentieth century, critics have objected to *information journalism* as shallow, lacking in context, and omitting background information. In the US, a key moment of such criticism occurred during the McCarthy era of the 1950s, when journalists issued news stories that reported the statements of a powerful US congressman and the actions of the House Un-American Activities Committee he chaired, without expressing judgments against the resulting tyranny.

In reaction to such failures of the standard news story, US journalists have increasingly infused news stories with analysis and interpretation, and the resulting form has grown consistently longer (Barnhurst & Mutz 1997). During the last quarter of the twentieth century, cultural critics also engaged in a sustained critique of objectivity, and journalists began to abandon the term in favor of the phrase *fairness and balance*.

Another influence on the production of news stories is the rise of public relations (PR), which emerged along with twentieth-century mass media as corporations tried to influence public perceptions (→ Media Relations; Public Relations: Media Influence).

Journalists have little time to do thorough reporting, a limitation that PR practitioners use as an opening to provide information prepackaged to imitate the standard patterns of the news story. Although both spheres are interdependent, the balance between journalism and PR is constantly shifting. Journalists generally consider the influence of PR a growing, serious threat to their own independence and standing, which depend on audiences believing their news stories cover any corporation without favor.

Other commercial trends in the media have also influenced news story writing (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Commercialization of the Media). The founding and growth of private commercial TV stations in Europe threw into sharp relief a hybrid form of news, which combines information and entertainment and bridges the divide between serious and light media fare (→ Infotainment). Examples of new, mixed news stories combine public affairs reporting with other practices, such as public service or advocacy (→ Advocacy Journalism; Public Journalism). Hybrid news stories shift the practice of journalism toward production of so-called “news you can use.”

The news story today has to fulfill two functions at once: to maintain its close connection to reality and to appeal to the media recipient as an entertaining genre. Journalists call these the *hard* and *soft* news functions of stories, which may be fundamentally at odds. Not all occurrences can be entertaining, and so a core of hard stories remains for news storytellers to tell.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Constructivism ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Infotainment ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism: Group Dynamics ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Relations ▶ Neutrality ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Standards of News ▶ Truth and Media Content

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## News Values

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The composition of news in the mass media is shaped by a broad variety of causes – by the number and type of topical events, by the type of the media and the interests of their audiences, by professional routines and individual preferences of journalists, and by technical constraints and economic conditions (Shoemaker & Reese 1996; → Media Production and Content). Among these causes are the news values of → news factors. They are the basis of the theory of news values. This theory explains the selection of news for publication, and the prominence of news stories in newspapers and news programs, by professional criteria of news factors in news stories (aspects of events) and the news values of the news factors (selection criteria). In the theory of news values, non-professional influences like individual preferences of journalists, political leaning of news organizations, and pressures from their owners, advertisers, or other social forces are neglected. Therefore, it deals only with a small part of the whole process of newsmaking. The term “news factors” denotes characteristics of news reports, with respect to the events covered. The term “news values” denotes the relative impact of news factors on the processing of news stories by journalists. The term “newsworthiness” denotes the chances of news stories getting published and the prominence of their presentation.

### APPROACHES TO NEWS VALUES AND NEWSWORTHINESS

The term “news value” was introduced by → Walter Lippmann in 1922 (1961) to explain the newsworthiness of events. The theory of news values was developed by Östgaard (1965) and Galtung and Ruge (1965). Major theoretical and methodological contributions were made by Rosengren (1970, 1977), Schulz (1976), Staab (1990), and Shoemaker

(1996). The range of news value theory has been extended by Donsbach (1991) and Eilders (1997) to explain also the selection of news by newspaper readers, and by Eilders and Wirth (1999) to examine the retention of news. Kepplinger has proposed and tested a two-component theory (Kepplinger & Ehlig 2006). Based on it, the newsworthiness of news stories can be calculated, and the predictions compared with empirical findings. Different authors have based their theory of news values on partly different assumptions. Some authors (such as Östgaard, Galtung & Ruge, and Schulz) derive their theories from assumptions about the complexity of reality and the necessity of gaining attention for parts of it. Shoemaker's theory is derived from biological and cultural conditions for the survival of societies, while Rosengren's theory is derived from – among other reasons – the economic relevance of the source of information on foreign countries to its receivers. Most authors do not explain the selection of news by (among other reasons) the reality covered (e.g., Östgaard, Galtung & Ruge, Schulz, Shoemaker, Eilders); some insist that sufficient explanations require some information about reality (e.g., Rosengren and Staab) (→ Extra-Media Data). While most authors neglect the question of whether the mass media present an adequate (“objective”) picture of reality, Galtung and Ruge explicitly want to explain the (according to the authors) biased coverage of western media about developing countries (→ Bias in the News; Objectivity in Reporting). Some authors especially deal with foreign news (e.g., Östgaard, Galtung & Ruge, and Rosengren); others include foreign and domestic news (e.g., Schulz, Staab, Donsbach, Shoemaker, and Eilders).

The publications of Galtung and Ruge, Rosengren, and Schulz initiated an intensive discussion about the theoretical and methodological role of real-world indicators, in which two related questions were mixed: “How can we explain the selection and presentation of news?” and “Do the mass media present an objective picture of reality?” In this discourse, two meanings of the term “objectivity” have been used – objectivity in the epistemological sense of knowledge without preconditions, and objectivity in the methodological sense of reliability of information. The discourse is closely related to the impact of media coverage on the perception of reality and related behavior (→ Media Effects; Reality and Media Reality).

## **TWO-COMPONENT THEORY OF NEWS SELECTION**

All nonrandom decisions to select objects are based upon at least two conditions: characteristics of objects to be selected and selection criteria (two-component theory). If decision-makers do not employ any selection criteria or if there are no characteristics that distinguish the objects selected, only random selection is possible. Some news factors might be more relevant for some media outlets than for others. For example, the news factors “physical damage” and “prominence” may have higher news values for tabloids than for quality papers. For quality papers, the news factors “relevance” and “status” may have higher news values than for tabloids (→ Quality Press; Tabloid Press). Therefore, the same news factor can have different news values for journalists working for different media outlets. News factors given in a news story can be identified by experts or by quantitative content analysis, and this has often been done by numerous researchers (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). News values of news factors – that is, the relative influence of a news factor on the newsworthiness for certain media outlets – could be

identified in representative surveys of news people responsible for decision-making in newsrooms, but this has never been done. News values of news factors have been identified in an experiment with journalism students, however (Kepplinger & Ehmig 2006).

### **MEASURING THE INFLUENCE OF NEWS FACTORS ON THE NEWSWORTHINESS OF NEWS**

To test the influence of news factors on the newsworthiness of news, five research designs have been applied. First, content analyses of media output were conducted (Galtung & Ruge 1965; Schulz 1976; Staab 1990; Shoemaker & Cohen 2006). Significant correlations between the prominence of news (space, time, and placement) and either single news factors in the articles or complex indices representing them are interpreted as evidence for the influence of news factors on news decisions. In this case, it cannot be excluded that news stories not published have more news factors than news stories published. It is also possible, for unknown reasons, that long articles necessarily include more news factors. Therefore, the number of news factors might not be a cause but a consequence of the long articles. In addition, some news factors in a news story might be the consequence of enhancing a news story to improve its newsworthiness.

Second, comparisons of real-world indicators with news about indicated events were undertaken. Using this design, one can control the influence of real-world factors on correlations between the prominence of news and news factors. For example, a high proportion of news about politics in developing countries dealing with top leaders might not indicate a strong influence of the news factor “elite people,” but reflect a typical pattern of policy-making in these countries. Therefore, Rosengren (1970, 1977) has proposed the use of extra-media data, specified the conditions which these data must fulfill, and applied his approach to empirical research. Intra- and extra-media data are especially useful when the stability or change of news values over a longer period of time is to be researched (Best 2000). But because of the lack of sufficient data, they can be applied only to some topics.

Third, with experimental studies and surveys, tests are done with news stories in which news factors are systematically varied (→ Experiment, Laboratory). Subjects rank the news stories according to their newsworthiness. The relevance of individual news factors in comparison to combinations of news factors can be calculated (Buckalew 1969/1970). Results allow a valid test of the news value theory. Because of the small number of subjects and the artificial nature of the news stories tested, the results of these studies cannot be generalized.

Fourth, input–output studies were conducted. Based on the input available in newsrooms, the comparison of news factors in news discarded from the pool with those accepted for inclusion in the news coverage indicates the relevance of news factors for decisions made (Buckalew 1969/1970; Kolmer 2000). The design offers valid tests of the news value theory, but does not allow precise identification of the relative impact of single news factors, because the type and combination of news factors cannot be manipulated.

Fifth, predicted and measured newsworthiness were compared. Using regression analysis, the newsworthiness of news stories can be predicted on the basis of information

on news factors included in news stories and the news values of news factors measured in advance. Predicted newsworthiness of news reports as indicated by their prominence (length, placement) can be compared with their empirically measured newsworthiness (Kepplinger & Ehmig 2006). The design has similar advantages and disadvantages to the one mentioned above.

## RESEARCH ISSUES

After several decades of research in news value theory, several basic questions are still open. First, do news factors have different news values for different types of media outlets, for example street sold papers and national quality papers; commercial TV stations and public broadcast stations, etc.? This can be answered by determining correlations between news factors and prominence of news calculated for different types of media. Because of the limited evidence of this design, a definite answer cannot be given.

Second, do news factors have different news values in different countries or – as Galtung and Ruge (1965) have speculated – in different cultures? There are hints on similarities as well as on differences (Shoemaker & Cohen 2006), but for the reasons mentioned above there is no clear evidence.

Third, are news values of news factors constant or do they change in the course of time? Quantitative studies in the news coverage over several decades (Westerstahl & Johansson 1994) and several centuries (Wilke 1984) indicate that the relevance of at least some news factors has changed. For example, in foreign news of the Swedish press from 1912 to 1972, in some periods the news factor “negativism” explains more than twice as much variance as in others (→ Negativity). In addition, news on spectacular events increases the news value of news factors (→ Crisis Communication; Disasters and Communication). Therefore, after so-called “key events,” similar but relatively unimportant events become very newsworthy (Kepplinger & Habermeier 1995).

Fourth, are news values of news factors independent of the available input of news stories? So far, news factors have been counted and their intensity added, assuming that the news values of news factors do not depend on the competition between news stories. This assumption most likely does not hold. Instead, there is strong evidence from experimental studies that the news value of a news factor given in a news report decreases if the same news factor is given in a competing news story with higher intensity (e.g., more victims in an accident). To put it differently: the news values of news factors (and the newsworthiness of news reports) depend on the competition between the available inputs.

Fifth, are news values of news factors independent of the events or topics covered? Most authors who apply content analysis to research the relevance of news factors code the topics or the type of events covered (accidents, crime, unemployment etc.), rather than just the news factors of news stories. But when the relevance of news factors is analyzed, the topics of the news are rarely controlled. Nevertheless, there is clear experimental evidence of correlations between the news values of some news factors and some types of events. For example, in news reports on train accidents, the news factor “damage” has a high news value, even if only little damage has been reported (Kepplinger & Ehmig 2006).

Sixth, can news values of news factors always be regarded as causes of the newsworthiness of news reports? Nearly all authors apply causal theory to the interpretation of correlations between news factors and newsworthiness. As Staab (1990) has demonstrated, this interpretation is questionable, because newsmakers might intentionally add news factors to their news stories to make them more newsworthy. For example, when they cover an accident they might mention an uninvolved, distant, but prominent relative of a victim. In this case, the news factor “prominence” would not be a cause of the newsworthiness of the news report but a means to make the story newsworthy. To put it differently, the news factor would be a functional prerequisite of the report’s newsworthiness and we would have to add to the causal a functional theory (→ Functional Analysis). If this is true, a paradox exists: the use of news factors as means by journalists requires a functional explanation. But their attempts to increase the newsworthiness by the inclusion of additional news factors is only successful when the causal theory is correct; that is, when the included news factor actually has the impact on newsworthiness which it is supposed to have.

Seventh, what is the relationship between the events covered, news stories about events, and news factors included in these news stories? Here, several important questions come into play: How do mere occurrences become events and how does an event become a news story (Fishman 1980)? Which parts of occurrences belong to an event? Does a statement by a top official (news factor “elite people”) belong to an air crash or are these two events? What influence does the definition of an event have on the inclusion or exclusion of news factors? Obviously, the inclusion of the statement (news factor “elite person”), that is, a broad definition of the event “air crash,” increases the number of news factors and thus the newsworthiness of the news report. If this is correct, the news factor “elite person” is not an independent but an intervening variable (Staab 1990). From this, one can conclude that news value theory only provides a comprehensive explanation of the selection and presentation of news if information on reality is covered or the activities in the newsroom are taken into consideration. Therefore, it is not an alternative but a supplement to other theories of news selection.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Extra-Media Data ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News Factors ▶ Negativity ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Quality Press ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Tabloid Press

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## News Workers

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News workers are those engaged in the production of the written, visual, or audio texts designated as news and information appearing in print media and on broadcast and cable television, radio, and the Internet. These workers assign, report, research, write, and edit reports as well as produce and assemble visual images and the graphic forms for news and information. News workers also include senior editors, news directors, and others who manage these functions (→ News; News Routines; News Story).

As an occupational category, news work does not usually include those engaged in any manufacturing, distribution, or advertising functions (such as press operators, broadcast engineers, or sales representatives). Although larger than that of journalist, the category includes only a small fraction of the workforce in communication industries (→ News Production and Technology). The *United States*, for example, had about 1.5 million workers in those industries (including telephony) at the turn of the twenty-first century. By one estimate, however, fewer than 120,000 were full-time editorial workers in mainstream media, about 50 percent in daily newspapers and somewhat less than 20 percent in television news. In *China*, by contrast, full-time editorial workers numbered about 87,000, distributed across the media in similar percentages. By comparison, approximately 30,000 people are so employed in *Germany* and 15,000 in the United Kingdom (Weaver 1998). Clearly news workers have a social and political importance disproportionate to their small numbers relative to the whole workforce.

The tasks of news workers as well as the differentiation of news work from other communication-related occupations, like most work since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth century, reflects an evolving *division of labor* (Hardt & Brennan 1995). The occupation of printer evolved into that of newspaper editor-publisher, with the tasks of information gathering folded into the day's work (→ Journalism, History of). With expanding commerce, increasing literacy, and developing print technology in the nineteenth century, these tasks divided as newspapers grew in size and circulation (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). To meet the growing need for capital, publishers became financiers while editors became managers of content production. With the arrival of the telephone and the typewriter, the production of news stories separated, at least for a time, into reporting, i.e., gathering information, and rewriting that information into story form. Through the twentieth century, reporting became more specialized as the *beat system* emerged to engage a more complex social and political order. In broadcasting, editors evolved into news directors and reporters into producers and correspondents. But with the emergence of independent journalism on the Internet, these functions sometimes merged once again (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

As in other occupations, the differentiation of news work accompanied an increased *routinization of its tasks*. For journalists whose job is to quickly generate news of broad public interest, these routines are more intellectual than mechanical. The summary lead (or lede) emerged late in the nineteenth century along with the emphasis on the 5Ws formula – the most basic elements of contemporary news stories: who, what, when, where, and why (or how) – as essential features of news. In the early twentieth century, these practices along with others, such as reporting alternative positions on controversial issues and citing official sources (→ News Sources), converged into the now globally ascendant and much criticized conventions of journalistic objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting). While granting news workers some autonomy to deal with situations that deviate from the completely routine, news organizations retain substantial control of these workers through the inculcation of occupational norms that promote efficient news production. Journalists claim professional status based on routine capabilities (→ Professionalization of Journalism), including accuracy, meeting deadlines, presentation style, and shared news values, noted an observer of journalism in the United Kingdom (Elliot 1977).

These competencies serve organizational purposes as well, and so professional status is as valued by executives as by workers. A study of television newsrooms, for example, found news workers consumed with a competitive ethos in which *not getting beaten* by the competition is the basic measure of performance. This ethos gives news workers a standard of accomplishment, but also serves organizational interests in competing for ratings (Ehrlich 1995).

The features of professions (such as law or medicine) attributable to journalism – command of specialized knowledge, commitment to performance standards, and the like – are also organizational strategies for accomplishing the work at hand (→ Organizational Communication). This understanding renders suspect any claims for news work as one of the professions. Under these circumstances, unionization of news workers has a long history and is now common around the world (→ Labor Unions in the Media). This is not to say, however, that news workers are indifferent to the call of public service, but their conception of it varies around the world. Surveys indicate, for example, that large majorities of journalists in the United Kingdom (88 percent) and United States (67 percent) rate investigating the claims of government (→ Investigative Reporting) as important to their mission (Weaver 1998). Journalists in China, although spared that question, did report that explaining government regulations and party policies was important.

Such differences in news workers' conceptions of their socio-political role do not map neatly onto cultural or political differences, however. American journalists did not rate their role as adversary to business nearly as highly as did their British counterparts (14 versus 45 percent), who in turn rated it less highly than did Brazilian journalists (53 percent). The most common element in the self-conceptions of news workers around the globe is simply the importance of getting timely information to the public. Even after two centuries of constant social, technological, and organizational change, timeliness remains the core definition of news work (→ News Values).

SEE ALSO: ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Investigative Reporting ► Journalism, History of ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Labor Unions in the Media ► News ► News Production and Technology ► News Routines ► News Sources ► News Story ► News Values ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Organizational Communication ► Professionalization of Journalism

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# Newscast

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The newscast has anchored broadcast media schedules since their invention and has delivered mundane and momentous news and information daily from near and far, entwining itself with society, culture, and the politics of the day. Synonymous with the great conflicts and crises of mediated history – particularly US-centered history – the televisual nightly newscast has embedded itself into the narrative of nations (and even, at times, their conscience), connecting an apparently simultaneous, unified, and collective audience (→ Television: Social History).

## CHANGING SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEWSCAST

For instance, the long US military involvement in Vietnam became known as “the living-room war” because this was where the consciousness of the nation was deemed to reside. Partly, it was the arbiters of late twentieth-century mediated events, and notably network television’s heyday – the news anchors – that provided daily continuity, ritual, and reassurance to millions of viewers across the States, helping to contain and negotiate a way forward through even the most catastrophic and anxiety-provoking news. The nightly news format, its success and potential power, epitomized in the Oscar-laden 1976 movie *Network*, became a global format, mimicked in countries around the world.

However, the mid-1990s appeared to mark a shift and a *decline of the television evening newscast* as a national investment of discrete viewing time in a shared space and time – that of the living-room. The centrality of the newscast and its pivot – the news anchor (→ Celebrity Journalists) – has appeared to be under threat in relation to massively increased competition and transformations in the very architecture of news gathering and dissemination. For instance, the rapid departure of the leading presenters of the period, with, e.g., the retirement of NBC’s Tom Brokaw in 2004 and CBS’s Dan Rather in 2005, and the death of ABC’s Peter Jennings in 2005, appeared to mark a *shift to a new news order*. What then are the newscast’s prospects in the apparently fragmenting news cultures of the twenty-first century?

Wholesale deregulation, the technological transformations of the digital era (→ Digital Media, History of), and the subsequent mass proliferation of news providers and news channels (→ Newscast, 24-Hour) have transformed the news landscape into a patchwork of interconnected, mobile, and colliding discourses. The constancy and ubiquity of television and online news in particular has led to some commentators characterizing its presence as “ambient.” For instance, television screens (and audiences) are sometimes concentrated but sometimes scattered throughout private and public spaces, including in airport lounges, bars, and railway stations (McCarthy 2001), not to mention reception areas of company buildings, waiting rooms, and a whole variety of transport: planes, coaches, taxis, etc. Hargreaves and Thomas (2002, 44) define “ambient news” as “like the air we breathe, taken for granted rather than struggled for.” More usefully, Cottle (2006, 51) situates news in his

mapping of a complex “new media ecology” of “public sphere(s) and public screens.” Similarly, audiences for news and other programming have become increasingly “diffused” (Abercrombie and Longhurst 1998) as they both consume and apparently constitute the new → media ecology through the “red button,” → citizen journalism, and Web 2.0.

### PECULIARITIES OF THE NEWSCAST

However, despite the heralding of the portability and availability of the tools of news production and the apparent blurring of the distinction between producer and consumer, mainstream national news media and public service television channels in the UK remain the primary source of news for the majority (Gillespie et al. 2007). Furthermore, the evening newscast (especially in the US and UK) still exerts significant presence in the mainstream television schedules, and contributes the reassuring familiarity of a constant view of catastrophic and disturbing events. One can go further and state that the globalization of news formats has tended to assert a dominant and recognizable frame through which the world is routinely represented to us on television.

For some, this is significantly a matter of *presentational style*, or what Caldwell (1995) identifies as television’s self-aware display of exhibitionism, part of its “televisuality.” For instance, on-screen brevity and movement have become the predominant framing devices as television news has become a concatenation of the tabloid front page headline and byline, and a busy computer desktop.

Despite the emergence of televisuality as a defining feature of the newscast at the turn of the century, the significance of → broadcast talk in our more intensely visual news culture should not be underestimated. For instance, a key dynamic in the construction of news is found in its “*rhetorical structure*,” notably, “a patterned way in which language comes to be used; once used, referred to; and when referred to, remembered and drawn upon as part of what ‘everyone knows’” (Schudson 1990, 118). It is unsurprising then that studies of media discourses have made claims as to the discourses’ “circulation” or to their being a “circuit” (Miller et al. 1997), their self-referentiality or “metacommunication” (Esser et al. 2001), and their heavy reliance upon repetition and archival use (→ Discourse Analysis; Collective Memory and the Media).

Among this fluidity and connectivity, the separation of texts from audiences in the study of the media is widely recognized as highly problematic (→ Audience Research), as Allan (2004), for instance, recognizes in his rejection of the model of a “media/society dichotomy.” Instead, television discourse is partly contingent on the context of its production, which may also exist simultaneously with the context of its broadcast. The temporal and spatial context and content of talk, i.e., its “embeddedness,” are more than ever defining characteristics of mediated discourse in the new media ecology.

### RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

So the transformations in the media and news landscapes require transformations in the theoretical and empirical approaches. Unfortunately, in the same way that the nightly newscast is associated with a *mythical living-room era* of collective reception and its

“effects,” television news is associated with a golden age of content analysis. In the UK, for example, some of the pioneering content analysis was undertaken by the Glasgow University Media Group in the 1970s, notably investigating evidence of the ideological bias of broadcasters in covering industrial and economic affairs, as published in the group’s acclaimed *Bad news* (1976). Of course the Glasgow University Media Unit, as it is today, has moved on, and their latest work examines TV news and public understanding of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

However, the principle upon which a great deal of content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative) over the years has been based is that of an ideal “systematic” analysis, notably applied to a comprehensive and somehow exclusive corpus of news programs or data. With only three UK television channels in the UK in the mid-1970s, one can see the relative appeal and validity of this task at that time. However, there is a long tail to this legacy that appears surprisingly in vogue in US communication studies, for example. Indeed, conventional content analysis approaches tend to focus upon what words or images are present in media and how these cluster together, and then to attempt to produce “systematic” analyses and comparisons, and to make inferences from this positive data. Instead, the claims generated by such systematic analyses appear increasingly out of touch with the new media ecology characterized by mediated conditions of connectivity, saturation, and immediacy (Hoskins & O’Loughlin 2007, forthcoming).

Some commentators go further in defining the temporal, spatial, and discursive relations of news with its environment. Cottle (2006), in relation to conflict, for instance, claims that news is “mediatized,” with the media constitutive of events so that the events cannot be considered to exist without their media dimension. And Hoskins and O’Loughlin (2007), drawing upon Goffman (1972), argue that ontologically speaking there is an *interaction order* composed both of what appears in news media and of what happens beyond the media text – “out there” in the world. What happens on-screen is inseparable from off-screen events, but more and more it is the case that off-screen events become inseparable from media representations of those events.

At the same time, there is an increasingly *interdisciplinary body of work* that takes media discourse (broadcast talk, image, sound) as central in developing a critical understanding of the construction of news, the shaping of its agendas, and its local, national, and global influences. These developments have been driven by (socio)linguistics (e.g., Fairclough 1995; Clayman and Heritage 2002), ethnomethodology (e.g., Jalbert 1999), and the significant growth in media and cultural studies and in the academic study of journalism (e.g., Zelizer 2004; Allan 2005). It is clear that the study of the newscast and emerging news cultures requires a collaborative and multidisciplinary approach to begin to become adequate to the dynamics of our new media ecology. One such innovation is the integrated multidisciplinary media analysis (IMMA) approach, which I have hinted at here and which is outlined in Gillespie et al. (2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Celebrity Journalists ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Collective Memory and the Media ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Research Methods ▶ Television: Social History

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## **Newscast, 24-Hour**

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The rise of 24-hour news programming, associated with the shift from the electronic news gathering (ENG) of the 1970s to the satellite news gathering (SNG) of the 1980s, marks a shift in the temporal and spatial connectivity of the globe. The continuousness and sheer expanse of 24/7 news has driven an appetite for immediacy, proximity, and

simultaneity, so that today these are the dominant modes of television news programs, defining how the world is represented to millions and shaping news agendas and allegedly the events being represented (→ Television News).

The so-called “CNN effect” or “phenomenon” is the idea that television news shapes the behavior of influential, sometimes disparate, and especially political actors in events that are being covered as they happen “live” in “real time” (→ CNN). This term is synonymous with CNN’s name-making coverage of the 1991 Gulf War. With the war in the living room, the accountability of politicians, diplomats, military strategists, and journalists was subjected to the unblinking eye of the television camera, as the relentless if simulated intimacy and urgency of the coverage created the first significant global TV audience. For all its vacuous images, this was a new kind of present history and it was an emotionally involving experience. The war had a continuous presence in everyday lives – an experience usually localized to actual conflict areas became a global phenomenon (→ War Correspondents).

Today, the 1991 Gulf War seems barely remarkable in the context of the inexorable rise of the so-called “media event,” to the extent that it has become almost a standard frame of the conflicts and catastrophes that appear to have dominated the opening of the twenty-first century on television. In less connected and less frenetic times, the media event stood out as marking a momentous and sometimes catastrophic occurrence, so that the routine schedules of television channels would be interrupted to signify “news” worthy of intensive, extensive, and continuous attention. Media events are the ultimate live frame, for they are based on a particular (mostly televisual) discourse that at one level at least reflexively situates the medium and its participants in the production of an unfolding event. The term is often related to the work of Dayan and Katz (1992), who identify *three sub-divisions of media events*, namely, “contests,” “conquests,” and “coronations.” Their focus is on the narrative of the “festive viewing” of television and the celebratory and ceremonial unifying of audiences on such occasions (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events).

Since the publication of Dyan and Katz’s influential work, however, the media event has become devalued in two key ways. First, 24-hour-news networks are part of a hypermedia environment that tracks events continuously; there is no “time out.” The very term “rolling news” is something of a paradox, not only because of the segmented and repetitive nature of “rolling” news, but also because of the presumption of there being sufficient “news” to fill such an expanse of time. Second, television news coverage has become permeated by a series of stories connected through a discourse around terrorism and the so-called “war on terror.” Twenty-four-hour networks may on the one hand bring an apparently more attuned connection with local and global events, but on the other they bring a pervasive sense of insecurity and even fear.

The 24-hour newscast phenomenon acquired new global spaces through the advances of Rupert Murdoch’s → News Corporation into Asia with his takeover of STAR (Satellite Television for the Asian Region) in the mid-1990s (→ Satellite Television). Elsewhere, the perceived international influence of the Qatar-based Al Jazeera’s coverage of 9/11 and the war on terror (e.g., its broadcast of audio and video messages from Al-Qaeda leaders, picked up by western channels) provoked the establishment of other pan-Arab satellite channels. For instance, it was no coincidence that the news channel Al Arabia was



launched in March 2003 at the beginning of the Iraq war. Furthermore, the launch of the English-language Al Jazeera International in 2007 demonstrates a demand for ever-greater connectivity from broadcasters attempting to shape global news agendas (→ Arab Satellite TV News).

However, a deep or enduring impact of the satiation of global television news remains to be seen. From a viewer perspective, at least, what matters is not so much whether one spends the day at home with the → BBC's *News 24* or CNN as background noise, but that cumulatively, the “network news society” delivers a persistent and highly unsettling contiguity with conflict and catastrophe. Yet this very routinization of representation is also said to have a paradoxical effect in numbing responses. For instance, the media event of the 2003 Iraq war soon converted into habitual coverage of the inconclusiveness of its aftermath (more reminiscent of the coverage of the period of the Vietnam War).

The built-in obsolescence of all television news always ultimately extinguishes the intensity of the media event, and reduces it to a serial narrative of the everyday and the familiar, as with its recapitulative exhausting of the events of 9/11. So 24-hour television “modulates” between chasing immediacy, instantaneity, and novelty as primary news values, and the reduction of events into familiar, manageable, and “safe” narratives, through its compulsion to repeat and its reliance on its ever-accumulating archive (Hoskins & O'Loughlin 2007). Twenty-four-hour TV, then, is a significant node of the global connectedness of late modern society that both amplifies and assuages the experience of events continuously represented as “news.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ BBC ▶ CNN ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ News ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newscast ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television News ▶ War Correspondents

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## **Newspaper**

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Known as the chroniclers of daily life, newspapers assemble large amounts of information in the form of words, pictures, and graphics printed on lightweight, inexpensive paper stock for the purpose of informing and entertaining the public. Newspapers are portable, inexpensive, and printed either daily or weekly in tabloid or broadsheet format. Estimates

indicate that there are approximately 60,000 newspapers in the world and about one in eight are dailies. The daily operation of a newspaper varies with the size of the paper, but most papers consist of five departments: advertising, editorial, production, circulation, and business. Newspaper revenue comes from sales and advertising. According to the *International Journal of Newspaper Technology* (Chisholm 2004), over 80 percent of revenue in the United States comes from advertising, while in the United Kingdom the figure is over 60 percent, and in Germany over 55 percent (→ Advertising; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). Because revenue is linked to circulation, the commercial potential of newspapers is constrained by the size and economic prosperity of their markets. Newspapers account for the biggest segments of the publishing world, with 40 percent of the industry's revenue.

## HISTORY AND CONTENT

Newspapers have existed in one form or another since 100 BCE, and their content is linked to their historical development. Newspapers became more complex over time. The Roman government issued the *Acta Diurna* around 59 BCE to inform the populace of state affairs. By the late fifteenth century, newsheets were being circulated in German cities. In 1556 the Venetian government published *Notizie scritte*, for which readers had to pay a fee. Modern newspapers appeared in the first half of the seventeenth century, with *Relation* in Germany in 1605, *Nieuwe Tijdingen* in Belgium in 1616, *Gazette* in France in 1631, and the *London Gazette* founded in 1665 in England. The first Japanese daily newspaper, *Yokohama Mainichi Shimbun*, started in 1870. In colonial America, early newspapers consisted of local gossip interspersed with economic and political information copied from newspapers in London.

After the conflict with England in 1765, newspapers became mouthpieces of political parties and factions. With the creation of the United States, partisan newspapers were founded (→ Partisan Press). In the 1820s, the → penny press was developed and newspapers included less partisan news, more local news, and more advertising. Newspapers in the United States today have become more informational as a result of the penny press. European newspapers still tend to be more partisan than their American counterparts (→ Party–Press Parallelism). Because of competition among newspapers, the idea of the “latest” news developed, along with simpler language and more illustrations, to attract readers. The competition between Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst at the beginning of the twentieth century resulted in the rise of sensational news and non-news items such as comics (→ Newspaper, History of).

*Technological innovations* in the mid-1800s also affected the content of the newspaper (→ Technology and Communication). Telegraph transmissions of news stories led to the development of the inverted pyramid style of writing, which includes the most important information in the first one or two paragraphs (→ News; Telegraph, History of; Telegraphic News). In the event of a telegraphic transmission interruption, the most important information would have gotten through. The wire services allowed newspapers to share expenses and provide more breadth in coverage. Additional technological innovations in the early twentieth century led to the inclusion of photographs and visual elements in the newspaper (→ News Agencies, History of).

The *political climate* influenced the content of some papers. *Iskra*, published by Lenin in 1900, provided a venue for revolutionary propaganda, and in 1925, *Thanh Nien* introduced Marxism to Vietnam. The Progressive era in the early twentieth century also had a significant impact on American journalism that led to objective journalism (→ Objectivity in Reporting). In addition, newspapers focused on the reporting of facts and providing both sides of an issue, with opinions relegated to the editorial pages. The Kennedy era, the Vietnam War, the 1960s, and the → Watergate scandal were associated with the adversarial role of the newspaper. The focus on conflict has become the staple of front pages of national and metropolitan dailies.

Because of television, newspapers lost their role as a primary source of news and thus the amount of hard news was reduced and more soft or feature-type news was printed (→ Soft News). The development of other new media has also had a strong impact on the readership of newspapers and on news-gathering techniques. The loss of readership to other media has led some newspapers to explore a different news paradigm. In the mid-1990s, a group of newspapers in North Carolina started actively engaging the community in reporting civic issues via polls and focus groups. This movement, known as civic journalism, is an attempt, according to Baran (1999), to strengthen the identity of the newspaper as an indispensable local medium and thereby attract readers (→ Public Journalism). The loss of readership and the resulting economic pressures have also led to a reduction of the number of newspapers and the growth of chain ownership (→ Concentration in Media Systems). In the United States, four out of every five newspapers are owned by chains. Because of the Internet, computer-based reporting is replacing traditional in-person reporting and library archive research. In addition, most newspapers now have an online presence (→ Exposure to Print Media). Despite the growth of online newspapers, the World Association of Newspapers (2007) estimates that one billion people in the world read a daily newspaper.

## RESEARCH ON NEWSPAPERS

Hallin and Giles (2005) provide broad theoretical *categories of media systems*, dividing the western world into the liberal model, the polarized pluralist model, and the democratic corporatist model. The United States tends to follow the liberal model, in which state intervention is limited and where the profession of journalism centers on the objectivity norm. In this model, newspapers tend to be politically neutral. The Mediterranean countries of Europe follow the polarized pluralist model, in which newspapers are not market-driven but are an intellectual vehicle for elite discussion. In this model, political parallelism is high and the state plays more of an interventionist role. The democratic corporatist model combines features of the first two and is seen more in northern Europe (→ Political Journalists).

Newspapers were one of the first subjects of mass media research and continue to provide fertile ground to be mined by researchers. Academic research on newspapers varies according to the interest and approach of the scholars involved. The important role of newspapers in society in the areas of public affairs and politics has been examined on the local, national, and international levels. Some researchers approach the study of

newspapers from a sociological perspective, such as Tuchman in *Making news: A study in the construction of reality* (1978) and Shoemaker and Reese in *Mediating the message: Theories of influences on mass media content* (1991). These scholars focused on the interplay among the external and internal factors influencing the content delivered by newspapers. These factors include the socialization of the journalist, the organization of the newsroom, external influence from politicians and → public relations professionals, and the ideology of the cultural environment (→ Journalists' Role Perception). Similarly, but focusing more narrowly, some researchers have examined the influence of newsroom diversity on content production (→ Media Production and Content). Researchers have also examined legal and ethical issues pertaining to newspapers, such as access to government records, lawsuits, defamation, and freedom of the press.

The representation of news issues and the coverage of certain groups are also a popular research area. Relying predominantly on textual and content analysis, researchers have examined how events are portrayed in the newspapers and have compared coverage among different newspapers. Comparative studies of newspaper coverage range from examining what issues are covered and how issues are covered in privately and publicly owned newspapers, in dailies and weeklies, and around the world. Representation of certain groups is also examined in an abundance of studies examining the portrayal of women and racial and ethnic minorities, with most studies indicating that minorities are underrepresented and negatively represented (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Reality and Media Reality).

Newspapers have also been a staple of → media effects research. In the 1940s, researchers focused on newspaper readership and its effects on political attitudes and political participation. Traditional agenda-setting research focused on the salience of issues in newspapers and their impact on public salience (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Uses-and-gratifications research originated with the examination of newspapers, focusing on their surveillance, correlation, and escapist functions (→ Uses and Gratifications).

Applied researchers focus on readership studies and circulation research to help management determine content. These studies include reader profiles, analysis of who reads what topics, and the motives and rewards for reading a newspaper. Another management tool is typographical research, which focuses on news design elements such as headlines, white space, type, and their effect on readability and legibility. In addition, management is constantly exploring new delivery methods, specifically electronic ones (→ Applied Communication Research).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ News ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Penny Press ▶ Political Journalists ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Relations ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Soft News ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Telegraphic News ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Watergate Scandal

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## **Newspaper, Antecedents of**

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The first newspapers appeared in western Europe in the seventeenth century, in forms that laid the basis for, and anticipated the form and content of, the contemporary newspaper (→ Newspaper, History of). While they developed out of sixteenth-century print and manuscript news media, their advent constituted an early modern media revolution that was central to state formation, reading, and politics in this period. The quantity of news provision increased, resulting in a qualitative transformation, and news media became embedded in politics and culture (Zaret 2000; → News; Political News).

Newspapers can be defined by six specific characteristics: (1) publication, i.e., commercial availability to a public, (2) regular periodicity, (3) serial publication, (4) continuity in title and physical format, (5) topicality of content, and (6) heterogeneity of content (→ Newspaper). While the *Acta Diurna* of ancient Rome, and the newsletters that circulated in Europe from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, are clearly antecedents of the newspaper, they do not sufficiently meet these criteria. Elements of all six can be found in several kinds of news media in the sixteenth century, but these characteristics are first united in the seventeenth century across most of western Europe. The newspaper, as understood here, did not appear outside Europe prior to 1700, though other countries have older news media.

### PREDECESSORS IN SCRIPT AND PRINT

The history of newspapers demands some account of forms of news communication prior to 1600. The first newspapers developed out of the *printed pamphlet*. Since the Reformation, the printing press had increasingly been used for → propaganda purposes by governments and for commercial purposes by printers and publishers (→ Printing, History of; Printer-Editors). These stationers developed and exploited the public interest in topical events – wars, sensations, disasters, crimes, and punishments – by producing short, printed pamphlets in the vernacular. Printed pamphlets were occasional, but created the business practices, distribution networks, literary forms, and the market that would later be exploited more systematically and regularly by the first newspapers (Raymond 2003).

Newspapers also have their origin in *manuscript culture*. Manuscript newsletters satisfied interest in remote events, in wars but also rumor and gossip, among Europe's elite. From the sixteenth century, professional suppliers of manuscript news appeared. The Fugger family, for example, the proprietors of a financial house in Augsburg, supplied Europe's merchants with political and financial news in a series of newsletters from 1568 (Von Klarwill 1924). Venetian scribes produced *avisi* or *gazette*, containing regular updates of local and international news, from the 1530s onwards. These contained digests of other letters, indicating date and place of origin as a heading to the report: the same format that the earliest printed newspapers would follow. University students offered a more personalized news service in England later in the century. Paolo Sarpi gathered news within Venice by ear, and from correspondents across Europe, and supplied it in regular manuscript newsletters supplemented with shrewd political analysis through the 1610s, long before that city had printed news (De Vivo 2006). These were commercially published (publication applies to commercial manuscripts as well as printed items) and distributed at regular intervals, and, while their purpose was to supply privileged information, access to them was limited by cost. Manuscript news, unlike printed news, was not ordinarily subject to censorship or pre-publication licensing, though senders and recipients risked their correspondence being intercepted, read, and pursued with legal actions such as libel (Love 1993).

### THE EMERGENCE OF THE NEWSPAPER FORM

Printed news periodicals appeared in the late sixteenth century. *Mercurius Gallobelgicus*, a semi-annual volume mainly concerned with military conflict, was published in Cologne

and then Frankfurt between 1594 and 1635. Serial and consecutively numbered news pamphlets appear in London in 1592, containing news of the French wars of religion; these were followed in the 1620s by *corantos*, near-periodical, numbered pamphlets of foreign news, printed first in Amsterdam and then in London; and in 1641 the first English weekly newspaper, fitting all six criteria, appeared. A weekly newspaper (*Relation*) appeared at Strasbourg (then part of the German Reich) in 1605; another at Antwerp in the same year. An official French news periodical, *Le Mercure Français*, was founded in 1613; a more heterogeneous periodical, *Nouvelles Ordinaires*, appeared in 1631; the same year, political division and a propaganda war resulted in the *Gazette*, sponsored by Cardinal Richelieu, which was for many years France's dominant news publication. Similar developments took place in Basel from 1610, Frankfurt and Vienna by 1615, Hamburg and Berlin shortly afterwards, Amsterdam in 1618, and Sweden from 1645. The *Gaceta de Madrid* appeared in 1661, initially annually, becoming weekly in 1667. A daily publication appeared in Leipzig in 1650. The first newspaper in Russia appeared in 1703. An attempt was made to found a newspaper in Britain's American colonies in 1690, but Boston's *Publick Occurrences* was suppressed after a single issue; the *Boston News-Letter* was established with greater longevity in 1704 (Dahl 1952; Solomon 1972; Chartier 1982; Clark 1994; Raymond 1996; Raymond 2003, 106–108).

The pattern, in most countries, is to move from occasional publication, through serial publication, to periodical publication, followed by an expansion of contents, an increase in frequency, and subsequently by regional differentiation within the country. The conventions and contents of manuscript newsletters and occasional pamphlets are appropriated and adapted, resulting in rapid *formal experimentation*. The publishers (or financiers) of newspapers would employ an editor to digest news from various sources, often soldiers and postmasters; soon editors would take a more active role, exploring new styles for presenting the news, including editorials. Publishers targeted specialized markets, including groups defined by political opinion, profession, or interests. Advertisements were soon introduced, and publications thereby included the three elements of content that would be seen as defining the form: news, → editorial, → advertising. Also to be found are: accounts of sport, word games, public notices, reviews of books, cultural affairs, inserts on recent history, and introductions to political theory. Medical and science journals borrowed the medium of the newspaper for other purposes in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

### **NATIONS, WAR, AND TRADE**

News follows war and trade. This is partly because of public interest in these matters, but also because news concerning war and trade insists on regular updates. Much of the rapid spread of newspapers in Europe took place during the thirty years' war (1618–1648). Moreover, governments were not reluctant to let their subjects or citizens read news of overseas wars (see → censorship, below; → Conflict as Media Content). The economic and transport infrastructure that was essential both to the supply of news to editors, and to the movement of printed newspapers to their readers, depended on postal networks and trade routes. The history of newspapers in the seventeenth century could be written as a series of annotations on a map of these networks, stretching from Antwerp to Brussels and the Habsburg Netherlands, to Augsburg, Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, and Leipzig,

to London, to Venice and thence throughout Italy, Seville, and throughout Scandinavia, thence to Edinburgh (Arblaster 2006). These points were connected by roads that saw communications and trade, and news and newspapers, spread along these major routes.

*Trade* provided an impetus for news distribution: merchants needed to know where military or political conflict might support or undermine their business, and information about goods and prices elsewhere formed a modest element of early newspapers (it was more plentiful in bespoke manuscript news). Yet trade networks were exploited in ways that were entirely indifferent to these financial interests: they provided an infrastructure that facilitated the gathering and commercial supply of all kinds of news.

There is, then, a series of paradoxes at the heart of newspaper culture. Newspapers exploit existing technologies and infrastructures, but frequently in ways that go against the perceived nature of those technologies and infrastructures. Newspapers are national phenomena – hence the nationalism of much newspaper historiography that seeks to assert the priority of one country or another in establishing the newspaper – yet they supply international news, cut across national boundaries, and enhance a sense of local and international as well as national communities (→ International News Reporting).

### CENSORSHIP AND “PROPAGANDA”

Most early newspapers shied away from news of the country in which they were published. This was because news, especially political news, was regarded as privileged information and was governed by norms of secrecy. In many states, to publish news was to risk imprisonment, and this fact alone operated as a significant impediment to the development of indigenous, regular, periodical news out of an existing market for occasional and imported news (→ Violence against Journalists). News was available to a political elite, and fears were commonly expressed that popular access to news would produce political instability. News was seen to belong to the secrets of state that preserved majesty and authority. Moreover, it was said, if the general populace – shopkeepers, tradesmen, apprentices, agricultural workers – was to spend time reading newspapers and discussing news they would devote less time to their proper professions, and trade would begin to decline. These fears or commonplaces were iterated and reiterated as soon as print became a relatively cheap commodity, and long after the newspaper was an established fact of social and political life.

The consequence was a series of *obstacles to the distribution of news*, in the form of pre-publication licensing and post-publication censorship, particularly focusing on printed news. These obstacles ranged from norms and conventions, through parliamentary legislation to royal proclamation; some form of restriction was in place across most of the world. Where news was published, it was frequently limited to foreign news (though it needs to be remembered that there was real interest in foreign news, in part because of the interest in trade, war, and religion). Surreptitious publication and surreptitious importation of books could circumvent these restrictions, which meant that news distribution occasionally developed as a strategy used by political oppositions.

Some states, France pre-eminent among them, pioneered the use of the *newspaper as an official medium*, communicating authorized views. Such activity promoted a government's point of view – though government bodies were frequently not unified during this period



– and created an official market that could drive out the surreptitious market in news. To speak of “propaganda” during the early modern period is an anachronism: the word was specifically associated with the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* and did not arrive at something like its modern meaning until the early nineteenth century. Early modern apologists for the state would have used a different and less value-laden group of words to describe their activities. In France, Théophraste Renaudot was hired by Richelieu to edit the *Gazette*, restricting rumor and promoting an interpretation of the news that served Richelieu’s purpose. Though Renaudot’s view of his purpose may have been quite idealistic, there is no doubt that his office was an instrument of the government (Solomon 1972). In England, both Charles I and the Long Parliament established weekly newspapers during the Civil War to boost the morale of their armies, to depreciate that of their opponents, and to curry support for their cause (Raymond 1996). After the Civil War, Charles II employed a licenser to the press who tracked down illicit publications, sought to silence dissent, and enjoyed a monopoly of news while editing the official newspaper. Promotion of one’s own view, combined with the suppression of the views of others, was established as the most effective means of governing opinion.

To conclude, the earliest newspapers should not be viewed solely from the perspective of their antecedence to the contemporary, or defined by the characteristics of the modern press. This Whiggish and frequently patriotic approach characterized newspaper historiography from its origins in the later eighteenth century until recently, and it impeded appreciation of the historical and cultural complexity of early newspapers. The media revolution that gripped seventeenth-century Europe produced a dynamic culture of news publication, consumption, and analysis.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Censorship ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Editorial  
▶ International News Reporting ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ News ▶ Newspaper  
▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Newspaper Journalism ▶ Political News ▶ Printer-Editors  
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## Newspaper, History of

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Historians tend to agree that the *Acta Diurna* in ancient Rome, a daily gazette of official news, was one of the most important precursors of the → newspaper as a public disseminator of topical information in the western world. (Newspapers, in their modern sense, would not emerge in countries such as China, Japan, and Korea until centuries later, but forerunners such as newsheets – containing official edicts and decrees – had limited circulation). Handwritten copies publicized news from police courts, accidents, deaths, the reporting of municipal councils, courts of law, and even the Senate. These reports were posted outside a variety of public buildings for the perusal of interested citizens. It would be over a thousand years, however, before technology, politics, and education would allow the regular commercial distribution of printed news in the form that we recognize today as the newspaper.

The introduction of printing to Europe around 1440 did not immediately prompt the development of anything resembling a modern newspaper (→ Newspaper, Antecedents of; Printing, History of). Economic and political conditions meant that newspapers took a longer period to make the most of this technology. The *Gazetta* of Venice was arguably the first newsheet of modern times, providing the merchant and political classes of Venice with eagerly awaited → news of the perceived threat from the Turkish empire. They were handwritten from 1536, but from about 1570 they were making the best use of available printing techniques. To a large extent, the newspaper as we know it became shaped by events and conditions in northwestern Europe from the seventeenth century and North America from the eighteenth century. It is on these areas that this brief account will concentrate.

### EARLY PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS

Periodical newsbooks and newsheets began to spread across the cities of Europe from the early seventeenth century. The *Relation*, published by Johann Carolus in the then German city of Strasbourg from 1605 onwards, is generally regarded as the first regular newspaper in print. The first newspapers in other countries, depending on the definitional criteria

used, emerged shortly thereafter: France (1631), Italy (1643), Sweden (1645), Spain (1641), Poland (1661), and Russia (1703). In the nonwestern world, newspapers began to replace earlier types of bulletins in the nineteenth century, such as in Mexico (1805), Brazil (1808), India (1819), Japan (1870), China (1874), and Egypt (1867).

Relatively liberal political conditions made newspaper production a viable activity in England from 1621, with the publication of the first *coranto* translated into English. The first dated and sequential newsbooks began to be published in England the following year. They required a certain sort of writing that was to distinguish newsbooks from other literary forms (→ Literary Journalism), one which was centered on the transitory and the contemporary, and foregrounded the political and the → public like no other. The first publication to be able to break the taboo on reporting the proceedings of Parliament was the *Heads of Severall Proceedings in this Present Parliament* from November 22 to 29, 1641, written by Samuel Pecke. The years of the English Civil War were the laboratory for many of the permutations of early journalism (→ Journalism, History of). They saw the birth of many modern techniques of modern political journalism, for instance: the planted item, the inadequately denied → rumor, and the inside story (Frank 1961, 54). From 1643, the *Mercuries* introduced satirical writing and scurrilous innuendo about public figures and overt political → propaganda, in the first regular attempts to create a public forum through a consistently partisan idiom in print. The period also witnessed the first experiments with → advertising in periodical publications. It would not be long before the interdependence of advertising and news became a characteristic combination of newspaper journalism with all the benefits and compromises this brings.

### THE FORMATION OF A PUBLIC SPHERE

By the Restoration of 1660 in England, there was a return to a situation of central and licensed control over newspaper journalism. The term “newspaper” is first used around 1670 with reference to a specific form of print culture beginning to take on its identifiable characteristics. The *Licensing Act* lapsed in 1695, not because the ruling political classes felt secure about unrestricted printing, but because it could no longer be administered efficiently. From this point we see the emergence of newspapers as central to what → Habermas (1989) has called a → “public sphere.” Habermas sees this public sphere as an arena in which a compromise between the competing interests of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy was negotiated to the benefit of the bourgeoisie, making use of its critical judgment. The first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, was published from 1702. Barbers’ shops, taverns, and especially coffee shops all formed part of a spreading national network of outlets for newspapers and other periodicals where people gathered informally to read, exchange opinion, or catch up on the latest rumor or gossip (→ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere).

Similar developments enabled the newspaper to become established within political constraints through much of western Europe. In 1777 the *Journal de Paris* became France’s first daily newspaper. In the German-speaking territories, the *Intelligenzblatt* was from the early eighteenth century a regular supplier of a wide range of commercial information, together with news about trials and deaths. Political content was usually confined to officially sanctioned newspapers edited and published by governments.

In *colonial America*, Boston was the birthplace of newspaper production with Benjamin Harris's *Publik Occurrences* of 1690, John Campbell's *Boston News-Letter* of 1704, and the *New England Courant* of John and Benjamin Franklin of 1721. After 1769, Isaac Doolittle printing machines enabled speedier and more voluminous production, and this technology enabled the country to become united in its aspirations for independence from Britain. The freedom of the American press from colonial control became one of the founding principles of the republican cause (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The newspapers of Isaiah Thomas and Samuel Adams's *Boston Gazette and Country Journal* provided journalism to stoke the revolutionary fires in the 1770s, and the interest in home news during these years occluded all else.

Newspapers played a central role too in the *French revolution* of 1789. Many of the leading figures were journalists or pamphleteers including Brissot, Marat, and Robespierre, and they produced newspapers such as *L'Ami du Peuple*, calling upon the absolute freedom of the press to represent the wishes of the people.

By the end of the century, three daily London-based newspapers had begun to draw together the strands of the extended experiment in newspaper journalism into a successful format. The *Morning Chronicle* edited by James Perry, the *Morning Post* edited by Daniel Stuart, and *The Times* were all combining credibility, probity, and financial success, and the first two were demonstrating the benefits of control of the whole newspaper by one manager, although this function was not described as "editor" before 1802. From this point, the financial success of newspapers was to be exploited by owners and editors to emphasize their editorial independence from government (→ Ownership in the Media). The rise of the leading article was a device that allowed this claim to be demonstrated on a daily basis on the important issues of the day, and increasingly newspapers sought out the best writers to articulate distinctive political and economic arguments for their readership.

## THE DEFEAT OF A RADICAL PRESS IN ENGLAND

As one set of developments was moving newspapers toward commercial respectability and political independence, a long suppressed radical impulse gained renewed momentum at the start of the nineteenth century in England (→ Radical Media). Under the impact of social and intellectual developments abroad in the shape of the American and the French revolutions, and at home in the wake of the unemployment and radical social upheavals of the early Industrial Revolution, readerships were being increasingly politicized along class lines. Newspapers began to address their readers in one of two ways: as a market for economic purposes or as a social class for political purposes.

Government fears of the impact of revolutionary ideas led them to raise the stamp duty twice between 1789 and 1797, but this merely encouraged the radicals to publish illegally and, in doing so, raise their oppositional credibility with their readers. The first phase between 1815 and 1819 included the writings of Cobbett, Carlile, Wade, and Wooler. This journalism, in the form of a weekly polemic, provided an organic link to the readerships it was targeting, the working classes.

The second phase of radicalism in the 1830s accompanied the push toward parliamentary reform, but expressed a strand of radical thinking that went beyond a mere shift in suffrage. Hetherington and O'Brien, for instance, ran unstamped newspapers to push for

political representation from the perspective of a specifically socialist critique of property, but the reduction of stamp duty from 1836 meant that the radical press was drowned in a torrent of cheap publications aimed at the working classes as a market.

## NEWSPAPERS AND MARKETS

By the early nineteenth century the aspirations for press freedom of the great revolutionary movements of the late eighteenth century had been moderated. It was to be in the commercialization of newspaper production that their editorial independence would come (→ Commercialization of the Media). This was linked to increased efficiency and speed in both production and distribution as new printing techniques and transport, both driven by steam, moved newspapers into the industrial age.

In the US, Benjamin H. Day produced the first successful *penny newspaper*, the *New York Sun*, from 1833. It was the first to target the ordinary people of the growing metropolis of New York in a language they could identify as their own (→ Penny Press). The success of the newspaper was also dependent on its sale on a daily basis on the streets, breaking with the tradition of more respectable papers for advance subscription and delivery (→ Quality Press). Gordon Bennett followed this successful pioneer in 1835 with his *New York Herald*, which perfected a popular blend of sport, crime, business, general news, and an increasing use of interviews with personalities in the news.

The removal of taxes and duties on newspapers between 1836 and 1855 in England shifted the onus of control definitively from political to commercial interests. The newspapers that emerged were commercially and politically incorporated and acted as a conciliatory, consensual channel between politicians, commercial interests, and the press rather than as an inflammatory intervention on behalf of a radicalized people in pursuit of rights and progress. Dropping taxation had made investment more attractive and paved the way for more competition between politically stable newspapers in the hands of so-called respectable men of property.

In newspaper form, the first entrant into this new order was the *Daily Telegraph* in 1855. This was a paper that at a penny was intended to introduce a different clientele to the daily newspaper. It brought together elements of the human interest of American popular journalism, public campaigning around issues of concern to its readership, and celebrity interviews. On the other hand, the continuing dominance of *The Times* in the elite market was based on its ability to enhance its political and editorial independence by investment in the latest technologies and maintenance of hugely profitable circulation and advertising.

In the US, the private transmission of news via telegraph assumed considerable importance during the Civil War (1861–1865; → Telegraph, History of). This had an impact on journalism in the systematization of its language and the development of the inverted triangle of the news story. The telegraph, in combination with the advanced system of shorthand introduced in 1840 by Pitman, meant that there was more of a verifiable base to much reporting of news, and therefore more scope to develop angles conforming to the particular identity of the individual paper. This was followed by further developments in printing and telegraphy into the 1870s including web rotary presses, the private wires, and the telephone. The new communication technologies allowed increasingly for information to be double-checked, which is considered by many to be

one of the defining features of modern journalism. The increased quantity and reliability of news, combined with the increase in advertising from the 1880s, meant that newspapers began to be able to concentrate on how the paper was put together rather than simply filling the space. Under the influence of more interventionist editors, newspapers developed identifiable house styles. Newspapers had always been a commodity, but they were rapidly becoming a more streamlined and capitalized commodity.

Improvements in print quality and better incorporation of visual material, including advertisements, forced newspapers to look increasingly to their visual aspect as consumers of journalism became more attuned to a wider range of aesthetic considerations in the layout and illustration of their papers (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of).

Pulitzer launched his New York *World* in 1883 and developed an invigorated version of popular journalism that was to be as influential in the US as it was in the rest of the world (→ New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century). It combined lively, topical writing, interviews with the celebrities of the day (→ Celebrity Culture), campaigns, and even stunts to attract publicity to the newspaper and an astute courting of the reader through its language and worldview.

Hearst, with his New York *Journal* from 1895, provided the competition that was to drive American newspapers more in the direction of → sensationalism and scandal (→ Scandalization in the News). He did much to refine the template for successful popular newspapers. The drive for readers led to the labeling of such newspapers as → “yellow journalism.” Both these newspapers were drawn into ever more populist appeals to an increasingly chauvinistic mood in the country during the Spanish–American war of 1896–1898, demonstrating the potential for newspapers to become agents of unbridled jingoism.

With the expansion of advertising, popular magazines in England tested markets for journalism lower down the social and financial scale and soon began mapping products onto that market (→ Magazine, History of). The first to try was George Newnes’s *Tit-Bits*, which was the herald of the new penny weeklies of the 1880s. Whatever their stylistic innovations, the penny weeklies’ most significant contribution was their enormous financial success, which enabled Harmsworth and Pearson in particular to found the two most influential newspapers of the early twentieth century, the *Daily Mail* (1896) and the *Daily Express* (1900). They built on the well-established tradition of an intimate form of address with their readers, a popular feature of both radical pamphlets, women’s magazines, and Sunday newspapers.

### THE LONG POPULAR CENTURY

Harmsworth’s reworking of the popular newspaper as primarily a vehicle to attract readers and advertisers had a lasting effect on the shape and content of journalism across the twentieth century, forcing other proprietors to adapt the content of their newspapers to match or improve upon the pattern he had set.

The *Daily Express* was launched to rival the *Daily Mail* and to exploit the new market for popular daily journalism that Harmsworth had opened. It innovated itself with news on the first page from 1901. These newspapers relied upon more editorial intervention to make copy fit the format and style of the paper. The role of the subeditor was pivotal in the creation of this new discourse, in fitting the copy into a format that allowed a newspaper

to be read on the move and tailoring it to fit the space available within the pictorial and advertising space. The “story” becomes the basic molecular element of journalistic reality and the distinctions of categories of news into “hard” and → “soft news” become institutionalized (→ News Routines).

### THE INTENSIFICATION OF PRESS COMPETITION

By the twentieth century, newspapers had become identifiably big business. The leading proprietors presided over a period that continued the trends toward concentration, competition, and entertainment in print media. This competition led among other things to a concentration of the market and a narrowing of political range (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Sensationalism, special offers, campaigns, layout, and aspects of writing style of the 1930s all became defining features of the popular newspapers of the age.

The relaunched *Daily Mirror*, from 1934 under the editorial direction of Bartholomew, triggered the tabloid revolution with its signature heavy black boldface for headlines, pin-ups, youthful style, simplified language, and prominent use of pictures to reach a new readership. It redrew the map of the popular newspaper by integrating all the visual appeal of popular culture and consumerism for the first time. After the war, the *Daily Mirror* soon began to climb to a pinnacle of influence in popular journalism, ousting the *Daily Express* with a populist, proletarian, and youthful appeal encapsulated in the slogan that ran from May 11, 1945: “Forward with the People.”

### TABLOIDIZATION

The most sustained and widespread set of debates around contemporary journalism emanates from the tabloid newspaper (→ Tabloid Press). “Tabloidization” may refer to: (1) an increase in news about celebrities, entertainment, lifestyle features, and personal issues, (2) an increase in sensationalism, the use of pictures, and sloganized headlines, (3) a decrease in international news and public affairs news including politics, (4) a reduction in the length of stories, and (5) a convergence with the agendas of popular and in particular television culture.

Elite newspapers have also been enmeshed in the clustering of trends characterized as tabloidization. The late twentieth century has seen a further narrowing of ownership and the incorporation of newspapers into more broadly defined → media conglomerates that have eroded the boundaries between journalism and media entertainment (→ *Infotainment*). In order to survive the intensification of competition, elite newspapers have become heavier and have more lifestyle and consumer coverage. They have increased the numbers of specialist supplements and size and quantity of high-profile advertisements. Most significant is the almost universal shift to a tabloid format. In the expanding tide of newsprint, the elite press’s relative coverage of foreign news has decreased (→ International News Reporting), yet they are providing a very different service from that of their predecessors in that, freed from the necessity to be first with breaking news, they can concentrate much more on opinion, commentary, and selective in-depth reporting.

Global trends such as online journalism and the rise of *freesheets* and blogs (→ Blogger) mean that the format and content as well as the social use of newspapers is

in the process of intense renegotiation, but it seems certain that some form of newspaper will survive: one which successfully incorporates these developments as part of a more diverse media package. Rupert Murdoch is the best example of a contemporary media mogul who is confidently positioning his newspaper empire in a convergent media environment. Newspapers are now at the hub of an increasingly hybrid operation that makes the whole newspaper package more akin to an extended magazine with specializations ranged around the core of a more general news function (→ Digitization and Media Convergence; News Corporation). Elite newspapers, in particular, at the start of the twenty-first century give a glimpse of a radically altered, more open-ended journalism under the influence of the → Internet, with its archival potential and more direct reader intervention via emails and blogs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Blogger ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Infotainment ▶ International News Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Literary Journalism ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ New Journalism, Nineteenth-Century ▶ News ▶ News Corporation ▶ News Routines ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Penny Press ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Quality Press ▶ Radical Media ▶ Rumor ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Soft News ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## **Newspaper Journalism**

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The newspaper is the oldest and arguably the most important of all media for journalism. More journalists work in newspapers than in any other media. Moreover, dominant ideas of news – as a factual, independent account of the day's principal events, set out in an



ordered way for a geographically defined audience – emerged historically along with the business of the → newspaper (→ Newspaper, History of). Newspapers thus provide much of the form or architecture through which journalists and their audiences recognize news (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001), such as the division of journalism into the categories → *news*, *features*, and *sports*, as well as journalistic ideals, including independence from power and speaking to and for a public. Changes in newspaper journalism are therefore the focus of particular scholarly concern, and some commentators suggest that recent changes signal the end of journalism (Hardt 1998).

In countries shaped by liberalism, the ownership of newspapers tends to be in private hands, and journalism experiences the characteristic tension between a dependence upon the marketplace and a jealously guarded freedom from political control which allows newspapers to claim status as the defenders of the public interest (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Journalism: Normative Theories; Political Economy of the Media). Critics argue that the balance tipped in the 1990s toward a dumbed-down, market-driven journalism, leading local and regional newspapers in particular to employ fewer journalists and to place emphasis on sensation and lifestyle at the expense of serious political news (Franklin & Murphy 1998; → Local News; Tabloidization). Scholars have documented a greater reliance on the *information subsidy* of public relations and a blurring of the line between advertising and reporting in many western countries.

Wider cultural trends are also likely responsible for changes in some newspaper → news values. With the rise of → identity politics, particularly the women's liberation movement, distinctions between public affairs and private lives have become less tenable, and newspaper journalism has responded by replacing so-called women's pages with large features and lifestyle sections and by moving features to the front of the paper. Historical studies further caution against making too much of declines in specific qualities of newspaper journalism. The ethical standards of the tabloids, for example, have risen and fallen many times (Engel 1996; → Tabloid Press).

The *traditions* of watchdog journalism, specialist correspondents, and in-depth investigations remain powerful influences on journalists' idea of the newspaper (→ Investigative Reporting; Journalists' Role Perception). Cultural studies of journalism point to the importance of the myths that journalists construct (see Zelizer 2004 for a review), such as exaggerating the role of the *Washington Post* in the resignation of US president Richard Nixon (Schudson 1995; → Watergate Scandal) or celebrating heroes as seen in responses to the murder of Anna Politkovskaya, of *Novaya Gazeta* (see [www.annapolitkovskaya.com](http://www.annapolitkovskaya.com)). The culture of independent, morally serious, and analytical reporting has found fresh impetus as first television and later the Internet weakened the newspaper monopoly on daily news, impelling newspapers to shift toward interpretation (Barnhurst & Mutz 1997), such as the *Independent* in the UK or the weekly *Die Zeit* in Germany, which devote whole pages to in-depth treatment of a single issue (→ Interpretive Journalism; Quality Press). Few newspapers can sustain a business producing such journalism, despite its high value to journalists. Some scholars characterize western newspaper journalism today as polarized between a mass of clerks retyping press releases and a few critical journalists who set news agendas (Bromley 1997).

Questions about what the *changes in newspaper journalism* mean have grown more complicated as recent scholarship has re-emphasized models not reducible to the liberal

one that informs the dumbing-down debate. The variety of models includes the distinctive newspaper traditions of many countries, such as the Italian tradition of politically affiliated newspapers (Hallin & Mancini 2004; → Italy: Media System), the complex democratic politics of popular newspapers (Conboy 2002; → Populism and Responsiveness), and the alternative press as an agent of political change (Downing 2001; → Alternative Journalism). Liberal models have also come under question from within, partly in response to a weakening of public trust in the authority of newspaper journalism. In the US, these concerns crystallized around the movement for public or civic journalism (→ Public Journalism), but dissatisfaction exists in many countries over such matters as journalists' claims to objectivity and their positioning of readers as spectators rather than as participants.

The case for studying newspaper journalism separately from the rest of the media is steadily weakening as news businesses and technologies converge (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). Converged *digital newsrooms*, with journalists producing news for multiple platforms, are emerging particularly in the US. Journalists rarely celebrate newsroom efficiencies, but the evidence of the impact on news quality is conflicting. Some analysts note that digitization has increased editorial control and facilitated more in-depth reporting (Avilés & León 2002). Journalists' relationships with the news public have changed across all media with the rise of the Internet, increasing the public demand for instant news and for greater participation in newsmaking (→ Citizen Journalism).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Interpretive Journalism ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Italy: Media System ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Local News ▶ News ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Populism and Responsiveness ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Quality Press ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Watergate Scandal

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# Newspaper, Visual Design of

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Newspaper design refers to the process of planning, selecting, organizing and arranging the → typography, photographs, illustrations, and graphics of → newspapers (→ Photography; Infographics). It also refers to the *look* or *style* of a newspaper (→ Design; Graphic Design). Newspaper design is highly conventional, so historians have noted visual features that comprise different stylistic periods. These styles are closely related to how publishers, editors, and journalists define the role of journalism in society (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001; → Journalism, History of; Journalists' Role Perception). Changing technology also profoundly influences newspaper design.

Visual newspaper design as a specialized profession within newspaper publishing is a recent occurrence. Before the 1960s, the organization of printed elements depended on journalistic custom and editors' and typesetters' daily production considerations (→ News Factors; News Routines; News Values).

## HISTORY OF PRINT AND NEWSPAPER DESIGN

The newspaper in the sense that we know it today – as a regularly occurring publication for the gathering and dissemination of news and opinions concerning current events – first made its appearance in Venice in 1536 (→ Newspaper, Antecedents of; Newspaper, History of). By the end of the seventeenth century in England, newspapers had become essential reading for citizens participating in government by public opinion in the new democracy taking shape there.

The conventions of book design developed in the sixteenth century (→ Book), and early newspapers followed them into the nineteenth century. They were visually dominated by text type, which was meant to be read like a book, from top left to bottom right. Initial letters (drop caps) or text-sized headlines often started the page or signaled a new story. The newspaper title, now called a *nameplate* or *flag*, was set in larger type, centered at the top of the page like a book title, establishing the practice of designing flags to carry a publication's identity. Following eighteenth-century calligraphic trends, some newspapers designed more decorative flags.

Nineteenth-century industrialization saw the rapid rise of a literate middle class and the development of mass consumption. With the press's role in politics now secure and business's need for advertising space expanding exponentially, the number and size of newspapers exploded (→ Political Communication; Advertising). New technologies supported this growth. Machine papermaking allowed editors to increase the size and number of pages in newspapers. Power-driven rotary presses and machine-set typography replaced vastly slower hand-production methods. These advances created space for experimentation in content and design, ever-larger staffs, and competition for readers (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Publishers divided their staff into three parts – editorial, advertising, and print production. Although complementary, each became a separate sphere that worked independently. Advertising began to drive design innovation. Early nineteenth-century ads had looked like editorial copy, set in the same type and to the same measure as editorial copy. But by mid-century, businesses sought visual advantage in their *ads*. Department stores and manufacturers began advertising heavily, employing more space, larger, decorative type, and illustrations. Ads became increasingly sophisticated as artists and advertising agencies were engaged (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). The editorial side had no choice but to adopt larger, more varied headlines. This established a visual syntax that made page position and scale communicate the relative importance of stories (→ Visual Communication). Larger headlines allowed readers to scan pages and locate stories of interest.

*Illustration and photography* had a profound impact on newspaper design. Starting in the 1820s, illustrated news magazines (→ News Magazine, History of), such as the *London Illustrated News*, Germany's *Illustrierte Zeitung*, and America's *Harper's Weekly* and *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News*, assigned illustrators to cover stories, draw portraits, and capture important events, such as coronations, funerals, and wars (→ Illustrated Newspapers). With artistic license, illustrators even sketched and interpreted events they had not witnessed. Illustrations were reproduced in newspapers as woodcuts and wood and zinc engravings (→ Prints; Printing, History of).

The invention of photography in 1834 created even more pressure to illustrate the news, and photographers were sent to cover it (→ Photojournalism). But due to printing limitations, photographs had to be reproduced as woodcut copies. In 1880 Stephen Horgan produced the first practical half-tone line screen for the *New York Daily Graphic*, which enabled photographs to be printed directly. Magazines initially pressed the quality limits of photographic technologies, but they were followed by large, city newspapers with the resources to experiment. In the twentieth century, the popularity of photo-magazines like *Life* led newspapers to develop their own Sunday rotogravure magazine supplements (→ Picture Magazines).

By the end of the nineteenth century, all the features of modern newspaper design – display type, photography, illustration, and graphics – were in place. In the hands of respectable editors, they provided readers with different kinds of information. But these tools could also attract readers by sensationalizing the news with giant, emotional headlines and attention-getting, if often misleading, images (→ Yellow Journalism). Even good newspapers fell victim to the temptation of large circulation. In 1898, most of the American press printed accusations that a Spanish mine had blown up the US battleship *Maine* in Havana harbor, killing 266 Americans. The resulting public outcry led to the

Spanish–American war and the US invasion of Cuba. Although these claims were never substantiated, newspapers manufactured graphics to explain exactly how the mine had sunk the ship. In the twentieth century, professional codes of ethics evolved that restricted editors’ use of misleading photos and layouts, although sensationalist tabloids that attract readers through newsstand sales continue such practices today (→ Standards of News; Ethics in Journalism; Historic Key Events and the Media).

Early twentieth-century newspaper designs were cluttered. They utilized rules between columns, above and below headlines, and after stories. As late as the 1950s more than a dozen stories might appear on the front page (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001). In production, advertisers first staked their claim on space, then section editors dummied or mocked-up the remaining “news hole.” The production side set the hot metal type and locked it into the press, often changing editors’ layouts to meet deadlines and fill space (→ News Production and Technology).

### PROFESSIONALIZATION OF NEWSPAPER DESIGN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The professionalization of journalism in the latter half of the twentieth century produced more thoughtful design (→ Professionalization of Journalism). Studies of the ease of identifying letter-forms (*legibility*) and understanding words (*readability*) contributed to a more functional approach (Zachrisson 1965). Editors began to make typographical decisions based on observing how readers scan pages and process reading material. Social changes, such as the increasing pace of life and the availability of alternative media, influenced newspaper readership. Edmund C. Arnold (1981) and Mario Garcia (1981) were among the first to argue that designers must address young readers and semi-illiterate adults who were turning from newspapers to → television news (→ Newscast). Of chief concern were the lost advertising dollars chasing them. With the invention of → cable television and the → Internet, their insights became more profound (→ Newscast, 24-Hour; Internet News).

Functionalist ideas about design began to emerge in the 1960s as hot metal type gave way to *photocomposition* and letter-press gave way to *offset lithography*. Photocomposition used paper type and half-tones that could be cut and pasted together in any configuration, and made it easy to change the size of type and pictures quickly. New technology also altered production. In hot metal printing, typesetters and page makeup artists were closely aligned with the press operators. With photocomposition, responsibility for design shifted more onto the editorial and advertising staffs. Printers simply created and printed the offset plates, effectively removing them from the design process.

*Grid sheets* for pasting-up paper type and photos replaced rigid columns of type. Every newspaper created its own grid with standard columns and gutters. Grids served more as guides than a straightjacket, providing a standard horizontal and vertical template necessary to lay out large newspapers on a daily basis. A key question for visual designers became how to violate the grids creatively, while still adhering to their overall parameters.

Modular design simplified newspaper layout by packaging headlines, stories, photos, and graphics into rectangles and squares. With fewer modules per page, readers were meant to be attracted by a cleaner, less daunting look. The more staid look of modular

design was enhanced by the reintroduction of color, which had died out during the Great Depression. Color added a powerful form of emphasis and was easy to print with offset.

With the advent of electronic publishing and *computer layout programs* like Quark XPress and PageMaker, more backroom jobs were eliminated in favor of *editorial designers* or *visual journalists* who resided in the newsroom (→ News Workers). As a result, by the 1990s design had become central to the planning and news-gathering processes rather than an afterthought. Editors, writers, and photographers were asked to “think visually” and to imagine new possibilities for creating photographic and graphic information. Designers helped them conceive, plan, and develop *story packages* that are central to today’s newspaper marketing strategy (→ Media Marketing). Photojournalists provide a caption explaining what and who appear in the image, an early step in framing the preferred meaning (→ Framing of the News; Framing Effects). But newspaper designers crop, scale, and adjust light and color balances in Photoshop (→ Digital Imagery). Other digital manipulations transform photos into photo-illustrations, and designers must indicate such alterations in print.

Maps were the world’s earliest news graphics. Other graphics include diagrams that explain how a system works, *tables* that array data and lists, and *graphs* (Tufte 1990). Designers believe *infographics* facilitate readers’ comprehension by presenting numerical information, processes, and procedures more succinctly and clearly than text (Harrower 2002). Today, drawings and photo-illustrations are mostly used to visualize what cannot be photographed live: courtroom proceedings; fashion or product designs; personal memories and accounts; impressions, sensations, feelings, and other intangibles. Feature sections such as lifestyle, travel, health, and food use the most illustrations, following a longstanding pattern of innovation in newspaper design (Barnhurst 1994). Editorial or opinion content provided an early and continual location for political → cartoons, appearing as line drawings, the same way → comics do (→ Caricature).

Stylistically, photo treatments have changed with the times, first appearing in black and white, then in color. Posed portraits gave way to candid images before designers entered the newsroom, and today designers use photographs from sources outside the newspaper. Citizens’ ability to take and send mobile phone photos electronically has added a new dimension to photojournalism (→ Citizen Journalism).

Due to media convergence, newspaper design is evolving rapidly (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). Major newspapers have designed web pages to make their content available online. Their sites often contain more information – through sidebars, links to other sites, slide shows, and even video – than the newspaper itself. It remains to be seen whether such innovative design and packaging strategies can significantly slow or reverse the loss of newspaper readership. Some believe the emphasis on newspaper design has been a misdirected, futile attempt to save paper media, and that the future of news is electronic.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Caricature ▶ Cartoons ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Comics ▶ Design ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Historic Key Events and the Media ▶ Illustrated Newspapers ▶ Infographics ▶ Information and Communication

Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Marketing ▶ News Factors ▶ News Magazine, History of ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ News Workers ▶ Newscast ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Newspaper Journalism ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Political Communication ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Prints ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Standards of News ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Typography ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## **Newsreel**

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A newsreel was a single film reel of topical → news items, shown in cinemas across the world for much of the twentieth century. The term “newsreel” is too often loosely applied to mean any kind of cinema film depicting a news story, so that the topical films of the 1890s made by the Lumière brothers are sometimes misleadingly called newsreels (→ Cinema; Cinematography, History of). But the newsreel was a specific form that arose with the habit of regular cinema-going in the late 1900s, when a short reel of news stories came to be accepted as a suitable component of the emerging mixed cinema program.

Newsreels were thereafter issued once or twice a week, to match the changes in cinema programs. The first newsreel proper was *Pathé Fait-Divers*, subsequently *Pathé Journal*, first issued in France in 1908, although there were examples of regular programming of news film by some cinemas that preceded it. The form soon spread worldwide, encouraged by the spread of the French multinationals Pathé and Gaumont. The first newsreel in Britain was *Pathé's Animated Gazette*, in 1910; the first in America was *Pathé's Weekly*, in 1911. The newsreel achieved prominence during World War I, when its acceptance by

audiences led the American, British, and French governments to create their own → propaganda newsreel (as America did with *Official War Review* and France with *Annales de la Guerre*) or co-opt an existing reel (as the British did with *Topical Budget*; → War Propaganda). But it was in the 1920s that the newsreel rose to new heights of popularity and influence; by now it was a feature of most cinema programs, and benefited both from the general rise in cinema-going and from the giddy round of sport, celebrity, achievement, and disaster that characterized the decade.

Newsreels until 1929 were silent. Such commentary as they provided was in the form of titles preceding and then intercut into the action. The *appearance of sound newsreels* coincided with increased dominance by the major → Hollywood studios. Fox Movietone, Paramount, and Universal began to be the names most familiar to newsreel viewers across the world, as local versions were issued in various countries. A newsreel was a difficult financial proposition for an independent, given the small part of the cinema program that they occupied (10 minutes or so), while they became a convenient part of the programming package that a major producer might offer, as well as being a branding tool.

World War II brought further prominence to the newsreels. There was no government takeover in Britain, as had been the case in the previous war, but there were specialist reels directed toward workers and the armed services. In America the five main newsreels (Fox Movietone, MGM, Paramount, Universal, and Warner-Pathé) continued to operate independently throughout the war, while each also contributed to a government reel, *United Newsreel* (1942–1945), designed for overseas exhibition. In Germany, all of the newsreel production was subsumed under a single service, *Deutsche Wochenschau* (1940–1945; → Propaganda in World War II). In the years immediately following the war, an Anglo-American re-education newsreel, *Welt in Film* (1945–1952), was exhibited throughout Germany. The war gave the newsreels a new importance, and in many ways represented the peak of the medium. But it also sowed the seeds of the medium's decline, as audiences were exposed to issues and territories that widened their sense of what the news could be. In peacetime the newsreels, trapped in rigid formulae, would struggle to regain that same degree of audience respect.

Television spelled the *end of the newsreels*. The audience was moving away from the cinemas and into the living-room, and television news was simply quicker with the news. Early → television news services, such as the → BBC's *Television Newsreel* (1948–1954), followed the newsreel style, and often employed former newsreel staff, but evolution to daily news broadcasts and a presenter-led format made the bi-weekly newsreels seem old-fashioned in both presentation and news values. The newsreel had always favored the noncontentious, news as part of a cinema program whose prime purpose was to entertain. If the common perception of the newsreel as being fixated on trivia, sensation, and ceremony (“a series of catastrophes ended by a fashion show,” in Oscar Levant's cruel summing up) is oversimplified, it was nevertheless a medium whose time had gone. Gradually the newsreels passed away, the last newsreel in America, *Universal News*, closing in 1967, the last in Britain, *British Movietone News*, closing in 1979. Some anomalies remained (the Belgian *Belgavox* continued, with government support, into the 1990s), but essentially the newsreel ceased to be a vital medium by the end of the 1950s.

The newsreel was a powerful means of communication, whose historical significance has been sorely neglected. Newsreels were seen by hundreds of millions across the globe



for several decades. Through this particular medium the public was exposed to the issues and personalities of the time, and introduced progressively to news matters beyond the confines of particular countries. It was also a communicative medium in the way its homely style and populist agenda suited the mass cinema audience. Newsreels, at their height, were produced with a sound understanding of what their audience was looking for.

This considerable power was, however, colored by a pusillanimous attitude that was eventually rejected by audiences who, postwar, expected more from a visual news service and found this in the newsreels' logical successor, television news. But if the newsreels were a subservient medium, strongly criticized for their cautious approach and support of the political status quo, they were nevertheless immensely influential. Very much a twentieth-century medium, newsreels played a major part in conferring visibility on things, in making the visually emphatic newsworthy (→ Visual Communication; Visual Culture). If we judge things by appearances, by what our screens show us, and how people of influence comport themselves on those screens, then the newsreels were a medium of real historical importance, not least because their images of the twentieth century now lie in footage libraries and will continue to color our view of the past for as long as we still believe what we see on our screens.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Cinema ► Cinematography, History of ► Hollywood ► News ► Propaganda ► Propaganda in World War II ► Television ► Visual Communication ► Visual Culture ► War Propaganda

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## **Nielsen Ratings**

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Nielsen is a name synonymous with television audience measurement throughout much of the world. Today, it is associated with a family of services that provide estimates of the size and composition of media audiences, loosely referred to as Nielsen ratings. Those numbers are essential to the operation of commercial media, since they constitute a currency used to sell audiences to advertisers.

Advertiser support of American *radio broadcasting* began in the 1920s. However, for radio to compete with print for advertising revenues, the industry needed to quantify its audience. By the early 1930s, telephone surveys were used to produce what came to be called radio “ratings” (→ Rating Methods). Technically, a rating is the percentage of the total possible audience tuned to a particular station or program, but the term is often used to label all estimates of audience size and composition. In the late 1930s, a market researcher named Arthur C. Nielsen (1897–1980) developed a meter, called an “audimeter,” which could keep a running record of the wavelength to which a radio receiver was tuned. In 1942, Nielsen launched a “Radio Index,” which estimated American radio network audiences using audimeters placed in a sample of 800 homes (→ Exposure to Radio). In 1950, Nielsen adapted the constantly evolving audimeter to the business of measuring *television audiences* (Beville 1988). By the end of the twentieth century, the A. C. Nielsen Company had emerged as the sole supplier of television audience ratings in the United States, and the term “Nielsen’s” became a kind of shorthand for TV ratings used by media executives and the general public alike (→ Exposure to Television).

The company originally founded by A. C. Nielsen Sr. has since been sold and reorganized a number of times. But the Nielsen brand and core businesses remain. Nielsen companies and/or their partners now provide audience measurement services in the United States and dozens of countries in Asia, Europe, Africa, and Latin America. Indeed, as advertising-supported media proliferate around the world, so too does the need to measure audiences.

In the United States, Nielsen Media Research provides a variety of audience estimates. The principal television measurement services are the *Nielsen Television Index (NTI)*, which uses a panel of roughly 10,000 households equipped with → people-meters to estimate television network audiences, and the Nielsen Station Index (NSI), which uses a combination of meters and diaries to estimate TV station audiences in 210 local market areas in the United States. In recent years, Nielsen has expanded its measurement operations to include video games, cinema, outdoor advertising, product placement, and, through its subsidiary Nielsen//NetRatings, various Internet-related user behaviors. The company has also announced an “anytime anywhere media measurement” initiative to track all manner of video consumption regardless of the technology involved (e.g., digital video recorder, portable, and web-based distribution).

As the most visible form of audience measurement, Nielsen ratings play a critical role in the operation of commercial electronic media. In the US alone, tens of billions of dollars in advertising are spent in accordance with Nielsen audience estimates. Television programs are either canceled or renewed largely on the basis of their ratings performance – as are the contracts of media executives. As the quasi-official scorekeeper for television, Nielsen even draws the ire of politicians and cultural critics with some regularity. Though the methods Nielsen uses to produce ratings will change along with the media environment, the Nielsen name and core businesses are likely to remain a fixture of the media industries for a long time to come.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Media Marketing ▶ People-Meter ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Ratings ▶ Survey

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## **Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth**

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Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann stands for a paradigm shift in the field of media effects research. In 1972 she presented her → spiral of silence theory in Tokyo in a lecture entitled “Return to the concept of powerful mass media.” This paper can be seen as a break with the “minimal effects” hypothesis (→ Media Effects). Noelle-Neumann argued that research confined itself to short-term media influences, that it used poor measures, and failed to see crucial factors such as the consonance of the media, their cumulative effects, and their influence on the climate of opinion (→ Media Effects Duration). She argued that these effects could only be measured by using a combination of media content analyses and representative public opinion polls – preferably by conducting several waves of → surveys. Above all in the USA, her spiral of silence theory gave rise to a great number of empirical investigations that made Noelle-Neumann one of the best-known figures in communication research worldwide.

Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (b. 1916) studied *Zeitungswissenschaft* (newspaper science), history, philosophy, and American studies in Berlin. In 1937/8 she received a scholarship at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. In 1940 she obtained her doctorate in Berlin with a dissertation on public opinion research in the USA, Emil Dovifat being her doctoral supervisor. She then worked as a journalist until the end of the Third Reich. For this she has come under repeated attack (Simpson 1996; Kepplinger 1997). In 1947, Noelle-Neumann founded the *Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach*, where she paved the way for opinion research in Germany. She regarded her institute as a bridge between commercial and academic research. Thanks to the innumerable method experiments that she dedicated above all to questionnaire design (→ Interview, Standardized), to the set-up of rating → scales, and to sampling methods (→ Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom), Allensbach indeed gained an exceptional position among survey research firms. Her textbook on the methods of opinion research (Noelle-Neumann 1963) has been translated into several languages (→ Research Methods).

In addition to developing methodology, Noelle-Neumann helped Allensbach to acquire a strong profile as an advisor for political parties (election research), as well as in the fields of market research (media analyses) and social research. Among other things her institute assisted in election campaigns for the German chancellors Adenauer and Kohl (both from the Christian Democratic Party). As far as her sympathy for this political party is concerned, Noelle-Neumann neither kept it secret, nor concealed her conviction that academics should intervene in public → discourse. In Germany more than anywhere else, this commitment earned her criticism implying that she was producing results that were politically useful (→ Communication Research and Politics). Studies on press concentration (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Germany: Media System), on press editorial department structures, and on the media's influence on voters' behavior (→ Political Communication) came under particular attack.

In 1964 Noelle-Neumann was offered the newly created chair of *Publizistik* (public communication) at the *University of Mainz*. Trying there to win support for the use of empirical research methods (especially in the case of representative surveys, experiments, and quantitative content analysis), she became the most important driving force for a shift in the German-speaking scientific community toward an empirical social scientific approach (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe). To her, the way things had developed in the USA was declaredly the model for imitation.

Cooperation between the Institut für Publizistik in Mainz and the Institut für Demoskopie Allensbach made it possible for Noelle-Neumann to encourage or herself carry out pioneering studies in several areas of research. In addition to media effects research and election research, special attention has to be drawn in this context to international comparative research on → journalism (→ Journalists' Role Perception), to vocational field research (self-understanding and the social condition of journalists, relations between editorial staff and media owners), and to happiness research (*Glücksforschung*). Furthermore, in developing the personality strength scale Noelle-Neumann made a major contribution to opinion leadership research (→ Opinion Leader). Composed of 10 items for self-description, this scale makes it possible to identify people with great charisma and assertiveness. Sociometric tests have shown that influentials hold central positions in networks and have a large circle of acquaintances, and that this enables them to overcome social communication barriers (Weimann 1991). Noelle-Neumann's scale is used in political research, marketing, media planning, and network research.

Under Noelle-Neumann's direction, the Mainz Institut für Publizistik became the discipline's leading institution of learning in Germany. The "Mainz School" has produced communication scientists of international renown such as Winfried Schulz, Hans Mathias Kepplinger, Jürgen Wilke, Wolfgang Donsbach, and Hans-Bernd Brosius. Establishing links between scientific findings and training issues (→ Journalism Education) is part of the Mainz Institute's tradition. So is its international orientation; in this context, particular emphasis must be put on Noelle-Neumann's cooperation with the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in the USA, and especially with Norman Bradburn. Between 1978 and 1991 Noelle-Neumann spent six trimesters in Chicago as a visiting professor, teaching political science.

Noelle-Neumann's major contribution to the study of mass communication is her spiral of silence. That this theory follows the "powerful effects" principle is one of the

reasons why it has given rise to debate. Wherever powerful effects are supposed to exist, media criticism is not far away, and neither is the resistance of journalists. Despite the debates, it is beyond dispute that Noelle-Neumann brought to the discipline of communication one of the most important theoretical innovations of the second half of the twentieth century. The spiral of silence theory is a macro-theory that comes as a challenge to the social sciences. It has brought the notion of public opinion back into the center of scholarly debate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Western Europe ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ▶ Communication Research and Politics ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Discourse ▶ Germany: Media System ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Political Communication ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Scales ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Survey

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## **Nollywood**

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"Nollywood" – the Nigerian direct-to-video film industry – has become the third largest film industry in the world, producing a staggering 1,500 titles per year. It began during the Nigerian political, social, and economic crisis of the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the collapsing national currency made celluloid film production prohibitively expensive and when rampant crime made people hesitate to go out to cinemas at night. Widespread ownership of video cassette recorders, an infrastructure developed to sell pirated cassettes of foreign films, numerous personnel who had been working in film, television, or

theatre, and a huge potential market allowed the creation of a novel film industry based entirely on video (→ Video; Africa: Media Systems).

The pivotal figure in the creation of the Nigerian video film industry is Kenneth Nnebue, an Igbo dealer in electronic goods who in 1992 produced *Living in Bondage*, the first film in Igbo, followed by *Glamour Girls* in 1993, the first film in English. The industry is still dominated by Igbo businessmen, who often finance films as well as control their marketing and distribution. In some cases, marketers such as Nnebue and Ojiofor Ezeanyaeche have evolved into writing and directing roles, shaping the creative vision of films (→ Cinema).

The business model is to make films very cheaply and very quickly: the average budget is about \$20,000, and films are normally shot in a week or two and released a couple of weeks later. The Nigerian penchant for quick returns on investments informs this model, but it is also determined by the need to stay ahead of pirates, who copy any successful film. Profits leak away in other ways besides piracy. There is no mechanism for producers to receive revenues from the thousands of video rental shops. The lucrative foreign export market for Nigerian films is dominated by pirates, and → television stations that broadcast Nigerian films in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa pay little or nothing to filmmakers (→ Globalization of the Media). All this, coupled with the glut of films in the market, makes heavy investment in a single film risky. Budgets over \$60,000 are rare. The result is visible deficiencies in everything from script development to rehearsals and lighting. Many films are now shot with good digital cameras, but sound recording is a particular problem due to lack of equipment and trained personnel (→ Film Production).

The term “Nollywood” is of recent coinage and is not universally accepted. It refers primarily to films made in English and therefore obscures the important Yoruba and Hausa branches of Nigerian video film production. Yoruba films stem from the Yoruba traveling → theatre tradition, which flourished for half a century on stage, on television, and on celluloid film. Deeply rooted in the Yoruba artistic and cultural heritage as well as responding to contemporary urban life, the Yoruba filmmakers are noted for their clannish social organization and their loyal ethnic audience. Hausa filmmaking is heavily influenced by → Bollywood rather than → Hollywood and responds to a very different moral, religious, and cultural climate. Kano State, the heart of the Hausa film industry, established its own → censorship board after it introduced Islamic Sharia law in 2000, enforcing a ban on any on-screen touching between the sexes.

Nollywood films, on the other hand, are notoriously freewheeling and sensationalistic. Melodrama pervades the acting, directing, and writing. Their convoluted plots normally sprawl across sequels. In keeping with African cultural values, family relationships tend to be the focus of attention, though there are also plenty of love stories and a gallery of heart-throb actors (Richard Mofe-Damijo, Genevieve Nnaji, Ramsey Noah, Omotola Jalade-Ekeinde). A star system is highly developed: the publicity posters and jackets of the films are invariably covered with the faces of actors who the producers hope will be familiar to the perhaps illiterate consumers (→ Stars). Actors like Pete Edochie and Zach Orji have appeared in literally hundreds of films. Directors like Chico Ejiro, Lancelot Oduwa Imasuen, and Andy Amenechi have shot well over a hundred films each.

Most films register the anxiety that besets contemporary Nigeria, where violence is endemic, corruption is pervasive, economic life is precarious, the social fabric is fraying, and spiritual warfare rages. The films are full of supernatural elements: witchcraft attacks

by family members, consultations with diviners about fertility problems, guardian spirits enforcing the traditional morality of communities, businessmen and politicians seeking wealth and power through human sacrifice, and Bible-wielding pastors combating the forces of darkness.

Because video technology is so cheap and easy to use (→ Technology and Communication), Nollywood has arisen as a grassroots phenomenon of petty producers and as an expression of urban popular culture (→ Popular Culture; Film as Popular Culture). In these respects, as in its spectacularly successful conquest of Nigeria's screens, it contrasts with African celluloid filmmaking, which has had minimal distribution in Africa and so has had to rely on external, mostly European funding and foreign festival, art-house, and school audiences.

Nollywood films have flooded the African continent. They are shown on television in Namibia and Congo, imitated in Ghana and Kenya, sold wherever there are Africans in Europe and North America, and can be bought or downloaded from the → Internet. Tunde Kelani, the most respected of Nollywood filmmakers, has shown *Thunderbolt*, *Saworoide*, and *Agogo Eewo* at many international film festivals. Nollywood has truly revolutionized the African media environment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Bollywood ▶ Censorship ▶ Cinema ▶ Cinematography ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Film Production ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Piracy ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Stars ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Theatre ▶ Video

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# **Nonparametric Analysis**

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A class of data analysis procedures for statistical hypothesis testing that, unlike parametric statistical analysis, makes no assumptions about the sampling distribution of a statistic

being evaluated ( $\rightarrow$  Sampling, Random), *nonparametric statistical analysis* is also called *distribution-free statistical analysis*. The two terms have a slightly different meaning but are frequently used interchangeably. While nonparametric statistical inference is not bound to a priori specified parameters of a statistical model, distribution-free statistical inference is not bound to an a priori specified sampling distribution of a statistic that serves as estimation for a parameter in a population.

### NONPARAMETRIC OR PARAMETRIC STATISTICAL ANALYSIS?

Two indications suggest preferring a nonparametric over a parametric statistical analysis: (1) measurement problems and (2) problems with the assumptions of a parametric statistical test.

*Measurement problems:* in a strict sense, the results of a parametric statistical analysis cannot be meaningfully interpreted if the data were measured on a measurement level other than an interval or ratio level ( $\rightarrow$  Measurement Theory). While most statisticians and researchers agree on the fact that ordinal data require a nonparametric approach, there is still disagreement over whether statistical tests for analyzing nominal data require a parametric or nonparametric statistical analysis. Given large samples, the common practice is to analyze nominal data in a parametric fashion by referring to a chi-square sampling distribution. However, operating with small samples requires analyzing nominal data with a nonparametric approach (see example below) since a specific sampling distribution with known parameters is missing. For the same reason, nonparametric statistical tests are commonly labeled as *statistical tests for the analysis of small samples*.

*Problems with the assumptions of a parametric statistical test:* parametric statistical tests are bound to mathematical-statistical assumptions such as homogeneous variances in populations or normally distributed variables. If the collected data suggest that mathematical-statistical assumptions are violated, the results of a parametric statistical analysis may be biased. Many parametric statistical analyses are either robust or conservative test procedures. This means that results are either unbiased or favor the null  $\rightarrow$  hypothesis in a statistical test decision even if assumptions are violated. Communication (empirical) researchers usually consider this a minor problem. However, conservative parametric test decisions typically are associated with a reduced power of the corresponding statistical test ( $\rightarrow$  Test Theory). In other words, it is more difficult to detect a statistically significant result with a parametric statistical test analysis if the mathematical-statistical assumptions are violated. It can be shown that under the condition of violated assumptions a nonparametric test analysis may result in an unbiased test decision with higher power than its parametric equivalent.

In summary, a nonparametric test analysis is recommended if data have been collected on an ordinal or nominal level, if sample sizes are small, and if there is evidence that mathematical-statistical assumptions of a parametric test analysis have been violated.

### A SELECTION OF NONPARAMETRIC STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Communication researchers can select among numerous nonparametric statistical procedures for analyzing data. Typically, a useful categorization of nonparametric procedures



refers to measurement level and the number of variables as categorization criteria. The following (limited) selection of nonparametric statistical analyses covers just a few of the most common nonparametric test procedures.

*Nominal data, one variable:* the *binomial test* analyzes the statistical significance of deviations from a theoretically expected distribution of dichotomous observations (such as the flip of a coin). The *multinomial test* generalizes the binomial test for observations with more than two categories.

*Nominal data, two variables:* the *Fisher-Yates test* (see example below), which is also called *Fisher's exact test*, examines the significance of an association between two variables with two categories each (which defines a  $2 \times 2$  contingency table). The two versions of the *Fisher-Freeman-Halton test* generalize the Fisher-Yates test concept for  $k \times 2$  (two variables,  $k$  categories of the one and 2 categories of the other variable) and  $k \times m$  (two variables,  $k$  categories of the one and  $m$  categories of the other variable) contingency tables.

*Ordinal data, one variable:* the *median test* and the *Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon test* (also called *Wilcoxon rank-sum test*) analyze whether the difference in medians between two independent samples is statistically significant. The *Kruskal-Wallis test* can be applied for more than two independent samples (as in a one-way analysis of variance). Similar to a repeated measures analysis of variance, a *Friedman test* can be applied to analyze differences in dependent samples. Both the Kruskal-Wallis test and the Friedman test require a transformation of measurements into ranks. There are nonparametric statistical test analyses for more than one variable and more than two independent samples. These procedures, however, are rather complex and require a profound mathematical-statistical background to understand.

*Interval data:* unlike the aforementioned statistical tests, nonparametric statistical tests for interval data do not require a prior transformation of measurements into ranks, which usually results in a loss of information. These test procedures are indicated if the size of samples is small and, therefore, parametric analytical procedures are out of the question. The *Fisher-Pitman Randomization test*, for example, analyzes whether differences between two independent samples are statistically significant (or in other words, whether two samples originate from the same population). The *Fisher Randomization test* analyzes the same hypothesis for two dependent samples.

In addition to nonparametric procedures for testing differences in two or more samples, numerous nonparametric correlation coefficients for the analysis of associations between ordinal variables are available ( $\rightarrow$  Correlation Analysis). The most common nonparametric correlations are the *Spearman's Rank Correlation* ( $\rho$ ) and *Kendall's Rank Correlation* ( $\tau$ ) for ordinal data.

## EXAMPLE

The nonparametric Fisher-Yates test and the corresponding parametric chi-square test for  $2 \times 2$  contingency tables will be used as an illustration of the nonparametric test concept.

A media researcher is interested in analyzing whether men tend to prefer nonfiction TV programs, such as documentaries or news, and women tend to prefer fiction TV programs, such as movies. Hence, the specific (one-sided) research hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) under evaluation

is: “There is an association between gender and preference (in the population). The preference for TV programs is specific. Men prefer nonfiction TV programs while women favor fiction programs.” The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is: “There is no such association in the specified direction; the variables gender and preference (fiction vs. nonfiction) are independent (in the population).” In mathematical terminology, the research hypothesis can be written as  $H_1: \pi(\text{men/nonfiction}) > \pi(\text{women/nonfiction})$ , and the null hypothesis as  $H_0: \pi(\text{men/nonfiction}) \leq \pi(\text{women/nonfiction})$ .

In a first study a sample size of just  $n = 15$  men and women could be realized. The data collection results in the following  $2 \times 2$  contingency table:

	Nonfiction	Fiction	Sum
Men	4(a)	1(b)	5
Women	3(c)	7(d)	10
Sum	7	8	15

The sample data seem to indicate an association in the right direction: men tend to favor nonfiction and women fiction TV programs. The question, however, is whether this association is statistically significant, i.e., is not a random result. As a significance level we choose  $\alpha = 0.05$ . Due to the small sample size the nonparametric Fisher-Yates test will be applied. For the first step, we will determine the random probability of the  $2 \times 2$  frequency distribution above. For this we use the hypergeometric probability function according to the following formula:

$$p = \frac{(a + b)! \cdot (c + d)! \cdot (a + c)! \cdot (b + d)!}{n! \cdot a! \cdot b! \cdot c! \cdot d!} = \frac{5! \cdot 10! \cdot 7! \cdot 8!}{15! \cdot 4! \cdot 1! \cdot 3! \cdot 7!} = 0.093$$

Given the observed marginal sums, the probability that the  $2 \times 2$  table above occurs at random is 0.093 or 9.3 percent. This, however, is just the probability of the observed frequency distribution. In a second step we need to determine how many *more extreme* frequency distributions (more extreme in the direction of  $H_1$ ) are possible given the observed data. For example, here is another  $2 \times 2$  frequency distribution in which we have moved one man from the fiction to the nonfiction category, and one woman from nonfiction to fiction. The marginal sums remain unchanged:

	Nonfiction	Fiction	Sum
Men	5(a)	0(b)	5
Women	2(c)	8(d)	10
Sum	7	8	15

Since one cell already has a frequency of 0, it is impossible to find another more extreme  $2 \times 2$  frequency distribution. The probability of this frequency distribution is:

$$p = \frac{5! \cdot 10! \cdot 7! \cdot 8!}{15! \cdot 5! \cdot 0! \cdot 2! \cdot 8!} = 0.007$$

Thus, the probability that the observed frequency distribution or more extreme frequency distributions occur at random (the null hypothesis) equals the sum of both probabilities:  $p = 0.093 + 0.007 = 0.1$ . The null hypothesis cannot be rejected since  $p > \alpha$ . Men do not prefer nonfiction over fiction TV programs compared with women – the association observed in the sample is not statistically significant.

In a second study, a larger sample of  $n = 40$  could be reached. After data collection the  $2 \times 2$  contingency table looks like the following:

	Nonfiction	Fiction	Sum
Men	5(a)	5(b)	10
Women	6(c)	24(d)	30
Sum	11	29	40

Assuming the variables are independent in the population and given the marginal frequency distribution, the expected cell frequencies can be calculated with the following formula:

$$e_{ij} = \frac{\text{row sum } i \cdot \text{column sum } j}{\text{total sum}}$$

According to this formula only one of the four cells has an expected frequency of less than 5 (cell a). This result suggests that one has a sufficiently large sample to assume a chi-square distributed sampling distribution of the chi-square test statistics, which is used to evaluate the association between gender and preference in the  $2 \times 2$  table above. Thus, one can use a parametric chi-square test for the analysis of this  $2 \times 2$  contingency table. The empirical chi-square value can be calculated by using the following formula:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{n \cdot (|a \cdot d - b \cdot c| - \cdot n/2)^2}{(a + b) \cdot (c + d) \cdot (a + c) \cdot (b + d)} = \frac{40 \cdot (|5 \cdot 24 - 5 \cdot 6| - \cdot 40/2)^2}{10 \cdot 30 \cdot 11 \cdot 29} = 2.05$$

Chi-square values of zero indicate no association between the variables in the sample. Negative chi-square values do not exist. The greater chi-square values are, the less plausible is the null hypothesis. A chi-square value in a  $2 \times 2$  contingency table has one degree of freedom ( $df = 1$ ), since only one of four cells can be freely modified given fixed marginal sums. Further, the formula provided for calculating an empirical chi-square value refers to a two-sided test (i.e., for testing unspecific hypotheses). To test a specific hypothesis by means of a one-sided chi-square test with one degree of freedom, one can use the relationship between a chi-square distributed and a normal distributed random variable, which is:

$$\chi_{(df=1)}^2 = z^2$$

Thus, this example would yield a standard normally distributed z-value of  $z = 1.43$ , which is the square root of 2.05. The corresponding probability for this and more extreme z-values is, according to the tabulated standard normal distribution,  $p = 0.076$ . Again,

since  $p > \alpha$  we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The parametric test, too, suggests that the observed association between gender and preference in a sample of 40 people is not statistically significant.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Test Theory

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# **Nonverbal Communication and Culture**

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Humans communicate verbally through words and nonverbally via facial expressions and body movements. Nonverbal communication refers to any human behavior, other than words, that serves a communicative purpose (→ Interpersonal Communication). Such behavior can occur voluntarily or involuntarily, either simultaneously with words or alone. Nonverbal communicative behaviors that have been under intensive research include high–low context, silence, turn-taking, facial expressions of emotion, head nod, and gaze and mutual gaze.

Culture is defined as “the way of life of a people” (Hall 1959, 31), who often live in a well-defined geographic area, speak the same language, and use the same nonverbal codes, with a set of norms and values regulating their thoughts and behaviors (→ Intercultural Norms). The relationship between culture and communication, verbal or nonverbal, is a reciprocal one, as crystallized by Hall (1959, 169): “culture is communication” and “communication is culture.” People communicate according to the dictates of their culture, and, in turn, through communication, culture is manifested, specified, and developed.

## **RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

In the long journey of human evolutionary processes, cultural groups have formed distinctively different languages and nonverbal communication cues, which are understood

among themselves but can be enigmatic for outsiders. As nonverbal communication is often implicit, fleeting, and hidden, it creates a major difficulty for intercultural communication.

*Nonverbal cues serve several purposes* in interpersonal interactions. They can convey → attitudes (e.g., likes and dislikes), express → emotions (e.g., being pleased or displeased), provide information about personality (e.g., being outgoing or reserved), provide a context for exerting influence (e.g., using silence to show disagreement), and complement, repeat, contradict, or substitute verbal messages (e.g., using a smile instead of words to show happiness). For example, when nonverbal cues illustrate what is being said, they are called illustrators; when they regulate the flow of the conversation, they are termed regulators; when they have a direct verbal translation (e.g., “V” for victory), they are termed emblems.

The main conceptual framework under which nonverbal communication has been studied is *cultural relativism and universalism* (CRU). CRU categorizes nonverbal communicative behaviors according to their meaning and function. For example, the North American *okay* sign (the thumb and the index fingers form a circle, with the other three fingers in an upright position) means *money* in Japan, *zero* in France, *sex* in Mexico, and *homosexuality* in Ethiopia. The *thumbs-up* gesture also means *okay* in North America and Europe. But in China, it means *you are the best*. In Japan, it means *boyfriend*, and in Iran, it is an obscene gesture. In these instances, the meaning of the *okay* sign is compared cross-culturally. Conclusions are made in terms of whether the meaning of a certain nonverbal behavior is culture-specific or culture-universal. Under this scheme, cultures are not divided into clusters. Rather, each culture is taken as it is. In the following sections, representative literature on culture and nonverbal communication is reviewed.

### **HIGH-LOW CONTEXT COMMUNICATION, SILENCE, AND TURN-TAKING**

Hall (1976) distinguished two *communication styles*: high-context and low-context. With high-context communication, the verbal message is indirect and restricted, and the listener is expected to infer the full meaning or intention of the speaker by analyzing the words in the specific context (→ Language and Social Interaction). Low-context communication is characterized with direct and elaborated verbal messages, leaving little room for the audience to conjecture. Research indicates that low-context communication is the predominant communication style in North American and European cultures, whereas high-context communication is frequently used in Asian and African cultures (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication).

Although both the east and west employ *silence* as a communication strategy, it is viewed and used differently. For example, silence is viewed positively in Japan. Japanese of few words are trusted more than Japanese who speak a lot. A well-known Chinese proverb says that sometimes silence is more eloquent than words, and those who know when to be silent know how to communicate. In Korea, a candidate losing political debates may receive more votes because the less verbose candidate may be judged as a reticent man, capable of deep thought and practical approaches to his country's economy. Indigenous people of northern Canada and Alaska, including Athabaskans, Northern Tutchone, Carrier, and Cree, prefer silence to talk when social relations are uncertain. This communication tactic is known as “the rule of the bush which bore two reasons”: talking too much is disrespectful, especially with a stranger, and it is strategic to leave

enough time to think over how to express something that is very complex and connected to many other things. On the other hand, North Americans are uneasy with silence in conversations. To avoid awkwardness, they tend to fill it with words.

A related concept is *turn-taking*, which refers to who speaks, how often, and for how long. Euro-Canadians tend to take long, monologic turns, and take a high percentage of turns in topics that they initiate. Japanese, however, tend to take short turns, and distribute them evenly regardless of who has introduced the topic (→ Conversation Analysis; International Communication).

### EYE CONTACT DURING CONVERSATION

Past research indicates that eye contact serves an important communicative function, and that cultural upbringing dictates the way we gaze and mutually gaze (for a review, see Li 2004; → Eye Behavior; Gaze in Interaction; Visual Communication). Researchers found that among the Chinese, conversational partners do not usually look directly at each other's eyes. Black and white Americans differed in their listening behavior. During a conversation, whites gazed steadily at the speaker while blacks avoided looking into the eyes of the speaker. Comparing gaze behavior between native English speakers (Australians of British descent) and native Japanese speakers, researchers found that the Japanese participants gazed at their partners more frequently but for shorter durations than Australians. The Australians tended to look up at the end of utterances, yet no pattern of looking up was found among the Japanese participants. Japanese felt uneasy when being directly gazed upon. Researchers compared gaze behaviors of 22 pairs of Swedes and 22 English pairs during laboratory conversations. In both conditions there were 11 male/male and 11 female/female dyads. It was found that length of glances was higher for the Swedes than for the English. Frequency of glances was higher for the English than for the Swedes.

Li (2004) reported that in both *gaze and mutual gaze behaviors*, Chinese/Chinese interlocutors looked less frequently and for shorter durations than did Canadian/Canadian interlocutors, thus documenting an evident cultural difference. This finding has practical value in today's multicultural world. Suppose a Canadian professor finds her Chinese student not looking at her when he is spoken to. She may interpret the student as inattentive or disrespectful. Or imagine a Canadian businessman finding that his Chinese negotiator is not engaging in eye contact. He may infer that the Chinese person is insincere or uninterested. Similarly, a Canadian doctor finding that his Chinese immigrant patient looks away when spoken to may surmise that this individual is not telling him all of the symptoms. If intercultural interlocutors are aware of such findings – differences in eye contact behavior between Chinese and Canadians – they may be less likely to make erroneous judgments, which are the first step toward miscommunication. Li also found that when Chinese were paired with Canadians, they gazed slightly more frequently than when they were paired with fellow Chinese, while the Canadians maintained their frequent gaze pattern.

This finding provides obvious support for → communication accommodation theory (CAT). CAT states that interlocutors have a tendency to converge or diverge their linguistic codes either for power or desire for social approval (Gallois et al. 2005). In this

instance, the second-language speakers (the Chinese) had both linguistic and cultural disadvantages in comparison with their Canadian partners; the Chinese, therefore, converged to the more frequent gaze pattern of the Canadians. The Chinese may have converged their gaze pattern to that of their Canadian partners because they wanted to be agreeable. Immediately after the conversations, the Chinese and Canadians were asked about their experiences. Both parties said that they had experienced a pleasant interaction. In some cultures there seems to be a rule specifying that interlocutors should look at each other, while in other cultures the rules are not specific. This point is illustrated by an interesting anecdote (Li 2004, 6) concerning an encounter between a Chinese and two Americans: “On the second day of my arrival in the US, I went to see the Department Chairman accompanied by my American friend Judith. To show my respect for the Chairman, I sat straight, my hands on my knee. Most of the time I looked down; sometimes I looked at Judith, who was sitting on my right hand side. Then I heard Judith saying ‘Xiao Li, you are supposed to look at the speaker, not me.’ They both smiled, and I smiled too, but for a very different reason: I smiled to hide my awkwardness.”

Li (2004) goes on to explain that in Chinese culture, there are no clear rules regarding where one should look in a conversation, except for when one is speaking with a superior or a parent. In this case, one should look down to show respect. Looking into the eye of your mother while she is criticizing you would make her angry because that is tantamount to “talking back.” Looking down would be interpreted as being modest and accepting her criticism.

Researchers have also found that Asians, Indians, and Africans relate constant gaze with being superior, disrespectful, threatening, or insulting. Southern Europeans, Arabs, and Latin Americans, on the other hand, interpret lack of gaze as insincere, dishonest, or shy. Eye gaze of blacks is minimal when interacting with a superior, as a means of showing respect. Evidently, black children have learned to lower their eyes when an older person or a teacher is talking to them, or when they are being scolded. Among the Navaho Indians, direct gaze at one’s conversational partner is a taboo. Among the Wituto and Bororo Indians in South America, the speaker and listener both look at outside objects during a conversation. In Japan, people look at the neck level, not at the eye level. Intense gazing at the eye level during conversation may be interpreted as being disrespectful.

### **WHAT DOES A NOD REALLY MEAN?**

Greeks express *yes* with a nod as North Americans do, but they express *no* with head jerking back, eyes closing and eyebrows lifting for a while. The Bulgarian head movement for *no* consists of throwing the head back and then returning it to the upright position. When emphatically displayed, the return to the upright position can involve a slight bend of the head forward, thus appearing very much like the North American nod for *yes*. Cultural groups may share the use of nodding the head, especially while listening. However, the interpretation of a nod differs from culture to culture. The Japanese nod signifies continued attention while a North American nod signifies both continued attention and agreement. Without knowing this difference, North Americans can be very frustrated when, at the end of a long presentation, they find that their listener disagreed with them wholeheartedly in spite of constant nods.

Li (2006) found that when Chinese conversed with Anglo Canadians, the more back-channel responses (including head nods), the less information was correctly communicated between the speaker and the listener. On the other hand, when a Chinese talked with another Chinese or a Canadian with another Canadian, the more back-channel responses, the more information was correctly communicated. This finding showed that back-channel responses function differently in inter- and intracultural discourse. In the former, they impede information communication, while in the latter, they facilitate it. Li also found significant cultural differences in the frequency of back-channel responses. The Chinese/Chinese participants had the highest frequency, the Canadian/Canadian participants the lowest, and the intercultural participants (Chinese/Canadian) were in between. This pattern provides support for CAT in that a back-channel convergence occurred in the intercultural conditions.

### FACIAL EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTION

The earliest scientific study of *facial expressions of emotion* was published by Darwin (Ekman 1973). He postulated that emotions and their expressions were observed across cultural groups, as well as species. Therefore, they are innate and biological in nature. This theory was supported by later researchers, who identified six emotions across cultural groups: anger, fear, happiness, sadness, surprise, and disgust (Ekman 1973). Although humans are equally capable of the six emotions, whether, when, and how they display them are decided by their cultural upbringing. Ekman found that Japanese participants displayed the same negative facial expressions as American participants when watching a stress-inducing movie about sinus surgery. However, in the presence of an interviewer, the Japanese displayed fewer negative expressions than when they were alone. But the Americans were as expressive in the presence of the interviewer as when they were alone. It was concluded that culture is dictating certain rules about what feelings one should reveal to whom and under what circumstances. Matsumoto and Kupperbusch (2001) replicated Ekman's (1973) study and they found that Americans also masked their emotions in the presence of others, but to a lesser extent than the Japanese.

Ekman et al. (1987) asked participants from Estonian SSR, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Scotland, Sumatra, Turkey, and the United States to watch slides and judge six emotions and their intensity. They found that cross-cultural agreement was very high. However, cross-cultural agreement in judgment accuracy was lower for high-intensity emotions than for low-intensity emotions (Matsumoto et al. 2002). This finding has important implications for intercultural business and political communication, because in these situations, emotional intensity is usually high. Inaccuracy in judging each other's emotions can lead to misattribution, misunderstanding, and miscommunication, and the consequences can be severe.

Major findings on nonverbal communicative behaviors seem to illustrate a saying by Confucius: our common human nature brings us together whereas our different customs and habits set us apart. Because we are similar, we can communicate, to some extent, nonverbally even when we do not speak each other's languages. But our different cultural norms may erect barriers. For members of different cultural groups to communicate



effectively, it is *essential* that we learn each other's nonverbal ways of expression, especially rules concerning when and how to use which nonverbal signals.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Emotion ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Intercultural Norms ▶ International Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Visual Communication

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## **Nonverbal Signals, Effects of**

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Human communication is a *multichannel reality* comprising verbal, paraverbal, and nonverbal signals. Although some authors subsume paraverbal aspects, like pitch, tone of voice, etc., under the heading of nonverbal behavior, it is most common to preserve the term “nonverbal” for those aspects of communicative behavior that are transmitted visually, such as gestures, body posture and movement (→ Gestures and Kinesics), facial displays (→ Facial Expressions), gaze (→ Gaze in Interaction), and interpersonal distance (→ Proxemics).

There is ample empirical evidence that the visual communication channel plays a prominent role, not only in face-to-face interactions but in mediated communication as well (Burgoon et al. 1989). Beyond so called discourse and dialog functions closely tied to speech production and conversation, such as illustrative gestures or turn-taking signals, nonverbal behavior constitutes the major basis for the perception of persons and the formation of social impressions (see Bente & Krämer in press). Based on nonverbal cues, humans are prone to make inferences about the emotional states, intentions, and even personality attributes of other people. Impressions on the basis of nonverbal behavior are formed within extremely short time periods, and even minimal variations in posture, movement, or facial expression can have a deep impact on the emotional attitudes of an observer.

Based on the observation that nonverbal cues, like all visually perceptible stimuli, possess an overwhelming suggestive force, Frey (1999) introduces the concept of *inferential communication*. Referring to Helmholtz's concept of *unconscious conclusions*, he highlights the fact that the inferences based on visual cues are not subject to conscious cognitive control but leave us defenseless, while affecting our judgments immediately and sustainably. With regard to the *neuro-biological bases of inferential communication*, recent neuro-imaging studies could identify specialized brain areas for the processing of visual communication cues, especially sensitive for human faces and gaze behavior. Further, the discovery of the so-called mirror-neurons enforced the assumption of a hardwired *empathy system*, which takes advantage of the fact that observed movement produces the same neural activation patterns as the production of this behavior.

The conclusion, however, that this neural reflection leads to a simulation of comparable emotional states (→ Emotion) in the observer is still a hypothesis. This hypothesis also draws upon another implicit assumption, namely that emotional states more or less involuntarily lead to specific expressive behaviors on the part of the sender that can then be informative for an observer (see Manstead et al. 1999 for a review). This position, however, has been challenged in recent years. Referring to empirical findings in evolutionary psychology, Fridlund (1991) argues that it is not functional to disclose emotions to an observer, and that it makes much more sense to assume that nonverbal cues are used independently from the affective state in a socially purposeful or manipulative way. Based on recent findings, Manstead et al. (1999) suggest that both emotional and social contexts can determine nonverbal behavior and that both views are thus not mutually exclusive.

## SIGNALS AND BEHAVIORAL QUALITIES

In an attempt to systematize nonverbal cues according to their communicative functions, Mehrabian (1972) identified three basic effect dimensions and associated signal categories: (1) the *evaluation dimension* (liking) is communicated by so-called *immediacy cues* such as smiling, forward lean, close proximity, and touch; (2) the *potency dimension* (power) is conveyed by *relaxation cues* such as asymmetry, side lean, relaxed hands, and backward lean, and moreover by staring, averted gaze, and expansive gestures; and (3) the *activity dimension* is associated with *activity cues* comprising vivid and extensive use of gestures, frequent facial displays, etc. A broad literature exists dealing with those functional

categories, the identification of particular cues or signals, and the proof of their distinct effects. In recent years, however, scholars discovered that dynamic characteristics or movement qualities, such as speed, acceleration, dimensional complexity, symmetry, etc., may have an even stronger impact on the observers' impressions than the so-called semantic aspects (Grammer et al. 1997; Krumhuber & Kappas 2005). These aspects exert a subliminal influence on the observer and thus are rarely identified as a cause of social judgments and interpersonal feelings. Against this background, Grammer et al. (1997) suggest a view of nonverbal communication that differs radically from traditional category-oriented "body language" approaches and that has been labeled the *analogous communication* perspective.

Experts of propaganda and political campaigns long since discovered the power of televised images and the crucial role of visual presence, physical appearance, and nonverbal behavior in influencing the attitudes of a mass audience, as in televised presidential campaigns. In fact, it has been shown that politicians' facial expressions (the presentation of happiness/reassurance, anger/threat or fear/evasion displays) are even more decisive for the perception of the actor than the observers' political partisanship or ideological beliefs (Sullivan 1996). Referring to the *facial feedback theory*, the socio-emotional effects of facial expressions have been interpreted in this context as *vicarious instigation* (Vaughan & Lanzetta 1980). This view holds that the observation of the actor's facial displays leads to the automatic mimicry of facial movements and subsequently – due to the interlinkage of facial muscles and brain regions associated with emotions – to the corresponding feelings in the observer. This affective resonance is assumed to be the basis of empathic reactions to the screen actors, which may also account for emotional involvement and identification processes in fictional offerings.

### **NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR IN TRADITIONAL MEDIA**

It is evident that the interpretation of mediated nonverbal behavior depends heavily on the context information presented. The Kulechov effect describes the fact that even neutral faces can lead to such different emotional attributions as terror, joy, or contentment when embedded into different stories (Pudowkin 1961). Moreover, the staging of nonverbal behavior implies numerous influences by the medium itself, including camera perspectives, production techniques, or journalists' decisions about the selection and placement of nonverbal material. As visual attention is a valid indicator of power and status in social groups, presence on-screen not only reflects the relative importance of the personalities presented, but can also subtly influence the audience's perception of leadership and dominance (Masters et al. 1991).

Physical distance is a highly influential nonverbal cue in interpersonal communication. It is also an intriguing example of how staging variables can simulate or substitute variations in nonverbal behavior. Meyrowitz (1979) coined the term "para-proxemics" to account for the fact that camera distance, judged by the relative size of an actor on the screen, is capable of triggering psychological mechanisms similar to the real distance to another person. A close-up could thus create intimacy but could also be threatening when penetrating virtual personal space abruptly, whereas a wide shot could create a psychological distance between the observer and the screen actor.

The camera perspective also determines the observer's field of view and thus directs the attention of the audience to particular nonverbal cues. For instance in close-ups the focus is on facial activity, which stimulates inferences about the emotions and intentions of the actor. On the other hand in half or wide shots the view is opened up to communicative gestures, interpersonal constellations, and information about context. It is likely that these perceptual constellations also influence the direction of the audience's *causal attributions*, so that the causes of observed behavior are located within either the actor or the particular situation.

With regard to angle of view, the results are equivocal. Kepplinger (1982), for example, found politicians presented on TV from a straight angle to be the most likeable, while deviations in either direction (up or down) led to less positive evaluations. Other studies (Kappas et al. 1994) show the low-angle shot to be preferred. Messaris (1997) states that low camera angles can make actors appear more powerful, provided that they are already recognized as high in status, as in the case of known political leaders. It has to be noted that the camera angle as a surrogate for the observer's perspective and gaze direction interacts with the gaze direction of the actor portrayed. Here, looking directly into the camera can reduce the impression of an actor's power. In line with results from gaze research, powerful people are expected to be looked at by inferiors rather than to look at observers themselves.

The subtle interplay between nonverbal behavior and presentation variables is also reflected in the concept of *parasocial interaction* (Horton & Wohl 1956; → Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). Although in mass communication large audiences are present, each member might still feel they are being addressed in relative privacy and thus get the illusion of a face-to-face encounter with the performer or persona. To achieve this, the persona attempts to duplicate the gestures, conversational style, and milieu of a small informal gathering, and turns on eye contact by facing the camera. This behavior is supported by formal presentation techniques. While the persona is facing the camera, zoom activity can enhance intimacy by making the persona appear actually to approach. Whether the emotional response of the viewer will be positive or negative depends on the communication behavior of the persona.

## NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION IN THE NEW MEDIA

So-called "cues-filtered-out theories" of computer mediated communication (CMC) consider the partial or complete lack of nonverbal signals as a deficit with particular socio-emotional consequences (→ Personal Communication by CMC). On one hand it is considered as detrimental, in the sense of resulting both in emotional impoverishment and in the facilitation of antisocial and deviant behaviors. On the other hand the lack of nonverbal signals, in particular the lack of status and dominance cues, is expected to foster a balance of power and influence, and to equalize participation and mutual attention in net-based communications (Kiesler et al. 1984). Both positions use face-to-face encounters as normative reference. In his "social information processing" (SIP) theory, Walther (1996) challenges the deficit conception of mediated communication and highlights the creative processes in the users. These processes might not only find substitutes for the nonverbal channels (e.g., by using so-called emoticons or avatars), but

also result in new forms of human interaction that are not possible in face-to-face meetings at all. It is still an open question, though, under what circumstances the inclusion of nonverbal channels in CMC (e.g., by video or avatar representations) will enhance the experience of *social presence* (Biocca et al. 2003) and lead to beneficial socio-emotional effects and better task performance (→ Presence). As in face-to-face interactions, the outcome will depend more on what the actors do than on which channels are available. This also holds for the implementation of so-called embodied conversational agents (ECAs) in → human–computer interaction (HCI). By decoding but also by showing expressive nonverbal behaviors, ECAs are expected to personalize the interactions between humans and electronic devices and to facilitate acceptance and intuitive usage (Cassell et al. 2000). As Blascovich (2002) states in his “threshold model of social influence,” the social influence of virtual interlocutors depends on at least two factors: the perceived agency (whether the behavior is directly or indirectly human in origin or is computer-generated) and the behavioral realism. With regard to the latter, it is assumed that verification of the entity being a social actor depends largely on the processing of subtle nonverbal cues and transient movement dynamics.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Emotion ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Presence ▶ Proxemics

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## North Africa: Media Systems

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This entry focuses on the media systems in the Maghreb countries. The Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia) as a political entity is characterized by authoritarian structures. The regimes are omnipresent in almost every aspect of daily life, including the media sector. The countries in question share strong similarities in terms of their early historical development, their French colonial past, the nature of their media systems, the journalism practiced, their media laws, and their common struggle to increase press freedom, access to information, and protection of journalists. Tunisia has the most authoritarian regime and thus the most restrictive media policies. Morocco is the most liberal of the countries and thus has the least restricted media. Algeria exists in the middle of the spectrum. In recent times, the media landscapes in the three North African countries have changed under the combined impact of the globalization process and information and communication technologies.

### ALGERIA

In Algeria there are about 40 daily → *newspapers* and → *magazines* in circulation. The daily newspaper with the widest circulation is *Al Khabar* (400,000). The circulation of

daily newspapers is about 3 million, which is 9 percent of the population. Since 1990, the Algerian press has been governed by the “Information Code.” Politics is viewed as combat rather than contest, and journalists are hampered by a lack of adequate training and by low pay; they are not financially self-sufficient. Journalism remains more of an intellectual passion than a real profession. Over the past decade, ongoing civil strife between the regime and Islamic extremists has made journalism one of the most dangerous professions; 58 commentators and editors were murdered between 1993 and 1996. Journalists in this North African country continue to suffer from legal and physical harassment.

In 1926, → *radio* broadcasting began in Algeria, but it was only after independence in 1962 that a wide range of radio content was developed and broadcast. The state-run Radio-Television Algerienne (RTA) consists of four national stations. In Algeria there are an estimated 244 radio receivers for every 1,000 inhabitants. Radio Algeria programming is available via the Internet. Radio remains under the control of the government, with coverage biased strongly in favor of state policies. While the 1998 amendments allow for the licensing of private stations, the regime continues to maintain its monopoly over radio broadcasting.

In Algerian Television, Enterprise Nationale de Television (ENTV) oversees the two state-run channels, *Canal Algérie*, broadcasting to Europe’s Algerian community, and *Al Thalitha TV*, broadcasting to Arab countries. *Berbère Television (BRTV)* is a Berber station that is broadcast from France to Algeria via satellite and targets the Berber communities. RTA broadcasts in Arabic, Berber, and French and operates an international service broadcasting in Arabic, English, French, and Spanish (→ International Radio). The 1990s witnessed an unexpected explosion of → satellite television; more than 60 percent of Algerian households have access to European channels through satellite dishes. Recent studies of television viewing habits in Algeria suggest that regime-run broadcasting is less popular, especially among the young, than satellite broadcasting, which is uncensored and often viewed as more credible. The 1998 amendment allows for private television broadcasting, but so far no licenses have been provided.

The Centre de Recherche sur l’Information Scientifique et Technique (CERIST), a state-owned research center, introduced the first access to the → *Internet* in Algeria in 1993. There were approximately 1,920,000 Internet users in Algeria in the beginning of 2007. In terms of Internet penetration, Algeria is lagging behind the other two North African countries in question. Several newspapers now operate online versions of their publications.

## MOROCCO

From independence in 1956, Morocco has had one of the most open *print media* environments of the Maghreb countries. There are 26 newspapers and 136 weeklies with a total circulation of 350,000 per day; less than 1 percent of the population reads a newspaper every day. Many Moroccan newspapers maintain websites. While Morocco does have an open and relatively free press, there are three no-go areas: Islam, the monarchy and the Sahara. Journalists who overstep the boundaries often face persecution, harassment, and in some cases have even suffered imprisonment (→ Violence against Journalists; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Print media organizations continue to need a license to publish. However, → censorship has been softened in the country since 1997.

*Radio* began broadcasting in 1928. By 1962, the regime had reorganized the country's broadcasting structure and become the "*Idaa wa At-Talvaza Al-Mahgrebiya*" (Moroccan Radio and Television: MRT). There are an estimated 6.62 million radio receivers in the country. The four Arabic stations are the National Arabic Channel, Koran channel, Radio Tamazight and International radio channel. The National Channel, which has 24-hour broadcasting, features coverage of local news and events, call-in talk shows, drama, and educational and cultural programs. Radio programming is state-run and is broadcast live over the Internet. Moroccan audiences also have access to Tangier-based radio station *Medi 1*.

*Television* began in Morocco in 1952 as a private enterprise. In 1961, ownership of television broadcasting and content development was transferred to the regime. Until 2002 the regime had a monopoly on television broadcasting, except for *2M*, originally privately owned, but bought by the state. In 2002 the Broadcasting Supreme Authority (HACA), was created by royal decree to regulate the broadcasting system. Another development is the creation of the National Company of Radio and Television Broadcasting (SNRT), a convergence of the Moroccan broadcasting channel (RTM) and the Autonomous Service of Advertising (SAP). The Moroccan audiovisual system has witnessed five additional channels: (1) *Al Maghribia*, an international news channel for the Moroccan community abroad; (2) *TVM international*, a general entertainment channel for the Moroccan community abroad; (3) *Arabia or Tarbawiya*, Morocco's leading education and culture channel, aimed at a youth audience; (4) *TVM Layoune*, designed for the southern region; and (5) *Assadisa*, a religious channel. In 2006 the radio station *Medi 1* launched its own TV channel, *Medi Sat 1*. The most popular way to watch television in Morocco is through satellite TV. Moroccan audiences have access to international satellite televisions. There are an estimated 3.1 million television sets in Morocco. Moreover, 67 percent of households own a satellite dish. In 2007 SNRT started full-scale digitization of Moroccan TV. The digitization process covered 54 percent of the population and full coverage is expected by 2015.

The history of the *Internet* in Morocco dates back to the early 1990s. The first general users of the Internet in Morocco were scholars, businesspeople, and students in 1995. There are approximately 5 million Internet users in Morocco, 15 percent of the population, but 95 percent of the use is oriented to international websites. The Internet is an important part of youth subculture in Morocco. Many young people choose the 3,500 Internet cafes for social media use; *YouTube* is the most popular net-based activity among young people.

## TUNISIA

The history of the Tunisian press began in 1860 with the creation of the periodical *Al-Raid Al-Tunisi*. In the 1930s the nationalist press fought for the independence of Tunisia. During the reign of Habib Bourguiba (1956–1987), the Tunisian media functioned as a key instrument for the legitimization of the political hegemony of one party. In 1987 the Tunisian media sector witnessed a kind of political opening up that positively affected the media landscape. There are nine dailies and 15 weeklies, and the total circulation of newspapers in Tunisia is 250,000 copies a day. Approximately 3.7 percent of the population read newspapers every day. However, these publications rarely provide information that



diverges from the official line and have become an ardent propaganda instrument for the regime. Foreign publications are also subject to censorship, including the 70 accredited foreign correspondents.

*Radio* in Tunisia is an absolute monopoly and functions under direct supervision by the regime. The primary reason for continuing to keep broadcasting under state control is the expressed desire to preserve national unity and maintain centralization of the regime and administration. Today, the state-run Tunisian Radio and Television Establishment (ERTT) has several radio networks, including *Sfax*, *Gafsa*, *Tataouine*, and *Monastir*. Tunisian radio is a state business, subsidized by the regime and partially financed by advertising revenues. There are an estimated 1.9 million radio receivers in Tunisia, or 607 per 1,000 inhabitants. *Radio Mosaïque* FM, the first ever private radio station in Tunisia, started broadcasting on November 2003. Tunisian radio has also been available via the Internet since December 1996.

*Television* transmission in Tunisia began in 1966. As of 2007, there were three television stations. There are an estimated 1.9 million television receivers in Tunisia. ERTT operates two national television channels. Tunisian TV broadcasts news, sports, soap operas, religious and cultural programming, cartoons and children's programming, and films. Sixty-five percent of the television programming is produced in Tunisia. The remaining 35 percent comes mainly from the Arab world, Europe, and North America. Since 1994 there has been a special youth television channel, *TV 21*. In addition to state-run television, since 1988 many Tunisians have been able to receive satellite television, and thus can watch Arab satellite news, including the first opposition satellite channel, *Al Mustaqillah*, which was launched from London in January 1999. There are an estimated 500,000 satellite dishes. Since March 20, 1998, national television has been available online. A private satellite TV channel, *Hannibal TV*, started broadcasting in February 2005 as a response to the initiative by President Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali to open up and privatize audiovisual broadcasting.

In 1991 Tunisia became the first Arab and African country to introduce the *Internet*. Since then the country has continuously improved its infostructures as part of the promotion of the Tunisian economy both at home and abroad. It occupies a leading position among developing countries in terms of digitization, ranking highest in Africa and in the Arab world. It is ahead of several European countries, being placed thirty-fifth in the World Economic Forum's Networked Readiness Index (NRI) in 2006–7. Tunisia has the highest Internet penetration (953,000 households and businesses). The ability to access broadcast radio and television on the Internet reveals the sophistication of the regime's use of the Internet in Tunisia. However, in spite of wide Internet access, the Internet in Tunisia is still censored via a proxy server.

The North African countries have witnessed the emergence of a new media regime, characterized by greater diversification and multiplication of news sources and leading towards a richer and more pluralistic communication environment. However, the three countries are still classified as non-free countries according to the most recent Freedom House rankings.

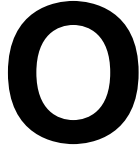
SEE ALSO: ► Arab Satellite TV News ► Censorship ► Communication Law and Policy: Africa ► Development Communication: Africa ► Digital Divide ► Freedom of the Press,

Concept of ▶ International Radio ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Party Political Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Violence against Journalists

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# Objectivity in Reporting

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The concept of “objectivity” connotes a set of practices and ideas, such as a stance of → neutrality or → balance in relation to the people and events being reported. It is a central ethos in journalism, especially in the Anglo American liberal democracies (→ Ethics in Journalism). It is also acquiring global significance as journalists seek new roles and institutional supports within the “transition societies” of formerly communist and third world dictatorships. What objectivity means in practice, however, and whether it is a desirable and achievable goal for reporting in a democratic society are questions very much debated.

Objectivity sounds like a positive value, the pursuit of truth without fear or favor. Few reporters would want to be considered unobjective or too biased to produce the accurate, truthful accounts that citizens of democracies presumably need in order to make informed judgments about public affairs. But the matter is not so simple. Objectivity is not a single, fixed “thing.” One research team identified four possible meanings, each commanding some support among journalists in western liberal democracies: the negation of journalists’ subjectivity; the fair representation of each side in a controversy; balanced skepticism toward all sides in a dispute; and the provision of facts that can contextualize an issue (Donsbach & Klett 1993; → Journalists’ Role Perception).

Hackett and Zhao (1998) suggest that in contemporary North American journalism, objectivity constitutes a kind of multifaceted discursive “regime,” an interrelated complex of ideas and practices that provides a general model for conceiving, defining, arranging, and evaluating news texts, practices, and institutions. They identify five general levels or dimensions in this regime.

First, objectivity is a normative ideal, a set of valued goals that journalists should strive for. These can be divided into values concerning the capacity of journalism to impart information about the world (separation of fact from opinion, accuracy, completeness), and values concerning the stance that reporters should take toward the value-laden meanings of news: detachment, neutrality, impartiality and independence, avoiding partisanship, personal biases, ulterior motives, or outside interests (→ Bias in the News). Second, these values imply an epistemological stance, a set of assumptions about knowledge and reality, discussed below. Third, objectivity is embodied in a set of news-gathering and presentational practices, such as “documentary reporting practices” that

allow reporters to transmit only facts that they can observe or that “credible” sources have confirmed (Bennett 2005, 184; → News Sources), and the separation of “fact” from “opinion” in newspaper pages. Fourth, the regime of objectivity is embedded in an institutional framework, including media independence from the state, legal guarantees of free speech, the separation of editorial and marketing functions within news organizations, and the conduct of reporting by reporters with requisite skills and ethics. Finally, objectivity is an active ingredient in public → discourse. It provides the language for everyday assessments of journalistic performance, including synonyms (“fairness,” “balance”) and opposites (“bias,” “partisanship”).

### HISTORICIZING OBJECTIVITY

As an ideal, objectivity is neither universal nor timeless. It has emerged in specific historical, political, and cultural contexts, though there are debates over the causes of its emergence in American journalism. Geopolitically, proclaimed adherence to objectivity is more typical of journalism in the US, the UK, and Canada than in continental Europe, with its stronger tradition of partisanship in the press (→ Journalism, History of), or in theocratic or authoritarian regimes such as China, where journalism is mandated to serve the state and/or an official ideology. Even where it is most entrenched, the objectivity regime is more characteristic of some news media – the → “quality” press, → public service broadcasting, or news reports – than others, e.g., → tabloid press, entertainment-oriented television, opinion columns.

Historically, objectivity as a paradigm in Anglo American journalism displaced the partisan press during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One interpretation sees its roots in the democratic, universalizing discourse of the nineteenth-century labor press (Schiller 1981). A more conventional view links objectivity’s origins to the emergence of technology – photography, the telegraph (→ Photojournalism; Telegraph, History of) – and associated organizational forms (news wire services, the “inverted pyramid” form of reporting) that appeared to capture reality. The emergence of advertising for mass markets contributed greatly to the decline of the → partisan press; nonpartisan “objective” journalism enabled newspapers to pursue the broadest possible readership, and thus advertising revenue.

Cultural currents also contributed. Faith in the scientific method contributed to a “reverence for facts” in the late nineteenth century (Stephens 1988, 253). But the carnage of World War I, the apparent impact of wartime propaganda and the new public relations industry, Freudian psychology, historically unprecedented totalitarian regimes in Europe, and the Great Depression all contributed by the 1930s to a culture’s loss of confidence in the reliability of facts, the rationality of citizens, and the viability of liberal-democratic capitalism (Hackett & Zhao 1998, 40). Objectivity in North American journalism became more narrowly and technically defined, as “a method designed for a world in which even facts could not be trusted,” (Schudson 1978, 122) rather than a universalizing discourse of truth in the public interest. Over the next few decades, the objectivity regime adapted and incorporated other related approaches, including interpretive reporting, adversary/critical journalism, enterprise reporting, and others (→ Precision Journalism; Interpretive

Journalism; Investigative Reporting). Approaches that more directly challenged the objectivity ethos have been contained or marginalized (→ Advocacy Journalism; Alternative Journalism; New Journalism; Underground Press).

## **EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL CRITIQUES**

Underlying various critiques and defenses of journalism objectivity are contending epistemologies – different models for understanding the relationship between reports and the reality they are intended to describe. Positivism, once a dominant position in western thought, was firmly based in the European Enlightenment’s confidence in scientific method, rationality, and progress. It asserts the possibility of accurate descriptions of the world-as-it-is, through the careful observation of events, perceivable through the senses. Positivism underlies the commonsense criticism of news that it should be objective and accurate, but often is not, due to various factors that introduce “bias” in reporting. Often, conservative critics cite the presumed “left-liberal” political views of journalists, an interpretation of news bias common in the US, but less so in other western liberal democracies; it is a view that has in turn been criticized for intellectual inconsistency and for its assumption that journalists rather than economic and political structures shape the news (McChesney 2004, ch. 3). A contrary view sees news as failing to obtain objectivity due to the “conservatizing” pressure of powerful elites, such as media owners, advertisers, governments, and/or official sources. The best known of these interpretations is Herman and Chomsky’s “propaganda model” (1988). This view has also been criticized, mainly on grounds that it is unduly reductionist: it regards news as the instrument of some elite, disregarding both the institutional autonomy of journalism and the full range of external influences (such as those identified in Shoemaker and Reese’s five-level model (1996) operating upon news.

If the above critiques rest upon the epistemological assumptions of positivism, a contrary epistemological position is evident in recent social theory, in trends that emphasize the importance of language or “discourse” in shaping human understanding of reality. “Conventionalism” holds that human perception of the world is always mediated by our mental categories and our procedures of knowledge production. In this view, news reporting is as much a construction of the social world as a reflection of it; objective journalism cannot live up to its ideal, because knowledge of the world independent of the standpoint of the observer is impossible (→ Construction of Reality through the News). Claims to achieving objectivity in the news, then, must be regarded as assertions of the power to define reality, rather than legitimate claims to have accurate knowledge of it. In the view of its critics, however, this epistemological position tends towards a self-contradictory relativism, which sees no independent way to assess the truth-value of competing news accounts or discourses. For some critics (e.g., Norris 1992), this position implicitly enjoins journalists to abandon any effort to distinguish between truth and propaganda.

A third epistemology, critical realism, avoids both positivism’s superficial faith in facts, and conventionalism’s dead-end relativism. Knowledge of the real is possible, it asserts, but only through engaging in the work of theorizing, and exploring the structures and

processes that underlie individual events. From this standpoint, news reporting may be criticized not because objectivity is impossible in principle, or because individual journalists or news reports have departed from the (otherwise desirable and achievable) standards of objectivity – but because the structures and procedures of actually existing journalism constitute a deficient *form* of objectivity. This standpoint offers some sophisticated critiques of the objectivity regime as generating, paradoxically, *ideological* accounts of the world, accounts that are partial and one-sided, or that reinforce existing relations of power. One line of critique suggests that objectivity serves to disguise the value assumptions and commitments that unavoidably influence the selection and presentation, the framing, of news reports. Reports may quote “both sides” in a controversy, thus appearing to be balanced and impartial – while at the same time confining the definition of what is at issue, and marginalizing other perspectives. Thus, US television reportage of the Iraq war policy often features Democratic and Republican party leaders criticizing each other, while leaving unexamined their shared assumption that what is at stake is how to achieve victory or reduce American casualties, rather than (for example) reducing Iraqi suffering or strengthening international law.

An even stronger critique asserts that the objectivity ethos directly contributes to the production of ideological news accounts, for example, by legitimizing media practices that undermine democratic public life, such as a stance of cynical negativism divorced from coherent analytical perspectives, and the framing of politics as a game of insiders motivated only by electoral success (→ Negativity). In this view, the partisan press historically characteristic of western Europe offers a more positive democratic alternative.

Interestingly, the epistemology of news objectivity has contradictory aspects. The aspect of accuracy entails a positivistic faith in “facts,” while the aspect of balance between contending viewpoints implies a concession to conventionalism.

## RECENT CHALLENGES AND CONTEXTS

Arguably, objectivity has remained a dominant norm in North American journalism during much of the past century because it has served a variety of functions and interests: amassing broad audiences, providing political legitimacy for the monopoly press, and helping to define and manage the symbiotic relationship between news media and politicians (Hallin 1989, 68–70). It also enhances journalists’ claim to professionalism, and constitutes a “strategic ritual” to protect them from such hazards as lawsuits and editors’ reprimands (Tuchman 1972; → Professionalization of Journalism).

Yet current developments in the political economy of news media are potentially undermining the objectivity regime. The Internet facilitates the diffusion of opinion and personal experience, blurs the distinction between producers and audiences, and bypasses journalists as professional gatekeepers (→ Citizen Journalism). The deregulation of broadcasting and the relative decline of public service broadcasting have intensified commercial pressures since the 1980s. Channel proliferation has fragmented audiences. More and more conventional media are owned by conglomerates seeking high and immediate profits. Consequences arguably include the erosion of the universalizing stance of objectivity and of public affairs information in the conventional news media, and,

conversely, the rise of opinionated pundits, politically partisan media (most dramatically Fox News), and infotainment.

Contrary to the objectivity norm, recent reform movements within journalism have called for the explicit pursuit of specified goals. In the US, civic journalism challenges reporters to abandon the stance of detachment in favor of reinvigorating public political life (→ Public Journalism). Internationally, and particularly in strife-torn countries such as Indonesia, the Philippines, and Rwanda, practitioners and educators critique conventional news reportage of conflicts as tantamount to “war journalism” that too often exacerbates violence (→ Peace Journalism). For Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), far from being neutral observers, journalists are caught in a “feedback loop” with political players; and the ethos of objectivity, with its emphasis on official sources, two-sided conflict, and events rather than processes, impedes a morally and professionally justifiable incentivization of peaceful outcomes. Critics, however, dismiss peace journalism as another form of advocacy, usurping what should be the role of public relations (Hanitzsch 2004).

In its Anglo American heartland, faith in objectivity in reporting may be eroding, but no single norm or regime has emerged to supplant it. Meanwhile, in many nonwestern “transition societies,” objectivity may be gaining a new lease of life under the impact of media globalization, and as an alternative to the state-oriented authoritarianism of the past.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Discourse ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Interpretive Journalism ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Negativity ▶ Neutrality ▶ New Journalism ▶ News Sources ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Peace Journalism ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Quality Press ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Underground Press

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# Objectivity in Science

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Objectivity has been a criterion of both science and its practice throughout the modern era. Its principal meaning is that the effect of the individual scientist has been removed from the findings and what is left can be considered both non-ideological and agenda-free. The term is used as a global epistemological principle across all traditional science and as a specific property within tests and measurements.

## OBJECTIVITY AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE

As an epistemological principle, objectivity anchors one end of a continuum of claim that begins with the idiosyncratic. Idiosyncratic claim in its most extreme is claim that is true only in the presence of the individual making it. An example might be of a very persuasive speaker who under the force of rhetoric gathers followers at a rally. Once removed from the force of the moment, the truth of the matter disappears. Subjective claim is also located in the particular individual but the insight is exportable and moves from banal to resonant such as from a summer beach novel to an enduring work. Objective claim cannot originate in the individual but must originate in the inescapable properties of the object.

While approving of the principle, philosophers of science have wondered how it might come to be. For objective claim to be possible there has to be a direct and unbiased transmission of information from the object to the observer. For objective claim to be presented there has to be an unbiased method (symbolic form) for retransmitting the information to other observers. Most contemporary commentators reject the possibility of these two necessities, and, therefore, agree that objectivity at the individual level is either not attainable or not demonstrable.

Although the individual cannot be declared an unbiased observer, bias can be mitigated within a research community through a process of *intersubjective cross-examination* and critique that involves conventionalized protocols, independent replication, and critical review. The traditional view of the scientific method, for example, starts with the individual's freedom and duty to pose falsifiable hypotheses that are then tested empirically, and presented in sufficient detail to any interested person for scrutiny and replication. This process represents a commitment by the scientific community to achieve propositions of the highest quality. Conventions – agreed upon rules – govern everything in this process, including the propositional structure of a hypothesis, the conditions of *falsifiability*, the character of a fair test and its empirical evidence, and the manner of its publication, from the terms of its acceptance to its presentational style (→ Critical Rationalism). Compared to the physical sciences, replication and critical review in communication, as in many social sciences, are considerably less conventionalized. Authors are not obliged to make data and instruments available to others and routinely refuse requests. None of the mainline journals maintains a regular feature of published reviews. These may be perceived as threats to the objectivity of the discipline.

## OBJECTIVITY AND TRUTH

Objectivity does not guarantee the truth of the matter. A declaration of objectivity means that the intellectual community's standards of quality have been met. Those standards, however, may not be adequate: they may be founded on false premises; they may be applied in an inappropriate matter; the enforcement of conventions may be haphazard; their practical enactment may be compromised. These are all human practices subject to human error. There is, however, no simple statement about what this possibility of error means. For the strict realist, who holds to an addressable, objective world about which true and false statements can be made ( $\rightarrow$  Realism), the community can fall into error but it will not remain in error. It is self-correcting. Any single proposition may be wrong, but, on the whole, science works in progressive ways to a better approximation of that reality.

The social constructionist cannot be so sanguine. Most of the variants of social constructionism would consider both a material and ideational reality as the subject of inquiry in the social sciences ( $\rightarrow$  Constructivism). The components of the ideational reality as the product of social processes cannot be objective. They are culturally produced and exist in the time and place of their constituting cultural practice. Consequently for social constructionists, at least some elements of what is true come with an expiration date. Time erodes knowledge; science cannot be linearly progressive as what is justified as true becomes false.

Relativists and many postmodernists reject the first premise of realism – that there is an addressable, objective reality that provides a self-corrective to claim ( $\rightarrow$  Postmodernism and Communication). Knowledge and the declaration of the true are both social processes that are held in place through material practices and power relationships. The intersubjective critique is a high quality gloss for the rough and tumble politics of knowledge. The most that it will grant science is that it works, but its instrumentality is encased in political rather than veridical characteristics.

Practitioners of the *interpretive turn* that appeared throughout the social sciences in the early 1970s have a problematic relationship with objectivity and truth. Their epistemology is social constructionist, which leads them to reject notions of an independent reality that provides a corrective to erroneous claim. Further, the individual researcher is considered the instrument of analysis in a reprise of Max Weber's *verstehen* or special understanding that humans have for human life. For the more radical of interpretivists, the comparison is not between the objective and the subjective but between the resonant and the idiosyncratic.

Interpretivists, social constructionists, relativists, and postmodernists, arguably, all conflate the true with the good, which is to say that claims about what is true are advanced politically rather than on some intrinsic character. In doing so they close the gap that David Hume struck between what is or is not and what ought or ought not to be, for in arguing that something is so they are forced to argue that it ought to be believed to be so. This belief in something is constitutive in a socially constructed, ideational world, leading to material consequences based on that constitution. In this formulation, objectivity is a rhetorical property rather than an epistemological principle.

## **OBJECTIVITY IN MEASUREMENT AND TESTING**

An objective method of measurement is one in which any one observer following the rules of measurement will assign the same values/qualities to the observed object as any other observer following those same rules. The premise is that the properties of the object will interact in a consistent way with the rules of measurement to produce the reported values. These values are necessarily a function both of the object properties and the rules of measurement: any belief that it is possible for the object to report its properties to observers in the absence of a measurement protocol would require a brute sense empiricism – an epistemological position that has been universally rejected by commentators.

### **Protocol Interaction**

The notion that the rules of measurement participate in the values reported can lead to the erroneous claim that those values are contaminated by the protocol. But consider measuring a board using a metric scale (millimeters), an imperial scale (inches), and a story pole (a pencil line on a stick). All three measurement protocols can give the exact same answer to the question of whether the board is long enough, although each will report different values (→ Measurement Theory).

Further, there is some belief that the bias of a protocol can be contained by using multiple protocols. This practice is often called triangulation and is an extension of the multiple-observers convention in that it produces multiple observations by using different methods. What has not been conventionalized, however, is the resolution of the differences that typically appear among the protocols. Determining what will be held as true will always be contentious.

### **Objectivity and Validity**

Objective measurement does not guarantee valid measurement (→ Validity). Every measurement protocol is designed to return a value for every application. It is possible that the rules of measurement may auto-indicate a value in the absence of a property or even an object. Some commentators argue that attitude studies fall into this category. The rules may not interact with the properties of the object at all or in consistent ways.

It is also true that inference is a necessary part of any measurement, objective or not. Inference assigns meaningfulness to some measurement value. To say that 31 people checked the number 3 out of choices ranging from 1 to 5 has little value without the inference that the value of 3 represents a neutral attitude. If the source of the behavior is not an attitude but some other cognitive property, then the inference will be false. If the properties measured appear only in the presence of the rules of measurement, then the measurement will be true but the inference drawn from them will most likely be false.

In the end the validity of a measurement is always unknown. Consequently, a measurement (as well as a claim) can be objective and also false. In the absence of contrary evidence, however, we may act in some confidence that it is true. The irreducible

possibility of error in measurement and testing, however, requires a skeptical stance even when acting in confidence.

### UNDERSTANDING OBJECTIVITY IN COMMUNICATION

Traditional science houses few interpretivists, social constructionists, relativists, or postmodernists, but they are well represented in the communication field. The result is that objectivity is a contested term across the domain of the discipline but within given areas is either assumed or ignored.

There is one part of the debate as it is commonly framed that can be quickly set aside: there is nothing about objective measurement that requires numbers; the requirements for objectivity are rules governing multiple observers who consequently generate the same observations *given the same conditions*. Numbers are simply a convenience of analysis. There is, consequently, no necessary impediment to objectivity in qualitative or interpretive studies at the level of observation. Interpretivists can establish rules of observation, and communication research is seeing an increasing conventionalization of participant-observation fieldwork.

Multiple observers can work the same observational domain using the same rules. The results are expected to differ, however, because the communicative practices that are the objects of observation are held to be contingent to the time, place, enactors, and observers of their origin. It is expected that *conditions will not be the same* across those contingencies.

That difference may be paradigmatic and potentially incommensurate, but it has little to do with objectivity. It is the rules of observation and their systematic application that establish the objectivity of the observations. The differences across observations that are expected to appear, given the interpretive paradigm, may simply be the facts of the case. The result is that no one has a unique claim to objectivity and no one is released from specifying systematic and reproducible rules of observation, if they choose to declare themselves scientists.

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► Critical Rationalism ► Measurement Theory ► Post-modernism and Communication ► Realism ► Test Theory ► Validity

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# Observation

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Observation is a very “natural” way of gathering data and information – probably everybody can identify situations where humans are scrutinizing their surroundings. Selltiz et al. note: “We are constantly observing – noticing what is going on around us . . . ; as long as we are awake, we are almost constantly engaged in observation. It is our basic method of getting information about the world around us” (Selltiz et al. 1967, 200). However, these everyday observations are not sufficient for social research, since their informational basis stems from unclear viewpoints, undocumented (re)constructions of the observer, and random events. So in order to become a scientific technique, an observation study has to follow some rules – most notably, it has to be systematic in both its planning and recording phases. This does not mean that it has to be standardized; however, even if an observation study collects information in an open way, it has to follow a clear research strategy.

In comparison to the other two central ways of data gathering in communication studies – content analysis and → interview – observation plays a smaller role in research nowadays (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative). In many handbooks of communication studies, it is just noted as a means of getting some ideas “from the field” in order to develop items for survey studies or categories for content analysis – and sometimes it is missing altogether. This is not necessarily the case in neighboring disciplines, like sociology or psychology: here, observation studies play a central role in research. In sociology, field studies are a core instrument for getting access to social phenomena, and in psychology, observations play an important part in experimental study designs (→ Experiment, Laboratory; Experimental Design).

## **ROOTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF OBSERVATION AS A SCIENTIFIC METHOD**

While observation as a mode of perception is simply a part of human existence and therefore cannot be traced back to some historical roots, its scientific origins can be identified more clearly. Anthropologists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were among the first who used observations systematically as a way of gathering information during their travels around the world, and their ethnographic studies of cultures foreign to them can be seen as one central developmental branch of sociological studies. Still, these observations were very open in their focus and methods, so the resulting travel reports were not scientific when judged by modern standards.

With the dramatic changes of societies during industrialization, sociologists started to study the life of the working class and new forms of existence in metropolitan areas in contrast to traditional rural life. While there were still many smaller, open studies among the observations applied in this context, some researchers followed a more coherent and methodologically strict perspective on social phenomena. One of the most prominent examples of this development is the so-called Chicago School, with sociologists like Nels

Anderson concentrating on urban life, using observation as a central tool for getting access to social realities.

However, observation studies of human behavior are not limited to anthropology and sociology, and accordingly, one will find some roots of the method in other fields as well, most notably in psychology. Behaviorists (e.g., B. F. Skinner and J. B. Watson) started to analyze animal (and later human) behavior in the first half of the twentieth century, using observations in controlled experimental settings. Later on, some spectacular psychological experiments like the Milgram study or the Stanford Prison experiment led to a certain image of psychological observation studies, which is still influential in popular beliefs of what psychology is about.

In media and communication studies, (field) observation studies were a central research tool right from the beginning of the discipline. Both the behavior of audience members in natural home environments and the work routines of journalists in newsrooms were the targets of many observation studies. As within sociology, the early studies did not stick to methodological standards and the documentation of the data gathering was often very weak. For example, Walter Gieber notes about the method of his early study of 16 telegraph editors: “Field visits to the newsrooms were in two waves to permit an extensive interview with the deskman and observation of the editing process” (1956, 424). Following the development in other social sciences, later studies became more rigorous in their study methodology. However, large-scale observation studies with standardized instruments are still rare in communication studies, at least when compared to the other types of data gathering.

Just lately, the influence of → cultural studies in communication and media studies has led to a growing number of observation studies, mostly based in the “qualitative” paradigm – so they favor open instruments and exploration studies, based on a few hand-selected cases (→ Qualitative Methodology). This has been criticized by some researchers as well, who regard these as being merely “chance observations,” so there is an ongoing debate on the status of the method in communication studies.

## **OBSERVATION CONCEPTS**

When mentioning the term “observation,” many researchers in communication studies think of their first steps when doing a study, just as Donohew and Palmgreen (2003, 119) describe it: “Most theory building begins with rather crude observations of events or other phenomena that seem to be related. At first, the scientist does not know exactly what to look for. Observation at this point tends to be rather unstructured and informal.” This type of information gathering could be identified as open, (probably) participant observation without a structured instrument. While this is a typical part of the research process, it is usually not mentioned as a special method. There are other variations of observations, however, that deserve this status.

When trying to differentiate between several types of observations, one can discern several dimensions for discriminating these types. Three dimensions are especially useful for such a differentiation, since other variations could be related to them:

- 1 level of standardization;
- 2 involvement of the observer;
- 3 visibility of the observer.

First, the level of standardization refers to the use of strict observation rules, which may be defined in code-books and formal observation guidelines, in contrast to open documentation or diary methods. Very often, researchers use a combination of both open and closed elements, in order to control the observation process while retaining the openness for surprises from the field.

Second, in many cases, access to the field is only possible if the observer becomes part of the observed reality: “The participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization he studies” (Becker 1958, 652). So the observer is directly involved in the field – for example if he or she is working as a journalist when doing an observation study of newsroom selection processes.

Third, the involvement of the observer is often confused with the visibility of the observation process. However, active participation of an observer in the field does not necessarily mean that the observed persons are aware of being studied – for example, if the observer is working undercover. On the other hand, a completely passive observer can be very visible, for example sitting next to and observing somebody, thus being obtrusive and probably causing reactivity.

### **TYPICAL STEPS OF AN OBSERVATION STUDY**

No matter what type of observation study a researcher chooses as adequate for a given research interest, it will follow a few typical steps, which are somewhat different from those of interview studies or content analyses. Of course, observation studies start with a research interest or research questions, like other types of empirical research. One should extract and clarify the underlying dimensions of meaning and central concepts touched by these questions – even when doing a “qualitative” exploration study. The identification of dimensions in the research interest/questions is not only aimed at the (sometimes unknown) social phenomena, but also at one’s own perspective – thus, it is also necessary if the researcher does not know a lot about the field itself. Based on this first clarification, the researcher has to decide where, when, what, and whom he or she wants to observe – which means: identifying the research field (place, time, social context), subjects/objects (individuals, groups, inanimate objects), and cases (actions, events, time units). Usually, this leads to refined research questions, and, in some cases, also to a further clarification of research questions, up to testable hypotheses and variables in the case of highly standardized studies. Following this step, the researcher has to develop observation procedures, which include a research plan and observation tools, like code-books or diaries, and might involve the use of technical devices for recording aspects of the social phenomena under observation (microphones, digital audio recorders, cameras etc.).

When working with several observers, the researcher has to train them. Very often, this means a simulation of the observation situation or just an explanation of the code-book, since advance access to the field is not possible or is problematic. The same applies to pre-tests. Sometimes, one could choose to do the training and pre-tests in a “test” field similar to the actual observation field, with comparable observation objects/subjects. However, even with advance training, going into the field can be problematic, for example if an observer starts to openly observe an editor in a newsroom. Both the observer and the observed subject(s) have to become accustomed to the situation, so the field phase needs some kind of introductory phase as well. Material from these first observations should be



left out of the final data analysis and interpretation. In some cases, the data analysis and interpretation can also lead to further research questions – and to a second “loop” of the whole research process, including the development of refined research instruments and more field time.

### APPLICATIONS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES

As described above, observations are frequently used as a first “explorative” access to social phenomena, for example if there is not sufficient in-depth knowledge to design “closed” items for questionnaires. The method can be applied in a much broader way. For example, it is often the method of choice when it comes to newsroom studies (→ Gatekeeping; Media Production and Content). Observations are also used to gain access to the everyday life of media audiences, especially if one is interested in habitualized use patterns that cannot be reflected upon by the audience members themselves (→ Audience Research; Nielsen Ratings). There are many reasons why subjects might not be able to verbalize certain aspects of their social reality, both in open interviews or closed surveys. They might not be aware of them, or they might not have the language capabilities to describe them (for example, children); here, observations are sometimes the only solution.

Observations of newsrooms and media audience members in everyday settings are usually direct observations by human observers. However, one should not forget other types of observation studies. There are also (sometimes automatic) observations with the help of technical equipment. These machine observations are used heavily in market research (TV quota measurement) and in experimental studies (→ Physiological Measurement). It has to be noted, though, that the analysis of automatically acquired behavior traces (for example, computer log files) and experimental studies are very different from the classic “role model” of field observations, and many researchers actually do not even think of these types of research as being observation studies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Field Research ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Interview ▶ Log-File Analysis ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Survey

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## Observational Learning

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Observational learning is concerned with the acquisition of attitudes, values, and styles of thinking and behaving through observation of the examples provided by others (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). Psychological theories have traditionally emphasized learning from direct experience. Natural endowment provides humans with enabling biological systems but few inborn skills. These must be developed over long periods and altered to fit changing conditions over the life course. If knowledge and skills had to be shaped laboriously by trial-and-error experiences without the benefit of modeled guidance, human development would be greatly retarded, not to mention exceedingly tedious and hazardous.

Errors can produce costly or even fatal consequences. Moreover, the constraints of time, resources, and mobility impose severe limits on the situations and activities that can be directly explored for the acquisition of new knowledge and competencies. Fortunately, humans have evolved an advanced capacity for observational learning that enables them to expand their knowledge and competencies rapidly through the information conveyed by the rich variety of models. Social modeling shortcuts the learning process.

Observational learning is governed by *four sub-functions*. *Attentional processes* (→ Attention) determine what people selectively observe in the profusion of modeling influences and what information they extract from modeled events. A number of personal and social factors influence what people choose to explore and how they perceive what is modeled in the social and symbolic environment (→ Selective Attention; Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

People cannot be much influenced by observed events if they do not remember them. A second sub-function governing observational learning concerns cognitive *representational processes*. Retention (→ Memory) involves an active process of transforming information about modeled events into conceptions for generating new patterns of behavior. The third sub-function in observational learning involves the behavioral *production processes* by which symbolic conceptions are transformed into appropriate courses of action.

The fourth sub-function in observational learning concerns *motivational processes*. People do not perform everything they learn. Whether or not they put into practice what they have learned observationally is influenced by three major types of incentive motivators. These include the directly experienced costs and benefits of the modeled style

of behavior; the observed detriments and benefits experienced by others; and the positive and negative self-evaluative reactions to the conduct, rooted in personal standards (→ Bandura, Albert).

Observational learning is not simply mimicry of what one sees. The proven skills and established customs of a culture may be adopted in essentially the same form as they are modeled. However, in most activities skills must be improvised to suit different situations. Modeling influences convey rules of behavior. For example, individuals may see others confronting moral conflicts involving different matters but applying the same moral standard to them. In abstract observational learning, observers extract the rules and principles embodied in the specific judgments or actions exhibited by others. Once observers learn the underlying principles, they can use them to generate new instances of behavior that go beyond what they have seen or heard.

Social modeling not only promotes *higher-level learning*, but *creativity* as well. Modeling unconventional ways of thinking increases innovativeness in others. Creativity usually involves synthesizing existing knowledge into new ways of thinking and doing things. When exposed to diverse modeling influences, observers often adopt advantageous elements, improve upon them, synthesize them into new forms, and tailor them to their particular circumstances. Through these processes, selective modeling serves as the mother of innovation.

Social modeling for observational learning comes in a *variety of forms*. Some of the observational learning is based on the models in the environment one inhabits. In contemporary society, attitudes, values, and styles of thinking and behaving are adopted from the pervasive modeling in the symbolic environment of the mass media that occupy a major part of peoples' daily lives. In addition, verbal modeling often substitutes for or supplements behavioral modeling as a source of observational learning. By drawing on verbal descriptions of how to behave, people are aided in mastering social, occupational, and recreational skills and learn appropriate conduct for different situations. In symbolic modeling using inspirational exemplars, people learn values, lifestyles, and guides for daily living personalized in idealized figures in treatises and biographical writings about past visionaries and reformers.

As already noted, observational learning plays a key role in the acquisition of knowledge, cognitive skills, and new styles of behavior. Modeling influences also have strong motivational *effects* based on the outcomes that flow from the actions of others. Observed desired effects can create outcome expectancies that serve as positive incentives, whereas observed punishing effects can instill negative outcome expectancies that function as disincentives for similar behavior.

People are easily aroused by the emotional experiences of others (→ Excitation and Arousal; Emotion). Therefore, observers can acquire lasting attitudes, values, and emotional reactions toward persons, places, or things that have been associated with modeled emotional experiences. They learn to fear the things that frightened others, to dislike what repulsed them, and to like what gratified them. Fears and intractable phobias can be weakened or eliminated by modeling coping strategies for exercising control over the things that are feared.

During their daily lives, people have direct contact with only a small sector of the physical and social environment. They inhabit a limited locale, work in the same setting, travel the same routes, visit the same places, perform the same routines day in and day out, and interact with the same circle of friends and associates. Consequently, the public

consciousness and images of reality are greatly influenced by vicarious experiences – by what people see and hear (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Emotions, Media Effects on). Many of the shared views of occupational pursuits, ethnic groups, minorities, the elderly, social and gender roles, and other aspects of life are partly cultivated through symbolic modeling of → stereotypes (→ Mainstreaming).

Global broadcasts now show sociopolitical conflicts, the strategies and countermeasures used, and their effects, as they are happening. Televised modeling is becoming an especially influential vehicle for social and political change. The revolutionary advances in communication technologies (→ Technology and Communication) are conferring growing primacy on observational learning from the variety of models who populate the vast cyberspace.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Mainstreaming ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Memory ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Technology and Communication

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## **Online Journalism**

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Online journalism involves the delivery of news content through a networked, digital medium. The → Internet and world wide web are primary vehicles for online journalism, but other options include mobile phones, personal digital assistants, and other devices. The question of whether those not traditionally considered journalists can or do produce journalism is important but unresolved (→ Citizen Journalism).

### **DEVELOPMENT**

Online journalism dates to the development of prototypes in the late 1970s and early 1980s, a period when the Internet was a cumbersome, text-based system mostly for

scientists and researchers. Proprietary online services intended for general public use evolved separately and in tandem with a growing consumer market in personal computers. Early forms included teletext, which transmitted information through a portion of the television broadcast signal, and videotex, which sent information to an individual terminal via telephone lines (Sigel 1983).

Videotex services, many of them government-supported, attracted media participants throughout western Europe, notably in Britain, France, and Germany, as well as in Japan, Canada, Brazil, and Australia (Branscomb 1988). Early journalistic *information providers* for these online services included the BBC and *Financial Times* in Britain. In the United States, media companies that owned videotex ventures supplemented their own content with information from wire services, major newspapers, and other sources.

Online journalism gained traction once a structure for *hyperlinking* Internet documents developed in the late 1980s and a graphic interface allowed easy navigation around the rapidly growing network (→ Digital Media, History of). Its growth in the United States illustrates similar trends throughout the developed world: About 20 US newspapers offered some sort of online product at the start of 1994, mostly bulletin boards plus a handful of alliances with proprietary commercial services such as America Online. The first consumer web browser, Netscape Navigator, launched that year; by December, about 100 online newspaper services were either operating or in development, and the first online advertisement had appeared, on the *Wired* magazine site, hotwired.com. The number of US newspapers online climbed to several hundred by mid-1995.

Newer browsers and ongoing technological developments made it easier to use the Internet and the web (→ Exposure to the Internet). More users started getting news online, and the more they did so, the more media companies and marketers could reach them there. News media executives quickly realized that an exclusive arrangement with a closed, proprietary service was unnecessarily limiting: They could create and maintain their own websites and reach the expanding online market no matter which service provider users favored. By the mid-2000s, almost all news outlets in the developed world had an online presence.

## ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

After moving to the web in the 1990s, it took nearly a decade for most media organizations to turn a profit there. The two primary revenue sources for commercial media, subscriptions and advertising, did not transfer easily to the emerging medium. With millions of information sources available for free, users were reluctant to pay for content. And advertisers struggled to adapt their placement and pricing strategies to fit the online environment (→ Advertising).

At first, parent organizations subsidized online journalism sites. They saw them largely as vehicles for extending their brand name and geographic reach. Some major organizations employed dozens of journalists to maintain their websites, but most online staffs remained small. Content online originated in the parent outlet, which then repurposed it, commonly through an automated process, for digital delivery. A few editors typically worked in a separate location, handling whatever the parent outlet could not automate, such as adding links or rewriting headlines. Online content was otherwise identical to offline content.

By the mid-2000s, changes were apparent. In the US market, 95 percent of newspaper websites reported that they were profitable by 2005. Although most broadcast-affiliated sites remained in the red, revenue was rising. Enhanced placement, tracking, and targeting tools bolstered advertising, which generated most of the profit. Keyword search ads generated the greatest revenue, followed by display and classified advertising.

Major news media also succeeded, to varying degrees, in charging consumers for some content. For example, the *New York Times* offered paid access to archives, a Sunday preview feature, and selected columnists through the Times Select service. The *Wall Street Journal*, one of the only online journalism sites to charge for access from the start, in mid-2005 reported making more profit from its online news division than from its print counterpart.

Economic challenges remained. Print media sites competed for classified ads with sites such as monster.com, ebay.com, and craigslist.org. News aggregators such as Google News and Yahoo! News were popular and attracted commensurate numbers of advertisers. Local ad revenue that once went either to local media or to telephone directories now divided among more competitors; newspaper sites no longer received a majority of it.

Although its contribution to the bottom line increased through the mid-2000s, online news still accounted for a small fraction of revenue at most mainstream media outlets, and traditional sources of revenue were down. Even strong online growth seemed unlikely to make up for the losses buffeting parent companies. Whether they would invest in technology or in journalists was of particular concern because journalists provide the investigative power and creativity that companies require to move beyond headline services.

## DIGITAL JOURNALISTS

News outlets throughout the world now not only maintain websites but also are expanding use of newer digital formats, such as RSS (really simple syndication) feeds, reporter blogs (→ Blogger), and podcasts. The digital media environment has also become central to journalists' view of what they do (Teeling 2006).

Creating online journalism differs from traditional media production in at least three ways. Many of those producing online journalism also work for other, affiliated media. Growing amounts of what they produce does not translate across platforms. And much of the online content does not come from journalists at all.

A majority of the most widely used online news sites are affiliates of traditional media organizations, and the stories that journalists produce for print or television also typically are disseminated online. The process works in the opposite direction as well, particularly for breaking news: Stories reported first on the Internet subsequently appear in the traditional product.

However, journalists contributing material to the web handle increasingly diverse content. Newspaper sites, for example, offer audio, video, and other multimedia content. Many also provide user-generated material, from blog entries to audience members' texts and visuals. An *online newspaper* is no longer simply the newspaper online; it has evolved into something unique to the Internet.

For journalists, this shift has called for gathering information in multiple formats, such as audio clips along with written notes or video along with still images. Online staffers

create multimedia story components, and develop and oversee interactive elements. The result is a trend toward an integrated newsroom, where journalists produce content for several types of media (→ Cross-Media Production). Many organizations are desegregating the print and online newsrooms, creating a *platform agnostic environment* where journalists with good ideas for telling a story in a different medium can do more than suggest that someone else develop those ideas for online publication (Glaser 2005).

Such transitions are not necessarily smooth. Reports on *newsroom convergence* (→ Digitization and Media Convergence) have suggested problems related to everything from differences in newsroom cultures to a lack of training with new tools and techniques. Some journalists see the cross-platform trend enhancing professional goals for public service as well as personal goals for career advancement. Others disdain the emphasis on branding and promotion, dislike the demand for more content without more pay, and suspect organizational motives that may lead to staff reductions.

The growth of online information from outside any newsroom may exacerbate these misgivings. News aggregators generate a lot of traffic with little or no editorial input, relying instead on sophisticated technology to collect, organize, and present stories targeted at the individual user. Bloggers share the role that opinion columnists, news analysts, and television commentators once held. Social networking sites such as *myspace.com* and open-source publishing sites such as *ohmynews.com* or *YouTube.com* enable users to publish their own version of news (→ Open Source). Journalists at traditional news organizations debate whether or when none, some, or all of this output is *journalism*, but acknowledge the undeniable competition for user time and attention, as well as for advertising revenue.

## ROLES AND NORMS

Journalism has never been a perfect fit for the sociological construct of professionalism, which entails autonomy, prestige, and a particular set of criterion skills and normative values. Nonetheless, journalists generally consider themselves professionals in the important sense of their loyalty to the ideals of a profession and to a particular set of norms (→ Ethics in Journalism; Professionalization of Journalism; Journalists, Credibility of). They also share conceptions of broad professional roles, such as being a *watchdog* of the government and a *gatekeeper* of information (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

Online journalism most obviously challenges the role of determining which stories reach the public (→ Gatekeeping). There is simply no gate to keep when anyone can be a publisher, and the notion of guarding one becomes absurd (Williams & Delli Carpini 2000). The emerging forms of political and government communication, transmitted to and from the public, also are at least partially displacing journalists as information providers and interpreters (Tumber 2001).

The change may shift the conceptualization of such professional roles away from the practical realm and into the normative one (Singer 2006). Rather than keeping an item out of circulation, journalists may focus more on vetting items for veracity and illuminating the context. As other online information providers challenge their role, status, and autonomy in deciding what is news and what makes it so, journalists may find that their self-definitions revolve less around the job they do and increasingly around the standards they apply in doing it.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Blogger ► Citizen Journalism ► Cross-Media Production ► Digital Media, History of ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► Ethics in Journalism ► Exposure to the Internet ► Gatekeeping ► Internet ► Journalists, Credibility of ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Open Source ► Professionalization of Journalism

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## **Online Media**

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The term “online media” primarily refers to technical communication media where digital content is transmitted from any kind of server to distant receivers via the → Internet (TCP/IP [transmission control protocol/Internet protocol]) or other digital networks, e.g., mobile services, and presented on a computer or a comparable terminal device (notebook, PDA [personal digital assistant], or mobile phone). Not all kinds of digital media are online media: multimedia CDs, DVDs, DVD players, mp3 players, or media applications on standalone computers are referred to as “offline media,” as content is stored at the place where it is presented. In opposition to broadcasting media (→ Television; Radio), where analog or digital content is broadly transmitted (via terrestrial or satellite broadcasting or broadband cable; → Cable Television; Satellite Television) to all receptive devices, in online media a client computer requests specific content from a server that, in turn, directly – i.e., point-to-point – delivers the content. According to this technical



definition, online media facilitate a broad variety of different forms of computer-mediated communication (→ Internet, Technology of). They can be described along several dimensions dealing with (1) basic aspects of communication structure, (2) aspects of exposure and user interaction, and (3) theoretical and institutional aspects of mass media.

### **BASIC ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE**

The first dimension is the *direction of communication and number of communication partners*. Online communication can take place between single persons who are mutually exchanging messages (interpersonal or one-to-one communication, e.g., email, chat, or Internet telephony; → Electronic Mail); between several persons, often organized within issue-based groups, e.g., in MUDs (multi-user dungeons), discussion, or chat forums (group or many-to-many communication) where some members are actively participating while passive “lurkers” are only reading the others’ contributions; and between a sender and an arbitrary number of recipients (one-to-many, e.g., websites or weblogs). If each member of a society has at least the potential opportunity to be a recipient – i.e., a medium addresses the public and if the audience size exceeds a critical mass of recipients – one-to-many communication is called mass communication.

A second basic aspect is *synchronicity*. Here we have to distinguish between interpersonal and mass media. Some interpersonal media enable synchronous communication between communication partners, which means that each side instantaneously receives the other side’s messages and can, in turn, immediately react (e.g., chat, Internet telephony, video conferences). This permits a direct and truly interactive communication situation, requiring the simultaneous disposition and attention of both partners. Other interpersonal media offer asynchronous communication: the sender’s message is stored and can be received and answered whenever the recipient wants, e.g., email, voice mailbox (→ Interpersonal Communication). Referring to one-to-many or mass communication, there are also two basic variants of synchronicity. Asynchronous online media permit recipients to receive content whenever they wish. Most online news media offer an archive where old articles can be retrieved even years later. In contrast to print media, where content cannot be changed after publication as there are too many original copies, digital content can be updated, revised, or altered easily and at any time. This is the main reason why online publications can be problematic to cite, as a cited version can significantly differ from later versions. Synchronous online media are the equivalent of broadcasting by streaming video, music, or spoken word in real time. Different from “traditional” broadcasting, many synchronous online media additionally offer archived material for later, asynchronous use, e.g., as video on demand.

Third, online media can contain *different forms of digital content* ranging from text, photographs (→ Photography), drawings, sound clips, videos, and → animations (multi-media) to any imaginable information service or software application. Thus, online media can display all kinds of content from the traditional media, and the concept of hyperlinks allows interconnection of any form of content. This has major implications for the debate on technical media convergence and the replacement of traditional media by online media: theoretically, online media can substitute for any existing medium (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). If a so-called “multimediality” emerges incorporating all earlier media and offering additional services in the future, it will be digital and online. If

a multimediu, i.e., one device for all media content, user needs, and situations, ever exists it is unclear how long its diffusion within society will take. Most researchers, academic and commercial, forecast that although the Internet and mobile media will continue to gain audience share, the established media (television, radio, press) will not be replaced in the medium term (see, e.g., Lehman-Wilzig & Cohen-Avigdor 2004; Adoni & Nossek 2001).

## ASPECTS OF EXPOSURE AND USER INTERACTION

### Place of Use

Until around the year 2000, online media were almost exclusively used on computers situated in (home) offices and mainly used for informational purposes, so-called “laid forward media.” Computers are increasingly used as entertainment media, so-called “laid back media,” and have started to displace television and other entertainment media in living-rooms, children’s rooms, and bedrooms (e.g., Bakardjieva & Smith 2001; Berker et al. 2005).

Today, most online offerings can be used at any kind of media terminal as long as a sufficiently fast data connection is established and the terminal’s input and output facilities (display, loudspeaker, keypad) are adequate. This allows not only home use, but also the development of mobile media services for portable devices like notebooks, PDAs, mobile phones, game paddles, and digital music or video players. Broadband mobile media offering multimedia capabilities and location-based services (the “third generation of telecommunication,” UMTS [universal mobile telecommunications system]) are seen as the most promising media markets.

### Interactivity

There are two different concepts of interactive media (→ Interactivity, Concept of). In a sociological sense, interactive media allow individuals or groups of individuals to communicate with each other (computer-mediated interpersonal communication). Examples are online marketplaces like eBay, online communities where users can share personal photographs (e.g., Flickr), and videos (e.g., YouTube) or discuss specific issues. The other meaning refers to → human–computer interaction. Here, media content is stored on a server (the computer, usually a web server). The user can access the desired content by selecting one option (hyperlink) or an array of options (e.g., a restaurant database searchable by location, nationality of cuisine, price category) or by inserting text in a text field (e.g., → search engines or expert systems).

The more *options the medium provides* and the more easily users can control the content (range of options), the faster the medium reacts to users’ choices (speed), and the more flexibility users obtain to decide when to retrieve content (time flexibility), the more interactive a medium is. Highly interactive media can detect users’ needs and interests without user input or even awareness. Online media, for example, can track and save users’ visits and selected content and automatically present appropriate content at the next visit. Mobile media can identify a person’s location and deliver location-specific information (e.g., nearby restaurants or gas stations). Besides control, the number of senses a medium activates (visual, aural, tactile, olfactory, gustatory; “media richness” –

see Steuer 1992), the ease of control (usability), and the user's situational feeling of being personally, emotionally, and locally connected to the described content (established concepts are playfulness, connectedness, sense of place, presence, immersion) affect the degree of a medium's interactivity. According to this definition, online games are the most interactive online media (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception): In a conventional ego-shooter game, the player has a choice as to where to look, where to move, and what to say. The system instantly reacts to his or her actions, and for the player it feels like "being there" (see Kiouisis 2002; Lin 2003).

*Content modularization* is an indispensable prerequisite of human–computer interactivity. In the traditional media, specific media products (e.g., newspaper copies, magazines, TV or radio programs, movies) are produced and presented as one integral piece of content. In hypertext and interactive media, content is broken into singular modules that users can deliberately select or arrange by clicking on hyperlinks or applying other forms of control. Consequently, there is no fixed order of reception. The degree of modularization depends on two dimensions: the universality and the size of content modules. If modules are *universal*, they fit different contexts and can be understood even without context. Universal modules can be applied in any content configuration and can be easily distributed across different media channels (cross-media utilization).

If, for example, a one-hour TV news magazine consisting of several thoroughly composed films that are linked by a presenter is offered as a download on the web, the material has to be separated into self-contained films that users can arbitrarily watch and understand in any order and without the original linkages. The coherence of the initially integral content is, at least partially, lost. This example also illustrates the second dimension: while the initial TV news magazine is a consecutive content unit of one hour, the web version comprises several films of a much shorter duration, i.e., content modules are smaller in size. In many text-based news sites, module sizes are still similar to newspapers or printed magazines such that print and online articles are comparable in length.

There are also extremely modularized media offerings assembled from a huge number of micro-elements. An online restaurant guide is, for example, a database of thousands of cases, each one consisting of dozens of fields or attributes: name of the restaurant, phone number, email address, dishes and beverage prices, different quality ratings (atmosphere, service, taste, or tidiness), etc. Each bit of information is significant only in combination with other bits of content. Visitors, then, can search for information and view different configurations of restaurant lists and profiles. The same principle applies to online games. In an ego-shooter game, each motion sequence, weapon, enemy, monster, and landscape is based on a huge number of separate information bits that are combined according to the situation and the player's actions.

### **Personalization**

Unitized media content can be easily adapted to users' interests and wishes. Automated content configuration permits the permanent personalization of online media, i.e., the repeated provision of a package of content that is automatically selected and presented according to users' preferences. There are two basic variants of personalization. The user may

select his or her preferred topics, departments, genres, actors, and locations and is presented with the content in the future (“customization,” e.g., Daily Me). Personalization in a narrower sense means that the user is automatically presented with tailored content, i.e., without selecting it and sometimes without noticing the automatic adaptation. Mobile services, for example, automatically provide locally relevant information, such as the next restaurant, hotel, or gas station. Amazon is another example: customers are accurately profiled according to their past purchases and viewed products. In future visits, they are presented with new offers and other information fitting their personal profile. These and other profiling practices clearly affect the information privacy of customers or recipients and this is being debated critically in the scholarly literature (see articles in *New Media and Society*, 8(6)).

## THEORETICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS OF MASS MEDIA

### Meaning of Online Media

So far this discussion has referred to online media as “technical” media, like television sets, computers, mobile phones, broadband cable, or telephone lines. In communication studies, two other perspectives dominate.

First, there is the meaning of *institutional media*, including a complex and emerging configuration of companies or institutions offering media products, trying to reach defined communication goals, applying processes and rules of content production under public control and regulation, and producing media-specific types of content for audiences with specific needs, gratifications, and patterns of media exposure. According to this cultural meaning, we can distinguish different types of online media, e.g., news sites, television network sites, corporate or product sites, political campaign sites, thematic communities, or search engines (→ E-Democracy).

Another meaning refers to online media as concrete media offerings or products (e.g., cnn.com, msnbc.com, ft.com), which are produced by journalistically and/or economically oriented institutions, disseminated, and received with the help of a technical infrastructure and devices. Most online media providers strive to reach mass audiences with products in order to finance their costly production by advertising revenues (online media requiring a user fee are still restricted to premium content; → Media).

### The Internet as Mass Medium or Cross-Medium

In the early days of the Internet in the mid-nineties, scholars discussed whether the Internet is a mass medium or not. At that time, about 5–10 percent of the population in most western countries were online. The question arose whether the Internet could be seriously compared to the other mass media after having reached a “critical mass” of 10 percent of users (Morris & Ogan 1995). In this discussion, different meanings of media became blurred. The Internet as a technical medium was compared to television, radio, and the press as institutional media. Later, the potentially infinite number of visitors on any website provoked the question of whether the web per se is a mass medium or whether only those sites that are *actually* viewed by a large audience can be called a mass medium (see, e.g., Webster & Lin 2002). The question of what number of recipients is required to talk of a

mass audience is still unanswered, but there seems to be a consensus among scholars to exclude from mass media private sites that are viewed by only a small number of visitors.

In the traditional mass media, almost all → news and entertainment content (→ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception) is supplied by professional media companies, institutions, or networks. This also applies to most online news and entertainment media. The majority of today's successful online mass media were founded by already established media or publishing houses. Online start-ups or standalone online media are still rare, and there are several reasons for this. In the beginning of online media, established media brands were already known to the audience and had a good image concerning news and entertainment quality, and online users trusted the established brands in the online world. Established media houses also had the journalism infrastructure and know-how to produce content for new media. They were able to reuse existing media content in their online media and to produce or purchase content at a lower price (*cross-media utilization*). Finally, multimedia houses can offer different media products with complementary content and promote new content across media channels (*cross-media promotion*). They can, for example, produce a television show, deliver background information or additional videos on a corresponding website, and offer a sweepstake over a telephone line with a usage fee (Ha & Chan-Olmsted 2004).

### **Source of Content**

In the traditional mass media as well as in online mass media, news and entertainment content is selected, produced, and presented by professional journalists (→ Online Journalism; Journalism; Professionalization of Journalism). Today, many online news media additionally contain "user-generated content": more or less "average users" actively mount different kinds of personal content at a website. This content is, in turn, selected, revised, and assembled by professional site providers. Examples of user-generated content are discussion forums, weblogs (→ Blogger), user diaries, personal essays, sound files or films, reader ratings of articles, and opinion polls. Users' visits to web pages can be logged and transformed into presentable content (e.g., as "Today's top 10 most read articles"). These kinds of online content are produced in an alleged cooperation between professional content providers and active users, giving recipients the feeling of being fully respected as co-writers. However, the site provider has the power to modify or reject users' contributions with the aim of creating an attractive mass media product (see Schweiger & Quiring 2005). Other online media are completely user-generated and can be regarded as real communities insofar as users' contributions are not at all or only lightly controlled by professionals (e.g., Wikipedia, Flickr, YouTube).

The Internet and other digital networks are communication platforms for news and entertainment media for private individuals, but they are also a means for all social and economic actors to directly reach the public without the paid (advertising) or free (press relations) mediation of mass media (sometimes discussed as "bypassing journalism"). Most companies, associations, and other institutions in the industrialized world run corporate, product or institutional websites. The Internet is home to an infinite multitude of database applications and services: online games, information services like Yellow Pages, product comparison sites, navigation services, download sites, e-learning environments,

search engines, and sophisticated applications like Second Life. The question arises as to whether these are all online media or whether the concept needs to be bounded in some way. There is no simple answer to this question. There is such a variety of online media, services, and applications, and all imaginable combinations of them, that any rigid definition is bound to fail.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Blogger ▶ Cable Television ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Media ▶ News ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Photography ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Search Engines ▶ Television

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## **Online Relationships**

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Online relationships may form using real-time chats or email from associations originating in listservs, chatrooms, interactive games, social networking sites, and many

other social venues on the Internet. They may be limited to a single encounter or they may involve repeated interaction over time. They may be conducted exclusively online or involve additional media, including face-to-face contact.

### **EVOLVING THEORETIC APPROACHES TO ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS**

Early laboratory studies of computer-mediated communication and theories developed for other media raised doubts about the use of the Internet for interpersonal relationships (→ Mediated Social Interaction; Network Organizations through Communication Technology; Communication Networks). Computer-mediated channels lacked bandwidth and, because of the lack of nonverbal and social cues, were thought to be inadequate for interpersonal interaction. Theorists assumed that it would be difficult to express complex emotional messages in online settings without abundant nonverbal cues (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Later researchers demonstrated that with sufficient time, text-based interactions could achieve the same level of content exchange as face-to-face interaction. Moreover, those with the online experience to take creative advantage of the expressive capacities of text-based media were more successful in forming and maintaining online relationships. The Internet also sometimes functioned in “hyperpersonal” fashion, allowing people to achieve higher levels of disclosure and intimacy than they would have been likely to achieve face to face. This effect was achieved by allowing senders to optimize their self-presentations, encouraging receivers to utilize idealized images of senders, making an advantage of asynchronous interaction, and generating positive feedback loops.

### **ONLINE, OFFLINE, AND MIXED MODE RELATIONSHIPS**

Online interaction and online relationships in particular were initially viewed as threats to offline relationships. Early studies involving inexperienced users indicated that people who spent more time on the Internet spent slightly less time with family members and with local social contacts and were somewhat more lonely and depressed. However, as users gained experience, they also gained confidence that in turn allowed them to take greater advantage of the Internet’s interpersonal capabilities (LaRose et al. 2001). In one particularly noteworthy study Kraut and colleagues (2002) reversed earlier findings on the same sample by showing that, as subjects became more experienced, they reported greater overall contact with family and friends as well as greater social support.

Negative effects on users’ offline social lives are more likely to occur among users who lack experience, are introverted or compulsive, are socially isolated, or whose social networks are generally not yet online. Studies in several countries now indicate the Internet typically encourages people to develop new, more diverse relationships while at the same time enhancing communication among those who already have well-established relationships with each other offline (e.g., Hlebec et al. 2006).

Consistent with the Internet’s larger social evolution, negative effects of online interaction were more common in the early stages of the Internet’s adoption when it was novel, was disconnected from users’ other activities, and attracted those who may have been less embedded in existing social structures. As the user population became more representative and users gained experience, the Internet was integrated into

users' lives and in most cases made a positive contribution to their ongoing social activities.

Although the term "online relationship" is usually reserved for relationships that begin online, distinctions between online and offline relationships are dissolving. Online relationships often migrate to other settings and relationships begun offline often entail periods of regular or even prolonged online contact (→ Long-Distance Relationships). These "mixed mode" relationships pose new challenges for existing theories of both relationship development and mediated interaction (Walther & Parks 2002). Online and offline interaction stimulate each other, promoting an overall increase in interaction between relational participants. People in mixed mode relationships also take advantage of channel differences in order to manage uncertainty and conflict. Individuals favor media with restricted cues over face-to-face interaction, e.g., when the topic is potentially threatening to their self-images.

The Internet is a rapidly evolving meta-medium in which new combinations of media elements appear almost daily. Email is currently the dominant social venue with 10 times more users than chats and 25 times more users than multiplayer online games (Quan-Haase & Wellman 2002). Social venues may be categorized according to their primary communicative function (e.g., social support, gaming), but users regularly complement or subvert the intended function with a wider range of social interaction. Social venues may also be categorized according to whether they are limited to text, allow synchronous interaction, or allow back-channel communication (e.g., private messages during interaction within a group). Although social venues support relational formation and maintenance, they are not all equally fertile. Venues that allow synchronous interaction with back-channels (e.g., chats, MUDs/MOOs [Multi-User Dungeons, Domains, or Dimensions/MUDs Object Oriented], some interactive games) have higher rates of relational formation than those that are limited to asynchronous exchanges with no back-channels or graphics (e.g., newsgroups, mailing lists).

## OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS

Between 10 percent and 35 percent of Internet users have started a new relationship online. Over 80 percent use the Internet to augment contact with existing friends and family members. Online relationships can be described using the same concepts and measures as other interpersonal relationships, but they nonetheless create distinct social opportunities and raise distinct challenges (→ Relational Maintenance; Relationship Development).

### Opportunities

The Internet promotes the formation and maintenance of interpersonal relationships in several ways. The low effort required for email and instant messaging allow immediate, frequent, and easy interaction. Although the Internet lowers psychological and other transaction costs, it is not "frictionless." Time and energy are still expended and some costs are only delayed until such time as the participants in the online relationship wish to meet face to face or conduct a complex transaction. The Internet is also a powerful tool



for identifying and contacting those with common interests. It does so not only by transcending geographic barriers, but also by providing both powerful search tools and a myriad of interest-specific social venues.

Accordingly, most new social contacts on the Internet are with people who have similar interests. Carried to the extreme, the ability to select for common interests may result in the balkanization of social networks. Yet the same tools that help identify those with common interests can also be used to diversify one's social network. Moreover, similarity on one dimension does not imply similarity on others. Commonality thus opens avenues for diversity through discussion of differences in background and attitudes. Many interpersonal communication technologies allow relational participants to communicate asynchronously when differences in schedules and time zones limit opportunities for synchronous interaction. For those with Internet access, email has become the most frequent means of contacting friends and relatives who live more than 50 km away (Quan-Haase & Wellman 2002).

The Internet facilitates relationships by overcoming the limits of face-to-face interaction in offline settings. The relative advantages of online settings are illustrated in research on social support (Walther & Boyd 2002; → Social Support in Interpersonal Communication). Compared to face-to-face settings, online support venues may offer greater access to expertise, greater control over one's messages and self-presentation, and freedom from the confines of one's offline social network. Internet use has been associated with a larger overall social support network, particularly for those whose offline networks were limited (Hlebec et al. 2006).

### Challenges

One of the challenges facing online relationships is the *migration to face-to-face interaction*. Although 20–40 percent of online relationships migrate successfully, this transition often presents an insurmountable hurdle, particularly if the online acquaintance has been brief, if the participants did not first meet in conjunction with a shared interest, if there are barriers to getting together in person, and if participants have not already successfully managed conflict (Baker 2002).

*Deception* is always a possibility given the Internet's unparalleled freedom of self-presentation (→ Deceptive Message Production). It is most likely when online participants are less involved, do not anticipate meeting in person, and have no way to cross-check identity claims. When face-to-face interaction is desired, as in online dating, participants typically present idealized images of themselves in an effort to balance accuracy and desirability (Ellison et al. 2006; → Impression Management; Self-Presentation). Those who present themselves more honestly are more likely to develop successful online relationships.

Relative *anonymity* and lack of physical presence may breed other challenges, however, including unpredictable, disinhibited behavior. Although moderate disinhibition may encourage introverted users, settings in which people display extreme disinhibition make it difficult for users to engage in the sustained interaction needed for stable relationships.

Managing the *boundaries of online interactions* and relationships is also a major challenge. As network-enabled communication technologies become more ubiquitous, expectations regarding availability and access must be reworked. One point of tension is

the blurring of lines between work and home life. Another is the need to manage expectations about how quickly one will respond when others assume nearly continuous Internet connectivity. Finally, privacy concerns are inevitably raised as people provide increasing amounts of personal information and interaction in increasingly personal ways online. Individuals may not recognize the social boundaries or the lack of social boundaries in common online venues. Their privacy may be comprised, e.g., when they exchange personal information using work-related email or when they post information intended for intimates on sites that are publicly accessible and searchable.

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Examining a wider range of relationships is necessary for a broad understanding of online relationships. Romantic relationships garner the greatest attention, while far more common relationships such as work relationships, friendships, and extended family relationships are understudied (→ Dating Relationships; Friendship and Peer Interaction). Cultural differences and similarities in the dynamics and appeal of online relationships are inadequately understood. Longitudinal work is needed to identify the trajectories of online relationships. Research examining specific communicative challenges such as impression and boundary management is still in its early stages. Because most online relationships involve or will involve multiple media, researchers can no longer productively isolate “online” relationships from relationships more generally. Researchers are just beginning to consider how people utilize multiple channels in strategic ways and how task performance might be enhanced by the staging of interaction across multiple channels. Going beyond global estimates of Internet use will be essential to understand the potentially different functions of the Internet’s many social venues, as will stronger multi-variate controls that help identify differences among sub-groups of users (Zhao 2006).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Friendship and Peer Interaction ▶ Impression Management ▶ Long-Distance Relationships ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Self-Presentation ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication

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## Online Research

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The term “online research” refers to two different concepts which are often confused: (1) applying online methods in social research, and (2) social research of online phenomena. The first part of the article sketches the most important empirical methods and their online version. The second part briefly illustrates how selected online phenomena or research questions can be methodically addressed.

### ONLINE METHODS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

Many traditional methods in communication studies have been successfully transferred and adapted to the → Internet as a research tool (→ Interview; Interview, Qualitative; Interview, Standardized; Experiment, Field; Experiment, Laboratory; Observation). Only a few online methods are completely new developments (e.g., Internet data mining with robots or search engines).

#### Quantitative Surveys

The traditional methods of quantitative surveys are face-to-face interviews, (computer-assisted) telephone interviews, and self-administered questionnaires (paper and pencil), either disseminated via mail or administered in groups that are present (e.g., students on university courses). Online surveys apply self-administered questionnaires, which are usually presented as a series of web pages including questions, items, and answering

options. Three strategies are commonly used to establish contact between a questionnaire and potential participants: email invitations, hyperlinks on websites announcing a survey, and unexpected “pop-up” windows introducing a survey.

Web questionnaires have technical, socio-psychological, and economic advantages: all kinds of multimedia (photos, illustrations, animations, films, spoken word, music, etc.) can be displayed. Participants’ answers can be dynamically evaluated, commented, rejected, or corrected, which enhances data quality and reduces the need for manual data correction. The order of questions and items can be rotated, systematically or at random. Questions and answers can be filtered and modified in real time (for example, if a participant indicates that the “Tonight Show with Jay Leno” is his or her favorite television show, the program title can be directly inserted into the follow-up question: “what are your motives for watching the ‘Tonight Show with Jay Leno?’”). The interview situation is completely anonymous; thus, online surveys can deal with sensitive social or psychological issues (loneliness, exposure to pornography, drug abuse, etc.), where all traditional survey modes would imply grave effects of social desirability (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships; Pornography Use across the Life-Span). As no personal interviewers are involved, interviewer effects (sympathy/antipathy, accentuation or variation of questions and wording, etc.) can be ignored. The execution is almost free: online surveys can be run on a simple Internet server (with database server software), no interviewers are needed, no postal or telephone charges (as in postal surveys) have to be paid, and no manual data entry is needed. Consequently, the sample sizes of some online surveys can be gigantic (up to hundreds of thousands).

On the other hand, there are crucial disadvantages, many of them related to sampling procedure and sample quality. As there is still a significant number of people who are not online, online surveys cannot replace telephone or face-to-face interviews if a representative sample of a country’s population is aimed at. The total population of Internet users is unknown and there is no complete email directory. Hence, no valid random sampling technique is available, and no evaluation of a sample’s representativeness, as long as a survey aims at the whole population (→ Sampling, Random). If a restricted and known population is under analysis (e.g., visitors to a website, a company’s employees, students at a university), appropriate random sampling techniques permit representative samples (e.g., drawing email addresses from a list, presenting a pop-up questionnaire to every  $n$ th visitor to a web page). There is no safe method of barring individuals from completing an online questionnaire several times. This problem especially applies to polls yielding results of some public or personal relevance, where participants might try to achieve a higher weight for their personal opinion by repeatedly answering the questionnaire. As in most other surveys applying self-administered questionnaires, there is no control of the questionnaire completion situation in online surveys, i.e., participants can collaborate, look up an encyclopedia, or visit other websites during a test. As text reading on a computer screen is laborious, and Internet users are often impatient, online questionnaires should be comparatively short and easy to answer.

### **Qualitative Interviews and Focus-Group Discussions**

Qualitative personal or group interviews demand personal contact between interviewer and interviewee. Only in a face-to-face setting can a confident communication situation

be established, and paraverbal or nonverbal signals (e.g., emphasis, facial expressions, sweating) be properly registered. Nonetheless, high-quality audio and/or video conferencing techniques offering real-time and sensory-rich signals can be pragmatic and affordable tools for qualitative interviews. In in-depth interviews, collaborative software, which enables interviewer and interviewee to edit and comment texts, charts, or pictures together, may be a help. These and other tools may be applied in qualitative research if there are great geographical distances between interviewer and interviewee (e.g., in international studies) or if the interviewee prefers not being in personal contact.

### **Online Experiments**

Conventional laboratory experiments are laborious. Subjects have to be acquired individually or in groups; they have to show up at the laboratory at an arranged point of time; if computers are needed for stimulus presentation and/or subject inputs, each participant needs access to one, etc. Many experimental settings involving stimuli and measurements that can be displayed on a computer can also be conducted as virtual experiments on a website (→ Experimental Design).

The basic advantages are: (1) no investigator is needed; (2) participants can use their own computer at home or in the office; and (3) they can perform the experiments whenever and wherever they want to. These characteristics in sum result in a comparatively natural exposure situation. Finally, virtual experiments often exhibit extraordinarily large samples. There are major disadvantages as well: as indicated for online surveys, the sample quality may be poor and experimental groups may differ significantly. Participants have to administer the experiment on their own, and the researcher has poor control over the execution. If the prepared experimental procedure does not work at some stage or if the participant does not understand the instructions and requirements, the execution may be canceled and/or the received data may be corrupt.

Thus, virtual experiments only work if they can be taken easily and rapidly, and if participants are highly involved and keep to the rules. Experiments involving measures of personality may serve as an example here: many personality tests comprise simple stimuli and only a few questions and item batteries, and most individuals are highly interested in learning about their own personality (e.g., “how good am I in coping with crises?”) (→ Test Theory). Another area of application uses tests of websites and other online media (usability, user selection and navigation, etc.). After random allocation, site visitors are presented with different stimulus versions of media content. Navigation behavior can be measured by log-file analysis and afterwards an online questionnaire can be administered.

### **Observations**

Online research provides a rough, yet completely unobtrusive, method of observing human behavior – as far as it refers to the Internet: log-file analysis measures which page or document website visitors opened at what time, what part of the screen they looked at, whether they scrolled up and down the page, and other kinds of overt behavior that cannot be observed. Log-file analysis is the online variant of TV metering (→ Audience Research; Nielsen Ratings; People-Meter; Rating Methods). The difference between the

techniques is that people-meter systems are restricted to a sample while log-file analysis measures *all* visitors' actions on a website. With the help of cookies (little files stored on a visitor's computer by a web server), separate visits to a website can be recognized and connected to other data sources (e.g., online questionnaires answered on the same computer). There also exists (client-based) software that protocols all email and web activities of a person. Like TV metering, this method requires the participants' permission and active software installation on their computers.

### **Data Mining and Collaborative Work**

The Internet is a worldwide network of computers containing all kinds of mass media content, personal messages, → interpersonal communication, → group communication, and other information interconnected by hyperlinks and retrievable by search engines. Accordingly, it can be used as an endless source of social data and documents, which can be gathered unobtrusively with the help of search engines, robots, and other kinds of automatic data mining. An example may illustrate the potential: public opinion toward a politician, as publicly communicated on the net, can be sampled by searching for the politician's name with a standard search engine, saving all web pages, contributions on discussion forums, and comments on weblogs, and finally running a conventional content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). The Internet not only offers new capabilities for gathering empirical data, but also facilitates and enhances traditional methods of literature research, expanding the availability of research literature beyond countries, disciplines, and scientific communities. This kind of online data mining can yield research data for extended → meta-analyses, which would not have been possible in former times. The same applies to Internet-based tools for collaborative work.

### **SOCIAL RESEARCH OF ONLINE PHENOMENA**

The Internet is a virtual world in which almost all real-world phenomena exist too. This especially applies to social and communication phenomena. Some real-world phenomena have changed dramatically in the virtual condition (e.g., accessibility of pornographic and extremely violent material to children; anonymous online communities; → Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of); others still are quite comparable in both "worlds" (e.g., mainstream media content or → journalism). As it is impossible to draw a complete picture of all analyzed online phenomena, some examples might give an impression of the field.

Social research on the Internet begins with descriptive *demographics of the Internet population* (i.e., the number and structure of online users). Another "classical" realm of online research is *website evaluation*, including usability tests (combining retrieval tasks and think-aloud technique in the usability lab; additionally applying eye tracking, screen recording, and video observation of participants), user surveys, clickstream analyses (log-file analysis), and focus-group discussions. In *advertising research*, content and effects analyses of banners and other forms of mass media and direct advertising on the Internet are of relevance (→ Advertising; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of). Research on

online *journalism* and → *public relations* (PR) looks at communicators' characteristics on the Internet and new forms of interactions between journalism and PR. Research in → *political communication* addresses political participation on the Internet, e-government as Internet-based organization of policymaking and administration, the impact of politicians', parties', and other institutions' online communication on public opinion, etc. Research in → *health communication* deals with the effectiveness of online campaigns, and recipients' use of and trust in online medical information (→ Health Communication and the Internet). *Audience research* discusses uses and gratifications of different media channels and audience acceptance of new media products. *Psychology* and *sociology* analyze processes of interpersonal and group interaction, and the emergence or development of online communities, while → *rhetorical studies* deal with → discourse strategies, codes, and styles on the Internet. One might easily figure out how this enumeration is to be continued.

It is important to note that social research of online phenomena often, but not always, applies online methods. The demographics of the Internet population, for example, cannot be addressed with an online survey. Such data inevitably have to be based on a random sample of a country's total population, which, in turn, calls for a traditional telephone or face-to-face survey. It is hard to forecast the future of online research: online methods, as well as online phenomena, change at such a dramatic pace, that today's detailed descriptions of the field will be at best of historical value tomorrow. But hopefully the basic methods and ideas that this article has sketched will remain of relevance in the nearer future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Audience Research ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Discourse ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Group Communication ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Journalism ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Observation ▶ Online Media ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ People-Meter ▶ Political Communication ▶ Pornography Use across the Life-Span ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Survey ▶ Test Theory ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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# Open Access Journals

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Open access (OA) refers to a publishing practice in which users are granted rights of free access to digital content. Anyone, regardless of their institutional or personal status, can read and download OA materials without charge. OA is an invention of the *digital era* and only feasible because of the Internet and the world wide web. These technologies make it possible to separate the fixed costs of producing an article from the marginal cost of its distribution, which is effectively zero. This separation is critical to understanding OA business models (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

OA contrasts with traditional publishing practice, where the costs of bringing print or electronic products to market are offset by user-facing charges: purchasing, pay-per-use, and licensing or subscription charges borne by libraries or individuals (or membership dues, in the case of the journals published by many learned societies). As well as being granted rights of free access, OA users are normally licensed to copy, distribute, and display those materials publicly in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution.

Although use is free under an OA model, costs naturally arise in the production and quality assurance of content. A number of mechanisms are evolving to enable these costs to be defrayed. Under the currently dominant “author pays” model, upfront publication charges are met by the researcher’s funder or employer. Alternatively, OA journals may be created on a voluntary basis by scholars or librarians, who assume the publishing role for themselves. Publication costs might also be met from endowment income or from other sources, such as philanthropic or commercial sponsorship or advertising. Although the OA concept has become strongly associated with scholarly journals, there is no reason *in principle* why it should not apply to other digital content: books, monographs, or even broadcasting, film, and music.

OA in publishing taps into a broader set of social developments, including open source software, open licensing, and even freedom to roam, all of which seek to redraw the relationship between capital and the rights of the individual. OA has also coincided with an alleged affordability crisis on the part of many libraries, leading to a negative cycle of journal cancellations, reduced subscription bases, and higher prices.

A powerful OA advocacy movement comprising academics, research funders, librarians, and politicians has emerged in response, galvanized by major international statements (notably the *Budapest Open Access Initiative* and the *Berlin Declaration*). Two key principled arguments are frequently marshaled by OA advocates. The first is that toll restrictions limit the circulation of knowledge and thus act as a brake on research and new discoveries. The second is that taxpayers have a vested interest in the outputs of the research that they have funded and should therefore have rights of access. Other, more



tactical, arguments are deployed, often invoking research that demonstrates a positive relationship between OA and a higher citation impact (Lawrence 2001; Eysenbach 2006). Early research on usage does not show the same impact (Nicholas et al. 2007).

OA journals are a source of considerable confusion and misunderstanding. It follows from the definition above that OA is fundamentally a legal and economic construct, not a particular technology. Neither should the OA concept be confused with *peer review*, nor indeed with any other value-added publishing function. OA journals may be produced to the highest possible standards of peer review and attract high impact factors (some of the titles published by BioMed Central fall into this category), or they may not. They may invest considerable effort in copyediting, presentation, and site navigability, or they may not. In this respect, editorial standards are independent of the notion of OA, and these journals span the full quality range, from the lamentable to the indispensable, just as traditional titles do.

OA journals are generally assigned into two broad *categories*: “gold” and “green.” Gold journals normally undertake full peer review and in most respects are indistinguishable from traditional (toll access or “white”) journals, except that they grant free rights of access to their content. The green road to OA refers to a set of arrangements, running in parallel with tolled access journals, whereby researchers archive a copy of their article (but normally only a preprint, the pre-peer reviewed manuscript) in an OA institutional or subject repository, often maintained by professional librarians using open source software products like D-Space.

OA is a disruptive technology with very considerable potential to reshape the scholarly communication environment. It is not, therefore, surprising that many of the claims of the OA movement are not entirely accepted by learned society and commercial publishers (Robinson 2006). Central to their concerns are serious doubts about the long-term financial viability of OA and that the journals system may become fatally destabilized as a result.

SEE ALSO: ► Copyright ► Cost and Revenue Structure in the Media ► Distribution ► Media Economics ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of

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## Open Meetings Law

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Open meetings law is predicated on the belief that government derives its power from the people in order to act on their behalf. For the government to remain accountable to the people, its processes must remain accessible to them, and to the news media, the people's watchdog (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Journalism: Normative Theories).

To narrow the gap between governmental practices and the democratic ideal of government transparency, open meetings law requires public bodies with decision-making authority, such as agencies and commissions, to conduct their discussions, deliberations, and determinations in meetings open to the public and with advance notice. Some laws also include advisory public bodies such as panels and committees; some require that minutes be taken and published.

Most open meetings laws, like most freedom of information laws, were *enacted over the past thirty-five years*, often in response to public calls for reform following revelations of egregious instances of government abuse. A global study found that 68 nations had enacted some form of freedom of information law during this time period. There appears to be no similar study of nations with open meetings laws but, in general, there are far fewer of them (→ Freedom of Information).

Open meetings law presumes that government meetings are open to the → public. The burden of proof therefore rests with the party seeking closure. However, the prerequisites for closure can be so vague that the government's burden of proof becomes a negligible one. For example, the Constitution of *Finland* (1999) requires that plenary sessions of Parliament "are open to the public, unless the Parliament for a very weighty reason decides otherwise for a given matter." In contrast, the Government in the Sunshine Act (US Congress 1976), which is the federal open meetings law of the *United States*, enumerates 10 circumstances that might justify an exemption. These range from national security matters to housekeeping materials. Nine of them also apply to determining whether the government will be exempt from producing particular documents sought under the 1966 US Freedom of Information Act.

Open meeting laws cover different levels and branches of government. The 1976 US federal law applies to about 50 federal public bodies whose members are appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Senate. Each of the 50 states has also enacted a law that regulates meetings of its state bodies. The state statutes differ widely from each

other in their scope and severity, and in the extent to which they specify open meetings regulations applicable to local government.

It has proved difficult to *secure full compliance* with open meetings law regardless of the level or branch of government to which the law applies or the specificity of its provisions. Generally, a meeting of a public body refers to a quorum of that body, gathered to consider government business. Yet reaching a consensus as to whether the word “meeting” or “public body” applied to particular circumstances was sometimes a protracted process even before the existence of teleconferences, chat rooms and email.

There is also little inducement for a reluctant public body to comply with the provisions of open meetings laws many of which, like the Municipal Act of *Ontario, Canada*, lack meaningful penalties for noncompliance or contain penalties that have rarely been imposed.

The Municipal Act as amended in 2006 provides that from January 2008 municipalities are permitted but not required to appoint an investigator to explore allegations of open meetings law violations. The Act differs from Canadian federal law, which does not include open meetings law requirements. However, it is similar to many other open meetings laws in its failure to specify the process that will be used to determine whether there was noncompliance.

“Accessible transparent government goes far beyond just opening the doors to a meeting,” Ontario Information and Privacy Commissioner Ann Cavoukian and Assistant Commissioner Tom Mitchinson wrote of the deficiencies in Ontario’s Municipal Act. “The broader objective of transparency is to ensure that citizens understand how decisions are made and have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process” (Cavoukian & Mitchinson 2003). To meet that objective, they say, a law must include an efficient, accessible system of oversight and enforcement, and a body to take and investigate public complaints and resolve disputes. In addition to requiring government to provide adequate advance notice of all meetings, government must be prohibited from conducting any business for which it did not provide such notice.

The short-term *prognosis* for a substantial increase in the number of nations with open meetings law is uncertain. International effort still appears focused on freedom of information laws – enacting them, strengthening them, and above all monitoring them and increasing compliance. Satisfactory implementation of freedom of information law is viewed as a prerequisite to promulgating open meetings law. For many of the 68 nations with freedom of information laws profiled in a global survey, satisfactory implementation appears a long way off. *Bulgaria*, for example, enacted the Access to Public Information Act in 2000. In 2004, an international monitoring body noted significant improvements in implementation over the prior year and recommended changes, including requiring open meetings of collective bodies. By June 2007, however, any thought of expanding access to proceedings had been supplanted by the need to rescue the 2000 statute from “the deliberate attempts to weaken a law that has operated for the benefit of its citizens.”

There may have been some movement toward open meetings law in the last several years. The Constitutional Court in *South Korea* ruled in 2000 that there was a constitutional right to attend plenary sessions of the National Assembly, and that the news media should be able to report on the sessions unimpeded. Prior to that ruling, statutory

law generally left the decision of whether to open a meeting to the discretion of the Assembly members. No open meetings law has yet followed from the court's 2000 ruling, but that does not preclude the possibility. It took nine years for a freedom of information statute (Act on Disclosure of Information by Public Agencies) to become effective after the Constitutional Court ruled in 1989 that the people of South Korea's new democracy had a constitutional right to information (→ South Korea: Media System).

Article 19 and other international human rights groups view open meetings as a vital part of freedom of information, which was declared to be a fundamental human right by the United Nations at its first session in 1946. In 2000, the UN Special Rapporteur and the Organization of American States (OAS) Special Rapporteur endorsed nine international standards established by Article 19 as underpinning freedom of information legislation. Standard 7 states that the law should establish a presumption that the public can attend all meetings of governing bodies.

SEE ALSO: ► American Convention on Human Rights ► Free Flow of Information ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► International Communication ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► Public ► Public Meetings ► Right to Communicate ► Right to Know ► South Korea: Media System

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## **Open Source**

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Open source software (OSS) refers to software that can be freely used and modified. It is developed collaboratively over the → Internet by teams of globally distributed and

predominantly volunteer programmers (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology; Virtual Communities). The OSS movement is a continuation of a long tradition of sharing and cooperation that started in the early days of the Internet. OSS is protected under copyright licenses that aim to ensure the availability and free (re)distribution of the source code, the set of instructions written by developers that make up a program.

The term “open source” is frequently used alternatively or in conjunction with the term “free software” (as in FLOSS – Free Libre Open Source Software). FLOSS is an evolving and ambiguous phenomenon. It encompasses a wide variety of projects and institutional frameworks, such as community-initiated and -led projects, initiatives introduced and controlled by corporations, restrictive copyleft licenses, as well as more permissive, non-copyleft licenses, depending on how strict the conditions for the use and redistribution of the source code are. Copyleft licenses ensure that all the freedoms in modifying, using, and distributing the source code, which are protected under their terms, are preserved in any of its subsequent versions, whereas noncopyleft licenses allow for various exceptions.

OSS has been regarded as emblematic of processes associated with the transformative socio-economic capabilities of the Internet and of information and communication technologies (→ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of; Information Society). In particular, FLOSS has been examined as a revolutionary software development methodology, the principal characteristics of which are the granularity and modularity of the source code, which allow individuals to become as involved as they wish depending on their time and level of expertise, and the intensive release schedule, which leverages user feedback to implement new features and to quickly detect and solve program errors (bugs) (Feller & Fitzgerald 2002). In addition, FLOSS has been regarded as representative of a new model of production, social or peer-to-peer production, which reduces the gap between consumers and producers of information and which provides an alternative to the rationality of the exchange economy. It is known as the “gift economy,” which expresses the essence of community and is based on the principle of anticipated reciprocity (Kollock 1999; Benkler 2006; → Media Production and Content). At the same time, FLOSS has been viewed as an engine of economic development that provides the means to correct the deficiencies of proprietary software, especially in cases where access and interoperability are of great importance, such as in the case of e-government services (Forge 2005; → Code as Law; Communication Technology and Development).

Most examinations of the OSS phenomenon rely on a combination of arguments, including the cultural, ideological perspective focusing on influential practitioners’ accounts (Raymond 2001) and emphasis on the role of ideology and the desire to participate in the gift economy; the socio-technical perspective, which views OSS projects as systems whose technical and social aspects are intricately connected through a dual, recursive process of technology and social shaping; and organizational studies, labor economics, and the economics of innovation, where a few studies adopt formal economic models, but many researchers frame their explanations by combining insights from a number of areas.

Issues concerning motivation, coordination and cooperation, scalability, conflict management, division of labor, governance, and integration are investigated in the literature, but the topic that has drawn most attention is the question of incentives. One line of research assumes the economic rationality of individual motives and is premised on the view of

open source communities as composed by atomized actors whose behavior is influenced by the aggregate behavior of others. This work tends to reduce the complexity of the relationship between the gift and exchange economies to a distinction between monetary and nonmonetary rewards (e.g., Lerner & Tirole 2002). They argue that the reputational benefits of successful OSS contributors often translate into better-paid positions and improved access to venture capital. OSS researchers tend to use quantitative methods, including large-scale developer surveys (David et al. 2003), data mining of concurrent version system (CVS) repositories (Koch & Schneider 2002) and social network analysis of email postings (Crowston & Howison 2005).

Empirical research has demonstrated that claims about the wide collective basis of OSS contributions need to be challenged and that research is needed to understand the viability and scalability of OSS from an internal OSS community perspective on issues of coordination and control, and with regard to the way OSS communities interface with commercial and public actors.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code as Law ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Virtual Communities

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# Operationalization

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Operationalization is the process of translating abstract things into concrete, measurable variables (→ Measurement Theory). It is one of those things that is more easily said than done. It is quite simple to explain to someone the purpose and importance of operational definitions for variables and even to describe how operationalization generally takes place. But a researcher will quickly appreciate some of the subtle difficulties involved when he or she attempts to operationalize a complex variable. Operationalization is how researchers define things by what they do. In other words, the “operations” are the procedures or steps one must go through in order to observe the concept being defined (Babbie 2001; Katzer et al. 1998). To get to this point in the research process, we must first look at how research begins.

## CONCEPTS, CONCEPTUALIZATION, AND OPERATIONALIZATION

The research process starts off with a concept that a researcher is interested in measuring or observing. A concept is a “mental image that summarizes a set of similar observations, feelings, or ideas” (Schutt 2004, 86) or a “term that expresses an abstract idea formed by generalizing from particulars and summarizing related observations” (Wimmer & Dominick 2003, 42). Concepts are important for two reasons: (1) they simplify the research process by combining characteristics, objects, or people into more general categories; and (2) they simplify communication among those who have a shared understanding of them (Wimmer & Dominick 2003).

It is easy to identify concepts; for example, a story which appeared in the *New York Times* reported that five US colleges were participating in a pilot program to ban alcohol in their fraternities. The article also claimed that “substance-free housing” would become the norm on US campuses. Some of the concepts used in the article, like alcohol, colleges, campuses, and pilot program, are widely understood and commonly used. We might use these terms in conversation and never realize that your colleague was visualizing something completely different from you. From reading this article we might be left with several questions. (1) Is a junior college included in the term “college”? (2) Does the concept of “on campus” extend to fraternity and sorority houses that are not physically on college property? (3) Does “substance free housing” mean banning tobacco as well as alcohol?

Some of the concepts from the *New York Times* article illustrate that oftentimes there are concepts used in everyday conversation where people do not share the same → definition. When this occurs, we need to explicitly define the concept so that all readers will share the same definition. This is what is known as conceptualization. It is the process of specifying what we mean by a term (Schutt 2004; Wimmer & Dominick 2003). In a similar vein, Babbie (2001) defines conceptualization as the mental process whereby fuzzy and imprecise notions are made more specific and precise. In addition, Schutt sees conceptualization differently based according to whether we are conducting inductive or

deductive research (→ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction). “In deductive research, conceptualization helps to translate portions of an abstract theory into specific variables that can be used in testable hypotheses. In inductive research, conceptualization is an important part of the process used to make sense of related observations” (Schutt 2004, 87). For example, if a person were to go into a classroom of 25 people and ask “What is your favorite cake?” It’s likely that most of the students in the classroom will probably not think of the same type of cake. If a researcher wanted to measure this concept, he or she would need to define what is meant by the term “cake.”

After we define the concepts in a theory, we can then identify variables corresponding to the concepts. Let’s say that we are interested in measuring differences between males and females on binge drinking. Our concept is binge drinking and we conceptualize it as “heavy episodic drinking.” Once we have defined it so that all readers will share the same definition, we can decide how we can measure this variable. One way we can measure it is by asking both males and females how many drinks they consumed in succession during some period.

Once we have specified the variable we want to measure, we can proceed to the next step in the design of our study – deciding on our measurement procedures. The goal is to devise operations that actually measure the concepts we intend to measure. This is referred to as the “operationalization of variables” or an “operational definition” (Wimmer & Dominick 2003). During this process, there will probably be several possible operational definitions for a given concept; the researcher must make a choice which one is most suitable for his or her research study. For this example, we are interested in conducting a study measuring people’s incomes. To measure income, we conceptualize income as annual earnings and operationalize the variable by asking the question “What was your total income from all sources in 2006?” When looking at income there is a large range of variation, from some people earning millions of dollars to those earning less than \$5,000 per year. Depending on your sample, you as the researcher must decide what the highest and lowest income categories will be (Babbie 2001; → Coding; Scales; Scales and Indices).

A good illustration of this process takes us back to our cake example from earlier. The operationalization for white cake is the recipe. It makes public what someone means by “white cake.” Anyone who has the recipe will be able to replicate the “white cake.”

#### *White cake*

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Sift together  $3\frac{1}{2}$  cups of flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of salt, and 4 teaspoons baking soda.

Blend together 1 cup of butter and 2 cups of sugar.

Add 1 teaspoon of vanilla to 1 cup of milk.

Slowly mix together in stages the flour mixture, the milk, and the creamed sugar.

Whip the whites of 7 eggs until stiff and fold them into the batter.

Bake in lightly greased pans for about 25 minutes.

The cake recipe above tells us what we need to do to make a white cake. Anyone with basic cooking skills could follow it and likely end up with something similar to what the author of the recipe had in mind, but it could differ in terms of taste, weight, height, and moistness. Even though the recipe appears specific, some aspects of it are still missing: the size of the eggs and the quality of butter are not specified; there is no adjustment specified in the recipe for higher altitudes. Each of these might affect the outcome of the cake, and



so the recipe could have included them. If we were to look in a different cookbook for white cake we would likely find a slightly different recipe. If we followed that recipe, we would probably produce a cake much like the first one. This example shows us that there is no one correct recipe for a white cake. Along the same lines, there is no one correct operational definition for a concept (Babbie 2001; Katzer et al. 1998).

## **TYPES OF OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**

An operational definition is a specification of the activities of the researcher in measuring or manipulating a variable. There are, in general, two kinds of operational definitions: (1) measured and (2) experimental (Kerlinger 1986).

A measured operational definition describes how a variable will be measured. For example, achievement may be defined by a standardized achievement test, by a teacher-made achievement test, or by grades. On the other hand, an experimental operational definition spells out the details of the investigator's manipulation of a variable. Reinforcement can be operationally defined by giving the details of how subjects are to be reinforced (rewarded) and not reinforced (not rewarded) for specific behaviors.

Whether it is a measured or an experimental operational definition, researchers cannot underestimate the importance of operational definitions. They are indispensable ingredients of scientific research because they allow researchers to measure variables and because they are bridges between the theory-hypothesis-construct level ( $\rightarrow$  Hypothesis) and the level of  $\rightarrow$  observation. There can be no scientific research without observations, and observations are impossible without clear and specific instructions on what and how to observe. Operational definitions are those instructions.

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINITION GOALS**

Most researchers try to create definitions that ensure publicness, replicability, and, if possible, fruitfulness. These goals are part of an attempt to create definitions that reduce error. First, when researchers talk about reality, one wants to know specifically what they mean. Thus one must look for *clear, unambiguous definitions* of terms. For example, if a researcher is studying "eating," he or she should specify whether drinking liquids and taking vitamin pills fall under the definition. In normal usage of the term "eating," lack of specificity is not very important, but if a physical education researcher is studying the effects of various diet programs you need to know precisely what is meant (Katzer et al. 1998).

Second, to generate factually accurate information, researchers must *check what they say against reality*, and this means they must do something to define what they are talking about. For example, a researcher who studies eating by asking subjects how many meals a day they eat is using a very different definition than if he or she follows them around recording everything they eat. The researcher may have had the same conceptual definition in mind but then chosen different methods to actually observe eating. An acceptable operational definition helps readers and researchers by linking words with reality and by being public, specific, and replicable. But this is not enough.

The major criterion for the evaluation of any definition is its fruitfulness and is usually the most difficult to assess. To be fruitful, the conceptual definition must *build on current*

*theories and prior research.* Fruitful definitions usually fit into the research traditions of a field. They build on what exists. There is occasionally justification for writers to construct new definitions, but they should not introduce new terminology into a field unless they are convinced that the existing set of concepts is inadequate.

In addition, the *operational definition should coincide with the conceptual definition* in a useful way. Since operational definitions usually do not include exactly what is of interest; several operational definitions that, taken together, encompass the conceptual definition completely are usually needed. This goal should be of particular concern to the researcher and to the reader or user of research. Having more than one operational definition increases the chances that at least one will be useful.

SEE ALSO: ► Coding ► Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ► Definition ► Hypothesis  
► Measurement Theory ► Observation ► Reliability ► Research Methods ► Scales  
► Scales and Indices ► Validity

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## **Opinion Leader**

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Decades of social science research have demonstrated that there is a group of people in any community to whom others look to help them to form opinions on various issues and matters. Whether called “opinion leaders” or “influentials,” these people literally lead the formation of attitudes, public knowledge, and opinions. In the classic book *Personal influence*, opinion leadership is defined as “leadership at its simplest: it is casually exercised, sometimes unwitting and unbeknown, within the smallest groupings of friends, family members, and neighbors. It is not leadership on the high level of Churchill, nor of a local politico; it is the almost invisible, certainly inconspicuous form of leadership at the person-to-person level of ordinary, intimate, informal, everyday contact” (Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955, 138).

Since the introduction of the opinion leadership conceptualization, both practitioners and academics have been keenly interested in its applicability in modern society. Hundreds of studies have been conducted to identify potential opinion leaders, learn of the characteristics distinguishing them from their “followers,” and understand how they exert their personal influence to change opinions and behaviors of the masses (for a review see Weimann 1994). Many of these studies have validated the view that opinion leaders do indeed exist and influence others, in various areas, ranging from fashion and consumer decisions to politics. Such opinion leaders are individuals regarded as having expertise and knowledge on a particular subject. These individuals often provide information and advice to “followers”; therefore, they are more likely to influence purchasing behavior through word-of-mouth communication (→ Group Communication and Social Influence).

Opinion leaders are seen as having *special advantages*: First, they are perceived as possessing “expert power” because they are technically competent and are convincing. Second, product opinion leaders have knowledge power because “they have prescreened, evaluated, and synthesized product information in an unbiased way” (Menzel 1981, quoted in Solomon 1994, 385). Third, social power is attributed to them because of their standing in the community. Fourth, their hands-on product experience makes opinion leaders more likely to give both positive and negative information about the product’s performance – unlike paid-for communication, which focuses exclusively on a product’s positive aspects. Finally, they have referent power since, in terms of education, social status, and beliefs, they usually tend to be homogeneous with, or at least similar to, their opinion-seeking counterparts. Therefore, it is imperative that companies conduct research to identify opinion leaders. The knowledge gained from these studies can then be utilized to properly target information at the appropriate settings and media.

### ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT

Three major studies laid the groundwork for opinion leadership theory: the “*people’s choice*” study, the *Decatur study*, and the *drug study*. Each study led to a greater understanding of how opinion leaders disseminate information – from the more simplistic two-step flow of communication to the more elaborate model, the multi-step flow of communication. The *two-step flow theory* asserts that information from the media moves in two distinct stages – from the mass media to the opinion leaders and from the opinion leaders to their followers (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication). The two-step idea was first introduced by → Paul Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) in *The people’s choice*, based on a study that focused on the process of decision-making during a presidential election campaign. Despite a number of criticisms by subsequent researchers, the “people’s choice” study is considered one of the most prominent in mass communication research, due to its comparison between the mass media and personal flow of information and influence (→ Media Effects, History of).

Criticisms are directed at the oversimplification of the two-step flow of communication, which leads to an underestimation of the direct influence of the media. The process of influence is said to be more complex than a single group of opinion leaders listening to the mass media, then feeding their opinions to a group of passive followers.

Instead, people who influence others are themselves influenced *by* others in the same topic area, resulting in an exchange. Opinion leaders are thereby both disseminators and recipients of influence.

With this in mind, a more accurate portrayal of the communication flow would be a *multi-step process*, rather than simply a two-step process. The two-step flow of communication theory has, however, remained relevant throughout the years. Several recent studies have addressed issues arising from Lazarsfeld, Katz, and Merton's studies from the 1940s. For example, Weimann led a re-examination of the opinion leader conceptualization in modern studies (1991, 1994), attempting to spark a new interest in the old theory and modify the definition and measurement of opinion leaders. Weimann and Brosius (1994; Brosius & Weimann 1996) examined the process of agenda setting as a two-step flow of communication, highlighting the role of opinion leaders in mediating between media agendas and public agendas (→ Agenda-Setting Effects).

### WHO ARE THE OPINION LEADERS?

The early studies on personal influence and opinion leadership resulted in several attributes related to opinion leaders. The most important ones are that opinion leaders: (1) are found at every social level, and in most areas of decision-making influence people from the same social level; (2) are found in both sexes, all professions, all social classes, and all age groups; (3) tend to be more involved than non-leaders in various social activities and social organizations and occupy central positions in their personal networks; (4) are considered experts in their field, but this is informal recognition by close friends, relatives, co-workers, colleagues, and acquaintances; (5) are more exposed to the mass media than non-leaders; (6) are more interested, involved, and up-to-date in the field in which they are influential than non-leaders; (7) tend to be monomorphic, i.e., usually expert in one area but rarely in various areas; (8) manifest a specific communication behavior, i.e., are more involved in formal and informal personal communication than non-leaders; and (9) are usually well aware that they are sources of information and influence for others.

In his review of the opinion leadership concept after the early studies, → Elihu Katz (1957) suggested three *criteria that distinguish leaders from non-leaders*: (1) *who one is* – the personification of certain values in the figure of the opinion leader; (2) *what one knows* – the competence or knowledge leaders have; and (3) *whom one knows* – their strategic location in the social network. A more debatable characterization relied on the use of the mass media, or the two-step flow model.

### MEASURING OPINION LEADERSHIP

Despite the growing research on opinion leadership, the identification of appropriate opinion leaders continues to be a challenge. Several methods have been used (→ Research Methods). In the *positional approach*, persons in elected or appointed positions in the community are assumed to be opinion leaders. This approach is inexpensive, but it can be highly inaccurate because it assumes opinion leadership is based upon position, rather than respect. The *reputation approach* relies upon the nomination of selected individuals

as, for example, the ten most influential persons in a community regarding a certain issue. Using the reputation approach generally improves the accuracy of identification, because one is getting information from more than one source about the influence of others in the community. In the *self-designating method* individuals are asked to identify themselves as being influentials in certain issues. This approach has the advantage of getting input on influence from community members, and therefore is more accurate than the positional approach. A potential pitfall of the self-designating approach is that persons might over- or underestimate their influence on others.

*Sociometric methods* trace communication patterns among members of a group, which allows for the systematic mapping of member interactions. Data is typically obtained by interviewing participants and asking them to whom they go for advice and guidance. These methods are more expensive and difficult to administer. Sociometry works best in a closed, self-contained social setting, such as a hospital, prison, or army base. This mapping of contacts serves to locate persons who are at the center of communications about the issue area. Another method of data collection on opinion leadership and advice-giving is by *observing social action* within the community. Observation, because of costs related to its application and the length of time required, is the most expensive of the techniques described here, but it is often considered the most accurate.

The *key informant* approach involves first identifying a limited number of people assumed to be knowledgeable regarding the patterns of influence within a group, and then asking them to identify influentials in that group. Although key informants are selected subjectively as persons likely to have the ability to identify opinion leaders, this method is employed because it usually produces savings in terms of costs and time when compared to other methods. However, it should be noted this methodology is less applicable to sample designs in which only a portion of an audience is interviewed.

Finally, → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann suggested a measure, the *strength of personality scale* (PS scale), which emerged from testing numerous questionnaire items related to self-perceived levels of personal influence (Noelle-Neumann 1983; Noelle-Neumann & Csikszentmihalyi 1992). These early → scales were tested and refined after years of pretests with a variety of samples (→ Scales and Indices). The final scale included 10 items that were later weighted according to their part-whole correlations with the total scale (Weimann 1991, 1994). The successful identification of the influentials by means of the PS scale, validating the identification by “external” criteria, and the relative ease of administering the scale led more researchers to explore its potential.

### **THE FUTURE: OPINION LEADERS IN CYBERSPACE**

The acknowledged significance of opinion leaders in general led recent attempts to explore their existence, attributes, and functions in the online environment. The widespread use of the → Internet has enabled huge audiences to easily access an abundance of information about a variety of issues, products, and services. Internet users have made cyberspace into a meaningful place of interaction, information-gathering, and consulting. Moreover, the advent of the Internet, with its constituent parts (the world wide web, forums and lists, chatrooms, email), has also irreparably blurred the classic distinction between interpersonal and mass communication.

Preliminary evidence that virtual contacts have been integrated into information-seeking habits is provided by the Pew Foundation studies (Pew Internet and American Life Project 2002). For example, they report that an estimated 52 million web surfers in the US have sought medical information on the web, and approximately half of these report that the information found influenced their decisions about treatment and care (→ Information Seeking). This information was often key in deciding where to go next (e.g., whether to go see a doctor, whether to get another opinion), rather than in final decision-making about treatment. More and more people turn to the Internet and its virtual communities to seek advice, information, and guidance. Within these communities *online opinion leaders* emerged, generating millions of personal recommendations sent to their virtual followers. Recent studies are revealing the existence of these online opinion leaders in chatrooms, forums, and personal weblogs (→ Online Media; Blogger). In seeking to extend the theory of opinion leadership to the online environment, future research will explore whether the established theories for the offline environment would also help us understand opinion leadership in the online world.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Blogger ▶ Group Communication and Social Influence ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Online Media ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Order of Presentation

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The effectiveness of a communication depends on a variety of factors. Among those concerning organization and procedure, order of presentation forms one of the major factors that influence the impact of communication on an → audience. It is to → Carl I. Hovland and team's credit that appropriate research questions and → experimental designs have been developed to test and acknowledge this effect (→ Persuasion; Media Effects). "Order" refers to two aspects of variation: "(1) the order of presenting a series of communications, and (2) the order of presenting the various elements within a single communication" (Hovland 1957; → Media Effects, History of).

## ORDER EFFECTS IN SUCCESSIVE COMMUNICATION

For order effects in successive communication, the issue of the most advantageous position is of pivotal concern. We need to consider on the one hand the effects of being in first position, in terms of presenting our own communication before opposing arguments have an opportunity to reach the audience, and on the other hand the effects of being in last position, i.e., having the "final say." Lund (1925) enunciated a *law of primacy*, stating that the side of an issue presented first will have greater effectiveness than the side presented afterwards. In a replication of the Lund experiment by Hovland & Mandell (1952), results indicated that only one of three groups showed a greater effectiveness for the side presented first (primacy), while two groups showed the second side to be more effective (recency).

In another experiment to test this phenomenon, Hovland & Mandell (1957) used topics of interest at the time. The order of presentation was counterbalanced. Half of the subjects received the affirmative arguments first and the other half the negative arguments first. Opinion questions were asked after the first and again after the second side had been presented. Three of four groups showed a recency effect and only one a primacy effect. The authors therefore concluded: "When two sides of an issue are presented successively by different communicators, the side presented first does not necessarily have the advantage." The results of Hovland & Mandell raised serious questions about the generality of the law of primacy in persuasion for communication situations in which two sides of a controversial issue are successively communicated.

Further research on primacy or recency effects was stimulated by considering *mediator variables* (→ Mediating Factors). Primacy is found to be advantageous, particularly during the first stages in → information processing. As attention wanes, however, the second side will increase its relative impact by prolonging attention (Tetlock 1981). *Space* as another moderating variable showed that shortening the interval between both sides favors primacy, while shortening the interval between the second side and the impact measurements favors recency. The spacing effects are more evident for recency and attitude change (Miller & Campbell 1959). Finally, if the communications are on a very controversial issue, the advantage of primacy is reduced. Summarizing, the primacy/

recency effects clearly depend on mediating variables that facilitate either a primacy or a recency effect (→ Schemas and Media Effects).

### ORDER EFFECTS IN A SINGLE COMMUNICATION

The *order of presentation within a single communication* includes a series of possible variations. Only two pivotal aspects are referred to here: (1) the effectiveness of one- and two-sided messages, and (2) the effectiveness of explicit and implicit conclusions in persuasive messages. When communicating a persuasive message the sender has to decide whether to consider opposing viewpoints. A *two-sided message* is a message that not only presents arguments in favor of a position but also considers opposing arguments. A one-sided message, on the other hand, presents only arguments in favor of a particular position.

Hovland et al. (1949) concluded from a series of experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory) that two-sided messages show a greater effect for persons who reveal a personal opinion contrary to the one presented. For supporters of the position presented in the communication a one-sided message shows greater effects. The two-sided message is also more effective than the one-sided message when individuals subsequently are exposed to opposing propaganda. Two-sided messages provide an immunizing effect. Finally, intervening variables such as education and intelligence are found to moderate the effect. For an intelligent audience, two-sided messages are proven to be more effective.

Studies on persuasion continued to investigate the effect of one- and two-sided messages. Petty & Cacioppo (1981) find for → advertising messages that a one-sided message is superior to a two-sided message if the advertised product is “well-liked, widely consumed, has few competitors, and enjoys loyal customers.” A two-sided message is more persuasive when “the audience is well-informed about a product and its alternatives, the product is not widely preferred, or the audience is likely to be exposed to advertisements for competitive products” (→ Advertising Effectiveness).

More recent experimental studies differentiate between *two types of two-sided messages*: refutational and nonrefutational. Refutational messages mention counterarguments to the position advocated and then refute them. Nonrefutational messages only mention the counterargument, without offering a refutation (Lucas 1989; Allen 1991). These studies show that a two-sided message with refutation generates more favorable attitudes than a one-sided message. However, a one-sided message is more persuasive than a two-sided message with no refutation. The two-sided message with refutation generally appears to be more persuasive and independent of the favorability of the audience.

Studies have also addressed whether communicators may rely on implicit *conclusion drawing* by the audience rather than explicitly stating their own position. In an experiment on economic questions, Hovland & Mandell (1952) found supporting evidence for the relevance of explicitly stating conclusions: more than twice as many recipients are likely to agree with the opinion of the communicator when the message includes an explicit conclusion, compared with a message with an implicit conclusion. Audience members may require an explicit conclusion to understand a persuasive message. If the recipient of an implicit message reaches no conclusion, less attitude change occurs in the advocated direction. Conclusion comprehension is seen as a critical mediating variable between



conclusion drawing and attitude change. Implicit conclusion drawing affords comprehension of the message. Accordingly, for complex issues implicit messages are expected to be less persuasive than explicit ones.

Another mediating variable is found in a *recipient's involvement* (→ Involvement with Media Content). Implicit messages can yield a greater effect than explicit ones if recipients are highly involved (Kardes 1988; Sawyer & Howard 1991). The advantage of implicit messages for highly involved persons results from a greater comprehension of the conclusion and a greater persuasiveness of self-generated conclusions compared to conclusions offered by the communicator (“People don’t like to be told what to think”). But if recipients are involved only on a low level, stating explicit conclusions has an advantage. Explicit conclusions also seem to be more persuasive than implicit conclusions for recipients who initially are favorable to the message. For those who initially are unfavorable, no differences between explicit and implicit conclusions are observed (Thistlewaite et al. 1955; Fine 1957).

Concluding, explicit messages are found to be slightly more persuasive than implicit messages. But complexity of the message, and especially involvement, moderates the effects of explicit and implicit messages.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Advertising Effectiveness ► Audience ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Experimental Design ► Hovland, Carl I. ► Information Processing ► Involvement with Media Content ► Media Effects ► Media Effects, History of ► Mediating Factors ► Persuasion ► Schemas and Media Effects ► Sleeper Effect

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## Organization–Public Relationships

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Over the years, academics and practitioners have worked to define public relations by what it accomplishes, the role it plays in society. One attempt at positioning the practice, and research about the practice, features the impact public relations can have on the quality of the relationship between each organization and its key publics, a theme that is at least 55 years old (Cutlip & Center 1952). Monitoring this view, Scott Cutlip, Allen Center, and Glen Broom (2000) observed that the trend in the United States was for public relations to be less focused on one-way, self-interested persuasion and more on mutuality, reciprocation, and the idea of “between.” Based on this trend, these authors posed one of the most widely disseminated definitions: “Public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (2000, 6). Thus, organization–public relationships consist of qualitatively valuable and relevant factors that lead key publics to support or oppose the organization because they see the organization as being as interested in their interests as it is in its own. The organization sees its interests with its publics as a valuable aspect of its own interests. Perception of mutual benefit can lead to support rather than opposition, which could foster willingness to buy products, use services, or take issue positions on public policy actions to support rather than sanction the organization. In short, the quality of the relationship is an independent variable that predicts support or opposition. The quality of the relationship is the dependent or mediating variable that results from what the organization does to meet or exceed the expectations of its key publics, whose good will and support are important to its business plan.

### **MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The ways in which relationships are built or harmed can result from careful strategic business planning that meets high standards of corporate responsibility, and public relations processes shared meaning, i.e., identification, which results rhetorically in shared sense-making joining the interests of the organization to those of key publics. A mutually beneficial relationship (MBR), a highly desirable outcome of effective and ethical public relations, occurs when the stakeholders of each organization believe that it works to achieve a condition where it and all its stakeholders benefit appropriately because of the quality of their relationships.

As a platitude, MBRs are asserted as the outcome goal of public relations, without much attention to how that end is achieved or what it entails. Some think, thereby leading to substantial criticism, that mutually beneficial relationships are the exclusive outcome of strategic communication rather than responsible and reflective management decisions. Such platitudes may mask the darker intent and ability of the focal organization to manipulate the relationship to seem more mutually beneficial than it truly is. Woe to the organization that fails to believe that such deceit can be detected and doubly harmful to relationships. The concept of MBR commits organizations to a process and → discourse that go beyond mere manufactured image or reputation by actually operating in ways that achieve mutual benefits.

The logic of MBR is that when people believe that organizations operate with their interests in mind, they support rather than oppose those organizations. Thus, people buy from businesses they believe give them full value for goods and services purchased. They support activist or other nonprofit groups that share their values and hold similar goal-oriented commitments, such as preventing or treating specific childhood diseases. They believe in and support governmental agencies that act in their interest, in what can be seen as the public interest, where they are the “public.” They support businesses that meet operating expectations such as paying fair wages, giving proper benefits, protecting the environment, and fostering the communities where they operate.

Critics of this line of thinking simply doubt that businesses, for instance, ever hold stakeholder interests equal to their own. Thus the logic of MBR challenges public relations practitioners to truly understand and be in a management position to help the organization to know the expectations of its stakeholders that define their best interests. For this reason, public relations practitioners need to be advocates for sound and effective measures that produce mutual benefits.

MBRs assume that stakeholders hold varying standards of how each organization should operate. These standards are forged through societal dialogue voiced by many points of influence: industry, activist, government, media reporter, and such. Disagreement and intolerance are part of the dispute over the definition of what is mutually beneficial and whether the organization truly operates to that end. Critics hold different standards. Some are more intolerant of the actions and ethical choices of organizations than others. Thus, MBR is a normative goal that cannot be totally satisfied for all parties in any relationship. Each organization, regardless of its type, has a wide array of stakeholders. Each may have different expectations for the quality of the relationship and whether it is satisfied by what the organization does and says. In any full discussion of MBR, the sense of community is a focal point. What any organization does and says needs to be judged by whether it truly advances the essence of community among all of the stakeholders.

By the same token, appeals to community can be used asymmetrically to the beneficial interest of the organization rather than those of its stakeholders. Thus, a government ostensibly fighting international terrorism can appeal to community to defend its policies against its critics. It may, in this rhetorical stance, argue that any critic of its battle against international terrorists is actually a supporter of terrorism because it does not immediately and completely agree with and support the government policies. This rhetorical stance would in fact be asymmetrical and not serve the mutual interest of the critics, whose ideas

may indeed ultimately add value to the fight against terrorism but do so in ways that disagree with the positions of the administration.

## HOW TO CREATE RELATIONSHIPS

### Practitioners' Views

Substantial discussion by various practitioners and academics earlier in the twentieth century sought to determine how organizations could create relationships. Both the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) have featured relationship building as a part of effective public relations and strategic business communication.

In its “vision, mission, and structure statement,” the IABC features relationships and says it specializes in helping people and organizations to make business sense of communication, think strategically about communication, measure and clarify the value of communication, and build better relationships with stakeholders (IABC 2007). The PRSA has been committed to meeting the challenge of relationship building since at least 1982: “Public relations helps our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony.” Reviewing the wide array of institutions that require effective public relations, the PRSA publication *Public relations tactics: The blue book* noted that “these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or publics such as employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders, and other institutions, and with society at large” (PRSA 2002, B2).

One of the leaders in the formation of public relations as a management discipline, John W. Hill, principal founder of Hill & Knowlton, featured the concept of relationship in his books published during the 1950s and 1960s. He credited public relations icon Ivy Lee with an even earlier discussion of the term: “Public relationships, he [Lee] wrote, involved not simply ‘saying’ but ‘doing’ – not just talk, but action” (Hill 1963, 16). Hill reasoned that organizations simply could not avoid considering and meeting the challenges of multiple relationships “because the corporation deals with employees, stockholders, customers, neighbors, government functionaries, and many others – with all of whom it has many relationships” (1958, 4). To build relationships, organizations must not only talk, but act in appropriate ways. They must be good as well as do good.

At one level, the effort to achieve MBR, Hill reasoned, was a matter of reputation management. Do the organization’s stakeholders believe the organization works in their interests? Does it have the reputation for such actions? If not, is the problem with its reputation one that could be corrected by communication, or does it also, or primarily, call for new and improved actions and policies? To this end, Hill asked managements to think about how strong their relationships were with all of their stakeholders. He was a practical counselor as well as one who sought high moral ground as the rationale for his profession and its profession. He reasoned, as advice to executive managements:

Business managements are concerned with the problems of conducting their corporate or industry affairs in ways that they may feel are contributive to public progress. They must arrive

at effective policies that go far beyond their economic and operating functions into the complex realms of social, governmental, and political relationships. The large majority push forward into these policy areas as a matter of choice. But in terms of the long-range survival of corporate enterprise, there is little choice involved; it is a matter of essentiality. (1963, 230)

A realist, Hill knew and counseled that organizations could not operate with autonomy as long as they merely operated in their own interest and expected others to tolerate that point of view.

### **Theory and Scholarship**

Relationship management theory discusses process variables that can foster or impede the creation of MBRs (Ledingham 2005). This line of analysis is far from finished, but key factors are emerging (Heath & Coombs 2006): *Openness* fosters two-way communication based on listening for and sharing valuable information and evaluative opinions, as well as being responsive, respectful, candid, and honest. One-way communication occurs when an organization “speaks” but does not listen to or acknowledge the merit in what other people and organizations “say.” *Trustworthiness* builds trust by being reliable, nonexploitative, and dependable. Trust relates as well to the ethical and balanced use of control to foster one’s interests in relationships with other interests. *Cooperativity* engages in collaborative decision-making that insures that the needs and wants of the organization and its stakeholders are met. *Alignment* shares interests, rewards, and goals with its stakeholders. *Compatible views and opinions* foster mutual understanding and agreement, co-creating meaning. *Commitment* supports community by being involved in it, investing in it, and displaying commitment to its quality.

The analysis of relationships has been explored from many points of view. *Systems theory* gives the rationale that no part of a system can operate forever imbalanced against the other parts of a system (→ Systems Theory). A *rhetorical perspective* (→ Rhetorical Studies; Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations) reasons that the effort to define interests assumes the co-creation of meaning. Many voices come together to define what constitutes a mutually beneficial relationship. *Social exchange theory* reasons that the quality of each relationship is based on give and take (→ Social Exchange). In such matters, publics must be allowed or assumed to define themselves and speak their mind. Theory does not adequately get at the essence of MBRs if it leads to the conclusion that the organization alone can know what is a public, whose ideas are best, and which discussants of an issue are legitimate.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Excellence Theory in Public Relations ► Intereffication Approach in Public Relations ► Issue Management ► Legitimacy Gap Theory ► Public ► Public Affairs ► Public Relations ► Public Relations Field Dynamics ► Rhetorical Studies ► Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations ► Social Exchange ► Systems Theory

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## Organizational Assimilation

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Organizational assimilation refers to the process by which individuals move from “outsider” to full membership in an organization. Fredric Jablin (1982, 1987, 2001) developed a framework to consider the influence of communication on the social construction of role expectations and their enactments that considers the stages of vocational socialization, organizational entry, metamorphosis, and organizational exit.

From childhood, *vocational socialization messages* from family, school, peers, media, and part-time work experiences shape individuals’ beliefs regarding the nature of work, how to communicate with others at work, and appropriate vocations to pursue. Employment interviewing and pre-entry experiences then provide information which becomes the basis of job and occupational expectations (though incomplete and at times misguided) (Jablin 2001).

Organizational entry and the development of role and task competencies center on two related, ongoing experiences: role-taking and role-making. *Role-taking events* convey the expectations of members for unit and organization membership. Orienting, socializing, training, formal and informal mentoring, and information-giving and -seeking are the chief means of learning task priorities and preferred manner of role performance (Katz & Kahn 1978). *Role-making* involves newcomers’ attempts to change work assignments and environments to better suit their needs and goals (Graen & Scandura 1987; Jablin 1987). Upward influence attempts and role negotiation represent communicative forms of role-making. Disengagement/exit concludes the cycle and may include both leave-taking behaviors and developing expectations of another organizational role.

### VOCATIONAL SOCIALIZATION

From childhood into early adulthood, individuals receive occupational information from their environments, which they then compare against their self-concept, weighing the

options and choosing career directions (→ Communication Skills across the Life-Span). Some cues regarding technical preparation, prestige, social elements, and stresses are never questioned while others are reconstituted as career understanding matures.

*Family members*, especially parents, are primary influences on individuals' career choices and understanding of the nature of work. Children are exposed to anecdotes regarding the nature of parental work responsibilities, deadlines, accomplishments, and difficulties through dinner talk or occasional visits to the workplace. Direct and indirect parental comments on various occupations (from garbage collector to aerospace engineer) convey status, fulfillment, approval, and relations with others. When participating in task-oriented or organizing activities such as household chores, children receive training in coordinated behavior and learn to: respond to requests for work; create justifications or accounts in refusing to perform tasks; solicit the help of others to perform tasks; remark on the expertise of others; identify chores to be completed or delegated; accept or reject sex-role stereotypes; and interpret and use metaphors to describe their tasks or environment. Young people are frequently exposed to procedure-related communication, including "the possibilities and the methods for raising questions or negotiating a change, the forms of talk or silence that are expected to accompany the work one does, and the extent to which people make decisions for themselves or need to follow orders" (Bowes & Goodnow 1996, 308).

*Schools and formal education-related activities* socialize youth into society, introduce and reinforce hierarchical divisions of labor, and provide feedback on intellectual, physical, and social abilities. Children learn to obtain information required for the completion of assignments, to navigate improperly delegated assignments and dysfunctional group dynamics, and to impress individuals in positions of authority. Textbooks typically offer limited, and often stereotyped, views of work interactions. However, pre-professional programs reveal implicit vocational interaction norms and codes by which individuals can later construct interpretations of events and interactions.

*Peers* serve as significant others who confirm and disconfirm the desirability of occupations. Because children and teens spend over half of their time in the company of peers, the importance of peer approval of vocational decisions should not be underestimated. Individuals receive considerable guidance from friends on dealing with conflict, negotiating solutions, and problem-solving with regard to their peers, parents, and teachers.

Depictions of occupations in the *media*, particularly on television, are popular, emphasize sex-role stereotypes, and feature prestigious occupations (omitting important roles for those of lower prestige). Television and movies commonly emphasize the trivial (e.g., romantic interests, office gossip) or one-way communication behaviors such as ordering or advising others and verbally aggressive conflict behaviors. Depictions of employees ridiculing inept bosses and prevailing in conflicts with them are common.

Finally, through *part-time jobs*, high school and college students learn to follow orders, provide reports on work events, apply problem-solving behaviors, and develop work relationships. They also typically receive little training or socialization, are excluded from outside-of-work interactions with supervisors and co-workers, do not form close relationships with supervisors, and complete tasks solo (and unsupervised) as opposed to in collaboration with others.

## ANTICIPATORY SOCIALIZATION

Through job fairs and employment interviews, individuals develop expectations regarding the nature of work in a specific organization and their fit to the position/organization. On North American college campuses, the 30-minute “first” or *screening interview* assists employers in identifying prospects, is marked by information-giving vignettes by both parties about organizational or candidate qualifications (e.g., candidate strengths/weaknesses), and often evidences a 2:1 ratio of interviewer-to-candidate talk-time. Information sharing is often hampered by interviewers’ closed-ended or vague questions (necessitating re-asking of questions) and interviewees not discussing issues of substance until well into the interview. “Second” or selection interviews may extend from two hours to two days, and the interactions are characterized by multiple interviewers, few scripted interactions, specific screening criteria, and lengthy information exchanges. On occasion, screening, selection, and even placement (i.e., assigning position) may occur in a single interview episode.

*Interviewers favor* candidates who fit skill and aptitude criteria, engage in an informative and conversational manner, and display high levels of non-verbal immediacy. *Interviewees prefer* organizations where job attributes like salary and benefits are competitive; whose interviewers are interpersonally warm, well organized, and knowledgeable, and ask open-ended questions; and where recruiters’ information concurs with secondary sources. The interview process culminates with candidate/organization selection and the development of candidates’ more or less realistic job expectations. Most candidates have fairly accurate notions of job pay and benefits, but their expectations regarding the nature of job duties are often inflated, based on incomplete information from recruiters, others (e.g., peers), and vocational socialization. Those developing more realistic job previews, especially from verbal exchanges, report higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

## ENTRY

While messages forecasting desired knowledge, values, or behaviors are likely conveyed during the interview process, socialization begins in earnest upon the first day of entry through, at times, deliberately constructed contexts, prepared training materials, and encounters with incumbents (Chao et al. 1994; Van Maanen & Schein 1979). New hires receive messages specifying the nature and importance of task elements, preferred manner of task performance, and patterns of order and status in the work unit. Newcomers look to supervisors to provide guidance in task completion, give feedback, and reward or sanction behavior. Co-workers have vested interests in socializing newcomers, provide vital emotional support, and contribute to newcomers’ social construction of work realities and attitudes.

Newcomers nevertheless report encountering *role surprise*, in cases of mild discrepancies between their expectations and realities, or “role shock,” where discrepancies are major and dire (Louis 1980). It is generally accepted that newcomers seek information to reduce uncertainty about the best way to complete tasks, the quality of their job performance, and their relationship with others (Miller & Jablin 1991; Morrison 1993, 2002). Newcomers vary their information-seeking tactics and sources depending upon the



source and perceived social cost of the information. While research remains ongoing, it appears that (1) perceptions of social costs lead new hires to seek performance and relational information through less direct means (indirect inquiry and observing) and (2) overt means will be used when seeking task or technical information (→ Information Seeking; Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory).

During the entry process, newcomers' development of relationships with supervisors and co-workers is essential (→ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships). While interactions with supervisors are initially marked by directives and explanations, at some point these exchanges gravitate to “high-quality” patterns, characterized by mutual support, give-and-take, informal ideation, and inside information, or to “low-quality” patterns displaying the opposite characteristics. The nature of these leader–member exchanges (Graen & Scandura 1987) portends the favorableness of assignments, performance reviews, and advancement opportunities. From entry, newcomers and co-workers tend to exchange information equally and express mutual support. Critical outcomes for newcomers during entry include reducing role ambiguity, resolving role conflicts, and gaining role competence. Task mastery may be a precursor of acceptance into the unit or may be required for acceptance.

### METAMORPHOSIS

Employees are thought to regularly seek to modify their role to suit their needs, abilities, and desires. New hires engage in role-making when they pursue competing expectations of their role's purpose, the manner in which the role is to be enacted, and how the role performance will be evaluated. Others' expectations may be altered by selectively neglecting assigned tasks, performing extra tasks in addition to assigned duties, and explicit role negotiations with the supervisor (and others at times) to create agreements about assignments and responsibilities.

During this phase of assimilation, newcomers move away from coping and role learning activities and toward *fine tuning and negotiating the role* with others. The manner and outcomes of role-making have considerable influence on participants' interpersonal trust and on unit innovation, coordination, and flexibility. Contexts for role negotiation include performance feedback interviews and daily upward influence attempts, and contribute to employee role development, extra-role behaviors, and job satisfaction (→ Feedback Processes in Organizations).

Voluntary transitions from organizations are usually gradual, following a pre-announcement, announcement, and *post-exit sequence*. Psychological factors such as withdrawal, good or hard feelings, perceptions of justice/injustice, and misgivings over leaving may be preceded or followed by overt/hidden conflict, celebrations, retirement symbols, leave-taking, exchanges of addresses, and/or abandonment. In particular, communication-related antecedents (e.g., closed communication climate, non-participation in decision making) of leaving for a different organization are well studied, leading to questions regarding the role of communication in the evolution of loss of commitment or allegiance.

SEE ALSO: ► Affects and Media Exposure ► Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory  
 ► Communication Skills across the Life-Span ► Feedback Processes in Organizations  
 ► Friendship and Peer Interaction ► Information Seeking ► Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ► Mentoring ► Organizational Communication

► Organizational Identification ► Relationship Development ► Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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## Organizational Change Processes

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Change is fundamental to organizing. To organize, or structure human activity intentionally to achieve collective goals, is in itself a change process – a movement from one

state of being to another. A *change process* in the context of formal organizations may be defined as a sequence of events by which alteration occurs in the structure and/or functioning of an organization. Alternatively, it may be seen as the way in which difference(s) emerge between two (or more) successive conditions, states, or moments of time in an organization (Ford & Ford 1995).

As implied by these definitions, organizational change processes can be all-encompassing in scope, but scholarly attention is typically devoted to large-scale planned changes, such as restructuring, mergers, or implementation of major new management methods or information technology. Transcending the traditional concerns of innovation research, the study of change-related communication (CRC) considers how planned changes are adopted and implemented and how change-oriented discourse can infuse organizational interactions and messages.

### RESEARCH INTERESTS IN ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Organizational change processes have been of interest to → organizational communication scholars from the early days of the discipline's formation. In a historical overview of organizational communication research, Redding (1988, 45) cited several early publications that in one way or another focus on the role of communication in organizational change processes. For example, he mentions the following titles: "Employee Magazines Build Morale (1950)," "Effective Communications – One Road to Productivity (1950)," and "How House Magazines Improve Industrial Relations (1953)." Each of these suggests that early organizational communication scholars considered that communication could play a key role in enhancing productivity, improving employee relations, or attaining other organizational change goals. Additionally, → Everett Rogers's classic work on diffusion of innovations also highlights the role of communication in change.

However, organizational change has not until recently been a significant focus of study for organizational communication researchers. For example, handbooks of organizational communication have given only brief mention of organizational change. This is surprising, as the 1980s were a time when the notion of → organizational culture was coming into vogue as a major organizing construct, and culture change has been a major focus of both practitioners and organization studies scholars. However, organizational communication theorists tended to be critical of *culture change initiatives*, resisting the notion that culture is something that can be reliably managed. Thus, while practitioners and organizational scholars both became enamored of the culture metaphor beginning in the 1980s, practitioners were much more likely to associate culture with organizational change than were scholars.

The 1990s brought more focus on organizational change processes by communication scholars, largely stimulated by the increased *emphasis on change in the contemporary workplace*. There is still a relatively small body of work within the communication discipline, and few self-identified organizational communication scholars whose work concentrates on organizational change processes. However, this literature is growing, as is the sense of importance attributed to organizational change-related communication. In fact, Jones et al. (2004, 722) identified one of the six major challenges for organizational communication scholarship as "understand[ing] the communication of organizational change."

## INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

The intellectual context for organizational change scholarship is quite diverse. Communicative dimensions of organizational change processes have been addressed by scholars from multiple countries and disciplines. Among organizational communication scholars in the English-speaking world, the work of Laurie Lewis in the United States is particularly prominent, but there is also substantial work on the subject by organizational communication scholars in Australia (e.g., Victor Callan and colleagues at the University of Queensland), the United Kingdom (e.g., Dennis Tourish at the Aberdeen Business School), and mainland Europe (e.g., Wim Elving at the University of Amsterdam and Anne-Marie Søderberg at the Copenhagen Business School). Outside of organizational communication, numerous management scholars have investigated communication aspects of organizational change processes or discursive approaches to organizational change. In particular, Jeffrey Ford's work (e.g., Ford & Ford 1995) has been widely cited, and Loizos Heracleous has been prominent in researching discursive approaches to organizational change (Heracleous 2002).

The social context in which organizations operate has changed substantially in the past 30 years, and as a result of a number of converging factors, we have seen an intensified commitment to organizational change on the part of managers and executives. Among these factors are: the emergence of Asian economies as serious competitors to western businesses in high-profile industries such as manufacturing and electronics, creating a heightened sense of threat; revolutionary new technologies such as personal computers and the → Internet that enable rapid processing and transmission of information across boundaries; and the political-economic force of neo-liberalism, which has resulted in free-market principles being applied globally and in new domains of society (→ Globalization of Organizations).

Alongside these changes is the *global dissemination of management ideas*. Thus, we have seen waves of popular management models and methods, such as quality circles, total quality management (TQM), business process re-engineering (BPR), downsizing, outsourcing, lean manufacturing, e-business, knowledge management, enterprise resource planning, and sustainable or "green" business. The recommended response to these forces from so-called experts has been to organize for continuous change – to become a flexible organization that can adapt quickly to changes in the environment. This argument for change has been repeated by popular management "gurus," such as the late Peter Drucker, Tom Peters, and John Kotter, as well as by business schools, management consulting firms, and the business press, such that it has become the accepted wisdom for many managers and executives.

## MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF THE TOPIC

A number of key dimensions of organizational change processes can be discerned. One important dimension is the meta-theoretical perspective from which the topic is approached. At least two broad meta-theoretical perspectives can be identified.

*Managerialist perspectives*, including positivist, post-positivist, realist, normative, and behaviorist approaches, are prominent in both communication and organization studies,

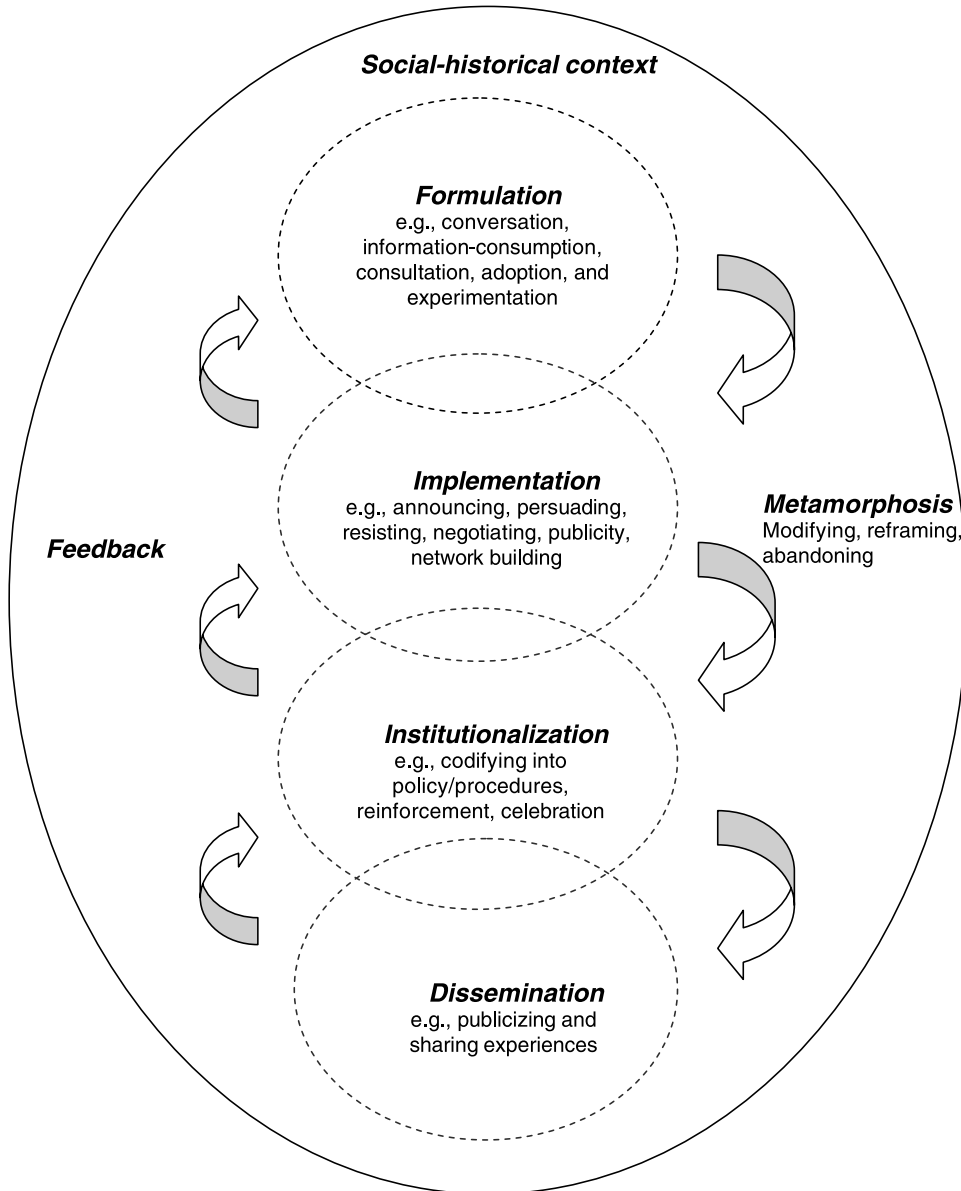
with scholars attempting to discern more or less effective means of communicating in the process of change. From this perspective, communication is seen as a tool or instrumental means to achieve organizational change, and change agents are seen to be attempting to align or adapt organizations to an objective reality (Ford & Ford 1995). For example, research has focused on effective ways to announce change (Smeltzer & Zener 1993), the relationship of communication frequency and participation to perceptions of success (Lewis 1999; Lewis 2006), the effectiveness of particular methods of employee participation in change (Kellett 1999), persuasion campaigns in the context of change programs (Garvin & Roberto 2005), and the effects of major change on communication patterns (Tourish et al. 2004).

A second group of perspectives, which might be referred to as *constructivist*, includes social constructionist, interpretive, critical, discourse, and postmodern approaches (→ Constructivism). This group tends to be more concerned with understanding and critiquing organizational change processes, and communication is viewed as a means by which change is constructed by organizational members. Interpretively oriented approaches tend to describe patterns of communication practices and meaning constructions. For example, researchers have investigated the means used to frame change initiatives (Fairhurst 1993), patterns of communication with external stakeholders (Lewis et al. 2001), and alternative constructions of a single change initiative (Zorn et al. 2000; → Framing Effects). Critically oriented constructivist approaches see communication as the arena in which organizational members struggle for preferred constructions of change-related phenomena. For example, researchers have demonstrated how certain communication practices serve a hegemonic function in change processes (Leonardi & Jackson 2004) and how tensions are reflected and constructed in CRC (Fairhurst et al. 2002).

#### FOUR PHASES OF ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

To understand the major dimensions of the topic of organizational change processes, it is helpful to consider a *model of the change process*, as shown in Figure 1. This model is essentially a communication-oriented reinterpretation of traditional phase models of change, the best known of which is Kurt Lewin's unfreezing–moving–refreezing model. The model in Figure 1, however, highlights the interaction of the organization with its discursive environment. That is, change programs do not take place in a vacuum; rather, social-historical trends influence the interpretation and choices made regarding changes in each phase.

Communication is implicated in each of the phases of change. In the first phase, the *formulation phase*, members of the organization become aware of the need for or possibility of change and decide upon a particular course of action, more or less well defined. In addition to identifying potential problems internally, members consume popular books, articles, seminars, and training videos – not to mention everyday talk with other managers – to learn of new programs and “best practices.” They may consult internal and outside experts (e.g., academics, consultants) as well as non-expert members of staff who may have insight or who may be affected by changes under consideration. Meetings will be held and memos, emails, and reports exchanged as discussion of a change develops. The organization may experiment with a change program on a small scale.



**Figure 1** Phases of organizational change-related communication

Communication processes in the formulation phase have been the focus of substantial theorizing and study, especially the processes by which popular management ideas are communicated and adopted. Guru theory, management fashion theory, and discourse theory make similar and mostly complementary claims. For example, Clark and Salaman (1998) theorized that management gurus construct an appealing identity for the manager as a heroic, transformational leader, thus encouraging managers to enact change to live up to the role. The management fashion perspective (e.g., Abrahamson 1996) suggests

that a management fashion industry, consisting of gurus, consultants, business schools, and the business press, identifies new developments in management practice and then represents these ideas as simple but radical departures from existing practice that are necessary to prevent impending disaster. The fashion industry employs a recognizable pattern of rhetorical conventions and principles to convince managers to adopt them in some form (Clark & Greatbatch 2004). Discourse theorists (e.g., Zorn et al. 2000) suggest that managers draw on the popular discourses from gurus and the fashion industry more broadly to legitimate their change initiatives, and that organizational members are prepared and disciplined by these same discourses in their interpretations of and responses to change initiatives.

The *implementation phase* is the most extensively researched in both the change management and communication literature. Communication processes in this phase include announcing changes, exchanging task-related information needed to enact planned changes (including training and coaching), persuading stakeholders (including employees) to accept and commit to changes, and resisting the changes. Given that many organizational changes today result in layoffs or decreased job security, winning employee commitment is no mean feat.

A number of aspects of implementation communication have been examined. A major focus has been identifying strategies that are likely to help managers introduce changes effectively. For example, Smeltzer and Zener (1993) modeled strategies for change announcements, and Lewis investigated both change agents' (1999) and receivers' (2006) perceptions of the relationship of implementation communication activities to the success of change. Timmerman (2003) investigated media choice during implementation and, while his work was predictive rather than prescriptive, it had clear implications for practitioners. In addition to these efforts, other research of a critical nature has focused on the political (e.g., Doolin 2003) and emotional (e.g., Zorn 2002) aspects of implementation communication, as well as resistance processes (e.g., Ford et al. 2002). Still other research has addressed variations in organizations' socialization activities in the context of change (Hart et al. 2003), how employees cope with the stress of change (Callan 1993), and how discourses are used instrumentally to drive change (Leonardi & Jackson 2004).

The *institutionalization phase* is analogous to Lewin's "refreezing" stage of change. Once changes have been introduced, efforts to make them part of the organization's routines are important. This is a key phase in an era of constant change, since one of the pitfalls of constant change is that management is tempted to move on to the next "fashion" before the current change program is successfully institutionalized. Institutionalization may involve a number of communication activities, such as textualizing new practices into policies and procedures, recognizing and celebrating achievements, providing ongoing training and other socialization practices, discussing failures, and reorienting efforts. Few studies explicitly focus on the institutionalization phase of change efforts, although there are exceptions (e.g., Fairhurst et al. 2002).

The *dissemination phase* draws attention to the fact that, as a change initiative plays out, messages about the change process and change results are conveyed, either formally or informally, to multiple audiences. The organization's reputation is influenced either intentionally or unintentionally by the dissemination of messages about the change process. Furthermore, these messages shape others' views not only of the organization, but also of

particular types of change initiatives. A management fashion perspective points to an interesting and practically important communication phenomenon in this phase. Because of managers' motivation to garner the praise and positive identity associated with successful programs, there is a temptation to publicize and overstate successes and hide failures. Zbaracki (1998), for example, reported that organizations that had had questionable success implementing TQM programs nonetheless publicized their use of and successes with these programs extensively. Such publicity may encourage the increasing positive appraisal and popularity of programs like TQM, even though such appraisals may be unwarranted.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH AND THEORY

Despite a wide-ranging exploration of communication processes in the context of organizational change, theoretical development has been rather sparse. This is less true in the research on CRC in formulation and dissemination than in implementation and institutionalization. Regarding communication in formulation and dissemination, management fashion, guru, and discourse theories are prominent, as reviewed above. Institutional theory has been used extensively to explain change processes generally, but only recently has it been considered as a means to explain CRC (Lammers & Barbour 2006; → Institutional Theory).

Much research on communication in implementation and institutionalization has been atheoretical, for example focusing on variables that are related to perceptions of success or resistance. However, Lewis (2007) has recently begun to address this concern, developing a model of implementation communication around stakeholder theory. In addition, structuration theory (e.g., Fairhurst et al. 2002) and discourse theory (e.g., Heracleous 2002) have been drawn upon by some scholars in researching implementation and institutionalization. Surprisingly, the rich theoretical tradition in → persuasion research has rarely been brought to bear on organizational change processes. Since so much of CRC is a process of influence – in all four of the phases – organizational change would seem an appropriate context in which to apply the theory of reasoned action, the elaboration likelihood model, and other persuasion theories.

A recent development has been a *focus on "positive" approaches to CRC*. Building on developments in positive psychology, the gist of such approaches is to identify positive deviance – that is, what is working well in an organization – and build on it, as opposed to identifying problems – or negative deviance – to be solved. Methods such as appreciative inquiry and dialog have drawn particular attention (Barge & Oliver 2003; → Dialogic Perspectives).

Another future direction that seems particularly important is increasing research on *intercultural and trans-national organizational change*. While there are a few notable studies (e.g., Söderberg & Vaara 2003), these are rare. Given increasing globalization, an understanding of CRC practices in different parts of the world and, especially, in intercultural situations seems needed.

SEE ALSO: ► Business Discourse ► Change Management and Communication ► Constructivism ► Dialogic Perspectives ► Framing Effects ► Globalization of Organizations ► Institutional Theory ► Internet ► Learning Organizations ► Organizational



Communication ► Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ► Organizational Culture ► Organizational Discourse ► Persuasion ► Rogers, Everett ► Technology and Communication

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# Organizational Communication

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Because investigations of organizational communication involve the intersection of two complex concepts – organization and communication – the discipline of organizational communication involves a number of diverse topical interests. Most scholars would agree that “organizations” are social collectives, embedded in a larger environment, in which activities are coordinated to achieve individual and collective goals. The study of organizational communication, then, is the consideration of “how the context of the organization influences communication processes and how the symbolic nature of communication differentiates it from other forms of organizational behavior” (Miller 2006, 1).

## EMERGENCE OF THE FIELD

As with many disciplines in communication, the study of organizational communication has been traced back many decades – even to antiquity (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts; Communication: History of the Idea). For example, Clair (1999, 284) argues that the discipline “lean[s] on the shoulders of Smith and Ricardo or Marx and Engels . . . rel[ies] on the tomes of White and Russell or Levi-Strauss and Douglas . . . resurrect[s] Aristotle, Plato, or Heraclitus.” However, most historians of the field place the

beginning of the modern discipline of organizational communication in the middle of the twentieth century (→ Speech Communication, History of). The genesis of organizational communication can be traced to influences from traditional rhetorical theory, investigations of human relations and psychology, and theories from management and organizational studies. From their early years, organizational communication studies have been influenced both by theoretical frameworks from sociology, psychology, rhetoric, anthropology, and even the physical sciences, and by the ongoing practical concerns of those working in organizational settings. These cross-currents of theoretical and applied interest still influence organizational communication scholars in the twenty-first century.

Redding and Tompkins (1988) provide a typical recounting of the early history of organizational communication in their discussion of three overlapping formative phases. The *first* of these, occurring roughly between 1900 and 1950, is labeled the “era of preparation.” During this time period, concerns revolved around the need for prescriptive and skills-based training that would achieve “effective” communication within organizational settings. For example, researchers during this period looked at ways to structure messages, make appropriate media choices (e.g., written vs oral), and send messages to the “right person” at the “right time” for business effectiveness. Tompkins and Wanca-Thibault (2001, xxi) suggest that typical research questions during this era might include “What effects do downward directed mass media communications have on employees?” and “Is an informed employee a productive employee?”

The *second phase* (1940–1970) is labeled the “era of identification and consolidation.” During this time period, the discipline of organizational communication as a unique entity emerged, as seen through the development of graduate programs, the publication of seminal research articles, and recognition in professional associations such as the Speech Communication Association in the US (now the National Communication Association [NCA]) and the → International Communication Association (ICA). This time period was marked by attention both to prescriptive advice for practicing managers (what Redding and Tompkins call the “empirical-prescriptive” phase) and to an emphasis on the scientific method as central to the development of knowledge about organizational communication processes (what Redding and Tompkins call the “applied-scientific” phase). During this time period, empirical attention was focused on communication in supervisor–subordinate relationships, communication processes leading to employee satisfaction, communication networks such as “the grapevine,” and small group decision-making. These topic areas were investigated through straightforward → surveys of organizational members and through laboratory experiments of basic organizational communication processes (→ Experiment, Laboratory). Tompkins and Wanca-Thibault (2001, xxi) consider typical research questions from this time period such as, “What is the relationship between the attitudes and performance of workers and the feedback they receive?” and “How can communication networks in organizations be measured?”

Redding and Tompkins argue that organizational communication reached “*the era of maturity and innovation*” in the 1970s. At this point, organizational communication was recognized as an established discipline under the larger umbrella of communication studies, with important links to a wide range of allied disciplines including “administrative science, anthropology, business communication, corporate communication, industrial organizational psychology, management communication, organizational behavior, political

science, social psychology, sociolinguistics, sociology, rhetoric, and even literary criticism” (Taylor et al. 2001, 102).

The maturity of the organizational communication discipline is clear: organizational communication is among the largest divisions in both ICA and NCA, there are divisions or sections of organizational communication in organizations such as the Academy of Management, European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) and the Korean Society for Journalism and Communication Studies (KSJCS). Graduate degree programs have proliferated across the globe, and organizational communication scholarship is well represented in our discipline’s journals, in interdisciplinary journals, and in specialized journals such as *Management Communication Quarterly*. The publication of “handbooks” and summary edited books on organizational communication in the 1980s (Greenbaum et al. 1983; McPhee & Tompkins 1985; Jablin et al. 1987; Goldhaber & Barnett 1988) also points to the maturing and consolidation of the discipline.

The time since this “era of maturity and innovation” began has not been stagnant, of course. In recent decades, the discipline of organizational communication has been marked by a number of major intellectual shifts and conceptual debates. These developments have largely followed similar currents in other academic disciplines but have had specific implications for organizational communication in terms of theoretical commitments and research topics. Further, as scholars in organizational communication have worked through these theoretical and conceptual discussions, the “new” perspectives have not totally replaced the “old.” As a result, organizational communication is now a relatively eclectic discipline in terms of theoretical commitments, methodological approaches, and research topics. Three important, and somewhat overlapping, strands of work are now prevalent in organizational communication. Following Corman and Poole (2000), these strands are labeled “post-positivist,” “interpretive,” and “critical.”

## POST-POSITIVIST RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

The first important strand of research in organizational communication is scholarship that has stemmed most directly from research conducted in the middle portion of the twentieth century and the phases of empirical-prescriptive research and applied scientific research discussed above. Various labels such as post-positivist, modernist, empirical, functional, or normative, this strand of research was clearly the dominant perspective as organizational communication reached “maturity” in the 1970s. The ontological focus of research during this time period was on a realist conception (→ Realism) of both “organization” and “communication.” That is, organizations were seen as “containers” within which people worked and within which goods and services were produced. These organizations were characterized by processes such as “input, throughput, and output” that emphasized both the boundaries of the organization and the definable processes of material and information management that occurred “within” those organizational boundaries. Further, communication was conceptualized in terms of mechanistic views of information flow that followed prescribed routes and included defined content.

Thus, communication and → information were conceptualized as discrete “things” that could be investigated within the discrete boundaries of the organizational container. Epistemological and methodological commitments were closely aligned with the scientific

method and a commitment to “objective” observation of communication behavior within organizational settings (→ Objectivity in Science; Quantitative Methodology). During this time period, the post-positivist perspective in organizational communication was often linked with managerial concerns such as increasing productivity, increasing efficiency, and enhancing the effectiveness of information flow within organizational systems.

Thus, early examples of post-positivist research in organizational communication included extensive attention to topics such as supervisor–subordinate communication, semantic information distance, information flow, upward and downward feedback in the organization, communication climate, and prescribed and emergent communication networks. During the 1970s and 1980s, “systems” perspectives on organizational communication became particularly prevalent, fueled by scholars interested in understanding the complexity of communication in organizations, the relationships among organizational subsystems, and the embedding of organizations in larger institutional environments (Farace et al. 1977; → Systems Theory).

In the final decades of the twentieth century and continuing into the twenty-first, organizational communication research with a post-positivist epistemological and methodological focus has continued, but has also been marked by important developments. First, many organizational communication scholars in this tradition now eschew a strictly realist ontological focus, with its emphasis on organizations as “containers” and on communication as mechanistic processes of information flow. Instead, scholars working from a post-positivist stance in organizational communication today tend to embrace modified realist stances or more complex ontologies of social constructionism (Miller 2000; → Constructivism). Second, post-positivist scholars in organizational communication today advocate and use much more sophisticated methodological choices, including over-time analysis (e.g., stochastic analysis, time-series analysis; → longitudinal analysis), complex analysis of communication networks (→ Network Analysis), and computer modeling of organizational communication systems. Third, post-positivist scholars in organizational communication today are engaged with crucial questions that face individuals and organizations in the late modern and postmodern world. These questions include issues of advanced communication and decision-making technologies, issues of globalization, alternative organizational structures and non-profit organizations, and self-organizing systems. As a result, post-positivist scholars are now generally less aligned with strictly managerial concerns than they were during the 1960s and 1970s and are less likely to consider questions of a strictly applied nature.

### **THE INTERPRETIVE TURN**

During the 1970s and 1980s, as in many fields of social and human research, organizational communication scholars began to question an allegiance to positivistic and functional approaches to scholarship. This questioning involved a rejection of realist conceptions of organizations and communication (e.g., the “machine” and “container” metaphors), together with a clear turn away from positivistic epistemological assumptions and research methods based on the scientific method and quantitative approaches. Within the discipline of organizational communication, several publications were particularly noteworthy during this time period. For example, Burrell and Morgan’s (1979) publication

of *Sociological paradigms and organizational analysis* caught the attention of many organizational communication scholars, as it systematized the study of organizations to include alternatives to the dominant paradigm of → functional analysis.

Within organizational communication, however, the “interpretive turn” is most often traced to a conference held in the summer of 1981 in Alta, Utah. Taylor et al. (2001, 108) recount that “during that summer a group of young communication scholars met in a mountain retreat just south of Salt Lake City to consider where the field had been and where it should now be going,” and Kuhn (2005, 619) argues that that gathering now “serves as a synecdoche for a movement occurring over many years, comprising a graduate shift in organizational communication from attention to information flow and the forces shaping members’ attitudes dominant before the conference . . . to an increased concern with meaning, interpretation, and power in organizing processes afterward.” The discussions from the 1981 Alta conference were published in a benchmark book, Putnam and Pacanowsky’s (1983) *Communication in organizations: An interpretive approach*.

The *intellectual roots of the interpretive turn* in organizational communication can be found in intellectual movements such as symbolic interactionism (→ Symbolic Interaction), → hermeneutics, → phenomenology, and → ethnomethodology. There are a number of important markers of the interpretive approach in organizational communication scholarship that developed from these founding perspectives. Ontologically, the interpretive approach is marked by a social constructionist view of the social world (e.g., Berger & Luckmann 1967). With this shift in ontology come changes in epistemology and methodology. Specifically, in the 1980s many organizational communication scholars turned to subjective epistemologies that emphasized the relationship between the knower and the known and the value of local and emergent forms of knowledge (→ Qualitative Methodology).

*Methodologically*, scholars began to emphasize research methods drawn from anthropology (e.g., organizational ethnographies), rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies), and other qualitative modes of inquiry (e.g., interviewing, narrative, discourse analysis). The interpretive turn also led to a shift in the conceptualization of “organization” and “communication.” Instead of following the container metaphor, which emphasized the flow of information within and between organizational structures, interpretive scholars considered the role of communication in processes of organizing and sense-making (Weick 1979). In other words, organizational scholars shifted from a mechanistic view of organizational communication to a constitutive view of organizing and communicating (Craig 1999). Finally, the interpretive turn marked a definitive turn away from the managerial concerns that were important to many organizational communication scholars working from a functional perspective. Instead, attention turned to the experiences and interactions of a variety of organizational actors.

The era of the “interpretive turn” in organizational communication was also marked by the emergence of interest in a number of research topics. Perhaps the most important of these in the 1980s was → “organizational culture.” Though early work in management and other applied areas emphasized a prescriptive approach to culture in which organizational leaders were urged to develop cultures that were “strong” (Deal & Kennedy 1982) or “excellent” (Peters & Waterman 1982), scholars in organizational communication followed the tenets of an interpretive approach in proposing models of culture that

emphasized the emergent and performative nature of culture (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo 1983), the existence of organizational sub-cultures, and the role of cultural understandings in processes such as organizational socialization, conflict, decision-making, and change. Other scholars during the early years of the interpretive turn focused attention on more macro issues of organizational identity and image, especially through the use of rhetorical approaches to organizational analysis (e.g., Cheney 1991). Many of these concerns are still active in organizational scholarship today, as scholars investigate the “lived experience” of organizational members through ethnographic, interview, and narrative methods.

### THE CRITICAL TURN

During the same time period as the “interpretive turn” in organizational communication studies, many scholars were also turning to a critical approach to organizational communication in which organizations were viewed as systems of power and control (→ *Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches*). Indeed, the watershed Alta conference in 1981 discussed above also marked a move in the discipline to an appreciation of critical approaches to scholarship, though the roots of that scholarship (like the roots of the interpretive approach) can be traced to many decades earlier (→ *Critical Theory*). In organizational communication research, critical scholarship can be traced to a *number of intellectual origins*, including Karl Marx’s attention to the commodification of labor and processes of alienation, Frankfurt School critics and their attention to cultural control, Louis Althusser’s attention to the political function of ideology, and Antonio Gramsci’s arguments regarding hegemony and control through consent. Organizational communication scholars also rely heavily on → Jürgen Habermas’s work on forms of rationality and communicative competence, Michel Foucault’s discursive approach to power, and Anthony Giddens’s structuralist conceptions of the relationship between agency and structure (→ *Structuration Theory*).

With these diverse and complex roots, the turn to critical organizational communication scholarship involved an analysis of *organizations as sites of oppression*, a consideration of the discursive construction of managerial interests, an examination of how workers are complicit in processes of alienation, and a consideration of processes of dissent and resistance in organizations (Mumby 2000; Deetz 2005). As Deetz (2005, 85) states regarding the critical approach in organizational communication, “of central concern have been efforts to understand the relations among power, language, social/cultural practices, and the treatment and/or suppression of important conflicts as they relate to the production of individual identities, social knowledge, and social and organizational decision making.” As organizational communication scholars interrogate these issues, there has been a consistent concern with praxis – the synthesis of theory and practice. In organizational communication, this concern often translates into considerations of alternative organizational forms, participatory practices in organizations, and opportunities for employee dissent (→ *Participative Processes in Organizations; Dissent in Organizations*).

With the critical turn in organizational communication scholarship also came a move to *feminist sensibilities and scholarship* (Ashcraft & Mumby 2004; → *Feminist and Gender*

Studies). Ashcraft (2005) argues that feminist research in organizational communication has roots in both the critical turn in social theory and research and the political activism that has served as the heart of feminism in all of its various waves. As Ashcraft (2005, 145) states, “whereas critical organizational scholars prioritized emancipation through ideology critique, feminists literally grounded their emancipatory interest in the trenches of practice.” Feminist scholarship did not gain a strong foothold in the organizational communication discipline until the 1990s, though there had been earlier studies of gender and biological sex in organizational communication processes, typically from a post-positivist perspective. However, in recent decades, feminist scholarship in organizational communication has included areas of research such as the public/private divide implicit in the distinction between work and home, feminist ways of organizing, emotionality in the workplace, and feminist approaches to conflict.

The critical turn in the discipline of organizational communication has also been associated in recent years with the emergence of *postmodern theorizing* (Taylor 2005; → Postmodernism and Communication). Postmodern approaches to organizational communication can be seen through two contrasting lenses (→ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches). First, postmodern approaches differentiate organizations and communication in the modern epoch (e.g., centralized authority, mass markets, formalization, rationality, standardization, and stability) from the postmodern epoch (e.g., lateral relationships, fragmented and niche markets, consensus-based control, interactivity, and change; → Cultural Studies).

In this sense, it is possible to talk about a postmodern era or postmodern organizational forms. Perhaps more important, though, organizational communication scholars draw on postmodern theory to consider concepts such as intertextuality, the fragmentation of identity, the interrelationships of power, knowledge, and discourse, and the need for reflexive understanding. Taylor (2005, 120–130) provides five claims that are central to postmodern approaches to organizational communication. These are: (1) organizations are (inter-)texts; (2) organizational cultures and identities are fragmented and decentered; (3) organizational knowledge, power, and discourse are inseparable and their relations should be deconstructed; (4) organizational communication involves complex relations of power and resistance; and (5) knowledge of organizational communication is representational – thus, communication should be reflexive.

### **CONTEMPORARY FRAMES FOR CONSIDERING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

There are a number of ways that current theory and research in organizational communication have been categorized. For example, Conrad and Haynes (2001) identify *five “clusters of scholarship”* within organizational communication in terms of their underlying concerns with aspects of the dualism between action and structure. Some research privileges structure over action, such as research on information exchange and supervisor–subordinate relationship. Other research privileges action over structure, such as work considering the emergence of culture, symbolism, or ambiguity. Conrad and Haynes also identify clusters of scholarship that attempt to integrate action and structure (e.g., work stemming from Giddens’s structuration theory, considerations of unobtrusive control



and identification, and critical theory), as well as research that crosses organizational boundaries and challenges traditional constructs from the 1980s and 1990s.

A second categorization structure for current organizational communication scholarship was proposed by Mumby and Stohl (1996), who identify *four central "problematics"* within the study of organizational communication. These are the problematics of voice, rationality, organization, and the organization–environment relationship. These problematics highlight the ways in which researchers question traditional ways of thinking about organizational communication and embed their interests in current concerns. For example, pressures toward globalization point to the fluid nature of the organization–environment relationship and the ways in which time and space are reconfigured through new technologies, new organizational forms, and the shifting needs of a global economy.

Putnam et al. (1996) provide a particularly insightful framework for considering contemporary theory and research in organizational communication. This framework considers the *metaphors of communication and organization* and highlights the varying ways the concepts of "organization" and "communication" are framed by theorists and researchers (→ Organizational Metaphors). The seven metaphors identified to categorize both historic and contemporary research in organizational communication are as follows. In the *conduit metaphor* approach to organizational communication, communication is seen as transmission that occurs within the container of the organization. Research in this tradition includes considerations of formal and informal communication flow, adoption of new communication technology, and considerations of information load in the workplace.

In the *lens metaphor* approach, communication is seen as a filtering process and the organization is seen as the eye. This metaphor highlights the possibility of distortion and the importance of message reception, and would include research on feedback in organizations, environmental scanning, and strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg 1984) in organizational communication. The *linkage metaphor* shifts the emphasis in theory and research to the connections among individuals and organizations. Thus, a primary focus of research within this metaphor is a consideration of communication networks, including network roles, patterns, and structures. Contemporary research in organizational communication considers these linkages both "within" organizations and in larger interorganizational systems. The *performance metaphor* marks a major break from the previous three, and interaction and meaning take the forefront. In the performance metaphor, "organizations emerge as *coordinated actions*, that is, organizations enact their own rules, structures, and environments through social interaction" (Putnam et al. 1996, 384). Organizational scholars working in this area rely on such frameworks as narrative theory and Weick's theory of organizing (Weick 1979; → Sense-Making) and consider processes including storytelling and symbolic convergence in groups at the micro-level (→ Symbolic Convergence Theory) and the rhetorical construction of organizational image and identity at the macro-level.

The *symbol metaphor* sees the organization as a complex system of texts and communication as a process of representation through which the organizational world is made meaningful. Many current studies of organizational culture, organizational socialization, and the role of narrative, rites, and rituals in constructing the commonplaces of organization could be seen as stemming from this metaphor. The *voice metaphor*, as Putnam et al. note, "entails focusing on communication as the *expression or suppression*

of the voices of organizational members” (1996, 389). Contemporary work from this metaphor could include considerations of ideology and naturalized knowledge (a consideration of *distorted voices*), considerations of hegemony and power (*voices of domination*), considerations of women and cultural groups in organizations (*different voices*), studies of hierarchy and participation (*access to voice*), and considerations of empowerment and democratization (*making a difference through voice*). In the *discourse metaphor* approach, finally, Putnam et al. consider theory and research in organizational communication that sees communication as a conversation, as collective action, and as dialogue. Scholarship stemming from this metaphor variously considers discourse as an artifact in organizational life, as structure and process, and as ongoing acts.

### CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH TOPICS IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

The metaphors discussed above point to the disparate and enriching frameworks now used to consider organizational communication. However, it is important to emphasize the ongoing importance of the *metatheoretical and theoretical influences* discussed above, including post-positivism, interpretivism, critical approaches, postmodernism, and feminism. Organizational communication also continues to blend a concern with social theory with ongoing concerns with practice and with the experiences of organizational members. Further, the discipline of organizational communication continues to be marked by a consideration of various levels of analysis. Scholars are concerned with the individual experiences of organizational members (→ Psychology in Communication Processes); with the interaction of critical dyads in organizations, such as supervisors and subordinates (→ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships); with interaction in task-related and social groups in the workplace (→ Group Communication); with the structure and function of various organizational types (→ Organizational Structure); and with larger systems of organizations across industries and nations (→ Interorganizational Communication).

There are a number of topic areas that would be considered “*enduring*” interests of *organizational communication scholars*. These include conflict processes in organizational systems and cultures (→ Organizational Conflict), issues of leadership (→ Leadership in Organizations; Feedback Processes in Organizations), and processes of individual and group decision-making (→ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations). However, the following outlines some of the more important contemporary interests of scholars in organizational communication. All of these topics are currently approached from a variety of theoretical perspectives and with a wide range of methodological approaches and analytical tools (e.g., ethnographic analysis, network analysis, survey and interview techniques, field experiments, comparative case analysis, rhetorical analysis, archival analysis, and historical analysis). It should, of course, be noted that these topic areas are not mutually exclusive and that this list is not intended as a comprehensive accounting of current organizational communication research.

Influenced largely by feminist theorizing, contemporary scholars in organizational communication have shifted from a traditional view of organizational processes as rational and logical to a consideration of *emotional experience in the workplace*. Such work includes studies of emotional labor, stress and burnout in the workplace, compassion,

humor, and workplace bullying (→ Emotion and Communication in Organizations). The concepts of *organizational identity and identification* have held a central role in organizational communication research in recent years, as scholars have considered the formation of identity and the influence of identification on issues such as organizational decision-making, commitment, and group interaction. Work in this area has important roots in rhetorical (especially Burkean) theory (→ Organizational Identification).

Not surprisingly, the role of *communication technology* in shifting organizational communication processes has been a central concern of scholars for the last several decades. This research is conducted largely within the auspices of post-positivist theoretical and methodological assumptions and has included considerations of decision-making technology, technology for information storage and retrieval, communication technology such as telephony and the Internet, and technology that allows for alternative organizational configurations such as → telework (→ Technology and Communication; Meeting Technologies; Mobility, Technology for; E-Commerce). Shifts in technology, travel, and politics have led organizational communication scholars to the critical consideration of *globalization processes*. Theoretical and research interests in this area include both global and economic concerns as well as considerations of ways in which processes of globalization affect the work lives and communication processes of individuals. Much work in this area remains theoretical – often with a critical or postmodern sensibility – but there are increasing forays into research that considers data from a variety of levels (e.g., economic, political, network, psychological) and a variety of methodological approaches (→ Globalization Theories; Globalization of Organizations; Technology and Globalization).

Traditional research in organizational communication considered profit-centered organizations and bureaucracies (→ Bureaucracy and Communication). However, organizational communication scholars have recently become more interested in considerations of *nonprofit organizations and alternative “flatter” forms of organizations* encouraged through feminist theorizing. Further, trends in technology and globalization have led to increased consideration of virtual workplaces, and concerns with → knowledge management have led organizational communication scholars to concepts of learning and dialogue in organizational processes (→ Learning Organizations; Dialogic Perspectives), and to continued considerations of participatory systems and organizational democracy.

Critical scholars in organizational communication initially gave a great deal of attention to the ways in which organizational processes such as managerialism, decision-making, organizational structure, identification, and gender and culture could lead to hegemonic processes of oppression and alienation in the workplace. In recent years, these scholars have also turned their attention to ways in which employees resist these processes and engage in *active dissent and resistance*. Given rapid developments in technology, globalization, organizational forms, and market concerns, scholars in organizational communication are concerned not just with the nature of organizational communication in the late modern and postmodern world, but also with the processes through which *organizations change and adapt* (→ Organizational Change Processes). Concerns with organizational change are particularly marked in considering the ways in which organizations navigate crises (→ Organizational Crises, Communication in; Crisis Communication), the management of organizational image (→ Image; Issue Management), and ethical considerations (→ Organizational Ethics).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bureaucracy and Communication ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Constructivism ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ▶ Dialogic Perspectives ▶ Dissent in Organizations ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Emotion and Communication in Organizations ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Feedback Processes in Organizations ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Group Communication ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Image ▶ Information ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Interorganizational Communication ▶ Issue Management ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Leadership in Organizations ▶ Learning Organizations ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Meeting Technologies ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Network Analysis ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Organizational Assimilation ▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Organizational Conflict ▶ Organizational Crises, Communication in ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Organizational Ethics ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Organizational Metaphors ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Participative Processes in Organizations ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Realism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships ▶ Survey ▶ Symbolic Convergence Theory ▶ Symbolic Interaction ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ Telework

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# Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches

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The term “critical approach” refers to a broad, interdisciplinary body of theory and research that conceives of organizations as dynamic sites of control and resistance. “Critical studies” covers several distinct yet related intellectual traditions, each of which examines the communicative practices through which control and resistance are produced, reproduced, and transformed in the process of organizing. These traditions include: neo-Marxism, → critical theory, postmodernism, and feminism (→ Postmodernism and Communication; Feminist and Gender Studies). Each of these traditions shares the “post-linguistic turn” assumption that language and → discourse are central, constitutive elements of human meaning and reality formation.

In the context of organizational communication studies, this assumption translates into a view of communication and organization as co-constitutive. That is, communication is viewed as creating organizations as meaning-based, social constructions; organizations are conceived as both enabling and constraining the everyday communication processes of their members. Common to all traditions within the critical perspective, however, is the notion that such co-constitutive processes are not arbitrary or spontaneous, but rather occur within the context of complex relations of power. Thus, all perspectives in critical organizational communication studies view organizing as a fundamentally political process that gets played out in the dynamics of various competing interests (→ Control and Authority in Organizations).

Furthermore, critical perspectives share a praxis orientation toward theory and research. Simply put, praxis – the synthesis of theory and practice – invokes the possibility of social transformation. As Marx famously put it, “The philosophers have only described the world; the point is to change it.” In the context of organizational communication research, praxis translates into efforts to conceptualize and realize more democratic and participatory organizational forms (Deetz 1992). As such, all critical research invokes, whether implicitly or explicitly, the possibility of alternative organizing processes. In this sense, all critical research operates according to an emancipatory logic that recognizes the possibilities for self-reflection and social change.

## CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS

The critical perspective came into its own in the early 1980s as part of a broader rise to prominence of an interpretive, meaning-based approach to the study of organizations. Both Putnam and Pacanowsky’s (1983) important edited volume, *Communication and organizations: An interpretive approach*, and a special issue of the *Western Journal of Speech Communication* edited by Putnam and Pacanowsky in 1982 featured essays by Conrad (1983), Deetz and Kersten (1983), and Deetz (1982) that together formed early efforts to define the conceptual terrain of critical studies, exploring the connections among communication, power, and organizing.

### Intellectual Origins

The *intellectual origins* of the critical perspective, however, are far older. Much is owed, of course, to Marx's rewriting of political economy and his groundbreaking analysis of the capitalist accumulation process. Despite its limitations, Marxist theory still resonates for critical organization scholars in its acute analysis of the expropriation, alienation, and commodification of labor. In this sense, critical organization studies has inherited from classic Marxist theory an understanding of the materiality of the capitalist labor process and the ways that workplace power and exploitation are structured into capitalist relations of production.

A much stronger influence on critical organizational communication studies has been exerted by efforts to reinterpret Marxism in the face of the changing character of capitalism and the workplace in the twentieth century. In particular, the work of the Frankfurt School and a number of western Marxist theorists, including Antonio Gramsci, Gyorgy Lukács, and Louis Althusser, have been instrumental in shaping critical studies of workplace "control through consent." This phrase captures the evolution of the capitalist workplace as it moved away from coercive, exploitative practices – described so vividly by Marx in *Capital* – toward forms of control that, paradoxically, relied more heavily on worker autonomy. For critical studies, then, theory and research have been centrally concerned with explaining the communicative dynamics through which apparent worker autonomy and consent to an exploitative labor process reside together.

Central to critical efforts to address this problematic have been the *concepts* of "ideology" and "hegemony." "*Ideology*," particularly as developed in the works of Althusser and Gramsci, refers not simply to a system of ideas, but rather to everyday discourses and practices which constitute the lived reality of social actors. From a critical perspective, ideology provides the interpretive mechanism through which certain social realities and interests are privileged over others. Furthermore, ideology does not simply reflect these dominant interests in a straightforward manner, but rather transforms and obscures these interests such that they are not immediately accessible to everyday experience. For example, Willis's (1977) classic study of a working-class sub-culture of "lads" in a British high school illustrates how their rejection of middle-class values of education, enterprise, and upward mobility and their embracing of a culture of violence and "having a laff" prepares them for insertion into the capitalist labor process in a way that reproduces their role as generalized, abstract labor. Thus, the lads' sub-culture functions ideologically to simultaneously secure and obscure their relationship to capitalist relations of production.

Gramsci's (1971) concept of "*hegemony*" is equally important in its conception of capitalism not as coercive, but as a structure of relations and institutions that creates a "collective will" among classes and interest groups with competing interests. A group or class that is hegemonic does not act in a coercive fashion (though coercion may be a control mechanism of last resort) but rather is able to articulate the beliefs, values, and interests of other groups and classes with its own. Hegemony therefore functions primarily in the ideological and cultural realms through the institutions of civil society such as the family, religion, education, and the mass media.

In the context of critical organization studies, Gramsci's concept is taken up to address the subjective experience of workers as they participate in the labor process. Burawoy

(1979), for example, shows how capitalist relations of production are hegemonic in part by virtue of the workers' construction of a culture of "making out" that functions ideologically to obscure the exploitative character of capitalist relations of production. Hegemonic relations, then, involve not passive consent to a system of beliefs, but rather the active appropriation and reproduction of those beliefs by subordinate groups.

The final neo-Marxist influence on critical organization studies comes out of the *Frankfurt School of critical theory* and, more specifically, the work of second-generation Frankfurt School philosopher → Jürgen Habermas. Habermas's work has been particularly influential on two related fronts. First, he argues that contemporary modernity has privileged technical forms of rationality over practical and emancipatory rationality, resulting in the dominance of instrumental, means–end forms of knowledge. This colonization and rationalization of the life-world lead to impoverished notions of human knowledge and community, and negate possibilities for critical reflection and social transformation. Second, Habermas posits the notion of "systematically distorted communication" to address the ways in which technical rationality functions ideologically, through discourse, to co-opt other forms of rationality. Critical organization scholars (e.g., Deetz 1992; Mumby 1988) have used Habermas's work to explore the central role of organizations in processes of the colonization of human identity formation. This not only includes research into the discursive mechanisms through which employees themselves are colonized by corporate ideologies and values, but extends also to larger corporate efforts to shape human identity, what counts as knowledge, definitions of excellence, and so forth.

### **Recent Developments in the Field**

Much of the critical organizational communication research conducted in the last 25 years has taken the form of extended "ideology critique," focusing on the discursive mechanisms through which organizations construct social realities that produce and reproduce the interests of "managerialism" (Deetz 1992). Early examples of such research include ideological analyses of organizational storytelling (Mumby 1988), work songs (Conrad 1988), and workplace rituals (Rosen 1985). In each instance, analyses focus on the intrinsic connection between ideology and discourse, examining how particular discursive practices "interpellate" social actors as organizational subjects in specific ways. Frequently repeated organizational stories, for example, "narrate" particular organizational realities into being and position members as subjects within those realities.

In the last 15 years the conceptual terrain of critical organization studies has broadened considerably, particularly with the emergence of research informed by postmodern theory and feminist theory. While *postmodernism* approaches are addressed in another entry (→ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches), it is worth noting that there are certain continuities between critical theory proper and postmodern analytics. First, while both perspectives focus on power and its dynamics, postmodernism is concerned less with liberating truth from power and more with explicating the discursive mechanisms through which power and truth are articulated together in particular ways. Second, both focus on the discursive construction of social reality. However, while critical theory examines discourse through the lens of ideology critique, postmodern thought



examines discourse as a complex constellation of intertextual practices that construct subject positions in complex and often contradictory ways. Third, and related, while critical theory views the social actor as a rational, conscious – though linguistically mediated – subject, postmodernism views the subject as decentered, fragmented, and the effect of discourses.

Since the mid-1990s *feminist organization studies* has exercised increasing influence in critical organization studies (→ Gender and Discourse). Unlike earlier “gender as variable” research that examined, for example, differences in managerial leadership style between men and women, critical feminist studies take up Acker’s (1990) idea that organizations are “gendered” cultural forms, constituted around systems of difference that take “masculine” and “feminine” as the primary binary opposition. This reframing of the relationship between gender and organization has generated theory and research that examine the ongoing, communicative construction of masculine and feminine identities in the process of organizing. Of particular significance here is the shift away from an essentialist conception of gender, almost exclusively concerned with women’s roles in the workplace, to a much more nuanced exploration of the multiple and intersecting gendered identities that are socially constructed through everyday discursive practices. Consistent with other critical approaches, feminist scholarship focuses on the intersection of discourse, power, and organizing in everyday social practice; what differentiates it from other forms of critical research is its careful exploration of power as a gendered process.

Feminist theory and research in organizational communication have had three broad foci: (1) feminist deconstructions of the gendered underpinnings of mainstream organization theory (e.g., Mumby & Putnam 1992); (2) empirical analyses of everyday gendered organizing processes (e.g., Trethewey 1997); and (3) studies of feminist organizational structures and their possibilities for alternative means of democratic decision-making (e.g., Ashcraft 2001). It is important to note that while feminist organization studies can be placed under the broader umbrella of critical studies, this area also has a distinct and independent history, with much of early feminist thought and practice maintaining a skeptical posture in regard to the male-dominated theory work conducted in critical studies. Indeed, a strong case can be made that while many critical scholars were theorizing about the possibilities for alternative democratic institutional forms, many feminists were engaging such possibilities in a praxis-oriented manner through the creation of women-centered, collectivist organizations.

### **CURRENT RESEARCH FOCI**

While it is not possible to provide an exhaustive account of the current state of research informed by critical approaches, there are certain broadly identifiable empirical foci. These include: (1) professional identities; (2) knowledge-intensive organizations; (3) work-home relationships; (4) the body, sexuality, and emotion; and (5) employee resistance.

#### **Professional Identities**

The discursive construction of employee identities has become a central preoccupation of much critical scholarship (→ Organizational Identification; Identities and Discourse).

Such work takes a number of forms. For example, the European Labor Process Group of Knights, Willmott, and colleagues focuses on the ways in which employees maintain professional identities in the face of increasingly insecure work environments, where traditional conceptions of “job stability” and upward mobility have largely disappeared in the new, post-Fordist economy. In organizational communication studies proper, a number of scholars have shifted focus away from organizations as physical sites, within which members construct meanings and identities, and toward examination of the professional discourses that are both medium and outcome of organization members’ identities. In this context, organizations per se are less important than the constellation of discursive resources (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality) that social actors draw upon in constructing such professional identities (→ Organizational Discourse).

### **Knowledge-Intensive Organizations**

The shift from the Fordist to the post-Fordist organizational form has led a number of critical researchers to examine the effects of this transformation on issues of power, control, and identity. For example, researchers have investigated the implications of flatter, more knowledge-intensive organizational hierarchies for issues of employee autonomy and decision-making.

One of the more interesting findings of this work is that greater decentralization of decision-making and control processes has actually led to increased, though more subtle and insidious, control over workers. This is particularly true in team-based organizations, where workers engage in “concertive control,” constructing their own collective value premises that act to internalize self-surveillance at the level of everyday work activities (Barker 1993).

### **Work–Home Relationships**

The critical focus on issues of “corporate colonization” and “managerialism” has led some scholars to investigate more closely the increasingly complex relations between work and others spheres of life, particularly home. Again, the advent of the post-Fordist organization and attendant phenomena, such as corporate campuses, telecommuting (→ Telework), flex-time, and so forth, has produced increased critical focus on the ways in which such structural shifts have changed employees’ relationships to work.

Perhaps most significantly, this research has drawn increased attention to the impact of these shifts on the construction of subject positions and the ability of social actors to even contemplate identities separate from work. If, indeed, distinctions between work and the private spheres of life are increasingly amorphous, then it is arguably increasingly difficult for social actors to articulate identities that are autonomous from corporate rationalization processes. In this context, critical organization research is particularly interested in the impact of such structural shifts on civil society; that is, to what extent corporate forms have subsumed other spheres of civil society such as family, education, and religion, thus constraining possibilities for the construction of meaning systems that function autonomously from corporate discourses including efficiency, rationality, and branding.

### **The Body, Sexuality, and Emotion**

The move in the last few years to studies of the body, sexuality, and emotion reflects increased critical attention to both the gendered and material character of organizing (→ Emotion and Communication in Organizations). In the latter case, this shift perhaps reflects the recognition that, in privileging the discursive/symbolic character of organizing, critical scholars have sometimes overlooked the flesh-and-blood social actors who people organizations.

Studies of the body and sexuality focus on how these issues are read through, and coded into, organizational discourses and practices. For example, Trethewey's (2001) study of mid-life professional women's experience of aging addresses their efforts to situate themselves and their bodies in relation to patriarchal/managerial discourses that interpellate such women within a "master narrative" of decline. In this sense, questions of the body, sexuality, and emotion are examined in terms of how they are structured into larger discourses of power, resistance, and identity. Emotion, for example, has been recognized by critical and feminist scholars as an important site of struggle in contemporary organizations; managerial control efforts aim at harnessing employee emotions as a way to enhance customer satisfaction, while employees struggle to maintain their right to express unmediated, genuine emotion.

### **Employee Resistance**

Finally, the last few years have seen a marked increase in critical studies that focus on employee efforts to resist organizational control mechanisms. This is in contrast to the early emphasis on control processes and the conceptual and empirical marginalization of resistance practices (→ Dissent in Organizations).

This recent effort to capture employee recalcitrance in the face of increasingly sophisticated managerial control efforts reflects greater sensitivity regarding the control–resistance dialectic in everyday organizing. Moreover, it suggests a greater recognition that, from a discursive, meaning-centered perspective, critical research is less about identifying and critiquing specific control (or resistance) practices, and more about explicating the – gendered, classed, raced, etc. – dialectical struggle between multiple interest groups over organizational meaning and identity. In this sense, critical organization studies at its most effective unpacks the ways that discourses, identities, control/resistance, and organizing get articulated together to create particular constellations of meaning. It is through understanding the political interests informing such articulation processes that alternative organizing practices become possible.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Discourse ▶ Dissent in Organizations ▶ Emotion and Communication in Organizations ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Telework

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# **Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches**

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Postmodern approaches to organizational communication elude easy description. Broadly speaking, they are diverse forms of inquiry that challenge and reconstruct systems of

power, identity, and representation (→ Control and Authority in Organizations). Since the 1980s, postmodern approaches, situated with reference to a larger critical tradition, have burgeoned in organizational communication studies. Under this rubric, many extant theories and methods in → organizational communication inquiry have been challenged and refashioned.

Yet scholars working in this tradition sometimes eschew the label “postmodern” and its attendant baggage, adopting other terms such as “dialogic” (Deetz 1996) or “discursive.” Inevitably then, the task of describing “postmodern approaches” is likely to be partial and fragmented – much like the approaches it seeks to describe. This entry thus proceeds tentatively, by examining the relationship between postmodernism and the critical tradition, and discusses some key tenets, trends, and futures of postmodern approaches to organizational communication studies.

### **MODERNITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Postmodern thought has been a relatively new entrant in organizational communication studies due largely to the dominance of managerial perspectives and quantitative methodologies – approaches against which postmodern and critical approaches in part set themselves (Deetz 1992). As such, the emergence of postmodern thought in organizational communication studies has to be seen with reference to the critical turn in organizational studies (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches), which began in the late 1970s when scholars began to consider issues of power and language as central to organizational life (Mumby 1988).

Like those in most disciplines that are engaged in investigations of “the social,” organizational communication scholars have wrestled with the central problematic of → *modernity*. The engagement with modernity both as a historical epoch and as an epistemological stance has been most overt in critical and postmodern approaches to organizational communication. Both approaches invoke a broad conception of power, and theorize issues of domination, control, and resistance. It is therefore a mistake to examine critical and postmodern approaches to organizational communication in oppositional terms. Indeed, there are important continuities between them in organizational communication studies, with many scholars combining both traditions (Cheney 1999).

A crucial difference between critical and postmodern approaches lies in their *respective critiques of modernity*. While critical approaches tend to offer an internal critique of modernity, endorsing some central Enlightenment ideals such as emancipation or progress, postmodern thought tends to take an external critique of modernity, sometimes rejecting it wholesale. Yet the relationship between postmodern thought and modernity is complex, and such complexity reflects the broad range of philosophical positions encapsulated in the term “postmodern.” For instance, Mumby (1997) argues that there are at least two major strands of postmodern thought: affirmative postmodernism and skeptical postmodernism (→ Postmodernism and Communication). The former maintains the viability of resistance, albeit fragmented, to dominant systems of power and is in some ways continuous with critical research in its belief in social transformation. In contrast, the latter eschews the possibility of any form of viable resistance to dominant control systems.

In addition to positioning their work as a critique of modernity, postmodern scholars in organizational communication examine postmodern organizational phenomena that arise from modernity itself. These include the replacement of structure with flux, the increasing fragmentation of labor, the emergence of bewildering arrays of difference and identity, the dominance of information and postcolonial economies, and so forth (Taylor 2005).

### **SOME TENETS OF POSTMODERN THOUGHT IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

First, postmodern approaches, drawing from Foucault, consider power in terms of diffuse and disciplinary networks, operating normatively and unobtrusively. Rather than power being conceptualized in terms of repression, it is thought of in terms of its ability to produce identities, languages, and realities. In particular, discourse is understood as the means through which power produces and reproduces (→ Organizational Discourse). Zoller's (2003) work, for example, examines occupational health and safety standards as a discourse that serves to produce a range of norms that construct work practices and identities.

Second, *embodied individual identities are seen as fragmented* (Tracy and Trethewey 2005). Postmodern thought is characterized by complex examinations of (the death of) individual subjectivity and the imposition of regulatory constructions upon categories such as pleasure and desire. Nadesan and Trethewey's (2000) analysis of women's popular success literature and the ways in which it constructs incomplete entrepreneurial identities among professional women exemplifies such research.

Third, issues of representation are *examined discursively*. Reality, for postmodern approaches, is a suspect category, never fully represented in discourse. Yet discourse and discursive formations remain our only means of accessing reality. Derrida's idea of "différance" points precisely to this: that which is referred to or signified in discourse is always deferred and set back. Postmodern approaches to organizational communication therefore often treat organizations themselves as discursive formations, a form of hyperreality, subsequently treating organizing and communicating as synonymous (Fairhurst & Putnam 2004).

Further, postmodern thought attempts to *move beyond the examinations of distinct economic, social, political, or cultural foundations* for explaining or understanding organizational life. Rather, postmodern scholars either consider their work as without foundations (the collapsing of categories such as economy or society) or as post-foundational proper (the construction of multiple foundations of organizational thought and practice).

Finally, postmodern scholars *theorize issues of resistance to disciplinary practices*. Here, resistance is conceived as a means of subverting or engaging in opposition to such practices. Research on resistance often characterizes organizations and communication as constituting systems of disciplinary practice, and examines fragmented and partial individual resistance in the context of such formations (Nadesan 1996).

### **POSTMODERN RESEARCH TRENDS IN ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION**

Organizational communication scholars emphasize some tenets of postmodern research over others, and in some respects the area is distinct from postmodern research in other

areas of communication inquiry. First, postmodern work in organizational communication studies often foregrounds questions of identity, resistance, and control, treating questions of reality, truth, and representation as larger, background issues. This is especially visible in studies of *concertive control* (Tompkins and Cheney 1985), which show how unobtrusive systems of normative power in organizations simultaneously shape individual identities and create possibilities for fragmented resistance (Larson & Tompkins 2005). Researchers have examined a wide range of phenomena under the rubric of concertive control, including social development programs, high-tech work teams, temporary labor, and fire-fighters (Cheney et al. 2003).

Second, postmodern research is friendly to *issues of voice and otherness*, emphasizing the study of difference, fragmentation, ethics, and politics (→ Organizations, Cultural Diversity in). Postmodern organizational communication studies is marked by a tendency toward inclusiveness, most clearly evidenced by emerging feminist scholarship on the subject (Ashcraft & Mumby 2003). While feminist thought itself is remarkably complex in its liberal, radical, Marxist, postmodern, and postcolonial manifestations (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), it contributes to postmodern thought in organizational communication studies the examination of gender as a key site of complex difference. Feminist thought and practice serves to deconstruct dominant organizational theory, enabling a constant engagement in the search for and the theorizing of difference. Such retheorizing is also evident in recent attempts, for example, to uncover the racial foundations of organizational communication thought (Ashcraft & Allen 2003). More recently, the emphasis on difference is turning into a productive engagement with issues of occupational and professional identity (Ashcraft 2006). Other organizational communication researchers have begun to examine organizational communication through postcolonial perspectives, which in turn are often informed by post-Foucauldian thought (Kurian & Munshi 2006). However, there is as yet no significant emerging corpus of research on postmodern difference informed by queer theory.

Third, postmodern approaches in organizational communication tend to be *more affirmative than skeptical*; this is evident in the emergence, since the early 1990s, of a significant body of work that examines various aspects of resistance. In many ways, the study of resistance can be said to constitute the central concern of postmodern organizational communication studies in the 1990s and the early part of this century. Such research often treats resistance in individualized, fragmented, and open-ended terms, although more recently scholars have also begun to call for attention to the more collective aspects of such resistance (Ganesh et al. 2005).

Finally, in the last few years postmodern approaches to organizational communication studies have begun to *play with the boundaries of what “counts” as organizational communication* itself. For instance, sparked by Cheney and Christensen’s (2000) work on how organizational identity issues coalesce both “internal” and “external” forms of communication, scholars have begun to examine the intersections between organizational communication and public relations scholarship (McKie et al. 2004).

## FUTURES

It is hard to predict any single direction for postmodern organizational communication research. However, it is safe to say that postmodern approaches will continue to explore

the dialectics of identity and difference, highlighting the contradictory and tension-laden character of organizational formations. Further, such approaches are likely to push collective understandings of the boundaries of organizational communication itself, as they continue to chart the shifting and dynamic interplay between internal and external forms of communication, and discursive and material realms. Finally, postmodern scholars are likely to continue working within the qualitative tradition, expanding their work to include both ethnographic and historical methods.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Dialogic Perspectives ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Modernity ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Organizations, Cultural Diversity in ▶ Postmodernism and Communication

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## Organizational Conflict

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Organizational conflict is a frequent occurrence in most work settings. Whether rooted in interactions with co-workers, supervisors, or customers, conflict is an inevitable part of task and relational communication. Conflict refers to incompatibilities or perceptions of diametrically opposed goals and values that occur in the process of organizing. It includes disagreements about ideas, negotiations to obtain scarce resources, informal complaints about work issues, objections to corporate policies, and formal grievances filed against an organization. Hence, conflict is a pervasive feature of organizational life, but one that is often ignored. Unresolved and poorly managed organizational conflicts are very costly and lead to lower job satisfaction, lost work time, high costs of litigation, and the loss of valuable employees.

### SOCIAL INTERACTION AND CONFLICT

Organizational conflict also entails social interactions between two or more interdependent parties that adjust to each other’s moves and countermoves. It includes what the parties say to each other (→ Language and Social Interaction), the → information that they exchange, their nonverbal behaviors (→ Facial Expressions; Gestures and Kinesics; Paralanguage), and the → meanings or interpretations of their messages. Moreover, in conflict interactions, parties react to each other’s influence attempts and anticipate each other’s actions.

Communication in conflict situations draws on sequences of statements and responses that develop into patterns. These patterns, then, can lead to repetitive cycles or conflict spirals. For example, if one party makes a threat and the other party responds with another threat, followed by a counter-threat, the conflict interaction begins to develop a competitive spiral that increases in intensity. Parties often have difficulty breaking a conflict spiral and avoiding these cyclical patterns in present and future interactions (Folger et al. 2005).

Because the parties in organizations are interdependent, they need each other to accomplish tasks and develop working relationships. Hence, they cannot easily walk away

from disagreements without the problems recurring at another point in time. Interdependence also means that each person has the potential to block the other party from attaining organizational goals. Therefore, parties must cooperate with each other to work together, yet they simultaneously compete with each other to attain their own goals; hence, parties mix both cooperation and competition to manage organizational conflicts (Putnam 2006).

This mix of cooperation and competition contributes to the tensions that parties feel in organizational conflicts. Because they are competing with each other, they may withhold information, feel distrustful, and fear exploitation. However, the need to cooperate pushes the parties to share information, develop trust, and avoid escalation. Folger et al. (2005) describe these tensions that result from cooperating and competing as a balancing act. Like tacking a sailboat that is moving upstream, parties need to capture the force and energy of the wind and steer the boat to avoid rampant escalation or easy exploitation. Parties need to confront the other disputant about the issues, develop mutual understanding of the underlying concerns, and avoid giving in prematurely.

In effect, conflict interaction develops into processes that move in either a destructive or a constructive direction. Destructive conflicts become inflexible over time; lead to uncontrolled escalation; and increase in the number of issues, parties, and costs that participants experience (Deutsch 1973). Disputants in destructive conflicts typically lose sight of their original goals, blur issues together, and aim to hurt or annihilate the other person. Thus, destructive conflicts often end up in a win-lose or lose-lose situation for both parties. In contrast, conflicts that move in a constructive direction lead to added flexibility, broaden participants' insights about situations, and foster personal development. Constructive conflict management focuses on discovering options to expand the pie and to produce a win-win situation for all parties. Because conflict can lead to destructive outcomes, most people avoid it or see it as a necessary evil. Organizational conflict, however, when handled in a constructive way, promotes change through preventing stagnation and enabling adaptability. It also functions as a safety valve, exposing problems and improving group cohesiveness.

To enhance effective conflict management, most people believe that parties must engage in rational decision-making and remove emotions from their interactions. Yet conflicts by definition are emotional (→ *Emotion and Communication in Organizations; Emotion*). Emotions are triggered because participants perceive an interruption in their plans or see a discrepancy between their goals and the likelihood of achieving them (Jones 2001). Emotions also enter into conflicts through seeing a course of action as good or bad, right or wrong. This value framing evokes frustration, anger, and contempt as well as feelings of pride and defensiveness. Emotions enter into conflicts because participants want to look good rather than be viewed as a wrongdoer. Thus, conflicts need to be approached with rational procedures, but with ones that recognize the personal and emotional involvement that employees have in work situations.

## **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

The role of communication in organizational conflict is clearly complex. Scholars have adopted different perspectives to examine the role of communication in organizational

conflicts, especially ones that treat communication as a variable, as an interaction process, as interpretations or meaning, or as a dialectic.

When scholars position communication as a *variable*, they combine it with other factors, like gender, culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts), or → cognitions, to test for the effects of interaction on conflict outcomes. Communication surfaces as a variable when it is treated as a type of media, a strategy or tactic, a style or orientation to conflict, or information that affects an individual's judgments about a situation (Wilson et al. 2001). As a process, communication becomes the *interaction patterns* of participants that unfold over time. This approach focuses on the combinations of actions and reactions and how they result in constructive or destructive outcomes.

Treating communication as *meaning* highlights the language that participants use, the stories that they tell, and the ways that they make sense of situations. For example, formal negotiation between labor and management signifies efforts to work out differences between parties who have competing interests. This routine has symbolic meanings for the parties who have a stake in this process.

Finally, scholars adopt a *dialectical perspective* to the study of communication and conflict (→ Dialogic Perspectives). A dialectic perspective focuses on the tensions that arise through the simultaneous connection of opposites, such as cooperating and competing, or withholding and sharing information. Communication helps parties manage the tensions that arise from the oppositions that are inevitable in organizational conflicts. In this approach, communication and organizational conflict define each other as disputes surface through both formal and informal means, become fused with public and private activities, and are worked out through rational and emotional interactions.

## **ARENAS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT**

These perspectives for studying communication and organizational conflict surface in research findings on conflict styles, communication media, negotiation and bargaining, work/life conflicts, and dispute system designs.

### **Conflict Styles**

Individuals typically approach an organizational conflict with a predisposition to manage the dispute in a particular way (→ Conflict Resolution). This orientation influences the verbal and nonverbal behaviors that members choose. In the 1960s and 1970s, Blake and Mouton (1964) identified five styles that are common ways of managing conflicts: problem-solving, competing, accommodating, avoiding, and compromise. With problem-solving, individuals confront a conflict directly through exploring causes and possible solutions. Competing relies on coercion or position power to pressure the other party to comply. Individuals who accommodate tend to smooth over a conflict and yield to others, while those who avoid withdraw from the scene or fail to confront. Compromise refers to meeting the other party half-way or settling for a 50–50 split. This approach is regarded as a half-hearted effort and often fails to meet the needs of both parties (Olekalns et al. 2007).

Choosing a conflict style depends on the importance of one's own and the other party's goals. Employees who develop a repertoire of approaches are typically more effective at

managing conflicts than are people who rely on only one or two styles. If both parties regard their relationship and their respective goals as important, they should use problem-solving or compromise. However, if organizational members need to reach a decision quickly or if only one party's goals are critical, competing, accommodating, or avoiding are appropriate. Managers who are optimistic about resolving a conflict typically begin with problem-solving and then shift to competing if subordinates do not comply. This combination of problem-solving and competing promotes the information search necessary for resolution and leads to the best substantive and relational outcomes (Olekalns et al. 2007). Choice of conflict style also influences levels of stress at work. Specifically, problem-solving and accommodating lower the amount of stress while the use of competing and avoiding may increase anxiety.

Research in the 1980s and 1990s revealed that the effects of using conflict styles differed across cultures. For example, managers from China, Korea, and the Middle East scored higher on avoiding as a preferred conflict style than did managers in the United States and Australia. However, younger Asian workers preferred problem-solving to manage organizational conflicts (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework; Communication Modes, Asian; Communication Modes, Western).

As a whole, research on conflict styles treats communication as a variable and relies heavily on questionnaires (→ Survey; Interview) that measure organizational members' preferences. These questionnaires are sometimes inaccurate predictors of actual behaviors in conflict situations and fail to recognize that preferences are fluid; hence, styles are only one indicator of verbal and nonverbal messages that parties use in organizational conflicts.

### **Conflict and Communication Media**

Another way that communication functions as a variable in organizational conflicts is the type of media or channel that parties use. "Communication media" refers to telephones, memos, computers, or face-to-face interactions. Early research in this arena revealed that disputants were more likely to cooperate when conflicts were managed through face-to-face interactions than when individuals used telephones or written messages. Recent studies on the use of emails reaffirmed these findings. In particular, disputants were more likely to use negative strategies, reduce information sharing, and receive lower joint profits in conflicts managed through email than in face-to-face interactions. Organizational conflicts handled via the computer led to fewer explanations, informal tones, and a tendency to bundle disparate arguments. The loss of social cues, such as vocal overtones or facial expressions in computer messages, may make it difficult to infer the other party's intentions (Olekalns et al. 2007). The effects of communication media on conflicts, however, are not direct or simple. Thus, if parties know each other well, interact regularly, or use multiple media to manage a conflict, these negative effects may not occur.

### **Communication and Negotiation Processes**

Research on negotiation process focuses on what bargainers say and how they respond to each other while searching for mutually satisfactory agreements (→ Negotiation and Bargaining). Negotiation is a form of conflict management in which parties exchange

offers and counteroffers in search of a settlement. In the 1980s and 1990s, researchers coded communication into categories of negotiation talk, such as a threats, offers, or information giving. Thus, this line of research treats communication as an interaction process.

Scholars have examined the relationship between categories of talk and distributive and integrative bargaining. Distributive bargaining treats organizational conflict as a fixed pie in which parties employ a win-lose approach to get the most from a pool of scarce resources. This approach is suitable when a person is buying a car or negotiating for the cost of a house. Integrative bargaining, in contrast, engages in a win-win process in which participants strive to meet the needs and interests of both parties. This model is most effective in workplace negotiations that depend on relationships and routine interactions. The two models, however, are tightly interrelated and any one negotiation is rarely a pure process. Bargainers who mix the two approaches rather than keep them distinct are more likely to reach agreements (Olekalns et al. 2007).

Research on communication and negotiation also reveals that bargainers reciprocate both cooperative and competitive tactics. That is, they match each other's tactics, such as arguments, threats, and demands, and they reciprocate offers and trade problem-solving tactics. To buffer against conflict spirals, bargainers use complementary tactics, such as following a demand with information giving or discussing procedures. Communication tactics also emerge at different stages in a negotiation. For example, bargainers who shift from → persuasion in the early stages of interaction to clarifying priorities later in the negotiation are likely to receive high joint gains.

Language use also aids in developing bargaining relationships. Specifically, studies find that negotiators who use first person pronouns, speak with short utterances, and avoid excessive interruptions convey closeness to the other party. Language use also facilitates making sense of a negotiation through the stories and symbols that parties share. For example, stories about outsiders as impeding the negotiation can unite opposing teams in reaching agreements.

### **Work/Life Conflicts**

Work/life conflict, also known as incompatibilities between work/family and home/work, refers to the tensions and role strain that occur from dividing time and energy to attend to both domains. Organizational expectations often compete with family and personal life for these scarce resources.

As a new arena of organizational conflict work, this topic embraces a dialectical perspective to examine the pushes and pulls between these domains. It also draws from the tensions between the public and the private domains, ones rooted in assumptions about the proper roles of men and women in society. These roles typically cast men in the work domain and expect women to attend to the private realm. In like manner, these assumptions perpetuate the myth of a separation between home and work, when, in actuality, the boundaries are very blurred. Effective management of work/family conflict improves organizational morale for both men and women (Kirby et al. 2006).

Research reveals that the critical factors for effective conflict management include having supervisors who recognize and are supportive of both domains, enacting and administering fair work/family policies, developing an organizational culture that fosters

flexibility, and having co-workers who value personal lives as well as organizational agendas. Organizations need to guard against sending mixed messages, such as having supportive policies but requiring excessive overtime and weekend work.

### **Designing Dispute Systems**

All organizations, large or small, have some type of conflict management system. Most of these systems are informal norms or sets of procedures for filing grievances. In the past 10 years, however, organizations have focused on designing formal dispute systems that are proactive and aimed at preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts (Lipsky & Seeber 2006). These systems contain steps and procedures for processing conflicts, build in alternative approaches for handling disputes, and integrate the system into the daily organizational routines. Alternatives for managing a conflict include hiring a neutral facilitator to lead discussions, voting on issues, assigning employees to serve as neutral third parties, or arranging for a mock trial with a jury of peers. Dispute systems typically offer conflict management training for employees, multiple points of entry for registering complaints, and approaches that focus on the needs and desires of parties rather than on who was right or wrong (Ury et al. 1988).

Communication plays a pivotal role in integrating dispute systems into the daily operations of organizations. The most effective systems are responsive, encourage employees to address conflicts at the lowest organizational level and as early as possible, and develop an organizational culture that supports dissent. Thus, employees feel able to voice complaints without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

### **NEW DIRECTIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Organizational conflicts differ from disputes in other arenas because they often reappear in different forms. Scarce resources and power differences often lead to fighting the same battles over and over again. Thus, scholars have moved away from resolving conflicts and, in turn, recommend ways to make decisions fairly and moving forward. When conflicts become opportunities to redefine situations, new directions emerge for managing conflicts. Dialogue is a form of communication that promotes attending to the other party's stance and creating new frames to locate conflict in alternative contexts. This approach differs from using the traditional options of conflict styles, negotiation, and dispute systems and brings multiple voices to the scene, transcends polarized positions, and develops new possibilities for meaning and action.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Conflict and Cooperation across the Life-Span ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Dialogic Perspectives ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotion and Communication in Organizations ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Information ▶ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Interview ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Meaning ▶ Negotiation and Bargaining ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Paralanguage ▶ Persuasion ▶ Relational Dialectics ▶ Survey

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## **Organizational Crises, Communication in**

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Advancing technology, global connectivity, and ethical lapses have resulted in an escalation in the frequency and intensity of organizational crises over the past two decades. Commensurate with the increase in crisis events, academic research in crisis communication has expanded, focusing predominantly on the role of communication in predicting, managing, and resolving crisis events (→ Disasters and Communication).

### **DEFINITION OF CRISIS**

Common types of crises are natural disasters, malevolence, product failure, human error, terrorism, financial loss, ethical violations, and widespread rumors. Hermann (1963) established that, to reach the level of a crisis, a negative event must have *three essential components*: surprise, threat, and short response time. *Surprise* indicates that the organization could not or did not prepare adequately for the magnitude of the crisis. *Threat* suggests that the organization's future is at risk. *Short response time* requires an

organization to take immediate action to avoid further intensification of the crisis. Coombs (1999, 2) addresses the interconnectivity of these three elements in his working definition: "A crisis can be defined as an event that is an unpredictable, major threat that can have a negative effect on the organization, industry, or stakeholders if handled improperly."

Crises evolve in *three general stages*: pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis (Seeger et al. 2003). In the pre-crisis stage, competent organizations scan their environment and attempt to prepare for potential crises. Warning signs typically occur in the *pre-crisis stage* that, if recognized by the organization, can be addressed to prevent a crisis. If the organization fails to recognize these warning signs, the situation may escalate into a crisis event. The *crisis stage* begins when a trigger event occurs. Typically, the trigger event makes apparent the warning signs that were not heeded during the pre-crisis state. In the case of a product failure, for example, reports of serious injury or extensive customer frustration are possible triggering events. During the crisis stage, the organization's reputation or survival is threatened. Communication during the crisis stage is hampered by the inherent uncertainty of the crisis and the public's demand for an expeditious response. The *post-crisis stage* begins when the danger of the crisis has passed. Post-crisis communication focuses on determining responsibility for the crisis, apologizing when appropriate, and taking corrective action to avoid similar crises in the future (Benoit 1995). Lawsuits and public outrage may cause the post-crisis stage to continue for years. For example, the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* crisis has yet to be fully resolved.

## EARLY RESEARCH

Early work in crisis communication focused primarily on *apologia*. Ware and Linkugel (1973) introduced apologetic rhetoric as a genre. The genre of apologetic discourse focused on the image-related crises of individuals and organizations. Ware and Linkugel identified *four strategies* commonly found in the rhetoric of self-defense: denial, differentiation, bolstering, and transcendence. Denial refers to a disavowal of guilt or responsibility. Claims of differentiation seek to separate the actions of the speaker from the general context of the accusations. Bolstering is an attempt by the speaker to distract the audience from the negative accusations by emphasizing admirable achievements of the individual or organization. Finally, speakers use transcendence to reinterpret the actions for which they are criticized in a broader and more positive context that is appealing to the audience.

Benoit (1995) extended Ware and Linkugel's work by developing a synthetic *typology of image restoration strategies* that is widely applied in the crisis communication literature. Benoit isolated four general categories for image restoration: denial, evading responsibility, reducing the offensiveness of the event, and corrective action. Denial involves either simply stating that the organization is not responsible or shifting the blame for a crisis event to a source outside the organization. When evading responsibility, organizations can claim that the crisis occurred because of provocation, defeasibility (an incapacity to respond), or an accident, or in spite of good intentions. Reducing the offensiveness of a crisis is achieved through bolstering the organization's reputation, minimizing the perceived impact of the crisis, differentiating between accusations and reality, making statements that transcend to a higher value, attacking the accuser, or offering compensation to victims. Corrective action requires organizations to make notable changes in their



management and operations to avoid future crises. Mortification occurs when the organization accepts responsibility and asks for forgiveness. Although apology has been a central focus of crisis communication research, the perspective is limited largely to considerations of reputation (→ Organizational Image).

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Research in crisis communication has expanded from apology to advance theoretical concepts focusing on the comprehension of complex crisis situations, organizational learning in the wake of crisis events, and the development of best practices for mitigating and managing crises.

Fully comprehending a crisis situation is difficult due to the inherent elements of a crisis: shock, urgency, and uncertainty. In the midst of a crisis, the available information is highly *equivocal*. This means that multiple interpretations can be made from the same data. The short response time is a constraint that denies individuals and organizations the luxury of an extended analysis or debate. In order to manage a crisis effectively, organizational leaders must make sense of the situation and respond quickly.

Weick's (1979, 1995) theory of → *sense-making*, applied extensively in the organizational communication literature, has emerged as a flexible and enlightening approach to understanding how individuals and organizations comprehend warning signs and crises. Weick (1988, 306) links sense-making to crisis communication through what he calls "the enactment perspective." Weick explains, "People often do not know what 'appropriate action' is until they take some action and see what happens." Weick contends that, during crisis situations, individuals are limited in their sense-making by their commitment, capacity, and expectations. Commitment refers to the tenacity with which individuals hold to established procedures or opinions. Excessive commitment may result in defending established ideas and procedures even after they have contributed to a crisis. Capacity is the degree of influence individuals perceive they have on their environment. Limitations on capacity simultaneously diminish an individual's perceived ability and willingness to act in crisis situations. Finally, the expectations individuals have about vulnerability and priorities influence crisis planning and willingness to respond. Prior to a crisis, inappropriate commitment, limited capacity, and disempowering expectations can impede an organization's ability to recognize signs that a crisis is imminent. During a crisis, these factors can slow the comprehension process. Weick's sense-making approach has been applied to crises such as Union Carbide's deadly gas leak in Bhopal, India; natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and fires; and the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

*Chaos theory* serves as a means for viewing crises from a broad systematic perspective (Murphy 1996). Traditional notions of causality are replaced by an attempt to understand general trends and patterns across a system using broad scales and wide time frames. Crisis communication scholars have applied chaos theory to observe how complex systems are dismantled by crisis and reconstituted through post-crisis communication. Crises are initiated by drastic system changes referred to as *bifurcation* points. Order re-emerges through the self-organization process. Communication is a central feature in the *self-organization* process. Through self-organization, hierarchical structures, policies,

procedures, and interpretations are established (Seeger et al. 2003). In many cases, self-organization results in a new and improved system that is less vulnerable to the form of bifurcation that instigated the crisis and subsequent evolution of the system. Chaos theory is particularly relevant to crisis communication in catastrophic natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, and tsunamis.

Ideally, organizations learn from mistakes made prior to or during the crises. Sitkin (1996) argues that failure is actually essential to the organizational learning process (→ Learning Organizations). Crises, which constitute a major failure, can inspire and validate *positive change* in organizations. Resilient organizations learn to take corrective action following a crisis so that similar crises do not reoccur. These corrective actions are maintained through organizational memory. The loss of this memory through employee turnover or a changing organizational culture can increase the organization's vulnerability to crisis. Organizations need not experience crises directly in order to learn from them. *Vicarious learning* occurs when organizations observe the crisis responses of similar organizations. Organizations can increase their resilience by adopting successful strategies from comparable organizations that have experienced crisis. Elements of organizational learning appear in crisis communication studies where corrective action is a featured element.

In the best circumstances, organizations emerge from crisis with a sense of *renewal* (Ulmer et al. 2007). Renewal occurs when the organization has a fresh sense of purpose and a renewed commitment to its stakeholders. Leaders in the organization communicate in ways that embrace a new normal, and employees feel a commitment to rebuild, move beyond the crisis, and rededicate themselves to serving their stakeholders. Renewal is prevalent in crisis communication research that focuses on communication ethics. Malden Mills' recovery from a devastating fire and Cantor Fitzgerald's response to losing 658 employees in the World Trade Center on September 11 are examples of crisis studies focusing on renewal.

Three *primary methods* are used to conduct crisis communication research. Case studies comprise the most common research method (→ Case Studies). Most frequently, theoretical frameworks are evaluated on the basis of outcomes of actual crises (Hearit 2006). Survey research methods are also prevalent in crisis communication research (→ Survey). Victims of crises, first responders, or organizational employees who have faced a crisis are often surveyed to build a better understanding of the impact crisis has on individuals in a variety of positions (Greenberg 2002). Finally, message testing research is often done prior to a crisis in hopes of predetermining effective communication strategies (Heath 1997; Reynolds 2002; → Test Theory). Crisis planners share a variety of message types with subjects in an attempt to predict how various messages would be interpreted in an actual crisis situation.

Crisis communication research has expanded and evolved considerably since the initial work in apologia. The increasing complexity of organizations and the expanding threat of terrorism portend an increase in the frequency and intensity of crises in the future. Crisis communication scholars must continue to adapt their theoretical concepts and research methods to match this evolving threat. The considerable expansion of crisis communication theory in the past three decades suggests that scholars will succeed in meeting this challenge.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Case Studies ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Learning Organizations ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Public Relations: Media Influence ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Survey ▶ Test Theory

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## **Organizational Culture**

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Organizational culture is the “set(s) of artifacts, values, and assumptions that emerge from the interactions of organizational members” (Keyton 2005, 1). These interactions create a social order or a communication construction of the organization. Thus, symbols, messages, and meaning create a continuous communication performance at work (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Meaning). This is why it is frequently stated that an organization *is* culture rather than an organization *has* a culture (Smircich 1983). While the popular view of organizational culture is often that it is comprised of organizational members’ shared assumptions, communication scholars have demonstrated that

multiple shared patterns of organizational artifacts, values, and assumptions exist and are constantly being created and recreated through member interactions (→ Organizational Communication).

### ARTIFACTS, VALUES, AND ASSUMPTIONS

Artifacts are visible or tangible in themselves or in their manifestations, such as *norms* about politeness or dress, organizational customs such as new employee orientation, or physical representations such as organizational logos. Artifacts are easy to observe, but can be difficult to decipher. For example, an organizational logo can be easily identified, but why or how the logo or artifact represents the organization is not always direct or clear. Because an analysis of an organization's artifacts is only partial, a valid interpretation of an organization's culture cannot be constructed from artifacts alone (Schein 1992).

*Values* shared by organizational members and manifested in their behavior are also a component of organizational culture. Values are strategies, goals, principles, or qualities that are considered ideal or desirable, and, as a result, create guidelines for organizational behavior. Organizational cultures are comprised of many values that are interdependent; one set may support one another (e.g., values for independence and personal achievement), whereas others again may conflict (e.g., values for autonomy and teamwork). Values that are shared inevitably become transformed into *assumptions*, taken-for-granted beliefs that are so deeply entrenched that organizational members no longer discuss them. These tacit assumptions are subtle, abstract, and implicit, making them difficult to articulate. Despite these features, basic assumptions are acted on with such little variation that organizational members consider any other action inconceivable.

Organizational members seldom talk directly about artifacts, values, and assumptions. Rather, the meaning held in these elements is revealed through day-to-day conversations with other organizational insiders and outsiders. Organizational culture is both created and revealed through the creation and enactment of rites, rituals, and ceremonies; the practice of norms or procedures; the use of specialized language; and the telling of stories or use of metaphors. No one artifact, value, or assumption can create or represent an organization's culture. Rather, organizational culture emerges from the complex interplay of these elements in the organizational communication of all members, all at levels, in all job functions. As a result, culture is nearly impossible to see in its totality.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Using a communicative perspective, organizational culture has *five important characteristics* (Keyton 2005). *First*, organizational culture is inextricably linked to organizational members, who participate in the organization symbolically and socially construct and sustain the culture. *Second*, organizational culture is dynamic, not static. *Third*, organizational culture consists of competing assumptions and values, as organizational members create sub-cultures with both overlapping and distinguishing elements. *Fourth*, organizational culture is emotionally charged, as meanings associated with artifacts, values, and assumptions are deeply connected to the feelings and relationships of organizational members. *Finally*, organizational culture operates in both the foreground and background

of organizational life. Organizational members make sense of their current interactions (the foreground) on the basis of their understanding of the existing culture (the background). This cycle of culture creation is continuous and never complete. As a result, organizational culture is a representation of the social order of an organization (→ Control and Authority in Organizations).

### **Relationships of Sub-Cultures to Culture**

A consensus view of organizational culture is based on the congruence of assumptions, values, and artifacts jointly held or shared by organizational members. The more unity there is among members, the more consensual the view of organizational culture. Often referred to as integration, mutually consistent interpretations are abundant and so deeply held that little variation occurs. Generally, a strong leader shapes this integration by initially generating the value and beliefs and then strategically publicizing and propagating them.

Six factors *limit* the degree to which a *consensual view of culture* can be achieved. Employees are often members of occupational or professional communities and bring pre-existing shared values and practices into the workplace. Employees also belong to specific functions (e.g., manufacturing, human resources, engineering, sales) or work groups. Because the work of these groups is central to the organizational mission, these individuals are likely to bond together as they work to control their collective destiny in the organization. Hierarchy can also create sub-cultures. Organizational members at the same level will share similar organizational treatment, and thus sub-cultures develop. Sub-cultures can also develop based on the social needs and interpersonal interactions among employees across work groups or work functions. When groups exist in an organization they distinguish themselves from members of others groups. This ingroup/outgroup distinction often results in intergroup conflict that strengthens differences between groups and the sub-culture of each. Finally, all employees have individual value systems, and core values are often difficult to change. Thus, it is common for sub-cultures with different sets of artifacts, values, and assumptions to develop in organizations.

Regardless of their basis, sub-cultures are revealed in the *language patterns* of organizational members as they segment themselves into groups. Sub-cultures may be distinguished by clear and systematic differences. This type of segmentation, known as differentiation, reveals oppositional thinking, with each sub-culture concerned about the power it holds relative to others. Within each sub-culture, there is consistency and clarity that makes it distinct from others. In contrast, fragmentation of organizational culture occurs when ambiguity is prevalent. Here, organizational members are part of shifting coalitions, forming and reforming on the basis of shared identities, issues, and circumstances. Sub-cultures appear briefly, but with boundaries that are permeable and fluctuating, making it difficult for a sub-culture to sustain itself. Fragmentation tensions are irreconcilable, and are often described as ironies, paradoxes, or contradictions, as employees may belong to sub-cultures that are in agreement on some issues and simultaneously belong to other sub-cultures that are not. In this view, ambiguity is a normal and persistent organizing condition.

The broadest view of cultural consensus and division is that integration, differentiation, and fragmentation *coexist*. Using all three perspectives allows consistency, distinction, and ambiguity to be revealed as important characteristics of an organization's culture. One perspective is not more correct than another, as each offers an incomplete view of an organization's culture, and all three are needed to offer a multifocal view. Described as a nexus approach to the study of organizational culture (Martin 2002), this serves as a resource for communication researchers. However, the ontological and analytical claims associated with it have been challenged (Taylor et al. 2006).

## HISTORY

Viewing organizations through a cultural lens – rather than as legal entities, hierarchies, or functional operations – reveals the rich symbolism that exists in all aspects of organizational life. A cultural lens also shifts the focus in organizational studies from that of managers, leaders, and executives to all organizational members (→ Leadership in Organizations). Through a cultural perspective, researchers can explore an organization's way of life, how that reality is created and interpreted by various organizational stakeholders, and the influence of those interpretations on organizational activities.

From early anthropological studies, culture was viewed holistically and was synonymous with societal boundaries. More recently, the study of culture has focused on meaning systems that distinguish members of one group or category from another. The primary contribution of anthropologists to the study of culture has been their integrated and detailed accounts of cultural phenomena. The study of organizational culture also draws from sociologists who focus on sub-groups within a society (e.g., blue-collar workers, working mothers) and the ideas, themes and values they express.

Although not labeled as organizational culture, Elton Mayo's human relations studies (Mayo 1975; 1st pub. 1949) concluded that informal interactions among organizational members created expectations and constraints that could not be otherwise explained, and that beliefs, attitudes, and values brought by employees into the work setting influence how the employees view themselves, the organization, and their roles. By 1969, organizational culture was inextricably linked to organizational change, as management scholar Warren Bennis proclaimed that the only way to change an organization was to change its culture.

Since the 1970s, communication scholars have worked to explore and explain the ways in which messages, meanings, and symbols are central to an organization's existence. This early symbolic interaction approach has been replaced with an interpretive approach that focuses on the complexity of meanings in social interaction, treats organizations as social constructions, and views the processes of organizing and communicating as inextricably linked (→ Organizational Discourse). Most recently, a critical communication perspective of organizational culture (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches) has generated insight about cultural processes by revealing the complexity of the work environment, the variety of stakeholders, and their competing interests and power relationships (Deetz 1988).

Communication scholars have contributed to the growth and development of the study of organizational culture in five ways (Eisenberg & Riley 2001). First, a communication perspective has demonstrated the symbolic nature of day-to-day conversations and

routine practices, emphasizing that culture is present in all organizational communication. Second, a communication perspective emphasizes the way in which both interpretation and action exist within communication practice. Third, the communication perspective on organizational culture recognizes how societal patterns and norms facilitate or constrain the practices of individuals within an organizational culture. Fourth, the communication perspective honors a variety of researcher–organization relationships. The researcher can be within, close to, or more removed from the culture being studied. Finally, the communication perspective acknowledges all motives as legitimate for the study of organizational culture. These five contributions underscore the role of the study of organizational culture in moving the broader study of organizations, particularly, organizational communication, from a rational, objective, and abstract perspective to one that produces deep, rich, and realistic understandings of organizations and the experiences of people within them.

### **APPROACHES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE RESEARCH**

Communication scholars have taken several approaches to the study of organizational culture. Four are described here: symbolic performance, narrative, textual reproduction, and power and political.

The *symbolic performance perspective* examines the way in which a set of artifacts, values, and assumptions reveals cultural meaning as well as how the performance itself is developed, maintained, and changed. Organizational performances have four characteristics (Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo 1982, 1983). They are interactive and contextual, as organizational members create and participate in them together situated within a larger set of organizational events. Organizational performances are episodic – each with a beginning and ending – creating regularity and a routine for the flow of work, as well as a framework for interpretation. Finally, organizational performances are improvisational. While an organization's culture can provide some structure for a performance, a performance is never fully scripted. Witmer's (1997) study of Alcoholics Anonymous illustrates these characteristics.

A second approach sees organizational culture as a *narrative reproduction*. A narrative is a story, and a common way for people to make sense of their organizational experiences (Boje 1991; → Storytelling and Narration). Because organizational stories are about particular actors and particular events, they serve as artifacts to provide information about an organization's values and assumptions. The telling and retelling of a narrative reproduces the culture and provides insight into what the culture values. Stories also reveal logics or rationales for understanding the complexity of organizational life, and create bonds that hold organizational members together. If others in the organization tell the same or a similar story, the narrative will gain legitimacy and be seen as the way things really are. Legitimacy in this case is not located in *truth*, but depends on the plausibility of the story. Most important, stories are never neutral, and often represent the interests of dominant groups. Because stories reinforce what is and what is not valued, they both produce and reproduce the organization's power structure. As an example, Zoller's (2003) interviews with employees at an automobile manufacturing plant demonstrate how stories reveal their values and assumptions and the way in which those values and assumptions align with those of management.

A third approach conceptualizes organizational culture as *textual reproduction*. Written texts, such as formal communication in the form of newsletters, mission statements, procedures, handbooks, reports, and slogans, are widely used and available in organizations, providing a fixed view of organizational culture (→ Text and Intertextuality). Typically these texts represent managerial perspectives because of their permanence and ability to be controlled. Textual reproductions of organizational culture are especially useful for exploring espoused versus enacted elements of culture. Formal documentation represents the espoused view and explains the culture from a managerial perspective. Alternately, informal texts, such as emails or blogs, are better representations of the enacted culture. An example of the latter is Gossett and Kilker's (2006) examination of a counter-institutional (i.e., not organizationally sponsored) website that reveals employees' and former employees' alternative interpretations of organizational events.

In a fourth view, *power and politics* are manifested in many ways in organizations; four are central to the study of organizational culture (Ragins 1995). Power can exist in an organizational member's ability or others' perceptions of that ability. Power can exist in interactions among organizational members. Structural or legitimate power can be derived from the design of the organization, most commonly based on a job title or job function. Finally, socio-political power – such as racism, sexism, and classism – can be imported from an organization's larger social environment. Thus, it is impossible for an organization's culture not to carry symbolic meaning about who is powerful and who is not. For example, Smith and Keyton's (2001) study of the production of a television sitcom demonstrates how interactions among organizational members both affirm and contest hierarchal power.

The *critical perspective* views the communication of an organization as an index of its ideology. Critical cultural studies explore forms of organizational domination and control as well as the ways organizational members perpetuate or resist these forms. Organizations are sites of hierarchy, dominance, and power, and, as a result, organizational members have varying degrees of power and status, and of control over message creation and message meaning. Powerful organizational members, when they can get others to accept their views about the organization, are in a position to create the normative practices of the organization's culture. Moreover, these members can establish a culture that is more favorable to them and less favorable to the less powerful. While norms and values are sometimes obvious, this imbalance can also be presented in such a way that less powerful organizational members accept the views and values of the powerful without question.

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

The value of a communicative approach to the study of organizational culture rests within a researcher's intimate knowledge of an organization's interaction environment. While early functional and prescriptive studies were largely based on → surveys or questionnaires (→ Interview), the interpretive and critical perspectives rely on participation → observation, group and individual interviews (→ Interview, Qualitative), ethnography (→ Ethnography of Communication), and textual analysis.

These methods allow the researcher to capture informal and formal textual artifacts of the organization, and organizational members' interactions as they occur as well as their



reactions to the communication of others. These methods also allow a researcher to examine the texts, interactions, and interpretations of communication within the context in which they were generated.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Leadership in Organizations ▶ Meaning ▶ Observation ▶ Organizational Assimilation ▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Organizational Metaphors ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Survey ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Organizational Discourse

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Organizational discourse is a burgeoning area of study featuring the role of discourse and communication in organizational dynamics. While its rhetorical and literary roots date back to the ancient Greeks (→ Rhetorical Studies), a more recent impetus has been the analysis of professional talk in institutional settings, beginning in the 1970s, and the role of slogans, creeds, jokes, and stories as reflections of organizational culture in the 1980s (Putnam & Fairhurst 2001). From these early beginnings, organizational discourse analyses have taken on a number of forms.

## DEFINITIONS

Discourse and communication are not synonymous; communication is conceived as a related but broader construct that goes beyond the language and meaning-centered concerns of organizational discourse. Although discourse can be defined in a number of ways, Alvesson and Kärreman (2000) generally distinguish between *discourse* and *Discourse*. Specifically, *discourse* is the study of talk and text in social practices. *Talk-in-interaction* represents sociality, the processes of messaging and conversing. It is the “doing” of organizational discourse, while *text* is the “done” or material representation of discourse in spoken or recorded forms. Texts can include both written documentation and verbal routines, such as performance appraisals and job interviews that are reconfigured through continued use. The details of language and interaction are the central concerns of *discourse* analysts. Following Michel Foucault, *Discourse* refers to general and enduring systems of thought rooted in history and culture. Power/knowledge relations are established in culturally standardized Discourses, formed by constellations of ideas, logics, assumptions, and language that come to constitute objects and subjects. These Discourses order and naturalize the world in particular ways and serve as linguistic resources for communicating actors. *Discourse* analysts interpret Discourses either as standalone systems of thought or the ways in which these systems of thought become dialogically grounded in social practices (→ Discourse Analysis).

## DISCOURSE–ORGANIZATION RELATIONSHIP

Organizational discourse analysts often refer to organizations as discursive constructions because the combined forces of *discourse* and *Discourse* are the foundations upon which organizational life is built. However, there are at least three interpretations of the discourse–organization relationship (Fairhurst and Putnam 2004). When the organization is cast as an *already formed object*, the organization exists prior to discourse, remains stable over time, and has specific features or components that shape language use. In this tradition, language can be an interesting artifact, reflect the boundaries of one or more speech communities, or become a product of some feature of the organization. When the organization

is depicted in a *state of becoming*, discourse exists prior to the organization because the properties of language and interaction produce organizing. For example, language use can signal relational differences, align group members into categories, legitimate actions, and enact asymmetric or distributed power relationships. This tradition explicitly rejects language as artifact to focus on the ways in which discourse constitutes micro- and macro-aspects of organizations. Finally, in the *grounded-in-action* relationship, action and structure are mutually constitutive. Drawing from → ethnomethodology, → structuration theory, or actor-network theory, the organization is anchored at the level of discursive practice. Rejecting the macro–micro distinction for organizational processes, analysts instead emphasize the ways in which structure is found in action, history is captured in the present, and the global exists within the local; for example, see concepts such as lamination (Boden 1994), structuration (Giddens 1984), and association (Latour, 1996). Because the object, becoming, and grounded-in-action perspectives all possess a certain veridicality, holding them in tension with one another can produce more complex understandings of the discursive foundations of organizational life.

### TYPES OF ORGANIZATIONAL DISCOURSE ANALYSES

There are a number of typologies for organizational discourse. This discussion follows Putnam and Fairhurst (2001) with a few exceptions. Accordingly, there are eight types of organizational discourse analyses: sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, cognitive linguistics (including discursive psychology), pragmatics (including speech acts, ethnography of speaking, and interaction analysis), semiotics, literary and rhetorical analyses, critical discourse analysis, and postmodern discourse analysis.

In *sociolinguistics*, language is a product of social categories such as class, education, or geographic differences; the analytic focus is on the meanings and linguistic repertoires of these social groupings. In the organizational arena, sociolinguistics examines language differences among blue- and white-collar workers, geographically separate units, occupations, roles, or sub-cultures. Language and lexicons are the artifacts of organizations whose structures are static forms rather than dynamic processes (→ Linguistics; Interactional Sociolinguistics).

*Conversation analysis* focuses on the detailed organization of talk-in-interaction (→ Conversation Analysis). Its goal is to discern how people use various interactional methods and procedures to produce their activities and make sense of their worlds. Conversation analysis captures the inherent richness and complexity of social interaction by analyzing turn-taking, membership categorization, adjacency pairs, insertion sequences, accounting practices, topic shifts, conversational openings and closings, agenda setting, decision-making, and many other forms of talk-in-interaction. The interpretive practices and competencies of actors found through conversation analysis also reveal how the organization is literally “talked into being” (Heritage 1997). As such, the macro–micro distinction dissolves because of an emphasis on social practices, the primacy of text, and the absence of researcher-imposed “levels” of analysis (Boden 1994).

*Cognitive linguistics* is the study of discourse processes that arise from mental processes such as → scripts, → schemas, and frames. It includes *discursive psychology*, in which psychological phenomena such as attitudes, categories, scripts, memory, attributions, and

so on are examined for the ways in which they surface in talk-in-interaction. For example, while scripts refer to mental representations or stereotyped sets of events, *script formulations* occur in ordinary conversation as verbalized event sequences. Scripts formulated in talk can be depicted as more or less routine; script violation or *breach* occurs in conversation when some problematic event is contrasted with a routine. Both script and breach formulations are rhetorical moves deployed for some interactional goal (Edwards 1997). In organizational discourse studies, script and breach formulations function as linguistic resources in organizational change, performance management, or organizational conflict. Other forms of cognitive linguistics include *cognitive mapping* of shared interpretations through linguistic phrasing, and *semantic networks* emerging from similar interpretations of organizational concepts and words.

*Pragmatics* emphasizes language in context (→ Linguistic Pragmatics) and forms three distinct schools. First, *speech acts* treat language as action, emphasizing the actions performed, such as promising, requesting, baptizing, and so on. Organizational studies focus on politeness, accounting, and common speech acts such as directives, declaratives, expressives, and so on as well as their ordering within specific episodes of interaction (*speech act schematics*). Second, *ethnography of speaking* focuses on actors' expectations and typifications associated with the context and its routines. Organizational studies emphasize the language of specific speech communities and communication rules, conversational performances of organizational roles, storytelling performances, and symbolic interaction through negotiated social orders. Finally, *interaction analysis* focuses on the coding of behavior according to a predefined set of codes. It includes a host of quantitative approaches that draw from studies of message functions and language structures to assess the frequency and types of coded verbal behavior in organizational interaction. Interaction analysis highlights the sequences and stages of interaction, their redundancy and predictability, and the link between interactional structures and the organizational context.

*Semiotics* examines the interpretive role played by → signs and sign systems (→ Semiotics). It includes nonverbal codes, images, actions, and objects, in addition to discourse. The analytic focus may be individual signs or sign systems, termed codes. Two semiotic schools have emerged in the organizational discourse literature: *structuralism*, which casts language as a system of differences in which deep structures of meaning and control produce surface-level signs and sign systems; and *semiosis*, which emphasizes the interplay of meaning between signs, referents in the material world, and mental images, such as that found between organizational identity, corporate image, and marketing communications.

*Literary and rhetorical analyses* focus on the interrelationships between language, → meaning, function, and context. *Literary* approaches focus on classic tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony, but also other rhetorical forms including alliteration, icons, euphemisms, and clichés. *Rhetorical* approaches draw from classical methods of argumentation to analyze corporate messages and advocacy in crises, organizational decision-making, identification, and conflict management. Analysts studying literary and rhetorical forms infer meanings through discursive subtexts rooted in organizational conditions and contexts.

*Critical discourse analysis* examines the often opaque relationships between discursive practices, events, and texts and wider social structures and processes to discern the hidden

influence of ideology, hegemony, and struggles over power (Fairclough 1995; → Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches; Critical Theory). Discourse functions strictly to produce, maintain, or resist systems of power and control; thus, analysts critique organizational narratives for their political bias and organizational rituals, routines, and texts for privileged interests. As power relationships are actively constructed through the routines of everyday organizational life, ironies, contradictions, and paradoxes emerge, revealing struggles over power and opportunities to resist.

*Postmodern discourse analysis* also focuses on power and resistance, but analysts reject grand narratives, challenge representationalist views of language, and focus on the instability of meaning (→ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches; Postmodernism and Communication). Foucault's Discourse and disciplinary power are central to this perspective. However, many analysts add to Foucault's work by adopting poststructuralist moorings, which cast Discourses of power as attempting to fix meanings in a struggle where several competing Discourses are always in play. In the organizational context, masculine, feminine, entrepreneurial, and managerialist Discourses are frequent examples. Discussions of agency are cast amid the fragmentation and ambiguity or irony and paradox wrought by multiple Discourses. In postmodern discourse analyses, text is also viewed as a metaphor for organizing; thus analysts privilege intertextuality or the ways a given text intersects with or embodies other texts. Deconstruction and exploring text–conversation tensions pose two analytic options.

## **CRITICISMS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Generally speaking, organizational discourse analysts argue for the social construction of reality through discourse and communication. Several discursive approaches have been charged with *relativism*, such that reality is just what actors define it to be; and *discoursism*, in which the organization collapses into discourse (Conrad 2004; Gergen 2003). In both instances, the putative lack of attention to pre-existing institutional forms and material conditions results in an exaggerated sense of agency and an insufficient account of coercive structural forces (Reed 2000), or how acts of organizing beget the complex form “organization” (McPhee & Zaugg 2000). For a critique of specific organizational discourse analyses, see Putnam and Fairhurst (2001).

Organizational discourse analysts increasingly look for ways to tackle the “levels” issue associated with *discourse* and *Discourse*. For example, Fairclough's (1995) critical discourse analysis preserves the macro–micro distinction between the two; Taylor and Van Every (2000) theorize hybrid agency between human and nonhuman objects (including texts), the latter of which carries the institutional traces of past organizing; and discursive psychologists like Wetherell (1998) reformulate *Discourse* as the display of one or more linguistic repertoires in *discourse*. Organizational discourse analysts increasingly apply a complex levels approach to specific phenomena such as leadership (Fairhurst 2007), organizational succession and board meetings (Cooren 2007), and the self (Holstein & Gubrium 2000). Finally, as organizational discourse analyses continue to open up the processes of social construction through more meaning-centered models of communication, new implications for praxis are emerging (Barge & Craig in press).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Interaction ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Schemas ▶ Scripts ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Structuration Theory

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# Organizational Ethics

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Organizational ethics includes the consideration of a wide number of issues of rights, responsibilities, values, and proper conduct in contemporary organizations and in organizations' relations to host societies. Conceptions and studies of organizational ethics have focused on both internal practices and social consequences and have been descriptive as well as normative. Unsurprisingly, questions of organizational ethics are especially prominent today in the wake of widespread scandals such as those at Enron and WorldCom and the almost incredible global social, economic, and environmental effects of large organizations. While many organizational ethics studies still focus on individual behavior and issues primarily linked to compliance with organizational policies, communication scholars have become increasingly interested in ethical issues focusing on values, governance, and → corporate social responsibility, drawing on concepts developed from critical communication theory (Deetz, in press; → *Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches*).

Organizational ethics discussions focusing on descriptions of internal organizational practices and individual conduct (often also called business ethics) have emphasized accountability, employee rights and responsibilities, and dissent and whistle-blowing (e.g. Seeger 1997; → *Dissent in Organizations*). Most research has described various *business ethics programs*, formal codes of ethics, what division houses the ethics program within an organization, ethics violation reporting, how culture influences ethics, and the role of leadership with respect to ethics. These studies investigate ethical decision-making, moral recognition, judgment, cognitive moral development, religion, and the role of emotion (Treviño and Weaver 2003). Most studies have used fairly simple self-report and behavioral measures. Jackell's (1988) work is an important exception in his ethnography of moral decision-making in organizations. His in-depth analysis provided an understanding of concrete moral dilemmas confronted by employees and the complex processes of making choices in actual work contexts.

A second line of work has been more *philosophical and normative*. Following MacIntyre's (1984) influential work, organizational managers were said to have developed a "character" problem. Character here is not meant in a sense of individual psychological lack, but as arising from the decline of a robust social discussion of values and shared guiding principles. Managerial "stewardship" was described as giving way to a rather raw instrumental reasoning process in which ethics was relegated to a private emotive realm and weakened. Value conflicts and debates gave way to calculations in presumed value-free representational codes, and procedural values like due process replaced end-state values based on conceptions of quality of life and morality. These works tried to reinstate value discussion in the organizational context. The complexity of multiple communities with multiple standards makes such discussions important but difficult.

A third line of work argues that the primary issue is neither individual conduct nor shared values but instead *organizational governance and decision-making processes* (→ *Decision-Making Processes in Organizations*). In this work, the consequences for the

environment and larger society are central, and issues of ethics and social responsibility merge. The concern ranges through important issues such as human rights, environmental protection, equal opportunity and pay for women and various disadvantaged minorities, and fair competition. Such broad issues are instantiated in activities such as using prisoners as workers, moving operations to environmentally less restrictive communities, offering and taking bribes and payoffs, creating environmentally unsound or wasteful products, closing economically viable plants in takeover and merger games, growing income disparity, declining social safety-nets, malingering harassment, maintaining unnecessary and unhealthy controls on employees, and advocating consumerism.

From such a perspective governance and decision-making processes are flawed from an ethical standpoint because, while the processes of organizational decision-making are heavily value-laden, they do not include a sufficiently representative set of values to make responsible decisions for the community or to make the most productive use of resources. The call for greater responsibility is less the application of a new social standard than a transformation of organizations to allow more decisional voices and value debate and negotiation (→ Participative Processes in Organizations). Ethics and responsibility rest in more free and open communication rather than in moral standards. Most of this work has focused on reforming → stakeholder theory by providing a richer conception and more robust applications drawing from critical communication theory, especially following the work of → Jürgen Habermas (Kuhn & Deetz in press; Palazzo & Scherer 2006; Scherer et al. 2006).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ▶ Dissent in Organizations ▶ Environmental Communication ▶ Feminist Communication Ethics ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Participative Processes in Organizations ▶ Stakeholder Theory

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# Organizational Identification

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For organizational communication scholars, identification provides a key to understanding organizing practices, the individual–organization relationship, and the construction of selves. “Organizational identification” refers to the creation, maintenance, and modification of linkages between individuals and organizations, whereas “identity” refers to the conception of the self that defines the person’s position in the social order (Cheney 1983a; Scott et al. 1998). Identification scholarship builds on a conception of personal identity in which we create selves, as well as distinctions from others, in social settings comprised by a variety of social groups. Identification, then, is the process by which an identity is constructed, but the linkages actors form are simultaneously guided by their pre-existing personal and social identities.

Conceptions of these individual–organization “linkages” mark an important distinction between *three versions of identification theorizing*. A first view emphasizes *cognitive processes*, drawing on → social identity theory and its claims that individuals seek to attain distinctiveness for their mental representations of ingroups and competing groups. In this perspective, identification is the perception of belongingness to a group, and it occurs when one integrates beliefs, attitudes, and emotions regarding an organization into one’s own identity (Pratt 1998).

The majority of organizational communication research on identification falls into a second perspective, one that foregrounds *communicative practice* in understanding individual–organization linkages. This approach draws on the dramatism of Kenneth Burke (1950), → symbolic interactionism, and → structuration theory to assert that one’s personal identity is made up of the myriad identifications with groups comprising social life and that identities tend to be “grouped” such that some identifications logically occur together (Scott et al. 1998; Kuhn 2006). Identification here is fundamentally communicative because the individual–organization linkages are manifest both in organizational activity and in the messages proffered by organizations.

A third approach sees identification as *subject to organizational discourses*, both within and beyond a given organization, which place us in “subject positions” that regulate thought and action. Usually drawing from poststructuralist theorizing, this third view provides an alternative communicative conception of identification that emphasizes the active power of discourse in comprising individuals’ identities (→ Organizational Discourse; Identities and Discourse).

Running across these perspectives is the assumption that individuals identify with organizations because doing so is necessary in the construction of a personal identity. Burke, for instance, argued that contemporary social life creates new divisions between people, and that individuals secure a sense of self against these divisions through attachments with various social groups. We identify with organizations because we recognize some congruence between our personal identities (or perhaps our desired selves) and the identities projected by organizations. In other words, organizations – and particularly workplaces – are attractive *resources for identification* because individuals can derive

several benefits through identification, including satisfying desires for affiliation with others, alleviating feelings of uncertainty or vulnerability, raising aspirations about performance, developing a positive self-image, and providing a sense of purpose.

Organizations benefit from member identification as well. Highly identified workers display more motivation, satisfaction, and pro-social behaviors; they are superior performers who are less likely to leave (Cheney 1983b; Elsbach 1999). More generally, highly identified members place the concerns of the organization above their own self-interest, so coordination with, and control of, these members tends to be relatively simple. Drawing on the work of Herbert Simon, scholars see organizational efforts to induce identification as part of a strategy to exert *unobtrusive control* over members (Tompkins & Cheney 1985; → Control and Authority in Organizations).

Public relations messages, socialization tactics, characterizations of competitors, and contact with charismatic leaders lead members to internalize decision premises in ways that guide their action toward the organizational interest, and away from personal interests, in the absence of overt commands. Thus, identification is generally encouraged by organizations, but high levels of identification can be damaging for both individuals and organizations if it generates unquestioning conformity, decreased creativity, and a lack of personal autonomy (Mael & Ashforth 2001). Moreover, some organizations, such as agencies for temporary workers, may actually seek to discourage identification because the attachments it creates are not beneficial for organizational action (Gossett 2002).

The presence of a *multiplicity* of identity resources complicates the outcomes for individuals and organizations. The most commonly studied identity resources are the work group, the organization, and the occupation, and scholars often examine the compatibilities or conflicts between these identifications in situated activity (e.g., Scott 1997; Glynn 2000). This research shows that differences in professional practices, the nature of the (often tacit) employment contract, communication structures, and organizational strategies lead some identity resources to have a stronger influence on identification than others. Recent work also suggests that identifications may shift over time in response to important organizational events or as actors perceive changes in the nature of the identity resources (e.g., Kuhn & Nelson 2002; Larson & Pepper 2003).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Symbolic Interaction

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## Organizational Image

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Organizational image is a useful concept for understanding the impressions individuals have of organizations or that organizations want to convey to individuals. The term refers to an → image that encapsulates the likeness of an organization. Organizational images can have a strong influence on most aspects of members' organizational experiences. From an individual perspective, organizational image helps to explain how people: (1) seek membership in organizations, (2) identify with organizations, (3) make sense of and compare organizations, (4) align their decisions and behavior with others serving the same organizational cause, and (5) understand themselves and their roles in organizations. From an organizational perspective, organizational image helps the dominant coalition to establish or position the organization, its goals, and its views in the minds of its employees, customers, or other stakeholders. For employees, organizational image helps envision what types of activities are appropriate; for external constituencies, the image helps place the organization into a category of similar organizations while simultaneously differentiating the organization from others (→ Organizational Communication).

The concept of organizational image is closely related to the term “corporate image,” used by management consultants and public relations practitioners. The concept was broadened to capture a wider range of uses. Most people immediately understand organizational image

and acknowledge its influences on organizational life. Most scholars and practitioners recognize its value as a concept and as an organizational “intangible.” Yet there has been little systematic research on this concept within communication studies because of the term’s early association with marketing and manipulation.

## HISTORY

Much of the popular press writing about image from management consultants and public relations practitioners coincided with scholarly writings on image in the first place. The earliest scholarly writings on organizational image came in the early 1960s from the economist Kenneth Boulding and the historian Daniel Boorstin; each had his own influences. Boulding (1956) offered “the image” as a device undergirding much of society. Boorstin (1961) used the term as a signification of the “graphical revolution,” whereby much of what the public knows becomes mediated through the graphical interfaces, such as advertising, the news media, or other third parties. While Boulding noted that his view shares much with George Herbert Mead’s symbolic interactionism (→ Symbolic Interaction), he assigned Barnard’s *Functions of the executive* (1968, 1st pub. 1938), Wiener’s *Cybernetics* (1948), and Shannon and Weaver’s *The mathematical theory of communication* (1998, 1st pub. 1949) as the sources for his formulations of the image concept. Boorstin attributed his source of inspiration to Walter Lippmann, who used “image” to describe the “pictures in our heads” of the world outside of our direct experience.

The first use of “organizational image” in communication studies was by Harris and Cronin (1979, 13), who used the term to mean the “construed beliefs and goals that define a collectivity.” According to Harris and Cronin, an organizational image is composed of three analytical levels: constructs used to define the organization, beliefs about the organization, and ideal goal states for the organization. Based on this “image,” organization members negotiate rules that define appropriate behavior within the context.

## DIMENSIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE

There is considerable debate about whether all organizations even have an image. Using such terminology usually suggests a question about the degree of familiarity stakeholders have with the organization or whether they have sufficient clarity to make an estimation of what the organization is about. Erving Goffman (1963) suggested that if an image is not clear or discernible, people will fill the blank screen with images of their own (→ Goffman, Erving). Often, these images are not favorable, which suggests that organizations are better off creating their own images as a way of establishing desirable ones.

A second way that image is described is purely in terms of affect, sentiment, or status, such as when it is said that an organization has a positive or negative image. Organizational images are used as frames in which organizations attempt to attach themselves to a category of similar organizations, and then distinguish themselves from the pack with which they associate. In this sense, individuals are able to locate an organization within a particular category, while still being able to differentiate the organization from others sharing the same label. Particular types of categories include market positions, industries,

or even organizational forms. In more cynical views, “organizational image” is used to connote a facade or a public face that contrasts with reality. According to Baudrillard (Merrin 2005), an image can function as (1) the reflection of a basic reality, (2) a mask or perversion of a basic reality, or (3) a mask for the absence of a basic reality, or (4) the image becomes its own reality.

### CATEGORIES AND DEFINITIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE

Many use the term → “corporate reputation” as a substitute for organizational image because of the “negative image” the latter term often has. That is, the term can often pejoratively refer to the illusory or superficial nature of images that may or may not reflect reality. There are *four general types of organizational images* in the communication literature. They are projected images, perceived images, refracted images, and defining images. Each of these four general types overlaps with the others in different ways depending upon whether one is adopting the viewpoint of senders or receivers, organizational members or individuals outside the organization, or simply comparing the messages designed to represent the organization with those from individuals who have their own opinions, speaking as authorized agents, highly identified or disenchanted individuals, or self-appointed experts.

The *projected image* refers to the image emitted by the organization. This is the view that came from management consultants and public relations practitioners in the 1950s and 1960s, and the view associated with management and marketing orientations. From this view, the projected image is the corporate image embodied in visual icons, corporate logos, tag lines, and message points. It also refers to the desired image that the dominant coalition projects through mission and vision statements, credos, speeches, and expressions of organizational identity and core values. This image can also be used by founders or entrepreneurs to help create, constitute, and guide the organization before the organization has any sense of history or precedence upon which to rely.

The second major view of organizational image is the *perceived image*. Here, the emphasis is on a general impression or perceptions held by insiders or outsiders. This category includes the organization’s public image, perceived organizational identity (members’ answers to the question “Who are we?” as an organization), construed external image (what insiders think outsiders believe), and corporate reputation (what outsiders actually think about the organization). This view also includes what those outside the organization hear coming from the organization. This view, too, is sometimes referred to as corporate image, but from the perspective of the external members’ perceptions of the organization. This view of image is different from corporate reputation in the sense that external audiences are comparing what they see the organization doing with what the organization says.

Another general view that is emerging is the view of *refracted images*; that is, organizational images passed on by third parties such as the news media, advertising agencies, government regulators, analysts, and pundits through some form of medium. These groups will often take the images passed on by organizations and add their own interpretations, which may or may not match or align completely with what the organization projects or says itself, but become part of the symbolic environment. Refracted images

gain an air of objectivity because they come from sources generally regarded as authoritative, they are publicly available, and they are widely distributed. The general public has access to these images and they interact or combine with what is seen coming from the organization itself.

The last view of organizational image comes from scholars who study organizations. This category of organizational image, *defining images*, simply refers to central images in organizations, such as root metaphors and archetypes. These images are used as heuristic devices to capture the general nature or definition of organizations or the worldviews that are at work within them. For example, Ruth Smith and Eric Eisenberg (1987) used root metaphors as organizational images to illuminate conflict in worldviews between management and labor at Disneyland. Gareth Morgan (1997) used images to help shed light on underlying organizational structures.

### MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGES

Organizational images have been assessed and measured in a variety of ways, including participant observation, in-depth interviews (→ Interview, Qualitative), focus groups, → surveys, Q methodology (→ Statistics, Descriptive), and content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). There are no standardized questionnaires for assessing the contents of organizational images (→ Interview, Standardized). Don Treadwell and Teresa Harrison (1994) studied organizational images using personal interviews, Q-sort, and questionnaires. Another large-scale example of the study of organizational images comes from Mary Mohan (1993).

Most Q methodology studies and surveys usually begin with in-depth interviews or focus groups to determine what images are applicable. The conditions of instruction for assessing organizational images have seen more systemization. Respondents are often asked to identify what their perceptions of the organizational image is, which images they find attractive or unattractive, which images they agree or disagree with, which images conform to their experiences with the organization, even their perceptions of what top management (or the organization) is attempting to convey. Content analysis has been used for examining organizational image in CEO speeches, vision and mission statements, annual reports, and published news reports. One concern with assessing organizational images through the use of respondents is their idiosyncratic nature. An individual's personal image of the organization may not even exist prior to the person's being asked to provide it.

### IMPLICATIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL IMAGE

There is considerable potential for organizational image as a construct within communication research. Communication scholars can combine these approaches in order to more fully illuminate conflict in communication policies and practices both within and across organizations. Using co-orientation theory from interpersonal communication research, researchers and organizational practitioners can use organizational image as a way of helping organizations understand the degree of accuracy, agreement, and perceived agreement between the different forms of organizational images described here.

For example, → public relations practitioners can compare the images that the general public sees coming from the organization with the images the organization is trying to project, or the perceptions that organizational members have of their organization's reputation with the reputation their organization actually has. Further still, the projected image of the organization can be compared with the reputation that the organization actually has with the general public or members of any one stakeholder group. Comparing these different perceptions and projects may enable organizations to identify areas of consensus and conflict that may suggest whether policy changes are needed or are sustainable.

SEE ALSO: ► Branding ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Co-Orientation Model of Public Relations ► Corporate Design ► Corporate Reputation ► Goffman, Erving ► Image ► Interview, Qualitative ► Interview, Standardized ► Organizational Communication ► Public Relations ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Survey ► Symbolic Interaction

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# Organizational Metaphors

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Metaphors have played an important role in shaping the study of organizations and organizational communication since the 1980s. Various principles of metaphor have been used to conceptualize the abstract and complex domains of organizations and organizational communication; to imagine new constructs, theoretical insights, and perspectives; to analyze and understand organizational culture; and to facilitate organizational change (Lakoff 1993).

An early and influential consideration of metaphorical → images analyzed organizational theory through a set of eight metaphors as diverse as “machines,” “cultures,” “psychic prisons,” and “instruments of domination” (Morgan 1986, 1997). This analysis highlighted the partiality of each metaphor, illustrating the idea that organizations are too complex to be understood completely as any one. In addition, multiple and overlapping metaphors have been used to characterize organizational communication research, including those of conduit, lens, linkage, performance, symbol, multiple voices, and discursive forms (→ Organizational Communication). This analysis also implies that the complexity of organizational communication requires the use of multiple metaphors in research and illustrates how the relationship between organization and communication shifts within and across metaphors, between those of containment, co-production, and equivalency (Putnam et al. 1996).

A range of *organizational constructs* have been reconceptualized through the use of metaphor, including the organizing process itself (Eisenberg 1990), career models (Buzanell & Goldzwig 1991), negotiation (Stutman & Putnam 1994), organizational socialization (Smith & Turner 1995), emotion management (Krone & Morgan 2000), international teamwork (Shockley-Zalabak 2002), and employee cynicism and resistance (Fleming 2005). In the process, these studies have illustrated the limits of traditional constructs and opened up space for the development of new knowledge and insights.

In addition, metaphors have played a role in the analysis of → organizational culture. Scholars have examined the external and internal coherence of metaphor clusters to understand the social construction of organizational reality (Koch & Deetz 1981), and the use of metaphor to better understand power relations and the processes by which systems of consensual meaning are constructed and challenged (Deetz & Mumby 1985; → Constructivism). Through an analysis of root metaphors, scholars have also demonstrated how the images of *drama* and *family* embedded in organizational culture help explain conflict and change in Disneyland (Smith & Eisenberg 1987).

Because metaphorical expressions both reflect and construct an organization’s system of → meanings, their use can both facilitate and block change (→ Organizational Change Processes). The skillful use of metaphorical language is considered important for leaders and others who wish to manage innovation and change in organizations (→ Leadership in Organizations). Organizational development consultants work with metaphor in a variety of ways as a tool to diagnose problems and design appropriate interventions (see Oswick & Grant 1996 for examples). Some of this work is noteworthy in its attempt to



acknowledge and creatively work with the inherent ambiguity and potential unmanageability of organizational metaphor (Barrett & Cooperrider 1990).

Future research on organizational metaphors supports the turn toward discourse in organizational studies and organizational communication research (→ Organizational Discourse). The greatest contributions to understanding will come from the continued study of metaphors in use among organizational members (Oswick & Grant 1996). Such language-centered research will continue to inform understandings of the discursive production and reproduction of organizations (Deetz 1986), and the ways in which some metaphorical expressions become dominant while others are suppressed (Inns 2002). The study of metaphors in use also will continue as a complement to the study of other forms of organizational discourse such as irony (Oswick et al. 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Constructivism ▶ Image ▶ Leadership in Organizations ▶ Meaning  
▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Discourse ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Sense-Making

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## Organizational Structure

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Organizational structure is the set of formally stipulated rules and regulations that regulate and legitimate the organization's work processes, communication, and other activities. An organization's structure constrains interaction processes and biases the style and content of interaction; also, since organizational structure is the framework of any organization, it is the focus of → discourse about organizational change.

Organizational structure includes features such as an organization's hierarchy, divisional and departmental pattern, arrangements for surveillance and record keeping, and explicit operating procedures and policies. It is generally spelled out in writing in a typical organization's legal documents, personnel and payroll records, strategic plan, and operating procedures manuals. Explicit, planned structural features make organizations distinct from other social forms such as communities and families, and are in large part responsible for the power organizations have in our world today. Organizational structure has long been important to → organizational communication, because it is a managerial tool establishing authority allocations, mandatory information flows, work allocation and workflow patterns, and grouping arrangements for employees. Early studies reflected this managerial perspective by identifying structural patterns useful for efficient communication. More recently, scholars have conceptualized an organization's structure as itself created and conveyed in a communication process that reflects cultural norms and the organization's environment and history.

### HISTORY

Formal structure is focal in even the earliest writings about organizations, which involve records of resources and plans for personnel use in building cities and pyramids. Early

analysis of organizational communication prescribed communication along lines of formally authorized relationships, within organizations viewed as containers of communication processes. Early analysts of bureaucracy and scientific management emphasized written communication, the regular flow of files from official to official, the importance of clear oral instructions about behavior, all supported by a formal managerial apparatus designed to maximize the efficiency of information flow (→ Bureaucracy and Communication). Bureaucracy, beyond its controlling tendencies, also manifested norms of transparency, fairness, and workplace justice, both to limit worker resistance and to harness worker loyalty and initiative. The tendency of human relations theorists was to take a managerial perspective emphasizing supervisor leadership through vertical communication to shape informal group norms. That tendency was echoed in the emphasis in early business communication literature on appropriate channel and style selection in vertical communication.

In the 1960s, strategic contingency and → systems theories led researchers and consultants to pay more attention to communication issues. They reasoned that as organizations faced more complex, unclear, and dynamic environments, structures had to change to allow similarly complex information processing. Abstract structural syndromes such as centralization, formalization, and standardization were reconceived as variables; both concrete and abstract structural features were seen as potentially simplifying or helping to perform the vital functions of coordination and information processing. In complex environments, organizations were supposed to: (1) develop flatter, more decentralized structures, (2) create ways to facilitate interdepartmental communication by appointing liaison managers and setting up regular integrating relationships and task forces, (3) share information and power more fully, and (4) engage in collaborative decision-making.

The documents stipulating organizational structure automatically mandate and constrain other organizational communication processes; moreover, they serve as a foundation for a managerial and financial logic that could overpower other bases of organizational decision-making. In addition, these documents create a fundamental division or “distanciation” in the organization, between managers empowered to create or write structural documents and approve them, professionals who have access to and can influence implementation of the structure, and workers who rarely have access to the documents and can seldom understand them.

Differences among documents such as hierarchy charts, mission statements, and policies lead to important differences in the implementation of, or dissemination of information about, structural change. Some important changes may be subject to brief announcement only, while others involve extensive consultation during planning, elaborate announcement ceremonies, and extensive training or development programs to deal with cultural and other consequences of the structural changes (→ Organizational Change Processes).

Since the height of influence for contingency theory, attention of researchers has swung away from general issues of organizational structure, for several reasons. First, global competition, technological advances, and greater complexity of outputs have led organizations to adopt very flexible structural arrangements across the board; today’s “machine bureaucracy” is rarer and very different from that of old. Second, growing understanding of nonformal factors such as information channeling, → organizational culture, and peer group pressure

have led to increased concentration on their use for organizational control, replacing standard structural features. Third, communication technology has revolutionized organizations, facilitating the development of novel forms, and augmenting or substituting for standard structural features (→ Technology and Communication; Information and Communication Technology, Development of). As a result of these developments, research on organizational structure has turned to analysis of specific structural features and types.

## IMPORTANT STRUCTURAL FEATURES TODAY

### Communication Technology (CT)

Though communication technology is not really a structural feature, its power as a communication and control medium has enabled it to supplant other structural features and change basic properties of organizations. CT has affected organizational structure foremost by allowing the creation of “new organizational forms,” discussed below. Other impacts include the fact that *computerized communication replaces direct interaction* for orders and standard rules as a coordination mechanism, allowing for more transparent coordination apart from control. CT also allows *both synchronous and delayed communication*, enabling coordinated work over global distances without regard to time differences. CT *crosses traditional organizational boundaries* and geographic distances easily, allowing the distancing effects of rank, occupation, and even organizational membership to be bypassed, so that organizations and their alliances can have truly global reach (→ Globalization of Organizations). CT allows the *transition to → knowledge management* as an important value-adding process, with information and ideas rapidly disseminated and applied in new ways.

With these empowering changes come some *constraints*. CT replaces work rules with communication access rules: there are some databases and message threads that employees cannot read or affect. CT also allows greatly expanded surveillance of employee work and communication, in a way that can defeat decentralization. For instance, optimal empowerment of battlefield commanders is undermined if distant superiors use CT to micro-manage combat decisions. Further, CT rules and surveillance are often less transparent than traditional structural features. Both these constraints and the empowering effects may depend on the structural context of the units using CT.

### Organizational Policy

Policies created and implemented within organizations are material features of organizational structure. Policies both reflect and create structure by mediating between structure and action and by formally prescribing how activities and procedures transpire.

Developing policy research has made links among structure, policy, and action clearer. Critical approaches focus on ways that structure influences whether an issue becomes policy-relevant and how policies reproduce existing organizational power distributions. Interpretive approaches focus on how organizational caseworkers interpret and use policies to negotiate activities within contested contexts, often in ways that thwart the

original intent involved in the policy. Decision-makers, implementers, and policy stakeholders engage in continuous negotiations of meaning and purpose throughout issue identification, policy construction, implementation, evaluation, and revision.

Because they are publicly available and subject to adjudication, policies – especially public policies – are often developed and disseminated in elaborate processes of investigation, publication, review, implementation, and staff training. Such processes help mediate between levels of organizational hierarchy.

### **Nonstandard Employment Relations**

More organizations employ workers under nonstandard arrangements such as independent contracting, temporary firm placements, daywork, and at-home work. Implications of these new relations vary by contract type, with workers who desire temporary status having better work experiences, greater flexibility, and more benefits, while involuntarily nonstandard workers suffer economic disadvantage. Other sources of success for temporary workers are the socio-emotional and informational supports from the client organization. Workers from “temp” firms often fall under a dual-control system, by both temporary agency and client organization, and experience looser control.

Organizations receive economic and knowledge benefits from nonstandard workers. Contingent workers also learn (so organizations risk proprietary knowledge), especially if they are successfully integrated with the core workforce. But integration can be challenging. Presence of temporary workers can lead core workers to be more conscious of the threat (and benefits) of greater insecurity in their own job arrangements, and also of (perceived) injustice, overwork, and reduced promotion opportunities for core workers.

## **IMPORTANT STRUCTURAL TYPES TODAY**

### **“New Organizational Forms”**

These are also called network organizations and post-Fordist organizations. Noteworthy features include: (1) *flexible production*, with skilled workers using computerized technology to do intelligent work responding to differentiated markets; (2) *team organization*; (3) *dense CT nets* within and between teams; (4) *flat vertical structure* with little middle management but dynamic self-organization of team alliances; (5) *control by top management* through surveillance, peer pressure, and result-based allocation of capital; and (6) *technology* allowing global distribution of such teams and networks. This complex of features is strikingly different from the “machine bureaucracy” that characterized many organizations a half-century ago; it is closer to the “organic community” form of craft shops and research labs, but lacks the social stability and worker power of those institutions.

New organizational forms have proliferated due to low-cost communication technology and more educated workforces; they are encouraged by hypercompetition and mobile global capital. They allow invisible, dynamic control, making worker organization and resistance harder. They also present communication challenges to workers: problems of successful team self-management in an externally controlled environment,

problems of surveillance and autonomy, and difficulties in developing trust and team commitment.

### **Organizational Democracy**

Another research focus, going beyond decentralization aimed at interactive coordination, is democratic participation by stakeholders in the resolution of basic structural issues for organizations. Democratic organizations develop due to top-level corporate desires to motivate workers, as well as from worker efforts inspired by democratic ideals. They are facilitated by an educated, empowered workforce valuing democratic initiative and voice, but constrained by post-Fordist developments, such as politically powerful free-flowing capital and new surveillance or control media.

Organizational democracy is a mixed structural type, with varied arrangements for member voice through ownership, voice, and representation, about varying issue types. Democratic organizations face special challenges, stemming both from the need for bureaucratic elements in performance-oriented social systems, and from today's hypercapitalistic environment (→ Participative Processes in Organizations).

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

As new media of control, nontraditional work forms, and global workforces proliferate, research must explore how management and work design, in conjunction with new structuring practices, lead to organizational control and/or emancipation. Future studies of structure and policy will benefit by focusing on micro-processual connections to macro-organizational and broader societal structures, using → structuration and activity theory. Investigations also will benefit from longitudinal studies and qualitative data reflecting critical, interpretive, and practice theory approaches.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bureaucracy and Communication ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Decision-Making Processes in Organizations ▶ Discourse ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Participative Processes in Organizations ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Technology and Communication

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## Organizations, Cultural Diversity in

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Cultural diversity is an increasingly salient issue for many organizations due to greater geographic mobility among potential members (including migration; → Migration and Immigration) and a decrease in barriers to participation in many countries. “Cultural diversity” is defined as the presence of members with different systems of understanding based on cultural or group affiliation (Cox 1993; → Diversity in the Workplace). These systems of understanding may be based on identities of gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religion, educational background, or other identity groups (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Loden and Rosner (1991) divide dimensions of diversity into those that are relatively fixed as primary (e. g., age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities, race, and sexual orientation) and those that are more mutable as secondary (e. g., educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, etc.). Although demographic differences in a group often reflect differences in experiences and patterns of behavior, it is the differences in worldview, values, and ways of understanding based on cultural differences that often prove challenging in understanding diversity in organizations. When members of a work, social, or educational organization come from different cultural backgrounds, there is both increased potential for conflict and misunderstanding and the potential for greater creativity and resources, resulting in productivity (→ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework; Organizational Conflict).

Cultural diversity has been framed by organizations in various ways (Cox 1993; Ely & Thomas 2001). Cultural diversity has long been seen as an issue of civil rights, social justice, and morality in some organizations, where providing access and fair treatment to people from different cultural backgrounds is the “right thing to do.” Cultural diversity, especially in the US, has also been framed as a legal issue, with a focus on avoiding charges of discrimination (e.g., lawsuits) and meeting governmental requirements (e.g., affirmative action). Many workplace organizations also frame cultural diversity as an economic issue (i.e., the “business case” for diversity), linking diverse membership to better creativity and innovation, legitimacy, the ability to attract talented new members, and, ultimately, productivity. A focus on cultural diversity may also be seen as part of the organization’s mission (particularly with educational or nonprofit organizations) or their identity. Often these diversity frames overlap, with organizations citing multiple reasons for focusing on cultural diversity issues.

## RESEARCH ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN ORGANIZATIONS

Research on cultural diversity in organizations has been approached from a variety of *meta-theoretical perspectives*. While much of the early research addressed cultural differences from a functional or social scientific perspective, many researchers today utilize interpretive and critical approaches to examine diversity in organizational life.

From a functional perspective (→ Functional Analysis), researchers (e.g., Hofstede 1991) have examined cultural-level factors that influence organizational behavior and affective outcomes (e.g., satisfaction), focusing on the influence of national culture and other easily measured dimensions (sex, ethnicity, age, etc.). The focus of these studies is predicting behavior on the basis of knowledge of cultural norms. These approaches have been criticized for oversimplifying cultural identity and minimizing the influence of multiple cultures and individual differences (Jackson et al. 2003).

From an *interpretive perspective*, research on cultural diversity in organizations has examined organizations via ethnographic case studies (e.g., Ely & Thomas 2001; → Ethnography of Communication) and in-depth interviews (→ Interview, Qualitative), for example asking minorities in organizations about their experiences and perceptions of behavioral choices (e.g., Orbe 1998). These studies try to make sense of the experiences of diverse members in specific organizational contexts. While they examine members' perceptions of life in the organization with recognition of the complexity of organizational realities, these studies rarely suggest ways to improve cultural relations beyond increasing understanding of the experience of those being studied.

A growing area of current research on diversity in organizations takes more of a *critical approach*, examining issues of dominant cultural power and privilege in organizations (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches). The goal from this perspective is to critique the ways in which organizations are sites of power and control, and the roles that cultural identity and dominant group membership play in this control (→ Control and Authority in Organizations). This perspective is exemplified by Munshi (2005), who uses postcolonial and feminist perspectives to critique the ways in which discourse about diversity serves to control those outside of the dominant group. While critical research highlights the structural changes that are necessary for equality of members, critics note that such opportunities for radical change are rarely accessible to organizational members.

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS

Within the organizational context, cultural diversity can also be addressed at individual, interpersonal, group, organizational, and societal levels (Jackson et al. 2003). Both the theoretical and the applied literatures address topics at these levels, while recognizing some concerns may be present on multiple levels.

At the *individual level*, the focus is on the influence of cultural diversity and the diversity climate on members' individual perceptions, attitudes, and performance. The emotional toll associated with being culturally different may be a salient issue for individuals who are not part of the dominant group (e.g., Allen 1998), as are issues of ethnocentrism and cultural sensitivity. Attitudes toward the organization and the subsequent level of



involvement and identification (Cox 1993) are examined at the individual level. However, most communication scholars examine these factors in tandem with communication behaviors at the interpersonal, group, or organizational level.

At the *interpersonal level*, interactions between members from different cultural backgrounds are the focus. Interpersonal conflicts, often due to different expectations or cultural norms, are manifest at this level, including issues of stereotyping, prejudice, and mistreatment. Members from diverse cultural backgrounds may also experience less access to interpersonal relationships with mentors who can help them within the organization. Training is often designed to address interaction between members at an interpersonal level, rather than examining structural issues that privilege one cultural group over others (Hafen 2005; → Intercultural Communication Training).

At the *group level*, the interactions between members working together in a team, committee, or departmental context are central (Oetzel et al. 2001). At this level, issues of inclusion/exclusion and tokenism become salient for members who are different from the majority or dominant group. Intergroup conflict may also be an issue (→ Organizational Conflict; Group Communication and Problem-Solving).

At the *organizational level*, the focus for cultural diversity is on the diversity climate. The diversity climate is influenced by communication at the other levels, but also includes issues of formal and informal structures, patterns of minority individual outcomes (opportunities for advancement, equity in compensation and job assignment, and fair assessment of performance), the value placed on diversity, the level of knowledge about and acceptance of cultural difference, and evaluations of institutional bias in human resource systems and other policies and procedures (Cox 1993). Both structural and informal access are important for members of nondominant groups. The level of structural integration of members from different cultural groups can be measured from their representation both at different levels of status within the organization and in specific units. Lack of opportunities for advancement to higher-level positions results in a “glass ceiling” (Morrison & Von Glinow 1990). However, the integration into informal networks, providing access to information and the ability to build relationships with others, is also vital. Voice, representation, and access to participation in organizational decision-making are often concerns for nondominant groups (→ Participative Processes in Organizations).

At the *societal level*, organizational representatives’ interactions with potential members and with others outside of the organization (e.g., clients and customers) can be influenced by cultural diversity as well. Representatives of organizations may also reflect perceptions about the cultural diversity of the organization and the diversity climate as they interact in their community. Public perceptions, which may be influenced by publicity about positive or negative events or climate evaluation, also influence the success of the organization in attracting members.

## **METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

*Methodological concerns* in studying cultural diversity in organizations center on the complexity of cultural identity and identity development, as well as power issues in the research process. Cultural influences are difficult to conceptualize and measure, as much

of culture is based on tacit understanding that may be difficult to articulate. Different aspects of one's identity may be salient depending on the organizational context, and personality and life experiences may influence the individual's level of cultural self-awareness. Dominant culture members and those who are assimilated into the dominant culture may not consider culture to be very important, but those who are exploring their nondominant identity and resisting assimilation may be more cognizant of their own cultural group's norms and expectations (Phinney 1993). Cultures are also in constant change, increasing the complexity of cultural dynamics.

Access issues can also prove challenging for researchers. Even willing and open participants' level of candor may be influenced by the cultural background of the researchers. An interviewee may choose to share less with a dominant-culture interviewer, for example, or frame information shared in ways that create or maintain a positive (face-saving) image of the cultural group. Organizations may also choose to limit access to researchers so as to not highlight potential problems or encourage members to focus on differences related to cultural diversity.

There are a number of *new and continuing directions for research* on cultural diversity in organizations, including studying the resources and skills necessary for diversity "competence" at multiple organizational levels, dimensions of culture that have been overlooked or underexamined in previous studies (e.g., religion), evolving contexts (e.g., virtual groups), and organizational processes from the perspective of members of nondominant cultural groups (e.g., emotional labor, leadership, change). Much of the research on diversity in organizations has been conducted within business and educational contexts in the United States; however, with increased globalization and worldwide demographic shifts, further analysis should be conducted in different countries and contexts.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Dissent in Organizations ▶ Diversity in the Workplace ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Group Communication and Problem-Solving ▶ Intercultural Communication Training ▶ Intercultural Conflict Styles and Facework ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Migration and Immigration ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Conflict ▶ Participative Processes in Organizations

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## Ownership in the Media

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Structures of media ownership take the form of either public or private enterprises. “Public” refers to those media funded at least partially out of general public revenues, whereas in the general sense “private” means media whose financing is provided by individuals, families, or groups. Public media can be state-owned (as in the former Soviet Union; → Russia: Media System) or state-managed, controlled by the government in power (such as China’s ruling Communist Party newspaper, *Renmin Ribao*; → China: Media System), or can have a charter making them relatively independent of the state or governing power (such as Britain’s → BBC; → United Kingdom: Media System). The type of structure, public or private, does not necessarily correspond either to the degree of professional freedom enjoyed by the media organ or to its quality. Some African broadcast media are modeled on the BBC but operate with far less openness and with frequent political interference (→ Africa: Media Systems). Community media, such as community newspapers and radio stations, which typically rely on listener sponsorship and grants and receive little if any government financial support, are generally much smaller in scope and reach but often exercise considerably more freedom than their public-media counterparts and often transmit a broader range of political, social, and cultural programming (→ Community Media).

Privately controlled media, especially of the publicly traded stockholder type (→ Media Corporations, Forms of), have become more prevalent worldwide during the past 25 years. In the United States and other market economies, media industries have been

permitted wide latitude to engage in mega-mergers of the various industries within the sector, a trend that accelerated in the US following the FCC's elimination of the "Fin/Syn" rules in 1995, which had previously prohibited in-house production and syndication ownership (→ United States of America: Media System; Communication Law and Policy: North America; Federal Communications Commission [FCC]). The 1996 Telecommunications Act relaxed restrictions on station ownership, enabling media owners such as the Sinclair Broadcast Group to expand their reach to more than a quarter of American homes. Even before the Act, non-media businesses, such as General Electric and Westinghouse, were allowed to purchase multimedia enterprises, including two of the major television networks, RCA and CBS. Two radio networks, Clear Channel and Viacom's Infinity Broadcasting, together now control more than a third of all radio advertising revenue and as much as 90 percent in some markets (→ Advertising). There still remains, however, a large number of private newspapers and a smaller number of television stations that are owned independently or by families. With the breakup of stockholder media groups such as Knight Ridder (US) and the Tribune Company (US), more have been added. Among the largest corporate → media conglomerates in the world, the German → Bertelsmann Corporation is of the "private" type (i.e., not traded), as is Cox Communications in the US. An exceptional media type, the *St. Petersburg Times*, a Florida newspaper, is run as a nonprofit institution.

Media conglomerates, headquartered in Japan, Western Europe, and North America, typically are vertically integrated firms cutting across a number of different media and other industries. The → Sony Corporation (Japan; → Japan: Media System), for example, manufactures numerous media and communication devices (televisions, radios, DVDs, CDs, VCRs, computers, camcorders, microwave telecommunication systems, digital radio and satellite systems, and other equipment) and also owns all or part of major film production and distribution outlets (Sony Pictures, Columbia Pictures, TriStar Pictures, MGM, United Artists, and others) as well as the Sony/Loews Theaters Group (some 3,000 screens in North America), plus various companies for games, music, and television production and distribution, and various television interests in Asia, Europe, Latin America, and Australia. Vivendi (France; → France: Media System) owns the Canal + Group of television and cinema studios, theme parks, and cable channels, almost 40 record labels, a video games division, a telecommunications group, and still other businesses. The largest media corporation, → Time Warner Inc. (US), owns AOL and other computer-based enterprises, one of the biggest cable operations in the United States together with the Turner Broadcasting System (→ CNN and other cable broadcasting companies and the Atlanta Braves baseball franchise), New Line Cinema, Warner Bros. Pictures and the Warner Bros. Television Group, Home Box Office operations, dozens of Time Inc. magazines, comic books, and still other media holdings (Greenwald et al. 2006).

### OWNERSHIP PATTERNS IN THE US

In the US, one of the prevailing patterns of broadcast ownership is control by major banking and financial institutions. The major stockholders and board members of leading broadcasting networks include such banks as BankAmerica, Citigroup, Chase

Manhattan, Bankers Trust, Washington Mutual, and Morgan Guaranty Trust, which interlock not only with the media and other major industries but also among themselves; they are thereby able to exercise significant influence over fiduciary functions and management hiring in the media. Major media organizations also interlock with Fortune 500 corporations, including airline, energy, nuclear power, insurance, telecommunications, and weapons industries. Ford Motor Company has enjoyed interlocking directorships on the boards of the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and *Los Angeles Times*. A simpler ownership structure is that of Bertelsmann AG (Germany; → Germany: Media System), whose majority stockholder and founder is an individual, Reinhard Mohn. With his family and foundation, Mohn until recently held 75 percent of stock voting rights in the company until forced to open share ownership (25.1 percent) to the Belgian–Canadian financial holding company GBL. In 2005, the Sony Corporation, which as shown above is widely diversified in product lines and ownership, and has a number of foreign stockholders, appointed an American, Harry Stringer, to be its first foreign chairman and chief executive officer. A recent trend is that Wall Street investment houses are bypassing film studios and making deals directly with successful producers to finance their projects.

The biggest issue in media ownership is industry *concentration*, both at the national and international level (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Competition in Media Systems). In the US, there is no dispute about the high media concentration ratios (number of companies controlling each segment of the industry), but not all agree that this condition violates the public interest. Although media concentration is high in most countries, it is a particularly contentious issue in the US, where ownership of media and communication systems has historically been private, commercially driven, and, until a wave of consolidation began to accelerate during the past 25 years, quite competitive. Many intellectuals and other leaders around the world complain that these monopolistic tendencies have intensified American media and cultural domination in their societies. Indeed, media content in most countries bears the heavy imprint of → “Hollywood” and “Madison Avenue.” Robert McChesney (1999) listed eight global corporations that owned 79 percent of the American mass media: → television, → newspapers, → magazines, → radio, satellite systems, cable (→ Cable Television), book publishing (→ Book), → film production and distribution, movie theater chains (→ Cinema), the core elements of the → Internet, billboards, and theme parks. Two bookstore chains, Borders/Walden and Barnes and Noble, accounted for a third of all retail book sales in the country. Worldwide, McChesney found that the mass media are controlled by between 70 and 80 first- and second-tier corporations.

### OWNERSHIP PATTERNS WORLDWIDE

Media policy in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and Western Europe (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe) has followed a similar pattern of consolidation. The very high concentration of media ownership in *Australia* (→ Australia: Media System) is led by Rupert Murdoch’s New York-based → News Corporation (which formerly had its headquarters in Adelaide), which alone controls some 70 percent of the country’s newspapers. News Corporation, along with John Fairfax Holdings, the Harris Group, and West Australian Newspapers, make up the Australian Associated Press, which dominates

national news distribution in the print and broadcast media (Given 2001). Similarly, New Zealand is dominated by four foreign-owned giant media corporations. Only 9 percent of the country's readership is tied to domestically controlled newspapers. In radio, the concentration ratio is even higher, with 97 percent of the country's stations controlled by a single joint Australian (ANM)–United States (Clear Channel) group. In television broadcasting, the state-owned but commercial TVNZ (TV1 and TV2) competes with the Canadian-owned (Canwest) stations TV3 and TV4. Pay TV is controlled by the foreign-controlled (formerly by Murdoch, now Fairfax) Independent News Ltd., comprising 80 newspaper and magazine titles in New Zealand (New Zealand 2003).

In *Canada*, media ownership patterns did not significantly change until the mid-1990s, when the government's Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) liberalized ownership rules to permit companies to own multiple television stations in the larger markets (→ Canada: Media System). Currently, nearly all of Canada's commercial stations are owned by national conglomerates. Mergers have brought about a tight consolidation of television station ownership across the country. With waivers given by the CRTC, some of the same conglomerates also took over major newspapers, and by 2001 all but one of the major urban newspapers were owned by a conglomerate. At the same time, ownership has been somewhat fluid, as major newspapers have passed from one chain to another in the last decade. Canada restricts foreign ownership of media companies to 20 percent. Although Canadian stations are required to air a majority of domestically produced content, most Canadians have access to American television, especially during prime time; it is easily accessible over the air, by cable, and via satellite. Canada is one of the most heavily foreign-penetrated media markets in the world.

In most of *Western Europe*, as in Canada and other leading industrial states, public service requirements are more established, and publicly funded broadcasting is more competitive with the commercial sector than in the United States. In *Britain*, for example, the BBC, publicly funded through license fees, is the country's largest broadcaster, with two national television channels (with national and regional sub-divisions), five national radio stations, cable and digital TV channels, and more than 40 local radio stations. However, Western Europe is also experiencing an expansion of commercial broadcasting and the mass media overall. *Italian broadcasting* (→ Italy: Media System), for example, is dominated by Fininvest, a company owned by former prime minister Berlusconi, who also has interests in France's TF1, Germany's Tele 5, Spain's TeleCinco, stations in the former Yugoslavia, and other countries. French and British print media have also been consolidated over the past decade by major transnational corporations (European Federation of Journalists 2005).

*France's* print media consolidation has been underway since the end of the World War II. The country's 175 regional newspapers in 1946 were reduced to 55 in 2004, most of which were owned by major media groups. In 2004, the print media were further consolidated with the purchase of the Socpresse publishing group, including *Le Figaro* and many other titles, by the aeronautics corporation, Dassault. Its main competitors are the Lagardère Group, which owns several major French publishing firms, and the Filipacchi Médias Group, the largest magazine publisher in the world. The bailing out of the left-wing *Libération* newspaper by Baron Edouard de Rothschild in 2005 signaled the near-finale of the independent press in France.

*Britain* too has a high concentration in print media, which are dominated by four major groups that control about 85 percent of the national market, though the government maintains relatively strong cross-ownership restrictions. The most powerful media group in the country is Murdoch's News International (NI), whose five newspapers, including *The Times* and the *Sunday Times*, have about 37 percent of the daily share and 39 percent of Sunday sales. NI also controls 75 percent of connected homes through its satellite BSkyB system. US companies also dominate Britain's digital and broadband sections of the media.

## MEDIA DIVERSITY

Currently, most American television stations are either owned by or affiliated to the large networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox, Viacom, and Time Warner; → Television Networks), both in over-the-air broadcasting and cable, constituting an oligopoly. The UPN network was taken over by a joint project of CBS and Warner Bros. Entertainment (CW) in 2006. It is sometimes argued that these companies actually operate as a *functional* monopoly, inasmuch as they share generic (often copycat) formats in programming, in both news and public affairs and in entertainment, and thereby cater to and present viewers with a narrow range of content, style, opinion, debate, and consumer tastes and preferences, and effectively censor that which is not profitable (→ Consonance of Media Content). Others argue, however, that the existence, depending on tiers of service, of potentially hundreds of stations via broadcasting, cable, satellite, and computer provides audiences with a high degree of diversity in programming, especially when one adds the countless number of Internet websites now available to most people. Still others insist that the number of broadcast outlets is not altogether relevant because their products are almost entirely, often crassly, commercial in character and thereby offer little of a public service remit, especially given the possibilities of earning a large share of their profits from overseas distribution.

From an international perspective, the capacity of vertically integrated media conglomerates to reach worldwide audiences raises the specter of cultural imperialism (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). The counter-thesis to this argument is that significant media industries exist in other parts of the world, such as → Bollywood, Televisa, and the Chinese-language film and TV industry, which offset the influence of American-produced media. Non-US media conglomerates, such as Sony (Japan), Bertelsmann (Germany), News Corporation (Australia), and Vivendi (France), offer competition to US media even in the United States itself. Whether the number of competing entities or the provision of publicly funded media is the best measure of media service will remain a significant debate for the foreseeable future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Americanization of the Media  
 ▶ Australia: Media System ▶ BBC ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ Bollywood ▶ Book  
 ▶ Cable Television ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ China: Media System ▶ Cinema ▶ CNN  
 ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Communication  
 Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Community  
 Media ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Concentration in Media Systems

► Consonance of Media Content ► Cultural Imperialism Theories ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Film Production ► France: Media System ► Germany: Media System ► Globalization of the Media ► Hollywood ► International Communication ► Internet ► Italy: Media System ► Japan: Media System ► Magazine ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Corporations, Forms of ► Media Economics ► Mergers ► News Corporation ► Newspaper ► Political Economy of the Media ► Privatization of the Media ► Radio ► Russia: Media System ► Sony Corporation ► Television ► Television Networks ► Time Warner Inc. ► United Kingdom: Media System ► United States of America: Media System

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# P

## P2P Networking

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The emergence of peer-to-peer (P2P) networking shows that technological determinism can be turned on its head: rather than socio-economic systems being determined by technological developments, sometimes technology can be determined by its users. Although in general the coupling goes both ways, P2P networking culminates the progression in computer architectures from mainframes through minicomputers, workstations, PCs, and client–server (master–slave) architectures, as information and communication technology (ICT), over a 50-year span, gradually adapted to the needs and behavior of its users (→ Communication Networks). In contrast to the master–slave or client–server architecture, in a peer-to-peer network each node has the same status and can issue requests to or respond to requests from any other node. Centralized management of network traffic becomes functionally unnecessary, with implications of increased local autonomy and lack of centralized control of the content carried by such traffic.

At the research level, P2P networks benefit from a constructive tension between two completely different disciplinary domains. While P2P networks research is increasingly drawn toward biology and physics in response to ever-increasing demands on the performance of such networks, it is also drawn toward social science as the development of P2P applications is increasingly influenced by a convergence between social science and design, known also as “social computing” (→ Social Networks; Technology, Social Construction of). Because this entry is centered on P2P networks rather than on applications, the focus is on their technological, physical, and mathematical aspects.

Although P2P technology is still making waves as a “disruptive technology” in ICT (Subramanian & Goodman 2004), its potential has not been fully realized, primarily because none of the implementations that underpin all the major P2P applications fully meets the requirements of a “true” P2P architecture. The *key vision of P2P* is to move away from any centralization of services and a single point of failure/control, to a truly distributed environment that enables two or more individuals to collaborate to achieve a goal that is of value to at least one of them. To meet this vision, a P2P network must have a number of

organizational as well as technological characteristics. While the provision of the resources and services that constitute the P2P network should ideally be shared by its community of users, the autonomy of individual users must be respected. P2P networks must be open to dynamic membership and connection topology, secure, scalable, robust to failures, and “autonomic” (self-configuring/self-optimizing/self-healing) (→ Communication Infrastructure).

All instances of P2P applications meet the vision better in some respects and worse in others. For example, in *Gnutella* all peers have equal rights, but the search algorithm is extremely expensive in network traffic. *Napster* has a much faster search mechanism, but at the cost of using a centralized directory. *Freenet* removes the dependence on either centralized directories or single points of failure for file storage, but its search mechanism is even more complex than *Gnutella*'s (→ Search Engines).

Current research addressing the performance of P2P networks as their size increases to millions of nodes has led to the investigation of their underlying topological structure in terms of graph theory concepts. Until relatively recently the modeling of physical and nonphysical systems and processes has been performed under an implicit assumption that the interaction patterns among the components could be embedded onto a regular Euclidean lattice. Two mathematicians, Erdős and Rényi (1960), made a breakthrough in *graph theory* by describing a network with a complex topology by a random graph. Fundamentally, *Gnutella* uses this model. Many real-life complex networks are neither completely regular nor completely random, and in P2P networks, even just in file-sharing systems, implementations based on these two models have encountered significant problems.

An important model for several P2P networks (especially discovery systems) is the “*small-world*” model (Watts & Strogatz 1998), based on the discovery that any two people on the planet can be connected by acquaintance relationships between six intermediate people, on average. A prominent common feature of the random graph and the small-world models is that their node connectivity distribution peaks at an average value and decays exponentially on either side. Such networks are called “exponential networks” or “homogeneous networks” because each node has roughly the same number of link connections (the sharp peak in the distribution). Because this most frequent number of links depends on the size of the network, it provides a measure of its “scale.” Work by Barabasi (2002) has shown, however, that most networks in a wide range of contexts – from physics, to biology, to social science, to the Internet (→ Internet, Technology of) – exhibit a “scale-free” distribution of node connectivity, i.e., uniformly varying from a maximum to a minimum, without intermediate peaks and independent of network scale. Scale-free networks are inhomogeneous: most nodes have very few connections but a few nodes have many connections. These “aristocratic” nodes organize the network so that it too can exhibit a small-world effect, but with a very different topology to the Watts and Strogatz small-world model.

Existing examples of P2P networks show limited achievement of the goals of P2P mainly because none of them exploits the scale-free properties that arise so often in natural and social networks. In a scale-free network a search can succeed in a very small number of steps if it is directed through one or two relevant and well-connected hubs. The introduction of “super-peers” is one way to begin to introduce scale-free aspects into P2P networks. However, such attempts to date have been of limited success as most “natural” scale-free networks have a hierarchy of super-peers, not just one additional layer. In addition, to remain true to the P2P philosophy, super-peer networks must be

avoided where the super-peers are static and physically reside on (clusters of) servers owned by a single organization. Somewhat paradoxically, although naturally occurring scale-free networks demonstrate highly efficient communication and stability against fragmentation, they are also extremely vulnerable to organized attack on the super-connected few. Counters to this threat involve carefully monitoring the hubs and either repairing them or delegating their responsibilities if their key role is jeopardized. Thus, the environment supported by a P2P network ideally should be truly dynamic as well as distributed. Research indicates that P2P networks are becoming ever more relevant to social computing and are performing in ways ever closer to how social systems actually work.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Infrastructure ► Communication Networks ► Internet, Technology of ► Search Engines ► Social Networks ► Technology, Social Construction of

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## **Painting**

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Understanding the historical practices of painting is significant for communication studies because in nearly all cultures these practices embody the origins and establishment of subsequent genres of picture-making.

Humans have made paintings for at least 30,000 years using *three material components*: pigment suspended in a medium; a surface to which the paint is applied; and tools like brushes, sticks, fingers, and hands by which the paint is transferred to the ground. In prehistoric times, paintings were applied to readymade grounds of rock surfaces. In other cases paintings have been made on grounds laid on a support, like canvas on a stretcher.

Grounds can be rough or smooth, resistant or absorbent, a choice that goes hand in hand with the type of tool, usually a brush, used to apply the relative transparency, opacity, and viscosity of the paint. Brushes can be small or large, fine or coarse, features that allow for the manipulation of techniques and visual symbolic codes for the wider purpose of projecting → meaning.

The autographic or hand-held painting processes that create unique → artifacts are always made against a broader intentional field of cultural expectations (→ Cultural Studies). The operation of background pressures explains why paintings vary from culture to culture, from one historical period to the next within the same tradition, and between two artists working in the same cultural context (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The background circumstances influence both the materials for executing paintings and the way line, tone, color, texture, rhythm, form, space, scale, and figurative references formally structure compositions for communicating perceptual, expressive, and conceptual meanings (→ Visual Communication). These variables determine style in painting.

*Style* allows someone both to make paintings that have meaning, and to distinguish, say, a Chinese watercolor from an Egyptian mural, a baroque from a Renaissance painting, a Matisse from a Picasso. Styles used to represent and conserve shared, symbolic understandings of the world have dominated non-European, ancient, and older European practices of painting (→ Sign). By contrast, paintings done in Europe since the late eighteenth century have aimed to critique dominant cultural expectations, a corollary of which has been the proliferation of styles that emphasize self-expression, a practice not found in other cultural contexts.

Painting styles vary on a spectrum from the pictographic to the highly realistic, the abstract to the figurative. Pictographic methods are arranged parallel to the picture plane rather than modeled in receding space, as in western painting aimed at evoking the real world on a flat surface, a function that picture frames reinforce (→ Perspective, Pictorial). The practice of twentieth-century painting moved away from creating such a window on the world in favor of emphasizing the inherent flatness of the picture plane, which had the effect of creating the twofold, potential space associated with psychoanalytic approaches to painting (→ Psychology in Communication Processes).

When paintings perform a ritual function, style changes only if the underlying beliefs wane, or if a representational innovation brings further prestige and purpose to the way paintings serve their prescribed role (→ Rituals in Popular Communication). Such an innovation happened when a new preaching style influenced late fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century Italian artists to move away from the schematic Byzantine style toward the invention of naturalism, in which the artist paints not only what happens in the sacred story but how this happens in a moment of time from an eyewitness point of view that the congregation shares (→ Art as Communication). Foreshortening is the representational master key for unlocking this innovation, as it eliminates inconsistencies in the projection of the visual field, a corollary of which is the way halos evolved from flat, gold circles into thin, linear ellipses.

Paintings can be made by the *process of accretion* associated with the accumulated revisions made in oil paintings, in which new applications of opaque or transparent paint obfuscate or modify previous layers, or by the alternative *process of omission*, in which brush strokes follow the mark-making tradition of calligraphy common to China and Japan. Both accretion and omission require a sophisticated knowledge of the medium.

An example of how a painting style develops in *response to technological innovation* can be found in the way the production of tube paints facilitated mobility when the Impressionists recorded everyday life. The Impressionists' coarse, grainy visual codes and improvised cropping techniques are also indebted to the invention of → photography (→ Realism; Realism in Film and Photography).

To understand the symbolic content of paintings requires knowledge of their context. An example would be the symbols used in Aboriginal Australian tribal art that do not resemble the phenomenal reality of the things they represent. In order to read such text-analog paintings the visual code, like the alphabet and its many combinations, has to be learned. Paintings in the western tradition that approximate more to phenomenal reality can also carry indirect, text-analog meanings. An example is a painting by Dürer that shows a man holding a large sword in one hand and a book in the other. To understand that this is a representation of St. Paul would require familiarity with his comment about scripture being like a two-edged sword, which became Paul's attributes (→ Iconography). Wittgenstein (1953) describes the ability to see one thing as something else as "aspect seeing," which he distinguished from the ordinary "seeing" of phenomenal reality.

Other examples of aspect seeing are the way visual elements are used to create synesthetic metaphors of value on the basis of equivalences across sensory modes. The preference of neo-classical artists for composing paintings with "honest," clear outlines is an example of a style being given the sensory equivalence of integrity (→ Visual Representation). This judgment about the symbolic potency of visual expression emerged as a reaction to the previous, "corrupt" rococo painterly style. Understanding the potency of expression of visual codes in painting requires such web-like registers from which conscious and unconscious comparisons are made.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Artifacts ▶ Code ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Iconography ▶ Meaning ▶ Perspective, Pictorial ▶ Photography ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Realism ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Rituals in Popular Communication ▶ Sign ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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# Paperback Fiction

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There have been several “paperback revolutions” in fiction publishing, the first of which unfolded during the first half of the nineteenth century in the United Kingdom, Europe, and the United States (→ Fiction; Fictional Media Content). Cheap bulk postal costs encouraged American publishers to print royalty-free foreign novels (those of Charles Dickens, for example) in lightweight large quarto or newspaper formats, offering cheap installments to subscribers. They could thus be claimed as periodicals, gaining access to third-class postal rates and railroad distribution across the country. Schurman (1996, 63) notes that by the mid-1840s in the United States, “paperback novels could be had through the mails at six cents each or sixteen for one dollar.” Park Benjamin had in fact issued what is generally taken to be the first paperbound full-length novel in June 1840, Charles Lever’s *Charles O’Malley*, a military romance. Smaller paperback quarto-sized books followed, usually as part of an ongoing series of publications, like the Beadle Dime Novels of the 1860s and 1870s, with their sewn spines and woodcut cover illustrations.

The first *dime novel*, published by Irwin P. Beadle in June 1860, was a story first serialized twenty years earlier in 1839, Ann S. Stephens’ *Malaeska, the Indian wife of the white hunter* – reflecting the ongoing taste for frontier adventure fiction. In the United Kingdom, George Routledge reprinted the famous frontier American novelist James Fenimore Cooper’s naval adventure *The red rover* in a new pocketsize paperback form in December 1848. Routledge’s Railway Library – easily identified through their yellow covers (known as “yellowbacks”) – ran alongside a number of other publishers’ Library or Standard series and lasted for around fifty years until 1899. By the 1860s, the first paperback revolution was in full swing, with publishers such as Routledge and Chapman and Hall investing in long-running series of new works and reprints, selling for a shilling or less each: hack writing in some cases, recycled literary classics in others.

In the later part of the nineteenth century, a new novel might go through *several phases*: serialization in a periodical or newspaper, then publication as a relatively expensive “three-decker” or three-volume hardcover novel (a typical format for literary fiction), followed by various reprints at ever cheaper prices depending on its popularity and longevity (Eliot 2000). The decline of the three-decker novel in the 1890s coincided with another paperback boom, although this was somewhat curtailed in the United States in 1891 when Congress’s Platt-Simonds Bill forced publishers to pay royalties to foreign authors. Genre fiction, however, began to flourish. Detective stories, westerns, and adventure fiction were printed on the cheapest kind of “pulp” paper and were closely tied to the rapidly growing pulp magazine market. But the various Library series – like J. M. Dent’s Everyman Library series, founded in 1906 – continued to reprint the literary classics in cheap paperback form well into the early twentieth century.

Mass-market paperback publishing – the third paperback revolution – properly began in *Germany* with Albatross Books, founded in 1932. Size was standardized (181 × 111

mm) and the books were color-coded: orange for fiction, for example. The company's success and format was noticed by Allan Lane, who at the time was director of Bodley Head in London, a prestigious publisher. Lane bought up publication rights to a range of novels and established a new publishing house in Britain devoted exclusively to paperbacks, Penguin. The first 10 titles, released in 1935, included novels by Ernest Hemingway and Agatha Christie. Again, the books were color-coded: orange and white for fiction, green for crime fiction, and so on. In 1945 Penguin began its Penguin Classics series, securing the paperback's affiliation to quality works of literature. Penguin's main British competitor was Pan – Ian Fleming's publisher – which, by contrast, embraced the lower popular genres such as horror and showcased a more lurid kind of cover illustration. In the United States, Penguin's success was replicated in 1939 by Fair de Graff's Pocket Books, with its kangaroo logo. The first 10 paperback titles here were led by James Hilton's *Lost horizon*, but again included a novel by Agatha Christie as well as a paperback volume of five of Shakespeare's tragedies.

The paperback novel has always accommodated both quality literature – pirated or reprinted literary classics – and genre fiction, and little seems to have changed, even today. The paperback publishers most commonly associated with mass-market genre fiction are Harlequin (founded in 1949) and Mills and Boon (founded in 1908, and initially specializing in hardcover novels). These two publishers merged in 1972, rapidly extending the range of their category romance fiction for which they are best known and selling around 30 million romance novels in the following year (Dixon 1999) – but also venturing into literary fiction through the MIRA imprint. Most literary fiction is now published in paperback only; on the other hand, many genre novelists are published first in hardcover, with paperback reprints following some time later on. Mass-market paperbacks are distinguished from trade paperbacks: the former remain small, pulp-like, and relatively cheap, while the latter are usually the same size as hardcover novels and are an overt sign of the paperback novel's continued ties to quality fiction.

SEE ALSO: ► Book ► Fiction ► Fictional Media Content ► Popular Communication

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# Paradigm

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“Paradigm” refers to a fundamental set of assumptions about reality and the appropriate ways of studying it. A discipline is said to be paradigmatic when there is general agreement within it as to basic statements of fact, background knowledge, research practices, warrants for claims and evidence, and criteria for accepting new knowledge.

Applied originally to natural sciences, and later extended to all forms of scholarship, the concept of paradigm is directly traceable to Thomas Kuhn’s (1962) *The structure of scientific revolutions*. That book was part of a sociology of science movement that went on to include Berger and Luckmann’s *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge* (1966) and Latour and Woolgar’s (1979) *Laboratory life: The social construction of scientific facts* (→ Constructivism). In Kuhn’s formulation, a paradigm was first an achievement by a scientist or group of scientists that was both extraordinary and anticipated, and then sufficiently open-ended that it attracted other scientists and provided for their work. Watson and Crick’s double-spiral helix model of DNA is a good example of a paradigmatic achievement. It organized scientific thinking and practice in the field of genetics and certainly has provided work for geneticists for more than 50 years. Initially a proposed solution, it has become the received view (or accepted explanation) for how cell replication works. It is this widespread acceptance and nearly total absence of dissent by any qualified scientist that nominate the model as a paradigm. The science associated with the achievement becomes paradigmatic and normalized and the principles that accorded the achievement become foundational and incontrovertible.

In a *normalized science*, the daily work involves the accretion of expected results using hypotheses that develop from the implications of the theory and highly conventionalized methods that are appropriate to the theory. The process of this daily work builds a mosaic of where the theory works (the research hypothesis was supported) and where the experiment failed. The shift in attribution is important to note. Successful experiments (→ Experimental Design) demonstrate the efficacy of the theory; unsuccessful experiments demonstrate a failure of the experimenter. In this manner, normalized science preserves its theory despite the appearance of contradictory evidence or anomalies. Over the course of time, however, contradictions and anomalies can build to where the exploration of alternatives becomes possible or even encouraged and the potential for a new paradigmatic achievement rises. As these alternatives are explored, rival explanations develop that vie with one another and the normalized view. With sufficient competition the field loses its normalized status and becomes pre-paradigmatic, with multiple explanations available and none capable of commanding it. Some practitioners adhere to the old, some to one of the new; and others float among those available as they position themselves in the field.

Importantly, Kuhn’s argument is not about truth but about the *human practice of science*. A theory is paradigmatic not because it is true but because it attracts practitioners

who can accomplish their goals with it. The double helix indeed may not be true, but, no matter, it provides the mainstream for the current science of genetics.

If we use that last sentence as the criterion, we would have to conclude that communication science is not normalized. There is no mainstream. There are certainly pretenders to the crown, and there are major theoretical families that attract a number of practitioners, but none has achieved a command of the field. Communication, therefore, can be described as a *pre-paradigmatic science* with multiple constellations of theories, each making its bid as the best available. This is not to say that each constellation is equally distributed (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

A particular practitioner could easily spend her entire career interacting with like-minded colleagues, crafting normalized studies, publishing in favorable journals, and teaching the principles of her received view. She would, of course, encounter and respect dissent, but such dissent would be considered wrong or more likely simply irrelevant. From this standpoint, the practitioner could easily argue that the practice in which she participates is the normalized science of the discipline and that the theories she supports are both foundational and incontrovertible. It is clear evidence of the pre-paradigmatic status of communication that such arguments appear regularly in our journals, in association meetings, in our classrooms, at the bar, and over coffee. Claims in these arguments to be the paradigm or even a paradigm are part of the political activity for ascension that are hallmarks of a pre-paradigmatic science. We will recognize communication as a normalized science when those arguments are as rare as the arguments against the double helix.

Kuhn's formulation of paradigm and normalized science works quite well across all forms of scholarship. For example, Stuart Hall (1980) argued for the then presence of two opposing formulations for → cultural studies, one experiential, the other structural. He went on in that article to propose a third, selecting elements from his opposing forces and adding elements of his own. It does not appear that Hall settled anything, as multiple authors have proposed other formulations since 1980 (cultural resistance, community, hybridity, postcolonialism [→ Postcolonial Theory], transnationalism, etc.). It is arguable, of course, but none of these appears to be paradigmatic in stature.

A paradigm can also be conceived, outside Kuhn's original formulation, as a descriptor for a community of scholarship with the background knowledge, research practices, and emblematic claims that are the signature of that community. Each such community has its rules of membership, requirements for good practice, warrants for claim and evidence, criteria of excellence, and increasingly its own divisional home in the associations and journal outlets of communication. Within a given community's boundaries, paradigmatic characteristics can appear, but they do not reach across the discipline.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Postcolonial Theory

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## Paralanguage

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Paralanguage refers to the nonverbal elements of speech – such as vocal pitch, intonation, and speaking tempo – that can be used to communicate attitudes, convey emotion, or modify meaning. In simple terms, paralanguage can be thought of as how something is said rather than what is said.

The study of paralanguage is known as “paralinguistics.” Early work on paralanguage emerged in the 1950s with the pioneering research of George Trager and Henry Lee Smith (Hall & Trager 1953; Trager 1958), who noted that kinesics (body movements) and vocalics (voice quality and other aspects of the voice) are part of the language system. Building on their work, other researchers focused on vocal pauses (hems, ahs, coughs), speaking rate, volume, and quality (Pittenger et al. 1960). Since that time, paralanguage has been studied and applied to numerous domains including psychiatry, child development, courtship (→ Interpersonal Attraction), and deception (→ Deceptive Message Production).

The idea that how one says something may impact the meaning of what is said is a familiar concept. Most often, humans use paralanguage purposefully, though perhaps subconsciously, as many of these patterns have been learned since infancy. For example, when something is said sarcastically, the voice may take on a negative tone to accompany a positive word or phrase, or particular intonations may modify the meaning of the words that are spoken. The voice may also send messages and reveal information apart from the words. For example, → emotions are signaled through the voice. When someone is aroused, the pitch and resonance of the individual’s voice change due to physiological changes in the vocal cords. Loudness may convey boisterous emotions; falling intonation may convey sadness or distress.

### **FACTORS AFFECTING PARALANGUAGE**

There are many different factors (e.g., biological, physiological, socio-economic, cultural) that can affect the paralanguage an individual employs. For instance, biological factors such as gender, age, and anatomical features heavily influence the physical ability to

produce certain sounds or ranges of sounds. Pitch usually deepens as one enters into adolescence and into adulthood and then elevates again in senior years. Additionally, the anatomy of the male vocal tract typically produces deeper-pitched sounds than the anatomy of the female tract.

Many paralinguistic cues are affected by cultural or regional factors. Individuals who live in the southeast United States, for instance, employ a slowed speech tempo with lasting emphasis on certain syllables, resulting in what is sometimes referred to as a drawl. Residents of the US state of Indiana are known for their nasality. Dialects the world over include vocal as well as verbal features that distinguish them.

Voices also differ from individual to individual. A voice style consists of numerous paralinguistic elements or cues. Paralinguistic cues refer to elements such as pitch, tempo, loudness, voice quality, and others. Each person's vocal cavity, tongue, and nasal cavities produce voice qualities that are so individual that law enforcement can use them to develop voiceprints that are analogous to fingerprints. Humans detect these differences as distinctive voice styles such as breathy, tense, raspy, or resonant (→ Communicator Style). For example, celebrities and media personalities are quite often recognized by their distinctive voice qualities or styles.

## PARALINGUISTIC CUES

Paralinguistic cues can be roughly subdivided into five general categories – frequency, intensity, fluency, voice quality, and timing. Figure 1 shows several cues in each of these categories. A description of each category and its cues follows.

### Frequency and Intensity

Any paralinguistic cue that deals with pitch is grouped under the frequency category. Of all paralinguistic cues, pitch (which is the perceptual label for fundamental frequency) is perhaps the most versatile in conveying different messages. In many languages, such as English, Spanish, and German, pitch, in conjunction with emphasis on specific words (e.g., “Well”), can convey a change in meaning (e.g., surprise, contempt, anger, disappointment) even though the word is the same. However, in certain other languages, such as Chinese, Thai, and Vietnamese, pitch inflections may actually convey a different word (Poyatos 2002). Changing pitch at junctures such as the end of sentence boundaries can

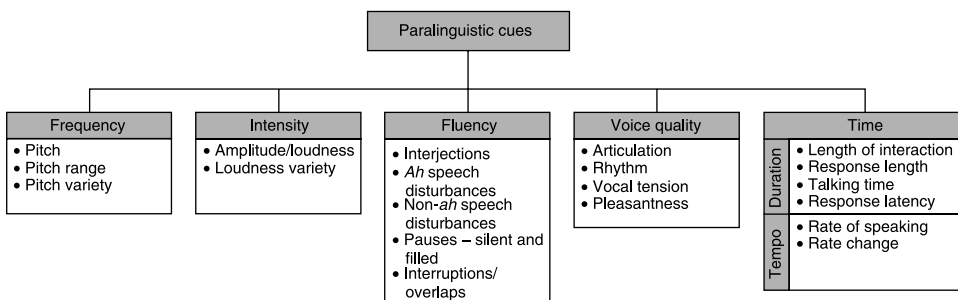


Figure 1 Paralinguistic cues and categories

also change meaning. In English, when a question is posed, even if not in correct grammatical structure, the voice pitch is typically elevated at the end of a sentence.

Pitch and its variability have been linked to physiological changes due to arousal and certain types of emotion. Researchers suggest that low pitch levels (in association with other paralinguistic cues) may be associated with boredom, anger, and disappointment, whereas elevated pitch levels may be associated with happiness, surprise, and anger again (Davitz & Davitz 1964; Scherer & Ekman 1982). Some emotions (e.g., anger) may either increase or decrease pitch level, requiring an observer to rely on other cues to infer the emotion. In general, pitch levels rise when an individual is trying to communicate praise or sincerity, or to appear less rigid.

Vocal cues dealing with the loudness of the voice are grouped under the intensity category. Emotions such as joy and anger may be conveyed using increased volume, whereas sadness and empathy are often conveyed using decreased volume (→ Comforting Communication). Research also suggests that loudness may reveal a speaker's sincerity or confidence (Rockwell et al. 1997). Certain emotions typically employ a greater variation in loudness than others. For example, someone who is angry often exhibits larger variation in volume than someone who is calm. Additionally, the intensity of voice may be used strategically to assert power or dominance in an interaction (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction).

### Fluency

Any paralinguistic cue that deals with the general flow of the speech belongs to the fluency category (→ Speech Fluency and Speech Errors). This category can be further divided into interjections, checkbacks, interruptions, and silent pauses.

Interjections, also known as vocal segregates, include words that interrupt the smooth flow of speech. *Ah* speech disturbances are a common type of interjection. Examples of *ah* speech disturbances include words such as *um* and *ah*. Interjections are common in speech, but are typically omitted in written text. Non-*ah* speech disturbances include other filler words that are not in the *ah* speech disturbances sub-category. Examples include *like*, *I mean*, and *whatever*. Also included are other forms of dysfluency such as repetitions, stutters, garbled sounds, hesitations, and halting speech.

Another interruption to the smooth flow of speech occurs when an individual interjects a question that requires a response from the conversational partner. These questions are often used to assess whether or not there is shared understanding of what is being communicated, but they also can be used by the person speaking to allow for more time to gather his or her thoughts. These questions are known as checkbacks. Examples of checkbacks include questions such as *Know what I mean?* *Ya know?* *Right?* *OK?* and *Got it?* (Buchholz 2000). Another type of interruption is overlap in speech of the subject and the interviewer. Often such overlap results in a change of turns.

Not all speech disturbances are filled with audible sounds. Like other disturbances, silent pauses may allow individuals to assess understanding or prepare for upcoming speech. A certain amount of silence exists in most speech. A silent pause is considered a speech disturbance when the amount of silence in the pause exceeds the amount of silence expected. The tempo, rhythm, and silent pauses of earlier speech impact the amount of silence that is expected.

### Voice Quality

Paralinguistic cues that deal with articulation, rhythm, and tenseness or pleasantness of the voice are grouped under the voice quality category (→ Voice, Prosody, and Laughter). *Articulation* may be associated with conveying different emotions. Researchers have observed that emotions such as pleasure, happiness, and surprise exhibit more clipped articulation than boredom, disgust, or sadness (Rockwell et al. 1997). Other researchers suggest that clipped articulation is often used “for addressing someone in a harsh or impatient tone (‘Com’n, get out’f here!’); warning against impending danger (‘Watch out!’); remembering suddenly (‘Wait!’)” (Poyatos 2002).

*Rhythm of speech* involves the combination of pitch, loudness, syllabic duration, and overall tempo (Poyatos 2002). Other paralinguistic cues, such as nonfluencies and response latency, also impact the perception of the rhythm of a conversation. Rhythm can be viewed on a scale from staccato-like, clipped articulation at one end to smooth, drawn-out speech at the other. *Vocal tension* or stress in the voice can be caused by a physiological change due to arousal. When a person is under stress, micro-muscle tremors in the vocal tract are transmitted through speech. These micro-muscle tremors are generated by the vocal cords that vibrate in the 8–12 Hz range.

Other attributes of voice quality related to vocal pleasantness – such as resonance, breathiness, and nasality – may also change when an individual experiences different emotions. Researchers have found that individuals often deem utterances false when there is a switch in the speaker’s voice quality. For more detailed descriptions of voice styles and qualities – such as breathy, laryngealized, nasal, falsetto, harsh, squeaking, screeching, squealing, squawking, hollow, whining, whimpering, twangy, and moaning – see Poyatos (2002).

### Timing

Paralinguistic cues related to the duration or the speed of an utterance are grouped under the timing category. The duration sub-category includes cues for overall length of an interaction, response length, total amount of talk time, and response latency. Length of interaction refers to the total duration of an interaction between conversational partners. Response length refers to the total length of an individual’s response to a question. Speaking duration refers to the proportion of the total time of the interaction that the subject spends talking or interacting. *Response latency* refers to the amount of time between when a question ends and when the subject begins a response. A response latency that is too long or too short interrupts the overall flow of the conversation. Many people attribute prolonged response latency to increased cognitive effort and a short response latency to anticipation, impatience, or wanting to get the next word in.

The *tempo* sub-category includes cues that gauge the rate of an individual’s speaking and the change in that rate. Rate of speaking refers to the “relative speed or slowness in the sequential delivery of words, sentences and the whole of a person’s speech” (Poyatos 2002, 8). Nonfluencies such as interjections and filled pauses affect the tempo of a person’s speech. Tempo has been formally calculated by researchers by taking the number of words or syllables spoken divided by the total time of a response or by the proportion

Table 1 Sample emotions and corresponding cues

Emotion	Pitch	Pitch contour	Pitch variation	Loudness	Rate	Enunciation
Anger	High	Up	Small	Loud	Fast	Clipped
Happiness	High	Up	Large	Loud	Fast	Somewhat clipped
Sadness	Low	Down	Small	Soft	Slow	Slurred

Source: Adapted from Scherer and Oshinsky (1977)

of voiced segments to total voiced and silence segments. Tempo is a major component of an individual's basic voice style, but it can be influenced by a number of factors. Certain grammatical elements, such as a parenthetical comment, are often conveyed with a change in tempo. Additionally, when someone misspeaks, stutters, or introduces errant information, often the subsequent repairing sentence is said with increased tempo. Tempo may also be tied to certain emotions or states of arousal. For instance, someone who is angry may have very slow, deliberate, tense speech. Someone who is confident may speak at a faster tempo. Researchers have studied tempo in a variety of contexts, including differences in the rate of speaking throughout a conversation or interview.

## PARALANGUAGE TO CONVEY EMOTIONS AND PERSONALITY TRAITS

An individual can convey emotions through a variety of paralinguistic cues. For example, one may convey sincerity about an opinion by using a softer but firm voice. Table 1 provides sample emotions and a few of their corresponding cues. For a more comprehensive analysis of the association between paralanguage characteristics and different emotions see Scherer (2003).

Paralinguistic cues can also be used to infer personality traits. For instance, people who are animated or extraverted often have a faster rate of speaking than those who aren't. Conversely, people who are withdrawn tend to have a "flatter" tone of voice. While paralinguistic cues such as these can be broadly associated with personality traits, it would be incorrect to conclude that these associations are consistent all of the time.

Paralanguage is an integral part of our communication toolset that allows us to convey emotion, modify meaning, or communicate an attitude. Most paralanguage occurs in a face-to-face environment. However, with the development and increased use of technology in recent years, conveying paralanguage through other communication media is becoming more popular. For instance, individuals using text-only communication channels might use font size, coloring, capitalization, or non-alphabetic characters as a proxy for traditional paralinguistic cues. Instant messaging programs have implemented emoticons that can substitute for paralinguistic cues not available in text-based communication media (→ Mediated Social Interaction). Even with the increased availability and understanding of substitutes, however, the use of paralanguage in text is relatively limited.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Deceptive Message Production ▶ Emotion ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Interpersonal Communication

► Mediated Social Interaction ► Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ► Speech Fluency and Speech Errors ► Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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## **Parasocial Interactions and Relationships**

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The term “parasocial interaction” (PSI) was first used by Horton and Wohl (1956) to describe viewers’ responses to media characters (called “personae” in PSI research; singular: “persona”) during media consumption. Horton and Strauss (1957) set down the first systematic descriptions and observations of PSI as well as of more long-term responses to personae, known as parasocial relationships (PSR). These two articles can be regarded as the beginnings of theorizing about PSI and PSR, as empirical data were still nonexistent.

In the following decades, many communication scholars picked up the idea of PSI and PSR and investigated various aspects of the concepts. Uses-and-gratifications researchers, for example (→ Uses and Gratifications), have regarded PSI and PSR primarily as motivators for → selective exposure or as a special type of interpersonal involvement that combines different phenomena like → interaction, → identification, and long-term relationships with media personae (Rubin et al. 1985; → Relationship Development). Culturally diverse scientific communities, especially Anglo-American, German, and Scandinavian researchers, have worked on PSI and PSR. Additionally, distinct scientific



disciplines, such as communication, social psychology, media psychology, film studies, and the arts have applied PSI and PSR research. Since all of these researchers have implemented and interpreted the concept on the basis of their preferred research → paradigm, it is not surprising that even today, a coherent and broadly accepted concept of PSI and PSR does not exist. PSI and PSR have been used to explain an extensive spectrum of media exposure phenomena, where a recollection and revival of the primary idea as well as a theoretical foundation and a meta-theoretical discussion are now seen as necessary (Giles, 2002; Schramm et al. 2002).

## CONCEPT

Horton and Wohl (1956) considered the illusion of interaction and interactivity between media users and personae (→ Interactivity in Reception) as one of the most central attributes of mass media consumption. Television as an audiovisual medium ought to be especially able to constitute an *illusion of face-to-face interaction*. Nevertheless, this mediated form of communication and social interaction is one-sided because the persona's action can reach the media user, while the media user's reaction cannot reach the persona. Second-order reactions of the personae comparable to those of real interpersonal interaction drop out. Thus, PSI shows similarities to forms of *asymmetrical* interactions in → interpersonal communication.

A notable characteristic of PSI is that in spite of the missing feedback, channel viewers often feel addressed by the personae. Referring to this, PSI research has shown that the same key impulses that play an important role in social interactions are relevant for the constitution of PSI. *Key impulses* are, for example, the mediated spatial distance between the personae and the viewers (obtrusiveness), the duration of exposure to these personae (persistence), the personae's attractiveness, and especially their nonverbal and verbal addressing performance. By responding to these addressing cues, media users give up their passive roles of being observers and become "actors."

This activity manifests itself in different forms, like rising interest, intensive thoughts and deliberations, tense body movements, agile facial expressions and gestures, and/or speaking to the TV screen. The *two-level model of PSI* (Hartmann et al. 2004) conceptualizes those viewer responses to media personae as being composed of different cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioral processes. These processes are seen as following up on initial impression formation (or persona recognition), after which they emerge into different interaction patterns, change dynamically within the course of media exposure, and are strongly influenced by factors relating to both personae and viewers. Due to a wide range of concurring processes, PSI can be classified – similar to involvement (→ Involvement with Media Content) – as a kind of *meta-concept* composed of narrower concepts such as → attention, comprehension, knowledge activation, evaluation, social comparison (→ Social Comparison Theory), sympathy, empathy (→ Empathy Theory), emotional contagion, and physical activity (Klimmt et al. 2006).

In contrast to the notion of PSI and PSR held by uses-and-gratifications research in the 1970s and 1980s, most research conducted during the last 15 years argues for a *clear distinction between PSI and PSR*. PSI, in this sense, specifically means the one-sided process of perception of the media person during media exposure. In contrast, PSR

stands for a cross-situational relationship that a viewer or user holds with a media person, which includes specific cognitive and affective components. While PSI is restricted to the duration of media exposure, PSR can endure beyond the single exposure sequence – like a friendship that exists between two persons beyond their face-to-face communication sequences. As a consequence, a first PSI sequence between a viewer and a persona is able to constitute a PSR after media exposure, while this PSR in turn is able to influence future motivations and selection processes as well as PSI processes in subsequent media exposure sequences (Gleich 1997).

### EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

PSI and PSR have been investigated in relation to diverse personae such as politicians, → news anchormen, → soap opera and film characters, TV talk show characters (→ Broadcast Talk; Celebrity Journalists), comedians, radio hosts, virtual avatars in computer games (→ Video Games; Avatars and Agents) or on the → Internet, comic figures (→ Comics), and characters in audio stories. In spite of the heterogeneity in the evolution of PSI and PSR research and the focus on positively evaluated PSI/PSR, the existing empirical findings provide some fundamental insight into the phenomenon. Most studies have used the terms PSI and PSR interchangeably, so most findings cannot be attributed exclusively to one of the two concepts. Therefore the following extract of key findings will not differentiate between PSI and PSR.

Both the attractiveness (physical, social, and task attractiveness) and perceived similarity of the media character seem to be important antecedents (Rubin & McHugh 1987; Turner 1993). Personae often exhibit character traits that receivers admire and would like to have (Caughey 1986). *Gender* also plays a role in this respect (→ Personality and Exposure to Communication). Vorderer (1996), for example, found that female viewers tend to admire the attractiveness of personae more than male viewers and thus tend to hold stronger PSR in the sense of worshipping personae. Interactions and relationships with female TV characters are often more intense than with their male counterparts. However, females display greater admiration for male characters and vice versa, which again points to the importance of cross-gender attractiveness for the formation of PSI/PSR (Vorderer & Knobloch 1996).

Findings regarding the effects of *age and education* are mixed. Vorderer (1996) found that PSI/PSR with stars of TV series is intense among older, less educated individuals who frequently watch television, but is also intense among adolescent fans of TV series, in contrast to middle-aged groups. Gleich (1997) and Levy (1979) found that strong PSI/PSR is associated with the age of the onlookers. In turn, Giles and Maltby (2004) pointed out the important role of PSI/PSR among adolescents. Nordlund (1978) reported that the intensity of PSI/PSR increases as the variety and number of spare-time alternatives decrease, which is a typical process as people get older. The intensity of media use seems to be positively associated with strong PSI/PSR in various investigations (Nordlund 1978; Levy 1979; Rubin et al. 1985; Vorderer 1996; Gleich 1997).

Accordingly, Rubin and Perse (1987) reported that PSI/PSR with *soap characters* increases with the strength of affinity to soaps and the intensity of exposure to them. Therefore, the frequency of selective exposure might be crucial; the effect that older

people tend to report stronger PSI/PSR might be diminished if the amount of television usage were controlled. It is not loneliness that makes individuals more prone to turn to media characters. Rather, individuals with high *social abilities* tend to report strong PSI/PSR (Cole & Leets 1999). However, shyness (a perceived lack of social competency) might hinder individuals in fulfilling their need for interpersonal interactions. Consequently, Vorderer and Knobloch (1996) found that PSI/PSR is highest among individuals who are shy, but feel a greater need for social interactions. Additionally, strong PSI during media reception can result in more intense post-viewing discussions and cognitions that influence the constitution and development of PSR (Rubin & Perse 1987).

In summary, findings suggest that “social and parasocial interaction are complementary, perhaps because they require similar social skills” (Cohen 2004, 192). Analogously, research shows that PSR develops quite similarly to real-life relationships (Rubin & McHugh 1987; Perse & Rubin 1989; Cohen 2004) and that the “typical” PSR is comparable to the relationship someone has with his/her neighbor (Gleich 1997).

## METHODOLOGY

The main problem with the previous findings is the nonstandardized measurement used across the studies (→ Measurement Theory; Hartmann & Schramm 2006). Most PSI/PSR research is based on the parasocial-interaction scale (Rubin et al. 1985) or variations/adaptations of that scale (→ Scales; Scales and Indices). Whereas Rubin et al. (1985) found a one-dimensional structure, Gleich (1997) and other researchers explored three underlying dimensions of the PSI scale, from (1) empathy and involvement in the reception process, through (2) emotional relationships in the post-viewing phase, to (3) previewing activities and selection processes.

The PSI scale was initially developed “to measure feelings of audience relationship with local television news personalities” (Rubin et al. 1985, 176). Therefore, in every other context besides television news the scale has to be modified and supplemented. The scale’s heterogeneity has constricted comparisons of PSI/PSR findings across different media genres, media personae, and media audiences for the last two decades (Hartmann & Schramm 2006). Some other measurement tools have now evolved, such as the “audience persona interaction scale” (Auter & Palmgreen 2000) or a seven-dimensional PSR scale (Gleich 1997). The “parasocial breakup scale” (Cohen 2003) consists of 13 items measuring the anticipated feelings and coping strategies of someone whose favorite TV person has been dropped. This scale primarily measures the intensity of the anticipated loss and is therefore an indirect measurement of PSR’s intensity. Schramm and Hartmann (in press) developed a PSI questionnaire based on the two-level model of PSI that can be applied directly after TV exposure. It contains 14 scales (one scale for each of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions), measures positive as well as negative and neutral PSI, is suitable for all TV personae and genres without modifying the items, and allows for comparisons of findings across different studies.

Although research on PSI/PSR can look back over 50 years of tradition, the measurements and findings in use are still very heterogeneous. The challenge for future research is to provide measurement standards and to build up standards of PSI/PSR findings that are generated, confirmed, and validated across several studies using the same measurements.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Celebrity Journalists  
 ▶ Comics ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Identification ▶ Interaction ▶ Interactivity in Reception  
 ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Involvement with Media Content  
 ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ News ▶ Paradigm ▶ Perception ▶ Personality and Exposure to Communication  
 ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices  
 ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Uses and Gratifications  
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## Parental Mediation Strategies

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“Parental mediation” refers to the interactions that parents have with children about their media use. The majority of the research has focused on interactions involving children’s television viewing. Most scholars believe that parental mediation is comprised of three dimensions.

The first dimension refers to parent–child *communication about television* (→ Media Messages and Family Communication). This dimension has been given numerous labels, including active mediation, instructive mediation, and evaluative guidance. There can be great variation in the content of parent–child communication about television. Parents might express negative attitudes about programs and content (e.g., “I don’t like this program”), encourage children to view the material more critically (e.g., “do you think this would happen in real life?”), provide supplemental information (e.g., “this show is filmed in Los Angeles, California”), or endorse the material or the characters’ behaviors (e.g., “she is my favorite character”).

The second dimension refers to the *rules and regulations* that parents impose on their children's television viewing. Most researchers call this type of interaction "restrictive mediation," although some use the term "restrictive guidance." Parents may create daily rules about the number or type of programs that are acceptable, what time of day television may be viewed, or the location where viewing can occur. Parents may vary in whether and how they negotiate viewing rules with their children and how strict they are in enforcing those rules.

The third dimension is called → "*co-viewing*," or "social co-viewing," and is defined as parents and children viewing television together. Parents might co-view because they wish to protect their children from harmful content or help them benefit from educational or positive content. In this case, parents are said to engage in "intentional co-viewing." Other times, however, parents simply wish to view the same programs as their children because of shared interests or as a function of them being in the same place at the same time. The latter type of co-viewing can be thought of as "passive co-viewing" (Bybee et al. 1982; Nathanson 2001; Valkenburg et al. 1999).

Of the three types of parental mediation, co-viewing occurs most frequently and parent-child communication occurs least commonly. Parents who co-view usually have positive attitudes toward television and enjoy watching programs. Parent-child communication and restrictive mediation are more likely to occur among parents who have more negative attitudes toward television, especially regarding their children's viewing. Mothers are most likely to engage in all types of parental mediation.

Each of the three types of parental mediation has been linked with a variety of *effects among children* (→ Educational Television, Children's Responses to; Socialization by the Media; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). Most research has been conducted on parent-child communication. This work shows that parent-child discussion about television is related to less aggression, better television plot comprehension, and more critical viewing among children (Austin 1993; Desmond et al. 1985; Nathanson 1999). When experiments (→ Experimental Design) are conducted in which researchers instead of parents deliver mediation message to children while they view television in a laboratory, the results suggest that active mediation also can reduce sex-role stereotypes, enhance learning from educational material, and diminish fright responses to scary content (Cantor 1994; Corder-Bolz 1980). The effects of parent-child communication about television may be strongest for younger children, such as those who are still in elementary school. Studies of adolescents sometimes fail to find effects or observe unintended outcomes. In some cases, for instance, parent-adolescent communication is linked with problematic outcomes among adolescents (Nathanson & Botta 2003). It is likely that parents need to adapt their communication to find a style that is persuasive to this age group.

*Restrictive mediation* is associated with positive outcomes, such as less aggression and better comprehension of television plots. However, restrictive mediation also is prone to backfiring effects, especially among adolescents. Research has found that parents who are very strict have children who are more aggressive (Nathanson 1999). In addition, rules may lead adolescents to search for the forbidden content elsewhere, such as at their friends' houses. On the other hand, children who receive both restrictive and active mediation are less likely to experience this kind of outcome (Nathanson 2002).

Co-viewing seems to enhance the effects of the co-viewed material (Salomon 1977). In the case of educational material, this effect is desirable. That is, children whose parents co-view educational content learn more from the material than do children whose parents do not co-view. However, the same type of effect has been observed when parents co-view antisocial content. For example, parental co-viewing also has been associated with increased aggression and more sex-role stereotypes among children (Nathanson 2001; Rothschild & Morgan 1987). Researchers speculate that the presence of parents leads children to pay greater attention to the co-viewed content and attach more importance to it, thereby making media effects more likely.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Child Protection, Media Regulations for ▶ Co-Viewing ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Media Messages and Family Communication ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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# Participative Processes in Organizations

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A core concept in organizational communication, participative processes refer to a wide range of efforts aimed at initiating or enhancing the involvement of employees in decision-making activities to which they would otherwise not have access by virtue of their positioning within an organizational hierarchy (→ Organizational Communication). Participative processes are generally discussed in opposition to or as a way to ameliorate problems associated with the routine functioning of bureaucratic hierarchy, that is, traditional top-down organizational structures (→ Bureaucracy and Communication; Organizational Structure). Top-down hierarchies allocate tasks, responsibility, and authority across positions in an organization in ways that control and coordinate organizational processes (→ Control and Authority in Organizations), but that may also inhibit flows of information and expertise, alienate employees, and, in so doing, diminish the organization's abilities to solve problems.

Participative processes take a *variety of forms*. In early formulations as practiced in the US and other industrial contexts, participation was conceived as essentially managerially driven, a prerogative managers exercised at their discretion. The manager's choice to consult with employees, to whatever degree and on selected issues, was a strategic one, made in response to the demands of a particular decision-making situation, and without accompanying changes in the organization's formal distribution of responsibility and authority. In other contexts, participation is practiced in formal programmatic initiatives, frequently organized around the creation of contexts for communication that function as alternative or parallel structures within the organization. These programs include programs for quality of work life, quality circles, Scanlon plans and other profit-sharing arrangements, and, more recently, employee involvement programs and autonomous or self-directed work teams. In Europe, participation has been strongly linked to national political processes and historically incorporated through legislative demands and union contracts into the formal functioning of organizations, such as in Swedish and German models of employee–employer co-determination. In other contexts, participation is practiced in ways chosen by employees who are organizational owners, as in employee stock ownership plans, worker cooperatives, and other alternatively structured organizations.

This variety suggests considerable diversity in the *philosophies underlying forms of participation*, the objectives that are sought, and the levels of power attributed to management and employees. Generally, informal participation practices and participation programs, particularly in the US, have functioned as ways to elicit employee commitment and increase the subjective involvement of employees in addressing organizational needs. Organizations have tended to alternate between cycles of focus on participation practices and on managerial control, depending on the state of the labor market or other economic or technological conditions. In legally mandated co-determination systems, in contrast, employees are viewed as roughly equal stakeholders in decision-making carried out in structures with employee representation. Such systems reflect political party philosophies,



the strength of union membership, and the influence of unions in government. Finally, in cooperatives and employee-owned organizations, participation is conceived as a fundamental right within the democratic or ownership ideologies upon which such organizations are based.

Researchers assessing the effects of participation generally ask whether participation processes are related to instrumental outcomes, chiefly job satisfaction and increased productivity, and assess the validity of models explaining how such effects are realized. In the *affective model*, participation is thought to enhance job satisfaction because employees find value in being involved in decision-making processes. The mere act of participation achieves benefits because participation enhances individuals' self-esteem and their feelings of control, trust, and identification with the organization, and reduces employees' resistance to decisions that are made. In the *cognitive model*, participation is thought to improve productivity by increasing the amount of information available within the organization for problem-solving. This makes it further possible to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of organizational processes.

Research has found support for both the affective and cognitive models, with somewhat stronger support for the former. However, it is difficult to determine the reliability of these findings because studies generally do not distinguish rigorously between the forms of participation used and the dimensions upon which these forms differ, such as the degree of participation and the range of issues discussed. There is similar diversity in the conditions under which participation takes place. Essentially, there is so much variety in participation processes that it is difficult to know what aspects are critical in achieving particular effects.

Interest in participation perseveres due to the continuing need to draw on the knowledge, expertise, and problem-solving capacities of employees in increasingly global, knowledge-intensive, and team-oriented work. Researchers have more recently focused on the communicative and collaborative dimensions of participation, since it is through communication networks that team members are brought together and through their interaction that problem-solving takes place (→ Communication Networks). But the authenticity of motives for participation programs has been a perennial question, as commitment on the part of organizational leaders ebbs and flows with economic and political conditions. Even with contemporary interest in creating flexible teams and collaborative communities, critics compare what companies say about the importance of participation with what they do in restricting employee voice, exercising arbitrary interference, and constraining employees' abilities to develop knowledge. Even more frustrating is the recognition that efforts to promote participation, regardless of their success, can produce a range of paradoxical effects that undermine desired outcomes. This is because participation is simultaneously a perceptual, political, structural, and ultimately interactional phenomenon, a complex process that is most frequently initiated by managers, but that requires the active engagement of employees to give it life and meaning.

SEE ALSO: ► Bureaucracy and Communication ► Communication Networks ► Control and Authority in Organizations ► Dissent in Organizations ► Organizational Communication ► Organizational Structure ► Participatory Action Research ► Participatory Communication ► Party Political Communication

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## Participatory Action Research

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Participatory action research (PAR) is a methodological approach to research that breaks with standard social scientific practice in a number of ways (→ Research Methods). In standard practice, research into the behavior of social groups is conducted by university-trained scientists, while in PAR research is conducted by the social groups themselves with the assistance of university-trained scientists. In standard practice, research into the behavior of social groups is conducted with an attitude of scientific objectivity (→ Objectivity in Science), while in PAR research processes are conducted with a less objectivist attitude. Finally, in standard social scientific practice, the primary aim of research is the accumulation of knowledge, while in PAR the primary aim of research is improvement of social conditions, or social change (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment; Social Mobilization). Given the aim of improving social conditions, much of PAR is conducted in the conditions of developing countries (→ Development Communication). However, action research approaches have been found useful worldwide in a broad range of contexts including education, urban planning, environmental conservation, and others. Journals, handbooks, and collected works on the subject are readily available.

PAR is not really a single method, but rather one of a *family of research approaches* (→ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods). One approach derives from John Dewey through Kurt Lewin, who is often considered the father of American-styled *action research*. Lewin sought both knowledge production and beneficial social change through social experiments. He proposed “a type of action-research, a comparative research on the conditions and effects of various forms of social action, and research leading to social action” (Lewin 1946, 38). This research involved a spiral of steps, “each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action and fact-finding about the result of the action” (1946, 38). *Action science* is a school of thought developed by Chris Argyris. Argyris’s

work is dedicated to improving community and organizational conditions, working largely in the context of industrial and corporate organizations and focusing specifically on the study of change and resistance to change. This research includes the study of “defensive routines” that manifest in organizations challenged with change, “dispositional” attributions of the form “My supervisor believes in such and such,” and theories of “causal responsibility” that concern the effects of decision *a* on outcome *b*. And she uses field experimental methods that meet “the rigorous tests of disconfirmability” (Argyris et al. 1985, xii).

Another approach to action research has a praxiological, or critical, orientation deriving from Karl Marx and Frederick Engels through Antonio Gramsci. Fals Borda’s (1985) promotion of *participatory action research* aims to foster community awareness within the perspective of historical materialism, addressing socio-political barriers to third world development efforts. William Foote Whyte has developed an approach to PAR that is different from that of Fals Borda. Whyte’s is more indicative of approaches to action research that focus on community participation. His characterization of the approach may therefore serve as a working definition of PAR: “In participatory action research (PAR), some of the people in the organization or community under study participate actively with the professional researcher throughout the research process from the initial design to the final presentation of results and discussion of their action implications” (Whyte 1991, 20). Despite its preoccupation with social change, Whyte believes that PAR should be recognized as an approach providing unique opportunities for academic research. It should be incorporated “into the tool kit of the social sciences” (1991, 19).

From the perspective of epistemology, PAR breaks quite deliberately with the tenet of scientific objectivity based in the fact–value dichotomy. Sometimes identified with British empiricist philosopher David Hume, the fact–value dichotomy refers to a distinction between scientific data, which are facts that can be proven, and social opinions, which are based on values and are matters of mere preference (→ Critical Rationalism). The attitude of scientific objectivity follows from the priority assigned to the pursuit of factual knowledge. PAR’s epistemology must therefore include knowledge gained from action that is guided by values.

For researchers interested in contributing to the well-functioning of social groups, or society as a whole, alternatives to scientific research have traditionally included policy research and applied research (→ Communication Research and Politics). Both policy and applied research aim to support or to change social processes. Policy research is concerned more specifically with informing decisions required of policymaking in large-scale societies or settings. While applied research focuses on the actual business of implementing social action, policy research, strictly speaking, may not be required or may have already been conducted (Etzioni 1971). Following such a classification, PAR would belong to the category of applied research, though not all researchers would agree with assumptions underlying distinctions between these forms.

Modern philosophical trends have largely undermined, or at least complicated, assumptions underlying the fact–value dichotomy and the idea of factual objectivity. Social theorists as divergent as Pierre Bourdieu, Jürgen Habermas, Michel Foucault, and Seyla Benhabib identify an element of practice in the conduct of most, if not all, inquiry. The relationship between PAR and contemporary philosophy of social science remains yet to be thoroughly articulated.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Communication Research and Politics ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Development Communication ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Research Methods ▶ Social Mobilization ▶ Social Movements and Communication

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## **Participatory Communication**

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Participatory communication stresses the importance of cultural identity of local communities and of democratization and participation at all levels – international, national, local, and individual. However, the point of departure must be the community. It is at the community level that the problems of living conditions are discussed, and interactions with other communities are elicited (Servaes 1999; 2003). It points to a strategy, not merely inclusive of, but largely emanating from, the traditional “receivers” (→ Models of Communication). Paulo Freire (1983, 76) refers to this as the right of all people to individually and collectively speak their word: “This is not the privilege of some few men, but the right of every (wo)man. Consequently, no one can say a true word alone – nor can he say it for another, in a prescriptive act which robs others of their words” (→ Freedom of Communication).

In order to share → information, knowledge, trust, commitment, and a right attitude, participatory communication is very important. The International Commission

for the Study of Communication Problems, chaired by Sean MacBride, argued that “this calls for a new attitude for overcoming stereotyped thinking and to promote more understanding of diversity and plurality, with full respect for the dignity and equality of peoples living in different conditions and acting in different ways” (MacBride 1980, 254).

The most developed form of participation is self-management of communication media. This principle implies the right to participation in the planning and production of media content (→ Media Production and Content). However, not everyone wants to or must be involved in its practical implementation. More important is that participation is made possible in the decision-making regarding the subjects treated in the messages and regarding the selection procedures. One of the fundamental hindrances to the decision to adopt the participation strategy is that it threatens existing hierarchies. Nevertheless, participation does not imply that there is no longer a role for specialists, planners, and institutional leaders. It only means that the viewpoint of the local groups of the public is considered before the resources for projects are allocated and distributed, and that suggestions for changes in the policy are taken into consideration.

## **TWO MAJOR APPROACHES TO PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION**

There are two major approaches to participatory communication. The first is the dialogical pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1970; 1973; 1983; 1994), and the second involves the ideas of access, participation, and self-management articulated in the UNESCO debates of the 1970s (Berrigan 1977; 1979). In spite of wide acceptance of these principles of democratic communication in participatory communication projects, there exists today a wide variety of practical experiences and intentions.

### **Freire’s Dialogical Pedagogy**

The Freirean argument works by a dual theoretical strategy. He insists that subjugated peoples must be treated as fully human subjects in any political process. This implies dialogical communication. Although inspired to some extent by Sartre’s existentialism, a respect for the autonomous personhood of each human being, the more important source is a theology that demands respect for otherness – in this case that of another human being. The second strategy is a moment of utopian hope, derived from the early Marx, that the human species has a destiny that offers a life more than the fulfillment of material needs. Also from Marx is an insistence on collective solutions. Individual opportunity, Freire stresses, is no solution to general situations of poverty and cultural subjugation.

These ideas are deeply unpopular with elites, including elites in the third world, but there is nonetheless widespread acceptance of Freire’s notion of dialogical communication as a normative theory of participatory communication. One problem with Freire is that his theory of dialogical communication is based on group dialogue rather than such amplifying media as → radio, print, and → television. Freire also gives little attention to the language or form of communication, devoting most of his discussion to the intentions of communication actions.

### Access, Participation, and Self-Management in UNESCO Discourse

The second discourse about participatory communication is the → UNESCO language about access, participation, and self-management from the 1977 meeting in Belgrade. The final report of that meeting defines the terms in the following way. *First*, “access” refers to the use of media for public service. It may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations (→ Access to the Media; Public Access Television). *Second*, “participation” implies a higher level of public involvement in communication systems than mere access. It includes the involvement of the public in the production process, and also in the management and planning of communication systems. Participation may be no more than representation and consultation of the public in decision-making. *Third*, “self-management” is the most advanced form of participation. In this case, the public exercises the power of decision-making within communication enterprises and is also fully involved in the formulation of communication policies and plans.

Access by the community and participation of the community are to be considered key defining factors, as Berrigan eloquently summarizes: “[Community media] are media to which members of the community have access, for information, education, entertainment, when they want access. They are media in which the community participates, as planners, producers, and performers. They are the means of expression of the community, rather than for the community” (Berrigan 1979, 8). Referring to the 1977 meeting in Belgrade, Berrigan (1979, 18) partially links access to the reception of information, education, and entertainment considered relevant by/for the community: “[Access] may be defined in terms of the opportunities available to the public to choose varied and relevant programs, and to have a means of feedback to transmit its reactions and demands to production organizations.”

Others limit access to mass media and see it as “the processes that permit users to provide relatively open and unedited input to the mass media” (Lewis 1993, 12) or as “the relation to the public and the established broadcasting institutions” (Prehn 1991, 259). Both the production and reception approaches of “access” can be considered relevant for an understanding of → community media (→ Citizens’ Media; Citizen Journalism; Media Democracy Movement).

These ideas are important and widely accepted as a normative theory of participatory communication: it must involve access and participation (Pateman 1972). However, we should note some differences from Freire. The UNESCO discourse includes the idea of a gradual progression. Some amount of access may be allowed, but self-management may be postponed until some time in the future. Freire’s theory allows for no such compromise. We either respect the culture of the other or we fall back into domination and the “banking” mode of imposed education. The UNESCO discourse talks in neutral terms about “the public.” Freire talked about “the oppressed.” Finally, the UNESCO discourse puts the main focus on the institution, for which participatory or community radio means a radio station that is self-managed by those participating in it.

## PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Participation involves the more equitable sharing of both political and economic power, which often decreases the advantage of certain groups. Structural change involves the redistribution of power. In mass communication areas, many communication experts agree that structural change should occur first in order to establish participatory communication policies. Mowlana & Wilson (1987, 143), for instance, state: "Communications policies are basically derivatives of the political, cultural, and economic conditions and institutions under which they operate. They tend to legitimize the existing power relations in society, and therefore, they cannot be substantially changed unless there are fundamental structural changes in society that can alter these power relationships themselves."

Therefore, the development of a participatory communication model has to take place in relation to overall societal emancipation processes at local, national, as well as international levels. Several authors have been trying to summarize the criteria for such a communication model. The Latin American scholar Juan Somavia (1977; 1981) sums up the following (slightly adapted) components as essential:

- 1 *Communication is a human need.* The satisfaction of the need for communication is just as important for a society as the concern for health, nutrition, housing, education, and labor. Together with all the other social needs, communication must enable the citizens to emancipate themselves completely. The right to inform and to be informed, and the right to communicate, are thus essential human rights, and this both individually and collectively (→ Freedom of Information).
- 2 *Communication is a delegated human right.* Within its own cultural, political, economic, and historical context, each society has to be able to define independently the concrete form in which it wants to organize its social communication process (→ Communication and Law). Because there are a variety of cultures, there can therefore also arise various organizational structures. But whatever the form in which the social communication function is embodied, priority must be given to the principles of participation and accessibility.
- 3 *Communication is a facet of the societal conscientization, emancipation, and liberation process.* The social responsibility of the media in the process of social change is considerable. Indeed, after the period of formal education, the media are the most important educational and socialization agents. They are capable of informing or disinforming, exposing or concealing important facts, interpreting events positively or negatively, and so on.
- 4 *The communication task involves rights as well as responsibilities or obligations.* Since the media in fact provide a public service, they must carry it out in a framework of social and juridical responsibility that reflects the social consensus of society. In other words, there are no rights without obligations.

The freedom and right to communicate, therefore, must be approached from a threefold perspective: *first*, it is necessary for the public to participate effectively in the communication field; *second*, there is the design of a framework in which this can take place; and, *third*, the media must enjoy professional autonomy, free of economic, political, or whatever pressure.

In sum, participatory communication for social change sees people as the nucleus of development (Jacobson & Servaes 1998). Development means lifting the spirit of a local community to take pride in its own culture, intellect, and environment. Development aims to educate and stimulate people to be active in self- and communal improvements while maintaining a balanced ecology. Authentic participation, though widely espoused in the literature, is not in everyone's interest. Due to their local concentration, participatory programs are in fact not easily implemented, nor are they highly predictable or readily controlled.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Community Media ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Information ▶ Media Democracy Movement ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Radio ▶ Television ▶ UNESCO

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# Partisan Press

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The term “partisan press” commonly describes a pattern of organizing competing journalism outlets along party lines, but may also represent a period in emerging national journalism systems. In creating and distributing news, publishers and editors may work within or make arrangements with parties, resulting in reportage that openly espouses the positions of leaders or factions (→ Party–Press Parallelism; Political Communication). In most countries, from France to Japan to the United States, Indonesia, and Senegal, some form of partisan or party-run press played a critical role in national political development. The partisan press, in both senses of the term, provides guidance to the general public and contributes to a country’s political consciousness (→ Public Opinion).

*Historically*, partisan presses appeared in the process of national emergence. In 1766 in India, for example, a merchant displeased with the way the colonial powers regulated business attempted to establish the country’s first newspaper, though the government quashed it before inaugural publication (→ Printer-Editors). A few decades later, the bilingual *Calcutta Gazette* and the *Bombay Gazette* appeared, but acting as official voices of their respective governments (Karkhanis 1981). In other countries, such as Norway, newspapers would combat government intervention and oppression by taking such simple measures as renaming the same paper after the national government outlawed the original one (→ Censorship, History of). Continental European newspapers of the late 1700s exhibited varying degrees of resistance or bending to the will of the ruling courts. In an example of international partisanship, the French-language *Gazette de Leyde*, based in the Netherlands, was responsible for promoting the successes of the newly independent United States to the rest of Europe (Popkin 1989).

Partisanship became a key principle for organizing the popular journalism of some countries in the nineteenth century. The 1830s saw the founding of Telugu- and Tamil-language newspapers in Madras, India (Karkhanis 1981). Horace Greeley’s *New York Tribune* served as a tool of the Whig party in its bid against Jackson in 1824. Political debates went beyond editorial pages to appear prominently on the front pages of Republican and Federalist newspapers (→ Penny Press). Exuberant partisan news coverage was also a progenitor of → sensationalism in journalism, prevalent in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and continuing today.

In the period before the press secretary, politicians used newspapers to act as their sounding boards and official scribes (→ Party Political Communication). The Japanese government was quick to put restrictions on its national press following the Meiji Restoration of 1868, setting a precedent for government regulation of speech rights in the country. Political dependence on newspapers to broadcast party messages lessened considerably after Theodore Roosevelt held the first → press conference in 1908.

Journalists have often made the leap from reporting to partisan policymaking. After their favorable coverage of his policies, American president Andrew Jackson appointed nearly 60 journalists to federal posts following his 1832 election (Baldasty 1984), a

process called the “spoils system.” After the Hungarian revolution in 1848, Mihály Táncsics, an editor of a popular paper, was entrusted with explaining legislative issues and earning public trust and support (Kosáry 1986).

European publishers in the Victorian era commonly remained married to the political system, which provided their papers with subsidies and exclusive news reports. A partisan pattern of press organization in Europe blossomed before World War I and depended on the existence of more than one party. Newspapers linked themselves to the politics of one competing party and tended at times to sacrifice the ideal of → objectivity in reporting to that political position.

Other forms of press organization may supplant a partisan press. For instance, some scholars indicate that Progressive Era ideals in the United States prompted journalists to eschew deliberate political affiliations. Newspaper editors came to think of such activities as conflicts of interest or barriers to making the craft more professional (→ Professionalization of Journalism). In other countries, journalists also formed associations and press unions that served the dual functions of protecting smaller enterprises from government oppression and delineating what qualified as journalism (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

It remains unclear whether the professional project in fact removes journalism from partisan involvement. For example, some scholars criticize the Japanese press for anti-government bias, though others contend that the existence of press clubs – national professional organizations the government affords preferential access – reinforces the point that the press remains a government tool in Japan (Pharr & Krauss 1996).

In most Southeast Asian and African nations, press systems took shape after independence movements, most of which occurred in the middle of the twentieth century. To succeed, they needed to ally themselves with a political party or other special interest. Partisanship may take a darker form in one-party political systems. In 1940s and 1950s Liberia, the government was quick to employ sedition laws and other acts of oppression, culminating in the imprisonment of C. Frederick Taylor, the editor of the *African National* (Burrowes 2004).

Many nations developed in the context of the political leanings and activities of the press. In countries with a literate population throughout the world, some form of partisan press played a role in shaping political life and in forming journalism itself.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Party Political Communication ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Penny Press ▶ Political Communication ▶ Press Conference ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Sensationalism

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## Party Political Communication

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Political parties are groups that organize to gain political office, control the governing process, mobilize majorities, organize dissent and opposition, and socialize voters. In democratic political systems parties have emerged as the natural evolution of like-minded interests organizing for political influence. Election campaigns are one major battleground on which political parties compete for influence through political communication (→ Election Campaign Communication). Many election studies have compared the messages, advertisements, debate performances, issue preferences, and web pages of partisan candidates as well as the overall strategies of the parties themselves (→ Negative Campaigning; Political Advertising; Political Marketing; Issue Management in Politics; Televised Debates). In systems with primary elections, it is generally observed that campaign messages are more partisan in the intra-party primary contest (featuring just candidates from one party) and more centrist during the general election campaign (featuring candidates from several parties).

Beyond the election situation, research on party political communication has largely examined the roles and functions of party labels and the styles of partisan leaders. *Party labels* have been defined as cues that provide simple, direct, and consequential information in shaping individuals' perceptions and evaluations. Party labels are considered by many to be the chief cue for individuals as they make decisions about candidates or issues. Findings from survey and experimental research suggest that labels help people make sense of their political worlds in at least five ways (→ Political Language; Political Symbols).

First, partisan labels are *broadly understood*. Research has noted that citizens recognize the predominant party labels in their political systems, that citizens and elites often agree on the broad meanings connected to party labels, and that citizens have an easier time discussing the differences between party labels than the individual candidates within a party.

Second, party labels *help citizens make decisions*. Party labels are argued to serve as short cuts (or heuristics) for making sense of political life. Experimental research has shown that voters are more likely to choose a candidate when partisan information is provided. This finding holds for voters who report both high and low levels of political sophistication. Even though individuals with fewer political resources are the most dependent on party labels to help them make political decisions, citizens of all levels of sophistication are found to make decisions more efficiently when labels are present.

Third, party labels are understood through *partisan screens*. Research shows that individuals who have an ideological view of political parties are more likely to see differences between party labels and consistently prefer their party label to the opposition's (→ Perception; Image). A similar pattern appears for the way individuals regard ideological labels (such as left, right, liberal, or conservative). At times, preferences for partisan or ideological labels can move from the group label to a leader nominated or elected by the party; indeed, studies have shown that attitudes toward party labels affect attitudes toward party nominees and that reactions to party nominees can, in turn, influence attitudes toward parties and party labels.

Fourth, party labels *influence how citizens think about candidates*. While the research mentioned immediately above acknowledges how individual cues can influence the way citizens regard party labels, other experimental studies have shown the opposite is true as well: when party images have been activated, citizens may not individuate political candidates (Rahn 1993). Specifically, experimental work suggests that party stereotypes (1) can function heuristically for voters when they are confronted with political information processing tasks, and (2) appear to be quite robust cognitive categories with considerable influence in many political information-processing tasks (→ Candidate Image).

Fifth, party labels are regarded as *dynamic*. Rhetorical and public opinion research has pointed to how the visibility and favorableness of labels can change over time. Studies have noted how labels can expand or contract over time, gaining or losing emotional, ideological, or stereotypical associations that influence how individuals regard these cues as well as the parties they represent.

Political strategists and academics have explored how the parties, partisan candidates, and party issues positions can be made more attractive. In the United States, visible wordsmiths include strategists Frank Luntz and academic George Lakoff. Working for the Republican side, Luntz has employed focus groups and public opinion → surveys to test phrases to help conservatives get elected, frame public policy debates, and garner more flattering news coverage (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Political Consultant). In his research as a linguist, Lakoff (2002) has offered advice as to how Democratic and left-leaning voices could begin to respond to the long-term linguistic efforts of the right. He recommends (1) creating framing devices that benefit a leftist perspective and (2) building counter-narratives to recast many of the ways in which contemporary politics are being discussed (→ Strategic Framing; Framing Effects). In Europe, scholarly attention has focused on the branding practices of political parties, including such processes as rebranding (e.g., the Labour Party emerging as the “New Labour Party”) and brand management (see Newman 1999; → Brands).

Scholars have also compared the *rhetorical and cognitive styles* of partisans from the left and the right. Rhetorician Richard Weaver observed that conservatives argue from

definition (basing their positions on fundamental principles) and liberals from circumstance (basing their cases on conditions and contingencies). Political communication research has offered empirical support for Weaver’s claim, documenting distinct partisan styles in politicians from the left and the right (Jarvis 2005). Psychologist Philip Tetlock has found conservatives (Republicans in the United States) and liberals (Democrats) display differing cognitive styles. Specifically, research on US senators and Supreme Court justices has shown that Republicans are more cognitively simple than Democrats. These findings do not mean that Republicans are less intelligent than Democrats. Instead, conservatives are more parsimonious in their thinking and arguments than their liberal peers, whereas advocates of centrist and moderate to left-wing causes tend to interpret and express issues in more complex and multidimensional ways (Tetlock 1983).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Brands ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Image ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ Perception ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Language ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Political Symbols ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Survey ▶ Televised Debates

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## **Party–Press Parallelism**

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Colin Seymour-Ure (1974) was the first scholar to speak of a “parallelism” between parties and newspapers. In his view this refers to three main features: the ownership of the mass media by political parties, the editorial choices of the news organizations, and the party affiliation of the readers (→ Ownership in the Media). Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (1995) further developed this concept, slightly changing it (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). In their view, party parallelism – or partisanship – includes “any organizational connections to political parties, the stability and intensity of editorial

commitments and presence or absence of legal restraints on the rights of the media to back individual parties” (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995, 65). Even in the absence of organizational links, party parallelism in Blumler and Gurevitch’s view may include also all those situations in which a news organization backs in a more or less stable condition a political party, either because of a historical tradition or because of contingent decisions (→ Balance; Commentary; Editorial; Endorsement; Neutrality; Partisan Press).

While in Seymour-Ure’s definition, the main feature of party parallelism was essentially the ownership of the news organization by the political parties determining a media content marked by a strong advocacy slant, Blumler and Gurevitch see party parallelism as a somewhat more general framework of links and connections between mass media and political parties, not necessarily descending from direct party ownership.

It is from this last interpretation that the definition of *political parallelism* descends. It refers to “media content – the extent to which the different media reflect distinct political orientations in their news and current affairs reporting, and sometimes also their entertainment content” (Hallin & Mancini 2004, 28; → Media as Political Actors).

Beyond content, political parallelism is reflected also in the organizational connections that, as in Seymour-Ure’s and Blumler and Gurevitch’s definitions, may exist between political organizations, parties, unions, social movements, and the like on the one side, and media organizations on the other (→ Social Movements and Communication). These links may involve the property of the media but also just the fact that mass media and news organizations are linked through a common ground of organizational connections and symbolic affiliations. Political parallelism exists when media personnel show a tendency to be active in political life: reporters take sides not just in their professional work but also by being active in party organizations and political life. Thus, political parallelism exists also when the careers of journalists and politicians overlap, when the shift from one position to another is easy and frequent (→ Advocacy Journalism; Journalists’ Role Perception; Bias in the News).

The move from the notion of *party parallelism* toward *political parallelism* highlights a very important, and, in some countries, very recent change of the political system. Political parallelism tends to substitute party parallelism as political parties are losing the importance they had in previous years. Their role as agents of socialization is losing ground. Party membership is going down while political participation is no longer limited to involvement with political parties, but can be related to a number of different political organizations, such as social movements, cause-related groups, environmentalist groups, feminist groups, and the like.

The weakening of political parties has determined the disappearance of many party newspapers in the Scandinavian countries, France, Italy and many other western democracies. However, it has not meant the disappearance of either political/ideological links existing between political organizations and mass media, or the political orientation of many newspapers and broadcasting organizations. In other words, even in a more secularized social life in which the → commercialization of the media has undermined their role as agents of political socialization (→ Political Socialization through the Media; Socialization by the Media), the concept of political parallelism indicates that the framework of organizational and symbolic links still exists between the mass media system and different social organizations, and is still reflected in the content of mass media. The fact

that these links may be of some stable nature differentiates the concept of political parallelism from that of *advocacy*, which may indicate a temporary “taking sides” for a cause by the mass media, and a less structured and stable framework of connections with different organizations of society.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Commentary ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Editorial ▶ Endorsement ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Neutrality ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Party Political Communication ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Socialization by the Media

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## **Pathos and Rhetoric**

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Derived from the Greek verb *paskhein*, meaning to be in a certain condition, to experience, or to suffer, pathos is one of the three principal sources of rhetorical proof along with ethos and logos (→ Ethos and Rhetoric; Logos and Rhetoric). Typically translated into English as → “emotion,” pathos is a key term in the ancient debate between philosophy and rhetoric because it tracks basic attitudes about human nature and civil society.

In the western canon, emotions have long been treated with caution by those who would hail the virtues of rational discourse aimed at truth. And since Plato (c. 428–c. 347 BCE), such caution is the symptom of a divisive political philosophy separating experts from non-experts. As Socrates suggests in the *Gorgias* – Plato’s famous diatribe against rhetorical art – the rhetorician might have luck arguing to the ignorant about something like the causes of health and sickness, but among experts, the diagnosis of a trained doctor will carry more weight. In contrast to the expert, a sophistic rhetorician working in either an expert domain or in a practical domain such as politics has no need to know the truth about things. Instead, according to Plato, the rhetorician merely hits upon techniques of persuasion that achieve the desired ends (459c). First among these techniques, as the Roman rhetoricians would later reiterate, is the appeal to popular emotion.

In typical Roman fashion, Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE) acknowledges that civic leaders must give emotions voice, but only in order to make proofs exciting to those who might otherwise remain apathetic. As Cicero laments in *De oratore*, intellectual understanding might have a direct line to the truth, but that line will usually remain untapped unless some external motivating force is applied. With some reluctance, then, the eloquent civic leader must embody the vivid language and delivery that speaks to the emotions of a popular audience (2.214).

Lurking in this Roman defense of eloquence is the fear that emotional appeals threaten civil society because they naturally cater to special interests without inherent consideration for the general good (*De Oratore* 2.186–187). For instance, the educator Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (c. 35–c. 100 CE) takes seriously the stoic philosopher’s fundamental suspicion of emotion when he condemns emotional appeals that distract a judge from the truth (*Institutio oratoria* 6.1.7). So again for the Romans, logical reason by itself escapes a popular audience, while a thoughtless appeal to the emotions is considered profoundly unethical. The Roman solution to this dilemma was to add pathos to logos, to *join* reason and eloquence, and this by sheer fiat. The most influential formulation is furnished by Cicero in the opening pages of *De inventione*: since wisdom in itself is silent and powerless to speak, wisdom in the absence of eloquence is useless. What is needed if a commonwealth is to thrive is *ratio atque oratio*, powerful reasoning allied with powerful speech.

In his radical 1924 reintroduction to the concept of pathos, Martin Heidegger explicitly rejects this Roman compromise with its manipulative psychology that ties emotions to the untrained mind. Instead, Heidegger considers pathos in the tradition running from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* through Augustine and the theology of Martin Luther, where a basic emotion such as fear makes our collective existence concrete and moves us in our fundamental belief (*doxa*). For Heidegger, the fact that we are subject to movement in our belief is precisely what makes us part of the human community and grounds all sorts of civic discourse, including discourse that seems essentially logical. Without pathos, according to Heidegger, we would lack the sympathies and antipathies that define community and shape social discourse down to its concrete propositions.

We might consider, for instance, the US logic for war against Iraq, as it was outlined by Colin Powell to the United Nations General Assembly in February 2003. In this case “wisdom” depended not just upon a deductive argument for correct action grounded in the truth of an immanent Iraqi threat; US action in this case followed a complex, mediated orchestration of the hopes and fears that defined friend and enemy around the key term “terror.” As Heidegger might remark in this case and similar, logos is grounded in pathos, not the other way around.

Repulsed by images such as an impassioned Josef Goebbels at Nuremberg, some postwar communication theorists like → Jürgen Habermas returned to philosophical theories of civic discourse grounded in reason. However, Heidegger’s revitalization of Aristotelian pathos now finds resonance in a range of contemporary rhetorical theory that starts from our more messy, and irrational being-in-the-world, including theories that engage cultural studies and psychoanalysis. Prominent examples of this latter camp include Judith Butler, who is interested in hate speech and the passionate attachments that mark the contours of social discourse, and Michel Meyer, who analyzes in detail how



real-world propositions necessarily implicate emotion. Finally, and ironically, this more radical rhetorical perspective prioritizing pathos has recently found a dubious ally in anti-Cartesian philosophy and brain science, which grounds cognition in emotion understood physiologically, not socially.

SEE ALSO: ► Emotion ► Emotion and Discourse ► Ethos and Rhetoric ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Logos and Rhetoric

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## **Patient–Provider Communication**

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Patient–provider communication, interaction between patients and professional and familial caregivers in formal health-care contexts, has significant influences on health-care outcomes. During health-care, patients interact with numerous health-care professionals (e.g., primary providers, specialists, nurses) and familial providers (e.g., elderly adults' children, spouses, young children's parents). Familial providers interact with health-care professionals on behalf of patients (Eggly et al. 2006), patients behave differently in family members' presence (Greene et al. 1987), and patient–provider communication affects health outcomes (e.g., pain and distress) (Cline et al. 2006). However, the majority of patient–provider communication research has investigated physician–patient dyads (→ Health Communication; Doctor–Patient Talk).

### **HEALTH-CARE RELATIONSHIPS**

The type of physician–patient relationship that develops varies with → relational control (Beisecker & Beisecker 1993). Relational control refers to the process of establishing who

has the right to define and direct a dyad's actions. In *paternalism*, physicians take control while patients yield control (e.g., unquestioningly accept physician judgments). *Participatory models* (e.g., mutual participation, participative decision-making, therapeutic alliance) imply both parties' active involvement and relatively equal control (interdependence, information exchange, and listening). In *consumerism*, patients take charge of their health-care, seek information independently, sometimes request treatments, and, if dissatisfied, seek other physicians.

Equal relational control is an ideal unlikely to be achieved in practice, but active patient involvement is assumed desirable. Due to differences in conceptual and methodological approaches, critics disagree about whether patient-centered interaction (which theoretically privileges patients over providers) leads to improved outcomes (Mead & Bower 2000). However, a participatory model and/or patient-centeredness typically are assumed desirable by researchers and medical educators. Evidence generally associates active patient participation, with positive health-care outcomes.

## OUTCOMES

Patient–provider communication affects health outcomes (Brown et al. 2003). Abundant research has found that patient satisfaction with health-care is related to patient–provider communication. Early observational research found patient satisfaction to be predicted more by quality than quantity of communication; later research showed communication length and quality to be unrelated. Physician communication behaviors associated with patient satisfaction include: providing information, discussing psychosocial and quality-of-life issues, offering emotional support, empathy, including families, and listening (Thompson & Parrott 2002).

Substantial evidence links patient satisfaction to adherence (compliance) to treatment regimens, and thus to health and medical outcomes (→ Compliance Gaining). Communication variables that influence patient satisfaction generally affect adherence. Additional patient outcomes affected by communication include: psychological (e.g., anxiety, distress) and physiological responses (e.g., blood pressure, heart rate, pain), health-care needed (e.g., hospitalization length, medication taking), problem/symptom resolution, health status, and quality of life. Better communication quality leads to improved provider outcomes: reduced malpractice claims, consultation length, doctor shopping, and marginal physician use; as well as increased appointment keeping (Brown et al. 2003) and clinical trial enrollment (Albrecht et al. 2003).

## MICRO-LEVEL PATIENT–PROVIDER COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Research has been conducted in two general ways: (1) obtaining patient/provider self-reports regarding perceptions of communication, and (2) observing actual communication. Although patient–provider communication was long assumed important, observational investigations did not begin until the 1960s. State-of-the art research observes micro-level communication patterns (e.g., who talks, forms and functions of talk, specific nonverbal behavior).

Depending on theoretical or practical interest, researchers may focus only on physicians' or patients' communication behavior or on relationships between their communication

behaviors. Researchers generally distinguish between *two dimensions of messages*: informational and relational. Informational-level messages typically contain medical content (e.g., symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, side-effects, prognosis). Relational-level messages include explicit relational content (e.g., “I like having you as my doctor”), as well as implicit messages (e.g., interruptions, closed versus open questions, empathy, friendliness, gaze) that influence affiliativeness (i.e., closeness, liking) and relational control (i.e., dominance, conversational control).

Over time, for *observation and measurement*, investigators have most relied on audio-recording patient–provider interaction for subsequent analysis. State-of-the art research relies on unobtrusive video-recording systems, which permit subsequent coding of complex nonverbal and verbal behavior, precise time assessments (e.g., length of talk, silence, touch time), and real-time coding of patient, family member, and provider communication behavior (Penner et al. 2007; → Coding).

Various observational coding systems have been used to analyze transcripts, audio tapes, and video tapes of interactions. (See 2001 special issue of *Health Communication* for applications of numerous coding systems to a common sample.) The typical unit of analysis is an utterance (speaking turn) or thought unit (oral equivalent to a simple sentence). Seminal research applied Bales’s interaction process analysis (IPA) to provider–patient communication. Designed to study small group interaction, the IPA categorizes verbal interaction into task and socio-emotional categories. Subsequent coding systems were designed specifically for medical interaction. Depending on theoretical interest (e.g., relational control, communication competence), additional interpersonal communication coding systems have been applied to physician–patient communication (→ Interview, Qualitative).

*Roter’s interaction analysis system* (RIAS), the most widely used coding system, focuses on physician–patient social exchange of resources and incorporates task and socio-emotional categories similar to Bales’s IPA, such as information giving/gathering in psychosocial and medical content areas and relational talk (social/emotional talk, agreements/disagreements, and partnering talk). Other coding systems focus on areas of theoretical or practical interest. The *measure of patient-centered communication* (MPCC) assesses patient-centeredness, including physician exploration of patient’s disease or illness experience, physician understanding of patient’s psychosocial context, and “finding common ground” (physician–patient agreement regarding problems, goals, and roles). The *Karmanos accrual assessment system* (KAAS) was designed to observe conversations about clinical trials, and includes global communication ratings applicable to medical interaction in general. The global assessments are relatively unique in making assessments at the dyadic rather than individual (patient or physician) level (e.g., connectedness, closeness, dominance; Egly et al. 2006).

## NATURE OF RESEARCH

Physician–patient communication research reflects *several trends*: (1) much early research was descriptive and qualitative; (2) most research has occurred in primary care but increasingly researchers are investigating specialized care, particularly cancer care (Arora 2003); (3) research has focused far more on physicians than patients; (4) research has focused predominantly on verbal communication.

Several research topics have received substantial attention. Studies of effects of patient social characteristics generally indicate that physician communication behavior varies based on patient gender, age, and socio-economic status (Cooper & Roter 2003). Females, elderly patients, and patients of lower socio-economic status generally fare worse than their counterparts with regard to informational and relational communication quality.

Research investigating communication competence and communication skills training has attended far more to physicians than patients. Reviews conclude that communication skills are “teachable,” but little agreement exists regarding what skills should be taught and what framework should guide training (Thompson & Parrott 2002). Although little research has focused on patient communication training, and that training typically has been limited to information-seeking skills, evidence generally supports its value for health outcomes (e.g., reduced blood pressure; Cegala 2006; → Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

A significant communication challenge for physicians is discussing “bad news” with patients, including terminality and other sensitive issues (e.g., diagnosis of serious health problems, poor prognosis, and difficult treatment regimens). Cultural expectations influence physicians’ disclosure of “bad news.” Although medical education and training often includes “bad news delivery,” little evidence exists for the efficacy of commonly advocated approaches (→ Bad News in Medicine, Communicating).

Evidence is growing that macro-level phenomena (the → Internet; → direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs, and more recently of genetic testing; complementary and alternative medicine; social support groups) affect micro-level patient–provider communication (Cline 2003). Exposure to these phenomena may enhance patients’ actual or perceived knowledge and empower them to communicate more actively with providers. Typical research involves content analyses to identify potential influential factors (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). Investigations of actual effects on physician–patient communication (e.g., patients bringing information to visits, time consumption, relational impact) generally have been limited to self-report data. Critics agree that these phenomena encourage patient participation, but debate whether specific effects benefit or harm physician–patient relationships and health-care outcomes. More investigation is needed. Email is a largely uninvestigated technological advance that directly influences physician–patient communication; its impact on health-care is debated. If macro-level phenomena ultimately improve health-care, differences in access to them may enhance health-care disparities.

Perhaps the *most important contemporary issue* is the impact of patient–provider communication on racial and ethnic health-care disparities (Cooper & Roter 2003; → Health Disparities, Communication in). Patient–provider communication may contribute to disparities, given the importance of communication for health-care outcomes and evidence regarding effects of social characteristics (i.e., gender, age, social class) on that communication. Little research has addressed this issue. However, patients rate race-discordant (versus race-concordant) physician–patient interactions as less satisfying and participatory. Whether these differences are rooted in stereotypes and expectations, or actual micro-level interaction patterns differ on the basis of race concordance, is not clear. Future research needs to identify disparity-enhancing patient–provider communication processes and develop efficacious interventions.

SEE ALSO: ► Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ► Coding ► Compliance Gaining ► Content Analysis, Qualitative ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Direct-to-Consumer Advertising ► Doctor–Patient Talk ► Health Communication ► Health Disparities, Communication in ► Internet ► Interpersonal Communication ► Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ► Interview, Qualitative ► Relational Control

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# Peace Journalism

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Peace journalism is an attempt at persuasive communication, usually by a social movement, to advocate in favor of ending war and violence. Journalism that advocates reforms such as social justice, the abolition of slavery, woman suffrage, and, most centrally, international peace has flourished in the United States, partly because of the press freedom the First Amendment of the US Constitution affords (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Perhaps not surprisingly, most of the research to date on peace journalism has focused on US subjects and concerns (Roberts 1991, 1995).

Underpinning the scholarship is a rich history of international peace movements. Several scholars have emphasized the vigor and continuity of Anglo-American efforts originating early in the nineteenth century (Brock 1968; Chatfield 1971; Curti 1936; DeBenedetti & Chatfield 1990; Phelps 1930; Wittner 1969). Recent studies focus on modern, international peace efforts such as the post-World War II nuclear disarmament movement (Wittner 2003). The research usually notes the important role of the advocacy press in promulgating ideas about peace (→ Advocacy Journalism).

Some scholarship views peace journalism as a tool of peace societies, first organized in the United States early in the nineteenth century. The Massachusetts Peace Society and the New York Peace Society formed in 1815 and the American Peace Society (APS) in 1828. These nonsectarian, Christian organizations sponsored periodicals such as the *Advocate of Peace*, *Calumet*, and *Harbinger of Peace* (APS), *Friend of Peace* (Massachusetts Peace Society), and *American Advocate of Peace* (Connecticut Peace Society). Another example, the New England Non-Resistance Society, published the *Liberator* and other titles. The League of Universal Brotherhood (founded 1846) and the Universal Peace Union (founded 1866) also published several periodicals.

Besides these comparatively nonsectarian, sponsored periodicals (Stewart et al. 2006), peace journalism also emerged in religious institutions, within the communication strategies of historical peace churches: Quakers (Society of Friends), Mennonites, and Church of the Brethren. All have proselytized for peace as a religious tenet. In the nineteenth century at least, the nonsectarian peace publications greatly overshadowed the religious ones, which thus received less scholarly scrutiny.

A third category of nineteenth-century peace journalism came from religious communitarians who advanced peace as a key principle of their vision to remake society. The Oneida Community in upstate New York published *American Socialist*, *Oneida Circular*, and *Witness* (Roberts 2005). The Shakers issued *Shaker Manifesto* and other publications, and the Owenite New Harmony group published *New Harmony Gazette*. Also in this category are the Adventists (*Review and Herald* and *World's Crisis*) and the Disciples of Christ (*American Christian Review*, *Christian Baptist*, and *Millennial Harbinger*).

After the nineteenth century, peace journalism grew along with the number of peace organizations. Examples of the publications from religious institutions (including the historical peace churches) are *Brethren Life and Thought*, *Friends Journal*, *Mennonite Life*,

*Fellowship* (Fellowship of Reconciliation), and *Catholic Worker*. Examples from secular organizations include *Liberation*, *International Conciliation*, and *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, as well as *WIN*, from the War Resisters' League.

Beginning in the early twenty-first century, individuals and groups turned to new media technologies such as the → Internet to proselytize for peace. For instance, most peace organizations today take advantage of computer networking and email to help organize their international members' activities, including the production of media messages. Many peace periodicals have either developed an auxiliary website or are primarily web-based, such as *Peace Journalism* ([www.peacejournalism.com](http://www.peacejournalism.com)), an international e-magazine.

The best-developed scholarship on peace journalism grows out of the field of peace history, especially institutional histories. Some scholars have focused on influential practitioners of journalism for peace advocacy, such as Dorothy Day and her *Catholic Worker* (Roberts 1984) and I. F. Stone, editor of *I. F. Stone's Weekly* (Cottrell 1992). Such research demonstrates that some practitioners such as Day focused almost equally on content and journalistic craftsmanship.

Research on peace advocacy journalism and new media technologies is still in its infancy. Other areas that demand study include peace advocates' uses of communication, economic aspects of peace journalism, audiences peace journalists reach, the social and cultural context, and the journalists' background and training, especially compared to mainstream professionals.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Alternative Journalism ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Internet ► Media Effects ► Media History ► Social Movement Media, Transnational

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# Pedagogy, Communication in

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Pedagogy is commonly defined as the principles and methods of instruction. Instructional pedagogy, at all levels, is mediated through the communication process. Successful pedagogy is thus dependent on successful communication among teachers and students. However, all teachers do not effectively use communication to support instruction. A teacher's thorough knowledge of content does not mean that she or he can communicate it to students.

Much of student learning success and teacher satisfaction with the process is derived from the quality of the student-teacher relationship. All teachers are faced with the challenges of classroom communication, of communicating content to students, and of engaging students in the learning process. When the communication process works well, learning takes place and relationships are developed. But the process does not always work. Some students feel course content is worthless, some are unresponsive, others fear talking in class, and still others struggle with the English language. These issues, in part, are affected by how a teacher communicates with students. An effective teacher is a content expert, and many teachers believe that is all they need to be. However, teachers who also focus on *how* to support students and learning through effective communication increase learning, student liking for learning, and teacher satisfaction.

## ROLE OF STUDENT TALK

The strategies outlined below focus both on student talk and on teacher talk (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction). The primary objective of developing student talk is to provide opportunities for student engagement in content. For example, studies have shown that the lecture method is not universally effective in helping students learn because they are not actively involved in the learning process. On the other hand, an old dictum states, “If you want to learn something, teach it.” There is truth there, truth that points to helping students communicate what they have learned. “If you can't communicate about it, you probably don't know it.”

Yet many teachers and students do not see the value of student talk. Barbara Wood (1981) made the point that many students see a negative relationship between talk and grades. It is the quiet student that just does his or her work who seems to get a positive evaluation. This isn't always the case, but it happens with regularity. Wood described four beliefs that guide many teachers' approaches to student talk in the classroom:



- I must retain the floor as much as possible.
- I must insist on complete quiet from my students in order to retain control.
- Students cannot gain access to the floor without first getting my invitation (I call on them).
- Students should not ask questions or make comments about the topic until the proper time (such time is rarely provided).

These beliefs invite passive behaviors from students. Alternatively, an effective focus on communication in classroom pedagogy can improve student ability to relate effectively to others, improve social system understanding, build confidence in influencing that social system, and most importantly, build confidence in content (→ Student Communication Competence).

### **COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FOR THE CLASSROOM**

Once the decision is made to focus on the role of communication in pedagogy, the question becomes one of implementation. However, choosing the appropriate teaching strategy for a course or an individual class session is not easy. An instructor can choose from an increasingly wide range of methods including lecture, discussion, guided discussion (→ Classroom Questioning), small groups, peer instruction, computer-assisted instruction, podcasting, online chat groups, experiential games and activities, and the like (→ Classroom Instructional Technology). All strategies work, but not equally well for every learning objective. Cooper & Simonds (2003) developed a set of guidelines applicable to choosing an appropriate instructional strategy.

- The *teacher*: what is the teacher's teaching style (→ Teacher Communication Style)? What is he or she comfortable with?
- The *students*: what is the student's background, interest level, knowledge level, attention span, etc.?
- *Objective of the lesson*: what is the learning outcome? Different outcomes (such as information acquisition or skill development) require different learning strategies.
- The *environment*: factors such as class size, amount of time devoted to the lesson, classroom physical arrangement, and other environmental considerations impact learning strategy selection.

Using these guidelines, a teacher can select the most appropriate strategy. The remainder of this entry focuses on three commonly used strategies.

#### **Lecture Method**

The lecture method is generic across subjects and education levels. It is well documented as a strategy for communicating ideas to others, and it has also been known to put many a student to sleep. It has survived because it is efficient, familiar, and necessary. No teacher escapes giving directions, specifying procedures, and providing demonstrations (Cooper & Simonds 2003). In recent decades, the lecture has received a great deal of criticism for misuse and unskilled applications. Research studies link the lecture method

to reduced motivation (Spaulding 1992), lower long-term memory retention, and passive learning (Freiberg & Driscoll 2005). The implication of these findings is that the lecture should more strongly engage students in the content (Freiberg & Driscoll 2005).

How does an instructor accomplish this? The teacher can develop an effective lecture by focusing on the student, the content, the organization, and the delivery (→ Teacher Clarity). Lecturing is a form of public speaking, and the principles of a good public speech apply. Preparation begins with audience analysis. Understanding who the students are and how they can be prepared to listen lays the groundwork for tailoring the lecture to meet their needs. Variables that should be considered include: students' learning styles and the instructor's teaching style, students' information processing ability, their attitudes and beliefs about the topic, their previous knowledge, feelings about the instructor, and the range of cultures represented in the classroom.

Some instructors, unfortunately, take the point of view that "It is my job to give the lecture, their job to listen." These instructors believe that no adaptation is necessary, and some would even say adaptation is pandering to students. This issue does bring up the necessary question of student responsibilities during a lecture. If we view the lecture as a communication event, then we know that whatever the outcome, both interactants (instructor and students) have an impact. Students do need to actively participate in this communication event to make it successful, but what is their responsibility? A very useful idea is for the instructor to talk with the students about lectures, about expectations, and ask the students for their opinions on how course lectures can be made most beneficial. In this way, adaptations are made on both sides for everyone's benefit.

A key factor in lecturing success is explicitly stating learning outcome(s) for the content. All lectures should have a clear instructional outcome, and the teacher needs to make the determination that a lecture is the best strategy to accomplish this objective. The identified learning objective becomes the main point for the lecture and guides the content of the lecture.

Once the main idea is determined, the teacher can develop the lecture's organization. A clear organization has many benefits. It helps students listen more effectively as it allows them to follow the development of the content; it helps the lecturer stay on track; and it aids in information retention. Good organization begins with an introduction that gains the attention of the students, introduces the main points, describes the relevance of the information, and previews the content. The body of the lecture needs to have clearly identified sections, with obvious transitions. Depending on the attention span of the students, a lecture can sometimes use the transitions between points to give the students a moment to talk with each other about the content. This breaks up the lecture's flow and more actively involves students. The conclusion should summarize the primary ideas of the lecture and restate the significance of the material.

Once the lecture is prepared, the instructor needs to consider delivery. Good delivery enhances listener attention. Delivering the lecture with animation, energy, and enthusiasm will help maintain interest. Watch student response during the lecture and if it appears that attention is waning, it may be time for a break, for the students to interact with each other, or for a refocusing activity.

Lectures will continue to be used in education because they are an effective strategy for certain purposes, such as introducing students to new information and concepts and

clarifying material perhaps already read in the course textbook. Becoming adept in the use of this classroom strategy is a necessary part of the teaching profession, just as important as leading in-class discussions.

### **Classroom Discussions**

A goal of this pedagogy is developing the student's ability to engage actively in the course content. Classroom discussions are one of the most efficacious strategies for accomplishing this goal. Cooper & Simonds (2003) noted that discussions are both exciting and messy. Discussion does not always follow a specific organizational pattern, teachers are not always in control, and students do not always discuss what the instructor thinks are the right ideas. However, the discussion method has no peer as a means to encourage students to participate actively and to ask more questions of the teacher and each other, and to find out how well the students can verbalize the content.

Hyman (1987) described five different reasons to hold class discussions: (1) explaining – analyzing causes, reasons, background, etc. for a given topic; (2) problem-solving – exploring options for tackling an issue; (3) debriefing – reflecting on the meaning of a shared activity; (4) predicting – speculating on consequences of a particular action or forecasting future events; and (5) policy deciding – coming to group consensus on lines of action. These five goals cannot easily be accomplished by other strategies.

An effective discussion should have a specific plan and structure. Like lectures, the discussion needs an introduction that captures the interest of the student, increases their motivation to participate, describes the purpose of the discussion, and describes the potential outcome. In addition, the teacher should briefly describe ground rules for the discussion. These rules might include suggestions on turn-taking, length of comments, listening behavior, disagreement resolution, decision-making strategy, etc. Next, the teacher should plot the body of the discussion out. What topics should be covered? What questions will generate the best student response? How will the decision be moved from one topic to the next? Either the discussion plan can be teacher developed or the teacher can develop it with the students. Last, the conclusion ties the discussion together, reinforces the outcomes, and may link the outcome of the discussion to the next lesson.

Questioning is one of the most important aspects of the discussion strategy (→ Questions and Questioning). Without good probes, the discussion will not succeed. Bloom's *Taxonomy of education objectives* is an excellent source for questions that increase critical thinking and support the lesson (Bloom 1956). Following this taxonomy will help develop questions that allow students to explore knowledge, develop comprehension, apply concepts, analyze situations, synthesize various points of view, and evaluate ideas based on specific criteria.

The final consideration when implementing this strategy is teacher response to student comments. As the goal is to develop student comments, the teacher should refrain from overt evaluation of student comments. Even positive responses can have a limiting effect on the discussion. Instead, the teacher should focus on building on student contributions, accepting and developing feelings, listening and reflecting student thoughts, developing further detail, and guiding student thinking toward deeper understanding of the topic (→ Teacher Feedback). The teacher also needs to act as an effective moderator of the

discussion. This includes encouraging comments from the reticent (→ Reticence), discouraging monopolizers, pacing the discussion so that the necessary topics are covered, providing summaries and transitions between topics, and bringing the discussion to a close.

### **Small Group Communication**

Some students, generally the brighter ones, do not like small group activities in the classroom. Complaints about groups in class are, unfortunately, frequently well founded. Many teachers do use small groups as a teaching strategy, but do so badly. Merely “getting them into groups” will not guarantee that a teacher will reach the goal of increased interaction and increased learning. Rather, classroom groups need to be constructed and implemented effectively.

Small groups ought to be used with two purposes in mind: helping the students acquire and better understand the content, and helping students learn to work in groups. If the class in question is a communication course, then the second purpose is likely built into the class structure. Given these two purposes, the usual rationale for using small groups is collaborative learning. The focus of collaboration fits the overarching theme of this entry – teaching communication. Collaborative learning is an attempt to take advantage of differing viewpoints held by students as they focus on a single project. Differing viewpoints can be a group’s greatest disadvantage as well. If students are not properly prepared to participate, chaos can result.

To set the stage for effective small groups, the teacher needs to consider process variables (how the group accomplishes its task) and content variables (how the content is managed). Students are frequently unaware of the importance of process variables. The teacher needs to help the groups develop procedures on leadership, participation, decision-making, group norms, individual roles and responsibilities, and logistics. The teacher also needs to help the group determine how it will tackle the content. Used well, the classroom small group can be an effective strategy to enhance learning.

### **ASSESSMENT**

Students need feedback on their communication efforts, and the teacher needs to effectively guide the classroom communication process. This cannot be accomplished without evaluation and assessment. Handled well, evaluation can increase skill, develop confidence, and promote effectiveness. An effective evaluation system can increase both the quantity and quality of classroom communication. Guidelines for this system are as follows.

- 1 Early in the class, at the beginning of the year or term, promote interaction between teacher and students and among the students. Use activities that require, in a nonthreatening way, every student to say at least two things the first few days of class (→ Teacher Confirmation; Teacher Immediacy). The goal is to develop the pattern of students contributing, orally, to the class. The longer it takes for a student to contribute, the more difficult it becomes. Developing student expectations for communication is important groundwork for later success.

- 2 The students' efforts at talking early in class should have minimal feedback or evaluation. The best approach is to develop outside boundaries such as specific time frames for their comments and interactions, with other time periods devoted to specific instruction. "Time" is a convenient beginning boundary, followed by the boundaries of topic, channel (who can talk to whom), and similar boundaries.
- 3 After the students have realized that talking in class isn't necessarily wrong, and after they have gotten used to the idea of boundaries, the teacher will be ready to move to descriptive feedback on their communication efforts. Descriptive feedback focuses on message effects. This evaluation technique asks the student to describe, with perhaps some probing from the teacher, the original intent for the conversation, the communicative acts used, and the subsequent effect. Through students' describing those three things (either orally or in writing), the teacher can probe and suggest alternatives in each area. This model is a powerful tool in getting the student to see options in communicative behavior.
- 4 The previous point focused on after-the-fact evaluation. This point focuses on before-the-act evaluation. This follows a more traditional teaching model in that the teacher sets up a specific objective to work on using a communication behavior. The teacher develops the objective, models the behavior, helps students practice, and then helps them to try it out in as real a situation as possible. Evaluation is done afterwards in the sense of "did it work?"

Evaluation is difficult, but necessary. It takes working with students on an individual basis frequently, but it is an educationally powerful method. If it follows the model described above, and focuses on description of behaviors, then evaluation can be a powerful learning tool that helps students see the connection between their communicative efforts and results in the real world.

Communication in pedagogy is frequently overlooked by content area instructors. However, a concentrated focus on communication in the classroom can do much to improve learning, increase student participation, and develop a more satisfying learning environment for all concerned.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Classroom Management Techniques  
 ▶ Classroom Power ▶ Classroom Questioning ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction  
 ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Questions and Questioning ▶ Reticence  
 ▶ Scholarship of Teaching ▶ Student Communication Competence ▶ Teacher Affinity Seeking  
 ▶ Teacher Clarity ▶ Teacher Communication Concern ▶ Teacher Communication Style  
 ▶ Teacher Confirmation ▶ Teacher Feedback ▶ Teacher Immediacy  
 ▶ Teacher Influence and Persuasion ▶ Teacher Self-Disclosure ▶ Teacher Socialization  
 ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ▶ Teacher Training in Communication

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## Penny Press

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In the early to mid-nineteenth century, in most western countries but especially those with press freedom, a cheap popular press appeared. The term “penny press” is associated with a famous generation of US newspapers that appeared in the 1830s, but the notion of penny publications has a longer lineage. The penny papers of the 1830s and their British counterparts have been credited with effecting a revolution in journalism, and in fact with the invention of journalism itself as well as of neutrality or objectivity (→ Journalism, History of; Objectivity in Reporting). This famous generation of penny papers also had successors that were spectacular in their own day but have escaped the attention of journalism historians. Echoes of the penny press formula – particularly the combination of sensational news with mass market appeal, large-scale industrial production, and economies of scale – have continued to appear. The relationships between popular journalism and populism, on the one hand, and journalism, on the other, remain controversial.

## PREHISTORY

Cheap publication has surfaced periodically since the advent of printing (→ Printing, History of). In most western countries, a ballad literature commenting on novelties and current events came to be printed up in the sixteenth century. Each one of these ephemera, often single-page broadsides, had to find its own audience, and so looked to the most sensational content, including marvels and disasters, and frequently crime and punishment (→ Sensationalism). Over time, these novelties developed into more substantial publications. In seventeenth-century England, cheap, short pamphlets (“chapbooks”) of 8, 12, or 24 pages appeared, priced at a penny and featuring tales of the supernatural, romances, heroes and villains, and some history and news. These were irreverent in tone and definitely plebeian, and were viewed with suspicion by the authorities and polite society.

These *penny pamphlets* survived taxation and moral uplift to remain vibrant through the eighteenth century. Reformers competed with them by producing more acceptable cheap publications. The pathbreaker was Hannah More, whose *Cheap Repository for Moral and Religious Tracts* issued monthly penny publications from 1795 to 1798, intending to counter both the plebeian sensational pamphlets and the radical political press inspired by the French Revolution and native thinkers like Tom Paine. Penny → magazines began circulating successfully in Britain in the 1810s, the most famous being the *Penny Magazine* published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, but, because of taxes and censorship, penny newspapers did not appear there until the 1850s (→ Magazine, History of; Censorship, History of).

British cheap publication evidently inspired *French experiments*. One key pioneer was Émile de Girardin, whose initial cheap publication, the *Journal des Connaissances Utiles*, had 120,000 subscribers. In 1836 he established *La Presse*, which cost 40 francs a year and was dedicated to conservative politics. De Girardin was a vigorous partisan, and France’s cheap press, like French journalism generally, remained committed to politics (→ Partisan Press).

In other countries, the appearance of a cheap mass circulation press was delayed until later in the nineteenth century. In many countries, censorship prevented popular publication. In others, market conditions, and especially the availability of plentiful advertising revenue, were slow to develop. By the end of the nineteenth century, most western countries had some version of a cheap popular press.

## US 1830S PENNY PRESS

In the US, the absence of censorship, the ready availability of government and party patronage, and the generous policies of the national postal system had encouraged a rapid growth of the newspaper system, until by the 1830s US Americans could claim to have more newspaper readers than any other country. Still, most of the newspapers produced were weeklies; daily newspapers remained expensive and targeted toward the business class.

Beginning with the publication of the *New York Sun* in 1833, a new genre of daily newspapers emerged. Priced at a penny, targeted toward a mass readership, drawing on manifold roots in working-class culture, intentionally wary of party politics, focused on crime news (→ Crime Reporting) and other sensational matter, the *Sun* and its imitators

opened a new market niche. The large popular readerships of these papers led to expanded advertising revenue (→ Advertising, Economics of). Some became immensely successful, and, after investing revenue in the latest communication and production technologies, became the elite organs of a new mass media system. Others continued to operate in the margins, producing plebeian matter on the cheap for ephemeral audiences.

This generation of penny papers has drawn a good deal of scholarly attention. Because it coincided with many other remarkable developments – a “market revolution,” a quickening of working-class activism, and a burst of reformism across the political spectrum – it has prompted arguments about the connections among them. Some point to *connections between the penny press and class tensions* evident in popular culture generally (→ Popular Culture and the News Media). Others argue that the penny press served a middling class coming into more intense contact with urbanization and market forces. The most ambitious arguments see the penny press as a driving cultural force behind the creation of a modern culture of news that included objectivity, political → neutrality, commercialization, the adoption of new technologies, the deployment of reporters, and the rise of “news,” by which is meant a combination of crime news and human interest stories (→ Commercialization of the Media). There is some truth in all these arguments, though a more responsible perspective sees the developments in both the general society and news culture as coming out of diverse sources and having deeper roots in a longer history.

The apparently distinctive content of the penny papers – politically neutral ephemeral matter – had been honed by predecessors. Since the turn of the century, gossip newspapers, often with names like *Wasp* or *Microscope*, had exposed the hypocrisies and vices of “dandies” and others. At first, these newspapers had a partisan bent. Later, under the threat of lawsuits, they turned more toward crime reporting. Meanwhile, the Workingman’s Party and the Anti-Masons had used republican language to criticize the corruptions of “partyism,” and claimed a stance above party. The Workingman’s Party especially adopted a plebeian tone. Most of these newspapers were weeklies, and not especially urban. Meanwhile, urban dailies were commercial, focusing on business news, meant to be read by the business class, and investing resources in news gathering. These were sometimes very political and sometimes neutral *Advertisers*.

The penny press merged the culture of the marginal weeklies with some of the habits of the commercial dailies to find an expansive audience of daily readers that could in turn be effectively sold to advertisers. This may at first have been a working-class audience, but in the course of the 1830s the successful entrepreneurs managed to move upscale, a history that can be told in capsule form by recounting the founding of the most important of the New York City penny dailies. The *Sun* and its producers, headed by Benjamin Day, were rooted in the same artisanal culture in New York City that had nurtured the Workingman’s Party and radical sheets like the *Free Enquirer*. In 1835, James Gordon Bennett established the *New York Herald*, which quickly surpassed the *Sun* in circulation. Bennett had been a Washington correspondent for the commercial daily *Courier and Enquirer*, and had sharpened his editorial voice in the party press; he won middle-class readers with his regular “money article,” which reported business news coming out of Wall Street, even while keeping downscale readers with crime news and show-business gossip. He also raised his price to two cents. In 1841, New York’s Whigs, led by former Anti-Mason publisher Thurlow Weed, selected Horace Greeley to edit the *New York*



*Tribune*, a Whig counterpart to a penny press establishment that they considered thoroughly Democratic. And in 1851, Henry J. Raymond, a committed Republican politico, founded the *New York Times* as a penny paper. The *Times* had no working-class accent to it, was consistently partisan and upscale, and cost the then-immense sum of \$100,000 to establish. Other famous papers – the *Baltimore Sun*, *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, and *Cincinnati Commercial*, for instance – followed a similar trajectory, beginning as rebellious upstarts and becoming their cities’ elite newspapers.

The penny press of the 1830s happened for a time to give expression to the demotic energy of *working-class culture*. By the 1840s, news culture and working-class culture had again separated. A vibrant popular culture continued in “yellow” literature – cheap books featuring genre fiction, often sold with a yellow paper cover – and radical and reformist politics continued in a weekly newspaper culture sponsored by reformists and evangelicals, but these were increasingly remote from commercialized news culture, which had again become partisan and would remain so until the end of the nineteenth century.

## POST-HISTORY

Something similar happened later in other countries and again in the US. In other western countries, the penny press waited upon the abolition of censorship and newspaper taxes – so, for instance, in Britain in the 1850s. There, mass popular dailies at first courted and then rinsed themselves of the radical political culture of the “unstamped” and Chartist press. In the US, the 1870s and the 1890s saw similar eruptions of cheap new newspapers, sparked by combinations of cheap paper (the result of new wood-pulp processes), newly abundant advertising (especially from department stores), and economies of scale coming from new production technologies (stereotyping, the linotype, and so forth). In the 1920s, “tabloids” appeared, emphasizing a shorter, more popular, decontextualized verbal reporting style combined with “candid” photography (→ Tabloidization). In the 1930s and the 1950s, broadcast media produced somewhat similar bursts of popular journalism, and in the last decades of the twentieth century, talk radio (→ Broadcast Talk), → cable television, and the → Internet provided new openings for news with a populist accent. Each of these moments seems to share important elements of the penny press, and there is a tendency among historians to view the penny press through the lens of subsequent “tabloid” or “boulevard” newspapers.

But these later mass popular journalisms are *historically and analytically distinct*. They appear as alternatives to a dominant daily news culture already well established. The first moment of the penny press arose before the appearance of a dominant daily news culture. Reacting against a politicized press, the successful penny papers themselves became the dominant daily news culture. Later eruptions of popular journalism found their markets alongside established and (by the twentieth century) professionalized news as the disreputable “other” journalism. Because the penny press produced a commercialized mass circulation newspaper establishment, it created the space for subsequent eruptions of popular journalism even while keeping them in their place.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commercialization

of the Media ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Magazine  
 ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Neutrality ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Partisan Press  
 ▶ Popular Culture and the News Media ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Sensationalism  
 ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## **People-Meter**

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A people-meter is an electronic device that records when media are being used and who is using them. It is the preferred method of audience ratings companies that provide “third-party” estimates of audience size and composition to various clients (→ Audience Research; Rating Methods), and the principle means of national television audience measurement around the world. People-meters are constantly being enhanced and adapted to capture other forms of media use.

People-meters, like the German “Teleskopie” system, were first developed in Europe during the 1970s. They improved on earlier household meters that recorded set use but failed to capture information about who was actually watching the set. In 1987, the A. C. Nielsen Company adopted people-meters as the standard method for measuring national television network audiences in the United States (→ Nielsen Ratings). Advertisers, who were increasingly interested in reaching specific target markets, found reliable, quickly gathered demographic information to be desirable. For the media, people-meters were a mixed blessing. Older networks that had sold time to advertisers based primarily on audience size found no advantage in the technology. Newer cable networks that catered to smaller, more demographically homogeneous audiences benefited from a measurement technology that better demonstrated their value to advertisers. People-meters of various designs are now in use in dozens of countries.

## TECHNOLOGY AND APPLICATION

In their most common incarnation, people-meters are small boxes that attach to each television set in a sample household. They record when the set is on and what is being watched. They also feature a set-top box with a series of lights that serve as prompts and person-specific buttons that allow individuals to indicate they are watching. To encourage viewers to “log in,” the lights flash when the set is turned on, when the channel is changed, or when there is no button-pushing activity for an extended period of time. Most people-meters offer respondents a remote hand-held device so they can press their button without walking to the set. The data collected by the people-meters are retrieved via telephone lines on a daily basis, combined with other previously gathered viewer information (e.g., age, gender, etc.), and turned into audience ratings that can be accessed the next day.

People-meter data are typically gathered from a panel of television-equipped households selected through some form of probability sampling. As such they suffer from the same kinds of sampling and nonresponse errors that occur in all → survey research (→ Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom). People-meter measurement, however, presents some novel problems and solutions.

Button-pushing requires the active participation of audience members. It is, therefore, a relatively obtrusive form of measurement that is subject to respondent fatigue. Further, some types of viewers, like children, are not particularly vigilant button-pushers. Ratings firms combat these problems by training respondents and offering various incentives for cooperation. They will also limit how long a household can be in the ratings panel – in the US, it is a maximum of two years. Ideally, more “passive” technologies would identify who within the household was watching. To that end, ratings firms have experimented with facial recognition software, or having respondents wear small “tags” that would signal if they are in the room.

Newer video technologies that offer an abundance of choice and the ability to time-shift consumption present the challenge of accurately identifying what is being watched. The problem is addressed in one of two ways. Ideally, the companies that provide media content will embed inaudible codes or “watermarks” into the audio portion of their offerings. Detecting these codes allows meters to record what content and delivery platform is being used, as well as calculate the extent of time-shifting. Media that are not encoded can still be identified by capturing an audio “signature” that is later matched to a library of material.

Conventional people-meters are expensive to manufacture, install, and maintain. This places a limit on the size of the market that can be economically measured. Local broadcasters in small cities simply do not generate enough revenue to justify adequately sized people-meter samples. Newer, less expensive technologies are being developed. These might involve smaller, lightweight meters that could be mailed to respondents, installed simply without hard-wiring, and returned to the ratings company.

## PORTABLE PEOPLE-METERS

Other forms of portable electronic media, like radio, are ever more commonplace. The diary-based measures that are still the principal means for measuring radio audiences, however, are problematic, and conventional people-meters that are anchored to a particular

location are ill-suited to the task. This has given rise to newer, portable people-meters (PPM) that are carried by respondents and are capable of capturing exposure to multiple sources of media.

At this writing, the most fully developed PPM technology is being deployed by the Arbitron Company, the major supplier of radio ratings in the US. It is being introduced in major American markets, and is being used in several countries, either as the “currency” for buying and selling media, or as a supplement to more conventional metering.

Arbitron’s PPM requires a sample of respondents to carry or wear a pager-sized device that is capable of detecting inaudible watermarks embedded in the audio signal of either radio or television. Thus, the PPM can capture information on exposure to either or both media. Portable media using earphones can be measured using special adapters. In the future, it might also be possible to measure proximity to print media by seeding them with tiny RFID chips, or outdoor advertising by building in some sort of GPS technology. At the end of the day, respondents are instructed to place their PPM in a docking station that recharges the meter and retrieves the data. PPMs are designed with motion-detectors to determine whether they are being carried. If they are not, the ratings company can contact the respondent.

Though they are less expensive and more easily deployed than conventional hard-wired people-meters, PPM technology is not cheap. Having PPMs accomplish both radio and television measurement would greatly improve the economics of deployment. However, in the US Nielsen has shown qualified interest, in part, because optimizing the device for “hearing” a radio receiver (e.g., in a car with the windows open), may make it too sensitive for television measurement (e.g., picking up a TV set in another room).

An alternative to PPMs that might further drive down costs and encourage greater compliance is under development. This approach takes advantage of “smart phones” already being carried by prospective respondents. Such phones have an operating system that can be programmed to take audio “snapshots” at 30-second intervals, recording an audio watermark or signature. At various times during the day, the phone transmits its data via GPRS to a data center, where it is interpreted, cleaned, edited, and aggregated into audience estimates that could be reported in near real time.

The thought is that since many people already use mobile phones, they would be more likely to carry them than a dedicated device. This strategy might enhance compliance among difficult-to-measure demographics like young males or minorities. For those who did not have the requisite smart phone, one could be provided. Investing less in collection technology might permit bigger sample sizes, or measurement of smaller markets. It remains to be seen whether people who may view their mobile phones as a repository of personal information will make them readily available to a research company, whether giving someone a powerful new phone will alter their behavior, and whether it is feasible to develop and test the software needed for each new kind of smart phone that reaches the market.

## **THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PEOPLE-METERS**

Beyond the technical attributes of people-meter measurement, there are economic and political forces that affect their deployment. Though there is variation in the hardware

used to create people-meters, they are all relatively expensive. Large national markets usually generate enough advertising revenue to justify the cost. Unfortunately, sampling error is independent of population size, so even the smallest local market needs a sample of roughly 500 people-meter households to estimate audiences with acceptable accuracy. To finesse this limitation, it is possible to have people-meter households do double duty in both national and local markets. As long as household data are properly weighted, this has the dual benefit of increasing the size of the national panel and extending measurement to smaller markets. This is one reason Nielsen is replacing household meters and diaries with “local people-meters” (LPM) in the US.

All forms of audience measurement have potential biases. Audience ratings, however, constitute a currency worth billions of dollars in the US alone. Any change, even an improvement, in the underlying measurement technology is likely to benefit some and disadvantage others in nontrivial ways. Hence, Nielsen’s introduction of well-established people-meter technology into local markets was met with fierce opposition by some broadcasters and public interest groups who claimed it would undercount minorities. This, in turn, triggered hearings in the US Congress. One can only imagine the difficulties in introducing more radical changes in audience measurement.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Media Marketing ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Survey

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## **Perceived Realism as a Decision Process**

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What do we mean when we say a story is realistic? At first, that may seem simple. One possibility is that realism is a characteristic of the genre – news is real and a → soap opera is not. That explanation may work in many cases, but → fiction is intended to capture aspects of reality that are not easily depicted in the news. A soap-opera depiction of a

sexual infidelity may capture the emotional reality of that betrayal better than a documentary on the topic. Another possibility is that people think if something looks real, it is real. Certainly, appearance is a cue to realism. For example, each new generation of → video game uses increased computer power to make the games look more realistic. But appearance of a video game or television show does not provide a complete picture of the problem. While young children tend to think that what looks real is real, adults know that what something looks like does not always reflect its true nature. No matter how realistic a dragon may look, an adult knows that dragons do not exist.

Such changes in realism judgments as people mature indicate that people use knowledge of the world to judge the realism of stories. For example, police dramas judged highly realistic by many people may seem comical to law enforcement professionals. But even a person's knowledge about the world cannot be a complete answer. Just comparing a story to what we know falls short even for shows strongly embedded in everyday life. Few viewers of the US television series *The West Wing* have had real-life experiences working for the president. For most of us, comparing a story to our own experience is totally inadequate for judging the realism of stories about drug dealing in Miami, life as a Jewish merchant in late sixteenth-century Venice, or life on a twenty-fourth-century starship. Yet we seem to be able to make realism judgments about all of those situations.

Scholars now appreciate that judgments about realism result from a complex, often moment-to-moment interaction between a story and the mental processes of the reader, viewer, or player. As we will see, our judgments about realism seem to be linked to both what we know and what we can imagine. Adult judgments of realism depend on sensory information such as the look and sound of a story, as well as on inferential, conceptual, and imaginative judgments about a story.

Finally, realism is not a binary judgment. Stories are not real or unreal. Instead, stories vary in how realistic they are in a variety of ways. Special effects in a fantasy story can make things that cannot happen look extremely realistic (→ Special Effects). On the other hand, a few words printed on a page about the death of a friend can be devastatingly real. To understand these complexities, we need to understand something about research on realism and how realism judgments change as we mature from child to adult.

### **WHY IS REALISM IMPORTANT?**

Many of the media messages we see are in the form of a story, including → news, → advertising, entertainment, and most recently computer games (Shapiro et al. 2006). Some modern scholars claim that stories are fundamentally the way we understand the world, ourselves, and our social relationships, and are the way we transmit culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

The notion that realism is an important element of stories is ancient. Realism undoubtedly plays a role in making many stories more compelling. For example, more realistic dramas appear to be more enjoyable (Shapiro & Chock 2003). Realism may also influence mental processing, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior, forming parasocial relationships with media characters, aggressiveness, and the effectiveness of health messages. A recent study indicates that realism mediates the relationship between exposure to sexually explicit Internet material and recreational attitudes toward sex. Video-game players

consider a high degree of realism one of the most important characteristics of a video game. However, the influence of realism can be very complex.

Some of the earliest modern social science studies on media realism manipulated realism by telling participants that a particular film or video clip was either real or fictional. Almost all find that presentations labeled as “real” encourage aggressiveness more than fictional presentations.

Another set of studies measured a variable called “perceived reality” as a global characteristic of television. Using factor-analytic techniques, three dimensions of perceived reality were often identified in studies: (1) magic window, (2) instruction or utility, and (3) identity. The “magic window” dimension of perceived reality, once seen as characteristic of children’s judgments about TV, has evolved into the semantic component, or “a belief in the reality embodied in the meaning or substance of the message” (Potter 1988). That is, realism is the degree of perceived similarity between mediated characters or situations and real-life characters or situations (→ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process).

### **DEVELOPMENTAL TRENDS IN REALISM JUDGMENT**

How children make realism judgments changes in systematic ways with maturity. Young children tend to judge realism based on concrete physical perceptions. What looks real is real, even if it is a dragon. As children mature, they gain experience with the physical and social world, and they learn to use abstract, conceptual, and even hypothetical thinking. What scares children reveals something interesting about how realism judgments change as children mature (Cantor 2001). First, as children get older they are less likely to be frightened by what looks scary but is actually harmless. By middle childhood, most children know that a dragon does not exist even if it is scary-looking. Second, as children mature they are more frightened by real dangers and less by fantasy dangers. However, as children age they become more able to be frightened by depictions of abstract concepts or hypotheticals, such as nuclear war. Children’s ability to distinguish between real and unreal depictions varies with the child’s experience with a particular topic. Even at a young age, children often use their real-world and television experiences to make complex realism judgments, for example about depictions of family life.

Knowledge of other less physically obvious aspects of television (acting, scripting, and rehearsal) become more important for older children. By middle childhood, children start to add more sophisticated categorizations about what is real in addition to judgments about physical characteristics and genre. One distinction seems to be on the basis of factuality – the distinction between events that really happened outside of TV and those that were made up for TV. Another distinction is between fabricated but possible and fabricated but probable or representative. During the passage from middle to late childhood, more and more children define real as probable or plausible, not just possible.

By adulthood a person’s understanding of realism is complex. What a person can imagine or infer about a story contributes as much or more to a sense of realism as what is explicitly presented (Shapiro & McDonald 1992). It is not surprising that people usually rate news as more real than drama. However, adolescents know that television news presents events as less complex, more intense, and more solvable than people know them

to be in real life. Adult realism judgments appear to be multidimensional, including plausibility, typicality, factuality, emotional involvement, narrative consistency, and perceptual persuasiveness (Hall 2003). This offers an interesting explanation for some complex realism judgments. For example, science fiction may be judged as not factual or plausible, but may look real and have high involvement and narrative consistency (→ Developmental Communication).

### **OTHER MEANINGS OF REAL**

Recent research indicates that people make judgments about realism in at least two ways. One way is similar to the semantic component defined earlier. A person can judge the absolute likelihood that a depicted event could happen in the real world. By that standard, much of what we see in the media is rare and thus would seem unreal. But people do not seem to do that. That raises another possibility – that people judge how real an event is based on imagining what that event would be like if it were to happen. Thus, earthquakes are absolutely rare. But if an earthquake were to happen, we can judge depicted behaviors and events as more or less realistic in that circumstance. This enables people to judge the realism of unfamiliar contexts and events – a story about prison life, for example. This also allows us to judge the realism of fiction and fantasy. People appear to make both absolute and relative judgments about realism across a wide variety of stories, including advertising, news, drama, and comedy.

Related to relative judgments of realism is the possibility that we make those relative judgments differently for ourselves than for others. This may parallel the → “third-person” effect. In general, events seem more realistic for others than for ourselves. This reality-person effect appears to be robust and has been detected for a variety of news, entertainment, and commercial messages. Psychologically, the effect appears to be an implicit comparison between self and other.

### **REALISM, TYPICALITY, AND EXPECTATIONS**

Several recent studies have explored realism judgments for specific narratives. The more typical the people and events in a story, the more realistic the story seems, but that effect is not as strong when the story appears to come from an unfamiliar culture (Shapiro & Chock 2003, 2004). While realism appears to be strongly tied to our judgments about typicality, the link to expectations about how characters act appears to be more complex. For example, people tend to spontaneously generate dispositional explanations when something bad happens to a character and situational explanations when something good happens. Also, items identified as atypical often contain incongruent emotional reactions.

One possibility is that stories containing information congruent with spontaneously generated attributions or with expected emotions will be judged more realistic. That seems to be true for → emotions, i.e., stories with expected emotions are judged more real than stories with unexpected emotions. However, the opposite seems true for attribution. Stories containing information contrary to what is spontaneously generated are judged more realistic than stories containing information congruent with what is spontaneously generated. However, even for emotion, our expectations about emotion vary in complex



ways that can influence our perceptions of realism. For example, extreme happiness in an interpersonal situation is more realistic than in a professional situation. It seems likely that research in the near future will find that many social judgments influence judgments about realism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Emotion ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Fiction ▶ Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ▶ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ▶ Perceived Reality as a Social Process ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Special Effects ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Video Games

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## **Perceived Reality as a Communication Process**

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Beyond one's own direct experiences of the world, humans rely on communication to form impressions about the rest of reality. This fact makes communication a key to how people form their perceptions of reality. There is a rich literature grounded in communication dealing with the role of mass communication in forming individual-level judgments as well as public opinion about conditions in the world (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Social Perception). This literature, which ranges over the areas of

entertainment, news media, media effects, and various social indicators, is impressive in its breadth and depth (e.g., Bryant & Zillmann 2002).

The main models employed in research on perceived reality typically focus on inaccurate or misleading perceptions of social reality. Studies usually involve various attributions about the world that are known, relatively uncontroversial, and normatively useful for citizens to remember accurately, such as the proportion of people working in law enforcement, or the incidence of violent crime. People's answers about these matters are then compared to media portrayals of these phenomena and the differences are calculated and explained, often with reference to media-use preferences and habits. Studies done in real-world settings will introduce various controls through multivariate equations in which the effects of demographics, education, and sometimes other variables are removed before the media variables of interest are considered. Experimental studies often rely on short-term changes in perceptions introduced by some manipulated media stimuli (→ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses).

In the realm of *nonfiction* → news and public affairs information, the basic approach is often similar, with dependent variables such as political or public affairs knowledge (→ Political Knowledge), perceptions of political figures or candidates for office (→ Candidate Image), or perceptions of the importance or relevance of various public issues (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Sometimes the studies involve the extent to which issue opinions are shown to have consistency with one another or with some elite construction of ideology (e.g., Converse 1964). Much of this work has been influenced by various normative theories of what is expected of citizens and of media (e.g., Donsbach 2004; McLeod et al. 1994). The bulk of work in the area has also been focused on the effects of media on citizens or society.

The most useful early mass communication process model was created by Westley and McLean (1957), who captured several essential elements of mass mediated information. The model focuses attention on information advocates such as politicians, advertisers, or other news sources. These sources help choose and subsidize information from the world and make it available to news organizations and individual journalists (→ Models of Communication). News organizations communicate with the public directly, but are active in selecting and shaping messages that flow to audience members. The model is notable because of its emphasis on selectivity at various stages of the communication process, and also for its incorporation of various feedback loops. Various shortcomings have been voiced over the years, but the model has had tremendous heuristic value (McQuail & Windahl 1993).

Over the years a vast literature has been created regarding perceptions and mainly misperceptions of social reality (→ Pluralistic Ignorance). The *spiral of silence* is one model that tries to explain reactions to public opinion trends, which people receive from other people and from mass communication. Mass communication, according to → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, are consonant, ubiquitous, and cumulative, and so resistant to the effects of selective exposure and attention (Noelle-Neumann 1993). In the model, media convey information that includes the norms of society, various representations of the opinions of others, and clues about the extent to which these are acceptable or not (→ Spiral of Silence).

Significant research interest has also been demonstrated in models that examine misperceptions of media content and their impact. One of the best known of these is the → third-person effects model. As it is articulated by Davison (1983), people tend to

perceive greater media impact on others than on themselves. The literature on public opinion has been a rich source, inspiring studies connecting media to perceptions of social reality for more than 100 years (Glynn 2005).

*Pluralistic ignorance* is a broad concept associated with general inaccuracy about the distributions of opinions in society. This can be shown to have a number of dimensions, including false consensus, social projection, and so-called “looking-glass perceptions.” It can also involve overestimates or even false estimates of the degree of consensus. Cultivation is another major perspective explaining media effects on perceptions of social reality. The model includes message systems analysis that examines the content of television and finds it full of violence. Institutional analysis examines the role of media corporations and their links to the power structures of society for clues about why television portrays reality as it does. Cultivation analysis links television content to public perceptions and distortions of social reality in a causal manner (→ Cultivation Effects; Gerbner, George).

Framing has emerged in recent years as a major focus of research activity aimed at understanding how people construct reality. One advantage of this perspective is its focus on defining reality, not merely selecting some aspect of perceived reality and making it more salient in a given situation. Framing can be seen as providing causal explanations for events, as well as moral interpretations. It has been described as having two sides – internal structures of the mind and devices embedded in political discourse (Kinder & Sanders 1990; Pan & Kosicki 1993). Communication, whether conceived in terms of individual talk or in terms of the larger infrastructure of public deliberation, is central to the process of collective sense-making about public policy issues (Pan & Kosicki 2001; → Framing Effects; Framing of the News).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Models of Communication ▶ News ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses

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Meta-analyses have been conducted within the last twenty years in four areas in the field of perceived social reality (→ Meta-Analysis; Perceived Reality as a Social Process; Perceived Reality as a Communication Process). Their results will be summarized here. It has to be noted from the start, though, that any meta-analysis summarizes only the existing literature at the time. The findings reported here should not be taken to reflect current knowledge or thinking in the area, but instead, only the state of knowledge as of the respective dates of publication of the meta-analyses.

### **META-ANALYSIS OF THE FALSE CONSENSUS EFFECT**

The earliest meta-analysis in the area of perceptions of social reality was undertaken on the corpus of literature on the *false consensus effect* (→ False Consensus). The false consensus effect refers to our tendency to perceive our own behaviors, attitudes, and opinions as relatively more common than those of people who behave differently or have alternative opinions or beliefs. As such, it is a *relative* phenomenon, not an absolute one. We do not necessarily believe our own opinions or behaviors are in the majority but, rather, we tend to overestimate how common our opinions and behaviors are. Many explanations for this phenomenon have been offered, ranging from → selective exposure to people who are similar to ourselves to motivation to believe that our behaviors, choices, and → attitudes are normal and good (see, e.g., Marks & Miller 1987).

In the typical false consensus study, participants are asked to provide information about their own beliefs or behavior or the extent to which they exhibit certain characteristics, and they are also asked parallel questions about some other group or the population

at large. Mullen et al. (1985) published the first meta-analysis of existing false consensus studies. For inclusion in this meta-analysis, studies had to meet three criteria: (1) they had to report some statistical test of false consensus, (2) the outcome measure of interest had to be free-response, self-generated percentage estimates of the prevalence of a particular characteristic, opinion, or behavior in some population, and (3) the statistical tests of the false consensus effect had to be derived from original data gathered to assess the phenomenon. These criteria yielded 23 studies containing 115 tests. The results indicated statistically significant support for the existence of a false consensus effect that is, on average, moderate in magnitude. Furthermore, they found that the effect was larger when participants were asked to respond to fewer questions about the behavior and beliefs of others, or when participants were first asked to provide reports of the behavior or beliefs of others prior to reporting their own, compared to when the questions were asked in the opposite order.

Robbins and Krueger (2005) published a subsequent meta-analysis of studies of the false consensus effect focused on whether such false consensus or “projection” effects are larger for perceptions of ingroups relative to outgroups. Examining 19 studies yielding 48 hypothesis tests based on over 5,000 participants, Robbins and Krueger report that, indeed, people tend to believe members of their ingroups are more similar to themselves in a variety of ways than are members of outgroups. However, ingroup false consensus effects tended to be larger in perceptions of laboratory-contrived ingroups than real ingroups existing in the participant’s world outside of the laboratory context.

### **META-ANALYSIS OF CULTIVATION EFFECTS**

Perceptions of false consensus are driven at least in part by selective exposure to people who are similar to ourselves. Through our daily interactions with like others, we come to see our world as populated by people who share many of our own characteristics, attitudes, and values. The advent of television, however, gave people a new lens through which to view the world. Of course, people differ in how much time they spend watching television. According to → cultivation theory, cumulative long-term exposure to television cultivates a worldview that is consistent with television portrayals (→ Cultivation Effects; Entertainment Content and Reality Perception; Gerbner, George). In other words, light and heavy television viewers will come, over time, to perceive the world in a very different way. Namely, the perceptions of heavier viewers will tend to become more consistent with the “reality” of the television world – as one that is relatively violent, hostile, and unfriendly – more so than will those of lighter viewers.

Shanahan and Morgan (1999) published the first meta-analysis of cultivation studies, examining the relationship between television-viewing frequency and perceptions of the world on such dimensions as the prevalence of violence, likelihood of being a victim of crime, and so forth. In 58 independent tests of the cultivation hypothesis, they report an average effect of around 0.10 in correlation terms, an effect that they admit is small but statistically significant, thus supporting cultivation theory predictions (→ Correlation Analysis). In general, heavy television viewers report perceptions that are more consistent with the television world than light viewers. However, Shanahan and Morgan also found evidence that the effect sizes were heterogeneous across studies. They found no evidence

that the magnitude of the cultivation effect varies across “perceptual domains” – the effect size was around 0.10 regardless of whether participants were asked about crime, sex roles, the “meanness” of the world, or a variety of other domains. They also report no evidence that the magnitude of the effect differs between men and women. However, they did find weak evidence that political liberals seem more susceptible to cultivation than conservatives, and white participants may show greater cultivation effects than other ethnic groups. On the whole, given the number of moderators they looked for and the relatively small differences between studies varying on potential moderator variables examined, their conclusion was that important moderators of the cultivation effect remain “at large” (Shanahan & Morgan 1999, 132).

### **META-ANALYSIS OF THE SPIRAL OF SILENCE**

The remaining two meta-analyses described here are less concerned with studies on perceptions of reality but instead on the potential *effects* of perceptions of reality. According to → spiral of silence theory (→ Noelle-Neumann 1974; 1993; → Climate of Opinion), our perceptions of the beliefs of others influence our willingness to express our own beliefs publicly. When we perceive our own opinion to be popular or gaining in strength with the public, we are more likely to express that opinion publicly than when we think our opinion is in the minority or becoming less popular. Because our own behavior serves as input into others’ perceptions of reality, this theory describes one mechanism by which our own perceptions of reality can affect the perceptions of others’ reality.

Glynn et al. (1997) conducted a meta-analysis of research on the spiral of silence by focusing on studies that met four selection criteria: (1) the study had to assess participants’ perceptions of opinion distribution, and compare that perception to the participants’ own opinion, (2) the investigator could not have experimentally manipulated perceptions of the → climate of opinion, (3) the study had to measure perceptions of the climate of opinion rather than which opinion in the distribution was in reality more or less common, (4) the study had to include a measure of how willing the participant was to express the opinion publicly. A total of 17 studies met these criteria, some of which were published, some unpublished, allowing Glynn et al. to compute 123 separate effect sizes.

This meta-analysis revealed a weak but positive and statistically significant relationship between perceived support for our opinion and willingness to speak our opinion publicly. Tests of heterogeneity revealed evidence of significant variation in effect size across studies. Glynn et al. considered several potential moderators of effect size, including whether the study was published, whether respondents were asked about willingness to express an opinion or just about engaging in a conversation on the topic, whether the audience for the opinion expression was presumed to agree or disagree with the respondent, whether the audience for the opinion expression was a stranger to the respondent or a member of the respondent’s community, and whether the opinion expression was directed to a media representative (e.g., a newspaper reporter) or someone else. However, none of these potential moderators of the effect size were statistically significant, leaving unanswered the question of what accounts for between-study variation in the size of the relationship between perceptions of the opinion distribution and willingness to express one’s opinion.

## META-ANALYSIS OF THE THIRD-PERSON EFFECT

People often fail to recognize or are unwilling to admit that the messages they receive through the mass media can affect their own thoughts, feelings, and behavior in negative ways. Yet there is reason to believe that, by contrast, people are quite aware of and comfortable acknowledging the detrimental effects that mass media can have on others or on society as a whole. This tendency to perceive mass media as having a bigger effect on others than on oneself has been dubbed the → “third-person effect” (Davison 1983). In the typical third-person effect study, participants are asked to indicate how probable it is that others (e.g., friends, members of the participant’s community, or people in general) will be affected by certain mediated messages (e.g., pornography, advertising, etc.). Participants also indicate how likely they are themselves to be affected by such messages. Like the false consensus effect, explanations for the third-person effect are numerous, such as biased attribution or self-esteem enhancement or maintenance.

Paul et al. (2000) conducted a meta-analysis to determine whether a third-person effect exists and what determines its size, restricting analysis to studies that (1) explicitly included a measure of perceived effects of certain media messages on others and the self, and (2) reported results in a format that could be converted to a common metric. This selection process resulted in 32 studies representing 121 separate effect sizes. Paul et al. found support for the third-person effect hypothesis in the corpus of literature, with an average effect size that was moderate in strength. People do indeed perceive media content as having a greater effect on others than on themselves. However, the size of the effect was heterogeneous across studies, suggesting the presence of one or more moderators.

An examination of sampling method, respondent (student or not), and message content (e.g., pornography, violence, political ads, etc.) revealed them to be significant moderators (→ Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom; Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of; Sexual Violence in the Media; Violence as Media Content; Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Political Advertising). Third-person effects were larger when sample collection was nonrandom rather than random. But this difference may have been the result of the fact that effects based on nonrandom samples are typically calculated from college student participants, whereas random samples usually include members of the general population. Indeed, third-person effects were generally larger in studies that used college students than in studies that relied on samples from the general population. Importantly, the meta-analysis revealed no statistically significant evidence that the third-person effect is larger when participants are asked about the effects of socially desirable media messages (e.g., wearing seatbelts, behaving nicely to others) compared to undesirable messages (e.g., pornography, television violence, political scandals), a distinction that has itself motivated substantial third-person effects research.

The Paul et al. meta-analysis tells the research community that there is a systematic tendency for people to overestimate the effects of media on others compared to themselves. But this meta-analysis does not provide information about the potential effects of such perceptions. The third-person effect is considered important because, presumably, differential perceptions of the effect of media themselves have certain effects. For instance, studies suggest that such perceptions are related to a willingness to censor objectionable media messages, presumably out of a desire to protect a naïve public from negative effects

(→ Censorship). To date, no meta-analysis of the literature on the correlates of third-person perceptions has yet been conducted, and one is certainly warranted, given the large number of studies on the topic that currently exist.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Censorship ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ False Consensus ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ▶ Perceived Reality as a Social Process ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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# Perceived Reality as a Social Process

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Research on small group communication has a long history of examining how participation in groups affects perceived reality. Groups often create a *shared reality* in which to work, interact, and complete their tasks. As Herbert J. Simon (1976, 23) states, "A man does not live for months or years in a particular position in an organization, exposed to some streams of communication, shielded from others, without the most profound effects upon what he knows, believes, attends to, hopes, wishes, emphasizes, fears, and proposes." There are three major approaches that address how the perception of reality is a social process within groups: social comparison theory, social proof, and shared mental models (→ Social Perception).

Research on *social comparison* examines how people check their perceptions of reality against similar others in order to establish a social consensus of the correct interpretation of an event or opinion (→ Festinger 1954; → Social Comparison Theory). Many issues people face do not have an objective or correct answer. Therefore, perceptions of the correct view often will be based on communicating with others to learn their positions. Social corroboration from one's group often increases one's confidence in one's view of reality. However, lack of validation from the group often leads people to abandon their view and conform to the majority opinion. The desire for social corroboration and a shared social reality often leads to groups rejecting or punishing dissenters and minority opinion members who may upset group consensus (Schachter 1951).

Similar to research on social comparison, research on *social proof* explores how others' behaviors may shape a person's social reality through informational social influence because one assumes that what most people are doing or believing must be true and correct. With social proof, people rely on the behavior of others to form opinions or gain information, and fail to rely on their own internal collection of knowledge or information. Social proof becomes more compelling as more and more people engage in a specific behavior or espouse a certain viewpoint. At some point social proof can cause what is known as a "social cascade." In a social cascade, many people behave or think in a certain way because of the weight of a few influential people, who early on influence subsequent opinion. As more and more people follow the opinion of these few influential people, the viewpoint becomes more compelling because of greater social proof, and may turn into a social movement (Sunstein 2003).

Finally, research on *shared mental models* and → sense-making examines how group members create a shared view of group processes, norms, and roles that helps coordination and performance. Through a process of sense-making, group members come to share subjective meaning of ambiguous stimuli and uncertain environments. Communication is the vehicle by which collective sense-making occurs. Through communication of opinions, information, and individual perceptions, group members can discuss their view of the situation or learn about norms or roles that others hold. This helps them influence one another and build and maintain a shared mental model of the situation and

group processes (Roberson 2006). Shared mental models are the common understandings that individuals in the group have of the environment, norms, task, and one another's responsibilities. Researchers have found that groups with stronger shared mental models often have improved performance on tasks (Cannon-Bowers et al. 1993). Not only do groups influence a shared social reality, but shared cognition plays a significant role in group processes and influences a group's performance and decision-making. Having shared cognition in the group allows for coordination of movement, facilitates communication and consensus, and promotes the maintenance of the group.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Group Communication ▶ Information Processing ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ▶ Perceived Realism as a Decision Process ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Social Comparison Theory ▶ Social Perception

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# Perception

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Perception is an ambiguous term and is used in many different ways, at least in the field of communication. Perhaps this is understandable given that communication is a diverse field that draws on concepts from a number of disciplines. Thus, in reading communication literature, one might encounter terms such as precept, perceptual field, or perceptual fluency (terms basic to cognitive psychology), → social perception and selective perception (terms basic to social psychology; → Selective Perception and Selective Retention), and perception of social reality (a term almost unique to communication; → Media and Perceptions of Reality). In fact, each set can be thought of as representing particular stages of information processing, and each is fundamentally important to communication processes (Shrum 2006).

## PERCEPTION AS CATEGORIZATION

Perception is essentially a process of categorization. In order to initially comprehend something, we take the surface features of the stimulus we encounter (e.g., color, shape, sound) and use them to place the stimulus into some semantic category. These categories can vary in their level of abstractness, from broader categories such as “plant” to more specific categories such as “fruit” or “apple.”

How a stimulus gets categorized is a function of a variety of factors, and psychology’s understanding of the factors that influence perception has changed dramatically over the last century. For many years, perception was considered a locus, or unitary event, that occurred prior to → comprehension and → memory storage (and retrieval). However, new formulations, inspired by the work of Jerome Bruner and his colleagues, dramatically changed the way scientists view perception. These formulations, often referred to as the “New Look” and “New Look 2” in perception research, now view perception as a “vast processing region” rather than a single point in information processing (Erdelyi 1974, 12). This new perspective on perception had profound effects on both cognitive and social psychology, as well as allied fields such as communication, laying the foundation for the information-processing and social cognition models that are currently dominating the respective fields.

## THE “NEW LOOK” OF PERCEPTION

For many years, research on perception took a positivist perspective that held that there was an objective reality, or “pure percept,” that could be perceived, comprehended, and stored in memory. Moreover, these precepts by definition were thought to be influenced by external factors such as intensity or novelty, but for the most part uninfluenced by internal factors of the perceiver. In other words, the mind of the perceiver was considered to be a *tabula rasa*, or blank slate, that came to the perception situation with no preconceived notions.

The research by Bruner and colleagues (for reviews, see Bruner 1957; Erdelyi 1974) challenged these assumptions. In a series of experiments, Bruner and colleagues showed that perception could in fact be influenced by internal constructs such as the expectancies and motivations of the perceiver. These expectancies and motivations can affect “perceptual readiness” (Bruner 1957), that is, the readiness with which individuals are prepared to categorize things as they are encountered. Here is an example. Consider a picture of a man that is presented to you. This man has no particular identifying characteristics other than that he is bending over. What is the man doing? Clearly, there are a number of possible answers. In other words, the man’s actions can be categorized, or perceived, in a number of ways: He may be working, praying, playing, and so forth. Prior to the work of Bruner and colleagues, scientists generally thought that only external factors (e.g., the frequency with which a category word such as work, play, or pray occurs in language) could explain deviations from chance categorization. Bruner showed, however, that categorization differed from random chance in predictable ways (Bruner 1951). In particular, categorization depended in part on the personal values held by the perceiver. People who tended to hold strong religious values were more likely to categorize the man

as praying than were those who did not hold strong religious values, and those who held strong economic values were more likely to describe the man as working than were those who did not hold strong economic values.

What Bruner's research showed was that various internal constructs affect the readiness with which we can categorize objects. In any particular situation, many concepts may be used to categorize an object. Which one is used is a function of the accessibility ( $\rightarrow$  Attitude Accessibility) of that concept (i.e., the ease with which it comes to mind): the more easily that concept comes to mind, the more likely it is to be used to categorize an object. Hence, the concepts that we think about often (e.g., the personal values we hold in high regard) are more likely to be used to categorize an ambiguous stimulus than are those that we do not think about as often. This explains why the participants in Bruner's experiment differed in their categorization of a man bending over as a function of their personal values. Indeed, Bruner and colleagues showed that the simple speed with which people could recognize words denoting particular concepts was similarly related to their personal values. When participants were presented with words from the Allport-Vernon values list (a list of values used to determine which ones are most important to a person), the participants were quicker to recognize values that were more important to them than they were values that were less important to them (Postman et al. 1948).

Values are not the only constructs that can influence perception. Past experience also plays a role. To demonstrate this, Bruner and Postman (1949) devised a clever experiment in which they presented participants with pictures of playing cards (i.e., the ace of diamonds, queen of spades, etc.). These cards were presented tachistoscopically (a procedure in which the picture of the playing card is shown on a screen but is masked or blurred; over a very short period of time, the masking is gradually removed and the word becomes more recognizable), and the speed with which participants could recognize or identify the card was recorded. However, the cards that were presented differed. Some were "normal" cards (e.g., a red queen of diamonds) and others were "anomalous" cards (e.g., a black queen of diamonds). Bruner and Postman found that participants were much quicker to recognize the normal cards than the anomalous cards, presumably because of past experience (the queen of diamonds is always red). The researchers provided further support for this reasoning by showing that participants became faster at recognizing the anomalous cards the more they encountered them, but they never reached the recognition speeds of the normal cards.

What the research by Bruner and colleagues shows is that the probability of categorizing a concept is a function of how frequently certain categorization concepts are activated. When we frequently encounter certain things (e.g., playing cards of a certain color) or frequently think about certain things (the values we hold dear), we are more likely to think of them first (and thus more likely to use them first) when we attempt to categorize an ambiguous stimulus. As the experiment with the man bending over implies, this laboratory research translates very obviously to real-world perception. Thus, we might expect that people would categorize the reasons for a person of a certain race sitting on a park bench (lazy, tired) based on their  $\rightarrow$  attitudes toward and  $\rightarrow$  stereotypes of people of that race, even though there are many possible reasons for the very innocuous behavior ( $\rightarrow$  Information Processing: Stereotypes).

## **SOCIAL PERCEPTION**

Perception as a categorization process occurs very early on in the information-processing stream. As such, it has important implications for downstream processes. One of these is the process of forming impressions of others. In the research just described, Bruner and colleagues showed that the accessibility of particular constructs in memory affected the recognition and categorization of various things (e.g., playing cards), and also affected the interpretations of ambiguous behaviors (e.g., man bending over). This general line of reasoning can also be extended to the construction of social perceptions, or attitudes and beliefs about others (→ Climate of Opinion; Pluralistic Ignorance, Third-Person Effects), and the implications are straightforward. A set of behaviors can often be interpreted in terms of quite a number of different trait concepts. For example, providing homework answers to a friend might be considered either dishonest or helpful; people who rarely change their minds may be considered either stubborn or persistent. Bruner and colleagues' work suggest that the impressions we form of people based on such ambiguous information will be interpreted in terms of the concepts that come most readily to mind. Thus, the accessibility of certain concepts (which may occur for reasons unknown to the perceiver) may potentially affect the interpretations of behaviors, which in turn may affect attitudes toward the people performing them.

These possibilities were confirmed in a series of independent experiments by Higgins et al. (1977) and Srull and Wyer (1979, 1980). In those studies, certain trait concepts were made more accessible via priming methodologies (→ Priming Theory). For example, Higgins et al. primed either "stubborn" or "persistent" via a Stroop task, and Srull and Wyer primed either "kind" or "hostile" by having participants unscramble sentences, a majority of which had implications for one of the two trait concepts. Later, participants read a description of a situation or a list of behaviors that were ambiguous with respect to the trait concepts they could imply. The results confirmed that the situationally induced accessibility of the trait concepts affected person perceptions. Participants in the studies interpreted the behaviors in terms of the trait concepts that were activated through the priming procedures, which in turn affected liking for the target person. Thus, attitudes were more favorable toward the target person when the trait concepts that were activated were positive (kind, persistent) than when they were negative (hostile, stubborn), even though participants were provided with the exact same information about the target person.

## **COMMUNICATION, ACCESSIBILITY, AND SOCIAL PERCEPTION**

The research on the effects of construct accessibility on social perceptions has important implications for the influence of various types of communication on social perception. One in particular is the effect of mass media on construct accessibility, and its consequent influence on social perceptions. Construct accessibility has a number of determinants. In terms of media effects, two are particularly germane: frequency of activation and vividness. The more frequently a construct is activated, the more accessible it becomes, and the more vivid a construct, the greater its accessibility (Higgins 1996). Thus, for example, heavy television viewers are likely to have certain constructs more accessible

than light viewers, because of both the frequency of viewing and the fact that television portrayals tend to be very vivid.

These possibilities were confirmed in a study by Busselle and Shrum (2003). Participants were asked to recall certain exemplars, some of which are frequently portrayed in television programs (e.g., murder, courtroom trial). The results showed that ease of recall was positively correlated with the frequency with which examples were portrayed in television programs (but only when direct experience with the examples was low). Other research has shown that not only does the frequency of television viewing affect construct accessibility, but, as in the studies reviewed earlier, this increase in construct accessibility has predictable consequences. In a series of studies by Shrum and colleagues, television viewing was shown to be positively related to the accessibility of certain constructs (e.g., violence, expensive products, marital discord), and this heightened accessibility was positively related to perceptions of the prevalence with which these constructs occur in everyday life. Thus, heavy viewers estimated a greater level of constructs such as societal violence, affluence, and marital discord than did light viewers, and this effect was mediated by the accessibility of these constructs (for a review, see Shrum 2006; → Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on).

The examples just provided pertained to the frequency of television viewing and its affect on social perceptions. However, it should be clear that the effects should pertain to any media, particularly when their content tends to overrepresent particular constructs. For example, like → television, → newspapers and → magazines often focus on sensationalistic events (e.g., murders, rapes, kidnappings; → Media Logic; News Values). Frequent consumption of such content should increase the accessibility of these constructs, just as it has been shown to do for television. However, it is also worth noting that it is not only the frequency of portrayals that may affect accessibility, but also the consistency of the portrayals. Thus, for example, if certain personal characteristics (e.g., length of hair, color of skin) are consistently paired with certain outcomes (e.g., drug use, violence), then the mere observance of these characteristics may activate the concepts with which they are consistently paired. In this way, the frequency and consistency of portrayals may lead to increased stereotyping, and as noted in the research reported earlier, these effects may occur outside of the perceiver's awareness.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Comprehension ▶ False Consensus ▶ False Uniqueness ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Memory ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Perception ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Television ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## Personal Communication by CMC

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Computer-mediated communication (CMC) includes electronic mail, group discussion systems, and real-time chat systems through which people send messages to others, either to a defined individual or set of recipients, or to a messaging space where many people may read and reply to others' messages. Much CMC is used for professional work and to facilitate commerce; within this application, much CMC that accompanies professional pursuits features personalizing features that help users relate to one another, which may enhance both the instrumental and interpersonal aspects of such communication. In addition, a great deal of CMC is used specifically for personal goals and activities. In some ways CMC is a simple alternative to other forms of communication (→ Online Media), with some socio-technical features that alter communication dynamics (→ Human–Computer Interaction). In other ways CMC offers significant opportunities that enhance communication in personal settings by allowing users to contact a large field of potential communication partners, reducing aspects of human interaction that impede communication effectiveness in conventional interaction. CMC can enhance personal communication by allowing users to enhance messaging in ways that conventional interaction does not as readily afford, facilitating new relationships and relational maintenance.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

CMC developed in several *domains*: in the development of government and industrially sponsored inter-computer information relay systems such as those that became the Internet, through interest-based discussions that traversed such networks (such as Usenet), and through individually or organizationally sponsored electronic bulletin board systems (→ Internet, Technology of). In all cases, accompanying the ability to send messages to other users about instrumental aspects related to file-sharing or about users' topic-related experiences, communication about off-topic interpersonal information often accompanied the use of ostensibly instrumentally focused systems. Research focusing on the ability of CMC to foster personal information became popular in the 1980s, driven by concerns that written communication transmitted via computer networks could not foster social and interpersonal cues, predicting and often demonstrating that CMC would feature impersonal interactions. Further, without nonverbal cues with which to emit and detect personal characteristics such as charisma or personality, interpersonal dominance or professional status, or the ability to manage conversations and facilitate turn-taking, CMC was often expected to be ineffective for instrumental group discussions or interpersonal functions.

This view was predominant in much research in the fields of social psychology, management, and communication, and was largely based on experimental research using ad hoc groups. However, less frequent reports from other domains depicted successful, personal exchanges using similar systems in situ, such as cross-sectional studies in organizations and hospitals where CMC was used over long periods, as well as from hobbyists and non-professional bulletin board discussions, reflecting variation in the task vs social nature of CMC, or depicting organic, emergent communities of users whose information-sharing online led to deeply personal and emotional associations. The 1993 publication of journalist Howard Rheingold's *The virtual community: Homesteading on the electronic frontier*, describing relational, social, and psychological dynamics observed in amateur networks, did much to bring the personal use of CMC to the public's attention, despite the limited network access and awareness that the public had at that time (→ Virtual Communities).

The 1990s fostered further applications and new understanding of CMC and its personal applications. The early years of the decade saw the increased popularity of proprietary CMC networks such as Prodigy, CompuServe, and America Online, which were used for both professional applications and semi-anonymous chatrooms, in which communicators could exchange help and support, or make friends or flirt with people whom they did not see and could either involve in their personal lives or easily keep away. The removal of funding by the US National Science Foundation for the major educational and scientific network cleared the way for commercial activity over the Internet. This rapidly propelled activity via for-profit Internet access providers, including the existing and new proprietary networks. The Internet evolved into a social space for worldwide discussions of any topic, personal relationship seeking or support, even anonymous, virtual-only flirtation, relationships, virtual marriage, and sexual simulation. One researcher whose 1980s work depicted CMC as negatively impacting interpersonal dynamics came to characterize the 1990s Internet as a field of "atheism, sex, and databases" (Sproull & Faraj 1997; → Sex and Pornography Online).



## NEW PERSPECTIVES

As it became clear that CMC was being used effectively for personal as well as task communication, new theories were developed that accounted for such use. Social influence theory (Fulk et al. 1990) argued that the expressive potential of a medium like email was not a deterministic result of specific technological attributes alone. Rather, people use media in accordance with their perception of the media's capabilities, which is shaped, in turn, through the media perceptions and uses of the individuals in one's communication network. Social information-processing theory held that CMC users may have the same relational goals as those who communicate offline, but must adapt to the characteristics of CMC in order to affect the level of impressions and interpersonal relations. Rather than relying on nonverbal cues for the expression of affective and social messages, as do face-to-face communicators, CMC users translate such meanings into verbal behaviors (→ Language and the Internet).

Several studies established that this *translation* takes place fluidly, but requires more time and/or message exchanges to reach the level of development that face-to-face communicators achieve more readily. Further research has shown that the timing of messages and responses interacts with verbal cues in determining the social meanings of text-based messages in CMC. It has been well established that communicators use language and paralinguistic cues other than the nonverbal cues conveyed by space, voice, and body in CMC so that, even in task-oriented as well as personal contexts, personal impressions are made and managed; the alternative forms of meta-communication CMC allows facilitate impressions and relational communication (for review see Walther 2006).

As the Internet became more pervasive, news media, → advertising, schools, and word of mouth led to great *diffusion and public awareness of the commercial and personal uses* to which it was being put. Anecdotal accounts of people making friends online, or having closer friends online than in offline contexts, were met with skepticism. More disconcerting were accounts of romantic relationships that began as meetings in CMC chatrooms. Research followed such trends, charting the course of successful romantic couples who had met and courted via CMC, or describing how friendships began in public, topically based online discussion groups, evolved to dyadic electronic media, traversed telephone contact, and culminated in face-to-face meetings a significant proportion of the time. Both sets of research found that relationships quite simply began in online venues that facilitated the meeting of and conversation among individuals who held common interests, as often or more than in chatting venues specifically oriented toward partner seeking per se. Toward the start of the twenty-first century, deliberate online dating and matchmaking systems provided another CMC venue for initiating relationships (Gibbs et al. 2006).

New research and theoretical models emerged that attempted to account for conflicting predictions and findings that had been accruing in the burgeoning CMC research literature in the 1990s. While many experiments and research accounts continued to show social deficits from CMC, others showed more normal relational states, while other accounts again documented superior or more intimate encounters online than in comparable offline contexts. A 1996 article attempted to summarize the extant findings as well as to introduce a new model: "Computer-mediated communication: Impersonal,

interpersonal, and hyperpersonal interaction” (Walther 1996). This model offered contingencies with which to understand how each type of interaction could be fostered by CMC.

*Impersonal CMC* seemed to be most likely when interaction time and/or interpersonal familiarity were restricted, either by the demands of an experiment, by the organic short-term context in which some (but not all) CMC exchanges take place, or by the imposition of software such as group decision support systems that are designed to enhance anonymity and minimize interpersonal effects in online interaction. *Interpersonal CMC* is facilitated by sufficient time for ongoing exchanges and by conditions such as anticipated relational longevity that prompt interpersonal interest, with users then deploying CMC in ways described by social information-processing theory to effect these goals.

*Hyperpersonal communication* represents more intimate, satisfying communication and interpersonal evaluations than are typical in comparable offline settings, and was hypothesized to arise due to systematic variations in basic communication processes that are facilitated by CMC. (1) Selective self-presentation, exploitation of the editing and timing capacities of the medium, and the ability to reallocate cognitive activity from ambient surveillance and physical self-monitoring to message construction all facilitate the construction of highly intentional, deliberate, and self-serving expressions of self, attitudes, and emotion in CMC messages. (2) The receiver is idealized through exaggerated interpretation of messages with respect to the person’s similarity or complementarity of social category memberships or personal characteristics. (3) CMC removes the time that is allocated to message construction and editing from the real-time flow of traditional conversational demands. (4) Reciprocal interaction involves the previous elements, which escalate positive perceptions of senders and receivers. The intentional breadth of the hyperpersonal model has allowed it to be applied to a variety of CMC field settings, from collaborative work groups and distance education settings to online social support systems and self-presentation in online dating systems, among others. Many elements of the framework have been supported in experimental research as well (see Walther 2007).

### **MAINSTREAM USE AND SPECIAL ADVANTAGES**

CMC has by this point become a mainstay of the maintenance of personal relationships, although less research has focused specifically on maintenance than on relationship initiation and formation. Several surveys of American Internet users report that people – women in particular – frequently use email for staying in touch with friends and family members. Beyond the convenient capacity of email to send messages any time and store them for retrieval, the written nature of CMC appears to lend itself to facilitating more delicate and frank exchanges among family members than they may feel comfortable undertaking by other media, such as telephone or face-to-face conversations (→ Self-Presentation). Research has found that CMC facilitates more, and less superficial, self-disclosure and personal question-asking than does face-to-face communication. Although a recent hybrid form of CMC – Internet blogs, or web logs – have become better known for fostering political commentary and citizen journalism, surveys show that blogs most often take the form of individuals’ personal diaries describing life events and observations (→ Personal Publishing). When there is an intended audience for blogs, it is usually the

blogger's friends and family (Lenhart & Fox 2006), reinforcing the role of CMC in relational maintenance processes.

The abilities provided by CMC for users to compose messages carefully, and to maintain physical and psychological distance while still offering potentially immediate exchange, in combination with the potential of the Internet to connect to vastly greater social networks than previously possible, have also been connected to CMC's utility in fostering social support, facilitating relationships for individuals with social skill deficits, and reducing threats to self-esteem from rejections in online mate-seeking. Online social support networks have arisen spontaneously and purposefully in a variety of Internet venues (→ Social Support in Health Communication; Social Support in Interpersonal Communication).

In these *virtual settings*, groups ranging in size from teens to thousands exchange information, emotional support, sympathy, and coping strategies with members experiencing various illnesses, psychological issues, legal problems, or other personal problems. The Internet allows and invites people with similar concerns to connect around a topic, and its potential global reach and weak tie facilitation provide the means for people to find others who share similar experience and first-hand expertise with respect to the issue of focus. Users of online social support systems often report that the mere discovery of so many other individuals with experiences and feelings like their own, often not the case in their offline personal networks, provides strong emotional benefit. Similarity of experience lends particular credibility to the information and personal advice exchanged in these venues. In addition, online social support users value the social distance, anonymity, message management, and discretionary access that online support provides.

Although the Internet opens numerous possibilities for forming relationships, those individuals with skill deficits affecting face-to-face communication appear to find particular *gratification* (→ Uses and Gratifications) or *further deterioration* in conducting personal relationships online. Depression, loneliness, shyness, or other similar syndromes (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety) lead some individuals to withdraw from face-to-face social interaction, preferring instead the message management and distance that CMC interaction allows in the conduct of meeting and chatting online. In some cases, awareness of the capabilities of CMC to foster self-disclosure and friendship development can lead to interpersonal success online. In other cases, Caplan (2003) demonstrated that problematic Internet use, comprised of online interaction durations exceeding a user's intention, accompanied by guilt over apparent inability to control such use, reinforces and exacerbates psychosocial problems.

The same properties of distance and message management that reduce the anxiety and risk of meeting and initiating relationships with others appear to have made *online mate-seeking* a valuable CMC process. Several aspects of commercial online dating sites such as Match.com seem to routinize and depersonalize a communication process otherwise fraught with anxiety, uncertainty, and risk of rejection (→ Dating Relationships). Online dating sites typically collect demographic, preference, and personality information from users, in order to allow other users to screen their databases of candidates and select among a subset of potential mates that meet desired criteria; this replaces the discovery process that might otherwise necessitate a good deal of interactive communication with a stranger in order to make preliminary compatibility judgments. There may be system-

enabled, impersonal ways to signal prospective interest in conversing with another individual, such as the communication of words and graphics depicting a wink, but obviously doing so in a generic, stylized manner that is the same across the many users who wish to initiate this signal of interest. A recipient may then accept the symbolic token and initiate a CMC conversation, or select to reply with an automated “no thank you,” an impersonal, generic, stock reply that may be less deflating to receive than an individual rejection. Research on online dating services has focused primarily on the presentation of self online and on how individuals idealize their online profiles; future research will undoubtedly focus on communication using a range of new, system-provided symbols indicating interest/disinterest, availability/receptivity, and particularly authenticity, which is at this writing the primary concern of online daters.

CMC is also a mainstay of personal communication among individuals who use any number of *text messaging systems*. Such systems include short message service (SMS), a method of “texting” or sending alphanumeric messages to other users who have mobile phones that are equipped for this purpose. Likewise, instant messaging using AOL Instant Messenger, ICQ, and other systems providing real-time, dyadic chat are popular, particularly among individuals in their teens and twenties, but increasingly in professional settings as well. These systems are useful in maintaining a feeling of presence, or connectedness, among individuals. The ad hoc messages common to these systems tend to be informal, and they are often intended to be amusing or humorous; they facilitate banter. Most such messaging takes place among people who have personal relationships offline, although a significant proportion of teens report meeting online someone they did not previously know, by using such systems. Interaction using instant messaging may be less stressful than face-to-face interaction, and meeting strangers via such systems has been found to induce greater happiness than meeting strangers face to face, possibly because individuals need not worry about their appearance or awkward pausing, and because such systems are associated with socializing and fun (Green et al. 2005). Communication stress may also be reduced as individuals commonly segregate their personal relationships from familial or fraternal audiences by the use of different pseudonyms and accounts by which they represent themselves online.

Other research concerning personal CMC has examined the implications of CMC in the *presentation of the self online*, with respect to language and identities. These studies include whether deception is facilitated or better detected in online, verbal-only discourse, and what linguistic markers are associated with lying in CMC environments (typically, real-time chat; → Deception Detection Accuracy). The study of linguistics and identity in CMC has also focused on gendered language, alternatively finding that individuals’ online discourse reinforces offline gender stereotypes, or that people accommodate to the linguistic patterns of desirable CMC interaction partners as they communicate online. Concern over online self-presentations also encompasses the potential for individuals to enact alternative identities online. These efforts may include minor distortions in age and status, as well as performance as a fictitious person of the gender opposite to one’s own in certain Internet spaces that occlude discovery of participants’ offline characteristics. Research has suggested that such radical behavior occurs less frequently than popular accounts suggest; that it is most often driven by simple curiosity rather than pathology or malicious intent, and that its duration is fleeting. Others have suggested that identity play

in CMC provides therapeutic opportunities to enhance perspective-taking abilities (Herring & Martinson 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Blogger ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Deception Detection Accuracy ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Online Media ▶ Personal Publishing ▶ Self-Presentation ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Social Support in Health Communication ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Virtual Communities

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# Personal Publishing

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Personal publishing by an individual or small group – generally not for profit and generally not aimed at a mass audience or utilizing mainstream publishers – has occurred for centuries. In its early years it took the form of, e.g., small-scale pamphleteering, the circulation of diaries within faith-based or friendship communities, or the publication of books of family history or autobiography using the “vanity” press (publishers whose income comes primarily from authors). Because of the economics of publishing, however, these practices tended to be marginal. With the advent of the personal computer and inexpensive desktop publishing tools, small-scale personal publication became easier and a variety of small-scale magazines sprang up (→ Zines). It has been the diffusion of access to the Internet in recent years across much of the world (→ Digital Divide), however, that has enabled a flourishing of online personal publishing and inspired a greater academic focus on this area. This started with personal Internet home pages in the mid-1990s and has continued in the form of the “weblog” (a site consisting of items published in reverse chronological order) and, most recently, of profiles on social networking services like MySpace and Facebook.

Self-publishing has taken a great *diversity of forms* and therefore attracted interest from academics across a number of disciplines. Zines and personal home pages, e.g., are important means of recirculating fan-created fiction and criticism (→ Fandom). Much of the attention paid to weblogs in the press and academic literature has focused on those who use them as a form of alternative or → citizen journalism (→ Blogger). There has also been some attention paid to weblogs as tools for the creation and maintenance of virtual communities of practice through the sharing of topic-centered information and inter-linking between such sites by their authors (Efimova 2004; Mortensen and Walker 2002). These are not the most popular reasons that people choose to self-publish online, however.

A survey of US bloggers (Lenhart and Fox 2006) – echoing earlier, smaller-scale surveys – indicates that the most important *uses for weblogs* by a considerable margin are as a means of creative expression and as documentation of the writer’s life and experiences. Diaries, both traditional and online, have been studied as part of a broader literary and sociological interest in biography and autobiography – written, oral, and now online (e.g., the journals *Auto/Biography* and *Biography*; → Storytelling and Narration). Such studies reveal the manner in which a medium of supposedly “free” expression can be constrained or at least influenced both by internalized expectations of what “belongs” in a diary (Stanley 1992) and by the constraints of the medium itself (Harrison 2001). Studies of home pages and weblogs also focus on how they may be used to construct, present, explore, or play with identities (Cheung 2004; Miller and Arnold 2001; → Self-Presentation).

Because the newer forms of online diary make *interaction between readers and the author* easy, social psychologists have examined the weblog as a novel form of computer-mediated communication and potentially as a form of virtual community (→ Personal Communication by CMC; Virtual Communities). The assumed importance to their

authors of a readership for online diaries has been called into question by a number of interview-based studies that reveal a more complex and sometimes distanced relationship between the writer and his or her desired and actual readers (Gumbrecht 2004; Menchen Trevino 2005; Nardi et al. 2004). Even when desired, interaction is not necessarily forthcoming: one analysis of patterns of online responses posted on weblogs (Mishne and Glance 2006) found that while 80 percent of sampled weblogs allowed or enabled comments, only 28 percent had actually received any.

Many diaristic personal publishers – particularly the young – appear to be migrating from individual weblogs and home pages toward “profiles” in social networking services that encourage them to make explicit their personal and professional ties to others in that network. With the increased diffusion of broadband Internet connections and the availability of inexpensive portable digital cameras (including those in mobile phones), weblogs and “profiles” increasingly include pictures, audio, and video as well as text (→ Amateur Photography and Movies). The implications of these shifts will become the subjects of research in the future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism  
▶ Digital Divide ▶ Fandom ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Self-Presentation  
▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Virtual Communities ▶ Zines

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# Personality Development and Communication

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The idea that an individual's personality is "inherently intertwined" with how they communicate has intrigued scholars since the late 1920s (Daly 2002). Indeed, many have observed that through our social interactions we drop clues about the essence of our personality and, in turn, learn about others. Everyday parlance is, in fact, filled with terms and phrases categorizing individuals' personalities. Across essentially every human culture, for example, colloquial expressions like "He's so quiet," "She's very assertive and to the point," and "They just love to talk," illustrate how attention to communicative perceptions and behaviors punctuates personality discernment in daily life (Weaver 1998).

## PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

This fundamental link between personality development and communicative perceptions and behaviors was first demonstrated in the pioneering work of Gordon Allport (1937). Recognizing the unique heuristic value of natural language terms, Allport employed a lexical approach to identify more than 18,000 words that described common personality dispositions or traits. Approximately a quarter of these terms, because they concerned distinctive human behavior (e.g., friendliness, shyness, talkativeness) were deemed particularly important. And, of these, a substantial portion involved some aspect of communicative perceptions and/or behaviors.

Reflecting this dispositional foundation, personality is broadly defined in contemporary theories as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics or personality dimensions, each incorporating an array of dispositions or traits, which uniquely influence an individual's → cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations. *Personality dimensions*, which can differ among individuals, develop through the ongoing interaction between an individual's unique genetic history and the variety of physical, social, and cultural environmental factors encountered throughout the life-span. Specifically, as individuals respond to personal, social, and cultural demands, personality dimensions emerge as relatively stable and enduring patterns of perceiving, relating to, and thinking about themselves and their environment.

Although there is considerable evidence for *personality stability and continuity* across the adult life-span, much less is understood about the complex interplay of constitutional and environmental factors during childhood from which personality develops. Research findings increasingly highlight the role of genetic influences in shaping virtually every aspect of personality functioning. Overall, the current heritability estimate for personality overall is approximately 40 percent, with some specific aspects of personality (e.g., temperament, social composure, and wit) evidencing substantial biological heritability (→ Communibiology). However, genetic influences, while powerful determinants of



personality development, are not environmentally immutable. Environmental influences, such as culture, family, and parental characteristics, acting as social regulators, continually interact with genetic influences (i.e., biological regulators) to mediate both the enactment of behaviors and the emergence of individual differences (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Family Communication Patterns).

Against this backdrop, it is now generally accepted that personality development during infancy and early childhood is shaped by a range of *environmental factors*. A stable child–caregiver relationship, for instance, that provides nurturing support appears crucial for normal personality development. Family dynamics are also significant, with several aspects – including cohesion, adaptability, and disciplinary practices – potentially affecting a child’s self-esteem, → emotion regulation, and cognitive, intellectual, and social growth and, consequently, personality development. By middle childhood (6–11 years old) most children display considerable personality development continuity, with parental descriptions of their personality characteristics reflecting the same traits and dimensions commonly applied to adults (Halverson et al. 2003).

During adolescence, however, personality seems to involve some *malleability*, particularly in western cultures. Apparently instigated by an array of biological, environmental, and psychological determinants, adolescents often exhibit elevated aggressiveness, distractibility, impulsivity, public self-consciousness, and restlessness. These dispositional shifts, often corresponding with strong developmental spurts (i.e., pubertal onset), are seen as adolescence-limited differences that obscure, but do not significantly alter, stable personality characteristics. From young adulthood onward, personality development can continue and typically involves normative adjustments, reflecting increased self-control, pleasantness, and coping skills, that correspond with age-related biological, systemic, and social factors. Such adjustment does not occur evenly throughout adulthood, however, and is not evident in all individuals.

## PERSONALITY DIMENSIONALITY

While modern theorists generally agree on these core aspects of personality development, there is considerable divergence in both the name (e.g., central dispositions, primary factors, supertraits, and types) and number (ranging from 3 to 16) of personality dimensions across modern personality theories (Ryckman 2008). Increasingly, communication theorists have adopted the *psychobiological theory of personality* developed by Hans J. Eysenck (1990) as a conceptual framework for delineating relationships between personality dimensions and communicative perceptions and behaviors. Several distinctive aspects of the psychobiological theory appear to underlie its broad application in communication research. Particularly prominent are: (1) a strong emphasis on inherited neurobiological and psychological determinants as primary in personality development; (2) utilization of large, culturally diverse samples in development and validation of key theoretical concepts; and (3) advancement of a parsimonious typology involving three essentially orthogonal behaviorally defined personality dimensions.

Two dimensions of Eysenck’s psychobiological typology are consistent with those identified in essentially all contemporary personality theories. The *extraversion* personality dimension is conceptualized as tapping traits such as an individual’s level of sociability,

social adaptability and activity, and positive self-esteem. The *neuroticism* personality dimension, on the other hand, involves traits such as anxiety, emotionality, and a negative self-image. Unique to Eysenck's typology, *psychoticism* is conceptualized as involving traits such as egocentricity, social autonomy and deviance, impulsivity, and callousness. The fact that many of the traits exemplifying each personality dimension are manifestations of communicative behaviors has not been overlooked by communication scholars.

## PERSONALITY AND INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Indeed, for many communication theorists, the three personality dimensions of the psychobiological typology are conceptualized as central components within the nexus of affective, cognitive, and physiological mechanisms guiding an individual's daily interactions with their social environment (Weaver 1998, 2000). And, consistent with this expectation, there is a growing body of research evidence suggesting that the extent to which individuals exhibit psychoticism, extraversion, or neuroticism greatly facilitates explanation and prediction of their self-perceptions about communicating.

Drawing from the findings of several studies, for instance, it is possible to sketch out distinctive interpersonal communication profiles for each personality dimension. Individuals evidencing *extraversion* as their predominant personality dimension consistently perceive themselves as confident, patient, and skilled communicators (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). Extraverts tend to freely express sympathy for others, are perceptive and attentive, experience essentially no → communication apprehension, and endorse a people-oriented approach to listening that reflects patience with and interest in others.

In stark contrast, individuals reporting *neuroticism* as their predominant personality dimension tend to be extremely apprehensive, imperceptive, and defensive during social interactions. Lacking both patience and finesse when communicating, neurotics often ardently filter both verbal and nonverbal conversation content and seem susceptible to information overload and confusion. Consequently, neurotics frequently display a unique "social shyness," appearing, on the one hand, as acquiescent and demure communicators who prefer minimal contact with others, but, on the other hand, reporting considerable hostility and frustration during social interactions (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety).

Reflecting considerable callousness toward others, individuals reporting *psychoticism* as their predominant personality dimension tend to be unsupportive, unresponsive, and verbally aggressive during social interactions (→ Verbal Aggressiveness). Reporting moderate communication apprehension, psychotics appear to lack empathy and sympathy for others, seem imperceptive and inattentive in interpersonal settings, and endorse an approach to listening defined by impatience with and indifference toward others. Psychotics frequently seek to dominate or control interpersonal interactions through rudeness and/or by infusing conversations with culturally avant-garde or marginalized jargon.

The findings of a recent study on → *communicator style* illustrate how the three distinctively different personality dimensions moderate perceptions about interpersonal communication (Weaver 2005). Specifically, three aspects of communicator style – the way individuals perceive themselves communicating and interacting with others (Norton &

Brenders 1996) – and the three dimensions of personality were assessed in a large sample. The three aspects of communicator style are: (1) a nondirective style typical of an attentive communicator who encourages, accommodates, and acknowledges others; (2) a directive style characteristic of a dominating communicator who talks frequently, comes on strong, and takes control in social situations; and (3) an illusive style assumed by a communicator who is acquiescent yet deceptive in interpersonal interactions.

The investigation revealed considerable correspondence between the personality dimensions and the communicator styles. Individuals evidencing the extraversion personality dimension endorsed the nondirective communicator style; those evidencing the psychoticism personality dimension endorsed the directive communicator style; and those evidencing the neuroticism personality dimension endorsed the illusive communicator style. Further, within each personality dimension, the alternative communicator styles were essentially rejected.

### **PERSONALITY AND MASS MEDIA USE**

Consideration of the personality characteristics of media audiences has long been recognized as a key component to understanding both the uses and effects of the mass media (Weaver 2000). Early research, for example, identified numerous unique individual characteristics – such as emotional insecurity, social isolation, intellectual ability, and predispositions and personality patterns – that influence media content preferences and the consequences of exposure (→ Personality and Exposure to Communication; Selective Exposure).

To this end, the psychobiological theory of personality has also provided an effective theoretical framework. However, application of the three personality dimensions to problems concerning media uses and effects involves a different conceptual orientation. Recognizing that few, if any, media use behaviors share the imminent centrality to personality manifest through interpersonal communication behaviors, media scholars have focused principal attention on segmentation of the mass media → audience across the three personality dimensions (→ Audience Segmentation).

Traditionally, segmentation strategies based on demographic characteristics such as age, gender, and race have dominated and remain the standard practice of many media and marketing researchers. Although strategies employing psychographics, which involve “fuzzier” concepts such as lifestyle and/or psychological profiles, have been developed, evidence of their effectiveness is limited.

A growing body of research suggests, however, that Eysenck’s personality dimensions may more effectively segment individuals into *three distinct subsets* that project fairly homogeneous media use attitudes, needs, and behaviors. Individuals displaying the neuroticism personality dimension, for example, express a strong preference for informative/news television content (→ News; Television News) and “downbeat” music, and tend to avoid lighthearted comedy and action/adventure fare. Content facilitating sociability, such as “club” or “party” music, and content promoting social activities, such as party-themed movies, are strongly preferred by individuals exhibiting extroversion. Individuals presenting the psychoticism personality dimension evidenced a strong preference for socially deviant content such as graphically violent horror movies and “hard” or “rebellious”

rock → music videos (Weaver 2000). Significantly, similar patterns of congruency between the personality dimensions and media content preferences have been observed among children and adolescents (Weaver 2006).

The explanatory utility of the tripartite psychobiological typology as a segmentation tool has also been demonstrated in research on self-reported motives for television viewing (Weaver 2003). Individuals evidencing the neuroticism personality dimension, compared with those in the extraversion and psychoticism groups, strongly endorse using television as a replacement for social companionship, to pass the time, and for both relaxation and stimulation. And, consistent with expectations, individuals exhibiting the socially outgoing extraversion personality dimension strongly rejected the notion of using television as a functional alternative to interpersonal companionship (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships; Uses and Gratifications). Personality dimension segmentation has also been successfully applied to understanding → Internet preferences and use (Amiel & Sargent 2004).

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Evidence from diverse programs of research summarized here leaves little doubt that personality development and communication are entwined and that crucial work to untangle and clarify the conceptual linkages binding these two theoretical domains is under way. One prominent outcome of this inquiry has been the articulation of a “communibiological perspective” by Michael Beatty and his associates. A derivative of Eysenck’s psychobiological model, the communibiological perspective emphasizes the influence of genetic and neurobiological mechanisms on communication behavior.

The developing research literature points to other conceptualizations that should provide fruitful avenues for future research and theory. Application of → Albert Bandura’s (1997) self-efficacy notion to social interactions, for example, could prove provocative. Specifically, the concept of social self-efficacy, reflecting an individual’s assessment of engaging in social interactions, could provide a theoretical framework highlighting individual differences in cognition and affect as casual predictor communicative behaviors. Finally, addressing the interesting question of whether similar interrelationships between personality and communication are reliably evident across a variety of cultures demands empirical attention. Some evidence suggests we can answer with a qualified “yes” so long as we recognize that culturally grounded communication practices vary considerably, even across cultures sharing common heritages.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cognition ▶ Communibiology ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Emotion ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Implicit Personality Theories ▶ Information Processing: Self-Concept ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Music Videos ▶ News ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Personality and Exposure to Communication ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Television News ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Verbal Aggressiveness

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## **Personality and Exposure to Communication**

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Variations in preferences for media content highlight the importance of how the diversity of the viewing audience affects exposure and responses to media content. Among the

limitless ways in which audience members may differ, the personality characteristics of the viewer provide a vast and diverse means of predicting individuals' uses of, preferences for, and reactions to media content.

## **PERSONALITY AS A CONCEPT IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

Although the term "personality" has been used in a variety of ways, it is generally understood to refer to traits or dispositions that are relatively enduring and stable. Whereas demographic characteristics such as race and gender could be included under this definition, personality is typically understood to represent traits, outlooks, and behavioral tendencies that are relatively consistent and enduring within individuals.

Because the concept has been explored extensively in a variety of disciplines and because it provides a broad framework for conceptualizing individual difference variables, it has enjoyed a wealth of scholarly attention among media researchers interested in examining a host of related questions (→ Individual Differences and Information Processing). Among these questions are how personality serves as a useful predictor of preference and enjoyment of content, how personality functions as a predictor of selective exposure and perception, and how personality may serve as an important moderator in explaining differential effects of media content on viewers (→ Selective Attention; Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

## **PERSONALITY AND MEDIA USE AND ENJOYMENT**

Media use is not uniform across populations, nor is media content homogeneous. Some individuals spend a great deal of time viewing → television; others refuse to have a television in their homes. Some people have an affinity with action films and horror; others prefer romance, tear-jerkers, and melodrama (→ Film Genres). Variations in use and preferences may reflect a host of audience characteristics, including gender, historical or social context, or mood, among others. However, the personality of the viewer undoubtedly plays an important role in media use, as personality is thought to be relatively stable across temporal variations.

Research from a → uses-and-gratifications perspective conceptualizes media use as goal-directed, purposive, and fulfilling needs for individuals (Palmgreen et al. 1985; Rubin 2002). Following from this assumption, research generally supports the proposition that personality tends to be associated with using media for the fulfillment of various goals. For example, Weaver (2003) reported that neurotic personality types tended to watch television more frequently for purposes of passing the time and stimulation, whereas extroverts (who presumably had greater social contact) were less likely to watch television for purposes of companionship (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). Similarly, emerging research on → Internet use suggests that individual-difference variables such as social skills and shyness may be useful in predicting uses of and preferences for online communication over face-to-face interactions.

Research also suggests that personality variables are useful in predicting many preferences for different *types* of content or media portrayals. In this regard, media associated with potentially harmful behavioral or attitudinal reactions have garnered the greatest share of

scholarly attention. For media violence specifically, research generally suggests that personality variables indicating greater hostility or aggression on the part of the viewer are predictive of greater interest and enjoyment (→ Violence as Media Content). For example, research has reported that traits such as callousness, rebelliousness, tough-mindedness, psychoticism, and aggression are associated with greater viewing and enjoyment of a host of different genres, including horror films, defiant rock music, and television violence, among others. Similar patterns have also been obtained for research on erotica or pornography, with higher levels of sexual permissiveness associated with enjoyment of sexually explicit materials per se, and with higher levels of aggressive or sexually callous traits associated with enjoyment of sexual materials featuring violence or unconventional behaviors (for reviews, see Oliver 2002; Oliver et al. 2006; → Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of).

Although existing research suggests that viewers appear to be attracted to entertainment that mirrors or complements their existing dispositions, unambiguous explanations for these preferences have yet to be identified. For example, these preferences may reflect how individuals have been affected by media consumption, with heavier viewers of violent content developing dispositions that reflect their media diets. On the other hand, these preferences may reflect a preoccupation with violent or sexual cognitions that serves to make such media content particularly salient or meaningful. The latter interpretation is consistent with Reiss and Wiltz's (2004) recent argument that individuals are motivated by a finite number of basic desires (e.g., power, status, vengeance, honor, etc.), with the actualization of these desires (including vicarious actualization) resulting in feelings of joy or fulfillment. This line of research implies that existing research on personality and media preferences may illustrate more general patterns of media consumption that reflect the means by which individuals use media content to satisfy basic desires, albeit vicariously.

### **PERSONALITY AND SELECTIVE PERCEPTION, EXPOSURE, AND AVOIDANCE**

In addition to predicting individuals' enjoyment of media content, research on individual differences suggests that personality likely plays an important role in terms of media consumers' selectivity – including selective exposure, avoidance, and perception. Although this research has generally examined individual differences in terms of attitudes, many researchers conceptualize enduring attitudes as part of a subset of related constellations of traits that make up what is commonly understood to be the building blocks of personality.

Research in audience selectivity is often broadly influenced by theories of cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957; → Cognitive Dissonance Theory). This perspective generally suggests that individuals tend to expose themselves to media messages that are consistent with existing attitudes and avoid inconsistent messages as a way of avoiding dissonant feelings. Further, when incongruent messages are encountered, they are often perceived and remembered in ways that are supportive of existing beliefs. Although scholarship on the role of cognitive dissonance and media use has revealed numerous nuanced caveats to this basic prediction (Cotton 1985), research in a host of domains supports the prediction. In

particular, research pertaining to social and political media content generally shows that individuals tend to select and perceive messages in ways that are supportive of existing beliefs. However, similar research also curiously suggests that under some circumstances, partisan individuals tend to perceive news reports on salient, related issues as hostile to their position (Vallone et al. 1985; → Hostile Media Phenomenon). The seeming disconnection between viewers' assimilation of messages and their perceptions of a hostile media is difficult to resolve, though it may reflect the extent to which individuals are cognizant of how messages may affect other viewers. That is, perceptions of powerful media influence on others may serve to exacerbate hostile-media perceptions (Gunther & Schmitt 2004).

### **PERSONALITY AS A MODERATOR OF MEDIA INFLUENCE**

In addition to predicting enjoyment and selection of media messages, personality variables can also serve as important moderators of both the strength and direction of → media effects. In many respects, research demonstrating this moderating effect may reflect differences in interpretation of media content. For example, individuals who are sensation seekers may find frightening media content exciting and gratifying, whereas individuals low in sensation seeking may experience dread or anxiety (→ Sensation Seeking). These differences in resultant affect may manifest themselves in further differences in behaviors, arousal levels, cognitions, or related emotional responses.

Related to the notion of interpretation, personality characteristics may also play consequential roles in individuals' processing of media messages, with variations in processing resulting in variations in the extent to which messages may result in attitude change. For example, individuals who score high on need for cognition (NFC) are typically more likely to carefully scrutinize and elaborate upon message arguments than are those who are low in NFC. According to the → elaboration likelihood model, this individual difference may imply different paths to attitude change, with message quality having a stronger influence than peripheral cues for individuals high in NFC, and the reverse true for individuals low in NFC (for a review of this literature, see Petty & Wegener 1998).

In addition to suggesting that individual differences play important roles in moderating the effects of persuasion, studies employing priming models also demonstrate that personality can moderate the extent to which media content may activate concepts, emotions, or action tendencies that, in turn, affect subsequent behavior. In general, research from this perspective argues that for a concept or mental model to be primed or activated, the concept must be present in an individual's cognitive structure (→ Priming Theory). Applied to issues of personality, this reasoning suggests that certain personality traits may signify a given cognitive structure for a viewer, making the viewer more susceptible to priming effects resulting from exposure to different types of media content. For example, research on media violence and priming has demonstrated that individuals with certain personality characteristics, such as trait hostility, psychoticism, or hyper-masculinity, are more vulnerable to priming influences than are individuals who do not harbor high levels of these traits (see, e.g., Bushman 1998; Scharrer 2001; → Violence as Media Content, Effects of).



## PERSONALITY AS A CONSEQUENCE OF MEDIA SELECTION AND EXPOSURE

Arguably, the bulk of social scientific research on personality and media has conceptualized personality variables as independent variables in terms of predicting media selection and response, or as moderator variables in terms of specifying the types of individuals who may be more susceptible to media influence. Because personality is understood to be stable and enduring, this focus is understandable. However, given that media consumption (and its accompanying messages and portrayals) begins at a very early age and comprises the bulk of individuals' leisure activities, future researchers may profitably examine how long-term and cumulative media use may play important roles in the formation of personality traits and dispositions (→ Personality Development and Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Film Genres ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Individual Differences and Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Personality Development and Communication ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Television ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Personalization of Campaigning

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Election campaigning is considered to be personalized if it focuses on the top candidates and their personal qualities more than on political issues. The personalization of campaigning is part of the personalization of politics as a whole (→ Political Personality in Media Democracy). Moreover, the personalization of voting behavior and that of media coverage play an important role (Brettschneider 2002). Yet the personalization of election campaigns receives the bulk of criticism. Some observers see in it a dangerous trend toward depolitization. Politics, according to them, is increasingly meaningless, issues are marginalized, and elections are turned into mere beauty contests, designed by → spin doctors who are practically “packaging” their candidates for the media (Franklin 2004).

The *reasons for personalized election campaigning* include the increasing importance of the top candidates compared to their parties, decoupling of parties and candidates, and the focus on apolitical candidate characteristics (human interest). The increasing importance of top candidates in many countries is also considered to be a part of the “Americanization” of election campaigns (→ Election Campaign Communication). Since the American president is essentially elected by the people, the candidates of the Republicans and Democrats are obviously the main protagonists. In parliamentary democracies, however, the head of government is elected by the parliament. The population votes for the candidates of their electoral districts or parties. The importance of the top candidates varies depending on the political starting point (topical agenda) and the constellation of candidates. Nevertheless, the personalization of election campaigns is not an entirely new phenomenon in parliamentary democracies. “Political leaders have always been embodying political ideals and goals as representatives of political movements and parties. The personalization of politics is as old as politics itself” (Radunski 1980, 15).

According to many observers, however, more and more top candidates tend to distance themselves from their parties these days. The top candidate, they say, is not necessarily and primarily a representative of his party any more, but faces the voters in his own right, occasionally taking positions that oppose those of his own party. Again, this tendency was first noticed in the US. The American procedure for selecting party candidates – that is, the broad diffusion of primaries since the 1970s – favors such a decoupling (Patterson 1993). Jimmy Carter, for instance, was the first American president who successfully ran as a counter pole to his own party’s establishment in Washington.

Bill Clinton also ran as an “outsider” at first. His TV spots during the 1992 presidential elections and his speech at the Democratic convention rarely mentioned the Democratic Party. Instead of presenting himself as a party politician, he ran as a pragmatist. Tony Blair followed a similar strategy in his 1997 election campaign for the House of Commons, as did Gerhard Schröder in the 1998 German parliamentary elections. The decoupling is particularly obvious in → political advertising. A clearly visible party logo on the candidate’s campaign posters and flyers is much less common now than it used to be.

Most observers also claim that the focus on private issues in election campaigns is a new phenomenon. While the candidates in the US have always been showing their private side – for example in campaign ads – this has been less common in parliamentary democracies. Instead, the focus used to be on the candidates’ political role. By making the tour of popular TV shows, as well as marketing their personal background stories to the media, some politicians now want to collect sympathy points and reach those voters who have only little interest in politics (→ Political Marketing). Still, most candidates seem to prefer talking about their political ideas and leadership qualities than their biography, family situation, looks, and hobbies.

Changes in voting behavior, parties, and the mass media are considered to be the cause of increasing personalization. Voters tend to be less loyal to their parties. This in turn leads to stronger fluctuations in voting behavior and a growing importance for the top candidates (→ Issue Voting). At the same time, parties have changed from being doctrinal parties to catch-all parties, concentrating less on their political ideology and more on their short-term success in the elections. Top candidates are seen as a means to achieve this electoral success (Wattenberg 1991).

But more than anything, personalization is due to the development of the media system – in particular, the diffusion of commercial → television (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). This holds true for the US as well as other western democracies (Mazzoleni & Schulz 1999; → Mediatization of Politics). Television’s focus on prominent politicians appears to be part of a → politainment trend. Campaign professionals adapt to this → media logic in order to increase public attention. Key elements in this strategy are → televised debates. “The modern campaign strategy which dominates all others and best fits media logic is personalization, concentrating on telegenic leaders while programs and policy proposals remain in the background” (Swanson & Mancini 1996, 272).

However, the assessment of the personalization of campaigns is beginning to change. The top candidates’ prominent position in the campaign is no longer considered to be detrimental as such. It rather depends on the type of image aspects that are focused on (→ Candidate Image). If nonpolitical image components predominate and replace political issues, this will indeed be problematic. But if personalization in election campaigns is used to transmit political issues, personalization is not then the same as depolitization. Rather, personalization can be an adequate strategy in order to communicate complex content: politicians then lend their party’s policies a face and a voice.

SEE ALSO: ► Candidate Image ► Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ► Election Campaign Communication ► Issue Voting ► Media Logic ► Mediatization of Politics ► Politainment ► Political Advertising ► Political Marketing ► Political Personality in Media Democracy ► Spin Doctor ► Televised Debates ► Television

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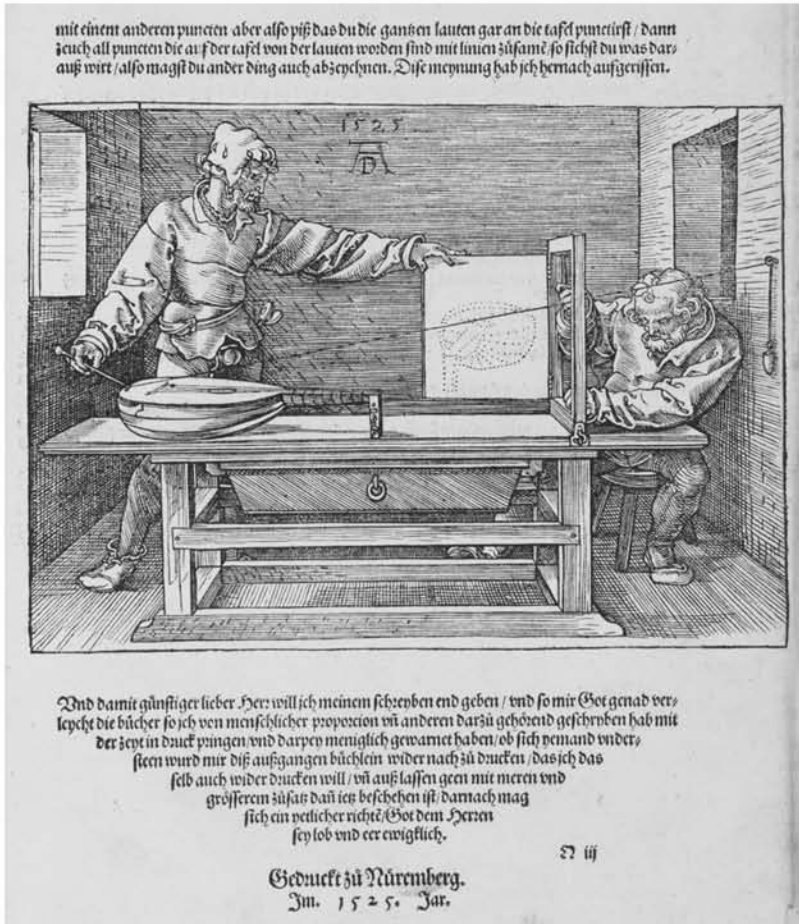
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## Perspective, Pictorial

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Perspective refers to the graphic representation on a flat surface of an optical sense of depth associated with natural stereoscopic vision (→ Visual Representation). This translation of three-dimensional visual perception onto a two-dimensional picture plane is accomplished through a variety of techniques for composing the pictorial space, including: (1) diminishing scale, (2) the occlusion of figures and shapes, (3) atmospheric blurring or color variation from foreground to background, and (4) the converging of parallel lines at vanishing points along an imaginary horizon line. From the fifteenth century in Europe, artists increasingly used a combination of such techniques to create formal systems of perspective designed to present the picture plane as a kind of window, through which one views a visible world implied beyond the plane of the picture frame (→ Painting). Tied to the notion that a picture could, and should, imitate natural appearances, European drawing, painting, and print-making (→ Prints; Printing, History of) following the Renaissance conventionally organized the lines, shapes, and colors of the picture plane to appear to proceed outward from an observer's unique point of view. The viewer sees depicted objects and space from the single *perspective* of the viewer's unique position, as if the visible world was unified along the sight lines of this imagined observer. The representation of vision is stable and monocular. The point of view of the painter coincides with the beholder. Although recent polemical analyses have suggested that mirrors and lenses could have been used to produce the impression of perspective, Renaissance treatises advanced a conception of vision that followed mathematical projections and geometrical deductions, as illustrated in Dürer's engraving of a man drawing a lute (Fig. 1; Hockney 2001; Hockney & Falco 2003; Neiva 2005).



**Figure 1** Engraving of a man drawing a lute. Albrecht Dürer, 1525  
 Source: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University

Perspective does not represent human vision per se, but it represents one of the potential modes of representing vision. While Damisch (1987, 37) has criticized the temptation to consider the idea of perspective as a pictorial code, its self-referential visual nature as well as its regulative presence across western art may indicate otherwise (→ Code). Goodman (1976) argues that the notational system of perspective relates closely to human language, constituting a conventional and symbolic code that requires cultural training to decipher. Some scholars of → visual culture therefore contend that cultural learning is necessary to visual comprehension (Bryson et al. 1994).

**PERSPECTIVE – MORE THAN A CONVENTIONAL CODE?**

The notion that perspective is little more than a culturally conventionalized pictorial code, a kind of visual morphology or grammar of image-making, *perspectiva artificialis*

(Goodman 1976), contrasts with the idea that renderings of linear and aerial perspective in art successfully mimic the perspective of natural perception, *perspectiva naturalis* (Messaris 1994). Humans as a species may experience natural perspective in routine vision, but pictorial techniques for rendering visual depth have not always been available to artists, painters, and architects, and the particular conventions of linear perspective that emerged in the western tradition of picture-making have not characterized the picture-making of numerous other cultures.

It is something of a paradox, then, that perspective be considered the pre-eminent device of realistic visual representation. In the process of seeing the natural world in perspective, the observer knows that the railway is constructed of parallel tracks, and that they remain parallel even when vision indicates that the parallels converge to a vanishing point on the horizon. Yet in attempting to represent this visual experience on a flat picture surface, the artist consciously plots lines that actually do converge, artificially foreshortening depth within practiced and self-contained schemes that have become, not only accepted norms, but demonstrations of competence. Depiction in perspective translates the properties of objects in terms of a canonical pictorial procedure. The pictorial rule of perspective demands that every object reflected in the picture surface should not suffer distortion, but that the orthogonal lines receding in the distance converge to a point vanishing in infinity whose position depends upon the spectator's viewpoint: "A pyramid of visual rays joins the objects that are seen to beholder's eyes" (White 1967, 121). Alberti's *Della pittura* (1973, 1st pub. 1436) defines the picture as the planar section of the visual pyramid. The sense of depth is obtained because the objects diminish in direct proportion to the individual's gaze.

While foreshortening of objects amounts to a pictorial technique not unknown in antiquity, in fact familiar to the ancient Greeks, it was only during the Renaissance in Europe that perspective, as a completely homogeneous conception of space, came to full realization. Furthermore, the knowledge of representing in perspective supplies the pictorial ground of modern → photography. This, in turn, leads to the assertion that perspective dominates the visual canon not only in western art, but in the use of pictorial material in various mass media, extending its global reach.

Even if foreshortening is *not* the most natural and inevitable mode of spatial representation (Waisanen 2002), perspective is now everywhere: in the cinema, on television, in the pictures found in publications that we read, and even in the design of → magazine pages, → posters and websites. We carry mobile phones that photograph and transmit scenes according to conventions of perspective (→ Digital Imagery). The relative universality of the → Internet confirms, through use of photographs, that perspective is a mode of representation transcending cultural barriers.

### **PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION, CLASSICAL CULTURE, RHETORIC, AND TRUTH**

More than a mere technique of pictorial representation, perspective must be seen as a rhetorical device (→ Rhetorical Studies). In both perspective and rhetoric, representations disregard objective and absolute truth. In perspective, the viewer never perceives things as they are, but instead as they seem to be, in the same way that in a persuasive speech

(→ Persuasion; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion) what matters is not truth but truth-likeness, at best the surface appearance of truth. As Gombrich (1993) asserts, the world may never look like an image, but an image can be made to look like the world.

Among ancient authors, Plato (c.427–347 BCE) not only noticed but also assessed negatively the *mimesis* of the painter, who makes pictures that comply with the compositional method of perspective, comparing the artist to the rhetorical sophist. In the *Republic* (X, 595 b–c), Plato states most clearly what he considers the correct moral and logical stand: “we must not honor a man above truth.” Objective and eternal truth, on the one hand, and persuasion and perspective, on the other, are irreconcilable. Consider their contrast: perspective and rhetoric represent the transitory, while absolute truth is averse to change, since what changes is not yet true. As illusionists, conjurers, and producers of simulacra, painters and sophists disseminate phantasms of truth (*Republic* X, 538 b–c; → Rhetoric, Greek).

Despite Plato’s disapproval, apocryphal anecdotes reveal the endurance and the lure of illusionary pictorial techniques. In his *Historia Naturalis* [*Natural History*], Pliny describes the outcome of a competition between the most skilled painters of the time: Zeuxis and Parrhasius. Zeuxis depicts grapes so real that birds come to peck at them, while Parrhasius paints curtains so perfect that Zeuxis asks his competitor to open the drapes. Parrhasius wins the dispute, having duped a fellow artist. Vasari (1980, 1st pub. 1550) records another tale: Paolo Uccello stays months without leaving the house, probing into the secrets of perspective. When his wife urges him to go to bed, Uccello makes it intimate: “*Che dolce cosa è questa prospettiva!*” (“What a sweet thing is this perspective!”)

## **PERSPECTIVE AND PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION IN CULTURE AND NATURE**

Although a naïve conception of perspective might describe it as a simple reflection of human vision, perspective is a visual construction of an essentially mental nature. An image in perspective embodies a system of cultural meanings, being much more than the joint work of the hand and the eye. This is Panofsky’s position in *Perspective as symbolic form* (1991, 1st pub. 1927). Panofsky contends that perspective, like any symbolic construction, is the linking of a mental concept, *the signified*, with a material mode of pictorial representation, *the signifier*, within a system of diacritical distinctions (→ Sign; Sign Systems). Before choosing a geometrical or optical strategy of representation, the image-maker has to have prior conceptual guidance. To represent in perspective, the artist must accept that the natural space of the world is not a quilt of isolated scenes, but rather one unified space.

Developing Panofsky’s ideas further, Francastel (1951) points out that perspective is the dominant factor in the cultural creation of a new type of pictorial space. To raise the apse of the church of Santa Maria de Fiori, Brunelleschi (1377–1446) came to the conclusion that he could not use the traditional medieval methods of construction. Brunelleschi’s solution relied heavily on geometrical and mathematical planning; but in doing so, he also gave birth to a culturally revolutionary conception of space, both uniform and measurable. Brunelleschi’s final plan derives from the application of perspective. It was more than a novel architectural solution: the transformation of natural space into a

geometric representation constituted an intellectual anticipation of modern scientific conceptions of nature, in which the material qualities of the natural world are rephrased in a geometrical and mathematical language. Brunelleschi's artistic achievement forecasted Galileo's *Dialogo sopra i due massimi sistemi del mondo* (1953, 1st pub. 1632).

Although it is quite accurate that the origin and the discovery of the pictorial method of depicting in perspective is the product of specific historical developments, and therefore a cultural invention, this does not mean that perspective is purely and solely cultural. Cultural systems of perspective should be seen as historically specific manifestations of our biological legacy. Depth information results from *stereopsis*, in other words, from the fact that the eyes produce slightly different views of the natural world. After receiving such data, the brain assesses the perceptual disparities, interpreting them and thus producing *inferentially* the sense of depth. As brain cells are binocularly driven, and as this indicates a prior cerebral categorization, the conclusion should be that both perceptual and pictorial perspective are inferential processes. And if differences in retinal information are the basic anatomical condition for vision in depth, then the cultural invention of perspective can be seen as an attempt to reproduce similar inferential processes (→ Information Processing).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Painting ▶ Persuasion ▶ Photography ▶ Poster ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Prints ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Symbolism ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation

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# Persuasion

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Persuasion is a communicative function that can be pursued in many different settings, ranging from face-to-face interaction to mass communication. Mass media persuasion takes three primary overt forms: commercial advertising (of consumer products and services), pro-social advertising, and political advertising. On each of these subjects, there is extensive empirical research and theorizing (→ Strategic Communication).

Studies of *consumer advertising* have examined such questions as the effectiveness of different advertising strategies, the role of endorsements in consumer advertising, effects of varying the frequency and timing of advertisements, the role of visual elements, and so on (e.g., Kardes et al. 2005; → Advertising; Advertising as Persuasion; Advertising, Endorsement in; Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). Advertising is commonly one part of a larger marketing effort involving decisions about pricing, product distribution, market segmentation, sales force management, and so forth (→ Marketing).

*Pro-social communication campaigns* (sometimes termed “social marketing,” because such campaigns apply familiar marketing tools to pro-social ends) aim to forward environmental or charitable causes or to advance health-related ends such as encouraging people to exercise, quit smoking, and so forth (→ Environmental Communication; Health Campaigns, Communication in; Social Marketing; Planned Social Change through Communication). Research on health promotion communication has been informed by such theoretical approaches as the → health belief model, the → stages of change (transtheoretical) model of health behavior change, and the → extended parallel process model (→ Health Communication; for collections of studies of pro-social campaigns, see Rice & Atkin 2001; Hornik 2002).

Studies of *political persuasion* (especially, but not exclusively, in the context of election campaign advertising) have examined such subjects as the effects of negative advertising and the role of televised political debates in elections (see, e.g., Mutz et al. 1996; → Election Campaign Communication; Negative Campaigning; Political Advertising; Political Persuasion; Televised Debates). This research is linked with broader work concerned with mass media influences on public opinion generally (see Glynn et al. 1999), including such topics as → propaganda and the interplay of interpersonal interaction and mass media as influences on the public (e.g., the → “two-step flow of communication”; → Public Opinion).

Beyond these three overt forms of mass media persuasion, advocates can also pursue persuasion through two other kinds of media content: news (by means of media advocacy) and entertainment (especially through entertainment education). “Media advocacy” refers to the strategic use of news media coverage to influence opinions on social or public policy questions (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication). For example, in addition to using paid advertising, a health campaign might supply relevant news stories to local media outlets, or an advocacy group might seek to influence the framing of news stories concerning its particular issue. (For a practical guide to media advocacy, see Wallack et al. 1999).

Especially in the *developing world*, the use of entertainment programming to carry persuasive messages (e.g., about population control or disease prevention) has been particularly notable. For example, a recurring television → soap opera can be used to convey information about HIV/AIDS prevention. A number of these → “entertainment education” campaigns have been especially effective vehicles for persuasion. (For a useful overview, see Singhal et al. 2004.)

In addition to research and theorizing focused on specific contexts of persuasion (e.g., political advertising or changing health behavior), a number of more general theoretical perspectives on persuasion have been developed (for broad treatments of such work, see Dillard & Pfau 2002; O’Keefe 2002; Perloff 2003). Among the more prominent and promising are the → elaboration likelihood model (ELM), → social judgment theory, and → transportation theory. And persuasion has also been illuminated by the application of general models of psychological processes such as → cognitive dissonance theory (often invoked to explain selective exposure to messages) and the theories of planned behavior and reasoned action (two related approaches to understanding the bases of voluntary action; → Planned Behavior, Theory of; Reasoned Action, Theory of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Endorsement in ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Environmental Communication ▶ Extended Parallel Process Model ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Planned Behavior, Theory of ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Judgment Theory ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Stages of Change Model ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Persuasion and Resistance

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In → persuasion research, the concept of resistance generally refers to → audiences withstanding attempts to change their beliefs, → attitudes, or behaviors. Resistance, however, can actually be conceptualized in multiple ways. For example, it can be thought of as simply an *outcome* of a persuasive attempt (i.e., no change in attitude in the face of a persuasive message). It might also be considered a *motivation*, or goal of the audience (e.g., to maintain or protect their initial beliefs). Resistance might also reflect the *process* through which persuasive attempts are thwarted (e.g., disagreement with a message position or denigration of a message source). Finally, resistance might be reflected by the qualities of either attitudes (e.g., attitude strength) or people (e.g., dogmatic personalities) that limit persuasive effect (see Knowles & Linn 2004).

Regardless of how resistance itself is conceptualized, its role in persuasion is often considered from two different perspectives. First, resistance as the natural, and perhaps unintentional, result of exposure to a persuasive message is examined with the intent of determining how best to minimize this blockage to persuasive effect. Second, given there are persuasive situations in which the intended goal is to reinforce attitudes, or promote resistance to future persuasive attempts that the audiences might face (e.g., messages that might encourage teenagers to start smoking), much attention has focused on how to *generate* resistance to persuasion. Thus, to understand resistance, it is important to consider the factors that might generate resistance to persuasion, means of overcoming those sources of resistance, and the conditions under which resistance might be intentionally induced.

## SOURCES OF RESISTANCE

Although resistance to persuasion has been a consistent theme in persuasion research for over 50 years, there does not exist, as yet, a clear typology of the sources of resistance or the means of overcoming them. Still, there are a number of sources that have been examined, some of which focus more on motivational or process orientations to resistance, like reactance, scrutiny, distrust, inertia, and invulnerability, whereas others relate more to the nature of individuals and attitudes themselves (Knowles & Linn 2004).

### Sources Relating to Motivational or Process Orientations

One of the most commonly cited sources of resistance is a motivational force known as *reactance* (Brehm 1966). According to reactance theory, when people perceive a request as

unjustly restricting their freedom to choose or act as they want, they experience a motivation state in which they attempt to reassert their freedom by rejecting the request. This rejection might appear as holding onto their initial attitudes more strongly or as a desire to engage in the very act they were cautioned against. The more direct and demanding the request, or the more important the threatened freedom, the greater the reactance is likely to be. Individual differences in the tendency to be reactant have been examined, and though teenagers – teenage males in particular – are viewed as prototypically reactant and thus challenging targets for persuasive attempts, any group predisposed to feeling restricted might be likely to evidence this form of resistance.

A second very common source of resistance to persuasion is *scrutiny*, which refers to the critical processing of persuasive messages. The more carefully people process a persuasive appeal, the more likely they are to come up with arguments (→ Argumentative Discourse; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion) that may counter or undermine the positions asserted in that message. To the extent that message scrutiny reveals weaknesses in a message's arguments, the message is more likely to be resisted. Scrutiny is more likely to occur when people are both motivated and able to process information. Thus, messages that are seen as personally relevant are particularly likely to undergo careful examination.

Three other process-related sources of resistance have received less attention yet still put up significant barriers to persuasive impact. *Distrust*, or the general guardedness against proposals for change, suggests that audiences process persuasive messages with skepticism, which biases the outcomes against change. *Inertia*, which focuses on people's tendency to stay just as they are to avoid the effort involved in enacting change in what they think or how they act, implies less active resistance in favor of the more benign motivation to maintain the status quo. Finally, *invulnerability*, which is perhaps most applicable in health-related contexts, suggests resistance is likely when audiences perceive whatever negative consequences might arise if the message is not accepted as not likely to happen to them (→ Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism). Particularly likely in adolescent audiences, perceptions of invulnerability suggest resistance stems from a lack of perceived need to change.

### Sources Relating to the Nature of Individuals and Attitudes

In addition to the motivational and process variables, there are also a number of sources of resistance to persuasion that stem from the nature of attitudes as well as the people who hold them. Considering the nature of attitudes, several characteristics of attitudes are associated with resistance to persuasive influence. Perhaps the most notable is that of *attitude strength*, which is in part defined by the ability to withstand attacks and to persist over time. Factors that contribute to attitude strength include, among other things, → attitude accessibility (i.e., attitudes that come to mind quickly), attitudes based on direct experience or attitude-relevant knowledge, and attitudes on issues that are personally relevant or in which a persona has some vested interest. Along related lines, *attitude certainty*, which refers to a person's own perception of the validity of his or her own attitude, suggests that those certain of their own attitudes are likely to more readily resist persuasive attempts.

As to personality factors, the trait of dogmatism, or the tendency to have closed belief systems, is associated with greater resistance to persuasion. In contrast, research on authoritarian personalities indicated such traits associate with greater openness to fascist

ideology. More recently, measures that tap into individual differences related to the motivational forces and process variables associated with resistance (e.g., reactance, preference for consistency, need for cognition) have received increasing attention, though these lines of research are still in their nascent stages.

### **STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME RESISTANCE**

Given the many and varied sources that pose resistance to persuasive attempts, it is not surprising that a number of strategies have been considered to try to overcome these barriers to persuasion. There are two basic categories of strategies to overcome resistance processes. The first set focuses on how to enhance the persuasiveness of the compliance attempt, or encourage message acceptance. These efforts include attempts to increase message vividness and emotional effect; the use of incentives; boosting argument strength; the use of positively framed arguments; and the inclusion of positive message acceptance cues, such as credible, attractive, or likeable sources, social consensus cues, boosts of self-affirmation, and others (Knowles & Linn 2004; → Credibility Effects).

A second set of strategies focuses on minimizing the sources of resistance. For example, one could side-step resistance by redefining an interaction as not involving an influence attempt (e.g., as a conversation rather than a sales pitch). One could directly address the sources of resistance by offering counterarguments or other forms of assurance. Conversely, one could distract from resistance by disrupting message scrutiny. One might even reframe a situation so as to harness resistance processes to promote change (e.g., through reverse psychology).

Perhaps the most studied form of reducing resistance, and the currently most popular, focuses on the use of narratives, or stories, as persuasive vehicles (see Green et al. 2002). Narratives are believed to reduce resistance for two main reasons. First, given that audiences generally approach stories with the expectation of being entertained, not persuaded, any natural barrier posed by the perception of persuasive intent is avoided. Second, the dramatic and suspenseful nature of stories may capture viewers' attention such that their focus is on following the plot of the story and the fate of the characters (→ Storytelling and Narration), which serves to distract them from scrutinizing the message content. Further, if audiences identify with story characters, it is likely that, given their resistance is down, they may be more likely to adopt the views and behaviors of the characters they admire. This approach has been the foundation of the entertainment-education movement, in which persuasive messages are intentionally embedded in entertainment programming with the expressed purpose of increasing audience knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding pro-social issues, like safer sex and family planning (see Singhal & Rogers 1999; → Entertainment, Effects of).

### **STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE RESISTANCE**

To this point the focus has been on sources of resistance and how to overcome them. However, a significant amount of attention has been paid to how to promote resistance to persuasion; that is, to encourage audiences to continue to hold onto their current attitudes. Efforts to promote resistance to persuasion have focused on two strategies: forewarning and inoculation. Forewarning simply refers to alerting people that they are

about to be exposed to a persuasive attempt. Under this circumstance, it appears that audiences generally perceive the impending persuasive attempt as a threat to their current beliefs, thus motivating them to defend their original attitudes.

Inoculation theory offers more systematic and theoretically developed insight into how to promote resistance to persuasion. On the basis of a biological model of inoculating against disease, William McGuire suggested that giving small doses of the opposition's viewpoint, followed by refutations of those arguments, would bolster resistance to future persuasive attempts. Currently, inoculation messages are designed to have three components: threat to belief, which appears not simply to forewarn audiences of a future persuasive attempt but also to motivate defense of the current attitude; counterattitudinal arguments, or opposing viewpoints that the audience might hear at some point in the future; and refutations of those counterarguments. Evidence consistently demonstrates that audiences exposed to inoculation messages are more resistant to future persuasive attacks, whether they contain the same counterattitudinal arguments as included in the inoculation message or different ones. Research over the last 50 years has consistently found support for the inoculation effect in such varied domains as political campaigns, social policy initiatives, and health behaviors (see Compton & Pfau 2005).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Media Effects ▶ Persuasion ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism ▶ Storytelling and Narration

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# Phenomenology

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Phenomenology is a movement in philosophy associated with the human sciences as a qualitative approach to the study of human conscious experience. Research → validity and → reliability are assessed as functions of logic, not mathematics or statistics (→ Qualitative Methodology; Research Methods).

Consciousness refers to the unique human ability (1) to have an awareness of self, others, and the world, i.e., iconic codes of awareness, (2) to be aware of that awareness, i.e., indexical codes of signification, and (3) to displace that awareness of awareness in space and time, i.e., symbolic codes of meaning. The conjunction of these codes in expression and perception is the function of discourse. Following Merleau-Ponty, these three semiotic phenomenological stages of defining human communication (→ Semiotics) are known as the phenomenological method of (1) description, entailing the iconic principle of *reversibility*, where expression and perception are interchangeable; (2) reduction, entailing the indexical principle of *reflexivity*, where expression structures perception; and (3) interpretation, entailing the symbolic principle of *reflection*, in which expression and perception represent one another. As a contemporary human science, phenomenology is the name for, and method of, the study of discourse as a logic of discovery.

There is both a European and a US *tradition* in phenomenology, beginning in eighteenth-century Europe with Johann Heinrich Lambert, who first used the term “phenomenology.” The name was then taken by Kant to describe awareness of awareness, in distinction from initial awareness. Hegel turned phenomenology in a historical direction by focusing on the evolution of self-consciousness. By the nineteenth century, the European forerunner of phenomenology was Franz Brentano. He divided phenomena of consciousness into (1) *representations*, (2) *judgments*, and (3) *emotive acts*. A philosopher, he had several famous students at the University of Vienna. First was the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, who stressed the relationship of representation and emotive acts in his famous “talking cure” for neurosis. Second, there was the logician Edmund Husserl, who focused upon the relation between representation and judgment in consciousness, i.e., “intentionality.” Both Freud’s applied work and Husserl’s theoretical analysis founded phenomenology in its modern sense within the domain of human communication. In his 1922 London lectures, Husserl defined his methodology as centered on the “manifest multiplicity of conscious subjects communicating with one another.”

Within discourse, Husserl specifies the meaning of conscious experience as having four domains of reference, as elaborated in → communicology (→ Meaning). First, *meaning* signifies (the signifier expression) while *manifestation* refers (the signified perception). Second, meaning has *objects*. Third, *symbolic meanings* in perception contrast with *intuitive meanings* in expression. Fourth, all *acts of meaning* have a common *ideal meaning*. Thus, a phenomenon is the object-referent (*noema*) of the constituting act directed toward it (*noesis*). The whole process is called *intentionality*, whereby a person is “conscious of . . . [experience].” Karl Bühler in Europe and Vilém Flusser in South America provided major applications of Husserl’s work to communication theory and practice (→ Photography).

Also among Husserl’s interpreters are the French philosopher and psychologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty and his student Michel Foucault. Both focused on the *embodied discourse* domain of consciousness where self, other, and the lived-world blend together. Merleau-Ponty suggested there are two levels of communication: (1) *existential discourse*, in which a person expresses his or her speaking in an original and perceptive speech – that is, a “speech speaking”; and (2) *empirical discourse*, which merely expresses what has already been said by others – that is, a “speech spoken.” Heidegger made the same distinction with his “talk” (*Rede*) and “idle talk” (*Gerede*). Foucault argued that the

empirical social level of discourse hides the existential level. This contested process of discourse forms a “rupture” or ongoing discontinuity of levels. He engages his third level, *critical methodology* (interpretation), by using the first-level (description) method of *archaeology* (“knowledge” as the *experience of consciousness*) and the second-level (reduction) method of *genealogy* (“understanding” as the *consciousness of experience*) (→ Critical Theory; Structuralism). Thus, for Merleau-Ponty and Foucault, the conjunctions of both consciousness and experience in discourse are reversible icons, reflexive indices, and reflective symbols. While Merleau-Ponty examines the place of *personal perception* in public expression, Foucault critically studies the reverse – that is, the place of *public expression* in personal perception.

The central personality in American phenomenology is Charles Sanders Peirce, also known for his combination of semiotics and phenomenology with an existential focus: “man is a sign . . . my language is the sum total of myself; for the man is the thought” (Peirce 1931–1958, vol. 5, para. 314). Like Husserl, whom he studied (Peirce 1931–1958, vol. 4, para. 7), Peirce defined his phenomenology by “communication: the recognition by one person of another’s personality takes place by means to some extent identical with the means by which he is conscious of his own personality” (Peirce 1931–1958, vol. 6, para. 159).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Coding ▶ Communicology ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Discourse ▶ Meaning  
▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Photography ▶ Qualitative Methodology  
▶ Reliability ▶ Research Methods ▶ Semiotics ▶ Structuralism ▶ Validity

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# Photography

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The word photography comes from the Greek *φωτός* (photos) and *γράφειν* (graphein), meaning to write with light. From its invention in the early 1800s to the beginning of the twenty-first century, photography referred to a photo-chemically based system of analog and indexical still image production that resulted in an optical reproduction of the space in front of the lens. In the first five years of the new millennium analog photography was almost completely supplanted by electronically based digital systems that calibrate light intensities in terms of logarithms. For most of the nineteenth century, photographs were produced by specialists, using a variety of chemical formulae to make and develop light-sensitive surfaces. As artist-technicians, their primary concern was to document the world of appearances, although aesthetic manipulation of reality became an ever-growing trend.

By the early twentieth century, photographic processes had become standardized and their production industrialized, allowing a growing number of amateurs, as well as professionals, to document various aspects of everyday life, and create photographic art in all kinds of genres and styles, including abstract and camera-less photography, architectural, → advertising, fashion, documentary, nature, nude, → photojournalism, → portraiture, and surrealist. With the invention of half-tone printing in the 1880s, photography became all-pervasive in journalism and other forms of publishing, whether to capture objectively the news of the day or to express the subjectivity of the photographer (→ Journalism, History of; Objectivity in Reporting). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, digital photographs began circulating in geometrically expanding numbers through the Internet. With the inflation of prices in the art market in the latter half of the twentieth century, all forms of photography became collectible in the art market, whether its well-known practitioners had intended them to be art or not.

## EARLY HISTORY

First used as a working tool by painters wishing to measure perspectives, the *camera obscura* was invented in the sixteenth century (→ Painting). Artists soon began searching for a method of capturing its framed image on a light-sensitive surface. Joseph Nicéphore Niépce produced the first known surviving photograph in France in 1827, calling it a heliograph, although documents suggest he made his first successful photographic image as early as 1816. Having no method to permanently fix the image, however, Niépce signed a contract in 1829 with Louis Jacques Mandé Daguerre, who was also experimenting with chemically produced images. After Niépce died in 1833, Daguerre successfully invented a photographic process in 1837, called *daguerreotype*, which fixed the image on a silver-plated sheet of copper, using iodine and mercury fumes. Daguerre published his findings in 1839, leading one French newspaper to write: “It upsets all scientific theories of light and optics, and it will revolutionize the art of drawing” (*Gazette de France*, January 6,

1839). Over the next 20 years, daguerrotypes became an extremely popular form of photography, especially for landscapes and, later, portraits, once exposure times had been reduced to under a minute.

Among the best-known daguerrotypists were Baron Jean Baptiste Louis Gros and Joseph Girault de Pranguey, who documented architecture and cityscapes in their travels to Greece and the Middle East. The Americans Albert Southworth and Josiah Hawes were portrait photographers whose images of the Boston elite revealed startling details of character. By 1853 there were 86 daguerrotype galleries in New York City alone. However, the fact that a daguerrotype image could not be reproduced, as well as the daguerrotype's expense, led photographers to search for other methods of photographic image making. Utilizing different chemicals, but essentially the same limited technology, *ambrotypes* and *tintypes* were briefly an extremely popular low-cost alternative that allowed hundreds of thousands of individuals to have themselves photographed.

At virtually the same time as Daguerre was experimenting, Henry William Fox Talbot began (1835) sensitizing paper with silver chlorides and nitrates to produce a photographic image on paper, but he, too, was not able to fix the image permanently. It was Sir John F. W. Herschel who, after reading Daguerre's and Talbot's papers in 1840, successfully fixed his photographic images with a solution of hyposulfite; he also coined the terms "photography," "positive," and "negative." However, these first paper photographs lacked the sharpness of detail found in daguerrotypes. In 1841, Fox Talbot announced the invention of *calotypes*, which not only greatly improved image quality, but also involved the production of a negative from which multiple prints could be produced. Between 1844 and 1846, Talbot published *The pencil of nature*, a collection of 24 calotypes, which constituted the first photographic book. Among the most important practitioners of calotypy were David Octavius Hill and Robert Adamson, two Scotsmen whose outdoor portraits of common people between 1843 and 1848 revealed a strong painterly quality. In France in the early 1850s, Henri Le Secq and Charles Marville used calotypes to photograph the country's historic buildings and monuments for the Historic Monuments Committee of the Ministry of the Interior.

However, the invention of the wet-plate *collodion* process by Frederick Scott Archer in 1851 soon made both daguerrotypes and calotypes obsolete. Archer's glass-plate negatives produced much sharper images than calotypes and were infinitely reproducible. Coating glass with a viscous solution of nitrocellulose in alcohol and ether, mixed with potassium iodide, the photographer had to expose and develop his images while the coating was still wet, forcing him to carry a portable darkroom when working in the field. Photographic prints were made on albumen paper, which had been coated with potassium bromide and acetic acid dissolved in egg whites, then sensitized prior to exposure with silver nitrate. While albumen paper gave way to superior collodium paper in 1864 (invented by George Wharton Simpson), wet-plate negatives remained the standard until the 1880s, when gelatin dry plates came into general use.

With these improved tools, photography became both a mass medium for portraiture and a high art. Oscar Gustave Rejlander and Henry Peach Robinson, for example, used photo-montage techniques to produce complex, allegorical images that mimicked classical painting. The work of Roger Fenton, Julia Margaret Cameron, and Nadar (Gaspard Félix Tournachon) was less stylized but also had high art pretensions. Mathew Brady, famed

for his photographic work in the American Civil War, focused more on documentary aspects.

The invention of *dry-plate photographs* involved a long and complex process over 20 years of fits and starts. While Richard Hill Norris produced the first commercially available collodian dry plates in 1856, Richard Leach Maddox is credited with the invention of gelatin dry plates, although his published paper in 1871 in the *British Journal of Photography* initially failed to attract any attention. Maddox formed an emulsion of gelatin, containing nitric acid, cadmium bromide, and silver nitrate, which he coated onto glass plates and paper, then developed in a solution of pyrogallol. Unfortunately, ill health prevented Maddox from further experiments. The experiments of several other inventors were necessary before reliable and very light-sensitive dry plates became commercially available in 1878. By the early 1880s, large-scale production of dry plates had commenced and collodion wet-plate photography was phased out. Meanwhile, albumen paper had been succeeded by gelatin bromide and chloro-bromide paper for printing.

With the invention of the Kodak camera and acetate roll film in 1888, photography entered a new era, allowing large numbers of amateur photographers the opportunity to produce photographic images for the first time. The introduction of the Kodak “Brownie” in 1900 further democratized the production of photographic images by making it possible for completely untrained amateurs to “point and shoot” successfully (→ Amateur Photography and Movies).

### PHOTOGRAPHY ENTERS THE MODERN AGE

While photography evolved toward ever easier usage, some photographers continued to attempt painterly effects. Under the banner of Pictorialism, photographers utilized gum prints on heavy stock paper, producing soft-focus images that resembled paintings. Photogravure printing technology also created soft photographic images, which could be mass produced in a printing press. Peter Henry Emerson, e.g., advocated reproducing human vision by blurring the edges of the image and leaving the camera focus slightly soft. Pictorialist photographers, such as Frederick H. Evans, George Davison, Robert Demachy, Heinrich Kühn, Hugo Erfurth, Eduard Steichen, and Alvin Langdon Coburn, created images that consciously attempted to elevate photography to an art; e.g., Demachy’s *Behind the Scenes* (1897) resembled Edgar Degas’s portraits of ballerinas. Their portraits, landscapes, and nudes thus mimicked genre paintings in terms of both composition and texture.

Heinrich Kühn was among the first to experiment with *color photographs*. In 1907, after years of preparation, the Brothers Lumière in Lyon (the same inventors who had introduced motion pictures in 1895) marketed “autochrome” plates, which would reproduce living color. While previous generations of photographers had to rely on hand coloring their black-and-white prints, the Lumières’ autochromes placed a layer of starch, dyed orange, green, and violet, under a black-and-white emulsion, which was then developed as a color transparency. Autochromes proved extremely popular, but it was not until the invention of the Kodachrome dye coupling process (available in 1937), which placed three layers of color film emulsion on 35 mm photographic film, that an easy and effective color negative process became commercially available.

After 1900, art photography slowly began freeing itself from the strictures of Pictorialism. A new generation gathered together under the banner of the “Photo-Secession” to advocate “*straight photography*.” They demanded a return to sharply focused images that highlighted the characteristics of the medium itself, rather than attempting to copy other art forms. Among the first champions of straight photography was Alfred Stieglitz, who had earlier been aligned with the Pictorialists. Stieglitz co-founded the Photo-Secession in 1902, and its New York gallery “291.” He also became founding editor of *Camera Work* (1903–1917), the primary publication of the new style, while continuing to make his own straight photographs, *The Steerage* (1907) being one of his acknowledged masterpieces. Stieglitz published the work of Gertrud Käsebier, Clarence H. White, Steichen, Coburn, and a young photographer, Paul Strand.

In 1917, Strand won first prize in the prestigious Wanamaker competition, the Twelfth Annual Exhibition of Photography, with his photograph *Wall Street* (1916), which was typical of straight photography’s concern for capturing scenes from everyday life, while simultaneously abstracting the image through composition and light values, thereby constructing deeper meanings. Strand also exemplified a new generation of professional photographers who took on commercial assignments to support their own artistic work in the medium. Strand bought an Akeley 35 mm movie camera and worked as a newsreel and documentary cinematographer. White became a professor at Columbia University and directed his own photography school in Maine, while Steichen supported himself with fashion and advertising photography. Today, Steichen’s commercial photography is just as highly prized in the art market as his more private work.

Value is, in fact, more dependent on original condition, age, uniqueness, and reputation of the photographer than on the original context of production. As is the case with other arts, a photographer’s reputation is subject to fashion and critical academic debate. A constant in photography’s history over the last century is that photographers have chosen to work in a wide variety of genres, whether as private artists on fellowships, private patronage, or foundation grants, or as employees for hire of private companies, government agencies, or communications media.

## FORMS AND SUBJECTS OF MODERN PHOTOGRAPHY

In the 1920s European modernist artists began experimenting with exposing photographic paper to light without a camera, resulting in purely abstract images, parallel to painting’s evolution toward abstraction (*abstract or camera-less photography*). Both Man Ray and László Moholy-Nagy placed objects directly on photographic paper and exposed them to light in a darkroom for their rayograph and photogram series, respectively. Christian Schad and Francis Brugière used cut paper to produce abstract shadows in a multitude of black, white, and gray tones. Meanwhile, Alfred Stieglitz’s *Equivalents* series depicted clouds as pure light and shade. In the 1940s, Harold Edgerton and Gjon Mili utilized strobe lights to create abstract multiple exposures of moving objects or persons, again producing abstract designs. In the 1960s, Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind photographed the real world, but framing their images so that objects were abstracted and no longer recognizable as anything but pure form (→ Art as Communication).

In the nineteenth century, a major impetus for photography was the *documentation of architecture*, especially historic buildings. In the early twentieth century, photographers became fascinated by cityscapes with skyscrapers as the epitome of modernity. Eugene Atget's images of deserted Paris streets and buildings prior to World War I had a great influence, especially on the surrealists. The city demanded new ways of seeing, whether looking down from high buildings or looking up at them, as exemplified by Alvin Coburn's view down on Central Park, *The Octopus* (1916), and Alexander Rodchenko's images of Moscow balconies. In mid-century New York, Bernice Abbott followed in Atget's footsteps, while Eric de Maré became the most prominent architecture photographer of the 1960s–1990s.

With the expansion of mass print media, photography evolved into the most important tool for *advertising consumer goods*. In the 1920s, German photographer Albert Rengé-Patsch produced advertising photos for Hag Coffee, strongly influenced by the Bauhaus concept of graphic design, while Ralph Steiner's American *Eight O'Clock Coffee* likewise highlighted the product through eye-catching composition. Given the huge popularity of fashion magazines, it is not surprising that fashion photography soon became big business. Some of the most successful fashion photographers also established artistic reputations, include Irving Penn, Cecil Beaton, David Bailey, Sarah Moon, William Klein, and Bruce Weber.

One of photography's foremost goals was to *document real-world conditions*. Utilizing the camera as a tool for social criticism, Lewis Hine's images of children in New York sweatshops helped pass child labor laws in many states. August Sander's frontal portraits of farmers, workers, and tradesmen created a complex social portrait of Weimar Germany. In Depression-ridden America, the photographs of Walker Evans, Arthur Rothstein, Dorothy Lange, and Ben Shahn documented economic hardship and the New Deal. Roman Vischniac's photos of Jewish ghettos in 1930s Poland captured a way of life that would disappear with the Holocaust. In the last 50 years, Robert Frank, Lee Friedlander, Danny Lyon, and Mary Ellen Mark, among others, have documented both the middle class and social outcasts (→ Documentary Film).

Just as *nature* has always been a primary subject matter for art, so too has it continued to fascinate photographers. Edward Weston's, Imogen Cunningham's, and Karl Blossfeldt's early twentieth-century images tended to abstract nature, finding formal patterns in natural environments. In mid-century, Ansel Adams and Eliot Porter sought to capture the grandeur and power of the natural landscape, while Jean Dieuzade's and Joan Fontcuberta's nature images function as abstracted still lifes.

An important subject from classical art, *nude photography* runs the gamut from the pornographic to the highly aesthetic. Paul Outerbridge's nudes in the 1930s broke new ground by mixing classical naïveté with taboo-breaking fetishisms. Frantisek Drtikol and Bill Brandt abstracted the human body, making it an element of photographic design. Helmut Newton and H. F. Heineken have trodden a narrow line between pornography and fashion photography, while Robert Mapplethorpe's large-format homoerotic images of male nudes caused intense political controversy in the 1980s.

With the rise of illustrated news magazines, e.g., the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung*, *Picture Post*, and *Life*, as well as the development of the 35 mm Leica camera, *modern photo-journalism* was born (→ Picture Magazines). Capturing news events of the day, whether

diplomatic conferences or images from a war front, photographers such as Erich Solomon, Alfred Eisenstedt, Umbo (Otto Umbehr), and Margaret Bourke-White traveled the globe to get their scoops. More in the vein of today's paparazzi, Weegee photographed the underbelly of 1950s New York and Los Angeles, his snapshots of murders, homeless drunks, and prostitutes displaying the immediacy of news torn from the headlines. At the same time, W. Eugene Smith created a series of intense photo essays, including one on the Japanese victims of industrial pollution.

From the time of the earliest daguerrotypes, *portrait photography* has been central to the medium. The photograph was thought to capture not only the outward appearance of the subject, but also a sense of the person inside. In the 1920s, Nicholas Murray photographed the artistic and intellectual community of his day, including many film stars. Hollywood, in fact, engendered a sub-genre, the star portrait, produced for studio publicity purposes by George Hurrell, Clarence Sinclair Bull, and Ruth Harriet Louise. After 1950, Chargesheimer (Karl Heinz Hargesheimer) and Richard Avedon represent celebrity photographers working for illustrated magazines. In the 1960s, Diane Arbus's portraits of freaks and other physically or emotionally deformed persons took on a surrealist quality. In the 1990s, Cindy Sherman invoked the conventions of portraiture to create fictionalized self-portraits in gallery-sized formats that have commanded prices akin to painting.

The twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have seen a large number of photographers manipulating the medium to create *surrealist fantasies*, juxtaposing photography's ability to reproduce reality iconically with its capability of creating fictions. Utilizing a variety of techniques, including multiple exposure, photo-montage, and solarization, photographers in the 1920s, like Jaromir Funke and Herbert Beyer, created surrealist images. In the 1950s, it was Philippe Halsman and Jerry Uelsmann who sought to visualize their inner subjectivities, while in the 1970s Paul de Nooijer and Duane Michaels were prominent.

## DIGITAL CONVERGENCE

In the early years of the twenty-first century, photography has become both more prevalent, retaining its status as a mass medium through → Internet distribution, and also subject to the critical and aesthetic winds of postmodernism (→ Postmodernism and Communication). Photographers, such as Marco Breuer, Carl Carienza, Rimma Gerlovina, Richard Misrach, Julie Moos, Sebastiao Salgado, Gary Schneider, and Krzysztof Wodiczko are as diverse as the genres they work in.

In the new millennium, photography has morphed from a chemical-based medium to digital forms, with images stored digitally on hard discs in cameras or computers (→ Digital Imagery). While it is still too early to tell what aesthetic consequences the digital revolution will have for photography, it is already clear that both amateurs and professionals have embraced the medium almost instantaneously. Furthermore, distribution of digital images has been revolutionized, allowing consumers to take pictures with their phones and send them to their computers, while professionals can email extremely large image files from almost anywhere on the planet to their editors. However, digitality has also entailed convergence, meaning that film, photography, and other forms of image production have lost much of their media specificity (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Painting ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Picture Magazines ▶ Portraiture ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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# Photojournalism

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Photojournalism means reporting visually. Yet this simple definition belies the complexity of a professional media practice whose mission remains constant, while the means of fulfilling that mission and the degree to which one believes it can be fulfilled shift along with technology, culture, and perception.

The defining characteristic of photojournalism is visual portrayal, with contextualizing verbal information, of an *event* – an observable occurrence that can be as simple as the fleeting moment of a child's smile or as complex as a country's struggle to rebuild after war. Henri Cartier-Bresson, often described as the greatest photojournalist of the twentieth century, defined *the decisive moment* as “one moment at which the elements in motion are in balance” (1952): “Photography must seize upon . . . and hold immobile the equilibrium of” that moment. A founding member of the great picture agency Magnum, Cartier-Bresson believed effective picture stories required engaging the heart, mind, and eye: through “recognition of a rhythm in the world of real things,” the eye finds and focuses “on the particular subject within the mass of reality” and the camera registers “the decision made by the eye.”

## GENRES

Photojournalism images fall into five categories: *spot news* (significant, unplanned events); *general news* (ongoing issues and activities); *features* (interpretative essays about lives, activities, and issues); *illustrations* (staged or digitally created images communicating concepts); and *documentary* (long-form picture/word narratives). Subject matter addresses political, cultural, economic, or natural concerns ranging from a single incident (such as the

moment when a screaming, burned girl ran from a napalm bombing in Vietnam) to a family's long-term experiences with the ongoing illness and subsequent death of a grandparent. Serious photojournalism, practiced with the goal of *witnessing* (or showing the world to itself) should be distinguished from *paparazzi* photography, with its goal of capturing celebrity life. However, the line between the socially responsible “watchdog” for the public interest and sensationalist voyeur-satisfying insatiable curiosity is as difficult to establish in professional media practice as it is in everyday life (→ Journalism: Normative Theories).

## HISTORY

Discussions of photojournalism's origins underlie scholarship about visual ways of knowing: the role of the seer versus the role of the seeing technology (→ Photography). Newton (2001), for example, roots visual reportage in the evolution of consciousness through the human need to survey the environment in order to survive. In that case, the medium of reportage is the eye/brain, which mediates stimuli gathered through perception into meaningful information (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). Such technologies as sketch pads and cameras developed as extensions of the body. Pioneer photojournalism educator Cliff Edom (1976) maintained that cave art was a form of visual reportage, that the “illustrated press” dated back to illuminated Egyptian manuscripts, and that even fine art sometimes portrayed significant events (→ Art as Communication). As early as the 1830s, British and US print publishers relied on field artists to draw scenes for conversion to woodcuts and engravings. In 1842 the *Illustrated London News* began a 16-page weekly containing 32 woodcuts.

Photographic historians date the beginning of actual *photographic reportage* to 1826, when the first image was created by means other than the action of a human hand and tool. Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's eight-hour exposure (a heliograph) at LeGras recorded the changing patterns of highlights and shadows across the turrets of his estate, making permanent the first light-written image. The oldest extant light recording of a human figure is Jacques Louis Daguerre's 1838 image of a man having his shoes shined on a Paris street. The daguerreotype, with 20- to 30-minute exposures, captured fine detail for portraiture, as well as such newsworthy events as battle scenes, fires, earthquakes, and uprisings. A daguerreotype of the 1853 train wreck near Pawtucket, Rhode Island, for example, was used as the basis of an engraving published in the *New York Illustrated News* (Carlbach 1997). Although William Henry Fox Talbot patented his paper negative process in 1841, making possible multiple reproductions of the same “pencil of nature” image, the more durable and detail-sharp wet collodion, glass negative process, introduced in 1851, led to the mass reproduction of photographs in print.

Seeking to record new views of the world, such nineteenth-century enterprisers as Nadar photographed Paris from a hot-air balloon and Frances Frith documented foreign lands. In 1873–1874, John Thompson published a four-volume documentary of life in China and teamed with radical journalist Adolphe Smith on the monthly publication *Street Life of London*, laying the groundwork for such (now classic) photojournalistic publications as *National Geographic* magazine, founded in 1888.

Scholars often correlate photojournalism history with technological advances. One benchmark was the development of half-tone techniques for converting continuous



photographic tones into dot patterns for letterpress printing (→ Printing, History of). The first newspaper half-tone, *A Scene in Shantytown*, was published in 1880 in the *New York Daily Graphic*. Other late nineteenth-century benchmarks included rotogravure, which made possible the reproduction of multiple high-quality copies of text and pictures from a single plate; flash power; roll film; and moving images. Key twentieth-century developments included the 35 mm camera, wire transmission, color printing, stroboscopic flash, offset printing, and digital imaging (→ Digital Imagery).

Scholars also cite the critical roles of aesthetic, cultural, and economic forces in photojournalism's development: artistic and scientific drives toward realistic portrayal of the material world, surveillance and propaganda functions of governments and institutions, economic imperatives of mass distribution systems, public fascination with visual media, experimentation in advertising media, and the rise of modernism (→ Aesthetics; Propaganda, Visual Communication of). Popular opinion linking photographic realism with the assumption of accurate and transparent representation fostered its use by news publications, as well as natural scientists, and supported growth of the social and behavioral sciences. Social reform highlights were Jacob Riis's late nineteenth-century visual documentation of New York City slums and Lewis Hines's early twentieth-century investigation of child labor.

Institutional forces played a key role in the professionalization of photojournalism. This can be seen in the creation of cooperative → news agencies such as the Agency France Presse (founded in 1835 as Agence Havas), the Associated Press, Reuters, and United Press International; of organizations such as the Danish Union of Press Photographers (founded in 1912) and the National Press Photographers Association (1946); and of international picture agencies, such as Black Star and Magnum. The great picture magazines, such as the *Arbeiter-Illustrierten Zeitung* (1921), *Münchener Illustrierte Presse* (1924), *Life* (1936), and *Look* (1937), used high-quality printing techniques in black and white and eventually color to build mass appeal (→ Picture Magazines). The magazines were particularly influential in developing the picture story, or photo essay, a carefully designed layout of pictures, captions, and text. Influential *Life* editor Wilson Hicks (1952) believed word-picture combinations communicated better than either could alone. The picture magazines were largely responsible for the rise of such photographic stars as Margaret Bourke-White, W. Eugene Smith, and Robert Capa.

For much of the twentieth century, the term "photojournalism," attributed to University of Missouri journalism dean Frank Luther Mott, referred to reproducing still photographs in combination with words in print publications to report subject matter of immediate and significant interest to the public. Although the major picture magazines lasted only about four decades (except for *National Geographic*), specialty magazines and → books continued to publish photo-documentaries. As the twentieth century progressed and video journalism, information graphics, and digital media developed, they came to be grouped under the inclusive term *visual journalism*, which can also include editorial cartoons and multimedia packages with both still and moving images, graphics, and audio (→ Documentary Film; Television News, Visual Components of). This relatively new form, sometimes called *new media storytelling*, is characteristic of visual news dissemination on Internet sites, particularly as → newspapers commit resources to online versions (→ Internet News).

Increasingly, the twenty-first-century visual journalist must be skilled not only in making excellent digital photographs but also in combining both still and moving images with text and sound for electronic dissemination via media ranging from home computers to personal display devices. Print publications of visual reportage come and go, while → Internet sites such as digitaljournalist.com demonstrate the ease and cost-effectiveness of publishing full-color picture packages for worldwide distribution.

In some ways, this is a return to the “generalist” journalist of the mid-twentieth century, when word journalists were often expected to carry cameras to collect images for their stories (→ Journalism, History of). Although specialization prevails, those who can write, shoot, edit, and design have an advantage, especially during times of shifting economies, technologies, and audiences.

### KEY ISSUES

Despite, or perhaps because of, the ubiquity of images in mass media, photojournalists still find themselves asserting the reportorial power of authentic photographs over the misperception that pictures are best used to illustrate text and enhance layout. Contemporary analysis of the appropriate role of photography in news reporting founders on issues of truth and privacy under the general term *photojournalism ethics* (→ Image Ethics). On one end of the ideological continuum are those who argue that all photographs misrepresent reality because they are necessarily “mind driven,” human-motivated, minute slices of time, place, and action. Exacerbating those arguments are abuses of digital manipulation techniques. On the other end are those who argue, as did Andre Bazin (1961), that, because a photograph records the energy of light rays reflected from real-world subjects, photographs hold a referential trace (→ Realism in Film and Photography). Film scholar Laura Marks (1999) argues that “electronic images, like all of us, owe their material being to electrons and their associated waveforms,” continuing an interconnectedness with the physically real into virtual space. A related argument is that photographs – whether “straight” (not overtly manipulated) or purposefully altered – provide evidence of something: point of view, editorial judgments, or even the imagination of the image-maker or subject. Defenders of photographic truth also point to the ease with which ideas can be manipulated with words as a general argument for the need for journalism ethics.

Researchers approach the complexity of *visual truth* by examining both methodological and epistemological characteristics of a particular image or set of images. *Methodological* refers to technological and behavioral means of image production. Technologies include tools (cameras, lenses, means of recording light, and means of production and dissemination). Behaviors include not only events that garner visual attention (ranging from the subtlety of gesture through the complexity of war) but also the effects of individual differences on interaction between photographers and those observed, and on subsequent preparation of images for publication. *Epistemological* refers to content issues: what we say an image means. Image content is created, altered, and disseminated (behavior) with technology (→ Ethics in Journalism). Yet the meaning of that content is ultimately created, perceived, altered, disseminated, and forgotten or remembered by viewer minds influenced by the full range of contexts and human differences (→ Ethics of Media Content).

Of particular significance is the issue of the public's → right to know versus the right to → privacy. Here again, method and epistemology are interconnected. One methodological shift, for example, is toward professional use of images taken by nonprofessionals (the photos of prisoner abuse taken in Abu Ghraib, for example), whose images and videos are either picked up after major events and distributed via international agencies, or are posted on the Internet (→ Amateur Photography and Movies). A related shift is toward the use of images of lower technical quality – in part because of the ease of producing digital images with low-tech cameras and in part because lower-quality images may be perceived by an increasingly skeptical public as more authentic than images produced through technical expertise.

Another important shift is the effect of digital imaging on visual archives; film made archiving a matter of storing negatives and prints for later retrieval by fact checkers and historians. Digital images involve decisions to erase files and on how best to protect authenticity. Increased digital storage capacity and pixel-examination software are improving archival practices and image authentication routines. The growing use of → stock photography, fueled by digitization and online accessibility of image collections, such as the US Library of Congress and the British Museum, are systematizing image use.

Legal trends throughout the world vary. US courts, for example, increasingly demand that photojournalists turn over their recorded visual evidence, while courts in Japan increasingly honor journalists' rights to protect their sources. Organizational codes of ethics governing truth and privacy issues continue to be strengthened.

What has not shifted, however, is the commitment of the serious photojournalist to recording history in as authentic a manner as humanly possible. One need only recall the Holocaust to understand the consequences of not having reliable visual evidence readily at hand. Attempts to deny the occurrence and/or extent of the Holocaust eerily echo Orwellian prophesies of vested interests altering truth by erasing and rewriting – or repicturing – history (Brennen & Hardt 1999).

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Aesthetics ► Amateur Photography and Movies ► Art as Communication ► Book ► Broadcast Journalism ► Collective Memory and the Media ► Desensitization ► Digital Imagery ► Documentary Film ► Ethics in Journalism ► Ethics of Media Content ► Field Research ► Framing of the News ► Illustrated Newspapers ► Image Ethics ► Internet ► Internet News ► Journalism ► Journalism, History of ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► Media and Perceptions of Reality ► News Agencies ► News Magazine, History of ► Newspaper ► Newspaper, Visual Design of ► Photography ► Picture Magazines ► Printing, History of ► Privacy ► Propaganda, Visual Communication of ► Realism ► Realism in Film and Photography ► Reality and Media Reality ► Right to Know ► Scopic Regime ► Stock Photography ► Television News, Visual Components of ► Visual Communication ► Visual Representation ► Voyeurism

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## Physical Effects of Media Content

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The physical effects of media content are understood as the direct influence of the media on the organism. This includes mainly processes of physiological arousal as well as emotional effects evoking joy or fear, a pleasant mood or stress.

Early one-dimensional arousal theories (Lindsley 1951; Duffy 1962) stated that physiological arousal comprises unspecific activation on which degrees of alertness of the organism are dependent. Schachter used this assumption for a *two-factor model of emotion* according to which → emotion results from the combination of arousal and → cognition (Schachter 1964). For Schachter, positive and negative emotion are identical on a physiological level and can be differentiated only by cognitive evaluation and causal attributions (→ Excitation and Arousal).

This concept left its mark on communication research and inspired a great deal of research on media reception (→ Exposure to Communication Content). Sturm et al. (1982) used a combination of physiological and cognitive measuring to explore the emotional involvement of children while watching TV. They found that the breathing amplitude while watching a filmic story varies systematically with the dramatic course the story takes and its evaluation as “pleasant” or “unpleasant.” This parallelism of physiological indicator (Physiological Measurement) and cognitive evaluation can be seen as a solid arousal–appraisal conjunction according to Schachter (→ Physiological Measurement; Appraisal Theory). The authors also found inconsistent results: the skin conductance level (SCL) rose continually without a clear connection to cognitive evaluation.

Zillmann used the Schachter concept as a basis for his excitation transfer model which plays an important part in media violence research (Zillmann 1971). The model states that residual arousal caused by an earlier filmic event leads to cognitive re-evaluation in a new situation and thereby to reinforcement of existing behavior (→ Emotional Arousal

Theory; Excitation Transfer Theory). For instance, hostile attitudes can be reinforced by highly arousing erotic content if the surrounding conditions (e.g., frustrating or annoying factors) stimulate aggressive behavior. On the other hand, it is possible to enhance helpfulness by showing frightening filmic material if the situation inspires pro-social behavior.

One problem of Schachter's theory and its practical applications in communication studies is that the variability of cognitive interpretation of arousal tends to be overestimated and there is often not enough distinction between different arousal indicators. Film reception experiments by Lazarus and his colleagues (1962) show that the skin conductance level indicates stressful film events. Heart rate and blood pressure, however, indicate motor activation or pleasant arousal. According to the two-arousal hypothesis by Routtenberg (1968) and further developments by Gray (1982). Gray argues for at least two different arousal systems that can, depending on the surrounding conditions for the individual, either enhance or obstruct each other. The *behavioral activation system* (BAS) prepares the organism for motor activities, e.g., in the context of fight or flight, and easily reacts to rewarding cues. The *behavioral inhibition system* (BIS) is stimulated by fear, and usually interrupts motor action and promotes cognitive activities (Fowles 1980). Both types of arousal can be influenced by cognition, but cannot be modified at will in any way.

With this concept in mind, the dissociation between the SCL (indicator for BIS) and heart rate (indicator for BAS) during the course of a dramatic filmic chase can be explained. In a viewer experiment (Grimm 1999), both arousal indicators ran parallel as long as a woman on the run (and with her the viewers) saw a chance of escaping several aggressive men (→ Experimental Design). When a few scenes later the men finally caught up with the woman and she realized the situation was hopeless, the viewers', and also presumably the victim's, BAS activities suddenly dropped while BIS arousal continued to rise. BIS thereby developed an obstructing function for BAS in order to protect the organism from useless and potentially damaging arousal and to make further cognitive operations possible (→ Emotions, Media Effects on).

Today, empirical research has shown that cognition does not only function as a subsequent attribute of arousal states, but also actively creates them. Zillmann (1988) proved that intentional exposure to media content can interrupt adverse moods and aggressive feelings. In dealing with frightening media content, the viewers use techniques of self-appeasement such as the affirmation "It's only a movie." In this way, unpleasantly high arousal levels can be regulated cognitively. On the other hand, people strive for arousal-inducing experiences to a certain extent in order to reach the arousal level that is suitable for them (Zuckerman 1979). "High sensation seekers" therefore prefer horror movies and pornography whereas "low sensation seekers" avoid intensively arousing movies (Zuckerman & Litle 1986). Buchsbaum & Silverman (1968) showed that a high level of arousal (BIS and BAS) is accompanied by higher cortical activity. According to this, "high sensation seekers" increase their cognitive arousal regulation together with the desired arousal intensity (→ Sensation Seeking). This leads to the assumption that the gratification of arousal-inducing media use is not only generated by the BIS–BAS activation itself, but also by the regulation of arousal. This view is consistent with the *emotion management concept* (Vitouch 1993; Grimm 2006) according to which frightening media stimuli are sought out to enhance fear control. This usually implies a strengthening of BIS in relation to BAS.

As a BIS-dominated activity, *television use* can have damaging effects on a long-term basis. Hill et al. (2003) showed in a longitudinal study that the intensive use of television correlates with lack of exercise (weak BAS) and obesity. The so-called “couch potato” effect can be seen as unwanted long-term effect of an otherwise efficient activity of excitement monitoring from a physiological point of view (→ Media Effects Duration).

Another rather underrated effect is the impact of heavy media use on the ability to concentrate. There is evidence that the continuous reception of fast shots and jump cuts in a movie may contribute to a state of enjoyable distraction, but will interfere with the ability to concentrate on something for a longer period of time (Christakis et al. 2004). Others, however, argue that television increases the speed of perception and thereby cognitive abilities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Cognition ▶ Desensitization ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Sensation Seeking

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# Physiological Measurement

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Psychophysiology is concerned with the physiological bases of psychological processes. For example, where psychologists are interested in why we like a certain TV program, physiologists are interested in the input–output of the cardiovascular system. A psychophysiologicalist attempts to link the two approaches. The study of the interface of mind and body is what makes psychophysiology most distinct.

Physiological processes here designate physical and/or chemical reactions or accompanying symptoms of human behavior, such as (changes in) cardiovascular activity (e.g., heart rate, blood pressure, peripheral blood volume), electrodermal activity (EDA, like skin conductance), neuroelectric activity (electroencephalography [EEG], such as alpha waves), muscle activity (electromyography [EMG]), body temperature, breathing, eye movements (electrooculography [EOG]), pupillary reflexes, reflexes (such as the blink of an eye), and many more similar processes.

Psychological reactions designate aspects of human behavior that can be expressed in the language of psychology. Here, the focus is primarily on the description, explanation, and prognosis of → information processing (cognitive aspect), experience (affective aspect), and behavior dispositions (conative aspect) of individuals (→ Cognition; Emotion; Affects and Media Exposure). The physiological reactions indicating reaching or leaving a psychological state are therefore described as psychophysiological indicators. Psychophysiological research identifies or manipulates behavioral, cognitive, or emotional states of subjects as the independent variable (for example, through instructions, picture or movie presentations, sensory irritations, etc.) and observes events on the physiological level as the dependent variable. Psychophysiological measurements must therefore be added to the method of → observation in most cases.

## THE NATURE OF PSYCHOPHYSIOLOGICAL MEASUREMENT

In contrast to data collection techniques such as → interviews, → surveys, or observation, psychophysiological data collection is considered more direct, immediate, and objective.

While other measuring procedures that accompany the reception – such as real-time response measurement (→ Real-Time Ratings [RTR]) – can influence the reception experience and information processing itself, psychophysiological processes are considered to be less reactive; they do not require the memory and/or the verbal abilities of the subjects. Hence, they do not interfere with message processing. At the same time, the reactions are scarcely controllable by the observed person. Psychophysiological measurement should therefore enable researchers to gain empirical access to the processing, experiencing, and responding of people that they cannot or will not voice or that is not accessible by other methods.

Emotional experience, for example, is for many people not easy to describe, and is frequently something we are not even conscious of. In addition, emotions are very volatile reactions, that later (for example, in a post hoc interview) are no longer remembered or cannot be described, or are remembered or described incorrectly or altered. Furthermore, the expression of attitudes toward people, advertising, topics, or other matters of opinion are frequently subject to the problem of social desirability or the distorting effects of impression management. Psychophysiological measurement helps to address these problems. These kind of measuring processes finally produce very scattered time-series data that allow the reproduction of the *process* of media reception and not only its consolidated result. In addition, they provide an excellent database for powerful time-series analysis.

### QUESTIONS OF VALIDITY

The main problem of psychophysiology, however, is how far physiological reactions can serve as valid indicators for the psychological concepts in question. Emotions should serve as a good example here because they represent an integrative concept of cognitive, affective, and motivational perspective on human behavior. For example, strong emotional reactions, such as anger or enthusiasm, routinely correspond with increased physiological arousal, which can be measured by changes of electrodermal activity. The valence of the reaction, however, cannot be read from the intensity of the activation, that is whether it designates a positive (happiness) or a negative (anger) emotion. Both emotions are connected with high activation.

Whether a stimulus is evaluated as pleasant or unpleasant depends on the cognitive evaluation or appraisal of that stimulus. Therefore one psychophysiological parameter alone is seldom a sufficient indicator for a complex psychological phenomenon. Newer findings of psychophysiology stipulate that emotion-specific reactions be indicated by the combined collection and evaluation of several physiological parameters. For example, against the background of circumplex models of emotions, the simultaneous recording of arousal *and* valence can serve as a clue for experienced emotions. While arousal is measured by means of electrodermal activity, valence can be collected via real-time response (RTR) systems, electromyography, or facial expressions.

The insufficient external → validity of psychophysiological examination is often considered a problem. Since the test subjects are closely monitored using numerous sensors and cables, the context is a highly artificial one and not comparable to normal media environments. In the mean time it has been shown that people adapt quickly to the



artificial situation and to most sensors in laboratory surroundings. The use of → television and the → Internet, especially, can be simulated comparably realistically in modern laboratories. Technical development has also contributed to the measuring instruments becoming smaller, more precise, more portable, and more robust. The measurement process therefore has become less intrusive, distracting, and irritating for test subjects.

## APPLICATIONS

In psychophysiology physiological phenomena are arranged, summarized, and interpreted in the context of psychological questions, and the complex empirical results integrated with our understanding of anatomy and physiology using a series of concepts. Activation concepts, → habituation models, stress reactions, and emotion theories are of especial significance in communication research. In communication studies psychophysiological concepts can be applied to attention and information processing, learning, emotional experience, (sexual) excitement, attitude (change) and persuasion, adaptation research, social cognition, and sleep research.

For example, within the scope of the *limited capacity paradigm* it can be shown that an average activation level supports information processing optimally and therefore results in the best learning performances (→ Limited Capacity Model). Activation concepts in communication are referred to in → *mood management theory* and → *excitation transfer theory*. Psychophysiological indicators such as excitement here serve as indicators or causes of media selection and effects of media reception. People therefore generally appear to strive for an average excitation level (→ Excitation and Arousal). In these contexts electrodermal activity is a very reliable measure of activation or arousal. It is widely used as an indicator for psychological concepts like attention, task significance, or affective intensity of stimuli experienced by the subjects. Studies have shown that EDA is also highly correlated with self-reported emotional arousal.

Beyond activation, there are several more physiological indicators for different kinds of psychological processes. Orientation reactions are reactions that prepare an organism for reaction to a new stimulus. These *orienting responses* correspond with a reduction of heart rate, an increase in skin conductance, an increase in muscle tension, pupil dilation, constriction of peripheral blood vessels, expansion of the blood vessels in the brain, as well as alpha blockage (short blockage of the alpha brain waves). However, when a stimulus becomes too intensive, a *defense response* is triggered, which represents a complementary reaction to the orienting response and is supposed to protect the organism from excessive stimulation.

The pattern of psychophysiological reaction also complements the orienting reaction. It is linked to cognitive avoidance reactions. The so-called *fear response* appears at sudden appearances of stimuli and is displayed physiologically by an increased blinking reflex, an increase in the heart rate, an expansion of the brain blood cells, and an increase in skin conductance. A similar theoretical systematization differentiates between physiological systems of response activation (behavioral activation system), behavioral inhibition (behavioral inhibition system), and emergency reaction (fight/flight system). Behavioural activation is caused by fulfilled expectations and positive feelings; behavioral inhibitions are caused and accompanied by dissonance experiences, which also evoke information

collecting processes (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory). Selective attention or the blocking of nonrelevant stimuli is accompanied by an increase in heartbeat frequency and higher heartbeat variation. Active stimuli absorption, however, can be accompanied by a decrease in heartbeat frequency. Coordination performances involve frequent changes between heartbeat acceleration and delay. These concepts and measuring processes are applied primarily in media information processing in reception research (selection, exposure, retention), and adaptation research in media use and media education (→ Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Exposure to Communication Content).

Within the scope of the *research on social cognition*, → attitudes, or → persuasion it can be shown that electrical activations of certain facial muscles (facial EMG, especially movements of the *corrugator supercilii* [brow] muscles and *zygomaticus major* [cheek] muscles) co-vary with evaluations of actors shown on television. These individual vegetative accompanying reactions are instinctively perceived as emotion of a certain color by observers and again form the foundation for the evaluation of the persons shown (compare facial feedback theory of emotions). Facial EMG can therefore identify subtle reactions to emotional media that are not perceptible using the facial expression coding methodology (e.g., the *facial action coding system* (FACS) developed by Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen (Ekman et al. 2001)).

Furthermore, the magnitude of the blinking reflex – which can also be measured via facial EMG – varies linearly with affective valence: blinking is more pronounced in response to unpleasant stimuli, compared to pleasant stimuli. In addition, the activity of the *oricularis oculi* muscle is elevated for arousing versus neutral sounds. It must be noted that facial EMG is not able to discriminate between very subtle differences in emotional valence that are often present in media messages. Compared to self-report, however, facial EMG measures discriminate more effectively between emotional responses, e.g., in television advertising. Furthermore, there are indicators within the context of the psychology of emotion that clear and distinct cardiovascular reactions can be shown for discrete emotions, such as anger, fear, and sadness (→ Facial Expressions; Nonverbal Signals, Effects of).

There are currently very promising developments in the field of *brain imaging techniques*, including positron emission tomography (PET) and functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). These (very expensive and complex) measures use the diversity of the signal intensity in brain tissue in psychophysiological communication research. Through fMRI, it is possible to make visible metabolic processes that accompany brain activities. Since the activity of certain brain regions corresponds with certain psychological correlatives (such as emotions), emotions experienced by a test subject when observing medial stimuli can be identified. There are pilot studies especially in the area of advertising, violence research, video game studies, etc.

In general, perhaps the most important aspect of the psychophysiological approach to psychological phenomena is the attempt to understand the physiological mechanisms that mediate between cognitive and emotional events. There are currently four main trends in psychophysiological communication research: (1) Measuring processes are becoming more precise and can increasingly be used in mobile settings. (2) Various psychophysiological parameters can be measured simultaneously and submitted to pattern recognition. In addition to the increased accuracy of measurements, advanced statistical analysis of recorded data is becoming more and more important. (3) The

significance of the analysis of media content processing allows for data to be collected over time which leads to more accurate study of time processes. (4) Continuing use of the three systems approach to brain behavioral relations, i.e., the integration of physiological data with verbal reports and overt behavior study.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Emotion ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Habituation ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Interview ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Mood Management ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Observation ▶ Persuasion ▶ Real-Time Ratings (RTR) ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Survey ▶ Television ▶ Time-Series Analysis ▶ Validity

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## **Picture Magazines**

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The development of picture magazines is a twentieth-century phenomenon, aided by print technologies that offered quality reproduction of photographs in large numbers and in a short time, like rotogravure, which had yielded high quality reproduction using a single plate for type and photo since 1910 (→ Magazine, History of). Earlier, photographs had been used for wood-engraved illustrations in many magazines, including the *Leipziger Illustrirte* (Germany, 1843), *L'Illustration* (France, 1843), *Illustrated London News* (UK, 1842), *L'Ilustracion* (Spain, 1849), the *Saturday Evening Post* (USA, 1821), *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (USA, 1855), *Harper's Weekly* (USA, 1857), and the *Weekly Illustrated of India* (India, 1880). The *Canadian Illustrated News* (1869) featured a half-tone on its first cover, only a few years after the *Illustrated London News* (1842) had been launched with 32 woodcuts on 16 pages.

Picture magazines constituted windows to the world for millions of readers in all parts of the world, who became eyewitnesses to human and natural tragedies, visitors to foreign places, and participants in the explorations of the universe. The heyday of modern picture magazines was the 1920s and 1930s, when they emerged – accompanied by the success of moving pictures – as important global manifestations of an expanding visual culture (→ Cinema). Picture magazines are the result of an enterprising worldwide use of photographs as a means of public communication (→ Photojournalism). Large circulation figures – from 300,000 copies a week for the *Illustrated London News* (UK) in 1863 to 6.2 million copies a week for the *Saturday Evening Post* (USA) in 1959 – document the rising popularity of the picture magazine over a 100-year period. Beginning in the late 1950s, advertising expenditures and reader attention shifted to television and brought about an identity crisis among picture magazines. Argentina, for instance, lost half of its magazine circulation between 1998 and 2004. The result was a new focus on specialized interests, like fashion or sports, e.g., *Sports Illustrated* (USA) was launched in 1954 and the *Sunday Times Magazine* (USA) has appeared since 1962.

When picture magazines emerged fully in the 1920s, they relied on the aesthetics of innovative photographic practices, which were the product of cultural and political processes in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, where photography had captured the imagination as a new language of public conversation (→ Photography).

## EUROPE AND THE US

In Europe, for instance, the art movements *Neue Sachlichkeit* and social realism, particularly, helped shape magazine photography as an expressive documentary tool, demonstrated in the Soviet Union and Germany by the rise of a radical aesthetic and by the recognition of the factual as a central professional interest. Thus, photographers associated with *Novyj Lef* (Left Front of the Arts) magazine and *USSR in Construction* (USSR, 1930) recognized that the new challenges of daily life required a new form of representation. Their work appeared in political magazines, like *Molodaia Gvardiia* (Young Guard) or *Vestnik Truda* (Herald of Labor) to cater to the working class, thus suggesting a merger of avant-garde photography into mass culture, resulting in a sophisticated, expressive visual coverage of events. In Germany, the connection between art and photography resulted sometimes in a complex, new way of looking at familiar objects, like in *Der Querschnitt* (Germany, 1921), where photographs with different meanings were reproduced for effect.

Innovative layouts contributed to the new look of picture magazines, not unlike in *La Vie au Grand Air* (France, 1898), a sports magazine, which was known for its unique layouts, photomontage, and inset images. *Vogue* (USA, 1892) published the first bleed edged photo in 1930, a style common in Japanese magazines, and featured the first full color photograph on its cover in 1932. While sizes have varied greatly among picture magazines over the years, an innovative, small (A5) format, known as the handbag or travel format, was introduced by *Glamour* (1939) in 2001, followed by *Cosmopolitan* (1885) and *Elle* (1985) in 2004. *Vu* (France, 1928) dedicated much of its content to photojournalism, made use of art photography, and used montage effectively, challenging the traditional *L'Illustration* (1843); the latter became *Paris-Match* after 1949 and is

known for its photographic scoops. In addition, single images were fashioned into longer narratives with the development of the picture story – a sequencing of images not unlike a film clip – claimed and popularized in the late 1930s as the photo essay by *LIFE* magazine (USA, 1936). However, German picture magazines, like the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* (1892), the *Münchener Illustrierte Presse* (1924), and the *Arbeiter-Illustrierten Zeitung* (1921), had developed this genre since the mid-1920s as a regular feature. Their visual narratives competed with the visual attraction of movie house offerings and replaced the use of photographs as mere illustrations of texts (→ Newsreel).

Picture magazines responded generously to public demands with a steady stream of pictures and texts, providing the modern context for societies driven by the desire to understand the world through the consumption of photographic images. Picture magazines produced national identities as they became a major source of visual evidence – next to film – until the advent of television. They depicted the familiar and the exotic, realizing the potential accessibility, diversity, and durability of their representations of reality. The impact of picture magazines, with their emphasis on photographic reportage, coincides with the crisis of the word in Europe. Considerations of language as signs of class, authority, or expert knowledge become suspect, until abandoned for the alternative of the image and its inherent claims of objectivity. Yet, the result was always an ideologically charged visual reproduction of the world, which fit the respective editorial visions of reality.

The emerging strategy among European and US publishers to reinforce the dependence on the picture as explanation included the use of a single image on the front page of the magazine, the inclusion of a serialized novel, and a low price (→ Magazine, Visual Design of). Also, the availability of photographs encouraged the production of glossy weekly newspaper supplements, which offered a visual interpretation of culture and politics in competition with picture magazines for advertising and readership. With the establishment of picture magazines and weekly supplements came the rise of professional staff photographers, who complemented or replaced the work of photo agencies (→ News Agencies). The latter, like Mauritius, Dephot, and Weltrundschau in Weimar Germany, or Black Star in the United States, initially had accounted for much of the magazine content, e.g., when *LIFE* magazine was launched in 1936, followed by *Look* a year later, Black Star was a major supplier of photographs. Earlier, the Associated Press (USA) had also become a distributor of photographic material – in Germany it had absorbed Pacific and Atlantic Photos in 1931. At the same time, picture magazines reached across cultural and political borders for photographic material – photographs have been sent by wire since 1923. *The Graphic* (UK, 1870), and later on the *Picture Post* (UK, 1938), used German photographers on a regular basis. Likewise, many contributors to Black Star were German émigré photographers, whose work would subsequently appear in *LIFE* magazine, demonstrating the cross-cultural appeal of topics or styles of photographic representation. In 1947, the picture agency Magnum (Paris) was founded, serving publications worldwide while protecting the rights of photographers to their work.

## LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America, where most readers buy their magazines at newsstands, picture magazines are popular sites of fotonovelas, fictional versions of the traditional photo

essay as storytelling, or a variation on movies, which appear serialized each week. In addition, celebrity magazines like *Caras* (Brazil, 1994) and the current affairs magazine *Veja* (Brazil, 1968) boasted large circulation figures. Photography had been well established early on in most Latin American societies and played a major role in the identification and definition of nation and peoples as documentary photography went beyond magazine coverage. *Revolución* (Cuba, 1959) became the picture magazine of the Cuban revolution; similarly, the picture coverage of *Drum* (South Africa, 1961) served black readers to help anticipate freedom from an apartheid system. In Mexico, the short-lived *Rotofoto* (1938), a provocative picture magazine, was highly popular with its coverage of politics; later on, *Hoy* (1937) and *Mañana* (1942), joined by *Siempre!* (1953), dictated the performance of the illustrated press until the advent of television in the 1950s, when newspapers began to replace picture magazines as print sources of visual information.

## ASIA

In Asia, the beginning of picture magazines coincides with the influence of European and American photographic practices. In Japan the publication of *The Far East* (1870) was followed by *Datsuei Yawa* (1874), later known as *Shashin Zasshi*, which featured hand-mounted photographic prints; the oldest illustrated women's magazine, *Fujin-Gaho* (1905), reproduced photographs, and *Asahi Graphic* (1921) was the first rotogravure-produced magazine. Korean photographers had published *Hankook-sajin-hoebo* in Seoul and Incheon since 1904; about 40 years later, the first picture magazine after the liberation from Japanese colonial rule was *Kookje-bodo*. In China, the first picture magazine, *Dianshi zhai Huabao*, appeared in 1884 in Shanghai, established by Ernest and Frederick Major, while in India, the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, a *Times of India* weekly edition, appeared in 1880. After the 1980s period of reforms in China, documentary photography has found a home in glossy, illustrated magazines, which have begun experimenting with the popularity of pictures and topics dealing with human conditions and the urban landscape. *People's Photography* (1983) became the first professional magazine addressing the potential of photography as a language of enlightenment in China.

Culturally distinct and ideologically varied in their approach, contemporary picture magazines continue to construct visions of reality, but unlike during the 1920s and 1930s, they rarely use the work of avant-garde photographers or feature experimental work to reflect on the world (with occasional exceptions in advertising.) Instead, form and style in photojournalism tend to create a universally shared view of people and events, reinforced by the use of international picture agencies or the widespread circulation of some western magazines (→ Stock Photography). Finally, with art books and museums recovering documentary and/or journalistic work, picture magazines have also become conduits of photojournalism as art (→ Art as Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Cinema ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Magazine, Visual Design of ▶ News Agencies ▶ Newsreel ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism  
▶ Stock Photography

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## **Piracy**

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The origin of the term “piracy” dates back to the thirteenth century when rogue seamen who intercepted merchant and military vessels to rob them of their cargo were known as “pirates.” In the early eighteenth century, the term took on a new meaning, referring to the unauthorized use of intellectual property. Images of the swashbuckling pirate are still reproduced in → popular culture today: in movies (→ Film as Popular Culture), → television programs, romance novels, and theme parks. By the late 1900s, the term had been loosened from its original meaning and become the primary descriptor of the unauthorized use of copyrighted works, patents, and trademarks (→ Trademarks in the Media; Copyright). By the early years of the twenty-first century, the most common usage of the term piracy had come to signify unauthorized uses of intellectual property via the → Internet and sale of CDs, DVDs, and computer software on the black market. While seafaring pirates pilfered material property to keep or resell, piracy of intellectual property involves the infringing appropriation of immaterial goods, including creative and intellectual works.

The distinction between piracy of material goods and that of intellectual property is essential to the understanding of the term “piracy” and its actual practice. The theft of material goods deprived the owner of cargo or land that could not be recovered without force. However, the distinctive feature of the theft of immaterial goods, such as intellectual and artistic creativity, is inherent in the nature of the product, which is easy and cheap to reproduce. Copyright law created a dichotomy between an “idea” and its “expression,” the former being unprotected by → intellectual property law and the latter protected by its

embodiment in tangible form. Thomas Jefferson wrote of ideas and informational goods as eminently sharable, comparable to lighting another person's candle from one's own, giving the other light but not leaving oneself in the dark. Jefferson was referring to what economists now call "public goods," which allow joint or nonrival consumption by all potential consumers. The costs of producing a → book, film, or recording are primarily incurred during the production of an original text. After that, the costs of reproducing copies drops significantly and the text becomes prone to piracy. This is why, under capitalism, state intervention to protect intellectual property became essential.

The *function of intellectual property law* therefore is to protect artistic and intellectual creativity from those who make unauthorized copies at the expense of both the actual creators and the owners of the means of communication and production. The latter ultimately decide what gets produced, and this involves the transfer of intellectual and artistic works to capitalists who control the systems of production and distribution. In Marxian terms, the labor of the artist, intellectual, or inventor is appropriated for the purpose of making a profit, and the actual creators end up being exploited by the appropriation of their work. Like factory workers, intellectual and artistic workers are not compensated for the value of their work; the factory worker puts in eight hours of labor but is paid for only six. The remainder is profit for the capitalist, meaning that piracy actually begins at the level of production and then moves to the level of unauthorized reproduction.

*Media piracy* began with the rise of the book publishing industry after the invention of movable type. European governments sought to control book piracy through the licensing of printers to help promote the development of an infant industry (→ Printer-Editors). In return, printers and publishers agreed not to publish seditious or heretical works. However, the monopoly prices and profits earned by licensed book publishers inspired literary piracy by unlicensed entrepreneurs seeking a share of the industry's fortunes. This began a trend rooted in the structure of capitalism involving conflicts between big and small capital over unauthorized use of intellectual property, battles waged primarily at the industrial level. In addition to books, small capital pirated vaudeville acts, motion pictures, and musical recordings on a regular basis. At the same time, the United States sought to protect copyrights and patents held by national industries while refusing to grant protection to foreign works and inventions until the late nineteenth century.

The infringement of intellectual property protected by copyrights and patents grew more intense as the means of communication evolved. Struggles over the control of copyrights and patents at the industrial level were waged between oligopolies and peripheral firms engaged in various forms of intellectual property. By the mid-twentieth century, *new communications technologies* opened the doors to unauthorized reproduction of copyrighted works in the home and the office (→ Technology and Communication). Starting with the introduction of reel-to-reel tape recording and photocopying, intellectual property owners began to lose control over the uses and users of their works. The trend accelerated with the development of music cassette tapes and then the introduction of the VCR in the mid-1970s. While new home and office technologies generated piracy on a mass scale, industrial piracy of music and movies became a problem for intellectual



property owners on a global scale. At the start of the twenty-first century, the unauthorized reproduction of copyrighted works – computer software, recorded music and movies – became rampant, especially in China and Russia. As the major exporter of intellectual property, the US turned to international forums such as the World Trade Organization to combat global piracy.

In the late 1990s intellectual property owners faced a new front in controlling their works – the *Internet*. The → music industry was the first to face infringing uses of its property. First, central servers such as Napster made the piracy of music cheap and easy. The music industry was successful in shutting down Napster, but by then Internet users had begun to use peer-to-peer systems to share music files to engage in copyright infringement. The copyright industries (software producers, music companies, and movie studios) fought piracy using litigation, legislation, digital rights management, and marketing to protect their intellectual property. Their efforts have begun to pay off with services such as iTunes and video on demand. The logic of capital and the logic of intellectual property go hand in hand, despite Jefferson's reminder that the sharing of information and culture could spread light (→ P2P Networking; Communication Law and Policy: North America).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Book ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Copyright ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Hollywood ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Music Industry ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Trademarks in the Media

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## **Planned Behavior, Theory of**

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The theory of planned behavior (TPB) is one of a class of related theories of behavior change. The theory was developed by Icek Ajzen (1985, 1991) as an extension of the theory of reasoned action (TRA; Fishbein & Ajzen 1975; → Reasoned Action, Theory of), itself a model of behavior change. The TRA originated as a solution to the problem of attitude–behavior correspondence (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency). In brief, the problem is the commonly observed fact that people can have attitudes toward a behavior that are favorable or unfavorable but not act on those attitudes in a consistent way.

## **FORERUNNER: THE THEORY OF REASONED ACTION**

To understand the importance of the TPB requires understanding of how the TRA solves the problem of attitude–behavior correspondence. As part of the solution, Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen introduced the concept of intention as a mediator of attitudes and behavior. When a behavior is under volitional control – that is, when a person can readily enact a behavior or not – then the intention to carry out such a (volitional) action will lead to that behavior under certain circumstances. The TRA initially is restricted to volitional behaviors with behavioral intentions mediating attitudes and behavioral response.

To insure correspondence among attitudes, behavioral intention, and behavior requires behaviors that are carefully defined and that there is correspondence across the three. The behavior must first be well defined. For example, losing weight is not a behavior – it is, instead, a goal. The goal of losing weight might be achieved in many different ways, such as “my exercising vigorously at the gym for 30 minutes three times per week starting this week.” Definitional correspondence requires matching in time, action, context, and target. The action is exercising vigorously for 30 minutes three times per week; the time is this week; the context is “at the gym”; the target is my behavior, not the value of people exercising more generally. By defining behaviors precisely and not confusing behavior with general goals, intentions can be defined precisely. When matched in this level of specificity, behavior and intention will tend to correlate strongly.

This fundamental development in the conceptualization and measurement of behavior along with the introduction of a corresponding conceptualization of behavioral intention sets the stage for the solution of the problem of attitude–behavior correspondence by inserting behavioral intention between attitude and behavior. The TRA then turns its attention to accounting for behavior by accounting for behavioral intention.

In the TRA, behavioral intention is determined by two broad factors – cognitive and social. Cognitive factors are → attitudes toward the behavior, again carefully matched in level of specificity to maximize the association with intentions to carry out the behavior (→ Cognition; Cognitive Science). Social normative factors are the perceived pressures that a person feels from significant others to engage in the behavior. These two classes of predictors are the attitudinal and social normative routes to the formation of intention.

The chief conclusion from the TRA, the core for the more general TPB, is that attitudes toward the behavior and social normative pressure will predict behavioral intention and ultimately behavior when the behavior is well defined and when the theory’s concepts are matched in level of specificity. Cumulative studies of the associations between attitudes and behavioral intention and between behavioral intention and behavior show considerable consistency when there is a match in level across concepts (Kim & Hunter 1992).

The attitudinal and social normative routes to intention in turn employ subjective expected utility functions from economics and the psychology of decision-making (Arrow 1951) to account for attitude toward the behavior and for social normative pressure. Specifically, attitudes, and perceived → social norms are, themselves, functions of underlying beliefs – about the outcomes of performing the behavior in question, and about the normative expectations of specific referent groups. Thus, for example, the more one believes that performing the behavior in question will lead to “good” outcomes and prevent “bad” outcomes, the more favorable is one’s attitude toward performing the behavior.

Similarly, the more one believes that specific others think one should (or should not) perform the behavior in question, and the more one is motivated to comply with those specific others, the more social pressure one will feel (or the stronger the subjective norm) with respect to performing (or not performing) the behavior.

## **DEVELOPING INTO THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR**

### **The New Element**

The core of the TPB is the TRA. The TRA assumes that behavior is the result of the information people have – correct or incorrect – about good and bad consequences of the behavior for themselves and what others think they should do.

As a theory of volitional behavior, the TRA focuses on behaviors that are under the control of actors through their own agency. For example, exercising at the gym tonight is generally under a person's control and so is volitional. However, if the person requires transportation to the gym and their car is in the mechanic's shop, then the intention to go to the gym depends on factors outside of the person's immediate control. Although walking and mass transit are possibilities, they erect barriers to the realization of intention. The behavior is no longer completely under volitional control but depends in part on the perception of how controllable the behavior is.

The TPB holds to the core of the TRA but extends it to include *perceived behavioral control* as a predictor of behavioral intention parallel to the attitudinal and social normative routes. Perceived behavioral control is how easy or difficult the performance of the behavior is perceived to be. Perceived behavioral control is related to the concept of self-efficacy introduced by → Bandura (1977) and is also a measure of the available resources, opportunities, and skills necessary to undertake a behavior. Perceived behavioral control functions as a predictor of both intention and behavior within the TPB and, like attitudes and subjective norms in the TRA, is itself a function of control beliefs and the perceived power of those beliefs to affect the outcome. So, even if I believe that going to the gym regularly and exercising will improve my physical appearance and believe that my significant others want me to go to the gym regularly, perceived difficulties with mass transit may lead me to avoid the gym, marking this behavior as less under volitional control. Research summaries in various contexts have shown that perceived behavioral control adds substantial explanatory power to the prediction of behavioral intention (Ajzen & Albarracín 2007).

### **Empirical Value**

Two characteristics of a consequential theory are its ability to predict and its generative capacity. The TPB and its variants – including the TRA and the integrated model of behavior change (Fishbein 2000) – have generated thousands of published studies in their 35-year history. These studies have focused on topics as diverse as politics, consumer behavior, exercise, safe sex practices, smoking, → video games, and shoplifting, among many others (Eagley & Chaiken 1993; Ajzen & Fishbein 2005). The TPB has been a rich theory for researchers, having wide applicability in diverse contexts.

The theory has also been powerful in its ability to predict behavior. As Ajzen noted in a reflection on the theory's origins (Ajzen & Albarracin 2007), it was designed in part to move beyond the weak predictive capacity of dispositional theories in psychology. When the theory is implemented appropriately, substantial variation in intention is explained by the three routes to behavioral intention even in special populations (e.g., adolescents) and with socially undesirable behaviors (e.g., drug use intention).

### **Applicability in Communication**

The TPB and its variants are theories of behavior change but have considerable influence in research problems in communication and persuasion. They help campaign designers answer the question: "What approaches, topics, and beliefs should my campaign messages target?" (→ Development Communication Campaigns; Election Campaign Communication; Health Campaigns, Communication in; Population Campaigns). The three routes to behavioral intention identify three different ways that → persuasion can occur – by manipulating attitudes, social norms, or perceived behavioral control. In turn, these components are based on underlying behavioral beliefs, normative beliefs, and control beliefs that can be targeted in the design of persuasive messages. Which route to choose in a particular case and which beliefs to target depend on conducting formative research with the behavior and with the target population.

In addition to locating the possible routes to persuasion for the given behavior and target population, the TPB also suggests that specific beliefs or particular routes to persuasion can be made more salient by communication campaigns that target those beliefs (Cappella et al. 2003; Fishbein & Yzer 2003). The TPB does not assume that the three routes to persuasion are equally strong. Communication campaigns can emphasize one route to intention rather than another or one behavioral belief rather than another in order to make it more salient. If a campaign primes a route or belief, then that component could play a stronger role in subsequent behavioral intention by having a greater weight during decision-making (Fishbein & Yzer 2003). Thus, the TPB guides communication campaigns and persuasion in two important but complementary ways – persuasion that changes a belief and priming, which makes a belief more cognitively salient (→ Priming Theory).

The TPB and its variants guide researchers to routes to persuasion and to beliefs to target in persuasive efforts but they do not tell us how to design messages or other interventions to achieve these changes. Other theories complementary to the TPB need to be consulted in the message design phase (Cappella 2006). In this sense, the TPB does not compete with theories of attitude change (e.g., the → elaboration likelihood model) or with → information processing theories but answers questions about behavior change that these theories are not able to ask.

### **Criticism**

A theory as productive and time-tested as the TPB is not without its criticisms. These have included the role of affect, causality, sufficiency, habit and past behavior, the nature of the routes to intention, and rationality. These issues are summarized in Eagley and

Chaiken (1993) and considered in several other places (Ajzen & Fishbein 2005; Fishbein 2007). Even if one acknowledges some theoretical challenges, the TPB and its cousins have had profound effects on the study of human behavior and on the design of communication campaigns and interventions. Few theories have had the staying power, influence, and predictive success of the TPB.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude Accessibility ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitude Functions ▶ Attitudes ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Information Processing ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Persuasion ▶ Population Campaigns ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Social Norms ▶ Video Games

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# Planned Social Change through Communication

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Planned social change is the result of an intervention by a change agent (an individual or organization that seeks to induce change) in order to transform the nature of human communities, most often as a response to some perceived problem such as health risks, environmental crises, political instability, economic hardships, underdeveloped infrastructures, and recovery from natural disasters. Thus, there are a variety of contexts in which planned social change is practiced including → health communication, political transformation, crisis management (→ Crisis Communication), technological innovation, and → modernization. Across each of these areas, the predominant goal is to improve the quality of life and the standard of living within a given social system. Ostensibly, the goal of planned social change is the betterment of society, though there may be no consensus on which goals of the campaign are most important and indeed whether they are socially desirable at all.

Most planned social change campaigns can be divided into *three basic phases*. First, there is a planning stage in which all relevant situational information is assessed and strategies are formulated. Second, there is an implementation phase in which campaign strategies are put into action. Finally, there is an evaluation phase in which the performance of the campaign is assessed so that future campaigns can benefit from lessons learned. Successful campaigns rely on extensive research during each of these stages.

The mass media are often a crucial tool in the hands of change agents by transmitting information, setting the public agenda, and mobilizing the public (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Agenda Building; Social Mobilization). A major issue in the research literature on social change campaigns is how to maximize the effectiveness of mass media in the change process. Among the keys to the successful use of mass media are creating messages that resonate with the intended → audience, and placing messages efficiently by targeting the most likely prospects for inducing change, and avoiding the already converted and change-resistant members of the audience.

Evaluations of past social change campaigns indicate that significant long-term, desired change is extremely difficult to achieve. Moreover, variance in effectiveness across different campaigns suggests that the complex situational constraints that regulate success make each case unique. The effectiveness of planned social change campaigns depends on a variety of factors including the cultural compatibility of the goals, strategies, and tactics of the campaign, the quality of research and planning, the availability of necessary resources, the salience and efficacy of campaign messages in the media environment, and the lack of resistance from community institutions, opinion leaders and the public at large (→ Population Campaigns; Health Campaigns, Communication in; Development Communication Campaigns).

## **INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT OF PLANNED SOCIAL CHANGE**

Perhaps more so than any other area of communication research, planned social change research represents a dramatic mix of basic and applied research (→ Applied Communication

Research). It also brings together researchers interested in the psychological processes involved in regulating social change in individuals and those interested in more macro-sociological processes related to improving society such as patterns in the distribution of information, knowledge, resources, and power.

At the heart of the planned social change process are such basic theoretical concerns as education, motivation, and → persuasion. Each of these processes has been used by planned social change campaigns as both antecedents and consequences. For example, campaigns may target learning, motivation, and attitude/behavior change outcomes. Alternatively, learning and motivation may be key antecedents (mediators) to producing changes in attitudes and behaviors. In turn, changes in individual attitudes and behaviors may be key milestones on the path to the betterment of communities. Driven by the desire to maximize the power and positive outcomes of social change programs, practitioners have traditionally been very concerned with developing and testing underlying theories. By the same token, social change campaigns are concerned with applied outcomes, testing actual effects in real-world settings. In other words, planned social change projects tend to be *theory-driven and research-evaluated*.

Another characteristic of planned social change is an *implicit assumption about the pro-social benefits* of potential campaign effects. That is, in most cases, those involved in planned social change campaigns often assume that if the campaign is successful, society and the individuals that comprise it will be better off. There are value-laden decisions involved in the design and implementation of planned social change. The degree to which the larger community is in consensus regarding the social desirability of the goals and decisions of the campaign is likely to vary widely.

Research on planned social change is by nature an *interdisciplinary endeavor*, both historically and contemporaneously. First, historical contributions to knowledge in planned social change have come in virtually all social science disciplines (as discussed below). Second, contemporary research evaluating the effects of large-scale, planned social change campaigns often involves researchers from multiple disciplines, for example, the Minnesota Heart Health Project (MHHP), which was a community-based campaign designed to promote heart-healthy behaviors among citizens in three experimental Minnesota communities. The project, which ran from 1980 to 1993, brought together researchers from communication, psychology, sociology, social work, marketing, biostatistics, epidemiology, and medicine.

Strategic campaigns for social change are likely to be extremely *resource-intensive* in terms of the staffing, research, and media costs of developing, implementing, and evaluating the campaign. As such, most large-scale campaigns are dependent on government and private foundation funding. This means that such campaigns are more likely to be top-down and to reflect interests consistent with these institutions. Though such campaigns are likely to espouse elite values, many of the problems they address have the most adverse effects on the poor who may often be the beneficiaries of social change. Moreover, not all campaigns are conducted by organizations with access to copious resources. Grassroots organizations can be successful in engaging in planned social change; however, it is likely that the scope, objectives, and tactics will have to be more modest in order to reflect their relatively limited resources.

In response to these concerns, more recently, some have argued for a different approach, community-based participatory research (CBPR) where, ideally, the community is an equal

partner with the researchers from the defining the problem to the execution of the study, interpretation of the data and dissemination of the research. Whether CPBR, in practice, produces more sustainable outcomes requires more empirical work (→ Participatory Action Research).

## MAJOR DIMENSIONS

The important dimensions of planned social change can be organized according to Lasswell's (1948) model of the communication process: "Who says what to whom through what channel with what effect" (→ Models of Communication; Lasswell, Harold D.)

### Who? The Change Agents

Those who initiate planned social change campaigns are known as change agents, which most frequently consist of government agencies, political parties, businesses, academic researchers, health communication professionals, interest groups, nonprofit organizations, and social movements.

When change agents and the communication messages that they produce come in contact with the target audience, campaign effectiveness may be reduced if the audience perceives them to be external to the culture they are trying to change. As such, most campaigns engage local change agents for points of contact with the target audience.

### What? The Content

This dimension focuses on the messages of the campaign. Understanding the important components of successful messages involves invoking bodies of knowledge drawn from applied academic research and professional experiences from the fields of advertising and public relations. For instance, campaign messages must be both attention-grabbing and memorable to cut through the clutter of the thousands of persuasive messages to which targeted individuals are exposed on a daily basis (→ Attention; Selective Attention). There are other content choices as well that must be made on the basis of a thorough situation analysis. Should the campaign use rational, information-based appeals or more evocative emotional appeals? In part this depends on such factors as the amount of information that the audience needs in order to make decisions, the difficulty of gaining the attention of the audience, and the degree to which targeted audience members are motivated to process information.

Advertising also contributes different templates for the types of messages that might be successful in different situations such as humor, guilt, fear appeals, narratives, exemplars, and frames among others (→ Advertising; Advertisement Campaign Management). Fear appeals are likely to be particularly useful in social change campaigns, as they often communicate negative sanctions for not complying with the recommended attitude and/or behavior change. A variety of models have been proposed to account for the *effectiveness of fear appeals* (e.g., the fear drive paradigm, the protection motivation model, the threat control model). Among the factors that these models contribute are the believability of



the fear appeal, the perceived likelihood that failure to follow the recommended behavior will lead to negative consequences, the perceived likelihood that the recommended behavior will prevent negative outcomes, and the perceived personal efficacy of following the recommended course of action. There is also a general consensus regarding the appropriate level of fear used in messages – it should not be so weak that it has no effect, but not so strong that it overwhelms the target audience or motivates counterarguing and other discounting strategies.

The practice of → *public relations* has contributed knowledge on how to extend campaign resources by using strategies to engage the news media to cover stories that will advance campaign goals. Not only does good news coverage contribute free publicity, but it may also add credibility to the message. For example, campaigns to ban smoking in public places may benefit from news stories about the potential harms of second-hand smoke. To get news media attention, events and messages must be constructed to conform to the demands of → news values and practices (→ News Routines; News). For instance, they must fit media definitions of what constitutes a good story and must be packaged to fit media conventions in terms of content and timing.

Not only can news content be used to reinforce a campaign, but *entertainment programming* may be engaged as well. An “entertainment-education strategy” may be used to embed messages in entertainment programs for transmitting information to stimulate change through storytelling (→ Entertainment Education). For example, Mexican → soap operas have been used to transmit messages about the importance of family planning, responsible parenting, and literacy. Entertainment programming has many advantages over traditional media for inducing change. Entertainment media are ubiquitous and emotionally evocative; they are valued, if not revered, by their audience. They are vivid and demonstrative. Finally, their intentions are less likely to be recognized and discounted by the audience (Brown & Singhal 1999). Unfortunately, we know little about the effectiveness of using entertainment media as part of social change campaigns. Clearly more research is needed to guide the application of nontraditional campaign media, as well as to evaluate their effectiveness.

### **To Whom? The Target Group**

Most planned social change campaigns target individuals with messages tailored to change individual attitudes and behaviors. Successful campaigns know that it is important to target some individuals more than others, specifically, individuals who are most likely to respond to the messages, which may include those who are likely to be motivated to receive, process, and yield to campaign messages, as well as those who are likely to influence the opinions and behaviors of others. Exploratory research may be used to identify the characteristics of individuals who are likely to be persuaded and those who are likely to persuade others. Such research may also be useful in making decisions about what types of messages to create for them as well as where to place those messages as part of a cost-efficient media plan.

Researchers may not only be concerned with the characteristics of the potential target audience, but also with differences in the way that different types of individuals process these messages. For example, dual-process models (i.e., the → elaboration likelihood model

and the heuristic systematic model) emphasize the message receiver's level of *involvement as a moderator of message effects*. High-involvement individuals tend to have greater motivation and ability to thoroughly process the crucial information in the message. On other hand, low-involvement individuals tend to look for heuristic shortcuts to message processing by focusing on peripheral information such as communicator attractiveness or the number of arguments presented (→ Involvement with Media Content). Insights from these models have a number of implications for planned social change campaigns including the production of different messages targeting high- and low-involvement audiences.

Researchers have known for many years that certain individuals (i.e., opinion leaders) among the target population are likely to have disproportionate influence. As such, many campaigns seek to capitalize on influence flows within community networks by identifying and engaging → *opinion leaders* directly as part of the campaign. Moreover, media expenditures may be more efficient by targeting opinion leaders to take advantage of the “two-step flow” of information, as messages are filtered through highly influential individuals. Research has shown that opinion leaders differ from one context to another, so campaigns must identify the context-specific characteristics of opinion leaders. Moreover, opinion leaders may be part of community networks or part of the mediated world, such as the case of celebrity or expert endorsements.

### Through What Channel? The Choice of Media

Most campaigns create messages that are disseminated through various mass media. The particular media mix (i.e., choices about which media to use to carry campaign messages) depends on the campaign goals, media goals, target audiences, and resources of the campaign. For example, the campaign goal of spreading knowledge requires media that carry credible information that can be processed and reprocessed by the target audience (e.g., print media), whereas changing attitudes and behaviors is likely to require media that carry emotional appeals, allow for the modeling of appropriate behavior, demonstrate negative consequences of not following recommended changes, and permit repetition without redundancy (e.g., television).

Media goals specify the relative emphasis of widecasting (an emphasis on reaching as many people as possible using such media as → newspapers and → television) or narrow-casting (targeting specific audience members using media like → magazines and → radio). Media choices are also dictated by the choice of target audiences as campaign planners seek media vehicles that have relatively high concentrations of target audiences for efficient message placement. Finally, choices are guided by the more pragmatic constraint of available resources (e.g., radio is very inexpensive and magazines are very expensive; television has high absolute costs, but relatively low cost per thousand persons reached).

The → *Internet* is a growing part of the media mix for most campaigns. As a tool to disseminate campaign information, the Internet offers many advantages over traditional mass media. It is relatively low-cost, permits the transmission of large amounts of information, and is driven by the needs and interests of the audience. The Internet also permits interactive, two-way communication. Moreover, and surprisingly, a high degree of credibility is accorded to the Internet as a source of information. Still, concerns about the → “digital divide” in terms of access to online information mute this optimism

(→ Exposure to the Internet). Beyond mass media, *interpersonal message channels* are important to engage because they are very influential: messages can be personalized and reinforced through the influence of primary groups, social ties, and opinion leaders. Many small business owners can attest to the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of word-of-mouth advertising. For these reasons and the fact that they represent two-way, interactive communication, interpersonal channels are particularly effective in most social change campaigns (→ Interpersonal Communication).

There has been much recent interest in buzz/viral marketing, the nonlinear spread of information throughout → *social networks*. It may take the form of information spread from person to person, or the form of campaign messages (e.g., humorous video clips) that are passed on through digital networks. In part, the success of such techniques stems from their relatively low cost and the positive attitude of the target audience toward such messages, though whether they are effective or not requires more research.

### **What Effect? Potential Outcomes of Campaigns**

Finally, there are the potential outcomes of a campaign. Some campaigns may promote radical social transformation, some minor incremental change, while others may seek to prevent change altogether. Regardless of the nature of social change sought, there are a variety of different perspectives on the nature of that change. More specifically, some campaigns may focus on inducing micro-level change in the form of altering the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals. Other campaigns may focus on macro-level changes including shaping social values and norms, while yet others may focus on changing institutional policies.

Scholars have been interested in the dissemination of knowledge and the use of persuasion to change attitudes and behaviors for quite some time, such that the literature is truly voluminous. Perhaps the most influential program for studying *persuasion* was laid out by researchers from Yale University in the 1950s (Hovland et al. 1953; → Hovland, Carl I.). Their influential research explored such message-related characteristics as source credibility, message appeals, substantiating arguments, incentives/sanctions, and the structure of argument presentation (i.e., one-sided vs two-sided messages; → Message Design Logics). Their research contributed copious evidence on message effectiveness such as the findings that messages attributed to high-credibility sources are more persuasive, but that the credibility effect wears off over time in the absence of repetition, and that conclusive two-sided messages are better than messages that present only one point of view (→ Credibility of Content; Credibility Effects). They helped propagate the notion that one important key to promoting change in attitudes and behaviors is to present information that provides incentives for following recommended behaviors and sanctions for doing otherwise, something that is at the heart of most planned social change campaigns. Most importantly, their research set the agenda for decades for persuasion researchers from psychology and communication.

Research also suggests the importance of *targeting social norms* as part of social change campaigns. Social norms are opinions, attitudes, and behaviors that are considered widely shared within a given social system. In any system, there are incentives for conformity to → social norms and sanctions for violating those norms. Such normative pressures exert

a powerful influence on the public. Campaigns may take advantage of such pressures by invoking and reinforcing existing norms. They occasionally seek to create or change existing norms (e.g., the “5 a Day” campaign to increase fruit and vegetable consumption in the UK). While such campaigns ultimately seek to influence individuals, they focus on influencing norms (and the perception of norms) as key mediating factors. This type of orientation is reflected by Fishbein & Ajzen’s (1975) theory of reasoned action, which incorporates social norms into the relationship between attitudes and behaviors (→ Reasoned Action, Theory of). Conceptualizing the influence of social norms, as well as attempting to influence norms as part of the campaign, is complicated by the fact that individuals are part of overlapping social networks, each of which may have its own set of norms.

The *presumed influence model* (Gunther & Storey 2003) provides a perspective on campaign effects that combines the influence of social networks and perceptions of social norms. In this model, when individuals encounter multiple campaign messages, they may make the assumption that other members of their social network are going to be affected by this campaign and thus make inferences about potential changes to social norms, which then has an effect on the individual’s attitudes and behaviors. For example, a teenager may witness anti-smoking ads and infer that other teenagers are going to be affected by the campaign and become less likely to smoke. Alternatively, this inference may be matched by another inference that such campaigns wouldn’t be necessary if smoking wasn’t prevalent among teens. This example points out a precarious position for campaigns with regard to the communication of social norms – competing inferences about the normative acceptability of the behavior in question. Which inference is more influential is likely to be moderated by perceived smoking prevalence among the individual’s immediate peer network.

While social networks and social norms can be powerful tools in social change campaigns, *operationalizing* them is inherently difficult. A more direct approach is to actually change organizational, community, and social policies. For example, social problems may be curtailed through public policy initiatives that include the application of incentives, sanctions, and usage impediments. Examples of such incentives would include tax breaks for hybrid cars and public financing for the development of alternative energy sources. Sanctions might include usage taxes and laws with fines for noncompliance. Examples of usage impediments would include indoor smoking bans, fuel efficiency standards, and licensing/regulation. While such policies are no doubt effective in regulating the behaviors of individuals and larger collectives, they also require complicity from within the power structure of any given system.

## **A MULTIDISCIPLINARY HISTORY OF PLANNED SOCIAL CHANGE**

The history of planned social change in the social sciences is relatively long and variegated. A number of disciplines have made important contributions to the growth of knowledge in planned social change including psychology, sociology, economics, political science, and communication. Each of these disciplines has at some point also touched on mass media’s role in affecting social change.

The largest contributions of *psychologists* have been in the area of the role of motivation and persuasion in changing knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors at the individual level. In

addition, psychologists were influential in early studies of the role of communication and mass media in producing such change. While the media have long played an important role in bringing about social change from religious reformations to revolutions, social science researchers have been studying the role of mass media in bringing about social change only since the middle of the last century.

One of the first *systematic studies of mass persuasion* was conducted during World War II in a series of research projects investigating the effect of the *Why We Fight* films that were designed to mobilize soldiers to fight against the Germans and Japanese. General George Marshall, who was the Chief of Staff of the US Army, engaged renowned Hollywood director Frank Capra to create a seven-film series designed to motivate American soldiers. Evaluation research conducted by a prestigious group of persuasion researchers hired by the government showed that the films were powerful in increasing soldiers' factual knowledge, but that they had little effect on motivations and attitudes. Ultimately, this was an early study that provided evidence that campaigns designed to promote planned social change have an easier time influencing knowledge than they do shaping attitudes and behaviors. After the war, researchers involved in this project went on to conduct a long series of studies (known as the Yale Program of Research on Communication and Attitude Change) investigating factors related to using mediated message to promote attitude change (→ Stimulus–Response Model).

For *sociologists and economists*, the aftermath of World War II was also a fruitful era for researchers studying planned social change, particularly in the area of promoting national development in developing countries. Researchers operating from the “modernization perspective” assumed that developing the economies of third world nations was a key to world stability. From this perspective, the mass media were seen as the “magic multiplier” in bringing information and motivation in order to mobilize individuals in developing countries in the process of modernization (→ Lerner 1958). In the development model, government and mass media were envisioned as a partnership in promoting the social good. The argument that media should play a central and coordinated role in promoting national development has often been used to justify government ownership (as opposed to private ownership) of the media. By the 1960s, the modernization perspective on national development began to draw criticism on a variety of fronts. Its assumptions were challenged as being ethnocentric and its conclusions were questioned by dependency theory (Cardoso & Faletto 1979), which argued that the developed nations through economic ties have engaged developing nations in exploitative relationships that leave them in a perpetual state of underdevelopment.

Sociologists have contributed knowledge regarding a key component in most conceptions of planned social change – *social control*. Most campaigns aimed at shaping individuals and their communities implicitly or explicitly recognize forces of social control. These forces operate through a combination of incentives that reward norm conformity and sanctions that punish deviance. These forces may be informal as in the case of public opinion and peer pressure, or they may be formalized in terms of laws and public policy. Many sociologists view the mass media, as primary sources of communication of social norms and the attendant incentives and sanctions that induce conformity, as social control agents. These ideas have implications for planned social change such that change agents often use media in the course of a campaign to do more than carry

information and persuasive messages. The media can be used to convey or change social norms as well as to model rewards and punishments associated with them.

Another historical tradition in planned social change focuses on *social engineering*, a concept that comes from the political science discipline. Social engineering focuses on large-scale change (typically at the national level) in public opinions, attitudes, and behaviors. Most often, this perspective focuses on the role of government as the primary change agent. Under this perspective, public policy, laws, and other governance strategies are considered primary directives of social engineering. There is a heavy emphasis on the incentives and sanctions that induce change, adopting the social control framework from sociology. Social engineering is facilitated by the tools of social science, which provide formative and evaluative research that guides the process of social change. Such change is promoted by the use of mass communication technologies, which convey policies and rules, and shape opinions, attitudes, and behaviors. The term “social engineering” has taken on negative connotations through its associations with various historical social engineering campaigns such as the propaganda campaigns and final solution from Nazi Germany and the Cultural Revolution and Great Leap Forward campaigns in China.

*Political science* also provided early research on the *role of propaganda* as mass persuasion. Originally, the term was socially acceptable and used to describe attempts by government agencies (such as the Office of War Information, 1942–1945, and the Voice of America, founded in 1942) to influence the opinions and behavior of the public (→ Propaganda in World War II). Concerns about the negative effects of other countries’ use of propaganda during World War I, in communist revolutions, and the rise of Nazism motivated government interest in engaging political scientists in the study of propaganda effects (Lasswell et al. 1979). In the best-known example of propaganda research, Lee and Lee (1939) identified common techniques used by propagandists engaged in mass persuasion, which included such devices as glittering generalities, card-stacking, and name-calling. Like social engineering, propaganda has increasingly assumed negative connotations because of its association with brainwashing, indoctrination, disinformation, and psychological warfare, as well as its historical association with enemies of the United States. In reality, propaganda campaigns are simply a special case of planned social change for which the benefits and detriments of effects are in the eye of the beholder.

More recently, *communication researchers* have picked up the ball to advance research on planned social change. One of the earliest examples of research on social change by a communication researcher was a perspective on planned social change that was initiated in 1962 when → Everett Rogers published his book *Diffusion of innovations* (Rogers 1962). The book helped launch a research tradition that examined the processes and influential factors that regulate the adoption of new technologies and practices in a given society. Rogers characterized the process of social change as a bell curve, in which innovations are in turn adopted by innovators, early adopters, early majority, majority, and laggards over a period of time. The theory viewed the process of innovation adoption as occurring through a series of stages including awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption. The mass media may play a key role in each of these stages (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

Many of the research traditions discussed in this section produced a considerable amount of social science research in their day, but at some point fell dormant. For many

of these traditions, their decline was precipitated by the gradual recognition and resentment of ethnocentric assumptions implicit in their model of planned social change, that is, they are predicated on assumptions such as: if only other societies were more like us, they would be better off; or, our view of social change is right and their view of social change is wrong.

### CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN PLANNED SOCIAL CHANGE

Current campaigns designed to foster planned social change are likely to employ a combination of mass, interpersonal, and interactive communication to achieve objectives, adopting many of the concepts and tools of advertising and public relations campaigns. Such campaigns revolve around defining objectives and situational constraints, creating strategic solutions, and executing them with an integrated campaign (→ Strategic Communication).

Campaign goals vary in terms of the degree of change sought from incremental modifications to revolutionary change. If objectives are overly ambitious, the campaign is likely to fall short of its goals and be deemed a failure. If the objectives are too modest, the agency footing the bill for the campaign may not feel that the campaign is worth the investment. Whether objectives are achieved depends on support from within the power structure, available resources, the degree to which incentives and sanctions can be invoked, and the cultural compatibility of the campaign.

Strategic decisions must be made about who to target, and how and when to target them with change efforts. Strategies may vary in the extent to which they emphasize *coercion* or merely seek the *consent* of the targets of change. Zaltman and Duncan (1977) provide a typology that organizes strategic approaches into four categories. First, *power* strategies, which are on the coercive side of the continuum, involve changing laws, policies, economic incentives, and other relatively direct forms of control. *Persuasion* strategies tend to utilize communication media using a variety of different types of appeals to change audience knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and motivations. *Normative re-educational* strategies are based on a more rational model of spreading information. *Facilitation* strategies rely on providing resources and opportunities to the public. Most campaigns opt for a mix of these strategies, the composition of which is based on a variety of factors including available time and resources, and the nature and degree of change sought.

The *tactics* used in a campaign depend in large part on the amount of resources that are available to the campaign. The use of mass-mediated advertising has the advantage of maximizing the change agent's control over the campaign messages, but paid advertising is very expensive, and may not be a viable option for other than the well-endowed campaign. Some campaigns may seek to use public service announcements (PSAs), but PSAs have been on the decline lately as media outlets have become less concerned about demonstrating social responsibility. Organizations that seek to effect social change but don't have the resources to pay for advertising may often resort to engaging news media through the use of press releases, events, or rallies. Reliance on news media involves risks, in part because the organization can't control whether the media will show up to publicize the story, nor can they control the nature of the message. As many protest groups that seek to change the system have discovered, getting the attention of the news media can be very difficult. Often, such groups resort to the use of dramatic tactics (such as street theater and confrontations) to attract media attention. Unfortunately, for these groups the resultant coverage is often

negative and their tactics can be used as criticism against them and their cause. This has led to the realization that any publicity may not be better than no publicity at all.

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Many of the *methodological issues* and problems associated with attempts to study the effects of planned social change campaigns are common to research on media effects in general. It is difficult to isolate cause and effect. How do we know that the effects are the results of the campaign and not something else? At the individual level, it is difficult to manipulate exposure to the campaign or to measure the degree of exposure to the campaign. Some campaigns have tried to set up experimental and control communities to assess change in response to the campaign, but again it is difficult to isolate campaign effects (see Hornik 2002; → Experimental Design).

One limitation of most planned social change campaigns is that they are essentially *pilot campaigns* designed to test the viability of a given campaign approach. They may be limited in scope and in time frame, and as such never achieve systemic change. These campaign projects may show positive campaign effects, but implementing the campaign on a system-wide basis may not be feasible. Thus, such campaigns may not have a wide or a lasting impact.

The most promising areas for the *future of research and practice* in planned social change are how to most effectively apply the methods of strategic communication honed by advertising and public relations practitioners, and how to harness and evaluate the power of the Internet and other new media. As the tools of strategic communication and media message production become more widely available, it may be more feasible for organizations such as social movements to engage in social change campaigns. As they go forward with these initiatives, there are a few important lessons to bear in mind. The acceptability of social change goals is in the eye of the beholder. It is far easier to spread knowledge than it is to change attitudes and behaviors. Mass-mediated messages are more effective when combined with Internet support and interpersonal communication that utilizes existing communication networks and opinion leaders. And finally, change is most likely to occur among individuals who are motivated to process information and when it is consistent with personal values and social norms.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Attention ▶ Audience ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Community Structure Model ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Impersonal Effects ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Advocacy In Health Communication ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Modernization ▶ News ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Participatory Action Research ▶ Persuasion ▶ Population



Campaigns ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Public Relations ▶ Radio ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Secular Social Change ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Mobilization ▶ Social Networks ▶ Social Norms ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Television

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## **Playing**

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Playing is always communication. It does not matter whether a child interacts in solitary play with a pretend object, whether a group of children is engaged in role-play, or whether an online community meets at a virtual playground, as in the massively multi-player online games (MMOGs). Each form of playing is communication. Some fields of communication and media sciences can profit from the view that forms of computer-

mediated communication should be analyzed not only from the perspective of media communication but also from that of play. The analysis of interactive media entertainment especially can be based on a play frame (e.g., Vorderer 2001; Ohler & Nieding 2006). Play research can contribute to various fields of the communication sciences; therefore it is necessary to take playfulness seriously.

Play researchers of numerous disciplines agree that an unambiguous *definition of play* has not been offered in the history of play research. The term “play” contains a wide range of behaviors. Till now play research has not been able to extract the behavioral or functional features that are applicable to every play form and different playful behavior pattern. It is not even possible yet to distinguish playful from non-playful behavior precisely. The concept of play is a genuine fuzzy concept. Sutton-Smith (1997) even assumes that its ambiguity is the peculiar quality of play.

More recent approaches to play differ from classical ones with respect to their broadness. Compared to early speculations on and theories of play (e.g. Groos 1899, 1901), which tried to explain the entire phenomenon, twentieth-century approaches focus on only specific aspects, e.g., play and cognitive development (Piaget 1962), or play and the modulation of arousal (Shultz 1979).

One main difference from other communicative behavior systems is that it is not only (young) individuals of the species *Homo sapiens* that show play behavior, but also those of other species. All mammals, some birds, and perhaps even non-avian reptiles play. This means that the behavior system “play” is much older than modern humans; it is even much older than the entire hominid line. The essential contrast between animals and humans arises from the fact that the latter develop more elaborate play forms in the course of their ontogenesis.

Several authors assume that play is a *functionless or even purposeless behavior*, but mostly it has been suggested that it serves some adaptive function. The most prominent approaches in animal play suppose that it is physical exercise (or pre-exercise; Groos 1901) yielding payoffs for later adult sensorimotor skills. For the human species play should be more focused on cognitive exercise, resulting in improved cognitive competencies later on. Other approaches agree that the evolutionary function of animal play is based not in the opportunity for improved practice but in behavioral adaptation to changing niches (behavioral flexibility; → Evolutionary Theory; Communibiology). Individuals of a species that show playful behavior are able to retrieve a repertoire of behaviors more effectively than others of the species. This results in a higher rate of reproductive success. Over many generations the behavioral feature will manifest itself in the genetic pool of that species. All members of the population will show playful behavior (Ohler & Nieding 2006).

Every child older than 1 year enacts different play forms simultaneously or consecutively. But in the course of development – in specific age ranges – certain play forms are more frequent than others (→ Developmental Communication). Most scholars agree that the development of children, with minor deviations, can be characterized by the emergence of the following *sequence of play forms* (approximate starting ages in brackets): sensorimotor play (6 months), experimental play (1 year), early pretense play (1 year), constructive play (2–3 years), role-play or elaborate pretend play (3–4 years), games with rules and other symbolic games (5–6 years).

Video and computer games are games with rules (→ Video Games). In the history of computer games, classic games like chess or checkers were the first to be computerized. Later on new games were developed that can only be played interactively with electronic devices. Video games can be taxonomically subdivided into the following main categories: hit, jump, and run games; action games (first person and third person shooters); adventures; simulations; and strategy games (turn-for-turn and real-time). Modern video games often appear to be hybrid forms. For almost all these types of video games there exist not only single player versions but also the option for multiplayer use.

MMOGs represent the latest generation of computer games (at least up to the time of writing). Massively multi-player role-playing games (MMORPGs) especially require the participants to collaborate in accomplishing certain tasks (quests). In the more popular MMORPGs, such as World of Warcraft, participants can establish long-lasting player associations (guilds,) and many of the users' activities are not aimed at game-specific goals (e.g., reaching the next level). Instead, mediated via their avatars, participants show a high frequency of communicative acts that are typically performed in real "third places" like pubs or clubs. MMOGs are not only games but virtual meeting places (→ Virtual Communities). The attractiveness of these virtual environments is amplified by the rewards of being integrated into a social network and the opportunity to gain a reputation within it (Ducheneaut et al. 2006). As games with rules, MMOGs are able to produce flow in their players. Furthermore, in their function as virtual social places they are able to induce (virtual) social co-presence (→ Computer Games and Child Development; Presence).

An important compendium concerning different aspects of playing video games is Vorderer and Bryant (2006).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Communibiology ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Evolutionary Theory ▶ Presence ▶ Video Games ▶ Virtual Communities

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# Pluralistic Ignorance

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There are several definitions of pluralistic ignorance – in the fields of psychology, sociology, and communications the term is not used uniformly. But despite the differences in details, they all share a focus on the same phenomenon: the inaccuracy with which most people perceive or judge → public opinion or at least the distribution of opinions in social groups (→ Social Perception).

## ORIGIN

The term was first coined by Allport & Katz in 1931 to describe situations where individuals make unfounded assumptions (and act on the basis of these assumptions) as to how others in their peer group will think, feel, or act (Allport & Katz 1931, 152). Later, Allport (1933) used the term to describe a situation in which members of a group who believed themselves to be in the minority were actually in the majority. Allport did not emphasize the relationship of the term to the concept of public opinion; he focused much more on social groups and the behavioral component of the idea. He argued that members of a social group usually perceive the norms of the group by observing the public behavior of others. If this behavior is discrepant to the individual norms or attitudes of the observing group member, he or she tends to believe that the norm discrepancy is his or her individual problem whereas he or she believes that nearly all other group members show this behavior because it is in line with their own social norms and attitudes.

As a consequence, the group member conforms to the norm to avoid embarrassing situations and displays the respective behavior, which again could be misperceived by the other group members as the usual and intended behavior of the majority. If the individual discrepancy between norms and behavior is widespread and holds true for most of the group members, this may lead to the paradox that a social group may follow some norms or show some behavior that most group members actually do not accept. This concrete phenomenon of the *majority believing itself to be in the minority*, including its behavioral consequences, is what Allport originally termed pluralistic ignorance. It includes the attribution of identical actions of self and other to different internal states (Miller & McFarland 1987). Up to now, the original meaning of pluralistic ignorance is still a line of research in social psychology (e.g., in studies on the causes and motives for the (ab)use of drugs or alcohol among college students).

Allport's definition of pluralistic ignorance originally served as a concept for the discrepancy between private beliefs and public behavior. Researchers who followed broadened the definition. Breed & Ktsanes (1961), for instance, defined pluralistic ignorance as an *inaccuracy in estimates of public opinion*. Other scholars described pluralistic ignorance simply as the situation when *the majority is wrong about the majority* (which holds true for Allport's original definition, but not for later definitions of pluralistic ignorance,

because salient effects can occur even if only a minority shows misperceptions), while O’Gorman defined it briefly as “false social knowledge of other people” (1988, 145).

While some researchers labeled only one of the two possible directions of misperception as pluralistic ignorance, Taylor included both, suggesting that the term be used to describe a “situation when a minority position in public opinion is incorrectly perceived to be the majority position and vice versa” (Taylor 1982, 312). In communication science, this definition seems to be the most accepted in the recent literature. The crucial change to Allport’s definition is not only its link to the concept of public opinion, but the loss of the behavioral component in the original definition – in the field of public opinion, pluralistic ignorance is usually concerned with perceptual accuracy.

All the definitions above have in common that they describe pluralistic ignorance as a characteristic of a social group that has its cause in the average perceptions of the social reality by the members of the group. Therefore, the term can be seen as somewhat of a misnomer since the outcome is not truly pluralistic. Instead, it is a misperception each individual may or may not have in judging the attitudes, sentiments, or behavior of the plurality. Accordingly, the term “pluralistic ignorance” is not undisputed and there are several other terms in the literature that focus on the same phenomenon described by “pluralistic ignorance” above. For example, in 1932 Schank, one of Allport’s students, discovered a similar relationship between personal attitudes and group norms in a small New York community, but labeled the phenomenon “misperceived sharing,” or “misperceived consensus.” Sometimes, especially in the context of the → spiral of silence, pluralistic ignorance is also referred to as “social optical delusion of the public about the public” (→ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth).

## RELEVANCE

Though pluralistic ignorance has its tradition and its explanatory roots in the tradition of general social perception, the salience and relevance accorded to the concept is due to its *behavioral consequences*. The relationship between perceived public opinion and an individual’s behavior corresponds to the logic of the Thomas theorem: “If men define situations as real, they’re real in their consequences” (Thomas & Thomas 1928, 572). In the case of pluralistic ignorance, this means that each individual’s subjective perception of public opinion defines the individual social circumstances under which he or she is speaking or acting in public. Both correct and false perceptions of the public’s opinion may have the same impact upon the subject’s behavior – as long as he or she believes (even if erroneously) the perception to be “true.” The consequences may be serious: an incorrect perception of the political → climate of opinion during an election campaign, for example, may lead to inappropriate voting decisions of single voters, for persuasive as well as for strategic reasons.

As a social psychological phenomenon, pluralistic ignorance is an *important concept in communication research* for various reasons. First, communication research is interested in public opinion in general, which naturally includes the social perception of public opinion. Second, the perception of public opinion is one of its own components – public opinion about public opinion. Third, most people’s actions are based not only on their own attitudes or opinions; frequently they are based on their perceptions of the opinions

of others. Therefore, pluralistic ignorance concerns the behavioral consequences of public opinion. Furthermore, the measurement of people's "real" opinions is difficult and frequently biased. In such cases, the measurement of perceived opinions can serve as an indicator not for "true" public opinion, but for underlying personal attitudes, and for this reason pluralistic ignorance is relevant to the measurement of public opinion. Additionally, in respect of its causes, the question arises as to whether the distortion of the perception of public opinion is caused at least partly by media coverage.

### METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Pluralistic ignorance occurs only when individuals underestimate or overestimate the proportion of others having the same opinion as they have themselves. This inaccuracy or error in estimation can be tested only by comparing the actual distribution of opinions on an issue within a social group or representative sample with the distribution of opinions as it is perceived by the members of the group or sample. Therefore, pluralistic ignorance implies *two different levels of observation*: the aggregate level and the individual level.

The aggregate level is used to observe whether there is any discrepancy between actual and perceived public opinion; the individual level is used to observe which of the individuals belonging to this aggregate have an incorrect perception of the aggregate's characteristics and what the cause of the distortion might be. In most investigations, actual public opinion is usually operationalized as the aggregation of all single opinions within the group or sample. To measure the perceived public opinion additionally, each member of the group must provide his or her estimations about the opinions of others. There are different *operationalizations of perceived public opinion*: some studies ask simply for minorities and majorities, which is a dichotomous measurement; others ask subjects to rate the percentage of the different proportions, which allows for more complex analysis. Since both kinds of data, perceived and actual public opinion, are usually collected within the same survey, some caution in questionnaire design is necessary to avoid halo effects.

With respect to methodological aspects, it is important to consider that pluralistic ignorance is, as Glynn et al. (1995) point out, a product, not a process: it describes the state of misperception at one arbitrarily chosen point of time. Since public opinion changes at least slightly from day to day, measured differences between actual and perceived public opinion are no surprise at all, since one can safely assume that the perception of public opinion follows the development of public opinion with a delay. Therefore, the discrepancies could be considered as just an artificial effect, depending on the time of measurement, which will vanish as soon as the perception of public opinion catches up with public opinion. However, research in general shows that this argument is untenable, since pluralistic ignorance can be observed for issues with stable distribution of public opinion as well as for issues with changing majorities. In addition, there is evidence for constant misperceptions within the same issue over decades.

### EXPLANATIONS OF MISPERCEPTIONS

Early research on pluralistic ignorance has focused on one crucial question: why do people perceive the opinions of others incorrectly? Pluralistic ignorance has been found

in different countries, different cultural settings, and on a large number of different issues. Therefore, explanations for the occurrence of misperceptions based on specific cultural conditions are limited and insufficient. Accordingly, recent research has focused on the pattern of the perceptions of opinion and on the psychological and social factors influencing the accuracy of these perceptions. Within this research, one can identify different approaches or phenomena that can be summed up under the term “pluralistic ignorance”: → false consensus effect, looking glass perception, and false idiosyncrasy. The connections of the different concepts to pluralistic ignorance are outlined below.

*False consensus* can serve as an explanation for findings in pluralistic ignorance where minorities perceive themselves erroneously to be in the majority. False consensus means that most people tend to consider their own opinions as common and appropriate and therefore expect them to be shared by a larger proportion of others, whilst alternative opinions are perceived as deviant and inappropriate (Ross et al. 1977). Research identified biased information availability, as well as the need for self-enhancement and social support, as possible explanations for the phenomenon. Within this line of research, the overestimation of consensus (the tendency of an individual to overestimate the group of people who share his or her opinion) is relevant. It is in contrast to Allport’s original definition, which focused on the pattern that people tend to believe their felt norm discrepancies to be an exception. However, it serves as an explanation for the overestimation of minorities within the newer tradition of linking pluralistic ignorance to public opinion.

Similar to false consensus is what is called *looking glass perception* (Fields & Schumann 1976), sometimes also termed “egocentric bias” or “social projection.” This term describes people’s tendency to assume that others have the same opinions on issues as they themselves. It is assumed that this effect is independent of the actual distribution of opinion and is relatively widespread. However, for some issues with ideological aspects, an ideological bias may prevent looking glass perception.

False consensus and looking glass perception describe situations in which people do not agree but think they do – when a minority perceives itself as in the majority. The opposite (and original) pattern of pluralistic ignorance is when people agree, but do not realize it – when a majority perceives itself as in the minority. This has been coined “false idiosyncrasy” or “silent majority” effect (Eveland 2002). It may occur if people believe their own position to be not in line with public norms and therefore overestimate the position of public opinion that is in contrast to their own. It is possible that this is also the reason for the ideological bias mentioned above (→ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses).

## PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE AND THE MEDIA

Many studies in pluralistic ignorance try to explain the misperceptions underlying the concept by examining psychological and/or social influences on perception but do not discuss media effects as a possible cause. This is surprising, for Allport had in 1924 mentioned three sources of information for inferences about the opinion of others: rumors, social projection, and the press (Allport 1924, 308). Nevertheless, there are a few approaches in media effects research that can be usefully linked to the phenomenon: the hostile media effect, the → third-person effect, the spiral of silence, cultivation research,

and exemplification effects (→ Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects; Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of; Media Effects).

The → *hostile media phenomenon* (Vallone et al. 1985) postulates that many with a partisan view on an issue tend to misperceive relatively neutral news content as biased against their own position. Since this perception can be found for partisans on different sides of an issue, at least one of the partisan sides must be misperceiving the bias in media coverage. Because of this misperception and because of common assumptions about the power of mass media, people assume an influence of the perceived bias on public opinion and therefore estimate public opinion incorrectly.

This effect may be amplified by the *third-person effect* (Davison 1983), which postulates that most people believe that the media have a greater impact on others than on themselves. Because of this misperception, people assume the surrounding society to be strongly influenced by media coverage that may lead to changing estimations of public opinion. Since they are founded upon exaggerated assumptions of media impact, these perceptions of the climate of opinion may be misperceptions.

The *spiral of silence* (Noelle-Neumann 1974), a dynamic theory of public opinion, postulates that most people fear isolation and therefore tend to express their opinion in public only if it is in line with the opinion they perceive as being in the majority, otherwise they remain silent. The spiral of silence assumes that people have a “quasi-statistical sense” that makes them able to estimate public opinion and to identify majority and minority positions. Hence, a person’s willingness to express (or not to express) his or her opinions in public is perceived by others and influences their inferences on the climate of opinion. Nevertheless, according to the theory, the quasi-statistical sense can be distorted by media coverage due to its consonant, ubiquitous, and cumulative character. This may lead to misperceptions of the climate of opinion and inappropriate behavior in public as a consequence.

The *cultivation approach* (Gerbner et al. 1980) suggests that in the course of the last few decades television has become the most important cultural factor in society. Therefore, television – and particularly its entertainment programs – is shaping viewers’ conceptions of social reality (“mainstreaming”). Since the TV world differs from the real world, the conceptions of heavy viewers established by television may be incorrect and, with regard to public opinion, these conceptions may result in pluralistic ignorance. Exemplification effects (Zillmann & Brosius 2000) describe the impact of examples selected and covered by the media upon the recipients’ conceptions and especially on their perceived climate of opinion. Many investigations showed that abstract statistical data, for example poll results, hardly have an impact on these conceptions, whereas a few personal statements as examples of public opinion can have a strong impact upon the perceived climate of opinion which may of course lead to pluralistic ignorance.

Today, the spiral of silence is the only theory that attempts to combine predictions of different patterns of pluralistic ignorance as well as explanations for their occurrence in a larger theoretical framework. Though there has been much progress, up to now the research and findings on pluralistic ignorance are still very heterogeneous. There are many different approaches and concepts, but successful attempts at theoretical and/or interdisciplinary integration are still lacking. The explanation of social misperceptions remains a challenge for future communication research.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory  
 ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ False Consensus ▶ Hostile Media  
 Phenomenon ▶ Media Effects ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Perceived Reality:  
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# Pluralistic Ignorance and Ideological Biases

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An ideology is a consistent set of related ideas about the nature and goals of society, such as liberalism, conservatism, or socialism. Ideological bias refers to the skewed thoughts and perceptions that such perspectives can produce. One such misperception is → pluralistic ignorance, an inaccurate perception of how a group member's own opinions relate to those of the larger group. The communications media are widely believed to produce biases in → public opinion, but the extent and direction of media content and effects are still contested by both scholars and political actors (→ Social Perception).

The behavioral sciences treat political ideologies as internal maps or → scripts that we all make use of to interpret social and political behavior (→ Schemas; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction). An ideological perspective is not necessarily biased or prejudiced. Individuals with a high degree of ideological consistency tend to be well informed and to vote for candidates whose views match their own. In this sense, ideologues are the most “rational” citizens (Zaller 1992). Recent research in cognitive psychology treats ideological bias as a failure of → information processing. It consists of stereotyped thinking in which new information is distorted in order to make it conform to existing beliefs (Kinder 1998; → Stereotypes). Social psychologists find that adherence to ideologies of both the far left and far right is associated with intolerance and closed-mindedness.

Ideological bias can produce pluralistic ignorance, a mistaken perception of the relationship between one's own opinions and those of the majority. In mass publics, pluralistic ignorance represents a misreading of public opinion vis-à-vis one's own opinion. Thus, an individual may be in the majority but inaccurately believe she is in the minority, or vice versa (Berkowitz 2004). Paradoxically, such erroneous perceptions of majority opinion can become self-fulfilling prophecies. If those who incorrectly feel they are a minority become afraid to speak out, their opponents may dominate public debate and form a new majority. This process is known as the → “spiral of silence” (→ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth; Climate of Opinion).

The *results of pluralistic ignorance* may favor either side of the political spectrum. For example, in the 1970s, a time of highly publicized racial strife in the United States, white citizens incorrectly believed that most whites opposed racial integration in housing in their community (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media). Conversely, a more recent study found that a desire to appear “politically correct” led white college students to overestimate on-campus support for affirmative action. In both cases, a → “false consensus” favors vocal minorities over silent majorities, since being in the majority confers normative advantages in public debate – *vox populi, vox dei*.

Pluralistic ignorance and ideological bias are products as well as carriers of misinformation. Thus, the *quality of information in public* → discourse is central to understanding both phenomena (→ Political Discourse; Quality of the News). The effects

of → television viewing have attracted the most attention from researchers (Comstock and Scharrer 2005). For example, → cultivation theory argues that television creates a surrogate reality for heavy viewers, whose perceptions of the social environment are clouded by the fantasy versions they experience on television, especially in entertainment programming (→ Cultivation Effects). Similarly, the theory of → video malaise argues that a negativistic bias in television news gives viewers an unduly jaundiced view of their social environment (→ Negativity). Both theories remain controversial, and video malaise is now seen as a particular case of more general media negativism.

The most controversial issue, however, is *whether news media content favors one side of the political spectrum*. Particularly in the United States and Europe, the debate over media bias has been joined by political elites and the general public (→ Bias in the News). On one hand, critics on the left indict for media for “manufacturing consent” for ruling elites, by reinforcing and legitimizing their perspectives. Conversely, political conservatives portray the news as the instrument of leftist journalists whose coverage undermines traditional social values and institutions. The question is whether the news reflects the ideological assumptions of left-leaning journalists or the economic interests of their more conservative bosses, or whether these and other influences cancel each other out. All three positions have vocal proponents (Lichter et al. 1990; → Instrumental Actualization). Moreover, the debate over media bias is itself colored by pluralistic ignorance. For example, partisans tend to regard neutral news content as favoring their opponents (the → hostile media phenomenon), and there is a widespread tendency to believe that the media influence other people more than ourselves (the → third-person effect).

Communications scholars increasingly rely on content analyses to sort out such competing claims (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). However, this literature has produced *mixed results*. In the United States, for example, Democratic presidential candidates tend to get more favorable coverage than Republicans, but presidents from both parties get highly unfavorable coverage while in office. However, some *broad trends* can be identified. The news media do frequently ignore or denigrate marginal groups and radical voices calling for fundamental social change, as critics on the left argue. But news coverage also tends to be critical of hegemonic social institutions such as government, business, and the military, as right-wing critics contend. More generally, the media frequently draw attention to society’s problems and failures, stimulating social reform. This watchdog role can be interpreted as either a threat to traditional values and institutions or a safety valve that marginalizes dissent. Thus, despite their quite different perspectives, critics on the left and right can both claim some support for their allegations of ideological bias in the news.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Discourse ▶ False Consensus ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Information Processing ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Negativity ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Schemas ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Scripts ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Television ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Video Malaise

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## **Plurality**

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Plurality refers to the existence of a multiplicity of identities and perspectives from which different groups and people experience social reality. A belief that this diversity should be a criterion for judging how power is distributed in society is termed pluralism; transferred to debates about the media, pluralism is an ideal that calls for versatile media contents and diffuse distribution of power to control the media. In this form, pluralism and plurality are core elements of the legitimization rhetoric of twentieth-century liberal democracies. As such, they are also a contested part of political and social theory and, consequently, of the role of media in society. Evidence of the actual existence of different kinds of plurality in society and in the media, as well as views about the value of the concept itself, remain contradictory. This is due to both the conceptual range over which pluralism has been stretched and the political interests this covers.

### **EMERGENCE OF THE CONCEPT**

The term “pluralism” is derived from Latin through (thirteenth-century) French. During the early nineteenth century it is often used in a pejorative sense to refer to people holding more than one official ecclesiastical position at the same time, enjoying the benefits of an office without actually being in residence. In *nineteenth-century philosophy*, pluralism comes to refer to a belief that the world is made of multiple substances and differing views on matters. Here the belief in plurality is juxtaposed with “monism,” a belief in the underlying unity of reality, implying one ultimate opinion binding to all. In *political theory*, pluralism appears as a shorthand term for a key belief in twentieth-century liberalism (Laski 1919), according to which power in democracies should be spread between many economic and political pressure groups. To a large degree, then, pluralism takes the actual institutional forms of modern western democracies as an ideal model, implying that these societies are an embodiment of the principle of pluralism. Pluralism thus celebrates western democracies’ forms of institutional systemic differentiation, cultural diversification, and democratization, and implies that the media has been a successful part of this process.

Historically, pluralism *as an ideology* can be regarded as a reaction to the political challenges of modernity. If the modern scientific revolution challenged the knowledge monopoly (and monism) of the church, other facets of modernity (the market economy, political and religious diversity, secularization) gradually challenged the idea of a simple, hierarchical, and stable social order and power. As one key element in this socio-cultural process of change, modern media – from the printing press to digital broadcasting networks – was from the beginning caught in the middle of this process and debates about it (Thompson 1995; Briggs & Burke 2005; → Printing; History of; Media History). From John Milton’s *Areopagitica* (1644) on there is an evolving tradition of the idea of free speech (Peters 2005), in which the call for pluralistic and diverse media content plays an important role (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

In the liberal *theory of the press* (and its later versions on the social responsibility of the media; → Accountability of the Media), the media is given the task of reflecting the constituent groups and identities of a given society. By the 1940s this ideal of pluralism of opinions is well established in the dominant western thinking about the mass media: plurality of media content (opinion and views) comes to serve as the twin of the scientific method (news based on facts; → Objectivity in Science; Precision Journalism). The media is given the tasks of distributing verified and objective information and reflecting relevant group opinions (cf. Commission on Freedom of the Press 1947; Royal Commission on the Press 1950, 1st pub. 1947–1949). More than coincidentally, thus, pluralism as an ideal in general social and political theory as well as in media theory is articulated during the same twentieth-century conjuncture of → modernity as two other key concepts of liberal media theory, namely *objectivity* as a core value of news journalism (cf. Schudson 1978; → Objectivity in Reporting) and the notion of “the market-place of ideas” (Peters 2004).

## THEORETICAL TENSIONS

As part of a functionalist and affirmative theory of modern society, pluralism has also been challenged in the field of media research.

*Critical theory* (or *Marxism*) from the late 1960s on has pointed out some key limitations of pluralism’s explanatory power. Critics claim that social diversity and its manifestations in modern societies are from the start framed by uneven social conditions. Hence, the starting point of liberal pluralism – that it suffices to allow recognizable groups to take part in public life – is flawed. Since media institutions in modern western societies are linked to economic and political power, working toward genuine pluralism in the media has to deal with structural inequalities related to both general social conditions and the media. Critical political economists (Murdoch & Golding 2005) of this strand have challenged the liberal media policy of western governments. Their thinking has also informed practical political attempts (ranging from ideas of public service broadcasting to public media subsidies; → Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; Subsidies for the Media) to secure a plurality of representation in the media (→ Political Economy of the Media). Epistemologically, critical theorists and liberal pluralists share the legacy of modernity, i.e., the idea that the media can be judged on how well it *reflects* the constituent groups and identities of a given society. Both positions view truth mainly as a matter of correspondence to reality, and a pluralistic debate is seen as a

method for finding out the truth or consensus (→ Realism). The fundamental disagreement concerns the performance of the market-driven media system to provide for this: liberal pluralists believe it does; critical theorists think the market forces need to be at least counterbalanced with other logics (Curran 2002).

Another critique of pluralism emerges – somewhat ironically – from *multiculturalism*, i.e., the growing recognition of the plurality of identities, experiences, and ways of knowing in late modern societies. This shift of perspective is rooted in a broader epistemological turn in social theory and media research, arguing that all representations of social reality are ultimately constructions (→ Constructivism). Hence, to call for a correspondence between pluralist media contents and the plurality of reality (and thus to call for a reflecting role for the media; → Neutrality), is to misplace the question. From a constructivist point of view, the media is always part of the process of how groups and interests are constituted. Therefore there cannot be a “common” or “neutral” vocabulary of representing the “constituent” groups of society, and any claim for such impartiality is in itself a form of power and ideology.

On the one hand, multiculturalism offers a stinging criticism of the pluralist notion of diversity as such as a way of seriously ethically limiting the role of the media, i.e., media theory of this kind effectively denies us the responsibility for asking what is right (→ Ethics in Journalism). Here multiculturalism criticizes pluralism for not taking new identities, groups, and their representations of reality seriously as part of the public democratic dialogue. Such *dialogically grounded multiculturalism* points out that identities are constructed in communication, and that this communicative potential of language and communication (→ Habermas, Jürgen) leads to a media theory which will not celebrate the postponing of ethical judgment in the name of pluralism and free speech. On the other hand, some constructivists also abandon this belief in dialogue and deliberation. For them (Mouffe 1999) society is comprehensively seen as a site of a power struggle between groups and identities, and democracy as a constant struggle of identities with clashes between positions, show of power, and influence, and conversions (instead of consensus) from one belief to another (→ Social Identity Theory). Here, constructivism is connected to a view of communication and language as ultimately strategic and instrumental. Thus the media can be evaluated on how well it performs the act of recognition of new and constantly emerging plurality groups, identities, and interests in late modern societies, but not (even in theory) on how it is able to provide a site for deliberation and negotiation between diverse positions.

## EMPIRICAL DIMENSIONS

All the theoretical disagreements aside, pluralism sets an important normative goal in evaluating media policy and performance. This opens up the difficult terrain of operationalizing plurality: where and how can it be measured?

On the *level of media structures and institutions*, a call for pluralism translates into a need for a diverse and diffused pattern of control of media organizations. In liberal democracies this means measuring the concentration of power by media ownership and other forms of economic control, such as advertising and sponsorships (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Media Economics). At this level media systems have had a tendency to

develop increasing ownership concentration. This anti-pluralist trend has manifested itself in the development of chain-ownership of one media, such as newspapers from the late nineteenth century onward; in the emergence of multimedia companies, combining various media activities such as television, magazines, and newspapers; or as conglomeration, when media companies are part of wider industrial corporative structures (Doyle 2002; → Media Conglomerates). The effects of ownership concentration on the diversity of media content are complex: in some current contexts (such as multi-title magazine publishers and multi-channel television corporations) concentration can contribute to diversity (Van der Wurff 2005, Van Cuilenberg 2005), although in others (such as syndicated or corporately shared newspaper material) it can clearly add to the homogenization of media content.

Another focus for measuring media plurality is to look at the *diversity of the media workforce*. During recent decades, media companies have begun to pay growing attention to the cultural diversity of their employees, who by and large are still mostly disproportionately white, male, and upper middle-class, and thus not representative of the plurality of their respective publics. There is a historical liberal pluralist counterargument for this critique: that journalism is a profession (→ Professionalization of Journalism) and that this enables journalists to act as neutral mediators of social reality. However, a question remains whether calls for professionalism and its particular set of values compromise the ideals of pluralism or diversity in the first place (Glasser 1992; Zelizer 2004). Empirically, there are also some clear indications of international homogenization related to professional journalism and its practices (Hallin & Mancini 2004).

Focusing on the *diversity of media content*, one way of judging pluralism is to evaluate the access of various groups and their representatives to the media (→ Access to the Media). Research has consistently emphasized that the media in general and journalism in particular reproduce the existing knowledge and power structures of society by offering the “primary definers” and legitimate representatives of routine institutional sources a dominant position in the public (Hall et al. 1978). Through this privileged access these actors also exercise control of the agenda of issues that the media system deems noteworthy (→ Agenda Building; Agenda-Setting Effects). Powerful countries, institutions, and their elite representatives are also able to control the frames of representation in which the media depict the world (→ Framing of the News; Framing Effects). Indeed, there is clear evidence of a structural correspondence between the plurality of opinion in the media and the plurality of opinion in the political power elite: mainstream media content is an “index” of the range of legitimate internal disagreements of the power elite (Bennett 1990). However, without contradicting this long-term functionality for the status quo, one should bear in mind that professional → news values and presentation techniques cannot be totally reduced to structural power: “the journalistic field” of news production practices also sets conditions for the performance of the powerful actors (Benson & Neveu 2005; McNair 2000; → News Routines). Finally, in terms of media content, plurality of views is also closely tied to the actual theme in question: there are domains of social life (such as art) that can enjoy a much more diverse debate than others (such as foreign policy or national security).

Measuring plurality can also mean considering the *points of view of the audience* and its choices. It is one thing to measure the diversity that a whole (national) media system

provides but sometimes quite another thing to look at what is available as actual choice for the audience (Hellman 2001). Thus, for instance, television programming as a whole can be very diverse but in a given prime-time moment the channel competition can create a stream of very homogeneous content. Indeed, the question of what constitutes the relevant media opinion market (or audience) within which plurality is measured will become all the more complex and important (Van Cuilenberg 2005). It is crucial whether the relevant market is defined geographically as a local, national, or even transnational one, and whether pluralism is measured across media output or inside particular → genres of content (news, entertainment, special interests, etc.).

In judging all this and other, similar empirical evidence, obviously a lot depends on the theoretical positions outlined above. Liberal pluralism can, for instance, celebrate enhanced professionalism of media production, while more constructivist accounts would point to the shortcomings of professional routines in either facilitating dialogue or allowing visibility to new, emerging identities and groups. Similar differences of interpretation apply at the structural level. For instance, on the one hand the link to advertising and audience lifestyles has driven the media to create new kinds of profiled content, which increases quantitative diversity (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). On the other hand this connection equates the market value of social groups with their possibility of being publicly and democratically represented. Thus the logic not only reproduces but also increases social power differences.

### NEW QUESTIONS

Since plurality and pluralism emerge as an essential and essentially positive part of modern western social imaginaries (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication), it is likely that this vocabulary will remain a prominent part of discussions about the role of the media and journalism in society, about how well the media actually perform this role, and about what kind of → media policy would enhance pluralism best. However, at least two recent trends pose questions for its usefulness as a framing notion of media performance.

A first set of challenges emerges from the *rapid development of media technology*. In a digitalized and interactive network environment, many traditional boundaries become blurred. Questions like “Who is a journalist?” or “Is this journalism (or entertainment or advertising)?” are becoming much more complex than in traditional media outlets. Thus the role of the idea of professionalism in debates about media performance is likely to change. Also, since the threshold for being able to broadcast (webcast) your message has dropped dramatically, some believe this will potentially solve some of the structural problems of earlier mass media arrangements. There are also partly legitimate hopes that some audiences will become active and critical partners in surveying both the media’s performance and the news, providing alternative content and exposure (with the help of light media production technology such as mobile phone cameras) and changing “hot spots” of attention and criticism (Benkler 2006).

To be sure, the early twenty-first century has witnessed some interesting and impressive experiments where *new media forms* enable new kind of organizational patterns for media production: despite all their problems, such phenomena as “wikis,” → open source



journalism sites, and blogging (→ Blogger) are evidence of a changing landscape. Since pluralism is a historical construction, it will be affected by all this. For instance, in its most dramatic form, open source ideology suggests that the “collective intelligence” of wiki-based sites does away with the role of experts – and even actually synthesizes opinions and evidence (the very modern distinction of which gives rise to pluralism). Whether pluralism continues to have a central bearing on our evaluation of such media practices is a good question. But for the moment, it is not at all clear that the *theoretical* strands of debate would become obsolete in the near future. It is, after all, telling that many of the problems the new technology promises to solve are the same ones that the debate around pluralism has attempted to come to terms with.

A second notable set of challenges emerges from outside the media. Despite differences of opinion about timing and depth, there is a broad consensus that modernization has been lately reshaped into a process of *globalization* (→ Globalization Theories). This is a major shift in the economic, political, social, and cultural conditions of the media. Since pluralism was invented during the emergence of the modern nation-state, it tends to look at society as a nation-state. It also situates media in the service of such a unit and in cooperation with particularly national political and economic structures, institutions, and identities. In a world of globalized economy, weak translational political structures, and diverse, diasporic identities, a call for a pluralistic media is perhaps not enough. In the contemporary world, media itself has become such an obvious part of political communication that the agenda for a pluralist media theory – the media to inform about reality and reflect the variety of opinions – might not be plausible any more.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Blogger ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Constructivism ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Genre ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media History ▶ Media Policy ▶ Modernity ▶ Neutrality ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Open Source ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Realism ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Subsidies for the Media

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## Poland: Media System

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The Republic of Poland is one of the largest countries in central Europe, and in size of population (38.7 million people) ranks eighth in Europe. Of that population, 98 percent are of Polish ethnic origin, and over 90 percent are Roman Catholics. Politics in Poland takes place in the framework of a parliamentary representative democratic republic.

Poland’s history is characterized by a long-lasting struggle for independence and a late democratization. In 1795 the country was partitioned by its neighbors and erased from the map of Europe until its reconstitution in 1918. After a short period of democracy (until 1926), Poland was ruled by an authoritarian government. The Second Republic was destroyed by the German invasion in 1939. After World War II, the *People’s Republic of Poland* was created, a satellite state of the Soviet Union.

By the late 1980s the workers' and intellectuals' reform movement *Solidarnosc* ("Solidarity") was able to enforce a peaceful systemic transition. The era of communism ended in 1989, and Poland underwent a process of far-reaching political and socio-economic transformation. It is regarded as a consolidated democracy and one of the most successful transition countries of the former Eastern bloc. In May 2004 Poland became a member of the European Union. The country has a rather polarized multi-party system, which especially in the early 1990s was characterized by an extreme fragmentation. After the 2005 elections, six parties entered Parliament. Poland has since then been ruled by a centre-right minority government.

### **TRANSITION AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The Polish media system under communist rule was regarded as one of the most consistently open in the Eastern bloc. Its press landscape especially was much less uniform than conventionally anticipated in a communist state. Nonetheless, for more than four decades its main characteristics consisted of state control, communist ideology, and centralistic structures. The systemic transition toward democracy and market economy facilitated fundamental changes in the media sphere. Old monopolistic structures have been dismantled and replaced by pluralistic ones, censorship and barriers to information have been abolished, and new players have been admitted to the media market.

Press freedom started to exist as early as mid-1989. In 1997 it was anchored in the new constitution. Article 14 states: "The Republic of Poland shall ensure the freedom of the press and other means of social communication." In addition, Article 54 guarantees freedom of expression and prohibits censorship. Media communication is regulated mainly by three statutory acts: the Press Law of 1984 (amended in 1990 and 1991), the Broadcasting Act of 1992 (with later amendments), and the Intellectual Property Law of 1994.

### **PRINTED PRESS**

Since 1989 the press landscape has become noticeably more differentiated. From 1990 until 1991 the Workers' Publishing Cooperative (RSW), a gigantic press combine established by the communist ruling elite, was wound up and its publications privatized. Thereafter, the press market developed with practically no restrictions. With very few exceptions, all publications available on the Polish press market are privately owned and do not receive any state subsidies. The government basically has no means of exerting influence over the printed press.

The range of print publications is diverse and extensive. In 2004 there was a total of 6,502 publications, including 58 dailies, 396 weeklies, 226 fortnightlies, 1,815 monthlies, 2,153 bimonthlies and quarterlies, and 1,854 others (i.e., sub-local publications, distributed in one or more districts of a city, but not in the entire city). The written press has always had a strong tradition in Poland. Nonetheless, newspaper readership has been declining in the last two decades. In 2006, the average total single circulation of paid daily newspapers amounted to 4,369,000 copies (free daily newspapers 597,000). Newspaper sales per 1,000 adult population amount to 137. The market for national dailies has expanded in recent

years with the successful launch of new paid and free newspapers. The regional daily press, however, has been in decline. Since 1999 eight regional dailies have ceased to exist.

In 2006, there were 12 *national dailies* on the Polish market, including seven dailies of general interest (five quality papers and two tabloids) and five specialized dailies (one focusing on sports and four focusing on economical and legal issues). For more than a decade *Gazeta Wyborcza* (“Election Newspaper”), the first independent daily in the Eastern bloc, set up in May 1989 by former dissidents, kept its leading position. A market shake-up occurred in 2003 with the introduction of the tabloid *Fakt* (“Fact”) by the German publishing company Axel Springer. Within a short time, the newcomer succeeded in attracting many Polish readers, and reached a circulation of 529,000 copies in 2006. *Gazeta Wyborcza* has been relegated to second place (423,000 copies). Besides national titles, there were 27 regional dailies and four free newspapers in the Polish market in 2006. External pluralism can be observed in the national press especially. Whereas *regional dailies* keep their profile rather neutral, national dailies represent a variety of political orientations and worldviews. National dailies are owned by Polish and foreign companies or Polish–foreign joint ventures. The regional market is dominated by two foreign companies: the Norwegian Orkla and the German Passauer Neue Presse.

The *magazine* market has changed significantly since 1989. It was mainly foreign companies that identified many market deficits in this area and that filled the gaps successfully with the introduction of new offerings (women’s magazines, young people’s magazines, TV guides, and popular color magazines). The magazine market is characterized by a high concentration. The 14 biggest magazine publishers publish more than 100 titles with a total circulation of 30 million copies. The major magazines are owned by foreign companies: Bertelsmann, Axel Springer, Heinrich Bauer, and Hachette Filipacci.

## BROADCASTING

The process of restructuring the broadcasting sector was accompanied by numerous controversial discussions. It lasted until March 1993, when a new broadcasting law came into force and a dual system was introduced. State broadcasting was broken down into 18 separate stock corporations of *Polskie Radio* (Polish Radio) and *Telewizja Polska* (Polish Television [TVP]), which serve as public broadcasters. Public broadcasting de facto remained under state control because the state is the 100 percent stockholder of all of the stock corporations. Also in 1993, the first licenses for private broadcasters were awarded.

The Broadcasting Act of 1992 established a new controlling body: the National Broadcasting Council (KRRiT). Inter alia, its responsibilities include the allocation of licenses to private operators, the supervision of public and private stations, the nomination of the supervisory boards of the public media, and the distribution of the broadcasting fees. Although in the initial concept it was foreseen as a group of independent experts, the National Broadcasting Council has always had strong links to politics. Its members are nominated by Parliament (*Sejm* and *Senat*) and the president. Right from the start, each president and each government has attempted to name people close to them as candidates to the Council and to exert influence over the body in various ways. However, because individual council members could not be dismissed during their period of office, direct governmental control was not always possible. It often happened

that the majority of the political powers in the Council represented the opposite of the ruling government's views. Major changes occurred after the Act of December 29, 2005, became law: the term of office of the previous Council expired and a new board was established. All its members, who in spring 2006 nominated new supervisory boards for the public media, have political allegiances with the ruling center-right government. Furthermore, the Act has reduced the number of board members from nine to five: two are appointed by the Sejm, one by the Senat, and two by the president. The term of office of each of the members is six years. Before this, a rotating system ensured that every two years one third of the Council members were changed.

The market for audiovisual media has expanded significantly since 1993. Polish radio listeners and TV viewers have a wide and varied choice. Polish public radio provides four national programs. Its independent regional stations provide 17 regional and four local programs. Nationwide programs are also offered by three private operators: the commercial stations *RMF FM Radio* and *Radio Zet* and the Catholic station *Radio Maryja*. Furthermore, there are three stations that broadcast supra-regionally and 168 local stations. In terms of listeners reached, the private commercial stations are leading: *RMF FM* with 21.4 percent, and *Radio Zet* with 18.8 percent. The most popular public programs are *PR 1* (14.9 percent) and *PR 3* (6.1 percent). Most of the nonreligious radio operators with national or regional transmission range have foreign partners.

Regarding the TV market, it is crucial to distinguish between broadcasters whose programs can be received terrestrially (via the analog signal) and those whose programs can be received via satellite, cable, and digital TV platforms. To the first group belong Polish public television (TVP), which broadcasts two nationwide programs and one regional program (produced by 16 regional departments), as well as the private operators that received a license to broadcast (*POLSAT*, *TVN*, *TV 4*, and *Telewizja Puls*). In terms of viewers reached, the public channels have kept their leading position: *TVP 1* (25.4 percent) and *TVP 2* (20.8 percent), followed by *POLSAT* (15.9 percent) and *TVN* (15.1 percent). *POLSAT* and *Telewizja Puls* have remained Polish in their ownership structure, while *TVN* and *TV 4* have foreign partners.

Via satellite, cable networks, or digital TV platforms more than 400 TV programs (foreign programs, thematic channels) can be received in Poland. Of these, 50 are Polish-language broadcasts. They are produced by foreign operators as well as by Polish public television and the licensed commercial stations. In 2006, 30 percent of all Polish households subscribed to cable TV, 20 percent possessed a satellite antenna, and 8 percent took advantage of the services provided by the two digital TV platforms *Canal+ Cyfrowy* and *Cyfrowy Polsat*. It is planned to introduce terrestrial digital TV before 2015.

The importance of the *Internet* has been growing continuously since the 1990s. In 2006, 30 percent of all Polish households and 87 percent of all companies had access to the Internet. About 10 million Poles are regular users, spending an average of 22 hours per month on the web. The two most important Internet portals in Poland are *Wirtualna Polska* and *Onet*. Almost all important Polish media outlets have developed their own websites, too. In the media market, the observable tendency is that the boundaries between telecommunication operators and cable TV operators are disappearing. Companies possessing the corresponding infrastructure are able to provide access to television, telephone, and Internet at the same time.

The development of the Polish media since 1989 has been influenced by two crucial factors: structural transformation following the systemic change, and a far-reaching technological transformation. In both respects, Polish media have followed “western” standards and global trends. The Polish media system shows characteristics of diverse western models. As in Mediterranean countries, a political culture prevails that aims to exert influence over the public media. This is especially true for public television, which is often instrumentalized by politicians. The degree of regulation (of commercial time, violent content, and ownership) in the broadcast sector is rather high. In this respect, Poland resembles countries in northern Europe. Communication policy toward print media, however, is particularly liberal.

SEE ALSO: ► Censorship ► Commercialization of the Media ► Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Models of Communication ► Political Communication Systems ► Privatization of the Media ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Underground Press

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## **Politainment**

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Politainment refers to the blending of politics and entertainment into a new type of political communication. The portmanteau word is composed of “politics” and “entertainment,” analogously to the term → infotainment. As well as infotainment, which is used as a label for a specific television program type, the term “politainment” denotes, in a broader sense, the entangling of political actors, topics, and processes with the entertainment culture. According to Dörner (2001), two different, though interrelated forms (or levels) of politainment may be distinguished: entertaining politics and political entertainment. Both take advantage of the mass media’s potential to attract wide

audiences and to create celebrity (→ Celebrity Culture). Politainment may be seen as resulting from an increasing mediatization and professionalization of politics that characterize modern democracies (→ Mediatization of Politics; Political Consultant; Spin Doctor). Governments, parties, and politicians cope with these developments by adapting to the → media logic, particularly to the selection criteria and presentation formats of → television (→ Television News; Television News, Visual Components of).

*Entertaining politics* serves political actors to get media access in order to enhance their public images and to promote political issues. This is quite obvious during election campaigns (→ Election Campaign Communication), when, for example, party conventions are staged by movie directors mimicking the dramaturgy of pop concerts, and when political candidates appear on popular television talk shows. Politicians presenting themselves in an entertainment setting, exposing their personal characteristics and private lives, are catering especially to voters with little interest in politics.

A certain type of politainment exploits for political purposes the popularity of showbiz celebrities. This is the case when pop stars engage in politics, endorse political candidates, or even move into political offices. For example, well-known singers such as Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Bob Marley, and Bruce Springsteen, as well as bands such as the Clash, Rage Against the Machine, and Public Enemy, are known for expressing political viewpoints. Others, like Bono and Bob Geldof, seek publicity in the context of world economic forums or G8 summits in order to advocate political goals. Famous movie stars like Ronald Reagan and Arnold Schwarzenegger gained top political office in the United States and thus succeeded in transmuting popularity into political influence. Silvio Berlusconi's career took him from solo entertainer to Italian prime minister, after having been successful in the television business. The Berlusconi case exemplifies how commanding television entertainment can be transformed into political power.

*Political entertainment*, a somewhat different type of politainment, refers to political topics in various entertainment formats of → popular music, film (→ Film as Popular Culture), and television. The entertainment industry tends to exploit the world of politics with its sometimes interesting personalities, prestigious figures, and exciting scandals (→ Scandalization in the News). Movies and television plays take up political matters as raw material for drama or satire plots, as illustrated by movies such as *Wag the Dog* and *Primary Colors*, and by serials like *West Wing* and *Yes, Prime Minister*. Late-night television, following the model of NBC's *Tonight Show* (made famous by Johnny Carson) and now well established in many countries, presents political issues and celebrities in an entertaining format mixed with showbiz and comedy. It is assumed that Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* had a decisive role in promoting Schwarzenegger's candidacy for governorate of California.

This example illustrates quite well the symbiotic relationship between politics and entertainment. Politainment offers political actors effective means for reaching the public and pursuing political goals and, in exchange, provides the entertainment industry with celebrity figures and exciting stories. As a result, politics appears entertaining while public affairs enter popular media, so that the distinction between fact and fiction erodes. The Clinton–Lewinsky scandal and its media coverage are perhaps the best-known example of the blurring line between hard news and tabloid-style entertainment (Carpini & Williams 2001).

Politainment seems to serve political functions, as it brings political actors and issues to the attention of a wide and partly apolitical audience and may thus stimulate political participation and contribute to agenda-setting processes. The legendary Live Aid and Live 8 concerts reached millions of people worldwide and directed public attention to famine and poverty in the third world. The Live Earth concerts in 2007 followed this model to promote the issue of global warming. There is empirical evidence that the strategy of using entertainment as a vehicle for political matters is successful, particularly in media environments such as the US, dominated by entertainment formats and → soft news (Baum & Jamison 2006). Van Zoonen (2005) draws a parallel between engaged citizens and the behavior of fans of popular music, claiming that entertainment makes citizenship pleasurable. Politainment may stimulate interpersonal communication and Internet interaction, give an emotional access to the world of politics, and thus strengthen political values.

More often, however, politainment is regarded as a problematic development, criticized for downgrading civic culture and for contributing to → political cynicism. Politainment as a communication strategy designed by political marketing specialists is suspected of leading to excessive personalization, even “celebritization,” of politics and of fostering political populism (→ Mediated Populism; Political Marketing). Staging political events as spectacles and presenting politics through the art forms of popular culture may create a fake picture of the political reality, a political “fantasyland” (Nimmo & Combs 1983), impeding rather than advancing citizens’ understanding and deliberation of politics.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Infotainment ▶ Media Logic ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Popular Music ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Soft News ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Television News, Visual Components of

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# Politeness Theory

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Politeness theory is a sociolinguistic theory in the pragmatic tradition that was developed by Brown and Levinson, who extended Goffman's dramaturgical approach. Using Durkheim's work on social rituals, Goffman examined how people manage their public identities, which he labeled *face*. When in the presence of others, one's face is always on display and others will form impressions and respond to these impressions (→ Impression Management; Self-Presentation). Face, then, becomes a situated social identity that is not owned, but rather resides in the flow of human interaction. To have one's face invalidated by others means to lose face; to have it sanctioned is to have face. Face must therefore be maintained and is subject to constant threats. The process by which people maintain face is called *facework*. Because people are mutually concerned with maintaining each other's face, facework becomes a necessary social ritual that provides the cooperative mechanism for interaction order as opposed to interaction chaos. Considerable research in interpersonal communication has used politeness theory and facework to examine the communicative strategies people use to enact, support, or challenge face.

Brown and Levinson extended Goffman's analysis by refining the concept of face, and by proposing a heuristic of politeness strategies people use to manage *face-threatening acts* (FTAs). Face was defined in terms of two opposing human needs: *negative face* (the need for autonomy) and *positive face* (the need for validation). The struggle to balance positive and negative face points to a fundamental conflict involved in human interaction: on the one hand, people strive to cooperatively manage each other's face, and on the other hand, they tend to unintentionally commit acts that are inherently face threatening. It is this presumably universal conflict that permeates all social interaction and that subsequently motivates the use of politeness strategies. The severity of an FTA is determined by (1) the social distance of the speaker to the hearer (e.g., status, closeness), (2) the power of the speaker relative to the hearer, and (3) the rank of the FTA (i.e., a cultural and personal assessment of the threat magnitude).

Drawing from Grice's *conversational maxims*, Brown and Levinson proposed a hierarchy of five mutually exclusive politeness strategies that balance two opposing goals: the goal to communicate the content of the message in an efficient way, and the goal to preserve one's own and the other's positive/negative face. The most polite strategy is to entirely *avoid the FTA*, which maximizes face saving at the expense of communicating content. The least polite strategy is to relinquish all efforts at face saving and to go *bald-on-record* without redress, a strategy that prioritizes the content of the message at the expense of face. In between are three strategies that vary in degree of politeness. People might choose to do an FTA *off record* through innuendos. When speakers use *positive politeness* FTAs, they show regard for the recipient's positive attributes (e.g., claiming common ground), whereas *negative politeness* FTAs minimize imposition on the listener's autonomy (e.g., incurring a debt). According to Brown and Levinson (1987), negative politeness strategies are more polite than positive politeness strategies, because they mark the speaker's self-effacement.

Politeness theory and facework have been tested not only cross-culturally (Holtgraves 2001) and nonverbally, but also in face-threatening social contexts, such as the provision of advice and requests, sexual resistance, social influence, phone calls to a 911 emergency center, and doctor–patient conversations (MacMartin et al. 2001; Metts & Grohskopf 2003). Empirical research on politeness theory has used two different methodologies to examine politeness and facework. First, the extent to which certain strategies are more or less face threatening has been examined most frequently with a message perception method, which requires participants to read hypothetical scenarios or dialogues that vary in face threat. Participants then evaluate strategies that vary in politeness on the basis of their perceived attention to positive or negative face. Second, by far the greatest amount of research has tested how politeness is enacted in everyday conversations by using discourse analysis, an interpretive method that attempts to bridge the gap between sentence meaning and speaker meaning by examining the functions of specific speech acts. So far, results are mixed, which might partially be a function of the different methodologies that have been used to examine politeness and facework. For example, scholars in the message perception tradition argue that speakers view positive politeness as more positive than negative-politeness strategies, and use various politeness strategies within the same utterance, even though these strategies were conceived initially as linearly arrayed and mutually exclusive (Metts & Grohskopf 2003). Brown and Levinson (1987), however, contend that politeness theory needs to be examined with interpretive, rather than deterministic, methodologies in order to capture subtle speaker–hearer relationships in speech acts in everyday interactions.

Face, faceless and facework, have entered the common vernacular in a relatively short period of time, indicating their immense relevance and heuristic value. Future research will focus on several issues. For instance, initial work has begun to uncover individual differences in face needs and facework competence. In addition, the relative importance of positive face compared to negative face appears to be an important distinction between personal and social relationships. Yet, we know little about how people avoid threats to positive face in close relationships. Scenario studies might not reveal the conversational nuances relational partners use to manage positive face. Rather, a detailed analysis of couples' conversation is necessary.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse Analysis ► Impression Management ► Self-Presentation

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# Political Advertising

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Political advertising is a form of political communication that uses the mass media to promote political candidates, parties, policy issues, and/or ideas. Advertising messages are generally controlled messages allowing for direct communication with the public and voters without interpretation or filtering by news media or other sources.

In the United States, where political advertising is the dominant form of communication between political candidates and voters, political advertising is a paid media form, and candidates and parties purchase airtime or space for their advertising messages directly from commercial media outlets. Since political advertising enjoys strong protection as a form of free speech/free expression under the US Constitution, there are very few regulations or restrictions on the amount of advertising that can be purchased or the content of advertising messages. In other countries political advertising, particularly on radio and television, is either prohibited or tightly controlled. Some countries allow more freedom for print advertising, and, since purchase of broadcast advertising is prohibited, candidates or parties are given free time for promotional messages. The UK and France are examples of such systems. Other countries (e.g., Germany) have a dual system, providing free time on public broadcasting outlets and allowing purchase of time on private stations (→ Political Communication Systems).

## ISSUES OF FORM AND CONTENT

Early forms of political advertising were printed, and generally took the form of → posters, signs, mailers, flyers, and brochures. Newspapers and magazines also offer important mass distribution channels. In the first half of the twentieth century, radio developed into an important advertising medium, but it was the development of television that led to the current popularity and significance of political advertising. Beginning in the United States with the first presidential campaign of Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1952, candidates and parties began to purchase time for political advertising on television. Since that time, televised political advertising in the United States has been an increasingly important part of every presidential campaign, and dominates the communication at almost all election levels, including state and local elections (see Jamieson 1996 for an overview of the historical evolution of political advertising in the United States).

In democracies around the world political advertising has also evolved into an important form of communication. In many countries printed forms of political advertising, such as posters and newspaper advertising, remain the most important forms of electoral communication. Some observers suggest that “American-style” televised political advertising has been spreading to other countries, but there is also evidence that these trends are more the result of professionalization and modernization of campaign techniques (Kaid & Holtz-Bacha 1995; Kaid 2006a).

*Criticisms* of political advertising have become a recurring aspect of politics in many democracies. In addition to complaints about the accuracy or truth of specific political ads, the most common criticisms are (1) that political spots are too short to contain meaningful information, (2) that television ads focus too much attention on the candidate's image at the expense of issues, and (3) that political ads are too negative. Certainly political spots in the United States are quite short: the average length is now around 30 seconds, and some are surely superficial and lacking in substance. Many spots, however, can convey simple viewpoints of the candidate in 30 seconds. In most other countries, the prescribed format is somewhat longer, up to 5 minutes or longer. Research has not supported the second concern. In their analysis of the video style of presidential spots in the US, Kaid and Johnston (2001) verified that television spots focus much more heavily on issues than on image or candidate qualities. This is also true of most electoral advertising and party broadcasts in other countries (Kaid & Holtz-Bacha 1995; Kaid 2006a).

The concern about the increase in negative or attack advertising may be a valid one (→ Negative Campaigning). Negative advertising is usually defined as advertising that attacks the opponent or opposing idea, rather than discussing the positive attributes of the sponsoring candidate, party, or issue. In the United States the amount of such negative advertising has been increasing over the past two decades, and in some recent presidential campaigns the percentage of negative ads was higher than that of positive ads. This trend toward negativity has also increased as a result of new campaign finance laws in the United States, which greatly expanded the involvement of independent groups as sponsors of political advertising. In the 2004 presidential campaign, for instance, independent groups such as the Media Fund, MoveOn.org, Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, and the Progress for America Voter Fund spent millions of dollars on negative political advertising.

While these trends toward negativity in US presidential elections continue, there is no evidence that the majority of electoral advertising at state and local levels is negative. There are certainly notorious examples of attack ads in races for senator, governor, or Congress, but the majority of ads are positive. This is also true of political advertising in other countries. While many countries do have some examples of attack advertising, and trends suggest that this may be increasing, most political advertising outside the United States focuses more on the positive attributes and issue positions of the sponsoring candidate or party.

## **EFFECTS OF POLITICAL ADVERTISING**

The effects of political advertising are less easily and clearly documented, but some conclusions are clear. One of televised political advertising's great advantages is that it is capable of overcoming selective exposure. Many voters only choose to expose themselves to political messages that are in line with their predispositions, making them less likely to see persuasive messages with opposing viewpoints. However, in the US political spots come in the middle of television programs, leaving voters less able to avoid those that have messages counter to their beliefs. Television ads also reach voters when their other defenses against opposing messages may be down, when they are focused on other concerns and more open to persuasion. Thus, political advertising tends to work best with voters who are uninvolved or even undecided (→ Advertising Effectiveness).

Overall, there is a large body of research that provides convincing evidence that political television advertising can be effective in *changing a candidate's image* and/or in affecting *voting decisions* about the candidate (Kaid 2004). The former effect, changes in → candidate image, may go in either direction. That is, the changed effect may be an increase in positive opinions or a negative effect decreasing the image. Similar effects have been observed in many countries around the world. Some research has also tied exposure to political television ads directly to voting behaviors and electoral outcomes (→ Political Persuasion).

Political advertising is particularly effective in communicating *issue information* to voters. Exposure to political advertising often leads to increased voter knowledge. In fact, studies have shown that political advertising can be more effective at eliciting voter recall of issues than can exposure to television news (Patterson & McClure 1976) or even televised debates (Just et al. 1990).

Because *negative advertising* has been increasing, considerable research has been dedicated to determining the conditions under which it is effective. Some candidates and parties fear a backlash from negative advertising that might harm, instead of help, the sponsoring candidate. While a few researchers have observed such effects, the overwhelming evidence suggests that negative advertising is quite effective, with limited backlash potential. One of the reasons for this effectiveness is that the public tends to remember negative information more than positive information. Negative ads also tend to be more effective when they criticize the issue positions of the opposing candidate, rather than the personal qualities or image of the opponent.

Research also offers some good advice about how to offset the effects of negative advertising. First, it is helpful to inoculate voters against possible negative attacks. By providing counterevidence or positive candidate information first, a candidate or party decreases the possibility that later attacks will be credible. Second, once an attack has been made in a negative advertisement, the target must provide a rebuttal to the charges. If a candidate is attacked and does not respond, the public tends to believe the attack is true. American presidential campaigns provide many good examples of the dangers in letting attacks go un rebutted. In 1988 Michael Dukakis's campaign was damaged by his failure to respond quickly to George H. W. Bush's advertising attacks criticizing Dukakis's record on crime. More recently, in 2004 John Kerry failed to take seriously the attacks of the Swift Boat Veterans for Truth group on his Vietnam War record. Rebuttals must come quickly, and they must be direct responses, not couched in vague or ambiguous terms.

There is also a concern that increased negative advertising may lead to lessened participation in the political process by voters. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1995) have proposed that exposure to negative advertisements can decrease election turnout by turning voters off and making them cynical about politics. Most other researchers, however, have not found this to be the case, and some research even suggests that heightened negativity may increase political interest and stimulate turnout (Kaid 2006a).

## NEW DIRECTIONS IN POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Criticisms of political advertising have led to the desire on the part of news journalists to scrutinize political ads and to attempt to circumvent the candidate's desire for a controlled message unfiltered by the media. Print and broadcast journalists have begun to offer

“adwatches” as a way of exposing inaccurate or distorted advertising messages. In an adwatch, a journalist analyzes the advertisement, researches the claims made in it, and attempts to evaluate the truth and accuracy of the ad. While journalists hoped adwatches would mediate the effects of ads on the public by pointing out untruthful or distorted claims, studies have shown that this is often not the case. Frequently, despite journalistic efforts, adwatches have served to enhance the ad, making its visual and verbal claims more salient to viewers.

Political advertising has taken new directions recently with the increased importance of the → Internet (Kaid 2006b). Candidates are using websites as a form of direct political advertising, and they are also using them to host copies of their political television ads, making it possible for viewers to play and replay the ads. In addition, some candidates and third-party interest groups are using their own websites to distribute unique video ads produced only for distribution on the web. Some of these formats take advantage of the interactivity possible on the web, thus providing more opportunity for direct voter involvement in the ads. Web publishing tools have also made it possible for ordinary citizens to produce their own ads. These are all trends that will grow and take new directions in the future.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising Effectiveness ► Candidate Image ► Election Campaign Communication ► Internet ► Negative Campaigning ► Party Political Communication ► Political Communication Systems ► Political Marketing ► Political Persuasion ► Poster ► Propaganda

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# Political Cognitions

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“Political cognitions” refers to the ability of human beings to acquire and possess → political knowledge through perception, reasoning, or intuition. Citizens’ cognitions about politics come mainly from information supplied by the mass media – television, newspapers, magazines, or the Internet – because most political happenings are beyond the day-to-day experiences of citizens. Dependence on mass media has consequences for peoples’ cognitions about politics and makes it important to investigate what kinds of information mass media produce.

## **MEDIA AS SOURCES OF COGNITIONS**

Despite news professionals’ claims of balanced reporting, information provided by the mass media is biased (→ Balance; Bias in the News). Indeed, complete → neutrality is impossible. Media personnel must choose what political stories to report, whom to use as story sources, and how to present the narrative of political events. By highlighting certain issues, people, and details, and framing them to reflect particular perspectives, the media affect how people interpret information and use it for political decisions (→ Framing Effects). For instance, Clinton’s approval ratings rose during the Lewinsky sex scandal when news media framed the event as a conservative war waged against a liberal president rather than focusing on the ethical issues concerning the sexual behavior of the president.

The news media are often blamed by democratic theorists for the public’s lack of civic participation and knowledge. These theorists charge that the media provide insufficient political information for effective participation in public life. However, other theorists absolve the media of blame, noting that the number of important issues under consideration at any one time is so great that citizens cannot possibly be fully informed about all of them. Even if people know the details of an event initially, they soon forget them and retain only the gist of the story and their reactions to it. Nonetheless, citizens can make sound political decisions without knowing most of the facts about which social scientists quiz them when judging their civic competence.

The media do deserve blame for often failing to present political information in ways that citizens can easily process and remember. Political events are frequently presented as discrete happenings, unconnected to any political history and narrative. Political stories rarely focus on the aspects that the majority of citizens find most interesting and memorable. That makes it difficult for people to commit these stories to long-term memory, and exacerbates the already considerable negative effects of inattention and apathy.

Distinguishing media impact on citizens’ attitudes from the impact of multiple other information sources is difficult. Experiments have been useful in isolating mass media

effects but raise questions about the validity of the findings in real-world settings. Experiments have revealed ample evidence of profound → media effects on citizens' political attitudes. Citizens tend to adopt the dominant frames that are offered by the mass media. Consequently, their political attitudes conform to the mainstream opinions featured by the media, which in turn reflect the views of those political elites on which the media rely heavily as information sources (→ News Sources). Not only do media messages affect the tenor of political attitudes, but media selection of issues has an → agenda-setting effect. The emphasis of media coverage, especially if stories are prominently placed, indicates to citizens which issues are significant and which can be safely ignored. Political issues that are emphasized in media stories are much more likely to be described as one of the “most important” issues than are issues receiving lesser attention (Iyengar 1991).

Though political messages in the media unquestionably affect the political attitudes of citizens, the process involves more than a simple transfer of information (→ Attitudes). People are not blank political slates and their political cognitions are not completely determined by media information (→ Information Processing). People combine their own experiences, biases, motivations, and stereotypes with the political information they consume (→ Information Processing; Stereotypes; Stereotypes). Their built-up expectations and beliefs about political issues and events provide a lens through which they view and interpret new political messages. Political cognitions thus represent a melding of content and framing of political messages with citizens' existing political attitudes and biases. Because existing attitudes and biases guide citizens' opinion formation, this process has been dubbed “motivated reasoning” (Lundgren & Prislín 1998).

### **COGNITIVE PROCESSING NEEDS AND CAPABILITIES**

Political scientists have different conceptions of how much breadth and depth of political knowledge average citizens need in a democracy to perform their civic duties. While most deem a well-informed and active public essential, they disagree about the standards that should be applied. Judged by idealistic standards about citizens' roles in a democracy (the “ideal” citizen), average citizens are woefully uninformed about current and historical political facts. They know too little about their current government officials and political institutions, current domestic and international political issues, political geography, and political history.

Political realists concede that citizens have neither the cognitive capabilities nor the motivation to process the vast amounts of political data necessary to fully understand the major political issues requiring attention at various times. Still, people do pay attention to news stories, but they concentrate their attention on the limited amount of information that they find interesting and relevant to their own lives and essential for fulfilling their civic obligations (→ News Processing and Retention). They participate only selectively in the political process. Although democratic idealists are disturbed by limited learning, economic theories suggest that it constitutes rational behavior because it is a waste of intellectual resources to obtain detailed political knowledge about matters that do not appear to be of immediate concern (Downs 1957). Motivation to learn political information peaks at times of crisis when citizens may have to take action but it tends to be low at other times.



Citizens are “active information processors and meaning constructors” rather than passive consumers of political messages (Gamson et al. 1992). However, they tend to choose political messages that provide information with which they already agree. Selective exposure then reinforces existing beliefs. Information that conflicts with established beliefs is avoided because it can produce cognitive dissonance, which is an uncomfortable mental state (Festinger & Carlsmith 1959; → Cognitive Dissonance Theory).

Citizens use cognitive shortcuts in order to simplify and efficiently process political information. They are also unsystematic cognitive processors who do not search their entire memory for relevant political information when expressing political opinions; instead, they tend to use information that is readily available from memory and made salient by the media. For instance, when the media routinely frame politics in terms of politicians’ personalities instead of political issues, personality factors become paramount in people’s thinking and behavior (i.e., voting).

### **SOCIAL INFLUENCES**

Although cognitive political processing is an individual activity and a major part of human identity, it also has social components. For instance, people monitor their social environment and alter their political communication to conform to the political norms of their society. People also alter their search of political information and their own political communication based on what they believe to be the majority or consensus political opinion (Mutz 1998; → Climate of Opinion; Pluralistic Ignorance; Social Perception; Third-Person Effects).

Just as the media act as major sources of information and influence on political cognitions, social factors heavily influence political thinking. Ethnicity, nationality, age, socio-economic status, education, religion, and gender are all social factors that strongly influence political thinking and attitudes. In fact, these social factors are often the central focus of political issues that are important to people, and form the core of their political identities. For example, political attitudes about the role of women in society cannot help but be affected by a person’s nationality, religion, and, of course, gender.

### **EMOTIONS AND POLITICAL INFORMATION PROCESSING**

Many political topics are dramatic and apt to arouse citizens’ → emotions. In fact, political rhetoric is deliberately constructed to appeal to feelings like pride, love of country, anxiety, or fear. Despite the pervasiveness of emotion-arousing appeals, emotional influences on thinking have been condemned in the past as irrational and harmful, and contrary to the prized canons of rationality.

Advances in neuroscience demonstrate that earlier views were mistaken. Emotional arousal releases hormones that enhance human perceptions, speed reactions, and deepen and sharpen memories. In fact, emotional arousal provides the spark that sets off human thinking processes. The emotional arousal produced by many political messages therefore has a major impact on rational political thinking and on the conduct of politics (→ Emotional Arousal Theory). This is especially true during stirring political events like fiercely contested elections, revolutions, or civil and international wars.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News  
 ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotional Arousal Theory  
 ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes  
 ▶ Media Effects ▶ Neutrality ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ News Sources  
 ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Social Perception  
 ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## **Political Communication**

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Communication is considered to be *political* if it relates to the exchange of messages among political actors. For example, most of what politicians do is political communication. Likewise, citizens communicate politics when they discuss political issues with friends or family members, phone in to political radio talks shows, or participate in political chats on the Internet. Demonstrations and other forms of protest are more

expressive, sometimes even violent, forms of political communication. However, only few people engage in such forms of communicative activity. Most citizens confine themselves to the role of passive spectators of politics that is presented by mass media. Nevertheless, the consumption of political media reports is a form of political communication too.

In abstract terms, the category of political actors includes all groups, organizations, and individuals who are participating in the process of collectively binding decision-making on the distribution of scarce resources in society. Some of these actions – and the corresponding communications – take place backstage, i.e., in the arcane spheres of party assemblies, parliamentary commissions, diplomatic negotiations, and meetings in government offices. But a major part is performed in public, for example when politicians give public speeches, debate in a parliamentary plenum, or present statements in front of television cameras.

Communication research focuses on political communications taking place *in public*, whereas political science is more interested in decision-making processes inside political institutions. But the research topics of both disciplines overlap considerably.

### CHANGING POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

While politics is becoming more dependent, in its central functions, on mass media, questions relating to the → mediatization of politics are assuming higher ranks on the research agenda. Concepts such as → “media democracy” and “electronic democracy” (→ E-Democracy) have been introduced in order to characterize the transformation of politics brought about by the evolution of mass media. The changes are part of a far-reaching → mediatization of society, which involves all spheres of society and social life (→ Information Society).

According to a model proposed by Blumler and Kavanagh (1999), we are now witnessing the emergence of a “third age” of political communication. This new era is characterized by media abundance, the growth of → political marketing, intensified professionalization of political publicity, and strong currents of populism entering both politics and the media (→ Mediated Populism; Populism and Responsiveness). Politics is adapting to the → “media logic” and is thus continuously shaped by the interactions with mass media. The redistribution of power that comes along with the evolution of mass media is affecting the orientations and norms that regulate the behavior of political actors and journalists. In addition, the manner in which political actors and the media communicate vis-à-vis the general public is assuming new modes and formats.

Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) suggested conceptualizing the interface of the realms of politics and journalism in terms of a → political communication system in which politicians and journalists interact in order to produce political news and comments for a mass audience. The interactions of politicians and media professionals are shaped by a specific → *political communication culture*, which varies across countries according to system-specific role definitions and behavioral norms. Moreover, different regulatory conditions determine the audience orientations and content outputs of political communication systems. They may vary depending on the structure and development of media markets, the degree and form of → professionalization of journalism, the degree of → party–press parallelism, and the degree and nature of state intervention in the media

system (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995; Hallin & Mancini 2004). For example, if there are close party ties with media systems, more biased political content can be expected and also more conflicts over issue priorities. By contrast, a high degree of autonomy of the media system may activate citizens to seek information and guidance about political matters.

Following up on these ideas, Hallin and Mancini (2004) present a cross-country comparative analysis which distinguishes European political communication systems according to three different models: (1) the polarized pluralist model, which applies to Mediterranean countries such as France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain; (2) the democratic corporatist model, which characterizes the situation in northern and central European countries; and (3) the liberal model, which prevails in the UK, the United States, Canada, and Ireland.

### **THE COMMUNICATION OF POLITICS**

In spite of impressive modernization trends, including, for example, the growing importance of → visual communication, most of the discourse among political actors is still language based. Political elites use language for strategic purposes such as building a positive image, winning public support, or establishing specific perspectives for evaluation (→ Political Language; Strategic Communication). Language labels are instrumental in defining particular groups as friends or foes, and labels indicate that certain problems are relevant for political discussion (→ Symbolic Politics). On the other hand, language serves citizens to make sense of politics, form opinions, and take political decisions (→ Sense-Making). For example, party labels are cues that help voters to make decisions about political candidates or issues (→ Party Political Communication).

The empirical study of language and → political symbols was inaugurated by → Lasswell and associates with their seminal analyses of → propaganda during both twentieth-century World Wars (see, e.g., Lasswell et al. 1949). Analyses of the structure and functions of political rhetoric are now intensely covered fields of research (→ Rhetoric and Politics; Rhetoric and Social Protest). In recent times, normative discourse theories, particularly the “deliberative model” emphasizing the formation of considered opinions through argumentative exchange, as proposed by → Habermas and others, attracted considerable attention (→ Deliberative Polls; Deliberativeness in Political Communication). Deliberation refers to a process in which individuals discuss and weigh arguments from various points of view.

The mass media play a pivotal role in making the political discourse open to the public. Mass media select, process, and transmit → political news and current affairs content (→ Media Production and Content). For ordinary citizens and even for political decision-makers, the media coverage of politics is the most relevant and quite often the only source of information about current events. The picture of politics as presented by the media, whether it is accurate or flawed, neutral or partisan, is for most people a major orientation base. Because most political events elude direct personal experience, mediated information serves to form individuals’ perceptions of the political reality, including the predominating opinion climate (→ Climate of Opinion; Media and Perceptions of Reality). Moreover, when political actors anticipate the media reporting and behave according to what they think the media want, the mediated political reality becomes self-fulfilling.

Thus, political news creates the events that it seems to represent (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events).

The indispensable functions of mass media for the newsmaking and publicity of political actors has turned the media into a “political institution” serving particularly actors of the political center to accomplish political and policy goals (Cook 2005). There is a growing demand of governments, political parties, and various interest groups for professionalizing their political communications (Negrine et al. 2007). A number of newly emerged professions provide expertise specific to publicity and political advocacy, as, for example, public opinion analysts, → public relations experts, and a variety of → political consultants. Professionalization tendencies are most obvious and most advanced in modern election campaigning, which makes use of the theory and practice of political marketing. The “marketing colonization” of politics, as critics have termed it, includes an increased use of public opinion polls for campaign planning and also for newsmaking and spin doctoring (→ Election Surveys; Polls and the Media). Spin doctoring involves, among other things, rapid rebuttals, attacking opponents, and explaining campaign strategy to journalists (→ Spin Doctor).

By providing a platform for the public debate of political issues, the media construct a → *public sphere*, that is, an open realm for the exchange of information and opinions among diverse political actors. The media-constructed public sphere has a *reflexive* character, allowing political actors to “revisit perceived public opinions and respond to them after reconsideration” (Habermas 2006). In principle, this is conducive to the public sphere as a filtering mechanism that serves to generate “considered” public opinions. However, according to Habermas, the dynamics of public communication may be impaired by dominating powerful actors of the political center and by deficiencies of the media system, namely commercialization tendencies and connections with special-interest groups.

Rather than confining their role to functioning as intermediaries, i.e., serving the information and publication needs of all groups in society, the media themselves have become powerful political actors, sometimes referred to as the → fourth estate. Media organizations pursue policy objectives, for example, by expressing specific partisan opinions, by endorsing the interests of certain societal groups, or by legitimizing the views of those in power (→ Media as Political Actors). This may have consequences for the balance of power among the classical political estates – legislative, executive, and judiciary – and thus raises questions concerning the definition of media freedom and mechanisms of media control (→ Media Policy).

## **POLITICAL COMMUNICATION CONTENT**

The evolution of mass media brought about contradictory results as to citizens’ exposure to political information. On the one hand, due to a number of 24-hour news networks on radio and television and, in addition, a plethora of Internet news pages, the sheer volume of available political information proliferated immensely (→ Internet News; Newscast, 24-Hour). On the other hand, many mainstream broadcasters and newspapers have reduced their hard news coverage, especially foreign affairs reporting, and have instead extended the supply of entertaining content, → soft news, and → infotainment formats. This goes along with shrinking audiences of serious newspapers and public affairs

programs in many countries. While politically attentive citizens benefit enormously from the enriched political media menu, particularly of the Internet, the audience majority seems to be content with being informed just about the most salient issues.

Corresponding to the key role of mass media in spreading news, much research attention is paid to the volume and structure of political content available in the press, on radio and television, and on the Internet. The focus of most analyses is on mass media's coverage of political events and issues in the news (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; News as Discourse). As political news is the most important and often the only source available to citizens and other political actors for forming an impression of current events, questions of → media performance, particularly with reference to democratic citizenship, are of central relevance.

Hence, a growing field of research is devoted to assessing the quality of journalistic reporting and testing political news for its → accuracy and objectivity. These and other criteria are derived from considerations of the → public interest, from professional standards or from theories of democracy (→ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in; Standards of News). A recent review of predominantly US research concludes that the quantity and quality of news supplied by mass media is adequate for citizens' needs if one takes into account the practical realities of a commercial media system (Graber 2004). The answer might be different for a system with a strong media sector committed to a public service mission, as is still the case in some European countries.

By contrast, there is also ample empirical evidence confirming → Walter Lippmann's (1922, 358) dictum that "news and truth are not the same thing and must be clearly distinguished." But only part of the reporting that does not meet the expectations of concerned observers is flawed by deliberate attempts at slanting the news. More often structural factors that are inherent to the news production process are responsible for differences between the political reality and its media representation. A large number of studies have documented that the news media's picture of the political reality is characterized by elite actions, proximity, negativity, and other → news values that help to select among an abundance of events entering the editors' desks day after day.

Political actors' attempts at influencing the journalistic selection mechanisms affect the news media's endeavor to present a fairly accurate picture of the political reality. Several strategies serve this purpose; for example, staging newsworthy pseudo-events or tailoring political events to the needs of news production. Professional → issue management, based on communication theories and research results, is deployed not only by political parties and powerful interest groups, but also by grassroots organizations and social movements (→ Issue Management in Politics). Nation-states and governments also engage in → media diplomacy as a strategy to back up or even substitute for traditional means of managing international relations. And political terrorists too are exploiting the Internet and other mass media for the diffusion of violent and subversive messages and for blackmailing political authorities (→ Mediated Terrorism).

## **CITIZENS' COMMUNICATING**

Although democracies rest on the will of the people, most citizens do not actively participate in politics other than casting a vote on election day. Even political talk plays a

minor role in the everyday life of most people. Much more common is passive consumption of the political spectacle as delivered by mass media. Television is still the main source of information about politics for the average citizen, though the Internet is gaining ground, particularly among the younger generation, at least in some countries (→ Political Media Use). A high correlation of political media use with certain demographic factors is responsible for large differences in the reach of political news and in citizens' acquisition of political information (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). In all countries those who have a higher income, who are better educated, and who are more strongly interested in politics are the most attentive to political information. However, due to blurring lines between hard news, soft news, and light entertainment in some mass media, there is also a chance that politically inattentive citizens are unwittingly exposed to mediated politics (→ Politainment).

Media use can be expected to increase → political knowledge, and indeed many studies show that this is actually the case. Newspaper reading seems to be most effective in this respect, though it is not quite clear how much of the effect has to be attributed especially to media exposure and how much is due to the distinct motivational predispositions of newspaper readers (→ Exposure to Print Media). People with lower levels of education and little interest in politics may, under certain conditions, gain some political knowledge from television news. Internet use, at least among young adults in some countries, was found to contribute to political knowledge too (→ Political Socialization through the Media). In general, intensive news use is correlated with political reflection and issue discussion. This indicates a mutual reinforcement among political media use, political deliberation, and civic participation, according to the pattern of a "virtuous circle" (Norris 2000).

Normally media audiences follow political news highly selectively, directed by their personal interests and political predispositions. Moreover, people have a quite limited processing and storage capacity, particularly for complex and unfamiliar topics, which constitute the bulk of hard news stories. This explains why most political news offered by the media is not recognized, and even stories that audience members attend to are processed only cursorily, hardly stored, or quickly forgotten (→ News Processing and Retention; Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Hence, studies testing political learning from the news show disappointing results, particularly if they apply standardized survey measures.

Whether the media's supply of political content and the audience's political learning from the media meet the requirements of democratic citizenship is a contested question. The answer depends essentially on how "good citizenship" is defined. If the ideal of the fully informed, participatory citizen serves as a starting point, content analyses and studies testing audience's political knowledge inevitably come to a sobering conclusion (for reviews of the pertinent literature, see Delli Carpini 2004; Graber 2004). However, the answer is different if the reality of political communication is measured on a more modest standard such as the "monitorial citizen" standard. Monitorial citizens, according to Schudson's (1998) understanding, need not be fully informed; they only have to scan the media for major political threats to themselves or their communities. The average monitorial citizen may rely on attentive publics who follow the political scene quite closely and who share their information with the less informed sections of the population.

“The media’s role in informing monitorial citizens may thus be a two-step process” (Graber 2004).

Relationships between mass media use and interpersonal communication were observed as early as 1940, in the seminal “Erie County study” of the US presidential election led by → Lazarsfeld et al. (1944). The researchers coined the concept of a → “two-step flow of communication,” which states that ideas often flow from the mass media to → opinion leaders and from them to population sections that are less attentive to the public discourse. The concept implies a role differentiation between opinion leaders on one side and their “followers” on the other. This notion, however, has been challenged by more recent research and substituted by the model of a social network among a number of different communication roles and positions (→ Media Content and Social Networks; Network Analysis; Social Networks).

### **CHANGING ELECTION CAMPAIGNS**

By far the most research activity is concentrating on → election campaign communication – for at least three different reasons. First, elections usually have far-reaching consequences for the distribution of power in society and the priorities of political decision-making. Second, election campaigning is essentially aimed at influencing citizens’ political beliefs and attitudes by communication means (→ Political Persuasion). Consequently, the impact of the campaign and its various elements on the voters’ minds and ultimately on their electoral behavior is the crucial question not only researchers are interested in, but first and foremost, those who are running for office or managing the campaign. Third, the election battlefield usually serves to deploy new tools of mass persuasion and new ways of instrumentalizing communication media for political purposes. In this respect the arrival of the Internet and other new media provided parties and candidates with new powerful tools to organize the campaign, to solicit funding, to mobilize supporters, and to reach the electorate. At the same time, the new media environment enlarged citizens’ opportunities of accessing relevant campaign information, expressing their personal opinions, and organizing collective actions through the networking capacity of the world wide web.

Communication researchers take advantage of election campaigns as a testing ground for advancing theories and methodologies. Several of the keywords that are in use to denote the change processes constituting the mediatization of politics originate from election campaign research. For a certain time period, it was common to regard the changes as signs of “Americanization,” in the sense that advanced American campaign practices are exported to other countries, or adopted by campaigners outside the United States. The critical overtone that was often associated with the Americanization concept derived from → cultural imperialism theories, which had their followers particularly during the late Cold War period (→ Americanization of the Media). As an alternative, some scholars suggested to conceive of the changes in election campaigning as a process of “modernization” (Swanson & Mancini 1996) or “postmodernization” (Norris 2000).

However, there are more precise characterizations of the transformation of election campaigning. For example, parties and candidates tend to extend their activities over the whole legislative period so that pre-election campaigns have been turned into permanent campaigns. Quite often hidden campaigning through means such as newsmaking and



issue management remains unnoticed by the average voter since it is interwoven with everyday politics. Targeting as a campaign strategy to reach specialized audiences benefits from the increasing diversification of mass media and from the emergence of new personalized media, particularly emails and mobile phones. The importance of television as an information source for voters as well as the persuasive power of visual communication have boosted the tendency to personalize election campaigning, i.e., to organize the strategy around the leading candidates and to emphasize their personal characteristics (→ Personalization of Campaigning). As a result, → candidate images and the “horse race,” that is, who is leading in the polls, may get more public attention than political issues and the parties’ political programs (→ Horse Race Coverage).

The extensive use of → election polls and forecasts, which are quite often commissioned by the media in order to enhance their campaign reporting, regularly gives rise to speculation about potential → “bandwagon effects,” implying that voters tend to follow what they perceive to be the majority opinion. On the other hand, the → “underdog effect” hypothesis states that voters may tend to support a competitor who is expected to lose. The research evidence speaks for a weak bandwagon effect rather than for an underdog effect.

A critical issue, particularly in the United States, though in some other countries too, is the practice of → negative campaigning, especially the growing number of negative political advertisements (→ Political Advertising). While there is clear evidence that negative ads do affect voting preferences, the consequences for voter turnout, → political efficacy, and political trust seem to be negligible, as studies in the United States show.

## **POLITICAL MEDIA EFFECTS**

As the study of mass communication is generally based on the premise of → media effects (McQuail 2005, 456), it is also a central presumption of political communication research that the media have a significant impact on politics (Graber 2005). A large number of key communication concepts and theoretical hypotheses in general relate to → political cognitions or political behavior. These include, for example, agenda-setting theory and related concepts, which have inspired very much research activity in recent decades (Bryant & Miron 2004; → Agenda Building; Agenda-Setting Effects; Framing Effects; Priming Theory). In almost all cases, the studies deal with the agenda of *political* issues.

From the perspective of certain political actors – namely politicians, political parties, government officials, and interest groups – the media are often seen as an instrument of political persuasion, i.e., for exerting purposive influence on → public opinion or on specific target groups. Traditionally, this type of communication was labeled “propaganda.” But the central role of propaganda in the fascist and communist regimes of the twentieth century brought the term into discredit. Nowadays more neutral terms such as information policy, public relations, or strategic communication are preferred to denote deliberate persuasive communication aimed at specific goals.

A broad field of communication research is devoted to examining the effectiveness of persuasive influence attempts. Part of this research is focused on the persuasion of individuals under experimental conditions, an approach that was introduced on a broad scale by → Hovland and his research team during World War II (Hovland et al. 1949; → Experimental Design). The tested messages include variously structured messages,

different kinds of media formats, and also advertisements (→ Advertising Effectiveness). Another strand of research looks at influence processes in campaign contexts, for example, in health campaigns, in political information campaigns, in → social marketing campaigns, and most often in election campaigns.

In the early days of systematic experimental study of → persuasion, media effects were conceptualized primarily in terms of attitude change. As empirical research showed that mass media quite often do not bring about the presumed attitudinal effects, or the effects are conditional on contextual or situational factors, increasingly complex models of persuasion were developed. More recent models are trying to take moderating conditions into consideration. For instance, the O-S-O-R model suggested by Markus and Zajonc (1985) and McLeod et al. (1994) stresses the importance of individual differences (“O”) – demographic, cultural, cognitive, or motivational – and of intervening reactions of recipients while they process a message. Another example is the → “elaboration likelihood model” by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), which posits a dual route to persuasion. Message involvement or importance decides on whether audience members apply a central or peripheral route of message processing (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models).

As distinct from such rather pragmatic approaches to media effectiveness, there is a broad field of political communication research with a critical or pessimistic orientation that starts from the more or less explicit assumption that mass communication may have negative implications for democratic citizenship and for the political system as a whole. Among the harmful media effects that have been hypothesized are eroding trust in political institutions, loss of social capital, and declining political efficacy (→ Social Capital, Media Effects on). The empirical evidence for these and other problematic media effects is mixed and obviously dependent on the specific political context, the historical situation, and the media environment under study. By and large, more detrimental political effects have been observed for the United States than for other countries, which may be due, at least to some degree, to the large number of studies undertaken in the US context. A typical example is research on → political cynicism. Studies in the US context have shown that exposure to news stories that frame politics as a strategic game rather than an endeavor to solve social problems does activate corrosive cynicism among citizens. Yet studies in the European context have provided evidence of the contrary, namely positive connections between cynicism and political sophistication.

## **POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND RESEARCH IN FLUX**

Evidently, the context of political communication is rapidly changing due to societal trends such as globalization, economization, individualization, and, above all, the rapid proliferation and diversification of mass media. The advent of the Internet and other new media has removed some of the constraints that traditional media have imposed on communication processes. Due to the enormous increase in content diversity, citizens can choose according to their individual political interests among an excessive variety of outlets and media products. While audience members can select more freely, the traditional media are losing some of their gatekeeping and filtering functions. Messages filtered according to journalistic routines and conventional news value criteria can be sufficiently

compensated for. Political actors can bypass the mass media and use their own channels for directly addressing the public or specific target groups. Thanks to the availability of convenient software, citizens can easily disseminate messages via weblogs or Internet platforms such as *YouTube*, or in direct person-to-person networking (→ Blogger; Online Media; P2P Networking). The new media seem to enhance both mediated expressions of political opinion and direct political interaction.

Research is trying to keep pace with these developments, though not with fully satisfying results. On the one hand, there is the interest of a well-established field – such as political communication research – in the continuity of theories and methods. On the other hand, this may also impede a commensurate adaptation to environmental changes.

The systematic study of political communication is a relatively young field that developed gradually during the twentieth century, though reflections on political communication, especially on strategies of political rhetoric, have been quite common in political philosophy and can be found in the ancient Greek works of Plato and Aristotle (→ Rhetoric, Greek). As a field of academic study and teaching, political communication was formally institutionalized only in the 1970s with the foundation of special divisions within scholarly organizations such as the → International Communication Association (ICA). Yet there are clear signs of maturity, as demonstrated by a considerable number of textbooks and handbooks that have appeared in recent decades in many countries and languages (e.g., Chaffee 1975; Mazzoleni 1998; Kaid 2004; Schulz 2007) as well as specialized scholarly journals (e.g., *Comunicazione Politica*, *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, *Political Communication*). Signs of maturity notwithstanding, the field is characterized by a fragmented intellectual structure due to the fact that political communication researchers are either based in neighboring disciplines or have different disciplinary backgrounds, such as political science, psychology, journalism, or speech communication (Lin & Kaid 2000). And many relevant articles are still scattered through various journals of several related disciplines, predominantly mass communication and political science.

An analysis of professional journals that appeared at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Graber 2005) may convey the impression that only a minor part of the relevant research follows closely the fundamental changes of political communication arising from the evolution of mass media. Most well-covered research themes have been on the agenda for decades. By far the most attention is paid to election campaigns. Other familiar topics on the list are international relations, information processing, public opinion, and campaign advertising. Studies of new media rank second, though. This signals that at least the transformation of media systems by new media has drawn extensive attention.

Another somewhat novel theme near the top of the list is *civic engagement*. The label refers to research that tests the presumed (mal)functioning of mass media for political participation. While this category of studies continues the critical strand of research mentioned above, it also represents a trend in political communication research that was already emerging, according to McLeod et al. (1994), at the end of the last century and has been rapidly growing since. Research on civic engagement includes studies with an explicit orientation to normative criteria, especially to standards derived from theories of democracy.

Still underdeveloped, but showing hopeful signs of growth, is *international comparative research* (see, e.g., Esser & Pfetsch 2004). Even though many countries around the world are catching up with political communication research, there is a great preponderance of

studies conducted in the United States. A growing body of international comparative research may serve to prevent a premature generalization of results pertaining to a specific political and media context or, as Blumler & Gurevitch (1995, 75–76) have put it, may act as an “antidote” to “naïve universalism” and “unwitting parochialism.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Bandwagon Effect ▶ Blogger ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Deliberative Polls ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ E-Democracy ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information Society ▶ Infotainment ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Issue Management ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Content and Social Networks ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Media Diplomacy ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media Performance ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Policy ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ Network Analysis ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ News Values ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Online Media ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Party Political Communication ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Persuasion ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Efficacy ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Language ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Political News ▶ Political Personality in Media Democracy ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Political Symbols ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Populism and Responsiveness ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric and Social Protest ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Social Networks ▶ Social Capital, Media Effects on ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Soft News ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Standards of News ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Symbolic Politics ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Underdog Effect ▶ Visual Communication

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# Political Communication Culture

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How does the way people think about politics influence the way and the means by which politics is communicated? And how does the communication of politics impact on political orientations and symbols? These questions are at the core of political communication culture, which refers to the forms of expression and the attitudinal milieu in which politics and media interact. The study of the interaction of media and politics with regard to the cultural roots of political communication was introduced by Gurevitch and Blumler (1977). Their aim was to identify and to analyze key dimensions along which political culture impacts on the processes and outcomes of political communication. Political culture refers to the → meanings attributed to politics. The study of political communication cultures has turned out to be most fruitful as a comparative framework. The investigation of political communication cultures across countries, social segments, or time may provide us with a better understanding of the processes of encoding and decoding political messages, the vocabulary of politics, the culture of journalism, the interrelationships between media and politics, and the relations between citizens and political elites (→ Political Communication).

## PREMISES OF POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

The idea of political communication culture rests on three premises. First, political communication in western democracies is to be understood as a process of → interaction between political actors and media actors.

Second, this interaction is based on a specific set of cultural expressions or actors' orientations and takes place in the institutional and societal contexts of the political system and of the media system (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). As an upshot of these considerations, political communication is to be regarded as a two-dimensional social system. It involves a structural dimension that refers to the institutional settings of the political system (e.g., the mechanisms of government, the electoral system, the role of political parties, the cleavage structure, etc.) and the media system (e.g., the degree of politicization or commercialization of media). It also involves a cultural dimension that includes the orientations of actors in political communication roles and/or the expressions of political messages. It is supposed then that we may be able to describe empirically the specific patterns of interaction between political actors and journalists by researching their orientations and the institutional contexts.

Third, the political communication culture approach gains significance first and foremost as a comparative framework. It calls for comparing across national political communication cultures, that is to say, between various dimensions of the media–politics interface across countries. It is also possible, however, to apply the framework to comparing smaller segments within a country, for instance to compare the media–politics interface on regional or local levels or within certain cultural segments, such as ethnic or cultural groups in a society.

### BASIC NOTIONS AND DIMENSIONS

In the current literature there are basically two conceptions of political communication culture, which vary in their emphasis and qualification of the relevant dimensions. In an updated version of their original approach, Gurevitch and Blumler (2004) point out that political communication culture comprises *three dimensions*: (1) the relationship between the media and political systems, which might be captured on a continuum from autonomy to subordination; (2) the norms that define the roles and functions of media for society, ranging from an essentially critical/watchdog function to a nation-building or state-supporting role; (3) the relationship between citizens and their political system that is expressed in the notion of citizenship, which may range from alienation or apathy to political engagement.

While Blumler and Gurevitch's concept provides a general, macro-analytical perspective on the impact of the political culture on various forms of political communication, there is a narrower notion formulated by Pfetsch (2004). This concept draws on the political culture model of Almond and Verba (1963) and applies it to the *politics–media relationship*. It claims that the exchanges between political actors and journalists are regulated by a set of orientations and norms that can be measured empirically on the individual actor's level. In this approach, political communication culture is defined as the actor's orientations toward specific objects of political communication, which determine the manner in which political actors and the media communicate vis-à-vis the general public.

Following this definition, political communication culture consists of attitudes toward (1) the institutions of exchange relations between politics and the media; (2) the input side of political communication, such as → public opinion, (3) the output side of political communication, such as the agenda-setting processes that are triggered by political → public relations or PR (→ Agenda-Setting Effects; Strategic Communication; Political Marketing); and (4) the role allocations and norms of professional behavior. The specific orientation patterns of political actors and their spokespersons on the one hand and of journalists on the other hand make up a national political communication culture. It is important to note that the self-image of the two groups of actors is characterized by tensions resulting from the conflicting interests of their institutions of origin. Thus, politicians view communication as an instrument with which to gain or retain political power, while journalists see it as a duty (and a business) to inform the public about what is at stake (→ Journalists' Role Perception).

The *emphasis of current research* on political communication culture is clearly on applying the framework to the empirical study of the communication forms and political processes of modern western democracies. One trajectory of this approach is to classify the interface between media and politics in various countries using a typology of four types of political communication cultures (two main types and two subtypes), which was put forward by Pfetsch (2004). In this heuristic a "media-oriented political communication culture" is to be distinguished from a "party-oriented type." While in the former, the milieu between media and politics is dominated by the media logic, political power calculations determine communication relationships in the latter. The third type, a "PR-oriented political communication culture," depends primarily on the close relationship

between journalism and political PR (→ Public Relations Roles). Finally, the “strategic type” is defined by the dominance of political logic, which is deployed by the strategic use of political PR to anticipate → media logic (Manheim 1998). Although this typology is a heuristic tool, it allows for differentiating national and sectoral milieus of political communication, and reflects on their potential impact on political forms and discourses in modern democracies.

## INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

Research on political communication culture became pertinent as an approach to studying the significance and meaning of political communication processes at a time when scholars felt it was not sufficient to describe only isolated phenomena in the outward manifestations of political communication, such as electoral campaigns (→ Election Campaign Communication), television formats and the personalization of politics, the contents of → news, or the practices of political public relations. Gurevitch and Blumler (2004) argued that, at a point when scholarship on political communication was rather dispersed and fragmented, it was necessary to understand the underlying processes of political communication and the public forms it takes in a larger framework, such as political culture.

The political communication culture approach thus can be located at the *crossroads of different strands of research* in communication science and political science. The core concept of the normative underpinning of the politics–media relationship and its outcome is related to studies on professional orientations of journalists and media culture (e.g., Donsbach & Patterson 2004). Regarding the consequences of the political communication culture for modern democracies, the research can be linked to studies on the nature and development of political communication at large.

The perspective of political communication culture gains its meaning as a *comparative framework* (→ Comparative Research). Only comparative analyses can help answer the question whether the types of political communication culture are empirically valid. In order to pursue a research agenda on political communication culture, there are a number of challenges that current scholarship faces. First, students of political communication need to develop adequate research designs and measures for assessing the type of political communication culture that prevails in a country or a cultural segment of a society.

Second, the link between the institutional contexts of political communication and the given dominant constellations of actor orientations still needs to be determined in empirical studies. One trajectory of research that is suited to tackling this question is provided by Hallin and Mancini (2004). They discuss a “polarized pluralist model,” a “democratic corporatist model,” and a “liberal model of the media system,” and relate each of them to political system variables (→ Political Communication Systems). Further research may link these types to the types of political communication culture.

A third point in the contemporary research agenda is to establish knowledge about patterns of changing political communication cultures over time. So far, there are many general theories about the development of political communication at large, such as → modernization or → Americanization of the Media. Yet systematic, data-based, longitudinal empirical studies on the specific milieus at the interface between media and politics are still missing.



Political communication culture is key to understanding the public representation of political issues and politics in national public arenas, as well as the interaction between political actors and journalists and its implications for the democratic process. Ascertaining the dominant political communication culture in a country can help explain the mode and quality of → political discourse, and, not least, may influence the quality of the democratic political process. Hence, the contribution of this approach to the study of political communication lies in its relevance for modern democracy. As the quality of political communication is directly related to a rational understanding of public affairs among citizens, the political communication culture is an important precondition of democratic development. It is therefore a test of every political communication culture whether it permits or generates discourses that enhance a rational understanding of political processes on the part of the public. By the same token, a political communication culture is dysfunctional for the democratic process if it impairs the quality and rationality of the political discourse.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Interaction ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Logic ▶ Modernization ▶ News ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Roles ▶ Strategic Communication

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# Political Communication Systems

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Looking at political communication phenomena in a systems framework is a common approach in this field of study. The term “system,” in its general meaning, denotes a multitude of component parts, depending on each other, and functioning as a whole (→ Systems Theory). The nature of the political communication system is thought of as a structure of producing, processing, and communicating political messages. As Blumler and Gurevitch (1977) point out, adapting the systems approach to political communication processes implies the assumption that variation in one of its component parts would be associated with variation in other components.

## ELEMENTS OF A POLITICAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

By analogy with the political culture research (Almond & Verba 1963), a political communication system can be mapped out along *four dimensions*. First, it implies an institutional structure that depicts the space in the media and politics in which politicians and journalists interact to produce messages. This structure is directly influenced by the set-up of the media and political system. Second, the political communication system implies an input side of → public opinion that reflects the reactions of the public and, third, it implies an output side that depicts the messages that are produced at the interface between media and politics with regard to the public. The fourth dimension of the political communication system implies the role definitions and norms of the actors such as politicians and journalists. Their interactions are subject to behavioral norms and other system constraints (→ Political Communication Culture; Journalists’ Role Perception).

The political communication system is composed of *elements from two other social systems*: politics and the mass media. According to theoretical considerations, integration of two social systems comes about if the exchange processes between them are institutionalized. Hence, the political communication system can be regarded as such an institutionalization, as it carries and regulates the ongoing cross-border communication between politics and the media. Eventually, it develops its own language and the more contacts are maintained, the more it develops an identity of its own.

The common *unit of reference for professional roles* in political communication is the → public. The preferences and demands of the media audience with certain information needs, and the preferences and demands of the electorate with specific political needs, converge in the construct of public opinion. Hence, the social construction of public opinion on the part of political communication actors can be understood as the input side of the political communication system. The output side is concerned with the production, processing, and communication of political messages. Managing political issues is a major function of the politics–media interface (→ Issue Management in Politics). Since the choice of issues has an impact on the image of the actors involved,

agenda setting influences public opinion about organizations and actors, and does so with persuasive intent, i.e., with the aim of generating consent (→ Agenda-Setting Effects).

## INTELLECTUAL ROOTS

The notion of political communication systems reflects the adaptation of political systems analysis to a theoretical framework of political communication. Perceiving political communication through the lens of a systems perspective coincides with the insight that it is not sufficient to capture the interface between politics and media through indicators of the media system or the political system only. At the same time, the investigation of political communication would fall short if it were studied only in terms of the short-term, issue-related behaviors of actors in areas such as election campaigns, political → public relations, newsmaking, or public opinion. If political communication refers to “an interactive process concerning the transmission of information among politicians, the news media, and the public” that includes top-down, bottom-up, and horizontal flows of messages (Norris 2001, 11631), then students of political communication must understand the general nature of this interaction rather than concentrate on particular situations or singular issues or events. The attempt to develop a broader framework of analysis for political communication that focuses on the whole system rather than on single aspects also reflects the need for a more abstract formulation of processes of political communication that lends itself to comparative analysis. Hence, the political communication systems perspective allows for conceiving processes of political communication as an ordered system, which consists of actors and structures that can be related to each other and their environment in systematic terms.

The conception of political communication as a system is inspired by *Easton's (1965) political systems analysis* and the notion of “political culture,” which was introduced by Almond (1956). The specific patterns of citizens’ beliefs and orientations to the political system and its dimensions are called political culture. A basic assumption of systems analysis is that a political system can be stable only if the citizens’ fundamental values and orientations are compatible with the socio-political and institutional structure of the society. The notion of political communication systems refers to both the institutional setting of the political and the media systems and the subjective orientations of political communication actors. These → attitudes determine the interaction and the flow of messages between political actors and media. According to Pfetsch (2004) the match of the actors’ attitudes and the structures of message production is a decisive criterion for the stability of the political communication system of a given country.

The essential value of the concept of political communication systems lies in its potential as a *heuristic basis for the comparative study of political communication*. If political communication processes are seen as interplay between communication roles and structural conditions, the comparative approach offers considerable potential for analyzing these processes. Comparison enables us to make out which structural conditions correspond with specific constellations of actor orientations. Moreover, only comparative research can reveal the variety of political communication systems as well as the systematic link between the political system and the media system (Pfetsch & Esser 2004).

## CHALLENGES OF FUTURE RESEARCH

The interplay between structural conditions and attitudinal and behavioral aspects has not yet been researched systematically. To date, we lack encompassing studies that reveal the variety of national political communication systems and their internal and external conditions. Current research on the interface of media and politics largely follows the path of neo-institutionalism, which has its precursor in formulations such as the *Four theories of the press* by Siebert and Schramm (1956; → Journalism: Normative Theories). While this study has been heavily criticized for its ideological bias, recent work by Hallin and Mancini (2004) on media systems and their political aspects constitutes a meaningful point of departure for the comparative analysis of political communication systems. Hallin and Mancini develop a typology of three ideal types of media systems: the “liberal model,” the “democratic corporatist model,” and the “polarized pluralist model.” Moreover, the researchers link these types to a set of variables to describe the structural conditions in the media and the political system. These environmental conditions are associated with specific expectations vis-à-vis media organizations on the part of politics, and with political mechanisms and opportunities for exerting influence on the media. On the other hand, the setting of the media system influences how media organizations position themselves in a national media system and in the public sphere.

On the side of the media, Hallin and Mancini propose that *four dimensions constitute important environmental conditions* for media systems: (1) the development of media markets (strong or weak development of mass circulation press); (2) political parallelism (extent to which the media system reflects major political divisions in terms of links between media and political parties; → Party–Press Parallelism); (3) strong or weak journalistic professionalism; and (4) the degree and nature of state intervention in the media system. Arguably, the four dimensions converge in the *dichotomy between commercialization and politicization* of the media system, which has wide-ranging implications for political communication. With regard to the structural context conditions on the side of the political system, Hallin and Mancini refer to the general relationship of state and society, especially the state’s role as owner, regulator, and founder of media organizations, the makeup of the government including the party system, and the intensity of political cleavages and interest mediation.

Although this framework reflects some of the basic ideas of political communication systems analysis as proposed here, it still reveals some shortcomings and methodological problems that emerge if the systems approach to political communication is applied in empirical designs of cross country comparison. Yet future research must solve the problem of bringing together different levels of analysis and different types of data, such as attitudinal measures of individuals’ orientations and their aggregation to the macro-level of analysis, as well as measures of the structural makeup of the media–politics interface. Eventually, it will also be necessary to formulate a set of hypotheses about the political communication system with its environment and specify them in empirical research designs. Current research has only begun to travel this route.

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Attitudes ► Issue Management in Politics ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► Journalists’ Role Perception ► Party–Press

Parallelism ► Political Communication Culture ► Public ► Public Opinion ► Public Relations ► Systems Theory

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## **Political Consultant**

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A political consultant is a paid, outside advisor to candidates, political parties, or interest groups. The rise of political consultants started in the United States when Whitaker and Baxter formed Campaign Inc. in the mid-1930s, which is considered the first political consulting firm. But while in the late 1950s only roughly thirty or forty individuals acted as professional political consultants, the industry has seen tremendous overall growth since the late 1960s. Three developments contributed to this rise of the political consultancy business.

The first development is the advent of nationwide *television* as the dominant medium of political communication. In order to cope with the structural demands of a visual and fast-paced medium, candidates and parties had to adopt the standards of a new media

logic, centered on the communication skills of personalities, impression management, and the delivery of camera-ready pictures and visuals. In these days a new entrepreneurial profession entered the political marketplace: the political consultant, specialized in strategic communication, image-building, and crafting television commercials based on extensive survey research and focus groups.

Second, as party loyalties have eroded and electoral volatility has risen, the traditional style of party campaigning and voter mobilization has been gradually replaced by a *political marketing approach*, where the priority is to identify voter needs and to target special voter groups. This approach relies on the expertise of external consultants specialized in careful segmentation of the electoral market, survey-based development of micro-messages, strict message discipline, instant rebuttal units, opposition research and the use of focus groups, mall intercepts, and extensive survey research to craft arguments, framing the issues and producing effective television commercials.

Third, the ongoing *fragmentation of channels and audiences*, a multiplicity of news outlets, the advent of the Internet, and the transformation of broadcasting into narrowcast micro-messages addressed to carefully targeted voter segments increased the demand for professional media and communication consultants, experienced in advanced techniques of news management, scripted events, spin control, and → negative campaigning (→ Spin Doctor). In the United States currently 8,000 professional political consultants and 1,500 political consultancy firms offer services in the fields of general strategy, media and communication consulting, polling and survey research, fund raising, field operations and organization, initiative and referendum consulting, and Internet services and web campaigning. Political consultancy has become a growing branch since the 1980s in Latin America, Australia, and western Europe, and – with some delay – also in eastern Europe. The development in the United States – the gradual replacement of traditional party managers by professional media and strategy consultants – can now be observed on a worldwide basis. Foreign political parties and candidates invite American top consultants to perform highly specialized functions that domestic experts cannot fulfill or are just learning to accomplish in a professional manner.

The *internationalization* and *globalization* of political consultancy is further fostered by transnational platforms, like the International Association of Political Consultants (IAPC), founded by Joseph Napolitan in 1968, or the European Association of Political Consultants (EAPC), organizing conferences and workshops and serving as meeting platforms and professional networks. In the meantime, similar associations have been established in the United States, where political consultancy is considered as a one-billion-dollar market, Latin America, western Europe, and Russia. Also Australia and New Zealand have a flourishing political consultancy scene, whereas the political consultancy market in Asia and Africa is still in its infancy.

The data of the Global Political Consultancy Survey, a worldwide survey of political consultants and campaign managers from 45 countries conducted between 1998 and 2000, permit insights into the *professional role definitions* of political consultants, and show two different consultancy approaches (Plasser & Plasser 2002). Political consultants of the first type have been characterized as “party-driven sellers,” while those belonging to the second type have been defined as “message-driven marketers.” *Party-driven sellers* concentrate in their consulting activities on a strong and efficient party organization and

programmatic positions of parties, while at the same time they stress the importance of the candidates' personalities. Party-driven sellers consider the secret of a successful campaign to be the product of party-related factors.

By comparison, the *message-driven marketers* concentrate on the strategic positioning of their candidates and the development of messages which appeal to the expectations of special target groups, and place much more importance upon the central message of the election campaign. Message-driven marketers clearly tend to define campaigns as political marketing operations in which the strategic positioning and addressing of target groups represent essential conditions of success. Message-driven marketers also concentrate more strongly on the availability of financial resources and evaluate the role of external advisors and campaign experts as much more important than party- and organization-centered campaigners. Sixty percent of the political consultants who were interviewed in the survey operate as party-centered "politics-sellers." Forty percent correspond more strongly with the message-driven marketers and their political marketing logic. American political consultants mostly correspond to the type of the message-driven marketers (→ Political Marketing).

The data of the Global Political Consultancy Survey indicate that the focus of modern campaign strategies also moves in the direction of candidate- and message-centered factors among political consultants from the traditionally party-centered competitive cultures of Germany, Sweden, or Italy. This change of orientation appears to be even more explicit among political consultants with a strong affinity with the US role model of modern campaigning.

Yet, the data also indicate the existence of a combination of traditional and modern styles of political communication in most of the regions examined. Western European political consultants clearly differ from the modus operandi of American political consultants. Two-thirds could be classified as TV fixated, who appeal to the mass public and try to optimize the reach of their campaign messages. American political consultants, on the other hand, prefer a postmodern strategic logic of communication. Three out of four US political consultants interviewed could be defined as target-group marketers. Confronted with a multitude of news channels, "media clutter," and the declining marginal value of extensive advertising campaigns in the large national networks, they changed their focus in the direction of segmented advertising campaigns in the local cable channels, targeted direct marketing activities, and the potential of the Internet.

SEE ALSO: ► Election Campaign Communication ► Media Logic ► Negative Campaigning ► Political Marketing ► Political Persuasion ► Spin Doctor ► Strategic Communication

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## Political Cynicism

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Political cynicism is recognized as an important political sentiment. However, there is little agreement about the nature, measurement, and consequences of political cynicism. *Webster's Dictionary* defines a cynic as “one who believes that human conduct is motivated wholly by self-interest. A person who expects nothing but the worst of human conduct and motives.” Cappella and Jamieson (1997, 166) defined *political cynicism* as “mistrust generalized from particular leaders or political groups to the political process as a whole – a process perceived to corrupt the persons who participate in it and that draws corrupt persons as participants.” Cynicism has been defined as oppositional to → political efficacy (e.g., Niemi et al. 1991) and as inversely related to trust in different social, economic, and political institutions.

Political cynicism has different dimensions and can be considered in relation to various objects. Cynicism as absence of trust has been treated at the level of the institutions of government and the regime as a whole (e.g., Miller 1974). It has also been conceptualized as negativism and disapproval at the level of candidates and incumbent political leaders (e.g., Citrin 1974). Erber and Lau (1990) also stress a distinction between political cynicism directed toward persons on the one hand and toward issues and institutions on the other. An additional dimension of political cynicism can be seen as directed toward a specific context such as a campaign (De Vreese & Semetko 2002; → Election Campaign Communication).

Political cynicism has been linked directly to news coverage of politics. Most notably, the link has been demonstrated between cynicism and exposure to strategic news – that is, news covering politics as a strategic arena, focusing on politicians' motivations and concern with → public opinion rather than their policies. This relationship was investigated in a seminal series of experiments conducted by Joseph Cappella and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (1997). First, they found that participants exposed to strategic news remembered more strategy-based information about candidates compared with those who were exposed to issue-based news. Second, they found that strategic news enhanced political cynicism.

The studies by Cappella and Jamieson (1997) and others compellingly linked exposure to strategic news coverage to political cynicism in experimental studies in the US. Outside



the US, several studies have also tested the relationship between strategic news reporting and political cynicism. Kleinnijenhuis and colleagues (2006) demonstrated that negative news media coverage discourages trust in political leaders (→ Negativity). De Vreese (2004) tested the effects of repeated exposure to strategic news and found that when participants were not subsequently exposed to strategically framed news, the effect on cynicism that was established in the immediate post-test vanished (→ Framing Effects). This implies that repeated exposure is a necessary condition for a longer-lasting effect. De Vreese and Semetko (2002) found that exposure to strategic news media reporting about a national political issue contributed to citizens' levels of cynicism, even when controlling for the initial level of cynicism in the campaign. De Vreese (2005) further specified this dynamic by demonstrating, using two-wave panel surveys and media content data from two countries, that the relationship requires a certain level of strategic reporting in order to affect political cynicism.

The *consequences* of political cynicism are important. While news coverage of politics is a relevant antecedent for understanding change in political cynicism, the consequences and implications of cynicism and distrust have also been considered. Cynicism (media-induced or not) has been used to explain declining turnout in established democracies, most notably in the US (Cappella & Jamieson 1997; Patterson 2002). Indeed, cynicism has also been suggested as the cause for citizen apathy and general dislike of public administration and government (Nye et al. 1997).

The direct consequences of cynicism have, however, not often been subjected to empirical analyses. Other studies have provided evidence of the contrary, namely that there is no relationship between cynicism and voter apathy (De Vreese & Semetko 2002). In fact, some studies have yielded positive connections between cynicism and political sophistication, thereby suggesting that political cynicism is perhaps little more than a healthy expression of critical reflections about the political system and politicians (De Vreese 2004, 2005).

Our understanding of political cynicism in communication and politics is work in progress. Future work should be aimed at getting a more detailed understanding of the different dimensions of political cynicism, the conditional relationship with news exposure as a function of news content and audience characteristics, and the different consequences of cynicism, e.g., for public engagement in politics.

SEE ALSO: ► Election Campaign Communication ► Framing Effects ► Media Effects  
► Negativity ► Political Efficacy ► Public Opinion ► Video Malaise

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## Political Discourse

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In general usage, political discourse comprises all forms of communication in and by political institutions or actors and all communication with reference to political matters. Thus, political public relations, both internal and external, news, commentary, film, talk shows, citizens' everyday talk about politics etc. are all sites of political discourse. Different sites follow different rules of selection and construction of political reality, including, for example, news management techniques, news values, frames of interpretation, and heuristics of political judgment. General usage also acknowledges the fact that political discourse is often thematically structured, as in reference to “globalization discourse,” “abortion discourse,” and so on.

In addition to such general usage, there are two prominent, and opposing, strands of theorizing that feature more specific concepts of political discourse: the normative discourse theory of democracy and public communication associated with, among others, German philosopher → Jürgen Habermas on the one hand, and, on the other hand, a broad field of theoretical approaches originating in French philosophy and sociology that center around social and political functions of discursive practices (→ Discourse Analysis).

In the first, *normative*, tradition, political discourse is characterized by the attempt to convince others through rational exchange of arguments about political matters. In the background of this understanding is the model of an ideal speech situation in which interlocutors cannot but make the following four counterfactual presuppositions about each other: (1) that their utterances are comprehensible, (2) that their claims about

elements of objective reality are true, (3) that their utterances reflect their real intentions (truthfulness, sincerity), and (4) that their actions and norms are morally defensible (rightness) (Habermas 1984, 23). While most instances of (political) communication deviate from this ideal in one way or the other, such deviations can be “repaired” in discourse by problematizing and justifying the respective validity claims of comprehensibility, truth, and rightness. Only truthfulness cannot be argued but only demonstrated through corresponding action.

Political discourse in this normative understanding thus entails that political actors should explicitly justify their validity claims so that they can be debated by others in the → public sphere – a process called public deliberation or public discourse (see Peters 2008; → Deliberativeness in Political Communication). In his later writings, Habermas (1998) argues that civil society actors should put power-holders in the center of the political system “under siege” with their communication and that they can acquire communicative power to the degree that their opinions influence legislative deliberation and law-making. In this view, political legitimacy is procured not only by electing representatives (as is posited in most theories of democracy) but also by the communicative power generated bottom-up in political discourse. In empirical political communication research, this normative model has sometimes been used to evaluate the discursive quality of political media content, parliamentary debate, and citizen deliberation but a comprehensive empirical investigation of the interlocking stages and elements of political discourse from this perspective is lacking.

The second *tradition of theorizing political discourse* has a completely different starting point and draws from a number of different disciplines, including political science, sociology, linguistics, and literary and → cultural studies (for an overview, see Apter 2001). Here discourse is understood as a way of organizing human experience in both texts and social practices following the insight that all human activity is built on a constant process of interpreting and giving meaning to the world. Usually, a relativist epistemology is advocated in this tradition, lacking a systematic distinction between scientific and other (e.g., professional, popular, sub-cultural) forms of discourse and not privileging the former over the latter. The boundaries of discourse as opposed to nondiscursive elements of the social world are often somewhat vague, and the idea of a causal relationship between discursive and nondiscursive elements is usually abandoned or ignored. Discourse analysis in this tradition is often concerned with exposing mechanisms or functions of domination in discourse and, conversely, the links between particular discourses and the ability of social and political actors to claim and realize agency.

Thus, political discourse has been studied from critical and feminist perspectives through in-depth interpretations of media texts (→ Text and Intertextuality). But everything can become the object of political discourse analysis in this sense: political rituals and public speeches, but also dress, architecture, anthems, flags, and other insignia of power and authority. One example relevant to political communication is the *analysis of media events*, deliberately staged and globally televised celebrations, contests, or “conquests” (Dayan & Katz 1994; → Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Examples of the latter type are political events that mark transgressions such as Egyptian president Sadat’s first visit to Israel or Pope John Paul II’s first visit to communist Poland. Conquests, due

to their strong propensity to command emotional participation and their particular performative qualities, can mark the coming of a new era and contribute to constructing the reality of that era. It is this emphasis on the reality-constituting capacity of discursive texts and practices that unites the divergent field of political discourse analysis in the second tradition.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Cultural Studies ► Deliberativeness in Political Communication ► Discourse Analysis ► Framing of the News ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Media Events and Pseudo-Events ► News as Discourse ► News Values ► Public Sphere ► Text and Intertextuality

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## **Political Economy of the Media**

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Political economy is the study of the social relations, particularly the power relations, that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources, including communication resources (→ Media Economics). This formulation has a certain practical value because it calls attention to how the communication business operates, for example, how communications products move through a chain of producers such as a → Hollywood film studio, to wholesalers, retailers, and, finally consumers, whose purchases, rentals, and attention are fed back into new processes of production.

A more general and ambitious definition of political economy is the study of control and survival in social life. “Control” refers specifically to the internal organization of social group members and the process of adapting to change. “Survival” means how people produce what is needed for social reproduction and continuity. Control processes are broadly political, in that they constitute the social organization of relationships within a community, and survival processes are mainly economic, because they concern processes of production and reproduction.

### TRADITIONS IN POLITICAL ECONOMY

Political economy has consistently placed in the foreground the goal of understanding social change and *historical* transformation. For classical political economists of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and John Stuart Mill, this meant comprehending the great capitalist revolution, the vast social upheaval that transformed societies based primarily on agricultural labor into commercial, manufacturing, and, eventually, industrial societies. For Karl Marx, it meant examining the dynamic forces within capitalism and the relationship between capitalism and other forms of political economic organization, in order to understand the processes of social change that would, he contended, ultimately lead from capitalism to socialism.

*Orthodox economics*, which began to coalesce against political economy in the late nineteenth century, tended to set aside this concern for the dynamics of history and social change, in order to transform political economy into the science of economics, which, like the science of physics, would provide general, if static, explanations. According to this view, economics would be able to explain precisely how buyers and sellers come together to set prices in the marketplace, but would not address those broad processes of social and economic change that create the conditions for setting prices. Contemporary political economists, occupying various heterodox positions distinct from what has become the economic mainstream, continue the tradition of classical political economy to take up social change and transformation, focusing now on such areas as the transition from an industrial to a service or information economy. The study of the mass media and communication technology plays an important role in this research because the industries encompassed by these fields of study are major forces in the creation of today's economy.

Political economy is also characterized by an interest in examining the social whole or the *totality of social relations* that make up the economic, political, social, and cultural areas of life. From the time of Adam Smith, whose interest in understanding social life was not constrained by the disciplinary boundaries that mark academic life today, through Marx, and on to contemporary institutional, conservative, and neo-Marxian theorists, political economy has consistently aimed to build on the unity of the political and the economic by accounting for their mutual influence and for their relationship to wider social and symbolic spheres of activity. The political economist asks: How are power and wealth related? How do these influence our systems of mass media, information, and entertainment?

Political economy is also noted for its commitment to *moral philosophy*, understood as both an interest in the values that help to create social behavior and in the moral principles that ought to guide efforts to change it. For Adam Smith, as evidenced in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, a book he favored more than the popular *Wealth of Nations*, this meant understanding values like self-interest, materialism, and individual freedom, that were contributing to the rise of commercial capitalism. Whereas for Karl Marx, moral philosophy meant the ongoing struggle between the drive to realize individual and social value in human labor and the push to reduce labor to a marketable commodity. Contemporary political economy tends to favor moral philosophical standpoints that promote the extension of democracy to all aspects of social life. This goes beyond the political

realm, which guarantees rights to participate in government, to the economic, social, and cultural domains where supporters of democracy call for income equality, access to education, and full public participation in cultural production and a guarantee of the right to communicate freely.

Following from this view, *social praxis*, or the fundamental unity of thinking and doing, also occupies a central place in political economy. Specifically, against traditional academic positions which separate the sphere of research from that of social intervention, political economists, in a tradition tracing its roots to ancient practices of providing advice and counsel to leaders, have consistently viewed intellectual life as a form of social transformation and social intervention as a form of knowledge. Although they differ fundamentally on what should characterize intervention, from Thomas Malthus who supported open sewers as a form of population control, to Marx, who called on labor to realize itself in revolution, political economists are united in the view that the division between research and action is artificial and must be overturned.

The political economy approach is also distinguished by the many schools of thought that guarantee significant *variety of viewpoints* and vigorous internal debate. Arguably the most important divide emerged in responses to the classical political economy of Adam Smith and his followers. One set, which eventually established the contemporary discipline of economics, focused on the individual as the primary unit of analysis and the market as the principle structure, both coming together through the individual's decision to register wants or demands in the marketplace. Over time, this approach progressively eliminated classical political economy's concerns for history, the social totality, moral philosophy, and praxis, and transformed political economy into the science of economics founded on empirical investigation of marketplace behavior conceptualized in the language of mathematics. Broadly understood as *neo-classical economics* or simply, in recognition of its dominant position as today's orthodoxy, *economics*, it is a perspective that reduces labor to just one among the factors of production, which, along with land and capital, is valued solely for its productivity, or the ability to enhance the market value of a final product.

A second set of responses to the classic political economy of Adam Smith opposed this tendency by retaining the concern for history, the social whole, moral philosophy, and praxis, even if that meant giving up the goal of creating the science of economics. This set constitutes the wide variety of approaches to political economy. A first wave was led by a number of groups including *conservatives* who sought to replace marketplace individualism with the collective authority of tradition, *utopian socialists* who accepted the classical faith in social intervention but urged putting community ahead of the market, and by *Marxian* thinkers who returned labor and the struggle between social classes to the center of political economy. Subsequent formulations built on these perspectives leaving us with a wide range of contemporary formulations.

Although economics occupies the center and center right of the academic political spectrum, a *neo-conservative political economy* thrives in the work of people like George J. Stigler, James M. Buchanan, and Ronald Coase, all recipients of the Nobel Prize in economics, who apply the categories of neo-classical economics to all social behavior with the aim of expanding individual freedom. *Institutional political economy* occupies a slightly left of center view, arguing, for example in the work of Galbraith, who drew principally on Veblen, that institutional and technological constraints shape markets to

the advantage of those corporations and governments large enough and powerful enough to control them. Institutionalists created the framework for studies (described below) documenting how large media companies can control the production and distribution of mass media products to restrict diversity of content, specifically by keeping out work that challenges pro-business views. *Neo-Marxian* approaches, including those of the French Regulation School, world systems theory, and others engaged in the debate over globalization, continue to place social class at the center of analysis, and are principally responsible for debates on the relationship between monopoly capitalism, the automation and de-skilling of work, and the growth of an international division of labor. Finally, social movements have spawned their own schools of political economy, principally *feminist political economy* which addresses the persistence of patriarchy and the dearth of attention to household labor, *environmental political economy* which concentrates on the links between social behavior and the wider organic environment, and a political economy that melds the analysis of social movements with the Italian *autonomous Marxist* theoretical tradition.

## RESEARCH ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE MEDIA

### Regional Emphases

North American *research* has been extensively influenced by the contributions of two founding figures, Dallas Smythe and Herbert Schiller. Smythe taught the first course in the political economy of communication at the University of Illinois and is the first of four generations of scholars linked together in this research tradition. Schiller, who followed Smythe at the University of Illinois, similarly influenced several generations of political economists.

Their approach to communication studies drew on both the *institutional* and *Marxian* traditions. A concern about the growing size and power of transnational communication businesses places them squarely in the institutional school, but their interest in social class and in media imperialism gives their work a definite Marxian focus (→ Globalization of the Media; Media Conglomerates). However, they were less interested than, for example, European scholars, in providing an explicit theoretical account of communication. Rather, their work and, through their influence, a great deal of the research in this region have been driven more explicitly by a sense of injustice that the communication industry has become an integral part of a wider corporate order which is in their view both exploitative and undemocratic. Although Smythe (1981) and Schiller (1989) were concerned with the impact within their respective national bases, they both developed a research program that charts the growth in power and influence of transnational media companies throughout the world.

Partly owing to their influence, North American research has produced a large literature on industry and class-specific manifestations of transnational corporate and state power, distinguished by its concern to participate in ongoing social movements and oppositional struggles to change the dominant media and to create alternatives (McChesney 1999; Mosco 1996; Schiller 1999; Wasko 2003). A major objective of this work is to advance → public interest concerns before government regulatory and policy organs. This

includes support for movements that have taken an active role before international organizations, in defense of a new international economic, information, and communication order (Mosco & Schiller 2001).

*European research* is less clearly linked to specific founding figures and, although it is also connected to movements for social change, particularly in defense of public service media systems, the leading work in this region has been more concerned to integrate communication research within various neo-marxian and institutional theoretical traditions. Of the two principal directions this research has taken, one, most prominent in the work of Garnham (2000) and of Murdock & Golding (2000), has emphasized *class power*. Building on the Frankfurt School tradition, as well as on the work of Raymond Williams, it documents the integration of communication institutions, mainly business and state policy authorities, within the wider capitalist economy, and the resistance of subaltern classes and movements reflected mainly in opposition to neo-conservative state practices promoting liberalization, commercialization, and privatization of the communication industries.

A second stream of research foregrounds *class struggle* and is most prominent in the work of Armand Mattelart (2000; Mattelart & Siegelau 1983). Mattelart has drawn from a range of traditions including dependency theory, western Marxism, and the worldwide experience of national liberation movements to understand communication as one among the principal sources of *resistance* to power. His work has demonstrated how peoples of the third world, particularly in Latin America where Mattelart was an advisor to the government of Chile before it was overthrown in a 1973 military coup, used the mass media to oppose western control and create indigenous news and entertainment media (→ Development Communication; Development Communication, Planning of).

*Third world research* on the political economy of communication has covered a wide area of interests, although a major stream has grown in response to the modernization or developmentalist theory that originated in western, particularly US, attempts to incorporate communication into an explanatory perspective on development congenial to mainstream academic and political interests. The developmentalist thesis held that the media were resources that, along with urbanization, education, and other social forces, would mutually stimulate economic, social, and cultural modernization in the third world. As a result, media growth was viewed as an index of development. Drawing on several streams of international neo-Marxian political economy, including world systems and dependency theory, third world political economists challenged the fundamental premises of the developmentalist model, particularly its technological determinism and the omission of practically any interest in the power relations that shape the terms of relationships between first and third world nations and the multilayered class relations between and within them (Zhao 1998; Pendakur 2003).

The failure of development schemes incorporating media investment sent modernization theorists in search of revised models that have tended to include telecommunication and new computer technologies in the mix. Political economists have responded principally by addressing the power of these new technologies to integrate a global division of labor. A first wave of research saw the division largely in territorial terms: unskilled labor concentrated in the poorest nations, semi-skilled and more complex assembly labor in semi-peripheral societies, and research, development, and strategic planning limited to



first world corporate headquarters where the bulk of profit would flow. More recent research acknowledges that class divisions cut across territorial lines and maintains that what is central to the evolving international division of labor is the growth in flexibility for firms that control the range of technologies that overcome traditional time and space constraints (Sussman & Lent 1998; Pellow & Park 2002).

### **Central Coordinates: Commodification, Spatialization, Structuration**

One can also map the political economy of communication through key coordinates or the three social processes that are central to the field: commodification, spatialization, and structuration.

#### *Commodification*

Commodification has long been understood as the process of taking goods and services that are valued for their use, e.g., food to satisfy hunger, stories for communication, and transforming them into commodities that are valued for what they can earn in the marketplace, e.g., farming to sell food, producing drama for commercial television (→ Commodification of the Media). The process of commodification holds a dual significance for communication research. First, communication practices and technologies contribute to the *general commodification process throughout society*. For example, the introduction of computer communication gives all companies, not just communication companies, greater control over the entire process of production, distribution, and exchange, permitting retailers to monitor sales and inventory levels with ever greater precision. This enables firms to produce and ship only what they know is likely to sell quickly, thereby reducing inventory requirements and unnecessary merchandise. Second, commodification is an entry point to *understanding specific communication institutions and practices*. For example, the general, worldwide expansion of commodification in the 1980s, responding in part to global declines in economic growth, led to the increased commercialization of media programming (→ Commercialization of the Media), the privatization of once public media and telecommunications institutions, and the liberalization of communication markets.

The political economy of communication has been notable for its emphasis on describing and examining the *significance of institutions*, especially businesses and governments, responsible for the production, distribution, and exchange of communication commodities and for the regulation of the communication marketplace. Although it has not neglected the commodity itself and the process of commodification, the tendency has been to foreground corporate and government institutions. When it has treated the commodity, political economy has tended to concentrate on media *content* and less on media audiences and the labor involved in media production. The emphasis on media structures and content is understandable in light of the importance of global media companies and the growth in value of media content. Tightly integrated transnational businesses, such as → Time Warner Inc., → News Corporation, and → Sony Corporation, create media products with a multiplier effect embodied, for example, in the *tiered release* which might start with a Hollywood film exhibited in theaters, followed by a DVD, shortly thereafter by a version for pay-per-view, pay-cable, and, finally, perhaps aired on broadcast television.

Political economy has paid some attention to *audiences*, particularly to understand the common practice whereby advertisers pay for the size and quality (propensity to consume) of an audience that a newspaper, magazine, radio or television program can deliver. This generated a vigorous debate about whether audiences, in fact, labor, i.e., sell their labor power, in effect, their → attention, in return for whatever content is produced (Smythe 1981; → Audience Commodity). The debate has been useful because it broadened the discussion beyond content and included all businesses, and not just media companies, in the core of communication research. Recent political economy research has advanced the analysis of → audience research by examining audience history and the complex relationship of audiences to the producers of commercial culture. It has also extended the debate over audience labor to the Internet where the process of building websites, modifying software, and participating in online communities both resembles and differs from the labor of audiences that Smythe described (Terranova 2004).

In addition to examining the process of commodifying media content and audiences, it is important to consider the *commodification of media labor*. Harry Braverman's now classic work directly confronted the transformation of the labor process in capitalism. According to him, general labor is constituted out of the unity of *conception*, the power to envision, imagine, and design work, and *execution*, the power to carry it out. In the process of commodification, capital acts to *separate* conception from execution, skill from the raw ability to carry out a task, to *concentrate* conceptual power in a managerial class that is either a part of capital or represents its interests, and to reconstitute the labor process with this new distribution of skill and power at the point of production. In the extreme, and with considerable labor resistance, this involved the application of detailed and intrusive "scientific management" practices, pioneered by Frederick Winslow Taylor. Braverman documented the process of labor transformation in the rise of large-scale industry, but he is particularly recognized for demonstrating the extension of this process into the service and information sectors. His work gave rise to an enormous body of empirical research and theoretical debate, the latter focusing principally on the need to address the contested nature of the process, the active agency of workers, and the trade union movement and, finally, on how the transformation of the labor process was experienced differently according to industry, occupation, class, gender, and race.

The labor of communication workers is also being commodified as wage labor has grown in significance throughout the media workplace. In order to cut the labor bill and expand revenue, managers replaced mechanical with electronic systems to eliminate thousands of jobs in the printing industry as electronic typesetting did away with the jobs of linotype operators. Today's digital systems allow companies to expand this process. Print reporters increasingly serve in the combined roles of editor and page producer. They not only report on a story, they also put it into a form for transmission to the printed and, increasingly, electronic page. Companies generally retain the rights to the multiplicity of repackaged forms and thereby profit from each use. Broadcast journalists carry cameras and edit tape for delivery over television or computer networks. The film industry is delivering digital copies of movies to theaters in multiple locations over communication satellite, thereby eliminating the distribution of celluloid copies for exhibition by projectionists. Companies now sell software well before it has been debugged on the understanding that customers will report errors, download and install updates, and figure out

how to work around problems. This ability to eliminate labor, combine it to perform multiple tasks, and shift labor to unpaid consumers further expands the revenue potential (Sussman & Lent 1998). Workers have responded to this by bringing together people from different media, including journalists, broadcast professionals, technical specialists in the film, video, telecommunications, and computer services sectors, into trade unions that represent large segments of the communications workforce.

### *Spatialization*

The second starting point for the political economy of communication is spatialization, or the process of overcoming the constraints of space and time in social life. Classical political economists like Adam Smith and David Ricardo found it necessary to devote considerable attention to the problems of how to value the spaces taken up by land and our built environment. Furthermore, their development of a labor theory of value was bound up with the problem of how to define and measure labor time. Marx came closer to spatialization when he noted that capitalism “annihilates space with time.” By this he meant that business makes use of the means of transportation and communication to diminish the time it takes to move goods, people, and messages over space. Today, political economists conclude that rather than annihilate space, business, aided by developments in communication and information technology, transforms space. People, products, and messages have to be located somewhere and it is this location that is undergoing significant transformation, evidenced in, for example, upheavals in the international division of labor that has seen millions of jobs relocated to low-wage regions of the world, especially China and India (→ Markets of the Media; Consumers in Media Markets).

Spatialization builds upon ideas offered by geographers and sociologists to address structural changes brought about by shifting uses of space and time. Anthony Giddens refers to the centrality of *time-space distanciation* in order to examine the decline of our dependency on time and space. He suggests that this process expands the availability of time and space as resources for those who can make use of them. David Harvey identifies *time-space compression* to suggest how the effective map of the world is shrinking, again for those who can take advantage of it. Manuel Castells calls our attention to the declining importance of physical space, the space of places, and the rising significance of *the space of flows* to suggest that the world map is being redrawn according to boundaries established by flows of people, goods, services, and messages creating what Doreen Massey refers to as a transformed “power-geometry.”

Communication is central to spatialization because communication and information processes and technologies promote flexibility and control throughout industry, but particularly within the communication and information sectors. Spatialization encompasses the process of *globalization*, the worldwide restructuring of industries and firms (→ Globalization Theories). Restructuring at the industry level is exemplified by the development of integrated markets based on digital technologies and, at the firm level, by the growth of the flexible or “virtual” company, which makes use of communication and information systems to continuously change structure, product line, marketing, and relationships to other companies, suppliers, its own workforce, and customers.

The political economy of communication has traditionally addressed spatialization as the institutional extension of corporate power in the communication industry. This is

manifested in the sheer growth in size of media firms, measured by assets, revenues, profit, employees, and stock share values. For example, communications systems in the United States are now shaped by a handful of companies including US-based firms General Electric (NBC), Viacom (CBS), the Walt Disney Company (ABC; → Disney), and Time Warner Inc. (→ CNN). There are others including non-US-based firms such as the News Corporation (Fox), → Bertelsmann, and Sony. Political economy has specifically examined growth by taking up different forms of corporate concentration (Herman & Chomsky 1988; Kunz 2006). *Horizontal concentration* takes place when a firm in one line of media buys a major interest in another media operation that is not directly related to the original business.

The typical form of this is *cross-media concentration* or the purchase by a firm in an older line of media, say a newspaper, of a firm in a newer line, such as a radio or television station. But horizontal concentration also takes place when a media company buys all or part of a business entirely outside of the media (e.g., when a broadcaster buys a hotel chain). *Vertical integration* describes the amalgamation of firms within a line of business that extend a company's control over the process of production as when a major Hollywood film production studio purchases a distributor of film. This is also referred to as forward integration because it expands a firm further along the production and distribution processes. Backward vertical integration took place when the New York Times Company purchased paper mills in Quebec, thereby expanding the company down the production process. In addition to demonstrating how media firms have developed into transnational conglomerates that now rival, in size and power, firms in any industry, political economists are addressing the development of flexible forms of corporate power evidenced in the *joint ventures*, *strategic alliances*, and other short-term and project-specific arrangements that bring together companies or parts of companies, including competitors. These take advantage of more flexible means of communication to unite and separate for mutual interest (Wasko 2003; → Concentration in Media Systems).

### *Structuration*

The third entry point for the political economy of communication is structuration, a process given prominence in the sociologist Anthony Giddens's work. Structuration amounts to a contemporary rendering of Marx's view that people make history, but not under conditions of their own making. Specifically, research based on structuration helps to balance a tendency in political economic analysis to concentrate on structures, typically business and governmental institutions, by incorporating the ideas of agency, social process, and social practice. Concretely, this means broadening the conception of social class from its structural or *categorical* sense, which defines it in terms of what some have and others do not, to incorporate both a relational and a constitutional sense of the term.

A *relational* view of social class foregrounds the connections, for example, between business and labor, and the ways in which labor constitutes itself within the relationship and as an independent force in its own right. This takes nothing away from the value of seeing class, in part, as a designation for the differences between the "haves" and the "have nots." The political economy of communication has addressed class in these terms by producing research that documents persistent inequities in communication systems,

particularly in access to the means of communication, and the reproduction of these inequities in social institutions (McChesney 1999; Murdock & Golding 2000). This has been applied to labor, particularly in research on how communication and information technology has been used to automate and de-skill work, including work in the media industries. It has also been used to show how the means of communication are used to measure and monitor work activity in systems of surveillance that extend managerial control over the entire labor process in precise detail.

A relational view of social class that defines it according to the practices and processes that link social class categories means, for example, that the working class is not defined simply by lack of access to the means of communication, but by its relationships of harmony, dependency, and conflict to the capitalist class. Moreover, a *constitutional* conception of class views the working class as producer of its own, however tenuous, volatile, and conflicted, identity, in relation to capital and independently of it. This research aims to demonstrate how classes constitute themselves, how they make history, in the face of well-researched analysis of the conditions that constrain this history-making activity.

When political economy has given attention to agency, process, and social practice, it tends to focus on social class. There are good reasons for this emphasis. Class structuration is a central entry point for comprehending social life, and numerous studies have documented the persistence of class divisions in the political economy of communication. Nevertheless, there are other dimensions to structuration that complement and conflict with class structuration, including *gender*, *race*, and the broadly defined *social movements* that, along with class, make up much of the social relations of communication. Political economy has made important strides in addressing the intersection of feminist studies and the political economy of the media (Meehan & Riordan 2002). It has also taken major steps in research on information technology, gender, and the international division of labor, which addresses the double oppression that women workers face in industries like microelectronics, where they experience the lowest wages and the most brutalizing working conditions (Pellow & Park 2002). Communication studies has addressed *imperialism* extensively, principally by examining the role of the media and information technology in the maintenance of control by richer over poorer societies (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). Race figures significantly in this analysis and more generally in the social process of structuration, as Gandy (1998) takes up in his multi-perspectival assessment of race and the media. Racial divisions are a principal constituent of the multiple hierarchies of the contemporary global political economy, and race, as both category and social relationship, helps to explain access to national and global resources, including communication, media, and information technology (Pellow & Park 2002).

One of the major activities in structuration is the process of constructing *hegemony*, defined as what comes to be incorporated and contested as the taken-for-granted, commonsense, natural way of thinking about the world, including everything from cosmology through ethics to everyday social practices. Hegemony is a lived network of mutually constituting meanings and values that, as they are experienced as practices, appear to be mutually confirming. Out of the tensions and clashes within various structuration processes, the media come to be organized in full mainstream, oppositional, and alternative forms.

### Relationship to Cultural Studies and Policy Studies

Understanding the political economy of communication also requires one to look outward, at the relationship between the discipline and those on its borders. Although one can map the universe of academic disciplines in numerous ways, it is useful to situate the political economy of communication opposite cultural studies on the one side, and policy science on the other.

The → cultural studies approach is a broad-based intellectual movement that focuses on the constitution of meaning in texts, defined broadly to include all forms of social communication. The approach contains numerous currents and fissures that provide for considerable ferment from within. Nevertheless, it can contribute to the understanding of political economy in several ways. Cultural studies has been open to a broad-based critique of positivism (the view that sensory observation is the only source of knowledge). Moreover, it has defended a more open philosophical approach that concentrates on subjectivity or how people interpret their world, as well as on the social creation of knowledge. Cultural studies has also broadened the meaning of cultural analysis by starting from the premise that culture is ordinary, produced by all social actors rather than primarily by a privileged elite, and that the social is organized around gender and nationality divisions and identities as much as by social class.

Although political economy can learn from these departures, it can contribute equally to richer cultural studies. Even as it takes on a philosophical approach that is open to subjectivity and is more broadly inclusive, political economy insists on a realist epistemology that maintains the value of historical research, of thinking in terms of concrete social totalities, with a well-grounded moral philosophy, and a commitment to overcome the distinction between social research and social practice. Political economy departs from the tendency in cultural studies to exaggerate the importance of subjectivity, as well as the inclination to reject thinking in terms of historical practices and social wholes. Political economy also departs from the tendency for proponents of cultural studies to use obscure language that belies the original vision of the approach, that cultural analysis be accessible to the ordinary people who are responsible for creating culture. Finally, it eschews the propensity in cultural studies to reject studies of labor and the labor process in favor of examining the social “production” of consumption and the ensuing tendency among some in the cultural studies school to deny labor any value in contemporary movements for social change.

Political economy can also learn from the development of a *policy studies perspective* whose political wing has tended to place the state at the center of analysis, and whose economic wing aims to extend the application of primarily neo-classical economic theory over a wide range of political, social, and cultural life. Political economy has tended to regard government as overly dependent on and determined by the specific configuration of capital dominant at the time and therefore benefits from an approach that takes seriously the active role of the state. Moreover, political economy shares with policy science the interest in extending analysis over the entire social totality, with an eye to social transformation. Nevertheless, political economy departs fundamentally from the policy science tendency to a pluralist political analysis that views the state as the independent arbiter of a wide balance of social forces, none of which has enough power

to dominate society. Against this, political economy insists on the power of business and the process of commodification as the starting point of social analysis. Furthermore, political economy rejects the tendency of policy science to build its analysis of the social totality, and of the values that should guide its transformation, on individualism and market rationality. Against this, it insists on social processes, starting from social class and labor, and on setting community and public life against the market and a rationality that, from a political economy perspective, actually reproduces class power.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Bertelsmann Corporation ▶ CNN ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consumers in Media Markets ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication, Planning of ▶ Disney ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hollywood ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Economics ▶ News Corporation ▶ Public Interest ▶ Sony Corporation ▶ Time Warner Inc.

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## Political Efficacy

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A multidimensional concept that links political → cognitions, → attitudes, and behaviors, political efficacy refers generally to citizens' beliefs in their ability to influence the political system. In the half-century since its emergence, research on political efficacy has focused much on its conceptualization and → operationalization. In communication research, however, scholarship has emphasized defining its antecedents and outcomes.

### DEFINING AND MEASURING POLITICAL EFFICACY

According to its initial formulation (Campbell et al. 1954), political efficacy referred to the feeling that political actions taken by individuals can have an impact on the political process. Early perspectives on the concept saw it not only as a psychological disposition, but also as a norm and as a behavior. In other words, if citizens are politically efficacious, they will be more likely to support a given political regime, be more trusting of that system, and be less likely to engage in activities that challenge the system. If political efficacy is a disposition and a norm, then politically efficacious citizens believe that they can and should participate in politics. Contemporary views have reverted to the original emphasis on feelings, and conceptualize political efficacy as having two dimensions: internal efficacy, which reflects a personal sense of political competence, and external efficacy, the belief that the political system is democratic and will respond to actions taken by its citizens.

Although scholars concur on the existence of these two constructs, the items used to measure them have been less consistent (Balch 1974; Morrell 2003). Grounded in large part in work in the American National Election Studies, most operationalizations of *internal efficacy* are based on one or more of the following Likert-scale items (→ Scales; Scales and Indices):

"I consider myself to be well qualified to participate in politics."

"I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues facing our country."

"I feel that I could as good a job in public office as most other people."

"I think that I am better informed about politics and government than most people."



“Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can’t really understand what’s going on”

*External efficacy*, on the other hand, tends to be measured by items that include the following:

“People like me do not have any say about what the government does.”  
“I don’t think public officials care much what people like me think.”

Although internal efficacy and external efficacy have been shown to be empirically related, this relationship is not always constant, and the presence of one does not necessarily imply the presence of the other. There are individuals who believe they can influence the system, yet perceive some politicians or elected officials to be unresponsive to efforts geared toward social change. Similarly, other individuals may perceive elected officials to be receptive to input, yet do not believe they themselves possess the knowledge or ability to take action to influence governmental policies.

Regardless, political efficacy is highly correlated with other cognitions and behaviors (→ Attitude–Behavior Consistency), and has played a key role in political theorizing. For example, a combination of efficacy and political trust can generate social or political change. According to William Gamson (1968), a combination of high internal efficacy and low political trust (linked to external efficacy) can motivate citizens to take action. However, the relationship between efficacy and action is reciprocal (Finkel 1985): Feelings of self-competence and system responsiveness can encourage political participation, and engaging in such activities can increase levels of internal and external efficacy.

## **POLITICAL EFFICACY AND COMMUNICATION**

The relationship between communication and political efficacy is not clear-cut; issues of causality and direction of effects remain unclear. A few trends have emerged from this front, however.

First, various studies have illustrated how *newspaper reading* increases knowledge, and with increased knowledge, enhances feelings of self-efficacy. Understandably, citizens who know more about politics will feel more self-confident and be more likely to perceive themselves as being able to take action. The fact that newspapers can physically devote more space to providing mobilizing information – information that allows readers to know how to take action (e.g., where a town-hall meeting will convene) – also can stimulate levels of self-efficacy. Whereas newspaper reading can enhance internal efficacy, *television viewing* is generally negatively associated with it, presumably due to how television news viewing decreases political knowledge. In other words, because television news focuses less on issues of substance, opting instead for coverage of personalities, places, and events, audience members relying primarily on television news will tend to experience lower levels of knowledge gain than newspaper readers. Despite this general trend, the view that newspapers are more effective than television news at imparting political knowledge has come under attack as researchers have begun to scrutinize the conceptualization and measurement of political knowledge and media use (→ Political Knowledge, Political Socialization through the Media).

Second, when examining the *effects of media content* on feelings of efficacy, research illustrates that these effects are primarily negative. Numerous studies conducted over the past three decades have drawn the same conclusion: media → negativity undermines political trust, a very close correlate of external efficacy. In their milestone study linking newspaper coverage with → political cynicism and (external) efficacy, Miller et al. (1979) found that in a sea of primarily neutral or positive newspaper coverage, consumption of critical coverage led to greater distrust of the federal government, which in turn fueled feelings of system unresponsiveness. Over the years, television news coverage of politics has been more negative than newspaper coverage, and has grown increasingly so (→ Political News). Negatively valenced stories of Congress, presidential candidates, and democratic institutions regularly punctuate television news coverage, and more so in network news than local television news (Moy & Pfau 2000). Moreover, television production practices have evolved such that viewers regularly see close-ups of individuals engaged in politically contentious discussions (e.g., in a roundtable on a news talk show) or split screens in political debates (Mutz & Reeves 2005). These formats, which become more prominent as political discourse grows increasingly uncivil, can reduce trust in government, which in turn can decrease levels of external efficacy.

Newspapers and television news notwithstanding, negative portrayals of politicians and the political process appear in scores of other outlets. Political *campaign advertisements* are rife with negative messages designed to undermine the opposing candidate; viewers exposed to these negative advertisements can shift to voting for the sponsoring candidate or choose to disengage from the political process and abstain from voting (→ Political Advertising). Television news magazines present 15-minute segments in which investigative reporters expose the truth behind a host of scandals, and illustrate the failings and foibles of politicians and others. Presented in a highly accessible and dramatic fashion, the conveying of such backstage information indicates to viewers that the system is not to be trusted. In even shorter segments, political talk radio hosts in the United States have taken to lambasting politicians and policies, employing forms of speech previously unheard over the airwaves. And with the fusing of political and popular communication, negative messages about the political system and those who occupy various offices can be found in late-night talk shows and entertainment content (→ Infotainment; Politainment). Late-night talk-show hosts devote the beginning of their shows to a monologue in which politicians and political incidents provide the fodder for most of their jokes. Shows like *Saturday Night Live* and *The Daily Show*, which have been adapted in several countries outside the US, satirize politicians, distort their personal traits, and deride their policies. For those who rely primarily on these non-news outlets, negative portrayals of politicians and the political system can shape perceptions; these anti-institutional themes communicate to audience members that the system cannot be relied upon and is intractable.

Third, the emergence of the → *Internet* on the media landscape has changed how scholars view media effects on efficacy. There is no convergence of views on this front, and the differences map easily onto a spectrum anchored by optimism and pessimism. At one end, optimists believe new media technology can lower the costs of communicating with elected officials, expressing their views with others, and participating in public affairs. In addition, the wealth of information available on the Internet has the potential to increase knowledge about political issues. Together these factors can enhance perceptions

that one can take effective political action. Pessimists, however, offer another view, contending that the Internet helps only to erode political efficacy. Specifically, the same wealth of political information online that would generate political knowledge could overwhelm a user and reduce his or her sense of self-efficacy. Also, increased levels of communication (e.g., emails) with elected officials may not necessarily mean increased responses from these individuals; this disjuncture would nurture perceptions of system unresponsiveness. Empirically, the data linking Internet use to political efficacy have generated inconsistent results. These inconsistencies derive in part from the context and time period in which the data were collected as well as the items used to measure Internet use. Some scholars prefer to operationalize the concept as access to the Internet, whereas others opt to employ measures of exposure to information about a campaign (or a given issue) or active seeking of such information (Kenski & Stroud 2006).

Fourth, communication effects on political efficacy include those of *interpersonal communication* (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication). Much like mass-mediated content, discussion with others affords citizens the opportunity to gain knowledge about politics, learn about differing views and experiences, and understand how action can be taken. Perhaps more importantly, discussion about an issue allows citizens to learn that others feel the same way they do about an issue; the mere knowledge that others share one's views may increase one's feeling that effective action can be taken.

### **EFFICACY MAY INFLUENCE COMMUNICATION**

Thus far, the aforementioned trends reflect those that situate political efficacy as causally subsequent to communication, not surprisingly given communication scholars' focus on effects research (→ Media Effects). A smaller corpus of literature provides evidence for arguing causality in the other direction, i.e., that efficacy (particularly internal efficacy) influences communication.

In general, more self-efficacious individuals will tend to follow public affairs content, believing that additional information gleaned from the media will help them better understand the world around them and take action. This finding resonates with the → uses-and-gratifications literature, which posits a menu of motivations as to why individuals use the media. Also, those who believe they possess some level of political self-competence will be more likely to express their opinions and communicate with others. This communication can take various forms, perhaps the easiest and most common ones being interpersonal discussion, particularly with like-minded others, and expression of views in an online setting (one that may or may not allow for anonymity). This communication may stem from a desire to rally support for a given cause or to take collective action. Finally, those with higher levels of internal efficacy also have a greater tendency to engage with media that allows for some level of interactivity, such as call-in radio and television talk shows.

In sum, it is clear that mass and interpersonal communication can shape one's feelings of efficacy. However, as media outlets and genres proliferate, and as they attempt to attract different segments of the population, each with different orientations and motivations and dispositions, the relationships between communication and efficacy will need to be analyzed more closely.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitude–Behavior Consistency ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cognition ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Negativity ▶ Operationalization ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political News ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Political Journalists**

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Political journalists, viewed through the lens of the editorial organization, are those who report on political affairs or work on the *political desk*. This perspective foregrounds organizational factors in news production, particularly the division of labor in the editorial process. Typical Anglo-American newsrooms make a functional distinction between news gatherers (reporters) and news processors (editors), but in continental Europe many news cultures have implemented divisions among subject-related editorial departments (such as politics, business, or sports), where journalists function as professional all-rounders with tasks involving reporting, editing, and commenting (→ News Routines; Political News).

Organizational pressures, especially the cutbacks in financial resources allotted to editorial processes, have left journalists limited, if not inadequate, time to produce a balanced, comprehensive, and contextualized account. Other limitations emanate from the textual constraints of most news formats and from the increased speed of news production through new communication technologies. Consequently, reactive modes of

political journalism have gained ground as more proactive approaches have receded (→ Muckraking; Investigative Reporting). Reliance upon official sources is particularly pervasive in, but not limited to, news cultures with an authoritative press system (→ News Sources). Even in liberal media systems, journalists commonly recognize government information as credible and authoritative, which makes it much easier for political advertisers and public relations executives to get their messages into the news (McChesney 2004). Because politicians have long recognized the impact of media and public opinion on the processes of political decision-making, journalists operate permanently under pressure from lobbyists and so-called political handlers (→ Spin Doctor), who strive to control and manipulate information. As political communication has relied more on strategic information management, media coverage has turned cynical and negative in tone (Patterson 1993; → Strategic Communication; Negativity; Bias in the News).

Political journalists also work under normative expectations that often conflict (→ Journalists' Role Perception). In an era of mediated politics, they play a vital role in informing the electorate. They are expected to act in the public interest, as gatekeepers who identify the relevant political news of the day for citizens, and also as watchdogs who monitor the legislative, executive, and judicial estates to safeguard democracy (→ Fourth Estate). Tensions arise between the demands of covering the revival of local cultural identities and the processes of globalization, as societies look to political journalists to serve as a cohesive force contributing to social integration.

In contrast to normative expectations, however, some scholars argue that political journalism in fact causes alienation, induces cynicism, and has a narcotic influence that continues to erode public engagement in civic life (McNair 2000). As media organizations have become subject to marketing, commercializing, and commodifying processes, political journalism has tended to highlight the popular and spectacular over the relevant. This tendency, along with a decline in voter participation, has helped give rise to a reform movement (→ Public Journalism) that endeavors to reconstruct public life by reconnecting journalists with the communities they cover. Other efforts attempt to furnish political journalists with a more assertive role in national development and nonviolent conflict resolution (→ Development Journalism; Peace Journalism), especially in poor and war-torn societies of Asia and Africa.

Consistent evidence shows that journalists come primarily from the middle and upper middle classes. Some media critics (e.g. Paletz & Entman 1981) argue that their elite background prevents many political journalists from challenging the political status quo. They are thus seen as preserving the legitimacy of the prevailing political, economic, and social system.

Finally, journalists are also political actors. The strategic ritual of objectivity dominates the professional ideology of journalists around the world (Weaver 1998; → News Ideologies), but interpretive and interventionist practices still exist in political reporting. In the United States after the September 11 attacks, prominent political journalists positioned themselves as Americans first, journalists second, in a stance that may have contributed to the biased coverage of the war on Iraq in the mainstream US media. In a similar vein, leading media figures in Europe (including France, Germany, and Great Britain) and Asia (especially in the Islamic context) spoke out against the war.

Politically active journalists perceive themselves as participants in the debate, as advocates of and missionaries for a particular political cause. They may act on behalf of the socially

disadvantaged or as the mouthpiece of a party or other group whose interests are at stake in a political process. As advocates, their impulse is not to stand outside the flow of events, but to participate, intervene, and get involved to promote change (→ Advocacy Journalism). The interventionist impulse also motivates public, development, and peace journalism.

Historically, politically assertive journalism has a rich tradition in Latin America and also in Europe, where the media tend to have distinct political orientations (Hallin & Mancini 2004; → Party–Press Parallelism). Surveys of journalists have shown that the degree of their partisanship is higher in the political cultures of Germany and Italy than among their colleagues in the United States (Donsbach & Patterson 2004). Although the majority of news workers lean to the liberal side of the political spectrum, most media organizations, as a result of their integration into the economic system, lean to the conservative side.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Development Journalism ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Muckraking ▶ Negativity ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Peace Journalism ▶ Political News ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Strategic Communication

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## **Political Knowledge**

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One of the foundational assumptions of democratic theory is that the public must be sufficiently informed about public matters in order to be capable of fulfilling their roles

in making collective decisions. The centrality of an informed public in democratic theory has made the study of political knowledge integral to the study of political communication. Much of the research on political knowledge addresses one of two main questions: Is the public sufficiently politically knowledgeable to sustain an effective democracy? and: What role does communication play in the creation and maintenance of an informed citizenry? (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication; Public; Public Opinion; Public Sphere). But to begin, it is important to define political knowledge.

Various terms are used to address the *concept of political knowledge*. For instance, the term “political sophistication” often includes knowledge or awareness of political matters as a central component. Some also incorporate political interest, political participation, political discussion, and news media use in definitions of political sophistication. However, a number of scholars have noted that, at its core, political sophistication is about knowledge of the political realm. Thus, political sophistication is a concept very closely related to political knowledge.

Another commonly employed term that shares much with political knowledge is *political expertise*. Political expertise is difficult to differentiate from political sophistication, as it also has been claimed to include factual political knowledge as well as political interest and experience in political activities. Again, given the central role of knowledge in the definition of expertise, political expertise is closely related to – or heavily overlapping with – political knowledge.

## **DIMENSIONS AND LEVELS OF POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE**

Political knowledge is often divided into two components. Some researchers refer to “differentiation” – the number of political facts or concepts held by an individual – and “integration” – the ability to connect and relate these facts or concepts – as the two components of political knowledge or thinking. Others make a very similar distinction between factual knowledge and structural knowledge.

*Factual political knowledge* is probably the most commonly investigated aspect of political knowledge. It refers to the ability to remember or recognize bits of information that can be determined by observers to be true or false. For instance, knowing the names of one’s representatives – or alternatively, knowing the length of a representative’s term of office – is a form of factual political knowledge. Other forms of factual political knowledge include knowledge of officials and their positions in the political system, knowledge of political process, and knowledge of candidate characteristics and issue positions.

The second dimension of political knowledge, often ignored by researchers but considered vitally important by theorists, is *structural knowledge*. Structural knowledge is the way in which factual information is organized by an individual. For instance, political ideologies are one way in which attitudes are structured. Various terms have been employed to refer to political knowledge structures, including → schemas, ideologies, and knowledge structure density. What each of these terms shares is the notion that it is not merely a group of disconnected facts about politics that make up political knowledge. Instead, the manner in which facts are organized in memory, and the ways in which individuals see connections between the facts, can be vitally important. However, it is difficult to explicitly say that any given organization or structure of political information

in memory is accurate or correct. For instance, some consider hierarchically organized structures to be the most sophisticated or expert, whereas others believe that knowledge structures need only be highly interconnected to reflect higher levels of sophistication or expertise.

A different method of dividing up the concept of political knowledge is by considering *knowledge across various political domains*. For instance, one might distinguish knowledge of gun-control policy from knowledge of health-care policy from knowledge of fiscal policy. Some argue that individuals who have high levels of knowledge or expertise in one domain do not necessarily have high levels of knowledge in other domains. Issue publics – groups of individuals who care a great deal about an issue and pay high levels of attention to governmental activity surrounding it – are informed about their own issues but not necessarily about the issues of others. One might also distinguish between knowledge of politics at the national level and knowledge of politics at the local level.

There is considerable debate regarding the *level of political knowledge* of the general public and what level of knowledge is necessary for the effective practice of democracy. Research on factual knowledge suggests that levels of political knowledge in the US have been low and stable since the mid-twentieth century. Comparative work suggests that levels of foreign affairs knowledge differ by country, with people from North America being relatively less informed than their European counterparts (Bennett et al. 1996).

Some argue that research showing a lack of knowledge of fundamental rules of government, an inability to correctly identify the names of one's political representatives, and the lack of a consistent ideological framework employed in reasoning and decision-making raise serious questions about the ability of democratic forms of government to work effectively and in the interests of their citizens. Others counter that even citizens with minimal levels of knowledge of the sort described above can use simple heuristics – based on party identification or even visual characteristics (e.g., race, gender) of candidates or supporters of various issues – to make satisfactory choices in the majority of cases. Still others question the ability of scientists to specify what kinds of knowledge and what levels of knowledge are in fact necessary and sufficient for effective decision-making in a democracy.

## **MEDIA USE AND KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION**

While it is important to understand what political knowledge is, it is also important to understand how communication is related to knowledge. Political knowledge has been consistently linked to news media use, with the strength of the relationship often varying from one medium to another (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Political Media Use). Communication researchers have determined that individuals' first introduction to politics, and most of their contact with politics, comes from the media. Therefore, it makes sense that using news media would lead to increased political knowledge. While there is some debate as to how best to measure media use, the medium that has demonstrated the strongest relationship to political knowledge is the newspaper.

The *newspaper use/knowledge relationship* has been found using a variety of measures, such as amount of attention paid to political stories while reading a newspaper and how many days an individual reads a newspaper. This relationship is fairly robust because it is



replicated across time, countries, and measures of newspaper use, although political learning is typically less from tabloid newspapers than from broadsheets. Researchers have theorized several reasons for why newspaper reading tends to be the best predictor of political knowledge. Two common reasons found are the content provided in newspapers and the structure of newspapers. Researchers conclude that newspapers have space in which to provide more background on issues and they allow readers to absorb the information at their own pace, both of which facilitate learning.

*Television news* is also positively related to knowledge, especially among those who have generally lower levels of education (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). In countries such as the United States where most individuals watch commercial network news, the relationship between television and knowledge is not as strong or consistent as the relationship that exists between newspaper use and political knowledge. This could be due to either content differences across media or the ways in which individuals use different media. For instance, television news often presents visuals that are inconsistent with the verbal message, which can reduce learning. Moreover, television news generally has less space to devote to political news (24-hour cable networks being the exception) than print media and thus it carries less political information overall. It also could be that individuals are more easily distracted by alternative behaviors (e.g., eating, talking) while watching television news than while reading a newspaper. These distractions can reduce attention and thus reduce learning.

The newest form of mass media, the → *Internet*, can also be a source of political information and learning (→ Internet News). Although examining the political uses of the Internet is still a relatively new area of research, research has shown that online news use is positively related to political knowledge. Younger individuals have generally been found to have lower levels of political knowledge, but young individuals who use the Internet for political purposes have been found to have higher levels of political knowledge than their non-Internet-using counterparts. Key to the relationship between knowledge and Internet use is being aware of what individuals are searching for when using the Internet. Using the Internet for leisure activities, such as playing games, is negatively related to knowledge; however, using the Internet to search for political information is positively related to knowledge.

## **DISCUSSING AND PROCESSING POLITICS**

Discussing politics with others has also been tied to an increase in political knowledge (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication). Whether it is the discussion that fosters knowledge, or whether it is information seeking in preparation for discussing politics that creates the relationship is a matter of some debate (Eveland 2004). The people whom individuals talk to about politics are typically referred to as an individual's "discussion network." There are several features of the network that are considered when examining discussion effects. The most commonly analyzed features are the frequency of discussion – how often politics is discussed – and the size of the discussion network – the number of people with whom an individual talks about politics.

*Frequency of political discussion* has one of the most consistent relationships with political knowledge; that is, the more you talk about politics, the more you know about it.

Researchers have determined that this relationship exists because the more often you talk about politics, the more chances you have to be exposed to other points of view and come across new information. In addition, the size of the discussion network is also positively related to political knowledge for similar reasons. The third variable that is often considered when examining the influence of discussion networks is the heterogeneity of discussion partners, which is the variety of political views and other characteristics represented in an individual's discussion network. This variable's relationship to knowledge is not examined as often, but has generally demonstrated a positive relationship to at least some forms of political knowledge.

For both types of communication – mass mediated and interpersonal – an individual's motivation plays a role in what information is selected and how it is processed (→ Information Seeking; Uses and Gratifications), and this will have a large impact on how knowledge is affected by that communication. Selecting news-related mediated content and talking frequently to a variety of individuals about politics are communication behaviors associated with political knowledge. When processing information, elaborative processing – making connections between new information and prior knowledge and experience – is associated with increased knowledge.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Political News ▶ Public ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Schemas ▶ Television News ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Political Language

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Political language has been studied by sociolinguists, communication scholars, political scientists, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and marketing professionals (→ Language and Social Interaction; Political Communication). Shared assumptions across these fields are that (1) citizens come to know their political worlds through messages and symbols, and (2) political words do not have → meaning in themselves; rather their meanings are a function of contexts, speakers, audiences, and predispositions. Beyond these shared assumptions, specific fields have made unique contributions to what is known about political language.

Fundamental contributions to this topic have been provided by sociolinguists. Widely accepted claims from this area include those that naming is critical to communication (for only entities that are named can be shared among people; Kress & Hodge 1981); that language helps individuals to understand situations (as the structure of any language helps to shape the perceptual and conceptual discriminations available to individuals; Fowler 1974); and that political language is not static (indeed, political terms can change with time as the meanings of words can expand, contract, or shift from their original meanings; Fromkin & Rodman 1974).

Key scholarship in communication and → cultural studies has also focused on the power of names and naming. Three key works from these fields link shifts in word use to broader ideological concerns. British theorist Raymond Williams's *Keywords* (1976) took a longitudinal approach to show how important social and historical processes occur within language. Williams observed from a Marxist perspective how certain meanings emerged (e.g., capitalism), older meanings became reversed (e.g., society, individual), and still others were extended (e.g., interest) over time in language. In doing so, he underscored how cultural and ideological shifts can be witnessed in the meanings ascribed to words. Rhetorician Kenneth Burke (1950, 1966) also discussed the capacity of language to shape people's thoughts, particularly subconscious thoughts (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). Burke introduced the notion of a "terministic screen" that serves as a set of symbols through which individuals can interpret and make sense of their worlds. These screens present a means of studying the intersection between language and ideology, for individuals can only see the world as their symbol systems allow them to do so. Rhetorician Richard Weaver (1953) pointed out how certain words are politically loaded in a society when he developed the concepts of "god" terms (words that have an automatic positive meaning) and "devil" terms (words that trigger negative associations). Weaver detailed how such terms have considerable persuasive – and propagandistic – force. He urged individuals to use such words with caution and to consider carefully when these words are employed by others.

The most powerful work in political science on political language has been advanced by Murray Edelman. Two of his seminal books, *Symbolic uses of politics* (1964) and *Political language* (1977), drew on foundational understandings from sociolinguistics and

imported them into political settings. In both of these books, Edelman asserted that individuals are far more likely to experience the language surrounding politics than actual political events themselves. For this reason, he regarded language as the central factor in social relations and action. In *Symbolic uses of politics*, Edelman argued that it is imperative to study how language shapes people's realities and how it establishes specific perspectives for evaluation (while distracting individuals from considering alternative perspectives). Notably, he discussed how elites use language to shape citizen expectations of government and of leadership, as well as perceptions of the past and the future. A key theme of his discussion was that the constructions provided by elites do not have to mirror empirical realities. He maintained that the language and symbols used to describe a leader, government, or issue do not have to be accurate, but they do describe how elites have guided conversations and how individuals have been encouraged to think and feel about themselves and their systems (→ Political Symbols; Symbolic Politics).

In *Political language*, Edelman focused specifically on how language is used to classify people, to define groups, and to justify actions and policies. Specifically, he described how labeling can (1) cast individual persons as deserving of state assistance or support, (2) define particular groups as allies or enemies, and (3) signal that certain issues are appropriate for political discussion. Edelman maintained that all of these processes have important consequences in political life. To politicize a person, a group, or an issue, in his mind, is to define it as appropriate for decision-making. In contrast, to ignore a person, to define a group as an enemy, or to regard an issue as nonpolitical often serves to win general acceptance for elite values (→ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication; Symbolic Annihilation). Political labels not only designate certain people and topics as political, but also contribute to the identity of a society. When citizens accept particular constructions, they help to create their own realities and collective identities. Edelman discussed how there are considerable incentives to accept the labels and the constructed understandings that are offered by political elites and promoted in media programming. Accepting these allows citizens to accept dominant and reassuring perspectives on public affairs rather than having to challenge understandings of themselves, their institutions, and their society.

Historical analyses of political language point to the intersection of words, traditions, and public life. From this perspective, scholars examine the ability of words to inspire, enrage, mobilize, and make mass actions possible. Sociological analyses of political language attend to how groups discuss politics, how groups are encouraged to enter public debates (and public life) and dissuaded from doing so, and what types of group interactions might lead to greater political participation (as well as what types of group dynamics make individuals want to avoid politics entirely). Psychological analyses explore how various linguistic framing techniques shape the way individuals interpret messages and make judgments (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News).

The study of political language in marketing and business schools has forwarded important observations on psychological short cuts, brand identification, and brand loyalty (→ Brands). As political campaign environments become increasingly professionalized and tied to the best business practices of marketing and advertising, valuable contributions to the understanding of political language have emerged from business schools (→ Political Marketing). European scholars, particularly, have focused on the

marketing and branding practices of political parties and other groups in political life (Newman 1999).

A variety of methodologies has been employed to study political language. Content analytic research has tracked trends in word use, documented shifts over time, and made connections between patterns in word use and → public opinion, public policy, and electoral outcomes (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). Computerized content analysis has examined large corpuses of texts to search for macro-patterns over time, across speaker type, and across various types of political messages. Stylistic analyses point to more nuanced differences in language use between speakers, message types, and political circumstances (→ Style and Rhetoric). Rhetorical analyses of historical texts have addressed how language has functioned in prior political contexts (→ Rhetorical Studies). Experimental and focus group research capture how language and framing techniques influence attitudes and behaviors (→ Experimental Design).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Brands ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Discourse ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication ▶ Meaning ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Political Symbols ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ▶ Style and Rhetoric ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Symbolic Politics

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# Political Marketing

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Political marketing arose when, in the middle of the twentieth century, the methods developed by commercial marketing specialists were adopted for political campaigning. Political marketing replaced unilateral → propaganda exactly as commercial → advertising has become a plain subsidiary of commercial → marketing. Political marketing is considered as one of the most demanding applications of political communication research. It stands at the crossroads of several distinct fields of social sciences engaging in the study or practice of deliberate and purposive communication to reach set goals (Maarek 1995, 2007; → Political Communication; Public Relations; Strategic Communication).

## THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL MARKETING

It is generally accepted that political marketing started to become a cornerstone of political campaigns when, in the 1952 presidential election, the American Republican Party hired a first-rate marketing consultant, Thomas Rosser Reeves Jr., who managed Dwight D. Eisenhower's successful transformation from an army general to a civilian commander in chief (McNair 1995; → Election Campaign Communication). The two main methods then used by Reeves in two successive steps are representative of the two main stages of a political marketing strategy. First, direct marketing by mail was extensively used in order to define Eisenhower's main campaigning themes, simplifying them according to the "unique selling proposition" method, which Reeves had previously devised for commercial products. Then 49 short televised spots (one for each US state) were aired, strictly following the precise targeting rules also previously developed for commercial marketing (Diamond and Bates 1984).

This shows clearly the two-dimensional aspect of political marketing with its two successive steps: not only does it grant new and modernized communication tools to the politicians, but also it precedes the campaign and influences its strategy considerably, notably in the targeting process. Political marketing does not arrive after the main campaigning decisions are made but comes in from the start as an aid to campaign decision-making.

This also means that political marketing influences and modifies the contents of politics itself. While the political propaganda of a premodern campaign plainly influenced the message and its transmission, modern political communication usually intervenes in the core of the political campaign. This may be advantageous to the development of a campaign strategy for addressing volatile voters. But this also means that rather than presenting a fully organized and focused political program, politicians are pushed to transform it in order to reach and convince the so-called "swing voters" who are commonly considered as being the most susceptible targets of the campaign. Swing voters may decide who will win the election (Maarek 1995, 2007).

Eisenhower's success in reaching the presidency in 1952 indicated clearly that political marketing, able to find him a strategy for winning the White House, was key to modern

political campaigning. In the following years, this led to the exponential development of political marketing in the United States (see, e.g., Sabato 1989; Kaid & McCubbins 1992).

### THE EXPANSION OF POLITICAL MARKETING

Nowadays, as a consequence, political marketing consultants are helping would-be politicians to campaign all over the world and sometimes for the smallest electoral offices in the tiniest constituencies (→ Political Consultant). This expansion also led to a systematic attempt to reach any media potentially helpful to political communication, in what constitutes the *second stage in the development of political marketing*. From audiovisual mass media to the → Internet, and including old-fashioned mail, all media have been employed by political marketing, following the reasoning that a single extra vote thus won might be useful. Even electoral meetings are now staged like rock concerts, and negative advertising is flourishing, not to mention innumerable direct marketing mailings and email spamming. For instance, in France, while campaigning for the presidential office in 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy sent unsolicited emails to more than a million mailboxes (Maarek 2007; → Electronic Mail).

While political marketing initially emerged in the United States, it has progressed very quickly to most of the countries where free elections are held (see, e.g., Franklin 1994; Kavanagh 1995; Scammell 1995). Politicians in many countries started to hire American political marketing consultants who had been successfully managing US presidential campaigns, from Joe Napolitano to James Carville and Dick Morris – to mention just a few prominent figures. Sometimes considered as an “Americanization” of political communication processes, this penetration by modern political marketing techniques is now understood as being a sign of plain *professionalized modernization*, and a reaction to similar media environments and similar electoral circumstances (Negrine 1996; Negrine et al. 2007). Modern political marketing knows no borders, and French or British political marketing consultants are now traveling around the world as much as their American counterparts (→ Professionalization of Public Relations).

### FROM CAMPAIGNING TO GOVERNMENTAL SPIN

Initially positioned within electoral campaigns, political marketing was bound to expand its borders to political communication at large.

In the 1970s, after the example set by John F. Kennedy, who reorganized the White House according to media management practices, only public opinion polls specialists were hired by governing politicians (Valéry Giscard d’Estaing in France, for instance, created a “public opinion cell” in the presidential staff in 1974). Then, in the 1980s, when polls increasingly dictated government public relations, many countries’ governments reorganized accordingly. Some, like France or Italy, also renamed the offices in charge of the government’s public communication (“Communication Publique” and “Comunicazione Pubblica” respectively).

This *generalization of political marketing* to government public communication is not only motivated by incumbent politicians’ wish to control their messages and to be re-elected more easily. Political marketing also became the counterpart of new media

developments, especially of the Internet and its widespread possibilities of extending citizens' free, fast expression (Davis 1999) – with Internet petitioning and blogging as a more recent transformation of that medium (Maarek 2007; → Blogger). Any new announcement in policymaking has now to face the new liberty given to citizens to denounce it instantly and efficiently, thus leading to more carefully planned communication campaigns by marketing specialists. As a consequence, government communication to the public has become more and more dependent on political marketing methods and on newly appointed communication officers and → spin doctors, who are eagerly trying to control the government's media relationships (Jones 1995).

This change was blatant in the United Kingdom when Tony Blair became prime minister after his landslide victory in the 1997 parliamentary election. He established as “director of communication and strategy” his campaign spokesman, former journalist Alastair Campbell, who proceeded to control government communication to the public in every way, thanks to his extended job definition (Wring 2004).

Tony Blair's success in controlling the media, at least during his first two governments, led to a clear breakthrough of political marketing practices as a policy enforcement tool, even if the media became aware of the political “spin,” which resulted in neutralizing it to some degree. In many countries, this was seen as an example to follow. In France, for example, the two main contenders for the presidential office in 2007, Segolène Royal and Nicolas Sarkozy, both equally claimed Blair's legacy.

## CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL MARKETING INFLUENCE

Two consequences of an increasing political marketing influence are discussed quite often in the scholarly literature: depolitization of politics and excessive personalization.

*Depolitization of politics* seems to be a paradoxical result of targeting swing voters in election campaigns, who are considered to have a crucial influence on the election outcome. By addressing swing voters through more and more differentiated and elaborate means, political marketing has considerably narrowed the scope of political campaigns and has rendered communication to the public more difficult. By catering to swing voters who have little interest in politics, parties and candidates have toned down the political core of their campaigns and often resorted to plain populism (→ Populism and Responsiveness; Mediated Populism). Likewise, governing politicians have been led to drastically change or withdraw from decisions deemed unpopular, following the results of opinion polls and the advice of public relations consultants. Addressing issues of citizens' everyday life, or of security and comfort, is considered as more profitable than campaigning or governing on the basis of a political program that people with little interest in politics might find less concrete and unattractive.

The way of addressing the public has also changed. In order to reach a wide audience and particularly citizens with little political interest, politicians are appearing on media entertainment programs and present themselves like show-business celebrities (→ Infotainment; Politainment). Bill Clinton playing the saxophone on Arsenio Hall's show is a legendary example. Discussing entertaining topics and private affairs has become a prime means of accessing the apolitical citizen. This is supposed to have led to a paradoxical depolitization of political communication. Politicians who rely too much on marketing advisors, however, often find their basic capacity questioned.



An increasing *personalization of political communication* is also seen as a consequence of political marketing. Personalization is connected to underplaying issues and focusing instead on politicians' personal charisma, and even their looks and private lives, particularly in election campaigns (→ Personalization of Campaigning). The marketing strategy of reaching undecided voters by nonpolitical arguments contributes to personalization, as does the predominance of television in election campaigning. In addition, negative advertising attacking the opponent, a growing phenomenon particularly in American presidential campaigns, directs voters' attention to the personal characteristics of the top candidates (Ansolabehere & Iyengar 1995; → Candidate Image; Negative Campaigning; Political Advertising). Therefore the personalities of the front runners become the main reason for casting votes, rather than their political programs or their campaigning themes, and this is assumed to result in a personalization of voting behavior.

Personalization is even having, as a rather dubious side-effect, the *celebritization of politics* (or "peopolisation," a *franglais* word derived from "people"). Politicians assume the status of celebrities, like prominent actors and pop stars, and are treated by the mass media accordingly. For instance, during the run-up to the French presidency campaign of 2007 a celebrity magazine published, as part of a survey of "50 stars at the beach," suggestive paparazzi photos of a scantily bikini-clad Ségolène Royal, the Socialist presidential candidate. This phenomenon points to the seamy side of political marketing: politicians taking advantage of the sophistication and branding potential of marketing methods have to face situations where the media dictate the rules of the game. Such politicians may not only lose control over their personal image, but also contribute to depolitization tendencies and even growing cynicism among the population (→ Political Cynicism).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Blogger ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Marketing ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Populism and Responsiveness ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Relations ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Strategic Communication

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## Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in

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Media content is usually considered “political” if it refers to current events and issues, to political institutions or actors, as well as to the public discourse among these actors (→ Political Discourse). If the term “quality” is used to speak of more than just a trait, it refers to a trait that is desired according to some standard or norm. In this sense, the quality of political media content refers to the degree to which this content fulfills normative requirements.

There are many sources of norms or standards for media content, resulting in a broad variety of criteria by which content may be assessed. Standards mostly pertain to the media's function of providing information and orientation and to news content (→ News; Political News; Uses and Gratifications). The core of those standards is formed by professional theory and practice of journalism (→ Ethics in Journalism; Fairness Doctrine; Standards of News). Many quality criteria are derived from the intention to best serve media consumers' individual orientation needs. Others, possibly coinciding, are derived from the notion of a → public interest that the media should serve. A particular field of empirical media research has established itself, which aims at assessing the quality of → media performance.

Serving the public interest may in itself be considered a political quality since it involves debate or other forms of democratic decision-making to determine what lies in the public interest. Serving the individual orientation interests of users may too be considered a politically relevant quality, since it is a prerequisite for rational political opinion formation and decision-making. From this one can conclude that the core quality criteria of professional journalism must also pertain to political media content: *objectivity*, *diversity*, and *readability* (→ Accuracy; Objectivity in Reporting; Plurality).

Above and beyond that, further norms can be derived from the notion that the media should foster the desired outcome of the political process according to the norms of the respective political systems. Such specific quality criteria for political media content mainly

originate from theories of democracy as far as they define the functions that the media system is expected to perform for political systems (→ Functional Analysis).

### **INTERDEPENDENCIES BETWEEN MEDIA SYSTEM AND POLITICAL SYSTEM**

No matter which form political systems take, in mass societies their functioning is dependent on the mass media. After all, politics can be conceived of as largely, or even solely, consisting of communication acts (Meadow 1980), and in modern states, unlike ancient city states, there is no alternative to involving citizens and societal groups in politics through the mode of mass communication. On the other hand, the structure of a mass media system is determined by the structure of the political system (→ Political Communication; Political Communication Systems).

Thus, the development of mainly market-based media systems in the western tradition is rather parallel to the development of democracy in the United States and Britain, whereas the development of monopolized and state-controlled mass media systems in other countries went along with the rise of fascist, communist, and other totalitarian states of the twentieth century.

The norms prescribing how the media should function can thus diverge widely, depending on the respective structure and values of a political system. What is functional for one system may be dysfunctional for another. For example, in totalitarian systems, diversity of media content will typically be dysfunctional, whereas it counts as a core quality in the context of democratic systems. Siebert, Peterson, and → Schramm's classical *Four theories of the press* (1956) discusses the norms of political systems as a major shaping force of media systems, and accordingly categorizes media systems as "libertarian," "social responsibility," "communist," or "authoritarian," with the first two models describing democratic media systems (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). A strong impact of political systems on media systems is confirmed by a recent and analytically more detailed study by Hallin and Mancini (2004).

In principle, media functions as defined by nondemocratic press theories – like, for example, Lenin's theory of the press as an agitator, propagandist, and organizer – might be interpreted as "quality" criteria in a totalitarian sense. Yet, the vast majority of the pertinent literature deals with quality criteria of media content in the *context of democracies*, for two reasons. First, independent and public scientific research on media and communication is not functional for totalitarian systems and thus remains an enterprise limited to the boundaries of democracies. Second, the spread of democracy to many countries in the world has caught the attention of scholars. This goes in line with an increased need for explaining the character of democratic regimes and the role of mass media therein.

This development has also fostered research that aims at defining and measuring the dimensions and degrees of democratic quality and at comparing them between different political systems. According to the most influential work of Dahl (1989), the degree to which countries meet the *ideals of democracy* can be assessed by measuring to what degree they meet the following five criteria: voting equality at the decisive stage; enlightened understanding; control of the agenda; inclusiveness; and effective participation. Whereas the first criterion is not dependent on the performance of the media, all other criteria are:

enlightened understanding refers to the ability of citizens to make informed and rational decisions. The third criterion states that citizens have the opportunity to place their issues on the agenda of the political system. The fourth and fifth criteria demand that all citizens have an equal chance to take part in and influence the democratic process.

From this it is not yet clear which content traits would contribute to Dahl's criteria being met. Indeed, research assessing democratic quality does not deal with this issue. Rather, some of the manifold indexes that have been developed to measure the quality of democracy in democratic audit projects utilize freedom of the press as an indicator of democratic performance (see, e.g., [www.democraticaudit.com](http://www.democraticaudit.com); Munck & Verkuilen 2002).

### QUALITY CRITERIA AS POSITED BY DEMOCRATIC THEORY

That freedom of the press alone will assure the beneficial effects of mediated communication for democracy is a tenet of libertarian democratic theory, which has its roots in classical texts originating from the era of Enlightenment and later on the era of utilitarianism. The first is closely associated with John Milton's tract *Areopagitica*, which introduced the notion that freedom of the press can be deduced from the right of the individual to defend him or herself against the state on grounds of natural law. The second is closely associated with the liberal thinkers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, John Stuart Mill above all, whose central argument held that individuals are capable of using reason and distinguishing right from wrong as long as they may access the ideas of others (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). According to this theory, human ideas and opinions prove themselves only in a process of mutual challenge, an adjustment which calls for an open marketplace of ideas.

Already from this early version of libertarian theory, *three quality criteria* may be derived. First, as a correlate to press freedom, the mass media have to realize *diversity*, for the sake of guaranteeing a marketplace of the broadest possible range of ideas. Second, they have to report *objectively*, in the sense of neutrally trying to reproduce the many claims and opinions that society holds. Third, one might see the duty of the press to serve as a "watchdog," i.e., to scrutinize government and to *criticize* all attempts of abuse of power by the government that might restrict the citizens' freedom of opinion (given by law of nature) or freedom of the press (derived from utilitarian reasoning; Voltmer 1998; → Fourth Estate).

The changes brought about by flourishing capitalism in western democracies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries led to a revision of the original libertarian theory of the press. The virtually autopoietic mechanism of truth revelation posited by libertarian theory was challenged by empirical data collected by the US Commission on the Freedom of the Press (Hutchins Commission). These findings in particular showed that practices of the yellow press – → sensationalism, neglect of relevant and substantial issues (→ Soft News) – had come to dominate and that the press in general did not supply equal access to different voices but rather was a forum for the powerful (→ Bias in the News). As a reaction to this, the Hutchins Commission provided a set of criteria against which to judge contemporary media performance, which detailed the norms of

Table 1 Normative criteria in democratic theory

Theory type	Criteria for a good democratic public discourse			
	Who participates	In what sort of process	How ideas should be presented	Outcome of relation between discourse and decision-making
Representative liberal	<i>Elite dominance, expertise, proportionality</i>	Free marketplace of ideas, transparency	Detachment, civility	Closure
Participatory liberal	Popular inclusion	<i>Empowerment</i>	Range of styles	Avoidance of imposed closure
Discursive	Popular inclusion	Deliberative	<i>Dialogue, mutual respect, civility</i>	Avoidance of premature, non-consensus-based closure
Constructionist	Popular inclusion	Empowerment, recognition	Narrative creativity	<i>Avoidance of exclusionary closure, expansion of the political community</i>

Note: The priority concern is italicized.

Source: Ferree et al. (2002, 316)

objectivity and diversity and extended the duty of the press to not only check on government but to scrutinize powerful particular interests too.

Further variations of liberal democratic theory and corresponding inferences for quality criteria during the twentieth century can be observed. Ferree et al. (2002) differentiate between a representative and a participatory strand of liberal democratic theory, which have both developed further, partly conflicting quality criteria (Table 1). The *representative liberal strand* holds it necessary that for the free marketplace of ideas to function it has to be supplemented by the criteria of elite dominance, expertise, proportionality, and transparency. Thus, the core idea of representative liberal theory holds that democracy will actually function better if average (i.e., under-qualified) citizens rather stay out of the account that media give of reasoning, debate, and action, and that media should focus rather on elites and experts. Correspondingly, the focus on these actors has to be proportional to the distribution of interests they represent and their actions must be made transparent to the public for the sake of accountability.

Quite the opposite, *participatory democratic* theory requires *empowerment* as the most important responsibility of media discourse, which means to engage as many citizens as possible in public life. This goes along with a need for giving ordinary citizens a chance to be heard (popular inclusion; → Politics in Popular Communication).

A still more recently developed normative democratic theory, which otherwise appears to be quite close to participatory liberal theory, holds *deliberativeness* to be the most important quality criterion (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication). This means a “process in which one provides fully developed arguments for one’s own position and takes seriously and responds to the arguments of others. It involves recognizing, incorporating,

and rebutting the arguments of others” (Ferree et al. 2002, 306). This view mainly originates from → Jürgen Habermas’s (1998) deliberative model of democracy, which also considers it crucial that actors from the periphery of the political system too should be offered opportunities to join in political discourse by the media (→ Public Sphere).

The last theoretical tradition identified by the authors is the *constructionist theory*. Scholars from this tradition have a critical approach in common and tend to focus on hidden inequalities in public → discourse. Thus, they focus on narrative patterns and deem recognition of the distinctive standpoints of actors an important criterion.

Apart from criteria concerning the participants and the sort of process that is supposed to mediate their communication, two further dimensions of quality criteria can be distinguished by which the different types of theory are characterized. The first one focuses on the different communication styles that are considered to be functional. Except for representative liberal theory, all theories have a preference for specific styles because of their potential to include the largest possible fraction of citizens. The second dimension, closure, concerns the time at which everybody can agree that the matter has been decided and attention may be dedicated to other issues. Again, depending on which theory one adheres to, closure is considered either a positive or a negative trait.

## **NORMATIVE CLAIMS AND EMPIRICAL KNOWLEDGE**

Scholars in the field of political communication have concentrated much of their research on issues related to creating and maintaining high-quality democratic governance (Graber & Smith 2005). The most frequent application of the diverse quality criteria derived from different strands of democratic theory lies in serving as frameworks for devising content analytical categories (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). A great many content analyses try to assess media performance using such criteria. Among the rather consistent findings are those showing that in many western democracies, content and style of media have undergone → tabloidization in one form or another during recent decades (Esser 1999). Other important findings point to the fact that in international comparison, high quality criteria will be realized greatly depends on the respective nature of political cultures and polities (Wessler, submitted; → Political Communication Culture).

Obviously, quite different normative notions exist among pundits as to which features of media discourse foster the quality of democracy. For example, little agreement may be found among scholars either about the requirements of democratic citizenship and the implications of empirical findings about citizens’ → political knowledge, or about the way that political messages should best be constructed for voters to make sense of them (Graber & Smith 2005, 483). Whereas the majority of scholars so far see tabloidization and → infotainment rather as a threat to democracy, some would argue that, on the contrary, infotainment might contribute to boosting the reach of political messages and also might contribute to a better understanding among those shunning complex messages (Zaller 2003).

Thus, it is a big desideratum for research to establish more proof concerning the causal connection between content features and democratic performance. This, of course, is a demanding task calling for long-term cross-sectional and cross-cultural research on the micro and macro levels.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Discourse ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Infotainment ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Media Performance ▶ News ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Plurality ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political News ▶ Politics in Popular Communication ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Soft News ▶ Standards of News ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Political Media Use

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To take part in the democratic process, citizens should be well informed about politics, which implies they should keep up with current affairs through the news media. Given this essential role of the media for democracy, it seems important to know to what extent and why citizens actually use political media content. While comparatively few empirical studies have focused exclusively on these questions, exposure or attention to political content is often measured in studies of political → media *effects*. Indeed, political media use is considered important because what people see or hear in the news media can influence their knowledge, attitudes and opinions, and political participation.

## CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND RESEARCH PROBLEMS

Political media use refers to people's usage of both political media (such as newspapers or news magazines) and political content in all kinds of mass media, including the Internet. Political content normally means nonfictional content dealing with political events, issues, institutions, etc. (e.g., political news, commentary, round tables).

Research on political media use is fraught with problems, and common approaches have been increasingly criticized in recent years. Inaccuracies are highly probable because "political information" or "news" can mean different things (to respondents), including short or in-depth, accessible or demanding, or even nonpolitical material. While usually counted as "political information," newspapers, radio, and television news cover not only domestic politics, foreign affairs, and economic news (often referred to as "hard news") but also sports, culture, and human-interest themes (→ Soft News).

Recipients' contact with politics in the mass media can take very different forms, varying in terms of motivation, attention, and regularity. People seek information about specific themes purposively, they follow current affairs habitually, and they encounter political content incidentally. Hence, just measuring quantitative exposure seems of limited utility, at least if research interest is in news processing and learning (→ Learning and Communication; News Processing and Retention). Finally, self-reported exposure probably overestimates political media use not only because of inaccuracies but also due to → social desirability.

This overview mainly relies on data from a large number of studies and countries (western Europe and the US) and focuses on general patterns and relationships that are fairly stable over time and across media-use measures (measures mostly pertain to frequency of use; time spent using political information has been measured in rather few studies).

## GENERAL PATTERNS OF EXPOSURE

Most adults are at least somewhat interested in current affairs, and regularly use the mass media to keep up. Compared to entertainment media use, however, political information



seems relatively unimportant to most of the audience. But it is hard to tell exactly how much of the time people spend with media is devoted to political content. Schulz (2007) estimates that share conservatively at about 10 percent.

Television continues to be the most important source of current affairs information if judged by audience size, frequency of use, or people's impression as to where they get most of their news. Television tends to present politics in a particularly vivid, emotional, personalized, entertaining way, and is thus more accessible and attractive. Daily newspapers and the radio remain important, but in some countries the Internet has already passed these media as a source of political news (at least among younger people).

News or politics is often integrated with other types of content that are more attractive to many citizens (e.g., music on the radio). In this way, even less politicized media users may encounter politics quite regularly. In one form or another, this phenomenon appears to hold for all media (including the Internet) although the discussion so far has centered on television (→ Trap Effect).

However, most of this incidental exposure is not exposure to in-depth political information but to news designed to appeal to a broad audience. The same applies to political content available in public places (e.g., in bars). On the other hand, cable TV and the web have expanded citizens' possibilities to get political information far beyond typical news coverage, including easy access to parliamentary debates, parties' news releases, and much more (with accordingly small audiences).

### **CORRELATES OF POLITICAL MEDIA USE**

While there is no specific theory of political media use, research suggests a variety of explanatory factors. Researchers have measured exposure or attention to news or other political content and examined their relations to demographics and an increasing number of other variables. This overview is based on studies that have taken the correlations between at least some of these explanatory factors into account.

*Motives or gratifications:* people mainly turn to political media content to keep informed about current affairs (→ Uses and Gratifications). Even if information-oriented motivation dominates, people also use news for diversion and entertainment. News use helps structure the day and often becomes a routine or habit, even a ritual. Social motivation also appears to be important: news and other political content provide us with themes and arguments for discussions. In general, citizens tend to prefer sources that reflect and confirm their own political views.

*Interest in politics:* quite strongly related to education, this is probably the most important factor linked with political media use. Interest in politics may almost be equated with interest in political media content. Those who are more interested in politics tend to use news media (especially hard news) more extensively, purposefully, and actively.

*Social environment:* political media use is shaped by socialization influences, specifically parental information habits. Discussions with family members, friends, and colleagues motivate people to keep up with current affairs. Citizens' political media use tends to be higher if they are well integrated into discussion networks (→ Social Networks), and if these networks are large, active, and heterogeneous (increasing the likelihood of citizens' being confronted with different opinions).

*Education:* studies usually find a positive relation between level of education (which indicates cognitive abilities and information processing capabilities) and newspaper reading, in particular for quality papers. A similar pattern holds for in-depth political information in other media, including television (but not for TV news). The effects of education on political media use are in part mediated by interest in politics.

*Income:* there is also a fairly consistent relationship between (household) income and political media use, particularly often found for newspaper reading. Besides financial resources, lifestyle and occupation-related motives could play some role here.

*Age and/or cohort membership:* political media use increases markedly during youth and adolescence, along with political interest. In old age, it may decline again due to deteriorating cognitive abilities and changing information needs. In the adult population, age has positive correlations with newspaper reading and television news viewing, while Internet news use tends to be higher among younger people. Older persons generally appear to be more interested in current affairs information. However, such differences between age groups may reflect not only processes of aging (called age effects) but also cohort effects, meaning stable differences between birth cohorts (i.e., people born in the 1930s, the 1940s, etc., who have been shaped differently by the changing times). In particular, cohort effects have been found for newspaper reading (→ Readership Research).

*Gender:* known differences between men and women are largely confined to newspaper use, with men reading more frequently. Women also appear to be somewhat less interested in politics, probably to a large part because of gender-related socialization and role patterns (education, employment, occupation, etc.). This gender gap is larger in the older cohorts of the population, and it has narrowed in recent decades, a trend likely to continue.

Further correlates of political media use that have been examined less frequently include personality factors such as need for cognition, desire for control, and opinion leadership (→ Opinion Leader), values (postmaterialism), attitudes (identification with a civic duty to keep informed), and exposure to other news media (e.g., TV news may prompt viewers to seek further information in newspapers). Finally, there are differences between countries: in Europe, political media use – most clearly, newspaper reading – tends to be higher in the north and below average in the south. The US also shows rather low levels of political media use.

## LONG-TERM TRENDS

In times of war or political crisis, interest in and exposure to news rise considerably, and television's role as the favorite news source is further strengthened. More interesting are long-term trends. In the past five decades, new media have greatly expanded the range of political content available to a broader audience, even if politics' share of total media content has declined. Political media use expanded as well in the postwar decades (in absolute terms), probably in part due to rises in educational attainment, women's employment, and political interest.

It appears that in postwar western Europe, political media use increased up to the 1970s (and in part also in the 1980s) but has declined somewhat since. In the US, an even more marked decline in news use has occurred, particularly during the past 10 or 15

years. Trends reported in the literature differ, however, which may be explained by the time periods, countries, and measures of media use they are based on.

In the US, young people in particular seem to have reduced their news use (at least in the old media), a trend that has received much attention lately. Traditional news sources are facing hard times as the younger cohorts increasingly turn to online news and weblogs, and even to news content available on mobile devices such as cell phones or PDAs (→ Online Journalism; Blogger).

Although it is not clear how far this downward trend extends to Europe, there is ample evidence that newspaper reading has declined not only in the US but also in many western European countries, particularly strongly among young people. A considerable part of the overall decline seems to be due to a cohort effect, meaning that newspaper use will drop further as the older cohorts are successively replaced by younger people who are reading less frequently.

In economic terms, the gap between news supply and news demand has widened. Facing stronger competition, news media have made efforts to keep or expand their audiences by more entertaining presentation and by emphasizing soft news. If these more popular forms serve to attract politically less interested people to news, they may not be as bad for democracy as many critics say (Norris 2000). On the other hand, hard news and in-depth political information could get increasingly marginalized – if not displaced – and more difficult to find.

Undoubtedly, an ever-increasing amount and variety of political information is available today. Expanded choice (of both news and entertainment content) facilitates but also forces selectivity, thus creating further potential to avoid news. At the same time, new distribution avenues generate new chances of exposure (in public places, on the web, etc.), and at least top news seems to be nearly omnipresent today. Scanning and monitoring the news (often while engaged in other activities) is becoming more common. The evolving political media use apparently no longer corresponds to the ideal of the “informed citizen.” But “monitorial citizenship” – a concept advanced in 1998 by Schudson in his book *The good citizen* – may be more realistic anyway, given the growing complexity of our societies, politics, and media systems.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Blogger ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Media Use, International Comparison of ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ News ▶ News Audience ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political News ▶ Readership Research ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Social Networks ▶ Soft News ▶ Trap Effect ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Political News

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Political news was published in leaflets and early → newspapers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, shortly after the advent of printing (→ Printing, History of). However, only the cheap, mass circulation press in the nineteenth century and, most notably, → radio and → television about a century later made political news available to a general audience (→ Media History). Today, regular newscasts on many radio and television programs, 24-hour news networks, and a multitude of websites on the Internet make political news continuously available and pervasive in society (→ Internet News; Newscast, 24-Hour). The deployment of global news logistics – → foreign correspondents, → news agencies, and news pools around the world – as well as advances in cable, satellite, and other transmission technologies, have brought about an enormous expansion of the political news supply.

In addition to studying the historical, technological, and organizational aspects of news production, communication research concentrates on three questions when examining political news: how does political news portray political reality? What kind of political knowledge does the audience get from political news? What are the functions of news for the political system?

### CONTENT AND STRUCTURE OF POLITICAL NEWS

According to common understanding, political news is a representation of current events and relevant issues, of individual politicians, and collective actors (such as states, international organizations, national governments, parties, interest groups, social movements, and citizens), and of their actions as well as the public → discourse among these actors. At a closer look it becomes apparent that most political news relates to verbal behavior, i.e., statements, political claims, declarations of intent, accusations, denials, etc.

News analyses typically focus on characterizing the content and structure of the political reporting of newspapers, → magazines, radio and television channels, news

agencies, and → Internet websites. Content analyses applying more or less elaborate coding schemes measure the topical substance and formal features of news; for example, the respective shares of reporting on international and domestic affairs, on different policies (e.g., economic policy, defense, education), on political issues, on the representation of political organizations and personalities, and on how such actors are portrayed and evaluated (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). News analyses also examine the published statements and opinions of political actors, and the style and rhetoric of public discourses (→ News as Discourse; Political Discourse).

Content analyses of political news provide a description of politics, or as one should rather say: of scientific perceptions and interpretations of politics. However, content analyses quite often pursue goals beyond a mere description of reporting. Instead, researchers are interested in the relationships between the news and the reported political occurrences, or between the news and the media audience, or between the news and the political system as a whole. Such relationships are either inferred from content analyses results, or studied directly, with research designs including observational, survey, or experimental methods.

### NEWS AND THE POLITICAL REALITY

It was Walter Lippmann (1965, 226) who set the theme for generations of researchers when questioning the news–reality relationship, by stating “that news and truth are not the same thing, and must be clearly distinguished.” Among the deficits research has diagnosed are, for instance, too much reliance on the elite, particularly on government officials and their news management (→ Issue Management in Politics; Spin Doctor; Public Relations); an excessive personalization and dramatization of politics; a preference for negativism (“bad news”; → Negativity); and a shortsighted presentation of isolated happenings, resulting in a fragmented picture of reality (Bennett 2001; Patterson in press).

News analyses may be roughly categorized into two types. Studies of “news bias” try to disclose journalistic malpractice, which is often attributed to the ideological motives of the journalists or the commercial interests of media owners (→ Bias in the News). Studies of “news mediation,” on the other hand, try to identify and explain the structural factors determining the selection and construction of news (→ Construction of Reality through the News; News Factors). Both types of studies contrast real events and their media representation, at least in principle, but sometimes also operationally by comparing the news with the reality or, more precisely, intra-media data with extra-media data (→ Extra-Media Data; Reality and Media Reality).

For several reasons, both types of studies mostly focus on *political* news. First, the political reporting of the mass media is, for the ordinary citizen – but quite often for political decision-makers as well – the only information source about relevant political events. This is generally the case for international and national politics, and even for most political events on the community level. Second, it is well established that the picture of political reality as presented by the media, whether it is true or false, accurate or distorted, neutral or biased, influences the political behavior of individual citizens, societal groups, political leaders, and nation-states (→ Media Effects). Third, political news has → reciprocal effects on reality and sometimes even creates the events that it seems to

represent (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Repercussions may occur, for example, when politicians anticipate media reporting and behave according to what they think the media want. Thus mediated political realities may be self-fulfilling (Nimmo & Combs 1983). Fourth, the content of political news is to some degree the result of the strategic news management of policymakers. In international politics, for instance, the news media are used for addressing foreign governments and publics or as a substitute for diplomacy (→ Media Diplomacy). Hence analyses of international communication and propaganda as well as of election campaign communication quite often serve to discover the political intentions, goals, and strategies of political actors.

### **POLITICAL NEWS AND THE MEDIA AUDIENCE**

As → audience research shows, a large majority of the population in modern democracies follows public affairs in the mass media day in, day out. However, the intensity of news usage as well as the amount of information people extract from the news vary considerably, depending mainly on the recipients' age, education, political interest, and previous political knowledge. Television is still the main source of political information, yet the younger generation is increasingly turning to the Internet for news (→ Political Media Use).

A key concern of communication research is to specify the mass media's contribution to citizens' → political knowledge and understanding. There is ample evidence of a positive association of political knowledge with public affairs media use, although less with watching television news than reading broadsheet newspapers. This relationship seems to be transactional rather than causal, following a "virtuous circle": people with higher political interest and previous political knowledge are more likely to attend to news reporting, and in turn, benefit from the news exposure (Norris 2000). However, long-term studies in the US spanning five decades do not show a considerable increase in the population's political knowledge, in spite of the enormous increase in both news supply and media exposure over the years (Delli Carpini & Keeter 1996).

The conventional approach to studying the media's contribution to information gain by testing people's factual political knowledge has been criticized as a "civics fallacy" (Norris 2000, see also Graber 1994). Citizens may not need to acquire encyclopedic information to participate in politics, e.g., to make reasoned electoral choices. More importantly, "civics" tests hardly correspond to the way people make sense of the news. Usually people process political information selectively and parsimoniously, investing just as much effort as is needed to get an impression of the salient events and relevant issues of the day (Graber 2001; → Political Cognitions). Moreover, news use quite often is a form of entertainment. Against this backdrop some authors suggest that the normative standards for citizens' role in politics as well as for the mass media's news reporting should be reconsidered.

### **NEWS AND THE POLITICAL SYSTEM**

Theories modeling the role of the mass media in politics, explicitly or implicitly, postulate that the news serves specific political functions for the adaptation, integration, and operation of a democratic system (→ Functional Analysis). For example, political news, in addition to recording the events of the day, is expected to reflect → public opinion, act

as a “watchdog” to disclose political misbehavior, facilitate public discourse, and foster citizens’ political participation. Such normative requirements are, according to common understanding, best performed under press freedom, a condition which is defined by the absence of → censorship, the availability of a plurality of sources and information, and open → access to the media for all citizens. Although the worldwide expansion of news channels and of political news supply has been conducive to these requirements, there are still large differences in press freedom in different countries, so that the news media can perform their positive political functions much better in some countries than in others (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Press freedom is relatively high in central and northern Europe, but low in most third world countries (Reporters without Borders n.d.).

Further, the positive functions of political news depend on the organization of news production and on the newsmaking behavior of journalists. In democratic societies these conditions are regulated by media law (→ Journalism: Legal Situation), by media market and ownership arrangements (e.g., private versus public ownership; → Ownership in the Media), and by more or less formal communication norms and journalistic standards (see, e.g., Graber 2002). Conventional standards of newsmaking, such as → accuracy, objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting), independence, plurality, or → balance, are rooted in fundamental democratic principles (McQuail 1992). Hence empirical studies examining how far these standards are met indicate to some degree the democratic quality of a given political system (→ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in).

Nevertheless, there are arguments in favor of lowering the conventional norms of journalistic performance. According to the “burglar alarm standard” proposed by Zaller (2003, 122) as an alternative to the “full news standard,” journalists should concentrate on important issues “by means of coverage that is intensely focused, dramatic, and entertaining,” and thus take into account citizens’ limited capacities to process political news, as well as recent changes in news style.

## CHANGING POLITICAL NEWS

The “full news standard” requires, among other things, a clear separation of → news from → commentary (→ Separation of News and Comments), as well as of public affairs (“hard”) news from entertaining → “soft” news. Both distinctions seem to be eroding, resulting in a changing news style. While the lines between news and entertainment are blurring, there seems to be an increasing tendency among journalists to intermix factual reporting with interpretations. New media formats and channels for publicizing public affairs have emerged, and the scope of political reporting has been expanding with the growth of strategic communication and mediated politics (see, e.g., Graber et al. 1998; → Mediatization of Politics). These changes may be attributed to several developments.

Since the mid-twentieth century, the range and conception of politics have been changing dramatically, and so has the media’s definition of politics. Most notably, processes of globalization and international cooperation have resulted in an increasing media attention to foreign affairs, particularly from mainstream elite media and specialized news channels. At the same time, the extension of state influence – through legislation, regulation, taxation, subsidization – has led to a growing politicization of major parts of society, including the economy, arts, sports, even the private lives of

citizens. Correspondingly, myriad interest groups engage in articulating their interests through public relations activities, issues management, protest action, even terrorism (→ Mediated Terrorism), leading to an ever-increasing stream of politically relevant information and forcing the media to focus on the most noisy and dramatic events.

Second, the expansion and commercialization of media markets (→ Commercialization of the Media) have brought about fierce competition for audiences, including audiences for news. Some media are trying to extend their market shares by softening up the news with human interest, mixing political information with entertaining elements, or presenting political issues in entertainment formats (→ Infotainment; Politainment).

Third, due to the emergence of the Internet, mediated political information abounds more than ever. Internet users do not only have at their disposal online news produced by offline media; the web also carries a vast quantity of information offered by various political stakeholders, including ordinary citizens. Search engines and web-based companies provide links – sometimes categorized and annotated – helping the user to find a path through the information bazaar. In addition, a plethora of blogs, podcasts, and other kinds of politically relevant information is available from various share and discussion sites (→ Blogger). These developments blur the lines not only between different genres and formats of political news, but also between producers and consumers of news.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Accuracy ▶ Audience ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Censorship ▶ Commentary ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Discourse ▶ Extra-Media Data ▶ Foreign Correspondents ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Diplomacy ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media History ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Negativity ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Factors ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newspaper ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Radio ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Separation of News and Comments ▶ Soft News ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Television

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## Political Personality in Media Democracy

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With the advent of → television the public appearance of political processes has changed fundamentally. Television makes visual impressions of political events easily available and provides politicians with the opportunity to project an → image of themselves to the general public (→ Media Democracy). This is assumed to have been contributing to a personalization of politics in general, and particularly to the change from issue-centered to candidate-centered election campaigning (→ Personalization of Campaigning). When the political parties and the mass media focus on the leading politicians, their public images become important factors in shaping and changing political opinions (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Candidate Image). As people lend themselves more readily to a mediated presentation of politics, the personality of political representatives plays an important role in citizens' thinking and behavior (→ Political Cognitions).

Personality can be defined as the intra-individual consistent pattern of reactions to different situations. With respect to the concept of political personality three different meanings may be distinguished: (1) the politician's private or "true" personality; (2) the persona a politician publicly presents (→ Impression Management; Self-Presentation); and (3) the image the media present of a politician. The politician's self-presentation and the image conveyed by the media may or may not correspond to the politician's private personality. The relationship between the different aspects of the political personality and people's reactions can be understood as dynamic interaction, in which people's perceptions influence public self-presentations and images, which in turn influence people's perceptions.

Lasswell's (1930) classic analysis of politicians' personalities distinguishes the agitator, the administrator, and the theorist. In recent research the emphasis has been on specific motives, predispositions, and interaction and decision styles (e.g., Winter 2005). As politicians rarely subject themselves to direct assessment procedures, indirect methods have become important in political psychology.

With the *personality assessment at a distance (PAD)* approach (Hermann 1999), the frequency of certain words or phrases during interviews is used to draw conclusions about a politician's personality. PAD is used to compare profiles of political leaders across countries and to predict future political behavior. It is to be remembered, however, that only spontaneous statements are informative about a speaker's private personality. Planned responses may be inspired by media coaches, and aim at a specific public image.

Schütz (1993, 1998) used content analysis to study politicians' public self-presentation behavior during election campaigns and scandals (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative). The resulting *taxonomy* distinguishes aggressive, assertive, and defensive self-presentation. Aggressive self-presentation is characterized by efforts to convey images of superiority or strength by devaluing opponents or attacking journalists. Assertive self-presentation means presenting favorable images without attacking others. Defensive behavior is aimed at protecting and re-establishing threatened identities. There is a critical balance between positivity and credibility in self-presentation. The effective self-presenter chooses the maximum level of positivity that can be conveyed to a specific audience in a specific situation without being perceived as insincere.

Selective broadcasting, journalists' comments, camera perspective, etc. add to creating a public image (→ Media Effects). The impact of *media features* on a candidate's image is examined in experimental studies on agenda setting (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Participants typically rate newspaper articles about competing candidates or watch TV shows in which the setting or background information is manipulated. It has been shown that information on certain personality traits (e.g., corruptness) receives more attention than information on others (e.g., educational background; see Kioussis et al. 1999), a finding that fits in well with the general trends that "bad news is good news" or "bad is stronger than good" (Baumeister et al. 2001; → Negativity).

Recent studies have analyzed politicians' personalities by means of personality inventories. Italian politicians' self-descriptions proved to be on higher levels than the general population with respect to agreeableness, extraversion, and social desirability, though there were congruencies between politicians and their voters on all personality dimensions (Caprara et al. 2003). These findings suggest that the politicians' self-presentations match voters' preferences.

Past research focused on political personalities in the press, on the radio, and on television. Today the → Internet is receiving increasing attention as a medium of → political communication. Personal websites, emails, and weblogs are prominent in political campaigning. Political candidates' websites aim at improving the candidates' image. The advantage of emails is the chance of addressing someone personally and tailoring messages to specific audiences. Weblogs are a medium of increasing importance (→ Blogger). They enhance the options of the public to actively participate in the political discourse and are often perceived as authentic, but there is of course also the possibility of selective posting and manipulating. A large area for future research on the personality in politics is opening up here.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on  
▶ Blogger ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis,

Quantitative ► Image ► Impression Management ► Internet ► Media Democracy  
► Media Effects ► Negativity, Personalization of Campaigning ► Political Cognitions  
► Political Communication ► Self-Presentation ► Television

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## **Political Persuasion**

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Persuasion is an integral part of politics and a necessary component of the pursuit and exercise of power. Political persuasion is a process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behavior regarding a political issue through messages, in an atmosphere of free choice (Perloff 2003, 34). As the field of political communication has grown, so too has the number of studies exploring the processes and effects of political persuasive communication (→ Persuasion). Political persuasion involves the application of persuasion principles to a context in which most individuals possess the seemingly incompatible characteristics of harboring strong feelings about a host of issues, yet caring precious little about the context in which these issues are played out.

## COGNITIVE PROCESSING

In order to understand political persuasion impact, one must appreciate the processes by which messages achieve their effects (→ Media Effects). Cognitive processing models such as the → elaboration likelihood model (see Petty et al. 2003) emphasize that under *low political motivation or ability*, voters base decisions on *heuristics* and are susceptible to cues peripheral to the main message, such as candidate attractiveness, political party labels, endorsements, and even the degree to which political names are repeated or are smooth-sounding (→ Information Processing). Some researchers argue that in these low-involvement situations, individuals lack political attitudes altogether and therefore can be swayed by factors that are momentarily salient in the political environment, variables that may be of such a transient nature they are devoid of any substantive meaning (Bishop 2005).

By contrast, when individuals are *motivated* or able to consider political issues, they centrally process message arguments, recalling arguments they perceive to be personally important and thinking through issues, although such thinking is invariably biased by strongly held values or self-interest. In politics, where attitudes and prejudices are formed at an early age, much highly involved processing is biased processing. Consequently, the political persuasion that occurs through debates, advertising, news, and blogs frequently falls under the category of reinforcement, attitude strengthening, or converting attitudes into voting behavior (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). The vast array of political communications also can change attitudes, frequently subtly and indirectly, as when messages access deeply held values, prime standards for candidate evaluation, and influence the salience of political issues (West 2005).

## LEVELS OF INFLUENCE

While researchers generally focus on specific types of political persuasion, we can understand this process more clearly by examining both the direction of influence and the various levels at which this persuasive influence occurs.

If a democratic system is to function efficiently, political persuasion occurs in both directions, bottom-up and top-down. The → public must be able to persuade politicians to enact public policies that reflect the will of the people. This persuasion can be expressed by the will of the majority, such as by a mandate in a winning election, but it can also be expressed by the minority, such as in the influence of special interests and lobbyists. Alternatively, the direction of influence can go from political leaders to the public. Politicians must be able to persuade the public to support their agenda of foreign policy, domestic, and legislative initiatives. For example, the government uses various means of political persuasion to persuade the people to support foreign military action, or support new domestic initiatives such as sweeping health-care reform or the privatization of pension provision.

Ultimately, it is the media that are the critical links in this process – regardless of direction – as they transmit carefully crafted messages by government agencies (for example White House propaganda in the war on Iraq; Kellner 2004), convey the strength of public support of policies by reporting public opinion polls (Mutz & Soss 1997), and act as gatekeepers and framers of the daily flow of political news (Williams & Deli Carpini 2000).

Along with direction of influence, we must understand the practice of political persuasion across levels. At the *interpersonal level* there is ongoing political persuasion occurring within the halls of legislative bodies, where law-makers engage in endless arm-twisting of their colleagues while seeking support and votes for legislation. The so-called “Johnson treatment” is a case in point. As a senator in the 1950s, the former US president Lyndon Johnson was particularly effective in gaining the support of his Democratic colleagues by exploiting tactics of persuasive interpersonal communication. In more recent years Johnson’s techniques have been refined through the use of non-stop opinion polls, made famous during the presidencies of Reagan and Clinton.

Political persuasion at the interpersonal level also occurs among individuals, dyads, and groups within the public. This is most apparent during political campaigns as supporters attempt to convert the undecided as well as rally the faithful. The persuasiveness of interpersonal political communication has become more apparent in recent elections as the use of the Internet, including emails and blogs (→ Blogger), has been found to be an important means of rallying political support and fundraising (e.g., the Howard Dean 2004 and Barack Obama 2008 presidential campaigns; → Election Campaign Communication). Internet campaigns by special interest groups have also been found to be effective in spurring letter-writing, phone calls, and emails to members of parliaments to persuade them to vote for particular legislation. In addition, at the intergroup level members of the public participate in political rallies, marches, and protests that can often be effective means of persuading politicians to pay greater attention to specific social causes or legislative issues.

Most research in the area of political persuasion occurs within the context of elections. At the *societal level*, political advertising has been found to influence the voting decisions and affect the political knowledge of voters in the US (Just et al. 1990; → Advertising as Persuasion; Political Advertising). Although derided by critics, negative political ads have been shown to be effective (Perloff 1998; → Negative Campaigning). Tactics of persuasion during elections have been practiced and perfected by political consultants (Thurber & Nelson 2000; → Political Consultant). As inordinate amounts of money are becoming increasingly important in successful political campaigns, candidates and party leaders must persuade donors to make financial contributions. Lastly, throughout the campaign candidates make promises to voters as a means of winning their votes, although means of accountability for broken promises are much less clear.

Converging across levels, attempts at political persuasion by interest groups must continually battle for legitimization from the greater public at large, public officials, and the media. Even as some interest groups find great success in persuading both public and politicians of their message, many other “fringe” groups (e.g., proponents of a 9/11 cover-up) may never find their message well received, despite their persuasive attempts.

## **MEDIA FORMS AND FRAMES**

Like other forms of political communication, politically persuasive messages are not always truthful and honest, and it is up to media watchdogs and the public to sort out fact from fiction. Politically persuasive messages also take different forms across various media. The goal of films like Michael Moore’s *Fahrenheit 9/11* and Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient*

*Truth* is to persuade individuals to support a particular set of political beliefs. In addition, both TV talk shows and talk radio have continued to become more pervasive in the US and other countries, and a myriad of talk-show hosts both entertain and try to persuade their audience that their opinions are right, while also inducing reinforcement effects (→ Broadcast Talk). Thus, the mediated campaign environment represents the battleground in the fight for the “hearts and minds” of public and elites. Legitimation of message is a crucial aspect of persuasion, and the media are primary sources of political information, whether about candidates or about issues (→ Political Cognitions). But the media are not simple conduits for information. Journalistic routines influence what and how news is presented (→ News Routines).

How information is framed also affects how it is processed, with what elements it is stored and related in the public’s mind, and ultimately how persuasive it may be. Framing provides the audience with a workable model to interpret complex and often confusing information (→ Framing Effects). In this sense, framing is an extension of agenda setting. Agenda setting was seen as the outcome of journalists’ roles, activities, and values. Hence the media tell us what to think about, if not specifically what to think (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Traditionally, this was viewed as a *laissez-faire* phenomenon, but more recently the setting of the media agenda (and through that the public’s agenda) has been seen as the result of an intention to create the media’s own effects (Lakoff 2004; → Strategic Framing).

But framing is a multilevel phenomenon. Elites and special interest groups attempt to create – or manipulate, depending on your perspective – the public agenda by providing poll-tested linguistic constructions of highly charged political issues. Media, using their own norms and values, select and present information about these issues. The public itself interprets mediated information through its own preconceptions and attitudes.

Initially, framing may be more effective in low-involvement situations, providing simple explanations for events, in line with peripheral processing. Once the frame is set, it can be activated for processing other persuasive messages. Kosicki (2002) argued that framing is consistent with schematic information processing (→ Schemas).

Framing operates at both a sociological and a psychological level. When the media present themes that explain basic episodic news (persons and events), there are inherent ideologies, values, and symbols that help to shape context. When individuals use these themes to assess cause and effect, heroes and villains, and right and wrong, the psychological processes are in full play (Iyengar & Simon 1993).

## AMBIGUITY OF POLITICAL PERSUASION

Ultimately, political persuasion can be best viewed along a *continuum* – one end anchored in the harmful effects of propaganda, the other in the positive effects of marches and demonstrations leading to civil rights legislation, with a great deal in between. Back in 1922 → Walter Lippmann said that the media create a pseudo-reality (Lippmann 1922), but in the age of corporate news media, the “mediation of reality,” in which persuasive messages are delivered by the media, is frequently guided more by purposes such as gaining revenue or influence than by journalistic standards (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality).

Political persuasion remains an ambiguous phenomenon, raising time-honored questions that date back to ancient Greek philosophy. Do political persuasive messages

enhance or debase democracy? Do advertisements inform voters about candidates' positions or mislead them by presenting vacuous statements and feel-good pictures? As campaigns move to the Internet, new questions are emerging, such as whether campaigns will enhance direct communication between leaders and citizens or increase the potential for deception in a milieu unchecked by nonpartisan news media. Theory and research suggest that technology will bring benefits, but also offer new gimmicks in an old game.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Blogger ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Information Processing ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Negative Campaigning ▶ News Routines ▶ Persuasion ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Public ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Schemas ▶ Strategic Framing

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# Political Socialization through the Media

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There is a great deal of controversy concerning the effects of mass communication on political socialization, in terms of both its size and direction (→ Media Effects). Political socialization can be understood as the processes through which democratic societies instill the proper norms among their members to maintain social institutions and practices. Most research on this topic focuses on how individuals engage in political development and learn basic civic skills, with family, schooling, peer groups, and media serving as the major factors involved in this dynamic. Early studies focused on adolescence as a critical period for political socialization, though this has given way to lifelong learning models, attention to generational differences, and consideration of civic modes of participation alongside the political (Sears & Levy 2003; Sapiro 2004).

Media consumption (→ Exposure to Communication Content) and → social networks are increasingly central to models of political socialization that extend beyond adolescence to life stages when parental and educational influence is comparatively reduced. The relationships between these variables are not always viewed as complementary, with electronic media often considered the source of declining rates of social interaction. Some scholars even argue that television viewing and → Internet use erode engagement in public life and demobilize citizens (Putnam 2000; → Exposure to the Internet; Social Capital, Media Effects on). Young people, as heavy users of such media, are thought to experience these negative influences to a disproportionate degree, as a consequence of the displacement of time from social interaction, the promotion of antisocial perceptions, and the generation of cynicism toward politics and public affairs (→ Political Cynicism).

However, these assessments of the adverse influence of television on civic and political participation have been called into question by research revealing little evidence of time-displacement effects and demonstrating the benefits of → news, documentary, and dramatic television viewing on civic attitudes and behaviors (→ Documentary Film; Drama in Media Content). Recent work has also observed that online news consumption and social messaging have positive effects on engagement in public life, providing some evidence of the pro-civic and pro-democratic potential of digital media for younger generations (Eveland et al. 1999; Shah et al. 2001).

## THE DECLINE IN YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Evidence shows that the gap in civic engagement between young and older adults has grown in recent years in most western democracies. For example, the gap in voter turnout between 18-to-24-year-olds and older adults has grown over the last two decades. Young people have less → political knowledge and pay less attention to the news than their parents did at their age. They are less trusting of their fellow citizens, and even when they do vote, their action is not as likely to be accompanied by other civic actions. By and large, young people today are comparatively disengaged from and uninformed about politics,



and less active in civic life than the rising rate of educational attainment among their generational cohort would predict.

Although conventional newspaper reading is viewed as the one positive exception to the negative effects of the media on participation and democratic legitimacy, traditional print media have seen their youth audience, and thus their influence, displaced by the rise of television during the latter half of the twentieth century and the ascendance of digital media in the last decade (→ Media Use across the Life-Span; Political Media Use). Among these, television use (→ Exposure to Television) has become a prime suspect when scholars began searching for causes of the four-decade decline in civic participation (Putnam 2000). Indeed, heavy television viewing as measured by hours of use is associated with lower political activity among both adolescents and younger adults, seemingly confirming this suspicion.

This finding should be interpreted tentatively. First, it only holds for formal political activity and discussion, but not for less formal civic activities and learning. Second, time displacement may not be the key mechanism. A focus on time spent with television may mask important differences in the effects of various forms of television *content*. Watching → situation comedies appears to deter civic action, while news and documentary viewing tends to show positive effects. This focus on television has also led many in the academic community to ignore the positive effects of the print media, such as newspapers and news magazines. Indeed, the decade's long decline in participation is more likely a direct result of the erosion of print news readership rather than an effect of the rise of television. The Internet, especially when used as a source of public affairs information and a sphere for political expression, shows signs of salutary effects rivaling TV and newspapers (Shah et al. 2005).

## COMMUNICATION AND SOCIALIZATION

As a result of these changes, traditional models of political socialization have been radically altered over the last 40 years to account for the shifting effects of communication factors. The early focus on political *outcomes* came at the expense of ignoring *processes* that are vital to democracy. The idea of an active audience has important implications for political socialization research. As mentioned earlier, time-spent media measures are insensitive to the differing effects of specific types of content. Moreover, television viewers often combine watching with other activities. Today's youth typically spend seven hours a day using media, most of which involves using two or more media simultaneously (Roberts 2000). It is therefore important to obtain self-reported information about the person's consumption of particular types of media content and the context of this consumption.

To more fully understand media effects, communication research has gone beyond simply questions of *how much* an individual uses various media to consider the questions of *how* content is consumed, and beyond *what* media are used to examine *why* certain media are selected (→ Media Effects, History of). The *how* question is answered by focusing on exposure and attention to various types of media content and by attending to potentially differential effects across a range of media. For example, among televised entertainment media, social drama viewing has been linked to civic engagement, whereas reality show viewing has been linked with civic disengagement. The *why* question is addressed by

examining the *gratifications* sought from content and their association with patterns of media consumption. For example, informational motivations increase attention to hard news and facilitate learning, whereas seeking escape or diversion motivations lessens attention and learning from news.

Further, the socializing influences of the mass media on youth are often complemented and reinforced by communication with parents and peers. How parents communicate with their adolescent children has been found to be particularly important to civic socialization (Chaffee et al. 1973). In particular, children who are encouraged to freely express their ideas even if they are at odds with those of their parents tend to be more politically engaged, whereas those who are raised in communication contexts where conformity is emphasized are less so. In a similar vein, political discussion issues with family, friends, co-workers, and others in one's social network have been found to play a key role in the development of civic identity (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995). These factors have been found to influence adolescent and early adult socialization, complementing and channeling the effects of media on civic outcomes.

## ADOLESCENT SOCIALIZATION THROUGH MEDIA

To understand the effect of media use and political talk on adolescent socialization, we must consider both the *level* of activity and strength of *effect*. Adolescent news consumption from traditional print and broadcast media is small in comparison to their consumption of entertainment content in the form of television programs, films, and video games. Still, there is a significant gain in news consumption, political talk with peers, and civic engagement from early to late adolescence. Family communication patterns also change during the adolescent years, with parents reducing demands for conformity and instead favoring greater openness to the expression of controversial positions. These changes contribute to adolescent political learning and activity.

### Effects on Adolescents

Newspaper hard news reading has the strongest media effect on indicators of youth socialization, after demographic and other controls, in conveying knowledge, stimulating discussion, and shaping attitudes among adolescents. The strength of its effects remains as strong in the late 1990s as it was in the early 1970s (Chaffee et al. 1973). Attentive television news viewing has positive though weaker impact, while television entertainment viewing has both positive and negative effects (→ Entertainment, Effects of). Mental elaboration or “reflection” – reflecting on issues seen in the news and connecting them with existing beliefs – has a strong effect on engagement beyond exposure to the news. Indeed, reflection and issue discussion are seen as both conduits and consequences of news consumption. That is, news consumption encourages these outcomes, but also has its effects on participation channeled through these internal and external forms of deliberation (McLeod 2000; Yoon et al. 2005).

Recent studies counter early speculation that the effect of adolescent Internet use, overall, on civic activism is negative (→ Internet Use across the Life-Span). Although “time-spent-online” measures have been negatively related to psychological well-being,

social trust, and real-world ties, recent research focused on adolescents finds positive linkages between certain forms of use and civic engagement. Research on young adults, which focuses on online news consumption, political messaging over email, and other online communication tools, suggests even more optimistic outcomes for adolescents.

### **YOUNG ADULT SOCIALIZATION THROUGH MEDIA**

Early adulthood is a period of rapid identity change. The social support provided by parents, school, and church is removed and new civic allegiances and identities must be formed. Young adults tend to have high rates of residential mobility, typically anticipating a move within the next five years. For this reason, they are less likely to feel a strong sense of belonging to their new social context, especially if they are no longer in the same community in which they attended high school. There are also substantial life-course differences between the college-bound, trade-school students, and those who directly enter the workforce or armed services. Nonetheless, social interactions with friends and co-workers play a critical role in all young adults' lives, including the development of their civic identity. For many young adults, the media also take on a larger role as a means of connecting socially with others and for maintaining contact with others through email and social networking.

Although younger adults are generally less active than older adults, the extent of difference varies across indices of civic engagement. Differences are largest for voting, political/public affairs interest, and knowledge. More moderate differences are shown for trust in people and efficacy (→ Political Efficacy). Volunteering and other forms of civic participation are more similar for younger and older adults. Newspaper reading remains low for those under age 40. Television news viewing is similarly skewed, though young adults approach older adult levels by the mid-thirties (McLeod 2000). Prior to the rise of the Internet, news reached young adults mainly through television, with young people consuming at lower rates than older citizens during election campaign periods. Internet use, writ large, displays an opposite pattern. Younger adults are the heaviest users, with amount of use declining across increasingly older adults. For example, more than 40 percent of young adults read a political story from the Internet in the 2000 US election campaign – almost double the proportion for those 50 and older. That percentage rose dramatically for both groups by 2004, though the gap remained in place (Yoon et al. 2005).

### **Effects on Young Adults**

Albeit in decline, newspaper reading, which has the strongest impact on learning and participation for adults generally, is among the strongest positive influences on civic engagement among young adults (Sotirovic & McLeod 2001). Still, it is unlikely that conventional newspaper reading is a way to spur young adult activism, due to its low use. The Internet, because of its very heavy use among younger adults, may provide a more potent opportunity. Internet use, measured in crude hours of use per day, was found to have a positive influence on knowledge, interest, volunteering, and civic participation on American adults aged 18–22. Internet effects for the youngest adults tend to be stronger than for adults over 35 years old. Internet use for search and exchange of information was

most strongly related to trust both in people and in civic participation among the youngest adult cohorts (Shah et al. 2001).

## PROSPECTS FOR SOCIALIZATION THROUGH THE MEDIA

The prospects for civic renewal and future civic socialization through the media clearly deserve more attention. As noted above, newspaper reading among adolescents has dropped markedly over the last three decades, particularly in the United States. Consumption of → television news has also dropped, leading some to suggest that young people are no longer exposed to or attentive to public affairs content. With the rise of the Internet, patterns of news consumption are shifting, especially among adolescents, with some recent studies suggesting that young people are mainly encountering conventional hard news content through online channels such as customized home pages, blogs, and news indices. Thus, use of the Internet by the most recent cohorts may partly offset the loss in conventional news consumption via newspapers and television. Notably, adolescent access to computers, the Internet, and broadband connections in schools and at home has grown rapidly.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ News ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Efficacy ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Social Capital, Media Effects on ▶ Social Networks ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Television News

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## Political Symbols

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Political symbols are entities that stand for things other than themselves, elicit responses, and assume meaning in relation to the objects, beliefs, values, or attitudes to which they refer.

In the field of political science, symbols have been studied from two key approaches. Behavioralist scholars have examined the functions of symbols, tracked their appearance across political messages and situations, and made connections between symbol use and attitudinal or behavioral effects. This perspective often regards symbols as separate from the world of politics, or as entities that mask the realities of political life. Interpretivist scholars, in contrast, have studied how symbols are open to interpretation, how individuals use – and are used by – them, and how symbols may not reflect empirical realities (and yet their constructed meanings are powerful, nonetheless). This perspective contends that because citizens rarely have the opportunity to experience political phenomena (e.g., campaign speeches, governmental meetings, policy debates, and other elite activities), they come to know their worlds through symbols and language.

Symbols have also been studied from processual, structuralist, and postmodern approaches in neighboring disciplines such as communication, anthropology, and sociology (→ Structuralism; Postmodernism and Communication). Most contemporary research on political symbols comes from the interpretivist perspective.

Political scientist Murray Edelman authored the seminal works on political symbols. Four of his books are particularly influential, and his own scholarship can be viewed as moving from the functional to the interpretivist perspective. Indeed, Edelman's *Symbolic uses of politics* (1964) and *Politics as symbolic action* (1971) bear markers of the functional approach, while *Political language: Words that succeed and policies that fail* (1977) and *Constructing the political spectacle* (1988) are clearly driven by an interpretivist view. Edelman was not the first to theorize about → symbolism and constructed meanings in politics. His theorizing was inspired by scholars including → Harold Lasswell, → Walter Lippmann, George Herbert Mead, Kenneth Burke, and Jacques Derrida. The breadth and richness of Edelman's work inspired a set of understandings, and research trajectories, about the roles of symbols in political life.

A key point for Edelman is that citizens come to know their roles, political leaders, governmental structures, and issue options through symbols and language (→ Political Language). Symbols, then, demand scholarly inquiry, as individuals cannot understand

their political lives outside of them. Perhaps responding to the functionalist perspective, Edelman and others claim that symbols do not need to be accurate to be influential. Instead, the symbols that leaders and societies use often tell a more powerful story about what those leaders and societies want to believe rather than that which can be empirically verified. Symbols are not regarded as meaningful in and of themselves. They become powerful only when individuals and groups grant them meaning, and they become most influential in constructing political realities when they (1) are supported by many smaller symbols (so that they are difficult to question), (2) shape public thought and dialog (so much so that people forget they are constructions), and (3) displace alternative constructions (so that other ways of thinking about political situations are left unimagined; → Political Discourse).

Political symbols can feature cognitive and emotional components. Edelman advanced two types of symbols that are widely cited in subsequent research. *Referential symbols* are abbreviations for the objective aspects of objects or situations. These symbols can be identified similarly by different types of people and refer to a situation as statistics might summarize an event. *Condensation symbols* are abbreviations of emotions connected to an object or situation. Condensation symbols may feature singular or multiple emotions and need not be based on accurate information. Edelman observed that no object could be purely a referential or a condensation symbol. Nevertheless, most controversial topics emerge to serve as condensation symbols, for the threats surrounding the controversy become meaningful through the emotions, not the objective consequences, of the situation.

Political symbols are also connected to political power. In Edelman's work, he explains how elites use symbols, myths, rituals, and political language to (1) shape the wants and preferences of citizens and (2) make certain solutions appear to be sensible responses to the symbolic framing of problems. Emotional symbols are particularly influential in creating incentives for individuals to accept the dominant constructions of problems and solutions. Media reports amplify these symbolic constructions, and, by doing so, conserve and preserve the power of political elites. Sociologist and theorist Pierre Bourdieu, too, examined the connection between symbols and power. His construct of *symbolic capital* offers an economic metaphor to assess the value of having prestige or being recognized.

Rhetorician Kenneth Burke defined symbols as a verbal parallel to a pattern of experience (→ Rhetorical Studies). In a way akin to political scientists working in the interpretivist approach, Burke regarded humans as symbol using, making, and misusing animals and argued that people's largest problems result from symbols using humans rather than humans using symbols. Burke's notion of *secular prayer* has been influential in the research of Edelman and others. There, Burke noted that political communicators often add dramatic properties to common matters and soften the impact of controversial ones to create influential political symbols.

Common critiques of research on political symbols include concerns with imprecise conceptualization and measurement and a lack of systematic and empirical methods. Interpretivist scholars respond to such critiques by noting that their aim is to offer a multidimensional approach and richer understandings of symbols in social, cultural, and historical contexts. Research on political symbols is most commonly praised for attending to the constructions of meanings of political and policy debates and for questioning and explaining puzzles in → public opinion research.

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► Lasswell, Harold D. ► Lippmann, Walter ► Political Communication ► Political Discourse ► Political Language ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Public Opinion ► Rhetorical Studies ► Structuralism ► Symbolic Politics ► Symbolism

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## **Politics in Popular Communication**

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Political communication is an interdisciplinary field with roots stretching back to Aristotle and Plato, who debated the meaning of democracy and society (→ Political Communication; Rhetoric, Greek). Modern political communication research incorporates not only the field of communication, including → journalism and rhetoric, but also political science, sociology, history, psychology, geography, and others (→ Rhetorical Studies).

Political communication can mean many things. Put simply, it is the “role of communication in the political process” (→ Chaffee 1975, 15). A more precise description, used by the Political Communication section of the American Political Science Association ([www.apsanet.org](http://www.apsanet.org)), offers that political communication is “the creation, shaping, dissemination, processing and effects of information within the political system – both domestic and international – whether by governments, other institutions, groups or individuals.” Furthermore, political communication scholars explore media in the political process, new media technologies, and societal- and individual-level effects on political processes. For example, Tekwani (2006) examined gaudy billboards as political communication in India, and Hanna (1992) explored the role of rock music in the political disintegration of East Germany.

The term “popular” has both positive and negative connotations. Negatively, it evokes notions of subordinate class position, dominance over the masses, and manipulation by the ruling class and/or culture industries. Adorno might have deemed “popular political communication” an oxymoron, believing that these popular cultural products serve only to control the masses and maintain status quo power relations (→ Critical Theory). In this context, however, it means of, by, for, and about the people. Popular political communication incorporates complex local, national, and international political and media systems.

## **POPULAR POLITICAL COMMUNICATION AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE**

Transparent and accessible popular political communication is necessary to have an informed public to facilitate dialogue and thriving governmental systems. As the world continues to expand into an electronic culture, heavily influenced by visual media such as → television and the → Internet, shifts in consciousness also occur (→ Medium Theory). Each new communication technology, whether written or printed, televised or web-based, influences the way information is received and processed (→ Information Processing). Shorter attention spans, a focus on visuals, and a trend toward entertainment are just some of the outcomes from this shift to a more electronic culture. In some cases, popular political communication has been reduced to slogans and sound bites, due mostly to the economies of the media industry and advancements in media technology (→ Media Economics; Technology and Communication).

Political communication is both communication by a formal political organization and the freedom to criticize that system on the part of the general public, including journalists. What constitutes political communication varies with every political structure. The concepts of the → public sphere and press freedoms are central concerns of popular political communication in western industrialized countries (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). In general, the public sphere is an ideal arena where ideas are generated, knowledge is shared, and opinions are freely debated and discussed. This forum is open and accessible for all to assemble and participate. Press freedom involves not only freedom from government control, but also freedom from commercial influence. While this might be a desirable model for other political structures, it is not always available. Where there is little individual press freedom, little to no private media ownership, and much government control of the media, as is the case in countries such as China, Laos, and Cuba (→ Censorship; China: Media System; Cuba: Media System), popular political communication often serves as a hegemonic tool for state → propaganda. Annually, the nongovernmental organization Reporters without Borders publishes a Worldwide Press Freedom Index. In 2006, for example, the top three countries enjoying the most press freedom were Finland, Iceland, and Ireland. The bottom three, with the least press freedom, were North Korea, Turkmenistan, and Eritrea.

In global society, the media serve as a type of public sphere where information is exchanged, debated, and distributed to the masses, although the exchange is mostly one-directional – media to the masses (→ Globalization of the Media; Globalization Theories). While the public may not have much production input with commercial media, particularly with newspaper and television, there still exists a social responsibility function of the media to serve the public interest in a democracy. The → BBC is a good example of public service broadcasting in the UK. The idea of a European public sphere and linking citizens across Europe has developed along with the rise of the European Union and has prompted the establishment, for example, of the German political education system (Segert 2005). Scholars who explore the cultural influences on popular communication in Africa, for example, point to the difficulties in establishing an exchange due to frequent breakdowns of government and leadership, as well as military intervention in the political communication process (Nnaemeka 1990).

Given the freedoms and the commercial nature of media, particularly in the US, sensationalization of → political discourse for entertainment value is permitted (→ Sensationalism).



Parody and satire are common formats used in western industrialized nations to critique the system. The *Daily Show* and the *Colbert Report* are examples of television programs used for this purpose. Political economic media scholars critique the strong commercial influence on the media. They insist more regulation is needed and the capitalist “free market” media model is inherently flawed at creating a true public sphere (→ Political Economy of the Media).

### MULTIMEDIA FORMS

Most recently, *radio* as a vehicle for popular political communication has seen a surge of influence and availability in Latin American countries. In countries such as Peru, Colombia, and Brazil, *comunicación popular* (“communication of the people”) occurs through community radio, which is a tool used by the people in social and political struggles. Radio Sutatenza of Colombia and Radio Huayacocotla in Mexico focus on education and community organization (Gumucio Dagron 2001). In the US, popular political communication on radio often serves niche partisan audiences. Hosts such as Rush Limbaugh and Dr Laura Schlessinger gained popularity among conservatives frustrated with the perceived mainstream media’s liberal bias (→ Bias in the News; Hostile Media Phenomenon). Air America radio targets more liberal, left-leaning listeners.

*Television*, arguably the most mainstream of all the media, takes a broad and diverse approach in its production of political discourse (→ Television: Social History). With the development of cable, television tries to reach large audiences through broadcast stations, while specialized cable networks focus on fragmented or niche markets (→ Cable Television). In the US and many other countries, broadcast stations generally host national presidential debates and air → political advertising (→ Televised Debates). Debates are not only seen as contests with winners and losers, but also a game in punditry, where popular political pundits from the left and right critique their opponents’ success. Political communication through advertising can be as diverse and simple as painting candidate names on roadside boulders, airplanes streaming banners, and vans or cars blasting boastful campaign messages from megaphones, to straightforward television, radio, newspaper, and outdoor advertisements. Recent popular communication scholarship examines political discourse in popular late-night programs, as well as newer venues such as YouTube and blogs (Tessler 2006).

### INTERNET

The newest medium with the greatest potential to provide in-depth (and almost unlimited) information, as well as the opportunity for individual citizens to contribute to political dialogue, is the Internet (→ Internet News; Online Journalism). While there are access and technical expertise inequities that even the most optimistic media reformers cannot deny, in many countries this medium offers the greatest opportunity to engage in political discourse even if governments regulate other forms of media. While many have only begun to incorporate this new technology, a few savvy bloggers and web page designers have been able to scoop mainstream news outlets (→ Blogger). In the broader context, the Internet is relatively new, and individual users and corporations are trying to

determine how to make the most of this medium as scholars monitor the progress and recommend democratic uses for this seemingly limitless new medium.

Many scholars believe a healthy democracy depends on a thriving public sphere, where political discussions are in-depth and free from fear of government retaliation. Providing journalists access to government officials and organizations and citizens the opportunity and freedom to participate in political debate are major challenges in many parts of the world. Even in countries where this relationship is claimed to exist, a close examination often reveals little transparency of process. Some of the biggest obstacles to popular political communication include consolidation of media ownership, and commercialization or profits being favored over public service, which includes the trend toward infotainment. Fraser suggests that the singular public sphere is unrealistic and citizens should seek out a “multiplicity of publics” (1992, 127) to participate actively in the popular political discourse.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ BBC ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Cable Television ▶ Celebrity Journalists ▶ Censorship ▶ Chaffee, Steven H. ▶ China: Media System ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cuba: Media System ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Information Processing ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Journalism ▶ Media Economics ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Online Journalism ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History

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# Polls and the Media

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Election polls have a long history of a symbiotic relationship with the media, dating back to the nineteenth century (Converse 1987; Frankovic 2008). However, it was not until the 1920s that polls insinuated themselves into the news operations of election coverage on a regular basis. Before the advent of the modern polling period, the major political poll operating in the United States was conducted by a leading circulation magazine, the *Literary Digest*. Based upon its subscriber lists, eventually supplemented by information from telephone directories and automobile registrations, the *Literary Digest* conducted large mail surveys to produce estimates of the outcome of presidential elections. While the magazine made good estimates from its data in 1928 and 1932, its 1936 estimate that predicted a Landon win over Roosevelt was a disaster (Squire 1988). Of greater significance, George Gallup had started a new public polling operation and promised his first major news client, the *Washington Post*, that his methods could outperform the *Literary Digest*. When he did, a new era of public polling for news organizations was born (→ Public Opinion Polling; Survey).

## SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP

The nature of the symbiotic relationship was, and remains, that public polling organizations needed the news media to publicize the work they did during elections in order to promote their availability for private work for commercial clients, where they made their money. And the news organizations were attracted to the ability of polls to generate news content based upon their election forecasts which coincided with their natural inclination to cover elections with “horse race” journalism which focuses on who is ahead and by how much (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Horse Race Coverage). At the same time as Gallup began his relationship with a series of newspapers that carried his syndicated column from the American Institute for Public Opinion, Elmo Roper established a similar relationship with *Fortune* magazine (Zetterberg 2008). And as American campaign techniques have been transported to overseas political systems, so has the use of polls in the news coverage of them (see, e.g., Worcester 1980; Weimann 1990; Brettschneider 1997; 2008).

These partnerships still exist today, although changes in technology and the structure of the news business have altered them. In the 1970s, a number of forces converged to move news organizations into independent data collection rather than continuing their reliance on syndicated data gatherers like Gallup, Roper, or Harris (→ Precision Journalism). This was the period when network television news was competing with newspapers for pre-eminent coverage of elections, including live on-the-air coverage on election night (→ Television News). In the polling industry, telephone surveys were replacing face-to-face interviewing techniques, and the advent of low-cost personal computers and supporting software coincided with the development of computer-assisted telephone interviewing

(CATI) operations and the design of random digit dialed (RDD) sampling (→ Sampling, Random).

Major partnerships developed in the US between CBS News and the *New York Times*, ABC News and the *Washington Post*, and NBC News and the *Wall Street Journal*. Each of these partnerships involved a major morning newspaper and a significant television news operation that coincidentally shared the same effective deadline early in the evening of the same day. Similar joint polling operations have sprung up in a number of other countries, including in Germany between the Allensbach Institute and the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, for example, and in the United Kingdom between the British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC) and Globescan, as well as a variety of research institutes. The television news operations get to produce a brief version of a polling story first for broadcast, while the newspaper operations produce longer stories, typically with more analysis, for the next morning's paper. By the late 1990s, these news organizations were also independently producing web-based content for simultaneous release as well.

In the beginning, the partnerships were justified on the basis of newsworthiness criteria (→ News Values). Why should a pre-eminent collection of journalists have to rely upon editorial decisions made by someone at the Gallup Organization (or Harris or Roper for that matter) about which questions should be included in a poll and when it should be fielded? When the paired news organizations set up their operations, there were shared resources each committed to the operation (like the phone banks in the advertising operations of the newspapers that were not being used in the evenings), and they contributed jointly to the development of the questionnaires. Each poll generated a dataset that could be analyzed separately by each organization, and it often produced different lead stories based upon different assessments of the most newsworthy content from the poll.

In 1992, the Gallup Organization entered into a joint agreement with → CNN and *USA Today* to produce poll content. In addition to work on analysis, Gallup editors eventually began to appear in brief video segments on the cable network. In 2006, in what might be described as business coming full circle across 70 years of work, Gallup announced it was severing its relationship with CNN because of declining cable ratings for their segments and an interest in establishing its own e-broadcasting presence, including with AOL. It maintains its partnership with *USA Today* because of its large readership in the United States and its worldwide presence. We are waiting to see whether similar “divorces” occur with other pairings of media and polling organizations in other parts of the world.

## POLITICAL POLLS IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Campaigns and elections are of special interest to news organizations because they share many features that make them ideally suited to coverage (→ Election Campaign Communication). They are high-impact events that affect many readers and viewers; in the case of presidential elections or even statewide elections, they affect everyone in the circulation or broadcast area. They usually involve known figures who are eager to be news sources and willing to be quoted. They involve conflict and drama, and they occur on a schedule. And election day provides a clear end to the event with a declared winner and loser.

All of these features provide a clear and well-understood storyline for news organizations, and they enable them to carefully plan their coverage in terms of the allocation of

resources (including reporters), the partitioning of the news hole, and the organization around key events in the political calendar, including the announcement of candidacies, primary elections or nominating conventions, debates between the candidates, and major policy addresses (Weaver 2008). Every one of these events is also amenable to different forms of polling that assesses the relative standing of the candidates at each stage of the campaign, especially in terms of the “horse race” measure of who is ahead and by how much; who won a debate; and the impact of significant campaign events like planned speeches or inadvertent slip-ups.

The polls also played a central role in the capture of election coverage by electronic broadcast media from newspapers. While news organizations sometimes shared the content of pre-election polls and analyzed them carefully for trends, the early television coverage of election night results was based upon the tabulation of raw votes from across the country. These votes came in very slowly and were relatively meaningless unless the news organization had detailed information about the geographical locations where they came from and the historical voting patterns there. It was quite common in this period for newspaper coverage of elections not to contain any significant results and analysis of them until the one or two days following the election. In order to overcome this problem and gain a reporting advantage, the US television networks developed new polling techniques to assist with election night coverage. At first they simply applied sampling theory to select “key precincts” where the raw votes could be tabulated on a representative basis. But they quickly saw the limits of such techniques for extended analysis of such factors as gender or attitudinal patterns underlying voter preferences. So exit polls were developed as a method to add a significant explanatory note to the understanding of social and political forces at work in the electorate. This technique added depth and immediacy to television coverage of elections, as well as an overall immediacy to counting votes more quickly.

The exit poll phenomenon has taken off in other countries as well, assisting electronic news organizations, especially television networks, in capturing election night coverage (→ Election Surveys). Depending upon the nature of the electoral system, these exit poll operations focus less on the division of the popular vote and more on the control of the national legislature or parliament. In the United Kingdom, one set of exit polls is designed to capture the winners of the marginal or competitive seats and hence the control of the House of Commons. In other countries, different interviewing procedures are employed, including the use of telephone surveys of those who have already voted, as in the Philippines. But in each case, the goal is the rapid reporting of the outcome of elections in as close to real time as possible and before newspapers can report the same results.

### **PROBLEMS WITH MEDIA USE OF POLLS**

The problems with the media’s use of polls derive from their reliance on “trial heat” or “horse race” polls that measure who is ahead and behind in a political contest (Patterson 2005). Polls could contribute in a number of significant ways to election coverage if they were used in a more varied set of ways that gave the voters a stronger voice in the coverage. They can be used at the start of the campaign to provide information about which issues the public thinks are most important and their sense of how much attention

the candidates are devoting to them. They can be used during the campaign to assess how much the voters are learning about the candidates and the issues they are discussing. And they can be used at the end of the campaign to measure voters' satisfaction with the content and tone of the candidates' speeches, ads, and debate performances, as well as with the media coverage of the campaign.

In the standard news story about the campaign that does not include such polling information, journalists search out party leaders, candidates, and campaign staff members for assessments of the campaign. These are all strategists of one kind or another who have a vested interest in the outcome of the campaign and will "spin" a story to their side's advantage (→ Spin Doctor). This often involves statements about what the voters are learning or how they are reacting to the candidates and events of the campaign. Why not use polls to give the voters their own voice in this coverage rather than providing partisan or self-interested interpretations of what is going on in the public's mind?

One of the realities that contemporary news organizations face is that their audience sizes and shares have been declining (→ Exposure to News; Exposure to Print Media). This has produced a number of associated trends in news coverage. One is a relative decline in hard news coverage, supplanted by an increasing amount of soft coverage (→ Political News; Soft News). Furthermore, news organizations have turned to a number of techniques to try to engage their remaining audience members and provide some interaction with the production of news. Both of these trends are complemented with the increased use of polling data, although not always of the highest quality. Polls enable news organizations to report on what their readers and viewers are thinking, their patterns of behavior, and their attitudes and preferences. The hope is that this will forge a closer tie between the news organizations and the audience.

At the same time, news organizations are some of the most profitable corporations in the business world, and they are under continuous pressure to maintain these high profit margins for their shareholders and investors. One consequence is that often they resort to inexpensive data collection that includes dial-in or web polls that involve self-selected samples of viewers and readers who are sometimes asked to respond to simple single-question surveys. The emphasis is on the sheer number of responses, for the purpose of engaging as many audience members as possible, rather than the representative nature of them. These features make → Internet polls especially attractive to news organizations, although significant questions about their methods remain.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Cable Television ► CNN ► Election Campaign Communication ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Election Surveys ► Elections and Media, History of ► Exposure to News ► Exposure to Print Media ► Horse Race Coverage ► Internet ► News Values ► Political News ► Precision Journalism ► Public Opinion Polling ► Sampling, Random ► Soft News ► Spin Doctor ► Survey ► Television News

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## Popular Communication

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Popular communication is an interdisciplinary, multi-theoretical, multi-methodological philosophy of media and audiences. It has evolved as a nonhierarchical perspective that emphasizes the value of objects, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs associated with everyday life. Gunn and Brummett (2004, 705) ask provocative questions about popular communication that capture the difficulty of defining the term: “Whose child is it, and who invented it? What sort of side dish did it contribute to the feast?” In many ways, the term defies definition because of the resistance to categorization inherent in a postmodern vision, which values all products of human endeavor (→ Postmodernism and Communication). Popular communication research is often critical of systems of power. A philosophy behind popular communication research is a “skepticism toward dominant institutions (including the university), ideologies, and social relations and an implicit commitment to a more democratic, egalitarian, and humane social order” (McChesney 1994, 340).

It is the ideology inherent in mass communicated messages that is of the utmost importance to popular communication scholars (→ Critical Theory). Through three related processes, “domination, contradiction, and struggle,” the global arena of popular communication research focuses on the role of media and the construction of meaning in capitalist and postcapitalist society (Lembo 1986, 390). Mosco (1983, 244–245) elaborates: “research offers an alternative way of seeing the place of communications in society by focusing on the transformation of social relations . . . [however] the critical view does not end with a description or even an explanation of existing reality, but is guided by an explicit value: to free people for self-determination. As such the growing area of popular

communication research reflects the ideological struggle over who does and will control media and information in global society. The emphasis is on media power and knowledge.”

Hence, one approach reveals the power of dominant institutions, such as the mass media, through examination of the messages and their potential impact on audiences (→ Media Effects). Another key interest of the field is the way(s) people make → meaning from the media (visual and verbal) texts they consume. This view holds that the mass media are ideological tools with which dominant society maintains power and controls resources by presenting assumed mainstream attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Meaning is thereby both an “agency of influence” and “the goal of influence” (Gunn & Brummett 2004, 710).

Much popular communication content is produced in the United States (films, television programs, recorded music). The reach and effects, however, are global (→ Global Media, History of; Globalization of the Media; Globalization Theories). Many nations are, however, developing media production facilities. There is a sizable film industry in India, for example (→ Bollywood). In addition to traditional means of production, the → Internet and the world wide web extend the reach of content producers and providers, whereas distribution might have been too expensive or too regulated in the past (→ Internet and Popular Culture). Reclamation of indigenous culture in postcolonial nations such as Africa, India, Bhutan, and the Cook Islands, and producing content by and for local people, is a positive aspect of new media technologies (→ Africa: Media Systems).

Entries in this section of the encyclopedia encompass the three Cs of popular communication research: (1) *corporations* are explored, as well as the relationship between popular culture and media and media-related industries (television, music, Internet, consumer culture, tourism); (2) *content* includes examinations of specific genres and forms, such as → anime, drama, → fashion, news, → popular culture, → reality TV, → situation comedies, → sports as popular communication, → video games, and → zines; and (3) *consumers* are discussed in entries such as those about → girl culture, celebrities, fans, subaltern communities, youth, and social class. In addition, more theoretical entries include → reification, ritual, mythology, → symbolic annihilation, politics, and the developing area of → media ecology.

In order to understand what popular communication is and does, it is necessary to consider how the term evolved and the context within which it developed. Popular communication as a component of everyday life is an area of concern and interest to scholars. Therefore, the following sections first define the terms “communication” and “popular,” demonstrate how and where these ideas came together, and discuss the history of popular communication as a philosophy and field of study. This is followed by a brief look at typical theories and methodologies, illustrated by examples of research. This entry concludes by speaking to the future of the field.

### WHAT IS “POPULAR”?

It was in relation to folk culture and folklore that widely understood, accepted, and enjoyed (as in “the people”) culture became thought of as culture of the masses, a vast, undifferentiated body of people with common tastes. Traditionally, the term “popular” was used to express favorability, high regard, and appreciation by the general public (as opposed to small, elite segments). Popular “culture” is culture of the people by the people



and for the people (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). At one time popular culture was thought of as the product of something made by hand, but it can also mean widespread fame, popularity, and commercialism, as well as the idea of a shared culture. Sometimes viewed as the opposite of high cultural art forms (ballet, classical music, and opera), popular culture is a shared set of practices as well as the product of those interactions. It includes television programs, comic books, → popular music (jazz, hip hop, rock), fashion magazines, sports, → advertising, food ways, festivals, and rituals. Whereas the high/low culture distinction views culture hierarchically, the “pop comm” approach is a linear, non-evaluative perspective. Thus, the idea of “mass culture” is intimately connected with valuations of popular culture.

*Mass society theory* views audiences as essentially passive, easily entertained, malleable sops for consumerism and advertising, predetermined to have bad taste, and devoted to repetitive formulaic forms of culture (→ Audience; Audience Commodity). Mass society theory presents a view of citizens as audiences for mass media products that are a homogeneous grouping of people, whose only connections to one another are through that which they find in common, that which is popular. Related to this is a belief in the decline of what is regarded as authentic, traditional, more personal forms of relating.

The theory of mass audiences can be traced to the early development of American consumer society and mass production around the turn of the twentieth century through the 1920s and 1930s, with the rise of the market economy. While industrialization, urbanization, and modernization originated in Europe, mass production and selling imperatives exploded in the US. What was identified as popular was not necessarily identified as such by the people it appealed to, but rather by those who produced it. In advanced capitalist societies, the popular is typically tied to the commercial and, given that, the term generally means the culture of ordinary people, i.e., working class, non-elite members of society, or that which is left over after what is elite is defined – hence the hierarchical, elitist view of the popular as inferior.

Cultural theorist Raymond Williams (1976, 199) points out that two characteristics identified early popular culture products – “inferior kinds of work” (popular press versus literature) and “work deliberately setting out to win favor” (pop celebrity or popular journalism versus serious, democratic work). Furthermore, Williams (1976, 90–91) articulates four meanings for the word “popular” in relation to culture and communication. (1) “A pejorative meaning referring to objects or practices deemed lesser than or inferior to elite culture,” i.e., appeal to a mass audience; for example, popular → Hollywood movies versus independently produced films; *Telenovelas* versus → BBC or PBS programs. (2) “Objects or practices well liked by many people,” i.e., not the small groups of elite or wealthy. Examples include rock and country music concerts versus attending the ballet or opera. (3) “Work designed with the intention of appealing to a great number of people,” i.e., commercial culture meant to be widely consumed. Popular press magazines, cable and network television programs, and other advertising-supported media are examples. (4) “Things people make for themselves,” for example, knitted scarves, community theatre, or musical performances.

The expression “popular culture” is, unfortunately, often used as a *pejorative term*, viewed as lesser than so-called high-culture pursuits because it originates among and is widely available to a vast majority of everyday people, and is deeply embedded in daily

life. Traditionally thought of as the product of something made by hand, popular can also mean widespread fame, popularity, and commercialism as well as the idea of a shared culture. Popular culture's definitional fluidity is made clear by remembering that, in their time, Shakespeare's plays were the popular culture of their day. During the 1960s, the music of the Beatles, for example, was considered vulgar. Parents worried that their children would be corrupted citizens and sexual deviants as a result of listening to the band. Today, however, songs such as "Love me do" and "Strawberry Fields" are played on oldies and soft rock radio stations.

The contents of popular culture are perpetuated through a nation's vernacular (spoken, written), i.e., visual or verbal language. The quality of and value placed upon the products are socially constructed. Popular culture carries and articulates social class and social group distinctions. Horkheimer and Adorno's classic work *Dialectic of enlightenment* posits that the production and distribution of popular culture constitutes a → "culture industry" (1997, 120). This argument holds that cultural products such as art become commodities that reflect dominant ideology and in fact convey norms. Fashion is an example of this process, which not only has the power to democratize but also to establish and affirm borders. The popular, therefore, is that which is representative of larger social conditions and opposition between authenticity and commercialization/globalization. Expressions such as "high art" and "low art," for example, have immediate associations with social class. High art can feature nude bodies, while low art is pornographic. While Gans (1975) orders the products of popular culture in a hierarchical manner (from classical to kitsch), the intent was to de-privilege forms of cultural narrative from their economic foundations (→ Taste Culture).

### WHAT IS "COMMUNICATION"?

Communication is a theoretical field as well as praxis that includes mediated and nonmediated forms (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy). Communication is also a process, a product, and a discipline (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). As a process, communication includes gestures, signs, symbols, sounds, painting, speaking, writing, facial expressions, and the transmission of these through a form of human and electronic technology (such as books, television, film, and radio). It is "interaction by means of mutually recognized signals" (Hartley 2002, 32). Communication includes what is known as a speech act, an example of which is dialogue. Interpersonal communication has the advantage of immediate feedback between sender and receiver, as in a frown, a nod, or a shrug (→ Interpersonal Communication). This type of nonverbal response is not as immediate in mass mediated communication; however, this is rapidly changing. Email, web-based polls, and audience/user ratings are examples of interactions that viewers, readers, and listeners can have with content providers. YouTube, a website where users post videos, film clips, and other material is an example of audiences creating content. In the case of television programs such as *American Idol*, viewers vote for their favorite performer by telephone and learn the results during the next episode.

As a product, mass (simultaneously, widely available) media contain the symbolic products of human communication – language, music, images, signs, and symbols – as well as the technologies that send them. Thus, communication is the transmission of

these products by way of books, television, film, the Internet, newspapers, magazines, and radio. An example is the BBC television series *Hex*, the plot of which revolves around the perennial battle between good versus evil. The program contains dialogue, plot, and story lines emphasizing love and hate, but also significant alchemical pagan symbolism. Thus, the program is coded in ways that those familiar with magic and mystery understand, but is also accessible to new viewers.

As a discipline, or area of academic study, the field of communication includes speech communication, organizational communication, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication, performance studies, and mass communication (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). The study of popular communication is also part of this array and, as described below, includes an emphasis on identifying sources of media control and power, analyses of visual and verbal texts, and appreciation of the role audiences play in the give and take relationship with content.

### WHAT IS “POPULAR COMMUNICATION”?

If communication is a process, product, and discipline involving the exchange of signs and symbols and the popular consists of objects or practices that appeal to a wide audience, then it follows that popular communication is the transmission of signs and symbols, via written and visual rhetoric, widely available to audiences. At the same time, the popular communication perspective recognizes that people are capable of making their own meaning from content, resisting and transgressing messages of expected behaviors and roles. Audiences often participate in the creation of content as well, such as on Internet fan sites.

Scholars in the field of popular communication resist fixing the meaning of the term by narrowly defining it. Gunn and Brummett (2004, 708) suggest a definition as “the study of objects that are widely circulated by means of mass media. These objects are studied with a view toward explaining their meaning, structure, and impact.” These areas have in common a concern with a particular set of problems; they ordinarily focus on mass media, specifically the interrelated “three Cs” – content (text), corporations (producers), and consumers (audiences) – have a predilection to use specific methods, and share similar political views.

Some popular communication scholars *examine the context* within which dominant social, political, and economic institutions use the media to retain power. Others focus on structures that contribute to the maintenance of boundaries between those with and without power and resources. Hegemony is control of people through use of ideas (instead of physical force), which requires their consent. Agreement is accomplished through an interwoven structure of mainstreamed attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors constructed as “normal” and reinforced through institutions such as family, education, religion, politics, and government. Ideology, a term that refers to a set of ideas or a vision, can be presented symbolically in media content through signification (meaning making) and articulated in representations (or lack thereof). Individual and social identity and belonging are thereby reinforced by the existing hierarchical power structure. Thus, through subordination, domination, oppression, and repression, a structured, predictable social order is maintained.

In a foundational essay exploring popular communication, Zelizer (2000, 303) described characteristics of popular communication scholarship that provided a framework for unpacking key ideas. As such, popular communication is: (1) interdisciplinary; (2) eclectic in its “theoretical focus, methodological perspective, and focus of inquiry”; and (3) connected to the academy and daily life.

### INTERDISCIPLINARY

Popular communication research is a product of merger or, as Geertz (1980, 167) points out, “blurred genres” between sciences and the humanities. The humanities and social sciences have been in dialogue for hundreds of years. However, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the humanities dominated European thought and enveloped a broader range of disciplines than today. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the social sciences institutionally broke away from the humanities. Since that time, these areas have been in dialogue but seek answers to questions in different ways using distinct methodologies. Geertz (1980, 167) identified this as a kind of freedom in which scholars from seemingly different disciplines became “free to shape their work in terms of its necessities rather than received ideas as to what they ought or ought not to be doing.” Popular communication research enjoys this exchange or flow of ideas back and forth between disciplines.

What is regarded as the production of knowledge in science is the *production of meaning* in mediated communication, both of which rely on intersubjectivity – ways in which shared understandings of phenomena are created. While traditional science argued for an objective unified reality, communication and popular communications argue that all meaning is socially constructed, the interpretation of which is individual (→ Constructivism; Objectivity in Science). Symbols are an example of the fluidity of meaning in a particular time and place. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, with the bombing of New York City’s World Trade Center towers and the Washington, DC, Pentagon building, the American flag came to have much more solidified meaning to many Americans. Where at one time the meaning of patriotism was fluid, and many definitions of allegiances accepted, after America’s retaliation, meaning became fixed. The emblem recognized as the Nazi swastika has ancient origins, but was appropriated by this ruling party as a sign. Thus, the philosophical underpinnings of communication, particularly popular communication, are traced through a series of linguistic, anthropological, historical, psychological, and social science disciplines. Popular communication studies bridge these areas with interdisciplinary philosophy, methods, and theories. It is this amalgamation that fuels debate on whether or not communication can be considered a discipline separate from other forms of social science and humanities.

The humanities further influence the trajectory of popular communication research through four interdisciplinary theoretical traditions that, in particular, inform philosophy and method in the field: → hermeneutics, → phenomenology, rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies), and → semiotics. These *ways of knowing* about the production, consumption, and content of communication are the foundation on which popular communication research is built. Hermeneutics, a reading of texts and/or understanding a culture from the perspective of that culture in order to understand how meaning is made and

changes, is considered by many to be a philosophy, theory, and method of analysis. A phenomenological approach considers and values everyday life and ways of being in the world, i.e., lived experiences. A rhetorical analysis examines the power of language to describe and persuade, including nonverbal forms of communication such as symbols. It is a philosophy, a skill, a method, and a technique that recognizes the power of communication.

*Discourse (language) analysis* adds the dimension of questioning taken-for-granted meanings and deconstructing them in ways that reveal sources of power by revealing hidden motivations (→ Discourse). For example, a discourse analysis of the contents of a political speech might reveal motivations around the topic of war. A → discourse analysis of advertising copy might examine the use of nature-based references as ways of constructing wholesomeness around products. Film narratives often examine the construction of masculinity, femininity, and sexuality. Associated theorists who have looked at the power of language, metaphor, and the relationship with power include Michael Foucault, George Lakoff, and Mark Turner.

*Semiotics*, another tool for examining visual and verbal representations in media content, is the study of signs and symbols and the way meaning is constructed and understood. Semiotics is also used in architecture and art. For example, a semiotic analysis of perfume ads could reveal social class biases, techniques of → branding, and status conferral by examining product packaging, naming, use of color, typography, and models. Associated scholars include Charles Sanders Peirce, Ferdinand de Saussure, → Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard, and Umberto Eco.

Scholarship is organized according to *three broad areas*: (1) the content of communication, (2) control of distribution, and (3) consumers/audience members who view or read the content. Examples of content-focused research include studies of television programs, Internet sites, and music lyrics, and visual analyses of news photography, portrayals of women and girls in advertising, and the male body in popular culture.

Examples of studies that examine corporations and control of the production of media products, and thereby construct meaning for society, include the related area of political economy. Political economy, defined as the production and distribution of power and resources in society, is concerned with the internalization of attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of dominant culture (→ Political Economy of the Media). This perspective is particularly global in nature. For example, studies have examined media ownership in Scandinavian countries, the production of film in India, and the film industry in Taiwan. A more extended example of research includes the subject of daytime television. Media corporations that own broadcast television operations produce programming to attract advertisers, which want to attract audiences to see their commercials. All parties – the media corporations, the television stations, the advertising agencies, and the companies whose products are for sale – are interested in making a profit. The programs generally reflect aspirational values of upper-class, high-consumption lifestyles. Thus, the programs echo the goals of media and marketing to encourage people to buy products and emulate the lifestyles seen on television, even if doing so is out of the financial reach of most viewers. Associated scholars include Karl Marx, Oliver Boyd-Barrett, and Dallas Smythe.

Communication studies are credited with bringing attention to the *importance of what audiences think about*, feel about, and do with mass media content. In traditional media

research, the idea of audience is an abstraction. Audience research, while conducted by corporations to ascertain the size and demographic characteristics of a group, in this case is about the experience of viewing, reading, and hearing and interpreting media content. One of the earliest applications of this perspective came from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham (UK). In the 1970s, researchers began studying the relationship between media texts and audiences. Stuart Hall is closely associated with work on the idea of encoding/decoding discussed earlier in this entry (→ Cultural Studies). David Morley and Charlotte Brundson conducted the *Nationwide Project* in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This audience and reception theory study examined the BBC program *Nationwide* using encoding and decoding. Their concern was with “the programme’s distinctive ideological themes and with the particular ways in which *Nationwide* addressed the viewer” (Moore 1993, 19). Interviewing viewers from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds, the researchers found that even within particular social class groups there were individual differences in the way media content is read.

### **ECCLECTIC IN THEORETICAL FOCUS, METHODOLOGY, AND FOCUS OF INQUIRY**

Grossberg (1994, 332) identifies three characteristics of communication scholars that are reflected not only in what becomes the topic of research but in the theory and method used: researchers are (1) committed to the fact that reality is continually socially constructed, (2) drawn to the “popular” as the terrain of everyday life and cultural practices, and (3) committed “to a radical contextualism” of power and culture. My own review for this entry of the 60 article titles published in the four-year-old journal *Popular Communication* found an eclectic blend of theory, methodology, and disciplines.

Critical studies, genre studies, image and characterization research, cultural studies, cultural history, and audience-focused consumption research are examples of theoretically driven areas. Topics include analyses of postmodernism, blackness, and art; telenovelas; the cultural politics of race; television makeover programs; political culture jamming and the *Daily Show*; hip-hop culture; the Israeli song contest and men; television shopping; gender transgression; boys’ and girls’ responses to and interactions with the *X-Files*; and Japanese popular culture. Scholars used a variety of methods, such as historical, textual analysis, critical analysis, and semiotics.

### **Eclectic in Theoretical Approaches**

Communication research has developed through a long history of scientific, empirical ways of knowing and, more recently, qualitative inquiry (→ Qualitative Methodology; Research Methods). The theories, methods, and objects of study contained within the domain of popular communication include critical studies, cultural studies, media criticism, and feminist, queer, and game theories (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational).

As discussed previously, popular communication scholars view audiences as active participants in the reception and decoding process of mediated messages. As such, there are individual differences in interpretation and understanding, therefore “media content is always polysemic, or open to interpretation” (Morley 1994, 255). Whereas traditional,

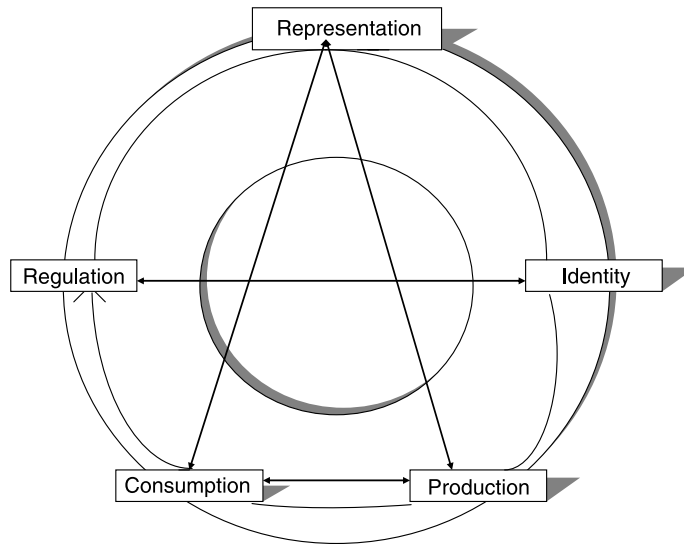


Figure 1 Hall's circuit of culture

linear theories of the flow of communication support the high/low culture distinction and view culture hierarchically, popular communication studies' nonlinear, non-evaluative perspective is illustrated by Stuart Hall's (1981) *circuit of culture model* (Fig. 1). Hall's work came out of the 1960s British cultural studies movement from the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. This early work, based on the writings of Italian revolutionary Antonio Gramsci, emphasizes the role of hegemonic consensus in maintaining institutionalized power and the ways mass media serve as tools that communicate dominant ideologies of industrialized, western democratic states.

In this view, power resides both with the sender and in the transmission process, but once the message is received, audience members make decisions about how it will be interpreted. Hall (1981) posited that both sender and receiver at different sites produce meaning, which is circulated through products and practices. Mass media content is viewed as text to be read, the meaning of which changes over time just as language and symbols do. Whether this content is the lighting, camera angles, and actors in a film, the pose and position of a model in an advertisement, or the language used in a televised presidential speech, the entire product or elements within a television program, film, web page, or book are viewed as encoded elements in the construction of the product. The power of the media, as an "ideological state apparatus" (Althusser 1977), reinforces and circulates beliefs about values, beliefs, and behaviors that are constructed as normal and desirable.

### **Eclectic in Methodology**

According to this perspective, there are *three primary lenses through which the audience decodes messages*: preferred (as the sender intended with little to no critical evaluation of content) or "structured polysemy" (Morley 1994, 255), negotiated (audience is aware of

the intent of the message, but goes along with it anyway), and resistant (audience awareness is high regarding the persuasive intent of the message and the audience actively works to decode the denotative and connotative meanings within and behind the text). Fiske (1987) added that audiences at times modify and even deflect senders' intentions. An important consideration is that ideologies are not necessarily static and, in fact, "hegemonic discourse is always insecure and incomplete" (Morley 1994, 256). This view suggests a lower level of effects and higher level of audience choice making. Budd et al. (1990, 170) point out, "Whatever the message encoded, decoding comes to the rescue." In this view, making and remaking of culture by audiences can work to resist commercial imperatives.

James Carey (1989, 15) identified the *transmission view* of communication as "a process whereby messages are transmitted and distributed in space for the control of distance and people." Furthermore, he posited a ritual model of communication (versus the traditional transmission model) that provides the context within which much popular communication research develops. The traditional transmission model emphasizes a linear sender-receiver model (→ Models of Communication). This social scientific concept is based on → Lasswell's (1966) classic questions: "who/says what/in which channel/to whom/with what effect?" Similarly, Shannon and Weaver's (1949) mathematical model of communication views communication as engineered as a series of signals. These models only minimally consider the audience as active in the reception process. Early theories of media effects shared the view of media having uniform, immediate, and long-term effects on audiences. The ritual model, however, emphasizes the social construction of texts and the creation and transformation of shared meaning. First articulated by James Carey, the ritual view sees culture and communication as inseparable, and communicating as reinforcing shared values and beliefs. Gunn and Brummett (2004, 712) take this further by declaring that communication brings "reality" into existence and affirms and maintains this established, constructed way of being as "normal." Communication, then, is the deliberate construction, with hegemonic origins and ideological goals, of information, as well as "the terrain upon which symbolic action takes place."

Therefore, studying communication through the lens of cultural theory and popular communication is to examine the sources and content of mass media messages and the responses to them by audiences. In order to do so, according to this perspective, quantitative research methods, while useful and important, are not sufficient ways of getting deeper into material and human understanding or accessing lived experience. Qualitative methods commonly used include in-depth personal interviews, participant observation, production research, ethnography, textual analysis, discourse analysis, and audience studies, with, as discussed above, theoretical bases in hermeneutics, phenomenology, semiotics, rhetoric (visual, verbal), → aesthetics, and texts (→ Rhetoric and Media Studies).

### **Eclectic in Focus of Inquiry**

Objects of inquiry for popular communication research include sports; sub-culture/ritual; music; communication symbols, forms, and phenomena; analyses of youth culture; representations of race, gender, age, and social class; fandom; media as text, film, and spectacles; the digital revolution; sexuality; television, radio, and magazines; and advertising/consumer culture.



A developing focus of inquiry that touches all areas of popular communication is identified by scholars such as McAllister (2003), who asks the question, “Is commercial culture popular culture?” (→ Consumer Culture). Certainly, in western countries, *commercialism* is a defining characteristic of mass culture that is exported globally. Whether that exportation is exploitation or simply opportunistic, commercial culture is far-reaching, and does not necessarily require the integration of advertising and entertainment. According to Mosco (1996, 144), commercialization is “a process that specifically refers to the creation of a relationship between an audience and advertisers.” This suggests an overlap with consumer culture. Ads are commercial culture, as are other objects, such as films. They become commercialized particular when they involve product placement and merchandising. Fowles (1996, 11) asserts, “advertising, while sharing many attributes with popular culture, is a categorically different sort of symbolic content.” By its very nature, advertising is self-serving and therefore pleasure oriented, eagerly appropriated by audiences. These approaches to media content call for new techniques, theories, and methods with which scholars can study both the popular and the people in a culture.

### CONNECTED TO THE ACADEMY AND DAILY LIFE

Two conceptual binaries describe the anxiety associated with defining the term “popular communication” and stimulate debate and tensions within the academy: (1) the low culture/high culture binary, and (2) the notion that texts that attract the masses are insignificant and therefore not worth serious scholarly attention (Gunn & Brummett 2004). What is viewed within the academic world as the everyday world contains a general tendency to dismiss what is widely available and popular as not worthy of serious academic study. For example, how can studying something as mundane and everyday as television, for example, be valuable? Popular communication scholars address this dismissal by emphasizing the importance of what is within people’s everyday lived experience as perhaps the most important aspect of culture.

An associated tension involves assumptions about audiences for popular communication – if the product is widely available, wildly popular, and easy to access and understand, the common assumption is that audiences for it must not be very smart and part of the “unwashed popular” (Gunn & Brummett 2004, 706). An example is the lack of communication research on *National Geographic* magazine, most notably the magazine’s lack of focus on gender and race and its role as a middlebrow source of colonial discourse. This oversight suggests a kind of blindness to these institutionalized values, even within the field (Parameswaran 2005). It was anthropologists Lutz and Collins (1993) who first identified the “special cultural niche occupied by the *Geographic*” and the notable absence of scholarship among media scholars. Today, many popular communication scholars have addressed this lack by making connections to the importance of popular engagement as reflected in economic, cultural, and social contributions to society.

While popular communication studies scholars could be viewed as engaged in a disproportionate amount of navel gazing, it is this reflexive practice that lends itself to ongoing questioning of premises of research as well as ways to refine and clarify methods.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In the early 1980s, the editor of the *Journal of Communication (JOC)*, → George Gerbner, challenged scholars to review the field of communication. The seminal 1983 special issue of *JOC*, *Ferment in the field*, contains 35 original essays from 10 countries responding to the question of the state of the field of communications research. Collectively, the essays converged around three processes surrounding the social relations of communication: domination, contradiction, and struggle. Mosco (1983) posited that the growth in critical research is reflective of the developing (at the time) information society and the control of it. Gerbner (1983, 358) noted that “common consciousness” had become a “largely manufactured product . . . and the concept of class or any other authentic public consciousness may be obsolete.” The scholars predicted a convergence between disciplinary perspectives (humanities and social sciences) as well as methodologies (quantitative and qualitative). There was also increased recognition not only of the growing convergence in mass media technology and production, but also between quantitative and qualitative research in the field. Gerbner’s (1983, 348) epilogue noted, “If Marx were alive today, his principal work would be entitled Communications rather than Capital” – a bit bold, even arrogant, perhaps, but the statement certainly addresses the importance of keeping the relationship between knowledge and media power always in sight.

Not only has there been a coming together of humanities and social sciences evident in popular communication research in the past few years, but also cross-pollination of media studies areas. Challenges to the field have come from postmodernism, cognitivism, and feminism in particular. Parameswaran (2005) examines engagement between feminist cultural studies and media studies in regard to issues of political voice, citizenship, and gender with those of mediated culture. If, as Appadurai and Breckenridge (1995) note, public culture is a “shifting array of texts and experiences, which constitute evolving contexts for one another,” then certainly popular culture as part of popular communication is similarly fluid. While many popular communication scholars study artifacts from popular communication, journalistic media, such as CNN, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, and other news organizations and content, also fall under this purview. Zelizer (2004, 114) challenges the field to reposition “journalism at the forefront of inquiry.”

Deetz and Putnam (2001) challenge communication studies scholars to consider less the obviously popular (as in entertaining) and more the pragmatic projects that address “significant problems of our times,” such as the democratic process and joint decision-making with governmental authorities. Funding initiatives and grant opportunities are likely to come from global concerns, health communication interests, and emphases on technology. They argue for more of a balance between pragmatic interests (of which popular communication scholars tend to be critical) and too much emphasis on trendy, popular topics. In addition, outreach to and activism within human communities, a basic tenet of communication and cultural studies research, offers promising possibilities for social change.

A decade after “Ferment in the field,” the follow-up report, *Defining media studies* (Levy & Gurevitch 1994), cautioned communication studies scholars to be mindful of the possible pitfalls and prejudices inherent in researching from positions of privilege while arguing for equity and other socially constructed differences. Furthermore, the field is so eclectic and interdisciplinary it would be easy to get lost in the mire of definitional fluidity,

or what Nordenstreng (2004, 13) calls “surfing syndrome” by studying only fashionable topics.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Anime ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ BBC ▶ Bollywood ▶ Branding ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Constructivism ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Fashion ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Girl Culture ▶ Global Media, History of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Internet and Popular Culture ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Media Effects ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Popular Music ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Reality TV ▶ Reification ▶ Research Methods ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Taste Culture ▶ Video Games ▶ Zines

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## Popular Communication and Social Class

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During the Industrial Revolution, the English word "class" morphed from a general term for a division or group to a specific term for a position of rank within a social system based on economic wealth. Around the same time, the word "popular" began to be applied

to communication and culture with meanings ranging from “liked by many people” to “created by many people.” Thus, social class and “the popular” simultaneously arose as objects of intellectual interest. Indeed, the very question of what counts as → popular culture or → popular communication has always led to questions of class. In the late eighteenth century, when J. G. Herder coined the term “popular culture,” he had in mind the peasant culture that, for him, represented a more authentic alternative to Europe’s elite, classical culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

By the late nineteenth century, when Matthew Arnold wrote *Culture and anarchy*, he understood popular communication as the culture of the “masses,” the culture of cheap novels and melodrama that was crowding out the high cultural tradition of “the best that has been thought and said” (Arnold 1960, 6). Though neither Herder’s romanticism nor Arnold’s elitism made explicit reference to social class, the issue of class and its contested role in defining culture, communication, and “the popular” lay just below the surface for both.

### MASS VERSUS CLASS CULTURE

In the early twentieth century, as the field of popular communication came into focus, so did debate about the role of social class. One key debate pitted a European-influenced mass culture approach against an American-influenced class culture approach. The former approach was represented by the group of German émigré intellectuals known as the *Frankfurt School* (→ Critical Theory). Horkheimer and Adorno (1972, 1st pub. 1944), for instance, blamed the ideological influence of mass culture for forestalling revolutionary social change. The → culture industry cranked out nearly identical forms of entertainment that lulled the masses into a false consciousness of mindless consumerism. The Frankfurt School thus shared the animosity of elitists such as Arnold to the popular culture of their time, yet they saw popular culture as an imposition from above rather than a contamination from below.

*Within US* communication research, the Frankfurt School was opposed by a more sanguine *class culture approach*. This pluralist perspective viewed social classes as having their own autonomous and equally valuable cultures. In → Katz and → Lazarsfeld’s (1955) research on communication flows among a sample of women, social class is treated as just another influence (along with social contacts and position in the life cycle) on individuals’ lifestyle choices regarding public affairs, movies, fashion, and household products (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of). Gans (1974) later solidified the American approach, arguing that the cultural affinities of different class and educational groups should be viewed not as a hierarchy but as a collection of diverse → “taste cultures.” In Gans’s view, so-called mass culture was just as valid for its less wealthy, educated public as high culture was for its public, and those critics on the left and right who derided mass culture were mere elitists who feared that the popularity of mass culture would erode their own privileged status.

The lines drawn within these mid-century debates have remained fairly resilient. While positivist researchers are accused of underemphasizing the determining role of social class in popular communication, critical scholars are faulted for overstating the influence of class. A rapprochement of sorts took form within the Centre for Contemporary Cultural

Studies in Birmingham, England (→ Cultural Studies). The *Birmingham School* originated with scholars who became disenchanted with classical Marxism's economic determinism. They built a model of scholarship that was rooted in Marxist notions of class conflict but showed an engagement with the culture of working-class people. In contrast to the Frankfurt view of the working class as victims of a totalitarian mass culture, the Birmingham scholars made the case that progressive social change remained possible and would be made by working-class culture.

### THE BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL

Inheritors of this tradition were among the first scholars to grapple with modern practices of popular communication in ways that did not merely condemn them. Under the direction of Stuart Hall, work within the Birmingham center turned to ethnographic studies of working-class sub-cultures (→ Ethnography of Communication). Birmingham scholars decoded the complex sign systems that lay below the surface of the music and style of sub-cultures like the Teddy boys, mods, and punks (→ Youth Culture). Much of this work took its lead from Raymond Williams's (1973) argument that cultural practices could be divided into dominant, residual, and emergent formations. While dominant formations wielded the majority of power and residual formations were remnants of the past, emergent formations created lines of resistance and pointed the way to new social structures. By Birmingham scholars' accounts, then, youth sub-cultures were not mere curiosities but potentially a kind of vanguard.

On another front, Birmingham scholars looked beyond the Frankfurt School's grim view of media culture by giving new attention to media reception (→ Audience Research). Hall (1980) forged a model of reception by integrating Birmingham-style cultural analysis with → semiotics. Media texts constitute a "structured polysemy." They are open to interpretation while usually favoring interpretations consonant with dominant ideology. The ways audience members interpret such texts are influenced by their position in the social structure; thus dominant readings will tend to be produced by those whose social position aligns them with dominant ideology (i.e., upper-class people), while oppositional readings will be produced by those whose position places them in opposition to dominant ideology (i.e., working-class people).

The world conjured by Birmingham theorists proved alluring to media scholars. It put a neo-Marxist spin on popular communication research and thereby lent such research a new political urgency. As studies accumulated of symbolically rich sub-cultures and resistant audiences, however, *three criticisms* arose of the Birmingham model. First, the narrative of dominance and resistance that underlay such work often reduced it to a trite Manichaeism. As Meaghan Morris (1988, 15) quipped, "I get the feeling that somewhere in some English publisher's vault there is a master-disk from which thousands of versions of the same article about pleasure, resistance, and the politics of consumption are being run off under different names with minor variations." Second, despite the Marxist origins of cultural studies, its focus on audiences and relative disregard for economic and textual analysis opened it to charges of political complacency.

Third, empirical research contradicted the assumptions of cultural studies. David Morley (1980) tested Hall's model of audience readings by showing a → television news

show to viewers of different social classes (→ Television News). He then interviewed them about the program and classified their readings. Contrary to Hall's predictions, Morley found that the working-class apprentice engineers tended to produce dominant readings of the program while the upper-class university students produced oppositional readings. Such results pointed to problems in cultural studies' attempt to reconcile audience analysis and class analysis. Social class is a multivalent concept whose influence on media interpretation is complex and changeable. As far back as the 1940s, American media research indicated that audience members' critical or uncritical reception of mediated messages depends on education. Given the covariance of education and social class, it is as likely that it was education that accounted for Morley's university students' oppositional readings as anything directly to do with class.

Despite their differences, Frankfurt and Birmingham scholars shared a common theoretical trajectory, agreeing on a Marxist ideological critique while disagreeing on the potential for resistance. A more coolly analytical line of theorizing on popular communication and class can be traced to Weber's "Class, status, and party" (1958). While class is determined by control over production, status is rooted in consumption and lifestyle. Whereas Marx understood the economic base as the driving force behind status, Weber saw class and status as autonomous and mutually influential. A similar emphasis on status and consumption appeared in Veblen's *The theory of the leisure class* (1994), which portrayed social life as a contest in which people assert status through conspicuous consumption and conspicuous leisure; that is, the ostentatious waste of money and time (→ Consumer Culture).

### **BOURDIEU'S NOTION OF CONSUMPTION AS COMMUNICATION**

The notion of consumption as a communicative system of status is elaborated in Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) work *Distinction*. For Bourdieu, the cultural field stands alongside the social and economic fields as avenues through which class divisions are reproduced. "Cultural capital" includes tastes, abilities, and habits of consumption that social actors employ to achieve a higher status. Like Veblen, Bourdieu sees economic capital as translatable into cultural capital, yet for Bourdieu, the reverse is also true: habits of consumption can influence economic capital. The interpenetration of wealth and culture occurs through the subtle mediation of "habitus," an unconscious system of dispositions ingrained through socialization. In an analysis of French survey data, Bourdieu finds class variations not only in tastes, but in the very bases of taste. For instance, he argues that the upper class's distance from necessity leads them to employ an "aesthetic disposition," observing objects of culture with a disinterested eye for formal beauty untainted by moral, practical, or sensual considerations.

Bourdieu's field theory forms a counterpoint to mainstream ideologies of social mobility and pluralism, pointing to the symbolic boundaries cultivated by differences in taste and conduct. His work has provided the terms for an analysis that forgoes both the Frankfurt School's ideological monoculture and the Birmingham School's dualistic struggle of dominance and resistance. Like these other paradigms, Bourdieu's work has led to valuable research in popular communication, yet it too has its critics. In his response to idealist notions of culture handed down from Kant, Bourdieu subjects culture to a cynical reductionism. As sociologist David Gartman (1991, 422) writes, Bourdieu

“reduces cultural choices to passive reproduction of structural necessities.” As a result, there is no room for agency in Bourdieu’s conception of culture, no possibility of changing rather than reproducing the class system.

To the degree that trends in theory follow politics, it is not surprising that Bourdieu’s Weberian realism has gained ground. His vision of an aesthetic elite set against a moral and practical working class resonates at a time when conservatives have appropriated populist rhetoric through appeals to so-called “values issues.” At the same time, the conservative political environment seems ripe for a resurgence of Frankfurt-style critical theory. Evidence of such resurgence in the US can be found in Thomas Frank’s (2005) recent work, which traces conservatives’ success in convincing working-class voters to vote against their own economic interests. Hence criticism of popular communication and class may come full circle, to renewed cries of mystification and false consciousness.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Semiotics ▶ Taste Culture ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Youth Culture

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# Popular Culture

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“Culture” is “one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language” according to Williams (1976, 87; → Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Originally used to describe the process of tending, culture evolved as metaphor, as noun, and as a reference to a physical object. Today, culture is regarded as a unifying system, a worldview, a civilization, and as a psychology encompassing behavior, attitudes, and values as well as the symbolic structure of these activities (→ Cultural Patterns and Communication). Music is one of the most globally ubiquitous forms of culture. Four elements are typically included in definitions of culture: institutions, norms, values, and artifacts. “Popular” is a term used to express favorability, high regard, and appreciation by the general → public, as in the popular vote or to distinguish the popular from the academic press. Thus, “culture” used in this sense is political rather than aesthetic (→ Political Communication Culture). Storey (1996) points out that culture is not a narrow sense of aesthetic nor only an intellectual product but rather a domain of contestation, reflection, resistance, and reconstruction.

*Popular* culture is culture of the people by the people and for the people. Traditionally, popular culture was thought of as the product of something made by hand, but it can also mean widespread fame, popularity, and commercialism as well as the idea of a shared culture. Sometimes viewed as the opposite of high cultural art forms (ballet, classical music, and opera), popular culture is a shared set of practices as well as the product of those interactions. It includes → television programs (→ Television as Popular Culture), comic books (→ Comics), → popular music (jazz, hip hop, rock; → Music Industry), → fashion, → magazines, sports (→ Sports as Popular Communication), → advertising, food ways, and rituals (→ Rituals in Popular Communication). Whereas the high/low culture distinction views culture hierarchically, the second is a linear, non-evaluative perspective.

Cultural theorist Raymond Williams (1976, 90–91) articulates *four meanings for the word “popular” in relation to culture*: (1) a pejorative meaning referring to objects or practices deemed lesser than or inferior to elite culture, i.e., appeal to a mass audience; (2) objects or practices well liked by many people, i.e., not the small groups of elite or wealthy; (3) work designed with the intention of appealing to a great number of people, i.e., commercial culture meant to be widely consumed; and (4) things people make for themselves.

## HISTORY OF POPULAR CULTURE

One of the first bringing together of the words “popular” and “culture” was in the culture of the folk. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) is credited with coining the term “popular culture” as a way of describing authentic culture. Fiske (1992, 25) states: “popular culture is formed always in reaction to, and never as part of, the forces of domination.” Some scholars argue that popular culture emerged as the result of industrialization,

urbanization, and modernization when the work day was divided between time spent working and leisure time.

It was in relation to folk culture and folklore that a widely understood, accepted, and enjoyed culture became thought of as culture of the masses, a vast, undifferentiated body of people with common tastes. The idea of *mass culture* is intimately connected with valuations of popular culture. This theory views the → audience as essentially passive, malleable, sops for consumerism and advertising, predetermined to have bad taste, and devoted to repetitive formulaic forms of culture.

The theory of mass audiences for the mass media can be traced to the early constructions of consumerism and mass production in the US in the 1920s and 1930s and the rise of the market economy (→ Consumer Culture). What was identified as popular was not necessarily identified as such by the people it appealed to, but by those who produced it for them. Raymond Williams (1976, 199) points out that two characteristics identified early popular culture products – “inferior kinds of work” (popular press vs literature) and “work deliberately setting out to win favor” (pop celebrity or popular journalism vs serious, democratic work; → Celebrity Culture). Mass society theory presents a view of citizens as audiences for mass media products that are a homogeneous grouping of people, whose only connections to one another are through that which they find in common, that which is popular. Related to this is a belief in the decline of what is regarded as authentic, traditional, more personal forms of relating.

In advanced capitalist societies the popular is typically tied to the commercial and, given that, the term generally means the culture of ordinary people, i.e., working-class, non-elite members of society, or that which is left over after what is elite is defined (→ Popular Communication and Social Class). Horkheimer and Adorno’s classic work *Dialectic of enlightenment*, posits that the production and distribution of popular culture constitutes a “culture industry” (1997, 120; → Culture Industries). This argument holds that cultural products such as art become commodities that reflect dominant ideology, that in fact convey norms. Fashion is an example of this process that not only has the power to democratize but also to establish and affirm borders. Global popular culture includes fashion, imported and exported from country to country, as well as Japanese → anime, → Bollywood films, and spectacles such as the Superbowl and World Cup soccer.

## CULTURE AND PUBLICS

Unfortunately, the expression “popular culture” is often used as a pejorative term, viewed as lesser than so-called high culture pursuits because it originates among a wide variety of everyday people and is deeply embedded in daily life. The contents of popular culture are perpetuated through a particular country’s vernacular (spoken, written), i.e., visual or verbal language. The objects, practices, and products that comprise popular culture are widely shared among a population. The quality and value placed upon the products are, however, socially constructed. Sociologist Herbert Gans is among the early scholars of popular culture and communication who studied the function of television in American society, the production of → television news, and the composition and perspectives of audiences (→ Television: Social History). One of his best-known books, *Popular culture and high culture* (1975), explores the place of fine art, popular art, mass media, and

audiences and hierarchical rankings, based on social class distinctions, perceived scarcity, and social construction of value.

Gans examined *criticisms of popular culture* and perceived negative effects under four areas: (1) negative effects on high culture, (2) negative character of popular culture creation, (3) negative effects on the popular culture audience, and (4) negative effects on society. Gans also studied popular taste and the products of popular culture, identifying five “taste publics” which differ in terms of the “diversity of and disagreement about aesthetic standards and values”: age, class, religion, ethnicity, regional origin, and education, each of which helps determine cultural choices. Thus, popular culture carries and articulates social class and social group distinctions. Expressions such as “high art” and “low art,” for example, have immediate associations with social class. High art can feature nude bodies, while low art is pornographic. While Gans orders the products of popular culture in a hierarchical manner (from classical to kitsch), the intent was to de-privilege forms of cultural narrative from their economic foundations. A characteristic of popular culture is its definitional fluidity. For example, in its time, Shakespeare’s plays were the popular culture of their day. Jazz, for example, during its early days was considered vulgar and audiences were thought to fall “trancelike into vulgar and wanton behavior” (Lopes 2006, 387). Today, jazz is often played to sophisticated audiences in trendy clubs and nightclubs.

One of the goals of the leading popular culture journal in the field, the *Journal of Popular Culture*, is to “break down the barriers between so-called ‘low’ and ‘high’ culture” and focus “on filling in the gaps a neglect of popular culture has left in our understanding of the workings of society.” Recent studies covered “Barbie dolls in Mexico,” Canadian superhero comics, Harry Potter, “Tricksters and the marketing of breakfast cereals,” and *The Simpsons*.

## POSTMODERNIST PERSPECTIVES

Postmodernism moves away from a singular gaze or perspective and argues for the value of a multiplicity of meanings (→ Postmodernism and Communication; Text and Intertextuality). Popular culture is replete with multiple perspectives and interlocking parts, or what is known as self-referentiality, that is, where one form of popular culture refers to another form. Intertextuality is apparent, for example, on the television program *The Simpsons*, which often refers to or parodies mainstream media and contemporary issues. In the television comedy *Seinfeld*, the lead character’s name is the name of the actor who plays that role.

One of the most famous examples of intertextuality and popular culture is the famous Andy Warhol (1928–1987) painting of Campbell’s soup cans. This form of expression, known as “Pop Art,” was part of a movement in 1960s America that illustrated the mixed messages and complexity of popular culture with characteristic energy. Huyssen (1984, 16) argues that it was within the realm of “pop” that postmodernism took root, and “the most significant trend within postmodernism has challenged modernism’s relentless hostility to mass culture.” The intertextuality implicit and complicit with a postmodern approach to cultural text separates the perspective from the narrow, unidirectional, individualistic approach characteristic of modernism. This hierarchical approach to

valuations of “high art” and “low art” then gives way under a postmodern view to valuing the popular as a body of work. The result is a rupture in a single identity, instead placing that which is high above that which is popular.

McRobbie (1994, 14) observes that postmodernism “implicitly challenges the narrowness of structuralist vision, by taking the deep interrogation of every breathing aspect of lived experience by media imagery as a starting point” (→ Structuralism). Thus, no one moment, no one *thing*, is privileged in the examination of the pastiche of the present. Popular culture theory recognizes the value of the everyday, arguing that objects and activities of everyday life, such as fashion, cosmetics, music, style, and dress, can be subject to the same analyses as topics considered worthy of “serious” scholarship.

### POPULAR CULTURE THEORY

Many forms of popular culture carry a stigma through association. Stigma is defined by sociologist Erving Goffman (1963) not as a particular attribute, but instead as a “spoiled identity,” as perceived lack of quality and a form of labeling (→ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication). *Comic books*, for example, have been stigmatized since their introduction in the mid-1930s. The famous comic book scare of the 1950s attributed juvenile delinquency to youth reading, in particular, crime comic books. Particular forms of music or bands have also been accused of destroying young minds, for example, jazz, in the 1920s, the Beatles in the 1960s, and the Grateful Dead, whose fans were regarded as “directionless, drug-addled nomads with no link to reality” (Lopes 2006, 388). *Fashion* is an example of a form of cultural expression appropriated up (torn jeans) or down (designer knock-offs). Simmel (1971, 302) points out that the “very character of fashion demands that it should be exercised at one time only by a portion of the given group . . . as soon as anything that was originally done only by a few has really come to be practiced by all . . . we no longer speak of fashion.”

Lopes (2006) argues that *stigma* works in and through popular culture by association with particular objects, forms, practitioners, genres, and roles, and can effect the development of cultural forms. For example, the stigma associated with → graffiti limits opportunities for creating and expression within the art form. A stigma associated with romance novel readers and writers both encourages a subculture of fans and authors who come together around their shared interest and a view of frivolity by those outside this culture (→ Fandom). Various forms of social → dance once stigmatized, such as tango and flamenco, have now gained widespread appreciation and participants. Popular culture producers, for example, hip-hop and rap artists, bear the burden of associations of violence, misogyny, and racism found in some of the music. Audiences and fans are also stigmatized for their appreciation and enthusiasm for particular forms of popular culture deemed banal or low-class during a particular time in a particular place. Opera lovers, classical music devotees, jazz fans, and antique collectors, who are regarded as of a higher social class and hence not stigmatized today, have different social experiences from heavy metal fans, motorcycle club members, or body builders. All participate in widely distributed mass cultural products, yet the focus on social class distinctions, often expressed in terms of stigmas associated with race, gender, or

sexuality, overshadows the qualities of the actual art form, which becomes labeled as “bad taste.”

Popular culture carries an ideological imperative. In a Gramscian sense, popularity evokes conformity, operating as a site for the production and reproduction of political hegemony (→ Critical Theory; Cultural Studies). This is why “popular culture” matters. It establishes, reifies, and contests established categories. Stuart Hall describes popular culture as “an arena of consent and resistance. It is partly where hegemony arises, and where it is secured” (quoted in Storey 1996, 466). When Spivak (1988) asks, “can the subaltern speak?” of global popular culture, she articulates concerns that western popular culture so dominates the world that nations of culturally and economically oppressed peoples lose the voice of their own culture (→ Subaltern Communities, Communication in). The study of popular culture offers a window onto the world of the everyday, a compelling view not only of individual groups and cultures, but also of social and cultural worlds generally.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Anime ▶ Audience ▶ Bollywood ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Comics ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Dance ▶ Fandom ▶ Fashion ▶ Graffiti ▶ Magazine ▶ Marginality, Stigma, and Communication ▶ Meaning ▶ Music Industry ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Popular Communication and Social Class ▶ Popular Music ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Public ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rituals in Popular Communication ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Structuralism ▶ Subaltern Communities, Communication in ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ Television as Popular Culture ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Visual Communication

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## Popular Culture and the News Media

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While there may be some debate over whether Russia's or Canada's version of "Naked News" came first, for many social observers the beginning of serious news delivered by naked women or women in the act of stripping indicates a crisis in the practice of journalism. To say that the boundary between → journalism and entertainment has been breached, if not swept away, is for many not a debate at all. It is a simple observation of the dramatic transformations in the practice of journalism that have taken place in the so-called "modern" western industrial democracies (→ Infotainment; Quality of the News).

More interesting is the debate over whether there ever existed a wall between journalism and entertainment, journalism and → popular culture, or journalism and ideology, for that matter. Conservative commentators, particularly in the United States, bemoan the loss of objectivity and → balance to a rise of a press dominated by liberal ideology (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Liberals challenge the idea of a liberal press as a myth propagated by conservative ideologues, counterclaiming that journalism in the United States and increasingly other countries that have come to embrace the ideology of free market capitalism (increasingly known as neo-liberalism), applied to more and more aspects of social, political, and economic life, has curtailed the democratic functions of the press and is moving the United States and other "free market" countries to a new and dangerous form of corporate–government partnership (→ Bias in the News; Commercialization: Impact on Media Content).

### RECONSIDERING THE CATEGORIES OF "NEWS" AND "POPULAR CULTURE"

This may seem like creating much ado about the simple juxtaposition of the two terms "news" and "popular culture," but both terms have complex histories that are ideologically informed and deeply intertwined. Examining the idea of "news" in relationship to the idea of "popular culture" highlights a number of critical issues. The *first* is that the two terms have often been used as contrasts, "news" referring to the serious side of mass-mediated culture while "popular culture" has often been evoked to identify the softer, chaotic, and entertaining dimension of mass-mediated communication. This opens up questions regarding the historical claim of news to a quasi-scientific form of objective

truth, and as to whether the “popular” in “popular culture” refers to media of and from “the people” or to mass-manufactured cultural products designed for a consumer society (→ Semiotics; Truth and Media Content).

A *second and related issue* concerns the common roots of both “modern” mass-produced news and popular culture. Both are communication products that came into existence in the rise of the “modern” era of expanding industrialization, democratization, and transformation of communication and culture into commodity forms (→ Commodification of the Media; Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The irony in the contrast between news and popular culture, in this sense, is that while both are popular forms of communication in the sense of being mass-produced, news was forced, particularly in the United States, to hide its commercial foundation for fear of being perceived as a vehicle of → propaganda for the industrial/corporate sector of society. Another irony was that news, particularly by the 1920s in the United States, was being framed as a value-neutral form of information aligned with a scientific worldview, which was generally accepted as a positive outcome of a union between liberalism and technology. The irony was that news at this time was also both claiming and attempting to serve an ideological position, promoting democracy by contributing to the formation of an active public capable of self-government, particularly as contrasted with the idea of the → public as a dangerous mob capable of destroying society, say, in sense of the Russian revolution and the revolutionary uprisings taking place across Europe.

So the news in the US in the early part of the twentieth century, founded on capitalist economics, legitimized as value-neutral by its commitment to scientism and progressive professionalism, was promoting a vision of an active public capable of democratic self-government (→ Public Sphere; Political Discourse). At the same time within the commercial sphere, the potentially dangerous public, the public as dangerous mob, was being engineered through → marketing and → public relations to view itself as committed to the “popular,” in the sense of desiring mass-produced culture and material goods as the means by which it would see itself as a unified culture with common, increasingly commercial goals. The echo of the mass society debates engaging social thinkers such as Émile Durkheim, Ortega y Gasset, and members of the Frankfurt School, can still be heard in this intersection of the news and popular culture in the debate over the viability of participatory democracy (Calhoun 1992; Bybee 1999).

A *third issue* concerning the link between news and popular culture, again related, but not as theoretical or central to those above, examines the representations of news, journalism, journalists, and reporters, in the popular cultural forms of the novel (→ Book), film (→ Cinema), and → television. These examinations shed light on the changing nature of the commodified vision of the press as it was represented in the public imagination throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century (see, e.g., Image of the Journalist in Popular Culture (IJPC) website at <http://ijpc.org/>).

A *fourth issue* that is brought into visibility when news and popular culture are considered in relationship is how news, as the serious form of popular, corporate culture frames reality in a way that complements or challenges softer corporate popular culture representations. It is in this sense that media observers such as John Fiske, Peter Dahlgren, Barbie Zelizer, John Fowler, S. Elizabeth Bird, Colin Sparks, and Gunther Kress view news as joining a cultural battle with other forms of popular culture over which reinforcing

web of representations will emerge as the dominant frame for constructing reality; or, in the view of philosopher Michel Foucault, which discourse will emerge as dominant (→ Power and Discourse). Cultural studies theorist Stuart Hall defines Foucault's idea of discourse as "a group of statements which provide a language for talking about . . . a particular topic at a particular historical moment . . . discourse, Foucault argues, constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about" (Hall 1997, 47; → Cultural Studies).

Certainly agenda-setting research (→ Agenda-Setting Effects), the way in which news media can set the agenda for what is to be considered important and talked about, coming from the mainstream of US and European media studies, could be understood as sympathetic to this view. However, it failed to situate this observation within a more encompassing system of interrelationships between culture as a system of → meaning and the social, political, and economic institutions that held in place a particular worldview; from the most humble elements of daily living to the most concrete institutional embodiments, not of a reality, but of a naturalized view of what constituted reality. This is, of course, the power of coupling news with popular culture, because in the domain of popular culture, the observer, whether academic, professional, or amateur, is more willing to follow the idea of → constructivism: that "pop" culture is a series of artificially constructed fads and diversions.

To apply this same constructivist thinking to serious "political information" requires a theoretical step that most, not having followed the disciplines of epistemology, hermeneutics, structuralism, and political theory as necessary domains of understanding to make sense of media as a cultural phenomenon, are unwilling to follow. It is here, of course, that the insights of viewing news as not distinct from popular (commercial) culture, but as another genre of it, begin to provide the groundwork for understanding such current popular culture media fare as "reality television" where the stakes are pitched at the very level of what constitutes "reality" and from whose point of view (→ Reality TV).

*Finally*, but not exhaustively, another related critical issue raised by the juxtaposition of news and popular culture is the complex dynamics running through the whole modern period and continuing into the late capitalist or postmodern era of commercially produced culture, labeled "serious" or "light," "soft" or "hard," or "news" vs "entertainment," "news" vs "fiction," or "news" in the dialectic domain of the "popular" as simultaneously a corporate production *and* an expression of the "popular" view/will of the people which has been excluded from access to corporate media production and distribution (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

In this issue we find discussions of the potential for popular resistance, challenge, and reform to a corporate media worldview. One might call this, following Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, a "liberatory" view of popular culture (Freire 1972): as a culture for and of the people, capable of not only seeing through the mystifications of power, but also of understanding and acting on the democratic principles of inclusion, dialog, and participation in the process of achieving social justice. This view of a liberatory popular culture has been expressed through the news form taken to excess (as in tabloid journalism), the parody of news and journalistic practice (consider the popularity in the US of Jon Stewart's parody of network news called *The Daily Show*), and the phenomenal rise of



alternative/radical media forms (consider the rise of IndyMedia, or more formally the Independent Media Center (2007), which operates in eight languages). These approaches, more horizontal (people-to-people) in form, and involving both “information,” “entertainment,” and imaginative blends of the “information/entertainment” divide, challenge the dominant categories and re-engage a growing number of people as citizens rather than simply as consumers.

This growing ideological war over the health of the media and the political state can be seen in individual countries as well as in the more general challenges to free-market globalization (→ Globalization Theories). A particularly dramatic example of a moment when commercial news, liberatory popular culture, and spectacle were united is arguably illustrated by the speech of Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez as he stepped to the same UN podium in September 2006 after President George W. Bush had delivered his own address there the day before. President Chavez remarked that “the devil” had been at the spot the day before and that it “smells of sulfur still today” (CNN 2006). Chavez then went on with an enthusiastic and detailed endorsement of a new book by noted US left-wing intellectual Noam Chomsky, *Hegemony or survival: America’s quest for global dominance*. Critical of US foreign policy and strongly endorsed by Chavez, the book hit the number one spot on Amazon’s US bestseller list two days later (Rich 2006).

### **NEWS IN THE SERVICE OF DEMOCRATIC CULTURE? POPULAR CULTURE IN THE SERVICE OF AN ENLIGHTENED AND ENGAGED PUBLIC?**

It is in this light, the territory of the news as popular culture, that a phenomenon like “Naked News” can be regarded as revealing more than flesh. What it reveals is the nakedness of the emperor and the empire-builders in their control over defining the political, economic, and social situation. Perhaps most notable in such parodies of the news, or in the resistance or liberatory news, is a reflection of how widespread are the market failures of global capitalism unleashed.

Commercially produced news itself appears to be one of the more significant examples of market failure. Commercially produced news, particularly in the arena of broadcast news in the US, was once viewed as a necessary money-losing proposition, required to demonstrate good faith and the commitment to the general public interest of the corporations who made their profits from the use of public airwaves. However, to stay with the US as an example, in the mid-1970s it was found that broadcast news programming did not have to be a money loser. As demonstrated by the popularity and growing audience size of the CBS Network’s *60 Minutes* series, a weekly investigative news magazine program, news could be a new and valuable profit center. With this realization, television news in the later decades of the twentieth century underwent a radical transformation, and began pushing whatever contributed to the market value of what was now reconceived as a new commodity, branded “news” or “information,” or even “infotainment.”

The outcome, both in the United States and in other nations, has been deeply injurious to the supposed democratic function of news as the vehicle for both contributing to the constitution of an active, engaged citizenry and to the public debate on issues of critical importance, not just to the corporations, to citizens as consumers, but also also to citizens as members of a democratic culture that goes beyond the formal institutions and roles of

politics to all places where power is exercised. The audience for what is increasingly viewed as news as corporate-speak is tuning out in record numbers (Mindich 2005). Morale among journalists has been plummeting as the corporate bottom line has become the operative rule as to what gets covered, how it gets covered, and what gets left out. In June 2007 even Britain's prime minister, Tony Blair, in a speech hosted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, compared the hyper-competitive, profit-driven news media to "a feral beast, just tearing people and reputations to bits" (Sullivan 2007).

The juxtaposition of news and popular culture has been and can continue to be an enormously productive area of research and understanding of the dynamics of twenty-first-century cultural politics and power, particularly if the relationship is viewed with the complexity it requires, holistically, and with the commitment to go beyond isolated, reductionist economic analyses that simply reify "infotainment" and the outcome of market forces and call for a return to a simpler cultural past that never was. Perhaps the most critical new direction the news/popular culture contrast suggests is investigation of the deteriorating stock of public meaning which provides the foundation for democratic culture.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Book ▶ Brands ▶ Cinema ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Communication: History of the Idea ▶ Constructivism ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Infotainment ▶ Journalism ▶ Marketing ▶ Meaning ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Modernity ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Myths ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Politainment ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Politics in Popular Communication ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Radical Media ▶ Realism ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Reality TV ▶ Semiotics ▶ Soft News ▶ Spectacle ▶ Subaltern Communities, Communication in ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Television ▶ Truth and Media Content ▶ Youth Culture ▶ Zines

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## Popular Music

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Music in various functions plays an increasingly important role both as an indicator of and as a medium for changes in society. Popular music is with us constantly; it is part of our everyday environment, and increasingly part of the aural or sonic soundscape that surrounds us. Not only do we listen to music in our homes and at concerts, but also as a background in cars, bars, airplanes, restaurants, and shopping malls. Our brains are constantly registering, monitoring, and decoding popular music. Popular music is one of the more powerful expressions of the → “culture industry” worldwide. Some would claim that popular music is the only truly universal “mass medium.” Certainly most people would agree that music speaks a universal language of → emotions. Popular music is now the lingua franca for a large segment of the world’s youth population. It is probably fair to say that music is the most universal means of communication we now have, instantly traversing language and other cultural barriers (→ Popular Communication).

Whereas consumption of other media products is often limited by geographic availability and consumer income, almost anyone anywhere can listen to popular music, often regardless of whether they want to or not. Most of us at one time or another have felt pursued by music itself. In this respect, popular music is certainly the most global aspect of our “global village” (→ McLuhan, Marshall). The evolution of technology and the proliferation of global cultural products have had many effects, not the least of which is the fact that the stars of the contemporary music industry are increasingly catering to

an international audience that is constantly growing. Today, we are all listening to the “global jukebox” (Burnett 1996; → Globalization of the Media).

There is no precise, straightforward *definition of popular music* but rather a commonsense understanding placing an emphasis on “popular” and based on the commercial nature of music, and embracing genres perceived as commercially oriented. As soon as there were media technically able to transmit sound, and communities economically able to use these media, there was mass communication of music. This occurred first with the development of the record industry, and was later followed by the development of → radio, sound film, → television, → music videos, and the → Internet.

### MUSIC AND GLOBALIZATION

In recent years, the international music companies have begun to stress that they are global organizations. Globalization in their case, and as reflected in company annual reports, means the organization of production, distribution, and consumption of cultural goods on a world scale market (→ Commodification of the Media). The flow of information, ideas, and cultural artifacts on a global scale has greatly increased in recent decades, due in part to the many developments of new communication technology (→ Globalization Theories). It is no longer fruitful to try to understand the new global cultural economy by using old models of conflict that contrast the center versus the periphery. In most of these models of “cultural imperialism,” an underlying concern or fear of “cultural homogenization” is expressed in the wake of growing Americanization and commodification (→ Americanization of the Media; Cultural Imperialism Theories). What is clear is that in the contemporary context, the international media environment is far more complex than that suggested by earlier models of media imperialism.

The study of *transnational music production* should be able to tell us something about the ways in which international capital works in the field of → popular culture and specifically in the entertainment industry. For example, a question that is always raised is: are we experiencing the rise of a global homogeneous world culture, and if so, will this process still allow for smaller heterogeneous local cultural traditions? One effect of media globalization and commercialization is the almost instantaneous dissemination of popular music developed by the major transnationals to an increasingly global audience spread to the far corners of the world. One can argue that the universal acceptance of popular music indicates that a widely felt need and demand are being met, and its global reach enables greater understanding and the emergence of some sort of global music culture.

There is also an increasing musical flow towards the cultural centers, and cross-flows within particular geographical and cultural regions as well, which may open up musical understanding between peoples. A controversial effect of the globalization of the music industry is the spread of music and the carrying across borders of some of the *values of the west*, such as human rights, individualism, and questioning of authority. These values embedded in popular music lyrics and music videos, whether explicit or implicit, can lead to controversy in nonwestern cultures (Shuker 2001).

However, as noted above, it is really no longer fruitful to talk about American “cultural imperialism” at the level of ownership in the entertainment industry. European and Asian companies have proved to be at least as successful as their American counterparts. It makes

more sense to discuss the few transnational companies that dominate today's world market. The transnationals certainly see themselves as players on a world scale. Advances in communications technology have weakened the nature of traditional national boundaries.

It used to be the case that → Hollywood film, television, and record producers saw foreign distribution as a lucrative by-product, money to be made after earning back costs and hopefully turning a profit in the domestic American market. In recent years, it is increasingly the case that producers, distributors, and investors target the international market from the very beginning of every new project (→ Markets of the Media). Still, it is important to remember that much of the information and entertainment material owned by non-American companies is still created by Americans, for the simple reason that Los Angeles is still the film, music, and television production capital of the global entertainment industry (Negus 1999).

The ownership of major entertainment enterprises has become increasingly internationalized, reflecting the economic interdependence among nations. In the entertainment industries it goes beyond internationalization of ownership. American film, television, video, record, and music publishing companies now derive at least 50 percent of their *revenues from foreign markets*, and must therefore consider the tastes of consumers in other countries as well as those of American consumers. One of the reasons why music companies pay million-dollar fees to stars such as Madonna, Britney Spears, and Michael Jackson is the simple fact that with a big selling album, enormous financial returns can be derived outside the United States. Escalating production and → marketing costs have made thinking about the foreign market crucial. The same logic is at work in the film, television, and book industries as well. The vertical and horizontal integration of the music, film, and television production and publishing industries, an alignment of technology development and ownership that is coupled to production and distribution control, has never been more closely linked to the power centers of the media and electronics industries in America, Europe, and Japan (Hesmondhalgh 2002).

## MUSIC AND DIGITIZATION

Deregulation and the emerging digital technologies changed the mission of the music business (→ Digital Media, History of). The multiplication of media channels combined with cheaper, more flexible means of producing, manipulating, and integrating musical material into new contexts (such as music TV, video games, and advertising) led to a *shift in revenues* from physical distribution to immaterial performance rights. A wider, simultaneous presence in global markets imposed further constraints to find instant “synergies” across the activities of a media group. The ideal product would sell on any channel, anywhere (Burnett & Marshall 2003).

Music, and its production, distribution, regulation, and reception, are now essential features of the → “information society.” The music industry is a key financial asset. The agent of change in the world of music in recent years is the Internet and the capabilities that it provides. There are two constants in the music industry. On the one hand, there are the artists and the music they create; on the other hand, there are the fans who are eager to hear the music (→ Fandom). All the other pieces between the artists and their fans are subject to change. What the Internet has provided is a mechanism and a technology with

the capability to bring the artist and the fans together, so closely in every possible way that it is going to change the mechanics and the dynamics of the business.

The *future of the music industry* in many ways coincides with developments in digital media. We are witnessing an important *transition period* in the music industry. Historically, intellectual property has been defined by physical boundaries, like the movie, video cassette, CD, or book. Now, because of advances in information technology, this physical boundary has been broken. The best example of this transformation is the music industry, where the music, which is the purest digital format, has left the CD, left the physical product, and spread rapidly across new technologies and networks and in different ways found its way back to consumers. Specific digital technologies such as mp3 sound files and peer-to-peer (P2P) networks have facilitated this process.

Due to these developments, music companies will need to embrace new technologies much faster and much more aggressively than they have in the past. Today we see new technologies and high consumer demand and use of these new technologies. The problem is that currently there are no proper business models in place, where the value of the intellectual property being produced is maintained. With the concentration of control in the music industry, the transnational corporations will continue to play a strong role in shaping global rules for trade policies and for the protection of intellectual property rights.

The globalization of the music industry has both an economic and a cultural dimension, which are closely linked. Certainly, the almost total dominance of the popular music industry by the transnational corporations, and the globalization of popular music styles are clear examples of the forces of globalization. The transnational majors' market share of the global production, manufacture, and distribution of recorded popular music is estimated at between 80 and 90 percent. Figures from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry also show that the dominance of the transnationals is around 90 percent across Europe, and growing in Asia. Since the 1980s, the transnationals have concentrated on buying up local and national record labels around the world in their search for increased market shares (Burnett 1996).

SEE ALSO: ► Americanization of the Media ► Bertelsmann Corporation ► Celebrity Culture ► Commodification of the Media ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Cultural Imperialism Theories ► Culture Industries ► Digital Media, History of ► Emotion ► Fandom ► Globalization of the Media ► Globalization Theories ► Hollywood ► Information Society ► Internet ► Marketing ► Markets of the Media ► McLuhan, Marshall ► Media Conglomerates ► Music Industry ► Music Videos ► Popular Communication ► Popular Culture ► Radio ► Sony Corporation ► Television ► Time Warner Inc.

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# Popular Mythology

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Myth comes from the Greek word *mythos* meaning “speech” or “story.” Contrary to popular parlance that says a myth is something untrue, false, or fake, *mythology* is in fact true stories and timeless tales passed down from generation to generation. Myths provide answers and explanations for the big questions of life, such as: where did we come from? What is love? Where do we go once we die? What is the role of nature? And so forth. They are the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves. They are truthful, inasmuch as they reflect a belief (even if erroneous or hegemonic).

Early on, Joseph Campbell (1949) established that every society has what are called the Big Myths – stories about love, life, origins, and death. How these myths are articulated varies enormously from culture to culture. In early times, myths focused on immediate needs such as personal safety, finding food, and understanding weather. Today, however, many myths focus on and construct femininity and masculinity. The concept of beauty, for example, has always existed and varies greatly between cultures. In industrialized countries such as the US the ideal female beauty is a tall, thin, big-busted woman (→ Body Images in the Media). In others, she is plump and short. It is the nature of human beings to believe in the stories we hear and see, regardless of whether they are factually provable or not. The real meanings behind myths are timeless, adaptable, and resilient.

All societies have deep and ancient roots. Psychologist Carl Jung (1968) referred to a kind of groupthink that develops what he called the collective unconscious. This is the psychological container within each person’s head in which ideas about morality, authority, and religiosity reside. It contains ideas that we somehow seem naturally to hold but in fact have learned as we grew up. While the collective unconscious is below conscious-level thinking, it holds a collection of cognitive (thinking), affective (feeling), and behavioral (doing) characteristics that are passed down to all members of a society, generation after generation. Mythologies are not, however, found only in the past because myths are essentially about the meanings people make – a key concept in communication studies (→ Meaning; Communication Theory and Philosophy). Cultures form around the meanings people construct, which occur within a system of other meanings from which ideology emerges. Meanings, for example for a word, change over time. Thus, the articulation of a myth, perhaps one about how a person finds true love, changes to keep current with the times.

A typical myth involves the hero’s journey. This is a tale, often told from the perspective of the hero, in which a young (usually) man must go out into the world and achieve, rescue, or locate something which he brings back to his community. On this journey, he experiences usually three challenges, accomplishes them, and brings back the boon. It is not only a tale of individual accomplishment but a timeless story that energizes cultures today through its familiarity and its sense of good prevailing over evil. Movies such as *Star Wars*, police and detective shows, and American Westerns all use this traditional storytelling

format, which simultaneously reveals and conceals its ideological foundation (→ Cinema; Visual Communication; Storytelling and Narration).

For a myth to remain relevant, credible, viable, and believable, it must reflect people's present-day realities. While the underpinnings of a myth remain true throughout time, popular culture portrayals help to define, reproduce, and distribute the stories. Once upon a time we got our stories by sitting around campfires, within sweat lodges, or in community situations, whereas today, the primary storytellers for most of the news and social instruction, in industrialized nations, come from the mass media.

Social changes such as the women's and civil rights movements as well as technological advancements in the mass media affect a culture's telling, remembering, and passing on of its most important tales.

A mythic perspective on → popular communication is interdisciplinary, incorporating religious studies, → linguistics, sociology, psychology, → semiotics, literary and narrative theories, and psychoanalysis. Methodologies that facilitate this kind of inquiry include → hermeneutics, → phenomenology, semiotics (→ Rhetorical Studies), psychoanalysis, and the history of the imaginary, as well as the use of conceptual tools from → aesthetics and art. Mass culture has a mythological dimension, which has been investigated from the perspectives of narrative theory and mythic analyses in films, television programs, sports, → advertising (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of), and other forms of communication.

French semiologist → Roland Barthes regarded myths as not only classical fables about gods, goddesses, and heroes. To him, myths reflect the dominant ideologies of our times and take on the appearance of naturalness, everyday-ness. Furthermore, myths function as metaphors that help us comprehend our experiences not only in our own culture but also in comparison to those in the world around us. Myths make socially constructed laws, rules, regulations, social relationships, sexual relationships, beliefs, and values seem normal and natural – simply how things are and have forever been. This is accomplished through language, narrative structures, images, and sounds.

Narrative patterns such as those found in the Western film genre articulate a form of social order, present a classic plot of good versus evil, and provide a mechanism through which social tensions can be released. As a genre, the Western has several clear themes and elements that make it quickly identifiable: it takes place in the American West and has cowboys, Indians, horses, and gunfights (→ Film Genres). Newspaper stories also perform this way by framing reality, by telling readers what is important to know in ways that support dominant, mainstream beliefs of a society (→ Framing of the News; Media Production and Content). Myths inform our everyday lives and play a powerful role in shaping individual and collective identities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Film Genres ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Visual Communication



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## **Population Campaigns**

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Communication campaigns have become a central component of family planning programs designed to shape social norms and individual behavior related to fertility. Communication at multiple levels (individual, family, community and mass media) has been used to heighten awareness of family planning, change attitudes toward contraceptive use, and shape norms surrounding family planning. Communication campaigns play a key role in providing people with access to accurate information in order to promote informed choice and to dispel rumors and myths about family planning. They also help improve service quality by enhancing the interpersonal skills of providers (Robey et al. 1994).

Campaigns have an important, complementary function that supports service delivery efforts, the policy environment, and community-based programs. Because population campaigns create demand for services, they are typically coordinated with improvements in service delivery infrastructure, service provider skill, and contraceptive supplies to meet the expectations generated through the campaign. Communication campaigns, in concert with other family planning program components, have promoted informed choice, improved the quality of services, assisted couples to achieve their ideal family size, saved the lives of women and children, and curbed population growth (→ Planned Social Change through Communication; Communication and Social Change: Research Methods; Development Communication; Health Communication).

### **EVOLUTION OF POPULATION CAMPAIGNS**

Once characterized as relying on clinic-based, passive approaches, campaigns today are increasingly complex, using multiple channels and participatory techniques. Early programs, starting with the “*clinic era*,” relied on a medical model in which communication efforts were limited and family planning clients were expected seek services simply because they were available – reflecting a “build it and they will come” philosophy (Rogers 1973; Piotrow et al. 1997). Once at the clinic, clients primarily listened as providers

communicated family planning messages. While this model worked for highly motivated clients, it did not address the needs of those who did not feel comfortable discussing such private issues in public clinics.

The late 1960s marked the beginning of the “*field era*,” when the largely passive, one-way communication model was replaced by active dialogue. At the same time, while clinics continued to be an important component of family planning programs, their activities were complemented by outreach efforts undertaken by family planning field workers. Field workers, armed with posters, leaflets, radio broadcasts, and more, attracted new clients to clinics and also provided information and limited family planning services (Rogers 1973; Piotrow et al. 1997).

Over the past 20 years, population campaigns have grown in sophistication and reach. Today population campaigns are strategic, following a systematic approach with a focus on key behavior change objectives. In this “*strategic era*,” campaigns are results-oriented and designed, implemented, and evaluated on the basis of the latest behavioral science models and with the active participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries (Piotrow et al. 1997). Communication has moved beyond dialogue to convergence; an iterative process in which participants create and share information in order to achieve mutual understanding (Kincaid 1979; Rogers & Kincaid 1981). No longer focused on distributing a high volume of materials, campaigns now rely on multiple, mutually reinforcing channels that may include a mix of mass media, community mobilization, client-centered counseling, social network interventions, social marketing, TV or radio spots, dramas and music, public policy advocacy, and more. Entertainment education, an approach that capitalizes on the persuasive power of promoting educational messages through entertainment formats such as songs, dramas, and soap operas, has transformed communication and expanded the reach of family planning messages (→ Entertainment Education). Today’s campaigns also make use of positioning to determine how to best motivate audiences to adopt a specific behavior, and they benefit from more sophisticated audience segmentation, which differentiates audiences according to their family planning attitudes, needs, or concerns rather than just on basic demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, and socio-economic status (Piotrow et al. 1997).

## CONTEXT SURROUNDING POPULATION CAMPAIGNS

The environment in which population campaigns operate has been shaped by *international population conferences* held every 10 years. At the 1974 World Population Conference at Bucharest, participants addressed population in relation to development. While more developed countries were in favor of controlling population growth with the idea that reduced population leads to improved development, a sub-group of attendees resisted the idea of demographic targets and argued that investments in development would promote fertility decline. Despite this disagreement, attendees created the World Population Plan of Action, a document on population policy and programs that was the first of its kind (Ashford 1995). The next population conference, convened in Mexico in 1984, is best known for the United States’ declaration that it would withdraw funds from programs that promoted or provided abortion. Though this so-called Mexico City Policy was rescinded in 1993, it was reinstated in 2001 and continues to shape family planning

efforts worldwide, forcing some organizations to shift operations in the face of losing funds (→ Gag Orders).

One positive outcome from this conference was the call to make *family planning services universally available* (Ashford 1995). The 1994 conference in Cairo marked a major paradigm shift for international family planning programs. The landmark conference shifted the focus of family planning programs away from demographic objectives to an emphasis on the rights and needs of women and encouragement of a more comprehensive reproductive health approach. The Program of Action called for expanded family planning programs that promoted informed choice, increased access to contraception, and included programs aimed at men and young people.

One common thread of each of the conferences is that each country has the sovereign right to develop its *own population policy* in ways that are consistent with national laws, development priorities, and cultural values (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Culture and Health Communication). Consequently, while the latest program of action, adopted at the 1994 Cairo Conference, advocated a couple's right to choose from a variety of contraceptive methods in order to achieve their fertility desires, some national population policies and related campaigns, undermine a couple's human right to choose the number and timing of their children, rather than promoting voluntary use of contraception. China's "One Child Policy," which restricts couples living in urban areas to one child, is an often-cited example of a national policy that goes against the spirit of the program of action adopted in Cairo in 1994.

## THEORY AND PRACTICE

Fertility decline was once primarily explained by the demographic transition theory, a model attributing fertility decline to decreased mortality and to socio-economic factors such as urbanization and industrialization, which resulted in the rising cost and declining economic value of children (Notestein 1953). However, as more evidence has become available, scholars have come to acknowledge the critical and complementary role of the diffusion of new attitudes, behaviors, and technology through social interaction (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). This "ideational model" attributes fertility decline to the spread of ideas and innovation through mass media, social networks, and interpersonal communication. As these new ideas take root, social norms change, making contraceptive use and the small family norm more acceptable, eventually resulting in fertility decline (Cleland & Wilson 1987).

In practice, population campaigns are guided by behavior change communication theories, particularly *stage or step theories* that describe the process that individuals undergo to change their behavior. The specific objectives of population campaigns are often related to the maturity of organized family planning programs. Less mature programs with relatively low modern contraceptive prevalence rates (CPR) may focus on developing a supportive environment by increasing public awareness of the benefits of family planning, whereas a more mature program with relatively high CPR may direct its efforts to improving provider interpersonal communication skills to insure informed choice and contraceptive continuity. Campaigns often operate at one or more levels including the social and political environment, the service delivery system, the community, the family, the couple, and the individual. Elements of mass media, primarily used to create aware-

ness and influence attitudes and beliefs about family planning, are often complemented with interventions aimed at improving interpersonal communication between providers and clients, husbands and wives, and family and community members, which help to motivate behavior change.

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Proving that changes in social norms and contraceptive behavior can be attributed to population campaigns has been a challenge, particularly since it is nearly impossible to use the “gold standard” (an experimental design using pre- and post-tests, a control group, and randomized participants) to measure the impact of programs with a mass media component (Figueroa et al. 2002). The very nature of mass media interventions using radio or television precludes this, since it is almost impossible to create a control group with no exposure to campaign messages. Consequently, evaluators have been challenged to develop better methods to demonstrate that change can be attributed to population campaigns (→ Communication Evaluation Research).

The Program of Action developed at the 1994 conference in Cairo provided an opportunity for communication campaigns to *reach new audiences segments* by specifically calling for the expansion of family planning programs to provide information, counseling, and services for young people and men. Young people often have an unmet need for family planning. While young people are sexually active and young women do not want to become pregnant, many do not know about or have access to contraceptives. However, creating communication campaigns that satisfy young people’s need for information and help them make healthy decisions, while at the same time making them acceptable to adults and sensitive to cultural norms, is a challenge. Men have also been increasingly recognized as having an important role in improving family planning and reproductive health following the 1994 conference. Men who have been exposed to information about family planning are more likely to support their partner’s family planning decisions, and communication campaigns aimed at men can improve spousal communication about family planning, which is positively associated with contraceptive use.

Expanded access and *new channels of communication* also present opportunities and challenges for family planning campaigns. Today, people worldwide not only enjoy greater access to television and radio, but also have the opportunity to use new communication technologies (→ Communication Technology and Development). For example, the → Internet has expanded access to health information and facilitated information sharing in a way once inconceivable. Throughout the world, health professionals and consumers can retrieve the latest health information at the touch of a button. Internet technologies provide access to health-related databases and documents and can facilitate information sharing through listservs, discussion forums, chatrooms, and the like. While the Internet provides new opportunities for reaching audiences with family planning messages, it also has its drawbacks. As more and more channels of communication become available, population communication programs will have to work harder and be more creative in attracting audience attention. Furthermore, traditionally underserved populations will have unequal access to technology such as the Internet. Consequently, health communicators will need to address barriers that create a → “digital divide” occurring at country, community, and individual levels (Maxfield 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Evaluation Research ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture and Health Communication ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Communication Campaigns ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Gag Orders ▶ Health Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication

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## **Populism and Responsiveness**

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Populism and responsiveness are rather broad and messy concepts. They are not only used for scientific analysis but for political allegations as well. A simple and general definition of the two terms shows what holds the two concepts together: *responsive* refers to politics that are open to the electorate and respond to what the people want (Latin: *responsum* = response); *populist* refers to politics that attach great importance to people's opinions (Latin: *populus* = people). The two terms operationalize the sovereignty of the

people, albeit with different connotations. Responsiveness, at least to some degree, is considered an essential element of representation, and thus of democracy. By contrast, interpretations of populism are in most cases not only highly charged but also negative. Only some authors find the sources of populist protest in the heart of the “democratic project” (Canovan 2002, 33) or treat the populist principle as an institutionalist feature which mainly determines direct democracy and therefore stands for a broader plebiscitarian transformation of politics. The proponents of responsiveness hold that this concept makes politics *more representative*, whereas populists criticize the *nonrepresentativeness* of politics.

## POPULISM

Populism is both a political catchword as well as an ambiguous construct in social sciences. Populism has an “awkward conceptual slipperiness” (Taggart 2000, 1). The definition of the term and the phenomenology of populism, as well as explanations for it and its impact, are far from clear. As a result, studies on populism are quite fragmented despite a reasonably long tradition.

In the beginning populism was studied in very contextual terms and based on → case studies and/or historical approaches. Among these historical populisms, the so-called agrarian populism and especially the commodity farmer movement of the US *People's Party* or *Populist Party* should be mentioned, which is also where the term derives from (Canovan 1981). Today, various populist movements are observed, most of them in the right wing of the political spectrum (“neo-populist”).

So, in short, the historical perspective already provides an idea of populism's core feature: populism reacts to and mobilizes against political elites and institutions of representation. Since the nature of these varies, populism varies as well. This is also the reason why populist parties or politicians are regarded as opportunistic (Mudde 2004; Decker 2006). The fact that, contrary to many people's expectations, populism has turned into a permanent phenomenon and populists nowadays also form governments has advanced research. Here Canovan's (1981) taxonomy of different types of populism laid an important cornerstone. More recent publications discuss, in particular, causes and effects of populism (Taggart 2000; Mény & Surel 2002; Decker 2006).

In regard to the definitional characteristics of populism, we can identify some agreement or concurrence among scholars. Populism is considered to be “a thin-centred” ideology “that considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups” (Mudde 2004, 543): the people and the elite. Populists fuel this antagonism. They are hostile to representative politics and they construct “the people,” or the “heartland,” as Taggart (2002, 66f.) would call it: the place “in which, in the populist imagination, a virtuous and unified population resides.” This may be described as the vertical axis. However, the rhetoric of the people implies a horizontal axis, too. On the horizontal level, populism dissociates itself from persons or groups whose affiliation to the people is disputed. Among right-wing populists, these → identity politics easily converge with nationalist, racist, or xenophobic issues (→ Rhetoric and Race).

Furthermore, two other aspects are sometimes considered to be characteristic: the organization, i.e., charismatic leadership on the one hand, and the style on the other hand. According to the style argument, populism can only be treated as a → discourse, a

kind of rhetoric (→ Political Language; Rhetoric and Politics; Rhetorical Studies). Populism emerges when “he” becomes “them” or “I” becomes “we”; when adjectives like “distant,” “faceless,” or “invidious” portray the elite and when denominations such as “Eurocrats” or “party hacks” are used for the political personnel (Taggart 2002).

A large share of the literature on populism is concerned with the debate about the causes, and many scholars argue that populism is a phenomenon of social or political crisis or crisis-prone perception. Among explanations regarding the rise of right-wing populism, Kitschelt’s (1995) thesis is very well known. The author argues that the transition from industrial to postindustrial economies established a new cleavage, with left-wing libertarian positions on one side and right-wing authoritarian positions on the other. Thus, the background of this thesis also points to an actual or perceived effect of globalization or European integration and governance structures (instead of government), which all mounts a critique of the systems of politics. Others point to more precise changes, such as the process of cartelization within (European) party systems, which reinforces anti-elite sentiments, or the process of depoliticization, which is very pronounced among former consociational democracies such as Austria or Switzerland, and thus implies a populist call for repoliticization of the → public sphere.

## RESPONSIVENESS

Responsiveness and the study of linkages between the rulers and the ruled are of great relevance to democratic regimes. Keeping representation and government democratic requires ensuring that citizens are to some degree linked to political elites and their actions. In this, normative theory discusses the justifiability, desirability, or degree of this linkage, and is situated between an elitist and a participatory position. The elitist position demands leadership of the rulers rather than responsiveness and thus advocates a trustee model. The participatory position calls for a high level of responsiveness and more strongly favors a delegate model, on the other hand.

Empirical researchers illustratively discuss some typical instruments of linkage (e.g., elections, interest groups, opinion polls). Based on this, some authors argue that there is a broad diversity of linkage mechanisms (Kitschelt 2000) – such as charismatic linkage (responsiveness because of preferences, grand gestures, and personal styles) or clientelist linkage (responsiveness through material advantages). The distinction is implicitly relying on the classical, four-fold typology of responsiveness presented by Eulau and Karpis (1977): the rulers give the ruled the feeling of being represented by public gestures (symbolic); the rulers fight for the interests of their electorate through pork barrel exchanges (allocation); or the rulers try to secure particularized benefits for individuals or groups in their constituencies (service). The focus of most studies, however, is on the fourth and special linkage mechanism: policy responsiveness or the programmatic linkage, i.e., the relationship between public opinion and public policy (→ Public Opinion; Symbolic Politics).

Using different approaches, these studies of substantive representation generally begin with citizen issue preferences and link these to the positions of their representatives, following the design of the seminal Miller–Stokes study analyzing how constituencies influenced roll call behavior (Miller & Stokes 1963). This congruence model was further

adapted to the European political system with comparatively strong parties (responsible party model; Thomassen 1991), and tested for other causal orderings between public opinion and policies.

## POPULISM IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Communication studies dealing with populism are rather scarce, but at least two broad fields of interest are still discernible.

The first highlights the fairly close *link between populism in the media and politics* (Mazzoleni et al. 2003). Since many characteristics of populism – such as prominence, timeliness, conflict, etc. – converge with → news values, populist phenomena and actions are very likely to be reported by the mass media. Populism serves both the → media logic of selection and the logic of presentation. Thus, populists may easily exploit the media for their purposes (→ Mediated Populism). Yet comparative analyses also reveal that the mediated (neo-)populism still has different patterns, depending on the life cycle of the parties, the media type, and the overall context. Furthermore, while using a broad concept of populism which highlights the inclusive function, Mazzoleni (2006) rightly stresses that the media industry tends to be populist as well. Not only the imperative of the market in journalism and media (→ Markets of the Media) but also the civic journalism movement promote “populist formats” and give the people a voice by using phone-ins, town meetings, etc. (→ Citizen Journalism; Citizen Journalism, History of; Public Journalism). Here a new performance of style is identified, which incorporates “the people’s voice” into programming via new communication technologies (Jones 2003). As newsroom journalism lacks distinctive analytical tools, it is sometimes not very distinct from horse race journalism or from market-oriented journalism (→ Horse Race Coverage). But, in contrast to many authors, Mazzoleni (2006) holds that media populism is not necessarily an enemy of the democratic process but may bring the people back to politics.

The second field takes a more detailed look at the *discursive forms of populist messages* – techniques of mobilization, rhetoric, and strategies of → persuasion (Decker 2006, 11). Thus, they analyze typical patterns of argumentation, such as friend and foe schema, preferences for radical and alleged clear solutions, and of course the linguistics of “the people” (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). However, these types of interpretative-hermeneutic studies are still scarce (→ Linguistics; Hermeneutics). And regarding the field of populism and media in general, some authors rightly discuss the lack of research and theory and point in particular to the unreflected use of the term among scholars as well as journalists.

## RESPONSIVENESS IN POLITICAL COMMUNICATION

Typical responsiveness studies treat the mechanism of linkage between rulers and ruled as a black box. Consequently, the “chain of responsiveness” (Powell 2004) does not include a close look at aspects of political communication, mechanisms of linkage, or information processing of policymakers more precisely. Most of these responsiveness studies follow the Miller and Stokes (1963) dyadic approach (Burstein 2003) and look at the impact of



public opinion (citizen as respondent or constituency) on policymaking (politicians and legislative behavior; see, e.g., Brettschneider 1995).

Primarily, communication scholars take up the thesis of mediated politics (→ Mediatization of Politics). They analyze the media–policy connection more closely and highlight the media’s role in this connection. For example, this research looks at the emergence of the media agenda and the contribution of media in the processes of → agenda building and agenda setting (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Research about the use of (published) polls fits into this domain, too (→ Polls and the Media). Still, only few scholars take a closer look at the responsiveness of policymakers to media news and analyze their attention and following actions in the context of information processing and persuasion theories (Yanovitzky 2002, → Information Processing; Political Persuasion). Furthermore, qualitative studies which analyze the rhetoric of responsiveness are still scarce, and therefore that which applies in general remains true at the level of content-analytical studies: if Mudde’s (2004) allegation states that populism’s electorate first and foremost wants leadership, we need to include theories of representation (leadership versus responsiveness) in the analysis of populism in order to get a sound understanding of the challenges of representation in modern → media democracies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Case Studies ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizen Journalism, History of ▶ Discourse ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Information Processing ▶ Linguistics ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Media Logic ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ News Values ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Language ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric and Race ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Symbolic Politics

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## **Pornography, Feminist Debates on**

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The feminist pornography debates, known as the “porn wars” or the “sex wars,” began in the US, the UK, and many other countries around the world in the early 1980s. These struggles have raised questions about the nature and effects of not only pornography but also prostitution and stripping, highlighting crucial debates about women’s agency and the role of structural forms of inequality in shaping women’s lives in patriarchy.

### **HISTORY OF DEBATES**

There have been three *major philosophical/political positions* within feminism during these debates: (1) anti-pornography feminists, typically identified as “radical feminists”; (2) anti-censorship feminists who are critical of misogynistic pornography but reject the legal approach radical feminists proposed; and (3) a pro-pornography group valorizing pornography as a discourse that subverts traditional gender norms and has liberatory potential for women’s sexuality. The growing strength of the postmodernism (→ Postmodernism and Communication) underlying this third position is representative of a larger trend away from the activist-oriented second wave of feminism toward a more academic-based theorizing. Since the 1980s, these debates have caused major divisions in the global

feminist movement and continue to split feminists into anti- and pro-pornography camps (→ Women's Movement and the Media).

The second wave of western feminism, beginning in the 1960s, gave rise to a *radical feminist movement* that argued male violence against women was one of the central patriarchal methods of control over women. The other major strand of second wave thinking, liberal feminism, focused on women's subordinate social and legal status in the home and workplace, and tended not to highlight physical violence and sexual exploitation. For radical feminists, violence against women was theorized as a method of sexual terrorism, central to men's economic and cultural control of women. Radical feminists argued that until women were free from violence and the fear of violence – in private and in public – legal or economic gains would not liberate women (→ Sexual Violence in the Media).

A *grassroots anti-violence movement* argued that sexual assault was an expression of, rather than an exception to, patriarchy's sexual norms, and in response women created rape crisis centers, battered women's shelters, and support groups for survivors of child sexual assault. Radical feminists exploring reasons for this violence looked at popular culture and pornography, given that in a mass-mediated society images help shape attitudes and behavior (i.e., in advertising, news, and entertainment media). Radical feminists criticized misogynistic images in all these media, as well as the underlying ideology that legitimized or celebrated violence against women (→ Women in the Media, Images of).

This led to activist groups in the US, most prominently Women against Pornography (WAP) in New York, educating and protesting the harms of the pornography industry. Anti-pornography slide shows were distributed to local feminist groups and presented in private homes, local community groups, and colleges to help build a grassroots movement of women to organize against the pornography industry. WAP also gave guided tours of the shops in New York's infamous Times Square pornography district to raise public awareness about the sexist nature of pornography. In March 1979, WAP organized a Times Square march that drew several thousand and generated national coverage that publicized the movement.

The first major radical feminist publication was *Take back the night: Women on pornography* (Lederer 1980), in which key researchers of violence such as Diana Russell and prominent feminists such as Alice Walker and Robin Morgan set out a framework for understanding pornography as a form of violence against women in both its production and use by men. This was followed a year later by *Pornography: Men possessing women*, which established Andrea Dworkin as the best-known anti-pornography feminist in the US and then increasingly around the world. Dworkin argued that pornography was one of the major ways patriarchy disseminated woman-hating propaganda.

### **DIVISIONS OVER THE ORDINANCE**

Although there was a flurry of this kind of anti-pornography critique and activism in the US in the late 1970s and early 1980s, radical feminists did not face organized opposition from other feminists until an anti-pornography legal strategy was developed by Dworkin and lawyer/law professor Catharine MacKinnon. Rejecting traditional criminal obscenity law, in 1983 they drafted for Minneapolis a civil rights ordinance that would allow women to pursue damages against producers and consumers. Passed by the City Council

but vetoed twice by the mayor in Minneapolis, it was then passed and signed into law in Indianapolis in 1984. That ordinance, and the theory behind it, were rejected on constitutional grounds in the federal courts in 1986, though organizing efforts to pass the law in other jurisdictions continued through the early 1990s.

The ordinance proposed a shift in existing law, away from a moral framework about what kind of sex is consistent with the dominant sexual mores and toward a political one, focused on patriarchal power. Rooting the move in the radical feminist argument that women are oppressed in part through sexual subordination, Dworkin and MacKinnon identified pornography as a means of sexualizing inequality and a practice of sex discrimination. The ordinance created five causes of action women could pursue: coercion into making pornography; the forcing of pornography on unwilling people; assault resulting from pornography; defamation through pornography; and trafficking in pornography. The trafficking clause, allowing any woman to bring a case against any pornographer, was the broadest and hardest to square with contemporary interpretations of the First Amendment. The assault cause of action raised complex questions about pornography's effects on not just attitudes but behavior.

Anti-censorship feminists were skeptical about state intervention in sexual matters, even under the umbrella of civil law that empowered women, and rejected the ordinance as a threat to women's freedom and autonomy. The Feminist Anti-Censorship Task Force produced an argument – known as the FACT brief – that became a focus of debate between the two camps. Some of the women in FACT also articulated a pro-pornography position that became more prominent in the 1990s and 2000s, as the liberal rejection of the radical critique increasingly leaned toward the postmodern.

Much of the debate about pornography has concerned the question of effects (→ Media Effects; Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of). Does pornography, particularly material that eroticizes violence and/or domination, lead to increased sexual violence against women, children, and other vulnerable people? Pro-pornography feminists and some researchers argue there is no conclusive evidence. Others find evidence for effects with some groups of men. No one argues that pornography is the sole causal factor in rape; the question is whether use of pornography can be considered a sufficient condition for triggering a sexual assault in some men, and whether repeated exposure to pornography can contribute to the normalization of sex that is coercive, violent, and degrading.

Radical feminists argue that attention to the experiences of men and women – those who use pornography and against whom pornography is used – makes the connection clear. Such accounts, in light of laboratory work from social psychology, have led radical feminists to argue that, at a minimum, pornography (1) is one important factor in shaping a male-dominant view of sexuality; (2) can contribute to a user's difficulty in separating sexual fantasy and reality; (3) is sometimes used to initiate victims and break down resistance to sexual activity; and (4) sometimes provides a training manual for men who sexually abuse women and children.

## CONTEMPORARY DEBATES

These camps are also divided on the *nature of the pornography industry*. For radical feminists, the production of pornography in patriarchy exploits women. While not denying

the ability of women in the industry to make choices, the feminist anti-pornography movement focuses on the economic, social, and cultural factors that influence women's choices to perform in pornography, such as histories of sexual abuse in childhood, the violence of pimps, and control by boyfriends and other men. Pro-pornography feminists counter this argument by insisting that women are making rational choices given the reality of employment opportunities and that some women prosper in the industry.

This is part of a much larger debate regarding the nature of work in the sex industry. Pro-pornography feminists describe prostitutes, strippers, and women in pornography as sex workers who sell their labor, much like other workers, and argue that any problems should be addressed through union organizing and/or health regulations. Radical feminists reject the term "sex worker," arguing that women in the sex industry do not perform work as it is typically understood. Most radical feminists are anti-capitalist and supportive of labor organizing, but see pornography as a practice central to the subordination of women and as a form of violence. Radical feminists point to the rates of post-traumatic stress disorder in women who are prostituted, as well as high levels of physical abuse and sexually transmitted diseases, evidence of the exploitative conditions of these women's lives. Pro-pornography feminists argue that women in the sex industry freely enter into contractual agreements to sell their labor.

While most of the early arguments against the radical position focused on issues of free speech and the dangers of censorship in the 1980s and 1990s, such writing increasingly argues that pornography can be a subversive and liberatory text, or indeed, that it has been controlled and domesticated for women's pleasure (Juffer 1998). Many of these concepts have their origins in postmodernist theory, especially as developed by literary, art, and film scholars such as Linda Williams (2004) and Laura Kipnis (1996), focusing on the text and the power of readers to interpret meaning. The postmodern turn in the academy – a focus on the fluidity of meaning of texts with multiple meanings, depending on the subject position of the reader – has influenced feminist analysis that constructs the pornographic image as a complex text open to interpretation. This conflicts with the radical feminist argument that examines the meaning of the pornographic text in the context of the lives of the women who are used in the making and the women who will interact with the men who are the primary consumers. While pro-pornography feminists do not minimize the harm of men's violence against women, they reject the idea that pornography is a central practice in patriarchal control of women.

One area of agreement concerns the making of *child pornography*, which is understood by virtually all as exploitation and an inherent violation of children. Yet while pro-pornography feminists make a sharp distinction between sexually explicit material made with children and with adults, radical feminists make connections. While not arguing that adults in pornography have the status of children, radical feminists point to how pornography using adults also eroticizes subordination. Radical feminists point to common genres of pornography such as Hustler's "Barely Legal" films, in which the adult women performing are dressed and posed in ways that suggest a younger age.

Although the pro-porn and radical feminists continue to disagree on key issues, there was little direct political engagement between the two camps in the late 1990s and early 2000s. That is in part because there have been no legal issues to focus the debate, and also because pro-porn feminists tend to concentrate more on writing for an academic audience and radical feminists focus on activism outside the academy.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Feminist Communication Ethics ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Media Effects ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Pornography Use across the Life-Span ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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## **Pornography, Media Law on**

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Pornography or “porn,” is a socially defined class of sexual communication, which may or may not be protected under national laws. The term may be distinguishable from legal definitions of obscenity or indecency. Pornography is generally considered the depiction of graphic sexual behavior usually designed to promote sexual arousal. Pornographic material may be either legal erotica or illegal obscenity. Many have questioned the validity of the distinction between erotica and pornography, the latter being a pejorative and subjective term.

Regulation of sexual expression varies from society to society. As the Statement on Freedom of Expression for the Commonwealth notes, “The law with respect to obscenity and pornography must arise from, and respect the value of, the society in which it operates. States have a special responsibility for eliminating child pornography” (→ *Morality and Taste in Media Content*).

## HISTORICAL REFERENCES

Pornography has been in existence for centuries. Some of the earliest cave paintings, sculpture, and pottery discovered by archaeologists contain sexual references. “Pornography” is a word first found in the writing of the Greeks in relation to discussion about *porne*, or prostitute. Around 1650, some of the first pornography appears to have been published using printing presses.

“Pornography” is considered a general term that is distinct from its legal definitions addressed under a wide range of obscenity laws. Sex was first a legal issue in England in 1663 with the conviction in London of Sir Charles Sedley for breach of peace by becoming drunk, removing his clothes, uttering profane remarks, and pouring urine on a crowd below a tavern balcony. This indecency was not blasphemous, as was the case with previous convictions. Common law courts in England did not tend to be faced with pornography cases. Still, in 1727 Edmund Curll was convicted for corrupting public morals through publication of *Venus in the cloister, or The nun in her smock*. A few years later, John Cleland’s *Fanny Hill, or Memoirs of a woman of pleasure* was widely translated, yet later judged to be illegal in the United States.

Technological development of → photography and → video expanded the distribution of pornography. Much of what we consider pornography today has its roots in Scandinavia and the United States, where there was a dramatic increase in production in the 1960s and 1970s. Movies such as *Last Tango in Paris* and *Deep Throat* brought pornographic images into the mainstream. During this period, child pornography surfaced from Europe, Africa, and Asia. Japanese pornography, which began to mingle sex with violence, has flourished using a variety of realistic and animated approaches (→ *Animation*).

Twentieth-century → magazines and adult → books found a global market. When the → Internet world wide web exploded on the scene in the mid-1990s, pornography could be easily distributed internationally and became the first profitable online industry. In the absence of international pornography laws, national laws prevail that are designed to curb or prohibit the production, distribution, and sale of sexual materials. Current enforcement typically involves attempts to identify sexual predators in the online environment and prosecute them (→ *Sex and Pornography Online*).

Sexual media depictions are often unsolicited. Therefore, concerns have been expressed about the proliferation of Internet spam. Unwanted emails often make offers of a sexual or pornographic nature, and attempts to use email filters have been frequently defeated by the marketers of porn (→ *Electronic Mail*). Pornography is sometimes related to prostitution. Depending on perspective, legal scholars have treated the sale of sexual conduct as either a modern form of slavery or a legal right of work. An extension of prostitution is the depiction of sexual behavior in multimedia forms. These portrayals may be distributed for sale or not. Clearly, such behavior raises international human rights issues.

## **CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

While laws vary widely from nation to nation, a general international agreement exists on the need to prevent child pornography, although the age of sexual consent is not standardized worldwide. In Japan, soliciting prostitution from a child (under age 18) is punishable under the Law for Punishing Acts related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and for Protecting Children. Prior to 2005, no law existed to prohibit sex trafficking.

The typical legal concern involves sexual depictions of people under 18 years of age, such as the case in the Canadian Penal Code. Nevertheless, this is not universal. The age of concern drops to 16 under Australian law, and 15 in some US states. However, US federal child pornography statutes that make illegal the creation and distribution of photographs or videos limit such sexual behavior between an adult and a teen. In Europe, “audiovisual material which uses children in a sexual context” is restricted under the Council of Europe definition. The International Criminal Police Organization’s (INTERPOL) definition of child pornography goes beyond visual representation to include a “child’s sexual behaviour or genitals.”

## **EXAMPLES OF LEGAL REGULATIONS**

### **United States of America**

The US Supreme Court in *Miller v. California* (1973) has formulated a three-part test to judge whether content is obscene and, thus, not protected speech under the First Amendment: (1) whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find the work, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interests; (2) whether the work depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by applicable state law; (3) whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

A local jury might be asked to determine whether the pornographic material appeals to prurient interests based upon local community standards. State law is applied to the question of patent offensiveness. However, a large loophole is the third prong of the obscenity test, which allows sexual material to be legal where serious LAPS value is found.

As a general rule, print media have the most freedom to publish sexual material. This is because it is easiest to restrict access to children by zoning, for example, adult bookstores and businesses away from schools and other locations where children may be present. In broadcasting, the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has restricted indecent speech to a late evening hours “safe harbor” when children are not likely to be present in the audience. Broadcast indecency, which blurs the definition between indecent and obscene, is defined, under the broadcasting community standards, as sexual or excretory activities or organs in material that panders or titillates without value. Profanity, which generally is considered indecent, may not be so in certain serious contexts. The FCC applies a national contemporary community standard for the broadcast medium. Generally, cable systems are either free from indecency regulation or have more freedom than their broadcast brethren. The Internet is similar to print media



when it comes to its right to disseminate pornographic content. It is more broadly protected than broadcasting.

### Canada

The Criminal Code proscribes obscenity. It provides that it is an offense to publish, import, export, or advertise “anything that depicts a child performing a sexual act or assuming a sexually suggestive pose while in a state of undress.” In reporting court proceedings, the Code prohibits news media from including “any indecent matter or indecent medical, surgical or physiological details . . . that if published, are calculated to injure public morals.”

In *R. v. Butler*, the Supreme Court of Canada, ruling on the obscenity statute, adopted the feminist position that men who are exposed to pornography are induced to commit violence to women. The Court divided sexual expression into three distinct types: (1) explicit sex with violence, (2) explicit sex without violence but which subjects people to treatment that is degrading or dehumanizing, and (3) explicit sex without violence.” The third category is presumptive legal unless it involves child pornography, but the first and second categories are usually unprotected. As the Canadian Supreme Court reasoned, “the portrayal of sex with violence will almost always constitute the undue exploitation of sex,” while “explicit sex which is degrading or dehumanizing may be undue if the risk of harm is substantial” (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America).

### Europe

Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights balances freedom of expression with the protection of morals. Compared to the US Supreme Court, the → European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has rarely struggled with the definitional quandary over obscenity as an *unprotected* expression because it is, in general, protected. Nonetheless, its few obscenity cases recognize a reality surrounding obscenity as an ambiguous issue in the legal, socio-political, and cultural arenas. The 1976 ECHR obscenity case, *Handyside v. United Kingdom*, is illuminating.

*Handyside* started with the police seizure of copies of *The Little Red Schoolbook*, a reference book for children. Published by Richard Handyside in London, the book dealt with the early sexual experiences of children. In considering whether the English government’s interference with Handyside’s freedom of expression was acceptable, the ECHR found that English judges had authority, in the exercise of their discretion, to conclude that the book would harm the morals of many of the children who would read it. The seizure of the copies of the book by the authorities had the aim to protect the morals of the young – a legitimate purpose under English law.

Widespread concern about the actual or perceived harm of sexual material to children led the European Union in 1989 to declare that member states should take appropriate regulatory steps to prohibit television programs that “might seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors, in particular that involve pornography and violence.” In late 1996, the EU Commission, addressing the issue of illegal and harmful Internet content, made clear that all cyber child pornography falls under the existing legal framework.

European nations were some of the first to restrict Internet distribution. For example, Germany prosecuted and sentenced a manager of a subsidiary of CompuServe in 1998 for distribution of newsgroup online pornography. The case was later reversed when a court found that a subordinate was not in a position to limit illegal content access. Under German law, pornography is grouped with racist, violent, and other speech that is considered harmful (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

### **Japan**

Japan has been strongly influenced by the United States in its free speech jurisprudence since the end of World War II. Nonetheless, its obscenity law showcases how Japanese cultural values guide its application. The public distribution or sale of obscene material is a crime in Japan. It is regulated under the Criminal Code, the Custom Standards Law, and various mass media laws. Meanwhile, the Japanese Supreme Court has recognized governmental authority to restrict sexual expression, even when it has significant artistic or literary value. The Supreme Court has held obscene materials to be outside the protection of the Constitution of Japan on freedom of speech and the press. As the Court stated, “When writings of artistic and intellectual merit are obscene, then to make them the object of penalties in order to uphold order and healthy customs in sexual life is of benefit to the life of the whole nation.”

### **South Korea**

Obscenity in traditional media is prohibited as a criminal violation of the Criminal Code and other laws. The judicial interpretations of obscenity law in South Korea borrow heavily from American law. A case in point is the obscenity test drawn up by the Korean Supreme Court:

Whether a document is obscene should be determined by considering the explicit and graphic depiction of sex, the amount and substantiality of the sexual description in relation to the document as a whole, the ideas expressed in the document and their relationship to the sexual portrayal, the lessening impact of the document’s artistic and theoretical values on its sexual titillation. Further, examination should be made of whether the document, taken as a whole, primarily appeals to readers’ prurient interest.

Pornography definitions frequently run into difficulty because the line between porn and art is not clear. Digital artists commonly depict sex, and multimedia materials may blur the age of actors. The use of home computers, digital cameras, and video-recording equipment has created a revolution in the production and distribution of pornography. Inexpensive and available equipment allows individuals to create their own erotic or pornographic materials. Enforcement of laws generally halts at one’s front door, unless the sexual content involves illegal behavior or distribution.

SEE ALSO: ► American Convention on Human Rights ► Animation ► Book ► Censorship ► Communication and Law ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► Electronic Mail ► European Court of

Human Rights ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Magazine ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Photography ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Video

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## **Pornography Use across the Life-Span**

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Throughout the years, intense legal, political, and academic discussions have centered upon the use of pornography and its implications (→ Pornography, Media Law on; Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives). Currently, these discussions have been revived because the → Internet provides not only adults but also adolescents and children with free and anonymous access to pornography (→ Sex and Pornography Online). The easy availability of pornographic material for all age groups has raised questions about the extent to which people of different age groups are exposed to such material.

Although research on the issue is scarce, the existing studies suggest that younger people use pornography more often than older people (Buzzell 2005; Janghorbani et al.

2003; Traeen et al. 2004). This particularly applies to males – exposure to pornography is generally much more common among males than among females (Laumann et al. 1994). Young male adults and, with the advent of the Internet, also male adolescents seem to be the most frequent users of pornography. Exposure to pornography declines somewhat among people older than 30 years. People who are older than 60 are the least frequent users of pornographic materials. This *age gap* also shows in the fact that people older than 60 years are less likely than young adults to have ever been exposed to pornographic material (Traeen et al. 2004). Recent research from Scandinavian countries suggests that typically more than 80 percent of young adults have consumed some type of pornographic material sometime in their life (Haeggstroem-Nordin et al. 2005). For young male adults, this figure reaches nearly 100 percent. In contrast, only 63 percent of people older than 60 years have ever been exposed to pornography (Traeen et al. 2004). A study conducted in Asia suggests slightly lower figures, but still shows that the majority of young adults use pornographic material at some point in their life (Janghorbani et al. 2003).

Pornography is basically *targeted at adults*. However, the free and anonymous availability of pornography on the Internet has enabled adolescents to use such material. Studies from two culturally diverse countries – Taiwan and the Netherlands – have recently found that 50–70 percent of male adolescents and more than 20 percent of female adolescents have accessed different types of pornographic material on the Internet (Lo & Wei 2005; Peter & Valkenburg 2006). The respective figures for older people are generally lower, with less than 10 percent of women and less than 40 percent of men ever having been exposed to pornography on the Internet (Traeen et al. 2004). However, the diverging figures for adolescents and adults may also result from different investigation periods and different operationalizations of exposure to pornography on the Internet (→ Audience Research; Research Methods; Exposure to the Internet).

Generally, the comparability of research on the use of pornographic material is impeded by conceptual and methodological differences in the studies. The conceptual and operational definition of exposure to pornographic material (→ Operationalization) often differs across the studies as does the sampling technique, the target sample, and the interviewing mode (→ Survey). Moreover, research on sexual issues is affected by cultural contexts and technological change. For an encompassing understanding of the implications of exposure to pornography, cross-culturally comparative research is needed, preferably also with a longitudinal component.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Internet ▶ Operationalization ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Survey

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## Portraiture

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There have been many disputes over the definition of portraits and some of them have ended up in court (in Alabama in 1863, for instance, and in New South Wales in 1944). A compromise definition is advisable, steering between the dangers of vacuousness, on the one side, and of excluding many images that are commonly taken to be portraits, on the other. For example: “a representation of one or more individuals that can be recognized by acquaintances as a likeness (despite possible elements of either idealization or caricature).” So defined, the portrait has a history, a geography, and a sociology.

Whether or not Egyptian images of pharaohs or their wives (Nefertiti, for example) were likenesses, many ancient Greek and Roman statues were (→ Realism). In the west, an interest in likenesses seems to have declined in the Middle Ages, reviving in the fourteenth century, spreading during the Renaissance, and remaining important ever since. Some 40 years ago, John Berger claimed that the painted portrait was obsolete, thanks not only to the rise of photography but also to the decline of belief in social roles and changes in conceptions of identity. This obituary appears to have been premature (→ Painting).

Portraits can be found in *many parts of the world*, but not with equal density. An interest in portraits, officially forbidden in Islamic culture, developed in court circles in the Ottoman Empire in the mid-fifteenth century and in Mughal India c.1600. In China, they became more important from 1600 onward (Vinograd 1992). Today, photographic portraits are as ubiquitous as globalization (→ Photography). Within Europe, they became fashionable in Florence and in the Netherlands before spreading elsewhere. The place of Britain is a paradoxical one. Sitters were dependent on foreign artists from Hans Holbein to Anthony Van Dyck, but in the eighteenth century, the age of Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough, portraiture came to be seen as typically British.

Portraits were originally *confined to high-status social groups*, but for this very reason they became both the sign and the means of social mobility. Complaints about the democratization of the portrait go back at least as far as sixteenth-century Italy. As a means of distinction, portraits needed to emphasize social identities (gender, class, or occupation): the warrior with hand on sword, the mandarin in his robes of office, the

noblewoman in her fine clothes, etc., like “the scenic flats in photographers’ seaside studios with their empty face-holes waiting for the tourists to come and fill them in” (Brilliant 1991, 62; → Visual Representation; Symbolism). The rise of more informal types of portrait in eighteenth-century Europe may express a new culture of individualism, anticipated by Rembrandt in his self-portraits (Chapman 1990). In contemporary India, by contrast, a decentered view of the individual seems to underlie the current vogue for double images of the same person in photographs (Pinney 1997).

The varieties of portrait are so great that *typologies* are required, whether they are based on media or on → genres. The *media* of portraiture include not only painting (oil, watercolor, pastel) and sculpture (in marble, bronze, ceramics, wax) but also textiles, graphics (drawings, woodcuts, copperplates, mezzotints, etc.), and of course photographs, still or moving – not to mention mummification, producing the “auto-icon” recommended by the nineteenth-century radical Jeremy Bentham. The *genres* of portraiture are almost equally various: formal (the “state” portrait, for instance) or informal, contemporary or historical, public or private, realistic or idealized, as well as self-portraits, allegorical portraits, and various kinds of group portrait, from school or team photographs to conversation pieces or the traditional Chinese *yaji* (“elegant gatherings”).

Videos apart, the portrait may be analyzed as a *frozen act of communication* (→ Video). As in other analyses of communication, it is necessary to ask who is communicating what to whom, with what intentions, by what means, and with what effects (→ Art as Communication). In the case of the “who,” recent scholarship has presented the portrait as the product of an “encounter” or “transaction” between artist and sitter. The “what” is a likeness, sometimes an idealization, sometimes a → caricature, and often an expression of the sitter’s self-image. The public for portraits ranges from family and friends to large groups such as the nation. Their purposes include the commemoration of intimate occasions and of national heroes and heroines. The means and strategies employed are sometimes described as the “iconology” of the portrait, including clothes, gestures (more or less modest for women and men respectively), and “properties” such as classical columns, magnifying the importance of the sitter (→ Iconography; Sign). *References to other portraits*, like the “quotations” from Van Dyck by Reynolds, often had a similar purpose. The effects of these acts of communication are linked to the many different uses of these artifacts, hung on walls, collected into albums, or concealed in drawers or in locket, like English miniatures. In short, portraits come in many varieties. Rather than simply expressing individuality or presenting a social role, they reveal tensions between the individual and the social. These tensions are particularly visible in the case of a series of institutional portraits (bishops, or the heads of colleges), where formality in dress, for instance, coexists with increasing informality of posture.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Caricature ▶ Genre ▶ Iconography ▶ Painting  
▶ Photography ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ▶ Realism ▶ Sign ▶ Symbolism  
▶ Video ▶ Visual Representation

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## Portugal: Media System

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Situated in southwestern Europe, Portugal covers an area of 92,152 sq km and has a population of 10.6 million (2006 estimate). The two biggest cities are Lisbon, the capital, and Oporto. The official language is Portuguese. The literacy rate is 93 percent, and 94 percent of the population are Roman Catholic. In 2005, the country's GDP was €147.3 billion (€13,972 per capita). Portugal is a parliamentary democracy. The Portuguese Constitution determines the complete separation of the four main organs: the president, the government, the parliament, and the courts.

Portugal has been an independent country since the twelfth century. The monarchy was overthrown in 1910, but the period of the First Republic ended in 1926 with a military coup d'état. From 1933 the nation was ruled by a repressive right-wing regime with close ties to the Catholic church, the Estado Novo. Democracy came with the 1974 leftist revolution, which also led to independence being granted to Portugal's colonies in Africa. Between 1985 and 1995, the ruling center-right Partido Social Democrático promoted the privatization of key sectors of the economy, including banking and telecommunications, a tendency that continued under subsequent Socialist Party governments. The country joined the European Union in 1986 and experienced a significant economic growth in the 1990s. However, the economy has struggled and unemployment has grown since 2001.

Following the 1974 revolution, the 1976 constitution – and its revised versions – granted *press freedom* and prohibited any forms of censorship (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Communication). Media laws currently in place (Press Law no. 2/99, Television Law no. 31-A/98, Radio Law no. 2/97) enshrine a pluralist view of the media (→ Plurality) and establish a number of rights and guarantees for journalists and citizens. The Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social (Mass Communication Regulatory Body) oversees the enforcement of such rules and regulations.

There are five daily generalist *newspapers* with national circulation. Two of these are “quality” papers: *Público*, owned by the Sonae business group, and *Diário de Notícias*, the property of the Global Notícias multimedia group. This group also owns the mid-market *Jornal de Notícias*, based in Oporto, and *24 Horas*, one of the two popular newspapers. The other is *Correio da Manhã*, property of the Cofina group. Traditionally, readership of dailies

is low, and it dropped further in 2005, when *Público* had a circulation of 50,701 copies, *Diário de Notícias* 37,909, and *Correio da Manhã* 118,254 (ICS 2006). With circulations of 128,168 and 99,683 respectively, *Expresso* and *Visão* are the most widely read *weekly newspaper* and *news magazine*. Both are the property of the Impresa multimedia group. There are 532 regional and local papers in the country with typical circulations of only a few thousand.

The Portuguese *radio system* is organized into three main groups: Rádiodifusão Portuguesa, Renascença, and Media Capital. Rádiodifusão Portuguesa, which is a public service station, had its origins in Emissora Nacional, funded in 1935 under the Estado Novo. Soon after, the Catholic church started Renascença. This group is the audience leader, with 38 percent of audience share in 2005, due especially to RFM, its hugely popular easy-listening music channel. Funded by a license fee and advertising, Rádiodifusão Portuguesa operates three main channels – Antena 1, Antena 2, and Antena 3 – which broadcast news and popular music, classical music, and new music targeted at young people, respectively. The Media Capital Group is the most commercial of the three with its Rádio Comercial, Cidade FM, and Rádio Clube Português taking 20 percent of audience share. Local stations were legalized in the 1980s and totaled 355 in 2005. In addition, TSF (part of Global Notícias), which features long news bulletins and documentaries, plays a key role in radio journalism in Portugal.

Four *television channels* are freely broadcast in Portugal. Two belong to the state-owned Radiotelevisão Portuguesa (funded in 1955): RTP1 and 2: (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). SIC is the property of Impresa, and TVI is owned by Media Capital. SIC and TVI started operating in 1992 and 1993 respectively. There is less diversity in the program mix of the two privately owned channels than in RTP1's, the public service operator, which is funded by the state and by advertising. RTP1 invests more in national production with cultural and/or historical relevance, and had an audience share of 23.6 percent in 2005. With an audience share of 27.2 percent, SIC devoted its prime time to Brazilian telenovelas, but was overtaken by TVI with nationally produced soap operas (30 percent share). A new project, 2: was launched in 2004 to replace RTP2. It is open to the independent productions of the so-called “civil society” and shows more knowledge-oriented programs (5 percent audience share). RTP transmits dedicated channels to the island territories of Portugal: RTP Açores and RTP Madeira.

There are 20 *cable and satellite channels* in Portugal. RTP and SIC own a cable news channel each and several entertainment ones. Lusomundo, of the (mainly state-owned) Portugal Telecom multimedia group, has a number of cinema channels. The Internet has grown to 100,000 registered sites, and 35 percent of Portuguese homes have access to it (ANACOM 2006). All the main national media and most of the regional and local ones have online editions. There are several digital news periodicals, such as *Portugal Diário* and *Diário Digital*. Blogging has become very popular and is also widely used by some conventional media, such as radio stations. The recent appearance of over 20 web TVs and the delivery of television programs to mobile phones are other examples of the convergence of various forms of communication (→ Satellite Television; Cable Television).

While the Portuguese media system was marked by censorship and oppression during the Estado Novo period, it radically changed in the following 30 years, when privatization and deregulation turned the market into the decisive factor (→ Censorship; Privatization of the Media). Although there is still some state intervention in the Portuguese media



system, it is becoming increasingly liberal (→ Media Policy). A history of low levels of literacy still means low newspaper readership and therefore a certain economic fragility. Excessive concentration of property is the main risk for press diversity in the future (→ Concentration in Media Systems). Digital and cable media (including regional television channels) offer the biggest prospects for growth, but there is a crucial need to foster computer ownership and Internet access.

SEE ALSO: ► Cable Television ► Censorship ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Media Policy ► Plurality ► Privatization of the Media ► Public Broadcasting Systems ► Satellite Television

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## **Positioning Theory**

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Positioning is an essential concept in → communication management, → public relations, and → marketing communication. The process of positioning includes identifying, defining, and managing the → perception relevant audiences have of a particular organization, product, person, or idea. Three lines of thought relevant to communication theory have emerged during the last decades: strategic positioning, positioning strategies, and discursive positioning.

In line with the coalition and stakeholder theory of the firm (Freeman 1984), companies can be conceptualized as a “negotiated enactment of stakeholder interests” (Heath 1994, 147). Resulting from this ongoing process is the *strategic position of a company* in the market and in society. Theories of → corporate communication (van Riel & Fombrun 2007; Zerfass 2007) argue that this position has to serve as the starting point for developing communication programs. Strategic positioning thus constructs a frame of reference for public relations and marketing. For example, the website of Merrill Lynch

& Co, Inc., states: “Merrill Lynch has positioned itself to be the preeminent global investment bank, wealth management and advisory partner, an essential partner to its client.” This gives a clear orientation for the company’s communication management, which has to identify and facilitate different facets of this position in the minds of customers, prospects, employees, financial journalists, and other relevant stakeholders.

There is also a reverse relation between strategic positioning and communication. Professional communication helps to (re)position the company by gathering information and cultivating relationships (Steyn 2007), which might foster business routines (motivating employees, influencing customers’ preferences, securing the license to operate) and build immaterial capital (reputation, brands, trust, legitimacy). The need for integrating communication programs (→ Integrated Marketing Communications) and positioning goals stimulates the development of management tools like corporate communication scorecards, which try to map those interdependencies.

The second area of discussion is *positioning strategies*. Within marketing theory, the term “positioning” was coined by Jack Trout (1969) in a journal article. He expanded and deepened the concept together with Al Ries. Their popular book *Positioning: The battle for your mind* (Ries & Trout 1981) defines positioning as the ownership of a concept or word in the (potential) customer’s mind, relative to the position of the company’s competitors. In this narrow sense, positioning is part of the management process that plans, implements, and evaluates public relations and marketing strategies. Positioning begins with identifying the cognitive structures stakeholders use to define a product or service.

For example, automobiles are conceptualized as sportive, luxurious, reliable, powerful, safe, stylish, or comfortable. In a second step, companies have to concentrate on an auspicious segment and make people think that its own products or services are the best within this area. By doing so, Mercedes has succeeded in occupying the position “luxury and reliability” for decades. Volvo was the first to claim the category “safe car” with great success, but partly lost this position to Renault at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In a third step, communication measures have to be oriented toward the positioning goal. For example, Mercedes concentrates the majority of its advertisements and press campaigns on attributes that sustain its traditional perception. Renault, in contrast, implemented its new positioning strategy by visualizing the safety of its automobiles in a series of commercials and referring extensively to the high level of quality standards reached by its automobiles in media relations.

Finally, a quite distinctive, but nevertheless fruitful, understanding of positioning has been developed within speech philosophy and social psychology: *discursive positioning*. Positioning theory as conceptualized by Rom Harré (Harré & van Langenhove 1999) is an interactionist concept influenced by Wittgenstein, Vygotsky, and Goffman. It studies the nature and change of rights and duties in small-scale relationships. Harré criticizes role theory and theatrical metaphors of enactment for being too static and ontological.

Discursive positioning argues that social structure is rather immanent than real and arises from fluid patterns of positioning. In social interactions, people use communication to explain their own positions, defend them, and alter them. Often, they also try to position others as misinformed, wrong, or immoral. As a consequence, positions are dynamic and always linked to specific relationships where they are tested and legitimized. The concept of discursive positioning is instructive for a variety of fields within

communication studies, e.g. for studying interpersonal communication and organizational communication. It might also be used as a basic theory for communication management and marketing communication.

According to the rhetorical and interpretive paradigm of corporate communication (Heath 2001), companies strive to persuade others as well as themselves by positioning their self-concepts, cultures, brands, products, and services (→ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations). This takes place within a wide variety of communicative settings, ranging from personal interactions to corporate media, online channels, and the mass media. As a consequence, the dynamic concept of discursive positioning has to take into account the rules and resources imposed by society and its particular communication system.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Management ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Impression Management ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Marketing ▶ Perception ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetoric and Psychology ▶ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations ▶ Strategic Communication

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## **Postal Service, History of**

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The use of couriers to bear written messages is presumably as old as the art of writing itself. The entrusting of messages to those traveling on other business (trade, pilgrimage, etc.) is attested from ancient times. States in many parts of the world and in many periods have instituted some sort of cadre of official messengers, sometimes maintaining an infrastructure of roads, inns, and relays to provide for the needs of those traveling on

official business. Ancient Persia, Egypt, China, and the Roman Empire all had sophisticated communications infrastructures of this nature. The oldest descriptions of such a postal service in operation come from ancient Greek commentators on Persian affairs.

The official transport system of the Roman Empire, the *cursus publicus*, was a relatively late development but in many ways typical of these ancient postal systems. It relied on a network of well-maintained roads and bridges, and a system of inns and relay stables, to facilitate the movement of imperial messengers and officials. The use of the posts as an instrument of state intelligence meant that there was little distinction between couriers, scouts, spies, and the secret police. The supplies, beasts of burden, and ancillary staff that relay stations required were exacted from local communities, which in return enjoyed exemptions from certain other taxes. Private messages and travelers were strictly banned from the public posts, and separate commercial services developed to serve such needs.

### DEVELOPMENT IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND EARLY MODERN TIMES

In medieval Europe the physical and legal infrastructure of the *cursus publicus* was lost, but royal messengers as holders of a privileged official function were known. They were able to commandeer animals or other resources in the fulfillment of their duties, and assaults, insults, or robberies committed against them were more severely punished than those committed on ordinary travelers. Besides the royal messengers of Spain, France, and England, the official messengers of the papal chancellery and of the governments of Milan and Venice are also well attested. By the end of the Middle Ages, if not before, a more obscure “carrier” trade, open to members of the general public, was conducted by riders, drivers of packhorses, and carters who had little or no connection with the official postal services. Influential institutions or groups, such as civic corporations, universities, and religious orders, might retain servants to carry messages, often with privileges analogous to those of the official posts.

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw attempts to recreate something like the *cursus publicus* in many European states. The first international posts, linking the local Habsburg capitals of Innsbruck (in Austria) and Mechelen (in the Low Countries), were instituted in the late fifteenth century. By the end of the sixteenth century, interlocking services connected all the cities of western and central Europe to what was effectively a single communications network. Until around 1800, the trunk of this system was a service from Milan and Venice to Brussels, via Augsburg, Frankfurt, and Cologne, under the administration of hereditary imperial postmasters of the Tassis, or Taxis, family. With an increasing proliferation of civic, national, and international postal services connecting to this trunk, a great deal of redundancy was built into the system, so that failures of connections in one part could be compensated for in others.

The same period saw the growth and reform of postal infrastructure and organization in the Ottoman Empire, Russia, Persia, India, China, and Japan. In China, two parallel systems were maintained, one (dating from the seventh-century Tang dynasty) of regular couriers and courier stations and another (established by the Mongol rulers of the thirteenth-century Yuan dynasty) of express postal riders. Early seventeenth-century attempts to economize by closing down courier stations contributed to the social unrest

that precipitated the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644. In early modern India and Japan, great roads were put in a state of repair and provided with inns and relay stations; some, such as the *Sarak-i-Azam* (the Grand Trunk Road) and the *Tokaido*, were of tremendous economic, administrative, and cultural importance. In all these places a variety of private commercial carrier services operated, benefiting from the maintenance of roads and bridges, and the building of caravanserais and posting inns, but still quite distinct from the official postal service.

The posts in seventeenth-century Europe, however, became “public” in a very different sense: the official posts were transformed from a part of the tax burden into a largely self-financing service competing with private and civic carriers for custom. The legal understanding of posts continued to derive from Roman law, so that control of postal services, and the location of posthouses, were seen as issues of sovereignty (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy). International posts, even when purely commercial ventures, were regulated by treaties between states. Practical considerations, such as monitoring seditious or suspicious correspondence, or making the posts a financially attractive proposition for royal monopolists, gave national governments additional reasons to control the carriage of letters as tightly as possible. Sometimes in law, and often in fact, conveyance of letters became a state monopoly. This could lead to conflicts between the newer “public” posts and the existing practices of the older carriers. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, cities and universities fought a long but ultimately losing battle for their carrying privileges.

The first treaties between European states to regulate international posts date from the seventeenth century: sometimes to guarantee the continuation of a regular postal service between belligerents, sometimes to agree new routes. Tampering with postbags, or interfering with postal messengers, could lead to crises in formal relations, and calculated retaliations. The profusion of bilateral treaties led eventually to a need for multilateral regulation at an international level, and relations between postal authorities are now regulated by the Universal Postal Union, founded in 1874 by the Treaty of Berne, and since 1948 an agency of the United Nations.

## **TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGY**

Until the late eighteenth century, postmen were still essentially post-riders, supplemented by short-distance packet boats within European waters, as later in the Caribbean and the coastal US. In the later eighteenth century, changing transport technology led to the appearance of stagecoaches, with attendant coaching inns and turnpike roads, and long-distance packet boats (and later still clippers), linking Europe and overseas colonies. The great merchant companies that dominated colonial trade and administration made tremendous efforts, not always profitably or successfully, to provide regular links to overseas colonies.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, postal services were the biggest institutional customers for steam packets, for railways, and later for civil aviation. Postal contracts were important elements in financing new rail, shipping, and air services. Experiments with airmail began as early as 1911, and the first international airmail services were launched in 1919.

## **MODERNIZATION**

The nineteenth century saw a general overhaul of the working practices of the posts, first in the British Post Office and soon copied or adapted throughout the world. Rowland Hill's introduction of the adhesive penny stamp in 1840 provided a cheap and simple means of prepayment for conveyance of letters. The collection of prepaid mail from roadside postboxes, with near-universal delivery to the door, made the benefits of postal communication much more broadly available, but at the expense of the posts' earlier profitability. In subsequent decades Frank Scudamore spearheaded the introduction of parcel post, postal savings, and a post-office monopoly on the telegraph (later extended to the telephone; → *Telegraph, History of*). Like regular postal delivery itself, fixed-line telecoms were widely seen as a natural monopoly that could more usefully be run as a state agency than as a private business. In some countries the post office did not directly manage telecoms, but typically a Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications combined oversight of the posts with a regulation of telecoms that often came to include some degree of formal or informal → *censorship* (→ *Censorship, History of*) of → *radio* and → *television*. In twentieth-century welfare states, post offices were often the preferred point of payment for pensions and other disbursements to individual citizens. By the end of the twentieth century, the Japanese post office was the single largest financial operator in the world.

The US Postal Service eschewed or abandoned all these developments to an extent unusual among national post offices; although at its height, during the banking collapses of the 1930s, US postal savings were by far the largest guarantor of private savings. Since the late twentieth century, many postal regimes have retreated from the model of a nationalized monopoly combining wide fields of operation in different aspects of communication, administration, and finance, and have opened almost every aspect of post-office activity to privatization and competition.

## **SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE POSTAL SERVICE**

In seventeenth-century Europe, the institution of regular national and international posts open to the general public facilitated a massive expansion in correspondence. The working practices not only of diplomats and administrators, but also of merchants, scholars, the legal profession, scientists, and publishers, were all transformed by the advent of a regular service for the transmission of letters, → *newspapers*, and small packages. This was a necessary precondition for the beginnings of print → *journalism* in the first decades of the seventeenth century. The nineteenth-century reforms of Hill and Scudamore made the postal service an even more important lever of → *modernity*. The developmental potential of public postal services was recognized and promoted by the United Nations, through the agency of the Universal Postal Union, throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

The history of the posts is closely intertwined with the history not only of business but also of employment. In the industrial nations of the nineteenth century, post offices were typically the largest public sector employer. Their three-tier organization (postmaster general, postmaster, postman) was the model for middle management in the nineteenth-century development of railways (with station masters), retail chains (with store managers), and banking and insurance enterprises (with branch managers; → *Supervisor–Subordinate*

Relationships). The rationale for employing women in public service as sorting and counter clerks in post offices, and as telegraphists and telephonists, was purely to economize on wages, but had the side-effect of facilitating the social acceptability of working women. In a number of countries, the postal service produced test cases in equal opportunities (both sexual and racial) and in public sector unionization.

## POSTAGE STAMPS

The invention of the postage stamp opened a new area to forms of mass official communication. Written communication between private individuals came to use tokens bearing portraits of rulers, dynastic or national emblems, and other value-laden images of all sorts. Under highly ideologized regimes there was particular sensitivity to such iconography: during China's Cultural Revolution, for instance, philatelists might suffer for the hoarding of what could be considered reactionary or capitalist images. The collectibility of stamps has given rise to a philatelic sub-culture with its own literature, journalism, and economics. Old post offices, postage stamps and covers, postboxes and postal uniforms have all become elements of "heritage" nostalgia. Nevertheless, academic study of stamps is virtually nonexistent, and of postal history in a broader sense little better.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Journalism ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Modernity ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Radio ▶ Supervisor-Subordinate Relationships ▶ Telecommunications: Law and Policy ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television

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# Postcolonial Theory

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The emergence of postcolonial theory as an academic tradition, particularly in the United States, can be traced to the late 1970s with the publication of Edward Said's book *Orientalism* (1978). According to Said, Orientalism is a powerful body of knowledge – power/knowledge in Michel Foucault's sense (→ Structuralism) – produced by texts and institutional practices of western colonialism beginning with Napoleon's conquest of Egypt in 1798. Said finds three key elements in Orientalism: first, the power/knowledge of colonial institutions and texts to understand, control, and manipulate the "Orient" (or the east); second, the representation of "Oriental" societies as an unchanging cultural essence; and third, the fabrication of the "Orient" as an ahistorical space waiting to be transformed by historical progress and social development.

Orientalism, according to Said, was a European enterprise from the beginning. Its producers were European scholars and writers; its consumers were European students and readers; the non-European subjects of Orientalism figured only as inert objects. Since the "western self" of the European Orientalist made sense only in opposition to the "Oriental other," the traces of each in the other were systematically ignored or concealed. By positing that the east–west binary opposition predated colonialism, Orientalism also made Europe's colonial conquests seem legitimate. According to Said, although Orientalism underwent considerable changes over time, its basic structures and procedures have remained rather stable.

One of the most significant and sustained challenges to the Orientalist discourses of European colonialism (and later American imperialism) has come from theorists and practitioners of postcolonial nationalism, particularly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. And yet, postcolonial nationalists stayed within the dominant frameworks of western power/knowledge to imagine a nation that is at once modern in its political statecraft and authentic in its cultural history and memory. In *Nationalist thought and the colonial world*, Partha Chatterjee (1986) demonstrates how Indian nationalists like Bankim, Gandhi, and Nehru struggled to create an authentic vision of an uncolonized nation, even as they were heavily influenced by western theories of modern statecraft and Orientalist representations of Indian history and culture. Following the European Orientalists who came before them, many Indian nationalists saw India as an essentialized unity; its historical progression was still seen in terms of the (ancient) Hindu, the (invading) Muslim, and the (modern) British periods.

Despite their complicity with Orientalism, the postcolonial nationalists did manage to break the Orientalist monopoly on power/knowledge, establishing the postcolonial subject as a sovereign, rational, and active agent of history. Therefore, as Gyan Prakash (1996) argues, postcolonial nationalism – notwithstanding its many contradictions – should be considered one of the most important ways in which the third world writes its own history.

If postcolonial nationalists accused Orientalism of deliberate ideological misrepresentations, Marxist critics of third world nationalism have argued that the idealized



notion of a unified postcolonial nation is itself an ideological category, not unlike Orientalist idealizations of the colonial world. Thus, one of the major contributions of Marxism in postcolonial theory has been to destabilize the illusion of an undivided nation and to point toward the heterogeneity of the nationalist subject – albeit only in the economic domain of class struggles between dominant elites and subordinated workers.

Moving the debate on postcolonial theory beyond the political-economic domain, some cultural anthropologists, sociologists, and structuralist historians have worked to reveal heterogeneity in the domains of race, gender, class, caste, age, religion, region, language, and so on. However, for a long time, many of these approaches, like Orientalism, remained “essentialist” in theorizing colonial and postcolonial discourses with reference to essences of either class, social deep structures, or native culture.

A crucial break from the essentialist legacy of Orientalism has come from a recent turn toward anti-essentialism, or what is also known as postfoundationalism or post-Orientalism. One of the most prominent and successful contributions is found in the works of the Subaltern Studies Group. This group, dispersed across North America, Latin America, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Europe, has come up with what Edward Said (1988, v) described as “massively detailed, and frankly revisionist . . . fiercely theoretical and intellectually insurrectionary accounts of marginalized subjects in the colonial and postcolonial worlds.” Ranajit Guha (1988, 35) writes that the word “subaltern” is used “as a name for the general attribute of subordination . . . whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender, and office, or in any other way.”

Arguing that much writing on the history of the postcolonial world is teleological and essentialist, the Subaltern Studies Group has attempted to construct anti-essentialist histories from below – from subaltern perspectives. Some early writings relapsed into essentialist frameworks of Hegelian dialectics and Marxist ideology critiques to “recover” the subaltern from elite domination. However, the Group’s creative deployment of the subaltern as a heterogeneous, hybrid, and historically contingent subject has been theoretically refreshing and methodologically reinvigorating.

A sustained focus on historical contingency, marginality, heterogeneity, and hybridity in Subaltern Studies has been further emphasized by other leading postcolonial scholars, such as Homi Bhabha, Nestor Garcia Canclini, Stuart Hall, and Gayatri Spivak. Their scholarship has been particularly significant in contemporary debates because it situates postcolonial theory in a global context where it intersects productively with other anti-essentialist theories in postmodernism, poststructuralism, post-Marxism, and feminism.

SEE ALSO: ► Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Structuralism

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## Postdevelopment

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Along with “anti-development,” postdevelopment is a radical reaction to the dilemmas of development. Perplexity and extreme dissatisfaction with business-as-usual and conventional development rhetoric and practice are keynotes of this perspective. This perspective emerges out of frustration with the seeming inability of development intervention to improve the lives of those in need. As a critical response to the development industry, this approach raises concerns with the imposition of science as power, cultural imperialism, and environmental destruction (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories; Sustainable Development).

Resistance to development involves the realization that attaining a middle-class lifestyle for the majority of the world population is impossible. There are different strands to resistance to development. “Anti-development” is inspired by anger with development business-as-usual. “Beyond development” combines this aversion with scanning the horizon. “Postdevelopment” adopts a methodology of → discourse analysis. These positions overlap with critiques of → modernity and technoscientific progress as in ecological movements (→ Modernization).

Development intervention requires the management of a promise – and what if the promise does not deliver? Living in Chiapas or other oppressed and poor areas, chances are that development is a bad joke. Postdevelopment is not alone in looking at the shadow of development; all critical approaches to development deal with its dark sides. *Dependency theory* raises the question of global inequality (→ Dependency Theories). Alternative development focuses on the lack of popular participation (→ Participatory Communication). Human development addresses the need to invest in people. Postdevelopment focuses on the underlying premises of development, and what sets it apart from other critical approaches is its rejection of development. Since the 1980s activists and intellectuals in Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Europe have taken up these views. They typically problematize poverty, view development as westernization, and critique modernism.

Economists in the field of development focus on issues of poverty. Yet one can distinguish between “frugality,” as in subsistence economies, “destitution,” which arises when subsistence economies are weakened through growth strategies, and “scarcity,” when the need for commodities takes over. Often development policies encourage the implementation of growth strategies with caution, building on frugal lifestyles with appropriate

technology and maximum use of local resources. "Poverty" may be seen as more than an economic deficit, though, as engaged through Frierean approaches such as conscientization and human-scale development.

### THE ANTI-DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

Anti-development thinkers object to development as a form of westernization. With decolonization came critiques of cultural imperialism and "Coca-Colonization." Yet, this may deny the agency of the global south and the extent to which the south also owns development (→ Development, Geometry of). Development perspectives such as dependency theory, alternative development, and human development originate to a significant extent in the south. A more appropriate rejoinder to Eurocentrism is recognizing that multiple centers, also in the global south, shape development discourse.

Part of anti-western sentiments is *anti-modernism*. No doubt development suffers from "psychological modernism," through its focus on technological progress over human development. Social movement groups in the west have joined others in the south in their resistance to the privileging of science as power. "Science" here means Enlightenment thinking, positivism, and achieving mastery over nature. Yet the utility of science is more complex. Ecological movements use scientific methods to monitor energy use, pollution, and climate changes.

Like Orientalism, analyzed by Edward Said, → development discourse serves to produce and manage developing countries. Discourse analysis, scrutinizing language as a framework of structures of thought, has become a critical tool in development studies. This type of analysis permits broad critique of the development industry as a whole.

### PECULIARITIES OF THE POSTDEVELOPMENT

Postdevelopment critique differs from other alternative approaches in its rejection of the system of development, whereas some alternative strategies advocate working within the system. However, postdevelopment critics are not interested in alternative development, but in alternatives to development. Postdevelopment challenges the managerialist nature of development, when it attempts to shape and control economies and societies. So what to do? One response is nothing. However, doing nothing comes down to endorsing the status quo.

Postdevelopment thinking is uneven. In proposing to do away with development, postdevelopment essentializes "development." Essentializing "development" is necessary to arrive at the repudiation of development, and without the anti-development pathos, postdevelopment loses its foundation. Some postdevelopment claims misrepresent the history of development. The *Development dictionary* refers to the 1940s as the beginning of the development era (Sachs 1992). But the application of development to the south started with colonial economics and besides, development has an older history in the latecomers to industrialization in central and eastern Europe and in Soviet economic planning. Dichotomic thinking, pro- and anti-development, underrates the complexity of motives and motions in modernity and development. Postdevelopment's take on real existing development is narrow. Many reflections are general and do not discuss cases.

When cases are described, the experience of East Asia is ignored, despite its economic achievements.

In response to these concerns, postdevelopment opts for Gandhian frugality, grassroots movements, and indigenous knowledge. But none of these necessarily add up to rejecting development. If we read neo-liberal critiques of the developmental state side by side with postdevelopment critiques of development power, the parallels are striking. Both agree on state failure, though for different reasons. According to neo-liberal critics, states fail because of rent seeking; postdevelopment critics object to authoritarian social engineering and the faith in progress. Yet the net political effect is much the same and there is an elective affinity between the development agnosticism of neo-liberalism and postdevelopment.

Some argue that many social movements in the global south resist development. However, social movements in the south are too diverse to be captured under a single heading. Some are concerned with access to and inclusion in development programs, while others attempt alternative political action.

### **CRITICISM OF POSTDEVELOPMENT**

The politics of resistance to development is one of local struggles in the limited sense of Michel Foucault, rather than emancipation. Foucault's imagination of power is an imagination without exit. Accordingly, postdevelopment takes critique of development to the point of retreat. The imaginary of power that inspires postdevelopment leaves little room for forward politics. Instead, what postdevelopment offers is a cultural critique of development in which development is a substitute for modernity.

Postdevelopment is caught in rhetorical gridlock. Using discourse analysis as an ideological platform invites political quietism. In the end, postdevelopment offers no politics besides the self-organizing capacity of the poor, which lets the development responsibility of states and international institutions off the hook. Since most insights in postdevelopment sources are not specific to postdevelopment, what is distinctive is the rejection of development. Yet the rejection of development does not arise from postdevelopment insights as a necessary conclusion. Postdevelopment parallels postmodernism both in its acute intuitions and in being directionless in the end, because of the refusal to translate, or lack of interest in translating, critique into construction. It also matches the neo-traditionalist reaction to modernity with romantic and nostalgic strands.

Social movements, north and south, engage not merely in resistance but also in transformation and cannot be simply captured under the label "anti." Postdevelopment's strength is a hermeneutics of suspicion and an anti-authoritarian sensibility. But since it fails to translate this into a constructive position what remains is whistling in the dark. Postdevelopment adopts a wide angle in looking at development through the lens of modernity. Yet its optics is not sophisticated and its focus is blurred. Resistance to development and postdevelopment are based on flawed premises, flawed not as sensibilities but as positions.

The problem is not the critiques, but the accompanying rhetoric. "Alternatives to development" is a misnomer because no alternatives to development are offered. There is critique but no construction, resistance but no transformation. "Postdevelopment" is misconceived because it attributes to "development" a single and consistent meaning that does not match either theory or policy, and thus replicates the rhetoric of development

rather than penetrating its polysemic realities. It echoes the “myth of development” rather than leaving it behind. Postdevelopment makes engaging contributions to collective reflexivity about development and as such contributes to philosophies of change, but its contribution to politics of change is meager. (General sources are in Sachs 1992; Rahnema & Bawtree 1997; a wider treatment is in Nederveen Pieterse 2001.)

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development Discourse ▶ Development, Geometry of ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Modernity ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Sustainable Development

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## **Poster**

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Posters are visual means of communicating messages to large public audiences (→ Visual Communication). A poster is a printed mass media product (→ Printing, History of). Although → graffiti and murals are predecessors of posters, they do not qualify as posters, since one of the defining criteria for a poster is its mass reproducibility. While graffiti and murals exist only as single objects, attached to a specific place, posters are movable objects produced in large quantities to cover a wide geographical area.

The production of posters is typically event-related: political campaigns (→ Election Campaign Communication), advertising campaigns (→ Advertising Campaign Management), or simple announcements of cultural events count among the typical events leading to poster production (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). While posters in the context of an electoral or commercial campaign have to be considered as *paid media*, protest posters, produced for demonstrations or expressing clandestine opposition, are free media that have an end in itself and are not part of a larger, commercialized production process.

Historically, the poster or “placard” as a public announcement is linked with political upheaval and war. Already in the seventeenth century Netherlands, so-called *plakatten*, posted to walls and other public places, were used by the Dutch to protest Spanish domination. The twentieth century saw an increase in poster production and their public use. Both the German revolution of 1918 and World Wars I and II (e.g., Gregory 1993) were accompanied by heavy poster propaganda and counter-propaganda (→ Propaganda, Visual Communication of). US President F. D. Roosevelt’s New Deal policy enlisted poster artists like Ben Shahn in the Work Progress Administration (WPA), producing an

abundance of posters for all occasions, from tourism to theater and later on war-related topics (DeNoon 1987).

Two developments were prerequisite for modern posters to be used as means of mass communication. The first was the invention of lithography at the end of the eighteenth century, which enabled the reproduction of visual motifs in large quantities. Second, the political development of mass democracy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries created an audience and a market for posters.

Posters are produced for the purpose of being displayed in public. In the US, during the 1960s and 1970s, printed posters and billboards were largely replaced by televised commercials (→ Advertising, History of). Contemporary political campaigns in the United States print posters, if at all, only in small numbers, mainly as collector's items. Outside the US, and particularly in Europe, posters maintain their role as a major communication tool, both in political campaigning and in commercial → advertising (→ Political Advertising).

### **POLITICAL CAMPAIGN POSTERS**

Today, the dominant usage of posters is in the political realm (→ Political Communication). Election posters, which are still widely used outside of the United States, possess a distinct → iconography. The most pervasive motif is a candidate's headshot in the context of a political election campaign. The majority of political posters feature portraits (→ Portraiture). Thus, the election campaign poster is a specific, and in quantitative terms dominant, sub-category of the political poster.

Lithography, a printing technique that uses the repulsion of water and grease for the reproduction of graphic images, was invented by the Bavarian printer Aloys Senefelder around 1796 (→ Prints). This cheap and relatively fast technique to reproduce visuals spread quickly in western Europe and was mainly used in art and in early forms of advertising. The political poster needed a second "fertilizer" – mass democracy – to flourish in the second half of the nineteenth century. This happened to be in the United States of America, the world's first mass democracy. The first publication of a lithograph in the US dates back to the year 1819, but it took another 20 years before this printing technique became popular. The political campaign poster emerged to become a characteristic feature, first of presidential campaigning, then of campaigning in general. Although posters were produced in France and Germany in the nineteenth century, these countries still lacked the mass audiences at which political posters were targeted. Thus, the origin of the modern printed election poster is the US presidential campaign. Four phases of the presidential campaign poster can be distinguished (Müller 1997): the experimental phase (1828–1840), the commercial poster period (1844–1880), the partisan mass-printing period (1884–1948), and the extinction of the poster and replacement by television ads (1952 to the present).

While nowadays political posters and other campaign items are usually commissioned by respective campaigns, and in Europe by the political parties running campaigns, the employment of candidate portraits in poster format owes much to the commercial genius of America's early lithographers. Lithography as a trade blossomed in the 1840s and 1850s and kept its momentum until the end of the century, when color lithography, or chromolithographs, were fashionable. Around 1860, a total of 60 firms operating in the United States were registered, employing 800 people. Twenty years later the census of

1880 showed an increase to 167 lithography firms, employing a total of 4,332 people and with a production volume worth US\$6,912,338. The business kept growing and toward the end of the nineteenth century 700 lithograph companies were registered, with a total labor force of about 8,000 and a turnover of about US\$20 million annually (Marzio 1979, 3). Given those figures it comes as no surprise that in the 1840s small lithographic firms like the New York-based Currier and Ives were also offering political posters.

From the perspective of twentieth-century campaigning, where the differentiation of candidates is crucial, the similarities of opposing candidates' posters is surprising. For example, the only differences between the posters for the Whig presidential candidate Henry Clay and the competing Democratic candidate James K. Polk are the portraits and the accompanying names and slogans. The rest of the poster, including an American eagle, flags, floral ornaments, and framing curtains are identical. This was typical for the commercial period of the electoral poster, since these posters were meant to be sold by peddlers at very low price. The most expensive part of the poster production was the original → design of the poster prepared by an artist (→ Graphic Design). In presidential campaigns, those designs could be used twice by just exchanging the medallion-shaped portraits of the candidates, and thus reducing production costs. These early campaign posters were meant to be posted indoors – in saloons, at the sheriff's office, and by the large partisan audience at home above the fireplace.

At the turn of the nineteenth century the printing trade had reached its peak. The professionalization of presidential campaigning had led to a reversal of the production structures of posters. Formerly offered as a news item by commercial lithographers, the posters became products that were commissioned and paid for by individual campaigns, with distinct Republican or Democratic party symbols. These colorful posters had a larger format and were no longer meant for private display, but for adorning party rallies, work spaces, public billboards, as well as street parades. The New Deal campaigns of Franklin D. Roosevelt employed artists like Ben Shahn (see above) to design posters and billboards for his campaign (DeNoon 1987; → Art as Communication).

With the introduction of television commercials for Dwight D. Eisenhower's first presidential bid in 1952 posters became first old-fashioned, then too costly, and finally obsolete in modern US campaigning (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). Television advertisements had many advantages (→ Television; Television, Visual Characteristics of). They provided a national reach at comparatively low cost, and they could convey more information in a short period of time. Still, the poster tradition lives on. Stereotypes of presidential candidates were long established in political posters before electronic communication was available. Thus, the US presidential campaign poster can be termed the legitimate predecessors of contemporary TV and → Internet commercials. The medium has changed, but the political messages vary only marginally, as can be demonstrated by the main types of visual campaign strategies, most of which are still applied in twenty-first-century campaigning.

### **CAMPAIGN POSTERS IN GERMANY AND FRANCE**

In Germany, to this day, publicly advertised billboards and posters signal the election campaign. Campaign posters still rank high in the mix of paid media used by German

parties to communicate with the electorate. Although a slight decline in the importance of posters can be observed when comparing the campaigns of 1998 and 2002 (Müller 2002), posters still ranked second on the list of most important campaign communication tools, surpassed only by party conventions in 1998 and by the then newly introduced → televised debates in 2002. Since in the German public broadcasting system, television commercials for parties running in the general election are limited according to party size, but have to be aired for free, TV advertising does not dominate German campaign communications and has not yet replaced the posters.

The colorful French tradition of political campaign posters (Benoit et al. 1986; Gervereau 1991) was abruptly curbed in 1990 by the Loi Rocard, a law titled after then French Prime Minister Michel Rocard that expressly banned all forms of political advertising within the three months preceding an election, including newspaper advertisements and commercial posters. Posters can now be displayed in public during election time only in designated poster areas in the immediate vicinity of polling stations. Elaborate billboard campaigns like the one that brought President Mitterrand to power in 1981 – “La force tranquille” (the tranquil force), drafted after the image of US actor John Wayne – belong to the past. Thus, in contemporary French campaigning, posters no longer play a significant role.

## PROPAGANDA AND PROTEST POSTERS

The twentieth century, and particularly the two World Wars and the following Cold War, were the heyday of political posters. Posters were a crucial strategic tool of war propaganda on all sides (Gregory 1993; → Propaganda). Communist regimes in the Soviet Union and in China perfected large billboard campaigns which were spread over vast territories to propagate the communist model of society.

Contemporary usage of political posters is, with few exceptions, concentrated outside of the western and the developed world. For example, the use of posters of religious leaders, of victims of violence, and of terrorist “martyrs” in public rallies and demonstrations in the Near and Middle East is a scarcely researched topic. Additionally, in many non-western countries election posters still play an important role that requires further investigation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Campaign Management ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Design ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Graffiti ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Iconography ▶ Internet ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Communication ▶ Portraiture ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Prints ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Television ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Visual Communication

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## Postfeminism

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Postfeminism is one of the most important and contested terms in the lexicon of western feminist cultural critique. The term signifies something that is either after or beyond feminism in some way, yet still maintains a distinctive relationship to it. The notion of postfeminism was first used in the 1920s to describe the reaction against women's activism in the early part of the twentieth century (Faludi 1992), but it is only since the early 1990s that it has come to prominence as a central term in the field of gender and media.

In recent years, debates within feminist media and communication studies about topics as diverse as the history and exclusions of feminism, the gender consciousness of young women, and the ideological nature of contemporary media have crystallized in disagreement about postfeminism. The term is used both to signal a theoretical orientation or approach, and to capture empirical changes in the way that gender is represented. Broadly speaking, it is possible to identify four major ways in which the term is used, each of which is considered below.

### POSTFEMINISM AS EPISTEMOLOGICAL BREAK

For a number of writers, postfeminism represents an epistemological break with second wave feminism and marks “the intersection of feminism with a number of other anti-

foundationalist movements including post-modernism, post structuralism and post colonialism” (Brooks 1997, 1). “Post,” as it is used in this sense, implies transformation and change and signals a critical engagement with earlier/other forms of feminism. It is alleged to have arisen partly as a result of critiques from black and third world feminists who destabilized dominant feminist theorizing and interrogated the right of (predominantly) white western (northern) women to speak on behalf of all others.

Combined with this were the critical challenges mounted by postmodernism and poststructuralism (→ Postmodernism and Communication; Structuralism), which called into question the ways in which feminist theory relied on dualistic thinking and upon totalizing concepts (such as “patriarchy”). Postfeminism in this sense marks a shift away from a focus on equality to a focus on debates about differences, and from structural analysis and meta-theorizing toward a more “pluralistic conception of the application of feminism” that “addresses the demands of marginalized, diasporic and colonized cultures for a non-hegemonic feminism capable of giving voice to local, indigenous and post-colonial feminisms” (Brooks 1997, 4; → Feminist Media Studies, Transnational).

In cultural and media analysis, postfeminism in this sense is mostly encountered as an *analytic perspective*, rather than a description of the nature of any particular cultural product. Its value is in stressing the manner in which gender is connected to other forms of marginalization and other axes of power such that it can never be examined separately from “race,” colonialism, sexuality, and class. Amanda Lotz (2001) has suggested that for a text to be considered postfeminist (in this rather positive sense) it should contain the following four features: narratives that explore women’s diverse relationships to power; depictions of varied feminist solutions; attempts to deconstruct the binaries of gender and sexuality; and illustrations of contemporary struggles.

### POSTFEMINISM AS HISTORICAL SHIFT

In this perspective, a historical rather than epistemological or theoretical shift is considered important. This approach attempts to periodize feminism and regards postfeminism as a period after (the height of) second wave feminism. Sometimes it is used synonymously with “third wave feminism” (particularly in the US context, where the notion of a third wave is more fully developed than elsewhere). It seeks to mark a time not after feminism per se, but after a particular moment of feminist activity and a particular set of feminist concerns. For Joanne Hollows (2000) postfeminism is not necessarily anti-feminism, but represents a *new kind of feminism* for a new context of debate. Hollows is angered by a type of feminist analysis that holds new writing and contemporary cultural texts (whether films or sitcoms or chick lit novels) up against a “1970s version” of feminism – only to find them wanting. The feminism in such popular texts is always said to have been “neutered” or “co-opted” or “emptied of its radical potential,” she argues, whereas it may in fact have simply changed – for a new moment. Such critique, Hollows suggests, serves to reify feminism, and works on a “recruitment” model, rather than thinking of feminism as dynamic, negotiated, and in a process of permanent, ongoing transformation.

Similarly, Rachel Moseley and Jacina Read (2002) argue that the polarization in feminist thought between feminism on the one hand and femininity on the other is a

product of the thinking of the mid-1970s. Discussing criticisms of the successful US television show *Ally McBeal* that attack it for wanting to “have it both ways” (with Ally as a mini-skirted male fantasy *and* a successful, professional woman), they ask: why *shouldn't* she have it all ways? She is, they suggest, a postfeminist heroine, a female protagonist for our times, who wants it all and does not observe (what may seem to her and to her audience) arbitrary boundaries around behavior, address, or aspiration.

This is a powerful argument and the critique of second wave ideas as the “one, true way” is an important one. The problem comes in specifying what, if anything, might constitute the *content of postfeminism*. It seems infinitely flexible. Critical observers might note also the way in which a politically sanitized, neo-liberal, and highly sexualized version of postfeminism circulates in the media, where girl bands like the Spice Girls, “babes” like Ally McBeal, and a collection of silicon-enhanced supermodels are among its most celebrated icons (→ Women’s Media Genres).

### POSTFEMINISM AND THE BACKLASH

A third way in which postfeminism is used is to refer to discourses that constitute part of a backlash against feminist achievements or goals – the “post” in postfeminism, here signaling a reaction against feminism (Faludi 1992). Backlash discourses take many contradictory forms. They often work by attributing all women’s unhappiness to feminism, but may also suggest that “all the battles have been won” or, conversely, that “you can’t have it all – something has to give;” that “political correctness” has become a new form of tyranny; that (white) men are the real victims, and so on.

Imelda Whelehan (2000) argues that contemporary postfeminist discourses are often characterized by “retrosexism,” premised on real fears about the collapse of masculine hegemony. She has explored the nostalgic quality of much contemporary television, which harks back to a time and place peopled by “real women” and humorous “cheeky chappies,” and argues that representations of women “from the banal to the downright offensive” are being “defensively reinvented against cultural changes in women’s lives” (Whelehan 2000, 11). Similarly, in her recent writing about → advertising, Judith Williamson (2003) argues that contemporary postfeminist sexism operates in two main ways: through the frame of a period style in which the retro styling offers an alibi for notions about men and women and gender relations that, if expressed in contemporary language or settings, would garner significant critique, and, alternatively, through increasingly fetishistic sexual imagery that “depicts power relations as about S&M sex rather than who washes up or chairs the board” (2003, 2).

These arguments are valuable for trying (unlike the other two approaches considered so far) to say something about the normative or ideological content of postfeminist discourses, but they do not tell the whole story. In particular, the focus on harking back may miss what is new about contemporary depictions of gender. Moreover, while notions of backlash and retro-sexism have been crucial in highlighting the reactive (as well as reactionary) nature of many contemporary representations, the elision of postfeminism with anti-feminism misses a crucial feature of current media discourses: namely the entanglement of feminist and anti-feminist ideas within them.

## POSTFEMINISM AS A SENSIBILITY

The notion of postfeminism as a sensibility is an attempt to fashion an understanding of the term that could be used analytically, but which would not be limited to studying media products that were obviously backlash texts. For scholars who use it in this way, postfeminism is the *critical object of analysis*, rather than a theoretical orientation or a new form of feminism. The approach does not require a static notion of one single, authentic feminism as a comparison point, but instead is informed by postmodernist and constructionist perspectives (→ Constructivism), and seeks to identify what is distinctive about contemporary articulations of gender within media and cultural texts.

The notion of postfeminism as a sensibility originated out of a dissatisfaction with other models of postfeminism – in particular, the difficulty of specifying with any rigor the features of postfeminism, and the problem of applying the notion to any particular cultural or media analysis. The notion of a sensibility aims to answer questions such as: what makes a text postfeminist? What features need to be present in order for any media scholar to label something postfeminist?

The notion emphasizes the contradictory nature of postfeminist discourses and the entanglement of postfeminist and anti-feminist themes within them (McRobbie 2004). It argues that postfeminism is best thought of as a sensibility that characterizes increasing numbers of films, television shows, adverts, and other media products. A number of relatively stable features that together constitute a postfeminist discourse characterize this sensibility. These include the notion that femininity is a bodily property; the shift from objectification to subjectification; an emphasis upon self-surveillance, monitoring, and discipline; a focus upon individualism, choice, and empowerment; the dominance of a “makeover paradigm”; a resurgence of ideas of natural sexual difference; the marked sexualization of culture; and an emphasis upon consumerism and the commodification of difference (→ Commodity Feminism). These themes coexist with and are structured by stark and continuing inequalities and exclusions that relate to race and ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, and disability – as well as gender (Gill 2007).

## DEBATES AND DILEMMAS

It should be clear that postfeminism is at once a central critical term within feminist media studies, and a term about which there is little consensus. Recent attempts to reconceptualize postfeminism as a sensibility go some way to beginning the process of attempting to “map” or chart the nature of postfeminism – but existing attempts are likely to produce further disagreement. In addition, the term may be challenged for its *northern-centrism* and its lack of applicability to the global south. It has emerged and been most contested in the Anglophone cultures of the US and the UK, and it is not clear that the notion would have much value in developing countries, where feminism itself takes such different forms. Linked to its lack of global applicability is the tendency to restrict analysis to a highly selective number of media texts. The principal ones are *Sex and the City*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Bridget Jones's Diary*. Each of these has been subjected to

extensive analysis, while most media output remains, as yet, entirely unanalyzed from this perspective. It is therefore difficult to draw any conclusions about the extent to which contemporary media are showing postfeminist tendencies. The white, middle-class homogeneity of most texts discussed as postfeminist is also worth noting. Finally, the term has been used almost exclusively in relation to media texts, and its relevance or usefulness for audience research or for organizational or political economy studies have yet to be explored.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Commodity Feminism ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Structuralism ▶ Women's Media Genres

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## **Postmodernism and Communication**

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Postmodernism is one of a series of terms, including postmodernity and post-structuralism, that is applied to cultural production in western Europe and North America in the period from the 1960s to the present. Postmodernity is sometimes used to refer to the cultural history of this period. Poststructuralism was a critical practice directed toward literary, linguistic, and philosophical movements that flourished around

this time. The term “postmodernism” itself is defined in opposition to “modernism” in order to describe contemporary forms of art and architecture and their aesthetics.

Postmodernism began in the 1960s as a response to high modernism, particularly in architecture and the plastic arts (→ Art as Communication). The qualities of postmodern literature were less well defined (→ Fiction). The distinction between modernism and postmodernism was perhaps always clearer for critics than for cultural practitioners. High modernism’s most influential critic was Clement Greenberg, whose essays such as “Modernist painting” seemed to capture an aesthetic that was already passing. Greenberg’s notion of purity in artistic goals and his insistence on maintaining the distinction between high art and popular culture were being contradicted in practice by minimalists, pop artists such as Andy Warhol, and video artists such as Nam June Paik and Steina and Woody Vasulka. In “Art and objecthood,” the modernist critic Michael Fried attacked the minimalists for their “theatricality,” which he regarded as a betrayal of the modernist aesthetic (→ Aesthetics). Yet, the way in which these artists acknowledged the relationship between the work and the spectator helped to define postmodern installation and performance art. Greenberg’s and Fried’s modernism was subsequently challenged by other theorists such as Rosalind Krauss and Hal Foster in the pages of the journal *October*.

Poststructuralism specifically critiques the structuralist analysis of language, literature, and culture, including the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and Roman Jakobson in linguistics and Claude Levi-Strauss in anthropology (→ Structuralism). The most influential poststructuralists included Jacques Derrida, → Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and Paul de Man, each of whom had their own intellectual trajectories and never intended to found a coherent movement. To the extent that structuralism itself can be considered part of the modernist project, however, poststructuralism can be considered postmodernist.

Critical theorists also developed postmodernism into a general theoretical category (→ Critical Theory) – a development exemplified by two very different works: Jean-Francois Lyotard’s *The postmodern condition* (1984) and Fredric Jameson’s *Postmodernism* (1991).

Already in 1979, Lyotard’s brief but influential volume offered a more general view of postmodernism as a philosophical response, not only to modern art and the modernist movement of the twentieth century, but to what Lyotard and others came to define as the modern era in a broad sense, beginning in the eighteenth century or even earlier. Lyotard’s work did not focus on aesthetics, but instead offered a critique of the so-called grand or master narratives, which he identified in the ideologies and communicative practices of the modern period, advocating their replacement through multiple little narratives.

Jameson (1991), on the other hand, did take art and aesthetics as its starting point. He attempted to delineate various strands of postmodernism with specific analyses of architectural works, such as architect John Portman’s Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. Jameson’s guiding concern was to extend the discussion of postmodernism to cultural, ideological, and economic domains, as indicated in the subtitle: as “the cultural logic of late capitalism,” postmodernism’s aesthetic characteristics could not be separated from the economic conditions of postindustrial and global forms of economic organization now dominant throughout the developed world.

Jameson’s case for the inseparability of cultural forms and political ideologies has been accepted by a generation of cultural theorists in the humanities. The argument seemed

particularly relevant and convincing for popular cultural forms in the mass communication and entertainment industries, which were at this time becoming “global” to a degree not previously acknowledged (→ Globalization of the Media). While mergers in the communications industry were creating global “empires” in television and newspapers, at the same time the invention of the world wide web and its subsequent commercialization seemed to offer new venues to distribute popular entertainment (→ Commercialization of the Media). The video cassette and then the DVD emerged as new distribution methods for film and to some extent television. There was a growing concern that global companies would use these new distribution networks to promote the dominance of western and particularly American entertainment products throughout the developed and developing world.

If there is a common element in all of the “post-” terms and the work they represent, it might be that all of them are critical reactions to what are perceived as totalizing practices and rhetorics of the modern era. In each case, the reaction was an attempt to subvert claims to unity, simplicity, or universality. Those gestures of subversion constitute a legacy that remains influential today in the fields of art, art theory, and critical theory. Postmodernism also, arguably, has a legacy in → popular culture: music videos, social computing sites such as YouTube and myspace.com, and the products of remix culture (DJs and VJs) are postmodern in their rejection of single, simple representational practices.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Fiction ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Structuralism

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## **Power and Discourse**

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The concept of power, who holds it and how they use it has been of great interest to almost every field of social science. A crucial way in which power is expressed and resisted is through language. Ng and Bradac (1993) argue that language reveals power, language

creates power, language reflects power, and language obscures or depoliticizes power. It has even been claimed that there is no language situation, involving either public or private discourse, free from effects of power.

### TYPES OF POWER

Power can basically be defined as involving an unequal relationship between at least two people. Different types of power have been identified. French and Raven (1959) developed a framework of power which has been very influential. It contains five *main categories*: legitimate power (power due to position), referent power (power or ability to persuade and influence others), expert power (power derived from skills or expertise in an area), reward power (power that depends on the ability of the person in power to confer valued rewards), and coercive power (power that relies on using negative influence to get people to do things).

These types of power involve situations where one individual or group has power over another. Out of the five, coercive power is felt to be the least effective form, since it builds resentment and resistance. The overt marking of all five types of power has been decreasing in some societies over recent years, e.g., in Great Britain, making issues of *empowerment* and *consultative power* relevant (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment). Consultative power involves someone, in, e.g., a position of legitimate power, seeking information from subordinates, considering their advice, and making plans with others rather than just telling them what to do.

### SOCIAL THEORIES OF POWER

Power is a complex and highly theorized phenomenon. Work in the 1950s and 1960s from a *behaviorist perspective* saw power as residing in individuals and as being observable through behavior. One major problem with this approach is that power is only understood to have been exerted if the recipient of the power acts in a way they would not otherwise have done. This approach also sees power as quantifiable. In contrast, the structural model of power developed by theorists such as Steven Lukes views power as more abstract, ideological, and hegemonic. All social action is seen to involve power because behind all language and action are ideas and values. Power is seen to shape people's perceptions and has the effect of making people accept things as they are and act in certain ways, even if it is not in their best interests to do so and even if they are not aware that they are doing it.

*Poststructuralist theories* of power include the work of Michel Foucault. Rather than viewing power in terms of dominance and ideology, Foucault proposes a concept of power as a complex and continuously evolving web of social and discursive relations. Language is acknowledged as having an important role to play here.

### CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

The structural view of power has been influential in the area of *critical discourse analysis* (CDA; → Discourse Analysis). One of the fundamental tasks of CDA is to account for the



relationships between discourse and social power. Power is seen as already accruing to some people and not to others. This power is determined by institutional role and socio-economic status, gender, or ethnic identity (Fairclough 1992; van Dijk 1993). In CDA, therefore, the role of power in discourse tends to be a question of examining how those members of society who possess it reflect, reinforce, and reproduce it through the language they use. The issue of access to discourse is an element of this, in terms of both private and public discourse.

The focus of CDA is ordinary, naturally occurring language. Fairclough (2001), e.g., illustrates power in discourse using data from newspapers as well as face-to-face spoken interaction. An example from face-to-face interaction involves the use of interruption by a doctor when interacting with medical students. The doctor interrupts a student several times. Fairclough interprets this as an indication of the doctor controlling the student's contributions, with interruptions here being seen as a device used to exercise and reinforce power.

Power may be exercised in different ways. Fairclough distinguishes between power through *coercion* and power through *consent*. As with French and Raven's "coercive power," "coercion" here refers to the use of negative influence to get people to comply. *Consent power* involves winning consent to, or at least acquiescence to, the possession and exercise of power.

### POWERFUL WAYS OF SPEAKING?

Early work in sociolinguistics on language and gender took the view that there are more or less powerful ways of speaking (→ Gender and Discourse). Women are seen to be in a more powerless position in relation to men, and the linguistic strategies they use are in turn felt to be less powerful than those typically evident in the speech of men. As shown by numerous empirical studies, however, it is not the linguistic form or strategy that is powerful. Rather, it is a question of who uses it and how. The same strategy can be used to exercise power or to show solidarity, or even to do both. Interruptions, e.g., may be used by a speaker to provide support for another speaker rather than as a device for directly controlling the other speaker's contributions. Furthermore, as Tannen (1994, 23–24) points out, "what appears as attempts to dominate conversation (an exercise of power) may actually be intended to establish rapport (an exercise of solidarity). This occurs because . . . power and solidarity are bought with the same currency: The same linguistic means can be used to create either or both."

The situation is further complicated by the fact that different speakers have different *norms*, or expectations. An example which clearly shows this is given by Tannen (1995) and involves two men, one from Detroit and one from New York City. The first man feels that the second man is pushy and uninterested in what he has to say because the man from New York City never leaves him the length of pause he expects in order to take a conversational turn. On the other hand, the second man feels that the man from Detroit has nothing to say. Not only are the two men unable to communicate effectively, but they also ascribe powerful and powerless intentions to each other that were not intended.

A further example provided by Tannen involves the use of questions. Gender has been seen to be a relevant factor when considering whether and when people ask questions.

Women have been found to ask more questions than men and do not see question-asking as a powerless strategy. Tannen argues that men are more aware of the potential face-losing aspect of question-asking. Men with this view do not ask questions because it might reflect negatively on them. They are also likely to have negative opinions of other people who do ask questions.

The use of language in *context* determines the function and effects of an utterance. Discursive power is a contextually sensitive phenomenon. Speakers draw on different linguistic devices more or less successfully depending on the people they are interacting with and the speech situation.

A recent area of sociolinguistic research which captures the idea of different norms involves the concept of → *communities of practice*. Under this model every community, be it a family, a company, or a country, has a culture of locally constructed values, relations, and ways of communicating and doing things. What counts as powerful or not in a situation therefore depends on the community of practice.

### THE NEGOTIATION OF POWER

The communities of practice framework has developed within a *social constructionist* approach to sociolinguistics. Social constructionism was adopted from sociology as a dynamic means of analyzing the relationship between aspects of language and social identity, initially by researchers interested in the relationship between language and gender. This approach is influenced by poststructuralist ideas and challenges the notion that power is held by some speakers and not by others. Attention is given to how power is constantly under negotiation by participants in an interaction and to how speakers “do power” (e.g., Holmes et al. 1999; Thornborrow 2002).

The social role of a person is a facet of a person’s identity that may be drawn on at different points in an interaction. Other aspects of their identity may be evident at other times; e.g., gender, ethnicity, or age. Identity in this view is something that speakers construct and maintain through discourse (→ Identities and Discourse). In this type of approach power may be resisted by people in positions of less power. At other times the building of solidarity and rapport may be more evident in the speech of a more powerful person than the overt expression of power.

The discourse of people at work has been the focus of much of this research (→ Business Discourse), and a range of qualitative approaches to analysis has been drawn on (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). This is informed by approaches such as CDA but takes on elements of other approaches to language study as well (→ Politeness Theory; Conversation Analysis).

Unlike CDA, conversation analysis has not traditionally been concerned with issues of power. The idea that there are pre-ascribed roles is rejected, and contextual factors such as speaker status have only been seen to be relevant if there is evidence in the discourse that participants are orienting to these factors. The focus is on asymmetries that are made visible in the discourse. Context is of vital importance in this approach, but only at the level of surrounding talk. Hutchby (1996), however, argues that power can be analyzed using conversation analysis; interactional power being observable in small details such as the relationship between turns at talk.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Business Discourse ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment  
 ▶ Communities of Practice ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Dis-  
 course Analysis ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Politeness Theory  
 ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Power in Intergroup Settings

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## **Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction**

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When individuals engage in social interaction, regardless of the relationship they have with each other and the context within which it occurs (→ Classroom Power; Power in Intergroup Settings), power and dominance are fundamental dimensions that both shape and are shaped by communication (→ Power and Discourse). Studies of how people think about and judge their social relationships have consistently demonstrated the importance of a dominance dimension. People use this dimension to judge and experience their social relationships and the communication that occurs within them (Berger 1994; Ng & Bradac 1993). Judgments concerning who is dominant or submissive or who is “in control” easily come to mind, whether the judgments are made during or after a specific interaction episode or in an ongoing relationship consisting of multiple episodes.

These judgments may have substantial consequences. For example, people who consistently display dominant or submissive actions in their social commerce with others over time may be judged to have dominant or submissive personalities by those who interact with them. Not only are power and dominance fundamental features of social interaction among humans, dominance hierarchies are legion in the social behavior of

many animal species. Even when group members consciously strive to have “equal” amounts of power and “equal” status, dominance hierarchies emerge over time. Consequently, understanding how social interaction works requires attention to the role that social power and dominance play in its conduct.

## PERSPECTIVES ON POWER AND DOMINANCE

The concepts of power and dominance may be viewed from at least two perspectives: the individual and the relationship. Everyday parlance frequently reflects the *individual perspective*, as when people say, “She is an extremely powerful person” or “He is very controlling.” Such assertions imply that power is an attribute possessed by the individual and that one can have more or less of it. However, many power theorists have argued that power is more fruitfully viewed as a *characteristic of a relationship*. Individual A may indeed attempt to influence individual B during the course of a particular social encounter; however, individual B may resist individual A’s influence attempts to the point that A fails to influence B. Moreover, there is the possibility that individual B may exert counter-influence on individual A to the point that individual A is influenced. Consequently, social power is not simply a matter of attempting to influence others; it also involves social actors’ ability to overcome resistance from those they are attempting to influence (→ Relational Control). During the thrust and parry of social intercourse, control struggles may develop that eventuate in → interpersonal conflict (→ Social Exchange).

Although the relationship view of power is probably more useful than is the individual perspective for understanding how power dynamics play out during social interactions, considerable research has examined the degree to which individual personality dispositions such as dominance and power motivation influence individuals’ communicative conduct in social situations. In addition, a second research tradition has examined the ways in which communicative conduct in social situations influences observers’ attributions of power to individual social actors. This approach ignores the personality dispositions of individual social actors and focuses on the relationships between communication and perceptions of power and dominance. The question addressed in this research tradition concerns the relationships between specific features of verbal and nonverbal communication and observers’ judgments of the degree to which social actors are dominant. Each of these traditions is considered in turn.

## POWERFUL PERSONALITIES AND THEIR COMMUNICATION

A considerable amount of research has sought to understand the relationships between such *personality dispositions* as dominance and need for power and the behaviors individuals display while communicating with others. In the typical study, individuals first complete personality measures designed to assess their level of dominance or power motivation and are then placed in a group discussion situation. Video recordings of the discussion are analyzed to determine the frequency with which each group member participated in the discussion, the average length of time they spoke, how frequently they paused while speaking, the number of times they interrupted other group members, and how loudly they spoke. Each of these measures is a potential indicator of dominance. In

general, such studies have found that individuals who speak frequently and for longer times, pause less frequently when they speak, interrupt other group members more, and speak more loudly tend to score higher on personality measures of dominance than do people who score in the opposite direction on these communication parameters (Berger 1994). Thus, individual predispositions for dominance can be reflected in these nonverbal behaviors.

Related research on *power motivation* has produced similar findings (Winter 1973). Individuals with high power motivation levels seek to exercise influence over others. They define their social relationships in terms of power, and the successful exercise of power is their primary goal. Individuals with high power motivation gain power by making themselves visible to others and maintain power by surrounding themselves with loyal followers who are themselves not highly visible. Consistent with these power strategies, students with high power motivation were found to write more letters to their campus newspaper and be more likely to have their name posted on their dormitory room doors than their counterparts with low power motivation counterparts. Individuals with high power motivation also were more likely than those with low to seat themselves in visible positions during group discussions, and they displayed significantly more cantankerous behaviors during the discussions.

Findings like these provide support for the notion that individuals with high power needs seek to make themselves highly visible to others. Additional research found that in contrast to their counterparts with low power motivation, students with high power motivation tended to select as close friends students who were not well known to other students on campus. This finding provides support for the idea that those with high power motivation levels surround themselves with individuals who will not threaten their visibility.

### COMMUNICATION AND ATTRIBUTED POWER

Although the research just considered is predicated on the idea that relatively stable personality dispositions such as dominance and power motivation drive behavior, other research suggests that the behaviors social actors enact during social interaction episodes can promote *differential perceptions* of their power and influence among those who observe them. In the typical study, individuals engage in a group discussion that is video recorded and analyzed. At the conclusion of the discussion, each group member rates the degree to which every other group member was influential in the discussion. These judgments are then correlated with behaviors exhibited during the discussion to determine which behaviors are related to the influence judgments.

An analysis of 77 different experiments using this methodology showed an average correlation of .65 between the frequency with which group members verbally participated in the group and others' judgments of the degree to which they were influential in the discussion (→ Meta-Analysis). Those who spoke most often tended to be judged to be more influential than those who spoke little. Studies of this kind have revealed that individuals who interrupt others more, speak with greater vocal intensity, and pause little while speaking tend to be judged to be more influential than those who score the opposite on these speech parameters (Berger 1994). In addition to these *nonverbal indicators of*

*dominance*, some have broadened the list of relevant features to include verbal aspects of communication, under the heading of powerful versus powerless speech (Ng & Bradac 1993). Speech marked by the frequent use of qualifiers, hedges, and indirectness, in addition to nonverbal indicants of submissiveness such as a soft voice and frequent pauses, prompts judgments of powerlessness by observers.

Since the 1970s there has been considerable debate about how *sex differences in speech and language use* might influence people's judgments of women's and men's influence in social situations (→ Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in). Some have alleged, for example, that in contrast to men, women tend to display a characteristic speech style that creates perceptions of submissiveness and powerlessness, which may explain why women have tended not to rise to positions of power and influence in society (Lakoff 1975). Specifically, the claim is that more than men, women tend to: (1) use overly polite language when making requests; (2) employ tag questions when asserting opinions, for example, "It's a nice day, isn't it?"; and (3) use a rising vocal intonation when answering questions. The latter two of these forms were purported to make their users sound more uncertain and less confident about what it is they are saying and thus less influential in social situations. Contemporaneous studies of conversations between men and women revealed that men tended to interrupt women more often than women interrupted men, thus suggesting that men assume a dominant role in cross-sex interactions. Although some subsequent research has reported similar findings, there are a number of studies that have found either no sex differences in interruption rates or situations in which women interrupt men more than men do women (Berger 1994; Dindia & Canary 2006). Mixed results have also been reported for sex differences in the rates of tag questions and use of a rising vocal intonation in answering questions (Dindia & Canary 2006).

One explanation for these inconsistent results is the fact that interruptions, tag questions, and rising vocal intonation may serve a variety of functions during social encounters. For example, when a person says "It's a nice day, isn't it?" to someone, the tag question may serve as a friendly invitation to converse rather than a signal that the person is uncertain that it is "a nice day." Similarly, interruptions may serve a variety of functions other than bids for dominance. People may interrupt speakers to show support or agreement with what they are saying, or they may interrupt to seek clarification. The interrupter's primary goal is not to dominate the speaker, although observers of the interruption might infer that the interrupter is pursuing such a goal. Because such behaviors as interruptions, tag questions, and rising vocal intonations are multifunctional, merely counting their relative occurrence in conversations between men and women to determine who is more dominant cannot clearly reveal potential sex differences in the use of so-called "dominant forms" of communication.

Conversational topics might also determine whether women or men will dominate interactions between them. On average, women might dominate cross-sex conversations that happen to include time spent talking about women's fashions, while men might assume a dominant role when the topic is professional football. Of course, some men might dominate a discussion of women's fashions and some women could dominate a professional football discussion; however, in the aggregate such instances would probably be less frequent. In any case, some theories, such as status characteristics theory, suggest that individuals are accorded leadership (dominant) positions in groups when other group

members perceive that they possess certain status characteristics, such as education, leading perceivers to believe that such status characteristics are associated with special competencies (Berger et al. 1977). Dominance patterns in mixed-sex interactions may hinge in part on such competence inferences.

Most would agree that power and dominance are fundamental dimensions of social interaction. That verbal and nonverbal communication can both give expression to individual proclivities to exercise power and serve as grist for observers' inference mills when judging how dominant fellow social actors are is beyond dispute. However, the story that explains these complex relationships is still far from complete.

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Power ► Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in ► Interpersonal Conflict ► Meta-Analysis ► Power and Discourse ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Relational Control ► Social Exchange

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## **Power in Intergroup Settings**

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Exercising power over others is a common human experience. Children override the better judgment of their parents, displaying temper tantrums or simply nagging them to exhaustion. Parents in turn control their children using reason mixed with bribes and brute force, or the threat of it. In seemingly equal relationships such as that between spouses, people nonetheless influence or cajole their peers to have their own way. The exercise of power relies partly on strategic communication, and even seemingly powerless individuals may triumph over the more powerful. Just as individuals exercise power over others, they also have the experience of being overpowered by others.

The examples cited above have one common theme – they all involve a person (the agent) exercising power over another person directly (the target) – with three contextual dimensions: interpersonal (in contrast to intergroup), direct (versus indirect), and power over (instead of power *to*, e.g., power to do good common to both the agent and the

target). Ng in *The social psychology of power* (1980) has provided an overall analysis of the contextual dimensions. Presently, only the interpersonal–intergroup dimension will concern us, with the emphasis on power in intergroup settings seen from the perspectives of social psychological and cognate academic disciplines such as language and communication (→ Language and Social Psychology).

### THE NATURE OF POWER

Philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell (1938, 35) defines “power as the production of intended effects.” This elegantly worded generic definition is echoed in Heider’s *The psychology of interpersonal relations* (1958). According to Heider, a person’s action is constrained by the environment but is also a function of personal factors, which include the person’s power, intention, and how hard he or she is exerting him- or herself. *Power is what a person can cause*. From this generic definition, Heider differentiates between personal and social power, referring respectively to personal capabilities and social positions.

Both Russell and Heider align power with its effects. On this important but controversial point, Lewin and his fellow field theorists take a different approach. In *Field theory in social science* (1952), Lewin separates power from its effects and restricts it to mean the possibility of inducing force to overcome resistance. When force exceeds resistance, power is in action as influence, otherwise it remains dormant as potential influence. The agent’s influence is seen from the target’s perspective: the latter’s dependence is the former’s power to influence. Specifically, the target’s dependence on the agent as a guide to reality, for uncertainty reduction and similar other cognitive needs, provides the agent with a base for exercising informational social influence (→ Uncertainty Reduction Theory). By the same token, the target’s dependence on the agent for social approval, social validation, and similar other social motivational needs gives the agent a basis for exercising normative social influence. According to Raven (2001), most forms of social influence stem from six power bases: reward, coercion, legitimacy, referent, expert, and information power. The power bases are not rigid entities, but can be reframed to reduce resistance, minimize cost, and amplify influence. For example, coercive power can be reframed into informational and referent power using strategic communication (→ Strategic Framing).

*Social exchange theory* views power in the context of the ongoing exchange of outcomes between interdependent individuals (→ Social Exchange). Thibaut & Kelley in *The social psychology of groups* (1959) argue that as long as the target has no better alternative for satisfying his or her expected outcome other than from the agent, he or she is dependent relationally on the agent, and consequently places him- or herself under the latter’s contact control. Within this (trapped) relationship, the agent’s power over the target varies with the *range* of the target’s outcomes that is under the agent’s control. For example, although a mother who always rewards her child but never uses punishment may be able to retain contact control, she has less behavior control than she would have if she withholds reward or supplements reward with punishment.

The classic definitions reviewed above serve to indicate the range of power definitions still current in social psychology. By and large, they are concerned with social behavior in interpersonal contexts, and up till the late 1960s the study of intergroup behavior was



conspicuous by its absence. Burgeoning intergroup research since has been successful in filling the lacuna.

### INTERPERSONAL AND INTERGROUP SETTINGS

There are occasions where we think, feel, and act in terms of our unique personal self and treat others as individuals rather than as representatives of particular groups. There are other occasions where group membership and identification take control of our consciousness and induce us to treat others as either “one of us” or “one of them,” rather than as unique individuals in their own right. These two contexts – the interpersonal and the intergroup – correspond to our dual existence as unique persons and as members of social groups. The more the social context shifts toward intergroup, the less interpersonal relations and interaction occur between groups.

An insight from intergroup research is that seemingly interpersonal encounters are in fact *intergroup*. For example, when we greet a woman in a wheelchair, the one who is in our minds is not a person but a member of a disability group, a disabled “other,” and we show this by addressing not her, but the person pushing the wheelchair (Fox & Giles 1996). Another insight is the ease with which discrimination against “them” (the outgroup) can be triggered in the absence of historical rivalry and even at personal cost to the discriminator, simply by dividing people into (cognitive) groups. By contrast, it is notoriously difficult to reduce or eliminate intergroup discrimination, as reviewed by Gaertner & Dovidio in *Reducing intergroup bias: The common ingroup identity model* (2000). World history of peace and war is a constant reminder of this fundamental asymmetry (→ Social Conflict and Communication). A third insight is the discovery of a discontinuity between interindividual and intergroup interactions. Intergroup interactions are generally more competitive than interpersonal interactions, suggesting greater “fear and greed” in the former than in the latter situation (Wildschut et al. 2003).

Collectively the three interrelated insights summarized above serve to establish the prevalence of intergroup contexts and their powerful effects on practical issues such as stereotyping, discrimination, competition, and conflict. These insights and other advance in intergroup research provide a basis for understanding power in intergroup settings. As the topic of power in intergroup settings is broad, the discussion below is necessarily selective and only two aspects will be highlighted. The first is a comparison of high- and low-power groups with respect to the perceptual and behavioral correlates of power. Here power is treated as a given and the question is what flows from it. The second aspect does not take power as a given but instead constitutes it as the subject of inquiry. Here the concern is with the formation and change of power relations with respect to leader emergence and the politicization of collective identities in intergroup settings (→ Intergroup Contact and Communication).

### HIGH- AND LOW-POWER GROUPS

Intergroup research in the main has treated power as a given variable to see its effects or correlates. An informative overview of the findings can be found in Brauer & Bourhis (2006), who also summarize a number of intergroup power theories. They lump together

intergroup and interpersonal power, but only the former will concern us here. Compared to members of low-power groups, members of high-power groups are more inclined to evaluate outgroups negatively, perceive them as more homogeneous, and prefer group-based over individuated information processing. In turn, they receive more positive and fewer negative evaluations. The specific combinations of positive and negative traits suggest that power is associated with *mixed stereotypes*: competent but cold for groups of high power, and incompetent but warm and pitiable for low-power groups. Regardless of trait valence, within-group variability is overestimated for high- and underestimated for low-power groups. On the basis of these and other correlates of high- and low-power groups, Brauer & Bourhis (2006) conclude that high-power groups are less susceptible to stereotyping than low-power groups (→ Stereotypes; Social Stereotyping and Communication).

The connection between high power and freedom from stereotyping extends Fiske's (1993) power analysis of stereotyping. She makes the insightful observation that stereotyping not only serves cognitive functions, but also controls people who are subjected to it. This enables her to argue from the power-as-control perspective that stereotyping is a tool for power. A corollary of this would be that high-power groups are better able to protect themselves from being stereotyped. In this sense, the empirical connection found between high power and freedom from stereotyping completes the logic of the dual relationships between stereotyping and power (control). The intriguing question is: how does high power free its holders from stereotyping and control?

The answer is complex and implicates ideology and social representations. At the social interactional level of analysis, the answer can be gleaned from what high- and low-power group members actually do. *Individuals in powerful positions* (including membership in high-power groups) are less inhibited and show this in their more open display of a wider range of emotions, greater risk-taking, and more readiness to act (Keltner et al. 2003). Their stronger power bases also enable them to act according to their individual wishes and in their idiosyncratic ways (Brauer & Bourhis 2006). Behavioral disinhibition and inner-directedness combine to produce individuals acting freely and differently from each other, maximizing variability and thus minimizing the objective base of being stereotyped as homogeneous. *Low-power individuals*, as shown by Mulder in *The daily power game* (1977), tend to orient toward, attend to more, and know more about high-power individuals in their attempt to reduce their power distance from the powerful. As a result, low-power individuals have an objective base to individuate rather than stereotype powerful others, thereby relinquishing their (potential) control via stereotyping over them.

It should be apparent by now that power is never static. One may view it as a given in a particular context at a particular point in time, and see what may flow from it. Yet what flows from it is rarely automatic or straightforward, but is caught up in dynamical processes of influence and control. Conversely, as we shall discuss next, power is created or mobilized in and through processes of influence and control, often mediated by what human beings are best at, namely, using language to influence and control (Ng & Bradac 1993).

## LEADER EMERGENCE AND POLITICIZATION

Any intergroup setting must by definition presuppose the existence of two (or more) groups although the groups may vary in their "groupness." At the very least, a sense of

shared identity, however shallow, is required for a collection of individuals to become a group. If nothing more, the group remains as a cognitive group without a power hierarchy among members. To understand how power relations are formed in groups, one has to extend the study beyond cognitive groups to real groups that involve members interacting with and talking to each other.

When previously unacquainted individuals interact, typically a power hierarchy emerges. The leader who has emerged does not require pre-existing high status, because even groups composed of similar individuals also form power hierarchies, as documented by Bales in *Personality and interpersonal behavior* (1970). Rather, members talk their way to power through active communication participation as shown by volume of talk or, more effective still, a high rate of speaking turns. The ability to penetrate the web of conversational turn-taking to obtain speaking turns holds the key to becoming leader, and this is facilitated by enacting (constructive) interruptions worded in assertive “proactive speech acts” and not in conciliatory “reactive speech acts” (Ng et al. 1995). With speaking turns in hand, the speaker is in a position to create conversational control by drawing attention to self, maintaining or changing the conversational agenda, and allocating the next turn to a preferred person (→ Conversation Analysis).

The studies cited above and similar others were carried out with groups in isolation rather than in interaction. In these *intra*-group contexts, conversational influence and control among unacquainted strangers lead to power. Does the same hold in intergroup contexts? Later studies show that conversational influence and control through speaking turns remain important, but the intergroup context now generates social identification processes that selectively determine what behavior counts as important for the ingroup and the outgroup (→ Social Identity Theory). Crucially, as shown by Reid & Ng (2000), verbal utterances that represent or exemplify the ingroup position and are directed successfully at the outgroup correlate strongly with leader emergence. These outgroup-directed prototypical utterances mobilize the ingroup and advocate for the ingroup position (and hence enhance group identity) in the face of outgroup competition, for which the speaker is accorded leadership (→ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction).

The discussion above portrays leader emergence as the outcome of cumulative conversational influence and control mediated by social identificational processes. Influence and control are assumed to merely culminate into power. This is a superficial view of what is in fact a sequential and collective process of power creation. A more nuanced discussion can be gleaned from Berger et al.’s *Expectation states theory: A theoretical research paradigm* (1974). The insight from EST is that when enough conversational influence and control culminate to give evidence of an *incipient* power hierarchy at the early state of group interaction, group members develop expectations of who is and will be leading the group. Acting on these expectations, group members collectively shape the behavior of each other to fall in line with the expectations, for example, to look up and give preferential right to incipient leaders to speak and thereby to amplify their influence and control. There are some preliminary results supporting the role of expectations in intergroup contexts (Reid & Ng 2006), but more fine-grained and longer-range observation and data analysis are required to test it.

Still on the theme of power creation, our final discussion takes us beyond small group research to research dealing with large groups and large-scale social movements. The big

question is: how may power be generated to bring about social change, including a change in existing unequal power relations? A small answer can be found in the politicization of collective identity.

In their triangular model of politicized collective identity, Simon & Klandermans (2001, 319) postulate that people “evinced politicized collective identity to the extent that they engage as self-conscious group members in a power struggle on behalf of their group knowing that it is the wider, more inclusive societal context in which this struggle has to be fought out.” For this to happen, members need to become aware of shared grievance, then attribute the cause of their grievance to the adversary outgroup, and finally triangulate the power struggle by getting a third party (e.g., society at large) on their side.

Throughout the process and its extension, language and communication play a number of crucial roles. They provide an inclusive rhetoric to connect the group in question with other local identities into a collective identity to mobilize collective action (→ Collective Action and Communication). A collective identity, though powerful, carries the risk of submerging the group’s distinctiveness and consequently diluting its claim to leadership. Hence the group must reinvent itself as the prototype among the collective identity to advance and lead the cause. Here again, language plays a critical role in providing a world vision that creates the necessary system of categorization for identifying different targets for influence (Chrysochoou & Volpato 2004). Collective action is sustained in and through the construction and promulgation of narratives to politicize culture into a (symbolic) resource for power, by undermining the legitimacy of the status quo and envisioning a better future (→ Social Movements and Communication; Communication Strategies for Empowerment). These complex and dynamical relationships, where language and communication are heavily and critically implicated, make for interesting study across disciplines.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Collective Action and Communication ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Language and Social Psychology ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Social Conflict and Communication ▶ Social Exchange ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Pragmatism

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Pragmatism is an international philosophical movement that coalesced in the two decades before World War I, and has reverberated widely since. From the beginning, it featured communication, sometimes as an explicit concept, and more generally by emphasizing interaction, community, and communicable consequences as key components of knowledge, meaning, politics, ethics, aesthetics, and selfhood.

In the twentieth century, pragmatism was often characterized as a “distinctly American” philosophy associated with four thinkers – Charles Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and George Herbert Mead. In fact, the movement developed in a trans-Atlantic network of letters and print that included a number of European philosophers. Pragmatism’s center of gravity has generally been on American soil, but the family of philosophical positions it names grew up in dialogue with European, and especially German, thought (Joas 1993). Recent historical work has broadened the pragmatist genealogy considerably (Simonson 2001).

Pragmatism has long served as a covering term for a variety of related, but distinct positions. James publicly launched “the principle of pragmatism” in an 1898 lecture, but credited Peirce, whom he heard use it during a meeting of the later-famous “Metaphysical Club” (Menand 2001). The principle named a position Peirce had established several years earlier, that the meaning of ideas lies in the consequences and “habits of action” that those ideas produce (1992, 131). Peirce drew the name for his doctrine from Kant’s *Critique of pure reason*, which held the *pragmatisch* belief to be one among several kinds, characterized by contingency and lack of ultimate certainty.

In contrast to Kant, pragmatism has generally taken *contingency* as an inescapable part of knowing, counteracted through communal inquiry and communication. Against the Cartesian notion of certainty as built upon the foundations of introspective philosophy, Peirce turned instead to the community of knowers as the best hope for establishing adequate beliefs. James de-emphasized the communal aspects, and (to Peirce’s chagrin) transformed a theory of meaning into a theory of truth, opening up the first of many fissures among pragmatists. Dewey would re-emphasize the communal element of knowing and democratize it by leveling distinctions between scientists and non-scientists, and by championing a general experimental attitude worked out through communication.

Early pragmatists also developed *accounts of self and society* that featured communication. Humans were conceived as animals for whom language was both a tool and an inescapable medium of life. Along with Charles Cooley, Mead laid the foundations for what became known as → symbolic interactionism. He took physical gesture as basic to the development of mind and self, and as preparing the foundation for linguistic interactions, which, in turn, produce higher-order consciousness (→ Linguistics; Nonverbal Communication and Culture). For Cooley, Mead, and Dewey, societies and selves exist by and through communication.

Communication carries strong moral and political dimensions for pragmatists. For Mead, it is a social process that involves taking the perspective of others, and eventually the community writ large, or what he called “the generalized other.” Dewey, meanwhile, worked out a vision of participatory democracy actualized through newspapers, face-to-face conversation, and education. Art too would play a role as a communicative form for Dewey, as it did for Alain Locke, the architect of the Harlem Renaissance and its “New Negro” aesthetic (→ Art as Communication).

First-generation pragmatists influenced a number of early students of media and communication, including Robert Park, Walter Lippmann, Harold Lasswell, Kenneth Burke, Herbert Blumer, Helen McGill Hughes, Hugh Duncan, and C. Wright Mills. As a philosophical movement, though, pragmatism fell on hard times from the late 1930s until the late 1960s, when it began to be revived by a disparate array of thinkers. Ideas of communication coursed through their work, often as key elements in accounts of knowledge, ethics, politics, and culture. The German philosophers Karl-Otto Apel and → Jürgen Habermas led the way. In the late 1960s, Apel wrote introductions to translations of Peirce, and suggested that pragmatism offered “the starting point for a new foundation of the human sciences . . . as sciences of communicative understanding” (1981, 194). Habermas, in his turn, drew upon Mead to develop his widely influential theory of communicative action as that “coordinated not through egocentric calculations of success but through acts of reaching understanding” (1984, 286).

While Habermas, Apel, and others used pragmatism to establish new philosophical foundations, others revived it for postmodernist projects that rejected foundations all together (→ Postmodernism and Communication). None was more influential in this regard than Richard Rorty, whose *Philosophy and the mirror of nature* (1979) did more than any book to place pragmatism on the intellectual agenda again. Abandoning early pragmatism's embrace of science as a model for knowing, Rorty turned instead to art and literature, while rhetoric provided a template for the anti-foundationalist pragmatisms of critics like Stanley Fish. Recent literature on pragmatism extends across many fields, including philosophy, law, criticism, political theory, history, and communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Linguistics ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Post-modernism and Communication ▶ Symbolic Interaction

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# Precision Journalism

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Precision journalism is the use of social and behavioral science → research methods to gather and analyze data, bringing a level of rigor to journalistic work beyond anecdotal evidence. Although it can be practiced without computers, precision journalism is usually a subset of “computer-assisted reporting,” the catch-all term for anything from using the Internet for gathering information to developing newsroom intranets for sharing information among reporters. Another common term is “database journalism,” which focuses on gathering and analyzing large collections of government data.

Precision journalism may expand most in places with high concentrations of computers, where public records exist in electronic form, but internationally journalists practice it using any available techniques if they can get access to information and have sufficient training to carry out an analysis.

## ORIGINS

The term “precision journalism,” and the central idea behind it, were popularized by the 1973 book of the same name written by Knight-Ridder reporter Philip Meyer. He had discovered the journalistic potential of using public opinion research (→ Survey) and other social science methods during a sabbatical year at Harvard University in 1966–1967. He applied what he learned shortly thereafter by doing groundbreaking surveys of participants in race riots in Detroit and Miami. He credits journalism educator Everette Dennis with creating the term precision journalism (Meyer 1991).

Perhaps the earliest precursor to precision journalism occurred on the US presidential election night of 1952. Walter Cronkite, then the Washington correspondent for CBS News (→ Broadcast Journalism; Election Polls and Forecasts; Political Journalists), used a Univac I computer analysis of early returns to predict correctly that Dwight Eisenhower would easily win the presidency.

A pioneering use of the techniques was a 1969 *Miami Herald* study of the Dade County, Florida, criminal justice system. In 1972, the *New York Times* analyzed how arrest statistics differed across New York police precincts. A year later, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* investigative team worked with Meyer to quantify racial bias in criminal sentencing (→ Investigative Reporting). In 1978, Meyer assisted *Miami Herald* reporters (one of whom, Rich Morin, later became survey research editor for the *Washington Post*) in an analysis of property tax records that revealed the undervaluation of expensive homes compared to more modest homes in the Miami area (Cox 2000). These US examples illustrate the initial pattern of major newspapers using advanced computing in a media system that fostered journalistic independence.

Despite a widely read book and successful models, precision journalism was slow to spread in its country of origin or elsewhere during the 1970s for two reasons. First, it required access to large mainframe computers like the Univac or IBM 360, expensive “big



iron” hardware typically available only at large corporations or major universities. Second, most datasets interesting to journalists, such as court records, existed only on paper, requiring tedious hand-entry into a computer before analysis.

In the early 1980s, the spread of microcomputers started with hobbyist machines and then entered small businesses. Microcomputers also began to appear in government offices, leading to increased availability of machine-readable data that did not need keypunch data entry. Precision journalism then had the possibility of international diffusion but lagged behind the spread of its instrumental technologies (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

## DIFFUSION

A tiny scattering of US reporters began using early microcomputers, including machines like the Apple, Atari, Kaypro, and IBM PC, for newsroom work. Some had purchased computers for home hobby use, but then began to realize how the machines could help with their reporting. For instance, a reporter in the *Miami Herald* state capital bureau in 1983 wrote, for his IBM PC in the computer language BASIC, a vote analysis program that would take in a legislative roll-call vote and produce cross-tabulations of the data (→ Statistics, Descriptive) based on political demographics of law-makers (party, race, gender, leadership role, region, campaign funds from special interests, and the like).

The profile of database reporting grew in the mid-1980s when Elliot Jaspin, a reporter for the *Providence Journal*, matched Rhode Island databases of school bus drivers, traffic violators, and drug arrests, finding bus drivers with histories of bad driving records or drug dealing. On another occasion, he used a computer to analyze 35,000 mortgages meant to help lower-income home buyers and discovered many of the best loans going to the children of senior state officials. His stories prompted changes in state licensing procedures for bus drivers and indictments for those who had abused the mortgage program, attracting the attention of investigative reporters around the country (Cox 2000).

Interest in precision journalism skills exploded in 1989 when a young *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reporter named Bill Dedman won a Pulitzer Prize for an investigative project called “The Color of Money.” Computer analysis of mortgage applications showed how banks in the Atlanta area were shunning predominantly African-American neighborhoods, refusing to approve home loans there even for families with good incomes. The stories forced Atlanta banks to stop the practice and prompted US newspapers to do similar analyses in their own areas.

Later that year, Jaspin joined the University of Missouri journalism school and created what became the National Institute of Computer-Assisted Reporting (NICAR), under the wing of Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE), an organization based there (→ Journalism Education; Journalists: Professional Associations). NICAR began training reporters in the techniques of using computers and database software to extract government data from magnetic tapes and analyze it for patterns. At about the same time, the first national conference of reporters focused on precision journalism took place at Indiana University. Centers at other universities followed.

Interest in and application of precision journalism grew rapidly in the United States during the 1990s. In 1992, IRE began computer-assisted reporting training sessions and

panels at its annual conferences. The next year, NICAR held the first of what have become annual conferences that hundreds of reporters now attend. More than a thousand reporters now subscribe to the NICAR-L email listserv.

## METHODS AND APPLICATIONS

Notable precision journalism stories include topics such as natural disasters, school performance, and crime, and apply a range of methods, including surveys (→ Public Opinion Polling), geographic information software (GIS), financial data analysis, and cross-tabulations. Most of these applications of information technologies to → news originated in the United States.

Precision journalism techniques have enhanced the coverage of *natural and human-produced disasters*. The *Miami Herald* won a Pulitzer in 1993 for a computer-aided analysis of the destruction patterns from Hurricane Andrew. Even more extensive computer work went into tracking the diaspora of victims of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005, mapping the debris field from the 2003 loss of the space shuttle *Columbia*, and cataloguing the devastation of the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York City and Washington, DC.

To cover *school performance*, reporters have used statistical software like SPSS to create linear regression models that account for the effect of students' poverty on standardized test scores (→ Test Theory). The same statistical techniques also have uncovered significant cases of teachers and administrators fraudulently inflating classroom test scores in order to qualify for salary bonuses.

To cover the *criminal justice system*, one striking example was the use by the *Dallas Morning News* of logistic regression models to examine racial bias in jury selection by prosecutors and defense attorneys. Curiously, the paper found that both sides were biased in opposite directions, thereby canceling out the effects of the bias. In Brazil, *O Globo* did a computer-aided study of the incarcerations of more than 700 violent criminals, revealing that most had been quietly released long before their sentences were up. Newspapers and their network news partners in major cities around the world regularly do national public opinion polls using scientifically drawn random samples of respondents (→ Sampling, Random). Papers and networks such as the *New York Times*, the → BBC World Service, *Le Monde* in Paris, *El País* in Madrid, *Yomiuri Shinbun* in Japan, and *Folha de Sao Paulo* in Brazil practice this type of precision journalism. Geographic information systems software allows newspapers and television stations to reveal crime patterns, show the impact of toxic waste sites on the poor, and examine overbuilding in areas prone to floods or fires, among other topics. Dutch papers, for instance, used GIS to map the results of the referendum on the European Union constitution.

*Financial data* can uncover scandals involving the dates of stock transactions and trades favorable to insiders. Social → network analysis software can show, for example, the relationships of those who make large donations to the political candidates they support. Other examples include the creation of a database of the personal finances of Brazilian legislators, and analyses of the uncounted votes in Florida's controversial presidential election returns in 2000.

Precision journalism is not only for major investigative projects. Examples of lighter topics include cross-tabulation of pet licenses for most popular breeds and names; the

different traits men and women seek when placing personal ads, the pattern of parking tickets on college campuses, sports ratings for the performance of players and teams, and a study of the profits of Mexican soccer teams.

### INTERNATIONAL SPREAD

Precision journalism may have started in the United States, but the practice is spreading around the world. In 1997, IRE trainers held their first computer-assisted reporting workshops in Europe. The Danish International Center for Analytical Reporting (DICAR) then became an early proselytizer for precision journalism among international reporters. Since then, Global Investigative Journalism conferences in Copenhagen, Amsterdam, and Toronto have provided training in the use of spreadsheets, database programs, mapping, and statistics. *Precision journalism trainers* have conducted workshops in South Korea, China, and Nigeria, as well as in other countries in Latin America and Europe, including Bosnia. After attending the training sessions, reporters have gone on to do important stories despite the difficulty of getting public records in many countries. In a 2006 example, DICAR founder Nils Mulvad organized an international team of reporters to gather and publish a database revealing country-by-country details of the European Union 55-billion-euro farm subsidy program for the first time.

By the beginning of the twenty-first century, precision journalism had evolved from an exotic newsroom specialty into mainstream practice among some reporters in all but the smallest US newspapers as well as television stations. Journalism schools have begun teaching the basics to students. Although institutions and practitioners have emerged slowly in other countries, precision journalism has become widespread. The use of precision journalism techniques can grow as more countries put their census, courts, economic, election, and other data online. Ambitious international reporters can easily discover how the power of precision journalism is being used elsewhere and learn to use those tools in their own work.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Broadcast Journalism ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Investigative Reporting ► Journalism Education ► Journalists: Professional Associations ► Network Analysis ► News ► Political Journalists ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Public Opinion Polling ► Research Methods ► Sampling, Random ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Survey ► Test Theory

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# Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication

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Prejudiced and discriminatory communication is studied in a wide range of social science disciplines, including communication, sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. Some forms, such as hate speech, are explicit, and they are recognized easily by an audience as reflecting prejudiced viewpoints. Other forms are more implicit: neither the speaker nor the audience may be aware that the speaker holds prejudiced views, even though independent evidence demonstrates that such views indeed are held. The conditions under which prejudiced views are expressed, as well as the forms that these communications take, are the subject of this entry (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication; Stereotypes).

## FUNCTIONS OF DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE

Discriminatory language is insidious because of the myriad functions that it serves. Drawing upon the extant literature on prejudice, Ruscher (2001) identifies *five types of functions*: economy of expression, group enhancement/ego defense, social functions, ingroup dominance, and impression management. These functions are not mutually exclusive, and can have similar surface features. For instance, two individuals may have similar stereotypes of lower income individuals and both call them “trailer trash,” but one may use the term when his or her own middle income group is threatened (i.e., ego defense) and the other simply may use the term as a quickly understood social reference (i.e., economy of expression). Specific illustrations of these functions appear below in the discussion of explicitly and implicitly prejudiced language.

The five functions are important to consider because they provide insight into *why* speakers use prejudiced and discriminatory language. For example, *economical expression*, often seen in the short or symbolic labels used for outgroups, helps individuals preserve mental resources. As cognitive misers, social perceivers utilize shortcuts or heuristics whenever possible. Using stereotypes to group people is economical because attention is freed to focus elsewhere. Reliance upon the perceptual shortcuts of stereotypes – and shorthand expressions to reference the stereotyped group – proves both functional and practical. Speakers should use economical expressions when they would use stereotypes: when they are not motivated to think carefully about the targeted group or when they are under time pressure (→ Elaboration Likelihood Model; Information Processing; Stereotypes; Limited Capacity Model).

Discriminatory language also serves as an *ego protector* and as a way to enhance the social status of the ingroup. In many cases, people derive self-esteem from comparing

their own status to that of others. When downward social comparisons are made, people feel good about their status relative to others, and self-esteem can be maintained or even increased. As Thompson and Crocker (1990) demonstrated, social comparisons at the group level may engender intergroup bias, which tends to increase as presumed group threats also increase. Thus, certain forms of discriminatory and prejudiced language emerge when people feel threatened.

Prejudiced language also serves three social functions: avoiding contact, detachment, and delegitimization. By *avoiding interactions* with groups who may be the subject of prejudice or discrimination, people convince themselves that they are nonprejudiced. When people selectively avoid contact with disparaged outgroups, they reduce their opportunities to behave in a discriminatory fashion. Ironically, rather than recognizing their avoidance as discriminatory, individuals who have limited their own opportunities for further discrimination instead boast of their exemplary record in not discriminating in daily interactions.

If contact is inevitable, people may become *verbally and emotionally detached* from certain outgroups, and reference them in sterile ways, if they mention them at all. For example, rather than referencing outgroups in ways that might evoke emotion or action (e.g., “Women are raped in Dafur refugee camps”), detached speakers avoid emotional descriptions (e.g., “There’s unrest in Sudan”). Finally, *delegitimization* is the most severe social function of prejudiced language. Bar-Tal (1989) notes that this process involves rejection based on the perceived “less than human” status of a group or individual. People use language to communicate these perceived differences to others, which in turn justifies an outgroup’s low status and mistreatment. Discriminatory and prejudiced language that serves social functions appears most when a group benefits from social distinctions, such as during wartime or periods of scarce resources.

A fourth function served by discriminatory language is *dominance maintenance*. In order to maintain power hierarchies, privileged groups attempt to guard other groups’ access to certain resources. Privileged groups may blatantly prevent or subtly interfere with certain ethnic minority groups and women acquiring or maintaining high-status positions. By blocking avenues to access, the ingroup protects and maintains its power. The more powerful ingroup may, for example, control the news media or determine which dialects and languages are appropriate for formal discourse. A more subtle example in interpersonal communication involves the use of “tags” to imply what positions are descriptively or prescriptively normal. Unless otherwise specified, listeners often assume “doctor” references a white man, and speakers’ use of terms such as “lady doctor” emphasize this assumption. Such tags implicitly can communicate both how speakers believe the world is and how it should be.

Finally, using discriminatory language allows people to *maintain their nonprejudiced self-perceptions*. Social sanctions discourage people from openly expressing prejudiced ideals; consequently, people use language to deny or mask their prejudice. To this end, people may use bifurcations (verbally distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable subgroups of the outgroup) or concessions (disparaging qualities about the outgroup that are acknowledged in the occasional ingroup member). Alternatively, prejudiced language can serve → impression-management functions by playing to the audience’s presumed opinions: a speaker who wishes to be viewed favorably will adjust his or her

degree of explicitly prejudiced language to match the audience's presumed views of the outgroup.

## EXPLICITLY PREJUDICED AND DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE

Explicitly prejudiced and discriminatory communication often involves derogatory comments about an outgroup or outgroup member. Sometimes these comments comprise brief group epithets, whereas sometimes they are lengthy narratives about an outgroup's alleged negative behavior.

Group epithets comprise short, usually negative, labels applied to outgroups and individual outgroup members. Sometimes called ethnophaulisms (from *ethnos* for "nationality" or "a people" and *phaulizo* "to disparage"), these slurs provide economical expressions for outgroups. Historical examples include "frogs" for Frenchmen, "iron maidens" for professional women, "pickaninnies" for African-Americans, and "crackers" for lower income rural whites. Derogatory labels provide insight into how the speaker – and his or her own group – views members of an outgroup. First and foremost, the use of a label implies that the speaker views the target as an outgroup member rather than as an individual. Second, the speaker views the target negatively, and is willing to let listeners infer that negativity; even speakers ignorant of a label's meaning will use it in order to convey negativity.

Derogatory labels also serve a *social function*, insofar as they can indicate social roles or delegitimize group members from the larger society. The speaker essentially tells listeners to stay away from labeled outgroup members. The most extreme form of delegitimization involves the reconstruction of outgroup members into less-than-human outcasts. In wartime or during periods of "ethnic cleansing," for example, outgroup members are referenced with dehumanizing terms such as "gooks," "social diseases," "savages," and "animals." Bar-Tal (1989) notes that extreme delegitimization helps justify atrocities such as slavery, internment, and extermination.

Derogatory labels for outgroups may be used when ingroup members are communicating among themselves, or they may be used in communications intended for outgroup members to overhear or inadvertently read. Most people recognize derogatory labels as being intentionally expressed and potentially harmful; such labels epitomize the subjective understanding of hate speech. From a *legal standpoint*, however, derogatory labels may not meet stringent criteria for hate speech. In the United States, for example, the first constitutional amendment protects freedom of speech; hate speech is an exception, but is not simply hateful language. The criteria for hate speech are that the words threaten an immediate breach of the peace, are intended to hurt message recipients, and that exposure to these words is inescapable to their target (i.e., "fighting words"). Scrawling derogatory labels in public locations (e.g., graffiti) is unlikely to meet these stringent criteria, although obfuscating the source and potentially affecting more recipients actually may be more destructive than "fighting words" (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms).

Although few objective truths about outgroups are easily proven, social scientists regularly find that people prefer to believe that their own viewpoints are veridical. With respect to views of outgroups, validation can be provided through a wide variety of storytelling methods. In both casual and formal communication settings, speakers

provide alleged evidence for why certain outgroups deserve to be viewed negatively; speakers may be indoctrinating new group members or may be validating the views of veteran group members. For example, van Dijk (1988) reports a storytelling session by a Dutch couple who relay a tale about their Turkish neighbor. The story details the slaughtering of a sheep in a bathtub during Ramadan, pieces of the sheep becoming lodged in the drain, and the eventual arrival of the police. In recounting this explicitly prejudiced communication, the couple clearly is aware that their impression of the outgroup is negative. But because they have presented factual disparaging evidence, they also presumably expect the listener to share their view, or at least to appreciate why they have the right to hold it.

In recent years, stories about outgroup members have circulated on weblogs (→ Blogger) and → electronic mail. Occasionally, the stories include digitally manipulated photographs or are attributed to an expert. Although these stories share a similar purpose – demonstrating an outgroup’s abominable behavior – the → Internet medium allows communication to be rapid and widespread. Prejudiced communication over the Internet also has ideal features for impression management. Bloggers can post anonymously or through a pseudonym. Alternatively, individuals who forward stories through electronic mail can include comments that mask their own opinion (e.g., “I didn’t write this . . . just passing it along”). Electronically shared stories quickly can develop into urban legends. One example – which has been falsified – provides a detailed testimonial about unsanitary and aggressive behavior of a busload of New Orleans evacuees at a Texas rest stop following Hurricane Katrina. Like the interpersonally communicated story of the Turkish neighbor, the electronic story of evacuees helps ease guilt about the Hurricane Katrina catastrophe and justifies social distance (→ Online Media).

Discriminatory language also may be couched in terms of *jokes or purportedly humorous emails*. In a sense, prejudiced jokes are a type of storytelling about disparaged outgroups. Prejudiced humor serves many roles, including entertainment, promoting ingroup camaraderie, and expressing shared attitudes and values. Depending on the particulars of the joke, this form of prejudiced communication may serve group enhancement functions (e.g., disparaging the outgroup), social functions (e.g., prescriptions for social interaction), dominance maintenance (e.g., proving why the outgroup deserves its inferior social status), or impression management (e.g., the audience will think more favorably of the person who sent it). Outgroup-disparaging humor also serves economical expression in the sense that it can bolster the stereotypes held by recipients, rendering them stronger and more easily retrieved for use.

### **IMPLICITLY PREJUDICED AND DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE**

Prejudiced and discriminatory communication also can assume more subtle implicit forms; speakers of these communication patterns may not even recognize that they are betraying their own prejudices and listeners also may not realize that the language is discriminatory.

Several types of implicit discriminatory communication patterns serve the *ego-defensive/group enhancement function*. For example, researchers find that first person plural pronouns (e.g., we) are associated quickly with positive feelings about the ingroup,

and are used when referencing the ingroup. Cialdini et al. (1976) found that when the home sports team won a game, people used expressions such as “we won,” thereby enhancing themselves through connection to the team. Conversely, people used expressions such as “they lost” when the home team lost a game, thereby protecting self-esteem by distancing themselves. Thus, consistent with the ego-defensive/group enhancement function of discriminatory language, people desire to see their own group in a favorable light; when they cannot easily do so, they find a way to distance themselves from it.

The general preference to view the ingroup in a favorable fashion in part underlies intergroup bias. Consistent with intergroup bias, people tend to see their own groups as possessing more favorable characteristics and producing more superior work than other groups. In communication, intergroup bias is seen clearly in the *linguistic intergroup bias* (LIB), initially investigated by Maass (1999) and her colleagues. Generally speaking, the LIB reflects a communication pattern in which the behaviors of the ingroup are portrayed more favorably than the behaviors of an outgroup. When an ingroup member performs a positive behavior, the speaker characterizes the behavior abstractly, as though the behavior is indicative of the actor’s personality.

For example, if an ingroup member donates money to charity, the speaker might say, “she is generous.” Using this adjective implies that the actor performs similar actions across time and different situations. In contrast, if an outgroup member performs the same behavior, however, the speaker concretely might say, “she gave some money today,” which fails to imply generosity across time and situations. For negative behaviors, the LIB shows the converse: negative behavior performed by an ingroup member is characterized concretely (e.g., “He did not tell the truth about Paul”) whereas negative behavior performed by an outgroup member is characterized abstractly (e.g., “He is dishonest”). Because so many of the stereotypic qualities that people believe about outgroups are negative, abstract characterizations often serve to bolster and preserve stereotypes.

Among the most researched indicators of intergroup bias in communication settings, the LIB shows considerable generalizability across languages, communication mediums, and type of intergroup relationship. The pattern has been demonstrated in multiple languages in various countries, including Italy, Spain, the United States, and China. It also emerges orally, in writing, and when people select among written descriptions. Finally, the pattern emerges in a variety of intergroup settings, such as with ethnic, regional, and political outgroups, age cohorts, personal relationships (e.g., enemies vs. friends), and rival teams. Perhaps most interesting, the bias can be exacerbated or mitigated by motivational and dispositional factors. Threats to self-esteem or high levels of dispositional prejudice can exacerbate the LIB, whereas the motivation to be accurate can mitigate the bias. Research suggests that most people do not realize that they are displaying any bias in their communication patterns.

Besides the degree of linguistic abstraction for specific behaviors, implicitly prejudiced communication also emerges in *how speakers characterize events*. For example, in their delineation of how powerful people camouflage the control that they wield, Ng & Bradac (1993) proposed how speakers rely upon a number of linguistic masking devices; these non-mutually exclusive devices include generalization and permutation. Generalizations can include the use of adjectives to characterize behaviors (i.e., as in the LIB), but also comprise generalizations to entire groups (e.g., “People on welfare don’t want to work”)



or to unspecified events (e.g., “Immigrants cause a lot of problems”). Permutation relies upon the fact that listeners typically assign greater responsibility to the subject of the sentence than to factors later in the sentence. A statement such as “The defendant lied to the judge” implicitly assigns more blame to the defendant than a statement such as “The judge was lied to by the defendant.” As with the LIB, the groups to which speakers belong and their prejudices can influence their use of linguistic masking devices (→ Power in Intergroup Settings).

Implicitly discriminatory language also emerges in whether language is inclusive or prescribes what is normal. Organizations that address invitations for social events to “employees and their wives” send a subtle message to female employees, unmarried individuals, same-sex couples, and couples in unformalized relationships: although diversity may be tolerated, it is not expected or celebrated. Gender-biased language also sends messages about what is normal. The tags (e.g., lady doctor) discussed earlier are one example. Another example involves use and perceptions of gender-biased terms such as stewardess instead of flight attendant or chairman instead of chair. Research shows that individual differences in sexist attitudes are linked to the use and perceptions of gender-biased language, suggesting that it can serve a group-dominance function. Finally, subtle discrimination in language can be found in what is *not* said. For instance, men may ask a female co-worker her opinion on a tie or retail store, but may fail to include her in discussions of football (→ Gender and Discourse).

Although most widely considered with respect to gender, language that prescribes normalcy extends to bias toward other groups. For example, speakers may include an ethnic tag for historically white male positions (e.g., black doctor). Whites may solicit computer advice from an Asian colleague. Job recruitment websites may be devoid of photographs depicting applicants over 45, suggesting older adults are unwelcome and consequently deterring applications. Implicitly prejudiced communication therefore can be subtle, barely noticed, and far-reaching.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Elaboration Likelihood Model ► Electronic Mail ► Gender and Discourse ► Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ► Impression Management ► Information Processing: Stereotypes ► Internet ► Limited Capacity Model ► Online Media ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Social Stereotyping and Communication ► Stereotypes

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## Presence

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Presence, in its broadest sense, is a media user’s state that is characterized by the illusion of nonmediation. If present, media users are temporarily unaware of the mediated origin of their experience. Their thoughts, feelings, and behavior tend to react to the media content as if the portrayed scenery, persons, or objects were real, because the general artificiality of media imitation produced by human-made technology is not recognized (International Society for Presence Research 2001; → Media Equation Theory).

As a psychological state, presence is determined by the interplay of both situational or enduring individual factors, and environmental factors, which include qualities of the media technology and aspects of the content. The potential of the media technology to evoke illusions of nonmediation is addressed as its “immersive quality” (Slater & Steed 2000). The greater the likelihood that technological aspects or content factors foster the formation of presence, the more immersive is a medium. As any kind of media experience builds on subjective → perceptions, however, low-immersive media might also initiate a state of presence if users are susceptible to forget about the illusory origins of their experiences (for relevant individual factors, like a person’s willingness to suspend disbelief, see Wirth et al. 2007; → Suspension of Disbelief).

The umbrella term “presence” has been picked up in diverse fields of communication and related disciplines. As a result of the diverse perspectives that have applied the term, presence has been understood in different ways. A review by Lombard and Ditton (1997) lists six different meanings, ranging from “presence as social richness” to “presence as transportation” (→ Transportation Theory) to “presence as medium as social actor.” In general, a state of presence can occur in two distinct ways (Lombard & Ditton 1997): (1) “the medium can appear to be . . . transparent . . . as a large open window, with the user and the medium content (objects and entities) sharing the same physical environment” (invisible medium) or “the medium can appear to be transformed into something other than a medium” (transformed medium). In the context of presence that builds on an invisible medium, a popular classification is to distinguish *spatial presence* (sometimes addressed as physical presence or telepresence) from *social presence*.

## SPATIAL PRESENCE

Spatial presence can be defined as “a binary experience, during which perceived self-location and, in most cases, perceived action possibilities are connected to a mediated spatial environment, and mental capacities are bound by the mediated environment instead of reality” (Wirth et al. 2007, 497). In short, spatial presence refers to a user’s “*feeling of being there*” in the mediated environment (Biocca 1997; Riva et al. 2003; Lee 2004). Research on spatial presence evolved in technology-oriented disciplines like computer science and engineering. The term was first coined by Minsky (1980). Particularly, researchers concerned with interactive teleworking applications and sophisticated virtual reality systems applied the construct to their studies (Steuer 1992; → Computer–User Interaction; Virtual Reality). Spatial presence was deemed relevant as it was thought to affect a user’s task performance (Barfield et al. 1995). Some definitions that originated from this perspective characterized spatial presence solely on the basis of technological determinants. Among the most often cited factors are the degree of interactivity provided by a medium, and the number and balance of human sensory channels addressed by a medium (Steuer 1992; Biocca 1997).

More recently, the construct of spatial presence has also received the attention of researchers who are concerned with the description and explanation of experiential phenomena of media exposure and → media effects (→ Exposure to Communication Content). In this way, the perspective changed from rather technology-driven approaches to rather psychological interpretations (Ijsselstein et al. 2000). With the shift to a psychological perspective, the user’s → attention to media content emerged as one of the central determinants of spatial presence (Draper et al. 1998). More recently, → emotions and arousal have been addressed as important determinants of the formation of spatial presence as well (Baumgartner et al. 2006; → Excitation and Arousal). With researchers from more diverse backgrounds starting to work on the construct, not only highly immersive media like virtual reality systems were deemed capable of evoking spatial presence, but also low-immersive media, for example, books (the so-called “book problem”). In sum, in the past the concept of spatial presence has been studied in the context of quite different media, like virtual reality environments, → video games, the → Internet, → television, and → books (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception).

Throughout the past two decades, related approaches to nonmediation phenomena that emerged in other disciplines were continuously incorporated in research on spatial presence, particularly the study of transportation, which originated in literature research, conceptualizations of a user’s → involvement with media content (Schubert et al. 2001), flow experiences (Draper et al. 1998), and explications about the perceived reality of authentic or fictional media content (Lee 2004; → Media and Perceptions of Reality). Today, the existing conceptualizations still differ in the way they define spatial presence as psychological state, for example, in terms of the dimensionality of the construct. Accordingly, they also highlight different determinants. For example, Schubert et al. (2001) argue that a user’s experience of self-location, his or her involvement, and the perceived realness of the media content resemble three dimensions of spatial presence. In a more recent conceptualization, Wirth et al. (2007) argue that involvement and realness resemble determinants, while they regard the user’s self-location and perceived action possibilities as actual dimensions of the construct. As the concept of spatial presence has been addressed

from very heterogeneous areas of research, an interdisciplinary shared theoretical understanding that clearly distinguishes determinants, dimensions, and outcomes is still a major challenge of this line of research.

A broad range of measurements to assess spatial presence have been developed in the past (see [www.presence-research.org](http://www.presence-research.org) for an overview; Laarni et al. in press). Certainly, the variety of theoretical approaches to spatial presence also accounts in part for the diversity of existing measurements (Schuemie et al. 2001). Post-test questionnaires are applied immediately after the exposure to a medium and have been the most common way to measure spatial presence in the past. The most popular questionnaires include the Presence Questionnaire, the ITC Sense of Presence Inventory, and the I-Group Presence Questionnaire. Recent methodological issues were concerned with the → validity of existing questionnaires to assess spatial presence (Schuemie et al. 2001; Insko 2003), as well as with the different factor structures underlying existing paper-and-pencil measurements (→ Factor Analysis). Next to questionnaires, other subjective methods like think-aloud have been applied to study spatial presence as well. Also, a multitude of objective measurements have been introduced in the past, like psychophysiological measures, postural responses, and functional magnetic resonance imaging.

## **SOCIAL PRESENCE**

Social presence can be defined as a “sense of being together” with one or more other social beings, although the others are fictional (like characters in a science-fiction movie) or mediated appearances of real counterparts (e.g., through camera recordings or as avatars; Biocca et al. 2003; → Avatars and Agents). The conceptualization of the term is still a little bit vague and the construct combines different aspects and outcomes of interpersonal encounters (Schroeder 2002).

The term was first introduced to the realm of media technologies by Short et al. (1976) in the context of mediated interpersonal communication. Social presence was defined as “the salience of the other in a mediated communication and the consequent salience of [the] interpersonal interactions” (Short et al. 1976, 65). The authors used the term for the users’ evaluation of the extent to which different communication media convey social cues. Accordingly, social presence was not conceptualized as an experience but rather as an attitude toward a medium that guides → selective exposure behavior. Similar notions of social presence have been pursued in successive theoretical conceptualizations of interpersonal communication media, like the media richness theory.

In the context of virtual reality research, the term has been applied to describe the sense of being together in collaborative environments. Thus, the term changed to describe rather an experience than an attitude. For example, Biocca et al. (2003) construe social presence as a multidimensional experience that involves the feeling of sharing a space with another social being, being emotionally and cognitively connected to another person, and feeling reciprocally engaged in an interaction. Bente et al. (2005) argue that social presence builds on shared meaning and develops as intimacy, awareness, understanding, and contingency throughout the interaction. Still other researchers regard social presence as an experience, but argue for a distinction between feeling present with another entity and feeling connected to another entity.

So far only a few measurements have been developed for the study of social presence. Short et al. (1976) simply applied four semantic differential scales to assess the social qualities of a communication medium perceived by users (insensitive–sensitive, cold–warm, impersonal–personal, unsociable–sociable). Other recent paper-and-pencil tools have been introduced by Biocca et al. (2003) and others.

## **AUGMENTED REALITY**

A reality is augmented, if in a real surrounding one or more objects or social entities are perceived as real that actually are displayed or imitated by human-made technology (Azuma 1997). Thus, in contrast to states of presence that build on an “invisible medium” (see above), in augmented reality it is not the media that create the illusion of an environment. Rather, the real environment of the user is enhanced by the mediated illusion of an object or social entity. Lombard and Ditton (1997) speak of a medium that is transformed into an object or social entity that is erroneously perceived as real. If nonmediated sensations occur this way, they are addressed as “presence as augmented reality.” For example, a hologram imitating a shelf in a real living-room could create an augmented reality. Another example would be glasses that enrich the perception of the real world by adding simulated objects or social beings to the perceived scenery.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Book ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ Emotion ▶ Escapism ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Identification ▶ Internet ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Equation Theory ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Perception ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Suspension of Disbelief ▶ Television ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Validity ▶ Video Games ▶ Virtual Reality

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## Press Conference

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Newsmakers arrange a *press conference* to announce news to groups of reporters. The meetings vary in size, setting, and subject. Some detail plans and decisions. Others promise surprise revelations. A common feature distinguishes all press conferences: the opportunity for reporters to question a newsmaker.

The most familiar are those of presidents, prime ministers, and crisis managers during key events, but smaller press conferences supply much of the information the public

receives as news. The thousands of briefings, councils, and exchanges that the public seldom sees generate the daily flow of news. In most countries, the press conferences of government officials, dignitaries, business leaders, activists, scientists, politicians, and entertainers shape national news (→ News Sources). In local communities, the same is true of the press conferences that civic leaders, police and emergency personnel, arriving celebrities, and sports figures hold.

For their sponsors, as well as for those obliged or impelled to become newsmakers, press conferences are opportunities to reach the public. Not all the information they provide is urgent and vital. Press conferences are first and foremost a public relations device that fails unless it supplies news (→ Public Relations: Media Influence). Except for those conferences broadcast live, the public knows about press conferences only through reporters' later news accounts. Newsmakers cannot control what unfolds in a press conference, given the uncertainty of reporters' questions, which can foul the messages newsmakers seek to convey.

For reporters, press conferences are essential but not without constraints. Research shows that reporters dislike press conferences for forcing them to share information with competitors, but appreciate them for allowing direct access to those making news (Bantz 1985). Alert reporters watch for angles and leads that might later inspire a story that will scoop the competition or win an award.

Press conferences are characteristic of older democratic countries, notably the United States, where governments do not control the press. Only in societies with many news organizations are press conferences needed. Press conferences are rare in authoritarian societies where press systems are monolithic and run by the state (Frederick 1993). The *first press conferences* were convened around the beginning of the twentieth century when newspapers first gave regular assignments to writers and correspondents (→ Newspaper, History of). In the United States, President Theodore Roosevelt popularized press sessions. His famed pulpit for Progressive Era reforms was the talks he gave to the reporters assigned the White House beat (McKerns 1990). US president Franklin Roosevelt developed the *modern press conference* format during the New Deal programs in 1933. Seeking favorable publicity, Roosevelt invited question-and-answer sessions (Winfield 1990). Even so, by mid-century, when Harry Truman was US president, only newspaper and wire service reporters could attend. Microphones were prohibited, and reporters had to crowd around the president's Oval Office desk (Startt 1990).

Dramatic changes came with the *arrival of television* in the 1950s (→ Television News). Under US president Dwight Eisenhower, press conferences became public events. The rules changed, and reporters sat in large auditoriums. The first televised press conference, with Eisenhower, was broadcast in 1954. Early TV press conferences were recorded on film. Finally in 1961, US president John Kennedy permitted live cameras. His appearances captivated the public, and every succeeding president followed his example by doing press conferences on live TV (Allen 1993).

A major *criticism of press conferences* – that newsmakers arrange media events for the cameras – emerged because of television. US president Ronald Reagan, a former actor, staged press conferences with Hollywood-like effects. Engaging TV communication, directed not at reporters but at opinion leaders and home viewers, contributed to Reagan's popularity. News reporters could not question him effectively (Donaldson

1987). Other leaders including Canadian prime minister Pierre Trudeau, British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, and Russian president Boris Yeltsin were known for staging press conferences with popular and charismatic appeal.

The presence of cameras influences even the most routine press sessions. Only major press conferences attract live TV coverage, but almost all aim for televised accounts and recaps on the evening news. Research shows that reporters and their editors reduce and frequently eliminate coverage of press conferences they perceive as media events (Berkowitz 1993; Harmon 1989). Studies further suggest that the largest news organizations most often compress or dismiss press events (Carroll 1986). To help insure coverage, newsmakers answer reporters with rehearsed statements appropriate for TV sound bites. They also attend to the needs that Reagan instilled, for staging and for looking at the camera so that they appear to speak to the viewer (Hilton 1990).

Around the world, press conferences are spurred by policies that seek privatization and media multiplicity (→ Privatization of the Media). In Japan and many Asian countries, and particularly in western Europe, monolithic state-operated public broadcasters are joined by numerous private networks and channels (Dragomir & Reljic 2005). In the UK, televised press conferences were not common until the 1980s and 1990s, when newsmakers needed to gather reporters not only from the BBC but from Sky-TV, newly expanded independent channels, and other private TV news providers.

Changes within the US media stemming from the fragmentation and decline of newspaper and broadcast audiences have encouraged *alternatives to press conferences*. When print, broadcast, and online news providers employ a common newsroom, newsmakers can give announcements to the one reporter that several media share (Quinn & Filak 2005). In another trend, the media have divided news staffs into specialty teams, with the aim of targeting particular demographic groups. Instead of convening a mass gathering of reporters, newsmakers now channel information to appropriate specialists.

Changes in *media technology* have accompanied the evolution of press conferences. Little research has been conducted on the impact of recent technology. Yet from the Internet, reporters can acquire information with superior detail to that packaged in press sessions. Compelling questions for scholars relate to newsmakers' uses of new technology. Newsmakers can avoid the ordeal of convening reporters in some situations, communicating directly to the public through websites, weblogs, streaming audio and video, and other innovations, many of them incorporating interactivity (→ Technology and Communication; Interactivity, Concept of).

Despite changing arrangements and newer techniques, press conferences are still useful. They remain the standard means for news exchange, because of their convenience, expedience, and success at disseminating information widely. Press conferences can enlarge the esteem of organizations and leaders, and so newsmakers continue to meet the press. Reporters continue to attend for the volume of news and the interaction that the meetings provide.

SEE ALSO: ► Interactivity, Concept of ► Journalism ► News Sources ► Newspaper, History of ► Political Communication ► Privatization of the Media ► Public Relations: Media Influence ► Technology and Communication ► Television News



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## **Prevention and Communication**

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The main objective of prevention is to avoid diseases by reducing risks that may negatively affect health (→ Health Communication). The prevention approach complements the health promotion approach. While prevention intends to avoid disease and reduce risks, health promotion focuses on resources that sustain the opportunity of healthy living. Even though the two concepts are sometimes used synonymously, lately the prevention approach has been proffered as independent of the health promotion concept. Both prevention and health promotion aim at a modification of attitudes and behavior by specific communication strategies to raise the empowerment of individuals. The problem is that not all individuals are interested in health-related topics per se. In most cases, information is sought when people are directly or indirectly (e.g., through a family member or friend) concerned with a disease.

### **TYPES OF PREVENTION**

There exist different typologies of prevention classified by either stages of health or illness or by target audience. For example, some have differentiated between *behavioral and/or*

*environmental prevention*. While behavioral prevention concentrates on personal factors that influence health-related behaviors of an individual, environmental prevention focuses on factors that are external to the individual, such as living conditions and the opportunities to enact health behaviors such as legislation (e.g., with regard to drug use), economic and ecological preconditions for healthy living and so forth.

Another popular and often cited typology is the trichotomy of *primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention*, which considers different stages of health and/or illness. Primary prevention aims at people who are not yet affected by a disease and encompasses broad population-wide communication strategies. Secondary prevention strategies address people in a very early stage of a disease to minimize and/or avoid health risks. Tertiary prevention measures are as a general rule targeted at those who already have established diseases to avoid aggravation and complications.

In 1994, a similar classification system was proposed by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in the United States. This classification makes the distinction between *universal, selective, and indicated prevention interventions*. In comparison to the former classification, the IOM classification focuses on the general target group of a prevention intervention, not on the underlying objective. Universal prevention concentrates on the broad population to prevent risky and unhealthy behavior. The main objective is to provide information and improve the individual skills for healthy living. Selective prevention addresses special risk groups. Indicated prevention aims at individuals with existing risky and/or unhealthy behavior, e.g., drug abuse.

## MEDIA IN HEALTH CONTEXT

Apart from different typologies of prevention, different levels of communication strategies can be differentiated: → interpersonal communication, communication in and/or from health organizations, and communication via mass media. Most people talk about health-related issues with their doctor and/or family members and have the highest confidence in personal advisers (Identity Foundation 2001; → Patient–Provider Communication). But also the media have become a very important source of health-related information and a communication platform for health-related problems and support. In particular, health-related information TV programs are of high interest and are attributed with a high level of trust, followed by the pharmacist and health-related books (Identity Foundation 2001). Even health organizations (e.g., hospitals) are important for preventive strategies.

The role of media in health has been a subject of controversy. Media are an important source of information on health, and casual or incidental use of media is associated with people's knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (Finnegan & Viswanath 2002, 328). On the other hand, some have focused on the harmful effects of media, such as the effects of → video games and media violence on aggressive behavior in children (→ Computer Games and Child Development; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). The role of media in health promotion through health campaigns has also been widely studied (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in; Health Campaigns for Development).

One important problem in connection with health communication strategies is that health information is often not sought until a health-related problem has occurred

(→ Information Scanning; Information Seeking). Some media, such as the → Internet, assist in active seeking of health information (→ Health Communication and the Internet), while others, such as → television and → radio, may expose people to health information through routine use (Dutta-Bergman 2004). Media that lead to passive or casual use, nonetheless, are useful in reaching individuals who may be either uninterested in or not actively seeking health information. A major goal and challenge of prevention is to reach individuals with preventive or health-related information before a disease has developed. Media, with their broad reach and appeal, can draw attention, arouse interest, and provide alternative ways of enacting behaviors.

In recent times, the amount and range of health information has increased enormously in a variety of media, such as television and the Internet, and in different genres, such as → soap operas, telenovelas, comedy programs, music videos, talk shows, and public service advertisements, among others (→ Broadcast Talk). These programs address a variety of topics, such as nutrition and eating disorders, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and alcohol and tobacco, among others. But the presence of health-related information in the media is no guarantee that individuals will change their attitudes or behaviors. A number of individual and situational characteristic influence media effects.

### EXAMPLES FOR COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Different preventive communication strategies can be distinguished: public information campaigns, health journalism, and entertainment education, among others.

*Information campaigns* encompass different communicative activities to influence individual knowledge, → attitude, → meaning, and/or behavior. Social marketing is an example of an activity that promotes social or health messages in the same way as commercial marketing (→ Social Marketing). Different promotional activities and media channels are combined to reach the target audience. Typical vehicles are posters at public places, public service announcements in different media, as well as hotlines and events. Information campaigns offer the opportunity to reach a broad target group, but it is difficult to communicate complex and sophisticated information. To get the attention of the audience, it is necessary to promote consonant and creative messages in a cumulative way. A related strategy is “media advocacy,” which addresses not individuals but decision-makers such as legislators, policymakers, and media personnel, among others (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication). For example, the *Harvard Alcohol Project*, which promoted the concept of the designated driver, is often cited as a successful example of media advocacy.

*Health journalism* has an important role with regard to the communication of health-related or preventive messages (→ Health Communication and Journalism). Journalists “translate” relevant scientific information for a broad audience under an enormous time pressure (Viswanath 2005, 833). They also influence the agenda concerning health-related and preventive topics (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Media coverage of health is often criticized by scientists as superficial or inaccurate and often suffers from the disadvantage of reaching only the educated and those who are already interested in the topic (→ Communication Inequality).

*Entertainment education (E-E)* combines entertainment and education to promote pro-social messages drawing from such theories as → social cognitive theory (→ Entertainment Education). Using long-running entertainment programs, the E-E approach uses positive and negative role models to promote the desired and/or the undesired attitudes and/or behavior. Transitional characters represent the viewer's perspective, which changes over time in the desired direction. In E-E programs the health relative message is mediated in an indirect, almost subtle way. Parasocial interaction and identification with the positive or transitional character might raise the viewer's sense of self-efficacy to solve problems or to change individual behavior. Several evaluation studies have shown that the implementation of health relative, preventive messages is successful and might change attitudes under certain circumstances (Singhal et al. 2004). The idea is to encourage interpersonal discussion and reflection about the presented topics and positions as a precondition for attitude change and behavior modification. The E-E strategy offers the opportunity to reach especially those who are not interested in health-related topics and who are often hard to reach with preventive messages, e.g., adolescents or persons with a lower level of education, who are generally less information oriented. Relevant factors for the success of an E-E project are the viewer preferences (preferred medium, format, and genre) and the accurate implementation of the intended message. Media offer many opportunities for preventive purposes (Papa et al. 2000). As yet, there is no evidence that the integration of pro-social or health-related messages in entertainment generates negative reactions among the audience.

## CHALLENGES

Success in prevention requires several considerations. First, the access to valid health information for different social groups has to be assured. There still exist both health and information disparities with regard to socio-economic status (→ Knowledge Gap Effects). Therefore, special communication strategies are needed to reach the different groups and to close the gap between them (Viswanath 2005).

Second, the perception of the message as the most important precondition for following cognitive processes has to be considered: age, gender, socio-economic status, educational background, and health conditions are relevant factors which have influence on media use, and access to and perception of health-related messages (Viswanath 2005). Third, individual understanding and interpretation of a message have to be taken into account. There has been a shift to an individual perspective and qualitative studies that give important hints for the construction of preventive messages. Even participative approaches offer great potential and should be regarded in the future (Singhal et al. 2004).

Communication strategies have to be seen in a context of a varied media landscape, which consists of different and sometimes inconsistent, contradictory messages (Sherry 2002; Viswanath 2005). The success of a strategy might increase if the program is embedded in a media environment that is hospitable to the communicated message. Apart from intentional communication measures, also the unintended effects of media programs have to be considered. The resonance they generate can only be investigated in long-term media effect studies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Campaigns for Development ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Health Communication and Journalism ▶ Information Scanning ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ Patient–Provider Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Social Cognitive Theory ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Television ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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# Priming Theory

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The priming effect refers to media-induced changes in voters' reliance on particular issues as criteria for evaluating government officials. The more prominent any given issue in the news, the greater the impact of voters' opinions about that issue on their evaluations of government. The priming effect creates volatility in public opinion, especially during election campaigns (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on; Election Campaign Communication). As casual observers of the political scene, ordinary citizens only notice events and issues that are in the news; those not covered by the media might as well not exist. What is noticed becomes the principal basis for the public's beliefs about the state of the country. Thus, the relative prominence of issues in the news is the major determinant of the public's perceptions of the problems facing the nation (see, e.g., Iyengar and Kinder 1987).

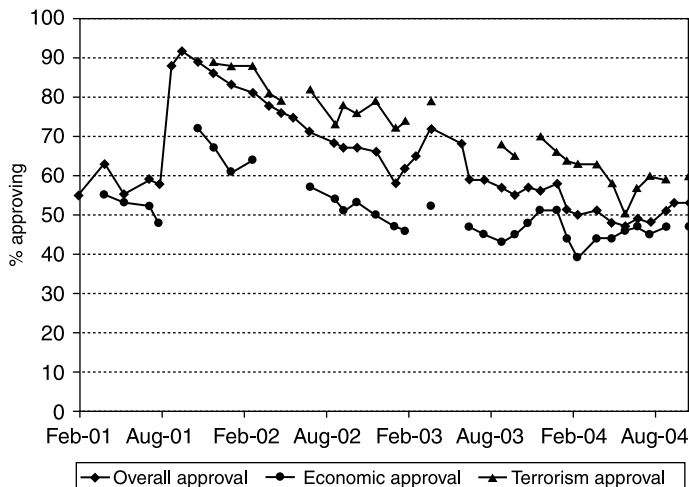
The relationship between news coverage and public concern has come to be known as the → agenda-setting effect. Over the past four decades, agenda-setting effects have been replicated in numerous studies. Cross-sectional → surveys, panel surveys, aggregate-level → time-series analyses of public opinion, and laboratory experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory) all converge on the finding that issues in the news are the issues that people care about.

## PRIMING AS AN EXTENSION OF AGENDA SETTING

Beyond merely affecting the salience of issues, news coverage influences the criteria the public uses to evaluate political candidates and institutions. A simple extension of agenda setting, priming describes a process by which individuals assign weights to their opinions on particular issues when they make summary political evaluations. In general, the evidence indicates that when asked to appraise politicians and public figures, voters weight opinions on particular policy issues in proportion to the perceived salience of these issues: the more salient the issue, the greater the impact of opinions about that issue on the appraisal (→ Issue Voting; for reviews of priming research, see Miller & Krosnick 2000; Druckman 2004).

Their dynamic nature make priming effects especially important during election campaigns. Consider the case of the 1980 American presidential campaign. Less than a week before the election, polls showed Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan to be dead even. Suddenly, the Iranian government offered a last-minute proposal for releasing the Americans held hostage for over a year. President Carter suspended his campaign to devote his full attention to these negotiations. The hostage story became the major news item of the day. The prominence of the hostage story caused voters to seize upon the candidates' ability to control terrorism as a basis for their vote choice (Iyengar & Kinder 1987). Given his unimpressive record on this issue while in office, the effect proved disastrous for President Carter.

Similar volatility in the state of the public agenda bedeviled President George H. Bush in the 1992 election. One year previously, he had presided over the successful liberation



**Figure 1** Ingredients of President Bush's popularity  
*Source:* Gallup CBS News Polls and Gallup polls, 2001–2004

of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation and his popularity ratings reached 90 percent. But as news coverage of the economy gradually drowned out news about the Gulf conflict, voters came to prefer Clinton over Bush. Had the media played up military or security issues, of course, the tables would have been turned.

The most recent instance of priming comes from the post-9/11 era. Prior to September 11, President George W. Bush's overall popularity was closely tied to perceptions of his performance on economic issues (see Fig. 1). After September 11 and extending through 2003, however, Bush's popularity was more closely tied to assessments of his performance on terrorism. Terrorism and national security had replaced the economy as the yardstick for judging Bush's performance. It was only in 2004, after the onset of the presidential campaign, that economic performance and overall performance were again linked. This finding is reinforced by a time-series analysis of Bush's popularity (see Iyengar & McGrady 2007), which demonstrates that following the 9/11 attacks, news coverage of terrorism became the single most important determinant of Bush's public approval.

### ANCILLARY CONDITIONS FOR PRIMING EFFECTS

Media priming effects have been documented in a series of experiments and surveys, with respect to evaluations of presidents, legislators, and lesser officials, and with respect to a variety of attitudes ranging from voting preferences, assessments of incumbents' performance in office, and ratings of candidates' personal attributes to racial and gender identities. In recent years, the study of priming has been extended to arenas other than the United States, including a series of elections in Israel (Sheafer & Weimann 2005), Germany (Schoen 2004), and Denmark (de Vreese 2004).

Typically, news coverage of issues elicits stronger priming effects in the area of *performance assessments* than in the area of personality assessments (Iyengar & Kinder

1987). In one noteworthy exception – involving “personality priming” – voters who watched the famous 1960 debate between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon on television were more likely to rely on image factors (such as integrity) when considering the candidates’ performance in the debate (see Druckman 2003; → Televised Debates) than were voters who listened to the debate on the radio. The radio group, on the other hand, took into account both image and the candidates’ positions on the issues. This study suggests that the visual imagery provided by television encourages voters to focus on personality-related rather than issue-related considerations when evaluating the candidates.

A special case of priming concerns the phenomenon of *momentum* in primary elections. Because news coverage during the early primaries tends to focus exclusively on the state of the “horse race,” primary voters are likely to rely heavily on information about the candidates’ electoral viability when making their choices (Brady & Johnston 1987). In a study of the 2004 primary campaign, researchers found that the single most important determinant of Democrats’ primary vote preference between senators John Kerry and John Edwards was the voters’ perceptions of the two candidates’ personalities. The second-most powerful predictor of vote choice was the candidates’ electoral viability (Iyengar et al. 2004). Viability was more important to voters than the candidates’ positions on major issues, including the war in Iraq and outsourcing of American jobs.

The ability of the news media to prime political evaluations depends on both media content and the *predispositions of the audience*. Unsurprisingly, priming effects peak when news reports explicitly suggest that politicians are responsible for the state of national affairs, or when they clearly link politicians’ actions with national problems. Thus, evaluations of President Reagan’s performance were more strongly influenced by news stories when the coverage suggested that “Reaganomics” was responsible for rising American unemployment than when the coverage was directed at alternative causes of unemployment (Iyengar & Kinder 1987, ch. 9).

In a further parallel with agenda-setting research, individuals differ in their susceptibility to media priming effects. Miller and Krosnick (2000) found that priming effects occurred only among people who were highly knowledgeable about political affairs and had high levels of trust in the media (→ Credibility of Content). Iyengar and Kinder (1987) found that partisanship affected the issues on which people could be primed: Democrats tended to be most susceptible to priming when the news focused on issues that favor Democrats, such as unemployment and civil rights, while Republicans were influenced most when the news focused on traditional Republican issues like national defense (→ Exposure to Communication Content).

In sum, issues and events in the news are deemed important and weigh heavily in evaluations of incumbent officials and political candidates. As is clear from the way in which President George H. Bush benefited from media coverage of the 1991 Gulf War and then suffered from coverage of the economy, priming results equally from news of political successes and news of political failures. Priming is a double-edged sword.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Issue Voting ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Social Capital, Media Effects on ▶ Survey ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Time-Series Analysis



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## **Printer-Editors**

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Printers acted as editors from the origin of printing in eastern and western society. But Gutenberg's press in the mid-fifteenth century gave birth to journalistic printer-editors who published news regularly and informed a wide public (→ Journalism, History of). These early journalists used book production techniques to generate broadsheets, pamphlets, mercuries, intelligencers, gazettes, and newsbooks (Boyce et al. 1978). Under the eye of monarchs and their censors (→ Censorship), they disseminated reports on war, discoveries, and omens, and campaigned for or against political and religious movements across Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as part of an emerging western print culture (Eisenstein 1979).

These printer-editors emerged in two stages (Briggs & Burke 2002). From the second half of the 1500s to the early 1600s, before the establishment of a periodic press, printer-editors were relatively obscure, were scattered widely, and operated small presses under strict censorship. Their occasional publications tended to focus on one topic or event.

The second stage extended to the eighteenth century, when printer-editors became periodic journalists, publishing well-known weekly or biweekly papers in major cities.

Printer-editors gleaned their material from many sources: officials for court gossip, soldiers for accounts of battles, alleged eyewitnesses for marvels, and correspondents for foreign news. Printer-editors operated on both sides of the law. Some were used by monarchs to defend their claims or actions, and others operated secret presses for religious dissent, much of it propaganda inspired by the upheavals of the Reformation, including Luther's 95 theses. In Mexico City, during the early 1500s, newsbooks called *hojas volantes* (flying pages) appeared in the streets, well before the first press in North America.

A periodic news press took root in the seventeenth century, encouraged – at different rates in different countries – by a more tolerant political climate, a literate public in growing cities, a network of publishers and correspondents linked by a postal service, and the stimulus of print capitalism. In England, the evolution of a Parliament-restrained monarchy allowed for periods of greater press freedom (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of) than in France or Germany. In the colonies of North America, printer-editors labored at first under old-world governors.

Conflicts such as the Thirty Years War fueled readership and encouraged periodic publication, but news of commerce also mattered. In the freer political climate of trading centers such as Amsterdam, printer-editors published brusque *corantos* or newssheets on business and politics (Shaaber 1967). In England, under the censorious Stuarts, a cautious weekly news press took root in the London of the 1620s, imitating the Amsterdam newssheets. A vigorous periodic press arose during the Civil War (→ Partisan Press), as royalist and anti-royalist printer-editors quarreled (Smith 1994), but the Restoration brought back censorship. The English periodic press could not grow beyond a few official papers until the restrictive Printing Act expired in the late 1600s. Outside of England, authoritarian governments licensed a small periodic press while struggling to contain an illegal *underground* press. German principalities imposed strict regulations on printers. In France, Cardinal Richelieu, wary of inflammatory newsbooks, granted a monopoly on news publication to Théophraste Renaudot and his *Gazette de France*.

Printer-editors had a dubious social status well into the eighteenth century (→ Journalism). They did not fit existing social categories: part craftsman, part entrepreneur, part bookseller, part printer, part editor, and part writer. Their ephemeral papers were neither serious books on history nor crude broadsides. Conservative clergymen and officials regarded them as crass opportunists or dangerous voices of criticism and immoral ideas.

In the eighteenth century, the role of the printer-editor changed, divided, and declined. The growth of periodic news to serve the many sites of the Enlightenment public sphere – the English coffee house, the French salon, the German scientific association – required a division of labor (Habermas 1989). By the late 1700s, daily newspapers such as the London *Times* were expanding newsrooms for thousands of readers (Rea 1963). The newspaper was a corporate product, requiring separate contributions from printers, publishers, editors, and news writers (→ Commercialization of the Media). The printer-editor, as author of many forms of journalism, was replaced by specialists – the essayist, the factual reporter, the reforming editor, the revolutionary polemist. Nineteenth-century newspapers became large commercial enterprises. The printer-editor of a small, personalized paper had receded into history.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Ethics in Journalism  
▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism,  
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## **Printing, History of**

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In the broadest sense, printing is any means by which a pattern, text, or image is impressed on another surface. The creation of an impression in clay or wax with a seal, or in metal with a punch, and the printing of patterns on textiles are all ancient arts that bear some similarity to printing proper. Paper money, wallpaper, official forms, tickets, texts, images, and many other things have been and are printed with ink on paper. The concern here will be with the printing of texts on paper.

### **EARLY ASIAN PRINTING**

By the ninth century, printing texts in ink on paper by means of relief-carved wooden blocks was a widespread practice in East Asia. The paper to be printed on was laid face down upon the inked block and rubbed over with a hand-held implement to transfer the ink. The earliest use of printing was for the reproduction of texts from the Buddhist scriptures, a ritualized pious deed not necessarily implying that such texts would be read. Some of the oldest examples of printing to survive were deposited in stupas (monuments housing Buddhist relics) in such a way as to be inaccessible to readers. Printing was, however, rapidly applied to many different forms of textual and pictorial reproduction.

China was not only the place where woodblock printing (xylography) was invented, but also the first place where movable type was cast in clay or carved as individual hardwood blocks. The first recorded use of movable metal type, probably cast in bronze, took place in Korea in 1234.

Woodblock printing remained the preferred method in East Asia for all but long print runs of important texts – often texts of a scriptural, ceremonial, administrative, or encyclopedic nature, printed by government commission or under the aegis of a wealthy private patron. The number of characters needed even for simple printing jobs entailed far more complicated systems of storage and retrieval than were required for movable type with alphabetic scripts. Even in Korea, where an alphabetic script had been invented in the fifteenth century, the continuing cultural prestige of Chinese script limited the use of the Korean alphabet until well into the nineteenth century.

Joan Nieuwhof, chamberlain of a Dutch trade mission to China in the mid-seventeenth century, included in his report a passage on Chinese printing, based on personal observation and the writings of Jesuit missionaries. He considered skilled Chinese workmen capable of producing woodblock impressions at as quick a rate as European compositors and pressmen with movable type and a printing press, while Chinese methods were better adapted to East Asian scripts and had the further advantage that the publisher could store hardwood blocks, and print off from them as the occasion arose (a form of print-on-demand), rather than having to print a run all at once, perhaps underestimating or overestimating its selling potential. One advantage of metal type that Nieuwhof fails to consider is that for long runs it was more durable, and damaged parts more easily replaced.

## **THE GUTENBERG PRESS**

Since parchment copies could not be economically produced on a large scale, printing only became a feasible proposition in Europe from the early fifteenth century, when the use of paper had become common. Woodblock printing, primarily of religious images and playing cards, began in Europe around 1400. Some have postulated an Asian inspiration for this, but the issue remains open. By the 1460s, block-books were being printed, combining text and image in a manner that was impossible to achieve with movable type.

### **Gutenberg's Inventions**

The dominant form of printing in early modern Europe, however, was the printing press invented by Johannes Gutenberg, in Mainz, around 1450. Gutenberg's invention of a means of "mechanical writing" was shrouded in a commercial secrecy that even the surviving legal records of disputes with his business partners have failed to disperse. The technical details of his invention have to be inferred from later presses. The upshot of Gutenberg's falling-out with his backers was the establishment of rival presses, making it impossible to retain a monopoly on the technology; thereafter, the initiation of new individuals into the mystery of printing in some cases seems to have been on condition that they not set up shop in the immediate locality. As a result, Gutenberg's technology spread rapidly, and within a century of its invention was in use throughout western Europe and in European settlements in Mexico and Goa.

The “forme,” a locked frame of metal type ready to be inked and printed from, was known to thirteenth-century Korea; one of Gutenberg’s innovations was the press itself, probably based on a wine press. What resulted was a device by which a printer, working a screw-mounted platen by means of a hand-operated bar, evenly pressed the paper against an inked forme. Two sturdy columns, the “cheeks,” not only served as the central support of the press, but held the platen straight during its movement up and down. For the same purpose, the size of the platen was restricted, and each side of a full sheet of paper had to be printed one half at a time. The forme was secured face up in the bed of the press, or “coffin,” and then inked with hand-held inking balls or tampons. The paper, lightly dampened to take the oil-based ink that metal type required, was secured in a light fold-over frame, a “tympan,” attached to one end of the coffin. The tympan was folded down over the coffin, the whole was slid under the platen, the bar was pulled one way to apply pressure, then the other to release the platen; the coffin was then moved along and the exercise repeated for the second half of the sheet. The coffin was then slid out again and the tympan opened to remove the printed sheet, which was hung up to dry. The forme of type was prepared by a compositor before being secured in the coffin, from racks of different individual pieces of type. These pieces of type had been cast in a mold that had to be of variable width for different letters, but of a standard height in order to give an even impression. The metal type was an alloy of lead, tin, and antimony; the mold was made with a punch. This method of textual reproduction provided greater standardization and considerable savings in time when compared to scribal copying, and for reproducibility of long runs or large texts also offered distinct advantages over woodblock printing.

### **Consequences of Gutenberg’s Printing Press**

Much debate has surrounded the historical importance of the printing press, which Eisenstein (1979) has viewed as an invention so revolutionary as to mark a clear break with pre-typographical culture, but Chartier (1989) more simply as an important stimulus to the dissemination of cultural practices already inherent in alphabetic script and the codex book. Consideration of non-European history suggests that any technological determinism would be misplaced. Late Ming China, without any new technology, saw a tremendous growth in publishing, and the emergence of a literary class of professional authors, editors, commentators, and anthologists that only partially overlapped with the state-authorized aristocracy of learning established by the imperial examination system. At the same time, awareness of the printing press did not lead to any immediate changes in the book culture of Russia or of the Muslim world, until figures in authority decided that it should. In these cases the printing press was much more an instrument of change than its agent.

The cultural impact of the shift from scribal publication to print may have been only an acceleration of existing trends, certainly in the first decades when printing was simply a mechanical means of producing books otherwise identical to those already being produced by scribes or stationers. But the impact of printing on the technical and economic organization of → book production and the book trade was without doubt revolutionary. The physical reproduction of texts on paper came to rely on three skilled technical jobs: casting type (technologically the hardest nut for Gutenberg to crack), composing type with speed and exactness, and pulling the press, which itself demanded

great skill to produce a clean impression. The compositors and pressmen worked in the master printer's shop; most punch-cutters and type-founders set up in business independently, selling type to numerous different printing shops, but some big printing houses cast their own type on the premises. Publishing and bookselling could be independent commercial functions, but in the first two centuries of printing it was usually a single individual who owned the press and bookshop, and decided what to print and sell. Over the course of time, mechanical and commercial activities became increasingly specialized, with separation of the roles of printer and bookseller, and the dividing of type-casting, compositing, and working the press into multiple sub-specialties. Printing workers were among the most skilled and best paid of the time, and their "chapels" were early precursors of unionization. The uniquely well-preserved print shop and archive of the Plantin Office in Antwerp (now the Plantin-Moretus Museum) illuminates every aspect of the trade in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The first decades of printing saw a series of minor but crucial developments in book design: the diversification of Latin types (Blackletter, Roman, Italic, etc.) and the creation of types for printing in Greek, Hebrew, and other scripts; the creation of decorative type and borders, and of methods of combining woodcut illustrations with letterpress text, making the work of illuminators redundant; the perfection of methods of printing in color, particularly in red and black on the same page; and the invention of the title page, first as a means of identifying printed texts and then as a means of advertising them.

The rapid dissemination of the technology, and the imperative to produce books in previously unheard of numbers, and then sell them as quickly as possible, led to new commercial interactions and marketing strategies. Although most printers initially combined the roles of publisher and bookseller, they would also happily act as printer for another bookseller, and vice versa, so that any given bookshop would contain works from many different print shops. Book trade contacts, and especially the great book fairs, initially in Lyons and later in Frankfurt and Leipzig, created new forms of commercial and intellectual networking that linked centers of printing and book-buying across western Christendom.

The very first products of the Gutenberg press were Latin Bibles, printed indulgences, and calendars, all of which required standardized reproduction in relatively large numbers. These were soon followed by Latin grammars, the works of Cicero, and then those of other classical authors read in large numbers, major works of medieval scholarship in theology, canon and civil law, natural philosophy, and medicine, and vernacular books and booklets of all sorts: devotional, educational, self-help, romantic, and sensationalist. By 1600 every type of printed work had seen the light of day, from lottery tickets and flysheets advertising wonder drugs to the great polyglot Bibles that presented parallel texts in three or four different scripts on the same page. There were ever more editions of ancient texts (classical, scriptural, or patristic), even of the more obscure ancient writers, constant reprints of late medieval romances for a popular readership, but also an increasing range of new discoveries, opinions, and arguments made available to the general public (→ Newspaper, Antecedents of).

The controversies of the Reformation greatly stimulated the growth of the press, which presented a new means of disseminating religious → propaganda, but also led to stricter regulation, on confessional grounds, of what could be published (→ Censorship; Censorship, History of). The contact that ordinary folk had with texts was increased greatly by

the printing of almanacs and catechisms. In the seventeenth century, the interlocking developments in scientific experiment and the publication of results, whether in books, pamphlets, or learned journals (→ Magazine; Magazine, History of), owed a great deal to the printing press as a means of disseminating knowledge.

### THE MECHANIZATION OF PRINTING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

For 350 years the Gutenberg press in use in Europe, and increasingly throughout lands of European settlement overseas, saw constant minor improvements but no major modifications. Little had changed between Gutenberg's own day and the description of printing provided in Diderot's *Encyclopaedia*, itself a major printing achievement. The last improvement of the handpress era, and the first that considerably increased press output, was Charles Stanhope's press. Built entirely of iron, this was a much harder-wearing machine than earlier wood-frame presses, saving on repairs and replacement; the platen was large enough to print one side of a full sheet at a single impression, and it was moved by a system of levers and counterweights rather than a screw, so that it required less force to operate. The Stanhope press, brought on to the market in 1802, was greeted by the British and Foreign Bible Society (founded 1804) as a providential invention that made it economically feasible to envisage putting a Bible in every home.

In 1812 the first steam-powered printing machine was built in London by Frederick König. The forme was secured in the flat bed of the machine, as in a Gutenberg press, but inking and impression were both carried out automatically by rollers. König's machine could produce 800 impressions per hour, as against 250 on a Stanhope press. Within two years König had developed a double-cylinder machine, first taken into use by *The Times*, that could produce over 1,000 impressions per hour. As with Gutenberg, disputes between König and his backers led to him leaving London, thus speeding the adoption of the new technology elsewhere. The König and Bauer machine works, which he co-founded, exported printing machines across Europe.

In 1844, in New York, Richard Hoe built the first practical rotary printing press – abandoning the flat bed just as König had abandoned the flat platen, so that the paper ran between an impression cylinder and a type cylinder. His machine could produce 8,000 impressions per hour. The Bullock press of 1865 added a continuous roll of paper, boosting the speed of production still further. These developments were of particular interest to newspaper publishers, who throughout the nineteenth century faced the need to print ever larger runs at ever greater speeds.

In parallel with the mechanization of printing itself, machines for making paper, for casting type, and for compositing were developed and refined, patent following patent. From the mid-nineteenth century onward newspapers, cheap novels, and other ephemera were increasingly printed on high-acid wood-pulp paper, made in Fourdrinier machines, as a cheap alternative to traditional rag- or linen-based papers. By the end of the nineteenth century, linotype, photogravure, and offset lithography all provided means of printing without traditional movable type or engraved plates. Lithography was the first European technology to offer undoubted advantages over traditional East Asian methods of reproducing nonalphabetic scripts, and was rapidly adopted in China and Japan, as were later developments. At the same time, the use of western printing technology had

been spread beyond areas of European settlement by missionary societies and colonial governments, and as a tool of administrative and religious reformers was making considerable inroads into the traditional book culture of Muslim lands.

Nineteenth-century mechanization was followed in the twentieth century by a profusion of chemical printing processes, electrification, and most recently computerization. Offset filmsetting, or photocomposition, and now computer-to-plate offset printing, have made cast-metal type itself, like the woodblock, obsolete for all but bibliophile editions and quality bespoke printing.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Book ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Labor Unions in the Media ▶ Magazine ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, Antecedents of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Prints ▶ Propaganda ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Typography ▶ Underground Press

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## **Prints**

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Printing, strictly defined, is the process by which ink is transferred from a prepared matrix to another surface; prints are the material objects that bear the ink transferred by



this process (→ Printing, History of). From the mid-fifteenth century until the early nineteenth century in the west, a printing press powered by hand was most commonly used to effect the transfer. As a result, the surface receiving the ink, often a sheet of paper, was usually relatively small in scale in order to fit into the press. The matrix was routinely inked and printed repeatedly, producing hundreds or thousands of prints that were identical in content. Although, by the late sixteenth century, collectors were able to discern qualitative differences between prints made from a new or much used matrix, and were willing to pay substantially more for the former, print scholar William Ivins was correct to point out that the fundamental importance of printed images was their status as “exactly repeatable pictorial statements” (1953).

Physical portability, existence in large numbers, and low cost in comparison to drawn or painted pictures have made prints a powerful means of bringing largely identical images to many people in many places (→ Painting). By the end of the fifteenth century, some thousand years after printing on paper began in China, printing in Europe was producing pictures faster and in greater numbers than had ever been possible previously. Since then, prints have had profound effects on how the socio-cultural world has been constituted and understood. Like printed texts (Eisenstein 1979), printed pictures led to a stabilization of certain → codes, such as a shared vocabulary of classical architecture (Carpo 2001) or a common legal tender in the form of engraved bank notes. Prints have also offered a flexible medium through which civic, national, or religious identities around the Mediterranean basin, Europe, the Americas, and Asia could be constructed and contested (San Juan 2001; van den Boogaart 2003; Wilson 2004; → Socialization by the Media). For example, the chromolithographs produced in the 1880s by the Chitrashala Press in Poona, India, emphasized the martial prowess of Hindu deities such as Khandoba and Bhavani as a call to action to a wide and politically sensitized viewership then under colonial rule (Pinney 2004).

Prints could also be presented as a means to universal knowledge. The most extensively illustrated printed → *book* of the fifteenth century, the *Nuremberg chronicle* (*Liber chronicarum*) compiled by Hermann Schedel, was organized as a year-by-year account of notable historical events in all the world then known to Europeans from Creation through the years just before its publication in 1493. More than 600 woodcuts from the workshop of Michael Wolgemut and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, many printed more than once in the book to produce almost 1,900 illustrations, depicted biblical scenes, subjects from classical and medieval history, and a series of city views. Some of these views were distinct, recognizable representations (for example, Nuremberg, Venice, and Jerusalem), whereas others used the same image repeatedly to denote various cities (for example, a single woodcut was used to indicate the land of the Amazons, Alexandria, Athens, Pavia, and Prussia).

## MATERIAL MANIPULATIONS

Another publication from Nuremberg demonstrates how the physical nature of prints allowed and even sometimes explicitly invited manipulation by its viewers. The *Picture academy for the young* (*Bilder-Akademie für die Jugend*) was published between 1780 and 1784 by Johann Siegmund Stoy as a volume of 52 engravings for children and two

volumes of text for their teachers (Heesen 2002). Each engraving contained nine pictures, related thematically but drawn from different orders of knowledge, from biblical history to everyday life. Teachers were to start by presenting only one picture at a time, covering the others with a paper mask; alternatively, the nine pictures were to be cut apart, mounted on cardboard for durability, and stored in a specially constructed box, whose compartments mimicked the placement of each picture on its original uncut sheet. By taking the printed pictures from compartments, comparing them and replacing them to their proper places, children were prompted both to learn about the world and to organize that learning according to Stoy's framework (→ Media Use and Child Development; Media Use by Children).

The arrival of Japanese woodblock prints in Europe in the early nineteenth century offers an example of the manipulation of printed material without such explicit authorial direction. Prints by Utamaro, Hokusai, and others were first brought to the Netherlands from Nagasaki, a Dutch trading center, as wrapping for parcels and stuffing for bales of merchandise being transported to Europe. Early Dutch officials stationed in Japan did collect woodblock prints as "native illustrations . . . of passing scenes" (Captain Sherard Osborn, cited in Stewart 1979), but a European recognition of Japanese woodblock prints as objects that communicated aesthetically rather than packing material flourished only in the second half of the nineteenth century, with the 1862 International Exhibition in London. Subsequently, these prints had a profound impact on many European painters including Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, and Claude Monet.

While the early Dutch merchandise packers in Japan and the children who used Stoy's *Picture academy* remain anonymous, there is information about other individuals who materially manipulated the prints they collected, a practice that reached a high point in the sumptuously bound, multi-volume print albums compiled by the great connoisseurs of the eighteenth century (Griffiths 1994). Jacopo Rubieri, a fifteenth-century notary in northern Italy, collected prints during his travels, cut out or painted over parts of them, and glued them into his juridical notes. Anna Jäck, prioress of the Augustinian convent in Inzigkofen, collected prints along with hand-drawn pictures to paste into a manuscript book she completed in 1449. The German text, *Sister Regula's life of Jesus (Leben Jesu der Schwester Regula)*, was a manual intended to teach its readers to meditate by envisioning in the fullest possible detail scenes from Christ's life and passion. As an external aid to this contemplation, Jäck collected 45 small images to paste beside the relevant passages. She began writing the manuscript only after obtaining all the pictures, which fit neatly into the blank spaces she had left in the columns of text. Jäck was concerned with neither the pictures' makers nor the techniques used; rather she gathered pictures from different sources to communicate to her readers the types of images they could bring to mind during their devotions.

### INTERPELLATING PUBLICS

Stoy's *Picture academy* and Anna Jäck's meditation manual were aimed at specific groups of viewers. The *Picture academy* targeted children seeking to learn about history and the world around them, while Jäck's manuscript was directed toward pious people in her community who sought instruction in devotional meditation (→ Religion and Popular

Communication). Prints were effective at mobilizing these and other types of knowledge for visual consumption by many different individuals; having interpellated these disparate viewers, prints could coalesce them into cultivated publics that could confront, contest, or accept a shared body of knowledge (→ Social Movements and Communication). In this way, they are a prime example of what Bruno Latour (1988) called “immutable mobiles,” things that allow one member of a community to make a claim that can be entertained by the community at large. Prints are especially effective at communicating visual information in order to bring together a public then able to make further cultural claims (→ Art as Communication; Visual Communication). For example, Marcantonio Raimondi’s print, *Parnassus* (c.1517), was not intended to reproduce the exact composition of Raphael’s fresco in the Vatican. Rather, the print’s message was that Raphael had made the picture: as the engraved inscription states, “Raphael depicted this in the Vatican” (RAPHAEL PINXIT IN VATICANO). The print’s sixteenth-century viewers were mobilized to form a public accepting that message and crediting Raphael with both the painted and printed Parnassus. That new public, brought together by print, established Raphael’s place in the history of sixteenth-century art (Pon 2005).

Marcantonio Raimondi’s print was an engraving, a particularly labor-intensive technique that involved cutting into the surface of the matrix with a sharp implement called a burin. As Walter Benjamin pointed out, the development of the technique of lithography at the end of the eighteenth century allowed the production of regular, eventually daily, → news images in virtually unlimited numbers; this newly enriched traffic in printed images was a key factor the emergence of a → public sphere. Photography and digital print production, developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, further accelerated the traffic in images available to the public and its various counter-publics. Whether → Jürgen Habermas’s classic formulation of a well-informed, rational, and democratic bourgeois public sphere was ever actually achieved is debatable (→ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of). But the power of prints to interpellate publics is clear from the struggles to control print production during the decades in which lithographs became widespread. In Paris in the autumn of 1830, Charles Philipon began publishing a weekly paper, *La Caricature*; this was soon followed by a daily journal, *Le Charivari* (Cuno 1983; Kerr 2000; → Caricature). Both publications contained collectible lithographs about contemporaneous events, often political in nature. The political caricatures, including a biting series on the recently installed constitutional monarch, Louis-Philippe, had by 1832 led to 20 seizures by government censors, some 6,000 francs in fines, and 13 months in prison for Philipon himself as well as the arrests of his publisher, his printer, and one of his artists, Honoré Daumier.

In response, Philipon used prints to bring together a politically engaged public as the Association for the Freedom of the Press (Association pour la Liberté de la Presse), which became better known as the Association Mensuelle Lithographique. Subscribers paid a monthly fee, and in return received a lithograph exclusively commissioned for them; the fees were to be used to offset any further court costs Philipon and his journals might incur. One of Daumier’s best-known lithographs, *Rue Transnonain: 15 April 1834*, was published in the last issue of *L’Association Mensuelle*. The print depicts victims of a massacre during the Paris riots of that month, killed in their homes at close range by French soldiers who believed a fatal sniper’s bullet had come from the building. By

bringing this single, politically potent image to the subscribers of the *Association Mensuelle* in a detachable format suitable for framing, Daumier's lithograph demonstrates how prints can be valued simultaneously for their aesthetic qualities and their power to form and inform communities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Book ▶ Caricature ▶ Code ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Media History ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ News ▶ Painting ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of ▶ Religion and Popular Communication ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Visual Communication

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# Privacy

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“Privacy” is widely recognized as a legal right, but with a range of different meanings. These include restraints on intrusion into the home, confidentiality of correspondence, freedom to make certain fundamental decisions, control of personal data, anonymity, and many others. Countries differ as to the specific understandings of privacy their laws protect and whether those understandings apply equally against the government and private sector entities.

Since the end of World War II, *international legal agreements* have recognized privacy as a human right because “laws protecting privacy are the means through which the collective acknowledges rules of civility that are designed to affirm human autonomy and dignity” (Smolla 1992, 119). The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides that “no one shall be subject to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home, or correspondence.” The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights contain identical provisions. The “Right to Privacy” clause of the → American Convention on Human Rights likewise provides that “no one may be the object of arbitrary or abusive interference with his private life, his family, his home, or his correspondence.”

## **COMPARATIVE LAW: CONSTITUTIONS, STATUTES, AND COMMON LAW**

A number of countries recognize privacy in their constitutions. For example, the South Korean Constitution states: “The privacy of no citizen shall be infringed.” Similarly, the Basic Law of Germany protects privacy as part of “human dignity,” “inviolability of the home,” and the “privacy of correspondence, posts and telecommunications.” Other countries in which privacy emanates from constitutions include Brazil, Ireland, India, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, and the United States.

In addition to the constitutional guarantee of privacy, many nations regulate privacy as a civil or criminal offense through statutes. This is true in the 27 member countries of the European Union, which are required by the 1995 EU Data Protection Directive to adopt omnibus data protection laws applicable to both the government and the private sector (→ European Union: Communication Law). Although many European nations had adopted privacy laws prior to the Directive taking effect in 1998, the Directive significantly increased the scope and burden of privacy law throughout Europe. Argentina, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, and other nations have also adopted broad data protection statutes. Common law has also played a significant role in evolving privacy requirements, especially in the United States and New Zealand.

## US Constitutional Provisions

“Privacy,” as a distinct set of legal rights, originated in the United States with the 1890 publication of Samuel Warren and Louis Brandeis’s *Harvard Law Review* article, “The right to privacy.” Warren and Brandeis proposed the creation of a tort action for invasion of privacy by the news media. In the century since, privacy law has expanded to exist in all of the forms discussed above, with the exception so far of an omnibus data protection law. This exception is increasingly bringing the United States into conflict with other nations.

The US Supreme Court has found three *privacy rights implicit in the US Constitution*. The *first* is based in the Fourth Amendment “right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures.” The Court has held that the protected zone of Fourth Amendment privacy is defined by the individual’s “actual,” subjective expectation of privacy and the extent to which that expectation is “one that society was prepared to recognize as ‘reasonable.’” The protection afforded by the Fourth Amendment is subject to many exceptions. For example, there can be no reasonable expectation of privacy in information held by a third party. Hence, the US government can collect even the most sensitive information from a third party without a warrant and without risk that the search may be found unreasonable under the Fourth Amendment.

The *second* of the constitutional privacy protections is a more general constitutional right against government-compelled “disclosure of personal matters.” This right has proved quite weak, and in fact has never been used by the Supreme Court to block any government demand for personal data. The *third* constitutional privacy provision is an amorphous but controversial right of individuals to make certain fundamental decisions concerning themselves or their families. This right has been the source of considerable controversy in debates over abortion, reproduction, education, and childrearing, and seems unlikely to survive the appointment of more conservative Supreme Court justices.

The contours of the Fourth Amendment and of the right against nondisclosure of personal matters are of great importance to journalists, because they define the constitutional protection against the government seizing or searching journalists’ papers, files, photographs, and outtakes. As many journalists have learned to their consternation, there are today few, if any, limits, and those that there are can always be overcome by the government applying to a court for a warrant.

## US Tort Privacy Law

US common law, and later statutes, have also provided for four types of privacy torts over the years. First, the tort of unreasonable intrusion requires that it involve one’s invasion of the solitude of another or his private affairs and that it be “highly offensive to a reasonable person.” Second, the tort of disclosure of embarrassing facts applies to publication of private information that would be “highly offensive to a reasonable person” and is not of “legitimate public concern.”

The third privacy tort is publicity that places a person in a false light before the public. To be actionable under the false light tort, the publication must be both false and highly

offensive to a reasonable person. The final privacy tort is for commercial appropriation of an individual's name, likeness, or other personal characteristic without permission. Most state laws require that the appropriation be for "direct commercial gain"; the activities of the press rarely are found to satisfy this requirement. Because the torts restrict expression and therefore must withstand First Amendment review, they are rarely successful. To date, only a few awards to privacy tort plaintiffs have ever survived the Supreme Court's First Amendment scrutiny.

## **DATA PROTECTION AS RIGHT OF PRIVACY**

### **Euro-American Experience**

Privacy concerns almost always respond to new technologies. The latter third of the twentieth century witnessed the creation of a new and different form of privacy protection – data protection – in response to the development of computers since the 1960s. These data protection laws have evolved over the past three decades, and they have taken widely varying forms in different countries (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

Data protection laws generally focus on investing individuals with control over the collection and use of information about themselves. Earlier data protection laws tended to lay less stress on individual control. Later data protection laws have become almost wholly preoccupied with this goal. The first data protection laws emerged in the United States and applied primarily to industry sectors (such as credit reporting and higher education) far removed from the activities of most journalists.

Perhaps the high point of data protection law focused on individual control is the *European Union Data Protection Directive*. The Directive reflects the European experience with personal data being misused by the Gestapo and by the East German Stazi and other national police and intelligence organizations during and after World War II. Thus, European nations have pursued a broader approach to privacy and one that regards it as a basic human right.

Europe was the site of the first national omnibus privacy legislation (Sweden, 1973). Today, all 27 members of the EU have broad-based laws, adopted in compliance with the EU Data Protection Directive of 1995. The Directive requires each member state to enact laws governing the processing of personal data. Personal data are defined as "any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person." This would include not only textual information, but also photographs, audiovisual images, and sound recordings of an identified or identifiable person, whether dead or alive. As a practical matter, the Directive does not apply in only two contexts: activities outside of the scope of Community law, such as national security and criminal law, and the processing of personal data that is performed by a "natural person in the course of a purely private and personal activity."

The EU Data Protection Directive is noteworthy for its broad scope, its sweeping requirements, and its singular focus on privacy, often to the exclusion of other values. The national laws adopted under the EU Directive vary widely, thus largely undermining the value of the Directive in facilitating pan-European data flows. Even though member states

are permitted, but not required, to carve out exceptions to most of the Directive's provisions for journalistic purposes, because national governments and individuals have broad rights to block the collection, use, and transfer of personal data, national data protection laws reduce the store of personal data on which journalists may draw.

### **Other National Data Protection Laws**

Article 25 of the EU Data Protection Directive restricts the flow of data to countries found by European officials to lack "adequate" data protection, and this has added considerable pressure to the existing incentives for other nations to adopt new data protection laws and to model those on the Directive. To date, Switzerland, Canada, Argentina, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man have all adopted restrictive data protection laws that have been found "adequate" under the Directive. Many other nations (including Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) have adopted such laws but have not applied for adequacy determinations or have been turned down because the provisions were not considered adequate under the Directive. The United States negotiated a "safe harbor" agreement that allows US companies in many industries, on a case-by-case basis, to agree to be bound by the Directive's "principles" and to be subject to enforcement by the US Federal Trade Commission (or other federal authorities) if they fail to. In exchange for a publicly acknowledged agreement to do so, the companies may then import personal data from the EU.

### **Later US Data Protection Laws**

The US Congress and many state legislatures have adopted more restrictive data protection laws. These laws reflect considerable movement toward investing individuals with control over information about them, irrespective of whether the information is, or could be, used to cause harm.

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act of 1998 requires operators of websites directed to children under 13, or who knowingly collect personal information from children under 13 on the Internet, to provide parents with notice of their information practices, and obtain prior, verifiable opt-in parental consent for the collection, use, and/or disclosure of personal information from children (with certain limited exceptions). The Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994 bars states and their employees from releasing information from motor vehicle records, including names, addresses, photographs, and telephone and social security numbers. The law has many exemptions, but none for the news media.

These laws apply to the press directly. The result has been quite pronounced in terms of *restricting press access* to traditionally accessible sources of information. A study by Brooke Barnett (2001) found that journalists routinely use public records not merely to check facts or find specific information, but to actually generate stories in the first place (→ Freedom of Information; Journalism: Legal Situation). Other laws do not directly regulate the activities of journalists, but have limited their ability to obtain important information. For example, the privacy rules under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act address the privacy of personal health information and thus severely restrict the ability of hospitals and other health-care providers to comment on the



medical condition of their patients. Thus, journalists are often unable to discover even the most basic information concerning public officials and victims of crimes and natural disasters.

While more recently adopted data protection laws increasingly restrict journalists' access to personal data, in the United States they continue to impose few restraints on the use of data once obtained because of the powerful role of the First Amendment. The US Supreme Court held in *Bartnicki v. Vopper* (2001) that the broadcast of an illegally intercepted cellular telephone conversation concerning labor negotiations over public school teacher salaries was protected by the First Amendment.

SEE ALSO: ► American Convention on Human Rights ► Communication and Law ► European Union: Communication Law ► Freedom of Information ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Journalism: Legal Situation

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# Privatization of the Media

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The term “privatization” refers to the transfer of property and/or operations from state or public ownership and control into private hands. Among the principal reasons given to justify privatization is that private ownership and operation make a company perform more efficiently because its managers will be financially obligated to make the company accountable to shareholders. By contrast, government operations are often criticized for being inefficient, corrupt, and insufficiently responsive to the interests of the taxpayers who fund them. Advocates of privatization argue that the competitive environment of private industry fosters greater technological innovation, and that it pressures companies to introduce more stringent cost-cutting measures.

Privatizations of vital public services have become a lightning-rod topic in recent decades, most notably in countries where economic and political institutions have undergone radical structural transformations, for example in central and eastern Europe and in Latin America. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, gas and oil industries were privatized and then became the focus of corruption scandals and civic unrest as former government officials and communist party leaders became wealthy “oligarchs” through massive stock acquisitions. Elsewhere, recent attempts to privatize water services have led to public outrage and riots, most notably in Bolivia in 2000. Government efforts to privatize universal health-care services, education, and other social services have also led to significant debate and protest in several countries throughout the world. In many poor countries, privatizations have taken place as a form of “structural adjustment” in response to pressures from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in exchange for loans.

The government of the United States has been in the global vanguard in promoting a political economic ideology that favors the privatization of state and public services (→ Political Economy of the Media). In its foreign policy initiatives, in bilateral and multilateral agreements, and as an influential model for other governments, the US government premises its global policy agenda on firm beliefs in the value of market self-regulation, liberalization, and privatization. The US government sub-contracts with private companies for the performance of sensitive government functions. Hundreds of prisons are run by large for-profit corporations, and the US military is supported by many private enterprises, from defense contractors who design and build high-technology weapon systems, to “private military companies” (PMCs) who provide such support services as security forces, interrogation of prisoners, and training. The nature and extent to which private enterprise can be made to supplant state and public services seems to be unlimited, and the rationales and processes of privatization are especially relevant for understanding the economic and political history of the telecommunications and mass media industries. Many of the basic infrastructures and vital services in the United States are built and/or owned by private corporations, including telecommunications. US domestic policy historically has favored private ownership of media and

telecommunications companies, and has tended to define the → “public interest” according to shareholder interest, a view that is increasingly embraced on a global basis.

### **PRIVATIZATION OF BROADCASTING**

Because media industries and related policies are widely considered vital to sustaining public life, there is strong and widespread opposition to regulating them as any other industry, such as steel, coffee, or coal. Instead, the governments of most countries in the world view media and culture as exceptional because of the role they play in sustaining public life and culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). For example, the argument in favor of a “cultural exception” by signatories of the → UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity is in part a response to the actual or perceived threats to the sustainability of nationally based media industries that are dwarfed by global media empires (→ Globalization of the Media; Media Conglomerates). Although media privatization is on the rise worldwide, many governments tend to intervene by attempting to sustain the viability of their national media industries through import quotas and subsidies. Such policies are generally opposed by economists, and by governments and intergovernmental organizations that actively promote privatization and market liberalization.

Media industries have been privatized in many countries throughout the world for the past several decades, but the pace accelerated significantly in the 1980s and 1990s, particularly in post-socialist central and eastern Europe, throughout Latin America and much of Africa, and in India and selected East Asian economies. As well, liberal democratic welfare states in western Europe and other parts of the world have embraced media privatization. In the United States, the radio and television broadcasting system as a whole is overwhelmingly commercial, and the US system of public broadcasting, especially television, generally lacks stable and sufficient funding, or influence and importance as a vital stage for American culture and politics.

Historic resistance to socialism in the United States has provided an ideological framework for severely limiting government funding of media and cultural industries. By comparison, in many other countries, public service broadcasting has been articulated through government interventions, with reference to liberal democratic ideals, affirming a role for public leaders to develop and sustain political and cultural discourse through the media. Such systems have been well funded and insulated from political pressure (for example, through license fees rather than direct government appropriations), and have been much more central to national public life. The United Kingdom’s → BBC, Germany’s ARD, Japan’s NHK, Canada’s CBC, and Australia’s ABC are among the systems that serve as public service models, particularly because of their commitments to innovative quality programming, and to the insulation of programming from direct government and market influence (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

However, due to pressures from global competition and the rapid increase in the availability of new media sources, even where they are well established and relatively successful, public service broadcasters (PSBs) have found themselves having to compete for audiences in an unfamiliar commercial and multichannel media landscape. One result has been that PSBs have had to adapt at a faster pace to technological change, and to develop business models that enable them to compete with commercial networks. Such

changes have led to concerns about the demise of the distinct identity and mission of public service broadcasting. Although not technically privatized, numerous PSBs have taken on more characteristics of private, commercial broadcasters, including paid advertising (→ United States of America: Media System).

## PRIVATIZATION OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Perhaps even more dramatic than the changes to broadcasting have been the trends in privatizations of telecommunications infrastructures and the convergence of mass media and telecommunications infrastructure ownership (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy). In the past 20 years, many governments around the world have privatized their postal, telegraph, and telephone companies (PTTs), resulting in numerous subsequent mergers with and acquisitions by larger foreign companies. As well, foreign telecommunications firms have entered new markets in which privatizations and market liberalization occurred. For example, foreign direct investment poured into post-socialist central and eastern Europe to construct new landline and wireless infrastructures, sometimes in partnership with PTTs and also through new, private companies. Telecommunications infrastructures are viewed widely as vital tools for developing the economies of the global south, which is why key intergovernmental organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), and the World Bank have been active in promoting this sector. The World Bank in particular has been an advocate of telecommunications privatization, which it has advanced through a “toolkit” developed expressly for this industry sector. Given the limits of public funds in many poor countries, privatization initiatives are geared mainly toward attracting foreign direct investment.

Although it would be an exaggeration to attribute global trends in telecommunications privatization to the influence of the United States, many patterns and controversies related to deregulation, liberalization, and privatization throughout the world reflect *pre-existing patterns of policymaking in the United States* (→ Media Policy; Communication Law and Policy: North America). The US telegraph and telephone industries historically have been privately owned, with little exception of note, whereas PTTs throughout most of the world have functioned as government-owned and operated agencies. Despite the fact of private ownership, under heavy government regulation to control prices and insure quality of service, AT&T, the national telephone monopoly, functioned in many ways like a PTT. When a federal court decided in 1982 that AT&T should be broken down into several smaller companies, the results were very much like a privatization. The break-up was intended to promote a more competitive, innovative, and open network environment. The breakup contributed to the destabilization of familiar distinctions between telecommunications and the mass media, and since then, US telecommunications policy has moved in the direction of encouraging the “convergence” of previously separate industries and technologies, and the promotion of cross-industry “synergies.” Also since that time, the US telephone industry has undergone a process of reconsolidation, resulting in new vertically integrated firms that combine media content production and distribution systems.

As in the case of → *cable television systems*, US telephone companies now have a conflict of interest in that their own content providers compete with other content providers

needing access to the same infrastructure. Today, public interest advocates worry about the possibility that the telephone/telecommunications industry in the United States is losing its historic neutrality as a “common carrier” by having a vested interest in the success of its own content subsidiaries, which are in competition with other content providers on the same system, potentially resulting in discriminatory pricing and lower quality of service provided to competitors needing access to the same infrastructure. Whereas an original goal of the breakup of AT&T was to promote a more “open network,” subsequent vertical integration of content and infrastructure has introduced a disincentive for telecommunications carriers to keep their networks open and accessible to all content providers.

Not surprisingly, similar concerns have emerged in Europe and elsewhere over the question of whether privately owned networks can serve as neutral carriers of the content of their competitors. Another important development in media privatization has been the growth of the Internet. A significant global policy concern has been the disproportionate *de facto* control the United States has over Internet governance through the US-based Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), which is self-described as being “responsible for the global coordination of the Internet’s system of unique identifiers.” By having control over these identifiers, ICANN possesses the capacity to shut down a country’s access to the global Internet. In the wake of the UN World Summit on the Information Society, governments around the world have begun to take steps to increase multilateral control over Internet governance, particularly in response to ICANN.

### QUESTIONS OF THE FUTURE

In the twenty-first century, distinctions between *ownership of media content and infrastructure* are completely blurred, and a new wave of privatization has emerged. While in the 1980s and 1990s, privatization was typically undertaken by public trading in the stock market, a new pattern of private equity investment in media and telecommunications has emerged. Through speculative forms of investment, private equity firms and majority shareholders have managed to take some of the world’s leading media and telecommunications companies off the publicly traded stock market, resulting in the removal of these companies from regulatory reach or public scrutiny. This new airtight form of privatization has raised concerns about the lack of transparency in how companies operate, and the weakening of any form of public interest regulatory oversight (Noam 2007).

Beyond the question of whether media are privately or publicly owned is the matter of the *changing relationship between media and the state*. As telecommunications firms develop increasingly sophisticated capacities for surveillance and data mining, they are able to use that information not only to place their services at a competitive advantage compared with content provided by other firms on their networks. Telecommunications firms now provide surveillance services to governments through the use of data gathered about the communication patterns and information-seeking behavior of average citizens. These developments illustrate that media privatization does not necessarily signal an absence of government control or abuse of powers, nor does it insure greater public accountability.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC ► Cable Television ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Globalization of the Media ► Media Conglomerates ► Media Policy ► Political Economy of the Media ► Public Interest ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Telecommunications: Law and Policy ► UNESCO ► United States of America: Media System

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## **Professionalization of Journalism**

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The professionalization of journalism refers to the process by which a category of workers engaged in reporting and commentary in the public media on current events and ideas achieves the status of the occupational professional. Key issues in understanding the professionalization of journalism center on the difficulties in defining “professionalization” itself; the historical differences between US and non-American trajectories of professionalization; the relationship between journalistic objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting) and professionalism, especially in the American case; and the current economic, technological, and political challenges to the professional status of → journalism.

### **DEFINITIONS**

The difficulty most media scholars face in determining whether to consider journalism a profession links partly to the social and cultural practices of journalism and partly to difficulties in the study of the professions in general. Although the scholarly criteria for considering whether or not an occupation is a profession has remained largely stable since Durkheim – professions control their own recruitment, claim an exclusive area of competence, and postulate various normative benefits generated by their occupational autonomy – the method of analysis has moved from seeing professions as the bearers of functional traits to viewing them as interested social actors.

An older *trait approach* to the sociology of professions engaged in a → functional analysis of professional systems, a research program whose openly normative tendencies define a profession as a model of occupational autonomy and responsible self-management that everyone should imitate. Trait theories continue to manifest themselves within much of the literature on journalism, primarily in attempts to determine whether or not journalism is a profession. Most scholars working in the sociology of the professions have abandoned the trait approach and its functionalism. Many sociologists care less about answering the question “Is this occupation a profession?” and more about analyzing the circumstances in which workers attempt to turn an occupation into a profession and themselves into professionals (Hughes 1965). The study of “the profession” as an idealized functionalist category has been replaced by the more Weberian study of “professionalization” and the “professional project” (Larson 1977).

The *theory of the professional project* has remained at the center of much of the most important work in the sociology of the professions for the past several decades (MacDonald 1995). For scholars in this tradition, professions are neither naturally existing occupational categories nor the bearers of socially functional traits. Instead they are collective social actors that attempt to translate one order of scarce resources – special knowledge and skills – into social and economic rewards. Within the studies of journalism, this Weberian analysis is seen in studies that trace the rise of journalistic professionalism over the course of history.

Key to the success or failure of an occupation’s professional project is its ability to achieve a regulative bargain with the state. Professional groups must also do more to secure their monopoly than simply petition state elites; they must engage in a competitive struggle with other occupational groups that offer similar knowledge-based services, a process of *struggle over jurisdiction* (Abbott 1988). Finally, the fundamental aim of a profession is less a strict monopoly than a looser form of social closure: a process that allows the professional group itself to define the criteria for judging its own competence, by promulgating abstract standards of conduct and controlling the selection and training of its members.

In the study of journalism, scholarship has moved along a similar track. Much recent research analyzes the means and methods that the journalist has employed to seize control of both the abstract knowledge base and the occupational autonomy needed to establish professional dominance. For instance, cross-national empirical evidence demonstrates that journalists see themselves as a professional ingroup (Donsbach 1981). Rather than attempting to shoehorn journalists into traditional professional criteria, a more interesting approach is to *determine categories of professional journalistic competence* and analyze how much the practice of actual journalists reflects these categories.

## CROSS-NATIONAL DIMENSIONS

Many cross-national studies of professionalism and journalism adopt some or all of the sociological perspectives on professionalization, though not always explicitly. Three important cross-national studies of journalistic professionalism are “Professionalization in the media world?” (Kepplinger & Köcher 1990), *Comparing media systems* (Hallin & Mancini 2004) and *Making journalists* (deBurgh 2005). These three join others that probe

professionalization and journalism (Frohlich & Holtz-Bacha 2003). The benefits of cross-national comparisons are that they call into question some of the basic assumptions of a professionalization model grounded solely in the historical experience of American or British journalism.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) includes professionalization as one of the four axes (along with media market development, political parallelism, and state intervention; → Party-Press Parallelism) along which to analyze the three major media systems of North America and Europe (the polarized pluralist, the democratic corporatist, and the North Atlantic liberal; → Political Communication Systems). The three media systems vary in their approximation to the abstract model of professionalism that Hallin and Mancini propose. *Polarized pluralist journalism* as practiced in Mediterranean countries possesses a weaker level of professionalism and closer ties to the perspectives and activities of other political and social actors. *Democratic corporatist journalism* within the northern and central European countries is a highly professionalized endeavor; journalists often join press organizations and subscribe to overt, written codes of enforceable conduct. “Professional” does not translate into either objective or “free from ties to political parties,” but rather defines journalistic autonomy as a form of active political intervention in the political world. The overview of the *North Atlantic model*, finally, largely parallels analysis of the development of professionalism in the United States: high levels of professionalism of a noninstitutionalized sort, primarily dependent upon claims to journalistic objectivity and an overt abstention from political life.

Other cross-national studies have also addressed issues of journalistic professionalism. The main limitation of many of these comprehensive and theoretically sophisticated overviews of major journalism systems and global variations in professionalism and professionalization is their focus on the west: North America, Britain, and Europe. Other scholars have launched moves toward expanding the comparative frame, exploring global issues related to journalism education, training, and practice and, secondarily, professionalization (Waisbord 2000).

## DISCUSSION IN THE UNITED STATES

Despite moving toward a deeper understanding of cross-national professionalism, most journalistic analyses of professionalism still use the *United States as a typical case*, either in comparison to other countries or as the definition in need of conceptual adjustment. A review of how journalistic professionalism developed in the United States must therefore precede any analysis of current challenges to journalistic professionalism (→ United States of America: Media System).

A factor complicating an overview of the American case is that few historical studies tracing the development of journalism see professionalism as the primary object of study (→ Journalism, History of). Some of the most historically detailed overviews trace the growth of the occupation of journalism in general, colorful terms (Summers 1994), and many of the most useful case studies see the emergence of objectivity as synonymous with the growth of professionalism (Kaplan 2002; Mindich 1998). As a result, journalism scholarship regularly conflates “journalistic objectivity” with “journalistic professionalism,” even though the correlation does not necessarily hold true on the comparative level.



In any case, most sociologists and historians of journalism point to the *emergence of paid, full-time reporters* (coinciding with the birth of the inexpensive popular newspapers in major American urban areas, especially New York City; → Penny Press) as marking the first step toward journalistic professionalization. Originally considered a disreputable or marginal activity, reporting would, in the decades after the Civil War, yoke itself to the largely middle-class professionalization project. Journalists began to shed their so-called bohemian ways (Tucher 2004) in favor of an adopted image of solid respectability. By the early twentieth century, the Progressive Movement developed a growing emphasis on, even a mania for, democratic professionalism, and journalism moved in tandem, organizing its first professional schools, adopting its first codes of ethics, launching its first trade publications, and organizing industry and trade groups such as the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE; Banning 1999).

Even more important than the adoption of these formal markers of professionalism, however, was the decoupling of the newspaper from the political party machine (Kaplan 2002) and the growth of an explicitly *commercial model of news reporting* that seized upon “objectivity” as its primarily narrative marker (Schudson 1978; → Commercialization of the Media). Scholars dispute the exact timing of this shift, as well as its sociological backdrop, but in the decades between the turn of the century and World War II, North American journalism institutionalized the current, familiar model of professionalism on a national scale.

Over the next half century, this dominant narrative fusing objectivity and professionalism would not go unchallenged. In reaction to widespread social unrest and the collapse of the postwar liberal consensus, *critical professionalism* grew in the late 1960s (Hallin & Mancini 2004), fusing a professional reportorial style with a more aggressive and power-challenging approach to the craft. Several decades later, a widespread disgust with a process of politics seen as trivial and relentlessly negative gave rise to the public journalism movement, a similarly anti-professional response among a small faction of journalists (Carey 1999). In sociology, the description of journalistic objectivity as a strategic ritual (Tuchman 1978), the detailed analysis of the daily processes for making news decisions (Gans 1979), and the critique of how the national media shaped the image and social behavior of the new left (Gitlin 1980) challenged the epistemological foundations underlying journalists’ self-image (→ Journalists’ Role Perceptions). Still, the success of the narrative that the North American professional model proposed has been remarkable, especially considering that journalistic professionalism rests upon shaky foundations.

## CURRENT CHALLENGES

How great a challenge journalistic professionalism faces varies from country to country, depending on national factors and how institutionalized professionalized journalism has become. Several long-term social trends threaten the still weak status of journalism as a profession: growing corporatization (and its counterpart, politicization); the diffusion of digital communicative tools (→ Internet); and, at least in the United States, the collapse of the three-decades-old modus vivendi between news organizations and the government on using journalists as witnesses in legal proceedings.

Sociologists have long had theoretical and empirical concerns about the process of educated labor becoming increasingly proletarian (Larson 1977), and a few American

media scholars have drawn an explicit link between the growth of centralized, profit-driven media systems (Bagdikian 2000) and a decline in journalistic professionalism. In the European context, where the tradition of mixing state and private media enterprises faces increasing pressure to Americanize, scholars have drawn a far more forceful link between professional decline and a media system grounded in a capitalistic communications environment. Bourdieu (1998) was especially polemical in this regard. To complicate matters further, *increased corporate control and consolidation* find their apparent opposite in a second trend that also could affect the status of journalism as a profession (→ Consolidation of Media Markets): the explosive growth of digital communications via the Internet, which futurists, online entrepreneurs, and scholars say has the potential to democratize the current journalistic system. Most commentators doubt that → online media forms like weblogs (→ Blogger), podcasts, videoblogs, one-woman media startups, or radical media enterprises like Indymedia will replace the professional journalist (→ Alternative Journalism; Citizen Journalism), but nearly all argue that the profession will not emerge from the Internet era unscathed. Scholars have so far done little to no research on how the impact of the Internet on professional journalism varies across national boundaries, leaving to speculation whether its effects have been universal.

In a sociological and cultural sense, these technological, regulatory, and economic trends are in their early stages and difficult to assess, but they are the likely terrain where the professional project of journalism will unfold. In the coming years, research should include an examination of technological challenges to journalism and journalistic expertise, a comparative analysis of legal-political culture in the relative failure of journalism professionalization; and the cross-national study of institutions of journalism education. Finally, the professional project of journalism manifests itself as much in practice as in theory or education. In the so-called “distributed newsroom” of the twenty-first century, research should assess how the organizational structures, work routines, staff interactions, and ethical decision-making processes of journalists are changing.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Blogger ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists’ Role Perceptions ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Online Media ▶ Party–Press Parallelism ▶ Penny Press ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## Professionalization of Public Relations

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The term “professionalization” refers to the way in which occupations become recognized as professions, usually explained by a range of factors related to the improvement of services offered and status enjoyed. The precise meaning of the term depends on the approach taken to defining the concept of “profession.” Three theoretical perspectives are in evidence in sociological literature: the functionalist approach, as articulated by Parsons (1954) and indebted to Durkheim, sees professions as key to maintaining social order;

the critical approach, initiated in the 1970s (Freidson 1970, Johnson 1972), which views professions as centers of monopoly power and elitism; and the Foucauldian perspective, which defines the profession as characterized on the one hand by high status and power, and on the other hand by subjugation resulting from the exercise of *self-discipline*. Professionalization, therefore, can be understood respectively as: a process of improvement of services, knowledge, and standards; a process of social closure and exploitation of a monopoly position; and finally, a “soft” technology of control of expert labor (→ Professionalization of Journalism).

In → public relations, professionalization has been discussed predominantly within the functionalist framework, and with specific reference to the dimensions established by Wilensky’s seminal article “The professionalization of everyone?” (1964): emergence of a full-time occupation; establishment of formal training; formation of a professional association; agitation to achieve legal protection for the occupation; and establishment of a formal code of ethics (→ Functional Analysis). Public relations in the USA is an important case in point: it offers a good illustration of this *professionalization discourse* as well as of its influence worldwide (see Pieczka & L’Etang 2001). The critical approach to the question of professionalization of public relations has been championed mainly by media sociologists and cultural historians whose disapproval of the practice is rooted in Marxist critiques of capitalism and in the Habermasian preoccupation with the → public sphere (L’Etang, 2004; → Habermas, Jürgen). Consequently, public relations is treated here as a profession whose increasing power is seen as a corrupting influence in terms of social justice and the existence of the public sphere. This critical stance is best summed up by Wernick’s verdict on promotional professions, public relations included, as “deficient in good faith” (Wernick 1991, 194). The third, Foucauldian approach to professionalization has so far not been developed in public relations.

The *history of the professionalization of public relations* post-World War II can be structured around two key moments: the emergence of professional associations at the national level in the late 1940s, significantly in the USA (Public Relations Society of America in 1947) and UK (Institute of Public Relations in 1948), and the publication of Grunig’s *Excellence in public relations and communication management* in 1992. National professional associations are important because they focus efforts given to defining and representing the best interests of the occupational group, which tend to be pursued through programs of professional education, public statements and campaigns, and the drafting of codes of ethics. *Excellence in public relations* is noteworthy because, as a publication resulting from a research project conducted by an academic team and funded by a professional association, the International Association of Business Communicators, it makes a point about the value attached by the profession to abstract knowledge, while simultaneously harnessing academic interests to the professional agenda.

The set of ideas contained in the *Excellence* project became the reference point in the 1990s for the *profession’s search for its modern identity*, which came to be anchored in liberal pluralism and the “empirical-administrative” approach (Dozier & Lauzen 2000). Thus the public relations profession described itself as instrumental to the existence of democracy, transparency, and order in public life through the practice of two-way-symmetrical communication, while at the same time being attentive to the worldview of corporate actors. The popularity of these ideas as represented in published research and

public relations textbooks throughout the 1990s can be at least partly attributed to their usefulness to the professional project.

An important strand of research relevant to professionalization, and included in the *Excellence* project, is based on the concept of → *public relations roles*, which stratifies the profession into two layers, technicians and managers, defined with reference to tasks, competences, autonomy, and access to power. This scheme, originally developed in researching American practitioners, was subsequently applied to other countries, proposing, as its critics pointed out, the idea of the uniformity of public relations practice and professional standards globally (→ Public Relations, Intercultural). Roles research also turned out to be important in identifying gender differences within the profession and contributing to the development of the feminist theory of public relations (Grunig et al. 2001).

SEE ALSO: ► Functional Analysis ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Professionalization of Journalism ► Public Relations ► Public Relations, Intercultural ► Public Relations Roles ► Public Sphere

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# Propaganda

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The term “propaganda” is of Latin origin, meaning spreading, extending, or propagating with the help of the laity. It was first used by the Catholic church to denominate its mission. In 1622, the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, a council of cardinals responsible for the spread of the Catholic faith, was established in Rome under Pope Gregory XV. During the Age of Enlightenment the term assumed a polemic connotation. In the course of the French Revolution “propaganda” lost its ecclesiastic meaning in favor of a political one. The term then stood for the proclamation of an ideological expansion program hitherto unknown. Propaganda was adapted in a positive sense by the European labor movement in the nineteenth century and consequently also became a central concept of communist ideology. Lenin adopted propaganda, agitation, and organization as core terms of his press theory. The term also gained ground in commerce and became partly a synonym for → advertising. While the latter term, however, referred to economic goods, propaganda took on a more psychological meaning. It was also taken on favorably in the twentieth century by the National Socialist (Nazi) movement in Germany and the fascist movement in Italy. This has always been typical of totalitarian and authoritarian states. As a consequence, the term aroused highly negative associations in western democracies and was replaced there by the term → public relations.

## DEFINITIONS

There are numerous definitions of the term propaganda in the literature. It is variably interpreted in a narrow or broad sense and as rather neutral or connoted. One of the earliest scientific definitions was introduced by → Harold D. Lasswell, who wrote: “Propaganda is the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols” (1927a, 627). Edward L. Bernays, one of the fathers of public relations (PR), wrote at around the same time: “Modern propaganda is a consistent, enduring effort to create or shape events to influence the relations of the public to the enterprise, idea or group” (1928, 25). Jacques Ellul, a French sociologist, defined propaganda even more broadly, as the pervasive process of influencing social values (1973).

## HISTORY

Although the term propaganda was only shaped ideologically and institutionally in the early seventeenth century, the phenomena it refers to are much older and may be traced back to antiquity. Thus the Athenian statesmen Solon and Pericles were characterized as early protagonists of propaganda (Sturminger 1960). Propaganda was also used in the medieval conflicts between state and church. Propaganda also flourished during the schism of the different Christian confessions of the Reformation and the subsequent political conflicts in central Europe. Propaganda was no longer limited to the religious sphere but encroached upon the state sphere too.

World War I (1914–1918) led to a hitherto unprecedented expansion especially of military propaganda. All parties were convinced that the fight by psychological means was as important as the one with military weapons. All belligerent parties created their own institutions for this purpose: Wellington House and Crewe House in the UK, the *Maison de la Presse* in France, the Central Office for Foreign Services in Germany, the Committee on Public Information (CPI) in the USA. Therefore, it is justified to speak of a major propaganda campaign in which even drastic means were used (“atrocities propaganda”).

After World War I, the western democratic states at first demobilized their propaganda, while twentieth-century totalitarian movements drew upon massive propaganda to enforce their ideologies and claims to power. This was first the case in the Soviet Union, where a department of agitation and propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party was established in 1920. The other communist countries followed this example later. In the rightist ideologies, propaganda played a no less important role. In the 1920s, the National Socialists in Germany created a propaganda apparatus at party level, which they applied to state level after 1933. Adolf Hitler was convinced that Germany’s defeat in World War I had to be assigned to deficient propaganda. He followed an eclectic propaganda theory, taking up elements of mass psychology (e.g., the work of Le Bon and McDougall). A propaganda ministry under the direction of Joseph Goebbels was responsible for central control. In fascist Italy, propaganda was pursued in a similar way.

Even more than in World War I, national and international propaganda reached a climax in World War II (1939–1945; → Propaganda in World War II). This was again true of all warring countries. While the totalitarian regimes abused propaganda to mislead their peoples, the western democracies, bound to the ideals of freedom of opinion and freedom of the press, wanted to abstain from such propaganda after the war. Instead, they tended to speak of information or educational work. In military contexts, the term “psychological warfare” had been introduced. The western countries believed it necessary to defend themselves against the threat of Soviet totalitarianism even by informing and undeceiving attempts at manipulation. Therefore, the means of propaganda ruled again during the Cold War. Even after the end of the east/west conflict, propaganda has been revived in recent conflicts such as the Gulf War, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and Iraq (MacArthur 1993; → War Propaganda). Propagandists, such as groups of Islamic terrorists, now even use the Internet (→ Mediated Terrorism).

### **FORMS AND MEANS OF PROPAGANDA**

There are three different forms of propaganda: (1) white propaganda, i.e., the open distribution of information regarded as truth; (2) gray propaganda, consisting of statements of doubtful quality, which systematically avoid identification of the source of the information; and (3) black propaganda, consisting of lies whose source is concealed, with the aim of embarking upon deception.

Propaganda may be directed inwards (national propaganda) or outwards (foreign propaganda). In the first case, the national population or parts of it are addressed by the propaganda. In the second case, propaganda is directed toward people in other countries. The form and content of such propaganda depends on whether these countries are neutral, allied, or adversary (→ International Communication).

All sorts of communication means may be employed for propaganda. In the time before modern mass media were available, symbols, coins, heraldic signs, architecture, sculptures, and paintings were used. Speeches and the theatre have also been applied. The invention of printing offered greater possibilities for distribution in more recent times. This applied especially to propaganda writings (leaflets, pamphlets). With the help of new graphic techniques visual propaganda became more diverse (→ Propaganda, Visual Communication of). With the help of lithography, caricatures as well as posters became means of propaganda. Photography and film were also very soon adopted for purposes of propaganda. The → radio, which appeared in the 1920s, served the warring parties in World War II to broadcast messages across country borders and front lines. Because of this advantage, radio transmissions were also a favored medium during the Cold War and still are established where free distribution of information within a country is not possible: → Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty broadcast their programs to the Soviet Union and eastern Europe until 1989, and Radio Martí addresses the Cuban population from the US. In this case, television is also used (TV Martí; → Cuba: Media System). During recent years, terrorist groups have been trying to conduct propaganda to promote their aims with the help of video tapes; for this purpose the same groups make use of the Internet. Beyond the propaganda communicated through the media, it is common to speak of “propaganda of action” (demonstrations, hunger strikes, terrorist attacks).

## RESEARCH

The effect of the massive impact of propaganda during World War I stimulated an intensive preoccupation with the subject. The beginning of scientific research about propaganda in the field of communication was marked by Harold D. Lasswell's study *Propaganda technique in the World War* (1927b). Lasswell not only described the organization of propaganda, but also distinguished four major aims: “(1) To mobilize hatred against the enemy; (2) To preserve the friendship of allies; (3) To preserve the friendship and, if possible, to procure the co-operation of neutrals; (4) To demoralize the enemy” (1927b, 195). Important elements of propaganda were the war objectives, the question of war guilt, the demonization of the enemy (above all by “atrocious propaganda”), and the belief in victory.

The necessity for research on and countering of propaganda increased in the US again in the late 1930s. In 1937 the Institute for Propaganda Analysis was founded, with the communication scientist Hadley Cantril as the first president. The institute was designed to detect National Socialist propaganda in the United States and to counteract it. The most important publication of the institute laid down and illustrated seven general rules of propaganda: (1) name calling, i.e., giving an idea a bad label; (2) glittering generality, i.e., associating something with a “virtue” word; (3) transfer of authority, sanction, and prestige; (4) testimonial, i.e., having someone respected say that something is good or bad; (5) plain folks, i.e., convincing by referring to other people or the majority; (6) card stacking, i.e., giving the best or worst possible case; (7) bandwagon, i.e., following the majority (Lee & Lee 1939).

Apart from the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, which above all wished to serve education, further institutions for propaganda research were founded in the US. They became the basis of empirical communication science. It was again Harold D. Lasswell



who conducted a research project on National Socialist and allied propaganda, financed by the Rockefeller Foundation (Rogers 1994, 203ff.). This project became a laboratory of method development, where Lasswell systematically refined the process of → quantitative content analysis. By using this method – in quasi-diagnostic investigations – undisclosed intentions and plans of the adversary side were to be uncovered. This was based on the assumption that verbal statements were “representational” of attitudes and intentions. Several other scientists who established empirical communication research were involved in the US war propaganda research: emigrants such as Hans Speier and → Paul F. Lazarsfeld at the Columbia Bureau for Applied Social Research (New York), but also the group of researchers conducting the “American soldier” studies, including → Carl I. Hovland, who had a significant influence on the social psychological analysis of persuasion (Rogers 1994, 362ff.).

Lasswell expanded his propaganda studies after World War II in comprehensive, broadly based historical panoramas (Lasswell et al. 1979/1980). On the other hand, however, propaganda research lost its significance. The experiences with propaganda had fostered a belief in the great power of mass media. However, this conviction seemed to be jeopardized by the survey-based studies of Paul F. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues. On the basis of these studies, the *minimal effects theory* in fact became accepted (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of). The effects of propaganda seemed to have been overrated. This was the reason for criticizing propaganda research (Lazarsfeld & Merton 1943). Propaganda research almost disappeared from the scientific stage.

Historical and scientific reasons have again caused a revival of propaganda research. The age of propaganda by no means ended with World War II. In the east/west confrontation, propaganda remained a proven agent on both sides, all the more so as the balance of the atomic threat could avoid a “hot” war between the great powers. Above all, within the confrontation of these powers, further propaganda campaigns were launched. And also the new local wars in the world are supported by propaganda. On the other hand, the boom in public relations has led to a rediscovery of propaganda as a phenomenon representing, to a certain extent, a precursor. Additionally, the minimal effects theory has been questioned, if not abandoned. With the return of the assumption of more powerful mass media, propaganda has in turn regained attention. As a result, interest in historical propaganda research has been revived too.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cuba: Media System ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ International Communication ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Public Relations ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ War Propaganda

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## Propaganda, Visual Communication of

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There is no more difficult concept to clearly define than that of → propaganda. Countless books and learned essays have grappled with a definition of this persuasive practice that would encompass all of its many manifestations. The difficulty in arriving at a definition that satisfies all aspects of this particular type of persuasive behavior is compounded by the historical shift in the acceptance of those activities that today might be labeled as propaganda. Propaganda, in its most neutral sense, means to disseminate or promote particular ideas. A working definition of propaganda which focuses on the communication process is as follows: “Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist” (Jowett & O’Donnell 2006).

The concept of persuasion is an integral part of human nature and the use of specific techniques to bring about large-scale shifts in ideas and beliefs can be traced back to the ancient world (→ Persuasion; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). While propaganda activities utilize a wide range of media and virtually every form of human social interaction, the utilization of visual media has been particularly effective throughout human history (→ Rhetoric and Visuality; Visual Communication). The psychological effect attained through the visual sense is particularly powerful, and tends to lend a sense of credibility and veracity, as well as providing a strong emotional response. From the earliest periods of recorded history we have numerous examples of visual stimuli used as propaganda devices to convey a sense of power, control the flow of → information, or manipulate the → emotions and → cognitions of the → public (→ Affects and Media Exposure; Cognitive Dissonance Theory; Emotions, Media Effects on; Visuals, Cognitive Processing of).

## THE EARLY HISTORY OF VISUAL PROPAGANDA

### Ancient Days

The development of visual propaganda throughout history moves along two basic trajectories. The first is the desire to disseminate the message to an ever-wider public; the second is to disseminate this message as quickly and effectively as possible. In the ancient world, where communications were severely limited by distance, visual propaganda was initially confined to monumental displays associated with official sites of power such as palaces and temples, where large architectural structures, statues, obelisks, wall engravings, and other visual devices were used as a means of establishing a sense of power, social order, and hierarchy. As transportation and communications improved in the ancient world, new methods of visual propaganda emerged as a means of creating and maintaining a sense of unity and stability across far-flung regions. In particular, the use of coins, circulated widely and embossed with the visual images of rulers and symbols of state, were extremely effective as a means of conveying the importance and centrality of the state in the lives of people (Fig. 1).

Julius Caesar (100–44 BCE) was particularly adept at using sophisticated propaganda techniques. He used coins to advertise his victories or display himself in various guises, such as warlord, god, or protector of the empire. Caesar also made maximum use of the public spectacle, spending lavishly on massive triumphal processions to celebrate military victories (→ Spectacle).

### The Emergence of Print

Until the fifteenth century, aside from coins, there was no means of duplicating imagery on any large scale in the west. Pictures were made for palaces, churches, and monasteries and did not travel. With the development of printing, it was possible to produce visual



Figure 1 One of Julius Caesar's coins. Coins such as this were the first genuine form of mass visual propaganda in the ancient world



Figure 2 *The leaflet seller*, an etching by Amman from 1588. Illustrated leaflets have been a staple form of visual propaganda since the development of printing in the fifteenth century

imagery as well as textual material in large quantities and transportable forms. In many ways, printing can be seen as the first mass production industry, and the modern age begins with the negation of the uniqueness found in the previous forms of handwritten communication.

The eventual development of woodblock prints, and later engravings on metal, was a significant breakthrough in the development of visual propaganda. Now the visceral power of the image, often accompanied by written text, could be widely disseminated in the form of broadsheets or pamphlets. These visual prints were intended to elucidate current events for the common man, and were focused to a large extent on religious or political themes. This new form of visual communication fostered a new profession, that of the engraver-artist. Lucas Cranach (1472–1553) was a master engraver whose work was of enormous assistance to Martin Luther's propaganda campaign against the Roman Catholic Church. His portraits celebrated the reformers and supporting Protestant princes as heroes, and his caricatures satirized the pope and the Roman Church. These early propaganda prints were sold on the streets, and widely circulated, and were the forerunner of the extensive use of printed material in the development of propaganda techniques in the modern age (Fig. 2).

The emergence of printed propaganda signaled a major shift away from the feudal power structure of the Middle Ages into a modern “bourgeois” mentality. It was at this point that propaganda as a deliberate, systematic strategy to alter perceptions, beliefs, and actions of politically engaged publics begins to emerge, fueled by new forms of communication capable of reaching a wide → audience within a relatively short period of time (→ Public Sphere). Propaganda, especially in the form of visual stimuli, enters the structure of the modern political state as a powerful weapon both of groups opposed to authority and those in power, and → prints and other forms of visual propaganda such as flags, → heraldry, medals, regalia, and all manner of art and architecture were used to legitimize authority and symbolize the inherent power of the state.

New forms of printing accelerated this development (→ Printing, History of). Lithographic printing was invented in 1798 by Alois Senefelder, and by 1848, could produce 10,000 sheets per hour. In 1856, the element of color was added, leading to the emergence of the “golden age of posters” in the late nineteenth century. While → posters had been around for centuries, the new printing techniques now available precipitated and encouraged the emergence of the poster as the foremost medium of visual propaganda in the pre-motion picture and television ages. In both of the great wars of the twentieth century the poster became a major propaganda weapon, especially in creating morale and civic motivation on the home front with slogans like “Loose lips sink ships” and “Is your journey really necessary?”

## MODERN DAYS

### Photography and Motion Pictures

The emergence of → *photography* in the 1830s created an entirely new possibility for increasing the effectiveness and emotional impact of visual propaganda. By the 1860s the use of photography as a dramatic illustration of the horrors of war or the plight of the poor in slum living conditions had become a major weapon for the propagandist, despite the fact that such photographs were often deliberately staged by the propagandist as a means of influencing public opinion. By the turn of the century photographs could be mechanically reproduced in newspapers and magazines, and between the world wars, → picture magazines such as the *Berliner Illustrierte Zeitung* and the *Münchener Illustrierte Presse* in Germany, *Vu* in France, the *Picture Post* in the UK, and *Life* and *Look* in the US provided the major visual news experience for a mass public (→ Photojournalism).

Photography proved to be a particularly powerful propaganda tool in the hands of skilled photographers such as Robert Capra, with his famous “Moment of death” picture from the Spanish Civil War, or Dorothea Lange, and her work in Appalachia for the New Deal administration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Heinrich Hoffman’s carefully crafted pictures of Adolf Hitler contributed greatly to the Nazi → iconography, and were found in almost every home in Germany during that period.

The use of photographs continues to be a major weapon in the propaganda arsenal, but the digitization of photography and the potential for the manipulation of the image has both created the potential for greater “agitative creativity” and caused a growing distrust of the pictorial image as an indication of “reality” (→ Digital Imagery).

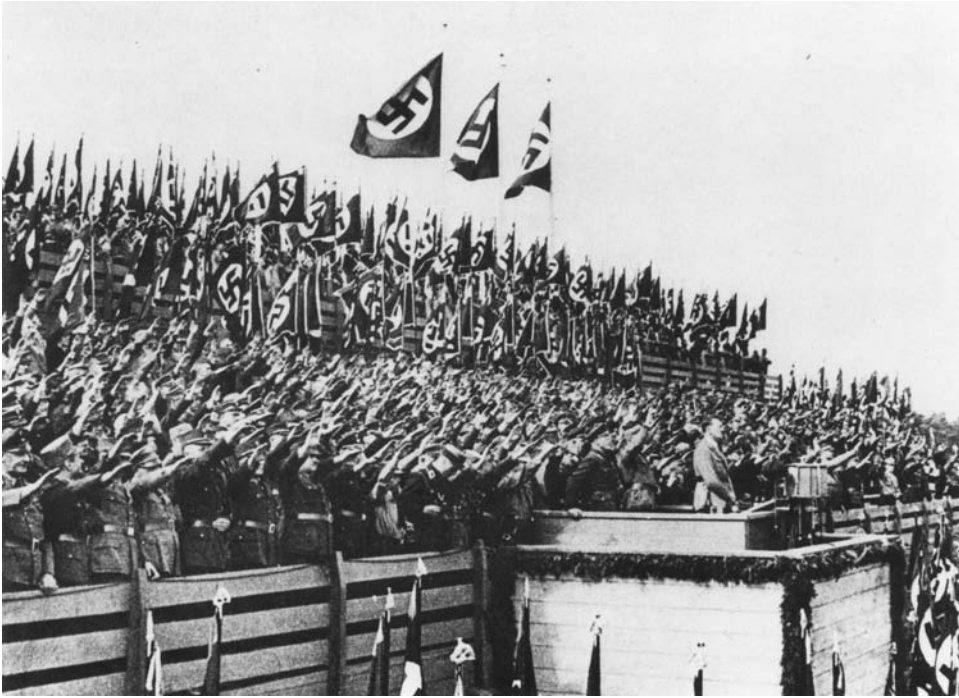


Figure 3 Part of the crowd of 151,000 who attended Party Day celebrations in the Nuremberg Stadium in 1933 to listen to Adolf Hitler's speech

The *motion picture* has always been an enigma when it comes to its use as a propaganda weapon (→ Cinema). Even as early as the 1890s, films taken of the Boer War (many of these were faked) were shown in British and American cinemas for propaganda purposes. By the time of World War I, the cinema was so popular with the international public that motion pictures became an integral part of the “official” propaganda activities of most governments. However, through its long history as an important and successful entertainment medium, the motion picture has had a checkered history of success as a vehicle for disseminating propaganda. There are, of course, individual films such as director Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the will* (1935), a brilliant cinematic paean to Hitler's 1934 Nazi Party rally in Nuremberg (see Fig. 3), or current controversial documentaries, such as Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2005), which can be seen as successfully communicating their propaganda objectives, but there are far more films that have failed to achieve the desired result of their propagandist creators (→ Documentary Film). It appears that over time movie audiences have come to expect entertainment, and resent being confronted with explicitly political content. The most successful forms of motion picture propaganda have always come in the guise of entertainment. The depiction of “the American way of life” in countless Hollywood films, for example, seems to have had a greater impact on foreign audiences (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services) than a myriad of propaganda documentaries turned out by the US government.

## Television

Television was first introduced to the world in the 1930s, when it was broadcast to small, elite audiences in Britain and Germany (→ Television). The Nazis immediately attempted to exploit both their scientific breakthrough and their athletic prowess by televising the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games, but this demonstration was available only to a small number of the Nazi Party elite and to the general public in tiny viewing rooms. Nevertheless, this exhibition established television's potential as a propaganda medium. The British used their early experiments with television to broadcast entertainment, thus setting a precedent for an entirely different model of how television would be used. In the United States, television was introduced in the late 1940s, largely as a visual extension of highly popular commercial → radio networks, and there was never any real question of its “power to persuade” being usurped by governmental or other potential agencies of propaganda (→ Television as Popular Culture). Of course, if we include → advertising as a form of propaganda, then television has indeed succeeded in becoming the largest propaganda medium in the world (→ Advertising as Persuasion). Even the use of television for formal educational purposes, a role for which it was ideally suited, never achieved the potential that had been part of its promise for so long (→ Educational Communication; Educational Media; Educational Media Content; Television: Social History).

Because of the technological barriers to broadcasting television signals across oceans and borders, it has only been in the past 25 years that the development of → satellite television has created the potential for global television propaganda (→ Global Media, History of; Globalization of the Media; Technology and Globalization). However, here too the public has shown a marked preference for entertainment programming, but in very recent years, particularly with growing international conflicts in the former Soviet Union, the Balkans, and the Middle East, satellite television news channels such as Fox News, → CNN, and Al Jazeera have begun to emerge as significant sources for delivering propaganda messages (→ Arab Satellite TV News; Newscast, 24-Hour). The continuous broadcasting of images of conflict, many “live” as they are unfolding, has made these satellite channels, as well as the traditional broadcast networks, among the most powerful propaganda agencies now in existence (→ International Communication; International Television).

New communication technologies, including hand-held mobile phone devices, digital cameras, and palm-sized computer interfaces, all linked to the → Internet, promise to facilitate the dissemination of imagery which could be used for a wide variety of propaganda purposes. Government attempts to regulate such widespread use of visual devices have proven to be rather futile, and there is little doubt that in the future the free flow of imagery will only increase, providing an even greater potential for diverse expression, but also for manipulation and the creation of more powerful visual propaganda.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Audience ▶ Cinema ▶ CNN ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Cultural Products as Tradable Services ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Global Media, History of

► Globalization of the Media ► Heraldry ► Iconography ► Information ► International Communication ► International Television ► Internet ► Newscast, 24-Hour ► Persuasion ► Photography ► Photojournalism ► Picture Magazines ► Poster ► Printing, History of ► Prints ► Propaganda ► Public ► Public Sphere ► Radio Networks ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Visuality ► Satellite Television ► Spectacle ► Technology and Globalization ► Television ► Television as Popular Culture ► Television: Social History ► Visual Communication ► Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

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## **Propaganda in World War II**

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World War II witnessed the greatest propaganda campaigns in history. Often referred to as the “Fourth Arm” after the army, navy, and air force, → propaganda was conducted by all belligerents and was essentially designed to sustain domestic civilian morale during a long war at home while undermining enemy civilian *and* military confidence in the ability to achieve victory. Although propaganda was becoming a characteristic of peacetime politics in the first half of the twentieth century, it was still seen largely as a weapon of war, especially in democracies.

Dictatorships in the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany more readily embraced its peacetime use as a form of coercion of mass populations instead of the individualistic democratic predisposition toward → persuasion and consensus-building. These different ideologies eventually went to war against each other in 1939, in a conflict that began with a cavalry charge in Poland and ended, six years later, with atomic explosions over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It became a war of national survival – total war



– in which propaganda was used by all sides as a psychological weapon to supplement, reinforce, or counter the destructive power of military force. Ultimately, however, World War II was won by military power – which prompts the question of what role propaganda actually played in determining the final outcome (→ War Propaganda).

### **TOTAL WAR, TOTAL PROPAGANDA**

Propaganda was highly organized from the outset, although most sides found it difficult to centralize its various functions. The Nazi Propaganda Ministry had several rival voices from within the “divide and rule” bureaucracy created by Adolf Hitler (Welch 1994). The British set up a Ministry of Information that stumbled its way through the early wartime years (including the “Phony War” or “Bore War”) fighting other Whitehall departments like the Foreign Office and Service Ministries. It eventually settled down after 1941 when Brendan Bracken was appointed minister and a Political Warfare Executive was created to conduct overseas propaganda (Taylor 1999). Once the Americans entered the war in late 1941, sufficient lessons had been learned to separate out domestic and overseas propaganda functions through the Office of War Information and the Office of Special Services. For all sides, fighting the war was the major priority, but who was responsible for publicly chronicling or interpreting its progress – image rather than reality – was also important.

The idea of a *home front* or of a “nation at arms,” of mobilizing entire populations for sustained conflict, first emerged during the 1914–1918 war. It came into sharper focus in the 1930s with the arrival of the bombing aircraft and its indiscriminate impact on the civilian populations of cities, first witnessed during the Sino–Japanese War (1931–1933 and from 1937 onward) and especially the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) through newsreel footage of the bombing of Guernica. The mass bombing of cities between 1939 and 1945 was to substantially narrow the gap between soldier and civilian both physically and psychologically; all were now combatants in a people’s war where the home front became as much the front line as far away battlefields. In such an environment, morale became a critical factor and one that might determine the eventual outcome. That environment was also media-rich compared to wars of the past – traditional print media were now supplemented by the arrival of broadcast → radio and sound → cinema. Although television was technically available, all belligerents decided largely to suspend its development for the duration and use the facilities for radio or jamming purposes.

Propaganda was also a weapon that could be *deployed against the enemy* when no other means of attacking them were available, especially in the form of electronic broadcasting. This was true of Britain following its retreat at Dunkirk in 1940. Until Britain could launch a “strategic” bombing offensive against the all-conquering Nazis, the → BBC played a major role in sustaining resistance movements, challenging the Nazi version of events as they unfolded and sowing seeds of doubt throughout occupied Europe about the eventual outcome. Radio broadcasts were supplemented by the dropping of millions of leaflets.

At home, the British came to blend self-knowing mockery with propaganda through the popular BBC radio show *ITMA* (“it’s that man again”), whose host, Tommy Handley, lampooned the Ministry of Information (MoI) as the “Ministry of Aggravation.” George

Orwell, who was to satirize the MoI as the “Ministry of Truth” in his postwar novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, was himself an effective wartime broadcaster, along with J. B. Priestley, whose “postscript” broadcasts from the summer of 1940 were credited with the biggest regular listening broadcasts in the world. The BBC decided not to jam German broadcasts to Britain led by William Joyce (“Lord Haw Haw”) on the grounds that only → news and not views should be censored, although the views about plucky Londoners “taking it” during the 1940 Blitz espoused by such North American broadcasters as Quentin Reynolds and Edward R. Murrow did much to persuade American listeners which side they should sympathize with (Cull 1995; → Censorship, History of; Censorship).

Propaganda flourishes most effectively in the wake of victories. Until 1943, despite a decade-long existence for Josef Goebbels’s Ministry of Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, the *Nazi propaganda machine* never really shifted into top gear because it had no real need to (Balfour 1979). Hitler, who had devoted two chapters of his *Mein Kampf* to the subject, had regarded propaganda as an essential instrument of achieving, and sustaining, political power. Nazi propaganda, however, did not export successfully – except among those who wanted to believe it. For the first years of the war, Nazi propaganda flourished in the wake of military success. But after defeat at Stalingrad, Goebbels rallied the nation to “total war” with slogans such as “victory or death.” This theme was partly prompted by the Allied call for “unconditional surrender” made following the Casablanca Conference of 1942 – the first real Anglo-American declaration of war aims following the USA’s entry into the war after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The British had survived their “finest hour” in the Battle of Britain of 1940 – just. They had even managed to transform the military humiliation of Dunkirk into a patriotic rallying cry – the “Dunkirk Spirit” – that is still evoked by nationalists today. In 1942, Prime Minister Winston Churchill secured one of his greatest achievements by persuading the American president, Franklin Roosevelt, to deploy the sheer weight of American military power against the Germans and Italians in a “Europe first” strategy rather than go for full-out revenge against the Japanese.

### PROPAGANDA MEDIA

This was a significant development in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor, and the American film industry was mobilized to reinforce the policy decisions (→ Film Production). Hollywood movies brought the distant war beyond the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to the only home front that did not have to endure bombing. Hollywood professionals like Frank Capra were likewise enlisted to make “indoctrination films” explaining to recruits from Iowa why they should fight Germans rather than just the Japanese (→ Hollywood). Capra’s *Why We Fight* series of seven films became compulsory viewing for all US armed forces personnel. The major theme of these films was that Japan, Germany, and Italy had formed an “axis” that had conspired to turn the “free world” into a “slave world” and, if they were not stopped, the “four freedoms” espoused by Roosevelt (freedom of speech and religion and freedom from want and fear), and adapted in 1941 to the Atlantic Charter with Churchill, would see the triumph of the “man-machine” over the individual.

Movies were so thoroughly infused with wartime propaganda themes that it was difficult for audiences to stand back and say “That is just a propaganda film.” So all-pervading was

propaganda that the experience of being propagandized could almost be defined as having lived at the time. Propaganda not only manifested itself in films and radio broadcasts, it also took the form of posters, picture postcards, china plates and ornaments, biscuit tins, cigarette cards, songs, and music. It proved capable of almost infinite applications, as with the British (and later American) "V for victory" campaign.

The effectiveness of much propaganda depended not only upon events at the fighting fronts but also upon media access to them. It took the British more than a year for the military authorities to appreciate the need for war reporters and camera men to be allowed to accompany the troops (→ War Correspondents). Operational security issues and a military predisposition toward censorship overrode any propaganda benefits. For the Nazis, it was the reverse. Their front line propaganda company units were able to capture spectacular images of the German army's initial successes in Belgium and France, which were duly incorporated into the official newsreels. Once the Americans entered the war, they allowed camera crews to accompany bombing raids over Germany, and William Wyler's documentary *The Memphis Belle* (1943) was testimony to the success of such decisions. The American influence on the British became evident with the later wartime release of major documentaries such as *Desert Victory* (1943) and the Anglo-American collaboration *The True Glory* (1945).

Almost without exception, propagandists on all sides, including journalists, saw themselves as patriotic members of the war effort (Collier 1989). Propaganda was a pejorative word; it was something that the enemy did "to us" or that "we" did "to them." The democracies had Ministries or Offices of War Information that told "the truth" whereas the dictatorships engaged in the "big lie." Although this was itself part of the propaganda war, it does highlight differences of approach toward the manipulation of opinion. Democracies understood that, in a long war of national survival, a "strategy of truth" was required to sustain credibility in a war between "good" and "evil." Goebbels famously remarked that if you repeated something over and over again – whether it was true or not – people would believe it. One of the tragedies of World War II was that when stories began to emerge from 1943 onward of the death camps built for the "final solution" they were dismissed by many people as being "atrocious propaganda" such as that used to demonize the Germans during World War I.

The war in the Pacific also saw major propaganda campaigns that were strikingly racist in tone. The Japanese saw themselves as the superior race in their drive for a Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. "Tokyo Rose" (in fact several female broadcasters) tried to undermine the morale of Allied troops as island after island fell with high American casualties. Hollywood films depicted the "yellow peril" as "buck-toothed" fanatics who would rather commit suicide than be captured. The American troops, especially segregated black soldiers, were depicted by Axis propaganda as decadent, cowardly, and racially inferior. The Nazi depiction of Soviet peasant soldiers as "Untermenschen" ("sub-humans") was only countered by military defeats after Stalingrad. And, of course, Nazi anti-Semitic propaganda in such films as *The Eternal Jew* (1940) exploited historical stereotypes as a method of inducing support for, or acquiescence in, the final solution. Even in Britain, the popularity of concepts like "Vansittartism" (the doctrine that the German people are innately belligerent) evoked comments that "the only good German is a dead German," while, at one point, the Americans devised the Morgenthau Plan, which

would have seen the postwar pastoralization of German society. So deeply rooted were some of these prejudices that they survived long after the war had ended.

Intelligence historians have been able to make a good case that the Enigma machine that cracked the “Ultra secret” probably helped the allies to knock two years off the war. Propaganda historians can make no equivalent claims. If anything, propaganda most likely lengthened the war through instilling hatred of the enemy and bolstering domestic support for the war effort. We need only recall the 14-year-old boys defending the streets of Berlin as the Russians advanced on the city in 1945.

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Cinema ▶ Film Production ▶ Hollywood ▶ News ▶ Persuasion ▶ Propaganda ▶ Radio ▶ War Correspondents ▶ War Propaganda

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## **Proxemics**

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Proxemics is the study of how humans perceive, structure, and use space as communication. Space helps people manage the dual needs for privacy and closeness in social and personal relationships. Early work on proxemics focused on classifying territory and conversational distance. Contemporary research has examined how proxemics is related to messages such as liking and dominance.

A *territory* is a fixed geographic space that is occupied, controlled, and defended by a person or group. Scholars have identified *four basic types of territory* (Altman 1975; Lyman & Scott 1967). “Body territory” includes a person’s physical body as well as the invisible, adjustable, and portable bubble of personal space surrounding one’s body. Personal space insulates people against physical and emotional threats from the external environment, including other people. “Primary or home territories” are private spaces that clearly belong to a person or group and provide a physical and psychological retreat from the public world. People can let their guard down in primary territories such as homes, cars, and private offices. “Secondary or interactional territories” are semi-public

territories that are inhabited and temporarily “owned” by particular people at different times. Examples include university classrooms, country clubs, and gyms. Finally, “public territory” is open for use by anyone. Public beaches, shopping malls, and sidewalks are all examples of public territory, although public places are sometimes claimed as primary territories (e.g., a gang’s turf).

Research has examined how *crowding* affects humans and other animals. Studies of deer and rats showed that crowding leads to stress, hyperactivity, infertility, and even death. College students are healthier and earn better grades when they live in less crowded dormitories. Crime, juvenile delinquency, and neighborhood violence go up in crowded conditions. Yet people can experience positive affect when they are part of a unified crowd, such as fans at a football game. Altman (1975) distinguished between *density* (the number of people per square foot or mile) and *psychological crowding* (discomfort and anxiety due to having one’s personal space violated). Although these two terms are related, some people may experience psychological crowding in an environment characterized by low density; conversely, densely populated environments may not be experienced as crowded.

People actively identify and protect their territories. *Boundary markers* such as doorways, fences, and walls demarcate where a territory begins and ends. *Central markers*, such as draping a sweater over a chair, are used to reserve a territory. *Ear markers* are placed directly on possessions (e.g., “This book belongs to Maria”) or boundary markers (“Steve’s room”). When a person’s territory is invaded, people often become aroused and defensive, leading to a flight or fight response. Research by Judee Burgoon suggests that violations of personal space lead to aversive reactions when they are committed by an unattractive or unrewarding communicator (Burgoon et al. 1996; → Expectancy Violation). People are more lenient when proxemic violations are committed by a highly regarded person. In fact, such violations sometimes lead to increased liking.

Like territory, conversational distance is an important component of proxemics. Edward Hall’s classic work identified *four perceptual categories of conversational distance*: “intimate” (0 to 18 inches), “personal” (18 inches to 4 feet), “social” (4 to 10 feet), and “public” (over 10 feet; Hall 1966, 1968). Conversation at closer distances is defined by more sensory stimulation and a perceptual focus on the face and upper body. At farther distances, people have an overall rather than close-up view of each other and are more easily distracted. These specific distances are most applicable to North America and central/northern Europe. The intimate zone is smaller in places such as South America and the Mediterranean region and larger in most of Asia (Andersen 1999). Yet, across various cultures, people generally use smaller conversational distances with people whom they like and trust. Couples are more likely to sit close together when they are satisfied rather than dissatisfied with their relationship. People also use closer distances when they discuss personal topics and expect to have a positive interaction with someone. In the US, romantic partners and women friends generally sit closer together and in more face-to-face positions than men friends.

Contemporary communication research has investigated how other proxemic cues relate to liking. Leaning forward, communicating on the same physical plane (or at the same level), and using a face-to-face position all help reduce physical distance between people. These three cues, along with close distancing, are part of a larger cluster of

*immediacy* behaviors that communicate intimacy, liking, and social support (→ Teacher Immediacy). However, proxemic immediacy only leads to liking if the receiver is comfortable with increased physical closeness.

Proxemic cues also communicate dominance and regulate interaction. Leaning in close to someone can be intimidating, as can towering over someone rather than communicating on the same physical plane. Powerful people also have more control of space; they have larger and more private territories, display more territorial markers, and have gatekeepers such as secretaries who prevent intrusion into their private quarters. In terms of regulating interaction, people lean forward when they want a speaking turn, lean back when they wish to relinquish their turn, and step away when trying to end a conversation. As these examples illustrate, proxemics play a subtle yet powerful role in people's everyday interactions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Teacher Immediacy

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# **Psychology in Communication Processes**

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Psychology is generally concerned with studying the mind, the brain, and human behavior. While popular media often focus on clinical psychology (the study and

treatment of mental illness), there are many other forms of psychology, ranging from neuropsychology to cultural psychology to sports psychology. This entry largely focuses on experimental psychology, an overarching branch that includes all areas of psychology in which researchers manipulate variables in order to perform empirical tests of how people think and behave (→ Experimental Design). Examples of experimental psychology areas include cognitive, cultural, developmental, perceptual, and social psychology, all of which hold implications for communication research (→ Cognitive Science).

### HUMAN COGNITIVE ARCHITECTURE

The framework of human cognitive architecture is helpful in discussing how different types of thought, as well as the corresponding areas of psychology, relate to each other along a continuum, and how this continuum, in turn, relates to communication processes. Alan Newell (1990), in his landmark text *Unified theories of cognition*, established a hierarchical structure that is based on the processing time which goes into organizing different types of human behaviors. At the very bottom level, taking fractions of seconds, are biological events, such as neurons firing. These biological events combine into *cognitive actions*, such as retrieving a memory, which typically take between 10 milliseconds and 10 seconds. Cognitive actions, next, are joined in rational actions, such as solving a math problem, which may take from minutes to hours. All of these behaviors enter into social actions, such as forming an identity, which takes months or years, and further mold historical actions such as the forming of a racial stereotype within a culture, which takes decades. Finally, at the evolutionary level, over millennia, the mind, body, and behavior of a species will change. A crucial aspect of Newell's framework is that "lower level" processes, such as neurological and perceptual events, combine and emerge as "higher level" processes, such as making decisions, forming social impressions, and communicating.

There are, of course, a number of non-experimental sub-fields within psychology that do not employ a "bottom-up" methodology. For example, one of the earliest and perhaps most controversial theories is *psychodynamics*, which posits that significant parts of our emotional or motivational forces operate at a subconscious level, and are strongly influenced by early childhood experiences and development. These latent traumas or motivations may remain in the mind and emerge on a conscious level as neuroses or psychoses. The role of psychoanalytic therapists is to identify the underlying subconscious reasons for the surface problems. The two scholars most associated with this tradition are Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, who utilized clinical interviews with patients as the basis for formulating their theories.

### COMMUNICATION PROCESSES

The relationship between psychology and communication research can be specified with reference to *three key types of communication processes* in the context of the human cognitive architecture framework introduced above. The three processes are face-to face interpersonal interaction, mediated interpersonal interaction, and communication via mass media. This framing is not intended as a historical account of these different

communicative practices, nor as an exhaustive description of communication, but serves to highlight some general similarities and differences between the two fields of inquiry.

### Face-to-Face Interpersonal Interaction

Consider an everyday conversation between two people sitting in a restaurant. As these people interact, they exchange information via both verbal and nonverbal cues (→ Interaction; Interpersonal Communication; Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Understanding what processes govern such social interaction, and how verbal and nonverbal cues interact in providing meaning and structure to social interaction, has been one of the cornerstones of communication research since the field took shape in the 1950s.

An early theoretical framework by Adam Kendon (1970) discussed the notion of *interactional synchrony*, i.e., the idea that verbal and nonverbal behaviors are intricately tied to one another, both within a person (i.e., person A's verbal behaviors match her nonverbal behaviors) and across several individuals (i.e., person A's verbal behaviors match person B's nonverbal behaviors). By rigorously observing people as they interacted with one another in experimental settings, Kendon uncovered a number of fundamental aspects of how social interaction proceeds, establishing just how closely tied verbal and nonverbal behaviors are in what he metaphorically termed a "complex dance." Since Kendon's groundbreaking work, other researchers have elaborated theoretical frameworks covering various relationships between verbal and nonverbal behaviors.

Burgoon's → expectancy violations theory addressed how people's expectations of one another guide the ways in which they exchange verbal and nonverbal information (Burgoon 1978). When individuals violate each other's expectations in terms of how the interaction should proceed, either verbally or nonverbally, they can be seen to follow specific patterns of social interaction. For example, if a person violates a social norm, such as touching a stranger, then the stranger will react to that violation of his or her expectations, based on an assessment of the potential subsequent outcomes of his or her reaction to the unexpected touch.

Patterson (1983) expanded these previous theoretical frameworks concerning face-to-face interaction through a sequential functional model of nonverbal exchange. It allowed for more specific predictions of verbal and nonverbal behavior with reference to different parameters and relational structures of social interaction. In particular, the model incorporated long-term personal history as an antecedent to a given exchange, short-term contextual information that conditions the interaction at its outset, as well as various types of processes that occur during the exchange itself. In the scenario described above in which a person touches a stranger, the approach would consider the arousal levels or psychological states of both individuals before the event occurred, their personal characteristics such as degree of extroversion and introversion, and historical circumstances, including events that may have occurred during previous and perhaps similar meetings.

In sum, psychological frameworks and models have allowed communication researchers to produce detailed descriptions and to form specific predictions of how people exchange both verbal and nonverbal information with one another. When similar exchanges of information occur through some mediating technology, it becomes relevant to examine additional psychological processes.



### Mediated Interpersonal Interaction

When small groups of people interact with one another in real time, using different types of media (e.g., telephones, computers, and video conferencing), the processes that unfold during face-to-face interaction are combined with and complicated by various factors that are unique to mediation (→ Mediated Social Interaction). One prominent example of research on this topic examines the kind of *computer-mediated communication* (CMC) in which two individuals rely on computer-based technology to conduct an interaction (→ Personal Communication by CMC).

The literature on face-to-face interactions provided the foundation for studying CMC, in which different qualities of face-to-face interaction appeared to be degraded or missing altogether. For example, in an online message board, users interact asynchronously via typed messages in a pseudonymous setting. How might the lack of visual cues or synchronicity affect such interactions? Early research in CMC hypothesized and found that the lack of social cues in CMC led to less personal forms of interaction than in face-to-face contexts (Sproull & Kiesler 1986).

But as online communities emerged, it became clear that CMC could support relationship formation and even intimate interactions (Parks & Floyd 1996; → Virtual Communities). In an attempt to reconcile experimental findings concerning the poorness of CMC with his own field observations, Walther proposed the social information processing theory, arguing that the more limited bandwidth or sensory richness of CMC, relative to face-to-face communication, meant that it would take longer for individuals to exchange information (Walther et al. 1994). Over time, however, the two types of social interaction may achieve comparable interpersonal effects and intimacy levels. One methodological lesson was that even if CMC may appear less personal in short-term experimental settings, CMC compares to other types of interaction that are typically deemed more intimate when it comes to naturalistic settings, as examined in observational studies.

Later work by Walther suggested that certain unique features of CMC enable interactions that actually can be more personal or intimate than comparable situations in face-to-face settings (Walther 1996). According to Walther, CMC creates a feedback loop of positive impression management, idealization, and reciprocity that leads to more intense interactions, which he referred to as hyperpersonal interactions. Furthermore, studies by Bailenson et al. (2005) extended the notion of hyperpersonal CMC by simulating unique communication processes that could not occur in real-life face-to-face interaction. For example, a specially designed CMC system that allowed a speaker to make eye contact with several audience members simultaneously, provided the participants with “conversational superpowers.” In CMC, a speaker thus may transform his or her actions strategically to maximize intimacy or social influence.

One of the most renowned lines of research within CMC has explored how people interact with *media interfaces*. Reeves and Nass (1996) showed via a series of experiments that people have a tendency to treat media interfaces (e.g., televisions and computers) as if they were social actors (→ Media Equation Theory). For example, people become polite to computers under certain conditions in order to conform to a social norm. In one study, participants performed a learning task on a computer. They then filled out an evaluation of the event, either on the same computer or a different computer. Participants

gave more positive ratings if they filled out the evaluation on the same computer that had administered the learning task than if they were assigned to a different computer. Reeves and Nass concluded that this pattern is analogous to the social norm of being polite to individuals asking for an evaluation of themselves.

To sum up, when people use media to conduct interpersonal interactions, they are combining processes that occur within face-to-face interpersonal interactions with new processes that are unique to utilizing various kinds of technology. Thus, the additive model of psychological processing, outlined in the introduction, can work as a framework for understanding mediated forms of interpersonal communication. In a further, metaphorical, sense, mass communication can be viewed as combining processes of face-to-face as well as mediated group interaction with additional processes that are inherent to the large-scale dissemination of information, even if historically, the use of mass media predates CMC.

### **Mass Communication**

Mass communication has typically been understood as organizations (e.g., newspapers, film production companies, or television studios) using some media technology to distribute information to large audiences (→ Media Effects). With the rise of digital technology, the contrast between large organizations and large audiences has been blurred, as it is now possible for any individual to send an email to websites and listservs, which, in turn, send this message to thousands of other people (→ Media Effects, History of). As John Durham Peters has noted (1999), mass communication technologies have changed how we think about communication in general – as dialogue, dissemination, and combinations of the two. From the perspective of psychological processes, one way to approach mass communication is as a combination of face-to-face and mediated interpersonal interactions.

In the 1970s and 1980s, → George Gerbner provided some compelling evidence for his → *cultivation theory*, which is a macroscopic theory of how interpersonal interaction and mass media use may be shown to combine in predictable ways. The basic argument is that, after much exposure to various forms of mass media, people will change their patterns of interpersonal behavior because they have acquired an altered mental representation or worldview. For example, people who watched large amounts of television, which often features violence, were more likely to begin avoiding going out late at night. The theory illustrates the combinatorial aspect of the psychological processes entering into communication. In order to create a model of how a worldview is cultivated, it is necessary to understand how people perceive and attend to stimuli (e.g., watch television), how they interact with mediated versions of people, and how, as a consequence, their interpersonal interaction with actual people changes. While some of the methods employed by Gerbner and colleagues have been called into question, his approach suggested the importance of examining the connections between interpersonal communication and mass communication.

### **CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH AS A COMMON GROUND**

One area which is common to psychology and communication is the study of *cultural influences* on identity formation and social interaction. Psychology has a well-respected tradition of examining cultural differences in how the mind functions. For example, work

by Hazel Markus and her colleagues has demonstrated that culture is rooted so deeply within the mind that the way in which people construe the self – how we relate to other people, how interdependent social relationships are, and how cognition, emotion, and motivations are formed – vary drastically between eastern and western cultures (Markus & Kitayama 1991).

These differences are so pervasive that they extend down to the “low level” cognitive actions discussed above. For example, work by Douglas Medin and colleagues has examined biological concepts among various groups: from Petan, Guatemala, and from Native American, Amish, and majority culture groups in Wisconsin, USA. The data from these different cultures exhibit systematic differences regarding very basic and supposedly “universal” aspects of cognition – how people form categories about objects, as well as how people draw inferences based on what category an object belongs to. A methodological lesson is that when data is collected from American undergraduates, as is common practice, the findings, models, and theories may not generalize to the world at large. Even at the level of how people perceive physical objects visually (→ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of), there are differences across cultures (Kitayama et al. 2003).

Also, communication scholars have argued that message production and social interaction should be studied outside the laboratory and with regard to the cultures in which those processes are entrenched (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). In a wider sense, James Carey (1989) has argued that communication is not simply a transmission of information, but a *ritualistic process* that creates and sustains social reality. In a ritualistic view, reading a newspaper is not so much a way of gaining new information as a communal affirmation of a shared worldview. All types of human expression – from architecture to dance to news broadcasts – confirm and propagate a symbolic order that governs social processes. In sum, psychologists have focused on how culture shapes thought by directly comparing people from different cultures. Communication scholars, in turn, have theorized and examined the very acts of expression and interaction as inherently cultural processes.

## **A CONTINUING INTERDISCIPLINARY RELATIONSHIP**

The fields of psychology and communication are closely related, to the extent that the line differentiating the two is often quite blurry. In terms of historical roots, some of the studies that are considered landmarks in the field of communication originally were carried out in psychology departments, and/or published in psychological journals; for example, work by → Bandura, → Hovland, → Lasswell, and Lewin.

Even now, there is continuing cross-over between the two fields in terms of publication venues, collaborations among scholars, and even migration across departments for faculty and students trained in either of the two disciplines. Given the historical development of the two areas of inquiry, psychology is more of an established discipline than communication, so communication may benefit from the relatively consolidated approaches of psychology. In the future, the fields will be entering into shifting configurations as each develops further. The relationship between psychology and communication has been productive in the past, and communication scholars will continue to both learn from and inform psychologists.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Science ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interaction ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Equation Theory ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Paradigm ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Virtual Communities ▶ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

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# Public

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Few concepts in the social sciences have attracted more attention and caused more confusion than the concept of the “public.” The dispute concerning the nature of the public is at least as old as Greek democracy. Since that time, one of the most divisive questions has been whether the public is characterized by an everyman, holding common opinions (*doxa*), or by an intellectual elite, endowed with deeper insight, knowledge, and wisdom (*episteme*). This controversy is the starting point for the following considerations. After a summary of different theoretical concepts, the relationship between the individual and the public is reviewed. The question of exposure to communication content is then addressed.

Since its beginnings in ancient times, the term “public” has bred a multiplicity of *competing meanings* (Habermas 1962; Childs 1965), which continue to shape scientific discourse today. Three major theoretical schools of thought can be identified: a normative or qualitative concept, an operationalist or quantitative concept, and a functionalist concept.

The *normative or qualitative concept* defines the public as a social elite comprising well-informed, responsible, and interested citizens. These pursue the common good and participate in an enlightened and rational discourse on societal affairs. In a democratic system, the public forms a critical counterpart to the government, acting as an imaginary parliament and engaging in political deliberation. Moreover, the public discussion of political ideas and the free exchange of arguments are regarded as the heart of the democratic process, as they make the best, wisest solutions possible (Berelson 1952; Hennis 1957; Habermas 1962; → Political Discourse; Public Opinion).

In the *operationalist or quantitative concept*, the public is regarded as a collective of diverse individuals whose views on a particular issue can be measured by opinion polls. According to this quantitative concept, the public is a certain cross-section of society, an “issue public,” as defined by survey research (Converse 1987). The *functionalist concept* defines the public as a system of social monitoring, enabling a society to observe itself and to react to issues which are or may become relevant to its members. The public has the function of monitoring trends and developments in society. It identifies and brings up important issues, reduces the complexity of social and political matters, and thus reaches a consensus on social conflicts (Luhmann 1970).

In addition, according to → Noelle-Neumann (1993), the public can be understood as an institution of social control: its purpose is to enforce social conformity, stabilizing society as a whole. In contrast to the normative concept, in this view the public is concerned with political and nonpolitical issues, and includes not only the intellectual elite but every single individual within a social collective. Furthermore, the existence of the public is restricted neither to democratic systems nor to societies familiar with survey research or modern mass media (→ Spiral of Silence; Climate of Opinion).

The functionalist approach is the oldest concept: single thoughts, fragments of theory, and even comprehensive analyses can be found in every period of history (e.g., in the works of Cicero, Michel de Montaigne, or John Locke). In contrast, the normative concept did not emerge

until the eve of modern democracies, during the age of Enlightenment in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Finally, the operationalist concept, which is closely connected to the advent of empirical social research, appeared in the first half of the twentieth century.

An examination of the public's exposure to communication content must concentrate on the *relationship between the individual and the public*. The public is frequently viewed metaphorically as an organic being with a collective mind, yet this is an intangible generalization. Accordingly, all three concepts make statements about the relationship between the individual and the public. They share the view that the public consists of individuals who are both members of social groups and parts of specific media → audiences. In the functionalist concept, these individuals, groups – including the elite – and audiences are pooled to form a single public. According to this understanding, the mass media are also social units and components of the public. Their function is to confer publicity, to set important issues on the public agenda (→ Agenda-Setting Effects), and to serve as a general communication forum and source of information for the public. The media give attention to specific topics and problems, thereby influencing public awareness of these issues. Additionally, their coverage serves as a frame of reference in public discourse (→ Framing Effects).

The relationship between the individual and the public is determined by a *mechanism of symbolic representation* in the mind of every individual (Lippmann 1922; Mead 1934; Goffman 1963): virtually all people continuously form views of the public – it represents the generalized others in the individual's imagination, even if nobody is physically present. As the individual's perception or imagination of the public sentiment affects his or her own decisions (e.g., on voting) and opinions, it also contributes to the shaping of public opinion. Consequently, the public can also be defined as both a state of being exposed to others and an awareness of being (potentially) watched by the anonymous "public eye." Individuals rely on two sources of information in order to assess public attitudes and behavior: interpersonal communication and the mass media (Noelle-Neumann 1993). Media statements regarding public sentiment pervade interpersonal communication along several steps of the flow of communication (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication; Diffusion of Information and Innovation). In this manner, the media exert influence on the way the public is perceived; they shape the individual's understanding of the proportion of opinions, i.e., of the size of minorities and majorities (→ Media Effects). Although individuals arrive in many cases at correct estimates of the opinion of others, erroneous judgments are possible (→ Pluralistic Ignorance).

The circulation of communication content among the public takes place via intervening psychological and social processes: on the one hand, people's exposure is framed by interpersonal relations; on the other hand, individuals expose themselves selectively to communication content, i.e., they actively seek information that is consonant with their initial attitudes and that is likely to satisfy their needs (→ Selective Exposure). Exposure thus varies according to personality and social factors (→ Media Use by Social Variable; Personality and Exposure to Communication). Members of the intellectual elite, for example, usually gain greater exposure to information content in the media than does the general population (Fig. 1).

In summary, it can be concluded that the public consists of individuals who seek exposure to communication content. This content derives either from interpersonal

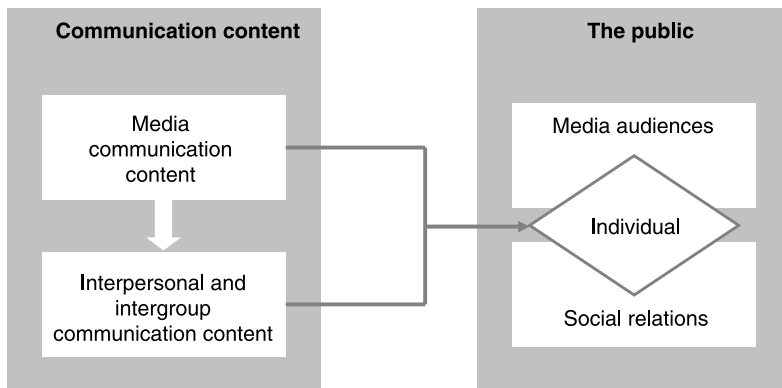


Figure 1 Exposure to communication content: the individual and the public

(intergroup) communication or from the mass media – which themselves in many cases influence interpersonal communication through their coverage. The public can be understood as a large collective of partially interconnected individuals, groups, and audiences through which (mass) communication is channeled.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Audience ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ News Audience ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Personality and Exposure to Communication ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# Public Access Television

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Public access television – also known as community television or open channels (→ Community Media) – is a form of → television in which citizens produce programs and bypass corporations, governments, journalists, and other gatekeepers to transmit their programs directly to audiences (→ Access to the Media). Proponents of public access television promote it as a remedy to commercialism, centralization, and lack of diversity in television systems around the world (→ Commercialization of the Media; Plurality). As a systematic alternative to commercial or government-supported television, public access television first emerged in Canada and the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Public access channels have since appeared in hundreds of communities in North America, Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania, although public access outlets have never attracted audiences large enough to rival those of professional television systems.

The emergence of public access television in *Canada* and the *United States* was closely associated with three developments: the appearance of media-activist movements (→ Activist Media) that promoted public access television as a means to nurture democracy and localism; the development of lightweight and relatively inexpensive equipment that facilitated video production (→ Video) by amateurs; and the construction of urban cable systems with channels available for public access programming (→ Cable Television). Beginning in 1966, the Canadian National Film Board sponsored documentaries in which citizens voiced their opinions about social and economic issues. The concept of public access was wedded to cable television in 1970 when a citizens' organization in Thunder Bay, Ontario, persuaded the local government to negotiate for community access on the local cable system. In 1971, the Thunder Bay model was adopted nationally when the Canadian Radio and Television Board stipulated that public access be a part of the country's burgeoning cable system (→ Community Video).

In the United States, media activists campaigned for similar access to cable systems (→ Citizens' Media; Citizen Journalism). Because the country's young cable industry needed allies in its regulatory battles with over-the-air broadcasters, it formed an alliance with public access advocates. When private companies negotiated the rights to wire local communities for cable, the agreement often included the reservation of channels for local public access, as well as channels for local governmental and educational programs. Frequently, the companies also agreed to provide public access producers with facilities and video equipment. In 1972, the Federal Communications Commission began requiring access channels in most local cable systems.

Produced largely on scant budgets, Canadian and US public access programs vary widely in format, content, and production quality, as do many public access programs around the world. Many address political or social issues, while others are purely entertainment. The most successful programs have attracted viewers with their originality and their willingness to address subjects ignored by other television outlets.



By the beginning of the twenty-first century, some of the world's most robust public access channels were in the Federal Republic of *Germany*. Again, they took root with the widespread advent of cable, in this case in West Germany in the 1980s. Germany's public access channels grant nondiscriminatory access to citizens and provide free production facilities. Unlike the cash-strapped systems in North America, the Federal Republic's "open channels" receive a portion of the subscription fees that Germans pay for television services. These funds support studios, technicians, and equipment for public access productions. Open channel services have also been established on local cable systems in *Sweden* and the *Netherlands*, and, to a lesser extent, in other European countries.

Although public access television is often associated with local communities, there have also been attempts to reach national audiences. In *South Korea*, the Broadcast Law of 2000 requires KBS 1, a national broadcast network, to set aside a small portion of its schedule for programs produced by the public. In 2002, South Korea's RTV network inaugurated the world's first satellite television channel devoted to public access programming (→ *South Korea: Media System*). In 2006, *Australia's* Satellite Community Television (SCTV) began beaming multiethnic, multilanguage public access programs nationwide. Previously, SCTV had been limited to local broadcasts on an over-the-air channel in Sydney.

In the first decade of the twenty-first century, the future of public access television is uncertain. With over 1,000 local cable channels devoted to public access, the United States had the most extensive system in the world in 2006. However, US cable channels remain chronically underfunded and face regulatory challenges. In 1979, in the case of *FCC vs. Midwest Video*, the US Supreme Court ruled that the Federal Communications Commission could no longer require cable companies to include public access channels in local cable systems. Since that decision, local governments have had to choose whether to negotiate for public access channels and production facilities in their franchise agreements with private cable companies. The now entrenched cable industry continues to lobby the US Congress to eliminate local governments' authority to negotiate such concessions. Public access television faces similar regulatory and economic threats in many nations, and also faces the challenge of adapting to new media such as satellite television and the world wide web (→ *Satellite Television*; *Internet*). Nonetheless, the notion of unfiltered citizen access to television is likely to remain attractive to critics of professional media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ *Access to the Media* ▶ *Activist Media* ▶ *Cable Television* ▶ *Citizen Journalism* ▶ *Citizens' Media* ▶ *Commercialization of the Media* ▶ *Community Media* ▶ *Community Video* ▶ *Internet* ▶ *South Korea: Media System* ▶ *Plurality* ▶ *Satellite Television* ▶ *Television* ▶ *Video*

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## Public Affairs

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Public affairs is both a generic term for the trends and conditions that define and result from socio-economic–socio-political trends, and the corporate management function that works to position each organization comfortably and cooperatively in its non-marketplace context. Focusing on the latter meaning, Madden (2005, 665) defined public affairs as “the management function responsible for interpreting an organization’s external environment, or in the case of a corporation, its noncommercial environment, and managing an effective and appropriate response to that environment.” Its primary connection with society centers on governmental relations, the factors in the public policy (non-marketplace) arena that can lead government to influence (support or oppose) management decisions and organizational operations and policies (→ Organizational Communication; Corporate Communication; Corporate Reputation; Organizational Image).

### ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Its corporate role, and hence its definition, depends on whose eye is seeing the beauty. Some define it as a management function that subsumes public relations and other communication functions. Especially in companies with a primary emphasis on product marketing, the public relations function is likely to be dominant. For some observers, it is often confused with or used interchangeably with → public relations. Those who see public relations as the dominant discipline feature public affairs as a sub-function devoted to government relations in the broad sense and → lobbying more narrowly. In many large organizations, especially national and international or multinational corporations, public affairs is the dominant discipline. In such organizations, public relations is a marketing, product promotion, publicity, and image-management function that reports to public affairs. In non-profits that feature public affairs, it is the planning function, whereas public relations often is designed to implement the public affairs plans. To further obscure the differences or similarities, some organizations name these kinds of functions corporate communications, external affairs, and even community affairs.

Public affairs, as a department and function, is not limited to businesses. Many non-profit organizations, especially if they are large and approach the discipline as an integration

of many specialties, feature their public affair department, which often also has a public relations function. However defined and positioned, proponents of these disciplines – public relations and public affairs – prefer that they are integrated and interconnected (→ Integrated Marketing Communications). Organizations that feature public relations as the dominant discipline tend to see it as implementing marketing and advertising promotion. In such organizations, public affairs is merely government relations, if it is a part of the organization chart at all. When public affairs is the dominant discipline, marketing may reside beneath public affairs and be part of or even report to public relations. So the definition is like a kaleidoscope. As it turns, it gives different perspectives on the subject at hand, namely the nature of public affairs as an organizational discipline.

### **DIMENSIONS IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH**

Dennis's (1996) book is one of the few devoted to public affairs. It was published by the Public Relations Society of America and openly vowed to not attempt to fully reconcile the specific definitions of public relations and public affairs. This work featured public relations as a broader function: "Public relations helps an organization develop and maintain quality relationships with the various groups of people ('publics') who can influence its future . . . Public affairs is the public relations practice that addresses public policy and the publics who influence such policy" (1996, xviii).

Viewed this way, public affairs is the discipline that centers its attention, management counseling, and communication efforts on the dynamic factors and conditions specific to the ways in which organizations can affect public policy and the manner in which public policy can affect organizations. Public affairs, from its seminal days, has been more than publicity and promotion. It has developed to bring large organizations into the *societal dialogue* that shapes the socio-economic, socio-political arena. Public affairs became a vital topic under that rubric in the 1950s in the United States. From the start, the term "public affairs" seemed more comfortable to executives and politicians because "public relations" carried a lot of semantic baggage, which today is reflected in the editorial comment "just public relations," or the pejorative appellation "spin." As public relations seemed to lack substance and respectability, something was needed to define how this important function could be made credible and functional in the public policy arena. Continuing this tradition today, many companies and other large organizations see public affairs as being central to their efforts to manage risks, whereas public relations is more likely to be associated with revenue generation through sales or fundraising. Although experts disagree on the best methodology and independent variables (Hillman 2002; Schuler 2002), the central academic and corporate assumption is that effective public affairs performance helps overall management and organizational performance.

### **EMERGENCE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

President Dwight D. Eisenhower played a major role in the inception of public affairs when he brought a group of leading business executives together to give a bipartisan forum for Democrats and Republicans. Following World War II, many forces seemed imminently about to define and shape business interests. Eisenhower was keenly aware of

the potential of international socio-economic collisions that would define the political and commercial arrangements and approach in the United States. In a spirit of citizen participation, he fostered the naming of the group as the Effective Citizens Organization. This group eventually changed its name to the Public Affairs Council (PAC) in 1965.

Many felt that public affairs was the new face of public relations practice. The 1960s and 1970s were a period of ferment, activism, reflection, combat, and self-examination in all of the institutions in the United States. Corporations and other large organizations were increasingly convinced that to ignore the public policy arena would leave them out of many decisions and allow others to define them and write their organizational missions. Whereas public relations had developed a reputation among many as featuring promotion, publicity, and image management, the tumult of the time called for a more basic and encompassing approach to positioning organizations and policies. The goal increasingly came to be to adjust organizations to the public policy arena and to adjust public policy to the needs and interests of large organizations. These organizations had increasingly become the voices that needed to be heard and needed to listen to one another, as the United States and other countries forged a postwar understanding of economics, finance, regulation, legislation, and standards of corporate citizenry.

### **PUBLIC AFFAIRS IN PRACTICE**

Public affairs departments perform many functions. One of the most crucial is serving in the *management council* of each organization. Using monitoring and issue analysis, public affairs specialists bring ethical and public policy issues to management-level decision-making. Specialists continually assess how comfortably the organization's policies fit with those of other key organizations working to shape public affairs. As a communication function, public affairs fosters public relations, corporate communications, media relations, employee relations, and strategic philanthropy, and may participate in investor relations. Additional points of strategic response include lobbying, grassroots organization, campaign finance, management consulting, and benchmarking. In addition, public affairs specialists often play a vital role in meeting the management challenge to know and achieve the level of performance that fosters rather than diminishes the organization's social capital (→ Strategic Communication).

From the inception of modern issues management in the 1970s, public affairs has adopted that approach to its public policy challenges. It defines issues management as "the process of prioritizing and proactively addressing public policy and reputation issues that can affect an organization's success. Many large companies, in particular, use issues management techniques to keep all of their external relations activities focused on high-priority challenges and opportunities" (Public Affairs Council 2006). Public affairs and → *issue management*, perhaps the offspring of public affairs, are viewed as being necessary for companies because of the keen abilities of their adversaries to shape public opinion and therefore drive public policy. It is not coincidental that public affairs and issues management started and became mature during a period of socio-political ferment.

The *Public Affairs Council*, located in Washington, DC, has been a driving force in supporting and promoting a public affairs approach to relationship building and non-commercial positioning of organizations and their stakeholder publics (→ Stakeholder

Theory). One of the stellar accomplishments of the public affairs movement, the Council performs research to understand and refine the discipline, produces cutting-edge publications, and conducts workshops for executives and public affairs specialists. It believes that the discipline stays vital and refines its practice through continuing education. Its membership consists of major companies, associations, and consulting groups. It was one of the first organizations to innovate in, define, and give substance to issues management. “Born of a marriage between lobbying and communications and schooled in the techniques of community organizing, public affairs has grown up to be a credible participant in the formation of public policy” (Duke & Hart 1996, 14).

The public affairs movement has focused considerable attention on the *challenges facing large organizations* operating in an environment made ever more complex to management because of the tangles and challenges of public policy advocacy. If we accept that public relations failed to satisfactorily meet this challenge starting in the 1950s in the United States, then its mantle shifted to the shoulders of public affairs. Public relations seemed to lack the character and respectability to weigh in on the matters of regulatory and legislative shifts and twists. One of the failings was its historic connection with fabrication, spin, and smoke and mirrors. Some believe it came to rely on cleverly worded press releases to the extent that it lacked proactive participation in public dialogue. If an organization, industry, or other sector of society waits for other forces to shape public opinion, that body may have the conditions of its operation made more difficult. Public relations needed to act less reactively and more proactively.

Public affairs departments, and the discipline as such, developed to engage organizations earlier in the dialogues that lead to public policy formation. Some saw the advantage of working early when opinions are not well formed. Such a view can lead critics to surmise that public affairs can and will seek to undercut legitimate change in the public policy arena not by debating issues but by manipulating how those issues are debated.

In an era when public relations/public affairs scholars are again addressing responsible advocacy, one can imagine that the challenge to public affairs as a professional practice and academic discipline will be to refine its theory, ethics, practice, and management impact so that the larger interests of all legitimate voices are heard and respected. It seems that the challenge is not to know how to make an organization effective, but to learn the ways for the organization to work with other interested parties in a reflective manner to make society better, more fully functioning. Thus, public affairs as a discipline and employer of best practices is challenged to understand, appreciate, and proactively participate in the creation of effective public affairs, the socio-economic, socio-political dynamics that affect the organization’s ability to function in the interest of its various stakeholders.

SEE ALSO: ► Corporate Communication ► Corporate Reputation ► Integrated Marketing Communications ► Issue Management ► Lobbying ► Organizational Communication ► Organizational Image ► Public Relations ► Stakeholder Theory ► Strategic Communication

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## Public Broadcasting, History of

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Public broadcasting is notoriously difficult to define, and yet it has been at the center of debates in → media policy for decades in those countries where it exists. Proponents of public broadcasting argue that at its heart is the notion of providing the “best” in programming for all, while detractors would argue that it is a form of state control over what we can listen to or watch (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

Public broadcasting can also be defined in economic terms (funding from the state or public taxation), cultural terms (maintaining and supporting a minority culture), social terms (broadcasting for the “social good”; → Public Goods), → audience terms (the listener/viewer as citizen) and, finally, as “that which is not commercial broadcasting.” In relation to the final statement, Tracey (1998) has suggested a simple epigram for defining public broadcasting as opposed to broadcasting funded by commercial means: the former gets money to make programs while the latter makes programs to get money. However simplistic, this is what public broadcasting is about in essence (→ Media Economics; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

A history of public broadcasting can usefully be divided into three periods: the early history from the 1920s until World War II, the immediate postwar period, and the 1960s onwards.

### EARLY HISTORY

Scannell (2000) has argued that a historical understanding of public broadcasting needs to take into account two factors: public broadcasting as defined by the state and public broadcasting as interpreted by the broadcaster. In the UK for instance, the government

decided upon a broadcasting service that would operate via a license granted by the Post Office. As the service had to share the airwaves with the military and emergency services, a shortage of frequencies meant that the scarce resources had to be utilized in the national interest. A similar rationale was behind the broadcasting services in Belgium and Denmark, for example. Broadcasting was viewed as a public utility, and the mandate to develop it as a national service in the public interest came from the state (→ United Kingdom: Media System).

This was in contrast to the model in the *United States*. Although the broadcaster David Sarnoff had referred to broadcasting as a public service in a speech in 1922, drawing attention to its potential to inform, educate, and entertain the nation, broadcasting development took the commercial as opposed to the state-controlled, public service path (→ United States of America: Media System). Although it would be unfair to argue that the broadcast media in the US developed in a completely chaotic and unregulated manner, there were fewer restrictions than in the UK (Hilmes & Jacobs 2003).

### Monopoly Days

Once established, the British Broadcasting Company (which became a Corporation in 1927), or → BBC, was soon fashioned under the watchful eye of its first managing director, then director-general, Sir John Reith. Reith interpreted public broadcasting by developing a set of principles which were to dominate British broadcasting for decades. This Reithian approach to public broadcasting in the early days of radio broadcasting was based on four tenets. First, the need to protect broadcasting from commercial pressures was safeguarded by creating an assured source of funding (a license fee for all those who owned wireless sets). Second, the service was to be provided for the whole nation regardless of the geographical location of the listener. This policy of a universal service was achieved, third, by the establishment of a national program (broadcast from London) and, fourth, by a regional program from selected cities across the UK (including Cardiff and Birmingham).

Broadcasting had a duty to bring the “best” of British culture to every household in the UK, and this reflected the director-general’s almost missionary zeal for the task in hand. It also allied Reith with the Victorian essayist, Matthew Arnold, who argued that culture was the “best” that had been thought and written in the world. Therefore, the early years of broadcasting in the UK were forged by a combination of a notion of public service and an Arnoldian vision of culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Meanwhile, the period of the Weimar Republic (1918–33) in *Germany* witnessed an emergent public broadcasting system, one which was state-governed and -controlled. The *Reichpost*, the state regulatory authority covering postal services, telegraphy, and the telephone service, allocated broadcasting licenses and controlled transmission facilities, and the state’s hold over broadcasting was further tightened by the establishment of the Imperial Broadcasting Company in 1925. As Humphreys (1996) has argued, “the state’s grip on the medium had become almost absolute by the time Hitler came to power.” By the early 1930s, the service had incorporated clear elements of public broadcasting and broadcast a range of music, drama, documentary (→ Documentary Film), talk (→ Broadcast Talk), → news, and current affairs programs. When Hitler came to power in 1933, the radio service was instantly commandeered by the Nazis and exploited as a → propaganda tool under the watchful eye of the chief propagandist, Joseph Goebbels. By the mid-1930s

the Nazis had turned their attention to the new medium of television, and they soon established the world's first high-definition television service. The service was distributed to public spaces as opposed to domestic receivers, however, and so the BBC receives credit for the creation of the first public television service for the home (→ Television; Television Technology; Television: Social History).

## THE POSTWAR PERIOD

The world's first regular domestic television service began on November 2, 1936, when the BBC broadcast from Alexandra Palace in north London. However, the outbreak of World War II brought the service to an abrupt halt in September 1939. By the time the service resumed on June 7, 1946, it was clear that television in the UK was to be developed along the same public service principles that governed radio (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). Although John Reith had left the BBC in 1938, his legacy remained and was to dominate broadcasting policy for at least another 20 years. The high moral enterprise, achieved by a policy of mixed programming on radio and television and a refusal not to pander to audience tastes alone, nevertheless alienated sections of the audience who felt that the tone and content did not reflect their interests or needs. Indeed, one member of the UK government-appointed 1949 committee of enquiry into broadcasting (the Beveridge Committee) referred to the policy as "compulsory uplift."

Reith's concept of public broadcasting nevertheless influenced the development of radio and television services in many European countries after the end of World War II and formed a key part of the → political economy of the media in these countries. For many, the adoption of this model allowed for a degree of state control and nation-building following a period of upheaval and turmoil. With nations eager to redevelop, rebuild or rediscover a sense of national consciousness in a new Europe, a model of broadcasting which catered for a national service in the national interest was seen as the way forward. Programming in which nations could reflect their own identity within and without the outside world, free from commercial pressures, would flourish under the public broadcasting model.

As television services emerged in postwar Europe, some variation in the "degree" of public service appeared. In France, for example, the state had a closer hold on broadcasters than in Spain, where the television service (which began in 1956) was funded by → advertising but controlled by the state (→ France: Media System; Spain: Media System). The main aim of the Allies' postwar broadcasting policy in Germany was to ensure that party political influence on broadcasting as a social good remained minimal. To this end, the BBC's Hugh Carleton Greene (later to become the corporation's director-general in 1960) was deployed to run the BBC-inspired *Nordwestdeutscher Rundfunk* in the British zone of occupied Germany. As a result, the overwhelming influence on German broadcasting up until the 1980s was a public broadcasting ethos. Further afield, Japan's NHK television service, introduced in 1953, drew closely on the BBC's public service model and was funded by a license fee. The Japanese public broadcasting model, whilst carrying a comprehensive diet of news and current affairs, placed its prime emphasis on entertainment (→ Japan: Media System).

Chinese broadcasting history is one of unprecedented growth and expansion after a small, relatively inauspicious start. The Communist Party which came to power in 1949



established broadcasting as a state propaganda tool. Television was introduced in 1958 in Beijing alone and spread across the country at a very slow pace. The rapid expansion took place after 1976, and by today Chinese viewers have access to a wide range of channels, some of them still closely monitored by the state (→ China: Media System). These examples highlight how political and cultural contexts impact upon the development of public broadcasting in different countries.

### COMMERCIAL COMPETITION

Despite the dominance of the public broadcasting model in Europe, the postwar years saw a gradual shift towards commercialism (→ Commercialization of the Media). In the UK, the debate over a rival television service to compete with the BBC began in the years immediately after the war. The debate was fuelled by the publication of the Beveridge Report on broadcasting which, although supporting the maintenance of the BBC's monopoly over broadcasting, accused the corporation of a London-centric bias at the expense of the nations and regions of the UK. A minority report by one of the committee's members, the Conservative MP Selwyn Lloyd, went so far as to advocate the establishment of a commercially funded television service. It was this impetus, together with the activity of backbench Conservative MPs and external pressure groups, that led to the passing of the 1954 Television Act, which introduced a television service funded by advertising revenue to the UK for the first time (→ Advertising, Economics of). The 1960s and 1970s saw the continued abandonment of the Reithian model of public broadcasting across Europe. In the US, however, there was a concerted attempt to "ringfence" public broadcasting by the establishment of the *Public Broadcasting Service* (PBS) in 1969. This network of nonprofit-making stations was launched in October 1970 and drew (and continues to draw) its programming from a variety of sources offering programming in news and current affairs, children's programming, entertainment, science, and the arts. After initial success, however, the service soon declined in the face of stiff commercial competition. The 1960s saw an increasingly liberal approach to broadcasting (particularly in terms of content) and in the UK the matter came to a head in 1977 with the publication of the *Annan Report* on broadcasting. For the first time, the appropriateness of a paternalistic mode of public broadcasting in a pluralistic society was questioned, and the concerns voiced in the report reflected the changing nature of British society during the 1960s and 1970s.

A further shift took place during the 1980s when citizens were being increasingly defined as consumers. The neo-liberalist stance of the *Peacock Report* in the United Kingdom, published in 1986, referred to the now-famous notion of "consumer sovereignty," a sign for many that the death knell for public broadcasting had been rung. Across Europe, technological advances and changes in regulatory legislation made it easier to establish networks. Throughout the 1990s, increasing de-regularization, globalization, and the international marketplace placed public broadcasting systems under threat (→ Competition in Media Systems; Globalization of the Media). The notion of the "national" territory or boundary with which much of the public broadcasting ideal was bound up was eroding. At a global level, the market was considered to be the most appropriate mechanism for satisfying audience demand for broadcasting services, and the basic tenets of public broadcasting were gradually eroded.

The future of public broadcasting is uncertain. In the UK, for example, the communications regulatory body, Ofcom (Office of Communications), undertook a wholesale review of public service broadcasting during 2004–2005. The aim of the review was “to set out a new framework for public service broadcasting . . . designed for the future and sufficiently adaptable to respond to and reflect changing technologies, markets, and the needs of citizens and consumers” (Ofcom 2005). An indication of how the notion of public broadcasting has changed since the mid-1920s can be seen clearly in the inclusion of two terms that would be anathema to John Reith – “markets” and “consumers” (→ Audience Commodity). The impulse to inform, educate, and entertain remains, but it also remains to be seen whether or not the market can deliver or whether there will still be a role for the public broadcasting ideal.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ BBC ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ China: Media System ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Documentary Film ▶ France: Media System ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Japan: Media System ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ News ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Privatization of the Media ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Goods ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Spain: Media System ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Television Technology ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Public Broadcasting Systems

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Public service broadcasting (PSB), according to McQuail (2005, 179), refers to “a system that is set up by law and generally financed by public funds (often a compulsory license fee paid by households) and given a large degree of editorial and operating independence.” Public service broadcasting is supposed to function independently of both the market and the state, and therefore differs from the alternative systems of commercial broadcasting on the one hand and authoritarian or state-operated broadcasting on the other (→ Communication and Law; Media Policy; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Until the 1980s public service broadcasting was dominant, or even held a monopoly, in most countries of the western world. During that decade public broadcasters lost their dominant position because of liberalizing policies following the advent of new distribution technologies and the eroding legitimacy of the argument of spectrum scarcity as well as growing political and public criticism of the privileged position of PSBs (→ Satellite Television; Cable Television). In the 1990s commercial stations became the dominant actors in most broadcasting markets, and public service broadcasters had to adapt to a new, “dual” broadcasting context in which they are the exception rather than the rule. At the beginning of the third millennium new multimedia platforms represent yet another challenge for public broadcasters.

## ORIGINS AND PHILOSOPHICAL TRACES

There is no clear definition or coherent theory of public broadcasting. When → radio was invented at the beginning of the twentieth century and → television by the middle of the same century, national governments had to regulate → access to the media – unlike the situation with the press – because of the scarcity of frequencies and a widespread concern about the impact of these new, electronic media on people and society (→ Media Effects). In this context public, noncommercial corporations were set up that presented a comprehensive program, consisting of information, education, culture, and entertainment that would raise the level of political awareness and cultural taste of citizens, not consumers. The first director general of the British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC), John Reith, had already put these ideals on paper in the 1920s, and his BBC became a trusted source amidst the → propaganda of authoritarian regimes in those days and indeed a model for the world (→ United Kingdom: Media System).

The philosophical traces of the concept of PSB lie in humanistic Enlightenment ideals and in normative notions on the social responsibility and public interest of media in modern societies (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Journalism: Normative Theories). These notions stem from policy advisory commissions like the Hutchins commission in the US (1947), the British Royal Commission on the Press (1949 and 1977) and successive committees on broadcasting in the UK (Scannell 1980). As such this is a negotiated concept

that results from a process of political struggle, social debate, and academic reflection and differs from country to country and from period to period, reflecting national media policies and research traditions.

In a situation of channel scarcity for broadcasting, where government interference was considered inevitable, explicit legitimization for a public broadcasting policy was not really necessary. But from the 1970s, interfering in public broadcasting and giving the organizations a financial prerogative and a specific role “in the → public interest” began to require legitimizing. The public monopoly, originally of a more ritualistic nature, was not seriously contested but an open government had to legitimize its prescriptive regulations. With the introduction of commercial television and, in the European context, the changed policy environment following the EC directive “Television without Frontiers,” interference and preferential treatment required a more deliberate strategic policy and legitimacy (→ European Union: Communication Law).

### **GOALS AND DISTRIBUTION**

In spite of all the differences mentioned, the goals of public broadcasting across cultures show a striking resemblance (see Broadcasting Research Unit 1985; Council of Europe 1994; McQuail 2005): (1) universality of geographic coverage and audience reach, and a common reference point and forum for all members of the → public; (2) pluralistic, innovative, and varied programming, independent of both government and market forces; (3) concern for national culture, language, and identity as well as a reflection of ideas and beliefs in a multiethnic and multicultural society; (4) accountability toward society and the audience (→ Accountability of the Media).

At present public broadcasting systems exist all over the world, but are most frequently found in European countries and in countries that have historical or colonial ties with these European countries (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe). The example and model of PSB worldwide is the BBC, but within Europe the BBC’s position is in many respects the exception rather than the rule. In fact, the position and organization of PSBs, as national institutions, reflects the history of the respective nation-states.

The American public broadcasting system, PBS, has quite a different tradition and position (Avery 1993). The United States Radio Act of 1927 enabled the commercial, advertiser-funded broadcasting system for which the US is known. In 1945 the Federal Communications Commission created licenses for noncommercial educational radio stations with a public service ideal. Educational television officially began by 1952, but it was only with the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, following the report of the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television, that more (although limited) funding for both educational radio and television became available. Since then public radio and television gained a fixed but, compared to public broadcasters in Europe and elsewhere in the world, rather marginal position in the media landscape (→ United States of America: Media System).

### **PUBLIC BROADCASTING IN QUESTION**

The reflection on the concept of public broadcasting has considerably increased since its existence is not self-evident any more, due to the advent of new media technologies and a

liberalization of media policies all over the world. The new context of PSB has raised continual criticism on almost every aspect of its operations: its mission and its realization, its programming, organization, control, its funding and expenditure.

The question of the *mission* of public service broadcasters is greater than ever. It shows that an explicit legitimization in terms of PSB's role in society has become imperative, and serves as a battleground for different interests and insights. Traditionally, the political function of PSB in relation to democracy, pluralism, and public debate was emphasized, but more recently socio-cultural goals, such as serving social integration and cohesion, have become more prominent (Bardoel & Brants 2003). At a more practical, nonrhetorical level the independence of public broadcasting, from both the state and the market, is constantly at stake. For public broadcasters the relation to politics is most crucial, and Hallin & Mancini's seminal book *Comparing media systems* (2004) demonstrates that the relation between politics and the media and media freedom across western countries varies greatly according to their political history and culture and the room it leaves for a vivid → public sphere, including public broadcasting. In this respect, the countries of North America and western Europe are ahead of the European countries of the south and the east that have a relatively young democratic tradition.

Public broadcasters also have to redefine their relation to the public. Although the public should be the primary frame of reference, many PSBs have kept the people and civil society at a distance, while politics and the government proved to be the preferred partner. This is also a result of a tradition of paternalism, which is more or less inherent in the pedagogical imperative practised by public broadcasters in the past. Although public broadcasters have a problem of redefining their mission in the context of the new "dual" broadcasting market and a changing, multicultural society, many believe that basic functions such as a low-cost and universally available reliable provision of information, education, and culture and the catering for minority tastes and interests cannot or will not be sufficiently served by the commercial market ("market failure").

Closely related to the mission is the *program* assignment of public broadcasting. The recent debate on this issue can be summarized by the catchwords "comprehensive or complementary": should PSB still present a full-scale program offering or should it just supplement programs that its commercial counterpart does not offer? Despite accusations of copycat strategies and a convergence between public and commercial broadcasters, research shows that most public broadcasters have chosen, principally or pragmatically, the middle way of compensation. Although there is much debate on the mission of public service broadcasting, almost no country has made the choice to really narrow the program task of PSB (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). In response to this critical debate, most public broadcasters look for arguments in favor of the full-scale model and try to stress their distinctiveness more than ever. The alternative option of de-institutionalizing PSB by introducing public program funds comparable with policies vis-à-vis culture and the arts ("distributed public service") has been proposed in countries that reconsidered their public broadcasting system, but no country has dared to take that far-reaching step, with the notable exception of New Zealand, where a drastic reorganization of PSB took place in 1988. Open competition via an "arts council of the air" model was meant to lead to greater value for money and add to the quality of PSB programming, but in practice it did not work out that way.

Looking further into the *organizational* aspects, the rapid rise of commercial television from the 1980s, leading to the majority of stations being private by the middle of the 1990s, has also changed the structure and culture of public broadcasting institutions considerably (→ Convergence of Media Systems). Already in the 1980s quasi-commercial elements were introduced within public service broadcasting, such as the popularization of programming in peak time in order to maximize → audiences and advertising revenues, the increasing cost-consciousness and efficiency in its activities and the adaptation of management practices from the commercial sector (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). Although there is still considerable support for the maintenance of strong PSB institutions in most countries, there is also a growing need for continual monitoring of its overall efficiency and effectiveness.

The main source of *finance* for most PSBs remains the license fee, but most countries have mixed systems. There are countries in which at least three-quarters of the budget of public television comes from license fees or public subsidies, as opposed to countries where → advertising is the major part of a channel's income. In addition, the overall financial position of public television channels differs considerably from country to country. The BBC budget is about seven times higher than the total budget of the 22 public broadcasting organizations that make up the public broadcasting service in the Netherlands. The comparative "poverty" or "wealth" of PSBs is of course closely related to the size of the population (or market) to be served. Although there is strong criticism of advertising as a partial but important source of income for public broadcasters, mixed funding has been defended as a proper tool to minimize unilateral dependence on politics and to strengthen the programming freedom of broadcasters. On the other hand, income from advertisements may motivate even PBSs to conform to tuning-in quota.

## **PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING IN A NEW MEDIA CONTEXT**

In 10 years' time TV households will devote much less of their viewing time to linear, generalist channels. Audiences will use more distribution platforms and channels alongside the currently available open broadcast channels. In order to maintain a reasonable level of audience reach public broadcasters may decide to extend their portfolio of platforms and channels. The first step will involve thematic channels, which will, to the extent that they prove successful, change the function of the present open channels to showrooms for program offerings on thematic channels and "on demand" platforms. Gradually these media and platforms will be linked as part of deliberate cross-media strategies that try to keep the viewer and the listener in their network for as long as possible. In general, brand building across media and platforms will become more important for public broadcasters. In the new media context the *raison d'être* of PSBs, more than ever, will lie in offering quality programming and setting the standard as well as serving as a trusted brand or as an "anchor" for citizens in the new flood of information.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience ▶ BBC ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Policy ▶ Propaganda

► Public ► Public Broadcasting, History of ► Public Interest ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Public Sphere ► Radio ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Satellite Television ► Television ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ► United Kingdom: Media System ► United States of America: Media System

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## **Public Diplomacy**

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The notion of public diplomacy has been used in international relations and in international communication studies since about the mid-1960s. It originates from US foreign policy from the period of the Cold War. Public diplomacy is understood as a dialogical communication between governments and other actors on the stage of international relations via the mass communication media and non-mediated channels of contact with the foreign countries' mass audience. The aim of public diplomacy is to create or reinforce a positive → image of the country and its society, and by influencing → public opinion to shape positive attitudes toward the country, and in consequence to make the achievement of international policy goals easier.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century the notion was widely discussed, as a result of the campaigns undertaken by the USA and European countries after the September 11, 2001, attacks and the employment of public diplomacy tools by many governments in order to rebrand their country or reposition it in the new international environment. The new campaigns adjusted the images of countries in relation to political, economic, and cultural changes, acknowledging the impact the rise of global communications has had on international relations (→ Globalization Theories; Globalization of the Media).

Nowadays public diplomacy is still understood as a supplementary means of American international policy, and often taken for a new version of international → propaganda. In the past this approach was supported by the activities of the United States Information Agency (1953–1999), which was frequently cited as a model institution for public diplomacy. Nevertheless, public diplomacy understood as the long-term, symmetric, dialogical communication of governments and NGOs with broad foreign audiences differs from propaganda, but may still use the same means and apply these to the same audience as propaganda. According to Leonard et al. (2002), public diplomacy is played out in three spheres: political/military, economic (promoting products and businesses), and societal/cultural.

Public diplomacy differs from traditional forms of diplomacy in the means used, the channels the messages are sent through, and the target groups that should be reached. Traditional diplomacy was characterized by the flow of messages from government (diplomats) to government (g2g), whereas public diplomacy implies the direction governments (diplomats) to foreign public (g2p). Thus public diplomacy is understood in the countries where it has been conducted for a relatively short time as a means of supplementing traditional government-to-government diplomacy. The third form of public diplomacy nowadays is characterized by the people-to-people (p2p) flow of information. In the third case the messages are sent and received between members of the public in different countries without the mediation of governments.

### THREE DIMENSIONS OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

According to Leonard et al. (2002), there are three dimensions of public diplomacy: news management, strategic communication, and relationship building. *News management* is seen as a short-term, reactive activity, having a long tradition in the classic form of diplomacy. It relies very much on cooperation with → foreign correspondents (→ Framing of the News; Spin Doctor).

*Strategic communication* covers cooperation with the mass media of communication in a longer-term and proactive way. The mass media are still seen as important tools of public diplomacy. Also, public relations agencies hired by governments have an enormous impact on strategic communication (→ Public Relations). In the media field nowadays, public diplomacy implements → advertising, as in the case of the US “Shared Values Initiative” campaign in 2003. This consisted of television spots targeted at the public in Muslim countries. The aim of the campaign was to improve the attitudes of Muslim societies toward the USA.

*Relationship building*, perceived as a long-term activity, relies on winning support in foreign countries by cultural and educational programs targeted at students, artists, academics, and journalists (people exchange). The practice of public diplomacy might here originate from traditional cultural diplomacy (social/cultural level). In this case, public diplomacy is understood as a “soft power” (Nye 2004) in international relations, focusing on the image and reputation of the country. The concept of public diplomacy as a soft power builds on the difference between public diplomacy and propaganda, and puts the stress on “attractive” power rooted in culture, typical of public diplomacy in contrast to propaganda.

Public diplomacy as a concept and a practice is rooted in international studies, the theory and practice of diplomacy, international and intercultural communication, and international public relations. The approach rooting public diplomacy in international



studies and international communication is well illustrated by the writings of Gilboa and, recently, Melissen. According to Gilboa (2001), public diplomacy is one of the ways in which the mass media of communication are used as an instrument of foreign policy and international negotiations. The core of this activity lies in influencing a foreign government by influencing their citizens. This model applies to the g2p level of public diplomacy. Melissen (2005, xxi) argues that it would be a simplification to view public diplomacy as only another instrument of foreign policy. He analyzes the notion in a framework of propaganda, national branding, and cultural relations, and understands it as “part of the fabric of world politics.”

The last dimension of public diplomacy according to Leonard et al., i.e., relationship building, is often equated with governmental public relations.

### **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS**

In some interpretations, public diplomacy is a part of public relations, or both notions are used interchangeably (Hiebert 2003). In the latter case public diplomacy is understood as *international public relations*. According to Signitzer and Coombs, public diplomacy and international public relations are in “a natural process of convergence” (1992, 137). Depending on the approach and the country, the theory and practice of public diplomacy might stem from public relations, meaning promotion of products and businesses (economic level of public diplomacy), and concentrate on → branding, or relate to cultural and educational exchange (social/cultural level).

Practitioners of place *branding* use the term “public diplomacy” only with reluctance, or perceive it as a core element of national branding (Anholt & Hildreth 2004). They reject the parallel use of both terms as they claim that public diplomacy is more limited to the proliferation of governmental policy. According to this approach, public diplomacy is included as a tool, part of a broader campaign of building the country’s brand, understood as “the most important channel of transmitting national identities to consumers” (Leonard et al. 2002). Public relations specialists argue that branding aims at upgrading the country-of-origin effect, whereas public diplomacy concentrates mainly on the political/military level. Building a positive image of the country is much easier if its products are widely perceived as being of high quality. On the one hand, the country-of-origin effect may help to build a positive image; on the other hand, it might also become the main obstacle to rebranding the country if the place of origin is perceived in a negative way. Still, public diplomacy should be seen as wider than branding in defining its goals. Whereas branding builds on the differences between countries, and seeks for products that would be typical only of the one country, public diplomacy might also stress the similarities if it is required to support any act of international policy. Also, the target group definition in public diplomacy is wider than “consumers” only.

Images of countries are also influenced by the *image of their leaders*. In heads-of-states public diplomacy, leaders or other famous personalities are perceived as a country’s products and contribute to the image of the country. The same must be said about diasporas, members of the public living abroad, and domestic institutions such as parliaments and political parties. The performance of the institutions, and contacts with elites and the general public abroad, have a significant impact on the perception of the country.

## STRATEGY

Public diplomacy is implemented by governments, especially by ministries of foreign affairs but, in accordance with the logic of contemporary international politics, also by NGOs. The *main actors* of public diplomacy nowadays are still governments, coordinating the campaigns. One of the key problems of public diplomacy with the government as the main actor is how to manage perceptions of the country as a whole and coordinate such differentiated fields as politics, trade, tourism, investment, and cultural and educational relations. In the p2p type of public diplomacy, NGOs or informal groups play the main role. As public diplomacy includes promotion of products and businesses, companies might also be seen as important actors.

Because one of the main goals of public diplomacy campaigns is to foster positive attitudes among the audience abroad, the campaigns are usually *long-term activities*. Before launching the campaign a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is done, the country profile is analyzed, and target groups are defined. The most effective tactic, according to Leonard et al. (2002), is careful selection of foreign publics and target groups among them. Campaigns targeted at too large a community of different countries are not effective. The next step is the selection of means and tools, including the choice of channels through which to communicate the message. Key messages of the country are elaborated, often in combination with a selection of leading products and services that will be promoted. At this stage of preparation the coordination of campaigns is essential.

Many public diplomacy campaigns are run by public relations agencies in the target countries (Gilboa [2001, 6] calls such campaigns “the domestic public relations variant”). *In practice*, an agency in the target country is better accustomed to local specifics. Governments also hire well-known public relations firms to maintain favorable attitudes abroad, as was the case during Iraq’s war against Kuwait in 1991, when the Kuwaiti government hired Hill and Knowlton. In the process of branding or rebranding the country, foreign specialists are employed also in order to throw fresh light on the country in question; this hiring of foreign specialists applies especially to the key messages elaboration stage. The last stage of public diplomacy campaigns is evaluation. Evaluating the effects of public diplomacy campaigns is rather difficult. First, they are long-term activities, especially if they aim at changing negative stereotypes. Second, changing attitudes are difficult to measure. The tools that are used after the campaigns are attitudes surveys, media content analyses (both quantitative and qualitative), and tracking the amount of contact with target groups. In Europe the most effective long-term campaigns are illustrated by two cases: those of Spain and Ireland to rebrand after joining the EU.

The campaigns might, according to Leonard et al. (2002), build on competition or cooperation. Competition occurs when one government sends messages to the same key audiences abroad as another government or governments, all aiming to win the audience over to achieve their goals, and the countries’ policy goals are seen as contradictory. A cooperative public diplomacy suggests working together in fields and regions where competition might be abandoned, especially in those such as democracy promotion, human rights, and good governance.

Public diplomacy is still perceived as a bilateral action, but nowadays we are also confronted with a multilateral form of it.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Branding ▶ Foreign Correspondents ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Image ▶ Media Diplomacy ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Spin Doctor

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## **Public Goods**

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The idea of public goods has been subject to considerable debate and contestation. The term is generally used to classify products or services that are not diminished through usage and for which charges cannot be levied on individual consumption (e.g., street lighting). The concept of public goods is significant for media and communication scholars because it potentially applies to some forms of broadcasting and informational or audiovisual products and services. Such classifications also have implications for contemporary media policy debates concerning the regulation of communication technologies and the legitimate role of state intervention in market activities (→ Communication and Law; Media Policy).

### **THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In contemporary economic theory, the notion of public goods refers to products or services that exhibit the two key characteristics of *nonrivalry* and *nonexcludability* (Ver Eecke 1999; Shankar & Pavitt 2002). Nonrivalry means that the consumption of the goods by one person does not preclude consumption by another. When, say, a loaf of bread is eaten, it ceases to be available to anyone else. In contrast, the reception of a television program can

be extended to extra viewers at no additional cost without diminishing its availability (i.e., Pareto efficiency; see Samuelson 1964; Minasian 1964). Nonexcludability, meanwhile, means that there is no technically practical or cost-effective way of preventing additional consumption without payment (free riding). For example, if a community organized a neighborhood patrol to deter crime, any increase in security would extend to all residents in the area irrespective of whether they personally contributed to the initiative. Likewise, an unencrypted broadcast or Internet website can potentially be used by an unlimited number of nonpaying users. If consumers of the product or service cannot be required to pay, the private sector is likely to underprovide them in a purely commercial market (Ver Eecke 1999).

Goods that are excludable and rivalrous are more likely to be provided by the private sector. However, market inefficiencies in pricing and information mechanisms mean that goods that are socially beneficial may also be undersupplied or underconsumed. Products and services that confer benefits external to individual private consumption are known as *merit goods* (Fiorito & Kollintzas 2002). For example, commercial broadcasters often prioritize populist genres that maximize ratings and revenue rather than educational programs that may enhance informed citizenship.

The underprovision of public/merit goods is an important consideration in explaining the role of the state or public sector in economic theory. Some scholars categorize particular products or services as intrinsic public/merit goods that require state provision or subsidy (e.g., national defense, public parks, or public service broadcasting). However, there is both theoretical and political disputation about *which* goods and services – if any – require state intervention and the extent to which this should complement or substitute for their provision by the private sector (Ver Eecke 1999; Fursich & Roushazamir 2001). Although distinct, public, private, and merit goods are therefore better understood as *ideal types* that are not necessarily mutually exclusive in their application to empirical examples (Ver Eecke 1999). For example, a public broadcaster might include light entertainment in the schedule that a subscription broadcaster provides as a private good, while a commercial free-to-air broadcaster's schedule could include news and documentaries with merit-good value (see Anderson & Coate 2000; Samuelson 1964; Minasian 1964).

## REGULATORY AND TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES

The trend toward international free trade regimes has increased pressure on governments to restrict their provision of public/merit goods to cases of demonstrable market failure. In the EU, for instance, public broadcasting interventions must be clearly delineated and proportionally funded to avoid market distortion (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; European Union: Communication Law). However, the assumption that efficient commercial markets are a natural state of affairs overlooks the point that economic activity is embedded in social, political, and legal institutional arrangements (e.g., enforcement of property laws). Whether or not a product or service can be categorized as public or private depends on these underlying structures. Consequently, reconfigurations of regulatory and technological arrangements alter the base conditions upon which the classification and legitimization of public goods are premised.

Informational or audiovisual goods are particularly contentious because different institutional arrangements potentially alter their nonrivalrous or nonexcludable character.

This is reflected in recent tensions between commercial and open-source software providers (→ Open Source) and controversies over Internet-based media file-sharing services such as Napster (see Becker & Clement 2006; also Stewart et al. 2004). The combination of market liberalization, digitalization, and media convergence is especially significant here: Digital media facilitate the potentially unlimited replication (nonrivalry) and distribution (nonexcludability) of informational or audiovisual goods (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). However, artificial scarcity (i.e., the elimination of nonexcludability) can be imposed through conditional access or encryption technology and intellectual property regulations (→ Intellectual Property Law). The potential to transform public goods into private goods (→ Commodification of the Media) and vice versa explains why these concepts are subject to ideological, legal, and technical contestation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Copyright  
▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Media Policy ▶ Open Source ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy

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## **Public Interest**

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As mass media play an increasing role in our societies by providing an arena of public debate and making politicians, policies, and relevant facts widely known, they are expected

to follow certain rules of conduct. These rules and the normative media theories they draw upon typically imply presumptions as to the public interest the media should serve (McQuail 1992; 2005; → Journalism: Normative Theories). Presumptions about what is the public interest, directly or indirectly, determine the institutional set-up of media systems, legal regulations, and media policy measures as well as journalistic codes of ethic and performance standards (→ Communication and Law; Ethics in Journalism; Ethics of Media Content; Media Performance; Media Policy).

Not surprisingly, there is no agreed definition of the public interest, although its history goes back to classical times. The modern understanding of the concept can be traced back to the Enlightenment era when political philosophers who discussed the notion of interests in general, especially partisan interests and the aggregation of private interests, developed the idea of a public interest as a normative objective of political action. The various meanings of the concept we can find today may be subdivided into *substantive* and *procedural* interpretations. While the former are concerned with the content of political actions and their consequences, the latter focus on the quality of decision-making processes (Alexander 2002). For example, procedural interpretations of the public interest are implied in the concept of deliberative democracy and in → Habermas's idea of procedural rationality created in → political discourse (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication). Instances of substantive interpretations are the three main views distinguished by McQuail (2005): utilitarianism, unitary, and common interest approaches.

*Utilitarianism*, or the majoritarian view, equates the public interest with aggregated individual values and preferences. The public interest is merely the sum of individuals' wealth, happiness, and avoidance of pain. Therefore, the state's role must be limited to maximizing individuals' benefit according to the overall popular vote. In the case of the media the public interest will be best achieved by free market forces and by giving the public what it says it wants (Veljanovski 1990). A common assumption is that audience ratings and public opinion polls indicate the preferences of the citizens (→ Audience Research; Nielsen Ratings; Readership Research; Public Opinion; Public Opinion Polling; Survey). On the other hand, this involves the risk of a "tyranny of the majority." Also, pleasing the majority in the media market may lead to a mainstreaming of media content and an erosion of quality standards (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in; Quality of the News).

By contrast, the *unitary* approach derives the public interest from a collective moral imperative that transcends particular or private interests. In other words, the public interest necessarily takes precedence over the interests of individuals, in order to pursue a vision of an ideal society (Berki 1979). The public interest is decided by reference to some single dominant value or ideology. However, this would work only in a paternalist (or even nondemocratic) system in which decisions about what is good are made by guardians or experts. As to political communication, the unitarian approach may lead to a "manufacture of consent" since the media will tend to confirm the political status quo (or the "official" ideology as defined by the ruling elite or party).

A third approach conceptualizes the public interest as *common interest* (Held 1970; McQuail 1992; 2003). In this view the public interest is not an aggregation of individual interests, but rather a shared interest. In other words, the public interest is equated with the interests all citizens have in common. Based on this idea modern states provide public

services of transport, power, water, and even broadcasting. Basic features of national broadcasting systems and the services they provide (for example, frequency allocations, access to political parties, rules for advertising) are thus justified on grounds of a wider “common good,” transcending individual choices and preferences (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). The principle of media freedom may itself be supported on grounds of long-term benefits to society that are not immediately apparent to many individual citizens. A key element of the common interest approach is the notion of accountability which stresses that media freedom has to be balanced by responsibility (McQuail 2003; → Accountability of the Media; Accountability of the News).

In one way or another, the public interest has been the subject of three different sorts of skepticism. First, it has a rather vague and confusing meaning that seems to include the public welfare, the common good, and the national interest (Dennis 2002). Second, it is hardly possible to identify empirically where the public interest lies. And third, there is some doubt whether the practices and institutions of modern politics and the media are such that the public interest is pursued, even if there is agreement on how it should be defined. By and large, the conventional wisdom even among political and social theorists is that vested and concentrated interests often are more able to promote their interests at the expense of the public interest.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Accountability of the News ▶ Audience Research ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Media Performance ▶ Media Policy ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Readership Research ▶ Survey

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# Public Journalism

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Public journalism is a movement that arose principally among journalists in the United States during the late twentieth century, as an effort to draw the people to the media at a time of declining readership and viewership by showing the value of the media in civic life. Public journalism is also known as “civic,” or less often “community,” journalism. The movement developed in part as an answer to the decline of civic participation that scholars noted (Yankelovich 1991; Merritt 1998; Rosen 1999; Putnam 2000) at a time of renewal in many cities (Sirianni & Friedland 2001). Public journalism refocused news on issues and engagement using a community approach. Its founders believed that journalism could improve public dialogue by developing content that citizens engaged in the deliberative process could use in their communities to develop solutions to common problems.

Public journalism inspired discussion among professionals and scholars about the craft of journalism. The debate between → Walter Lippmann and John Dewey in the 1920s marked a seminal time in determining the role of professional journalists in the United States. Lippmann focused on informing elites and using the media to monitor those in power. Dewey believed citizens were capable of a greater participatory role beyond simply voting. In his view, everyday citizens would deliberate on issues if given the information and the opportunity. Lippmann’s view prevailed, and American journalism spent the better part of a century pursuing greater professionalism and more scientific reporting methods. Public journalism marks a return to Dewey’s view of journalism in democratic life (→ Journalists’ Role Perception; Professionalization of Journalism).

Some critics argue that public journalism is just good “shoe-leather journalism,” implying a tradition of close-to-the-ground reporting and editing, but traditional journalists spend more time in places of power (such as city hall) than in ordinary life (→ News Sources). By rooting stories in communities, journalists capture the richness of civic conversations. Public journalism encourages journalists to probe systematically from the bottom up, starting with citizens. The top-down model of traditional journalism typically starts with officials and their issue frames (→ Framing of the News). Public journalism starts with those living in communities – their concerns, issues, aspirations, and problems – and builds meaningful comparisons, illuminates trends, and seeks out solutions for citizens to consider. Instead of leaving out officials and experts, the process may prevent elites from framing issues without considering alternative community frames.

The techniques public journalists employ encourage contextual reporting. Reporters develop sources after considering a range of potential stakeholders. “Real people” sources are not simply the opening storyline but the main threads that hold the story together throughout the coverage. Public journalists seek to portray the similarities and differences among stakeholders and look for common ground. The journalists do not select the solutions, but leave the people to decide. By reporting on potential outcomes, journalists help the process go well among citizens.

Professionals and scholars developed public journalism through experimentation and observation. What public journalism seeks to accomplish has come to define the movement.



Other characteristics include cultivating diverse sources from all strata of civic life, finding high-quality information for citizens to use, and providing feedback from citizens as well as the information needed for mobilization.

## FOUNDATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Public journalism took shape in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Experiments began in Georgia, but the *Wichita Eagle* of Kansas conducted the first major newspaper project in 1990, when editor Davis “Buzz” Merritt wanted to give the people a voice in election coverage. In another early project, the *Charlotte Observer* ran a series called Taking Back Our Neighborhoods. The paper partnered with broadcast stations to cover housing and crime, leading to changes in policing housing and in housing code enforcement.

On television (→ Television News), public journalism developed in parallel. It began with public stations that developed local public affairs coverage. For example, the Wisconsin Collaborative Project connected stations in small and medium markets to develop cooperative coverage of regional issues. Television eventually connected with print (→ Newspaper Journalism), when commercial broadcasters created project partnerships with newspapers. Such collaboration became a core element of public journalism.

The longest running collaboration is “We the People Wisconsin,” involving Wisconsin Public Broadcasting (the eleven stations of Wisconsin Public Radio and seven stations of Wisconsin Public Television), the commercial CBS affiliate for Madison (WISC-TV on VHF broadcast and cable), the *Wisconsin State Journal* (the main outlet of the Capital Newspapers chain of southern Wisconsin), and Wood Communications, a public relations firm in the region. The partnership continually redefined ways to bring citizens into the deliberative process, developing town hall meetings, mock courtroom hearings, and conferences on issues such as health-care.

*Foundation funding* promoted public journalism. The Knight Foundation funded the Project on Public Life and the Press, led by Jay Rosen at New York University. The Pew Charitable Trusts created the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, under the direction of Ed Fohy and Jan Schaffer. During its decade-long run, the Pew Center held workshops, created opportunities for journalists to share experiences, and funded grants. The grants were small compared to the budgets of news businesses but were large enough, usually up to \$20,000, to seed experiments. The US Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and Public Broadcasting System (PBS) (→ Public Broadcasting Systems) joint Challenge Fund, with support from the Pew Charitable Trusts, supported Best Practices in Journalism, an effort to improve broadcast coverage of local politics by running campaign coverage workshops from 2000 to 2004. Another offshoot of the Pew Center, the J-Lab Institute for Interactive Journalism, received support from the Knight Foundation and from the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation of Oklahoma. J-Lab continues to focus on interactive journalism and incorporates ideas from public journalism.

Many public journalism grants favored *partnerships*, which combine the capacity of broadcasting to reach a wide audience and raise awareness of a problem with the resources of newspapers capable of reporting stories more deeply. Early grants supported the hiring of people for community liaison; they set up listening posts, organized town hall meetings, and connected to communities. These strategies shortened the start-up time journalists needed

for gathering information about community concerns and aspirations. Large public journalism projects would likely have been too costly for media outlets without these partnerships.

### BENEFITS AND CRITICISMS

Public journalism alters long-entrenched patterns of journalistic practice. Newspapers engaged in public journalism use more graphics to present issues and solutions (Coleman 2000). On television, public journalism coverage uses more diverse sources, including women, minorities, and non-elites (Kurpius 2002). Partnerships accompanied increased volunteerism, better political processes, and improved citizenship; the problem-solving frames worked better than traditional human-interest or historical frames; and the opportunities for feedback encouraged citizens to get involved (Nichols et al. 2006).

Early *critics* objected that public journalism pandered to the public as a marketing ploy to sell news or advertising. Others said either that it was no different from good journalism (→ Standards of News), or that it gave too much power over the focus of coverage to citizens, who are not well enough informed to understand complex and difficult aspects of public life (→ Public Sphere). Still other critics said that public journalism imposes the editor's view of political processes on citizens and presumes that editors know the public interest best. The town hall meetings drew fire for failing to produce thoughtful debate. These criticisms diminished in the latter part of the 1990s.

One main criticism has persisted: that public journalism undermines journalistic detachment and the *quest for objectivity*, a core professional norm for journalism (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Public journalism projects challenge the idea of detachment by encouraging journalists to spend time in communities, getting to know their ideas and their issues. Objectivity may be unachievable, a fact professional journalists can skirt by seeking truth and accuracy through lesser, more-realistic goals, such as fairness, balance, depth, and context. Innovative television news managers found ways to alter journalistic routines at the station when implementing public journalism, without raising objections, but not every newsroom had such leadership.

A recent criticism is that public journalism is *too expensive for daily practice*. Deep, contextual news coverage of issues may require resources that news organizations lack (Hamilton 2006). Other ways to fund hard news might relieve the pressures to make a profit, as did the Pew Center grants, which moved news businesses not only to try public journalism but also to delve into reporting on trends facing their communities.

Although newspapers and broadcast stations across the United States practiced public journalism, the experimentation was difficult to sustain. Foundation funding created only enclaves of innovation within newsrooms. A partnership among media organizations often depended on core individuals to keep it going and would falter and die once the key actors left. News outlets would let community liaisons go once foundation money ran out, and the ties they built to the community would wither. Or when the reporters practicing public journalism left for other jobs, the trust they had developed within the community would not transfer to the reporters replacing them. The amount of time journalists spent getting to know the community well instead of turning out daily stories caused economic stress in the system. The commercial media struggled to justify the costs of conducting such an intensive form of reporting.

Public journalism emerged in response to the primarily commercial US media system and did not spread intact to other countries (→ Commercialization of the Media; United States of America: Media System). Although scholars around the world study the phenomenon, they treat public journalism as a phase in US journalism practice.

Foundations that supported public journalism have turned to other issues, but its influence endures. “We the People Wisconsin” is still an active media partnership that reinvents itself, but at a slower pace. Individual public journalists continue to practice their craft at television stations and newspapers, but, in the absence of the labels and the debate, they weave the elements of public journalism into daily routines. The experiments bearing the label and the resulting discussion of the craft aimed at altering coverage routines (→ News Routines). The introspection, research, and development arguably made journalism better.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ News Routines ▶ News Sources ▶ Newspaper Journalism ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Standards of News ▶ Television News ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Public Meetings

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A public meeting is a gathering in which there are limited, if any, restrictions on who may participate. Public meetings, as an ideal, are a form of democracy (→ Public Sphere), but in fact are often viewed as frustrating and futile. Researchers have studied issues and topics related to public meetings (e.g., leadership, public participation); there is now increased attention on studying public meetings themselves as structured communication events. Labeling an event as a meeting calls attention to the communicative dimensions of this activity. Communication scholars have examined public meetings as situations in which identity, social action, and culture, among other practices, are enacted.

Scholars have specified two or, more commonly, three participants as a minimum for constituting a meeting. While people may gather in a variety of situations, not all gatherings are labeled as meetings; e.g., it would be unusual to call a gathering of friends a meeting. A meeting is explicitly framed as such by participants, but not all meetings are public. For those that are, the public may be involved as observers or participants. Public meetings usually have a *specific structure* and *rules for participation* (e.g., parliamentary procedures or *Robert's Rules of Order*). One characteristic of public meetings that distinguishes them from organizational meetings is that the latter form is more open in terms of participation. Also, the latter will have several audiences, some of which may not even be physically present at the time of a meeting but may know of the discussion through mediated forms of communication, such as print or television broadcast. Several types of meetings fall within the domain of public meetings, including public hearings, public inquiries, town meetings, and some board meetings (this last area intersects the domains of the public and organizational study).

Tracy and Dimock (2004) outline two major *research traditions* that provide an understanding of public meetings: public deliberation and public participation. The former area focuses on a normative ideal for the type of communication that should occur during public meetings: talk is rational and assumes equality among participants. Public participation research examines views of participants regarding public meetings. Tracy and Dimock fault both areas for failing to pay attention to the actual communication practices associated with public meetings.

Language and social interaction scholars have used various *perspectives* to study the actual communication practices associated with public meetings; these perspectives include → ethnography of communication, → discourse analysis, → ethnomethodology, → conversation analysis, speech act theory, and critical/narrative approaches. While meetings have been a part of the background context for many studies, Schwartzman (1989) was among the first to call attention to the need to study meetings in and of themselves as communication events. Applying an ethnography of communication framework, Schwartzman identified the varying structures, purposes, participants, settings, and norms for meetings. Several studies have highlighted the role of culture in meeting discourse (e.g., Brison 1992). Because talk and culture are interconnected,

participants may have varying assumptions regarding the purpose of talk during a meeting (e.g., to convey information, to express emotions, to present arguments, etc.). Discourse analysts have shown how differences in participant background can contribute to different meanings for words that are used during meetings, possibly leading to sustained disagreement (e.g., Gephart 1992). More recently, the action-implicative discourse analytic approach (→ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis) has been applied specifically to examining school board meetings and how participants, through their language use, construct identity and negotiate their interactional dilemmas (e.g., Tracy & Ashcraft 2001).

One *challenge* in the study of public meetings deals with definition. As described earlier, public meetings have been included in many studies as part of a context, but not necessarily as the main focus per se. One reason for this relates to how the unit of analysis is defined for a given study. For example, the topic of focus may be the group (e.g., a governing board) or the purpose (e.g., decision-making, problem-solving, deliberation). Focusing on the group as the unit of study, however, highlights participants rather than communication. Orientation to purpose brings the focus back to communication, but identifying type of talk ahead of time forecloses consideration of the multiple forms of talk that may occur during a public meeting and what those forms may contribute to the various outcomes of a meeting. The most promising future direction for research on public meetings is the development of a practical theory approach (Craig 1989). Practical theory examines communication as naturally occurring practices and seeks to understand the situated ideals of participants for their communication practices. Within the frame of public meetings, a key issue is how participants manage multiple, and possibly competing, goals such as how to develop a consensus or community while voicing individual preferences.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Public Sphere

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## Public Opinion

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Bearing the dubious distinction of being one of the oldest, yet least understood, concepts in social science, *public opinion* continues to inspire and perplex scholars from communication and other fields. The term can be adequately defined as a general measure of the directionality and strength of issue-specific views and sentiments held by a relevant group. Public opinion bears a sort of syntactical internal contradiction: While “public” denotes the group and the universal, “opinion” on its own is typically associated with the individual and considered a somewhat internal, subjective formulation. The rise of survey research during the early twentieth century further complicated matters with a trend toward quantifying public opinion as a simple aggregation of individual survey responses (→ Survey; Public Opinion Polling). The rejection of such mathematical reductions – along with the suggestion that public opinion was in fact a group-level social force iteratively constructed through interpersonal interaction and media use (→ Interpersonal Communication; Political Media Use; Media Use by Social Variable) – set the stage for a social science debate that has continued for well over 50 years.

### HISTORICAL APPROACHES

The French term “l’opinion publique,” originally attributed to sixteenth-century French Renaissance writer Montaigne, was adopted in European thinking as political power and decision-making shifted away from the monarchy and toward the citizenry during the Enlightenment. With the advent of the printing press (→ Printing, History of), knowledge became more distributed within societies, and this led to a realization that it might be possible to arrive at better decisional outcomes if more affected parties (i.e., the citizenry) were consulted. Until recent times, however, the citizenry considered to have a voice consisted primarily of land-owning, wealthy white males. One of the earliest problems to arise in conceptualizing what constituted public opinion was the difficulty of coming to some type of decisional outcome at the end of a public opinion process in which many different viewpoints were voiced. When parties disagreed, it was difficult to discern (1)

whose views should be most prominently considered and (2) how other ideas could be eliminated. Additional debate centered on how “rational” a group could be considered in arriving at a public viewpoint. While some argued for an ideal speech situation, in which all points of view could be heard and equally considered, concern remained that public debate would be sullied by an emotional mob mentality in which rash decisions would be reached through manipulative means.

With these challenges in mind, Enlightenment-era thinkers set out to incorporate the views of the public into governmental decisions, while at the same time balancing this democratic input with the presumed knowledge and experience of government officials. In this way, a democratic government could consider the will of the people while maintaining stability against abrupt shifts in sentiment that could overrun the long-term authority of the state. This potential for mob-like behavior is often referred to as the “tyranny of the majority.” Divergent views of the role of public opinion in a democracy (i.e., a mandate from the people or merely the views of those affected by decisions) were typified by the 1920s debate between → Walter Lippmann and John Dewey (Splichal 1999). Dewey believed that the more people included in arriving at a public opinion outcome, the better off the entire society would be. From Lippmann’s point of view, governmental decisions were best left to elected and appointed officials who were free to use public opinion as a guide to varying degrees.

This debate and other public opinion conceptualizations generated in the early twentieth century marked a shift from approaching public opinion as a philosophical subject to a perspective more rooted in the increasingly systematic approaches of social science (Binkley 1928). Yet this trend toward more scientifically rigorous methods created another debate, with one side seeing public opinion as an aggregation of survey responses, while others were more interested in public opinion as a socially constructed force that developed through media use and interpersonal conversation. For the survey-oriented group, George Gallup’s 1936 prediction of the United States presidential race was a watershed moment. With careful sampling techniques created to replicate the basic demography of the electorate, Gallup’s poll was able to correctly predict Franklin D. Roosevelt as the winner of the election with far fewer respondents than the *Literary Digest* poll, which had incorrectly predicted that Alfred Landon would win. Gallup’s reputation was further improved when he correctly predicted the Labour Party’s surprise 1945 victory in the United Kingdom’s general election (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Election Surveys). This led some to argue that public opinion was quite simply a collection of individual responses tightly linked to electoral outcomes.

For those more interested in social aspects of public opinion (Cooley 1962 [1st pub. 1909]; Tarde 1969 [1st pub. 1901]), public opinion was conceptualized as a type of normative force, which had the ability to influence media presentations and conversations about public issues (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on). Public opinion was seen as a force opposed to tradition and reason. Long before the conceptualization of a two-step flow involving the media and subsequent interpersonal discussion, Tarde saw the important role that media played in disseminating new ideas, noting that the press had the ability to superimpose a kind of “public mind” upon citizens, who were more likely to talk about the ideas set forth in the media (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication). Blumer (1948) rejected polling as a means of measuring public opinion. He asserted that the real value

of public opinion was its ability to represent the views of many as a single force capable of influencing those in positions of power, governmental or otherwise.

### **PUBLIC OPINION PROCESSES: INFORMATION OR SOCIAL CONTROL?**

From a societal perspective, public opinion can function in a number of different ways. Some scholars (Habermas 1989 [1st pub. 1962]; → Habermas, Jürgen) argue for the merits of thinking about public opinion as a rational, information-based phenomenon in which the best ideas will percolate to the top of the public agenda. Within the confines of the “public sphere,” citizens are exposed to a number of different ideas and opinions that they can hold or improve upon (→ Public Sphere). In a manner akin to free market systems, the ideas that hold the most value are in the highest demand, while less popular ideas are pushed aside.

Others (Noelle-Neumann 1993; → Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth) counter that public opinion is in fact a method of social control. Acknowledging that societies must be held together by some level of group-wide cohesion, this view posits a heavy influence of the mass media upon the general public. Instead of debating within a rational and unbiased opinion climate, most citizens are instead limited to considering the views put forth in newspapers or on television. Furthermore, these debates tend to mimic news coverage, allowing the views of the news media to become the dominant views within the public. The social control aspect is also involved within interpersonal opinion exchanges. Noelle-Neumann’s “spiral of silence” theory predicts that those who believe that their viewpoint is in the minority will be less likely to express that viewpoint (→ Spiral of Silence; Climate of Opinion). Majority opinions are more likely to be expressed, leading to a spiraling effect in which majority opinions are overrepresented, whereas minority ones are underrepresented. This collective phenomenon is said to be rooted in individuals’ fear of becoming socially isolated from a group as a result of expressing an unpopular opinion.

The validity of both views (i.e., public opinion as rational information exchange versus public opinion as social control) can be seen in different opinion contexts, and it must be acknowledged that both play an important role in opinion exchange. The notion of individuals fearing social ostracism as a result of expressing an unpopular view highlights the often-neglected role that emotions and affective considerations play in public opinion processes. Scholars have long noted that relatively new or underdeveloped opinions tend to be based less on reason and more on “gut reactions” to ideas or individuals (Zajonc 1980). While such opinions might be considered low in opinion quality, they are nonetheless interesting from a research perspective because they are often the basis for opinions that could become more developed, better reasoned, and higher in opinion quality.

### **LEVELS OF ANALYSIS**

Perhaps the most difficult component of studying public opinion lies in conceptualizing public opinion processes with respect to different levels of analysis. As Pan and McLeod (1991) noted, the spiral of silence theory captures the inherent multilevel nature of public opinion as a social force. At the individual level, people connect with their social environment by talking to others and through exposure to media outlets. From this information-



gathering process, they form perceptions of the “climate of opinion” surrounding a given topic. In this way, perceiving opinions can be seen as analogous to perceiving social norms in terms of looking to others for guidance as to what is and what is not acceptable in a given situation (→ Social Perception). In other words, the opinion climate at the macro-level impacts individual perceptions of opinion at the micro-level. Internalizing the opinion climate impacts individual expressions of opinion, and this further impacts the macro-level opinion climate. With the increasing popularity of multilevel modeling approaches in the social sciences, public opinion scholars may be on the brink of a better-specified model of this dynamic and iterative process.

### **PUBLIC OPINION AND THE MEDIA**

Given the importance of the contextual effects in understanding public opinion, researchers interested in media effects, information processing, and political psychology have all contributed to public opinion knowledge. Over the past few decades, media effects research has shifted from investigating the direct effects (i.e., strong or limited effects) of messages to a more information-based cognitive approach (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, History of). The information-processing approach seeks to identify how new, outside information – most of which is received by individuals via media outlets – is integrated with already-existing information. For those who see opinion formation as a continual, iterative process influenced by both pre-existing views and new contextual information, it is important to consider the characteristics of the mechanisms through which this new information is delivered.

A good example of this shift can be seen in agenda-setting research (McCombs & Shaw 1972), which initially focused on matching prominent news stories with lists of what the public perceived to be important issues (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). More recently, agenda-setting research has explored possible mechanisms (e.g., priming) through which this media effect might take place. Other research has focused on how the agenda-setting function can cause shifts in public opinion that go beyond a simple listing of what is important (→ Priming Theory). In other words, agenda-setting research could be a much stronger theoretical framework if differently “set” agendas were shown to impact individual opinions as well as perceptions of macro-level opinion in a significantly different manner. Zaller (1992) presented another view of the impact of media and other messages on public opinion. In his Receive-Accept-Sample (RAS) model, people receive information, accept it or reject it on the basis of whether it fits with prior beliefs, and then sample from recent considerations when asked to offer their own opinion. Zaller also posited the existence of two-sided message flows, in which differing views on an issue are offered for individuals to consider (→ Political Cognitions; Political Knowledge). Political awareness is a key mediating variable in Zaller’s model, and those of moderate political awareness are seen as the most vulnerable to the dueling messages offered in two-sided flows.

### **TECHNOLOGY AND DEMOCRATIC OUTCOMES**

In western societies, advances in information technology have historically led to increases in citizen access to political information and political power. Since the introduction of

movable type, continually improving information technology has led to an overall trend of increased accessibility for citizens in terms of communicating their views to elected and appointed public officials. In other words, it has become easier for individuals to impact public opinion by contributing to the overall context or opinion climate in which issues are considered (→ Communication Technology and Democracy). Within that overall trend, though, there have been and will continue to be anti-democratic perturbations, whether in the form of → censorship, surveillance, or elite control of opinion debates through technological means.

But exactly how will this new technology be harnessed for democratic outcomes? The barriers to news creation and dissemination are no longer as high as they once were. The recent explosion in popularity of web logs (i.e., blogs; → Blogger) indicates that many individuals are willing and able to put forth their own views and content for mass consumption. Indeed, through web links, e-newsletters, a plethora of cable and satellite television channels, and the increasing portability of wireless and hand-held communication technology, it seems that the potential for broadcasting information – political or otherwise – is almost limitless. Yet it remains to be seen whether the increasing availability of political information will have a marked impact on public opinion processes. It is possible that the people who were interested in politics before the Internet revolution will be the same people who make use of new technology. Problems with access, such as the → digital divide, remain an issue for many, especially in developing nations around the world.

The key to unleashing the potential of technology's role in facilitating the exchange of public opinion rests with government's willingness to allocate more explicit decision-making authority – whether in the form of online deliberations or otherwise – to the general public. This has been and will continue to be a key hurdle for effectively employing information technology as a public opinion tool. Representative democracy is a compromise between the idea that all should have some form of access to decision-making authority and the notion that raw public opinion is too fickle to serve as a basis for a functioning democracy. Newspapers, radio, and television have certainly – each in its own way – improved the transparency of the operations of government while also allowing for the views of common citizens to be broadcast on a wide scale (e.g., letters to the editor, radio call-in shows). Fishkin (1991) and other deliberative scholars (→ Deliberative Polls) argue that this potential exists for online deliberative forums because the Internet ameliorates the effects of many key barriers to a more inclusive, deliberative democratic system (i.e., by bringing people together, controlling conversation, providing uniform access to relevant information).

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

To truly understand public opinion as it relates to society at large, however, social science first needs to address more basic questions regarding the exchange of political information, in terms of both interpersonal interaction and media exposure. Fundamental public opinion issues still need further consideration and explication: How do political ideas from the outside world enter the consciousness of individuals and become integrated

with already-held → attitudes, beliefs, and opinions? What role does → emotion play in opinion formation?

With roots in political science and social psychology, mass communication research and public opinion studies are of a similar scientific pedigree. Recent attempts to realign these two formerly diverging fields of research signal an encouraging move toward recognizing public opinion as an inherently communication-centered phenomenon. Encompassing message production, media sociology, content analysis, media exposure effects, individual processing and other cognitive approaches, and interpersonal interaction, as well as a host of perception-based interpretations of social reality, public opinion can be seen as a chance to embark on truly interdisciplinary research (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Media Production and Content; Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative; Exposure to Communication Content). With the increasing speed of technological advancement, the channels by which information passes between sender and receiver are part of an increasingly complex and multifaceted process. Though polling information is available for almost any topic or political candidate, scholars and citizens alike recognize that there is more to the process than simply adding up the number of people who say they are for or against an issue.

Perhaps the tallest hurdle remaining for public opinion scholars is specifying and modeling key contextual factors of public opinion climates. Spiral of silence research gained much attention by noting that the perception of majority pressure can impact the likelihood of individual opinion expression. However, scholars have more recently recognized that perceptions of majority and minority pressures can vary according to the perceived strength of opinions as well as perceptions of how much agreement there is among a group or community.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Behavioral Norms: Perception through the Media ▶ Blogger ▶ Censorship ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Deliberative Polls ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Emotion ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rhetoric, Vernacular ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Survey ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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## Public Opinion, Media Effects on

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Because there are various concepts of → public opinion there are no general statements about the effects of mass media on it. Instead, the effects of mass media have to be related to specific concepts. Moreover, different study designs and methods have to be taken into consideration. According to the *quantitative concept*, public opinion is regarded as the distribution of individual opinions within a population and measured by representative opinion polls (→ Survey). According to this approach, the intensity and tone of media coverage directly influence public opinion. Most studies are based on a linear-effect model (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis): the more often the media cover an issue, the more people believe it to be important (→ Agenda-Setting Effects); and the more often the media present certain opinions, the more people adopt these opinions. The intensity and tone of media coverage are measured by quantitative content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). In some studies, they are not measured but estimated; possible effects are concluded from media use (Robinson 1976). As well as the intensity and tone of media coverage, the framing of news stories can influence public opinion. Framing refers to the media's reporting of issues or events structured along certain perspectives, and to the audience's processing of that content according to predetermined schemas (→ Schemas; Schemas and Media Effects). As demonstrated in several studies, people's interpretations and conclusions are mostly in line with media frames (→ Framing Effects).

## MEDIA EFFECTS IN THE QUANTITATIVE CONCEPT OF PUBLIC OPINION

### Methodological Designs

The assumed influence of media coverage on public opinion can be analyzed using cross-sectional or longitudinal designs (→ Longitudinal Analysis). In *cross-sectional designs*, the distribution of media coverage on several issues, or the distribution of various opinions on one issue, is compared over a short period of time (several days or weeks) to the distribution of corresponding opinions within the population.

In *longitudinal designs*, the development of intensity and/or tone of media coverage on individual issues (or persons, institutions, etc.) during a rather long period of time (several months or years) is compared to the development of corresponding opinions (Ader 1995). In most studies, general trends in media coverage are compared with general trends in public opinion (aggregate data analysis). Here, the intensity of media use and the type of coverage presented by different mass media is neglected (MacKuen 1981; Page & Shapiro 1992, pp. 341–347). In a few studies, based on the intensity of individual media use and the type of coverage presented by the relevant media, an index of media input is calculated and related to opinions held by individuals (individual data analysis; Kepplinger et al. 1991; → Scales and Indices). If media coverage has an effect on public opinion, trends in public opinion should be predictable from data about trends of media coverage. This has been done using advanced mathematical models of the relationship between causes and effects (Fan 1988; Zaller 1992; → Time-Series Analysis).

As the term implies, media coverage is related to something which gets covered – events, opinions, etc. Media coverage might or might not present an adequate picture of the distribution of opinions or the changing number of certain events in the course of time (→ Reality and Media Reality; Social Perception). Some people might have first-hand information about the reality covered by the media, others might not. Opinions can be influenced by either individual experience or media coverage, or by both sources of information. In these cases information based on personal experience can contradict or support information provided by the mass media. Depending on the mixture of information, personal experience can minimize or maximize media effects (→ Perceived Reality as a Social Process). Therefore, several authors have tried to separate the relative influence of real-world indicators and media coverage on public opinion (Combs & Slovic 1979; Erbring et al. 1980; Behr & Iyengar 1985).

### Influence on Behaviors

Media-induced public opinion may *influence behavior*. For example, in the early seventies the coverage of German news media painted a picture showing that a breakdown of the oil supply in the country was ahead – although there was enough crude oil in stock. Because people became concerned they took precautions and bought unusual quantities of gasoline and diesel, which in turn led to scattered bottlenecks in delivery and sharp price increases. Six years later, when the quantity of imported oil really had dropped considerably, the media rarely covered this development and, in consequence, the population did not become concerned and did not change their habits (Kepplinger 1983).

Media-induced images of reality are also relevant for voting decisions. For example, although in 1992 there was an economic upturn in the US, the television networks presented the situation of the economy as twice as bad as in the previous year. Thus most Americans thought of the economic situation as bad (Ladd 1993). Since the assessment of the economic situation has a strong impact on the image of leading politicians, George Bush's popularity went into freefall and challenger Bill Clinton won the election (Katz & Baldassare 1994).

### **Influence on Social Perception**

According to the *functional concept* of public opinion, societies need a consensus on some basic issues. A consensus can only be achieved if at least a significant minority accepts which issue should be discussed, and if the formation of opinions is based on individual insight (see below) or on social forces. The functional concept stresses the importance of the latter. In this case, media coverage can be regarded as an intervening variable which modifies the psychological dynamic of opinion formation. As → Walter Lippmann (Lippmann 1922) and others have stressed, the pictures in our heads about groups, events, and the like are often attended with representations of how other people think about these objects. Likewise one's own opinions, attitudes, and intended behavior are seen in the light of the positions held by others. The formation of public opinion thus emerges from the individual's actual interaction with other people together with the symbolic interaction with generalized others; both influence one's own opinions and behavior.

Perceptions of how most other people think stem from the individual's direct experience, mainly through conversation, as well as indirectly from the media. Media coverage therefore influences not only how people imagine politicians, whom they have rarely met personally, for example, but also how they imagine the → climate of opinion (Fields & Schuman 1976; Gunther 1998). The perception of the climate of opinion can affect whether people are willing to speak out in public or whether they keep silent (→ Spiral of Silence). For example, in the eighties the German news media covered nuclear energy unfavorably. In consequence, an increasing part of the population thought the majority would oppose nuclear power plants. Supporters of nuclear energy were decreasingly willing to voice their position in public. In the course of ten years the relative majority of supporters became a minority while the initial minority of opponents became the relative majority (Noelle-Neumann 1991).

If the mass media present an inadequate picture of the distribution of opinion in society, they may convince members of the minority that they represent the majority opinion (→ False Consensus) and make members of the majority believe they belong to a minority (→ Pluralistic Ignorance). These conclusions might be suggested by most people's conviction that the media have a stronger impact on other people than on themselves (→ Third-Person Effects). This in turn can influence individuals' willingness to express their opinions in public (Mutz 1989), and thus explain the emergence of a silent majority: through the agency of the mass media the views of elites and avant-gardes may incorrectly appear as being widely held. The minority position can thus appear as a majority opinion, which causes the actual majority to keep silent or reduces their willingness to speak out.

## MEDIA ROLE IN THE QUALITATIVE CONCEPT OF PUBLIC OPINION

According to the *qualitative concept* public opinion is the consequence of intellectual insights. In this approach the media serve as a forum for discourse, and media coverage is not primarily seen as the cause of opinions but as the prerequisite of reasonable conclusions (Habermas 1989). Because only a small portion of the population is interested in such discourse and has enough knowledge to take part (Neuman 1986), the qualitative concept is also referred to as the “elite concept of public opinion.”

According to the qualitative concept, media coverage and public opinion are more or less identical. This is especially true for the coverage of high-quality media such as the leading newspapers (→ Quality Press). Therefore, public opinion can be deduced from media coverage. This is an idea held by many politicians, who often distrust opinion polls (Herbst 1998; → Public Opinion Polling). As far as media coverage shapes the opinions of the majority, there are similarities between the qualitative and quantitative concept that have largely been neglected: present trends in media coverage can be interpreted as future trends in mass opinions. For instance, the spread of minority positions in society can be analyzed by multi-step models which include direct and indirect media effects (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects) on various types of individuals and groups (Hilgartner & Bosk 1988).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ False Consensus ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Perceived Reality as a Social Process ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Quality Press ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Schemas ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Survey ▶ Third-Person Effects ▶ Time-Series Analysis

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## Public Opinion Polling

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The term “public opinion polling” generally refers collectively to both the representative → survey method and to the institutes that specialize in employing this method, particularly to commercial survey institutes. Other terms commonly employed in this context are: “public opinion research,” “survey research,” or simply, if somewhat confusingly, → “public opinion.” The term “demoscropy” (Greek: “observation of the public”), originally suggested by American scientist Stuart Dodd (Dodd 1946), is also commonly used in some European countries, particularly in connection with political debate, although it has not gained a foothold in English-speaking countries.

Along with media content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), the laboratory experiment (→ Experiment, Laboratory), and participant → observation, public opinion polling is one of the most important tools in empirical communication research. Survey research serves as a vital source of information in the social sciences, as well as in the areas of market research, media research, and the political sphere.



## HISTORY

The three cornerstones of survey research are: the standardization of the investigative technique, i.e., completing → interviews using a firmly worded questionnaire; analyzing the findings in aggregate, in other words, observing respondents as a group, not as individuals; and the random selection of respondents to form a group representative of the total population in question (→ Sampling, Random). These three core elements of opinion research were first combined systematically in the early twentieth century, although they had already been employed previously in a number of statistical surveys and research projects.

Starting in the early Middle Ages at the latest, there were a number of attempts to investigate the population's opinions on current issues by conducting standardized surveys of a great number of people. The first document that can be viewed, at least in terms of its approach, as a *standardized questionnaire* designed to ascertain opinion, stems from the year 811. It is a list of questions compiled by Emperor Charlemagne to be answered by local dignitaries in the provinces of his realm. The questions were designed to investigate the reasons for symptoms of unrest in the empire at that time, for instance, the growing number of men deserting from the army (Petersen et al. 2004). Beginning in the late eighteenth century, we find a steady series of developments in survey method, culminating during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a rich tradition of empirical social research based on surveys. A number of remarkable studies were completed from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, especially in Germany (cf. Oberschall 1965).

Attempts to apply *statistical principles* (→ Statistics, Descriptive) to people date back even further. The Old Testament describes a census conducted by King David (2 Samuel 24); and statistical data on the population was collected regularly in the Roman empire, for example by the census documented in the nativity story in the Gospel according to Luke (Luke 2:1–3). During the eighteenth century, the so-called “moral statisticians” addressed the question of why the number of suicides, crimes, births, and other seemingly arbitrary acts remained constant from year to year. Gradually, they realized that even acts resulting from highly individual motives adhere to calculable statistical laws when viewed in terms of society as a whole.

The development that ultimately revolutionized survey research and, consequently, broad swaths of the social sciences was the concept of selecting respondents according to the *principle of random statistics*. The first survey of this kind was completed by British economist Arthur Bowley in 1912 (Bowley 1915). The breakthrough of the modern method of social research based on representative samples, however, came when American researchers George Gallup, Elmo Roper, and Archibald Crossley employed this technique for their forecasts of the 1936 US presidential elections.

Aside from choosing respondents using a technique that was essentially based on the principle of random selection, another novel aspect of their investigation was the *use of interviewers* to question respondents face-to-face. Prior to this study, questionnaires were commonly sent out by mail. By using the face-to-face technique, Gallup, Roper, and Crossley insured that the sample was representative, and, moreover, they also found that when contacted personally by interviewers, a substantial share of the randomly selected respondents were actually willing to participate in the survey. Of course, the methods employed then

have been refined in many ways in the meantime, but the fundamental methodological principles used are still applied in all reputable representative surveys today.

## FUNDAMENTAL METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

Although representative survey findings are now a standard feature in newspaper and television reporting (→ Precision Journalism; Polls and the Media), the survey method still seems somewhat puzzling to many, who wonder how it is possible to draw firm conclusions about the opinions of a population of millions based on interviews with just one or two thousand people. These doubts would be justified if the goal of survey research were to ascertain the opinions and modes of behavior of each single person in all their complexity, but surveys are not intended for that kind of individual → case study. When it comes to opinion polling, individual members of society are not the object of investigation, but rather society as a whole.

In completing surveys, strict *rules regarding standardization and structuring* must be adhered to: as far as possible, all respondents are to be treated in the same way, regardless of whether they are university professors or unskilled workers. All respondents are posed the same questions, using identical question wordings and response alternatives. This technique provides no information about the special characteristics and motives of individual respondents. Rather, it enables researchers to determine what respondents think about a certain issue on average (cf. Noelle-Neumann & Petersen 2005, 65–79).

In public opinion polls the respondents are not selected arbitrarily, but in accordance with strict rules that insure that the group of people interviewed is *representative of the total population*, thus enabling researchers to generalize the responses obtained during the interview (→ Generalizability). Representative samples can be drawn using two different techniques. The “random method” adheres to the lottery principle, with samples being selected at random from the total universe. The fundamental principle is that every member of the population or group of people under investigation must have an equal chance of being included in the sample. The second technique for drawing representative samples is the “quota method.” Using this method, interviewers select respondents who display certain predetermined attributes, such as sex, age group, occupational group, size of place of residence, etc. Taken as a whole, the attributes stipulated in the interviewers’ quota instructions represent a scaled-down model of the total population (Taylor 1995; → Sampling, Nonrandom).

## METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Over the course of the last few decades, research on survey methodology has resulted in a highly diverse body of literature. Numerous basic research studies have been conducted on various aspects of the survey procedure, although the bulk of such research generally focuses on sampling and data analysis. In recent years, research on the first of these two thematic areas, sampling techniques, has mainly concentrated on the fact that *response rates* – i.e., the share of persons selected for a sample who can actually be contacted and who are willing to complete the interview – are steadily declining in many countries around the world. Research on analytical techniques has been boosted by the greatly increased

computing capacity of modern computers, which allows even extremely complex multivariate analysis methods to be employed with relative ease. In contrast, research on how interviewers affect respondent behavior has become somewhat less important in recent years, as telephone and online surveys have largely replaced face-to-face surveys.

So far, remarkably little basic research has been completed on the subject of *questionnaire methods*. At first glance, this seems surprising, since the questionnaire is the survey method's most important tool. Without a good questionnaire, even the most complex analytical methods are of no use at all. Unlike research on sampling and analytical methods, there is no solid mathematical foundation for research on questionnaire techniques. Although survey research pioneers such as Hadley Cantril (1944) and Stanley Payne (1951) investigated the effects of various question wordings via a series of split-ballot experiments in the 1940s and 1950s, it was not until the 1980s that this area began to attract more attention again. In this respect, findings and methods from the field of cognitive psychology played an important role, as reflected in the work of researchers such as George Bishop, Norman Bradburn, Seymour Sudman, and Norbert Schwarz (cf. Sudman et al. 1996). In contrast, only a few isolated studies have dealt with the issue of how various wordings affect respondents emotionally or how the questionnaire orchestration affects response behavior. Another aspect of questionnaire methodology that has been neglected thus far is the effect of illustrations, lists, cards, or other items presented to respondents during the interview. The lack of basic research on this aspect is largely attributable to the current predominance of the telephone survey method, which has depleted the array of methods that can be employed in surveys. Now, however, the emergence of online surveys has begun to revive the relevance of some of these aspects (cf. Couper et al. 2001). From another aspect, little progress has been made in adapting measurement techniques from the field of individual psychology to the requirements of survey research, despite some very promising approaches (Ring 1992).

Since the early days of survey research, numerous variations on the public opinion polling method have been developed, to suit the specific investigative task at hand. One example in this context is the *controlled field experiment* ("split-ballot experiment"; → Experiment, Field), which can play a major role not only in investigating media or advertising effects but also in basic methodological research, since it enables researchers to combine the evidentiary logic of the experiment with the generalizable findings of representative surveys (Petersen 2002).

Another example is the *panel technique*, whereby the same group of respondents is interviewed on several separate occasions. This method is particularly important when analyzing effects that cannot be investigated experimentally, thus playing a significant role in both social research and market research (Hansen 1982). In recent years, there has also been a surge in various technically supported measurement techniques and in "access panels," whereby respondents are selected from a previously recruited pool of people who are willing to participate, although such techniques play only a minor role in academic research.

### **SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF OPINION POLLS**

In the meantime, survey research has become an integral part of many areas of life. It is probably the most important research tool in the empirical social sciences, for example in

communication research, political science and sociology. It plays a central role in the business world. Today, representative surveys are naturally conducted in conjunction with product launches, advertising campaigns and new design concepts of all kinds. Survey research plays a particularly vital role in the political process and the mass media, especially during election campaigns.

Right from the start, *election forecasts* (→ Election Polls and Forecasts) have been particularly important for survey institutes since they allow researchers to compare the data on party strength ascertained before an election with the actual election outcome, thus providing a rare opportunity to test the reliability of the survey method against external criteria. For decades, election surveys have also been the target of critical remarks from politicians and journalists, due to the alleged influence of published election forecasts on voting behavior. Contrary to common assumptions, however, research to date indicates that the effect of such forecasts on voting behavior is actually only slight. At any rate, the influence exerted by polls on voting behavior is certainly far less significant than the effect of other forms of media reporting. Yet even if election forecasts did exert a major influence on voting behavior, it is fair to ask whether this would necessarily have a negative influence on the democratic process, as many people assume. Representative surveys are not the only source of information on the relative strength of the political parties prior to an election, but they are certainly the most reliable source. Particularly for politically astute, tactically minded voters, this information can be important, contributing to well-informed voting decisions. Without the publication of election polls, the void would simply be filled by less well-founded speculation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Case Studies ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Generalizability ▶ Interview ▶ Observation ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Precision Journalism ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Survey

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## Public Relations

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However old the practice of public relations is (Heath 2005a), in the identity we know today it became a serious professional practice in the latter part of the nineteenth century in the USA and in other democratized parts of the world, especially in Europe. Its emergence paralleled the development of mass production society, as a means both for promoting goods and services and for engaging in public policy debates and issues management. The twentieth century witnessed the profession's development as a selected set of strategic best practices, an academic discipline to prepare future practitioners, and a subject for refinements through sophisticated scholarly investigation and discussion. Public relations is on its way to becoming a matured practice all over the world, not least because academic and professional development research continues to mature by generating a wide variety of perspectives and theoretical approaches.

### NATURE AND IMAGE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

In the opinion of some, public relations can be defined as the art of stealthy manipulation of → public opinion, of the opinions of consumers and of politicians. As viewed by some, it consists of spinning the truth to the selfish interest of some organization or interest, issue advocate, person, or viewpoint – usually to the disadvantage of others (→ Spin Doctor).

In contrast, public relations has equally been seen as a *professional practice and academic discipline* dedicated to spreading rational and trustworthy information from and about an organization in order to open up the organization and its practices for those who are interested (→ Professionalization of Public Relations). At the same time, public relations is also seen as a professional practice and academic discipline dedicated to fostering effective two-way communication between some organization or entity, such as an industry, and persons whose opinions can make or break the future success of the sponsor. Some discussants of the nature of public relations, for example in South Africa,

New Zealand, and the USA, have advocated that instead of focusing on fostering sham relationships, senior practitioners are first of all the consciences of their employers. They know better than other disciplines the moral standards by which their employers are judged. They advocate that first the organization must be good before it can be effective in its communication efforts. The core goal of public relations is then not so much to open the organization or produce good relationships as to help the organization to produce quality and acceptable strategic decisions.

Practitioners recognize both that the *challenge of ethics* is broad and that the devil is in the detail. Each strategic decision as well as each word that is spread can pose ethical challenges and, consequently, needs to be discussed in terms of its consequences for the well-being of the organization, of its publics, and of society at large. The first step in public relations is to create sound management policy that deserves the fruits of good will, as John W. Hill, the co-founding principal of Hill & Knowlton, argued in the mid-1900s. At the time of his retirement in the late 1960s, his firm was the largest in the world. "Public confidence in the corporation as an institution must be earned and deserved. 'Smart publicity' will never replace sound management policies and acts in building a solid foundation of good will," he rightly claimed (Hill 1958, 163).

## HISTORY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

### Europe

To many, modern public relations was born in the USA at the end of the nineteenth century. That may be so for the naming of this phenomenon but not for the practice itself. World history in general and European history in particular offer many instances of what can be termed evidence of public relations practice, if not by that name. In Europe, public relations as practice has a long history (see for an overview, van Ruler & Verčič 2004). The period of the Enlightenment, as developed in the eighteenth century in France and Germany, strongly influenced the evaluation and practice of public relations in many European countries. In the eighteenth century, science and knowledge were no longer seen as being relevant only for the elite, but had to be diffused. One of the countries that were the first to institutionalize this concept as a practice was the Netherlands. The means for the diffusion of knowledge became known as "voorlichting," which is a literal Dutch translation of "enlightenment."

*In the Netherlands* the concept of "voorlichting" soon developed into institutionalized "giving full information to all people to enable them to mature and emancipate." Already in the mid-nineteenth century, the administration as well as civil society organizations started to introduce "voorlichters," specialists who traveled around to give information about health, good farming, housekeeping, sexuality, politics, etc. At the same time, the elite remained skeptical about this full enlightenment of ordinary people. That is why most of the time "voorlichting" was also used to show people how to conduct themselves as good citizens/subordinates and to control their behavior. When industrialization became a fact (late 1800s), industries started to provide information about themselves to the press as well as to the general public. The first official press departments originated in the early 1900s. The government soon followed. Dutch journalists, however, preferred to keep direct access to administrators and politicians. Thanks to the strong "pillarization" (denominational

*segregation*) of the society, with each pillar using its own media and therefore its own political contacts, their lobby was successful for a long time and the governmental public relations departments were forced to aim their press releases at foreign journalists only.

Directly after World War II public relations became an established part of company life. The Dutch claim to have established the first national public relations association, in early 1946. There was an enormous growth in the area during the 1980s, when US management approaches became the vogue.

In *Germany* also, public relations has a long history, based on the concept of "Öffentlichkeitsarbeit," which can be translated as "work for the public sphere." According to Bentele (1997), the first press offices engaged in politics and economics as well as in communities, associations, and organizations originated in the early 1900s. Alfred Krupp, founder of the steel company Krupp, established the first press department in a private company in 1870. The duty of this department was to read all newspapers that were considered important to the firm and at the same time to write articles, brochures, and "correspondences" in order to advertise products and the firm as a whole. As in the Netherlands, a characteristic feature of this first period is that public relations was used both to inform and to manipulate.

During the Weimar Republic (1918–1933), new social conditions arose such as the parliamentary, democratic state and an economically independent and active press; the media, no longer directed or controlled by the state, gave a boost to the growth of public relations. After the National Socialists came to power, the conditions of public relations changed abruptly. In sharp contrast with the Weimar period, the media were now controlled and manipulated by the party. After the end of World War II in 1945, not only did public relations have to redefine itself under the new conditions of a parliamentary democracy, it also had to dissociate itself from (Nazi) propaganda. The US influence on West German society was widely felt in the development of postwar public relations: besides new German advertising and public relations agencies, branches of US agencies started to settle in Germany (and in many other European countries), and today research in public relations has been established in several German-speaking universities in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Similar distancing occurred among US practitioners, who rejected the connection between propaganda and public relations even though they had initially embraced the connection and cut their professional teeth on propaganda efforts in support of both world wars.

Another country with early maturation of public relations is the *United Kingdom*. L'Etang (2004) placed the beginning of public relations in Britain in the 1920s. Emphasis focused especially on the role of local government, which contributed to public relations ideology and key concepts of professionalism. These articulated a strong public service ethos, laying the foundation of the (now Chartered) Institute of Public Relations, which was established in 1948. It all started with an emphasis on public service rather than on business activities being the roots of public relations in the UK (as well as in most of the Scandinavian countries and in Northern Ireland). Today, public relations seems more oriented toward propaganda and control, even within governmental departments.

Public relations is big business *all over Europe*, in the western as well as the eastern European countries. In most countries US agencies as well as US scholars have dominated the development, except for the German-speaking countries, Scandinavia, and France. In most of the eastern Europe countries public relations could only begin to flourish

after the fall of the Soviet Regime in 1989. In all these countries public relations is growing rapidly and many universities provide bachelor's as well as master's degrees in public relations (often, however, named communication management or corporate communication). There is yet hardly any theory building in these countries and the practice has to lean on German, French, and Anglo-American approaches. Despite the US influence, robust innovations and new directions are being explored that may add important refinements to the understanding and practice of public relations internationally.

### United States of America

Modern public relations in the United States started in the mid-nineteenth century. Its rise paralleled the mass media's growth, which allowed mass-produced publicity and promotion, as well as the sort of issues management that resulted from the efforts of the robber barons to craft the public policy that was needed to support a mass production society. The practice in the USA has been dominated by public relations agencies, such as Hill & Knowlton, Burson-Marsteller, and Porter Novelli, as well as the public relations departments of major corporations. It has also been a valued tool of activism and the management of government agencies. Scott Cutlip (1994) has written in depth on the history of public relations agencies in the United States. In Cutlip's opinion, the beginnings of modern public relations are found in the *American Revolution*, which brought the struggle for power between the patrician-led patriots and the commercial-propertied Tories – as well as indicting the British monarch for conditions that had become insufferable in the minds of leading colonial radicals. The twentieth-century developments in this field are directly tied to the power struggles evoked by the political reform movements led by master politicians from Theodore Roosevelt to Bill Clinton. These movements reflected strong tides of protest against entrenched power groups.

As a profession, the public relations vocation began with the establishment of the Publicity Bureau in Boston on the eve of the twentieth century and grew into large organizations. Starting with the rise of powerful monopolies, the concentration of wealth and power, and the rough-shod tactics of the robber barons in exploiting human labor and the nation's resources, contemporary public relations emerged out of the melee of the opposing forces in this period of the nation's rapid growth and emergence from isolationism into an imperial power, most of all for promotional and propagandistic reasons, Cutlip (1994) said. Efforts to refine the practice produced an interest in reshaping the profession as public affairs and issues management.

Although not the first pioneer in public relations, Ivy Lee remains today one of the most influential who helped define and build public relations. As a former journalist, he issued his *Declaration of principles* of public relations, which were, over time, to have a profound influence on the evolution of press agency into publicity and of publicity into public relations. In an era of "the public be damned," his declaration accentuated the positive right of the public to know:

This is not a secret press bureau. All our work is done in the open. We aim to supply news. This is not an advertising agency; if you think any of our matter ought properly to go to your



business office, do not use it. Our matter is accurate. Further details on any subject treated will be supplied promptly, and any editor will be assisted most cheerfully in verifying directly any statement of fact . . . In brief, our plan is frankly, and openly, on behalf of business concerns and public institutions, to supply the press and public of the United States prompt and accurate information concerning subjects which it is of value and interest to the public to know about. (Cutlip 1994, 45)

Also famous worldwide is Edward Bernays, who defined public relations as propaganda and the engineering of consent in the early 1900s.

### Other Parts of the World

In other parts of the world public relations has been a timeless craft and now is a growing field. As on other continents, the practice of public relations in Asia can be traced back for over a thousand years, ever since emperors realized the importance of public opinion and building harmonious relationships with people.

The use of modern public relations started in the 1970s. In China, for example, public relations became popular after President Deng Xiaoping's decision to open China to the west. The popularity of the TV series *Miss Public Relations* in the late 1980s and early 1990s colored the perception of public relations among the Chinese, as the Chinese public relations scholars Flora Hung and Regina Chen detailed in Sriramesh (2004), where the development of public relations in Asia is described. The TV show, which showed young women hosting guests at expensive hotels, led most Chinese to think that public relations professionals were only involved in guest relations. In recent years, as multinational companies established a foothold in the country, Chinese practitioners and scholars wanted to incorporate western perspectives of public relations practice. The fundamental question was how to apply the western concept of public relations – brought in by young scholars who had studied in the United States – in a Chinese context. With the unique characteristic in Chinese culture of maintaining harmonious relationships with people, relationships are more critical and require more distinct obligations in China than in the west, Hung and Chen claim. That is why public relations in Asian countries can best be seen as a combination of western (USA-oriented) approaches and the so-called personal influence approach.

Due to the constraints of an encyclopedia entry, we cannot give here a full picture of the development of public relations in the world. We encourage our readers to familiarize themselves with overviews of public relations on the different continents, as well as *The global public relations handbook* (Sriramesh & Verčič 2003), the *Encyclopedia of public relations* (Heath 2005b), and articles in *Public Relations Review* on the development of public relations in specific countries, for example in Latin America and Africa.

### PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH

The scholarly literature on public relations features one *generic principle* of public relations: It is the function that communicates for each organization and helps its management to favorably position the organization to earn the favor of targeted markets, audiences, publics, and society at large. This, however, is accomplished in different ways and guided by different theories. These theories define the different approaches to public

relations, as can be found in the literature of the discipline. Some scholars seek one general theory of public relations. Perhaps it is to be seen as a proof of the effort to achieve the maturity of the discipline that so many perspectives exist and are challenged by so many researchers. Each perspective offers a unique and important contribution to theory building and valuable strategies to guide and foster ethical practice. For more details than can be provided here on theories and perspectives, see Bentele et al. (2005) (only in German), Botan and Hazleton (2006), Hansen-Horn and Neff (2007), Heath (2001b), and many other handbooks, as well as the *Encyclopedia of public relations* (Heath 2005b).

### **The Information Model**

The information model of public relations focuses on the dissemination of information, which targets groups to inform (enlighten) them about the plans of the organization and the decisions made. In the former Soviet countries in Europe, one of the major topics is the education of the organization as well as the public to practice this information model, instead of the propagandistic persuasion model of the Soviet regime (Tampere 2003).

The information model is rooted in classical mass communication theories, such as the two-step flow of information (and the multi-step flow), the diffusion of innovations theory, the knowledge gap theory, the → uses-and-gratifications approach, and → information processing theories (→ Two-Step Flow of Communication; Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Knowledge Gap Effects). Successful public relations in this approach engages in informing the right people at the right time about the plans and decisions of the organization, but most people are not easy to reach directly, and the most widely used channels to inform key, targeted members of the public and society at large are consequently the mass media. Thus, informational communication management is primarily broadcasting management.

### **The Persuasion Model**

The persuasion model of public relations focuses on the → persuasion of target groups to accept the organization's view on relevant issues, and is also known as the → corporate communication approach (van Riel & Fombrun 2007). The basis for this approach stems from Bernays's theory of public relations as propaganda (for an overview of his ideas, see Cutlip 1994), and the expanded introduction of a psychological approach to mass communication instead of a sociological one in the study of public relations, which give this model wings. The key aspect of these theories is the seeking of control through the assumptions of asymmetrical propaganda.

John Hill (1963, 6) offered tried and true advice for practitioners to be cautious about how they seek to persuade: "It functions in the dissemination of information and facts when non-controversial matters are involved. But when controversy exists, public relations may become the advocate before the bar of public opinion, seeking to win support through interpretation of facts and the power of persuasion." Whether such communication options on matters of controversy are → propaganda or rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies) can be examined by the extent to which the message is manipulated to obscure enlightened choice or framed to maximize it. Hill realized that propaganda could

not be the rationale for public relations, but knew that organizations could not and should not avoid engaging in controversy, which starts with information and includes the interpretation of that information and the application of it to make informed and enlightened decisions.

Receiving and processing the message (which is key in the information model) is not enough here; the targeted public must also be convinced there is a predefined meaning for the situation rather than one that emerges through dialogue. Successful public relations, by this logic, means “*convinced publics*,” or ensuring a positive image is held by important target groups. Since it is difficult to convince people, research is thought to be important for discovering what the publics will accept. Persuasive public relations is therefore primarily → *impression management*. Defined by both means and ends, persuasion can corrupt public relations if it presumes only to advantage the source and to control the judgments and actions of a targeted public.

### **The Critical Model**

Habermas (1962; → Habermas, Jürgen) claimed that the development of public relations and advertising changed open democratic → discourse into a non-critical force of acclamation of the powerful elite. In light of this view, critical models of public relations have been developed, with a main tradition in the United Kingdom. Cottle (2003) edited a volume with different critical approaches (see also Davis 2002). Critical approaches to public relations are rooted in symbolic interactionism, the cultural approach of Stuart Hall, the sociology of news production, and social drama theory.

As in the persuasion model, public relations is seen as a persuasive power, though not from the angle of the benefit of the organization, but from the angle of the benefit to (or deficit from) society as a whole. What may be successful public relations for the organization is not necessarily successful (or even detrimental) for society, these scholars argue. Critical perspectives will call public relations impression management or spinning.

### **The Two-Way-Symmetry Model**

Grunig et al. (2002) offered a critical view, but not so much from a societal perspective as from a strategic management perspective based on the logics of → systems theory. They call the scientific persuasion model an asymmetrical approach to public relations that presumes that to solve a relationship problem a key public has only to alter its view to conform to that preferred by the organization. Grunig et al. prefer a two-way-symmetrical model, in which relationships are built and maintained through → interaction. The essence of the interaction is to understand the concerns of a public through research, make those concerns known to management, and seek appropriate changes in management policy. The aim of the relationship is the creation of consensus on important issues to avoid conflict and assure cooperation, for the sake of the publics as well as of the organization itself.

To accomplish this outcome, it is important to focus on communication processes not toward publics or target groups, but between interdependent parties. The premise is that communication between parties will lead to a *balance of interests*. Another premise is that parties are willing to act as involved and rational citizens instead of selfish consumers and

producers. Theoretically this approach is rooted in balance theories of communication, e.g., co-orientation models (→ Co-Orientation Model of Public Relations; Intereffication Approach in Public Relations). In this approach, successful communication management is seen as negotiating with the publics for an acceptable meaning of issues, which is a matter of balancing the give and take. By this logic, two-way-symmetrical public relations is primarily negotiation management.

### The Interpersonal Model

Most public relations theories are closely associated with mass communication. As early as 1984, Ferguson promoted the use of interorganizational and interpersonal relationship as the focus in public relations theory. Yet, in most public relations literature, relationships are conceptualized for the most part as interactions between groups (“publics”) rather than individuals, Toth (2007) claimed.

Sallot was one of the first scholars to explore the rich interconnectedness of public relations practice and theory and interpersonal communication (IPC) theory in several presentations (see for an overview Sallot, 2005). Only recently (see, e.g., Botan & Hazleton 2006) have researchers started to apply IPC theory in a comprehensive manner to public relations and practice. The central logic of public relations theory derived from IPC theory is that relationship quality counts and that the quality of what is done by relational partners can increase or decrease the harmony between the partners. *Harmonious relationships* lead from and to an incentive to cooperate and support, to distribute resources that are available in the relationship. Disharmony results from qualitatively inferior relationships that give participants a motive to sanction relational partners.

Another typical interpersonal approach to public relations is the *interpersonal influence model*, developed in Asia (Sriramesh 2004) in order to feature the importance of interorganizational and interpersonal relationships in Asian countries. It is critical in this approach to make efforts to cultivate interorganizational and interpersonal relationships by exchanging gifts, favors, and hospitality and do this in an ethical manner. In this approach, successful public relations is most of all people management.

### The Reflective Model

The reflective model of public relations (called communication management) is trying to integrate many of the leading perspectives on public relations. Dialogue is an important strategy to develop trust, but it is rather naïve to believe that it is an answer to all mistrust (van Ruler & Verčič 2005). First of all, it is impossible to engage all publics, let alone public opinion, in this dialogue; second, in most cases interests are fuzzy or conflicting. That is why managers use all kinds of strategies, including manipulation of frames (persuasion), in order to earn the favor of publics and get things done. The constraint on this manipulation is public legitimacy, which, because of increased public counteraction, has become increasingly necessary for business to survive.

The reflective model differentiates between the societal/institutional and the economic/administrative roles each organization plays in its public relations. The *economic role* is

concerned with the meso- (group) and micro- (interpersonal) level of communication among members of the organization, and between the organization and its publics in order to become legitimate in the eyes of specific publics. The *societal role* is concerned with the macro-level of societal legitimization. Public relations is concerned with the reproduction of the underlying principles that enable organizations to emerge, develop, and prosper. Living in an organizational society, these organizational challenges are communicatively enacted.

This model also differentiates between the organization as organization and as institution. The reflective model looks at the organization as an empirical realization of an institution in society, and the organizational dimension is subordinate to the institutional dimension when it comes to survival. That is why public relations is empirically working in and through the social construction of public identity. In this approach, public relations is primarily concerned with public legitimization, and in order to get public license to operate, it focuses on public opinion (the public sphere) as a quantity as well as a quality. The institutional dimension of an organization triggers the reflective model of public relations, while the organizational dimension triggers the existing models, now seen as strategies of the reflective model (van Ruler & Verčič 2005).

The primary concerns of public relations from a reflective approach are an organization's inclusiveness and preservation of the "license to operate." As marketing is viewing organization from a market view, reflective communication management is viewing organization from a societal or public view. The basic question in this approach to communication management lies in the empirical definition of what is seen as legitimate.

### **The Rhetorical Model**

The rhetorical model builds on what has been called the rhetorical heritage reaching back to treatises central to the humanities, crafted by Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Quintilian, and many others, including more recently the work of Kenneth Burke and Chaim Perelman. This body of literature continues to be a robust part of the standard curriculum of well-educated persons and vital to the democratic spirit of countries around the world (Heath 2001a, 2007; → Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations).

The essence of the rhetorical model at its best is to know the strategies and forces that lead to co-created meaning, collaborative decision-making, and identification. It can also be applied to evil ends using offensive means. Enriched by reflective management and guided by the commitment to demonstrate cases through fact, weigh the values central to each case, and seek to recommend the wisest policy, public relations can apply the rhetorical heritage to increase the likelihood that interested markets, audiences, and publics can make enlightened choices as stakeholders and stakeseekers.

The essence of rhetoric is *statement and counter-statement*. It is advisory, invitational, and propositional, with as its basic paradigm a thoughtful contest between choices. At its best, it can lead to enlightenment and wise choice. At its worse, it obscures, obfuscates, and centers on ad hominem dispute that ultimately may be damaging (Ihlen 2002).

Thus, the theory and practice of public relations as relying on the rhetorical heritage arm it better to engage in discourse as the rationale for individual and collective decision-making in society. This approach allows insights into how meaning is crafted, how ideas

are enlivened and framed, and the rich connections between the meanings of the actions of companies and those of other organizations, which are also part of the meaning they create, as well as yield to, in the fostering of harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships. In these endeavors, character counts, a theme that continues to be central to the rhetorical heritage. Not only does the character of the organization speaking add to or detract from the impact its opinions and information have, but the kinds of statements made, the care for the interests of others, and the efforts to achieve enlightenment and reveal good character add to the reputation of the organization.

In more current terms, the rhetorical model presumes that society is created for the collective management of risks. Each individual and organization is conjoined in this arrangement. Dialogue is the rationale for bringing information to bear on risks, but the evaluation of such information is not centered in one body, but institutionalized for the collective good of all members of the society.

### THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

The major work of Sriramesh and Verčič (2003), *The global public relations handbook*, shows that the democratization of the world, especially in the latter half of the twentieth century, goes hand in hand with an enormous growth of public relations all over the world, as well as the necessity of viewing public relations on a global scale. The rapid expansion of new communication technologies such as → satellite television and the → Internet has increased the dissemination of information about products, services, and lifestyles around much of the world, Sriramesh and Verčič claim. Coupled with the freedom that accompanies democratization, the result has been a significant increase in the global demand for products and services, as well as of global suppliers who can meet this demand.

As a result, countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle-East, eastern Europe, and Latin America have already become, or will soon become, major centers of manufacturing as well as consumption, requiring the organizations of these countries to trade and communicate with a global audience. The *formation of multinational trading blocks* has also contributed to shrinking the global market, thereby increasing organizational activities among and between trading blocks. These factors, Sriramesh and Verčič claim, have contributed to a significant spurt in global communication, placing public relations practitioners at the forefront of managing the relationships among people of varied nations and cultures on behalf of organizations of all types. For professionals to engage in strategic public relations management in a global setting, it is essential that they have knowledge of globalization and competencies in multicultural communication (→ Globalization Theories).

The major works of Heath (2001b) and Botan and Hazleton (2006) show how robust the discourse on public relations theory and practice has become. From the 1970s, when much of the discourse on the topic existed in a few textbooks, professional trade publications, and the emerging *Public Relations Review*, the discipline has grown steadily. The breadth and depth of analysis have increased. The discipline is slowly becoming less derivative and more original in its theory building. It continues to seek to make critical and practical advances that have pedagogical and real-world application.

Last but certainly not least, globalization and the necessity of corporate social responsibility will urge public relations to rethink its ethical devices and its position in the organization as well as in society (→ Public Relations Ethics). The question is how public relations, with such a tarnished image, can grow steadily into a professional and academic discipline by realizing its potential for making society more fully functional.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Change Management and Communication ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Contingency Model of Conflict ▶ Co-Orientation Model of Public Relations ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Cultural Topoi in Public Relations ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Discourse ▶ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Impression Management ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interaction ▶ Intereffication Approach in Public Relations ▶ Internet ▶ Issue Management ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Legitimacy Gap Theory ▶ Persuasion ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Diplomacy ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Public Relations, Intercultural ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Public Relations Ethics

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A core responsibility of communicators in public relations is to manage issues (→ Issue Management; Communication Management). Public relations holds the substantial moral responsibility of defining issues, communicating about those issues with publics and the media, and working to prevent and resolve problems between organizations and publics. This weighty responsibility includes deciding what concepts are related or unrelated to an issue, what facts are relevant or irrelevant, and what potential solutions exist. A moral responsibility to conduct these activities in an ethical manner is inherent in



pursuits of such significance, and public relations professionals worldwide are therefore obligated to act with ethical rectitude by the very nature of their responsibilities (→ Corporate Social Responsibility).

Critics argue that public relations has no ethical compass, engages in unrestrained advocacy, or even that it is among the most immoral of fields (→ Advertising Ethics; Ethics in Journalism). Proponents argue that public relations professionals should (and do) act as “ethical consciences” within their organizations, or for clients. Both points of view are able to offer examples and cases in which their beliefs are illustrated. Ethical public relations is one of the foundations of the research supporting excellent public relations management (Verčič et al. 1996; Grunig 2001; Bowen 2007), making management more reflective and responsible to external publics. Others (van Ruler & Verčič 2005) expound on the societal role of the legitimation of organizations in society and the role that public relations plays in enabling communication that contributes to social discourse. Although debate continues, the majority of scholars and authorities on public relations argue that the field has a basis in ethics stemming from the moral nature of informed free choice, education and rational debate on issues, and the duty of dialogue.

Consideration of the power held by public relations to communicate and define issues necessitates analysis of public relations activities through the lens of moral philosophy. Both utilitarian and deontological (Kantian) approaches support the view of public relations as an ethical pursuit. A utilitarian analysis concludes that public relations serves the interest of the greater good by providing a free and open flow of information and discourse for the greatest number of people, thereby benefiting society as a moral good.

Philosopher Immanuel Kant’s deontological approach provides arguably the most rigorous and analytical moral analysis yet developed. Autonomy is central to Kant’s deontological approach because he argued that *only* the rational will, free of subjectivity, can conduct an ethical analysis. Rational autonomy, or free moral choice, implies the knowledge, access to information, and debate of competing interests necessary to make an analytically sound judgment of right versus wrong. Therefore, the public relations function bears a moral responsibility because it facilitates communication between organizations and publics, supporting the ethical standards of autonomy and dialogue.

Ethical issues are also examined in terms of asking whether they maintain the dignity and respect of the involved publics and organization(s), as well as whether the moral test of a good will can be met. If it can, the intention behind the decision is one to uphold a moral choice rather than serve selfish ends. In this sense, public relations is responsible for consistent organizational decision-making that helps build long-term relationships with publics. Research shows that these relationships are based on trust, among other variables. Ethical decisions work to enhance trust, and trust enhances the reputation of the organization as a credible and morally responsible entity (→ Trust of Publics).

Analysis of ethical issues is complex and time-consuming for public relations professionals, particularly in industries with an inherent level of danger, risk, or proneness to crises. The extent to which ethical analyses take place in public relations practice varies widely. The degree to which the public relations executive acts as an ethics counselor to management depends not only on the type of industry involved, but also upon the

expertise, age, ethics background or training, credibility, and persistence of the public relations professional.

As the builders of relationships and stewards of organizational reputation, public relations professionals are also obligated *to act as ethics counsel*. Research in public relations has shown that the public relations executive acting as an ethics counselor to the CEOs and top decision-makers is a common role in many organizations. These senior-level public relations executives are charged with examining issues from multiple perspectives, including those of publics external to the organization, to determine ethical organizational actions and policy. Because of the extensive research conducted by public relations, as well as the relationships public relations professionals maintain with publics, the function is ideally situated to consider the views and needs of publics who would not, otherwise, have a voice in management decision-making.

Public relations professionals often ascribe to codes of ethics held by *professional associations*, such as the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) across many countries, the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (Euprera) with membership in Europe, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in the US, or the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) with members in most countries. Each of these organizations holds a code of ethics applying to its membership, encouraging responsible, professional, credible, and well-intentioned public relations activities. The content of these codes of ethics varies not by country but by organization; for instance, the PRSA code attempts to offer practical professional guidance geared toward consultants and agency practitioners, while the IPRA code specifies certain moral duties that much be upheld, involving dignity and respect, human rights, and so on. The first code of ethics specific to modern public relations was codified by Ivy Lee in 1906, and the Arthur W. Page Society, based in the US, works to advance the ethical principles Page used in his distinguished public relations career at AT&T.

Although codes of ethics evidence good intent, they often provide conduct guidelines rather than the framework for a comprehensive moral analysis. Therefore, public relations scholars have worked to create formalized means of analyzing ethical dilemmas: Bowen (2004, 2005) created a deontological analysis; Bivins (1992) a systems-theory based analysis; Tilley (2005) a management approach; and, Pearson (1989) a dialogue-based approach. Both academically and professionally, public relations ethics is growing in demand, in responsibility, and in importance. Though no single person or function can be the entire “conscience” of an organization, public relations is ideally situated to know and counsel top management on the values of publics when resolving ethical issues. Public relations managers conduct moral analyses to guide the activities of their organizations, their clients, and their communications with publics and the media. Attention to ethical decision-making facilitates the building and maintenance of relationships, which is the overall goal of the public relations function.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising Ethics ▶ Communication Management ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Ethics of Media Content ▶ Issue Management ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Public Relations ▶ Trust of Publics

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## **Public Relations Evaluation**

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Evaluation is a management tool that allows the user to establish whether a project or campaign has had its intended effect. Effective evaluation is at the center of any public relations effort and should be a basic element of any planned public relations action. In reality, however, evaluation is often overlooked or not undertaken for a variety of reasons, including costs, lack of resources, or simply a failure to understand how to conduct basic evaluation. Basic evaluation provides the user not only with information on how well the project worked, but also with an indication during the project as to whether it is “on target,” or “on phase” (→ Public Relations).

Further, effective evaluations are based on *four assumptions*, that are tied to project outcomes and/or business or client needs. First, public relations evaluation assumes that the decision-making process is basically the same across all entities or businesses. This assumption establishes that evaluation is both systematic and applicable to a variety of

situations. Second, all evaluation is based on realistic goals with measurable outcomes based on a set strategy and tactics that are implemented to bring the strategies to life. That is, all evaluation has expectations that are rooted in daily practice, associated with specific strategies (that, in turn, employ specific tactics), aimed at meeting measurable objectives (that, in turn, are tuned to “reachable” goals tied to client or business goals). Third, evaluation is divided into three general stages: development, refinement, and evaluation. This assumption suggests that evaluation is a continual process, which begins with project evaluation, is refined as it is implemented, and has a final evaluation against its objectives and ultimately against the client or business goals. Finally, evaluation is knowledge-based and behavior-driven. This assumption underlies the fact that evaluation decisions are made with forethought and that there are measurable criteria against which project outcomes can be tested.

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

As noted above, all public relations projects must start with realistic goals and measurable objectives. These goals and objectives derive from the problem statement – a statement that succinctly states what the project is seeking to do, what ends it is trying to achieve. The problem statement will in turn focus on the public relations goal, that will be tied to both tactical (output) and strategic (outtake and outcome) decision-making. An output is a tactic, e.g., a media release, video news release (VNR), or speech. It is the technical element and comprises what is to be done to meet the objectives. The outtake is the initial evaluation of the output: has it accomplished its intended purpose? The outcome is whether or not the strategy that employed the tactics actually “moved the needle,” met or surpassed its objectives to reach both public relations and client/business goals.

A goal is simply something that is desired. In a political campaign, it is to win the election (→ Election Campaign Communication). In a → branding project it is to establish, maintain, or expand the → brand. In a corporate project it may be to have employees sign up for certain benefits. The goal should be reasonable; the desire to corner 100 percent of a market with a new brand may be achievable, but improbable. Objectives come from goals. They are the things we seek to assess during and at the end of the project. *Public relations objectives* fall into three areas: informational (was the message sent out, received, and understood?), motivational (did it change or reinforce attitudes and behavioral intentions?), and behavioral (did the targeted audience do what the message asked?). Informational and behavioral objectives are fairly easy to set and evaluate; motivational objectives, however, are harder and require that the evaluation assess cognitive, affective, and intended behavioral aspirations. Good evaluation will employ a *triangulated research approach* – it will use multiple research methods to evaluate each of the three objectives during and after the project (→ Triangulation).

### **EVALUATION PHASES**

All evaluation is phase-oriented. The first phase *develops the project* and its evaluation. This pre-project phase sets or establishes the benchmarks against which the project will

be evaluated at selected times. Benchmarking is a form of evaluation in and of itself; it provides the project with a current knowledge base against which to plan and helps to establish realistic objectives. The benchmark phase also provides information about competition, identifies potential problems, and may help to preplan strategy in cases where objectives are not being met.

The second phase occurs once the project has begun and, based on periodic evaluation, *refines the strategy and tactics employed* to meet specified objectives (or may result in the altering of the objectives themselves).

The third phase occurs post-project as a *final evaluation* and establishes whether the objectives have been met and the goal achieved. Final evaluation reviews the entire project, from benchmarking to final outcome and provides evaluation of strategy and tactics, as well as a cost–benefit analysis.

## EVALUATION METHODS

Evaluation methods employed in a public relations project run the gamut of possible → research methods. Some evaluation simply requires counting whether a target audience – possibly an intervening audience, such as editors or reporters – receives, evaluates, and then forwards the outputs to the intended → public. Other evaluation may require outtake analyses: were the messages transmitted to targeted publics with the intended results, that is, was the tone of the actual article or broadcast what was intended? This goes beyond a count of simple pick-up, it looks at how the message was evaluated by a third party whose endorsement may add to or detract from its intended effect.

Similar research methods are employed across the three phases of evaluation. They are generally classified as being either formal (scientific and quantitative; → Quantitative Methodology) or informal (humanistic or qualitative; → Qualitative Methodology). During the developmental phase, however, a third methodology is typically added – historical or secondary research. Throughout the public relations project different methods are employed and compared one against the other to insure that the evaluation is providing decision-makers with reliable and valid information.

### Reliability and Validity

Evaluation methods differ in terms of both → reliability and → validity of the “data” collected and analyzed. The terms “qualitative” and “humanistic” are applied to data gathered with the intent of a deep understanding of specific individuals or cases but not meant to be extended to a larger population or public. The difference is to be found in use. Quantitative data establish norms (or parameters) against which groups can be compared, but in establishing a norm any individual differences are lost.

Quantitative methods have established ways of testing for reliability of response or observation. As such, they can tell the evaluator within a certain degree of confidence that the responses will be similar among other members of the public from which they were taken. Once reliability has been established, validity of response can be established – both in terms of logical and of statistical analyses. Hence, an advantage of the quantitative

method is that reliability and validity can be judged and extrapolation to larger groups possibly inferred.

Qualitative data, on the other hand, comes from a much smaller sample and often from the interview of selected individuals. Qualitative data has a deeper meaning, is valid only for those persons being interviewed, and has real reliability problems – that is, it is valid for that group or individual, but may not reliably represent others from the public from which they come.

## Evaluation Methodologies

Evaluation methods can be divided into *four general classes* – historical/secondary, qualitative, quantitative, and content analysis. Historical/secondary methods evaluate extant data. Qualitative methods collect data from individuals or small groups of individuals whose → generalizability is limited but which is valid for those individuals; the data obtained is typically based on what was said or interpreted. Quantitative methods generally seek to gather information that can be reduced to numeric evaluation and in the case of survey or poll methods may be generalized to larger groups. Content analysis is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and examines the actual messages that are employed in public relations projects or campaigns (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative).

### *Historical/Secondary Methods*

Almost all projects will have some historical context from which to obtain the data required to establish where the project is before it actually begins. This information may come from association sources, previous research, annual reports, and news reporting of similar industries or products or persons. In many cases other departments may have the data required to establish a starting point. The Internet has made the gathering of historical and secondary data, as well as access to documentation, much easier than before. The gathering and evaluation of extant information often points to gaps in the project knowledge base, places where additional data is required to gain the “big picture” of the project and its project environment. In the rare case where data are missing, contemporary information must be obtained – primarily through qualitative and quantitative methods.

### *Qualitative Methods*

Three qualitative methods found in public relations evaluation are in-depth interviews, focus groups, systematic observation/participant observation, and the → case study. *In-depth interviews* are the most controlled of the qualitative methods and are often used when trying to obtain data from opinion leaders, innovators, or people who are held in high esteem through their contact with target audiences (→ Interview, Qualitative). *Focus groups*, or what have been called “controlled group discussions,” allow for a degree of control over questions, but allow participants to qualify their ideas, agree or disagree with others, and “tag on” to current threads of conversation; they provide the researcher with invaluable insight as to why something may or may not work. *Observation* – whether simple systematic “environmental scanning” or a planned participant observation study –

provides information about the real-world activities of people (→ Observation). Observation is something that is often overlooked in planned evaluation, but is a method that provides additional insight into project management.

The *case study* is an in-depth look at previous projects or campaigns from a historical perspective and is found in three different forms. The linear approach examines the case from beginning to end, with a focus on the particular elements employed in the project – basic research undertaken, project objectives, project programming, and project evaluation – as a static analysis of the case under study. Process-oriented case studies take into consideration the feedback process associated with the case, with evaluation first appearing at the second of four phases (fact-finding/problem analysis, strategic planning, action, and assessment). The grounded case study takes a management-by-objective (MBO) approach and includes analysis of the project’s financial impact and its impact on the business bottom line. Traditionally, linear and process-oriented case studies have focused on the communication process while the grounded case study has looked more at business strategy. All provide essential information for the planning of a public relations project or campaign.

#### *Quantitative Methods*

Quantitative methods can be further divided into scientific and social scientific camps. Most public relations evaluation takes a social science approach and focuses on survey and poll methodology in gathering data on small samples of larger populations or publics.

*Survey or poll methodology* seeks to understand the attitudes or behavioral intentions (norms) of target audiences (→ Survey; Public Opinion Polling). Polls are shorter, more behavior-oriented collections of questions that seek to take snapshots of the target. Surveys are much longer and take an in-depth look at the target audience or public. Both collect samples (representative or nonrepresentative members of the population or universe being studied), most commonly face to face, by telephone, by mail, or on the → Internet. Sample selection can be conducted as a “probability” or convenience (“nonprobability”) sampling. Probability sampling occurs when all members of the population have equal chances of being selected; convenience sampling occurs when only those present in a given environment are selected to participate in data gathering (e.g., random intercept or mall survey; → Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom).

Scientific approaches are more *experimental*, where variables of interest (“independent variables,” such as messages or channels) are varied and their impact on desired outcome variables (“dependent variables,” such as purchase intent, relationship, reputation). Very sophisticated projects may even simulate under differing conditions the projected impact of the project on the outcome(s) of interest (→ Experimental Design).

*Content analysis* spans the qualitative–quantitative gulf. Since the method examines messages, it may be considered qualitative and as such may evaluate message content via rhetorical analysis thematic structure, purpose, and so forth. However, content analysis also allows a quantitative evaluation of the message such as number of words, basic tone of message, number of times a certain word or phrase is found, readability indices (e.g., Flesch Reading Ease or Flesch–Kincaid Grade Level indices), or type–token ratio. Content analysis has been computerized for faster analysis with the Internet allowing for almost real-time message acquisition and analysis.

## Establishing Metrics

Prior to actually beginning data acquisition, evaluation metrics need to be established. A metric is a way to provide both focused and continuous project evaluation. Metrics run the gamut from dashboards to scorecards. Metrics are management tools that take the results of data gathered through qualitative and quantitative methods and relate them to project objectives, specific outcomes or outcomes, or other indicators that are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis.

Some metrics, such as *balanced scorecards*, are evaluated on a regular basis, but not continuously. Dashboards, on the other hand, are set up to monitor data as it comes in and provide day-by-day, minute-by-minute evaluations. What is common to each, however, is the data gathered, some of which may be compared to pre-project benchmarks or to established benchmarks throughout the project. Scorecards typically examine specific indicators against other indicators – either competitor-based or project-based – and are presented typically as numeric data. Dashboards are often more graphical and present data in terms of analogical measures, such as clocks, fever graphs, or other chart-like presentations. Evaluation metrics should be established during the pre-project, development phase.

## Developmental Phase Methodology

Developmental phase evaluation focuses primarily on gathering data against which to compare project results over the life of the project. As such, it often begins with a set of methods that are neither qualitative nor quantitative. Development phase research is often rooted in historical or secondary research. It may, of course collect new data to update what has been obtained from historical and secondary sources or, because of a lack of historical or secondary research, require that benchmark data be gathered as a pre-project requirement through qualitative or quantitative methods.

In preparing for a project or campaign certain information should be readily available. This information may be collected, culled, and interpreted to establish an initial baseline or benchmark against which periodic checks can be conducted at later phases. An all too common characteristic of previous public relations evaluation has been a failure to establish a baseline – often based on the assumption that data at this stage is too expensive to gather.

During the developmental phase in-depth interviews, focus groups, observation, and previous case studies provide the background against which to compare the public relations activities during the campaign. Selected interviews and focus groups may be employed to gather an in-depth understanding of what strategies and tactics will produce the desired results and when and where secondary benchmarks (employed during the refinement phase) should be gathered. The developmental phase will set the actionable and measurable objectives to be met during the campaign.

Quantitative methods seek to establish the expected attitudinal and behavioral norms as target audience/public benchmarks. Survey methodology is often applied where historical/secondary analysis fails to produce expected attitudinal or behavioral norms. In some cases the projected campaign will be submitted to experimental method and a simulated campaign run against differing conditions (market or competition, for instance).



Content analyses are often undertaken to better understand how similar messaging has been interpreted by opinion leaders or reactions of focus groups to messages. This may take the form of pre-project message testing, concept testing, and so forth.

### **Refinement Phase Methodology**

During the refinement phase evaluations are undertaken to see if the project is on target and schedule. This phase employs survey or poll, in-depth interview, focus group, and content analyses methods, often triangulated to provide the normative data required for larger population against the deeper and “richer” data from interviews and focus groups. Content analyses provide indicators that key messaging is getting out and that opinion leaders, editors, or reporters are on message. Observation continues to be an important informal methodology, such as observing during the day how many times and how people communicate on message (“word of mouth”).

Data gathered during the refinement phase is evaluated against set objectives. This evaluation allows for alterations in strategy and tactics once the project has begun. As with most planned events, once the project is kicked off many things may alter the way intended messages are interpreted: the competition may engage in counter-messaging, or the target audience simply is not getting the information or, once received, is not being motivated to act. Finally, refinement phase evaluation seeks to make better predictions about actual behavior – that which drives the return on investment and project goals in most cases.

### **Final Phase Methodology**

Final phase methodology is typically divided into three areas. First, was the goal met? Did the project move the needle? Did it meet or surpass expectations and how did it contribute to the client or company bottom line? Second, each objective is examined to evaluate both the strategy and tactics employed. Were objectives met? Were they on target? Were they on schedule? All the data gathered during the development and refinement stages are evaluated against final outcome(s). In some ways this is a meta-evaluation of the campaign and may yield an internal case study that can be used for future projects as baseline or benchmark data. Finally, a cost–product evaluation is undertaken. Here the evaluation focuses on whether the project was cost-effective, that the goal(s) and objective(s) were on target. Was the project cost-effective or were developmental estimates off so that the project could have come in for less? These are the hard questions that are always asked at the final evaluation phase.

Evaluation is an important factor in any public relations project. It should be planned across three phases and take into account both the project goal(s) and the objective(s). Objectives must be actionable and measurable and the methods selected to gather data should be triangulated to gain the best insight into project effectiveness.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ Case Studies ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Generalizability ▶ Internet ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Observation ▶ Public ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Relations ▶ Qualitative

Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Reliability ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Survey ▶ Triangulation ▶ Validity

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# **Public Relations Field Dynamics**

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Systems theory reveals that organizations are integrated into their social environment by means of a network of relationships (→ Systems Theory). In part, this rationale of organizational success motivated Harlow, who used the term → “public relations” (PR) to describe the field of “all types of relations an organization has with its publics” (1957, xi; → Organization–Public Relationships). Systems theory and relationship analysis help explain why PR can be reciprocally activated: an organization and its reference groups observe, analyze, and rate each other regularly, particularly when it seems to be relevant because of expected risks and chances. On the organizational side, it is the task of PR activities to arrange these processes as communication management and to intervene communicatively if it seems to be necessary or expedient.

How each organization understands and appreciates its reference groups’ opinions, acceptance, and/or behavior will affect how the organization responds to these groups. For effective PR interventions to be made, the relevant reference groups must be identified and their positions on various issues evaluated, along with their attitudes toward the organization. This, in turn, requires appropriate methods. The concept of public relations field dynamics – presented to a professional audience for the first time in 1992 – is one such method. It can be used to identify central qualities of PR, to demonstrate them in context, and to track them over time (→ Organizational Image; Corporate Reputation).

### **THEORETICAL CONCEPT**

The model of public relations field dynamics (PRFD) offers a simple but effective instrument for the observation and description of changes in the relationships between several

organizations and publics in any network. For instance, the *situational theory of publics* (→ Publics: Situational Theory) makes it possible to define – on the basis of three indicators (awareness of problems, awareness of consternation, and disposition of engagement) – the attitude of each single reference group toward an organization, and allows practitioners to predict behavior by analyzing the situation (Grunig & Hunt 1984). Alternatively, the *system of markets of opinion* can be applied to differentiate several basic frames of public communication (Szyzka 2005). The PRFD method provides a combined observation and graphical presentation of different reference groups in a group field, and clarifies changes in the network of relationships by comparing the results over time and by various positions on a specific issue.

The PRFD model also works with *three indicators*: valuation of relationship, valuation of → attitude, and degree of influence. Initially, the current status of the relationships between an organization and its reference groups is identified and graphically presented. The synopsis of the findings also makes clear and measurable the relationships between the different reference groups. If the status is defined periodically or if it changes under the influence of incidents (e.g., disputes), the dynamic in the field of PR can be demonstrated and strategically evaluated. In order to make prognoses it is not sufficient to evaluate the actual situation (i.e., take a snapshot). As this situation is the result of a process whose further development should be predicted, the earlier development of the group field has also to be included in the analysis.

Issue management tracks the development of issue careers in public communication in order to draw conclusions with regard to risks, chances, or the possible need for action (→ Issue Management). PRFD focuses – under the influence of the development of public communication – on the reference groups. The two methods complement each other. Methodologically, the PRFD system is adapted from the system for the multiple-level observation of groups (SYMLOG) theory proposed by Bales and Cohen (1979), which is a social psychological method for the analysis of the development of relationships in small groups. In its graphic representation, SYMLOG takes the form of a three-dimensional field diagram. The two orthogonal dimensions – “task orientation” (controlled versus emotionally expressive behavior on the vertical axis) and “social emotional orientation” (friendliness versus unfriendliness on the horizontal axis) – build a field in which a third, also bipolar dimension called “degree of influence” (dominance versus submissiveness) is positioned as a target circle. Springston adapted the SYMLOG model to describe PR in an appropriate way (Springston et al. 1992; Springston & Keyton 2001). While the dimensions of “social emotional orientation” and “degree of influence” have been retained, he changed the dimension of “task orientation” to one of “community orientation versus self-orientation.”

These dimensions can be described as follows. By measuring respondents’ perceptions, the dimension of “friendly versus unfriendly relationship” (*valuation of relationship*) expresses the basic orientation of a reference group as an attitude toward the organization and other relevant groups. It thereby reflects social trust or distrust, acceptance or insecurity. The decisive factors at this point are reciprocal interests and their orientation, combined with consternation and existential orientation as social emotional influencing factors. The overall evaluation of the relationship of one or several reference groups to an organization as friendly versus unfriendly (friend or foe) at first sight appears stereotypical

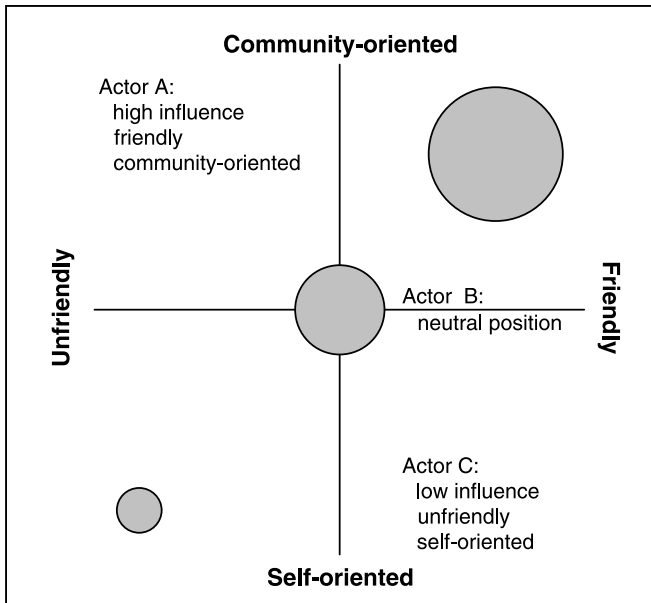


Figure 1 Field diagram of the perceived relational landscape

in that it differentiates groups that are expected to be supporters and groups with opposing interests and therefore with a potential for conflict. But between these two polarities, all levels of interaction – including the neutral position – can be scaled.

The dimension of “community orientation versus self-orientation” (*valuation of attitude*) shows how far a reference group evaluates another of the organization’s reference groups or the organization itself as community-oriented or self-oriented. This judgment is important for understanding the decisions and the behavior of an organization. For example, willingness to examine the interests of social groups and their concerns can be considered as a recognizable intention to seek social integration (community orientation) and will therefore receive a positive valuation. The consequent focusing of an organization on the question of cost-efficiency (expense) and economic benefit (self-orientation) will be followed by a critical or negative valuation from the reference groups.

The dimension of “low influence versus high influence capability” (*degree of influence*) shows the potential degree of influence a reference group ascribes to another relevant group or to the organization. In situations without conflicts only a part of this potential is used, because further exertion of influence is not necessary. Only in conflict situations (e.g., concerning sensitive subjects or problematic constellations of interests) will the full potential of influence be tapped, in order for the group to accomplish its own interests –. Knowledge about these potentials belongs to individual PR experts and cannot be shown with PRFD.

Figure 1 illustrates the field diagram of PRFD methodology, placing the friendly–unfriendly dimension on the horizontal axis and the community-orientation–self-orientation dimension on the vertical axis. The influence dimension is demonstrated by

circle size within the field. The selection of these three dimensions offers five essential advantages. (1) Each dimension makes an independent statement; the bipolarity of the scale positions them unambiguously. (2) The dimensions are orthogonal, i.e., they are independent of each other, so alterations to one dimension will not automatically affect the others. (3) Any positioning in the field diagram entails an evaluation of quality or importance; value can be deduced only in the entire context of PR. (4) The field diagram allows issue analysts to reproduce comparative alterations of opinions and attitudes over time. (5) As all actors in any field are in relationships with each other, developments and alterations in the field can be observed and presented (Springston et al. 1992; Springston & Keyton 2001).

### FINDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES

PR activities are ideally a process in which target-oriented action requires a strategic activity intent and the decision to follow a procedure is based on systematic analysis. Issue analysis enables PR professionals to appraise communicative trends and potential consequences of public communications in the context of organization-political decisions in order to consult managers, to take precautions against or to prepare for expected controversies and conflicts, and to initiate specific communicative measures. PRFD as an analysis tool gives PR professionals the possibility of considering the relevant publics of an organization as a system of mutual influences. Springston et al. (1992) implied that the use of this tool not only makes clear who are allies or antagonists but also shows who – due to their own neutral position – can be considered as a potential mediator in conflict situations. Considering the development of the field diagrams in time lapse, it is possible to observe changes in positions and parameters and to estimate the degree of the polarization or unification of publics. This analysis allows practitioners to make inferences about the organization, about how it reflects the preferred issue position of others, and about how that can affect social trust. Thus, it is possible to make predictions about the risks faced by an organization that follows its organization-political interests and aims as well as the opportunities for strategic and communication-strategic actions.

Finally, by means of PRFD, it is possible to *answer three central questions* about the analysis of the public relations of an organization. (1) Which basic attitude do publics have toward an organization? (2) How will the basic organization-political orientation of an organization be evaluated? (3) What kind of influence can different publics exert by implicit and explicit actions? Questions, for example, about the different roles and the different organizational relevance of several reference groups, about situational influencing factors, or about the differentiation of various publics can be formulated in relation to the comparative issue context and lead to models, methods, and procedures for communicating about differences. PRFD does not, therefore, recommend a specific stance on various issues but serves as an instrument for analysis.

The PRFD methodology can aid practitioners in their efforts to develop statements about the current condition of several publics. In the context of issues and problems, the reactions and attitudes of key publics can be predicted. Here public communication can be understood as a system of markets of opinion (SMO). This offers the possibility of differentiating publics in different markets of opinion geared to a specific focus on topics

and specific key values. Such a model clarifies the fact that assessments of an issue can differ. For example, the issue of personnel reductions may be differently assessed in the personnel and financial markets, because they offer different conditions (social versus economic acceptance) for accepting key policies. However, the way the competing interests of different publics have to be handled depends, for example, on dominance, majority, and dependency within a certain market field. PRFD connects reference groups to a collective field diagram, as SMO positions opinion markets with partial interests in the common public opinion market.

PRFD provides a social psychological model capable of providing adaptable approaches and models for the description of central issues of PR. In this sense, PRFD is a component of awareness in PR research. The fact that the method has not been widely accepted some 15 years after its first publication (e.g., in the USA: Grunig & Hunt 1984; Botan & Hazleton 2006; in Germany: Röttger 2004, Bentele et al. 2005) does not argue against the method.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Corporate Reputation  
▶ Cultural Topoi in Public Relations ▶ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ▶ Issue Management ▶ Legitimacy Gap Theory ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Relations ▶ Publics: Situational Theory  
▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Systems Theory

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# Public Relations: Global Firms

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After World War II, a spurt in the growth of multinational companies and worldwide trade led to the concomitant growth of global advertising and marketing agencies and networks around the world. Such growth was the inevitable outcome of the need to coordinate the → advertising and → marketing of goods and services in the various markets that were joining the global trade flow and becoming part of the multinational market domain (→ Globalization Theories). In the marketing mix, the global expansion of public relations firms got a late start. However, in the 1950s, the growing realization of the cost-effectiveness of public relations in relation to advertising and marketing, along with an increased understanding that → public relations can effectively support advertising and marketing efforts through reputation management, media relations, and relationship building with diverse publics around the world led to the start of the expansion of international/global public relations firms and activities (→ Professionalization of Public Relations; Corporate Reputation; Organizational Image).

The rate of expansion increased especially from the late 1980s onwards with the demise of the former Soviet Union, the spread of market globalization in more countries, the spatial compression enabled by communication technologies and travel, increasing global competition, and financial deregulations worldwide. The demand for global public relations services were coming from a growing number of companies doing more business in unfamiliar markets, companies that were faced with the need to culturally understand and build mutually beneficial relations with a complex array of publics, government, and the media of various countries, a service that is beyond the scope of just advertising and marketing. Global public relations firms and networks have positioned themselves as entities that possess the knowledge, expertise, and resources to provide these services in an increasingly interconnected world with complex business communication needs.

## **BRIEF HISTORY**

As a communications profession, public relations, as it is understood today, was born in the United States and also had an early start in Britain. Two US firms with early international vision and aspirations were Hill and Knowlton and Burson-Marsteller. Lured by the business potential of the formation of the European Economic Community, the former entered Europe in the 1960s and soon after the Asia Pacific region. Burson-Marsteller, Hill and Knowlton's main international competitor, closely followed suit. Edelman PR (the only independently owned global public relations firm today) was also an early player in joining the expansion of global firms (Morley 1998). In Britain, in the 1980s, Shandwick (now Weber-Shandwick) provided major competition to the US-based firms as it entered the race to provide global public relations services to multinational clients. It established a strong presence in the Asia Pacific region in addition to Europe, after acquiring Inter-

national Public Relations Group (IPRG), a strong network of public relations firms spanning Japan to Australia, brought together by the enterprising Taiji Kohara of Japan who entered the public relations business in the 1960s (Morley 1998).

The reach of public relations firms today is indeed global. Most of the global firms have a presence in the major metropolitan cities of the world. They provide a full range of public relations services such as strategy and program development, creativity, tools and materials development, implementation, and evaluation and measurement (Rudgard 2003). Some of the global firms (and now networks) have built a reputation for being specialists at providing certain types of public relations services, such as public affairs, financial affairs, travel, health-care, technology, or sports marketing. Today, there are close to two dozen global public relations firms that provide worldwide services, mainly based in the US or in Europe. While they also provide services to domestic clients, their international accounts generate between 40 and 70 percent of their revenues (Wilcox & Cameron 2006).

### **THE NEED FOR PR FIRMS IN TODAY'S GLOBAL MARKETPLACE**

According to Amy Rudgard (2003), head of public relations for Lego in Europe, clients hire global firms or networks for a number of reasons, among them control and consistency over global campaigns, lack of in-house resources, personnel, and expertise, lack of the international experience or resources at the current client, rapid business growth, and entry into new and unfamiliar markets, or the sudden occurrence of a crisis with international repercussions that demands quick action. Further reasons are that the management of some clients with global needs does not perceive the financial value of maintaining a full-fledged in-house international PR team at all times, or that global firms with local affiliates are better rooted in the local culture of various markets.

All of these reasons suggest that an increasing number of businesses, in addition to multinational companies, are in need of coordinated public relations services that transcend national cultures and customs (→ Globalization of Organizations). Along with business, several organizations that span national borders, such as nongovernmental agencies and international agencies, also utilize the services of global public relations firms.

### **OWNERSHIP PATTERNS AND TRENDS**

Until the 1970s, most public relations firms were independently held or publicly owned. However, they were gradually bought over by large advertising firms as they were turning out to be lucrative investments. Another advantage for the advertising firms was that they could provide seamless services to clients with international advertising as well as public relations needs. That trend further shifted as global media and communication operations began to converge rapidly after the late 1980s, leading to the growth of large → media conglomerates with diversified holdings (→ Globalization of the Media). While they maintain their names, most global advertising and public relations firms today are owned by such large conglomerates. For example, the Interpublic Group owns Foote, Cone and Belding along with other advertising agencies and some of the largest global public relations firms



such as Weber-Shandwick and Golin/Harris International. The largest conglomerate, however, is Omnicom (roughly US\$8.6 billion in revenues), which owns global public relations firms such as Fleishman-Hillard, Porter Novelli, and Ketchum (Wilcox & Cameron 2006).

There are two main reasons for this ownership trend. The first is that large multinational companies with communication needs in various markets of the world can shop under one roof and expect seamless integrated marketing communication services, i.e., the melding of public relations, advertising, and marketing, in the various countries in which they do business. The other reason is purely financial. Global public relations firms are increasingly proving to be worthwhile investments for large media conglomerates (Wilcox & Cameron 2006).

It needs to be pointed out, however, that not all clients with international public relations needs may desire the one-size-fits-all approach, especially if they feel the need to conduct more locally tailored public relations programs in disparate market cultures. These clients feel the need for less standardized and more personal and culturally focused services. Having to hire one global firm with international offices is not the only option. Such clients can pick and choose from other available options when constructing their global public relations account.

### **OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO CLIENTS FOR STRUCTURING GLOBAL PR ACCOUNTS**

The trend of building networks (e.g., WorldCom, IPREX, Pinnacle), whether comprised of partially owned affiliates or independently owned smaller firms worldwide, is on the rise in global public relations. As a result, clients with global public relations needs have at least *four main options available* to them for structuring their global accounts. First, as mentioned already, there is the option of going with a wholly owned firm that has its own offices in different cities created by the parent firm and bearing the same name. Second, a client can go with the wholly owned network approach. Such a network is composed of local firms that have been acquired by the lead firm, but the local firms retain their local staff, management, and identities. A third option is to go with a main firm that is also part of a network because of equity participation with firms in other countries. The fourth option is to go with a looser (in terms of ownership) network that is a consortium of independently owned firms located in different countries that work together to support the needs of each other's international clients (Heylin et al. 1991).

Each arrangement has its *strengths and weaknesses*. Wholly owned firms with their own offices may have some offices that are weaker than others. In this case, the quality of service would not be uniform in all markets, but central coordination would be a plus. The second option has the advantage of offering services that are rooted in the local culture and knowledge of public relations of the various markets where the affiliates exist (Heylin et al. 1991). A disadvantage for clients with global priorities could be lack of coordination between various markets. However, such an option would be ideal for a client that prioritizes the local over global centralization. The same advantages and disadvantages would apply to the third and fourth options, except that a further disadvantage in the case of the fourth option would be a lack of leadership and centralization in a network of independently owned firms with their own cultures, loyalties, and client priorities.

The choice comes down to the client's needs. A multinational client shopping for international public relations services would have to consider whether its needs are more global, local, or glocal; the infrastructure of its multinational operations; and whether there is greater need for centralization or for decentralization in the management of the account (Rudgard 2003).

## FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The landscape of world business has changed dramatically in the last couple of decades. Business activities and communication are criss-crossing national and cultural borders at a rate not known before. However, greater fluidity also means greater intercultural contact, and this reality carries with it the high potential of intercultural communication conflict between clients and the publics in new contact zones. As global public relations firms and networks work to connect disparate market cultures, and establish a presence in recently marketized cultures (parts of South America, Africa, and Asia; eastern Europe; and Russia) where market-capitalist PR is a new concept, their primary challenges become obvious.

In addition to providing the more standard services that these firms and networks provide to their clients, they also have to effectively play the role of intercultural boundary spanners at various levels in the global business communication matrix (→ Public Relations, Intercultural). They also have to effectively address the challenge of anti-globalization sentiments, especially those directed against their multinational clients, and counsel their clients to be far-sighted and socially responsible members of the globalization process (Vogl 2001; → Issue Management; Corporate Social Responsibility).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Issue Management ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Professionalization of Public Relations ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations, Intercultural

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# Public Relations, Intercultural

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Although public relations practice is slightly ahead of the public relations body of knowledge, both have developed ethnocentrically in the twentieth century, based predominantly on experience and research from the United States and to a lesser extent from some countries in Europe (Sriramesh & Vercic 2003; Van Ruler & Vercic 2004). However, public relations practice, or many of the publicity activities that we have come to characterize as → public relations today, took place in pre-biblical times in many ancient cultures. There is evidence of such communication practices in ancient civilizations in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, India, and China, among others (Sriramesh & Vercic 2003; Sriramesh 2004). However, in its “modern” avatar (incarnation), public relations practice is perceived around the world to be a western (predominantly American) phenomenon (→ Communication Modes, Western).

## INTERCULTURAL ASPECTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH

The body of knowledge of public relations is relatively young and ethnocentric. Grunig and Hickson (1979) concluded that of the 4,141 books and articles on the subject of public relations prior to 1976, only 63 had some research component, a clear sign of the lack of development of the “science” of public relations by that time. Although there has been a noticeable spurt in public relations scholarship in the last 30 years (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline), it is only in the last five to ten years that the body of knowledge has diversified to some extent, based on descriptions of experiences from other regions of the world. Even so, most of the studies in this genre have focused on public relations as a phenomenon in a single country, and to a lesser extent one region, and there is very little literature that compares public relations practices across countries or cultures. So it is reasonable to conclude that theorizing about intercultural public relations is in its infancy (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication). It is important to recognize that whereas international public relations is almost always also intercultural, intercultural public relations need not always be international.

The three-nation research project funded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) that has come to be recognized as the *Excellence Project* (Grunig et al. 2002) was arguably the first research attempt to compare public relations across cultures (albeit in three Anglo-Saxon countries: the US, Canada, and the UK) by using the same research design and survey questionnaire to gather data in all countries. When it began in 1987, this project was also the first effort to study the linkage between culture (both societal and corporate; → Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Cultural Patterns and Communication) and public relations, as evidenced by the first *Body of knowledge report* published by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 1988, which did not make any reference to culture as a variable in public relations practice.

Beginning in 1990, several graduate students studying in the United States began conducting studies of public relations in a few countries in Asia, principally in India,

China, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Japan, and Thailand. Although their efforts have been helpful in extending the pedagogy beyond a few western countries, thereby reducing to some extent the ethnocentricity of the body of knowledge, there is clearly a paucity in the depth of information from these countries; while many other Asian nations, as well as those from Africa, the Caribbean, and Latin America, have received even less representation in the literature in English for many reasons, including language.

Globalization has made it imperative to address these hitherto neglected areas, which is why there is increased attention to international and intercultural public relations now. In fact, one can reasonably argue that there is no such thing as “domestic” public relations any longer because of the rapid globalization of even small organizations as a result of better communication infrastructure, lower trade barriers, etc. This makes it essential for organizations to consider environmental variables in designing public relations strategies and tactics. Public relations practitioners have traditionally relied on anecdotal evidence to guide their forays into new markets, and in many respects they continue to do so even now because of the scarcity of “intercultural” public relations knowledge. Practitioners have found out, sometimes the hard way, that anecdotal evidence is not always a good method for learning. Three key variables (among others) make organizational environments challenging for intercultural public relations practitioners: the culture, the political and economic system, and the media system. Of these, culture is the only variable to have been empirically linked with public relations so far, albeit by few studies. Unfortunately, culture continues to be treated as an afterthought in the public relations body of knowledge (Sriramesh 2006), which is why one can make a reasonable argument that the current body of knowledge of public relations is ethnocentric (Sriramesh 2002).

### **CULTURE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS: THE MISSING LINK**

The link between organizations and culture has been made in a variety of disciplines, such as organizational behavior (→ Organizational Communication). Similarly, culture and communication are two sides of the same coin. Because communication is the primary underpinning of public relations, the logical connection between culture and public relations is easy to discern. Both *societal* culture (Sriramesh & White 1992) and *corporate* culture (Sriramesh et al. 1992) influence public relations practice. This distinction is important because public relations people communicate with → audiences external and internal to the organization and should have familiarity with the cultural idiosyncracies of these key stakeholders (→ Stakeholder Theory) in order to communicate effectively with them. Yet less than a handful of empirical studies have assessed how culture affects public relations (see a review of these studies in Sriramesh 2006). It is even more interesting that of the three environmental variables mentioned above, culture has the greatest number of studies linking it with public relations. That is as good an indicator as any of the extent to which intercultural issues have been ignored in public relations pedagogy. Further, beginning with the IABC project, most of the studies linking public relations with culture have relied almost exclusively on Hofstede’s dimensions of culture, although even Hofstede noted that culture is much more than the dimensions he was able to measure. The field has barely touched the surface of the many unique cultural idiosyncracies of individual regions and countries beyond some studies that have discussed *guanxi*

(“relations”) and *mianzi* (“saving face”) in Chinese culture (Sriramesh 2004), and one or two studies that have assessed the influence of *wa* (“harmony”), *amae* (“desire to depend on the goodness of others”), *tatamae* (“public persona and behavior of an individual”), and *honne* (“the private or true self and emotions”) in Japanese culture (Sriramesh & Takasaki 2000; → Communication Modes, Asian).

Cultures also differ in the emphasis they place on *interpersonal trust* and the ways in which such trust is established and maintained. In public relations literature this is discussed in terms of the *personal influence model* (Sriramesh & White 1992; Sriramesh 2006). Practitioners from different cultures use different methods of building personal relationships with key stakeholders as a means of increasing the effectiveness of their communication with these stakeholders. This is closely linked to the notion of “relationship building” that seems to have pervaded the body of literature in the past seven years (Hon & Grunig 1999; Ledingham & Bruning 2000). However, interestingly, the core discussion of relationship building in public relations still does not account for culture as the key variable it is. Only when studies have used the core concepts identified in the US or a few western countries in other countries, such as Taiwan and China, has culture been taken into account in applying to other cultures the relationship dimensions identified in the US.

There is plenty of evidence of culture not being given its due in public relations pedagogy, resulting in the ethnocentricity of the body of knowledge. For example, one of the premier research journals of the field, the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, published a special issue titled “Public Relations *Values* [emphasis added] in the New Millennium” as the first issue of the new millennium. Although the thoughtful essays in that special issue discussed activist values, feminist values, rhetorical values, and postmodernist values, not one of them made a single reference to culture, which is the core concept that addresses values in any society. In the entire special issue there was only one reference to culture, when Grunig stated: “[individualistic] Anglo cultures need symmetrical public relations even more than organizations in collective cultures” (Grunig 2000, 39). The same applies to discussions of ethics and public relations (→ Public Relations Ethics) as well, where discussions are silent about ethical values from more ancient cultures such as China or India or cultures in other regions of the world such as Africa or Latin America.

When discussing intercultural public relations, it is important to extend the discussion beyond the traditional (anthropological) notion of culture to include other variables also, such as political economy and media culture. In the rapidly globalizing world of the twenty-first century, such a broader focus is absolutely necessary in order for public relations practice to be more effective.

## **MEDIA CULTURE**

Although almost all textbooks of public relations discuss maintaining relations with the mass media as one of the most important activities of public relations practitioners (→ Media Relations), there has been very little theorizing about the differences in media cultures around the world and their impact on public relations. Global or intercultural public relations ought to study how public relations should be tempered to different media environments. A framework for developing research programs to study the impact of media culture on public relations was presented in Sriramesh and Vercic (2003) and

consists of analyzing who owns and controls the media in a country (media control; → Ownership in the Media), who has the ability to penetrate media content (media access; → Access to the Media), and the extent of diffusion of the mass media through the populace (media outreach; → Exposure to Communication Content). Although public relations professionals have been conducting media relations activities cross-nationally and cross-culturally, they are basing them mostly on anecdotal and not empirical evidence. More often than not, such activities have involved imposing western notions of media relations on other parts of the world, with limited effect. So it is imperative for scholars to link media culture with public relations on the basis of empirical evidence.

### **POLITICAL CULTURE**

Western liberal democracy underpins many of the assumptions that pervade the current literature on public relations, because modern public relations has its roots in the west. This is partly why much of the theorizing about public relations is also prescriptive (normative), instructing how it should be practiced in other countries and regions of the world. However, democracy is practiced in myriad forms around the world, because of socio-cultural factors and those relating to level of development. Other forms of political system (e.g., corporatism, communitarianism, or theocracy) exist around the world, and their impact on public relations has not been explored at all. For example, the literature on → issue management assumes a liberal democratic environment where corporations use lobbying to influence legislative decisions and the enactment of public policies. However, in other political systems lobbying may be ill-advised because it is illegal. Also, the term “lobbying” itself may have different connotations in different countries. The body of knowledge has yet to fully explore all these avenues.

The body of knowledge of global, international, and intercultural public relations is very young, with a bright future for development. The rapid pace of globalization requires that scholars pay attention to developing this fledgling field with robust conceptual and empirical studies that can help to increase the efficacy of public relations practitioners globally.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Audience ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Communication Modes, Western ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Intercultural Media Effects ▶ Issue Management ▶ Legitimacy Gap Theory ▶ Media Relations ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Publics: Situational Theory ▶ Stakeholder Theory

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## Public Relations: Media Influence

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Earning public understanding and acceptance through reports in the press is one of the oldest means–ends schemes in public relations (PR). Firms, governments, NGOs, and interest groups alike use the media to convey their message to their publics. Hence, media influence is a two-step process. Whether PR efforts lead to news items in the media depends on the relations of the company with the media and on the newsworthiness of the publicity efforts (→ Media Relations; News Factors; News Values). Once the media have published the news, PR media influence can be understood through theories about media effects (→ Media Effects; Exposure to Communication Content; Information Processing).

PR media influence is a special field of media effects because of the involvement of stakeholders. Every actor who may affect the company or may be affected by the company is a stakeholder. Typical stakeholders are competitors, investors, financial analysts, interest groups, employees, and consumers. Stakeholders are not simply external publics outside the organization, but active players in the publicity arena themselves, who also invest in media relations. Stakeholders may serve as alternative sources for journalists who want to verify their facts or to present both sides of the argument (Fig. 1, feedback

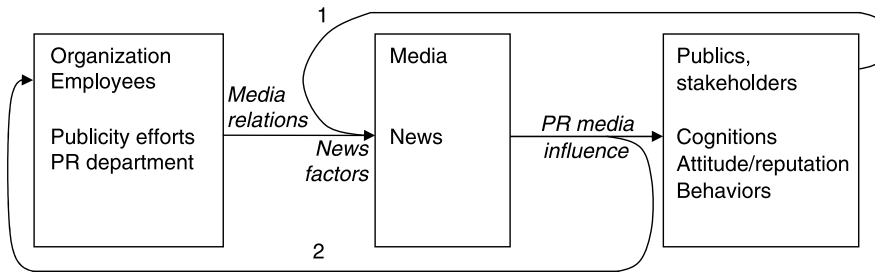


Figure 1 Media relations, news factors, and PR media influence: a reciprocal model

loop 1). Stakeholders may also be located within the organization itself (feedback loop 2). Employees often learn from the press about takeover negotiations, organizational scandals, or the relative performance of their firm as compared to competitors, especially in global firms (→ Public Relations: Global Firms).

From a more abstract point of view, media and journalists, as well as an organization's publics and stakeholders, can be conceived of as actors in an interorganizational communication network (→ Communication Networks; Interorganizational Communication; Social Networks; Network Analysis). A network perspective results in a *reciprocal* model of PR media effects.

### INFLUENCE OF THE AMOUNT AND TONE OF THE NEWS

Although it is a basic assumption throughout the PR community that stakeholder perceptions of a firm's reputation rest in part on news coverage (→ Corporate Reputation), only in 1990 was the first large-scale attempt made to test this assumption. Fombrun and Shanley (1990) focused on the amount and tone of the news. The frequency or visibility of the news is often used as a synonym for the amount of news, whereas near-synonyms for the tone of the news are the tenor, direction, valence, or favorability of the news. The authors measured the amount and the tone of the news about firms by means of a content analysis of titles of newspaper articles (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). With firms as their units of analysis, they regressed the amount and the tone of the news about a firm, together with measures of its financial performance, on its reputation score. Reputations of firms were derived from the Fortune 500 survey among the business elite. They found that the amount of news had a negative effect, i.e., the greater the scrutiny of the firm by the press, the worse its reputation (→ Negativity). On the other hand, the tone of the news had a significant positive effect on corporate reputation, but only for highly diversified firms, especially when the amount of news was large. Stakeholders may have to rely on the news for their information about diversified firms, because it is hard to deduce the reputation of such a firm from elementary knowledge about its core business.

Later studies applied other research designs with mixed results (→ Research Methods). On the basis of a longitudinal research design with yearly data for three firms (→ Longitudinal Analysis), Verčič (2000), for example, found that the yearly change in the amount or tone of the news did not have a significant effect on the yearly change in the perceived trustworthiness of the firm. In addition to different research designs,



different → operationalizations of a positive and a negative tone may have been at the heart of these mixed results.

### NEWS-TYPE-SPECIFIC INFLUENCES

Recent studies have found that media influence depends in addition on the “news frame,” the “news type,” or the “attributes” with which an organization is associated in the news (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News). Among other things, the news may associate organizations with problems or “issues” that arise, with its successes and failures, or with stakeholders who are either supportive or critical of the organization. Each of these three news types (or “frames”) has a unique effect on the audience (Meijer 2004).

In *issue news* (e.g., “Philips rolls out sales of energy-efficient light bulbs”) an actor (e.g., Philips) promotes or counteracts an issue (e.g., sales of energy-efficient light bulbs). Research on second-level agenda setting and priming shows that the issues with which an organization is associated in the news become salient for evaluation of the organization (Carroll & McCombs 2003; Carroll 2004). On the basis of a correlational second-level agenda-setting study, starting from a 2005 content analysis of press releases and media coverage and aggregated survey data for 28 companies, Kioussis et al. (2007) concluded that a company’s attention to issues (or “substantive attributes”) in PR messages is transferred to the media agenda, and subsequently to public opinion. Moreover, media adopt the positive or negative issue positions of corporations from the PR news wire. Thus, firms are often quite successful in building the issues that serve to evaluate them.

*Priming* and *second-level agenda setting* occur also in a business context. Fombrun and Shanley’s (1990) early results point to the *special status of issues* related to a company’s core business, often labeled as owned issues in the political communication literature. In a study based on a yearly panel survey study and a daily content analysis of the news, 1997–2000, Meijer and Kleinnijenhuis (2006), for example, found that news about a firm’s owned issues did indeed increase reputation, even when controlling for former reputation. For example, the reputation of oil company Shell deteriorated in the eyes of audience members who came to associate the company with environmental issues, whereas its reputation improved for audience members who came to associate Shell with its core business. A respondent’s issue associations with Shell depended on issue associations with the company in the media from the respondent’s personal media palette. Remarkably enough, Shell raised environmental issues itself, because the company wanted to improve its environmental reputation actively after the 1995 Brent Spar affair, in which Greenpeace had successfully accused Shell of using the sea as a trash can to dump the obsolete Brent Spar oil platform.

Corporate reputations depend in a quite different way on news about corporate *success and failure* (e.g., “Upbeat forecast for Philips profits,” “Sales dip for Philips”). A defining feature of news about success and failure is that the subject that caused successes and gains or failures and losses remains unspecified. Success breeds success, according to Meijer on the basis of a panel survey study that permitted control for a firm’s previous successes (Meijer 2004). For example, most shareholders will follow market hype, whereas only highly aware shareholders will have the self-confidence to act against the hype (e.g., selling shares in a booming market, buying shares in a collapsing market).

## EFFECTS OF SUPPORT AND CRITICISM FROM STAKEHOLDERS IN THE NEWS

The literature shows mixed results with regard to effects of news about *support and criticism*. Whether criticisms hit home also depends on stakeholder credibility (→ Credibility Effects; Consistency Theories). Shah et al. (2002), for example, found that President Clinton was able to restore his reputation after the Monica Lewinsky affair once the moral issue disappeared and press reports came to focus on Republican hardliners who criticized Clinton. Republicans were never deemed credible by Democrats.

The variety of different stakeholders and experts in business news is quite impressive. Business news involves different issue arenas (e.g., corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, labor relations, consumer affairs), each of them with its own stakeholders and its own experts. In news about mergers and acquisitions, for example, the news may start with rumors, but CEOs usually become the primary definers of the news. Financial analysts and bankers often play the role of experts in this type of news. But if, for example, dismissals are at stake, then employees will easily become the primary definers. Labor unions and a firm's PR spokespersons often will enter the scene also, as will lawyers when the labor dispute is not settled soon. If a firm is prosecuted because of its violations of the law, then CEO and PR spokespersons, as well as lawyers and polling agencies, are likely to become newsworthy. If interest groups, e.g., environmentalists, become the primary definers in the news, then the responsibility for the defense is often with the PR department. In sum, each issue arena raises in the press its own primary definers, adversaries, and experts, whose antagonisms maintain the issue arena to the detriment of other such arenas.

The large number of more or less credible stakeholders in the PR domain makes a precise account of news about their support and criticism difficult, but studies to trace stakeholders are a first step. In their study about the growing prominence of CEOs in corporate news, Park and Berger (2004) found that CEO statements were counterbalanced with stakeholder statements. Stakeholders often cited in CEO press coverage were adversaries (e.g., other executives, board members, union personnel). But experts (e.g., financial analysts, industry analysts, scholars) were cited even more in news items about CEOs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Communication Management ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Consistency Theories ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing ▶ Intereffication Approach in Public Relations ▶ Interorganizational Communication ▶ Issue Management ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Relations ▶ Negativity ▶ Network Analysis ▶ News Factors ▶ News Values ▶ Operationalization ▶ Positioning Theory ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Evaluation ▶ Public Relations Field Dynamics ▶ Public Relations: Global Firms ▶ Public Relations, Intercultural ▶ Research Methods ▶ Social Networks ▶ Stakeholder Theory ▶ Trust of Publics

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## **Public Relations Planning**

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The 1952 edition of *Effective Public Relations: Pathway to Public Favor* (Cutlip & Center) set the standard for PR education for decades to come. Chapters 5–7 introduced planning as the second of a three-stage process model. The first step was fact-finding, the second planning, and the third communicating. By 1958, the authors had moved evaluation (originally in step one) to step four. In 1963, Marston created the popular acronym *RACE* (Research, Action, Communication, and Evaluation) to represent the four-stage process conceptualized by Cutlip and Center. As in the earlier model, planning took place at the second stage (→ Public Relations).

### **THEMES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS (PR) PLANNING**

Since 1952, three major themes have emerged in the PR planning literature: a growing emphasis on research as the foundation for planning, increasing stress on linking PR

plans to business and corporate plans, and growing emphasis on the need to evaluate communication plans (→ Public Relations Evaluation).

### **A Growing Emphasis on Research**

Funded by the first Arthur W. Page Society research grant, Broom and Dozier researched and wrote *Using Research in Public Relations: Applications to Program Management* (1990). Positioning research as the central element in managing PR programs, this book outlines how research helps to define PR problems and conceptualize the program (“before”), monitor the program’s progress and make mid-course corrections (“during”), and assess program impact to learn what did or did not work and why or why not (“after”). In 1992, the International Association of Business Communicators published the results of the Excellence Project, focusing on roles (including research) performed by PR practitioners in countries around the world. Ferguson followed in 1993 with *Mastering the Public Opinion Challenge*, which won the 1994 National Communication Association’s Public Relations Innovation, Development, and Educational Achievement (PRIDE) award for best publication in the book category. This book addressed the role of environmental intelligence and strategic planning systems in the tracking and managing of organizational issues (→ Professionalization of Public Relations).

### **A Growing Focus on Linking to Business and Corporate Plans**

By the early 1980s, leading textbooks stressed the need to link PR planning to corporate goals and objectives; and by the end of the decade, these planning models were ensconced in the literature.

Despite a growing recognition of the importance of long-term planning for communication, books and scholarly articles continued to focus, through the 1990s, on contingency planning for crises (with an increasing emphasis, as well, on risk management). Ferguson (1993, 1999, 2000), however, documented a large-scale and unique experiment on the part of the Canadian government to require long-term, research-based communication planning by all departments, agencies, and regions. In 1988, the Privy Council Office (PCO) brought its first government-wide communication policy to life by asking every federal department and agency to submit annual strategic communication plans in October and operational plans in March. The PCO reviewed the plans for conformity to the broad corporate objectives of the government and provided feedback to the strategic planners. Once approved, all subsequent planning efforts (work planning and support planning) were tied to these plans. (See later discussion for definitions of *strategic*, *operational*, and *support* planning.)

By 2000, a spate of articles on → strategic communication planning had appeared, and every professional conference hosted sessions on planning. Led by an editorial board from the Netherlands, Singapore, Slovenia, and the US, *The International Journal of Strategic Communication* published its first issue in January 2006. In Great Britain, the National School of Government established training in strategic communication planning.

### **A Growing Emphasis on Evaluation**

In the late 1980s, a survey of practitioners in Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, and Zimbabwe identified the emergence of accountability as a critical concern; and by the 1990s, calls for greater investment in evaluation were coming from professional associations and academics in the US, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and other countries. The Institute for Public Relations Research and Education, the International Public Relations Association, the International Association of Business Communicators, and the Public Relations Society of America (along with chapters in other countries) urged organizations to pay more attention to evaluation.

This new century, which could be dubbed the “*age of accountability*,” intensified the challenges to PR planners. With scandals rocking the financial world, organizations grappling with new security issues, and trust in politicians and business leaders at an all-time low, the Internet provided a new means for dissident groups to organize and press their causes. These groups addressed a crazy quilt of political, social, and economic issues. Activist publics employed old strategies such as civil disobedience, teach-ins, and marches, as well as new strategies such as culture jamming. Class action suits gave a voice to the less powerful, and people’s tribunals judged people at the highest levels of government. In Seattle, Quebec City, Genoa, Barcelona, and other cities, crowds collected at world summits to protest against globalization. The crowds drew unlikely “march fellows,” with organizations as diverse as Greenpeace standing arm in arm with John Birchers and antiabortion activists.

Accountability implies the need to evaluate, and evaluation requires setting goals and objectives – basics in the planning process. In the same way, planning requires research into the opinion environment. So a concomitant stress on research, planning, and evaluation emerged in the PR literature. The increased emphasis on conducting quantitative research (→ Quantitative Methodology) reflected this same shift in focus within both academia and industry.

### **PLANNING TYPOLOGIES**

A major difficulty with talking about communication planning derives from lack of agreement on terminology. PR practitioners use such diverse terms as program plans, action plans, functional plans, project plans, strategic plans, strategies, operational plans, work plans, campaign plans, corporate plans, contingency plans for crises, support plans, communication approaches, communication (or “comm.”) plans, and risk management plans to describe the large variety of annual or multi-year communication planning products. Public and non-profit organizations frequently use different terminology to for-profit organizations.

For example, governments use the term “programs” to refer to major ongoing services such as leisure, health, or transportation. Businesses, on the other hand, consider a program to be a large-scale undertaking of limited duration with well-defined deliverables. Similar variations in usage occur at all levels of planning, making it difficult to use consistent terminology across sectors, business units, or industries. For that reason, a careful definition of terms is required to frame any discussion. Moreover, although many more specific

forms of planning exist (e.g., market and advertising plans, program plans, management by objectives, etc.), it is beyond the scope of this discussion to identify the full range.

### Strategic Planning

Applied in a corporate or communication context, the term *strategic planning* refers to future-oriented, “long-term,” and goal-oriented planning. Tied to the mission, mandate, vision, and broad goals or objectives of the organization, strategic planning involves deciding where you want to be at the end of your journey – your ultimate destination. In unstable environments, organizations must revisit their strategic plans on a regular basis to insure goals have not changed since the writing or updating of the last plan. The volatility of planning environments (social, economic, technological, political, cultural, and other) means that definitions of *long-term* have changed from the 1960s (10-year planning cycles) to the 1980s (5-year planning cycles) to the present day (3- to 5-year planning cycles, with annual updates).

Strategic planning can take place at the corporate or highest level of the organization or within the context of programs, branches, or business ventures. Before engaging in high-level planning of any variety (corporate or communication), the organization conducts a situation audit, clarifies its mandate, and writes or updates its mission and vision statements. A *situation audit* looks at the past performance of the organization (its achievements, failures, trends in products and services, and profit performance), forces in the organization’s environment (e.g., economic, socio-cultural, technological, political, and demographic), the biases and loyalties of stakeholders (those who have a stake in the success or failure of the organization), and organizational resources. A *mandate* specifies the responsibilities of an organization and assigns authority for pursuing those responsibilities. A mandate generally appears in articles of legislation, incorporation, or charters. A *mission statement* justifies the existence of the organization by defining its purpose or reason for being, values, strategies for achieving its objectives, and behavioral standards. Mission statements guide the *present* actions of the organization. A *vision statement*, on the other hand, says where the organization would like to be at some *future* point – its desired future identity. In that sense, a vision statement is an expansion of the objectives that used to appear in 10- to 20-year strategic plans. In ideal form, vision statements are optimistic, realistic, and eloquent in expression.

After completing these three steps (conducting a situation audit, clarifying its mandate, and rewriting or updating its mission and vision statements), strategic planners move into action – first at the corporate level and subsequently at other levels of the organization. Strategic planners in communication then link their efforts to these different layers of planning (corporate, business, program, or other areas within the organization). Every plan that succeeds the corporate plan links back to these central themes and ideas. In that way, the multi-year corporate plan offers a strategic framework for business units and programs, as well as for communication planners.

The multi-year communication plan typically incorporates the following elements: opinion environment, issues, communication objectives, messages, priorities, strategic considerations (with recommendations as warranted), desired outcomes, and budget. The omission of a heading called *target audiences* derives from the fact that the strategic

plan is a broad “motherhood” document. Tied to activities specified at the operational and support planning stages, audiences do not appear in the multi-year or annual strategic plan. Designating audiences at this high level is deemed inappropriate.

### **Operational Planning**

Most commonly used by governments, the term “operational planning” refers to work and project plans. Like the term strategic planning, operational planning originated with the military. Driven by strategic planning and tactical in nature, operational planning involves making choices about how to reach a desired destination. Which vehicles will allow the organization to achieve its strategic goals? Which path will it follow? If strategic planning defines the destination, operational planning sketches a road map for reaching that destination.

Operational planning transforms communication priorities for the immediate planning period (usually one year) into products and services. Such plans also assign priorities to these activities and services, identify key target audiences, designate accountabilities (who will be responsible for carrying out the activities), articulate performance indicators, define evaluation methods and tools, establish milestones and timelines, and identify the resources required to deliver the products and services. Whereas top executives in communication are typically responsible for strategic planning, middle-level managers tend to be responsible for operational planning.

### **Support Planning**

“Support planning” flows from operational planning. Activities identified in the operational planning phase must be brought to life. The organization sets timelines and budgets and assigns responsibilities for accomplishing activities. Planners consider both the strategic responsibilities (e.g., communication objectives and messages) and the tactical (e.g., timing and vehicles for carrying the message). Support planning develops – in a more complete fashion – each of the activities identified in operational plans. Unlike annual or multi-year plans, which cover the full range of an organization’s issues and activities, support plans are more limited in scope. The *focus* of the support plan (rather than the longevity, number of activities, or timeline) sets it apart from other types of planning.

Support plans can take the form of “single-use plans” (nonrecurring activities) or “standing plans” (repetitive work and predictable, recurring situations). Redundant once the activity has been carried out and the objective achieved, single-use plans help the organization to manage specific issues, activities, or broad initiatives. Planners write single-use plans for pending policy announcements, upcoming special events, environmental campaigns, press conferences, publications, or capital expenditures. Within the business sector, single-use plans can also apply to programs. Standing plans, by contrast, remain relevant for a lengthier period of time, involve a number of components (e.g., public service announcements, website, and other activities), and have no set length. Communicators dust off standing plans year after year for events of a recurrent nature (e.g., Secretary Appreciation Day or Recycling Day).

### Contingency Planning for Crises

Different from other kinds of planning, crisis communication planning involves anticipation of a situation that could (but not necessarily will) occur. Written in Chinese, the word “crisis” has two characters: one represents danger, the second opportunity. Handled properly, crises can bring increased knowledge of how the organization should function. Common sources of crises are industrial accidents, environmental problems, massive restructuring, union–management conflicts, product recalls, hostile takeovers, acts of terrorism, charges of financial fraud and embezzlement, health threats, major economic and technological changes, and natural disasters. Some result from natural events and others from human actions. Whatever their cause, in the short term, crises can threaten the viability – even the life – of an organization. For that reason, organizations attempt to anticipate and plan for crises. They create categories or typologies to hold various kinds of crises. An airline, for example, might plan for a crash, hostage taking, hijacking, strike, merger, employee layoffs, discovery of a structural fault in aircraft design, air rage, bomb scare, intoxicated pilot, death onboard, food poisoning, weather-related problems, threat of bankruptcy, or service disruption. Planners assess both the probability that the crisis could occur and potential impact in the event of occurrence. They also look for advance indicators of a crisis. Simulations prepare organizations to cope in crisis situations.

*Crisis management teams* include PR personnel, and crisis management plans have communication components: parties responsible for managing the crisis (team members, chain of command, lead spokespersons, coordinator of operations, alternates, and liaisons to connect with victims’ families), required support systems (physical facilities, communication hardware and software, staff requirements, and regulatory requirements), information strategies (key messages, media for carrying messages, target publics for communication, mini-crises that could be activated by the crisis, and sensitivities/cautions in managing the crisis), response and control mechanisms (alert system for activating crisis management network, daily operational guide, system for de-activating crisis management network), evaluation of operations (pre-testing of systems and procedures, post-crisis debriefing, and modifications required), and appendices (principles and regulations governing crisis management). Contingency planning for crises requires the generation of detailed guidelines for dealing with the media. In the situation, publics affected want to be informed and to believe that the organization is taking the necessary actions to better the situation (→ Crisis Communication).

### Planning for Risk Management

Risk management involves assessing and developing strategies to manage potential risks (losses, injuries, or other negative events). Risks may range from threats to the image of the organization to computer viruses or bioterrorism. Many pertain to health or the environment. Strategies for dealing with risk can include avoidance (not purchasing a computer program that carries the risk of being infected with viruses), reduction (installing anti-virus programs), retention (accepting the loss of files when a computer virus strikes), or transfer (suing the company that sold ineffectual virus protection software).



Risk management planners identify the risks, assess the likelihood of occurrence and potential consequences, prioritize the risks based on this assessment, decide on options for managing the risks, develop appropriate responses, and seek approval of their choices. They track the risks to determine whether re-evaluation is necessary at some later point in time. Planners also develop individual plans for high priority risks (→ Risk Communication).

SEE ALSO: ► Crisis Communication ► Health Campaigns, Communication in ► Health Communication ► Organizational Crises, Communication in ► Professionalization of Public Relations ► Public Relations ► Public Relations Evaluation ► Public Relations Roles ► Quantitative Methodology ► Risk Communication ► Strategic Communication

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# Public Relations Roles

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Organizational roles are abstract maps summarizing the most salient features of the daily activities of organizational members. Katz & Kahn (1978) considered roles central to the structure of organizations; organizations can be regarded as open systems of interrelated roles. Roles are defined as “recurring actions of an individual, appropriately interrelated with the repetitive activities of others so as to yield a predictable outcome” (Katz & Kahn 1978, 189).

In → public relations, practitioners perform a wide range of activities. Despite such diverse activities, researchers have discovered systematic patterns in the roles that practitioners play. Enactment of various roles has important consequences for practitioners and the practice of public relations. Indeed, practitioner roles are among the most studied areas in public relations research.

## CONCEPTUAL AND OBSERVED ROLES

Glen Broom began studying roles of practitioners in the 1970s (Broom 1982). Drawing on the relevant literature, Broom conceptualized *four practitioner roles* that he later tested using experimental and survey designs. The “expert prescriber” was conceptualized as the organization’s acknowledged expert on public relations. Expert prescribers make recommendations to those who run the organization with the expectation that top managers in organizations will comply. The “communication facilitator” was conceptualized as a “go-between.” Practitioners enacting this role are involved in monitoring and enhancing the flow of information between publics and decision-makers inside organizations. The “problem-solving process facilitator” was conceptualized as an assistant to top management, helping senior decision-makers systematically analyze and solve public relations problems for organizations. The “communication technician” was conceptualized as a provider of technical communication services, generating various collateral materials to implement public relations programs. Practitioners enacting this role serve as *journalists-in-residence*, hired for their journalistic skills and expertise.

In a study of US practitioners, Broom found that the roles of expert prescriber, communication facilitator, and problem-solving process facilitator were highly correlated. Although conceptual distinctions could be made between these roles, practitioners enacting one of these roles were very likely to enact the other two roles as well. The communication technician role, however, was not correlated with the other three.

Broom’s finding prompted Dozier to conduct exploratory → factor analysis on three practitioner → surveys. Broom’s initial findings were replicated. This led to an *inductive reconceptualization* of practitioner roles. The “communication manager” makes communication policies and is held accountable for the success or failure of those decisions. Such practitioners facilitate the flow of information between the public and senior managers and keep top decision-makers in organizations apprised of public reactions to their

organizations. The “communication technician” role remains as originally conceptualized by Broom.

Decades later, further research distinguished between the *strategic and administrative manager roles*. The “strategic manager role” consists of conducting evaluation research, using research to segment publics, and performing environmental scanning. The “administrative manager role” involves setting goals and objectives for public relations programs, preparing departmental budgets, and managing organizational responses to public relations problems (Grunig et al. 2002).

All practitioners conduct various role activities to some degree. For some analytic purposes, practitioner roles can be operationalized in terms of predominant role. A practitioner’s predominant role is the role set that he or she enacts most frequently. Thus, practitioners who enact manager role activities with greater frequency than technician role activities are enacting the manager role predominantly.

In addition to Broom’s 24-item set of practitioner role measures, other scholars have used alternative measurement strategies. Ferguson (1979) developed a 45-item set that measured practitioner perceptions of the appropriateness of various public relations activities (→ Scales and Indices). As such, Ferguson’s measures can be viewed as the role received by the practitioner from others in the organization, as well as from other practitioners outside the organization. Berkowitz & Hristodoulakis (1999) developed a 13-item set to measure norms or ideals that apply to the roles of practitioners. Wright (1995) conducted a study of senior-level practitioners and suggested a third major role of communication executive. “Communication executives” hold the rank of corporate senior vice president, reporting directly to the chief executive officer. Toth et al. (1998) identified an “agency profile role,” which seemed to fit the duties of practitioners working for public relations firms.

## **ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF ROLES**

Prior research showed that professional experience in public relations is a positive indicator of manager role enactment (Broom 1982; Dozier & Broom 1995). Women tend to have fewer years of professional experience and fewer years of employment with their current employer. Thus, women are less likely than men to enact the manager role predominantly. Level of formal education has only a weak positive relationship with manager role enactment (Dozier & Broom 1995).

Those enacting the manager role predominantly are more likely to use programmatic research to scan the organization’s environment and evaluate the impact of public relations programs, when compared to those enacting the technician role predominantly. Manager role enactment is associated with greater participation in strategic decision-making (Dozier & Broom 1995). Such participation is important to the practice, because proactive “best practices” dictate that practitioners must counsel organizational decision-makers about the public relations implications of various strategic choices before decisions are made. Too often, decision-makers seek public relations help under crisis conditions, after poor choices have been implemented without proper counsel.

Practitioners enacting the manager role predominantly earn higher salaries than practitioners enacting the technician role predominantly. This is true, even after controlling

for the professional experience of the practitioner. Job satisfaction, however, is more elusive. Practitioners who participate in strategic decision-making report higher levels of job satisfaction. However, job satisfaction may be affected by the practitioner's desire to pursue the *creative, artistic* aspects of public relations, activities associated with the technician role (Dozier & Gottesman 1982).

### CRITICISMS OF ROLES

Creedon (1991) provided the first comprehensive critique of roles research from a feminist perspective. Toth & Grunig (1993), Hon (1995), and Toth et al. (1998) further elaborated this criticism. The feminist critique is important. In the United States, women make up over 61 percent of the public relations labor force (US Department of Labor, 2006). As a female-majority occupation, gender issues in public relations are important.

The critique includes five elements. First, argued the critics, Broom's quantitative measures of roles miss too much texture and nuance of role enactment. Second, the gender of the researcher arguably influences the kind of research questions asked and the methods used to answer those questions. Third, roles research places too much normative value on the manager role while seeming to denigrate the technical aspects of public relations (frequently enacted by women practitioners). Fourth, suggested strategies for overcoming gender discrimination (based on roles) ask women to change their behavior (e.g., enact the manager role more frequently), while leaving the discriminatory ideology of organizations intact. Fifth, the open systems framework for theorizing about practitioner roles provides normative justification for the unequal distribution of power in organizations and society.

### ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

Most prior research on the roles of practitioners focused on the actual enactment of roles by individual practitioners. Although this research has contributed much to the theory and practice of public relations, the individual level of analysis is problematic for several reasons. First, women enact the technician role predominantly with much greater frequency than men (Dozier & Broom 1995). Relative to women, men tend to enact the manager role predominantly. Second, people attracted to public relations for creative, artistic opportunities may find greater job satisfaction in the production of messages than in strategic planning. Since enactment of the manager role is linked to such desired outcomes as greater participation in strategic planning and higher salaries, enactment of the technician role predominantly seems undesirable. However, the seeming hierarchy of practitioner roles (manager over technician) is an artifact of the level of analysis; the hierarchy disappears when the analysis is shifted to the organizational level.

In the *Excellence Project* (Grunig 1992; Grunig et al. 2002), the most important predictor of excellence in public relations was the knowledge base to enact the strategic manager role and to engage in two-way communication with publics. Moreover, the knowledge base was operationalized as an attribute of the public relations department, not individual practitioners.

Through the multivariate analysis of the factors associated with overall excellence, Grunig et al. (2002) found that the organizations with the excellent public relations also

had high expertise in the technical aspects of the practice. This led Dozier & Broom (2006) to theorize that expertise to enact the strategic manager role at the department level led to successful public relations programs over time. This, in turn, empowered the public relations department to capture more resources to enhance the technical expertise of the department.

Excellent public relations departments have a mix of practitioners; some play the manager role predominantly while others play the technician role predominantly. Some seek to participate in the strategic planning of the organization while others use their creative, artistic talents to implement communication programs. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine an excellent public relations department without the full range of expertise. Less-than-excellent public relations departments do not have the requisite strategic management expertise to know what to do with the creative, artistic talent that exists within the department.

Normatively, this shift to the organizational level of analysis suggests dual career tracks for both creative, artistic practitioners and for strategic planners. Both types of roles should be rewarded, because both contribute to the excellence of the public relations department.

SEE ALSO: ► Factor Analysis ► Professionalization of Public Relations ► Public Relations ► Public Relations Planning ► Scales and Indices ► Stakeholder Theory ► Strategic Communication ► Survey

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# Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy

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Public service broadcasting (PSB) is funded by the public, and regulated to ensure that it serves the → public interest. Public service broadcasters (PSBs) should be distinguished from state broadcasters, which function mainly to serve the interests of the government, and purely commercial broadcasters, which respond primarily to individual consumer choices rather than to any notion of the broader public interest. PSBs are also distinct from nonprofit local “community broadcasters,” which are public-oriented and partly grant-funded, in that PSBs are generally national in scope (→ Community Media).

Almost all countries have some form of national public service as part of their broadcasting ecology, but the size, type, and form of public service broadcasting intervention varies. In Japan and Britain, for example, PSB is funded by a universal license fee and accounts for a significant proportion of all media viewing and listening. In other countries, for example the USA, PSBs rely on less secure forms of funding, such as donations, and only a small fraction of all media use is of PSB content.

## THE AIMS AND BASIC STRUCTURES OF PSB

### Dimensions in PSB’s Societal Functions

The legal basis of the well-established public broadcasting system in Germany can serve as an example for the variety of functions that are expected from the broadcasters. According to German constitutional law scholar Bernd Holznapel, the functional remit of public broadcasters covers eight basic dimensions:

- *Information remit*: the PSB has a duty to convey objective information as a basis for the free forming of opinions. Coverage, therefore, has to be comprehensive, truthful and factual [→ Objectivity in Reporting; Neutrality].

- *Guiding role*: as a source of independent and unbiased information, PSB provides reliable, credible reference points and, consequently, guidance for a free forming of opinion.
- *Role of forum*: PSB has to ensure that all relevant opinions on a particular subject receive a hearing. They have to offer a forum for public discussion in which the relevant social groups can participate [→ Political Discourse].
- *Integration role*: PSB should aim for mutual understanding and, thus, foster social cohesion.
- *Benchmark*: PSB has the obligation to provide guiding, high-quality, and innovative programming. In this way they set standards [→ Quality of the News; Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in].
- *Cultural mission*: PSB programming has to reflect Germany's cultural diversity and the events taking place in all the regions of the country [→ Plurality].
- *Mission to produce*: appropriate fulfilment of the respective obligations cannot be guaranteed by the mere acquisition of foreign productions. Because of that, PSB has a mission to produce independently and creatively.
- *Innovative role*: PSB is encouraged to take an innovative lead in testing and using new technology and new services in the broadcasting sector. [→ Technology and Communication]. (Holznagel 2000, 2)

In order to achieve these goals, PSBs are generally obliged to ensure that their services are universally available, and that they have sufficient independence and funding. Forms of intervention that support public service broadcasting include finance, charters, and governance.

### Financing of PSB

NHK in Japan (→ Japan: Media System), the → BBC in the UK, SVT in Sweden (→ Scandinavian States: Media Systems) and ZDF in Germany (→ Germany: Media System) are all examples of public service broadcasters funded by a *universal license fee* on receiver sets. The size of the license fee varies according to local conditions, but in larger markets it can be around \$200 per year per television household. In many countries (France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, and Portugal, for example) public broadcasters receive both direct subsidies and advertising revenue.

Public service broadcasters also receive some forms of grant in direct aid from the government (through *taxation, i.e., direct public subsidies*); and smaller countries (such as Portugal and Ireland) are forced to rely more on subsidy through taxation (→ Portugal: Media System). While the US PSB service receives most of its funding from donations, it also receives a significant proportion through government grants.

*Indirect public subsidies* come mostly in the form of non-market prices for use of the "airwaves" or spectrum frequencies. Most publicly funded broadcasters receive free or cheap spectrum. This means that they do not pay the same charges as a mobile telephony company would pay for the exclusive use of certain frequencies. The value of this indirect subsidy rises rapidly with demand for spectrum, which is in turn driven by innovation, as new services are provided that could use spectrum currently used for television. Some stations receive *voluntary public funding through donations*. For instance, NHK's license

fee is technically voluntary, i.e., there is no penalty for non-payment, and people have the right to prevent license collectors entering the home, though there are strong social pressures to pay. The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) in the US is funded mainly by completely voluntary donations from viewers and listeners.

Some broadcasting systems impose *public service obligations* (such as obligations to provide → news, and educational (→ Instructional Television), cultural, or national programming) on some commercial broadcasters, as a condition of the license to broadcast. In the United Kingdom, the launch of commercial broadcasters alongside the BBC in the 1950s and 1960s was permitted only on the condition that these companies adhered to a strong public service remit. If broadcasters fail to adhere to public service requirements they may lose their licenses. A crucial obligation placed on public service broadcasters is the obligation to present news and current affairs fairly or “impartially.”

### Founding Statements and Charters

Founding statements and charters state the purposes and aims of the corporation. PSBs’ overarching aims and principles tend to be set out either in a license or in a separate founding statement. The BBC, which provides a model for many PSBs around the world, is governed by a *Royal Charter*, which has been renewed and updated every decade or so since the first charter was signed by King George in 1926. The charter sets out the aims of the corporation. For the first years of the corporation they were set out broadly as provision of broadcasting services to “entertain, inform and educate.” The Royal Charter approved by the UK government in 2006 changes the general objectives of the corporation and sets out a framework for regulating the provision of nonbroadcasting (such as Internet) services. The public purposes of the BBC for 2007 onwards are as follows: (1) sustaining citizenship and civil society; (2) promoting education and learning; (3) stimulating creativity and cultural excellence; (4) representing the UK, its nations, regions, and communities; (5) bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK; (6) in promoting its other purposes, helping to deliver to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services and, in addition, taking a leading role in the switchover to digital television (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of).

### Accountability and Governance

The regulation, accountability, and governance structures of PSBs attempt to insure that the PSB organization is directly accountable to the public it serves, rather than the government, shareholders, or advertisers. The Netherlands’ system of public service broadcasting differs from others, in that public broadcasting channels provide space for programming that is provided by broadcasting associations that represent societal interest groups (→ Netherlands: Media System). Other broadcasters have regional public accountability mechanisms – such as the regional councils in the BBC, or the regulatory authorities in Germany at *Länder* level that exist to monitor and regulate PSB activity.



Some countries, such as Germany, have a separate system for the *financial accountability* of public service broadcasters. The Commission on Broadcasting Finance (known as the KEF) has since 1975 had responsibility for auditing the accounts of the public broadcasters and insuring that license fees are wisely spent. The BBC has traditionally been a self-regulating organization, with the BBC governors (renamed the BBC Trust in 2006) acting as a body that holds the Corporation to account for content and also financial matters. The BBC reports annually to Parliament, but Parliament has only weak, symbolic sanctions over the BBC. This arrangement has been criticized as providing only weak accountability and an insufficient guarantee of separation of regulatory and management functions, but it has the advantage of underlining the independence of the BBC.

The system of PSB has been explicitly recognized in *international legal instruments* such as the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR; → European Court of Human Rights). ECHR article 10 explicitly permits states to license broadcasting services. However, the freedom of expression provisions in the ECHR were used in the case of *Tele 1 v. Austria* to establish that national regulators could not restrict terrestrial broadcasters to the national PSBs through refusing to license other broadcasters. There remain some sources of tension between the World Trade Organization attempt to liberalize trade in services (the General Agreement on Trade in Services) and the possible restrictions on free trade between states due to PSBs. Similarly, regional free trade arrangements including the European Union have provided a basis for criticism of PSBs as a form of “state aid” and a barrier to free trade and investment.

### PSB IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Public service broadcasting has since its inception been based on an attempt to find an alternative to the commercial organization of communications services. The BBC, set up in the 1920s as a consortium of receiver makers, was taken into public ownership in 1926, and a system of noncommercial, publicly funded broadcasting was set up. Within the UK, this was seen by successive UK committees of inquiry as necessary so that the “chaos” of commercial broadcasting in the US was not replicated in the UK. The BBC model has since been widely exported, and hybrid commercial–public service models have evolved in most countries.

For example, in both Japan and Germany in the postwar period a broadcasting system was set up that included a large national public service element. In the case of Germany this broadcaster had many checks and balances to prevent the emergence of a monolithic → propaganda instrument. In the former Soviet bloc, there has been a less successful attempt to develop a mixed ecology of commercial and public service media. The PSBs that have been introduced have struggled to achieve audience share and budget sustainability. In developing countries the principal challenges for PSBs have been financial sustainability and political independence, but there is strong support for PSBs where they are necessary for the protection of minority languages.

Most countries’ PSBs operate in a tense relationship with governments. On one hand they must demonstrate that they still merit direct and indirect subsidies, and on the other they can only fulfill their democratic mission by engaging in robust criticism of the government. The use of the BBC model in countries with authoritarian tendencies has been criticized, as it permits too many possibilities for state interference.

## ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATIONS OF PSB

Public service broadcasting has been justified with reference to the following main claims about the economic characteristics of broadcasting. First, *broadcasting is a public good*. Public goods, like for example air, or the protection by the military, are goods that are nonrival (my consumption does not diminish yours) and nonexcludable (it is difficult in any case to prevent you consuming them). This has led some to claim that the appropriate level of PSB will not be provided by the market, and that public provision may be the most efficient form of provision.

Second, *broadcasting is a merit good that provides positive externalities*. Education, insurance, and public broadcasting tend to be underprovided by a market because consumers do not choose to consume the amount that serves optimum welfare. In addition, like education, consumption by one individual will have positive benefits in terms of the economic, educational, and democratic health of society as a whole. The BBC argues that broadcasting delivers “public value” that would not be delivered by commercial broadcasting, such as improved democratic, educational, and social cohesion benefits. The contribution of the BBC is measurable through willingness-to-pay → surveys that demonstrate that the average sum that citizens would be willing to pay for a BBC subscription (if this were the only way of getting BBC services) is in excess of the sums currently paid in license fees, thus demonstrating that consumers enjoy a surplus of value. Surveys commissioned by the BBC also show that the amount individuals would be prepared to pay in tax to keep the BBC operating “for the good of society” is also in excess of the current level of the license fee, and in excess of the consumer surplus value.

Third, *spectrum is a scarce resource* and as a result there are a severely limited number of broadcasters. Because choice is limited and broadcasting is a particularly influential and invasive medium, markets will fail and broadcasters must be open and accountable directly to the public and Parliament rather than to shareholders, in order to insure that they provide balanced, plural, and representative forms of content (→ Balance). This rationale is seriously challenged when new platforms such as satellite and broadband show that traditional analog spectrum licenses are no longer a necessary condition of accessing the market.

## CHALLENGES TO PUBLIC BROADCASTING

*Political pressure on broadcaster independence* is the major and permanent pressure on public service broadcasters. The years 2004–5 saw major conflicts regarding the relationship between PSBs and governments in Spain (→ Spain: Media System), Italy (→ Italy: Media System), and the UK. In Spain and the UK the conflicts centered on news coverage of terrorism and security (→ Mediated Terrorism). There are numerous examples in history of disputes between governments and PSBs regarding the appropriate coverage of controversial issues, and governments generally find it hard to resist the temptation to interfere, by attempting to influence high level appointments and editorial policy (→ Media Policy).

The role of governments in relation to broadcasters is a problematic one, and all public broadcasters face a continuing struggle for independence: from societal interests and

from governmental influence and control. All of these regulatory arrangements come under pressure from time to time, particularly in relation to sensitive issues such as national security. Key areas of tension between governments and PSBs concern the content of news programming, and the appointment of key figures to management, journalistic, and governance positions within the PSB. In 2004, the Spanish PSB allegedly came under direct pressure from the prime minister to report terrorist bombings. In Italy, PSB independence and impartiality has traditionally been weak. It is generally accepted that there tends to be a division of the main RAI channels between major political parties, and that this informal system has survived successive governments.

*Audience decline and fragmentation* is a second challenge to PSB. With increasing channel choice and consumer empowerment comes a decline in audience for PSB channels and genres. In the European Broadcasting Union countries, the PSBs' audience shares declined from 39 percent in 1995 to 35.5 percent in 2003 (Ward 2006). For publicly funded broadcasters, declining audiences undermine the legitimacy of charging universal license fees. For advertising funded PBSs, audience loss highlights the increasing costs of providing public service programming. PSBs respond with an attempt to provide popular programming, and leave themselves open to the corresponding criticisms of "dumbing down" or lack of distinctiveness. This could be described as a "downward spiral of PSBs." Fragmentation also leads to pressure for change in the nature of PSB services. For example, some PSBs and their critics argue that the PSB should not have to observe the same high standards – for example of impartiality – if its monopoly position is diminished (→ Audience Segmentation).

Finally, PSBs are increasingly attempting to *launch new services* such as → Internet, satellite, mobile, and high-definition platforms (→ Mobility, Technology for). The extent to which PSBs are able to enter these new markets depends on the detail of their regulatory arrangements. Some (for example in Germany and Japan) are severely curtailed in their ability to launch new services, while others, for example the BBC, have been able to launch a large array of online and other services. New platforms such as reception on PCs and mobile phones undermine the idea of charging a license fee on TV receivers as a way of paying for PSB services. If significant numbers of users access PSB services through platforms other than TV sets, new payment mechanisms may have to be found.

Views on the current and future development of PSBs range from the pessimistic view that it will be impossible to maintain public provision of distinct PSB material to more optimistic views that see the role of PSBs expanding into new on-demand and interactive services. Some have called for a more "decentralized" or "distributed" model of public service broadcasting. This has variously been described as an "arts council of the airwaves," distributing funding for public service content by competitive tender, and as a "public service publisher" (Ofcom 2004) that would commission and distribute content of a public service nature for free.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience Segmentation ► Balance ► BBC ► Community Media ► European Court of Human Rights ► Germany: Media System ► Instructional Television ► Internet ► Italy: Media System ► Japan: Media System ► Media Policy ► Mediated Terrorism ► Mobility, Technology for ► Netherlands: Media System ► Neutrality

► News ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Plurality ► Political Discourse ► Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ► Portugal: Media System ► Propaganda ► Public Interest ► Quality of the News ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Scandinavian States: Media Systems ► Spain: Media System ► Survey ► Technology and Communication ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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## **Public Sphere**

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The public sphere is an indispensable element of a democratic society and the institutional core of democratic decision-making. Every democratic political order is essentially based on the idea that citizens participate in collectively binding decisions, articulate their interests and opinions openly, listen and evaluate the opinions and arguments of others, and, on that basis, make up their minds. The public sphere establishes an arena of discussion on public affairs and guarantees that all these processes are open to the public.

In everyday usage, the term “public sphere” is associated with “the public”, i.e. the people as a whole or a group of people having common interests (e.g., “the reading public”). Scientific definitions of the concept vary across different theoretical schools of thought (→ Public). Mostly the term refers to the institutionalization of a realm of social life for the exchange of information and opinions. The public sphere in the narrower sense is the act of free citizens gathering together for debate in order to achieve a rational regulation of public affairs. Another facet of the concept denotes the structures and contents of the public political debate itself. In a third dimension of the meaning, the term refers to the public spaces in which public communication regularly takes place:

streets and squares, formal and informal gathering places, publicly meeting institutions of the political system, and the arena of the mass media.

### HABERMAS AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Proponents of *critical theory* working at the Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt had a decisive influence on the development of the concept of the public sphere. The most famous work of the Frankfurt School, *Dialectic of enlightenment* by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (1972), written in the early 1940s while in American exile, focuses on the mass production and consumption of cultural goods as well as their spread via the media. The authors deny any enlightening impact of the predominant media practice in the United States of the 1940s and describe it instead as a form of mass deception. This characteristic of the → “culture industries” necessarily accompanies the development from market capitalism to state and monopoly capitalism. Applied to the concept of the public sphere, the *culture industry thesis* implies three thoughts. The main realm for the exchange of opinions in modern society is the mass media arena. Its commercial basis leads to the standardization and trivialization of all cultural products. Through this, public communication becomes a commodity; its exchange value is more important than its utility value (→ Political Economy of the Media; Commodification of the Media).

Jürgen Habermas, the most prominent representative of the “second generation” of the Frankfurt School, in his seminal work on *The structural transformation of the public sphere* (1989) contrasts the bourgeois public sphere of the liberal democracies of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe with the debased public sphere of late capitalism (→ Habermas, Jürgen). Habermas follows the traditional orientation of critical theory, which is to measure society not according to what it is but according to what it could be. The model of the bourgeois public sphere serves as a normative backdrop against which the transformation and symptoms of decline in the late capitalist welfare state can be shown all the more clearly. Habermas, like Horkheimer and Adorno before him, is less concerned with the sociology of the public sphere than with a comprehensive analysis of society using the public sphere as an analytical “category.”

Habermas’s understanding of the public sphere takes up Enlightenment philosophy ideas on free deliberation and its inherent potential for rational discussion, debate, and consensus. He points to historical evidence of this in the social developments of Great Britain, France, and Germany after 1680, when the rapidly developing, property-owning, educated bourgeoisie succeeded, for the first time in European history, in openly expressing its demands and developing → *public opinion* as an instrument of critique and of control of state power. The preconditions for this were found in the concrete historical situation at the beginning of the eighteenth century, when the feudal authorities (church, princes, and nobility) disintegrated. As an accompanying development, bourgeois society as well as the new sphere of public authority came into being with national and territorial states. The public sphere as a mediator filled the space between bourgeois society, now a private realm, and the public authority of the state. Places for reasoning and meaningful argument were, in addition to newspapers and journals, a variety of public spaces like pubs, coffee houses, table societies, political clubs, and literary salons, where a self-confident bourgeoisie gathered to contribute everyday knowledge and life-world experience to the

discussion of public affairs (→ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere; Public Meetings). Here it was not simply private, partial interests that were moved up against the state, but rather rational critical debate, out of which a discourse-mediated common will emerged.

Precisely because the basis of the public sphere lies in the autonomy of the human life-world from the state, the social structural transformation of the public sphere started, according to Habermas, at the moment when the strict separation between private life and public authority began to erode. With the development of modern welfare states in the late nineteenth century, state authority and civil society became increasingly interwoven. For one, powerful interest groups are increasingly successful in their attempts to influence state decision-making in their favor. For another, the state intervenes ever more deeply in the private realm and in people's economic activities. With the expansion of the social basis of public debates beyond the bounds of the classical educated bourgeoisie, the forms of participation in the public sphere change: the tendency toward active → discourse is eclipsed by passive consumption of public communications. It is no longer general interests and the public good that determine the form and contents of discursive argumentation in the public sphere, but instead unequal partial interests.

The structural transformation brings with it a functional change of the public sphere. With the emergence of the *mediated* public sphere as the central forum of modern societies, the bilateral character and discursiveness that mark the ideal of deliberative assembly lose importance. The public sphere that is now manufactured by the mass media relies on organized contributors. It therefore stands open mainly to powerful and resource-strong actors in the state and economy. The citizens themselves are forced back, as in absolutist states, into the role of spectators ("re-feudalization").

### BEYOND HABERMAS

Several authors have taken Habermas's conception as a point of departure for their own theoretical and empirical research on the public sphere. Early on, sociologist Oskar Negt and filmmaker Alexander Kluge (1993) criticized Habermas's concept from a neo-Marxist perspective. They put forward, as opposed to rational discourse, an alternative understanding of the public sphere as a form of organization of collective social experience. In contrast to Habermas's ideal of the bourgeois public sphere, they articulate the notion of an oppositional, proletarian public sphere. In view of the hegemony of the dominant ideology within the bourgeois public sphere, Negt and Kluge seek the conditions of emancipation and self-enlightenment of the proletariat in the counter-public sphere ("counter publicity").

Niklas Luhmann, a longstanding opponent of Habermas within German sociology, thoroughly criticized Habermas's concept of the public sphere, arguing that consensus is not the result but a prerequisite of communication. In order to be able to communicate successfully at all, one must have issues at one's disposal that are accepted by all participants. In the case of political communication, public opinion as "the issues structure of political communication" indicates which issues can be brought forward in the political process with an expectation of being heard. For decision-making, the multitude of opinions is then reduced by means of the decision rules of the political system. Power, and not rationality, is what is decisive here (Luhmann 1970, 1986).

US authors criticizing Habermas's notion of the public sphere refer mainly to the historical inaccuracy and the over-stylized picture of the bourgeois public sphere. It is to that degree questionable whether rational-critical argumentation ever played as powerful a role as Habermas describes. Critics also address the problem of the exclusionary character of the bourgeois public sphere, excluding the working class as well as women. Beyond that, Habermas is found to underestimate the role of science and religion in the bourgeois public sphere in favor of literature. Regarding the media, Habermas is criticized for not recognizing → tabloidization tendencies as early as the seventeenth century and, on the other hand, for drawing an overly one-sided picture of entertainment-oriented television consumers in modern times. Particularly, communication scholars reproach Habermas for having an inadequate understanding of the functions of the modern mass media. With reference to media forms that interlace interpersonal and mass communication, they point out that discourse does not necessarily require direct communication among people who are all present at any one place. They suggest that the public sphere of modern societies should be conceived not as a uniform communication space but instead as a network of more or less closely connected subsidiary public spheres or clusters of denser communication (Calhoun 1992; Roberts & Crossley 2004).

Based on the idea that in modern societies the mass media builds the central arena of public spheres, contemporary empirical work focuses on the deliberative quality of media discourses (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication). Drawing on normative criteria from the Habermasian model of the public sphere, such as the inclusiveness of discourse, the reciprocity of the participants, the degree of mutual respect, and the level of reflexivity, several studies try to measure the quality of media coverage on controversial policy issues. For example, Gerhards (1997) investigates whether the abortion discourse as reflected in German media meets the demands of Habermas's conception. According to his findings, the media discourse is conducted mainly in the exclusive circle of the political elites, and the participants in the discourse speak more *about* each other than *with* each other. An international comparative study on the same topic shows that public discourse in the United States comes closer to the participatory model of democracy, because here more actors and arguments of civil society are included, while the elite-centered marketplace of ideas and arguments in the German case accords with the model of liberal democracy (Ferree et al. 2002). In both countries the media discourses do not meet the high normative standards of a rational-critical public sphere.

### **PUBLIC SPHERE REVISITED**

Since the 1980s, cognizant of the criticisms and further developing his ideas, Habermas (1985, 1996) has qualified his originally pessimistic view of the potentials of the democratic public sphere. He no longer sees the public sphere as a category typical of an epoch that is tied to historically unique conditions, but rather bases a hope for emancipation and democratization on the universal capacity of human communication for reason and mutual understanding, which can unfold in historically contingent forms of the public sphere. He changes his fictive, ideal-type understanding of the public sphere to a conception of the public sphere "as intermediary system of communication between formally organized and informal face-to-face deliberations in arenas at both the top and

the bottom of a political system” (Habermas 2006, 415). The task of the media is to make public and to confront selected issues, arguments, and opinions of the political elites and actors in civil society. Even though mediated communication lacks the defining features of deliberation, it can still function as an arena for perception, identification, and definition of problems related to society as a whole. It thus delivers necessary input for rational decision-making in the institutionalized discourses of the political system (→ Political Discourse). In the working together of everyday talk, mediated public communication, and institutionalized forms of deliberation in the center of the political system, well-grounded opinions on social problems can thus be developed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Coffee Houses as Public Sphere ▶ Commodification of the Media  
 ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Deliberativeness  
 in Political Communication ▶ Discourse ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Media History  
 ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public ▶ Public Meetings  
 ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of ▶ Tabloidization

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# Public Sphere, Fragmentation of

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The public sphere is defined as a network of all the communicative spaces within which public affairs are debated and a public opinion is formed (→ Public Sphere; Public Opinion). Such an infrastructure of political communication is crucial for democratic self-government and the social integration of modern society. Both functions seem to be threatened if the public sphere decays into a multitude of arenas that are just loosely connected (if at all) and do not form a coherent space for deliberation (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication; Political Discourse).

From a sociological point of view the fragmentation (i.e., stratification) of the public sphere seems to be the result either of social inequality (Fraser 1992) or of individualization in the postmodern age (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim 2002). In contrast, communication scholars refer to the media dominance over public communication of current societies. In this view the fragmentation of the mediated public sphere can then be described in at least three distinct dimensions: fragmentation of media channels, fragmentation of content, and fragmentation of audiences (see also Dahlgren 2005).

The enormous growth and the differentiation of the national media systems are focused on in the first dimension. Instead of having only a few radio stations and print media of national importance, there is now a multitude of communication channels, which are all competing with each other. On the one hand, this leads to an extended social range and inclusiveness of the media arena within the public sphere. On the other hand, it also leads to an ongoing decay of this arena into a multitude of media branches and niches that serve a multiplicity of special interests. The → Internet has a special share in the growth of the mediated public sphere. Some authors emphasize that the global infrastructure of the Internet will enable the expansion of the public sphere across national boundaries (Roberts & Crossley 2004). However, the development of a possible global public debate depends on who actually uses the Internet for what reasons and purposes (Sparks 2001). From a democratic point of view the Internet expands the possibilities of political groups and interests that have, up to now, been restrained by the high access barriers of the mainstream media. Thus, the Internet enables the development of new counter-publics and subsidiary publics. However, this could also lead to a locking out of social groups into secluded “cyber ghettos” (Dahlgren 2001).

The vast growth of the media sector, which is formative for the development of the media systems in all western societies, has effectively heightened the media’s capacity in addressing and generating media content. In order to fill the multitude of channels with content, more and more areas of human life have to be made a topic of media communication, including areas that are traditionally reserved for personal and private experiences. Fragmentation of media channels thus tends to result in a diversification of content. The competition among more and more media products, combined with limited public attention and the ever-growing market orientation of media products, leads to an overabundance of entertaining media content (→ Competition in Media Systems;

Diversification of Media Markets; Markets of the Media). The majority of information available in today's media does not cater to public affairs deliberation but rather to private interests and the need for amusement. This also applies to the sphere of the Internet, where public debate is a marginalized phenomenon. The playing down of political communication is a quite paradoxical result of the media-driven expansion of the public sphere (McKee 2005).

Developments of media technology and content increasingly allow a more flexible and individualized media usage. This leads to a splitting up of the recipients' attention and a segmentation of media audiences (→ Audience Segmentation). With a growing range of media products and individualized forms of usage, the attention devoted to each single media product inevitably must shrink. Accordingly, political content is perceived in increasingly smaller portions. Moreover, the size of the media audiences that are absorbing identical content is declining, as special interest formats and specialized channels must focus on small target groups in order to be commercially successful. This means that the probability of all members of a society perceiving all relevant topics and problems is diminishing. Hence, if there are no topics of common importance, the probability that a mediated public sphere will resonate in daily interpersonal communication declines.

Most authors, including → Jürgen Habermas, agree that a unitary public sphere is an idealization, for the public discourse has always been divided into a variety of class- and group-specific communication circles. Therefore the seeming fragmentation of the public sphere cannot be blamed on the media development alone. The crucial question, then, is whether or not the segmentation of the public sphere has to be regarded as a challenge to democracy. The optimistic – mostly postmodernist – view argues that special interest media and mainstream media are never hermetically secluded from each other. Exchanges between different media can be found on the level of the producers and on the level of the users. We may therefore expect that people's demands and issue positions diffuse from sub-publics to the national political → public and result in policy outcomes. In this perspective, the fragmentation of channels, contents, and user groups contributes to desirable democratic plurality (Dahlgren 2005). Seen from a pessimistic point of view, the very same fragmentation is worrying, as it is expected to widen gaps of issue knowledge and orientations within the population that cannot be closed with non-medial forms of communication. As a consequence, the mass media would lose its key function of connecting publics, and the public sphere would forfeit its power of social integration (Downey & Fenton 2003). Yet empirical evidence is still lacking for both the optimistic and the pessimistic view. More research is needed, especially on the communicative coupling between mediated and non-mediated arenas of the public sphere.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Diversification of Media Markets ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Internet ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Public ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Sphere

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## Publics: Situational Theory

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During the past 40-odd years, James E. Grunig's situational theory of communication behavior has been developed, changed, empirically tested, and adjusted through new research, with the purpose of defining the communication process and the behavior that results from it. Situational theory seeks to explain why people communicate and when it is most likely that they communicate. The theory also uses communicational behavior to partition the general → public into smaller segments which are most likely to communicate about certain issues. Situational theory also predicts behavioral effects of communication (→ Media Effects), as well as attitudes that are most commonly connected to specific types of communication and types of public for which these consequences are most likely. Finally, the theory describes the process in which a certain, previously unconnected, group of people develops into an activist group that, with its → public opinion, influences the decisions of a certain organization (Grunig 1997).

In the course of its long development, the situational theory of publics has become a significant part of public relations theory and approaches to → communication management (Grunig & Repper 1992), as well as an integral part of the public relations two-way symmetrical model (Grunig 1992).

In its current form, situational theory offers guidelines for segmenting the population into smaller groups (→ Audience Segmentation; Segmentation of the Advertising Audience) relevant for public relations programs. In that sense the theory is comparable with marketing segmentation theories (→ Marketing). Marketing theories offer specific criteria for choosing a segmentation concept; segments have to be mutually exclusive, measurable, reachable, significant for the mission of an organization, and big enough.

Most importantly, though, marketing segments have to show a “differential reaction” to various marketing strategies (Kotler & Andreasen 1987, 124). Situational theory of publics is also used for predicting differential responses, those important for the area of public relations. In addition, it can be used for predicting the effects that communication has on → cognitions, → attitudes, and behavior, as well as forecasting the likelihood of collectively pressurizing an organization (Grunig 1982).

## DEVELOPMENT AND BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

The development of the theory began with the assumption of John Dewey and Herbert Blumer (Grunig 1997) that the formation of a public depends mostly on certain problems a group of people share, with the presumption that the consequences of these problems are similar for that group. Blumer (according to Grunig & Hunt 1984) separated the concept of publics from the concept of masses, defining masses as a heterogeneous group of people, unlike the public, which he considered homogeneous. Individuals form a mass not because they share a mutual characteristic but simply because they are all included in the same mass media or live in the same city. On the other hand, members of a public share a common problem and it is this problem that makes them a homogeneous group. A public is formed around issues that influence its members in a similar way. Dewey (according to Grunig 1997) also recognized the key role that publics have in American democracy; once publics recognize a certain problem, stakeholder groups are formed (→ Stakeholder Theory). The main objective of these stakeholder groups is to pressurize the government, thus indirectly controlling organizations.

Members of a public function as a unique system process the same information, and demonstrate similar behavior; that is to say that they represent a structured system in which members discover the same problem and react to it in a similar manner. On the other hand, masses do not behave unanimously (or do not behave at all; they are often inactive). Situational theory builds on the classic concept of publics, formalizing the concept and offering a way of identifying and measuring publics and public opinion (Price 1992).

## VARIABLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

In its current form, situational theory comprises two dependent variables (active and passive communication behavior) and three independent variables (problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement). Recent research conducted on the model added cognitive and behavioral effects as well as attitudes to the list of dependent variables (Grunig & Childers 1988). The two dependent variables of active and passive communication behavior are also called → information processing and → information seeking.

Grunig based the theory on theories of decision-making in economics and psychology. His first publication of the situational theory was in a monograph on the relationship between communication and economic decision-making, published in 1968 (according to Grunig 1997). The first two variables that the theory is based on were *information seeking* and *problem recognition*; this categorized the theory as a situational theory. Specifically, the independent variable of problem recognition is not a characteristic people transfer from one situation to another, but a person’s perception that a certain

situation represents or conveys a problem. The next independent variable, *constraint recognition*, was added to the model in research conducted in 1969 and 1971. Grunig discovered that people do not have a need to communicate in situations where certain constraints enable them to make a decision. In 1976, Grunig also added the concept of *involvement* (Grunig 1982), and later that year the concept of a *referent criterion* (a solution transferred from past situations to new ones). The theory was later redefined more than once, but apart from the referent criterion, all dependent and independent variables remained in place.

Independent variables are situational in that they describe perceptions people have about certain situations, especially situations that are problematic or lead to conflict. Situational theory allows a logical connection between these concepts and the classic theorists' idea that problems and situations create publics that change in time. Independent variables can therefore be defined as problem recognition (people realize that something has to be done and stop to think about it); constraint recognition (people perceive that there are limitations that restrain their ability to act); and level of involvement (the level to which people connect to a certain situation; Grunig 1997).

The theory predicts that a high level of problem recognition and a low level of constraint recognition increase both information seeking and information processing (Grunig & Stamm 1979). The level of involvement increases information seeking, but has a lesser influence on information processing. In other words, people rarely seek information on problems that do not concern them, but frequently accidentally process information in low-involvement situations. Since people are more active in their information seeking than in information processing, information seeking and variables that precede it are more likely to produce communication effects than information processing. People who communicate actively develop cognitions that are more organized, have attitudes about the situation more often, and are more frequently involved in behaviors connected to the situation (Grunig 1982; Grunig & Ipes 1983).

Grunig and Disborow (1977) and Grunig (1982, 1983) combined the four variables in order to segment publics in various situations. In the studies mentioned they calculated conditional probabilities in order to predict the possibility of each of the publics being involved in one of two communication behaviors. These probabilities could then be used to plan communication programs for each public. Grunig also estimated probabilities of various communication effects for various combinations of variables. Effects included message retention ( $\rightarrow$  Memory, Message), cognitions and attitudes ( $\rightarrow$  Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on), and certain behaviors. For example, the likelihood that the most active public (high problem recognition and high involvement, low constraint recognition and existence of a referent criterion) will be involved in passive communication behavior was 99 percent, in comparison with the least active public, for whom this likelihood was 63 percent. As for active communication behavior, the likelihood of involvement for the most active public was 77 percent, while for the least active public it was only 20 percent. The most active public had a 99 percent likelihood of having a cognition (for the least active public it was 65 percent), and the possibility of holding an attitude was 74 percent for the most active public and 52 percent for the least active public.

All of the probabilities mentioned help define the implications that situational theory has on forming public relations programs (Grunig & Hunt 1984). If an organization

communicates with a public with little chance of information seeking and information processing, it is not necessary to invest time and money in an attempt to send a message. In this type of public, the message will rarely be noticed and, therefore, it will rarely be efficient. The only possibility for communicating with this type of public (if for any reason it is important to the organization) is in communication processing, while communication seeking is very unlikely. If an organization is communicating with a public that is ready to process information, but is not seeking it, the communication strategy must be based on style and creativeness in order to attract the attention of this group. If the communication is aimed at an active public that is likely to actively seek information, it is important to offer them extensive and high-quality arguments in order to discourage them from seeking elsewhere.

### EMPIRICAL TESTS OF THE THEORY

In the early days of the theory, the author predicted that each situation will create a unique profile of publics, specific to that situation only. Empirical research of this supposition included, among other things, public affairs, social responsibility, consumer, and employee issues (Grunig 1997; → Public Affairs; Corporate Social Responsibility). However, canonical variants that were the result of the research mentioned earlier pointed to the possibility that in various situations there are four consistent types of public; the *all-issue public* (a public active on all issues); the *apathetic public* (a public not interested in any issue); the *single-issue public* (a public that is active on one issue or a group of connected issues that concern only a very small segment of the population); and the *hot-issue public* (a public active on only one issue that involves almost everyone in a population and is followed with a high media coverage).

Empirical tests of situational theory consistently point to the conclusion that active publics are more likely to show active behavior and are more likely to have cognitions, attitudes, and behavior. However, in its current form, situational theory presupposes the existence of cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors but not their content or valence (Grunig & Childers 1988). People construct their own cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors, in other words, they actively control their own thoughts and behaviors. According to the theory, then, all of the communication efforts aimed at communicating with publics that are not likely to succeed are misguided. Communication campaigns are often based on the idea of changing the level of problem recognition, constraint recognition, and the level of involvement in an audience, the final goal being that of redirecting their behavior in such a way that suits the organization. However, merely exposing an audience to the media cannot lead to the desired effects, since people cannot be influenced by messages they do not seek or process.

Although numerous empirical tests confirmed most of the basic assumptions of the theory, certain elements are still not completely without question. Situational theory of publics in its current form says nothing about the valence of attitudes. Research shows that cognitions and attitudes rarely precede communication behavior; and that people do not seek and process information in order to confirm their existing attitudes but instead they seek information that is of relevance to them (Grunig 1997). Even though attitudes, cognitions, and behavior (according to the situational theory) are a result of

communication behavior and not its source, even the author of the theory agrees that including these variables in the theory is necessary.

The question that still remains unanswered by the theory is: can messages create publics? The question of creating publics through the media and media messages is based on another question, namely: how are behavior and communication messages linked? According to situational theory the answer is in creating publics in various ways (for example through → interpersonal communication), but not in using mass media. Only in situations in which individuals form publics will those publics seek and process information on a certain issue.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication Management ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Excellence Theory in Public Relations ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Public ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Segmentation of the Advertising Audience ▶ Stakeholder Theory

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# Qualitative Methodology

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Qualitative methodology includes a variety and diversity of methods, procedures, and research designs. All kinds of qualitative methods have in common that their main research aim is a deeper understanding of the research object. Therefore, they are nonstandardized tools that can be adapted flexibly to every kind of research object, which can better be called research subjects because qualitative methods do not measure them objectively but interact with them, insofar as method is not a neutral tool in order to gain knowledge about researched subjects but is part of the social reality investigated.

## AIMS OF QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

Qualitative methods try to discover new hypotheses rather than testing hypotheses deductively derived from known theories; they explore new phenomena and describe them intensively (“thick description”) and from different perspectives (→ Triangulation). This is essential for the most prominent approaches in qualitative methodology, such as → grounded theory, ethnography (→ Ethnography of Communication), → case studies, social → hermeneutics or → phenomenology, feminist methodology (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), or action research (→ Participatory Action Research). They all have several research aims in common.

First and basically, qualitative methodology is *directed at the understanding of the social world* that qualitative researchers explore and investigate (→ Verstehen vs Erklären). Social research, therefore, tries to reconstruct the social constructions of people’s cognitions, emotions, communications, or actions. Understanding and meaning cannot be taken for granted but need a great effort to recover within the research process by way of intensive interaction between researcher and the people researched (or the texts researched; → Text and Intertextuality). Epistemologically, meaning is itself not a given object but must be “negotiated” in social interaction (→ Language and Social Interaction). Understanding can be characterized as the process of exploring and (re)constructing meaning.

Second, every piece of scientific knowledge and the process of gaining it are necessarily *context-bound* and in consequence strictly relative to this context. Context originates both



from within the social reality and social interactions investigated and from the interaction between the researcher and the researched subject (people, actions, etc.) or object (texts, visual material, etc.). The researcher's methods and tools for gaining knowledge are not considered neutral or technical instruments but establish, develop, and affect the research context. Even basic key terms and concepts used in research projects are not only defined by the researcher but elaborated within the data collection process through communication and "negotiation" with the informant or research subject being investigated.

Third, research outcomes are not only achieved results within a research process, but can be characterized as being *dynamic knowledge* in an epistemological sense. This is the reason why research instruments have to be open, flexible, and adaptive to the research subject or object. Research instruments are not the fixed tools of operationalized theories that have to be completely and finally developed before fieldwork begins (→ Operationalization). Instead, they have to be changed (and changeable) within research interaction according to the requirements of the individual and case-specific research situation.

Fourth, the procedure of qualitative research is *primarily inductive* insofar as it starts with research questions and temporarily "ends" with → hypotheses. The research process is spiral instead of linear because there is a permanent dynamic inherent, which includes developing, testing, and changing research questions, premises, hypotheses, instruments, and tools. At the end of the study there should be a better and deeper understanding of the research subject investigated. Consequently, research methods need to be reflected at each stage of the research process with respect to their contribution to the research results.

## DIFFERENT QUALITATIVE APPROACHES

The different approaches mentioned above emphasize different aspects of qualitative research, although there are many commonalities in fundamental research aims and in epistemology.

*Phenomenology* is the study of human phenomena and experiences in everyday life. As social phenomena are not entirely conscious for the people experiencing them, the researcher has to explore different perspectives to gain a full picture of the phenomena being investigated. The foreground of the participants' life-world can be researched by asking the participants about their subjective perceptions. The background of the participants' experiences can be explored by asking other participants about their understanding of the researched person's actions or by observing the participants' actions within their social context. The main aim of phenomenological research strategy is to gain a holistic impression and a deeper understanding of the phenomenon researched and its nature by changing the perspectives of research.

A very similar approach, although less philosophical and more practical, is *ethnographical research*, which emphasizes → field research in natural settings and the investigation of people's everyday lives. The researcher adopts an insider's perspective, trying to understand how people understand and construct the world they are involved in. Thus, ethnographical investigators primarily rely on participant → observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of (private) documents; data collection is eclectic (→ Document Analysis; Interview, Qualitative). Ethnographic researchers do not confine themselves to a single and short-term research contact but establish a longer contact and intensive

relationship with the field under study (community, group, organization, etc.). Another characteristic of ethnographic research is reflexivity, which is particularly relevant for the researcher's ambivalent role and status within the field as both (distant) observer and (close) participant.

*Grounded theory* emphasizes the spiral and strictly inductive research process: Instead of establishing hypotheses at the beginning of a study, researchers start their investigations only with open research questions. The research process is considered a permanent alternation of data collection and data analysis. Thus, sampling procedures are not planned systematically in advance, but the researcher enters the field with a convenient sample of first interviews, observations, or gathered document materials (→ Sampling, Nonrandom). Provisional theoretical concepts are identified from the first distinct events or incidents in the data. Then further data are gathered by either the same method or different methods and are analyzed in detail. New questions arise from the data, which need to be answered with the help of further data, and so on. The process of data collection and data analysis comes to an end when no further concepts or dimensions emerge from the data and theoretical saturation is reached. Of course the researcher still may discover a “negative case” that does not fit the concepts elaborated. Then the theory must be modified or extended.

*Case studies* privilege in-depth inquiry over coverage when trying to understand the case and its complexity rather than to generalize from the case to a certain population of individuals or organizations. As is true for the approaches previously described, the participants' interpretation of their actions or of their worldview is at the center of the investigation; case studies are rather long-term investigations than one-shot studies; and they follow an inductive logic. The case study approach slightly differs from the other approaches, insofar as its explorative character is less demanding. The results of case studies are considered descriptive (rather than leading to hypotheses or theories), heuristic and provisional (rather than saturated), and particular (rather than generalized).

Another claim for qualitative methodology is made by feminist methodologies and by action research. Although *feminist methodologies* are not methodologies in a strict sense but can be understood as a (meta-)theoretical approach or perspective, they suggest a preference for qualitative methodology and its practical or political consequences. They sensitize the researcher to the politics and power influences underlying each methodology and each method. As research and methodological rules are mostly masculine – most researchers have been male – the dominating role of objectivity in research and methodology is itself masculinist. Instead, feminist methodology insists on the positionality (“standpoint epistemology”) and reflexivity (“logic of self-reference”) of social research and the researcher. It is a critical methodology and has normative implications for social practice, claiming justice and equality between sexes. Implications for research designs include the empowerment of the people researched and the cooperative production of knowledge.

This is also and particularly true for *action research*, which aims to change practice with the help of and for the participants researched. Social scientific research causes political consequences in two different ways: with respect to the relationship between researcher and researched and with regard to the change or improvement of social practice outside the research process. Action research helps the participants researched to

reflect their own practice and to change a criticized situation. In this perspective, all steps in research, from the early stage of defining the research problem to the final data analysis, result from the processes of negotiation and cooperation between researcher and participant.

## METHODS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE

Prominent methods in qualitative methodology are participant observation, in-depth interviews, narrative interviews, qualitative content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative), → discourse analysis, → conversation analysis, social scientific hermeneutics, etc. They will be described shortly.

With the help of *observation*, events and actions can be investigated. Observation can either be direct (nonparticipant) or participant. There is a preference for participant observation in qualitative research, particularly when an ethnographical approach is chosen, because in direct observation the observer is cut off from the people he or she observes and therefore cannot ask the meanings of or reasons for their actions and behaviors. Practically, researchers or observers first have to gain access to the field, which implies defining their role as more or less active participants in the field or situation observed. Then observers make a record of their impressions of the situation. As human behavior is complex, observers permanently select particular elements of the situation to be observed. Furthermore, observing includes interpreting the meaning of the impressions made, insofar as observation is an observer's subjective, selective, and sense-making activity. In qualitative observation there is no standardized schedule with predetermined categories; instead observers record relevant impressions with detailed but unstructured field notes and sometimes with the help of video equipment. Although qualitative observation is unstructured in terms of measurement, it must be well prepared according to the research aim, to the role the observers take within the field they observe, and to the technology the observers use to record their observation.

In *in-depth-interviews* the researcher or interviewer uses an interview guide consisting of open-ended key questions and of probing follow-ups. The guide has a flexible order and structure so that the interview can be conducted as a dialogue with the respondent. It enables the respondents to express their point of view, to emphasize the aspects relevant for them, to clarify and illustrate the meaning of their responses, etc.

*Narrative interviews* do not even use interview guides as employed in in-depth interviews, because narrative interviews aim at gaining complete stories told by the respondents. If the respondents talk about their lives, narrative interviews are used for biographical research, life history, or oral history. Storytelling is an open-structured but rule-based dialogue or conversation (→ Storytelling and Narration). It is the aim of biographical research not only to gain true data about the informants' life but also to get an impression of how the story of their life is told, how narratives are constructed.

Unlike individual interviews, *focus groups* consist of moderated discussions among a group of six to ten respondents or discussants. Instead of an interviewer, a moderator manages the conversation by asking questions and developing the discussion. The main aim of a focus group session is to find out how strong arguments are, to test new ideas or products, etc., and this is achieved by discussants' mutual stimulation and controversial

debate. As group dynamics emerge spontaneously, the results of the discussion may differ from group to group. Therefore, several groups should be selected to compare the outcomes. Depending on the research question, the samples of focus groups can either be homogeneous or heterogeneous with regard to demographic or other characteristics, real-world groups (families, neighbors, cliques, etc.), or artificial groups (consisting of people who do not know each other). All kinds of qualitative interviews are recorded with the help of an audio tape (sometimes even a video tape), then transcribed and finally analyzed.

*Qualitative content analysis* is a method to develop categories from texts or visual material including newspaper articles, radio or television programs, and web pages (primary material), but also transcribed interview texts, documents, or video-taped observations (secondary material). Categorization means a step-by-step reduction, abstraction, and generalization of the textual or visual material. This → coding procedure is an inductive and spiral process, because it starts from the material and repeatedly goes back to it in order to check that the categories evolved from the material are correct and do not bias the original, context-bound meaning. Categories summarize, explicate, and structure the original material. They can be sorted on different levels of abstraction. Often categories may be combined in order to develop patterns or typologies of texts or other manifest material (photographs, films, documents, etc.) in further steps of analysis.

A more open and less rule-based kind of interpretation or data analysis is at the center of (social scientific) *hermeneutics*, which is particularly used in analyzing narratives or stories from interviews or texts. Instead of reducing propositional units to more abstract categories, hermeneutic interpretation emphasizes the functional relationship between units and the whole text, narrative, or story. Both formal and content-related characteristics of the language used in interviews, texts, or visual material are brought into play for the interpretation and understanding of meaning and social reality represented in and by the material analyzed.

*Conversation analysis* can be regarded as a particular kind of hermeneutic analysis that is related to dialogical structure, such as talk, conversations, debates, etc. Language not only represents social reality but is also an expression of human (communicative) action. Participants' utterances and interactional forms are embedded in social rules, structure, and order. With the help of linguistic or semiotic tools these latent structures and patterns can be uncovered (→ Linguistics; Semiotics). Conversation analysis is not only based on communication represented in texts but also takes into consideration nonverbal and extra-verbal overt behaviors.

*Discourse analysis* combines a text-immanent hermeneutical approach with a context-related interpretation. Similar to conversation analysis, it characterizes discourse not only as a text but as a social practice in everyday life, involving ideology, authority, social rules, power, and even audience. Unlike conversation, discourse represents the struggle for arguments, status, and hierarchy and emphasizes sociological questions rather than linguistic ones. For discourse analysis both naturalistic material (documents, media contents) and interviews may be used. In addition to coding processes employed in qualitative content analysis, discourse analysts combine manifest characteristics of the text with latent power analysis (e.g., in the tradition of Michel Foucault). This is the reason why discourse analysis often follows a critical approach, uncovering the ideology and power relations behind the text.

As texts or other documentary material cannot be separated from their social production, *documentary analysis* also explores the social context of texts for a better understanding of the meaning expressed within them. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the characteristics of the producers of texts and documents. Documentary analysis is particularly relevant for historical research and for media research in order to evaluate the status, truth, and relevance of documents, media contents, and their production.

*Qualitative experiments* use a particular stimulus, as do standardized experiments (→ Experimental Design), but they explore the range of subjects' reactions rather than test hypotheses. Within → ethnomethodology Harold Garfinkel has developed so-called breaching experiments to reconstruct everyday rules: By breaching commonsense expectancies, questioning "normal" behaviors, or disrupting ordinary rules, it is possible to make self-evident practices conscious for the practitioner and to demonstrate the effectiveness of invisible rules, structures, and orders. Thus, experimenters use incomplete or inconsistent instructions. Another technique is for researchers to engage in an everyday conversation insisting on the clarification of the other person's position, which obviously disrupts the conversational rule not to question clearly comprehensible statements.

As research instruments are open and flexible, so too are sampling procedures. In qualitative research they are mostly deliberative or purposive. The sample cannot be representative in a quantitative sense but should either be homogeneous, in order to find the small distinction among the sample units, or heterogeneous, in order to cover a maximum of variation and find the commonalities (and differences) among the sample units. A special case of heterogeneous sampling is extreme-case sampling, which is appropriate when the full range of possible answers, positions, and actions needs to be explored. Very often sampling procedures are driven by convenience because or if access to the field or population investigated is hard to gain. However, sampling procedure is far from being arbitrary; instead it is coherent and consistent with the research questions and the theoretical aim of the study.

In sum, qualitative research requires the researcher's fundamental openness within a research process. In a cognitive sense this means that the researcher is open to unexpected aspects and events. In a social sense this means that there are no strict rules either for the researcher (interviewer, observer, coder or interpreter) or for the person interviewed or observed. Critics of qualitative methodology object that the lack of rules may cause arbitrary research results. Furthermore, if these results are strictly context-bound and can only be interpreted within their context, the idea of deciding between true and false results must be abandoned. Finally, the results of qualitative research cannot be generalized, as they are based on only a small number of cases.

## EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

However, there are evaluative criteria for qualitative research dealing with these problems: First, the most general criterion of qualitative methodology is *clarity of presentation*, which seems trivial as it is an overall criterion for every scientific effort. Process-related reporting of the research process is typical of qualitative methodology, in contrast to a more outcome-related reporting within quantitative methodology. Other researchers can

comprehend not only the operationalization of theoretical constructs but each step of the process and can criticize its plausibility.

A second criterion may be called *communicative* → *validity or validation*, which means that the researcher's understanding of an answer, an observation, or a text interpretation will be checked with the research subjects' own interpretation or with other researchers' inferences. On the whole, the qualitative research process includes open and authentic data collection, which inherently promotes validity because it relies not merely on a sketchy research contact but on intensive and extensive interaction.

Third, generalization and *generalizability* can be achieved if the results and conclusions are transferable to other settings and contexts than those under study. Therefore, the sample should be heterogeneous enough with respect to the research question, the context should be elaborated intensively, and the concepts should be abstracted at a high level. Even in case studies results are generalizable, if the case is sufficiently complex to discover general structures rather than single social practices.

Fourth, → reliability of data implies the *stability of the results* within the research process. Also, the systematic use of different methods and research instruments ("triangulation") can provide reliability if the outcomes of different methods are consistent or lead to a coherent holistic impression of cases investigated.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Case Studies ▶ Coding ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Document Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Field Research ▶ Generalizability ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistics ▶ Observation ▶ Operationalization ▶ Participatory Action Research ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Reliability ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Semiotics ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Triangulation ▶ Validity ▶ Verstehen vs Erklären

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# Quality of the News

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Quality of the news is a difficult and complex concept to define. Who determines what is good quality and what is not? Quality depends in part on what → uses and gratifications are demanded from the media. Taking a liberal standpoint one could say that quality is what the audience wants. Another view would be to let media professionals, such as journalists and editors, act as moral agents and establish a set of criteria that defines good quality. The literature has, in sum, taken the view of professionals as the starting point.

A high-quality news service is expected to help citizens make informed decisions that in turn will help develop society. This view has support from disciplines other than journalism and mass communication studies, such as economics. Here, a high-quality news service is perceived to help economic development, as it reduces uncertainty by providing accurate and reliable information. In political science the media is seen as the → fourth estate, informing citizens, maintaining checks and balances on the political process, and thereby increasing the efficiency of government and helping to resolve social conflict by giving a multifaceted description of events, among other things. The above functions are largely supported by what the journalism and mass communication literature describes as commonly shared professional standards of → journalism (→ Standards of News; Journalism: Normative Theories). Sometimes, however, there is tension between these standards and a demand for a lighter kind of news reporting, geared toward entertaining sensationalism, that pits professionalism against commercialism (→ Commercialization of the Media). In fact, Downs (1957) showed that it is theoretically irrational for citizens to vote, since it is highly unlikely that any individual citizen's vote would be crucial. Therefore, the audience should have a preference for entertainment rather than hard-to-digest quality news about political affairs. Hence, the personal rewards gained by attaining and digesting quality news may be lower than the personal cost of obtaining them. Also, the individual news consumer may not internalize the benefits to society of having well-informed citizens. However, a US study by Gladney (1996) polled editors and readers of 251 newspapers, grouped by size of circulation, asking them to rank 18 measures of news quality, and found that there was less divergence between readers and editors than the logic based on Downs would predict.

## MEASURES OF NEWS QUALITY

Generally, research divides the definitions of news media quality into three sub-categories: content, organizational, and financial commitment (Hollifield 2006).

Content is a matter of several aspects, but some measures are: → balance and fairness – lack of → sensationalism; → accuracy – lack of bias (→ Bias in the News); news

interpretation (→ Interpretive Journalism); relevance of the news presented and reliance on authoritative sources (→ News Sources); comprehensive coverage and presentation of multiple points of view; favorable coverage of different groups in society; strong local coverage (→ Local News); the community press standard – emphasis on community values and institutions; a strong editorial page; visual appeal; and good writing.

Organizational aspects of quality can be divided into two major categories. Editorial quality includes: editorial independence and courage – freedom from outside pressure by political interest groups and economic forces (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of); impartiality – fairness in gathering and reporting news (→ Fairness Doctrine); influence with opinion leaders; and community leadership – willingness to take an active role in the betterment and welfare of the community. Journalistic staff features include: professionalism – e.g., the level of education, experience, and willingness to fight against wrong; staff enterprise – aggressive and original reporting; decency; and integrity – a keen sense of professional ethics (→ Ethics in Journalism).

The content and organizational measures of news quality have a long tradition in the literature but have suffered critique for being too subjective and difficult to replicate. These measures are usually judgments by panels of professional experts and are by definition difficult to duplicate. As a response to this critique, measures of financial commitment emerged (Litman & Bridges 1986; Bogart 1981, 2004; → Qualitative Methodology).

Financial commitment can be divided into four sub-categories. *Copy* includes the advertising–editorial copy ratio, the amounts of locally produced copy and nonadvertising copy, the length of stories in terms of offering readers depth, and the number of in-depth, investigative, or interpretive stories. *Graphics* includes the amount of visual and graphic material. *Journalistic* includes the size of the news staff, reporter workloads, and the number of stories or amount of time devoted to news programming. *Technical* includes the number of → news agencies subscribed to and investment in news-gathering technologies such as satellite trucks. These criteria are not measurements of news quality per se, but are considered to be a measure of the amount of resources that are needed to produce such quality (Litman & Bridges 1986). The quantitative measures of financial commitment require little, if any, subjective judgments and are thus better suited to duplication (→ Quantitative Methodology).

## THE USE OF QUALITY MEASURES

The above measures of quality have been devised for the purpose of measuring not so much quality per se as how other institutional factors and the degree of competition affect news quality. Increased news media competition has in a number of studies been shown to be linked to higher measures of news quality. News media (print and broadcast) have been found to increase their financial commitment in news production as the intensity of competition over market shares increases. Studies have also shown that high-quality newspapers and broadcasters do better in terms of → circulation/ratings than do low-quality ones. In fact, increased measures of quality not only affect relative market shares, but also increase total news demand in a given market. However, these findings originate in research undertaken in either the US or other developed markets that feature a very low degree of competition after a century of news media consolidation (→ Consolidation of Media Markets). More recent international research indicates, however,



that in conditions of hyper-competition, more competition may in fact yield lower-quality news products (Hollifield 2006; van der Wurff & van Cuilenburg 2001; Becker et al. 2006).

Concerning the effects of public ownership of news media (→ Ownership in the Media), research has shown that profit margins are higher in publicly owned news media companies due to pressures from investors. News organizations often respond to these pressures by cutting the largest cost item, i.e., personnel, thereby reducing financial commitment and leading to lower scores in other measures of news quality.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF MEDIA QUALITY**

Different groups value news quality differently. From a professional viewpoint, high scores in the above quality measures or awards such as Pulitzer prizes constitute success. Taking the view of readers, circulation is a proper measure, while investors would value profitability. Research has established a positive link between quality and circulation/ratings, while high circulation/ratings do not necessarily imply high profitability.

A problem in this research is how to establish causality between different measures of quality and factors that affect and are affected by news quality. Quality has been found to positively affect circulation/ratings, but a strong case is made for the reverse causality. Given the logic that in order to achieve a high measure of quality a news organization needs financial commitment, which in turn comes from high circulation/ratings, then small newspapers/broadcasters do not have the same resources as big ones to produce quality news. This effect is amplified by the fact that advertisers tend to converge on high-circulation/ratings news organizations (→ Advertising, Economics of). Gladney (1990) found that smaller newspapers can't really compete with big ones in staff enterprise, staff professionalism, news interpretation, and comprehensive news coverage, as these demand greater resources. Logan and Sutter (2004) found that 91 percent of all Pulitzer prizes in 1997 went to newspapers in the top quintile in terms of circulation the same year. This is not surprising, as the news industry exhibits increasing returns to scale. That is, producing a news item is costly while distribution to the audience is very cheap. It therefore makes economic sense to have few producers investing in news production.

The literature is not clear on whether the measurements of news quality are valid for all socio-economic groups in society. Concerns have been voiced that the measures used are elitist in character, mainly appealing to the well-educated urban classes. In studies by Gladney (1990, 1996) editors at larger, often metropolitan, newspapers emphasized staff enterprise, staff professionalism, and comprehensive news coverage. Their counterparts at smaller newspapers placed greater value on community leadership, strong local news coverage, decency, and the community press standard, which is an "emphasis on news coverage that focuses on common community values and helps give readers a sense of individual existence and worth." (Gladney 1990, 62). Readers were found to largely hold these same values, especially concerning strong local press coverage and the community press standard, confirming earlier research. Hence, large (metropolitan) and small (local) news media can fulfill different functions, with the latter complementing the former in terms of more locally focused news. This illuminates the difficulty of applying one standard of excellence to all news markets.

Another channel through which the size of circulation/ratings can affect measures of quality is the risk of media capture, which describes a situation where the content of a news organization is controlled by some external political or economic organization (Besley & Prat 2006). If this influence is attained by economic means such as bribes or ownership, smaller, poorer news organizations are likely to be more susceptible than wealthier ones. As the economic performance of news organizations declines with increased competition, high degrees of competition may then increase the risk of media capture, which is relevant for the organizational quality measures of editorial courage, decency, accuracy, etc. Apart from leading to media capture, extreme competition is also likely to reduce measures of financial commitment as revenues drop. The research on the negative effects of competition is small and recent (Hollifield 2006; Becker et al. 2006; van der Wurff & van Cuilenburg 2001), which to a large extent is a result of the fact most research is focused on the consolidated US media market. However, more international research is needed on this issue, as many emerging economies exhibit extreme levels of media competition.

SEE ALSO: ► Accuracy ► Advertising, Economics of ► Balance ► Bias in the News ► Circulation ► Commercialization of the Media ► Consolidation of Media Markets ► Ethics in Journalism ► Fairness Doctrine ► Fourth Estate ► Freedom of the Press, Concept of ► Interpretive Journalism ► Journalism ► Journalism: Normative Theories ► Local News ► News Agencies ► News Sources ► Ownership in the Media ► Political Media Content, Quality Criteria in ► Qualitative Methodology ► Quantitative Methodology ► Sensationalism ► Standards of News ► Uses and Gratifications

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## Quality Press

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Although communication researchers talk and write eloquently about the quality press and seem to have a clear concept what the term means, hardly anyone has made an effort to define it. A short, impressionistic review of handbooks and lexica as well as of online resources like Wikipedia and Google shows the term “quality” in many media-related contexts. But the “quality press” itself has attracted little attention from researchers (Spassov 2004).

Nevertheless, there seems to be an unwritten consensus that those newspapers and newsmagazines are considered quality press that (1) address the “intelligentsia” (Sparks & Campbell 1987, 456), i.e., the elites and decision-makers of a country; (2) are distributed nationally rather than regionally; and (3) provide a broad and in-depth coverage of news and background information. A recent German definition (Raabe 2006) emphasizes additionally that quality papers frequently cooperate internationally with other quality print media; that they often have local or regional editions for several big cities, including the capital of the country; and that they offer a journalistically rich “menu” to readers as well as an attractive readership to advertisers – including sporadic supplements.

The term “quality press” implicitly contains a clear value judgment. Labeling some newspapers “quality press” implies inevitably that all the other press products are *not* “quality press.” This can be unfair, as regional newspapers or even the boulevard press differ in terms of their quality, too. Besides that, even the quality newspapers and magazines differ among themselves and from country to country.

### PRECONDITIONS OF A QUALITY PRESS

A non-negotiable precondition of quality press is press freedom and democracy – though even dictatorships may try to create the impression that quality papers continue to exist, as Hitler’s propagandist minister Joseph Goebbels did: in Nazi Germany for many years the *Frankfurter Zeitung* benefited from this policy. It was the newspaper that had more leeway to place messages “between the lines” than the others (Gillesen 1986). Otherwise, the quality press depends on the existence of the following conditions:

- *Degree of education and “demand” of publics:* an educated and literate readership has to exist, and it has to be willing to pay for news and information.

- *Cultural tradition*: in “northern” countries a “habit” of reading newspapers seems to have grown, whereas in “southern” countries such a tradition is limited to very small elites.
- *Sales system*: where newspapers have to compete at the newsstand daily, it is less likely that quality press will develop.
- *Degree of centralization*: in countries like France, Great Britain, and Austria the so-called quality press is concentrated in the capital. In more decentralized countries like the US, Germany, and Switzerland quality papers are more “equally” distributed among different cities and regions, and thus have a broader base from which to be nourished.
- *Size of countries*: in smaller countries, it is more difficult to develop quality press – but countries like Denmark, the Netherlands, and Switzerland prove that there are exceptions to this rule.

### IDENTIFYING THE QUALITY PRESS

No single researcher can give a solid overview of the quality press throughout the world. The earliest and still most prominent attempt to identify the “club” of quality newspapers worldwide dates back to the late 1960s: Merrill (1968, 32–44) cited different rankings made until then in the Merrill Elite Press Pyramid. Among the world’s top 10 papers were the *New York Times*, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *Le Monde*, the *Guardian*, *The Times*, *Pravda*, *Jen-min Jih-pao* (Peking), *Borba* (Belgrade), *Osservatore Romano* (Vatican City), and *ABC* (Madrid). While the idea of identifying elite newspapers certainly makes sense, Merrill’s ranking itself seems dubious. Though based on experts’ judgments from various continents, his list of 10 newspapers contains four from countries where press freedom as the basic requirement for developing a quality press was nonexistent at that time. *Pravda*, *Jen-min Jih-pao*, and *Borba* were organs controlled by communist or socialist governments, and *ABC* was censored by the fascist Franco regime. Further, the *Osservatore Romano* is controlled more by the Catholic church than by a politically “independent” publisher.

More recent rankings include a look ahead in the *Columbia Journalism Review* (1999) into the twenty-first century, in which only American newspapers were ranked by top editors, and a study by the German media watchdog organization Internationale Medienhilfe based on the judgments of 1,000 media experts in 50 countries. According to the latter, the top five newspapers in the world in the year 2005 were (1) the *Financial Times* (UK), (2) the *Wall Street Journal* (USA), (3) *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (Germany), (4) *Le Monde* (France), and (5) *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* (Switzerland). Due to the scandals in which the *New York Times* was involved, it ranked only sixth in this review (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 2005).

Reviewing the literature and picking out just a few countries, some “obvious” examples of the quality press are: in France, *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro*, and the *Herald Tribune* (an American newspaper published in Paris); in Germany, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Die Welt*, the business newspapers *Handelsblatt* and *Financial Times Deutschland*, and as weeklies *Der Spiegel* and *Die Zeit*; in Great Britain, the *Independent*, the *Guardian*, the business newspaper the *Financial Times*, and the newsmagazine *The Economist*; in Italy, *Corriere della Sera* and the business newspaper *Il Sole-24 Ore*; in Japan, *Asahi Shimbun*; in Spain, *El Pais*; in Switzerland, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *Tagesanzeiger*

(internationally much less “visible”), and the weeklies *Facts* and *Weltwoche*; in the US, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* (the world’s leading business paper), the weekly newsmagazines *Time* and *Newsweek*, and the *New Yorker* as a cultural highlight.

The difficulty in defining its characteristics apart, the quality press in many western countries has become an endangered species. Book titles like *The vanishing newspaper* (Meyer 2004), and magazine stories addressing “journalism without journalists” (Lemann 2006) or analyzing the sharp decrease in foreign correspondence (Arnett 1998), can be seen as alarming. As classified → advertising is shifting to the Internet, the web is eating up newspapers’ revenue sources. And many users, particularly younger ones, have become accustomed to receiving information for free online, which poses a threat to the survival of the quality press. While the public debate concentrates on bloggers and “citizen journalists” endangering professional journalism, the other real threat for quality journalism may be the rise and the professionalization of public relations (PR). If a scenario developed by Ries and Ries (2002) should come true, PR will expand at the expense of advertising – and thus the resource basis for quality journalism will erode further.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Comparative Research ► Quality of the News ► Rating Methods

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# Quantitative Methodology

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The results of polls tell us how many people intend to vote for a certain political party, watch TV more than four hours a day, or favor a certain TV program. We call methods of collecting and analyzing such data “quantitative methodology” because individuals’ attributes are counted in large numbers. One can count not only single persons (→ Survey), but also propositions within texts, visual elements within pictures or sequences of film material (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), or observed actions and overt behaviors (→ Observation). Counting people, words, the duration of a TV program, and so on is deeply rooted in our everyday lives and nothing artificial. Quantitative methodology joins these basic social phenomena but works out systematic (methodological) rules to a complex pattern of standards.

## AIMS OF QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY

The main aim of quantitative methodology is comparison and measurement (→ Measurement Theory). To compare individuals, text units, or behaviors it is necessary to have a common basis as a starting point for comparison. Without commonalities or standards no comparisons can be made. The logic of quantitative methodology is basically the *logic of standardization*, which implies reducing context complexity around the research object in question. With the help of standardization it is possible to measure the attributes of research units. Measurement is related to the attributes of research units; research units, however, are not viewed in their (complex) entirety but reduced to variables that can be analyzed separately.

One can standardize either different features of the research process or the research process as a whole. Standardizing the entire research process means proceeding systematically and in a certain order of procedures. We start with research questions or with → hypotheses referring to a specific research object. Research questions without hypotheses, which are potential answers to these questions, imply an explorative research strategy. If hypotheses, which can be deduced from abstract theories, are available, a confirmative research strategy will be preferred to test whether the hypotheses are right or false. Regardless of the research strategy being explorative or confirmative, a second step requires research method(s) that are adequate to answer the research questions or to test the hypotheses. Theoretical concepts must be translated into empirical indicators – a process we call → operationalization. Furthermore, a sample of research units needs to be selected. The following process of data collection demands a direct contact and interaction between researcher and the research field explored. After collection, the data will be analyzed with quantitative (statistical) tools and interpreted in the context of the research questions or hypotheses. Each step of the research process is checked according to scientific rules to which a given scientific community agrees within a certain scientific context.

## METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

We can now take a closer look at several steps of the research process and their particular standardization. The most relevant objects of standardization are the research instrument and the research situation. In *polls and surveys* people are questioned about their opinion toward certain social phenomena. The respondent's opinion is treated as a variable that can be separated from other (measurable) attributes. The wording and the order of the questions are laid down in a questionnaire. The interviewer is admonished to follow the interviewing rules strictly and not to use his/her own words. The respondent has to fit his/her answers to preformed categories of answers, such as "strongly agree," "somewhat agree," "don't know," "somewhat disagree," and "strongly disagree." It is the respondent's task to translate the mental representation of his/her opinion into the given (i.e., communicated) categories and to select the category that best fits his/her opinion. This procedure ignores the respondent's own semantic representation of his/her opinion and the context of the cognitive process that forms this opinion, as well as other cognitive and communicative aspects related to the opinion in question, such as prototypical examples, narratives, etc. (→ Cognition; Attitudes). For the purpose of comparison the respondent's answer is only of interest as the standardized semantic result of the preceded complex and context-related or context-bound cognitive processes of opinion formatting. Typical variables collected in surveys may be attributes (gender, age, income, etc.), opinions or attitudes (toward social phenomena, such as norms), knowledge (of persons, structures, processes, etc.), or behaviors (hours of TV watched, voting, etc.).

The research instrument of *content analysis* is called "code-book." It includes a set of standardized semantic categories of attributes that are relevant with regard to the research questions, and which the coder searches within the documents (text, proposition, photograph, film, etc.; → Photography). Coding categories can be formal elements (such as the length of an article, the position of an article within a → newspaper, etc.), semantic variables (such as the theme of an article, actor-related categories, etc.), or pragmatic variables (such as the assessments of actors, organizations, arguments, etc.). Although → coding is not an automatic process (with the exception of computer-aided content analysis; → Text Analysis, Computer-Aided), a deeper or hermeneutical understanding of the text or propositions within the text is not necessary for coding. The coder's task is to assign textual or visual elements to the given categories. A coding manual or commentary contains the coding rules the coder has to apply to the document that has to be coded.

With regard to *observational methods*, the observer pays attention to overt behaviors or apparent attributes of observed people, which s/he records in a code sheet or a list with given categories. Other concomitants spontaneously observed are not of interest in the context of the standardized schedule. The coding process works analogously to the coding process of content analysis.

## RESEARCH DESIGNS

As well as the research instrument and the research situation, the complete research design and the process of data collection can also be standardized. Within *experimental research* designs (→ Experimental Design) independent variables are controlled with the

help of manipulated stimulus material or the treatment of experimental subjects. In order to test causal effects, subjects are randomly allocated to experimental groups and/or a control group. The experimental group, for instance, is exposed to a horror movie to find out whether this stimulus causes anxiety reactions (→ Fear Induction through Media Content). The proof for the causal effect of the movie content on the media user's emotional state either requires the comparison between a pre-test and a post-test measurement, or a comparison between the measurement of the experimental group after presenting the stimulus material and that of the control group, which is exposed to no stimulus material at all or to a neutral stimulus material.

In the first experimental design comparing *two measurements of the same subjects*, the experimental subjects should show more feelings or reactions of anxiety after viewing the horror movie than before viewing it to put the anxious response exclusively down to the movie and not to any other circumstances. This experimental design only proves the causal effect hypothesized if repeated measurement of the same subjects does not sensitize the subjects toward the measurement instrument, and consequently does not bias the measurement results. In the second experimental design *comparing different subjects* those subjects of the experimental group should show more feelings or reactions of anxiety than the subjects of the control group who viewed a neutral movie to put anxiety exclusively down to the reception of the horror movie and not to other attributes of the subjects or the research situation. This experimental design only proves the causal effect hypothesized if the stimulus materials of the experimental group and the control group clearly differ and if both groups are comparable (identical) with regard to other relevant subjects' attributes.

There are further research designs in quantitative and standardized methodology, such as trend or panel designs, which are often applied in polls on voting behavior or on political attitude change. In *trend studies* the same research instrument is used for different samples at different points of time. Points of time can be chosen very closely (e.g., daily) and data can be analyzed with the help of time-series statistics (→ Longitudinal Analysis). As the samples differ at each point of time, only aggregated differences can be measured. To measure individual differences, panel designs should be applied. In panel designs, standardized measurements can be repeated several times for the same sample, but not as often as in trend designs because subjects become sensitized to the research instrument and bias their responses. Furthermore, sample size in panel designs continuously diminishes because of "panel mortality," i.e., respondents' decreasing cooperation in participating in the survey. As a result, the sample may be biased or become too small for complex statistical analysis.

## LOGIC OF SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

Quantification of data also has consequences for sampling procedures because quantitative methodology requires sufficiently large samples (of respondents or text units) for data analysis. The general aim of sampling is the generalization of the results (→ Generalizability). The most far-reaching kind of generalization is a representative sample, which means that the distribution of relevant variables in the sample corresponds to the distribution of these variables in the total population. A *random sampling* technique tries to maintain the



chance of getting into the sample (approximately) equal for every unit (respondent, text, observed person, etc.). Although the probability of getting into the sample is low if the total population is large, it will never be zero. The procedure of random sampling needs practical conditions that make sure the distributions within the sample are representative of the distributions within the total population (→ Sampling, Random). If some relevant parameters of the total population are known, a *quota-sampling* is also possible. The distributions of these variables in the total population serve as quota instructions for the sampling procedure, which makes sure that the distributions in the sample represent the distributions in the total population. Other sampling procedures and techniques vary according to the research question or the data-collection method applied. In experiments, for instance, samples need not be representative, but should be selected at random; this is important for the statistical testing of the hypotheses (→ Sampling, Nonrandom).

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

All steps taken to standardize the process of data collection reduce the complex information about individuals or text units to separate variables and categories, abstracted from their context. With the help of statistical data analysis we can now count the number of individuals or units with regard to the collected variables (univariate statistics) and we can correlate the variables (bivariate statistics; → Correlation Analysis). Information about the sample distribution is expressed as means and standard deviation of variables; information about the correlation of variables can be documented in cross-tabulations or mean comparisons between group variables (such as gender, categories of age, education, etc.).

It is also possible to test *complex theoretical models* with many variables (multivariate statistics). Several statistical tools discover structures within the data (e.g., → Factor Analysis; Cluster Analysis; Discriminant Analysis); others use a confirmative logic to test models (e.g., variance of analysis; → Regression Analysis; Structural Equation). The complexity lost or reduced within the process of data collection by standardizing the variables and neglecting the context of variables can partly be re-established by analyzing the correlation between the separately collected abstract variables. The analytical outcome may be a complex relationship between variables, which enables the researcher to reconstruct context (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory).

### **EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**

Quantitative methodology is based on certain criteria to assess its quality. These criteria are objectivity (→ Objectivity in Science), → validity, and → reliability. The notion of “objectivity” is somewhat misleading because it does not imply truth in an epistemological sense. Instead, objectivity is related to the research process and procedures. Research procedures have to be systematically planned and carried out. Researchers have to bear in mind the scientific rules that the scientific community agrees on. In that sense, objectivity has a normative aspect and is therefore replaced by the notion of “*intersubjectivity*” (→ Critical Rationalism).

The same is true for *validity*: a research instrument is valid if it measures what it claims to measure. Validity is a criterion to assess the relationship between theoretical concept and empirical indicator. To measure the relevance of media coverage on a certain theme with the help of the position of articles in a newspaper makes sense because front-page news is considered more relevant than articles placed at the back of the newspaper. Although this example seems obvious, the rule to assess validity follows a circular logic, as validity can only be ascertained within scientific discourse and not with the help of a formal procedure.

In contrast to validity, *reliability* is a formal criterion, which can be mathematically calculated as a coefficient of agreement. Reliability is related to the stability of the research instrument. A research instrument is reliable if its repeated use does not change the outcome. In content analysis the coding scheme is reliable if different coders use it in the same way with the same coding results (inter-coder-reliability) or if the same coder uses it the same way at the beginning of the coding procedure as at its end (intra-coder-reliability). The same is true for observation with the exception that an observed situation cannot be reobserved (if it is not recorded). Therefore, intra-coder-reliability can only be simulated by observing similar situations. In surveys reliability is related to similar instruments (questions in the questionnaire). If different questions that are supposed to measure the same construct lead to similar or equal answers, these questions are considered reliable.

In sum, quantitative methodology is characterized by a relationship between *standardization* of research instruments, research situations, and research designs, *quantification* of analysis, *generalization* of results gained from samples, and *systematizing* research procedures. Research is a technical and rule-based process. The underlying premise says that standardizing method and research procedure creates a common basis of preconditions, which allows for comparison across different research objects. As a consequence, the research object is measured in a standardized way and can only be explored in terms of standardized and quantified variables. It is cut off from its individual context but it can be analyzed systematically. Furthermore, standardization is the only way to analyze data quantitatively. To collect a sizeable amount of data is of immense value for the generalization of empirical results because the probability of variety within data increases – even if not necessarily in a linear fashion – with the number of objects researched.

## CRITIQUE AND DEFENSE

For the reasons mentioned above researchers who prefer → qualitative methodology object to quantitative methodology, and claim that the complexity lost within the process of data collection neglects the problem of understanding and interpretation (→ *Verstehen* vs *Erklären*). A respondent's selection of a certain category from a given set of categories would not imply that she or he understands the category in the same way as the researcher does or other respondents do. Selecting a certain category by interpreting it as the best fit for one's own opinion would be only a vague indicator for the "true" value of the opinion in question. Using standardized data-collection methods would only catch the researcher's presumption of what a question or a category means. Whether the meaning insinuated by

the researcher fits the authentic meaning of the “research object” or not could not be technically assessed.

From a *meta-theoretical perspective* it is possible to reconstruct the communication model that underlies quantitative or standardized methodology: it is a stimulus–response model because quantitative methodology supposes that standardizing the meaning of the research stimulus (questions in surveys, categories in content analysis and in observation) causes the standardized understanding of the research object (respondents in surveys), of the coder (in content analysis), or of the observer (in observation).

Advocates of quantitative methodology, however, use the premise of nonsystematic or random error that accompanies the process of measurement. Although a standardized instrument (questionnaire, code-book, observation schedule) is not able to represent the “true” value itself, it is a statistically probable estimation of it. Every bias (deviation from the “true” value) is less probable than the collected value, unless the measurement has been carried out correctly. Systematic errors only occur if and when attributes of the data-collection process itself interfere with attributes of the object (respondent, text, observed person).

Critics may again object that interferences between the measurement process and the measured attribute cannot be avoided and are typical of social phenomena, as the process of data collection is a social process itself. From a constructivist epistemological viewpoint (→ Constructivism) it is indeed not possible to separate both kinds of “realities” (data collection and data itself). Constructivists claim that we should not even speak of (measured) data but of (constructed) facts, as measurement can be considered a social process following and violating the methodological rules developed and declared valid by the scientific community.

We need not solve this problem of epistemological argumentation here because it is more fundamental than the alternative between a quantitative and qualitative methodology. As a consequence of constructivist objections we should not interpret validity in an ontological but in a pragmatic sense. The “correct” use of data-collection and data-analysis tools is not an indicator of truth or approximation to reality but a pragmatic consensus within a scientific community in a given social and historical context. Again, the argumentation is based on standardization: if all researchers use the tools of data collection in the same way, the results can be compared and discussed. If the rules change and other research instruments are developed, they should be compared with the old ones either to find a new agreement among the scientific community or to compete for the better way.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Coding ▶ Cognition ▶ Constructivism ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cluster Analysis ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Discriminant Analysis ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Generalizability ▶ Hypothesis ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Newspaper ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Observation ▶ Operationalization ▶ Photography ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Reliability ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Structural Equation ▶ Survey ▶ Text Analysis, Computer-Aided ▶ Validity ▶ Verstehen vs Erklären

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## Questions and Questioning

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Any discussion of questions and questioning needs to distinguish between questions as a linguistic form and the various social actions that are accomplished through this form. Questions, or “interrogatives,” can be formed in a variety of ways. One type of question uses a specific question word: “which,” “when,” “why,” “where,” “who,” “whose,” “whom,” or “how,” forming what is called a *wh-question*, e.g., “Who was that lady?,” “Where did you play basketball?,” “Met whom?” Another question type is the *yes/no question*, i.e., a question to which a “yes” or “no” answer is generally expected. These questions are usually formed in English by inversion of subject and auxiliary, e.g., “Is Al here today?” If there is no auxiliary, the “do auxiliary” is added. Increasingly in informal oral English, the auxiliary is left out, e.g., “You home?” Other languages use phrases or particles, rather than inversion, to indicate that a preceding or following utterance is a yes/no question. Yes/no questions can also be formed syntactically in the same way that declarative statements are formed, using upward instead of downward intonation, e.g., “You’re home?” Quirk et al. (1985) call these *declarative questions*. Other types of questions are *tag questions*, which are a type of yes/no question, e.g., “They’re a lovely family now aren’t they?” and *alternative questions*, e.g., “Didju say *widespread* or *whitespread*?”

### RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FORM, FUNCTION, AND RESPONSE

According to conversation analysts, questions are *first pair parts* (→ Conversation Analysis). This means that they initiate courses of action and make certain kinds of responses to these actions relevant and expectable. To some extent, the grammatical form of the question puts constraints on the form of answer that is relevant and expectable. Wh-questions make relevant answers that replace the question word; i.e., *who* questions

elicit person references, *where*, place references. Yes/no questions make relevant *yes* or *no* answers. Alternative questions make relevant answers that choose one of the alternatives. However, participants can choose to design responses to questions in ways that do not conform to the grammatical form of the question. For example, when participants disagree with a presupposition embedded in a yes/no question, and providing either a *yes* or *no* answer would imply agreement with this presupposition, participants can choose to give a *non-type-conforming* answer that displays that the question is in some way problematic (Raymond 2003).

Questions are not only used to ask for new information. They are used to initiate repair on someone else's prior talk, e.g., "Huh?" or "Met whom?" and they also perform a variety of social actions such as invitations ("Wanna come down and have a bite of lunch with me?"), offers ("Would you like a cup of coffee?"), complaints ("Why is it that *we* have to go *there*?"), and requests ("Can I have your light?"). At the beginning of a phone conversation, a question such as "Is Judy there?" is also a request, i.e., to speak to Judy. When questions are used to perform actions such as invitations, offers, and requests, recipients often respond by first answering the question, and then dealing with the action performed by the question (Schegloff forthcoming). For example, in response to the phone request, "Is Judy there?" the response "Yeah, just a second." first answers the question: "Yeah," and then responds to the request, indicating that it is being complied with: "just a second."

Like other kinds of initiating actions and their responses, the ways that particular questions are used in particular contexts to perform particular actions are often culture specific. The English telephone request "Is Judy there?" may be heard as an information-seeking question in other cultures. And in some cultures, it is perfectly acceptable on a first encounter to ask adults questions such as "How old are you?" or "How much money do you make at your job?" In North America, it is not.

There are two different types of responses to the actions that questions initiate. With some exceptions, those that forward the action initiated by the question and, in the process, promote social solidarity are called *preferred responses*, and those that block the action initiated by the question are *dispreferred responses* (Schegloff forthcoming). For example, accepting an invitation is *preferred* and rejecting it is *dispreferred*. However, not all responses that forward the action initiated by the question are preferred. Exceptions include self-deprecations, e.g. "I look fat in this dress, don't I?" and some offers, e.g., "Would you like the last piece of cake?" Of course, people can and do give dispreferred responses, but they generally do these in ways that mark them as dispreferred, e.g., by delaying them with silence and discourse markers such as "well," mitigating them, and providing accounts. These response preferences are not personal, psychological preferences, but structural and social preferences. Even if someone invites a person they dislike to a party, and that person does not want to come, their refusal is still a dispreferred response. In fact, they may even end up coming if they can't think of an acceptable account for refusing.

Aside from this action preference, the design of the question itself can convey a preference for a certain type of answer. Linguistics uses the term *conducive* to describe this preference (Quirk et al. 1985). For example, the questions "Didn't he arrive yet?" and "Do you really want to leave now?" seem to expect negative answers because of the *negative*

*polarity item* “yet” and the *intensifier* “really.” The questions “Did someone call?” and “Hasn’t the boat left already?” seem to expect affirmative answers because of the positive polarity items “someone” and “already.” These questions are conducive because they display the questioner’s epistemic stance (Koshik 2005). Because of the preference for agreement, the answers prefer agreement with this stance.

Some questions, commonly known as *rhetorical questions*, are so strongly conducive that they are not heard as questions but as making a claim, or assertion, of the opposite polarity to that of the question. Because of this polarity reversal, Koshik (2005) calls these questions “reversed polarity questions.” They are often used as accusations, challenges, or complaints, e.g., “when have I.” (i.e., I never have), said in response to a friend’s accusation that Shelley was blowing off her girlfriends for guys, and “oh who cares!” (i.e., no one [except you] cares), said by a teenage boy in response to his parents’ attempts to correct his grammar.

### QUESTIONS IN INSTITUTIONAL TALK

Questions play an important role in institutional talk. According to Drew and Heritage (1992), question–answer sequences are the dominant form of interaction in many types of institutional talk, e.g. counseling interviews, medical interactions, broadcast news interviews (→ Broadcast Talk), survey interviews (→ Survey; Interview, Standardized), employment interviews, emergency calls, courtroom interactions, and pedagogical interactions (→ Educational Communication). Questions are used to enact institutional roles, with the professional often leading the lay person through a series of question-initiated sequences, creating interactional asymmetry.

Questions reflect institutional norms, are central to accomplishing institutional goals, and are designed in special ways to meet these goals. Broadcast news interviewers design questions to strike a balance between the “journalistic norms of impartiality and adversarialness” (Clayman & Heritage 2002). For example, interviewers use reversed polarity questions to challenge interviewees, without directly giving their opinions, e.g., “Doesn’t that suggest that your party is still immature/irresponsible/undisciplined/unserious?” Teachers in one-on-one writing conferences use similar questions as hints to enable students to perform error correction successfully (Koshik 2005). For example, after a student explains how a portion of his text is relevant to his thesis, the teacher says, “Good. Did you tell me that?” conveying, “You didn’t write in your essay what you just told me orally, but you should have.” Attorneys in the courtroom can design yes/no questions to challenge the truth or adequacy of a witness’s evidence. These questions often contain presuppositions which support their views. Lawyers can then require witnesses to answer with type-conforming questions, asking that answers beyond simple “yes” and “no” be stricken from the record (Atkinson & Drew 1979; → Discourse in the Law). In contrast, survey interview questions are designed to avoid presuppositions (Raymond 2003). Doctors use questions to elicit the patient’s history in medical examinations, and to maintain control over what is talked about (Drew & Heritage 1992; → Doctor–Patient Talk).

Many of the questions asked by the professional in institutional talk are *known-information* questions, i.e., questions to which the questioner knows the answer. Lawyers

and broadcast news interviewers are expected to know answers to the questions they ask of witnesses and interviewees; they are asking these questions for an overhearing audience (Drew & Heritage 1992). Known-information questions are so common in North American and British pedagogy that they are identified with doing teaching, even when done outside institutional settings, e.g. when parents help children with homework. They engender a special three-part sequence, which Mehan (1979) calls “initiation, response, evaluation.” In the third turn after the student’s correct answer, the teacher typically evaluates the answer as correct, e.g., “good!” This evaluation does not treat the answer as new information. It would be odd for a teacher, or even a lawyer or news interviewer, to follow an answer to a known-information question with an information receipt such as “oh,” displaying that the answer was news to them (Drew & Heritage 1992).

SEE ALSO: ► Broadcast Talk ► Conversation Analysis ► Directives ► Discourse in the Law ► Doctor–Patient Talk ► Educational Communication ► Interview, Standardized ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Survey

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# R

## Radical Media

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“Radical media” is a term used by communication scholars to refer to information and communication technologies used by radical media activists to bring about social change (→ Activist Media; Social Movements and Communication). In this sense, the word “radical” means the expression of ideas, opinions, and options to reorganize society that are not sanctioned by the established social order. British communication scholar John Downing coined the term in his volume *Radical media*, where he critiques the term “alternative media” as oxymoronic because “[e]verything, at some point, is alternative to something else” (1984, ix). For Downing, the designation radical media needs to be based on a careful historical examination of the medium’s context, content, and consequences. Under certain cultural and political conditions, content that in other contexts would be deemed apolitical and inoffensive can yield tremendous social change when transmitted by radical media; thus, context determines the “radicalness” of the content in each case. Also, the medium’s organization does not necessarily mean that the content is radical; each case has to be examined in order to establish if and to what extent the medium’s content is in fact radical, depending on its potential to strengthen resistance politics and bring about social change.

Radical media serve both progressive and authoritarian social movements. In the first case, radical media are used by radical media activists including environmentalists, women, ethnic minorities, and human rights groups among others. In the latter case, radical media express the views of fundamentalist, racist, or fascist movements that revolve around “radically negative forces” (Downing 2001, ix), such as white supremacy, and religious fundamentalist organizations (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media).

The *goal of radical media* is twofold. First, radical media express someone’s intent to critique, resist, and transform the establishment. Second, radical media are used by activists to build solidarity and support around their agendas. In this sense, radical media develop a series of vertical and lateral communication and information actions and messages.

Radical media come in “a colossal variety of formats” (Downing 2001, x) that range through print media (→ Newspaper), → radio, → television, → video, film, puppets, woodcuts, → dance, → posters, → cartoons, → graffiti, murals, → theatre, performance art, and culture jamming.



With several co-authors, Downing has studied the role(s) of radical media in different geographical, cultural, and political contexts that include radical radio and print media and the fall of the dictatorship in Portugal in the 1970s; the free radio movement in Italy from 1970 to 2000; the case of access television in the United States during the 1980s and 1990s; the case of samizdat in the former Soviet bloc; and the case of Free Radio Berkeley in the United States.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Cartoons ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media  
▶ Community Media ▶ Dance ▶ Graffiti ▶ Newspaper ▶ Poster ▶ Radio ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Television ▶ Theatre ▶ Video

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## **Radio**

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Radio is a media technology that permits one person or organization to communicate with many receivers over large distances via the electromagnetic spectrum and radiated electrons. Listening to radio is possible by modulating voice (→ Broadcast Talk) or music (→ Popular Music) onto a radio wave that transmits at a predetermined signal. A radio receiver is tuned to the modulated carrier wave broadcasting at that frequency and the radio circuitry amplifies the voice or music, after discarding the carrier frequency wave (→ Radio Technology; Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

Radio is a ubiquitous and inexpensive means of mass communication. Audiences need not be literate, making radio accessible to everyone with the most basic language skills, or in the case of music, no language at all (→ Exposure to Radio). Depending on the characteristics of the radio frequency, programs can be heard around the world (→ International Radio), but are typically limited to a small geographic area. The device that became known as the radio took its name from radio waves, the band of frequencies that made the technology possible. Before that, it was more commonly known as “the wireless” because it operated without a physical connection.

Radio was demonstrated by Guglielmo Marconi in 1895, in work based on the earlier theory of Heinrich Hertz and ideas by Nikola Tesla. Marconi's transmitter and receiver

used Morse code to communicate radiotelegraphy. The unmodulated carrier frequency was turned off and on, signaling a short or long (dot–dash) signal that could be interpreted by a trained receiver, making radio an effective means of point-to-point communication, especially from ship to shore.

Radio transformed into the first medium of live mass (point-to-many) communication when Reginald Fessenden and Lee de Forest demonstrated voice and music broadcasts in 1906 and 1907. David Sarnoff of the American Marconi Company first proposed a commercial enterprise in his “radio box” memo of 1916, although Charles Herrold had earlier begun regularly scheduled broadcasts in San Jose, California. The United States began licensing frequencies in 1920, when the necessary radio patents had been pooled by the Radio Corporation of America (RCA). By 1922, radio was a national craze in the US, with more broadcasters than available frequencies (→ Attending to the Mass Media). The Federal Radio Commission (FRC, later the FCC) was the government agency in the US that brought some order to the chaos by 1927 (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). The radio medium became advertiser-supported when one of the original RCA partners and patent-holders, AT&T, successfully experimented with “toll broadcasting” on its New York station WEAJ in 1922 (→ Radio Networks).

Until the popularity of television grew after World War II, radio was the most widely used mass medium, from the 1920s through the late 1940s. Many of the program → genres that exist on television today (e.g., game shows, sitcoms, serialized dramas) were first conceived for radio. After television, radio stations switched to specialized music formats to attract a new audience that often stays loyal because of the unique content or the compelling on-air personality of the announcer (→ Audience Segmentation). In the US, public radio is a designated band of frequencies for noncommercial content.

Radio operates in different ways. AM (amplitude modulation) radio modulates the desired content onto the carrier wave using the vertical strength of the frequency. To combat audio interference from other sources of electromagnetic frequencies (e.g., thunderstorms), Edwin Armstrong developed FM (frequency modulation) radio, which modulated the frequency itself horizontally. Satellite radio (XM and Sirius) are federally licensed digital audio radio service (DARS) frequencies in the US that transmit signals from a high-power geostationary satellite to subscription-only receivers. Finally, HD radio is a method for allowing terrestrial (AM and FM) radio broadcasters to modulate digital (CD-quality) signals onto the same carrier wave used for analog signals, allowing radio content to be received by old and new radios alike on the same band and frequency. Signal compression will eventually allow more content per individual frequencies (called a channel).

Radio stations are *licensed* by individual countries, and radio frequencies are controlled by international treaties and agencies. In the United States, nearly 14,000 radio stations broadcast to over 300 million potential listeners. Radio audiences age 12 and above are measured by Arbitron to assist in the determination of advertising rates. The Radio Advertising Bureau and the National Association of Broadcasters are two important trade organizations. Ownership of radio stations was deregulated in the US by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which allows a single company to own a limitless number of commercial stations as long as no market area designated by Arbitron has more than eight stations per owner. Clear Channel owns over 1,400 stations, making it the largest owner (→ Ownership in the Media).

Media effects research grew out of early studies of radio in → Paul Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research, with seminal studies of, for example, voting behavior as influenced by radio (→ Media Effects, History of). On the other hand, some researchers studied radio from a → uses-and-gratifications perspective. Among these, Herta Herzog examined why people listened to daytime dramas (i.e., soap operas). Hadley Cantril studied, for example, the panic that followed the 1938 Halloween broadcast (by Orson Welles and the Mercury Theatre) of H. G. Wells's epic *War of the Worlds*. Interviews with listeners were used to explain why one million of the six million listeners believed the fictional broadcast to be real.

After the introduction of television, many mass communication researchers and theorists turned their attention to the world of video, which exerts a potentially more powerful influence and consumes many more hours per day of public attention. Still, radio functions as the ultimate portable medium and continues to reach nearly everyone, especially in commuting automobiles. In publications such as the *Journal of Radio Studies*, some studies now focus on how broadcast radio competes with satellite radio and other forms of portable audio media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Genre ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ International Radio ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Popular Music ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## **Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of**

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The radio spectrum is viewed as a natural and scarce resource available to all nations. Even though the rules establishing the allocation of bandwidth and assignment of frequencies vary, common principles apply to all countries. The *legal rationale for controls* over licensing is generally based on four principles: (1) recognition of spectrum as a valuable resource; (2) conservation of bandwidth due to spectrum scarcity; (3) prevention of technical interference between channels; and (4) radio broadcasting's potential to

influence society. These general principles serve as the starting point for regulating ownership, technology, and programming content (→ Radio; Radio: Social History).

## GLOBAL HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION

Before radio's ship-to-shore communication evolved into broadcasting early in the twentieth century, nations recognized the imperative of using wireless telegraphy at sea to save lives and cargo. The International Radiotelegraph Convention of 1906 established policies that held radio frequencies should be registered, signal interference prevented, and proprietary restraints against sending and receiving signals lifted.

Nations began drawing up rules beyond maritime services in the 1920s, and eventually formed an international body to oversee radio regulations. The agreement of 1927 allocated the middle frequency band (MF = 10 kHz to 30 MHz) for broadcasting, maritime communications, land mobile radio, and amateur services. In 1932, the Madrid General Radio Regulations Conference established the *International Telecommunication Union (ITU)*. From its base in Geneva, Switzerland, the ITU today is an arm of the United Nations and effectively manages radio traffic across borders while settling international disputes. A select comparison of countries will show how legal systems contrast both in terms of radio ownership and content restrictions.

## NATIONAL REGULATIONS

### US and Europe

The origin of radio-broadcast regulation in the *US* was prompted by a treaty dispute with Canada, which US Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover was powerless to resolve under existing law. Congress consequently moved to grant his office more power under the Radio Control Bill of 1927, and in 1934 it established the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in order to protect the “public interest, convenience and necessity” of broadcasting. Those terms continue to guide American radio regulations, and in the decades since it was created, the FCC has enforced a wide variety of rules from restricting indecent content to limiting the numbers of stations one group can own. In 1996, the Telecommunications Act was passed to allow more competition in radio and to deregulate other elements of the law (see <http://wireless.fcc.gov/rules.html>; → United States of America: Media System; Communication Law and Policy: North America).

In *Britain*, the British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC) is an independent public organization, which for 80 years was run by a board of governors, who were replaced in 2007 by a trust of 11 members. Britons support the BBC through license fees, and in return the “Beeb” has supplied domestic and global audiences with a wealth of radio programs, but private stations now compete with the BBC under the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA). The 1990 Broadcasting Act created licenses rather than franchises for British broadcasters, yet, unlike the US model, private radio stations had to gain approval for programming formats. When radio groups began taking over multiple stations, the UK devised a system of ownership points to prevent any one group from reaching too wide an audience. Britain also adopted a new technical standard for radio digital

broadcasting, Eureka 147 (→ United Kingdom: Media System; Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

The Association of German Broadcasters (ARD) became the organizing agency for radio in West *Germany* following the fall of the Third Reich. The ARD was modeled after the British public service system, which afforded independence from the government without reliance on advertising revenue. It was originally comprised of nine independent broadcasting corporations covering various regions of the country. After the fall of the Berlin wall the newly founded public broadcasting stations in East Germany were incorporated into the system. Boards of representatives from political parties, industrial unions, religious groups, and other associations monitor the independent public channels. German households support public radio with a fee, but advertising also generates revenue. One of the key principles of broadcasting in Germany is the freedom from governmental interference in terms of program content. No public official can control or censor German programming, but the Federal Constitutional Court has ruled that public radio must give voice to a variety of opinions. That protection corresponds with the European Convention on Human Rights, which has influenced radio broadcasting in other countries as well.

*France* moved from a public monopoly operated under the Office de Radiodiffusion Télévision Française (ORTF) to both a public and a private system of licensing in the early 1980s. In 1984, France adopted its first commercial radio law allowing private stations to seek advertising for support. Today, private-sector radio attracts more than two thirds of the listening audience in France, but Radio France continues to operate seven public channels as well (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

### **African Nations**

Radio is the dominant medium for *African countries*, and the majority of systems reflect their colonial fathers. France used radio as a means for disseminating its language and culture among Africans. Britain encouraged natives to preserve their culture and language by radio after years of using the medium exclusively for its colonists rather than natives. The Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) stands as an example of the British model since it became the first country to gain independence in 1957. Ghana's state-run radio system fell victim to political patronage, however, and failed to realize the BBC ideal of broadcast independence. Following deregulation in the 1990s, private stations replaced the GBC as the most popular channels for Ghanans.

African countries tend to rely primarily on national broadcasting systems with studios located in the capital or the nation's largest city. Nigeria and South Africa's broadcast systems stand apart among those on the continent for their development of regional systems of radio. Following widespread deregulation, hundreds of independent or community radio stations sprung up across Africa. Legal structures vary, but governments generally apply stricter controls over broadcasters than western powers. Zambia, for example, licenses private radio stations, but forbids news bulletins on them. Clandestine radio channels assumed an important role in African broadcasting during the 1990s. The infamous *Radio des Mille Collines* (Radio of a Thousand Hills) in Rwanda enflamed genocidal hatred contributing to the mass murder of millions in 1994. As a result,

humanitarian stations were established by the United Nations to broadcast messages of peace to Africa's war-torn regions (→ Africa: Media Systems; Communication Law and Policy: Africa).

## Asia

Two key distinctions in radio regulation are the extent to which the government applies legal controls over content, and the measure to which privatization of radio ownership has occurred. Radio Singapura of Singapore for example was originally government operated but became privatized in 1994. Radio Singapura is still subject to government censorship ostensibly to protect the multicultural population from offensive and violent content. Singapore law forbids the denigration of races or religions in addition to banning pornography or violence "contrary to the public interest." The Media Development Authority of Singapore exercises censorship whenever it detects programming that might put the public at risk. In *Japan*, Nippon Hoso Kyokai (NHK) operates three radio services required by law to elevate cultural values for both national and community interests. Article 44 of the Broadcast Law of Japan requires NHK to conduct research and development in radio, and serve foreign countries with Japanese programming that will contribute to international understanding (→ Japan: Media System).

At the other end of the spectrum, the Democratic People's Republic of *North Korea* operates a government-run system of radio connecting Pyongyang by radio wire to more than 4,000 "broadcasting booths" located in farms, factories, and other public places. The government forbids reception of foreign channels on any North Korean radio receiver. *South Korea's* National Security Law prevents its citizens from listening to Pyongyang's radio propaganda if the government in Seoul determines that they are doing so to help North Korean efforts. In addition to South Korea's 100-plus radio stations operated by two networks, American Armed Forces radio is popular, and internet-based radio stations are cropping up on broadband websites. One independent Internet radio station operated by North Korean defectors was forced to vacate its offices following a protest from the Pyongyang government, but continued webcasting from private offices (→ South Korea: Media System; Communication Law and Policy: Asia).

Shanghai signed on to the first American radio station in *China*, but the Minister of Communications established the first Chinese public radio channel in 1927. The Chinese Communist Party established its first radio station, New China, in 1945, in the southern province of Yunin, and took over nationalist transmitters in 1949. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, China used a three-tiered broadcasting system based on geography – municipal, regional, and national networks – funded by governments at each level. Radio in China remains a state-run system with no private ownership but with some competition among individual stations and networks (→ China: Media System).

## Latin America

The rule of law in Latin America is by no means airtight and the politicization of radio airwaves is a defining factor. In *Mexico*, a privatization bill was enacted in 2000 over the loud protests of government-run radio stations, which charged that political patronage

was involved in the new law. In *Venezuela*, the 1999 constitution introduced by President Hugo Chavez promised freedom of expression for broadcasters, but human-rights groups observed prior restraint was ordered by judicial fiat, and more recently a widespread suspension of radio and television stations critical of the Chavez administration was ordered.

In *Brazil*, privately owned radio stations are required to carry government-sponsored programs including a one-hour evening newscast produced by the government, *Hora do Brazil*. Community radio stations have reached listeners in rural areas of the country, but not always legally. ANATEL, Brazil's telecommunications regulatory agency, has shut down renegade community stations broadcasting without a license.

Radio stations in *Chile* were nationalized under Salvador Allende's regime in the early 1970s, but eventually were sold to political groups representing the Socialists, Communists, and Christian Democrats. Today, the Roman Catholic Church also broadcasts over a radio network in Chile.

In *Colombia*, the National Institute of Radio and Television offers program content for both private and government-owned stations. The two largest networks are required by law to broadcast shortwave for Colombian interests outside the country.

The international scope of foreign investments in radio systems and the extent to which countries legally restrict foreign ownership for reasons of national security, culture, or economy has changed in recent years. Brazil opened its cable television industry to foreign ownership, but not its radio stations. Chile, on the other hand, applies no restrictions to foreign investments in radio, and India recently raised its limit to over 70 percent to attract foreign investment.

Only American and Puerto Rican citizens were allowed to hold US radio licenses until 1996 when a cap was placed on direct foreign investments of 20 percent for private firms, and 25 percent for holding companies. Following September 11, 2001, a select committee of government agents was authorized to approve foreign ownership in US radio licenses on a case-by-case basis (→ Communication Law and Policy: South America).

SEE ALSO: ► Africa: Media Systems ► BBC ► China: Media System ► Communication Law and Policy: Africa ► Communication Law and Policy: Asia ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► Communication Law and Policy: South America ► European Union: Communication Law ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Foreign Policy and the Media ► International Radio ► Japan: Media System ► South Korea: Media System ► Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ► Radio ► Radio: Social History ► Telecommunications: Law and Policy ► United Kingdom: Media System ► United Nations, Communication Policies of ► United States of America: Media System

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# Radio for Development

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Radio for development is the strategic use of this medium to effect social changes beneficial to a community, nation, or region. Within the study and practice of communication for national development and social change, → radio has claimed a prominent place for a variety of reasons. As an aural medium, radio obviates the need for a literate audience, making it an attractive medium for states and agencies working with impoverished populations that lack access to schools or other forms of literacy training. In addition, radio is an inexpensive medium for its audience, and therefore enjoys a wide range of diffusion even among rural people with scant resources for material not directly related to their basic needs. Finally, radio is relatively inexpensive to produce and distribute, making it an attractive medium for donor agencies concerned with per capita costs for reaching underdeveloped audiences with pro-social messages. Indeed, among all communication media (print, film, telephone, television, and new media), radio consistently enjoys the highest rates of diffusion and use in the developing world (→ Exposure to Radio).

## EARLY THEORIES AND METHODS

Along with the broad use of radio for development, a wide range of approaches and methods has emerged with its evolution and deployment. In the early years of development communication (the 1950s through the 1960s), which were dominated by modernization theories, the focus of scholars and practitioners was both on the mere exposure to radio and on the diffusion of “good information” (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Modernization). For *modernization theorists*, radio, along with other mass media, was considered an “index of development.” Indeed, in the early 1960s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO) issued standards for media sufficiency that identified the per capita requirement of five radios per 100 inhabitants as a measure of minimal development. As the primary, transnational organization conducting research into communication and development at the time, UNESCO reflected the assumptions of scholars that radio and other media functioned as



“magic multipliers” of development and as the gateways to “empathy” and social mobility needed in the transition away from traditional values and beliefs (→ Empathy Theory). Many social surveys at the time demonstrated correlations between media exposure and wider economic and political participation.

During this period, however, neither radio nor other mass media generally were seen as a simple panacea for underdevelopment, as is sometimes erroneously asserted by some scholars. Rather, radio was to be combined with information relevant to development objectives in a process of diffusion aimed at attitude and behavior change. Early development efforts were often guided and assessed by the theoretical propositions delineated in Rogers’s *Diffusion of innovations* (1962), which prescribed messages aimed at achieving attitude changes among individuals considered to be early adopters of new technologies and practices (→ Opinion Leader; Rogers, Everett). By the time his book was first published, Rogers had documented some 5,000 diffusion projects, many of them using radio in the development process. These early approaches to radio for development are often represented in the shorthand phrase “the dominant paradigm of communication,” which generally conceptualizes media use as a one-way, top-down spread of information from experts to beneficiaries.

### CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGES

The dominant paradigm of radio for development was challenged in both theory and practice in the 1970s when there was a confluence of intellectual and social factors. Many of the leading theories and practices emerged from Latin America, including: (1) Paolo Freire’s work on dialogic pedagogy; (2) dependency theory’s critique of capitalism; and (3) liberation theology’s option for the poor (→ Dependency Theories). All of these movements reacted against the top-down model of development and called for communication practices that relied on the *participation of grassroots communities*, which were viewed as crucial partners in efforts to design and implement particular projects (→ Participatory Communication).

The social and political context of this movement reinforced its direction. Within Latin America, a turn toward authoritarian government spurred a strong call to return to civilian rule, which accompanied democratic models of communication. On the global stage, former colonies from Africa and Asia took their place within international organizations, such as UNESCO, and pushed agendas such as the call for a → New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO). Indeed, in 1977 UNESCO published what has become known as the “Belgrade Document,” which had a strong impact on radio for development. In it, UNESCO identified the goals of access, participation, and self-management for radio development projects.

Actually, the practice of grassroots radio in Latin America preceded the theory. As far back as 1947, Radio Sutatenza, established by a Roman Catholic priest in Colombia, began using a *community model of radio for development*. The station’s success at promoting community participation in radio for development stimulated numerous other broadcast projects that ultimately led to the formation of the Latin American Association of Radio Education (ALER). Since then, hundreds, if not thousands, of small community radio stations have taken root around the world. They tend to define development

broadly and rely on various means of support including educational institutions, international aid organizations, churches, listener contributions, and even advertising. Successful models of participatory radio for development include: listening clubs, where people meet to discuss programs and then ask questions and offer responses to broadcasters either in writing or on tape; cassette forums, where local populations submit opinions, suggestions, and questions to broadcasters serving rural populations; “people’s reporters,” who are representatives elected by communities to act as local journalists and submit news to radio stations; and community centers that broadcast cultural events and public affairs programs. Regardless of their particular practices, most participatory uses of radio tend to work with existing nongovernmental organizations and other civil society groups to increase their impact in achieving development objectives and goals.

Participatory approaches have been so successful that virtually all radio for development projects today make blanket claims to incorporate access and dialogue into their activities. This has led to vigorous *theoretical debates* attempting to refine this robust concept. At one end of the theoretical debates, scholars have identified approaches that conceptualize participation merely as a means to an end, or as the practical necessity of identifying salient topics, concepts, language, and actors to most effectively deliver media products such as radio dramas, public service announcements, or songs with pro-social messages. At the other end of the debates is a school that posits participation as an end in and of itself. This approach understands participation as practically a moral mandate wherein the beneficiaries of any program should be directly involved at every stage of production. Deep participation in the communication process is thought to contribute to multiple outcomes ranging from material gains to psychological empowerment.

### REFORMING EARLY APPROACHES

In a move stemming from these theoretical debates, some clear descendents of the dominant paradigm approach to radio for development have undergone rigorous reformulation since the 1990s. Two complementary approaches in particular stand out as robust methods of implementing radio for development projects: → social marketing and → entertainment education. *Social marketing* traces its roots to the advertising industry and adopts the industry’s primary objective of persuading individuals to change their attitudes and behaviors. Drawing on research and methods from consumer behavior, social marketing attaches pro-social messages to industry techniques of influencing market segments through radio advertising, announcements, and programs.

Similarly, *entertainment education* borrows techniques prevalent within various media industries and aimed at mass audiences. As indicated in its name, this approach designs projects that use media strategically both to entertain and to educate audiences about development issues, with the aim of changing attitudes and behavior (Singhal 2004). Entertainment education programs are founded on Albert Bandura’s social learning theory and create programming with characters that model pro-social beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (→ Observational Learning).

A recent review of 14 cases of radio dramas from Latin America, Africa, and south Asia demonstrated the contemporary strength and influence of Bandura’s social learning theory and the entertainment education approaches to radio for development (Myers 2002;

→ Development Communication: Africa; Development Communication: Asia; Development Communication: Latin America). Like social marketing projects, entertainment education radio programs rely on formative research of audience segments, consisting largely of focus groups and surveys. This formative research is vital to shaping pro-social messages that are largely determined in advance by donor agencies. At this time, the most commonly funded programs focus on family planning and AIDS prevention (→ Health Communication). They are sometimes evaluated through survey techniques that measure message retention, attitudes, and reported behavior changes. Social marketing and entertainment education share a clear lineage from dominant paradigm approaches in their top-down transmission orientation to communication that focuses on individual attitudes and behaviors.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RADIO

As with all development communication projects, the future of radio for development will be shaped by a combination of technological advances and the agendas of donor agencies, international organizations, and communication scholars. In the mid-1990s, radio for development was given renewed life by the advent of *wind-up* or “*clockwork*” radios that operated without the need for electricity or batteries. Despite their sustainable qualities and relative affordability, the wind-up sets have generally been beyond the means of many of the world’s poorest people. New developments in solar-powered sets, however, are once again trying to place radios in the hands of individuals who do not have access to electricity or batteries.

Aside from technological challenges, the agendas of *donor agencies* vary by region, which will shape future uses of radio for development. US programs, such as the Agency for International Development and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, prefer programs that reflect the dominant paradigm tradition. These sorts of programs reach mass audiences and generate quantitative data, such as ratings points and attitude measures, that are demanded by donor agencies in their evaluation requirements. European foundations and religious organizations, however, have been more supportive traditionally of community radio approaches that strive for local participation and control of communication. This approach to radio for development is also supported by international organizations such as the United Nations Development Program and UNESCO, which currently are focused on promoting democracy locally, nationally, and internationally. These institutions have identified corporate media as an impediment to democratic communication practices, while noting the rise of civil society groups and nongovernmental organizations in the regulation of societies. This emphasis on democratizing communication will provide support and encouragement for more participatory and community radio for development projects.

Finally, scholars continue to debate *theoretical questions* in development communication and will influence radio for development practices in the future. The notion of participation has been the most robust concept in the field of development communication over the past quarter century, but scholars have adopted it in complex and nuanced ways. Many scholars continue to devote energy to democratic theories of radio as well as social marketing and entertainment education approaches to the medium. Both

approaches to radio for development will continue to have adherents, proponents, and defenders in the long term.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Development Communication: Asia ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Health Communication ▶ Modernization ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Social Marketing ▶ UNESCO

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## **Radio France Internationale**

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Radio France Internationale began in 1929 with the creation of the French national office of radio broadcasting. Two years later, in 1931, Radio France began broadcasting to French colonies in 20 languages under the name *Poste Colonial*. Its target audience was French expatriate colonizers and a few natives, termed *évolués*, who had been trained to speak French and engage in low-status labor, such as nursing, postal clerking, and the infantry, which whites were not allowed to perform in the colonies. In 1938, Poste

Colonial was renamed Paris Mondial, and was then jettisoned during the pro-Nazi Vichy regime (1940–1944), resuming after liberation. In 1964 the French government created the ORTF (French Radio and Television Broadcasting). In 1974 Radio France became a separate entity from the ORTF. The following year, on January 6, 1975, Radio France Internationale (RFI) was created as a subsidiary of Radio France (→ International Radio; France: Media System).

From 1987 RFI was independent from Radio France and broadcast news and public affairs programs around the world in 19 languages on shortwave frequencies 24 hours a day. In Paris, RFI could be heard on the FM band; the station could also be accessed in France via satellites and the Internet. From 1991 RFI could be heard on FM in 27 African countries. It was estimated that RFI had a global audience of 44 million listeners, roughly three-fifths of them in Africa. This number surpassed many African domestic radio services, including Africa No 1, a Panafricanist radio station broadcasting from Libreville, Gabon. The rest of RFI's audience was spread out worldwide, with 24 percent in the Middle East, 9 percent in Latin America, 5.3 percent in Asia, 5 percent in the Pacific, 4.7 percent in Europe and 0.8 percent in Northern America (Vittin 1997). During the → Francophonies, an annual worldwide event in which all the former French colonies celebrate their cultures, RFI usually worked in tandem with other powerful francophone radio services such as Radio Canada and Radio Suisse Romande in order to extend Francophonie worldwide.

In the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century, RFI had a workforce of 850, including 350 correspondents worldwide. RFI's influence also extended beyond radio to other media such as newspapers. Journalists such as Philippe Leymarie and Stephen Smith, who wrote regularly for → *Le Monde Diplomatique*, frequently broadcast on RFI. RFI also worked in tandem with the Francophone TV channel TV5 to expand French audiovisual presence globally, in order to compete with major players such as the → BBC World Service, CNN International (→ CNN), and Qatar's Al Jazeera (→ Arab Satellite TV News). As of June 2005, roughly two million people were visiting RFI's website each month.

In *Africa*, the popularity of international radio services such as RFI, the BBC World Service, → Voice of America, and → Deutsche Welle was entirely due to the media monopoly in many African states, which turned local and national radio into a government mouthpiece. Within this context, African audiences saw international radio as providing "objective" news that seemed less biased and more complex than state → propaganda (→ Africa: Media Systems). These international radio services managed to retain their influence even after the wind of democratization swept Africa in the early 1990s. According to Vittin (2002), RFI serves as the official voice of France because the service is entirely funded by the French government. This includes the French Foreign Ministry (€71 million in 2004) as well as the French Ministry of Communication (€53 million in 2004) (Roy 2004).

However, this funding raised controversies regarding agenda setting, French national interests, and the desire for objective news. Vittin (2002) argues that there are dangers when important → news regarding the continent is framed by journalists in Paris or New York (→ Framing of the News). News within that context becomes a tool to internationalize French or US perspectives about a particular African situation. As a result, descriptions may be packaged with national self-interest or lack analytical nuances. This *management of information* may also legitimate and validate some points of views at the

expense of others, creating a disequilibrium in a particular public sphere. Within this context, Zanasoumo Roger Nouma claims that RFI's implicit mission is cheerleading for French corporations and helping to implement their strategies on a global basis, and quotes RFI's former chairman, Fouad Benhalla, as openly claiming that RFI's mission is to offer an official French vision of world events (Nouma 1990, 65, 106).

SEE ALSO: ► Africa: Media Systems ► Americanization of the Media ► Arab Satellite TV News ► BBC World Service ► CNN ► Deutsche Welle ► Framing of the News ► France: Media System ► Francophonie ► International Radio ► Le Monde Diplomatique ► News ► Propaganda ► Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ► Vatican Radio ► Voice of America

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## **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty**

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Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty were among the half dozen major broadcast information sources for the Soviet bloc from soon after World War II until the final collapse of the Soviet system in 1991. The two shortwave stations were covertly founded in 1950 (Radio Free Europe) and 1953 (Radio Liberation from Bolshevism, its initial title) by the US Central Intelligence Agency. Radio Liberty broadcast to the citizens of the Soviet Union, and Radio Free Europe to most of the sovietized eastern and central Europe, including the Balkan states. Radio Liberty's signal began to reach the USSR with any strength only in 1960 (→ International Radio).

### **THE STATIONS' HISTORY AND GOALS**

There were exceptions to the coverage. One was the German Democratic Republic, which was covered by RIAS (Radio in the American Sector) broadcasting out of West Berlin, and another was Albania, where the absence of shortwave sets in the country and the scarcity

of Albanian speakers in the USA rendered the project impracticable. Yugoslavia was defined, after the 1948 Stalin–Tito break, as a halfway house of sorts between the Soviet bloc and the west, and began to receive a multilingual “South Slav” broadcast service only in 1993 as the federal Yugoslav republic disintegrated into its constituent elements. The three Baltic republics, for a complex variety of reasons, were not fully covered until the 1980s, while the USSR’s non-Russophones received very little attention.

Officially, both stations’ funding was provided at the outset by an ongoing nationwide campaign within the USA to protect citizens in both zones from the effects of monopoly Communist Party control over the flow of information (→ Propaganda). Ostensibly, the Crusade for Freedom (the campaign’s title), inaugurated by President Eisenhower, collected annually a host of small contributions from around the USA, referred to as “truth dollars,” which provided the stations with their financial base. In reality, at most only around 20 percent of RFE’s funding was procured from the Crusade, and none for RL.

This reality was unknown to a large proportion of the stations’ staff, and came as a bitter shock to some who, when the truth finally emerged in 1967, felt they had been lied to. Their sentiments were shared by a number of public figures, who were less disturbed at the truth itself than that the Crusade’s everyday barrage of appeals and advertising had misled the public into subsidizing a government spying agency. Other longstanding critics of the stations – some of whom objected to their trenchantly anti-Soviet tone, others who wanted them to instigate armed revolt in Soviet bloc countries – found in the revelation supporting evidence for their views.

### **TURBULENCES AND CHANGES OF SITE**

This episode led to a period of some turbulence in the stations’ life which eventually, after a series of congressional and presidential inquiries and reports, led to the *removal of the CIA’s control over the stations*. The Agency was replaced in 1974 by the Board for International Broadcasting, whose initial two top figures were a former assistant secretary of state and a former director of news at CBS. In 1976 the two stations were administratively merged as RFE/RL, Inc., and in 1978 almost all operations shifted to Munich in Germany. Paradoxically, many of the staff found the new management considerably more intrusive and heavy-handed than the CIA, which had largely followed the pattern of the British Foreign Office’s fairly light touch in managing the → BBC’s overseas service.

In 1981 the headquarters in Munich were bombed, causing four people to be injured and US\$2 million worth of damage. Stasi files secured from the GDR after 1989 indicate that the money and equipment were supplied by Romania’s Ceausescu regime, but that the wreckers were from a variety of nations, led by Ilyich Ramírez Sánchez, better known to the → tabloid press as the professional terrorist “Carlos the Jackal.”

In 1993, following the final collapse of the Soviet bloc, the Clinton administration moved the operation to Prague, where President Havel offered a site rent-free in the city center. The services were considerably reduced, with the Hungarian service being cut out altogether. In 1998, the US Congress placed the new Radio Free Iran and Radio Free Iraq under RFE/RL control, and in 2002 Radio Free Afghanistan.

As of 2007, RFE/RL was broadcasting nearly 1,000 hours a week to its traditional target zones and to southwestern Asia, and had bureaus in 19 countries. Since 1996 RFE/

RL has built over 500 transmitter sites to enable AM and FM broadcasts as well as its traditional shortwave service. The languages in which it broadcast were Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, Avar, Azerbaijani, Bashkir, Belarusian, Bosnian, Chechen, Circassian, Crimean Tatar, Croatian, Dari, Georgian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Pashto, Persian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Tajik, Tatar, Turkmen, Ukrainian, and Uzbek. RFE/RL has also built up an electronic information service more recently, which according to its website has been receiving over 20 million hits a day.

### **DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER**

The main difference between the RFE/RL stations and the → BBC World Service, → Deutsche Welle, → Voice of America, or → Radio France Internationale was that while the latter aimed to provide an international news service, RFE/RL endeavored to be the honest domestic news service – not without international coverage, to be sure – that the nations and republics in the Soviet zone were lacking. They were staffed to a great extent by refugees and expatriates from the various Soviet bloc nations, who set themselves the task very often of diffusing samizdat publications that would otherwise have reached rather few people in major cities. In this way, they could amplify muzzled public opinion and maintain some semblance of internal debate within each of the nations independent of the regimes. However, especially in the early years, their form of address was sometimes very local and specific, for example naming a factory manager who was a sexual predator and warning him that justice would await him once the regime collapsed.

*Reactions to these stations* varied sharply across the political spectrum, as well as within the Soviet zone itself (aside from the political leadership, whose views may easily be deduced). For VoA and BBC adherents, the two stations were often seen as very aggressive in style to the point of being counter-productive. For the West German government, where the Munich office was located, this sharp style ran counter to their drive to develop an effective working relationship with the Eastern bloc (*Ostpolitik*), in the interests both of keeping the two parts of Germany in communication, and in terms of national economic opportunities for business and trade with Moscow. For others on the political right, the stations repeatedly failed to deliver the real goods, in other words. stimulating uprising against the Soviet yoke.

Within the stations themselves, there was an almost equally *wide spectrum of political opinions*, some of which surfaced directly in broadcasts and some of which did not. In Radio Liberty, for example, the sudden new rush of Jewish Russian émigré professionals beginning in the late 1970s led to frequent tension between the newer arrivals and the older generation of gentile Russians, some of them racist nationalists, intuitively skeptical that a Jewish person could be a true Russian. It was also widely recognized both that the Soviet regimes infiltrated their own people into RFE/RL, and that some station staff had a pro-fascist background and present.

### **THE POLITICS OF BROADCAST JAMMING**

The Soviet bloc regimes routinely sought to jam RFE/RL broadcasting. Estimates and reports vary, but as of 1961 there were approximately 1,400 local and long-distance



jamming stations altogether. Different regimes operated jamming at different times, with Poland largely ceasing from 1956 onwards, though the Russians continued to jam broadcasts in Polish. According to one Polish spokesperson at the time, the energy needed would have supplied electric power to a medium-sized town. In 1981 the BBC World Service estimated that four days of jamming cost Soviet Russia as much as the BBC's Russian Service for a whole year. On the other hand, especially in large cities, it was generally all too effective, though the determined could sometimes still hear the broadcasts by listening at twilight or in the evening, when the signal was at its clearest, or in the countryside.

However, jamming also interfered with some local broadcasting. Counter-jamming measures were undertaken at different times by the western stations. From time to time, in response to negotiations between the Soviet bloc and the west, the Soviets would reduce or pause their jamming, but these windows rarely lasted very long. In late November 1988, however, the Soviet Union suddenly and without fanfare stopped jamming. This proved to be of particular importance during the attempted coup against President Gorbachev in August 1991 by those determined to reinstate the old Soviet system. Because jamming was not in place, western news services, in particular CNN, were able both to broadcast what was happening and to be seen in the major Soviet cities. This most likely had a powerful impact on consolidating the opposition to the coup, which rapidly and boldly expressed itself across the USSR, and thus led to the coup's failure, almost without bloodshed.

## **ROLE OF THE STATIONS IN POLITICAL UPHEAVALS**

### **Hungary, 1956**

As the determined Hungarian revolution against Soviet colonization developed in late 1956, RFE was caught in an extreme dilemma. Should it simply report events as they transpired, or encourage people to take their rebellion to new heights? The situation was further complicated by the fact that some informed global opinion judged that the Soviets, having withdrawn militarily, would not return, while others suspected the worst. Some RFE staff, with the interim premier Imre Nagy's past in mind, were skeptical that he had become a nationalist leader, while others were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt. In the event, some very ugly street murders of unarmed party officials in Budapest gave the Soviet Politburo members in favor of military action the rationale they needed to press for intervention. The situation was uncertain from day to day.

Nonetheless, a review of broadcasting output subsequently determined that a considerable amount of the tone of broadcasts had been highly emotional in a way that would easily encourage Hungarian listeners to think the west would intervene to protect the revolutionaries. Thus, while no evidence was available that any direct message had been broadcast urging listeners to expect western action, the impression lingered for many decades that RFE in particular had whipped up expectations in Hungary to the point of getting people killed, or later executed, in the name of help that was never going to be forthcoming. Domestic criticism of the station within the USA repeatedly harked back to this episode.

### **The Prague Spring, 1968**

With this in mind, the Czech and Slovak broadcasters in the station found themselves in a paradoxical position during the Prague Spring. When the gradual cultural thaw in intellectual and literary circles – symbolized by the first republishing of Kafka since the 1948 communist coup – came very rapidly to galvanize the entire Czech and Slovak publics, the RFE Czechoslovakia service found itself compelled by management, as well as its own political inhibitions, to tread with the greatest caution. No one wanted to be accused a second time of stimulating a revolt whose consequences would be borne exclusively on the spot. Nor did the staff want to propose or even endorse any actions that could be used by Soviet hardliners as a rationale for armed intervention.

Thus with the temporary explosion of freedom in media within Czechoslovakia itself, RFE found itself constantly behind the times, since it would have been direct anti-Soviet provocation to install any of its own reporters in the country. Indeed, at one point the station found itself urging moderation and caution on the reformers, who seemed to be overly insouciant of the temptation they were presenting to Soviet hawks. When the Soviet invasion came, they were assiduous in urging Czechs and Slovaks to stay calm and not to engage in any pointless heroics.

### **Polish Solidarity, Perestroika, and the Soviet System's Collapse**

The emergence of Poland's huge Solidarity labor movement in 1979–1980, the 1981 imposition of martial law in Poland to avoid Soviet intervention, the collapse from within of the Polish regime, and the emergence of Gorbachev as reformist Soviet leader bent on the reconstruction (*perestroika*) of Soviet life, all presented RFE/RL with unparalleled new opportunities. It was unexpected that RFE would add to its critiques of the regimes' failures critical commentary on the timidity of the Polish Catholic hierarchy, which until then had constituted something of a sacred cow, but it was a sign both of the times and of RFE's maturity that this was possible. RFE also expanded its pop music programs, highly popular with Soviet bloc youth. RL's new Russian director concluded that Gorbachev's policies were more of a threat to the old Soviet system than to the west, and so steered away from the knee-jerk suspicion of many of the old guard staff regarding the changes underway.

In the few days following the nuclear power plant disaster in Chernobyl in 1986 the Soviet response – or rather nonresponse – confirmed the old guard in their skepticism, until the Kremlin's sudden switch to acknowledging the disaster some 72 hours after the event. In contrast, President Gorbachev's frankness in publicly recognizing the mess the USSR had gotten itself into by invading Afghanistan (our "bleeding wound") was a sign of change. Not only however did RL involve itself constructively with the new direction the USSR was taking, but for the first time it also began seriously to engage with broadcasting to the non-Russophone republics of the Soviet Union.

The trajectory of these two stations is an absorbing one. Inevitably, after 1991, voices called for their closure, since their ultimate mission had been achieved. The counterargument was that their service was still needed as nations long deprived of a vigorous news market struggled to develop democratic broadcasting. In some ways slimmed down, but

also with some new projects, RFE/RL has continued up to the present to be actively engaged in producing quality international news (see website at [www.rferl.org](http://www.rferl.org)).

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ International Radio  
▶ Propaganda ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Voice of America

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## **Radio Networks**

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A traditional → radio network consists of a series of radio broadcasting stations connected in some way (typically by broadcast, landline, microwave, or satellite; → Radio Technology) so that each of the stations can carry the same programs or advertisements (→ Advertising). Often, the stations will carry the programs simultaneously, but under some circumstances (e.g., stations in differing time zones), a program or set of programs may be delayed for a given length of time. In both cases, the network serves to extend the audience beyond that which would have been available without the network. The linkage between stations may take the form of very different stations linked for the convenience of sharing particular content, or may take the form of one primary station linked to multiple “repeater” stations in which the repeater simply rebroadcasts whatever it receives from the primary station. More recently, with the advent of satellite channels and the → Internet, the radio network label has been applied to describe any audio service involving a large number of receivers, rather than stations, although it is questionable whether a system involving only one transmission device should be considered a network.

### **NETWORK PREDECESSORS**

The idea of program origination in one location and an audience for the program in other locations is somewhat older than radio itself, having been demonstrated with the telephone during the 1880s and 1890s. In Budapest, brothers Antoine and Francois Puskas linked telephone subscribers to a commercial service offering news and entertainment for about 40 years, beginning in 1893 (Sterling & Kittross 1978, 39). While the Puskas’s

service might be more similar to radio broadcasting than radio network broadcasting, experiments in the US in 1885 engaged audiences for music programs in two different locations (New York Times 1885), and by 1890 several cities were connected for telephone transmissions of musical and comedy entertainment. By this time, college boat races had already been “transmitted” to two different audiences 400 miles apart, and predictions were being made that all major cities east of the Mississippi river would soon be joined by telephone entertainment, with various channels available at “the push of a button” (New York Times 1890). In 1909, Lee DeForest included a simultaneous radio/telephone broadcast experiment in which 21 mayors in their own cities talked into the telephones in their offices, engaging in a discussion that was broadcast via radiowaves to all the cities, so that each mayor could hear all the others (Chicago Daily Tribune 1909).

### DEVELOPMENT OF RADIO NETWORKS

Experiments with radio networking began during the early 1920s. By the mid-1920s, permanent radio networks had been established in the United Kingdom, the US, and a number of other countries. One of the earliest radio networks was the *British Broadcasting Company*, later the British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC; United Kingdom: Media System). In 1922, the Post Office was charged with organizing broadcasting in such a way as to avoid the chaos that had ensued in the US, where inventors, manufacturers, and audiences were all dealing with a “frontier” situation in which, with radio’s rapid development, no one was certain how it could be used to make money, or how it should be regulated (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). F. J. Brown of the Post Office visited the US prior to beginning work on British broadcasting policy in order to learn from what had happened there (Briggs 1995). British manufacturers and the public were eager for regular radio broadcasting. Marconi had moved to England soon after his demonstration of wireless telegraphy (→ Telegraph, History of), where his presence helped to spur on other inventors and entrepreneurs. By 1922, the Post Office had licensed some experimental stations (2LO and 2MT), and later the same year the BBC.

Formed in October 1922 by a group of wireless manufacturers (including Marconi), the BBC began broadcasting from Marconi’s London studio on November 14. Broadcasts from Birmingham and Manchester soon followed. Within three years, the BBC could be heard nearly everywhere in the UK. The group of manufacturers who began the BBC saw broadcasting as a commercial enterprise, a stimulus for the sale of radio receivers. A major influence on the growth of the philosophy of regulation of the BBC, and of radio networks in the country, was John Reith, who envisaged the BBC as an independent broadcasting system broadcasting information and entertainment for the public good, free from political or commercial pressure (→ Public Broadcasting Systems; Public Broadcasting, History of). This tension between the use of the spectrum for the public good and for commercial enterprise became one of the major points of debate in most countries, and has been resolved in many different ways.

In the *United States*, where privately owned experimental stations had been broadcasting, sporadic hook-ups between stations occurred occasionally during the early 1920s, much like the telephone experiments of the 1890s (→ United States of America: Media System). For security reasons, amateur stations had been shut down during World War I, and the

US Navy had requisitioned Marconi's and other foreign radio investments in the US. As a result, the US Navy developed the world's most powerful transmitter and created a patents pool of radio technology from which its suppliers could freely draw for the duration of the war.

General Electric (GE) and American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T) were heavily involved in radio from an early period, and during the war served as suppliers for the Navy. This appropriation of patents and technologies allowed a number of technological advances and standardization to occur. After the war, GE was able to use its influence to help control which patents were being released by the Navy so that a certain level of standardization could be achieved. Along with these developments, British Marconi was able to join with other companies in the formation of Radio Corporation of America (RCA; Balk 2006).

In 1920, the US Navy had transferred the Marconi stations it had confiscated to RCA. With RCA's collection of stations, a radio network was probably inevitable. There was no generally accepted means of radio support – toll stations, taxes on receivers, or simple funding through set sales were all considered. Additionally, producing programs for many stations proved to be a monumental and costly task. In 1925, plans began for a “broadcasting service association” for stations, and by 1926 the National Broadcasting Company was formed, advertised as “Radio for 26,000,000 homes” (Balk 2006). The first broadcast in late November linked 25 stations. Within two months, a second NBC network, the “Blue” network debuted. In 1927, the Columbia Broadcasting Company (later Columbia Broadcasting System) began operations as a third major network in the US. Although a series of stations formed an educational radio network in the 1930s, it was not until the late 1960s that a truly public (noncommercial) radio network, National Public Radio (NPR), was formed in the US.

Development of radio networks around the world tended to follow a pattern similar to that in the UK (broadcasting as a government-sanctioned public good) or in the US (broadcasting as a commercial enterprise), although elements of both traditions appear in all countries. Egypt, for example, included early experimentation similar to that in the US, but opted for a system heavily influenced by the BBC. In 1932, the Egyptian government employed the British Marconi Company to provide a noncommercial radio service for Egypt (Boyd 1999; → Egypt: Media System). In smaller countries, an international audience is often obtained with a powerful radio station rather than through a network. Czech Radio began broadcasting in 1923, and continues today in multiple regional stations as well as Internet locations. Radio Prague, the international component of Czech Radio, began as a station in 1936, and is considered more like a network today because of the array of content it produces in association with stations in other countries (e.g., Croatia, Romania, Australia, and the US), and the extent of offerings in multiple languages via broadcast and over the Internet (→ Czech Republic: Media System; International Radio).

## **GOLDEN AGE OF RADIO NETWORKS AND AFTER**

The motivation behind radio networks is to bring content to audiences that are separated by distance. For most large countries, network radio broadcasting is needed for full

geographic coverage, so network broadcasting of some sort became important in providing news, education, and entertainment for the country (→ Radio News). In hindsight, network radio broadcasting before the diffusion of television forms a kind of golden age for network broadcasting. In a pre-television era, network news, drama, comedy, and music provide access to information and talent undreamed of before radio's diffusion (→ Radio: Social History). Typically, → television takes over many of the news and entertainment functions for most people and provides the added visual dimension, that forces changes in network radio content, whether the network is commercial or noncommercial (→ Television, Visual Characteristics of).

In the television era, radio networks must adapt by finding which particular niches it fills better than television. This may be in terms of geography or content. For example, radio networks may have access to audiences in places where it is difficult to receive television signals, such as remote villages or islands or in places where terrain blocks television signals. In the South Pacific, Radio Polynesia links a number of radio stations through FM and shortwave broadcasting to pool resources to provide a radio network in which the stations are separated by hundreds of miles and different forms of government.

In regard to content niches, radio networks provide all-news programming, religious programming, or other specialized programming geared for particular uses, such as background music in stores or other businesses. In addition, because the bulk of the audience has shifted to television in many countries, highly specialized programming (right or left of the political spectrum, for example) can be successful for certain radio networks. In the US, certain ad hoc networks sometimes form around groups of stations reaching particular audiences, providing advertisers with access to those people in a way that could not be easily achieved through advertising on hundreds of local stations around the country.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Satellite radio broadcasting also provides a challenge to network broadcasting. Satellite broadcasting may not be a true network, but it offers the listener the same kind of experience: the same content wherever he or she may go within the country. Geographically large countries, such as the US and Canada, offer opportunities for satellite radio to have many of the same functions as network radio in the golden age. At the turn of the twenty-first century Sirius and XM satellite radio competed in the US and Canada, although a merger of the two was announced in early 2007. The difference between satellite radio and network radio broadcasting is that network broadcasting is typically thought of as involving a number of local stations, each broadcasting within its own area, and in that way much of the country is covered, while with satellite radio, a few satellites (two or more, depending on the size of the country) cover a huge geographic area, so that the entire country is covered, also offering many different channels. A satellite radio service may be thought of as providing the content of 100 (or more) content-specialized radio networks. In an interesting turn of events, satellite radio in the US, where commercial broadcasting is perhaps at its most commercial, satellite radio is primarily financed by subscription.

In the UK and countries where the population tends to be more densely packed, there is less need for satellite radio networks. Instead, much of the current focus in radio is on achieving higher quality through digital broadcasting or high definition radio. Digital

Audio Broadcasting (DAB) has also taken hold in southern parts of Canada, where the population is also relatively dense. With traditional radio broadcasting, reflections occur from buildings or natural terrain which tend to interfere with clear reception of signals. With digital audio broadcasting, the reflections are used in selection of the strongest signal at any given time, and competing signals are rejected.

The introduction of digital programming (as opposed to digital broadcasting) has signaled the arrival of a different kind of network as well, with some local stations serving almost as repeater transmitters from a centralized programmer, yet each projecting a unique identity within its base community.

The Internet has seen the arrival of still more types of audio providers who classify themselves as radio networks, although they are more like a station with multiple types of content at the same time. The “network” designation undoubtedly comes from the practice of → satellite television services that began referring to themselves as networks in the 1980s, because they covered large geographic areas either through direct broadcasting from satellite or through distribution over → cable television.

What began as experimental services designed to provide the same content to audiences separated over distances has evolved during the last century, and continues to evolve today. In current terminology, a radio network refers as easily to an audio service with wide geographic coverage as much as it does to interconnected stations sharing content. Although radio networks in many parts of the world continue their traditional structure and role in disseminating → information, educational materials, and entertainment, recent developments in the area of digital broadcasting and multiple audio formats delivered via the Internet insure that radio networks will continue to evolve (→ Educational Communication; Educational Media; Educational Media Content).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ BBC ▶ Cable Television ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Czech Republic: Media System ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Egypt: Media System ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Information ▶ International Radio ▶ Internet ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio News ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Radio News

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Timely information delivered over radio waves dates back to the earliest stations and before (→ Radio; Radio: Social History; News). Lee de Forest reported the election night results via radio in 1916 and the first licensed US station to report election returns was KDKA in 1920. By 1924, radio broadcasts became a major influence on → public opinion because they could report live events. Radio news in the UK first gained attention during the General Strike of 1926, which briefly halted newspaper publication.

Radio → newscasts, however, did not appear in the US until the 1930s, relegating emergency and event coverage to the wireless medium. By 1933, the wire services that supplied news to most newspapers decided to withhold news wire stories from radio, until radio newscasters agreed to limit their reporting to twice per day, at times (9.30 a.m. and 9 p.m., for just five minutes) that protected the newspapers (→ News Agencies, History of). By 1935 competing wire services began to supply US radio stations and the newspaper–radio war was over by 1939 (Culbert 1976).

Unlike the US and the UK, radio in many other countries was controlled by the government. In Germany, for example, Hans Fritzsche began offering news broadcasts on behalf of the von Papen regime's Wireless News Service in 1932, which fell under the control of Joseph Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry in 1933. During the Nuremberg tribunal at the close of World War II, Fritzsche was prosecuted for distorting the news in the 1930s and 1940s (→ Propaganda in World War II).

*Research interest* in US radio news began in 1940 during the campaign between Franklin Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie. Surveys conducted by → Paul Lazarsfeld suggested that most voters considered radio superior to newspapers for political news. His studies also noted that reinforcement was the main effect of radio coverage, with listeners' predispositions supported by their choice of candidate speaking on the radio. Radio began a long broadcast tradition of reporting the horse race aspects of political contests (→ Elections and Media, History of).

World War II greatly expanded the importance of radio news, making reputations for future television commentators Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, and others. In the UK people began to equate hearing something on the BBC as knowing the truth, according to an observation by George Orwell in 1944. After the arrival of television in the late 1940s, radio news became a supplementary service, still focusing on live events and breaking news. Until the → Internet era began, newspapers and television enjoyed a long era of news dominance (→ Newspaper Journalism; Broadcast Journalism).

Academic journals that regularly report on radio news are *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly* (originally *JQ*), *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* (*JOBEM*), and *Journal of Radio Studies* (*JRS*). The latter journal has focused more on history and international studies than on US radio news, with only seven articles on radio news in its first 14 years of publication. *JQ* has emphasized newspaper journalism and television news, with 15 articles with the words “radio” and “news” in the title since the 1970s.



*JOBEM* focuses almost entirely on television news, with only three articles specifically on radio news in the past two decades.

The three dominant *areas of radio news research* are ownership/competition, listenership, and news director perceptions. Research on ownership starts with the notion that large corporations are inherently inferior when it comes to serving local audiences (→ Ownership in the Media). In the US, the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) dictates that stations operate in the public interest, serving local audiences (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). Radio news is generally considered a linchpin of local service. Most recent studies about the demise of localism focus on Clear Channel and its dominant position in the United States (over 1,200 stations). *Listenership studies* typically provide a descriptive profile of the audiences for radio news (→ Audience Research). Most provide a snapshot of a particular point in time, while the rest attempt to study trends. Often such research emulates newspaper readership studies. Surveys of radio news directors have assessed trends and the present status of radio news, including newsroom profitability, salaries, staff diversity, careers, and internships.

Some observers take a dim view of the *future of radio news*, as television and online sources have overshadowed radio (→ Television News; Online Media). Radio talk shows have supplanted regular newscasts, particularly on the AM stations in the US. Radio stations facing economic difficulties found it easier to fill time with local and syndicated talk shows rather than maintain full-fledged news departments. The blurring of lines between radio news reporting and talk radio commentary has been a concern for many years. National Public Radio is apparently the only US source of radio news with a long-term prospect, although it has endured periodic threats from legislators who object to its political leanings. The → BBC World Service, → Deutsche Welle, → Voice of America, Radio Netherlands, and Radio Australia are also options for those who want news from the radio.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience Research ► BBC World Service ► Broadcast Journalism ► Deutsche Welle ► Elections and Media, History of ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Internet ► Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ► News ► News Agencies, History of ► Newscast ► Newspaper Journalism ► Online Media ► Ownership in the Media ► Propaganda in World War II ► Public Opinion ► Radio ► Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Radio: Social History ► Television News ► Voice of America

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# Radio: Social History

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The introduction of → radio broadcasting during the 1920s released a tide of social changes, which have profoundly affected every society in the world, changes that have subsequently been amplified by → television and information and communication technology (→ Television: Social History; Information and Communication Technology, Development of). By the end of the twentieth century these electronic media had become so embedded in social, political, and economic processes that it is hard today to conceive of a world without their influence. Their defining characteristic as public media is that they provide systems for communicating simultaneously with large, geographically dispersed → audiences via pathways that are immediate and capable of delivering messages live: they abolish the delay between production and reception inherent in all earlier public media. Their combined effect has been greatly to accelerate the formation and shaping of cultural consciousness within societies (Hilmes 1997). They provide mechanisms of continuous reference and comparison by which individuals perceive their relationships beyond their immediate private sphere. The few social groups yet to be reached by radio have nevertheless felt the effects of communications-driven political and economic change indirectly.

## THEORETICAL FRAMING

The social history of radio occupies a small proportion of the literature in comparison with film, print, television, or the → Internet (→ Printing, History of). The systematic study of the mass media gained momentum in the 1960s and 1970s, by which time, despite the far greater worldwide ownership of radio receivers, the social impacts of television were preoccupying the industrialized nations. Subsequently the theorization of the → public sphere has been influential in attempts to discern (1) how each component of the mass media influences social change, and (2) which forces are dominant in shaping each medium: economic, political, or technological (→ Habermas, Jürgen).

Radio's social history can be traced through a number of marked stages, arising from changes that are either *endogenous* (i.e., internal to the radio industry and typically driven by advances in technology) or *exogenous* (i.e., due to alterations in external conditions of culture, economy, or politics that force change on the radio world). The manner and pace of these developments has varied from continent to continent according to relative wealth and stage of industrialization (→ Communication Inequality).

## INHERENT ADAPTABILITY

The facilities and institutions for systematic public broadcasting began to emerge in Europe and North America from 1922. The history of radio since then has been remarkable for the variety of uses and listening locations to which the radio *receiver* has

been successfully adapted. Many authors have observed that the source of the medium's adaptability and enduring social role lies in its paradoxical offer to the listener of both a highly personal choice of aural accompaniment to private life and, simultaneously, a means of participation in the shared experience of a tangible public community of concurrent listeners (e.g., Douglas 1999). Key illustrations of the significance of this personal/public engagement can be found in the field of health information: messages about personal health matters have been embedded in a variety of programming, their potency being attributed to the combined effect of preserving the anonymity of the listener, while normalizing their isolated experience (→ Health Communication and Journalism).

### **EARLY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SHAPING**

In its initial development radio was a point-to-point system, transmitting in Morse code and then, following the first demonstration in 1906, via the human voice (→ Telegraph, History of). It was rapidly adopted as a means of sending messages, "one to few," by the military and civilian emergency and other services. Although outside radio's mass communications role, the numerous social impacts these nonpublic applications cannot be overlooked, be these via extensions to military capability or to the effectiveness of civilian rescue and policing.

The social significance of the pre-1920s era of radio lay less with either its content or the numbers of listeners, but in the sense of expectation it created in the popular imagination at the *idea* of what might be achievable in a world where voices could be transmitted through the ether; early electronics manufactures envisaged new business opportunities; owners of newspapers and organizers of live entertainments saw a threat to their livelihoods and responded defensively; governments realized the need for new systems of regulation to decide who would be allowed to communicate what and to whom (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). The first decision to fundamentally shape radio for the twentieth century was that, for the general public, it would be a one-way medium with government agencies licensing companies or consortia to transmit on given frequencies. The manufacturers built receivers accordingly. The second pivotal decision, which has shaped the subsequent development of all broadcasting, was to determine how to fund radio services. European nations favored a public service model in which a national broadcast network would be funded from the public purse or, as in the case of the → BBC in the UK, from an annual license fee attached to the ownership of a radio receiver; while America opted for a commercial model in which privately owned broadcasters fund their competing services through on-air advertising (→ Public Broadcasting Systems; Public Broadcasting, History of).

### **POTENCY OF RADIO MESSAGES**

In these parallel models, from the late 1920s and into the 1930s, the mains-powered "wireless" found its place at the heart of the domestic living space of an increasing proportion of households across North America, Europe, New Zealand, and Australia. In the period leading up to 1939 further aspects of radio's position in the public sphere were established: the different funding models placed different emphasis on the proportions of

information, entertainment, and education they broadcast, with the imperatives of winning advertising inclining the commercial model toward entertainment while the underpinning ideology of the public service model attached higher importance to radio's educational role; transmission was often confined to a particular limited number of hours in the day; radio's close relationship with the commercial recording industry was established as playing their recorded products on air began to drive sales – of gramophone discs and players as well as radios.

During the lead-up to World War II, as radio ownership continued to increase, its importance as a potent propaganda tool became sharply evident. The imperial nations of the day invested in increasingly powerful transmission technologies in order to reach their colonies and allies overseas (→ BBC World Service). Significantly, radio was then the only mass medium able to reach pre-literate audiences, a fact that clearly framed the spread of state-sponsored “external” radio services from the 1930s onwards and, more recently, → UNESCO's many local radio development projects (→ Radio for Development).

Radio broadcasting proved to be of critical importance to both sides during World War II and of greater pervasive and persuasive influence on public opinion than the press. Among the complex of factors involved were: the rapid provision of → news perceived as authoritative and up to date, including occasional “as live” reports from the front line using early mobile recording equipment; recognition by political leaders that talking “direct to the nation” had real impact on morale; and recognition also of the power of musical, comic, and dramatic entertainment to foster a sense of belonging and unity among a national audience. While radio has not occupied quite such a singular role in subsequent national crises in western nations, its power to influence the collective actions of listeners continues to be evident, for example through the catalytic role attributed to particular radio broadcasters in fomenting the Rwandan genocide of 1994 (Kellow & Steeves 1998) or the overthrow of the Milosevic dictatorship in Yugoslavia in 2000 (Collin 2004).

## **SHIFTING LISTENING PATTERNS POST-WORLD WAR II**

During the 1950s endogenous and exogenous factors forced a radical shift in radio's position in listeners' lives, which enabled it to become a major facilitator of the processes of post-World War II political democratization and social change in the west. The key technological innovation was the mass manufacture of transistors, which made the new receivers both portable and cheap to buy (→ Radio Technology). For rural and less developed societies with little or no access to mains electricity the availability of affordable battery-powered radios created a surge in radio listening and in many such parts of the world it remains the dominant mass medium. With portability the choice of station became a personal matter: radio could now go with the individual listener, including – importantly – in the car; as a direct consequence the demand for ever more culturally and demographically differentiated stations grew. The major exogenous co-factors were closely associated: first, the postwar economic boom brought with it the rapid rise in disposable income in the industrialized nations, which in its turn transformed the economic and cultural environment into which radio stations broadcast; second, television began rapidly to supplant the wireless as the centerpiece of the domestic living space (→ Television: History of). A significant outcome of this shift was that the fortunes of the

radio industry become ever more closely entwined with those of the record industry such that today the overwhelming majority of total radio output around the world is of recorded popular music, catering to individuated tastes (→ Music Industry). Radio's ability to reach across cultural boundaries (→ International Radio) has been largely responsible for the mixing of musical traditions that have given rise to the proliferation of popular music genres and cultures, from the evolution of rock 'n' roll in the southern USA onwards.

The closeness of the radio station's relationship to its listeners, however, has been built through talk (Scannell 1996). The words and voices of presenters and contributors define the appeal to audiences both according to social grouping (by class, age, language, etc.) and identification with the locality (→ Broadcast Talk).

The arrival of truly portable tape recorders in the 1940s enabled the voices of "ordinary people" to be heard on the radio, expressing opinion and giving glimpses directly into their ways of life: they could be recorded at their places of work, on the streets, and in their homes as components of news reports or as the subjects of documentary exploration. From the late 1960s the radio phone-in emerged as a yet more immediate means of putting listeners on air, paving the way for the "talk radio" genre. Talk radio stations themselves typically describe the verbal sparring between hosts and contributors as entertainment, while critics tend to regard their output as disproportionately influential on public opinion, especially during election campaigns (Hendy 2000).

Toward the end of the twentieth century claims of both music and speech-oriented stations to significant interactivity between presenter and listener became key markers in their social *raison d'être*: for stations funded by government or license fee, interactivity has become emblematic of their public service; for commercial stations it is key to nurturing the listener identification and loyalty that they sell to advertisers; for "third sector" stations it is central to their representative appeal to supporters and potential donors. It remains to be seen how the twentieth-century constructs of collective identification and station loyalty will fare in the face of the post-1990s proliferation of digital platforms through which radio can now be heard and the accompanying processes of deregulation (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Public Sphere, Fragmentation of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Health Communication and Journalism ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ International Radio ▶ Internet ▶ Media History ▶ Music Industry ▶ News ▶ Online Media ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Public Sphere, Fragmentation of ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television, History of ▶ Television: Social History ▶ UNESCO

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# Radio Technology

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The history of radio technology can be divided *chronologically* into four main eras: experimentation with basic equipment between the 1890s and 1920s; broadcasting to mass audiences using established processes between the 1930s and 1950s; adjustment to the arrival of television from the 1950s; and, finally, the emergence of digital radio technology from the late 1980s.

This history can also be viewed *thematically*, by distinguishing between developments in the capture and manipulation of sound by program-makers, the transmission of those sounds across the ether, and the ways they have been heard by listeners. What unites each era and each theme is a recurring tension between the push for technological improvement – such as a desire to attain higher fidelity sound – and an equally powerful determination among producers *and* listeners to maintain radio's status as cheap, easy to operate, and instantly accessible. Another perennial tension is between the centripetal *and* centrifugal forces that technology unleashed on the medium (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

## EXPERIMENTAL PERIOD

The origins of “wireless” are complex. Though Guglielmo Marconi (1871–1937) is popularly credited with being its founding father, most academic authors stress the medium's emergence through a broad front of inventive acts in electrical science during the second half of the nineteenth century. The British scientist James Clerk Maxwell and the German scientist Heinrich Hertz, for instance, had first theorized, and then verified, the existence of electromagnetic waves by the 1880s. It was another British scientist, Oliver Lodge, who

had developed a “coherer” able to “syntonize” sending and receiving equipment to the same electromagnetic frequency – and demonstrated a Morse code signal being transmitted by precisely this means across a distance of some 55 meters by 1894. Alexander Popov in Russia, Augusto Righi in Italy, Edouard Branley in France, and Roberto Landell de Moura in Brazil, all worked along much the same lines at the time.

Marconi’s achievement was thus not to have “invented” radio but to have seen its commercial potential as a signaling system – for merchant shipping, say, or the armed forces – and then to have shown, by sending the letter S across the Atlantic in 1901, just how far a signal could travel when transmitted from tall masts and refracted from the ionosphere to a point over the horizon. It was also Marconi who seized the initiative internationally by claiming general-purpose patent rights in 1896 (→ Technology, Social Construction of).

This was wireless telegraphy, however, not wireless telephony (→ Telegraph, History of). Conveying more than a series of dots and dashes required the electromagnetic signal to be “*modulated*” as a *continuous wave* – something achieved by the Danish scientist Valdemar Poulsen in 1902, and then demonstrated more sensationally in 1906 by the Canadian Reginald Fessenden when he transmitted voices and music across a wide stretch of the Massachusetts coastline. It was this event that effectively marked the beginnings of radio as a means of mass communication, since it broke with Marconi’s limited conception of the technology as a means of private, one-to-one contact, and hinted at David Sarnoff’s later, and much quoted, vision of a “music box” available in every home providing entertainment and information to the public: a vision that turned the perceived fault in wireless transmission – that it traveled in all directions so that anybody with receiving equipment could listen – into its prime virtue (→ Public Broadcasting, History of).

What made this feasible technically – and created the potential for a general audience – was a second wave of invention that radically *amplified* the rather weak signals hitherto achieved: Ambrose Fleming’s adaptation of Edison’s light-bulb into a “diode” valve in 1904; Lee De Forest’s addition of a third valve, the “audion,” in 1906; the creation of simple receiving sets that drew on the electrical properties of crystals – as tested by the German scientist Karl Braun – to “tune” into signals of differing wavelengths; and, by the mid-1920s, the manufacture of “dynamic” loudspeakers that allowed headphones to be discarded in favor of communal listening.

## THE DOMESTICATION OF RADIO

Radio’s experimental period therefore ended with its domestication. Simple crystal kits, or unwieldy receivers lashed to a spaghetti of unsightly batteries and aerials, steadily evolved into more aesthetically pleasing – and more effective – valve sets, tastefully wrapped in wood or Bakelite, relatively easy to tune and to run off a mains electricity supply, each occupying pride of place in the living rooms of suburban Europe and America. The period also ended with enforced reductions in the number of those actually broadcasting. As more and more private operators had appeared – there were some 150 in Britain and at least 500 in the United States by 1921 – national regulators and commercial interests asserted the *need for interference* to be minimized. The drive to create centralized monopolies such as the → BBC, commercial cartels such as the Radio Corporation of America,

and a panoply of national and international regulatory bodies: all this had many underlying social and political causes (→ Media Conglomerates; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of). But, at another level, it was a response to the perceived dangers of chaos in the ether, at a time when transmitters were crude and scientific understanding of the effect of atmospheric conditions on electromagnetic waves was barely developed (→ Radio: Social History; Radio Networks; Communication Technology Standards).

The underlying technology of radio was firmly established by the beginning of the 1930s. Yet the fact that regular broadcasting emerged only two decades after the start of wireless communication meant techniques of program-making were still evolving. Mixers, for example, appeared only in the late 1920s. The number of microphones in each studio increased thereafter, creating more “perspective” in dramatic or musical performances. By the 1930s, the BBC was using the *dramatic control panel*, a kind of mixing desk linking several studios at once and allowing producers to assemble baroque, multilayered programs encompassing recitals, orchestral music, and narration in complex forms – to the evident bafflement of many listeners. Other technology pointed radio in the direction of greater intimacy. More sensitive microphones, for instance, allowed for a less declamatory style of speech – and, as Chanan (1995) has shown, played a part in encouraging a sensual, “crooning” style of singing, as heard on American radio in the songs of Rudy Vallee and Bing Crosby.

### EARLY RECORDING TECHNIQUES

The biggest challenge was in finding a convenient means of recording. Within the BBC, three very different types of machine were employed in the 1930s: the Blattnerphone, and its successor the Marconi–Stille system, which impressed signals in magnetic form on steel wire or steel tape; the Philips–Miller system, which used film track; and a machine that recorded directly onto wax discs. None was ideal: material was bulky or expensive, and processing was slow. Steel tape, for instance, could be edited only by the laborious welding of joints.

Nevertheless, by 1940 the Corporation was using some 40 *static disc recorders*. And for those wishing to record on location, machines were by now regularly carried on large vans. War acted as a major spur to miniaturization, since there was huge demand for reports from the front line. The BBC developed a “Type-C” recorder mounted on ambulances and, from 1943, the “midget,” equipped with double-sided discs allowing nearly three minutes’ recording each side and weighing only 16 kilograms. German engineers, however, had already succeeded in producing an even lighter *magnetic tape recorder*, which made recordings infinitely easier to edit. When the Allies overwhelmed Nazi forces in 1945, some of these portable *Tonschreibers* were seized, and subsequently remodelled by British and American firms. Within a decade, most recording was done on magnetic tape. The medium was becoming ever more mobile and fleet of foot in its production capacity.

### RESPONSES TO TELEVISION

By now, of course, there was → television, and radio had to carve out a new role for itself (→ Television: Social History). Miniaturization and portability was one means of insuring



its continued pre-eminence, since television struggled to report distant events smoothly and cheaply without a great deal of advanced planning; radio was still the more instant of the two media. It also had a reservoir of experience built up over decades. The BBC's first outside broadcast for radio had been in 1923; in 1939 it was doing some 5,000 a year. By World War II, the ad hoc use of telephone lines for "hook-ups" had been replaced by the permanent leasing of higher-specification cables, so that program material could be distributed easily and quickly from one part of a country to another; mobile transmitters had also been deployed.

Two other technical responses to television came in the form of VHF – which used *frequency modulation (FM)*, as opposed to the amplitude modulation (AM) of medium wave and long wave – and *stereophony*. Together, they offered vastly improved sound quality. Both technologies were prewar in origin, but took root from the late 1950s. VHF/FM was largely static-free; stereo allowed producers to create a "sound stage," overlap dialogue, create movement. The combined effect was to offer listeners a greater degree of clarity and naturalism, in much the same way that color made television images more vivid. Studios, equipped with multi-track recorders and effects units, became the site of experimentation in the new art of "radiophonics." Among European public service broadcasters, there was even talk in the 1970s of radio creating a form of "sound cinema."

In the US, stereo and FM had more influence in music radio, where it offered an alternative to an increasingly over-formatted AM sector. It was on FM that aficionados appreciated the complex, layered, rock albums of the period, and where a counterculture seeking heightened sensory experiences briefly thrived. For the radio establishment, however, FM's overriding advantage was more prosaic: because its signals were highly localized, it multiplied dramatically the number of stations that could be squeezed onto the air. In the US, especially, radio now became more localized than it had been since the early 1920s. The number of formats and markets proliferated, and, as they did so, radio shifted from being a mass, "national" medium to one predominantly serving a range of niche audiences, defined by locality, age, or musical taste. An important dimension to this fragmentation in listening was the widespread adoption of battery-powered, portable *transistor radios*. The technology, unveiled in 1947, drew on a science of semiconductors more than half a century old, and subsequently took another decade to become commercially viable. By the 1960s, however, its impact appeared irreversible. Though radio was displaced from the living room, it had found a multitude of new homes: the kitchen, the bedroom, cars, and even, by the 1980s, in one's pocket as a kind of "personal hi-fi." Television captured the family audience, but portability and cheapness made radio far more ubiquitous, especially in the developing world. In the west, the transistor also helped radio to forge a close association with teenage culture and all its musical sub-genres. Technology was applied to the cause of "consumer choice," and *narrowcasting* took over from *broadcasting*.

## DIGITIZATION

In one sense, digitization simply accelerates these trends. Digital recording and transmission, first employed systematically by European broadcasters in the mid-1990s, provides even higher fidelity sound than anything captured on tape and aired on FM.

Since binary code also allows more data to be compressed into the broadcasting spectrum, it multiplies again the number of stations that can take to the air. On the → Internet, meanwhile, *streaming* enables new operators to reach small but global audiences, and *podcasting* pushes radio further in the direction of personalized listening (→ Digital Media, History of).

As in the past, however, new technology has a paradoxical influence. Authors such as Douglas (1999) rightly acknowledge radio's continued "technical insurgency": its protean ability – via the "radio hams" of the 1920s, the pirates of the 1980s, and the bedroom deejays of the Internet age – to be an alternative medium, to evade full rationalization by corporate interests (→ Alternative Journalism). Others suggest that ever since stations first hooked up to each other via phone lines in the 1920s, "networking" – whether analogue or digital – has created an increasingly professionalized, *standardized industry*. The current pervasiveness of technology capable of delivering centrally produced programs to every station owned by a single chain, and of "automated" play-out systems that replace human beings in each studio, hints at a rather more mechanized, *impersonal* future, where the "infinite" choice offered by "unique" formats is largely illusory.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ BBC ▶ Communication Technology Standards ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Technology, Social Construction of ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History

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## **Rating Methods**

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A rating, as the term is most often used in media industries, is an estimate of the size and demographic composition of a radio, television, or Internet audience. Such metrics are of enormous importance to advertiser-supported media because they set the value of the time used to run commercial messages. The larger and more desirable the audience, the more the media can charge advertisers. Ratings are typically measures of exposure to media based on surveys of various target populations conducted by "third-party" firms

independent of the sales transaction. The practice of ratings research emerged in the United States in the 1930s, and has since been refined and adopted worldwide (→ Nielsen Ratings). However, new technologies that allow people to consume a wide range of media anywhere, at any time, coupled with the desire of advertisers to reach ever-more narrowly drawn markets, have strained current systems of audience measurement. Ratings companies have responded by developing new methods to keep pace with the demands of their client industries (→ People-Meter).

Audience ratings are most often based on some form of probability sampling, and as such are subject to the same kinds of non-response and sampling error that occur in any survey research (→ Survey; Sampling, Random). In dozens of countries, ratings companies provide commercial and government clients with estimates of national audiences. In a subset of those countries, including the US and China, firms provide more localized measurement of cities and regions. Two factors are pressing sample sizes to their limit. The increasing abundance of new media delivery systems, including broadband delivery systems and video-on-demand, has fragmented audiences, reducing the size of any one outlet's audience. Concurrently, advertisers are more apt to be concerned with tightly defined target audiences. Under such circumstances, even large national samples are quickly whittled down to a very small number of respondents in the audience of interest, producing unacceptably high levels of sampling error. To address this problem, ratings firms are devising strategies to increase sample sizes, or basing their estimates on technologies that afford census-like numbers of respondents.

## MEASURES OF EXPOSURE

The methods used to measure media exposure are, in large part, what set ratings apart from other forms of survey research. As US radio grew into an advertiser-supported medium in the late 1920s, it became essential to quantify its audience. The first such effort, launched in 1930, used telephone recall techniques to ascertain listening in the previous 24 hours. A few years later, "telephone coincidental" techniques, which asked respondents what they were listening to at the time of the call, were introduced in an effort to reduce response errors attributable to faulty memories. Telephones are still used in ratings research today, though usually in support of other methods that provide more copious data on exposure.

*Diaries* are inexpensive paper booklets that require a respondent to make a written log of their radio listening or television viewing, usually for one week. Diary formats vary by medium, but all offer some sort of grid that divides each day into quarter hours or broader "dayparts." In television measurement, a diary is assigned to each set in the sample household. In radio, each individual in the sample carries a diary. At the end of the survey week, the diaries are mailed to a processing center where they are coded, checked for logical errors and omissions, and ultimately turned into ratings reports.

If they are properly filled out, diaries provide a wealth of information, including audience demographics, at relatively low cost. Nonetheless, although they are, at this writing, in widespread use, they suffer from a number of problems that make them increasingly problematic for audience measurement. Diaries necessarily require some literacy. They suffer from relatively low response rates that, even with financial incentives,

sometimes dip below 30 percent. Data collection is slow, and prone to a variety of processing and response errors. Most importantly, the new media environment, with remote controls, hundreds of channels, and various recording and delivery devices, simply overwhelms the ability of even conscientious diary-keepers to produce an accurate, contemporaneous record of their media use.

*Meters*, devices attached to receivers and producing a continuous paper record of tuning behavior, were introduced in radio measurement in the early 1940s by Arthur C. Nielsen. These were “household” meters that could record when sets were on, and the station to which they were tuned, but were incapable of identifying who within the household was listening. In the 1950s, household meters were adapted to television measurement. Such meters eventually made an electronic record of set use that could be retrieved over telephone lines to produce “overnight” ratings. They were the principal method of national television measurement in the US until the late 1980s, and continue to be used in some local markets.

Household meters have a number of advantages. They are fast, relatively unobtrusive, require no literacy, and produce vast amounts of accurate set-tuning data over long periods of time. Compared with diaries, however, they are expensive. Their cost is justified only in larger markets (e.g., nations and major cities). Moreover, household meters produce no demographic information, so they must typically be used in conjunction with diaries.

A new generation of meters called *people-meters*, introduced in the late 1980s, provided a means to quickly gather demographic information. They work much like household meters, but feature a set-top box and/or hand-held devices that allow respondents to press a button signaling their presence in front of the set. People-meters are currently the preferred way to measure television audiences around the world. They do require some effort on the part of respondents, however, and so are more obtrusive and prone to respondent fatigue and error than is ideal. Newer generations of more passive, portable devices are being introduced.

All the aforementioned techniques gather data from samples. Even large national panels, which might exceed 10,000 households, can be insufficient to estimate the audience for a very small network, or to assess the behaviors of a narrowly defined market segment. Media industries are now studying the possibility of harnessing the data created by *digital set-top boxes*. These are analogous to household meters operating in millions of homes, and might provide a way to study highly fragmented digital media consumption. There are, however, at least three problems with this approach. First, it presents obvious concerns about privacy. Second, not all homes subscribe to digital cable or satellites, and even those that do won't necessarily have all their sets attached to the service. Hence, it is impossible to determine the total audience for all channels. Third, like all household meters, the technology provides no “people data,” though mathematical models can approximate demographic composition.

*Internet audience measurement* has also presented some relatively new opportunities to measure user behaviors. One approach, sometimes labeled “user-centric,” mirrors conventional ratings research. Here a probability sample of users is recruited to provide information. However, since Internet access is gained via a computer, it is a relatively simple and inexpensive proposition to install a piece of software on the user's machine that records and reports the URLs the user visits. This, in effect, turns each computer into

a metering device, and allows research firms to create much larger panels than would be economically viable with conventional metering. Alternatively, a “server-centric” approach takes advantage of the fact that all Internet traffic is managed by computers called servers. They can record the total number of times information is requested and fed to users. This goes beyond sampling and represents a census of use. Unfortunately, server “hits” can be difficult to decipher. While there are techniques to differentiate returning versus new visitors, or identify their place of origin, this approach cannot provide reliable demographic information about Internet audiences. It can, however, be combined with user-centric data to provide highly detailed estimates of exposure, including the use of media streamed over the Internet.

### **MEASURES OF ENGAGEMENT**

Another consequence of newer media that allow people to see what they want when they want it is some erosion in the value of simple exposure as the metric upon which media time is bought and sold. DVRs and other on-demand technologies make it relatively simple for audiences to avoid commercials. Increasingly, advertisers are demanding some measure of the extent to which audiences are involved or engaged with the media they consume. The general theory is that engaged audience members will be less inclined to look away, more receptive to advertising, and better able to recall brand messages.

“Qualitative” ratings are nothing new. In some countries with strong traditions of public service broadcasting, finding out how much people like or learn from programming is an ongoing practice. Historically, in the more commercially oriented US, qualitative ratings have foundered. Current definitions of engagement include various affects, attentiveness, recall, intentions, and behaviors. For these factors to constitute an ongoing system of ratings, the industry must reach some consensus on the definition of engagement, valid measures of the construct, and whether the value of such supplemental ratings ultimately justifies the cost.

### **RATINGS QUALITY**

Ratings are subject to various sources of error, including sampling, response, non-response, and processing error. The first three are familiar to survey researchers. The last speaks to the fact that ratings are a complex product manufactured from various inputs, including different measures of behavior as well as program and advertising information. All such forms of error have relatively objective meanings and can generally be ameliorated with the application of sufficient resources.

However, there are more subjective criteria that affect the quality of ratings data. Take, for example, something as fundamental as the definition of exposure to television. Should the audience for a program include those who watched the show in real time as well as those who recorded it? If the latter, does their inclusion depend upon how quickly they replayed the program? Is a delay of a few minutes, or hours, or days acceptable? There are no objectively right answers, but the resolution can have profound consequences for different ratings consumers. As a consequence, ratings are inevitably the product of an ongoing process of negotiation among different industry and government players, often

with competing interests. That very tension is probably the best guarantee that ratings maintain a reasonable degree of quality.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Media Marketing ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ People-Meter ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Survey

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## **Readership Research**

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Readership research employs empirical methods to investigate print media usage, focusing mainly on → magazines and → newspapers that appear periodically. Of primary importance in this context are readership analyses that ascertain findings on print-media coverage (reach or cumulative audience) and readership structure (composition of readership to describe print-media target groups). These methods are supplemented by reception analyses, which investigate reading habits in a more general sense.

A distinction can be drawn here between readership research as *media advertising research*, which deals with the performance of a print medium as an advertising medium, and as *editorial readership research*, which is aimed at optimizing newspaper and magazine content and/or layout. The lion's share of applied readership research focuses on optimizing media planning for advertising purposes (→ Advertisement Campaign Management; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of) as well as optimizing the content and layout of print products. In comparison, academic reception research, which is designed to ascertain more fundamental insights into readership, plays a relatively minor role. The dominance of media advertising research in practice can be explained by its far-reaching economic significance (→ Advertising, Economics of; Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The origins of systematic readership research based on empirical methods go back a very long way. In the US, for example, standardized questionnaires (→ Interview, Standardized) were already being used in the early 1920s to conduct commercially motivated mass surveys among newspaper readers (to help publications respond to readers' interests and thus increase circulation, to provide evidence of readers' interest levels and purchasing power, and thus increase advertising revenues). In 1921 George Hotchkiss conducted a written survey among wealthy and well-educated New York residents to investigate their newspaper-reading habits. His self-administered survey method was further developed by Ralph O. Nafziger and his students at the University of Wisconsin. During the same period, George Gallup was working on a different approach at the University of Iowa. Gallup developed the face-to-face survey method based on interviews with a representative cross-section of readers, a method he first employed in 1927 to conduct copy tests to establish whether particular articles were read in full, merely glanced through or paid no attention at all (→ Survey).

The *widening spectrum of print media* available, for example the ever-increasing number of new general-interest and special-interest magazine titles, has brought with it an increasing necessity for comparative readership coverage and readership-structure findings upon which commercial advertisers and advertising agencies can base their media-planning decisions. Investigations funded jointly by several publishers have in the meantime been superseded by syndicated national readership surveys in many countries. If readership surveys are to obtain accurate findings, above all for titles with a small circulation and low coverage, they require very large samples, which also means very large research budgets. The need to raise substantial funding led to *joint industry surveys* commissioned by a great number of publishing houses and conducted by large market-research companies. These surveys are often overseen by technical advisory commissions that serve to lend the findings a legitimate, "quasi-official" status, thus raising general acceptance levels. Typical examples of such joint industry readership surveys include: the MRI in the US, the NRS survey in the UK, the media analyses (MA) in Germany, or the AMPS in South Africa.

In his "Summary of current readership research" for the Worldwide Readership Symposium 2005 in Prague, Erhard Meier reported on 91 readership surveys from 71 countries, a fact that reflects both the centralization and the globalization of research companies today. Multinational organizations such as Ipsos, AC Nielsen, Milward Brown, or TNS each presently conduct national readership surveys in 10 or more different countries. Sample sizes range from 1000 (Bahrain and Zambia) to about 250,000 respondents (India).

## BASIC DEFINITIONS AND METHODS

Newspaper or magazine circulation says little in itself about the number of people a print medium actually reaches. The reality of the situation is far more complex: many copies are printed but distributed free of charge rather than sold or are not distributed at all, other copies are sold but are not read and, above all, a great number of copies are used by

more than just one person, e.g., at home, at work, or in a doctor's waiting room. Despite the fact that data supplied by publishing houses is verified by so-called *Audit Bureaus of Circulation* in many countries to prevent manipulation, the question of how many readers a print medium actually reaches remains unanswered.

### What is a "Reader"?

Because circulation data fails to paint the complete picture, it is necessary to conduct readership surveys based on broad samples. In order to do this, it is necessary to *define exactly who qualifies as a reader*. Should only people who read a publication from cover to cover very carefully be counted or do people who just flick through a publication, stopping only to read a few headlines or glance at a few pictures also qualify as readers? What if a publication is read more than once: do all reading events count? Does it only count if a publication is read on one specific day or does it count if it was read at any time within the issue period or even well beyond the issue period, e.g., at some time in the last three months? Clear definitions of who counts as a reader are essential as they provide the buyers (advertisers and advertising agencies) as well as the sellers (publishing houses) of advertising space with what equates to a mutually acceptable currency.

The most common of such currencies is *Average Issue Readership (AIR)*, i.e., the number of people who have read or looked at some or all of the average issue of a publication. Just flicking through is enough: it is not necessary to have read a publication through carefully to have come into contact with an advertisement placed there. *Average Readers per Copy (ARPC)* can be calculated by dividing average-issue readership by average circulation. There are many different ways of measuring average-issue readership. The four main techniques are described here, namely: "Through-the-Book," "Recent Reading," "First Reading Yesterday," and "Readership Diaries."

### Through-the-Book Technique

The oldest of these methods is the *Through-the-Book (TTB)* technique, which was first used in 1936 to estimate the readership of *Life Magazine*. It is the only one of the four approaches described here to employ recognition of a specific issue to estimate readership. Respondents are shown actual full issues of publications; stripped or skeletonized issues are often used to reduce the burden on both respondents and interviewers when a great number of publications are presented in one interview. Bill Simmons and Alfred Politz are pioneers of the TTB approach. Empirical tests have shown that TTB estimates are prone to both overclaims (e.g., caused by perceived social desirability or prestige effects) and underclaims (e.g., caused by forgetfulness), as well as to frequent confusion of similar print titles with the same kind of content. To prevent confusion, similar titles are often presented together in a group. The age of the issues presented also has a major influence on findings. If the issue is too old, there is a danger that respondents will have forgotten about having read it, whereas if the issue is very recent it may not yet have accumulated its full audience.

The most common method for measuring readership today is the *Recent Reading (RR)* technique, which was brought into use by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising in 1952. In Europe, it is also known as the IPA technique. There are two fundamental



differences between RR and TTB. First, respondents are not asked whether they came into contact with one specific issue of a newspaper or magazine, but about contact with any issue. “The readership estimate depends not on the respondent’s ability to *recognize* a specific issue as one they have previously read, but on their accurate *recall* of when it was that they last came into contact with the publication in question” (Brown 1999, 65). Second, the question mainly used to estimate readership in this technique is: “When did you last read or look at any copy of . . . (title),” and it is posed either as an open question or with response categories, e.g., “yesterday”/“within the last seven days”/“between one week and one month ago,” and so on. Even in this case, where the information requested seems to be so simple, there is still a danger that respondents may not provide reliable answers from memory. In particular, if the most recent reading event is already quite some time ago, a telescoping effect is often observed, i.e., respondents believe something happened more recently than it actually did.

Intensive methodology research has uncovered two further phenomena limiting the accuracy of the RR technique. The first is *replicated readership*, which comes about when people spread their readership of a given issue over more than one issue period, leading to overestimation. The second is *parallel readership*, which occurs when two or more issues of the same publication are read in the same period, leading to an underestimation of average-issue readership. Although these two sources of error cancel each other out to a certain extent, empirical tests indicate that the net effect tends to be understatement.

Many readership surveys supplement the main recent-reading question by asking about *frequency of reading*. A distinction can be drawn here between questions using verbal scales (e.g., “almost always,” “quite often,” or “only occasionally”), questions using numerical scales (e.g., “How many out of twelve issues of magazine XYZ have you read in the past 12 months?”), and questions that employ a combination of verbal and numerical scales. However, these frequency questions also depend on an ability to remember events to such a degree of accuracy that many respondents are likely to struggle to respond reliably. In order to increase recall accuracy in particular, and to eliminate biases caused by replicated reading, readership researchers have experimented with ways to reduce the recall period, e.g., by including questions about First Reading Yesterday (FRY).

A further method referred to earlier for estimating readership data is *Readership Diaries*. Households selected at random are asked to regularly record all the newspapers and magazines they read during a specified period of time (e.g., 1 month) in a diary, including additional details on which issue was read, how much was read, whether the issue in question was being read for the first time, etc. Researchers face serious methodological problems when using the readership diaries method; recruiting a representative cross-section of panel members, for instance, and ensuring they continue to participate reliably over time can prove extremely difficult. A further drawback of diaries is the tendency of respondents to behave unnaturally (conditioning effect).

### **Methodological Problems**

All of the methods employed to estimate print-media readership described so far suffer from *one common weakness*, in that they all rely exclusively on statements provided by respondents, who may fail to recall past events correctly or filter responses according to

social norms, e.g., social desirability. The accuracy of readership estimates ascertained using these methods therefore depends on the number and type of visual aids employed or the length of time that has elapsed since the reading event took place. Alternative approaches to ascertaining readership data involve *technical measurement techniques* designed to gather data independently of replies provided by respondents (“measurements not responses”). Examples of this type of approach are: the use of *eye cameras* to track reading, electromagnetic sensors fitted to wristwatches to register page contacts, portable bar-code scanners to register publication details, or hidden cameras to validate page-contact findings. However, these methods have so far not progressed beyond laboratory tests conducted under unrealistic conditions.

Erhard Meier’s review of methodological observations referred to above shows that most national readership surveys continue to be based on face-to-face interviews with broad samples of the population. Of the 91 national readership studies conducted around the world during the review period, 71 used face-to-face interviews, of which the majority (63) were conducted with pen and paper, 5 as computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI), and 3 as double screen CAPI interviews. A total of 10 national studies used self-completion questionnaires and 7 used computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). There are a few countries where a mix of methods is used, e.g., telephone interviews combined with self-completion (Norway), face-to-face interviews with pen and paper supplemented by subsamples conducted using CATI, or (in the Netherlands and Germany) subsamples using computer-assisted self-interviews (CASI).

Because large national readership surveys often include several hundred different newspaper and magazine titles, it is common practice to pose *screening questions* at the beginning of interviews to reduce the title load per respondent by excluding those titles respondents “only know by name,” or titles that are completely “unknown” to them. Subsequent questions, usually beginning with the frequency question followed by the recency question, are only posed on the remaining publications. *Logo cards*, either in black and white or in color, are the main form of visual aid employed in face-to-face readership interviews to assist respondents’ recall, as well as to help avoid title confusion. Print titles and categories (dailies, weeklies, fortnightlies, monthlies, etc.) are often rotated to counterbalance possible order effects. In many readership surveys, respondents are then posed a number of supplementary questions to establish, for example, how long, where, and on how many days reading took place, or to ascertain their “relationship” with the publication read, e.g., by asking about the amount read (“all/nearly all,” “over half,” “about half,” “less than half,” etc.). In order to establish reader “involvement,” respondents are also often asked to gauge how much they would “miss” a publication if it were no longer published.

Another way of reducing load per respondent employed in certain large national readership surveys is to *split the titles* included, e.g., to create two groups of 150 publications and conduct a survey for each. The findings from the two representative surveys are fused to create one combined dataset. This so-called “marriage of data” via common connecting links (e.g., socio-demographic or attitude variables) is, however, wide open to methodological criticism.

Rudimentary contact data (having “read or flicked through” a newspaper or magazine) tells advertisers little about the potential effectiveness of their adverts. In contrast, *data on*

*the quality of reading*, allows conclusions to be drawn about the chances readers have of coming into contact with advertisements, which is a prerequisite for advertising effectiveness. Respondents who have read a publication carefully from cover to cover, for example, are more likely to come into contact with a particular advertisement than those who have only taken a look inside, flicked through briefly (→ Copy Test and Starch Test).

In summing up his comprehensive review of methods developed in the field of readership research, Michael Brown states that there is no “gold standard,” no single, inalienable currency that provides an equally valid measure of readership across the entire spectrum of print titles and categories: “All methods have differing advantages and limitations. Arguments as to methods’ ‘validity,’ in any absolute sense, are arid; they should be judged by their ability to deliver readership estimates which allow comparisons between different newspapers and magazines which are minimally biased” (Brown 1999, 83). For as long as there are no universally accepted methods, it will continue to prove difficult to further harmonize the many different techniques being employed to estimate readership around the world today, as well as to establish common methodological standards. This is essential, however, for international advertising planning in an increasingly globalized world economy.

### EDITORIAL READERSHIP RESEARCH

While newspaper and magazine readership in newly developed countries is rising in line with alphabetization, it is in decline in many developed industrial countries. In the US, the *fall in newspaper readership* in recent decades is so dramatic that it represents a cultural shift away from newspaper reading. Fewer and fewer young people are becoming regular newspaper readers and many magazines are, to an increasing degree, only being read sporadically. Young people in particular read print media more impatiently and selectively, tending to scan rather than read thoroughly (→ Exposure to Print Media).

Empirical readership research has an important role to play in optimizing print media, providing vital insights for decision-makers. Surveys among readers based on the *copy test* technique, for example, can be used to establish which of the items in an issue read yesterday or the day before yesterday were “read in full,” “only scanned,” or “not looked at at all.” Here too, attempts have been made recently to introduce *technical measurement* to avoid relying on readers’ questionable ability to respond reliably from memory. One example is the “*Reader Scan*” method, whereby a small panel of readers electronically mark the point up to which an article has been read during the act of reading. However, along with the apparent gains in accuracy, this method also brings with it a number of problems. For example, there are difficulties with gathering representative samples for such studies as it is normally only possible to attract participants with above-average motivation as readers. It is also impossible to completely counter conditioning effects in such tests (“unnatural behavior”).

The increasing intermedia competition has breathed new life into readership research in recent years and new perspectives are opening up, for example research into the networking of cross-media usage between print and online media (“print in a multi-media world,” “integrated communication”).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement Campaign Management ▶ Advertising, Economics of  
 ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Copy Test and Starch Test ▶ Cost and  
 Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Exposure to Print Media ▶ Interview, Standardized  
 ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Performance ▶ Newspaper ▶ Survey

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## **Real-Time Ratings (RTR)**

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Real-time rating (RTR) methods – also called “real-time response” or “continuous response measurement” (CRM) – collect judgments or evaluation data from a subject during media exposure (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Audience Research). While questionnaires provide data about the outcome of a perception (e.g., television viewing), RTR focuses on the process of viewing. Besides the application to academic questions of reception research, it is widely used within the media industry for testing → television programs or movies before they are aired or released. Applications range from commercial television or radio programs, → advertising research, to measuring judgment processes in presidential debates (→ Televised Debates). It can also be used for content analysis of television programs or speeches (e.g., measuring perceived degree of

violence, dimensions of characters' behavior, interaction, etc.; → Content Analysis, Quantitative).

### **DEVELOPMENT: "LITTLE ANNIE"**

The idea of real-time response measurement dates back to the late 1930s and early 1940s when → Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Frank Stanton introduced their "program analyzer," which was later adopted by CBS and major advertising companies. Their first system, affectionately named "Little Annie," consisted of two cylinders, about five inches long with a diameter of an inch. One cylinder had a red push-button at the end and the other a green button. The members of the audience held one in each hand with the thumb positioned to press on the button. Viewers were instructed to press the green button to indicate their liking of a radio program, and the red button if they were to feel uncomfortable about the program. Pushing neither button indicated indifference. Audience response charts on paper showed patterns of likers and dislikers for up to 10 persons at a time.

In the later years a set of 100 stations called "Big Annie" was developed. The first generations of these kinds of program analyzers were used for program and film testing, for example, at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research, McCann Erickson, or CBS. In the years following the introduction of the program analyzer, the idea was adopted for a number of similar devices. The main differences were in the way participants' judgments were collected: five- to ten-point scale push-button systems were developed as well as seven-point scale dialers, and ones with ten or more points (→ Scales; Scales and Indices). But basically the idea itself remained the same (Millard 1992).

The boom of microcomputers in the 1980s led to refinement in data collection, display, and analysis. Today participants in RTR studies signal their reactions to exposure mostly by means of a dialer, joystick, or slider using a predetermined scale (mood, judgment, → attitudes, etc.). More or less any scale suitable for real-time reactions can be used. Hence, RTR can be considered as a continuous report on one repeated question (e.g., How much do I like what I see?), producing panel data that are dynamically sensitive to the subtle effects of the stimulus. Since results are nothing more than highly autocorrelated time-series data (→ Time-Series Analysis), a wide range of data analysis techniques can be employed.

### **APPLICATIONS TODAY**

Compared to traditional → surveys, the results of RTR are far more precise, letting the researcher pinpoint which parts of audiovisual stimuli are responsible for the so-called peaks or spikes during exposure. For example, one can describe how the appearance of a certain character influences judgments, how music can contribute to changes in evaluations, how humor moderates perception, how dynamic a plot is perceived to be, and more. Moreover the technique is also described as a measure of audience → "attention" (Millard 1992), semantic processing, attitudes, or other psychological states or mental processes (Biocca et al. 1994). In general, Biocca et al. (1994) define the measure as subjects' self-reports of changes in psychological state or judgment.

Furthermore RTR can also be used as a continuous *measure of changing message content* or a way to code communication behaviors. Measures of hedonic response (like/dislike)

are found in a majority of the measures. Concerning validity, subjects report that the measure reflects their feelings about a program accurately. Moreover, RTR proves to be a sensitive indicator for attitudes toward a fictional or real character (often measured in the context of political or presidential debates). Finally, the measure allows for the investigation of whether our overall evaluation of a media stimulus is triggered largely by an overall judgment of that stimulus (mean-driven judgment), rather than by individual events or scenes of a program – whether it be cumulative, multiplicative, linear or nonlinear (e.g., peaks, spikes, punch-lines, appearance of important actors, peripeteia).

High *attention to a program* can be indicated by high frequency of use and wide range of movement of the dialer. Studies show a positive correlation between this kind of activity and memory recall of these parts of the program. However, critics point to the fact that high involvement in the program may lead to the subject forgetting to use the dialer, giving rise to a false interpretation of psychological deafness or boredom. The nonuse of the handheld device can therefore mean opposite things: being completely absorbed or completely bored. Implementing a secondary task reaction-time design into the research setting could address the problem, but would at the same time make the viewing situation more artificial and the task more complicated.

The participants could also be asked how involved they felt during a decisive part of the program and relate this answer to the individual real-time response data. If high reported involvement is accompanied by no scale movement, these subjects should be analyzed carefully, separately, or even eliminated from analysis. Another important issue in this context is that subjects utilize the given scale to a different degree. If the sample size is low, this scaling problem is often not leveled out sufficiently. Again, cross-checks with questionnaires – asking subjects about their highest and lowest scores in relation to their personal range – could help adjust RTR data. In some cases, it might even be helpful to standardize the mean series.

## VALIDITY OF THE METHOD

One other major constraint of RTR measurement is that it is only one-dimensional. As the online evaluation task requires some cognitive effort, valid results can be expected only if subjects concentrate on one dimension only for evaluation. For example, it is relatively easy for subjects to indicate whether they like what they see or not. More difficult and less valid would be the question of whether a magazine, show, film, etc. is entertaining or informative. Moreover, reactivity of RTR measurements is often criticized, meaning that the task itself modifies the perception process or does not indicate what should be measured – hence, → validity is violated. As stated above, if participants are asked to indicate their involvement in a movie by means of RTR, very high involvement might make viewers forget to use the dialer because they are too engaged in the program (→ Involvement with Media Content). Similarly, if viewers are continuously evaluating their state, they might not be able to become engaged with the media content. Hence, the task should be easy and participants be given time to get used to the method.

Compared to RTR measures a questionnaire can ask for retrospective judgment on a greater variety of criteria. However, a retrospective judgment may be quite different from an online judgment. After watching a movie, quite a lot is already forgotten; messages

have already been processed on a higher level, rationalized, adjusted to one's reference system, and often altered because of → social desirability. If one wants to collect data on spontaneous, immediate impressions, RTR is the ideal measurement technique. Continuous audience response research is of high value when applied to pilot programs, TV commercials, movies, or political advertising at a point in production where they can still be changed. Taken together, the most effective means of audience research is a combination of several techniques. For audience profiling and ex post facto judgment, a questionnaire is employed. For continuous judgments RTR is needed, and for validation purposes and enrichment of RTR data, focus groups can be very useful (→ Qualitative Methodology).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience Research ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Survey ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Television ▶ Time-Series Analysis ▶ Validity

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## **Realism**

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A classic position in the history of ideas and theory of science, realism assumes that the world exists independently of human minds, and that it lends itself to intersubjective inquiry, even if humans – individually, collectively, and as a species – may be unable to understand reality in all its aspects (Nagel 1986). In recent theory of science, realism has regained influence in comparison with other major positions such as → critical rationalism and → constructivism. Pavitt (1999) suggested that realism is currently the dominant position in theory of science, and that it informs the practice of much current media and communication research. (In literary and other aesthetic theory, realism denotes fictional

Table 1 Three domains of reality, incorporating three types of phenomena

	The real	The actual	The empirical
Experiences	x	x	x
Events	x	x	
Mechanisms	x		

forms that represent reality in the categories of everyday experience [→ Fiction; Realism in Film and Photography; Reality and Media Reality].)

The general tenets of realism can be laid out with reference to three components of Roy Bhaskar's (1979) influential *critical realism*.

*Ontological realism*: rejecting skepticist and idealist premises – that no knowledge of the empirical world is possible, or that reality equals the sum of our conceptions of it – realism questions such “anthropocentrism”: “Copernicus argued that the universe does not revolve around man. And yet in philosophy we still represent things as if it did” (Bhaskar cited in Archer et al. 1998, 45).

*Epistemological relativism*: from a moderately constructivist position, realism assumes that human knowledge of both nature and other minds depends on an iterative sequence of perceptions, cognitions, and inferences, all of which are open to question, rejection, and revision in a community of researchers. In the process, reality serves as a limit condition or regulatory ideal, without which the range of natural and cultural phenomena that one encounters in science as well as in daily life would be inexplicable.

*Judgmental rationality*: science depend on the exercise of rationality, which, at some point, must end in (fallible) judgments about what to do next – as an individual scholar, a scientific field, or a society. The business of science is to continuously compare and contrast alternative accounts, considering the widest possible range of criteria and means for examining reality.

Critical realism further emphasizes the *transfactuality* or *stratification* of reality. Several kinds of facts are real, including aesthetic experience and its biological foundations, micro-social order as well as macro-social infrastructure. Such facts are not reducible to each other, but enter into relationships of emergence, and they call for complementary forms of inquiry (Jensen 2002). One methodological implication is that research must consider three domains or levels of reality (Table 1). The *empirical* domain is the source of concrete evidence – *experience* of the world. By experiencing and documenting, for example, how journalists collect information, and how readers respond to it as news, researchers procure a necessary though not sufficient condition of empirical studies. The *actual* status of this documentation is a matter of inference. It is by characterizing and conceptualizing empirical materials as evidence of *events* (e.g., reporter–source interactions or decodings) that one may infer their place in mediated communication. The domain of the *real* is the most inclusive. Research ultimately seeks to establish the *mechanisms* that may account for events (e.g., a system of political communication that operates according to economic prerogatives and professional routines, as well as ideals of citizenship).



In sum, experiences, events, and mechanisms are all real. Experiences are available to be selected and analyzed by researchers as evidence of events. However, the distinctive task of research is to interpret or explain the underlying mechanisms with reference to theoretical concepts and frameworks.

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► Critical Rationalism ► Fiction ► Realism in Film and Photography ► Reality and Media Reality

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## **Realism in Film and Photography**

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From its very beginnings, photography was understood and experienced in terms of its capacity for realism. “It is not merely the likeness which is precious . . . but the sense of nearness involved in the thing . . . the fact of the very shadow of the person lying there fixed forever,” wrote Elizabeth Barret in 1843 (quoted in Sontag 1977, 183). Soon it would be used to record events and document many aspects of the world, not just in people’s family albums, but also in science, medical training, police work, military reconnaissance, and many other spheres of activity. Yet photography also developed into an art form, with highly allegorical *tableaux vivants* that “combined the sensuous beauty of the fine print with the moral beauty of the fine image” (Mike Weaver, quoted in Wells 2000, 262). In the twentieth century both these aspects of photography would continue to develop: documentary photography and → photojournalism with masters such as Erich Salomon, Cartier-Bresson, and Robert Frank; and photography as a form of modern art with, for instance, the formal, quasi-abstract landscapes of Edward Weston and the nudes of Bill Brandt.

In a similar way film started both as a medium for capturing reality and as a new form of theatre (→ Film as Popular Culture). As the Lumière brothers sent cameramen across the world to record sites of interest including *The Grand Canal of Venice*, shot from a

gondola, Georges Méliès, who had been a magician, built the world's first film studio in Montreuil and used the medium for trick films such as *The Man with the Rubber Head* and *Disappearance of a Lady*, and for science fiction fantasies such as *Trip to the Moon* and *Voyage across the Impossible* (→ Animation). The two kinds of films looked very different. In Lumière's *Arrival of a Train at the Station of La Ciotat* (1896), one of the earliest films ever to be screened, a train enters a station and moves toward the camera, and the people on the platform too move toward or away from the camera. In Méliès's films the camera was static, positioned in front of a stage, observing the spectacle, rather than in the middle of the action.

### REALISM IN THE HISTORY OF FILM THEORY

These two sides of photography and film have also dominated theory and criticism. In the 1950s, André Bazin (1971) called film "the deathmask of reality" and advocated the use of long takes that show events unfolding in real time and renege on the medium's capacity to condense or, occasionally, expand time through editing. In the same period, Siegfried Kracauer wrote that photography and film should aim for an "impersonal, completely artless camera record" (1960, 12) and "represent significant aspects of physical reality without trying to overwhelm that reality – so that the raw material focused upon is both left intact and made transparent" (1960, 23). Almost all significant new developments in the cinema of the time claimed to advance the cause of realism – postwar neorealism in Italy, the early *nouvelle vague* films in France, the British kitchen sink dramas of the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the *cinéma vérité* style of US documentary filmmakers such as Pennebaker, the Maysles brothers, Leacock, and Wiseman.

For others film could only be an art insofar as it went *beyond* the "simple" reproduction of reality. The constructivist Soviet filmmakers and theorists of the 1920s, for instance, experimented with "creative geography," constructing a nonexistent location by combining shots taken in different locations and using editing to make them seem adjacent. In the 1930s Rudolf Arnheim (1967) argued that only the medium's shortcomings, the way in which it *reduces* what it records, could allow it to develop into a new art form. The absence of the third dimension, the absence of colour (in the black-and-white era), and the absence of the nonvisual world of the senses should not be seen as a loss, he said, but as a gain: "Only gradually . . . the possibility of utilising the difference between film and real life for the purpose of making formally significant images was realised" (Arnheim 1967, 42).

In the 1960s the dominant realist aesthetic was challenged by a combination of → semiotics and Marxism. In *Mythologies* (1977), → Roland Barthes attacked *The Family of Man*, a key 1950s exhibition of documentary photographs that featured Dorothy Lange's iconic 1930s portrait of a poverty-stricken mother and child on the cover of its catalogue. Barthes denounced as a bourgeois "myth" the exhibition's aim to show the universality of human actions across the world: "The failure of photography seems to me flagrant in this connection: to reproduce death or birth tells us, literally, nothing . . . Yes, these are facts of nature, universal facts. But if one removes History from them, there is nothing more to be said" (Barthes 1977, 101). As in the Soviet Union of the 1920s, realism was now seen as a bourgeois art form that naturalizes the status quo of bourgeois society.

Bertolt Brecht became an important reference point for both filmmakers and theorists. “Less than at any time does a simple reproduction of reality tell us anything about reality,” Brecht had said in the 1930s, “Therefore something has to actually be constructed, something artificial, something set up” (quoted in Wells 2000, 108).

In the late 1960s, filmmakers like Godard would heed this call and use Brecht’s “alienation effect” to insure audiences would realize they were looking at a film, at something constructed, rather than at a “mechanical” record of reality. Film theorist Colin MacCabe (1974), in the pages of the then very prominent UK film journal *Screen* denounced the “classic realist text,” which, he argued, presents the dominant discourse, not as a → discourse, but as objective fact. Although other discourses can get a hearing in “classic realist texts,” they are “between quotation marks,” while the dominant discourse functions like the voice of the omniscient narrator in realist novels and always has the last word. Only films that do not privilege one discourse and leave the inevitable contradictions unresolved could be truly “revolutionary” and allow viewers to examine the issues for themselves.

### INFLUENCE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES ON THEORY

As theorists argued against the idea that photography and film can record reality “as it is”, and as this anti-realist view was taught to generations of media students, photography and film themselves began to be overtaken, first by video, and then by the new digital media with their much greater potential for image manipulation (→ Digital Imagery). The strongest reaction against this development came from photojournalists. In a celebrated article titled “The end of photography as we have known it”, Fred Ritchen argued that photography’s “fact-based, mechanistic qualities, which have been able to change world opinion even against the most powerful governments, have been devalued to a point where photography is much less a threat to the established points of view. The debate encouraged by the photographs of the Vietnam War will probably not occur again. Photography becomes poetry, and those whose position is less than lyrical suffer the most” (Ritchen 1991, 14).

In the second half of the twentieth century, the market for photojournalism would contract and → magazines would increasingly rely on *stock imagery* for their illustrations (→ Stock Photography). Image banks now allow magazine publishers to cheaply and quickly download photographs to illustrate almost any kind of article. The photographs they distribute have lost their function of recording specific people, places, and events, as they must be reusable, and focus on connoting the kinds of themes publishers might wish to illustrate. Press photographs are increasingly posed and “set up,” rather than “captured.” Ambitious young photographers no longer follow the call of Cartier-Bresson to record the “decisive moment,” but focus on studio work and on photography as an art form. In → Hollywood film, the disaster movies of the early 1970s inaugurated a return to the studios and to the construction of often dystopic future worlds. “Dramatized documentaries” became increasingly indistinguishable from → fiction films and today’s “reality television” differs from the *cinéma vérité* of the 1960s and early 1970s in that it no longer pretends that what the viewer sees would have occurred in the same view if no cameras had been present (→ Reality TV).

Yet at the level of technology the issue of realism still dominates. Computer games for instance are constantly praised for their level of realism (→ Video Games). The more they approach the look and the level of resolution of photography and film, the better. This development is also reflected in a new theory of visual realism that takes its clues from the linguistic theory of modality (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006, 154ff.; → Linguistics). The question they ask is not “How real is this image?” but “As how real does it represent what it represents?” They list the indicators of this kind of “surface” realism (level of detail, use of color, rendering of lighting, and so on) and describe how these indicators are used in different types of images. In their theory, images that are in fact records of reality can therefore have “low modality” and images that are entirely constructed “high modality,” just as → paintings may also be “photorealistic.” In the heyday of photographic and filmic realism, the crucial questions were: Has the reality in front of the camera been tampered with or rearranged? Has anything been “set up” for the camera, or re-enacted? In the age of digital technology, the questions are: *As how real is this represented? How real does it look?*

### TRUTH AND REALITY

As Hodge & Kress have said, “appeals to something like truth and reality are fundamental in the social construction of meaning” (1988, 121). People will always need clues as to whether they can use the information in images as a reliable guide for judgment and action. The “guarantee” that was formerly provided by the ability of film and photography (and video) to provide a “mechanical duplicate” of reality is of course still used in some areas, for instance in surveillance. But in other areas, for instance in the media, it is retreating, and new “guarantees” have perhaps not yet developed to the point that we can again judge the reliability of images with confidence. The idea that we can know reality through visual examination, which has been so fundamental in the age of empirical science, is increasing undermined, both by theorizing it out of existence and by the malleability of the new media and the new modes of image-making (→ Objectivity in Science; Objectivity in Reporting).

Raymond Williams is right of course: “There are many real forces – from inner feelings to underlying social and historical movements – which are either not accessible to ordinary observation or not at all represented in how things appear, so that a realism ‘of the surface’ can miss important realities” (1983, 260). But in representing such realities it is harder to exclude the subjectivities and interpretations that empirical observation and the “mechanical duplication of reality” claimed to exclude, and therefore harder to agree on what the facts are. For the time being, the Mathematician from Brecht’s *Life of Galileo* appears to have, again, gained the upper hand – Galilei: “Perhaps Your Excellency would like to observe these impossible and unnecessary stars through this telescope?” Mathematician: “One might be inclined to answer that your instrument, showing something that logically cannot exist, can hardly be a very reliable instrument.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Discourse ▶ Fiction  
▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Film Theory ▶ Hollywood ▶ Linguistics ▶ Magazine  
▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Painting ▶ Photojournalism  
▶ Reality TV ▶ Semiotics ▶ Stock Photography ▶ Video Games

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## **Reality and Media Reality**

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Since the earliest days of mass media, researchers, social critics, politicians, and the general public have been concerned about the extent to which media representations reflect or deviate from “reality.” Over the years, a great deal of research and public debate have revolved around the kinds of images of the world that are created and disseminated by media, and how they compare to the “real world” as revealed by official statistics or other objective indicators (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality).

### **REALITY AS SOCIAL REALITY**

The first problem research in this tradition must confront is the question of what constitutes “reality,” which is a topic of longstanding philosophical deliberation. Similarly complex is the question of how – and even whether – we can comprehend reality. Many theorists argue that humans construct what is perceived (and treated) as reality through social, cultural, and psychological mechanisms and structures. In a sense, this reflects Shakespeare’s notion in *Hamlet* that “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so” (act II, scene ii). Berger & Luckman (1966) argued that reality is knowable only as a mediated phenomenon, and that this is always ultimately a social process. Through intersubjectivity, we share a sense of “everyday reality” with others, but this is socially and culturally constructed (→ Constructivism).

There is thus a fundamental debate over whether media and reality can be meaningfully compared; if reality is unknowable, then attempting to compare it to media is a futile enterprise (Schulz 1976). Given that, some researchers, rather than comparing news media to some standard of “reality,” have examined social, institutional, and psychological explanations for how journalists make decisions about what to cover (or not cover), and how (Donsbach 2004).

On the other hand, even if reality does not exist outside of human (cultural) construction and interpretation, and is constructed (rather than discovered) through human investigation and manipulation of symbol systems, many researchers still believe that the world represented in media can be compared to certain facts about life and society. From that perspective, the task is to determine the most useful and reliable indicators of how the media world deviates from observable structural parameters, or to compare mediated representations and unmediated experiences of the “same” event or phenomenon (Donsbach 2003).

For example, in a series of studies, Kepplinger compared the coverage of the oil supply in Germany with data on actual reserves (1979); media coverage of air and water quality with real-world biological measurements (1992); and the political activities of the German parliament with the coverage of politics by the emerging media in the postwar period (2002). Studies in this vein often show sharp disjunctures between “reality” and media coverage.

Media can also construct multiple (and often conflicting) realities. For example, comparative international analyses have shown how the US and “others” are presented by the press in different countries in the context of the “war on terror” and the war in Iraq (Nohrstedt & Ottosen 2005), or how media in Israel and Jordan each portrayed the peace process (Wolfsfeld et al. 2002).

On the other hand, the very “unreality” of media can also have a powerful impact on our sense of reality. As Fiske (1987, 21) argues, television is “an essentially realistic medium because of its ability to carry a socially convincing sense of the real.” In Brazil, a telenovela can provide interpretive frames that shape how viewers perceive contemporary political events (Porto 2005). As Pearson (2005, 406) notes, Mexicans are fond of saying “Life is like a telenovela,” to the point that “the line between *the* world and *a* world is often difficult to distinguish.”

Although many scholars concerned with the correspondence of media to reality tend to focus on news, for purposes of this discussion, the distinctions among news, scripted programs, and “reality television” are not especially relevant (→ Reality TV). At a more general level, media themselves can constitute a way of knowing (Chesebro 1984). Media representations are “real” in the sense that dreams, stories, legends, and → rumors are real – they exist as phenomenological narratives and representations (→ Narrative News Story; Storytelling and Narration). That is, a statement about an event is not *the* event itself, but it *is* nonetheless itself *an* event.

Comparative measures of media and reality allow researchers to see how closely media stories reflect the facts of society and provide a basis for follow-up studies in different media, and/or in other societies, and/or over time. There is no expectation of any particular correspondence between reality and media reality; the key theoretical and empirical task is to illuminate specific and systematic discrepancies in order to better

understand media institutions and to provide a basis for further inquiry into how media images inform our constructions of social reality.

Large portions of what we know (or think we know) are based not on first-hand experience, but on media representations of life, society, groups, and institutions. Researchers in the *cultivation analysis tradition*, for example, point out that most people have limited, if any, experience of places such as courtrooms, police stations, prisons, or hospitals, but that we have extensive and vivid images about what transpires in such locations, as well as about the sorts of people who work in them (→ Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects). Media provide us with a vast range of representations of things about which we have no direct knowledge, and these account for many of our “intersubjective” beliefs.

### ANALYSES OF MEDIA CONTENT

Systematically coded, quantitative content analysis has been frequently employed to illuminate how media construct different aspects of reality (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). An online bibliography of content analyses listed in *Communication Abstracts* between 1990 and 1997 features 428 separate entries (Neuendorf 2000).

These studies cover an immense range of topics. Studies comparing reality and media reality have examined issues as diverse as the portrayal of persons over 50 in television commercials; alcohol and tobacco use in daytime → soap operas; → news coverage of infectious diseases; women scientists in popular → magazines; sex and contraception in prime-time programs; art and artists on network television news; television’s messages about the environment; the image of journalists on prime-time television; and hundreds more (→ Media Production and Content).

The number of areas in which the “real world” and the media world can be compared is virtually boundless. Entering the phrase “media portrayals of” into the Google → search engine will produce tens of thousands of hits, with links to a broad range of articles and sites that examine media representations. Researchers have explored the correspondence between reality and media reality in relation to dozens of wide-ranging topics, including girls and women (→ Women in the Media, Images of; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media), ethnic minorities, weight loss surgery, bipolar disorder, terrorism, hate crimes, sex in the workplace, sports, suicide, poverty, aging, and many more.

### Early Studies

In the 1930s and 1940s, many content analyses were conducted on then burgeoning forms of popular culture, including movies, radio, song lyrics, and magazines. The technique was applied to television almost immediately after it emerged. Early studies by Smythe (1954) and Head (1954) established basic parameters for examining television’s representations of demography (gender, age, class, race, occupations) and violence that other studies would emulate for decades to come. Smythe (1954) analyzed a week of New York television programs in 1951, 1952, and 1953 and Head (1954) studied a 13-week sample of 1952 network programs. It is noteworthy that Smythe began his report with the caveat that “Reality is too elusive a concept to be pinned down definitively” (p. 143).

Both of these seminal studies found that the *demography of the television world* diverged sharply from the real world. On television, there were twice as many male characters as female characters, and males tended to be older than females. Adults were vastly over-represented in the television world; at that time, over half of the US population, but only a quarter of the TV population, was younger than 20 or older than 50.

Most TV characters were white Americans. “American Negroes” accounted for 2 percent of the TV world. Non-Americans were mostly English, Italian, and French; there were no Jews, Africans, Indians, or Asians other than Chinese, who represented 0.2 percent of the TV population (compared to 22 percent of the world’s population at that time).

*Violence on television* occurred at a rate of 6.2 acts per hour (Smythe 1954), and was far more frequent on children’s programs (22.4 acts per hour for “children’s drama” and 36.6 per hour for “children’s comedy drama”). Both studies found that the most common program type was crime drama (→ Violence as Media Content).

These early studies found that upper- and upper-middle-class *occupations* were greatly over-represented, as were certain occupations at the lower and higher ends of the employment scale. Over half of television characters, compared to about 10 percent of the US population, were professionals, managers, service workers, and private household workers. The latter reflect the dominance of upper-class characters, who typically (in the media reality of the times) had servants at home. Occupations such as operatives, craftsmen, and farmers were virtually invisible in the TV world, but they accounted for nearly 50 percent of the actual workforce. In terms of specific occupations, teachers were the “cleanest, kindest, and fairest,” while scientists were “the least honest, least kind, and most unfair.” Lawyers were the “dirtiest” of all occupational types (Smythe 1954, 155).

Dozens of studies conducted in the intervening decades have confirmed and replicated the portraits of the TV world drawn by Smythe and Head, especially with regard to gender, class, and violence. One notable exception is that the number of African-American characters has increased over time.

### Cultural Indicators

Other studies have continued to focus on television, given the medium’s dominant role as the most widely shared storyteller of contemporary culture. One of the most sustained investigations of media reality was → George Gerbner’s Cultural Indicators Project. Starting in 1967 and continuing into the late 1990s and beyond, an annual week-long sample of prime-time and weekend daytime US network broadcast programming was systematically coded for hundreds of aspects of the world as portrayed on television and the people who live in that world. The project accumulated data on thousands of programs and tens of thousands of characters over more than 30 years.

Many of the project’s findings echo those of Smythe and Head despite the passage of time. Although the percentage of women in the TV world did increase somewhat over the years (from 27 percent of the TV world in the 1970s to 35 percent in the 1990s), males continued to outnumber females. Daytime serials and game shows are more balanced, but females are especially under-represented in children’s and news programs. Women are twice as likely to play the role of wife as men are to play the role of husband. Women age faster than do men, and are more likely to be shown as “evil” as they age. Older people



appear far less on television than an accurate representation of reality would require. People over 65 account for over 12 percent of the actual US population but less than 3 percent in the television world, and older women are especially scarce on television.

*Poor and working-class people* continue to be nearly invisible on television, appearing in less than one-tenth of their actual population share, while middle-class characters are over-represented, as are professionals (doctors, lawyers, judges, business moguls, among others). White males are consistently over-represented. Villains and “bad guys” are disproportionately from the lower classes and more likely to be represented as people of color or mentally ill. The percentage of African-Americans in network prime-time programs has increased (but only among males), roughly matching their corresponding percentage in the US population (about 12 percent). Asian/Pacific characters account for less than half, and Latino characters are less than one-third, of their real proportion of the US population, while Native Americans are nearly invisible.

Media reality is violent. Between 60 and 70 percent of the network programs in each weekly sample contained *violence*, with 4 to 6 acts of violence per hour. The small year-to-year fluctuations in these data show no clear pattern or tendency, and taken as a whole the patterns seem highly consistent over the decades. Among major characters, 40 percent commit violence and 43 percent are victims. On children’s programs, over 80 percent of males and two-thirds of females are involved in violence. Fewer than 2 percent of characters are shown as having any physical disability, and just over 1 percent are portrayed as mentally ill, but over 70 percent characters who are portrayed as mentally ill commit violence. (In reality, mental illness does not predict violence.)

Another large-scale study of television content in the US, the National Television Violence Study, examined 10,000 hours of programming between 1994 and 1997, and found many parallel patterns, with about 60 percent of prime-time programs featuring violence, with no major differences between broadcast and cable fare. Children’s shows were even more likely to contain violence, with an average of 14 episodes of violence per hour, compared to six in other programs. Beyond the sheer frequency with which violence is encountered in the media world, the reality of media violence bears little resemblance to the reality of violence. Nearly six out of ten violent incidents do not depict any pain, and about half depict no harm; close to 90 percent show no blood or gore.

### **Other Patterns**

Stories of *crime and violence* dominate news coverage as well as fictional programs, and the coverage does not match real-world crime patterns. Murder accounts for a disproportionate amount of both local and national news; murder suspects represent 0.13 percent of all those arrested, but 25 percent of all suspects in the news. From 1970 to 2000, almost a quarter of all stories were crime-related, although corporate crime typically receives relatively little attention.

The amount of crime coverage in television news does not reflect actual crime rates; editorial decisions and judgments of news value determine coverage, locally and nationally. Also, television network news over-represents white victims and under-represents African-American victims. African-Americans are more likely to be shown as perpetrators of crime and less likely than whites to be portrayed as police officers.

Researchers have pointed out many other significant discrepancies between the reality of crime statistics and television's depictions of crime and violence. Perpetrators of crime are apprehended and convicted far more often on television than in reality. Women on television are more likely than men to be victims of homicide (the reverse is true in reality), and women on television are three times as likely to commit crime as are women in reality. Homicides account for 79 percent of the crimes in the television world, compared to only 0.01 percent of actual crimes (Brown 2001). Conversely, nearly 70 percent of actual crimes are theft or robbery, but these are only 5 percent of the crimes portrayed on television.

### ACCOUNTING FOR MEDIA REALITY

Many varied factors account for these patterns, but the central explanations are commercial and cultural. Even the earliest content analysts of television pointed to the *commercial context of programming* as the major explanation for the media reality they found (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Commercial media content is designed to feel familiar, to reproduce formulas, and to gratify common audience expectations; a program that strays too far from the mold would be jarring to the audience. Commercial media have always thrived on imitating the successful; fear of losing the audience drives programming decisions. The patterns described here also have deep cultural and historical roots that predate modern media; current media are not the source of these images, but television in particular has mass-produced and mass-distributed them to an unprecedented degree (→ Television: Social History). All eras and cultures have relied on stories to express and represent both reality and ideology, but never before has any society produced and consumed as many stories as we do now.

The stories and images of the media reflect popular ideological and commercial values, including the glorification of youth culture, particular intersections of race, class, and gender, the valorization of certain occupations, ritualistic struggles between good and evil, and so on. As with any cultural or industrial product, television stories reflect the values, priorities, and needs of those who produce them. This explains why so many aspects of media reality appear to have changed little in more than half a century of research. Slow, gradual changes in cultural reality do come to be reflected in media reality (and vice versa), but without meaningful change in the dominant institutional commercial structures, significant changes in media reality are unlikely to be seen.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Balance ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Constructivism ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Fantasy–Reality Distinction ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Magazine ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News ▶ Realism ▶ Reality TV ▶ Rumor ▶ Search Engines ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Truth and Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Reality TV

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Reality TV became an increasingly prevalent global entertainment → genre in the 1990s and early 2000s. The popularity of reality shows with producers is due in large part to the fact that they represent a cheap, flexible form of programming that is easily customizable to different audiences and lends itself to forms of interaction and participation associated with new communication technologies (→ Interactivity, Concept of; Digitization and Media Convergence). As an entertainment genre that relies on the unscripted interactions of people who are not professional actors, reality TV develops and discards formats at a rapid rate, parasitizing the permutations available in everyday life – including everything from romance to warfare – for raw material. Reality-based formats can be differentiated from → news and other informational or documentary programming insofar as their focus is not on bringing the public realm of politics into the private sphere, but on publicizing the private and intimate (→ Television News; Tabloidization). The emphasis is not on matters of public interest for the purpose of democratic participation, but on therapy and social experimentation for the purpose of diversion (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking; Media Democracy). Reality formats make their claim to reality on the basis of their lack of scriptwriters and professional actors, but they are, for the most part, highly edited portrayals of patently contrived situations.

The global success of the genre is based in part on the fact that since reality TV formats rely not on contrived scenarios and contests rather than on the talent of individual actors or scriptwriters, they are easily exportable. Successful formats rapidly replicate themselves from region to region, drawing cast members from local populations. Thus, for example, the *Big Brother* format, which isolates a group of strangers in a house where they compete to be the last one voted out by viewers, was pioneered in the Netherlands but became successful in local versions across Europe and in the Americas, Australia, and Asia, as well as in regional versions in Africa and the Middle East (→ Globalization of the Media; International Television).

The reality TV boom in the early twenty-first century was built around successful blockbuster formats like *Survivor* and *Big Brother*, but reality TV, broadly construed, has been around since the dawn of television. For example, *Candid Camera*, a prank format that films unsuspecting people placed in humorous situations, was a format that migrated from radio (where it was called *Candid Microphone*) to TV in 1948 (→ Television). Game shows and talk shows, both perennial entertainment formats, share with reality TV a reliance on at least partially unscripted interactions featuring non-actors. The development of lightweight cameras and recording equipment facilitated the migration of reality-based formats from the soundstage to the home, the street, the school, the workplace, and beyond (→ Documentary Film, History of). As this happened, the scope and reach of reality-based programming grew to encompass a broader range of human experience, some contrived, some based in the events of daily life, many a combination of both. At the

same time, the expansion of cable TV increased the demand for cheap, quickly produced content – a demand that reality TV was uniquely positioned to fill thanks to its reliance on the inexpensive or free labor of non-professional actors and, in many cases, on found scenarios, sets, and even video (as in the case of shows like *America's Funniest Home Videos* – a format made possible by the advent of cheap, portable video cameras) (→ Cable Television).

As the number of channels and the amount of programming time devoted to reality formats have expanded, so too has the range of the formats that can be described as reality-based entertainment. Susan Murray and Laurie Ouellette (2004), for example, list *sub-genres* including, the “gamedoc” (in which cast members compete for prizes as their daily lives are recorded), the dating show, the makeover show, the “docusoap” (a reality TV version of the → soap opera in which the focus is on open-ended dramatic narratives), the talent contest, court and police shows, and celebrity formats that feature behind-the-scenes glimpses of the real lives of the rich and famous – or the formerly rich and famous. The proliferation of formats has led to two new TV award categories in the United States and a cable channel devoted entirely to reality programming.

Reality fare ranges from expensive and highly produced blockbusters like, in the United States, *Survivor* and *American Idol* to cheap, quick-hit dating formats and even compilations of video images captured by security cameras. All of these formats rely on the interactive promise that characterizes the era of media convergence: that non-professionals can contribute to the creation of media content. This participation comes either in the form of selected members of the viewing population crossing over to the other side of the TV screen, or in forms of direct participation fostered by interactive formats that invite people either to send in their own videos or to shape the outcome of the show by “voting,” usually by phone, Internet, or text message (→ Convergence of Media Systems). Viewers tend to describe the appeal of reality TV in terms of the ease with which they can identify with the non-professional cast members and the suspense provided by the fact that outcomes are not scripted in advance.

The booming popularity of reality formats represents not just the rise of a genre, but also a shift in industry practice (→ Media Economics). Even the most successful formats are expected to make most of their money during their first run rather than in rerun syndication. The flexibility of the genre has disrupted the rhythm of the typical television season in the United States, allowing producers to switch shows mid-season and to debut new shows during summer prime-time slots, typically devoted to reruns. Moreover, reality formats lend themselves to the integration of content and advertising, as illustrated by successful formats like *American Idol* in the United States, which features prominent product placement deals, and doubles as a promotional vehicle for the singers, whose albums and concert tours generate additional revenues for producers.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Documentary Film, History of ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Genre ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ International Television ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Media Economics ▶ News ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Television ▶ Television News

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## Reasoned Action, Theory of

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The theory of reasoned action (TRA) is a general theory of behavior that was first introduced in 1967 by Martin Fishbein, and was extended by Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (e.g., Fishbein & Ajzen 1975; Ajzen & Fishbein 1980). Developed largely in response to the repeated failure of traditional → attitude measures to predict specific behaviors, the theory began with the premise that the simplest and most efficient way to predict a given behavior was to ask a person whether he or she was or was not going to perform that behavior. Thus, according to the theory, performance or non-performance of a given behavior is primarily determined by the strength of a person’s intention to perform (or to not perform) that behavior, where intention is defined as the subjective likelihood that one will perform (or try to perform) the behavior in question (→ Attitude-Behavior Consistency; Planned Behavior, Theory of).

### THEORY

Although the theory focuses upon behavioral intentions (e.g., to jog 20 minutes every day), it can also *predict and explain intentions to engage in categories of behavior* (e.g., to

exercise) or to reach certain goals (e.g., to lose weight). According to the theory, however, unlike the strong relation between intentions to engage in a given behavior and behavioral performance, there is no necessary relation between intentions to engage in a behavioral category and whether one does (or does not) perform any single behavior in that category or between intentions to reach a specific goal and goal attainment. Thus, although the theory can predict and explain any intention, the TRA recognizes that only intentions to engage in volitionally controlled behaviors will consistently lead to accurate behavioral predictions.

The intention (I) to perform a given behavior (B) is, in turn, viewed as a *function of two basic factors*: the person's attitude toward performing the behavior (i.e., one's overall positive or negative feeling about personally performing the behavior – Ab) and/or the person's subjective norm concerning his or her performance of the behavior (i.e., the person's perception that his or her important others think that he or she should [or should not] perform the behavior in question – SN). Algebraically, this can be expressed as:  $B \sim I = w_1Ab + w_2SN$ , where  $w_1$  and  $w_2$  are weights indicating the relative importance of attitudes and subjective norms as determinants of intention. It is important to recognize that the relative importance of these two psychosocial variables as determinants of intention will depend upon both the behavior and the population being considered. Thus, for example, one behavior may be primarily determined by attitudinal considerations while another may be primarily influenced by perceived norms. Similarly, a behavior that is attitudinally driven in one population or culture may be normatively driven in another. While some behaviors may be entirely under attitudinal control (i.e.,  $w_2$  may be zero) others may be entirely under normative control (i.e.,  $w_1$  may be zero).

The theory also considers the *determinants of attitudes and subjective norms*. On the basis of Fishbein's earlier (1963) → expectancy value model, attitudes are viewed as a function of behavioral beliefs and their evaluative aspects. Algebraically:  $Ab = f(\sum b_i e_i)$ , where Ab = the attitude toward performing the behavior,  $b_i$  = belief that performing the behavior will lead to outcome "i" and  $e_i$  = the evaluation of outcome "i." Somewhat similarly, subjective norms are viewed as a function of normative beliefs and motivations to comply. Algebraically:  $SN = f(\sum N b_i M c_i)$ , where SN = the subjective norm,  $N b_i$  = the normative belief that referent "i" thinks one should (or should not) perform the behavior and  $M c_i$  = the motivation to comply, in general, with referent "i".

Generally speaking, the more one believes that performing a given behavior will lead to positive outcomes and/or will prevent negative outcomes, the more favorable will be one's attitude toward performing that behavior. Similarly, the more one believes that specific referents (i.e., individuals or groups) think that one should (or should not) perform the behavior, and the more one is motivated to comply with those referents, the stronger will be the perceived pressure (i.e., the subjective norm) to perform (or to not perform) that behavior.

It is at the level of behavioral and normative beliefs that the *substantive uniqueness of each behavior* comes into play. Even if two behaviors appear quite similar, the outcomes (or consequences) of, for example, buying a Ford may be very different from those associated with buying a Toyota. Similarly, a specific referent's support or opposition to my always using a condom for vaginal sex with my main partner may be very different from his or her support or opposition to my always using a condom for vaginal sex with an occasional partner. According to the theory, these specific behavioral and

normative beliefs about the behavior in question must be identified in order to fully understand the determinants of that behavior. Although an investigator can sit in her or his office and develop measures of attitudes and subjective norms, she or he cannot tell you what a given population (or a given person) believes about performing a given behavior. Thus one must go to members of that population to identify salient behavioral and normative beliefs. To put this somewhat differently, according to the theory, one must understand the behavior from the perspective of the population one is considering.

Finally, the TRA also considers the role played by more traditional demographic, economic, personality, attitudinal, and other individual difference variables, such as perceived risk (→ Risk Perceptions) or → sensation seeking. According to the model, these types of variables primarily play an indirect role in influencing behavior. That is, these “distal” or “background” factors may or may not influence the behavioral or normative beliefs underlying attitudes and norms. Thus, for example, while men and women may hold different beliefs about performing some behaviors, they may hold very similar beliefs with respect to others. Similarly rich and poor, old and young, those from developing and developed countries, those with favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward religion, and those who have or who have not used drugs may hold different attitudinal and normative beliefs with respect to one behavior but may hold similar beliefs with respect to another. Thus, according to the theory, there is no necessary relation between these “distal” or “background” variables and any given behavior. Nevertheless, distal variables such as cultural and personality differences and differences in a wide range of values may influence underlying beliefs, and when they do so, they are likely to also be associated with the behavior in question.

### APPLICATION OF THE THEORY

In order to apply the TRA, one must first *identify the behavior* (or behaviors) that one wishes to understand, predict, change, or reinforce. Unfortunately, this is not as simple or straightforward as is often assumed. As indicated above, it is important to distinguish between behaviors, behavioral categories, and goals. Moreover, from the perspective of the TRA, the definition of a behavior involves several elements: an action (joining, using, buying, selling), the target (the navy, condoms, a Ford), and the context (after graduating high school, for vaginal sex with an occasional partner).

Clearly, a change in any one of the elements changes the behavior under consideration. Thus, for example, as indicated above, joining the navy is a different behavior than is joining the Army (a change in target). Similarly, using a condom for vaginal sex with an occasional partner is a different behavior than is using a condom for vaginal sex with one’s spouse (a change in context). Moreover, in predicting and assessing behavior, it is also important to include an additional element – time. For example, an assessment of whether one bought a car in the past three months is different from an assessment of whether one bought a car in the past two years. Consistent with this, the intention to buy a car in the next three months is very different from the intention to buy a car in the next two years.

The second step in applying the TRA is to *identify the specific population* to be considered. As indicated above, for any given behavior, both the relative importance of attitudes and norms as determinants of intention (and/or behavior) and the substantive



content of the behavioral and normative beliefs underlying these determinants may also vary as a function of the population under consideration. Thus, it is imperative to define the population (or populations) to be considered.

Once one or more behaviors and target populations have been identified, the TRA can be used to understand why some members of a target population are performing the behavior and others are not. That is, by obtaining measures of each of the central variables in the theory (i.e., beliefs, attitudes, norms, intentions, and behavior), one can determine whether a given behavior (e.g., getting a mammogram) is not being performed because people have not formed intentions to get a mammogram or because they are unable to act on their intentions. Similarly, one can determine, for the population under consideration, whether intention is influenced primarily by attitudes or norms. Finally, one can identify the specific behavioral or normative beliefs that discriminate between those who do or do not (intend to) perform the behavior.

For accurate prediction and full understanding of a given behavior, measures of beliefs, attitudes, norms, and intention must all correspond exactly to the behavior to be predicted. That is, each of the measures should contain the same four elements as the behavior. This is known as the *principle of correspondence or compatibility*, and is central to the TRA. This does not mean, however, that one must always measure behaviors and intentions at a specific level of all four behavioral elements. If one is interested in predicting whether one will or will not get a mammogram in the next six months, beliefs, attitudes, norms, and intentions must all be assessed with respect to “my getting a mammogram in the next six months.” However, if one is interested in predicting whether one will or will not get a mammogram at Women’s Hospital in the next six months, beliefs, attitudes, norms, and intentions must all be assessed with respect to “my getting a mammogram at Women’s Hospital the next six months.”

In 1991, Ajzen introduced the theory of planned behavior, which extended the TRA by adding the concept of perceived behavioral control as a predictor of both intention and behavior. And in 2000, Fishbein introduced the *integrative model*, which extended the theory of planned behavior by expanding the normative component to include descriptive as well as injunctive norms, and by explicitly acknowledging the role of skills and abilities and facilitating factors as moderators of the intention–behavior relationship. The reasoned action approach has been used successfully to predict and/or explain a wide variety of behaviors, including such things as wearing safety helmets, smoking marijuana, voting, eating at fast food restaurants, smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, entering an alcohol treatment program, using birth control pills, breast feeding, donating blood, wearing seat belts, condom use, church attendance, and engaging in premarital sexual behavior (see, e.g., Ajzen et al. 2007; Van den Putte 1993).

SEE ALSO: ► Attitude-Behavior Consistency ► Attitudes ► Expectancy Value Model  
► Planned Behavior, Theory of ► Risk Perceptions ► Sensation Seeking ► Social Norms

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## Reciprocal Effects

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Originally, the term “reciprocal effects” was used by Kurt Lang and Gladys Engel Lang (1953) to describe the behavior of people in front of TV cameras. Here it is used in a broader sense. It denotes all the effects of the mass media on actual and potential subjects of media coverage (→ Media Effects; Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects). Included are the effects of media coverage that mentions subjects personally or explicitly deals with individuals and topics closely related to them. Subjects are distinguished from bystanders who are not directly or indirectly addressed by media coverage. With respect to the time when reciprocal effects occur, anticipatory, immediate, and corrective reactions are distinguished. *Anticipatory reactions* intend to avoid or seek to bring about media coverage. *Immediate reactions* are instantaneous consequences of interactions between media people (reporters, camera men, etc.) and the protagonists of media reports. *Corrective reactions* are produced by existing news coverage. When we look at reciprocal effects, there is no given distinction between cause and effect, because every element can be seen as both cause and effect. For example, a report might be seen as an effect of a subject’s prior behavior while also being the cause of his subsequent emotions. Thus, the traditionally linear model of media effects becomes a *feedback* model of media relations: the personality or behavior of subjects stimulates media reports that, in turn, directly influence the cognitions, appraisals, emotions, and behavior of subjects (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis).

### CAUSES AND TYPES OF EFFECTS

We can distinguish seven different causes and types of reciprocal effects.

(1) *Awareness of reports*: because the subjects of news reports are highly involved in the issue at hand, they are motivated to hear and see considerably more reports than

are bystanders (→ Exposure to Communication Content; Involvement with Media Content). As a result, subjects are subjected to an unusually strong dose of media information.

(2) *Appraisals of reports*: according to attribution theory (→ Attribution Processes), actors tend to attribute their misbehavior to circumstances whereas observers tend to attribute it to the actors' personality (Jones & Nisbett 1972). Journalists are professional observers; therefore they tend to attribute behavior to the actors' personality and describe it correspondingly. As a consequence, the subjects of negative news reports (→ Negativity) often see themselves as victims of circumstances and believe they would be misrepresented if reported as independent actors who are fully responsible for their mistakes. Because most subjects are not aware of perception differences between actors and observers, they tend to blame reporters for unfair coverage, which in turn might be perceived by reporters and editors as unfair criticism.

(3) *Assumptions about effect upon others*: most people attribute stronger negative effects of media messages to others than to themselves (→ Third-Person Effects). People who are highly involved in an issue tend to estimate the effect of news reports as stronger than neutral people do. Because the subjects of news reports are more involved in the issues reported, are more aware of the coverage, and have more background information than bystanders, they overestimate the effect of media on others even more.

(4) *Estimating public opinion*: the subjects of media reports can use four types of data to estimate the reports' effect on the population in general – opinion polls, media reports, expert analysis, and their own impressions drawn from discussions with people (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on; Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality). Opinion polls are not always at hand, for example, in the immediate outbreak of a crisis (→ Crisis Communication; Public Opinion Polling). Therefore, subjects might draw their own conclusions about public opinion from media reports, partly by assuming certain effects of the mass media on the general population, partly by assuming that media coverage represents or reflects public opinion. Subjects who generally mistrust the validity of opinion polls, those without regular access to opinion polls, and those facing the beginning of a crisis rely first and foremost on media coverage to estimate public opinion (Herbst 1998).

(5) *Observing behavioral changes*: people who are associated with the subjects of media reports are generally more acutely aware of these reports than are average bystanders, in part because these people know the individuals depicted but also because usually they react on a personal level to the reports. Therefore, media reports have a remarkable influence upon the cognitions, appraisals, and behavior of those associated with the subjects. In the case of negative reports, these people may question the accuracy of coverage or turn away from the subjects. In the case of positive reporting, these people may applaud it and turn their attention more closely to the subjects. The subjects of reports will observe these behavioral changes. In addition, they will attribute such changes to themselves by misinterpreting them. For example, subjects will interpret an unusually short greeting, actually caused by time pressure, as an attempt to avoid them.

(6) *Emotions evoked by reports*: emotions are reactions to psychological arousal (→ Excitation and Arousal) and → cognition. Cognitions include the perceived causes of

positive and negative events. Negative events that are perceived as being caused by given circumstances stimulate sadness, while the same events perceived as being caused by individual behavior stimulate anger (Nerb & Spada 2001). Because the subjects of negative reports attribute their depiction to the personal motives and agendas of journalists and editors, the subjects develop feelings of anger or similar emotions, such as annoyance. Because the subjects know that they cannot rectify every reader's, listener's, or viewer's image of them, they develop feelings of powerlessness. In contrast, positive reports will stimulate strong positive emotions such as happiness, hope, and pride.

(7) *Interactions of emotions and observations*: generally, people develop consistent emotions and observations (→ Appraisal Theory). For example, if the subjects of media reports believe others are avoiding them, they will feel abandoned. Subjects' observations might very well reflect real changes in the behavior of people around them. It might also be that the subjects are imagining behavioral changes. Emotions and perceived behavioral changes (real or attributed) reinforce each other, which, in turn, leads to the creation of an insular emotional state where subjects stay stuck in emotional patterns and thereby modify their own behavior (Kepplinger & Glaab 2005).

### TIME OF REACTIONS

Concerning the time and pattern of reaction to media reports, we can distinguish between four types.

*Anticipatory reactions* are due to the fact that the increasing availability of media information to the general public has changed the balance of power between politicians and political institutions on the one hand, and journalists on the other (→ Media Logic; Mediatization of Politics). Because of the increasing dependency of politicians, business people, artists, etc. on media coverage, they adapt their public behavior to the needs of the media, even when this is counter-productive to their original mission. Here, two strategies have to be distinguished – agenda building to establish favorable coverage and policy cutting to avoid unfavorable coverage (→ Agenda Building). Expecting favorable coverage, these people frame information given to the media according to their policy (Linsky 1986; Hutcheson et al. 2004), they shape events to fit media coverage, and they stage events that would not occur if it wasn't for the expectation of media coverage (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). Fearing unfavorable media coverage, politicians, business people, and other public actors avoid making unpopular decisions (→ Symbolic Politics).

*Immediate reactions* occur when decision-makers and journalists interact and exert a mutual influence. Professionals are aware of this influence and behave accordingly. Decision-makers and journalists play roles according to social expectations. Furthermore, the personal and ideological distance between journalists and subjects also has an impact on their verbal and nonverbal behavior (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of). It is relatively strong in more polarized societies and in contexts where the media is more partisan. The subjects of TV coverage are also influenced by the presence of cameras, lights, and staff. Some are stimulated by these circumstances; others feel insecure or even frightened. The ability to handle this medium effectively has an impact on career prospects (→ Public Relations Roles).

*Corrective reactions* are behavioral changes due to the anticipation of the positive or negative effects of media coverage on others. There are two major reasons why subjects respond to media reports. Because subjects are so aware of positive reports and sensitive to issues related to themselves, they are strongly influenced by those reports. They therefore also tend to overestimate the impact of reports upon the wider public more than bystanders do. In the aftermath of positive reports, their subjects will seek to take action to capitalize on their popularity and, for example, will make certain decisions that they know will benefit from added media coverage. These decisions might have consequences that otherwise would not have occurred. In the aftermath of negative reports, the situation is more complex (→ Scandalization in the News). Because subjects are convinced that their actions have been misrepresented, they are confronted with a critical choice. They can do nothing, hoping the coverage will end quickly; or they can react in order to minimize the anticipated effects on the general public and their customers and/or clients. Both choices are risky because both can ultimately stimulate more negative coverage than otherwise.

Finally, *feedback loops* can occur. Thus far, journalists' behavior and news reports have been interpreted as causes, and the behavior of politicians and other decision-makers as effects. This is insufficient for three reasons. First, the behavior of subjects can also be regarded as the cause of journalists' behavior and of news reports. Second, subjects' expectations of the motives, goals, and behavior of journalists, as well as journalists' expectations of the motives, goals, and behavior of subjects, can influence the subjects' own behavior, which in turn can influence the journalists' behavior. For example, preparing for an interview, politicians as well as journalists may expect a sharp controversy, which from the outset will influence their behavior toward each other. To put this more formally: the expectations and behavior of each actor influence the other and immediately interact with the expectations and behavior of the interlocutor. Third, the direct and indirect effects of news reports can themselves cause new news reports. Again, to put this more formally: the effects of former media coverage on subjects' behavior can cause subsequent media coverage dealing with the behavior stimulated (Fishman 1980) or with the former media coverage.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Appraisal Theory ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Cognition ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Media Campaigns and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Media Logic ▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Negativity ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Relations Roles ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Social Capital, Media Effects on ▶ Symbolic Politics ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction

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Social interaction is a complex, yet often subtle, process through which humans transmit information, pursue social goals, and initiate and sustain relationships. Even in the current digital age with its various forms of remote communication, face-to-face interaction is still critical for our social and emotional well-being. One way of characterizing the give-and-take between people in interactions is in terms of the relative changes partners make in their behavior over time; specifically, compensation and reciprocation. Compensation refers to a pattern of balancing or controlling the partner's behavioral intimacy by moving in the opposite direction. Thus, too much intimacy by one person precipitates avoidance and too little intimacy precipitates approach. In contrast, when a partner's behavioral intimacy is matched or intensified, the resulting pattern is described as reciprocation. On the verbal side of interactions, reciprocation or matching of self-disclosure seems to be the dominant pattern. Although verbal communication is obviously important, nonverbal communication typically has a greater impact than the verbal on social judgments, interpersonal attitudes, and influence (Patterson 2002). In fact, most of the research and theory on compensation and reciprocation has focused on nonverbal communication. Consequently, this discussion examines the evolution of our understanding of compensation and reciprocation in nonverbal communication (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of).

## REACTIVE ADJUSTMENTS IN INTERACTION

How and why do people make behavioral adjustments relative to their partners in the course of interaction? The systematic pursuit of this question can be traced back to Argyle and Dean's (1965) *equilibrium theory*. Argyle and Dean (1965) proposed that a small set of behaviors, including distance, gaze, smiling, and verbal intimacy, was critical in reflecting the behavioral intimacy or involvement in an interaction. Thus, as the underlying intimacy in a relationship increased, e.g., from initial strangers to acquaintances to good friends or lovers, the comfortable level of involvement also increased. Furthermore, equilibrium theory posited that interaction partners were motivated to maintain a comfortable or appropriate level of involvement over the course of an interaction. When there was a deviation from the appropriate level of involvement, reactive adjustments were predicted that would help to restore equilibrium to a comfortable level.

For example, if Bill approached a little too close to Mary and exceeded her comfort level, she might reduce the overall level of involvement by decreasing her gaze and reducing her smiling. Thus, her reactive adjustment might help to restore equilibrium in their behavioral involvement. In other words, the reduction in gaze and smiling compensated for the too close approach. Compensation might also occur when there was too little involvement for one or both partners. For example, if the seating arrangement required two good friends to sit too far apart, they might compensate for this increased distance by substantially increasing gaze toward one another. Early research on equilibrium theory not only provided strong support for the predicted compensatory adjustments of equilibrium theory, but also expanded the set of relevant behaviors to include touch, body orientation, posture, and body lean (Patterson 1973). That is, compensation might occur in any combination of one or more of these behaviors.

The results of a few studies, however, directly contradicted the predictions of equilibrium theory. Instead of compensating for increased involvement, individuals increased, or reciprocated, the higher involvement of a partner. In hindsight, it is likely that the dominant pattern of compensation found in the research was a product of the relationships (i.e., the lack of them) between the interactants and the types of experimental settings sampled. Typically this research employed confederates initiating a spatial intrusion, high level of gaze, or a touch on their unsuspecting partners in settings where their partners had little control over their immediate environments. Given these circumstances, it is not surprising that most people compensated by leaving the setting, turning away, or avoiding gaze in response to the confederate's increased involvement. This kind of pattern might not be expected between good friends interacting at home or at work. In fact, reciprocation might be more common in interactions between friends, family members, or lovers. Consequently, explaining both compensation and reciprocation required something more than equilibrium theory.

## AROUSAL THEORIES

Early research demonstrated that recipients of high levels of nonverbal involvement, such as a close approach and touch, often experienced increased arousal (e.g., McBride et al.

1965; → Proxemics). Thus, arousal seemed a likely mediator directing nonverbal adjustments. For example, the *arousal-labeling theory* proposed that when the partner's change of nonverbal behavior was sufficient to produce arousal, an emotion-labeling or self-attribution process was initiated (Patterson 1976). Next, if the resulting emotional state was positive (e.g., liking, love, comfort), then the individual would reciprocate the partner's increased involvement. For example, a close approach, smile, and touch from a good friend would increase arousal, be labeled as liking, and lead to reciprocating the friend's high involvement. This might take the form of smiling back at the friend and increasing gaze. If similar behavior was initiated unexpectedly by a stranger, arousal would also be increased, but be labeled as discomfort and lead to compensation. Thus, the recipient might turn away and avoid gaze in attempting to re-establish some degree of comfort and control in the setting.

From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, several other theories also enlisted arousal as a central process directing both compensation and reciprocation across a wide range of relationships (see Burgoon et al. 1995 for a review). In spite of important differences among the theories, common to all of them was the determining role of affective state in directing reactive adjustments, i.e., negative states precipitated compensation and positive states precipitated reciprocation.

Arousal theories improved on equilibrium theory by offering explanations of both compensation and reciprocation. Nevertheless, in terms of explaining the dynamic give-and-take of interactions, they also shared two basic *limitations*. First, the theories were all reactive in nature. That is, they were limited in explaining B's reaction to A's change in behavior and could not address the reasons behind A's behavior in the first place. Furthermore, some interactions are more or less scripted and do not proceed in a simple, reactive fashion. For example, in initiating a greeting, interactants are not simply reacting to one another, but are following a common script for greetings. A second limitation was that the arousal theories were all affect driven. That is, according to the arousal theories, a person's affective reaction to a partner's behavior necessarily determined the behavioral adjustment. Specifically, positive emotional reactions (liking, love, comfort) precipitated reciprocation, whereas negative emotional reactions (anxiety, fear, discomfort) precipitated compensation. Although this certainly happens at times, there are many occasions when we cannot let our immediate emotional reactions determine our behavior. For example, if the boss approaches closely and puts a hand on your shoulder as she asks you to take on another responsibility, you are not likely to pull away (compensation), even though your affective response may be negative.

### FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

The important limitations of arousal-based theories suggested that a different approach was needed to explain behavioral adjustments and, more generally, the initiation and development of interactions. The functional model provided such a perspective by focusing on the functions of interactions (Patterson 1983). Specifically, the functional model posited that individuals are not only reactive in relating to their partners, but also proactive in initiating goal-oriented behavior. Thus, patterns of compensation or reciprocation may be initiated independent of a person's underlying affective reaction to a



partner. Nevertheless, affect in the functional model still provides a critical role in the initiation of, and reaction to, patterns of nonverbal behavior as a kind of “default” setting in interactions.

The presence of particular goals, however, such as gaining compliance from another person or deceiving someone, can override the role of affect in determining nonverbal behavior. The proactive manifestation of compensation and reciprocation may be seen in interaction strategies precipitated by interpersonal expectancies (Ickes et al. 1982). For example, in the case of a self-fulfilling prophecy, specific expectancies about a partner may result in reciprocating the behavior *anticipated* from the partner. Thus, a positive expectancy about a partner increases the likelihood that an actor will initiate the open and friendly behavior expected of the partner. In other words, the actor’s expectation precipitates a behavioral strategy of reciprocation and facilitates the expected behavior from the partner; i.e., a self-fulfilling prophecy. Sometimes, interpersonal expectancies can precipitate a contrasting strategy of compensation. That is, the actor tries to overcome the partner’s anticipated behavior by initiating an opposing (or compensatory) strategy. Thus, if it is important and if the partner’s reactions seem malleable, an actor might be more open and friendly to a presumably cold, unfriendly person. That is, the actor compensates for the unfriendly expectancy by behaving in warmer and friendlier fashion in attempting to alter the expected outcome.

## CURRENT TRENDS

Although the study of interactive behavior is still a major focus of research, in recent years there has been less attention paid to the specific contrast between compensation and reciprocation. Instead, there is greater interest in the *social utility of behavioral adjustments*, consistent with both the functional approach and an evolutionary perspective on interactive behavior. For example, research indicates that interpersonal rapport is reflected in partners mutually displaying positive expressions, visual attention, and behavioral coordination with one another (Tickle-Degnen 2006). Related research on behavioral mimicry also shows that the automatic copying of a partner’s movements and expressions increases liking and social bonds (Lakin et al. 2003). In fact, both rapport and mimicry are special cases of reciprocation.

The current emphasis on reciprocation in the form of behavioral rapport and mimicry provides additional evidence for the pragmatic value of behavioral adjustments. In interactions with friends, matching and mimicry serve to increase liking and foster stronger relationships. In turn, the increased attachment is adaptive because it facilitates subsequent cooperation and interdependence. Although this form of reciprocation typically happens automatically and outside of awareness, strategically mimicking a partner’s behavior can also facilitate increased liking and influence. For example, individuals who are ostracized or otherwise in need of social support are also more likely to initiate mimicry with their more secure partners (Lakin et al. 2003). Compensation is, however, also adaptive in managing the discomfort of a partner’s inappropriate involvement and in trying to modify a partner’s attitudes and behavior. Thus, these complementary patterns of behavioral adjustment are important, but often subtle, elements in navigating our social environments and managing our relationships with others.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Initial Interaction ▶ Interaction Adaptation Theory ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Proxemics

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## **Regression Analysis**

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The essence of scientific research is explaining and predicting relationships among variables. Two or more variables co-vary and are related if their values systematically correspond to each other. In other words, as one value increases or decreases, the other value consistently or systematically increases or decreases ( $\rightarrow$  Correlation Analysis). For example, researchers might observe the amount of Internet use increases from younger to older adolescence, leading them to expect a relationship between Internet use and age of adolescents.

As scientists seek to explain phenomena, they employ various empirical measures to express relationships among two or more variables. *Correlation* is a measure of such relationships. The Pearson product–moment correlation coefficient assesses the magnitude

and direction of a relationship between two linear variables, and describes how proportional the values of the variables are to each other (StatSoft 2006). A multiple correlation coefficient does this for three or more variables, such as age, education level, and amount of Internet use. There are similar tests, such as gamma and phi, for relationships among nonlinear, categorical, or rank-order variables (→ Measurement Theory).

From a correlation coefficient we might conclude there is a positive and significant relationship between amount of Internet use and age of adolescents. A correlation coefficient ranges from 0.0 (no relationship) to 1.0 (a perfect relationship between the variables' values). The coefficients can be positive (the variables increase or decrease in unison) or negative (as one variable increases, the other decreases, or vice versa).

## **REGRESSION AND PREDICTION**

Regression is typically used for research designs having one or more continuous independent or predictor variables. Based on correlation, regression moves beyond examining whether a relationship exists between variables to assessing the nature of the relationship (Kerlinger & Pedhazur 1973). Regression analyzes the variability of the criterion or dependent variable based on the information from one or more predictor or independent variables (Pedhazur & Schmelkin 1991), seeking to explain which independent variables best predict the dependent variable. For example, we might try to predict income level from people's age, experience, and amount of education. Or we might try to predict level of fear from the amount of time people spend watching television and how realistic they feel television content is.

Prediction is the essence of science. Regression analysis seeks to uncover how much one or more independent variables predict the dependent variable. It seeks to explain the dependent variable's sources of variance, and to answer, "What values in the dependent variable can we expect given certain values of the independent variable(s)?" (Vogt 1993, 192). Good regression models can predict one's income or one's level of fear from the predictor variables.

### **Simple and Multiple Regression**

The regression equation involves one or more independent variables. Regression analysis estimates the coefficients of that equation, involving the independent variables, which best predict the value of the dependent variable. The regression equation indicates the nature and proximity of the variables, specifically how well we can predict values of the dependent variable by knowing the values of the independent variable(s) (Vogt 1993). The equation is represented by the regression line, which depicts the relationship between the variables. The sum of squares refers to the deviation or variance of a score from the average score of a distribution; it is fundamental to regression analysis (StatSoft 2006). The regression line or least-squares line is a line on the graph or scatterplot that depicts the lowest sum of squared distances of all data points. We fit our data to the best-fitting straight line based on this least-squares criterion (Blalock 1979).

*Simple regression analysis* contains one continuous predictor variable. The equation for simple linear regression refers to the regression of  $Y$  scores on  $X$  scores, or how the dependent

variable scores depend on the independent variable scores. The simple regression equation seeking for a design with one predictor variable,  $X$ , and one dependent variable,  $Y$ , is.

$$Y = a + bX$$

where  $X$  is the independent variable score,  $Y$  is the predicted dependent variable score,  $a$  is the intercept constant (i.e., where the regression line intercepts the  $Y$  axis), and  $b$  is the regression coefficient (i.e., the change in  $Y$  with the change in one unit of  $X$ ). The simple linear regression equation seeks to uncover how much an independent variable explains or predicts the dependent variable.

*Multiple regression analysis* contains the simple regression designs for two or more continuous independent variables. The regression equation for a multiple regression design with three predictor variables,  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ , and  $X_3$ , and one dependent variable,  $Y$ , is.

$$Y = a + bX_1 + bX_2 + bX_3$$

where  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ , and  $X_3$  are the scores on three independent variables,  $Y$  is the predicted dependent variable score,  $a$  is the intercept constant, and  $b$  is the unstandardized regression coefficient (used with raw scores). The multiple linear regression equation seeks to uncover how two or more independent variables explain or predict the dependent variable. If the regression coefficient  $b$  were to be standardized in these equations, it would be represented by  $\beta$  (beta), whereby all variables are standardized to a mean of 0.0 and a standard deviation of 1.0.

Based on the size of each regression coefficient, researchers can compare the contribution of each independent variable for predicting the dependent variable. Multiple  $R$  indicates the strength of the relationship. The proportion of explained variance for the predictor or set of predictors is depicted by  $R^2$  and  $F$  is the test of significance of the relationship. If the predictor variables are intercorrelated, such multicollinearity makes it difficult to assess individual predictor contributions to the regression equation.

Multiple regression, then, estimates the separate and collective contributions of two or more independent variables to explaining the dependent variable (Kerlinger & Pedhazur 1973). Multiple regression analysis assesses the relationship between a dependent variable and a set of independent variables, seeking to learn how the continuous independent variables, such as age, level of education, academic performance, and amount of television viewing, explain or predict the dependent variable, such as the amount of Internet use. Or communication researchers might want to learn how, collectively, knowledge, skill, and motivation enhance communication competence, and whether knowledge, skill, or motivation is more instrumental to enhancing communication competence. Once the researchers measure the three predictor variables – knowledge, skill, and motivation – they can assess how the variables, collectively, explain a communicator's level of competence, and which one, if any, better explains a communicator's competence. Or, in a typical transaction, a salesperson might want to learn which attribute – price, gas mileage, or reliability – predicts a consumer's decision to buy an automobile. Once the salesperson gathers the information across many transactions, he or she can learn which attribute is, or which attributes are, better predictors of car purchases.

### Additional Considerations

Statistical programs allow researchers to enter the predictors into the regression equation using forward, backward, stepwise, or hierarchical techniques. Depending on the objective, a researcher might choose to enter all predictors simultaneously. Forward entry sequentially adds predictors having the highest correlations with the criterion variable. Backward entry enters all predictors and then removes one at a time based on the weakest significance. Using stepwise regression, the computer selects predictors that add incrementally and significantly to the equation, based on the set tolerance criterion. If the researcher's goal was to test a communication model, he or she would enter the predictor variables in blocks, hierarchically, according to the sequential steps in the model.

We also can expand the relationships examined by regression analysis to include two or more criterion variables. For example, we might examine how knowledge, skill, and motivation predict communication competence *and* satisfaction. Or we might analyze how amount and type of television viewing predict distrust *and* fear. Monge (1980) explains the application of multivariate multiple regression to communication research. In addition, such techniques as binary and logistic regression can be used to expand the manner of how we can examine relationships via regression analysis to include discrete, categorical, and other nonlinear variables (Norusis 1999).

### BRIEF EXAMPLES

A few brief examples help illustrate the application of regression analysis in communication research. Sypher and Zorn (1986), for example, used stepwise multiple regression in their organizational study, and found, of four communication-related abilities, cognitive differentiation accounted for the most variance when predicting job level and upward mobility. Those with more developed cognitive abilities tended to be promoted to higher levels in organizations than did those with lesser cognitive abilities.

Ohr and Schrott (2001) used regression analysis to examine determinants of political → information seeking in a local German election: social expectations to be politically informed; a personal duty to stay politically informed; a desire to express political orientations by voting; and the entertainment aspect of politics. They found that campaign information seeking can be explained reasonably well by these determinants, especially social expectations to be politically informed (→ Election Campaign Communication).

In the media context, Rubin et al. (1985) used hierarchical multiple regression and found news affinity, perceived news realism, and news-viewing motives predicted parasocial interaction with favorite television news personalities (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships). Those who sought information when viewing the news, and felt news content was realistic and important, developed a greater sense of parasocial interaction with newscasters than their counterparts.

Loges (1994) also used hierarchical multiple regression, and found support for the hypothesis that media dependency relations (→ Media System Dependency Theory) with → newspapers, → magazines, → radio, and → television are more intense the more threatening one perceives the social and natural environment to be. Controlling for demographics, Loges found that threat significantly added to the explained variance in dependency.

Using hierarchical regression, Slater (2003) found that gender, → sensation seeking, aggression, and frequency of → Internet use contributed to explaining the use of violent media content and violent website content. Alienation from school and family partially mediated the effects of sensation seeking and aggression on using violent Internet content.

Path analysis uses several regression analyses to test the path model, seeking to explain complex directional relationships between independent and dependent variables. Rubin and McHugh (1987), for example, examined an explanatory model of perceived importance of parasocial relationships, moving from television exposure through interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction to perceived relationship importance. They found that social attraction and parasocial interaction significantly predicted perceived relationship importance.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media System Dependency Theory ▶ Newspaper ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Radio ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Television

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# Reification

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“Popular communication” can be characterized by the various ways in which the general public engages popular forms of communication including radio, → television, film, → popular music, and print media such as magazines, newspapers, and popular literature, as well as new technologies such as the Internet, email, and mobile phones (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). In addition to their general utility, these cultural objects inform and entertain the general public and are directed toward mass audience reception. The conspicuous consumption of popular forms of communication reveals a complex set of interactions with these modes of communication (→ Popular Communication).

Popular communication in the twenty-first century has transformed human → interaction by providing for seemingly limitless possibilities. In so doing, contemporary popular communication has subverted traditional forms of communication such as letters and the telephone. As more personalized and private communication is increasingly no longer the dominant form of communication, the reification of human communication has become pervasive. In the context of popular communication, “reification” can be described as the process by which popular communicative interactions between persons and the personal relationships indicative of those interactions are converted into objects that are thereby depersonalized and often function as a commodity.

This concept of reification is derived from Marxist studies and includes the theory that, as human beings become considered as physical objects they are deprived of subjectivity, that is, a consciousness of individual agency. Reification, according to this Marxist view, subsequently produces the effect of alienation. Within the parameters of popular communication, reification and alienation can be identified through such examples as television talk shows and reality shows which often feature intimate discussions and interactions between persons and groups of persons that are directed and mass-marketed to television viewers who consume such discussions and interactions as commodities. Through this process of reification viewers become part of a communicative exchange, which, ultimately, results in the commodification of human relations (→ Commodification of the Media).

The → Internet provides another such example of popular communication and reification. Many websites such as MySpace, which is marketed to users as “a space for friends,” as well as Internet chatrooms and email represent modes of popular communication that have also become a significant vehicle for marketing goods and products to consumers. In addition, mobile phones can be used to connect to the Internet, check email, and download and access popular music, all of which is mediated by the marketing strategies of mobile phone and other corporate companies (→ Electronic Mail; Commercialization of the Media; Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Consequently, the mobile phone has evolved into more than simply a way for people to communicate. Rather, mobile phones provide yet another example of the reification of human contact

through popular communication as they have become another means for transforming the communicative process into a commodity. However, these modes of popular communication alone do not produce reification. Instead, these cultural artifacts are part of a larger complex interplay between → popular culture, commercial culture, market forces, and the need for human beings to communicate and interact socially.

In addressing the *intersections between commodity culture and popular communication*, current popular communication scholarship has continued to provide a historical and comparative view of these popular communicative processes while also examining the areas of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, social class, globalization, audience reception, and information technologies as they relate and contribute to an understanding of the social and cultural consequences of such processes (→ Cultural Studies; Social Movements and Communication). Scholars have continued to develop interdisciplinary theories and methodologies to trace the effects of reification through popular communication on human beings and the society at large. Scholars of popular communication, for instance, generally agree that attention to national as well as global market forces on information technology and culture is one of many significant factors in identifying the potential social and cultural consequences of popular communication and reification. Audience reception is yet another popular field of inquiry within popular communication studies (→ Audience). Many scholars in these emergent fields posit that it remains to be seen how popular communication artifacts and technologies will ultimately be used – as a tool for creating community beyond cultural and social divides such as race, gender, sexuality, and class, or will they persist as a way of continuing to create markets and consumers?

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Commodification of the Media ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Interaction ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Media Effects ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Popular Music ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television

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# Relational Control

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Relational control is the most dynamic of the three dimensions of social relationships proposed by Millar and Rogers (1987) – the other two are trust and intimacy. Control represents the vertical “distance” between the persons in an ongoing interaction; it refers to the pattern of rights and obligations to define or direct and to defer or accept the other’s assertions while constructing the continually re-produced form of any interpersonal relationship. The temporal relevance of control is the present, since the right to direct and the obligation to accept the dyad’s form varies by topics, social roles, and social settings. Functionally, control structures serve to regulate how each person acts toward and with the other and the dyad’s ability to accomplish interdependent and individual goals (→ Social Interaction Structure). Subjective judgments about the vertical distance between persons are encapsulated in the notions of freedom and equity. Freedom concerns the possibility of one’s own actions affecting the forms and outcomes of the relationship, while equity judgments concern the fairness of one’s own rewards in comparison to the other’s, considering the amount and type of one’s contributions to the relationship (→ Social Exchange).

Relational control has been most frequently measured with the Relational Communication Control Coding System (RCCCS) or some modification of it. A comprehensive report of the development, application, and modifications of RCCCS is provided in Rogers and Escudero (2004). Briefly, the RCCCS uses a three-digit code to categorize any speech turn; the first digit codes the *speaker*, the second codes the verbalization’s *format*, and the third classifies the turn’s *response mode* relative to the prior statement from the previous speaker. The three-digit code is then assigned a control code; an attempt to define the relationship is called a one-up movement (↑); a request or acceptance of the other’s definition is called a one-down movement (↓), and a non-demanding, non-accepting, leveling utterance is called a one-across movement (→). Combining contiguous control codes creates three types of transacts termed *complementary* (↑↓ or ↓↑), *symmetrical* (↑↑, ↓↓, or →→) and *transitory* (→↑, ↑→, →↓, or ↓→), thereby measuring the two primary theoretical constructs (i.e., complementarity and symmetry) that prompted the coding scheme’s creation (Rogers 1982). Although seemingly complex, the reliability and validity estimates of RCCCS are good to excellent by conventional social science standards. The RCCCS has been used to describe the relational control dimension of verbal utterances in a variety of interpersonal settings such as husband–wife conversations, superior–subordinate interactions, and three-or-more-person family therapy sessions, and recent modifications include the coding of nonverbal behaviors in interpersonal interactions (Rogers & Escudero 2004).

A variety of measures of the relational control dimension is possible with RCCCS. Two that have received a fair amount of empirical attention are dominance and redundancy. *Dominance* is operationally defined as the number of one-up moves responded to with a one-down maneuver (dominance = given ↑, %↓). Dominance is a momentary outcome

in an ongoing conversation where one person asserts a definition of the relationship and the other accepts that assertion (e.g., the wife says “Let’s go out to dinner” and the husband replies “OK. Good idea.”). In husband–wife relationships, the more the husband is in a dominant position relative to his wife, the more marital satisfaction he reports, but the same correlation is not observed with wife dominance scores. Further, the greater the couple’s dominance ratio indicating that the husband is in a dominant position considerably more than his wife, (1) the less he understands his wife and (2) the more redundant and rigid or less flexible the couple’s control structure. (*Redundancy* is operationally defined as the sum of the absolute deviation from random use of the nine transactional configurations indexed by the RCCCS. Either highly redundant or highly chaotic patterns are problematic for the relationship.)

Dominance, a momentary relational structure, is not to be confused with *domineeringness*, which is a measure of an individual’s use of one-up moves (domineeringness =  $\uparrow$ /total number of maneuvers uttered by the speaker). Dominance and domineeringness are independent measures; that is, the frequency of dominance cannot be predicted by the frequency of one-up moves even though the more domineering one person is the lower the other’s dominance score. This statistical independence is an important, consistent finding; it empirically supports the conceptual distinction between individual and relational measures, and reminds scholars that communication processes cannot be additively reconstructed from or reduced to measures of individual actions and perceptions. Research consistently shows that, in husband–wife conversations, the more domineering statements issued by the wife, (1) the less marital satisfaction she reports and (2) the less communication satisfaction both she and her husband report. Husband domineeringness is not consistently related with either spouse’s reported levels of marital satisfaction, although it is slightly correlated with the frequency of conflicts observed in marital conversations. (A verbal conflict is depicted by at least three consecutive one-up moves by the two speakers with RCCCS codes.)

Just as biological systems continually reproduce their structure by and through their own processes, so communication systems reproduce their relational form by and through their message performances. Describing this self-regulating feature of interpersonal relationships is the concern of the relational control construct and the focus of RCCCS coding procedures.

SEE ALSO: ► Social Exchange ► Social Interaction Structure

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# Relational Dialectics

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Relational dialectics is an interpretive theory of meaning-making in familial and non-kin relationships (→ Meaning). Formally articulated in 1996 by Leslie Baxter and Barbara Montgomery, the theory is grounded in the philosophy of dialogism articulated by Russian language philosopher → Mikhail Bakhtin (→ Dialogic Perspectives). It relies primarily on qualitative methods with a goal of rendering a rich understanding of the meaning-making process (→ Qualitative Methodology). Unlike many interpretive theories, however, relational dialectics theory (RDT) challenges interpretivism's focus on consensual, unified meanings, emphasizing instead the fragmented and contested nature of meaning-making. Further, RDT moves from subjective sense-making of individuals to focus on → discourse. The theory can be summarized in *three core propositions*.

The *first proposition* is that meanings emerge from the struggle of different, often *opposing, discourses* (→ Text and Intertextuality). Following Bakhtin, all of meaning-making can be understood metaphorically and literally as a dialogue. Everyday dialogue presupposes difference in the unique perspectives of the interlocutors. To Bakhtin, all meaning-making can be understood as a dialogue – the interplay of different, ideologically freighted discourses. Bakhtin's lifelong intellectual project was critical of monologues of all kinds – authoritative discourses that foreclose the struggle of competing discourses by centering a single discursive point of view. Meaning-making becomes calcified when only one discourse occupies the centripetal center and all other systems of meaning have been rendered mute. RDT seeks to reclaim discursive conflict in relating, adopting a radical skepticism of relational monologues.

To date, RDT-informed researchers have identified a variety of competing discourses in romantic, marital, and familial relationships. Three dialogues appear common across a wide range of relationship experiences. First, relationship parties give voice to a discourse of individualism that interpenetrates with a discourse of connection. Second, relationship parties navigate the discursive struggle between a discourse of openness, candor, and honesty on the one hand, and a discourse of discretion and privacy on the other hand. Third, the communication activity of relationship parties is rendered intelligible by a discourse of certainty and predictability in play with a discourse of uncertainty, novelty, and spontaneity. Other discursive struggles are specific to particular relationship types. For example, stepfamily communication is often characterized by the discursive struggle of stepparent-as-parent with and against stepparent-as-outsider. Existing research has, for the most part, been centered in the first proposition, to the relative neglect of the other two propositions.

The *second proposition* is that the interpenetration of discourses is *both synchronic and diachronic* (→ Linguistics; Semiotics). Meanings emerge in any given interaction moment, and in this sense, they are, at least momentarily, synchronically fixed. But meanings are also fluid; in subsequent interactions, relational parties might jointly construct meanings that reproduce the old meanings, or they could jointly produce new meanings. In either case

– reproduction or production – meaning-making is envisioned as ongoing communicative work that results from discursive struggle.

Some constructed meanings function to elide, or skirt, the struggle of discourses to the extent possible. For example, parties can privilege one discourse at a given moment and thereby mute all discursive rivals. If, over time, one discourse is reproduced again and again, it becomes authoritative. RDT argues, however, that it is effortful for parties to sustain authoritative discourses. Communication holds the potential for rupture, and centrifugal discourses, while removed from the centripetal center, can never be completely silenced. The struggle of competing discourses is also elided when relationship parties jointly construct meanings that involve an inversion across time with respect to which discourses are centered and which are marginalized. This diachronic ebb and flow moves back and forth, with centered and marginalized discourses changing places in the meaning-making process. This pattern of meaning-making appears quite common among relationship parties. Discursive struggles are also elided when relationship parties construct ambiguous or equivocal meanings. Ambiguity is a discursive lubricant, allowing meaning to slide between discourses, appearing to embrace them all.

Other meaning-making emerges from the interplay of discourses. Hybrid constructions combine or mix competing discourses. A new meaning emerges from the struggle, one that draws upon elements of multiple discourses. Another kind of discursive mixture is what Bakhtin refers to as an aesthetic moment; that is, meaning-making in which discourses are no longer framed as oppositional but instead merge in a way that profoundly alters each meaning system. These aesthetic meanings are crafted along new discursive lines, akin to chemical reactions.

The *third proposition* is that the interpenetration of competing discourses *constitutes social reality* (→ Constructivism). In this third proposition, RDT joins a growing number of theories committed to a constitutive view in which communication is positioned to construct the social world, not merely to represent an objective world that precedes communication. What is unique about RDT is its articulation of the mechanism by which such construction takes place: the tensionality of difference. The constitutive process includes a decentering of the sovereign self in which the individual's dispositions, attitudes, beliefs, and social positions are thought to precede communication. Communication is deployed by the sovereign self to serve his or her preformed goals. By contrast, according to RDT, consciousness and identity are continually formed through communication with different others. In decentering the sovereign self, interpersonal conflict and power are shifted from the individual unit of analysis to focus instead on discourse.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Constructivism ▶ Dialogic Perspectives ▶ Discourse ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Semiotics ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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## Relational Maintenance

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Relational maintenance refers to activities that occur in interpersonal relationships after the relationship is developed and before the relationship is terminated (Stafford 1994). Although the term implies a temporal stage of relationship life, communication scholars have more frequently focused on the processes that sustain a relationship. For example, Dindia & Canary (1993) identified four common *definitions of relational maintenance*: (1) the process of keeping a relationship in existence; (2) the process of keeping a relationship in a specified state or condition; (3) the process of keeping a relationship in satisfactory condition; and (4) the process of keeping a relationship in repair (→ Relationship Development).

There are several controversies within relational maintenance scholarship, including theoretical commitment and views of intentionality. For example, three major theories have emerged. The first is *equity theory* (→ Social Exchange). Associated with the work of Canary, Stafford, and colleagues, equity theory posits that maintenance behaviors are both rewards and costs. These authors identified seven maintenance strategies: “positivity” (being cheerful and optimistic), “openness” (self-disclosure and direct discussion of the relationship), “assurances” (messages stressing commitment), “network” (relying on common friends and affiliations), “sharing tasks” (accomplishing instrumental responsibilities), “advice” (expressing opinions and support), and “integrative conflict management” (e.g., cooperating, apologizing). Research indicates that these strategies are consistent and strong predictors of relational characteristics such as satisfaction, commitment, and love.

The second theoretical approach is a *dialectical perspective* (→ Relational Dialectics). Championed by scholars such as Baxter and Montgomery (1996), the dialectical approach focuses on the ways that contradictory tensions are managed in order to sustain the relationship. For example, a dialectical tension might involve the desire for both predictability and novelty in the relationship. Eight management strategies have been identified. These include “denial” (rejecting the existence of a tension), “disorientation”

(ignoring the ability to actively manage tensions), “spiraling inversion” (responding to first one, then the other pole), “segmentation” (partitioning the relationship by topic/activity), “balance” (partially fulfilling the demands of each pole), “integration” (responding to both poles simultaneously), “recalibration” (temporarily synthesizing the contradiction so opposing forces are no longer viewed as opposite), and “reaffirmation” (celebrating the stimulation that contradictory tensions provides).

Finally, *systems approaches* have been touted as the ideal theory for understanding maintenance processes (Stafford 1994; → Systems Theory). Systems approaches allow for an understanding of how mutual and reciprocal influences affect the balance of the relationship. In his seminal study of maintenance processes, Ayres (1983) found that three strategies – “avoidance”, “balance,” and “directness” – functioned to sustain a relationship’s equilibrium.

Although these theories have provided insights into maintenance processes, they have not provided a full picture. Equity theory, for example, is biased toward western notions of relationships. The dialectical perspective provides an intuitive means for understanding relationships, but does not provide a mechanism for predicting which relationships will be maintained and which will not. And, despite the potential usefulness of the systems perspective, relatively little maintenance research has adopted this view. A significant area for future scholarship is the development of a theory or theories that more fully explain the maintenance process.

A second ongoing controversy is the extent to which maintenance is achieved intentionally. At issue is whether maintenance is effortful and planned (i.e., it is *strategic*), or whether it also occurs as a by-product of everyday interaction (i.e., it is *routine maintenance*). Dindia (2000) identified three possible relationships between strategic and routine maintenance. First, she argued that some behaviors might start off as strategies for relational partners, but become routinized over time. Second, some behaviors might be performed primarily strategically by some partners and primarily routinely by others. Finally, Dindia proposed that the same behavior might on some occasions be used strategically, and on other occasions be used routinely. Tentative support has been found for all three possibilities, and for the proposal that routine maintenance may be a stronger predictor of relationship satisfaction than strategic maintenance (Dainton & Aylor 2002). However, the larger question of when and why maintenance is performed strategically vs routinely has not yet been answered.

Regardless of theoretical perspective or stance on intentionality, much of the published research has used *self-report data* (→ Research Methods). Although communication is presumed to be the central mechanism for relational maintenance, the sheer difficulty of capturing real-life interactions in real-life settings makes research focused on actual communication problematic. Whether strategic or routine, relational maintenance is embedded in the rocky terrain of daily life, and is rarely on public view. Future research will need to devise creative methods to fully investigate maintenance communication.

Moreover, although scholars have learned a great deal about the cognitions and behaviors that relational partners use for maintenance, network and cultural influences have largely been ignored. Future research needs to put maintenance in context, investigating the extent to which cultural norms, as well as family members, other relationships, and social structures, affect the maintenance process.

Finally, nearly all of the research has focused on dating and marital relationships, but clearly *other types of relationships* are maintained (→ Dating Relationships; Marital Communication). Scholars are just beginning to investigate the maintenance of friendships, family relationships, co-worker relationships, and the like. An intriguing but as yet unanswered question is the extent to which the same maintenance processes operate across contexts. Early results indicate that there are some maintenance activities that occur in numerous relationship forms, including providing support and talking about the relationship. The relative importance of these more generic strategies vs the contextually determined and/or relationally idiosyncratic behaviors is an area for future research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Marital Communication ▶ Relational Dialectics  
▶ Relationship Development ▶ Research Methods ▶ Social Exchange ▶ Systems Theory

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## **Relational Schemas**

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Schemas are defined as large-scale cognitive structures representing general knowledge, often also described as subjective theories, about some object or concept (Smith 1998). Their main functions include aiding in the interpretation of external stimuli, directing attention to specific types of external information, and guiding the retrieval and judgment

of information from memory. That is, schemas play a central role in information processing and how persons understand and act in their social worlds. It follows that relational schemas organize knowledge of relationships in long-term memory and play an important role in the cognitive processes that precede, accompany, and follow interpersonal communication (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

Specifically, *relational* schemas can be defined as interrelated pieces of declarative and procedural knowledge about relationships that resides in long-term memory (Baldwin 1992). In this context, declarative knowledge is defined as descriptive knowledge of the attributes and features of things, whereas procedural knowledge refers to a person's knowledge of if-then contingencies. The declarative and procedural knowledge contained in relational schemas overlaps with three subsets of knowledge that are often considered to be independent and to constitute their own schemas: self-, other-, and relationship-schemas. *Self-schemas* organize knowledge about the self, including knowledge of thoughts and emotions, goals and plans for the future, and memory of past experiences. *Other-schemas* represent knowledge about others with whom one has relationships. Knowledge of others mirrors knowledge of self in that it includes representations of others' thoughts and emotions, goals and plans for the future, and past experiences. The main difference is that, depending on how well one knows the other, these representations are much more limited than those of self.

Finally, *relationship-schemas* contain memories of past and expectations of future interactions with others. They include knowledge of experienced and expected behavioral sequences between self and other that is used to interpret and to plan behavior. These interaction sequences can be very specific and rigid interpersonal scripts (Abelson 1981) for routine behaviors, such as greeting someone, or more abstract and flexible memory organization packets (MOP) (Kellermann 1995) and plans (Berger 2002) for reaching goals in novel interactions. Although these three sub-schemas are often conceptualized as being isolated from each other, Baldwin (1992) demonstrated that these three subsets of knowledge are so highly interdependent on one another (i.e., any change in one will effect changes in the others) that they actually all belong to the same, highly abstract cognitive schema.

Like other schemas, relational schemas are hierarchically organized and exist at least at three levels of generality (Koerner & Fitzpatrick 2002). At the most general level is knowledge that applies to all social relationships, the general social schema. Such general social knowledge includes beliefs and pragmatic rules that apply to all interactions, like the norm of reciprocity (→ Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction) or the need to be truthful and relevant when communicating (→ Deception Detection Accuracy). On the second level are relationship-type schemas that include knowledge specific to the different types of relationships one has, such as romantic partner, co-worker, sibling, and best friend. The knowledge stored in schemas at this level is different from the knowledge in the general social schema and applies to all relationships of that type (Fletcher 1993). On the most specific level are relationship-specific schemas that contain knowledge that applies to only one particular relationship a person has with one specific other person. These schemas contain memories, attributions, and experiences made within the context of that particular relationship and allow individuals to adapt their thoughts, behaviors, and interpretations to that particular relationship. These particular relationship beliefs are what make each relationship unique and distinguishable from other relationships.



The knowledge contained at the level of more specific schemas is different from the knowledge that exists at more general levels, and a person's complete mental representation of a relationship combines knowledge from all three levels. Thus, similarities of mental representations of relationships with different persons are the result of shared knowledge drawn from either the general social schema or the relationship-type schema. By contrast, differences in mental representations of relationships with different persons are due to unique information contained either in relationship-type or in relationship-specific schemas. Consequently, there must be a process that determines which information is retrieved and used in relational information processing. Originally, Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002) proposed a sequential process in which relationship-specific knowledge is accessed first and general social knowledge last, which would explain why more specific knowledge has supremacy over more general knowledge in information processing. An equally plausible alternative that is more consistent with parallel processing is a recursive or iterative process that accesses knowledge at all levels of specificity simultaneously and that assigns more specific knowledge primacy over more general knowledge if there is a conflict between knowledge at the different levels of abstraction. A similar process should be involved when storing relationship experiences in memory. Truly unique experiences are stored in relationship-specific schemas, whereas experiences that are made with several others are stored in relationship-type schemas or the general social schema.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Communication: Definitions and Concepts ► Communication: Relationship Rules ► Deception Detection Accuracy ► Information Processing: ► Self-Concept ► Memory, Person ► Reciprocity and Compensation in Interaction ► Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction

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# Relational Termination

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Approximately 50 percent of first-time marriages, and an even higher percentage of remarriages, end in separation or divorce. Because researchers and theorists are concerned with the prevalence of relational termination, they have devoted a great deal of effort to understanding the antecedents, processes, and consequences associated with divorce and the dissolution of romantic relationships.

A number of the *characteristics that people bring to marriage* are associated with the likelihood that they will divorce. For instance, socio-demographic variables such as age and income predict the early termination of marriages. The divorce rate is particularly high for those who marry in their teens as it is for people in lower income groups, those with low-status occupations, and those with less education (Kitson et al. 1985). Relatively stable personality variables, such as neuroticism, also have been linked to the dissolution of marriage (Kelly & Conley 1987).

In addition to the characteristics that people bring to their romantic relationships, the *way partners interact* with each other predicts relational dissolution (Vangelisti 2002; → Marital Communication). Individuals who are dissatisfied with their relationship display more negative affect and less positive affect when communicating with their partner than do those who are satisfied, and the expression of negative affect predicts declines in marital satisfaction over time. Further, there are two sequences of behavior that distinguish happy from unhappy couples. The first involves the reciprocation of negative affect. People who tend to respond to their partner's negative behavior with negative behavior are less satisfied than those who do not. The second involves one partner communicating in "demanding" ways (e.g., trying to engage the other) while the other withdraws (e.g., tries to avoid the issue at hand). Labeled the demand-withdraw pattern, this behavioral sequence has been consistently associated with marital dissatisfaction and divorce (→ Interpersonal Conflict).

Because marital and other romantic relationships take place in the context of social networks, *family and friends* also influence relational stability. Generally, perceptions of approval from a partner's network and network support are positively linked to relational stability, as is the amount of overlap between partners' social networks (Sprecher et al. 2006).

The termination of marital and other romantic relationships occurs over time and involves interaction between relational partners. In other words, it is a *process rather than an event*. A number of researchers have put forth models describing the stages that couples go through when their relationships come apart (e.g., Knapp 1978). The models are similar in several ways. For instance, most note that the dissolution of romantic relationships starts when one or both partners recognize there is a problem and begin to evaluate the relationship. Next, the models suggest that partners discuss their relational problems. These discussions may be direct or indirect and may involve efforts to repair the relationship. The models also indicate that people go to their social network

to talk about their relationship, seek advice, or provide an account of why their relationship is ending. Finally, most of the models suggest that after the relationship ends, partners engage in behaviors that help them recover from the dissolution. While some of the models describe the termination process as a series of steps, all of them acknowledge that relational partners may progress through the steps at different rates and in different sequences and that partners may even skip some steps (→ Relationship Development).

Rather than describe the dissolution process itself, some researchers have focused specifically on the *tactics that people use to end their relationships*. For instance, Cody (1982) found that people who initiated a breakup with a romantic partner tended to use one of several strategies including: (1) positive tone (apologizing, trying not to hurt the partner); (2) negative identity management (noting the importance of dating other people); (3) justification (explaining the reason for the breakup); (4) behavioral de-escalation (avoiding contact); and (5) de-escalation (saying that partners should “cool off” for a period of time).

Relationship dissolution is *stressful* for most people. Individuals who are divorced report lower levels of well-being, more health problems, more loneliness and social isolation, and more economic difficulties than do those who are married. Longitudinal studies indicate that divorce causes psychological distress; however, there also is evidence suggesting that people have certain individual differences that make them vulnerable to divorce (Mastekaasa 1994). Moreover, a small number of studies show that divorce can be linked to positive outcomes such as personal growth and autonomy (Marks 1996).

Like adults, children typically find divorce stressful: Children whose parents have divorced tend to have poorer psychological adjustment, lower academic achievement, and more behavioral problems than do those whose parents have not divorced (Hetherington et al. 1985). It is worth noting, though, that the differences between children with divorced parents and those with continually married parents are relatively small. In addition, children’s adjustment to divorce is influenced by social and economic resources (Amato 1993). There is strong evidence that the conflict associated with divorce, rather than the divorce itself, accounts for the lower well-being of children from divorced families. Further, children whose parents have economic difficulties after divorce appear to be more negatively influenced than those whose parents do not experience such difficulties.

Although the prevalence of relational termination has stimulated a great deal of study, researchers’ understanding of divorce and relational dissolution is still fragmented. Most studies focus on direct associations between predictors and outcomes when, in reality, many of these associations may be mediated by other factors. Also, much of the literature is based on the assumption that characteristics that occur early in relationships determine relationship outcomes. Because the process of relational termination likely is non-linear and is influenced at different points in time by different variables, understanding the process will require longitudinal studies that examine relationship variables at multiple points in time.

SEE ALSO: ► Dating Relationships ► Interpersonal Communication ► Interpersonal Conflict ► Marital Communication ► Relationship Development

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## Relational Uncertainty

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Relational uncertainty is the degree of confidence people have in their perceptions of involvement within interpersonal relationships. The construct has its roots in → Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT; Berger & Calabrese 1975), which emphasized the relevance of uncertainty to interactions between strangers (→ Initial Interaction). As scholars began to examine URT in the domain of close relationships, they recognized the need to reconceptualize uncertainty in ways that attended to features of intimate associations (Knobloch & Solomon 2002a). The relational uncertainty construct was developed to fill this void.

Relational uncertainty is an umbrella term that refers to ambiguity arising from self, partner, and relationship sources (Berger & Bradac 1982). *Self uncertainty* indexes the questions people have about their own participation in the relationship (“How certain am I about my goals for this relationship?”). *Partner uncertainty* involves the doubts individuals experience about their partner’s participation in the relationship (“How certain am I about my partner’s goals for this relationship?”). *Relationship uncertainty* is the ambiguity people feel about the state of the relationship itself (“How certain am I

about the future of this relationship?”). Whereas self and partner uncertainty encompass questions about individuals, relationship uncertainty exists at a higher level of abstraction because it focuses on the dyad as a unit. The three sources of relational uncertainty are both conceptually and empirically distinct.

The *sources* of relational uncertainty can be further distinguished by content areas (Knobloch & Solomon 1999). In the context of courtship, self and partner uncertainty involve the questions people have about their desire for the relationship, their evaluation of its value, and their goals for its progression. Relationship uncertainty includes the ambiguity individuals experience about the norms for appropriate behavior, the mutuality of feelings between partners, the definition of the association, and the future of the relationship (→ Expectancy Violation).

Scholars have conceptualized relational uncertainty at two *levels of abstraction*. It exists on a global level as people’s overall ambiguity about a relationship (“How certain are you about the status of this relationship?”). It also occurs on an episodic level as the doubts generated by discrete events (“How much uncertainty did you experience because of this episode?”). Scholars have collected data on both people’s retrospective accounts of unexpected events (Planalp et al. 1988) and their appraisals of hypothetical episodes (Knobloch & Solomon 2002b).

Relational uncertainty can have several *consequences*. It may provoke face threats because individuals lack information about how their partner will respond to messages. Consequently, people tend to avoid open communication under conditions of ambiguity (Knobloch 2006). Individuals experiencing relational uncertainty engage in more topic avoidance, are less likely to express jealousy to their partner, and are more apt to refrain from discussing unexpected events. Moreover, people grappling with relational uncertainty produce date request messages that are less affiliative, less relationally focused, and less explicit. Relational uncertainty may also make it harder for individuals to glean information from conversation. Under conditions of relational uncertainty, dating partners have trouble recognizing relationship-focused messages, experience problems deriving inferences from utterances, and report that conversation is difficult (Knobloch & Solomon 2005). Thus, relational uncertainty may impede people’s ability to process messages (→ Relationship Development).

At the episodic level, scholars have investigated how individuals manage uncertainty increasing events (→ Information Seeking). Both distal and proximal features of the situation govern people’s responses to unexpected episodes. Three predictors have garnered the most research attention (Knobloch 2005). Intimacy is a distal parameter that is positively associated with direct information seeking strategies. Cognitions and emotions are proximal parameters that also predict information seeking strategies.

Questions remain about the *advantages and disadvantages* of relational uncertainty (Knobloch 2007). On the one hand, research suggests that relational uncertainty may be dissatisfying. People experiencing ambiguity appraise irritating partner behavior to be more severe, feel more negative emotion, and perceive network members to be less supportive of their courtship. Further, individuals typically view unexpected events to be negatively valenced. On the other hand, scholars have theorized that relational uncertainty may be beneficial by providing romance, excitement, and opportunities to affirm commitment (Knobloch & Solomon 2002a; Livingston 1980). More research is needed to

determine the boundary conditions that make relational uncertainty helpful or harmful to intimate associations (→ Uncertainty Management).

Two other directions for future research involve the link between relational uncertainty and communication. First, most studies have examined people's global communication strategies rather than features of their utterances, so work is necessary to shed light on characteristics of messages. Second, scholars have focused on understanding how relational uncertainty predicts message production, so research is required to illuminate the connection between relational uncertainty and message processing.

SEE ALSO: ► Expectancy Violation ► Information Seeking ► Initial Interaction ► Relationship Development ► Uncertainty Management ► Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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# Relationship Development

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Since the dawn of interpersonal communication research in the early 1970s, communication researchers have been interested in relationship development processes. Theories focused on how strangers develop more personal and intimate alliances with others over time, couples work to maintain relationships, and partners cope when they fall apart or disintegrate. Extensions and applications of these basic theories into work, family, cross-cultural, and mediated arenas followed.

Several important *relationship development theories*, advanced in the 1970s, laid the foundation for the next 30 years. Altman and Taylor's (1973) Social Penetration Theory claimed that relationships develop because people expect the amount and nature of rewards accrued by continuing will exceed the potential costs. Communicators exchange an increasingly broad number of topics, going into more depth on some and staying superficial on others. But as the topics and depth progress from non-intimate areas to more intimate ones, the layers are peeled, like an onion, and the relationship develops. Relational dissolution (i.e., depenetration) follows the same process, but in reverse.

Duck's (1973) description of the phases of breaking up was consistent with this approach, but examined satisfaction with the relationship, possible confrontation about complaints, means of dealing with one's social network, and retrospection on the breakup (→ Relational Termination). Rogers (Rogers & Farace 1975) described another relational approach to development based on analysis of conversations; symmetrical or complementary transactions connote similar types of relationships (→ Transactional Models).

Charles Berger's → Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT) has generated the most research in the communication field (Berger & Calabrese 1975). On the basis of attraction theories developed by Newcomb, Asch, Miller, and Heider (Knapp et al. 2002; Rubin & Rubin 2001), Berger identified three main stages of development: entry, person, and exit. Berger and associates developed and tested 21 theorems centered on seven essential communication concepts: amount of communication, nonverbal affiliative expressiveness, information-seeking behavior, intimacy level, reciprocity, similarity, and liking. Research also examined five main strategies for reducing uncertainty: interrogation, self-disclosure, detecting deception, environmental structuring, and deviation testing (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication; Deception Detection Accuracy; Information Seeking). The process of development was conceived as a series of proactive (predictions) and retroactive (explanations) attributions about the other person before, during, and after interaction (→ Attribution Processes).

Miller & Steinberg's (1975) Goal-Plan-Action model proposed that relationships move from non-interpersonal (where demographic/stereotypic attributions are based on cultural/sociological information) to interpersonal (in which psychological information is used to create personal/private attributions). Central concepts of this model are control (people intentionally try to affect others) and exchange of rewards (with reduction of costs). Three main skills necessary for development are empathy, self-disclosure, and

small talk (→ Empathy Theory; Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

Knapp's (1978) Staircase Model was based on Murray Davis's 1973 book *Intimate relations* and Social Penetration Theory. Knapp identified five stages of coming together – initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating, bonding – and five stages of coming apart – differentiating, circumscribing, stagnating, avoiding, and terminating. Progression through the stages depends on interactions that take place and amount of information exchanged.

The 1980s produced extensions of these theories and some new directions (Berger & Gudykunst 1991). Judee Burgoon and Jerold Hale (1984) extracted fundamental topics in the relational area. Gudykunst extended URT to the intercultural communication arena, and Leslie Baxter, following Duck's work, continued to examine elements such as disengagement, turning points, and other stages (→ Relational Maintenance). This latter approach was continued into the 1990s and until today by those following more of a dialectical approach.

Researchers have investigated development in several *types of relationships*. Most research has focused on romantic or potentially romantic interactions (Vangelisti 2002; → Dating Relationships). These works identified attraction and attribution as key elements in moving from one stage to another (→ Interpersonal Attraction). Studies of friendship among acquaintances and roommates, dissolution, and conflict among family members or spouses abound. Best known in this area is the work of Baxter and Bullis on turning points, Bochner on families, and Fitzpatrick on marital couple types.

Additional research has looked at interpersonal relationships across cultures, identifying mainly the uncertainty that is inherent in cultural differences. URT in work relationships has taken the form of socialization and assimilation; later work has looked at uncertain situations such as job transfers, stress, and burnout. A similar applied area is the health field, with URT applied to provider–patient and caregiver–patient relationships.

Extensions to mediated relationships began with examination of URT to explain parasocial relationship development with television characters and online relationships (Walther & Parks 2002; → Mediated Social Interaction). In effect, with so many relationships today initiated online and with the help of mobile phones, email, and instant messaging (IM) programs, long-distance relationship development (see Stafford 2005) becomes more than interpersonal – almost hyperpersonal (→ Long-Distance Relationships; Online Relationships). Thus focus on the medium has replaced prior investigations into the process.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Dating Relationships ▶ Deception Detection Accuracy ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Friendship and Communication ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Long-Distance Relationships ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Online Relationships ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relational Termination ▶ Transactional Models ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Reliability

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Linguistically, the word “reliability” occurs in contexts of relying on something, for example, on one’s tools, someone else’s service, given measuring instruments, or data. In the conduct of science, the reliability of data is an important bottleneck for the construction of theories or scientific conjectures, and for giving reasonable advice.

*Data* usually are the primary and therefore the most direct representations of typically transient phenomena that researchers are interested in theorizing, conceptualizing, or explaining. Interviews, public happenings, historical events, natural catastrophes, even scientific experiments do not last long enough for important details to be inspected (→ Research Methods; Experimental Design). Moreover, phenomena cannot be compared unless they co-occur. Analysis, comparison, and research of diverse transient and non-synchronous phenomena cannot proceed without relying on sufficiently durable

representations of them: data for short. Even archaeological artifacts that have endured natural decay, often thought to be direct and unmistakably obvious data, are not data unless they can be seen as the products of a distant culture that archaeologists seek to understand. Observations, when committed to memory, may seem individually more real than phenomena talked about by others, but they have no intersubjective status until they are recorded, described, or transcribed, until they have become data for more than one person. Thus, one speaks of data when a community can handle them in the absence of phenomena of interest to that community.

### EPISTEMOLOGY OF RELIABILITY

Reliability is a measure of the extent to which a community can trust data as stand-ins for unavailable phenomena. *Sources of unreliability* are many. Measuring instruments may malfunction, be influenced by variables that are irrelevant to what is to be measured, or be misread. When asked for their opinions, interviewees may answer to please the interviewer. Witnesses may testify from recollections that are distorted by self-interests, enriched by recent insights, or informed by explanations heard from third parties. Medical doctors may disagree on the diagnosis of a patient. Content analysts may have conflicting assessments of what a text means. Demonstrating the reliability of data means ruling out all conceivable sources of uncertainty that could have contributed to the data's present form.

Assessing the reliability of data entails two *epistemological difficulties*. Not only are many phenomena that data aim to represent transitory, but, even when they are not so, it is the act of generating data that makes them into known phenomena. For example, one does not know the time of the day unless there is a clock to observe. One does not know the meaning of a text unless one reads it. One does not know the category of an event unless someone categorizes it. Data are relatively durable descriptions that create what they describe. This fact is the most important reason why researchers need to assure themselves and each other that the data they have generated or obtained from other sources are reliable in the sense of representing something real and are, hence, worthy of attention. Obtaining such assurances presents two problems: how to assess the reliability of data, and once measured, whether their unreliability is tolerable or not.

### TWO COMPATIBLE CONCEPTS OF RELIABILITY

There are two concepts of reliability in use. (1) From the perspective of → *measurement theory*, reliability amounts to an assurance that a method of generating data is free of influence from circumstances that are extraneous to the processes of observation, description, or measurement. Establishing this kind of reliability means measuring the extent to which the variation in data is free of variation from spurious causes. Such tests require duplicating the data-making effort under a variety of circumstances that could affect the data. These duplications must be independent of each other and obtained under the very conditions under which one would like the data to be stable. For example, if human coders are involved, one wants to use coders whose kind can be found elsewhere (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). For interview data, one wants to be sure that the personality of the interviewer does not affect what interviewees say (→ Interview; Survey).

If the temperature of medical patients is measured, one may want to be sure that room temperature does not influence the outcome. The extent of agreement among these duplications is interpreted as the degree to which data can be considered reliable and, hence, trusted.

(2) From the perspective of *interpretation theory*, reliability amounts to an assurance that researchers interpret their data consensually. Establishing this kind of reliability means demonstrating that the members of a scientific community agree on the meaning of the data they analyze. Unlike measurement theory, interpretation theory recognizes that researchers may have different backgrounds, interests, and theoretical orientations that lead them to different interpretations of the same data. Seeing the same phenomenon from different perspectives is typical, often considered instructive, and not counted as evidence of unreliability. It is when data are taken as evidence about phenomena not under researchers' control, say, about historical events, witness accounts, or statistical facts, that unreliability can become an issue. A method for establishing this kind of reliability is triangulation. Data are reliable when, after accounting for explainable differences in approaches and perspectives, three or more sets of data imply the same thing. Unreliability becomes evident, however, when one researcher's claim of what the data represent contradicts the claims made by others. When one researcher considers his or her data as evidence for "A" while others consider their data as evidence for "not A," the two claims cannot both be true. Data that cannot be triangulated erode an interpretive community's trust in them. From the perspective of interpretation theory, therefore, reliability assures a community that its members are talking about the same phenomena – without availability of these phenomena independent of talking about them.

Whereas measurement theory focuses on the process of generating data and attempts to assure researchers that their data are representative of real as opposed to spurious phenomena, interpretation theory concerns itself with what measurement theory tries to accomplish, namely that researchers agree regarding whether they are investigating the same phenomena. Both concepts of reliability rely on achieving substantial agreement.

## **RELIABILITY AND AGREEMENT**

The reliability of a particular technological device often is an either/or proposition; for example, does the engine of a car start or not? The reliability of a class of devices usually is the failure rate of its members, indicated by a statistic; for example, the repair record of a particular model of car. However, when humans are involved in generating data, especially by recording observations or reading texts – from recording the numerical values read from a measuring instrument to judging whether published statements are favorable or unfavorable to a candidate for political office – their reliability depends on agreement among independently obtained records of observations, readings, or judgments.

Agreement is not truth, and reliability, therefore, must not be confused with → validity. Validity is the quality of research results, statistical findings, measurements, or propositions being true in the sense that they do represent the phenomena they claim to represent. To establish validity requires validating evidence. Predictions, for example, are not valid until they come true. By contrast, from the measurement theory perspective, reliability assures that data are generated with all conceivable precautions against

Table 1 Kinds of reliability and validity for comparison

	What is measured?	Errors registered by the measure
Stability	Agreement between the results of repeated applications of the same process to the same set of phenomena	Intra-observer inconsistencies
Reproducibility	Agreement between the results of applying several supposedly identical processes to the same set of phenomena	Intra-observer inconsistencies + Inter-observer disagreement
Accuracy	Agreement between an accepted standard and the results of applying one or more supposedly identical processes to the same set of phenomena	Intra-observer inconsistencies + Inter-observer disagreement + Disagreement with a standard
Validity	Agreement between research results and what they claim to represent	Intra-observer inconsistencies + Inter-observer disagreement + Disagreement with a standard + Disagreement with evidence

extraneous influence from the data-making process; from the perspective of interpretation theory, reliability insures that all available data triangulate and their interpretations are consistent with each other – in the absence of evidence of what these data actually represent. Since validating evidence is rarely available while data are being analyzed, reliability often is the only criterion available to empirical researchers.

### KINDS OF RELIABILITY

There are three kinds of reliability: stability, reproducibility, and accuracy, which may be contrasted with validity. They are distinguished by registering different kinds of errors and having unequal strengths (Table 1).

Stability is also called test–retest reliability, reproducibility test–test reliability, and accuracy test–standard reliability. While all three reliabilities (and incidentally validity as well) are determined by measuring agreement, the data for stability, reproducibility, and accuracy (and validity) differ. As the table suggests, stability reacts to just one kind of error, replicability to two, and accuracy to three. It follows that accuracy is the strongest and stability the weakest form of reliability. In most practical situations, however, replicability is preferred.

### MEASURING RELIABILITY

From the measurement theory perspective, reliability is the degree to which a data-making process is reproducible in a variety of situations, by different but identically instructed observers or interpreters, or by different measuring devices that are designed to respond to the same phenomena in identical ways. From the interpretation theory perspective, reliability is rarely actually measured, but assessed in terms of the degree to which separate researchers concur in the use of data claimed to be about the same phenomena.

Where humans are involved as observers, researchers, coders, translators, or interpreters, *appropriate measures of reliability* – reproducibility in particular – must do the following:

- 1 Treat the observers involved as interchangeable (the point of replicability being that any qualified observer should be able to comprehend the given instructions for what is to be done, observe, read, or interpret the phenomena in question, and record them accordingly).
- 2 Measure the extent of the (dis)agreement or (in)compatibilities among many (at least two) independently working observers or researchers regarding the descriptions or categorizations of a given set of phenomena (recording units).
- 3 Compare the observed (dis)agreements or (in)compatibilities with what would be expected when the accounts of these phenomena were chance events. In order to be interpretable as the absence of reliability, chance must be defined as the condition of no correlation between the descriptions collectively used to account for the phenomena in question and the phenomena to which they were meant to apply. For example, chance would be observed when observers assigned their descriptions to the phenomena by throwing dice.
- 4 Be independent of the number and kind of descriptions available to each phenomenon (so as to yield reliability measures that are comparable across variables with different numbers of values or scales of measurement).
- 5 Define a scale that is anchored in at least two points with meaningful reliability interpretations: perfect reliability (typically 1.000) and the absence of any reliability or chance agreement (typically 0.000).
- 6 Yield values that are comparable across levels of measurements, where different levels – nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio metrics – are involved.

There are only a few statistics that satisfy these criteria, and researchers should examine them in the above terms before settling on one.

### **CRITICAL VALUES**

The second question concerns the conditions under which somewhat unreliable data may still be trusted for use in subsequent analyses or rejected as too misleading. Some researchers look for a fixed numerical cut-off point in the scale that an agreement coefficient defines. Save for perfect agreement, there are no magical numbers, however. Cut-off points depend on the costs of losing one's reputation, resources, or affecting others' well-being by drawing false conclusions from unreliable data. When someone's life is at stake, for example in criminal proceedings or in medical diagnoses, or when decisions between war and peace are made dependent on imperfect data, the costs of wrong conclusions are high and that cut-off point must be high as well. In academic research, where the consequences of wrong conclusions may be less drastic, reliability standards may be more relaxed but should never be ignored.

While reliable data cannot guarantee valid conclusions – researchers can make mistakes in analyzing perfectly reliable data – unreliable data always reduce the probability of

drawing valid conclusions from them. This relationship between reliability and validity renders reliability assessments an important safeguard against potentially invalid research results.

SEE ALSO: ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Experimental Design ► Interview  
► Measurement Theory ► Research Methods ► Survey ► Validity

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# **Religion and Popular Communication**

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“Communication” derives from the Latin term *communicare* meaning to share or impart and to make common (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). “Popular communication” refers to those efforts of, by, and for the people that establish and maintain this sharing and commonality (→ Popular Communication). In this sense, communication is the basic requirement for sustaining any social group. “The people” are generally understood as the average or common members of a society, the masses, and are contrasted with elite sub-groups that possess an unusual degree of power, wealth, or information. “The people” are also distinguished from “others,” who are nonmembers of any particular group at issue but are members of their own social groups (→ Popular Culture).

“Religion” has a more obscure etymology, with Latin and Old French derivations pointing to binding and reconnection, reverence, rereading, gathering, and care. From a philosophical perspective, religions are belief systems or worldviews that posit a divine order for both human life and the universe as a whole. There is significant diversity of belief among world religions regarding the structure of this divine order, but human recognition of a spiritual “depth dimension” is universal. From a communication perspective, a religion is a more or less organized social movement working to unify a people by advocating and passing on ways of life that are in accord with its vision of divine order.

### **EARLY HISTORY**

Historically, universality of religion suggests that sharing spiritual experience was one of the first goals of human communication. Early human culture is characterized by oral, gestural, and graphic media. Early *graphic evidence* of religious communication is

recognized in Upper Paleolithic cave art (40,000 to 10,000 BCE); the scale (murals up to 20 feet in length, 20 feet above floor level), location (some nearly inaccessible, others in cave galleries for popular viewing), permanence (a consistent message across hundreds of generations), and expense (requiring extensive scaffolding, assistants, tools and pigment, lighting) all demonstrate how cave art expresses awe and reverence. Paleolithic oral (myths, legends, dramas) and gestural or performative (songs, dances, rituals, etc.) communication traditions are more difficult to trace, but archaeological evidence of interment and other ritual practices is clear as early as 160,000 years ago (→ Storytelling and Narration). Each subsequent media revolution enables new forms of expression, but orality, visual symbolism, and ritual performance are the fundamental modes of popular religious communication (→ Rituals in Popular Communication).

*Architecture* presents another early avenue of popular religious expression, serving to mark sacred spaces or times and create appropriate ritual environments. Numerous megalithic calendars and tombs dating from 5000 BCE show both precise astronomical knowledge and considerable labor invested in transporting and positioning massive stones. As agriculture developed, temples and shrines became important structures within the new and growing cities.

Many religions vector toward sacred locations and architecture – ritualized travel to a distant site represents both the first mass form of international communication and a fundamental pattern for socio-religious movements (→ Social Movements and Communication). Pilgrimage sites are still vital centers for disseminating religious knowledge, styles, and imagery. The holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia is a prime example, today it is estimated that over 2.5 million Muslim pilgrims visit and worship in the month of Zil al-Hijjah.

## WRITING

With the development of alphabetic writing circa 2000 BCE, the myths and meta-narratives of oral religious traditions could be recorded and distributed with a broader reach and a new degree of uniformity and precision. The sacred texts and commentary of manuscript culture became important to many religions, forging a close relationship between religion and literacy. With Islam, reading the Koran in Arabic is considered a spiritual obligation for everyone. Judaism and Christianity also advanced literacy, but for most people religious communication remained oral and performative. Hinduism is an exemplar – it is the oldest active world religion, developing out of the already ancient Vedic oral tradition between 3000 and 1000 BCE. The Hindu Vedas are revealed sacred texts, but they are experienced orally and referred to as *Shruti*, “that which has been heard.”

*Manuscript culture* remains active, as with Judaism and the Torah, but religious communication changed radically as printing technologies developed worldwide. Buddhist scriptures and artwork were printed with woodblocks as early as the sixth century CE, and in Europe Gutenberg’s *Bible* (1455) represents a landmark event; the movable-type press inaugurated mass production of books, a much more portable and durable medium than manuscripts. Martin Luther’s publication of *Ninety-five theses* in 1517 sparked the Protestant Reformation and ultimately pushed the spread of literacy by encouraging

vernacular translation and personal interpretation of the Bible. Later, when paper became less expensive and presses more common, religious newspapers and periodicals flourished. This was especially true in the “new world” of North America, where religious books and tracts were used extensively to spread both literacy and morality from the educated east to the wilds of the expanding western frontier.

### MODERN MEDIA

The end of the nineteenth century saw the development of electronic media in the west. Telegraph and telephone are primarily interpersonal media and had minimal impact on popular religious communication, but the development of → radio at the turn of the century introduced a revolutionary pattern of dissemination, broadcasting (→ Telegraph, History of; Radio: Social History). Prior to broadcast media, religious communication was relatively local. Pilgrimage site art and architecture could share a uniform message with millions, but it took hundreds of years; print media introduced portability and faster distribution on a larger scale, but were limited to literate receivers. With broadcasting, a uniform oral message is shared nearly instantaneously on a mass scale. By the 1930s radio was firmly established as the mass medium for both Europe and North America, with television following a similar growth pattern in the 1960s. Religious programming in the United States was among the earliest genres because commercial broadcasters interpreted their legal obligation to operate in the → public interest as a call to provide major religions with weekly airtime and programming support. Today religion remains the third most widely syndicated radio format in the United States. In the 1980s, cable and satellite networks extended the broadcast pattern to a national and international scale, and numerous churches and faith-based organizations have embraced this expanded opportunity for mass ministry by founding their own studios and channels, many operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week (→ Cable Television; Satellite Television; International Television; Morality and Taste in Media Content).

With the turn of the twenty-first century, *computer media* are rapidly developing alongside both the fundamental oral, graphic, and performative media and the now firmly established print and broadcast media. The → Internet enables nearly all users to communicate on a global scale in both text and audio-visual formats, and religious content and interaction abound. In contrast to the unilateral quality of broadcast and print media, computers enable both dissemination and bilateral interaction – sender and receiver can converse and discuss all issues, including religion, with greater speed and reach than ever before. However, just as literacy rates limit the reach and efficacy of print, economic conditions limit the scale of broadcast and computer media. In developed countries where technology is common and networks are established, mass-mediated and web-based religious communication can be enormously influential, but in developing countries the impact is much less apparent.

In the future, as computer media undoubtedly spread, religious content and interaction will grow along with global networks. Extensive use of electronic media for religious purposes makes it clear that communication *about* religion is well served by all media, but religious communication itself, the rites that express reverence, awe, devotion, and belonging, tend to be more interpersonal than mediated. With radio and television



some rituals are broadcast, yet presence at and participation in a physical communal event is usually considered necessary for sacred purposes. Popular religious communication remains fundamentally oral and visual, especially within ritual performance contexts.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ International Television ▶ Internet ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Public Interest ▶ Radio ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Rhetoric and Religion ▶ Rituals in Popular Communication ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Telegraph, History of

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## **Remediation**

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Remediation (Bolter & Grusin 1999) refers to a historical process through which newer media forms interact with earlier ones. On the very first page of *Understanding media* (1964), → Marshall McLuhan noted that the “‘content’ of any medium is always another medium: the content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print.” Remediation proceeds from this insight, but understands the process as more complex and historically nuanced.

The relationship between media is not a linear process of replacement or incorporation, as McLuhan suggested; instead, the media of a given culture enter into a configuration of relationships involving cooperation as well as competition among numerous media. When a new medium is introduced (e.g., film at the beginning of the twentieth century, television in the middle, or the computer at the end), the whole configuration may shift. Designers and producers working in the new medium may seek to take over the roles previously played by the established media, and their counterparts in the established media may respond either by yielding easily or by reasserting their own roles (→ Design

Theory). This dual *process of appropriation and reappropriation* will remain ongoing as long as the various media remain vigorous. Today, printed materials (books, magazines, newspapers), film, television, and radio remain important, although practitioners in these media have had to adjust their roles because of the introduction of digital forms.

One might generalize and claim that Hollywood film remediates the novel, or that computer games remediate film. Used more precisely, however, the term “remediation” describes specific creative acts: the computer game *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* remediates the Peter Jackson films, which in turn remediate the novels by J. R. R. Tolkien. Remediation is not a mere transfer of content. In the quotation from *Understanding media* above, McLuhan himself put the word “content” in quotation marks, indicating that the distinction of form and content was problematic for him. By the same token, new media producers do not remediate content per se, but rather the representational practices of a previous media form.

For example, some *video and computer games* borrow and refashion camera techniques and narrative elements from film (→ Video Games). Such games have radically extended the first-person (or subjective) camera. In film, the subjective camera locates the viewer in the persona of one or a few main characters (→ Cinematography). Early generations of action and role-playing games put the player almost exclusively into the viewing position of the main figure. This practice (which may in fact have been adopted to make the rendering of computer graphics more efficient) was promoted as a defining advantage of games over film. Games were and are still claimed to be interactive (→ Interactivity, Concept of): not only can the player see through the eyes of the main character, but he or she can act as the main character, usually by fighting opponents and gaining various forms of treasure. Later games have become more sophisticated in their camerawork, refashioning many Hollywood techniques quite explicitly in so-called cut scenes over which the player has no control. Game producers, however, continue to insist on the advantage of games as a representational practice: they are interactive, not fully determined by the game designer.

This claim to greater authenticity (or sometimes even “reality”) is a defining aspect of remediation in general. For this reason, acts of remediation establish an ambivalent relationship between the remediating and remediated forms. The producers of the new form borrow representational elements from the older one, but, in refashioning those elements, they further make an implicit or explicit claim that their new form is in some way better, i.e., more authentic or more realistic.

Bolter and Grusin (1999) identified two main *representational strategies* of remediation: transparency and hypermediacy. *Transparency* is a strategy that dates back at least to Renaissance painting, in which the artist or producer tries to erase the evidence of the medium: to make the medium disappear so that viewers may feel as if they were in the presence of the object or scene represented. Examples include linear-perspective painting, so-called “straight photography,” Hollywood narrative cinema, and digital interactive narratives. *Hypermediacy* is the opposite strategy, in which the producer acknowledges and even celebrates the process of mediation. Examples include avant-garde cinema, postmodern architecture, and many forms of digital installation and performance art (→ Art as Communication). As approaches to remediation, a focus on either transparency or hypermediacy indicates whether the producer is inclined to cover up or to acknowledge

a dependence on earlier media forms. The strategy of transparency often makes a direct appeal to nature, denying its dependence on these earlier forms.

Remediation is one theoretical approach to comparative media studies. Intermediality is another term that covers, for instance, an approach currently pursued by a variety of scholars in Europe and Canada (→ Intermediality). While intermediality often implies synchronic studies of media forms, remediation entails a historical approach (→ Media History). This historical perspective is grounded in a conviction that there is a relationship between formal strategies of representation and the ideologies of particular times and cultural groups. Strategies of remediation are also strategies for affirming cultural identities. Thus, the so-called music-video and remix generation may favor a strategy of hybridity and hypermediacy, while older viewers may prefer the transparency that still characterizes Hollywood films.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Cinematography ▶ Design Theory ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Intermediality ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media History ▶ Video Games

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## **Research Dissemination**

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When considering how the lessons learned from science can be used by those audiences who might benefit from them, the term “research dissemination” (Lomas 1993) has been coined to focus on the active process by which information gleaned from science is actively communicated to those audiences who are thought to be most likely to benefit from this information. However, there is considerable confusion in terminology among those who focus on this important issue. Thus, “communication,” “diffusion,” and “dissemination” are often used interchangeably to describe the processes by which information from science is moved into the public or practice domains (→ Diffusion of

Information and Innovation). Similarly when focused on the benefits of research dissemination processes, knowledge transfer, translational research, research translation, knowledge integration, and knowledge implementation are often presented as comparable outcomes from research dissemination.

With respect to research dissemination processes, the terms “communication,” “diffusion,” and “dissemination” have overlapping but different meanings. As such, they are often confused with one another. In simplest terms, *communication* is the provision of information through sounds and signs (sight) that can be transmitted to single individuals, small and large groups, organizations, communities, and mass populations. Communication can also be transmitted through other senses (e.g., touch, smell), but this is usually restricted to transmissions to a single individual or between individuals, and rarely extends to larger groups or populations (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). *Dissemination* simply means to scatter widely, and the term “diffusion” is often used as a synonym for dissemination. *Diffusion*, in the context of chemistry, is the spontaneous migration of substances from regions where their concentration is high to regions where their concentration is low.

Thus, in the context of information and knowledge, prior to the availability of mass communication technologies (e.g., the printing press; → Media History) information and knowledge were largely concentrated within religious and private libraries, universities, and academies, and communication was limited to correspondence and the distribution of a limited number of handwritten texts (Eisenstein 1979; Chartier 1987). Diffusion of information, where it did occur, was also limited to storytellers (e.g., religious) and oral reporters of official information (e.g., town criers). With the advent of mass communication technologies, diffusion of information became more rapid, the ability to actively disseminate information to larger audiences became possible, and the ability to tailor the information for particular audiences became a reality.

## PASSIVE VERSUS ACTIVE COMMUNICATION

In the modern context of communication, diffusion and dissemination reflect a different level of action or effort to perhaps achieve the same outcome (i.e., widespread exposure to information). Thus, diffusion is often conceived as a relatively passive process, whereby “natural” channels of communication (e.g., word of mouth, reading) allow information to diffuse through individuals and social networks into larger populations, albeit slowly over time. With respect to information related to new ideas or technologies, this process has been labeled the diffusion of innovation (Rogers 2003) whereby creators of new information or innovators pass information on to early adopters and information continues to be communicated and used over time following an S-shaped curve (from mid to late adopters) until all the population of potential information users have been exposed to the innovation and most if not all are able to use it (→ Rogers, Everett).

Dissemination, on the other hand, is associated with more active efforts to accelerate the transmission of information beyond passive individual communication channels to reach a wider audience and larger populations more quickly than passive diffusion (Lomas 1993). Effective dissemination involves several steps: (1) identifying audience characteristics that may make them more or less receptive to, or interested in, the

information being disseminated (→ Audience Research); (2) understanding the context in which the information is likely to be used; (3) framing the information to maximize audience receptivity and contextual relevance (→ Framing Effects); and (4) creating feedback mechanisms that allow monitoring of information exposure and use, enabling modification of dissemination strategies as receptivity and context change over time.

## UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT AUDIENCES

The → audiences in communication are many and varied, and are often recognized by the channels through which communication takes place to them. Thus, for example, the media, both entertainment and → news, are seen as a communication channel to reach the general public. While media do segment the general public (e.g., demographically, psychographically, and geographically; → Audience Segmentation) to address the different appetites for information, media communication is designed to reach masses of individuals in a wide variety of personal settings (e.g., home, work, recreation). With respect to research dissemination, the news media in particular are regularly contacted by research agencies to alert them to new findings. As such both the news media and the research community may usually be focused on novelty rather than the significance of new scientific knowledge.

*Commercial communication* also reaches out to market segments of the general public, and has a broader set of communication channels including point of sale, personal sales representatives, as well as traditional media outlets. With the advent of the → Internet, and computerized tracking of purchasing behavior, commercial communication has led the way in developing and implementing individually tailored communications that frames the information in the context of past purchasing behavior patterns based on market research data collection. Thus, for example, discount coupons provided at supermarket checkout counters are tailored to past purchases, increasing the probability that similar or related products will be obtained. Similarly, Internet sales websites provide their customers with email reminders and other forms of electronic communications about new opportunities to purchase goods or services that reflect their interests and past purchasing behavior.

*Political communication*, to promote candidates for office or political ideologies, has also adopted many of the commercial communication strategies of market research, market segmentation, and message framing to shape the information to fit the values or beliefs of target constituencies (→ Political Communication; Strategic Framing). While not nearly as sophisticated as either commercial or political communication, government and nongovernment organization communication efforts to reach the general public (e.g., to promote health, social well-being, and national security) have also attempted to take advantage of new communication technologies to improve the receptivity of information being communicated (→ Health Communication). While communication interventions vary widely in the extent to which information about the audience shapes the messages being communicated, they all share one thing in common: broad reach is more important than the magnitude of the response to the information communicated. Thus, for example, a small percentage increase in sales or change in voting behavior across a large population

is considered more significant than a large impact in a relatively small proportion of the general population.

Dissemination on the other hand, while sharing many of the same concerns about audience characteristics as communication, is much more focused on the *context in which information is used*, and as such seeks to achieve a larger impact on a relatively limited population of information users who share the same practice context. For example, in the health arena, there are three very different practice contexts in which information may be used: public health, primary care, and disease specialty care practice. Disseminating research information about new approaches to promote health and prevent disease to public health practitioners, needs to recognize: (1) the level of training of most public health practitioners (e.g., masters or bachelors trained) to translate information into practical knowledge that can be applied in public health practice context; (2) the variation in resources in international, national, state, and local public health practice contexts that make possible or make difficult the implementation of public health interventions based on new health promotion information; and (3) the extent to which public health practitioners working for long periods of time in resource-limited practice contexts may or may not be amenable to change.

Similarly in *clinical practice settings*, dissemination of research information to improve quality of care must be designed with three factors in mind: the rate of the dissemination for new clinically relevant information, the time constraints of clinical practice, and the variation in clinical infrastructure resources. With the explosion of access to research information and other information sources (e.g., patient blogs, professional associations) available to patients and providers from the Internet, a key challenge for both patients and providers is to sort through the enormous amount of information to separate the wheat from the chaff (→ Health Communication and the Internet). For example, if the words “heart disease” are inserted into a Google search, 87,300,000 hits are returned. Similarly, if a search is made for “cancer control,” one gets 116,000,000 hits. Thus, for two of the leading causes of death in the developed world, there are over 200,000,000 links to information on the web from which to choose. In any service delivery context, but particularly in the clinical care context, this is a great deal of information to sort through and integrate into practice.

In the *primary care practice context*, the communication and dissemination challenges are even greater because patients may be coming in with any number of signs or symptoms of a health-related problem, in contrast to the disease specialty context where the focus of both patients and providers is on one group of diseases or disorders (→ Patient–Provider Communication). In primary care practice, patients may or may not be as motivated to search the web to find out more about their potential problem, compared to patients with a pre-existing condition seeking a specialist. For primary care practitioners, the challenge is not only to have the latest information on the signs or symptoms of the problems being presented at the point of patient contact, but also to have the time to review with the patient their broader personal and family health history information and a set of preventive medicine strategies designed to also promote health (e.g., smoking cessation, improved diet, increased physical activity).

New information management and communication technologies like the electronic medical record (EMR; with information from the practice) and the electronic health

record (EHR; with information from the patient) hold the promise of providing *real-time communication* between practitioners and their patients, as well as providing the opportunity to disseminate to practitioners, at the point of patient contact, key decision aids based on patient-specific information such as test results or patient self-reported health status. It remains unclear to what extent current practitioners and patients will be willing to adopt these new forms of electronic communication and dissemination. To date the adoption of both EMRs and EHRs has been slow, particularly among smaller freestanding practices unaffiliated with large health-care systems.

In more specialized care contexts, the knowledge gap between the practitioner “expert” and the patient continues to narrow, as many patients take advantage of *open access to health and illness research information* available through the world wide web. Highly motivated patients will seek out and attempt to digest large amounts of treatment and follow-up information, frequently sharing this research information in their communications with their practitioners. This, in turn, can put a special burden on the practitioners who must not only become familiar with this research information but must also integrate it with their own tacit knowledge from practice experience as well their own efforts to keep up with the new information emerging from research.

As such, the process of shared decision-making and knowledge integration may become more the norm in the future, which in turn may help speed the process of research dissemination and use of new knowledge as it emerges from research innovations. As new generations enter the health service delivery workforce and become adult patients, the familiarity and comfort with electronic forms of communication, information seeking, and the electronic tools for increasing channels for communication and dissemination may lead to expanded shared decision-making between practice experts and knowledgeable patients. New approaches for integrating explicit knowledge from science with tacit knowledge from practice and patient experience will be needed (Kerner 2006).

## **RESEARCH INFORMATION AND PRACTICE KNOWLEDGE**

As noted above in the context of health-care, the communication and dissemination of research information can lead to new knowledge, when the information is either put to immediate use or is understood in the context of a practice framework. Thus, information may or may not lead to new knowledge depending on how it is presented and how it is understood. Prior to the twentieth century, communication and diffusion of information were relatively slow processes that depended on the spoken or written word. This permitted time to deliberate about new research information and put it into context, and may have provided more time for information to be transformed into knowledge. Since the advent of modern communication technologies (radio, television, the Internet), more and more information from research and other sources is being transmitted with less and less time to digest the information. As such, one unintended consequence of the explosion of information available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, is that there is a signal-to-noise ratio problem with too much information being processed and too little time to contextualize the information into knowledge.

Instant messaging, instantly reviewing and replying to emails from PDAs (personal digital assistants), and the many and varied means by which people can now communicate with

each other around the world, have provided multiple avenues for quickly sharing new information, reacting to changing situations in real time, and potentially speeding up the rate at which new information can be transformed into new knowledge by those with the time to deliberate about what the information may mean in their context (→ Technology and Communication). However, the shift from slow and deliberative communication and research dissemination technologies to instantaneous technologies may inadvertently contribute to the creation of a growing class of individuals who turn away from much of this new information and focus only on the things they can learn from their personal experience (→ Digital Divide). The impact of such a disparity may be the creation of large “knowledge gaps” that could impact many aspects of society (Viswanath & Finnegan 1996; → Knowledge Gap Effects).

### KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER VERSUS KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION

As more and more communication channels are opened, the temptation to push large amounts of research information out to as broad an audience as possible is great. The explosion of web links on the Internet with respect to virtually any topic imaginable is but one example of this high information push priority. All sectors of society are flooding the communication channels with new information resources, be they government, commercial, or NGOs (→ Knowledge Management). While facilitating communication and diffusion of information, these expanded communication channels also provide new challenges for disseminating information to those audiences who are most interested in the particular information being disseminated (i.e., pull), and have the resources (e.g., time, infrastructure) to transform this new information into knowledge that can be used.

In the field of research dissemination and implementation, the terms “knowledge transfer” and “knowledge integration” have been used to differentiate the push-only approach from the research dissemination approach which recognizes the importance of push, pull, and infrastructure to take advantage of new information and translate it into usable knowledge (Lomas 1993; Orleans 2002; Kerner 2006). A key to knowledge integration is to recognize the importance placed on information and knowledge gained from tacit experience in a practice context as well as explicit information and knowledge gained from research. In most *knowledge transfer dissemination approaches*, the assumption is often that the only information and knowledge worth disseminating is explicit. This may help to explain why the diffusion and dissemination of explicit new information from research falls on deaf ears when it contradicts or undermines long-held beliefs and assumptions based on experience within the context in which the information would be used.

*Knowledge integration*, on the other hand, recognizes that explicit information gained from research may or may not fit the context in which the information could be used and transformed into practice knowledge. As such, knowledge integration models for research dissemination require that an exchange of information take place between the advocates of explicit research information and those who value tacit knowledge from context-specific experience. When such an information exchange is valued by both parties, an informed decision can be made within a particular knowledge use context that weighs the benefits and costs of using the information from both research and experience.



## OUTLOOK

The explosion of new communication channels in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have provided both great opportunities and great challenges in transforming research information into knowledge that can be applied to improve the human condition. Research dissemination, when focused on knowledge integration and communication exchange, can help the process of transforming large amounts of new information based on research and practice into knowledge that can be useful and applied.

However, with rapid innovation in communication technologies comes the real concern that disparities will be exacerbated between those ready, willing, and able to take advantage of the information revolution, and those who are left behind because of limited access to, and limited understanding of, the new communication technologies. Research dissemination strategies must be developed to sort out how best to integrate the information-disadvantaged. Thus, all can benefit from the opportunities provided by these new mechanisms for communication, diffusion, and dissemination of research and the integration of research with practice, particularly when focused on the underserved.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Communication: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Internet ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Media History ▶ News ▶ Patient–Provider Communication ▶ Political Communication ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Technology and Communication

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# Research Ethics

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As the field of ethics addresses the philosophical foundations for standards of behavior and treatment of others when personal, social, and professional values conflict, social science researchers in general and communication researchers in particular are required to consider ethical implications of their work. Ethics is a process of deliberation that helps illuminate the dimensions and implications of our moral agency. It enables us to draw upon broad moral values to help question or justify a decision that will affect others. As professionals whose work both depends upon the willingness of others to cooperate and whose work can have direct or indirect bearing on the welfare of others, researchers are obligated to ensure their activities reflect commonly accepted ethical standards. Potential risks to subjects of research vary depending upon the nature of the questions explored and the methodologies used, but researchers are obligated as professionals to uphold fundamental values involving reduction of potential harm and respect due to all research participants as autonomous agents (→ Research Methods).

These and other fundamental values are rooted in the moral philosophy of Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, and others. These theorists proposed frameworks to assess the “good” or what constitutes “goodness.” Kant, for example, proposed a system of moral law that places a premium on our “absolute” duties to respect and promote the exercise of free will and the capacity for reason that separates humans from the animal kingdom. This capacity is what enables us to pursue “moral” lives as well as physical, emotional and intellectual ones. Failure to carry out this duty to respect others as autonomous, rational beings constitutes a failure of moral agency. Such precepts of moral philosophy provide the foundation for the subfield of the philosophy of ethics, which is concerned with how we might deliberate among conflicting options in a dilemma by applying moral principles.

Thus, the distinction between the related topics of moral philosophy and ethics is subtle but significant. While morality refers to a set of beliefs about what constitutes right and wrong, ethics, Frankena said, is the intellectual work that addresses “moral problems and moral judgment” (1963, 3). Ethical deliberation does not merely assert the “truth” of moral claims; it enables us to argue for the legitimate, reason-based application of moral claims in a given case. Ethics is the study of questions regarding what individuals might be obliged to do in certain situations, and how one might construct a compelling argument to place a premium on one value over another in a given situation when legitimate values, such as the pursuit of truth and the concern to minimize harm, come into conflict.

## **ETHICS IN RESEARCH**

Numerous governmental and scientific organizations around the world have formally adopted ethical codes or guidelines to ensure researchers uphold key, broadly accepted ethical principles. Many calls for research ethics guidelines were responses to examples of

research conduct that was perceived to be abusive, destructive, or unethical in some way. Charles Babbage (1970) wrote about the lack of ethics and honesty in British science in the nineteenth century.

The global scientific community was shocked by the horrors of Nazi research on human beings during the Nuremberg trials after World War II. In the US, from 1932 to 1972, medical treatment for syphilis was withheld from 600 poor African-American men in rural Alabama during the infamous Tuskegee syphilis study. The ensuing outcry resulted in the establishment of the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research in the 1970s. In 1979, the commission released the widely known Belmont Report, "Ethical principles and guidelines for the protection of human subjects of research."

### **The Belmont Report**

The Belmont Report (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research 1979) put forward three basic principles that have become widely embraced as fundamental considerations that determine the ethical validity of any research effort: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.

*Respect for persons:* "[I]ndividuals should be treated as autonomous agents, and . . . persons with diminished autonomy are entitled to protection." The report states: "To show lack of respect for an autonomous agent is to repudiate that person's considered judgments, to deny an individual the freedom to act on those considered judgments, or to withhold information necessary to make a considered judgment, when there are no compelling reasons to do so."

*Beneficence:* "Persons are treated in an ethical manner not only by respecting their decisions and protecting them from harm, but also by making efforts to secure their well-being. . . . In this document, beneficence is understood . . . as an obligation." The report continues: "[I]nvestigators and members of their institutions are obliged to give forethought to the maximization of benefits and the reduction of risk that might occur from the research investigation."

*Justice:* "An injustice occurs when some benefit to which a person is entitled is denied without good reason or when some burden is imposed unduly." The report refers to the Tuskegee study specifically, stating, "These subjects were deprived of demonstrably effective treatment in order not to interrupt the project, long after such treatment became generally available."

Many ethical codes and guidelines are explicit in the need for such standards to protect the credibility and public support of the research enterprise. Concern about and attention to research ethics has spawned a body of literature explicating how ethics should inform particular types of research as well as calling more generally for heightened ethical sensitivity on the part of scientists (see Kitchener 2000; Shamoo & Resnik 2003; Rollin 2006).

Research ethics and oversight boards have been formalized around the globe. In the US, the National Institutes of Health's Office of Human Subjects Research is associated with institutional review boards, or IRBs, that are located within the administrations of universities and other research centers. IRBs are charged with approving research

protocols for any projects involving federal funding, but most universities require IRB approval for all projects, funded or not. Other countries, most notably in eastern Europe, have national research ethics committees (RECs). Most European Union members have established a network of federal, state, and local research ethics review committees (Institute of Science and Ethics 2005), many similar to the IRB system. Several studies have found that emphasis on research ethics in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America is minimal, inconsistent or under development (Ezcurra 2001; World Health Organization 2002; Kirigia et al. 2005). China's Ministry of Science and Technology has responded to a recent pattern of apparent scientific misconduct by pledging more aggressive enforcement of ethical standards (Yidong & Xin 2006).

### ETHICAL STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE

As social-science research and communications studies have expanded and matured, institutions and researcher networks have reconsidered the efficacy of research-ethics oversight systems that were originally established for work in medicine, bio-engineering, and other more clinical settings. European and North American organizations, such as the UK Economic and Social Research Council, the European Commission's Information Society Technologies Programme, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Special Working Committee in Canada, and the Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs in the US, have promoted standards intended to address the range of social-science methodologies and field-specific risk assessment.

At the same time, social scientists have been urged to consider the idea of "risk," not just in a personal or health-related sense, but as a concept that had interpersonal and social dimensions as well. According to the "Research Ethics Framework" adopted for UK researchers in 2006 by the Economic and Social Research Council, "The form of vigilance required for the management of physical risk used in medical research is inappropriate for the management of social risks that may be present in social science research" (Economic and Social Research Council 2006, 22). Social-science researchers have argued that strict application of clinical standards to survey, ethnographic, and other methodologies have stifled research, threatened academic freedom, and constitute an unpardonable paternalistic approach (American Association of University Professors 2006).

Most notably, this has concerned qualitative researchers (→ Qualitative Methodology) and those involved in environmental- and social-justice projects. "[D]esigning culturally valid ethical procedures for research involves adopting a new perspective, one that derives from the ethnic groups themselves rather than one that starts from prior assumptions of what constitutes human values of respect, care and justice. . . . With rare exceptions, current professional standards and federal regulations for the protection of research participants fail to provide the guidance needed to achieve the responsible conduct of ethnocultural research" (Trimble & Fisher 2006, xii, xv). The American Association of University Professors adopted a resolution urging that "research whose methodology consists entirely of collecting data by surveys, conducting interviews, or observing behavior in public places be exempt from the requirement of IRB review" (2006, 3–4) and that institutions "formulate a separate set of procedures for research that is not federally funded" (p. 6).

*Field-specific research and academic associations* have also adopted ethics guidelines that are often tailored for dominant methodological practices. The code of the American Sociological Association provides guidelines on research conducted in public settings and the use of publicly available information. The code applies eight key values – integrity, fairness, professional and social responsibility, equality of opportunity, confidentiality, honesty and openness, respect for self and others, and freedom and safety – to the areas of teaching, research, publications, and relationships. The → International Communication Association (ICA) has not adopted a code of professional ethics but instead offers members a general policy statement that embraces broad standards similar to those of AEJMC and NCA (International Communication Association 2006).

Research on → Internet use and online communication has also raised questions about the need for more specific ethics guidelines (→ Research Ethics: Internet Research). The European Commission's ethics code for socio-economic research emphasizes that such research must acknowledge that what users consider "private" is shifting in response to new technologies, yet researchers risk breaching the trust of subjects by unintended disclosure of material such as drafts attached to emails. Research quality can also be threatened by problems of authenticity, originality, and reliability of Internet data (Dench et al. 2004). Stern also cautioned that, "Given [the nature of both] online communication and research, those who study Internet users and communities may find themselves particularly likely to come across distressing information in their research" (2003, 249). This is because the anonymity and public reach of the Internet appears to promote self-disclosure (Reid 1996; Miller & Gergen 1998; Thompson 1999), which increases the likelihood that researchers will come across expressions that otherwise may have gone unnoticed.

Many Internet researchers dispute whether much of their work in collecting and assessing online communication is research that involves actual human subjects. In response, the US Department of Health and Human Services has stated that online research does involve human subjects if: (1) there is some element of "interaction or intervention with a living person that would not be occurring except for the research project at hand," or (2) "identifiable private data/information will be obtained for this research in a form associable with the individual" (Stern 2003, 255).

SEE ALSO: ► Applied Communication Research ► Ethics of Media Content ► International Communication Association (ICA) ► Internet ► Online Research ► Qualitative Methodology ► Research Ethics: Internet Research ► Research Methods

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## Research Ethics: Internet Research

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Internet research ethics (IRE) attempts to clarify and resolve ethical dilemmas encountered by researchers who use the → Internet as a medium for their research – for example, doing online surveys – and/or focus on the various forms of interactions observable online, such as virtual communities, social networks like MySpace, web pages, instant messaging, and other forms of computer-mediated communication (→ Online Research; Research Ethics).

IRE is further complicated as researchers may draw on *humanities* ethical guidelines, which usually treat someone posting material online as an *author* (White 2002), and/or *social science* guidelines, which treat posters as *subjects* who thus require traditional human subjects protections (Bruckman 2002). Because the Internet connects researchers and those they study across national boundaries, additional complications arise as researchers are constrained by diverse national laws, such as those regarding privacy and data privacy protection, and contrasting research ethics, as countries vary considerably with regard to how human subjects are to be treated.

IRE has been systematically addressed in Germany with regard to the ethics of online surveys (Arbeitskreis Deutscher Markt- und Sozialforschungsinstitute et al. 2001; → Survey); in Norway as part of a larger research ethics framework (NESH 2003); by the American Psychological Association (Kraut et al. 2004); and, with greater emphasis on the interdisciplinary and international issues of IRE, in the ethical guidelines developed by the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR 2002).

In the Anglo-American world, much of the interest in IRE is driven by *research oversight committees*, such as the institutional review boards (IRBs) responsible for protecting human subjects in the United States (Buchanan 2002). Such protections minimally include guarantees of subject anonymity, confidentiality of personal information and research data, and a right to informed consent (see Lawson 2004). In addition, subjects are to be exposed to *minimal* risks and *only* as these are justified by the research's benefits. This *consequentialist* approach in the Anglo-American world contrasts with a more absolute approach elsewhere to protection of these and other basic rights such as privacy (European Commission 1995; NESH 2003). Moreover, different research *methodologies* require distinctive ethical approaches (Markham 2004). Participant-observation approaches have received the widest attention (Sveningsson 2004; Bromseth 2006; → Research Methods). Other methodologies, ranging from discourse analysis to online surveys, will often present different sorts of ethical problems and resolutions (Ess forthcoming).

While especially the AoIR guidelines find extensive use in a variety of disciplines and countries, as our uses of the Internet develop, new ethical concerns continue to arise. For example, how should researchers respond to sensitive and disturbing information online, such as apparently serious considerations of suicide in a blog or home page – especially as posted by minors (Stern 2004)? Blogging opens up new ethical questions regarding citation practices, plagiarism, and libel. Similarly, the explosive popularity, particularly among young people, of social networking venues such as Facebook, MySpace, and others raises important issues beyond those of potential sexual predation. These include the restrictions, if any, that might be justified regarding the content a user is allowed to post. As the Internet continues its explosive diffusion throughout the world – over 1 billion people on the planet have regular access to the Internet – an IRE is needed that is recognized as legitimate for all participants while at the same time respecting the diverse ethical traditions defining distinctive national and cultural identities.

SEE ALSO: ► Copyright ► Internet ► Internet: International Regulation ► Internet Law and Regulation ► Online Research ► Qualitative Methodology ► Quantitative Methodology ► Research Ethics ► Research Methods ► Survey

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# Research Methods

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Alongside theories, research methods shape academic disciplines such as communication. Whereas theories determine the subject matter (i.e., the part of reality a discipline is looking at), methods determine how a discipline gathers information about its subject matter. Which methods are acceptable and how methods are applied is subject to an ongoing debate and communication process within a scientific community. The correct application of research methods ensures that scientific results (1) are collected systematically; (2) are independent of the scholar who collected them; and (3) can be replicated by other scholars. In other words, research methods increase the credibility of results, and hence improve their quality.

This entry provides an overview of the methods being used in communication research. Scattered around the encyclopedia are some 80 entries on research methods. This overview entry will try to refer to most of them so that the reader can easily find more information on a given keyword. Besides the specific methods a vast body of literature provides interested readers with information on the theory of science and research focusing on the question of how we find evidence for our theories, whether we can eventually prove or falsify theories with the data collected, as well as how research depends on our conceptualization of science in general. Some of the most well-known authors in the field of general methodology are Karl Popper (1935) and Thomas Kuhn (1962). Popper's basic argument is that theories in general cannot be verified, because we cannot know – neither in the present, nor in the past and future – about all events and facts relevant to the theory. Consequently, theories can only be falsified; good theories are those that survive plenty of falsification attempts (→ Critical Rationalism). Kuhn argues that science does not develop in a linear fashion. Instead, scientific revolutions change the → paradigm according to which research is conducted, thereby establishing a new view on the types of problems a discipline should address and the way of building theories about them.

Research methods can be grouped in three sub-fields: (1) data collection; (2) data analysis; and (3) study design. The kind of method through which a researcher collects data depends on whether he or she uses → quantitative methodology or → qualitative methodology. *Quantitative approaches* collect data from a large number of subjects, and are usually aimed at describing characteristics of, and trends in, the general population (e.g., a country) or at identifying differences between sub-groups (e.g., men vs women). Most of the time, only few attributes of subjects are measured. Typical studies with quantitative methodology are representative → surveys among the general public. *Qualitative approaches* collect data from only a small number of subjects, and are usually aimed at describing individuals or small groups according to their behavior in an area relevant to communication, for example how politicians use the Internet. Most of the time, many attributes of subjects are collected in order to describe the complex nature of that subject's behavior or attitudes. Studies with qualitative methodology are often in-depth → interviews with individuals who are typical of the study's subject.

## DATA COLLECTION

Data collection can be conducted with (1) self-characterization of respondents; (2) observation of respondents' behavior (→ Observation; Case Studies); (3) analysis of media or communication content (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Discourse Analysis; Historiography; Document Analysis); and (4) measurement of physiological parameters.

Respondents in *interviews* characterize themselves either in front of an interviewer who is asking questions (→ Interview, Qualitative; Interview, Standardized) or in written questionnaires (mail survey, online survey). The interviewer will ask questions either via the telephone or face to face. Telephone surveys have become extremely popular because they are fast, inexpensive, and easy to control (all interviewers are located in one spot). Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) makes it convenient to design, conduct, and analyze telephone interviews. Face-to-face interviews have the advantage of a higher response rate and better illustration. Visual materials can be used to illustrate → scales, ranges, and so on. However, face-to-face interviews are more expensive, and the effects of the interviewer on the quality of the interviews pose a potential problem. Mail surveys usually suffer from a very low response rate, unless the researcher notifies respondents in advance and highlights the importance of the study. The term survey is used to describe mainly face-to-face interviews or telephone interviews with samples of the general population of a country. Professional survey-research institutes (e.g., Gallup or Roper in the US; Allensbach in Germany) offer representative results for those who are interested in → public opinion.

Other than surveys, *qualitative interviews* are less standardized. The order and the wording of questions are to some degree dependent on the course of the interview. Instead of collecting a limited series of individual attributes (e.g., which party do you vote for, how many hours of television do you watch on a normal weekday), qualitative interviewers try to dig deeper and collect information about an individual as a whole. At the same time, there are neither a fixed number of people under investigation, nor a precise sampling procedure. Researchers often use theoretical saturation as a criterion to stop doing further interviewing. This means that interviews are conducted as long as the researcher has the impression that he/she still gets valuable information about the research topic.

*Observation* of subjects' behavior is a multifaceted method. In general, researchers develop a coding scheme that counts the occurrence, frequency, and/or duration of certain behavioral instances. One of the most frequent observation methods is telemetry: devices built into the television set of a sample of television viewers (→ People-Meter) enable researchers to identify the channel any subject is watching at a given point in time. As a result, ratings for a given television show can be computed (→ Nielsen Ratings). Other types of observations are conducted while people are engaged in group discussions. Their points of view, their nonverbal behavior, their arguments, and so on can be observed and counted.

Analysis of *communication content* can be conducted in several ways, depending on the type of study. Qualitative content analysis is used when data has already been collected from expert – ethnographic or historiographic – interviews. Quantitative content analysis is used to analyze larger amounts of mostly mass media messages like newspaper articles

or television news (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). The results of content analyses may be used to make three types of inferences: (1) to the context in which a message was created; (2) to the motives and intentions of the communicator (journalists, public relations people); and (3) to possible effects of media messages. All three inferences are only valid if additional data, such as survey results, interviews with journalists, etc. is incorporated into the study. *Physiological measurement* (still) plays a minor role in communication research (→ Physiological Measurement). Examples of fields in which this methodology is used are media use and reception (→ Exposure to Communication Content) as well as the effects of media violence (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). Recipients' heart rates, electrodermal activity, or blood pressure are used to identify physiological arousal, which in turn can help to predict phenomena such as involvement with a media message, activation, and/or processing quality.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Whether data was collected using qualitative or quantitative methods, it needs interpretation and analysis. There is a whole spectrum of methods to do this. In the qualitative realm, the collected texts are reordered, interpreted, and reconstructed in order to find general ideas behind the text surface. The qualitative analysis is a combination of inductive and deductive processes. Theories and hypotheses are developed, compared against the textual material, rephrased, and compared again.

Quantitative data is mostly analyzed using a wide spectrum of statistical procedures and tests. These can be divided into descriptive and explanatory statistics (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Statistics, Explanatory). *Descriptive statistics* include the central tendencies of variables in a sample, such as arithmetic means, median, or standard deviation, as well as the distribution of frequencies for a given variable, such as the percentage of voters voting for each of a country's parties. *Explanatory statistics* are designed to test the relationship between two or more variables (→ Correlation Analysis; Factor Analysis; Cluster Analysis) and try to identify causal orders. They include group comparisons (t-test, analysis of variance) and predictions of a dependent variable by one or more independent variables (→ Regression Analysis; Discriminant Analysis; Structural Equation). Most of these analyses are parametric – they are based on statistical distributions, mainly the so-called normal distribution. Less frequently used are different types of → nonparametric analysis.

The adequate application of statistical procedures requires knowledge about the *measurement level* on which data was collected (→ Measurement Theory). Variables on the nominal level have a limited number of values that are mutually exclusive. A typical variable on the nominal level is gender. It has two values: “male” and “female.” Each observation in a data set has a value for gender, either one or the other. Nominal variables with two values are called dichotomous; when they have more than two values they are called polytomous. Variables on the ordinal level of measurement have a limited number of values that can be arranged in a rank order (the best, the second best, the third best, etc.). Grades in school are an example of rank-order data. Subjects in a sample can either have a unique rank each or can be tied, i.e., they share a rank. Variables on the interval level have values with equal distances. The interval level is most often found with Likert scales.

## STUDY DESIGN

One of the most important issues in social sciences is the question of *causality*: in a complex social environment, how can we be sure that a given phenomenon A is the cause for another phenomenon B? Can it not be the other way round, i.e., B causes A, or even more likely that A and B are caused by a third phenomenon, C? The only study design that yields true causal relationships is the → experimental design (→ Experiment, Laboratory). Experiments are built upon two groups of subjects: the experimental group and the control group. These groups are created by dividing a set of subjects into two halves, using either randomizing or matching procedures. As a result, the groups do not differ systematically in any variable. Ideally, all attributes of the subjects are distributed equally. Given this, the two groups receive a different “treatment.”

For example, the experimental group is presented a violent media stimulus, the control group a non-violent. The different treatments form the independent variable. After presentation, subjects’ reactions are measured, e.g., their aggressive tendencies. These reactions form the dependent variable. If the two groups differ in their reactions, the cause must be the different treatments, as we assume that the two groups are identical in any other regard. This can only be stated if there are no other differences between the two groups; statistically speaking, there are no error variables. Many error variables can occur during the presentation. Consequently, researchers try to standardize the exposure to the stimulus material as much as they can. This leads to high degree of internal → *validity*. On the other hand, this procedure also creates rather artificial situations in which subjects are likely to behave differently from natural situations. Thus, the degree of external validity is low. The interpretation of the results of this experiment would claim that violent media content leads to aggressive tendencies among its viewers.

The experimental design can also be used outside the “laboratory.” Field experiments and natural experiments are conducted in the social environment of the subjects (→ Experiment, Field; Experiment, Natural; Comparative Research). It is more difficult to find two parallel groups of individuals, and it is even more difficult to control for error variables that occur during presentation. These types of experiments have a higher degree of external validity at the cost of lower internal validity. Any other non-experimental design does not allow for a causal interpretation of the relationship between two or more variables.

Communication processes occur over time. As a consequence, it is often not appropriate to investigate subjects’ communication behavior only once at a given point in time (cross-sectional analysis). A repetition of investigations over time is called → *longitudinal analysis*. This kind of analysis can either be conducted as trend study or as panel study. Trend studies are often found during election campaigns. Surveys among samples of the electorate are conducted on a regular basis, using a “fresh” random sample every time. The results can be used to show developments in party or candidate preferences over time. However, trend analyses do not show whether individuals have changed their opinions and/or preferences. This can be shown by using panel studies. In these studies, the same subjects are surveyed at different points in time. Panel surveys, therefore, do not only show the gross development of public opinion, they also show how individuals have changed their views and what might have caused the changes. Problems arise regarding

so-called “panel mortality,” i.e., respondents refusing to participate in the study any longer and dropping out of the panel. Increasing the time period of investigation increases panel mortality as well. In addition, panel studies are more expensive because panels need a lot more administration.

Another type of design is called → *Delphi Studies*. In order to get assessment about future developments, researchers conduct mail or telephone surveys with experts in a certain field. Their responses are aggregated and sent out to the experts once more. Experts can then revoke their original responses in light of the results, i.e., the responses of the other experts. It is assumed that the results converge after the second survey, which in turn leads to more valid predictions.

Surveys and questionnaires often include standardized measures, mostly scales that explore a certain construct such as personality traits, → attitudes, or person → perceptions. Standardized measures are pre-tested and validated. Researchers therefore know about the distribution of the measures in a given population. A good overview of such measures is given by Rubin et al. (1994).

### QUALITY MEASURES OF RESEARCH

The quality of research methods is also an issue of methodological consideration. Systematization and objectivity (→ Objectivity in Science) have already been named as prerequisites of good research. They make given results independent of the particular researcher’s views or expectations, and enable other researchers to repeat the study, as long as all steps of a study are laid open in the publication. Particularly in the area of quantitative methodology, two further measures of quality are applicable: → reliability and validity. *Reliability* indicates whether categories in a code-book (content analysis), questions in a survey, or categories in observation sheets measure a stable construct or not. The most common form of reliability is test-retest-reliability. After a certain interval, the same subjects are being measured again. If the first and the second measurement lead to the same results, the corresponding instrument (code-book, questionnaire) is reliable. Other forms of reliability include parallel-test or split-half-reliability. The degree of reliability varies between 0 (not reliable at all) and 1 (completely reliable). Without reliable measures, any conclusion or interpretation might be misleading or at least dependent on the situation in which the data was collected.

Validity refers to the question of whether a measured construct really measures what it intends to measure. In other words, the → operationalization, i.e., the translation of theoretical concepts into measurement operations, should be valid. A good example for missing validity is the attempt to measure the construct “intelligence” by the perimeter of people’s heads. It is obvious that head perimeter has nothing to do with intelligence. The validity of a measure is very difficult to obtain and determine. Mostly, researchers rely on face validity using prior knowledge or common sense to estimate validity. Criterion validity uses an existing measure to validate a new one. Intelligence tests are often validated by using teachers’ judgments of their students’ intellectual capability. The question arises, then, of whether such judgments are valid themselves.

Another quality measure is the → *generalizability* of results. As most research is conducted using random samples or nonrandom samples, results can only be generalized

to a population if – and only if – a sample is representative of a certain population (→ Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom). Representativeness means that the distribution of attributes and variables in a sample is equivalent to the distribution in the given population.

Most of these quality criteria refer to quantitative methodology. It is much harder to establish such criteria for qualitative research. In particular, researchers have to prove that their results and interpretations are independent of their personality, or have to lay open how their own views and attitudes are related to their subjects. Triangulation is one way of increasing the quality of research (→ Triangulation). It includes employment of different methods, theories, or data sources on the same research topic in order to capture the phenomena in a broader way.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Case Studies ▶ Cluster Analysis ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Critical Rationalism ▶ Delphi Studies ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Discriminant Analysis ▶ Document Analysis ▶ Experiment, Field ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experiment, Natural ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Generalizability ▶ Historiography ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Non-parametric Analysis ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Observation ▶ Operationalization ▶ Paradigm ▶ People-Meter ▶ Perception ▶ Physiological Measurement ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Reliability ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Scales ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Structural Equation ▶ Survey ▶ Triangulation ▶ Validity ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## Response Sets

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In many social empirical studies subjects are provoked by situational conditions to exhibit reactive behavior patterns. From these reactions (e.g., marking point 5 on a seven-point rating scale), the kind and the strength of the subjects' behavioral dispositions (e.g., beliefs, personality traits or states, emotional feelings) may be inferred. For reliable and valid conclusions to be drawn from collected data (→ Test Theory), the subjects' reactions should only depend on these inner states under study, and not be influenced by other factors that are irrelevant to the research topic. In other words, the methods chosen for the measurement of values in a study (→ Scales) should provide data that resembles the "real values" of these inner states as close as possible.

The error part of measured values should also be minimized. An error occurs during measurement because values obtained are superimposed by a random distortion. In addition, values may be biased by systematic influences. For example, subjects participating in a social study tend to develop hypotheses concerning the goal of that study. As a consequence, they might react in accordance with their assumptions, and this response tendency causes a systematic error. A systematic bias also occurs if a subject in an interview gives answers that are formulated with respect to → social desirability. As a rule, data-collection methods that are based on processes of verbal communication (i.e., → interviews, questionnaires, and psychometric tests) are all more or less subjected to the influence of response sets. It should be the researcher's intention to keep their negative biasing effects on collected data as small as possible.

### DEFINITION AND TYPES OF RESPONSE SETS

A response set is defined as a subject's tendency to react to the stimuli presented to him or her in an interview, a questionnaire, or a psychometric test (questions, test items) in a way that reveals a certain pattern. This pattern interferes with the values indicating the intensity or strength of the internal state or trait to be measured. As a consequence, it is made difficult to assess the 'true' values of the variables in the focus of research. Response

sets *reflect general human reaction tendencies*, e.g., to answer questions in such a way that the partner will consider the person's verbal utterance to be relevant to the ongoing communication (Grice 1975). Response sets may also be related to a person's specific characteristics (e.g., not being able to say "no" to a communication partner).

Response sets that become obvious in characteristic answering patterns in social research are the acquiescence response set, the nay-saying response set, the central tendency, the tendency toward the extreme, and a random answering tendency. Two more response sets – faking and the tendency toward social desirability – are related to the content of the questions or test items. The *acquiescence response set* is based on a subject's tendency to predominantly answer questions in an affirmative way. A nay-saying response set, by contrast, is effective if a subject tends to give mostly negative answers to questions. A central tendency describes an answering pattern that consists of subjects frequently selecting the middle points of a rating scale (→ Scales and Indices).

In contrast, a *tendency toward the extreme* will be observed if mainly extreme (i.e., the highest or the lowest) numbers on a rating scale are checked as answers. Guessing or answering at random occurs if a subject does not know the correct answer or does not want to deal with the question's content. By faking, a person is intentionally giving answers that do not express what he or she really thinks or feels, but what he or she wants the experimenter to hear or read (e.g., when a person applies for a job and does not want the HR manager to know about their real opinion). The tendency toward social desirability is effective when a person is giving answers that are strongly oriented toward general norms and values as seen by the person.

### DETERMINANTS OF RESPONSE SETS

As indicated, it has been argued whether response sets reflect a general tendency of subjects to react or whether they should be attributed to specific personal characteristics. For example, if test items for the measurement of a personal trait or state (e.g., anxiety) are constructed in such a way that affirmative answers are indicating stronger intensity of this trait or state, a higher test score might really indicate a higher intensity of that state or trait. However, a high test score may also simply be the consequence of an acquiescence tendency. As a third possibility, this acquiescence tendency could be related to the personal state or trait; as a consequence a high test score would reflect both strong intensity (i.e., anxiety) and an effective acquiescence tendency.

In empirical investigations, the acquiescence tendency has been found to be *related to specific behavioral dispositions*: subjects exhibiting a strong acquiescence tendency tend to act in a reserved and docile way toward other persons. In addition, persons with this tendency have been found to be less competent in social interaction (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills). Contradictory results, however, have been provided by the observation that the acquiescence tendency varies considerably between tests and that only weak correlations between this tendency and behavior outside test situations have been found. Furthermore, a tendency toward faking as well as a social desirability tendency have been found especially for those questionnaire items that are related to norms and the value systems of the social environment the subject is living in (→ Interview, Standardized; Public Opinion Polling).



## IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH PRACTICES

### Avoiding Response Sets

Response sets affecting measurements in social studies can be minimized in their effects by carefully constructing the methods used for data collection. In order to reduce the acquiescence and nay-saying tendency, the alternatives provided for the subject's answers (e.g., in multiple-choice items) should be balanced out with respect to "yes" and "no" answers. For example, if the intensity of a person's anxiety is to be measured, approximately half the "yes" and half the "no" answers should indicate a higher intensity of this state. Effects of central tendency can be limited by avoiding middle points on rating scales, and choosing an even number of points when constructing the scales (→ Rating Methods). However, if people perceive the intensity or strength of the personal state or trait they are asked about as best represented by a value right in the middle, between the two extremes, they might be irritated by the omission of a central answering point. To avoid response sets in general the subjects' cooperation should be asked for by *providing comprehensible instructions* for the test or questionnaire, as well as unambiguous formulations of test or questionnaire items. In that way subjects establishing unfounded assumptions concerning the intentions of the study can be avoided. As subjects tend to react in correspondence with their prevailing hypotheses about the study, obscure and incomprehensible texts in data-collection methods can intensify biasing tendencies and by that increase the error proportion of obtained data.

### Controlling Response Sets

In addition to a careful design of instructions and questions or test items, the strength of some of the content-oriented response sets (i.e., social desirability, faking) can be estimated by the inclusion of scales specifically constructed for that purpose. These scales will make biasing tendencies obvious during data analysis and thus might indicate that the subject's test results should be interpreted with great care. Moreover, if the correlations between these scales indicate that response sets and the variable(s) to be measured are known, a mathematical correction procedure can be applied to exclude biasing tendencies from received data (→ Statistics, Descriptive).

For example, some personality tests contain so-called frankness or faking scales. The construction of items for these scales is based on the assumption that for some questions the correct answers be will known beforehand. If, for example, a subject says "no" to a question like "Have you ever been dishonest?" or "Have you ever lied?", such an answer indicates a tendency of the subject to fake test results, assuming that everybody has lied at least once in their life. As soon as the frequency of positive answers to items of this faking scale exceeds a certain threshold, an interpretation of test results should be performed with care.

### Social Processes Underlying Response Sets

Response sets should be appraised with respect to the fact that empirical studies in social sciences are conducted within social situations. A context is established, in which data

based on the subject's reaction is of importance for the experimenter as well as for the subject. An experimenter is interested in acquiring unbiased data, which does not restrict → reliability too much and which allows for valid interpretations (→ Validity). For the subject the score achieved in a test or a questionnaire can have *severe consequences* if, for example, the chance to get a job depends on the results, and “wrong” answers (at least in the subject's perception) are perceived as dramatically reducing the likelihood of success.

If a person is anxious to influence test or questionnaire results in a certain direction, that does not necessarily mean they intend to present themselves in a better light. In some cases subjects dissimulate, e.g., if a person is undergoing a testing procedure for the army and wants to avoid being selected. On the basis of a single answering sheet it is mostly impossible to decide whether a response set was active or not, and which response set has to be taken into account. Furthermore, a biasing tendency does not necessarily have to be a consequence of deliberate faking. *Unconscious biases in answering* can occur, e.g., if a subject is not experienced in filling out tests or answering questions in questionnaires and if they have difficulties in understanding the formulation of instructions, questions, or answering alternatives.

Given the likelihood of incompatible interests between the experimenter and the subject participating in a test, there is only a small chance that response sets will be avoided. Subjects tend to cooperate when they realize that the data collected in the study will be used to compute aggregated parameters like means and frequency tables, and that no values specific to individuals are made public. It is a further advantage if the goals of the study and the procedure are explained to the subjects at length and if they are explicitly asked for their cooperation. In general, it is important to make the relationship between the subjects' cooperation, the goal of the study, and the quality of acquired data obvious to the subjects.

Response sets should be understood in the light of a general *tendency of subjects to influence the results* of studies they are involved in. Some subjects have been observed to compliantly follow experimenters' instructions and to be surprisingly willing to oblige the experimenter and the study in general. Cooperation can also be based on a tendency to relent to social pressure in the testing situation or on the desire for social appreciation when the subjects are anxious to exhibit only behavior perceived to be acceptable to the peer group or the experimenter.

Subjects, however, have also been observed to demonstrate *destructive or negativistic behavior* that might result in abandoning their participation in the study. Such destructive behavior is intensified if the subjects consider the questions, answering alternatives, or scales as not being clear or useful to them. Negative behavior is also increased if subjects recognize a social pressure to react in a specific way, or if they feel misled in some way.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Reliability ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Statistics, Descriptive ▶ Survey ▶ Test Theory ▶ Validity

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## **Reticence**

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Reticence is a communication problem with cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions and is due to the belief that one is better off remaining silent than risking appearing foolish (Keaten & Kelly 2000). Reticent individuals tend to avoid communication in social and public contexts, particularly novel situations that have the potential for negative evaluation. The publication of Gerald M. Phillips's first article on reticence in 1965 was groundbreaking in that it expanded scholarly interest in communication anxiety and avoidance problems beyond fear of public speaking (→ Speech Anxiety), spawning cognate constructs such as communication apprehension (McCroskey 1970) and launching a major new line of research (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety).

Reticent individuals view themselves as incompetent communicators, and measured against norms about appropriate levels of talkativeness in social situations (→ Social Norms), they tend to fall short. Reticence is typified by a set of faulty beliefs about communication, such as that good communicators speak spontaneously and one must be born with good communication skills. The adoption of this set of beliefs creates anxiety and feelings of helplessness. Reticent individuals fear negative evaluation and appearing foolish, and they have learned to associate anxiety with communication, which contributes to their avoidance and withdrawal pattern.

Although there is debate about how much overlap exists between reticence and cognate constructs, there are theoretical distinctions. Stage fright and speech anxiety refer to fear of public speaking; reticent individuals often fear giving speeches, but their anxiety about communication extends to social situations. Communication apprehension involves fear or anxiety across contexts, similarly to reticence, but does not include faulty beliefs or skill deficits (→ Communication Apprehension).

## HISTORY OF THE RETICENCE CONSTRUCT

Although Phillips developed the reticence construct, he credited F. Laura Muir with introducing it to him. First defined as a personality-based, anxiety disorder (Phillips 1965), by 1977 reticence was reconceptualized as a problem of inadequate communication skills (Phillips 1977) and remained as such throughout Phillips's work. Drawing on his 1968 definition, Phillips (1984, 52) defined reticence as: "when people *avoid communication because they believe they will lose more by talking than by remaining silent.*" This served as the definition of reticence from 1977 until 1997, when Phillips published his final article on reticence. He posited that the major characteristic of reticent persons is avoidance of social situations in which they feel inept. Reticent persons may or may not have deficient social skills, but they think they do, and most do. Thus, the conceptualization of reticence for two decades was clearly about reticent *behavior*. Phillips felt that whether or not reticent people experience anxiety is not important.

In a refinement of the construct in which he adopted the term *communication incompetence* as a replacement for reticence, Phillips (1991) (1) identified the classical canons of rhetoric – invention, disposition, style, delivery, and memory – as the major sub-processes that are involved in a competent act of communication, and (2) argued that the reticent communicator may be incompetent in one or more of these rhetorical sub-processes.

Another aspect of reticence, introduced in the 1970s and remaining as a central component, is reticent individuals' adherence to a faulty set of cognitions or beliefs (Kelly et al. 1995). These beliefs contribute to the reticent person's avoidance of communication and ineptitude as a speaker, and include, among others, (1) an exaggerated sense of self-importance; (2) a conviction that speaking is not that important; and (3) a belief that it is better to be quiet and let people think you are a fool than prove it by talking.

Thus, the conceptualization of reticence throughout the decades of the 1980s and 1990s included cognitive and behavioral dimensions and recognition of an anxiety (i.e., affective) component that was considered irrelevant to treatment of the problem. The behavioral dimension was central, involving avoidance and ineptitude brought on by skills deficits in the rhetorical sub-processes. The cognitive component was the faulty belief system that justifies the reticent person's avoidance of communication.

The most recent reconceptualization, offered by Keaten and Kelly (2000), modified some aspects of the construct while retaining most of its essential features. To the cognitive and behavioral dimensions, Keaten and Kelly added the affective component, arguing that reticent individuals' anxiety about communication is relevant. Their definition, derived from the belief that "it is better to remain silent than risk appearing foolish" (2000, 168), represented a departure from Phillips's (1984) definition, and was supported by research findings (Keaten et al. 2000). Their conceptualization was further

elaborated as a model of reticence in which reticence is viewed as part of a cycle of social interaction constituted by six components: need, perceived incompetence, perceived helplessness, anxiety, devaluation, and withdrawal.

### MEASUREMENT OF RETICENCE

Until 1997, the procedure used to assess reticence for both treatment and research purposes, developed by Phillips, was an individual screening interview. Interviewers were instructors in a special course for reticent college students. The brief interview followed a protocol in which students were asked questions about the communication difficulties they experienced. On the basis of student responses and observation of their verbal and nonverbal behaviors, the interviewers determined which students were appropriate candidates for the treatment. The final decision to enroll a student in the program was made jointly by the interviewer and the student. Thus, individuals were deemed to be reticent through the screening process, which continues to be the method used to assess reticence for treatment purposes. The concurrent validity of the method was established by Sours (1979).

Keaten et al. (1997) published a 24-item standardized measure called the Reticence Scale (RS), which has been used to assess reticence for research. The RS measures six dimensions of reticence experienced in social situations: (1) feelings of anxiety; (2) knowledge of conversational topics; (3) timing skills; (4) organization of thoughts; (5) delivery skills; and (6) memory. The scale has obtained good reliabilities and there is support for its construct and concurrent validity. More recently, a 12-item version of the scale has been tested which also has good reliability (Kelly & Keaten in press).

### TREATMENT OF RETICENCE

Launched in spring of 1965 by Phillips, the Reticence Program at the Pennsylvania State University was designed as a treatment for reticence (→ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques). In the early 1970s the program was modified to incorporate the educational philosophy of Robert Mager, an approach that better fit the changed definition of reticence as deficient communication skills. The program was offered through an introductory college speech course and has been implemented at other universities.

“Rhetoritherapy” was the term Phillips coined to designate the skills training approach used in the Reticence Program. As Phillips & Sokoloff (1979, 389) defined it, rhetoritherapy is “a form of systematic, individualized instruction directed at improving speech performance in mundane, task, and social situations.” The cognitive restructuring component of the training aims to change reticent students’ faulty beliefs about communication. They are encouraged to set realistic goals and to perceive situations as rhetorical, i.e., as opportunities for achieving social goals.

Given the emphasis of rhetoritherapy on speech as a means to accomplish goals, Mager’s (1972) concept of goal analysis became the centerpiece of the program. The goal analysis method helps students pinpoint realistic goals, identify behavioral criteria indicating goal achievement, and develop specific plans of action. Students set goals for communication contexts (e.g., social conversation, public speaking), prepare goal analyses, implement

actions, and evaluate their performance. They begin with easier goals and work on achieving progressively more difficult ones, practicing the communication techniques they are taught. A study by Keaten et al. (2003) provides support for the effectiveness of the goal analysis approach.

Phillips was adamant later in his career that his method was behavior modification, aimed at improving skills in the rhetorical sub-processes representing the five canons of Aristotelean rhetoric (Phillips 1991). The five canons as applied to rhetoritherapy are: (1) *invention*, the process of sizing up a social situation to determine topics for communication; (2) *disposition*, the process of arranging ideas in a sequence; (3) *style*, the word choices for expressing the ideas; (4) *delivery*, the actual presentation of the ideas; and (5) *memory*, the process of drawing upon resources such as what has been successful in similar situations in the past (→ Arrangement and Rhetoric; Invention and Rhetoric; Style and Rhetoric; Delivery and Rhetoric; Memory and Rhetoric).

Since the 1970s, studies of the Reticence Program have employed self-evaluation papers, standardized scales, and observer ratings and have consistently found the program to help reticent students. The earliest study – by Metzger in 1974 – compared assessments of improvement by the instructor, the students, and observers, and found that students showed noticeable or at least adequate improvement, although a few showed only minimal improvement. McKinney's (1980) results indicated that students in the Reticence Program reported significant decreases in anxiety and avoidance behavior on all items concerned with social interaction, class participation, group discussion, and interviewing, and on most public speaking items. Kelly and Keaten's (1992) study found a greater reduction in self-reported shyness and communication apprehension for those in the Reticence Program than for those in either a speech course or a control group.

Because of limited research, there is less evidence for the long-term effectiveness of rhetoritherapy. Oerkvitz (1975) assessed participants' perceptions of their improvement one year or more after completion of the program and found that 75 percent of respondents said that they had improved, 17 percent had not, and some gave mixed responses. Similarly, Kelly (1992) mailed a questionnaire to former Reticence Program participants, with 91 percent of respondents reporting that they had improved their communication skills upon completion of the program and 87 percent reporting continuing positive benefits. They indicated greater confidence, less fear, communication skill improvement, and more control over their behavior as results of the program.

Research on the impact of the program on reticent beliefs (Keaten et al. 2000) revealed a moderate treatment effect for three of seven beliefs: "The most significant changes in beliefs center around the relationship between communicative ability and skill development ... reticent individuals begin to realize that communication skills can be learned ... they learn that preparation is a vital component of effective speaking" (2000, 144). Another study – of the perceived effectiveness of the components of rhetoritherapy (Keaten et al. 2003) – found that respondents viewed the rehearsal and performance of a speech and an oral interpretation of literature as most helpful. Additionally, they reported that goal analysis was helpful, practice was more helpful than instruction, and the supportive classroom environment was instrumental in the development of their communication skills.

Together, these studies demonstrated the effectiveness of the rhetoritherapy approach as a treatment for reticence. The treatment has been found to reduce anxiety about communicating, to change faulty beliefs, and to a lesser degree to improve behavior.

SEE ALSO: ► Arrangement and Rhetoric ► Communication Apprehension ► Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ► Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Memory and Rhetoric ► Social Norms ► Speech Anxiety ► Stage Fright ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Rhetoric in Africa

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This description of rhetoric in Africa will focus on two primary tendencies, namely, the valorization of the virtues of classical antiquity on the one hand, and the highlighting of an ethos of cosmopolitanism and the politics of the private on the other. These two disparate discursive operations are often complementary and give a deeper meaning to the political and cultural formations of the contemporary age.

The academic study of rhetoric studies in Africa is relatively new and South Africa maintains a pivotal position in spreading and entrenching the discipline. In this regard, the efforts and accomplishments of a South African-based French professor of philosophy, Philippe-Joseph Salazar, who founded the Centre for Rhetoric Studies, University of Cape Town, have been seminal. Salazar has not only worked to establish the academic parameters and credentials of the discipline but has also contributed to the creation of the institutions to legitimize the field of study. In particular, he was instrumental in establishing an association for the study of rhetoric and communication in Southern Africa whose reach extends to other parts of Africa and the globe, and which espouses a multidisciplinary ethic (see for instance Salazar et al. 2002).

In addition, one of the ways in which Salazar lays the foundations for the academic viability of the field is by various interrogations of categories such as democracy and race within the context of post-apartheid South Africa (→ Rhetoric and Race). Accordingly, Salazar's important study *An African Athens: Rhetoric and the shaping of democracy in South Africa* (2002) examines the discourses of democracy, multiculturalism, race, cosmopolitanism, public deliberation, and constitutionalism in South Africa (Osha 2005). Within the shores of Africa, Salazar's focus on democracy, multiculturalism, and cosmopolitanism is quite important for moving beyond conventional discourses that fail to address the interconnections between these categories. Along with these general discursive concerns, there have also been elaborate attempts to ground the study of rhetoric beyond Southern Africa, in regions as diverse as West Africa, through the hosting of regular international conferences that attract reputable academics from all over the world. In other words, the institutionalization of the practice has indeed been equally important.

Democracy remains a very topical issue in Africa for many reasons. The problems of governance have been the bane of postcolonial development. Ethnic conflicts, wars, and



genocide continue to plague the African continent, as events and developments in Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and so many other countries demonstrate. The global community wishes to see Africa democratize and develop, and in this connection external theories of democracy and development are frequently advanced. A dominant *rhetoric of democracy* offered by the Bretton Woods institutional order for postcolonial African nations includes the following conditionalities: good governance, public accountability, fiscal discipline, and economic liberalization. This dominant rhetoric of democracy is often proffered without an elaborate historical context. Salazar and other scholars (for example, Cassin 1998) re-establish the rhetorical and historical connections between Athenian conceptions of democracy and modern modes of governmentality. By making this connection, scholars of rhetoric in Africa historicize, and grant depth to, the problem of governance in contemporary times.

The historicization of the rhetoric of democracy in contemporary times is not a merely anachronistic maneuver. Scholars of rhetoric also investigate categories such as race, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and sexuality, as we have noted in the case of Salazar. These various preoccupations give the study of rhetoric a contemporary flavor and relevance. In his reflections on these issues, Salazar advances a notion of multiculturalism (rainbowism), tolerance, and a new understanding of the semiotics of the body within a globalizing, cosmopolitan South African context (→ Rhetoric, Vernacular). The investigation of cosmopolitan sensibilities, the ethics of good living, and the technologies of the self in the neo-liberal age is usually conducted within the context of broader historical dimensions. In this way, we come to understand that the competitive spirit of sport and its modern sublimation owe much to the medieval thrust to domesticate human activities that were usually bloody or unduly harmful. The contemporary cult of the body and the cult of personality regarding the ruler (caesarism) can be traced to distinct historical formations, and part of the success of rhetoric studies has been to unravel the antecedents of these traces.

As mentioned, the study of rhetoric in Africa has moved in *two central directions*. First, there has been a powerful tendency to foreground the importance of classical studies and knowledges. Second, the gains made from the initial maneuver are then transferred to explorations of contemporary phenomena and problems. Scholars of rhetoric studies have also situated the contemporary political instrumentalization of the concept of democracy within a much broader conceptual canvas than is usually attempted by scholars in other disciplines, through a conscious link to Athenian institutional impetuses and forms of life (→ Rhetoric, Greek). The multidisciplinary scope and approach of rhetoric studies in Africa has been considerably assisted by the contributions of scholars such as Charles Calder and Chris Dunton, who employ their backgrounds in literature and literary theory to demonstrate the ways in which contemporary sexualities can be conceptualized. Thus by unearthing the deeper layers of meaning in the concepts that govern contemporary existence, scholars of rhetoric in Africa show that what is assumed to be “new” or “unusual” has wider and perhaps more illustrious historical origins.

SEE ALSO: ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Race ► Rhetoric, Vernacular

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# **Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion**

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Rhetoric, argument, and persuasion come together in the study of argumentation. According to a handbook definition, *argumentation* is a verbal, social, and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by advancing a constellation of propositions justifying or (in case the standpoint is negative) refuting the proposition expressed in the standpoint (van Eemeren et al. 1996). This definition does justice to the “process–product ambiguity” of the term “argumentation” because it captures not only the activity of advancing reasons but also the discourse or text resulting from it.

## **THE STUDY OF ARGUMENTATION**

Argumentation always pertains to a specific point of view regarding a certain issue. The speaker or writer who advances argumentation defends this *standpoint* to listeners or readers who (are assumed to) doubt the acceptability of the standpoint or have a different standpoint. Argumentation is aimed at convincing them of the acceptability of the standpoint. The person who advances it makes an appeal to their reasonableness by assuming that they will act as reasonable critics when evaluating the argumentation – otherwise advancing argumentation would not make sense (→ Argumentative Discourse; Discourse).

The study of argumentation includes not only philosophical and theoretical investigations of the concepts of rationality and reasonableness inspiring the conceptual frameworks that shape the various models of argumentation, but also empirical and analytic research aimed at explaining argumentative reality and reconstructing it from the perspective of these models, and practical research aimed at a critical appreciation of the various kinds of argumentative practices and systematic improvement when this is due.

In all components of this research program, the effort is concentrated on three problem areas: the analysis, evaluation, and production of argumentative discourse and texts.

So far the study of argumentation has not resulted in a universally accepted theory. The *state of the art* is characterized by the coexistence of a variety of approaches that differ considerably in conceptualization, scope, and theoretical refinement. Some argumentation theorists, especially those having a background in discourse analysis and rhetoric, have a primarily (and sometimes exclusively) descriptive goal. They are interested in finding out how speakers and writers use argumentation to convince or persuade others. Other argumentation theorists, inspired by logic and philosophy, study argumentation for normative purposes. They are interested in developing soundness criteria that must be satisfied for the argumentation to be reasonable. Many argumentation theorists take a middle position and assume that the study of argumentation has a normative as well as a descriptive dimension.

In spite of the differences, argumentation theorists are jointly concerned with *certain research problems*. The first one is the identification of standpoints, argumentation, and other argumentative moves. Another common problem is the identification of elements that remain unexpressed in the discourse, which are often the pivotal points of an argument, in particular *unexpressed premises*. In some cases, the identification of these implicit elements causes considerable problems – usually because there are several possibilities.

Arguers who put forward an argument are not automatically involved in an attempt to logically derive the conclusion from the premises, but they must be aiming for a transfer of acceptance from the explicit premise to the standpoint. In this endeavor they rely on more or less ready-made *argument schemes* – conventionalized ways of relating a premise to a standpoint. Because an argument scheme typifies the justification or refutation the premise provides for the standpoint, examining argument schemes is required for getting to the principles, standards, criteria, and assumptions involved in argument evaluation.

A further problem is the analysis of the *argumentation structure*, which is determined by the way in which the arguments advanced in defense of a standpoint hang together. When it consists of one premise and an unexpressed premise, argumentation is “single,” but in practice its structure can be more complex, depending on how the defense has been organized to respond to (anticipated) doubt or criticism. In more complexly structured argumentation the reasons put forward to support a standpoint can be alternative defenses of the standpoint that are unrelated, but they can also be interdependent because the arguments strengthen or complement each other or the one argument supports the other.

Hamblin (1970) demonstrated that a great number of the generally recognized *fallacies* are not covered by the “logical standard definition” of fallacies as arguments that seem valid but are not, because they are not arguments, not invalid, or fallacious for another reason. Most argumentation theorists therefore dropped the standard definition and view fallacies as discussion moves that harm the quality of argumentative discourse. The theorists’ problem is to explain when and why this is the case.

These and other problems pertinent to the analysis, evaluation, and production of argumentation are treated differently in the various theoretical approaches to argumentation. Although this is not always acknowledged, most of these approaches are strongly affected by either the dialectical perspective or the rhetorical perspective on argumentation developed in antiquity. *Rhetorically oriented* approaches put an emphasis on factors

influencing the effectiveness of argumentation, viewing effectiveness as a matter of “right” rather than fact. If the factual effectiveness of argumentation, in the sense of its actual persuasiveness, is the primary interest, empirical *persuasion research* is required that amounts to empirical testing of attitude change (→ Persuasion). *Dialectically oriented* approaches focus primarily on the quality of argumentation in regulated critical dialogues. They put an emphasis on finding ways of guarding the reasonableness of argumentation. A brief overview of prominent approaches, starting with the “neo-classical” approaches developed by Toulmin and Perelman, will highlight their main points and make clear that they are all indebted to classical rhetoric and dialectic (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic).

### OVERVIEW OF PROMINENT APPROACHES

Reacting against the then dominant logical approach to argumentation, Toulmin (1958) presented a model of the “procedural form” of argumentation: the steps that can be distinguished in the defense of a standpoint. It is noteworthy that Toulmin’s model is conceptually equivalent to the Roman-Hellenistic *epicheirema* (extended syllogism). According to Toulmin, the soundness of argumentation is primarily determined by the degree to which the *warrant*, which connects the *data* adduced in the argumentation with the *claim* that is defended, is made acceptable by a *backing*. This procedural form of argumentation is “field-independent”: the steps that are taken – as represented in the model – are always the same, irrespective of the subject of the argumentation. What kind of backing is required, however, depends on the field to which the standpoint at issue belongs. An ethical justification, for instance, requires a different kind of backing than a legal justification. This means that the evaluation criteria for determining the soundness of argumentation are “field-dependent.”

In line with classical rhetoric, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958) regard argumentation as sound if it adduces (more) assent with the standpoint among the audience. Thus the soundness of argumentation is in the *new rhetoric* measured against its effect on the target group, which may be a “particular audience,” but can also be the “universal audience” that embodies reasonableness for the speaker or writer. Apart from an overview of elements that can serve as points of departure of argumentation, such as facts and values, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca provide an overview of argument schemes that could convince or persuade the audience. The argument schemes that are distinguished remain for the most part close to the classical topical tradition. There are arguments with a *quasi-logical* argument scheme, but also arguments with a scheme that *structures reality* and arguments with a scheme *based on the structure of reality*.

Out of dissatisfaction with how argumentation was treated in logical textbooks, inspired by Toulmin and to a lesser extent Perelman, since the 1970s an approach to argumentation has been propagated in Canada and the United States that is known as *informal logic*. The label covers a collection of normative approaches to argumentation that remain closer to the practice of argumentation in ordinary language than formal logic. Informal logicians develop norms for interpreting, assessing, and construing argumentation, such as *premise acceptability*, *relevance*, and *sufficiency*. Among informal logicians, Johnson (2000) takes a predominantly logical approach but complements it with a “dialectical tier,” whereas Tindale (1999) turns to rhetoric (→ Rhetoric and Logic).

To modern dialecticians argumentation is part of a procedure for resolving differences about the tenability of standpoints by means of a regulated discussion. According to Barth and Krabbe (1982), the dialectical rules that are to be followed must not only be “problem-valid” in the sense of optimally serving the purpose for which they are designed, but also “conventionally valid” in the sense of being intersubjectively acceptable. Building on dialogue logic, they present argumentation in their *formal dialectics* – a term coined by Hamblin – as a regimented dialogue game between a proponent and an opponent of a thesis. Together the parties try to establish whether the thesis can be defended against critical attacks.

Van Eemeren and Grootendorst’s (2004) *pragma-dialectical* theory of argumentation connects with formal dialectics. The replacement of “formal” by “pragma” (for “pragmatic”) points to the differences, which are inspired by speech act theory, Grice’s logic of conversation, and discourse analysis. In the pragma-dialectical model of a *critical discussion* four stages are analytically distinguished, an overview is provided of the speech acts that can play a constructive role in the various stages, and the discussion rules are formulated that must be followed to test the acceptability of a standpoint in a reasonable way. As shown in van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992), each rule violation, in whatever stage of the discussion, obstructs the resolution and is therefore a fallacy.

In the past decades a powerful *reevaluation of rhetoric* has taken place. The irrational image of rhetoric that had come into being has been revised and the sharp division between rhetoric and dialectic appears to require weakening. Several argumentation theorists have become aware that rhetoric as the study of ways of gaining assent is not incompatible with maintaining a critical ideal of reasonableness. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2002), for instance, aim to bring about an integration of insight from rhetoric into the pragma-dialectical theory. In their view, there is a rhetorical goal corresponding to each of the dialectical stages of the resolution process. They think that the reconstruction of argumentative discourse and texts can become more precise, and more fully accounted for, if allowance is made for the arguers’ *strategic maneuvering* to keep their dialectical and rhetorical pursuits in balance.

In a number of (French) publications, Ducrot and Anscombe have developed a purely *descriptive linguistic approach* to argumentative language use that is in many respects rhetorical. Because they are of the opinion that verbal utterances that – often implicitly – lead the listener or reader to a certain conclusion always involve an argumentative relation, they refer to their theoretical position as *radical argumentativism* (Anscombe & Ducrot 1983). Their approach is characterized by a great interest in words such as “only,” “but,” “even,” and “because” that give the utterances a certain *argumentative force* and *argumentative direction*.

It is remarkable that the rehabilitation of rhetoric in the study of argumentation started at about the same time in various countries. In the 1980s, in the United States several argumentation scholars defended the rational qualities of rhetoric. Wenzel, for one, wanted to give rhetoric full credit, but then emphatically in relation to logic and more in particular dialectics. In Germany, Kopperschmidt claimed that rhetoric is the central concern of argumentation theorists. North American theorists such as Leff, Schiappa, and Zarefsky took up the same position (see van Eemeren et al. 1996). In persuasion research, O’Keefe gave an impetus to the empirical study of argumentation. He tested experimentally

the recognition of argumentative moves and, more recently, used “meta-analysis” to check on theoretical claims.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Discourse ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Dialectic ► Rhetoric and Logic ► Rhetorical Studies ► Style and Rhetoric

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## **Rhetoric in Central and South America**

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This entry presents an overview of recent rhetorical studies by scholars from universities in Central and South America, where there is a renewed interest in this field. Generally, rhetorical studies in Central and South America are concerned with the main theoretical notions of literary criticism in antiquity; the application of such notions to the analysis of Greek and Roman classical texts (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman); the influence of classical rhetoric on Latin American thought and literature from the discovery of the New World; and → discourse analysis, especially according to modern linguistic theories.

*Central American* scholars have recently pursued ancient literary theory and documented its influence on historical and contemporary → discourse. For instance, Campuzano (1980) has explored pre-Platonic poetics, and Sparisci Loviselli (2003) has addressed the

relation of classical rhetoric to Costa Rican oratory. Critical analysis of contemporary rhetorical discourse is also represented; typical of this scholarship is Alvarez's assessment of the oratory of Jose Marti.

Within *South America*, perhaps the most extensive body of rhetorical studies relates to principles of ancient rhetoric and literary theory (→ Rhetoric and Poetics). Among these studies, Chichi (2002) has identified and investigated the functions of rhetorical and dialectical resources for refutation in Aristotelian and Platonic texts and their Hellenistic receptions, and Santa Cruz (2003) has examined aspects of rhetoric in Plato. Additionally, a number of scholars have offered surveys of ancient rhetorical theory or literary theory.

Rhetorical studies have also addressed historical and contemporary discourse from the perspective of ancient rhetoric and literary theory. Considerable research has been motivated by the relationship between oratory and other literary genres, especially tragedy (Gastaldi & Gambon 2006). Other studies have interrogated the relationship between rhetoric and political life (Paglialunga 2004), religion (Hansen 2003), education (Pereira 2005), and constructions of the New World (Nava Contreras 2006).

Finally, some studies have applied rhetoric to the problem of discourse composition, particularly in light of contemporary theories of → linguistics. For example Narvaja de Arnoux (2001) investigates the role of grammar and style in the writing process, while Dietrich (2003) offers a theoretical-methodological basis for the rhetorical analysis of discourse and the integration of rhetoric, communication, and teaching of languages.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Discourse Analysis ► Linguistics ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetoric, Roman

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## Rhetoric and Class

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A basic sociological assumption is that human behavior is patterned, not random. Such patterns form social structures or stratifications that reflect the persistent and regularized social relations that the patterns facilitate. The social stratification made possible by these hierarchies affects life chances, resources at our disposal, and relations of inequality in the distribution of social resources and rewards. Hence, at its most basic, research on social class encompasses the study of how societies manifest hierarchies of prestige and power, and how these hierarchies in turn shape a social stratification system and the reception of goods according to the status assigned to positions in the system.

Much difficulty in explicating the concept of social class critically stems from the fact that in complex societies multiple criteria, not just economic factors, are used to identify the set of relations that determine not only what a class is, but the individual's position in the social stratification system. For instance, wealth, prominence, ancestry, prestige, occupation, and level of influence are all possible elements in defining social class. What is more, some of these elements have several valences that might carry difference in the prestige and status granted. For example, although wealth is a primary determinant of social class in the United States, how such wealth is attained is key to locating an individual in the stratification system. The proliferation of class terms (criminal class, jobless class, underclass, working class, professional class, chattering class, and so on), speaks further of how the concept of class, albeit productive, has multiplied to the extent that critical imprecision has become a significant concern. Hence, reliance on class as explanatory concept requires careful attention to matters of definition.

From an early focus on only the persuasive effects of discourse, rhetoric scholars since the 1960s have taken up the call for a more robust critical practice that emphasizes rhetoric as a process and perspective humans undertake. This scholarship has sought to understand rhetoric as epistemic, as mediator of multiple "truths," and as generative grammar for social critique (→ Rhetorical Criticism). The insistence on the sociality and materiality of rhetoric, its implication with ideological discourses, and its formative or constitutive power has continued to facilitate the training of rhetorical lenses onto not just iconic texts but the social construction, negotiation, and performance of symbolic structures. Hence scholars of rhetoric have contributed to our understanding of how social structures are socially constructed phenomena, sustained and reproduced by ideological discursive practices.



Rhetorical scholarship has thus provoked deeper understanding of how social relationships are constructed and sustained by the ongoing discursive activity of people. Therefore, patterns of regularized relationships, concomitant notions of status and roles, and their implications are observable through the way people engage in particular discursive practices. However, simple observation reveals significant contestation over the definition, meaning, and impact of social class as marker of identity. Such indeterminacy is not necessarily a shortcoming from the vantage point of the study of rhetoric, as it effectively demonstrates the constructed, negotiated, and performed nature of our identities as discursive practices.

The central outlook to rhetorical engagement with the subject of social class has been a Marxist critical perspective. Marx's treatment of *class as a dynamic relationship* tied to the overall set of productive processes and relations in society, his notion of class struggle, and the concomitant theory of social progress (especially Marx 1939–1941) have been the central animating impetus for a critical theory that took up the critique of the political economy in which texts, media, mass culture, and other cultural practices served as legitimating discourses for capitalist ideology.

Although Marx's ideas about class conflict and economic determination have been criticized as essentialist, the notion that agon is central to the life of the polis has been given prominence by rhetorical and political theorists. With a critical eye toward such discourses, rhetoric scholars have explored how individuals are integrated into the framework of a social formation and the power of such discourses in shaping attitude, belief, and behavior.

A significant move has been the understanding of how the dominant class must constantly reinvent or rearticulate the set of relationships that assure it of social dominance. An implication of this insight is that the power relation between social classes is inherently unstable and a differential relation. In other words, it is not one element or another that points to class or power, but the relations between the complex of elements that are constitutive of class and social position. This particular struggle for reasserting dominance or hegemony takes place in various contexts, including education, politics, media systems, and others. Hence, the Marxian conflict or "battleground" is not merely about economic, but also cultural, relations. From this vantage point, sustaining a dominant status is a struggle to define and rearticulate the basis for dominance conceived not just economically but also culturally, and thus, symbolically.

Scholars of rhetoric have incorporated these insights into studies about just how such hegemonic struggles take place discursively through privileged representations and articulations that reinforce and reaffirm particular power relations. Highlighting a focus on the power of discourse to reconfigure real economic and material relations, and leveling a critique of idealist (or non-realist) positions that pay attention to the effects of discourse on the consciousness of individuals, some scholars have written on the material instrumentality of discourse to affirm hegemony. Others have commented wisely on the history of this ideological critique as it has emerged within the rhetorical tradition. A productive area continues to be how class permeates media content, and how it frames acceptance or promotes class abjection through popular representations.

Concerned with issues of representation, hegemony, intersectionality of social struggles, pluralism, and poststructural sensibilities against totalizing narratives of social structure,

many rhetoricians have been in the vanguard of a critique reflective of widespread disenchantment with the essentialist and homogenizing tendencies of Marxist-inspired critical discourses. Such approaches have been instrumental in rendering a critique of power and the social formations it makes possible, as situated within an economy of discourses that “permeate, characterize and constitute the social body” (Foucault 1980, 93). Scholars in the field of rhetoric have responded fruitfully to these poststructural and postmodern approaches, devoting critical attention to anti-essentialist investigations of social positionality, gender, race, and ethnic identity, and to studies of new social movements as reflective of such concerns. Work on the mystification of power relations, vernacular rhetorics, counter-publics, and outlaw rhetoric has treated the centrality of discursive practices to the reproduction of class consciousness, social positionality, and the possibility of social change.

SEE ALSO: ► Critical Theory ► Popular Communication and Social Class ► Post-modernism and Communication ► Rhetoric, Postmodern ► Rhetorical Criticism

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# Rhetoric and Dialectic

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Rhetoric and dialectic are closely related theories of (and trainings in) → persuasion. They have some distinct bodies of doctrine (e.g., the topics of invention and the enthymeme belong to dialectic; the theory of disposition and the figures of speech to rhetoric) but over time they have also overlapped and annexed each other's territory (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy). Theorists today attempt to incorporate the insights and teachings of both subjects into an overarching theory of persuasive communication. These attempts have some instructive historical antecedents which will be the main subject of this article.

## DIALECTIC IN GREEK AND ROMAN RHETORIC

To understand the history of the relations between rhetoric and dialectic it is necessary to take account of changes in the definition of dialectic and in the educational context of the two subjects. For Plato dialectic meant the training in philosophy acquired through dialogue and argument. For Aristotle dialectic is the technique of argument used in everyday conversations and in subjects (such as politics or questions of practical behavior) where certain reasoning, which he called analytic, was not possible. Later in antiquity and in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, "dialectic" and "logic" were synonyms, so dialectic included both plausible and certain reason, both the topics and the syllogism. Since the nineteenth century the term "dialectic" has generally been used to refer to the logical method of Hegel and of Marxism. This is connected to the classical Greek idea of dialectic, but is separate from the mainly Latin tradition with which this article is concerned.

Aristotle says that rhetoric and dialectic are counterparts because they are both concerned with questions that cannot be resolved scientifically. Dialectic treats such questions more generally, while rhetoric is concerned with persuasion in the three contexts in which speeches were made in Athens: the law court, the public assembly, and the occasion for celebration or blame. Aristotle was the first to admit the teaching of rhetoric into the school of philosophy and the first to give a systematic account of all the doctrines of rhetoric (→ Rhetoric, Greek). Throughout the Hellenistic world the rhetoric schools were the dominant form of higher education.

When Cicero argued in *De oratore* that orators needed a knowledge of dialectic, for which he wrote his textbook *Topica* and whose doctrines he incorporated in his late synthesis, *Partitiones oratoriae*, he was campaigning for a broadening of rhetorical education. For Quintilian dialectic, including the syllogism, the topics, and the four Stoic forms of inference, were part of the orator's education (→ Rhetoric, Roman). For much of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages it was usual to study rhetoric and dialectic together as constituent parts of the cycle of seven liberal arts. Later in the medieval period the study of logic came to dominate the whole arts course of the universities which were

founded then, with rhetoric relegated to the sidelines. In fourteenth-century Italy some teachers of letter-writing, a subject at the margins of the university arts course, revived the imitation of classical Latin and took a more literary approach to the study of Latin rhetoric (→ Rhetoric, Medieval).

## DIALECTIC IN EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE

### Valla

Lorenzo Valla was appalled by what he saw as the pointless intricacy of late scholastic logic and by logic's domination of the university arts course. His *Repastinatio dialecticae et philosophiae* (1439) is a wide-ranging attack on Aristotelian philosophy. He insists on the wide range of talents and skills required for rhetoric, but argues that this demanding skill need be mastered only by the few people who will become leaders. By contrast dialectic is much simpler, consisting of a small part of one of rhetoric's five skills. For him dialectic is concerned with practical arguing in good Latin. It involves the study of topical invention, careful attention to the implications of words employed, and the presentation of arguments in a small number of forms of argumentation, which need not be stated in full.

Compared with the years required to gain a thorough knowledge of Greek and Latin grammar, dialectic, which everyone needs to study, should take only a few weeks. Valla's polemical work sets out the goal of a simple and accessible dialectic expressed in classical Latin but this goal was most nearly achieved by his enemy, George of Trebizond, whose *Isagoge dialectica* (late 1430s) gives an introduction to Aristotelian logic, including the elements Valla rejected, expressed in classical Latin. Unlike Valla's work, it was a viable teaching book and achieved considerable success with around 60 editions in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

### Agricola

Rudolph Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* (1479) treats dialectical invention as the key element in the composition of texts of many different kinds (→ Invention and Rhetoric). Agricola rewrites the topics of invention (for example, definition, genus, cause, and contrary) so as to put more emphasis on the nature of the argumentative relationship defined, on its use in practical arguing, and on the method of producing arguments of each type. Familiarity with the topics of invention enables a writer to find whatever can usefully be said on a topic. The best arguments found must be selected and expressed either as simple expositions or as fully supported and elaborated argumentations. He regards the distinction between exposition and argument as partly a matter of audience (it is exposition when you state something simply to an audience that follows; argumentation when an audience resists and you pile in additional reasons and extort their assent) and texture (exposition is plain; argumentation involves density of reasoning and figures).

Furthermore he argues that emotional persuasion is subject to logical processes (for example, to make someone feel pity for a person you must show them that their fate is both harsh and undeserved). Rather than fitting all works into the traditional rhetorical model of the four-part oration, Agricola argues that many different models are available

for the structure of texts and that the writer must think about the appropriate form by reflecting on the arguments he or she has assembled, the nature and attitude of the audience (which will enable him or her to work out the key question to be addressed) and what he or she wants to achieve (→ Arrangement and Rhetoric). One of Agricola's suggestions for practical training in becoming familiar with topics, argumentation, and exposition was the dialectical analysis of a text, for example a speech from Virgil's *Aeneid* or by Cicero. Agricola's dialectical commentary on Cicero's speech *Pro lege Manilia* became the model for the numerous dialectical commentaries written by Latomus, Melanchthon, and Ramus.

In effect Agricola's work proclaimed the new technique of dialectical invention to be the core of the composition of literary, technical, and persuasive works. He presented the moods and figures of the syllogism and the figures of rhetoric, which were easily available in other texts, as necessary add-ons to complete the training in arguing and composition. Although Agricola enjoyed a great reputation in northern Europe, with many publications of his work, his unification of rhetoric and dialectic around dialectical invention ran against the disciplinary boundaries of schools and universities so that teachers took different views on where it should fit within the syllabus. Erasmus combined techniques from both subjects under the umbrella of variation and rhetorical amplification of an existing text in his highly successful *De copia* (1512). The first book, on copia of words, suggests methods of varying or extending the language of a phrase on the basis of figures of grammar and rhetoric, while the second, on copia of things, uses the topics of invention to discover more material within, or to vary the presentation of, something already expressed.

### Melanchthon

Philipp Melanchthon was called to Wittenberg at the age of 21 to teach Greek and rhetoric. His *De rhetorica libri tres* (1519) emphasizes the close relationship between rhetoric and dialectic. In his (Aristotelian) view all subjects depend on dialectic, yet dialectic itself became deprived and useless when (presumably in the medieval universities) rhetoric was removed from the schools. He proclaims the common purpose of dialectic and rhetoric, the former restrained and suited to teaching, the latter spreading itself more fully and ready to move an audience.

This book included much of the syllabus of dialectic within the invention section of a rhetoric textbook. But since his audience asked him for even more dialectic, he first produced a short overview of the whole of dialectic, *Compendiaria dialectices ratio* (1520), and then, to complement it, a rhetoric without so much dialectic, *Institutiones rhetoricae* (1521). Melanchthon's first attempt at a comprehensive rhetoric which included the dialectical material that he thought necessary was thus replaced by separate textbooks for the two subjects, including the now traditional areas of overlap, which he later expanded further.

### Ramus

Peter Ramus adopted a different approach to the problem of combining rhetoric and dialectic (*Dialecticae libri duo*, 1556). He always expected that rhetoric and dialectic would be taught together and that the theoretical training offered by manuals of the two

subjects would be complemented by readings in classical literature and oratory, which would demonstrate the way in which effective persuasive writing combines the skills taught by both. His theory of method obliged him to start at a very general level, proceeding by division to specifics and to avoid all overlaps between subjects.

This encouraged him to declare that dialectic was composed of only two elements, invention and judgment. Invention described the topics, while judgment was sub-divided into the theory of the proposition, the syllogism, and method. By the same simplification, rhetoric comprised only style, that is to say, the tropes and figures, and delivery. Thus while Ramus certainly oversimplified both subjects (partly in the hope that, contrary to frequent practice, the whole of each subject would be covered in class), the claim that he taught a rhetoric without invention needs to be qualified by the observation that he expected his pupils to learn invention within the dialectic studies which they pursued alongside rhetoric. The textbooks of Ramus and Melanchthon enjoyed enormous success throughout northern Europe, without replacing the classical textbooks (for dialectic, Aristotle; for rhetoric, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero, and Quintilian) required by the university syllabus (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance).

## SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TO TODAY

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the tendency was for rhetoric and dialectic to be presented separately, with more attention to the emotions in rhetoric manuals as a result of a gradually increasing domestication of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. George Campbell's *Philosophy of rhetoric* (1776) adapted and absorbed much of the teaching associated with topical invention and syllogistic as part of the foundations of eloquence before going on to discuss purity of language and qualities of style. Where Hugh Blair's *Lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres* (1783) focus on language, taste, style, and criticism, and Alexander Bain's *English composition and rhetoric* (1887) was devoted to the English sentence, paragraphing, figures of speech (organized logically), and intellectual and emotional qualities of style, Richard Whately's *Elements of rhetoric* (1846) included a good deal of dialectic in its discussion of the types of argument and methods of presentation, even though Whately composed a parallel *Elements of logic* (1827), and the two textbooks were often taught together, for example in North American colleges. The nineteenth century saw a gradual decline in the teaching of Aristotelian logic and its replacement with the more mathematical formal logic.

Reactions against the abstractness and lack of application of formal logic have caused some philosophers to attempt to formulate rules for practical arguing (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Stephen Toulmin's *The uses of argument* (1958), for example, develops a theory that allows people to assess the strength of arguments in practical life, which owes something both to traditional logic and to rhetoric (→ Rhetoric and Logic). Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca incorporated theories of argumentation, topics of invention, and persuasive principles taken from rhetoric in their *Traité de l'argumentation* (1958), which became known in English as *The new rhetoric* (1969). Since then theorists of communication, working partly from → linguistics, partly from ideas about mass communications and → public relations, and partly from theories of → information connected with computer science (→ Information Processing), have begun to interact with

the newly flourishing historians of rhetoric to find new ways of incorporating the insights of the ancient arts of rhetoric and dialectic in a modern and postmodern framework.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arrangement and Rhetoric ▶ Information ▶ Information Processing  
▶ Invention and Rhetoric ▶ Linguistics ▶ Persuasion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetoric,  
Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric  
and Logic ▶ Rhetoric, Medieval ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric, Roman

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## **Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan**

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Chinese rhetorical thought can be traced back to the Spring and Autumn period (770–476 BCE). The word for “rhetoric” in Chinese came from Confucius’ (551–479 BCE) speech in *The book of changes*: “The gentleman advances in virtue, and cultivates all the spheres of his duty. His honesty and good faith are the way in which he advances in virtue. His sincere rhetoric (Xīu Cí) is the way in which he fulfills his spheres of duty.” In ancient Chinese, “rhetoric” means to decorate oral and written words, to use language appropriately and effectively.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF RHETORIC IN CHINA**

In ancient China, people summed up the functions of rhetoric in four aspects: moral cultivation, life pursuit, interpersonal coordination, and social management. Rhetoric or speech was regarded as one of the abilities and qualities of participating in social management as well as one’s pursuit of life, as expressed in Shusun Bao’s speech in Xianggong’s year 24 of *The Tso Chuen*: “The highest meaning of ‘not decaying’ is when there is

established virtue; the second, when there is established merit; and the third, when there is established speech. They are not forgotten with length of time: this is called three ways of ‘not decaying.’” Rhetoric was also regarded as one important means of social management. *The book of songs* said, “If the wording of your decrees is gentle and kind, the people will be of one heart and support you; if the wording of your decrees is pleasing and convincing, the people will feel safe and assured.” Ancient Chinese people thought that rhetoric should obey four moral principles: “speak rituals,” “speak humanity,” “speak loyalty,” and “speak truthfulness.” They also summarized some rhetorical principles such as the harmony of rhetoric and context, the harmony of “Wén” (refinement) and “Zhì” (simplicity), and the harmony of “Dǎ” (clear) and “Qiǎo” (literary grace).

Chén Kuí’s *Wén Zé* in the Song dynasty is usually regarded as the first systematic rhetoric book of China. Actually, there were many books about rhetoric before the Song dynasty, such as *The book of changes*, *The analects of Confucius*, *Lǎo Zi*, *Hánfēi Zi*, *Guīgúzi*, Liú Xiàng’s *Shuōyǔàn*, Cáo Pǐ’s *Diǎnlùn*, Lù Jǐ’s *Wén Fù*, and Liú Xié’s *Wénxīn Diǎolóng*. Chén Kuí’s *Wén Zé* is a composition book. It put forward some principles of writing, and summed up many rhetorical means, figures of speech and styles (→ Style and Rhetoric).

Modern Chinese rhetoric was established from the beginning of the twentieth century to the 1930s under the influence of western and Japanese rhetoric. The representative books of this period include Lóng Bóchún’s *Rhetoric: Introduction to letters*, Tāng Zhèncháng’s *Textbook of rhetoric*, Wáng Yì’s *Rhetoric*, Táng Yuè’s *Figures of speech*, and Chén Wàngdào’s *Introduction to rhetoric*. They investigated the objects, scope, and tasks of rhetoric. These studies focused on usage of words and sentences, figures of speech, and style. Until the 1950s, Chinese rhetoric developed independently from modern linguistics. Many new books emerged, such as Lǚ Shūxiāng and Zhū Déxǐ’s *Lectures on grammar and rhetoric*, Zhāng Gōng’s *Modern Chinese rhetoric*, Zhāng Zhìgōng’s *The outline of rhetoric*, and Ní Bǎoyuán’s *Rhetoric*. These studies mainly focused on rhetorical means such as sounds, vocabulary, and grammar, as well as figures of speech, paragraphs, chapters, and style. From the 1980s, the research objects, scope, fields, and tasks of rhetoric changed greatly. Many new books have been published, such as Wáng Déchūn and Chén Chén’s *Modern rhetoric*, Zhèng Yuǎnhàn’s *Speech stylistics*, Lí Yùnhàn’s *Stylistics of Chinese language*, Wáng Xǐjié’s *General rhetoric*, Liú Huànhuī’s *Compendium of rhetoric*, Zhāng Liànqiáng’s *Studies on the theoretical basis of rhetoric*, and Chén Rùdōng’s *Introduction to socio-psychological rhetoric, Cognitive rhetoric, and Contemporary rhetoric of Chinese*. In addition, studies on the history of rhetoric phenomena and rhetoric discipline have made great achievements, such as Zhèng Zìyú’s *Rhetoric history of China*, Zhōu Zhènǔ’s *Rhetoric history of China, General history of Chinese rhetoric*, chief-edited by Zhèng Zìyú and Zōng Tíngǔ, and *Rhetoric phenomena history of China*.

Modern Chinese rhetoric has made great progress. First, understanding of the nature of rhetoric has deepened. The meaning of “rhetoric” has changed gradually from “polishing” and “decorating” to “a purposive, effective and contextual speech communicative act or symbolic act” (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion; Rhetorical Studies). Second, the objects and scope of Chinese rhetoric have been extended from rhetorical skills to context, schema of rhetorical communication, laws of rhetorical communication, and discourse comprehension (→ Discourse; Discourse Comprehension). Third, new



research methods have been used, such as socio-psychological and cognitive approaches (→ Cognition; Information Processing; Persuasion). Fourth, new rhetorical laws and principles have been revealed, such as “rhetoric fits context, speech purposes, and socio-psychological elements.” In a word, Chinese rhetoric has made great achievements from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day.

## RHETORIC IN JAPAN

Rhetoric in East Asia also includes Japanese and Korean rhetoric (→ Rhetoric in East Asia: Korea). Some people believe that *Wénjīng Mifǔ* was the origin of Japanese rhetoric, but others consider that Japanese rhetoric began from the Meiji era. Meiji rhetoric included five different forms: “rhetoric,” “article studies,” “Bijigaku” (a free translation of “rhetoric” in Japanese), “Bunshougaku” (eloquence), and “Shujigaku” (the pronunciation of “rhetoric” in Japanese). Modern Japanese rhetoric focuses on methods of writing or composition, especially methods of writing poems (→ Rhetoric and Poetics). Its main content is connotation, structure, form, style of articles, figure of speech, and rhetorical means. The rhetorical studies in Meiji and Taisho can be divided into four types. The first is studies of “Bijigaku,” such as Sanae Pakada’s *Bijigaku*, Shoyo Tsubouchi’s *Bijigaku*, and Hougetu Shimamura’s *New Bijigaku*. The second is “rhetoric” studies, such as Shoyo Tsubouchi’s *Rhetoric*, Chikarashu Igarashi’s *General rhetoric: Composition and application*, Tateki Owada’s *Rhetoric*, Hagoromo Takeshima’s *Rhetoric*, Seiichi Sasaki’s *Rhetorical methods*, Motohiko Hattori’s *Rhetoric*, and Yoshiharu Watanabe’s *Outline of modern rhetoric*. The third is article or composition studies, such as Chikarashu Igarashi’s *New talks on articles* and Totsudo Kato’s *Applied rhetoric: Speech and article*. The last one is eloquence or persuasion studies, such as Dai Kuroiwa’s *Eloquent rhetoric* and Ryutaro Nagai’s *Lectures on elocution*. Modern Japanese rhetoric was influenced by western rhetoric theories from its beginning. Some other western rhetoric books also had a strong influence on Japanese rhetoric, such as Campbell’s *Philosophy of rhetoric*, Blair’s *Lectures on rhetoric*, and Whately’s *Elements of rhetoric*. In addition, modern Japanese rhetoricians absorbed perspectives from ancient rhetorical thought such as Cáo Pǐ’s *Diǎnlùn*, Líu xié’s *Wénxīn Diānlóng*, and Chén Kǔ’s *Wén Zé*.

Japanese rhetoric has developed continuously since the 1930s. Its research fields expanded from forms, structures of articles, writing methods, figure of speech, and style to the cognitive, epistemic, and psychological basis of rhetoric, metaphor, etc., such as Shigehiko Toyama’s *Japanese rhetoric*, Akira Nakamura’s *Japanese rhetoric*, Ken’ichi Seto’s *Epistemic rhetoric*, Tateki Sugeno’s *New rhetoric*, and Kanji Hatano’s *Modern rhetoric* (→ Rhetoric and Epistemology; Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). In addition, studies on the history of Japanese rhetoric made progress, such as Hiroshi Hayami’s *Neoteric Japanese rhetoric* and *The history of Rhetoric: Neoteric Japan*, Shiro Hara’s *Studies on the history of Japanese rhetoric*, and Shuntaro Arisawa’s *Studies on the evolvement process of Japanese rhetoric in the early and mid Meiji eras*.

Modern Japanese rhetoric flourished in the period from the 1860s to the 1920s while western rhetoric declined. It was more than half a century earlier than the renaissance of western rhetoric. Political reforms in the Meiji era provided a social basis for the rise of modern Japanese rhetoric.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Information Processing ▶ Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric in East Asia: Korea ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## **Rhetoric in East Asia: Korea**

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The history of Korean rhetoric is the history of translation of and communication with its neighboring foreign cultures. From its early period of the Three Kingdoms to the later Yi dynasty, Korea sought its own ways of expression under the influence of Chinese culture. More recently, from the beginning of the twentieth century to its independence from Japanese colonial rule in 1945, the influence of Japanese culture was predominant (→ Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan). Since then, Korea has been strongly affected culturally by America (→ Rhetoric in North America: United States).

Before its annexation to Japan in 1910, Korea had maintained a mimetic rivalry with China, especially in terms of *Confucianism*. In traditional Confucian culture, words and expressions are undervalued as mere vehicles for conveying Tao and thoughts. This tendency was enhanced by the introduction of Buddhism and the natural philosophy of Laotzu and Chungtzu, both of which placed emphasis on spiritual identification apart from verbal and literary communication. However, this spiritual and occult tradition was challenged by new ideas: a modern educational system from Japan and democracy from America. While Confucianism is conservative in expression of private emotions and loyal to the established social hierarchy, development of democratic government in Korea went in tandem with the spread of public opinions and public speaking. Rhetoric plays a crucial role in Korea's modernization and development, both politically and economically.

In the Three Kingdoms of Koguryo, Paekche, and Silla, only the ruling classes were literate enough to understand and communicate in Chinese characters, and literacy was equated with political power. However, even in this period, Korean efforts to express their own native thinking found a solution in the inventions of *idu*, *hyangchal*, and *kygyol*,

variations of the Chinese language in its syntax and pronunciation. In the later twelfth century, Lee Kyubo (1168–1241) in his essay “A brief commentary on the subtle will in poetry” argues that the subject and content of a poem come before word arrangements. Here he repeats the Confucian doctrine that speech and writing are vehicles to deliver authentic will and virtues of a person. A good style is one that performs this function well. Hence, the study of style in Korean rhetoric is not the end in itself, but the means to manifest the personality of the writer or speaker. The relationship between the will and its expression is also found in the controversy of *li* (the general principle or reason) and *qi* (energy or individuation) among Yi Hwang (1501–1570) and Yi I (1536–1584) and their disciples in the Yi dynasty. *Li* is the equivalent to the invention of a topic; *qi* the arrangement and eloquence of words (→ Invention and Rhetoric; Style and Rhetoric).

While the study of Korean rhetoric and communication foregrounds the literary content, the *proper study of style* is not disregarded. Pak Chiwon (1737–1805) in his introduction to Lee Jaesung’s *Sodanjukchi* (“A writer is like a general of soldiers”) argues for the importance of style, as Cicero likens the arrangement of words to military strategy. According to Pak, words are like soldiers, the content a general, and historical examples and anecdotes the moats and bulwarks of a castle. Metaphors are similar to the task forces. However, the most important thing is variation of style depending on the given situation. Here Pak emphasizes the efficiency of *sirhak* (practical learning), ignoring the philosophical debate of *li/qi*.

The invention of *Hangul*, the Korean alphabet, in 1443 is the landmark event for self-expression by Koreans. While communication in the Chinese characters was mainly confined to the literati and the yangban (gentlemen) class, hangul made it possible for women and lower people to find ways of self-expression. But the official language of the government was still Chinese, and the practice of direct petition from the people to the king or queen supported the use of the Chinese language, together with the Korean traditional examination for recruiting bureaucrats, which was based on the Chinese classics.

However, hangul became a dominant language, especially with the introduction of Christianity and the translation of the Bible into Korean by early Christian missionaries. The complete Korean Bible was published in 1938. With the introduction and spread of Christianity and the establishment of modernized advanced schools, western rhetoric and pulpit oratory were also introduced into Korean culture. They helped the development of identification of colloquial and literary styles. This development also expedited the increase of literacy. These changes in the ways of expression were accompanied by a desire for democratic society. The publication of the *Independence Newspaper* and “new novels” dealing with love affairs and self-awakening were offshoots of this desire.

The study of rhetoric in Korea before the enlightenment period was mainly focused on the importance of will and content of speech and writing, whereas style and modes of expression were under close attention from the end of the enlightenment throughout the whole of the twentieth century. This study of style is closely related to the scholarship of Japanese rhetoric, which was mainly concerned with stylistics of belles-lettres. The first Korean textbook of rhetoric, *Practically applied composition* (1909) by Choe Jaihak, devotes most of its pages to stylistics and metaphors, with rare attention to invention and arrangement. At the top of the stylistic study in Korea stands Yi Taejun’s *Lectures on composition*, which is still published in Korea. Yi’s book suggests some examples of

composition and then analyzes them in terms of style and diction. Both of these textbooks were written under the strong influence of Japanese rhetorical books.

The independence of Korea from Japan in 1945 opened the floodgates for free speech and self-expression. This time the influence of British and American rhetoric was apparent. Following I. A. Richards, Kim Kirim's *New lectures on composition* focused on remedies for misunderstanding in communication. The need for a remedial rhetoric was evoked by the birth pangs of a new nation, torn asunder by the ideological struggles of communism and democracy. Still, a "reduction" of rhetoric to eloquence and style was perpetuated in the teaching of composition at college and university level.

In the 1990s, Korea experienced a restoration of rhetoric, including invention and logic. This tendency is reinforced by the new university entrance examination, which demands critical inquiry and writing. The introduction of a new law school system is expected to invite further studies of reasoning and logical proof. And feminism is breaking the wall that confined rhetoric to men.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Invention and Rhetoric ▶ Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan  
▶ Rhetoric and Logic ▶ Rhetoric in North America: United States ▶ Rhetoric, Roman  
▶ Rhetoric in South Asia ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## **Rhetoric in Eastern Europe**

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Throughout central and eastern Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria), classical rhetorical studies pertain to a longstanding tradition of research on antiquity, while contemporary rhetoric scholarship focuses on democratic → discourse and the political context in postcommunist times. A major challenge throughout the area is the diffused location of both classical and contemporary (postcommunist) rhetorical research. National academies of sciences along with classical philosophy and philology university programs host most classical and medieval rhetoric research. Scholarship on contemporary rhetorical discourse and political rhetoric can be located under postcommunist studies and philology. Since the fall of communism (1989), rhetorical practices of debate and democratic discourse are also part of postcommunist studies. Rhetoric as a general subject matter is embedded in humanities under programs such as classical studies, philology, linguistics, history, history of literature, ancient

history, and classical philosophy. International democratic organizations sponsor new alliances with local, national, or international scope that acknowledge the role of debate and rhetoric for civic engagement, political awareness, and social change.

Important challenges for the study of rhetoric (both classical and contemporary) are shared throughout central and eastern Europe, such as (1) the scarcity of higher education or high school programs that incorporate rhetorical studies (Slovenia, Poland); (2) the diffused location of rhetorical scholarship within national research institutions inherited from the communist past (applicable to all central and eastern European countries listed); (3) problematic access to bibliographical resources or scholarship due to lack of translated materials; (4) terminology inherited from communist times; and (5) difficult international access to information or location of scholarship associated with the history of rhetoric in some countries, due to communist past and regulations (→ Rhetoric and History; Rhetorical Studies). Almost absent as scholarship in the region are deliberative rhetoric and communist rhetoric.

### **CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL RHETORIC IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

Most higher education programs in classical studies include classical rhetoric as textual/literary studies within the Greek and Latin programs specific to each university (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman). Natunewicz provides detailed information on the large number of classical scholarship programs for each country of the region in the listings part of the Central and Eastern European Classical Scholarship (CEECS) network ([www.ceecs.net](http://www.ceecs.net)).

The three main programs that locate “rhetoric” as a subject matter for study and scholarship are Slovenia (University of Primorska, University of Nova Gorica), Poland (Center for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe [OBTA]), and Bulgaria (Department of Rhetoric, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Sofia). Based on the profiles of the programs listed above, rhetorical studies signifies rhetoric and pragmatics (Slovenia), classical and medieval rhetoric (Poland), and philosophical or political rhetoric (Bulgaria). The University of Sofia, Bulgaria, lists its Department of Rhetoric as part of the Faculty of Philosophy. The umbrella term “rhetoric” does not explicate methodological or theoretical approaches specific to the mission of the Department. “Faculty” translates for American academic structures as “college” or “school.” The Bulgarian example is indicative of the general tendency to utilize such terminology describing academic structures of higher education in the area.

Most national universities in the Czech Republic (Prague, Brno), Romania (Bucharest, Iasi, Cluj-Napoca, Timisoara), Bulgaria (Sofia), Hungary (Budapest), and Slovenia (Ljubljana) have centers or departments dedicated to classical studies, classical philosophy, and classical philology. Such centers and departments feature undergraduate and graduate programs in direct or indirect relation to rhetorical studies, as part of the higher education curricula approved at the level of the national education department or ministry. Depending on the country, the uneven presence of rhetorical research creates difficulty in locating the term and the discipline of “rhetoric” under certain disciplinary studies in multiple departments or university programs.

At the high school level, following an educational tradition of over 50 years, Latin language and literature is part of the humanities high school four-year curriculum in

most central and eastern European countries, with requirements set by each national ministry or department of education. For instance, the Romanian high school curriculum (four consecutive years) comprises ancient rhetorical texts to be studied as part of the Latin language and literature requirement. Starting in 2006, the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research introduced Latin language and literature focused on several religious texts from ancient and medieval times. Unique in the region, Slovenia recently included rhetoric as part of the secondary school curriculum (eighth and ninth grades).

### CLASSICAL AND MEDIEVAL RHETORIC RESEARCH

In all central and eastern European countries, academies of sciences validate most prestigious scholarship produced at national level. All institutes and centers under the auspices of national academies of sciences share similar formats throughout the region.

Postdoctoral and highly specialized research is organized under different names (institutes, sections, or committees), inheriting the communist format for specialized scholarship. Each national academy of sciences has its own publishing house, thus endorsing the highest levels of research. Accordingly, under the seal of each academy of sciences, numerous publications (in different formats) feature specialized research. Due to coexisting structures from the communist past, knowing the history of publishing houses in the area becomes an imperative for international scholars. Currently, some university press publications in the area announce broader scope for publishing textbooks and graduate work.

In all academies of sciences (Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria) “rhetoric” as a discipline is part of philosophical or philological institutes, depending on the research projects accepted. While the research produced in communist times can add important explorations beneficial to international scholarship, few classical studies produced in communist times have been translated into either English or any other international language. Kumaniecki (1967), in an indicative presentation on classical philology in Poland covering 1945–1965, attests to the wealth of scholarship, while rhetoric remains mostly an embedded focus.

Access to research produced during communism remains more problematic, due to previous political regulations or for translation reasons. Depending on the country, most communist publications require extensive library investigation to find rhetorical scholarship, translations of rhetorical texts, and specific studies on the rhetorical tradition. However, a wealth of both classical and philological research materials has been produced by national academies of sciences and/or university presses in the past 50 years. It is important to note that such materials require both language fluency and understanding of the political and pedagogical past in order to make successful advances in scholarship on specific rhetorical subject matters. National library archives in different countries inherit policies and resources based on the distinct political past of each country. For instance, pre-1989, library access to Byzantine original texts in Romania was under strict censorship laws, hence there is a scarcity of rhetorical research available for continuation of scholarship.

In order to locate *classical rhetorical* scholarship produced in conjunction with national academies of sciences, Natunewicz (2000) provides a detailed description of most classical

studies programs in the region. Among them, for the *Czech Republic*, rhetorical scholarship can pertain to the Section of Humanities and Philosophy, Historical Sciences or research produced at the Institute for Classical Studies or the Institute of Philosophy. To name a few Czech Academy of Sciences publications, there are *Philological Letters*, *Eirene*, *Folia Philologica*, and *Philosophical Journal*. The *Bulgarian Academy of Sciences* lists institutes focused on studies of classical times and, by extension, on the rhetorical tradition. Among them are the Institute for Literature, the Institute for Philological Studies, and the Institute of History. The *Romanian Academy (of Sciences)* includes large research sections related to classical studies, among which are philology and literature, arts, architecture and audiovisual, historical sciences, and archaeology. The Romanian Academy publication *Classical Studies* is considered the most prestigious national publication on Greek and Roman/Latin studies, in print for the past 50 years. In addition, 40 other serial, periodical, and commemorative publications are listed under classical scholarship. The *Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN)* houses the Committee for Studies on Ancient Culture, along with numerous other committees and institutes related to classical studies. Of international note is the longstanding publication *Journal of Juristic Papyrology*. In 1994, after the fall of communism, the *Slovenian Academy of Sciences* announced its status as the national research entity aligned with the rest of the academies of sciences in the region. Rhetoric as part of classical studies can be found in projects related to philological endeavors. Part of the *Hungarian Academy of Sciences* is the Institute of Philosophy, where there is a Research Group on Communication. The University of Leipzig, once a part of the former East *German Republic*, hosts rhetorical studies focused on style and literary tradition, at the Institute of Classical Philology.

*Medieval rhetoric* can be studied within the Czech Academy of Sciences, Center for Medieval Studies; or in Poland, at OBTA, among others (→ Rhetoric, Medieval).

## CONTEMPORARY RHETORICAL STUDIES

Deeply connected to the development of postcommunist studies in the last decade of the twentieth century, scholarship focusing on rhetoric and democratic discourse has become of academic interest throughout the region. Complex theoretical approaches (rhetoric and culture, critical discourse analysis, political rhetoric, among others) create novel and exciting scholarship on the function of rhetoric in postcommunist times to create civic engagement and social change (→ Rhetoric and Politics).

Since 1989, a plethora of new academic institutions have pursued research on political, historical, philological, and philosophical studies related to communist and postcommunist societies in central and eastern Europe. Hosted by national academic centers as multi-national research projects, rhetorical scholarship brings forth political and civic discourse as part of postcommunist studies in the humanities. Of note are postcommunist academic institutions such as the New Europe College (NEC-Romania) and the Central European University (CEU-Hungary). NGOs, democratic and civil organizations, associations, and alliances at local, national, and international levels feature debate, argumentation, and rhetoric as practical venues to create civic awareness for social change throughout the area.

Extremely important for the development of rhetorical studies in postcommunist times is open access and exchange of scholarship related to classical and current rhetorical

studies. After 1990, multiple conferences and symposia have been organized to emphasize contemporary rhetoric and its impact on democracy. In the past decade, several international organizations, associations, and centers have featured rhetoric and democratic discourse as part of research programs and/or projects. Among such multinational alliances are OBTA at Warsaw University, the Center for Rhetorical Studies at the University of Cape Town, the Rhetoric Society of America, and the International Society for the History of Rhetoric. In recent times, *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* has published annually rhetorical scholarship on the region (e.g., Marin 2004, 2006; Ornatowski 2005, 2006).

Research on postcommunist discourse is also part of the International Pragmatics Association conferences, incorporating central and eastern European pragmatics and critical discourse analysis (→ Discourse Analysis; Linguistic Pragmatics). Similarly, engaging scholarship on argumentation and postcommunist rhetoric is part of international conferences and publications hosted by the International Society for the Study of Argumentation (→ Argumentative Discourse; Rhetoric, Argumentation, and Persuasion).

Since 1995, most central and eastern European countries joined with the International Debate Education Association (IDEA) to form regional and national organizations that promote democratic education through rhetorical practices of debate and argumentation.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline  
▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Rhetoric, Argumentation, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and History ▶ Rhetoric, Medieval  
▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetorical Studies

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# Rhetoric, Epideictic

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The term “epideictic” derives from the Greek *epideixis*, translated as “showing forth” or “display.” According to Aristotle’s classification of rhetorical genres in *The art of rhetoric*, epideictic → discourse is concerned with topics of praise and blame, deals with the present, and is addressed to an audience of spectators, rather than judges (1358a–b). Epideictic relies on verbal amplification (*auxesis*) to portray desirable qualities of the object of praise and to depict the object of blame as base and dishonorable (1368a). Although *The art of rhetoric* identifies epideictic as a distinct form or genre of rhetoric, it also notes that epideictic elements can be used in the other two main genres of oratory, when, for example, a deliberative speaker portrays a particular course of action as more attractive than others and a judicial orator’s defense employs amplification to depict the accused in a favorable way (→ Rhetoric, Greek).

Aristotle’s classification subsumed under the rubric of epideictic several existing genres, including the speech of praise (*enkômion*), the festival speech (*panêgyrikos logos*), and the Athenian funeral oration (*epitaphios logos*). Aristotle also “disciplined” these genres by collapsing their distinct ideological functions into a neutral category of praise and blame and by turning the → audience into detached observers of the orator’s skill (Schiappa 1999, 185–206). In practice, however, each of these genres exceeded the mold into which Aristotle tried to place it: *enkômion* possessed a significant moral and didactic dimension (Poulakos 1987), *panêgyrikos* was often used politically to exhort an audience to follow a course of action (Haskins 2005), and *epitaphios logos* played a major role in constituting Athenian democratic ideology (Loraux 1986).

Aristotle’s interpretation of epideictic as display and amplification was tied to his notion of rhetoric as a “useful” art subordinated to substantive knowledge of politics and ethics (*Rhetoric* 1355a, 1356a; → Rhetoric and Ethics; Rhetoric and Politics). An alternative approach to eloquence was championed by Aristotle’s older contemporary Isocrates (436–338 BCE), an Athenian educator whose school was a major rival of Plato’s Academy. Isocrates posited discourse as an artificer of culture and politics rather than a mere appendage to it (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). According to this view, epideictic “appears as that which shapes and cultivates the basic codes of value and belief by which a society or culture lives; it shapes ideologies and imageries with which, and by which, the individual members of a community identify themselves; and, perhaps most significantly, it shapes the fundamental grounds, the ‘deep’ commitments and presuppositions, that will underlie and ultimately determine decision and debate in particular pragmatic forums” (Walker 2000, 9).

The purview and cultural importance of epideictic expanded during those historical periods when oratory of the type practiced in public arenas of democratic Athens and republican Rome was eclipsed by less explicitly pragmatic types of eloquence. Epideictic discourses occupied a broad range between the extremes of the Isocratean idea of *logos politikos*, “characterized by elevation of subject matter and a certain practical application

usually arising from admixture of the deliberative element,” and declamatory exercises that treated paradoxical themes (Burgess 1902, 96).

Epideictic rhetoric continued in prominence from late antiquity into the Renaissance (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance; Rhetoric, Medieval; Rhetoric, Roman; Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic). Its influence on the discursive output of both secular and religious nature owes to its preoccupation with ethical choice and its artful modeling of virtues. The moralizing aspect of epideictic infiltrated many genres, cutting across presumed distinctions between rhetoric and literature, prose and poetry, the private and the public. Its pragmatic-pedagogic aspect cannot be dismissed either, for epideictic declamation formed a cornerstone of humanistic education from Hellenistic times to the nineteenth century, training students in the art of seeing both sides of the same subject (Vickers 1983).

In the twentieth century, several theorists contributed to the perceived primacy of epideictic rhetoric. Richard Weaver argued that all language is “sermonic” insofar as its function of naming is never neutral but shot through with intention and attitude. Chaim Perelman’s theorizing of “presence” highlighted display as a key rhetorical strategy in bringing certain elements to “the foreground of the hearer’s consciousness” (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969, 142). Kenneth Burke’s notion of “terministic screens” similarly insisted that every terminology selects and amplifies some aspects of reality and thereby obscures other aspects (1966). Burke’s characterization of rhetoric as a form of communal identification (rather than mere → persuasion) suggested that discourse not only frames reality but also creates grounds for both social → identification and division (1969; → Rhetorics: New Rhetorics).

Together, these insights influenced scholarly inquiry into rhetorical dimensions of a wide spectrum of symbolic action, both verbal and nonverbal (→ Rhetoric, Nonverbal). No longer viewed as a mere supplement to substantive argumentation, “display” is now accorded serious scholarly attention. Contemporary rhetorical studies of display encompass both traditional ceremonial genres of public address as well as a host of primarily visual and spatial forms, from museums and memorials to film and television (→ Rhetoric and Visuality).

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Discourse ► Identification ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Ethics ► Rhetoric, European Renaissance ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric, Nonverbal ► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetoric and Politics ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic ► Rhetorical Studies ► Rhetoric and Visuality ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics

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## Rhetoric and Epistemology

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In 1967 the assertion that rhetoric is epistemic attracted immediate attention from rhetorical scholars. The assertion was taken to imply that rhetoric generated a sort of knowledge. The purpose of the claim was to establish a fresh justification for the study and practice of rhetoric. In short, it was an answer to a line of reason beginning with Plato, who argued that rhetoric was a form of deception, practiced only under questionable circumstances by suspect persons.

The dominant response to the strong tendency to view rhetoric with suspicion was to present the art of → persuasion as vital in making the truth effective. The problem with that position, adherents of the claim that rhetoric is epistemic argued, is that it implies that rhetoric is only necessary under questionable conditions. If truth can be known, but cannot be explained sufficiently by those who know it to gain the assent of others whose assent is somehow necessary, then a sort of lie must be told to the latter by the former. Put differently, those not able to grasp truth must be deceived into thinking that they do. That implies that those who know truth are not in a position simply to demand adherence and perhaps ought to be. Therefore, rhetoric, if justified as making the truth effective, is anti-democratic.

Epistemology, taken as the theory of knowledge, seemed to a number of scholars to be a better platform on which to justify rhetoric; that is, the practice of rhetoric was a way to create a sort of knowledge (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy). The term “epistemology” arose in the sixteenth century. Before then, thinkers simply seemed to assume that we knew what we knew; in short, knowing was not problematic. Philosophers began to take knowing as posing a question: how can we know? Answers to the question varied, but the discussions helped fix “an age of reason.” Descartes is often cited as a helpful time-marker in the beginning of the discussion.

Juxtaposing “epistemology” with “rhetoric” as a fresh beginning in justifying rhetoric anew immediately became controversial. In part the controversies arose from the term

“knowledge.” The question “how can we know?” was treated as if it were “how can we be certain?” Descartes argued for an indisputable starting place for thought. With that foundation, reason must be followed. That entailed setting aside emotion. Emotional responses were, in this realm, improper guides. (Some advocates of the linking of rhetoric and epistemology would argue that this move was the same as setting aside commitment.)

Since rhetoric has always been associated with arguing for probabilities not certainties, the historical thrust of the quest of epistemology is contrary to the claim that rhetoric is epistemic. Quite frequently, however, writers about epistemology have tended to interchange “knowing” and “understanding” in their discussions. For the most part the proponents of rhetoric as epistemic have taken “understanding” as a qualified claim to knowledge rather than taking “knowing” as synonymous with “certainty.” These would argue that twentieth century science worked toward probabilities, which can be verified by traditional methods provisionally but are ever open to further research and reinterpretations.

Many rhetoricians hold that science and rhetoric interact in that the gradual establishment of traditions of scientific research has been a result of a constant conversation that is essentially rhetorical, and that the entire enterprise has resulted in an ethical code that scientists must observe in order to assure the integrity of the pursuit of truth, as provisional as that term may be.

In the final section of *The uses of argument*, a book that influenced many rhetorical scholars in the latter twentieth century, Stephen Toulmin writes, “The status of argument has always been somewhat ambiguous.” The essential question of “how we think” seems to be a psychological one. “Considered as psychology, the subject is concerned with intellectual, or ‘cognitive’ processes” (1958, 211, 212).

The claim discussed here may be even more important in the twenty-first century, in which, thus far, cognitive science has flourished. Antonio Damasio firmly sets aside the mind/body problem, arguing in *Descartes’ error* (1994) that the question of how we think is material and that we now have the techniques to reveal the activity of the brain. Moreover, we must take the brain as part of the entire nervous system. Damasio argues further that emotion cannot be dismissed as disruptive to reason. Thus commitment is relevant to human action. In a later book, *Looking for Spinoza* (2003), he makes a highly provisional attempt to trace human values as seated in adaptive evolution of brains.

Rhetorical theorists must attend carefully to such developments. Cognitive scientist Walter Freeman has argued that it is not sufficient to study the activity of isolated brains, and that the overriding questions of cognition are how brains interact (1995, 2000); he explicitly says that cognitive scientists must address the phenomenon of communication. These sorts of studies will pose a number of obstacles and challenges for all rhetoricians and surely impact heavily on the claim that rhetoric is epistemic.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Theory and Philosophy ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric of Science

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## Rhetoric and Ethics

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The field of communication has historical roots in the interplay of human speech and ethics (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). Our journals record scholarly investigation of communication ethics beginning in 1934 with Pellegrini's *Quarterly Journal of Speech* essay, "Public speaking and social obligations." The founding scholarly work on speech and ethics is Aristotle's *Nichomachean ethics*. Aristotle's public descriptive account of Homer's narrative responsiveness to Athenian virtues in action establishes the enduring heart of communication ethics – *responsiveness*, commencing with responsiveness to the Athenian polis.

Responsiveness is part of a long heritage begun with *phronesis*, practical wisdom attentive to the interplay of the demands of the situation and a given virtue of the polis, whose application falls to the side of neither excess nor deficiency. Centuries later, this sense of responsiveness continues to propel the communication field's commitment to democracy and the fight against → propaganda spurred by World War II (Wallace 1955). Today, this responsive tradition continues with Michael Hyde's call for communication ethics' response to the emerging era of "post-human" genetic alteration. The communication field's responsiveness to → audience and context acts as a line of demarcation between the rhetoric of communication ethics and the philosophical study of ethics (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy).

### FROM VIRTUE ETHICS TO TAINTED GROUND

Contemporary communication ethics theory begins with Aristotle's introduction of responsiveness and "virtue ethics." Variations on virtue ethics exist in differing historical eras, each with a different locus that frames the standard for virtue: (1) the classical world

– virtues and the polis; (2) the medieval world – virtues and the church; (3) the enlightenment – virtues and rationality; and (4) modernity – virtues and the individual. Virtue ethics now competes with other communication ethics theories that refute *one* view of virtues, rejecting the universal claim of “truth,” considering bias inevitable, and working hand-in-hand with a postmodern context of narrative and virtue contention (→ Rhetoric and Narrativity; Rhetoric, Postmodern).

Communication ethics in a postmodern context recognizes that differing communication ethics live on biased ground where the rhetoric of competing “goods” shapes our discourse. Bias is unavoidable, as detailed by Hans Georg Gadamer (1986, 238–239). His understanding of philosophical → hermeneutics assumes the ontological reality of bias; recognition of situated, tainted ground links communication ethics to learning about and discovery of different “goods” protected and promoted by those dissimilar to us. *Alterity* is key to Emmanuel Levinas’s understanding of ethics as first principle; the initial communicative gesture is recognition of radical alterity, an otherness different from “my kind” or “me.” Tainted/biased ground and engagement with alterity/difference requires rhetorical engagement of a communication ethic or “bearing witness,” as Amit Pinchevski (2005) suggests.

Tainted ground is the home of radical otherness, represented in a philosophical turn of consequence in the work of Heidegger and Nietzsche; they mark a “disputed” end to the reign of “virtue ethics”; virtue ethics continues without uniform acceptance as we move into an era marked by a “hermeneutic of suspicion.” Deconstructive and existential approaches open conversation to theories that openly claim tainted ground in work interestingly akin to that of early sophists, who argued that virtues are polis-dependent (→ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic). Virtue ethics understood as nurtured by biased ground, whether of a given polis, church, “universal” principle, or individual, rests upon the socially constructed approval of Sandra Harding’s (1991) metaphor of *standpoint theory* (→ Rhetoric and Gender; Rhetoric and Race). Standpoint, the admission of tainted ground, rejects conventional thinking, countering individualism, a term coined by Alexis de Tocqueville (2002) in *Democracy in America*. Individualism advocates that one can stand above history, securing a vision of “truth” imposed upon another with universal assurance.

Individualism, according to Tocqueville (2002), is not selfishness, which can unite collective self-interest. Selfishness works with a knowledge of taintedness that individualism rejects. Selfishness permits Franklin to warn us that we must all hang together or hang separately. Individualism proclaims and tells, based upon an assumptive arrogance of untainted perception, missing the pragmatic need for association and the admission of bias.

Concepts such as standpoint, ground, embeddedness, situatedness, social–cultural limits, and the unavoidable bias of tradition place human feet on provincial soil that generates difference. Communication ethics as cosmopolitanism in the twenty-first century must attend to the local and engage learning as the bridge to the other, disclaiming the assumption that we can stand above our own historicity. Communication ethics as responsiveness in this historical moment rests on tainted, biased ground, whether that of speaker, audience, context, and/or content, moving rhetoric to the forefront – a persuasive task responsive to audience and context that provides a public map of the “why” and “how” of a given communication ethics position. Communication ethics, thus, takes a

pragmatic rhetorical turn, pivoting on tainted ground, forming a public map of the “for,” the “by,” and the “about” of communication ethics. Calvin Schrag’s (1986) articulation of communication praxis, called in this essay a rhetoric of prepositions (“for,” “by,” and “about”), frames communication ethics in the interplay of biased/tainted ground and the historical moment, attentive to a rhetorical turn responsive to otherness, context, communicators, and message.

### COMMUNICATION ETHICS PRAXIS

Calvin Schrag (1986) defines rhetoric of prepositions, “by,” “about,” and “for,” offering basic coordinates for a rhetoric of public accounting. The key to the use of Schrag’s rhetoric of prepositions is that it offers a public accounting of a given communication ethics situated upon tainted/biased ground. Communication ethics praxis unites communication ethics vocabulary with Schrag’s communicative praxis, a rhetoric of prepositions: (1) responsiveness – “for”; (2) the human face – “by”; and (3) the good – “about.”

*Responsiveness:* “For” assumes that communication ethics engages and influences others. Aristotle’s connection of speech and ethics responded to the virtues of the polis, with further responsiveness required by *phronesis*, practical wisdom responsive to unique circumstances/context and ever attentive to dialectical danger of excessive response or deficiency. Aristotle framed “the golden mean” as a moving ethical aim responsive to both excess and deficiency. The golden mean responds to known public virtues and is responsive to the polis and to the “proper” proportion of response. Aristotle’s ethics moved *phronesis* or responsiveness to a recognition of the “proper” sense of “taste” (Gadamer 1986), suspicious of communicative actions of gluttony and/or deprivation.

The communication ethics assumption today is that wariness of communicative acts of excess and deficiency recognizes multiplicity and the rhetorical contention of competing goods. Tainted ground moves us from the “taste” of communication ethics to recognition of “tastes.” Communication ethics in a postmodern context meets the historical moment without confidence in universal truth that assures the one “right” response – the “for” of responsiveness lives in the mud of everyday life (Buber 1955), not pristine clarity. This lack of clarity moves from theory and proclamation alone to Levinas’s connection of ethics as first principle as responsiveness to the human face.

*The human face:* “By” lives through authors who continue to make a case for communication textured by its ethical implications. Major review essays by Chesebro (1969), Arnett (1987), Johannesen (2001), and Arnett et al. (2006) and journal scholarship continues through human faces situating communication ethics in the forefront. The study and practice of communication ethics rests on biased ground, engaged by a human face embedded in unique historical situations and responsive to others.

The contemporary marker for the study of communication ethics in the US is the theme bestowed upon the annual conference of the Speech Communication Association (now the National Communication Association) in 1983 by vice president Kenneth Anderson. Anderson’s proclamation energized James Jaksas’s spearheading of a national commission (1984) and later a National Communication Association Division entitled Communication Ethics. Jaksas and Michael Pritchard began the communication ethics summer conference at Northern Michigan University/Gull Lake (1990) with the summer

conference moving to Duquesne University (2004). The conferences gave birth to numerous articles, including five edited book projects: (1) Jaksa & Pritchard's (1994) *Communication ethics: Methods of analysis*; (2) Makau and Arnett's (1997) *Communication ethics in an age of diversity*; (3) Bracci & Christians's (2002) *Moral engagement in public life*; and (4) Pat Arneson's (2007) *Exploring communication ethics*. Finally, two of the major Carroll Arnold addresses on communication ethics were delivered at the National Communication Conference by Kenneth Anderson (2003) and Michael Hyde in 2007. Their addresses and ongoing scholarship announce the enduring importance of communication ethics.

*The good:* The “about” of communication ethics, the protection and promotion of a given understanding of the “right” communication act, begins with knowledge of tainted/biased ground. We live in the rhetorical encounter of multiple communication ethics, each protecting and promoting a given good. Recognition of multiplicity necessitates one basic assumption – there is no one agreed-upon entity entitled “the communication ethic.” There are multiple communication ethics, each providing rhetorical protection and promoting a given sense of the good. In the field of communication, six major approaches to communication ethics have dominated the scholarship: democratic; universal/humanitarian; codes, procedures, and standards; contextual; narrative; dialogic. Each one protects and promotes a particular good (Arnett et al. 2006).

The “about” of communication ethics in this historical moment assumes that we live and communicate in an era of multiple rhetorical and ethical coordinates: (1) contending understandings of the good; (2) contrasting goods that display themselves in communicative action; and (3) tainted/biased narrative ground(s) upon which communicators, context, and message rest. It is the rhetorical contending of goods and the pragmatic necessity of learning about different goods that shape postmodern engagement with communication ethics (Arnett et al., in press).

The problems that shake local and global communities often rest with contrary commitments to the good, played out in communicative behavior. Differing interest groups work at protecting and promoting different understandings of the good. In an age of diversity and contentiousness “about” what goods should claim our loyalty for protection and promotion, communication ethics begins with learning and asks, “What does the Other seek to protect and promote as a given good?” Additionally, communication ethics in this era abides within an existential reminder, “What one considers a communication ethic will not necessarily meet with the approval of another.” The rhetoric of communication ethics in an era of narrative and virtue contention seeks to understand what good is protected and promoted by a given communication ethic.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Hermeneutics  
▶ Propaganda ▶ Rhetoric and Gender ▶ Rhetoric and Narrativity ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy  
▶ Rhetoric, Postmodern ▶ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ▶ Rhetoric and Race

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## Rhetoric and Ethnography

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“Rhetoric” and “ethnography” are slippery concepts, each describing a practice or methodology as well as a class of textual objects. And while “rhetoric” describes an identifiable field of study more than does “ethnography,” which is most often associated with cultural anthropology, each is an inter- and cross-disciplinary enterprise whose character can vary depending on its disciplinary home. Both rhetoric and ethnography – in their multiple meanings – have been individually challenged by postmodernism (→ Postmodernism and Communication), particularly by the loss of faith in grand, totalizing theories and the assumption that language plays a role in the construction of reality. But these challenges have also brought theorists and practitioners of rhetoric and ethnography

together to explore how postmodern understandings of each concept can inform the other (→ *Ethnography of Communication*).

Postmodernism's crisis of representation prompted what has come to be known as the "rhetorical turn" in the humanities and social sciences. Some scholars in disciplines such as history, economics, and anthropology recognized that their knowledge-making practices were thoroughly rhetorical – emerging through argument and contestation and inevitably expressed from some point of view. In cultural anthropology, one outcome of the rhetorical turn has been a reflection on ethnography (literally, "writing culture") as both fieldwork practice and written account. The practices of participant observation (→ *Observation*) and interviewing (→ *Interview, Qualitative*), central features of ethnography, are no longer viewed as neutral activities but as interested influences on the objects of study. In addition, the written account of fieldwork (also called an "ethnography") has come to be seen as a kind of fiction, not in the sense of something necessarily untrue, but in the sense of something made (rather than simply reported) by an author (Geertz 1973).

Two publications have had enormous influence over subsequent discussions about the rhetorical nature of ethnography. The central concern of one collection of essays, informed by a postmodern sensibility, is the rhetorical construction of ethnographic authority (Clifford & Marcus 1986). The essays, by anthropologists and a comparative literary theorist, explore the ethical implications of representing cultural "Others" when these representations can never be neutral, as well as the nature of "experimental" writing (writing in forms that challenge the traditional ethnographic genre). Marcus and Fischer (1986) are more explicit about what experimental ethnographies might look like. Marcus and Fischer pay particular attention to the form of ethnography, arguing that any experimentation with form should illustrate the difficulty of representation. As a particularly successful (and early) experiment with form, they cite Bateson (1958), which examines one cultural practice of a tribe of New Guinea headhunters from multiple angles that parallel the author's own emerging understanding of the practice. Marcus and Fischer also survey how experimental ethnographers juxtapose their own voices with the voice of the "Other"; such experiments are designed not only to decenter the authority of the ethnographer but also to illustrate that cultural representations are moments of exchange between differing worldviews.

Largely excluded from these two publications, feminist anthropologists have also contributed to the discussion about the rhetorical nature of ethnography and to experimentation with the genre. In the introduction to Clifford and Marcus (1986), Clifford asserts that feminism has not contributed to ethnographic experimentation; this assertion has been challenged by articles and edited collections, among them Di Leonardo (1991) and Behar and Gordon (1995). Moreover, Mountford (1996) argues that the gender of ethnographers is rhetorical in how ethnographies are written as well as in how the researcher conducts fieldwork. Mountford points to the work of Hurston, historically overlooked in her own discipline, as an example of rhetorical experimentation that highlights gender (as well as race and class); by foregrounding herself as an insider and attending to her own subject position as a researcher, Hurston (especially 1935, 1938) complicates the relationship between observer and observed as well as author and audience.

Ethnographic theorizing within anthropology has prompted contributions by contemporary rhetorical theorists, as well as the “discovery” of canonized thinkers such as Kenneth Burke (see, e.g., Abrahams 2005). But the discipline of rhetoric has also felt the influence of a revitalized ethnography. While compositionists and communication scholars interested in empirically investigating writing and speaking practices have borrowed methods associated with ethnography – particularly participant observation and interviewing – for decades, the rhetorical turn brought newfound interest in ethnography and culture to rhetoric studies. This interest has expanded beyond theorizing about the practice of ethnography; rhetoricians have begun to describe culture itself (e.g., its institutions, objects, practices, and the like) in rhetorical terms. Two such ethnographies are Cintron (1997) and Britt (2001). Questions of the grounding of rhetoric in culture and vice versa have also been taken up more broadly by the interdisciplinary International Rhetoric Culture Project (Strecker et al. 2003).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Ethnomethodology ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Micro-ethnography ▶ Observation ▶ Postmodernism and Communication

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# Rhetoric, European Renaissance

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The goal of rhetoric during the Renaissance was the *mastery* of spoken or written language to affect a *particular* audience in an *intended* and predictable manner. *Mastery* entailed an understanding of language in its relation to human psychology, the use of formal procedures for turning theory into practice, and the education of others in both theory and practice. The focus on *particular* audiences, rather than a universal audience, recognized that listeners or readers could be differentiated and grouped according to their interests in a given topic or problem. Not every *intention* could be realized with every audience, and students were trained to judge whether it was reasonable to expect a particular audience to respond as intended to a particular use of language.

## REDISCOVERING THE ANTIQUE TRADITION

Renaissance rhetoric was marked by an enthusiastic return to the major Greek and Roman treatises, combined with efforts to adapt those treatises to the changed circumstances of the early modern period. Cicero (106–43 BCE) had been known during the medieval period for the mechanical prescriptions found in his *De inventione* and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and both treatises had been reduced to synopses and epitomes that served immediate needs. Quintilian (c. 35–c. 95 CE) had been known during the medieval period as an imitator of Cicero, based on fragmented and nearly incoherent versions of his *Institutio oratoria* (→ Rhetoric, Roman). Aristotle (384–322 BCE) had been known primarily through his logical and ethical treatises, while the names and works of many other classical writers had simply disappeared (→ Rhetoric, Greek). But in the early fifteenth century, scholars recovered complete copies of Cicero's *De oratore*, *Orator*, *Brutus*, many of his personal letters, and most of his speeches, leading to a major re-evaluation of the previously known works and showing the centrality of Roman rhetoric in producing a full civic and private life through → discourse. A complete version of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* was discovered in 1416, with its vision of an orator who embodied in himself all the education of his culture, and whose life from cradle to grave was devoted to and governed by rhetoric. As the Byzantine empire crumbled during the fifteenth century, many Greek scholars emigrated, bringing with them works of rhetoric unknown to Latin scholars in the west, along with works previously known only through incomplete or inadequate Latin translations, including Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. Copies of these works circulated throughout western Europe as quickly as they could be transcribed, with eager scholars trading fascicles among themselves as they waited for the next installments to arrive.

These and other classical works all became available as full treatises in a surprisingly short span of time and the effect was electrifying. Where rhetoric had been seen largely as a set of linguistic procedures for intelligent composition and efficient communication, it now was seen as once having been the very heart and soul of a vibrant civilization,

fostering civic life and celebrating private life. Renaissance writers, educators, and political and religious figures who wanted to reproduce that vibrancy for their own time embraced classical rhetoric as a major means toward that end. Some of the first books to come from the newly invented printing press were treatises on rhetoric, and the newly recovered classical Latin treatises were edited and published throughout Europe. The Greek treatises were edited, most were translated into Latin (often in competing versions), and some were translated into vernaculars. All of the major Greek and Latin treatises received commentaries that often were much longer than the original treatises themselves. Student textbooks and handbooks soon followed, sometimes building upon the prescriptive understandings from the medieval period, but more often ignoring the medieval works to go back directly to the newly recovered classical sources (→ Rhetoric, Medieval). In the first 250 years of print there were over 3,800 books on rhetoric, in over 12,300 printings, by more than 1,700 authors, produced by 3,300 publishers in 310 towns from Finland to Mexico.

### THE ANTIQUE TRADITION AND RENAISSANCE SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The Renaissance embrace of classical rhetoric was not without challenges, since many of the institutions of Greek or Roman civic life had little counterpart in the Renaissance, and the regional variations between southern and northern Europe were far more pronounced than those within the small city-state of Athens, or republican Rome, or even imperial Rome. Classical judicial oratory, for example, had almost no practical relation to the processes of legal adjudication in the Renaissance. Classical theory envisaged competing speakers trying to sway juries of hundreds in open gatherings, whereas Renaissance courts often had magistrates in restrictive settings. So also, the institutions that shaped classical political oratory bore no resemblance to the procedures in Renaissance monarchies and principalities, where policies were debated *in camera* and decisions rested with a single person. Commentators were puzzled by classical democracies and republics that seemed to vest political power in uneducated people, and even the small Italian states that offered scope for public oratory restricted the franchise to the elite. A different kind of challenge was presented by the fact that the Renaissance had its own communicative needs that had never been anticipated by classical rhetoric, notably in preaching and official letter writing (*ars praedicandi* and *ars dictaminis*). During the medieval period both of these genres had been addressed in rhetorical terms, and became major concerns in the Renaissance as increasing religious partisanship called for effective sermons (*ars concionandi*) and as letter writing expanded from public officialdom to a wider realm of literate private exchange (*ars epistolographia*).

Renaissance writers responded to these challenges in a variety of ways. Some sought to recast the activities of their own time in terms of classical rhetoric, as with the English definition of a letter as “nothing else but an Oration written, containing the mind of the Orator or writer” (Angel Day, *The English secretorie*, 1586), in which the understandings about a public speech intended for a large audience of strangers are extended to a private meditation intended for a single and familiar reader. Others writers sought to modernize classical rhetoric to embrace Renaissance activities, for example, by adding to the traditional three genres of judicial, political, and ceremonial rhetoric such new genres as

explanation (*genus enarrans*), instruction (*genus docens*), and commentary (*ratio commentandi*). To the extent that classical rhetoric was focused on → persuasion and effecting communal action in a civic sphere, Renaissance rhetoric represents a vast expansion to include realms of discourse well beyond persuasion, while at the same time seeking to preserve the underlying structure and understandings that made rhetoric such a force in earlier times. Both of these efforts – extension and modernization – reflected the belief that earlier authors had all been saying versions of the same thing and that their different doctrines were all consonant with one another.

## RHETORIC IN THE RENAISSANCE

George of Trebizond (1396–1486), a Greek émigré in Italy, contributed to the syncretic view with his *Rhetoricorum libri V* (1433/4, published c. 1472), which blended the Hellenistic Greek rhetorical theories of Hermogenes (second century BCE) with earlier Latin theories of Cicero, the former from George's old life in the collapsing Byzantine world, the latter from the new western world he hoped to enter. George's syncreticism was more the artifact of a Renaissance writer than of the materials themselves, and what looks like a rehearsal of doctrines from two traditions is actually the *forging of a new rhetoric for the Renaissance*, couched in the language of classical doctrine. Rudolf Agricola (c. 1443–1485) illustrates the same phenomenon in his enormously influential *De inventione dialectica* (1479, published 1515). During the medieval period scholars increasingly assigned to dialectic the argumentative procedures of rhetoric, and then subsumed dialectic into scholastic logic, so that argumentation theory became increasingly remote from the shifting contingencies of everyday life (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Agricola largely reversed this process by instead using the extraordinarily elaborated dialectical systems to produce vast numbers of inventional strategies for rhetorical argumentation (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic; Logos and Rhetoric).

Rhetoric emerged as the *central educational discipline* in the Renaissance, studied in the simplest provincial classroom and the university lecture hall. At its most basic level, it involved widely available training in practical techniques for manipulating words, while at advanced levels it was a sophisticated exploration of language and psychology. Widespread rhetorical education provided shared understandings of how individuals should communicate, since it trained students both in how to control language and in what to expect of the language of others. Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560), hailed as the Praeceptor Germaniae, reshaped classical doctrines for Renaissance purposes – and ultimately for Protestant purposes – in his widely circulated textbooks on rhetoric: *De rhetorica libri tres* (1519), *Institutiones rhetoricae* (1521), and *Elementorum rhetorices libri duo* (1529). Melanchthon's school texts were imitated and recast for local purposes throughout Europe by Protestants and Catholics alike. One notable imitation in England was Thomas Wilson's *The arte of rhetorique* (1553), but, unlike Melanchthon's texts intended for the Latin classroom, Wilson advertised that his English text was intended for local preachers, non-Latinate courtiers, and women. In France, Petrus Ramus (1515–1572) proposed a curricular approach to the teaching of dialectic and rhetoric. Those parts of argumentation evidently shared by the two disciplines he assigned to dialectic, so that instruction in rhetoric focused only on those aspects of discourse not shared with dialectic. Pedagogical

presentation was made easier by systematic reorganizations of both disciplines – by Ramus himself, starting with *La dialectique* (1555), and with his colleague Audomarus Talaeus (c. 1510–1562) in *Institutiones oratoriae* (1545). This curricular realignment had the effect in much of Europe of encouraging a split between “logic” and rhetoric, between argument and style, when in fact both Ramus and Talaeus insisted that in practice the two disciplines could only function together (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy).

Counterbalancing these uses of formal rhetoric in the classroom were two equally influential but less formal approaches. The Renaissance inherited from late antiquity a program of *exercises in composition* known as the *progymnasmata*, and published in hundreds of editions across Europe. In the form attributed to Aphthonius (fourth century CE), the series began with proverbs and legends suitable for very young boys, and ended with declamations of legal argumentation for grown men. The *progymnasmata* encouraged the invention of dialogues and adoption of unusual *personae* and unfamiliar points of view, with the goal of flexibility and comprehensiveness in speech or writing. The *educational treatises by Desiderius Erasmus* (1466/69–1536) had much the same goal, and were equally widespread and influential. The most famous of these treatises was his *De copia verborum et rerum* (1412), which began as a short exercise for two of his students and gradually grew into a huge treatise that captured the imagination of Renaissance readers. Richness of thought was Erasmus’s goal, but the path could only be through richness of language. He provided hundreds of techniques for manipulating words and phrases that would create an unending supply of new combinations of language, thus making possible new combinations of ideas and understandings, and ultimately making mankind better able to appreciate and honor the fullness of God’s creation. Most of these techniques derived from his understanding of classical rhetoric, but it put *elocutio* in the service of *inventio*; style was the path to argumentation (→ Invention and Rhetoric; Style and Rhetoric). At its best, Erasmus’s *De copia* encouraged the rhetorical ability to perceive and articulate multiple points of view, along with skepticism that any one expression or thought was adequate for the richness of creation. This multiplicity in Erasmus contrasted with the singularity needed by Ramus to systematize his curricular realignments. In subsequent centuries, and in less capable hands, this contrast played itself out as a conflict between skeptical toleration and unrelenting insistence on a single understanding.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Dialectic ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Rhetoric and Gender

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Rhetoric is the art and study of human symbol use. As a discipline, rhetoric began in ancient Greece as a practical art of persuasion, applied principally to political, legal, and judicial contexts (→ Rhetoric, Greek). Gender refers to the cultural constructs of masculinity and femininity imposed upon biological sex by any particular culture – what it means to be *masculine* or *feminine*. The relationship between rhetoric and gender has played out in four different and progressively complex perspectives in the discipline of rhetorical studies.

### GENDER AS EXCLUSION

The starting point of the relationship between rhetoric and gender was one of mutual exclusivity. Gender was not conceptualized as relevant to rhetoric. In fact, however, rhetorical action and standards of eloquence were highly gendered in that rhetoric was synonymous with and considered to be the province of men. The assertion of authority and expertise, the use of logical argument, and the deliberate manipulation of discourse to affect an audience's beliefs and actions were seen as masculine prerogatives (→ Rhetoric and Logic), unsuited to women and even impossible for them to attain given their biological nature (Campbell 1981). Furthermore, women typically were denied the education necessary to learn the art of rhetoric. At every level, then, considerable cultural complicity was required to insure that there was no place for women in rhetoric, a perspective reflected in the formal study of rhetoric. The gendered nature of rhetoric was not a subject for scholarly investigation.

Acknowledgment in the discipline of rhetoric that gender is indeed relevant to rhetoric emerged as part of an interest in gender that accompanied the rebirth of feminism in the 1960s. Betty Friedan's *The feminine mystique* (→ Feminine Mystique), written in 1963, helped launch feminist movements in the United States; in Europe, Simone de Beauvoir's *The second sex* (1953) was a primary inspiration. Feminist social movements challenged contemporary gendered practices and made issues of gender an area of scholarly inquiry across academic disciplines, including the study of rhetoric.



## GENDER AS HISTORY

Initial efforts to incorporate gender into rhetoric centered on the recovery of women speakers in history who managed to speak and write despite the cultural proscriptions against such activity. Feminist scholars in rhetoric searched for and found women in every historical time period who achieved renown because of their rhetorical success. Sappho, Aspasia, Cornelia, and Hortensia, for example, were rhetoricians with considerable social and political influence in ancient Greece and Rome. Margery Kempe wrote her autobiography in the Middle Ages, developing a distinctive narrative style, and Anne Askew wrote *Examinations* to document her religious suffering and to argue her case before being burned at the stake in 1546 (Glenn 1997). Most studies, however, focused on those women activists in nineteenth-century Europe and the United States who spoke out on behalf of abolition, temperance, and suffrage (→ Rhetoric and Social Protest). Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Angelina Grimké, Sojourner Truth, Susan B. Anthony, Emma Goldman, and Alice Paul were among those whose rhetorical activism received particular scholarly attention.

Studies of women in history focused principally on *three dimensions*: their significance historically, the obstacles they had to overcome in order to speak, and the degree to which they met traditional rhetorical standards for eloquence. Those selected for study by rhetorical scholars were those whose speeches and writings had been preserved, offering evidence of their noteworthiness and significance. For the most part, these were women speaking on behalf of social and moral causes considered the special province of women.

In addition, the study of important women speakers in history typically was accompanied by a focus on what they had to overcome to succeed rhetorically. Because speaking in public was considered in direct contradiction to the traits of femininity, engaging in rhetorical activity was thought to desex women and to diminish their purity and moral superiority (→ Femininity and Feminine Values). Rhetorical scholars typically explored and addressed the ways women speakers negotiated the obstacle of gender through their choice of arguments, dress, audience adaptation, and other accommodations (Kennedy & O'Shields 1983).

Furthermore, rhetorical scholars measured early women speakers against traditional criteria for eloquence. The discourse of women rhetors was analyzed according to the traditional schemas and expectations for rhetoric in which masculinity was the norm. If they deviated from these criteria, they were found to be at fault; yet meeting them meant they were not entirely feminine. As a result, women were found not to measure up – they were evaluated as unable to perform rhetorically as well as men. A study of Frances Wright offers an example. She was judged a failure as a speaker because, as a woman, she did not meet societal expectations of rhetors – and this in turn lowered her *ethos* (Kendall & Fisher 1974).

## GENDER AS STANDPOINT

The realization that the assessment of women rhetors was according to traditional rhetorical – i.e., masculine – standards led to efforts by feminist rhetorical scholars to understand women's rhetorical practices on their own terms. According to *standpoint*

*theory*, women as a group might be expected to favor certain rhetorical processes and practices because of certain cultural conditions and role expectations. Gender as standpoint thus recognizes the distinctive circumstances of a woman's life and the particular interpretations she gives to those circumstances. Rather than assess and evaluate a woman's rhetorical choices according to traditional rhetorical criteria, the particular goals, meanings, and strategies of woman as rhetor began to be considered.

Standpoint theory literally originated in the recognition that the female body will produce a different kind of knowing or ways of making sense of experience. Two French feminists – Hélène Cixous (1976) and Julia Kristeva (1979) – were instrumental in the development of standpoint theory. Cixous coined the phrase *writing the body* to suggest a reconceptualization of women from inferior to powerful, with a linguistic system grounded in an understanding of women's muted subjectivities. Kristeva posited that women have a particular relationship to and conception of time that affects their perspective on and approach to the world. In the United States, Patricia Hill Collins (1990) and Sandra Harding (1991) developed standpoint theory, and Julia Wood (1992) has articulated contemporary meanings of standpoint theory as it relates specifically to the discipline of communication.

When standpoint is the starting point for rhetoric, what counts as significant communication, who is allowed to speak and in what circumstances, and the desired goals and outcomes for a rhetorical transaction are reassessed. For many women, for instance, important communication occurs in the private rather than the public realm, and strategies are directed less at persuading and changing others and more at achieving understanding and community (→ Women's Communication and Language). Furthermore, women need not be important in history for their communication to be considered important, and rhetorical scholars began to examine women's communication across contexts from the private to the public.

Of particular importance has been the enumeration of various *women's rhetorical systems*, some of which contain more expanded options for rhetors than those offered by traditional rhetorical theories. These include Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's discussion of contemporary feminism as oxymoron (1973), Sally Miller Gearhart's articulation of the womanization of rhetoric (1979), and Cheris Kramer's exposition of different linguistic systems for women and men (1974). Karen Foss et al. (1999) summarize the rhetorics of nine contemporary feminist activists and describe rhetorical options such as enactment, violation of expectations, and honoring of multiplicity – strategies not part of the traditional rhetorical canon.

The recognition of multiple identities as standpoint for any rhetorical system was important for initiating a consideration of all kinds of standpoint factors, in addition to gender, that might distinguish the rhetorics of non-dominant group members. Standpoint epistemology opened the way for rhetorical scholars to take into account and begin to examine the rhetorical practices of all kinds of marginalized rhetors (→ Rhetoric and Class; Rhetoric and Race). The result was an increasingly broad understanding of rhetoric. No longer a monolithic ideal from classical Greece, rhetoric is now conceptualized in the plural. A multiplicity of rhetorics exists, many of which simply have not yet been acknowledged or fully explored because they do not meet the traditional expectations and conventions of a rhetorical system.

## GENDER AS TRANSFORMATIVE

The acceptance of gender as standpoint – as a variable that cannot help but affect rhetorical sensibilities – led to a debate about the *capacity of gender to transform rhetorical theory* itself. At one end of the debate are those scholars who suggest that rhetoric needs to take gender into account, but that such accounting will not substantially alter what rhetoric is. Celeste Condit, a prime advocate of this position, suggests that diverse genderings should be incorporated into rhetoric, but her version of rhetoric remains synonymous with traditional eloquence (1997). At the other end of the continuum are those scholars, including Sonja Foss, Cindy Griffin, and Karen Foss (1997), who believe that the goal of feminist perspectives generally is to disrupt the ideology of domination wherever it occurs and to facilitate the transformation of knowledge and practices that limit the possibilities of human social life. The incorporation of gender into rhetoric is seen as an intervention that can assist in a reconceptualization of rhetorical theory to help achieve these emancipatory outcomes.

An example of a theory designed to reconceptualize rhetoric is Sonja Foss and Cindy Griffin's *theory of invitational rhetoric* (Foss & Griffin 1995; see also Foss & Foss 2003). These scholars seek to expand rhetorical possibilities by offering a continuum of rhetorical modes ranging from conversion rhetoric to invitational rhetoric. In the process, they develop the invitational possibilities more fully than traditional rhetorical theories have done. Regardless of where scholars fall in terms of their conceptualization of the role of gender in rhetoric, gender is now a fully acknowledged dimension in rhetorical theory, with the capacity to affect if not transform the rhetorical terrain.

SEE ALSO: ▶ *Feminine Mystique* ▶ *Femininity and Feminine Values* ▶ *Rhetoric and Class* ▶ *Rhetoric, Greek* ▶ *Rhetoric and Logic* ▶ *Rhetoric in North America: United States* ▶ *Rhetoric and Race* ▶ *Rhetoric and Social Protest* ▶ *Rhetoric in Western Europe: Britain* ▶ *Rhetoric in Western Europe: France* ▶ *Women's Communication and Language*

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## Rhetoric, Greek

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The word “rhetoric” comes from the Greek *rhêtorikê*, which means “the art of speech,” “the art of speaking”: the etymology shows the role played by the ancient Greeks in the field which constitutes the subject of this article. The art of speaking exists in many civilizations, but Greek antiquity has given it a distinctive, rigorous, and rich theoretical underpinning.

The most common definition in antiquity consists of characterizing rhetoric as the “power of persuasion” or the “art of persuasion.” This means that rhetoric aims to win the approval of others by means of speech (→ Rhetorical Studies). The basis of Greek rhetoric is → persuasion: the enigma of persuasion (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). How do we explain the frequent yet mysterious phenomenon that consists of making others freely think something they have not thought before? Rhetoric was invented in order to answer this question. Fundamentally, it aims at understanding, producing, and influencing persuasion. The word “art” (*tekhnê* in Greek) does not limit itself to what modern languages mean by artistic creation, and it also gives the idea of a reasoned approach, of a system of rules for practical usage, and of a technical production.

In its full sense (which was that of the ancients), the word “rhetoric” covers both the theory and the practice of speech; that is to say, treatises, manuals, and abstract discussions, and also presentations and speeches of all kinds.

Rhetoric was developed in Greece during what is known as the “classical” era; that is to say, during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. It was linked to the regime of the “city”

(*polis*), which was a dominating type of political and social organization at that time. A “city” was a small autonomous state of which the inhabitants (or more precisely, some of the inhabitants), called “citizens,” managed their affairs by voting and common debates. Such a regime favored public speech and, therefore, rhetoric.

It was at Athens above all, the most important city at the time, that rhetoric was at its height in terms of three aspects: oratorical practice, theory and teaching, and critical and philosophical reflection.

### **ORATORICAL PRACTICE**

The Athenian oratorical practice spread within a legal and political context. By law, parties were obliged to plead their cause personally, without being represented by a lawyer. The public prosecutor’s office did not exist, therefore individuals brought the necessary accusations forward. Such a system supposed an effective commitment from the citizens, both as defendants and as prosecutors, within the legal framework. The courts sat all throughout the year and the verdicts were given by the juries, drawn from among citizens of more than 30 years of age, of whom there were several hundreds. In politics, the main organ was the Assembly of people (made up of all the adult citizens with a quorum of 6,000), who exercised the executive power by voting on decrees and by electing magistrates. There was also the Council (composed of 500 citizens aged over 30), who prepared the work of the Assembly. So it was the Athenian institutions themselves that created the rhetoric activity. It was an almost daily activity, considering the frequency with which the courts and assemblies met, and also an activity that took place before a large audience, usually meaning an extremely high number of listeners each time (several hundred or several thousand people). In Athens, during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, “speaking to the people” constituted a communication situation that is difficult to comprehend today. It was a question of making oneself heard in large crowds, in physically and acoustically uncomfortable conditions, and with a view to real and immediate consequences.

Added to that are the ceremonial speeches made on occasions such as national funerals and religious feast days, as well as ambassadorial speeches given before cities and foreign sovereigns and all sorts of private conferences.

From this assiduous and multiform practice, written traces have been preserved, because during the classical era, the Greek speakers took the habit of publishing their speeches or at least some of them. The three most significant contributions, in both quantity and quality, were those of Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Lysias. They illustrate the Athenian rhetoric practice in all its glory. The published speeches are not necessarily word for word records, but were revised with artistic license and took into account a posteriori the arguments of the other side. Between “oral character” and “literary character,” the exchange was constant in Athenian rhetoric.

### **THEORY AND TEACHING**

Oratorical practice relied on a very vigorous teaching. There were many masters of rhetoric in Athens and many different schools. The methods varied but were for the main

part oral. They included theoretical lessons, case studies, the learning of exemplar speeches assigned by the master, practical composition exercises on real or fictional subjects, verbal sparring matches between students, as well as gesture and voice training (→ Delivery and Rhetoric; Gestures and Kinesics).

Research into the rhetoric field was conducted in the manuals or treatises that were called *Tekhnai* (“Arts,” meaning “of rhetoric”). Two remarkable examples have been preserved and offer complete lessons on rhetoric. One is the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, dated from between 340 and 300 BCE, and which has been wrongly handed down to us under the name of Aristotle (the author could in fact be the orator and historian Anaximenes of Lampsacus). This treatise lists the different types of speeches, then presents the appropriate subjects for each type, then analyses the common means of persuasion in all types of speeches (concerning argumentation as well as style). It finally gives indications regarding which plan to adopt for each type of speech considered (→ Arrangement and Rhetoric). Its aim is to supply as detailed a method as possible, in order to allow speakers to produce the most rich, elegant, and persuasive speeches for each case. Basically, it gives definitions, advice and rules, which stem both from a systematic study of the object and a close examination of usage and norms in place at that time.

The other treatise is the *Rhetoric* by Aristotle, which dates from around 360–325 BCE. For Aristotle, the study of rhetoric took on an intellectual and practical usefulness. It allows truth and justice to triumph within the legal context. It serves to persuade at all times where a didactical presentation is not acceptable and where it must maintain the conviction using common notions (before large audiences); it provides the ability to support opposing arguments and it allows one to defend oneself by speech in case of danger.

Some of the main points covered by Aristotle include the identification of three genres which can be applied to all possible rhetoric speeches (judicial genre, deliberative genre, and epideictic or ceremonial genre; → Rhetoric, Epideictic); the distinction between the two main forms of persuasion: logical persuasion through demonstration (*logos*; → Logos and Rhetoric) and moral persuasion through “character” (*êthos*; → Ethos and Rhetoric) and “passion” (*pathos*; → Pathos and Rhetoric); the psychology used as an agency of proof; the systemization of the “commonplaces” (*topoi*) of argumentation; the distinction between the technical evidence (elaborated by speech) and non-technical evidence (provided by an external source, for example testimonies); and also sentence analysis (“period” notion) and → metaphor (→ Style and Rhetoric).

Aristotle came up with the fundamental idea that, in order to persuade, the existing competencies within the listener must be exploited. A good speaker knows the cognitive competencies and the significant connections of those listening. He builds upon the pre-existing ideas, on accepted values, and in this way can bring about the paradox of persuasion (which was indicated above). Innovation is introduced into the listener’s mind from well-known and accepted premises.

## CRITICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION

The Athenians did not only practice and theorize rhetoric; they also analyzed and evaluated it. While the rhetoric phenomenon was developing and becoming more extensive, society at the time had, in fact, reservations and doubts about this new art,

which harbored possibilities of excessive subtlety, manipulation, and deception. This mistrust was radically and greatly expressed in Plato's dialogues, which constituted one of the principal chapters in rhetoric history (first half of the fourth century BCE). Plato often dealt with rhetoric; it constituted one of the main themes of his work. Plato ruthlessly criticized what he regarded as the faults of the rhetoric in use in his day: its intellectual and moral weakness as well as its link to democracy (Plato condemned democracy). Against this vulgar rhetoric, he defined the ideal of a "true" rhetoric, which was founded upon truth and justice. The true rhetoric has little in common with what is normally called rhetoric. It is, in reality, science and teaching; it is the speech of philosophy. Ultimately, in its perfection, it is not made for men but for gods.

The Platonic criticism was fruitful, because it sparked off a dialogue between philosophy and rhetoric. It made philosophers understand that rhetoric also concerns them (that is why Aristotle, a philosopher, dealt with rhetoric) and it led orators to take into account the intellectual and moral requirements of philosophy (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy).

When the fourth century BCE came to an end, rhetoric was completely different to what it was at the beginning of the fifth century BCE. Over the period of 150 years, in classical Greece and in particular at Athens, rhetoric became widespread thanks to the constant contact and exchanges between people, institutions, doctrines, and problems.

Subsequently, the elements put in place were never forgotten. They constituted a platform for the later history of rhetoric, not only during antiquity but much later up until the modern era of European and American history.

Even today, Greek rhetoric remains a reference and a source of inspiration for the scholars who are interested in political models, literature, and the philosophical and linguistic aspects of communication.

SEE ALSO: ► Arrangement and Rhetoric ► Case Studies ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Ethos and Rhetoric ► Gestures and Kinesics ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Metaphor ► Pathos and Rhetoric ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Epideictic ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ► Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic ► Rhetorical Studies ► Style and Rhetoric

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# Rhetoric and History

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The conjoining of the terms “rhetoric” and “history” suggests at least three related but distinct areas of study. One, *the history of rhetoric*, focuses on rhetorical theory and practice during particular periods of time; entries on various aspects of this area abound (e.g., → Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic; Rhetoric, European Renaissance). Two others are the focus here: *rhetorical processes in history* and *the rhetoric of history*.

## RHETORICAL PROCESSES IN HISTORY

The study of *rhetorical processes in history* focuses on the ways in which rhetoric functions in historical contexts. As “speech” emerged as a distinct field in the early to mid-1900s, its origins in public address were evidenced in its scholarship (→ Speech Communication, History of). Early inquiries focused on specific speeches and speakers in historical contexts using what came to be known as “historical-critical research,” exemplified by the classic three-volume anthology, *A history and criticism of American public address* (Brigance 1943; Hochmuth 1955). In the mid-1960s, publications using this methodological approach came under attack as “cookie cutter” studies that did little to advance either rhetorical theory or the discipline’s status in the academy (→ Rhetorical Criticism).

By the 1970s, such challenges met rejoinders from several authors who sought to restore luster to the study of rhetorical processes in history. During a gradual renaissance, many scholars shifted from the assessment of rhetorical texts as distinct products that were historically situated to explorations of historical developments as captured in, and created by, rhetorical processes. Echoing the move in departments of history from “drum and trumpet” topics to social and cultural perspectives, rhetorical scholars increasingly explored historical events as rhetorically constituted.

Two trends characterized this resurgence. A *move toward book-length studies* evolved as scholars found journal articles and book chapters too abbreviated as venues in which to make significant arguments and interpretations. In addition, an emphasis (some scholars would say *re-emphasis*) on the *significance of primary resources* came from the recognition that invaluable insights may be obtained from examining such archival materials as memoranda, correspondence, reports, oral histories, appointment calendars, photographs, and recordings. The development of Internet databases and resources has eased access to some archival holdings, and such access is especially valuable given the accelerating graduate study and tenure schedules that encroach on the time required for meticulous historiographical research (→ Historiography).

Studies of rhetorical processes in history still attend to individual rhetors, with particular attention to the speeches of American presidents (e.g., Ritter & Medhurst 2003). Other examinations broaden the scope of “public address” to incorporate differing forms of communication. Ball (1992), for example, uses primary sources from presidential libraries



to trace the decision-making processes in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, connecting the arguments within these small groups to the execution of and justifications for the Vietnam War. In a wide-reaching exploration, Condit & Lucaites (1993) delineate the evolution of the term “equality” from the mid-eighteenth to the end of the twentieth centuries, exploring the crucial role of discourse in developing connotations and applications that shifted across time and subject. “Equality” for white colonists, for example, did not have the same meaning as for black slaves.

Scholars interested in the rhetorical analysis of historical processes agree on its significance, but other aspects are debated. Issues include how rhetorical history should be defined; one characterization is that “rhetorical history,” broadly construed, seeks “to understand the context through messages that reflect and construct that context” (Turner 1998, 2), while others suggest that any study of rhetoric that occurred in the past constitutes rhetorical history. Another issue is whether rhetorical history and criticism are so closely related as to be indistinguishable, or constitute distinct perspectives that deserve delineation in order to appreciate their complementary approaches. A third point of difference centers on what the relationship between rhetorical history and rhetorical theory should be: should historical studies be explicitly based on and constructed as contributions to theoretical inquiry, or do they serve other functions? Finally, scholars differ concerning the current status of rhetorical history, with some declaring it to be alive and well while others contend it has been marginalized.

### THE RHETORIC OF HISTORY

A more recent area of inquiry, the rhetoric of history, focuses on how the construction of history constitutes an essentially rhetorical process that by its very nature emphasizes certain aspects in certain ways while overlooking others. Paralleling explorations of other specialized discourse communities (e.g., the rhetoric of scientific inquiry and of law), such studies argue that the standard of “objectivity” masks the choices that not only can but must be made in constructing stories of the past (→ Objectivity in Science). These choices include delineating a time frame for the subject, identifying key “characters,” developing narrative frameworks, evaluating and using evidence, creating arguments of causality and relationship, employing metaphors, and constructing the historian’s own credibility. Central to such analyses is the contention that such choices constitute not mere window dressing but essential epistemological decisions: one’s very way of knowing about what and who have gone before is created through the writing of history. The most advanced versions of this argument contend that there *is* no “history” – at least, none that is humanly knowable – beyond what is rhetorically constructed. (→ Constructivism; Rhetoric and Epistemology; Rhetoric of Science)

From this perspective, such cherished criteria as “accuracy” and “facts” depend on not only the individual but also the social and cultural context in which the histories are created and received (→ Memory and Rhetoric). As Carpenter (1995) contends, such historians as Frederick Jackson Turner, Carl Becker, and Barbara Tuchman served as opinion leaders because they created stories that resonated with their audiences and their times. Whether writing for academics, the general public, or both, historians make their arguments within the contexts of the social truths of their times.

Some scholars extend this investigation to explore the rhetorical purposes to which historical arguments are put. Political, social, and economic debates rely on “the lessons of history” to construct cases for both the interpretation of current events and the recommendations for future action. Precisely because historical accounts are rhetorically constructed, the “lessons” drawn from the same events are often diametrically opposed. Arguments over reparations for slavery, for example, pit meta-narratives of white innocence and the individual nature of history against those of white implicature and the institutional nature of history, in contentions that Bacon (2003) asserts reveal the rhetorical nature of historical constructions. Similarly, “the lessons of Vietnam” suggest to some that the United States and its allies should have been more aggressive in their military intervention in Iraq, and to others that they should not have undertaken the venture in the first place.

Gronbeck (1991) suggests *two key forms of argument from the past* to illuminate issues of the present. The “genetic argument” traces the subject of discussion to a particular point of origin, cited as the “beginning” of the story currently being addressed. That originating point may be cast either as an ideal from which the community has gradually but inevitably progressed, or as an ideal to which the community must return in order to realize its potential. The “analogical argument” constructs parallels between historical and current characters, events, or situations to suggest cautionary tales or advisory actions. In both cases, appropriations of the past construct and are constructed by views of the present and the future.

An additional rhetorical use of history celebrates *the past as embodying the essence of the society*. Inspired by Kammen (1991), these studies examine how the commemoration of historical concepts serves to inspire and embody a people. Blair et al. (1991), for example, trace how changing expectations for public monuments reveal the ways in which a society’s public memory frames the past, while Biesecker (2002) elucidates how, at the turn of the twenty-first century, such popular “memory texts” as the World War II memorial and the movie *Saving Private Ryan* serve as rhetorical reconstructions of the past to create a sense of national unity and purpose for a fractious American public.

Whether the focus is on rhetorical processes in history or the rhetoric of history, the connection between these two key terms reveals both the interdisciplinary significance of communication as a central liberal art, and the valuable insights to be generated through the interdisciplinary turn in academia.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Constructivism ▶ Historiography ▶ Memory and Rhetoric ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ▶ Rhetoric of Science ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Speech Communication, History of

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## Rhetoric and Language

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“Language is itself the collective art of expression, a summary of thousands upon thousands of individual intuitions” (Sapir 1921, 246). When exploring rhetoric in relation to language we usually have in mind the nature and functions of the communication systems used by humans in different times and in different parts of the world. Some of the first important theoreticians of language were in fact rhetoricians, as well as philosophers. A major point of departure in exploring rhetoric is the rhetorical role played by language as a conceptualizing and persuasive tool, as a means of communication and as a bearer of values (Dumarsais 1825; Fontanier 1968; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969; Groupe µ 1976; Barthes 1988).

### THE CONCEPT OF RHETORIC

Rhetoric has always been difficult to define, since the term has multiple denotations and connotations. Dictionary definitions most often describe rhetoric as the effective use of language to persuade or as the study of the elements of style and structure in writing or

speaking. Typical definitions clearly point to a dualistic nature of rhetoric as understood for much of the past 2,500 years: “rhetoric is the *process* of using language to organize experience and communicate it to others. It is also the *study* of how people use language to organize and communicate experience. The word denotes, as I use it, both a distinctive human activity and the ‘science’ concerned with understanding that activity. All human beings are ‘rhetors’ because they naturally conceive as well as share their knowledge of the world by means of discourse” (Knoblauch 1985, 29).

Rhetoric is currently used to mean: (1) a field of study and an academic discipline (→ Rhetorical Studies); (2) social, professional, and/or political skill in language use (→ Rhetoric and Politics); (3) persuasive, stylistic features in language use (→ Style and Rhetoric); and (4) a form of “energy” transfer in language use (following Kennedy 1998). Needless to say, none of these ways of defining rhetoric is exclusive.

In ancient times rhetoric was a vast and influential branch of learning, closely tied to grammar and to logic within the famous medieval trivium (→ Rhetoric, Medieval; Rhetoric and Philosophy). Grammar evolved into a vast field of linguistic studies, which examine and explore the nature, structure, functions, and evolution of language (→ Linguistics). Although linguistics is a much later development than rhetoric, experience and scholarly evidence show that the study of language and rhetoric have been intertwined when required by specific situations and purposes. Important issues of language analysis were addressed by grammarians and philosophers in ancient Greece, Rome, and India (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman; Rhetoric in South Asia). The earliest linguistic debate is found in the pages of Plato (4th century BCE). Further insights were later offered by Aristotle (4th century BCE). When Aristotle first called rhetoric the counterpart to dialectic (*Rhetoric* 1354a), he situated the study of the persuasive functions of language alongside the study of philosophy and science as a vital scholarly endeavor (→ Persuasion).

The term “rhetoric” and its variations in European languages is derived from the Greek *rhêtorikê* (art/technique of a public speaker; from *eirein*, to say, speak), the earliest occurrences of which are in Plato’s dialogue *Gorgias* (see Dodds 1959). It is used there, somewhat pejoratively, of the technique of a public speaker or politician. According to Kennedy (1998), almost all cultures have a word for “orator,” someone with special skills at public speaking. A common brief definition of “rhetoric” in classical antiquity was “the art of persuasion,” or, in Aristotle’s formulation (*Rhetoric* 1355b) “an ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion” (Kennedy 1991).

## RELATION BETWEEN RHETORIC AND LANGUAGE

In order to understand the dynamic and complex relation between rhetoric and language it is essential to examine the role of natural language use and of human communication mechanisms in shaping and reflecting human thinking processes. This relation can be explored at three levels: (1) semiotic-evolutionary (the role of natural language in enabling distinctively human forms of thinking and communicating effectively); (2) structural-comparative (the role of specific language codes in shaping habitual thought – the “linguistic relativity” of experience); and (3) functional-discursive (the role of linguistic conventions, specialized discursive practices, and particular ideologies in cultivating specialized forms of thought for various situations and purposes).

From a *semiotic-evolutionary perspective*, there is a strong interdependence between language systems and thinking patterns. A central feature of languages is that they are systems of symbols designed for the purpose of communication. It is hardly possible to formulate a meaningful thought without using language. The reason is that, when formulating a thought, we need a particular code to express it with and a corresponding network of meaning relations to enable the transfer of messages (→ Meaning; Semiotics). Since language serves as both an instrument of thought and a means of expression, it reflects and shapes socially and culturally agreed meaning. This explains why one of the most salient characteristics of language by comparison with other communication systems is its flexibility and versatility.

The rhetorical dimension of language use is always present, though in different degrees, since we need to be relevant, both in writing and in speaking, when we communicate a message, so that we may capture and maintain our addressees' attention. We are used to selecting from the wide range of linguistic devices and discursive patterns the register and style that is most appropriate in a specific situation. The much debated distinction made by structuralists between *langue* and *parole* (Saussure 1916), as well as the distinction between the *competence* and *performance* of language users (Chomsky 1965) acquire a new significance in rhetorical theory through a change of focus. Whereas linguistics examines the way in which language is used by human beings, rhetoric examines the active role of human beings when using language. Consequently, the two elements are regarded as complementary in the context-based, goal-oriented, and addressee/audience-targeted process of communication.

From a *structural-comparative perspective*, the situation-adjusted language use involves understanding its persuasive potential as well as the speaker's ability to influence beliefs and behaviors through the power of symbolic action. This viewpoint stood in contrast to the position of many philosophers who treated → discourse as a neutral channel for representing an otherwise objective, independent "truth." Rhetoricians argue instead that the manner and form of discourse is integral to the thing or phenomenon that is described or discussed. Moreover, they emphasized their central role in shaping and motivating collective identity and action. Modern rhetoric follows classical rhetorical theory in treating the relationship between language and meaning as *contextual*, i.e., the meaning of a particular linguistic usage derived from the particular experiences and understanding of a particular audience addressed by a particular speaker at a specific moment in time (→ Linguistic Pragmatics).

From a *functional-discursive perspective*, language acquires meaning and value in actual use depending on socio-cultural contexts and historical conditions. On examining language use, Halliday (1978) proposed three categories of meaning: ideational meaning (relating to overall situation in the world), interpersonal meaning (concerning the relations between communicators), and textual meaning (referring to the structured text/discourse). By emphasizing the functioning of public discourse, scholars of rhetoric have drawn attention to communicative acts that affected the entire community and are typically performed before the law courts, the legislative assemblies, and occasional gatherings of the citizens at large. The language of public discourse can thus be distinguished from the language of technical discourse addressed to specialized audiences and private discourse addressed to more personal audiences that did not directly affect the social and political community as a whole.

Rhetoric can also deal with the *language conflict*. There is an inherent conflict in communication through language. On the one hand, words can clarify, inspire, and articulate thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Thus, words can build bridges across chaos. On the other hand, they can oversimplify, conceal, and fail to communicate assumptions/presumptions or to convey intentions/emotions. Trying to understand how language works is a stimulating, and often rewarding, intellectual challenge. The pursuit of rhetorical studies presupposes and/or fosters a respect for language while it unveils its limitations: our words are sometimes interpreted as articulating more than we intended, and sometimes less.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Linguistics ► Meaning ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Rhetoric and Politics ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetoric in South Asia ► Rhetorical Studies ► Semiotics ► Style and Rhetoric

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# Rhetoric and Logic

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Logic and rhetoric are such broad subjects that in order to profit from their comparison we must make at least one division in each field. Logic in the narrow sense is mainly concerned with the consequence relation (“following from”), and a well-documented tradition exists from Aristotle’s *Prior analytics* to the present that explores this question. In a wider sense, logic includes the study and statement of the principles of good reasoning and may be seen as taking as its central problem the question of what makes for a good argument or a good inference. Developments of logic in the wide sense can be found as long ago as Aristotle’s *Topics* and more recently in twentieth-century informal logic.

In the narrow sense, rhetoric deals with the study of persuasive discourse, especially argumentation. Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and Perelman’s new rhetoric are prime examples of this (→ Logos and Rhetoric; Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). In a wider sense, rhetoric is the art of *making things matter* (Farrell’s 1998 phrase), especially (but not only) through the effects of language, and includes poetry, drama, narratives, instructional discourse, and the like. It is only when we consider logic in the wide sense and rhetoric in the narrow that their domains can overlap, and that it may become difficult to tell logical and rhetorical considerations apart.

## PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

In Plato we cannot identify any logic apart from what he calls dialectic, but many of the principles that can be extracted from what he says about dialectic also belong to logic in the wide sense. In the *Gorgias* Plato distinguishes dialectic and rhetoric on two related counts: (1) rhetoric is concerned with appearances and persuasion whereas dialectic is concerned with truth and justice; (2) dialectic is an art (or *technê*), meaning that it is a teachable and productive activity, and rhetoric is not (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic). At the outset of his later dialogue, *Phaedrus*, Plato again dismissed certain kinds of rhetoric on moral grounds. But he went on to outline a philosophical kind of rhetoric, which was a way of directing the soul toward knowledge by means of speech. Dialectic was still his preferred method, having the power of leading one to knowledge through its methods of division and collection; however, Plato allows that rhetoric could be based on dialectic when teaching another. It would then be an art because it would presuppose the speaker’s acquaintance with the forms of knowledge and would additionally involve knowledge of the different kinds of souls and the kinds of speeches likely to affect them. The kind of rhetoric of which Plato approves, then, has only a narrow pedagogical range.

In Aristotle, in addition to logic in the wide sense that we see in the *Topics*, there is also logic in the narrow sense (in *Prior analytics*), rhetoric in the narrow sense (in *Rhetoric*), and rhetoric in the wide sense (in *Poetics*). In all four fields but the last, the concept of syllogism is central to the elaboration of the subjects. Near the beginnings of both *Prior*

*analytics* and *Topics* Aristotle defines a syllogism as an argument in which the conclusion (1) follows necessarily from the premises, (2) is different from any of the premises, and (3) comes about because of the premises. (Notice that the extension of “syllogism” is thus much narrower than that of “valid argument.”) In the *Prior analytics* syllogisms take first principles or their consequences for premises; dialectical employments of the syllogism, however, are identified as those that either are based on answers given to questions in discussions or are widely shared beliefs (*endoxa*). This last feature is shared with rhetorical uses of the syllogism (these Aristotle calls *enthymemes*) which are further distinguished by the fact that they do not require that conclusions should follow necessarily from their premises; that they follow for the most part suffices.

Aristotle identified three kinds of rhetoric, distinguishable by the nature of audiences: forensic rhetoric is addressed to courts and concerns events in the past; deliberative rhetoric is addressed to individuals or councils planning for the future; and ceremonial (*epideictic*) rhetoric is concerned with an audience’s present attitudes or feelings about a person or event (→ Rhetoric, Epideictic; Rhetoric, Greek).

For Aristotle, rhetoric is the study of the various modes of persuasion and it is an art; he sees it as an outgrowth of both politics and dialectics. However, although he clearly gives an essential role to the *enthymeme* as being “the substance of rhetorical persuasion,” it seems to play a significant role in only one of the three invented (or internal) modes of persuasion he identified, namely, *logos*. The other modes were *pathos* (the use of emotions) and *êthos* (display of character) (→ Ethos and Rhetoric; Pathos and Rhetoric). His conception of rhetoric in the narrow sense thus appears to be wider than that of logic in the wide sense since he recognizes that rhetoric as an instrument of persuasion will require knowledge of character, ethics, and the emotions, over and above knowledge of logical proofs.

### WHATELY AND PERELMAN

Richard Whately in his *Elements of rhetoric* (1828) thought of rhetoric as the art of composing arguments. Logic, on the other hand, he took to be both a science that investigated the processes of the mind in reasoning and an art that furnished rules of reasoning to avoid erroneous deductions (see *Elements of logic* [1826]). He further distinguished inferring and proving. The former belongs to the search for truth and depends on logic, the latter is within the province of rhetoric and is concerned with establishing the truth to the satisfaction of another.

In the twentieth century Chaim Perelman worked to develop a rhetoric that would serve for philosophy as well as public discourse. This was largely in response to the dominance of the logical positivists who extended the innovations in logic in the narrow sense (originally wrought by Frege, Russell, and Wittgenstein to deal with uncertainties in the foundations of mathematics), to serve in the analysis of scientific discourse. But their methods being both formal and positivist were ill equipped to deal with either natural language arguments in public discourse or questions of value – issues that became of increasing concern after World War II. Perelman’s response was to advocate a revival of the subject of argumentation and although it was inspired by both Aristotle’s dialectical and rhetorical views, he referred to his approach as a *new rhetoric*. It is characterized by



the marginalization of logic in the narrow sense as having no relevance to argumentation, and the broadening of the scope of rhetoric to include all natural language argumentation, not just the types that might be addressed to the three kinds of audiences posited by Aristotle.

Perelman saw logic as logic in the narrow sense: it was formal, demonstrative, concerned with truth and validity, and impersonal in its methods. Rhetoric, which he equated with argumentation, however, was concerned with reasonable and justifiable opinions rather than truth, and in contrast to logic, argumentation interacts with the minds of its audience, aiming to persuade or convince it. Arguments, rather than being valid or invalid as logic would have it, argumentation judges as more or less strong.

Perelman's rhetoric is a rhetoric in the narrow sense but it broadens Aristotle's approach by extending the object of discourse to any audience addressed (including oneself), and widening the subject of discourse to include the theoretical as well as the practical. He distinguished actual and particular audiences from the abstract universal audience. Actual audiences may be persuaded, but universal audiences – impartial and critical sounding boards constructed by the speaker – hold to a higher standard and will be convinced only by good argumentation.

In response to Perelman, Henry Johnstone, Jr. sought to distinguish philosophical method from rhetorical method. Since the purpose of rhetoric, even as refurbished by Perelman, was to gain assent to a thesis, Johnstone took the rhetor as having the overriding goal of getting his view accepted by his listener. But, Johnstone insists, if the listener is aware that rhetorical techniques are being employed against him, he will be resistant to persuasion. Thus rhetoric can succeed only when it conceals its methods. In contrast, philosophical argumentation must allow any technique used by an arguer to be equally available to her discussant.

## **RHETORICAL AND LOGICAL VALUES**

Typically rhetoric exhibits its value in the analysis of speeches like Socrates' defence in Plato's *Apology* or Lincoln's "Gettysburg address," uncovering motivations and strategies and persuasive techniques. In contrast, logic paradigmatically seeks to display its excellence in the analysis of arguments such as Anselm's ontological argument or Hume's argument against miracles, identifying inferential structures, for example, and modal operators, and searching for ambiguities and missing or unsupported premises.

The central problem of logic in the wide sense is that of when one ought to accept a conclusion given certain reasons. The central problem of rhetoric in the narrow sense is how a set of ideas ought to be presented to an audience, how a presentation can come as close as possible to having its desired effect. Thus logic relies on semantic and epistemic considerations like truth and acceptability whereas rhetoric leans on social and psychological factors such as emotions, tradition and popularity. Accordingly, logic and rhetoric bring distinct sets of standards to argumentative discourse.

But whereas logic champions truth and consistency and puts persuasion at risk, and rhetoric prizes successful communication above logical excellence, neither the logician nor the rhetorician can escape logical or ethical responsibility for their discourses. Broadly speaking there are two kinds of responses to this situation. One is for each subject

to incorporate items from the other's subject when they attempt a comprehensive theory for argument evaluation. Thus many elementary logic books include rhetorical maxims, and many rhetoric primers include a chapter on the elements of logic. Ralph Johnson, the informal logician, extends Johnstone's requirement for philosophical argumentation to rational persuasion in general: in addition to holding the three standards advocated by many other informal logicians (that the premisses should be acceptable, relevant and sufficient), Johnson stresses that argumentation must not be unilateral but that the argument presented to its addressee should be completely open, with all its features made plain and manifest. The reason for this is that the addressee's assent to the argument could be rational only if he or she has complete access to the same information and reasoning as the persuader. This awareness of and concern for the persuadee has not in the past been thought to belong to logic, even logic in the wide sense. It is therefore interesting that Johnson's concern for the epistemic welfare of his interlocutor is raised to the level of a right: the arguer has obligations to those whom he is trying to persuade. This is an example of logic treading on rhetoric's territory. The other response to the observation that we have both logical and rhetorical responsibilities is suggested by Joseph Wenzel. It is that logic, rhetoric and dialectic are in fact three distinct perspectives on argumentation, each having different scopes, resources and standards, and answering to different interests. Rhetoric, Wenzel maintains, deals with arguments as a process whereas logic treats them as a product. He considers rhetoric a resource to help communities find solutions to practical problems; but with the informal logicians, he sees good arguments as those that give acceptable, sufficient and relevant reasons for their conclusions. Tindale has gone a step further, agreeing with Wenzel that all three perspectives are necessary for a complete analysis of argumentative discourse, but adding also that rhetoric is the basic or most fundamental of the three components.

SEE ALSO: ► Ethos and Rhetoric ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Pathos and Rhetoric  
 ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Dialectic ► Rhetoric, Epideictic  
 ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics

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# Rhetoric and Media Studies

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Few would deny media's increasingly central role in the everyday lives of most individuals, particularly in first and second world countries. And increasingly, few would deny media's rhetorical influence in how people come to understand themselves and those around them. News media shape the way individuals see their communities as well as those on the other side of the planet (→ News). Television sitcoms offer representations of individual characters that frame how one sees others of differing national, ethnic, or economic backgrounds (→ Situation Comedies). Movies offer narratives filled with violence and crime, which often leads people to overestimate the occurrence of such acts in real life (→ Cultivation Effects). Media play a central role in shaping the way many people perceive themselves and the world around them (→ Media Effects; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

In → rhetorical studies, media have been most commonly understood as technologically mediated forms of communication. This way of defining media places an emphasis on media such as → photography, → radio, → television, film (→ Cinema), and the → Internet. The primary reason for these media being seen as differing from other types of media is the basic assumption that the technology somehow alters communication in fundamental ways, something that the German philosopher Walter Benjamin (1968) explored over 70 years ago. In his landmark essay, "The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction," Benjamin argues that traditional forms of art are unique because of the sense of awe that the individual feels when he or she directly engages them, something he refers to as its aura. The use of mechanical reproduction, Benjamin suggests, destroys the aura as the mass audience takes the place of the individual. The recording of Mozart heard on the radio by millions of listeners is altogether different from the Vienna Philharmonic's live performance. Some may argue that it sounds the same, but few would agree that it does not feel different. Rhetorical studies have struggled to deal with these feelings created by media.

## VISUAL RHETORIC

What makes media particularly unique for the field of rhetorical studies today, however, is its overwhelming emphasis on images. Rhetorical studies have long focused on the spoken and the written word. As technological advances made the production and reproduction of images easier, the symbolic force of pictures, both still and moving, became more salient for public communication. Rhetorical scholars, hitherto focused on public speaking and literature, have found this increasingly dominant form of communication troublesome to address, and long-held rhetorical assumptions dating back to Plato and Aristotle have been problematic. While rhetorical scholarship has begun to adapt to newer forms of communication, media studies have generated new conceptual distinctions.

Rhetoric has, of course, traditionally been rooted in the study of language and a rhetor's ability to persuade or influence his or her audience, regardless of whether the rhetor's authority was derived from → emotion, character, or logic (→ Rhetoric and Language; Persuasion). Media's reliance on imagery, according to some theorists, works outside these three basic rhetorical forms, something Aristotle's model could not have anticipated. Images function rhetorically in two basic ways (→ Rhetoric and Visuality; Visual Communication). First, every image is visually symbolic as it represents some original (→ Visual Representation). From the movies projected on screens to the pictures accompanying a news article, images present symbolic versions of reality. As a symbolic discourse, images belong (for some, naturally) to the realm of rhetoric. Second, people's reactions to images are not, by and large, the same as to words. Images, especially those that are mediated, function primarily through → aesthetics, calling forth pleasure or disgust, hope or fear. This privileging of the aesthetic, many suggest, requires new ways of employing → rhetorical criticism. While some scholars may work with both rhetorical functions of media images, the research that has emerged over the past few decades tends to fit into one of the two areas.

### APPROACHES TO MEDIATED RHETORIC

Those who read mediated communication as a conventional text that relies, like human → discourse, on symbols, apply long-established rhetorical models (→ Text and Intertextuality). No one has been more influential in this area than Kenneth Burke. Burke understood rhetoric to be the study of symbols and their many functions, and many rhetorical critics have found it useful to adapt his critical concepts to more modern media. One such adaptation has been based on Burke's belief that the languages people use allow them to do and think certain things and, conversely, to hide alternatives, what he called *terministic screens*. Through these screens, → identifications with others are both created and stifled. In the aptly titled collection of essays *The terministic screen: Rhetorical perspectives on film*, David Blakesly notes the importance of the title when he argues that "film rhetoric – the visual and verbal signs and strategies that shape film experience – directs our attention in countless ways, but always with the aim of fostering identification and all that that complex phenomenon implies" (2003, 3). In addition, Burke's rhetorical pentad (act, agent, agency, scene, and purpose) as a way of critically engaging mediated texts, particularly those that are narrative in nature, has also proved invaluable to the study of media.

While Burke's pentad and other dramatic tools are readily adaptable to media studies, other conventional rhetorical tools and methods have also been employed. Although primarily empirically based, Cappella & Jamieson's study (1997) has shown how underlying metaphors used by news media create what the title of their book makes clear, a "spiral of cynicism" for the American electorate. While the thrust of their research is empirical, its foundation is clearly rooted in metaphorical criticism. Using the classical notion of mimesis, Trevor Parry-Giles and Shawn Parry-Giles have turned to the popular television drama *The West Wing* to suggest that it teaches the American public about the presidency and the nation. Mimesis, as first explored by Plato and Aristotle, is rooted in the notion that through imitation or representation rhetorical work is being done.

Employing this concept, Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles argue that *The West Wing* presents a rhetorical representation of the presidency that works through approximating “a reality of the presidency that is persuasive and credible” (2006, 4).

In addition to these more traditional forms of rhetorical criticism of media, scholars have also begun to explore newer territory assuming that technologically mediated communication’s reliance on the image requires new rhetorical approaches. The first of these approaches is rooted in *ideological criticism*, which explores and uncovers the media’s reinforcement of hegemonic forces in society writ large (→ Critical Theory). Feminist scholar Bonnie Dow (1996) has, for instance, turned a rhetorical eye on the images of female identity created by media. Examining the way in which women have been portrayed in television shows in the United States such as *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Doctor Quinn, Medicine Woman*, Dow uncovers a number of symbolic representations of women in popular media that offer mixed portrayals of feminist ideals (→ Feminist and Gender Studies).

Another, newer approach that applies rhetorical methods to media emphasizes the fact that visual media do *affect audiences at an emotional level*. Rhetorical critic Roderick Hart made just this argument when he turned to television. Taking a broad view of television – its role as a medium and its content – Hart argues that television reaches → audiences at the level of consciousness. To make sense of this aesthetic response, he uses a phenomenological approach. Focusing on the level of emotional consciousness, → phenomenology walks a middle ground between the beliefs that people engage media as objective viewers or that visual media reach the individual at an unconscious level. In the end, such a rhetorical inquiry leads Hart to argue that “television makes us feel good about feeling bad about politics” (Hart 1999, 10).

The final dominant approach to understanding media rhetorically in recent years has been to dig deeply into a text to understand how its symbolic images impact audiences at the unconscious level. Such *psychoanalytic criticism* builds on Freud’s original models to create a theory of how media construct the individual and collective personality or psyche. Janice Hocker Rushing was instrumental in pioneering this method in rhetorical studies. In just one of many examples, Rushing & Frenz (1995) examined the cyborg in a number of American films as a heroic reworking of the Western myth, suggesting that the cyborg represents a new, “transmodern,” way of being that unites mind, body, and machine in one self. For Rushing & Frenz, the → cyborg becomes a rhetorical discourse that shows audiences, at an unconscious level, how to live with new technology.

The psychoanalytic approach to rhetoric and media also represents one of the current research trajectories that continues to open up possible understandings of how media influence the way people live with and through technologically reproduced communication. Incorporating the work of Jacques Lacan and others, rhetorical theorist Joshua Gunn has begun advancing new ways of using a psychoanalytic approach to mediated communication. In one such instance, Gunn (2004) argues that a psychoanalytic understanding of fantasy offers a way to mediate the disjointed relationship between fragmented texts and de-centered subjects. Gunn’s assertion is, put simply, that the media offers dominant portrayals of fantasy that causes one to desire and, ultimately, to repress such a desire. Psychoanalytic criticism, while not an uncontested rhetorical approach, continues to offer new ways of engaging media studies.

While Gunn's approach to rhetorical media studies seeks to penetrate media texts more deeply to see how they affect individual and collective psyches, another approach is to step back and look at the way in which media build on and work with other aspects of people's lived experiences. One way of doing this is for rhetorical scholars to incorporate the idea of *homologies*. In the sciences, things are said to be homologous when they share formal structures. Rhetorical and media scholar Barry Brummett (2004) has recently suggested that homologous patterns of discourse exist across communicative texts that work to structure lives through formal patterns. In his recent book, *Rhetorical homologies*, Brummett explores how films can present audiences with stories and images that are homologous to lived experience, additional mediated texts, and other, larger narratives. A rhetorical criticism built from an understanding of homologies offers the possibility of bringing media more directly into connection with other human communication.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

One final note on rhetoric and media studies concerns the Internet. While the Internet incorporates many modes of communication (discussed above) with more traditional print-based media, how rhetorical scholarship might engage it theoretically or critically remains to be seen. This is not to suggest that it cannot. But to begin to understand how communities of individuals on Facebook "live" together or how virtual communities (e.g., Second Life) influence the way individuals see themselves and the physical world around them will require even newer ways of understanding the use of symbols through mediated channels toward further identifications.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Audience ▶ Cinema ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cyborgs ▶ Discourse ▶ Emotion ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Iconography ▶ Identification ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Persuasion ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Photography ▶ Radio ▶ Rhetoric and Language ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Television ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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## Rhetoric, Medieval

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As an area of investigation, “medieval rhetoric” refers to the discipline taught as rhetoric in the liberal arts curriculum of western Europe, as well as to how that art was adapted to communication practices for secular and ecclesiastical purposes, between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries. Study of medieval rhetoric includes examining the continuance of the classical rhetorical tradition, as it was transmitted from the ancient societies of Greece and Rome (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman), along with the development of rhetorical education and pedagogical practices in composition that fostered the emergence of distinctive medieval discursive genres, which persisted even into the Renaissance (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance). In its scope, medieval rhetoric is necessarily complex and only truly began to be studied on its own terms in the twentieth century, as medieval Latin texts were discovered and made accessible for close examination by scholars investigating the history of rhetoric.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOLARLY VIEWS TOWARD MEDIEVAL RHETORIC**

The study of medieval rhetoric originated in the second half of the nineteenth century with publication of collections of medieval Latin texts not easily classifiable as literary but which shared recognizable rhetorical features (Bennett & Leff 1995, 5). These texts offered evidence of how rhetoric had been taught in the Middle Ages, as part of the trivium of verbal arts that included grammar and dialectic, and how its precepts had been adapted to new communication needs in medieval society, particularly preaching, letter writing, and verse writing. As medieval rhetorical texts were identified, examined, and translated, scholarly views toward medieval rhetoric developed, helping to reveal how the continuity of rhetorical teaching in the Middle Ages had provided a type of cultural coherence in the longest era in the western tradition (Woods 1990, 80).

Early twentieth-century scholarship took its direction from Baldwin's survey (1928), which represented such texts as blurred with grammar and the art of poetics, and viewed medieval rhetoric merely as instruction in the techniques of stylistic elaboration and

ornamentation (→ Rhetoric and Poetics; Style and Rhetoric). Baldwin differentiated it from Aristotelian rhetoric, which he characterized as imparting effectiveness to truth, and labeled it sophistic rhetoric, imparting effectiveness to the speaker (→ Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic). Baldwin concluded that medieval rhetoricians did not advance rhetoric as an art but allowed its classical function of invention to be assimilated into dialectic (→ Invention and Rhetoric). For the first half of the twentieth century, Baldwin's work focused scholarly attention on texts that evidenced this view of medieval rhetoric as sophistic and connected with poetics.

Offering a different view of medieval rhetoric was an important but difficult essay by Richard McKeon (1942). Motivated by an interest in rehabilitating historical connections between rhetoric and philosophy, McKeon considered how medieval rhetoricians conceptualized their art and influenced intellectual developments in logic and theology (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic; Rhetoric and Philosophy). According to Bennett and Leff (1995), he identified *three lines of conceptualization*: rhetorical, based on the works of Cicero and Quintilian; philosophical-theological, based on Augustine; and logical, derived from Aristotle through the work of Boethius.

McKeon traced the development of these conceptualizations across four eras in the history of medieval logic: fifth to tenth centuries (handbooks on dialectic), late tenth to twelfth centuries ("Old Logic"), twelfth through thirteenth centuries ("New Logic"), and late thirteenth through fourteenth centuries (scholastic treatises). Though limited in its treatment of the traditional conceptualization of rhetoric, McKeon's essay demonstrated the need for a wider scope of investigation of medieval rhetoric and justified a more thorough examination of extant texts.

## MEDIEVAL RHETORIC AND CICERONIAN RHETORIC

The impulse for a more thorough investigation of medieval rhetoric was generated by research published in the 1970s by James J. Murphy. Murphy (1974) offered a new approach, one that combined the disciplinary tradition of rhetoric, the rhetorical educational program inherited from Rome, with an expanded, flexible exploration of the manifestation of that tradition in the Middle Ages. Murphy argued that the Roman educational program outlasted the culture that created it and transmitted rhetoric into the Middle Ages as a living tradition of precepts for pragmatic application. From Murphy's view, rather than a fragmented or degenerative version of the classical tradition, medieval rhetoric demonstrates how its teachers and practitioners adapted the tradition to their own specific discursive or communicative needs, implicitly lending their assent to Cicero's dictum: "Eloquence is one . . . regardless of the regions of discourse it is diverted into" (Murphy 1974, 363).

Based on the foundation established by Murphy, medieval rhetoric is recognized as essentially Ciceronian in nature. The dominant sources of classical rhetorical precepts were Cicero's treatise on invention, *De inventione*, and the anonymous rhetoric to Herennius, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which was attributed to Cicero, along with fragments from Quintilian. Cicero's treatise on logical topics for arguments, *Topica*, and Aristotle's logical works were also influential. In the fourth century, Ciceronian rhetoric of pagan Rome was still widely popular in practice, but by the fifth century, the cultural dominance



of Christianity threatened the survival of that tradition. Murphy (1974) marks the beginning of medieval rhetoric in the fifth century with the appearance of two works that secured the continuance of the rhetorical tradition but in different ways.

Writing at the start of the fifth century, St Augustine's *On Christian doctrine* argued that defenders of Christianity need rhetorical skill. Illustrating that even Jesus and Paul had used eloquence, he suggested that combining rhetorical eloquence with scriptural authority would better equip preachers to serve the church. The appropriation of Ciceronian rhetoric to the needs of the church assured the preservation of rhetorical texts and established grounds for medieval preaching theory (e.g., in works by Gregory the Great, Rabanus Maurus, and Walafrid Strabo).

Also written at the beginning of the fifth century was the allegorical treatise *On the marriage of Philology and Mercury* by Martianus Capella. In that work, Capella personified liberal arts from the Roman curriculum as handmaidens for the bride Philology. The first three dealt with words (grammar, dialectic, rhetoric), and the second four with numbers (geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, music). Lady Rhetoric is portrayed as a warrior-queen, resplendent in her adornment and armament, wielding power over people and armies alike. The popularity of Capella's work in the Middle Ages preserved the pagan tradition of rhetoric as an art and firmly established its dominance in the medieval liberal arts curriculum. Pedagogical practices continued to include both grammatical training in composition and rhetorical practice in declamation and disputation.

Systematic investigation of medieval rhetoric generally acknowledges two periods of development: an early period of transition (400–1050) and a second, known as the “High Middle Ages” (1050–1400). Works from the transitional period display a shared concern for preserving traditional rhetorical knowledge and typically appear as commentaries (Victorinus, Grillius), as encyclopedic compendia (Cassiodorus Senator, Isidore of Seville), or as treatises rehabilitating traditional precepts for current needs (works by Notker Labeo and Anselm de Besate). The High Middle Ages produced works that exhibit conscious efforts to adapt rhetorical precepts, such as those treating order or arrangement, linguistic correctness and the use of figures, or textual interpretation and elaboration, to medieval problems of composition and disputation (→ Arrangement and Rhetoric).

By mid-eleventh century, the rhetorical tradition gave rise to three medieval discursive arts. Communication needs for composing official letters were met with a new art of letter writing (*ars dictaminis*), for composing sermons, an art of preaching (*ars praedicandi*), and for composing verse and didactic literature, an art of poetic (*ars poetriae*). By the start of the twelfth century, numerous treatises appeared in each of these new rhetorical genres: *Ars dictaminis* (Hugh of Bologne, Guido Faba, Boncompagno da Signa), *ars praedicandi* (Alain de Lille, Robert of Basevorn), and *ars poetriae* (Matthew of Vendome, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, John of Garland, Gervase of Melkley).

As medieval educational practices developed under the dominance of the church, an intellectual movement known as scholasticism also emerged, which Christian scholars found useful for advancing and refuting competing theological arguments. Derived from traditional rhetorical declamatory practice but informed by the logical works of Cicero, Boethius, and Aristotle, scholasticism approached disputation as syllogistic demonstration based upon authoritative scripture or texts. Thus, scholastics tended to place dialectic or logic, used to demonstrate truth, above rhetoric or eloquence, regarded as popularizing ignorance.

## CURRENT ISSUES IN THE STUDY OF MEDIEVAL RHETORIC

Despite the growth in scholarship since Murphy's work, many areas of study remain incomplete, such as the continuous tradition of commentary on Ciceronian rhetorical texts (Ward 1995), and medieval rhetoric still tends to be marginalized as a field of study in the history of rhetoric by communication scholars. One reason is the difficulty in working with medieval Latin texts. The other is the tendency to judge medieval rhetoric against an arbitrary classical rhetorical paradigm. Brian Vickers (1988), invoking Baldwin's earlier view, devoted a whole chapter to a discussion of "medieval fragmentation," in which medieval rhetoric is judged as fragments of "the genuine classical tradition." Martin Camargo (2003) has argued that Vickers' judgment relies upon several mistaken assumptions, the most significant of which accepts as fact only one authentic rhetorical tradition.

George Kennedy (1999) has asserted that throughout its history, rhetoric moves from its primary form to secondary ones, that is, to rhetorical techniques that contribute to the purpose of the speaker or the writer but only indirectly. By his description, most of medieval rhetoric becomes secondary. Marjorie Curry Woods (1990) has demonstrated the problems with Kennedy's distinction, and argues that the medieval tradition of pedagogical rhetoric offers a new foundation for assessing the western rhetorical tradition as a whole.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arrangement and Rhetoric ▶ Invention and Rhetoric ▶ Logos and Rhetoric ▶ Memory and Rhetoric ▶ Rhetoric and Dialectic ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and Logic ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## Rhetoric in the Middle East

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An overview of rhetoric in the Middle East should begin with the recognition that the terms “rhetoric” and the “Middle East” are not neutral, as they reflect the ideological and cultural values of the Occident. There is a general consensus that the notion of rhetoric, coined by Plato in the fourth century BCE to define the art of public → discourse and oratory practiced in ancient Greece and the western tradition, should be challenged for its Hellenocentrism. Western scholars of rhetoric have moved beyond the belief that those outside the constellations of Occidental thought lack a “rhetorical consciousness.” The ancient Africans, Egyptians, Hebrews, and Chinese reflected on the role of symbols and argument (→ Rhetoric in Africa; Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan; Rhetorical Studies). Western rhetoric owes a deep debt to the Arab world, which preserved and translated the classical rhetorical texts of Greece and Rome during the Islamic world’s renaissance in the ninth and tenth centuries CE, a period in which Athens yielded to Baghdad as the center of humanistic scholarship. Between 711 and 1492, the art of rhetoric flourished in Spain during the period known as *La Convivencia* (“the coexistence”) as Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived in a cosmopolitan community (→ Rhetoric in Western Europe: Spain). The discourse of and in the modern Middle East is a tangle of religious, national, and sectarian myths and arguments, often prompted by traumas (e.g., the crusades, Muslim expansion, the rise of the Ottoman empire, colonialism, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, 9/11, etc.) that are the result of conflict between the west and the Middle East.

The Middle East is the geographical descriptor used in the modern west to name the region of predominantly Arab and Muslim peoples who, from the vantage point of Europe and the west, live in lands that are to the east. The symbolic construction of the Middle East and its people by those in the Occident is often expressed as one part of a much larger reductive narrative about the east, which Edward Said (1978) termed “Orientalism.” According to Said, western speakers, writers, artists, and media depict the Orient, Arabs, and Islam in essentialist terms.

The peoples of the Middle East (the term *Mashriq* is used by Arab language speakers to describe the region) have an understanding of symbols and discourse (the Arabic term *balagha* is closely related to the meaning of rhetoric) and are prompted to discourse by the exigencies of the region. Their view of the Occident is not immaculate as the symbolic construction of the west in this region clusters around a series of interpretations that Ian Buruma and Avishai Margalit call “Occidentalism” (2004). According to this frame, the west celebrates the sloth of the sinful city over the grounded rural; favors the economic

over the heroic; values matter over spirit; and endorses the wicked and evil. Accordingly, the scholarship on rhetoric/*balagha* in and about the Middle East/*Mashriq* can be organized around three notions: Orientalism, Occidentalism, and cosmopolitanism.

### ORIENTALISM

Arabs are often depicted in the west as fundamentally inhuman, warlike, emotional, and barbaric. Such essentializations, Said argued, reduce Arabs and Islam to an ideology of Orientalism, one that is both ahistorical and reductive (→ Postcolonial Theory). Many in the west reduce Islam to *jihad* or holy war, and the violence of some Muslims in the name of their religion is seen as representing the main rather than the marginal tenets of a faith held by over a billion people. A recent Pew report explains this view with data unveiling a significant “attitudinal divide” between the west and the Muslim world; many in the United States believe Muslims are fanatical, violent, and arrogant.

Said’s Orientalism argument has been heavily criticized, but the scholarly consensus is that he captured a previously unrecognized dichotomy in western thought, one that defined the Orient against the Occident. This dichotomy extends into western literature and philosophy, as Martin Bernal documents in his *Black Athena* (1987). Bernal’s argument, which is also contested in the literature, corroborates Said’s thesis by setting forth evidence that the west has demonized the Orient, suppressing evidence that the Egyptians (a “Middle Eastern” people) provided the philosophical touchstones of western civilization. Bernal provides ample evidence that the Orient and the Occident were in relationship during the axial age.

### OCCIDENTALISM

Occidentalism is the ideological frame of the west used by many residents of the Middle East, one that shares with Orientalism a commitment to an essentialist and bipolar vision of the social cosmos. A prime illustration of Occidentalism is the response of Palestinian Arabs to Zionism. The conflict between the Zionists and Palestinians was, in part, a clash between Orientalism and Occidentalism. Many Zionists brought with them colonial and Orientalist attitudes, viewing their mission as bringing civilization to a barren land and its backward people in need of enlightenment. The Palestinians saw the Zionists as invaders, a disease upon the Arab nation. They were foreign, with evil intention, bent on destroying Islam and the mosques of Palestine. The European Jews were viewed as communist, seeking to impose the material values of western civilizations on the land of Palestine and the indigenous Arab people.

The conflict between Zionism/Israel and Palestinian nationalism has often served as the primary exigency of discourse in the Middle East. Zionism and the creation of Israel, for example, are rarely placed in context by those in the region. Even those European Jews who did not yearn to return to an ancient homeland did so because their choices were severely restricted. The leading historian of Palestinian identity, Rashid Khalidi (1997), historicizes Zionism and notes that Jews fleeing the Nazis and the Holocaust were barred from entering most western countries, and, irrespective of a commitment to the “land of Israel” ideology, had nowhere else to go. Tragically, these refugees from Europe, with a

historical connection to the land of Palestine, participated in the dispersion of 800,000 Palestinian Arabs (the *Necba*), who also had deep religious and secular connections to the land. Edward Said was highly critical of Israel for its treatment of Palestinians, but he also condemned the Palestinian leadership for its failure to understand the “many wests” and its reliance on stereotypes of the Occident.

### COSMOPOLITANISM

Cosmopolitanism, an ideology affirming cultural and identity change due to contact with others, an inclusive universalism, and a commitment to conversation and argument, has been offered by some as a third perspective. From this perspective, those who subscribe to the ancient hatreds theory of conflict in the Middle East (e.g., “Jews and Arabs have and always will hate each other”), or believe the conflict is an expression of a “clash of civilizations” often fail to contextualize the evidence justifying their beliefs and fall prey to a fatalism that is not supported by history. This history includes religious texts that are open to rhetorical interpretations and periods in history in which Jews, Arabs, and Muslims lived in creative harmony.

The alternative to Orientalism, accordingly, is to view Arabism and Islam as diverse, heterogeneous movements, rooted in rhetorical situations that host demanding exigencies. Not all Arabs are religious Muslims and not all Muslims are Arab. The notion of Arabism is largely secular, and is expressed in the communal connection felt by those who speak Arabic and share a narrative of common origins. In the twentieth century, Arabism was closely linked to the nation-state, introduced into the region by the Europeans. The most compelling exigency of the twentieth century for the people in the region was colonialism – the British and French divided the Middle East as the reward for their victory in World War II. They created the modern map of the region, and twentieth-century rhetoric from the region has featured calls for decolonization and national unity. Arabism has not prevented conflict and war between and among Arab states. For example, there are profound cultural differences between Gulf Arabs and those of the Levant, reflecting religion, class, and societal structure.

Islam, which is often intertwined with Arabism, lends itself to a host of different and sometimes competing interpretations of the Koran (the central religious text of Islam) and its expressions. A number of Arab scholars have approached the study of the Koran as a rhetorical document, seeking to provide exegesis that displays how the text invents and persuades. Modern scholars illustrate the Koran’s commitment to reason; rhetorical interpretations place the text in its context, rejecting apodictic or literal understanding of its language. For example, the claims made by some that the Koran mandates jihad or suicide bombing or anti-Semitism are tempered and contextualized when the relevant texts are placed in their context. There are, of course, those who seek literal interpretations of the Koran, and derive from them fundamentalist principles dictating purity and cathartic violence, but they deviate significantly from normative Islam (→ Communication Modes, Muslim).

Orientalism yields in the face of experience that Arabism and Islam are contested notions, that self and group identity are in process, and, as Bernard Lewis has written, that the Middle East is a region of multiple and conflicted identities. Edwin Black, in his

*Rhetorical questions*, provides the ideal frame for an understanding of the discourse of this region. As Black observes, human identity is mutable and open to revision and change. Although there may be a diachronic or historical continuity in identity, the notion of identity itself is plastic, altered by the physical and symbolic forces that confront it.

A rhetoric of cosmopolitanism, which many scholars have advocated, features the need for people to narrate in the context of competing narratives about identity and place. Two key works of scholarship are important in gaining an appreciation of this alternative. The nature of a cosmopolitan rhetoric is what Chaïm Perelman and his colleague Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca develop in the most important and influential philosophical rhetoric of the twentieth century, the *New rhetoric* (1969; → Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion; Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). Their work deals with confused identities and value conflicts, and has its roots in the writings of the ancient Hebrews. Perelman saw great value in the Talmudic holding that multiple truths could coexist and that human argument rather than divine revelation should yield humane judgments. Scholars have used their work to highlight the use of argumentative reason in the Torah, the Christian Bible, and the Koran. In turn, Marc Gopin, in his *Holy war, holy peace* (2002), draws on this shared sense of reason expressed in the Abrahamic faiths to identify the touchstones necessary for rapprochement between Israelis and Palestinians. These religious texts, he argues, can yield points of convergence and myths needed to create a new reality in the region.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Modes, Muslim ▶ Discourse ▶ Postcolonial Theory ▶ Rhetoric in Africa ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan ▶ Rhetoric in Western Europe: Spain ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics

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# Rhetoric and Narrativity

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For centuries, rhetoricians, communication scholars, and practitioners have recognized narrative's rich descriptive and persuasive appeal. Numerous essays, books, and monographs address the nature and functions of narrative in disciplines as varied as rhetoric and communication, biology and anthropology, psychology and sociology, political science and public policy, and theology and philosophy.

Throughout rhetorical history, narrative has assumed many roles from a rhetorical trope or figure, to a part of speech, to a paradigm that explains how humans make sense of their world. Such diverse roles reflect the varying levels of privilege theorists have accorded to narrative at any given point in time.

Discussions of *narrative in classical times* emphasize narrative's role as a part of speech and a form of proof. Rhetorical handbooks dating back to the fifth century BCE catalog narration (*narratio* or *diēgēsis*) as a formal part of speech. Handbooks were an important resource for citizens of democratic Athens. Male citizens, who were expected to speak on their own behalf in Athenian law courts, outlined the particulars of their case in the narration (Kennedy 1999, 21). In his *Art of rhetoric*, Aristotle conceived of narrative as a form of artistic proof. He outlined proof by example, noting that examples could arise from historical accounts as well as invented parables and fables. Cicero expanded the discussion of narrative further, attending to both fictitious and historical narratives in *De inventione* (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman).

Narrative in all its forms (e.g., anecdotes, examples, allegories, fables, parables, stories) was a popular, if sometimes suspect, type of persuasion and instruction from classical Greco-Roman times through the establishment of the early Christian church and the *Middle Ages* (→ Rhetoric, Medieval). Surviving *progymnasmata* or handbooks of teaching exercises include sections on anecdotes, fables, and narratives among others (Kennedy 1999, 27, 205). Wary of narrative's appeal, some scholars questioned narrative's validity and truth value. Unlike scientific discourse and formal logical proofs, which resulted in certain knowledge, rhetoric yielded only probable knowledge. As unproved suppositions that could be imagined and falsified, narratives frequently prompted skeptical audience responses (→ Rhetoric and Logic; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion).

Nevertheless, narrative persisted in rhetorical treatises, handbooks, and theories, receiving some of its most significant attention in recent years. *Contemporary rhetorical treatments* have produced a richer understanding of narrative's nature, scope, and function. Some theorists have explored the role of narrative in politics, the legislature, and judiciary while others have attended to the function of scientific narrative (Bennett & Edelman 1985; Jorgensen-Earp & Jorgensen 2002). Rhetorical discussions also include the role of narrative in social change, in health communication, and in professional communication.

Narrative's influence in rhetoric is magnified by the number of theories and methods that rely on principles of narrativity. For example, rhetorical-critical theories and methods such as depiction, fantasy-theme analysis, metaphoric criticism, and dramatistic criticism

all draw on narrative concepts such as characters, examples, and stories (→ Rhetorical Criticism).

Much of the contemporary research on narrative draws on Walter Fisher's *theory of the narrative paradigm*. Outlining arguably the most comprehensive account, Fisher contends that narration is the dominant mode of human communication: humans are storytellers who create and communicate stories that form understanding, guide collective reasoning, and shape behavior. Contrasting his narrative approach with the formal logic associated with traditional argument, Fisher points out that the narrative paradigm has several advantages. In particular, because all humans have innate storytelling abilities, the narrative paradigm is democratic; that is, all people, not just experts, are qualified to render judgments. In addition, Fisher claims that the narrative paradigm promotes just decision-making based on good reasons (Fisher 1984, 1985).

Narrative theory and especially Fisher's narrative paradigm have been the subject of many *critiques*. Some critics argue that the narrative paradigm may not engender critical thinking since people will likely accept stories that reinforce beliefs they already hold even if those pre-existing beliefs are flawed. Others are troubled by Fisher's tendency to dichotomize traditional argument and narrative argument. Still others question the democratic and participatory nature of narratives (Gring-Pemble 2001; Rowland 1989; Warnick 1987).

In spite of the critiques, scholars recognize the value of narrative as both theory and method. Since rhetoric's inception, rhetoricians have valued narrative's capacity to help audiences "see" through vivid imagery, memorable characters, and unforgettable stories. Through narratives, people can celebrate common values, strengthen community, and assess the strengths and limitations of potential scenarios. As a heuristic, narrative theory will, no doubt, be strengthened as scholars attend to its many critiques. One especially fruitful line of inquiry that extends narrative's classical roots centers on narrative as a "rhetoric of possibility," a way of exposing alternatives and guiding people to moral judgment and action (Kirkwood 1992).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and History ▶ Rhetoric and Logic ▶ Rhetoric, Medieval ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetorical Criticism

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# Rhetoric, Nonverbal

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The word “nonverbal” is used to describe the many ways human beings communicate without overtly using words. Typically, this encompasses body movements (gestures, facial expressions, eye behavior, touching); body positioning (posture, distance from and alignment to others); and vocal behavior (rate, pitch, intensity). Sometimes physical (appearance) and environmental (architecture, design) features are also included.

## HISTORY

The modern study of nonverbal communication has its roots in the second half of the twentieth century, but Greek rhetoricians discussed the use of body movements in persuasive speaking as far back as the fifth century BCE (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of; Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic). These ideas were refined and expanded in the writings of Roman rhetorical theorists and practitioners (→ Rhetoric, Roman). This interest in the appropriateness and effectiveness of bodily behavior in the speech-making process waned during the Middle Ages and Renaissance (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance; Rhetoric, Medieval), but re-emerged as the heart of the elocution movement. From the middle of the eighteenth century to the early twentieth century, elocutionists emphasized what they considered to be the proper use of the body in delivering speeches. They had little concern for studying naturally occurring behavior. Instead, they offered prescriptions for successful body movement and voice in speech-making, which led to more stylized and formal behavioral enactments (→ Delivery and Rhetoric).

Two landmark studies of spontaneous nonverbal behavior were completed during the nineteenth century – de Jorio’s descriptions of Neapolitan gestures and Darwin’s observations on facial expressions linked to emotional states (→ Facial Expressions; Gestures and Kinesics). But it was not until the 1950s that the phrase “nonverbal communication” appeared in a book title, and several ongoing developments came together to forge the foundation for nonverbal studies as we know it today. In the decades preceding the 1950s, scholars from many disciplines developed an interest in the scientific study of communication (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline; Communication and

Media Studies, History to 1968). There was also a growing desire to understand the nuances of natural, face-to-face interaction, and the technology for recording and analyzing those behavioral nuances was becoming increasingly sophisticated (→ Language and Social Interaction). The convergence of these factors resulted in numerous theoretical perspectives and research programs. Birdwhistell explored the possibility that body movement had a structure that paralleled the structure of spoken language; Hall began mapping the organization and effects of space on human interaction; Rosenthal viewed nonverbal signals as a source of unconscious influence in various contexts; others were interested in nonverbal behavior as an outward manifestation of psychological states. Scholars also began to look for similarities in nonverbal behavior across cultures and species (e.g., nonhuman primates; → Nonverbal Communication and Culture). Two broad approaches emerged from these early explorations and they remain with us today: one approach describes how nonverbal behavior manifests itself in the structure and organization of human interaction (→ Interpersonal Communication); the other manipulates selected behaviors (nonverbal and/or psychological) and observes the effects on human transactions. In both approaches, it is clear that nonverbal and verbal behavior are not separate entities, but co-acting units of a comprehensive communication system governing human transactions.

### INTERRELATIONSHIPS WITH VERBAL BEHAVIOR

Verbal and nonverbal behavior interact and support one another in various ways. For example, the words “go north” can be reinforced and *repeated* with a pointing gesture that co-occurs or follows the verbalization.

Nonverbal behavior may also *complement* what is said verbally – e.g., a job interviewee who verbally expresses a desire to work for a company may also show his or her interest through positive facial and vocal expressions accompanied by an attentive, forward-leaning posture. When verbal and nonverbal behavior complement one another, this increases the possibility that a communicator’s intended message will be decoded accurately.

There are, however, many times when verbal and nonverbal behavior do not complement one another. Instead, they appear to be *discrepant* or at odds with one another, communicating different meanings. Sometimes this discrepancy is intentionally performed in order to signal an alternative meaning for the verbal behavior – e.g., a sarcastic vocal tone indicating the verbal message is a sham or a smile that accompanies the phrase “you’re a real loser,” indicating the statement was made in the context of play and should not be taken seriously. Comedians use discrepant cues to get laughs and being coy requires displays of both approach and avoidance. Physicians and teachers can effectively communicate serious concern by combining positive verbal behavior with negative facial expressions. Discrepant verbal and nonverbal behavior may also occur when people try to hide or mask their true feelings or attitudes. In such cases, actual feelings may overpower the masks, and facial, vocal, and bodily behavior will signal just the opposite of “I had a nice time” or “Of course I love you.” Because responses of this type can be ambiguous, there may be difficulty in accurately decoding. This can trigger a discrepant message in return. Sometimes discrepant messages are passed over or go unnoticed because the content is not perceived to be of great import. And sometimes subsequent conversation

helps to resolve seemingly discordant behavior. Many of these discrepant messages occur during natural feelings of ambivalence – e.g., not being sure whether you like someone or not, or not wanting to tell the truth, but not wanting to lie either.

Typically, decoders tend to believe the meaning associated with signals perceived as harder to fake when choosing between discrepant verbal and nonverbal signals. Although verbal behavior is often perceived as easier to fake, those who are just beginning to learn a new language tend to give more credibility to the manifest verbal behavior.

Nonverbal behavior may also act as a *substitute* for verbal behavior. Without any verbal behavior, a person can signal a variety of short-term states (tired, playful, frustrated, sad, indifferent) and even some long-term conditions (gender, old age) with facial expressions and body movements.

The face, voice, and hands are particularly effective in *accenting and moderating* verbal behavior.

Nonverbal behavior also works with verbal behavior to coordinate and *regulate* interaction behavior. Speakers coordinate and organize the production of their own messages in a variety of ways – e.g., using gestural chops and pauses to demarcate a verbalized series of units. In addition, both interactants regulate the flow of interaction between them – coordinating greetings, goodbyes, and turns at talk. Nonverbal behavior, like verbal, is often reciprocated when it meets our relationship expectations and preferences and offset with counteracting behavior when it does not.

## **AWARENESS AND TRUST**

Some nonverbal behavior is enacted without a great deal of conscious awareness, but this is not true of all nonverbal behavior. We may not be aware of certain nervous mannerisms we exhibit, some types of gestures we use, or the dilation of our pupils, but we are often very much aware of making gestures that are widely understood by our audience, many facial expressions of emotion, as well as the choosing of certain artifacts designed to affect our appearance. Our awareness of our interaction partner's nonverbal behavior also varies. If there is a reason to be particularly observant (e.g., suspected lying), our awareness of the other's nonverbal behavior is high; at other times our awareness of specific behaviors may be low even though the impression these behaviors collectively communicate is high – e.g., “It isn't anything you've said, but I feel like I can trust you.” Nonverbal behavior plays a central role in judgments of another person's honesty, status, trustworthiness, liking, and competence (→ Attribution Processes). As a result, its influence in applied settings cannot be underestimated – e.g., demeanor in the courtroom, at security check-points, in political speeches, cross-cultural and classroom encounters, and in personal and work relationships.

## **ORIGINS**

Our nonverbal behavior has both biological and cultural origins. For example, genes are responsible for how the facial muscles move when displaying various expressions of emotion, but culture teaches people whether and when to use certain facial displays, under what conditions they should be manifested, and how they should blend together

(Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Studies of twins and nonhuman primates suggest that we may be biologically predisposed to assume certain postures and possibly to enact whole sequences of movement behavior. Some aspects of nonverbal encoding and decoding skills may also have a genetic link. Tests repeatedly show females, as a group, to be somewhat more accurate encoders and decoders of nonverbal signals than males.

## MEASUREMENT

Nonverbal behavior is typically measured in three ways: (1) with a specific instrument (e.g., machines that track eye movements or vocal variations; → Eye Behavior); (2) by observers who make detailed recordings of visible behavior or use an extant coding scheme (→ Gaze in Interaction); and (3) by observers who make judgments about the meaning of one or more nonverbal stimuli. Our knowledge and measurement of nonverbal behavior is becoming increasingly more precise, and computer-assisted analyses enable the processing of more → information in a shorter period of time. Recording equipment is increasingly portable and unobtrusive (→ Measurement Theory), providing an opportunity for a greater database of spontaneous nonverbal behavior in natural situations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Delivery and Rhetoric ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Information ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Paralanguage ▶ Proxemics ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric, Medieval ▶ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ▶ Rhetoric, Roman

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## Rhetoric in North America: Canada

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Rhetorical study in Canada resists neat categorization, in part because it is a relatively recent phenomenon characterized by a rich diversity of perspectives and approaches, and by a comparatively fluid conception of what it means to engage in scholarly activity in rhetoric. As an academic specialization, rhetoric emerged in Canada only in the last two decades of the twentieth century (→ *Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada; Speech Communication, History of*). Prior to the 1980s, the subject was not offered in Canadian universities; there were no communication departments where rhetoric might have been taught, and university literature departments, firmly in the belletristic tradition, disdained the teaching both of nonliterary works and of composition. However, despite the lack of institutional visibility and sanction, small numbers of individual rhetoricians found homes in professional colleges and in departments such as curriculum studies and political science, and – more rarely – in literature departments.

While most Canadian rhetoricians maintained memberships in American and international organizations, by the early 1980s they had gained sufficient confidence, if not prominence, to form three distinct scholarly organizations of their own. Though many rhetoricians belong to more than one, the three organizations are sufficiently diverse that they do not overlap completely in membership or activities. Because their differences provide a clear picture of the nature of rhetorical study in Canada, they are briefly profiled here.

The first to form was the *Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric* (CSSR; [www.cssr-scsr.ca](http://www.cssr-scsr.ca)), founded in 1980 as the Canadian Society for the History of Rhetoric. The name change, made formal in 1991, was intended to recognize the diversity of approaches (not just historical) that characterize Canadian scholarship in the field. Through its annual conference and its biennial peer-reviewed journal, this small society provides “a forum for the voices of scholars with a range of research interests and from a variety of disciplines, yet who share a passion for ‘rhetoric’ – in whatever terms that be defined” (Spoel 2007, 1). The CSSR is bilingual, with members presenting and publishing in both English and French. The society holds its annual conference in conjunction with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, a multidisciplinary gathering of scholars that is the largest academic conference in the country. The majority of papers presented at the annual conference and published in the society’s electronic journal are concerned with rhetorical theory and with critical analyses of a range of objects (→ *Rhetorical Criticism; Rhetorical Studies*).

The *Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning* (CASLL) is the formal name of “Inkshed,” a group founded in 1983 to “provide a forum and common context for discussion, collaboration, and reflective inquiry in discourse and pedagogy in the areas of writing, reading (including the reading of literature), rhetoric, and language” (CASLL, n.d.). The group maintains an active online discussion list and holds its own annual gathering separately from the Congress, where its focus is largely on the practice of “inkshedding,” a collaborative process described by one of its originators as a

“dialogically transactional” form of freewriting (Hunt, n.d.). Like CSSR, CASLL serves to provide common ground for a constellation of scholars, but it differs from CSSR by being far more centered on the practice and scholarship of writing and its instruction, and its members tend to be those who teach composition or are employed by university writing centers. Since 1994, CASLL has maintained a modest book publishing program featuring titles in the areas of composition and literacy. The few existing studies of the nature and scope of rhetorical study in Canada have been produced by this organization, though their coverage extends mainly to writing instruction and writing centers (Graves 1994; Smith 1999, 2005; Graves & Graves 2006).

Like the other organizations, the Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (CATTW; <http://cattw-acprts.mcgill.ca>) was established in the early 1980s. A bilingual organization, CATTW is somewhat larger than the other two groups, and proudly draws its members from professional schools like engineering, education, science, social work, and management, as well as from the public and private sectors. Its mandate focuses on examining the generation, interpretation, structure, and impact of nonliterary writing in the professions and in professional settings such as business, nonprofit organizations, and government. Like CSSR, CATTW meets annually in conjunction with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, and there is enough overlap in the two societies’ interests and membership that they occasionally hold joint sessions. CATTW emphasizes collaboration and interdisciplinarity in research, reflecting the general state of rhetorical study in Canada. The association publishes two issues per year of its peer-reviewed journal, *Technostyle*, and maintains an active online discussion group.

The recent emergence of rhetoric as a field of academic specialization in Canada has *several implications*. First, rhetoric in the Canadian context remains a constellation of scholarly specialties and pedagogical interests rather than a unified disciplinary construct. Second, though the situation is gradually changing, rhetoric still suffers from a lack of institutionalized support, both within universities and in the national funding agencies. Third, since most Canadian rhetoricians were trained in the United States, a distinctly Canadian tradition in scholarship and theory has yet to fully emerge.

Nevertheless, the first decade of the twenty-first century has seen significant development in course offerings and programs, most of them in the contexts where Canadian rhetoricians have found homes: academic writing centers, professional schools, and departments of literature. The emergence and strengthening of graduate programs is one sign that the field is undergoing robust growth. Although Canada has thus far produced comparatively few theoretical advances (exceptions include Charland [1987] and Hunt), the eclectic and interdisciplinary nature of rhetorical study in Canada remains one of its strengths, providing opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches. Theoretical innovation is likely to occur first in one of two areas: in writing practice and instruction, where Canadian rhetoricians have been most active, or – in keeping with Canada’s central cultural preoccupation – in the rhetoric of identity formation (→ Identities and Discourse).

SEE ALSO: ► Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Identities and Discourse ► Rhetorical Criticism ► Rhetorical Studies ► Speech Communication, History of

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## **Rhetoric in North America: Mexico**

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Rhetorical practice and teaching existed in ancient native cultures in Mexico, mainly in the Aztec and Mayan civilizations (Beristáin & Ramírez Vidal 2005). Western rhetorical tradition was introduced into Mexico with the European conquest and Catholic evangelization: the triumph of the occidental civilization in the “new world” was due to the success of European rhetoric. During the sixteenth century, evangelization was founded on this rhetoric: the use of sermons was necessary to convert the inhabitants of the new world. In 1553 the Royal and Pontifical University of Mexico was erected; rhetoric was a mandatory course in the teaching program. The professors and the friars theorized on rhetoric and wrote many works about it (Osorio Romero 1980), such as the *Rhetorica Christiana* of the Franciscan missionary Fray Diego Valadés, published in Italy in 1579. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was an increase in teaching, practice, and theory of rhetoric, mainly because the Society of Jesus encouraged rhetorical studies in colonial Mexico. Rhetoric spread to other fields like poetry, as is shown in the work of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (Bizzell & Herzberg 2001, 780–787). The rhetorical development during the period of colonial domination has not been investigated comprehensively until now.

After the independence of Mexico (1810), internal wars and political and economic instability during the nineteenth century led to a decline in the teaching of rhetoric, it being restricted to religious colleges, a crisis that carried over into the next century. However, practice of rhetoric continued to be an important aspect of Mexican culture in the second half of the nineteenth century: debates and arguments in Congress and in

newspapers were recurrent events. The Mexican revolution originated new rhetorical procedures that became controlled by the governing power. In Mexican universities courses on rhetoric had not been included in the curriculum until now. Isolated lectures and seminars had been given by Mexican and foreign experts (mainly from Spain) to familiarize students with this topic.

In 1941 and 1942, the Mexican essayist Alfonso Reyes dictated two courses about “The critic in the Athenian age” and “The ancient rhetoric” (later published; Reyes 1961), which point out *two main trends* of rhetorical studies in the second half of the twentieth century: first, the rhetorical analysis of literature, and second, research on the classical rhetorical tradition.

The spread of formalism, structuralism, and poetics, and the rise of attention to literary form, largely due to the works of Heinrich Lausberg and the “Group  $\mu$ ,” stimulated *interest in textual analysis* in Mexican universities ( $\rightarrow$  Rhetoric and Poetics). Rhetoric and poetics were fused into one discipline for the study of literature, focusing mainly on literary figures, and to some measure on construction, characters, time, space, rhythm, verse structure, and so forth. In this field, prominent academics made important contributions, linked closely with  $\rightarrow$  linguistics ( $\rightarrow$  Text and Intertextuality). Rhetoric is regarded as an essential characteristic of language.

On the other hand, Mexican researchers have *focused on the classical, medieval, and Renaissance rhetorical tradition* ( $\rightarrow$  Rhetoric, Medieval). Translations of Greek and Latin rhetorical treatises have been made in recent years: the fragments of Gorgias, the *Dialogues* of Plato, the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle, rhetorical works of Cicero, the *Dialogue on oratory* of Tacitus, the *Institutio oratoria* of Quintilian, and the *Poetria Nova* of Geoffrey of Vinsauf ( $\rightarrow$  Rhetoric, Roman; Rhetoric, Greek).

Scholars have studied and published about different rhetorical topics, periods, theorists, and authors: the Sophistic movement, the Attic orators (particularly Antiphon, Lysias, and Isocrates), Aristotle, the ancient Greek novel, Cicero, Quintilian, etc. Furthermore, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance have been the object of rhetorical studies. Mexican and foreign scholars have focused particular attention on rhetoric in colonial Mexico: history, preaching, teaching, and theory (Abbott 1996; Beuchot Puente 1996). Scholars in the US, Italy, Spain, and Mexico have largely studied the *Rhetorica Christiana* of Diego Valadés (1579).

Rhetoric is now being studied from *different orientations*, as seen in the recent organization in Mexico (by Helena Beristáin of the Institute of Philological Researches, UNAM) of two international congresses on rhetoric (1998 and 2004), the publication of the collection “Log of rhetoric” (“Bitácora de retórica”), and courses and seminars about rhetorical topics.

New trends of philosophical thinking from Europe and the US are opening new fields for the study of rhetoric in Mexico, particularly  $\rightarrow$  semiotics and pragmatics, which have provided new instruments and theories ( $\rightarrow$  Linguistic Pragmatics; Rhetoric and Semiotics). Deconstructionism and  $\rightarrow$  hermeneutics are promising domains for expansion of rhetorical studies. Furthermore, the modern disciplines on  $\rightarrow$  discourse could be described as rhetorical, and some scholars consider argumentation as the main part of this discipline ( $\rightarrow$  Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Nevertheless, few researchers in Mexico are aware they are using rhetoric; this discipline is studied usually without being named as such.



Consequently, the future of rhetoric in Mexico depends on linking it more closely with the philosophical and textual disciplines, and on finding a particular development in the history of rhetoric.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Hermeneutics ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Linguistics  
► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric in Central and South America  
► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetoric, Roman  
► Rhetoric and Semiotics ► Rhetorical Criticism ► Rhetorical Studies ► Semiotics  
► Text and Intertextuality

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## **Rhetoric in North America: United States**

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The democratic ethic that has dominated the intellectual history of the United States has shaped a rhetorical practice driven by the socio-cultural influence of the word. The result has been a rich multiplicity of voices that defy generalization, yet define a complex texture. The first rhetorical period, approximately the first century and a quarter of the presence of British settlement in North America, was dominated by religious rhetoric and specifically by the *Puritans*. Puritan sermons were highly structured, linking lessons from biblical text to everyday life. Puritans respected reason and viewed it as a gift from God that opened human insight into God's structuring of the universe. The democratic content of Puritan rhetoric was constrained. Beneath God, the minister was separated from others in the community by his trained role as the interpreter of the Word. Men and women were similarly differentiated by the biblical separation of gender. And finally the elect of the Puritan community were separated from non-believers. Within that narrowed

but still broad slice of Puritan life, democratic equality defined access to power (→ Rhetoric and Religion).

As the eighteenth century proceeded, *secular rhetorics* began to grow in importance. In these rhetorics can be heard two voices: democratic pragmatism and radical reform. Secular institutions of governance developed with an openness to public persuasion. Courts featured common law and self-representation for plaintiffs and defendants. Legislatures responded to petitions formulated at public meetings, most often requests for governmental attention to practical community problems. Beside the pragmatic secular rhetoric grew a more moralistic and spiritual religious rhetoric. The so-called *Great Awakening or New Light* preaching located spirituality and morality in the human heart. When joined with the Enlightenment's belief in the human capacity for reason, the result was a radical rhetoric of reform. The great rhetorical triumph of the eighteenth century, the American Revolution, was achieved with this combination of institutional pragmatism and reform.

With independence achieved, the dialectic tension between these two rhetorical forces grew. Adoption of the United States Constitution and similar state constitutions established forums for deliberation and → persuasion. The United States Senate, particularly, became a great deliberative body where the issues of the day were debated (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication). Outside of the governmental forums, a high style of oratory, particularly prominent in great civic events, celebrated the nation and motivated the energy of expansion. The primacy of public rhetoric as the keystone of a democratic society was both a theme and the demonstrable commitment of this institutional discourse. Outside the government, through specialized newspapers, committed issue-interested organizations, the pulpit, and the lecture circuit, reformers called upon an idealistic moral rhetoric to resist injustice and motivate change. The energy of reform, and the failure of institutions such as the Senate to contain that energy, culminated in the collapse of rhetoric into the Civil War.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the balance of power between reform and institutional rhetoric shifted away from the institutions of government toward a more *public rhetoric*. The public was perceived as an agency of change and, as democracy diffused through broader notions of citizenship, the public became the dominant audience for rhetoric. The emergence of a more public rhetoric was exemplified most prominently in the great disputes about the impact of the new industrialization, the great immigration, and the emergence of urban poverty. Within the more conservative institutional venues the debate proceeded about poverty and its causes. Movements as diverse as social Darwinism, Christian socialism, and the gospel of wealth shaped public views on the responsibility of the poor for their own condition and the responsibility of the community to address poverty. But this intellectual exchange was in counterpoint with the great efforts of reformers among labor, African-Americans, women, farmers, and others to organize through direct action to alter the political and economic circumstances of ordinary citizens. The morality of reform was joined with the sense of democratic power that rhetorically motivated those affected to force change in their conditions.

The struggle between institutional voices and voices of reform culminated in the *progressive movement* by the turn of the twentieth century. Progressivism was more

conservative than the reformist call for civil rights and economic conscience, but its agenda addressed the reformers' issues. Through its successful call for direct election of senators, recall, and referendum, progressivism expanded the institutional venues of a rhetorical public. But the most dramatic rhetorical change was the rhetorical presidency: presidents enhanced their power over other institutions of government by direct appeal to the public.

As the twentieth century proceeded, rhetoric's focus on the public audience was transformed by *technologies of communication*, including most prominently radio, television, and electronic augmentation of voice. Speakers could reach millions; millions could literally hear and later see their president and other leaders at the moment they spoke. Ironically, in the balance between institutional and reform voices, mass communication returned power to the institutions that controlled media. Yet, particularly in mid-century, reformers began to master techniques of mass communication and to activate civil rights movements for African-Americans, women, and other marginalized groups, as well as opposition to the Vietnam War. Even a more general counterculture rhetoric promoted a more libertine and free individualism. Popular conservative movements emerged late in the century, particularly from religious speakers who had mastered mass communication (→ Rhetoric and Technology).

At the start of the twenty-first century, the growth of the Internet promises to again transform the nature of rhetoric in the United States. The dominance of mass communication, where one addressing many dominated communicative technology, appears at an end. The connections of *virtual space* multiply the possibilities for voices to reach others. At the same time, the sheer proliferation of voices presents a problem of focus for those who attend to rhetoric. The model of citizenship developed within the context of mass communication must now adapt to new parameters created by the diffused Internet.

SEE ALSO: ► Deliberativeness in Political Communication ► Persuasion ► Religion and Popular Communication ► Rhetoric and Politics ► Rhetoric and Religion ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetoric and Technology

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# Rhetoric in Northern and Central Asia

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Although the area of northern and central Asia is comprised of a large number of independent and sovereign nations, including the Russian Federation and the central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, its recent history is dominated by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). For most of the twentieth century each of these now independent nations was a part of the USSR; since 1991, the central Asian states have struggled to survive in the shadow of the Russian Federation. The central story of rhetoric in this region in both modern history and contemporary times must therefore be framed in terms of the former USSR and its transformations in the continuing period of post-Soviet democratization, mock-democratization, and authoritarian reinstatement (→ Rhetoric in Eastern Europe).

## **RHETORIC DURING THE SOVIET PERIOD**

Rhetoric in the USSR was not at all times in all places the same, but certain general patterns were evident. Two dominant influences on Soviet rhetoric were the lack of strong rhetorical traditions from Tsarist times and the systematic suppression of the human rights vital to the flowering of rhetoric, such as freedoms of speech, press, and assembly, as well as most academic freedoms (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Soviet rhetoric was thereby constrained: inventional and deliberative attributes were systematically shorn from rhetoric in pedagogy, theory, and practice, leaving rhetoric as, primarily, a concern with either compositional stylistics or effective arrangement and presentation of pre-determined messages, following the “party line” (→ Invention and Rhetoric).

The study and practice of rhetoric was never vibrant under Tsarist regimes, nor did it prosper under the Soviets. Reuer (2000) surveys the historical study of rhetoric in Russia, finding little interest in it as a discipline. Although there were exceptions, interest and pedagogy in rhetoric were either for ceremonial purposes or limited to precepts for literary composition. Under the Soviets, the guiding principle of the curriculum was Marxism–Leninism, and there was no room for orientations that were rhetorical rather than material. In general, rhetorical pedagogy (although never by that name) within the Soviet academy emphasized style and presentation rather than invention and argumentation (→ Style and Rhetoric). The stylistic focus of rhetoric was indirectly reinforced during the Soviet period by state constraints on political and intellectual activities: both “subversive” activities and texts were suppressed. Just as dissident speech was not tolerated, neither were the texts that had the potential to

equip readers in the arts of deliberative rhetoric. After all, such texts are designed to bring to public consideration possibilities of things being other than the way they are.

In a study of Soviet approaches to rhetorical education and practice during the 1950s and early 1960s, Butler found “a surprising amount of speech activity” that was “apparently grounded on classical rhetoric” (1964, 229). Butler focused much of his analysis of Soviet rhetorical pedagogy on a translation of *The art of oratory*, edited by A. Tolmachev (1959), which was one of only two Soviet texts on rhetoric that he located in the Library of Congress through 1963. Among venues for rhetorical practice, Butler found an abundance of “discussion clubs” as well as “groups, panels, committees, chapters, unions, directorates, and councils (the word soviet means council).” In all of these contexts, however, communication practices were “designed to express a single ideology,” creating a “dominant ‘downward’ flow of communications”: “Discussions are used for making decisions, but the answers sought are mainly the ways and means to implement an official policy decreed from above” (Butler 1964, 230).

The most prominent among forums for discussion were “study groups” to assist in “adult education.” Although there were local groups in virtually every social entity, from schools to factories to collective farms, there was also an overarching national organization: the Znanie Society. The activities in these groups varied, ranging from indoctrination in Marxism–Leninism to the promotion of pragmatic government goals, such as increased production quotas. As Butler notes of Soviet speech situations generally, the “ends of speech,” including “to inform, entertain, stimulate, and convince,” were generally present, “but to the Soviets these are means to an end – that end being the building and perfecting of the Communist state” (1964, 238).

It follows that in public education, “speech skills” were “conceived of largely as a political instrument” (Butler 1964, 231), but one always in the service of “state-approved ideology” (238). Butler concludes that although the “standards of eloquence” that are “taught and practiced in the Soviet Union” include the basic “rhetorical elements” of speaker, subject matter, audience, and occasion, “the Soviets have added a fifth requisite – agitation and propaganda.” Rhetoric was a mode of propagation, not a mode of inquiry: “Oratory is thereby reduced to an instrument for control over individuals, rather than for the development of individuals” (Butler 1964, 238; → Propaganda).

In restricting the role of rhetoric to propagation of Marxism–Leninism, as interpreted by Party leaders, the vitality and range of rhetoric was severely limited. The relative constancy of constriction of rhetorical topics during the Soviet period is evident in Hannah’s (1965) content analysis of 120 speeches made by delegates from the Soviet Union to the UN Security Council over a period of roughly 15 years. Hannah concludes “on the basis of the evidence available that the Soviet delegates’ formal political communications did not basically change during the years 1946–1960,” although fluctuations were noted (Hannah 1965, 147).

The late Soviet period saw reforms under Gorbachev that loosened the ideological yoke on rhetorical practices, though education experienced little reform. Communication patterns remained predominantly “top-down,” but under *perestroika* a “nascent Russian civil society” began to develop (Weigle 2000, 2), and with it came some grassroots political deliberation.

## POST-SOVIET RHETORIC

The dissolution of the Soviet Union gave rise to 15 independent nations, including the Russian Federation and the five central Asian nations. The hegemony of the Soviet Union had broken asunder, and in many ways new and “open” societies were instantly born. But the old Soviet habits of life and attitudes toward authority did not simply vanish, and in many ways they merely reinstated themselves in “democratic” form (Williams 2007). There has not been a decisive shift from “closed” societies to “open” societies, nor has there been a consistent trajectory in this direction. Consequently, it might be more accurate to think of social and political regimes in northern and central Asia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union as “opening” and “closing” in varying degrees.

Curricular incorporation of rhetoric during the post-Soviet era has been spotty and ad hoc. In Russia itself, the curricula for both secondary and higher education are still centrally controlled: Moscow defines required courses of study as well as “majors” and areas of concentration. Neither rhetoric nor communication has gained national sanction, and although classes in various areas of communication (especially intercultural communication and public relations) are taught at several universities, they are generally taught as “electives” under the auspices of other approved programs of study such as foreign languages (especially programs in English and translation). They remain marginal to the primary curricula. Even so, occasional courses in rhetoric do now appear, as do classes in argumentation. Although most Russian approaches to argumentation remain primarily linguistic or philosophical, contemporary European perspectives on argumentation are gaining attention, notably the Amsterdam School’s approach of pragma-dialectical analysis (van Eemeren et al. 1996, 353; → Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Some of the texts of the Amsterdam School are now translated into Russian.

A professional education organization, the Russian Communication Association (RCA), was formed in 2000; however, it does not have national NGO status under current Russian regulations. RCA functions primarily to promote the study of communication and as an information clearing house, facilitating course development, textbook acquisition, and pedagogical approaches for those who do teach courses in communication in various corners of the Russian curriculum. RCA, with support from the North American Russian Communication Association, has sponsored a biennial communication conference since 2002; rhetoric, argumentation, and political communication have been among program topics at these conferences. An affiliated NGO, “Metacommunication,” associated with the Rostov Institute of Management, Business and Law, publishes an annual Bulletin of the RCA, *Vestnik*. Rhetoric, argumentation, persuasion, and public speaking are all categories included in its call for manuscripts. The first rhetorical journal in Russia, *Ritorika*, began publication in 1995, and a new *Russian Journal of Communication* will begin publication in the United States in 2008 in English (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia).

Although there are some initial efforts to begin a Kazakh Communication Association along the lines of RCA, that initiative is in its early phases. Despite the lack of professional organizations in central Asia to promote the study of rhetoric, international NGOs such as the International Debate Education Association (IDEA; [www.idebate.org](http://www.idebate.org)) have made great inroads throughout central Asia, and especially in Kazakhstan, in the promotion of

debate training in secondary schools, institutions of higher learning, and civic organizations. IDEA incorporates into its debate training programs elements of argumentation and public speaking. IDEA is also active in Mongolia, again promoting debate as an agency of personal and political empowerment. Overall, since its inception in 1999, “IDEA has grown from a collection of debate clubs into the pre-eminent global debate organization, touching the lives of over 70,000 secondary school students, 15,000 university students . . . in 27 countries.”

Rhetorical practices in the Russian Federation during the presidency of Boris Yeltsin were, relative to the darkest years of the Soviet Union, open and free: political parties with diverse ideological perspectives, political leaders with divergent styles and often dissident visions, as well as charismatic and demagogic leaders, all vied for public allegiance. Russian political space was opening at a rapid pace; however, it was not fully open, and Yeltsin continued throughout his presidency to resort to authoritative methods when more democratic ones became too cumbersome or unpredictable. Indeed, Russia’s democratic “revolution” had a typically Soviet flavor to it: it was imposed and implemented in a “top-down” manner (Williams 2007).

Rhetorical analyses of Russian → political communication (Williams et al. 1997; Janack 2002) and transformations in Russian national identity (Ishiyama et al. 1997) have begun to appear in English-language journals, but few have appeared in Russian journals (an exception is Launer et al. 1997). From the perspective of rhetorical theory, the role of → memory in post-Soviet rhetoric is of increasing interest. The particular concern is with public memory, both relative to finding usable history from which to generate arguments for democratic actions and to reconciling with repressive and brutal dimensions of the Soviet legacy (→ Collective Memory and the Media; Memory and Rhetoric).

The central Asian nations did not open as radically after the dissolution of the Soviet Union as did the Russian Federation. Each retained strong elements of centralized, autocratic control, yet blended that control in different ways with democratic reforms. Under Vladimir Putin, Russia is now closing: media are centralized under government control, new laws greatly inhibit the development of civil society, and opposition political parties are de-registered and/or physically harassed (→ Russia: Media System). The dissolution of the Soviet Union created the political space for the cultivation of rhetoric in pedagogy, theory, and practice, and in the opening of the Russian Federation and the central Asian nations the seeds of rhetorical study were sown. As those nations, and particularly Russia, are now closing, it is not clear that rhetoric will come to a full flowering.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Collective Memory and the Media ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Eastern Europe and Russia ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Invention and Rhetoric ▶ Memory ▶ Memory and Rhetoric ▶ Political Communication ▶ Propaganda ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric in Eastern Europe ▶ Russia: Media System ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems

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Insofar as rhetorical practice travels through systems of symbolicity, so-called channels or modes of communication are the discursive spaces within which rhetoric operates. And insofar as rhetorical practice should culminate in some sort of adjustment or change in audiences', readers', or viewers' knowledges, feelings, self-identities, and/or behaviors, the ways in which those dimensions of individuals are accessed physiologically are central to rhetorical effectivity. Those two axioms comprise the grounds for rhetoricians' interest in the orality-literacy theorems.

The orality-literacy theorems grow out of studies of oral, literate, and electronic media of communication (→ Media History; Medium Theory). Milman Perry's work in the 1920s on rhythmic and syllabic patterns in Homer, arguing that oral rhetors could insert variously metered epithets – “pre-fabricated materials” (Ong 1982, 21) – from a stock list, showed us how grand epics could be presented without brute memorization; standardized forms plus commonplace epic themes could be woven endlessly into different-yet-coherent patterns in oral psychoculture. Psychocultural theorization, contrasting oral and literate cultures, had begun.

Here is a dual focus on both the ways in which whole societies are dominated by one or more of those media in any given epoch (*macro-theorems*) and the processes by which



individuals come to process symbols delivered to them aurally, visually (via literate, pictorial, performed, or material symbols; → Visual Communication), and even tactilely, olfactorily, or gustatorily (*micro-theorems*). Theorems are understood broadly as propositions that are derived from axioms or other pre-existing formulae, as a logician might understand that notion, but also more narrowly as “more or less hypothetical statements” derived from observations of human communication practices (Ong 1982, 156). The observations come from combing historical accounts – epic oral/written poetry, early treatises, sacred and profane literature – in order to reconstruct communication practices that would be explained were the theorems accepted as true. The orality-literacy theorems, therefore, are largely post hoc explanations of the communication environments within which the human lifeworld operates and of the mental operations for perception, comprehension, understanding, and evaluation that are conditioned by different communication media (→ Rhetoric and History). After examining both the macro- and micro-theorems underlying interests in oral, literate, and electronic environments, this entry will relate them to a broader notion of → media ecology and to conceptions of rhetoric (→ Rhetorical Studies).

### MACRO-THEORY: DOMINANT MEDIA IN SOCIETY

McLuhan first became known widely for writing about social structure, culture, and communication media (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; McLuhan, Marshall). Following other historians of technology and society, most notably Mumford (1934) and Innis (e.g., 1972), McLuhan’s *The Gutenberg galaxy* (1962) was a study of the impact of mechanically reproduced literacy – the flood of publishing following the invention of the printing press (→ Printing, History of). “Technological environments are not merely passive containers of people,” he argued (1962, 7), “but are active processes that reshape people and other technologies alike.” McLuhan brought into focus the theorem that changes in dominant media of communication – oral to literate to electronic – rippled through the social, economic, political, and religious institutions of societies, altering them determinatively (→ Rhetoric and Media Studies; Rhetoric and Technology).

*Oral culture:* Havelock (1986) was concerned among other things with understanding how cultural frameworks – *nomoi* and *êthea* – were constructed, maintained, and transmitted in an *oral society*. Translating these words as *custom-laws* and *folk-ways*, respectively, he argued that orations and especially poems were the keys to managing life in pre-literate Greek society. Poetry embedded history and wisdom from the past, while orations contained the grand visions of the world and human beings’ places within it at times of crisis and decision. Custom-laws were sayings or aphorisms that encapsulated the wisdom of one’s ancestors in mnemonically memorable ways, while folk-ways were the accepted routines of doing everything from accomplishing everyday tasks to relating to other societies (→ Memory; Memory and Rhetoric).

Socialization and understanding of one’s place in the collectivity were achieved through recitative educative processes, but more in the large on public occasions, festivals where the folk would gather to renew their collective commitments and have reinforced their individual and societal identities. The *nomoi* and *êthea* were captured in streams of sound from the poets, seers, priests, orators, and actors working amphitheater audiences,

who in turn, with their clapping, singing, and recitations, legitimated cultural understandings. Together, they formed the *echo-principle*: the audience could follow celebrants, even join in repetitions of key notions or lessons, much as today's child reads a book over and over, finding joy in speaking the lines being read by a parent. Oral cultures thus live in an evolving present, grounded in traditions from the past that are echoed in public recountings of them, building futures molded out of tradition (→ Rhetoric, Greek).

*Literate culture*: McLuhan (1962) argued that the movement in the west from chirographic to *print literacy* conditioned European democratization, the Reformation, school teaching, and the scientific method. For Postman (1985), the west reached its zenith in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – the height to him of political writing, scientific advancement, school expansion, and public business. Deibert (1997) added that the mechanical-literate revolution represented by print radically changed modes of distributing knowledge and of thinking – social epistemology – and hence showed us that new media are environments rather than simply tools. Not only did societies' institutions change with the coming of new media, he argued, but so did the *mentalités collectives* – collective and individual consciousness.

*Electronic culture*: each new *electronic technology* – telegraph, telephone, silent then sound film, → radio, → television, computer-assisted communication (→ Cinema; Telegraph, History of) – deepened human beings' reliance upon “conveniences” in communication, work relationships, and entertainment, but, more than that, rewired the ways we talk in, interact with, access, and process the world. The electronic age, as well, became the age of → spectacle, where publicly shared images or sequences of (moving) images seized dominant places in western socio-political life, producing an *ocularcentric society*. If the electronic media gave us pictures that took the place of direct human encounter, computerization only accelerated reliance upon virtual interconnectivity, creating a *cyberworld* in which material spaces gave way to their pixilated representations and in which identities could be remanufactured at will (→ Digital Imagery; Digital Media, History of).

Overall, the social-historical shifts from oral to literate to electronic culture wrenched familial-institutional life and individuals' operations within it, producing new cultural rules and roles. Shifts in mediation were accompanied by wholesale revolution in human environments and the procedures needed to work within them.

### **MICRO-THEORY: ACOUSTIC CODING, LITERACY, AND VISUALITY**

As already suggested, not only did the west witness fundamental changes in social-political-economic-religious institutions as orally based *monopolies of knowledge* yielded to literately and then electronically dispersed social epistemologies, but it has experienced shifts in mental operations accompanying alterations in human reliance upon acoustic, literate-symbolic, and visual-pictorial channels of communication. The orality-literacy theorems attempt to account for those shifts.

*The acoustic world*: with no inscription to record ideas, traditions, procedures, and marks of identity, how did oral (tribal) cultures socialize and grip their members? Through mnemonics and speech formulae with rhythm, balance, repetition, alliteration, and assonance, and proverbs that could be applied situationally, answer oralists. Ong (1982) inventoried characteristics of orally based thought and expression, suggesting among

other things that acoustically circulated ideas were additive (not subordinate), aggregative and clichéd (not analytic), redundant (not sparse), conservative or traditionalist (without narrative originality), concrete or close to the lifeworld, agonistically toned (contrasting pieces of proverbial wisdom to solve specific problems), empathetic and participatory, homeostatic (seeking stable equilibria), and highly situational. One sees heroic achievement in oral cultures, but little in the way of individual identity; membership and totems define the self, acquired through recitation and ritual practice. The world and those dwelling in one's tribe are interiorized largely through sound.

*The literate world:* in the west, literacy spawned a very different consciousness. Writers and readers gained a sense of individual identity; places to read were built into living quarters, isolating self-consciousness. Writing separated ideas from those thinking them, even abstracting written philosophies and literatures that took on existences independent of authors. *Authorizing* could become a logical-rational, rule-based testing process rather than a matter of collective affirmation. Organized vocabularies representing community or national language practices and associated with discursive realms of life (economics, social relations, theological orientations), *grapholects*, grew strong enough to separate the knower from the known. From here, it was but a short journey to “typographical man” (McLuhan 1962), the “typographic mind” (Postman 1985), and even a new world, “typographic America” (Postman 1985) – modernism.

*The electronic world:* the theorems suggest that one should be able to trace the remanufacture of human subjectivity today. Assuming that westerners have been vision-biased since the beginning of cultural life, how might we pursue the impact of “new media” in our time? *Remediation* is a framing process, suggesting both that new media absorb and remake older channels/practices and that old media steal from the new to create *retrograde media* and hence adapt to new conditions. So, computer games draw on epic stories and film narratives, while both realistic films such as *Jurassic Park* and animated features such as *Shrek* work off digitized images, special effects, and editing. Waite (2003) goes further, arguing that the electronic screen arts, in particular, can alter humans' sense of duration and space, providing a *variable flex* orientation, constructing a new *communication matrix* within which we comprehend the external and our internal worlds through de-centered experiences. The medium is the message (McLuhan 1964), as well as the environment and the fundament of psychic life (→ Rhetoric and Visuality).

### THE THEOREMS, MEDIA ECOLOGY, AND RHETORIC

If we assume that rhetoric is both a practice of figuration and means of → persuasion, then the internal-psychological figuration of the world via symbols and the external-social, public → discourses by which large groups of people are persuaded to experience that world both are significant rhetorical concerns. Rhetoric, like the orality-literacy theorems, must address means of treating issues of both consciousness and culture.

On the surface, the theorems account for the need of rhetorical theorists to remake the art of persuasion developed for oral societies – even those with writing available, as in fourth-century BCE Greece – into a *techne* more attuned to the formal characteristics of written language syntax and to the reasoning processes of emerging, formal logics in eras of literacy (→ Rhetoric and Logic). And, in our time, *visual rhetoric* explores the mechanisms

by which images and their sequencing function discursively, creating persuasive texts. Most simply, the theorems magnify the importance of channel and coding in human communication; more profoundly, they undergird the proposition that oral, literate, and visual rhetorics are radically different processes of persuasion and identification because of their varied grounding in alternative subjectivities and cultural practices.

The orality-literacy theorems are being expanded and deepened today by *media ecology* studies. Starting with New York University's doctoral program fashioned by Postman in 1970, media ecology studies works from a broad base extruding the concepts underwriting the orality-literacy theorems: that media are sensorial *environments* (extending and emphasizing particular senses); symbolic environments (each governed by its own syntax, coding conventions, and social uses); and combined into multimediated environments (with varied avenues to communication available in industrial societies). And as well, environments are media, because architecture, urban and rural configurations of landscape, or nature itself, for example, can govern human interaction (see Lum 2005 for dilation of these claims).

Such propositions drive rhetoric to treat the materiality of the physical world, natural and social, as both figuration and a force in persuasion, and to consider environment not simply as context for communication, but integral to rhetorical effectivity. The orality-literacy theorems, especially as conceptualized in media ecology studies, radically expand rhetorical thinking about codes, symbolicity, and what counts as messages.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cinema ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Discourse ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Media History ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Memory ▶ Memory and Rhetoric ▶ Persuasion ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Radio ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and History ▶ Rhetoric and Logic ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetoric and Technology ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Spectacle ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television ▶ Visual Communication

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# Rhetoric and Philosophy

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Interactions between rhetoric and philosophy have always been marked by concerns (and sometimes controversy) about the scope, status, and interdependence of the two disciplines. The reason is that while both disciplines are concerned with → discourse, their aims are different. Philosophy is chiefly concerned with discourse as a medium to express and test knowledge, whereas rhetoric is chiefly concerned with discourse as a medium of influence on minds of individuals and collectives. As a historical matter, contacts between rhetoric and philosophy have differed according to intellectual and cultural circumstances within the ancient, medieval, renaissance, modern, and contemporary eras.

## ANCIENT ERA

The earliest relations between rhetoric and philosophy concerned whether principles of speaking constituted an art. Theoretical precepts about speech-making existed before mid-fifth century BCE, beginning evidently with Tisias (and possibly Corax) of Syracuse (→ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic). By the early fourth century, a body of precepts had developed on public speaking that many conceived as an art. The status of the “art of speeches” was first questioned by Isocrates c. 390 BCE, when he insisted that speaking was not governed by an invariable, exact art, but rather a variable, productive art (*Against the sophists* 10–12). Shortly afterward, Plato enlarged the argument in his *Gorgias* (c. 387 BCE); rhetoric, he reasoned, did not possess knowledge of its object, the soul, could not explain its procedure, and aimed at pleasure – not benefit – of the soul; therefore, rhetoric was not an art (465). Plato later placed rhetoric on a philosophical foundation in *Phaedrus* (c. 367 BCE), where rhetoric was a soul-leading art dependent upon knowledge of soul types and the ability to adapt speeches to such types (261, 271).

Extending and responding to Plato, Aristotle’s *On rhetoric* (c. 330 BCE) defended rhetoric as an art (1354a) and theorized artistic persuasion as deriving from rational arguments, the speaker’s ethical influence, and emotional states of the audience (1355b–56a). Aristotle constructed rhetorical argumentation on analogy with dialectical argumentation (1354a). Accordingly, rhetoric received two logical instruments, enthymeme (rhetorical deduction) and example (rhetorical induction; 1356a–b); it was also furnished with general and particular heuristic topics (1358a). Concerning the scope of rhetoric, Aristotle constrained its application to settlement of matters falling outside the province of any art, especially matters that were deliberative, epideictic, and judicial (1357a; 1358a–75a; → Rhetoric, Epideictic).

Aristotle’s *On rhetoric* combined philosophical conceptions of rhetoric with some pre-existing doctrines to provide a fairly complete theory of the parts of rhetoric, including invention, expression (incorporating delivery), and arrangement of speech materials (→ Rhetoric, Greek). This theory facilitated further development, especially in the philosophical schools, for almost two centuries. However, around mid-second century BCE,

renewed hostility arose toward rhetoric among philosophers. They argued that rhetoric was not an art because it dealt with uncertainties, did not reliably persuade, and was not useful, either to speakers or communities. They also complained about the scope of rhetoric. Hermagoras of Temnos' *Rhetorical arts* (plausibly c. 140–130 BCE) proposed that rhetoric was concerned with political questions of two sorts: particular questions (hypotheses) and general questions (theses). Philosophers argued that general questions were not the concern of rhetoric, because their treatment required knowledge that belonged to other arts (Cicero, *De oratore* 1.56, 85). Defenders of rhetoric denied that rhetoric was restricted to particular questions (Cicero, *De oratore* 1.47–57, 85–88); they also argued that philosophy had no practical use (implying it was not an art; e.g., Philodemus, *On rhetoric*, *P. Herc.* 1078/1080, fragments 13, 18; Sudhaus 1896, 154–55, 157).

Within this polemical context, Cicero composed *De oratore* (55 BCE), which reduced the dispute over rhetoric and art to a linguistic quibble (1.102–110) and required that any complete speaker know all important matters and arts (1.20). Cicero's requirement admitted the speaker's need to understand arts outside of rhetoric, but it also implied that speakers were superior to philosophers, because speakers added to philosophers' knowledge a capability for persuasive expression (3.143). Quintilian extended Cicero's view, claiming that rhetoric incorporated everything needed to educate a speaker, including all the philosophical arts (*Institutio oratoria* 1.pr.16–17, 2.21.13, c. 95 CE; → Rhetoric, Roman). Afterwards there were minor skirmishes between rhetoric and philosophy (see, e.g., Aristides, *To Plato on rhetoric*, 145–147 CE, and Sextus Empiricus, *Against the professors* 2, second–third century CE), but the two arts coexisted in a kind of intellectual détente through the remainder of antiquity (→ Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic).

## MEDIEVAL ERA

During medieval times intellectual relations between rhetoric and philosophy were transacted chiefly in western Europe (→ Rhetoric, Medieval). Here rhetoric survived in three more or less philosophical venues – theology, logic, and the liberal arts – and its reception in these venues changed over time (cf. McKeon 1942). In relation to theology, rhetoric was initially theorized in Saint Augustine's *On Christian doctrine* (c. 425) as the instructional complement to scriptural interpretation in preaching. Within Augustine's theory, the materials of ecclesiastical speaking were to be discovered through semiotic interpretation of scripture, while the structure and expression of such materials was to be guided by rhetoric. Later preaching theorists embraced a broader range of rhetorical resources, including Thomas of Salisbury, whose *Principles of the art of preaching* (before 1230) exploited Roman principles concerning parts of rhetoric and parts of speeches.

Within the realm of logic, Boethius' *On topical distinctions* (before 523) conceived of rhetoric alongside dialectic as a means of argumentative invention – one of two parts of logic (the other part was judgment). This general conception, which subordinated rhetoric to logic, persisted throughout the medieval era, for example, in Isidore of Seville's *On distinctions of things* (before 636) and Hugh of St Victor's *Faculty of instruction* (around 1130). In the medieval tradition of liberal arts, rhetoric was treated as one of a family of arts, otherwise including grammar, dialectic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. Our early sources for this tradition include Martianus Capella's *Marriage of*

*Philology and Mercury* (before 439) and Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* (before 636); these works represented rhetoric as an autonomous art generally consonant with ancient theories. Still, the increasing stature of logical theory during medieval times eventually produced an erosion of this autonomy and a subjection of rhetoric to logic even in the context of liberal studies, for instance in John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon* (1159).

## RENAISSANCE ERA

In the Renaissance, preaching theory and liberal studies persisted as venues in which rhetoric flourished; however, both were pursued along humanistic lines that showed significant independence from philosophy (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance). In advanced education, the medieval *artes liberales* were largely supplanted by the *studia humanitatis* (grammar, rhetoric, poetic, history, moral philosophy), a course of study designed to inculcate an eloquent prose style. Likewise, innovation in preaching theory brought religious teaching in closer alignment with rhetorical concerns for discourse types, discourse parts, and eloquent style (e.g., in Hyperius' *On the composition of sacred sermons*, 1553). The principal site of interaction between rhetoric and philosophy was at the boundary between logic and rhetoric (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic). Along this frontier the competing claims of the two arts were prosecuted in a back-and-forth confrontation. The issue was joined first in Valla's *Recultivating dialectic and philosophy* (1439), which subordinated dialectical argument to rhetorical invention (Mack 1993).

This stance was countered in Agricola's *On dialectical invention* (1479), where Agricola added discourse arrangement and expression to invention and judgment as elements of the dialectical apparatus. Agricola's strategy was reversed by Melanchthon's *Principles of rhetoric* (1521); here, dialectical themes were added to the types of rhetorical speaking, and dialectical invention and judgment were integrated into the parts of rhetoric. Agricola received more positive response from Ramus, whose *Principles of dialectic* (1543) and *Criticisms of Aristotle* (1543) framed a critique of discourse arts that assigned dialectic the functions of invention and judgment (including arrangement) and allocated only style and delivery to rhetoric. Ramus's conception of the rhetorical art was soon realized in Talon's *Principles of oratory* (1545) and *Rhetoric* (1548), and this conception was influential for more a century throughout Europe and in North America. In this intellectual context it is not surprising that Bacon's *Advancement of learning* (1605) constricted rhetoric in favor of logic, reducing it to an illustrative function in discourses, the content and arrangement of which were supervised by logical arts.

## MODERN ERA

Modern times brought a new alignment of rhetoric with philosophy, particularly through the attempt to reshape rhetoric in accord with philosophical conceptions of human nature. One of the most important of these conceptions was faculty psychology, or the theory that soul or mind is constituted by separate elements with characteristic faculties or capabilities. This theory was current in Renaissance philosophy, e.g., in Reisch's *The pearl of philosophy* (1503); however, in the modern era, rhetorical theorists increasingly conceptualized their art with special reference to its operation on mental faculties.

Pascal's *L'art de persuader* (1658) conceived of different means of persuasion for the understanding and will, and provided a method for achieving the former. So too, Fénelon's *Dialogues sur l'éloquence* (1717) presented the theory of eloquence as a set of precepts for proving to the understanding, portraying to the imagination, and moving the emotions. Such innovations popularized faculty psychology and encouraged its incorporation in more traditionally motivated rhetorics, for example, Gottsched's *Ausführliche Redekunst* (1736) and Sheridan's *A course of lectures on elocution* (1762).

The flower of faculty psychology was realized in Campbell's *Philosophy of rhetoric* (1776), where a concern for the faculties of understanding, imagination, emotions, and will served as the basis for the definition of rhetoric, the distinction of types of discourse, and the central heuristic for the development of theoretical principles. Campbell intended that his account would reposition rhetoric among the arts, and his definition of eloquence as "that art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end" included all the forms of purposive discourse – not least poetry. This extended the reach of rhetoric and provided a rationale for belletrism, a contemporary movement that subsumed rhetorical, poetical, and sometimes other forms of discourse under a general literary theory (as, for example, in Rollin's *De la manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les belles lettres*, 1726–1728). Although less programmatically inclined, Blair's *Lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres* (1783) and Whately's *Elements of rhetoric* (1828) both employed faculty psychology in explaining persuasion and its processes.

### CONTEMPORARY ERA

In the twentieth century, rhetoric was most influenced by two philosophical trends, the linguistic turn and social materialism. The linguistic turn attempted to understand human nature and epistemology by focusing on semiotics, especially the reality-disclosing function of linguistic communication (→ Semiotics; Rhetoric and Semiotics). In the rhetorical discipline, this focus led at first to a narrow, communicative theory, where the subject of rhetoric became "misunderstanding and its remedies" (Richards 1936). However, later on it inspired a more expansive conception of rhetoric as a "symbolic means of inducing cooperation" (Burke 1950).

After mid-century, there was increasing philosophical support for the view that language constituted reality. This view heavily influenced theories of rhetorical criticism and eventually led to a new focus of the rhetorical discipline upon how rhetoric constitutes identities of individuals and communities (e.g., Charland 1987). A second and complementary trend was discursive materialism, or the philosophical view that the human condition is explicable through reference to its material basis in discourse. Consistent with this view, rhetoric came to be defined materially as "speech" (e.g., McGee 1982), and an immediate consequence was the identification of rhetorical theory with any systematic conceptualization of speech or situated discourse, including, for instance, discourse theories formulated by Toulmin, Foucault, and Habermas (see, for example, Foss et al. 1991).

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Rhetoric and Dialectic ► Rhetoric, Epideictic ► Rhetoric, European Renaissance ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic



- ▶ Rhetoric, Roman
- ▶ Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic
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## **Rhetoric and Poetics**

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Any understanding of the relation between rhetoric and poetics will depend on how each category is conceived. The term “rhetoric” can mean “rhetorical discourse”; or the suatory practices observable in any given piece or kind of → discourse; or the *art* or *theory* of rhetorical performance. Further, “rhetorical discourse” may be defined narrowly or broadly – for example, as any discourse that intends or causes persuasion. “Persuasion” too may be defined narrowly, as the inducement of belief and the promotion of action; or broadly, as the production of any effect in an audience’s psyche (→ Persuasion; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Likewise, “poetics” can mean the *art* or *theory* of poetic discourse, while “poetic discourse” may mean anything from poetry to “literature” very generally conceived. Thus, any discussion of rhetoric and poetics is working with labile terms.

A persistent tradition in modern western culture tends to regard rhetorical and poetic discourse as *virtual opposites* that may, however, exert some influence on each other. This way of thinking played a formative role in the early twentieth-century revival of rhetoric as a modern academic discipline (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline; Rhetorical Studies). Scholars tended to conceptualize rhetoric as primarily an art of practical public discourse, and to regard the subject matters of rhetorical and literary studies as distinct. In North American universities, for example, rhetoric and literature were the provinces of Speech and English departments, respectively. At the same time, however, historians of rhetoric have become conscious of what Florescu (1971) has called *letteraturizzazione* –

the tendency of rhetorical forms to become or interpenetrate with literary forms – so that rhetoric becomes literary, and literature becomes rhetorical.

Another way of viewing the rhetoric–poetic relation is to regard rhetorical and poetic (or “literary”) discourse as *intimately related* to each other, as sister arts, or even to view one as a subset of the other: poetic discourse as a particular type of rhetoric, or rhetoric as a particular (“applied”) type of poetic discourse. Such views have both ancient and modern warrants. There are, for example, well-known connections between Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, suggesting that he views them as “counterparts,” just as he does rhetoric and dialectic – or, that he views rhetoric, dialectic, and poetics, along with other verbal arts (such as logic), as overlapping *genres* or sub-components of a more general art of discourse, each resembling (and differing from) the others in certain ways (→ Genre; Rhetoric and Dialectic; Rhetoric, Greek). Notably, Aristotle insists that poetry must represent a “plot” (*mythos*) that is a probable and logically coherent sequence of events – that is, a persuasive, cause-and-effect portrayal of how things probably would happen in a given set of circumstances – thereby revealing “universal” truths, leading the audience to insight, and provoking emotion (pity and fear, in tragedy). All of this is clearly related to his discussions of argument by example and the arousal of → emotion in the *Rhetoric* (→ Excitation and Arousal). Aristotle also says that the “speeches” in a drama (or, for that matter, in a novel, film, or short poem) belong to the art of rhetoric (→ Logos and Rhetoric; Pathos and Rhetoric).

There is a persistent tendency in ancient thought to divide the realm of rhetoric into *practical* and *epideictic* kinds, and to view poetic discourse as a type of *epideictic* rhetoric (Walker 2000; → Rhetoric, Epideictic). “Practical” rhetoric is typically represented as discourse of the law court and the forum, where juries or assemblymen vote, while “epideictic” ranges from civic celebration and commemoration to performance for the sake of entertainment, edification, philosophical reflection, praise/blame, and display. As early as the archaic poet Hesiod we find poetic “song” and civic “speech” portrayed as epideictic and practical types of eloquence, both derived from the same source (the Muses) and both exerting the same kind of persuasive, even hypnotic power. Indeed, for Hesiod, the civic orator is practicing an “applied” kind of poetic-epideictic discourse, transposed from verse to prose and serving the pragmatic purposes of everyday politics. Many early poets treat poetic discourse as a medium of epideictic persuasion and argumentation, and this idea recurs in the early sophists associated with the “birth” of rhetoric as an art, especially Gorgias and Isocrates (→ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic). It persists as well into late antiquity: for example, Hermogenes of Tarsus, in his treatise *On types of style*, classifies poetry, along with history, philosophy, and civic ceremonial speech, as types of epideictic (or “panegyric”) rhetoric.

Modern difficulties in following this ancient line of thought have much to do with a reticence to view poetic discourse as argumentative or persuasory (which is part of the general tendency to view rhetoric and poetics as opposites; → Argumentative Discourse). However, modern expansions of the idea of “rhetoric” have also made the ancient view more intelligible (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). Richards’ (1926, 1936) notion of the radically metaphorical nature of all language goes far toward breaking down that opposition, as does Burke’s (1950) extension of the concept of persuasion to what he calls “identification.” Indeed, with Burke all forms of discourse are rhetorical, from the

classical oration to the inward workings of thought and ideology in individuals and whole societies (a view that puts Burke close to the perspective of the early sophists and Isocrates). If all forms of discourse are rhetorical, so must be poetic discourse too. Notably, Burke associates poetic (or “literary”) discourse with what he calls “pure persuasion” – a kind of epideictic persuasion for persuasion’s sake (and the unsettling of ossified ideologies). Richards’ and Burke’s thought is reflected in the important rhetorical-literary theorizing of Booth (1961), and other more recent scholars (e.g., Fish 1989). Finally, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958) have argued that epideictic discourse is not peripheral but central to the realm of rhetoric, insofar as epideictic serves to establish and sustain (or sometimes revise) the communal agreements about general values and beliefs that necessarily underlie judgment, motivation, agreement, and action in practical civic discourse. If that is so, and if poetic discourse is a type of epideictic, then poetic discourse must also be a “central” type of rhetoric.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Discourse ▶ Emotion ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Genre ▶ Logos and Rhetoric ▶ Pathos and Rhetoric ▶ Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Dialectic ▶ Rhetoric, Epideictic ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## **Rhetoric and Politics**

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The study of rhetoric and politics examines the role of → persuasion in the political process. The study of rhetoric most commonly begins with readings from ancient Greece and Aristotle’s handbook, *On rhetoric*. Classical scholars conceived of rhetoric as a practical art involving the performance of public oratory in the contexts of politics, law, and ceremonial occasions, separated from the philosophy of knowledge. As Isocrates’ words

expressed during the classical period: “Speech is responsible for nearly all of invention. It legislated in matters of justice and injustice, in beauty and baselessness. . . . With speech we fight our contentious matters, and we investigate the unknown” (*Antidosis* 254–256, in Mirhady 2000; → Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman). While twentieth-century rhetorical scholars continued to address the role of persuasion in the → public sphere, its study has more recently expanded beyond public oratory to include other persuasive texts, including advertisements, autobiographies, → cartoons, films, manifestoes, memorials, photographs, → television and print news, and many other forms of → discourse circulating in public spaces (→ Advertising; Cinema; Newspaper; Photography). Rhetoricians of today also recognize the epistemological contributions of rhetoric, which accentuate its role in creating knowledge and constituting perceptions of political reality (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Rhetoric and Epistemology).

Scholarship that intersects rhetoric and politics includes not only the study of electoral politics, but other forms of political persuasion involving institutions (e.g., governments, corporations) and individuals and/or groups working to disrupt such institutional power (e.g., activist leaders and social movements; → Election Campaign Communication; Political Communication; Social Movements and Communication; Rhetoric and Social Protest). Such scholarship often relies on humanistic methodologies yet also utilizes social scientific measurements. The study of rhetoric and politics often centers on three broader areas of examination: the consideration of history in the study of rhetoric and politics, an examination of how political messages make meaning, and an assessment of message impact.

### THE ROLE OF HISTORY AND POLITICAL RHETORIC

The study of rhetoric is often attuned to the history of ideas and how public texts contribute to the evolutionary understanding of political and cultural conflicts and norms. A public text, thus, functions as a historical artifact, which reflects the political and cultural ideas of the moment in which it was created. For some, an understanding of the historical and political context represents a necessary component in the comprehension of textual meaning. Of course, even as rhetoricians turn to history to inform rhetorical practice, rhetoricians also are mindful of rhetoric’s role in creating historical narratives, which are likewise dependent on arguments and evidence (→ Argumentative Discourse).

Regardless of its rhetorical dimensions, history serves as a key component in the study of rhetoric and politics. Rhetorical analyses cognizant of history demonstrate how rhetoric helps enact, empower, and constrain human behavior over time, excavating the “rhetorical climate of an age” (Zarefsky 1998, 31; → Rhetoric and History). For some, understanding the relationship among history, rhetoric, and politics necessitates an examination of archival resources that inform the meanings of the public discourse, allowing for a more insightful and informed interrogation of text and context.

An appreciation of the generic features of political discourse represents one scholarly focus of those sensitive to the contributions of history to rhetoric and politics (→ Rhetorical Criticism). Campbell and Jamieson (1990, 8) explain that a generic approach to political discourse “emphasizes continuity within change” and assumes that “symbolic institutional

needs” are integral to understanding “the force of events in shaping the rhetoric of any historical period.”

Historically, the public speakers who attracted the attention of scholars of rhetoric and politics were white men in positions of political leadership. More recently, however, scholars have worked to expand the rhetorical canon by writing more leaders of *marginalized groups* into history. Zaeske (2003), for example, examines women’s petitions housed in the Library of Congress to exhibit the role of women’s signatures as expressions of their political participation during the US antislavery debates (→ Rhetoric and Gender). Focusing on issues of race and politics during the historical era of Reconstruction, Wilson (2002, xvii) illuminates the “social meanings of race and civil rights as these concepts were negotiated by the period’s national politicians,” revealing the gradual erosion of equality (→ Rhetoric and Race). Such scholarship often requires the use of archival depositories to uncover seldom studied political texts and to gain a greater appreciation of the political context in which the texts were produced.

While political texts often feature an examination of the written or spoken word, an exploration of the *visual turn* in rhetoric is gaining widespread scholarly attention (→ Rhetoric and Visuality). Olson (2004, 16–17) argues that more traditional forms of discourse are insufficient for capturing the historical political climate as “those without political power and economic privilege often resorted to types of rhetorical appeals in various mundane objects . . . used for persuasion in public life.” Recognizing that such visual images are historically situated, such scholars presume that visual meanings are complex and variable yet have held significant rhetorical power throughout history.

While some of the historically minded rhetorical research is concerned with broader theoretical issues, much of the scholarship is classified as *theory grounded in practice*, where the particulars of the case inductively invoke general theoretical principles that transcend the case. As David Zarefsky (1998, 25) explains, isolated case studies “suggest models, norms, or exemplars . . . and they sometimes yield a ‘theory of the case.’” Other rhetorical scholars, however, question such grounded theorizing, expressing concern that the particulars of the historical and the individual inhibit a more theoretical examination of the political persuasion process. Such differing views reveal the pluralism at work in the scholarship of rhetoric and politics, which also attends to the ways that messages create → meaning.

## **POLITICAL MESSAGES AND THE CREATION OF MEANING**

Rhetorical scholars attending to political messages often rely on social scientific and critical-historical perspectives in their scholarship (→ Political Persuasion). Utilizing *social scientific methods*, Hart (2000), for example, demonstrates his concern for broader theoretical conclusions about political messages with his creation of a computer program, DICTION, which examines the “unconscious language choices people use when talking to one another” (Hart 2000, 4). Beginning with US political messages from the 1948 presidential election, Hart and his researchers downloaded over 20,000 public texts into DICTION in order to draw more general conclusions about political discourse through an analysis of variance (ANOVA) study. The data revealed, Hart contends, that political campaigns ideally reinvigorate the country, involving a “conversation” among candidates,

the media, and the public. Citizens also typically look for a “middle ground” and dislike the negativity of campaigns. In the end, Hart offers an optimistic assessment of campaigning and its democratizing tendencies.

Other scholars of rhetoric and politics, however, opt to forgo social scientific methods and interrogate instead the nuances of meanings, utilizing, among others, rhetorical, political, and media theories as critical lenses by which to analyze public discourse. With such *critical perspectives*, objectivity is often shunned in favor of a rhetorical critic’s insights that offer new and provocative ways in which to understand the meanings expressed in discourse. Many rhetorical critics assume, as Medhurst (1996, 219) explains, that “the truly important questions in life seldom lend themselves to clear-cut answers that can be held with absolute certainty,” especially in a political world full of volatility, change, and conflict.

Questions of ideology and thus *power* are often foundational to rhetorical studies focused on political meaning. McGee (1980, 5), for example, argued that “ideology in practice is a political language, preserved in rhetorical documents, with a capacity to dictate decision and control public belief and behavior.” Such a perspective views rhetoric as a “theory of social and political power” that can help unite or divide communities (Lucaites & Condit 1990, 24; → Rhetoric and Social Thought).

Ideologically grounded studies often are foundational to the examination of media texts (→ Rhetoric and Media Studies). *Popular culture* in particular is attracting increased attention by researchers interested in the political meanings created by fictionalized discourse. Dow (1996) explains that → popular culture completes “some of the cultural work” previously produced by public oratory; television works “rhetorically to negotiate social issues: to define them, to represent them, and ultimately, to offer visions of their meanings and implications” (Dow 1996, xv). For postmodern scholars, the lines between reality and → fiction are blurred, especially in a mediated world, which draws attention to the ideological struggles over issues of gender, race, and class more so than questions of truth (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

The *news media* are also, of course, the target of many scholars’ critical interrogations (→ Journalism; News). Framing theories are commonly used to examine the news. Press frames, Jamieson and Waldman (2003, xii–xiii) explain, “shape what citizens know, understand, and believe about the world” as conceptions of truth and falsehood “pass through news frames,” featuring particular journalistic interpretations. In the process, certain information is included while other details are excluded because of the “fixed borders” of press frames (Jamieson & Waldman 2003, xiii). More specifically, press frames group important words, phrases, and visual images to emphasize particular interpretations of political history, events, or people. While journalistic coverage can certainly provide alternative perspectives, often such frames inspire more stereotypical coverage, particularly of marginalized groups and individuals (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News).

Even though attention to mediated texts is a popular focus for scholars of rhetoric and politics, other researchers, however, continue to examine the meanings created in *public speeches*, with some focused on the discourse of institutional leaders. The connection between the discourse of governmental officials and *theories of nationalism* is becoming increasingly popular. Such political discourse, Beasley (2004, 3–4) maintains, helps foster

“feelings of shared national identity within a wildly diverse democracy.” Depictions of citizenship are commonly featured; political discourse often renders visible or invisible those groups that are privileged or marginalized in a political culture.

Other scholars, however, are more concerned with those who combat institutional forces to effect political change. Morris and Browne (2006, 1) contend that *social protest* scholars “understand that *words* are *deeds*, that language has force and effect in the world.” The social movement scholar generally eludes the focus on the single text and single leader in favor of a diversity of textual forms produced by multiple members of a movement. Such texts include the written and spoken words (e.g., speeches, songs, manifestoes, poems, autobiographies), the nonverbal symbols of a movement (e.g., gestures, emblems, signs), and different types of mediation (e.g., → Internet, marches, performances) used by leaders and members (→ Rhetoric, Vernacular). The focus, though, is often centered on questions of meaning regarding the discursive action of social protest – meanings that invoke questions of effectiveness for scholars of rhetoric and politics.

### AN ASSESSMENT OF RHETORICAL IMPACT

One of the more contentious issues involving political rhetoric over the past few decades evolves around questions of effect. Instigating a debate, political scientist Edwards (1996, 214) asserted: “we do not know nearly enough about the impact of rhetoric, and we should not assume its importance” without the presence of “systematic evidence” often omitted from rhetorical analyses (217). In response to Edwards’ charge, Medhurst (1996) explained that rhetoricians and social scientists often ask different research questions, with scholars of rhetoric concerned about matters of stylistic eloquence, source intent, rhetorical strategy and meaning, and argument, which often defy the measurement of hypothesis testing.

Regardless of the dispute, notions of effect are often categorized as more instrumental or constitutive by rhetorical scholars. An instrumental approach locates the scope of effect in the immediate context and assesses the text’s impact on the intended audience. A constitutive approach, however, suggests that “discursive action constitutes the concepts that shape a social world so as to enable and constrain subsequent thought and action” (Jasinski 1998, 80). Such discourse, though, is viewed as one component of a much larger mosaic of political discourse that collectively creates or erodes a sense of community. Instrumental notions of effect, thus, are viewed more causally; constitutive notions of impact, rather, are viewed as reflective of, and contributing to, the rhetorical culture in which the texts circulate in more abstract ways.

The role of → *public opinion polling* is often viewed as a more instrumental assessment of effect, whose history is rooted in the nineteenth century (→ Polls and the Media). Such polling, though, has received considerable critical attention from scholars of rhetoric and politics. Hauser (1999, 5) is skeptical of the news media’s reporting of public opinion polling because it typically “creates the impression of ‘the public’ as an anonymous assemblage given to volatile mood swings likely to dissipate into apathy and from which we personally are disengaged.” The result, Hauser contends, is that individuals “seldom experience” such polling data as reflective of their own opinions, exacerbating feelings of alienation (Hauser 1999, 5).

The tendency of polling to reduce the individual to an aggregate leads other scholars to rely on *focus groups* to assess questions of impact. Some of the more robust focus group research in rhetoric and politics relates to the longitudinal research of DebateWatch, a program directed by Diana B. Carlin from the University of Kansas and sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates. Initiated in 1996, DebateWatch brings together citizens to watch the presidential debates and answer specific questions about those debates in small groups. Based on such research, Levasseur and Carlin (2001) note the importance of talking to “ordinary citizens” about politics, shifting attention toward what the American people have to say instead of attending to the words of the nation’s political leaders or the percentages of their responses. Such studies, though, occasionally provide less favorable impressions of the electorate than anticipated. Reporting on the 1996 DebateWatch data, for example, Levasseur and Carlin (2001, 408–409) report that the electorate was more focused on “egocentric arguments,” where “personal concerns” were assumed to represent “common affairs.”

Such attention to issues of civic engagement represents for many the foremost outcome of scholarship associated with the study of rhetoric and politics. Scholars often return to rhetoric’s roots when detailing notions of civic engagement, recognizing the contributions of Aristotle and Cicero, in particular, to notions of citizenship and rhetorical practice (Gronbeck 2004). In part, scholars write and teach about exemplars of civic engagement whose political involvement altered political practices in substantive ways. The scholarship in turn is designed to help promulgate civic engagement ends among citizens, particularly students in the earliest stages of civic consciousness, strengthening the relationship between democratic practice and rhetorical principles.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Cartoons ▶ Cinema ▶ Discourse ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Fiction ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Meaning ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Persuasion ▶ Photography ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Post-modernism and Communication ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric and Gender ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and History ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetoric and Race ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetoric and Social Protest ▶ Rhetoric and Social Thought ▶ Rhetoric, Vernacular ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Television

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## Rhetoric, Postmodern

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Postmodern rhetoric is a set of discursive and critical practices that diverge from → persuasion by means of *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* (→ Rhetoric, Greek). Where classical rhetoric addresses a known and identifiable → audience, postmodern rhetoric puts into question the identities of the speaker, the audience, and the messages that pass between them, interrupting and displacing senders, receivers, and messages by realigning the networks through which they pass (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

## PRECURSORS OF POSTMODERN RHETORIC

The most important precursors to postmodern rhetoric are Friedrich Nietzsche and Martin Heidegger. *Nietzsche* proposed that language is the result of a series of transformations, where bodily mechanisms are transformed into sensations and feelings that we express in sounds. Sounds become words when they designate things that are similar in certain respects, and they communicate the perspective of a community as if they referred to an independently existing reality (→ Realism). Logical categories are the result of equivocation and synecdoche, since they posit identities where there are only similarities, and they take as universal what is only a partial view. “*Language is rhetoric*,” says Nietzsche, “because it desires to convey only a *doxa* [opinion] not an *epistêmê* [knowledge]” (Nietzsche 1989, 23; → Rhetoric and Epistemology; Rhetorics: New Rhetorics).

*Heidegger*, by contrast, takes rhetoric to be a matter of discourse rather than language, and discourse is rooted in shared moods (*pathe*), practices, and institutions. For him, rhetoric is originally an art of listening because speaking is a response to what has already moved us, and, as the capacity for being moved, *pathos* plays the leading role (Heidegger 2002; → Pathos and Rhetoric). Furthermore, Heidegger (2002) says *pathos* is ontological, for it reveals the being of beings in their totality. In *Being and time*, he declares Aristotle’s rhetoric to be “the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of Being with one another” (1962, 178; → Hermeneutics), and he emphasizes the *pathos* of anxiety in the ontology of human experience. In developing this ontology, Heidegger introduces many neologisms and unusually literal interpretations of keywords (e.g., *Dasein* as “being there”), because, he says, when it comes to grasping being “we lack not only most of the words, but, above all, the ‘grammar’” (1962, 63). Traditional grammar, which privileges declarative statements about entities, cannot disclose being itself because being is articulated in the totality of relations entities have with one another, particularly in relation to the human being. Hence, there is an inherent strangeness to his discourse, which attempts to disclose relational totalities rather than to objectify entities as subjects and predicates in grammatical propositions.

## POSTMODERN THINKING

### Liotard

Jean-François Lyotard develops an explicitly postmodern account of language and discourse in *The postmodern condition* (1984). Although influenced by Heidegger, Lyotard stresses the heterogeneity and multiplicity of discourses. For him, the relational totalities within which statements or phrases occur are not subject to any overriding unity or ontological reference. The *pathos* of this condition is not anxiety but something akin to the sublime described by Immanuel Kant, where the imagination is overwhelmed with intuitions that cannot be presented as a whole. The postmodern sublime is the sense that discourse is irreducibly and unpresentably multiple. Taking concepts from speech act theory (→ Linguistic Pragmatics) and from the later Wittgenstein (see Wittgenstein 1958), Lyotard portrays language as a plurality of → genres, where senders, addressees, and referents shift as we move from one genre to another. Since all statements are acts,

however, genres are types of linguistic performance specified by differences in their pragmatic rules. However, since there is no rule for linguistic performance per se, it is always possible to invent new messages and new genres of discourse, as is evident in the new codes and statements at the leading edge of science and technology. Lyotard valorizes this inventiveness as *paralogy*, which he advocates as a strategy of resistance against the demand for communicative totality animating the flow of capital (information) in the postmodern age.

In *The differend* (1988), Lyotard addresses the absence of a common idiom for settling disputes between genres and phrases. A “differend” occurs when there is no rule according to which such disputes can be settled. While the situation may seem to call for persuasion tailored to each particular case, a differend demands something else. Here, the disputants are not human subjects but phrases and genres of discourse, which, says Lyotard, “are strategies – of no-one” (1988, 137). On this account, a phrase “happens” and must be linked onto by another phrase, even if in silence. Lyotard bears witness to differends by finding idioms for them, but these idioms keep open the question of linkage so that any final phrase is infinitely deferred. To bear witness to the differend is not to communicate a message, but to evoke the feeling that something incommunicable (the multiplicity of phrases) demands to be said (1988, xvi, 13).

### Foucault

Michel Foucault also focuses upon → discourse as a set of concepts and practices that are not reducible to systems of signs or rules of grammar. In *The archeology of knowledge* (1972), Foucault notes that discourse neither expresses the intentions of a subject nor extends the contents of a concept nor designates objects already given. Instead, discourse consists of statements, and “a statement is always an event that neither the language (*langue*) nor the meaning can exhaust” (1972, 28). Furthermore, the unity of discourse is historical rather than logical, rhetorical, or conceptual, and its history is marked by breaks and discontinuities, as illustrated in the *History of madness* (2006).

In his studies of discursive formations, Foucault uses a genealogical method modeled after Nietzsche. “What is found at the historical beginning of things,” he declares, “is not the inviolable identity of their origin; it is the dissension of other things. It is disparity” (1977, 142). In the *History of madness*, he shows that the concept of madness as mental illness can be traced back to the transitional period between the Middle Ages and modernity, where the mad were first allowed to roam free, then deported aboard ships, and finally confined in lazar houses after leprosy disappeared from Europe. By showing current concepts and practices to be the result of historical accidents and contingencies, Foucault reveals their lack of necessity or inevitability, and shows that we do not have to accept their objectionable consequences. This critical function of genealogy and archeology opens the way for new possibilities for “subjectivation,” as he remarks in *The history of sexuality* (1985). Here, he studies “the games of truth in the relationship of self with self and the forming of oneself as a subject” (1985, 6). In this respect, he valorizes a freedom of invention similar to that in Lyotard, although for Foucault it is a freedom to constitute and empower ourselves as subjects rather than to invent new discourses in

which subjects are shifted, dissolved, and displaced. Nevertheless, both find a precedent in Nietzsche, who saw subjectivity as a grammatical-social construction and as a dimension of transformative power.

### Derrida

In his deconstructive writings, Jacques Derrida dismantles the notion that communication is primarily a transmission of → meaning between speaking subjects, particularly as conceived in speech act theory. In *Limited Inc.* (1988), for example, Derrida challenges J. L. Austin's assumption that speech acts are fully determinable by context, and that nonconventional speech is parasitical upon conventional norms (Austin 1975). Derrida protests that "a context is never absolutely determinable" (1988, 3) due to the structure of the sign, which characterizes all language. By virtue of its iterability, says Derrida, every sign presupposes a certain absence, since it functions in the absence of senders and addressees. In writing, for example, a mark is infinitely repeatable beyond the moment of its inscription; it is a "machine" functioning independently of the author (1988, 18). The context of such marks is a text without specifiable boundaries, for signs function only in relation to one another and generate their own difference (*différance*), which shifts them out of any limited context, e.g., through self-reference, or citation.

Derrida notes that Austin's distinction between serious and non-serious speech cannot be finalized because speech acts asserting this distinction are subject to citational doubling, which interrupts and displaces their intentional aim and opens them to "non-serious" uses they would presume to exclude. For Derrida, any theorizing about language or communication must itself be stated in language, and therefore cannot perform the theoretical gesture of a science, since the theory itself would be part of the field it investigates. In *The philosophical discourse of modernity* (1987), → Jürgen Habermas accuses Derrida of reducing critical discourse to (mere) rhetoric by denying its contextual limits. However, Derrida replies that he is not making such a reduction, a position he criticizes as "rhetoricism" (1988, 156), but is demonstrating a structural necessity of signs, which defers final separation between the rhetorical and nonrhetorical functions of language.

### Vattimo and Perniola

In contrast to their French counterparts, Italian postmodernists emphasize aesthetic, rhetorical, and historical continuity in their work. Gianni Vattimo and Mario Perniola, for example, characterize the postmodern as a dissolution of progressive history, where past and present are contemporaneous as simulacra produced and reproduced by the media. As a result, advanced cultures experience a dissolution of their identity and foundations, in which their differences with what is "other" are suspended in a repetitive passage of "the same." For Vattimo, interpreting this experience requires a narrative in which Nietzsche's overturning of foundations is joined to Heidegger's destruction of the history of ontology (Vattimo 1988). Such a narrative distorts or twists the tradition back upon itself, so that being becomes a moment in which all of its interpretations are present

at once. This marks the end of the concept of progress, since technological advancement has created conditions in which only “further progress” is possible, much like the state of contemporary art (1988, 101). Perniola, on the other hand, stresses the absence of a message in the communication of networks and contacts the new technology is spreading around the globe. For him, postmodern experience is best interpreted in terms of the Italian baroque, or the enigma of a passage into a realm between life and death, spirit and body, subject and object (Perniola 1995). He takes this movement as a kind of persuasion (*peitho*), which he interprets to mean trust in the present, without anticipating a future that will give it meaning and without reference to an origin in the past. Persuasion, then, has nothing to do with convincing someone of something, but is a way of living completely in the present, a passage through the intermediary spaces of communicative networks, where identities and differences are suspended in the passage itself.

Hence, where French postmodernists tend to characterize these networks as spaces of difference and alterity, the Italians, by contrast, characterize them as spaces of “sameness” and continuity in both the spatial and temporal senses. However, sameness is not identity, but a passage between identity and difference, and in this respect there is agreement on both sides as to the active non-identity at work in postmodern discourse. Rhetorically, this requires strategies of displacement, interruption, and delay in the transmission of messages between speaking subjects. Such strategies, both would agree, are afforded by the technological and linguistic mechanisms already at work in the postmodern world.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Discourse ► Genre ► Habermas, Jürgen ► Hermeneutics ► Language and Social Interaction ► Linguistic Pragmatics ► Linguistics ► Meaning ► Pathos and Rhetoric ► Persuasion ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Realism ► Rhetoric and Epistemology ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Semiotics ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ► Semiotics

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## Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic

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Pre-Socratic rhetoric is an overarching concept that captures not only the traits of Hellenic rhetoric that were demonstrated by the sophists who immediately preceded Socrates, but also the antecedent forces that shaped sophistic views on thought and its relationship to expression. The dialogues of Plato and the development of the Socratic movement have often been considered the seminal events in recognizing rhetoric as a formal discipline or *technê* (→ Rhetoric, Greek). Yet, the dramatic date of these dialogues – particularly such dialogues as Plato’s *Gorgias* and his later *Phaedrus* – reveal that sophists were already established and teaching rhetoric within and throughout Hellenic culture well before Plato (apparently) abstracted and coined “rhetoric” as a discipline worthy of scrutiny. Gorgias, a sophist who was clearly older than Plato’s mentor and primary dialogue-character, Socrates, professed to be an established teacher of rhetoric, claiming a pedagogical ancestry dating back to his fellow Sicilians Corax and Tisias. Of course, the debates over the “founding” of rhetoric, whether abstracted as a discipline or long practiced as a craft, continue even today. Yet, what is clear is that several forces were at work prior to the sophists and Plato, which contributed greatly to rhetoric’s evolution into a discipline, regardless of when historians of rhetoric wish to select the moment when rhetoric became recognized as an area of study.

While we may not resolve with certainty the disagreement over rhetoric’s origin, we can both appreciate and (better) evaluate characterizations of rhetoric’s origin if we consider the confluence of forces that contributed to the nascent features of rhetoric’s evolution into a discipline. That is, we are aided in understanding the emergence of rhetoric as a discipline by considering long-established social and intellectual forces. There is, of course, little doubt that the synthesis of these forces came about during the early decades of the fifth century BCE, in what is commonly called the pre-Socratic period of rhetoric, but our understanding of the development of pre-Socratic rhetoric will be better realized if we are sensitive to such forces and their history. The four primary forces shaping

pre-Socratic rhetoric are: the Homeric tradition, the rise of logography, the emergence of pre-Socratic philosophy, and the evolution of the *polis* or Hellenic city-state. From this perspective, the emergence of Gorgias and his fellow sophists in Plato's dialogues is not the beginning, but rather the consequence, of important developments in Greek thought and expression.

### HOMERIC ANTECEDENTS

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* represent the earliest body of sustained Hellenic discourse. Now recognized as inscribed oral discourse, *Homerica* reveal emerging notions of rhetoric in two dimensions. The composition patterns of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* reveal systemic formulae that served as both an aid to memory for early bards (*oidoi*) and later for the more formal guild of rhapsodes (*Homeridae*). Research on the composing processes of Homeric discourse done by Milman Parry, Albert B. Lord, and others reveals that such patterned heuristics demonstrate a consciousness about thought and its relationship to expression. Further, an internal examination of the works of Homer reveals that the characters themselves demonstrate techniques of persuasion and the manipulation of language that would one day be formalized by sophists and theorized by rhetoricians. The wily exploits of Odysseus to trick the cyclops Polyphemus in book 9 of the *Odyssey*, for example, reveal deliberate attempts to persuade and deceive through carefully crafted speech. Odysseus may have had little or no awareness of rhetoric as it was later understood by fifth-century BCE sophists, but the conscious awareness of structuring language for persuasive effect is unmistakably present among Homer's characters.

### THE RISE OF LOGOGRAPHY

Greece's evolution in writing from Bronze Age syllabaries to an alphabet provided a technology both for preserving the spoken word that was much more efficient than the heuristics of oral composition and, eventually, for facilitating abstract thought and prose composition. The rhythmical structure of oral poetry offered a technology for preserving discourse by stable patterns of cadence. Writing made such a technology unnecessary, freeing discourse from the necessity of mnemonic devices for rhythmical meaning and allowing for unfettered prose composition. That is, just as writing mathematics – as opposed to doing such problem-solving orally – greatly facilitates abstract thought with the manipulation of numbers, so also does writing prose stabilize narrative (*logoi*) in a manner that facilitates abstract thought and makes the need for rhyming and poetic composition obsolete (→ Medium Theory; Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems).

As writing grew in popularity to the extent that a city such as Athens could be literate, the shift in composition from poetry to prose, particularly the use of writing for functional civic purposes, became clear. The multiple benefits of prose writing (logography) became readily apparent, extending this new art far beyond a recording device to a facilitator of abstract thinking. Logography branched out from the mere recording of speech to more specialized sub-genres of history and forensic argument; this shift from

exclusively oral (momentary) communication to oral *and* literate communication enabled rhetors not only to freeze discourse but also to reflect on stable communication. Many scholars, such as Eric Havelock, believe this ability to freeze words helped to nurture abstract thought and philosophical inquiry.

### THE EMERGENCE OF PRE-SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY

Another pre-Socratic source contributing to the development of rhetoric was the early development of philosophy. Pre-Socratic thinkers such as Empedocles began to reflect not only on the nature and function of the universe, but also on human understanding and expression. Fragments of their work reveal the belief that knowledge was constrained by the limitations of our own sense perceptions and that inferences that could be advanced were both probable and interpretive. In addition to Empedocles, other pre-Socratic philosophers of the Eleatic school – such as Parmenides and Zeno – viewed concepts in antithetical and dissociative syntactic constructs (*dissoi logoi*).

Structuring knowledge on a polar continuum reflects itself in not only a correlative balancing of style and cadence but an epistemology of degree and relativism. That is, concepts such as *dissoi logoi* have obvious stylistic and syntactic patterns that make them attractive features in euphonic composition, but they also echo epistemologies that nurture a balancing of perspectives that result in probability as a dominant model of thought and expression. Pre-Socratic thinkers such as Empedocles stressed human understanding and probability over earlier Homeric notions of divine inspiration and myth, marking a departure from the Homeric tradition. The insights of pre-Socratic philosophy provided a foundation for sophistic rhetoric that would be based on oppositional thought, sense perception, relativism and opinion (*doxa*), formulaic composition, and the power of literacy in moving discourse from momentary expression to stabilized communication that facilitates abstract thinking. It is little wonder that, when we trace the rhetorical genealogy of sophists, we see direct and indirect relationships with pre-Socratic philosophers (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy).

### THE RISE OF CIVIC ACTIVITY

The emergence of the *polis* has long been recognized as an important feature in Greek history. Focus on the rise of the city in Hellenic culture has centered on the development of imperialism, the enhanced activity of commerce and trade, as well as the political dynamics that resulted in the exposure to, and interaction with, rival Hellenic cultures. The rise of the Greek city also played an important role in the emergence of rhetoric, particularly pre-Socratic rhetoric. The archaic and classical periods of Greece witnessed the emergence of powerful political city-states, which aggressively promoted their hegemony through kinship ties and military conquest. In all such cities, rhetoric was an active and dynamic feature of civic operations (→ Rhetoric and Politics). One of the most important features of pre-Socratic rhetoric is that judgments about the validity of discourse were adjudicated by listeners and readers. That is, pre-Socratic rhetoric has the consistent feature of being constructed toward, and evaluated by, audiences.



Effective communication in a *polis* – democratic or otherwise – is directed to and judged by audiences. Having the validity of discourse based on the audience was a powerful force contributing to sophistic rhetoric, because effective discourse became a pragmatic and powerful civic force. As the *polis* developed, the role of effective expression increased in importance – whether that rhetoric was received by a tyrant or a democrat. What was reasonable and/or desirable became the standard for attaining agreement. Relative judgments of value and preference were made by the audience, which meant that effective methods of establishing what was most desirable varied according to the circumstances and wishes of the time. Pre-Socratic thinkers refined methods of probabilities, and these heuristics lent themselves well to the pragmatics of daily social problems that could be resolved by argument that stressed warrants for expressed values and opinions (→ Logos and Rhetoric).

In a democracy such as Athens, where securing conviction from the (male) populace determined policy and judgment, rhetoric would be a source of civic power. Yet, in other city-states, ones that had political systems rivaling Athens, rhetoric also was active, albeit that activity was manifested in different ways. In tyrannies such as Syracuse, rhetoric was often demonstrated in the arts of aesthetic performance, as well as with rhetors who functioned as formal representatives or *presbyters* of their rulers. Even in Sparta, famous for its militaristic orientation and (alleged) nonliterate bias, systems of effective communication were imperative for effective civic government. Sophists throughout Greece provided approaches to rhetoric in virtually every type of government, which variously treated rhetoric as an art, an ambassadorial function, a topic for advanced education, and (of course) for political and jurisprudential deliberation.

Pre-Socratic rhetoric thrived throughout Hellenic culture because the malleability of its systems and the range of its benefits cut across and met virtually every sort of orientation that required effective communication. Rhetoric's plasticity made it a pervasive and powerful force and a rival paradigm to Socratic thought. The fact that rhetoric adapted to existing conditions as it evolved through the classical and Hellenistic periods and into the Roman empire is testimony to the attractiveness of rhetoric, which is present in even its nascent, pre-Socratic forms (→ Rhetoric, Roman).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Logos and Rhetoric ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Memory and Rhetoric  
▶ Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetorical Studies

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## Rhetoric and Psychology

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This entry examines the fields of rhetoric and psychology, each from the perspective of the other, and both from the meta-perspective of a psychologist-turned-rhetorician who retains equal measures of respect (and disrespect) for both. Rhetoric and psychology each study → persuasion but from radically different approaches that reflect their contrasting origins in the humanistic and scientific traditions of communication studies (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy). With a view toward advancing consideration of the issues that divide rhetoric and psychology, we can imagine their representatives as engaged in a conversation of sorts on questions of relative worth to their students, to the general advancement of knowledge, and to each other (→ Psychology in Communication Processes; Rhetorical Studies).

PSYCHOLOGIST: I don't know what I'm doing here. You're not even an academic discipline.

RHETORICIAN: What's that you say?

PSYCHOLOGIST: To qualify as an academic discipline requires a clearly defined and distinctive area of inquiry, and a method or methods capable of adding to the stock of knowledge. You fail on all these counts, and I'll sit with you just long enough to tell you why (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline).

RHETORICIAN: I'm all ears. Indeed, I'm honored that you've taken the time from your busy schedule to converse with me.

PSYCHOLOGIST: Busy indeed! These days we psychologists are active on many disciplinary fronts, both pure and applied. And that leads me to my critique of rhetoric as something less than a discipline. I'll start with the related problems of incoherence and lack of distinctiveness. From reading Kenneth Burke's "Traditional principles of rhetoric," I gather that rhetoric has accrued a great many meanings over the centuries, from the clearly self-celebrative to the pejorative, including among the latter the "art of proving

opposites.” Applied to itself, this definition is potentially self-damning. Assuming a reasonable definition of “proving” as demonstrating that something is the case, rhetoric would forever be undermining its own truth claims. What could possibly be the value of that?

RHETORICIAN: Interesting that you lead with so misleading a definition. But perhaps we can profit from it nonetheless. Let me ask you, are there not issues on which reasonable individuals might legitimately differ?

PSYCHOLOGIST: Of course. But . . .

RHETORICIAN: And are there not disputes within your own hallowed discipline of psychology on which even the experts take opposing views? Don’t you psychologists continue to argue over the very definition of psychology, for example – without consensus as to whether psychology is the study of mind or of behavior?

PSYCHOLOGIST: I’ll concede the point for now. But . . .

RHETORICIAN: My larger point is that not all differences can be resolved, even in your own field, by way of appeal to pure logic or indisputable fact. Indeed, the most interesting questions are of this sort, are they not?

PSYCHOLOGIST: I suppose.

RHETORICIAN: I could go on with this line of questioning, but I think I’ve said enough to suggest that continuing controversy is not necessarily a bad thing, nor premature consensus a good; furthermore, that not all issues, even scientific issues, lend themselves to demonstrative proofs, if by “demonstration” is meant proof beyond a shadow of the doubt.

PSYCHOLOGIST: Are you saying, then, that you rhetoricians don’t really “prove opposites”?

RHETORICIAN: Yes and no. Rhetoric isn’t about issues of pure fact or pure logic. Its concerns are with issues of judgment rather than certainty, and on these issues it offers instruction in how to argue opposing views, much of it time-tested and richly illustrated by way of critical accounts of rhetorical practices. It’s in this sense that rhetoric “proves opposites,” providing thereby wonderful preparation for law, politics, and for analysis of persuasion in the guise of objectivity in such fields as your own. That is surely one of our distinctive contributions. Rhetorical proofs are different from demonstrative proofs; they are extra-factual and extra-logical, but not necessarily counter-factual or illogical. And while rhetoric is an advantage-seeking art, it needn’t disadvantage those persuaded by it. Over the centuries, we rhetoricians have learned a good deal about how to persuade and also about how to defend against the con artists who sully our good name. If we had time, I’d “prove” to you how precisely these sorts of proofs are used by psychologists when they are not preoccupied with proving what is trivially true (→ Logos and Rhetoric; Rhetoric and Epistemology; Rhetoric and Logic).

PSYCHOLOGIST: I think you’ve spoken long enough. Indeed, until now I barely have been able to get a word in edgewise. You’ve said that you rhetoricians have learned a good deal about how to persuade. I’m willing to go toe to toe with you on that issue, pitting what meager tools you rhetoricians use for accumulating knowledge about persuasion against those in our scientific arsenal. Won’t you concede that even your own field’s textbooks on persuasion borrow heavily from social psychological theory and research? Applied fields of persuasion such as → advertising, → public relations, → marketing, and political consulting do likewise (→ Political Consultant). They turn to us because our

methods are scientific, enabling us psychologists to develop falsifiable theories of persuasion and to exercise controls over potential sources of error in research, such that we can be surprised by our data. That's the defining feature of a modern discipline; its hallmark is objectivity (→ Objectivity in Science). Some say that you rhetoricians are too wedded to the theorizing of the ancients; others that you are congenitally ill disposed to generalizing, preferring to wallow in the idiosyncratic particulars of every new case. You had a promising beginning back in Aristotle's day, but you haven't advanced very far since. Aristotle put forward some interesting hypotheses – about the effects of demographic variables in the use of emotional appeals, for example. We've tested them. You haven't!

RHETORICIAN: For a psychologist you aren't too bad at persuasion, albeit the sophistic persuasion of hyperbole. I take it that you haven't read our research on forms and genres of persuasion and on the situations that give rise to them (→ Rhetorical Criticism). That scholarship surely moves beyond "idiosyncratic particulars," as you put it. But it is true that we rhetoricians tend to prefer "muddleheaded anecdotalism" over "simpleminded empiricism," the former case-driven and storied in its telling; the latter typified by a "variable-effects" approach to the study of persuasion (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science). If we had more time, I'd love to tell you more about it.

PSYCHOLOGIST: Since you rhetoricians are so good at proving opposites, perhaps the next time we meet you'll do a better job of representing my views.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Discursive Psychology ▶ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ▶ Logos and Rhetoric ▶ Marketing ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Public Relations ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric and Logic ▶ Rhetoric and Narrativity ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric of Science ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorical Studies

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# Rhetoric and Race

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One of the most persistent problems of → persuasion in the modern era has been the domination and subordination of racial “others,” yet race has received little attention from rhetoricians until relatively recently (→ Rhetorical Studies). Not until the second half of the twentieth century were sustained explorations of race and racism pursued by rhetorical scholars in either Speech or English departments. Since 1999, however, numerous studies that link rhetoric and race have emerged, not only in the fields of communication and composition, but also in a variety of other areas of social and symbolic action and significance. While it would be impossible to consider all of this research in the limited space of this entry, an overview of those studies that link rhetoric and race reveals a powerfully interdisciplinary field of inquiry.

Early studies of race and rhetoric focused on literary and → discourse analyses and tended to emphasize black communication (→ Rhetorical Criticism). Over time, research on rhetoric and race expanded to address gender and sexuality, white power and privilege, and → cultural studies. Rhetorical studies of race and racism offer important opportunities for examining the symbolic and social dimensions of identification and division, and, perhaps most importantly, the potential for discourse to promote social transformation and change. Rhetorical studies of race and racism pose provocative challenges to a society that has struggled throughout its history to overcome what W. E. B. Du Bois presciently coined “the problem of the color line,” the struggle for racial equality and social justice.

## **RHETORIC AND RACE IN BLACK AND WHITE**

*Before the 1960s*, few studies in either composition or communication addressed issues of race either directly or indirectly, with the exception of Kenneth Burke’s considerations of race in several of his early works (Crabbe 2003). Discussions of rhetoric and race were “an unlikely tandem” in composition studies (Campbell 1999), and in speech communication scholarship before the 1950s, much of the research that appeared in print focused mainly on “Negro” language practices. In the 1960s, both European and African-American scholars began to focus their research efforts on the relationship between rhetoric and race, and in doing so, they began to transform the ways in which language and social identity were understood and conceptualized.

*During the 1960s*, numerous essays and books appeared that examined and explicated rhetorics of black protest. By the 1970s, scholars began to question the efficacy of rhetoric for addressing racial issues, and theorized the need to reconceptualize and redefine rhetoric’s traditional preoccupation with persuasion and argumentation (Asante 1971; → Communication Modes, African). This redefinition called for an enlarged and enhanced understanding of discourse that addressed the social realities of racial difference and identity in the United States, and would be echoed later by other scholars, who hoped

to establish less oppositional rhetorical theories and practices in the areas of gender, composition, and other realms of social and symbolic action.

The 1980s witnessed a continued expansion of research extending rhetoric and race beyond traditional critical analyses of African-American discourse and public address, and shifting to descriptive studies of the language of oppression as well as more theoretically complex explorations of the language of white racism (van Dijk 1987, 1993). This expansion continued into the 1990s, during which discourse studies and research influenced by symbolic and modern racism scholarship became much more prevalent. The focus on white identity and privilege continued to increase in the 1990s, as research began to attend to issues of power, ideology, and domination in areas such as critical legal studies, critical race studies, and media studies (Olmstead 1998). These studies signaled a shift toward enlarged conceptualization of rhetoric and race that would influence significantly the shape and trajectory of scholarship at the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first.

### BEYOND BINARIES: RETHINKING RHETORIC AND RACE

In the 1980s and 1990s, researchers began to take rhetoric and race in new critical and theoretical directions. In areas where little research had been conducted, such as diversity studies (Fernandez & Davis 1999) and composition (Gilyard 1999), relationships between race and rhetoric became central concerns. Studies in the social construction of equality (Condit & Lucaites 1993), commemorative discourse (Browne 1999), and civil rights rhetoric (Jensen & Hammerback 1994) revealed an expansion of traditional critical approaches, and rhetorical theorists increasingly recognized race as a collaboratively constructed rhetorical phenomenon (McPhail 1994; Gresson 1995). Scholars also began to offer theoretically driven examinations of the *social and symbolic construction of whiteness and racial privilege* (Nakayama & Martin 1999). The momentum established at the end of the twentieth century, which saw a rethinking of rhetoric informed by emerging ideological and epistemological concerns, invigorated thinking about rhetoric and race as the twenty-first century began.

Indeed, since 2000, intellectual currents in the study of rhetoric and race have both returned to their roots and also moved in powerful and provocative new directions. While studies of black nationalism and black identity have returned the discussion of race and rhetoric to the early emphasis on African-American discourse (Gordon 2003; Terrill 2004), emerging explorations of the rhetorics of whiteness and anti-racism have established fertile new grounds for addressing the problems and possibilities of racial reconciliation (Watts 2005). Race remains central to discussions of political rhetoric (Frank & McPhail 2005; → Rhetoric and Politics), and has emerged as well in studies of visual rhetoric (Gallagher & Zagacki 2005). Rhetorical scholars have expanded the conceptualization of race well *beyond the boundaries of black and white identity*, and connections between race, class, gender, and sexuality continue to enlarge the terrains upon which issues of discourse and identity can be explored (→ Identities and Discourse; Rhetoric and Class; Rhetoric and Gender).

Rethinking the relationship between rhetoric and race has returned researchers to one of the earliest questions raised by scholars: whether or not racial conflict and division are,

in fact, problems that can be remedied by rhetoric. *Two areas of inquiry* in which this question has become a central consideration are studies of reparations and reconciliation. Research on reparations questions the potential of rhetoric to erase the color line (Bacon 2003), while scholarship on reconciliation continues to look to the promise of rhetoric to bring about significant social transformations in the area of race relations (Hatch 2006). John Hatch's hopeful conclusions provide a salient representative anecdote for the future study of rhetoric and race: "The tragic reality of unequal and conflictual race relations might have to go from bad to worse before reconciliation's call to atonement becomes compelling" (2006, 271). Hatch's observation offers a guardedly optimistic assessment of the potential of rhetoric to reconcile what Ashley Montague (1964) over 40 years ago described as "man's greatest myth: the fallacy of race."

SEE ALSO: ► Civil Rights Movement and the Media ► Communication Modes, African  
► Cultural Studies ► Discourse Analysis ► Identities and Discourse ► Media and  
Group Representations ► Persuasion ► Power and Discourse ► Rhetoric and Class  
► Rhetoric and Gender ► Rhetoric in North America: United States ► Rhetoric and  
Politics ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetorical Criticism ► Rhetorical Studies  
► Symbolic Annihilation

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## Rhetoric and Religion

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The relationship between rhetoric and religion is fourfold: (1) rhetoric is a tool used by religious groups; (2) political rhetoric draws upon religious language; (3) religious systems contribute to the discursive constructions of their adherents' worldviews; and (4) religious traditions contribute to rhetorical theory and practice.

Religious systems use *rhetoric as a tool* for interfacing with outside groups and communicating with adherents. Interfacing with outsiders includes efforts to share the message of the faith but also to create relationships with other groups. In the case of Christianity, the imperative to evangelize is especially strong, and Christian groups have been innovative in their rhetorical practices. Long a staple of Christian rhetoric, the sermon → genre has become indispensable in the American context – used by the evangelists of the First and Second Great Awakenings, including Jonathan Edwards and Charles Finney, as well as twentieth-century evangelists, such as Aimee Semple McPherson, Oral Roberts, and Jimmy Swaggart. These twentieth-century preachers were among the first to appropriate media technologies – film, → radio, → television, and the → Internet – for religious purposes (→ Cinema). In the Catholic church, the pastoral letter remains an important tool for communicating with believers, and Carol Jablonsky (1989) explains that American bishops have used these letters to instruct members in the doctrine and practices of the faith.

Rhetoric and religion interact in the political context as *political leaders draw upon religious language*, but also as religious leaders assert influence over public policy matters (→ Rhetoric and Politics). Roderick Hart (1977) has argued that in the United States, church and state have arrived at an implicit contract, which he calls “civic piety,” that is held stable by rhetorical practice. Civic piety rhetoric calls upon a nonsectarian God who watches over the United States, but it otherwise maintains a distinction between church



and state. Presidential inaugurals typically demonstrate civic piety, such as Franklin Roosevelt's use of religious language calling for a "holy war" against recession and John F. Kennedy's statement that "on Earth, God's work must truly be our own." Steve Goldzwig (1987) has countered that in addition to this "official" civic piety, there are "unofficial" public theologies that explicitly use the language, imagery, and values of specific religious traditions to influence public policy. He cites Jerry Falwell and Archbishop Oscar Romero as examples, but that list could also include William Wilberforce, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr, and Caesar Chavez (→ Rhetoric and Social Protest). Similarly, Erik Doxtader (2001) claims that Christian rhetoric, specifically the *Kairos Document*, contributed to bringing about the reconciliation that ended the system of apartheid in South Africa.

Religious systems also have rhetorical value as they *discursively constitute worldviews* for their adherents. Kenneth Burke (1961) notes that because words for the natural world are commonly used to explain the supernatural and because the reverse is also true, the ways that we see our natural world are always influenced by our theologies. For instance, Burke argues that the cycle of guilt, sacrifice, and redemption that is central to the Christian Bible also inheres in our discourse. The existence of the hortatory negative in language (the "thou-shalt-not") makes sin possible, which leads to guilt and the need for redemption and sacrifice. In their analysis of Hindu nationalism in India, Roy and Rowland (2003) suggest that this type of mythic structure is not unique to cultures influenced by Christianity. They note how Hindu nationalist identity is premised on a mythic structure that pits the great heroes of that tradition against the evils it identifies as inherent to Islam.

Finally, *religious traditions contribute to rhetorical theory* and practice. Rhetorical critics have acknowledged the contributions made by the scriptures themselves, as well as the writings of religious thinkers such as St Augustine, St Anselm, Søren Kierkegaard, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. James Darsey (1997), for instance, argues that the practice of radical rhetoric in the United States has been influenced by the prophetic tradition. The prophets of the Hebrew scriptures and contemporary radicals share a sense of mission, an attempt to hold listeners to a sacred principle, and an uncompromising posture. In a related vein, scholars have noted the persistence of the "jeremiad" in the tradition of American public address. The contemporary political jeremiad, which is heir to Puritan preaching as well as the prophetic tradition, holds up principles that are sacred to the community, expresses disappointment in the community's failure to live according to these principles, and then calls audience members to return to principled living (Murphy 1990; → Religion and Popular Communication; Rhetorical Criticism). Rhetoric scholars have primarily attended to the contributions that the Jewish and Christian traditions make to rhetorical theory, but other religions have much to offer as well.

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Genre ► Internet ► Radio ► Religion and Popular Communication ► Rhetoric and Politics ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetorical Criticism ► Rhetorical Studies ► Television

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## Rhetoric, Roman

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Roman rhetoric aims to present practical and theoretical guidelines for effective verbal → persuasion. In ancient Rome such precepts found an application most regularly in speeches made in the criminal and civil courts, but they were relevant also to debates on political policy in the senate and at popular assemblies. All of these oratorical activities were traditionally restricted in ancient Rome to men of the elite classes. The main principles of Roman rhetoric derive largely from earlier Greek rhetorical theory, which achieved impressive levels of sophistication during the fourth century BCE, and which formed the major focus of formal education in the Hellenistic world (→ Rhetoric, Greek). As these Greek-speaking communities were gradually incorporated into the Roman Empire from the second century BCE onwards, the value of rhetorical training came to be appreciated by members of the ruling elite, although the process of acceptance and integration took considerable time. The first teachers of rhetoric in Rome essentially reproduced the existing Greek system; it is not until 92 BCE that we hear of Latin being used as a language of rhetorical instruction in the city. Over the next 50 years or so, formal training in rhetoric finally became established as a central feature of upper-class Roman education.

### RHETORICA AD HERENNIUM

The three most influential works of Roman rhetoric are *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (“Rhetorical precepts addressed to Herennius,” author unknown), Cicero’s *De Oratore* (“On the orator”), and Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* (“The education of the orator”). The first takes the

form of an instructional manual or handbook, probably written sometime between 88 and 82 BCE, and presents many of the conventional tenets of ancient rhetoric (Gaines 2007). Oratory is thus divided into three broad types (1.2): legal (*iudiciale*), deliberative (*deliberativum*), and epideictic (*demonstrativum*). Similarly the orator's job is viewed as consisting of five main tasks (*officia*; 1.3): deciding on the most appropriate arguments and subject matter (*inventio*); arranging these arguments effectively (*dispositio/ordo*); casting them in a suitable linguistic style (*elocutio*); memorization of the final text (*memoria*); and finally the persuasive delivery of the speech (*pronuntiatio/actio*; → Arrangement and Rhetoric; Delivery and Rhetoric; Invention and Rhetoric; Memory and Rhetoric; Style and Rhetoric). Some of these aspects receive greater emphasis than others. Greek intellectuals had been particularly interested in analyzing and categorizing types of argument, especially those applicable in legal contexts, and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* reproduces this bias (see 2.1; → Logos and Rhetoric). Similarly, linguistic style is discussed in great detail, with some 80 stylistic devices (such as anaphora, tricolon, metaphor, and so on) catalogued, defined, and illustrated by example (4.19–4.46).

As a whole, the work is closely modeled on contemporary Greek works, although it does demonstrate the advances made in forging a new Latin terminology to match the technical vocabulary of Greek rhetoric (see, e.g., Pernot 2005, 102–104). Such handbooks placed a strong emphasis on systematization and practical utility, and the work illustrates well the main methodological hallmark of ancient rhetoric: the extensive use of categorization and taxonomy. (See, for example, the discussion at 1.8 of the four possible ways of gaining a jury's goodwill.) This kind of approach has the pedagogical virtues of clarity and order, and introduces into the study of persuasion an impressive logical rigor. Indeed, at its best, this form of analysis represents one of the most remarkable intellectual achievements of Greek and Roman scholars. It can also, however, encourage a rather formulaic approach to speech-making. As successful practitioners of oratory such as Cicero recognized, these "rules" of rhetoric offered only an initial framework for a speaker's attempts at persuasion. The realities of each specific rhetorical challenge usually called for some adaptation or variation to be introduced. As Cicero stresses, rhetorical precepts should be viewed primarily as a codification of oratorical "best practice" rather than an infallible and sacrosanct intellectual system (see *De Oratore* 1.146; 2.81–2.84; 2.131).

## CICERO

Cicero's *De Oratore* (written in 55 BCE) is a more complex and ambitious work that combines features of the standard rhetorical handbook with elements of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophical dialogue. Especially noteworthy is Cicero's attempt to raise the social and intellectual prestige of rhetoric. A longstanding challenge to the discipline was that it presented little more than a slick system of verbal tricks to be cynically applied by the orator for often immoral ends (Wisse 2002; the criticisms derive largely from Plato's *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*). Cicero responds by asserting that a training in rhetoric ideally provides a well-rounded education, in which the orator learns to analyze and debate a wide range of subjects and gains a deep understanding of the world through the accompanying study of law, literature, and philosophy (*De Oratore* 1.72–1.73; 2.68; 3.143). This argument has its own biases and self-interested elements, but no less so perhaps than Plato's (Vickers 1988, 83–147). This

controversy over rhetoric's ethical status was to be rehearsed in various forms in the Renaissance and beyond (Vickers 1988, 178–213; → Rhetoric and Ethics; Rhetoric and Philosophy).

*De Oratore* also reasserts the importance of the orator's exploitation of *ethos* (character) and *pathos* (strong emotion), aspects given prominence by Aristotle but often underplayed by the standard handbooks (Wisse 1989; → Ethos and Rhetoric; Pathos and Rhetoric). Cicero's own oratorical practices, which made considerable use of emotional pleas, may have been a further factor in his decision to stress these aspects (Hall 2007). *De Oratore* expands the traditional horizons of Roman rhetorical handbooks in another way too, through its inclusion of an analysis of oratorical humor (2.217–2.290). Although earlier Greek treatises on wit and humor existed, Cicero's incorporation of the topic into his framework of rhetorical theory seems to be an innovative step (Rabbie 2007). His discussion of the subject was influential enough to convince Quintilian to include humor as a topic for analysis in his own treatise written over a century later.

### QUINTILIAN

Quintilian's treatise, a massive undertaking that took several years to complete (c. 93–95 CE), is the most comprehensive and detailed discussion of rhetoric to come down to us from the ancient world (Fernández López 2007). The work addresses all the features regularly found in the handbooks, and extends its discussion to include the very earliest stages of the orator's training (Book 1). Its level of scholarship is impressive: Quintilian frequently summarizes the contrasting views expressed on a topic over the centuries by various (often otherwise unknown) rhetoricians and displays sound judgment in his handling of them. He seizes shrewdly on the decisive issues that bear upon a particular debate and cuts through fussy, over-complicated elaborations of theory. He also presents sensible, humane views on the challenges of educating and motivating young students.

In many ways, Quintilian serves as an authoritative guide to virtually every issue in Roman rhetoric. He is more, however, than just a synthesizer of earlier scholars' views. His discussion of oratorical delivery in particular seems to have addressed the subject with far more rigor and detail than earlier treatments. Rhetorical theory had previously shown only limited interest in the performative elements of oratory such as hand gestures and facial expression; Quintilian by contrast treats the subject in considerable detail, documenting some 30 or so hand gestures available for use by the orator (*Institutio Oratoria* 10.3; Hall 2004). This discussion influenced Andrea de Jorio's pioneering study of nonverbal communication in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Naples (de Jorio 2000), and thus has in turn influenced more recent analyses of body language (e.g., Kendon 1986). Quintilian's observations regarding the orator's need for careful image management also anticipates several other lines of approach in modern social studies. He urges the speaker, for example, to pay attention to his gait, dress, and overall bearing (or, to use Bourdieu's term, *habitus*); and several modern studies have identified ways in which Roman rhetoric's precepts regarding self-presentation and image management encode societal norms of masculinity (e.g., Gleason 1995; Richlin 1997; → Rhetoric, Nonverbal).

Quintilian's treatise as a whole demonstrates the extent to which rhetoric by this time had been embraced by the Roman elite as a central part of the educational system. (Suetonius' work *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus* ["On grammarians and rhetoricians"]

provides brief biographies of some of the renowned teachers of this period.) It was to retain this place until the fragmentation of the Roman Empire around the fifth century CE, and, during the Renaissance, rhetorical handbooks such as *Rhetorica ad Herennium* enjoyed a renewed prominence as they came to form the basic educational texts of the elite classes learning Latin for both administrative and broader cultural purposes (Ward 2007).

### THE LITERATURE ON ROMAN RHETORIC

Several other discussions of Roman rhetoric survive from the classical period: Cicero's *De Inventione*, *Brutus*, *Orator*, *De Partitione Oratoria*, *De Optimo Genere Oratorum*, and *Topica* (written between 91 and 44 BCE); Tacitus' *Dialogus de Oratoribus* (c. 96–102 CE); and Iulius Victor's *Ars Rhetorica* (probably fourth century CE). Also extant are some 50 speeches by Cicero from legal trials, senatorial debates, and political assemblies, which provide illuminating examples of rhetorical theory put into practice.

Useful surveys of the main features of Roman rhetoric and its historical development can be found in Kennedy (1972), Clarke (1996), and Pernot (2005). Lausberg (1998) presents a compendious treatment of the technical elements of Greek and Roman rhetoric. Dugan (2007) provides an excellent synopsis of recent scholarly trends in the study of Roman rhetoric. These range from analyses of the influence of rhetorical training on Roman poets and historians, to the role played by educational declamatory exercises (such as the *suasoria* and *controversia*) in shaping upper-class social attitudes and ideals. All these approaches testify to the tremendous impact of rhetoric on the lives of the Roman elite. By the first century CE, the young men of this class were highly trained in analyzing moral, legal, and political issues from an essentially rhetorical perspective, and could deploy with great facility a formidable arsenal of persuasive techniques.

SEE ALSO: ► Arrangement and Rhetoric ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Ethos and Rhetoric ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Logos and Rhetoric ► Memory and Rhetoric ► Pathos and Rhetoric ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Epideictic ► Rhetoric and Ethics ► Rhetoric, European Renaissance ► Rhetoric and Gender ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Language ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric, Nonverbal ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetorical Studies ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Rhetoric of Science

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The rhetoric of science is the application of the resources of the rhetorical tradition to the texts, tables, and visuals of the sciences. It is a relatively new form of → rhetorical criticism that began over half a century ago with studies in science policy, shifted in the past quarter century to studies of science itself, and, in the past decade has evolved methodologically from case studies to forms more amenable to wide generalization.

### PRECURSORS

Rhetoric of science begins with studies of science policy, an area that involves deliberative issues that fall readily within the traditional concerns of those trained in rhetorical analysis. Nevertheless, so strong was the traditional focus of the emerging discipline of

speech on political oratory that the first rhetorical analysis of science policy was not made until 1953 (→ Rhetorical Studies; Speech Communication, History of). In this study, Richard Weaver is concerned with an early climax in a continuing conflict in American public education, the place of evolution in the public-school biology curriculum. The focus of Weaver's study is the Scopes trial. In that trial, he concludes, the prosecution and the defense argued at cross-purposes. The issue at hand was not the law against teaching evolution, but the legality of Scopes's conduct under the law. Given this issue, the scientific testimony in favor of evolution was irrelevant. Indeed, even in the legislature the question was not the truth of evolution but the right of the state to exclude from the curriculum what was, for the people of Tennessee, academic knowledge perhaps, but religious heresy certainly. This area of rhetoric of science has not remained dormant; it has been pursued, for example, by Jeanne Fahnestock, Alan Gross, John Lyne, Carolyn Miller, and Arthur Walzer.

### **A FIRST GENERATION OF STUDIES: EMERGING RHETORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**

The focus of rhetoricians on science itself rather than science policy, a focus initiated a quarter-century ago, represents a definite break with traditional rhetorical criticism. Among those who have devoted their attention to science itself are Charles Bazerman, Carol Berkenkotter, John Angus Campbell, Jeanne Fahnestock, Alan Gross, Randy Allen Harris, Greg Myers, Jean Dietz Moss, and Larry Prelli. From this group, I select Campbell as representative. In the study of science itself, he is the pioneer. Originally focused on the *Origin of species*, his work has since moved forward and backward in time, forward to Darwin on orchids, backward to Darwin's *Notebooks*. In all of his work, Campbell's message is the same: Darwin is the master rhetorician, willing even to distort and disguise his religious and scientific views if he believes that distortion and disguise will attain conviction on some issue central to evolutionary theory. Indeed, Darwin is a master rhetorician even in his *Notebooks*, whose audience is only Darwin himself. Campbell (1990) shows that these notebooks are a proving-ground for Darwin's theories, tested against the imaginary audience of such important potential objectors as his geological mentor and friend, Charles Lyell. Of the relationship between the *Origin* and the *Notebooks*, there is, Campbell says: "an unbroken continuity . . . From his jotting in his first notebook through the sixth and final edition of the *Origin*, scientific discovery and rhetorical invention, technical and social reason, so effectively unite in Darwin's thought that one can only say that each is an aspect of a single logic of inquiry and presentation" (1990, 86). While this conclusion shies away from implicating rhetoric in the content of science, it clearly asserts its integral relationship to scientific discovery.

In the 1990s, a new climate of opinion emerged, signaled by the linguistic turn in philosophy, exemplified by Ludwig Wittgenstein and John Austin, and popularized in 1979 by Richard Rorty's *Philosophy and the mirror of nature*. Accordingly, it is no accident that the 1980s, which saw the creation of rhetoric of science, also saw a rhetorical consciousness emerge in disciplines unconnected with the rhetorical tradition. Participating in this activity were the literary scholar Wilda Anderson; the economist Deirde (formerly Donald) McCloskey; the anthropologist Emily Martin; the philosophers Marcello Pera, Philip

Kitcher, and Ernan McMullin; the linguists John Swales, M. A. K. Halliday, and Ken Hyland; the historians Bruce Hunt and Evelyn Fox Keller; the sociologists Ricca Edmundson and Richard Harvey Brown; and the library scientists Bryce Allen, Jian Qin, and F. W. Lancaster. For illustration, I selected Allen, Qin, and Lancaster as representative of less radical and McCloskey as representative of more radical claims.

In Allen et al. (1994), the authors trace both the pattern and content of the citations in the *Philosophical Transactions*. The authors also infer from *citation analysis* that the primary medium of scientific communication shifted from books in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to journal articles in the nineteenth, and to journal articles, conference proceedings, and technical reports in the twentieth. The authors then trace the shift in scientific productivity from Europe to America, and track the rise of Soviet science. In addition, they follow the eighteenth-century shift in the language of science from Latin to the various vernaculars. In the latter part of the twentieth century, they note a further shift to English as the international language of science. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, by treating citations as rhetorical features, they are able to measure the rate of change of persuasive communities; slow in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and rapid in the nineteenth and twentieth. In connection with this trend, they venture a cautious prediction concerning the increased tendency toward obsolescence in scientific publications: “if the present trend continues, the median age of the persuasive community may overtake the time required for review and publication of traditional printed communications media. This would lead to increased pressure to adopt speedier means of formal communication in science” (1994, 304).

In a ground-breaking essay entitled “The rhetoric of scientism,” McCloskey (1985) provides an example of her mastery of rhetorical technique. After a plain English summary of Muth’s important article, McCloskey gives us parallel columns: in the left, she reproduces key sentences from his article, all written in the “scientistic” patois of economists; in the right, she *turns this patois into plain English*. It is a dazzling performance, demonstrating that nothing of substance is lost in the translation. Next, McCloskey infers that, if nothing of substance is lost, “the appeals to the methods of science are mainly matters of style, arising out of a modernist conversation” (97). Nonetheless, McCloskey avers, Muth *needs* these scientistic trappings: how else is he going to meet the expectations of economists, who would not be persuaded unless an argument is fitted out with appropriate jargon and decked out with appropriate mathematical formulae? In a finale to this fireworks display of rhetorical proficiency, McCloskey compares argument in economics with argument in three apparently disparate fields. Under their respective disciplinary skins, she finds, arguments in paleontology, mathematics, and literary history *parallel* those in economics. No interesting epistemological differences exist.

## A SECOND GENERATION: NEW APPROACHES

In an attack on the positions represented by Campbell and McCloskey, Gaonkar (1993) contends that *rhetoric is constitutionally unsuited to the analysis of science*: it makes no sense to turn a system designed to teach oratory in ancient Greece and Rome into a system for the analysis of the texts produced by a social structure as complex as modern science.



Gaonkar's essay represents a reflective moment in which to meditate on the methodological limitations of the first generation of rhetoric of science, limitations that a second generation of scholarship will address: Jeanne Fahnestock, Leah Cecarelli, Celeste Condit, and Alan Gross, Joseph Harmon, and Michael Reidy.

Fahnestock (1999) undermines our comfortable sense that, aside from metaphor, the figures can be safely ignored by rhetorical critics, that the study of such schemes as *antithesis*, *incrementum*, *gradatio*, *antimetabole*, *plоче*, and *polyptoton* is the preserve only of pedants. She tells us why, while particular figures have been identified in great numbers over the centuries, a definition of figuration has eluded us. Her wide range of examples – from the Bible, from public address, and, most prominently, from science – suggest that the *figures exercise their powers* regardless of subject matter; the wide range of languages that are the origin of these sources – classical Greek, Latin, French, German, and English – suggest that they exercise their powers regardless of language (→ Style and Rhetoric). Most importantly, the attention she pays to the visual as well as the verbal strongly suggests that the figures are not linguistic, but conceptual, in nature, and that, as such, they can serve as a resource for invention and an index of conceptual change. This book also gives the lie to the pessimistic implication that many have drawn from Gaonkar's assertion that the rhetorical tradition lacks the hermeneutic wherewithal adequate to a robust criticism.

Ceccarelli (2001) is also innovative methodologically; she transforms three biological case studies – of Dobzhansky, Schrödinger, and Wilson – into an argument concerning the *effectiveness of interdisciplinary* → *persuasion* in the sciences. In Ceccarelli's view, Dobzhansky convinced geneticists and naturalists that they shared the same object of study; Schrödinger convinced physicists and biologists that their individual perspectives had a contribution to make to the study of the gene; Wilson, on the other hand, failed to persuade either scientists or humanists to embrace his reductionist vision. Ceccarelli thinks she can explain why. In her view, the two successful scientist-authors convince through intelligent rhetorical design that avoids confrontation. Wilson fails to persuade because he refuses the conciliatory gestures that come naturally to Dobzhansky and Schrödinger. Instead of promoting the language of compromise, Wilson gives us metaphors drawn from conquest. Instead of encouraging readings appropriate to each interest group, he clearly signals his intention to reduce the humanities and the sciences to a single material base subject to exceptionless laws.

While Fahnestock and Ceccarelli implicate rhetoric in the constitution of knowledge (→ Rhetoric and Epistemology), two other books – Condit (1999) and Gross et al. (2002) – do not engage epistemic issues. Each is innovative in its combination of rhetorical analysis with methods derived from the social sciences. Condit's intellectual quarry is the public perception of eugenics and genetics. But a successful hunt requires a *grounding in sampling and statistical techniques*: “the backbone of this study . . . consisted of 653 magazine articles drawn from the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* from 1919 to 1995” (1999, 260; → Sampling, Nonrandom; Sampling, Random). The content of these – and of supplemental sources – was coded and analyzed (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). In following these procedures, Condit is concerned with matters of statistical significance and inter-rater → reliability. But statistical analysis is not the end-point of her task. She also asks what her data mean, a task requiring both critical intelligence and rhetorical analysis. She

makes her methodological claim explicit: “all critics can be assisted by → quantitative methodologies when those methodologies are understood as counting tools, embedded in the critical project, rather than as overarching frameworks that constrain critical thought within a hypothesis-testing method. It is possible to use numbers in a postpositivistic fashion” (Condit 1999, 257).

Gross et al. also combine rhetorical analysis with social science methods. Their goal is sweeping: to provide the reader with a *rhetorical history of the scientific article* from its seventeenth-century beginnings to their present. Accordingly, their generalizations are the result of “an analysis of 1,804 short passages for style and 430 whole articles for presentation and argument” selected randomly from three languages, English, French, and German (2002, viii). As with Condit, these texts are subjected both to statistical and rhetorical analysis. Gross et al. (2002) have two additional features of methodological interest: they expand the scope of text to include graphics, the tables, line graphs, photographs, and drawings that are so central to scientific communication and, in their final chapter, they sketch out an evolutionary theory of the rhetorical development of scientific prose and visuals (→ Rhetoric and Visuality).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Persuasion ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Reliability ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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# Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic

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“The Second Sophistic” is the name given by Flavius Philostratus (c. 170–245 CE) in his *Lives of the sophists* (481, 507) to the rhetorical style current in his day. The sophistic culture described by Philostratus involved highly educated members of the Greek elite improvising public declamations, often in the personae of famous figures from Greece’s historical or mythological past. The primary emphasis was upon the re-enactment of key moments of military or political significance: most themes were drawn from the times of either imperial Athens (fifth century BCE) or the conquests of Philip and Alexander (fourth century BCE). This historical emphasis was matched at the level of diction, morphology, and style by the revival of the “Attic” dialect used by classical Athenian writers such as Thucydides, Plato, and Demosthenes (→ Rhetoric, Greek).

Modern scholars have taken over the phrase to encompass a number of broader phenomena (Whitmarsh 2005, 6–10). The term was revived in the nineteenth century by Nietzsche’s friend Erwin Rohde (1876, 1886), who argued that *die zweite Sophistik* was a primarily linguistic phenomenon promoting Atticism at the expense of “Asianism,” supposedly a more melodious style emanating from the Ionian Greek cities. Rohde based his arguments on the claims of an ancient author, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (writing in Rome at the turn of the millennium), who praised Roman conquest for its promotion of the “Attic muse” in response to “the other, who arrived yesterday or the day before from one of the pits of Asia” (*On the ancient orators*, 1). As was seen by the great Prussian scholar Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Möllendorff (1900), however, Dionysius’ claims are motivated by the rhetorical (not to say xenophobic) need to promote Rome: there is no real evidence for an Asianist movement.

Wilamowitz-Möllendorff’s weighty intervention deterred subsequent generations of scholars, who generally left the field alone, until the 1960s. In a more politically conscious era, Glen Bowersock (1969) turned the focus away from literary content, and onto the historical role of the orators (or “sophists”) themselves, which he identified as one of mediation between the Greek elites who were politically dominant in the cities of the eastern Roman Empire and Rome itself. Against Bowersock’s Rome-centered view, Ewen Bowie (1970) argued that the Second Sophistic – the term now extended to cover the wider phenomenon of the literary archaism practiced in most Greek literary composition in the first three centuries CE – was primarily a vehicle for the preservation of Greek cultural values in the face of Roman domination. This interest in relations between Greece and Rome was spurred on, from the 1990s onward, by → postcolonial theory: thus, for example, Simon Swain (1996) extends Bowie’s ideas into a broad theory of Greek resistance to Roman occupation, and Tim Whitmarsh (2001) argues that Roman conquest forced Greeks to rethink their ways of understanding the nature of identity. The diverse range of interpretations can be sampled in a number of collections of essays (especially Goldhill 2001; Konstan & Saïd 2006).

While many use “the Second Sophistic” as a convenient label for Roman–Greek imperial literary production in general, the narrower phenomenon described by Philostratus has also received considerable attention. As a form of rarefied competition for elite status, sophistry was an important means of consolidating class hierarchies while allowing for a limited amount of mobility. Thomas Schmitz (1997) has helpfully cross-applied Pierre Bourdieu’s theories of social distinction, built on the analysis of modern European educational structures. Bourdieu’s ideas have also been used, along with those of the anthropologist Michael Herzfeld, by Maud Gleason (1995), who emphasizes the importance of sophistry as a forum for constructing and debating masculinity (→ Rhetoric and Gender). The self-conscious role-playing so central to the Second Sophistic (in the narrower sense) does indeed lend itself readily to discussion in terms of social constructionism, built around the idea of identity as performed rather than essentially inherent (→ Constructivism; Identities and Discourse). Such approaches have been further cultivated by postmodern interest in performativity and mimicry (e.g., Connolly 2001; Whitmarsh 2005; Webb 2006; → Postmodernism and Communication; Rhetoric, Postmodern).

SEE ALSO: ► Constructivism ► Identities and Discourse ► Postcolonial Theory ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Rhetoric and Gender ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric, Postmodern ► Rhetoric, Roman

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# Rhetoric and Semiotics

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Semiotics is the study of → signs and signification, including both linguistic and non-linguistic signs (→ Linguistics; Semiotics; Sign Systems). The American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), who coined the term and did innovative work in the area, regarded it as the study of that which supports inferences; that is to say, of how signs enable interpretive inference to other signs. Peirce held that all we know or experience comes to us through the mediation of signs. He did not hold that all signification is solely the product of social convention or of language proper, maintaining that signs serve as tools for scientific investigation as well as for the exploration of human creations (→ Language and Social Interaction). One consequence of this view is that all inquiry is semiotic inquiry. Another lineage of semiotics, usually designated by the term “semiology,” grows out of a tradition of European → structuralism traced back to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, and carried forward by such writers as → Roland Barthes, Roman Jakobson, and the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss. In this tradition, emphasis is placed on the social structuring of meaning and the rendering of cultural forms as texts. In contrast to Peirce, this tradition places emphasis on the arbitrariness of signs and on binary structures of meaning.

Umberto Eco has helped to bridge the gap between the two traditions, perhaps with incomplete success, by bringing the Peircean approach (and the term “semiotics”) into a common theoretical frame with semiology. Like Peirce, he emphasizes the triadic structure of signs; and like Barthes, he accesses discursive domains through → codes. Codes make signs intelligible in linguistic communication, visual information, emotional expressions, color schemes, scientific discourse, social rituals, literary → genres, and so on (→ Visual Communication). There is some debate about whether the Peircean logic of signification can be explained as functioning purely as social conventions. To hold so would appear to put one at odds with a central feature of the Peircean theory, that is, the belief that as-yet unconventionalized signs break in unexpectedly, challenging established semiotic conventions from without, a feature especially important to scientific inquiry. Similarly, there are different understandings of whether Peirce’s idea of “infinite semiosis” should be read against the grain of his professed → realism. Peirce saw movement toward the fixing of belief as a matter of acquiring interpretive habits within communities; but these habits had to accommodate the recalcitrance that creates doubt and requires new interpretations. This process may go on indefinitely, so long as the opinion of the community of inquiry remains unsettled.

In a general sense, much of the rhetorical tradition can be understood as defining a semiotic practice, not just in respect to the study of tropes and figures, but in respect to how inferences are produced, on the scaffolding of signs, in the minds of audiences and observers (→ Rhetorical Studies). This would also encompass rhetorical invention, which aligns rather well with Peirce’s treatment of abduction. Semiotics was attractive to early film theorists, who were seeking vocabularies and tools for discussing the visual,

linguistic, musical, and image editing occurring in films (→ Film Theory). It was also used as a strategy for reading a wide variety of social signifiers, from clothing fashion to the subject positions constituted within semiotic practices. The idea of “codes,” along with Peirce’s terms, “icon,” “index,” and “symbol,” found their way into common usage in books on rhetoric and communication. During the heyday of structural semiotics in the 1980s and 1990s, Peirce’s philosophical realism may have made his approach less attractive to those rhetorical theorists and critics who shared widely held assumptions about the social construction of reality (→ Constructivism). As theories of structural semiology have become less fashionable, perhaps a space has been cleared for the largely untaken Peircean option. Apart from some theoretical work dealing with Peirce’s “speculative rhetoric” and some theoretical preparation of the ground for a Peircean approach to rhetoric, there has been little work in rhetorical criticism that takes the explicitly semiotic approach.

On the expansive view of semiotics, found in such writers as Eco and Julia Kristeva, “implicit” semiotic theories can be found in writings stretching from the pre-Socratics to Freud and picking up much in between, reminiscent of the expansive view of rhetoric that invites appropriation of figures such as → Habermas and Foucault as “implicit” theorists of rhetoric. One way to draw the distinction between rhetoric and semiotics is to say that semiotics is largely concerned with mapping out the codes, patterns, and conventions of signification, whereas rhetoric is concerned with how such codes, patterns, and conventions can be put to use in the processes of → persuasion, → identification, and articulation. This is a rough distinction, but it has the virtue of emphasizing the performative, addressive, and pragmatic aspects of the rhetorical tradition, while acknowledging that rhetoric takes flight only on the wings of signification.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Code ▶ Constructivism ▶ Film Theory ▶ Genre ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Identification ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistics ▶ Persuasion ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Realism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Structuralism ▶ Visual Communication

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## Rhetoric and Social Protest

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Research in rhetoric and social protest strives to discover how organized, uninstitutional forces use symbols and symbolic actions to promote or resist change in societal norms and values. Its focus ranges from interpersonal to mass communication, from the colonial period to the present, from moderate to radical elements, and from formal discourses to the rhetoric of the streets.

Until the latter half of the twentieth century, research in the rhetoric of social protest lay dormant in the field of communication, while rhetorical scholars pursued traditional studies of great men speaking well in times of crisis (→ Rhetorical Studies). However, studies of protest rhetoric developed rapidly in the late 1960s with the rise of the civil rights movement in the US, threats of confrontational “black power” advocates, and widespread protests opposing the war in Vietnam (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media). Rhetorical scholars could no longer ignore threatening protestors, who were in their streets, on their campuses, and in their classrooms. Researchers, at first, viewed conflict and confrontation with its attendant strident rhetoric as problems to be avoided or resolved through reasoning and locating common ground (→ Conflict Resolution; Social Conflict and Communication). Problems (controversies rather than conflicts) were perceived as communication breakdowns or failures to communicate.

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Simons (1972) was the first to challenge the “establishment bias” of rhetorical studies of social protest. He and others argued that while many questioned the rhetorical strategies and tactics of social protest, the protestors themselves faced nearly impossible rhetorical situations in which they were viewed as illegitimate, systematically denied access to normal channels and procedures, had virtually no powers of reward and punishment, and enjoyed neither legislative nor enforcement powers. Simons argued that methods of influence appropriate for “drawing room controversies” were ineffective in resolving conflicts in which neither party was willing or able to compromise. Confrontations were inevitable because they were clashes in which one party’s relative gain was the other’s relative loss. Simons described the essential nature of protest rhetoric as “coercive persuasion” designed to make institutions pay attention, address issues, and consider

change. Both Simons and Burgess (1973) claimed that coercive persuasion was inherently rhetorical because protestors had to persuade target audiences that dire consequences were likely, if not certain, before they would feel forced to comply, and that audiences must become convinced of the coercer's probable capacity and intent to follow through with the threatened action.

When scholars began to study social protest rhetoric in earnest, doubts arose about the theoretical bases of such studies. After studying US president Johnson's "war on poverty" as three establishment movements, Zarefsky (1977) questioned whether the life cycle and strategies being attributed to the rhetoric of social movements were unique to social protest or common to most campaigns and movements. He claimed that Johnson's war on poverty followed the same cycle and employed the same strategies scholars claimed to be unique to non-establishment movements. McGee (1980) argued that the notion of a social movement was more → "meaning" than "phenomenon" and concluded that the study of social movements, and therefore social protest, might become a theory of human consciousness but not a rhetorical theory.

Lucas (1980) challenged these criticisms by claiming that the roles of rhetoric in social protest could not be understood by merely looking at the formal properties of protest discourse or by applying self-evident propositions to the role of rhetoric in constructing social reality, but only by carefully analyzing the interaction of discourses with other social and situational factors that influence the process of protest rhetoric within social movements. Simons (1980) took a similar position, noting that strategies and life cycle were not the definitive characteristics of social movements. He traced situational theory to classical Greek rhetorical theory and identified common situational factors with which protestors must contend in their efforts to bring about or resist change (→ Rhetoric, Greek). These factors made their rhetorical efforts unique, set them apart from establishment movements, and made them worthy of study. The emphasis on unique situational variables and the interaction of situational forces has significantly influenced the study of social protest rhetoric since the early 1980s.

## RHETORIC AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

Rhetorical scholars have claimed that confrontational strategies in social protest are not only inevitable but essential to successful outcomes. Cathcart (1978) claimed that protestors must use such strategies to produce a *dialectical tension growing out of moral conflict* that provokes a clash with institutions and institutional leaders. The struggle becomes a moral battle for power and legitimacy to define and control the social order. To attain legitimacy in this moral struggle, protestors must strip institutions and their leaders of legitimacy by provoking confrontations that show how ugly institutions really are. The need to create this dialectical tension explains the use of symbolic actions and language strategies (vilification, obscenity, scapegoating, and polarization) to provoke repressive and sometimes violent reactions by institutional agents and agencies.

Researchers have also argued that conflict and controversy should not be avoided or stifled because both are critical to the development and improvement of society. Griffin (1969) employed the theories of Kenneth Burke when writing that to study social protests is to study strivings for salvation, perfection, and progress, rather than efforts to disrupt,



do harm, or destroy. Stewart et al. (2007) have advocated an interpretive systems approach that sees the potential of conflict to create opportunities for societal growth and progress, adaptation and evolution. These notions have led to studies aimed at understanding the rationales and purposes of extremist rhetoric, violence, riots, terrorism, and disruptive acts such as sit-ins and boycotts.

Since confrontations inherently involve two or more adversaries, researchers have studied the rhetorical strategies and tactics of institutions and counter-movements – a rhetoric of control – created to resist or stifle protest rhetoric in moral struggles for right and wrong, good and evil (Bowers et al. 1993). They have studied institutional efforts to control language, media, channels, information, expertise, and agendas, and strategies such as evasion, counterpersuasion (framing issues, enhancing fear appeals, challenging motives, denigrating the opposition), coercive persuasion (expulsion, restrictive laws, harassment, arrests), and adjustment. Some researchers have focused on the internal conflicts among individuals and groups fighting for essentially the same causes, including competing labor unions and moderate to radical organizations struggling for women's rights, to preserve the environment, or to protect animals.

### FUNCTIONAL APPROACHES

Studies from the 1950s to the 1990s often focused on the life cycle of social movements, many based on the research of sociologists and social psychologists. While usually avoiding the notion that social protest follows a linear life cycle, moving inevitably from one stage to another, researchers have attempted to discover recurring and changing rhetorical purposes, strategies, and ever-changing relationships. Recent efforts have focused on similarities and differences between first, second, and third wave feminism and environmentalism and how the perspectives of protestors are shaped and changed over time, for example, in the gay liberation and civil rights movements (Darsey 1991; Stewart 1997).

Rhetorical researchers have also conducted *leader-centered studies*. Simons' (1970) classic essay has had profound effects on the study of protest rhetoric. He identified the requirements, problems, and dilemmas leaders must resolve through rhetorical strategies, and concluded that, while protestors are denied the controls enjoyed by institutional leaders and are harassed from outside, they must perform the same functions while trying to adapt to the external system (→ Leadership in Organizations). Leaders of social protests must continually balance inherently conflicting demands on their positions and organizations. Stewart et al. (2007) studied the roles of protest leaders (organizers, decision-makers, and symbols), fundamental leadership characteristics based on Max Weber's work (charisma, prophecy, and pragmatism), and how they sustain their leadership. Other researchers have focused on the rhetoric of individual leaders, including their use of narratives, the jeremiad, a feminine style, dialectic, argument from transcendence, perspective by incongruity, and framing. They have analyzed efforts to adapt to generic and situational constraints and to use what they have, including family, position, personal sufferings, and personal testimony.

Theorists have long advocated a functional approach to understanding social protest rhetoric and to *constructing generalizations* that apply to past and future protest activities

(→ Functional Analysis; Generalizability). This approach sees rhetoric as the agency through which protestors perform necessary functions (indispensable processes) that enable organized efforts to come into existence, to meet oppositions, and perhaps to succeed in bringing about or resisting change (Stewart 1980). Researchers have developed schemes of functions and identified which might be most prevalent during differing phases of social protest. Simons (1970) identified three general functions or requirements: attracting, maintaining and molding believers into effective organizations; securing adoption of their ideology by established institutions; and reacting to resistance from within and without. Stewart et al. (2007) have identified six critical functions: transforming perceptions of social reality, altering self-perceptions, legitimizing the protest effort, prescribing courses of action, mobilizing for action, and sustaining the effort. Gregg's (1971) early functional study of ego enhancement has had major impact on research in social protest. He claimed that protest rhetoric was primarily self-directed because protestors must recognize and proclaim to self and others that their ego had been ignored or harmed to the point of disenfranchisement.

Many researchers have studied the *channels protestors have used* to transmit messages to believers, nonbelievers, and the opposition and to sustain their efforts. Such studies include artillery election sermons as a prelude to the American fight for independence, pamphleteering of anti-British colonialists, the radio addresses of the Rev. Charles Coughlin in the 1930s, the eulogies of Cesar Chavez, television coverage of feminism's Strike for Equality, and video documentaries opposing abortion. Several studies addressed the rhetorical characteristics, purposes, strategies, and impact of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr's "Letter from Birmingham Jail." Other research has focused on songs, slogans, the Internet, autobiographies, and memorials that recruit, celebrate, and recall past struggles to bring about change and equality and to sustain the struggles and gains of past protestors.

SEE ALSO: ► Civil Rights Movement and the Media ► Conflict Resolution ► Crisis Communication ► Functional Analysis ► Generalizability ► Leadership in Organizations ► Meaning ► Rhetoric and Class ► Rhetoric and Gender ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric in North America: United States ► Rhetoric and Race ► Rhetorical Studies ► Social Conflict and Communication ► Social Movements and Communication ► Women's Movement and the Media

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## Rhetoric and Social Thought

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Aristotle defines rhetoric as the art of determining the available means of persuasion in a particular case. This can be interpreted in a number of ways. When considered narrowly, the study of rhetoric can be equated with the psychology of → persuasion or with informal logic. However, when that definition is read along with the rest of the *Rhetoric*, as well as the *Ethics* and the *Politics*, and in the context of the rhetorical instruction given by the Sophists and Isocrates, rhetoric is better understood as the theory and practice of civic → discourse (→ Rhetoric, Greek).

This civic orientation is, at least among American scholars working in communication departments, usually associated with the study of political oratory, or what is called public address (→ Rhetoric and History; Rhetoric and Politics). While studies of public address in the early to mid-twentieth century were often primarily descriptive or appreciative, the last three decades of that century saw the development of a systematic attempt to link rhetorical theory and the study of public address to the literature on political and social theory. This was anticipated in the work of Kenneth Burke, which was heavily influenced by Marx and Freud, in books such as *Counter-statement* (1931), *A grammar of*

*motives* (1945), and *A rhetoric of motives* (1950). Burke offered a philosophically rich account of the political and social implications of the human use of symbols. Rhetoric and social theory developed in the context of the “linguistic turn,” the resurgence of French and German social philosophy, and the consolidation of → cultural studies in the humanities (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy). Rather than focusing on the artfulness or effect of particular speeches, rhetoric and social theory sought to identify the role that public discourse plays in social, cultural, and political processes (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics).

As a project, rhetoric and social theory has three trajectories. The first trajectory is *analytic and descriptive*, and directed toward properly identifying the manner in which public discourse mediates the development of politics and culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The second trajectory is *critical*, and aims to identify the systematic distortions, biases, or interests produced or served by public discourse. These first two trajectories, when linked to a discussion of power, are often subsumed under the category of “critical rhetoric,” a term coined by Raymie McKerrow (1989). Finally, the third trajectory is to *contribute to normative political philosophy* by developing norms for democratic public communication.

The most influential American rhetorical scholars in the development of rhetoric and social theory in the late twentieth century include Michael Calvin McGee and Thomas B. Farrell, both because of their authorship of heavily cited essays in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, and because of their formative effect on doctoral students at the University of Iowa and Northwestern University, respectively. While they did not collaborate and their work is in many respects incompatible, it in large measure defined the boundaries of work that would follow. McGee, an anti-foundationalist, argued that rhetoric rather than philosophy was the source of political values such as “liberty” and “equality.” His work thus emphasized rhetoric’s ontological power. Farrell, a neo-Aristotelean, looked to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* to develop an alternative to normative models of democratic communication developed by German political philosopher → Jürgen Habermas, the best-known heir to the “Frankfurt School” of → critical theory. Farrell, as such, emphasized rhetoric’s power to create social knowledge.

The rhetoric and social theory project was in large part successful, in that contemporary rhetorical studies is written in the context of and responds to German critical theory, cultural studies, feminism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism (→ Feminist and Gender Studies; Postmodernism and Communication; Rhetoric, Postmodern).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Persuasion ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and History ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric, Postmodern ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics

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## Rhetoric in South Asia

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South Asia usually refers to the geo-cultural area traditionally known as the Indian subcontinent and consists of contemporary Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tibet, and the Maldives. The region has a rich tradition of conceptualization of the arts of argumentation, oration, and literary embellishment, marked by a flair for categorizing even the subtlest features.

In ancient India, the understanding of various forms of rhetoric practice was necessitated by cultural practices, including public deliberations in Vedic assemblies and post-Vedic republics, urban leisure cultures’ adulation of oratory (*vacanam*) and the aesthetic, the tradition of public debates to establish and defend academic and religious thoughts, and well-organized judicial and political systems (→ Rhetorical Studies).

Comprehensive theorizations of scholarly argumentation were reached at in logic (*Nyāya*) and other disciplines (→ Argumentative Discourse; Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Caraka (400 BCE), in his treatise on medicine, classifies debate into two types: friendly discussion between two scholars (*Sandhāya sambhāṣā*) and argumentation of two hostile scholars (*Vigraha*). Gautama (c. 200 CE), the founder of *Nyāya*, however, classifies argumentation (*Kathā*) into three categories: discussion for truth without fear of losing (*Vāda*), a debate where the debater censures the opponent’s thesis without establishing any counter-position (*Vitaṇḍā*), and debate for victory without care for the truth (*Jalpa*). Sanatni (c. 1000 CE) denies *Vitaṇḍā* any independent existence; Dharmakīrti rejects all forms of debate except the *Vāda*. Gautama categorizes quibble (*Chala*) and false parity of reasoning (*Jāti*), the tricks used for victory in lieu of fair argumentation, and sub-varieties of these features. Gautama also identifies 22 categories of censuring a debate (*Nigrahasthāna*). Caraka and Maitreya (400 CE) prescribed some context-sensitive nonverbal strategies for public argumentation.

Emperor Ashoka (200 CE) proclaimed mutual tolerance, restraint of speech, and respect for the truth in each system as the basic principles of religious argumentation. Mughal Emperor Akbar (1500–1600 BCE) conceptualized “the path of reason” (*Rah-I-Akl*) as the guiding principle of interreligious dialogue.

Judicial argumentation was discussed in *Dharmaśāstras*, the Hindu treatises on law (200 BCE onwards), and *Arthaśāstra*, a treatise on polity by Kautilya (300 BCE). As testimonies were accorded importance, more than even divine tests, technical discussion on forms, qualities, and defects of legal argumentations (*Vāda*) are aplenty. Concise, relevant, reasonable,

unambiguous, capable of proof, understandable without an explanation, consistent, and nonfigurative submissions (*Vākya*) are considered as ideal.

*Arthaśāstra* discusses the political rhetoric (→ Rhetoric and Politics). Persuasive verbal strategies used by spies and the composition of royal writs were discussed by Kautilya. He categorizes the qualities of royal writs as arrangement of the content (*arthakarma*), relevance (*samvandha*), completeness (*paripurnatā*), sweetness (*mādhurya*), dignity (*audārya*), and lucidity (*spastatva*).

Caraka, Kautilya, and Sushruta detailed a comprehensive system of technical textual composition (*Tantra-yukti*) having more than 30 clearly explained and categorized stylistic and logical devices (*Tantra*), including content (*vidhāna*), quotation (*apadeśa*), doubt (*samasyā*), derivation (*nirvacana*), and exception (*apavarga*) (→ Invention and Rhetoric; Style and Rhetoric).

Sanskrit aestheticians' endeavors in understanding the sources of literary persuasiveness focused on rhetoric figures. Bharata (c. 200 BCE), in *Nāṭyaśāstra*, the most ancient available treatise on poetics, identifies four literary figures – *Upamā*, *Rūpaka*, *Dīpaka*, and *Yamaka* (simile, metaphor, zeugma, and homophony). Later theoreticians' insistence on categorizing finer differences of rhetoric strategies proliferated figures and sub-figures. With the contributions of generations of scholars through the centuries, the number of figures had risen to 136 by the thirteenth century (in Appayadikshita's *Chitramimāṃsā*). However, the search for broader categories to understand the general ornamentality of literary writings also led to the concepts of *Soundrya* (beauty) and *Vakratva* (deviance) being propounded as defining categories of literary writings (→ Rhetoric and Poetics).

Aestheticians of other languages of the region also show comparable engagement with literary rhetoric. Though ancient Tamil aestheticians did not invest in subtle details, the *Tolka:ppiyam*, the earliest available Tamil treatise on poetics (c. 100 BCE), recognizes simile (*Uvamam* or *Uvamai*) as the most important literary technique and dedicates one full chapter to the subject. *Siyabasalakara* (c. 900 CE), the oldest prose work in Sinhalese, the Sri Lankan language, is a treatise on rhetoric. Other important works like *Dandyālaṃkara sama* and *Siyabās Lakuṇa* (c. 1200–1300 CE) continue the engagement. These works in general share close affinity with Sanskrit aestheticians' understanding of rhetoric, *Dandyālaṃkara sama* being itself a commentary on Dandi's work, the *Kāvyaadarśa*.

With the spread of Muslim education during the medieval period, classical Arabic and Persian thinking became, and continued to be, an indispensable part of the south Asian knowledge system (→ Communication Modes, Muslim). Though some insights are offered on the art of oratory, as in the *Bayān-wa-al-Tabayīn* of Jahiz, classical Arabic and Persian thinking accords much importance to rhetorical aspects of literary works. Led by scholars like Al-Mubarak, Ibn-al-Mutaz, Qudama-bin-Jafar, Rashid al-Din Vatvat, Qays al-Razi, and Sad al-Din Taftazani, the tradition offers multidimensional understanding of the nature and categories of rhetoric figures and composition styles.

During the past two centuries, elements of western rhetoric have been incorporated into the south Asian knowledge system. However, the idea of rhetoric as a discipline covering areas other than literary figures has failed to gain circulation. In the west, Oliver (1971) and Kennedy (1998) have offered brief introductions to rhetorical practices of ancient India within a comparative framework. Though constrained by lack of access to

important primary sources, these works take into account various areas of rhetorical practices other than the literary. In south Asia, however, non-innovative exposition of classical rhetoric figures in contemporary literary contexts has become predominant with a few comparative and interactive exceptions. Chakraborty (1988) offers valuable insights on possible interaction between western and Sanskrit rhetoric figures by identifying examples of western figures like *asyndeton*, *anticlimax*, etc. in contemporary Bengali literature and simultaneously noting how the finer peculiarities of various types of comparison-based rhetoric practices of the western literatures, overlooked by the western system, can be effectively categorized under the Sanskrit figures. Karickam (1999) provides a comprehensive comparative analysis of the Indian (Dravidian and Sanskrit) and western rhetoric figures, preparing the base for further interactivity.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Communication Modes, Muslim ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric in the Middle East ► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetoric and Politics ► Rhetorical Studies ► Style and Rhetoric

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## **Rhetoric in the South Pacific**

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Since the “new rhetorical” movement of the 1960s, the definition of rhetoric has expanded to encompass a variety of theories and movements, technologies and innovations, thereby raising the question of how rhetoric is understood and employed in the twenty-first century (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). While its rich connection with composition studies has increased the profile, popularity, and applications of rhetoric in North America, the emphasis on composition or academic writing as a mainstay of tertiary education is not nearly so widespread in the South Pacific. As a result, the term “rhetoric” is regarded dubiously.

Popular uses of the word as a term of denigration, such as “rhetoric of the media,” “just rhetoric,” “empty rhetoric,” and “political rhetoric,” have propagated images of trickery, deception, or simply the antithesis of reality. In academic circles, “rhetoric” is too often perceived as synonymous with remedial, with “fixing up” bad writing, with teaching grammar,

and with decorating language (→ Style and Rhetoric). However, progressive programs in the region reject these narrow definitions of rhetoric and see it instead as a valuable element of new textual cultures, particularly digital cultures. The five canons of classical rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery) have enjoyed a revival in everyday written and oral communication as a direct result of the information age. Particularly in online environments, critical applications of rhetoric are vital for managing, interpreting, and processing data (→ Technology and Communication; Rhetoric and Technology).

When considered in light of Andrea Lunsford's definition of rhetoric as the study of human communication, the South Pacific region becomes a rich environment for "communication studies." Claire Woods, Director of International Programs for the School of Communication, Information, and New Media at the University of South Australia, argues that rhetoric is central to a critical understanding of textual culture, to developing "an understanding of the theoretical and applied work involved in the *tekhne* of text production as readers, writers, makers and receivers of multi-genre textual forms" (2007; → Text and Intertextuality).

The English Department at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, offers a curriculum that features classical rhetoric and "writing studies" in much the same tradition as North American universities. This department is a leader in rhetorical studies in the region, and is one of very few to include courses in "rhetoric" alongside more mainstream degree requirements.

The emphasis on communication studies, however, is perhaps best demonstrated by the region's ever-evolving understanding of and increasing appreciation for its indigenous people. Studies of Aboriginal life writing have grown in popularity over recent decades and have awakened the region to its earliest histories of communication, in written, oral, and graphic forms. In *Writing never arrives naked* (2006), Penny van Toorn explores the involvement of Indigenous Australians in the colonizers' paper culture, and describes how Aboriginal people used the written word, creatively and resourcefully, for self-empowerment and survival (→ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on).

In *Comparative rhetoric*, George Kennedy writes that "evidence for traditional aboriginal rhetoric comes from an extensive body of prose myths and religious and secular song, which can be classified as epideictic in that its primary function was the transmission and reaffirmation of the beliefs and values of the community" (1998, 60; → Rhetoric, Epideictic).

As Edward Corbett, widely regarded as an unassuming giant of twentieth-century rhetoric, described it, rhetoric is the "enabling discipline" that crosses cultures and blurs boundaries. Though not always referred to as "rhetoric," this classical art is ever present in the South Pacific and remains a pillar of ethical and meaningful human communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Rhetoric, Epideictic ▶ Rhetoric and Technology ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ▶ Style and Rhetoric ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Rhetoric and Technology

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Rhetoric as the study of forms of self-expression has many meanings depending on the context in which it is used. For theorists and practitioners of public speech, it is concerned primarily with the study of persuasion (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). For those interested in cultivation of effective expression, rhetoric concerns the use of style and development of polished writing and speaking (→ Style and Rhetoric). Rhetoric has been the subject of scholarly theory and analysis in education since at least the fourth century BCE, when Aristotle developed his theories of artistic proof and stylistic expression in *On rhetoric* (Aristotle 1991; → Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetorical Studies).

## INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON RHETORIC

*Aristotle's On rhetoric* exemplifies the ways in which technology has influenced rhetoric. The advent of writing in Greek culture meant that public oratory would be influenced by technical developments in inscribed expression. The adoption of writing in a previously oral culture precipitated interest in sequential logic and prescribed forms of organization. As Walter J. Ong (1982, 9) noted, "writing from the beginning did not reduce orality but enhanced it, making it possible to organize the 'principles' or constituents of oratory into a scientific 'art,' a sequentially ordered body of explanation that showed how and why oratory achieved and could be made to achieve its various specific effects." Pursuing this same line of work, Ong traced the work of Ramus, a sixteenth-century educator who developed pedagogical theories during the shift from oral to print culture and literacy. Ramus produced grand display schematics that "proceeded by cold-blooded definitions and divisions, until every last particle of the subject had been dissected and disposed of" (Ong 1982, 134). Ramus's visual displays and diagrams were remarkably well suited to dissemination in the new medium of print (→ Media History; Medium Theory; Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems).

The digitization of print technologies in the late twentieth century has further influenced the nature and form of rhetoric (→ Digitization and Media Convergence; Printing, History of). Early affordances introduced by digitization included use of new fonts and hypertext commentary on primary texts (Lanham 1993). Further development of hypertext markup language (HTML) in the 1990s provided enhanced possibilities for rhetorical expression

that included embedded supporting hyperlinks, producers' ability to track users' movements through sites, automated personalization of messages delivered to users, and interactive user interfaces. These technical capacities of the new medium have been also combined with persuasive appeals in the form of animations and multimedia content to create online platforms that are highly effective for rhetorical expression (Farkas & Farkas 2002; Burnett & Marshall 2003).

The distinction between expressive forms seen in earlier media contexts and those associated with new media has been clarified by Lev Manovich (2001). He observed that an important difference between prior media and new media is that the latter are computerized. Whether it be a text or visual → image, the new media object originates on computers and is comprised of digital code and subject to algorithmic manipulation (→ Digital Imagery). Because it has been converted using mathematical functions, digital text is modular and is comprised of independent, separate elements such as pixels, hyperlinks, gif and jpeg elements, and media clips. These elements can be disaggregated, rearranged, and re-presented through automated processes. Thus, a good deal of digital media content is produced through the cooperation of multiple agents who produce variable texts that can be tailored to individual users, rather than unified, stable texts designed for mass audiences. As Manovich noted, another dimension of the digitally constituted text is its variability. Instead of a master text or copy that is created and stored, a digital text may give way to many versions as the text is altered automatically through periodic updates and processually through actions taken by users. This process has been termed "co-production" and viewed as a collaborative constitution of the text, in which content is jointly produced by authors and users (→ Text and Intertextuality).

### **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

The need to study and analyze co-produced texts has led some scholars in the humanities to turn to the work of prominent theorists such as → Roland Barthes (1977) and → Mikhail Bakhtin (1981). Barthes' work shifted the critic's focus from the author as sole producer of an oral or written message to the reader or consumer of the text. Barthes believed that an author-centered orientation worked from the perspective of the "readerly text" – a finished work that views the author as the center of meaning production. This is in contrast to what Barthes labeled the "writerly text" – one which is incomplete, plural, and indeterminate, thus calling upon the reader to supply or fill in meaning. Barthes' view of text as a network in which meaning emerges along a horizon of possible significations aligns well with digital expression as experienced in contemporary media environments, where texts are produced through corporate authorship, constantly revised, often borrowed, and frequently parasitic on the other texts to which they are linked. Analysts and critics of rhetorical expression working from Barthes' framework often consider the range of possible meanings and construals of a persuasive message and how it might be taken up, rather than emphasizing the purported intention of its author in interpreting its meaning. (→ Rhetoric and Semiotics; Semiotics).

Because Bakhtin viewed artistic expression as seen in novelistic prose as interweaving the speech of the author, the characters, the various forms of expression in the host culture, and what is said in other texts, his theories have also been quite pertinent to study of

rhetorical expression in certain current media forums. For example, the world wide web is host to many forms of heteroglossic speech, such as multiply authored sites, intertextual satire, parody, group discussion and deliberation, and other contexts where many voices blend and clash (→ Internet). In such an environment, it is useful to consider persuasion in multiply authored sites as an expression of orientations that evolve from multiple forms of expression and points of view.

## METHODS AND STUDIES

The study of online persuasion has included various methods of analysis and criticism. For example, Laura Gurak's (1997) study of text-based discussion in listservs, newsgroups, and email used a → *case study method* to examine persuasion practices among people protesting actions that they considered to be a threat to online privacy. Gurak considered participants' use of form letters, petitions, and the patterns of their dissemination as well as the content of the messages circulated to explain why the agents against whom they were protesting acceded to their demands. In a later study of web-based protest, Gurak and her co-author John Logie (2003) considered member protest against online service provider Yahoo! in 1999 by using a comparative case study method. They demonstrated that the structure of hypertext discourse on the web enabled actions that would not have been possible in earlier text-based communication. These included defacement of existing websites, redirection of users to alternate sites, and use of notices and site placement to establish a single website as a central node in the protest action. These two studies indicate how the rapid grow of the web and its associated technologies changed the form and effectiveness of online protest over time (→ Rhetoric and Social Protest).

A second line of research on rhetorical discourse in new media environments is from a *critical perspective*. For example, Susan Herring studied the roles and nature of online communication involving women for over 15 years. In a 2001 retrospective of trends relating to gender, she used → discourse analysis to trace the ways in which gender differences emerged in control of online interaction and nature of online messages (→ Mediated Social Interaction). In the Internet's early days, when women were a small minority of Internet users, they were often harassed or dismissed by participants in online discussions. The advent of the web brought with it online pornography, which objectified women and exploited their representations for personal gain (→ Sex and Pornography Online). By the 2000s, online content came to be dominated by commercialized representations that positioned women as having a need to please others and improve themselves. Herring's current work has considered practices of self-representation produced by women in personal home pages, online meeting sites, and on webcams to describe the ways in which online gender representation has continued to be stereotypical (→ Stereotypes).

*Rhetorical criticism*, a method of analysis that focuses on text-based persuasive strategies and how they function to influence users, has also been used to study online discourse (→ Rhetorical Criticism). This mode of criticism closely examines uses of expressive form, placement, genre, argument, visual image, and other means of symbolic representation that are used to persuade audiences. For example, a rhetorical criticism of web-based discourse would consider site layout, the link structure, ease of use, and the means by which site design is planned to encourage repeat visitors and increase site usability. Such

an approach might also examine site elements such as interactivity and intertextuality as they are used to promote user involvement with site content, as well as the means by which site authors seek to establish their ethos, or credibility, with audiences (Warnick 2007; → Ethos and Rhetoric).

As communication and information technologies develop, the means used to persuade audiences are likely to change as well (→ Technology and Communication). During the classical period, additional logical forms emerged and exposition became increasingly linear. In the late nineteenth century in the United States, training in oratory emphasized dramatic use of the voice and elaborate gestures to convey content to large audiences in the absence of devices for oral projection of the voice. By the early twenty-first century, the Internet made possible new forms of immediate and highly visual persuasive expression. In each case, rhetoric has adapted to the communication contexts in which it has been used, and there is every reason to believe that this trend will continue in the future.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Case Studies ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethos and Rhetoric ▶ Image ▶ Internet ▶ Media History ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Gender ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems ▶ Rhetoric and Semiotics ▶ Rhetoric and Social Protest ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Style and Rhetoric ▶ Technologically Mediated Discourse ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Rhetoric, Vernacular

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The rhetorical tradition began with, and has remained linked to, the public discourse of official forums. Aristotle named these deliberative, forensic, and epideictic rhetoric (→ Rhetoric, Greek). Although these first appeared as genres and later included additional forms of address, such as the sermon and the essay, the distinctive focus of rhetorical theory and criticism into the mid-twentieth century remained on speaking and writing. With some notable exceptions, these genres were typically delivered in an official site, such as a legislative chamber, or by a person who was in a position of power, such as the leader of a movement. They are captured by the category of “public address.” From the mid-1960s this category was challenged on a number of fronts, such as its inability to account for protest rhetoric, the rhetoric of new media, or that of marginalized groups, which became subjects of inquiry among rhetoricians (→ Rhetoric and Social Protest). In the mid-1990s, this challenge was extended theoretically and critically to reconsider excluded voices without access to official sites, voices that are not in positions of leadership, or whose modes of expression do not take the form of public address or formal essay, by considering them as they were manifested in vernacular exchanges, or *vernacular rhetoric*.

Vernacular rhetoric is variously understood as deliberation and opinion formation reflecting the rhetoric of the everyday (Hauser 1999), rhetoric of the people (McGee 1975), mundane rhetorical performances within a culture that shape it as a culture (Ono & Sloop 1995), and a critique of culture and a mode of resistance that makes power relations visible (Calafell & Delgado 2004; Hauser 2006; Holling 2006; Ono & Sloop 1995; Sloop & Ono 1997). Irrespective of these differences, those who study vernacular rhetoric examine “texts” that are outside power, and often as they interact with power. They contain the voices of citizens who do not hold office, do not have access to official forums, and whose expression of opinions and sentiments exerts influence more through its logic of circulation than as a significant official statement.

Usually vernacular rhetoric consists of → discourses that circulate within a particular group or community, such as a street gang. It may also include the range of expression outside power directed to pervasive concerns and issues or signal events, such as how lay people discuss euthanasia. And it may include artistic expression and images that reflect commitments and sentiments of some identifiable social unit, such as an identity group, a social movement, or a significant cross-section of a nation as these are expressed in the → *public sphere* (Finnegan & Kang 2004).

Study of vernacular modes of expression has opened rhetoric studies to areas heretofore ignored by the discipline. Vernacular rhetoric does not necessarily frame issues in the same way as authority, often uses different topoi, and is commonly expressed through alternative media, such as the Internet (Holling 2006), visual images (Calafell & Delgado 2004), the body (Hauser 2006), or other means of materiality to make different arguments from those expressed in official public spheres by the elite voices of the empowered. These differences are important for what they reveal about dimensions of

human experience; invention and expression of community, subjectivity, and identity; and resistance and aspiration as they are expressed by people in their everyday lives, often in hush harbors, sometimes under conditions of overt oppression, but always drawn from the community. Sometimes they may reflect and circulate the ideas of authority figures, sometimes they may influence the expression of authority figures (Hauser 1999), but sometimes the ideas and sentiments circulating in everyday discourse may frame life's realities in ways that are quite different from, and are a critique of, those of authority (Sloop and Ono 1997). Regardless of how they relate to official expressions, they are an essential voice in a social dialogue that shapes a human world of values, ideas, beliefs, emotions, celebrations, and actions.

Within this frame, studies of vernacular rhetoric are an extension of the mid-twentieth century shift in rhetoric study's focus from producing influential communication to *exploring rhetoric as a social practice* (Burke 1969; → Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). This line of thought argued that society could not be understood without taking into account how humans use symbols – speaking and writing primarily but not exclusively – to shape social realities, which, in turn, constitute a human world. Because the rhetorical perspective toward language use always considers it as addressed, theorizing rhetoric as a social practice means it must be regarded as a performance that is always enacted ensemble.

The shift from production to social performance has had the significant consequence of decentering the privileged position of the speech or the essay as the focus of rhetoric scholars. In this respect, those who study vernacular rhetoric join a number of other schools within the discipline in addressing major questions now to the fore in rhetoric studies: how do we establish social identification through our modes of social discourse; what do our modes of rhetorical exchange reveal about a shared sense of identity and a shared reality; how does ensemble performance, which shifts from “an audience” addressed to “a public” that forms through networks of everyday rhetorical exchanges, challenge the definition and locus of agency, subjectivity, public memory, identity, and epistemology?

In addition to these questions, there are *major challenges* facing the study of vernacular rhetoric that are, to some degree, *sui generis*. How is a text constructed when the discourse, unlike a speech or a diary, is not continuous? The evidence of vernacular rhetoric is often like archeological shards that must be pieced together from fragments of significant symbolic performances. Does vernacular rhetoric have a logic or multiple logics of circulation? Must such logic(s) necessarily challenge those of official voices? This question is central to critique of vernacular rhetoric, since some, following Ono and Sloop (1997), always regard it as already “outlaw” rhetoric, while others, following Hauser (1999), regard it as an exchange out of power that, while constitutive of community, is often a mode of citizen deliberation that is not necessarily a mode of resistance.

Finally, what are the *methodological implications* that accompany studying vernacular rhetoric? The humanities have traditionally deployed methodologies suited to textual analysis of specific artifacts, such as the painting, the drama, or the public address. Although vernacular rhetoric may take these forms, it is more commonly found in everyday exchanges that require participant observation if not ethnographic methods (→ Rhetoric and Ethnography). Combining non-traditional methods with traditional methods poses intellectual challenges, but also opens an avenue to bringing the humanities to the street.

SEE ALSO: ► Discourse ► Public Sphere ► Rhetoric and Ethnography ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetoric and Technology ► Rhetoric and Visuality ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics

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## **Rhetoric and Visuality**

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If visuality is understood broadly as the practices, performances, and configurations of the appearances, then the relationship between rhetoric and visuality is as old as the art of rhetoric itself. The ancients tied rhetoric to the world of *mimesis*, or the appearances, rather than to the realm of philosophical truth; this relationship has often unfairly relegated both rhetoric and the visual to subordinate status in the Platonic regime of knowledge (Kennedy 2001). Yet in the ancient tradition the visual is constitutive of rhetoric in a number of ways (→ Rhetoric, Greek). The canon of delivery references visuality in its emphasis on gesture, movement, and performance (Kjeldsen 2003; → Delivery and Rhetoric; Gestures in Discourse). The trope of *ekphrasis* (literally “bringing-before-the-eyes”) and Aristotle’s notion of *phantasia* reference the ability of rhetoric to create → images in the mind and cultivate affective grounds for judgment (O’Gorman 2005; → Pathos and Rhetoric; Rhetoric, Epideictic). Sight is framed as a powerful influence on persuasion by Quintilian, who divided images into the categories of pictorial images and

mental images, and argued that the best orators created visions (*visiones*) in their listeners' minds (Scholz 2001; Kjeldsen 2003; → Rhetoric, Roman).

A contemporary discussion of the relationship of rhetoric to visuality would position itself in relation to the rise of visual culture studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The concept of visuality emerged in the 1980s as a key term of the poststructuralist turn in art history (→ Art as Communication; Visual Culture). Hal Foster's germinal collection, *Vision and visuality* (1988), which featured the work of scholars such as Jonathan Crary and Martin Jay, notably framed visuality as the recognition that vision is socially constructed and historically constrained; how we see is not natural but tied to the historically specific ways that we learn to see. Jay (1996) usefully lists a range of concepts and theorists associated with the study of visuality, most importantly *the gaze* (Laura Mulvey), *surveillance* and *panopticism* (Michel Foucault), → *spectacle* (Guy Debord), → *scopic regime* (Christian Metz and Martin Jay), the *mirror stage* (Jacques Lacan), and the *pictorial turn* (W. J. T. Mitchell; → Spectator Gaze). The concept of the pictorial turn has been of particular interest to rhetorical scholars because it encourages scholars to revisit relationships between image and text, and marks a growing recognition that the visual is not reducible to the operations of language or text (Mitchell 1994).

In the field of communication, scholars' attention to the rhetorical aspects of visuality in this poststructuralist sense is relatively recent, though attention to the rhetoric of visual artifacts goes back several decades. The 1971 Wingspread Conference "Report of the Committee on the Advancement and Refinement of Rhetorical Criticism" famously argued that rhetorical critics should pay increased attention to visual artifacts, performances, and media (→ Rhetorical Criticism). While scholars after Kenneth Burke accepted the notion that rhetoric was best conceived broadly as symbolic action of all kinds, it was not until the 1970s and 1980s that a critical mass of scholars began conducting → case studies of visual artifacts such as murals, → posters, → documentary film, → television, political → prints, and memorials; their interests are reflected in Martin J. Medhurst and Thomas Benson's (1984) edited collection, *Rhetorical dimensions in media* (→ Rhetoric and Media Studies). Partly as a result of the growing disciplinary acceptance of rhetorical analysis of visual artifacts, and partly as a result of the rise of attention to visuality in the humanities more generally, by the late 1990s what was coming to be called "visual rhetoric" had begun to coalesce into a recognizable sub-field of rhetorical studies in communication departments. Scholars not only continued their decades-long interest in exploring the rhetorical aspects of historical and contemporary visual artifacts, they also began to attend to issues of visuality more explicitly. Today, communication scholars working at the intersection of rhetoric and visuality concern themselves with a wide variety of theoretical, critical, and historical questions, including the practices of visibility and invisibility, the role of spectacle in the → public sphere, rhetorical histories of viewing, the role of image appropriation and circulation in public culture, and the complex relationships among rhetoric, the body, and cultural performance (Prelli 2006; Olson et al. 2008).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Case Studies ▶ Delivery and Rhetoric ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Image ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Pathos and Rhetoric ▶ Poster ▶ Prints ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Rhetoric, Epideictic ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetoric, Nonverbal



► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetoric and Semiotics ► Rhetorical Criticism ► Scopic Regime ► Spectacle ► Spectator Gaze ► Television ► Visual Communication ► Visual Culture ► Visual Representation

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## **Rhetoric in Western Europe: Britain**

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The tradition of rhetorical theory and practice in Britain is longstanding and vibrant. In the Middle Ages, Britain produced important contributions to rhetorical theory. The Venerable Bede (c. 672/73–735), for instance, provided a treatment of the stylistic aspects of discourse in his *De schematibus et tropis*, and Alcuin (c. 735–804), the British-born tutor of and advisor to Charlemagne, left us his *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus*, a dialogue in which emperor and teacher explore the theoretical underpinnings of civic discourse in the Ciceronian tradition (→ Rhetoric, Medieval). While the practice of public address was quite limited during the period, British rhetorics explored the persuasive elements of verse, and monastic libraries in the British Isles preserved manuscripts of some of the key rhetorical texts of late antiquity.

While the Renaissance came relatively late to Britain, it brought continental influence to the rhetorics Britain produced (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance). Humanist texts such as Leonard Cox’s *Arte or crafte of rethoryke* (1530) and Thomas Wilson’s *Arte of rhetorique* (1553) had a decidedly Ciceronian flavor. Cox treated invention (the ancient canon of discovering ideas or developing lines of argument) by drawing upon Roman

theories of the *loci communes* (argumentative commonplaces; → Invention and Rhetoric). Wilson offered a full-blown treatment of all five *officia* of Ciceronian rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery) and adapted them to the needs of a Tudor audience. Both of these works were heavily influenced by the theories of Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560), the German humanist theologian, whose *Institutiones rhetoricae* (1521) provided a four-fold division of the art (judgment, invention, disposition, elocution) compatible with both antiquity and Protestant Christianity.

Britain also produced stylistic and Ramistic rhetorics in the sixteenth century. Richard Sherry's *Treatise of schemes and tropes* (1550) and Henry Peacham's *Garden of eloquence* (1577) treated expression, the stylistic aspect of rhetoric (→ Style and Rhetoric). John Jewell (*Oratio contra rhetoricam*, 1548), Gabriel Harvey (*Rhetor*, 1575; *Ciceronianus*, 1576), and Douglas Fenner (*The Artes of Logicke and Rhetorike*, 1584) all gave voice to different aspects of Ramus's attack on Ciceronian rhetoric (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic).

In terms of diversity and innovation, rhetoric reached its zenith in Britain during the Enlightenment. Rhetorical theories developed along five broad lines of inquiry. The first of these is the neo-classical or neo-Ciceronian. In John Holmes' *Art of rhetoric made easy* (1755), John Lawson's *Lectures concerning oratory* (1758), and especially John Ward's *System of oratory* (1759), British writers crafted theories of rhetoric that adapted the broadly classical concerns of the orator in public controversy to the somewhat changed environment of Enlightenment Britain. These theories considered the civic goals of rhetorical discourse, the orator's argumentative resources, and the situations or causes (legal, political, occasional, and religious) he might confront.

A second and related line of inquiry considered rhetoric as an art of criticism and conversation. This line, the belletristic, expanded rhetoric to include literature, historical writing, and even epic poetry. Concerned largely with matters of taste, style, and sublimity, belletristic rhetoric shifted attention from the production of discourse to its reception. In his *Elements of criticism* (1762), Henry Home, Lord Kames, offered a nearly pure form of belletristic rhetoric, while Adam Smith's *Lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres* (delivered 1762–1763) and Hugh Blair's *Lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres* (1783) created rhetorics that combined neo-classical and belletristic concerns.

A third line of theory might broadly be called the philosophical, for it resulted from the quest to explain persuasion in light of contemporary advances in psychology and philosophy of mind. George Campbell, in his *Philosophy of rhetoric* (1776), drew upon both Thomas Reid's commonsense philosophy and David Hume's radically different conceptions of human thought and crafted a rhetoric rooted in faculty psychology, inductive processes, and the passions and judgments of the audience (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy). Hume himself, in his essays on eloquence, taste, and essay writing, assessed contemporary eloquence in light of the ancients and also suggested that women be included in the sphere of intelligent discourse.

Students were exposed most directly to a fourth kind of rhetoric, the lectures provided in the schools and universities. Robert Watson, George Jardine, William Greenfield, William Leechman, Archibald Arthur, and many others toiled in near obscurity but provided students with a version of rhetoric that was situated in the moral philosophy course. They taught students that rhetoric was best considered in its relationship to other moral studies, including what today would be called theology, psychology, philosophy of mind,

ethics, jurisprudence, and logic. These teachers tended to make rhetoric subordinate to logic and limited to matters of style, taste, and criticism.

One final type of rhetoric, the elocutionary, focused almost exclusively on delivery of the speech (→ Delivery and Rhetoric). Thomas Sheridan, in his *Course of lectures on elocution* (1762), argued that a correct and powerful speaking voice would improve not only the speech but also the moral character of the individual and the institutions about which he spoke. Elocutionary theories tended to de-emphasize the inventional or substantive aspects of the art.

The eighteenth century also saw a dramatic increase in the quality and quantity of oratorical discourse. Preachers in the pulpits of the Scottish Kirk and the Anglican Church, advocates and barristers in the courts, and MPs in parliament made public discourse a central part of civic life, and illegal reports of political orations fed the public's growing appetite for speech texts. Political discourse of the period is best exemplified by the epic battles between Pitt the Elder and Horatio Walpole and the speeches of Burke and Pitt the Younger on the French and American revolutions.

SEE ALSO: ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Invention and Rhetoric ► Rhetoric and Dialectic  
 ► Rhetoric, European Renaissance ► Rhetoric, Medieval ► Rhetoric and Philosophy  
 ► Style and Rhetoric

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# Rhetoric in Western Europe: France

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According to the *doxa*, rhetoric flourished in France under absolutism, enjoyed a fire-and-brimstone revival during the Revolution, and gradually disappeared in the nineteenth century, until it was reduced to the few figures of style school children still learned in the twentieth century. Actually, after 1700, interwoven rhetorical and anti-rhetorical strands shape a field that expands and contracts, with occasional eclipses. Rhetoric – with competing definitions as an art of → persuasion and/or ornate speech – survived in academic programs until the late nineteenth century. Latin rhetoric thrived in the Jesuits' schools, whose curriculum remained faithful to the *Ratio studiorum*, until their expulsion (1764); elsewhere, it was gradually restricted to French and its emphasis shifted from oratory to techniques of writing and reading, reminiscent of the Hellenistic *progymnasmata* (preparatory exercises), until the 1890s, when literary history and *dissertation* displaced it. Rhetoric resurfaced in the twentieth century, especially in the 1960s–1970s: its taxonomies appealed to the structuralists (→ Structuralism); its history was reassessed; it was also recast as a theory of communication (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy; Rhetorical Studies). It has since inspired dynamic and innovative research.

In the Ancien Régime, rhetoric ruled the social usages of language, having major cultural and political stakes (Fumaroli 1980). The classics, notably Aristotle and Cicero, were obligatory references (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman): school manuals mostly repeated one another, though they occasionally reflected theoretical inflections in contemporary treatises. At the same time in the seventeenth century (in the wake of Ramus's attacks), distrust of rhetoric's argumentative efficacy (e.g., Descartes, echoed by Locke in England) added to the traditional censure of rhetorical persuasion as unethical (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion; Rhetoric and Dialectic). The apparent futility of constantly reorganizing the taxonomy of figures and tropes in the face of the evidence of spontaneous linguistic creation embarrassed rhetoricians even earlier than Dumarsais's *Traité des tropes* (1730). A collection of texts arguing for and against rhetoric, all of which relied on Augustine, illustrates the crisis of rhetoric at the time (Bouhours, *Réflexions sur l'éloquence*, 1700).

Following upon Port-Royal's *Grammar* (1660) and *Logic* (1662), Bernard Lamy based his *Rhétorique* – or *Art de parler* – (1675–1715) on Cartesian notions of speech as the expression of thought. Moving away from the oratorical tradition, he views persuasion as the rule governing all exchanges (including conversation, which played a major role in rhetorical thought throughout the eighteenth century), and defines rhetoric as a theory of human interaction.

Under the absolutist monarchy, oratory's traditional division into three genres – deliberative (for political assemblies), forensic (in the courts), and epideictic (→ Rhetoric, Epideictic) – that still prevailed in epistolary manuals around 1700 evolved into a mode of hyperbolic praise (monarchic propaganda) counterbalanced by a close association between pulpit and forensic oratory.

Ostensibly scorning rhetoric, the *Encyclopédistes* nonetheless retained many rhetorical notions, often under other headings (e.g., grammar). The orators of the French Revolution gave rise to many a myth about political eloquence. True, an enduring difficulty was overcome: Tacitus had linked eloquence with democracy – even in Louis XIV’s time, warnings against flattering the vanity of the great had become a *cliché* (Fénelon, *Dialogues de l'éloquence*, 1718). With only reconstructed speeches at our disposal, and little information on the actual oratorical practice of Danton or Robespierre in the revolutionary assemblies, however, the traditional view that they combined very traditional *forms* of eloquence (most of them were rhetorically trained) with momentous *contents* that roused their audiences cannot be substantiated. Yet, the Revolution left the somewhat fantasized but enduring image of an oratorical (and not only political) climax (Principato 1999).

The nineteenth century presents a sequence of revival and rejection of rhetoric, leading to the disappearance of the “classe de rhétorique,” which traditionally led to the literary degrees (Douay-Soublin 1999). Through this process, primacy shifted from the pseudo-orality of speeches to the written word. The displacement of rhetorical exercises by the *dissertation française*, which appeared in the 1860s, signaled a new eclipse in the history of rhetoric. By then Academic rhetoric (in the context of both the French Academy and the university) had come to prominence.

Works like Paulhan (1941) and what Queneau (1947) and OULIPO (OUvroir de Littérature POtentielle) owe to the *progymnasmata* signal rhetoric’s lingering presence in twentieth-century culture (→ Style and Rhetoric). But the past four decades have seen the reassessment of rhetoric’s role in the cultural history of western Europe. With → linguistics as a “scientific guarantor,” especially for the structuralists (Jakobson’s → metaphor/→ metonymy polar opposition; Hjelmslev’s connotation), figures and tropes became a prime focus (Genette 1966–1972). According to Foucault (1966), they played an important role in the neo-classical *episteme*.

The year 1970 is emblematic. *Recherches rhétoriques* shows the adaptability and fecundity of rhetoric’s interpretive grid (from classical oratory to detective stories). Genette’s “La Rhétorique restreinte” popularized a vision of rhetoric’s gradual shrinkage – that subsequent research has revised significantly – but all aspects of rhetoric were (re)opened to scrutiny: figures (Groupe  $\mu$  1970), argumentation (Perelman 1977), the rhetorical components in early modern texts (Kibedi-Varga 1970), and the philosophical aspect of rhetoric (in language – Ricoeur 1975; through readings of Nietzsche by deconstructionists – de Man 1979; → Rhetoric and Philosophy).

The International Society for the History of Rhetoric (established 1977) has provided a context for reassessing the history and role of rhetoric worldwide. Rhetoric is reclaiming its legitimacy in France – a chair of “rhetoric and society (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries)” was created at the Collège de France (1986) – and rhetoric studies continue to develop, often in connection with new areas of scholarship (e.g., postcolonial, gender studies, etc.), through conferences – “Actuality of rhetoric” (1997), “Public speech” (2001), “Argumentation and political discourse” (2001), “Queer: writing difference?” (2005; → Rhetoric and Gender).

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Theory and Philosophy ► Linguistics ► Metaphor ► Metonymy ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric and

Dialectic ► Rhetoric, Epideictic ► Rhetoric, European Renaissance ► Rhetoric and Gender  
► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Philosophy ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetorical Studies  
► Structuralism ► Style and Rhetoric

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## Rhetoric in Western Europe: Germany

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During the early modern period, in Germany rhetoric was taught at grammar schools (*Gymnasien*), both Protestant and Jesuit, and at Protestant universities. Rhetorical theory provided a basis for writing, especially in Latin, serving as a means of communication for scholars throughout Europe. It influenced the theory of poetics as well as art, each of which relied heavily on rhetorical theory (→ Rhetoric and Poetics).

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the “golden age” of rhetoric in Germany. A significant number of textbooks were published, mostly in Latin, by authors like Philipp Melancthon (*Elementa rhetorices*, 1531), the Dutch Latinist G. J. Vossius (*Rhetorice contracta*, 1621), and C. Soarez (*De arte rhetorica*, 1560), to name just a few. Some of these treatises were still being reprinted and used in teaching during the eighteenth century. A small number of textbooks were written in German, for example by J. M. Meyfart and especially Christian Weise (*Politischer Redner*, 1677), one of the most important figures of late-baroque rhetoric.

With the rise of German as the language of instruction in the *Enlightenment*, this changed dramatically. The most influential handbook was composed by Johann Christoph Gottsched, a professor of philosophy at Leipzig University. His *Vernünfftige Redekunst* (1736) combines both humanist and modern traditions. Rhetoric is viewed as a mere supplement to philosophy; it is an instrument to communicate truth, not to find it (→ Style and Rhetoric). The orator seeks to persuade his audience with rhetorical devices (e.g., figures and tropes; appeal to the emotions), whereas the philosopher aims to convince his audience with syllogisms and logical conclusions (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy).

Another important work is Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten's two-volume *Aesthetica* (1750, 1758). While he was still deeply committed to ancient rhetorical theory, Baumgarten's founding of this new discipline clearly indicates the *decline of rhetoric*. During the second half of the eighteenth century, rhetoric was replaced by aesthetics (and other disciplines, e.g., psychology, pedagogy, philology), conceived as a general theory of the fine arts (*Theorie der schönen Künste*; → Aesthetics). Rhetoric and architecture are classified as practical arts, not as *schöne Künste* (i.e., arts and letters). As a consequence, rhetoric was marginalized, thereby losing its place within aesthetic theory.

This marks the beginning of a long *animosity toward rhetoric* that is particularly strong in Germany (Barner 1970), most prominent in works like Kant's severe criticism of rhetoric in his *Critique of judgement* (1790) and Hegel's *Lectures on aesthetics* (published 1835). The most important exception to this anti-rhetorical movement is Nietzsche's lectures on rhetoric, held at Basel University (Switzerland) during the 1872–1873 term and unpublished during his lifetime. They were rediscovered in the early 1970s in France by postmodern philosophers like Jacques Derrida and influenced the deconstructivist movement (e.g., Paul de Man; → Postmodernism and Communication; Rhetoric, Postmodern).

It was not until the 1960s that rhetoric was rediscovered by historians of German literature (although there has been a continuous interest in rhetoric among classical philologists). Still of major importance is Heinrich Lausberg's (1960) reconstruction of the rhetorical system, designed as a handbook for text analysis. Social history provided a basis for a fundamental re-evaluation of the seminal role of rhetoric during the Baroque period (Barner 1970). Books by Dyck (1991), Fischer (1968), Sinemus (1977), and Carrus (1996) have demonstrated how early modern literary theory was based entirely on rhetoric; Grimm's substantial study (1983) is devoted to the connection between erudite literature and rhetoric from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century.

Less attention has been directed to the eighteenth century. Dyck and Sandstede (1996) have published a two-volume bibliography of printed sources on rhetorical theory. Preceding works focused on the relationship of logic and rhetoric and the fate of rhetorical topics in the early Enlightenment (Beetz 1980; Grimm 1983; Petrus 1994). Only a few studies deal with pre-Romanticism, Romanticism/Classicism, and beyond (Schanze 1996; Riedl 1997; Goldberg 1998; Kopperschmidt 2003). In general, we still have insufficient knowledge of applied rhetoric. Till (2004) provided a new model for writing histories of rhetoric: he distinguishes between two different approaches, a systematic and an anthropological concept of rhetoric, which preceding studies have constantly mingled. Reconstructing the history of rhetoric on a "systematic" basis means writing the history of the system of rhetoric (i.e., the five canons), whereas the anthropological approach contextualizes rhetoric within a larger philosophical framework (on rhetorical anthropology, see Gross 2006).

Unlike other countries, there is no strong tradition of rhetorical research in Germany. Only one Department of Rhetoric (founded in 1967 by W. Jens), situated at the University of Tübingen, exists. Therefore, most research is currently conducted in adjacent disciplines, i.e., German philology, communication studies, philosophy, or classics. The multi-volume *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, the most important interdisciplinary research project on the history of rhetoric in Germany, is also edited at the University of Tübingen (an English translation is in preparation).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetoric, Postmodern ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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# Rhetoric in Western Europe: Italy

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Rhetoric has been important for centuries in Italian literary culture. The first development of an Italian literary prose was thanks to a teacher of rhetoric in Bologna, Guido Faba: in the thirteenth century, he provided examples of elaborated prose in rhetorical models of letters and speeches. Other Italian works of the time represented a return to classical theory, with some limited innovation, such as *Il fiore di Rettorica* (before 1266), attributed to Guidotto da Bologna, or Brunetto Latini's *Rettorica* (c. 1260), a vernacular paraphrase and commentary on Cicero's *De inventione* (→ Rhetoric, Medieval). The *De vulgari eloquentia* (c. 1306) of Dante Alighieri was in part a treatise on rhetoric, in which, next to matters of a historical-linguistic and metrical nature, four stylistic levels of a text are addressed: (1) *insipidus*, tasteless, grammatically correct, but qualitatively insignificant; (2) *et pure sapidus*, clear and tasteful, but scholastic, lacking in originality; (3) *sapidus et venustus*, tasteful and graceful, showing a good understanding of rhetoric; and (4) *excelsus*, the sublime style of the most illustrious writers, rich in the rhetorical ornaments necessary for perfection.

In the *fifteenth century* rhetorical knowledge was enriched from recovery of complete texts for Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (1416) and Cicero's *De oratore* (1421; → Rhetoric, Roman). Before this time, Cicero's *De inventione* and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, preceptive treatises with practical and scholastic aims, had been studied, read, and admired (they continued to attract attention, e.g., in Castelvetro's sixteenth-century commentary on *Rhetorica ad Herennium*). An important principle of rhetoric was the "theory of imitation" (imitation of models, thought to be classic and perfect). This principle was cultivated by the most authoritative Italian grammarian and theorist of the sixteenth century, Pietro Bembo, who thought that it was necessary to imitate Cicero and Virgil in order to write well in Latin, and to imitate Petrarch and Boccaccio in order to write well in Italian.

A new interest for Aristotle's *Rhetoric* developed also (→ Rhetoric, Greek). This work was little known before the *sixteenth century*, when it received numerous Italian translations, such as those by Bernardo Segni (1549), Annibal Caro (1570), and Alessandro Piccolomini (1571). Rhetoric, with broad reference to Aristotle and Cicero, was made part of the normal course of school studies for any cultivated person (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance). In the university, Aristotelian professors introduced the ideas of the Greek philosopher by means of graphical outlines that synthesized his rhetorical theory. Instruction in classical principles and relevant notions (the types of discourse, the parts of the oration, rhetorical figures, ornamentation) lasted far beyond the Renaissance, prevailing with stability in *seventeenth-century* Jesuit schools, and by way of continuation, until the first half of the nineteenth century. Rhetoric also had applications to Catholic preaching and its models (→ Rhetoric and Religion). Particularly remarkable from this point of view is *Il predicatore* (1609) of Francesco Panigarola, which is presented as a commentary on Demetrius' *De elocutione*. Panigarola here addresses the type of Italian language that must be used by a

preacher, and therefore, starting from the special perspective of religious communication, confronts the so-called *questione della lingua* (language question), a topic much debated in Italy.

The first attempts at a profound *renewal* in the field of Italian rhetoric arose in the *eighteenth century*, through French and English influence. One finds traces of the Enlightenment in the works of innovative writers such as Saverio Bettinelli (1718–1808), Melchiorre Cesarotti (1730–1808), and Carlo Denina (1731–1813). The Italian adaptation of the rhetoric of Hugh Blair in the work of Francesco Soave (*Lezioni di retorica e belle lettere*, 1801–1802) is a product of this climate also. Alongside the thematic concerns of writing and communication, other topics, by now characteristic of the pre-romantic climate, entered into the reflections of scholars: passion, creativity, the rush of enthusiasm, and freedom of style respecting models. Rhetoric was not repudiated, but the simple technique of writing was judged for no more than its sufficiency to guarantee the quality of its results. And the repertoire of technical notions was enlarged. In the *Biblioepa* (1776), Carlo Denina discusses not only a better way to write, but also the more convenient use of typographical techniques (notes, bibliographies, glosses, indices, print characters, communicative clarity, etc.), in order to reach the public in a more effective way, much like in a modern “manual of style” (→ Style and Rhetoric).

The work of the critic Francesco De Sanctis (1817–1883) favored an overthrow of rhetoric, which turned gradually from a fundamental matter in scholastic education to a synonym for bad literary training, contrary to the values of spontaneity and sincerity. During the *nineteenth century*, the change of perspective was completed; nonetheless, handbooks on “elocution” and “rhetorical garnishments” were still used in the schools. Their definitive elimination was due to the influence of the philosopher Benedetto Croce, whose thought had much influence in Italy during the 1900s. In Croce’s view, rhetoric simply became a “false concept” to be eradicated. This very negative judgment of rhetoric was widely shared and became common opinion, without opposition (→ Rhetoric and Philosophy).

In the second half of the *twentieth century*, there was a cautious return to rhetoric, but understood in a way distinct from the tradition. It was no longer viewed as a set of precepts; rather, its study was justified by the fact that it provided an instrument necessary for interpreting literary production in the past. It was the key to penetrating the culture of authors in the Middle Ages, Humanism, and the Renaissance, in order to comprehend their works and understand the principles by which they had been inspired. Rhetoric, therefore, was seen as a necessary element for good historical understanding.

The revaluation of rhetoric, in a cultural context in which its condemnation had been strong, is continuing, then, in the wake of international culture, within the theory of reasoning, within studies of philosophy of language and law, and within studies of → linguistics, history, and literary theory (among others, Plebe 1968; Schiaffini 1975). Even preceptive rhetoric is reborn in today’s schools of writing, which are being developed in a way that takes interest in the forms of orality, such as debate (Cattani 2001).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Linguistics ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric, Medieval ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetoric and Religion ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## **Rhetoric in Western Europe: Spain**

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As in the rest of Europe during the “Siècle des lumières,” the decadence of rhetoric was a fact in Spain. Persuasion based on the rhetorical employment of language was neither considered important nor respected, consequently leaving poetry as much more highly esteemed than eloquence (→ Aesthetics; Persuasion; Rhetoric and Poetics). There was only one exception, namely, sacred oratory – that is, religious discourses given by priests from the pulpit. That is how we can interpret the translation from Latin into Spanish of the work of Fray Luis de Granada (1504–1588) about eloquent preaching entitled *Rhetorica ecclesiastica*, which was published in 1770.

Resounding and flashy baroque along with a recalcitrant conservatism were the most characteristic features of rhetoric at this time, in sacred as well as in profane oratory. The Jesuit priest José Francisco Isla (1703–1781) wrote a novel, entitled *Historia del famoso predicador Fray Gerundio de Campazas, alias Zotes* (1770), which was a satire against the bombastic eloquence of sacred oratory in his time. Fray Gerundio enters a religious order, where he learns to preach in a grandiloquent style full of baroquisms, inopportune and confused citations of Latin authors, and many other nonsensical extravagances.

The work of Ignacio de Luzán (1702–1754), entitled *Arte de hablar, o sea, retórica de las conversaciones* (1729) is an adaptation of the classical doctrine on rhetoric as designed and exposed by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian to the social and political context of Spain in his time (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman).

Gregorio Mayans y Siscar (1699–1781) is another author of rhetorical treatises worth citing in this time. With his three works (*Oración que exhorta a seguir la verdadera idea de la Elocuencia Española*, 1727; *El orador christiano*, 1733; *Rhetorica*, 1757), he not only furnished Spanish scholars with a lot of beautiful examples of Spanish eloquence in the sixteenth century, but presented them with a full exposition of the rhetorical theories of Aristotle, Hermogenes, Dionysius, Longinus, Cicero, and Quintilian as they were explained by the important Spanish scholars Elio Antonio de Nebrija (1441–1522), Luis Vives (1492–1540), and Francisco de las Brozas, “El Brocense” (1523–1601).

In the next century, the romantic nineteenth century, there are two methodological guidelines – fully typical of Romanticism – that can be detected in Spanish works concerning

rhetoric: sentimentalism and belletrism. For the adherents to sentimentalism, a rhetorical discourse must be particularly emotional and full of psychological and expressive strategies in order to capture the will of the hearers (→ Pathos and Rhetoric). For instance, José Gómez de Herosilla, in his work *Arte de hablar en prosa y en verso* (1826), argued that the task of rhetoric was to teach the orator to impact the soul of his hearers. For the defenders of belletrism, rhetoric – conceived as basically an art or science of style – must be integrated in literature conceived as a preceptive art of beautiful speaking and writing (→ Style and Rhetoric). For instance, there are in this century a great number of books about rhetoric with titles such as *Poética, Retórica o Literatura Preceptiva* (e.g., Arpa y López 1878; Latorre y Pérez 1878; María Terradillos 1883; Flórez-Villamil y Rives 1900).

Beginning in the past century, a rehabilitation of classical rhetoric took place in Spain, as it did in the rest of the world. Antonio García Berrio and his disciples have played a role of paramount importance in this movement. Spanish scholars have two different conceptions regarding rhetoric. They conceive it either as a science of style, useful in literary studies (e.g., Melero Bellido et al. 1981; Paraíso Almansa 2000), or as general science of a much broader scope and part of a general theory of communication, in close contact with other sciences (e.g., Berrio 2000; Capdevila 2004; → Communication Theory and Philosophy).

SEE ALSO: ► Aesthetics ► Communication Theory and Philosophy ► Pathos and Rhetoric ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric and Poetics ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Style and Rhetoric

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# Rhetorical Criticism

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Rhetorical criticism analyzes → discourse in order to understand its communicative power. In US departments of speech and communication, it grew out of the emphasis on public speaking as an expression of democracy and from perspectives developed by literary theorists (→ Rhetorical Studies; Speech Communication, History of).

Critical analysis of discourse began in ancient Greece and Rome as teachers attempted to understand why some rhetorical acts were successful while others were not (→ Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman). Although the practice of analyzing discourse became part of disciplinary scholarship only in the modern period, the works of Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, Quintilian, and Augustine, among others, include guidelines for assessing rhetorical acts. Those linkages reaffirm the relationship between theory and practice; in effect, criticism is a way of refining theory in light of assessments of practice. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, for example, the main characters evaluate three speeches and, on that basis, offer a theory of rhetoric. Textual analysis appears briefly in book 4 of Augustine's *On Christian doctrine* in which biblical passages are dissected to demonstrate that sacred authors used the tropes associated with the pagan Greco-Roman tradition.

## DEVELOPMENT AS A FIELD OF RESEARCH

Rhetorical criticism as the analysis of those elements in poetry or prose that are there primarily for the sake of the audience began in the 1940s in departments of English and derived its name from John Crowe Ransom's *The new criticism* (1941), an approach to literary texts derived from the language studies of I. A. Richards and the critical essays of T. S. Eliot and others, which was spread through textbooks by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren (*Understanding poetry*, 1938; *Modern rhetoric*, 1949).

These new critics held that literary work should be treated as existing for its own sake, an approach that diminished historical and biographical studies. They warned against the intentional fallacy, interpreting a work by reference to the plan of the author, and the affective fallacy, evaluating a work by its effects on an audience. In *Explication as criticism* (1963, x) W. K. Wimsatt clearly stated the textualist position, that "explication is criticism; it is the evaluative account of the poem."

In *The philosophy of rhetoric* (1776), George Campbell captured the essence of textualism when he defined rhetoric as "that art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end," identifying the critic's primary concern as the relationship between form – the choices that shape a literary or rhetorical work – and function – what that act is designed to achieve, at least to attract an audience that is to be affected in some way. Accordingly, rhetorical criticism can be applied to literary as well as political, commercial, or philosophical discourse, illustrated by Wayne Booth's *Rhetoric of fiction* (1961), Edward Corbett's *Rhetorical analyses of literary works* (1969), and John Ciardi's *How does a poem mean?* (1959). The form–function relationship is also central to studying rhetorical and literary genres (e.g.,

Rosmarin 1985; Campbell & Jamieson 1990), works that share certain characteristics because they have similar functions.

Rhetorical criticism in communication studies has focused on the discourse of the marketplace and developed methods to understand the power of political speech (→ Political Persuasion), → advertising, → documentary film, → journalism, and other discursive forms that seek to influence specific public behaviors and attitudes. When fledgling critics in US speech departments searched for critical models, they turned to *Select British eloquence* by Chauncey Goodrich (1963; 1st pub. 1852), an anthology of addresses that the British public regarded as the masterpieces of their respective authors. Some evaluations were comments on style: “The eloquence [of John Eliot on June 3, 1628] lies wholly in the thought; and the entire *bareness* of the expression, the absence of all ornament adds to the effect, because there is nothing interposed to break the force of the blow” (Goodrich 1963, 2). Others noted context: “Much of the celebrity attached to this speech [by George Digby on April 21, 1641] is owing, no doubt, to the circumstances under which it was delivered” (1963, 15). Analyses of the addresses of Lord Chatham, Edmund Burke, Charles James Fox, and William Pitt the younger were extensive and detailed. Biography, political history, and commentary on key speeches were fused in a bio-critical assessment, a form of analysis that dominated early analyses of US oratory (→ Rhetoric in North America: United States; Rhetoric in Western Europe: Britain).

### THE PUBLIC ADDRESS AS OBJECT OF STUDY

Public address as an object of criticism began with William Norwood Brigance’s *A history and criticism of American public address* (1943), a two-volume collection of essays about major US political and religious figures, extended in a third volume (Hochmuth 1955). Ernest Wrage’s *Public address: A study in social and intellectual history* (1947) marked a transition from the study of speech performances to the study of speech texts and the rise of textualism as a critical approach. Historical and cultural analyses were not abandoned, however. Wrage stated a key assumption of public address scholarship, that “from the speeches given by many men [*sic*], it is possible to observe the reflections of prevailing social ideas and attitudes” (1947, 456).

Studying speeches was a way to understand the development of national character and identity: “A speech is an agency of its time, one whose surviving record provides a repository of themes and their elaborations from which we may gain insight into the life of an era as well as into the mind of a man [*sic*]” (455–456). The works included in *American forum: Speeches on historic issues, 1788–1900* (1960) and *Contemporary forum: American speeches on twentieth-century issues* (1962) edited by Wrage and Bernet Baskerville reflected these views. Although the works presented opposing views on controversial issues, the only woman represented was Susan B. Anthony (in the first volume), the only African-American Roy Wilkins, and the only socialist Eugene V. Debs (both in the second volume).

US scholars touted public speaking as a distinctively democratic practice and asserted the discipline’s special relevance in the context of the cold war. The reiterated claim that studying public address is a means to understand national character and promote patriotism led to an insistence that addresses by major figures are historical and cultural

documents central to the nation's mythic heritage and historical experience. That perspective encouraged critics to study rhetoric by US presidents, leaders of national movements, and eminent churchmen, and to ignore protestors and dissidents, particularly communists, socialists, and anarchists who criticized the system and those outside positions of power such as women and minorities, a focus that persisted into the 1970s, illustrated by Barnet Baskerville, *The people's voice* (1979).

In the three volumes of *History and criticism of American public address* and in Thonssen & Baird's influential *Speech criticism* (1948), a critical apparatus emerged. Thonssen & Baird (1948, vi) emphasized psychological and historical factors, but reflected their reliance on Greco-Roman materials, in concluding that "the most basic is the critic's evaluation of the speaker's ability to adjust his argument to the four factors of rhetoric as developed by the ancients: himself, his audience, his subject, and the occasion. Of these, most important is the audience, for the success of a speech lies not in its well-turned phrases, but in achieving a desired effect upon the hearers."

### STANDARDS OF JUDGMENT

The standards of judgment identified and developed in individual chapters were the integrity of ideas, emotion, character of the speaker, structure, style, delivery, and measures of effectiveness, a synthesis of the Greco-Roman modes of proof – logos, pathos, and ethos – and of the classical canons of invention, disposition, style, and delivery. Their survey of modern critics began with Chauncey Goodrich and continued with classicist Richard Jebb's *Attic orators* (1876), historian William Lecky's studies of British speakers, biographies that included rhetorical evaluations (e.g., John Morley's *Life of Richard Cobden* and *Life of William Ewart Gladstone*), treatments of oratory as propaganda-reflecting techniques developed and used during the two world wars, and ended with works by faculty in departments of speech.

In his path-breaking book, *Rhetorical criticism: A study in method* (1965), Edwin Black identified the elements of and assumptions underlying the critical apparatus of Brigance, Hochmuth, Wrage, and Thonssen and Baird, which he called neo-Aristotelian, recognizing its debt to and departure from Aristotle's *Art of rhetoric*. His analysis identified three key limitations: assumptions that prevented the critic from responding freshly to discourse, a circumscribed historical context limited to original presentation to an audience, and effects on the immediate audience as the ultimate standard of evaluation. The impact of these limitations was illustrated with a critique of John Chapman's August 18, 1912, address at Coatesville, Pennsylvania, a work almost without an audience, lacking discernible immediate effects, by a man of quixotic character, but a speech still able to speak to modern readers. Black's critique of neo-Aristotelian criticism was timely given the intellectual ferment in related disciplines and the impact of the social upheavals of the 1950s and 1960s in the United States and elsewhere.

### SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND RHETORICAL STUDIES

The civil rights, antiwar, New Left, counter-cultural and feminist movements transformed the rhetorical landscape and made it impossible for US communication scholars

to ignore discourse that challenged conventional assumptions about deliberation and public persuasion, a claim that is evident in the conclusions to the report of the 1970 Wingspread conference on rhetoric past and future and its contemporary needs (Bitzer & Black 1971).

*The civil rights movement* burgeoned in the aftermath of World War II and grew during the 1950s with sit-ins, freedom rides, and such powerful speakers as Martin Luther King, Jr., John Lewis, and Fannie Lou Hamer (→ Rhetoric and Race; Rhetoric and Social Protest). Struggles over how best to achieve civil rights sparked the Black Power movement, which echoed the Black Muslims, whose impact was felt particularly in the rhetoric of Malcolm X. Eloquent African Americans such as Barbara Jordan and Shirley Chisholm also were elected to Congress (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media).

The civil rights movement posed at least two challenges to rhetorical critics. First, it questioned assumptions about the relationship of public speaking and democracy because these speakers challenged Americans to live up to those democratic values often praised in public speaking while pointing to the character, history, and extent of US racism as a national disgrace. Second, almost exclusively white critics needed to analyze discourse that challenged their beliefs and values, in particular, → stereotypes about race, ethnicity, and public discourse. In earlier Brigance and Hochmuth volumes, only Booker T. Washington merited a chapter (for a wider view of earlier African-American rhetors, see Woodson 1925). In the 1960s and 1970s, anthologies of civil rights rhetoric appeared (e.g., King 1964) as did critical analyses (e.g., Burgess 1968; Scott & Brockriede 1969; Scott & Smith, 1969; Smith [Asante] 1969) that questioned whether neo-Aristotelianism was an appropriate evaluative apparatus.

In the 1960s, *counter-cultural, antiwar, New Left, and feminist rhetoric* demanded fresh approaches as nontraditional forms of discourse and as social movement texts, and critics responded in creative ways (for a wide sample, see Morris & Browne, 2006; → Rhetoric and Gender). The winds of change were fostered by the works of so-called “new critics,” such as I. A. Richards, Northrop Frye, and Kenneth Burke. Burke’s *A grammar of motives* (1945), *A rhetoric of motives* (1950), *The rhetoric of religion* (1961), and *Language as symbolic action* (1966) opened new paths for critics (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). The impact of works by European theorists has been substantial, particularly those of Mikhail Bakhtin, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Civil Rights Movement and the Media ► Discourse ► Documentary Film ► Journalism ► Political Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Gender ► Rhetoric, Greek ► Rhetoric in North America: United States ► Rhetoric and Race ► Rhetoric, Roman ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetoric in Western Europe: Britain ► Rhetorical Studies ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ► Speech Communication, History of ► Stereotypes

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## Rhetorical Studies

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The rhetorical impulse may be conceived as the desire to express one's thoughts in a way that affects the thoughts of others. Such an impulse is universal among humans, and historical evidence exists for its cultivation in ancient civilizations of Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas (Lipson & Binkley 2004). Early instances of theoretical inquiry concerning rhetorical communication have been documented in China (c. eighth century BCE), Egypt (c. eleventh century BCE), India (c. fourth century BCE), and Greece (including Magna Graecia, c. fifth century BCE; → Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan; Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic; Rhetoric in South Asia). Arguably, each of these regional developments gave rise to a different tradition and trajectory of indigenous rhetorical studies. However, as a historical matter, the European tradition was most closely related to the emergent discipline of communication; accordingly, it receives emphasis here.

## ANCIENT RHETORICAL STUDIES (FIFTH CENTURY BCE TO FOURTH CENTURY CE)

Within the European tradition of rhetorical studies, self-conscious attempts to theorize persuasive speaking were initially concerned with speech organization and elaboration of subject matter (early theorists included Tisias, Protagoras, Gorgias, Antiphon, and Theodorus; see Cicero, *Brutus* 46–48). Theoretical studies of rhetoric soon became abstract, with a focus on functions of speakers and types of speeches (see, e.g., Isocrates, *Against the Sophists* 16–17, *Panegyricus* 1–12; Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1358a–b, 1403b; → Rhetoric, Greek). By the second century BCE, both of these theoretical categories became more or less crystallized; the functions of speakers were conceived as invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery; likewise, the kinds of speaking were conceived as deliberative, judicial, and demonstrative (or occasional) (see Cicero, *De oratore* 1.137–145; → Arrangement and Rhetoric; Delivery and Rhetoric; Invention and Rhetoric; Rhetoric, Epideictic; Rhetoric, Roman; Style and Rhetoric). Of course, the functions of speakers and kinds of rhetoric initially theorized were suited to the political arrangements in Greece and later Republican Rome. In later antiquity, changing political and cultural circumstances encouraged the literary development of rhetoric (e.g., Hermogenes, *On types of style*, second century CE), elaboration of demonstrative rhetoric (e.g., Pseudo-Menander, *On epideictic speeches*, fourth century CE), and the recognition of additional types of rhetorical discourse, including history writing (Rufus, *Rhetorical art*, second century CE), letter writing (Demetrius, *On style*, first century BCE–first century CE), and preaching (Pseudo-Philo, *On Samson*, first century BCE; see Folgert 1997).

The development of rhetorical theory was accompanied by the rise of pedagogical, critical, and historical studies. Pedagogical inquiry was concerned with effective means of inculcating rhetorical expertise in practitioners. Early materials for rhetorical instruction included rudimentary treatises (e.g., Theodorus' rhetoric book, fifth–fourth centuries BCE; see Plato, *Phaedrus* 266d–267a), model speeches (e.g., Antiphon's *Tetralogies*, fifth century BCE), and specimens of eloquence (e.g., Gorgias' *On Helen*, fourth century BCE). Educational theory became a deliberate part of rhetorical education in the school of Isocrates, who stressed preceptive instruction, practice, and moral as well as literary imitation of political discourse. In Hellenistic times, rhetoric was adopted as the centerpiece of an ancient literary educational program. Within this program, students typically learned reading and writing from a *litterator*, grammatical analysis and elementary composition from a *grammaticus*, and advanced composition, rhetorical theory, and declamatory practice from a *rhetor*. During the Roman imperial era, the rhetorical program of education was codified in Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (c. 95 CE). We also find specialized educational treatises on elements of the program, e.g., Seneca's *Controversiae* (first century CE; declamation), Athonius' *Progymnasmata* (second century CE; composition exercises), and Fortunatianus' *Artis rhetoricae* (fourth–fifth century CE; catechism of rhetorical theory).

Rhetorical criticism was at first the child of rhetorical theory, when analysis of actual (and imaginary) rhetorical performance was employed as a vehicle for theoretical discussion (e.g., Isocrates, *Helen* 1–15; Plato, *Phaedrus* 263e–264e). Eventually, however, rhetorical criticism was pursued as an independent form of literary production (e.g., Caecilius of Caleacte, *On the style of the ten Attic orators*, first century BCE; Dionysius of Halicarnassus,

*On the ancient orators*, first century BCE). Cicero may be credited with historicizing rhetorical criticism in *Brutus* (43 BCE), which provided chronology and critique of Roman speakers up to his own day. Comparable scholarship provided chronology and assessment of speakers and speech-making during the Roman empire (e.g., Tacitus, *Dialogus de oratoribus*, second century CE; Philostratus, *Lives of the sophists*, third century CE; → Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic).

History of rhetorical theory was invented by Aristotle when he gathered early rhetoric books in his *Collection of arts* (mid-fourth century BCE), a move designed to prepare for his own theoretical discussion in the *Rhetoric*. Aristotle's practice set a precedent, at least in ancient times, for the consultation of historical sources during the composition of new theoretical works (see, e.g., Cicero's *De inventione* 2.4–8). In *Institutio oratoria*, Quintilian's most central rhetorical doctrines are constantly shaped in relation and response to the whole history of thinking on the subject (especially in book 3). A historical concern for rhetoric is also discernible in scholarly commentaries on "classic" authors and rhetoric books (e.g., Victorinus, *Explanationum in rhetoricam M. Tullii Ciceronis*, fourth century CE; Troilus, *Prolegomena in Hermogenis artem rhetoricam*, fourth–fifth centuries CE).

### **MEDIEVAL RHETORICAL STUDIES (FIFTH CENTURY TO FOURTEENTH CENTURY)**

The Middle Ages were marked by both tradition and innovation in the theory and practice of rhetorical arts (Murphy 1974; → Rhetoric, Medieval). The ancient tradition of rhetoric was represented initially within new encyclopedic treatments of rhetoric as part of the liberal arts (e.g., Martianus Capella, *On the marriage of Philology and Mercury*, ante 439; Cassiodorus Senator, *Principles of divine and secular learning*, c. 555). Later on, traditional rhetoric found a place in rhetorical compendia (e.g., Alcuin, *Discussion of rhetoric and the virtues*, c. 794) as well as in commentaries and translations of "classical" authors and works now viewed as "authorities" (e.g., Boethius, *Commentary on Cicero's "Topica"*, c. 520; William of Moerbeke, *Rhetoric of Aristotle*, c. 1270). The stature of the ancient tradition in medieval thought on rhetoric created a discipline inherently historical in nature, especially since traditional materials, including some ancient treatises, were foundational to rhetorical education in the schools and universities (both secular and ecclesiastical).

Rhetorical criticism also, where we find it in the Middle Ages, frequently takes on a historical outlook. Partly this is because much of such criticism is designed to explain, assess, or defend the composition of ancient authors in the Bible (e.g., Aurelius Augustine, *On Christian doctrine*, 426; Cassiodorus Senator, *Exposition of Psalms*, c. 550). Another consideration is that ancient materials were a significant part of the corpus of authoritative works from which medieval scholars learned rhetorical precepts and to which they appealed when they wished to "approve" good examples of composition. So, for instance, when Anselm de Besate wished to display the rhetorical sophistication of his own *Rhetorimachia* (c. 1048), he explicated the text mainly with marginal references to Cicero's *De inventione* (c. 88 BCE) and *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (80s BCE). Likewise, in *Etymologiae* (ante 636), when Isidore of Seville turns to exposition of rhetoric, he has repeated recourse to quotations from ancient authors to illustrate theoretical principles, including passages from three of Cicero's speeches (*in Catilinam* 1, *pro Milone*, *Philippicae* 2).

Innovation in medieval rhetoric came chiefly in development of discourse types that achieved new significance in the Middle Ages, specifically preaching, letter writing, and poetry writing. Preaching was initially presented as a theoretical subject in Aurelius Augustine's *On Christian doctrine* (426). Thereafter, it was elaborated by Gregory Magnus (*Pastoral care*, 591), Rabanus Maurus (*On the education of clerics*, 819), and Guibert de Nogent (*A book on how a sermon should be given*, c. 1084). By the thirteenth century, preaching theory reached a new level of advancement in works by Alexander of Ashby (*On the mode of preaching*, ante 1205) and Thomas of Salisbury (*Principles of the art of preaching*, c. 1235); the result was the thematic sermon, a rhetorical discourse of religious worship built around the elements of theme, division, and development (of divisions). This form of sermon dominated preaching theory until the Renaissance. Medieval letter-writing theory had its beginnings in Alberic's *Dictaminum radii* (c. 1087), which proposed these contents of a letter: salutation, exordium, narration, argumentation, and conclusion. Subsequent theories were more adapted to the compositional circumstances of letter writing, and by the early twelfth century there was general agreement on the following parts: salutation, securing of good will, narration, petition, and conclusion (e.g., Anonymous of Bologna, *Principles of letter-writing*, c. 1135). Rhetoric became the foundation for poetry writing when the *Versificator's art* (c. 1175) of Matthew of Vendôme established description – based on rhetorical topics – as the objective of poetry. Later on, the role of rhetoric in verse composition was elaborated in other works. For example, Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *New poetry* (c. 1210) applied functional activities of speakers to poetry writing.

### RENAISSANCE RHETORICAL STUDIES (FIFTEENTH CENTURY TO MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY)

Early Renaissance thought was dominated by the humanist objective to recreate the culture of classical antiquity, not least through the *studia humanitatis*, a program of education designed to inculcate eloquence through instruction in grammar, rhetoric, poetic, history, and moral philosophy. Consistent with the humanist objective, Renaissance rhetoricians turned to ancient materials – many newly found – for inspiration in their development of rhetorical works (→ Rhetoric, European Renaissance). Some rhetorical works took a general theoretical outlook (e.g., George Trebizond's *Rhetoricorum libri V*, 1470); others were devoted to special aspects of the discipline (e.g., Richard Sherry's *A treatise of schemes and tropes*, 1555). Still other works provided precepts for particular types or modes of rhetorical discourse, including preaching (Andreas Hyperius, *De formandis concionibus sacris*, 1553), letter writing (Angel Day, *The English secretorie*, 1586), and legal practice (William Fulbeck, *A direction or preparatiue to the study of the lawe*, 1600). Most of these rhetoric books were conceived as advanced instructional texts. Additional materials for rhetorical instruction were provided by authors whose intention was to recreate the Hellenistic program of rhetorical education. Accordingly, they constructed new books of progymnastic exercises to guide composition studies (e.g., Giovanni Cattaneo, *Progymnasmata, id est Praeexercitationes rhetorum*, 1507, a Latin version of Aphthonius' *Progymnasmata*), as well as books that offered sample “declamations” on Renaissance themes (e.g., Charles Estienne, *Paradoxes, ce sont propos contre la commune opinion: debatus en forme de declamations forenses*, 1553, a defense of paradoxical theses).

Given the admiration of ancient culture that motivated many Renaissance humanists, the rhetorics they produced were inevitably connected with historical concerns. At least in part, the same was true of rhetorical criticism in this period. One of the favorite targets for criticism by humanist rhetoricians was Cicero's speeches. Bartholomaeus Latomus, for example, published commentaries on 27 orations of Cicero, and he was only one of more than 60 authors who contributed to criticism of the Ciceronian oratorical corpus (Green & Murphy 2006). Greek orators received less attention, though they were sometimes translated into Latin and vernacular languages with explanatory commentary (e.g., Thomas Wilson, *Three orations of Demosthenes*, 1570, English translation). Perhaps more important is the Greek scholarship in which Renaissance humanists extended rhetorical criticism to the problem of interpreting Biblical texts (e.g., Philipp Melanchthon, *Dispositio orationis in epistola Pauli ad Romanos*, 1529). Of course, not all rhetorical criticism in the Renaissance addressed ancient works. Desiderius Erasmus offered a detailed critique of the style of contemporary Ciceronians in his *Dialogus cui titulus Ciceronianus sive de optimo genere dicendi* (1528). And rhetoric books from this period frequently critique actual or imaginary discourse of a contemporary nature in order to illustrate theoretical precepts (see, e.g., Thomas Wilson, *The arte of rhetorique*, 1553, fol. 88r; Angel Day, *The English secretorie*, 1599, 5–8). One final outcome of humanist innovation in rhetoric was the collection and publication of ancient works of rhetorical theory, practice, and criticism in both Greek and Latin. These efforts made possible the first attempts at systematic history of ancient rhetoric.

Renaissance scholars did not all share the same passions for ancient authors, and Peter Ramus achieved notoriety by opposing the views of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. During the sixteenth century there was considerable disagreement about the functions and relations of arts of discourse – grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic; Rhetoric and Philosophy). Ramus's resolution of the dispute was to allocate functions uniquely to each art so that dialectic subsumed invention and judgment (including disposition of discourse); rhetoric subsumed style (including figures of speech) and delivery; and grammar subsumed etymology and syntax (*Dialectique*, 1555; cf. Omer Talon, *Institutiones oratoriae*, 1548). This reorganization of arts constricted the scope of rhetoric to concerns about presentation of ideas. A similar view of rhetoric was later represented in Francis Bacon's *The two bookes: Of the proficience and advancement of learning* (1605), where, subordinated to the interests of science, rhetoric was limited to the expressive function of "illustration" in the last of Bacon's four intellectual arts: invention, judgment, memory, and tradition. Later in the seventeenth century there were further attempts to discipline rhetorical style in the service of science; Thomas Sprat reports, for example, that the Royal Society exacted from members a style that exhibited "Mathematical plainness" (*The history of the Royal Society of London for the improvement of natural knowledge*, 1667).

### MODERN RHETORICAL STUDIES (MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY TO NINETEENTH CENTURY)

Faculty psychology was perhaps first applied to the uses of rhetorical theory at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when Francis Bacon (*Advancement of learning*, 1605) explained the function of rhetoric with reference to four mental capacities – reason, imagination, emotions, and will. By the mid-seventeenth century, a Cartesian-influenced faculty psychology – involving reason and emotion – appeared as the central conceptualizing doctrine of Blaise

Pascal's *Art de persuader* (1650s). Pascal's idea, that auditors possessed multiple mental faculties, each of which was subject to rhetorical appeal, was quickly seized by rhetorical theorists as the basis for new approaches to the discipline (Howell 1971). Early belletrists offered rhetorical theory (and criticism) emphasizing aesthetic reception of discourse (e.g., René Rapin, *Discours sur la comparaison de l'éloquence de Démosthène et de Cicéron*, 1670; Bernard Lamy, *De l'art de parler*, 1672). Likewise, preaching theorists placed new stress on appeals to emotions as well as reason in the composition of sermons (e.g., Joseph Glanville, *An essay concerning preaching*, 1678; → Pathos and Rhetoric). In François Fénelon we find mental faculties as the organizing principle of rhetorical theory, for Fénelon conceived eloquence as nothing other than proving to reason, portraying to imagination, and striking emotions (*Dialogues sur l'éloquence en général celle de la chaire en particulier*, 1718).

Faculty psychology also influenced an already existing tradition of rhetorics concerned entirely or chiefly with delivery or "elocution." The earliest elocutionary rhetorics had arisen late in the Renaissance era and had been informed either by ancient delivery theories or linguistic accounts of speech production (e.g., Louis de Cressoles, *Vacationes autumnales; sive, De perfecta oratoris actione et pronuncitione, libri III*, 1620; Robert Robinson, *The art of pronuntiation digested into two parts*, 1617). In the eighteenth century, however, Thomas Sheridan reframed elocutionary rhetoric with reference to faculty psychology, for he characterized elocution as an unexplored language of imagination and passions, and he argued that this language shed as much light on human nature as the language of understanding (*A course of lectures on elocution*, 1762, x–xi). Later elocutionary manuals exhibited extensive instructions for expressing individual emotions, and this would appear to reflect an intensification of interest in the passionate faculty (e.g., Richard Walker, *Elements of elocution*, 1781).

Certainly, in this era, the work most obviously influenced by faculty psychology is George Campbell's *The philosophy of rhetoric* (1776); here the definition and types of eloquence are both tied to mental faculties: eloquence is the "art or talent by which discourse is adapted to its end" and the ends of every discourse are "to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or to influence the will" (1). Campbell's rhetoric extended the scope of eloquence to all purposive discourse in every field, including, for example, literature, history, and philosophy as well as oratory. This extension was generally followed by Hugh Blair (*Lectures on rhetoric and belles lettres*, 1783) and Richard Whately (*Elements of rhetoric*, 1828, though Whately limited eloquence to prose composition). Both Blair and Whately constructed rhetorics that were otherwise informed by faculty psychology. Nonetheless, Blair's chief interest was the inculcation of aesthetic taste for use in composition and assessment discourse, while Whately's was the exposition of principles for persuading by means of argumentative composition.

Rhetorical education in this period was chiefly focused on adults, particularly their cultivation of aesthetically pleasing oral and written composition in vernacular languages. At the same time, because of the rise of belletrism, rhetorical education also incorporated development of literary taste and training in rhetorical criticism of more or less contemporary discourse, both literary and oratorical. These tendencies decreased the dependence of rhetoric on historical materials and fostered the development of rhetorical criticism as a form of scholarship (see, e.g., Franz Horn, *Die Poesie und Beredsamkeit der Deutschen*, 1822–1824; Joseph Reinach, *L'éloquence française depuis la révolution jusqu'à nos jours*, 1894). Still, historical study of rhetoric continued, and new forms of systematic critical

and analytical inquiry produced broadly based rhetorical studies of ancient, medieval, and Renaissance rhetoric (see, e.g., Louis-Antoine-François de Marchangy, *La Gaule poétique, ou L'histoire de France considérée dans ses rapports avec la poésie, l'éloquence et les beaux-arts*, 1813–1817; Richard Volkman, *Die Rhetorik der Griechen und Römer in systematischer Übersicht*, 1872; Eliodoro Lombardi, *Studi critici*, 1889).

## **CONTEMPORARY RHETORICAL STUDIES (TWENTIETH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT)**

### **Institutional Changes and the Role of War Propaganda**

At the dawn of the twentieth century, rhetoric survived chiefly in literary studies and in practical language instruction concerning oral and written composition. For economic, social, and political reasons, composition had been conceived as essential to higher education in the United States a little before 1900 (Berlin 1987). In consequence, institutional support for rhetorical instruction was stable during the twentieth century, and in the presence of such support, American rhetorical studies flourished and expanded in ways that were not paralleled elsewhere (especially in Europe; see Kinneavy 1990, 187). During the first decades of the century, rhetorical instruction in America was typically transacted in hybridized oral and written communication courses offered by departments of English.

However, after 1914 (foundation of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking), oral rhetoric gradually shifted to departments of public speaking or speech (→ Speech Communication, History of). Teachers of public speaking quickly sought to establish disciplinary status, and by the mid-1920s, the dominant form of scholarship was rhetorical criticism of American public address (→ Rhetoric and History; Rhetorical Criticism). Such scholarship earned the emerging speech field some measure of prestige (Brigance 1943); it also encouraged speech scholars to conceive of rhetorical studies as grounded in public speaking but derived from historical-critical scholarship. Around this time, the trajectory of scholarship concerning written rhetoric was somewhat different as English composition teachers focused their attention mostly on rhetorical instruction in textbooks designed to accommodate current paradigms in writing theory (Kinneavy 1990, 188; on later developments, see Connors et al. 1984).

Despite institutional support for rhetoric in colleges and universities, *World War I* → *propaganda* and warnings from intellectuals about the dangers of mass society made the mass media and the idea of rhetoric sources of public concern (→ War Propaganda). As a reflection of this concern, I. A. Richards conceived rhetoric as “a study of misunderstanding and its remedies” (1936) and Kenneth Burke termed Hitler a “medicine-man” who was concocting rhetorical potions to do to America what he had done to Germany (1939). Likewise, Richard Weaver believed that “rhetoric, noble or base, is a great power in the world; . . . there is a fierce struggle over who shall control the means of rhetorical propagation” (1953, 24).

### **New Focus on Meaning**

The focus of this new rhetorical outlook was upon → meaning (→ Rhetoric and Language). To Richards, language was not simply signs that human beings used to index and construe

ideas that dwelt in individual and collective minds, but, from *The meaning of meaning* (Ogden & Richards 1923) onward, words played multiple functions in → discourse, including indicating, characterizing, realizing, valuing, influencing, controlling, and purposing. Meaning-making became understood as a textual struggle, requiring both rhetors and audiences to be sensitive to linguistic constructions and psychological processing to overcome multiple obstacles to clear communication (Russo 1982). Misunderstanding could be avoided or sidestepped through analytic processes that students of general semantics turned into laws of language use.

Kenneth Burke also explored meaning-making encounters between rhetors and audiences, with a vocabulary that reflected interest in the dancing of attitudes; charting-praying-dreaming as dimensions of language use; identification as a symbolic process of constructing consubstantiality between people; five vantages (act, agent, scene, agency, articulated purpose) on the meaningful forces of discourse; and terministic screens (or linguistic orientations) that control perception. Like Richards, Burke conceived of human beings as symbol-using and symbol-misusing animals whose search for perfection through symbolic (linguistic) means periodically threatened their downfall (Gusfield 1989).

Richards, Burke, and Weaver were among the vanguard in the first half of the twentieth century, as rhetorical studies moved through opinion-formative, psychological, and linguistic-ideological understandings of rhetoric's individual and collective forces in society. Individuated meaning-making processes made common understandings almost impossible, even as the very breadth-of-meaning associated with such god-terms as "democracy" or "American way of life" proved ambiguities that permitted individuals to feel identification with the collective. Both the nobility and ignobility of rhetoric lay in a complex of symbolic functions performed by ideologues and counter-ideologues within public arenas.

By around mid-century Donald Bryant (1953), among others, had formulated rhetoric in ways that amalgamated late modernist understandings of public ideation and meaning-making. The scope of rhetoric he saw as providing the "*rationale of informative and suasive discourse*," giving it oversight over all instrumental and persuasive language use. Rhetoric's search for "informed opinion" separated it from the exploitation of advertising and propaganda, the indirection of poetry, the facticity of science. Its central function of "*adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas*" operated by leveraging emotions at play in specific situations and rationally assembling ideas in bundles compatible with auditors' capabilities and circumstances. Thus, rhetoric ideally dealt with public matters requiring quality information and shaped its appeals in ways that produced informed opinion among reasoning people dwelling in a contingent world (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion; Rhetoric and Psychology).

### Focus on Literature and Language

Developing simultaneously was another new rhetoric and mode of criticism drawing inspiration from Richards' technical-critical studies of *literary language use*. Wayne Booth (1961) construed literature as a conversation between an author/implied author and an audience/implied audience, bringing rhetorical understandings of voice, narrativity, and reading to bear on both biographical criticism and New Criticism (→ Rhetoric and Narrativity). The technologies of Richards' semantic criticism were likewise extended



following Noam Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar, providing literary analysts with tools for demonstrating that rhetoric can be conceived of as choices authors make between nonsynonymous expressions (Steinmann 1967; → Linguistics). These rhetorics fostered basic understandings of language-in-use, pedagogical approaches to teaching composition and criticism, and tools for pursuing historical-comparative studies of rhetorical style, broadly conceived.

The new rhetorics of the twentieth century offered scholars fresh approaches for investigating the operation and *consequences of language* and other forms of symbolic discourse (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics). Given the malaise that had affected neo-classical rhetorical criticism of American public address by the 1960s (Black 1965), these approaches encouraged a reconsideration of rhetorical criticism, particularly its sources of evidence, standards of evaluation, and relation to the critic (Gronbeck 1975). The result was a resurgence of rhetorical criticism, now dislocated from rhetorical history. The subsequent success of this resurgence focused the attention of rhetorical scholars upon the construction and application of critical theories, eventually leading to a general decline in studies concerned with the history of rhetorical theory and practice.

During the latter part of the twentieth century, the United States underwent major changes in global orientation, internal institutional operations, and *new modes of communication*. Educational systems were revolutionized, repressed consumer cultures expanded, the Cold War returned fears of propaganda and brainwashing, and → television became a centralized message delivery system even more feared than → radio and → yellow journalism. Further, popular reform and protest movements, anti-war and race riots, and a growing feminist consciousness began to put stress on traditional, civic, and civilized conceptions of the rhetorical arts (→ Rhetoric and Social Protest). The scope of rhetoric enlarged and its functions multiplied (Gronbeck 2004).

### **Expanding the Scope of Rhetoric**

Three dilations of rhetoric's scope in the last third of the twentieth century are especially noteworthy; they represent new rhetorical concerns about identity, place, and multimediation.

#### *Identity Rhetoric*

Traditionally, western rhetoric has focused on the manifest, publicly accessible dimensions of discourse, and, given the currency of cognitively oriented psychologies, early twentieth-century rhetoric conceived changes of beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors as the products of rhetorical events. What persons thought and did, not who they were, has dominated rhetorical studies. But now, *identity*, *self*, *subjectivity*, and *consciousness* are concepts deployed across the communication arts generally, and the rhetorical arts specifically, when speculating about the person-centered dimensions of discoursing (→ Identities and Discourse).

The proposition that both producers and consumers of rhetorical discourse have their identities piqued, affirmed, challenged, or changed is now commonplace, because of our understanding of the processes by which identity matters are engaged in rhetorical encounters. Critical work on *the gaze*, for example, suggests that repeated viewing by men of women and their bodies in movies turns women into objects, destroys the women's

subjectivity, and changes the gazers' orientation to other females, thus affecting the identities of gazers, individually and collectively (→ Sexualization in the Media). *Subject positioning* occurs in relationships constructed not only visually, but also verbally. So, when US president Lyndon Johnson opened his August 4, 1964 speech on the Gulf of Tonkin by saying "As President and Commander in Chief, it is my duty to the American people to report . . . ," he was not only announcing military engagement but also positioning American listeners as citizens who were subject to the demands of patriotic duty – support of their leader and country – even as Johnson's actions were depicted as those of a military man, a Commander in Chief. Here, positioning was reciprocal, as it usually is. In this connection, Smith (1999, 393) argues that human consciousness has always been at the base of rhetorical studies because "rhetoric operates at the core of the human psyche. It is part of our way of being." Such questions have sustained rhetorical inquiry since the pre-Socratic philosophers, but have become featured especially in a time of postmodern inquiry (→ Rhetoric, Postmodern).

#### *No Sense of Place*

Traditionally, genres of rhetoric were based on the gatherings of people to accomplish particular goals in places constructed around collective activities. Rhetorical arenas could be identified physically: forensic oratory in courts, deliberative oratory in assembly halls, ceremonial oratory in arenas, churches, or the *rostra* in ancient Rome. Rhetoric was spatialized, even when it moved out of doors; town squares and parks were constructed with the needs of public business in mind. But, the personal became political, as we contemplated institutional powers dominating individuals' subjectivities (e.g., in 1970s' feminist and racial thought), and the social became political, as classed/raced/gendered groups felt the force of the hegemonies under which they lived; matters of subjugation and powerlessness came to be addressed symbolically, not spatially (→ Rhetoric and Class; Rhetoric and Gender; Rhetoric and Race). Accordingly, while the exercise of power by means of rhetoric is often tied to traditional scenes of political action (→ Rhetoric and Politics), many relational activities, e.g., parent–child interactions, manager–worker interactions, or interracial confrontations, occur outside of formally constituted "places" (→ Rhetoric, Vernacular). Insofar as power is conceived as "materialized in the [symbolic] production of rules, procedures, and norms that judge and regulate the behaviors of a population" (Greene 1999, 3), then influence, control, politics, and rhetoric itself are no longer contained within the walls of any architectural environment or tied to it. "Place" gives way to a symbolically charged metaphor, the → *public sphere*, a virtual space where disembodied voices do battle without mutual presence.

#### *Multimediation*

The widening of rhetoric's scope also has been encouraged through revolutions in theories of discursivity. Thanks to Roland Barthes' *Elements of semiology* (1968), we have come to understand that human beings relate to each other through multiple symbol systems, and, indeed, as we watch films or television or click on streaming computerized video, we are processing verbal, visual, and acoustic codes simultaneously (→ Rhetoric and Media Studies; Rhetoric and Semiotics; Rhetoric and Technology; Semiotics). Bryant worried that there would be no outer boundaries to rhetoric, if we followed students of Kenneth

Burke in calling stoplights' control over human bodies "rhetorical" or all manifestations of identification "rhetorical." Yet the sort of expansion of scope that Bryant worried about has developed in the wake of Barthesian semiotics, Althusserian understandings of subject positioning, and the digital world's conception of multitasking.

Undoubtedly classical and modern rhetorics took the visual as vital to the verbal, rehearsing Horace's phrase in *Ars poetica*, "*ut pictura poesis*," "as is painting, so is poetry"; the visual can be evoked verbally, just as the verbal can be manifested in visual representation (→ Rhetoric and Visuality). Likewise, the classical canon of delivery (*pronunciatio* and *actio*) recognized that the orator's words were encased in the physics of sound as well as the performance of the body. Yet *multimediation* suggests more than acoustic-material encasements of rhetorical thought; it calls up the complexity of the task of cognitive processing wherein the mind moves back and forth across codes, searching through time for significant signs that can be assembled by the receiver to make "a message" (→ Information Processing). As well, of course, it suggests that rhetorical artistry demands attention to encoding multiple channels.

### **Multiplying the Functions of Rhetoric**

Among the new functions of rhetoric posited by scholars, three seem relevant for discussion here, namely, therapy, critique and empowerment, and instrumentality.

#### *Therapeutic Functions*

The call for more engagement with the nonpublic – the psychoanalytic and the psychotherapeutic – dimensions of shared culture grew slowly but progressively in rhetorical studies. Erving Goffman's (1959) conception of human interactions as negotiative and transactional suggested that rhetorical encounters could become instrumental in self-development and the fostering of healthful relationships (→ Goffman, Erving). Studies of therapeutic rhetoric, where discourse was examined less for its political force than its work in healing individual and interpersonal injuries, in ameliorating one's own life or one's membership in a group or class, tended to feature discourses of healthful self-regard and social responsibility. These led Cloud (1998, xii–xiii) to regard "the therapeutic as a political strategy of contemporary capitalism, by which potential dissent [i.e., dissatisfaction with one's place in society] is contained within a discourse of individual or family responsibility." Yet, from Goffman to transactional analysis to the many me-ism therapies of the 1970s and onward, therapeutic rhetorics fill books, DVDs, and workshops with their focus on inward turns and strategies of self-examination and repair, and they therefore represent a new function for rhetorical practice.

#### *Critique and Empowerment*

Following the revolutionary temper of mid-century politics, it was but a short step for rhetoricians to pick up *Marxissant* or Foucauldian impulses to critique institutions and seek empowerment (→ Critical Theory). Ideological concerns developed in the wake of Marxist thought in British → cultural studies (*Ideologiekritik*) and Foucauldian interests in knowledge/power, discourse formations, and circulation, and they were incorporated into rhetorical studies during the 1980s (→ Discourse Analysis; Rhetoric and Social

Thought). The force of such work, among other things, was to rupture Bryant's notion of public discourse as informed opinion derived from reasoning; rhetors became conceptualized as political partisans and freedom fighters storming the centers of power, with power understood as language control as much as physical control.

A grand debate in the late 1960s and early 1970s between Hans-Georg Gadamer (→ Hermeneutics) and → Jürgen Habermas explored in part the rhetorical resources for ideological formations of discourse, strongly suggesting connections between ideological and psychocultural formations and rhetorical practice. Readings among rhetoricians of Michel Foucault complemented and extended the issues (Wander 1983; McKerrow 1989). When rhetoric's jobs came to include critique and empowerment, it took on revolutionary and reformative tasks.

### *Instrumentality*

Traditionally, the instruments of rhetoric were, largely, voice and writing, orality, and literacy (→ Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems). The voice and print were parts of logics of influence: informative and suatory discourses construct pictures and arguments that affect the beliefs, attitudes, values, etc., of auditor-readers. They depict the world and they assemble reasoning structures that interrelate aspects of it in ways that change people's minds.

But, coming forward from Lévi-Strauss's conception of *bricolage*, of making something, including ideas, out of found materials, came an expanded function of rhetoric: *articulation*. The idea was clearly captured in Grossberg's (1992, 54) words that it is "the production of identity on top of differences, of unities out of fragments, of structures across practices. Articulation links *this* practice with *that* effect, *this* text to *that* meaning, *this* experience to *those* politics." Here was a grand theory of meaning-making, exemplified by US President George W. Bush's January 29, 2002 State of the Union address. He created an "axis of evil" by connecting Iraq, Iran, and North Korea with Al-Qaeda terrorists, secularist Saddam Hussein as prime exemplar of evil, and yet also radical Iraqi Muslims with theocratic aspirations. He discursively manufactured weapons of mass destruction out of empty cylinders by positioning them in a 10-year-old context that was reconstituted in the then-present. And all of this was strung along a direct, rigid timeline running from the New York City and Washington, DC, terrorist attackers of September 11, 2001 to a clash of civilizations that would sustain a war on terror for the indefinite future.

The articulatory function of rhetoric, therefore, broadly expands the instrumentality of its art, where linguistic reference is stretched beyond recognition by perceptual excess, where the rational appeal of unmasking power has too many targets to accomplish its work, and where the world is too complex, with its embedded interconnections between politics, economics, sociality, and peoples, to permit refutation or systematization. Surrender to poststructuralist desire and postmodern surfaces leaves us with the rhetors' only hope for agency lying in self-interested, multimediated mappings of worlds wherein everything possesses symbolic capital for creating social reality (→ Constructivism). This world is only rhetorical; that is, we inhabit it only by finding articulations between and among the parts of our surroundings and thoughts that we fear or desire.

SEE ALSO: ► Arrangement and Rhetoric ► Constructivism ► Critical Theory ► Cultural Studies ► Delivery and Rhetoric ► Discourse ► Discourse Analysis ► Goffman, Erving

▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Information Processing ▶ Invention and Rhetoric ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Pathos and Rhetoric ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Radio ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Class ▶ Rhetoric and Dialectic ▶ Rhetoric in East Asia: China and Japan ▶ Rhetoric, Epideictic ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric and Gender ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and History ▶ Rhetoric and Language ▶ Rhetoric and Media Studies ▶ Rhetoric, Medieval ▶ Rhetoric and Narrativity ▶ Rhetoric and Orality-Literacy Theorems ▶ Rhetoric and Philosophy ▶ Rhetoric and Politics ▶ Rhetoric, Postmodern ▶ Rhetoric, Pre-Socratic ▶ Rhetoric and Psychology ▶ Rhetoric and Race ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetoric of the Second Sophistic ▶ Rhetoric and Semiotics ▶ Rhetoric and Social Protest ▶ Rhetoric and Social Thought ▶ Rhetoric in South Asia ▶ Rhetoric and Technology ▶ Rhetoric, Vernacular ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Style and Rhetoric ▶ Television ▶ War Propaganda ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## Rhetorical Theory of Public Relations

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Rhetorical theory can help public relations to account for the symbolic aspects of communication, which arguably are the heart of → public relations activity. Although some fleeting mentions were made of the term in the early public relations literature, it is often said that the rhetorical approach originated around 1980, when Robert L. Heath proposed rhetoric to be the essence of an organization's relationship to its environment (Heath 1980; → Rhetorics: New Rhetorics; Rhetorical Studies; Organization–Public Relationships). Heath has since argued consistently that rhetoric affords public relations with the possibility for an ethical and pragmatic practice: “the good organization communicating well” (Heath 2001, 39; → Public Relations Ethics). Rhetoric assists organizations to achieve legitimacy as well as specific goals. It helps to focus the different interpretations, the zones of meaning, of stakeholders and, ideally, to co-define and co-create these (→ Stakeholder Theory). Concurrence is the aim, and the clash of different viewpoints strengthens the public opinion process.

Rhetorical studies related to public relations have been conducted both within the public relations field itself and in → organizational communication. Some scholars have seen organizations as symbolic contexts, while others have focused on the relationship between corporate advocacy and society. The latter research has often been tied to → *issues management*, that is, analyses of how corporations engage to anticipate, identify, evaluate, and respond to issues that might affect the organization and/or its publics. A particularly

flourishing line of research has involved studies of organizational self-defense and image restoration during or after crisis situations (→ Crisis Communication; Image Restoration Theory). In general, US scholars have dominated the field, and published several collections of case studies (Hoover 1997; Courtright & Smudde 2007).

Several debates have accompanied the attempt to use rhetoric in public relations. Some have had a problem seeing → persuasion as a legitimate activity; others have challenged the epistemological stance of the approach. It has been posited that rhetorical public relations scholars sometimes acknowledge that reality is socially constructed; yet at other times it is assumed that there is really one universal truth, that some “facts” are better than others (→ Constructivism). The problem is that no hints are given as to how these may be distinguished and why (L’Etang 1997, 39).

It has also been pointed out that the rhetorical approach has *ontological weaknesses*, since it has expressed faith in a well-functioning “marketplace of ideas” where the resource issue does not play a role (Cheney & Christensen 2001). Critics have argued that a better metaphor might be the “supermarket of images in which large establishments offer their customers a limited number of brands promoted by a few social leviathans” (Sproule 1988, 484). It is simply not the case that all arguments are guaranteed to be heard, nor that the better ones will prevail against the self-interested ones.

Yet another common charge is that the approach by and large has been tied to the instrumental agenda of mainstream public relations research that tries to improve the communication of organizations, rather than questioning their goals or methods from a societal point of view. Still, some studies with a critical perspective have been conducted (for instance, Crable & Vibbert 1983).

Rhetoric is particularly useful in *analyzing four major types of organizational strategy*: (1) the way organizations *respond* to existing rhetorical situations, for instance through crisis communication; (2) the way organizations attempt to *anticipate* future rhetorical situations, for instance through issues management processes; (3) the way organizations attempt to *shape rhetorical situations*, for instance through strategic definitions; and (4) the way organizations try to *shape their own identities* (Cheney et al. 2004). A challenge for *future research* is to develop a full-fledged rhetoric for these organizational activities. This includes providing ideal models for strategic communication, as well as fulfilling an analytical and critical function.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Constructivism ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Image Restoration Theory ▶ Issue Management ▶ Organization–Public Relationships ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ▶ Stakeholder Theory

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## Rhetorics: New Rhetorics

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"The history of rhetoric is one of diminishing returns," Ricoeur once argued (1996, 319), offering an apt depiction for the trajectory of a discipline originally associated with social and intellectual prestige, and gradually demoted to a status described by rhetoricians themselves as marginal. Historically, new rhetorics have arisen as responses to challenges from emerging fields and existing disciplines or reactions to pressures from the social, cultural, or intellectual climate of a particular period. Such efforts have often gone beyond preserving the traditional core of the discipline, and frequently involved radical transformations of key classical concepts or ideas and excursions into other fields. New rhetorics are profoundly interdisciplinary and live in tense relationship with the original field they modified. Of the ideas that have helped the emergence of new rhetorics, the most important ones concern style as a repository of figures marking a departure from ordinary language; the epistemic status of rhetoric; the notion of a clearly definable rhetorical core, traceable to some historical origins; and the distinctiveness of a key set of figures who can legitimately be considered rhetorical theorists.

### CLASSICAL RHETORIC

By some accounts, classical rhetoric emerged as a general theory of → discourse predicated on the assumption that "discourse should be viewed as a function of the figurative and tropical nature of all linguistic conventions" (White 1997, 21). Traditionally, rhetorical theory discussed this figurative dimension of language under the rubric of style, which often has meant an emphasis on figuration – special syntactic or semantic patterns, "ornaments" that mark a text as deviant from "ordinary" usage and explain its communicative impact



through recourse to such deviance (→ Style and Rhetoric). Throughout the history of the discipline, style has been the most vulnerable rhetorical canon, because it was the easiest to reduce, as happened in the nineteenth century, to a mere inventory of techniques lacking in substance and completely decontextualized. Recent attempts to rehabilitate this canon have focused on identifying the argumentative potential of stylistic choices rather than seeing them as some form of textual decoration (Fahnestock 1997); subsuming style to the study of → genre (Campbell & Jamieson 1978); or associating it with ideological intent rather than mere aesthetic effect (McGee 1980).

The classical tradition relegated rhetorical discourse to the province of probable knowledge, because such discourse rests on beliefs, customs, and values shared by a given community under specific circumstances (*doxa*; → Rhetoric, Greek; Rhetoric, Roman). Yet in a western intellectual tradition increasingly striving to achieve epistemic certainty, a discipline committed to contingency and probability was inevitably forced to defend itself over and over again. From its ancient beginnings, rhetoric's epistemic "weakness" – its inability to produce truth rather than mere belief or opinion – placed it in the shadow of "stronger" epistemic disciplines, like dialectic (→ Rhetoric and Dialectic; Rhetoric and Epistemology). With the gradual rise of scientific discourse in the western world, which reached a climax in the seventeenth century, ideals of truth and epistemic certainty came to define the worthiness of an intellectual discipline, and thus made rhetoric seem all the more deficient. One of the major "new rhetorics" of the twentieth century, that of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958), identifies as one of its premises the departure from a Cartesian notion of certainty as epistemic ideal, and takes on instead the goal of examining the formation of convictions as facilitated by the adherence to particular sets of values and beliefs, rather than correspondence to a universal notion of truth or validity (→ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion). Similarly, Scott attempts to rehabilitate the epistemic status of rhetoric by proposing a modified understanding of truth, no longer seen as the end-result of formal processes of discovery, but rather as a "set of generally accepted social norms, experience, or even matters of faith as reference points in working out the contingencies in which men find themselves" (1999, 134).

### POSTMODERNIST RHETORIC

This understanding of truth signals a new, postmodernist rhetoric, predicated on a relativist and contingent epistemology, which no longer privileges universal and formalized criteria for inquiry (→ Postmodernism and Communication; Rhetoric, Postmodern). Well illustrated by Farrell (1993), who argues that a rhetorical knowledge is fundamentally social in nature and based on consensus among a well-defined audience, this new rhetoric responds to the original charge of epistemic "weakness" by flaunting the very dichotomy at stake – belief versus certainty. This new rhetoric emerges as a defense of the discipline, but it is also a radically modified approach that can no longer afford to operate with the original concepts, and ends up replacing them with broader terms such as social knowledge (substituting for *doxa*), to signal a new set of intellectual assumptions. These assumptions are grounded in a post-Nietzschean sensibility that views certainty as an illusion made possible by cultural and social conventions. This is a sensibility that enables a view of rhetoric as a social force that can organize communities, structuring their beliefs and values in ways that allow them to pursue ethical goals and to live a common good life. By contrast, this new rhetoric

deems dialectic socially subversive, inasmuch as dialectic taunts the very idea of consensus by trying to replace it with universal standards for truth that are not dependent on the values or beliefs of a particular community (Weaver 1994). Thus re-articulated, the new rhetoric is not only departing from the original core, but also re-evaluating classical terms and their meaning, rewriting the tradition in a way that allows it to legitimize its own enterprise.

Such shifts have not been equally welcomed by rhetorical scholars. Gaonkar (1990), for example, has expressed reservations concerning attempts at transforming rhetoric, arguing that they threaten to thin the discipline's substance beyond any recognizable distinctiveness. Reviewing the scholarship devoted to a redefinition of rhetoric that tries to escape the charge of epistemic weakness, Gaonkar identifies two movements: a *historical* one that re-tells the history of rhetoric by concentrating on a different cast of characters and a different set of conceptual priorities, and a *synchronic* one that aligns rhetoric with the broader intellectual trend of postmodernism. The historical movement, especially in its refocusing on the Sophistic tradition, is represented by Jarratt (1991), whose recourse to the Sophists enables her to articulate a feminist rhetoric and to lay the theoretical foundation for a socially and politically sensitive pedagogy. Gaonkar's objections against revisionist histories of rhetoric that enlist the help of the Sophists in order to promote new rhetorics are that these revisions tend to create a tension between different versions of the rhetorical tradition – one centered on Aristotle and the other on the Sophists – and that such tension renders the field incoherent. Such a concern, recognized as important even if it is not shared by all rhetorical scholars, depends on a particular understanding of what offers a discipline both intellectual coherence and longevity. Blair (1992) argues that histories of rhetoric that seek to detect influences, predominant as they are in the field, are conservative attempts at maintaining a set of concepts and distinctions as they were intended at the time of their creation. But such preservationist efforts are in vain, she insists, because the perspective from which we read these concepts, as well as the use to which we put them, have inevitably changed. What Blair would prefer to see is an approach she calls "critical," which takes into account that a theoretical vocabulary changes meaning and significance over time but seeks nevertheless to identify coherent conceptual trajectories and to focus on the explanatory value of a pedigree concept in response to culturally situated problems.

### INTERDISCIPLINARY INFLUENCES

But knowing what constitutes a distinctly rhetorical tradition, comprised of a recognizable set of concepts and questions, as well as likely to be associated with particular figures, has itself been a contentious issue. In an essay devoted to the difficult problems raised by any attempt at identifying a stable rhetorical tradition, Gross (2005) insisted that a historical criterion does not work. Taking Bizzell and Herzberg's anthology (1990) as a case in point, Gross ponders the large temporal gaps separating canonical figures in the historical trajectory proposed by the editors: three centuries between Aristotle and Cicero, a thousand years between Boethius and Erasmus, a century between Richard Whately and Kenneth Burke. "A history with such lacunae seems no history at all," Gross complains (2005, 32). In lieu of the historical criterion of continuity, he proposes we focus on a series of concepts that originate in classic and pre-classic times and continue to generate

over times scholarly quandaries. Such emphasis, Gross believes, would create a rhetorical tradition defined less by names or schools, and more by “attempts over two and a half millennia to grapple with one or another scholarly quandary that its conceptual system generates. Some thinkers, such as Aristotle, Campbell, Burke, and Perelman, address these questions directly; others, like Nietzsche, Locke, and Derrida, address issues that bear directly on the answers to these questions. This latter group forms an open set of thinkers who are not rhetoricians but whose fields of study – philosophy of language and cognitive psychology might be examples – legitimately influence rhetorical theory and can help form and re-form the rhetorical tradition” (Gross 2005, 36). Gross’s proposal has the advantage of moving the discussion of disciplinarity away from the counterproductive strategy of boundary drawing and toward genuinely intellectual concerns that enrich a discipline. His understanding of a rhetorical tradition allows us to consider interdisciplinary influences as substantive cross-fertilization. In fact, Gross sees theorists from other fields as potential participants in an intellectual conversation centered on “a set of problems, initiated by an exemplar, and subsequently addressed, directly and indirectly, by various thinkers” (2005, 42).

This opening of the field to other disciplines, and loosening of its connection to a particular tradition, leads to a process of fragmentation and multiplication that makes the plural term in “new rhetorics” seem inevitable. In a discussion organized in 1990 by the journal *Rhetoric Review* (Enos 1990), all contributing scholars agreed that such a plural form has become necessary in order to reflect the diversity of approaches, methodologies, and questions in contemporary rhetorical scholarship. The intellectual and cultural factors that triggered such a proliferation – the shift toward a relativist conception of truth that does not privilege certainty, the disappearance of a distinction between ordinary and figurative language, and the opening toward other fields – made possible the emergence of novel research agendas, such as composition studies, feminist rhetoric, and rhetoric of science. The proponents of these agendas depart in significant ways from a traditional understanding of rhetoric: they focus on writing and not oratory (composition), insist on bringing to the fore the discourse of previously marginal or de-legitimized rhetors (feminist rhetoric; → Rhetoric and Gender), and disavow any distinction that would relegate certain discursive genres outside the purview of persuasion (→ Rhetoric of Science). At the same time, this scholarship draws not only on Aristotle or the Sophists, but also – if not even more so – on theories from fields like philosophy, sociology, psychology, or anthropology. Such new rhetorics represent an attempt, successful by many accounts, to keep up with a broader trend that favors interdisciplinarity as a source of intellectual richness.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Discourse ▶ Genre ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Rhetoric and Dialectic ▶ Rhetoric and Epistemology ▶ Rhetoric and Gender ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric, Postmodern ▶ Rhetoric, Roman ▶ Rhetoric of Science ▶ Style and Rhetoric

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## Right to Communicate

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In its modern use, freedom of speech means the freedom of communicating in a variety of formats, including but not limited to the spoken word (→ Freedom of Communication). The right to communicate may vary from one medium to another, and when scholars and jurists discuss free speech, they focus on a broader freedom to communicate, rather than on the narrow right to speak orally. Therefore, “freedom of speech,” “freedom of expression,” “freedom of the press,” and “freedom of information” are often used interchangeably (even though each is distinctive; → Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Information).

Freedom of speech, under the US constitution, refers to the right to publish – that is, to write, speak, print, or broadcast information without censorship by the state. Related to this is the freedom of the press, which is understood to mean that any policy regarding what should or should not be printed or broadcast is to be determined solely by the managers of the medium in question. In a key free-press case in the US, *Miami Herald v. Tornillo*, the US Supreme Court held that:

a newspaper is more than a passive receptacle or conduit for news, comment, and advertising. The choice of material to go into a newspaper, and the decisions made as to limitation on the size and content of the paper, and the treatment of public issues and public officials – whether fair or unfair – constitute the exercise of editorial control and judgment.

Freedom of expression under various national, regional, and international human rights declarations protects ideas expressed symbolically, as in picketing or participating in a demonstration, whereas freedom of information addresses the public's statutory right to access information in the possession of government agencies (→ American Convention on Human Rights; Inter-American Court of Human Rights; United Nations, Communication Policies of; European Union: Communication Law).

The most oft-cited *rationale for freedom of speech* as a right is that it is vital to citizen participation in a democracy. This is especially the case in the US. Alexander Meiklejohn, whose First Amendment theory has profoundly influenced the free-speech jurisprudence of the twentieth-century US, argued that the First Amendment is primarily designed to absolutely protect the political expression that citizens need in order to effectively participate in the democratic process. Thus, as the landmark case of the US Supreme Court in *New York Times v. Sullivan* shows, the press must be empowered to ensure that debates on public issues are “uninhibited, robust, and wide-open.”

Historically, the right to communicate as part of freedom of speech finds its most enduring value in the discovery of truth. It is also associated with an individual's right to self-fulfillment. Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” The UDHR also guarantees against “state suppression or regulation” of speech.

In the US, however, courts remain reluctant to recognize the journalist's privilege to *protect confidential sources* when subpoenaed by courts or law-enforcement authorities to reveal information about the source of a news story or give the information needed to complete an investigation (→ Source Protection). In the US it is not a matter of federal law, but one of state statutes. Internationally, from a journalist's privilege perspective, the right to communicate is recognized as a human right, and the concept is gaining wide acceptance in international law. For example, according to Article 13 of the American Convention on Human Rights, “no judicial or police authority may or should adopt measures in an inquiry that jeopardize the confidentiality of journalistic sources.” Further, the → European Court of Human Rights held in 1996 that journalists can refuse to disclose their news sources unless there are competing interests that outweigh the source protection. More recently, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) recognized the journalist's privilege in war reporting when it ruled in 2002 that Jonathan Randal, a former *Washington Post* correspondent, should not be compelled to verify his source's statements even if confidentiality was not at stake.

The *First Amendment* to the US constitution states: “Congress shall make no law abridging . . . the freedom of speech, or of the press.” Still, US courts have resisted a literal interpretation of the First Amendment, preferring instead a balanced approach. A case in point is the “imminent” lawlessness test – a derivative of the “clear and present danger”

formula – in *Brandenburg v. Ohio* that speech may only be limited when there is a likelihood that it poses an “imminent” threat to others.

*Germany*, like the US, explicitly guarantees a right to free speech and permits some limitations to the right. Article 5 of the German Basic Law states in part that “Everyone shall have the right freely to express and disseminate his opinion by speech, writing and pictures and freely to inform himself . . . freedom of the press and freedom of reporting . . . are guaranteed . . . there shall be no censorship.” Just as in the US, an absolutist interpretation of this constitutional mandate has failed to win support in Germany. In a very significant political expression case in Germany – the *Lüth* case – the Federal Supreme Court of Germany upheld the notion that a call for a boycott of a film with the argument that the director had Nazi ties is protected as a basic right in a democracy because it leads to “intellectual dialog” and “vigorous public debate.” The court reasoned that when the film director’s private commercial interests are balanced against the public’s right to free expression, it is important to respect the speaker’s right to influence → public opinion in the post-war period.

This right to communicate embodies not only the right to receive information but also the right to communicate freely by individuals and the press. Ruling in a commercial speech case, the US Supreme Court held that “where a speaker exists, the protection afforded [presumably by the First Amendment] is to the communication, to its source and to its recipients both to freely express and receive communication. [If] there is a right to advertise, there is a reciprocal right to receive the advertising, and this may be asserted by consumers.”

SEE ALSO: ▶ American Convention on Human Rights ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Source Protection ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of

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# Right of Correction

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One efficient way to resolve libel disputes out of court is to correct stories in the media. Prompt and timely correction can mitigate the extent of damages caused by the media's violation of a person's reputation.

Correction is far better as a means to regain an injured reputation than any other means from government or outside regulators. Although correction is often implemented voluntarily, some legal systems allow the statutory right of correction in the civil codes or media laws. Under the right of correction system, the media outlet has to disseminate its own statement correcting its earlier defamatory statements. The major aim of this system is to create a harmonious balance among essential but conflicting social interests (→ Communication and Law).

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The right of correction, sometimes confused with the → right of reply, refers to the right of the individual who has been defamed by news stories to rectify defamatory stories in the media. The right of correction redresses immediately the reputational damage of any person who is affected by untrue statements or aggrieved through any media. It also contributes to social development because it gives every person in the community the benefit of corrected information. Hence, the availability of such a remedy is a more effective means to satisfy the concerns of persons who have been injured by the news media.

The right of correction originally meant a person's right to inspect information that an organization possesses about him or her and to challenge the accuracy of that information. Under this right, information about a person must be amended if found to be inaccurate, incomplete, irrelevant, or inappropriate. The right of correction in libel laws is limited to correcting those facts that the media reported inaccurately (→ Libel and Slander). In addition to reputational redemption, the right of correction should also create a balance of information, which is necessary to the formation of public opinion. The unrestricted formation of public opinion based on correct information is indispensable to the vitality of a democratic society.

In most democratic countries, news journalism is expected to promote the public's participation in the media. According to a survey by Bezanson et al. (1987), although journalists believe that correction is an effective way to resolve libel disputes, they think that current libel laws discourage correction of potentially defamatory stories because correction can backfire on journalists when they are sued. Thus, some media attorneys recommend against correction of news stories because if the news media admit error, it may increase the plaintiff's chance of proving the claim in a subsequent libel suit (→ Journalism: Legal Situation).

Nevertheless, the media should opt for the right of correction over legal solutions for several reasons. First, legal actions such as libel suits can impose a chilling effect on a free press, leading the media to fear complex and expensive litigation. Second, the often

exorbitant investment in time and money, along with legal fees and related costs, for plaintiffs in a libel suit frequently cancels out damage awards. Third, the libel rules that govern the media differ enormously from place to place. The media face different laws pertaining to the same story, especially in the United States. Fourth, libel suits generally entail time-consuming and lengthy legal processes, which delay the establishment of truth if it is ever a litigational goal. And finally, many journalists feel uncertain if and when they should defend their news-gathering procedures, their state of mind, and the stories that they believe are accurate. This is particularly relevant to American journalists.

The right of correction is somewhat *similar to the right of reply* in that both rights are designed to “right” any media-inflicted harm. However, they are distinguished from each other. Whereas the right of reply provides an opportunity to rebut assertions, the right of correction allows the target of incorrect stories to demand correction of the stories. That is, while the right of correction requires the publisher of erroneous information to correct the mistaken material, the right of reply mandates that the publisher grant space to a person to counter the defamatory stories, regardless of whether the stories are correct or not.

### RELATED ISSUES

In US media law, the right of correction has created issues such as how and to what extent it can be implemented. The first issue is whether the statutory right of correction *violates the constitutional right to a free press* under the First Amendment to the US Constitution (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America; Freedom of Communication). Because the correction should state the original inaccurate information and clearly correct it by giving the ascertained facts, the correction can burden the media unduly by violating their right to a free press.

The second issue is whether the right of correction is *limited to factual news stories*, as in Germany, or whether it also includes the expression of opinion, as in France. Some scholars argue that even if the right of correction is allowed for only factual statements or assertions, it is difficult to distinguish fact from opinion. Thus, because the right of correction is primarily for vindication of the damaged reputation, to distinguish fact from opinion is not helpful in resolving libel disputes.

The third issue involves *who may pursue the right of correction* through the judicial system. This becomes controversial especially when a government agency can ask for correction, as in France and South Korea. Indeed, if a governmental body can exercise the right of correction, the right can be abused or impose a chilling threat on the media as a “watchdog.”

The fourth issue is whether the right of correction should be recognized through *voluntary codes of practice or through legal prescription*. Because journalists will not be able to participate in a tit-for-tat argument when printing or broadcasting corrections, this is best dealt with through self-regulation. Therefore, media outlets should be free to make whatever comments they wish about a correction, and a blanket ban on such comments is unnecessary.

### INTERNATIONAL ARENA

In many countries, the right of correction is stipulated statutorily. Not surprisingly, how the right of correction applies varies from country to country. In Europe, most legal systems consider the right of correction compatible with freedom of expression.



One distinctive feature of the right of correction in *France*, called *droit de rectification*, is that the right is applied only to the government. The law of 1881 that provided for the right of reply for individuals also included the right of correction. It has been amended several times since 1881. The 1982 law states that the right of correction applies to radio, TV, and other audiovisual communication media as well as to print media. The law provides that factual inaccuracies in newspaper stories pertaining to a public official's official conduct should be corrected.

*Germany* has a statutory right of correction. A person injured by news articles can demand a correction of the stories. The right of correction is enforced only by courts. The courts decide the content, manner, time, place, and the size of typeface of the corrected stories. The burden of proof for the correction of defamatory stories rests with the plaintiffs (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

Although the statutory right of correction is not universal in the *United States*, about 30 states have recognized the right of retraction. To date, only one state, North Dakota, has accepted the Uniform Correction Defamation Act, which limits damages to economic loss if a newspaper follows the correction provisions, even when malice is proven. The Uniform Correction Defamation Act is endorsed by the American Bar Association and the newspaper editors' group. If adopted by states, it will likely reduce the hundreds of defamation cases filed annually in the United States.

*South Korea* is the only Asian country that has a statutory right of correction. South Korea revised related laws and enacted a special law in 2005 that enforces the media to correct wrong stories as a means to redress reputational damage. The law provides for comprehensive ways to resolve libel and invasion of → privacy disputes prior to judicial intervention. Significantly, the law allows a governmental body to exercise the right of correction.

*Other countries* such as England and the Netherlands have similar statutory right of correction systems. Finland, in its news media law enacted in 2004, requires the right of correction not only of print media but also of electronic media.

## **FUTURE OF THE RIGHT OF CORRECTION**

Interpreting the right of correction still causes controversy. The right of correction is an effective means of satisfying the concerns of those who believe that they have been unfairly injured by the media. It serves as an alternative to intrusive and expensive defamation litigation that can chill the exercise of independent editorial decision-making. Further, the right of correction is a much less intrusive interference with editorial freedom than the right of reply.

On the other hand, although the right of correction should be the least intrusive and coercive way of reputational recovery, it should be discretionary when it comes to its application to the press. Even if the right can be granted when the accused turns out to be innocent in the courts, the right should not be allowed to the value judgment. In addition, the right should be limited to those who can prove that the statement in question was false and that their legal rights have suffered.

Most important about the pro-and-con debate about the right of correction is that correction of media stories can be harmonized with journalistic freedom and freedom of expression (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of).

Above all, such remedies as the right of correction can in themselves affect journalistic freedoms in one way or the other. At the same time, if the right is not enforced by law, it becomes difficult for the defamed to correct inaccurate stories when the media balks in the name of freedom of press. To further complicate the matter, the right of correction differs from country to country. Thus, it remains to be seen whether the right of correction would function as an effective self-regulating mechanism for the news media to the benefit of a wider public.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Fairness Doctrine ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Government Speech, Law and Policy on ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Privacy ▶ Public Interest ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ Right of Reply

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## **Right to Know**

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In 1990, only 13 countries had laws recognizing a right to access information held by public bodies, which has variously been called the right to know and → freedom of information, among other things. As of the time of writing, the number is approaching 70 countries, and many of the new constitutions adopted since 1990 recognize access to information as a fundamental human right. Numerous intergovernmental bodies, particularly financial institutions like the World Bank, have also adopted policies on the disclosure of information. This explosion in legal and policy recognition has been

accompanied by a similar growth in authoritative international statements on the importance of access to information, the key focus of this entry.

### GLOBAL STANDARDS

The UN has yet to adopt a treaty or other document explicitly guaranteeing a right to access information held by public authorities, although it is increasingly seen as part of the general right to freedom of expression, which includes the right to “seek, receive and impart” information and ideas. In its “observations” on the regular reports states are required to submit to it every five years, the UN Human Rights Committee, the official body tasked with implementation of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, has expressed concern with unduly broad secrecy laws on a number of occasions (for example in relation to Armenia [1998], Uzbekistan [2001], and the United Kingdom [2001]). The committee has not, however, gone so far as to specifically call on states to adopt access-to-information legislation (→ United Nations, Communication Policies of).

The UN special rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression, a special mandate established by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 1993, has been far more categorical. In his 1998 annual report to the commission, the special rapporteur stated clearly that the right to freedom of expression includes the right to access information held by the state. His views on this were welcomed by the commission, which requested him to follow up on the issue. The special rapporteur significantly expanded his commentary on freedom of information in his 2000 annual report, noting its fundamental importance not only to democracy and freedom, but also to the right to participate and to realization of the right to development (→ Development Communication). At the same time, the special rapporteur elaborated in detail on the specific content of the right to information, identifying nine key characteristics.

These characteristics include the following: that access to information laws should be based on the principle of maximum disclosure; that public bodies have an obligation to routinely disseminate information, even in the absence of a request; that exceptions to the right of access should be clearly and narrowly drawn; that procedural and cost guarantees should be put in place that facilitate access; and that protection should be afforded to whistleblowers, i.e., individuals who release information on wrongdoing.

In December 2004, the UN special rapporteur issued a joint declaration with his counterparts at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (the OSCE representative on freedom of the media) and the Organization of American States (the OAS special rapporteur on freedom of expression), stating: “The right to access information held by public authorities is a fundamental human right which should be given effect at the national level through comprehensive legislation (for example Freedom of Information Acts) based on the principle of maximum disclosure, establishing a presumption that all information is accessible subject only to a narrow system of exceptions.”

### REGIONAL STANDARDS

The right to information has also been explicitly recognized in declarations or recommendations adopted by authoritative human rights bodies in all three regional

systems for the protection of human rights, in Africa, the Americas, and Europe. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights adopted a *Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression in Africa* at its thirty-second session in October 2002. Principle IV of that declaration sets out the key principles that apply to this right. These include, among others: the idea that public bodies hold information not for themselves but as custodians of the public good and that everyone has a right to access this information; the need for a right to appeal to an independent body against any refusal to provide information; the need for proactive publication of key information; and the need to reform secrecy laws to bring them into line with the principles underpinning the right to information (→ Communication Law and Policy: Africa).

Similarly, within the inter-American system, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights approved the *Inter-American Declaration of Principles on Freedom of Expression* at its hundred-and-eighth regular session in October 2000. The principles unequivocally recognize a right to access information held by the state, as both an aspect of freedom of expression and a fundamental right on its own (→ Communication Law and Policy: South America; Communication Law and Policy: North America).

Within Europe, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a *Recommendation on Access to Official Documents* in February 2002. The recommendation provides generally for member states to guarantee “the right of everyone to have access, on request, to official documents held by public authorities.” The rest of the recommendation goes on to elaborate in some detail the principles that should apply to this right. Key among these are that exceptions should be limited to the protection of selected overriding public and private interests and apply only where disclosure of the information would cause harm to those interests. Importantly, even where harm would ensue, the information should still be provided where this serves the overall public interest (see Principle IV; → Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

The Commonwealth has also recognized the fundamental importance of the right to information and elaborated in some detail on the content of that right. The November 1999 *Durban Communiqué*, for example, recognized the importance of access to information in promoting transparency and accountable governance and in encouraging democratic participation.

Legal recognition of the right to information has been significantly bolstered by two recent cases, one at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and one at the European Court of Human Rights.

Very significant, from the perspective of international law, is a decision of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, *Caso Claude Reyes and Others v. Chile*, adopted on September 19, 2006, which concerned a refusal by the Chilean authorities to provide access to information regarding their approval of a logging project. The court unanimously held that the refusal to provide the requested information constituted a breach of the right to freedom of expression, guaranteed by Article 13 of the *American Convention on Human Rights*, stating: “With respect to the facts of the present case, the Court concludes that article 13 of the Convention, which specifically establishes the rights to ‘seek’ and ‘receive’ ‘information,’ protects the right of all persons to request access to information held by the State, with the exceptions permitted by the restrictions regime of the Convention” (para. 77).

States had an obligation to provide a legal framework to insure respect for this right, in other words to adopt an access-to-information law. The court further held that “in a democratic society it is indispensable that state authorities are governed by the principle of *maximum disclosure*, which establishes the presumption that all information should be accessible, subject to a restricted system of exceptions” (para. 92). The state bears the burden of proving that requested information falls within the scope of the exceptions.

The European Court of Human Rights has been reluctant to recognize a general right to access information based on the right to freedom of expression, although it has found a right of access based on family and/or private life in a number of cases. In a recent case, *Matky v. the Czech Republic*, the court appears to be taking a more liberal position, holding that the right to freedom of expression may be engaged in certain cases regarding access to information. It remains to be seen how broadly the court will interpret this.

Equally important from the perspective of international law is the preparation, by the Council of Europe, of a binding treaty on the right to information. The Group of Specialists on Access to Official Documents working on elaborating the treaty held its second meeting on this in mid-November 2006 and at the time of writing is expected to finalize the draft shortly.

## THEMATIC DEVELOPMENTS

The right to access information has been developed in a number of thematic areas, including anti-corruption work and protection of the environment and of human rights defenders.

Implementation of the right to access to information is a key requirement imposed on states parties to the UN Convention against Corruption, which came into force in December 2005 (as of December 2006, the convention had 80 states parties). Article 10 of the convention calls on states parties to “take such measures as may be necessary to enhance transparency in [their] public administration.” This may include, among other things, adopting rules giving members of the public a right to obtain information held by public bodies. Article 13 of the convention supports this by requiring states parties to insure “that the public has effective access to information.”

In recent years, there has been increasing recognition that access to information on the environment, including information held by public authorities, is key to sustainable development and effective public participation in environmental governance. The issue was first substantively addressed in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Principle 10 of which provides in part: “At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.”

In 1998, as a follow-up to the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, member states of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the European Union signed the legally binding Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making

and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention). As of December 2006, there were 39 states parties to the Aarhus Convention. The preamble, which sets out the rationale for the convention, refers to Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration and notes that the right to live in a healthy environment depends on access to information.

The convention, which came into force in October 2001, requires state parties to take legal measures to implement the convention's provisions on access to environmental information. Article 4(1) states: "Each Party shall ensure that . . . public authorities, in response to a request for environmental information, make such information available to the public." The rest of the article goes on to establish conditions for the release of information, including timelines, exceptions (among them a public interest override), and limits on fees.

There have been moves within the international community to recognize a special aspect of the right to freedom of information in relation to human rights. In 1998, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Declaration on Human Rights Defenders). Article 6 specifically provides for access to information about human rights, including how these rights are given effect in domestic law.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Development Communication ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Inter-American Court of Human Rights ▶ Media Policy ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ United Nations, Communication Policies of

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## **Right of Reply**

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One of the fundamental goals of a legal system is to establish standards in reconciling competing social interests by weighing their relative values in a society. The same is

applied to a society's libel laws, which provide a peaceful means for individuals to obtain vindication and compensation for their reputational harm and related losses. Therefore, libel laws furnish judicial remedies, based on such legislative acts as civil codes or press laws, to individuals whose reputational interests have been violated by the media in disseminating news (→ Libel and Slander). This is especially true of those countries where the right of reply is recognized as a way to resolve the conflicts between protection of reputation and freedom of the press (→ Right of Correction).

### **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

The right of reply is a statutory right for a defamed person to respond to the precipitating libelous publication. It affords the defamed an opportunity to use the same amount of space or time as the original libelous article. It provides relief in libel litigation that awards an equalizing opportunity for publication or broadcast of a counterclaim in the same medium in which a defamatory remark was published about an individual. The right of reply can also be a means for those who seek access to the mass media to disseminate their views in opposition to statements previously broadcast or published (→ Access to the Media). The core point of the right of reply is that the person who has been libeled may answer in kind.

Under a legal system that allows the right of reply, a news media outlet must publish or broadcast a statement that the injured party has prepared. It is premised on a belief that this remedy in libel law can serve to build an enabling environment by providing the public with the assurance that the effect of journalistic abuses can be mitigated without unreasonable interference with journalistic freedoms.

### **RELATED ISSUES**

The right of reply addresses the actual or perceived abuses of press freedoms in a way less threatening to media independence than do libel lawsuits (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Despite good reason for recognizing and applying the right of reply, however, there remain a few issues about how and to what extent it can be exercised in actual cases.

One fundamental issue is whether the right of reply would impose a chilling effect on the freedom of the press as a constitutional right. Law professor Jerome Barron of George Washington University, for example, asserts that the right of reply can serve as an alternative to intrusive and often expensive defamation litigation that can chill the exercise of independent editorial discretion. Nonetheless, others who oppose the right of reply disagree. They argue that the right of reply may in itself threaten press freedoms unless it is limited in such a way as to recognize freedom of the press and the public's right to receive information.

Another issue is whether the right of reply covers all types of media. This concerns the press/broadcast dichotomy principle that US courts have long accepted in ruling on the public's access to the media. In the United States, the legal right of reply has never been imposed on the *print* media. But in France, Germany, and South Korea, among other nations, the public is eligible for a right of reply in both print and broadcast media.

Similarly, the right of reply debate focuses on whether the right of reply should be strictly limited to fact (factual assertions). France, for instance, offers the injured the right of reply to opinions as well as facts. It stands in sharp contrast with Germany, in which the right of reply applies only to factual assertions. A problem is that, when limited to fact, it is often difficult to distinguish fact from opinion.

Other issues include whether the government or a governmental body can exercise the right of reply. In South Korea, where the right of reply is well entrenched in its law, a governmental body can ask for an arbitration process for a reply to the media content. This differs from most western countries, where the government generally is not allowed to seek a reply in the media.

The most recently generated controversy over the right of reply is whether the → Internet media can be subject to the right of reply. The Internet is growingly responsible for reputational injury, as more people and media distribute stories through the Internet. Yet it is unclear how and to what extent the right of reply can extend to cybercommunication because the Internet is essentially different from the traditional news media (→ Internet Law and Regulation).

## INTERNATIONAL ARENA

About 30 or so countries guarantee the right of reply. From the perspective of freedom of speech and the press, however, the mandatory right of reply may infringe on the right of editorial decision-making.

The right of reply should be allowed only with certain conditions, according to several legal scholars. Otherwise, a news media might be so overpowered by such reply demands that it will lose its own editorial identity and become simply a conduit for the statements of others. Thus, if publication of a reply is required, its size should not exceed the volume of the text to which the objection was raised. Nor should its position of eminence within the printed matter or broadcast be greater than that of the original statement. In addition, if a reply defames a third person, the media outlet should be able to reject the complainant's claim.

Meanwhile, how the right of reply is carried out in reality differs from country to country. In Germany, each *Land* (state) has a press law that requires newspapers and periodicals to publish replies, or counterventions, from people affected by a defamatory assertion of fact. Press laws stipulate that replies be provided in the same typeface and given the same prominence as the original article. A reply may not exceed the length of the original article. Reply statements are limited to factual allegations. Complainants have three months to request their reply, and editors who fail to comply voluntarily can be ordered to do so by the civil courts.

In France, the right of reply has been available since the Freedom of the Press Act of 1881 to anyone mentioned or clearly alluded to in the press, whether or not the article is inaccurate or defamatory. Article 12 requires the editorial director to include a reply statement free of charge in the most prominent position of the next issue of the newspaper or periodical. Article 13 allows an individual to exercise the right of reply, which can be of the same length and in the same typeface as the offending article. The reply must not violate the rights of others or attack the integrity of the journalist. Significantly, French law denies the right of reply of medical doctors and police officers.



South Korea has recognized the statutory right of reply since the early 1980s. Since the Press Arbitration Commission (PAC) was created in 1981 as a mechanism to enforce the right of reply, South Korea has developed a unique and well-structured remedy system. In 2005 its National Assembly passed a special implementation law on the right of reply as well as the right of correction. The Press Arbitration Act provides for remedies for individuals whose reputations have been damaged and authorizes the PAC to manage the process. Under the law, an individual can file a petition not only for reply but also for monetary damages for libel.

In the United States, the right of reply has been viewed mainly as the public's right of access to the media. No right of reply is acceptable in relation to the print media. In *Miami Herald v. Tornillo* (1974), the US Supreme Court held that a mandatory right of reply is an unconstitutional interference with the First Amendment right of the print media to free speech. But the right of reply is more accommodated in broadcasting law of the United States. In *Red Lion Broadcasting Co. v. FCC* (1969), the US Supreme Court, upholding the → "fairness doctrine" of the American broadcasting law, found that the broadcast licensees could be required to provide airtime to those who have contrasting views in response to the broadcasting of controversial issues. Nonetheless, the fairness doctrine was repealed by the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the late 1980s. Likewise, the FCC stopped enforcing the personal attack rule, which permitted a person whose character was attacked by a broadcast station to reply to the attack without cost, and the political editorial rule, which required a broadcaster to notify and give an opportunity to a political candidate to respond to the broadcaster's endorsement on another candidate.

Among other European countries, Austria, Denmark, Greece, Finland, Norway, Spain, and Sweden recognize the right of reply. In Japan, the right of reply has not been resurrected after it was repealed in 1945.

The right of reply guarantees that a party injured by often defamatory statements has the opportunity (the right) to respond to the injurious statements. To better understand the right of reply, it is necessary to know how differently it is applied as well as how it has evolved. Although most countries consider the right of reply an effective way for an individual to repair his or her tarnished reputation, how the right is implemented hinges on a nation's legal and historical context, in which freedom of the press has been balanced against reputation as a competing interest. The right of reply will more likely meet its ultimate aim when the media accept it as part of their ethical journalism rather than as a legal requirement.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Fairness Doctrine  
▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of  
▶ Government Speech, Law and Policy on ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation  
▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Public Interest ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ Right of Correction

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## Risk Communication

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Risk communication is a field of communications research that is used by a variety of professionals, including → public relations and other professionals involved in purposive communications in government and the private sector (→ Strategic Communication). Risk communication can be defined as a process that increases the selectivity of the → perception and communication of decision consequences. The decision consequences experienced by the decision-maker are based on “uncertainty” (Otway & Wynne 1989), a situation where actions have to be taken under conditions of incomplete information. The prominent theoretical concepts of risk communications are based on the sociology of risk (Luhmann 2005), as well as journalism research (Wilkins & Patterson 1991; Görke & Ruhrmann 2003).

### DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNICATION

There are at least three dimensions to risk communication: (1) issue, (2) communicator, and (3) audience. First, risk communication is contingent upon the actual *issue that is assessed and perceived as being risky*. A “risk” (R) is the product of the probability (P) of damage and the seriousness of this damage (S), that is  $R = P \times S$  (Rowe 1977). Risk can be differentiated between specific intensities, as well as between specific types of potential

damages (Slovic 1987). Types of potential damage include accidents (e.g., an explosion at a chemical factory), natural catastrophes (e.g., a tsunami), or terror attacks (e.g., the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA). When considering “the issue,” one must be mindful that, in everyday life and in the scientific world, uncertainty is communicated differently (Lindell & Perry 2004; Barnett et al. 2005; Goldstein 2005). In *everyday life*, possible damages and the probability that the damages or risky events will come to fruition are well known. In *science*, however, both well-defined risks as well as complex, sometimes still unknown, risks – for example in the field of nuclear energy or genetic engineering – exist side by side.

A second dimension is *how risk is communicated*. The communicators, e.g., the spokesperson of an agency or the journalist who reports the risk, represent a contingent selection. They are able to report about a risk, but may choose to remain silent. Catastrophes are reported immediately. However, it is also possible that a risk is not communicated, because it is not yet realized, one does not know enough about it yet, or it is not reasonable to talk about it. For example, one may choose not to disclose information in case of a terror risk, for security reasons. In the case of imminent catastrophes (or catastrophes that failed to appear), the information or lack of information in an announcement can predict how effective or successful further communication is accepted and perceived. The following questions should be asked when assessing the effectiveness of how the risk was communicated: (1) How do risk experts respond to questions? (2) How do sources, i.e., the spokespersons of the agencies and journalists, phrase a statement? What does this statement suggest? Trust in agencies and journalists can be operationalized by asking the following questions: (1) Are the issues selected correctly? (2) Are the underlying facts correct? (3) Are they depicted correctly? (4) Are they appropriate to journalistic judgments? (5) Are they trustworthy? (Kohring 2004).

Finally, the → audience plays an important role in the selectivity of communication of risk, as there are audience members who may or may not pay → attention to the → news, or may or may not understand it, and may accept or reject it (→ Selective Exposure; Selective Perception and Selective Retention). The audience is able to perceive or ignore statements on risks. Risk perception is influenced considerably by attitudes about science, technology, and culture (→ Risk Perceptions). Experts and decision-makers orient themselves in a worldview based on science. They have an understanding of the scientific methods and explanations, which normally result in provable or probabilistic statements. Lay people, however, base their experiences on their everyday life and that of their particular reference group. Hence, the reported risks are personalized with regard to their own fears. They calculate the probability and the amount of damages of the crisis according to their subjective certainty.

### **RISK COMMUNICATION, CONFLICT, AND CATASTROPHES**

Conflicts can be seen as a cause and a consequence of risk communication (→ Social Conflict and Communication). They can escalate due to dramatized press coverage, for example. Conflicts clarify who is “pro” and who is “against” specific decisions. They also show who is keen to discuss a risk and who prefers to avoid the argument. This explicit “two-point formation” allows for an exclusion of complex alternatives, which cannot be decided upon immediately. Conflicts can be characterized by typical communication dimensions and structures.

On a *factual level*, arguments about the accuracy of statements and facts are relevant. This can also complicate the conflict; for example, if conflicting positions are repeatedly supported with new arguments, the conflict may be extended. Another concern in terms of accuracy occurs when experts deny each other the correct use of a technical language. In this context, “rationalization” can be understood as an attempt to explain threatening, uncertain, or ambiguous events and developments (hypothetical risks). These explanations could include scientific, political, or economic information. The role of rationalization is to assess, calculate, and legitimize incomprehensible risks.

On the *social level*, conflicts become apparent when “winners” and “losers” are identified and the actions and decisions of both groups become based on this construct; for example, when the risk perception of someone else is called “irrational.” Dramatized press coverage can result in an excited dispute, where controversial statements are expressed in an emotional way. This can lead to a further intensification of the conflict. In addition, calculated violations of rules can be exploited to intensify the “emotional climate.” It is essential to communicate each group’s points of views without emotional content in order to temper any conflicts that arise.

On the *temporal level*, a restructuring of the time horizon takes place, where past risk communications are reinterpreted. In the present, where one knows more about the risk, the statements of the past could be understood as a pretense of fake risk assumptions. At the same time, the future is observed and experienced threateningly. One expects that current and future decisions of the rival will restrict one’s own options (Coombs 2007).

Risks can not only be seen as damaging events that can be calculated probabilistically, managed technically, or regulated by the insurance industry, but also as *political conflict situations* (Lindell & Perry 2004). There are no attributions for natural catastrophes, which follow the principle that the party responsible is liable for the damages. However, it can be assumed that, in western industrialized countries and in less developed countries, the mass media will increasingly describe natural catastrophes as social catastrophes and, therefore, as risks. Security is seen as socially constructed (Luhmann 2005). For example, deaths from catastrophes such as floods or earthquakes can ultimately be traced back to human actions, for example, due to building in flood-prone areas. Natural catastrophes are normally “mere” coping crises.

Difficulties in acceptance only occur if the responsible officials can be blamed for inefficient coping actions. Failure to render assistance, insufficient precautions, inability to make decisions, and insufficient information delivery often are mentioned by experts and commissions if risk management and communication are evaluated (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2002). Failures of this kind escalate into serious crises of communication and acceptance, especially if national communication is incapable of admitting failures and learning from these experiences.

## **RISK COMMUNICATION AND ACCEPTANCE**

Acceptance is the outcome of a selective processing of the scientific, economic, political, and cultural information in risk perception, risk assessment, and risk communication (Lindell & Perry 2004). Acceptance is normally described as a positive attitude toward

single statements. In addition, acceptability describes the communicated reasons and circumstances of acceptance. In case of crisis or incident, there is limited time for communication (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2002). To determine the potential for acceptance, *five assumptions that complicate the communication* must be distinguished.

- 1 One cannot infer general future acceptance from the present behavior of the persons affected. Due to intensified public relations and → advertising, there is a significant difference between expressed (what people say) and shown (what people really accept) preferences.
- 2 In view of the ignorance of possible long-term effects and consequences, the passive acceptance of risks or of disputed decisions cannot be evaluated as acceptance.
- 3 Absent collective protest and the absence or breakdown of social movements that are against risky decisions and developments do not inevitably indicate acceptance (→ Social Movements and Communication).
- 4 Tacit risk acceptance by specific sub-groups of the population, which might be influenced by public relations, does not mean the acceptance or the willingness of other groups.
- 5 Attitudes and interests can become manifest in different role demands. Thus, acceptability and acceptance could individually contradict each other. The reason for this is also that sometimes risk communication is misinterpreted as advertising (Ulmer et al. 2007).

Acceptance of risk communication only occurs long-term on the basis of acceptability of premises. Acceptance can be obtained by effective, goal-oriented communication.

### **NEED FOR RESEARCH**

More research is called for in at least seven areas. (1) *Issues*: communication researchers, as well as other social scientists, should have basic knowledge about the relevant topics, e.g., scientific, technical, and ecological developments, their effects, and consequences. (2) *Experts*: they should be observed under stress in public, in crisis management groups, and in television editorial offices. (3) *Sample strategies*: systematic comparative analyses are necessary to describe and explain sample strategies in form and content. Which risk definitions and concepts of probability result in specific risk evaluations by different scientific, technical, and political actors? (4) *Communicators*: the communicators and the causes, which make sure that catastrophes and terrorism with a latent history become an issue, should be analyzed further (Greenberg & Thomson 2002). This applies not only to information programs, but also to entertainment programs, which increasingly have a higher circulation and stronger effects. It could become apparent how specific events and issues are dramatized and are able to establish themselves in the public awareness (Görke & Ruhrmann 2003). (5) *Journalists*: the basic conditions under which journalists and editors work should be analyzed in detail (→ Journalists' Role Perception). Analyses of risk perception and risk description by journalists are necessary as well. (6) *Media/content*: long-term verbal and visual content and issue analyses of the description and visual presentation of risks, catastrophes, and terrorism should be carried out (Mythen & Walklate 2006). This should also include the → Internet and feature films. *Audience*:

adequate methods are necessary to measure cognitive *and* affective reception modalities and schemes of the audience and its sub-groups (→ Audience Research).

Such analyses should be carried out using multi-methods (→ Research Methods; Triangulation). This allows researchers to compare media statements with the content that the audience recalls. An integrated research approach is necessary to understand risk communication internationally and interculturallly.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attention ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Health Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Issue Management ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Marketing ▶ News ▶ Perception ▶ Public Relations ▶ Research Methods ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Conflict and Communication ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Triangulation

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# Risk Perceptions

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One definition of risk communication is “communication with individuals (not necessarily face-to-face) that addresses knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, and behavior related to risk” (Edwards & Bastian 2001, 147). In the public health arena, we often hear about the dangers of poor lifestyle habits (e.g., smoking, drinking, not exercising, failure to vaccinate or screen for cancer) or how to engage in preventive health behaviors (e.g., taking aspirin to prevent heart disease). Often, the media, health providers, and even our family and friends craft persuasive communications designed to inform us about our risk of disease or other bad outcomes. The basic idea behind these messages, and consistent with many theoretical models of behavior change, is that increasing a person’s sense that something bad can happen to them, that is, perceived risk, will motivate behavior change to either prevent or diminish the threat. Thus, perceptions of risk entail not only the perceived probabilities of an event occurring – or not – but the negative consequences as well; negative consequences can encompass the physical, social, psychological, and economic realms (→ Health Communication; Persuasion; Persuasion and Resistance).

“Risk” is a difficult concept to convey and one that is poorly understood by the public. A comprehensive understanding of risk that can guide informed decisions requires that patients know the antecedents (e.g., risk factors), likelihoods (probabilities), and consequences and preventive actions (pros and cons) necessary to control/avert risk, if possible (Weinstein 1999). Most attention in risk communication is focused on conveying probabilistic information, perhaps due more to the inherent complexities involved in describing uncertainty than of the other dimensions mentioned. A critical issue is whether those at the forefront of communicating risk conceptualize and craft messages targeting these dimensions. Admittedly, not all communications will involve discussion of each component above (e.g., probabilities of disease). For example, among those who test positive for disease (e.g., Huntington’s), focus may be spent on conveying details of the disease and how to cope with the consequences. In these situations, elements related to coping and illness perceptions (e.g., timeline, severity, controllability) can take precedence (Leventhal et al. 2001; → Risk Communication).

## COMMUNICATING NUMERICAL RISKS

Numbers (e.g., percentages, frequencies) are often used to describe the magnitude of risk. Numbers have several appealing qualities: (1) they are precise, (2) they convey an aura of “scientific credibility,” (3) they can be converted from one metric to another (e.g., 10 percent = 1 out of 10), (4) they can be verified for accuracy – assuming enough observations, and (5) they can be computed using algorithms (e.g., Gail Score for breast cancer; Windschitl & Wells 1996). Further, it is assumed that many people appreciate numbers due to their mathematical training in school and/or occupation. For these reasons, and with advances in evidence-based medicine, numbers are likely to be used even more in clinical and other settings to convey risk.

A common marker of understanding is whether the public or patients are able to correctly reflect back a probability estimate. Those who provide approximately the same number are often viewed as understanding their magnitude of risk. After receiving numerical risk feedback, while accuracy generally improves, many individuals continue to provide a risk estimate that deviates from that received (e.g., in genetic risk; see Braithwaite et al. 2004). Do deviations suggest individuals do not understand their numerical risk? Below are various reasons, not meant to be exhaustive, why numerical risk estimates may deviate from those provided.

*Format of information:* individuals may have received their estimate in a format that was poorly understood. There appears to be wide variation in how risk is presented. For example, in conveying BRCA1/2 (genetic risk for breast cancer) risk, Butow and Lobb (2004) found high variability in the format counselors used (e.g., different combinations of numerical, verbal, and graphical displays) along with 23 different facts about risk. Wide variability in use of formats and a tendency to convey too much information may cause confusion rather than clarity. Communicators need to be aware of formats that facilitate the best processing of risk magnitudes or other relevant risk information (e.g., natural frequencies, graphs; Gigerenzer & Hoffrage 1995; Ancker et al. 2006). Of import, no single format may be best in all situations.

*Low message engagement:* as a result of the above or other processes (e.g., relying on an expert to interpret information; poor math skills) individuals may not have fully engaged with the information provided.

*Biased motivated processing:* individuals may not have believed or may have distorted the magnitude of the risk in order to reduce the perceived threat or to interpret it in a more favorable manner (e.g., optimistic bias; Klein & Weinstein 1997).

*Incorporated behavior change:* individuals may have taken into account any future actions in their estimate, thus diminishing or increasing the perceived risk. The estimate will then reflect a future rather than the current state of being.

*Mood states:* both positive and negative moods can affect the processing of (risk) information (Lowenstein et al. 2001; Slovic et al. 2005). Recent models merging perceived risk and affect, such as “risk as feelings” and the “affect heuristic,” suggest that individuals may use their current affective state as a source of information from which to derive risk perceptions.

*Use of heuristics:* individuals use mental shortcuts (i.e., heuristics) to make judgments. For example, they may feel that they resemble the type of person who is at higher/lower risk for disease (i.e., representative heuristic), recall instances of people with or without the condition, making the event seem less/more likely (i.e., availability heuristic), or be influenced by other numerical estimates they encountered (i.e., anchoring; Tversky & Kahneman 1974). These heuristics can distort perceived risk estimates.

*Insensitivity to risk assessment measures:* depending on how risk judgments are assessed (e.g., numerical vs verbal scales), responses may be more or less valid and reliable. Indeed, there is no “gold standard” for evaluating risk perceptions (Diefenbach et al. 1993), and whether responses can be used to judge accuracy of risk judgments involves meeting certain requirements (Windschitl & Wells 1996).

As the above suggest, caution should be used when interpreting whether someone understands a numerical risk when a mismatch or match occurs. A match may simply be a person reflecting back information rather than true understanding. Insights to understanding



may be obtained by whether the person asks relevant questions and paraphrases the meaning of what was conveyed in a manner that stems logically from the information provided. The key issue is whether the interpretation of the information results in communication errors or not, as discussed below.

## EVALUATING THE EFFICACY OF RISK COMMUNICATIONS

How do we judge whether our risk communications are effective? There exist very few guidelines on this issue (Rohrman 1992; Weinstein & Sandman 1993), and these vary by whether the communications are focused on education, persuasion, crisis management, or conflict management. Below, and in addition to what others have suggested (Rohrman 1992; Weinstein & Sandman 1993), are ways by which the efficacy of risk communication processes might be judged.

*Engagement in recommended behavior(s)*: a risk communication is deemed effective if resulting perceptions of risk lead to the recommended behavior. A risk communication would be judged ineffective or even detrimental if it causes the person to enact inappropriately (e.g., failure to get mammograms because personal risk estimate was low).

*Paying attention to the message*: a key step to any communication is whether the target audience paid attention to the message. Risk messages that are attended to, as reflected in such outcomes as recall, use, and dissemination to others, in addition to any actions taken, can be considered in some situations as being effective.

*Acquisition of factual knowledge*: did your communications result in greater understanding of the phenomenon in question, especially in relation to the dimensions of understanding risk discussed earlier (e.g., knowing of risk factors, what to do)?

*Judging the direction of risk magnitude*: while an individual may accurately reflect back a risk magnitude, they may judge the risk as objectively higher or lower than the source's intended meaning. Thus, while the take-home message might be that the person's risk is actually higher/lower, the person does not walk away with this impression.

*Conflict/trust*: does presentation of risk information result in greater or less trust and/or conflict (e.g., outrage)?

*Evocation of extreme negative/positive affect*: do individuals after receipt of risk information express undue anxiety, stress, or anger? Conversely, do they express unexpectedly high levels of positive affect in light of high probabilistic negative outcome(s)? These issues involve psychological well-being as outcomes.

*Judging perceived risks/benefits*: assuming individuals are aware actions can be taken to reduce their risk, they may not fully understand the benefits and costs of the actions (e.g., mastectomy to reduce breast cancer risk). They may fail to appreciate fully and/or know how to balance the risks and benefits (e.g., how much is my risk reduced in light of the possible side effects?).

*Consistency between values and decisions/actions*: as a result of the discussion, is the person's decision to take some form of action consistent or not consistent with his/her values?

## CONSIDERATIONS IN COMMUNICATING RISK

Here are some considerations for those who wish to design risk communication interventions. The reader can also refer to an excellent text on this issue (Witte et al. 2001). In addition to

clarifying and clearly specifying the goal(s) of your communication, accessibility and channel of dissemination (e.g., web, print, phone), understanding your target audience (e.g., needs, values, prior experiences with health issue), context (e.g., socio-political environment), and resources (e.g., staffing, costs), attention should be given to the following aspects.

*Content areas of risk:* will your communications cover risk factors (e.g., physiological, environmental, genetic), forms of probabilistic information and their utilities (absolute, relative, attributable), important consequences (e.g., social, physiological, psychological, economic), and methods of prevention, if possible (e.g., lifestyle changes, surgical, medicinal)?

*Common communication formats, their strengths and weaknesses:* will you communicate information numerically, verbally, and/or graphically? Know the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

*Biases in perceptions of and personalization of risk:* are there reasons to believe your audience may review and process the messages in some biased fashion (e.g., selective attention to information, react optimistically or pessimistically, superficially, counterarguments)? If so, examine why this might happen and ways to curb the potential effects of such biases.

*Probing for understanding:* how will you judge whether the target audience understands your message? In this, as in so many other situations, pilot test your materials.

*Evaluating the efficacy of risk communications:* how will you judge whether your communication was effective? For example, if greater factual knowledge is gained but with no accompanying recommended behavior change, is this considered a success, a failure, or neither?

In sum, the application of risk communication to diverse areas of health will only increase in the future. Effective risk communication involves the consideration of a multitude of factors, some of which have been highlighted here. Risk communication is anything but easy and poses formidable challenges. Yet when done effectively, the rewards for the public and patients can be immense.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bad News in Medicine, Communicating ▶ Culture and Health Communication ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Environmental Communication ▶ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication, Ethics in ▶ Persuasion ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Uncertainty and Communication

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## Rituals in Popular Communication

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Rituals and ritualization can be found in all aspects of contemporary social life: religion, education, politics, → popular culture, work life, family life, friendship, consumption, and leisure. Formal ceremonies such as religious observances, weddings, funerals, or oaths of office are familiar; the rest of social life is also punctuated by small bits of ritual and ceremoniousness, which we often overlook. From the rules of politeness to military codes of honor, from the celebration of birthdays and holidays to presidential inaugurals, from the conduct of board meetings and superior–subordinate communication to the conduct of a symphony orchestra concert, from dinner parties to Super Bowl parties, to the groups of television viewers gathered for news of disaster and crisis, the distinctive moments of life are marked by ritual.

### FORMAL RITES AND CEREMONIES

How ritual works is most easily observed in formal ceremonies, so the discussion will begin with those examples. In a religious service, wedding, or oath of office, people

perform → scripts of symbolic activities, including words, gestures, movements, music, dress, and decoration to connect with larger realities, meanings, and values, create new social realities, or manage social change (→ Symbolism). These are all matters of what Durkheim (1995) called the serious life, and his analysis of how ritual connects individual and group is the classic source of ritual studies. These examples and Durkheim's criteria show how important it is not to confuse ritual with routine and habit.

Most often, formal rites and ceremonies are performed in places and times that are set aside from everyday life, so that participants' explicit connection with the serious life through such rituals is also separated from the routine (Eliade 1959; Turner 1977). Religious ceremonies, for example, are conducted in buildings with architectural elaborations that symbolize this separation and direct attention toward a symbolized center, via doors, entranceways, inner and outer rooms, altars and podiums, furniture, decoration, and lighting. When religious ceremonies are not in locations built for the specific purpose, the room or building is decorated and furniture arranged to mark its religious function. Outdoor ceremonies are not in random locations, but oriented to natural features to guide attention in the ways needed by the religious practice, whether it be facing Mecca, a sacred mountain, or a beautiful view.

Setting aside time and place for ritual helps create a social mood called *liminality*, from the Latin for threshold, which was first identified in regard to rites of passage (van Gennep 1960). In the transition from one known social status to another, whether boys and girls to men and women, the citizens of one country to those of another, single people into a married couple, or citizens into office holders, the ceremony itself is a threshold and as long as the participants are involved in it, their social roles and relations are ambiguous. Turner (1977) pointed out how the subjunctive mood of most rituals is related to this liminal characteristic; the ritual is a timeout for what could be or should be, for promises rather than descriptions, for concentrating on ideals rather than actualities. One form of the subjunctive mood is role-leveling or role-reversal in masquerade, carnival, licentiousness, or games – think of Carnival preceding Lent or the silly games at a wedding reception. These performances also become symbolic markers that the ceremony is outside normal social time, place, and conduct. The contrast of these liminal experiences with everyday life provides some of their power to produce social change or reinforce values, as they demonstrate new possibilities and provide compelling memories, normative guides, and evaluative terms for later behavior.

So far, the examples are of formal rites and ceremonies, usually with some sort of official sanction and purpose, with recognized and accepted forms, performed in special places and times, symbolically and performatively marked as such, with a characteristically subjunctive mood. Such rites and ceremonies connect a people to the things they take most seriously, and have the capacity to create, maintain, and transform social realities. These are important things in the life of any person, organization, community, and society, even when they are infrequent.

## THE FUNDAMENTAL ROLE OF COMMUNICATION

Notice the fundamental role of communication in rites and ceremonies. Along with the essential verbal performances are layers of other symbolic forms required by the ritual.

There is little about a ritual left to chance; almost everything is chosen for its symbolic value and thus falls within the general category of the communicative. Such perfectly ordinary phenomena as standing up or sitting down, when performed in rituals, are ways of saying things that produce meanings, cognitions, and emotions. From body movement, posture, gesture, and clothing, through music, chanting, marching, food, and drink, to decoration and architecture, rites and ceremonies are thickly communicative phenomena. There is no rite or ceremony without communication and their communicative performances are the effective mechanisms of their consequences (Rothenbuhler 1998).

It is important to recognize the *formality of the effective communication* in ritual. One does not say just any old thing, or move one's body as one pleases in a ritual. It is not just that some communicative forms are required in ritual, but that all communication be according to form. The center of the ritual is the performance of a script of signs and symbols not encoded by the performer, but imposed by the ritual, implicitly required by the community (Rappaport 1999). Beyond that, all other statements or movements are whispered or made small. It is the proper performance of this package of communication, including the non-performance of the disallowed, which produces the effects of ritual. From the point of view of the communication scholar, it is appropriate to say that ritual is communication and could not exist or do what it does in any other way. (This also provides a starting point for a ritual perspective in communication theory; see Carey 1988; Rothenbuhler 1998.)

### THE CONTINUUM OF RITUALIZATION

The formality of communication in these cases and its recognized, usually intentional, effectiveness defines one end of a continuum. On the other end of the continuum are the tiny *bits of formality* in otherwise very informal and often thoughtlessly performed communication, such as standardized greetings among friends, introductions, or the arrangement of seating at work or social gatherings. Goffman (1967) was the pioneer of this area of study, and it is communicative form that is in play here; how things are done is key, because the form is read symbolically (→ Goffman, Erving). There is no information shared between two co-workers who say good morning in the same way each day, for example, but its form may be a valuable ritual of relationship. These bits of symbolic formality are consequential – they create, maintain, or alter social realities, identities, and relations; they define situations and their obligations or licenses. Like the most formal and important of rites and ceremonies, then, these little formalities of everyday conduct also provide contact with the serious life – and we can see, then, that they should not be dismissed as mere habit or routine. The field of ritual studies, then, as some famous anthropologist quipped, covers everything from handshakes to coronations.

Between these two extremes, each of which has its own research literature, lies a vast and varied territory with its own more recent, growing literature. We could call this the *study of ritualization*, examining the various degrees of attention to form and propriety of communication and its consequences in meaning and morality.

Dayan and Katz (1992), for example, drew attention to *media events* such as state visits, state funerals, royal weddings, the Pope's travels, or the Olympic Games (→ Katz, Elihu;

Media Events and Pseudo-Events). In such cases, television coverage takes a ritualized form: the normal schedule is interrupted, coverage is carried live, and the tone of journalism is more reverential or pedagogical than adversarial or inquisitive (→ *Television; Television: Social History*). Audience members engage in a kind of “dressed up” viewing; they pay more attention to media events than normal television, plan their viewing ahead of time, watch in groups, and think and talk about their viewing later (→ *Exposure to Communication Content*). Other work has expanded the media events frame to the analysis of conflict, denigration, and ongoing news coverage (Liebes & Curran 1998). The implicit analytical thread that ties all this work together is a focus on ritualization, a tendency for a heightened sense of social importance to be expressed in a heightened degree of attention to form, and its corollary, a tendency to respond to certain communicative forms as signs of social importance.

Coman (2005) shows that journalists ritualize in covering media events, in that the form of their coverage is a ritual frame that signals the audience which events are worthy of ceremonious attention and constructs the journalists’ authority to do so (→ *News Routines; News Values*). Couldry (2003) shows how ritualization operates in the entertainment and celebrity system as well (→ *Celebrity Culture*). By constituting “the media” as a socially important category and maintaining what he calls the myth of the mediated center, all players in the media, not just those involved in the “serious” pursuits of journalism, gain status and authority.

### **RITUALIZATION BY AUDIENCES**

Media audiences also ritualize. Again, there are continua of ritualization and of socially sanctioned seriousness. On one end are major events of widely recognized importance, as in Dayan and Katz’s (1992) first formulation of the media event concept. Audiences for other big events in the media, such as the Super Bowl or the Academy Awards, can exhibit similarly ceremonial patterns of attitude and behavior, though usually here with more playfulness, less attention to values, and less sense of social obligation (→ *Fandom*).

On a smaller scale, some aspects of ritualization can appear in regard to otherwise ordinary television. Sports fans can treat each game as an occasion for ceremonial gathering and identity work. Fans of particular television shows can gather, enjoy one another’s company, and use the story lines as fodder for value-laden conversation. Small ritual structures can be built in family life to set aside times and places to watch TV together, or to have some private time away from the others. Even lone viewers, whether devotees of a show or a genre, can ritualize their viewing, investing it with a greater degree of importance than the rest of their weekly routine.

### **RITUALS AND THE MEDIA**

Ritual, defined as the performance of appropriately patterned behavior to symbolically effect or participate in the serious life, is present wherever formal behavior is used to bring about desired social ends or to control undesired ones (Rothenbuhler 1998). Formal rites and ceremonies such as funerals, weddings, and inaugurations, on the one hand, and the

little bits of ceremoniousness in otherwise ordinary, everyday activities such as handshakes, introductions, and dinner parties are both important and imply a continuum of ritualization. The group activities of everyday life often involve heightened attention to symbolic form or attention to the communicative significance of the way in which things are done, hence a kind of ritualization.

In contemporary societies, the media are one of the major sponsors of ritual. Their endorsement of an event as worthy of full ceremonial, media event coverage is a major commitment of resources to making it so, and a crucial signal of social value. Short of that, both the media and their audiences engage in a variety of ritualizations that mark some activities and events as distinct and important in the ordinary flow of life.

Combining these studies of ritualization among media professionals and audiences with the older literature on the small rituals of everyday life yields a provocative conceptual view: there are underlying continua of social life from religion to politics to entertainment. Entertainment is not all for fun, but also involves identities, values, and social judgments, just as religion and politics require the pleasures of aesthetic expression. The study of ritual helps to illuminate these connections.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Collective Memory and the Media  
▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Fandom  
▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ News Routines  
▶ News Values ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Religion and Popular  
Communication ▶ Scripts ▶ Symbolism ▶ Television ▶ Television: Social History

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# Rogers, Everett

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When Everett M. Rogers passed away on October 21, 2004, his ashes were returned to the family's Pinehurst Farm in Carroll, Iowa, where he was born on March 6, 1931. In a career spanning 47 years, he wrote 36 books, some 325 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, and over 100 research reports. His prolific writing and clear prose have left an indelible mark on our understanding of the role that communication plays in social change (→ Planned Social Change through Communication).

Everett Rogers attended Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, which had a great intellectual tradition in agriculture and in rural sociology. Numerous agricultural innovations were generated by scientists at Iowa State. Rural sociologists – including George Beal (who served as Ev's doctoral advisor) – were conducting pioneering studies on the diffusion of these innovations, such as hybrid seed corn and chemical fertilizers (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Rural Development). Questions were being asked about why some farmers adopted these innovations, and some didn't. These questions intrigued Rogers.

Such questions about innovation diffusion, including the causes of strong resistances and how communication could help overcome them, formed the core of Rogers's graduate work at Iowa State University. His 1957 doctoral dissertation analyzed the diffusion of a cluster of agricultural innovations among farmers in Collins, Iowa, close to the family farm. In the review of literature chapter, he reviewed the existing studies on the diffusion of agricultural innovations, educational innovations, medical innovations, and marketing innovations. He found several similarities: For instance, innovations tend to diffuse following an S-shaped curve of adoption.

This finding was of great interest to scholars both within and outside of rural sociology because of its deductive and parsimonious potential. For instance, marketing scientists, epidemiologists, demographers, and political scientists appreciated the predictive potential of the S-shaped curve, given that it elegantly describes a logistic (or exponential) growth curve (Dearing & Singhal 2006).

In 1962, Rogers published this review of literature chapter, greatly expanded, as *Diffusion of innovations*. The book provided a comprehensive theory of how innovations diffused, or spread, in a social system. The book's appeal was cross-disciplinary and global.

When *Diffusion of innovations* was published, a dominant paradigm guided development theorizing and influenced development communication theory and practice. This dominant concept of development “grew out of certain historical events, such as the Industrial Revolution, the colonial experience in Latin America, Africa, and Asia; the quantitative empiricism of North American social science, and capitalistic economic/political philosophy” (Rogers 1976, 121). The decade of the 1960s, when dozens of countries in Asia, Africa, and South America gained their political independence, was one of great optimism for development. The governments of these countries were searching for ways to effectively communicate agricultural, health, and family planning innovations



to their populations. The international development community believed that people in these countries needed to discard their traditional ways and adopt technological innovations (Melkote 2006).

At that time, the notion of exogenously induced social change was implicit in diffusion practice and research (Melkote 2006). The route for this change – from being a traditional person to a modern one – was embodied in the communication and acceptance of new ideas. So Everett Rogers's writings on the diffusion of innovations established the importance of communication in the modernization process (→ Development Communication; Development Communication Campaigns; Development Support Communication; Modernization).

By the 1970s, it was becoming increasingly clear that the process of development was not as straightforward as was conceptualized in the dominant paradigm (Rogers 1976). Although an early proponent of the dominant paradigm, Rogers was humble enough to admit the problems with the earlier conceptions of communication and social change (Melkote 2006). For one thing, he redefined the meaning of development, moving away from the earlier technocratic, overly materialistic, and deterministic models to include issues of equity in distribution of information and benefits, active participation of people at the grassroots, independence of local communities to tailor development projects to their own needs, and integration of old and new ideas, traditional and modern systems, and endogenous and exogenous elements (Rogers 1976; Wilkins 1999).

Throughout his career, Rogers believed that the academy had a responsibility to not just study the processes of social change, but also affect it. He argued that practitioners had much to teach the academy, for they were the ones getting their hands dirty in the real world (Dearing & Singhal 2006).

Why have Everett Rogers's writings been so influential over the past four-plus decades? His biggest contribution lies in his ability to explain how the macro-process of system change is linked to micro- (individual- and group-)level processes. The explanations he offered showed both how micro-level units of adoption were influenced by system norms, and how system change was dependent on individual action. In this sense, diffusion of innovations theory is one of the very few social theories that link macro- with micro-level phenomena (Dearing & Singhal 2006).

It is no surprise that *Diffusion of innovations*, into its fifth edition in 2003, is the second most cited book in the Social Science Citation Index.

SEE ALSO: ► Development Communication ► Development Communication Campaigns  
► Development Support Communication ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation  
► Modernization ► Planned Social Change through Communication ► Rural Development

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# Rumor

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The concept of rumor covers a wide range of realities: false or unverified → news, of course, but also any journalistic errors or disinformation maneuvers when publicly revealed, any prejudices and stereotypes made into narratives, some → propaganda pieces if ambiguous enough, some hoaxes their authors do not kill, some realistic contemporary legends, and even some examples of viral marketing. The reason for this conceptual maelstrom is that, although the reality of rumor is old and well documented, new and problematical conceptualizations of rumor have emerged.

## ORIGINS

The term “rumor” is ancient and originally had a meaning close to “reputation” and “fame.” In Rome, rumor was used in the context of justice, such as when Quintilius listed it among tools including records, tortures, oaths, and witnesses. This antiquated meaning of rumor remains embedded in the modern sense, which only adds to the confusion in current usage and explains why even scholars (e.g., Allport & Postman 1947) cite the *Aeneid* – “Rumor! What evil can surpass her speed?” – without knowing the original Latin reference is to “fame” (“Fama, malum qua non aliud uelocius ullum”).

The shift in definition coincided with the first published *rumor theory* by Louis William Stern, a German psychologist who in 1902 was the first scholar to reify rumor (unintentionally), giving it an autonomous mechanism, as if it were independent of those whispering it. When he suggested quantifying rumor, the abyss between rumor and reputation began to open (but reputation clearly remains unquantifiable, so that one cannot say without irony, “Her reputation is 11 times better than his”). Stern inherited the preoccupations of forensic psychology: in an experimental protocol he treated rumor as an objective testimony that travels along a chain of subjects (physically, he lined up volunteers in a room and told the first person to repeat a story to another, and so forth). Then he applied quantitative methods to compare the versions from different witnesses of the rumor; logically, each step caused a loss of information. Even if the technique is efficient and the results spectacular, it assumes that the message is composed of details that remain themselves undefined. This sleight of hand modeled rumor as an account of details that Stern could represent visually with tables. It describes rumor propagation as a

message diffusing by itself, traveling toward the worst, coming from truth and becoming false.

The new sense of rumor spread slowly. In 1911, one of Stern's colleagues, Rosa Oppenheim, was the first to link *rumor and the press*. She writes about her surprise upon observing that newspapers can print unverified or bad information and wonders why refutations are slow to arrive and then go unnoticed (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Journalism). Around the same time, the psychoanalyst Carl G. Jung, Stern's Swiss correspondent, published a brief article reporting his study of the diffusion of a rumor in a classroom. More than the telling of a good story, Jung concluded, the girls shared "etiologic conditions," a way to suppose the existence of a collective unconscious and to interpret details as symptoms of a deeper trouble. Oppenheim and Jung's heritage is a burden: all of the media must struggle against popular falsehood, that is, rumor, and all rumors are suspected of carrying a second message to decipher.

### THE MODERN CONCEPT OF RUMOR

However, the canonic model of rumor diffusion was still to come. One of the touchstones of the *modern concept* is diffusion control, and its father is Gordon Allport, a former student of Stern and one of the most prominent social psychologists in the United States. When World War II began, the army engaged Allport officially in monitoring and enhancing American civilian morale. He proposed using rumor as a thermometer. The hidden goal was to monitor the penetration of propaganda the enemy broadcast over short-wave radio (Kishler et al. 1968). Allport also created rumor clinics, with civilians, police officers, and war correspondents in charge of debunking rumors and Nazi propaganda and publishing the official results in the syndicated columns of the biggest newspapers in the country (→ Propaganda in World War II). Rumors became identified as enemy matter.

After the war, Allport and one of his Harvard colleagues, Leo Postman, published two articles that met with instant success, even if some of their findings are highly questionable (Allport & Postman 1947). For example, they assert a *basic law of rumor* ( $R \sim i \times a$ ), where the quantity of rumors in circulation ( $R$ ) depends on the importance of the news ( $i$ ) and the ambiguity of the evidence ( $a$ ), a formulation of common sense at once alarming for its positivism and impossible to measure for any of its proposed terms.

Following the same tack, they propose a *generalization of the rumor formula* capable of describing a *basic course of distortion*: rumors travel, they say, with *three biases* – leveling, sharpening, and assimilation – losing most of their details, recomposing themselves from only certain aspects, and associating their meanings with pre-existing prejudices and stereotypes. If these mechanisms were obvious in the laboratory (the book includes 17 extensive experiments; → Experiment, Laboratory), they have become obsolete in life. Some of the most important rumors, like the 1969 report that Paul McCartney of the Beatles pop group was secretly dead, behaved nothing like what Allport and Postman described (Rosnow 1991). Even the endeavors to see rumor as an alternative mode of communication, in Africa in particular, tend to demonstrate the contrary (Ekambo 1985).

If rumors diffuse among informal and auxiliary channels, such as word of mouth, clubs, or other circles (Shibutani 1966; → Communication Networks; Organizational

Communication), they travel as well among formal ones, such as media and official statements, which may have more effect on audiences. Research focuses on informal channels and cognitive factors, because these resemble the popular idea of rumor. But rare → case studies do show the importance of media, the most-quoted source of rumor (Kapferer 1989; → Risk Communication). The media, and journalists particularly, diffuse rumors on four types of occasions: when they are abused by rumor; when they try to refute it; when they do special coverage of rumors; or when rumors play a part in movies or television scenarios (→ Fictional Media Content).

Folklorists and ethnologists have led the latest evolution in rumor research during the last 30 years. To the idea of rumor as a diffusion process, they add that extensive traditional and cultural background is necessary for the hearer to understand a rumor (→ Storytelling and Narration; Suspension of Disbelief; Popular Communication). Contemporary legends often share narrative characteristics with rumors. Rumor studies, which emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century, have grown more complex, including research fields other than law or journalism.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Case Studies ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Culture and Communication, Ethnographic Perspectives on ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Discourse, Cognitive Approaches to ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Fictional Media Content ▶ Journalism ▶ Memory, Person ▶ News ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Perceived Reality as a Social Process ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Small Talk and Gossip ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Suspension of Disbelief ▶ Uncertainty and Communication

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# Rural Development

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Rural development was the almost exclusive focus of the early development of communication endeavors in the 1950s. The focus was on economic outcomes and, to a great extent, the emphasis was placed on agriculture, with some attention to how the mass media (radio and print at first, then television from the 1960s) could improve the lives of rural populations in literacy, education, health, and community development. The early projects of communication for rural development, sponsored by such multilateral aid agencies as → UNESCO and bilateral programs like Point Four in the US, were influenced by academic writings on development like → Daniel Lerner's → modernization theory, → Wilbur Schramm's policy strategy, and → Everett Rogers's diffusion paradigm (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). The focus on rural development, however, began to shift in the 1970s when specific areas like education, telecommunications, agriculture, health, and nutrition took attention away from rural development more broadly (→ Health Communication; Health Campaigns, Communication in). In recent years, less project attention has been devoted to agriculture and education and more has gone to health and telecommunications as issues in rural development. In the early years of the new century, rural development has re-emerged in the form of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, centered on the reduction of global poverty, which is often more concentrated in rural areas. Development communication has again been identified as a potential factor in the accomplishment of these goals.

## CHANGING CONTEXTS: 1950 TO THE PRESENT

Rural development as a concept has changed significantly in four areas over the past 50 or so years. First, there was a *steady decline in the percentages of people living in rural areas* between 1950 and 2005 (71 percent to 51 percent; UN Population Division 2005) even though overall population growth has increased in absolute numbers from 2.5 billion to 6.5 billion. National social policies focus more often on urban problems, as that is the growth trend for almost all countries. Populations left behind in rural areas are largely made up of agricultural workers who are relatively worse off than those in urban areas but whose problems are given less attention. The very critical situation of these populations helps to foment continuing migration to urban areas, and often to other countries, as legal and illegal immigrants. The relative prosperity of urban areas in comparison with rural ones causes not only migration problems, but also political ones for national governments.

The second change in context is a much *more sophisticated set of communication technologies* that connect rural populations to urban information centers. Radio was the first major technology to reach rural areas, especially after the diffusion of cheap transistorized radios (→ Radio for Development). Because of literacy barriers, print has remained of limited importance for the majority of rural populations. A number of educational television projects were initiated in the 1960s and 1970s, many for rural

populations, but most were discontinued for both political and economic reasons (McAnany et al. 1983; → Television for Development; Educational Media). Communication satellites began commercial operation in 1965 and were quickly touted for their potential contributions for development (Hudson 1990), but their potential is for carrying the content of other media like radio, television, or the → Internet (→ Satellite Television). The Internet is the latest in the technologies to be incorporated into rural projects, although its complexity, the literacy demands, and the costs make its applications limited. Radio, one of the oldest of the mass media, still holds the best promise for development communication in rural areas (Jamison & McAnany 1978; Sposato & Smith 2005).

The third change is a shift in aid policy that places more emphasis on the *work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs)* in rural areas, and encourages the participation of people in their own development. Another important change has been the recognition of the role of women, not only in the caretaking roles of family health and nutrition, but also in the central roles of agricultural production and marketing, which had been thought of as a male domain.

The fourth change has been in the *theories of communication for development*, from the early Lerner vision of media's central role in individual modernization to today's theories of participation and social change (→ Participatory Communication). In one sense, the change recognizes the centrality of people's participation in comparison to the role of technology in rural development. Still no theory completely discounts the importance of information and communication technologies. The current call for social change as an integral part of development communication (Gumucio-Dagron & Tufte 2006) echoes interests of the earliest pioneers of development communication. Even though the theories have shifted from a functionalist-behaviorist model to a social participation and political-economic one, the ultimate goal of improved life chances for the rural poor remains. A brief review of theories of development communication demonstrates how theory led to different kinds of applications for the rural poor.

## THEORIES

Daniel Lerner has most often been credited with proposing a theory of communication in development. His *modernization theory* argued for the significant individual consequences of exposure to radio by rural audiences in the Middle East, and a psychological change of traditional world views and values to a more empathetic, modern individual open to change. The critique of this model came from those who argued that the problem was not so much in the traditions but in the structural constraints for social change. Schramm soon incorporated Lerner and other social-change theorists into a call for an increase in media investments by developing countries to provide the magic multipliers of information. Rogers had developed his *original diffusion model* based on research on the application of agricultural innovations by US farmers. In the 1960s he applied this model to experiments in three developing countries, and it was widely adopted by agricultural agencies worldwide. In the 1970s there was a reaction in Latin America and elsewhere against all three approaches as being overly optimistic and not accounting for the structural and political barriers to communication for social change (→ Development Communication: Latin America).

Some of the first *critical voices* raised, questioning the original premises of development communication, were from diffusion researchers like Luis Ramiro Beltran and Juan Diaz Bordenave in Latin America, and Nels Roling and Joseph Ascroft in Africa, who began to question the equity of innovation benefits in rural agriculture. There were also questions raised about the viability of the whole development communication and modernization paradigm, an early critique by Golding (1974) being typical.

*Dependency* was a Latin American critique of classical development theory that had communication applications emphasizing the ideological effect of capitalist-owned media (Armand Mattelart and Beltran were among these authors; → Dependency Theories). The critical tradition placed an emphasis on the political economy of media that continues into the present with the added focus on the role of globalization of media ownership and ideological effects among developing-country audiences (→ Political Economy of the Media). Much of this work has been identified with → Cultural Imperialism Theories (of which Herbert Schiller was a main proponent), which see the media as undermining national and ethnic cultures and values. Even though there has been an ongoing counterattack against these theories, begun by John Tomlinson (1991), there remains a popular nationalist sentiment that there are cultural threats from foreign media (→ Globalization of the Media). Rural audiences are less exposed to external cultural influence, but even so there is a threat of internal imperialism by urban cultures that dominate the production of media content in large cities to be transmitted to rural audiences. The real problem, however, is about voice rather than medium. How can rural people have a voice in their own development and in their own culture (→ Access to the Media)?

The third phase of communication development began to ask how people could *participate in their own development* when they did not create the messages. An early articulation of participation was O'Sullivan and Kaplun (1978), who argued that real development could only happen when the grassroots people were involved in communication projects. Later participation theorists argued for different cultures to derive their own models of development based on needs defined by communities themselves (→ Participatory Action Research). Others argued that true participation would enhance democratic values and most of all empower individuals and communities (see Melkote & Steves [2001] for a recent overview).

A final approach used in rural development for a variety of purposes is an approach called → *Entertainment Education*, which promotes change through educational messages embedded in a variety of entertainment formats. This has been best articulated through the research of Singhal and Rogers (1999). It has been adapted to the → soap opera format on radio and television by a number of health and other social programs for rural as well as urban areas. Although there are a variety of theories and paradigms in communication for rural development, the overriding question in their application is: do they work to improve people's lives?

## METHODS OF MEASURING SUCCESS

One of the challenges for development communication is to show people that it works. The evaluation of projects inspired by different theories and paradigms is embodied in a

variety of methodologies. The earliest approaches of Lerner, Schramm, and Rogers all shared a common communication effects/behavior model that tried to measure media exposure and individual impacts on knowledge, attitudes, and practice (the famous “KAP” formulation for evaluation of outcomes; → Media Effects, History of). Lerner’s modernization theory used → survey and national population data in → correlational analysis that was difficult to replicate. Rogers’s diffusion research was based on a quantitative model developed in the US to measure agricultural production, but more importantly the time of adoption and the characteristics of the adopters to measure the degree of their innovativeness. The critique by some early third-world researchers was not so much methodological, but that the model showed up inequalities among farmers: those better off benefited more and increased the gaps among groups. The Entertainment–Education paradigm follows the effects model but adds some qualitative data.

The common methodology of most of the critical researchers was political economy, also largely quantitative, which often measured the structure of media ownership, numbers of programs and sometimes audience figures (→ Audience Research). The ideological aspect was usually limited to content analysis of messages but with no data on audience impacts (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). The inference was that the author’s analysis of the content was sufficient to reach a conclusion about impacts on audiences. In terms of providing data on ownership, content, and exposure, the data was and still is accepted as evidence for potential influence on audiences, but without some evidence about how audiences interpret the messages and what consequences can be shown for attitudes and behaviors, an important question remains unanswered.

The participatory communication approaches have mostly used qualitative methods to answer evaluation questions (→ Qualitative Methodology). Qualitative data is sometimes better suited to answer questions about empowerment, gender, politics, efficacy, etc., which are often part of project goals. There are several problems with collecting and using this data to demonstrate success, none intrinsic to the methodology itself. First, many funding agencies do not accept the data as valid and demand quantitative outcome data. Second, research designs are often not carefully planned and the data does not convince. Third, the goals of some participatory communication projects, like empowerment, are long term (→ Media Effects Duration) and the data-gathering period is short term. Finally, since qualitative data by its nature requires more patent interpretation, outside funders and agencies question the bias of researchers.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Audience Research ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Dependency Theories ▶ Development Communication: Latin America ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Educational Media ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Action Research ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Schramm, Wilbur ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Survey ▶ Television for Development ▶ UNESCO



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## **Russia: Media System**

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The Russian Federation is a 17.1 million km<sup>2</sup> territory, on which a population of 146 million is unevenly distributed. It has borders with 14 countries in Europe and Asia. Russia is a federal republic comprised of 88 federal administrative units subordinate to the central government. Russia is divided into seven federal regions headed by plenipotentiaries appointed by the president. Russia is a parliamentary democracy. The bicameral Federal Assembly consists of the Federation Council (members appointed for each of 88 federal administrative units) and the State Duma (450 members elected every four years by proportional representation from party lists (50 percent) and from single-member constituencies (50 percent)). The major political parties are Yedinaya Rossiya (Unified Russia), the Communist Party, the SPS (Union of Right-Wing Forces), and the nationalist Liberal-Democratic Party.

The official language is Russian but the population is comprised of various ethnic groups speaking more than 70 languages between them. The major religions are Russian Orthodox Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. The economic situation remains uneven despite Russia's rich natural resources. The disintegration and strong autonomy of regions hinder economic progress, and Russian political leaders have made strong efforts to consolidate regional markets into one economy.

## HISTORICAL STAGES OF THE RUSSIAN MEDIA SYSTEM

The development of the Russian media has been traditionally controlled by the political elite. The first print newspaper, *Vedomosty*, was set up in 1703 by Peter the Great. His grand-daughter Catherine the Great edited a magazine, but later suppressed liberal publications. In the nineteenth century Russian journalism developed disproportionately. The existence of → censorship hindered the progress of newspapers (→ Censorship, History of). Until the reform of 1865 literary → magazines dominated, and private → newspapers operated only in St Petersburg and Moscow (→ Magazine, History of; Newspaper, History of). Regional newspapers started to develop in the 1850s and 1860s, but they were subordinated to governors' offices. In 1880 the number of newspapers outnumbered that of magazines. After the first Russian revolution in 1905, numerous political parties and their newspapers began to operate legally, although formal censorship still existed. Press freedom was legally introduced only in April 1917, in the course of the bourgeois revolution (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). In the Soviet period, from 1917, the media were used instrumentally to promote the dominant communist ideology and to create unanimity of a society (→ Propaganda).

The dominant structure of the Soviet media was a pyramid hierarchy, which subordinated all media to Moscow. This pyramid was controlled by the Communist Party and the state, thus safeguarding political accuracy. Media content was watched by representatives of Glavlit, the special Soviet censorship agency. This produced an informal system of self-censorship, which still affects Russian journalism today (→ Party Political Communication). Radical changes in the Soviet media started immediately after Mikhail Gorbachev began, in 1985, to promote the goals of his policies, such as acceleration (in economy), "perestroika" (in social life) and "glasnost" (in the media). Although it resulted in revolutionary changes in the media and society as a whole, "glasnost" was a variation of the late Soviet media policy with a clear instrumental character (Paasilinna 1995).

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian media were radically restructured. Print media were no longer distributed nationally, while national TV channels captured the central place in the media system. *The first stage* of transformation of the Russian media system (1990–1993) was characterized by president Yeltsin's fight to free the media from the control of the USSR central authorities. Two laws, the *Soviet Law On Press and Other Mass Media* and the *Russian Law On Mass Media*, laid down new foundations for media activity. The *second stage* of transformation (1994–1995) was mainly associated with the privatization of print media and partly denationalization of the national TV. In the *third stage* (1995–1996), media activity was shaped by the necessity to ensure the re-election of Yeltsin.

The *fourth stage* of development (1996–1999) was characterized by safeguarding the existing status quo of the media. The principal role of the executive in media regulation and the dominance of state-run media became the main features. The *next stage* started after parliamentary (1999) and presidential (2000) elections with the strengthening of influence from the government and the president. Official statements were made about the eventual withdrawal of the state from the media industry in order to foster fair competition and secure equal conditions for all media companies. However, the political elite intensified its efforts to more efficiently determine → media policy. The *dichotomy between etatism and the market-driven economy* became the most crucial characteristic of the Russian media system (Nordenstreng et al. 2002).

The modern development of the media was strongly determined by economic factors. It took about a decade for the Russian media to realize the economic role of → advertising. The economic significance of advertising for the media became evident in the late 1990s, but a financial crisis in 1998 slowed down its growth. Since then, the progress of the media market has been connected with the improvement of the economic situation in Russia. Since the year 2000, the most popular form of media among advertisers has been → television. Still, the advertising market is immature, and no more than 0.5 percent (0.8 percent of GNP) is spent on advertising (→ Advertising, Economics of). Audiences became another key driving force for restructuring the media. By the year 2000, they had demonstrated a decrease of interest in political media that resulted in the rise of entertainment programs (→ Exposure to News; Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking).

### NORMATIVE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The first *Russian Federation Law on Mass Media* (1991) reinforced inadmissibility of censorship and guaranteed → freedom of information. The main thrusts of the law are also included in the Russian constitution (1993), which guarantees freedom of speech and bans censorship. These rights can be limited only by (federal) law, and only in the interests of protecting the constitution, morality, or for the defense of national security.

After 1991 several attempts were made to introduce *limiting amendments* (restrictions on violence and pornography on television, and on the role of the media in covering terrorist attacks), but the Law on Mass Media has not undergone any significant changes (→ Pornography, Media Law on; Violence as Media Content; Mediated Terrorism). Russia is still lacking a broadcasting law, although draft laws were actively discussed in the 1990s. Broadcasting is under the direct control of the president and is regulated by presidential decrees and government orders. Licensing regulations date from 1994 and 1999. The authorized broadcast licensing body is the Federal Service for Monitoring Compliance with Legislation on Mass Communications and Protection of Cultural Heritage, a separate entity in the Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of).

Self-regulation exists in the form of the Professional Code adopted by the Union of Journalists and codes of professional associations (National Association of Broadcasters, Russian Association of Advertising Agencies; → Journalists: Professional Associations). In 2005, the Public Board for Press Complaints was established by the Russian Union of Journalists. The Board examines complaints filed by readers, listeners and viewers,

regarding breach of professional ethics and standards of conduct (→ Self-Regulation of the Media).

## PRINT MEDIA

Newspapers have lost the central position in the national media system, but play an important role on the local market. The number of titles increased significantly from 4,863 (in 1991) to 5,758 (in 2000), but the newspaper circulation as a whole radically dropped from 160.2 million to 108.8 million (a decrease of 67.9 percent), with the share of nationally distributed newspapers falling down to 36 percent (Russian Press Market 2006). The Russian newspaper system is comprised of national, republic, regional, city, rural district, lower-level (lower than city or district), and other (mostly free non-daily sheets) newspapers. National newspapers are distributed mostly by subscription; the role of retail is essential only in big cities.

Moscow newspapers *Moskovsky Komsomolets* (daily circulation: 1.4 million), *Komsomolskaya Pravda* (756,000), and *Izvestiya* (234,500) safeguarded popularity outside the capital by producing inserts in cooperation with regional dailies. These dailies elaborated specific content strategies close to sensational journalism (→ Sensationalism). The position of quality newspapers is more problematic. *Kommersant Daily* (circulation of 86,000) or *Nezavisimaja gazeta* (50,000) cannot compete with local tabloids or nationally distributed mass circulation dailies.

The most popular Russian newspapers are national weekly *Argumenty i F акты* (circulation of 3 million), weekend editions of *Komsomolskaya pravda* (2.8 million), and *Trud* (1.6 million). Among quality weekly magazines, leaders are *Itogy* (85,000), *Expert* (75,000), and *Kommersant Vlast'* (73,500), which target educated and well-paid readers. The Russian press market is divided into quality dailies, mostly business-oriented, and popular newspapers that obviously follow the trends of tabloidization (→ Tabloidization).

The degree of concentration on the print media market is rather low. "Prof-Media," a media affiliate of the oil company LukOil, owns more than 40 newspapers and magazines, TV channels in Rostov, Norilsk, several radio stations, numerous Internet sites, and a business news agency. The combined readership of its outlets has exceeded 25 million. German publishing house Burda has a combined readership of about 23 million, and *Argumenty i F акты* company has more than 19 million (Russian Press Market 2006). A unique media owner is the Russian state, completely or partly controlling 300 national, regional, and local TV companies and 2,140 print media (15 percent of all print media titles). The central government owns *Rossiiskaya gazeta*, *ITAR-TASS* news agency, and *VGTRK* broadcasting company (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

In terms of popular magazines, the publications most in demand are illustrated TV guides: *7 dnei* (with a distribution of 1 million), *Antenna* (486,963), *TV park* (298,000), and *Tsvetnoi televizor* (162,000). Among women's magazines, *Liza* (90,000), a weekly with a mixture of practical advice for working females, cookbook summaries, and fashion patterns, is the most popular. Glossy magazines represent a comparatively small but vigorous sector of the magazine industry. The German company Burda and Finnish-owned company Independent Media have adapted international periodicals like *Burda moden*, *Playboy*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Harper's bazaar*, and *Cosmopolitan*.

## RADIO

About 85 percent of adult Russians listen to the → radio every day. In 2005 radio was listened to mostly at home, in work offices, and in cars. The statistics for the radio industry are not precise; in 2005, however, 1,002 licenses for radio broadcasting were issued. No more than 500 were operated; of them 143 were municipal and non-commercial and 391 were commercial stations (→ Exposure to Radio; Radio: Social History).

The present structure of the radio industry involves a mixture of state and private channels. Two state-owned stations – *Radio Rossiya*, received by 66 percent of the population, and *Mayak* (55 percent) – maintain the position of major national channels. Their universal technical accessibility is the main reason for their popularity. In the sector of commercial radio, commercial networks play a significant role. The success of the *Russkoye radio* network (257 local stations) is ensured mostly by music programming that rests upon Russian pop and light music. The network has risen as the third national radio channel (reaching 45 percent of the population), and *Evropa plus* has become the fourth (43 percent). In big cities, commercial music radio stations have succeeded because of increased professionalism in developing formats and establishing relations with both advertisers and listeners. Other stations gained popularity among specific audiences positioning themselves as sources of specialized programs like women's radio (*Nadezhda*), drivers' radio (*Avtoradio*), or religious channels (*Radonezh*). A major network that dominates the radio segment is the *Rousskaja mediagruppa*, the owner of *Russkoye radio*.

## TELEVISION

About 94 percent of Russians watch television every day. Almost all Russian households (99 percent) have at least one television set, about two thirds have color sets, but 45 percent still possess black-and-white sets. The number of broadcast licenses issued by authorities in 2006 was 14,290. However, there is no reliable data on the number of TV stations operating on the market. Major national TV channels are transmitted from Moscow via terrestrial networks and satellites. Satellite earth stations provide access to *Intelsat*, *Intersputnik*, *Eutelsat*, *Inmarsat*, and *Orbita* systems.

The core of the national television market is comprised of nine channels available to more than 50 percent of the population. There are three federal channels – the *First Channel*, with mixed state–private ownership, the state *Rossija*, and the private *NTV* – three national private television networks – *CTC*, *Ren-TV*, and *TNT* – and two regional channels with national distribution – state-owned *Kultura* and the Moscow municipal *TVC*. Regardless of ownership structures, Russian television is financed primarily by advertising and sponsorship.

Russian television is a mixture of two models: the state-controlled and the strictly commercial. The concept of public-service broadcasting was not considered until recently, because of the control of the integrated political-business elite on TV. The state formally or informally remains the major actor in the TV sector. By operating the VGTRK company, the state has got complete control over two nationally distributed TV channels – *Rossija* and *Kultura* – and radio channels *Radio Rossiya*' and *Mayak* (more than 50 percent

shares). VGTRK also includes a network of 80 regional television stations and 100 centers for transmission of broadcast signals. Another important player, Gazprom Media, the owner of NTV and TVT, is an affiliate of the state-owned Gazprom company that helps the state to informally control the management of private TV channels.

Leading private channels operate as television networks, and *Ren-TV*, *CTC*, and *TNT* have formed alliances with local stations targeted at joint programming and advertising (→ Television Networks). Although they are financially independent from the state, they do not provide any serious alternatives to → political news on state-controlled TV, since they pursue purely commercial programming strategies based on entertainment. The national status of the two top channels is secured by their technical availability. The *First Channel* is available to 98 percent of Russians, and *RTR* to 95 percent. However, the popularity of channels varies: in 2005, shares of the *First Channel* represented 22.9 percent, closely followed by *Rossija* (22.6 percent), NTV (11.2 percent), and CTC (10.3 percent).

In terms of *programming*, competition for viewers among major channels is especially intense among evening news and current-affairs programs. The growing popularity of feature genres, cultural and non-political programs, and Russian drama and serials, compared to political programs in the early days of the “glasnost,” has made television an essential part of the Russian leisure industry and marked the revelation of the global trend toward television → infotainment (Rantanen 2002). The only channel that carries noncommercial programs (high culture, classical films, quality documentaries, classical music) is state-run *Kultura*. By including Euronews shows in its programming schedule, *Kultura* has come close to the idea of public service in TV.

Cable television began to develop after 1990 (→ Cable Television). In recent years state and municipal authorities have issued 258 licenses for cable TV networks, 18 for satellite transmission (→ Satellite Television), and 20 for combined air and cable operations. Statistics also show that there are 3,000 relatively large cable companies operating and delivering programs to nearly 12 million households. Penetration of satellite TV is fairly low, not exceeding 8 percent of the population. Two leading companies, satellite *NTV Plus* (owned by Gazprom) and cable and Internet *Stream TV* (owned by Sistema-Multimedia and linked to the Moscow City Government), offer packages of terrestrial and their own channels, but are available mostly in Moscow and a few big cities.

Minor cable and satellite operators offer Russian-language programs and popular international channels like → *CNN*, → *BBC World Service*, *Euronews*, *Discovery*, *Cartoon Channel*, etc. From the year 2000, Russian niche channels distributed via cable and satellite channels developed in numbers and scope, varying from business channel *RBK-TV* to women’s channel *TDK-TV*, from Orthodox channel *Spas* to old movies on *Nostalgia-TV*.

## INTERNET

The Russian → Internet began to develop between 1993 and 1997, when the number of users doubled each year. In 2006, the maximum number of Russian Internet users stood close to 22 million (about 12 percent of the population). The progress of the Internet initially took place in big cities, especially in Moscow, but in recent years the inequality of geographical regions has been steadily decreasing. Now residents of Moscow and St

Petersburg represent less than one third of Russian users. In 2006, the share of female users was almost 50 percent. Most users are still educated and better-paid men (between 20 and 35 years old): state officials, politicians, businessmen, students, and school children (→ Exposure to the Internet; Digital Divide). The Internet in Russia is the most open medium, thus closely corresponding to the concept of public sphere, regardless of some unsuccessful attempts by the Russian state to introduce special legislation into the field.

There are more than 180,000 sites in the Russian-language sector of the Internet, Runet. Several popular newspapers, like the *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, were already exploring the Internet in 1994. The first online media projects were started by literary post-modernist writers who launched the *Russkii Zhurnal*. Currently the most popular online sources are *RBK.ru*, *Gazeta.ru*, *List.ru*, *Lenta.ru*, and *Polit.ru*. Major political parties and official state agencies also operate numerous sites, but a diversity of political and cultural views is created by the Internet presence of many oppositional voices.

### FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEDIA

The Russian media system differs substantially from western European ones in a number of features, due to the influences from politics and the professional traditions of Soviet journalism and literature. The rationale for this might be the geopolitical position of Russia and the multiethnic and multicultural character of Russian society. The pressures of the authoritarian traditions of Imperial and Soviet Russia also play a role. The Russian media can be seen as a synergy of western – mostly European and North American – and Asian elements, and regarded as transitional and Eurasian.

Several points distinguish the Russian media from European and Asian counterparts. First, the Russian media are subject to pressures from those who influence the media system as a whole. Second, in “Eurasian” media there exists a strong belief in the regulatory role of the state shared by players on the media scene. This explains the traditional ignorance of market-driven logic and societal initiatives at grassroot level. Top-down media policy is another consequence of this attitude. This gives a firm basis for the etatist mentality embedded in the “Eurasian media model” (De Smaele 1999). Third, a Eurasian media model is affected by conflicting multiethnic, multiconfessional, and multicultural interests where values of modernization and knowledge confront paternalistic mentality of journalists and audiences. Unevenness of economic wealth reflected by unequal access to ITCs is another indicator of the “Eurasian” media. The complexity of the model is also reflected in the lack of commonly shared journalistic professional values and the dangers that still exist for professionals working in the field of investigative and critical journalism. Since 1992, 179 journalists have been killed in Russia, including Anna Politkovskaya in October 2006 (→ Violence against Journalists).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ CNN ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Exposure to Radio ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Journalists:

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## Sampling, Nonrandom

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Nonrandom sampling, also called “nonprobabilistic” or “nonprobability sampling,” is any sampling method in which the process that determines whether a member of the population is selected for inclusion in the sample is guided by a nonchance or nonrandom process. Such nonrandom processes can include the investigator choosing who to include in the sample, advertising a study to find participants, or other methods of seeking participants in such a way that whoever is approached, recruited, or selected cannot be described by some kind of random mechanism.

Nonrandom sampling methods are often perceived as inferior to random sampling methods (→ Sampling, Random), and it has been said that their frequent use in communication research renders the field a “prescience” rather than a mature science (Potter et al. 1993). Such a condemnation is too harsh, as nonrandom sampling can be an entirely effective and highly practical way of recruiting participants for a research study, and not a requirement for the application of the principles of scientific investigation (Sparks 1995). But the researcher needs to be well aware of the restrictions on the kinds of inferences that can be made when sampling nonrandomly. Namely, population inference is nearly impossible when a study is based on a nonrandom sample, as the sample is very likely to be unrepresentative of the population the investigator is interested in studying. Furthermore, when sampling nonrandomly, some statistical concepts such as sampling error and confidence intervals have little to no meaning or application to the interpretation of research results. Nevertheless, nonrandom sampling methods have their place in the field.

### CONVENIENCE SAMPLING

A common method – perhaps even the dominant method – of sampling in some camps of communication scholarship is “convenience sampling,” also known as “haphazard sampling” or “opportunistic sampling.” Convenience sampling is, just as its name implies, the inclusion of members of a population in a sample because those members are conveniently available to the researcher and thus easy to find or recruit. The most common instantiation of this sampling method is the use of college students enrolled in an investigator’s class, or perhaps majors in his or her department taking courses taught by a colleague.

Other forms include approaching people who just happen to be passing by the researcher when he or she is in data-collection mode, or the use of “subject pools” – pools of students who are required to participate in studies as a course requirement or for extra credit. Or a content analyst (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative), interested in describing the kinds of appeals ordinary citizens use when attempting to persuade, might restrict his or her search for such editorials by looking only in his or her local newspaper, the newspapers of nearby communities, or those available in the local public library (i.e., newspapers that are easy to find and collect).

One *danger of the use of convenience sampling* is the possibility that the investigator might, knowingly or unknowingly, end up restricting the sampling in such a way that precludes or reduces the likelihood of observing certain measurements on the variables being measured. For instance, a researcher who was studying sex differences in shyness might tend to approach people to fill out a → survey on shyness who appear to be outgoing, friendly, and willing to cooperate, thus reducing the likelihood of including shy people in the sample. Alternatively, a content analysis of newspaper content might end up including only conservative newspapers in a convenience sample if the analyst lives in a region of the country that tends to be highly conservative in its political leanings.

### QUOTA SAMPLING

If a researcher decides he or she wants to make sure that certain groups are included in a sample in sufficient numbers for research purposes, then quota sampling might be used. Quota sampling is essentially nonrandom stratified sampling. With random stratified sampling, the population is broken into subpopulations that are homogeneous on the stratification variable prior to randomly sampling each stratum. But with quota sampling, each stratum would not be randomly sampled, and there may not be any attempt to develop or define the population prior to sampling. Instead, the investigator would recruit participants with the only goal of making sure that the desired number of participants is recruited from each stratum, regardless of how obtained. Once the desired sample size (the “quota”) in a given stratum is achieved, sampling from that stratum would terminate. From that point forward, all sampling would focus only on those strata for which the quota has not yet been met.

Consider a quota sample of members of an academic association, with the goal of making sure the sample contains a certain number of members at various academic ranks. Rather than randomly sampling lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and full professors, a quota sample could be obtained by contacting 100 members from each of these groups (the strata) without making any kind of attempt to do so randomly. For instance, the membership could be contacted by email, and the first 100 members of each group to reply would be included in the sample. Alternatively, someone could be stationed at the registration desk at a conference with instructions to approach conference attendees with the goal of getting 100 conference participants from each of these four strata to respond to a survey. If 100 assistant professors are successfully recruited before the other groups, then no more assistant professors would be included in the sample, and sampling would focus on filling the quota for the remaining groups.

Quota sampling could also be used to *sample entities other than people*. For instance, a researcher might want to collect a sample of advertisements published in men's magazines with the goal of comparing ad content to those published in women's magazines. The goal might be to get 200 ads from each category of magazines. The investigator might go to the local bookstore and purchase a bunch of magazines of both types, scan through them, and include the first 200 found in each magazine type.

Quota sampling is a good way to ensure that members from various sub-groups of a population end up in the sample, but the costs in terms of nonrepresentativeness resulting from biases in the recruiting process can be severe. Another danger of quota sampling exists when the sample is built over a long period of time. For instance, if one were to quota sample members of various political parties over a year-long period to assess attitudes toward various government policies, then attitudes and group membership may be spuriously correlated if the quota for sampling one of the groups is achieved very early in the sampling process and attitudes are shifting over time. For some interesting comparisons and discussions of the results of quota sampling compared to other methods, see Curtice & Sparrow (1997), Lynn & Jowell (1996), and Worcester (1996).

### **VOLUNTEER SAMPLING**

Researchers sometimes make a public call in search of participants for a research study. An example would be advertising in a newspaper, or sending an email to a listserv requesting people to participate. Those who respond to the ad or email would then be included in the sample. There are companies in the business of providing volunteer samples to researchers, such as access to email addresses of people who have agreed to participate in online surveys in exchange for some kind of incentive or reward. This method of sampling, known as "volunteer sampling," can be used to extend the reach of a researcher who might otherwise be inclined to use a convenience sample of some kind. For instance, rather than recruiting students from a single college class, the investigator could send an email to a database of students enrolled at the investigator's university, or advertise the study in the student newspaper.

Like other nonrandom sampling methods, volunteer sampling typically produces ambiguity about the representativeness of the sample to some broader population of interest, as there is the real possibility that those who volunteer to participate in a given study differ from those who do not volunteer in ways that might influence their behavior in the study, responses to questions on surveys, and so forth. Indeed, there is evidence that people who volunteer to participate in research studies differ from nonvolunteers in personality, interests, and other things that can reduce the generalizability of the findings away from the group of people who volunteered (Rosenthal & Rosnow 1975).

Although volunteer sampling is frequently discussed (as it is here) as a distinct form of sampling, in fact, virtually all methods of sampling of human beings can be construed to some extent as a form of volunteer sampling because we cannot force people to participate in research studies. A person ending up providing data to a researcher is typically the result of him or her volunteering to participate, regardless of the mechanism that resulted in him or her being solicited in the first place.

## NETWORK SAMPLING

A researcher might have an interest in sampling a population whose members are small in number, difficult to locate, or perhaps unreachable by any of the methods described thus far. For example, there may not be a readily available list of intravenous drug users, or people suffering from depression, from which a random sample can be drawn, and the investigator may not have convenient access to sufficient numbers from such populations. But if it is possible to find even one member of such a population, network sampling can be used to construct a decent, albeit nonrandom sample of sufficient size for empirical study.

With network sampling, once one or two members from the population are located and solicited for participation in a study, they can be used to help *recruit others from this population through their social network*. Network sampling is based on the principle that individuals with a certain background, certain characteristics, habits, or life circumstances are likely to know others who share such features. For instance, suppose an investigator wants to sample pregnant women for a study of prenatal advice-giving by friends. Pregnant women are likely to know or come into frequent contact with other pregnant women as a result of attending prenatal classes, visits to the obstetrician, and so forth. If a couple of pregnant women can be recruited, the investigator can request that they spread the word about the study throughout their social network, communicating the study and the need for additional participants. Some kind of reward system could give past participants the motivation to recruit future participants.

Network sampling is also called “*snowball sampling*” because the sample gets built and grows in size over time as new participants are recruited throughout the social network, in much the same way that a snowball rolling down a snow-covered hill would grow in size as it descends. For more information on this and related methods, see Salganik & Heckathorn (2004).

## SCIENTIFIC VALUE OF NONRANDOM SAMPLES

One of the more common criticisms a communication scholar is likely to face by other scientists is poor sampling. Such criticisms typically take the form of skepticism about the → generalizability of the findings reported as a result of a failure to engage in a rigorous sampling of the population of interest. For instance, a researcher who uses a convenience sample of students in his or her class as research participants may be criticized on the grounds that there is little basis for making claims about the processes and effects of human communication by studying adolescents and young adults – a population with various cognitive and personality characteristics that make them distinctive from others not in college or lower in education. Even if the investigator was specifically interested in college students as a population, the criticism could still be lodged that students at the investigator’s university may be different from students at other universities. An argument could be made that students in an investigator’s class are probably not even representative of students at that investigator’s university. And if they were, who cares about such a trivial population anyway?

Ultimately, concerns researchers have about nonrandom samples boil down in one way or another to worries about the possibility of a *hidden moderator of a research finding*.

That is, a relationship a researcher reports between variables measured (or manipulated) may, unbeknownst to the researcher, vary systematically as a function of a third variable. If the people in a sample are overwhelmingly low or high on that third variable – a variable that may not even be measured – the investigator may be reporting an effect that is contingent and would not generalize to a broader population of people who differ from the sample on that third variable. Sears (1986) and Abelman (1996) make the point that the possibility of an important, hidden moderator must loom large in our thinking about the generalizability of research findings from nonrandom samples (student samples in particular). To the extent that a researcher's findings are contingent on a hidden moderator variable that the sample is restricted on, criticisms of research based on nonrandom samples are justified.

But criticizing the use of nonrandom samples is sometimes a knee-jerk reaction to the mismatch between the way that data collection should be done as presented in introductory statistics and research methods books. Communication researchers frequently do not do anything like what is described in most statistics textbooks – taking random samples of well defined populations. If the researcher's goal is population inference, as if he or she were a pollster trying to gauge the sentiment of the public on some topic or issue (→ Public Opinion Polling), nonrandom samples leave a lot to be desired. Similarly, if a content analysis wants to make a claim about the content of a population such as newspaper editorials or news stories about crime published by major newspapers in a given window of time, some attempt to randomly sample content is paramount to sound generalization from sample to population.

But communication researchers are typically motivated by *understanding processes rather than populations*. We seek to understand why relationships exist between variables – the mechanisms that produce associations – and to test theoretical propositions that make predictions about whether relationships between variables exist when an attempt to quantify those associations is made. We conduct studies to see if predicted relationships are found or whether a pattern of associations observed between variables is consistent with a proposed mechanism or theoretical orientation. *Process inference*, rather than population inference, is usually the ultimate goal of the communication researcher (see Frick 1998, Hayes 2005, or Mook 1983, for a detailed discussion of the distinction between process and population inference).

For instance, a researcher might create two interventions in the form of high-school lesson plans designed to increase condom use among high-school boys by systematically manipulating the framing of the message to focus on gains or losses that can result from an unwanted pregnancy. Theory might lead the researcher to expect that one frame might be more effective at changing the attitudes or behavior of the high-school boys who participated in the study. If, indeed, one version of the intervention turns out to be more effective, this gives the researcher some insight into the processes that produced the behavior- or attitude-change among these boys. The researcher may have no particular way of inferring what fraction of high-school boys are likely to be influenced, or whether one advertisement is likely to be more effective on high-school boys as a whole. The goal is simply to see if one intervention works better when it is delivered to a group of high-school boys and, if so, what it is about the processes at work that yields greater effectiveness.

To be clear, research based on nonrandom samples should be heavily scrutinized, just as any research should be. Nonrandom sampling does make it more likely that the sample will be restricted on potential moderators of relationships found, and nonrandom sampling frequently makes it highly ambiguous just what population is being sampled. But we should applaud anyone who makes a good-faith attempt to collect data rather than admonish them for nonrandom sampling, while still holding their feet to the fire to make sure that unwarranted leaps beyond the data are not being made. When process inference rather than population inference is the goal, the shortcomings of nonrandom sampling can be rectified in part through means other than random sampling, such as *replication*. If a research finding is an artifact of sampling method, other researchers (or the original researcher himself or herself) will fail to replicate the finding in future studies. Rather than insisting that communication researchers rely on random samples, why not instead require them to replicate their findings using a different sample from a different population than the original study before publishing those findings? In many ways, the ability to replicate a finding time and again, each time on a different sample from a different population, is a more powerful form of generalization than the population inferences random sampling affords.

SEE ALSO: ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Generalizability ► Public Opinion Polling ► Sampling, Random ► Survey

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# Sampling, Random

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One of the bigger tasks the communication researcher faces is obtaining the data to answer the research question or test the hypothesis that motivated the research in the first place. In the field of communication, data comes primarily from two sources – human beings, or some media form (which, it could be argued, ultimately are produced by human beings, so perhaps these are not distinct sources). Human beings may be asked by a researcher to fill out a survey (→ Survey) or participate in an experiment (→ Experiment, Laboratory). Alternatively, a researcher might seek out political advertisements, newspaper editorials, or speeches to include in a content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative).

Regardless, practical considerations typically require the researcher to limit his or her data collection to a sample drawn from a larger population of interest. For instance, a researcher interested in examining the effectiveness of a communication campaign in reducing unsafe sexual practices among high-school students will not be able to get all high-school students to participate in the study to evaluate its effectiveness. At best, he or she will only be able to get a certain fraction of students who are enrolled in a particular set of high schools, probably in a restricted location of the country, to provide data relevant to studying the effectiveness of the program. Those who participate in the study constitute the sample (those students enrolled in the high schools where data collection occurs) drawn from the broader population of interest (all high school students). Similarly, a content analyst interested in describing themes politicians have used recently in their television campaign advertisements is probably not going to analyze every campaign advertisement produced recently (the population). Instead, he or she may restrict the content analysis to most advertisements that aired during a national network evening news broadcast between 2001 and 2007 (the sample).

## THE NATURE OF SAMPLING

Researchers rarely care much about the sample per se – what particular people in the study say or do, or the content of those advertisements that the investigator happened to content analyze. Instead, researchers are usually interested in making some kind of an inference from the data obtained from the sample – a “generalization” of some sort (→ Generalizability). The inference or generalization often focuses on using information from the sample to infer characteristics of the population that the sample hopefully represents – a “population inference.” For example, the investigator might want to make an inference about the fraction of the kids in the population who would be likely to change their behavior as a result of the communication campaign, or what percentage of advertisements in the population include a fear appeal.

The ability to make a population inference is going to depend in large part on how the sample was obtained, for the method chosen influences how representative the sample is of the population of interest – how similar the sample is to the population on all



dimensions, characteristics, or features that are likely to influence or be related to the measurement of the variables in the study. When population inference is the goal (which it may not be; see Frick 1998; Hayes 2005; Mook 1983; → Sampling, Nonrandom), the researcher is well advised to employ some kind of random sampling method.

Random sampling (also called “probability” or “probabilistic” sampling) requires that the process through which members of the population end up in the sample be determined by chance. Furthermore, for each member of the population, it must be possible to derive the probability of inclusion in the sample (even if you never actually calculate that probability). Random sampling is extremely important when the goal of the research is population inference, for it is the random sampling process that will, over the long haul, produce a sample that represents the population. Although it is possible that, just by chance, a specific sample will be unrepresentative of the population as a whole on one or more relevant dimensions, random sampling ensures that no conscious or unconscious biases the investigator brings into the sampling will influence who ends up included in the sample. This is good, for such biases, when they exist, can limit the generalizability of any study results and limit the ability to make a sound population inference.

### **SIMPLE RANDOM SAMPLING**

The most basic form of random sampling is “simple random sampling.” With a simple random sample, each member of the population must have an equal probability of being included in the sample. In order to conduct a simple random sample, the researcher must have some means of identifying who is in the population in order to implement a method for making sure that each member has an equal chance of being included. Thus, simple random sampling requires that the investigator have some kind of list of the population prior to sampling – the “sampling frame.” An *example of simple random sampling* would be sampling members of the → International Communication Association (ICA) by obtaining a membership list from the headquarters of the association and then randomly selecting names from the list. If there are 3,000 members and you wanted a sample of 100 members, you might assign each member a unique number between 1 and 3,000 and then have a computer randomly select 100 numbers between 1 and 3,000 to identify who to include in the sample.

Many of the statistical methods that communication students learn about in introductory statistics classes and books assume simple random sampling, although simple random sampling is rarely actually done. The *problem with simple random sampling* is that it requires that all members of the population can be identified and enumerated so that a simple random sampling plan can actually be implemented. But for many populations that communication researchers would be interested in sampling from, such lists do not exist. Instead another method of sampling would have to be used. An exception would be media content of certain newspapers, magazines, television shows, or other things that are printed, published, or broadcast regularly and frequently. For example, we know that the *Los Angeles Times* is printed every day. So if we wanted to analyze the content of the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* between 1998 and 2007, it would be possible to

enumerate the days of the year (there are 3,655 days during that period), assign a unique number between 1 and 3,655 to each day, and then use a computer to randomly select a few hundred days (i.e., a few hundred numbers between 1 and 3,655), thereby ensuring that each day has an equal chance of being included in the sample.

## STRATIFIED SAMPLING

There are reasons not to use simple random sampling even when it is possible. For instance, it might be particularly important that you not leave it to chance whether the sample is representative of the population on certain variables that you know are likely to be related to what you are measuring. For example, if the goal is to estimate the average number of peer-reviewed publications of ICA members employed at universities in the US, you can be pretty sure that how many publications a person has is related to his or her academic rank. If you were to collect a simple random sample of ICA members in this population, it is possible that your sample, just by chance, may include assistant professors in greater proportion than they exist in the population, which could lead to a substantial underestimate of the quantity of interest.

To minimize this likelihood, you could conduct a stratified random sample, using academic rank as the stratification variable. When conducting a stratified random sample, the *population is first split into groups* (“strata”) that are homogeneous on the stratification variable. Then a simple random sample of each stratum is taken. So in this example, academic rank would be the stratification variable. The population is then divided up into strata (lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, full professors). A simple random sample of lecturers is then taken, as is a simple random sample of assistant professors, and so forth. The final sample is then constructed by aggregating the simple random samples of each stratum into a single sample.

When collecting a stratified random sample, the sample will contain as many members of population in each stratum as you desire, with that number being a function of whether the stratified sampling is done *proportionally or non-proportionally*. The distinction relates to whether the researcher attempts to sample the strata in proportion to their size in the population. For example, if 75 percent of the members of the population are in stratum A and 25 percent are in stratum B, proportional stratified sampling would require the researcher to apportion to the total sample in such a way that 75 percent of the total sample is taken from members of stratum A and 25 percent is taken from stratum B. By contrast, non-proportional sampling allows the investigator to concentrate the sampling in a manner disproportionate to the population distribution on the stratification variable.

For example, even though 25 percent of the population may be in stratum B, the investigator might intentionally apportion half of the total sample to stratum B. This is called “oversampling,” and can increase estimation precision when oversampled strata are more variable on whatever is being measured compared to the other strata. After the sampling, cases from oversampled strata might then be mathematically underweighted so that cases in the sample from those strata do not “count” as much when deriving the study results statistically, to compensate for their increased likelihood of being included in the sample relative to members of other strata.

## CLUSTER SAMPLING

Both simple and stratified random sampling require a list of the population prior to sampling. For instance, to conduct a simple random sample of ICA members, you would need to have a list of all ICA members. Stratified sampling imposes the additional requirement that each member of the population be placed into one and only one of perhaps several subpopulations defined by the stratification variable. In order for that to happen, information about each member's value on the stratification variable must be available. For example, to stratify by academic rank, you would need to know not only who is a member of ICA, but also each member's academic rank. This information might not be available.

A related method easily confused with stratified sampling is "cluster sampling." To conduct a cluster sample, it must be possible for members of the population to be classified into groups ("clusters") in some fashion. However, there is no requirement, as there is when doing stratified sampling, that these groups be defined by a measured variable (such as academic rank), or even that you know before sampling which members of the population are in which group. Indeed, you do not even need to know how large the population is, so long as each and every member of the population can be said to be a member of one and only one cluster. When you cluster sample, all you need to have available is the universe of clusters. You randomly sample clusters from the universe of clusters, and for those clusters that are randomly selected, you include each and every cluster member in the sample.

For example, suppose you wanted to sample the residents of a multistory apartment building to measure their attitudes about building management. For privacy purposes, the manager of the building might be reluctant to give the names and contact information for everyone living there. But she or he might be comfortable giving you limited access to the building, allowing you to knock on doors and talk to the residents. In the absence of prior information about who lives in the building and how to get in touch with them, you could not collect a simple or stratified random sample. But knowing that the building contains 30 floors, you could treat the floors as clusters, and then randomly select perhaps five floors. Once those five floors are randomly selected (probably through a simple random sample), you then approach everyone who lives on those five floors and include them in the sample. This would produce a bona fide random sample of residents of the building, even though you did not even know the specific identities of members of this population in advance of sampling from it.

A communication researcher interested in sampling the advertising content of newspapers could use cluster sampling quite easily. Perhaps the population is defined as all advertisements published in the *London Times* in 2007. No doubt it would be difficult to obtain a list of all members of this population (i.e., every single advertisement published during this period), making it impossible to conduct a simple random sample or a stratified random sample. But the investigator could easily conduct a random cluster sample, defining each day of the year as a cluster, randomly selecting perhaps 30 days in the calendar year, and then scanning the paper on those days, including every advertisement that appears on those days in the sample. See Lacy et al. (2001) and references cited within for advice on how to approach the sampling of media content.

### RANDOM DIGIT DIALING

The advent of the telephone and its penetration into most households, at least in industrialized countries, has made sampling of people much easier than in the past. By randomly dialing telephone numbers, it is possible to collect random samples of large populations of people who are geographically dispersed. This approach does not require an enumeration of the members of the population in advance of sampling because it relies on the assumption that most people are attached to at least one phone number. Numbers need not be dialed completely randomly, and indeed often are not.

For instance, to sample a particular region of a country, one might restrict the dialing to certain area codes or phone exchanges. And because many phones are not connected to residences, it would be advantageous to do list-assisted random digit dialing by purchasing a list of random phone numbers from a company that has already been culled of numbers that are disconnected or assigned to businesses or fax machines, for instance. Many companies exist that are in the business of constructing specialized lists of phone numbers to sell to researchers interested in sampling populations varying in size and specificity, from entire countries to people with specific occupations or interests.

### MULTISTAGE SAMPLING

In practice, random sampling plans are often “multistage,” mixing sampling methods of different types that are conducted at different stages during the sampling process. For example, a researcher who wanted to collect data by doing face-to-face → interviews of a random sample of urban city dwellers of an entire country would find it very difficult to collect a simple random or stratified sample of that population. Even if it were possible to enumerate the population, it might be cost-prohibitive to travel to the residences of, say, 1,000 different people dispersed across an entire country.

But it might be possible to divide the population up into clusters such as cities, then randomly select cities, perhaps stratified by number of residents (small, medium, and large, defined in some justifiable manner). Once a small number of cities is randomly selected from the population of cities, the researcher could get a residential phone directory for those cities and conduct a simple random sample of pages of each city’s directory. With pages randomly selected, the researcher could then randomly sample phone numbers from those pages that were randomly selected. To reduce the likelihood of excluding people from the sample who are not listed in the phone directory, the researcher might permute the last two digits of the phone numbers randomly selected from each page. Once this is done, calls are made to these numbers to set up a face-to-face interview of whoever answers the phone. As a result of this process, the researcher would not have to travel the entire country, thereby substantially reducing data-collection costs. And yet this approach would produce a bona fide random sample of the entire population of interest (or at least be very close to one).

### CAVEATS OF RANDOM SAMPLING

It is important to acknowledge that even if the selection of members of the population for inclusion in a sample is governed by a random process, *nonrandom processes can adulterate*

*random samples*, and this can disrupt the ability to make an accurate population inference. For instance, an investigator might select a sample of people randomly from a population of interest, but certain people who are approached for inclusion in the study are likely to choose not to participate. The process that drives that choice may not be a random one. An example would be people who have a relatively low level of education being more likely to refuse to participate in the study. This is called “nonresponse bias,” and it is very difficult to avoid entirely. In this case, the sample of people who ultimately provide data to the investigator will over-represent those in the population who are more educated, and that might be very important if the measurement of the variables of interest to the researcher is likely to vary systematically as a function of level of education of the participants. So random sampling does not guarantee a representative sample, although compared to nonrandom sampling methods, it is superior when representativeness is the goal.

When thinking about population inference, it is important to keep in mind whether the *population is dynamic or static*, for this determines how time invariant the inference is. A static population is one that does not change over time, whereas a dynamic population changes over time. For example, the political advertisements broadcast on the major television networks prior to the 2004 presidential election represent a static population both in size and any study-relevant feature one can conceive. The number of these advertisements does not change, and the characteristics of those advertisements that a researcher might be interested in measuring are fixed. But the population of adult citizens of a specific nation is dynamic in size and features. The number of adult citizens of a nation fluctuates in size daily, as people die and adolescents “come of age” and become adults. As the members of a population change, so too will aggregates of the features of this population, some perhaps more than others. It is unlikely that there will be dramatic shifts in time of the distribution of men versus women, for example, in a large dynamic population of people. However, the attitudes of the members of this population may shift considerably with time, some attitudes perhaps more than others.

Inferences about a dynamic population must necessarily be conditioned at least to some extent on the *time the data was collected*. Any pollster (→ Public Opinion Polling) would know, for instance, that one cannot infer much about a politician’s current approval from data collected more than a few weeks prior, as national and world events, even a single event, can move such judgments quickly. Other features of a population, even if dynamic, change much more slowly. It would be fairly safe to infer that if sample data suggests that the population distributes itself equally among a few political parties, for example, that distribution is not likely to shift much in a matter of weeks, months, or perhaps even a year or so. So inferences from “old” data about some features of a population are more reasonably made, even if the population is dynamic on that feature. The point is that random sampling from a dynamic population affords an inference only about the characteristics of that population at the time of data collection. The inference may be ephemeral, depending on what the researcher is measuring and attempting to make an inference about. For a good overview of the details of the methods of random sampling described here, see Stuart (1984).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Generalizability ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Interview ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Survey

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## **Samsung Corporation**

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Samsung Corporation of South Korea has emerged as a new global economic player, currently employing over 66,000 people in some 50 countries worldwide. In 2007 Samsung Electronics, the fastest growing subsidiary of the Samsung Group, had 25 production bases worldwide and 59 branches in 46 countries, in North and South America, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, southeast and central Asia, and China. The multinational corporation, originating from one of the Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs), was ranked 21st among the world's top global brands. Samsung has been grown as a leader in cell phones, home-theater systems, flat-panel TVs, computer screens, and flash memory (Rose 2005). In these consumer electronics categories, the mega-corporation ranked in the top three in the global market.

While Tokyo-based Sony has strived for better integration of its software and electronics businesses, Samsung's key goal has placed itself next to Sony, through concentrating on electronics (→ Sony Corporation). Of most significance among Samsung Corporation's many divisions, Samsung Electronics saw record profits and revenue in 2004–2005 overtaking Sony Corporation. Samsung earned a profit of more than 10 billion USD on sales of 56 billion USD in 2004, whereas Sony's profit was 1.53 billion USD on revenues of 66.9 billion USD in 2005. Samsung's rapid growth as a dominant global player has benefited greatly from its dense linkages to the Korean government, together with Korea's low labor costs, universal broadband Internet access, and affinity for electronics (Knowledge@Wharton 2005).

Established in 1938, Samsung – which literally means “three stars” – started with the export of agricultural and marine products to Manchuria and Beijing. During the 1970s, Samsung invested in the heavy, chemical, and shipbuilding industries. From the early 1980s, Samsung succeeded in launching a semiconductor industry and an electric home appliance business, not only domestically but also internationally. Since the early 1990s, when Samsung tailored its business strategies for the age of globalization, Samsung Electronics was positioned at the top of the dynamic random access memory (DRAM) semiconductor market. In the financial crisis of 1997, when the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) forced the Korean market to follow its structural adjustment program, many Korean mega-conglomerates collapsed in the restructuring of the domestic economy that ensued, but Samsung seized its opportunity and jumped into first place in the domestic market. Samsung Electronics became the number one company in both global and domestic market share for DRAM semiconductor chips, thin film transistor liquid crystal displays (TFT-LCDs), code division multiple access (CDMA) mobile phones, and computer monitors.

Riding the “Korean wave” – the growing appeal of Korean popular culture in other Asian countries – Samsung and its rapid growth signified the new global influence of capital from the NICs (→ Korean Cultural Influence). According to Wallerstein’s (1979) “world system” thesis or the → dependency theories (Frank 1969; Evans 1979) concerning South America, the topological status of Korea and its corporations should be no more than a semi-peripheral hub for promoting and connecting global and Asian trade and industry within the hierarchical totality of a global economy divided into three tiers of states (the core, the semi-periphery, and the periphery). Samsung, however, transcended the status of sub-contractor that such theoretical models would predict. Samsung Corporation rapidly rose to be a leader in the global high technology industry, with 13,000 researchers representing investment of 1.7 billion USD in research and development as of 2005. The extraordinary success story of Samsung can be explained by the East Asian form of state-interventionist economic development, in which it becomes relatively feasible to escape the structural constraints of the hierarchical global economy.

The different *divisions of Samsung* were a set of huge monopolies, and the corporation as a whole ranked as number one among Korea’s ruling conglomerates, accounting for one-fifth of the country’s exports. Samsung Corporation encompassed almost every profitable industry under its business logo: Samsung Electronics, Samsung SDI, and Renault Samsung Motors, as well as Samsung securities, life insurance, credit card, heavy industries, engineering, the Everland theme park, advertising, petrochemicals, shopping, cable channels, and so forth (→ Advertising; Cable Television).

Samsung’s rapid capital accumulation has been made possible by its omnipresent *power in the Korean economy and society* – described by such common terms as “Samsung’s way” or “the Republic of Samsung” – and by its collaboration with the state in controlling the labor market. Samsung’s economic power has been largely based on the long-lasting struggle of Samsung’s founding family, the Lee family, against the creation of labor unions within Samsung Corporation, and by government interventionism favoring the *Chaebols* – the large family-owned Korean conglomerates such as Samsung. The elite company became the number one → brand in the world in several areas, producing a 3G phone with → satellite television, a credit-card-sized camcorder, the world’s biggest plasma television, and the world’s first 5-megapixel camera phone, at the same time as the Korean government’s *Chaebol*-driven growth policies enabled it to suppress workers’ attempts to unionize. Samsung’s brand image as one of the high-tech global leaders, therefore, sprang not only from its own successful business strategies and goals but also from its special mode of capital accumulation aided by state interventionism, that is to say, a structural symbiosis between the anti-labor business climate in Samsung and the state’s regulatory labor control.

While Samsung contributed significantly to promoting Korea’s national economy in the global market, its dominant market power, with a total of 62 subsidiaries and a sales

record of 1.39 trillion USD (as of April 2005), made it a pervasive and overwhelming force in both the Korean economy and Korean society.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Brands ▶ Cable Television ▶ Dependency Theories  
▶ Korean Cultural Influence ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sony Corporation

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# **Satellite Communication, Global**

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The possibility of communicating over thousands of miles using a transmitter in space was proposed by Arthur C. Clarke in a 1945 article in *Wireless World*, in which he described a system of “extraterrestrial relays” or repeaters in space. Clarke calculated that an object put into orbit 22,300 miles (36,000 km) above the earth would revolve around the planet in 24 hours, the time it takes the earth to rotate on its axis. Thus, the repeater would appear motionless or “geostationary” from the earth. He noted that three such repeaters located 120 degrees apart above the equator would cover the entire globe.

Only 12 years later, the Soviets launched the Sputnik satellite. However, Sputnik was not a geostationary satellite; it was in low earth orbit and had to be tracked across the sky, and it simply beeped. But it spurred US scientists and engineers to develop more sophisticated satellites for commercial use. In 1963, the world saw the results as the Syncom 3 satellite transmitted television coverage of the Tokyo Olympics. In 1965, just 20 years after Clarke’s article was published, the first commercial international satellite, known as Early Bird or Intelsat I, was launched to link North America and Europe.

Today, there are numerous geostationary (or GEO) satellites that can provide global, regional, or national coverage. The first global system was Intelsat, still in existence today. Other global systems include Intersputnik, a system comparable to Intelsat that was built and operated by the Soviet Union, PanAmSat, Intelsat’s first global commercial competitor,



and now acquired by Intelsat, and Inmarsat, used for global maritime communications. However, single geostationary satellites can also be used to cover large nations such as Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, and the US, and regions such as North America, Europe, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

## SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY

Satellite technology has evolved dramatically since the early 1960s. Early Bird had only 240 telephone circuits, while today's geostationary satellites have 24–72 transponders, each capable of carrying a high definition TV channel, or multiple television channels, or thousands of telephone calls, text, and data messages. Early experimental satellites were designed for a lifetime of 2 years; today's satellites are designed to last from 10 to 15 years. (The limitation on the satellite's life is not the reliability of the electronics, which are fully redundant, but the weight, which limits the amount of station-keeping fuel that can be carried to nudge the satellite back into position when it begins to drift.)

Satellites have several properties that make them particularly appropriate for many communications applications. Geostationary satellites can *cover as much as one-third of the Earth's surface*. Earth stations placed anywhere in the satellite's beam are linked with each other through the satellite. As a result, the cost of communication via satellite is independent of distance – the cost of communicating across 500 or 5,000 miles is the same. In contrast, the cost of building and maintaining terrestrial networks is directly proportional to the length of the transmission route.

In addition to covering very large regions, geostationary satellites offer several advantages for *providing communications to rural and remote areas*. Earth stations can be installed virtually anywhere, whether a remote village, an offshore oilrig, a high-rise building, or a disaster site. Thus, communication can be provided wherever it is needed, without waiting to extend terrestrial facilities, for example, from cities to remote villages. Satellite networks are highly reliable; a problem with an earth station affects only that location, whereas a damaged terrestrial microwave repeater or cut fiber optic cable can knock out the entire network beyond that point. Satellite capacity is also flexible; the technology can be used for voice, data, and video, and it is simple to allocate additional bandwidth where needed. For example, a community can begin with a few voice circuits, and then add more circuits and television reception.

A *disadvantage of GEO satellites* for interactive services (such as telephony) is that there is a quarter second delay in each direction (to and from the satellite) because of its distance above the earth. Also, this distance means that the signals are weak, and devices must be large enough (typically with an antenna of half a meter or more in diameter) to amplify the signals from the satellite.

Low earth orbiting (LEO) satellites have no noticeable delay because they are located only about 600 miles above the earth. At this altitude, the satellites pass much faster overhead, and numerous satellites in various orbits must be used to provide continuous coverage. However, current generations of LEOs have very limited bandwidth, making them suitable only for voice and text or simple email. Two LEO systems, Iridium and Globalstar, provide portable voice and limited data communications with handheld devices

about the size of early “brick” mobile phones. They can be used where mobile phone service is not available, such as at oilrigs and mining sites, mountain-climbing camps, other isolated regions, and war zones. However, the price of their service and their limited bandwidth make them unsuitable for providing basic communications in developing countries.

## SATELLITE SERVICES

The most common use of satellites is for *television transmission*. Satellites transmit news feeds from around the world, and major sporting events such as the Olympic Games and the World Cup. Global and regional satellites transmit television signals across oceans and continents; domestic satellites transmit television channels to local television stations for terrestrial rebroadcast or to cable headends for distribution through local cable networks. High-powered GEO systems transmit satellite signals directly to end-users, who install a small antenna on the outside of their house or apartment (→ Television).

Specialized GEO satellites also transmit *radio programs* to small receivers. The WorldSpace satellite system delivers digital audio directly to portable radios in Asia and Africa. While one target audience is people who can afford to subscribe to digital music and ethnic channels, the system can also be used to transmit educational programs in a variety of languages for individual reception or community redistribution over small local radio stations for listeners with inexpensive transistor radios. In North America, similar satellite systems transmit commercial-free radio primarily to built-in automobile receivers for commuting drivers (→ Radio).

LEO satellites operated by Iridium and Globalstar provide *telephone service* almost anywhere in the world to handheld receivers. These systems provide voice and low-speed (typically 2.4–9.6 kbps) data connectivity that could be used for email, but is too slow for web access. The price per minute for these services is typically much higher than national terrestrial services. Thus, while they may be used by reporters and adventurers, and by relief agencies to coordinate aid and logistics for natural disasters, they are far too expensive for residents of developing countries. A somewhat less expensive option for the Middle East and much of Asia and Africa is phone service using Thuraya, a GEO satellite with operations headquartered in Abu Dhabi. GEO satellites can also be used for telephony using community earth stations. In Alaska, village telephone service is by satellite, with a local telephone network connected to a satellite terminal. The signal delay is an inconvenience, but the system is very reliable, and definitely preferable to the old two-way radio systems.

*Internet gateways* can be accessed via geostationary satellites. For example, Alaskan villagers and residents of the Canadian Arctic are connected to the → Internet via US and Canadian domestic satellites. A Mongolian Internet service provider (ISP) and some African ISPs access the Internet in the US via Intelsat. However, these systems are not optimized for Internet use, and may therefore be quite expensive. GEO satellites designed for Internet access are now available in the US and Canada, and are planned for other regions without terrestrial broadband. Canada’s Anik F2 provides Internet access in rural and remote parts of Canada; in the US, WildBlue and Directnet offer Internet access via satellite for households and small businesses without terrestrial broadband service. The price of Internet access is likely to decline as new protocols are being developed to make more efficient use of satellite bandwidth and thus lower transmission costs for users.

GEO satellites designed for interactive voice and data can also be used for *data broadcasting*. For example, China's Xinhua news agency transmits broadcasting news feeds to subscribers equipped with very small aperture terminals (VSATs; → News Agencies). WorldSpace's digital radio system can also be used for delivery of Internet content; schools or telecenters can identify which websites they want to access on a regular basis, and WorldSpace broadcasts the data for reception via an addressable modem attached to the radio. WorldSpace has donated equipment and satellite time for pilot projects at schools and telecenters in Africa.

Many of the innovations in satellite technology were originally designed for *military or for government research*, and then made available for commercial applications. NASA's Applied Technology Satellites in the 1980s and joint US–Canadian Communication Technology Satellite tested new frequencies and antennas, and were made available for public experiments in telemedicine, distance education, and community networking. Spread spectrum technology was developed for the US military as a very secure means of transmitting by satellite to avoid interception. Spread spectrum is now used for VSATs and in wireless mobile systems with code division multiple access (CDMA). Global positioning systems (GPS) using multiple satellites enable the US military to identify the location of targets on the ground with great accuracy. Initially, GPS systems for consumer use were “dumbed down” to limit precision, but now the most accurate versions are commercially available for use with handheld devices for hikers and for pinpointing the location of mobile phone users in emergencies (→ Mobility, Technology for).

Remote sensing by satellite was developed for geological research and mapping of terrain. Now farmers in the US midwest download remote sensing data to ascertain which parts of their fields need fertilizer, and with GPS transceivers in their tractors, can apply the fertilizer exactly where it is needed. Public online tools such as Google Earth use satellite imagery to enable the public to view their neighborhood or sites around the globe. *Specialized satellite systems* gather information that can be used for a variety of purposes. Remote sensing satellites are used to map the earth and to identify mineral deposits and various forms of soil and vegetation. This information can be used to identify promising areas for mining, to monitor flooding and desertification, and to plan land use for agriculture, forestry, and human settlements. Weather satellites transmit images that are used to monitor storms and forecast weather conditions. GPS systems calculate distances to three or more satellites to determine the location of the user within a few meters on the earth's surface. Standalone GPS systems are used for navigation, exploration, and outdoor recreation, and are being built into mobile phone handsets so that callers can be precisely located in emergencies.

## **SATELLITE APPLICATIONS IN DEVELOPING REGIONS**

### **Business and Consumer Services**

Small satellite earth stations operating with GEO satellites can be used for interactive voice and data, as well as for broadcast reception. VSATs have been used for interactive services such as video conferencing and for broadcasting in the Australian outback. VSATs are also used for telephony and Internet access in Alaska. Banks in remote areas of Brazil

are linked via VSATs; the National Stock Exchange in India links brokers with rooftop VSATs. VSATs for television reception (known as TVROs, for “television receive only”) deliver broadcasting signals to viewers in many developing regions, particularly in Asia and Latin America.

### **Rural Health-Care Delivery**

In Alaska, community health aides are the frontline providers in village health-care. A satellite network links the villages with regional hospitals, which in turn are linked to a major medical center in Anchorage. The village health aides are in daily communication via satellite with physicians at the regional hospitals. The Alaska Federal Health Care Access Network (AFHCAN) project is extending the use of the Internet for telemedicine throughout rural Alaska, using the satellite network. Equipment provided in village clinics is designed to be simple and cost effective, consisting of a personal computer and peripherals including electrocardiograms (for heart monitoring), electronic otoscope for observing otitis media (ear infections common in village babies), and a digital camera to send still images of patients. Much of this communication can be done in store-and-forward mode; for example, the digital photos can be sent as email attachments. Doctors at the regional hospitals, in turn, can transmit X-rays and other medical data to specialists in Anchorage. AFHCAN may now be the world’s largest telemedicine project, serving more than 235 sites, including 198 native clinics.

SatelLife of Cambridge, Massachusetts, operates a store-and-forward satellite system, using a LEO satellite, HealthSat-2. The satellite’s unique polar orbit allows ground stations to transmit and receive data from any point on earth daily. SatelLife’s HealthNet network enables medical practitioners to seek advice on treatment of unusual cases from colleagues in other parts of Africa, and to download articles from medical libraries. Burn surgeons in Mozambique, Tanzania, and Uganda have used HealthNet to consult with one another on patient treatment and reconstructive surgery techniques. In response to a cholera epidemic in Zambia, the medical librarian at the university obtained literature from her “partner library” at the University of Florida, and then disseminated the information to all HealthNet users in the region. SatelLife has also evolved to become an Internet gateway, providing public health and environmental workers with an inexpensive “on ramp” to the global information superhighway.

### **Distance Education and Training**

The Rural Communication Services Project (RCSP) was designed to use satellite communications via Intelsat to provide basic telephone service and teleconferencing to support development activities in an isolated region of Peru. The RCSP provided public telephone service and audio conferencing facilities to seven communities in the Department of San Martín, a high jungle area east of the Andes. The conferencing activities were developed in cooperation with Peruvian agriculture, health, and education ministries, and incorporated a wide variety of administrative, training, diffusion, and promotion strategies. More than 650 audio teleconferences were carried out during the project. At the end of the two-year period, the telecommunications operator, ENTEL, transferred

responsibility for teleconferencing development to its commercial sector, with plans to promote teleconferencing among government agencies and private businesses.

The University of the South Pacific uses a satellite-based network called USPNet to provide tutorials to correspondence students scattered in 12 island nations of the South Pacific from its main campus in Fiji. USPNet enables distance students to participate in audio tutorials conducted from any campus, communicate by email with lecturers/tutors or other students, access the world wide web, watch live video broadcasts of lectures from any of the three campuses (in Fiji, Samoa, and Vanuatu), and take part in interactive video conferences and tutoring with the main campus. Also, the network's communication facilities are important in saving time and travel for the staff of the correspondence program and the extension centers scattered across several time zones (and both sides of the International Date Line) and thousands of miles of ocean. General university administration has also become more efficient with email communication via USPNet to all USP locations.

In the Caribbean, the University of the West Indies established a teleconferencing network called UWIDITE (UWI Distance Teaching Experiment – later Enterprise) to link its campuses in Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad with extension centers throughout the Commonwealth Caribbean. This initiative has evolved into UWIDEC (for UWI Distance Education Center) headquartered at the Trinidad campus, and with facilities at the main Jamaica campus and a smaller unit at the Barbados campus. The audio conferencing network links the three campuses with university centers in 15 other Caribbean nations. The network may be used for lectures, tutorials, and meetings, enabling students to complete certificates and to participate in outreach programs, as well as to listen to lectures in regular UWI courses in preparation for taking exams to complete the first part of their degrees from their home countries. UWIDEC now provides additional materials and support for distance education in the region (→ Educational Communication; Educational Media; Educational Media Content).

### **Cultural Applications**

Canadian Inuit have established the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation (IBC), which transmits TV programs via satellite across the north. Inuit communities are separated by huge distances in Nunavut, a region that makes up one third of Canada's landmass. Most have no road access, and can be reached only by airplane or boat. As IBC notes: "The only roads connecting communities are electronic." IBC programming is distributed by satellite over the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN), an indigenous network featuring native programming from across Canada and around the world.

### **IMPACT AND FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION SATELLITES**

Satellite communications have had dramatic *impacts* in ending isolation and creating a truly global village. News flashes around the world and across regions in seconds. People living in countries where media choices are few or heavily controlled get programs from outside their countries by installing small satellite dishes. While we think of satellites as primarily bringing content to end-users, their interactive applications are perhaps more

significant. People in remote settlements can now make phone calls and access the Internet via satellite, as well as watch television. They can get medical help in emergencies, get access to education not available locally, and transmit their own information, as email messages, web pages, or radio programs.

Will satellites survive, as companies install more optical fiber, and terrestrial wireless networks link computers and mobile phones? Satellites will still have roles to play, particularly for broadcasting and in developing regions. As broadcasters introduce high definition TV, they need enormous bandwidth to carry the signals to all of their local outlets or cable headends. Fiber is not likely to be available for this form of point-to-multipoint distribution. Satellites will also be used instead of local cable or over-the-air transmission to deliver digital television directly to households. Satellites will remain an important means of transmitting video and high bandwidth content across oceans and between continents. Where submarine fiber optic cables have been installed, they will serve as a backup to prevent loss of service if cables are cut or circuits are overloaded. In the developing world, satellites will be important to deliver television and radio signals where no terrestrial network exists, and to provide broadband Internet access. They will become less important for telephony as mobile wireless networks are built out, but will still be the only means to reach isolated communities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ News Agencies ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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# Satellite Communication, Regulation of

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In recent years, satellite communication has been drastically changed by regulatory reform and technological advancement. The regulatory environment and technological advances have influenced satellite communications both structurally and content-wise. Competition in network and services development has led to advances in satellite technologies. Technological improvements in telecommunication systems have brought about lower cost digital services. Meanwhile, satellite communications facilitate the → free flow of information while creating a national sovereignty conflict over global communication (→ Satellite Television).

## National Satellite Regulations

In the past, satellite regulations in most countries were dictated by their domestic communication policies. National satellite regulations focused on who could provide services and in what markets. Since the 1990s, governments have liberalized satellite communication regulation, opening up the market to new players and promoting universal services. Such governmental liberalization of satellite regulation has two goals: (1) increasing competition through a blanket licensing policy, and (2) open access through an open skies policy.

The *blanket licensing policy*, which was proposed by the US → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in the 1990s, facilitates licensing of the maximum number of systems, with minimal interference. It allows regulators to configure certain classes of satellites on the basis of technical criteria that eliminate the risk of unreasonable interference. This regulation has streamlined licensing procedures and provided a wide variety of business opportunities for the telecommunications industry.

The *open skies policy* provides licensees maximum flexibility in operating their systems to meet market demands with minimal regulation. In the past, governments developed policies to protect their own satellite systems. These *closed skies* policies required service providers to use only locally owned satellites when providing satellite services. However, regulators realized that the massive demand for data, voice, video, and other convergence services is best addressed by permitting open access to all satellite resources. While domestic satellite regulations are still not entirely open, they permit more access to orbital resources, regardless of where the satellite operators are based.

## INTERNATIONAL REGULATION OF SATELLITE COMMUNICATIONS

The current changes in international satellite communications have been driven by competitive global markets and technological capabilities (→ Globalization of the Media). The major goal of the two largest international satellite organizations – Intelsat and Inmarsat – has been to eliminate unnecessary regulatory barriers that tend to inhibit the

use of satellite services. Intelsat and Inmarsat have consistently applied competition as a policy to increase competition in the global market. As the key objective of communication reform is increased efficiency, competition and cooperation are two tools available to policymakers to achieve this goal.

Meanwhile, a series of international efforts have been launched to improve satellite regulation in *developing countries* in South Asia, Africa, and South America. Such efforts include initiatives by the European Radio Communications Office, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and the World Trade Organization (WTO). For example, the WTO prohibits member countries from imposing certain types of quantitative restrictions, economic needs tests, or local incorporation requirements. Some WTO member countries have undertaken additional pro-competitive measures, which are designed to prevent anti-competitive conduct, ensure nondiscriminatory and cost-oriented interconnection, and administer universal service obligations competitively (→ Communication Technology and Development; Television for Development).

Despite several open border initiatives by Euro-American countries, the Asia Pacific nations show little concrete effort to harmonize the use of spectrum and licensing policies and regulations. In Korea and Japan, for example, satellite communications have been hindered because of separate licensing (or sometimes duplicate licensing) requirements for satellite service providers, space segment operators, end-users, and radio spectrum. Many regulations in these countries focus mainly on technical issues, such as technical coordination and avoidance of system interference, and few regulations focus on international satellite interoperability or interconnection (→ Communication Law and Policy: Asia).

In Africa and Latin America, satellite communication regulations entail a multiplicity of authorities and application forms. Licensing and renewal fees are high and approvals involve considerable delays. Besides, lack of transparency, requirement for bilateral and interconnection agreements, and security and trade issues remain challenges to satellite policy and regulations (→ Communication Law and Policy: Africa; Communication Law and Policy: South America).

## CONTENT REGULATIONS

With the proliferation of satellite communications, content regulation has emerged as a major concern. While the FCC only applies indecency regulations to over-the-air broadcasting, a discussion is under way in the US to propose to broaden broadcast indecency regulations to cover satellite communications. For example, satellite radio in the US so far has been unregulated in its content. Under its current regulatory status, satellite radio remains free of content restrictions due to its subscriber-only structure. This regulatory status can be compared to that of HBO or the Playboy Channel on → cable television. With such a comparison, satellite radio has a completely unlimited ability to dictate content and include material that would be deemed indecent or obscene on traditional radio.

Traditional radio has the right to play music without paying royalties to performers. In exchange, the FCC has the right to restrict the content of radio broadcasts. Despite these content regulations, which seem to be a violation of the First Amendment, these restrictions are permitted and have steadily expanded throughout the twentieth century. On the other hand, satellite radio companies in the US paid almost \$200 million for their airwaves and



pay more royalties for music, but there are no content limitations. As the audience of satellite radio grows, the FCC is considering content regulation of satellite radio.

Internationally, the degree of content regulation varies from country to country; however, the majority of industrialized nations regulate obscene and/or objectionable content (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content). In Europe, indecency regulations are now extended to satellite communications, which did not previously have as many restrictions. Interestingly, the content regulation of satellite broadcasting in Europe is related to the structural questions of how much market share satellite communications have, how much of a threat the satellite industry is to broadcasters, and what impact the satellite industry will have on the media market.

The degree of content regulation (i.e., how strict or how liberal) largely depends on non-content conditions, such as economic availability and technological advancement. What is most notable about content regulations is that those regulations are based on a new principle of “technology neutrality” in the US and the EU. According to technology neutrality, content would be regulated on content itself, irrespective of the underlying technology used to deliver it. Thus, satellite services would be regulated just like broadcasters, as regards indecency, violence, and hate speech (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms).

In developing countries, content regulation issues are more a matter of content management (i.e., restrictions or quotas on content, cultural invasions, right to access, and → copyright) than actual content-related regulation (i.e., content → censorship). In Africa and Latin America, satellite television is delivering popular Hollywood programming to national audiences through national television services. While foreign programs via satellite broadcasting are often criticized for diluting local cultural identity, many African and Latin American countries allow audiences freedom of choice, respecting the universal freedom of access to content, instead of banning foreign programs via satellite.

### **FREE FLOW OF IDEAS VERSUS NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY**

With the advent of global satellite infrastructure, the globalization of communications has undermined national sovereignty. The “satellite spillover,” which happens when the signal falls outside the beam pattern’s defined border of coverage, challenges national sovereignty – the right of every country to license the provision and use of telecommunications within its borders. Sovereignty has historically been protected by means of a license, fees, local conditions, and procedures.

The world is dividing into *two opposing camps*. The US and the EU nations, which support free flow of information, base their argument on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations Charter, customary law, and the International Telecommunication Convention. They argue that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. They oppose any interference with this right to impart information through any form of media (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America; European Union: Communication Law).

On the other hand, other less liberal countries (mostly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America) support national sovereignty and turn to customary law, the United Nations Charter and UN Resolution 110, and Resolution 37/92. Under this view, Article II of the United Nations Charter grants strong deference to the interests of national sovereignty, including

cultural, religious, social, and economic interests. To protect these interests, these countries prefer strict regulation of content and sanctions for nonconforming communications. The free-speech countries like the US and the UK view this state intervention as little more than government-sponsored censorship.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Copyright ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Foreign Policy and the Media ▶ Free Flow of Information ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ▶ Media Policy ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Communication, Global ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television for Development

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## **Satellite Television**

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There are many different uses for satellite technology, and television broadcasting is only one of them. In fact, communications satellites are also used for maritime applications, intercontinental telephony, business systems, and broadcasting television programming. In television, satellite is the easiest way to transmit a large number of services and thus a wide range of choices across a wide region, thereby overcoming the need for the complex infrastructure of terrestrial transmitters that a terrestrial network needs to broadcast its signals throughout a country.

By and large, satellite offers instant and almost total coverage within its footprint, giving it an advantage over both terrestrial and → cable television. Limitations on the reception of terrestrial television were one of the motivations underlying the initial

development of alternative delivery systems. Cable is disadvantaged in areas of lower population density where network construction costs are high in comparison to the number of homes passed (Bunting & Chapman 1996). On the other hand, satellite television is limited by the number of homes under the satellite footprint, and further limited by the number of homes with receiving dishes.

In fact, a signal carrying the television programs is beamed – from the “earth station” via a large dish (9 to 12 meters in diameter) – up to the satellite, where it is amplified and retransmitted toward the earth to individual consumers. At the earth reception level, satellite television requires the installation of a dish, which some consumers seem to dislike, if they also have to buy and install new set-boxes. Moreover, satellite transmission is also dependent on the weather – e.g., downtime can result from very rainy weather (see also Pelton & Howkins 1987).

## DEVELOPMENT

Satellite TV was conceived in 1946 by Arthur C. Clarke who, in a widely ignored article in *Wireless World*, pointed out that an orbiting satellite would revolve around the earth at the same speed as the earth rotates on its axis, above a fixed point, and could be used as a transmitting station. Since the 1950s, major developments have taken place in satellite technology as a result of the space race between the US and the USSR, and the Soviets launched the satellite Sputnik in 1957 with radio signals. In the 1950s, however, little thought was given to television broadcasting as the Americans and the Soviets engaged in the race to perfect intercontinental ballistic missiles and put them into space. In 1962, there was the launch of Telstar by AT&T, the world’s first communications satellite. It was not geostationary, although it signaled the beginning of the commercial exploitation of communications satellites. In 1964, the captions “live via satellite” brought the space age into millions of households as the Tokyo Olympic Games were flashed around the world. The age of satellite television had arrived.

In reality, satellite television started differently and that was with the relay of its signals via the cable systems to upper-income suburbs and municipalities in the US in the 1970s (Sherman 1987, 8). This could be done due to the advent of US commercial satellites, on the one hand, and the FCC’s 1972 Open Skies policy on the other (→ Federal Communications Commission [FCC]). The latter gave the commercial satellites the right to transmit TV services – TV reception up until then had been under the control of international operators, Intelsat and Intersputnik. In 1975 RCA launched the first satellite designed exclusively for use by the three American → television networks. Further, Home Box Office (HBO), Time Inc.’s pay movie channel, offered its service to cable operators using a transponder on RCA’s Satcom I, the US’s second commercial satellite, and began transmission of television programs via satellite to cable systems. A year later, Ted Turner uplinked TV signals from his terrestrial station in Atlanta and created WTBS, “America’s Station,” and in 1977, Pat Robertson began satellite delivery of the CBN cable network. These developments led to the *explosion of cable TV systems in the US* over the next decade. At the same time there were consumers outside cabled areas who wanted to install Television Reception Only (TVRO) dishes for these low-power satellites and TVRO technology burst forward. Thus, the industry found a potential market in fixed satellites

needing smaller reception equipment, which provoked the commercial development of higher powered satellites, the so called DBS, "Direct Broadcasting by Satellite."

### DIRECT BROADCASTING BY SATELLITE

Over the years, the term "DBS" has become increasingly vague. In effect, DBS lost much of its distinguishing features in the 1980s. Originally, the term was coined to refer to high-powered satellite services that were to be received by individual dishes of approximately 90 centimeters in diameter. In fact, in 1997 the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), through the World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC) – considering that direct broadcasting to homes required high-powered satellites – allocated specific orbital slots for high-powered satellites, the original DBS satellites. But with a series of disasters in satellite launchers in 1986 (Shuttle, Ariane), and with each advance in technology, it became ever more possible to achieve the same objectives – direct-to-home reception – with medium-power satellites such as Astra or Eutelsat in Europe. Yet there has been little development in real DBS satellite systems. By the late 1980s only the Japanese system was in orbit and even that had suffered grave technical problems.

*In the US* in 1983, United Satellite Communications, backed by Prudential Insurance, inaugurated America's first DBS service, the United Satellite, using a Canadian satellite. Just one year later, having attracted only 10,000 customers rather than 1 million as forecast, the service was in financial trouble. Comsat, Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), and Rupert Murdoch's News Service also pulled out of DBS in the early 1980s. In 1986, the Satellite Broadcasting and Communications Association of America (SBCA) was founded – as a merger between SPACE and the Direct Broadcast Satellite Association – but the prospects of satellite TV in the US were small. This was due to the fact that the cable TV industry was very successful at this time, and the satellite industry received a lot of negative press coverage. Half of all satellite retailers closed their businesses. In 1994, the first successful attempts in America were led by a group of major cable companies, known as Primestar. In 1994, Direct TV was also established, and in 1996, the DISH Network, a subsidiary of Echostar, also entered the satellite-TV industry.

*In Europe*, the German TV-SAT1 was found to have a malfunction after it reached its orbit and the French TDF1 eventually went into orbit in 1988 but it remained unused. The British BSB suffered delays and eventually did not start its transmissions. One could achieve almost similar results, however, with medium-power satellites such as Astra or the second generation "Hot Bird" Eutelsat system at a fraction of the cost. Indeed, the capacity of the new generation of medium-power satellites was immensely greater than DBS: DBS would carry four separate services while a medium-power satellite such as Astra could carry 16 channels. This had clear repercussions on costs: leasing a channel on TDF1 cost about \$11.7 million compared to \$5 million on Astra. A related reason for DBS's slow growth must be that it was regulated as a national service and so to some extent dependent on state direction (→ Telecommunications: Law and Policy; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). In fact, those satellites that had been launched had all had some state involvement. When commercial considerations dominate, alternative cheaper and unregulated systems tend to prosper (Negrine & Papathanassopoulos 1990, 32–33). As a result, DBS systems remained "not proven" while other satellite systems were

developing at an enormous pace. In 1992 in Europe there were 19 medium-power satellites in orbit, Astra being the largest operator in 1997 with six in operation.

In these circumstances, DBS was proven an unnecessary technological development. In fact, the Commission of the European Union in 1989 declared that the “1977 WARC DBS” concept was already redundant as a result of advances in transmission and reception technology and also that the principle of national coverage contradicts the European ideal of television across frontiers. It has therefore suggested a new arrangement for satellite broadcasting, which would allow for greater flexibility and a more efficient use of technological developments (→ European Union: Communication Law).

### **DIGITAL TRANSMISSION AND ITS EFFECTS**

The advent of digital transmission has affected the development of satellite television (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Digital Media, History of). This is because, up to now, satellite remains the easiest way to upgrade and transmit television signals in a digitalized form. However, as in the case of analogue satellite transmission, the services provided are still limited by the satellite footprint and satellite television subscribers have to buy and install new set-boxes and a satellite aerial. On the other hand, digital satellite TV revenues per subscriber have been higher than cable, even after homes have converted to digital cable. The reason behind this is that subscribers of satellite TV actively seek more choice by purchasing the equipment, whereas many long-term cable subscribers are used to paying low fees for a few basic channels – these subscribers will need to learn the benefits of digital choice (Thomas et al. 2003).

Moreover, satellite operators have been the most successful in the digital market so far, in part because of their pioneering efforts. In June 1996, media companies were involved in the “digital rush,” but they failed to agree on a common decoder box. In effect, they agreed to develop a so-called “common-interface,” a plug-like connection device that would link digital TV decoder boxes. In April 1996, the French pay-TV service Canal+ became the first broadcaster in Europe to launch digital TV, *Canalsatellite Numérique*. In some countries, digital satellite television has had a head start (UK, France, and Spain). In others, such as the Netherlands and Germany (countries with high cable TV reach), digital terrestrial television (DTT) and digital satellite entry is small. Other countries (UK, Sweden, and Spain) have started digital television through satellite, cable, or terrestrial frequencies. By and large, satellite television, whether analog or digital, has recorded most success in countries that have low cable penetration, including the major markets of France, Italy, Spain, and the UK.

### **THE FUTURE**

In 2005, digital satellite television remains the leader in the digital TV market worldwide. But, according to market forecasts, cable TV seems to be the main source of digital TV for households, bringing in 216 million homes by 2010 (Murray 2003). Digital satellite TV will be the next most popular delivery system, with 77 million homes forecast to receive digital terrestrial TV, and 21 million households to receive DSL entertainment signals. On

the other hand, 632 million homes will still take analog signals, so digital growth is likely to extend beyond the forecast period.

According to the forecasts, digital satellite television will be strong in North America and Europe, but less so elsewhere. Digital terrestrial television is expected to present considerable development in China and other parts of the Asia-Pacific region. Europe is forecast to have 28.6 million digital satellite subscribers by 2010. The UK is forecast to remain the leader in the European satellite TV market. Revenues of digital satellite television are forecast to reach \$13.8 billion by 2010, up from \$8.8 billion in 2002. France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK will account for 84 percent of digital satellite TV revenues (Thomas et al. 2003).

In one way or another, content is important to viewers. The arrival of digital satellite platforms has opened up the way for *increasing specialization* in their content. In fact, digital technology has enabled the analog satellite channels of the 1990s to proliferate and achieve even more specific levels of segmentation. Nowadays, there are channels specializing in → news, music, sports, children, lifestyle, home shopping, animals, wildlife and documentaries, history, science, channels for women, and so on (Papathanassopoulos 2002). However, the quality of programming and the overall range of services on offer seem to be increasingly important in the further development of satellite television in the digital era, and will remain so in the “battle” with cable and terrestrial digital television over the coming years.

SEE ALSO: ► Cable Television ► Digital Media, History of ► European Union: Communication Law ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► News ► Telecommunications: Law and Policy ► Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ► Television Networks

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# Scales

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In communication research scales are used to assess the intensity or the strength of personal variables like traits, states, → attitudes, feelings, and so on (→ Emotion). A rating is based on a statement expressing a perception, an attribution, or an attitude toward something that is presented to the subject. He or she is asked to indicate the degree of his or her agreement with this statement by marking a corresponding label from a list provided by the scale. Bipolar *Likert scales* (Likert 1932) extend from negative to positive numbers (e.g., -2 to +2), whereas unipolar Likert scales start from non-negative numbers like 0 or 1 (e.g., +1 to +5). Likert scales are most frequently constructed as five-point scales, but scales with seven or even nine points are also common. The labels assigned to points on a Likert scale (like “strongly disagree,” “somewhat disagree,” “neither agree nor disagree,” “somewhat agree,” “strongly agree”) must be chosen with great care in order to hold up equal semantic distances between the labels over the entire scale. As it cannot be ensured that subjects perceive intervals between adjacent points on the scale as equidistant, responses collected from subjects should preferably be cautiously treated as ordinal (and not as interval) data (→ Measurement Theory; Scales and Indices; Rating Methods).

A *Guttman scale* (Guttman 1950) is constructed in such a way that category items are strictly ordered according to their difficulty. For that reason it is assumed that a person agreeing with the label assigned to point 7 on a Guttman scale implicitly agrees to all items with lower numbers (i.e., 1 to 6) too. Guttman scales are helpful in constructing short questionnaires with good discriminative power. Furthermore, a semantic differential consists of a set of rating scales designed to measure the connotative meaning of concepts. End points of the scales building up a semantic differential are labeled with contrastive adjective pairs like “warm–cold” or “weak–strong.” Factor analyses (Osgood et al. 1957) revealed three factors – activity, evaluation, and potency – underlying ratings of objects on the semantic differential (→ Factor Analysis).

In *communication research*, scales are predominantly applied to assess subjects’ personality traits that are related to program selection and media use, or to measure the intensity of personal reactions that go along with or follow the reception of media (→ Media Effects). For example, the tendency to seek arousal and excitement is correlated with a preference for viewing action or horror films (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). For the measurement of this personal disposition, Zuckerman (1994) has developed the sensation-seeking scale (SSS). The need for cognition has been demonstrated to be a predictor of program selection and the intensity of attentive media processing. This motivational trait can be measured with a scale provided by Cacioppo et al. (1984). For the measurement of emotional states evoked by media presentations (e.g., action films, dramas), questionnaires like the Self-Assessment Manikin (SAM; Lang 1980), the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al. 1988), or the Differential Emotion Scale (DES; Izard 1972) are appropriate (→ Emotions, Media Effects on).

When interpreting data collected with scales, it must be taken into account that the subjects' reaction might be distorted by *response biases*. As a further drawback especially relevant in communication research, scales can hardly be applied for the continuous measurement of response variables. For example, for the continuous assessment of emotional processes during media reception, alternative methods like the physiological measurement or the analysis of facial expressions should be chosen to complement data collected with scales.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Factor Analysis ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Effects ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Response Sets ▶ Scales and Indices

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## **Scales and Indices**

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Empirical communication and media research attempts to translate reality into data by means of measurement. To insure → reliability and → validity, this process is guided by rules. In the case of quantitative research (→ Quantitative Methodology), the rules tend to be standardized in order to keep results comparable across different instances of



measurement (→ Measurement Theory). These standardized measurements can make use of the simple gauges employed in physics or engineering only occasionally, e.g., when the length of a newspaper article is determined with a ruler or the time people watch a TV program by a clock. Many concepts related to communication and media phenomena are complex in nature, for they refer to people's knowledge, intentions, emotions, or behavior. Thus they require more complex instruments for measurement, including different indicators ("latent variables"; Black 1999, 211; see also Bryman 2004, 66–69) to cover the multifaceted aspects of these concepts and to provide an indirect measurement for concepts that cannot be measured directly (Sullivan 2001, 159).

The procedure of "scaling" is used to quantify phenomena that cannot be counted directly (Jacoby 2004, 999). Empirical research draws upon several types of scales that describe general principles of how to collect data by multiple-indicator measures. Four important types of scales will be explained below. They share the characteristic that proper analysis and interpretation requires that the set of indicators be condensed to a single value representing the specific relationship between a case and a concept. This can be achieved by summarizing the multiple-indicator measurement to a composite score for each case.

The term → "scale" is also used for a set of indicators related to a certain concept representing its composite measure, e.g., the → uses and gratifications scale tapping individuals' motives for media consumption (see Rubin et al. 1994, 173–177). At best, such a particular scale is used repetitively in a similar form that also allows for assessing the validity of the scale by combining these different applications. The term "index," while used interchangeably with "scale" by many authors, can be defined as a particular type of scale, consisting of different indicators that are accumulated to form a single summary score in order to represent a theoretical construct (Carmines & Woods 2004, 485). A scale, however, "takes advantage of differences in intensity among the attributes of the same variable to identify distinct patterns of response" (Babbie 2002, 148).

Furthermore, the different levels of measurement are sometimes addressed as "scales" as well: objects are classified by nominal (or categorical), ordinal, interval, or ratio scales depending on the number and type of categories included (Bryman & Cramer 1995, 65–66; see also Ruane 2005, 54–57). To confuse the issue further, the term "scale" is also used in generally addressing the options given in a closed-ended question of a → survey, or a dimension of a content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). "Five-point scale" in this context means that the instrument designated five options to answer the question (and not a scale of five indicators). As this represents a more technical use of the term that is largely self-explanatory, it is excluded from further elaboration here.

## **TYPES OF SCALES AS MULTIPLE-INDICATOR MEASURES**

Before we turn to applications in media and communication research, it is essential to see how and for what purposes multiple-indicator measures are designed. Of the possible reasons for employing scaling procedures, data reduction is the most obvious. In addition, validity and reliability are improved, the effects of measurement error are minimized by multiple measures, it allows for drawing finer distinctions between cases, the dimensionality within a concept can be assessed, and data presentation may often recur on a graphical

depiction of these dimensions (see Jacoby 2004 in detail; also Bryman & Cramer 1995; Sullivan 2001). On the other hand, critics criticize scaling techniques for producing false quantification because “simply putting a lot of similar questions together and treating the responses to each question equally . . . does not automatically lead a social scientist to an underlying variable” (Gorard 2003, 108).

As a consequence, sophisticated ways of constructing a meaningful scale emerged in the history of empirical research, that are not specific to the field of media studies but rather common knowledge in social science. Their logic and characteristics need to be pointed out. From the variety of scales, four distinct types can be distinguished, which represent the majority of applications in the field (for an overview see, e.g., Sullivan, 2001, 170–179; Babbie 2002, 164–169).

The most popular approach to multiple-item measures is the so-called *Likert scale*, named after researcher Rensis Likert who developed it in 1932. The scale consists of a series of statements related to the construct under study, and respondents are required to express their agreement by selecting between response alternatives often ranging between 1 and 5 (“strongly agree” to “strongly disagree,” or vice versa). Still there is a certain ambiguity as to what the middle choice means to the respondents (Black 1999, 228). The summated ratings should discriminate between individuals, so item selection needs to consider a broad array of possible construct dimensions. In the pre-test phase, items are dropped that either correlate highly with each other (assuming that they measure the same dimension and are interchangeable) or correlate not at all (assuming that they probably do not measure the same construct).

A different approach to measuring using multiple items is represented by the *Thurstone scale*. Again, a set of statements is developed and rated by a group of “experts” on an 11-point scale ranging from favorable to unfavorable. Items for the main study are selected based on the mean values of these ratings in order to represent the whole range of agreement and disagreement. Respondents in the main study then select only those items they agree with; their composite score results from the mean of the pre-determined scale values. Thurstone scales are more difficult to construct for a researcher but easier to handle for respondents.

A *Guttman scale* tries to “achieve unidimensionality by developing the items in such a way that, in a perfect Guttman scale, there is only one pattern of responses that will yield any given score on the scale” (Sullivan 2001, 176). When formulating the items, researchers try to construct a progressive characteristic relating to the intensity of the construct being measured. As a consequence, more people will agree with “easy” items while only few will agree with the items considered as “difficult.” In a perfect Guttman scale, all items can be ordered according to their intensity, and a person who agrees with a certain item is expected to agree with all “easier” items and none of the “difficult” ones. The score of each individual is marked by the turning point of the last item he or she agrees with.

A popular scaling format for judging objects according to a set of characteristics is the *semantic differential*. The stimulus is rated by respondents based on a series of polar opposite adjectives (e.g., “powerful” vs “weak”). Between the two poles, a linear scale with seven points is drawn up on which respondents indicate their own assessment of the object. Results are often given in form of a “semantic profile” drawn by the mean values assigned to the object under study for each of the adjectives. If summarized scores for

each respondent are required, relevant dimensions to describe the object are determined by a factor analysis identifying response patterns across the sample (→ Meaning).

### **INDEX AS A COMPOSITE SCORE OF DATA**

The term “index” is used in everyday life for any kind of composite measure. Frequently, indices are used by governments to provide official statistics. Representing a prominent example, the consumer price index is supposed to cover a significant cross-section of products. These goods serve as indicators for price trends, and in a long-term view the index values are compared to assess inflation or deflation in the field of individual purchase (e.g., Carmines & Woods 2004, 486).

Accordingly, the calculation of an index value sometimes means nothing more than equating a certain figure with “100” at a certain point in time, and expressing changes in subsequent periods relative to 100 for purposes of comparison. For instance, where the daily TV viewing time in one community is 220 minutes, we could equate this figure with an index value of 100; the next measurement after some time may yield a mean value of 231 minutes which would be expressed by an index value of 105. The advantage of comparing data starting with a standardized value such as 100 is a simplified interpretation (in our case an increase of 5 percent relative to the earlier measurement).

In empirical research, the meaning of the term “index” goes far beyond statistical transformations. Moreover, the term is sometimes used interchangeably with “scale” to refer to an instrument that consists of different indicators for measuring a more comprehensive concept. The index value, then, represents a single figure that is expected to express the score of a single case under study with respect to this concept. To distinguish an index from scales in general, Sullivan (2001, 160) pointed out that scales are usually a multiple-item measuring device in which a built-in intensity structure or even an inherent order among the items exists.

### **CONSTRUCTING A SCALE AND CALCULATING A SUMMARY SCORE**

The *five main steps* in the construction of a composite measure like a scale or an index are (1) item selection, (2) the examination of empirical relationships among these items, (3) their condensation in a summary score, (4) the treatment of missing data, and (5) the validation of the entire measurement (see Babbie 2002, 149–163). It is important to note that for a proper calculation of index as well as scale values, measurement needs to fulfill some basic requirements that must already have been taken into account during the process of scale construction (Dunn-Rankin et al. 2004).

The range of possible answers should be similar for all items related to the concept. If, for instance, all answers are recorded on a five-point scale, it is easier to summarize these items than in a measurement where indicators include dichotomous or nominal variables as well. In the latter case it would be necessary to standardize the number of categories for each variable to the same range because otherwise variables with a higher range acquire a higher weighting within the index value. But weighting a variable higher than another one should always derive from theoretical considerations and not from question wording (on item weighting, see Sullivan 2001, 166–167).

The two dominant ways to calculate an index value refer to addition or multiplication procedures. The difference is obvious: within an additive index all partial scores can be replaced by scores for another item, because it is irrelevant to the final score which of the single items have contributed to the overall score. By multiplying item scores, the distribution of the final score becomes more volatile: first, a larger number of high item scores exponentially increase the overall score; and second, by including zero in the range of item values, higher scores on these items become a prerequisite for an overall score different from zero. Multiplication thus allows for defining necessary conditions among a set of items within an index.

No matter which procedure is applied, a multiple-indicator measure produces, strictly speaking, ordinal variables that are usually treated as interval/ratio variables in statistics (Bryman & Cramer 1995, 66; Sullivan 2001, 162). But still the allocation of high and low values needs to be meaningful for the concept underlying the summary score. The case is given when the scale consists of, for example, a set of different media that can be available within a household, and the additive index (in this case, the number of media available) is supposed to express media supply. In other cases it may be easy to calculate a score by summing up any ratings but difficult to interpret the meaning of the composite score later on.

Composing a summary score is a convenient way to transform sophisticated measurements of a complex concept into a single value. This becomes particularly relevant if this concept should be included in additional calculations involving a whole set of variables (e.g., multivariate procedures), in which case it is often essential to draw upon singular interval/ratio variables. However, the concept is thus reduced to one dimension, which might be appropriate only for selected research designs.

### **SCALES FOR RELEVANT CONCEPTS IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

The most important decision in the process of scaling refers to determining the operational → definition of a concept or, more precisely, the indicators that stand for the concept (Bryman & Cramer 1995, 62–63). In contrast to other academic disciplines such as psychology, there is no strong tradition of scale development and testing in media and communication research. If the same concepts are used over and over again for research, it is obviously advantageous to have a set of standardized measures at one's disposal that can be assumed to produce valid data (Sullivan 2001, 163). As a consequence, lists and handbooks of scales are widespread and easily available in other disciplines.

Up to now, this has not been the case in the field of media and communication studies. The only sourcebook of general communication research measures dates from 1994 and was edited by Rubin et al. They collected 62 profiles of measures they claimed were commonly used for research in the field, including interpersonal, instructional, mass, and organizational communication. All descriptions include the exact wording of the scale, data on its validity and reliability, and references to further application. As most of the original research in this volume was conducted in the 1980s, most of the scales are no longer adequate for current research instruments. A more recent sourcebook collected instruments particularly for the measurement of nonverbal measures (Manusov 2004).

Consequently, media and communication researchers often are on their own in finding or developing operational definitions of the concepts relevant to their topic (Bryman

2004, 66). Item sources for multiple-item measures are previous research, judgments of experts, opinions of the individuals who are the focus of the research, and of course the researcher's knowledge and one's own imagination (Sullivan 2001, 165–166).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Coding ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Definition ▶ Meaning  
▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology  
▶ Reliability ▶ Scales ▶ Survey ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Validity

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## **Scandalization in the News**

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Scandalization in the news refers to the apparent tendency for news content to focus on material exposing the foibles and misdemeanors of fellow citizens, especially the rich, famous, and powerful. Scandals themselves have an ancient pedigree. The original Greek terms, the noun “skandalon” and the verb “skandalizein,” refer to a spring-trap for prey, recalling the Indo-Germanic root “skand,” meaning to spring or leap. “Scandal” was used in a figurative way in the Christian Bible to describe a trap, an obstacle, or a cause of moral stumbling.

Communication scholars have focused on understanding the relationship between scandal and the media. They have developed explanations related to the transformations wrought partly by changes in communication technology, including the development of a highly competitive news market and new forms of visibility and “publicness” in the contemporary world, creating opportunities as well as risks for public figures (→ Public Opinion). They have linked these explanations to those derived from social theory, explored most thoroughly in John Thompson’s work (2000).

Communication researchers have examined a number of factors contributing to the focus of news media on scandal and particularly political scandals, namely, news economy, culture, and ideology. Scholars also have debated the reasons for the prevalence in the late twentieth century of political scandal reporting, with its normative issues concerning the wider impact on trust in politicians and implications for the health of democratic politics (→ Media Production and Content).

### NEWS ECONOMY, CULTURE, AND IDEOLOGY

Economics have been considered a primary driver of scandalization in the news (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). Protess et al. (1991) attribute the development of the investigative tradition in American media after Watergate to market considerations (→ Investigative Reporting). In a fragmented and fiercely competitive news market, scandal sells. Scandals provide the mix of ingredients found to attract audiences. They are vivid, racy, dramatic, and compelling. However, there is also evidence that scandal coverage creates relatively small shifts in audience size, inflating readership and audience viewing figures in the context of a stagnating if not diminishing news audience (Sabato et al. 2001; → Soft News).

One of the configuring elements of news culture is the set of *news values* driving coverage of events (→ News Factors; News Values). The media’s news values have long been skewed toward reporting the unusual and negative, and scandal news can be considered a subset of negative reporting (→ Negativity). It generally consists in an initial labeling of behavior considered transgressive of social norms, phases of revelation, expression of disapproval, dramatization, and, finally, outcomes. The response contributes to the constitution of the scandal and takes the form of language expressed in public implying that the action is shameful or disgraceful.

To narrate the story, journalists try to create a coherent whole, ordering facts and events within a cogent logic of space and time adjusted to the rhythms of media production (→ News Routines). First, to create compelling, meaningful stories, characters are identified in terms of villains and victims. Second, a plot or storyline is created. The plot is related, third, to drama in which moral language is used to characterize the wrongdoing for the audience. Scandal stories establish patterns of the acceptable, creating a contemporary form of morality tale. Scandal news mediates values through the exposition of wrongdoing and its consequences. Like morality tales, news about scandal implicitly recommends certain kinds of choice and action to members of the audience.

News culture in part constitutes and constrains what might be considered scandalous. For example, the abundance of political sexual scandal news in Anglo-American reporting is not because their politicians are more prone to certain kinds of behavior, but

because of different assumptions about morality and the roles of journalists in different societies (Canel & Sanders 2006; → Journalists' Role Perception).

Scandal reporting fits an ideological understanding of news as a “*journalism of outrage*” and journalists' roles as comprising a fourth estate, where reporters claim to seek to reveal wrongdoing and bring about change (Protest et al. 1991). It is the kind of journalism for which Watergate stands as the paradigm (→ Watergate Scandal). Scandal disclosure is considered as a subset of investigative journalism. Often presented as a cornerstone of liberal democracies (Schultz 1998), the watchdog function of the fourth estate has developed as an informal regulatory principle for the practice of journalism in democracies since the Enlightenment. What we might call the high-minded view of scandal coverage considers it to be part of the press watchdog function with positive consequences for liberal democracy.

### REASONS FOR SCANDALIZATION OF POLITICAL NEWS

Notwithstanding this lofty vision of the purpose of scandal reporting, there is a considerable body of research suggesting that in the 1990s the news media became particularly fixated on political scandal coverage to the exclusion of more serious political reporting (Tumber & Waisbord 2004; → News Sources; Political Communication). Apart from the economic and ideological factors already referred to, there are several reasons for this. *First*, reporting scandal upsets the sometimes cozy world of political reporting, disrupting the normal pattern of what Bennett (1990) has described as the “indexing” of coverage to the range of views expressed by mainstream government sources. The reporter can be more autonomous and seem more powerful.

*Second*, the potential for scandal increases in an environment where all public figures must radically “go public” and the realm of the private seems to disappear from view. Thompson's social theory of scandal (2000) locates the power of political scandals in their ability to damage reputation and undermine trust, both of which comprise the necessary symbolic capital of contemporary public figures. Political scandal strikes at the root of symbolic power because of the conditions of mediated visibility in which public figures must operate.

*Third*, reporting of politics takes place in a crowded field of news and entertainment outlets vying for the audience's attention. Scandal is often more entertaining than much political reporting, puncturing the carefully contrived image and performance of public figures. Political scandal provides a moment when politicians suddenly seem real.

*Finally*, the media have an expanded capacity to record symbolic content – phone intercepts, Internet postings of original documents, the televising of President Clinton's claim that “I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Miss Lewinsky” – giving them a central role in creating the compelling narratives of political scandal and thus becoming powerful independent actors in the political system. The Clinton–Lewinsky saga showed, as Watergate and the Iran–Contra scandals had before, that political scandals can become global affairs and even the defining event of a politician's career.

It can be argued that political scandals provide a yardstick for the openness and accessibility of a specific political culture or, on the contrary, destroy the foundations of rational conversation about politics, turning citizens into the disillusioned spectators of a

freak show. Reporting that examines every nook and cranny of a politician's private life can, in the words of some American critics of the phenomenon, turn democracy into a kind of "peepshow" or soap opera (Sabato et al. 2001). It is certainly doubtful whether a constant diet of sexual scandal reporting contributes to the Habermasian ideal public sphere as the orienting place of unfettered, public rational discourse (→ Habermas, Jürgen; Public Sphere).

### SCANDAL NEWS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Scholars have advanced various approaches to understanding the apparent growth of scandalization in the news and its impact on civil society. One view suggests that scandals entertain, divert the populace, and cause inconvenience to public figures, but have no enduring consequences. This is difficult to sustain even on a parsimonious definition of "consequences." A second view considers the proliferation of scandal coverage as testimony to the decline of the public sphere (Patterson 1993). Survey data in liberal democracies indicate deepening public distrust of government and low esteem for politicians, and this is taken as grounds for considering that political scandals corrode trust and the health of the public sphere (→ Video Malaise). Critics see three processes at work, combining to convert politics into a spectator sport for a cynical public: *privatization of the public sphere*, i.e., distinctions are no longer drawn between what constitutes private affairs and public ones (Stanyer & Wring 2004); *tabloidization of news and the growth of infotainment*, i.e., issue-based, analytical reporting is replaced by sensational journalism (Sparks & Tulloch 2000) and the news is driven by entertainment values (→ Infotainment; Tabloidization); and *personalization of politics*, i.e., the decline of political parties and of the importance of ideology leads to an increasing emphasis on the personalities of public figures rather than the policies they advocate (Brants 1998).

There is some evidence that an increased diet of scandals is correlated with a *growing disillusionment with politics* (Kepplinger 1996). However, given the difficulty of establishing a causal connection between political scandals and loss of public confidence in politics and politicians, it could be argued that political scandals are symptoms of more deep-seated democratic malaises rather than the underlying causes of them. Furthermore, cross-national studies of scandalization in the news have alerted scholars to the danger of generalizing about news tendencies and effects on the evidence of one cultural context (Canel & Sanders 2006).

While economics and ideology may be two primary drivers, scholars have also examined scandal news as not only an economic or ideological epiphenomenon but also a *cultural form* (Erlich 1996; Lull & Hinerman 1997). Scandal news discloses information perceived as negative about an individual and/or institution, gives publicity to this information, and places it in a narrative frame (→ Framing of the News). In doing this, the media provide some knowledge of facts, but crucially they enact the drama of moral agency in stories that can become the stuff of social memory. The extraordinary ordinariness that scandals capture, their airing of moral dilemmas in personalized narratives, make them into particularly engaging events but, for these reasons too, on the whole, localized affairs. This is part of the reason why the form, style, and impact of scandalization in the news can be usefully examined by comparative research, since they



arise in and out of specific cultural contexts that are extremely influential in shaping the precise features of scandal and its impact.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Framing of the News  
▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Infotainment ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalists' Role Perception  
▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Negativity ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines  
▶ News Sources ▶ News Values ▶ Political Communication ▶ Public Opinion  
▶ Public Sphere ▶ Soft News ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Video Malaise ▶ Watergate Scandal

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# Scandinavian States: Media Systems

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The Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden are individually small but together have a population of more than 25 million people. Historically there are strong links between them and they have to a large extent a common history, which also includes much warfare up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The languages of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden are very similar, whereas those of Finland and Iceland are different from the others. The countries are socially homogeneous, but this is changing because of immigration, especially in metropolitan areas.

Nordic politics is characterized by strong parties and strong organizations. There is a clear left/right dimension in political preferences, but most countries are governed by middle-of-the-road politics. The Nordic political communication system has been characterized as democratic corporatist by Hallin & Mancini (2004), which means (1) a strong political media tradition, which originated in the press but also affects radio and television; (2) an independent journalistic profession devoted to political coverage; (3) acceptance of state intervention in media structure, but not in content.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORDIC MEDIA

A basic characteristic of the Nordic countries is a daily press that is highest in the world in terms of newspaper penetration. The first newspapers were published in the mid-seventeenth century, *Ordinari Post Tijdender* in Sweden (1645) and *Den Danske Mercurius* in Denmark (1660), both controlled by the monarch. It was over 100 years before the first newspapers were published in Norway (1763) and Finland (1771), and later still in Iceland (1910). The mass press developed in most Nordic countries in the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. The press gradually became affiliated to political parties, and in the early twentieth century a strong party press developed. Newspaper concentration and professional journalism weakened party ties in the 1960s (→ Newspaper, History of).

Radio was established under similar conditions in all Nordic countries in the early 1920s, mostly by local radio clubs. In the mid 1920s they were gradually replaced by a state-controlled radio organization. Radio was from its beginning financed by receiver license fees. Television, which began transmissions between 1951 (Denmark) and 1966 (Iceland), was originally organized as an extension of the radio and followed the concept of public service radio (→ Radio: Social History; Television: Social History).

During the 1980s → satellite television brought an end to the monopoly of the national public service. Private television gradually became accepted in all countries, first by satellite transmission, then as terrestrial broadcasting. The radio market was opened up

to independent stations in the 1980s. In the 1990s there were private radio and television channels in all the Nordic countries.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Media legislation is formally somewhat different between the Nordic countries, but they all have a strong tradition of *press freedom* (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The constitutions of all the countries guarantee press freedom: in Sweden it is regulated by a basic law originating from 1766; in Norway press freedom was introduced in 1814 as part of its first constitution; in Denmark laws enabling press freedom were enacted in the mid-nineteenth century. All the countries also have press laws dealing with, among other things, the responsibility of editors. In Norway there is a special law regulating market shares of newspaper, radio, and television companies.

Freedom is extended to the content of radio and television, and in Sweden this is allowed for in a basic law. The organizational and technical aspects are regulated by additional laws. The Internet is generally treated like the press, which means there is freedom to establish websites and no restrictions on content (→ Internet Law and Regulation). Laws also grant citizens access to public documents. In the Nordic countries there are voluntary systems for media accountability, normally an ethical code of conduct supervised by a press or media council, but the models are different in scope and organization.

## THE NEWSPAPER SYSTEM

Nordic newspapers play an important role in the societies as agenda setters in the political system: reading a newspaper is regarded as an expression of social participation. Newspapers are mainly locally or regionally based; in fact, only the so-called tabloid newspapers and business papers can be regarded as having a national readership. About 80 percent of the total circulation consists of subscribed papers based on home delivery. There are systems of press subsidies in all the countries except Denmark, but they generally play a minor role except for small newspapers (→ Subsidies for the Media).

There are about 85 *daily newspapers* (4–7 issues a week) in Sweden, 75 in Finland, 55 in Norway, 30 in Denmark, and 2 in Iceland. The total circulation varies from 1.3 million (Denmark) to 3.6 million (Sweden). The average circulation ranges from 30,000 (Norway) to 45,000 (Sweden). Both Finland and Norway have a strong non-daily press, normally very local newspapers, about 150 each, while Denmark differs in having about 300 free non-dailies. In all countries but Iceland there is a clear market differentiation between local or regional quality papers and national single-copy sale tabloids, the latter group being relatively weak in Denmark and Finland. The dailies with the highest circulation in Norway (*Verdens Gang*) and Sweden (*Aftonbladet*) are single-copy sale papers, while in Denmark (*Jyllandsposten*), Finland (*Helsingin Sanomat*), and Iceland (*Morgunbladid*) they are subscribed morning papers.

*Free dailies* play an important role in all the Nordic countries, except Norway. The first modern free daily in the world, the Stockholm *Metro*, started in 1995. The concept has developed and nowadays the newspaper with the largest reach in Iceland is a free daily (*Frettabladid*). In Sweden and Denmark especially they also have a high circulation even outside the metropolitan areas.

The total circulation of paid newspapers per 1,000 adults exceeds 600 for Norway and 500 for Finland and Sweden, whereas Iceland and particularly Denmark show somewhat lower figures: for dailies it ranges from 520 in Norway and around 400 in Finland and Sweden to 230 in Denmark. On an average day more than 80 percent of the adult population in the Nordic countries reads at least one newspaper, Norway, Finland, and Sweden reporting the highest figures of more than one. An important reason for the high penetration is that newspapers reach almost all social groups in society. If free dailies are included, the readership is even higher, since they are read mainly by nonreaders of the traditional paid papers, like young people and immigrants. While the Nordic countries still rank top in the world in terms of market penetration, a gradual decline has been observed for paid newspapers in all the countries.

Although newspapers have lost some of their dominance in the advertising market to television and direct mail they still have between 45 percent (Sweden) and 55 percent (Denmark, Finland, and Norway) of the advertising market (2005). The loss in share has been compensated by an increase in the total advertising market, due mainly to the introduction of commercial television. The free dailies have also taken a substantial share of the advertising market in most Nordic countries. In spite of this the traditional newspaper business is generally profitable (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media).

Newspaper concentration has increased. This is especially true for Denmark and Iceland, where a few actors dominate the scene, whereas local press chains are strong in Finland, Norway, and Sweden. In terms of ownership the Nordic region is increasingly regarded as one market. Two main newspaper companies in Norway and Sweden, Schibsted and Bonnier, have interests in most of the other Nordic countries as well as outside the region. Leading the market of free dailies is the Swedish Metro International, owned by among others the Modern Times Group (MTG). Most newspaper companies also have interests in other media. Foreign conglomerates have so far played a minor role (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

There is also a relatively strong → *magazine press* in the Nordic countries, especially in Denmark and Norway. Special magazines have a strong standing. In the magazine market the Danish companies Egmont and Aller and the Swedish Bonnier Group play an important role in most Nordic countries.

## THE RADIO SYSTEM

All Nordic countries have a “dual” radio system of public and commercial stations. Public service radio has maintained a majority share of the market – between 50 percent in Finland and Iceland and 65 percent in Denmark and Sweden – in competition with the private radio channels. *Public service radio* consists of two to four national channels, for news and public affairs, classical music and pop music, and regional or local stations focusing on news. It is financed mainly by receiver license fees, except in Iceland where → advertising is permitted.

The monopoly for public service radio was abolished in the 1980s. At first private radio concessions were restricted to local stations, both nonprofit stations operated by local organizations as community radio and commercial stations. Gradually stations with national distribution were also permitted, like the Icelandic Bylgjan (established in 1986)

and the Norwegian P4 in 1993. Sweden is the only country with no nationwide private radio channel, but local stations with the same owner have formed networks to attract national advertising. The content profiles of public service and private radio are different: Public service radio is more oriented to discussion programs, whereas the latter focus on popular music. In most countries the concessions for private radio contain some requirements regarding the programming, mainly news or a certain amount of local coverage.

In most Nordic countries *commercial radio* has faced economic problems. The cost of the concessions has been relatively high whereas radio's share of the advertising market is only about 3 percent, which is clearly below the European average. The problems have affected mainly local stations, while some national channels have been somewhat better off. The Icelandic market differs from the other countries, with radio advertising having a share of more than 10 percent. The private radio stations are mainly owned by either national multimedia companies or international companies specializing in radio, e.g., the multi-national Scandinavian Broadcasting System (SBS), which is active in most Nordic countries, and the French NRJ.

The share of the population that listens to radio on an average day is about 70–80 percent in all countries and the average listening time more than two hours. Even though public service radio still holds a strong position, in general, its audience is predominantly elderly people, while young people listen mostly to commercial radio. Analogue distribution is still the dominant form in Nordic radio, but most radio broadcasters also transmit digital signals – online or via DAB or DVB. The experiments with DAB and DVB have been carried out mainly by the public service broadcasters.

## THE TELEVISION SYSTEM

Television in the Nordic countries was from its start heavily regulated. However, from the late 1980s a dual system gradually developed. Satellite and cable channels were permitted and were later followed by concessions for private national television (→ Cable Television). Finland is an exception because of its acceptance of private television from the start in 1957, as a time slot on the public service channel. In the late 1980s private television started the first channel of its own and later established an independent private network.

*Public service television* started as one-channel systems financed mainly by receiver license fees, but in Iceland advertising was also permitted. A second channel was introduced in Finland and Sweden in the 1960s, and in Denmark and Norway in the mid-1990s as part of public service broadcasting. Iceland still has only one public service channel. In Denmark a second channel was established in 1988. It was organized as an independent public service company (TV2), originally financed by both receiver license fees and advertising, and also given responsibility for regional television.

The five public service companies – *Danmarks Radio* (DR) in Denmark, *Yleisradio* (YLE) in Finland, *Ríkisúdvarpid* (RÚV) in Iceland, *Norsk Rikskringkasting* (NRK) in Norway, and *Sveriges Television* (SVT) in Sweden – have a strong position in Nordic television. They broadcast two national channels each, except RÚV, and have developed new, often specialist, channels as part of their adaptation to the digital transmission system. Their audience share varies from about 35 percent in Iceland and about 45 percent in Finland and Norway, to 70 percent in Denmark if DR and TV2 are considered together.

The *commercial television sector* in the Nordic countries consists of three types of channels: (1) terrestrial channels licensed by the government and financed by advertising; (2) satellite channels financed by advertising; and (3) satellite channels financed mainly by subscription fees. From the start of private television there has been at least one nationwide terrestrial channel in each country, the Danish channel being built on a network of ten local stations that together do not reach the whole population. The main satellite channels reach almost two-thirds of the population. The largest satellite network is TV3 (two channels in Denmark, one each in Norway and Sweden), broadcasting from the United Kingdom. Some of the private terrestrial TV companies have introduced specialist channels via satellite and cable.

The content profile of the public service channels is a broad public service offering both fact and fiction, but especially strong on news and public affairs. The national private channels that have a concession from the government also carry news and deal with public affairs. The strictly commercial channels offer mostly fiction including very short news updates. Local television is broadcast by both public service and private channels.

The economy of television has been quite strong for the national commercial channels, but weak for channels based on satellite broadcasting. Television's share of media advertising is between 20 and 25 percent and it is increasing. The actors in the area of nationwide private television are the main media companies of the individual countries: SanomaWSOY and Nordic Broadcasting in Finland, Schibsted in Norway, and Bonnier in Sweden. Denmark is an exception since the multinational SBS controls its semi-national private TV network. In the satellite sector the dominant companies are the Swedish MTG (TV3, TV1000, and the Viasat channels) and SBS.

Almost every Nordic household has access to public service television, about half to cable, and 15 to 30 percent have a satellite dish, except in Iceland which has a lower figure. Daily reach of television is about 70–80 percent of the population in all countries. The viewing time per day is quite low compared with other countries, with an average of 150–170 minutes per day. Among the foreign channels with the widest reach in the Nordic region are Eurosport, MTV, and Discovery, which broadcast in most Nordic languages. Analogue transmissions are gradually being phased out. In Finland all terrestrial channels will be broadcasting digitally in 2007, and in Sweden in 2008. In Denmark and Norway total digitization is scheduled for 2009. Digitization will increase the number of specialist channels (→ Digitization and Media Convergence).

## **INTERNET AND OTHER NEW MEDIA**

The penetration of the → Internet in the Nordic countries is generally high. Household access varies between about 70 percent in Finland and about 85 percent in Iceland, compared to the European average of less than 50 percent (2005). The expansion has been part of the increased interest in all types of new media technology. The dissemination has been especially rapid in the urban areas and among the youth. Use of the Internet on an average day is somewhat lower than the penetration of about 50 percent, and is mainly at the workplace. Home use has increased because of extended broadband access: in 2005 broadband access in the Nordic countries exceeded 50 percent when the average for Europe was under 25 percent (→ Exposure to the Internet; Digital Divide).

In the Nordic countries all the main media established themselves early on the Internet. In the second half of the 1990s almost all Nordic newspapers were established online. Newspapers have developed different models to reach a large audience at reasonable cost. The sites are financed by advertising. Experiments with subscription fees have been abandoned, except for certain areas like news from the stock exchange or weight-watcher clubs. Most newspapers sites have meant economic losses for the publishing companies, even though recent years have seen a positive advertising trend. The main media companies have developed new Internet services. The Norwegian company Schibsted has generated an increasing share of its profit from Internet operations in the Nordic countries and internationally (→ Online Media).

Nordic Internet users have a strong preference for newspaper reading on the Internet. About 40 percent of the population in Denmark, Finland, and Sweden read such papers regularly, and 60 percent in Iceland and Norway, compared to listening to music, which amounts to an average of 25 percent, or web radio or web TV, with about 20 percent. The areas of fastest growth in Internet use are in other services, like banking.

### CHARACTER OF MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Since the late 1980s the Nordic media system has been characterized by gradual *fragmentation*. It is most obvious for television, where the market share for public service decreased from 97 to under 40 percent in fewer than 15 years. Trends in radio are not that dramatic, and public service radio still attracts the majority of listeners. Free dailies have meant an expansion in newspaper readership, but also had a negative impact on the paid newspaper market. The other side of fragmentation is a strong “age segregation” in media habits (→ Audience Segmentation).

A second characteristic is the strong increase of the *role of entertainment* and fictional content in all media. In the 1970s Nordic media still had strong profiles in news, public affairs, political debate, and documentaries, but the opening of the market during the 1980s changed the pattern, and increasing media competition has reinforced this development.

Another characteristic is the *rapid dissemination of the Internet*. Research shows that the Internet, so far at least, is a reading medium, which is probably due to the strong presence of newspapers on the Internet. It is difficult to draw any conclusions so far about the effects of the Internet on the printed press. The declining newspaper circulation may reflect competition but is also related to a price increase in newspapers, which may have increased interest in online newspapers and in free dailies.

A final observation is that advertising plays a much more important role for media development in the Nordic countries than it did three decades ago. The advertising market has expanded, but this has been mainly to the benefit of television and direct mail, while the traditional newspapers have lost a substantial share of the advertising market. This has forced newspapers to rationalize their operations and to increase cooperation, leading to a new wave of newspaper concentration, which may, at least in the long run, also change one of the basic features of the Nordic media system (→ Advertising, Economics of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cable Television ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the

Media ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Online Media ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Subsidies for the Media ▶ Television: Social History

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## **Schemas**

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Our mental architecture is shaped in a way that helps us to deal with our complex environment. Since much of our everyday behavior and many of our experiences are repetitive and routine, our knowledge of regular aspects of the world can be organized in a highly structured way. One important theory about the organization of information in long-term memory is “schema theory” (→ Information Processing).

Schemas (also sometimes called “schemata”) are long-term memory structures (→ Memory). They are networks of concepts that organize past experiences. By representing general knowledge about concepts, objects, events, etc. in a certain area of reality, schemas



give a framework to interpret current experiences. The following summarizes the characteristics of schemas.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHEMAS

(1) A schema can be thought of as an abstract pattern onto which information can be mapped. Schemas consist of different components, including specification about the relationships among the components and slots for all components that can assume different values, as well as default values. (2) One schema can be embedded in another schema and can itself contain sub-schemas. Relationships among these may be considered to be like webs; thus, each one is interconnected with a number of others. (3) Schemas represent episodic as well as generic knowledge. (4) Schemas represent knowledge in very different domains. (5) Schemas are neither fixed nor immutable but can constantly be adjusted to new information and experiences. As schemas evolve with experience, they can develop to include more components and more specificity; they can be added to other schemas. Normally, new information is processed according to how it fits into existing schemas, but schemas may also be reorganized when new information makes it necessary to restructure the concept. (6) Schemas are generally thought to have an activation level that can spread among related schemas. The current level of activation influences how easily a schema comes to mind (accessibility). The more a schema is used, the higher its level of activation; thus experience and expertise may influence the level of activation and accessibility. The spread of activation is the cause of priming effects (→ Priming Theory).

The *original concept* of schemas is linked with the ideas and work of Selz and Bartlett. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the German psychologist Otto Selz came up with one of the fundamental ideas of cognitive psychology (→ Psychology in Communication Processes). To solve a problem requires understanding of it. To understand the problem, one must be able to relate the current situation to a past situation. Given a problem, the cognitive system must recognize that the situation presented by the problem can be described by a known schema and search long-term memory for an adequate schema. Given access to an adequate schema, a solution can be found.

In the 1930s, while working on constructive memory, Frederic Bartlett found empirical support for the idea of schemas in a series of memory experiments (→ Experiment, Laboratory). Bartlett presented the participants with information that was unfamiliar to their cultural backgrounds and expectations. In his most famous experiment the participants read a Native American folk tale “The war of the ghosts.” Then they were asked to recall details of the presented information several times. Typical errors in this task indicated that the participants transformed the content and style of the story in such a way as to align those features with their own cultural norms and expectations. Subjects “remembered” details of stories that were not actually there, omitted information that was considered irrelevant, transformed the order of events, and reinterpreted those facets of the story that did not make sense to them in order to make them more coherent and comprehensible. On the basis of these findings, Bartlett suggested that memory takes the form of schemas.

## THE FUNCTION OF SCHEMAS IN INFORMATION PROCESSING

Schemas play a role in top-down processing by providing a mental framework for understanding and remembering information. They are vehicles for comprehension, storage, and recall of information. By simplifying the world around us, schemas reduce the need to remember huge amounts of information and influence perception, memory, and recall. In *perception*, schemas are important for the assimilation of new information because they supply a framework into which it can be fitted, i.e., they work to recognize and process input. Schemas also provide the organizational foundation for the storage of *memories*. When we learn something new that we interpret to be related to pre-existing schemas, we integrate the gained knowledge into those pre-existing schemas. Faced with new information that does not fit into existing schemas, we may reorganize the existing schemas in such a way so as to re-establish consistency.

In *recall*, schemas provide the rules for arranging memories and also provide default values for filling out the “what must have been” for any gaps. Due to these processes, we are more likely to remember things that are consistent with our schemas. Beyond this, in most everyday situations information processing can be done without effort, and people can quickly organize new perceptions into existing schemas, predict new situations, and act effectively (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction; Mindlessness and Automaticity).

According to schema theory, the learner actively builds schemas and may reconstruct them in light of new information. Each individual’s schemas depend on that person’s experiences and cognitive processes (→ Cognition). Learning is explained as involving three different processes: accretion, tuning, and restructuring (Rumelhart & Norman 1978). In accretion, learners take the new input and assimilate it into one of their existing schemas without making any changes to its structure. Tuning is the adjustment of knowledge to a specific task, usually through practice, when learners realize that their existing schema is inadequate for the new knowledge and modify their existing schema accordingly. Restructuring is the process of creating a new schema that addresses the inconsistencies between the old schema and the newly acquired information.

## EFFECTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Since schemas affect how we perceive, notice, and interpret information, they may bias the encoding of information. Since we tend to pay attention to schema-consistent information, the uptake of new information incoherent with existing schemas may be inhibited (→ Selective Attention; Selective Exposure). Information that does not fit into existing schemas may not be comprehended, or may not be comprehended correctly (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Cognitive Dissonance Theory). Prejudices are typical schema-based errors (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication). Existing stereotypes, which are special forms of schemas (→ Information Processing: Stereotypes; Social Stereotyping and Communication), may lead an individual to “recognize” or “remember” something that has not happened because there is no information about the single case or because this is more coherent with the existing schema.

Schema theory has numerous *implications for designing communication processes*. Schema theory stresses the role of prior knowledge in knowledge acquisition. In order to process information effectively, existing schemas related to the new content need to be activated. Correspondingly, activating a learner's schema enables them to better process the information that they are perceiving. There are many (instructional) tools that can help make connections between existing schemas and new information, such as the use of meaningful titles or visuals in texts, the use of familiar scenarios or examples, the use of analogies and comparison, or the use of multiple perspectives. Another important implication of schema theory is the recognition of the role that culture and experience play in processing information. Research on novice versus expert performance suggests that the nature of expertise is largely due to the possession of schemas that guide perception and problem-solving (Chi et al. 1988).

In the context of mass communication studies, schema theory gains relevance when analyzing processes or effects of media exposure (→ Exposure to Communication Content). Beyond this, it seems plausible that while using mass media, people may develop “media schemas” that may include evaluations of media credibility, intelligibility, etc. These “media schemas” may substantially influence the acquisition of knowledge from the media and attitudes toward media (Watts et al. 1999).

Schema theory has a strong influence in cognitive science, learning theory, reading theory, and related areas. Schema-like constructs form the basis of many theoretical considerations about cognitive processes, including Shank's concept of → scripts and Minsky's frame concept (→ Framing Effects) as well as instructional theories (→ Educational Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cognition ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes ▶ Memory ▶ Mindlessness and Automaticity ▶ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Scripts ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication

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# Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction

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Knowledge structures are mental representations of regularities believed to exist in social situations and people's dispositions and behaviors. Specifically, knowledge structures are generalized characterizations of some social entity or experience. Knowledge structures are also commonly referred to as → schemas. Scripts, plans, prototypes, and memory organization packets (MOPS) are among the different types of knowledge structures or schemas (→ Scripts). If communication is conceptualized as a prediction activity, then knowledge structures serve as a database of social information on which people can base their predictions of how to interact with others. Knowledge structures are a means for people to anticipate their own interaction goals and the goals of others, interpersonal behaviors, and outcomes that are likely to occur in social interactions. The manner in which people perceive social situations is influenced by knowledge structures. People view interactions in a manner that is consistent with their pre-existing expectations. Additionally, a priori explanations of situations are based on schematically organized knowledge. For any specific social interaction, it is likely that multiple knowledge structures are activated.

## TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES

Knowledge structures or schemas organize knowledge about people, situations, and action sequences hierarchically, with abstract knowledge at the top of the hierarchies and more concrete knowledge at the bottom. For example, a *person schema* might include abstract personality descriptors such as “dominant” or “introverted.” Nested below these abstract elements might be concrete behaviors that are associated with the abstract element. Such concrete behaviors as “talks loudly,” “interrupts others often,” and “never stops talking” might be associated with “dominant.” These hierarchical representations are created to facilitate perception, explanation, and evaluation of experience.

*Self-schemas* are simplified characterizations of the self-concept. The self-concept consists of all information relevant to the self. Autobiographical information, personality traits, and social roles such as student, father, senior citizen, or male are elements that

may comprise the self-concept. Self-schemas are a function of patterns imposed on the self-concept (→ Information Processing: Self-Concept). If a summary of autobiographical memories reveals a pattern of shyness, then self as shy is a likely component of the corresponding self-schema. Scripts organize knowledge about event sequences. For example, an initial interaction script typically consists of the exchange of names and basic sociological information such as occupation. Disclosure of highly intimate information typically violates the initial interaction script that many people hold (Douglas 1994).

Person schemas are generalizations of the traits and behaviors for specific people like a college roommate or boss. *Role schemas* are generalizations that are held regarding sociological classifications such as race, class, occupation, and sex. Stereotypes and prejudices such as those based on race or sex fall into the category of role schemas (→ Information Processing: Stereotypes). Relational schemas are employed to make sense of friendships as well as family, professional, and romantic relationships (→ Relational Schemas). Given a relational schema, for each relationship type, people have general expectations of what should occur and how the relationship should function.

### MEMORY ORGANIZATION PACKETS

MOPs consist of a series of conventional scenes that are expected during a culturally defined episode. Examples of such episodes are initial interactions with strangers, small talk at parties, encounters with peers at work, and first date conversation. Schank (1982) proposed the MOP construct in an effort to represent human knowledge organization in the domain of artificial intelligence. In the field of communication, Kellermann (1995) was the first to employ the notion of MOPs in her work concerning the usual phases during initial interactions. MOPs are hierarchical structures that are composed of scenes and scripts. Scenes are more general than scripts and are therefore more flexible. Scenes contain information regarding the general behavior necessary to achieve a goal.

Kellermann demonstrated that initial interactions contain scenes such as greeting, introduction, and good-byes. The scenes of *greeting and good-byes*, however, are not unique to the culturally defined episode of an initial interaction. In fact, these scenes are likely elements in a MOP for small talk at a party or a reunion with a former classmate. Scripts, on the other hand, detail more specific behaviors associated with goal achievement. For instance, an initial interaction can happen in several contexts, such as networking at a professional conference, a dinner party, or a job interview. Although these different initial interaction contexts have the greeting scene in common, the specific script employed during the greeting scene will differ due to the distinctive features of the interaction context.

In addition to Kellermann's work on MOPs in initial interactions, Honeycutt and Cantrill (2001) have employed the MOP concept to explain the phases of intimate relationship growth and decay. People have cognitive expectations for the progression and decay of romantic relationships. These expectations are based on people's MOPs for each phase of a relationship. For example, when intimacy is escalating in a budding romance, people tend to expect scenes such as self-disclosure, dating, and meeting the parents.

## KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES AND INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Although multiple knowledge structures are likely to be activated in a particular social interaction with a conversational partner, there are three structures that are essential elements in the construction of generalized patterns of interaction for a specific conversational partner: *self-schema*, *other-schema*, and an *interpersonal script*. When people interact with a conversational partner, their perceptions, goals, and explanations of the other's behavior are based upon a generalized view of self, generalized views of their conversational partner, and the interpersonal scripts appropriate for the partner. The other schema can be a person schema or role schema or combination of the two schema types.

An interpersonal script is an explanatory pattern based on the history of interactions with a specific conversational partner. For instance, friends who have a history of absolute honesty even in face-threatening situations will have an interpersonal script that includes frank expression of opinions. The combination of interpersonal script and self- and other-schema composes a relational schema. As relationships develop over time, a relational schema is constructed (Baldwin 1992; Planalp 1987). Just as with any knowledge structure, relational schemas impact a person's perception of a relationship (→ Communication: Relationship Rules). Additionally, relational schemas influence the nature of explanations generated to comprehend events that occur in the context of the relationship.

## KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES, PERCEPTIONS, AND EXPLANATIONS

Schemas influence the perception and interpretation of social interactions. People see events and behaviors that are consistent with the expectations derived from their knowledge structures (→ Information Processing; Selective Attention). Interpretation of ambiguous information can be influenced by the schema associated with the information. Trope (1986) asked study participants to interpret the expressions of human faces (→ Facial Expressions). All participants viewed pictures with ambiguous expressions. Participants' interpretations of the facial expressions were based on the script that accompanied the picture. When participants were told that the person in the photograph was being threatened by a vicious dog, the expression was interpreted as fear. On the other hand, when the participants were told that the person in the photograph had just won some money, the expression was viewed as happiness. So ultimately expectations for a social interaction are based on the schemas that are activated at the time. For example, if the interpersonal schema for interactions with a co-worker is that of uncomfortable, contentious conversations, then subsequent interpersonal exchanges with that co-worker are more likely viewed as conflict laden, even if there is no apparent basis for conflict in the comments made by the co-worker.

Pre-existing knowledge structures prompted by a social situation will influence subsequent explanation of the event and the behaviors of people involved. For example, late nights at the office and an increased concern with personal appearance are associated with the "cheating spouse" schema. If a spouse is already viewed as a possible cheater, then the perception that the spouse has been "distant and uncharacteristically quiet" will be explained by the "cheating spouse" schema instead of an alternate one such as that of the "overworked and exhausted" spouse.

### **ANTICIPATORY AND ONLINE PLANNING**

Planning prior to an interaction can lead to more effective and efficient communication. Waldron and Lavitt (2000) compared the anticipatory planning behaviors of people enrolled in a welfare-to-work program. Enrollees who obtained and maintained employment were inclined to develop more complex job interview plans than enrollees who did not obtain and maintain employment. Additionally, pre-interaction planning is associated with increased verbal fluency. Planning can occur during a conversation, or online. When people plan online, there is an increase in their cognitions about goals and plans regarding the current conversation.

Waldron (1990) recorded participants taking part in a conversation and subsequently asked them to review the video tape of their conversation. While watching the tape, participants were told to document the thoughts they had during the conversation. Content analysis of participants' thoughts revealed that a substantial portion were regarding conversational goals and plans that could facilitate goal achievement. Furthermore, online planning during a conversation is associated with effective communication. Waldron and Applegate (1994) documented the communication behavior and plans of people who took part in a verbal disagreement. People who had more complex plans and edited during their interaction utilized more competent conflict tactics than those who did not have such complex plans and took part in less editing.

### **IMPACT OF PRECONSCIOUS ACTIVATION OF KNOWLEDGE STRUCTURES ON SOCIAL INTERACTION**

There may be more or less conscious awareness of the operation of knowledge structures in social interaction. Regardless of the degree of consciousness of the goal prompted by a knowledge structure, the process underlying the pursuit of an interpersonal goal is the same. Chartrand and Bargh (1996) demonstrated that regardless of whether the goal of impression formation was prompted with explicit instructions or a prime, the subsequent behavior prompted by the goal, or the basic process of impression formation, did not differ.

Automaticity of knowledge structure activation not only impacts perceptions and explanations but also influences the likelihood of the performance of behaviors consistent with the knowledge structure (→ Automaticity). Knowledge structures such as personality traits and stereotypes can become active automatically in the presence of relevant behavior or the stereotyped group. Bargh et al. (1996) found that participants primed with the trait concept of rudeness were more likely to exhibit rude behaviors toward the experimenter. Additionally, these investigators demonstrated that participants who were primed with an elderly stereotype walked more slowly than did participants in the comparison group. So, when activated at low levels of conscious awareness, schemas increase the likelihood that people will exhibit traits and behaviors associated with the other-schema for their conversational partner.

Interpersonal goals can be activated by the psychological presence of a relational partner (Fitzsimons & Bargh 2003). To state this differently, physical presence is not a necessary condition for a relational schema to impact the social perception process or

subsequent explanations of social interactions. Relational partners function as a private audience and bring to mind standards that people are obliged to meet. Baldwin et al. (1990) found that graduate students provided harsher evaluations of their own work after they were exposed to a subliminally presented picture of their scowling department chair. So, although self-, other-, and interaction schemas are likely to impact perceptions and expectations of interpersonal interactions, relational schemas for people that are not present for a specific social interaction can impact social cognitive processes as well.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Automaticity ▶ Communication: Relationship Rules ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Processing: Self-Concept ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes ▶ Relational Schemas ▶ Schemas ▶ Scripts ▶ Selective Attention

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## Schemas and Media Effects

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According to schema theory, the encoding and processing of information depends on learned, relatively stable cognitive structures in long-term memory, so called → schemas (Information Processing). These cognitive structures include knowledge about concepts, persons, events, and the self. When individuals encounter a stimulus, they search their minds for the appropriate schema to match the stimulus. The selected schema then structures the way the stimulus is interpreted. Because individuals use their prior knowledge to process and to understand the stimuli, schema theory is an example of top-down or concept-driven processing.

This basic idea of schemas can be traced back to the philosopher Immanuel Kant, who proposed the existence of innate structures that guide us to perceive the world (→ Perception). The scientific concept, however, was introduced by British psychologist Sir Frederic Bartlett in 1932. Bartlett investigated the recall of folktales and he observed that individuals’ understanding of the tales was shaped by their expectations. He concluded that individuals have substantive numbers of mental structures that are responsible for the schematized errors in the recall of those tales. Because Bartlett’s schema construct was not compatible with the dominant paradigm in psychology in the 1930s, the concept needed another 40 years until it re-emerged as a dominant theory in the 1970s. The term “frame” (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News) is often used synonymously. Scripts, which are a subclass of schemas, are used to account for sequences of actions (→ Scripts).

Schemas are believed to have a hierarchical structure with more abstract and general information at the top and more specific categories at lower levels. A schema is always connected to other schemas in a web of associations (Taylor & Crocker 1981). When a stimulus activates a schema, this can activate other interconnected schemas. Although schemas can vary in their accessibility, they are long-term, relatively permanent structures that are capable of being searched, retrieved, and stored again (Rumelhart 1980).

### FUNCTIONS OF SCHEMAS

With regard to media effects, schemas have *three main functions* (Graber 1984; Taylor & Crocker 1981): *First*, they facilitate the processing of information because they enable

individuals to organize and retrieve information in a structured manner. Stable schemas lend a sense of order to our understanding of the world. If individuals shifted their schemas in response to any new information this order would be lost, and we would be unable to cope with our environment. *Second*, schemas determine which bits of information are perceived and processed by individuals. Schemas structure the way in which we perceive the world: when a message is matched against a schema, elements of the message are ordered in a manner that reflects the structure of the schema (Rumelhart 1980; → Media and Perceptions of Reality). According to schema theory, people are cognitive misers because they strive to process the incoming information economically. Therefore, people do not attend to all the information they are exposed to. When confronted with new, incoming information, people draw on their existing schemas to understand and to assimilate the message. When individuals cannot identify a schema to understand the message, either they can attempt to establish a new schema, or the information cannot be integrated. In fact, schema theory posits that schema-irrelevant information tends to be ignored, and will therefore not be memorized.

*Third* and last, schemas help individuals to fill in the gaps when information is incomplete. Individuals are likely to go beyond the information that is presented in the media because they draw inferences that are congruent with their pre-existing schemas. In this context, Minsky (1975) introduced the term “default values.” Schemas have slots that represent the information inside the schema. For instance, politicians are commonly believed to be well dressed, quick-witted, married, and conversant with politics. This politician schema would have four slots. If a media message will not provide information about one of these four slots (e.g., a politician’s marital status), the schema provides a default value, and the missing information will be automatically supplemented (i.e., individuals believe the politician is married).

## **A SCHEMA THEORY PERSPECTIVE ON MEDIA EFFECTS**

The most extensive application of schema theory in communication research concerns news reception and news effects. For any topic in the news, people have from none to many schemas. As Graber (1984) observed, people would not be able to tame the information tide without their schemas. Schema theory helps to explain how people represent the public agenda, learn from the news, resist media information, and change their existing attitudes (→ News Processing and Retention; Media Effects).

### **Schemas and Agenda Setting**

From a schema theory perspective, issues can be understood as individual schemas. These schemas are stored in long-term memory; they can be retrieved and made salient by media coverage (Roessler 1999). The importance that individuals attach to public issues is determined not only by the amount of media coverage but also by individual schemas. Individuals do not simply count how often an issue occurs in the media and assess issue importance from the simple number of counts.

An → agenda-setting effect can be described as an interaction between individual schemas and the amount of media coverage. According to schema theory, this effect

depends on two crucial features. First, the more frequently a schema is activated, the higher is its accessibility and the more likely are agenda-setting effects. Second, however, the amount of schema activation depends on the fit between the issue schema and the individual schema. If an issue corresponds to a recipient's individual schema, there will be a higher agenda-setting effect than with an ill-fitting schema (Tiele & Scherer 2004).

### **Schemas and Learning from the News**

Rumelhart (1980) suggests three broad processes of schema learning: *accretion*, *tuning*, and *restructuring*. Accretion refers to the accumulation of new information into an existing schema, following the schematic structure that is already present. This kind of learning allows the acquisition of large amounts of specific knowledge about a given topic. With regard to media effects, the process of accretion explains why prior knowledge is associated with greater learning. When individuals already possess schemas about a topic, they are more likely to understand the information because it can be easily integrated into an already existing structure. This should also lead to better recall of the information learned.

When there is no schema available into which the incoming information can be integrated, individuals cannot learn the information effectively (Rhee & Cappella 1997). If individuals are nevertheless willing to process and to understand the information, there must be a modification of existing schemas. This can be accomplished either by the tuning of an existing schema or by the creation of a new one (restructuring). The more schema-discrepant the incoming information is the greater is the necessity for change. If there is a rather small discrepancy, tuning may be sufficient. Tuning involves the gradual modification of a schema. This can occur by continuously upgrading it in the direction of the current experience, for instance by adding a new slot to the schema or by generalizing a schema to other situations (see also Scheufele 2004). However, when there is highly schema-discrepant information, the creation of a new schema is required. In the context of news reception, tuning and restructuring probably occur less frequently than accretion. The first two processes require a considerable amount of time and effort. Hence, individuals will mostly tend to ignore the information instead of restructuring their memory system (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

### **Schemas and Resistance to Change**

Information from the media becomes subject to a schematic filtering. Rarely do individuals process the new information in a neutral and unbiased manner. An activated schema directs attention to certain aspects of a message that are relevant to the schema. Schematic processing is the principal reason why individuals forget specific details of news reports and retain only global impressions: Individuals mainly extract personally relevant information that suits their personal schemas (Graber 1984). Thus, from a schema theory perspective, schema-inconsistent information will show weaker media effects than schema-consistent information (Shen 2004).

Resistance to schema change (→ Persuasion and Resistance) is contingent upon at least three other major factors (Crocker et al. 1984; Scheufele 2004): the *level of initial schema*

*development, the ambiguity or consonance of the incoming information, and the frequency of the inconsistent information.* For well-developed schemas, inconsistent information is confronted with a vast store of congruent information. In light of this schema-congruent evidence, incongruent information is less likely to elicit change. This idea corresponds to persuasion theory, which posits that more knowledgeable people are more difficult to persuade (e.g., Petty et al. 2002).

For example, it is more difficult to change an expert's schema than a novice's, because change has higher costs for the expert than for the novice: changing the expert's schema would mean abandoning a large amount of established, schema-consistent information. The ambiguity of the incoming information also impacts the resistance to schema change (Crocker et al. 1984). The more ambiguous (i.e., contradictory and conflicting) and the less consonant media coverage is, the less likely is it that an existing schema will change. Last but not least, the simple frequency of inconsistent information is a crucial predictor of schema change.

### **Schemas and Attitude Change**

Attitude theories (→ Attitudes) emphasize the evaluative components of attitude objects. A schema theory account of attitude change is built on the idea that attitude change depends on salient schemas. In expressing and forming their attitudes, individuals draw on the schemas that come to their minds at the time a judgment is called for. Price and Tewksbury (1997) posit that the news media determine the schemas that are activated when people are called on to make a judgment about an issue.

This idea is based on an associative network model of human → memory, which assumes that knowledge is organized as an associated web of cognitive units such as schemas. Within this network, the activation of one schema can spread through the network to interconnected schemas, leading to the activation of related concepts. At any single point in time, only a small part of the knowledge store is subject to active thought. First, there are schemas always ready to be activated because they have a high baseline excitation level (chronically accessible schemas). Moreover, there are salient attributes of the current situation that render accessible other concepts that are applicable to that situation (temporarily accessible schemas). As known from psychological priming research (→ Priming Theory), both recentness and frequency of activation contribute to a schema's temporary accessibility (Higgins 1996). When individuals read or watch news, schemas are activated that have the highest excitation level. When these schemas are judged as relevant for the situation at hand, they are used in evaluations, therefore influencing attitude construction and change.

### **MEASUREMENT OF SCHEMAS**

Schemas are basically unobserved constructs; therefore evidence for a schema's existence is always indirect (Rhee & Cappella 1997, 229). In order to measure schemas, scholars have mainly relied on questionnaire techniques and experimental procedures. In *questionnaires* (→ Interview), schemas are mostly assessed by open questions and item batteries. For instance, Warlaumont (1997) measured consumers' schemas about reality-style advertising

by asking respondents to freely write down their impressions about the ads. A content analysis of these written responses indicated that the realism of those ads was schema-inconsistent with consumers' expectations. Miller et al. (1986) also transformed answers to open-ended questions into several dummy categories, and these categories were then factor analyzed. The resulting factors were interpreted as schemas. As another technique, Fredin and Tabaczynski (1993) measured media-schemas by asking people closed-ended survey questions about how they perceive their local media.

In *experiments* (→ Experimental Design), schemas are usually measured before the stimulus treatment. For example, Shen (2004) asked subjects to fill out a survey prior to the experiment (under the guise of a different research project). On the basis of that, subjects could be divided into several groups according to their pre-existing schemas. At the time of the real experiment, groups received a schema-consistent or schema-inconsistent newspaper article. Rather than measuring schemas before the stimulus, some authors directly manipulate the schemas. Wicks and Drew (1991) gave their subjects a newspaper article meant to invoke a schema about population growth. After some filler stories, subjects read other newspaper articles that were either consistent or inconsistent with their initially invoked schema.

### CRITIQUE AND ADVANCEMENTS

Despite its merits for media effects research, schema theory has been criticized by a number of writers (e.g., Kuklinski et al. 1991; Taylor & Crocker 1981; Zillmann & Brosius 2000). The main point of criticism is that schema theory is marred by considerable conceptual imprecision, and this has led to rather vague effect predictions. In fact, almost every media effect or non-effect can be explained by schema theory. Therefore, rather than predicting and testing specific hypotheses, schema theory is more suited to give a degree of plausibility to observed effects (Zillmann & Brosius 2000). To put it bluntly, it is easy to find a schema theory explanation for a result; however, it is almost impossible to find results that cannot be explained by schema theory. Another point of critique is that schema theory draws a static picture of information processing. Schemas are understood as the building blocks of cognition (Rumelhart 1980); they are searched, retrieved, or stored. However, modern accounts of learning and remembering assert that the human cognitive system is a highly plastic and dynamic network that is constantly in a state of change (Iran-Nejad & Winsler 2000). In the face of this continuous change, the idea of schemas as pre-existing, long-term structures is questionable. As Smith (1996, 901) puts it: "It seems likely that all types of cognitive representations will be found to be flexibly reconstructed in a context-sensitive way rather than retrieved from memory as they were stored – like items buried in a time capsule."

This critique notwithstanding, the basic assumption of schema theory that information processing is influenced by previous knowledge is generally accepted among media effects researchers (Zillmann & Brosius 2000). However, there are some advances on and some alternatives to schema theory. First of all, non-structural schema theory (Iran-Nejad & Winsler 2000) and connectionist models (e.g., Smith 1996) meet the enormous flexibility of human cognition better. Beside these, attitude theories allow sharper predictions of media effects in general and attitude change in particular. The

elaboration likelihood model (Petty et al. 2002) or the heuristic-systematic model (Chen & Chaiken 1999) not only describe specific routes of attitude change but also integrate concepts such as involvement or heuristics. At the same time, they can also account for concept-driven information processing.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interview ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Memory ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Perception ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Schemas ▶ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ▶ Scripts

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## Scholarship of Teaching

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Because a teacher is a manager of a communication environment, investigation into the teaching process analyzes the complexity of the communication situation and the specifics of student–teacher communication. The specificity of a distinct “scholarship of teaching,” suggested by Ernest Boyer (1990), argues that studying those topics emanating from the teaching process is worthy of scholarly recognition. While Boyer started discussing an individual teacher reflecting on the teaching process, the study of instructional communication added a structured approach, with evidence-based conclusions, to the broader dimension of teaching communication. For Boyer, scholarship existed in systematic examination and sharing with others about teaching (→ Educational Communication; Learning and Communication).

In Boyer’s perspective, this sharing may range from the course level, with syllabi and assignments, to teaching portfolios (now often used for evaluation of teaching excellence by many universities), to published articles and books. What made Boyer’s perspective distinct was the emphasis on teaching materials, approaches, and theories in contrast to the teaching done by what was previously seen as the “teaching of colleagues by publication.” Now a teacher might collect all the topics used in public speaking classes to discover to what extent international topics are reflected by the students after special emphasis was made by using international topics in all the examples in the handouts and lectures.

The scholarship of teaching may range from the rhetorical (Gronbeck 1989), to the social science approaches (Teven & McCroskey 1997), to the philosophical (Sprague 1990;

→ Communication Education, Goals of) and to the critical (Fassett & Warren 2005). Each approach uses a systematic way to discover good practices of teaching. Investigating teaching becomes scholarly and consequential only as it is understood by others. It becomes significant by transforming and extending the knowledge gained, in the same way that the scholarship of discovery, application, and integration – Boyer’s three additional forms of scholarship – do. Friedrich and Nussbaum (2005) concluded that most of the work in communication has been based upon the logical empiricism of the social science methodology. In 2000, Feezel and Welsh argued that the ambiguity of the concept has led to considerable confusion. They observed that it is not just reflecting upon the act of teaching, but the sharing of what is discovered about teaching that is the essential part of the scholarship.

The importance of audience to all communication applies creatively to this area. If the teacher is the locus, then the audiences of students, peers, administration, parents, and public are key relationships. If one switches the focus to any of these other variables, then new relationships develop. While a considerable amount of work in the field focuses on either the teacher (→ Classroom Power; Teacher Immediacy) or the students (→ Communication Apprehension), the other audiences tend to be studied more by other approaches (→ Media Ecology), and as such the focus of such studies tends not to be questions of teaching.

The criterion of what is being measured has led to a recent emphasis in the scholarship of teaching on the *ultimate measure of learning*. During the 1990s, a national emphasis on adding “learning” to the concept was also evident in communication. These approaches switch the emphasis from teachers’ communication behaviors to structural choices in teaching and their correlation with learning. For investigative ease, learning is often measured by direct quantitative measures (e.g., test scores, multiple choice tests). Yet, much of communication is context based, so that research on teaching is often challenged by using and developing measures of situations allowing such generalizations that are supportive of the learning process. Some studies are actually using qualitative measures of performance for public speaking classes. The lines of such research about teaching have become blurred as researchers are now applying different insights and a combination of methods.

Much of the research has relied upon students in basic speech courses for subjects. A major line of research by McCroskey and Richmond and their colleagues and students has used teachers enrolled in courses throughout West Virginia taught by department members. This perspective from K-12 classrooms has enriched the field by examining a greater variety of situations, subject matter, and classrooms than is possible on the college campus.

The primary outlet for social science methodology has been the journal *Communication Education*, while the publication *Communication Teacher* has focused on the actually teaching practices. Both types of sharing about the teaching process are consistent with Boyer’s concern for a scholarship of teaching. A blend of these two approaches appears in the *Basic course annual*, which focuses on the teaching of the basic courses. The *Handbook of Instructional Communication* (Mottet et al. 2006) and the chapters on instructional communication in the → International Communication Association’s *Communication yearbooks* have all added a high level of investigation into questions about teaching.



These publications allow the scholarship of teaching to be evaluated and shared by people in the field.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Power ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Educational Communication ▶ International Communication Association (ICA) ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Media Ecology ▶ Teacher Immediacy

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## **Schramm, Wilbur**

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Wilbur Schramm (1907–1987) has been called the founder of the field of communication study (Rogers 1995). More accurately, he is credited with creating the first PhD program in mass communication at the University of Illinois in 1948 (McAnany 1988) and setting the stage for the growth of university communication programs in the USA and abroad (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline; Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada).

His original background was in English literature (PhD, University of Iowa, 1932), but he soon branched out into interests in social psychology and sociology at Iowa. During World War II, he served in Washington, DC in the Office of War Information and through contacts with many social scientists developed his vision for a future field in (mass) communication. He returned to Iowa in 1943, became head of the School of Journalism,

and began the first independent PhD program in journalism with a focus on social science theory and methods. In 1947 he moved to the University of Illinois and became head of the Institute of Communication Research where the first PhD program in mass communication (not the traditional disciplines of speech or journalism) began in 1948. His early books *Mass communications* (1949) and *The process and effects of mass communication* (1954) became basic texts for the growing departments of mass communication. He moved to Stanford University in 1957 and became head of another communication research institute. At Stanford he taught a whole generation of PhD students who through research helped to promote his vision of the new field. He retired from Stanford in 1973 and moved to the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. He died in Hawaii in 1987.

In addition to his many books on mass communication, Schramm also wrote about interpersonal or human communication, as he called it with works that eventually influenced speech departments toward a more social scientific than a rhetorical approach (→ Interpersonal Communication; Speech Communication, History of). His work in → international communication is best remembered in his widely influential *Mass media and national development* (1964). Development communication remained an interest for Schramm to the end of his life and is perhaps his most lasting legacy in the communication field (→ Development Communication).

Schramm's contribution to the general field of communication, and mediated communication in particular, was unique. Many other scholars from a variety of fields during the 1930s and 1940s were beginning to recognize the importance of mass communication (→ Lazarsfeld, Paul; Lasswell, Harold; Hovland, Carl I., for example). Schramm's particular contribution was his ability to synthesize and organize a wide variety of research into a coherent whole. More importantly, he identified this research as constituting a new academic field, and he was able to institutionalize the study of mass communication within the US university structure.

As a person of his time, he was influenced by the prevailing *social science quantitative approach* that looked at the effects of media on people (→ Quantitative Methodology; Media Effects, History of). His *Television in the lives of our children* (1961) helped set the direction for this kind of research that still prevails in many parts of the world. Among his contributions was the expansion of communication departments (instead of journalism or speech departments), the creation of a social science research tradition that survives today, the beginnings of the public television and radio systems in the USA (→ Public Broadcasting Systems), significant contributions to educational and instructional technology (→ Educational Media), early promotion of → information theory applications in communication research, and perhaps most importantly the promotion of the development communication field (McAnany 1988; Rogers 1995; Lerner & Nelson 1977).

The work of development communication came from a variety of sources, but Schramm's → UNESCO-sponsored book in 1964 catalyzed efforts to focus on the broadcast media of radio and television for economic and social change. The book used → Daniel Lerner's → modernization theory from *The passing of traditional society* (1958) and → Everett Rogers's diffusion of innovations (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation), as well as the work of other mainly US scholars, to argue for national promotion of mass media for development (→ Communication Technology and Development).

There have been numerous subsequent critiques of the Lerner, Schramm, and Rogers paradigm, but at the time Schramm's book set in motion the discussion of communication for development. In UNESCO and other United Nations agencies, as well as in bilateral institutions and foundations, the discourse on development promoted numerous field projects. Schramm's emphasis on research meant that the new field of development communication began to produce a strong database to feed better theory as well as improve application. The field began to expand university programs in the US as well as in many other countries, but there was an eventual reduction in US universities as development communication studies became specialized and migrated to programs of public health, education, nutrition, and agriculture (→ Health Communication). The other change that took place was that theory outgrew the original dominant paradigm of media effects and modernization and branched into concerns about participation and empowerment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Development Communication ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Educational Media ▶ Health Communication ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information ▶ International Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Lerner, Daniel ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Modernization ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ UNESCO

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## **Science Journalism**

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In a classic sense *science journalism* deals with results, institutions, and processes in science, technology, and medicine. Its main occasions have been publications in journals, lectures at conferences, and prizes (such as the Nobel Prize). Science reporting is not necessarily prompted by the science system. The occasion may also arise from interesting phenomena in daily life or from general news (such as the scientific explanations behind

a tsunami). Under this broader definition, many journalists working outside the science sections of the media do not recognize that they do science journalism when reporting on health, environment, or consumer affairs (Russ-Mohl 1987). Research results from the social sciences and humanities fit less in the category of science journalism, because those disciplines have places in other sections of the media (such as the *feuilleton*, culture, or political section). For many authors this separation also mirrors the notion of *two cultures*, the scientific on one side, the literary on the other (Snow 1964).

Compared to other forms of journalism, science journalism is a relatively new (Friedman et al. 1986) or delayed addition to the news (Hömborg 1990). Even in industrial countries, it emerged in several waves in the second half of the twentieth century especially. Technical developments and medical problems during the world wars were catalysts for more coverage of science. The space programs in the USA and the USSR, especially the Sputnik shock in 1957 and the landing on the moon in 1969, were the next triggers for increasing science journalism. Reporting on technical developments during that time was mostly optimistic. Critical environmental debates followed in the 1970s and 1980s, after the nuclear accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl. Bioethical issues (seen in the first steps toward genetic engineering) have strengthened science journalism especially after scientists made public the cloned sheep Dolly in 1997, followed by the deciphering of the human genome, the stem cell debate, and increasing competition for research funding. A recent impetus has been the continued debates about risks (climate change, SARS [severe acute respiratory syndrome], bird flu, and the like) and about special technologies (→ Health Communication and Journalism; Risk Communication; Uncertainty Management). In the last 30 years, the scientific community itself has also increased its efforts to communicate (→ Public Relations: Media Influence).

In *developing countries*, the growing interest in public research and development investment pushes for broader reporting on these issues. According to the Science and Development Network ([www.scidev.net](http://www.scidev.net)), e.g., raising public awareness in China about science first became an official part of national development strategy in 2006. New knowledge superpowers like China, India, or Brazil experience a relationship between science and society that might be uneven and strained (Greco 2005). In less developed countries, science journalism is often still not a media priority or (in cases such as HIV reporting) is suppressed by government (Shanahan 2006).

Two perspectives describe the main *roles of science journalism*, one functional and the other critical. Scientists and scientific institutions as well as politicians tend to see the practice functionally, as an educational tool or instrument to improve public acceptance of scientific research. From this perspective, science journalism is part of the public understanding of science (PUS) movement (Gregory 1998), and the journalist is an educator. In this *translator* or *deficit* model (Irwin & Wynne 1996), science journalists interpret difficult scientific issues for a broader public, a task the scientific community cannot do sufficiently by itself. To some extent, functional science journalism also engages in the communication of innovation, as one tool to underline the importance of science and technology in industrial countries. Functionally, science journalists are clearly seen here as advocates of science (→ Journalists' Role Perception). This attitude persists in countries where governmentally steered associations, like the Chinese Society for Science and Technology Journalism, define themselves as tools for revitalization.

Acting as an advocate of science produces a kind of *Eureka! reporting*, focusing on breakthroughs and inventions, but avoiding science policy issues. Critics object to *gee-whiz* science journalism (Jerome 1986), think science journalism should be closer to general journalism in providing a context for scientific results and institutions (Logan 2005), and say journalists should resist the self-assigned function of popularizing science (Kohring 1997). Science journalism took on a growing role as critical observer of science in the United States in the 1980s (Jerome 1986), as it did later in many European countries. Especially in spectacular cases of fraud involving even the prestigious journals *Nature* and *Science*, at least some scientists and journalists described journalism as a partner helping guarantee quality in the scientific community. This role is similar to that of political journalism, as a watchdog or adversary of wrongdoing.

Science journalism faces divergent prospects for future development. An optimistic point of view emerged, e.g., in Germany (Wormer 2006), with the recent founding of several magazines and the development of new TV formats that broadened and redefined science coverage. A more pessimistic prognosis has emerged in the United States, against the background of the creationism debate and the political consequences of 9/11. In developing countries, the recently launched mentoring programs of the *World Federation of Science Journalists* might have a positive impact on the reporting on science in the future.

SEE ALSO: ► Disasters and Communication ► Health Communication and Journalism  
 ► Journalists' Role Perception ► Public Relations: Media Influence ► Risk Communication ► Uncertainty and Communication ► Uncertainty Management

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# Scopic Regime

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The French film theorist Christian Metz coined the term “scopic regime” in *The imaginary signifier* (1982, 1st pub.1975) to distinguish the cinema from the theatre: “what defines the specifically cinematic *scopic regime* is not so much the distance kept . . . as the absence of the object seen” (1982, 61). Because of the cinematic apparatus’s construction of an imaginary object, its scopic regime is unhinged from its “real” referent (→ Cinema). Representation is independent of what is represented, at least as a present stimulus, both spatially and temporally (→ Visual Representation).

Others employ the term more broadly to define visual experiences mediated, even constituted, by other technologies, such as photography, television, and digital computers, as well as to postulate significant gender differences (more often a regime fostered by the “male gaze”; → Spectator Gaze). Certain activities like shopping and spectator sports have been granted their own local scopic regimes. More ambitious theoreticians have posited general *systems of visuality* constructed by a cultural/technological/political apparatus mediating the apparently given world of objects in a neutral perceptual field. In this more totalizing usage, “scopic regime” indicates a non-natural visual order operating on a pre-reflective level to determine the dominant protocols of seeing and being on view in a specific culture at a specific time (→ Visual Culture). The term “regime” implies something vaguely coercive, involving a disciplined gaze or organized visual field that permeates a culture. Bolder commentators seek parallels between visual protocols and other cultural phenomena involving spatial organization, such as landscaping, architecture, and urban planning. Some even discern rough homologies with corresponding philosophical trends.

The modern European era, for example, has been analyzed in terms of three distinct, if overlapping scopic regimes: “Cartesian perspectivalism,” “the art of describing,” and “baroque reason.” The first and most pervasive emerged with the “invention” or “discovery” of *perspective in painting* in the fifteenth century (→ Perspective, Pictorial). It posited an abstract, quantitatively ordered, homogeneous space, and generated transformational rules to render three-dimensional space into two-dimensional representations. The rectilinear spatial order in which it situated objects was external to a rational, disembodied, and monocular subject. Descartes’s philosophy, often seen as the foundation of modern thought, was congruent with this aesthetic visual practice, while also abetting a scientific worldview. The Cartesian subject’s mental representations mirrored a world of mute objects no longer laden with the meaning inherent in a world understood as a legible text. If desire coursed through the body of this subject, it was voyeuristic in nature, eschewing the immediacy of the more proximate senses (→ Voyeurism). The urban landscape corresponding to it was that of Pope Sixtus V’s rationally planned Rome or Louis XIV’s geometric town of Richelieu and palace at Versailles.

A second early modern scopic regime has been identified with what the art historian Svetlana Alpers calls the *Dutch art of describing*, as opposed to the more perspectivalist,

narrative art of the Italian Renaissance. This Dutch art drew attention to many small things rather than a few large ones; its light was reflected off objects rather than modeling them through chiaroscuro; and it focused more on the surface colors and textures of objects than their relational placement in a geometric space. Its images were unbounded by a frame as in Cartesian perspectivalist art, and its beholder was a binocular, embodied subject. Rather than the three-dimensional window on the world postulated by the perspectivalists, it preferred the flatness of the canvas's material surface, showing its affinity with the mapping impulse of the Age of Discovery. Inviting viewers into the scenes depicted rather than keeping them at a distance, it abetted a less ocular-centric and more haptic scopic regime than its counterpart to the south. If it had any philosophical equivalent it was the inductive empiricism of a Francis Bacon or Constantin Huygens rather than the deductive rationalism of a Descartes. Cities like Amsterdam, spared the monumentalizing imposition of rationalized grids in favor of curvilinear pathways, textured material surfaces, and atmospheric effects, were its urban equivalent.

A third modern scopic regime has been identified with *baroque reason*, according to the French philosopher Christine Buci-Glucksmann. Playing with dazzling, disorienting, ecstatic visual experience freed from its dependence on geometric regularity or the calm solidity of material surfaces, it unleashed what she calls "the madness of vision" (1986). Anamorphic effects and trompe l'oeil surprises produced a visual field that resisted any meaningful order, a field unsurveyable by either a distant monocular gaze or a binocular proximate one. The desiring body, its eyes nervously glancing rather than calmly gazing, dethroned the cold, reifying stare of the disincarnated Cartesian perspectivalist subject. The paradoxical philosophy of a Pascal and the obscurities of Counter-Reformation mystics were its philosophical correlates, and its urban setting was that of the intersecting planes, uneven facades, hidden enclaves, and fragmented space of the baroque city.

Ideal types, these scopic regimes intersect in complicated ways in the real world. Although Cartesian perspectivalism may have dominated the modern era, those who defend the idea of a postmodern successor often see its visual culture as the revival of baroque reason. We now inhabit a world of simulacral, dazzling effects that undermine any idea of a geometric visual field open to the penetrating gaze of a monocular, disembedded subject or the mapped surface of empirical description. Instead, the eye has been placed back in the body, a body in motion, coursed by desire, and hard to distinguish from the prosthetic technologies that connect it to the world "outside." Perhaps in this sense, Metz's claim that cinema produces a scopic regime defined by the absence of a real object anticipates the larger argument made about the postmodern revival of the baroque. We no longer live inside the white modernist cube, but rather in the black box of the cinematic apparatus, if not the stage sets of the Las Vegas strip.

SEE ALSO: ► Cinema ► Perspective, Pictorial ► Spectator Gaze ► Visual Culture  
► Visual Representation ► Voyeurism

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## Scripts

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Understanding and production of messages and social behaviors are based on communicators' prior knowledge, which is organized and structured by schemas (Bartlett 1932; Rumelhart 1980). Over the years, researchers have identified different kinds of schemas, such as frames, story schemas, macro-structures, scenarios, mental models, scripts, and memory organization packets (MOPs).

Scripts are event schemas; that is, they structure common and ritualized activities that involve a sequence of actions. A script is a sequential list of characteristic actions of events or activities, such as eating at a restaurant or attending a birthday party. Scripts guide one's actions, expectations, and understandings during the enactment of the script-based activities (→ Schemas; Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

### ORIGIN OF THE CONCEPT

Scripts were first introduced by Roger Schank (1975; Schank & Abelson 1977). In an attempt to provide a data structure enabling computers to understand typical and repeatedly performed human activities, Schank (1975) developed conceptual dependency theory. Given that the basis of natural language is conceptual, understanding language involves extracting its conceptual base; that is, identifying concepts and realizing the relationships between them.

Building on conceptual dependency theory, Schank and Abelson (1977) introduced the concept of a script, defined as a stereotypical sequence of actions of an often-performed social activity, which consists of the name of the script, roles, props, entry conditions, results, and scenes. Scripts may have variations through equifinal actions, variables, script paths, scene selection, tracks, interference, distraction, and free behavior.



Scripts are different from other sources of mindless behaviors such as habits (Abelson 1981; → Mindlessness and Automaticity). While habits are response programs, scripts are knowledge structures. Scripts are not automatically activated like conditioned behaviors; instead, their activation is contingent on the satisfaction of action rules attached to them. When there is a goal state (e.g., “I have to eat as I am hungry”), persons realize what they have to do based on earlier learning or direct experiences (e.g., “I have to buy some food”), and activate the appropriate script. (e.g., the “visit a restaurant” script).

## PREDICTIONS AND FINDINGS

Schank’s script concept generated many predictions related to the structure, nature, and use of → memory, including a typicality effect, an atypicality effect, a gap-filling phenomenon, and a reordering phenomenon (Abelson 1981). The *typicality effect* occurs when people encounter the information that fits the activated script well: they comprehend this information faster and recall it better. The *atypicality effect* takes place when people encounter information that does not fit the script. The “*script pointer + tag*” hypothesis suggested by Schank and Abelson (1977) posits that a script tags actions that are unrelated to or inconsistent with the script along with a header to the script. As atypical information is tagged to the script, discriminatory accuracy is better for this information.

Between the two types of effects, the typicality effect lasts longer: while recognition and recall memory is initially better for atypical than typical actions, the rate of forgetting is greater for the tagged atypical actions than for tagged typical actions. Both the gap-filling and reordering phenomena reflect that people tend to orient their memories to be consistent with their scripts. When asked to recall stories study participants had heard earlier, they remembered some actions that had not been told just to fill in the empty slots in the script, and changed the sequence of disordered actions in the stories to fit the order of script.

## MEMORY ORGANIZATION PACKETS

Initially, Schank and Abelson (1977) assumed that a script was stored sequentially in its entirety. For example, the dentist’s office visit script and the physician’s office visit script were separate scripts, stored in separate locations in memory. However, Bower et al. (1979) found that when people were told two different stories having essentially the same scene, like the waiting room scene in a physician’s office and a dentist’s office, they recalled some information mentioned in one story when reconstructing the other story, which would not happen if people had stored the script-based stories in separate locations. Abelson (1981) attempted to resolve this problem by introducing the concept of a *meta-script*, which contains scenes that are much more abstract or generic than those in a script. Schank (1982) developed a more flexible theory, called dynamic memory theory, and a less rigid concept, called a memory organization packet or MOP.

Schank’s reformulated theory differentiated *four levels of memory*: event memory (EM), generalized event memory (GEM), situational memory (SM), and intentional memory (IM). EM contains specific remembrances of particular situations. GEM is a collection of events whose common features have been abstracted. SM contains relevant contexts, and the rules and standard experiences associated with a given situation in general. While

information about dentists resides in GEM, SM contains more general information like “going to a health professional’s office.” IM, the highest level of memory, includes the rules for getting people to do things for oneself and other plan-like information.

A MOP, a *memory structure* at the level of situational memory, keeps information about how memories are linked in frequently occurring combinations. The basic building blocks of MOPs are scenes, which are groupings of generalized actions with a shared instrumental goal. What a MOP does is to prescribe how scenes are linked together in order to accomplish a higher-order goal. The number of scenes is limited, and any given scene can be used by many different MOPs. For example, the waiting room scene can be organized by most MOPs that seek help from a professional.

The hierarchical relationship between a script and a scene is reversed in Schank’s new framework. Originally, scripts were composed of one or more scenes; in this new framework, scripts are now specific versions or tracks of a scene (they “color” a scene). In dynamic memory theory, a script is a sequence of specific actions that take place within a scene. Different from the original concept of script, which was assumed to exist in memory in one precompiled chunk, a MOP or a super-script is not stored in its entirety. It is organized when needed and disassembled when the job is completed. Thus, the confusion between two stories sharing the same scene, which was reported by Bower et al. (1979), is now explicable. While the original concept of a script has been reformulated, researchers often use the term to denote a script (old meaning), a MOP, and other event or action schemas.

## SCRIPTS AND MOPS IN COMMUNICATION

Scripts and MOPs have been tested in or applied to several different areas of communication research. Scripts have been investigated in two primary ways. First, a group of researchers have examined *the role of scripts in social relationships*. Honeycutt et al. (1989) examined the use of scripts in → relationship development, and reported that a prototypical relational escalation memory structure contained 13 typical behaviors. Holmberg and MacKenzie (2002) differentiated people’s personal relationship script (the past and future development of their own relationship) from a normative relationship script (their conceptions of how relationships typically develop), and found that correspondence between personal and normative scripts, and agreement between partners on personal scripts, predicted several measures of relationship well-being (→ Communication: Relationship Rules; Interaction; Interpersonal Communication).

*Sexual scripts* are a second area of communication receiving attention from a number of researchers. Lenton and Bryan (2005) reported that people used sexual scripts to make judgments of the sexual intent of others. Wiederman (2005) proposed that scripts for sexual activity were markedly different for males and females, at least in western society. Emmers-Sommer et al. (2005) discussed the role of sexual scripts in health communication.

MOPs have also been investigated by communication researchers in two primary ways. First, Kellermann and her colleagues have studied *informal, initial conversation MOPs* (Kellermann 1991, 1995; Kellermann et al. 1989; Kellermann & Lim, 1990). Initial interaction scripts were first introduced by Douglas (1984). As dynamic memory theory was introduced, Kellermann oriented to the less rigid structure of MOPs to account for the simultaneously flexible and conventional nature of conversational interaction. The identification of the

conversation MOP for informal, initial interactions was undertaken by Kellermann et al. (1989), who reported that the sequencing of scenes in the conversation MOP corresponded to the sequencing of actual conversational behavior. A second study extended the first study to include varying degrees of the relational goals in initial interactions (Kellermann 1991). Kellermann and Lim (1990) confirmed that the conversation MOP sequentially organized scenes in a manner corresponding to how people organize their topical talk in conversational encounters (Kellermann 1995). Kellermann and Palomares (2004) examined how MOP scenes could be used to identify different types of relational roles of conversational participants. Kennedy (2000) extended this research to study the conversational behavior of adults with right-hemisphere brain damage. Turner and Cullingford (1989) used the conversational MOP to program a computer to understand conversational interaction.

A second use of MOPs in communication research is in the domain of *small group communication*. Pavitt (1992) reported that group decision-making was led by a top-down processing structure represented by a conversation MOP. Pavitt and Johnson (2001) proposed that people's group procedural MOP could be classified as linear, reach-testing, or some compromise between the two.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication: Relationship Rules ► Comprehension ► Information Processing ► Interaction ► Interpersonal Communication ► Memory ► Mindlessness and Automaticity ► Relationship Development ► Schemas ► Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction ► Schemas and Media Effects ► Stereotypes

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## Search Engines

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A search engine is a computer program that allows the user to enter a series of keywords, usually called a “query,” and that responds with a list of results from a database that match the query. Major search engines, such as Google, Yahoo Search, and Microsoft Live Search, provide the most widely used method of finding information on the world wide web. Search engine websites are the most visited in the world, with estimates showing that in 2006 the Google and Yahoo websites reached approximately 80 percent of worldwide Internet users, or approximately 500 million people each month (→ Internet; Exposure to the Internet). As more and more information and entertainment becomes digital and is stored in databases, search engines are becoming increasingly important. The ability to effectively use a search engine is becoming widely recognized as a key skill of digital or information literacy. On the Internet, there is often a strong incentive for companies to place highly in search engine results, and search engine companies have become very powerful economic actors in online media.

Research on search engines is not an integrated field and there are at least four different perspectives: first, *information retrieval*, where the search engine is studied as a complex programming problem; second, *information literacy*, where the interactions between search engines and user skills are of paramount concern; third, *online marketing*, where

the search engine's effectiveness as a marketing tool is of central concern; and finally, *media law and policy*, where regulations relating to search engines are being debated.

### THE TECHNOLOGY OF INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

A search engine has three core technological elements: the index, the crawler, and the search algorithm. The *index* is a database that functions much as an index does in a book: it contains references and pointers to the information on the web, much as the word and page numbers in a printed index refer to text in a book. In order to obtain the references for the index, search engines on the web use another computer program, called a *crawler* or a *spider*, to automatically browse pages by traversing hyperlinks between and within websites. The *search algorithm* has the complex task of matching the terms the user types into the search box (the *query*) with the references in the index and displaying them in ranked order.

The classical problems in information retrieval, the branch of computer science in which search engines are studied, revolve around the search algorithm and how to insure that its results have sufficient *precision* (defined as the percentage of results that are relevant to the query) and *recall* (defined as the fraction of the results potentially relevant to the query that are in fact retrieved) (Singhal 2001). With the world wide web, new challenges have been introduced. First, the web demands search engines on a *scale* never seen before – web search indices contain references to billions of documents, many times the size of any other database. Second, the web demands *speed* – hundreds of thousands of queries must be processed per second. Third, the web introduces the problem of *stability* – it is constantly changing and it has been estimated that a complete index would be out of date within a year without constant crawling and refreshing of the index. Fourth, a construct of *authority* must be developed for web search engines – unlike a closed database, where the contents have been vetted for inclusion, the web includes many documents of all types, some of which may be fraudulent or criminal. Finally, the web contains many types of non-textual *multimedia* files, such as audio files, videos, and pictures, and much effort is being directed toward creating effective search engines for these items. In general, search engine companies are trying to increase both the type and the amount of items that can be searched.

### SEARCH ENGINES AND INFORMATION LITERACY

Search engines derive much of their importance as an object of study from their centrality in the everyday practice of Internet users. Research on the usage patterns of individuals shows that most people spend most of their time at a very small number of sites, typically including their email provider and news provider and very often a search engine. The search engine is the primary mechanism by which the user reaches unfamiliar websites. Search engines are therefore central not only to users but to operators of other websites, since they are the primary method of attracting new visitors. It is estimated that 80–90 percent of people who are online have used a search engine, and they are used in perhaps 20 percent of online sessions, or discrete periods of online activity. Usage of search engines appears to be associated with the intensity and diversity of web usage, leading to the

conclusion that the ability to effectively use search engines for navigation and to rapidly comprehend and evaluate the results they display are key skills in → information literacy.

## MARKETING AND ADVERTISING ON SEARCH ENGINES

Because of their central position in directing users to other websites, search engines are valuable sources of customers for online businesses. Search engines fund themselves primarily through advertising (→ Advertising, Economics of). Advertising does not appear typically in the main search engine listings, but instead the search engine operates a separate index of advertisements that are returned along with the main results when a user types in a query. These paid-for results are indicated as “sponsored links” or “recommendations” on the main search engine results page and are often set off in a separate area, for example in a column on the right-hand side of the page or in a box at the top. However, some smaller search engines do mix advertiser results with results from the main index, and some deliver *only* advertising-based results. Therefore it can sometimes be difficult for ordinary users to distinguish between advertising and non-advertising results.

Search engines have also developed a sophisticated system of advertising syndication. In syndicated search advertising, another website displays the search engine’s ads for a share of the price charged to the advertisers. In 2005, search engines accounted for perhaps 70 percent of all online advertising, and some 30–40 percent of that was revenue coming from syndicated advertisements (PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2006). From a marketing perspective, search engine ads are particularly attractive compared to other advertising vehicles because they are charged on a cost-per-click (CPC) basis, meaning that the advertiser only pays when someone clicks the ad and visits their website, rather than on a cost-per-impression (CPM) basis, where the advertiser pays whenever someone sees the ad. CPC advertising, therefore, is seen as a more efficient means of advertising.

Another element of marketing on search engines is *search-engine optimization* (SEO). In SEO, the marketer tries to achieve a good placement in the main index (rather than purchasing results in the advertising index) by “optimizing” their web pages so that they match the criteria used by the search engine’s ranking algorithm. These criteria typically include both elements of the web page itself, including text, title, descriptive meta-data, and the number of hyperlinks on the page, and a consideration of the position of the web page in relation to the rest of the web, often determined by the number of hyperlinks from other websites to the page. In addition to legitimate SEO, the value of search engine traffic means that some marketers try to boost their traffic by artificially inflating some indicators; for example, by creating a series of sites whose only purpose is to link to each other (often called a *link farm*) (Perkins 2001). While not illegal, these techniques (known collectively as *spam*) are frowned on by the search engine operators, and even a suspicion of spamming may result in delisting from the search engine results.

## LEGAL AND POLICY DEBATES

Search engine companies are also increasingly involved in a series of legal controversies (Gasser 2006). A major focus of concern is a debate over *censorship and free speech* (→ Censorship, History of; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The large search engines

are all based in the United States and fall primarily under United States law. Under the current provisions, search engines are entitled to the protections of freedom of the press, with the normal exceptions made for illegal content, such as child pornography (→ Child Protection, Media Regulations for). However, search engine owners have been criticized for censoring results in other countries, notably China, in accordance with government wishes. Restrictions also apply in a variety of other countries; for example, Germany restricts websites that promote Nazi views or deny the Holocaust. Whether this represents censorship or legitimate public control of illegal content is still being debated.

A second issue is *user* → *privacy*. Search engines routinely collect data on their users, including their queries and usage patterns (and in some cases much more), although many users are unaware of this. Governments, notably those of the United States and China, have formally requested this data. In China, dissidents were jailed partially through evidence supplied by Yahoo. In the United States, Google dissented from the government's request but was forced to comply by the courts. Even data that has been made anonymous by stripping out users' names can be controversial, as AOL discovered when it released a collection of search query data for academic study, only to find that newspapers had been able to locate and interview specific individuals. Search engine logs therefore potentially represent a significant risk to personal privacy.

A third legal controversy concerns *intellectual property rights online* (→ Intellectual Property Law). As search engines have expanded to include new forms of content, such as video, pictures, music, news reports, and even the full text of books held in libraries, concern has been growing on the part of copyright holders around the world about how to protect their works from illegal use, and search engines have been the target of a number of suits of copyright infringement.

Finally, a small number of scholars have been concerned about the *ethics of search engines* (Introna & Nissenbaum 2000; Machill et al. 2003; Van Couvering 2004). These scholars argue that the industry structure, which is comprised of a few powerful companies – in other words, decision-makers constituting an oligarchy (→ Concentration in Media Systems) – combined with the issues of access to the web and concerns about censorship, privacy, and reports of the overrepresentation of commercial companies in search results (probably due in part to SEO), does not favor the public interest in easy, safe access to the whole of the web. A consensus on what remedies might be appropriate has not been reached. One potential option might be along the lines of the voluntary code of conduct adopted in Germany (FSM 2004), which commits signatories to clarifying how the search engine's crawling and ranking algorithms operate, stating what actions may result in a website's removal from the search engine listings, clearly designating advertising, acting to protect minors from harmful content, removing references to undesirable content as specified in German law, and protecting the data it gathers on users.

## METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In academic work, search engines are sometimes used to locate or sample resources on the web (→ Online Research). Research on the quality of search engine results suggests that scholars should be cautious about relying on these alone to provide representative samples or complete coverage of a particular online object of study (Cothey 2004). Search

engine results are likely to be unstable over even very short periods of time, resulting in different samples at different times (Bar-Ilan & Peritz 1999).

Search engines seem to overrepresent websites based in the United States, websites that are popular (that is, that have many links to them), and websites that are older (Mowshowitz & Kawaguchi 2005). Different regulatory regimes and differing algorithms between countries may result in a different set of results for the same query in different geographic regions. Finally, some terms are extremely popular among marketers and this may skew the results toward commercial organizations undertaking an organized SEO program. In many cases it would be appropriate to supplement search engine results with other methods of sampling online content. In all cases it is appropriate to reflect on the bias that search engine sampling may introduce.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Child Protection, Media Regulations for ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Information Literacy ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Navigation ▶ Online Research ▶ Privacy

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# Secular Social Change

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The concept of secular social change in → health communication studies emanates from the findings of quasi-experimental community and group randomized trials of health promotion campaigns (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in; Prevention and Communication). Specifically, many longitudinally designed intervention studies have discovered that outcome variables of interest (e.g., knowledge, beliefs, behaviors) often show changes over time trending in the same direction both in the intervention groups – where the campaigns have been introduced – and in the “control” communities or groups, though often stronger in the former than the latter (Finnegan & Viswanath 2002).

Findings suggest therefore that secular change is continuous though not constant. Because of this, the goal of health intervention trials often is to demonstrate that change can be accelerated beyond the secular trend in control communities or groups. This has important ramifications for health communication theory and application through intervention and study design and measurement.

## CONTEXT

Many fields of study regularly examine secular trends to explain and sometimes predict large-scale cycles of human activities, events, and outcomes. Thus economists have observed long-term trends in such complex areas as the relationship between population savings and consumption in order to understand the dynamics of economic growth. A field such as epidemiology examines trends in diseases such as cardiovascular diseases and the associated factors that cause or ameliorate them. Sociologists and communication scientists often examine phenomena such as diffusion of innovations to understand the adoption or transformation over time of social and behavioral habits, practices, and policies, or the spread of new technology (Rogers 2003; → Diffusion of Information and Innovation).

Historians, too, examine long-term trends to understand the development of societies and nations across centuries, often using statistical models. Whatever the field of study, the concept of secular social change depends critically on longitudinal measurement across some period of time to produce a meaningful trend (→ Longitudinal Analysis). However, the interpretation and significance of the trend will depend importantly on the theoretical framework propelling the analysis and the hypothesized pathways and dynamics of how change is thought to occur.

## THEORY AND APPLICATION IN HEALTH COMMUNICATION

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the Latin word for “secular” in the early Christian west referred to the world outside the structure of the Roman church. By analogy, the concept has been adapted in health communication intervention studies to

refer to the world “outside” the domain (defined, for example, as a group or community) of intervention for change (→ Experimental Design). So the analysis of change or difference is by way of comparing what happens over time to a group or community that experiences an intervention or campaign and what happens to those not so exposed. A key question arises: does the intervention produce a change in outcomes measured over time that exceed the secular trend in unexposed groups or communities? In this sense, secular change includes *all* the factors, variables, and dynamic interactions that shape the health outcomes of groups, communities, or societies.

In broad strokes, health communication theories encompasses dynamic models that seek to explain and predict dependent variable outcomes across a wide range of objects of study – from the individual to groups, organizations, communities, and whole societies and cultures. Theories group around different levels in this micro-to-macro continuum, reflecting different change outcomes, processes, and dynamics appropriate to each level of analysis (Finnegan & Viswanath 2002). In the field of social and behavioral health, these are depicted as *spheres of influence* in the social ecological model (Coreil et al. 2001). That is, human behavior is understood to be shaped and channeled in the context of social dynamics at different levels of associative relationships: interpersonal, family, affiliations, organizations, social institutions (such as the communication media), communities, and whole societies.

These dynamic relationships socialize us preferentially to behave in some ways and not others. How change in mass behavior may be stimulated will differ according to the sphere of influence within which change is sought. For example, health behavior campaigns relying upon mass education strategies seek generally to stimulate mass voluntary behavior change by providing information about healthier behaviors, emphasizing benefits over barriers (→ Health Belief Model), building self-efficacy to adopt changes in the context of relevant values and expectations (→ Social Cognitive Theory). Other change strategies address mass behavior only indirectly by focusing, for example, on decision-makers and their policymaking roles (e.g., bans on smoking in work places or seat-belt laws).

## SECULAR CHANGE AND HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

In the 1970s and 1980s, several large US federally funded intervention studies sought to reduce cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors and to promote heart health in whole communities. Five factors distinguished these studies from previous such campaign efforts. These studies: (1) sought to improve health outcomes among generally healthy populations at the community level; (2) used quasi-experimental designs in which communities were randomized to intervention or “control” conditions; (3) used longitudinal designs including comparative baseline and intervention effect measures over multiple years; (4) tested a wide variety of intervention strategies, including media and other channels; and (5) also included multiple nested studies examining the effects of intervention strategies on specific sub-groups in the communities (e.g., school children, smokers).

Although each study showed significant but modest positive risk factor changes, these were ultimately overtaken by strong secular changes in the reference communities. That is, while the campaigns produced significant change in intervention communities for a

time, secular trends in the reference communities often closed the gaps by campaigns' end (Winkleby et al. 1997). In contrast to the overall analysis, many strategy-specific experimental sub-studies nested within the larger community trials demonstrated strong effects in changing heart disease risk behaviors and factors (Fortmann et al. 1995).

In seeking to account for the strength of secular trends, Finnegan and Viswanath (2002) identified the *central role of the mass media*. (1) Significant secular improvement in heart disease had been occurring in the United States since the 1960s and accelerated during the period of the large community trials. This was likely due to improvements in clinical diagnoses and treatment and increasing adoption by the healthy persons of preventive behaviors. (2) The expansion of media systems and coverage of heart disease accelerated these changes. (3) The agenda-building activity of federal and state government agencies, private health groups, public health advocates, and scientists were key influences in turning the media's interest toward more and better news coverage of heart disease prevention research (→ Agenda Building; Agenda-Setting Effects). (4) From a design and analysis perspective, the power to detect difference hinged in part on relatively stable reference community trends. In a highly dynamic secular trend, the models lacked power to detect difference as a function of the limited number of assigned units (communities) and the limited number of measurement points over time (community-by-year means). (5) The campaign intervention models of the large American community trials were framed also in the expectation of relatively little change in reference communities, especially in exposure to heart disease prevention information and programs. They did not anticipate either major growth in community media systems or the increased dissemination of heart disease prevention news, information, and programming. They were thus unable to sustain a significant difference in exposure over time.

CVD campaign studies also demonstrated that socio-economic groups do not benefit equally from either the forces of campaigns or the power of secular change. In the realm of the CVD prevention campaigns, studies have demonstrated the differential impact between higher and lower socio-economic scale (SES) groups in secular trends including smoking, exposure to CVD prevention information; prevention knowledge, campaign effects, and improvement in heart disease outcomes (Winkleby 1997; → Knowledge Gap Effects; Communication Inequality).

## **HEALTH CAMPAIGNS, SECULAR CHANGE, AND THE FUTURE**

Findings about secular change and public health campaigns suggest that researchers focus more attention on implications of change theories; study design and analysis; and robust campaign planning, implementation, and evaluation management and monitoring. Theory importantly shapes and informs health campaign research. However, the research itself sometimes suffers from a lack of clarity in how change is hypothesized to occur (e.g., pathways and dynamics), or how it may create effects differentially across population sub-groups, as in the case of lower SES groups, which typically change more slowly. The impact of this is that there can be disparities in the alignment of theory, research goals, and campaign or program composition designed to achieve the ends of the research. This can be a particular problem where campaign research is large-scale, complex from a behavioral and social change standpoint, and multidimensional from the standpoint of

usable intervention strategies. It requires careful planning to create the necessary alignment and to assure that a robust intervention is delivered consistently and with appropriate strength over the designated period of time.

In the area of study design and analysis, researchers suggested that an appropriate power analysis driving quasi-experimental study designs should consider models better able to detect smaller differences, as well as pay attention to important indicators of secular social change in progress or with the potential to overtake the campaign effect difference (Murray 1998; → Communication and Social Change: Research Methods). Along these same lines, Fishbein (1996) noted that public health campaigns using controlled designs are usually powered to detect medium-to-large effect differences in outcomes. In comparison to effect sizes commonly achievable and regarded as successful in the commercial realm (e.g., a 1–2 percent increase in market share), he argued that public health expectations of achievable behavior change are unrealistic and unwarranted. Unrealistic expectations of social and behavioral change and underpowered study designs unable to detect difference beyond secular social change can combine dangerously to undermine the public's and policymakers' commitment to and support for the importance of public health and health promotion.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Health Belief Model ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Prevention and Communication ▶ Rogers, Everett ▶ Social Cognitive Theory

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## Security and Surveillance Agencies

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Since the end of the Cold War's bipolar confrontation in 1991, the security arena has significantly changed from a once well-bounded field, consisting of hierarchically organized state bureaucracies, to a rhizomatic, growing assemblage that merges various kinds of public and private security agencies and activities and is driven by the desire to bring systems together, to combine practices and technologies and integrate them into a larger whole (Haggerty and Ericson 2000). Security has become an important but sensitive issue on political agendas as well as in the public perception. This has resulted in an evolving patchwork of systems, procedures and technologies across multiple sites, public and private, including most urban and international transport infrastructures such as roads, metro systems, rail stations, and sea and air ports. In this entry attention will mostly be focused on key European Union and US examples, although a full survey would also need to engage with, among others, Chinese, Russian, Saudi, and Israeli surveillance practices.

### ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE

One of the results of this transformation is that it has become increasingly unclear who is actually involved in specific security and surveillance tasks. The steadily growing number of surveillance cameras in public streets and places may indicate the globalization of surveillance power. Today, the UK is the world leader in using *closed-circuit television* (CCTV) to track people's movements. Surveillance becomes ubiquitous and part of everyday life. Lyon argues that surveillance comes to light when people realize that they are being watched (Lyon 2004). Yet the expansion of surveillance goes well beyond what our eyes tell us. Agencies throughout the world focus on data exchange, compatibility of databases, and thus the interoperability of systems. The systems become more interactive and thus more robust. If one device fails, the likeliness increases that the lost information can be provided by another within the automated socio-technical environments (Lianos and Douglas 2000) in which decisions on actions are pre-determined by technologies

such as CCTV, biometric identifiers, smart ID cards, interactive sensory systems, and other devices.

Moreover, digitization permits global real-time availability of information, including archival sources, together with data on current activities and emergent trends. This first came to light in 1996, as European politicians exploded in anger at detailed revelations of the extent of an international spying system named *Echelon*, created by the leading English-speaking nations (Hager 1996). They particularly feared massive economic espionage. However, international communication satellites had been put into orbit from Europe and elsewhere since the 1980s to facilitate telecommunication links (→ Satellite Communication, Global). The so-called *UK–USA alliance* between the secret intelligence services of the US National Security Agency (NSA) and the British Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) had been extended during the Cold War to the Australian Defence Signals Directorate (DSD), the Canadian Communications Security Establishment (CSE), and the New Zealand Government Communications Security Bureau (GCSB). All these agencies set up earth stations to intercept signals from the new electronic communication devices. Echelon was installed to enable intelligence agencies to monitor and analyze civilian communications into the twenty-first century (Campbell 1988). Arguably, it posed less a threat of economic espionage than of the erosion of privacy, and of changing the landscape of the relation between the practice of freedom- and security-related decisions, emanating from governments as well as private surveillance bodies.

Echelon's giant eavesdropping machinery, run by the NSA at Menwith Hill in Yorkshire, UK, captures and processes virtually every phone call, fax, email, and telex message sent everywhere in the world, with the mission of anticipating security threats. Fragments of communication are trawled out of the ether by all five surveillance centers. Each center is estimated to be able to make a million entries every 30 minutes. Filters that siphon out what is valuable, using artificial intelligence aids, reduce the number to 6,500 entries (Wright 1998). Only 1,000 of these are subsequently judged valuable for further processing and interpretation. NSA staff search for code words in so-called "Echelon dictionaries" provided by each "listening station." The information is shared among the five partner nations and, if it is decided that it is necessary, with the secret intelligence services of allied nations. It is claimed that a certain proportion of people not suspected of involvement in subverting national security also get routinely scrutinized (Bamford 2001).

The space-time compression of the data revolution enables new, proactive security and surveillance practices. Intelligence scarcely relies any more on counting missile silos and launch pads from aerial reconnaissance, but instead on profiling the personal data of whole populations in the name of preventing and mitigating security threats. There is an increasing demand for private data collected by all kinds of information-gathering agencies. Importantly, security is no longer managed exclusively within the domain of the nation-state. A steadily growing number of new public bodies as well as *private commercial agencies* have come into operation on sub-state and national levels and across national jurisdictions. From the 1990s onwards, private security firms have expanded to protect major institutions against crime and terrorism, from private premises to rail stations and airports. There are commercial data brokers such as Equifax, LexisNexis, and Choice Point – operating with billions of customer information files on their databases – that sell information not only to business but to government departments and the police.

Moreover, there is a constant growth of privately run international intelligence agencies providing knowledge on international affairs, such as Kroll Inc., Hakluyt (with ongoing links to Britain's MI6 foreign intelligence agency), and Stratfor. The two latter were founded in the 1990s by ex-operatives of state intelligence agencies and were almost entirely staffed by ex-intelligence people.

### **AFTERMATH OF 9/11 IN THE US**

The disastrous attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon of September 11, 2001, demonstrated that terrorists were able to circumvent law enforcement agencies' communication technologies and information practices. In their aftermath, western governments proposed new methods to counter terrorism and pushed through anti-terrorist legislation overnight that stripped away many limitations on state surveillance. Provisions such as Section 215 of the 2001 US Patriot Act illustrate how 9/11 acted as a catalyst for public-private partnerships in this sphere. The Act enabled investigators to police and govern at long distance by cooperating with high-tech companies such as Acxiom, using the billions of information files provided by retailers, financial institutions, direct marketers, publishers, mail-order services, telecommunication providers, and other companies such as semi-public transport and traffic services.

Thus the law opened up a huge domestic surveillance program that scrutinizes the American population as a whole, on the assumption it will be able to discern the lethal few from the many good (O'Harrow 2005). Some commentators claim that the NSA moved into domestic surveillance even well beyond what is enabled by the Patriot Act. President Bush was determined to sweep away the peacetime rules that had curbed the activities of the US intelligence community since the 1970s, and readily agreed to give the NSA broad new powers, lowering the bar, as Risen (2006) argues, on what is acceptable when it comes to the government's ability to intrude into the personal lives of average Americans (→ Privacy).

There is evidence for the prediction by Gary T. Marx that a paradigmatic American social control model is taking over the western democracies, even if adjusted to the specific contexts, cultures, and needs of other countries (Marx & Fijnaut 1995). Thus the European Union nations were far from laggards in developing their surveillance systems. Although this has never been officially confirmed, under the leadership of France's foreign intelligence agency, the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure (DGSE), France began to implement a European counterpart of Echelon with financial support from its equivalents in other member states, such as Germany's Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND). Moreover, the European integration process has accelerated the establishment of massive transnational information systems across the continent that stem from the removal of borders between member states as well as from an increasingly perceived need for cross-border law enforcement.

### **THE SCHENGEN INFORMATION SYSTEM IN EUROPE**

In this context the most important European system is the *Schengen Information System* (SIS), as its mechanisms impact much of the current security and surveillance developments

in the Euro Zone. SIS is a secret database founded on the policy of freedom of movement within Europe, as codified in the 1985 Schengen Agreement Application Convention. Officially facilitating freedom of movement in the so-called Schengen countries, the SIS also ensures control over people's movements, demonstrating the ambivalence of globalization processes. The imperative of free movement within and across different jurisdictions – seen as the basis for the socio-economic functioning of societies in the twenty-first century (Urry 2000) – generates simultaneously the need for more regulation and intensified border control. “Schengen” includes 13 EU member states plus Norway and Iceland. As part of the Fortress Europe architecture, SIS contains over 17 million entries, with individuals requested for extradition, mentally ill and missing persons, suspects in serious offenses, and so-called unwanted persons making up the great majority of the personal information stored. In 2004 almost 39,000 aliases and 15 million objects belonging to 878,000 people were registered. The UK and Ireland, though not members, participated in law-enforcement aspects of SIS. The network allowed all police stations to access data on specific individuals, vehicles, and property. The exchange of data was administered in each participating country in so-called SIRENE offices (Supplementary Information Request at the National Entry). These offices provide to member states with full access, via the SIRENE system, additional information about individuals registered in the SIS, such as bodily marks, occupation, location, and data on individuals closely related to them (Mathiesen 2006). SIS is accompanied by other systems such as EURODAC (for comparing fingerprints of migrants and refugees) and VIS, advanced software for rapidly accelerating the simultaneous processing of multiple entries, for example bio-informatic data.

Building on this foundation, an SIS II was being planned in the mid-2000s by the European Commission, to provide a new structure and more capacity for information such as *biometric identifiers*. Further efforts were underway to facilitate cooperation among law-enforcement agencies, intelligence analysis, and data exchange within the police forces of the 27 member states. The European criminal intelligence agency Europol was set up in 1999 to handle international crime such as drug-trafficking, child pornography, money laundering, counterfeiting, cyber-crime, environmental crime, terrorism, and racism (Europol 2004). The Europol Computer Systems (TECS) were available to EU member states and included a central information system on sentenced people and suspected repeat offenders, work files permitting simultaneous processing of around 70 types of personal data, and an index system to facilitate intelligence analysis (Mathiesen 2006).

### EXPECTATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Given these various information systems, a common aim was to improve cooperation between security and law-enforcement agencies throughout the European Union. With the Prüm Convention of 2005 a further step was made in this direction that illustrated the political process in creating an integrated security regime throughout the EU. Only seven states signed the Treaty. However, unlike the Schengen process, the signatories were willing to play “a pioneering role in establishing the highest possible standard of cooperation especially by means of exchange of information, particularly in combating



terrorism, cross-border crime and illegal migration, while leaving participation in such cooperation open to all member states of the European Union” (preamble to Prüm Treaty). Hence, through intergovernmental agreements there was an attempt to push cooperation beyond existing EU legislation.

The basic focus of surveillance and security in the mid-2000s was not on known individuals such as wanted criminals or terrorists, but on the everyday behavior of unknown individuals in the mass. The result of the transformation was a blurring of the lines between national security and public freedoms, between military forces and law enforcement, and last but not least between governmental agencies and private firms. These strategic realignments resulted in the “debordering” of borders, including their control and sorting mechanisms, as they have potentially expanded to every location. Individuals have fewer and fewer avenues to opt out of these systems. With their growing omnipresence, the multiple global dimensions of the new surveillance technologies could scarcely be missed.

SEE ALSO: ► Privacy ► Satellite Communication, Global

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# Segmentation of the Advertising Audience

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Organizations communicate core messages (position themselves) to different types of audiences (target groups) that they select out of a list of possible → audience segments or profiles, defined according to a number of segmentation criteria (→ Audience Segmentation). On the basis of this segmentation, audience profile selection, and positioning decision, organizations will define communication objectives and messages and build a communication plan.

The communication of organizations is targeted at different types of audiences. *Marketing communication* is all commercially relevant communication directed at customers and potential customers with the intention of selling products in the short or long term (→ Marketing; Integrated Marketing Communications). This type of communication can be directed at individual end consumers (“business-to-consumer communication”), but also at other companies or organizations (“business-to-business communication”). *Corporate communication* is all communication by organizations the objective of which is to establish and/or maintain a good corporate identity, corporate image, and reputation, and build good will with various stakeholders or publics (→ Corporate Communication). Stakeholders are (groups of) individuals or organizations that are important for the organization in that they can affect or are affected by the achievement of an organization’s goals and purposes (→ Stakeholder Theory).

## SEGMENTATION OF BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER ADVERTISING AUDIENCES

In Table 1 a framework and examples of variables used to segment consumer markets are presented. Objective criteria can be measured straightforwardly. Inferred variables have

Table 1 Consumer market segmentation criteria

	Objective	Inferred (psychographic)
General	Geographic Demographic (income, gender, age, education, profession, life cycle, etc.)	Social strata Personality Lifestyle
Specific (behavioral)	Occasion Loyalty status User status Usage rate Recency, frequency, monetary value	Benefit Hierarchy-of-effect stages (AIDA [attention, interest, desire, action], adoption, persuasion, etc.)

to be defined before people can be classified into groups. General criteria hold in all behavioral circumstances. For instance, a person is always male or female, no matter what buying situation she or he is in. On the basis of behavioral criteria, (potential) consumers can belong to different segments, depending on the product or buying situation concerned. For instance, a person can be a loyal buyer or a heavy user of a brand of beer, but an infrequent and brand-switching consumer of a brand of milk.

Markets can be divided into geographical segments such as continents, countries, regions, neighborhoods or cultures (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Consumer needs, wants, and reactions to marketing efforts often differ between these geographical or cultural segments, and therefore may require a different communication approach. For instance, Stella, a Belgian beer, is considered an ordinary lager in most continental European markets, but is perceived as a luxury beer in the UK (→ Image).

*Demographic segmentation* divides the market on the basis of sex, age, income, race, education, and profession. For instance, Axe deodorant targets young men, promising increased sex appeal in its communication campaigns, and BMW launched the Compact series for smaller budgets. Consumer markets can also be targeted on the basis of household life-cycle criteria such as marital and occupational status and the age of children. People are single, marry, get a job, have young children or adolescents, marry again or become single again, and retire. In each of these stages needs and wants are different, and communication strategies will have to be adapted to these different situations. For instance, couples with young children are interesting markets for toys and diapers, while retired couples may be into buying new furniture or may decide to travel extensively.

*Social stratification* is a permanent and ordered division of society based on criteria such as education, profession, income, and status. People in different social classes may have different needs and react differently to marketing communication stimuli. For instance, middle-class consumers may be convinced by buying arguments related to “showing off their wealth,” while members of the upper classes may rather want to consume in a “low-profile” way.

*Lifestyle measurement* is based on the activities, interests, and opinions of consumers (→ Taste Culture). Activities include how people spend their money and time, i.e., work, leisure, product use, shopping behavior, etc. Interests can be in fashion, housing, food, cars, culture, and so on. Opinions are attitudes, preferences, and ideas on general subjects such as politics or economics, or on oneself and one’s family. Different lifestyle groups may be interested in different products and activities, and are susceptible to different arguments in marketing communication.

*Personality traits* are relatively stable characteristics of individuals that guide their specific behavior. For instance, a person can be extravert or introvert, sensation-seeking or not, high or low affect intense, or have a low or high need for knowledge. Extravert individuals buy different types of perfume than introvert people; affect intense consumers react more positively to emotional advertising; and people high in need for knowledge like more information-dense communication. Although psychographic criteria may be more relevant than demographic or geographic ones, they are usually more difficult to measure and to use as segmentation criteria.

Organizations can divide their consumers with reference to *product- or brand-related aspects*. Consumers can be segmented on the basis of the occasion on which they use a product or brand. For instance, a brand of orange juice can be targeted at a segment of

consumers drinking it at breakfast, but also at target groups that use it in cocktails in the evening. Customers can be loyal to one single brand, loyal to a set of brands, or brand switchers. Switchers will be more easily convinced by incentives such as sales promotions, while those loyal to one brand may be more sensitive to image advertising or loyalty promotions. Consumers can also be heavy, moderate, or light users or buyers of a product. Heavy users are important for companies because they constitute the stable basis of their business. Individuals can also be segmented on the basis of their usage status: nonuser, potential user, first-time user, regular user, or ex-user. Nonusers will never buy the product (for instance, people without little children will not buy diapers). Companies should avoid communicating with them. Potential users should be persuaded to try the product, first-time users to become loyal, and regular users to stay loyal.

Especially for direct marketing purposes (direct mailing, telemarketing, etc.), customers can also be divided on the basis of their *buying history*, i.e., the recency and frequency of their purchases and the amounts they have spent buying products from the company. On the basis of each of these criteria or combinations of characteristics, the mailing frequency and/or the type of message or offer can be adapted.

Markets can often be segmented on the basis of specific *benefits that consumers prefer or are* looking for. For instance, people may look for a dishwashing liquid that performs well, is mild, or is cheap. Consumers that buy toothpaste may base their choice mainly on its price, medical characteristics, aesthetic properties, or taste. For each benefit segment an appropriate product and a specific communication campaign may be developed.

*Hierarchy-of-effects models* assume that consumers go through different stages in a well-defined sequence in responding to marketing communication, namely a cognitive (think), affective (feel), and behavioral (do) stage. Consumers can be segmented on the basis of which stage they are in at a certain moment in time, and different messages will have to be conveyed to different hierarchy-of-effect stage segments (→ Cluster Analysis; Statistics, Descriptive). One of the oldest frameworks is the *AIDA model* (attention, interest, desire, action). Communication targeted at potential consumers should grab their attention. People who are attentive should be made interested in the product. Interested people have to be persuaded to desire the product, and finally people who desire the product should be urged to buy it. Depending upon the stage people are in, messages and persuasion strategies have to be adapted. Other well-known hierarchy-of-effects models are the *AIETA* or adoption model (awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, adoption) and the *Lavidge and Steiner model* (awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, purchase).

On the basis of individual and relevant segmentation variables, *segmentation profiles* are defined that are combinations of these criteria. For instance, a segment may be defined as “all middle-class men between 20 and 30 years old that are heavy users of our product and price-sensitive.” Companies will define several of these profiles and select a number of them as target groups for their marketing communication campaigns.

## **SEGMENTATION OF BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS ADVERTISING AUDIENCES**

Organizations do not only sell to individual end consumers. Often marketing communication is directed at organizations or companies. Target segments can be based on the

Table 2 Business market segmentation criteria

Type of organization	Organizational characteristics	Buying roles	Purchase situation
Commercial (resellers, users, original equipment manufacturers)	Industry Company size	Information gatherer Key influencer	New task Modified rebuy
Government organizations	Location	Decision-maker	Straight rebuy
Not-for-profit organizations	Technology level Attitude toward risk	Purchaser User	

type of organization, organizational characteristics, buying roles of individuals within that organization, and the purchase situation (Table 2).

Resellers or distributors buy products to market them to the next intermediary in the distribution chain or to the final customer. For instance, supermarkets buy food products from Nestlé and Coca-Cola, and sell them to end consumers. Users are industrial companies or organizations that buy products or services to support or enable the production process or the activities of the company in general (machinery, copiers, paper, cleaning products, etc.). Original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) buy industrial goods and incorporate them in their own products. For instance, Monroe sells shock absorbers to car manufacturers who build them into their cars. Government organizations can be resellers, users, or OEMs of products. They buy paper, computers, and cleaning products for their daily operations, but also bricks and road construction materials to build into their infrastructure, and theatre plays to resell to the visitors of their cultural centers. Government buying procedures are characterized by complex decision-making and legal constraints. Therefore they are often treated as separate target groups that require a specific communication approach.

Companies and organizations can differ in terms of size, industry, location, level of technology and sophistication, etc., and may therefore constitute fundamentally different market segments that require different communication campaigns. For instance, communicating with a small company in a traditional industry to sell computer equipment will be radically different from approaching a large IT company.

In business buying situations a buying center or decision-making unit (DMU) is often comprised of several members who play *different roles in the buying process*. They constitute different segments that may require different communication segments and approaches. For instance, information gatherers in manufacturing management may need different types of information and different arguments to be persuaded than top management decision-makers or users in a research and development department. It is important to differentiate the message according to the different information needs of DMU segments.

Finally, the *purchase situation* is also important. In a new task, the DMU will often be large and engineering and research and development will be key functions. In modified rebuy situations, the DMU is medium-sized and comprises production and top managers. In straight rebuy situations, the DMU is often small and comprised of purchasing managers.

## SEGMENTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

Corporate communication is aimed at correctly communicating the corporate identity and strategy and at developing and maintaining a good image, reputation, and good will with various stakeholders or publics. Most organizations have multiple stakeholders, such as shareholders, employees, labor unions, governments, suppliers, distributors, banks, pressure groups, competitors, media, and so forth. Corporate communication campaigns aimed at these stakeholders should use various tools, such as public relations, corporate advertising, annual reports, press releases, and internal communication tools (e.g., newsletters, presentations, mailings, bulletin boards) to convey the appropriate message to these various publics.

Market segments have to be measurable: it should be possible to gather information about segmentation criteria and about the size, composition, and purchase behavior of each segment. Target groups have to be substantial enough to warrant separate and profitable marketing campaigns to be developed particularly for that segment. Segments have to be attainable, i.e., accessible and actionable. It should be possible to identify segment members and target the marketing communication campaign at them separately. Finally, market segmentation should lead to more homogeneous sub-groups in that the members of one group should react similarly to marketing stimuli and differ in their reactions to these stimuli from the members of other segments. For instance, there is no point in defining men and women as different segments if they react similarly to advertising and sales promotions.

SEE ALSO: ► Audience ► Audience Segmentation ► Cluster Analysis ► Corporate Communication ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Image ► Integrated Marketing Communications ► Marketing ► Stakeholder Theory ► Statistics, Descriptive ► Taste Culture

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# Selective Attention

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Selective attention refers to the differential processing of multiple sources of information that are available at the same time (Johnston & Dark 1986; → Information Processing; Attention). These information sources are generally in the external environment, though they need not be. For example, internal information sources, like → memory, may also hold attention. Further, selective attention refers not simply to the orientation toward one message or stimulus rather than another, but also to the focus on parts of a message rather than other parts (often referred to as selective processing; → Selective Perception and Selective Retention).

Although attention may certainly be drawn to an object or message via its sensory-stimulating features (e.g., its appearance), most research on selective attention focuses on the characteristics of individuals that might cause them to direct their attention to one stimulus rather than another. It is also of note that attention can be either automatic or controlled. That is, sometimes one's attention is drawn to stimuli by forces outside conscious awareness. Other times, people may actively choose what to attend to and what to avoid. Ultimately, selective attention has been an important focus for cognitive psychologists because it is generally accepted that what people attend to has implications for how they orient to their environment, their conscious life experiences, and the functional outcomes of those events and interactions.

## DEVELOPMENT

Discussion of selective attention can be traced to the work of William James (1950), who astutely observed that attention is influenced by what already exists in the mind. Indeed, decades of psychological research in this area suggest that selective attention is largely motivated by the priming, or activation, of certain mental constructs, including an object's modality, semantic cues, or mental schema (Johnston & Dark 1986; → Priming Theory; Schemas). So, for example, if the visual modality is primed, attention may be biased toward information presented through that modality. Similarly, if a particular schema is activated (e.g., birthday party), selective attention processes might lead people to pay greater attention to schema-consistent information (e.g., party hats, presents, candles). This attention, in turn, affects memory for and judgments of those features.

The extensive research on selective attention since the 1950s has been largely motivated by a particularly interesting conundrum known as "*the cocktail party problem*." That is, how is it that we can attend to one conversation, yet notice when our name is mentioned in a different conversation that we were not consciously aware was taking place? Indeed, the larger question is how people's attention can be both focused and divided such that important information from an unattended source may still be gathered. The research in this area, thus, has been geared toward understanding the nature of attention itself.

## THEORY

Theoretically, multiple explanations have been offered to explain selective attention, focusing on whether selectivity occurs earlier or later during information processing. “Early selection” theories, like Broadbent’s *filter theory*, argue that selectivity occurs early such that physical properties (e.g., sound, location) are noticed for all incoming stimuli, but given people’s limited perceptual capacities, a selective filter limits deeper information processing of most stimuli. “Later selection” theories, however, argue that deeper automatic processing is actually more common than initially thought. Such theories assert that most stimuli are deeply processed but only some make it into memory and affect deliberate choice.

Given that evidence from auditory and visual information studies seems to support elements of both perspectives, a *compromise position* has gained popularity. This position suggests that deeper processing of unattended stimuli is still more the exception than the rule, but that such stimuli do receive attenuated processing such that a person could pick up on relevant information if need be on the basis of activated schemas (see Driver 2001). More recent work elaborates on this view, arguing that if limits on perceptual capacity are not reached with the target information, then other “distractor information” may be processed. However, if the target information demands more capacity, distractor information is less likely to be automatically processed. Ultimately, it appears that attention is like an “adjustable beam spotlight” in which attention is sharpest on what is in the center, but sometimes, if capacity allows, is drawn to objects outside the spotlight, particularly those relevant to an activated schema (see Johnston & Dark 1986).

## APPLICATIONS IN RESEARCH

The most current psychological investigations of selective attention have begun to focus heavily on issues related to neuroscience. Specifically, rather than relying on self-report and eye-tracking measures of attention, these studies examine neurotransmitters and brain structure activation to gain insight into the physiological processes underlying selective attention, awareness, and ultimately memory. This research offers increasing insight into why people of various ages and psychological or pathological conditions attend as they do, and there is little doubt this reflects the methodological future of selective attention research.

From a communication standpoint, research on selective attention is likely to continue to focus on the qualities of individuals and their cognitive makeup that direct attention to some (or parts of some) messages rather than others. An examination of the literature actually reveals little direct discussion of selective attention per se, but rather a focus on the notion of  $\rightarrow$  *selective exposure*. Selective exposure refers to audience bias in the selection of information sources, generally in favor of those consistent with existing attitudes or opinions ( $\rightarrow$  Cognitive Dissonance Theory). Although it could be argued that selective exposure processes are more active and controlled than those of selective attention, the conceptual overlap between the two is strong. It should be noted, however, that there is a much clearer distinction between both of these concepts and that of selective perception, which involves differing interpretations of the same information



based on previously held attitudes. In other words, selective attention/exposure assumes bias in what is seen or heard, whereas selective perception refers to bias in how attended information is interpreted

The idea that people's beliefs influence their attention or exposure to information appears early in the communication literature (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944), and has been applied to both interpersonal (→ Interpersonal Communication) and media contexts. In *interpersonal contexts*, selective attention has been proposed as an explanation for relational judgments and conflict. For example, when people aim to make judgments about another's attractiveness or personality, they are more likely to accurately describe the person along that dimension (Perry 1976). Relatedly, if two people have different issues in mind during a conversation (e.g., related past arguments, work- or health-related stress), they are likely to attend to different aspects of the communication, which ultimately could impact their interpretation of the conversation (Watzlawick et al. 1967).

There has also been extensive research on selective exposure in the realms of *media and influence* (see Bryant & Davies 2006). Much of this research suggests that elements of a person's belief system or psychological makeup impact the messages he or she chooses to read or watch. For example, research on → news and political information suggests people choose to expose themselves to information that is consistent with their prior political beliefs (→ Exposure to News). In the persuasion literature, much evidence suggests that people are more likely to attend to information they perceive as personally relevant. From a broader media perspective, people often select their media content on the basis of whether they expect it will meet their social or psychological needs, including needs for information, social connection, or diversion (→ Uses and Gratifications).

In considering the psychological factors that influence selective attention or exposure, it is clear that emotional, as well as cognitive, components have influence. Indeed, → Festinger's (1957) highly influential *dissonance theory* makes this evident. According to dissonance theory, the motivation to maintain consistency in one's beliefs motivates selective exposure processes such that information expected to be inconsistent with currently held beliefs will be avoided. This presumption has been supported by a recent → meta-analysis of 16 research studies that linked dissonance with selective information exposure (D'Alessio & Allen 2002). Although this appears to be a cognition-based effect, the motivation for the information attention is the "psychological discomfort," or negative affective feeling, associated with inconsistency. Further, there is evidence that those in particular emotional states are more motivated to attend to information related to that state (Nabi 2003). To the extent to which people would like to change or maintain their moods (→ Mood Management), evidence from the media literature suggests that people expose themselves to media messages that they expect will help them to manage their moods in ways they most prefer (Zillmann 2000).

Although the focus of selective exposure research may seem to emphasize the cognitive and emotional makeup and abilities of the individual, there is also evidence that *message or situational features* may draw attention apart from, or sometimes in conjunction with, the individual's needs. The psychological literature in particular has focused on spatial orientation of information presentation, suggesting that selective attention appears to be more strongly influenced by visual, rather than semantic, cues. Further, color and

orientation are the visual cues most easily processed. Indeed, the literature on information vividness suggests that information that is graphic, concrete, and emotional is more likely to be attended to and to affect judgments, though evidence for the latter effect has been elusive.

There is also evidence that certain *features of individuals* might garner attention. For example, evidence supports the idea that people – both men and women – selectively attend to women they find attractive although only women selectively attend to men they find attractive (Maner et al. 2003). In the influence literature, the impact of source attractiveness, in addition to source similarity, likeability, and credibility, suggests that people may be more likely to attend to, and be influenced by, messages presented by those with whom they share similar features (gender, age, race), or whom they like or trust, than to those same messages presented by sources low on those characteristics, assuming low message scrutiny.

Finally, from the communication literature, Lang's (2000) → limited capacity model focuses on *elements of message construction* – both structure (e.g., edits, screen size) and content (e.g., sex, violence) – and how they interact with information-processing systems to affect what information is attended to and ultimately remembered and what information is not. Relatedly, research on message sensation value suggests that messages with certain features (e.g., sound saturation, camera cuts and angles, graphic images) are more likely to attract the attention of, and thus influence, high sensation seekers than messages without these features (Morgan et al. 2003; → Sensation Seeking).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes ▶ Automaticity ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Information Processing ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Limited Capacity Model ▶ Memory ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Mood Management ▶ News ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Schemas ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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## Selective Exposure

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The study of selective exposure seeks to understand how and why people consume particular communication content when faced with a constellation of choices. Broadly defined, selective exposure refers to behaviors that are deliberately performed in an effort to bring communication content within reach of one's sensory apparatus (Zillmann & Bryant 1985). In the modern, media-saturated world, selective exposure often occurs within the context of mass media, although by definition it encompasses all forms of human communication. The current state of research in this area can be understood by tracing historical approaches to selective exposure, outlining key theoretical components, and describing directions of current research.

### HISTORICAL ROOTS

Psychology's interest in persuasion laid the groundwork for the study of selective exposure. By the conclusion of World War II, propaganda researchers had long noted that people avoided messages that conflicted with their opinions, and even interpreted those messages differently (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention; Propaganda in World War II). Lazarsfeld et al.'s (1944) classic study of the 1940 presidential election provided strong support for the idea that people either avoided persuasive media content designed to change their opinions, or sought out media that reinforced their beliefs (→ Lazarsfeld, Paul F.). They found that approximately two-thirds of decided voters saw and heard more of their own party's publicity than the opposition's, and that the

campaigns influenced very few voters to change their voting intentions, especially among those harboring strong party affiliations.

The notion that media functions to reinforce existing beliefs and conditions is a theme repeatedly voiced in Klapper's (1960) survey of mass media research. In his book, he argued that the process of selective exposure was one of the primary mediators of → media effects. Klapper grounded his definition of selective exposure in → Festinger's (1957) influential → cognitive dissonance theory. Festinger's theory asserts that mental discomfort is produced in individuals holding conflicting attitudes, thoughts, or beliefs, and when individuals become aware of this contradiction they may seek to avoid information that produces this discomfort, or seek messages sympathetic to their beliefs.

In the years following the publication of Klapper's (1960) book, many media researchers focused their efforts on understanding the uses audiences have for media. Not surprisingly, research has consistently shown that that entertainment and interest are major motivating factors of media use (→ Uses and Gratifications). The realization that entertainment is a key variable spawned interest in the emotional factors leading to media use. Subsequently, a large body of literature has accumulated that confirms that → emotion and mood play an integral role in media choices (→ Media Effects, History of).

## **EMOTION AND SELECTIVE EXPOSURE**

Much of the research on emotion and selective exposure is based on the affect dependent theory of stimulus arrangement (Zillmann & Bryant 1985). This theory is founded on the premise that people are motivated to avoid negative, noxious, or unpleasant stimuli on the one hand, and try to maximize exposure to positive, pleasurable stimuli on the other. The theory recognizes that individuals often use media as a means to achieve this goal. Furthermore, the theory recognizes that individuals may or may not be aware of the motivating role of their own moods. Rather, through a process of classical and operant conditioning, individuals learn which types of stimuli are best suited to alleviate or maintain particular moods (→ Mood Management).

Particularly strong evidence in support of the theory has been found in studies that have investigated correlations between mood shifts associated with pregnancy and menstrual cycles and preferences for certain media content. For instance, women are more likely to view comedies when their menstrual cycle makes them most likely to be depressed (Helgrel & Weaver 1989; Meadowcroft & Zillmann 1987), and they are more likely to choose programs with higher sexual and romantic content when their cycle makes them more likely to have an increased libido (Weaver & Baird 1995).

Experimental and → survey research has shown that media may be used to alleviate such negative mood states as boredom, stress, apprehension, annoyance, and depression (→ Experimental Design). Relatively few studies, however, have examined the effect of positive emotions on selectivity. This leaves the basic assumption that individuals are motivated to maximize exposure to pleasurable stimuli open to debate. Nevertheless, Zillmann (1988) argued that good moods could be maintained or enhanced by consumption of media messages that are minimally involving, have a high behavioral affinity to positive mood, or are highly pleasant.

Selective exposure theory makes predictions about the effect of mood on media preferences based on the combination of four key variables: excitatory homeostasis, intervention potential, message-behavioral affinity, and hedonic valence. Theoretically, these four variables are distinct elements, but in practice a great deal of overlap exists between components. In some cases, it may be impossible to experimentally isolate each of the variables to determine their specific effect on selectivity.

*Excitatory homeostasis* refers to the human tendency to seek out states of psychological arousal that are neither over- nor under-stimulating (→ Excitation and Arousal). Researchers have observed that individuals who are placed in a state of boredom tend to seek arousing media messages and avoid relaxing ones. However, individuals who are in a stressful state are more likely than bored individuals to choose calming television programming (Bryant & Zillmann 1984). Researchers have also observed this same pattern of behavior among Internet users and in surveys of television use and stressful life events.

Some communication messages require a great deal of attention to process them, whereas others capture relatively little of our cognitive resources. *Intervention potential* is the ability of a communication message to capture, engage, or absorb an aroused individual's attention or cognitive-processing resources. A highly engaging message will occupy resources that might otherwise be used to dwell on a particular mood or emotion. For example, in one experiment, Bryant and Zillmann (1977) observed that viewing media content with a high intervention potential reduced the retaliation of participants against a person who annoyed them, whereas viewing minimally absorbing messages failed to reduce retaliation.

Communication that has a high degree of similarity to an individual's emotional state is said to have *message-behavioral affinity*. For example, participants in one study were insulted and then given the opportunity to view television (Zillmann et al. 1980). The researchers observed that participants who were insulted tended to avoid hostile comedy laden with put-downs, presumably because of the match between their emotional state and the television program's content. Participants in the control condition displayed no such tendency. These findings suggest that one's emotional state is indeed a predictor of exposure to, or avoidance of, certain media content.

Presumably all communication messages can be classified on a continuum of positive and negative. *Hedonic valence* refers to the negative or positive quality of a message. Negative messages might be described as threatening, distressing, or sad, whereas adjectives such as uplifting, amusing, or happy might be used to describe positive messages. Theoretically, individuals in negative moods should prefer messages with a positive valence. This prediction was confirmed in an experiment by Knobloch and Zillmann (2002). They demonstrated that when participants who were in a bad mood were given the opportunity to listen to music, they chose to listen to joyful music longer than participants who were in a good mood.

Generally, in cases where the hedonic valence of a message is in opposition to an individual's emotional state, the message should diminish the intensity of an individual's mood. However, researchers have found notable exceptions to this rule when other variables are taken into consideration. In situations where the hedonic valence of a message is positive and its intervention potential is low, negative moods are reduced, but the opposite effect is observed when the hedonic valence is positive and the intervention potential is high (Zillmann et al. 1980).

## CURRENT RESEARCH

The bulk of the selective exposure research centers on *entertainment messages* presented on → television. Nevertheless, a few studies have attempted to apply the theory to other forms of media, especially as new technology has introduced new ways of communication. For example, researchers observed that the speed at which → Internet users surfed web pages was associated with either boredom or stress. In an experiment, the researchers placed participants in either bored or stressed mood states and then unobtrusively observed their web-surfing behaviors. As predicted, bored participants tended to browse web pages more rapidly than their counterparts experiencing stressful moods (Mastro et al. 2002; → Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking).

Other research has examined selective exposure to *news content on the Internet*. This research has found that the way in which news articles are framed in lead sentences or by the type of picture that accompanies them influences time spent reading an article. Reading times increase when lead sentences emphasize conflict and suffering, or when the article is accompanied by a threatening image. In contrast, decreased reading times are associated with leads that stress factual information and economic implications, or when the article is accompanied by an innocuous image (Knobloch et al. 2003; Zillmann et al. 2004; → Exposure to News).

To date, no experimental studies have explored selective exposure to computer-mediated entertainment, although Bryant and Davies (2006) argued that the theory may explain exposure to new interactive media, such as video games.

## Cognitive Dissonance

Festinger (1957) originally proposed that selectivity is motivated by dissonance reduction and characterized by avoidance of information inconsistent with one's beliefs and attitudes, and pursuit of messages that are consistent with those cognitions. Field studies generally supported the theory, but laboratory experiments produced inconclusive results. These inconsistencies have generally been attributed to the methodological shortcomings of early experiments. Indeed, the latest → meta-analysis of the cognitive dissonance literature generated evidence in support of the theory's assumptions (D'Alessio & Allen 2002).

In recent years, psychologists have produced the bulk of the current research and theorizing has introduced new explanations for why dissonance occurs, including threats to positive self-image, and personal behavior that is inconsistent with normative standards. Although scholars are still divided on this issue, it is clear that the inclusion of such moderating variables in experimental designs has confirmed the viability of cognitive dissonance theory as an explanation for selective exposure.

Communication research, in areas such as consumer behavior, journalism, and health communication, centers on the demonstration of selectivity as a result of dissonance reduction. For instance, one study of newspaper readers found that positively framed articles about a politician were more likely to be read by his or her supporters than by opponents, and this tendency was magnified among those who tended to read in a superficial manner, had little interest in politics, or had dogmatic viewpoints. However,

articles containing negative information were equally read by supporters and opponents (Donsbach 1991). Research in advertising and health communication tends to focus on identifying variables that make a message more persuasive. For example, marketing efforts are often designed to reduce post-purchase dissonance, and health messages may induce dissonance to reduce smoking or promote condom use.

### **Spontaneous and Telic Hedonism**

The basic assumption that individuals seek out specific communication choices in an effort to maximize positive emotional states and minimize negative emotions has been questioned. For instance, individuals may choose to view a sad film, or listen to loud, angry music, engaging in seemingly counter-hedonistic behavior. Christ and Medoff (1984) observed that annoyed individuals, rather than using media to alter their moods, avoided viewing television altogether when given the choice. To account for such situations, Zillmann (2000) introduced the notions of spontaneous and telic hedonism. At times, it may be emotionally functional to immediately alter one's mood state by selecting media that relieves one of negative feelings. In these cases, individuals engage in spontaneous hedonism and can be observed to use media in an effort to manage their moods.

However, other situations require that individuals postpone the immediate gratification of altering their mood state, in favor of loftier goals, or more pressing needs. In such cases selection of communication choices may be counter-hedonistic in the short run, but conform to theoretical assumptions in the long run. In an experiment, Knobloch-Westerwick and Alter (2006) plotted preference for online news articles over time and observed that media preferences changed as individuals came closer to the time when they would ostensibly meet someone who had antagonized them earlier in the experiment. This study suggests that spontaneous and telic hedonism is an important variable to consider; however, aside from this single experiment, no study has specifically addressed the time variable in a selective exposure paradigm.

### **Informational Utility**

Informational utility refers to situations where information is sought out to reduce uncertainty. Whereas the hedonistic assumptions of selective exposure theory are particularly suited for explaining consumption of entertainment media, these assumptions may have less application in cases where media use is motivated by a need or desire for information (→ Information Seeking; Informational Utility). Selective exposure to communication that is motivated by informational utility is conceptually distinct from selective exposure behavior designed to reinforce pre-existing beliefs or conditions (as in cognitive dissonance theory).

However, at this time, studies have not explicitly isolated and tested the theoretical notion of informational utility to determine its effect on selectivity, although it should be noted that much of the information-seeking behavior described in the health communication literature, for example, may fall under the purview of informational utility. It may be increasingly difficult for researchers in the modern media era to experimentally

separate the informational utility of media from its emotional utility. For instance, exposure to so-called edutainment and infotainment may be driven by hedonistic motivations as well as the informational utility of such media.

### **Gender and Personality Variables**

Research in selective exposure has accumulated to the point where basic assumptions of the theory are being expanded to include how gender and personality traits interact with basic theoretical components. For example, greater support for the hedonistic assumptions of selective exposure theory has been observed among *females* than males. Some of the gender differences observed in earlier research can be explained by differences in how men and women respond to conflict. In one study, researchers led participants to believe that they would have an opportunity to retaliate against a person who had annoyed them. In anticipation of the conflict, women were observed viewing positive news articles in an apparent effort to reduce negative moods. However, men were more likely to choose negative news content, apparently in an effort to enhance their aggressive feelings (Knobloch-Westerwick & Alter 2006).

Research has also found that *personality variables* predict media preference (→ Personality and Exposure to Communication). Much of the communication literature has examined how certain traits, such as authoritarianism or rebelliousness, are predictive of media preferences. However, comparatively few studies have considered how higher-order personality variables are related to selective exposure to communication messages. These higher-order variables are derived from numerous personality traits and are thought to express the most fundamental commonalities and differences among individuals. One study in this area, for example, observed correlations between higher-order personality variables and preference for certain genres of media (Weaver 1991). Individuals who scored high on the trait of neuroticism also displayed preferences for downbeat music and informative news programs, but tended to avoid light-hearted comedies and action programs. On the other hand, individuals who scored high on the trait of psychoticism expressed strong preferences for violent horror movies, but tended to display less interest in comedies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Emotion  
▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Experimental Design  
▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Information  
Seeking ▶ Informational Utility ▶ Internet ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects  
▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Mood Management ▶ Personality  
and Exposure to Communication ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Selective Perception  
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# Selective Perception and Selective Retention

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Perception refers to the process of categorizing and interpreting information that is attended to (→ Perception). *Selective perception* refers to the process of categorizing and interpreting information in a way that favors one category or interpretation over another. Thus, selective perception is generally considered to represent a bias in → information processing. More specifically, information tends to be selectively perceived in ways that are congruent with existing individual needs, goals, values, → attitudes, and beliefs. This process generally occurs automatically, outside the conscious awareness of the perceiver (→ Automaticity).

The process of selective perception can occur at various stages of perception, including the initial recognition and categorization of stimuli, attention to competing stimuli, and the interpretation of these stimuli. *Selective retention* (also known as selective memory) is a similar process by which some information is retained and stored in → memory (and is thus available for retrieving) and other information is not (and is thus forgotten). Like selective perception, selective retention is biased in terms of what information gets retained, with information that is more congruent with existing belief structures more likely to be retained in memory (and thus more likely to be recalled at a later time) than information that is less congruent with existing belief structures.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPT

One of the seminal demonstrations of selective perception in terms of recognition and categorization was provided by Bruner and colleagues. Postman et al. (1948) showed that the recognition and categorization of words are affected by internal constructs such as personal values. Participants in their studies were quicker to recognize values from the Allport–Vernon values list (Allport & Vernon 1931) when the values were ranked as more important than when they were ranked as less important. In a similar manner, Bruner (1951) showed that the categorization (interpretation) of an ambiguous figure (e.g., a man bending over) also varied as a function of the importance of the Allport–Vernon values. Participants who held strong economic values were more likely to describe the man as working compared to those who did not hold strong economic values, and those who held strong religious values were more likely to describe the man as praying than those who did not hold strong religious values.

These findings clearly indicate that internal dispositions of individuals affect how incoming information is perceived. Specifically, individuals tend to perceive information in ways that are congruent with their needs, goals, and values. In other words, individuals appear to regulate the information that gets “filtered in” in the perception process. Bruner and Postman (1947b) referred to this process as “perceptual vigilance.”

Along with regulating what and how information is used in the perceptual process, selective perception can also pertain to a filtering-out process. Bruner and Postman (1947a) provided evidence of this process by demonstrating that people also showed a *decreased* ability to recognize certain emotion-laden stimuli, and these were usually related to taboo words (e.g., bitch, death, penis; Bruner & Postman 1947a). This process was termed “perceptual defense.”

The processes just described pertain to ones that occur very early on in information processing. That is, these examples of selective perception involve the recognition and categorization of information that is attended to. In addition, selective perception can involve the selective assimilation of information into existing cognitive structures, and these have important implications for communication processes such as persuasion. This process was explicated by Sherif and → Hovland (1961) in their → social judgment theory. According to this theory, people’s own attitudes serve as anchors for perceiving information. Specifically, information that is similar to or congruent with one’s own attitude or belief is assimilated (facilitating → persuasion), and information that is incongruent with one’s own attitude or belief is contrasted (inhibiting persuasion).

### **CLASSIC STUDIES IN SELECTIVE PERCEPTION**

The selective perception process that occurs when information is either assimilated (for pro-attitudinal information) or contrasted (for counter-attitudinal processes) can be seen in what are generally thought to be the classic studies in selective perception. Three studies in particular are cited most often in the communication and psychology literature concerning selective perception. These are the studies by Hastorf & Cantril (1954), Cooper & Jahoda (1947), and Vidmar & Rokeach (1974).

Hastorf & Cantril (1954) investigated the perceptions of student spectators at a football game between Princeton and Dartmouth, which Princeton ultimately won (the spectators had either seen the game live or on television). The game was particularly rough, and a number of players from both teams were injured, including Princeton’s best player. Hastorf & Cantril interviewed spectators a week after the game and found that the spectators’ perceptions of the level of, responsibility for, and quantity of dirty play were strongly related to the spectators’ attitudinal predispositions. Although virtually all students categorized the game as rough, they differed in their perception of that roughness. Princeton students thought the Dartmouth team committed many more infractions than did the Dartmouth students, and also thought the Dartmouth team was dirtier and the game less fair than did the Dartmouth students. For example, 69 percent of the Princeton students but only 24 percent of the Dartmouth students characterized the game as “rough and dirty,” whereas 25 percent of the Dartmouth students but only 2 percent of the Princeton students characterized the game as “rough and fair.”

The results of the Hastorf & Cantril (1954) study can be interpreted in terms of both selective perception and selective retention. In fact, it is impossible to separate the two because we do not know whether participants in that study recalled their prior interpretation (selective perception) or recalled specific incidents from the game to construct their interpretation for the researchers (selective retention and memory). However, Hastorf & Cantril also conducted a second study in which they showed different Princeton and

Dartmouth students a film of the game one to two months later, and asked the students to code the number of infractions they witnessed in the game. The results showed that even though the students watched the exact same film, they perceived it differently. Princeton students cited over twice as many infractions for the Dartmouth team as for the Princeton team (9.8 vs 4.2, respectively), whereas Dartmouth students cited an equal number for both Dartmouth and Princeton (4.3 vs 4.4, respectively), clearly demonstrating a selectivity in perception of events.

Two other classic studies, Cooper & Jahoda (1947) and Vidmar & Rokeach (1974), investigated the effectiveness of the use of popular communications to change prejudiced attitudes. In the Cooper & Jahoda study, the authors investigated the effectiveness of a cartoon character called “Mr Biggott.” Mr Biggott was portrayed in a buffoonish, clearly negative manner with exaggerated prejudiced attitudes. The intention was that prejudiced readers would recognize that Mr Biggott held beliefs similar to their own, but also that those attitudes were absurd (because Mr Biggott was absurd), and thus change their attitudes to become less prejudiced. What Cooper & Jahoda found, however, was that Mr Biggott was perceived differently by prejudiced and nonprejudiced readers. Whereas prejudiced readers did perceive the character for the most part as intended, prejudiced readers laughed at the cartoons and often misunderstood the point. Cooper & Jahoda concluded that prejudiced readers avoided psychological conflict by misunderstanding the underlying message.

Vidmar & Rokeach (1974) found results very similar to Cooper & Jahoda (1947) in their study of reactions to the television program *All in the Family*. In that study, the central character, Archie Bunker, is portrayed as a “lovable bigot” (Vidmar & Rokeach, 1974, 36). Vidmar & Rokeach found that high- and low-prejudiced viewers both liked the show equally well, but for different reasons. Low-prejudiced viewers perceived the program and main character as intended, that is, they categorized the program as a satire about bigotry and saw Archie Bunker as an object of ridicule. However, high-prejudiced viewers saw the program more as an honest depiction, and showed more admiration for Archie than did low-prejudiced viewers.

Although the Hastorf & Cantril (1954), Cooper & Jahoda (1947), and Vidmar & Rokeach (1974) studies are often considered as the classic ones, other studies have found similar results. For example, Vallone et al. (1985) conducted a study in which pro-Arab, pro-Israel, and neutral students are shown a videotape of television news coverage of the Beirut massacre, in which civilian refugees in Lebanon were killed. The results showed that prior attitudes influenced both interpretation and memory of the events, and both pro-Arab and pro-Israeli groups perceived that the coverage was biased against them, with neutral viewers falling in the middle. This effect of differing perceptions of biased media coverage against one’s own group has been termed the “hostile media effect” (→ Hostile Media Phenomenon). Similar results were reported by Zanna et al. (1976) in a study that investigated the reactions of pro-student and pro-police participants to a television newscast that placed the blame for a police–student confrontation on either the police or students.

Across the studies just reviewed, the results provide strong evidence that individuals’ perceptions are biased toward pre-existing attitudes and beliefs. Although the design of these studies did not allow for any assessment of the processes underlying the responses,

the results are consistent with the processes of perceptual vigilance and defense discussed earlier. When exposed to a complex social situation, people will likely interpret actions and events in terms of the constructs that are most accessible in memory. As Postman et al. (1948) so aptly demonstrated, important personal values are often the constructs that are most accessible. Thus, in all three of the selective perception studies just described, participants were most likely to interpret events in terms of their personal values (e.g., pro- or anti-Dartmouth or Princeton, prejudice), selecting for inclusion instances that fit with the existing values and filtering out those that did not. Moreover, as Bruner (1957) suggests, these processes most probably occur unconsciously.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Automaticity ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Information Processing ▶ Memory ▶ Perception ▶ Persuasion ▶ Social Judgment Theory

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# Self-Presentation

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In 1959, sociologist Erving Goffman published *The presentation of self in everyday life*. The heuristic value of the concepts he introduced in that volume have been wide-ranging, particularly in the field of communication with its focus on the ways that communication is used to establish and maintain relationships. Human desire for contact and companionship require teammates who help to present the self and an audience to react to the presentation. Goffman used the metaphor of a theatrical performance as the basis of his model of the ways that people present themselves to others in work situations. He cautioned that one drawback of the metaphor is that theatre presents situations that are not genuine, while authenticity is present to some extent in everyday life. He does claim, however, that even honest performers must present themselves in ways that avoid discrediting the impression they are fostering in their audience.

The driving force behind self-presentation, accomplished by exchanging verbal and nonverbal messages during ongoing interactions, is to present to and gather from others information that will help ascertain what can be expected in particular social situations, as people present or infer the ostensible character of the self or the other. The concept of working consensus was introduced by → Goffman to define situations in which people work together to enact a situation that all will find acceptable, if not a completely true reflection of personal feelings. While some researchers claim that self-presentation is used only when the goal is to gain approval from others, and is thus inherently duplicitous and selfish, others claim that self-presentation is a pervasive feature of social life. It can be a primary or secondary interaction goal, it can be used to help others, and it is not necessarily deceitful (Schlenker & Pontari 2000). From these basic roots, Goffman and others conceptually defined constructs that are now the bedrock of much communication research.

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS OF SELF-PRESENTATION

The following are some basic self-presentation concepts. *Self-presentation*: an individual projects an image of themselves in a social situation and thereby makes an explicit or implicit claim to be a particular type of person within that situation. This projected image demands that others treat him or her in the way that this type of person has a right to expect. *Interaction*: reciprocal influence individuals have on one another when in face-to-face situations, although this has been extended to mediated communication contexts as

well. *Performance*: activity of a given participant in a particular situation that serves to influence other participants. The sincerity of the performance ranges on a continuum from complete belief in its authenticity to the dishonest portrayal of self. *Social role*: enactment of rights and duties associated with a particular status when performances are enacted in similar situations or with the same audience on different occasions. *Defensive practices*: strategies and tactics to protect a self-presentation. *Protective practices*: strategies and tactics to protect self-presentations of others, or tact. *Preventive practices*: practices to avoid damaging a self-presentation before a mistake. *Corrective practices*: strategies or tactics to repair self-presentations after they have been questioned. *Team*: a set of individuals who cooperate in staging a performance. *Region*: a place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception such as a curtain on a stage or a wall in a building. *Frontstage*: the place where the performance is given and decorum is maintained. *Backstage*: a place where the impression fostered by the performance is contradicted as a matter of course. *Information control*: the necessity for a team or individual to keep certain information from the audience that would contradict the definition of the situation they are presenting (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). *Discrepant roles*: unexpected and unapparent relations between feigned role, information possessed, and regions of access. *Face*: the line that a participant takes when presenting the self (→ Politeness Theory).

This concept was more fully developed in the essay “Face work” from *Interaction ritual* (Goffman 1967). The Chinese concepts of “lien,” which focuses on deviant behavior, and “mien-tzu,” which focuses on violations of communication norms, were adopted by Goffman, who stated that face is the part of self that is presented to others for approval. Face is influenced by the self, others, and the context, and it can be lost, maintained, and improved through interaction. Brown and Levinson’s (1987) politeness theory (→ Communication Modes, Asian) separated face into positive face, or the need to be connected to and positively regarded by others, and negative face, or the need to be independent and autonomous. Lim and Bowers (1991) added competence face, or the need to appear capable.

## SELF-PRESENTATION RESEARCH IN COMMUNICATION

The heuristic value of the self-presentation concepts that Goffman and others identified has been immense. Many branches in the field of communication have adopted and advanced these concepts. Three of those areas are discussed below.

Research in interpersonal communication has long focused on *self-disclosure*, the revelation of information that cannot be ascertained by other means and that might result in loss of face if known by others. There is also a rich tradition of work on face, politeness, and mitigating face threats (Cupach & Metts 1994) in the interpersonal communication literature. A program of research by Wilson and his colleagues has examined the identity implications of social influence goals in different contexts. These researchers studied the competing demands on message production of face-threatening acts and seeking compliance in same-sex friendships (Wilson et al. 1998), ending romantic relationships, the educational context, and cross-culturally. For example, in the realm of same-sex friendships, individuals who had different goals such as requesting favors, giving advice,

and enforcing obligations formed messages that differed in terms of face threats and politeness strategies. Other findings are that in the educational context students who approach their professors to discuss disappointing grades and have different goals, such as getting the instructor to change the grade, trying to learn the material, or venting at the instructor, also formed messages that differ in terms of face threats and politeness strategies.

The *formal organization* was the original context in which Goffman explicated the concept of self-presentation. Research in organizational communication that has used self-presentation as a framework can be found in the areas of employment interviews, negotiation, gender diversity, job loss, public relations, and social responsibility (Rosenfeld 2002; → Organizational Assimilation; Organizational Communication; Sense-Making).

Early predictions about Internet communication claimed that ideas alone would traverse text-based, verbal communication. However, over time the personal characteristics associated with nonverbal cues (→ Nonverbal Communication and Culture) may be discerned via text-based (and now image-based) *computer-mediated communication* (CMC). CMC is now recognized as one of the most fertile venues for the dynamics of self-presentation and discerning the veracity of impressions gleaned online. Communication may take place online with no offline anchors to one's physical or non-conscious characteristics, rendering CMC entirely comprised of cues that are "given" rather than "given off." The fluidity with which a person may foster a persona online ranges from the mundane to the creation of alternative personae of opposite genders (→ Avatars and Agents).

The most detailed theoretical treatments of self-presentation appear in two of the four elements of the *hyperpersonal model of CMC* (Walther 1996). One element, selective self-presentation, explains how through writing CMC users reveal desirable information about the self in ways that are more intentional and discretionary than face-to-face communication allows. Second, they exploit characteristics of the channel to edit, rewrite, and recraft messages, with turn-taking exchanges suspended or retarded, in ways that favor themselves and target their recipients; CMC messages are composed "backstage." Goffman's influence is reflected in analyses of self-presentation through personal websites (Miller 1995) and, recently, in managing impressions in online match-making services, where one must strike a delicate balance between the most desirable and the realistic descriptions of self, which do not always coincide, in order to attract partners yet not disappoint them at first meeting. Ellison et al. (2006) interviewed users of online dating services, who claimed that they attempted to be honest in their self-presentations. However, they also excused themselves for strategic misrepresentation on undesirable answers to closed-ended questions that would filter them out of other users' searches. Whereas many users had appealing offline hobbies, they did not always engage in those hobbies as frequently as their online biographies would seem to suggest.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The wide appeal of the self-presentation concept for communication research is evidenced in the wide variety of methods that have been used in research studies (→ Research Methods). For example, in the interpersonal communication domain,



researchers often create scenarios and then request that respondents create messages about what they would have said in such a situation. Those messages are then coded for their level of politeness and face threat as well as for evidence that they are addressing the primary goal of the message sender. Alternatively, researchers ask respondents to recall conversations that match the type of situation under scrutiny, and the reports of those conversations are coded. Other researchers ask respondents to use scale items to rate how positively or negatively they feel about messages provided to them with and without, or with different levels of, mitigating facework (→ Scales). In organizational communication scholarship, researchers have used → discourse analysis, interpretive analysis, and questionnaires, among other methods (→ Interview, Qualitative; Interview, Standardized). In the CMC domain, researchers have analyzed personal home pages via interpretive analysis. Others have employed interviews, content analysis, and questionnaires to determine the sender's goals, how they used the CMC systems, and the types of changes they made to their personal profiles after receipt of a message. Most tests of hyperpersonal properties involve actual interactions/experiments examining how senders select behaviors, and/or how perceivers rate senders.

Self-presentation and its related concepts have provided a useful perspective on communication research in many domains, from early work on interpersonal and organizational communication to more current work on computer-mediated communication. Health communication is another more recent focus of scholars in communication, and although some work has been done on self-presentation in this context, such as on support groups, the area is one that should produce substantial future self-presentation research. Self-presentation should continue to be highly applicable as the field of communication matures.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Communication Modes, Asian ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Impression Management ▶ Interaction ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Non-verbal Communication and Culture ▶ Organizational Assimilation ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Research Methods ▶ Scales ▶ Sense-Making

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## Self-Regulation of the Media

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Media self-regulation is the setting of rules for the media and oversight of compliance with those rules by media organizations or by users. Self-regulation should be distinguished from state or statutory regulation (i.e., regulation by law or by a statutory regulatory authority). Means of self-regulation include dispute resolution procedures, rating boards, codes of conduct, and at the level of the user, technical measures such as filtering, encryption, and pin numbers that regulate children's and others' behavior.

Self-regulation is often seen as more attractive than state regulation because it has legitimacy with the industry, is more flexible in responding to change, and can offer an alternative to state and political interference with media content. On the other hand, self-regulation is often criticized for the same reasons: because it is overly flexible and too close to the industry to offer genuine protection of the → public interest. The sanctions of self-regulation are generally seen as weaker than those available to statutory bodies or through legal process. Usually, exclusion from the trade association or self-regulatory scheme is the ultimate sanction. In the case of press and broadcasting, there may be an obligation to publish a retraction or apology.

Forms of self-regulation are in some cases linked to statutory schemes. For example, the self-regulatory ratings provided by the Motion Picture Association of America and the British Board of Film Classification are adopted in the statutory framework for video rental or film exhibition. Such hybrids between state and self-regulation are referred to as co-regulation or regulated self-regulation.

The aims and justifications of self-regulation of the media vary sector by sector. For example, a study of the emerging self-regulatory codes for Internet service providers (ISPs) found that codes had articles relating to illegal content, → privacy, hate speech (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms), provision of → e-commerce services, spam (unsolicited email), and protection of minors. By contrast, press codes focus on the practice of ethical journalism, in matters such as intrusion into privacy and → accuracy of information provided (→ Ethics in Journalism). Codes for the electronic gaming sector focus narrowly on protection of minors and content standards. In the context of convergence these sectoral differences will be increasingly significant as codes and self-regulatory schemes overlap and potentially conflict.

## ORIGINS AND MOTIVATIONS OF MEDIA SELF-REGULATION

Self-regulation can be spontaneous, motivated by a genuine sense of responsibility to media users, or it may emerge in response to the threat of government or statutory regulation. Governments and public policymakers sometimes call for or support the development of self-regulatory schemes. For example, the European Commission offered financial and technical support to the development of self-regulatory schemes as part of the Internet Action Plan between 2001 and 2004, and again from 2005 onward (→ Internet Law and Regulation; European Union: Communication Law). The Italian minister of communications in 1997 called for a working group of ISPs to work on the development of a code of conduct for Internet content, and the code was agreed in 2004. In some cases (for example, codes adopted by providers of advertising) there may be a clear self-interest for advertisers in promoting content standards, as the industry shares an interest in promoting the view that advertisements are accurate. In many cases, self-regulatory activity is funded as a means to prevent costly statutory regulation.

## SELF-REGULATION BY MEDIA SECTORS

*Newspapers* generally feature one or more of three forms of self-regulation. *Press councils* are industry-wide bodies that operate a code of conduct that applies to → newspapers. One example of this is the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) in the UK. Typically the code of conduct consists of rules of ethical journalistic behavior, including rules on intrusion into privacy, harassment, reporting of crime, reporting of court cases (→ Crime Reporting), reporting on children, and accuracy. Some codes also set out the relevant legal standards in relation to the press. A second form of self-regulation, more commonly practiced in the USA, is the *news ombudsman* or readers' editor, which provides a semi-autonomous complaints and disputes resolution mechanism within a single media organization. For example, the Asahi Shimbun in Japan established a committee to resolve complaints as early as 1922. For these internal self-regulatory mechanisms to be effective, it is generally accepted that ombudsmen or complaints committees should enjoy independence of action within the organization and have a protected employment status. In addition, journalists may be subject to the code of conduct of a professional organization such as a trade union. In some cases, professional associations demand compliance with a *code of professional ethics*.

*Broadcasting* is a sector featuring a complex range of statutory regulatory interventions, traditionally deriving from the limited market entry and the need for a body that allocates frequencies. The sector also typically features a range of self-regulatory interventions, through individual broadcasters setting out producers' guidelines to insure fair and accurate reporting. Like the codes applied by individual newspapers, these are generally voluntary, but may be linked to a formal regulatory schema (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

*Internet content* is covered by a variety of self-regulatory codes. ISP codes set out the procedures for dealing with illegal content (a notice and takedown procedure in the US and the EU, whereby ISPs have no liability for monitoring content, but should take illegal content down when notified that it is present on their servers). There may also be

unilateral codes of conduct administered by the content providers themselves, such as privacy codes. And in the case of major cross-platform content providers, codes applied to other media may also be applied to Internet content. The PCC, for example, will hear complaints about web content, including video, if that content is posted by newspapers that subscribe to the PCC code. Some Internet industry codes of conduct, for example in China, have been seen as a way of enlisting industry support for state censorship.

### CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS OF MEDIA SELF-REGULATION

Self-regulation works best where there is a degree of coincidence between the self-interest of the industry and the wider public interest; i.e., industry self-regulation is more likely in those situations where self-policing can increase the overall demand for the industry's product or prevent a burden of statutory regulation. The existence of an industry-wide decision-making system (e.g., and industry association) increases the probability of effective industry self-regulation.

There have been numerous attempts in the literature on self-regulation to isolate the conditions for success of self-regulatory schemes. The UK's National Consumer Council has offered a succinct yet comprehensive set of "ingredients" for a *successful self-regulatory scheme*: objectives must be clear and intelligible and set out clear standards; the code of conduct must clearly set out rules, monitoring, enforcement, sanctions, consultation on codes and a redress mechanism; and the structure for implementing these should be legitimate and sustainable.

A code administered by a trade organization may face legitimacy deficit, and impartiality or independence of adjudication must be defended against the accusation that it has been "captured" by industry, rather than public interests. Therefore a dedicated structure is needed, including independent representation, external monitoring of compliance, public accountability, and adequate publicity functions. Resources must be sufficient to support these structures. Finally, performance indicators for redress (including time taken to deal with complaints and surveys of complainants) should be identified, enabling regular review of self-regulatory bodies.

### RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT AND OTHER RIGHTS

The generation of self-regulation often has its foundation in the possibility or fear of government regulation, so where industry representatives are able to point to a credible threat, they are most likely to sustain self-regulatory institutions. It is a commonplace to assert that there is therefore in practice no clear division between state and private self-regulation, though there has been little research on the legal consequences of this in communications. Huyse and Parmentier (1990) distinguish between the following state and self-regulatory relationships: *subcontracting*, where the state limits its involvement to setting formal conditions for rule making, but leaves it up to parties to shape the content; *concerted action*, where the state sets not only the formal but also the substantive conditions for rule making by one or more parties; and *incorporation*, where existing but unofficial norms become part of the legislative order by insertion into statutes.

Media content is an established field of self-regulation in which controversial issues of free speech regularly come into play along with other fundamental rights such as privacy. As a result, high standards with regard to transparency, accountability, and clarity and proportionality of objectives, for example, need to be maintained by the self-regulatory institutions.

### **REGULATED SELF-REGULATION AND EUROPEAN CONCEPTS OF SELF-REGULATION AND CO-REGULATION**

Schulz and Held have investigated co-regulation in the German context, specifically in the case of protection of minors. In their view, self-regulation in Anglo-American debate is concerned with “reconciliation of private interests” whereas their formulation – regulated self-regulation – is indirect state regulation based on constitutional principles. The German concept of regulated self-regulation gives the state a role when basic constitutional rights need to be upheld (Schulz & Held 2004, 22). The French term “co-regulation” also gives a sense of the joint responsibilities of market actors and state, short of outright command and control, in the activity under investigation. The term “co-regulation” has been used by the UK’s telecom regulator to suggest that the state should have a role in setting objectives that companies then organize to achieve – with the threat of statutory sanction if self-regulation fails. The relationships between law and voluntary codes have thus been the site of a great deal of regulatory innovation in the current period in Europe (see Tambini et al. forthcoming).

### **CONVERGENCE AND FUTURE TRENDS IN SELF-REGULATION**

Significant economies of scale are likely to be realized through functional integration of certain key aspects of the content regulation value chain horizontally across sectors and across EU member states and elsewhere. Computer games rating has illustrated the potential for developing a common pan-European ratings structure (→ Video Games). Germany and the Netherlands operate a cross-media rating and labeling scheme for age-appropriate content. In a situation of increasing cross border trade within the EU, these trends are set to continue.

One interesting recent development has related to journalistic ethics and their regulation online. Increasingly, existing codes, applied to the press over decades, have been applied to the written word online. At the same time, news provision by new entrants such as → bloggers, and by broadcasters who have their own codes, have illustrated the complexity and overlap that result in the new environment.

Adequate resourcing is the key to successful self-regulation. Policy on self-regulation must take into account a broader view of the sustainability, effectiveness, and impact on free speech of self-regulatory codes and institutions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Blogger ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophobias ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Newspaper ▶ Privacy ▶ Public Interest ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Video Games

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## **Semiotics**

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Semiotics is an interdisciplinary field that studies “the life of signs within society” (Saussure 1959, 16). While “signs” most commonly refer to the elements of language and other symbolic communication, it also may denote any means of knowing about or representing an aspect of reality (→ Sign; Sign Systems). Accordingly, semiotics has developed as an affiliate of such traditional disciplines as philosophy and psychology. In the social sciences and humanities, including communication research, semiotics became an influential approach particularly from the 1960s.

Two different *senses of “signs”* can be traced from the pre-Socratic philosophers, through Aristotle, to St. Augustine. First, the mental impressions that people have are signs that represent certain objects in the world to them. Second, spoken, written, and other external expressions are signs with which people can represent and communicate a particular understanding of such objects to others. The first sense (*mental impressions*) recalls a classical understanding of signs, not as words or images, but as naturally occurring evidence that something is the case. For example, fever is a sign of illness, and clouds are a sign that it may rain, to the extent that this sign is interpreted by humans. The second sense (*means of communication*) points toward the modern distinction

between *conventional signs* (verbal as well as formal languages) and sense data, or *natural signs*. Modern natural sciences could be said to examine natural signs with reference to specialized conventional signs.

The inclusive conception of signs has remained an undercurrent in the history of ideas (Posner et al. 1997–1998). The first explicit statement regarding natural signs and human languages came from St. Augustine (c. 400 CE). This position was elaborated through the European medieval period with reference to nature as God’s Book and an analogy to the Bible, and to all of existence manifesting itself as a Great Chain of Being (Lovejoy 1936). It was not until the seventeenth century, however, that the term “semiotic” first appeared, in John Locke’s *An essay concerning human understanding* (1690). Locke proposed a science of signs in general, only to restrict his focus to “the most usual” signs, namely, verbal language and logic (Clarke 1990, 40).

### PEIRCEAN LOGIC AND SEMIOTIC

The American pragmatist philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce was the first thinker to recover this undercurrent in an attempt to develop a *general semiotic* (Peirce 1992–1998). He understood his theory of signs as a form of logic, which informed a comprehensive system addressing the nature of being and of knowledge. The key to the system is Peirce’s definition of the sign as having three aspects: “A sign, or *representamen*, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its *object*” (Peirce 1931–1958, vol. 2, 228). An important implication of this definition is that signs always serve to mediate between objects in the world, including social facts, and concepts in the mind. Peirce’s point was not that signs are *what* we know, but that they are *how* we come to know what we can justify saying that we know, in science and in everyday life. Thus, Peircean semiotics married a classical, Aristotelian notion of realism with the modern, Kantian position that humans necessarily construct their understanding of reality in the form of particular cognitive and performative categories.

A further implication is that human understanding is not a singular internalization of reality, but a continuous process of interpretation, or what is called *semiosis*. This is witnessed, for example, in the practice of scientific discovery, but also in the ongoing coordination of social life. Figure 1 illustrates the process of semiosis, noting how any given interpretation (interpretant) itself serves as a sign in the next stage of an infinite process that serves to differentiate humans’ understanding of reality. Although Peirce’s outlook was that of a logician and natural scientist, semiosis also refers to the processes of communication by which cultures are maintained and societies reproduced and, to a degree, reformed.

One of the most influential elements of Peirce’s semiotics outside logic and philosophy has been his categorization of different *types of signs*, especially icon, index, and symbol. *Icons* relate to their objects through resemblance (e.g., a realistic painting of a landscape); *indices* have a causal relation (e.g., a photograph registers a segment of that landscape); and *symbols* have an arbitrary relation to their object (e.g., a novelist emphasizes specific

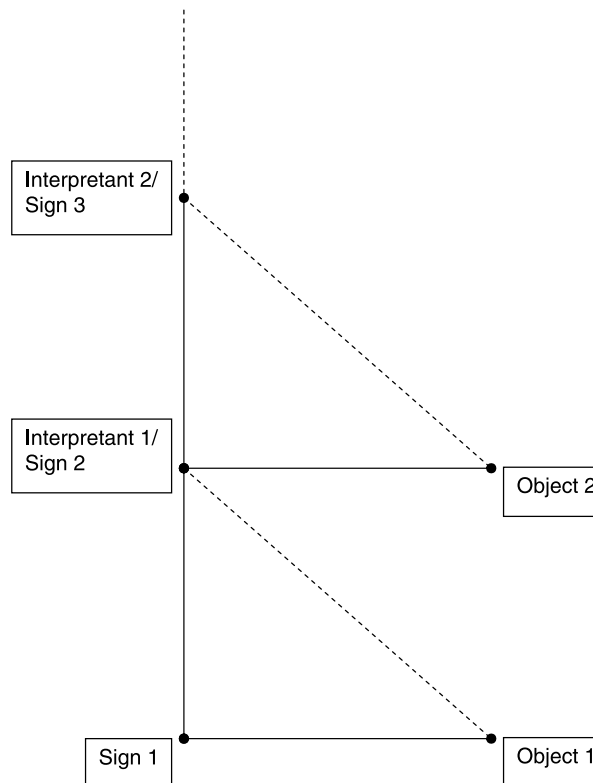


Figure 1 The process of semiosis

aspects of the landscape in constituting a verbal narrative). Different kinds of communication research, from discourse analysis to visual communication studies, have employed these types as analytical instruments in order to describe the ways in which humans perceive and act upon reality.

### SAUSSUREAN LINGUISTICS AND SEMIOLOGY

Compared with Peirce, the other main figure in the development of modern semiotics, Ferdinand de Saussure, focused on verbal language, or what Peirce had referred to as symbols. The main achievement of Saussure was to outline the framework for contemporary → linguistics. In contrast to the emphasis that earlier philology had placed on the diachronic perspective of how different languages change over time, Saussure proposed to study language as a system in a *synchronic perspective*. Language as an abstract system (*langue*) could be distinguished, at least for analytical purposes, from the actual uses of language (*parole*). The language system has two dimensions. Along the *syntagmatic* dimension, letters, words, phrases, etc. are the units that combine to make up meaningful wholes. Each of these units has been chosen as one of several possibilities along a *paradigmatic* dimension; for example, one verb in preference to another. This combinatorial



system helps to account for the unique flexibility of language as a means of expression and a medium of social interaction.

To be precise, Saussure referred to the broader science of signs not as semiotics, but as *semiology*. Like Locke, and later Peirce, Saussure drew on classical Greek to coin a technical term. The two variants are explained, in part, by the fact that Peirce and Saussure had no knowledge of each other. In Saussure's own work, the program for a general semiology remained undeveloped, appearing almost as an aside from his main enterprise of linguistics. It was during the consolidation of *semiotics* as an interdisciplinary field from the 1960s that this became the agreed term, overriding Peirce's "semiotic" and Saussure's "semiology," as symbolized by the formation in 1969 of the International Association for Semiotic Studies. It was also during this period that Saussure's systemic approach was redeveloped to apply to culture and society.

One important legacy of Saussure has been his account of the *arbitrariness* of the linguistic sign. This sign type is said to have two sides, a *signified* (concept) and a *signifier* (the acoustic image associated with it). Whereas this notion is sometimes construed in skepticist and relativist terms, as if communicators were paradoxically free to choose their own meanings, and hence almost destined to stay divorced from any consensual reality, the point is rather that the linguistic system as a whole, including the interrelations between signs and their components, is arbitrary, but fixed by social convention. When applied to studies of cultural forms other than language, or when extended to the description of social structures as signs, the principle of arbitrariness has rekindled classic debates concerning the relationship between signs and their referents.

### SEMIOTICS IN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

It was the application of semiotics to questions of meaning beyond logic and linguistics that served to consolidate semiotics as a recognizable, if still heterogeneous field from the 1960s. Drawing on several other traditions of aesthetic and social theory, this emerging field began to specify what studying "the life of signs within society" might mean. The objects of analysis ranged from artworks and mass media to the life forms of premodern societies, but studies were united by a common interest in culture in the broad sense of worldviews that orient social action. The work of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1963) on structural anthropology was emblematic and highly influential of such research on shared, underlying systems of interpretation that might explain the viewpoints or actions of individuals in a given cultural context. It was Saussure's emphasis on signs as a system, then, that provided the model for structuralist theories about social structure and power, and about the human unconscious as a "language" (→ Structuralism).

Of the French scholars who were especially instrumental in this consolidation, → Roland Barthes, along with A. J. Greimas (Greimas & Courtés 1982), stands out as an innovative and systematic theorist. Barthes's model of two levels of signification or semiosis, reproduced in Figure 2, has been one of the most widely copied attempts to link concrete sign vehicles, such as texts and images, with the social "myths" or ideologies that they articulate. Building on Louis Hjelmslev's formal linguistics, Barthes (1973) suggested that the combined signifier and signified (expressive form and conceptual content) of one sign (e.g., a magazine picture of a young black man in a French uniform saluting the flag)

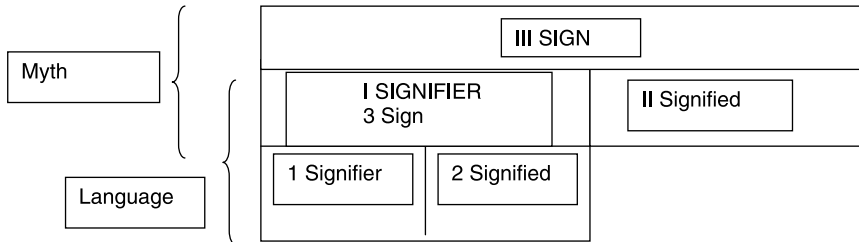


Figure 2 Two levels of signification

may become the expressive form of a further, ideological content (e.g., that French imperialism was not a discriminatory or oppressive system). Barthes's political agenda, shared by much semiotic scholarship since then, was that this semiotic mechanism serves to naturalize particular worldviews, while obscuring others, and should be exposed analytically (→ Critical Theory).

In retrospect, one can distinguish two ways of appropriating semiotics in social, cultural, and communication research. On the one hand, semiotics can be treated as a *methodology* for examining signs, whose social or philosophical implications are interpreted with reference to another set of theoretical concepts. On the other hand, semiotics may also supply the *theoretical framework*, so that images, psyches, and whole societies are understood not just in procedural but also in conceptual terms as signs. The latter position is compatible with one variant of semiotics that assumes that biological and even cosmological processes are also best understood as semioses. This ambitious and arguably imperialistic extension of logical and linguistic concepts into other fields has encountered criticism, for example, in cases where Saussure's principle of arbitrariness has been taken to apply to visual communication (→ Visual Representation) or to the political and economic organization of society.

A semioticization of, for instance, audiovisual media can be said to neglect their appeal to radically different perceptual registers, which are, in certain respects, natural rather than conventional (e.g., Messaris 1994). Similarly, a de facto replacement of major parts of social science by semiotics may exaggerate the extent to which signs and texts, rather than material and institutional conditions, determine the course of society, perhaps in response to semioticians' political ambition of making a social difference through a critique of signs. In recent decades, these concerns, along with criticisms of Saussurean formalism, have informed attempts to formulate a *social semiotics*, integrating semiotic methodology with other social and communication theory (e.g., Hodge & Kress 1988; Jensen 1995).

A final distinction within semiotic studies of society and culture arises from the question of what is a "medium" (→ Media). Media studies have drawn substantially on semiotics (Bignell 2002) to account for the distinctive sign types, codes, narratives, and modes of address that enter into different technological media (newspapers, television, Internet, etc.) as well as their characteristic modalities (speech, writing, still images, etc.; → Modality and Multimodality). A particular challenge has been the moving images of the film medium, which was described by Metz (1974) not as a language system, but as a

“language” drawing on several semiotic codes (→ Film Theory). In an extended sense, semioticians have described common objects and artifacts as vehicles of meaning, taking inspiration from, for example, Lévi-Strauss. One rich example is Barthes’s (1985) study of the structure of fashion, as depicted in magazines.

## SEMIOTICS AND THEORY OF SCIENCE

The conjunction of theoretical abstraction with analytical concretion helps to explain the continuing influence of semiotic ideas since antiquity. The understanding of signs as evidence for an interpreter of something else that is at least temporarily absent, articulated in Aristotle’s writings, and as an interface that is not identical with the thing that is in evidence to the interpreter constitute cultural leaps that have made possible scientific reflexivity and social organization beyond the here and now. The sign concept, equally, has promoted the distinction between necessary and probable relations, as in logical inferences (→ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction). Illness is a necessary condition of fever, but clouds are only a probable sign of rain. Empirical communication research is mostly built on the premise that probable signs can lead to warranted inferences.

The relationship between theory of signs and theory of science has been explored primarily from a Peircean perspective. For one thing, Peirce himself made important contributions to logic and theory of science. For another thing, the wider tradition of → pragmatism has emphasized the interrelations between knowledge, communication, and action, and has recently enjoyed a renaissance at the juncture of philosophy and social theory. By contrast, the Saussurean tradition has frequently bracketed issues concerning the relationship between signs and reality, sometimes retreating into post-modernist skepticism (→ Postmodernism and Communication), even if critical research in this vein has recruited other social and cultural theories to move semiology beyond the immanent analysis of signs.

For future communication research, semiotics is likely to remain a source of inspiration, as it has been for almost 2,500 years. The record from the past century of intensified interest in theories of signs, however, suggests that the field is not likely to develop into a theoretically coherent discipline. Instead, in addition to providing a systematic methodology for studying the human uses of signs, semiotics offers a meta-framework for understanding how different research traditions, fields, and disciplines conceive of their analytical objects, data, and concepts. The semiotic heritage offers means of reflexivity regarding the life of signs in society as well as in sciences.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction ▶ Film Theory ▶ Linguistics ▶ Media ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ Post-modernism and Communication ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Structuralism ▶ Visual Representation

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## Sensation Seeking

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Sensation seeking is a basic personality trait that has been defined as “the seeking of varied, novel, complex, and intense sensations and experiences, and the willingness to take physical, social, legal, and financial risks for the sake of such experience” (Zuckerman 1994, 27). The test used to measure the construct, the *Sensation Seeking Scale* (SSS) has evolved from the first version, containing only a general scale, to form version V. The latter contains four subscales and a total score based on the sum of the subscales (→ Scales). The subscales are based on → factor analyses and the results have been replicated in forms developed in many other countries. They are: (1) *thrill and adventure seeking* (TAS), an expressed desire to engage in physical activities or sports which are sometimes risky but provide unusual sensations of speed or defiance of gravity (e.g., parachuting, scuba diving, downhill skiing); (2) *experience seeking* (ES): these items describe the seeking of sensations and experiences through the mind and the senses, as through music, art, and travel, and social nonconformity and unconventionality; (3) *disinhibition* (Dis), i.e., seeking sensation through social activities, sex, and drinking, and associating with people who share these hedonistic preferences; and (4) *boredom susceptibility* (BS), which represents an intolerance for repetitious experience or predictable and unexciting people. More recently, a scale for *impulsive sensation seeking* (ImpSS) has been developed as part of a five-factor personality test (Zuckerman 2002).

These scales have been related to volunteering for risky activities, engaging in risky sports and vocations, smoking, drinking, using illegal drugs, preferences in art, television, movies, music, fantasy, and humor, criminality, antisocial personality, manic-depressive

tendencies, as well as cognitive styles and creativity (see Zuckerman 1979, 1994, 2006; → Exposure to Communication Content; Personality and Exposure to Communication). A *biological basis* for sensation seeking has been found in physiological characteristics like evoked cortical potentials, hormones, including testosterone and cortisol, enzymes that regulate neurotransmitters, and specific neurotransmitters, including noradrenaline, serotonin, and dopamine (→ Communibiology).

High sensation seekers are particularly attentive to novel stimuli. The *orienting reflex* (OR) is a measure of this characteristic. When a novel stimulus is presented in the visual or auditory fields, a measurable arousal response occurs in the form of a transient increase in skin conductance or deceleration in heart rate. On subsequent presentations of the stimulus these physiological reactions diminish in amplitude and disappear. The high sensation seeker shows a stronger OR to the first presentation of a stimulus when it is novel but not to subsequent presentations (Zuckerman 1990). This is particularly noted in response to stimuli containing content of interest to the high sensation seeker and high-intensity sexual and aggressive words. This preferential OR to sensational stimuli is reflected in the *media preferences of high sensation seekers* to sexually explicit, violent, and morbid themes (Zuckerman 1988, 1996; → Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). Sensation seekers also prefer complex designs, and intense art and music.

Donohew and his colleagues have used sensation seeking to design and target televised communications aimed at the prevention of drug abuse and risky sexual behavior (Donohew et al. 1991, 2004; → Prevention and Communication). Based on preliminary research on the different characteristics of messages appealing to high and low sensation seekers, they designed high stimulative messages that were novel, unusual, complex, intense, exciting, emotionally strong, graphic, ambiguous, fast-paced, and suspenseful. Another type of ad that was low stimulating, more cognitive, and emphasized the risk factors of drugs and sex was designed for low sensation seekers (→ Advertising Effectiveness). They found that the high stimulus value ads were more effective for high sensation seekers in the intent to call a hotline to get more information on drugs, whereas the low stimulus value ads were more effective with the low sensation seekers. The results were then utilized in a large study of televised ads in two cities. Evidence showed that the ads not only arrested but actually reversed trends in marijuana use during the times they were aired. Studies to promote safe sex and condom use among adolescents are ongoing and already showing positive results.

The work of Donohew and colleagues shows the *potential applications of sensation seeking theory* to the prevention of unhealthy and risky behaviors in the real world. High sensation seekers are over-represented among those who engage in risky behaviors, so it makes sense to design communications that will engage the attention of such people and imprint their message in memory. The typical prevention messages or treatment programs that simply attempt to scare risk-takers with factual messages are not very effective.

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising Effectiveness ► Communibiology ► Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Factor Analysis ► Personality and Exposure to Communication ► Prevention and Communication ► Scales

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## Sensationalism

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Sensationalism may be defined as a theoretical concept that encompasses those features of journalistic products that are capable of attracting the attention of the audience. Since the early days of newspapers, complaints about sensationalism have recurrently emerged in public discussions about the quality of journalistic products. In a nutshell, these complaints pictured sensationalist news as a journalistic device being designed merely to attract the attention of large audiences at the expense of informing them properly about socially significant events. In its defense, it has been argued that sensationalist news is an appropriate response to the evolutionarily developed human habit of attending to information that increases the chances of survival and reproduction (→ Evolutionary Theory).

Traditionally, sensationalism in the news has been conceived of mainly in terms of story content. Stories about topics such as crime, violence, natural disasters, accidents, and fires were considered as sensational. However, this definition of sensationalism provided no theoretical basis to explain why sensationalism would attract the attention. It

also provided no theoretical basis for the negative effects sensationalism is often accused of. Against this background, the concept of sensationalism gradually evolved in the late 1990s. Notably, Grabe et al. (2001) and Hendriks Vettehen et al. (2005) provided a foundation of the concept in psychological theories of information processing, more specifically in the notion that certain types of stimuli elicit automatic attentive processes. In the context of news processing, these stimuli are referred to as *sensationalist features*.

Three categories of sensationalist features may be distinguished: basic needs content, tabloid packaging, and vivid storytelling (cf. Hendriks Vettehen et al. 2005). *Basic needs content* includes audio, visual, and verbal news content that may be considered as important to every person because of its reference to basic human needs; e.g., stories about sex, violence, criminality, disasters, or famines. *Tabloid packaging* refers to formal features in news reports that represent unexpected or changing information. In television news, it includes transitions between scenes or camera shots as the most obvious examples, but also camera movements, uncommon editing techniques, and decorative techniques such as the insertion of music. In newspapers, extraordinarily large headlines or pictures may be considered as examples. *Vivid storytelling* refers to the inclusion in news stories of information that is either concrete or proximate to the audience. Well-known examples of vivid storytelling are the insertion of brief comments by lay persons on an issue in news reports, or the insertion of a report on an individual case history (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of).

In journalistic as well as scientific discourse, sensationalism has been theoretically linked to the mechanisms of market-driven journalism. The central hypothesis concerning sensationalism holds that an increasing competition puts pressure on news producers and owners to capture the attention of the audience. Sensationalism in the news is considered a successful way of achieving this (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). In line with this view, several studies have provided indications of trends toward more sensationalist television news, both in the U.S. (e.g., Slattery et al. 2001) and in Europe (e.g., Hendriks Vettehen et al. 2005). However, the evidence is correlative, implying that increases in sensationalism may be attributed to developments that coincide with increasing competition, e.g., technological innovations, or trends in journalists' role perceptions (→ News Production and Technology).

Because the concept of sensationalism is based on theories of information processing, predictions about cognitive processing of more or less sensationalist news could be tested. Notably, some studies have shown that the use of sensationalist features in news stories increases attentiveness during the viewing process, but that an unrestricted use of sensationalist devices (e.g., the tabloid packaging of a news topic with basic needs content) will induce cognitive overload, which will harm the storage of the news messages (e.g., Lang et al. 1999; Grabe et al. 2003). Moreover, other studies have shown that a vivid way of storytelling differentially draws attention to the vivid parts of the informational content, which can lead to distorted comprehension and judgments (for an overview, Zillmann & Brosius 2000).

Although knowledge concerning the antecedents of sensationalism and the cognitive processing of sensationalism is accumulating, less is known about audience preferences for sensationalism. Future studies might focus on the relation between the presence of sensationalism in journalism and audience preferences for sensationalism. In addition, it

might focus on audience variables that may relate to preferences for sensationalism, notably the → sensation seeking personality trait.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Evolutionary Theory  
▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ News Production and Technology  
▶ Politainment ▶ Sensation Seeking ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Tabloidization

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## **Sense-Making**

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Sense-making is an intersubjective process of making meaning for individuals, groups, organizations, and societies. Weick's theorizing about organizing and sense-making (1979; 1995; 2006) has been particularly influential in considerations of sense-making and is oriented toward understanding how people identify and work through puzzling, plausible, or equivocal experiences and how organizing emerges through micro-level and collective communicative practices and improvisations. Weick (1995) characterizes sense-making as a process grounded in identity construction that is retrospective, enactive of environments, social, ongoing, and driven by plausibility rather than accuracy. Although much organizational communication research uses sense-making to depict individual meaning-making



of work, identities, and complex situations, sense-making processes actually link micro-through macro-processes such that → organizational culture, structure, and knowledge are made more resilient (→ Organizational Structure; Knowledge Management).

Weick (1979) acknowledges the importance of communication in enacting, selecting, and retaining multiple → meanings through the use of both rules (i.e., past insights, procedures, scripts, and routines) and cycles (i.e., development of possible novel actions and interpretations) that are validated consensually. Organizational members constantly shape the collective → memory so that they act not only in accordance with expectations but also in response to current circumstances.

Sense-making occasions arise when *gaps between the present and desired future are confused, or difficult to close* (Weick 1995). Sense-making starts with the individual: “First, someone notices something, in an ongoing flow of events, something in the form of a surprise, a discrepant set of cues” (p. 2). Over time, the individual and the collective are intermingled as sense-making, a social process, involves others in actively structuring events and developing accounts to explain surprises. In sense-making, members attempt to fill in gaps by complicating or enriching the ways they and other members represent their organizational realities. Over time, more people join in persuading others about the viability of certain interpretations and actions. Thus organizing and sense-making processes have political consequences because whoever makes sense of confusing experiences, frames the meanings of these experiences for others, and encourages others to join in this collective and iterative framing gains much power and control.

Second, initial sense-making phases focus on *certain extracted cues in situations with multiple possibilities*. The cues, details, or moments that are focused upon and noted as confusing or memorable are extracted from an ongoing stream of human activity and surroundings and then pondered for plausibilities. How organization members determine where, when, and how to focus their → attention has implications for the ways cases, such as accusations of sexual harassment or determinations about courses of action in wildland firefighting, unfold and how scenarios for different stakeholders are constructed (Buzanell 2004; Dougherty & Smythe 2004; Weick 1993).

Next, in the *identification and framing of understandings*, sense-making involves “language work . . . to refine and enrich the representations that people impose on territories to make sense of them” (Weick 1992, 173). To accomplish this framing, members use specific interactional contexts as well as past experiences as resources for meaning creation. For example, Murphy (2001) describes the flight attendant’s dilemma as “knowing when to reproduce their dominant everyday routines and when to break these routines, risking possible organizational and/or interpersonal sanctions” (p. 31). Relating the past with present assessments and future organizational and relational possibilities demands inventive individual and collective sense-making. Flight attendants not only operate within improvisation and constraint in their work – especially during emergency situations but also in their relationships with pilots who operate as authority figures with power.

Fourth, sense-making involves the *crafting of narratives* (→ Storytelling and Narration). These narratives are stories of conviction and integration insofar as sense-making involves challenges to people’s known identities, courage to withstand assaults on credibility (because sense-making centers on possibilities that upset the taken-for-granted ordering of sense-makers’ worlds), and facility with storytelling to pull others into identity craftings and

sense-making processes. As such, organization members create preferred identities and meanings of work through humor (Tracy et al. 2006) as well as discursive strategies of comparison, logic, and support for identity reformulations (Larson & Pepper 2003). It is through the telling of new stories and new frameworks for encountering crisis situations that resilient organizing processes can emerge (Sellnow et al. 2002; → Crisis Communication).

Finally, sense-making mandates the *construction of collective knowledge*. Weick and Roberts (1993) write that communication processes are essential in creating reminders for members to heed or attend to their environments and learn from previous actions. Collective knowledge is (re)constructed every time insiders teach newcomers the ropes and relearn know-how. Collective knowledge construction is enhanced through narrators' candor about failures as well as successes, their narrative skills, and newcomers' attentiveness to sense-making stories. When members share experiences in rich, detailed, and memorable ways, their capacities to recall knowledge through scripts and other means are enhanced.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Knowledge Management ▶ Meaning  
▶ Memory ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Storytelling and Narration

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# Separation of News and Comments

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News and comment cannot coexist independently in a social system. Factual news and comment become twisted together like two strands of a rope. What is → news? What is → commentary? When we think of news, we often think of facts that refer to specific objects or events in the world. By contrast, commentary usually refers to a larger context. Commentary frames news (→ Framing of the News). News and commentary are constructed of words, pictures, sounds, or other symbols of social → meaning, but the communicator's intent is different in each case (→ Constructivism). News reports aim to reconstruct events, to create pictures in the minds of audiences. Commentary aims to shape how audiences construct these events. Commentary has intent. While news media usually are careful to separate news from commentary, audiences naturally blend them together. We can obtain a picture of events from news stories alone, as all news stories contain some evaluative descriptions beyond the facts, and one can learn events from commentaries alone, and still will learn some facts.

The separation of news from comment can be studied in all communication systems – in some there is more separation at times than in others, more in some periods of history, less in others (societies under stress) – but news and comment cannot be easily separated and must be evaluated in terms of how they interact within a particular social system. Even if media strictly separate news from editorials and columns, audiences necessarily put the two together as part of the construction of social reality.

One can make an *analogy with agenda-setting theory* (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Agenda setting, level 1, proposes that the connection between media and audiences at the level of news topics is close. Agenda setting, level 2, argues that the connection between the details in news stories and audience attention is likewise close. Within agenda-setting theory one can argue that news stories contain a heavy focus on facts with some details about events, while news commentary focuses on interpretive detail linked with the same facts. McCombs (2004) has called major news event topics “objects” and details about events “attributes.” In this sense, news stories could be described as objects-over-attributes messages, while commentary can be visualized as attributes-over-objects messages. No message is purely news and no message is purely commentary. There is always a mixture.

Attributes contextualize objects, as the comments of editorial writers, columnists, letters to the editor, photographs (→ Photography), and audio and video contextualize the facts of news events on the front page. If we lived in the controlled environments in which behavioral psychologist B. F. Skinner limited behavior and provided rewards for correct behavior, we might expect the relationships between news (objects) and comment (attributes), demonstrated by correlations between news and audiences, to be close to 1.00. That is, audiences given proper rewards for attending to messages would reflect

messages in exactly the proportions in which they are presented, in terms of objects and attributes, and audiences therefore would be quite able to keep separate in their heads information learned from news and that learned from commentary. Of course, no one does that, even if the media carefully separate news and commentary.

Professional journalists constantly wrestle with balancing fact and comment statements. Journalists construct their social roles relative to the way they gather, organize, and present messages, nearly always with reference to some larger professional duty, such as fairness or objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting; Journalists' Role Perception). Clarity in dividing news and comment is often determined by culture. France's *Le Monde* and Germany's *Der Spiegel* contextualize news. In Britain, the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Guardian* are newspapers to which audiences turn for a dependable selection and presentation of news and commentary consistent with their own views. The separation of news and commentary cannot really be addressed without reference to political and cultural systems. The Chinese government tolerates a wide range of news, and even some comment, about purely economic issues, but requires political news to exist within a particular, tightly controlled range (→ China: Media System; Censorship). US journalists pride themselves on their objectivity about news, defined as presenting political messages that provide equal, or at least fair, attention to all aspects of political issues, while directing commentary to editorial pages or personal columns. The free market system exerts influence. Many countries, from Russia to Syria to China, have government-controlled television networks. Britain's → BBC is government-funded, but editorially independent. Al Jazeera represents still another model that is consistently non-objective, while being ostensibly independent of government authority. In fact, all systems find a natural balance between news and comment, however defined for a given national system and culture (→ Arab Satellite TV News).

Political leaders, journalists, social scientists, and others are interested in media systems that help citizens function responsibly. There are many ways to examine the performance of information systems in presenting news and comment. There are basically two *empirical measures to examine the separation of news and commentary*. The first looks at the use of language in the news. What topics are covered? The second compares the valence of items in the news or commentary. To this latter approach belong "*synchronization studies*." They assess the degree to which news and commentary are separated in a news system or in individual news outlets. By means of content analyses one can compare how the valence of the news items correlates with the valence of commentaries on the same issue. One study found that newspapers in the United States reported the number of participants in anti-war demonstrations that were consistent with the newspapers' position on the Vietnam War, as expressed in their editorials and opinion columns. Similar results were found for German reports about the Berlin conflict in the 1970s (Schönbach 1977) and several other political issues (Kepplinger et al. 1991; Hagen 1992).

The balance between news and commentary varies from country to country, culture to culture. Agenda-setting studies in Germany, Britain, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Australia, and various countries in Africa and South America suggest audiences everywhere are likely to reflect → attention to news and commentary in predictable patterns. If we used the same heuristic as Sir Isaac Newton – the attraction of forces, not objects – we might conclude that while news and comment may appear adverse to each other within any particular

national or cultural setting, audiences meld news and comment into a social construction that fits their own lives, reflecting, perhaps, a law of social gravity that we have not yet discovered.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Attention ▶ BBC ▶ Censorship ▶ China: Media System ▶ Commentary ▶ Constructivism ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Meaning ▶ News ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Photography

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## **Sesame Street**

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Sesame Street is an educational children's television series for preschoolers that teaches a broad range of curricula, from letter and numbers to socio-emotional and coping skills (→ Educational Media; Educational Media Content). The series is the longest running US children's television show, having first aired in 1969, and has won over 100 Emmys, more than any other television program. It is often heralded as the hallmark of → entertainment education programming because of its broad spectrum popularity, its stringent research process, and its international impact.

### **THE CONCEPT**

*Sesame Street* was created by Joan Ganz Cooney and Lloyd Morrisett in response to a perceived need to improve basic cognitive, social, and emotional skills in preschool children, particularly minority and inner-city youth (→ Developmental Communication). Through this television program, preschoolers could begin to learn the alphabet, numbers, and positive social skills in their homes. The show's early success paved the way for other

educational programming, especially on the → Public Broadcasting System, where it was aired (→ Public Broadcasting, History of).

A combination of live action, animation, and puppetry, the show is produced in magazine format, a series of short vignettes with a narrative storyline set on the Street with the live-action and puppet characters woven throughout. Although the format has changed slightly, so that the narrative storyline is shown with fewer interruptions, the use of short-form scenes that have inherent educational value has remained constant. The live-action scenes include the diverse set of cast members, the Muppets (the puppets created by Jim Henson and his company), and real children.

The addition of the Muppets to the cast early on was critical to the show's long-term success. Segments with Big Bird, Ernie, Bert, Oscar the Grouch, Grover, and others (including Elmo in later years) had strong appeal with both kids and parents. Although the original funding for creating the series came from federal agencies and philanthropic organizations such as the Ford and Carnegie Foundations, the licensing income from the Muppet-related products sustained the show from the mid-1970s. Since then, the *licensing revenue* has been a major source of income for the show's parent production company, Sesame Workshop (originally called the Children's Television Workshop). In recent years, approximately 40 percent of the Workshop's revenue has come from licensed products. This financially successful model of children's educational television character licensing, and the impact of particular success cases such as the Tickle-Me Elmo doll that was produced by Fisher-Price/Mattel in 1996, has had a strong impact on the licensing models for children's educational programs, such as *Barney* and *Blue's Clues* (Morrow 2006; Bryant 2007).

Another reason for the success of the show is that it appeals to both children and their parents. Guest appearances by prominent personalities and adult-targeted cultural references throughout the show make the program appealing to parents, and therefore help *foster co-viewing between parents and children*. In addition, because of the longevity of the show, many parents today have themselves watched the show as children, and therefore the show has a nostalgic value for them as well.

## RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

One of the hallmarks of the show is the research behind it. Each episode has a specific curriculum, and each vignette or storyline within the episode ties back into the overall curriculum for the show. The show has a research team and curriculum content specialists who work hand in hand with the creative producers to create each episode. Through formative research during the production process, they make sure that children are learning the lessons outlined in the curriculum. Via summative research, conducted after the series airs, they can assess the actual impact of the program on its viewers. This intertwined research–production–content model has come to be called “the Sesame Workshop Model.” *Sesame Street* is the most heavily researched television program ever, with over 1,000 studies conducted about it globally (Fisch & Truglio 2001).

In addition, since one of the main goals of the program is to reach low-income and minority children, outreach has also been a consistent part of the *Sesame Street* project. Outreach materials for the show are available through local PBS stations and distributed through community and national organization partnerships.

## INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

Soon after the early success of *Sesame Street* in the US, Sesame Workshop began to co-produce international variations of the series with partner production companies in countries across the world. The first co-productions, *Plaza Sésamo* in Mexico and *Vila Sésamo* in Brazil, went on air in 1972. One year later *Sesamstrasse* was aired in Germany. Since then, the Workshop has partnered to create over 30 co-productions, from India to Turkey to Brazil to Japan. These co-productions, along with airings of the US version (either in English or dubbed in the native language) of the series, have reached children and parents in 120 countries.

Each of the co-productions is based on the process of the Sesame Workshop Model and fashioned after the original US show, but is overhauled so that it reflects the local culture as well as the specific needs of children in that region. For example, *Takalani Sesame* is a South African co-production which, in addition to the basic cognitive and social curricula, also deals with the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the region through a Muppet called Kami, who is HIV-positive. In Egypt, *Alam Simsim* has a strong focus on empowering girls in order to address the problem of female literacy. In the Middle East, a group of Jordanian, Israeli, and Palestinian co-production partners created *Sippuray Sumsum* which promotes cross-cultural respect through three separate versions of the show that have both unique and shared elements (Cole et al. 2001).

## OTHER MEDIA AND EVENTS

In addition to the television show, *Sesame Street* can now be found on other media platforms, including DVDs, computer games, and on the web. In keeping with its hallmark research-intensive model, these products for children are also created through internal partnerships with researchers, content specialists, and producers. In addition, the website for Sesame Workshop ([www.sesameworkshop.org](http://www.sesameworkshop.org)) has extensive information for parents, including extension activities and caregiving advice. The curricula for each episode can be found on the Public Broadcasting Service's children's programming website <http://pbskids.org/sesame/>.

There is also a number of parks and live shows based on the show. For example, in Japan there is Tokyo Sesame Place and there is a Sesame Place in Pennsylvania (US). In addition, the Sesame Street Live franchise produces live shows that are on tour both in the US and internationally.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Developmental Communication ▶ Educational Media ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ International Television ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems

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## **Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of**

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Research on sex media has often been divided into two categories, depending on whether the sexual stimuli are embedded within a larger context or not. The first type, illustrated by a TV soap opera in which some of the scenes, although typically not a majority, include references to or actual portrayals of sexual interactions, depicted in varying degrees of sexual explicitness. The second category, typically referred to as “pornography,” is primarily intended to sexually arouse the consumer and contains mostly explicitly sexual content.

The most influential theory guiding research in this area has been social learning theory (→ Observational Learning), with emphasis on the concept of “reciprocal determinism,” referring to a continuous reciprocal interaction between the person and the social environment. Thus, people seek out certain types of media that reflect their personalities, interests, attitudes, social interactions, and so forth, and such media experiences in turn may influence these personal characteristics, both directly, and indirectly via influences on peers and others in their social environment. In contrast to people who voluntarily seek out sexual media, there are also those who report unwanted



exposure, particularly on the Internet. Surveys reveal that 25 percent of young Internet users per year are exposed to unwanted sexual pictures and about 20 percent receive unwanted sexual solicitations, with about a quarter of these unwanted exposures described by users as distressing or upsetting (Mitchell et al. 2003).

### EMBEDDED SEXUAL CONTENT

Content analyses have generally shown dramatic increases in sexual content in the past two decades in media such as television and movies (→ Sexualization in the Media). Moreover, only a small fraction emphasizes any risks or advantages of birth control or abstinence (Kunkel et al. 2003).

Surveys of teens generally indicate that they rank entertainment media as a very powerful source of influence for *shaping their knowledge and views* about sexuality and sexual health, and they believe that such media do exert much pressure on them to become sexually active. Systematic studies of whether such effects occur have shown media experiences as one of the complex interacting factors that do have significant influences for many, albeit not all, people (Ward 2003). The data have primarily derived from (1) correlational research in naturalistic settings (→ Correlation Analysis), and (2) experimental research designs, usually limited to laboratory settings (→ Experiment, Laboratory). When the findings have converged from both types of methodologies, the ability to infer causation in naturalistic settings has improved, although caution is certainly needed in inferring causation based on correlational data alone. There have also been some longitudinal data, particularly useful for ascertaining long-term media effects (→ Longitudinal Analysis; Media Effects Duration).

For example, in one study investigators used a national telephone survey in the US in 2001 and 2002 that surveyed 1792 adolescents twice, 1 year apart. Important associations were found between amount of sexual content viewed at Time 1 and sexual behavior at Time 2. For example, the likelihood that adolescents would have sexual intercourse over the year in question doubled for those adolescents residing in the 90th percentile in their exposure to sexual TV content as against those in the 10th percentile (Collins et al. 2004). Another large longitudinal study that surveyed white and black adolescents from the southeastern US found media effects for the former but not the latter. After controlling for factors such as parental disapproval of teenage sex and peer sexual norms, the subsequent sexual behaviors of black adolescents was unaffected by baseline *sexual media diet* (SMD). In contrast, for white teens, even after controlling for other factors, those who had reported the largest SMD at baseline (i.e., those in the top quintile) were 2.2 times more likely than those in the bottom quintile to have had sexual intercourse two years later (Brown et al. 2006).

Results from nonlongitudinal research have also pointed to some significant associations that need to take other factors into account as well. A 2006 study assessing effects of SMD in relation to other contextual factors found that SMD accounted for more of the variance in adolescent *intentions to have sexual intercourse* than religious and school factors, but less than peer, parent, and demographic factors. After controlling for these other factors, SMD added a small but significant contribution to the prediction of adolescent sexual intentions (L'Engle et al. 2006).

Relatively reliable effects of media on attitudinal variables have been found regarding exposure to highly sexual media genres, e.g., soap operas and music videos. These studies also suggest that *individual difference factors* such as viewer involvement may be influential in determining outcome behaviors. Correlational research has found that greater exposure to or involvement with soap operas and music videos can result in more stereotypical sexual attitudes, greater endorsement of dysfunctional relationship models, and greater acceptance of sexual harassment (Ward 2003; Pardun et al. 2005).

In laboratory experiments (i.e., one group is exposed to sexual content, another to neutral content, with the two groups then compared on outcome measures), too, evidence suggests that participants exposed to highly sexual media genres become more accepting of casual and stereotypical attitudes about sex and relationships, and that their real-world perceptions come to reflect their media exposure. For example, students exposed to stereotypic music videos are subsequently more *accepting of sexual harassment* than are students exposed to neutral media content (Ward 2003). Although many experimentally induced attitudinal changes are likely temporary, to the extent that experimental conditions are habitually replicated in real-world environments, enduring attitudinal changes can be expected.

Total media exposure (e.g., total television viewing) has not been linked with behavioral changes, but specific genres such as music videos and soap operas have yielded stronger results (Ward 2003). Frequent viewing of music videos is associated with more sexual experience and more sexual partners for young women. For men, frequent viewing of soap operas has shown similar associations. Lastly, longitudinal studies demonstrate predictive relationships between sexual media exposure and early initiation of sexual behaviors, although associations may vary by demographic variables such as race and age (Brown et al. 2006).

## PORNOGRAPHY

People who seek out sexual images in one type of media often also seek it in other media. For example, among 745 Dutch adolescents, a very high correlation was found between frequency of exposure to sexually explicit content on the Internet and to R- and X-rated TV, movies, and magazines (Peter & Valkenburg 2006).

Although both genders show considerable pornography use in many cultures, research has shown that males are much more likely to be the consumers and to use it, particularly as *masturbatory stimuli*, across all cultures (Malamuth 1996).

Although experimental and correlational studies have provided most of the data, there have also been a few aggregate studies that examine larger populations rather than individuals. Some research has extended the findings with “embedded sexual media.” For instance, in a recent survey of 2,001 *Taiwanese adolescents*, 38 percent of whom indicated that they had accessed pornographic websites, significant correlations were found between Internet pornography exposure and permissive sexual attitudes and behavior, even with demographic variables, general media use, and exposure to traditional pornography controlled for statistically (Lo & Wei 2005). Exposure to → *Internet pornography* showed even stronger associations with sexual attitudes and behavior than did exposure to traditional pornography (→ Sex and Pornography Online).

The focus of many of the other pornography research studies has addressed concerns about *aggression against women*. It has been asserted that certain types of pornography, particularly those presenting nonconsenting or violent images, might cause changes in sexual arousal patterns, fantasies, attitudes, or behaviors, increasing such aggression (→ Sexual Violence in the Media). Some other research has also focused on potential adverse effects of nonviolent pornography use on family values (Zillmann 1994).

The research has been integrated in various → meta-analyses and reviews. These have generally reported that greater exposure to pornography (both violent and nonviolent) may be associated with increased acceptance of violence against women and aggression toward women, and other research also suggests negative changes in family values. The type of pornography people are exposed to does seem to make a difference. For example, depictions of nudity only actually reduce rather than increase aggressive tendencies in laboratory studies, while exposure to violent pornography appears to increase aggressive tendencies (Allen et al. 1995). In correlational studies focusing on consumption in naturalistic settings, however, it has been more difficult to separate consumption of different types of pornography, since consumers typically consume various types, and it has been concluded that higher levels of consumption of even some forms of nonaggressive pornography may be associated with increased *risk for sexual aggression*. Any causal interpretation of such correlational data must, of course, consider the possibility that pornography may be spurious and a “marker” for other risk factors. For example, more generally hostile, antisocial individuals may be more likely to use aggression in sexual interactions and may also be drawn to pornography due to its impersonal opportunity to exert control over a member of the opposite sex.

The third type of research has examined in various cultures how much pornography is being consumed in society at large or in a particular region of the country at large, and changes in such *consumption over time*. Such changes have then been correlated with other changes in the society, such as changes in sexual crimes (Wongsurawat 2006). In contrast to the conclusions emerging from the studies described above, these types of population-level studies actually suggest that increased pornography consumption may be associated with decreases in sexual crimes in society. Although such research has provided an interesting window regarding varied cultures, one problem is that it is difficult to relate changes at the larger societal level to individual behavior. Also, there are typically many other changes that have occurred in a society at the same time as changes in pornography consumption have been happening. Nevertheless, these studies do raise important cautions about any sweeping generalizations about pornography’s effects on varying individuals and in differing cultural environments.

Although the meta-analyses described above indicated that there is generally some association between consumption of pornography and aggression against women and that the associations are typically stronger for nonconsenting adult pornography than for other types of pornography, some earlier studies and particularly more recent ones conducted since these meta-analyses have particularly focused on individual differences among consumers. In the area of aggression against women, research suggests that if a man already has relatively strong tendencies to be aggressive, then heavy pornography consumption may “add fuel to the fire” and increase his aggressive tendencies. This seems to be particularly likely if the type of pornography he is sexually aroused by includes

nonconsenting content. On the other hand, if a man has little risk for being aggressive toward women as defined by researchers (i.e., the majority of the male population) then whether or not he consumes much pornography does not significantly affect his risk for being aggressive toward women (Vega & Malamuth 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Internet ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media

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# **Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives**

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The ubiquity of sexualized images and narratives across all media forms signals the importance of this topic for research and analysis. In mainstream communications research in the US it has been located in the → “media effects” tradition, where the emphasis has been on the moral risks of explicit sexual content to “family values” (Gunter 2002). This research uses content analysis, which relies on attaching predefined codings of → meaning to large datasets of, mainly, television content, to measure the number of sexual incidents portrayed, and the kind of values they promote (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative). Often funded by pressure groups such as the Kaiser Family Foundation, the aim of this research is to influence media policy on censorship and controls over children’s access to sexual content. The worry is that young people will be influenced to engage in premature sexual activity outside of marriage without heed to the attendant risks. In feminist scholarship, on the other hand, there has been a different agenda. Here the initial emphasis was on the ideological reproduction of patriarchal power relations through the cultural preoccupation with women’s sexuality. Most feminist research uses qualitative analysis of a few exemplary texts, to reveal the ideological work that they perform, such as the degree to which textual pleasure is predicated on women’s subjection to male control (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative).

The impact of globalization and new technologies of production and distribution such as the → Internet (→ Globalization Theories), coupled with a decline in the power of regulators to limit what is available, has enabled a greater diversity in the forms of sexual discourse circulated in the media (→ Pornography, Media Law on). This has brought questions of taste to the forefront of feminist debate in ways that often challenge the assumptions about sexual representation that defined the “second wave” era (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content). Patriarchy is no longer seen as the only determining force, not least because of the influence of feminist critical discourses (→ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture). Ethnographic studies have also complicated assumptions about textual meaning by revealing the very different interpretations made by audiences embedded in divergent taste cultures. Foucauldian methods of → discourse analysis have been used to map these multiple perspectives alongside theories of hegemony that trace how they compete in a hegemonic struggle to establish or maintain the legitimacy of certain sexual ideologies at the expense of others (→ Ethnography of Communication). For example, feminist scholars have drawn attention to the importance of journalistic reporting that brings sexual issues out of the private and into the → public sphere, where they can be subjected to scrutiny and public debate (→ Scandalization in the News). Infotainment formats circulate these issues more widely, in the responses to celebrity sex scandals, for example, or confessional talk shows where ordinary people expose their sexual problems or transgressive sexual behavior to expert and public commentary (Shattuc 1997; → Infotainment).

## **CRITIQUE OF PATRIARCHAL TEXTUAL/SEXUAL CONVENTIONS**

The critique of mainstream cinema by feminist film theorists, and the call for women to develop new filmmaking practices, has been particularly influential, drawing attention to the sexual politics of recurring narrative structures, visual conventions, and discursive framing, which position the spectator as masculine and foreground male desire. These approaches also cross over into the debates about pornography and to the analysis of the gender politics of television, which came to prominence in the early 1980s. Analytic techniques derived from → semiotics and psychoanalysis have been used in feminist film criticism to show how patriarchal ideologies are reproduced through the eroticization of unequal power relations via the sexual objectification of women's bodies mediated through the male gaze. This also reveals a history of racial subordination and segregation. Marginalized and abjected, in contrast to the idealization of the white female star's sexual allure, women of color have been commonly cast as sexually promiscuous, and lacking the sexual virtue and restraint expected of "civilized" white women. This binary structure of idealization and sexual denigration has been understood psychoanalytically as a complex mixture of fear and desire in men's sexual relationship to women arising from Oedipal guilt. Social prohibitions relegate the unacceptable aspects of sexual desire to the unconscious, which then return in obsessional fantasies that can be traced across the mediascape. The relation that exists between the expression of these unconscious desires and everyday conscious behavior, which has emerged in debates about censorship and pornography, is a matter of dispute. Pro-censorship feminists see it as a harmful legitimization of men's power over women, while others highlight the futility of legislating against the expression of transgressive desires that are themselves the product of societal prohibitions (Krzywinska 2006).

While liberal regimes draw a distinction between mainstream media and a potentially harmful pornography whose circulation must be carefully restricted, feminist analysis points to the continuities across this regulatory boundary in diverse genres, such as → advertising or → Hollywood films, which share with pornography a perspective where women are the object of men's sexual desire. The inherent violence in these textual relations is made explicit in the ubiquity of rape imagery and narratives that constitutes "a cumulative set of discourses that saturate the cultural landscape" (Projansky 2001, 17) and which, it is argued, play a role in maintaining women's subordination through fear. This creates a real difficulty for any program of → censorship, however. Regulatory bodies in the UK, for example, have responded to feminist critique by replacing restrictions on sexual explicitness with a more focused concern with the portrayal of sexual violence. Yet this will not have much impact on the sexual power relations that saturate the media environment. For example, feminist scholars have noted the pleasure women gain from fantasy scenarios of unequal power in "romance" genres, which are as ideologically potent as the more obviously sadistic genres addressed to men. Accusing women of complicity in their own oppression highlights the gap that opened up between feminist critics and the tastes of the majority, which led in the 1990s both to a backlash against "political correctness" and the development of postfeminist popular culture.

### DIVERSIFICATION AND DISTINCTIONS IN TASTE

Other post-war social movements in western democratic societies have also had a substantial impact on the debates about sexual content in the media. A more diverse culture of sexual expression was advocated by the bohemian challenge to bourgeois sexual propriety in the “permissive era” of the sixties. This was followed by a challenge to *heteronormative media cultures*, which, linked to extensive campaigning for political and cultural rights for gays and lesbians, has produced a growing acceptance of “queer” sexual portrayals in the western media. These developments have been further enabled by the niche markets opened up by new digital technologies of production and distribution, and the challenge to top-down regulation of “taste and decency” in a consumer-led market. In television, for example, the development of multiple channel televisions has enabled explicitly sexual programs addressed to a gay and lesbian audience to be developed and sold worldwide. Drama serials such as *Queer as folk*, about a group of gay friends, or the *L word*, about a community of lesbians, have been welcomed for moving away from the “homosexuality as a social problem” approach that previously characterized their treatment in the media (→ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies).

The positive role of fantasy in sexual portrayals is emphasized by libertarian theorists, who welcome the expression of repressed and transgressive erotic desires that limit women’s sexual expression as much as men’s. In this view, “unruly” impulses which are denied expression in everyday life are enjoyed in the “safe” space provided by the popular media, acting as an outlet for sexual drives that exceed the moral and political disciplinary boundaries of the patriarchal order or, indeed, the “politically correct” discourses of feminist critique. Cultural theories emphasize the political ambivalence of these temporary transgressions and their openness to hegemonic appropriations that diminish their political power. For example, there are doubts about the radical value of the “*raunch culture*” that has developed out of the utopian visions of sexual emancipation originally linked to the “second wave” women’s movement, given that it has led to a more intensive commercial exploitation of women’s sexuality alongside a decline in women’s allegiance to feminist politics (Levy 2005). More positively, it has encouraged the address to women as an audience for sexual content in the mainstream media, enabling guilt-free access to sexually explicit media that, it has been argued, is a more significant development for women’s “right to sexual pleasure” than the transgressive pornography valorized by libertarian feminists in that it can be more easily integrated with women’s everyday lives (Juffer 1998).

The globally successful TV series *Sex and the city* on the US pay channel HBO offers a dramatization of this new sensibility in contemporary western cultures, in which women’s desire to achieve sexual satisfaction is a central motif alongside an ironic recognition of the contradictory expectations of contemporary femininity (Arthurs 2004). This ironic response to the continuing power of traditional gender power relations in a postfeminist society is also exemplified by the rise in the 1990s of the knowingly sexist “lads mags” such as *FHM*, which carry sexually explicit pictures of women alongside humorous features and commentary.

## GLOBAL ISSUES

Sexual freedom may be seen as “empowering” in a context where women have won widespread economic and political citizenship in their own right, but is easily appropriated to more exploitative purposes where economically vulnerable women have little choice to refuse the terms on which their “liberated” performances are bought. Marxist feminists point to how capitalist cultures exploit women’s sexuality for profit and women are rarely the ones who control the process. Glamorous images of sexual freedom in the western media have been identified as one of the lures to migration for impoverished and disempowered women in the poorer regions of the world, who, in the worst cases, find themselves trapped into sexual servitude of various kinds. Charitable agencies seek to counteract the dangers via media campaigns about sexual exploitation. MTV Europe Foundation, for example, targeted male customers in a multimedia global campaign in 2005 alerting men to their complicity in trafficking.

The global flows of sexualized imagery via the Internet and → satellite television also generate controversy and censorship where they encounter divergent cultural contexts and regulatory regimes, as has been seen in China’s response to their entry into the international market. The public display of sexualized women’s bodies has also been central to the perceived corruption of values in western consumer cultures that traditional Islamic societies are seeking to resist. Another concern has been the proliferation of pedophile sites on the Internet, which has brought calls for international cooperation to prosecute the producers and consumers.

Cross-cultural exchanges also produce processes of hybridization and syncretization. For example, the impact of the South Asian diaspora on changing sexual cultures and marriage rituals is evident in mainstream Bollywood films and the cosmopolitan bricolage that characterizes the wedding magazines consumed by the new transnational urban middle class in India. Indeed, in this new taste culture “sexuality is most often the site marking and negotiating these class interests” (Desai 2003), while the power relationships involved are explored more critically in low-budget independent films such as *Monsoon wedding* and *Bombay boys*.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Bollywood ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Child Protection, Media Regulations for ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Fetishization ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Identity Politics ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Effects ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Postfeminism ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Taste Culture ▶ Voyeurism



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## **Sex and Pornography Online**

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Pornography online, sometimes called “cybersex,” has been assimilated to the discourse on sexuality as a mode of liberation for humankind through the exploration of sexual and political alternatives (Hunt 1993). The question is whether cybersex offers new constructions of pornographic exchanges.

The definition of pornography has not changed much over the centuries (→ Pornography, Feminist Debates on). It is the deliberate representation of obscene material about the body in order to create sexual arousal. Three *conditions to create pornographic desire* are necessary: anonymity, an intimate and yet alien relation to the other’s body, and the possibility of replacing one body with another (*American Journal of Semiotics* 1989). Computer technology meets these three conditions of erotic arousal: it offers secrecy, interaction with strangers, and repeatable substitution.

Seen within this framework, cybersex is traditional pornography disseminated through another medium. The → Internet carries *erotica*, the description of detailed aspects of sexual relations, and *exotica*, representing perversions and deviations like sado-masochism, zoophilia, and necrophilia. They appear on “free” bulletin board systems like alt-sex-bestiality or alt-sex-bondage, on the tacit understanding that the user trades his or her words or images for access. They are mostly, however, to be found on pay systems like Laura’s Lair or Pleasure Dome.

Cybersex holds the promise of total sensitization that the machine provides for users in its virtual reality format (→ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives). Artificially simulated intimacy is present, in the form of three-dimensional

images (→ Body Images in the Media) like Virtual Valerie (the creation of Mike Senz), the first articulated doll to participate in erotic games on a computer; or in the form of exoskeletons with goggles, data-gloves, and sensors that allow the client to meet partners in virtual space. From a human rights perspective, they are presented as less exploitative of the real body, often the female body, and women are quite active in Internet pornographic discourse, as can be seen in magazines like *Mondo 2000* or *Future Sex*.

The changes in pornography mediated by the Internet are with respect to the relation to the other's body. Sexual exchanges on the Internet have accelerated a tendency of pornography to *annihilate the body* in the name of desire and to *intellectualize sex* (→ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of). This was already the case in the writings of the Marquis de Sade in the eighteenth century. New technology annihilates the body because it replaces the other's body with the computer, as a low tech sexual aid like a dildo replaced the other's body in earlier times. It intellectualizes sex because the computer interface and the use of (hyper)text substitute the language of negotiation for advancing, accepting, or resisting flesh, thus releasing the sensation of pleasure as a drug for the brain, not for the sexual parts of the body.

The screen as an interface for sexual exchange allows these two tendencies to develop fully. It is central to high tech pornographic sex, as it fulfills the conditions of anonymity and distanced intimacy, and it does so because it gives extensions to the body while forbidding the other to have complete access to it. The screen interface renders the body invisible, thanks to a technology of simulation that fosters *dissimulation*. Interaction does not take place with the body of the other but with computer data, through which desire itself is digitalized. The interface redefines the body and its discourse as part of the cybernetics package of information processing (Stone 1995; Green 2001; → Information Processing: Self-Concept).

To counter the risk and fear of physical contact, the computer offers the possibility of substitution by digitalized contact. The interface, by images and through aliases, avatars (→ Avatars and Agents), and hypertextual journals, diaries, and other writings, allows the expansion of this new form of expression. It plays on the fuzzy lines of hypertext as a new means of contact-discourse. The openness of this writing process offers liberating, even libertarian possibilities that Theodor Holm Nelson (1993), the inventor of hypertext, extols as the essence of computer innovation. He considered that "teledildonics" (giving oneself sexual pleasure with technology, especially via computers) was the first outcome of the computer technology (Rheingold 1991, 345).

The Internet offers a multiplicity of imaginable sexual relations – a catalogue of pornographic styles. This follows the typical Sade-like practice of excess and subversion by saturation that builds up the paraphernalia of virtual sex, the third order of sex: after sex as nature and sex as discourse, sex as an unproductive state, without secretion and seduction, that would be characteristic of the postmodern condition (Kroker et al. 1989, 182; Cooper 2000).

Cybersex also offers a third order of evolution in the construction of sexual exchanges by technology, as new communication devices push the historical limits of pornography, testing the confines of what is socially permissible. In the *first order*, before print technologies, pornographic transgression was organized around forbidden objects of desire (religious taboos) that could not be imagined at a distance. Sensitization with the other's body was necessary for arousal. In the *second order*, with the arrival of print and

audiovisual technologies, transgression became organized around fantasy, as the objects of desire could be imagined at a distance. Sensitization became possible by projecting desire onto the other's body. In the *third order*, with the advent of the Internet, the objects of desire no longer have to be socially acceptable, as they can belong to imaginary realms and constructions. Transgression takes the shape of substitution. Sensitization of contact is possible by simulation, as the pornographic exchange consists of interfacing with the data of a virtual body (Frau-Meigs 1996).

Questioning reality follows from the traditional justification of pornography. It functions according to an authenticity code that denounces the artifice of normal relationships and social taboos. With cybersex, the relation to signs and to representation has been reversed such that only what is imagined, dreamed, fantasized has real value. More than a criticism of the world in political terms, cybersex tends to eliminate the external reality of politics and social life, to take refuge more completely in a temporary utopian zone, a site where politics and society can be redefined in individual, fictitious, and abstract codes.

SEE ALSO: ► Avatars and Agents ► Body Images in the Media ► Information Processing: Self-Concept ► Internet ► Pornography, Feminist Debates on ► Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ► Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives

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## **Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media**

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Sex role stereotypes represent women and men in highly generalized, often unrealistic, ways. Such media → stereotypes are important because representation plays a key role in

shaping what becomes social reality (→ Information Processing: Stereotypes; Media and Perceptions of Reality). Mediated messages influence knowledge as well as what is deemed significant and interesting (Brooks & Hébert 2006).

Repeated media images shape → attitudes, beliefs, and values. The media communicate to audiences the contours of current social reality while simultaneously helping to create it. Within television studies, for example, it has been argued that heavy viewers are most likely to accept stereotypical assumptions about certain groups in society (→ Gerbner 1998; → Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects).

Considerable research addresses the media's role in perpetuating stereotypes, including sex role stereotypes (→ Stereotyping and the Media). Scholars have examined a variety of media types – e.g., movies (→ Cinema), → television, → radio, advertisements (→ Advertising), → newspapers, → Internet – and highlighted the potential negative social influence of repeated exposure to stereotypical presentations of sex roles. Sex role stereotypes convey messages about expected appearance and behavior of women and men, shaping both our ideas and expectations of women and men. Moreover, sex role stereotyping in the media creates and perpetuates a reality that oppresses less powerful social groups.

## OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH

Researchers around the world have examined sex role stereotypes in the media. In general, findings tend to be quite consistent, showing that, despite some improvements over the years toward more divergent and realistic portrayals, stereotyping continues. For example, although there are more female characters on television and women are playing increasingly varied parts, they are still underrepresented in relation to men and to their actual numbers in society. Most women who do appear are young (Eschholz et al. 2002). Older women characters tend not to be positively portrayed. Older male characters tend to be depicted as being wise and independent, whereas older women are often represented as irrational and dependent.

Across most media types, women are more often presented as emotional and sensitive and men as serious, dominant, and prone to committing violence. Men act as workforce role models, and women as domestic role models appearing more often in household situations. Various studies indicated that in the late 1990s, male television characters were more likely to be shown at work and to talk about work than female characters, who were repeatedly shown in the private sphere and tended to talk about relationships (for an overview see Ross & Byerly 2004).

## EXAMPLES OF SEX ROLE STEREOTYPES

Over time, a number of common sex role stereotypes have been discussed in the literature. These include general depictions of women and men as well as more specific stereotypes based on a number of factors (e.g., gender, race, sexual orientation, context, age).

Griffin (1998) has highlighted the fact that in the US media, there are several common images of women that tend to *reinforce ideas of sex difference*, including hetero-sexy beauty queens, wholesome girls next door, cute pixies, and wives and mothers. According to Nelson & Paek (2005), in spite of social and economic advances US women have made in

recent years, the media continue to portray them primarily as sex objects, reinforcing the “sex kitten” stereotype (→ Sexualization in the Media). They find this depiction occurs even when the target media audience is women. In assessing US advertising media, some recent findings have shown an increase in the amount of sexism, sexuality, and objectification of women. For example, approximately 50 percent of → magazine ads depict women in sexualized ways. In Japanese television ads, women are significantly more often used as “attention getters” than men (Nelson & Paek 2005). Contemporary media around the world now show an abundance of images of women wearing sexy clothes posing in decorative ways. Repeated audience exposure to such images may over time cultivate the perspective that women are to be defined primarily by and valued for their sexual attractiveness to men (Lavine et al. 1999).

*Stereotypical images of men* are also commonly presented by the media (→ Masculinity and the Media). One avenue of research inquiry has been the examination of male heroes. Across the media, male heroes abound, ranging from traditional types (e.g., heroes in war films and Westerns; → Film Genres) to newer forms of the warrior (e.g., Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles; Donald 1992). Through these portrayals of warriors, males demonstrate aggression in ways that often receive societal validation. According to Donald (1992), the cowboy, a rugged, resilient figure, and the first hero of many men in the US, is also evident in war films, which are essentially Westerns set in other locales. Recent portrayals of masculinity include the hypermuscular male body with its sculpted shape. Like idealized female body images, this body type is nearly impossible to attain (Hatoum & Belle 2004).

Several studies have examined how women and men of different races tend to be portrayed in the media and numerous sex role stereotypes have been discussed in this work. For example, there has been considerable criticism of the mediated sex role stereotypes of African American women. Brooks & Hébert (2006) discuss several such common stereotypes, including “mammies,” “matriarchs,” “jezebels,” and “welfare mothers.” African American women’s bodies are often portrayed as “hypersexed,” leading some to assert that African American women are seen primarily as sexual, rather than romantic, characters (Brooks & Hébert 2006). Older African American women often appear in roles based on the “mammy archetype,” while younger African American women are more frequently depicted as “welfare queens” and “baby machines,” emphasizing promiscuity and greed (→ Black Feminist Media Studies).

*African American men* are also stereotyped in the media. According to Brooks & Hébert (2006), common stereotypes include “the shuffling Uncle Tom,” “the savage,” and the “childlike Sambo.” Other mediated stereotypes of African American men include “Uncle Remus” and “the magical negro.” Some US programs (e.g., *Frank’s Place*) have challenged traditional conceptualizations of black masculinity. However, Orbe’s (1998) assessment of black masculinity on *The Real World* showed that black men were portrayed as angry and aggressive. Orbe (1998) points out that such images reinforce fear of black men and that the show fails to represent black masculinity in positive ways.

*Far Eastern women and Latinas* are portrayed as exotic and sexual. Women from the Far East tend to be stereotyped as lotus blossoms, who are passive and the love interests of white men, or as dragon ladies, who act as partners in crime of men from their own cultures (Brooks & Hébert 2006). Latinas tend to be depicted as highly emotive, possessing hypersexual toughness, and exotic temptresses (→ Latina Feminist Media Studies).

According to Brooks & Hébert (2006), Far Eastern men are often depicted as menacing foreigners, laborers, corrupt businessmen, and martial artists. In general, they are not shown to have dominant male characteristics. This desexualization, especially combined with portrayals of the hyperfemininity of Far Eastern women playing the love interests of white men, reinforces white male dominance and emasculates Far Eastern males. Media coverage underrepresents and misrepresents Latinos who tend to be represented in problematic work roles (e.g., drug dealers, criminals) and as prone to violence. Frequent stereotypes include the bandito and the Latin lover (Wilson & Gutiérrez 2003).

Research on depictions of *Native American women and men* is scant. In examining images of Native American women, Portman & Herring (2001) explore the “Pocahontas paradox,” which is responsible for the continued romanticization and vilification of Native American women. According to these authors, the US media tend to portray Native American women as having power and strength or beauty and lust, such depictions merging into the Pocahontas stereotype. The mythology surrounding Pocahontas is damaging to Native American women, in part because media discourse foregrounds Pocahontas’s love relationship with a white man, John Smith (Portman & Herring 2001; Brooks & Hébert 2006). Sex role stereotypes of Native American men include the savage, the sidekick, and the underling. Few recent studies exist on the portrayal of Native American men. One exception is analysis of the novel and film *The Indian in the Cupboard*, although scholars disagree on whether the book and film reinforced or combated existing stereotypes (Brooks & Hébert 2006).

*Sex role stereotypes in sports* coverage tend to trivialize women or exclude them altogether. Such mediated messages reinforce the stereotype that sport is a male domain and downplay the appropriateness of female competitiveness. In addition, coverage of women athletes gives more focus to attractiveness and appearance than characteristics linked to sports success for men (e.g., strength, endurance). In spite of increasing participation, women in sports have long been “underrepresented and misrepresented” in media coverage (Hardin et al. 2005). These biases in coverage bolster notions that women are less suitable for sports. Differences in media coverage also exist in sport type. For example, women’s performance in sports regarded as aesthetically pleasing (e.g., figure skating) is highlighted and women tend to show up most frequently in individualized sports (e.g., golf, tennis). Women are more often depicted in passive poses, while men are shown in action. Women engaging in male-dominated team sports, such as ice hockey or basketball, are often ignored or portrayed as masculine. In addition, the physical appearance of women is emphasized much more often than their athletic ability (Hardin et al. 2005; → Sports as Popular Communication).

### CHANGES OVER TIME

Studies on sex role stereotypes in the media in different parts of the world appear to suggest that some types of stereotyping have decreased, but that other forms have taken hold, such as a greater incidence of the sexualization of violence in popular Hindi films (Ramasubramanian & Oliver 2004). Research on how women have been depicted in advertising over time indicates that obvious stereotypical images are less commonly employed but that use of subtle messages about sex roles and the power hierarchy remains frequent (Lindner 2004). In advertisements, for instance, women and girls are objectified,

subordinated, and mentally withdrawn from the situation (Lindner 2004), as extremely thin, physically weak, and childlike (Kilbourne 2003), or, as in the case of US advertising images of Indian women, as exoticized (Ghosh 2003).

Thus, the reality crafted by repetition of such mediated stereotypes is one of restricted representations of women and men – representations that counteract or diminish strides made by women and minorities. Through their subtle unity, sex role stereotypes in the media reinforce patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity (Dyer 2002; Eschholz et al. 2002; → Sexism in the Media). Overall, study results are mixed – suggesting some, little, or no progress in ending sex role stereotypes in the media. Whatever the case, it is clear that much work needs to be done to achieve fairness and equality. Sex role stereotyping continues – as do admonitions from scholars, researchers, and activists that it perpetuates sexism and makes it less likely for social and economic equality between women and men to be imagined and made real.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attitudes ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Cinema ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Film Genres ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes ▶ Internet ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Magazine ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Newspaper ▶ Radio ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Television ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## Sexism in the Media

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Sexism in the media relates to concerns about a range of gender inequalities – in content, employment, policy, decision-making, and ownership – that have been a major focus of women's liberation movements throughout the world since the 1970s. Mass media matter to women everywhere. They play a central role in the formulation and dissemination of ideas and the shaping of → public opinion, whether their format is news, entertainment, or → advertising. In fact, the media's influence is even greater today than ever, with 24/7 news channels, and hundreds of satellite and digital services offering everything from natural history to hardcore pornography and picture messaging via mobile phones.

Popular media such as film (→ Cinema), → television, → newspapers, and → magazines have universally tended to frame women (in every sense of the word) within what many have found to be a narrow repertoire of types which bear little or no relation to how real women live their real lives (Byerly & Ross 2006). Since the 1960s and 1970s, with the rise of women's liberation movements – also called feminism – within all nations of the world, women began to recognize and analyze these problems. For example, they saw the numerous ways in which historically they had been ignored or misrepresented by the news, as well as stereotyped in television programs, film, advertising, and magazines (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). Women also understood that having respectful, accurate, and progressive images and messages about themselves in news and other media was essential if they were to have a louder public voice and more fully participate in public life. The solution would not be a straightforward one, as sexism in the media springs, in large part, from women's larger structural marginalization in society, as well as the more specific lack of control over hiring and content decision-making within media industries. While women's particular relationships to mass media have varied somewhat from nation to nation, women have found a certain consensus in their concerns, which together comprise a feminist critique of mass media and a range of strategies for change.



## FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF MEDIA

*Symbolic annihilation of women:* the first point of the feminist media critique identifies women's absence and trivialization in the news and other "serious" media forms. Such treatment has been called the "symbolic annihilation of women," a concept originated by international media scholar George Gerbner (1978) and then applied to the specific situation of women by US sociologist Gaye Tuchman (1978; → Symbolic Annihilation). In her introduction to the foundational edited book *Hearth and home*, Tuchman said women are symbolically annihilated when they are made invisible, trivial, or otherwise misrepresented in television content. She included representations of women that "make them into ornaments" or needing men's protection in this definition.

*The hyper-sexualized woman:* the second point of the critique revolves around the sexual exploitation of women, which occurs across all media forms, including advertising. The problem manifests itself in several ways. One is the undue emphasis placed on women's sexual attributes over other qualities (e.g., intelligence, competence, achievement). A second relates to patriarchal (i.e., male superior) messages contained in the media content, such as advertisements for women's products that say, in essence, you must use this product to achieve the right look if you want a man to notice or love you. A third way the problem occurs is in the implied or overt use of violence against women by men, including gratuitous depictions of women being harmed, or in humiliating positions. Women have argued that all of these instances affirm men's social, economic, and political dominance, while reinforcing women's marginalization.

*Structural marginalization in the industries:* the third point of the feminist critique of media sexism has focused on women's exclusion from employment and decision-making in, and ownership of, media enterprises. The major issue here has been systematic discrimination that prevents women from being hired, promoted, and retained in news and other media industries. These levels of participation have been understood to hold central importance if women are to exert greater authority over messages and images, and be able to replace sexist content with that which more fairly represents women's range of roles, concerns, aspirations and contributions in and to society. Feminist political economists have placed particular emphasis on women's severe marginalization at the ownership and policy-setting levels and, by contrast, men's overwhelming dominance in media ownership. This pattern, which has accelerated markedly since the 1980s through conglomeration and globalization trends in media industries, has tended to concentrate control of the industries (and the wealth that flows from it) in the hands of a few wealthy men (→ Globalization of the Media; Media Conglomerates; Ownership in the Media; Political Economy of the Media). This gendered structural imbalance in media industries illustrates the material ways in which sexism manifests itself at the macro levels within and across nations.

## RESPONSES TO SEXISM IN MEDIA

Women have moved on a number of fronts throughout the world to redress and reverse sexism in the media. Some of these initiatives have been individual efforts, and others have been undertaken collectively in more organized ways. Together, these efforts constitute women's media activism, something that has been central to women's

liberation movements throughout the world. Byerly and Ross (2006), who have studied that activism, found that women have followed several paths, or approaches, in trying to reform mainstream media, change media policies, and establish women-owned enterprises. For example, some trained as media professionals have used their insider advantage to bring feminist-oriented content into news and other media (→ Feminist Media), or to advocate for women's advancement within media enterprises. South African journalist Crystal Oderson, for instance, has worked to encourage the hiring and retention of black women at her own broadcast station, while French journalists Virginie Barré and Natacha Henry have promoted women's status in news fields through the Association des Femmes Journalistes (Byerly & Ross 2006). Other feminist media activists have formed advocacy groups that monitor the media's performance and/or wage campaigns targeted at some specific problem. For example, Seeta Pena Gangadharan and Aliza Dichter co-founded the Center for International Media Action, in San Francisco, a US-based group that advocates for ownership limits in media through reformed federal policy that would expand women's ownership, particularly in broadcast media. Women's media action has also included the establishment of women-owned media – book publishing houses like Kali for Women, in India; syndicated radio programs, such as Women's International Newsgathering Service (WINGS), Vancouver, Canada; and the online international Women's eNews, based in New York, among others.

### **CONSIDERING PROGRESS**

With any social struggle, change occurs simultaneously alongside resistance to change, in a dialectical process. Thus, women have had some important successes in overcoming sexism in the media, while at the same time they remain vigilant of the persistent sexist patterns described earlier. Some success can be measured quantitatively. For instance, since the 1970s, women have established hundreds of women-owned media companies throughout the world, including feminist-oriented book publishing houses, magazines and newsletters, radio programs, film and video companies, film distribution centers, and, more recently, websites and weblogs (blogs). The last of these, accomplished through new technologies, enable women with computer access to transcend national boundaries, as well as traditional boundaries of private and public spheres. Media scholar Gillian Youngs (2004) has called cyberspace the “new feminist frontier” because it enables women to engage in multiple forms of networking, information sharing, political analysis, collaboration, and agenda building (→ Cyberfeminism).

In terms of women's representation in the traditional media, there are some signs of change. For example, there are stronger and more plentiful roles for women today in both film and television programming in many nations, and women of varied races and of lesbian identity have found a place (though still limited) in many films and television dramas. There are, of course, also the enduring sexist stereotypes, as well as women's graphic victimization as forms of entertainment (→ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of; Sexual Violence in the Media). In terms of news coverage, many of the issues that women have agitated for (e.g., rape law reform, an end to domestic violence, AIDS prevention) are being covered with greater regularity and sensitivity by many news organizations (Byerly & Ross 2006).

However, the 70-plus-nation Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which has been conducted every five years since 1995, found in its 2005 round that women are truly at the periphery of most news. Very little news around the world – only 10 percent of all stories – focuses specifically on women, with Canada (23 percent) and the US (20 percent) leading. In addition, women are rarely central in stories that comprise the bulk of the news agenda – politics (8 percent) and the economy (3 percent). Reporting on gender inequality (which exists everywhere) is almost nonexistent – only 4 percent of all stories highlighted equality issues. In 2005, 53 percent of those stories were reported by men – something welcomed and encouraged. However, because such a small percentage of the stories do discuss gender equality, the news agenda, overall, can be understood as still dominated by male priorities and perspectives (Gallagher 2006, 19–20).

Some of women's progress in overcoming sexism in the media can be seen in the creation of large-scale strategies with long-range goals. Central here are the more than two dozen media monitoring and advocacy groups functioning in nearly as many nations. Margaret Gallagher, who coordinates the largest of these, the GMMP, places considerable importance on the role of monitoring as a change agent. Monitoring produces data that can be used to advocate for changes within the news media, she says, but also to build on in important ways (Gallagher 2001; → *Activist Media*). For example, the 2005 round of the GMMP utilized its findings to, first, develop an "advocacy toolkit," containing training materials that local advocacy groups use to work more productively with media professionals to improve coverage of women and to bring about other social change. Second, eight regional training workshops were held to teach local community organizers how to use these toolkits. Third, GMMP sponsored "global weeks of action" (February 8–March 8, 2006), something endorsed by → UNESCO and other international groups, to focus attention on women and news. And, finally, a GMMP website on media monitoring and advocacy was established to provide resources and specific "how to" procedures ([www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org)).

Gender Links, a monitoring, advocacy, and training organization headquartered in Johannesburg, South Africa, is an example of a regional organization that established a network in 2004, called GEMSA – Gender and Media Southern Africa. GEMSA's action program brings media professionals together with women's activists in order to develop best practices for integrating gender into news and other media. The first international effort of its kind, GEMSA conducts research on media policy, media coverage and representation of women, training of both male and female media professionals, and a range of other advocacy organizations (Morna 2004).

Thus, feminist-led efforts to end sexism in the media occur at many levels, simultaneously. Latin American sociologist Pilar Riaño (1991) emphasizes the importance of such, particularly at the local level, as something that constitutes women's participation in grassroots public arenas through communicative practice (Riaño 1994, 122) (→ *Community Media*; *Grassroots Media*). At the same time, large-scale regional and international efforts, such as those carried on by GMMP and Gender Links, illustrate how women are making institutional reforms at policy and production levels. The optimistic view of these efforts, taken together, is that change is coming and will continue to come, and that an important role for communication researchers is to follow and evaluate their results.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Cinema ▶ Community Media ▶ Cyberfeminism ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Newspaper ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Television ▶ UNESCO ▶ Women in the Media, Images of ▶ Women's Media Genres

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## **Sexual Violence in the Media**

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The representation of sexual violence has been subject to critical inquiry in two main ways. One strand of research explores whether scenes of sexual violence (in films, computer games, and pornography magazines) might trigger sexual aggression. This sort of research is often pursued under the umbrella of psychology and criminology (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). A second strand, more often pursued by communication scholars, focuses more on how the media frame sexual violence as an

issue. The aim of this body of work is to explore how the media present the causes of, and solutions to, sexual violence, and examine how this might help to shape public and policy responses. This approach also includes an interest in the everyday representations of sexuality that infuse popular culture and how these might reinforce gender inequalities or romanticize sexual aggression (Ramasubramanian & Oliver 2006).

## **BACKGROUND**

Research into sexual violence in the media blossomed from the 1970s onwards in the UK and the US alongside the emergence of the women's liberation movement (WLM). WLM activists fought for recognition of the extent and seriousness of all forms of violence. Although rape is the "signature assault" usually used to represent sexual violence, feminists highlighted a continuum of abuses, including sexual harassment in the workplace, forced sex in marriage, domestic violence, and the sexual exploitation of children within the family. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the WLM fought to challenge the idea that rape was just "a bit of fun," worked to reform the unsympathetic way in which police treated rape complainants (e.g., the assumption that they must be lying), and questioned the routine use of victims' sexual histories to discredit them in court. The WLM also campaigned for new legislation in many countries, for example that a man could be charged with raping his wife.

Alongside such efforts, feminist campaigning also had a profound impact on media representations: countering the salacious reporting of attacks as titillation and the promotion of the idea that women enjoy rape (→ *Gender: Representation in the Media; Pornography, Feminist Debates on; Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives*). Particular TV programs were also instrumental in raising the profile of incest, for example, as well as prompting debate about the legal status of rape in marriage or the abusive nature of police investigations in rape cases (Cuklanz 1996; Kitzinger 2004a).

## **KEY FINDINGS AND ISSUES**

Although there have been major changes in the media representation of sexual violence in many countries since the 1970s and 1980s, more recent research still highlights problems. For example, communication researchers note an element of "moral panic" around the reporting of some forms of violence (such as ritual child sexual abuse). This is combined with a media "fatigue" and a declining interest in the most commonplace forms of sexual assault. Although someone familiar to the victim perpetrates most sexual violence, this is not the impression promoted by the bulk of media reporting (Kitzinger 2004a). In addition, when victims know perpetrators, the perpetrator may be excused or their violence minimized and the victim subtly implicated in her (or his) own victimization (Benedict 1992; Moorti 2002). Indeed, alleged assaults by boyfriends, family members, or others in a position of trust often only seem to attract major headlines through the lens of disbelief. This allows for a new discourse of skepticism to be promulgated. Peak coverage in the UK and the US has focused, for example, on controversies around contested "date rapes" and scandals around allegedly false allegations of child sexual abuse (e.g.,

intervention “scandals” or “false memory syndrome”; Kitzinger 2004a; → Scandalization in the News).

Journalists also often position abusers as “outsiders” via a variety of rhetorical devices. They may portray an assailant as a “beast” or “animal” or use racist stereotypes (tapping into a long history of fear of black men and justification for racist attacks such as lynching; Moorti 2002). Although a white-dominated western feminist movement has often prioritized gender as a category of analysis, critics highlight the inadequacy of a “color-blind” approach, citing the complexity of controversies surrounding sexual harassment/violence accusations against black men such as US boxer Mike Tyson or Clarence Thomas, the nominee for the US Supreme Court (Morrison 1992; → Black Feminist Media Studies). It is also important to examine how media reporting may promote homophobic assumptions (e.g., journalists sometimes conflate gay men and pedophiles; → Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies; Heterosexism and the Media). Even apparently neutral or expert concepts, such as the word “pedophile,” are potentially problematic. The very fact that there is a special noun for those who sexually abuse children implies that they constitute a breed apart. It also singles out the sexual abuse of children, as if there were no connection between abuse perpetrated against boys and girls and that perpetrated against adults (Kitzinger 2004a). This effort to isolate the sex offender from society fails to address the continuum of abuse or to confront the widespread nature of “mundane,” everyday, sexual violence and the cultural attitudes that support it (Carter 1998; Kitzinger 2004b).

When journalists *do* connect sexual violence to endemic cultural attitudes, it is usually in considering “sub-” or “foreign” cultures. Coverage of one notorious gang rape in the US, for example, suggested that only the Portuguese-American community held the sort of attitudes that led to such assaults (Moorti 2002). Similarly, reporting about the rape of the Central Park jogger by a group of young black men in 1989 treated “inner-city youth culture” as the problem (Cuklanz 1996). These types of cultural explanations are even more evident in western reporting of sexual violence in “foreign” countries. US news media accounts of the 1991 mass rape case in a Kenyan school, for example, associated the abuse of women with “tribal tradition” and collapsed all Kenyan women into the one-dimensional category of “the oppressed” (Hirsch 1994). Sometimes the western media seem happiest focusing on “exotic” violence against women. “Dowry burning,” “honor rapes,” “female genital mutilation,” or the mistreatment of women under “alien” fundamentalist regimes are then treated as evidence of those countries’ backwardness.

How the media frame the problem of sexual violence is vitally important because such framings help to promote certain types of solutions (→ Framing Effects). The tendencies outlined above allow for individualist, law-and-order, and colonialist solutions to be proposed as the only way forward. Concern about the abuse of women can be used to help justify a disproportionate application of the law to certain populations (such as black inner-city youth) or, indeed, intervention against foreign regimes (e.g., in Afghanistan). Framing the problem of sexual violence in the ways outlined above also leads to the responsibility for prevention being often laid at the door of potential victims. Children, we are told, should be closely supervised; young women should be assertive to forestall “misunderstandings” with their boyfriends; and all potential victims should avoid going out alone at night or being sexually provocative. A key theme running through much of

this analysis is that media reporting often ignores radical and self-reflective social strategies. Journalists sometimes seem to prefer to sensationalize the details of an individual attack, than reflect on the real patterns of sexual violence. Newspapers seem sometimes to orchestrate outrage about sentencing, or the release of individual convicted sex offenders, rather than looking at the social changes within the dominant culture that are needed to make rape and sexual abuse a thing of the past (Kitzinger 2004a).

Some of the most interesting work in this field (becoming widely accessible via the Internet) is emerging from parts of the world such as Asia. Media research initiatives in diverse countries confirm that many of the characteristics of media representation in the west are echoed across other parts of the world (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). Such work also brings new perspectives to western approaches. Alongside particular forms of domestic violence (including “honor killings”), other forms of institutionalized violence are highlighted. Issues such as the use of sexual violence in ethnic cleansing and genocide have increasingly gained recognition, as has military sexual slavery and the increasing trade in sex trafficking. Commentators stress the importance of including a gender-sensitive perspective in thinking about disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and the importance of linking issues such as trafficking to the breakdown in social structure. The bridge between academic analysis and activism is often very strong. Media monitoring groups challenge bad reporting, as well as providing support and advice to journalists to improve their practices (see [www.icescolombo.org/vaw](http://www.icescolombo.org/vaw); Lloyd & Howard 2005). Such work also records the key role the media can play in helping support social justice. This might include the role of a local newspaper in challenging the punishment gang rape meted out to a young woman in Pakistan, the role of radio programming in supporting the reintegration of women stigmatized by their sexual exploitation during a war, or the importance of the national media as a route through which to put the issue of “comfort women”/“military sex slaves” on the national agenda and push for restitution.

## NEW DIRECTIONS

There is a need for more work that goes beyond textual analysis to examine, and engage with, how media accounts are produced, and how they impact on the survivors of sexual violence as well as on society as a whole (→ Audiences, Female; Critical Theory). Studies of progressive examples of mass media reporting could provide insight into the role of the media in social transformation. Important work could also be pursued by examining specific campaigns designed to transform dominant social norms about sexual assault: initiatives ranging from “community caravans” in Trinidad and Tobago to a CD “virtual conference” for judges in India (Drenzin 2006; → Community Media).

Technological changes also present new sites of research. The ways in which sexual violence can be facilitated by the Internet (including “Internet pedophilia” and trafficking) is gaining attention from some communication researchers (→ Internet: International Regulation; Internet Law and Regulation; Internet, Technology of). Such changes also raise questions about how the Internet might help to challenge sexual violence, creating an avenue for alternative discourses and challenges to the status quo. The Internet also can support international dialogue – a dialogue which helps create new alliances and also

raises questions about the cross-cultural representation and definition of sexual violence. Such debates can provide productive new directions for research in a field of inquiry that is constantly evolving in response to social, political, and technological changes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Advocacy Journalism ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Community Media ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual, Transgender Media Studies ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Journalism ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of ▶ Violence and the Media, History of

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# Sexualization in the Media

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Sexualization is a concept used in communication research, primarily by feminist and gender studies researchers, to describe an increasingly close link between media images of men, women, and inanimate objects and human sexuality (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). Historical portrayals of sexuality tended to focus on psychological characteristics such as passivity and domesticity for women, and aggression and work for men. In recent years, representations of sexuality have centered on the eroticized body (Gill 2007; → Women in the Media, Images of). This is an important cultural shift, demonstrating an increase in the use of bodies and physicality to sell consumer products. The commoditization of sexuality increases as value and sexual appeal are linked. Additionally, developments in media production and technology, including satellite television and the Internet, have helped provide a cheap and easy forum for consumption, marketing, and distribution of sexualized images (Arthurs 2004).

It is no longer enough to be masculine or feminine to achieve one's desires. Instead, media messages appear to suggest that one must be openly "sexual," which in turn means having a young, beautiful body and a luxurious lifestyle. In tandem with this change, Gill (2007) has argued that there have been cultural shifts in the media around the world from portraying women as objects of (male) desire to women (described by the notion of objectification) who sexualize themselves to seek out their own (consumer oriented) desires. One of the most visible changes in recent years is the increase in the erotic codification of men's bodies, emphasizing, as Laura Mulvey (1975) stated in relation to women, their "to-be-looked-at-ness."

Feminist communication scholars have been at the forefront in conceptualizing and researching media sexualization. While some have applauded the shift from media images of women in traditional (passive) feminine roles, others question whether the increased sexualization of women's (and men's) bodies is "liberating."

## THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Studies focusing on media stereotypes or representations preceded contemporary research on media sexualization. Research examining stereotypical media images has paid close attention to the broad mental images that are presumed to result, and their supposed effects on human attitudes and behavior toward women (→ Stereotypes; Stereotyping and the Media). Studies of gender representation, on the other hand, are grounded in the assumption that the mass media contribute to systems of representation that structure ideological processes in society. Image and representation studies have been used mostly to explore two themes: *sex roles* and *gender roles*.

Some feminists' concern with sexism led its proponents to seek to better understand "sex roles" – or the false belief that women and men are innately different, and that men are "naturally" dominant and aggressive, whereas women are "naturally" subordinate,

passive, nurturing, and compassionate (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). The difference between sex and gender is that “sex” is based on assumptions about biological sex differences that are widely regarded as “natural,” whereas the notion of gender is based on the idea that sexuality (femininity and masculinity) is socially constructed and maintained through the presence of a structural ideology of hierarchical sexual difference. Sex-role studies have typically criticized media images of women (and men) and deemed many “negative.” As a result, there has long been a demand for more “positive” and “realistic” portrayals. *Representation studies* have attempted to identify underlying gender ideologies and to encourage wider social/structural change in order to challenge the hierarchical binaries of masculinity and femininity. While scholars have identified that women have tended to be portrayed in a narrow range of sex-role stereotypes, there was not always something innately sexual about these roles. Therefore, some scholars argue that it is not sensible to apply the same framework for describing media images in the 1970s to today’s media (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). This can be attributed to two main factors: first, the feminization of the media, and second, the growing sexualization of social life in many parts of the world.

Patricia Holland (1998) has argued that media sexualization does not mean the same thing, nor necessarily always lead to increasing media feminization (→ Feminization of Media Content). In some western countries, the feminization of news began as early as the 1880s with the introduction of → soft news features. Feminization describes both an increase in the numbers of female journalists and producers, and an increase in human interest, entertainment, and photography. While not everyone agrees on why feminization occurred, there are two main schools of thought. The first includes changing definitions of what is “newsworthy” (→ News Values). The second has to do with the economics of newspapers, targeting female audiences as an important consumer group (van Zoonen 1998).

Michel Foucault (1981) suggested that it is untrue that sex only recently emerged into public discourse. The widely held idea that until recently it was difficult to discuss sexuality is not backed up by historical evidence. The Victorian era, perceived to be a time of sexual repression, was actually one in which sexuality was constituted as a central feature of western social identity, and produced a proliferation of discourses. There are numerous records of public discussions around sex and sexuality in the early 1900s, and from the 1940s onward, research from sexologists such as Kinsey (1948) and Hite (1976) became widely deliberated. With the rise of new social movements in the 1960s, such as those of women’s and gay rights, media discussions about sex increased in frequency and frankness. The media tapped into such social changes – during this time, for example, US magazines such as *Playboy* and *Cosmopolitan* first appeared. In other parts of the world, however, such as India, the media are often the only public spaces today where sex and sexuality are openly discussed (Ramasubramanian & Oliver 2003).

One of the most concrete examples of media sexualization is in the UK tabloid newspaper the *Sun*. In 1970, one year after Rupert Murdoch bought what was then a politically left of center broadsheet newspaper, editor Larry Lamb introduced the first topless model – the “page three girl.” The feature proved to be extremely popular with readers, and contributed to an impressive rise in circulation for the paper. This success prompted other newspapers to adopt similar formats not only in the UK, but also in the

US, Canada, Australia, and elsewhere (although few went as far as the *Sun*, by featuring topless models). While the *Sun*'s editors said that the page three girl sent a message to women that they were free to be sexual subjects, scholars such as Holland (1998) have argued that the page was really designed for men and their sexual pleasure, not women's. Others have argued that page three has a positive influence in encouraging women to be proud of their bodies. Researchers have also noted that some newspapers now feature images of semi-naked men, and that women have helped create and produce these sexualized images.

### OPERATIONALIZING SEXUALIZATION

Research on media sexualization has taken many forms, focusing on different media institutions, forms, and practices around the world. Studies have examined, for example, sexualized representations of women in sport, television drama, the → news, advertisements, → cinema (including genres such as film noir and → Bollywood), female rock stars, women in → cartoons, minority women, men's magazines, and so forth. In addition, the rise in sexualized images of men has prompted research that explores portrayals of men across a range of media genres. The sexualization of children (mainly young girls) is also a new and growing area of inquiry, particularly with regard to their use in advertising (Hartley 1998).

*Magazines* have always been a popular medium for sex- and gender-role inquiries, and therefore it is unsurprising to find media sexualization researchers have also examined these publications (→ Magazine). British studies have documented an increasing media focus on sexual representation in the past 30 years that has contributed to greater complexity around the construction of sexual identities (McRobbie 1996). In recent years, men's lifestyle magazines (such as *Loaded* and *FHM*) have appeared replete with images of scantily clad women. Some suggest that the sexual objectification of women in these publications ("lad" magazines) can be tied to a "backlash" against women's social and political gains as well as to the supposed rise of the "new man" of the 1990s, who was supposed to be more caring, sensitive, and supportive (Benwell 2003).

In the 1980s and 1990s, the sexual performance from female characters became more explicit and central in Hollywood films such as *Basic Instinct* (1992), *Body of Evidence* (1993), and *Sliver* (1993). In India, Bollywood films featured highly eroticized images of women, as women's bodies became increasingly associated with sexual fantasy, a standard feature of these films (Rai 2006). In the US, filmic images of African-American and Latina women have long stereotyped them as sexual, and whose purpose is to pique the male sexual appetite (Bobo 1988; Valdivia 2000).

Though most studies on media sexualization appear to have been conducted in western countries, there has also been research on this issue in the Middle East, India, China, and central and eastern Europe, to name only a few. Sexualization is culturally specific, and the boundaries are not all drawn the same. For example, a study of *Jordanian cartoons* found that women tend to be portrayed as submissive and sexualized, particularly "liberated women" – a negative feature equated with moral "looseness" (Al-Mahadin 2003). Ramasubramanian and Oliver's (2003) study of contemporary Hindi films demonstrates that the sexualization of women in these films tends to portray sexual and

social submission to men – to both heroes and villains who sexually harass or assault them. The frequency and social acceptability of sexual harassment and assault in many of these films, the authors argue, contributes to a normalization of such behavior both in the films and in society more generally as an inevitable part of romantic relationships.

Research on advertising has found that many of the sexualized images of men portray those whose looks are “Latin” (the “Latin lover”; → Latina Feminist Media Studies). Black men, when represented, are usually associated with sporting products, once again tied to the stereotype of their “natural” physical prowess and sexuality. Asian men are rarely portrayed in a sexual way in advertisements (a typical stereotype used is the martial artist; Wilson and Gutiérrez 2003). Recently, there has been an increased presence of gays and lesbians in advertising, although it has been noted that more of these images portray women in a highly sexualized manner (kissing or embracing other women) primarily for (straight) male consumers. Gay men, when represented, are rarely, if ever, touching or kissing (Fejes 2003).

*Audience studies* have focused on how people tend to negotiate women’s representation on television, concluding that it tends to be oversexualized, stereotyped, and predisposes minority women to ethnic subordination and disempowerment (Rojas 2004). There is very little audience research on media sexualization. What has been done is limited in its scope and claims because it is difficult to prove direct or even indirect correlation between consumption of sexualized imagery and people’s actions, behaviors, and thoughts about gender.

It is also useful to note that while not all studies use the label “sexualization” to refer to the phenomenon addressed here, many researchers nevertheless interrogate its concepts and theoretical implications in their work. Regardless of the term used, media sexualization studies have been conducted across a wide range of media forms and focus on an array of different groups portrayed, including women, children, men, ethnic and sexual minorities, and older people.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Bollywood ▶ Cartoons ▶ Cinema ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Magazine ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ News Values ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Soft News ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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## Sibling Interaction

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Sibling relationships can be important and influential throughout the lifespan. During childhood, siblings can influence both personality development and behavior. In adulthood, siblings can be an important source of friendship, support, and information. In old age, siblings are often an important source of both emotional and tangible support. Although much is known about the effects of birth order, family size, and sex differences on intellectual and personality characteristics (Cicerilli 1995), less is known about sibling communication and interaction patterns. Sibling interaction is guided by a set of characteristics that, as a whole, are unique to the sibling relationship.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

There are six different characteristics that together make the sibling relationship unique. It is pervasive, involuntary and permanent, relatively egalitarian, typically includes a long shared history, is often filled with paradox, and comes in a number of different forms based on family makeup.

First, the sibling relationship is *pervasive* in both its longevity and the number of people who have siblings. A 1998 general social survey reported that 96 percent of American adults have at least one sibling (National Opinion Research Center 1998). The sibling relationship is the longest-lasting relationship in many people's lives, as siblings often stay connected with one another throughout childhood, adulthood, and old age. Further, researchers have estimated that around 80 percent of the population spends at least one third of their lives with their siblings (Fitzpatrick & Badzinski 1994).

Second, the sibling relationship is both *involuntary and permanent*. It is involuntary because it is not a relationship of choice like a friendship. It is permanent because even though siblings might choose to disengage from an active relationship, their relationship status as siblings cannot be dissolved (Cicirelli 1995).

Third, the sibling relationship is relatively *egalitarian* in nature. It is more egalitarian than other family relationships, such as the parent-child relationship (Cicirelli 1995), and becomes still more so as the siblings move out of childhood and adolescence. One reason that siblings, especially in adulthood, can interact as equals is that they typically have similar feelings of acceptance for one another.

Fourth, siblings share a long *family history*. Siblings' shared history is different than a shared history with friends because it includes management of sibling rivalry and conflict, parents' equal or differential treatment of siblings, and specific parent-child relationships.

Fifth, the sibling relationship can be filled with *paradoxical feelings and interactions*. In many sibling relationships competition, conflict, and rivalry may exist alongside feelings of love, care, and support (Mikkelson 2005).

Finally, one of the most distinctive characteristics of the sibling relationship is that it exists in a *number of different forms*, based on common biological origin and legal relationships. Siblings that have both parents in common can be identical twins, with 100 percent genetic relatedness; fraternal twins, with approximately 50 percent genetic relatedness; or full siblings, again with approximately 50 percent genetic relatedness. Siblings that have one parent in common are half siblings, with approximately 25 percent genetic relatedness. Other, legally defined sibling relationships are stepsiblings and adopted siblings. Stepsiblings share neither parent in common, whereas adopted siblings may be related (as in the case of parents adopting a niece or nephew) or may not.

Most sibling research has examined full biological siblings. Thus, less is known about relationships such as adopted siblings, stepsiblings, and half siblings. This is unfortunate, as the Stepfamily Association of America (2006) estimated that at some point, 30 percent of children will live in a stepfamily (this estimate included children who live with a cohabiting parent). Further, in European nations, researchers have estimated that stepfamily rates are as low as 4 percent in some countries and as high as 38 percent in others (Prskawetz et al. 2003). In addition, the 2000 US Census reported that 2.5 percent of children under the age of 18 were adopted (Kreider 2003). Although stepsiblings, adopted siblings, and half siblings are quite frequent in their occurrence, less is known about the communication patterns of these relationships (→ Family Communication Patterns).

## **SIBLING INTERACTION**

### **Contact**

Researchers have studied three aspects of sibling interaction in particular: sibling contact, sibling conflict and rivalry, and sibling support. Because siblings live together during the childhood and adolescent years, sibling contact is relatively high. However, as siblings move out of the household to attend college or to live on their own, the frequency of contact between siblings is greatly reduced because they do not share a living space (Leigh 1982). Not sharing a living space can also reduce contact between siblings because interaction with a sibling becomes more of a personal choice. Contact between siblings often tends to decline as siblings move into middle adulthood, as they become preoccupied with their own marriages and families. However, Leigh (1982) found that as siblings move into the later stages in the lifespan, sibling contact increases. Generally, the contact patterns between siblings can be represented by an hourglass figure, with contact patterns being the highest in youth and old age and the lowest during the middle stages of adulthood.

Researchers have examined the factors that predict the extent to which siblings remain in contact with one another. Lee et al. (1990) found that siblings who were emotionally close, felt responsibility for one another, had an expectation of contact, and were geographically close to one another were most likely to stay in frequent contact. The most important of these variables appears to be emotional closeness, as contact patterns between siblings are highly related to feelings of closeness between them (Cicirelli 1995).

Contact patterns between siblings are also influenced by the type of relationship they share. White and Riedmann (1992) found that contact was greater among full biological siblings than it was between half siblings and stepsiblings. Mikkelson (2006) found that, comparing types of sibling relationships, contact was more frequent between twins and full siblings than between half siblings and stepsiblings. Further, adopted siblings' contact patterns were similar to those of full siblings.

### **Rivalry and Conflict**

Although rivalry between siblings starts in childhood and adolescence, there are conflicting research findings with respect to whether rivalry decreases with age or stays relatively stable. Cicirelli (1995) noted that rivalry decreases as siblings age, so that when siblings reach late adulthood, rivalry is minimal. However, other studies have found that that feelings of rivalry often persist even into old age. Cicirelli (1995) argued that these inconsistent findings might be due to the fact that when older siblings still have feelings of rivalry, they often do not express these feelings overtly. Thus, feelings of rivalry between siblings may exist well into adulthood; however, expressed rivalry may decrease as siblings have developed ways of interacting in which the rivalry and conflict do not become explicit.

Rivalry often begins in sibling relationships when siblings compete for such resources as love, affection, admiration, and money from their parents. Although all siblings probably experience some feelings of rivalry, these feelings can be intensified or diminished depending on whether the siblings are treated relatively equally and how much they are

vying for the same resources. When siblings express feelings of rivalry and jealousy, they tend to express them in a distributive way (arguing, yelling, or making hurtful comments) instead of an integrative way (disclosing feelings, discussion; Bevan 2004). Siblings are more likely to express rivalry or any other type of conflict in a negative way, due to the permanent nature of the relationship (→ Interpersonal Conflict).

Among the different types of sibling relationships, while feelings of rivalry may or may not be higher among half siblings and stepsiblings than among full siblings, half and stepsiblings did report a higher percentage of actual conflict than did full siblings (White & Riedmann 1992).

### Support

Siblings can be an important source of support for each other throughout the lifespan. Goetting (1986) argued that the primary developmental task of siblings during early adulthood is to provide companionship, emotional support, and direct aid to one another. During middle adulthood siblings are relied upon for support, particularly in times of crisis. Siblings' support might be most frequent and important in old age. Cicirelli (1995) found in a study of hospitalized elders that sibling support was second in importance only to support from spouses.

Sibling support is predicted primarily by the amount of contact siblings share and their feelings of closeness to one another (Cicerilli 1995). Similarly, Mikkelson (2006) found that the amount of all five types of social support given (emotional, esteem, informational, network, and tangible) was positively related to the amount of closeness siblings felt (→ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication). Further, Mikkelson (2006) found that the amount of social support siblings gave to one another was related to their relationship type. Specifically, identical twins gave the most social support, followed by fraternal twins and full siblings, followed by half siblings, with adopted siblings and stepsiblings giving the least.

SEE ALSO: ► Family Communication Patterns ► Interpersonal Conflict ► Social Support in Interpersonal Communication

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## Sign

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The sign, in terms first articulated by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913), the Swiss linguist, has come to serve as the basic unit of approaches to communication that focus on meaning-making relations rather than on the effectiveness of senders' communication of intended messages to designated receivers (→ Linguistics; Meaning). Semiotic approaches have been taken up by general communication studies, → cultural studies, post-1960s literary studies, and other fields. For Saussure and for those who analyze culture in his wake, communication involves not messages but signs, material forms that when articulated and then encountered engender meanings bounded by cultural schemata (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The study of signs, then, is at its core social: What conventions determine how signs are made? What conventions determine their readings?

### THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF SIGNS

We communicate about the world indirectly through mediating sign languages – gestures, images, sounds, and words but also through such vehicles as decor, design, and dress (→ Code; Gestures and Kinesics). Signs may be studied as a matter of dispassionate interest, as instruments of persuasion, or as objects of social criticism. In the latter case researchers would ask: if communication is mediated by signification, what forms of economic, political, and social power determine the mediations? This question applies with force whenever labels (such as ability, age, class, ethnicity, gender, nation, race, religion, or sexuality) are attached to people like Post-it® notes, legitimating resource inequalities, whatever the intentions of those who apply them.

Because it does not privilege the intentions of senders as does the sender–receiver model, semiotics finds interest in whatever meanings a communication happens to produce. While those engaged in → persuasion judge communication in terms of their goals, semiotic critics scan more broadly. Advertisers, for example, who know the power of signs and are able to catch just the right wave, might well generate unplanned meanings and effects. They invest fortunes to persuade, intending to endow commodities with meanings to increase their value, structurally uninterested in other effects, but in so doing they occasionally shape constellations of mental life (→ Media Effects; Socialization by the Media). Think of the oft-told tale of advertising for Marlboro, the bestselling brand in the world (Schlach 2002). Like many advertisers, cigarette companies have long enhanced the value of their product by fastening its consumption to images of personal style and sexual allure (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of).

Think how Philip Morris and its advertising agencies appropriated musical and visual motifs from Westerns to assemble a masculinist sign, Marlboro Country (→ Rhetoric and Visuality; Masculinity and the Media). Originally a British brand – note the royal → iconography on the traditional Philip Morris logo – Marlboro had in the first half of the twentieth century been marketed as an unusually mild product for women. As if they were semiotic plastic surgeons, Philip Morris’s marketing specialists successfully removed the brand’s feminine connotations and replaced them with masculine ones (→ Branding). In redefining Marlboro as a quintessentially US product in the 1950s, they created the myth of Marlboro Country and added billions of dollars of value to a delivery system that dispenses toxic wastes, first- and second-hand, regardless of gender or nation. But the Marlboro ads have been able to do their work, become signs for consumers, only to the extent consumers have had compatible templates of meaning-making already in mind.

Not explicitly political in his own scholarship, Saussure was concerned less with questions of power than he was with those of disciplinary definition. He consistently contested commonsense notions about natural labeling, arguing against philosophical accounts of language that he likened to “our first ancestor Adam calling unto him the various animals and giving each one its name” (2006, 162). Such natural naming becomes unthinkable if there is no “prior external basis for the sign,” as for Saussure there was not (→ Sign Systems). Just as language divides undifferentiated territories according to cultural maps, he argued in effect, so objects come into existence as meaningful entities only in the moment they are identified.

## THE DUAL ESSENCE OF LANGUAGE

Those who believe that objects in some sense possess inherent meanings, whether religious or traditionalist, disagree with Saussure, and some linguists remain troubled that Saussure’s theories cannot pass an empirical test. Within the humanities, however, Saussure’s ideas, while contested and revised, have been productive for cultural analysis. Saussure himself saw his linguistic research as but one part of what he hoped would become semiology, or what might now be called the interdisciplinary study of signs (→ Semiotics). Its root, he wrote, was in the “dual essence of language,” the inseparability of form and meaning. “A linguistic sign,” he was quoted as saying by his students, “is not a link between a thing and a name, but between a concept and a sound pattern” (1983, 66).

The meaning a culture assigns to a particular material articulation he called a *signifié* assigned to a “significant.” This is now most often translated in English as a “signified” assigned to a “signifier” (Sd/Sr) but occasionally as a “signification” assigned to a “signal.” Not that there is only one meaning for each Sr, or that the meaning is a positive term. Rather, Saussure saw each sign as embedded in a complex chain of differentiations, its meanings comparative and multiple, depending upon its semiotic surroundings. “Morphologically there are neither *signs* nor *meanings*, but *differences in signs* and *differences in meanings*, (1) each of which exist solely in their relations to others, hence inseparable, but (2) never come into direct contact with each other” (2006, 46; emphasis in original). For Saussure’s theory, “context is everything” (Jameson 1972, 17; → Text and Intertextuality).

The relationship between *concept and sound pattern*, between the idea of a cat, for example, and the understood articulation of the spoken or written word “cat,” is “conventional, and thus arbitrary, wholly lacking in any natural link with the object, completely free of and unregulated by it” (Saussure 2006, 140). The object need not exist; “unicorn” can be a sign no less than “cat.” Similarly there is no territory called “Marlboro Country,” yet it no doubt has a place in cultural maps as real for many people as Oklahoma. Herein lies the axiomatic ground for communication and cultural studies oriented toward change. If the relation between, say, what a culture deems “feminine” and human bodies identified as “female” is conventional and arbitrary, then it can be challenged, and it can change. Given notions of “femininity” and “female” may be maintained by powerful institutions, and by interpersonal relations governed by institutional pressures, but they can also be overthrown (→ Heterosexism and the Media; Gender and Discourse; Gender: Representation in the Media). Signs in this way share the state of being Marx and Engels found characteristic of capitalist modernity: “All that is solid melts into air.”

### TOWARD A SCIENCE OF SIGNS

Roland Barthes (1915–1980) focused on Saussure’s call for a “science of signs” and argued that the “very history of the modern world,” with its abundant sights and sounds, demanded the development of semiology (Barthes 1970, 9; → Barthes, Roland). Thinking of Sd/Sr “in the fashion of the recto and verso of a sheet of paper,” he urged, might help forestall the temptation to think of the sign as only the Sr, “which Saussure wanted at all costs to avoid” (1970, 38). Thinking this way might also help avoid the temptation to think of the Sd as a meaningful object in itself; instead, the Sd is the concept, as understood through the sign. “The signified of the word *ox* is not the animal *ox*, but its mental image” (1970, 43). Indeed, although the Sd/Sr relation is commonly represented in fraction-like form, Barthes proposed thinking of the Sd as “behind” rather than above or below the Sr, since it “can only be reached through it” (1970, 49).

Barthes parted from Saussure over the arbitrariness of signification, preferring “unmotivated” to “arbitrary” for the Sd/Sr relation. He maintained that lack of motivation in signs may be complete or be partial, as in fire/smoke or footprints/past presence, a semiotic category of effect/cause that Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) categorized as an “index” (for Peirce, an “icon” had a likeness and a “symbol” was an entirely arbitrary/unmotivated sign [Peirce 1940, 102]). Barthes also questioned the description “arbitrary” because no individual is “free to modify it” (Barthes 1970, 50), at least under ordinary

circumstances of language use. He called the Sd/Sr relation “contractual in its principle, but this contract is collective, inscribed in a long temporality (Saussure says ‘a language is always a legacy’), and that consequently it is, as it were, *naturalized*” (Barthes 1970, 51; emphasis in original). As a consequence, for post-Saussurean semiology, meaning is never inherent in a Sr. Despite → caricatures to the contrary, this is not an argument that anything can mean anything. Communication here is culturally and historically grounded. People might well decode signs according to schema outside the dominant, heteronormative semiotic system, for example taking the Marlboro Man as a gay icon (Landman 2000).

The complexities do not end there. The bar (/) that separates Sd and Sr itself reappears inside each Sd and Sr, endlessly relating and dividing. Saussure, for example, according to his students’ account of his lectures, insisted that the “sound pattern” was “not actually a sound,” but rather “the hearer’s psychological impression of a sound,” “material” only as a “representation of our sensory impressions” (Saussure 1983, 66). No articulation, no perception, no concept exists in separation from the web of connotations that criss-crosses each encounter, bounded by cultural and historical location.

As Barthes argued, the process of signification does not stop with the recognition of a cultural meaning of a performance, picture, piece of writing, or sound. The consequent sign (the third term that comes into being once Sr and Sd align) connects itself through signification to other cultural meanings, in a “second system” (Barthes 1970, 89), perhaps making “Marlboro Country” a connotative signifier of freedom in the outdoors for its fans, or indeed for anyone who knows the code. For its critics, however, the brand’s image can also be a connotative signifier of a marketing campaign that willingly does harm. This second meaning would not only be against the intention of commercial advertising, it would be a reading of that intention, yet still within this culture’s codes (→ Structuralism; Structuralism in Visual Communication).

## ENCODING/DECODING

For a semiology without guarantees, without fixed meanings, denotation might most usefully be conceptualized as the most common connotation, rather than as a foundational meaning on which connotation trades. Thinking of connotation as a location for changeable flickers of meaning highlights its ideological quality. This can be seen in Stuart Hall’s (2006) discussion of encoding/decoding television. Hall offers three general categories to describe the movement from Sr to Sd in this second, connotative system: “dominant-hegemonic,” “negotiated,” and “oppositional” (2006, 169–173; → Discourse). The following account is based on Hall.

In the first category, the sign is decoded “in terms of the reference code in which it has been encoded,” and meaning is made “within the dominant code” (Hall 2006, 171). Hardly ideal for those who believe in democratic communication, this is the sender-centered “telephone game” come to life. For mainstream journalists, this way of seeing might not seem a way of seeing at all, but a fair and balanced way of reporting the events of the world. Yet as media critics have noted for decades, this form of journalism tends to favor sources and hence viewpoints drawn from public and private elites (Gans 2004; → News as Discourse). (For example, presenting as fact arguments by pro-business economists against a rising minimum wage while marginalizing economists who disagree.)

In cases in which the movement from Sr to Sd has been “negotiated,” general meaning-making along dominant-hegemonic lines is supplemented by “particular or situated logics.” One can read the news and find it sensible overall but not applicable to one’s own situation (e.g., someone earning the minimum wage might accept arguments in the media against a general raise but at the same time believe they do not justify her own boss’s refusal to pay more). In this situation, the telephone game hides the matter of interest when it shows the passage of a whispered text altered as it moves through a chain; different, conflicted understandings in life, motivated by conflicting interests, become misunderstandings in the game, providing examples of what elites might consider a failure of communication.

For Hall, oppositional readings see the Sr in terms hostile to the dominant code, and so understand the sign in terms of a Sd that objects to the dominant project with which it is associated (e.g., taking an argument against the minimum wage as a defense of wealth and an assault on the poor). Listeners in the telephone game can drop out in protest against a whisper just heard, breaking the chain. Yet dropping out from semiosis deemed offensive or even from its excess presence is infrequently an option in life. Future research might well explore how these processes have changed over media, space, and time since Saussure first articulated them nearly a century ago and extend the study of signification to the new experience of unending signs on parade.

Louis Althusser (1971) argued that whenever we make sense of our contemporary world according to dominant codes, our very construction as subjects of that world occurs yet again. For him, ideology was not an organized body of ideas but the way the world is “lived” in meaningful terms (Althusser 1971, 217). Yet the sense that, yes, this is the world, is not a recognition of reality – here Althusser followed Jacques Lacan – but a “misrecognition” (1971, 219) that forgets that signs are always maps, always representational, and never territories themselves (→ Realism in Film and Photography).

Ideology, then, thrives in the space between Sr and Sd. It does its work most effectively for dominant codes when it goes unseen, as if the Sd could be reached without going through the Sr, as if even for those who know they are looking at an ad, in some realm there could be a Marlboro Man, just as there could be a natural and obvious masculinity, thriving in a Marlboro Country that resonates as a familiar if fictional space. Yet Marlboro Man, the sign, might also be read in opposition, as an image using models hired to profit their employers by making smoking attractive, two of them smokers, both of whom lung cancer would kill.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Branding ▶ Caricature ▶ Code ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Discourse ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ Iconography ▶ Linguistics ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Effects ▶ News as Discourse ▶ Persuasion ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Structuralism ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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## Sign Systems

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Sign systems mediate the interactions between agents and their worlds. In Peirce’s (1992, 1998) terms, an agent is a first. The principle of “firstness” refers to the property of existing in the world independently of other entities. Firstness entails relative autonomy: a first always encounters and interacts with something else that enables its autonomy to be achieved. This is what Peirce defined as “secondness.” A first is, in reality, always defined in terms of its interactions with a second. Finally, the interaction between a first and a second is always mediated by a system of relations that makes possible the encounter between a first and a second. This is “thirdness.” Thirdness refers to some principle of systematicity and organization in terms of which encounters between first and seconds are seen as not random but able to be interpreted. Thirdness provides the resources and the principles of organization whereby the interaction between a first and a second can be successfully coordinated and appropriately interpreted.

### SAUSSUREAN PREMISES

A sign system has typically been conceptualized as a system of correlations of forms with meanings that exist in ordered hierarchies of relations. A sign system in this view makes possible the signs that people create in particular circumstances (→ Sign). Sign systems thus conceived have been conceptualized as networks of terms defined *relationally*. The terms are defined negatively by their position within the overall system of relations, rather than by something positive that is intrinsic to them. In other words, a sign system is a network of semiotically salient differences that potentially make a difference for the members of a given culture (→ Semiotics). The early twentieth-century prototype for this way of conceptualizing sign systems was Saussure's (1993) semiological theory of the language system (*la langue*) as a system of potential signs (→ Linguistics).

For Saussure, linguistic value is founded on two essential principles. First, the starting point is the totality of the language system and the relations of coexistence between the terms that constitute the system at a given moment in time (→ Code; Systems Theory). Second, the link between the two orders of linguistic facts – phonic and conceptual terms – is relational and arbitrary. It is therefore relative rather than absolute; value is not based on extra-linguistic physical things (Saussure 1993, 329). Value is based purely on the relations between the terms in the language system (→ Structuralism). Linguistic values are therefore arbitrary in this sense (Saussure 1993, 330).

*La langue* is a normative semiological institution in the sense that its values constrain and regiment the linguistic behavior of individuals. Sign systems therefore entail the typification of the means – the resources – and the situations – the conditions – for creating meanings. Sign systems are based on general categories that can be applied to many different individual cases. If we had to invent a new category for each new case we encountered, our finite brains would not be able to handle it and we would in all likelihood go crazy. The intensional definition of a given class of objects is the least general predication that applies to them all, according to Ryle's (1963) notion of categories.

### SIGN SYSTEMS ARE CONVENTIONALIZED RESOURCES

Take the noun *governor* in the nominal group *the late former Republican governor of Minnesota*. The noun *governor* specifies (symbolizes) a general category – a semantic class of Thing – that can be applied to many different individual cases (→ Symbolism). In Ryle's terms, the noun *governor* is the general predication that applies to a large number of individual cases as their intensional definition. However, the individual, Elmer Andersen, referred to by Al Gore in his book *The Assault on Reason* (2007, 113) by the nominal group in question does not necessitate the making of an entirely new category of Thing to refer to him. Instead, the systemic resources of the nominal group (i.e., deixis: *the*; qualification: *late, former*; classification: *Republican*; post-qualification: *of Minnesota*) combine and interact with the noun in this nominal group to produce a specific referent without Al Gore having to invent an entirely new nominal category. Thus, the noun *governor* is a type category of Thing that can be multiplied and instantiated in different times and places by different persons.

Similarly, the expressions *Can I help you?* and *Are you being served?* are conventionalized resources – typifications – that can be abstracted from many different occasions and seen as typical strategies notwithstanding their different wordings for initiating a sales transaction between customer and client. Now, sales transactions are themselves conventionalized forms of social interaction. In this case, we also see that the conventionalized mode of interaction (discourse genre, activity-type) qua institutionalized convention gives rise to typified forms of interaction, as exemplified in the initiating moves and their functions mentioned above, together with conventionalized speaking and action roles for participants (Halliday 1978, 63; → Language and Social Interaction; Discourse).

Furthermore, the presentation of the self as the bearer of a particular institutionalized role (e.g., salesperson) also puts into play a whole range of skills and competences and bodily and sartorial displays and performances that have the potential to elicit normative judgments as to the appropriateness or the capacity of the individual as a skilful or otherwise bearer of the designated role (Goffman 1971). Similarly, only certain kinds of physical settings will typically be recognized as being of the appropriate or right kind for invoking the conventional institution of sales transaction (→ Social Interaction Structure). Sign systems therefore have the power to evoke context-sensitive social and cultural conventions and norms in ways that are also sensitive to the history of prior such evocations. Sign systems are intertextually sensitive to the possible equivalence classes of these prior evocations and how they might contribute to the construction and understanding of the current situation and its anticipated future development.

The values of a sign system stabilize and regiment the range of possible meanings – the meaning potential – by digitalizing the topological-continuous variation of the underlying biophysical substrate (e.g., the articulatory space of the vocal tract) as discrete digital categories in the phonology and lexico-grammar of natural spoken languages. This process enables persons in interaction to direct the attention of others to specific objects and to coordinate this attention with others even when the object in question is not available to online perception. In other words, linguistic and other signs are not merely physical entities or processes to which structure or meaning is then added by psychological processes of inference and so on (Reed 1996, 17). Instead, signs bring about changes in the organism's relation to its internal and external environment in ways that enable it to organize and to anticipate possible future responses to the environment.

### **SIGN SYSTEMS, BIO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS, AND THE EMERGENCE OF COMPLEXITY**

Sign systems do not have an autonomous social-cultural-semiotic dynamics that is separate from the physical-material-biological processes that embody them (see also Lemke 2000; Thibault 2004). Sign systems are totally dependent on and are always tied to the physical-chemical-biological systems of material processes in which the former are embedded as part of a larger-scale ecosocial semiotic system (Salthe 1993, 45–46; Lemke 2000; Thibault 2004). Therefore, semiotic practices and the sign systems embedded in them are always both semiotic and material processes: on the one hand, they constrain and enable acts of meaning and their associated evaluative stances; on the other, they participate in and entrain physical-material couplings, both somatic and extra-somatic.



Sign systems are often talked about in reductionist terms as being composed of bottom-up assemblages of small-scale elements that are seen as basic, rather like the bricks that are assembled to build a house. In much of twentieth-century linguistics, for example, small elements such as phonemes and morphemes were thus seen as the compositional building blocks of larger structures such as sentences. Consequently, all levels in the hierarchy were viewed in essentially the same way – building blocks all the way up (and down). Sentences were no more than compositions of lower-level elements. In this view, there were no true higher-order levels and attractors (Salthe 1993, 36). In this conception there is no way of explaining how novel properties and processes emerge from the interactions between components on different levels because all levels are treated in the same way.

A further tool for rethinking sign systems, then, is the *three-level scalar hierarchy* view developed by Salthe (1993, 36–52). The three-level scalar hierarchy provides a way of breaking a complex phenomenon down into a triad of constituent levels of organization that enable us to contextualize the relations between levels. Thus, lower levels can be understood in terms of the way they are contextually integrated to higher levels in the hierarchy. Higher levels have emergent properties and processes that are not reducible to lower ones. Thus, meanings qua attractors in a possibility space – a sign system – manipulate and entrain lower-scalar physical-biological processes to their own ends so that new configurations and arrangements of lower-scalar processes and entities arise. These new arrangements are more highly structured and more highly specified with respect to the lower-scalar processes such that the higher-scalar system is able to interpret lower-scalar processes. The reverse is not, generally speaking, the case because lower-scalar entities are not sufficiently structured to do so. Sign systems are therefore global meta-semiotic phenomena that range over and constrain local phenomena.

In terms of three-level hierarchy thinking, newly emergent levels of organization do not come from nowhere. Instead, they emerge between previously existing levels. Semiosis is distributed in a number of different, yet closely related, ways across a hierarchy of interconnected levels, as follows: (1) semiotic-informational (systemic) constraints distributed over higher-scalar levels of an ecosocial semiotic system in historical-cultural time (L+1); (2) semiosis/sign-making distributed between brain, body, and world in the real-time inter-individual activity of social agents (L); (3) micro-temporal neuro-anatomical processes and capacities of human brain and body (L–1).

The interaction between an interpreting agent and a sign is an encounter between a first and a second. This is the intermediate (focal) level (L) in the proposed hierarchy. The higher level (L+1) is where the sign system qua thirdness is located. The level constitutes the higher-scalar environment where sign systems persist on longer time scales than individuals. Sign systems are not housed in individual brains, but are distributed across an entire cultural system. Level L–1 refers to the affordances – the biological and other enabling conditions – that make semiosis possible. Level L, on the other hand, is the level of the intentional social agents-in-activity-in-their-world. Agents are not simply constrained by top-down causation emanating from level L+1; they also have the capacity to modulate and therefore affect the flow of the activities they participate in across diverse space-time scales through their sign-making activity. Level L+1 consists of semiotic constraints that mediate and make possible the semiotic–material couplings and

interpretations that are created in the activity of agents on level L. Level L+1 provides the system of interpretation and therefore the categories and forms of action in and through which agents make sense of and orient to their worlds.

Our interactions with others often involve a great deal of uncertainty that cannot be explained in terms of systemic regularities alone, seen as rule-bound behavioral templates to which participants conform. Sign systems qua conventional resources are not, then, reducible to rule-following templates founded on predictable behavioral regularities and/or inventories of form–meaning correlations. Instead, they are meta-semiotic and cognitive resources that enable participants to find solutions in real time to problems of understanding, interpretation, and social coordination that may be completely unique, one-off occurrences. Sign systems are resources for both participating in and monitoring the complex meaning-making trajectories that we co-construct with others across diverse time and place scales in the process of operating on and transforming the social situations and events we create along these trajectories.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Discourse ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistics  
▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Social Interaction Structure ▶ Structuralism ▶ Structuralism  
in Visual Communication ▶ Symbolism ▶ Systems Theory

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# Simulation

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Simulations are imitations of some “real-world” phenomena, especially the states of affairs of (real) natural or social systems or the processes of the systems (processes are defined as temporal sequences of system states). Simulations are used in numerous domains: physics, chemistry, biology, economy, social sciences, and computer and engineering sciences. The general purpose of simulations is to attain insight into the functioning of these systems and to predict their future states.

The main meaning of simulation in the social sciences, communication, cognitive science, and artificial intelligence is computer simulation (CS). Simulations in this sense should always be defined with reference to a “real-world” phenomenon and to an abstract (theoretical) model. If a researcher is interested in a phenomenon (the target) he or she often tries to create an abstract model that is less complex than the target itself. In the social sciences the target usually is a dynamic entity. It changes over time and reacts to its environment. Therefore the model must capture the dynamics of the target. The model can be specified, for example, via a logical calculus or a mathematical equation connecting relevant variables. The development of the model over time can then be explored by the inspection of the development of its relevant variables. In the case of complex models, especially with nonlinear relations (e.g., nonlinear ordinary differential equations) and/or many interacting subsystems this can only be done with the aid of CS.

Simulation now means running the specified model forward through time and inspecting future states of the relevant variables. CS can be helpful if analytical methods are also available. Visualizing simulation results on a computer screen often increases the understanding of a system’s dynamics compared to complicated formulae and their results written down on paper. To summarize: scientific simulations are experiments with an abstract model to gain a better understanding about the dynamic system selectively represented in this model. Famous early examples of simulations are the world models of the Club of Rome based on the method of system dynamics developed by Forrester (1971).

Simulations as scientific tools serve *various functions* (Hartmann 1996). As a technique they allow the investigation of the dynamics of systems. But simulations can also serve an important function as a heuristic tool in the process of the formulation of → hypotheses

and new theories. The analysis of huge sets of runs with systematically or randomly varied parameters may yield unexpected regularities that would not have been inferred from the underlying abstract model. Furthermore, simulations can substitute and extend experiments. If the performance of an experiment is impossible because the real system is withdrawn from human access (e.g., in astronomy), or because an experiment would cause unreasonable modifications of the system or is morally not permissible (e.g., children's long-term viewing of aggressive contents), the only possibility of testing abstract models remains in simulations (→ Experiment, Laboratory; Research Ethics). Simulations are extensions of experiments, because not only can the effect of a specific experimental design be measured but the entire universe of possible condition variations can be inspected. Therefore simulations can be used as generators of ideas for condition variations in laboratory experiments.

One special form is *simulations with multi-agent systems* (MAS), which are used to model the dynamic behavior of populations (Wooldridge 2002). An MAS is a system running on a computer and composed of several agents and their environment. The definition of agents is still controversial, but in MAS an agent mostly represents a life-like artificial unit. Agent-based simulations are suited to models and explain the emergence of higher-level phenomena caused by the interaction of single agents. The interaction of many agents on a microscopic level will sometimes result in stable systems on a macroscopic level (e.g., the emergence of communication systems) that show novel and sometimes unexpected properties. Compared to traditional simulation techniques, MAS have the advantage that global behaviors as well as each agent's individual behavior, including its causes and consequences, can be observed. Examples of social phenomena simulated with MAS are the emergence of social intelligence, the emergence of intergroup cooperation, the spreading of gossip, and the evolution of communication, to mention just a few.

One special case of simulations is *interactive or human-in-the-loop simulations* (HILS). These differ from other simulations in that human operators or users are included in the simulation process. Examples of HILS are medical simulators, flight simulators, and driving simulators. In most cases the goal of HILS is not simply the prediction of future states of dynamic systems. HILS are often used as experimental settings in human-computer interaction research to measure user behavior patterns (→ Experimental Design). The results of the simulations can be used to improve the usability of interfaces (of cars or airplanes). Another function of HILS is the training of personnel. If it is too dangerous or too expensive to permit trainees the use of real equipment, learning in a safe virtual environment is a preferable alternative. To test the fitness of pilots, flight simulators can be used to simulate extremely hazardous scenarios.

Almost all HILS are realized not only as training devices but also as video and computer games (→ Video Games). *City simulators* are tools for urban planners to gain a better understanding of the evolution of a city, but they are also the game engines for computer games. Simulations form a category of their own in the domain of video games. This category can be further subdivided into *sensorimotor simulations* (e.g., flight and racing simulations) and simulations that can be used by the player to organize a dynamic system like a family, an organization, an economic system, or the evolution of a species. *Massively multi-player online role-playing games* (MMORPGs) are very complex simulations of alternative virtual worlds that have no counterparts in the domain of scientific

simulations. Virtual environments like *Second Life* are also simulations with comparable complexity, but they are not games because they do not have a pre-defined goal that the user is expected to reach.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognitive Science ► Experiment, Laboratory ► Experimental Design  
► Hypothesis ► Playing ► Research Ethics ► Video Games

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## **Singapore: Media System**

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Singapore, an island nation at the southern tip of mainland Southeast Asia, has a population of about 3.6 million made up of 77 percent Chinese, 14 percent Malays, 7 percent Indians, and 2 percent classified as others. A former British colony, the republic adopts the Westminster parliamentary system, and the government has been controlled by the People's Action Party (PAP) since 1959. The three corporations that provide for the various media in the country are largely owned by the government's investment arm, Temasek.

Singapore Press Holdings (SPH) dominates the *print media*, publishing 14 → newspapers and 80 periodicals. It also operates two → radio stations and → Internet portal services. SPH offers management and ordinary shares, with one management share equaling 200 ordinary shares. Transference of management shares must be approved by the government. MediaCorp dominates the broadcast media, operating five terrestrial TV channels, an outdoor digital TV channel, a TV production company, the channel News Asia providing round-the-clock satellite TV news (→ Television), and 14 radio stations. It also publishes a free-circulation newspaper and 13 periodicals. At the end of 2004, MediaCorp and SPH merged to become MediaCorp TV Holdings, which is now owned 80 percent by the former and 20 percent by the latter. The third corporation, StarHub, is the sole provider of cable TV and a major Internet service provider. Temasek wholly owns MediaCorp and is a major shareholder of SPH and StarHub.

Singapore media come in *four languages*: English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil. Media in English and Mandarin command the largest readership or viewership. Newspapers like the English-language *Straits Times* and Mandarin *Lianhe ZaoBao* are known for their

comprehensive coverage of foreign news. US TV programs are highly popular, but Singapore TV has increasingly aired programs produced domestically, with some programs in Mandarin (especially drama serials) and English (especially situation comedies) exported to countries like Malaysia. Singapore is quick to adopt the latest media technology. Digital TV began in 2001 in the form of mobile TV on buses. Internet penetration was at 68 percent of the population in 2005.

Besides the Official Secrets Act, the Sedition Act, the Defamation Act, and the Internal Security Act, which regulate the media, there are: the Undesirable Publications Act, which prevents importation, distribution, or reproduction of undesirable media material of all kinds; the Newspaper and Printing Presses Act, which requires *licensing of all print media*; the Films Act, which regulates possession, importation, production, distribution, and exhibition of films; the Broadcasting Act, which regulates ownership and operation of radio and TV broadcasting; and the Broadcasting Class License Act, which requires licensing of Internet service providers and Internet content providers. The laws empower the government to define topics as out of bounds, such as those that promote communism, contravene moral norms (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content), show excessive or gratuitous sex and violence (→ Pornography, Media Law on), glamorize drug use, or incite racial, religious, or linguistic animosities among the three major ethnic groups in the country. Critics argue the PAP also uses the laws to restrict political opposition and criticism. The government is known to defend itself vigorously against what it considers as personal attacks on public officials. Journalists are believed to exercise a good deal of self-censorship when covering such issues as alleged governmental corruption, nepotism, or a compliant judiciary. The government considers criticisms of domestic politics in the media and cyberspace as out of bounds because they are made outside of the formal political system. Commentators are often exhorted to declare their political affiliations or enter politics. The problem for critics is that the views of the political opposition are marginalized or ignored by the media.

Since the 1980s, the government has planned to make Singapore into a regional media hub. It has attracted global corporations like *HBO*, *MTV*, and *Disney Channel* to set up regional headquarters. But *foreign journalists* reporting on Singapore have to register with the government, submit a security deposit of US\$200,000, and name a person in the country to accept legal service (→ Licensing of Journalists). The government may fine and/or curtail the circulation of foreign publications deemed to have interfered in domestic politics. Audiovisual entertainment programs are also monitored through a citizen advisory panel using guidelines established by the government. The PAP government defends its restriction of media in the name of securing economic development for resource-poor Singapore and maintaining peace and stability among the three ethnic groups in the country. This has led to the view of Singapore media as operating under the developmental media model (→ Development Communication: Asia).

Others see Singapore media as operating under the *authoritarian model*: the strict media restriction is made largely to serve PAP interests and power. When French-based Reporters Without Borders ranked the country's press freedom in 2005 at 144th position out of 166 countries, the government rejected the measurement, claiming it was biased toward the western model of press criticism and opposition, whereas Singapore press followed a different model of contributing to nation-building (→ Political Communication Systems).

Another view of Singapore's media is that of "*controlled commodification*." It argues that the government has the determining influence over the media through its managerial role for capital in order to secure capitalist economic development for the country. Although Singapore is known for its free trade policy, the government restricts the flow of media commodities like films in the name of securing the country's political and cultural sovereignty against foreign, especially western, political or cultural encroachment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Development Communication: Asia ▶ Internet ▶ Licensing of Journalists ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Newspaper ▶ Political Communication Systems ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## **Situation Comedies**

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The situation comedy, or sitcom, has been a staple of entertainment media for decades. More than 900 have been on the air since 1947. Starting on → radio, it quickly became popular with audiences. With the advent of → television in the late 1940s, sitcoms migrated to the small screen, and it is these sitcoms with which most people today around the world are familiar. Content and neo-Aristotelian analyses of from 1 to 100 episodes each of approximately 800 situation comedies has led to the following understanding of situation comedies and how they work (Taflinger 1996).

### **DEFINITION OF SITUATION COMEDIES**

A definition of situation comedy should look at each word of the name, starting with "situation." There is a continuation from episode to episode of *the same elements*: (1) a

regular group of characters who appear in all or almost all episodes and who maintain a continuing relationship to each other (e.g., husband and wife and perhaps children, siblings, co-workers, neighbors; (2) a group of settings used in all or almost all episodes in which most of the actions take place – for instance homes, workplaces, schools – and in which (3) the premise of the show is established (Taflinger 1996). For example, the situation could be parents teaching their children how to live and behave in the world, or how doctors and nurses cope with being in a war zone, or how a man's reach exceeds his grasp, or how friends try to get and succeed in relationships. The premise is the basis of every episode's story.

However, the above criteria appear to be the basis of other types of episodic fiction TV series, such as lawyer shows, cop shows, medical dramas, and Westerns (→ Drama in Media Content). Separating TV series from other dramatic art forms such as movies and plays, what distinguishes situation comedies from other types of TV shows is that dramas attempt to evoke emotion from their viewers: love, hate, pity, sympathy, excitement – drama aims at the heart. Sitcoms, on the other hand, use humor rather than emotion: they aim at the head rather than the heart. Thus, the second word in situation comedy: “comedy.”

### CRITERIA FOR HUMOR

Six criteria are required for comedy, for an event to elicit laughter from a person (Taflinger 1996). First, it must be *mechanical* (Bergson 1956). In this criterion, the laughable element consists of a mechanical inelasticity, just where one would expect adaptability and flexibility. It is humorous when a person acts in a manner that is inappropriate to a stimulus or situation, as in any slapstick comedy routine. It is funny when a chair is pulled out from under someone who is sitting down, because he or she does not adapt to the change in situation and continues to sit in a mechanical fashion. A character is funny because he or she mechanically reacts to events without thinking about how events have changed the situation.

Second, it must be *inherently human*, or with the capability of reminding us of humanity. Something is funny only insofar as it is or reminds the audience of humanity. This is clear when the participants in the joke are people, even cartoon people. However, the audience may also laugh at the antics of animals, such as chimpanzees or horses or bears, but only in direct proportion to the animal's capability of reminding the audience of something human. Thus, animals such as chimps and orangutans are often dressed in human clothing to heighten the reminder, and horses and mules can talk and think better than the people they are around. It becomes apparent when one examines comedy that it is based on incongruity: the unexpected with the expected, the unusual with the usual, the misfit in what has been established as a societal norm. For there to be incongruity there must be something to be incongruous to. Therefore, for a comedy to work there must be an established set of cultural, human, and societal norms, mores, idioms, idiosyncrasies, and terminologies against which incongruities may be found.

This leads to the next two criteria for humor. Third, there must be a *set of established societal or human norms* with which the observer is familiar; and fourth, the situation and its component parts (the actions performed and the dialogue spoken) must be



*inconsistent or unsuitable to the surrounding* or associations (i.e., the societal or human norms). These latter two criteria explain why some people do not get a joke: they do not know or understand the norms being violated in the joke. Think of a joke you share with your friends. You may only need to say a single word or a phrase, and you all break up laughing. However, others with you will look confused and not laugh. That is because they do not know the situation to which you are referring, which is a norm for you and your friends, but not for them. Thus, the intellectual element really comes to the fore: to get a joke, you must not only understand the situation, but understand how the situation is being violated. This requires mental processing, not just an emotional reaction. Thus, there is the fifth criterion: it must *appeal to the intellect* rather than the emotions.

Finally, there is criterion number six: it must be perceived by the observer as *harmless or painless to the participants*. The comic action is perceived by the audience as causing the participants no actual harm: their physical, mental, psychological, and/or emotional well-being may be stretched, distorted, or crushed, but they recover quickly and by the end of the performance they are once again in their original state. It is funny when someone slips on the ice and falls: people laugh; people expect the person to stand up and look embarrassed – until they realize that the person broke his leg. At that moment the event is no longer humorous. This also applies to ethnic, racial, or social group humor: those in that group find the joke insulting and thus harmful to their self-esteem and the way they wish others to perceive their group. They do not find it funny. A key word in this criterion is “perceived”: the attempt at humor does not have to actually be harmless, it just has to be perceived as harmless by the audience.

### SITUATION COMEDIES AND SOCIETY

When all these criteria have been met, people will usually laugh. If any one of the criteria is absent or violated, then the attempt at humor will fail. Situation comedies use the above criteria in telling their stories. The stories themselves are the same as would be found in dramas (police stories, doctor stories, detective stories, love stories), but the stories aim at people’s cognition, not emotions, and are incongruous to real life, not examples of it. Because of the third and fourth criteria, situation comedies, more than any other mediated communication, reflect the actual beliefs their audiences hold about what their society is and the way people within that society should be. Situation comedies, unlike other forms of communication, must be grounded in the society of their times and audience for that audience to understand the jokes. Therefore, if the rules of society change, the jokes do not work.

Dramatic stories (both dramas and comedies) are constructed following some basic rules: there is a universe in which the stories take place (e.g., unmarried friends looking for love, a war zone, an office); a problem arises in that universe; the characters do things to solve that problem, making the problem worse; and finally, they do the right thing and the problem is solved. Because of the way stories are constructed, there are *three basic types of situation comedies*: the action comedy, the character comedy, and the dramatic comedy (Taflinger 1996).

In an *action comedy*, the characters simply do things, they perform actions, until they finally do the right thing to solve the problem. The characters are often clever, but not too

bright, inventing schemes that they immediately try rather than thinking things through, weighing options, and developing a good plan. The humor comes from watching the characters flounder around until, often apparently by accident, they solve the problem. This type of sitcom is the most common, since it is the easiest to do. More than 86 percent of American sitcoms have been action comedies (Taflinger 1996).

The *character comedy* requires that a character undergo a fundamental change in who he or she is to solve the problem. The problem arises because a character is doing or believing something wrong: that looks are everything, that social status is more important than being true to oneself, that selfishness is the way to behave. In the early part of the story the character seems to be right, but then the negative consequences start to impact the character's life, and they come to the realization that they were wrong and need to change what they believe. This change solves the problem. The character sitcom is rare because it is more difficult to do than just have the characters perform actions to solve the problem, and it requires a greater effort on the part of and concentration by the audience to understand the characters' personal problems and solutions. The character comedy is much rarer than the action comedy, about 13 percent of American sitcoms.

The third and rarest type of sitcom (about 1 percent of the total) is the *dramatic comedy*, or "dramedy." In this type of sitcom, the solution to the problem presented in the show is often unsatisfactory or poor, leaving it up to the audience to think about the problem and decide how they would solve it. For example, two characters may hold diametrically opposed extreme points of view. They present their extreme views on the issue in the episode, but never arrive at a good compromise, consensus, or solution. This leaves it up to the audience to arrive at their own conclusion, a middle ground between the two extremes. Another type of dramedy puts the characters in a difficult, almost impossible, situation and has them try to figure out how to cope with that situation. For example, doctors and nurses, who are dedicated to the saving of life, are living and working in a war zone, which is dedicated to the taking of life. The characters' physical, ethical, moral, and psychological battles are played out, and the audience is left to consider how they would solve the dilemmas and live in the situation presented.

From its inception as a form of episodic entertainment, the situation comedy has been a major element of mass media. Reflecting the mores of its audience and the times in which they live, and poking fun at them, it has provided amusement, and occasionally edification, for its viewers. Although it has had its ups and downs, and even had its obituary published more than once, it has always been and will continue to be a favorite with audiences looking for a laugh.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Drama in Media Content ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Radio ▶ Television

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## Sleeper Effect

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“Sleeper effect” describes a phenomenon in which messages from sources with originally low credibility cause opinion change over time. The credibility of a source as perceived by receivers of its message constitutes a central issue in the theory of persuasion, in particular with regard to its impact on attitude change (→ Attitudes). A highly credible communicator (e.g., by virtue of trust, expertise, or reliability) commands an increased probability that the receivers of a message will accept and absorb the persuasive intent of the communication (→ Persuasion). However, the effect of credibility varies during the course of persuasive effects over time. In general, the impact of a persuasive message peaks immediately after exposition and declines over time (→ Credibility Effects). The sleeper effect describes a contrary phenomenon for messages from low-credibility sources. Here, the immediate effect is overruled by the long-term effect: The sleeper effect is thus defined as the absolute increase in attitude change over time for receivers of a low-credibility message (Hovland et al. 1949).

Increase in agreement for low-credibility communication in the long term might be due to the diminishing of initial skepticism over time. Generally, arguments and other content supporting a communicator’s conclusion are subject to being forgotten over time. For a credible communicator, receivers of a message will show a fairly high agreement immediately after exposure, but this will gradually decline over time. For a non-credible communicator, on the other hand, skepticism or antipathy will lead the receivers of the message to show little initial agreement with the communicator’s position. Over time, however, the effects of low-credibility communication take a different course: “If then the discounted source is forgotten more quickly than the content (or ‘dissociated’ from the content) agreement with the recommended opinion should increase with time” (Hovland et al. 1953, 254; → Hovland, Carl I.).

Hovland & Weiss (1951) tested the sleeper effect in an experiment by using identical communications for four different topics. These stimuli were then presented to half each of the test persons by sources considered trustworthy and untrustworthy respectively. Opinion questionnaires were presented to the subjects before the communication, immediately after the communication, and four weeks afterward (→ Experimental Design). The results show that initially the communications presented by the untrustworthy

source were “discounted” by the audience and had less effect on opinion than those presented by the trustworthy sources. With the passing of time, the initial differences attributable to the source disappeared. After a period of four weeks, the amount of opinion change retained from the two sources was approximately equal: “Thus there was a forgetting effect when the presentation was by a trustworthy communicator and a sleeper effect when the communication was presented by a negative communicator” (Hovland et al. 1953, 255; → Media Effects Duration). Hovland and Weiss’s results indicate that there is a decreased tendency over time to reject the communication by an untrustworthy communicator. “This may or may not require that the individual must be less likely with the passage of time to *associate spontaneously* the content with the source” (Hovland & Weiss 1953, 648). Some evidence for this was provided by Kelman and Hovland (1953), who reinstated the source at the time of the delayed opinion test by repeating the introduction of the communicator before passing out the questionnaire. As soon as the source was reactivated in the recipient’s memory by the playback, the original effects were reproduced: the highly credible source yielded a greater impact on attitude change than the less credible source (→ Order of Presentation).

Even today, the sleeper effect remains *controversial*. From a methodological point of view, the experimental design has been criticized (Capon & Hulbert 1973; Gillig & Greenwald 1974), since the original studies included no control groups, which – given that measurement took place at three points in time – would have been necessary to control for a measurement contamination. Still, Praktkanis et al. (1988) found supporting evidence for the sleeper effect given the following presuppositions: subjects have to (1) be aware of the central arguments of a message, (2) receive the disrating stimulus (i.e., the low trustworthiness of a source of opposing arguments) *after* the reception of the message, and (3) evaluate the credibility of the communicator after having received the disrating stimulus. Such a procedure facilitates the message and the disrating stimulus being central to the effects of the communication. Here, the sleeper effect occurs only if the effect of the disrating stimulus fades sooner than the effect of the message. This interpretation of a different course of effects depending on source credibility opposes the dissociation hypothesis elaborated in the original and in subsequent studies. A further explanation is provided on the basis of the *effect of forgetting* (forgetting model). Here, immediately after reception, the message of a trustworthy source is assumed to be more readily remembered than that of an untrustworthy source. Over time, as both kinds of messages are forgotten, the difference in the persuasive effects of messages presented by high- and low-credibility sources diminishes. Differences in the effects of high- and low-credibility sources can be observed only temporarily.

Given the findings of the studies discussed, the sleeper effect has to be summarized as a *relative effect*. Over time, the advantage of high-credibility sources diminishes. The sleeper effect suggests only a temporary impact of credibility. Highly credible message sources do indeed create additional attitude change, but this is leveled out over time as either (1) dissociation or (2) forgetting occur. In the long term, a convergence of the effects of the low- and the high-credibility sources is found.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Credibility Effects ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Hovland, Carl I. ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Order of Presentation ▶ Persuasion

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## **Small Talk and Gossip**

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The need for the companionship of others is one of the fundamental features of human social nature, and talk is a primary form of human communion. “Small” talk is a type of talk through which we mark co-presence, e.g., the mutual recognition provided by threat-reducing talk to strangers in a lift or neighboring airline seat. This need to commune through speech is also enacted across distances (intimacy-confirming phone calls, texts, emails to significant others, friends, family). Within small talk, what is talked *about* may matter less to participants than the interpersonal significance of talking at all – in a range of social contexts – from intimate, playful encounters (e.g. “pillow” talk) to formal, hierarchical gatherings (e.g., in breaking the ice at the beginning of a job interview).

Hence the recent emphasis within research on social interaction on the *social functioning* of small talk (Coupland 2000). Small talk constructs social cohesion, reduces the inherent threat value of social encounters, and helps to structure social interaction. As humans, we have significant emotional investment in the impressions others gain of us (Goffman 1972), so our social competence, as displayed through our use of small talk, is crucial to our well-being (→ Impression Management). Some of the more formulaic

aspects of small talk, as often used in service encounters, e.g., enable servers and customers to define a generally positive relationship while they talk (Coulmas 1981). Such transitional moments of communication are often marked by conventional or ritualized language (“phatic communion”), with participants sharing predictable, “safe” topics, such as enquiries about well-being, comments about the local environment, “purposeless expressions of preference or aversions, accounts of irrelevant happenings, comments on what is perfectly obvious” (Malinowski 1923, 150). This is the type of talk that affords connection to colleagues while they gather for formal meetings at work, for example (→ Rituals in Popular Communication).

Small talk may thus function as avoidance of, retreat from, or delay of talk which is more serious, challenging, or power-ridden. In sociable small talk, people pay (sometimes sustained) topical attention to the safe, the superficial, with attention to detail and displayed preference for agreement, verbal play, and humor, as in “banter.” Eggins and Slade (1997) claim that the fact that “nothing happens” is the central paradox of “casual conversation.” Of course, *all* talk carries social and affective meaning, along with its representational or task-focused aspects. And participants in talk are likely to orient to relational or “face” issues, alongside more instrumental or task-related issues, in a more or less sustained and strategic way, across a wide range of social contexts and activity types. In medical consultations, e.g., conventionalized formulae such as “nice to see you,” comments about the weather, even an opening “how are you?” may be oriented to as polite, humanizing ways of broaching the medical business. And when small talk is used by the paramedic to stop the casualty drifting into unconsciousness, it is being used to serve a very serious, task-related function.

But small talk is a broad and differentiated generic category, which can also incorporate potentially *unsafe* and threatening themes, as in *gossip*. In many definitions, gossip is linked with newsworthy, critical talk about others (usually absent third parties), and (traditionally, though not more recently) with “women’s” language. Unlike small talk more generally, but like rumor, gossip is seen as a form of talk that is essentially information giving. Here, what is talked about does “matter.” Gossip is often but not exclusively realized through storytelling, with much of the disclosed information being confidential or personal. The ambivalent nature of gossip is that it may create nervousness and anxiousness, but also fascination (cf. the relish of being filled in with all the “latest gossip”): we may be doubtful about how honorable it is to talk behind someone’s back, but enjoy it nevertheless.

The related notion of *backstage talk* captures the privacy or secrecy associated with gossip, since, crucially, gossip involves pejorative evaluation of social behaviors, appearance, or other aspects of the protagonist/s. Due to the face-threatening themes, participants in gossip talk are likely to monitor their interlocutors carefully – and to include only “safe” recipients, or those who signal willingness to partake; friends, family members, close colleagues, and intimates. In gossip, people tell stories or anecdotes about others and thus attend to what people *should* or *should not* be doing (Eggins and Slade 1997). Thus, gossip is said to function as a sanctioning mechanism, by a kind of “moral policing,” whereby conversationalists can construct and assert collective values and thus establish normative boundaries. This allows participants to negotiate aspects of group membership, and the inclusion and exclusion of others (Goodwin 1990).

SEE ALSO: ► Genre ► Goals, Social Aspects of ► Identities and Discourse ► Impression Management ► Language and Social Interaction ► Politeness Theory ► Rituals in Popular Communication

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## **Soap Operas**

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Initially named after the soap manufacturers who advertised in the program breaks, the soap opera has long attracted among the largest audiences of any broadcast genres while being also widely reviled for its supposedly cheap, trashy, and repetitive content. The soap opera audience has, in consequence, received similar criticism, for being mindless, stereotyped, and vulnerable to mass persuasion. Since the 1970s, however, academic commentary, led significantly by the feminist revalorization of “women’s genres,” though drawing also on the rise in active audience studies (or audience reception studies) during the 1980s and 1990s, has resulted in a rethinking of the genre (→ Audiences, Female; Genre; Women’s Media Genres). This has permitted recognition of the genre’s narrative complexity and depth of characterization, its treatment of the moral dilemmas of daily life, and the many satisfactions that audiences obtain from the soap opera.

The soap opera began on radio during the 1930s in the USA, but quickly became a staple of daytime television broadcasting, filling the schedules between midday and early prime time, and providing continuity and predictability for audiences and broadcasters alike. The daytime serials, as they were also known, differed from series insofar as they were, it seemed, never-ending, with episodes running daily or at least several times per week over years, even decades, building up loyal audiences of fans for whom watching the soap opera became a habitual part of their own lives.

As a genre, the soap opera is clearly distinguished from sitcoms, series, and other forms of drama by its narrative structure, comprised of multiple intersecting plots and sub-plots, each stretching out the “endless middle” of the narrative, with cliff-hanger endings to episodes rather than narrative closure. It is also distinctive for lacking a focal hero or heroine but rather encompassing a sizable set of interrelated characters (connected by familial relationships, friendship networks or, most commonly, a shared neighborhood and/or workplace), all roughly equivalent in prominence, whose activities center on the private and emotional – love, sex, jealousy, betrayal, reconciliation. The settings are typically interiors, often simply staged as dyadic shot–reaction-shot sequences, with storylines concerning secrets overheard, love triangles, lost and found relatives, unwanted pregnancies, babies with contested parentage, romantic rivalry, and many more. These permit not only strong emotions but also polarized moral dilemmas, in which multiple characters become entangled.

Different cultures provide different inflections to these themes. Liebes and Katz (1993) identify a series of primordial themes in both prime-time and daytime versions of the genre, centering on inheritance, lineage, paternity, and family. In the north European tradition, the mundane rather than glamorized settings of ordinary life are prioritized in the early evening shows, portraying the frustrations and hardship of working-class life and the strong bonds of social support among women, following in the social realist tradition established by public service broadcasting (O’Donnell 1999). The Latin American telenovela, sometimes argued to be a distinct but parallel genre since it consists of long but finite series rather than serials, tells a rags-to-riches story of social mobility and romance for its heroine (see Rogers & Antona 1985). As Allen (1995) shows, the genre has been very successfully exported often by one country to its geographic, linguistic, or cultural neighbors, being then amended or appropriated by different cultures around the world. The common themes of romantic and familial relationships, the trials and dilemmas of the private sphere, and the complex social relations that anchor people in their community remain prominent in all forms of the genre.

Partly because of its daytime scheduling and explicit address to the housewife, and partly because of its focus on personal relationships, the soap opera has been dubbed a “women’s genre”; undoubtedly, it attracts more women viewers, though ratings often reveal a sizable proportion of the audience to be male. The genre has attracted a body of content analysis concerned with the messages that may influence women (e.g., gender stereotyping, promiscuity, pro- or anti-marriage views, support or not for women’s employment; Frenzt 1992) and, more recently, a body of feminist audience research concerned to understand the nature of the genre’s appeal for women (Geraghty 1990; → Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media).



Reception studies have established that the mode of audience response to the soap opera is less identification with specific characters than parasocial interaction (an imaginative engagement with the community of characters as a whole; → Parasocial Interactions and Relationships) and emotional → realism (as the structure of feeling portrayed, if not the exact scenarios, rings true for many in the audience). Audiences enjoy being critical viewers of the soap opera: far from accepting the messages presented, viewers argue back with the characters, critique the plots, identify inconsistencies or continuity errors (often drawing on knowledge of the soap opera going back for years), and discuss with each other during and after viewing the rights and wrongs of the storylines portrayed. In terms of mass communication theory, research on the soap opera audience has provided convincing evidence for the interpretive activity of viewers in co-constructing the meaning of the text, with evidence of diversity in reception that draws on the cultural resources viewers derive from their life-worlds (→ Interactivity in Reception; Semiotics).

With the growing success of talk shows and reality shows (→ Reality TV) through the 1990s and thereafter, the soap opera has lost some of its prominence as popular culture, and broadcasters have sought to diversify the genre itself in search of audience ratings – producing soap operas for younger audiences and spin-off mini-series, publicizing major cliff-hangers, developing linked websites, and so forth. They have also sought ever-more controversial storylines as competition among channels has grown, risking the emotional realism of the genre and the loyalty of longstanding audiences, but also generating, at times, national debates over pressing moral issues, for example through their treatment of such issues as abortion, incest, homosexuality, and crime.

Notwithstanding the economic drivers behind such storylines, or the melodramatic nature of their treatment, the hallmark of the soap opera continues to be the focus on the emotional responses of characters over time, the portrayal of diverse responses across the community of characters, and the tendency of all apparent resolutions to unravel, opening up new permutations of character and plot for future episodes. The openness of the genre to alternative readings has, in the age of online and interactive media, resulted in ever-greater involvement from its keenest fans, using online forums to rewrite episodes, provide inventive back-stories or fantasy projections, and chat or argue with each other in new communities of fandom, thus extending and perhaps deepening the engagement of viewers in the genre.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception  
▶ Genre ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships  
▶ Realism ▶ Reality TV ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Television as Popular Culture ▶ Women's Media Genres

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## **Social Behavior, Media Effects on**

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Surveillance, correlation, and transmission functions are basic to the role of mass media in society. *Surveillance* means locating and disseminating → news and → information. *Correlation* deals with interpreting and editorializing about this information (→ Commentary). *Transmission* is the socialization of norms, → attitudes, and values between groups and generations (Lasswell 1948). Socialization research, for example, has compared the effectiveness of different agencies of socialization, such as the family, peers, teachers, and the media, for fostering information gain or molding attitudes about groups and society (→ Socialization by the Media).

When performing their several functions, media can have positive or negative consequences. For example, reporting about societal threats can provide instrumental information and needed warnings for a society, but also may induce panic and anxiety (→ Fear Induction through Media Content). Watching more news- and public-affairs-type programs may be instrumental for gaining information about societal and political structures, but watching greater amounts of → television, in general, may be dysfunctional for acquiring such specific information (Rubin 1978).

In their analysis of coverage of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the US, Li and Izard confirmed the functions of the media during a crisis to “inform, explain and interpret the news event” (2003, 215), and observed that newspapers and television framed the event differently (→ Framing of the News). The media also help set the political agenda for the public (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Such an agenda, of course, may or may not reflect societal needs and priorities. In addition, television has altered the conduct of electoral politics, including party functions and structures, campaigns, conventions, and voting, sometimes for the better, and sometimes not (Patterson 1994; → Election Campaign Communication; Political Communication).

In an early study of how television coverage can structure and distort perceptions of public events, Lang and Lang (1953) compared reactions of spectators to the arrival of General Douglas MacArthur in Chicago, Illinois, with those watching the event on television. They observed that, owing to the media build-up, those at the event expected to see a spectacle. Many in the spectator sample were disappointed by the sparse and subdued crowds at the event. The television viewers, though, watched with others, and were not disappointed, as the telecast was produced to conform to their expectations. The telecast gave a distorted image of the event, but provided a perspective not available to the

spectators at the scene. The selectivity of the camera shots and the television commentary added excitement and a personal nature to the event for the television viewers, who could see MacArthur better than the spectators. The study is still applicable to coverage of news events such as public rallies and political campaigns, and to the presentation of sports and other media fare (→ Reality and Media Reality; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

## EFFECTS OF THE MEDIA

For many years, → media effects research has been guided by models that emphasize individual, group, and societal characteristics. These characteristics may discourage or attenuate media effects when performing surveillance, correlation, transmission, or other functions, such as entertaining audiences and promoting or selling products and services. In other words, when performing these functions, the media do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, they operate amid a host of individual differences and group and societal structures.

Researchers have considered such factors that might impede or encourage cognitive, affective, and behavioral effects of the media performing these social functions. Among *cognitive effects* are acquiring information, creating or reducing awareness and ambiguity, producing knowledge gaps (→ Knowledge Gap Effects), defining societal needs and issues, agenda setting, and socialization. Among *affective effects* are promoting attitudes, values, and beliefs such as political support and trust (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on), efficacy or apathy (→ Political Efficacy), cynicism and alienation, promulgating positive or negative → stereotypes of ethnic groups, cultivating beliefs, → desensitization, and promoting fear and anxiety. *Behavioral effects* consist of a variety of influences including activation or deactivation, engagement or disengagement, cooperation or aggression, violence, conducting campaigns, voting behavior, government operations, and social and power imbalances in society.

The media contribute to these effects for individuals, groups, and society. Media coverage and entertainment programs offer occasions to talk to people and provide information to support one's own opinions (Kepplinger & Martin 1986). Talk radio and the → Internet provide communication outlets for those who feel face-to-face interactants do not value their opinions (Papacharissi & Rubin 2000; → Broadcast Talk). The news media help frame and construct emotional meaning about sub-groups in society (Rodgers et al. 2007). Television portrayals can affect people's impressions of other races, especially when direct information is restricted (Fujioka 1999; → Stereotyping and the Media). The media may trigger violence against minorities and terrorist acts (Brosius & Esser 1995; Weimann & Winn 1994; → Mediated Terrorism). The media stimulate the purchase of new products and enable political participation. Newer and nontraditional media, such as the Internet and television talk shows, play expanded roles in voter learning and involving the citizenry in politics and elections (Drew & Weaver 2006). The media also can mobilize people, as television, radio, and cable networks did in a US\$117 million collaborative fundraising effort for victims and families of the September 11, 2001, US terrorist attacks (Gilbert 2002).

Such effects, though, may not be that direct. Individual, group, and societal characteristics function to deter or to enhance these effects. For example, Kim and Rubin

(1997) examined several individual characteristics that might impede or encourage three media effects: satisfaction, parasocial interaction, and cultivation (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships; Cultivation Effects). Specifically, they expected (1) instrumental media motivation, selectivity, → attention, and involvement to enhance these effects, and (2) avoidance, distraction, and skepticism to deter these effects (→ Selective Exposure; Selective Attention; Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Mostly supporting these expectations, they suggested such individual differences help explain why people respond differently to media messages.

## **MODELS OF INDIRECT MEDIA EFFECTS**

### **Media Influence and Personal Influence**

Incorporating psychological and sociological models in media research was initially a response to views that depicted the media as direct causes of mechanistic and uniform effects among isolated audience members. When examining the influence of media in the 1940 US presidential election, for example, → Lazarsfeld et al. (1944) identified several factors affecting people's responses to the campaign: social indicators that affected interest in the campaign, attitudinal predispositions to behave or vote in a certain manner, and opinion leadership within a two-step or multi-step flow of communication (→ Opinion Leader; Two-Step Flow of Communication). On the basis of these factors, election materials were more likely to activate and reinforce certain predispositions rather than to change people's minds or actions. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues observed that not all people have direct links to media messages, but influence often follows a path from the media to opinion leaders and then to less active segments of the population.

Consequently, media messages and influence are often disseminated interpersonally, within and across social groups in which people share certain interests, beliefs, and norms (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects; Interpersonal Communication). These groups serve as a means of social support for existing attitudes and opinions. In addition, opinion leaders within diffusion networks spread information and exert influence within a social system over time. Messages can be amplified, distorted, or otherwise altered as they pass along the interpersonal networks.

Studies of opinion leadership and the diffusion of innovation also found that such sociometric and gatekeeping patterns of communication influence operate in many realms, such as marketing, fashion, public issues, entertainment, health, agriculture, and politics (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Katz & Lazarsfeld 1955). Katz & Lazarsfeld found that personal influence was more frequent and more effective than mass media influence in political, → marketing, → fashion, and movie-going decisions.

Group and interpersonal influences were also apparent when Coleman et al. (1957) found that profession-oriented physicians and those better integrated within the medical community of local physicians were more likely than their counterparts to prescribe a new drug sooner for their patients (→ Health Communication). These researchers suggested the better-integrated physicians were more in touch and up to date and felt more secure when facing the risks of innovation. By somewhat of a contrast, when looking

at the diffusion of news, Deutschmann and Danielson (1960) observed the interpersonal relay function of opinion leaders was less operative for salient news stories of important events, except for subsequent discussions of those stories. In other words, the electronic media were the first sources of information for salient news stories. Similarly, Kanhian and Gale (2003) found that 97 percent of their sample were aware of the event within 3 hours of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in New York. Television and radio were the primary sources for those who learned of the attacks early in the diffusion process, but interpersonal channels were important for those who learned later.

### **Sociological and Psychological Models**

The *sociological model* challenges the notion of a uniform, mass audience and emphasizes the role of selective influences in the media effects process, in which effects are mediated (1) by the social categories in which people live, as evidenced by such indicators as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status, and (2) by the social relations people maintain, as evidenced by homophily, social networks, interpersonal dissemination of messages, and interpersonal mediation by opinion leaders. As noted in several interpersonal mediation and diffusion studies, opinion leaders are very much like the people they influence. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeach (1989) concluded the redefinition of the media–audience relationship emphasizes that people typically encounter media not as passive, isolated, and disconnected beings, but rather as groupings of people connected in social contexts. Those who share a social category might be expected to select similar communication content and to respond to it in a consistent manner. Social relations place an emphasis on the interpersonal dissemination of messages within social networks.

The *psychological model* adds the important role of individual differences to the media–audience relationship (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1989). A psychological perspective focuses on the individual, and on perception and information processing. Differences in individual characteristics and predispositions lead to variations in media choice and selectivity (i.e., selective exposure, perception, attention, and retention). These individual characteristics include personality traits (e.g., locus of control, neuroticism), motivation (e.g., → information seeking, arousal, diversion), attitudes (e.g., perceived realism, affinity, skepticism), beliefs and values (e.g., honesty, respect), learning ability, and environment (e.g., family, rural vs urban living). The variations in media choice and selectivity lead to differences in interpreting and reacting to media content.

Beside micro-level media effects studies focusing on media influences on individuals, *macro-level effects studies* consider media influences on groups, communities, organizations, and social structures. For example, according to Lazarsfeld and Merton (1948), media perform certain social functions: (1) conferring status by bringing prestige to those who are informed, and (2) enforcing social norms by calling public attention to deviant behavior. The media also have a narcotizing dysfunction when people spend too much time with them, so that they fail to take action themselves. Lazarsfeld and Merton argued that, in performing such social functions and dysfunctions, the structure and ownership of the media work toward maintaining rather than changing existing social and cultural structures. But that is not always the case.

### Examples of Media Effects on Social Behavior

An early example of the application of psychological and sociological models to media effects is a study of why some people panicked when listening to the *War of the Worlds* → radio broadcast in 1938. Cantril (1940) concluded that several conditions created suggestibility to fear and panic from listening: (1) a perception of realism from the program's dramatic excellence; (2) a perception of expert testimony by some characters; (3) reliance of some audience members on radio instead of print for news, especially lower-income and less-educated listeners; (4) feelings of resignation and hopelessness, especially owing to some listeners' levels of religiosity and fear; (5) selective attention and selective perception, leading to a sense of personal involvement with the program by some listeners; and (6) the insecurity of the times due to economic unrest from the Depression and from turmoil in the world. These factors illustrate the mediating role of individual characteristics (e.g., attitudinal predispositions) and social indicators. The realistic media content, the turbulent environment, and differences in fear, control, and perceived veracity contributed to the fear and panic experienced by some in the radio audience. The study illustrates that people differ in their personality, attitudes, and social makeup and these differences influence their perceptions of and responses to media messages.

Social uses of media are important in various communication settings. Katz and Foulkes (1962) observed that media can be used to strengthen one's position in a social relationship. They found that children who are attached to their parents use television to draw themselves closer to their family. Like more contemporary studies of talk radio and of the Internet, they also observed that media can be used to compensate for ineffective social relationships (e.g., Papacharissi & Rubin 2000). Lull (1980) also suggested several social uses of television. Besides using television for structural purposes (e.g., as background noise or to punctuate the time), people use television (1) to facilitate communication (e.g., entering conversations or reducing anxiety), (2) to affiliate with or avoid others (e.g., reducing conflict or maintaining relationships), (3) for social learning (e.g., problem-solving or information dissemination), and (4) to demonstrate competence or dominance (e.g., gatekeeping or exercising authority). Different social uses contribute to different media effects.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attention ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Commentary ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Desensitization ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Fashion ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Health Communication ▶ Information ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ News ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Efficacy ▶ Radio ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Selective Attention ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Television ▶ Two-Step Flow of Communication

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# **Social Capital and Communication in Health**

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The concept of social capital dates back more than 100 years and has intrigued academics, policymakers, and activists interested in understanding intergroup relations and social change in a variety of fields including communication, public health, sociology, and political science (Portes 1998). It has been seen as a promising way to examine how interaction and association among people and groups could influence public health, politics, economics, and overall comity and cohesion among disparate social groups. Despite substantive disagreements about the definition, utility, and appropriate measurement of social capital, there is broad agreement that social capital grows out of relationships between and among individuals and organizations and facilitates social action. Dimensions of social capital are generally understood to include norms of reciprocity, interpersonal trust, solidarity, and cooperation that seem to depend on social networks and civic engagement. Social capital is usually regarded as a positive phenomenon, although it can have negative effects when ties hinder positive action or serve to exclude segments of the population from key resources.

## **DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Coleman (1988) defined social capital by its function, as a “variety of entities” that facilitate actions by social actors. Social capital helps in explaining different outcomes of actions of individuals as well as connecting them to larger structural changes. Thus, according to Coleman, social capital, although a property of the social structure, is fungible and used by individuals to accomplish goals.

In contrast, Putnam (1993, 35–36) put a more collective spin on the concept and defined social capital not by its function, but rather as the “features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit.” Thus the benefits of social capital accrue more markedly at the community, rather than individual, level. Certainly social capital benefits individuals, because individuals form connections that benefit their own interests. However, the connections themselves affect the wider community, so that not all the benefits of social connections will belong to the individual, but rather can contribute to well-being at the group level.

In public health, definitions of social capital that favor the communitarian approach seem to have prevailed. The utility of social capital in examining group-level differences



in health, above and beyond the well-established benefits of social support for individuals, is the novel contribution of social capital to understanding public health (Kawachi et al. 2004). Groups enjoying higher levels of social capital have demonstrated lower levels of stressful conditions, risky behaviors, poor health, and mortality.

Putnam (2000) elaborated two key forms of social capital, “bridging” and “bonding,” to which Szreter and Woolcock (2004) added “linking.” Briefly, *bonding* social capital tends to reinforce homogeneous groups; developing reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity. Bonding social capital often occurs in the context of dense networks such as families, churches, and ethnic enclaves (→ Social Networks). *Bridging* social capital, in contrast, tends to be more inclusive, connecting people of greater diversity, and can generate broader identities and reciprocity. Finally, *linking* social capital is a particular form of bridging social capital, and links people across power or authority gradients in society.

### COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

An understanding of the relationship between social capital and communication requires careful attention to both the appropriate level and cross-level analyses (Viswanath in press). For example, a widely viewed → television program mass communication may lead to discussions among co-workers, → interpersonal communication, cementing relationships with a potential for trust and reciprocity, two dimensions of social capital. Accordingly, communication at both interpersonal and mass levels may lead to an increase (or in some cases a decrease) in social capital.

Communication may also be a key to understanding how different variants of social capital – bonding, bridging, and linking – are related to each other. From the point of view of *health*, communication facilitates diffusion of new information (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation), reinforces → social norms, mobilizes people for collective action (→ Social Movements and Communication), and creates social support, thus providing the base for understanding how social capital may impact public health (→ Social Support in Health Communication). For *individuals*, communication plays a role in integrating people into cohesive communities by helping to support and maintain social ties and in promoting interpersonal trust (→ Community Integration). Interpersonal communication within social networks sustains trust, reciprocity, expectations, and information exchange, all critical dimensions of social capital. In addition, social capital, through interpersonal communications, may reinforce, moderate, and contradict → information people are exposed to in mass media.

*Mass media* communications also play a role in community integration and cohesion, critical elements of social capital (Viswanath in press). A dimension of social capital membership in local organizations and institutions is related to local and national media use (Rothenbuhler et al. 1996; Stamm & Weis 1986; Viswanath et al. 1990). This well-established finding of local media use and community ties is important in understanding exposure to information of all kinds, including health information in the local media. “Media effects” on audience awareness, knowledge, opinions, attitude about health, and health behaviors assume exposure to media content, which is a necessary antecedent to effects (→ Media Effects; Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Agenda-Setting Effects). Community ties may enhance the opportunities for such exposure. Another way

community ties may influence media exposure is through social priming (Demers 1996; → Priming Theory; Exposure to Communication Content). Interaction with interpersonal networks and with members of local associations may “prime” audiences to attend to health information and act as a source of information.

The way media are *used* may also influence the formation of social capital. Media used for information are much more likely to contribute to social capital than media used for entertainment (Shah et al. 2001). News media may provide greater opportunity for exposure to mobilizing information as well as arguments, opinions, and frames that could promote engagements with civic affairs (→ News; Exposure to News; Framing of the News).

It is well documented that mass media are agents of both change and social control (Tichenor et al. 1980). The *agendas of organized social groups* may be amplified, potentially contributing to bridging and linking social capital. Organized efforts to promote public health, such as public health communication campaigns (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in), often use mass media as powerful advocates. Conversely, when the media are not amplifying the agenda of organized social groups, which is more likely to occur when the groups desire changes that threaten fundamental power structure in the social system, groups may engage in media advocacy (→ Media Advocacy in Health Communication). Media advocacy may be more likely to occur in communities with high levels of social capital where members are able to work together and benefit from collective action (Kawachi & Berkman 2000).

The *structure of a community* – its size, economic base, ethnic, racial, and social class diversity, and centralization or decentralization of power among others – also influences the availability of information, how media cover information, diversity of media choices, and how people use the mass media. Heterogeneous networks facilitate the distribution and dissemination of new information (bridging social capital) and collective mobilization (linking social capital) compared to more closely aligned networks of family and friends (bonding social capital). Thus, social capital may also provide a way to examine → communication inequalities that potentially contribute to social disparities (Viswanath 2006). *Communication inequality* – i.e., differences among social classes in the generation, manipulation, and distribution of information at the group level, and differences in access to and ability to take advantage of information at the individual level – may spring in part from differences among communities in social capital. People who participate in voluntary associations are, in general, from a higher socio-economic position than those who do not, and participation in such associations both contributes to social capital and may potentially provide an opportunity for individuals to access and act on information. In short, it is intriguing to explore whether the nature of social capital may influence what people may learn or do not learn from communications and whether that varies by social class, exacerbating inequalities.

## **MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL CAPITAL**

Measuring social capital is challenging for three reasons (Woolcock & Narayan 2000): (1) the multidimensional nature of most definitions of social capital include different levels and units of analysis; (2) social capital can change over time as the relative importance of informal organizations and formal institutions shifts; and (3) in the initial

development of the concept no standard approach for measurement was developed, and no longstanding surveys have been implemented to measure social capital across time and place (→ Measurement Theory).

In most studies researchers have used data from a variety of sources to compile indices of social capital. Indices generally include items related to structural and cultural aspects of social capital and are constructed either from aggregated micro-level data (such as social → survey items assessing trust) or macro-level data (such as number of voluntary organizations or crime rates). Large-scale studies examining social capital and health at the national or state level have tended to use a few items to assess social capital (often unavoidable because few items may be available given the data sources), while smaller-scale studies have been able to measure social capital with more comprehensive measures (Harpham et al. 2002). Examples of larger-scale studies include work by Kawachi et al. (1999) based on secondary data from general social surveys, using indices that included per capita membership in voluntary groups, interpersonal trust aggregated, and perceived norms of reciprocity. Other examples include work in Australia by Bullen and Onyx (1998), the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey directed by Putnam (Saguaro Seminar 2001), and work for use in developing countries by the World Bank (Krishna & Shrader 1999).

### **FUTURE RESEARCH**

A more rigorous, systematic, and through understanding of the relationship between health communication and social capital could be valuable in improving public health and reducing inequities among different social classes.

While communication is clearly essential to the formation and maintenance of social capital of all types, the relationships between each form of social capital and *health* communication should be considered. Health communications to inform people or to persuade or motivate them to change behaviors to improve their health often result in differential levels of knowledge across groups. Knowledge gaps are a perennial problem (→ Knowledge Gap Effects), and lower levels of health knowledge have often been found among the same groups that suffer from health disparities (Institute of Medicine 2002; → Health Disparities, Communication in). Understanding aspects of social structure that are likely to shape how information flows through populations is critical to advancing health communication. Social capital theory, which facilitates analyses of micro-to-macro transitions, has potentially great utility for the study of social factors affecting health communication. Social capital, in each of its forms, is likely to structure the communications that reach the individual by influencing the key components of communication.

In the area of interpersonal communications, social capital, and health, it is too early to predict the impact of the → Internet and the world wide web. Nonetheless, their unique characteristics are likely to heavily impact the nature of social interactions and, consequently, trust, reciprocity, and dimensions of health communication (→ Health Communication and the Internet).

SEE ALSO: ► Agenda-Setting Effects ► Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ► Communication Inequality ► Community Integration ► Diffusion of Information

and Innovation ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Exposure to News ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication and the Internet ▶ Health Disparities, Communication in ▶ Information ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Knowledge Gap Effects ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Media Advocacy in Health Communication ▶ Media Effects ▶ News ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Social Networks ▶ Social Norms ▶ Social Support in Health Communication ▶ Survey ▶ Television

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## **Social Capital, Media Effects on**

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The term “social capital” has become a popular way for academics, activists, politicians, and the public to describe how an individual’s location in a structure of relationships, and the sense of trust and reciprocity that accompanies this social position, can provide the means for citizens to cooperate on problems requiring collective effort (Coleman 1990). It is defined as the resources of information, shared norms, and social relations embedded in communities that enable people to learn and to coordinate action. As such, social capital concerns contextual, relational, and individual factors that are not overtly political yet have implications for the health of civil society. Of particular relevance to communication research focused on civic and political participation is the considerable attention paid to the mass media’s role in the production and destruction of social capital.

Robert Putnam (2000), who has led the examination of the roots of the decline in Americans’ community engagement and its implications for democratic functioning, sees the answer in the connection between television use and the erosion of social capital (→ Exposure to Television). Available evidence indicates that while contributions to charitable groups are at all-time highs, face-to-face encounters with other community members and involvement in political activities have slid dramatically over the last 50 years, the same period that witnessed the rise of television. And although attendance at public events has remained high, or even increased, it cannot match the sharp rise in privatized entertainment in the form of in-home media use (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking; Political Communication; Political Media Use).

These downward trends appear to be based on generational differences and individual changes; that is, members of generation X are not only less participatory and trusting than their baby-boomer parents, but they are less connected, engaged, and involved than the boomers were when they were young adults. Likewise, baby-boomers have typically

been less connected and involved than members of the preceding generation. Changes in patterns of media use over time – i.e., rising rate of television usage and decline in newspaper readership – have been identified as some of the main causes of the decline of civic culture (→ Media Use across the Life-Span; Political Socialization through the Media).

Work by Jack McLeod and his colleagues (1996) has found that newspapers, with their informative content and focus on → news and community events, produce pro-civic consequences; newspaper readers, especially those who pay close attention to local news content, are more politically knowledgeable and participatory than nonreaders. Conversely, television has been blamed for civic disengagement. The issue of whether television viewing actually erodes social capital and reduces civic participation has spurred a lively debate on the relationships between media use and civic life (see Shah 1998).

### **MEDIA AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Many of the factors found to enhance community participation – age and education, employment, church attendance, psychological ties to the community, and general sociability – arguably represent the unmeasured concepts of social trust, civic skills, and social networks that come with social standing and community belonging. Conversely, media use, typically defined as hours of TV use, is viewed as a barrier to civic participation.

The arguments offered for the *expectation of adverse media effects* are intuitively appealing. Time spent with media supposedly privatizes leisure time and therefore displaces other activities that build the community. Further, the depiction of social reality in mass media, particularly television, is thought to cultivate a perception of the world as a mean place, leading to social withdrawal (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). Thus, television's inaccurate portrayal of society distorts social reality judgments such that television's frequent presentation of violence is thought to lead heavy television viewers to believe that the real world is a more dangerous place than it actually is (Eveland 2002). Consequently, overall television viewing is criticized, often with scant evidence, as the main culprit in the erosion of social capital by fostering anti-civic sentiments (→ Political Cynicism).

Research formally testing time displacement and cultivation effects of mass media on social trust and civic engagement has found only *limited support* for the view that television use undercuts social capital (→ Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects). Nonetheless, these arguments, initially advanced for television, have recently been extended to → Internet use, with research relating time spent online with the erosion of psychological well-being, declines in social trust, the loss of real-world ties, and community disengagement (Nie 2001; Kraut et al. 1998; → Exposure to the Internet).

Although these perspectives are provocative, communication scholars have questioned their merits, arguing that these critiques of the media are grounded on the assumption that media use is one-dimensional and that there is only one type of audience when in fact media consumption is a product of varied motives and different types of users (→ Audience; Audience Segmentation). Thus, research on the topic of media use and civic engagement has taken the position that scholars must be attentive to patterns of use, not simply hours of use (Shah et al. 2001). This is critical when considering the effects of the Internet, a medium that many have argued contains the potential to increase knowledge, tighten relations, and ease coordination and cooperation.

## USING MEDIA FOR INFORMATION AND SURVEILLANCE

Information and surveillance motives for media use have received considerable scholarly attention because they promise increased political knowledge and awareness of civic opportunities and objectives. The general conclusion of this work: *informational uses of mass media* – i.e., reading newspapers, watching news programs, and gathering and exchanging information over the Internet – have pro-civic consequences, such as increase in levels of campaign and community participation (Shah et al. 2007). News media, then, do more than educate; they provide the basis for political discussion and deliberation that can lead to civic action (→ Political Knowledge).

*Non-news content* also has the potential to provide information and foster increased reflection about civic life. In particular, social dramas that depict contemporary controversies, often ones that are “ripped from the headlines,” allow for unique representations of various sides of socio-political issues. These programs are emotionally engaging, base claims on experiential rather than factual knowledge, and treat the audience as being physically present within the program, as opposed to the detached and objective approach of most news reports. These programs not only allow viewers to understand community problems in more complex and personal terms, but suggest avenues for involvement that are modeled by fictional characters. Indeed, news programs have increasingly capitalized on the storylines of programs such as *ER* and *NYPD Blue* by developing reports linking community events to the fictional narratives.

Research also suggests that *informational and communicative uses of the Internet* encourage community involvement and foster civic participation, that is, individuals who use the Internet to explore interests, gather data, and send and receive email have been found to be more socially and politically engaged (Wellman et al. 2001). The Internet may promote civic engagement because it allows users to gain knowledge, reinforce social linkages, and coordinate their actions to address joint concerns. The associative features of email may amplify the effects of more traditional forms of social interaction since email allows individuals to coordinate their actions with great efficiency and permits the politically active to present opportunities for civic participation to likely prospects in their social circle (Shah et al. 2007).

This suggests that media use and social networks work together to produce civic engagement, reinforcing the need to be attentive to the social context in which traditional and new media are used. In particular, scholars have theorized a communication mediation model in which socio-economic factors, particularly income and education, work through news consumption and interpersonal communication to shape civic engagement. News media use is thought to encourage citizen engagement through its effects on political discussion. Through these communicative actions, people become better informed, develop more complex conceptions of community issues, acquire psychological resources, and build social trust. Thus, informational media use works with conventional and online citizen communication to mediate the effects of background factors on public-mindedness and civic participation.

## USING MEDIA FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND DIVERSION

The relationship between entertainment/diversion uses of media and involvement in community life has been of increasing research interest. Situation comedies and reality

programs have been of particular interest, both because of their prevalence and their expected connections to trust and participation. There is evidence that upbeat sitcoms such as *Friends* run counter to Putnam's expectations about television, yielding positive relationships with interpersonal trust. Watching programs that depict social reality in a light-hearted manner may be related to a more hopeful worldview of which interpersonal trust is one component (→ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception; Entertainment, Effects of).

*Reality programs* such as *Cops*, *Survivor*, and *Apprentice* present a very different social world, one that is full of deception, betrayal, and finger-pointing. If there is any merit to arguments about "mean-world effects" of media consumption, reality program viewing should be related to social mistrust and civic disengagement. The conventional wisdom concerning this genre asserts that it fosters fear and a more dangerous view of societal interaction, encouraging withdrawal from community life. There is some support for this perspective.

Like sitcoms and reality programs, the use of the Internet for entertainment and escape may also have adverse civic consequences (→ Situation Comedies). Research indicates that individuals who use the Internet for recreation and anonymous socialization may not experience many civic benefits. Such uses of the Internet privatize social recreation; chatrooms and other means of interacting anonymously in online environments provide the illusion of face-to-face social belonging without the benefits. As such, recreational uses of the Internet may erode the individual-level production of social capital since these activities weaken social networks. Of course, the nature of this relationship is at least partly a function of the content of the exchange.

## GENERAL DIFFERENCES IN MEDIA EFFECTS

In addition to conclusions concerning the connection between Internet use and civic life, past research by Shah and colleagues has found substantial generational differences in the relationship between Internet use and civic engagement. The positive and negative associations observed between patterns of Internet use and trust and participation were concentrated among the youngest American adults. Indeed, across the generational groups examined, the predictive power of Internet use became weaker as analysis moved from younger to older groups. These findings, along with findings on generational differences in newspaper use, clearly suggest a generational difference in levels of media use and patterns of media effects.

However, the differential influence of media across generational groups may not simply reflect variation in levels in use; rather, generational contrasts may be a function of an *affinity toward certain types of media*. Research on media reliance has found that effects of media consumption tend to be concentrated among individuals who have learned to depend on a given medium, whether that medium is newspapers, television, or the Internet. In contrast to the Internet, research suggests that older people are more reliant on print media, the medium they developed a connection with in their youth. These generational differences may also provide important clues about how media may be used to build social capital.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality



Perception ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Exposure to Television  
▶ Internet ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Media Use across the Life-Span ▶ News  
▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political  
Media Use ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Social  
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## **Social Cognitive Theory**

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Theories of human behavior differ in their conceptions of human nature and what they regard as the basic determinants and mechanisms governing self-development, adaptation, and change. Social cognitive theory is rooted in an agentic perspective (→ Bandura 1986, 2006a). To be an agent is to influence one's own functioning and events that affect one's life. In this view people are contributors to their life circumstances, not just products of them.

## CONCEPTIONS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Human behavior has often been explained in terms of unidirectional causation. In the environmental deterministic view, behavior is shaped and controlled by environmental forces. In the dispositional deterministic view, behavior is driven by internal drives and dispositions. Social cognitive theory explains human functioning in terms of triadic reciprocal determination. In this transactional view of self and society, personal factors in the form of cognitive, emotional, and biological processes, the way one behaves, and environmental forces all operate as interacting determinants that influence each other. Individuals are characterized within this theoretical perspective in terms of a number of basic capabilities, which are reviewed next (→ Cognition; Emotion).

Humans are endowed with an extraordinary *capacity for symbolization* that provides them with a powerful tool for comprehending their environment and altering it in ways that touch virtually every aspect of their lives. Most environmental influences operate through cognitive processes. Cognitive factors partly determine which environmental events will be observed, what meaning will be conferred on them, whether they leave any lasting effects, what emotional impact and motivating power they will have, and how the information they convey will be organized for future use. The remarkable flexibility of symbolization enables people to create ideas that transcend their sensory experiences. Through the medium of symbols they can communicate with others at any distance in time and space. With the aid of symbols, people give structure, meaning, and continuity to their lives (→ Symbolism).

## LEARNING FROM MODELS

There are *two basic modes of learning*. People learn by experiencing the effects of their actions, and through the power of social modeling (→ Observational Learning). Direct experience is a tough teacher. Trial-and-error learning is not only an exceedingly tedious process, but a hazardous one when mistakes have costly or injurious consequences. Moreover, the constraints of time, resources, and mobility impose severe limits on the situations and activities that can be directly explored for the acquisition of new knowledge. Fortunately, this process can be cut short by social modeling. Humans have an advanced capacity for observational learning that enables them to expand their knowledge and competencies rapidly through the information conveyed by a rich variety of models (Bandura 1986; Rosenthal & Zimmerman 1978).

Modeling is not just response mimicry as commonly believed. Social modeling operates at a higher level of learning. Modeled judgments and actions may differ in specific content while embodying the same principle. For example, modeled speech may vary in content but have the same underlying structure, as in the passive voice, e.g., “The dog *was* petted,” “The window *was* opened.” Once observers extract the guiding principle underlying the modeled examples, they can use it to generate a variety of sentences in the passive voice that go beyond those they have heard. Abstract modeling provides the means for generative and innovative behavior.

Much of the vicarious learning is based on the models in one’s immediate environment. However, in contemporary society, ideas, values, belief systems, and lifestyles are

socially transmitted via the *extensive modeling in the symbolic environment*. This enables people to transcend the confines of their lived environment. With the revolutionary advances in communications technology, lifestyles are now being modeled and rapidly diffused worldwide. A major importance of symbolic modeling lies in its tremendous reach, speed, and multiplicative power. Unlike learning by doing, which requires shaping the actions of each individual through repeated consequences, in vicarious learning a single model can transmit new ways of thinking and behaving simultaneously to vast populations in widely dispersed locales.

The models upon whom people pattern their behavior come in *diverse forms and sources*. Some involve behavioral modeling in informal everyday activities or formally structured social arrangements. The salient symbolic modeling through the electronic media pervades people's daily lives. Verbal modeling is another source of instructive and inspirational exemplars. In this mode of symbolic modeling, values, lifestyles, and guides for daily living are personalized in the biographies of idealized exemplars.

Social modeling serves diverse functions in promoting personal and social change. With regard to its instructive function, models serve as transmitters of knowledge, competencies, values, cognitive skills, and new styles of behavior. In addition to cultivating new competencies, modeling influences can alter motivation, emotional dispositions, and value systems. Seeing others achieve desired outcomes by their efforts can instill motivating outcome expectations in observers that they can secure similar benefits for comparable performances; seeing others punished for engaging in certain activities can instill negative outcome expectations that serve as disincentives for similar activities. Observers can also acquire lasting attitudes and emotional dispositions toward persons, places, or things that have been associated with modeled fears, likes, and dislikes.

The actions of models can also serve as social prompts that activate, channel, and support previously learned behavior. Thus, the types of models that prevail within a social milieu partly determine which human qualities, from among many alternatives, are selectively encouraged. Finally, people's images of social reality and the structure and ideological orientations of societies are heavily influenced by the symbolic modeling in the mass media (Gerbner et al. 2002).

Symbolic modeling usually serves as the principal conveyer of innovations to widely dispersed areas, especially in early phases of diffusion. Modeling instructs people in new ideas and social practices and designates their functional value (Bandura 1986). People are linked, not only directly by personal relationships. Because acquaintanceships overlap different network clusters, people become linked to each other indirectly by interconnected ties. These multilinked social networks provide diffusion paths for the spread of new ideas, lifestyle patterns, and social practices (Rogers & Kincaid 1981; Granovetter 1983; Bandura 2006b).

### **ANTICIPATING CONSEQUENCES OF BEHAVIORS**

Through forethought people set themselves goals and anticipate likely outcomes of prospective actions to guide and motivate their efforts. Behavior patterns that produce positive outcomes are readily adopted and used, whereas those that bring unrewarding or punishing outcomes are generally discarded. But external consequences are not the only

kind of outcomes that influence human behavior. As previously noted, people profit from the successes and mistakes of others as well as from their own experiences. Because outcomes exert their influence through forethought, they have little or no impact until people discover how outcomes are linked to actions in one's environment. The ability to bring anticipated outcomes to bear on current activities promotes purposeful and foresightful behavior. When projected over a long time course on matters of value, a forethoughtful perspective provides direction, coherence, and meaning to one's life.

People are not only planners and forethinkers. They are also *self-regulators*. They construct standards of merit and ethical conduct and regulate their motivation and behavior by the consequences they apply to themselves. They do things that give them satisfaction and a sense of self-worth, and they refrain from behaving in ways that violate their standards because such conduct gives rise to self-criticism.

Human behavior is governed by the *interplay of extrinsic and self-evaluative consequences*. External outcomes are most likely to wield influence when they are compatible with self-evaluative ones. Under conditions in which the external support and reward for given activities are minimal or lacking, individuals have to sustain their efforts largely through self-encouragement. People experience conflicts of outcomes when they are socially punished for activities they value highly. Principled dissenters and nonconformists often find themselves in such predicaments. The relative strength of self-approval and external censure determine whether the courses of action will be pursued or abandoned. There are individuals, however, whose sense of self-worth is so strongly invested in certain convictions that they will submit to prolonged maltreatment rather than accede to what they regard as unjust or immoral.

People commonly experience conflicts in which they gain material and social benefits for activities that violate their standards. These are conditions under which people may engage in the personally devalued activities but preserve their sense of self-worth. They do so by selective disengagement of moral self-sanctions from their conduct (Bandura 1999). They use worthy ends to justify detrimental means. They sanitize the practices with euphemistic language that makes them personally and socially acceptable. They absolve themselves of accountability by displacement and diffusion of responsibility. They disregard, minimize, or dispute the adverse effects of their conduct. And they devalue and blame those who suffer the adverse effects for bringing the misery on themselves.

### **BELIEF IN EFFICACY**

People are not only agents of action. They are self-examiners of their own functioning. They reflect on their personal efficacy, the soundness of their thoughts and actions, the meaning of their pursuits, and make corrective adjustments if necessary. The meta-cognitive capability to reflect upon oneself and the adequacy of one's thoughts and actions is the most distinctly human core property of agency.

Among the types of thoughts that affect human self-development, adaptation, and change, none is more central or pervasive than people's beliefs in their ability to influence events that affect their lives. This core *belief in one's efficacy* is the foundation of human motivation, performance accomplishments, and emotional well-being. Unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions, they have little incentive to

undertake activities, or to persevere in the face of difficulties. Whatever other factors serve as guides, and motivators, they are rooted in the core belief that one has the power to effect changes by one's actions.

Efficacy beliefs operate through their impact on cognitive, motivational, affective, and decisional processes. Such beliefs affect whether individuals think optimistically or pessimistically, in self-enhancing or self-debilitating ways. They affect people's goals and aspirations, how well they motivate themselves, and their perseverance in the face of difficulties and adversity. Efficacy beliefs also shape people's outcome expectations – whether they expect their efforts to produce favorable outcomes or adverse ones (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of).

In addition, efficacy beliefs determine how opportunities and impediments are viewed. People of low efficacy are easily convinced of the futility of effort in the face of difficulties. They quickly give up trying. Those of high efficacy view impediments as surmountable by improvement of self-regulatory skills and perseverant effort. They stay the course in the face of difficulties and remain resilient to adversity. Moreover, efficacy beliefs affect the quality of emotional life and vulnerability to stress and depression. And last, but not least, efficacy beliefs determine the choices people make at important decisional points. A factor that influences choice behavior can profoundly affect the courses lives take. This is because the social influences operating in the selected environments continue to promote certain competencies, values, and lifestyles. By choosing their environments people can have a hand in what they become.

Social cognitive theory distinguishes among *three modes of agency*: individual, proxy, and collective. They are rooted in belief in one's efficacy to effect changes by one's actions. In personal agency exercised individually, people bring their influence to bear on their own functioning and on environmental events over which they can wield some influence. However, in many spheres of functioning, people do not have direct control over conditions that affect their lives. They exercise proxy agency by influencing others who have the resources, knowledge, and means to act on their behalf to secure the outcomes they desire. Children turn to their parents to get what they want, marital partners to their spouses, employees to their unions, and the general public to their legislative representatives. People do not live their lives in individual autonomy. Many of the things they seek are achievable only by working together through interdependent effort. In the exercise of collective agency, they pool their knowledge, skills, and resources, and act in concert to shape their future. The effective management of everyday life requires an agentic blend of these three different forms of agency.

SEE ALSO: ► Bandura, Albert ► Cognition ► Emotion ► Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ► Observational Learning ► Political Efficacy ► Symbolism

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## Social Comparison Theory

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The central idea of social comparison theory is that individuals often assess how well they are doing by comparing themselves with others around them. When → Festinger (1954) originally developed the theory, he argued that individuals want an accurate assessment of their opinions and performance, and that in the absence of objective standards, they look to others (preferably those who are similar in a relevant dimension) for → information about their relative standing. Individuals, he argued, seek to be right in their opinions, and have a unidirectional drive upward for their abilities.

Much of Festinger's early work focused on individuals comparing their opinions with those of others. In a series of studies, he examined the conditions under which individuals tended to conform or dissent with other people's judgments (e.g., about the length of a line). In the face of consistent opposition, most people conformed; in the presence of at least one other dissenting opinion, most people were willing to express their own dissenting viewpoint. Other early work confirmed the notion that individuals' self-evaluations change depending on the types of comparisons available. In a classic study by Morse and Gergen (1970), university students competed for a job with another applicant who was either organized and well groomed (Mr. Clean) or unkempt and disorganized (Mr. Dirty). Those competing against Mr. Dirty were more positive about their own performance than those competing against Mr. Clean.

### EXPANSION OF THE THEORY

The theory has subsequently expanded in multiple directions. One such direction is in the investigation of various *additional domains of comparison*, including personal values (e.g., "Do other people think this is as important as I do?") and the appropriateness of

emotional responses (e.g., “Are others as scared as I am?”). Some researchers have also pointed out that the drive for self-evaluation and comparison is not always present: Individuals sometimes want to avoid closure on a particular topic and suspend judgment about themselves.

Another direction in which the theory has expanded is in studying *additional motives for comparison*. Despite Festinger’s initial emphasis on accurate self-evaluations, research suggests that there may be several other common motives.

One alternative motive is *self-enhancement*. That is, individuals may sometimes seek out comparisons that make them feel good about themselves (rather than focusing on accurate information). Wills (1981) argued that when individuals want to engage in self-enhancement they make downward social comparisons – that is, they look for others who are doing less well on a relevant dimension in order to feel relatively successful. For those seeking self-enhancement, upward comparisons with those performing better were predicted to be ego-threatening and stressful. Psychologists such as Wood (2000) and Taylor (1991; Taylor et al. 1990) have studied individuals experiencing threat or stress (such as breast cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, or negative feedback about test performance). Numerous studies have reported on the tendency to seek out ego-enhancing, reassuring information about others who were less fortunate or coping less well.

A related line of research associated with Taylor and her colleagues (Taylor 1991) has focused on the *benefits of positive illusions*. Positive (though unrealistic) beliefs that one is doing better than most other people in the same situation have been correlated with prospective psychological adjustment and lowered physiological indicators of stress. The absence of such illusions has been associated with negative → emotions and even depression. A contrasting view is that not all positive illusions are beneficial and that self-enhancement can be detrimental. In some studies, individuals who rated themselves much more positively than others rated them generally showed long-term negative outcomes. A recent suggestion is that one way to resolve this seeming inconsistency is to distinguish between self-enhancement as social comparison (rating oneself more positively than one rates other people) and self-enhancement as poor self-insight (rating oneself more positively than other people rate one). Self-enhancement via social comparison may be linked to positive results, while poor self-insight may be linked to negative results (Kwan et al. 2004).

Other motives for social comparison include *self-improvement* and *inspiration*. That is, at times individuals may seek out information about those performing brilliantly. Such comparisons may provide hope for the individual’s possible future, information about how to perform similarly, and motivation to work hard.

## TARGETS FOR SOCIAL COMPARISONS

In an extended critique of the theory, Kruglanski and Mayseless (1990) argued that a central weakness of social comparison theory lies in the difficulty of predicting who would be a relevant or similar target for comparison, even when an individual’s motives are given. For example, even if a female runner were seeking an accurate self-evaluation, it is unclear whether she would compare herself to another runner of similar age, or another runner of similar experience, or another woman runner, or a runner with similar racing style.

Moreover, the variety of motives for social comparison suggests that similarity of target is not always the primary concern. Taylor et al. (1990) pointed out that Festinger's description of a unidirectional drive upward for abilities is ambiguous and has been interpreted in various ways in the empirical literature. Some researchers interpret this to mean that (for example) the hypothetical runner would try to improve her performance by comparing herself with slightly better runners; others have focused on her motivation to compare herself with less talented runners.

The traditional view is that people who want accurate information for self-evaluation of opinions or abilities would choose a similar or slightly better target; those seeking self-enhancement would choose downward comparisons to provide a sense of relative well-being; and those seeking self-improvement would look to more successful others (upward comparison) for relevant information and inspiration. More recently, however, researchers have argued that comparison choices may be even more complicated. For example, individuals seeking reassurance and self-enhancement may not want to make downward comparisons if such comparisons raise the possibility of similar bad outcomes occurring to them. Instead, these individuals may look for successful role models to provide the needed reassurance ("If they can do it, so can I"). Conversely, individuals seeking self-improvement may sometimes look to unsuccessful others to provide information about what to avoid or to create fear as motivation to work hard.

Some researchers have also argued that at times individuals may compare themselves not to others in their social environment, but to past selves ("At least I'm not as bad as I was") or imagined others ("I'm sure I'm doing better than most other women").

### **FACTORS AFFECTING THE OUTCOMES OF SOCIAL COMPARISONS**

Pelham and Wachsmuth (1995) pointed out that most social comparison research has focused on contrast effects (feeling better than the target of a downward comparison; feeling inferior to the target of an upward comparison). They argued that assimilation effects (overestimating the similarity between oneself and a target) also take place and may even be more common. In their description, individuals sometimes adopt the belief that "birds of a feather flock together" and exaggeratedly assign to themselves the qualities of those around them, rather than perceiving and responding to the differences. Thus a runner who trains with a pack of faster runners may not focus on the ego-damaging difference between her time and the others' but rather consider herself a fast runner to be part of such a speedy group.

Researchers have studied the factors that affect whether individuals will engage in contrast or assimilation. In various studies, *assimilation* has been observed to occur when individuals do not explicitly evaluate the comparison target; when they share a close bond, common attributes, or group membership with the comparison target; and when they are very confident in their self-image and so do not tend to engage in explicit self-evaluations and comparisons. Conversely, *contrast effects* have been observed to occur when individuals explicitly evaluate the comparison target and use it as a reference point for evaluating the self, and when they are less confident of their self-image and hence more interested in making self-evaluations.



Another relevant factor is whether individuals think they can change on the relevant dimension, and in what direction. When individuals believe they can improve, an upward comparison can be inspiring. When improvement is not seen as possible, upward comparisons can be demoralizing. When individuals fear they may decline, downward comparisons may be frightening, but when they are sure they will not decline, downward comparisons may be ego-enhancing. In a series of studies by Lockwood and her colleagues (e.g., Lockwood & Kunda 1997), individuals who were first asked to think about their most successful moments and subsequently read about a highly superior superstar appeared to be struck by the contrast between their best and the superstar's best, and were accordingly demoralized. Those who were not asked to recall their best performance appeared to engage in affiliation with the superstar and gave more positive self-evaluations.

Yet another important variable affecting the outcome of comparisons appears to be whether they relate to an ability or trait that is central to one's self-definition. The runner may feel proud (rather than demoralized) that her father can sing better than she can, but feel humiliated if he beats her in a race.

Thus, the people individuals select for comparison, and whether they engage in upward or downward comparison, assimilation, or contrast, seems to vary greatly depending on a number of factors. Moreover, Wood (2000) pointed out that researchers have varied substantially in their measures of social comparison and its effects and that this variation has led to numerous instances of inconsistent findings.

### **USE OF SOCIAL COMPARISON THEORY IN COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH**

Despite these complications, the central tenet of social comparison theory (that individuals compare themselves to others and alter their self-evaluations accordingly) is at the heart of many accounts of → media effects, even when it is not explicitly acknowledged. For example, much of the criticism of unrealistic media portrayals of body images (→ Body Images in the Media) rests on the assumption that viewers (particularly young teens) will compare their bodies to those media images and engage in destructive behaviors as a result. The outcomes of studies of media use and eating disorders reflect the joint processes of assimilation (e.g., thin women feeling better after watching images of thin, attractive models) and contrast (e.g., women feeling worse about themselves after seeing images of thin, attractive models). Social comparison theory is also related to notions of wishful → identification with media characters (both fictional and nonfictional; → Fiction).

Other media scholars have used the notion of *relevant similarity* to explain viewers' preferences for media characters that are same-sex or same-age. Researchers who address the possible effects of media content on self-categorization and social identity (e.g., among older viewers) are also making use of social comparison theory.

Social comparison theory has been used to predict patterns of → selective exposure to positively or negatively valenced media content (→ Mood Management). Examples include individuals' choice of health-related content on the → Internet, or their choice of whether to listen to sad or happy songs about love. In a series of studies, Knobloch and Zillmann (e.g., 2003) found that students who were romantically dissatisfied preferred to listen to sad songs, presumably to avoid the pain of upward comparison.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Emotion ▶ Festinger, Leon ▶ Fiction  
▶ Identification ▶ Information ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Mood Management  
▶ Selective Exposure

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## **Social Conflict and Communication**

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In a world of finite resources, growing populations, expanding democracy among weak nations, and expanding opportunities for communication across geographic boundaries, disagreements are inevitable. Disagreements might be about the distribution or conservation of resources, about status, power, or differences among various groups within the population, about the history of past interactions, or about a myriad of other issues, both

real and imagined. These struggles are indications of social conflict, or public clashes among groups over competing claims (Coser 1956).

Communication is crucial to social conflict because through it, social conflict can escalate into violence or de-escalate into resolution and reconciliation, and can lead to clearer definitions of opposing positions (Gilboa 2006). Conflict is a ubiquitous form of social interaction that can have positive or negative consequences for the groups involved, can have implications for both social change and social stability, and can be understood as both a product of the social setting and a purely symbolic act that has no relationship to what are imagined as real conditions.

Social conflicts, as intense forms of human interaction, tend to draw crowds of bystanders wherever they occur. News media, perhaps relying on the idea of “what the public wants,” include a disproportionate amount of social conflict, occasionally framing as conflict situations that are not viewed that way by the participants (→ Conflict as Media Content; Framing of the News). In most cases, however, the parties involved in conflict are often quite eager to make their position known to a wider audience. Hence, social conflict is a frequent theme of news coverage, particularly → television news about international politics (→ Foreign Policy and the Media).

## **SOCIAL CONFLICT AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

The emphasis among conflict scholars has changed in tandem with broader social changes. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, social conflict was understood in the context of industrialization, urbanization, and bureaucratization. The failure of socialist revolts and the rise of fascist regimes in the early middle of the twentieth century coincided with scholarship that critiqued scientific approaches to communication research and that focused on the role of ideology and coercion in stemming revolution. The relatively stable US social environment of the late middle of the twentieth century was paralleled by studies of the integrative aspects of social conflict. The civil rights, antiwar, and environmental protests of the latter half of the twentieth century focused attention on communication and social conflict as symbolic struggles over ideology, with potential for individual emancipation and radical social change (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media).

The study of communication and social conflict has advanced along a number of divergent paths, owing mainly to the philosophical worldviews and methodological preferences of the researchers. Scholars committed to understanding the world as it is tend to view social conflict and communication as components of a highly integrated and gradually changing world. Radical scholars committed to understanding the world as it might become tend to be interested in the use of communication to suppress revolutionary conflict and to maintain the dominance of oppressive groups (Burrell and Morgan 1979).

### **Conflict, Communication, and Radical Change**

As a social reformer and political activist, *Karl Marx* (1818–1883) viewed social conflict, and class conflict in particular, as a driving force behind social change. Antagonisms

between the owners of the means of production and the exploited laborers, in combination with widening economic crises, would eventually lead to revolutionary change. Private property and capitalist-supporting institutions such as the government and religion would be abolished, and the working class would become the ruling class, finally able to enjoy the fruits of their labor. Although history has proven Marx incorrect regarding the inevitability of revolutionary change, many of his ideas continue to stimulate research about the relationships between social conflict and change, about the connections among the legal, political, and economic systems, and about social institutions' support of dominant groups.

Scholars who are influenced by the economic aspects of Marxian scholarship focus on the concentration of ownership and interlocking directorships of media industries, and the accompanying concentration of the means of cultural production (→ Concentration in Media Systems). C. Wright Mills's focus was on the "power elite": an alliance of leaders within business, military, and governmental bureaucracies. These highly interlinked groups of leaders work together to insure their own position at the seats of power, and to ensure that the war-making economy is perpetuated. Mills argued that mass media play an important role in legitimizing and perpetuating the power of elites and by distancing elites from citizens. Mills's conclusion was that the media serve primarily to hand down decisions to the public, which can only react, and not influence them (→ Political Socialization through the Media).

Cultural critical studies emerged as an attempt to explain why the revolution that Marx predicted never came to be, and to emphasize processes by which dominant ideology becomes integrated into common sense so that citizens become the instruments of their own oppression. Critical cultural scholars find opportunities for both emancipation and coercion in → popular culture and mass media. Todd Gitlin's (1980) analysis of media roles in the social construction and demise of a radical student movement in the 1960s illustrates how potent challenges to the status quo can be absorbed without resulting in substantive social change (→ Critical Theory; Cultural Studies).

### **Communication and the Regulation of Conflict**

Marx's concern with social conflict was based primarily on his analysis of capitalism and his observation of the excesses of the industrial revolution. *Max Weber* (1864–1917), on the other hand, was more broadly interested in conflict that was not solely reducible to economic differences. Weber defined conflict as simply action that is intended to carry out an actor's own will against the resistance of others (Weber 1994, 13). Power is distributed on the basis of class, status, and political parties – not exclusively according to economic classes. Authority derives from claims to legitimacy based on rationality, bureaucracy, rules, and laws. Legitimacy derives from claims based on tradition, as in hereditary power. Authority derives from claims based on the charisma or heroism of the individual (Weber 1994, 108). Conflict parties with greater power and authority are more likely to prevail.

*Ralf Dahrendorf's* (b. 1929) theory of social conflict builds upon revisions of Marx's and Weber's concepts of conflict and power. Rejecting Marx's claim that the only force for change in society was revolutionary class conflict, Dahrendorf saw instead that conflict

was a fundamental and ubiquitous force behind the gradual forms of social change that characterize society. In Dahrendorf's definition, conflict comprises relations between two groups each of which wants to attain something available to only one group. Dahrendorf's revision of Marxism was to reject property ownership as the only basis for class formation. Instead, he argued that the main determinants of conflict are power and authority, both of which are more fundamental than class or property ownership. Conflict groups, then, typically represent a group with authority that wants to preserve the status quo versus another group lacking in authority and intent on challenging the status quo.

Weber described a number of features of rationality-based authority that are pertinent to questions of communication and social conflict. Ultimately, bureaucracy can be understood as a means of limiting communication and controlling conflict both within an organization and between an organization and the outside world. Conflicts are channeled to specially trained employees according to formally defined procedures and rules. The hierarchical nature of the bureaucracy insures that the organization's leaders are not bothered by each dispute that occurs at lower levels of the organization. This is because subordinates are restricted in their ability to communicate beyond a level or two above their own position. The organization can continue to function even as various levels of the bureaucracy are engaged in conflict control. Although bureaucratic control of conflict may lead to unsatisfactory resolutions for one or more participants in the conflict, the principle of equality before the law is in most circumstances preferred over conflict resolution according to privilege and favor.

Just as bureaucracies can be viewed as mechanisms for limiting and controlling conflict, the division of labor, or specialization of occupations and tasks, can be viewed not only as a means of increasing productivity but also as a means of limiting conflict and competition among organizations. *Emile Durkheim* (1858–1917) considered the interdependencies created by the division of labor to be the main unifying force of modern society.

In keeping with Durkheim's emphasis on questions of social order, a line of conflict sociologists developed propositions that stress the integrative aspects of social conflict. *Georg Simmel* (1858–1918) argued, in direct contradiction of Marx, that conflict is merely an intense but pervasive aspect of social interaction that can have positive or negative effects on society.

*Robert Park* (1864–1944) was a former journalist, and a student of Charles Dewey and Georg Simmel, who spent the majority of his academic career as a sociologist at the University of Chicago. Park's notion of conflict was also heavily influenced by Weber. He argued that conflict, and its less intense forms of struggle, namely competition and rivalry, are intrinsic to the formation and maintenance of social groups. Building on one of Simmel's propositions, Park claimed that the most intense, emotionally involving conflicts are over ideals in which the individuals fight not for themselves but instead for an abstract ideal. He coined the term "urban ecology" to explain the distribution of various groups of people throughout the city, and the succession of ethnic groups from the core of the city to the outer edges. For Park and his colleagues at the University of Chicago, ethnic media played an important role in maintaining the cultures and social control of ethnic neighborhoods, substituting publicity for the gossip and ostracism that were used to control deviant members of the community in the old world.

Another University of Chicago sociologist, *Herbert Blumer* (1900–1987), shared Park's interest in community formation through public discussion. The public is a group of people who are confronted with an issue, are divided in their view of how to solve the issue, and discuss the issue. Through discussion, the various factions come into conflict and thus intensify their critical powers in order to advance better arguments and to stake out their respective positions. This becomes the basis of public opinion: sharpened differences that emerge among conflicting groups engaged in public discussion (Blumer 1954). Social conflict in combination with public discussion can clarify the positions of the conflicting groups, and can lead to the search for additional information and solutions to the problem.

*Lewis Coser* (1913–2003) organized and formalized many of Simmel's propositions about the relationship between conflict and the integration of social groups. For example, conflict with outgroups is expected to increase the solidarity within the group, leads to rallying behind the leader, leads to the search for allies, and leads to an interest in maintaining the enemy in order to maintain solidarity within the group. Within large and complex groups, internal conflict increases cohesion as conflicting groups become more loyal to their own group and because formal procedures are used to give each group a fair hearing.

A program of mass communication research that combines Coser's integrative view of social conflict with Dahrendorf's interest in the division between authorities and those without authority was developed and applied to the analysis of news media in Minnesota communities. *Phillip Tichenor, George Donohue, and Clarice Olien* developed the community structural pluralism model over 30 years of research on the relationship between mass communication and its social and institutional environment. In this perspective, local mass media are best understood in terms of their dependence upon powerful local and non-local institutions. The general principle is that the media can report whatever their sources are willing to tell them. In the end, media reports of social conflict serve both social control and social change functions. Their "guard dog" metaphor suggests that mass media tend to be particularly vigorous in reporting conflict when elites are divided over an issue. At the national level, news media cover international events from the perspective of the home country's political and economic elites (→ Community Structure Model).

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESEARCH**

Just as the communication and social conflict research of the previous generation was responsive to the social and cultural climate of the day, current and future research acknowledges significant trends in the nature of conflict itself. The historic shift since World War II has been from conflict among industrial-age, professional military forces to the civil wars, ethnic violence, and other forms of what Charles Tilly (2003) calls contentious politics.

Incessant and critical media coverage of the humanitarian crises resulting from modern social conflicts is thought in some cases to stimulate western military intervention. On closer examination, Robinson (2002) showed that the so-called "CNN effect" was limited to cases in which a western country has no existing policy regarding the issues related to the crisis, and its elites are undecided on how to deal with the crisis (→ CNN).

As global climate change produces increasing environmental catastrophes, media coverage of the aftermath can be expected to amplify the jurisdictional disputes that arise among relief agencies, and are expected to prime viewers to judge political leaders on the basis of their presence and performance during the disaster.

As communities become more diverse, with more potential centers for organized social power, contentious politics have replaced a previous generation's bowling leagues and fraternal clubs as the primary method of social participation. Scholars and community organizers are developing *new methods of conflict mediation* to manage racial, ethnic, and environmental disputes. The idea is that conflict is primarily a communication-based act that can be channeled, via communications, into positive outcomes (Gilboa 2006; Warfield 2006). Through this process, social conflict and communication can activate citizens to participate in their community's civic life, even as more benign forms of social participation such as bowling leagues and civic club membership continue to decline. Civic journalism projects were designed to use local media to stimulate civic involvement by first creating forums to air citizen concerns, then using media resources to explore the scope of the problems and to create forums in which elected officials and the public discuss policies to address the problems (→ Community Integration; Community Media; Conflict Resolution).

Mass media do not create social conflict or social movements, yet media coverage is one of the key resources that conflict groups mobilize to achieve political goals (→ Instrumental Actualization). New information technologies are proving to be valuable tools for coalition formation and message dissemination, both among protest groups and between protest groups and the public. Mainstream media reporters covering large-scale social protests such as demonstrations during World Trade Organization meetings can turn to the websites of the various groups involved in the protest in order to learn about the substantive goals of each (Owens & Palmer 2003). Social movement scholars focusing on the strategic mobilization of the resources among protest groups understand that new communication technologies are among the many resources available for organizing against authorities.

Social conflict theorists tend to view all of history as result of various groups struggling to control scarce resources. As long as humans continue to interact, communication, as the primary expression of social conflict, will continue to be an important field of study.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ CNN ▶ Community Integration ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Structure Model ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Foreign Policy and the Media ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Instrumental Actualization ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Television News

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# Social Desirability

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The social desirability bias is a major → response set that is possibly active when data are collected in empirical social studies with → interviews, psychometric tests, or questionnaires in particular. This tendency interferes with the “true values” of the subjects’ traits or states that are to be assessed and puts a systematic bias onto the measured values (→ Scales; Measurement Theory; Validity). People react in a socially desirable way if they do not answer in a way or choose the alternative that best reflects the intensity or strength of the state or trait that is to be measured. Instead, subjects answer in a way that they assume to be expected by their peer group or the interviewer/experimenter or approved by the general public (→ Climate of Opinion; Public Opinion). For example, a person who sympathizes with a radical (right-wing) political party and is asked in a questionnaire to state his or her beliefs concerning migration or foreign persons will probably give moderate answers despite holding a more radical view. By that, the person intends not to stand out from other subjects or to the experimenter as being deviant or radical.

A stronger bias toward social desirability is to be expected if the questions are closely related to → social norms and value systems and if the subject is aware of that relationship. The amount to which a data collection method is subject to a social desirability bias can be estimated by assessing data for one group of subjects under normal conditions, and comparing with data from another group, where the subjects are additionally instructed to present themselves as much as possible in a socially desirable way.

In early social research the assumption prevailed that the tendency to appear in a good light to others is a general one and applies to all humans in the same way. It has since been found, however, that the social desirability tendency is influenced by factors like the age, gender, and social stratum of the subjects participating in the studies. Furthermore, there are correlations between the social desirability tendency and characteristics of the test situation as well as the topic of the questionnaire (→ Test Theory). In addition, regional- and time-dependent influences on the social desirability tendency can also be observed.

Thorough item construction as well as carefully planned instructions can reduce the effects of social desirability. Questions and answering alternatives should be formulated in a way that reveals as little as possible about test intentions and keeps the personal state or trait to be measured hidden from the subject. Furthermore, groups of alternative answers can be composed that all have a similar low or high social desirability. In that way, subjects are constrained to choose an alternative independently of social desirability (i.e., forced choice). In order to assess the strength of socially desirable responding, scales have been developed that can help to either control the social desirability tendency or even correct test scores (e.g., the Marlowe–Crowne Social Desirability Scale, MCSDS). To do so, a number of items are put together where an honest answer and an answer oriented toward social desirability diverge. For example, if a subject is negating questions like

“Have you ever been dishonest?” more frequently than other persons, this indicates a reaction tendency toward social desirability. The subjects’ answers can indicate whether they have filled out the questionnaire in an honest and true manner or whether they have been dishonest, which could account for biased test scores.

Finally, a tendency toward social desirability can also be reduced by providing appropriate instructions. Subjects should explicitly be asked to give honest answers and not to answer in a way that is biased with respect to social norms. During the test procedure a relaxed atmosphere is of advantage, where subjects do not feel themselves provoked to present themselves in a socially desirable way and to leave a good impression. Subjects should be convinced that it is in their interest to present themselves as accurately as possible and not in terms of what they assume to be considered preferable.

A laborious but effective method for controlling social desirability is the bogus pipeline procedure. Subjects are confronted with a set-up for the measurement of physiological indicators (such as skin conductance or heart rate). They are informed that this procedure allows a person’s attitudes to be recorded with great → reliability and validity. Filling out the questionnaire only serves to give an idea of how precisely a person knows his or her own attitudes and is able to communicate them. This method has been demonstrated to be relatively resistant against faking, social desirability, and other response sets.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Climate of Opinion ▶ Interview ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Reliability ▶ Response Sets ▶ Scales ▶ Social Norms ▶ Survey ▶ Test Theory ▶ Validity

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## **Social Exchange**

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Human survival is based on the ability to exchange resources, and as a result of evolution, the human brain has adapted so as to facilitate exchange (Cosmides & Tooby 2005).

Communication is a tool by which individuals can negotiate an exchange (→ Negotiation and Bargaining) as well as provide resources (Roloff 1981). Appropriately, communication scholars have used social exchange theories to guide their research. Interpersonal researchers have applied these frameworks to a variety of relational processes (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication; Interpersonal Conflict; Relationship Development; Relational Maintenance). Organizational researchers have found the frameworks useful for investigating → supervisor–subordinate relationships, as well as other aspects of the workplace (Cropanzano & Mitchell 2005).

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

Although different in some respects, social exchange theories assume that individuals are self-interested and that they will act in ways that meet their resource needs. People repeat rewarded behavior largely because they anticipate that those actions will be rewarded relative to other behaviors. Acting in a purely self-interested fashion could create exploitation that threatens social cohesion. To prevent exploitation, norms have emerged that guide social exchange. For example, the norm of reciprocity dictates that after receiving a resource, the receiver must act in a supportive way toward the giver until the debt is repaid. When norms are violated, individuals become upset and violators may be punished.

A variety of *exchange patterns* exist. Social exchanges are more informal than are economic exchanges. Instead of following an explicit contract, social exchanges are guided by understandings about what will be exchanged, and when and where the exchange will take place. Some exchanges involve giving resources whereas others involve taking away or denying resources. Individuals may communicate respect by exchanging compliments, but they can deny respect by expressing insults. *Restricted exchanges* occur when individuals provide each other with resources, whereas *generalized exchanges* occur when individuals receive resources from another but must repay the debt by giving a resource to someone other than the giver.

Restricted exchanges such as those between a buyer and seller are thought to be individualistic since each party is concerned about receiving resources that are better than the ones given away. Generalized exchanges are thought to have a collectivistic element. Parents may invest considerable resources in their children's future not because they expect their children to care for them but because they hope the children will use the resources to build a better life for grandchildren. Some exchanges are "tit for tat," in which one resource is returned in repayment for having received a specific resource, whereas other exchanges work on a "bank account model," in which resources are invested in a relationship and can be withdrawn when needed. Finally, some exchanges are trades in which two individuals agree to transfer specific resources to each other, whereas others are distributions wherein an allocator decides how much resource each individual in a group should receive from a supply. Buyers and sellers trade money for goods and services. In contrast, a supervisor allocates money from a budget designated for raises among a group of employees.

Individuals have *resource categories* that are used to interpret behaviors. Some resources are thought to be highly symbolic, such as love and respect, whereas others are more

concrete, such as money and goods. A behavior might be placed into multiple categories, and individuals may disagree as to which category is correct. Resource value can also be difficult to determine. In some cases, the value of a resource is based on supply and demand, but in others, it could be based upon how recently a resource has been received, norms, or its physical qualities. Possessing scarce and needed resources increases a person's power. The key principle of power is to make others dependent upon one's resources while maintaining one's own independence. When individuals become dependent on a person's resources, they have little choice but to grant his or her demands.

Finally, individuals use justice norms to *evaluate the fairness* of a social exchange. *Distributive justice* is focused on whether individuals have received resources that they deserved. One pervasive norm is equity, which dictates that each person should receive resources in proportion to what he or she contributes. An employee who has been more productive than a co-worker expects to receive more valuable resources, and the co-worker expects to receive less. Individuals vary in the degree to which they are sensitive to equity, and other distributive norms dictate that resources should be given on the basis of need, status, and equality. *Procedural justice* is focused on the decision process that produced the exchange.

Generally parties to an exchange should have voice in the decision-making (→ Participative Processes in Organizations). Voice means that they could directly express their desires, but expression can also occur when their representatives or decision-makers similar to them can communicate their wishes. Voice also requires that decision-makers actually listen to the points of view rather than simply letting parties express them. In part, voice is important because it implies respect for an individual. However, voice is of greatest concern when distributive justice is violated, and individuals are more upset when their own voice is denied than when other people have been denied voice. *Interaction justice* focuses on how the conditions of the social exchange are communicated. Fair interactions occur when justifications are provided for how the resources were distributed and the announcement is expressed in a sensitive manner. Communicating sensitively can overcome the negative reactions to violations of procedural justice.

Although the social exchange theories are useful, a number of *controversies* have surrounded them. Some critics question the degree to which human behavior is really self-interested and point to altruistic actions. Indeed, some types of relationships may be guided by a communal orientation aimed at meeting another's needs rather than an exchange orientation aimed at gaining resources for self. Other critics have argued that many of the exchange concepts are fuzzy. Resource value is especially problematic, given that so many factors influence perceived value and often the value of a resource is not clear until after exchange. The notion of contribution is a key feature of equity-based approaches, yet the notion of what constitutes a contribution is subjective. Also, the social exchange theories portray human behavior as being strategic. Individuals consider positive and negative consequences prior to doing something, which may not always be true. Finally, some critics have questioned the degree to which social exchange concepts provide insight into the various processes occurring during communication. The precise manner in which linguistic cues and nonverbal behaviors are used to express or infer resources is unclear.

## MEASURES AND FINDINGS

Because many of the concepts in the social exchange theories are focused on perceptions, they are measured through self-reports. For example, individuals are asked whether they received resources they deserved, what type of resources were exchanged, how valuable they were, whether they had voice in the exchange, and whether they felt adequate justifications were provided. In some cases, researchers study how individuals differ with regard to their feelings about exchange. Hence, scales assess desire to be in an exchange relationship, the tendency to feel indebted to another, and expectations for reciprocity.

Few attempts have been made to create less subjective measures of exchange. Formulae have been created to assess equity by mathematically combining contributions and benefits. Schemes for identifying resources being exchanged during an interaction have been developed. Statistical techniques have been used to determine whether individuals reciprocate information disclosures. However, these methods are rarely used.

Rusbult's (1980) Investment Model has guided research on close relationships as well as jobs. It posits that investments, satisfaction with current outcomes, and alternative sources for rewards determine the degree to which a person is committed to remaining in a relationship or a job. Commitment, in turn, increases the likelihood that a person will try to maintain their relationship or employment. Maintenance includes devaluing alternatives and responding to a partner's or employer's provocative actions in a constructive fashion. Commitment increases relational stability (Le & Agnew 2003; → Research Methods).

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Given increased access arising from information technologies and the blurring of work and family boundaries, communication may be a commodity whose supply can be quickly depleted by growing demands (→ Information Overload). If so, future research will focus on the commoditization of communication. How do individuals decide with whom to interact and for how long? Do individuals create barriers to communication when overwhelmed by contacts? How do individuals replenish their ability to communicate? Do individuals value face-to-face contact more than other, mediated forms of communication?

SEE ALSO: ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Information Overload ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Negotiation and Bargaining ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Participative Processes in Organizations ▶ Relational Control ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Research Methods ▶ Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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## Social Identity Theory

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Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1979) was originally developed to explain prejudice and discrimination, and the circumstances under which societies would move from relatively cooperative and harmonious arrangements to overt conflict. The theory has since expanded enormously, and has become the basis for a general social identity approach to social psychological and communicative phenomena. This includes, but is not limited to, ethnolinguistic identity theory (Giles & Johnson 1981), → communication accommodation theory (Giles & Coupland 1991), and self-categorization theory (Turner 1987). This expansion has occurred through empirical and theoretical advances that have elaborated the core idea of the theory to explain a wide range of other phenomena. Notable examples include the use of the social identity approach as a basis for understanding language expansion and language death, bilingualism and multilingualism, communicative shifts in accent and language along micro- and macro-social dimensions, language attitudes, social influence and → persuasion, stereotyping, and most recently, media selection and perception.

It is rare for a social scientific theory to become so developed. In the case of social identity theory, Tajfel's critical insight followed from a critique of early approaches to understanding prejudice and discrimination (→ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication). Tajfel observed, as did others, that the common approach to understanding these phenomena rested solely on the psychology of the individual, typically motivations or putative biological needs. By focusing on the individual to the exclusion of social context, these approaches were unable to explain when groups of people would simultaneously develop prejudices, and when these prejudices might be amplified or ameliorated. Because of this, such approaches were unable to account for the critical process of social change.

According to social identity theory, people are motivated to maintain or enhance a positive sense of social identity, but the way in which this occurs is directed and

constrained by beliefs about the legitimacy and stability of ingroup status vis-à-vis relevant outgroups, the degree to which boundaries between groups are thought to be permeable, and the individuals' degree of identification with their ingroup. Combinations of these beliefs, driven by a desire for positive social identity, lead to the crystallization of *three different social belief structures*, namely social mobility, social competition, and social creativity. In each case, these belief structures are best understood as resulting from an intergroup struggle for power, prestige, and status. Those groups that fare well in the intergroup context are those that emerge with relatively high status, and by extension group members achieve positive social identity (→ Intergroup Contact and Communication).

When people consider their group to have stable and legitimate low status, believe it possible to join a high-status group, and have little commitment to their ingroup, then they are likely to have *social mobility beliefs*. In other words, the problem of striving for positive social identity is solved by adopting an ideology based on individual movement between groups. On the other hand, people might perceive their group's status to be low, but consider the circumstances that produce that low status to be illegitimate and unstable. If this is combined with a sense that it is not possible to shift into another group, and strong ingroup identification, such a person is likely to solve the problem of positive social identity by engaging in *social competition*. In other words, people with these beliefs are likely to have hostile attitudes about members of the higher-status outgroup, and may engage in social action designed to change the situation. Examples would include engaging in language revival movements, engaging in social protest, or developing prejudicial attitudes toward members of the advantaged group.

Finally, someone who believes that it is not possible to individually join another group, but who also believe that the status of their group is stable (i.e., cannot be easily changed through some form of social action), is likely to value their ingroup but avoid confrontation with an outgroup. *Social, creative responses* to this problem of resolving positive social identity include finding a lower-status group to make comparison with, rejecting the basis for social comparison (e.g., the slogan "black is beautiful"), or ignoring the basis for status (e.g., intelligence, competence, wealth), and focusing instead on an alternative solidarity-based dimension for defining the ingroup (e.g., integrity, benevolence, or decency).

More recent research has considered the *role of the mass media* in particular as affecting group vitality and the likelihood of collective action (Reid et al. 2004; → Collective Action and Communication). Indigenous groups such as Native Americans and Hawaiians typically receive short shrift on mainstream television, and such a lack of exposure will likely have a negative impact upon subjective group vitality (→ Symbolic Annihilation). Similarly, there is much evidence that minority groups, such as women and older adults, have received relatively little exposure on mainstream television. Further to the lack of media representation, the depictions that are presented are often negative and stereotypic. It is likely that such portrayals negatively impact the subjective vitality of members of such groups, both within the minority group and in the minds of non-minority group members (→ Media and Group Representations).

There is, however, evidence that people engage with the media in ways designed to gratify social identities. In other words, people actively search for media content that provides information about the ingroup, and there is evidence that consuming such

material can have a positive impact on social identity (→ Exposure to Communication Content). Despite the presence of negative depictions of groups, it is possible that individuals' active attempts to find positive ingroup images can override the effect of more mainstream depictions. Other lines of more recent research include application of this approach to under-studied groups such as those defined by disability, age, civilian–police encounters, homosexual–heterosexual interactions, and the presence and effect of intergroup relations on the Internet (see Harwood & Giles 2005).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Collective Action and Communication ▶ Communication Accommodation Theory ▶ Ethnolinguistic Vitality and Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Intergroup Accommodative Processes ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ Persuasion ▶ Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ▶ Symbolic Annihilation

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## **Social Interaction Structure**

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How someone behaves verbally, physically, or through their presence in a social context influences the behavior of other people in that context. This is a logical and practical assumption about any form of shared human activity (→ Interactivity, Concept of). The variety of ways that behavior takes shape and is repeated over time and situations is referred to as “social interaction structure.” The concept of structure also implies that observable patterns of behavior give individual acts, messages, and other behaviors a frame of reference that can be used in their interpretation. The study of social interaction structures also encompasses analyses of natural language in multi-speaker conversations



(→ Conversation Analysis). Scholars who explore language-based approaches to social interaction often focus on how *rules* of language use and norms governing social behavior influence communication practices (McLaughlin 1984). The study of social interaction structure is also closely aligned with the study of communication as a dynamic *process* (→ Models of Communication) and is often used as the basis for empirically representing *communication systems*. Social interaction structures are studied in a number of sub-fields including group, intercultural, interpersonal, and organizational communication.

## IDENTIFYING AND INTERPRETING SOCIAL INTERACTION STRUCTURES

Interpreting social interaction structure involves applying theories about how social interaction is, or should be, organized to the results of observations and measurements of social activity. The content of social interaction structures can range from ordinary social behaviors, like words and physical movements, to the inclusion of graphical or melodic representations of ideas, thoughts, and emotions. Researchers may use very literal representations of actual messages (e.g., questions, statistics, etc.) or more generally descriptive terms reflecting broader categories of message themes (e.g., assertive, passive, etc.). Researchers also combine verbal and nonverbal messages together in making inferences about message content (e.g., expressions of sarcasm or irony).

An important variable used in defining the organization of communication processes is *time*. Time may account for the *duration* of events observed during social interaction as well as their *rate* of occurrence (the number of instances a behavior occurs in a given time unit). A related concept is *cyclicity*. Cycles represent structures based on the repetition of behaviors. Greeting rituals are examples of cycles that are an almost taken-for-granted part of ordinary social interaction. Cycles can also define the intervals between separate occurrences of social interaction. The intensity of emotional involvement displayed by people in a dispute, for example, can be judged by how little time elapses between messages or turns at talk.

Theoretical guidance is used in identifying message content and procedures for determining how messages are linked and interpreted. Social interaction structures can be classified into one or more of *four identifiable patterns*: distributional, sequential, temporal, and relational (Mabry 1999). These patterns represent increasingly complex explanations of the underlying social interaction.

## DISTRIBUTIONAL STRUCTURE

Distributional structures reveal variability in the frequency or rates of occurrence of social interaction. Classification measures of messages and/or speakers are designed to indicate the extent to which behavior is equally or unevenly distributed according to a method for defining the behavior. The examination of distributional structure is a basic result obtained from analyses of communication content (→ Coding; Measurement Theory; Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative).

Bales's interaction process analysis (IPA) observation system, for example, classifies message acts uttered in group discussions according to whether they represent *questions* or *attempted answers* regarding information, opinion, or suggested action, or are *positive*

or *negative social-emotional* expressions; overall, 12 types of messages expressed by group members are measured (e.g., agrees, gives suggestions, asks for information, disagrees, etc.). In his research using IPA, Bales found that a typical group problem-solving session produced about five times as many attempted answers as it did questions and roughly twice as many positive acts as negative acts; individual message category distributions showed that giving information accounted for the largest amount of interaction, about 30 percent, compared with positive or negative expressions of friendliness, which each accounted for about 3 percent of group interaction. Distributional structures were quite different in groups where members were satisfied or dissatisfied, experienced protracted conflicts, or worked under intense time pressure (see Bales 1999 for a thorough summary of his research and its implications). Distributional structures are used when communication research goals emphasize the types of messages shared during social interaction (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction; Marital Typologies; Mediated Social Interaction; Online Relationships; Relationship Development).

### SEQUENTIAL STRUCTURE

Sequential structures reflect the event order of messages involved in communication episodes or streams of conversation such as greetings, agreements, disagreements, or attempts at invoking or acceding to power displays. Norms of social interaction lead us to expect that a message exchange where, for example, person A says, “I agree” is likely to stimulate a different set of message responses from person B (or other parties) than if person A said “I disagree” (→ Social Conflict and Communication). Sequential structures are also instrumental in revealing how conversations are organized. The fact that speakers take turns helps make conversations predictable. Conversational organization also helps to explain speakers’ intentions and goals as communicators. How certain types of messages precede or follow each other is important for understanding whether speakers are being argumentative, dominating, playful, or sarcastic (→ Language and Social Interaction).

Rogers and Farace’s (1975) transactional method for analyzing relational communication identifies sequential structures based on influence control behaviors (→ Relational Control). These researchers analyzed records of conversations between relational partners to reveal successive pairs of sequentially occurring interpersonal control messages. Three sequential patterns of influence control structures emerged: *symmetrical*, *complementary*, or *transitory*. Symmetrical structures involved message sequences where both parties enacted the same type of control message. Complementary structure involved message sequences where one person’s message attempted to gain control and the other person was signaling a willingness to yield control. A transitory sequence occurred when a message either attempting to gain or yield control was paired with a message that appeared to neutralize control. Rogers and Farace (1975) also reported that transitory interactions comprised 60 percent of observed exchanges in their sample of couples’ interactions, symmetrical structures were the second most frequent sequence with 28 percent of the exchanges, and complementary exchanges accounted for only 12 percent of the interactions. Such findings suggest that couples spend a substantial amount of time attempting to neutralize their partners’ attempts at relational control instead of either challenging or acceding to the attempted influence. Assessments of sequential structure are often the

basis for theories advanced to explain how interpersonal relationships function and why they change.

### TEMPORAL STRUCTURE

Temporal structures integrate time-related factors into the organization of social interaction. Temporal structure is also judged by *event order* cycles based on changes in distributional or sequential structures. For instance, people in meetings may be somewhat more agreeable at the beginning of the meeting and toward the point in time when they want to end the meeting. But agreement may decrease, and disagreements increase, during the middle part of the meeting (Bales 1999). How groups and organizations pursue goals and react to external conditions can be tracked by observing changing patterns of communication that define specific phases or transitional stages (→ Organizational Change Processes).

Temporal structure is also implied in studies of how interpersonal relationships form, evolve, and dissolve. Berger and Calabrese (1975), for example, proposed that initial interaction between strangers passed through three phases motivated by needs for reducing uncertainty (→ Uncertainty Management). An “entry” phase draws on prior participants’ social information and norms of conduct assumed to be appropriate for that situation. Communication is more structured and oriented toward exchanging descriptive information. A second, “personal” phase may follow the entry phase, when people begin revealing information connected to core beliefs and values and how they perceive the other person(s) in the encounter. An “exit” phase marks the termination of the conversation and the encounter. Messages may revert back to normative expectations about ending social encounters or extend positive impressions made in the personal phase and solicit commitments to future contact. Although a linear trajectory is often implied in studies of temporal structure there is little agreement about the validity of this assumption. There is substantial agreement that studying transitional stages provides important insights about how communication functions in all social contexts.

### RELATIONAL STRUCTURE

Relational structures reflect the extent of *connectivity* between interacting parties (individuals, groups, and/or organizations). They resemble *network* configurations displaying how communicating units are connected by the amount of messages they exchange or time spent interacting (→ Social Networks). In romantic relationships, for example, Parks and Adelman (1983) demonstrated that couples were less likely to break up when they increased interaction with their partners and their partners’ network of family and friends. They attributed the results to a decline in uncertainty about the partner caused by increased social information and support generated from becoming more embedded in the romantic partner’s social network.

In his study of organizational networks, Danowski (1980) found network members in production- and innovation-oriented networks had similar beliefs and attitudes that reinforced network affiliations, whereas social maintenance (support) networks drew on more immediate, perceived problem issues. Relational structures are assessed through

direct observation of social interaction or by self-reported information obtained from participants (→ Network Analysis). All social contexts contain communication networks; however, people vary greatly regarding how densely connected (embedded) they are in their networks or the strength of their connections, on the basis of how much they interact with others with whom they are connected.

## RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Theories of social interaction structure are often linked to classes or specific types of mathematical analysis (e.g., distributional structure and log-linear models; sequential structure and Markov models). The merging of theory and analysis in the assessment of social interaction structure is often referred to as *modeling* (→ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis). Models represent mathematical expressions of how measured variables, like messages, are related to other variables (either messages or other social variables like attitudes or demographic attributes).

Mathematical modeling is uniquely suited to the complexity of analysis required for studying social interaction structures. Models provide relatively straightforward operational maps that can account for the persistence or changeability of a communication structure. The methodological options available for model development also have been demonstrated to provide increasing clarity and validity with more complex structures like sequential, temporal, and relational social interaction structures (VanLear 1996).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Coding ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linear and Nonlinear Models of Causal Analysis ▶ Marital Typologies ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Mediated Social Interaction ▶ Models of Communication ▶ Network Analysis ▶ Online Relationships ▶ Organizational Change Processes ▶ Relational Control ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Social Conflict and Communication ▶ Social Networks ▶ Uncertainty Management

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## Social Judgment Theory

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Social judgment theory (SJT; Sherif & Hovland 1961; Sherif et al. 1965) is based on the premise that the effect of a persuasive message on a particular issue depends on the way that the receiver evaluates the position that the message puts forth (O’Keefe 1990; → Persuasion). Sherif et al. (1965) claimed that an individual’s attitude toward a particular issue or behavior is not adequately reflected by a single alternative or position among those available. Research in the SJT tradition determines the limits of the position of the receiver “relative to the bounds of possible alternatives defined by the extreme positions on the issue” (Sherif et al. 1965, 3) in terms of the → latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection.

In SJT, each receiver judges the range of alternatives individually, and then these judgments can be combined “to reflect the consensus, defined by social norms, prevailing among given people” (Sherif et al. 1965, 10). Thus, SJT allows for delineating group patterns that emerge from perceptions of individuals (→ Social Norms). Additionally, SJT claims that the members of the population in question are affected by these patterns, in that they “develop and adopt a variety of practices, customs, traditions, and definitions that mark off latitudes for acceptable attitudes and behavior and for objectionable attitudes and behavior among members in various matters of consequence to the group . . . These shared practices and definitions with their highly evaluative aspects, are the norms of the group” (Sherif et al. 1965).

### THEORETICAL CONCEPTS

The following are some basic concepts of social judgment theory. When an issue has intrinsic importance or significant consequences for the life of the receiver, he or she is said to be highly ego involved. As *ego involvement* goes up, the trend is for the latitude of rejection to increase while the latitude of noncommitment decreases. An *ordered alternatives questionnaire* is a continuum of beliefs that form the complete range of alternative positions on an issue. It is bounded by the most extreme and opposite

positions possible, with a neutral position in the center, and there are usually between 7 and 11 beliefs listed. Granberg (1983) suggested that some of these statements should be ambiguous in order to facilitate detection of assimilation and contrast effects.

An *own categories questionnaire* is a subjective procedure whereby respondents sort the statements into categories that are meaningful to them. They are then asked which pile comes closest to their own position, which are acceptable, and which are objectionable. The *anchor point* is the position on the ordered alternatives that the receiver holds initially; the *latitude of acceptance* specifies the positions that he or she finds acceptable; the *latitude of noncommitment* represents the positions that he or she finds neither acceptable nor unacceptable; and the *latitude of rejection* represents the positions that he or she finds unacceptable. The *assimilation effect* is the judgmental distortion where one sees the persuasive message as falling closer to the anchor point than it really does. Little or no persuasion occurs because the receiver believes that he or she already holds a similar position on the topic. The *contrast effect* is the judgmental distortion where one sees the persuasive message as falling further from the anchor point than it really does. No persuasion is likely because the receiver believes that this message represents a view that he or she rejects outright. *Persuasion* is an attitude change toward or away from the position advocated by the persuader, which is affected by the receiver's initial judgment within the possible continuum of beliefs (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on).

## MEASUREMENT AND FINDINGS

In order to measure individual and group positions on a particular issue, SJT involves the construction of an ordered alternatives questionnaire or the own categories procedure, which presents the gamut of possible positions on the issue. Respondents are asked to indicate the positions they find acceptable, unacceptable, or neither acceptable nor unacceptable. The size of the latitude of rejection provides a measure of ego involvement. From these individual responses, group responses can be calculated that reflect the audience's latitudes of acceptance, rejection, and noncommitment.

Persuasive messages for a particular audience should be aimed at the far reaches of their latitude of acceptance, or into their latitude of noncommitment. Messages that fall into the latitude of acceptance are likely to cause an assimilation effect, whereby they are seen as being closer to the audience's position than they really are. Messages that fall into the latitude of rejection are seen as being further away from the audience's position than they really are due to a contrast effect. An audience with less involvement is more likely to be persuaded with a discrepant message than is an audience with high involvement in the issue because the latitude of rejection of the former should be smaller (O'Keefe 1990), thus the latitudes of acceptance and noncommitment should be relatively larger (→ News Processing and Retention; Scales; Test Theory).

Although SJT has been employed in a wide variety of contexts within the field of communication such as → political communication, → health communication, group communication, advertising research, public relations, and legal communication, this review will focus on the first two.

### Political Communication

There is a long history of the application of SJT principles to political communication and attempted attitude change (→ Political Persuasion). O’Keefe (1990) notes that while political campaigns are quite clear in their persuasive messages to get the voters to engage in the overt behavior of voting for their candidate, they are usually more ambiguous in their messages about campaign issues. That is because candidates hope that voters will assume that the candidate’s view and the voters’ views are closer than they actually are. In this case, then, an assimilation effect is desired. Granberg (1983) provides some fascinating examples of the use of ambiguity in political communication, citing examples ranging from General Douglas MacArthur to Robert Kennedy. He noted that McGovern, Stevenson, and Goldwater tried to be too specific when communicating their stances on political issues, while the Nixon, Carter, and Bush, Sr. campaigns benefited from a lack of clarity. He claimed that, “experience has taught politicians that it is unwise to sharpen the issues too much . . . Our system puts a premium on ambiguity” (Granberg 1983; → Election Campaign Communication; Strategic Framing).

Granberg (1983) also provided an overview of findings relevant to political persuasion using SJT (→ Third-Person Effects). He claimed that people tend to assimilate the stands of a preferred candidate, that the degree of assimilation is related to the importance of that issue, that the tendency to contrast the stands of a nonpreferred politician is not as strong as the tendency to assimilate the stands of a preferred politician, and that while ambiguity facilitates assimilation of a preferred candidate, lack of ambiguity facilitates contrast effects in a nonpreferred candidate.

More recently, researchers have studied the *third-person effect* (TPE) in political attack ads via the lens of SJT. Paek et al. (2005) investigated whether people estimated the effects of political attack ads to be stronger on others than on themselves. They predicted, consistent with SJT, that lack of credible evidence and social distance between the respondent and the third person would enhance the third-person effect with regard to political ads. They claimed that SJT offers theoretical potential for understanding the underlying mechanisms of the TPE and seeing it as a cognitive fallacy that can be corrected through presentation of credible and relevant information. They found that “credible information on overall message ineffectiveness leads to the reduction of estimated effects on both self and various others and in self–other perceptual gaps when the other is more distant from self.”

### Health Communication

One recent study applies SJT to health communication campaigns (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in). Smith et al. (2006) merged the social norms approach (SNA) with SJT. The SNA predicts that campaign messages providing true normative information about widely misperceived health behaviors will reduce the gap between inaccurate perceptions and actual practices, and consequently reduce behaviors originally based on exaggerated norms. At the formative evaluation stage of designing messages informed by SJT, the researcher should measure the boundaries of the latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection for true normative information to be conveyed to an audience (→ Message Design Logics). This study focused on norms for moderate

consumption of alcohol on a college campus, discovering that the three latitudes were significantly different from one another in believability. SJT predicts that a campaign based on a norm falling in the latitude of noncommitment is most likely to be effective.

A series of messages using the true norm, which fell within the latitude of noncommitment, were part of a year-long media-based health persuasion campaign (→ Cumulative Media Effects). Subsequent → survey data showed significant reductions in the gap in perceived versus actual percentage of alcohol consumption and actual versus perceived number of drinks; moreover, self-reports of consumption of five or fewer drinks increased significantly (→ Risk Communication). Therefore, using SJT as a guiding force in the message testing stage of the campaign was effective. SJT can also explain the effects of failed campaigns using persuasive messages that fell into the audience's latitude of rejection.

SJT can be assessed in terms of the criteria for a strong scientific theory (Granberg 1983). It synthesizes the known body of facts well and is grounded in findings generated from empirical studies. Not all studies have findings that are readily explained by the tenets of SJT, so it has established disconfirmation. The theory is unique in its focus on assessment of the full gamut of possible positions on a persuasive topic and its delineation of the latitudes of acceptance, noncommitment, and rejection, along with the subsequent possible assimilation and contrast effects from messages aimed at these latitudes. SJT is relatively parsimonious: "It does not contain excess baggage" (Granberg 1983). It has not had the heuristic value of other classic persuasion theories, however. Perhaps a resurgence of SJT principles might occur as researchers such as Smith et al. (2006) pair it with other theories, models, and approaches.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Cumulative Media Effects ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Latitude of Acceptance ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Scales ▶ Social Norms ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Survey ▶ Test Theory ▶ Third-Person Effects

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# Social Marketing

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Social marketing is a tool or framework that “relies on multiple scientific disciplines to create programs designed to influence human behavior on a large scale” (Smith 2006, 138). It traces its roots to an article written in the 1950s by the sociologist G. D. Wiebe, who “expressed concern that marketing was not being applied to such problems as ‘selling brotherhood like soap’” (Andreasen 2003, 294). The idea did not grow, however, until the 1960s and 1970s, when scholars such as Philip Kotler, Sidney Levy, Gerald Zaltman, and Alan Andreasen began to write about its core principles and gave it a name (Andreasen 2003).

Although social marketing has been used to address a variety of social concerns, it has been most consistently used in health promotion and disease prevention (Andreasen 2002), which has made it an area of special interest to scholars in health communication. Successful social marketing initiatives focused on health outcomes have included the *truth*<sup>®</sup> anti-smoking campaign aimed at teenagers; the Swiss *Stop AIDS* program, which sought to increase condom use among casual sex partners; the *VERB*<sup>™</sup> campaign, which promoted activity among 9–13 year olds; and the *PREMI* initiative, which increased immunization coverage in Ecuador (for more detailed examples, see Lefebvre & Flora 1988; Grier & Bryant 2005; Smith 2006; → Health Communication; Marketing).

Social marketing is characterized by *six defining criteria* (Andreasen 2002). (1) Behavior change is the benchmark used to design and evaluate interventions. (2) Projects consistently use audience research to (a) understand target audiences at the outset of the interventions (i.e., formative research), (b) routinely pre-test intervention elements before they are implemented, and (c) monitor interventions as they are rolled out. (3) There is careful segmentation of the target audiences to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness in the use of scarce resources. (4) The central element of any influence strategy is creating attractive motivational exchanges with target audiences. (5). The strategy attempts to use all four Ps (i.e., product, price, place, and promotion) of the traditional marketing mix. (6) Careful attention is paid to the competition faced by the desired behavior.

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Although social marketers have turned to a variety of theoretical perspectives for insight into individual initiatives, *exchange theory* serves as social marketing’s primary conceptual foundation. Exchange theory, which is derived from psychological and economic principles, “assumes that we are need-directed beings with a natural inclination to try and improve our lot” (Hastings & Saren 2003, 309). In order for a successful exchange to occur, both parties act primarily to fulfill their own interests. In the case of a health-related initiative, an effective marketing organization assesses and meets the needs of a target audience, and the organization benefits in return when members of the audience change their behavior (Maibach 2002). According to Smith (2000), the emphasis on

exchange theory differentiates social marketing from other approaches to behavior change such as education, which assumes that knowledge in and of itself leads to change, and a regulatory approach, which highlights enforcement as the most effective path to change.

## THE MARKETING MIX

One of the important features of social marketing is the marketing mix, which is borrowed from commercial marketing and is commonly referred to as the 4 Ps. A social marketing initiative carefully integrates all four elements.

The first of the four Ps is *product*, which is the “bundle of benefits being offered to members of the target audience” (Maibach 2002, 11). Although it is possible for the product to be a physical object such as a condom, more commonly social marketers attempt to “sell” an intangible product such as an idea, a social cause, or, most frequently, a change of behavior (e.g., eating more fruits and vegetables or using seat belts). When the product is not something one can easily hold or touch, the social marketer has the challenge of making “these ‘intangibles’ tangible in a way that appeals to the target audience” (Lefebvre & Flora 1988, 306).

In commercial marketing, *price* usually refers to the monetary value placed on a product. In social marketing, money also can figure into the price an audience member must pay in order to change behavior, but price also refers, at least in part, to the collective barriers that an individual must overcome to adopt the proposed action (Smith 2000). Non-monetary barriers can be “social, behavioral, psychological, temporal, structural, geographic, and physical” (Lefebvre & Flora 1988, 307). Price, however, is not simply about the downside of change. Part of conducting a price analysis for social marketers is also identifying the incentives a member of the target group can enjoy as a result of adopting a new behavior (e.g., an increased sense of self-esteem after losing weight).

*Place*, which also can be called the distribution channel, refers to “the process by which the product is made available to members of the target market at the time and place when it will be of most value to them” (Maibach 2002, 11). In order for social marketers to take advantage of the most ideal places, they have to identify what Grier and Bryant (2005) called “path points,” which are locations people regularly visit; times of the day, week, or year of their visits; and points in the life cycle where people are likely to act.

*Promotion*, which is the most visible component of the marketing mix (Grier & Bryant 2005), is the social marketing element most directly linked to communication. The communication options available to a social marketer are many and varied. One can, for instance, promote a product through → advertising, → public relations, consumer promotions, education, counseling, community organizations, interpersonal networks (→ Social Networks), point-of-purchase materials, direct mail, signage, special events and displays, printed materials, entertainment media, and the web (Grier & Bryant 2005; Maibach 2002; Smith 2000). Social marketing scholars posit that too often individuals not familiar with the complex relationship of all four Ps to one another reduce social marketing to promotion only (Maibach 2002). For an initiative to be labeled accurately as social marketing, the process must include the entire mix and not just the creation and communication of a message.

## CRITICISMS AND DIRECTIONS

### Use of Theory

One area of criticism frequently associated with social marketing is the application of theory. These criticisms have come in two forms. First, many social marketing initiatives either forego a direct reference to a theoretical base altogether, or, at the very least, reflect an application of theory that lacks formality. Walsh et al. (1993, 115) noted that professional social marketers often approach their task as “intuitive tinkerers” who are “impatient with the proposition that their craft warrants or can fruitfully be subjected to formal theory testing.”

Second, some scholars, such as Lefebvre, have argued that social marketing should go beyond exchange theory and called for theoretical eclecticism that will make social marketing a stronger, more vibrant approach to behavior change (Bryant 2004). Grier and Bryant (2005) also argued for eclecticism by suggesting that social marketers incorporate standard health behavior theories and models (e.g., theory of reasoned action, social learning theory, transtheoretical model) when appropriate, as well as frameworks less familiar to social marketers such as the emotional contagion model, political risk compensation theory, risk homeostasis theory, and social capital.

### Research and Evaluation

Another major challenge social marketers face is to incorporate rigorous research into their campaigns. This is difficult for two reasons. First, quality research at any level requires resources in the form of money, people, and time. Many organizations and groups (e.g., government offices and nonprofits) that wish to create campaigns often sacrifice needed research in order to dedicate what resources are available to the promotion portion of the marketing mix (i.e., communicating the message).

For instance, at the formative stage of campaign development, some social marketers forego data collection altogether, or the *information they gather provides limited insights*. Grier and Bryant (2005) argued, for example, that social marketers rely too heavily on focus groups, which often can be completed more quickly and with less expense, to make strategic decisions (→ Qualitative Methodology). Although focus groups conducted properly can provide very meaningful knowledge, Grier and Bryant believed that (1) disproportionate use of focus groups can be misleading because issues that people discuss do not always have the greatest impact on behavioral decisions; and (2) focus group data cannot provide needed insight into audience segmentation in the way that quantitative data can, which often are more resource intensive to gather (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in; Communication and Social Change: Research Methods; Research Methods).

Second, social marketing initiatives often *lack sufficient outcome data* to provide persuasive evidence that a campaign actually worked. Again, lack of resources accounts for much of the problem, but a larger issue relates to measurement and evaluation design. Commercial marketers typically have clearly defined objectives against which success can be measured, such as sales or market share, but outcome evaluation for social marketers

requires greater creativity to detect change. Grier and Bryant (2005) contended that there are innovative methods available to social marketers for providing convincing evidence for change, but results will only be taken seriously when they avoid the common mistakes made in outcome evaluation, such as measuring outcomes too early, before change can occur, failing to measure exposure to the promotion and expecting too much from a limited intervention “dose,” measuring the wrong outcomes, and using the wrong units of analysis when measuring effects (e.g., individuals instead of communities).

Although there have been criticisms directed at social marketing as a framework for behavior change and there are continued challenges that social marketers face, consistent evidence suggests that when applied with rigor social marketing has great potential as a tool for positive effect.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Audience Research ▶ Communication and Social Change: Research Methods ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Health Communication ▶ Health Communication, Ethics in ▶ Marketing ▶ Public Relations ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Research Methods ▶ Social Networks ▶ Tailoring, Communication and

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# Social Mobilization

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Social mobilizations are concrete evidence of commitment and activism aimed at some form of social transformation, whether in the formal sense of changing laws or by influencing informal social norms. Mobilizations are episodic and shorter-lived than movements, and are often key milestones in the history of movements, providing observable evidence of solidarity, progress, and public awareness built around a particular cause or set of related causes (→ Social Movements and Communication). Mobilizations may receive the conferral of legitimacy through the support of political institutions such as local and national governments, or intergovernmental organizations such as UN agencies. But mobilizations also may challenge and serve to undermine the moral authority and/or political legitimacy of such institutions. They can be understood as means to the ends sought by social movements, and although no single mobilization is sufficient evidence of the existence and scope of a social movement, no movement can be said to exist without one or more forms of observable mobilization.

*Mobilization repertoires* may vary according to legality/illegality, scale, size, cost, intensity, and purpose. Practices may include mass street demonstrations; protest marches; sit-ins and blockades; occupations of land or buildings; street theatre and performance; temporary public art installations; “culture jamming,” often involving spoofs played with brand icons or other familiar corporate or government symbols; boycotts; petitions and lobbying activities; and “electronic civil disobedience” (also known as → “hacktivism”), typically to interrupt service or access to corporate or government websites.

Some forms of social mobilization entail acts of violence, which often are committed to “send a message.” For example, activists may not only break minor laws through such acts as trespassing, which is often the case with nonviolent civil disobedience, but they may also be involved in the theft or destruction of property, kidnapping, hostage-taking, torture, and killing. In modern parlance, non-state actors who use violent means, regardless of their cause, are often labeled “terrorists” by governments to which they are opposed. Whether and when violence is justified as a response to injustice is disputed widely, but the use of violence as a means of social mobilization against extreme injustice by non-state actors has been defended by many political writers, including Thomas Jefferson, Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, Jean-Paul Sartre, and John Rawls. But if the definition of “social mobilization” is to be restricted only to political action through nonviolent means, it would deny the legitimacy of all past and future armed struggles for national independence, regardless of how barbaric the colonial conditions may have been.

Social historians date “modern” social movements as far back as the early and mid-nineteenth-century transatlantic (British and North American) movement against slavery. Research on the abolitionist movement reveals a well-developed set of communicative practices that not only were successful in drawing public outrage toward the barbarism of slavery, but also were an early manifestation of *transnational* social mobilization (→ Social Movement Media, Transnational; Transnational Civil Society). Records of speeches, written

texts, and other forms of public expression indicate a rhetorical strategy, sustained over the course of many decades, which provided eyewitness accounts of the inhumanity of slavery and the slave trade, and which aimed to bring shame to those responsible while bringing public pressure to abolish the institution of slavery itself. Today, the practices of bearing witness, shaming, and other forms of public pressure remain time-tested mobilization strategies.

In late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Europe, *trade unions and socialist political parties* were the seedbeds of important debates about class struggle, and for generations they have defined the image and substance of the most influential social mobilization under capitalism. In Rosa Luxemburg's 1908 pamphlet "Social reform or revolution?" she argued that reform must be understood as a *means* to the end of socialist revolution. Luxemburg rejected the view advanced by her contemporaries within the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) who argued that parliamentary reform was a more realistic goal, and instead she argued for more aggressive tactics, including the general strike, as clear demonstrations of the power of the working class to bring about radical social transformation. Naturally, "revolutionary" mobilization strategies came to be seen as quite distinct from "reformist" strategies, and as definitely more threatening to capitalist class power.

In most countries, radical social agendas are less likely to gain favorable attention from and access to dominant media institutions, and consequently, media used for radical mobilization are likely to be smaller scale and/or less costly to operate (→ Access to the Media). Today's low-cost digital audio and video recording technology, laptop computers, and increasingly global → Internet coverage have come to supplement and even replace the working-class press and made it possible for social mobilization to take place at an unprecedented scale and speed. Mobilizations since the late 1990s, targeted against global trade and investment liberalization – for example, protesting the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, the policies of the World Trade Organization, and the "structural adjustment" policies of the International Monetary Fund – have demonstrated political will and imaginative efforts to pursue "global justice" on a global scale (→ Technology and Globalization). At the same time, parallel efforts have emerged to articulate a broad range of "communication rights" in multilateral forums, summits, and declarations, which is not surprising, given how central the means of communication are to large-scale mobilization efforts at national and transnational levels.

As in previous generations, movement organizers face the risk of repression by governments seeking to prevent, control, disrupt, infiltrate, co-opt, or otherwise undermine social mobilizations through covert and overt means. Some methods used by states are generally recognized as reasonable, such as the uniform application of limits on the time, place, and manner in which demonstrations and marches may take place. However, other techniques used by states can be in violation not only of rights elaborated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but also of a country's own laws. Various forms of government surveillance, infiltration, and disruption of lawful political activity; unlawful searches and seizures of the property of movement actors; the denial of due legal process (e.g., lack of probable cause for arrest, and unlawful detention); physical abuse, torture, and even killing of activists; as well as ongoing harassment and intimidation, are all ways in which democratically elected governments sometimes violate their own constitutional principles in order to limit or prevent the potential of social mobilizations to draw public attention to actual or alleged injustice.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Development Communication ▶ Hacktivism  
▶ Internet ▶ Social Movement Media, Transnational ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ Transnational Civil Society

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## **Social Movement Media, Transnational**

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Transnational social movements engage in communication processes as well as the creation of media products in their strategic work toward social change. Media attention to these efforts as well becomes part of the ongoing struggle to promote social justice, political opportunities, and economic equality. The bridging of social movement interests across national boundaries signals the importance of issues beyond narrowly defined territories along with the coordinated efforts of actors across political boundaries (→ Transnational Civil Society; Social Movements and Communication).

Social movements offer a critical vehicle for engaging in strategic change across a variety of circumstances and for promoting varied goals and processes. The wide variation across these collectives and organizations that exists is worth noting, given the impact this has on constructing generalizable analyses from the particular historical and structural conditions of any given group (→ Generalizability). Some of the potential distinctions to consider might include the degree to which the social movement's agenda resonates with dominant or competing ideological tendencies, the potential to mobilize financial as well as social and cultural resources toward political gain, and other elements of the context within which the movement is attempting to achieve critical change. At issue here are those movements united by transnational interests, coordinating and acting across politically defined nation-states.

### **COMMUNICATION PROCESSES**

Given the transnational character of these social movements, the strategic efforts of these groups demand coordination across communities of participants who are not directly

known to one another. Communication technologies help these processes through *facilitating the mobilization and coordination* of plans as well as actions. Many anti-globalization movements, such as protests against the G8 meeting in Genoa in July 2001 and the planning of the European Social Forum in Florence in November 2002, relied on email as well as web-based communications to organize protests, coordinate transportation, and offer accommodation to engaged activists (→ Technology and Communication; Network Organizations through Communication Technology).

The use of communication technologies also provides a *vehicle for discussion and networking*, beyond the functional aspect of planning, thereby promoting a sense of shared purpose and identity. Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), a group based on principles of global feminism, was able to promote this spirit of collectivity through a combination of communication processes based in email and web systems as well as fax machines.

In addition to promoting the internal functioning and identity of the transnational social movement, communications also represents a *text* (→ Text and Intertextuality), recognizing the potential for asserting claims on interpretations of social struggles. As a product, → activist media offer distinct visions of social problems and possible solutions not typically present in the mainstream media. When dominant interpretations of communities and events in the media are deemed limited or problematic, the importance of creating alternative texts is imperative (→ Arab Satellite TV News; Kurdish International Broadcasting; Le Monde Diplomatique; TeleSur). IndyMedia groups, for example, employed a variety of video and textually based formats to counter dominant trivializations of groups protesting in Seattle in 1999. Similarly, the World Social Forum offers a virtual information sphere in order to publicize and legitimize alternative visions of crises and justice.

While some social movements focus on producing their own mediated texts, such as radio programs, video installations, and web-based sites of information, other groups engage in *media advocacy*, attempting to inspire media attention as well as legitimize their efforts in mainstream media industries. Transnational social movements advocating better conditions for workers in sweatshops were able to gain media attention through disseminating information on devastating conditions through the → Internet.

The Zapatista community was also able to leverage broad public support for resistance to injustices suffered in the Chiapas region in Mexico. Gaining legitimacy outside of the local territory was possible through the electronic networking of several groups, such as Global Exchange, Mexico Solidarity Network, and others. Attention to clear human rights violations and military coercion gained traction as first-hand accounts traveled through web-based systems toward other media.

## CASE STUDIES

The following → case studies illustrate some of the ways in which transnational social movements have integrated media into their internal communication processes, as well as creating or attracting media as texts signifying the struggles of these groups. Specific illustrations remind us of the importance of contextual factors in understanding the nature of social change and the potential for active engagement, rather than positing social movements or processes as somehow universal.



### **Global Social Justice Movement**

As a first case, paramount were the historical conditions giving rise to the mobilization against the World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings in 1999, as well as the particular communication technologies available toward promoting the process and vision of these groups. Diverse groups, mostly but not entirely based in the US, coordinated efforts in these protests through the use of the Internet and web-based systems. In addition, digital media were used to document the activities and intentions of the groups, in order to offer subsequent media texts countering a dominant vision of protestors as trivial or marginal. These texts included video, audio, and print in a variety of formats, distributed through the web, radio, magazines, newspapers, and other forms of communication. IndyMedia, as one organization devoted to the principles of resisting neo-liberal capitalism embodied by the WTO, offered a media outlet for different groups of participants to organize and chronicle their work in this broader effort (→ Independent Media Centers Network).

Subsequent protests against the G8 summit in July 2001, along with the advent of the European Social Forum the following year, exemplified similar applications of media systems, as representing both functional value in facilitating internal communication toward planning strategies, and critical value in composing a site for political engagement. Participants heavily relied upon computer-based technologies for email, online dialogues, and web-sites to engage in networking and publicize their interests, positioned against opposing views presented in mainstream media. For example, IndyMedia offered a vision of peaceful, ordinary citizens engaging in protests countering a mainstream version emphasizing violent, chaotic mobs.

### **Transnational Feminist Movements**

Just as resistance to global agencies promoting neo-liberal capitalism necessitates mobilization across national boundaries, so feminist movements engage in transnational action in response to patriarchal policies and actions (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). Although the particular conditions circumscribing the role of gender in power dynamics are recognized as integral to experiences of oppression, connecting gender with issues of ethnicity, class, sexuality, and other circumstances, these groups are united in their interest in promoting social justice and equality. Some of these social movements, including DAWN, Network Women in Development Europe (WIDE), and Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML), have used a variety of communications technologies, including fax as well as email and websites, to promote women's rights in the region they refer to as the global south.

Constituted through the work of participants based mostly in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, DAWN works with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in supporting feminist analyses of globalization, sustainability, and sexual and reproductive health and rights, among other issues. WIDE includes a policy component in its work, attempting to influence European and other international policies on issues of gender equity, building from a network of NGOs based in European Union countries. WLUML attempts to foster a sense of community among women living in Muslim countries, coordinated through regional offices in Pakistan and Nigeria, such that experiences can be shared and

strategies invoked to resist patriarchal control. These feminist groups share an interest in reinforcing transnational communities of feminist activists, through their use of communications technologies to share experiences and permit dialogue. Each of these organizations offers documents and news of their work through its website. Some also incorporate subscription-based services toward supplemental types of information exchange.

### **Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement**

Another social movement demonstrates how one local effort grew into more broadly based global groups through connecting activities and information through media. The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, initially enacted through local leadership and participation in Sri Lanka, has since evolved into a network of global participants (across Asian, African, American, and European regions) interested in creating “eco-villages” or communities creating practices alternative to usual approaches to modernity.

Internet systems have offered networked participants the opportunity to share information on past practices and organize conferences, while those with access to these technologies are able to view projected information on selected projects and ideals.

### **CONCERNS AND LIMITATIONS**

Although communications offer important processes as well as products critical to the struggles articulated through the work of transnational social movements, some concerns and limitations remain. Computer-based technologies appear to be integral to the coordination of transnational collectives, yet many other formats and technologies, encompassing attention to → popular culture, news and community radio and newspapers (→ Community Media), and electronic listservs, remain central to the broader context of social change.

Concerns about the → digital divide in access to computer technologies remind us of the limitations of access not only to computers and to the infrastructure supporting them (such as reliable systems of electricity), but also to the languages and literacies of practice and to cultural capital supporting use. Newer technologies presuppose a structural basis of social, financial, and other forms of capital that privilege elite participants, yet the agenda of social change needs to include those participants without access to such resources. Thus the conditions that underscore the very problems engaged by transnational social movements may be inadvertently reinforced by practices of resistance. The careful strategic use of media and communications must be engaged with in order to address global concerns with inequality and injustice.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Case Studies ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Video ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Generalizability ▶ Independent Media Centers Network ▶ Internet ▶ Kurdish International Broadcasting ▶ Le Monde Diplomatique ▶ Migrant Community Media ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ TeleSur ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Transnational Civil Society

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## **Social Movements and Communication**

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In all societies, social critics challenge unequal distributions of wealth, power, and privilege, effects of social policy, and cultural change or transgression. Aggrieved groups may organize to pursue their shared beliefs and interests. If they are unable to obtain satisfaction by petitioning legitimized political, economic, and cultural institutions they may take to the streets. Social movements are sustained collective actions occurring outside legitimated institutions of social power in pursuit of social goals (→ Collective Action and Communication).

Social movements historically have championed the interests of disadvantaged groups such as industrial workers, racial minorities, and women. Unable to command the economic or political resources available to interest groups and political parties, movements must generate a large and dedicated membership as their power base. Widespread support for movement goals will not guarantee a large or committed membership, however.

### **RECRUITMENT AND MOBILIZATION**

Olson (1965) noted that activists pay a price for their activism but they rarely are materially compensated for all their costs. To explain the widespread existence of social movements and the sometimes extreme sacrifice members make on their behalf, scholars point to subjective rewards of movement membership.

Interpersonal communication and interaction among activists are intrinsically satisfying, generating affective bonds and increased mutual respect (→ Interpersonal Communication). Blumer (1955) stated that activists, through interpersonal interaction in

intimate settings, develop feelings of “mutual sympathy and responsiveness” and a sense of belonging. Melucci (1989) argues that the development of a collective identity is a necessary precondition for movement effectiveness. The existence of an intellectually and emotionally supportive community reassures each activist that she or he is engaging in a worthwhile and noble cause. Membership in a revered group enhances self-esteem and provides meaning to one’s own life. For extremists the group acts as a haven from criticism and isolation.

Personal attachments often precede movement membership as existing interpersonal networks and local organizations are mined for recruits (→ Social Networks). Black churches in the southern United States and interpersonal networks among activists in the north were important for recruitment to the US civil rights movement in the 1960s (McAdam et al. 2001; → Civil Rights Movement and the Media). To promote the development of interpersonal networks and emotional ties, movement organizations sponsor picnics, hunting trips, and music festivals and set aside time at formal meetings and official gatherings for interaction. Collective actions promote interpersonal ties and collective identity. When facing riot police or organized opposition, activists are forced to count on one another, deepening bonds and developing trust and esteem. Shared hardship and confrontation starkly demarcate friend from foe, “we” from “they,” and serve to cement the adoption of a collective identity by activists. Subsequent encounters with fellow activists, bystanders, and members of the opposition are colored by their collective identities. Public protest, especially when it generates physical hardship, is a form of ritual sacrifice by the community and its members in the name of the larger utopian vision of the movement.

Incorporating and reinterpreting portions of the host culture, and innovating with new symbols and meanings, movements construct their own unique culture complete with myths and narratives, styles of dress, language, hairstyles, songs, heroes, and villains (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). Shared culture strengthens the sense of community and serves to demarcate the boundary between member and nonmember. Wearing movement clothes and singing movement songs serves to display publicly the activists’ identification with the movement, proudly proclaiming membership and accepting alienation from the opposition. Movement culture may become popular among a wider audience, potentially serving as a recruitment tool as reggae music has done for the Rastafari movement.

## **IDEOLOGY AND RHETORIC**

Social movements do ideological work. They frame social conditions as social problems, explain how those problems arose and how they operate in society, and propose and promote corrective social action. Certain *framing strategies* allow leaders to deepen activist commitment or to form coalitions with other activist groups (→ Framing Effects; Strategic Framing). Powerful frames incorporate widely held beliefs and values, present member interests as widely shared, and resonate with the everyday experience of activists.

Compelling frames emphasize injustice, identifying a group that is unfairly victimized, specifying an identifiable villain, and presenting a call to action to end the injustice (Gamson 1992). Such frames appeal to emotion as well as reason. Movement organizations

promote their frames for social problems to the media. The media are more likely to adopt frames that are reformist rather than revolutionary, and that are promoted by legitimated groups. Media framing influences public opinion on issues, and can impact the legitimacy and effectiveness of social movement organizations (→ Framing of the News).

## ORGANIZATION OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

### Movement Propaganda

To provide movement continuity, coordinate movement actions at regional, national, and international levels, and provide leadership that can represent movements to major social institutions, activists develop organizations of varying formality and permanence. The conditions that social movement leaders face require them to be exceptional rhetors (Simons and Mechling 1981). They must satisfy fractious volunteer memberships that often prefer radical rhetoric and at the same time avoid alienating potential allies among the elite and wider public, usually by reassuring them privately that the movement seeks moderate goals through peaceful means. Should the discrepancy be made public, leaders must explain themselves, as American civil rights leader Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., adeptly did by appealing to higher values and purposes.

The predominant means for resource-starved social movements to reach their goals is to convince officials or the wider public to adopt supportive beliefs and opinions. Social movements employ a wide range of → *propaganda tactics*, but are especially known for public protest, including demonstrations, sit-ins, marches, and picketing. Public protest draws attention to an existing social condition and defines it as contested or problematic, demonstrates that a group of citizens are willing to sacrifice time and effort and to risk incarceration or injury to address the problem, provides an opportunity to recruit sympathizers and to influence → public opinion, and challenges institutional authorities to respond.

### Getting News Coverage

Movements *seek out news coverage* by engaging in dramatic public protest actions, making leaders available for interviews, holding → press conferences, and sending out press releases. Television coverage of US civil rights protests during the early 1960s has been credited with generating emotional and monetary support for the movement, pressuring the federal government to provide protection for activists, and positively influencing the passage of movement-sponsored legislation. Other movements have found coverage to be less valuable, or even to be harmful. The Black Panther Party, also seeking the expansion of African-American rights and welfare, was portrayed as extreme and dangerous, making state repression more palatable to the public.

Content analyses of protest coverage show that even large demonstrations, strikes, or rallies may be ignored if the movement is especially disfavored, as, for example, neo-fascist movements, or if the action does not seem newsworthy to journalists (→ News Values; Content Analysis, Quantitative). News organizations value the odd and the sensational and highlight them in protest coverage, at times to the detriment of coverage

of protesters' message. Violence, especially, is likely to be highlighted where present and even its absence noted or discussed (→ News Factors; Sensationalism). Activists must choose between adopting confrontational or sensational tactics to draw attention, knowing that the tone will likely be negative and the focus on the actions rather than the movement message, and eschewing sensation and disruption, with the knowledge that the movement's struggle may be ignored. At anti-globalization protests in Seattle, Quebec City, Genoa, Cancun, and Hong Kong from 1999 to 2005, activists attempted to gain attention without appearing dangerous or unbalanced by engaging in innovative, dramatic, and symbolically pregnant expression such as street theatre, skydiving into demonstrations, hanging massive signs from buildings or overpasses, dressing up as sea turtles, undressing, dancing, singing and chanting, burning flags, and even committing suicide.

Media preference for the sensational may affect movement organizations themselves. Gitlin (1980) described how press preference for the more radical and flamboyant members of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) during the 1960s generated a public perception that the organization was a militant extreme leftist organization. Those whose politics reflected that perception were more likely to join the organization than were moderates, so that the organization was radicalized. Public perception of the organization as radical decreased mainstream support for the SDS, encouraging government repression and organizational decline.

Sustained movement activity may draw more diverse coverage, including a more complete discussion of movement ideology and social critique. Attention in the news confers social legitimacy, increasing movement spokespersons' access to editorial media, such as news magazines and television or radio talk shows. Feminist, environmentalist, and peace movements in many countries have been ignored, or faced dismissive or delegitimizing coverage, during their early development. As these and other movements have evolved, media coverage has come to portray them as legitimate social critics and their rhetoric as reasonable and even compelling. On some occasions, movement frames have come to dominate media discourse. For example, a frame that asserts that citizens should have equal rights regardless of race or sex now predominates in many countries.

### **Use of Alternative and Popular Media**

Movements propagandize through any readily available media. Intellectuals and agitators produce → books for scholarly and more popular audiences. Documentary film portrays movement beliefs and values in an emotionally compelling manner (→ Documentary Film). With some notable exceptions these materials tend to cater to small audiences predisposed to support movement beliefs. To reach larger audiences, activists have favored → popular music as a vehicle for movement rhetoric. Movement music demonstrating economic potential has been prone to appropriation by commercial music producers, draining it of its critical potential. Popular media have been the target of movement protest as well as its vehicle. Movements seeking to construct and promote a positive identity for social groups that have been traditionally seen as inferior, deviant, or just different have targeted cultural production organizations and artists with demonstrations

and criticism, as well as with awards and incentives to influence portrayals of ethnic, racial, gender, and sexual preference groups. Conservative religious groups have lobbied advertisers and engaged in letter-writing campaigns to authorities in attempts to reduce the incidence and explicitness of sex and violence on television (→ Popular Communication).

Mainstream media rarely provide access to radical movements, and political authorities will not help them gain a larger audience. Radical movements have historically turned to alternative media in the form of underground books, magazines, and newsletters. More recently, cable and → satellite television networks and, especially, websites have been used to carry movement ideology (→ Cable Television; Television Networks). A massive amount of material produced by movements from extreme left to extreme right can be accessed through the world wide web. Alternative media provide access to movement ideology for potential recruits and current activists, construct a space for debate among activists, and reassure and reinvigorate radicals by demonstrating the existence and vitality of an ideologically supportive community.

Despite their limited resources, movements regularly attempt to *influence political and economic elites directly*. Social movement organizations lobby law-makers, protest at speeches and meetings, conduct letter-writing campaigns, and sue opponents in court. In some instances, activists have extensive technical expertise that they use to gain entry into decision-making processes. With resources donated by wealthy sponsors, activists have set up think tanks where ideologically dedicated experts produce policy treatises that are disseminated to the public and to political decision-makers.

### CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Opposition to movements often leads to the formation of counter-movements, especially among those who would suffer materially or emotionally should the movements be successful. An example is the ongoing conflict between “pro-life” and “pro-choice” forces over abortion policy. Counter-movements may ultimately be more successful than the social movements that originally inspired them.

Though they face long odds, social movements do sometimes succeed in attaining their goals. More often, they achieve partial success or induce unexpected cultural, political, or economic change. Multiple waves of activism characterize social movements promoting feminism, anti-colonialism, Aryan nationalism, democratization, the end to poverty, and many others. Each wave inherits tactical knowledge, issue frames, movement culture, and sometimes surviving organizational structure from earlier waves. New movements emerge within a new political, economic, and cultural context that bears the imprint of earlier waves of contention.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Activist Media ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Book ▶ Cable Television ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ Collective Action and Communication ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Cyberfeminism ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Media Studies ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media

► Grassroots Media ► Identity Politics ► Interpersonal Communication ► Labor Unions in the Media ► Mediated Populism ► News Factors ► News Values ► Popular Communication ► Popular Music ► Press Conference ► Propaganda ► Public Opinion ► Radical Media ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Satellite Television ► Sensationalism ► Social Conflict and Communication ► Social Movement Media, Transnational ► Social Networks ► Strategic Framing ► Television Networks ► Underground Press ► Women's Movement and the Media

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## **Social Networks**

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Social networks are the interpersonal relationships people have with friends, family, colleagues, acquaintances, and others they may come into contact with directly or via media communications. Social → network analysis is used to understand these social relationships and how they help explain individual and social behavior (Scott 2000; Wasserman & Faust 1994). Social networks are studied at multiple levels of analysis including dyadic, group, and system. There are three primary types of network data collection technique: local, partial, and complete (Morris 2004).



## NETWORK DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

*Local or egocentric* techniques are used to measure a person's local social network. For example, a researcher can record the first names of respondents' closest friends, and then record data about the friends' socio-demographic characteristics and other attributes. Local networks are amenable to random sampling approaches (→ Sampling, Random) and can provide data generalizable to larger populations. For example, egocentric network data can be collected to investigate how interpersonal communications about a media campaign might influence its reception. Local or egocentric data are analyzed primarily using standard statistical software (SAS, SPSS, STATA). *Partial or snowball* techniques start with a set of respondents who provide the names of their social networks, who are in turn enrolled as participants (either all or some sample of the network ties). Partial networks can be used to study the spread of rumors or for subject recruitment.

*Complete or socio-metric* techniques provide a measure of the entire social network by interviewing all members of a bounded community. Socio-metric techniques are most often used in small communities, schools, and organizations where the boundary of the network can be defined. They provide a global view of network relations and thus also provide indicators for individual positions in that network. Socio-metric techniques require the use of specialty social network software, such as UCINET, Pajek, or R (visit [www.insna.org](http://www.insna.org) for links to these programs), or specific mathematical programming to calculate network indicators. The ability to generate a complete social network map of social relations provides considerable explanatory power.

## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Social network analysis has developed along two related fronts: visualization and mathematical analytics (Freeman 2004). Visualization software enables researchers to display the set of connections in networks (Fig. 1) and understand the social structure by use of colors or shapes, or with variations in the lines connecting nodes, rotation of the graph, and other visual aids. Analytic techniques include the growth and sophistication of algorithms used to measure network characteristics (Newman et al. 2006).

Figure 1 provides a network graph or sociogram indicating who is friends with whom in one sixth-grade classroom (Valente et al. 2003). Each node is labeled with the ID number of the student, and the lines connecting them indicate who chose whom as a friend. Although this network is small (37 people), network analysis can be conducted on large networks (e.g., thousands of nodes) and some researchers study very large networks such as the Internet.

## SOCIAL NETWORK MEASURES

Social network measures are generated primarily at three ecological levels: the individual, dyadic, and network. There are hundreds of *individual measures* that can be generated from one social network question (Borgatti et al. 2005). For example, asking students for the names of their friends at school can generate hundreds of indicators measuring their relative centrality in the friendship network, their membership in groups, reciprocity of

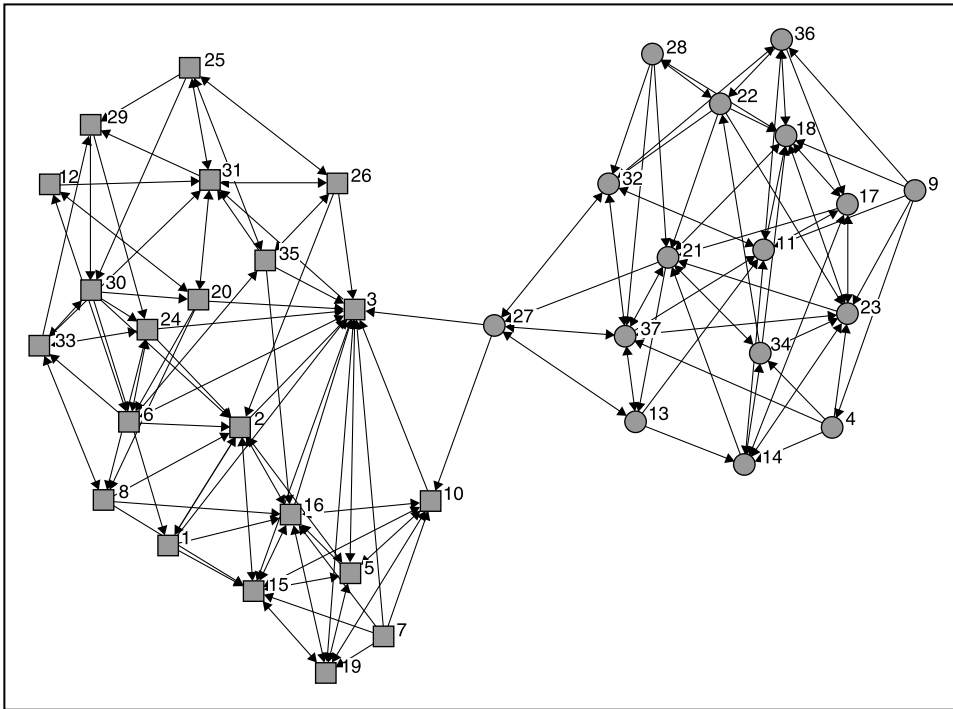


Figure 1 A friendship network among students in a sixth-grade classroom (boys shown by squares and girls by circles)

ties, and so on. The same data can be used to generate network-level indicators such as the degree to which the network is dense or sparse, its centralization, the number of cliques, their overlap, and so on.

One individual social network measure is *centrality*, which measures the degree to which a person occupies a prominent position in the network. For example, in Figure 1 persons 2, 3, and 21 are central nodes in the network, as indicated by how many friendship nominations they received. There are over a dozen measures of centrality (Borgatti et al. 2005). Another individual measure is a *bridge* or *liaison*: nodes 3, 10, and 27 are bridge nodes and the link from 27 to 3 constitutes a bridge. Other individual measures include being a group member or being an isolate. These individual measures can be related to individual behaviors. For example, researchers have shown that students who are central in friendship networks are more likely to become smokers in schools with a high smoking prevalence (Valente et al. 2005).

*Dyadic measures* can also be derived from the network in Figure 1. For example, one can calculate whether specific links are reciprocated, and the degree to which a person's links are reciprocated. Another dyadic measure is homophily, which measures the degree to which a person's ties are to others who have characteristics similar to ego. Homophily in networks creates pockets of interconnectivity (e.g., in Figure 1, boys overwhelmingly choose boys as friends while girls choose girls). Researchers also calculate network exposure to behaviors. For example, researchers have shown that adolescents with

friendship networks comprised of smokers are more likely to smoke themselves (Valente et al. 2005).

*Network-level measures* characterize the overall structure of the network. Some measures are simple, such as network *size* and *density*, which indicate the number of people and links in a network. Other measures require some calculation, such as the *average path length* (APL), which indicates how many steps, on average, it takes to connect different people in the network (Watts 1999). It is easier to transmit messages in a network with a short APL than in one with a longer APL because there are fewer steps separating everyone in the network. Stanley Milgram's early experiment showed that it took on average six steps for a message to reach a randomly selected person in Nebraska, and a Boston stockbroker created the "six degrees of separation" phenomenon (Watts 1999). APL is also used as a measure of network cohesion, since a shorter APL indicates a dense and closely connected network whereas a longer APL indicates a network characterized by long distances between people. Centralization measures the degree to which the network ties are concentrated toward one or a few nodes. Many scholars have discovered that networks are often centralized, characterized by few nodes having many ties, and many nodes having few (Newman et al. 2006).

## RESEARCH FINDINGS, DEVELOPMENT, AND CHALLENGES

Social network measures at the individual, dyadic, and network levels have been associated with behaviors in intuitive and counterintuitive ways. For example, bridges act as conduits for information flow across disconnected sub-groups in the network (Granovetter 1973) even as they can be bottlenecks which restrict the flow of resources. For a second example, studies have shown that as one's network fills with others who hold certain opinions or beliefs, one is more likely to embrace those opinions or beliefs. Conversely, however, studies have uncovered network thresholds that indicate that some people are willing to adopt a new idea or practice even though none or few of their network partners do (Valente 1995). In another example, studies showed that dense networks accelerate diffusion of ideas and practices (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation) because there are more paths for information and influence to flow through. A recent study, however, documented that too much density inhibits adoption of new ideas (Valente et al. 2007).

Social network analysis was originally applied mainly to the study of communication and interaction within small groups (→ Group Communication; Group Communication and Social Influence; Interpersonal Communication). Researchers investigated how the structure and patterns of their interactions reflected and affected individual outcomes such as depression, satisfaction, and success. Researchers were also interested in how network structural indicators might affect the overall success and performance of the group, community, or organization (→ Group Communication and Problem-Solving). The predominance of inferential statistical approaches in the social sciences (→ Statistics, Explanatory) meant that the more contextual approach and methods of social networks were eclipsed in favor of random independent sampling approaches.

By the mid-1990s, however, the growth in multilevel modeling and the → Internet brought increased attention to connectedness and explicit data on interpersonal connections

via computer communications. Social networks of online communities and patterns of communication via email could be studied. More powerful computer programs were developed to handle the analysis of large social networks. Thus social network analysis has emerged as a strong intellectual tradition interfacing with many different disciplines across the social, physical, and natural sciences (Monge & Contractor 2005).

There are many broad areas of emphasis currently being investigated in the network analysis field. The development of better and faster algorithms for calculating network indices at the individual and network levels continues. In addition, there is continued improvement in computer programs for the management, analysis, and display of social network data. Many researchers have also been investigating how social network data can be used to accelerate the spread of ideas and practices, or for disease control and/or security threats, in addition to using network data to reduce the spread of disease or increase the capacity for collective action.

One of the central challenges facing social network research has been the difficulty of applying inferential statistics and methodology to the analysis of social network data. Network data violate the independence assumption of inferential statistics and so need to be analyzed and interpreted with caution. Scholars have now begun to develop programs which can analyze network dynamics and behavior and study their co-evolution. Although it is in its infancy, the ability to understand the factors that affect the formation and dissolution of network ties, while studying how attributes of nodes affect, and are affected by, the network dynamics, promises to have a profound effect on science.

SEE ALSO: ► Diffusion of Information and Innovation ► Group Communication  
 ► Group Communication and Problem-Solving ► Group Communication and Social Influence  
 ► Internet ► Interpersonal Communication ► Media Content and Social Networks  
 ► Network Analysis ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology  
 ► Sampling, Random ► Social Capital and Communication in Health  
 ► Statistics, Explanatory

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## Social Norms

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What people choose to do, the behaviors they enact or refrain from enacting, is guided by a number of factors, including their own dispositions, the situational context in which they find themselves, the social roles they take on, and their interpersonal relationships. The study of how people's behaviors are guided, in part, by social norms has been the focus of considerable research in recent years.

Although the influence of norms on human behavior occurs across many domains, a great deal of research has focused on understanding normative influences in health-related behaviors, likely because of the inclusion of the subjective norm concept in the theory of reasoned action (TRA; Ajzen & Fishbein 1980); the TRA has been widely used to predict health behaviors (→ Reasoned Action, Theory of).

Norms have been conceptualized in several ways, but terms identified in the literature that deal implicitly or explicitly with the influence of referent others' attitudes or behaviors on people's own behaviors include: subjective norms (Ajzen & Fishbein 1980), social norms (Perkins & Berkowitz 1986), normative influences (Cialdini et al. 1990), or simply norms (Bendor & Swistak 2001). Cialdini et al. (1990) make a conceptual distinction between two different types of norms: descriptive and injunctive. *Descriptive norms* are conceptualized as perceptions about the prevalence of a behavior; they refer to what people perceive others actually do. *Injunctive norms* are social pressures that people experience from members of a referent group to enact or refrain from enacting a particular behavior (Cialdini et al. 1990; → Climate of Opinion; Social Perception; Interpersonal Communication). Both "descriptive norms" and "injunctive norms" are used in the literature to signify people's perceptions, which may or may not conform to reality.

## THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR AS THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON NORMS

### Conceptualization

In both the TRA and theory of planned behavior (TPB; Ajzen 1985; → Planned Behavior, Theory of), subjective norms are conceptualized as comprising two factors: individuals' perceptions about others' beliefs about a behavior, and their motivations to comply with those beliefs (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). Operationally, these two factors are thought to act in a multiplicative way such that a small increase in either can result in a large increase in the overall value of norms. Ajzen and Fishbein (1980, 57) intentionally conceptualized subjective norms in a "much more restricted" fashion than the broad definitions of norms found in much of the social psychological literature; they proffer the view that persons make decisions about whether or not to engage in a behavior based, in part, on what referent others (e.g., family, friends, and relational partners) think they should do, and on how much they are motivated to comply with those referent others.

Another distinction made in the literature is that between collective and perceived norms. *Collective norms*, operating at the level of the social system, represent codes of conduct that impinge on individuals within the system (Lapinski & Rimal 2005). From a sociological perspective, collective norms are closely related to Durkheim's (1947) notion of social control, which refers to the mechanisms that societies use to maintain the social order. These mechanisms can be either formal (e.g., laws and regulations) or informal (e.g., traditions and customs), but they serve to prevent chaos or anomie in society; Durkheim refers to this process of control as regulation. In contrast, *perceived norms* are individuals' understanding of the prevailing collective norm, and they operate at the individual, psychological level.

These distinctions are important because, among other things, they can differentially affect behaviors. It is often the case that descriptive and injunctive norms are congruent – for example, when a majority of people engage in a behavior, it is likely that individuals feel social pressures to conform to that behavior. Similarly, collective and perceived norms are often congruent, as when individuals correctly perceive the prevalence of a behavior in their environment. Interesting outcomes can occur, however, when there is a divergence between the two corresponding norms – as when individuals incorrectly believe that they will incur social sanctions if they do not conform, or when they harbor exaggerated perceptions about the prevalence of a behavior in their social midst.

### Evidence

There is a great deal of evidence, for example, that American college students believe that their peers drink much more alcohol than they actually do; these perceptions, in turn, are associated with students' own alcohol consumption (Perkins & Berkowitz 1986). Similarly, the literature on → pluralistic ignorance (O'Gorman 1988) shows that, on important social issues, the public often believes that the prevailing public opinion is more conservative than it actually is. This in turn makes them more resistant to change. The point here is that different types of norms exert influence in different ways and it is

important to specify which norm is being invoked in any given situation (→ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses; Third-Person Effects).

The TRA provides a description not only of how norms are operationalized (the product of others' beliefs and motivation to comply with those beliefs), but also of the role of norms in affecting behavioral intentions. Together with attitudes, TRA posits that subjective norms exert a direct influence on behavioral intentions. The TRA has been used as a basis for understanding the role of subjective norms in health-related behaviors and as part of a larger theoretical framework for predicting behaviors. Several scholars have provided meta-analytical reviews of the TRA research (e.g., Albarracin et al. 2001).

### **OTHER THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES**

Several other theoretical perspectives deal explicitly with normative influence on behaviors, including the model of spontaneous processing (Fazio 1990), focus theory of normative conduct (Cialdini et al. 1990), and the theory of normative social behavior (Rimal & Real 2005). Central to the thinking about norms is the concept of referent – that is, to whom do people look for normative information? The theoretical perspectives on norms generally consider referent others as ranging from the relationally close (family, partner; Ajzen & Fishbein 1980) to the distant (any person in a social situation; Cialdini et al. 1990). Other theoretical perspectives suggest that the influence of referents is dependent on whether or not referent others have access to information about one's behaviors.

#### **Model of Spontaneous Processing**

The model of spontaneous processing (Fazio 1990) focuses on the informational nature of norms and addresses how they serve to help persons define situations (termed “informational dependence”). Fazio states that the influence of normative information is dependent, in part, on whether people believe their behaviors will be known by others. People may look to their referents to determine the prevailing norms surrounding a particular behavior, but they can also choose to defy the norms if they believe that their behaviors will not become known to referent others. For example, individuals may perceive that referent others do not approve of smoking, but they themselves may choose to do so in a private setting because enactment of this behavior will not be known to others. In public settings, informational dependence may be coupled with a perceived threat of social sanctions for defying the norm.

#### **Focus Theory of Normative Conduct**

The focus theory of normative conduct (Cialdini et al. 1990) suggests that the salience of norms is an essential part of understanding the relationship between social norms and behaviors. The theory was developed on the basis of a series of experiments on littering behavior that indicated that norms will not influence behaviors unless a particular norm is focal. In other words, norms are more likely to exert their influence if they are made salient at the time of action.

In this research, focus on normative information was enhanced by manipulating characteristics of the situation or by priming (see Cialdini et al. 1990; Kallgren et al. 2000). These studies suggest that focusing on injunctive norms predicts behavior across situations but that the findings for descriptive norms are less robust. Further, it is believed that activation of injunctive norms may motivate socially desirable behavior in situations where the descriptive norm is socially undesirable. That is, if attention is focused on socially desirable injunctive norms, attention will shift away from undesirable descriptive norms and motivate action toward the desirable injunctive norm.

### **Theory of Normative Social Behavior**

The theory of normative social behavior (TNSB; Rimal & Real 2005) also makes the distinction between descriptive and injunctive norms, and it focuses on the underlying cognitive mechanisms – the moderators – that explain how descriptive norms affect behaviors. According to the TNSB, these moderators include injunctive norms, outcome expectations, group identity, and behavioral involvement. Specifically, the TNSB posits that the influence of descriptive norms on behavior is heightened if individuals also perceive strong injunctive norms to enact the behavior, if the behavior is thought to be beneficial, if there is a strong social connection with others enacting the behavior, and if individuals' own personal connection with the behavior is strong.

### **AREAS OF FURTHER INQUIRY**

There is ample empirical evidence in the literature to support the theoretical expectation that human behavior is guided, in part, by perceptions about how others evaluate, and whether they engage in, the same behavior themselves. *Uncovering the conditions under which this influence occurs* will continue to produce meaningful research findings. These conditions (or moderating factors) are likely a function not only of individuals' perceptions (their belief, for example, that they will get socially rewarded or punished for engaging in the behavior), but also of environmental conditions under which the behavior is enacted (for example, whether the behavior takes place in private or under public scrutiny) as well as the specific attributes that define the behavior in question (for example, the extent to which anonymity is a defining feature of the behavior, as is the case in HIV testing, or whether the behavior is habitual and familiar or episodic and novel). Hence, we envision a comprehensive model of normative influence that takes into account all three factors – individual perceptions, environmental conditions, and behavioral attributes.

A second area of future study pertains to gaining a better understanding of the *reciprocal relationships that exist between communication processes and normative influences*. To date, much of the research on the intersection between communication and norms has investigated how communication influences norms (the idea being that normative influences are social in nature, and hence interpersonal and mediated communication serve to perpetuate information about norms) or how they jointly affect behaviors. Less research has focused, however, on understanding how normative processes affect communication. Early work on the → spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann 1974) focused on individuals' propensity to refrain from expressing unpopular opinions, but there has been



less systematic research recently on understanding the underlying processes that govern how communication is affected by norms.

It is possible, for example, that the nature of the communication that occurs among individuals who are correctly aware of the widespread support for their point of view in a group will be different from the communication that occurs when there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding a particular point of view in a group. Research designed to understand how normative processes affect communication can ask questions not only about the nature of the communication that ensues, but also about the type of norms in question (for example, whether it is descriptive, injunctive, subjective, objective, or perceived), the characteristics of the social environment (free and open versus controlled, for example) in which the communication occurs, and the characteristics of the individuals engaged in the communication.

Research on normative influences has helped us understand a great deal about human communication processes, beliefs, and behaviors. Many areas of communication scholarship – particularly those that deal with some aspect of persuasion – are also concerned with changing human behaviors. Health communication scholars, for example, typically use principles of communication to implement interventions designed to persuade people to engage in healthy behaviors (→ Health Communication). Findings from the vast research on normative influences are likely to continue to make significant contributions toward this and other efforts that seek to persuade people to change their attitudes, perceptions, or behaviors.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Behavioral Norms: Perception through the Media ▶ Climate of Opinion  
▶ Health Communication ▶ Impersonal Effects ▶ Intercultural Norms ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ▶ Planned Behavior, Theory of  
▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Reasoned Action, Theory of ▶ Social Perception ▶ Spiral of Silence ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## Social Perception

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The term “social perception” might seem a misnomer, as it refers less to how people perceive their social environment through their senses than to how they make a judgment. Unlike the color of a car or the loudness of a piece of music, both of which can be more or less directly perceived by the respective sensory systems, the trustworthiness of a person or the aggressiveness of a social exchange can only be inferred or construed from various indirect cues. People have to go beyond the information given in order to arrive at a social judgment. In this sense, social perception is an *active and constructive process* of the perceiver. Not surprisingly, then, the same social situation or the same person may be “perceived” quite differently by different perceivers, or by the same perceiver in different situational contexts.

Nevertheless, a theoretical framework that was originally suggested for visual perception, Brunswick’s *lens model* (1947), provides a quite suitable approach to social perception. This model suggests that objects have certain “real” properties (distal stimuli; e.g., shyness), which translate into certain cues (proximal stimuli; e.g., little eye contact). Only the cues, not the “real” thing, can be directly perceived by an observer. Cues are retranslated and inferences from different cues are then put together to form a picture.

### THE NATURE OF CUES

Proximal cues can differ dramatically in their abstractness and in the information they imply. A cue might be simple and concrete, such as a behavior (e.g., avoiding eye contact)

or the physical appearance of a person. Cues also may be abstract, such as biographical data, group membership (the person is a librarian), or others. In all cases, however, the cue as such is meaningless. It is only meaningful to a particular perceiver, who has stored an association of the cue with the concept to be judged (e.g., shyness). Such associations may have been established in different ways.

One source of cue significance is that people have learned over time and over many observations that the proximal stimulus co-varies with a particular distal stimulus (eye contact and shyness). Other associations may have originated from single observations (“I know one other person who comes from Portugal, and this person is very shy”). Whether on the basis of multiple or single observations, people form individual and subjective lay theories about the associations of particular behaviors, appearance, biographical data, etc. with personality traits. Yet other associations may not be based on individual theories about the significance of cues but on shared cultural knowledge (e.g., stereotypes: librarians tend to be shy).

### THE VALIDITY OF THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

Obviously, errors may occur at different steps in the construction process, and the lens model offers a nice framework for understanding where errors may happen. First, perceivers – or, better, judges – can never fully observe all possible cues but only a subset. Perceivers may miss some important cues and focus on the wrong ones. Moreover, some distal stimuli have clearer cues than others. For example, there are many easily observable diagnostic cues of intelligence (e.g., performance on intellectually difficult tasks), but it is harder to judge trustworthiness. The latter example also illustrates the further problem that people, the object of social judgments, may try to influence the judgment and deceive the perceiver (appearing more trustworthy than they are). Finally, cues may vary in their validity. For example, “hitting another person” is probably more strongly related to aggressiveness than being a Libra is. Still, even cues with generally high validity may not hold for a particular person or a particular instance. Hitting another person in self-defense is different from hitting someone who jumps the queue.

In this latter regard, Heider (1958) proposed that what people need to do in order to find out what a person is like (e.g., whether aggressive or not) is to correct for the situational influence in the observed behavior. For Heider a person’s trait was a stable concept, which could be extracted despite steadily changing observations in different situations. Although there is no act without both an actor and a situation, one can at least attempt to disentangle the two factors, and determine which influence is a stronger cause, by using the *principle of covariance*: in order to be attributed as a cause of an effect, the factor should be present when the effect occurs but be absent when the effect does not occur.

By this logic Heider (1958), Kelley (1967), and other authors proposed one can identify dispositions by comparing the behavior of a person over many situations and also comparing the behavior of other persons in such situations. If a person behaves aggressively in one situation, one may conclude neither dispositional or situational causes. But if the person behaves aggressively in many different situations, it becomes more justifiable to assume dispositional aggressiveness. If other people behave aggressively in the same situation, it is assumed that the situation brings out aggressiveness in people. Some

situations allow a large variance of behavior, where different people can act differently and therefore show their individual differences, while other situations force people to act in one specific way. When someone pulls her hand away when touching a hot plate, one does not infer that this person is special because she does not like her hand being burned, or that she pulled her hand away because of her personality. In fact, in this situation, one would expect everybody to act in the same manner, and therefore the behavior is not very illuminating regarding the person's dispositions but merely reflects the situation.

### PROCESSES AND MODERATORS

What the social perceiver *should do* is assess the situation to determine whether it allows a broad range of behaviors. Only if the situation allows different responses should one infer personality traits from the observed behavior. However, what the social perceiver really *does* instead is often something very different. Initially, people automatically infer personality traits from observed behavior. This tendency to think that people are the way they act and to explain behavior with underlying personality traits is often called the *correspondence bias* or *fundamental attribution error*. This dispositional attribution does not require much mental effort and may occur automatically. It is only as a second step that perceivers may consider the situational influence, and this may result in a correction of the initial automatic impression. Most of the time this second step, however, does not happen. Considering the power of a situation and thinking about its influence on other people is laborious and does not work as automatically as the inference of personality traits (see Gilbert 1989). To engage in this effortful processing one needs cognitive resources, which may be constrained when one is tired or distracted. Besides, people are often quite satisfied with attributing actions to dispositions, since this makes their social world simpler and more predictable. Only when an accurate judgment is very important would people be motivated to spend more effort on the processing of information and on making correct attributions.

Even in those cases where people are motivated to find out about the real causes of a behavior, they may not succeed. The problem for social situations is that it is not always possible to compare different people and different situations. People often do not know how the person acts at other times, or may not have observed many other people in exactly the same situation. What they can do, however, is to imagine themselves in that situation and consider how they would behave. This method is of course far from being perfect, since it is difficult to correctly construe the situation the way it is subjectively experienced by the other person. Thus, the impact of the situation is often underestimated.

### PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Inferences do not occur piece by piece or independently. Rather, the different pieces of information mutually influence each other's interpretation. Expectations and activated stereotypes may influence which cues a perceiver focuses on and how they are interpreted. For example, a shove might be interpreted as hostile behavior when performed by an African-American and as playing around or dramatizing when performed by a Caucasian (→ Communication Modes, African; Communication Modes, Western; Nonverbal

Communication and Culture). Even the mere sequence in which the information is acquired influences the impression people eventually form. Apparently the first information colors the interpretation of subsequent information.

From this one may conclude that social perception is hard work. Cues have to be identified and interpreted, the importance of the perceived cues has to be weighed, new information has to be inferred from activated schemas, and all the gathered information has to be integrated into one single, coherent impression. All that must happen in a very short time. Despite this apparent complexity, perceiving somebody's shyness *does* feel like perceiving the color of a car. People think they *see* that somebody is shy and often do not consciously monitor their inference processes. Indeed, people can extract an almost incredible amount of information from very short episodes (thin slices) of behavior (see Ambady et al. 2000 for a review), and the construction process may even happen without people being aware of it. Often people do not even know which cues influence their impressions. For example, smiling faces are judged as happier when their eye muscles contract, but judges seem to be unable to report why they judge these faces as happier than those with mere lip-smiles.

At the beginning of this entry, social perception was compared to the perception of inanimate objects, but clearly people differ from inanimate objects. Several factors make social perception a more *complex and difficult task* than simply perceiving the color of a car or the size of a building (see Bless et al. 2004). First, people may try to influence the impression others have of them. Usually, they will present themselves in a favorable way, and perceivers have to sort out diagnostic from less diagnostic cues. Whether on purpose or inadvertently, people also may behave differently when they know they are being observed. Second, people may change and perceivers may need to update their impressions accordingly. A person who seemed shy at the beginning of a conversation may appear more extraverted after a while. And third, as outlined in this entry, although social perception may feel as easy as perceiving inanimate objects, there is much more construction going on in the case of social perception. It is not passive observation; the larger part of what we call social perception is being constructed in our brains. Even if we do not always realize it, the construction site of social reality is a very busy place.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Modes, African ► Communication Modes, Western  
► Nonverbal Communication and Culture

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## Social Perception: Impersonal Impact

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According to the impersonal impact hypothesis, the mass media influence individuals' perceptions of risk to others (societal-level risk), but not perceptions of risk to themselves (personal risk; → Risk Perceptions). Implicit in this hypothesis is the notion that individuals can compartmentalize various perceptions of risk, differentiating between societal-level judgments, or beliefs about the larger community with respect to a given risk, and personal-level judgments, or estimations of their own vulnerability to that risk (Tyler & Cook 1984).

Although the disjuncture between first and third persons in impersonal impact also is seen in the → *third-person effect*, two key points are noteworthy. Not only is the perceived risk in the third-person effect the media message itself, but also, unlike the impersonal impact hypothesis, the third-person effect does not require consumption of the media message. Indeed, the third-person effect posits that people believe media to have greater effects on others than on themselves (Davison 1983). Impersonal impact also is conceptually distinct from *impersonal influence*, a term Mutz (1998) used to describe how anonymous others and individuals outside one's immediate life-space can influence one's attitudes, cognitions, and behaviors. Within this domain of research, the media's role is as a conduit of information regarding others' attitudes, behaviors, and cognitions (→ Bandwagon Effect; Social Perception).

Studies of impersonal impact are quite robust, illustrating that exposure to media messages shapes individuals' perceptions that a problem will occur in general; however, these same individuals will not perceive themselves to be afflicted by this problem. This trend has emerged across numerous contexts including social risks such as crime, drunk driving, firearms; environmental risks including fires, tornadoes, floods, and radioactive waste; and health risks such as AIDS and skin cancer. Methodologically, survey research and experimental design are the two most common tools used to test this hypothesis.

Some scholars believe that media messages may not have any "personal" impact because individuals tend to see themselves as less susceptible to risk than others. This unrealistic optimism exists regardless of exposure to media coverage of risk: individuals think negative events are much less likely to happen to them, and positive events much more likely to occur. Also, individuals are unwilling to acknowledge the risk unless they are aware of behaviors that might reduce the risk at hand, and media coverage of risk

tends to provide different types of information. Given journalistic practices, news stories are more likely to report on events rather than the likelihood of those events occurring (→ News Routines; News Factors). Reporters also appeal to human interest by including exemplars (e.g., interviews with individuals, anecdotes) that may or may not accurately represent reality or base-rate information (Fiegeonson & Bailis 2001; → Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of). Even if the story reports risks, individuals tend to process messages consistent with existing cognitions and attitudes.

In contrast to media messages, → *interpersonal communication* concerning a particular risk can influence personal-level judgments. After all, interpersonal communication often is with like-minded others who have similar life experiences and can be more persuasive than the media in getting one to take action (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). This similarity between the individual and a like-minded source of communication may enhance the processing of messages. Also, because certain information, such as that derived from personal experience with a given risk, is deemed more relevant than media reports of that risk, it is processed and assimilated into one's schema more easily. Not surprisingly then, assessments of personal risk would be based on the calling forth of direct experience (Shrum & Bischak 2001).

Despite the prevalence of support for the impersonal impact hypothesis, more recent research has generated evidence of media impact on personal-level judgments. Collectively, these studies support the *differential impact hypothesis*, which posits that under some conditions, the media will influence perceptions of risk to oneself. For instance, in line with media system dependency theory, media effects are stronger when other information sources (e.g., interpersonal communication) are insufficient (→ Media System Dependency Theory). Consistent with previous findings, one study showed that exposure to newspaper stories about skin cancer increased estimates of societal risk, and that interpersonal talk about skin cancer increased perceptions of risk to oneself. However, newspaper exposure increased perceptions of personal risk of skin cancer only among those who depended heavily on newspapers for health information (Morton & Duck 2001).

Another factor that might facilitate the personal impact of media messages involves the *vividness of the message*. Vivid information is emotionally interesting and dramatic, and typically includes numerous images. The nature of vivid information therefore makes the story (and the risk) more likely to be recalled when individuals are asked for estimates of risk. Also, the dramatic fashion in which this type of information is conveyed may encourage the media consumer to identify with the portrayed victim, and perceived similarity tends to reduce the gap between perceptions of societal- and personal-level risk. In support of this theorizing is evidence that exposure to entertainment media and communication with peers, professionals, and parents – not exposure to news media – influenced undergraduates' perceptions of personal risk of AIDS (Snyder & Rouse 1995).

Findings that support the impersonal impact hypothesis and the differential impact hypothesis have great theoretical and practical implications. On the theoretical front, this body of research suggests that the mass media/interpersonal communication divide can indeed be bridged, and the two can and do work in tandem to influence perceptions. Moreover, individual-level characteristics need to be factored into the study of effects.

Although media impact on risk perceptions provides scholars with a theoretically interesting area of research, the more significant question revolves around how media and

perceptions of risk influence risk-related behaviors. Research on the impersonal impact hypothesis has profound implications for the construction of health campaign messages. Campaign planners will need to decide how to format their messages – for example, determine whether to use dramatically presented information, and whether a particular celebrity sponsor will be effective. These considerations, among others, will go into crafting specific messages for specific audiences the campaign is trying to target. Planners also will need to ascertain which media messages will generate interpersonal discussion, and which will likely lead to perceptions of personal risk and, ultimately, to behaviors that will reduce the risk at hand.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandwagon Effect ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Media System Dependency Theory ▶ News Factors ▶ News Routines ▶ Risk Perceptions ▶ Social Perception ▶ Third-Person Effects

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## **Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism**

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Unrealistic optimism, suggested by LeJeune and Alex in 1973, was described as the “illusion of unique invulnerability.” It was further developed by Weinstein (1980) in an article on individual perceptions of future life events. This illusion refers to an individual’s tendency to believe oneself invulnerable or at very low risk of suffering misfortune and victimization. It does not refer to the perceptions of individuals who have been victims of a particular misfortune (→ Victimization, Secondary). However, victim experience with one misfortune does not negate unrealistic optimism regarding other misfortunes.



Unrealistically optimistic persons believe others may be more susceptible to such victimization (a pessimistic bias regarding others). The optimism is considered “unrealistic” because, except in extremely skewed distributions, a vast majority of a population cannot be less vulnerable than average. Most unrealistic optimism research has focused on *health risk perceptions*. Other risk topics have explored the potential of being an earthquake victim or suffering a divorce. Weinstein argued that unrealistically optimistic judgments regarding one’s future life could be risky, dangerous, and potentially harmful (Weinstein et al. 2005; → Risk Perceptions; Health Communication). The unrealistic optimism bias also applies to positive events; for example, that one is more likely than others to benefit in the future, such as enjoying success in marriage or financial rewards.

A *comparison of self to others* is at the perception’s core. One’s own perceived chances of future misfortune are evaluated against others’ perceived chances, and a biased discrepancy results in the direction of optimism for self (Gunther & Mundy 1993) and pessimism for others (Culbertson & Stempel 1985). This tendency is similar to perceptions of mass media effects, where individuals are apt to see others as more influenced by media messages than themselves (→ *Third-Person Effects*).

However, these perceptual judgments are *affected by the degree of personal involvement* (→ Social Perception: Impersonal Impact). It is important to differentiate between judgments concerning personal risk susceptibility (often based on personal experience and interpersonal communications) and judgments involving increased susceptibilities of generalized others in society (notably as influenced by mass media; Glynn et al. 1995). In addition to being conceptualized as predictors of vulnerability and risk perceptions, unrealistic optimism and impersonal impact contribute to third-person effect outcomes (Brosius & Engel 1996).

Sears (1983) argued that “*person-positivity bias*” might be a factor in unrealistic optimism. The person-positivity bias posits that an individual typically values individual members of a group more than the group as a collective entity. When the individual is asked to compare perceptions of personal future risk with that of others, it may make a difference to whom the self is being compared. Accordingly, investigators have collected data using referent others who vary in proximity, familiarity, similarity, and importance to the self. Comparisons range from same-sex best friend, to a randomly selected known other, to “average,” “typical,” “most others known,” or a collective societal mass. At least one study found no person-positivity bias; however, the possible influence of proximity, familiarity, similarity, and importance with the compared other requires further research with varied subject pools, respondent samples, different risk contexts, etc.

Unrealistic optimism’s roles in theory building range from independent to moderator to dependent variable. Schemas that conceive of unrealistic optimism as a dependent variable, for example, argue its dependence upon influences such as cultural socialization (Heine & Lehman 1995), gender differentials regarding perceived personal risk (Lin & Raghbir 2005), age, locus of control, and degree of familiarity with the other to whom self is compared (→ Schemas).

SEE ALSO: ► Applied Communication Research ► Health Communication ► Risk Perceptions ► Schemas ► Social Perception: Impersonal Impact ► Third-Person Effects ► Victimization, Secondary

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## Social Stereotyping and Communication

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The journalist → Walter Lippmann introduced the notion of → stereotypes in 1922 and described them as “pictures in our heads”. Current psychological theory conceptualizes those “pictures” as cognitive structures or → schemas that represent widely shared beliefs about the defining characteristics of social groups (Operario & Fiske 2004). Any group might be subject to stereotypes, but the most commonly studied stereotypes are those based on race or ethnicity, nationality, religion, sex, and age. The beliefs that compose stereotypes may include physical characteristics, personality traits, behavioral tendencies, etc. Although stereotypes have traditionally been associated with exclusively negative beliefs about social groups, they generally include positive beliefs as well. For example, stereotypes of older people include not only such negative traits as forgetful and sad, but also positive traits such as wise and family-oriented (Hummert et al. 2004).

As cognitive structures, stereotypes serve as resources that help individuals to organize and respond to new people and situations (Ashmore & Del Boca 1981). *Social stereotyping*

refers to this use or application of stereotypes in person perception and social interaction, including communication (Leyens et al. 1994). Just as stereotypes are not exclusively negative in content, they are not exclusively negative in their application. Nevertheless, because stereotypes are often applied without conscious awareness of their influence (Greenwald & Banaji 1995), and because their negative aspects tend to outweigh the positive, they have the potential to lead to judgment bias and prejudiced behaviors (Operario & Fiske 2004).

### THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STEREOTYPING IN COMMUNICATION

One major communication theory, → *Communication Accommodation Theory* (CAT; Giles et al. 1991), has included stereotyping in its model of the communication process. In the initial conception of CAT (labeled at that time *Speech Accommodation Theory*), Giles et al. showed how group identity processes can influence communication behavior, outlining the conditions under which an individual (e.g., a Welshman) might choose to converge to or diverge from the linguistic style or accent of an outgroup member (e.g., standard British speaker) in interpersonal communication, as well as the consequences of that convergence or divergence.

In explaining certain kinds of divergences and convergences, Giles et al. drew on → *Social Identity Theory* (SIT; Tajfel & Turner 1986), which posits that individuals' identification of themselves as members of social groups is important to maintaining self-esteem. As a result, according to SIT, they are motivated not only to see the social world in terms of ingroups (groups of which they are members) and outgroups (groups of which they are not members), but also to maintain the status of their ingroups relative to outgroups as a way to preserve their self-esteem (→ *Power in Intergroup Settings*). As CAT has evolved, it has expanded its focus beyond group linguistic style to include other aspects of group identity and representations as influences on communication behavior more generally. In particular, CAT has incorporated stereotypes of outgroups into its model of the communication process, accounting for how individuals may choose to accommodate or not to the stereotypes in their interpersonal communication with outgroup members (→ *Intercultural and Intergroup Communication*).

The *Communication Predicament of Aging Model* (CPA; Ryan et al. 1986) illustrates how *age stereotypes* may affect the communication accommodation process (→ *Intergenerational Communication*). This model describes what can occur when a younger individual meets an older person. According to the model, the recognition of age cues such as grey hair, wrinkles, etc. can trigger negative age stereotypes in the younger person. Negative age stereotypes include beliefs about age-related deficiencies such as poor hearing and memory that are associated with beliefs about appropriate or necessary communication accommodations to address those deficiencies (e.g., speak more loudly, use short and simple statements, be repetitive). The younger person who adapts his or her communication to the older person in line with these beliefs, rather than with attention to the unique abilities of that individual, is *overaccommodating* to the age stereotype (→ *Intergroup Accommodative Processes*).

As CAT has continued to evolve, its models have incorporated the individual characteristics of communicators as predictors of both their reliance on negative as

opposed to positive stereotypes of outgroup members, and their proclivity to approach the interaction as intergroup rather than interpersonal (Williams & Harwood 2004). One example of this evolution is the *Age Stereotypes in Interactions Model* (ASI; Hummert et al. 2004), which extended the CPA model to interactions between older people and middle-aged individuals, as well as to those between older people and their peers. It also included such factors as the age salience of the situation and the role of the characteristics of the older person in triggering positive or negative age stereotypes and subsequent communication accommodations to negative age stereotypes. In brief, research has supported the predictions of this model, showing that negative age stereotyping and communicative overaccommodations to those stereotypes are most likely to occur with younger perceivers, in situations which increase the salience of age differences, and with individuals whose physical appearance suggests advanced age and whose personal characteristics are consistent with traits associated with age-related declines (Hummert et al. 2004).

### **CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL STEREOTYPING IN COMMUNICATION**

According to CAT (Giles et al. 1991), overaccommodations to stereotypes in communication can have negative consequences for the individuals involved, whether they are the targets or perpetrators of stereotyping. As presented in the CPA model (Ryan et al. 1986), those consequences for the target of the overaccommodation include lowered self-esteem, low satisfaction with the interaction, and the reinforcement of stereotypic behaviors. Together these consequences can contribute to a negative feedback loop that leads to greater age-related decline for the older individual. For the person who produced the overaccommodative talk, likewise, consequences include the reinforcement of negative age stereotypes and low satisfaction with the interaction. To the extent that the individuals associate their low satisfaction with the intergenerational (i.e., outgroup) nature of the interaction, they might be expected to avoid such interactions in the future, further reinforcing their stereotypical beliefs. Empirical research has supported these consequences of overaccommodation to stereotypes in intergenerational interactions (Hummert et al. 2004).

The predictions of CAT for social stereotyping have been most widely tested in the context of age stereotypes. However, Hummert & Ryan (2001) have shown that overaccommodation of the type documented toward older individuals occurs in interaction with members of other groups that are similarly stereotyped: women, persons with physical or developmental disabilities, and those with mental illness. Other social psychological research has demonstrated that stereotypes about gender, age, race, and ethnicity emerge in communication in similar ways, resulting in bias and prejudice (Ruscher 2001; → Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication).

### **LANGUAGE AND THE MAINTENANCE OF STEREOTYPES THROUGH COMMUNICATION**

As discussed, communicating in ways consistent with stereotypical beliefs serves to reinforce the validity of the stereotypes, increasing the likelihood that they will be

maintained and influence future interactions. To this point, the focus has been on how communicative styles such as overaccommodation may reveal social stereotyping in communication. However, social stereotyping can also be reflected in the language used to describe the behaviors of those in stereotyped groups in comparison to that used to describe the behaviors of members of ingroups (Fiedler & Schmid 2004).

In their linguistic category model, Semin and Fiedler (1991) identified four levels of abstraction, ranging from the most concrete to the most abstract: (1) descriptive action verbs, “John *threw* the ball”; (2) interpretive action verbs, “John *got rid of* the ball”; (3) state verbs, “John *enjoys* playing ball”; and (4) adjectives, “John *is athletic*.” According to Semin and Fiedler, perceptions of the stability of traits increases as language becomes more abstract. As a result, saying that “John threw the ball” tells the listener only about John’s behavior in this unique instance, whereas stating that he is “athletic” tells the listener not only how he behaves now, but also how he will behave in the future – the abstract term is therefore viewed as more diagnostic of John’s abilities than the concrete descriptor.

These characteristics of language in the context of social stereotyping are reflected in a phenomenon termed the *linguistic intergroup bias* (Maass et al. 1989). That is, individuals tend to use more abstract language in describing negative characteristics of outgroups and positive characteristics of their ingroups, whereas they tend to use more concrete language to describe positive behaviors of outgroups and negative behaviors of ingroups. The linguistic intergroup bias, then, is a communicative mechanism that reinforces negative components of outgroup stereotypes and positive aspects of ingroup stereotypes. This bias in communication may help to explain why the negative components of group stereotypes seem more robust, influential in behavior, and resistant to change than positive ones (Fiedler & Schmid 2004; Hummert et al. 2004; Operario & Fiske 2004).

### **SELF-STEREOTYPING IN COMMUNICATION**

Recently interest has developed in the phenomenon of self-stereotyping, i.e., behaving in ways consistent with negative stereotypes of one’s group (Levy 2003). Some self-stereotyping behavior may result from reactions to the overaccommodative or biased communication behaviors of others, as predicated in the CPA model (Ryan et al. 1986). However, other self-stereotyping in communication can occur as individuals describe their own actions in stereotypic terms (Hummert et al. 2004). For instance, older people may talk about having “senior moments” or not having the energy that they used to, echoing age stereotypes in their self-descriptions. A woman might describe herself as “a typical blonde” in a humorous excuse for an error, bringing a common sub-category of the female stereotype into the conversation. From a CAT perspective, the danger in such seemingly innocent remarks, even when made in jest, is that they reinforce stereotypical beliefs and emphasize the speaker’s category membership for both the speaker and listeners. Practically, they encourage listeners to think of the speaker as a member of a stereotyped group, with all of the characteristics associated with that group, rather than as an individual. For the speaker, they carry the danger of implicitly promoting stereotype-consistent behaviors in daily interaction.

## REDUCING SOCIAL STEREOTYPING IN COMMUNICATION

Several characteristics of social stereotyping create a *challenge for reducing its influence* in the communication process. First, from a cognitive perspective, stereotypes are useful heuristics that enable communicators to reduce their uncertainty when they encounter new people (Operario & Fiske 2004). Second, from a CAT perspective, communicators rely on stereotypes not because they wish to engage in biased and prejudiced communication, but because they wish to be effective communicators and adapt their communication to the needs of the other person (Hummert et al. 2004). Third, stereotyping in communication occurs most often at an implicit or unconscious level, so that communicators are unaware that they are basing their communication choices on stereotypical information (Greenwald & Banaji 1995; Hummert et al. 2004). Fourth, the ways in which stereotyping emerges in communication can be very subtle, occurring even at the level of word choice (Maass et al. 1989), and serve to reinforce the underlying stereotypical beliefs.

Psychological research on stereotyping shows that making individuals aware of their application of stereotypes, encouraging them to take the perspective of the other person, and providing them with individuating information on the other person can help them to control the tendency to rely on the stereotype as a heuristic (Hummert et al. 2004; Hummert & Ryan 2001). Awareness can help to reduce self-stereotyping as well. The linguistic intergroup bias (Maass et al. 1989) suggests that working on using more concrete language to describe the behavior of both ingroup and outgroup members would be another strategy to reduce not only the application of stereotypes in conversation, but also the strength of stereotypical cognitive representations.

Whether communication with members of stereotyped groups can change underlying attitudes and stereotypes of those groups has long been a question in intergroup research. Intergroup contact theory, as originally proposed, predicted that frequent contact with stereotyped group members would change attitudes (→ Intergroup Contact and Communication). However, Brown and Hewstone (2005) argue that simple contact is not sufficient. Rather, their revision of intergroup contact theory predicts that communication will effect positive change in attitudes and stereotypes only when (1) group membership is salient during the interaction, (2) the communicator views the outgroup member as typical of the stereotyped group, (3) interaction with the outgroup member is sufficiently frequent, and (4) interaction with the outgroup member is assessed positively by the communicator. Harwood et al. (2005) have found support for this revision of intergroup contact theory in their study of age stereotypes in the context of grandparent–grandchild relationships. Harwood et al. also point out that focus on a family identity offers a way for grandparents and grandchildren to transcend ingroup/outgroup identities based on age groups.

Clearly, not all relationships with members of stereotyped groups can use the family as a transcendent, common identity. However, Wohl et al. (2006) review research demonstrating ways that prejudice toward outgroup members can be reduced, even among members of groups with a long history of conflictual relationships such as Israelis and Palestinians. They identify two strategies with communicative implications. One strategy shifts the group categorization level to a more inclusive level, such as the human family, or another joint identity shared by the two groups (e.g., African-Americans and White

Americans can be jointly categorized as Americans). Another strategy increases the ingroup's recognition of their responsibility (collective guilt) for harmful acts perpetrated against outgroup members. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways, such as emphasizing the illegitimacy or immorality of those harmful acts or asking members of the more powerful group to consider the advantages they experience due to their group membership.

As societies worldwide become more diverse, communication opportunities with members of outgroups should become more frequent. Strategies to insure that those opportunities result in positive interactions can serve to reduce stereotyping in communication. The research and theories reviewed here offer some suggestions for such strategies.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Accommodation Theory ► Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ► Intergenerational Communication ► Intergroup Accommodative Processes ► Intergroup Contact and Communication ► Lippmann, Walter ► Power in Intergroup Settings ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Schemas ► Social Identity Theory ► Social Perception ► Stereotypes

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## Social Support in Health Communication

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Interest in social support as an important determinant of people's health stemmed from a number of influential papers published in the 1970s (e.g., Cobb 1976). These early writings suggested that people's interpersonal relationships with members of their → social network can reduce the negative impact of stress on their health. The specific mechanisms by which these relationships buffer the impact of stress were collectively termed "social support" (Wortman 1984).

Four *types of supportive behaviors* have been commonly described as dimensions of social support (House 1981): *Emotional support* involves demonstration of empathy, reassurance, love, and caring. *Informational support* involves provision of information that individuals may find helpful in dealing with stressful situations; this typically refers to information that is useful for problem-solving. *Appraisal support* refers to provision of information that is more relevant for self-appraisal, including provision of constructive feedback and affirmation about the appropriateness of beliefs or acts of another individual facing a stressful situation. *Instrumental support* involves provision of tangible goods and services to aid individuals in need. While a majority of the literature focuses on behaviors such as helping with daily chores or assisting with transportation, instrumental support can also include assistance with problem-solving tasks such as making important decisions.

Social support is likely to have a positive impact on people's health in a variety of situations; however, it takes on even greater significance when the stressor is a life-threatening illness such as cancer. A diagnosis of cancer often results in significant emotional trauma to the individual. Feelings of loss of control over and uncertainty about one's future are common. Individuals in such situations have to often deal with complex medical



information and make difficult treatment decisions that might have long-term implications for their quality of life (QOL). Supportive social relationships have been shown to minimize the negative impact of cancer and its treatment on patients' QOL.

While family and friends have the potential to provide support in most stressful situations, the supportive role of formal social network members such as health-care professionals becomes important within the context of an illness like cancer. Several studies show that patients rely on clinicians for informational, decision-making, appraisal, and even emotional support at various stages of their cancer journey (Arora 2003). Thus, the clinician–patient interaction becomes a key vehicle for social support in such situations.

The field of *clinician–patient communication* (→ Patient–Provider Communication) has a rich history of more than four decades of empirical research. Studies have ranged from micro-level assessments, focusing on the actual dialogue between clinicians and patients during a single visit, to more macro-level assessments of the patient's perception of clinicians' communication behavior over a defined period of time. Several studies have shown significant associations between clinician–patient communication and patient outcomes including patient satisfaction, adherence to recommendations, and QOL (Arora 2003). Unfortunately, empirical work in clinician–patient communication has often been criticized as largely exploratory in nature and lacking conceptual clarity.

Conceptualizing clinician–patient communication in terms of provision of social support is likely to provide much-needed conceptual refinement to the field. Perhaps in recognition of the supportive function of communication, the term “clinician–patient communication” is evolving into “patient-centered communication” (PCC), i.e., communication that is aimed at supporting patient needs as well as possible. Epstein and Street (2007) recently conceptualized PCC as including *six key functions*: fostering healing relationships, exchanging information, responding to emotions, managing uncertainty, making decisions, and enabling patient self-management. While this was perhaps not intended by the authors, these functions significantly overlap with the four-dimension framework of social support: fostering healing relationships and responding to emotions parallel emotional support; exchanging information parallels informational support; managing uncertainty requires appraisal support; making decisions is a component of instrumental support; and enabling patient self-management requires both appraisal and instrumental support.

The social support framework and the related conceptualization by Epstein and Street (2007) thus provide an important conceptual model for *future communication research* (→ Health Communication). However, to maximize the impact of future studies on health-care delivery, researchers may need to follow the following recommendations. First, rigorous efforts should be made to develop psychometrically sound measures of the six functions of PCC. Second, instead of the typical cross-sectional approach to studying communication, researchers should employ longitudinal study designs that would facilitate the monitoring of PCC over time. Third, researchers should study the interactions between the health-care delivery team or teams and the patient and family team, instead of the dyad of a single doctor and a patient. Fourth, researchers should explore how advances in information technology may be leveraged to develop data-collection systems to efficiently collect PCC data in busy health-care delivery settings (→ Consumer Informatics; Health Communication and the Internet). Specifically, the way that real-

time data-collection methods and electronic medical record and patient health record systems might be utilized to collect PCC data should be explored. Fifth, to truly understand and demonstrate the salience of PCC, researchers need to empirically identify specific mechanisms (mediators) by which PCC impacts patient health outcomes, as well as to identify factors that might facilitate or undermine (moderators) the association between PCC and patient outcomes. Finally, future studies will need to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of provision of support to patients by clinicians in face-to-face settings versus more mediated communication channels such as email.

Supportive clinician–patient interactions are vital to the delivery of patient-centered care, a key indicator of health-care quality. However, as suggested, to make the delivery of patient-centered communication a reality in routine health-care, a new approach to research will be needed.

SEE ALSO: ► Consumer Informatics ► Health Communication ► Health Communication and the Internet ► Patient–Provider Communication ► Social Networks

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## **Social Support in Interpersonal Communication**

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Social support is a diverse, multidisciplinary area of study that addresses the question: why do people who are involved in relationships tend to be mentally and physically healthier than those who are not? One approach to answering this question focuses on what people say and do to help one another cope with stress (enacted support or supportive communication). Alternatively, scholars have examined how cognitive schemas and beliefs about relationships influence one's coping and outlook on life (perceived available support). A third way of studying social support focuses on how integration in social networks shapes opportunities, information, immunity, and the flow of resources (social networks and social integration). Within each of these traditions, scholars have recognized that relationships are sometimes harmful rather than beneficial, and have

sought to identify circumstances in which and processes through which social support has positive outcomes.

The term “social support” emerged in the mid-1970s from several influential lectures, essays, and books that synthesized research showing how the social environment contributed to individual well-being. Over the next decade, considerable evidence accumulated to show that social support had beneficial effects, some of which came about through the ways social support buffers individuals from the otherwise detrimental effects of stress, and some through other processes independent of stress (e.g., by providing coherence or regulating behavior). By the 1980s, reviewers of this rapidly growing body of research expressed concern that diverse conceptualizations hindered theoretical explanation for how, why, and when social support had beneficial effects. There are various ways of parsing the literature, but it is common to differentiate among “enacted social support,” “perceived available social support,” and “social network/integration approaches.”

### ENACTED SOCIAL SUPPORT

The enacted social support tradition has been most prominent among interpersonal communication researchers because of its focus on messages and conversations that are intended to assist others in need (for reviews see Burleson & MacGeorge 2002; Goldsmith 2004). Some studies have described what types of actions are intended or interpreted as “supportive.” For example, it is common to differentiate providing information or tangible aid (problem-solving support) from attempting to comfort, bolster self-esteem, or convey caring or belonging (emotional support). Central research problems include explaining what makes some messages more effective and appropriate than others and identifying processes that account for the link between message or conversation features and beneficial outcomes. Recently, scholars have focused not only on the individual benefits of social support but also on its significance for relational functioning and satisfaction.

Albrecht and Adelman (1987) brought social support to the attention of interpersonal communication scholars in their book *Communicating social support*. They proposed that social support involved symbolic processes through which individuals managed uncertainty to gain a sense of personal control (→ Uncertainty Management). Stressful events may create uncertainty about outcomes, one’s individual identity and capabilities, and relationships. To the extent that interactions with one’s social network assist in managing this uncertainty, social support can bring about improved coping and adjustment. Managing uncertainty can entail reducing, sustaining, or increasing uncertainty, and challenges may arise as relational partners coordinate their preferred approaches.

Burleson and his colleagues’ studies of comforting shed light on the processes of emotional support (→ Comforting Communication). Messages intended to comfort vary in person-centeredness, i.e., the degree to which the distressed person’s feelings are acknowledged, legitimated, and elaborated. Persons high in cognitive complexity are more likely to produce person-centered messages, and both men and women find person-centered messages comforting when facing a loss or disappointment. Nonverbal immediacy cues combine with person-centered content to produce the most comforting responses. Person-centered messages are part of a larger process of encouraging talk about feelings. Such talk may bring about emotional relief by assisting in re-appraising a distressing situation.

Well-intended efforts at support can also entail risks and costs, including threats to competence, invasion of privacy, negative impressions, obligation, emotional contagion, and burden. Goldsmith and her colleagues propose that many of these risks and costs involve threats to identities and relational definitions; hence, conversations are helpful to the degree that they not only facilitate coping but also enact valued identities and relationships (Goldsmith 2004). Acts such as advice-giving may be intended as supportive but can also threaten the recipient's autonomy and competence, imply criticism of coping efforts, and convey status or solidarity. Consequently, features of conversations that save face, enact valued identities, or negotiate power and closeness may explain why some attempts at giving support succeed whereas others fail (→ Identities and Discourse; Politeness Theory; Relational Control).

Researchers have also begun to turn attention to the processes through which supportive communication is coordinated. Participants in a supportive conversation need to coordinate their view of the problem and the type of help it requires as well as their desires to approach or avoid problems. Offering practical information to someone who wants sympathy or trying to distract someone who wants to talk is likely to be perceived as unsupportive. Coordination may be particularly challenging when both members of a couple or multiple members of a group or community are affected by the same stressor. The term “communal coping” refers to the blurring of “provider” and “recipient” roles that may occur when individuals recognize a common stressor, communicate about it, and cooperate in their coping efforts.

### **PERCEIVED AVAILABLE SUPPORT**

Perceived available support is one's perception of being valued by others who will provide support if needed. The belief that others are there to help enhances coping with a variety of stressors in personal and professional life and also contributes to relationship satisfaction. Perceptions of available support are not strongly correlated with reports of enacted support, suggesting that perceived available support is based on more than just a past history of supportive actions. Instead, perceived available support appears to be linked to individual cognitive schemas for relationships (e.g., attachment models) and to more global properties of relationships such as responsiveness, interdependence, commitment, and sentiment.

Although perceptions of available support are not strongly tied to support received for specific stressors, there is evidence that ongoing patterns of communication that demonstrate trustworthiness and care contribute to the perceived supportiveness of a relationship. Perceived available support is also relevant to interpersonal communication because an individual's global sense that support is available, and his or her beliefs about the supportiveness of a particular relationship, create a perceptual lens that colors how specific supportive actions and conversations are evaluated.

### **SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION**

The term → “social network” refers to the ties that connect individuals. Structural features of networks have been examined for their relationship to positive outcomes. For

example, networks with dense interconnections are helpful for validating social identities and for making support needs known and then coordinating provision of tangible aid. In contrast, loose interconnections aid in enacting a new identity or connecting with previously unknown information or resources. Network size is a poor predictor of outcomes, perhaps because conflictual ties offset the benefits of supportive relationships. An appreciation of the influence of social structures beyond the individual and his or her immediate contacts is a distinctive feature of social network research. For the interpersonal communication scholar, this tradition helps to embed particular interactions and relationships within a broader social milieu.

Social integration reflects involvement in a diverse range of relationships, including family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and community and religious organizations. Those who are socially integrated live longer and healthier lives than those who are isolated. Diversity of social contacts, rather than sheer number, confers a health advantage. Social integration may promote health through enhancing personal control, meaning, self-concept, affect, and healthful behavior. Interpersonal communication scholars could contribute to our understanding of how to develop a diverse network and manage the potential communication challenges of sustaining multiple different types of relationships (→ Relationship Development; Relational Maintenance; Relational Dialectics).

### **ISSUES IN MEASUREMENT AND METHODOLOGY**

Several widely used measures of social support exist (see Cohen et al. 2000 for a review); however, most focus on perceived available support, sources of support, integration, or frequency of enacted support. Interpersonal communication scholars have developed ways to measure the quality of social support (i.e., not just how much is received but also whether it is seen as helpful, supportive, and sensitive). Common methods involve asking participants to rate hypothetical messages, recalled conversations, or brief interactions with a stranger or confederate. Although powerful, these methodologies often divorce messages from conversational context, either because the messages are presented or coded apart from surrounding dialogue or because participants do not recall potentially important details of conversational structure. Observational studies usually occur between strangers, despite evidence that most support is sought and received in personal relationships. Even when researchers have obtained participants' ratings of a particular conversation between close partners, it is challenging to determine to what extent ratings reflect observable conversational features or broader relational patterns and perceptions that exist beyond the conversation under examination. Qualitative methods are increasingly used to address the meaning and context of social support and are a useful complement to the dominant quantitative approach (→ Qualitative Methodology).

### **SOCIAL SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS**

Social support research provides a basis for interventions, including programs designed to provide new supportive relationships (e.g., buddy programs, support groups, mentors) and programs that attempt to make existing relationships more supportive (e.g., developing skills in identifying and seeking support, educating support providers).

Perhaps not surprisingly, the success of support interventions depends upon adaptation to the social environment and personal characteristics of participants. Many programs lack systematic and rigorous evaluation and few have a basis in theories of communication processes. This is an area ripe for the application of theories of relationship development, group communication, and communication skill development (→ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills).

Support groups and self-help groups, both face-to-face and through the Internet (→ P2P Networking), are an increasingly popular form of social support intervention. Participation in a support group can improve individual coping and mental and physical health. However, the willingness and ability to participate is greater in some socio-cultural groups than in others and for some conditions than for others. Some evidence suggests optimal group functioning occurs when participants include both those who are coping well and those who are struggling; yet while those who were previously lacking in personal and social resources benefit from the group, those who were coping well to start with may be at greater risk of psychological distress and reduced satisfaction with their support system. Many support group interventions have not been adequately assessed. Studies that have assessed such interventions often find participants report high levels of satisfaction, but input from individuals who declined to participate or dropped out is less often available, and links to outcomes such as coping or well-being are less often measured and less consistently demonstrated. Theories of group and interpersonal communication could bring a needed perspective on how the outcomes of support groups may be contingent upon communication processes.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Politeness Theory ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Relational Control ▶ Relational Dialectics ▶ Relational Maintenance ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Social Capital and Communication in Health ▶ Social Networks ▶ Social Support in Health Communication ▶ Support Talk ▶ Uncertainty Management

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# Socialization by the Media

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The mass media can play a significant role in shaping the social attitudes and social behaviors of children and adolescents. These effects are distinct from more general media effects that do not involve attitudes toward or behaviors with others, such as purchasing behaviors or learning educational content (→ Advertising as Persuasion; Educational Television, Children's Responses to; Sesame Street). Although parents exert the most influence on children, the mass media can be considered secondary agents of socialization. Research has found that mass media use, especially exposure to television, can affect the development of children's self-image, attitudes toward others, and interpersonal behaviors. Researchers also have studied the role of media in youth's development of political attitudes and behaviors.

## EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S SELF-IMAGE

When children view television, they compare themselves to characters and situations and form assessments of themselves. Usually, the effect on children's self-image is negative. For example, viewing of advertisements is related to lower self-esteem and depression among children who come from low-income families. It is likely that children feel bad about themselves because they cannot have the products that are advertised on television.

The link between television exposure and self-image also is evident among adolescents (→ Exposure to Television). Research on body image shows that adolescent girls who view a lot of television feel worse about their bodies and are more likely to have symptoms of eating disorders than do adolescent girls who watch less television (→ Body Images in the Media). Scholars speculate that this effect is due to the comparisons the viewers make between themselves and the people they see on television. In this case, consistent viewing of very thin female bodies leads adolescent girls to believe that this body type is normal and desirable, thereby leading to feelings of inadequacy if their bodies do not compare favorably.

At times, the effect of television viewing on self-image and self-esteem can be positive. Among African-American children, for instance, viewing of television featuring African-American actors is related to higher self-esteem scores. Although televised depictions of African-Americans tend to be stereotyped, it seems that the sheer presence of members of their own racial group improves African-American children's self-esteem. In addition, when children or adolescents compare themselves to characters who seem to be worse off than themselves, either physically or socially, television can bolster self-esteem.

## EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES ABOUT OTHERS

Television viewing also can influence *children's attitudes about others*. Numerous analyses of the content of television have shown that televised depictions of women are stereotypical (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Stereotyping and the Media).

Research has found that women appear less often on television (with → soap operas as the exception); and, when they do appear, they are typically young, attractive, involved in romantic relationships, and either without employment or holding very stereotypical types of jobs. Research suggests that exposure to these images helps children develop or maintain stereotypes about women. For example, children who are heavy television viewers are more likely to believe that women should engage in a very narrow and stereotypical range of behaviors and hold certain types of jobs, such as teachers and nurses. Moreover, television can influence young girls' career aspirations, as heavy viewers tend to desire more stereotypical jobs than do lighter viewers.

In addition, portrayals of minorities are stereotypical. For example, African-American actors are seen less often on television. When they do appear, they are typically cast in a very narrow range of minor roles. The presence and portrayal of African-Americans also differ by the genre of the program. African-Americans are most plentiful in comedies, where they assume less serious roles. When they appear in dramas, the storylines surrounding African-American characters often focus on race issues. Finally, news programs often over-represent African-Americans as law breakers, providing viewers with a skewed perception of their role in crime.

Television viewing also can shape children's – and adults' – *wariness about other people and situations*. Heavy viewers, for example, are more likely to believe that the world is a mean and dangerous place (→ Cultivation Effects). These individuals are more prone to overestimating both the likelihood that they will be victims of crime and the crime rate in general. Some scholars believe that television cultivates us to accept that the world we see on television is reflective of the world outside of our own windows. Because television is filled with violence and stereotypes, heavy viewers develop skewed beliefs about people and the world. Communication scholar → George Gerbner developed this → “cultivation theory,” and he and his colleagues have found some support for it. On the other hand, cultivation theory also has been the subject of much criticism. Among other things, critics charge that the theory's underlying assumption – that any type of television content carries the same message – is flawed (Gerbner et al. 1994).

## EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIORS

A lot of research has studied the effects of television viewing on children's interpersonal behaviors, including how children handle conflict and other social situations. The research suggests that heavy viewing is associated with more aggression among children. This effect is strongest among elementary-school children, perhaps because they are most impressionable and are still actively seeking role models for behavior. In addition, the effect is usually stronger among boys than among girls. This could be because, in general, aggression is a more tolerable form of behavior among males than females (Paik & Comstock 1994).

Certain televised portrayals increase the likelihood that children will *imitate television aggression* (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of). Aggressors who are physically attractive and have a sympathetic reason for violence (that is, those who engage in justified violence) are more likely to be imitated than are unattractive characters who engage in senseless aggressive acts. In addition, children are more likely to copy violence



that is rewarded or paired with humor. Classic cartoons typically contain many of these elements. As a result, classic cartoons are considered to be the most problematic type of content for children's learning of aggressive attitudes and behaviors.

There is a growing body of research that has found a relationship between video game use and increased aggressive behaviors among children (→ Video Games; Computer Games and Child Development). Video games are seen as a particularly worrisome form of entertainment because players are active participants, assuming the roles of perpetrators of violence and actually committing the virtual violence.

Although not as plentiful as the work on media violence, there is some work on the effects of viewing *pro-social or positive portrayals* on children's interpersonal behaviors. This work shows that viewing of pro-social content, including programs that teach sharing or helping behaviors or emphasize being generous, is related to pro-social outcomes in children. In fact, the effect of viewing pro-social television is twice as strong as the effect of viewing antisocial television. This could be because pro-social behaviors are condoned and encouraged by society and therefore are more likely to be imitated.

Research also has studied the relationship between television viewing and youngsters' *attitudes toward and initiation of intimate relationships*. Most of this work has focused on adolescents. Research in this area has found that heavy television viewing is associated with more permissive attitudes about sex, including the belief that premarital sex is acceptable, normal, and desirable. In addition, adolescents who view more television are more likely to engage in sexual activity than are adolescents who view less television.

In the case of *sexual attitudes and behaviors*, television has the potential to have a very strong effect on adolescents. In fact, television could become a primary agent of socialization for teenagers. Because of the subject matter and the embarrassment that surrounds it, parents often are reluctant to discuss sex with their children; and because of the central role that intimacy and sexual relations play during adolescence, teenagers actively seek whatever information they can about the subject. The mass media, and television in particular, are readily available and full of strong messages about sex. As a result, teenagers can easily acquire information about sex from television, and in the absence of parental communication about sex, they are apt to grant a lot of credibility to that information. In addition, the → Internet is a popular source of information about sex for teenagers. Given that the Internet is becoming more accessible to teenagers, it too can have a very strong influence on their attitudes and behaviors.

### **EFFECTS ON CHILDREN'S POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION**

Finally, media use can play an important role in children's or adolescents' political socialization (→ Political Socialization through the Media). That is, exposure to media can shape youngsters' knowledge about politics and the likelihood that they have an opinion about political issues and will participate in political processes. The political socialization research focuses on a variety of media as potential influences, including television, newspapers, and the Internet. In this sense, it is distinct from the other lines of research that have studied children's socialization by media. Adolescents are particularly prone to the political socializing effect of media because, cognitively, they are advanced enough to think about abstract ideas like politics. Research has shown that teenagers who

are exposed to news media are more likely to be knowledgeable about politics and have a stronger motivation to participate in political activities.

Future research on the socialization by media should expand to include a focus on the role of newer technologies, such as the Internet (→ Internet Use across the Life-Span). To date, the majority of research in this area has studied television. Although television is still the most frequently used medium among children, the Internet is quickly becoming a popular alternative. Children and adolescents are spending more and more time with the Internet, using it to learn about a range of topics and sometimes relying on it as a means of communicating with friends and family, and yet we know very little about the effect of Internet use on this vulnerable population. Research on the socializing effect of the Internet will continue to be an important topic for communication scholars in the years to come.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising as Persuasion ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Educational Television, Children's Responses to ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Use across the Life-Span ▶ Media Use and Child Development ▶ Media Use by Children ▶ Political Socialization through the Media ▶ Sesame Street ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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# Soft News

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The nature of news content has changed during the past decades due to the changes in media environment. As new media such as cable television, satellite television, and the Internet have appeared, the news media market has become more competitive than ever and news contents have tended to be more audience-oriented and softer. The problem is that soft news is not only “weakening the foundation of democracy by diminishing the public’s information about public affairs and its interest in politics” but also “has increased dramatically as a proportion of news coverage” (Patterson 2000, 2).

The definition of soft news varies, but one of its common characterizations is “all the news that is not hard news” (Davis 1996, 108–109). Hard news may then be defined by coverage of breaking events involving top leaders, major issues, or significant disruptions in the routines of daily life, such as an earthquake or airline disaster (Smith 1985).

One difference between hard and soft news is the tone of presentation. While a hard news story tells its audience the facts regarding what happens and leaves it up to the audience to decide what to do with the information, a soft news story tries instead to entertain or advise the reader. For instance, newspaper or TV stories may promise “news you can use.” Examples might be tips on how to stretch properly before exercising, or what to look for when buying a new computer. Soft news has also been identified by certain characteristics. It has been described, e.g., as news that is typically more sensational, more personality oriented, less time-bound, more practical, and more incident-based than other news (Spragens 1995). Knowing the difference between hard and soft news helps the audience develop a sense of how news is covered and what sorts of stories different news media tend to publish or broadcast.

The examples of soft news abound in the real media world. These include tabloid, syndicated, US-based programs like *Hard Copy*, and nightly network newscast features on personal finance, consumer affairs, and health. The regular features of network news magazines – *Dateline NBC*, *ABC Primetime Live*, *CBS 48 Hours*, and the made-for-soft-news spin-off *ABC 20/20 Downtown* – are “notorious” for their soft news formats.

Major print media outlets rate only marginally better than television at providing hard news over soft news coverage. The leading example of newspaper soft news journalism is *USA Today*, which from its inception has adopted an editorial direction that seeks a “television in print” style, with a heavy emphasis on color, photos, flashy graphics, brief articles, and coverage of lifestyle, entertainment, and “news you can use.” Many newspapers around the world have copied the model. Elite newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* in the US, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in Germany, or *Le Monde* in France have avoided the *USA Today* approach, making purposive editorial decisions to build readership through in-depth journalism focused on public affairs. Other newspapers, however, like the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* in the US or the *Independent* in the United Kingdom, have weakened their strong journalistic traditions by

attempting to compete with television on television's terms, and by combining business with editorial departments (Underwood 2001).

In the magazine industry, many publications have taken a soft news approach to public affairs. *Newsweek* and *Time* routinely feature soft journalism cover stories. For example, across the eight issues released in March and April 2001, *Time* ran cover stories on phobias, yoga, Jesus (an annual Easter rite), how to raise a "superkid," and the death of race car driver, Dale Earnhardt, Sr.

In another perspective, Patterson (2000) found that soft news has increased while hard news has decreased. He proposed that soft news has been defined as more personal and familiar in its form of presentation and less distant and institutional. He found a dramatic change in the vocabulary, consistent with the soft news thesis: *collectives* and *self-references*. That is, during the past two decades, reporters' use of collective words (crowd, army, congress, country, etc.), which are part of the vocabulary of hard news, has declined substantially, while their use of the self-references category (I, me, myself, etc.), from the vocabulary of soft news, has increased substantially.

The growth of soft news is rooted in marketing studies that indicate entertainment-based news can attract and hold audiences. According to Patterson (2000), Americans tend to believe the news has declined in quality. People who think the news has gone "soft" are more likely to say its quality has deteriorated.

Then do people prefer soft news to hard news in general? Some have insisted that the increase of soft news has occurred because it can attract more audience attention. The play theory and the uses and gratification model explain that the consumption of soft news can be viewed as a vehicle by which such enjoyment is obtained, and therefore audiences prefer soft news (Palmgreen & Rayburn 1985; Rayburn et al. 1984; Stephenson 1988). The results of Patterson's survey, however, suggest otherwise. The report indicated that "hard news is more appealing than soft news to most people" (Patterson 2000, 7). This suggests that hard news consumers are the foundation of the news audience and those who prefer hard news devote a lot more time to news.

Thus, although soft news has been the industry's answer to the problem of shrinking audiences, it may be diminishing the overall level of interest in news. Furthermore, it may be causing, ironically, the decrease in the news audience, with serious implications for democracy. Soft news distorts the public's perception of what the journalist Walter Lippmann called "the world outside." As Patterson (2000, 15) pointed out, "the irony is that, in the long run, these distortions also make that world a less attractive and inviting one. Interest in public affairs declines and so, too, does interest in news."

SEE ALSO: ► Infotainment ► Politainment ► Sensationalism ► Tabloid Press

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## Sony Corporation

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Sony is a leading global producer of consumer electronic equipment. Principal products include, among many others, home and portable audio, video cameras, digital cameras, Aiwa products, and home and portable gaming systems. Sony also is a producer of media content including recorded music, motion pictures (→ Cinema), → television programs and → video games. The company also has a fledgling financial services division, which offers insurance as well as → Internet banking.

Sony had revenues of approximately US\$63.5 billion for the fiscal year ended March 2006, an increase of 4.4 percent over the previous year, and the company had operations in 150 countries worldwide. Sony's five business divisions were electronics, games, pictures, financial services, and other, with almost 64 percent of revenues generated by the electronics division (*Datamonitor* 2006).

Sony was established in Tokyo, Japan, in May 1946 as an electronics company, making its reputation for innovation starting with the first all-transistor radio in 1954. Over the decades, Sony became an international company, establishing divisions around the world including in the United States, Britain, and Germany. The company continued to innovate, with the Trinitron television introduced in 1968 and the Betamax VCR in 1975 (→ Video), the Sony Walkman in 1979, the first CD player in 1982, and the first consumer camcorder in 1983.

Moving beyond its machine-based roots, the company began acquiring content providers in the late 1980s. The first acquisition was CBS Records, which was purchased in 1988. The following year, Sony acquired the long-running → Hollywood film studio Columbia Pictures Entertainment, occasioning at the time an upsurge of anti-Japanese anxiety in some quarters in the US. In 1991, these two companies were renamed Sony Music Entertainment Inc. and Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., respectively. In 1991, Sony Pictures Entertainment purchased the company's remaining interest in RCA/

Columbia Home Video, now known as Columbia TriStar Home Video Inc. Sony sold its 50 percent stake in the Game Show Network to Liberty Digital, Inc., and in 2002 sold off its stake in Telemundo Communications Group Inc., a 24-hour Spanish-language network, to NBC. In 2003, Sony Music entered a joint venture agreement with Bertelsmann's BMG combining the two music companies with each owning a 50 percent stake in the joint venture (→ Bertelsmann Corporation).

In the 1990s, Sony made its entry into the video game industry through a collaboration with Nintendo. That partnership was unsuccessful, however, and Sony began developing its own gaming system, which would become the first Playstation, launched in 1995.

Sony Corporation develops, designs, manufactures, and sells electronic equipment and consumer entertainment in seven main areas: electronics, video and online games, music, movies, television, robots, and internet services and applications. These products are produced through five business segments: electronics, games, pictures (film and TV), financial services, and "all other."

The electronics segment includes audio (home, portable, car, and navigation systems), video (cameras, decks, and DVD players), televisions, information and communication devices (including professional equipment), and semiconductors, among many others. Mobile communications operate through a joint venture with Ericsson – Sony Ericsson Mobile. The subsidiary produces mobile phones. Product names produced by Sony include Vaio, Trinitron, Bravia, and Handicam,

Sony Computer Entertainment was the home of Playstation 2, the dominant leader in the game console category. This product continued to sell well, due to deep price cutting, even after the introduction of the Playstation 3 in 2007. The PSP – the company's hand-held device – also has continued strong sales, though in 2007 Nintendo remained the leader in this segment. Station.com, a separate unit, produced online games including EverQuest and the Matrix Online.

Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE) produces and distributes motion pictures as well as television programming. The *Spider Man* franchise was a major success for this division. This area of the company has also had a number of television programming hits, particularly for cable outlets, including *Rescue Me*, *Strong Medicine*, and *The Shield*. In addition, they produced daytime programming such as soap operas, *The Young and the Restless*, and *Days of Our Lives*, as well as syndicated programming like *Judge Hatchett* and *Judge Maria Lopez*. This division housed home video acquisition and studio facilities operations, developed new entertainment technologies, and included AXN, an action and adventure television production company.

The "other" category for Sony included its financial services and the company's music business. Sony Life Insurance Co., Sony Assurance, Sony Bank, and Sony Finance International made up the financial services segment of the company. In addition to insurance products, this division offered Internet banking and credit card and leasing services. Sony Music Entertainment Inc. and Sony Music Entertainment (Japan) Inc., which included the Columbia, Epic, Legacy, Sony Classic, and Sony Nashville labels, sell recorded music and videos. In addition, the company has begun a monthly subscription service for music downloads.

SEE ALSO: ► Bertelsmann Corporation ► Cinema ► Hollywood ► Internet ► Television ► Video ► Video Games

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## **Sound Bites**

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A sound bite is a portion of recorded human speech that is presented as part of a broadcast news report. Referred to by a variety of names, including actuality, sound clip, and sound-on-tape, the sound bite is characteristically the distillation of a person's message, usually in one or two well-turned phrases or sentences. The overwhelming body of research on sound bites has focused on their brevity and subsequent effect on political discourse. Modest attempts are being made to expand the research agenda on sound bites to include issues of journalistic mediation and effects on learning information.

Most of the research on sound bites has examined their characteristics and use in television news reports of US national election campaigns (→ Television News; Political News). Content analyses (Hallin 1992; Lowry & Shidler 1998) have produced a consistent description: while the average sound bite in national campaigns was nearly 43 seconds in 1968, by 1988 the length had shrunk to under 10 seconds. As a comparison, a similar content analysis in Germany showed that candidates' sound bites on German television news average around 20 seconds (Donsbach & Jandura 2003). Broadcast practitioners took note of the findings, leading some networks to announce policies in 1992 for longer sound bites. Nevertheless, average sound bites have remained under 10 seconds. The brevity of sound bites has in turn affected → political discourse. Political consultants have steered candidates into speech behaviors that are suited to sound bites; i.e., main ideas expressed in concise or simple terms and compelling enough to make it past journalistic gatekeepers (→ Political Consultant). Through a change in behavior to suit broadcast news, all political speech has been affected, whether that speech is broadcast or not.

This research has been met with normative concerns that political speech is stripped of complexity and nuance, feeding voters simple solutions to complicated problems (Slayden & Whillock 1999). Hence, sound bites weaken democratic or republican governance by diluting discourse among voters and between voters and representatives. Some fear that sound bites, at their worst, are a means of creating false consciousness among the electorate, thereby aiding in manufacturing public consent. Others have argued that such fears are unfounded and rooted in deterministic assumptions. While news stories rely on sound bites, candidates also have access to more long-form interview programs than in the past. In the end, broadcast journalists are doing what print journalists have done for decades: crafting news for clarity and conciseness.

The shrinking sound bite has become symbolic of the increasingly active, mediating role of broadcast journalists (→ Broadcast Journalism). As studies have shown, the shorter a candidate's sound bite, the longer the reporter's narration. Research has documented that even though the number of sound bites in a news report has increased and reports have gotten shorter, the percentage of time devoted to journalists' narration has increased (Steele & Barnhurst 1996). This marks a change in political reporting from a relatively passive role to a more mediated form of news. News reports in the US in the 1960s typically relied on lengthy sound bites to carry the narrative thread of the story. By the 1980s, reporters' narration created the narrative unity of the news story. This increase in editorial control increases journalists' power in the delivery of political communication (→ Media as Political Actors).

The concern for some is that this more mediated approach to news leads to a narrative line stressing the campaign as a horse race rather than stressing a candidate's policy platform. Increased mediation also opens up the possibility for more bias on the part of reporters or news organizations (→ Bias in the News). In fact, some have argued that the shrinking sound bite has created a structural bias in favor of conservative policies. However, US studies of sound bite bias have detected a modest tilting toward Democratic candidates (Lowry & Shidler 1998), and have found that sound bites were slightly longer for Democrats than Republicans. Nevertheless, the length of sound bites did not prove to be related to how favorably a candidate was viewed by voters (Russomanno & Everett 1995).

Whether sound bites alter political discourse or contribute to bias, these effects are generally understood as unintended consequences. The shrinking sound bite and greater editorial control by broadcast journalists are typically explained in economic terms (Hallin 1992). The tightly edited pace of stories with short sound bites is believed to be preferred by audiences. News consultants have sold shorter sound bites to broadcasters as a means of maximizing ratings, which in turn maximizes profits. Other explanations have noted the technological development of broadcasting, which allowed for easier editing to create more complex or mediated news reports. Still other explanations have noted the broader shift in journalism, particularly following Watergate in the US, from a disseminating to an interpretive role (→ Journalists' Role Perception). The interpretive role is consistent with the more mediated style, which uses shorter sound bites and more reporter narration.

A new area of research on sound bites has explored how audience members learn from news that is driven by sound bites (→ News Processing and Retention). Some evidence suggests that viewers learn more information from a montage of sound bites and images than they do strictly from reporters' narration.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Journalists' Role Perception  
▶ Media as Political Actors ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Political Consultant  
▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political News ▶ Television News

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## Source Protection

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Journalists sometimes get information from sources who, for various reasons, wish to keep their identities secret. The use of confidential sources raises a number of complex ethical and legal issues (→ Ethics in Journalism). To begin with, the idea of keeping information secret seems anathema to the basic purpose of journalism, which is to disseminate information to an audience. Also, some sources wish to remain confidential to hide their participation in questionable behavior, putting journalists in the awkward position of helping people escape social, political, or legal responsibility for their actions. If the identity of the source becomes a central question in a criminal investigation or civil trial, the journalist may have to choose between identifying the source and facing imprisonment or fines for refusing to do so. A journalist who voluntarily reveals a confidential source's identity can face serious professional and legal repercussions (→ Journalism: Legal Situation).

### THE JOURNALIST'S CONFLICT

Often, however, confidential sources who want to remain anonymous to protect their jobs, families, or safety have helped journalists expose substantial government or corporate wrongdoing. Perhaps the most famous example is “Deep Throat,” the source who helped guide *Washington Post* reporters Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward as they uncovered the → *Watergate scandal* in the early 1970s that led to Richard Nixon's resignation from the American presidency. Deep Throat's identity remained secret until 2005, when a former Federal Bureau of Investigation official revealed that he was the source. There are countless other examples of journalists breaking important stories with the assistance of confidential sources.

Journalists across the globe fear that if they identify a confidential source, that source and other potential sources will be afraid to provide useful information in the future. Studies of journalists worldwide have found broad agreement that it is unacceptable to

identify a confidential source, even when there is little agreement across borders about other ethical practices and principles (Weaver 1998). Professional ethics codes generally agree that journalists should be cautious about promising confidentiality to sources but should keep such promises when given (→ Professionalization of Journalism).

Keeping the promise is often easier said than done because of the potential *legal complications*. In nations that adhere to the rule of law, controversies over criminal violations and civil law disputes between persons or corporations end up in courts of justice. Courts attempting to determine guilt or innocence or balancing the rights of civil litigants generally require that all persons with relevant evidence provide that evidence to the litigants or investigators. Rules, often called privileges, that allow some persons to escape the obligation to provide relevant evidence are often narrowly construed and are only acceptable when they protect a societal interest that is deemed more important than the value of the evidence lost. To varying degrees, courts in many countries allow attorneys, mental health counselors, medical doctors, priests and other clergy, and spouses of accused criminals to escape the obligation to testify or turn over documents to courts or investigatory bodies. Additionally, courts in many countries have rules that allow potential witnesses to escape the obligation to testify if doing so would be unusually burdensome or would reveal irrelevant information. Persons who are not covered by such a specific privilege or general rule run the risk of being punished with fines or imprisonment if they do not cooperate with authorities.

Journalists have often sought legal protection that would allow them to conceal the identities of confidential sources without the pressure of being threatened with imprisonment or fines. Journalists have succeeded in many countries in winning limited protection, but one problem they face is that, unlike attorneys, mental health counselors, and medical doctors, among others, journalists usually do not have licenses or other credentials that would make it easy to define clearly and to limit the number of privileged people. Therefore, courts and other governmental bodies are sometimes reluctant to provide a privilege to an uncertainly defined group.

## COUNTRY-SPECIFIC REGULATIONS

In countries that recognize a qualified (limited) privilege for journalists, the privilege usually allows journalists to avoid testifying to investigative bodies or in courts of law unless the information they possess is critical to the case and unavailable from another source. The privilege in nations or geographic regions of nations is created in various ways: constitutional provisions, general statutory evidence or procedure codes, specific shield statutes for journalists, or through court decisions interpreting constitutional or common law.

For example, constitutions in *Argentina, Mozambique, and Sweden* specifically protect journalists' rights to keep sources confidential. Not surprisingly, there is little case law about the journalist's privilege in those countries. General codes of evidence or procedure have provisions protecting journalists from being forced to disclose sources in *Australia, Austria, El Salvador, France, Germany, Japan, and Norway*. For example, the Supreme Court of Japan in 2006 found that a general procedural rule protecting "professional secrets" from forced disclosure applied to the identities of journalists' sources.

Russia has a specific federal law on the mass media that provides for source confidentiality, and many of the now-independent states of the *former Soviet Union* have adopted similar legislation, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. However, the mass media law's protection of the journalistic right to conceal sources is subordinate to general procedure codes and other important interests.

In *Canada, New Zealand, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, and the United States*, among others, journalists' rights to conceal source identities rely to a great extent on judicial interpretations of general press freedom statements in constitutions or statutes. Nigerian courts handed down several decisions in the early 1980s recognizing a right of journalists to conceal sources under the constitution's press freedom provisions, but a series of disruptions in the government has left the value of those decisions uncertain. Courts in Canada have been reluctant to tie the journalist's privilege to the constitution's free-press guarantee, instead requiring journalists to meet a high burden of proof that the source's unmasking would interfere severely with legitimate media privacy concerns. In both New Zealand and the United Kingdom, a so-called "newspaper rule" allows the media to avoid disclosure of a confidential source during the discovery phase of a defamation case. New Zealand courts have used that rule as the basis for creating a broader common-law privilege for journalists, while courts in the UK have been unwilling to do so.

In the UK, international law may do what national law does not. In 1996, the → European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) overturned British appellate courts and recognized a privilege under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects freedom of expression. A few years later the same court held, in a case out of Luxembourg, that the use of search warrants against journalists was even more invasive of free-expression rights than the use of a subpoena to compel testimony. Decisions of the ECHR are binding on all member nations of the European Union. Shortly after the ECHR ruling in 1996, the Supreme Court of the Netherlands agreed with the ECHR that Article 10 required protection of confidential source identities.

In another case involving a court with multinational jurisdiction, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) ruled in 2002, and affirmed in 2005, that *war correspondents* have a qualified privilege. A former *Washington Post* reporter, Jonathan Randal, was called to testify about his interview, through an interpreter, with a man accused of taking part in the "ethnic cleansing" of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s. The ICTY's Appeals Chamber eventually agreed with Randal that war correspondents faced particular dangers if forced to reveal sources. Routinely requiring reporters to reveal sources would undermine trust in reporters and could put them in greater physical danger from suspicious sources than they already faced in war zones. The ICTY declined, however, to extend the privilege to all reporters.

## THE LEGAL SITUATION IN THE US

The United States is often noted for its "exceptionalism" on freedom of speech and the press, and the first amendment to its constitution was one of the first such official recognitions of the right to free expression (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of the Press, Concept of). However, journalists in the United States are often less sure of being able to protect their sources than journalists in other countries. The highest court

in the United States, the Supreme Court, has only considered once whether the free-press guarantee in the first amendment gives reporters the right to conceal source identities from investigators. In 1972, the court in *Branzburg v. Hayes* said journalists had no right to refuse to testify before criminal investigation bodies called grand juries. The court ruled that in such a circumstance the public's need to bring criminals to justice outweighed the need to protect journalists' sources.

The decision was sharply divided, however, and lower federal courts in the United States have said, for the most part, that journalists do have the right to conceal sources in criminal and civil cases under the conditions proposed by Justice Potter Stewart in a dissenting opinion in *Branzburg*. This means that journalists' attempts to conceal sources are judged on a case-by-case basis and that the party seeking the journalist's testimony, notes, or source names must show that the information is highly relevant and important to a case and unavailable elsewhere. In addition to this common law protection in federal courts, 34 of the 50 American states, plus the District of Columbia, have shield laws that protect journalists to varying degrees in those jurisdictions. Most of the other states have court rulings recognizing a qualified common law privilege. There was no nationwide shield law at this writing, although proposals for such a law appeared in Congress, the national legislature, whenever journalists were jailed or fined for refusing to cooperate with federal investigations.

The uncertainty caused by differing jurisdictional rules on privileges raises the question of whether, and to what extent, the legal status of a privilege affects journalist-source relationships. Several American courts, including the Supreme Court in the *Branzburg* case, have lamented the lack of strong empirical data on the effects of privileges on sources and journalists. Such a study could be fertile ground for further research. Still unanswered with any certainty is the question of how to define "journalist" so as to grant protection to people gathering and reporting news without making the definition too broad. The problem is even more acute today with the existence of the → Internet, which allows many more persons to publish their opinions and the results of their own investigations for a wide audience without being employed by a commonly recognized medium of mass communication. The Internet also allows for the easy flow of information internationally, and the increased globalization of information industries, including the news media, raises questions about the comparative rights of journalists in various countries, including the right to conceal sources. More research is needed into how various nations recognize and protect the news-gathering rights of journalists.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ European Court of Human Rights ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Journalism: Legal Situation ▶ Licensing of Journalists ▶ News Sources ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ War Correspondents ▶ Watergate Scandal

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## South Africa: Media System

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South Africa had an estimated population of 47 million people in 2005. Eight in ten people were classified as African; among the rest, whites were the largest minority. Since 1994, there has been a constitutional democracy with an executive president elected by parliament, which recognizes 11 official languages (although these are still far from equitable representation in the media). The former liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC), is the ruling party, having won overwhelming electoral mandates since 1994. Under its policies, some 85 percent of homes had electricity by 2005, enabling increased TV penetration. There is a growing black middle class. The government practices a “black economic empowerment” policy, which gives preference to formerly disadvantaged South Africans in terms of contracts and broadcast licensing.

### HISTORICAL STAGES AND DETERMINANTS

The country was infamous for its apartheid policies (1948–1994), which built upon the white domination and segregation that evolved after Dutch settlers began arriving in the mid-seventeenth century. British colonialism in the nineteenth century saw 100 years of wars of conquest and resistance, ending with African South Africans retaining only 13 percent of the land. An indigenous middle class had developed its own press in the late nineteenth century, but this media died when its class basis was destroyed as white hegemony consolidated. Waves of resistance → newspapers developed in the twentieth century, closely linked to the fortunes of political movements such as the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union (1920s), the Congress movement (1950s), communists (1930s–1940s),

Black Consciousness (1970s), and the United Democratic Front (1980s). State repression of these political movements saw a range of tactics being used to silence the media associated with them (→ Censorship). The banned ANC put out underground publications (→ Underground Press) and ran a shortwave → radio station from the 1960s.

The English-language white colonial press successfully campaigned for press freedom from early on (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of), and secured this in 1828. In its mainstream form, this media sector came to be owned by the mining industry for most of the twentieth century, from which base it was mildly critical of apartheid.

The Afrikaans-language press emerged as part of the Afrikaner nationalist movement in the twentieth century, financed by Afrikaner finance capital, and completely intertwined with the ruling National Party during most of the apartheid era. Radio broadcasting as a state monopoly easily fell under government domination after the advent of apartheid. Its subsequent services were geared to uniting whites, and – when additional stations were launched in the 1950s and 1960s – fragmenting black identities along ethnic or tribal lines. The → television arm of the South African broadcasting Corporation (SABC) was started only in 1976, aimed mainly at a white audience, and it had three channels – all commercialized – in operation at the time of the transition to democracy in 1994. The newspaper industry owned a subscription entertainment channel, M-Net.

After apartheid, substantial broadcast pluralism emerged, as well as a degree of black ownership of both print and electronic media (→ Ownership in the Media). However, of the major print groups in 2006, Independent Newspapers was a foreign investor with no local shareholder (having bought the Argus group from the mining industry in 1993), while Naspers (commonly known as Media24) had only minor ownership among people other than Afrikaners.

## **NORMATIVE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

The 1996 constitution included a Bill of Rights that provides for rights to freedom of speech, freedom of the media, and access to information (→ Freedom of Communication). As part of freedom of speech, journalists are not required to register. However, freedom of speech does not extend to hate speech, and it has to be balanced with rights to dignity and privacy (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophobias). Since 1999, the Film and Publications Act has provided for pre-publication restrictions on content relating to age and distribution. It covers both child pornography and hate speech, and is applied to print media that are not members of the industry body (which operates a self-regulatory press ombudsman). The Act has not applied to licensed broadcasters, who are governed by the statutory Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, as well as the self-regulatory Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa. Those that are subject (e.g., cinemas) may not screen any film classified XX or “which, judged within context, amounts to propaganda for war, incites imminent violence, or advocates hatred that is based on race, ethnicity, gender or religion and which constitutes incitement to cause harm” (South African Government 1999). A parliamentary bill in September 2006 elicited major condemnation when it sought to scrap the exemption of the mass media bodies that operate under recognized self-regulatory mechanisms.

Another law dealing with hate speech is the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (2000), which bans publication of “anything that could reasonably be construed to demonstrate a clear intention to be hurtful, cause harm or promote hatred on the basis of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language or birth” (South African Government 2000). No media have been prosecuted for hate speech during the democratic era, and new legal precedents have meant fewer convictions for infringements of “dignity” (i.e., defamation) than previously.

One of the constitutional rights has been developed into the Promotion of Access to Information Act (2002), although this law is little used by the media (→ Right to Know). There remain some security laws as well as restrictions on reporting courts, but these have also been mainly moribund during the democratic era.

In 1993, a year before the democratic elections, political negotiations led to the passage of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, the autonomous status of which was maintained in the 1996 constitution. The Independent Broadcasting Authority later became the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (Icasa) after expanding to include telecommunications and (later) postal regulation. The authority’s councilors are appointed by the minister of communications from a list supplied by parliament after a public nominations process. After a decade of forward-and-back lobbying, by 1996 ministerial powers over Icasa excluded intervention in specific licensing, and were mostly limited to broad policymaking that also has to be open to public comment.

Under the 1993 founding Act, the regulator may only license broadcasters within certain boundaries relating to degrees of → cross-ownership by newspaper groups, concentration of ownership of stations, and foreign ownership percentage. The regulator imposes degrees of public service commitments (e.g., → news, local content; → Local News) depending on whether licensees are classed as “public,” “commercial,” or “community.” Community licenses are for local, nonprofit radio stations, which must demonstrate ownership and participation by community groups.

A law passed in 2006, the Electronic Communications Act, tackles convergence and requires a license for “unidirectional” audio and audiovisual content, irrespective of technology used. However, “content services” are exempted from the category of “electronic communications” licenses, which implies that (most) websites can continue to be freely published, although ambiguity may lead to contention.

The Broadcasting Act of 1999 formalized a system whereby board members of the SABC are appointed by the president on the advice of parliament. The 2002 Amendment Act retained the 1999 inclusion of a charter enshrining the corporation’s political independence, but also requiring it to operate in both the public and the “national interest.” The SABC is also accountable to Icasa, which has imposed detailed public service license conditions on the broadcaster’s many stations (→ Public Broadcasting Systems).

In 2002, the Media Development and Diversity Agency Act was passed, creating an institution mandated (despite a small budget) to promote new small-scale media (→ Development Communication: Africa). The SA Advertising Research Foundation, financed by the media industry, conducts market research (the source of statistics below).

## OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA

### Printed Press

The country's approximately 45 daily, weekly, and biweekly newspapers are owned by four media groups: Naspers, Johncom, Caxton, and Independent. They are complemented by more than 50 free sheets. Total circulation of daily newspapers was 1.57 million in 2006. Most newspapers are declining in circulation, but there is strong growth in tabloid newspapers, and to a lesser extent in African-language publishing. In 2005, 41 percent of the adult population read a newspaper. The magazine sector is growing. About 20 million audited magazines, including targeted customer publications, are circulated every month.

### Radio

Radio reaches more than 92 percent of South Africans, and some 88 percent of households have a set. In 2005, there were some 90 community radio stations (though many were struggling; → Community Media), five SABC national footprint stations, and 13 SABC regional stations. The same year, there were 13 privately owned radio stations – mainly regional and held by black ownership groups. However all stations, including SABC's, compete without any license limits for → advertising. Those with elite and urban markets draw the highest revenues. The largest audience is held by the SABC's isiZulu-language station, *Ukhozi FM*, heard by 21 percent of the country's adults in 2005. The same year, the SABC's *Radio Metro*, an English-language urban-music station, had grown to be the second largest with 17 percent. Other African-language stations follow with 16 percent (*isiXhosa*) and 12 percent (*seSotho*). Seven new commercial licenses were issued during 2006.

### Television

In 2005, 7.76 million households (72.1 percent) were estimated to own a television set. Almost 80 percent of South Africans were watching television at least once a week.

The main television service is terrestrial free-to-air. The SABC has three national channels for domestic audiences, and SABC Africa, which targets the remainder of the continent via satellite. The public broadcaster has been licensed to launch two regional channels in indigenous languages, but their launch is pending funding. A company with significant black (union) ownership owns the only private channel, *e.tv*.

All these channels are licensed to take advertising – not more than 10 minutes of advertising an hour; and not more than 12 minutes in a given hour. The SABC's two public service channels, however, have to carry 55 percent local content (versus 35 percent for the broadcaster's commercial service), and had to start reaching 80 percent African-language broadcasting in 2007. *SABC 1* had the highest viewership in 2005 (68 percent), with *e.tv* coming second at 55 percent.

The terrestrial pay service *M-Net* has 10 percent of viewers, while its sister company DSTV reached 6 percent through 60 television and 40 other channels via satellite.



## Internet

Internet access remains very much a minority facility, with just 5 percent of South Africans benefiting in 2005 (→ Digital Divide). Further, access on a daily basis is enjoyed by just 3.3 percent of adults (or slightly over 1 million people). A study in 2004 showed that this represented 1 percent usage by women compared to 4 percent by men (Gender Links 2004). Most access (57 percent) is via workplaces, because the high cost of telephony deters home-based connections (*Goldstuck 2005*). E-commerce is low, with only 13 percent of Internet users reporting having transacted online (OMD 2005; → E-Commerce). Connectivity at multipurpose community centers and schools is fraught with problems.

## GENERAL TRENDS

In a very free environment, South Africa has a media system that escapes being politically controlled. Instead, it is largely driven by commercial logic (although the weak community radio sector is characterized by volunteer rather than waged labor). The effect of dependence on advertising has led to particular controversy around the public broadcaster. Its competitors complain of unfair competition, while civil society and even the ruling party criticize the neglect of public service delivery, especially in indigenous languages. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that government policy will change toward a public funding model for the SABC. The extant policy has not meant, however, a lack of attempts by government to establish greater political control over the SABC. Most of these have been unsuccessful in the face of extensive lobbying, reflecting a strong democratic tradition in the country. Similar battles have been fought over government's aspirations to control Icasa. Notwithstanding government being kept at arm's length from broadcasting, and the need for the SABC to compete with editorially credible alternatives, the public broadcaster still frequently incurs accusations that it is not living up to its mandate of independent public broadcasting. On the other hand, e.tv, along with private radio and print, is generally seen as playing a watchdog role, often to the chagrin of the authorities, who say media should be supportive at this stage of national development. There is increasing choice of media, though not generally in mother-tongues. There is little "serious media" in the overall landscape, but that which exists (the *Mail & Guardian* newspaper, for example) has significant national influence.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Africa ▶ Communication Modes, African ▶ Community Media ▶ Cross-Ownership ▶ Development Communication: Africa ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Commerce ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ▶ Local News ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Right to Know ▶ Television ▶ Underground Press

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## South Korea: Media System

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South Korea, in its pan-national homogeneity across many fronts, has been a friendly and profitable market for the mass media industry. All South Koreans speak in just one common language of their own, and they all come from just one identical race. Hence they all share an identical heritage from their common history, ancient and modern. The literacy rate is extremely high at 99 percent. The literate and educated public, armed with affluence from the vibrant economy, handsomely supports a steady consumption of the traditional media as well as ready experimentation with the rapidly advancing new media.

Though the press and other media in South Korea now enjoy a full range of freedom, they nevertheless retain a mixed bag of various legacies from Korea's turbulent modern history (Lee 1982, 2003). During the last 100 years alone, South Korea changed from a five-century-old kingdom (1392–1910) to Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945), to US military government (1945–1948), to the beginning of an independent democratic state (1948), through the Korean War (1950–1953) to a military coup and successive military dictatorships (1961–1992), and to the beginning of civilian governments since 1993.

While the present shape of the South Korean political system is an unmistakable democracy, it often exhibits the characteristics of “formal democracy,” where consolidation of democracy is still to be desired (Halvorsen 1992).

### PRINTED PRESS

South Korea is a country of national dailies dominating the nation's media scene. Eleven general-interest national dailies, all published in the capital city of Seoul, fiercely compete for circulations, often resorting to free distribution with gifts to potential subscribers (→ Newspaper). The Big Three general-interest national dailies – *Chosun Ilbo*, *Dong-a Ilbo*, and *Joong-ang Ilbo* – sell more than two million copies each, with a fourth paper, *Hankook Ilbo*, publishing around 750,000 copies (KPF 2004a, 2004b). The first three

papers are not only the most influential and prestigious dailies but also the ones with mainstream conservative orientations. Contrasting to this set of papers is a group of three other national dailies – *Hankyoreh*, *Seoul Shinmun*, and *Kyunghyang Shinmun* – that are rather progressive and center-left in editorial leaning. The circulations of this second group are much smaller – 200,000 to 400,000 each.

Of the total of 138 dailies being published in South Korea, 79 are local dailies, which are relatively weak in financial base and mostly being published out of local boosterism or for the influence or prestige accruing from owning news media. Among the local dailies, the *Busan Ilbo* and the (Daegu) *Maeil Shinmun* are exceptionally strong and influential in their respective provinces. The total includes eight foreign-language dailies (in English and Chinese), eight business papers, three sports dailies, three children’s papers, and ten others exclusively specializing in a variety of industrial fields. The Korea Audit Bureau of Circulations (KABC) estimated the newspaper readership rate at 338 per 1,000 population unit in 2005 (KABC 2006).

The Big Three national dailies, as of 2006, have been engaging in a continual tug-of-war with the center-left President Roh Moo-hyun (2003–) over his populist government’s “engagement” policy toward North Korea. The Big Three define the Roh administration as communist sympathizers, while the ruling power tries to undercut these powerful media as outdated conservative complainants (→ Political Communication; Journalists’ Role Perception). The Big Three are more than dailies; they are all huge media complexes, each additionally publishing a very popular weekly → news magazine, a monthly → magazine (often over 600 pages in length), a women’s monthly, and also some other periodicals – literary, outdoors, fashion, etc. Dailies print 24 to 52 pages in broadsheet. Only one national news agency, Yonhap, operates in South Korea.

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

In South Korea, → television is assumed to have reached full saturation, with every household owning at least one set. Leading the television sector are three *major networks*: KBS (Korean Broadcasting System, public-service television), MBC (Munhwa Broadcasting Corporation, operating commercially but legally required to be public television), and SBS (Seoul Broadcasting System, commercial television). Also on air is a fourth network, EBS (Educational Broadcasting System), which specializes in instructional programming (→ Television Networks). Additionally, → cable television, with about 120 channels, is available in some 77 percent of the nation’s households, though most of these channels operate on shoestring budgets. Radio is everywhere with its specialized services from traffic to religious groups. The broadcasting sector cultivates the digital television (DTV) and digital multimedia broadcasting (DMB) services, while the new-media sector pursues the WiBro (wireless broadband) services.

The three major television networks are electronic counterparts of the Big Three print press. They are especially influential during election times for their ability to reach millions of people with images and messages critical to setting agendas for public discourse. On occasion, they compete in news reporting, as the MBC network did in 2005 by exposing the globally controversial stem-cell research scandal involving a Korean scientist. But, generally, the television networks compete in serial drama programs,

perhaps the most popular television fare among South Koreans (→ Soap Operas). Such programs, resembling the popular telenovela genre in Latin America, are the key players in the popularity of South Korean pop arts in the adjacent countries, including China, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, and other Southeast Asian nations. This trend is referred to as “Hallyu” or the Korean wave (Lee 2005; Ming 2005).

The *KBS network* has been continually controversial for its public service mission, which is often undermined by the ruling regime’s political influence. The president of the country has de facto power to appoint the network’s top managers, who have been invariably the president’s or the ruling party’s cronies. Budget-wise, KBS is bound to be stable since it collects license fees from all television set owners. It draws an additional revenue from airing commercials on its second television channel. The network is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities and manned by some 5,500 employees. KBS is criticized for its perceived indifference to quality programming and for indulging instead in ratings competitions in the domestic market. The network rarely deviates from the ruling power’s policy lines in its news broadcast (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of; Communication Law and Policy: Asia).

## NEW MEDIA AND THE INTERNET

South Korea ranks among the top countries in the use of the → Internet-based electronic media of various recent technological advances (→ Exposure to the Internet). Mobile phones are ubiquitous; it is not uncommon for a large family to have one for everyone, from children to grandparents. Especially remarkable is the high rate of broadband access – 77 percents of households, as of 2005 (MIC 2005). Nationally, about 73 percent of the population aged 6 and over use Internet-related services, with personal computers being owned by some 78 percent of all households.

“Information Highway” has been a national capital improvement endeavor ever since the early 1990s. Besides this government initiative, South Korea enjoys another advantage in this field in being the home of the world’s two leading *electronic manufacturers* – → Samsung Corporation and LG Group. These two often use the home base as a test market for their latest innovations. The government also promotes and supports production of software programs and online digital contents as a service-sector industry and a potential trade item for export. In mid-2006, there was a national uproar over the widespread misuse of the very successful computer games programs for gambling by millions of people. Addiction to this habit is increasingly becoming a societal concern.

All the traditional media, like the daily papers and television networks, provide highly elaborate online versions of their services, often in multiple languages beyond their vernacular version. News portals of various orientations are growing in number constantly. Independent online newspapers – numbering around 260 as of mid-2006 – also flourish, sometimes posing competition to the mainstream media’s online service. Especially notable is the emergence and success of several “citizens’ media” that promote “citizen reporters” and interactive journalism. One of them, *Ohmynews* ([www.ohmynews.com](http://www.ohmynews.com), [english.ohmynews.com](http://english.ohmynews.com)), is recognized as a leading model of this genre in the relevant global arena (→ Online Media).

## SYSTEMIC ISSUES

Though the future of the South Korean media industry looks bright, there are several systemic issues that continue to plague the South Korean press, like growing pains in a body that refuses to leave the cradle of tradition. One example is the temptation and practice on the part of the ruling power to indirectly undermine the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of the press (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). Since the Press Acts stipulate press responsibility as well as freedom, various government offices, including the presidential Blue House, readily take reports of any critical stance to the Press Arbitration Commission, thus fostering an environment of *chilling effects*. Even some of the powerful national prosecutors often file complaints against the media with the commission, requesting hefty fines for alleged wrongful reporting. President Roh himself has resorted to such measures several times. His press secretary often orders off-limit sanctions against “unfriendly” reporters for their critical reporting.

Roh’s administration manipulated the antitrust provisions in the Press Acts and the Press Arbitration Acts to charge large-circulation papers with monopoly practices, and thus to control the papers, if their circulation tops 30 percent of the subscriber-based market. Leading dailies took the case to the Constitutional Court, which rendered this particular provision unconstitutional in a decision in 2006. Roh’s administration, however, instituted a measure by which the government can financially help weak or failing papers with subsidies. The prospective beneficiaries, the smaller dailies, included several papers well known for their pro-government editorial stance (→ Concentration in Media Systems; Antitrust Regulation).

Another issue endemic in the South Korean press is the relative *ethical lapse in the newsroom*, often involving cash payments for favorable coverage. There is a specific word for this practice, “chonji,” meaning “a small consideration.” This under-the-table transaction remains a cause of shame to most other ethically conscientious practitioners, but the tradition goes on in many different variations: free golf games paid for by affluent news sources, free trips abroad in the name of on-site news coverage, expensive gifts during holiday seasons, quid-pro-quo favors arranged for influential media figures, and so on. Popular television anchors and influential politics editors often jump ship, becoming congressional candidates of certain political parties the next day. But, structurally speaking, South Korea’s system of ethical control should be airtight, as it has not just one but two separate institutional devices: the Korea Press Ethics Commission, run as a voluntary press council, and the Press Arbitration Commission, a statutory organ with the power of sanctions (→ Ethics in Journalism).

Also problematic is the confrontational relationship between *media owners and press unions*. Major dailies are all owned by families, but these owners, relatively speaking, are not well known for their intellectual leadership in editorial integrity and dedication to professionalism in journalism. The family owners of the Big Three press were all convicted of dodging tax at one time or another, though their supporters attribute this to the government’s political use of the magical power of tax auditing. In this climate, press unions raise their voice for “editorial independence in the newsroom” (→ Journalists: Professional Associations).

Finally, it is instructive to note the fact that, in spite of the media-rich setting in South Korea, the mainstream leaders in the influential national dailies are rather underperforming in their editorially enterprising endeavor. Their coverage of daily news is often excessively redundant, lacking long-term projects of investigative in-depth reportage. They have cutting-edge facilities and they hire well-educated personnel in the newsroom, thanks to the prestige of the reporting job. A case in point here is their apparent weakness in reporting on the North Korean concern, one hot global issue in recent years. The South Korean media, though geographically well positioned for exclusive, insightful reporting on the North, continue a “he said, she said” level of news reporting and nothing much more.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Cable Television ▶ Citizens’ Media ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Asia ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Exposure to the Internet ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Journalists: Professional Associations ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Korean Cultural Influence ▶ Magazine ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Online Media ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Political Communication ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Samsung Corporation ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Networks

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# Spain: Media System

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Spain had in 2005 a population of 44.1 million inhabitants and was twelfth in world ranking in GDP. Just after Greece and Portugal, it became the third Mediterranean country in Europe to re-establish a democratic system in the early 1970s. The new regime after the death of the dictator General Francisco Franco in 1975 brought about the restoration of the monarchy and the creation of a parliamentary system, along with a gradual devolution of power to the 17 regions, which turned Spain into a quasi-federal state. The most important international recognition of the new Spanish democracy came from its admission as a new member of the European Union in 1986. From the media perspective, the transition to democracy had already begun with a new press law in 1966. The press, subjected until then to strong censorship, was granted broader margins of freedom, so that some newspapers and magazines were able to reflect varying degrees of criticism or reticence about the last governments of the dictatorship.

## LEGAL DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIA STRUCTURE

Some legal measures concerning the media accompanied the political transition. In April 1977, a decree suppressed government powers to close and seize newspapers. In October 1977, another decree broke the monopoly of public radio on the broadcasting of home political news. Article 20 of the Constitution, approved in December 1978, established “the right to freely communicate or receive truthful information by any means” and stated that a specific law, “respecting society pluralism and the diverse languages of Spain,” should regulate state-run media and their control by parliament (Barrera 1995). The Statute for Radio and Television (1980) defined these media as “essential public services whose ownership belongs to the State.” The so-called Third Channels Law (1983) permitted each region to create its own public radio and television network. Catalonia and the Basque Country were the first to avail themselves of this law (Maxwell 1995).

In the case of the *printed media*, the legacy of many decades of press control led both politicians and journalists to agree that the best press law is no press law at all. Not even self-regulated rules have been adopted since then, except in the case of Catalonia, where the Audiovisual Council was established to monitor television and radio. State subsidy of the press, in force since the late years of Francoism, was maintained by the first, centrist governments of the transition; later socialist governments regulated them in 1984, and finally decided to discontinue the policy in 1990 in accordance with the requirements of the European Commission (Fernández & Santana 2000; → European Union: Communication Law).

Two new laws in the late 1980s increased state intervention in the Spanish media: the law concerning the Organization of Telecommunications (1987) and the law concerning Private Television (1988). Public radio was favored and some measures restricted the free market in the television sector, where, e.g., one shareholder could own a maximum of only 25 percent of the capital in a private television company. Foreign capital, too, was

limited to 25 percent. These conditions, which were finally suppressed in the late 1990s, required that difficult agreements be reached among at least four partners, and facilitated government involvement to organize the process. In the end, three channels began to broadcast: Antena 3, Tele 5, and Canal +, the last a pay-TV channel which monopolized that new sector.

The pluralism of the Spanish *radio* system grew through the awarding of new FM station licenses during three periods (1981–1982, 1989, and 1999–2000), which allowed the establishment of new radio networks. Political decentralization meant that regional governments became the primary decision-makers in the distribution of licenses, generally granted to media with similar political leanings to the different regional powers; thus, this process has been almost invariably controversial.

The technological development of other *television* formats in the 1990s led to a doubly inadequate response from government, which enacted regulatory laws and provisions either too late or too early. The first situation arose in the case of the regulations approved for local (more than 1,000 local stations were in operation at that time), cable, and satellite television in December 1995. On the other hand, the regulations concerning digital terrestrial television (DTT), approved in 1998 with the two licenses awarded two years later, were enacted before the technological resources which would allow the audience to receive those signals had been provided. It is only since 2006 that DTT has begun to reach TV users in an effective way. A 2006 law for public television definitely established the priority of digital transmission over analog, whose deadline for obsolescence is 2010.

Competition in the pay-per-view satellite television sector had two protagonists: *Canal Satélite Digital* (CSD) and *Vía Digital* (VD), both launched in 1997; the first owned in effect by the pro-socialist Prisa Group and the other by Telefónica with the political support of the then recently elected conservative government. An intense, year-long political and economic war was waged among media and politicians during which both companies suffered significant losses, a situation which ultimately led to their merger in 2003 as the new Digital + (→ Satellite Television).

## PRINTED PRESS

The number of *newspapers* published has increased during the democratic period. For many years, 110–115 newspapers were published. Between 1995 and 2004, this number rose to 139, which leaves Spain second only to Germany among EU countries. However, Spain also has one of the lowest indices of newspaper circulation per inhabitant: 104 in 2004, higher only than Italy, Greece, and Portugal (*Libro Blanco* 2006). One clear conclusion to be drawn is that many Spanish newspapers have low circulation figures: only 10 newspapers have average sales above 100,000 copies. The significant contribution of sports dailies, which account for 20 percent of total newspaper circulation, must be underlined. Monthly *magazines*, especially the so-called *revistas del corazón* based on true-romance news and photo-spreads, have had larger global circulation than weekly magazines since 1997 (Díaz-Nosty 2006).

The sport and financial dailies apart, only four newspapers have national circulation (*El País*, *El Mundo*, *ABC*, and *La Razón*), while the rest may be regarded as basically regional or local. In almost all of the Spanish provinces, the largest newspaper in terms of



circulation and consequently the most influential is regional or local. Many of them belong to larger media holdings; thus, by 2004, the seven largest Spanish media groups controlled 76.1 percent of total circulation. *Free daily newspapers* are the latest challenge to paid newspapers in terms of sales and advertising. Since the appearance of *20 Minutos* and *Metro* in Madrid and Barcelona in 2000 and 2001, this new sector has achieved significant shares of readership; the four free newspapers published in 2006 (*Qué!* and *ADN* had joined the other two) reached more than 3.1 millions readers every day – i.e., one fifth of all newspaper readers.

## BROADCASTING

The *radio* system has evolved toward a greater pluralism in recent years. Despite the favorable deal received by public radio in the assignment of frequencies and power for its stations, four private national networks account for the majority of audience share: *SER*, *COPE*, *Onda Cero*, and *Punto Radio*. In contrast to television, the national public radio network (*Radio Nacional*) survives only through state funding and has no income from advertising. Unlike the case of the television sector, too, none of the radio companies has any foreign shareholders. Although all-music channels account for more than half of listeners, Spanish radio is a very influential medium in the political arena, especially through the news services and the so-called *tertulias*, round-table debates among journalists, experts, and other public figures who analyze day-to-day politics.

There are two sectors of public *television*: the state-run *Televisión Española* (TVE), founded in 1956 and comprising two channels, and the 14 *regional television* bodies, which depend on the respective regional governments. Some of the latter use the language of their region, such as Basque, Catalan, and Galician. The financing of both state and regional television is mixed: public funding and revenue from advertising. This mixed financing arrangement is controversial and the commercial stations regard it as unfair competition. The three private television channels started in 1990 are still in operation, although one of them, *Canal +*, changed from pay-per-view to open-access TV in 2005 under the new brand *Cuatro*. A fourth channel (*La Sexta*) emerged in 2006. The latter two developments, in line with decisions taken by the new socialist government elected in 2004, were quite controversial for both political and business reasons. Public television has suffered the main damage in terms of audience. In 1995, five years after the emergence of private channels, the public sector held 52.3 percent of audience share; 10 years later, that figure had decreased to 43.1 percent; and in 2004 Tele 5 surpassed TVE-1 in terms of audience.

*Satellite TV* developed faster than cable in Spain. At the time of their merger in 2003, the two leading companies had a combined total of approximately 1.4 million subscribers. In 2005 the category “other channels,” which included themed or pay-per-view TV, local stations, etc., already reached 7.4 million in its average share. Fragmentation of audiences is one of the main consequences of the variety of mixed television models available and derives from a number of different patterns: pay/open, terrestrial/satellite/cable, public/private, national/regional/local.

The *Internet* has also had an impact on traditional media through online editions of printed newspapers, new digital newspapers, specialized *confidential* websites that publish

news and rumors, and, finally, the uncontrolled *blogosphere*. Thus, the conventional media has partially lost its authority and credibility in the shaping of public opinion. In only six years, daily use of the Internet increased in Spain from 5.6 percent of population (2000) to 21 percent (2006). It is still far below the average levels of use in central and northern European countries, and low in relation to population percentages for other Spanish media (41.4 for newspapers, 49.0 for magazines, 56.0 for radio, and 88.7 for television), but it continues to grow rapidly, especially among young and urban sectors of the population. In contrast, the average age of newspaper readers has been rising, and reached 43.3 years in 2005 (→ Digital Media, History of).

Concentration of media ownership in Spain is now an established trend, although, in comparison with other developed countries, the most important groups are not especially large. In 2006, the top 10 Spanish holdings controlled the 10 largest newspapers, three of the four national radio networks, three of the four national private TV channels, the two DTT channels, and the only satellite television station. Proof of their strength is reflected in the fact that three television companies and the Prisa Group were listed on the stock exchange between 2000 and 2004. Nevertheless only Prisa has a significant holding in the capital of foreign media, especially in Latin America. By contrast, foreign shareholders own significant interests in important newspapers or television channels in Spain, e.g., the Italian holdings RCS and Mediaset in the case of *El Mundo* and Tele 5 respectively. A number of other multinational groups control the majority of important magazines (→ Concentration in Media Systems).

The Spanish media system basically matches the description that Hallin and Mancini (2004) give of the so-called *polarized pluralist model*, with characteristics such as low press circulation, high degree of politicization, external pluralism, frequent state intervention, and a strong dislike of journalists toward self-regulation for historical reasons.

SEE ALSO: ► Concentration in Media Systems ► Digital Media, History of ► European Union: Communication Law ► Satellite Television

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# Special Effects

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Special effects are those techniques employed in moving image technologies to provide images other than those recorded by simply opening the camera's shutter and recording. In some cases the entire image may be produced using non-camera techniques. Alternatively, events may be staged or images altered to produce special effects. Special effects (hereafter "effects") may usefully be divided between (1) physical effects produced in front of the camera; (2) effects produced in the camera; (3) effects produced during printing; and (4) effects produced during editing. A fifth, relatively rare category of effects is produced at the point of reception (→ Film Production).

Christian Metz (1974) identified five → codes of → cinema: → photography, music, dialogue, sound effects, and writing. He did not include a graphical code for → *animation*, even for the ubiquitous rostrum camera animation of title sequences. And yet, since animation in its various forms is the earliest of all special effects (in the work of J. Stuart Blackton, Emile Cohl, and Georges Méliès) and ubiquitous in contemporary effects work, it should be understood not only as a code, but perhaps the code of the moving image. The → cartoon employs "cel animation," in which individual drawings are photographed frame by frame. In many studio-produced animations, these drawings are created on transparent cels, which can be laid over and moved in relation to one another. Stop-motion animation places physical models in front of the camera, performing small movements of the model between the exposure of successive frames. Both techniques can be combined with live action (as in the 1933 *King Kong*), as can the many experimental techniques developed over the last century. Manovich (2001) asserts that the very principle of → cinematography – animated photographs – is only a subset of the wider field of animation.

## EFFECTS PRODUCED IN FRONT OF THE CAMERA

Effects produced in front of the camera are not restricted to cels and models. Set design draws on the history of theatrical technique to produce illusionistic effects, such as forced perspective, in which the appearance of depth is increased by making props further from the camera considerably smaller than those close to it (→ Perspective, Pictorial). Even locations are usually dressed before a shoot: props physically removed or added, for example to secure a period look. More clearly "effects" than set construction or dressing, stunts are typically carried out by doubles or extras, and by trained animals, whose wranglers can be major participants in films like *Babe*. Horse-mounted actors have been shot on trailers being pulled through locations from Eisenstein's *Alexander Nevsky* to Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*. Virtual aviators have flown earthbound mock-ups of planes for more than half a century, and more than one plane crash has been staged by dropping a mocked-up aircraft into a studio tank. Squibs full of blood have exploded on actors' bodies for decades; their weapons have fired powder charges; fisherfolk have

withstood dump tanks full of water, and some have died as their cardboard temples crashed to the ground.

*Pro-filmic devices* (events constructed in order to be filmed) include pyrotechnics and miniatures (and miniature pyrotechnics). Many events (the burning of Atlanta in *Gone with the Wind*, for example, which involved setting fire to the old *King Kong* set) are too expensive to stage more than once, requiring multiple cameras to ensure adequate footage is recorded. Others pose challenges of scale: water notoriously acts very differently at miniature scales, and often requires chemical additives in order to move and reflect light appropriately. Smashable sugar-crystal bottles, fly-away sets and self-dismantling furniture for fight scenes, and the kind of costuming made notorious by Howard Hughes's obsessive construction of a brassière for Jane Russell in *The Outlaw*, indicate the degree to which props, makeup, costume, and hairstyling construct performers as effects for the camera; while we should not forget that acting too is a mode of illusionism that might well be included in the category (→ Realism in Film and Photography). This is the more apparent when we consider motion-capture technologies used to produce virtual actors or “synthespians” like Gollum in *The Lord of the Rings*.

### SPECIAL EFFECTS CAMERAS

Cameras themselves have been developed to shoot underwater, from the air, dangled from ropes, or tied to stampeding cattle. The development of *steadicam* in the 1980s permitted the fluidity of hand-held camerawork with the stability of a tripod. In addition to stop-motion, cameras can also be adjusted to shoot faster or slower than the standard 24 (film) or 25 (television) frames per second to produce, respectively, slowed-down or speeded-up imagery. Film stocks sensitive to nonvisible light (used in motion capture, but also for night-vision sequences) have found a place in a number of action series and films, as have micro-photographic devices capable of recording even the interior of living bodies.

Matte painting, in which elements of a scene, such as the sky, that otherwise might not be photographable are painted onto glass sheets in front of the camera, are used, for example, in the long shots of Tara in *Gone with the Wind*. Unpainted areas are photographed as they are (with the addition of lighting), and the camera adjusted so that both painted glass sheet and the scene beyond it are in focus. Back projection, of the kind used extensively by Hitchcock, involves careful adjustment of projection onto a glass-bead screen, in front of which actors play out, for example, the action of driving, while the rear-projected scenery recedes behind them. Matching actions, color, shadows, and focus in mattes and rear-projection requires extreme precision, even now that they are largely digitized.

### PRINTING AND EDITING OF FILM

*Printing* is one of the stages of film production least discussed in the literature, yet one that has retained its importance during the change to digital. The key device is an optical printer, through which pass one exposed and one unexposed strip simultaneously, transferring the image from one onto the other. Interventions in this process include

grading, the matching of color and tonality from one shot to the next, and superimposition, involving the printing of two images onto a single strip. Variants on superimposition include a variety of editing effects, such as dissolves, fades, wipes, and irises. Especially important is the related technique of masking off segments of the film strip so that different areas of the resulting image, printed during separate passes through the optical printer, appear to occur at the same time and place, as in the climactic steadicam race through the forest in *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*.

With the move to *digital editing*, many techniques that were the province of the other moments of production have moved to the cutting room. Some new effects have become available, such as the shot transitions afforded by morphing software (Sobchack 2000), and digital grading, which allows changes to parts of images as well as the whole frame (→ Digital Imagery). Specialized and therefore expensive techniques like mattes and rear-projection are combined with in-camera, editing, and printing effects in digital compositing for economic as well as aesthetic reasons. For *The Return of the King*, location stills of mountains were combined to produce a massive range, over which elements from several location shoots of clouds and weather were blended digitally to create a digital cyclorama as backdrop to the final battle. Into this were added live actors, many wearing prosthetics and all equipped with lavishly detailed costumes and props, their stunt doubles, extras, and horses, digitally created 3D animals, and an army of virtual soldiers engineered to exhibit different kinds of behavior. In all, over 40 layers of miscellaneous footage from different sources were combined into the final shots. This process, known as compositing, is today the apogee of the craft hierarchy in moving image production.

### EFFECTS PRODUCED IN RECEPTION

A final category of effects belongs more properly to reception. These include such effects as 3D, which uses either separate red and blue (or red and green) projections or polarized light that, when viewed through the appropriate eyeglasses, produces illusion that objects on the screen project outward into the auditorium. Other effects include the use of tiny electric shocks to selected seats in the auditorium for the eponymous *The Tingler*, and the highly regarded scratch-and-sniff cards provided by John Waters for *Polyester*.

Many projection technologies have presented themselves as special effects, starting with those of the Lumière Brothers themselves (inventors not only of cine projection but of the massive widescreen Domitor system), passing through Cinemascope, to arrive at IMAX and theme-park movie rides. Similarly, advertising for domestic technologies, including home movie theaters, high-definition TV, plasma screens, and digital light programming (DLP) projectors, indicate the persistent persuasive allure of → spectacle and verisimilitude.

### FUTURE TRENDS

Special effects are no longer special. The economic efficiency of digital editing allows film and program makers the option of “fixing it in post,” leaving flaws that would once have been physically removed, or sets that would once have been built or visited, to be painted out or constructed digitally in even the lowest-budget films. Tricks such as Warner’s use

of limited numbers of key lights to hide shoddy sets have become stylistic tropes in films like *Sin City*. As Michelle Pierson (2002) observes, many effects have ceased to be marvelous, and vanished into the fabric of the narrative world. To this extent, as Metz (1977, 657) noted, “to some extent, all cinema is a special effect,” and the same can be said of television (→ Television, Visual Characteristics of).

Even documentary can be seen as “special” when it shows us events that we would otherwise never witness, be they war-torn villages or spectacular wildlife (→ Documentary Film). As domestic footage of the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami evidenced, even amateurs produce footage at which we can only marvel. Simultaneously, however, contemporary audiences are now not only willing dupes but also critical connoisseurs of special effects. Films frequently address this double spectatorship in narratives whose culmination lies in the dispersal of illusion, the end of magic, or the destruction of the marvelous monster (LaValley 1985).

As special effects migrate from science fiction to the mundane world of police procedural TV series, and as the tools for producing digital animations and composites migrate to domestic technologies, it appears that the demands of viewers have moved increasingly toward films and, especially, television programs that promise authenticity (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events). But with reality TV, perhaps, we witness the effect of this upsurge of interest: the industrial production of authenticity as a system of melodramatic signs. These contradictions indicate that the purpose of special effects, and of the moving image in general, is not, or not only, or no longer, to represent the world aright. Introducing technology as a partner in communication rather than an obstacle to be surmounted, effects techniques and technologies now indicate that the purpose of media is to mediate (→ Media).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Cartoons ▶ Cinema ▶ Cinematography ▶ Code ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Film Production ▶ Media ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Perspective, Pictorial ▶ Photography ▶ Realism ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Spectacle ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of

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# Spectacle

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The term “spectacle” refers to an event or image that is particularly striking in its visual display, to the point of inspiring awe in viewers. In its origins, the concept of spectacle was used to describe something impressive and unusual, which thrilled because it looked like things never seen before or which deployed immense scale to dwarf its spectators. The notion of spectacle was applied to high-culture products such as visually impressive dramas or operatic displays as well as religious ceremonies and folk spectacles.

The idea of spectacle is considered today, however, almost entirely within the *framework of modern media*. It is used primarily for cinematic, photographic, or technologically enhanced images and visual displays (from the spectacle of cinema to a fireworks display, for instance; → Visual Communication; Visual Culture). While the term “spectacle” has often been used to convey the idea of unique and thrilling events, beginning with late twentieth-century theory, the idea of spectacle has come to mean an empty, media-obsessed, image-saturated world that numbs viewers with an onslaught of spectacular images (→ Media Events and Pseudo-Events; Sensationalism).

The *key text* that helped to shape this new understanding of the concept of spectacle was Guy Debord’s *The society of the spectacle* (1994, 1st pub. 1967). Debord was a founding member of the radical group Situationist International, in Paris in the late 1960s, who were interested in using guerrilla tactics and innovative publication styles to intervene in the homogenized experience of everyday life. The society of the spectacle, according to Debord and the Situationists, defines contemporary society as an ongoing and constant spectacle that produces an autocratic political context in which the awe of the image creates political acquiescence in increasingly passive citizens. Debord defined *several different kinds of spectacles* (such as the “concentrated spectacle” of fascist and communist societies, the “diffuse spectacle” of advanced capitalism and commodity culture), arriving at the term “integrated spectacle” for recent forms of spectacle that borrow from the concentrated and diffuse and that define the pervasive realization of the spectacle of the liberal democracy.

While Debord and the Situationists were rooted in the social movements of the 1960s, it could be argued that the relevance of their ideas and the world of spectacle have reached new heights in the decades since, in particular in relation to media spectacle and the “empty” spectacle of political events (→ Political Communication). The term “spectacle” is thus used to convey to varying degrees awe-inspiring events that produce a mystification of power and an increasingly passive public (→ Propaganda). The term has thereby come to increasingly *convey a negative context*, in which media events overpower political debate and discourse, and citizens are drawn in and disempowered by their awe of the spectacle (→ Propaganda, Visual Communication of). It has been a foundational idea in the critique of media events that deploy aspects of spectacle and entertainment styles in ways that mask their superficiality. For instance, Daniel Dayan and → Elihu Katz (1992) argue that the immensity of media events such as the Olympics or the Prince Charles–Lady

Diana wedding are forms of spectacle that take on the aura of religious ceremonies. In addition, the concept of the spectacle is key to the concepts of postmodernism, as defined by such theorists as Jean Baudrillard, that critique the world of surface and simulation of contemporary societies. For Baudrillard (1983), the mesmerized public is fascinated by spectacle over meaning, and this gives rise to the embrace of simulations over representations and the loss of a sense of the real (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

The notion of spectacle as a key force in modern society has been reinforced in the past few decades by the dominance of *spectacular images in the global media contexts* of massive live audiences watching riveting events, such as the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and the mass spectacle of the funeral of Princess Diana in 1997 (→ Globalization of the Media; Conflict as Media Content). It reached what appeared to be a particularly powerful manifestation in 9/11, an event that has been defined by many as the quintessential moment of the triumph of spectacle (→ Disasters and Communication). Thus, theorists such as Slavoj Žižek proclaimed that the terrorist attacks of 9/11 intended, above all, to produce spectacular images and the spectacle of terrorism (→ Mediated Terrorism), which was why they reminded so many observers of the spectacle of → Hollywood film (→ Cinema). Thus, even with its negative connotations, “spectacle” is a term that has come to seem increasingly prescient in relation to world events and the role of the media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cinema ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Disasters and Communication ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Political Communication ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture

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## **Spectator Gaze**

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The concept of the spectator gaze was central to the development of theories of → cinema and art history, emerging primarily in the 1970s. Its origins most likely lie in Jean-Paul



Sartre's theory of the look (in French, *le regard*) and the extension of that theory into psychoanalytic theory by Jacques Lacan. This theory postulates the position of an idealized spectator (of cinema, for instance) and the idea that an image (still or moving) is defined by a particular kind of gaze upon it (→ Film Theory).

The concept of this ideal spectator is central to theories of cinema that find their foundation in psychoanalysis and → semiotics, and what have been termed the apparatus theories of early film theory, which focus on the technology of cinema exhibition as a metaphor for viewer consciousness (→ Structuralism in Visual Communication). The spectator designates an abstract subject position of an imagined viewer of cinema, though it might be occupied by particular viewers of cinema in various contexts. Thus, theories of spectatorship are theories of address (how cinema or other image systems are seen to address viewers) rather than a theory of actual reception (what particular viewers do in response to image texts).

The concept of the gaze (→ Gaze in Interaction) emerged in the context of 1970s film theory most obviously in relationship to two texts: Laura Mulvey's canonical essay "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema" (1975) and John Berger's well-known book (which was part of a broader collaboration) *Ways of seeing*. In Mulvey's formulation, → Hollywood cinema creates *several intersecting gazes*: the gaze of the male protagonist upon the female subject in the film, the gaze of the movie camera upon the actors, and the gaze of the spectator upon the screen. Mulvey used psychoanalysis to postulate that this intersection of gazes is defined within classic Hollywood cinema as a "male gaze." This refers not simply to the gaze of actual male spectators upon the screen, but to an overarching male gaze through which all spectators, including female spectators, must look. Mulvey theorized that this created a kind of masochistic subject position for female spectators.

Likewise, Berger argued that throughout the history of art, the *depiction of women* has been one in which the gaze is defined as male, with female figures often turned away from male figures within the picture frame and toward the spectator himself. Berger famously wrote that in the codes of representation throughout the history of art, "men act and women appear" (1972, 47); thus the male gaze defined a look upon a passive female figure (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). It is central to these concepts of the gaze that the person looking retains power over the person who is looked upon, and the looking is not only powerful and voyeuristic but pleasurable. Mulvey's concepts hinged on the idea that such looking is inherently sadistic in its → voyeurism. It is also central to the theory of the gaze that image texts define the gaze that looks upon them. Thus, in this formulation, an image such as a Hollywood film determines (and limits) the particular kinds of gazes that can look upon it, no matter the identity of the person actually looking.

The model of psychoanalytic-semiotic theory that produced the concept of the gaze has been debated and critiqued over the past two decades, and has been updated and modified by many theorists, including Mulvey herself. In particular, the unitary aspects of the original model of the gaze have been questioned and reconfigured over time. The ahistorical aspects of the psychoanalytic model, its overemphasis on sexual difference, and its dependence on the model of a fixed spectator all limited the extent to which the theory of the spectator might apply to other contexts and media (→ Visual Culture).

This *rethinking of the concept* has given way to a broad range of theories about different kinds of gazes, a pluralism of potential gazes, and different ways of thinking about spectator

identification with images. Thus, many theorists have proposed models of negotiation for understanding what spectators do with particular images, rather than the model of a spectator who is positioned by a film text. Such theorists have proposed not only categories such as black spectatorship and lesbian spectatorship, but also the idea that the study of actual spectators in particular socio-historical contexts could be more useful than the limited notion of an abstract, ideal spectator. The concept of the spectator gaze is thus used today to characterize a diverse range of strategies that viewers use when looking at and identifying with images.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cinema ▶ Film Theory ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Hollywood ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation ▶ Voyeurism

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## **Speech Anxiety**

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Speech anxiety, also known as → stage fright, refers to the feeling of anxiousness or fear associated with delivering a speech. The symptoms of speech anxiety typically involve physiological arousal (e.g., elevated heart rate), negative thoughts (e.g., being negatively evaluated), and behavioral disruptions (e.g., verbal disfluency; Ayres & Hopf 1993). According to Ayres et al. (in press), the study of speech anxiety can be traced back to ancient Greek rhetoricians 2,000 years ago, who viewed speech anxiety as arising from a lack of

confidence or skills. Serious research using scientific methods did not begin until the mid-1930s, when psychologists developed ways to measure stage fright, and examined the causes and effects associated with communication fear. Following Clevenger's (1959) synthesis article on stage fright, many communication scholars began to develop theories, measurement approaches, and interventions in the areas of communication apprehension and reticence, which refer to fear or anxiety across various communication situations.

## THEORY DEVELOPMENT

Spielberger et al. (1970) distinguished between the concepts of *state* and *trait* anxiety. A *state* refers to a transitory condition varying over time and situations, whereas a *trait* is a more stable individual difference or personality characteristic. Accordingly, the causes of speech anxiety can be attributed to trait (enduring) or state (situational) factors (→ Communication Apprehension; McCroskey 1997b). The trait explanations include learned helplessness, modeling, and genetic predisposition. From the "learned helplessness" perspective, people develop speech anxiety because they learn to associate negative outcomes with speaking, such as being ridiculed by peers. According to the "modeling" explanation, people develop speech anxiety when they cannot learn proper speaking skills from others. More recently, some scholars have argued that communication fear, such as speech anxiety, is mostly genetically determined (→ Communibiology). Despite these different explanations, many scholars hold the "interaction" view, i.e., that the interaction between gene and environment results in speech anxiety (Ayes et al. in press).

Regarding state anxiety, there are *seven situational factors*: novelty (new experience), formality (formal situation), conspicuousness (too noticeable), subordinate status (inferior to audience), unfamiliarity (unfamiliar audience), dissimilarity (different from audience), and degree of attention (too little or too much; Ayres et al. in press). McCroskey (1997b) added one more situational factor: degree of evaluation, which refers to whether the speech will be evaluated or graded. Although several situational causes are identified, many scholars believe that trait anxiety predisposes speakers to experience these situational factors in certain ways, which in turn affects their state anxiety level (Ayres et al. in press).

Although most *explanations* of speech anxiety have been based on the trait perspective, a few scholars have developed state anxiety theories from the situational perspective. One major development is → *action assembly theory*, which posits that state anxiety arises because people cannot identify effective strategies or engage in appropriate behaviors to accomplish their goals in a given interaction (Greene & Sparks 1983). Concomitantly, social psychologists developed the self-presentation theory of social anxiety, positing that social anxiety is a function of one's desire to make a particular impression and the perceived probability of making the desired impression on others (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety; Schlenker & Leary 1982). Thus, one would expect a speaker to experience high levels of speech anxiety when he or she wants to make a specific impression with speech and doubts the possibility of achieving such a goal.

More recently, Ayres et al. (in press) have constructed a *component theory* of state communication apprehension, in which state anxiety can be predicted by the interaction of the speaker's nervous system sensitivity, and self-perception of motivation, negative

evaluation, and communication competence. Specifically, speakers will experience high levels of state anxiety when they are very sensitive to environmental changes, are motivated to accomplish a goal via speech, anticipate being negatively evaluated by others, and perceive themselves as having low levels of speaking ability.

## MEASUREMENT DEVELOPMENT

The three primary approaches to measuring trait and state public speaking anxiety are self-report scales, physiological instruments, and observers' ratings. Self-report scales measure individuals' feeling or thoughts associated with giving a speech; physiological instruments measure the degree of arousal experienced; and observers' ratings assess behavioral disruptions. Self-report scales are the most widely employed approach. The specific measures for each approach are briefly introduced below (→ Research Methods).

Several *self-report measures* of speech anxiety have been developed during the past decades. According to McCroskey (1997a), the earliest developed scale is the Personal Report of Confidence as a Speaker, which has been demonstrated to be highly reliable and valid in numerous research studies. However, this scale is rarely employed today. A more frequently used scale is the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety. This instrument is a 34-item, 5-point Likert scale. Respondents are instructed to indicate their level of agreement with statements such as "My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech." This measure has been demonstrated to be highly reliable and valid. The most widely used scale of trait anxiety today is the public speaking subscale of the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension, which has 20-item and 24-item versions. The 24-item version includes six items for communication in each of four contexts: public, meetings, small groups, and dyads. This scale has been demonstrated to have high reliability and strong validity in numerous studies both nationally and internationally (McCroskey 1997a).

The *state anxiety scale* developed by Spielberger et al. (1970) is the most widely used measure of state anxiety today (→ Scales). This instrument has 20-item and 5-item versions. Both versions use a 5-point Likert scale, in which respondents are asked to indicate how they felt in the speech they have just completed by choosing a category from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" for each statement (e.g., "I feel nervous"). Both versions have high reliability and good validity.

Another self-report measure that has been used frequently is the *Communication Anxiety Inventory* developed by Booth-Butterfield and Gould (1986). This inventory has two separate scales for trait and state anxiety. The trait form assesses individuals' predisposition to experience anxiety in three contexts – dyadic encounters, small group, and public speaking – while the state form asks respondents to indicate how they felt during a communication experience they have just completed. The trait form uses a four-point frequency scale ranging from "almost never" to "almost always." The state form also uses a four-point scale, ranging from "not at all" to "very much so." One example of the statements in the trait form is "I enjoy speaking in public," and one example in the state form is "I felt calm when I was talking." Both forms have satisfactory reliability and validity.

In addition to self-report measures, researchers use *physiological measurement* on speech anxiety. According to Beatty and Dobos (1997), the two most commonly used

instruments are measures of heart rate and skin conductivity. For instance, speakers' heart rates were measured continuously during a public speaking performance. Heart rates were recorded at one-minute intervals before, during, and after a speech. The heart rates of speakers generally increased slightly before a speech presentation, elevated dramatically when they began to speak, and then declined until the end of the speech. Several studies have also employed the galvanic skin response (measuring changes in the ability of the skin to conduct electricity during exposure to an emotional stimulus, such as giving a speech) to assess the effects of interventions on apprehension or anxiety, and some studies have recently started to use brain temperature to assess physiological response to public speaking.

In addition to self-report and physiological measurement, researchers have also used *observers' ratings* to measure behavioral aspects of speech anxiety, such as verbal disfluency and tense bodily movement (→ Observation). Mulac and Sherman (1974) developed the Behavioral Assessment of Speech Anxiety. This 18-item instrument requires that trained observers rate the severity of occurrence of each behavior for a given speaker, as compared to the other speakers being rated, using a 10-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "strong." Statistical analysis revealed four dimensions of this instrument: rigidity, inhibition, disfluency, and agitation. This instrument has been demonstrated to have high inter-observer reliability in numerous studies for the rating as a whole and for each dimension. In terms of validity, its ratings were negatively correlated with perceptions of speech skills and credibility. However, only a small relationship was found between observers' ratings and speakers' self-report anxiety level. That is, a speaker may feel quite nervous, but is able to control his or her behaviors so that observers are not able to detect any cue of nervousness. On the other hand, a speaker may feel calm but act in ways that observers perceive as signs of anxiousness, which may reduce his or her credibility.

In sum, these three approaches measure different aspects of speech anxiety: self-perceptions, physiological symptoms, and behavioral disruptions. For objective assessment of anxiety level, one can use all three methods and compare their results. If consistent results are found, one can be certain that the observed anxiety level is accurate. On the other hand, if the results conflict, it is likely that a speaker suffers only one or two sources of anxiety: negative thoughts, nervous feeling, or inadequate skills. Interventions are available to help reduce each source of anxiety (→ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Action Assembly Theory ▶ Communibiology ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ▶ Observation ▶ Research Methods ▶ Reticence ▶ Scales ▶ Stage Fright

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## Speech Codes Theory

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Speech codes are historically situated and socially constructed systems of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules about communicative conduct. The “speech” in “speech codes” is a shorthand term, a figure of speech, standing here for all the possible means of communicative conduct that can be encountered in a given time and place. The “code” in “speech codes” refers to a system of symbols, meanings, premises, and rules pertaining to those means. These senses of “speech” and of “code,” when placed together in the term “speech code,” establish a definition of a speech code as a historically situated and socially constructed system of resources that people use to talk about their own and others’ communicative conduct.

A speech code is a construct that an observer-analyst formulates explicitly in order to interpret and explain communicative conduct in a particular speech community. The observer-analyst notices that participants in the discursive life of a speech community use particular resources – acts, practices, patterns of activity, symbols, meanings, premises, and rules – to enact, name, interpret, and judge communicative conduct. And the analyst uses what was noticed to construct a hypothesis as to the existence and nature of a system of resources that these participants use to do that enactment, naming, interpretation, and evaluation. That hypothesis is the observer-analyst’s formulation of a speech code.

Two *examples* help to illustrate the concept of speech code as presented here. Gullestad (1992) formulates such a code as part of a larger Norwegian cultural code. Although she does not use the term “speech code,” she does use the word “code” and her work suggests a historically situated and socially constructed code of communicative conduct. She reports, as part of what she designates as a “code” of “social relations,” the use, in contemporary Norway, of the Norwegian words *fred* (“peace”) and *ro* (“quiet”), the Norwegian expressions *fred for enhver pris* (“peace at any price”), and the expressions, in English, of Norwegian notions of “not involving oneself too much” (in others’ lives), “avoiding open personal conflict,” and the importance of giving and understanding “a little hint,” of keeping oneself “whole, balanced, and safe,” and of “good social relations.” As Gullestad describes the code, such communicative practices as “not involving oneself too much” (in others’ lives), “avoiding open personal conflict,” speaking indirectly (with “a little hint”), and paying close attention to the “little hints” that others might give are linked to the achievement and maintenance of “peace,” which she interprets as being “free from disturbances from others.” “Peace,” in turn, is linked to “quiet,” which Gullestad interprets as the achievement of a desired “state of mind characterized by wholeness and control” (of self). A synthesizing premise of the code is that social distance (peace) creates good social relations as well as a desired state of individual well-being (1992, 137–164).

The cultural code that Gullestad reports for Norway can be contrasted to one found in the contemporary US. Several scholars (Katriel & Philipsen 1981; Carbaugh 1988) report the use, in the US, of such terms as “real communication,” “open communication,” “self,” and “healthy relationship” as terms in an American code. As these scholars formulate the code, “open communication” is linked to the achievement of the culturally desired state of a unique “self” and to the achievement of a “healthy relationship” with a friend, relative, or intimate partner. An important premise in this code is that communication (particularly “open communication”) is necessary for the establishment and sustenance of a (“good” or “satisfactory”) relationship (Katriel & Philipsen 1981, 310).

The Norwegian and American codes mentioned briefly here are but two among many that have been discovered and formulated, either implicitly or explicitly, as speech codes. Such formulations have been made for codes discovered in many societies and in many languages, including multiple codes found in the US, and codes found in Israel, Finland, Colombia, and Mexico (→ *Ethnography of Communication*). A large body of original ethnographic research into speech codes has provided the bulk of the evidence upon which speech codes theory rests (Philipsen 1992, 1997).

There are three broad *purposes to speech codes theory*. The *first* is to provide ways to discern and formulate the presence of a speech code in the communicative conduct of a particular time and place – a particular social world, setting, or milieu. The theory is concerned to specify where to look and listen, in communicative conduct, for elements of speech codes, that is, for indigenous symbols, meanings, premises, and rules pertaining to communicative conduct. This is the subject of one of the principal and longstanding propositions that is part of the theory, which states that the elements of a speech code – its symbols, meanings, premises, and rules – are inextricably woven into speaking itself. This provides an answer to the question of where to look and listen for evidence of culture in communicative conduct, that is, to look and listen for it in communicative conduct itself. The present version of the theory points to three broad types of places where such

elements can be found: in (1) locally prominent and poignant keywords or cultural terms pertaining to, (2) locally recognizable patterns of, and (3) local and particular genres and forms of communicative conduct, as the particular sites in which speech codes elements might appear (→ Storytelling and Narration).

The *second* purpose of speech codes theory is to formulate descriptive generalizations derived from the corpus of empirical research into particular speech codes. The most recent version of the theory presents three such descriptive generalizations.

The first of these *descriptive generalizations* is that everywhere that there is a distinctive cultural code, there is a distinctive speech code. This was illustrated in the brief juxtaposition of (some elements of) Norwegian and American speech codes, with the suggestion that the Norwegian code gives greater endorsement than does the American to communication that is indirect and respectful of personal boundaries, while the American code gives greater endorsement than does the Norwegian to directness of communication and to a more permeable self. Philipsen provides extensive documentation of support for this proposition across a wide range of societies and languages.

The second descriptive generalization is that in the life-world of every individual there are multiple speech codes. For example, although some Norwegians or Americans use the codes reported above, they draw on other codes as well that are used in their social environment. Gullestad (1992) and Philipsen (1992) provide book-length treatments of the societies in which they studied the codes they report, Norwegian and American, and in both cases show evidence of more than one code being used in these societies. The body of evidence on which speech codes theory is built suggests that the presence of multiple speech codes in any given life-world, of an individual or a speech community, is a universal feature of social life.

The third descriptive generalization is that in every speech code, the words, meanings, premises, and rules pertaining to communicative conduct are systematically linked with words, meanings, premises, and rules pertaining to the nature of persons and the nature of social relationships. This was illustrated here, in terms of cultural beliefs, for the Norwegian code in the linkage between (1) indirectness of communication and (2) the preservation of the well-being of a bounded person. And it was illustrated here for the American code in the linkage between (1) openness of communication and (2) the strength of interpersonal relationships. The import of this generalization is that in every speech code the symbols and meanings pertaining to communicative conduct are linked as well to symbols and meanings pertaining to notions of self and/or of interpersonal relations. Carbaugh (1989) and Philipsen (1989a) provide extensive documentation of the wide scope of this generalization across many societies and languages.

*Third*, speech codes theory posits a way to interpret and explain observed communicative conduct, and involves two propositions. One is that the significance of particular communicative acts is contingent upon the speech codes that people use to interpret them. For example, if someone observed a husband refusing to speak up to his mother in defense of the rights of his wife and himself as a couple, the not speaking up would be heard differently if interpreted in the terms of the Norwegian and of the American codes, as these codes were described above (→ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends). The other proposition says that people do not necessarily shape their communicative conduct so as to conform to their idea of what is culturally acceptable



conduct, that is, codes do not strictly determine conduct. Nonetheless, codes have a shaping power in communicative conduct to the extent that people use codes to support their evaluations – praise, criticism, and their appeals to others pertaining to what is acceptable and desirable communicative conduct. The body of empirical research on which the theory is grounded shows that people do appeal to cultural notions of acceptability of communicative conduct in the process of retrospectively framing and evaluating such conduct as they explain it to others. Furthermore, justifications of communicative conduct that are framed in the terms of a socially legitimated speech code are treated as more persuasive, by those who read or hear them, than those that are not so framed. What the extant studies of the force of speech codes have in common is that they explicitly acknowledge the limits of cultural codes to shape conduct, while at the same time showing that such codes nonetheless are deployed strategically in communication about social conduct, and are deployed in ways that have consequences for social interaction.

SEE ALSO: ► Communities of Practice ► Directives ► Ethnography of Communication  
► Interactional Sociolinguistics ► Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ► Language and Social Interaction ► Storytelling and Narration

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# Speech Communication, History of

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The field of speech emerged out of changing teaching practices in US higher education in the early twentieth century. Between 1880 and 1920, many of the academic fields in the US formed associations and university departments. University education, with the rise of the research university and the land-grant schools, was becoming accessible to a larger and more diverse group of Americans. Higher education was outstripping its traditional function of reproducing an elite class, qualifying them only for the “gentle professions” of the clergyman, the lawyer, and the politician. Speech instruction had traditionally been integrated into the general, liberal education of the private colleges, with students writing and speaking as part of the study of classics and philosophy. But as the nineteenth century came to a close, speech instruction, focused mainly on delivery, became a separate course in the curriculum. Speaking as a performance art, that of the “platform entertainer,” had become lucrative and popular, and college instruction reflected that reality.

The resulting pedagogy, called *elocutionism*, focused almost exclusively on delivery and performance aspects of speaking, and was perhaps more closely related to theatre than to public address. Elocutionism harmonized with a middle-class culture of oral and musical performance, but remained in tension with the civic traditions of public address. In 1890, the National Speech Arts Association (NSAA) was founded, with the intention of bringing together both private and university elocution teachers under the term “speech,” allowing them to include diverse activities involving the voice.

## EVOLUTION OF THE SPEECH DISCIPLINE

In the universities, speech instruction was evolving from traditional patterns. A precursor to the field of speech was “oral English,” which included courses (or sometimes parts of courses) that focused on students reading out loud or interpreting essays, stories, or poetry that had been written; speaking was understood as a complement to writing instruction. This resulted in a kind of second-class status for those who taught speaking; they were paid less than others and typically were not eligible for promotion. Oral English was short-lived, as most of the people who taught these courses moved to speech departments when they were formed. The relationship between speech teachers and English departments was generally unstable, although there were attempts at professional cohesion.

In 1910, the *Eastern Public Speaking Conference* (called until 1914 by the unwieldy name “The Public Speaking Conference of the New England and North Atlantic States”) became the primary organization for college teachers of speech. Paul Pearson officially called the first meeting at his institution, Swarthmore College. The idea of a conference of public speaking teachers in particular came from James Winans of Dartmouth College, later a renowned teacher at Cornell University; Winans was concerned about differences between NSAA teachers and the emerging group of speaking teachers and debate coaches.

The journal of the conference was the *Public Speaking Review*, a curious mix of teaching tips, professional news, and reports from the conference. Yet speaking instruction was flowering all across the country, and at the national level, speaking teachers met as a section of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), an organization which supplemented the research-oriented Modern Language Association by being focused on teaching and including secondary school teachers.

The meetings became increasingly uncomfortable, as the *tensions between speech teachers and their English colleagues* increased. At the 1914 meeting of the public speaking section of the NCTE in Chicago, Illinois, James O'Neill of the University of Wisconsin suggested a post-convention meeting of the speech teachers, and at this meeting they decided to create a new association, the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (NAATPS), along with a journal, the *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*. O'Neill would be president for the first five years, with Howard Woodward of Western Reserve University in Cleveland as the treasurer. The first years of the NAATPS saw the widespread change in universities from departments of "oratory" and "elocution" to departments of speech; partly this was a change underway already, but the Association also encouraged members to form separate departments when they could.

The new field was more than public speaking. The most common pattern for speech departments, sometimes called the "Midwestern" or "Illinois" model (after Charles Woolbert's design for the department there), included every activity that involved human speech. Courses included public speaking, debate, persuasion, physiology of the voice, diction and vocal expression, theatre, and interpretation (of literature), the new name for what had been called "reading." The early field did not view these as separate areas simply thrown into a department (as had been the case with speech in English departments) but as a unified course of study, beginning with the voice mechanism and proceeding to the various uses of human speech. Sometimes the "psychology" of speech was included as a unifying perspective, while sometimes classical rhetoric was invoked to provide a common thread.

The curriculum also included some *novel areas*. Rhetoric became a standard part of the curriculum due to the many PhDs produced by the program at Cornell University; sometimes the focus was classical, sometimes on the emerging idea of "rhetorical criticism," but most often on a study of British and American public address of the last two hundred years (→ Rhetorical Studies). Speech pathology, devised by Smiley Blanton (who had an MD from Johns Hopkins) at the University of Wisconsin, became a staple of the field until the 1960s and 1970s, and the early journal has a fair number of articles on lisping and stuttering. Consistent with the unified vision of the field, improvement of "speech" by addressing lisping or stuttering was of a piece with improving speech by "normalizing" a student's accent, or improving his or her interpersonal skills. This last function was often glossed as "social hygiene" or "speech hygiene." Teachers by the late 1920s assumed that civil society was organic, and that there was a normal, "healthy" function of individuals in social groups. Rather than a simple-minded conformity, they had in mind a kind of civic humanism inspired by John Dewey, where the democratic functioning of groups large and small required individuals who possessed the skills of both contributing their individual points of view and helping the group to function overall.

The NAATPS changed its name in 1920 to the National Association of Teachers of Speech (NATS), which conserved the pedagogic focus that defined the early field while accommodating the move to teaching the full range of courses involving speech. In 1947, the name was changed to the Speech Association of America, recognizing the growing research component of the field, demonstrated in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* and *Speech Monographs* (now *Communication Monographs*), established in 1934. The *Speech Teacher* (now *Communication Education*) began in 1952 as a forum for teaching methods, and later published mainly social scientific work on communication pedagogy.

In the *post-World War II era*, the speech discipline began, slowly but steadily, to lose the integrated structure that had characterized its early years, in several ways. First, and most obviously, the “Midwestern” model of the departments began to break up. As speech pathology (or “speech science” or “communication disorders”) became increasingly professionalized, it had less and less in common with speech departments. Their focus was on research in the physiology of speech and hearing and treatment of speech and hearing disorders, and on the production of accredited audiologists and speech pathologists for private practice and schools. Theatre, in many cases, had more in common with other performing arts such as music and dance, sharing the need for performance spaces and having their faculty evaluated for their artistic output rather than publications. In departments with mass media, radio, television, or film components, the level of student interest and the increasing scholarly and professional profile for media scholars and practitioners led in many cases to the formation of a separate department where there wasn’t already one.

But the *loss of the integrated vision* also happened on deeper levels, both methodological and epistemic. To an extent speech scholars in the 1930s and 1940s had seen themselves as answering empirical questions in different forms, sometimes about the historical context of speeches, sometimes about the causes of stuttering or the correlates of effective speaking. Increasingly, especially with the development of sophisticated experimental and statistical techniques, some speech scholars began to emulate researchers in psychology and sociology and adopt a more clearly social scientific approach to communication research. A rift between humanistic and social science research would continue to grow, and by the 1970s debates on the relative merits of each approach were common.

## RHETORICAL STUDIES

At the same time, humanistic scholars in communication increasingly identified themselves as “rhetoricians,” those who study rhetoric, a general theory of persuasion. With their discovery of Kenneth Burke’s writings in the early 1950s, they merged a classical tradition of rhetoric with symbolic interactionism, developing a general approach to the human use of symbols (→ Rhetorics: New Rhetorics; Symbolic Interaction). Through the 1960s, they expanded their notion of public → discourse beyond speeches by politicians to include pictorial and nonverbal rhetoric, protest rhetoric, and the rhetoric of social movements, while in the 1980s and 1990s, literary theory and → cultural studies decisively influenced the course of rhetorical theory and criticism (Rhetoric, Nonverbal; Rhetoric and Social Protest).

Even though the term “rhetoric,” since the eighteenth century, had been a synonym for style instead of content, and in the early twentieth century was associated in the US with

writing courses (the “freshman rhetoric”), a more dignified and intellectually satisfying account of rhetoric has been natural to (speech) communication departments. From Henry Hudson’s “The field of rhetoric” (1923) to Donald Bryant’s “Rhetoric: Its functions and its scope” (1953) and the proceedings of the Wingspread Conference in 1970 (Bitzer & Black 1971), scholars in this tradition sought to illuminate the social, cultural, and intellectual value in the study of persuasion.

The Wingspread conference, held in Racine, Wisconsin, was sponsored by the Speech Communication Association (as part of its National Developmental Project on Rhetoric) and organized by faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. An interdisciplinary group of scholars responded to the question “What is the essential outline of a conception of rhetoric useful in the second half of the twentieth century?” In a superb set of essays and responses, participants outlined an expanded notion of rhetoric, which went far beyond the public address tradition. In light of the political unrest of the time, contributors noted that a starting point must be the inadequacy of traditional conceptions of political discourse as a foundation for rhetorical theory and criticism. In the wake of the Wingspread proceedings, called *The prospect of rhetoric* (Bitzer & Black 1971), some common threads connect rhetorical scholarship. Rhetorical analyses are not empirical studies or theories about the effects of persuasion; these are left to social scientists, marketers, and mass communication researchers (→ Rhetoric and Psychology). Rhetorical theory and criticism must account for common speech as well as the speeches of politicians, lowbrow discourse as well as highbrow, science as well as popular culture (→ Rhetoric of Science; Rhetoric, Vernacular). Rhetoric is never merely technical, never just a set of means to an end; rhetoric is always both style and substance, ornament and argument. The moral dimension of rhetoric cannot be separated from its technical aspects, and rhetoric is not only a conveyer of knowledge but is constitutive of knowledge (→ Rhetoric and Epistemology; Rhetoric and Ethics).

## FROM SPEECH TO COMMUNICATION

On the social science side of the field, the quickly growing body of research on persuasion and influence in psychology and sociology stimulated parallel lines of research for speech communication scholars. Expanding on the Yale studies of → persuasion, communication research in both speech and media departments began to take a variable-centered approach to studying interpersonal and public influence. In the mid-1940s a group of researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, led by the social psychologist Kurt Lewin, began to study group interaction (“group dynamics”) reflexively, having group members simultaneously participate in and observe groups. These researchers established the National Training Laboratory (NTL) in Bethel, Maine, as a site for intensive summer studies of group process. As the NTL evolved, it began to move away from strictly group process and toward interpersonal communication more generally. This focus on personal relationships was actually somewhat novel. Speech scholars who attended the NTL summer sessions came away with not only a new framework for studying communication but a new ethic for communication. Some of them became part of what was sometimes called the human potential movement, an approach that sought to maximize the possibility of authentic and transparent communication.

This approach represented an extension and transformation of social hygiene, and was typified by textbooks such as Virginia Satir's *Peoplemaking* (1972). In addition, other contexts of communication became standard parts of speech pedagogy and research, including professional communication and → organizational communication (→ Interpersonal Communication; Group Communication).

As more and diverse topics were included in the curriculum, the term "speech" began to seem restrictive, and the more general term "communication" seemed more appropriate, since it easily accommodated nonverbal, written, and mediated communication, as well as the perspective that focused on human relationships generally, rather than the parts of them conducted through speech (→ Communication: Definitions and Concepts). In 1968, a conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, was sponsored by the US Office of Education and the Speech Association of America, resulting in proceedings called *Conceptual frontiers in speech-communication: Report of the New Orleans Conference on Research and Instructional Development* (Kibler & Barker 1969). At this conference, the recommendation was made to change the name of the field to speech-communication, and this name, minus the hyphen, was adopted the next year, resulting in the Speech Communication Association (SCA).

The conference's recommendations were made in recognition of the expanding understanding of the field, so that communication, a more general term that encompassed diverse channels, media, and modes of human interaction, was a more appropriate name for the field than speech, even though the conference adopted "spoken symbolic interaction" as the focus of study. The report acknowledged some old themes: the field as basically interdisciplinary, the importance of speech processes to democratic decision-making, the necessity of speech instruction for people to become functioning members of society. But these themes developed a new urgency due to the recognition of the plight of the underprivileged in society. This conference also marked the emergence of → applied communication research, serving the needs of both society and (later) business.

Speech communication as a field of undergraduate instruction underwent explosive growth in the 1970s (Craig & Carlone 1998). Students wanted to study in the many "new" areas of communication: interpersonal, organizational, group, and others. In fact, the diversity began, gradually, to outgrow the bounds of the term "speech" and the term "communication," as cultural studies and media studies became integrated into the field's teaching and research. So, despite being shared by other departments, including media and speech pathology, "communication" seemed increasingly a better fit. Another name change, based on the results of a vote by the membership, created the current National Communication Association in 1997.

## INTERNATIONAL LINKS

In most ways, the speech communication tradition was a *peculiarly American* one. While speech pathology, linguistics, classical rhetoric, and the social psychology of interpersonal relationships were studied in Europe and Asia, the configuration that brought them all together was found only in the US. Granting that oral communication instruction (in the elocutionist tradition) long survived in Europe, in Asia speech instruction was unknown until recently, and in neither case were there academic units devoted to the study of

speech. Yet by the 1980s, US speech communication scholars were forging links with their European counterparts on several fronts.

In the late 1970s, → conversation analysis, a qualitative methodology from sociology, made its way into communication departments, and with it contact and collaboration with an international group of conversation analysts. In 1985, a group of Dutch scholars, led by Rob Grootendorst and Frans van Eemeren (as well as the German scholar Norbert Gutenberg and, later, Canadian informal logicians such as Anthony Blair and Ralph Johnson), made contact with US scholars of argument, attending a biannual conference in Alta, Utah. In 1987, the US conference on argument was joined in the off year by a large, heavily international conference in Amsterdam, sponsored by the International Society for the Study of Argumentation (ISSA), and later by conferences of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA). Contacts with Finnish communication scholars resulted in an international conference in University of Jyväskylä, Finland, in the summer of 2000. All of these conferences represented significant contact among scholars from many countries.

SEE ALSO: ► Applied Communication Research ► Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada ► Communication: Definitions and Concepts ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Communication and Media Studies, History since 1968 ► Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ► Conversation Analysis ► Cultural Studies ► Discourse ► Group Communication ► Interpersonal Communication ► Organizational Communication ► Persuasion ► Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ► Rhetoric and Epistemology ► Rhetoric and Ethics ► Rhetoric, Non-verbal ► Rhetoric and Psychology ► Rhetoric of Science ► Rhetoric and Social Protest ► Rhetoric, Vernacular ► Rhetorical Studies ► Rhetorics: New Rhetorics ► Symbolic Interaction ► Theatre

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## Speech Fluency and Speech Errors

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Speech fluency refers to clear oral communication devoid of speech errors. A speaker who is able to deliver a message that features a continuous flow of information at an appropriate rate, unmarred by any of the multiple speech errors, is said to possess speech fluency, an area of communication mastery. Speech fluency is the product of mental skills, such as recall of procedural and declarative knowledge, and physical motor skills involving correct functioning and use of the vocal cords, tongue, mouth, and lips to produce speech (→ Message Production).

*Situational factors* that facilitate speech fluency include an attentive audience, an absence of distraction, the speaker being able to prepare and practice the message ahead of time, and a monologue rather than a dialogue communication format where there are fewer opportunities for interruptions and no requirement to manage turn-taking. In terms of *individual difference factors*, some speakers are naturally more fluent than others, whereas at the opposite end of the spectrum there are those who are burdened by anxiety with regard to communication. Nearly all speakers have the ability through training and practice to become communication masters whose speech is fluent. There are treatments available to improve speakers' speech fluency. Treatments include physical therapy, coaching, and confidence training. The goal of all treatments is to decrease errors, thereby increasing fluency (→ Speech Anxiety).

*Positive outcomes* associated with speech fluency are multiple. Speech fluency is a component of behaving as a socially skilled individual. Such skilled individuals benefit by making good impressions on others, which result in tangible rewards such as attracting relational partners and achieving professional goals. Speech fluency is also beneficial for engaging in persuasion and deception (→ Deceptive Message Production), as message receivers are not as accurate in detecting deception from fluent speakers.

There are many different *types of speech errors*, which are most often, though not universally, a nonverbal part of speech (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of). Among the most common types of speech errors are stuttering, audible pauses such as “uh” or “ah,” excessively long, frequent, or misplaced silent pauses, an unusually slow or accelerated speech rate, and counterfactual utterances.



*Stuttering* is an involuntary speech pattern marked by frequent disfluencies. Stuttering can include stammering, sound repetition, word repetition, hesitation, and elongation of sounds, usually vowels. Approximately 5 percent of children suffer from stuttering though many of them overcome the disorder such that only 1 percent of the adult population stutters, with varying degrees of severity. The cause of stuttering is unknown. There is no cure other than speech therapy techniques aimed to improve fluency.

*Pauses* are negative when they occur frequently, are long in duration, are audible, and occur in the middle of an idea. Such pauses direct attention to the pause itself rather than the speaker's content. Pauses are positive when they are used for emphasis and variation. Typically, these more effective types of pauses occur infrequently, are short in duration, are silent, and occur at the end of an idea.

Speech rates outside of an acceptable range are problematic because they lead to unwanted perceptions. An unusually *slow speech rate* sounds like grief and depression. Furthermore, the human capacity for processing speech is approximately four times greater than the normal speech rate of between 125 and 150 words per minute, so a slow speech rate is especially problematic, as it can cause listeners to become bored due to the low demand of the task. This boredom on the part of the audience can lead to audience distraction, which is a factor that can disturb the speaker, causing additional speech errors. An unusually *fast speech rate* sounds like fear and anger. Even though fast speech rates within an acceptable range are associated with judgments of speaker dynamism and extroversion, they are also thought to indicate less trustworthiness and poise.

*Counterfactual utterances* represent a verbal type of speech error. If a speaker is intending to state accurate information, then any misstatement of fact or omission of data represents a speech error. The cause of counterfactual utterances could be due to poor recall of declarative knowledge brought on by any of the many causes of speech errors.

Some of the *causes of speech errors* include a heavy cognitive load, → communication apprehension and social anxiety, physical deformity, Broca's aphasia (a brain disorder that affects the user's ability to produce fluent speech), mental illness, advancing age (→ Aging and Message Production and Processing), message complexity (→ Information Processing), and a dialogue rather than a monologue communication format, where turn-taking is an additional communication obstacle speakers must successfully negotiate.

*Negative outcomes* associated with speech errors include negative judgments about the speaker on important social dimensions such as competence, social attractiveness, and trustworthiness. An abundance of speech errors is likely to lead to low ratings of speaker credibility and persuasiveness. Ultimately, these negative judgments will translate to an inability for a nonfluent speaker to accomplish social goals and achieve success relative to a fluent speaker. Speech fluency is a fundamental component of successful interpersonal, organizational, public, and mediated oral communication.

SEE ALSO: ► Aging and Message Production and Processing ► Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ► Deceptive Message Production ► Information Processing ► Listening ► Message Production ► Nonverbal Communication and Culture ► Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ► Speech Anxiety ► Speech Communication, History of

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## Spin Doctor

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The term “spin doctor” is an amalgam of “spin,” meaning the interpretation or slant placed on events (which is a sporting metaphor, referring to the spin a pool player puts on a cue ball), and “doctor,” derived from the figurative uses of the word to mean patch up, piece together, and falsify. The “doctor” part also derives from the employment of professionals rather than untrained amateurs to administer the spin.

The term “spin doctor” was coined by American novelist Saul Bellow, who spoke in his 1977 Jefferson Lecture about political actors “capturing the presidency itself with the aid of spin doctors.” The word “spin” first appeared in the press on January 22, 1979, in a *Guardian Weekly* article; the phrase “spin doctor” first appeared in the press on October 21, 1984, in a *New York Times* editorial commenting on the televising of presidential debates. It took another decade until it was picked up by academics: Maltese (1994, 215–216) discussed the significance of spin doctoring for political communication, and Sumpter and Tankard (1994) for public relations. Theoretical concepts most closely related to spin are priming and framing (→ Framing of the News; Priming Theory). Medvic (2001), for example, considers “deliberate priming” as the main responsibility of spin doctors, by which he means producing campaign messages that focus on issues that are to a politician’s advantage and trigger appropriate schemas within targeted voters when evaluating the politician. Other works tied spinning to “strategic framing,” which Bennett (2005) defines as delivering a message with the “right” scripting to lead journalists to pick the preferred category for accentuating the message (→ Election Campaign Communication; Strategic Framing).

It should be pointed out that many scholars do not take spin doctoring too seriously, because it is neither a neutral scientific concept (such as “communication”) nor the

self-labeling of a branch (such as → “public relations”), but rather a biased term used by journalists to discredit, hype, or mystify the work of political public relations (PR) experts (e.g., as powerful manipulators; → Political Consultant). To discuss the term’s relevance for political communication research it seems helpful to distinguish a realist and a constructionist position. The realist position tries to answer the question of what spin doctoring actually means, where spin doctors are active, and what they actually do. The constructionist position doubts the existence of spin doctors as such and considers the use of the term a rhetorical strategy; it tries to answer the question why this term has become such a prominent media phenomenon.

### REALIST APPROACH

Arguing from a realist position, Andrews (2006) distinguishes four stages with regard to how the term “spin doctoring” has been used and how it has changed its meaning in the process. Initially, spin was used as a *technical definition* of a specific US campaign tactic whereby, after a televised presidential debate had ended, campaign operatives emerged to try to massage how reporters interpreted the meaning of the event (→ Televised Debates). “Spinning gave political handlers a chance to explain away and thus repair the damage a candidate had done to himself, or to inflict damage on the opponent that their candidate might not have” (Rosenstiel 1994, 309). The practice of party officials patrolling their media contacts after major campaign events turned out to be of mutual benefit, because reporters were keen to speak to dependable sources capable of giving them an instant interpretation as well as background guidance on the likely consequences (→ News Sources). The 1988 US presidential election was a watershed insofar as for the first time the news media reported extensively on the practice of spin doctoring (Lemert et al. 1991).

In the second phase, the term rapidly spread to other countries and considerably *broadened in meaning*. From a specific post-debate tactic it came to signify anyone or anything included in what were believed to be the black arts of campaigning (Andrews 2006). By using the term in an increasingly arbitrary fashion, journalists themselves were arguably putting a spin on minor stories, presumably to increase readers’ interest. As a result, campaign techniques as varied as briefing journalists, explaining campaign strategy or candidates’ actions to journalists, attacking opponents, rapid rebuttals, speech and → image consulting, media monitoring, → political advertising, or opinion polling (→ Public Opinion Polling) were all attributed to spin doctors, a cross-national content analysis of campaign coverage found (Esser et al. 2001; → Content Analysis, Quantitative).

A contributing factor to a broadening understanding of spin doctoring was the documentary *The War Room*. This showed Clinton advisors James Carville and George Stephanopoulos engaged in a wide range of campaign activities during the 1992 presidential election. The press pictured Carville’s and Stephanopoulos’ personalities as so intriguing that it turned them into celebrities. Both readily admitted to being spin doctors (and even labeled themselves as such) and appeared on news programs, on talk shows, and in people magazines (as did Alastair Campbell or Peter Mandelson a few years later in Great Britain). Journalists and campaigners in other countries were also fascinated by *The War Room* and how it staged the campaign process as a glamorous sort of warfare. In the 1990s, carefully planned backstage access for journalists to observe the process of image

construction became an essential element of campaigns in many modern democracies. This highly managed strategy of meta-imaging (Parry-Giles & Parry-Giles 1999) triggered a new type of campaign coverage called meta-coverage (Esser & D'Angelo 2003).

In the third stage, spin made the progression to an encompassing word for *media operations of political institutions*. Important milestones in this development were John A. Maltese's book *Spin control* (1994), Howard Kurtz's book *Spin cycle* (1998), and Dick Morris's insider account *Behind the Oval Office* (1997). Maltese classified as spin control any measure by the White House Office of Communication – responsible for long-term PR planning – that governments since Richard Nixon used in an effort to influence media coverage of administrations and their policies. Kurtz focused on the White House chief press secretary Mike McCurry, characterized as a master of spin, and described his Press Office Staff as being engaged in a constant spin cycle designed to reactively downplay negative issues and proactively promote positive issues. Clinton adviser Morris emphasized the importance of bypassing the cynical mainstream news media and holding instead what he called a second conversation with the general public, by listening to it through polls and talking to it through ads. The same broadening of meaning signified by the term “spin doctor” could be observed in Great Britain. From there it was only a short way to the fourth and final stage when authors began to equate spin doctoring with any type of commercial PR (see Andrews 2006).

### CONSTRUCTIONIST APPROACH

Against the backdrop of this development, it becomes clear that any attempt to classify this particular circle of consultants precisely is an undertaking doomed to fail. The broad use of the term makes it difficult if not impossible to adequately define spin doctors from a realist position. As a consequence, the constructionist position explicitly steps away from the idea that the term “spin doctor” refers to a specifically defined group of people. This approach turns its attention to the question of why there is suddenly a new expression for a well-known and long-established profile of tasks (i.e., political PR). The constructionist position starts from the observation that newly emerging occupations (such as PR) try to attain greater professional recognition by employing strategies of self-promotion. This strategy involves stage-managing one's own importance by publicly promoting the marketable values of one's activity. In other words, this strategy is based less on the question of whether someone possesses certain professional characteristics or not, and more on the question of whether one is able to act and appear professional.

According to this *strategic approach toward professionalization*, the key resource for political PR experts in managing their professional status focuses on the presentation of their own performance. While the majority of political PR experts does not seem to go this route and prefers to remain invisible to the public, a small media-savvy minority began pursuing this strategy actively in the 1990s. These consultants consciously sought the media limelight and had a strong self-interest in creating and sustaining the myth of powerful, omnipotent “spin doctors.” Nowadays, there is probably nobody who would like to admit to being a spin doctor, but for some time the term appeared new and seemed to help some political PR experts to set themselves apart from existing or related occupations. Due to the media attention they received, this small group was highly visible

but not representative of the occupation of political PR experts as a whole. This mechanism helps explain the professional image of consultants that in some countries has remained distorted to this date (Tenschler 2003).

The second argument of the constructionist position refers to the behavior of journalists: they also had an interest in creating and sustaining the *myth of the spin doctor*. Initially, journalists used the term to hype or mystify political PR because it corresponded to an important journalistic demand: it adds drama and color to otherwise boring, stage-managed events. Stories about spin are enjoyable to write and easy to research because they naturally take place in the journalists' own direct environment. Undoubtedly, one can also assume a fair degree of professional narcissism when journalists report on political PR, because they implicitly write about themselves as the subject of news management. Later, journalists used the term in a more degrading manner in order to discredit the legitimate aims of candidates, parties, and governments to assert themselves against increasingly autonomous and powerful media organizations, which often pursue an agenda of their own and whose motives are not always exclusively oriented toward the public welfare. The *demonization of spin* is to be understood as a counter-strategy of journalists to prove their independence and legitimacy (→ Journalists' Role Perception). Yet the discrediting use of the spin metaphor by journalists oftentimes conceals the fact that political PR experts provide essential information, without which the media could not possibly carry out their task of informing the public about the internal mechanism of the political process.

The third argument of the constructionist position is that the widely noticed increase in news reports about political PR must be seen as an outcome of a new, modernized, and *media-centered approach to policymaking and campaigning* (→ Media Democracy; Media Logic). Just as politicians have become adept at devising strategies geared toward effectively communicating their policy and image messages to the electorate, so, too, have journalists adapted to these changing circumstances by weaving into stories information about the behaviors and roles of political publication experts, as well as about the behaviors and roles of journalists. On this basis, Esser & D'Angelo (2003, 2006) developed a theory of meta-coverage that works from the premise that journalists are compelled to cover political PR in order to accurately describe, interpret, and analyze the media politics environment.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Election Campaign Communication  
 ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Image ▶ Journalists' Role Perception ▶ Media Democracy  
 ▶ Media Logic ▶ News Sources ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Priming Theory  
 ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Public Relations ▶ Strategic Communication  
 ▶ Strategic Framing ▶ Televised Debates

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## Spin and Double-Speak

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The term “spin” has historically been associated with political and governmental campaigns. Two prominent citations stem from the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*. In 1977, *Washington Post* staff writer Spencer Rich wrote an editorial about Mike Pertschuk, former chief counsel and staff director, Senate Commerce Committee. Rich accused Pertschuk of “being too ardent a consumer advocate, of ‘lobbying’ members of the committee on behalf of things he thinks are good, of putting his own philosophical ‘spin’ on options, of being too close to Ralph Nader, of having excessive influence on Magnuson; in short, of acting like the ‘101st senator.’” In 1984, under the headline “The debates and the spin doctors,” *New York Times* editorial writer Jack Rosenthal predicted that “a bazaar will suddenly materialize in the pressroom” during a presidential debate between Ronald Reagan and Walter Mondale. He explained: “A dozen men in good suits and women in silk dresses will circulate smoothly among the reporters, spouting confident opinions. They won’t be just press agents trying to impart a favorable spin to a routine release. They’ll be the Spin Doctors, senior advisors to the candidates, and they’ll be playing for very high stakes.”

Doublespeak appears to be a “close cousin” to spin. Kinnick stated, “doublespeak represents a language that is strategically chosen to distort or obscure reality. It is often associated with misleading advertising claims, unethical politicians, and public relations

‘spin doctors’ who use language to frame a subject in the most positive light” (2005, 260; → Spin Doctor).

Somewhere between its early beginnings among the political arena and its present-day use, the term “spin” has become associated with the public relations profession. Sumpter and Tankard (1994) identified the *spin model* as an alternative approach being practiced in the public relations industry. Part of the reasons this profession may be connected with spinning behavior is because these practitioners have been – historically – associated with using → propaganda techniques. The term *propaganda* itself has a negative connotation. So we should consider the way we engage in and discuss the concept of strategic → persuasion. The term *motivation* has a much more positive connotation, and people seem more responsive to being *motivated* to do something than being *persuaded* to do it.

With something of the ominous and the conspiracy theory about it, the public relations spin model still prevails today. Evidence lies not only in the profession but also in the plethora of literature written about spin and its relationship to → public relations. The reasons behind this association are open to speculation; however, they may stem from misrepresentation and misinformation.

Public relations activities are very diverse. Some practitioners engage in publicity and promotional activities, and they utilize varying propaganda-type techniques (bandwagon, glittering generalities, etc.) and persuasive methods (→ Bandwagon Effect). Although this paradigm determines how many public relations professionals have been depicted on television, in the newspaper, and in movies, these are *not* the only kinds of activities in which practitioners are involved. Public relations professionals are responsible for much more, including strategic planning and counseling, → fundraising, researching, and developing and maintaining relationships between an organization and its key publics (→ Public Relations Planning; Strategic Framing). This is just a range – not a cumulative list by any means. And public relations is practiced among a variety of disciplines, ranging from health-care, government, entertainment, and travel/tourism to corporate, nonprofit, and financial institutions (→ Health Campaigns, Communication in; Issue Management in Politics; Political Consultant; Political Marketing; Financial Communication).

There are several reasons why the communication profession supports strategic persuasion:

- Every issue has two sides; hence, there are two viewpoints.
- Practitioners are merely utilizing framing and agenda-setting strategies (→ Agenda-Setting Effects) to disseminate their messages.
- Practitioners are responsible for advocating the viewpoint of the organization they represent, on the basis of the fiduciary relationship/commitment between the organization and its stockholders.
- Strategic persuasion has been around for centuries (e.g., James E. Grunig’s [1992] press agency model, Edward Bernays’s [1923] “engineering” of → public opinion).
- Society should be exposed to a “free marketplace of ideas,” which, in turn, supports socially responsible behavior.
- Strategic persuasion supports the absolutist view of the First Amendment to the US Constitution and corresponding provisions in other countries, and of moral judgment: actions are moral provided they yield positive consequences through moral conformity to moral rules.

There are also several reasons why the communication profession denounces spin:

- Spinning is unethical behavior because it misrepresents and distorts truth (→ Public Relations Ethics).
- Spinning is the antithesis of J. E. Grunig's two-way symmetrical model of public relations, which seeks to develop mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics.
- Spinning is a form of propaganda that, when used deceitfully and manipulatively, does not fairly represent the information.
- The spin model suggests that public relations professionals are nothing more than "press agents" whose main goal and obligations are to "earn ink" and to make their organization "look good."
- The word "spin" has a negative connotation, and "perception is reality"; hence, some may view this negative word and its association with the behavior it represents as representative of the behavior of *all* practitioners.
- The spin paradigm does not support socially responsible behavior.

The word "spin" will never completely go away. However, by being kept alive via use in everyday dialogue, the word's existence is perpetuated, thereby giving it power to survive. Communication professionals should strive to diminish its use as a commonplace term among the media and further be committed to practicing ethical communication. Further still, they should never deceitfully manipulate a message to communicate half-truths. And the behavior of those who assert that they practice spin as their "duty" as communication professionals should be discouraged.

Finally, the public relations profession, in particular, should continue to educate people about what it is and its contribution to society. People need to be reminded that, although publicity and promotional strategies are viable components of the communication mix, they are not the sole functions of public relations. Furthermore, instead of advocating *propaganda* as the foundation for these activities, we need to broaden our thinking to that of *motivating* particular behaviors that influence positive changes in our society and of the free marketplace of ideas.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Bandwagon Effect ▶ Financial Communication ▶ Fundraising ▶ Health Campaigns, Communication in ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Consultant ▶ Political Marketing ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Public Relations Planning ▶ Rhetoric, Argument, and Persuasion ▶ Spin Doctor ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Strategic Framing

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## Spiral of Silence

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Developed by German survey and communication researcher → Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann in the 1960s and 1970s, the spiral of silence theory describes collective opinion formation and societal decision-making in situations where the issue being debated or decided upon is controversial and morally loaded (→ Public Opinion; Conflict as Media Content; Social Conflict and Communication). The theory is one of the most frequently cited and debated to emerge from the field of communication studies during the latter half of the twentieth century.

In the literature in the field, the spiral of silence theory is often reduced to a single premise, i.e., that people who feel their opinion is held by the minority tend to fall silent in public. Although this is a perfectly accurate description of one key aspect of the theory, it is in fact just one element of a far more comprehensive theory of how public opinion functions. This theory rests on the notion that there is such a thing as a “*social nature of humans*,” which causes people to fear social isolation and thus substantially influences their actions in public. The term “*public opinion*” then refers to opinions or behavior that can be displayed or expressed in public without running the risk of social isolation or, in some cases, that even must be displayed to avoid the danger of isolation. The term → “public” is here interpreted in a social psychological perspective as a state of consciousness in which individuals who are subjected to the gaze of those around them consciously realize that their actions are “seen by all” and “heard by all.” People must therefore constantly monitor the reactions of others in their environment (→ Social Perception).

Accordingly, Noelle-Neumann views public opinion as a form of *social control* that ultimately applies to everyone, regardless of social class. She states that this control is apparent in many areas of life, ranging from controversial political issues to → fashion, morals, and values. Noelle-Neumann’s understanding of public opinion stands in contrast

to another conception that views public opinion as the result of rational debate among an educated elite that is of crucial importance for the state (Holcombe 1923; Bourdieu 1979).

### ORIGINS OF THE THEORY

The theory originated from a surprising empirical research finding from the 1965 German federal election campaign. Over the course of 10 months, from December 1964 to shortly before election day, → survey findings on voting intentions remained practically unchanged, with a dead heat between the governing Christian Democratic Party and the opposing Social Democratic Party (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Election Surveys). In the final few weeks and days prior to the election, however, the situation suddenly changed, with survey findings showing a so-called “last-minute swing” in favor of the Christian Democrats. The election outcome confirmed the final survey findings.

While voting intentions remained unchanged over the course of many months, over the same period of time responses to the following question had shifted dramatically: “Of course, nobody can know for sure, but what do you think: who is going to win the election?” In December 1964, the percentage of respondents who expected the Social Democrats would win the election was about the same as the share who anticipated a Christian Democratic victory. But by July 1965, the Christian Democrats were clearly in the lead; and by August, almost 50 percent anticipated a Christian Democratic victory. The relationship between the two measures – voting intention and expectation of the winner – made the *puzzle, which gave rise to the theory* of the spiral of silence.

Subsequently, especially during the emotionally charged federal election campaign of 1972, the Allensbach Institute gradually gathered survey data pointing to humans’ fear of isolation, to their tendency to speak out or fall silent in controversial, morally loaded debates. The pattern that had been observed during the 1965 campaign was detected again on other occasions – and thus the spiral of silence theory slowly began to take shape.

### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE THEORY

People experience fear of isolation. They have a fear – probably developed over the course of evolution – of being rejected by those around them. For this reason, people constantly *monitor the behavior of others* in their surroundings, attentively noting which opinions and modes of behavior meet with public approval or disapproval. But people do not only observe their environment. They also in part unconsciously issue their own threats of isolation via what they say and do, via behavior such as turning away from someone, knitting their brow, laughing at someone, etc. These are signals that individuals perceive, and that show people which of their opinions meet with their fellow humans’ approval and which do not.

Since most people fear isolation, they tend to refrain from publicly stating their position when they perceive that this would attract enraged objections, laughter, scorn, or similar *threats of isolation*. Conversely, those who sense that their opinion meets with approval tend to voice their convictions fearlessly, freely, gladly, and at times vociferously. Speaking out loudly and gladly enhances the threat of isolation directed at those who think

differently. It reinforces their sense of standing alone with their opinion and thus augments their tendency to conceal their opinion in public. A *spiraling process* begins, whereby the dominant camp becomes ever louder and more self-confident, while the other camp falls increasingly silent.

This process does not occur at all times and in all situations, but only in connection with issues that have a strong *moral component*. The process is not set in motion if there is no underlying moral foundation implying that those who think differently are not merely stupid, but bad. This moral element is what gives public opinion power, allowing it to raise the threat of isolation that sets the spiral of silence in motion. Only controversial issues can trigger a spiral of silence. Topics on which there is social consensus – true consensus and not merely outward agreement – give rise to no disagreement and thus leave no room for a spiral of silence. The actual strength of the different camps of opinion does not necessarily determine which view will predominate in public. An opinion can dominate in public and exert the pressure of isolation even if the majority of the population holds the opposing view, yet does not speak out publicly.

The *mass media* can significantly influence the spiral-of-silence process. If the majority of the media take the same side in a morally charged controversy, they exert a substantial, presumably even decisive influence on the direction that the spiral of silence takes. Thus far, no instances in which a spiral of silence ran contrary to the media tenor have been observed (→ Public Opinion, Media Effects on). As a rule, people are not consciously aware of either the fear or threat of isolation. They observe behavior in their environment that is indicative of self-confidence and strength, and react practically instinctively with fear and silence to threats of isolation raised by their surroundings.

Public opinion is *limited by time and place*. As a rule, a spiral of silence only holds sway over a society for a limited period of time. In this regard, there are both short-lived instances, such as the controversy over the sinking of the Brent Spar oil platform in some European countries in the 1990s, and extremely long-term examples, such as the growing tendency in western societies over the course of the past centuries to attach ever greater importance to the value of equality (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). In geographical terms, the area in which a certain → *climate of opinion* predominates can be of varying size. There have even been a few cases of globally valid public opinion in recent history, such as the public opinion that isolated South Africa around the world for decades and ultimately forced the apartheid regime to step down from power. Generally, however, the process of public opinion and thus the spiral of silence tend to be limited by national borders or the borders of a particular cultural group. When viewed with hindsight or from an outsider's perspective, it is hard to comprehend the agitation and emotional fervor that accompany a spiral of silence.

Finally, public opinion serves as an instrument of social control, indirectly insuring *social cohesion*. Whenever there is especially strong integrative pressure in a society, as found in connection with the spiral of silence, this generally indicates that the issue or controversy that triggered the spiral of silence poses a particularly great threat to social cohesion. In extreme cases, the spiral of silence culminates in a situation where certain topics can either only be broached using a specific vocabulary (political correctness) or cannot be mentioned at all (taboo), lest people wish to be the target of extremely harsh signals of social isolation (Noelle-Neumann 1993).

## CRITIQUE OF THE THEORY

The theory of the spiral of silence has always been an object of controversy in communication research since its first publication in the *Journal of Communication* in 1974. Criticism concentrated on *three crucial issues*.

First, the theory was said to fail to consider, to a sufficient degree, the part that *reference groups* play in the formation of the population's opinions. People tend to orient themselves more strongly to their personal environment than to society or the public at large, so some critics hold (cf. Glynn & McLeod 1985). Second, Noelle-Neumann asserts that people are capable of estimating the distribution of opinions in the population. This capability, critics hold, is at odds with the well-documented phenomenon of → "*pluralistic ignorance*" – the majority errs about who is in the majority – and "looking-glass perception" – most humans tend to believe the majority shares their own opinion (Salmon & Kline 1985). Third, the theory of the spiral of silence is thought by some to possibly explain human behavior in societies that put much emphasis on the collective, but *not to apply to individualistic societies* such as the United States or many western European countries (Huang 2005). In addition to these three main points, Noelle-Neumann's thesis that the mass media play a decisive part in the development of the pressure of isolation, which silences those who hold the majority opinion, was criticized mostly in the early years.

Whereas the first critical argument rests on a misunderstanding insofar as Noelle-Neumann has never claimed her theory is the sole explanation of public opinion processes, and has never denied the importance of other influences such as reference groups on individuals' opinion formation, the other two arguments are in need of thorough testing. The theory explicitly holds that the behavior described is to be found in all societies, including decidedly individualistic ones. And the relationship between Noelle-Neumann's "quasi-statistical sense" (see below) and looking-glass perception is unresolved to this day.

## TESTING THE THEORY

On considering the wealth of studies that have attempted to empirically test the spiral of silence theory over the past 20 years, it is obvious that one of the greatest problems with any such endeavor is correctly identifying the type of social situation in which a test of this kind can be completed. This sort of situation cannot be arbitrarily created within the framework of a representative survey. Instead, researchers must wait for an auspicious moment to arise.

One common misapprehension concerns the concept of the "*quasi-statistical sense*," a term that Noelle-Neumann used to describe people's tendency to constantly monitor their environment, thereby assessing which opinions are gaining ground and may be expressed in public, and which views are losing ground and hence subject to the threat of isolation. The concept does not imply that people have a cash-register-like capability to continually estimate and record the percentage of the population that holds one opinion or the other.

Further, a test of the spiral of silence requires an *issue with certain prerequisites*. The issue must have a strong moral dimension, it must be in the public spotlight, and the public must be divided into different opinion camps. Further, a spiral of silence is particularly likely to come into being in situations where the majority of the mass media clearly side

with one of the opinion camps involved in the debate. In addition, the pressure of the climate of opinion that emanates from the issue must be so strong that respondents directly perceive the threat of isolation during the survey interview and do not have to imagine such pressure in a hypothetical situation (→ Public Opinion Polling).

On *analyzing the findings*, the behavior of respondents whose opinion is actually in the majority or gaining ground must be compared with the behavior of those who are in fact in the minority or whose opinion is under pressure from the climate of opinion. Comparing those who say they believe themselves to be in the majority or in the minority would produce misleading results. According to the theory, the threat of isolation is inseparably entwined with concrete issues and opinions. Whether people rationally believe their opinion is shared by the majority is irrelevant. Supporters of a standpoint that is subject to pressure from the climate of opinion tend to fall silent even if they – like most people – claim during the interview to hold the majority view (→ False Consensus).

If a suitable social situation for testing the spiral of silence can be identified, that is, a situation that involves a real struggle for public opinion, the following information must be obtained via surveys and media content analyses (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative) in order to test the spiral of silence:

- 1 the *distribution of opinions* on the issue among the population: which view is held by the majority and which by the minority? This information is needed to identify and compare the supporters and opponents of a particular opinion in the analysis phase of the investigation.
- 2 the *climate of opinion*; in other words, a question measuring the population's general feeling as to which opinion is getting stronger and which opinion is losing ground. This can be ascertained by means of questions such as "How do you think most people feel about this?" With this question one can pinpoint those issues that entail pressure from the climate of opinion. Whenever the percentage of respondents who believe that most people hold a particular opinion is considerably greater than the share who actually take this stance themselves, this is a sure sign that we are dealing with an issue that could ultimately trigger a spiral of silence.
- 3 *willingness to advocate a certain position* or speak out in public. This can, for example, be measured via the "train test," which has in the meantime become a classic question in spiral of silence research: "Suppose you are taking a long train ride and one of the passengers in your compartment starts talking strongly in favor of (or against) opinion X. Would you want to talk with this person so as to get to know his or her point of view better, or wouldn't you want to do that?" In countries such as the United States, where long train trips are unusual, other questions can be used. The most common version is the so-called reporter question: "Suppose a television reporter approached you on the street and asked you on camera about . . ."
- 4 the *degree of emotionalization* surrounding an issue – the strength of its moral component. There are a number of indicator questions that can possibly reveal the degree of emotionalization that a particular issue entails. Using one tried and tested model, respondents are presented with a number of topics and asked: "Which of these are delicate issues that might get you into hot water if you were to talk about them?"
- 5 the *intensity and bias of reporting* on the issue by the opinion-setting mass media.

Another reason why it has proved so difficult to test the spiral of silence theory empirically is the fact that these requirements rarely occur simultaneously and, even when they do, researchers must be able to begin measuring the effects on time. In cases where this has been possible, however, the findings would seem to confirm the validity of the theory. Examples of this are Cheryl Katz and Mark Baldassare's test of the theory completed during the 1992 US presidential elections, or Noelle-Neumann's own test during the 2002 German federal election campaign (Katz and Baldassare 1994; Noelle-Neumann and Petersen 2005).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Climate of Opinion  
 ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts  
 ▶ Election Surveys ▶ False Consensus ▶ Fashion ▶ Interview ▶ Interview, Standardized  
 ▶ Noelle-Neumann, Elisabeth ▶ Pluralistic Ignorance ▶ Public  
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# Spirituality and Development

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Most approaches to → development communication are grounded in economic frameworks concerned with how material resources are allocated in society. The dominant → modernization philosophy aims to maximize individual opportunities for material gain, while critical perspectives argue for just distributions of resources and against the inequities of capitalist systems. Both literatures usually fail to consider non-material aspects of people's lives, thereby neglecting a vital resource for empowerment and social change (→ Communication Strategies for Empowerment; Planned Social Change through Communication; Secular Social Change).

Modernization is grounded in neo-classical economic theory and Enlightenment philosophy, which privilege the → public sphere of reason, science, technology, economics, and politics, and devalue other areas of human experience. Modernization therefore assumes that development should address material needs, whereas religion speaks primarily to spiritual needs, which may conflict with material gain. Material development goals require a set of communication strategies. In large projects, campaigns usually are planned in a highly rational and systematic manner via → social marketing research. Religion is seldom considered except as a barrier or a resistance point (e.g., to family planning or HIV prevention) that needs to be overcome by research-based strategic planning.

In much of critical or Marxian thought, religion and spirituality likewise are regarded as more problematic than helpful. Religion is the opiate of the masses, blinding people to material inequalities and injustice. While some critical arguments do address non-material concerns of ideological influence and cultural imperialism (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories), these arguments have been largely subordinate to questions of power over capital resources.

Hence, non-material considerations that move development to the realm of the spiritual have seldom been priorities of western development aid. Few writings on development communication in mainstream traditions have addressed the role of religion and spirituality. Most scholars and practitioners make only passing references to religion, as a simple demographic or in a negative sense, as an obstacle to development. Further, just as western development usually ignores non-material realities, much theological writing and practice focuses on religion and spirituality with little or no attention to material injustice.

Yet religion, spiritual practice, communication, and material realities are inseparable in most of the world. In contrast to the secular orientation of western cultures, in many societies religious values are a part of everyday life, providing a foundational framework for behaviors related to everything from clothing styles to childrearing to health-care. Also religious rituals play a central organizational role in marking key life events.

Not all of this is positive, as religion and spirituality often do seriously impede progressive social change. This may be particularly the case for women and minority

ethnic groups (→ Development, Gender, and Communication). Also heinous crimes have been carried out in the name of religion.

Efforts to bridge the intellectual gap between the material and spiritual may be found in the practice of → hermeneutics, which involves the interpretation of sacred texts within historically specific contexts. Hermeneutics therefore assumes that no religious beliefs and practices are fixed and rejects a sharp and inseparable divide between people's spiritual and material needs.

Outcomes of hermeneutics include liberation theologies within every major religion, with leaders who are making arguments for development as a process of liberation from injustice, discrimination, and prejudice wherever they occur, including within their own organizations (Melkote & Steeves 2001). These arguments – plus accompanying faith and spiritual practice – frequently catalyze activism and provide openings for individual and community empowerment and social change.

In applications of liberation theology to development communication and education, the work of Paolo Freire (e.g., 1970) is particularly significant. Although his ideas emerged initially from the Christian liberation theology movement of 1960s Brazil, he drew upon works from other traditions as well, especially that of Ghandi. The impact of his arguments and methodologies has been broad, beginning in Latin America and spreading globally. From liberation theology, Freire's assumptions of what development communication should do are radically different from the assumptions of modernization, which emphasizes message transfer supportive of economic gain. Rather, for Freire, development communication ideally is emancipatory dialogue that leads to expanded individual and communal consciousness and power. Freire assumes that once people name their sources of oppression, as well as their sources of power, they can determine their own collective and individual solutions via a process of action and reflection. For development communication practice, the central focus should be dialogue. The success of the awakening process via dialogue requires spiritual practice, a form of communication seldom examined by western communication specialists.

The assumption is that spiritual practice by individuals and groups taps resources that provide the necessary consciousness, energy, and motivation for change. Other forms of traditional religious communication may additionally be significant in the liberation or empowerment communication process. These forms are unique to each religious tradition and culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts), and may include song, → dance, storytelling (→ Storytelling and Narration), and gatherings of groups with shared interests. Additionally, uses of mass-mediated information and communication technologies are not necessarily inconsistent with the goals of liberation (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of).

Freire has inspired many scholars and practitioners who remain secular in their assumptions. Additionally, arguments consistent with his approach are made by some branches of feminism and of critical scholarship, and by advocates of communitarian theory (→ Feminist and Gender Studies; Critical Theory); all advocate context-based dialogue as a means of challenging unequal power relations. Yet Freire and other proponents of liberation theologies go further in emphasizing the role of religion and spirituality in dialogic processes of empowerment.



A particularly well-known application of Christian liberation theology is the base ecclesial community movement in much of Latin America. The US Civil Rights movement is another. However, there are many examples in other religious traditions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam (Melkote & Steeves 2001).

Most development projects do not rise to the level of social movements (→ Social Movements and Communication). Yet their strategies and outcomes can be improved via consultation and active collaboration with religious and spiritual leaders. For examples, see the journal *Media Development*, published by the World Association for Christian Communication, and also the website of the Communication Initiative, and its free online publication, *Drum Beat*.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Strategies for Empowerment ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Dance ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Modernization ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Secular Social Change ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Storytelling and Narration

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## **Sports and the Media, History of**

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Sports and the media, from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, are so deeply interconnected as to give the impression of a smooth integration between two powerful socio-cultural institutions. Many – perhaps most – people across the world have a daily encounter with the sports media in some form (→ Sports as Popular Communication), including print, electronic, online, and even branded T-shirts and footwear (Boyle & Haynes 2000; Rowe 2004). But it has not ever been thus, and the history of sports and the media has been marked by competition and conflict as well as cooperation and synergy. Indeed, this history can be adjudged a struggle for power over sports and spectatorship that the media seem largely to have won, although at some organizational and financial cost. This is not just a matter of contending information and service industries, but also of social institutions, the people who engage with them as workers or consumers, and the

wider impact of the media–sport relationship on local, national, and global popular culture (→ Globalization of the Media).

## HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP

Sports and the media can be regarded as a “match made in heaven,” but might also be seen as a relationship prone to degrees of disharmony. Sports as understood today emerged in eighteenth-century Britain as a codification of earlier forms of folk play and physical culture. It displayed both a strong commitment to amateurism (playing the game for the love of it) and a strengthening professional ethos as part of the growth of industrialized leisure, in which spectators would pay to watch sports contests in enclosed spaces, engage in betting and wagering on them, and enjoy an overall social experience that conventionally involved consuming alcohol and vocally supporting one team or individual against another. As sports increasingly mutated into the “sportsbiz,” they became integrated into commercial structures and practices that, while not entirely stripped of their premodern, precapitalist features, became progressively removed from them (Rowe 2004).

Sports developed as significant social and commercial activities, and so, in the first instance, the print news media began to cover them as part of daily life, and also promoted sports events through advertising and sponsorship (Harris 1998). This was the beginning of an exchange relationship between sports and the media – newspapers informed potential consumers of forthcoming events and subsequently reported on them, while at the same time attracting readers and advertising revenue from sports and other nascent and established industries (→ Advertising). It soon became apparent that sports could attract popular attention and enable product endorsement, as effective means of capturing audiences for exposure to commodities given the seal of approval by respected, even revered athletes. In return, sports received a higher profile and greater visibility, so cementing their social importance and commercial viability, and inducing an upward spiral of *print media coverage* and sports prominence. Thus sports journalism developed far beyond mere provision of results and factual description, consuming many pages of → newspapers and → magazines (both general and sport-specific). The discourse of sport, therefore, insinuated itself into the everyday lives not only of sports appreciators (now referred to as fans), but of all those acquainted with a media culture, in the first instance deeply reliant on the written word and the still photograph.

Sports and the media, though, were still substantially constrained by time and space until the early to mid-twentieth century. Sports involved mainly local events, and, even where local “representatives” traveled to sports contests, the limitations of the print and telegraphic media dictated that events could be anticipated and reported only after considerable delay, given the available technologies of print media and physical transport. Sports newsreels were popular, but involved the cumbersome process of transportation to exhibition venues.

But the media became less and less temporally and spatially constrained, by means of first → *radio* and then → *television broadcasting* (Buscombe 1975; Rader 1984). The latter, crucially, offered both unprecedented audiovisual representation and instantaneity

to a majority of citizens in western countries in their homes within two decades of World War II (and with striking vividness following the introduction of color television; → Television as Popular Culture). This technology (→ Television Technology), and the major sports events it covered (such as the Olympic Games and the Association Football World Cup), enhanced the globalization of sports (Miller et al. 2001).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

At the moment when the electronic media could give a strong impression of “having been there” to viewers, two key questions were raised: could the media representation of sports create superior experience to that involving physical attendance? Would the institution of the media come to dominate that of sports? Sports organizations were generally concerned about the impact of television on attendances and so their prime source of revenue – gate takings. But the sale of broadcast rights on a competitive basis, with its associated spin-offs of merchandising, marketing, and publicity, facilitated a massive infusion of capital that accelerated the professionalization of sports and created the conditions for a more fluid national and international sports labor market (Miller et al. 2001), and new linkages of sports to other industries, such as fashion, clothing, and tourism.

In countries with strong public service broadcasting systems, such as Britain, much of continental Europe, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, the heightened commercial desirability of sports through broadcast media had the progressive impact of reducing the role of public service broadcasting in sports (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). In nations with a historically stronger private television sector, notably the USA, commercial television has always dominated sports broadcasting (Chandler 1988). Television sports competition under such circumstances developed as that between advertiser-supported free-to-air networks and subscription or pay-per-view arrangements, the latter constituting an “electronic turnstile” that parallels the cost of physical entry to the sports arena. As more countries have followed cable and satellite televisual sports provision at the expense of public and private free-to-air access, one of the most pressing issues in contemporary media sports has emerged – that of the “cultural citizenship” rights attached to the free and unencumbered broadcast provision of prime sports events conceived as being of major national cultural significance (Rowe 2004). Contentious debates over whether citizens should pay to watch major sports on television that were previously provided free-to-air demonstrate the density and intensity of the media–sports nexus (Boyle & Haynes 2000). As with other cultural forms, these matters revolve around questions of production, text, and reception (Wenner 1998), but in terms not of whether sports and media should interconnect, but of how, and according to which set of power relations.

## POWER OF MEDIA CORPORATIONS

With regard to the production of media sports, the main area of concern involves the growing global power of media corporations, notably News Corporation, over sports (→ Political Economy of the Media). Rupert Murdoch, News Corporation’s current

chairman and manager director, is frequently cited as the most powerful individual in contemporary sports, and regularly asserts the importance of subscription television sports as a “battering ram” in breaking through to viewers with a wide range of interactive media services, ranging from gambling to shopping. The *tendency to monopoly power* in the highly capitalized world of broadcast sports is not just revealed in the development of global media sports networks and the swallowing of smaller “players,” but also extends to the ownership of sports clubs by media companies (→ Consolidation of Media Markets; Concentration in Media Systems). These arrangements open up enormous possibilities for cross-promotion across print and electronic media platforms, but also provoke concerns about conflicts of interest, in which media companies may exert excessive power over sports competitions and organizations (Miller et al. 2001; Rowe 2004).

These issues surrounding media sports production have a direct impact on the second key area of concern – that of the *media sports text*. The → spectacle of sports is a highly salable commodity, but the sports event in real time and space constitutes only the apex of a much larger entity – the mediated audience. For example, in order to maximize television viewership, sports events can be represented in a more dramatic fashion, with the imperative of attracting and holding attention leading to faster, more spectacular audiovisual images (Goldlust 1987) that show little respect for the tactical subtleties and variations of pace savored by more committed sports fans (a minority of the potential audience). Media corporations can also exert considerable power over sports rules and forms, such as tie-breaks in tennis and one-day cricket matches, which are both “telegenic” and more easily contained in predictable temporal frameworks. To accommodate broadcast audiences in key markets, especially the east coast of the USA, Olympic marathons may take place in the heat of the day, swimming races in the early morning, and boxing matches after midnight. Similarly, in the news media, sports are increasingly molded to entertainment coverage, with celebrity scandals and gossip turning sports into a much broader cultural phenomenon (Boyle 2006) that may have little direct dependence on traditional conceptions of it.

## **ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE**

This refashioning and proliferation of media sports texts raises issues of relationships with, and impacts on, audiences. It is misleading to see audiences as simple victims of powerful media sports organizations: individually and collectively they not only have the capacity to protest against developments in media sports, but also hold the ultimate power of veto – to refuse to view or read what is produced. But it is difficult for sports aficionados, who may well have a lifelong attachment to sports, to resist (in both senses) media sports. Thus, while audiences may sometimes be successful in obstructing aspects of the transformation of media sports – for example, lobbying governments to block takeovers of sports clubs by media companies or to introduce stricter protections for broadcast sports access – they conventionally use the media services (especially televisual) made available to them. The qualities, meanings, and uses of these media sports texts and audience interaction with them should, therefore, be subject to close scrutiny. Critical media sports scholars analyze the ways in which these seemingly innocent, pleasurable

texts have embedded within them damaging ideologies, including sexism, homophobia, racism, ethnocentrism, class prejudice, excessive nationalism, and xenophobia (Wenner 1998). Correspondingly, media sport producers are called upon to disseminate “progressive” messages opposing sports’ enlistment as a vehicle of social oppression. Thus, media sports are fertile ground for the testing of socio-cultural theories and concepts linking sports to major structures of societal power, and interrogating the politics of popular culture.

The history of media sports is a dynamic one, and in the contemporary context many new and potential changes are evident, such as the increased availability of media sports texts via flexible, digital, and converged means such as digital television, computers and mobile phones, and new forms of sports journalism (Boyle 2006) made possible by the Internet and the practice of blogging. There is no doubt that the established interdependence of the media and sports will persist, and that new forms of media sports representation will emerge, such as the use of implanted technology that will turn athletes’ experience of sports contests into the virtual reality of spectators. The institutional specificity of the media and sports should be acknowledged, while at the same time it should be recognized that studying them and their links to wider social processes reveals much about the formation and constitution of contemporary societies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Concentration in Media Systems ▶ Consolidation of Media Markets ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Journalism ▶ Magazine ▶ Newspaper ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Popular Culture and the News Media ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Spectacle ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television as Popular Culture ▶ Television Technology

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# Sports as Popular Communication

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Although they are often framed as “merely” fun and games, sports and the communication that surrounds them influence social norms. Many scholars recognize that the “sports–media complex,” identified as such by Jhally (1989, 77) because of the virtually inseparable relationship between high-profile sports and media, is one that entertains but also reflects and reinforces existing social dynamics. As outlined by media sociologist Robert McChesney (1989), the sports–media complex is a commercial enterprise and has evolved in pace with consumerism and with communication technology.

Since the rise of → television in the mid-twentieth century, sports communication has diminished emphasis on traditional western ideals associated with sports (such as fair play and teamwork, for instance) and moved toward what some scholars call “sportainment” or “confrontainment,” which emphasizes individual stars (e.g., Tiger Woods, David Beckham, Michael Schumacher) and spectacle in mega-events such as the World Cup or American Super Bowl (→ Sports and the Media, History of).

## THE PHENOMENON OF SPORTS COMMUNICATION: SCOPE AND IMPACT

More than perhaps any other single genre of entertainment, sport has the power to draw national and global audiences simultaneously to a single event – to watch, cheer, cajole, and, occasionally, cry. In the case of an international competition (such as a World Cup soccer match or the Olympics), the sports stadium holds just a fragment of its audience. Millions of fans, speaking dozens of different languages and living thousands of miles apart, may also share the experience through mediated coverage. Events smaller in scope, such as an Australian rugby game, also draw significant audiences. Four of the ten most-watched shows in US television history (→ Television: Social History) have been Super Bowls. The audience for the 2004 Olympics in Athens was 3.9 billion, up from 3.6 billion for the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. Audiences for sports can rival those for televised phenomena such as the funeral of Princess Diana or the finale of the top-rated US sitcom *Friends*, which drew more than 50 million viewers in 2004.

Viewers translate into advertising dollars and profit for sports organizations, sponsors, and media partners (→ Advertising, Economics of). For instance, broadcast and cable networks in the US pay billions of dollars per year to broadcast games of the National Football Leagues, and yet they do so in expectation of a profit as they charge advertisers to reach a target audience. The average Super Bowl commercial sold for \$2.4 million in 2005, and the FIFA World Cup media rights value reached \$879 million in 2006 (Bryant & Holt 2006).

There is no reason to believe that such growth in consumption and revenues will not increase as young audiences demand coverage of a wider array of sports and as technologies make it possible to track live events virtually everywhere.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPORTS–MEDIA COMPLEX

The marriage of organized sports and media in Canada, the US, and Europe has followed the same general trajectory, as part of newsheets and magazines in the early-to-mid-1800s, mass-circulation newspapers in the mid-1800s, radio in the early-to-mid-1900s, and then television and the Internet during the past half-century (→ Newspaper, History of; Magazines, History of).

The *sporting press*, which began its rapid expansion during the nineteenth century, communicated on a wide scale the cultural parameters of sports. Mass-circulated media accounts generally did not question the politics of sports or the behavior of athletes but instead used sports as a way to provide escapist fare to draw the largest possible audience and attract advertisers. During the early twentieth century in the US, for instance, top-circulation newspapers allowed the lines between journalists and sports organizations to blur as team owners paid newspapers to cover their teams on the road, which manifested reporting that ignored unethical behavior by athletes and instead took a “gee-whiz” tone and promoted athletes as heroes. At the same time, advertising became central to the consumer-driven economy, and mass media came to depend on advertisers, which sought outlets that were attractive to consumers.

The *rise of radio* in the 1920s, and, more importantly, that of *television*, made the live spectator experience possible for those outside the ballpark or arena. The explosion of televised sports has been facilitated since then by global economic factors: it has provided a readymade vehicle for major transnational corporations to develop brand-name recognition and cultural familiarity (→ Branding) and to push consumption. Technological developments that led to sports coverage via cable or satellite (ESPN was launched in 1979; → Satellite Television; Cable Television), the → Internet, and, now, wireless devices have continued to feed the voracious public appetite for sports coverage and the corporate desire to promote brands and products. For instance, multinational media owner Rupert Murdoch uses sports entertainment as a “battering ram” (lead offering) in → News Corporation’s pay-television operations because, as he announced in the 1990s, sports has more power than any other form of entertainment to draw viewers (cited in Cashmore 2005, 365). Nike, a multinational corporation that started as a sports-and-fitness apparel maker in the 1970s and has since moved into sports entertainment, perhaps best evidences the synergy between commercial sports and consumption. Nike’s marketing of NBA superstar Michael Jordan to sell shoes during the 1990s was a key reason its revenues increased more than eight-fold from the mid-1980s, and enabled it to position the famous swoosh and logo (“Just Do It”) with the pursuit of sports and fitness globally (→ Globalization of the Media).

## THE SPORTS–MEDIA COMPLEX AND SPORTAINMENT

Broadcasters and cable operators rely on the audiences and advertising revenue that sports coverage generates. Sports leagues depend on broadcast rights fees, which can run into the hundreds of millions annually. Both institutions – sports and media – have transformed to accommodate their symbiotic relationship.

An example of this is in the way broadcasters invest and brand themselves by their sports coverage, as in the NBC Network's investment of significant resources in coverage of the Olympics, and the way sporting events have altered themselves to fit the commercial demands of TV (e.g., rule changes in international tennis to speed up the game, compression of cricket tournaments, and "television timeouts" in American football games). Sports must make themselves "televsual" to thrive, and networks and cable operators must be willing to attain the most televisually friendly (thus, popular) sports (→ Television Networks). Further, advertisers' demands for access to target consumers, combined with the technological ability of media producers to reach them, has led to fragmentation and specialization of sports programming. Audiences can be sliced into thinner and thinner segments on the basis of media they seek. For instance, US advertisers who want to reach devoted auto-racing or horse-racing fans who watch cable television in a particular region can speak to them via networks such as the Speed Channel. The Internet has also provided space for advertisers to reach groups of consumers based on narrowly defined interests, including in sports that may receive relatively little television coverage, such as professional weightlifting (→ Audience Segmentation).

To retain audiences to deliver to advertisers, televised (and Internet-streamed) sports must also be entertaining (→ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking). This demand has led to increasing pressure on leagues, teams, and athletes to become spectacles. John Gerdy, author of *Sports: The All-American addiction* (2002), argues that this emphasis on sports-as-spectacle has produced "*sportainment*," which is generally devoid of the values traditionally cherished in organized sports, such as character-building, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Instead, athletes have been transformed into entertainers; thus sports for sports' sake have been trivialized. Other critics argue that "*confrontainment*" is a more apt descriptor because of the emphasis on conflict-driven drama in programming. Media and culture critic Michael Real (1998, 25) has compared the presentation of sports mega-events to cockfights because of their emphasis on "death, masculinity, rage."

## REFLECTING SOCIAL NORMS AND CULTURAL IDEOLOGY

Sports cross national and cultural boundaries more readily than perhaps any other form of entertainment, making their potential for consumption limited only by their reach. Sports coverage may promote nationalist agendas by the way athletes, teams, and events are presented. Real political events impact coverage; Cashmore (2005) points out that since 1956, every summer Olympics has been implicated in some kind of controversy. (In Athens during 2004, for instance, the US team stayed aboard a cruise ship because of perceived threats from Al-Qaeda.)

Research indicates that media commentary involving international sports is driven by nationalist agendas, as sports become a symbolic extension of the power and identity of participating countries. One way media accounts reflect nationalism is by stereotyping other countries and athletes from those countries. In one analysis of 340 hours of international even coverage, Sabo and colleagues (1996) found that American commentators accused other countries of having a political agenda in the games and made negative comments about how international athletes were sponsored. Also, Denham's (2004) study



of coverage of US track and field star Carl Lewis, accused of using performance-enhancing drugs in previous Olympics, found sympathetic coverage of him in American media but international stories that accused him of being sanctimonious, arrogant, and hypocritical.

Sociologists including Coakley (2004) and Sage (1998) have also argued that depictions of sports, through repetitive emphasis on men, the able-bodied, and certain ethnic groups to the exclusion of others, reinforce a *social hierarchy*. Although legal and social changes in many western countries have resulted in tremendous increases in sports participation by traditionally marginalized groups such as girls and women, racial and ethnic groups, and the disabled, a vast amount of research shows that in sports media depictions they are generally invisible or are stereotyped in unflattering ways (→ Stereotyping and the Media; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). Sports sociologists including Rowe (2003) and Messner (2002) have argued that such depictions (or lack thereof) are choices by media gatekeepers based on an ideology that devalues women and those who do not match the ideal body standard. Sports journalists and producers, such as Leonard Koppett (2003), however, have argued that such depictions reflect the reality of sports, in which able-bodied men are naturally dominant, and that such coverage is justified by audience demands. They argue that these demands are not shaped by, but instead drive, decision-making by media gatekeepers.

### **IMAGES OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES IN SPORTS**

Although women and girls make up 40 percent of overall sports participants in the US, they receive (at best) only around 10 percent of the media coverage of sports. This general pattern is replicated in other western countries and is irrespective of medium. An example of the diminished coverage women receive in comparison to men can be found in a longitudinal study (1989–2005) of sports-related television coverage on ESPN and major US television networks. The study found no increase in the number of stories about women's sports; for instance, on ESPN's flagship show, *SportsCenter*, just 1 in 20 stories involved women's sports (Duncan et al. 2005).

Many studies have reached the conclusion that *media accounts of women's sports* are often ambivalent (→ Gender: Representation in the Media) and position women as less suited for sports than men, although a handful of recent studies have documented equal treatment of male and female athletes, especially in Olympic coverage. Messner (2002) has asserted that an increased female presence in sports has turned the sports–media complex into “contested terrain,” with evolving depictions of women and alternatives to the traditional stereotypes of women in sports outlined by Griffin (1998). Complicating discussions of the stereotyping of women in sports media over the past decade, especially, has been the emergence of what has been called “pro-sex feminism,” which espouses individual choices by female athletes to present themselves in sexualized ways as empowering (Projansky 2001). Thus, the sex-symbol status in recent years of Russian tennis player Anna Kournikova, whose athletic career failed to net a major singles tournament win yet whose marketing and media presentation made her one of the most recognized (and lucrative) names in women's sports, can be read as either a diminishment of women in sports or a choice made by individual female athletes to best position themselves in the sports–media complex.

Grainger et al. (2006) suggest that *images of race* (→ Rhetoric and Race) presented in mediated sport may be the most significant way that individuals understand the contemporary racial order in society. Mediated sports provide some of the most prominent “actors” in contemporary entertainment, and many of them are athletes of color. The use of racist stereotypes in sports coverage, especially in the US, is less prevalent than it was several decades ago. The civil rights movement and increased sensitivity of media producers to their audiences has subdued blatant references to black people (including African-Americans) and members of other racial or ethnic groups as less intelligent than their white counterparts (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media). Further, studies in recent years indicate that some racial groups (especially African-American men) are not marginalized, but are instead highly visible, although in limited roles, in the sports–media complex.

Still, according to Hoberman (1997) and Cashmore (2005), issues of representation exist in the reinforcement of racial ideologies, such as the reproduction of “natural” black superiority and that of the typical deviant or dangerous black man. Billings (2004), who examined commentary about quarterbacks in US college and professional football leagues, found that in televised games, references to non-white athletes have emphasized athletic ability in ways that imply diminished cognitive ability. Hoberman has argued that reinforcement of these images, coupled with the absence of people of color in other areas of the news, such as politics and business, has resulted in the false belief by black youths that sports – and sports alone – are their only path to upward mobility.

Although racial and ethnic minorities are visible, elite-level athletes who participate in adapted sports are virtually invisible. Although the Paralympics is second in scope and size only to the Olympics, it receives relatively little coverage in Canada, Australia, Europe, and Asia and is ignored in the US, receiving less coverage than sports such as billiards and bowling (→ Disability and Communication; Body Images in the Media). When adapted-sport athletes are covered, studies show that they are portrayed as objects of pity instead of as authentic sports heroes; an example is network coverage of Paralympian Hope Lewellen, which Schell and Rodriguez (2001) found focused far more on her disability than on her athletic accomplishments.

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Sports communication is dynamic and complex as it interacts with economics, technology, politics, and social life. Sports offer real-time drama, often on the world stage, in a language (the body in action) that can be read across cultures. A public appetite for “sportainment,” coupled with corporate desire to reach target audiences through sports programming, guarantees that offerings and opportunities will continue to grow. The infusion of interactive technologies makes the possibilities even greater.

As technology and social changes interact with the sports–media complex, communication scholars must recast their questions and seek to understand how new ways of mediating sports interplay with cultures. For instance, how will younger sports consumers and gatekeepers *define* sports? How will the increasing specialization of and interactivity between media producers and audiences, and the infinite opportunity for coverage and communities provided by the Internet, influence the ways ideology is reinforced? More

research that examines the motivations of producers and of audiences in relation to emerging sports–media texts is needed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Branding ▶ Cable Television ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ Disability and Communication ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine, History of ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ News Corporation ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Rhetoric and Race ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sports and the Media, History of ▶ Stereotyping and the Media ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television: Social History

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## Stage Fright

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Stage fright is the anxiety and nervousness people experience when delivering oral presentations. In the field of communication, stage fright has also been studied under a variety of rubrics including public speaking anxiety, reticence, and audience anxiety. It is one of the oldest topics that communication scholars have studied empirically (Clevenger 1959), perhaps because it profoundly affects so many. In survey after survey of people's greatest fears, giving speeches always appears toward the top of the list.

Given this, it is not surprising that stage fright is a popular topic in textbooks on public speaking. Speakers are not the only people who experience stage fright; musicians, actors, and dancers also often have it. The emphasis in this entry is on the stage fright experienced by speakers because that is where the bulk of communication scholarship is focused.

Stage fright is conceptualized in two basic ways. The first is as a trait-like disposition – some people are more uncomfortable and nervous when talking to audiences than others. The second is as a response to particular situations – everyone gets nervous sometimes when they make speeches.

### DISPOSITIONAL STAGE FRIGHT

#### Symptoms

The majority of academic research on stage fright focuses on dispositional anxiety. It is important to distinguish the research on dispositional stage fright from a larger body of scholarship on communication apprehension. While the roots of research on communication apprehension lie in stage fright, in the past two decades the communication apprehension construct has been broadened to incorporate fears individuals have about communicating in a variety of contexts (→ Communication Apprehension). Very few

researchers have studied what causes people to have dispositional stage fright. What is known is that among the contributors are: (1) inexperience in speaking in public, and (2) a history of aversive experiences when making presentations. There is also evidence that suggests some genetic predispositions for dispositional stage fright.

*Physiologically*, stage fright is often marked by sweaty palms, a nervous stomach, shaking hands, and a racing heart. Behaviorally, people with stage fright tend to pause more, stutter more often, and use more adaptors (nervous movements) when speaking in public. Cognitively, people with stage fright often have difficulty focusing on their presentations. They are less interested in knowing about upcoming presentations, and what they are interested in does not match what experts in public speaking think should be their primary concerns (e.g., they want information about how they will be evaluated and have a number of other self-related concerns). People with high levels of stage fright are less interested in environmental characteristics associated with a future presentation (e.g., nature of the audience, setting). Highly anxious people also select topics with which they have less familiarity (Daly et al. 1989). They tend to be much more self-focused when speaking than people without anxiety. It is not surprising that they give less effective speeches than people with less dispositional stage fright. Part of the reason their speeches may be less effective is that when preparing presentations they focus on things that are irrelevant to good presentations (Daly et al. 1995).

Interestingly, observers' ratings of speakers' anxiety and speakers' self-reports of their anxiety are, at best, only modestly correlated. Audiences do not see speakers as having as much anxiety as speakers report experiencing (Behnke et al. 1987). In fact, when speakers become aware of how inaccurate their judgments are, the quality of their performances improves (Savitsky & Gilovich 2003; → Speech Anxiety).

Public speaking anxiety is inversely related to emotional stability, extraversion, intellect, affect intensity, and self-esteem. Anxious people see audiences as less agreeable and fear negative opinions more.

### **Treatment of Dispositional Stage Fright**

Popular literature often recommends that nervous speakers simply face their fear – the notion is that if they get up and give some speeches, they will slowly overcome their anxiety. This works for people who have a limited degree of stage fright. But for those with extreme stage fright, this approach can backfire. If people are really scared of speaking in public, they probably will not expose themselves to many opportunities to give speeches. So when they do make a presentation, they are less likely to do well. That poor performance, in turn, confirms that they should be extraordinarily nervous about making presentations.

Most research suggests that skills training alone is not sufficient for reducing stage fright (Duff et al. 2007). But when skills training is done in conjunction with some of the treatments discussed below, there are significant reductions in individuals' level of stage fright (Allen et al. 1989). Importantly, skills training must follow, not precede, other therapies (described below) (Hopf & Ayres 1992). Some recent research has challenged the notion that therapies are any better than public speaking training in reducing dispositional stage fright.

There are *two major therapeutic approaches* to alleviating dispositional stage fright. The first is *systematic desensitization*, which seeks to link relaxation rather than nervousness to communicating. In the therapy, people suffering from stage fright sit in a slightly dark room, listen to peaceful background music, and practice deep muscle relaxation. When they are relaxed, the therapist gently presents a hierarchy of scenarios that might create nervousness (e.g., an initial prompt might be talking to their friend about the weather; a much later prompt would be giving a speech in front of their friends and family). The moment a scenario raises even a little anxiety, people are instructed to signal the therapist. The therapist tells them to again start relaxing and after they are relaxed, the process starts again. Over time, people begin to tie public speaking to thoughts of relaxation rather than nervousness. Critical to this method are making sure that people understand that relaxation is something they have control over, and belief that the treatment is a credible one.

A second technique is *cognitive restructuring*. This technique assumes that people suffering from dispositional stage fright have unrealistic or irrational beliefs about presentations, which create stage fright (e.g., “I know people will laugh at me,” “I know I will say something stupid”). The therapy gets people to change those beliefs to more positive ones. This is done, in part, by challenging the reality of the irrational beliefs (e.g., “How do you know people will laugh at you?” “Have people laughed at you when you spoke in the past?” “What’s the worst thing that would happen if people did laugh at you?”) and having people, instead, generate more positive beliefs (“Most people have some nervousness. It’s normal and really reflects excitement!”).

A closely related approach is Motley’s communication oriented motivation (COM) approach (Motley & Molloy 1994), which suggests that people experiencing stage fright are too focused on performing and that they should be more focused on communicating with audiences. In this treatment, people’s negative or dysfunctional beliefs about speaking are challenged (e.g., that speaking is a novel activity different from conversing, that it must be more formal, that audiences carefully scrutinize speakers) by ones that highlight the communicative value of speaking (e.g., speaking is an important way to accomplish your goals; speaking is not really that different from having conversations).

There are, of course, many other potential treatments including medical ones (e.g., the use of beta-blockers), visualization, meditation, and biofeedback (→ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques).

## SITUATIONAL STAGE FRIGHT

Everyone, even very experienced communicators, experiences some degree of stage fright when giving speeches. Indeed, there are positive consequences to having some degree of arousal when making speeches. The causes of situational stage fright are numerous and include (1) inadequate preparation, (2) heightened sense of conspicuousness, amplified by (3) a sense of being evaluated, especially in high-stakes environments, (4) audience size, (5) audience status, (6) the novelty of the setting, (7) rigid rules about presentations, (8) perceived audience disinterest in the topic, and (9) nonresponsiveness on the part of audience members (Daly & Buss 1984; MacIntyre et al. 1997; Witt & Behnke 2006). Dispositional stage fright interacts with various situational variables to affect performance

such that for people high in dispositional stage fright these situational characteristics amplify situational anxiety and its consequences on performance.

In *coaching people* to overcome situational stage fright, popular techniques include familiarizing speakers with the setting and audience to reduce novelty; aiding people in choosing topics that are familiar to them; teaching presenters ways to better prepare presentations; encouraging speakers to relabel their arousal from fear to excitement; coaching presenters to focus more on audience members, shifting attention away from themselves to others; helping presenters develop relaxation skills (e.g., deep breathing) prior to presentations; guiding speakers to ignore or reject unrealistic or rigid beliefs about “rules” of speaking (e.g., you do not need to tell a joke at the start of presentations); and making presenters aware of the fact that audiences are not as negative as they might think they are. Speakers overestimate how critical audiences are.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Apprehension ► Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques ► Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ► Reticence ► Speech Anxiety

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# Stages of Change Model

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Some behaviors take a long time to change, and rarely do individuals progress immediately from awareness of a new product or idea to its use. Stages of change models document and specify the specific stages or steps a person goes through when they adopt or quit a behavior. At least four distinct stages of change models have been proposed: (1) diffusion of innovations (Rogers 2005); (2) hierarchy of effects (McGuire 1989); (3) steps to behavior change (Piotrow et al., 1997); and (4) transtheoretical model (Prochaska et al. 1992).

*Diffusion of innovations* (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation; Rogers, Everett) is a theory that describes how new ideas, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors spread throughout a community (Rogers 2005). First developed by rural sociologists to study how farmers adopted new ideas, diffusion theory has grown into a robust science with applications in communications, health (→ Health Communication), → marketing, sociology, and many other arenas. Diffusion theory has many components, one of which is that individuals pass through stages during the adoption process. These five stages were labeled: *awareness*, gaining knowledge of the new behavior; *persuasion*, learning more about it; *decision*, making a conscious decision to use it; *implementation*, first use and experimentation with it; and *confirmation*, continued use of the behavior (see Table 1).

The *hierarchy of effects* (HE) and *steps to behavior change* (SBC) models were developed as expansions of the diffusion stages by increasing the number of steps in the behavior change process and being explicit about the relationship between steps. The full hierarchy model consisted of a table in which the rows were the components of the Shannon and Weaver (1949) communication model (source, message, channel, receiver, and destination) and the columns were hierarchy steps (exposure, → attention, comprehension, yielding, and behavior). The HE and SBC models are useful for three reasons: (1) they denote a more active → audience in terms of → information seeking and advocacy of the behavior, (2) they provide 12 or 16 specific, measurable steps in the behavior change process, and (3) the HE model proposed a rate at which individuals progressed through each step in the change process, advocating a model in which people could be expected to progress from step to step at a rate of 80 percent. Thus for a population exposed to a communication → persuasion message (→ Exposure to Communication Content), 80 percent of the population would progress through each step, with ultimately 6.9 percent experiencing the benefits of the new practice.

Stages of change and the *transtheoretical model* (Prochaska et al. 1992) also classified people into five stages: *pre-contemplation*, when they are not aware of the need to change behavior and do not intend to do it; *contemplation*, when they are aware of a problem but do not intend to change in the near future; *preparation*, when they intend to change their behavior in the near future; *action*, when they have made some behavioral modification; and *maintenance*, when they have made the behavior change for some period of time (usually six months or longer; → Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of).



Table 1 Stages of change models

Diffusion of innovations (Rogers 2005)	Hierarchy of effects (HE) (McGuire 1989)	Steps to behavior change (SBC) (Piotrow et al. 1997)	Stages of change (Prochaska et al. 1992)
1 Awareness	1 Recall 2 Liking 3 Comprehension	1 Recalls message 2 Understands topic 3 Can name source of supply	1 Pre-contemplation
2 Persuasion	4 Knowledge of behavior 5 Skill acquisition 6 Yielding 7 Memory storage	4 Responds favorably 5 Discusses with friends/family 6 Thinks others approve 7 Approves himself or herself 8 Recognizes innovation meets need	2 Contemplation
3 Decision	8 Information search and retrieval 9 Decision	9 Intends to consult a provider 10 Intends to adopt 11 Goes to provider	3 Preparation
4 Implementation	10 Behaving in accordance with decision	12 Initiates use 13 Continues use	4 Action
5 Confirmation	11 Reinforcement 12 Post-behavior consolidating	14 Experiences benefits 15 Advocates 16 Support practice in the community	5 Maintenance

There are three distinctions between the stages of change and the diffusion or hierarchy stages. First, the diffusion or hierarchy stages were derived from studies designed to determine attributes associated with early or later adoption of new techniques, whereas the stages of change model was derived initially from studies intended to get people to quit smoking. The emphasis in stages of change was to understand how people quit a behavior (smoking), not adopt a new one. Second, the stages of change model measures cognitive states and shows how these change during adoption, whereas diffusion focuses more on how information sources and knowledge vary during adoption. Finally, diffusion has a much more extensive history and application than stages of change and so has been tested in multiple settings, but the stages of change model is used much more today and more extensively in the health field.

There are at least three reasons why stages (or steps) are used so frequently in communication research. First, they provide a way to group people, compare these groups on factors that affect behavior, and develop interventions targeted at specific stages (→ Media Effects). Second, progression between stages can be used as an outcome rather than relying exclusively on behavior. Third, change is not continuous, but rather marked by distinct events, steps, or stages that signify progression to adoption.

One main challenge facing stage models is to be consistent in their measurement, since stages may be calculated via recall or via change from baseline to follow-up. A second challenge is to determine whether individuals progress steadily through the behavioral change steps. For example, it may be that progression between earlier steps is more rapid than progression through later ones.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attention ▶ Audience ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ▶ Health Communication ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Persuasion ▶ Planned Social Change through Communication ▶ Rogers, Everett

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# **Stakeholder Theory**

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Stakeholder theory has provoked controversy for more than 70 years, even though the term “stakeholder” is itself of more recent origin. The theory raises a highly contentious question: in whose interests should a business corporation or other type of organization be run? Opponents stress the primacy of shareholder rights. Supporters claim corporations have wider responsibilities toward a broad range of groups and individuals with a “stake,” whether financial or otherwise, in the operations of the business. In the contemporary world, strategic stakeholder communication has become a key driver of → corporate reputation. Hence the stakeholder concept is a central concern for the field of → public relations (→ Organizational Image; Trust of Publics).

The *origins of the stakeholder debate* can be traced to scholarly disputes in the 1930s between Harvard law professor E. Merrick Dodd and management theorist Adolf Berle. Dodd contended corporate powers were held in trust for the entire community, while Berle argued the same powers should be held in trust for shareholders. In the 1950s, Berle conceded the argument to Dodd. The word “stakeholder” first appeared in the management

literature in an internal memorandum at the Stanford Research Institute in 1963. It was originally defined as “those groups without whose support the organization would cease to exist” (Freeman 1984, 31). Thus the initial conceptualization of a stakeholder extended to such groups as shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, lenders, and society. The term was intended to broaden the notion that shareholders are the only group to whom management need be responsive. The term “stakeholder” was coined as a rhetorical device, designed to advocate an alternative perspective on business theory and practice – one that eschewed the traditional notion of serving the shareholder, or business owner(s), alone. The Stanford definition has come to be known as the “narrow” definition of a stakeholder.

The intense contemporary interest in the theory and current ubiquity of the term “stakeholder” began with the publication of R. Edward Freeman’s seminal 1984 book *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*. In addition to sparking a voluminous body of scholarly and practitioner literature, Freeman (1984) introduced a new definition of “stakeholder,” greatly broadening its applicability. According to Freeman (1984, 25), a stakeholder is “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm’s objectives.” In other words, virtually anyone – even a terrorist – can be considered a stakeholder.

Since then definitions have proliferated, Mitchell et al. (1997) presented no fewer than 27 that have appeared in the literature over the past 40 years. Some authors have even extended the concept to nonhuman entities such as the environment. It is widely acknowledged that the lack of an agreed definition is one of the theory’s most intractable problems. Very broad definitions present obvious difficulties for managers actually attempting to implement the concept.

Current scholarship suggests the stakeholder concept represents a genre of theories rather than a single theory. Donaldson and Preston (1995) identified *three distinct types of stakeholder theory*, which they argued had always been implicit in the stakeholder debate but hitherto had been thrown together in an inappropriate manner. “Descriptive stakeholder theory” attempts to describe and sometimes explain aspects of corporate and stakeholder behavior. It is concerned with what managers and organizations actually do. “Instrumental stakeholder theory” relates to the potential connections between certain stakeholder management practices and the achievement of traditional corporate objectives such as profitability and growth. “Normative stakeholder theory” focuses on ethical guidelines for the operation and management of corporations. It endeavors to tell managers what they should do.

*Descriptive stakeholder theory* has made relatively little progress despite its potential significance. Some scholars have speculated that the vagaries of human behavior put the development of a descriptively useful stakeholder theory of the firm beyond reach. A number of published studies adopt an *instrumental perspective*; however, the extant evidence for the financial efficacy of stakeholder management remains sketchy and methodological difficulties abound. Several instrumental researchers have used → corporate social responsibility ratings published by an independent agency as a proxy measure, rather than attempting to tap stakeholder management practices directly. Others rely on case studies, with limited generalizability as a result. Many scholars have called for more empirical research from an instrumental perspective.

The *normative stakeholder literature* is voluminous, dwarfing the number of contributions from other perspectives. Many normative stakeholder theorists hold that conventional shareholder capitalism is simply immoral. Replacing it with a stakeholder model is therefore an ethical imperative. Critics of this position argue normative stakeholder theory is inimical to the fundamental purpose of business (i.e., to generate wealth for the providers of capital) and that stakeholder management amounts to a breach of fiduciary duties to shareholders, thus is itself unethical. To be a fiduciary to multiple stakeholder groups, critics claim, is to be a fiduciary to no one. Goodpaster (1991) identified what he called the “stakeholder paradox”: it is both essential, yet in some ways illegitimate, to orient corporate decisions by ethical values that go beyond strategic stakeholder considerations to multi-fiduciary ones. The paradox remains fiercely debated (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Corporate Communication ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Image ▶ Public Affairs ▶ Public Relations ▶ Trust of Publics

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## **Standards of News**

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News standards connote normative qualities, such as accuracy and decency (→ Ethics in Journalism), but the term specifically means the way information is gathered, made into

news reports, and presented (Dicken-Garcia 1989). For example, *objectivity* encompasses six standards: verified facts, fairness, non-bias, independence, non-interpretation, and neutrality (Ward 2004). Journalists develop standards to gain credibility in society, and standards change across space and time. For example, US news standards changed as the press shifted from partisan (→ Partisan Press) to event-centered to commercial during nineteenth-century industrialization. Accuracy and balance, of little concern to partisan journalists, became more important with the shift from producer to consumer society (→ Professionalization of Journalism).

Western hegemony spread news standards, which developed with the rise of capitalism and the middle class (Smith 1978, 1979). The need to sell news profitably required qualities the public would buy, and investments shaped standards as ties to political parties weakened. Around 1900, western journalism also became more about structuring than recording reality, resulting in image politics and an emphasis on objectivity (→ Objectivity in Reporting).

Whether the press serves primarily the government or the public affects standards. History shows more concern with printing itself than with news standards, especially in authoritarian societies (Siebert 1965; Martin 1969), because rulers feared its permanence and reach (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). France executed printers for criticizing religion or government as late as 1760. England shaped colonial news standards through libel laws and press licensing (Levy 1963), controlled reporting on Parliament until at least 1845, and monitored journalism thereafter. In open societies, norms and the market shape standards, although laws prohibit libel, obscenity, and breach of security (→ Media History).

Little is known about *journalism in transnational changes* like industrialization, the development of capitalism, the growth of imperialism, and globalization (Chapman 2005), and even less is known about news standards across nations and time (→ Globalization Theories; International Communication). Low literacy and resistance delayed printing in some non-western nations (Briggs & Burke 2005). Two examples are Russia, where mobs destroyed its first press, and Turkey, which treated printed religious material as sinful. In the east, readers developed conceptions of themselves as news audiences around 1900, and journalism growth thereafter followed western patterns.

News standards probably always existed. Before printing began in Europe, travelers and hired messengers carried news along trade and post routes. A concern for *accuracy* likely arose because information changes when relayed orally. Another standard, *verified facts*, appeared in 1 BCE when a messenger included gossip in summarizing Roman senate decrees.

Conditions essential for newspapers coalesced around 1600, and news writing became a full-time paid job soon after. But journalists could not assure accuracy when no fact-checking means existed. As late as the 1700s, journalists generally did not go to witness news except in Parliament, where shorthand made reports seem *accurate* and *neutral* while giving reporters a sense of serving readers. Some 1750s English critics raised at least five news standards in appeals for *truth* and *decency* without *scurrility* or *defamation* or *selling skills* to political parties.

Polemics shaped standards in partisan times, which occurred in much of the world. *Impartiality* before England's Civil War, for example, meant that journalists digested

various political stances and received no payment for publicizing them. People read newspapers for opinions until the “doctrine of hard facts” developed (Smith 1978, 148). The end of the newspaper tax in 1861 freed English journalists from political obligations just when accelerating production costs were exposing the futility of targeting narrow audiences of political elites.

News standards flow transnationally. After an English businessman imported a press from Europe in 1476, the influence of British journalism dominated well into the nineteenth century. American colonists took London newspapers as a model and imitated Bow Street court reporting (Mott 1950). English penny magazines provided a model for 1830s America (→ Penny Press), where newspapers adopted the English division-of-labor system (Hudson 1968). Englishmen established a Turkish newspaper in 1840, Japan’s first newspaper in 1861, and periodicals in nineteenth-century China, which had been the first country to develop printing and long-distance news collection. By the 1860s, Japan incorporated the western model, which Chinese people – sent to Japan for a western education in increasing numbers from the 1890s – applied in China (Zhang 2006).

Consumer-driven US news standards expanded to England and Europe after post-Civil War industrialization. Matthew Arnold coined the term *new journalism* in 1887 to imply standards that competitive markets shaped: being lively, sensational, and reporter-driven (Marzolf 1980). The London *Pall Mall Gazette* editor from 1881 and the American founder of *Le Matin* in Paris in 1883 used the American model. US standards influenced Chinese journalism in the decades after 1900, as Chinese students returned from study in America and US journalists and educators worked in China (→ Tabloidization). News standards crossing national boundaries likely meld with domestic cultural norms.

News standards under conditions of *convergence* (→ Convergence of Media Systems) remain underdeveloped. Old issues re-emerge with new urgency when fact-checking is non-existent and news-gatherers unknown. If Daniel Defoe was not a journalist because he wrote about events he never saw, then determining who is a journalist on the Internet has even greater implications for news standards.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ International Communication ▶ Media History ▶ New Journalism ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Penny Press ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Tabloidization

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## Stars

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A star is an individual who is highly celebrated and deemed exceptional in a particular field or profession. The term has most commonly been associated with performers in popular media such as music, television, and, particularly, → cinema. Stardom is closely linked to fame and celebrity (→ Celebrity Culture), and these terms are often used interchangeably. The term “star,” which can be both noun (“a star”) and verb (“to star in”) originated in the popular American press of the early nineteenth century in relation to the expanding coverage of public figures and human interest stories. Articles in the so-called → “penny press” about popular performers of stage and vaudeville had the effect of expanding public interest in the names and qualities of these recognizable individuals. The film scholar Richard DeCordova (1990) has demonstrated that the institution of cinema was important to the expansion of stardom at the start of the twentieth century. He identifies an emergence of interest in “picture personalities,” and the subsequent naming of performers on screen and in film studio publicity material, as crucial in the development of the → Hollywood film industry and its star system.

It is often claimed that a publicity stunt in 1910 by the film studio IMP marked the *start of the Hollywood star system*. A false story about the death of popular actress Florence Lawrence was placed in the news press; the studio then denounced the article, drawing attention to her as their new star. Although revisionist historians have challenged the accuracy of these accounts, they acknowledge the emergence of a popular discourse on stardom by the 1910s. The circulation of stories about performers published during the late 1910s led to increased interest in the off-screen lives of leading actors, and by 1919 the Hollywood star system was sufficiently well established that a small group of powerful stars were able to found their own studio (United Artists). From this period until the 1950s it was commonplace for major Hollywood studios to sign named actors to long-term (usually seven-year) contracts, and the film industry promoted the circulation of famous performers – stars such as Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, Bette Davis, James Stewart, and many more – consolidating Hollywood's status as a globally dominant cinema. From the 1950s, spiraling costs and the popularity of television and other leisure activities brought an end to the long-term contract star system. Contemporary stars are self-employed, represented by powerful talent agencies, and hired on a per-project basis. By the start

of the twenty-first century, major “A-list” Hollywood stars were able to earn upward of US\$20 million per film plus gross profit participation, consolidating perceptions of the exclusivity of stardom. Stars remain important to the industrial function of the entertainment media as they offset risk by guaranteeing recognition (and audiences) for the products in which they appear.

Although Hollywood cinema is often viewed as a paradigmatic site of film stardom, *other countries* have their own star systems. Each has its own hierarchy of film, television, music, and sports stars, which have national if not always global appeal and recognition. British cinema, for instance, developed a distinctive film star system by drawing from theatre and music hall, promoting performers such as Margaret Lockwood, James Mason, and Diana Dors to popular stardom. Similarly, in France performers such as Max Linder, Brigitte Bardot, and Gérard Depardieu garnered star recognition. However, many European actors either moved to or worked in Hollywood to become global stars, for example Greta Garbo, Charlie Chaplin, Marlene Dietrich, Cary Grant, Elizabeth Taylor, and Anthony Hopkins.

Asian cinema offers some notable exceptions to this trend, maintaining distinctive and widely popular star systems. The popular Indian film industry promotes stars such as Amitabh Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai to global audiences, while both Chinese and → Hong Kong cinema have stars that are also popular worldwide, such as Jet Li and Jackie Chan (→ Bollywood).

Outside of cinema, national star systems operate across various media. For example, → television, → popular music, and sports all maintain distinctive hierarchical forms of stardom (→ Popular Culture). Although it has been argued that cinema offers the primary site for stardom, many of the most popular global stars are drawn from these other areas. Pop stars such as Michael Jackson, Bono, and Madonna and sports stars such as David Beckham, Muhammad Ali, and Tiger Woods are individuals celebrated not only for their achievements but also for their personal lives, and the stories that surround them are circulated through the mass media to an interested public (→ Audience).

Scholarly interest in stars has proliferated since Richard Dyer’s book *Stars* (1979), which argued that film stars could be understood as clusters of signs, or “star images,” that conduct ideological work by signifying cultural ideals, such as those connoting glamour, desirability, or beauty. However, work on celebrity pre-dates Dyer, such as the writing of social theorists Leo Lowenthal (1961) and Daniel Boorstin (1961). Boorstin famously argued that celebrity achieved through the mass media represented an artificial, manufactured fame; he called the celebrity a “human pseudo-event.” He contrasted this unfavorably with heroism: fame earned by (what he saw as) admirable skills or qualities. More recent research has illuminated the historical development of celebrity (Braudy 1997; Marshall 1997) as well as specific forms of film stardom (Gledhill 1991; Willis 2004). Writing on fan culture has also extended consideration of stardom by examining the forms of engagement audiences have with stars (Jenkins 1992; Gamson 1994; Stacey 1994). Current scholarly work on stardom and celebrity draws from a wide range of disciplines, and examines stars and their audiences in a variety of different media. Most approaches agree, however, that although stardom pre-dates modern communication technologies, the rise of the mass media facilitated a dramatic expansion of the sites and ways in which famous individuals can be consumed by audiences.



SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Bollywood ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Cinema ▶ Hollywood  
▶ Hong Kong Cinema ▶ Penny Press ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Popular Music ▶ Television

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## **Statistics, Descriptive**

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The original purpose of statistics was collecting data for government and administration. Thus, the term is used for, e.g., employment data or for censuses in general that provide data (statistics) about a population or nation. Scientifically, the term stands for different forms of presenting empirical data in charts, diagrams, or tables as well as for an academic discipline. In this respect, statistics is part of mathematics, but also an auxiliary discipline for other academic disciplines like communication research. Statistics serves for analyzing, presenting, and interpreting empirical data that have been collected by applying quantitative methods (→ Quantitative Methodology; Research Methods) like → surveys, content analyses (→ Content Analyses, Quantitative), or → observations in → experimental designs or field studies (→ Field Research). Statistics comprises of descriptive and explanatory procedures and aspects (→ Statistics, Explanatory).

### **SAMPLE, VARIABLES, AND SCALES**

Descriptive statistics deals with describing and characterizing empirical data from representative samples, i.e., mostly random samples (→ Sampling, Random). A sample is called random when all elements have the same chance of becoming or not becoming a member of it. This is a crucial condition for all statistical analyses, especially when it comes to

explanatory procedures. Observations or elements of a random sample can be, for instance, persons, newspaper articles, or television ads. In statistics, the attributes of these elements are called “variables.” They can take different values. An interviewee in a representative survey, for instance, can be male or female; his or her political interest can be weak, medium, or strong; and he or she can be 14 years, 52 years, or 79 years old. Gender, political interest, and age are variables, whereas “male/female,” “weak/medium/strong,” and  $\{1, 2, 3 \dots n\}$  are the values of these variables.

Variables can have different  $\rightarrow$  scales or levels of measurement, so one might say scales represent certain accuracies in measuring a variable ( $\rightarrow$  Scales and Indices; Measurement Theory). Usually, four *types of measurements or scales* are distinguished: nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio scale. (1) Nominal scales or variables (e.g., gender, color) represent a difference or equality of values (e.g., “male” and “female” or “red,” “blue,” and “yellow”) but with no meaningful rank order among values. Dummy variables that can take 1 and 0 as value are often considered a special form of nominal measurement. (2) Ordinal scales (e.g., military rank, school grades) also represent difference/equality, but additionally include a rank order like “bigger/smaller” or “more/less.” But there are no precise differences between consecutive values. Thus, one cannot state that a strong political interest would be twice as much as a weak political interest. (3) This is, however, possible for interval scales (e.g., temperature), which have meaningful, i.e., equal distances between ranks or values. For instance, a temperature of 240 degrees Fahrenheit doubles a temperature of 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

(4) Finally, a ratio scale (e.g., weight, prices) is like interval measurement, but additionally with a meaningful, i.e., absolute zero value. Humans and animals, for instance, cannot have a negative weight. Therefore ratio scales represent not only equal distance, but equal proportions of consecutive values. Dummy, nominal, and ordinal scales are called non-metric, whereas interval and ratio measures are called metric measurements. For computer programs non-numeric values of measured attributes (e.g., “male/female”) are usually turned into numeric values (e.g., 1 and 2), i.e., they are coded to enable statistical procedures automatically.

After having collected data, e.g., in a survey, we ask questions like these: how old are interviewees in the survey sample? How often do they watch television? Is there any connection between media use and political interest? To answer these questions we can *describe empirical data* in two ways: on the one hand, by making charts, diagrams, and tables; on the other hand, by computing sample characteristics (e.g., means) or coefficients (e.g., correlation coefficient) that represent a certain feature of the sample (e.g., average) in one value. Both ways comprise of univariate and multivariate perspectives.

## UNIVARIATE STATISTICS

Univariate statistics deals with single variables. One can, for instance, examine the distribution of age among all interviewees in a survey. The original data show values of a variable (e.g., age) for each element in the sample, e.g., each interviewee. By grouping all elements (e.g., interviewees) sharing a certain value (e.g., 25 years) we obtain a *frequency table*: this lists all values (e.g., ages) in the first column and the corresponding frequencies (e.g., number of interviewees) in the second column. Tables of categorical data list classes

of values in the first column (e.g., “10–19 years,” “20–29 years,” etc.) and frequencies in the second column. Tables of cumulated data – whether categorical or not – add up frequencies starting from the top of the column and ending with the sum of all frequencies (100 percent) in the last row. All types of tables can be transformed into corresponding charts following the same logic, but giving a better impression of the distribution of a variable in the sample. Another way of characterizing a sample is calculating sample characteristics. Here, univariate statistics distinguishes between means and deviances. Both differ with the measurement level of a variable.

Strictly speaking, the term “mean” refers to an average of values, i.e., to the *arithmetic mean*: Here, we sum up all values of all interviewees in our survey sample and divide this sum by the number of interviewees. This type of mean value can only be calculated for metric measurement. The permissible mean value for the nominal level of measurement is called “*mode*.” It is the most frequent value in a sample: if “37 years” is the most frequent answer to the survey question regarding the age of the interviewees, then the mode is 37. Of course, the arithmetic mean can be computed for age as well. The mean value for ordinal variables is the *median*. It splits a distribution in half: the first 50 percent of all values rank below the median and the second 50 percent rank above. The median can also be considered a special form of a percentile: Those percentiles dividing a distribution into quarters – 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent, 100 percent of all values – are called quartiles and the median is simply the 50 percent quartile.

*Deviation characteristics* differ with level of measurement as well. For nominal variables we cannot compute a deviance from the mean value. For ordinal measurement the permissible deviances are the range and the interquartile range. The range is the difference between the highest and the lowest value in the sample, whereas the interquartile range represents the difference between the third and first quartile. For metric measurement we calculate the variance or its square root, called standard deviation. An example for a metric variable is the duration of watching television measured in minutes. The variance in television viewing represents the sum of squares of interviewees’ individual differences from the mean value of all interviewees.

## MULTIVARIATE STATISTICS

Multivariate statistics describes *correlations* between variables (→ Correlation Analysis). For instance, we can ask if the time subjects spend on watching televised debates increases with a growing political interest. With bivariate statistics the term “covariance” refers to the fact that the variance of one variable corresponds to the variance of the other variable, e.g., in the sense of “the more X, the more Y.” In other words, we focus on the joint distribution of two variables. Similar to univariate statistics, correlations between two or more variables can be described by charts, diagrams, and tables on the one hand and by calculating correlation coefficients on the other hand.

The correlation between two variables is called *asymmetric* if one variable can be assumed to be the impact factor of the other variable; otherwise the relation is called *symmetric*. Age has a possible impact on political sophistication, for example – but not vice versa. Correspondingly, some coefficients indicate only the strength while others also represent the direction of a correlation: Here, a positive (negative) value of the coefficient

indicates that an increase in value of the first variable is accompanied by an increase (decrease) in value of the second variable. In cross-tabulation, i.e., in contingency tables with two variables, the columns usually represent the values of the assumed impact factor, which is also called the predictor or independent variable. And the rows of the contingency table represent the values of the assumed affected variable, which is also called the response or dependent variable.

All correlation coefficients rely on the *general linear model*, which stipulates a linear relation between variables. Strictly speaking, the term “correlation” should only be applied to metric measurement. At the nominal level correlations are called “contingency,” and at with ordinal measurement they are called “association.” For nominal measurement one computes *contingency coefficients*. Here, the permissible coefficient is the phi coefficient  $\Phi$  with a four-cell table (two variables with two values each), and Cramer’s V with a table of more than four cells. Both are based on chi-square-statistics,  $\chi^2$ , i.e., the differences between theoretically expected frequencies (based on probability theory) and observed frequencies in the joint distribution of two variables. The values of both coefficients range from 0 (no contingency at all) to 1 (perfect contingency).

At the ordinal level different coefficients can be applied. In contrast to Kendall’s  $\tau$  (Tau-b/c) the gamma coefficient  $\gamma$  does not make an adjustment for either table size or ties. A more popular coefficient especially in agenda-setting research is *Spearman’s rank correlation coefficient*  $\rho$  (rho;  $\rightarrow$  Agenda-Setting Effects). In many agenda-setting studies several issues are ranked for all media on the one hand and for the aggregate of recipients on the other hand. Here, Spearman’s  $\rho$  indicates strength and direction of the association between media agenda and recipients’ agenda. Thus, values range from  $-1$  for perfect negative correspondence to  $+1$  for perfect positive correspondence, with 0 for no correspondence at all. At the metric level of measurement one can compute correlation coefficients or conduct a  $\rightarrow$  regression analysis. *Pearson’s product–moment coefficient*  $r$  indicates the strength and direction of a correlation between two metric measurements. The coefficient whose values range from  $-1$  to  $+1$  is obtained by dividing the covariance of both variables by the product of their standard deviations.

The product–moment coefficient can also be considered the square root of the so-called explained variance in *linear regressions*. This procedure examines the impact of one or more assumedly independent or explanatory variables  $X_1, \dots, X_n$ , etc. (predictors, regressors) on an assumed dependent variable  $Y$  (response variable, regressand). This must be a metric variable, whereas the explanatory variables can be of lower measurement.  $R^2$  is the determination coefficient and indicates the amount (in percent) variance in the response variable explained by  $X_1, \dots, X_n$ . Values of  $R^2$  range from 0 (no impact of the explanatory variables) to 1 or 100 percent (full impact). The “error”  $1 - R^2$  is also called unexplained variance and represents the square sum of all residuals. Since regression tries to keep these residuals or unexplained variation to a minimum (“least”) it is often called OLS regression (ordinary least squares). Additionally, beta values  $\beta$  can be computed for each explanatory variable. A beta value represents the strength and direction of the correlation between a regressor and response variable with values ranging from  $-1$  to  $+1$ . Since beta values are standardized coefficients, one can compare them for different regressors in one regression analysis, or for one regression between different regression models.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Correlation Analysis ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Field Research ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Observation ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Regression Analysis ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sampling, Random ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Statistics, Explanatory ▶ Survey

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# **Statistics, Explanatory**

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Explanatory statistics is also called inferential statistics or statistical induction and deals with inferences about the population from the characteristics of a random sample, i.e., with making (probability) statements about usually unknown parameters of a population. For instance, when taking a random sample (e.g.,  $n = 1,000$ ) of television viewers from the population of all TV viewers (e.g.,  $N = 1,000,000$ ), we want to know if the average time of TV viewing in the sample (e.g., 184 minutes/weekday) comes close to the average time in the population from which the sample was taken (→ Statistics, Descriptive; Sampling, Random; Generalizability).

### **ROOTS IN PROBABILITY THEORY**

Explanatory statistics includes point and interval estimation as well as hypothesis tests for statistical significance. They are based on probability theory (e.g., the work of Richard von Mises, Thomas Bayes, and Pierre-Simon Laplace). On the one hand, probability can be interpreted as the ratio of a favorable outcome and the number of possible outcomes. For instance, if one expects a “6” when throwing a single die once, the probability of getting a “6” is the ratio of this favorable outcome ( $n = 1$ ) divided by the possible outcomes ( $n = 6$ ) – thus  $p(\text{“6”}) = 1/6$ . Throwing a single die is an example of a random

experiment. It is called random since we do not know the outcome before having thrown the die. On the other hand, we can assume that the number of cases in which we get a “6” comes nearer to the probability  $p(\text{“6”})$  when throwing the single die many, many times.

Asking an interviewee how old he or she is can be considered a random experiment, since we do not know what he or she will answer. All possible outcomes are called the *sample space*  $\Omega$  of the random experiment. We do not know the outcome for the next interviewee, but we can tell the probability of a certain age. For another example: we cannot predict the outcome of “throwing a 5” for sure when playing dice, but we know that the probability of this outcome can be obtained by dividing the number of positive outcomes (throwing a 5) divided by the number of possible outcomes (throwing a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6) – thus the probability of “throwing a dice once and obtaining 5” is  $p = 1/6$ . Probability values range from 0 to 1. This is the first of the *Kolmogorov axioms*. The second postulates that the probability of the sample space  $\Omega$  is 1 – in other words, the probability that any of the possible outcomes will occur is 1. The third axiom claims that the probability of a sum of disjoint, i.e., “exclusive” events or outcomes is the sum of the single probabilities of each event or outcome: e.g.,  $p(\text{“throwing a 1, 2, or 3”}) = 1/6 + 1/6 + 1/6 = 1/2$ . From these axioms one can deduce lemmas or rules for calculating other probabilities. One lemma tells us that the probability of the impossible event (e.g., “throwing a 7 with one die”) is 0. A second lemma tells us that the probability of an event  $p(A)$  and the probability  $p(A^C)$  of the event’s contrary  $C$  (“not  $A$ ”) sum up to 1.

Attributes of sample elements, i.e., variables and values, can be treated in terms of probability theory: when interviewing someone, we do not know the answer to the question “How old are you?” before we ask. Thus, age is a random variable. It can take different values, which can be considered as outcomes of a random experiment with  $\Omega = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$ . Each outcome or event has a certain probability. Listing the outcomes consecutively, one obtains a table or diagram showing the probability distribution (or function), which is comparable to the sample distribution. And as cumulated frequencies in sample statistics do, the cumulated probabilities form up to a cumulated probability distribution, also called density distribution (or function). As in sample statistics, we can characterize probability distributions by parameters. The expected value  $E(X)$  is the average or mean value of a random variable  $X$ . Additionally, we can compute the variance  $\text{var}(X)$  or standard deviation of a random variable  $X$ .

Distributions differ with the level of measuring a random variable ( $\rightarrow$  Measurement Theory). Discrete random variables take finite or countably infinite values – like age:  $\Omega = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$ . Examples of discrete distributions are the Bernoulli or the binomial distribution. Continuous random variables can take an infinite number of real numbers within the limits of an interval – like “time spent watching a half-hour TV soap”:  $\Omega = \{0 \leq x \leq 30\}$ . The most prominent example of a continuous distribution is the *normal or Gaussian distribution* (named after Carl Friedrich Gauss). Normal distributions  $N(\mu, \sigma^2)$  vary in position due to the expected value  $E(X) = \mu$  and in form due to the variance  $\text{var}(X) = \sigma^2$ . All normal distributions can be standardized, i.e., z-transformed into a standard normal distribution (SND) with  $\mu = 0$  and  $\sigma^2 = 1$ . The SND is a key feature of statistics since many distributions tend toward a normal distribution when numbers get large. This is described by the central limit theorem, which postulates that the sum of

stochastically independent variables  $X_n$  – as well as  $X_n/n$  – is approximately normally distributed.

### POINT AND INTERVAL ESTIMATION

Empirical distributions are often assumed to be normally distributed for practical reasons. One can take the SND as a template for drawing inferences about population parameters from sample characteristics. For instance, one can compare the arithmetic mean of a random sample with the SND and then make a probability statement about the unknown mean value in the population from which the sample was taken. The SND provides a standardized template with  $\mu = 0$  and  $\sigma^2 = 1$ . In a diagram, the area below the curve of the SND represents 100 percent of the values. More important are the standardized intervals: Within the limits of  $\pm 1$  standard deviations we find roughly 68 percent of all values of the SND. Within  $\pm 1.96$  ( $\pm 2.38$ ;  $\pm 3.29$ ) standard deviations we find exactly 95 percent (99 percent; 99.9 percent) of all values.

These three limits represent the *levels of confidence*. If the mean value of TV viewing in a random sample is 184 minutes, for example, a confidence of 95 percent can be interpreted like this: if we would take 100 random samples of the same sample size, we would find exactly this mean of 184 minutes for 95 of the 100 random samples. Yet for 5 of the 100 random samples we would find a different average. Thus, we make a 5 percent error when stipulating that the result of our single random sample is “for sure.” This error probability is denoted  $\alpha$  and also called the level of significance. With the second lemma of probability theory, confidence and error probability are complementary, i.e., sum up to  $p = 1$  or 100 percent. Thus, corresponding to levels of confidence  $\alpha < 5$  percent (significant),  $\alpha < 1$  percent (very significant), and  $\alpha < 0.1$  percent (highly significant) there are three levels of significance. For an example: the sample average of 184 minutes is called very significant ( $\alpha < 1$  percent), when there is a probability of at least 99 percent that we would get the same value when taking another sample from the same population. Or in other words, with a probability of 99 percent the population average is 184 minutes.

This statement is an example of point estimation. Here, the sample statistics (e.g., mean value) are directly used as a point estimator for population parameters (e.g., mean value). Interval estimations are a similar but more “precise” inference about population parameters from sample characteristics. Here, one gives an interval based on confidence and thus calls it the confidence interval. With the example above one would say: starting from the sample mean and  $\alpha < 1$  percent, we can assume that the mean of watching TV for all subjects from the population (from which the sample was taken) lies within the boundaries of, e.g., 180 and 188 minutes. Logically speaking, this is the same statement as the probability statement in the last paragraph, since both are based on the same confidence level.

### TESTING STATISTICAL HYPOTHESES

Explanatory statistics also deals with statistical hypothesis or *significance testing*. Here, one asks questions like “How significant is the sample average of 184 minutes?” (one-sample test) or “Does the mean in TV viewing in the male group differ significantly from the mean in the female group?” (two-sample test). For significance testing, SND and other

distributions like the Student-t-distributions serve as test statistics. In practice, the statistical hypothesis test comprises several steps, which can be illustrated with the example of the two-sample (un)pooled t-test. First, one proposes a null and an alternative  $\rightarrow$  hypothesis. The null hypothesis  $H_0$  postulates “no significance” or “equality”: for instance,  $H_0$  might claim that the mean value in the first sample (e.g., people from New York) and the mean value in the second sample (e.g., inhabitants of Los Angeles) do not differ significantly, but by chance. Statistically speaking, the two samples were taken from the same population ( $\mu_{NY} = \mu_{LA}$ ). The opposite, i.e., alternative hypothesis  $H_A$ , claims significance by postulating that the two samples are taken from different populations ( $\mu_{NY} \neq \mu_{LA}$ ).

Second, we set the level of significance. With medicine testing, for instance, high levels of significance should be chosen to “insure” that a medicine has no side-effects. If we chose  $\alpha = 0.05$ , we test on the 95 percent level of confidence. It is important to mention that one tests  $H_0$  and not  $H_A$ . The third step is choosing a test statistic (test distribution). With the two-sample t-test one chooses the Student-t-distribution as a template for the test decision. Strictly speaking, the t-distribution is a group of distributions differing with the degrees of freedom (df) that represent sample size (e.g.,  $df = n_{NY} + n_{LA} - 2$  for a two-sample t-test). The fourth step comprises calculating the empirical value of the test statistics from the sample data. The empirical t-value  $t_{emp}$  is compared to a critical, i.e., theoretical t-value  $t_{crit}$  depending on  $\alpha$  and df. If  $t_{emp} \leq t_{crit}$ , we accept  $H_0$ . But if  $t_{emp} > t_{crit}$ , we reject  $H_0$  and accept  $H_A$ . So we can state that the group means differ significantly ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and claim that the groups are samples from different populations – with a probability of 95 percent.

Statistical tests all follow this logic, but vary with the test situation and test statistics being applied. If we ask for the significance of a single mean value, we usually choose t-statistics. This test situation is called a one-sample t-test and is applied if the population parameter  $\sigma$  is unknown – as is mostly the case. For a large sample size (usually  $n \geq 30$ ) and known  $\sigma$ , however, one can choose z-statistics based on SND, since under these conditions t-distributions are approximately normally distributed. This test situation is called a one-sample z-test. Comparing two means is the above-mentioned two-sample test situation. Another example is  $\chi^2$ -statistics, which is based on the differences of theoretically expected frequencies (based on probability theory) and observed frequencies in the joint distribution of two variables. On the one hand,  $\chi^2$  statistics is chosen if we ask for independence ( $H_0$ ) and association or contingency ( $H_A$ ) of two nominal variables (one-sample test). On the other hand,  $\chi^2$  statistics is chosen for the two-sample test, i.e., when asking for equality ( $H_0$ ) or difference ( $H_A$ ) of distributions in two samples. Here, for instance, we might examine whether the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* differ in weighting political issues.

SEE ALSO: ► Generalizability ► Hypothesis ► Measurement Theory ► Nonparametric Analysis ► Sampling, Random ► Statistics, Descriptive

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# Stereotypes

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Stereotypes are gross generalizations about people. A stereotype is a category-based cognitive response whose affective counterpart is prejudice and whose behavioral counterpart is discrimination. By judging others not on knowledge of their individual complexities but on their inclusion in an outgroup, stereotyping is categorical thinking that can engender racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other types of intolerance.

Journalist Walter Lippmann coined the term, which he took from the “hot type” printing process prevalent at newspapers of his day. A stereotype is a plate constructed by making a mold of a printing surface and from that a cast in metal type. The stereotype enabled a newspaper to reproduce quickly and inexpensively many copies of a message. Lippmann regarded it as an apt name for his concept of a cognition that conforms to a fixed or general pattern and whose reproduction is easy. Lippmann said that to form an accurate picture of reality is a hopeless task because the real environment is altogether too big, too complex, and too fleeting for direct acquaintance. Instead, mass media present us with a simplified reconstruction of the world with which we can live (Lippmann 1922).

Stereotypes occur in a variety of environmental contexts, including social roles (e.g., gender), group conflicts (e.g., ideology), and power. Since the powerful pay less attention to the powerless than vice versa, the imbalance in attention allows the powerful to employ stereotypes as a controlling device, particularly when played out through the media. Stereotyping thus allows those with power to maintain and justify the status quo. The → “spiral of silence” theory of public opinion formation holds that a stereotype is a vehicle for spreading → public opinion. By crystallizing conceptions and opinions, stereotypes let everyone know when to speak up and when to shut up. In that way, stereotypes are engines of conformity.

Stereotypes arise from the need for a positive social identity with an ingroup that, in a form of compensatory narcissism, enlists an outgroup as a relative devalued contrast. Mass media are implicated in how social groups are labeled, defined, and framed (e.g., who serves as spokespersons and which group attributes are made salient; → Social Identity Theory).

Before children personally are able to evaluate stereotypes, they learn them from authority figures and peers, whose explicit or tacit approval for expressing stereotypes reinforces their use. Information processing in favorable conditions and through extensive practice becomes automatic, i.e., without intention or conscious awareness. Repeated encounters in different contexts thus allow a stereotype to become activated automatically.

Whether a person's personal beliefs complement or contradict cultural stereotypes, personal beliefs develop later in life and are less practiced, so they are not as automatic. The dissociation between cultural stereotypes and personal beliefs produces different dynamics for high- and low-prejudiced persons. Following automatic activation of a stereotypic idea, the low-prejudiced can control their response, forcing it to correspond to their unprejudiced standards. However, there is a cost. Suppression of stereotypical cognitions is an effortful process that taxes the perceiver's conscious resources. In categorizing a person merely through group membership, a perceiver uses stored information instead of making an effort to process new incoming information. This saves cognitive resources. Thus, while stereotypes complicate the life of the *stereotyped*, they simplify the information processing demands of the *stereotyper*.

Early conceptualizations of stereotyping viewed it as abnormal, as a motivated irrational response to frustration or the disorder of an authoritarian personality. Considerable evidence has amassed that stereotyping is a normal cognitive process and that people stereotype unless otherwise motivated or imposed upon by the demands of specific task environments. Nonstereotypical modes of thought can be engaged only if critical cognitive and motivational criteria are met, such as spare intentional resources, self-involvement, outcome dependency, and accountability. Absent such criteria, perceivers economize cognition through the application of stereotypes. Furthermore, this occurs without a perceiver's deliberate intention.

Generally, humans operate as "cognitive misers," overwhelmed by the complexity of the social environment and forced to conserve scarce mental resources. Humans are stingy in the allocation of online capacity, so they routinely resort to heuristic and peripheral information processing. Occasionally, however, humans are motivated to invest scarce cognitive resources in order to process information systematically and elaborately. Dual process models of information processing generally treat stereotypes as cognitive shortcuts. For example, rather than take the trouble to gather information about a candidate for public office, a person may use party affiliation as a heuristic. If, in the US, the candidate is a Democrat then one's stereotypical view of the qualities of Democrats is bestowed upon the candidate. A Republican candidate gets the same peripheral treatment.

Stereotypes are learned early, reinforced often, and encountered repeatedly, which allows them to occur automatically. As superficial as are most social encounters, stereotyping generally suffices. However, when motivated and able to process more elaborately and systematically, humans can think beyond stereotypes.

SEE ALSO: ► Cognition ► Gender: Representations in the Media ► Identification ► Information Processing: Stereotypes ► Prejudiced and Discriminatory Communication ► Public Opinion ► Schemas ► Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ► Social Identity Theory ► Social Stereotyping and Communication ► Spiral of Silence ► Stereotyping and the Media

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## **Stereotyping and the Media**

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Stereotypes are positive or negative generalizations indiscriminately attributed to members of a group (Tamborini et al. 2000; → Stereotypes). They have a significant impact on individuals' perception of and interactions with members of different social groups by conveying information about the social groups' capabilities (e.g., fast learners, good athletes), personalities (e.g., shy, violent) and/or socio-economic status (e.g., educated, powerful, poor).

While stereotypes may come from personal interaction, they are often acquired indirectly from exposure to mass media (→ Exposure to Communication Content). The media are powerful in developing, reinforcing, and validating stereotypical beliefs and expectations concerning certain groups, particularly when the audience's personal experience with those groups is limited (→ Media and Group Representations). Media conveniently package information about social groups into simple, identifiable images, thereby assisting → audiences to more easily accept and understand people and things they have not closely experienced. LaFerle and Lee (2005, 142) argue that “to provide an efficient path to cultural understanding, mass media employ stereotypes as a convenient categorization tool. The stereotypical → images found in media messages are easily accepted because they are usually simple and have little ambiguity.” They “act as self-perpetuating expectations about groups and their members, by directing attention to information that is consistent with the stereotypes. Information that is inconsistent, on the other hand, tends to be ignored, discounted, or interpreted so that it confirms the initial impression” (Peffley et al. 1996, 311; → Social Stereotyping and Communication).

### **FUNCTION OF SOCIAL STEREOTYPES**

Media from which audiences may receive stereotypical messages include → television, films (→ Film as Popular Culture), → newspapers, music (→ Popular Music), and any other source of mediated advertisement (→ Advertising), entertainment, education, or → news. In an effort to reach a broad audience with a clear message, the media often uses

stereotypical categorizations of individuals or groups based on attributes such as ethnicity, gender, class, employment, sexual orientation, religion, mental or physical disability, and age. These stereotypes are automatically activated when audiences encounter cues or symbols in mass media (Peffley et al. 1996; Abraham & Appiah 2006).

The media use *common cues* to help prompt the particular stereotype(s) to be applied in a given situation. This is useful since most groups are subjected to more than one stereotype. For instance, women may be portrayed in the media as nurturing mothers, aggressive businesswomen, or sexually alluring jezebels. Each portrayal has its own set of verbal and visual symbols to help the audience invoke the proper set of stereotypes.

Stereotyping is not inherently bad or harmful. In our complex world, stereotyping is necessary and helpful to simplify and organize the environment, enabling us to determine how best to respond in a given situation (→ Information Processing: Stereotypes). There are complimentary or positive stereotypes that have been shown to play an important role in intergroup relations and in countering negative stereotypes, leading to enhanced images of certain groups (Czopp & Monteith 2006; Kawai 2005; → Social Perception; Intergroup Contact and Communication). For example, although there is a dearth of empirical research on the use of media in reducing stereotypes, educational television programs that depict counter-stereotypic content have been shown to reduce children's negative stereotypes toward and increase their positive attitudes about ethnic minorities (Bogatz & Ball 1971; → Educational Media Content).

In the absence of primary information or knowledge, media stereotypes can help guide us through unfamiliar social situations or experiences with foreign cultures. For example, stereotypes about international businesspeople may help a job candidate decide what to wear to an interview with an investment banker or how to interact with corporate representatives during a meeting. Positive stereotypes about doctors' intelligence may help the patient feel more comfortable before surgery. A traveler who has never visited China may use Chinese stereotypes to help guide her interactions with Chinese natives until she has enough direct experience to confirm or refute her stereotypical impressions. It is generally not until stereotypes are used in negative ways – to serve as the foundation for negative prejudice – that stereotyping becomes particularly problematic, potentially leading to discrimination and intolerance of certain groups.

### EXAMPLES OF NEGATIVE STEREOTYPING

Some of the most blatant examples of negative stereotyping can be seen in the depiction of certain *ethnic groups in the media*. For example, negative stereotypes of Israeli–Palestinian relationships in the media have had dire consequences for children in the Middle East. Research has shown that exposure to ethnic media has been associated with Palestinian children's descriptions of Israelis as people who “want to put us in jail” and “shoot at us,” and with Israeli–Jewish children's descriptions of Arabs as “terrorists” and people who “want to take our land” (Cole et al. 2003). Similar negative stereotyping of Arabs can be found in Russian media. Yelenevskaya and Fialkova (2004) argue that since many Russians have had no direct contact with Arabs, the negative stereotypes Russians hold toward Arabs that characterize them as hostile, dogs, and dirty are borrowed from the mass media.

Other problematic ethnic stereotyping has been found in: German news media and cinema that negatively stereotype Turkish and Muslim women (Ewing 2006); Japanese children's books that negatively stereotype blacks as Sambos; American movies that ubiquitously portray Russians as evil (Molnar 1989); and Australian films that frequently describe ethnic minorities using negative racial epithets like "wog" and "chocko" that distinguish people with darker skin from lighter-skinned members of the ethnic majority (Speed 2005).

In American media, many of the most blatant examples of racial-ethnic stereotypes are associated with *black people*. In the early years of American television blacks were routinely characterized as lazy, untrustworthy, and unintelligent, relegated to largely demeaning roles designed to entertain white audiences, and shown living primarily in ghettos and slums (Mastro & Greenberg 2001). Even today, Crowds and Georgakas (2002, 9) argue that sitcoms like those appearing on the WB and UPN networks are often "borderline minstrel shows" that conjure up negative stereotypes of blacks "still acting as buffoons and coons" (→ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception).

Television news portrayals of blacks are far more negative, over-representing black perpetrators, under-representing black victims, and over-representing white victims (Dixon & Linz 2000). News stories make associations between blacks and negative issues such as violent crime, drugs, poverty, and welfare by situating these stories alongside noticeable images of blacks (Martindale 1996; Entman & Rojecki 2000). These news stories send powerful messages to audiences that most blacks are violent, criminal, drug-addicted, and on welfare, "and because these images come from the news media, which claim to represent reality and to provide unbiased information about society, Anglos tend to believe the images are true" (Martindale 1996, 21–22).

## EFFECTS AND CHALLENGES

Stereotypes in the media can *impact audience opinion* (→ Attitudes). For example, research on the effects of ethnic and racial stereotypes demonstrates that exposure to negative ethnic imagery in the media adversely influences later evaluations of ethnic minorities (Mastro & Tropp 2004). The simple exposure to stereotypical images of poor blacks in the media has led audiences to perceive greater disparity in socio-economic status between blacks and whites (Gandy & Baron 1998), and perceive that blacks are more economically disadvantaged than whites (Armstrong et al. 1992). Although whites' stereotypes of blacks as poor do not match actual poverty statistics, they do closely resemble racial representations in the news media that feature blacks as poverty-stricken (Peffley et al. 1996; → Television News).

It is important to realize that stereotypes are *permanent fixtures* in our mediated society and in our minds. Given that stereotypes are associated with a variety of groups and once formed are not easily dismissed, greater efforts should be made to disseminate accurate and diversified depictions of groups that appear in the media. Although media stereotypes can be negative, they are useful and necessary in providing information about unfamiliar people and places we might not otherwise encounter without the assistance of the media. Our challenge is to use stereotypes as convenient tools for navigating through millions of media messages, without succumbing to their most powerful shortcoming –

the tendency to ignore the diverse thoughts, behaviors, and contributions of the unique individuals behind the stereotypical images.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Attitudes ▶ Audience ▶ Educational Media Content ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Image ▶ Information Processing: Stereotypes ▶ Intergroup Contact and Communication ▶ Media and Group Representations ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Popular Music ▶ Social Perception ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Television ▶ Television News

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## Stimulus–Response Model

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The stimulus–response model is associated with the assumption that the mass media has powerful effects. Also referred to as the “hypodermic needle theory,” “transmission belt theory,” or “magic bullet theory,” it can be considered one of the first general conceptions describing mass media effects (→ Media Effects, History of). Lowery and DeFleur (1995) summarized the basic assumptions behind the stimulus–response or hypodermic needle theory as follows: (1) people in a mass society lead socially isolated lives, exerting very limited social control over each other because they have diverse origins and do not share a unifying set of norms, values, and beliefs; (2) similar to higher animals, human beings are endowed at birth with a uniform set of instincts that guide their ways of responding to the world around them; (3) because people’s actions are not influenced by social ties and are guided by uniform instincts, individuals attend to events (such as media messages) in similar ways; and (4) people’s inherited human nature and their isolated social condition lead them to receive and interpret media messages in a uniform way.

In this model, media messages are seen as “symbolic bullets,” striking every eye and ear, resulting in effects on thought and behavior that are direct, immediate, uniform, and therefore powerful. According to the generally accepted history of media effects research, the stimulus–response model was the guiding perspective in the media effects field during the early days of communication study. Although this “received view” on the field’s history does not go unquestioned, it is still influential.

### ORIGINS OF THE MODEL

During the early decades of the twentieth century, communication scholars derived the stimulus–response model from a questionable interpretation of the psychological and sociological theories prevalent at that time (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1982). *First*, so-called instinct psychology, developed shortly after the turn of the century, was interpreted to show that the media targeted stimuli toward internal, biologically determined drives, emotions, and other processes beyond rational control. Therefore, the same, or at least

similar, reactions were triggered in all individuals. *Second*, theories of mass society, prevalent during that time period, were construed to state that the audience existed in an urbanized and industrialized society that was volatile, unstable, rootless, alienated, and inherently susceptible to manipulation. As a result, people were regarded to be defenseless against and at the mercy of the capricious stimuli of the media. This was particularly the case as early ideas maintained that mass media were run primarily by people and organizations that were deliberately trying to exert a targeted influence upon recipients (like media tycoons, wartime governments, and advertisers; → Propaganda; Advertising).

The *third factor* contributing to a belief in all-powerful mass media was early propaganda research in the United States. According to → Harold D. Lasswell, who dealt with World War I propaganda in his doctoral dissertation, “the strategy of propaganda . . . can readily be described in the language of stimulus–response. The propagandist may be said to be concerned with the multiplication of those stimuli which are best calculated to evoke the desired response, and with the nullification of those stimuli which are likely to instigate the undesired response” (Lasswell 1927, 630). The standard history of the field interprets this quotation by Lasswell – who undoubtedly was one of the fathers of mass communication research – as representative of the mindset of the generation of media scholars at that time.

In the 1930s there was much concern in the United States over the success of Nazi propaganda in Hitler’s Germany. At that time there were also regular demonstrations by Nazi supporters in many places in the US, as, for example, in New York’s Madison Square Garden. For this and other reasons the Institute for Propaganda Analysis was founded in 1937, and social psychologist Hadley Cantril became its first president. Cantril’s study *The invasion from Mars* (1940) is generally seen as the *fourth* most impressive piece of evidence for the efficacy of the stimulus–response model: the right stimulus – a frightening media message – almost automatically led to a panic reaction on the part of the defenseless recipients. On October 30, 1938 a fictional radio drama unleashed mass panic. Orson Welles had staged H. G. Wells’s *War of the Worlds* in such a gripping and vivid manner that many radio listeners who had missed the announcement and beginning of the program were convinced their lives were threatened by an invasion from Mars. On the next day, the front-page headline of the *New York Daily News* proclaimed: “Fake Radio War Stirs Terror Through US.” *Finally*, Merton’s 1946 analysis of a Kate Smith war bond drive also reflects the assumptions of the stimulus–response model. Merton (1946) wrote that “never before the present day has the quick persuasion of masses of people occurred on such a vast scale . . . Masses of men move in paths laid down for them by those who persuade.”

Merton, Herbert Blumer, and Cantril also discussed intervening variables in the causal process but the standard history of the field interprets their studies as being motivated by an initial belief in the stimulus–response model of mass communication. How did this become the “received view” of the field? Because the first – and vastly influential – historical construction of media effects research stated that it was so. This refers to the book *Personal influence* (1955) in which → Elihu Katz and → Paul Lazarsfeld asserted that early effects research was guided by the following framework: “that of the omnipotent media, on the one hand, sending forth a message, and the atomized masses, on the other, waiting to receive it, and nothing in between.” Their account is seen as the “most important source” for the standard construction of media effects history (Delia 1987). Other research monographs (Klapper 1960), essays (Bauer & Bauer 1960), and



textbooks (DeFleur & Ball-Rokeach 1982) repeated this received history for generations of communication scholars.

### CRITICISM OF THE STIMULUS–RESPONSE MODEL

Recently, increasing numbers of scholars have been disputing this received view and arguing that the direct effects, or hypodermic needle, model was never endorsed by early mass communication research, but that it was instead a *straw man* invented by Katz & Lazarsfeld (1955) that they could easily knock down by demonstrating its weaknesses. Lang and Lang (1981) were the first to dismiss the standard history by stating: “Few, if any, reputable social scientists in the pre-World-War II era . . . worked with what was later described as the hypodermic needle model.” Even 15 years later, Lang (1996, 15) had still not managed “to find a footnote to a scholarly book or article that espouses it.” Indeed, authors who proclaimed that the stimulus–response model was the prevalent paradigm of this time cite not one study from the 1920s or 1930s that could be considered mass communication research and at the same time would support their stimulus–response claims. Hence, Chaffee and Hochheimer (1985) argue that the hypodermic needle model described by Katz and Lazarsfeld misrepresents the field’s history; indeed, that it was created as a foil against which their own limited effects model could be contrasted and presented as an impressive paradigm shift.

What are the critics’ arguments in dismissing the recorded history above? *First*, they doubt that early media effects researchers were strongly influenced by nineteenth-century European social theorists like Toennies, Durkheim, or Le Bon and their concepts of mass society – so much so, that some critics (e.g., Chaffee & Hochheimer 1985) voiced doubts that there were ever any serious proponents of mass society theory. As Czitrom (1982) concluded, “the whole notion of a theory of mass society was something of an artificial and spurious construct, an intellectual straw man created by its opponents.” Katz (1987), as a direct target of these allegations, recently admitted that empirical studies at the time were indeed not guided by mass society theory; nevertheless, he believes that “it was a highly prevalent image among both political and cultural philosophers.”

*Second*, critics of the standard theory have difficulty taking seriously the isolated reference that Lasswell makes to stimulus–response in his propaganda study. They point out that early propaganda studies were more descriptions of content and of execution than they were tests of effects, and that they had little to do with communication research as we know it (Lang & Lang 1981; Delia 1987). They also point out that Lasswell played no important role in media effects research of the time – he was cited in no significant effects study during this time period (Chaffee & Hochheimer 1985; Delia 1987).

The *third reason* lies in a diametrically opposite interpretation of early classic studies like Cantril’s *War of the worlds* study or the famous Payne Fund studies. Both investigations in no way discovered uniform stimulus–response effects. Instead, they recognized early on that there were individual differences in reactions to media stimuli. In addition, consideration of intervening and mediating variables (→ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects) showed that these reactions had been based on conditional instead of direct effects (Lang & Lang 1981; Wartella & Reeves 1985). Bineham (1988) explains the differing interpretations of these early studies with the idea that advocates and critics of

the received view had a very different understanding of what the hypodermic needle model meant. Advocates see the recognition of intervening variables as mere elaborations upon the hypodermic model if the studies still assume that mass communication is a one-directional and linear process; critics of the received view see the recognition of differences among media audiences and the inclusion of mediating variables as a break from the established tradition (Bineham 1988).

It can be concluded that within the social science tradition of media effects research, the position occupied by critics of the received history has rapidly gained popularity and persuasiveness. However, the opposing camp has seen some changes. It is no longer populated by those early authors who adopted Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1955) first scheme without further reflection. Instead, it now consists primarily of critics of social-science-oriented media effects research. These are primarily representatives of a critical or cultural paradigm who see most social scientific or empirical effects research as an elaboration of the hypodermic model tradition because – in their view – it conceptualizes the sender, message, and receiver as isolatable elements and sees the receiver as a largely passive target of message manipulation (Bineham 1988; → Critical Theory; Cultural Studies). Bineham (1988) sees the *battle for the past* as a highly significant effort between opposing camps to define the history of mass communication research in specific ways in order to justify their current respective positions.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Communication and Media Studies, History to 1968 ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Katz, Elihu ▶ Lasswell, Harold D. ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects: Direct and Indirect Effects ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Propaganda

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## Stock Photography

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Stock photography is the name given to a particular type of standardized commercial imagery. This largely consists of clichéd photographs of consumer well-being or corporate achievement: the happy couples on sun-drenched beaches pictured in travel adverts, and the well-groomed businessmen shaking hands who tend to grace company brochures (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). Stock photography is also the name of the industry that manufactures, promotes, and distributes these images for use in → marketing, → advertising, publishing, and increasingly multimedia products, websites, and other digital platforms (for instance, the sunsets and cloud images one can find on mobile phones). Worth an estimated US\$2 billion annually, the industry continues to expand into new areas of image production and supply: its leading corporations own some of the most important historical photographic archives, manufacture and market stock film footage, and compete with traditional sources of → photojournalism. Despite the ubiquity of its products, and estimates that it supplies a majority of the photographs used in advertising and marketing, the stock photography industry is largely overlooked by researchers into photography and consumer culture (exceptions include Miller 1999; Frosh 2003; Machin 2004), and is invisible to the general public.

### THE EMERGENCE AND FUNCTIONING OF THE STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY INDUSTRY

Stock photography emerged as a full-fledged, self-conscious industry in the 1970s (on historical precursors see Hiley 1983; Wilkinson 1997). Its main commercial premise is that advertising agencies will find it cheaper, faster, and less risky to “rent” readymade

images from an archive than to commission photographers for specific assignments (“assignment photography” is a term used for original or unique product photography projects).

In the 1990s the industry underwent radical reorganization, accompanied by pervasive technological change. Large stock agencies were acquired by yet larger competitors and integrated into global conglomerates in a burgeoning, digitized “visual content” industry (→ Digital Imagery). Today stock photography is dominated by three US-based multinational “super-agencies”: in descending order of size, Getty Images PLC; Corbis (privately financed by Microsoft president Bill Gates); and JupiterImages. These conglomerates compete alongside small and medium-sized agencies in a range of specialty fields: lifestyle and marketing imagery, contemporary editorial photography, historical images, sport, celebrities, illustrations and fine art prints, and stock film footage. Getty, for instance, as well as selling clips from its own wholly owned film archives, also distributes footage from Universal Studios films (→ Culture Industries).

Two principal production models determine how stock images are made. In traditional “rights-controlled” or “rights-protected” stock photography, agencies “rent out” images to clients for a limited time period or usage. These images have themselves been acquired from freelance photographers, who get a share of the revenue (usually well below 50 percent) in return, ideally generating long-term income through the *multiple resale* of each image to many different clients. The images are kept in “stock” by the agency, duplicated, categorized, and keyworded according to content, style, photographer, and potential meanings, before being marketed – formerly through printed catalogs and CDs, today most frequently through agency websites. Prices are negotiated according to type of usage (whether the image is for a print advertisement, product packaging, corporate brochure, etc.), time period, region, and extent of exclusivity, and they can range from several hundred US dollars for use in a small brochure to several thousand for national advertising campaigns.

In the 1990s new digital technologies transformed possibilities for the relatively inexpensive storage, duplication, and distribution of images, giving rise to “royalty-free” (RF) photographs. RF is based on a pay-per-image principle, whereas rights-controlled stock is based on a pay-per-use principle: in contrast to rights-protected stock, when you purchase an RF image it includes a very broad license to use it for almost any purpose as many times as you want. Available individually online, or on CDs or downloadable “virtual CDs” containing anything between 50 and several hundred photographs, RF images are geared to media professionals looking for “low-end,” lower-cost, and instantly available images without the need for exclusivity.

Despite early concerns that RF images would take business away from rights-controlled stock, all the large super-agencies, and many smaller ones, operate both systems side by side. In fact, one of the most conspicuous characteristics of the stock industry in recent years has been the proliferation of new business and production systems. Some of these are borrowed from other media industries (for instance, traditional news wire services), such as paying monthly or yearly subscription fees for an unlimited supply of images, and some are initiatives apparently originating with photographers themselves, such as “community-based” (also called “micro-stock”) websites involving semi-professionals and proficient amateurs and selling images for as little as US\$1. In a radical departure from the stock industry’s usual emphasis on providing readymade images, Getty and

Corbis will also specifically employ photographers to make new images according to client specifications (assignment photography).

### THE LOOK OF STOCK IMAGES

Stock photographers have the difficult task of producing images that are simultaneously “generic” – an industry term denoting the photograph’s generality and its ability to be resold for multiple uses – and singular: uniquely suited to the purposes of a particular buyer. To borrow an analogy from the garment trade, a successful image needs to look off-the-shelf *and* tailor-made. Moreover, since a good example of what a successful stock photograph might look like is set by images that are *already* displayed in catalogs or websites, the easiest way to create a successful new image is to copy an old one. Hence, notwithstanding the marketing rhetoric of innovation and creativity commonly employed by agencies, the stock system is frequently accused – by clients and industry insiders as well as critics – of encouraging conservatism and the constant reproduction of formulaic images that reflect, construct, and reinforce cultural → stereotypes (→ Visual Representation). These images are primarily geared to the needs of consumer advertising, and they almost always focus on middle-class American and European leisure activities (such as beach vacations) and economically privileged and ethnically normative demographic categories (youthful, white, middle-class individuals and families), as well as seemingly universal depictions of “relationships” of kinship, friendship, and romance.

Nevertheless, shifts in advertising and marketing practices since the early 1990s have led to the appearance of less obviously stereotyped image styles and content, including more “realistic” (i.e., grainy and black-and-white) photographs, and images of “ordinary” (that is, not conventionally good looking), “ethnic,” and minority (e.g., gay and lesbian) subjects. These changes in stock images have nevertheless occurred within a limited framework, largely dictated by the cultural backgrounds of photographers and their primary clients, by advertising’s continued promulgation of images of consumer well-being, and by the orientation of many advertisements toward audiences with significant disposable income (which means that visibly affluent people tend to be depicted). This conservatism has even created the need for new kinds of niche agencies: not just those serving previously neglected ethnic groups and communities, but also artistic “high-end” agencies, such as Photonica, that specialize in “avant-garde” or “edgy” images: readymade stock photographs that do not look like stock photographs. The irony is that most of these images, edgy or otherwise, are currently subject to what some stock professionals are calling “thumbnail visibility”: the need for photographs to attract a potential client’s attention while occupying a relatively small area of virtual space as part of an image-crowded thumbnail gallery on a computer screen. This tends to discourage pictorial subtlety, and can lead to even more standardized pictures.

### STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY, PHOTOJOURNALISM, AND THE “VISUAL CONTENT INDUSTRY”

In the late 1990s and early 2000s a new term, the “visual content industry,” seemed to be emerging to describe the expansion of the stock industry’s super-agencies into new areas:

sport photography, celebrity photography, fine art reproductions, illustration, stock film footage, historical archives, and photojournalism. While the use of this term has not caught on, the expansion has become increasingly institutionalized, as has the apparent blurring of discursive and organizational boundaries between the three great photographic fields of art photography, advertising photography, and documentary photojournalism (known in the trade as “editorial → photography”).

It is in the case of editorial photography that this realignment of fields has become most conspicuous in recent years. This is partly because of the acquisition by Getty and Corbis of some of the main historical archives of news photography in the US and western Europe: Getty bought the Hulton Deutsch Collection in 1996 and subsequently renamed it the Hulton Archive. It comprises 15 million images from the major British newspaper and press archives of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Getty also acquired one of the largest North American historical photographic archives when it bought the Image Bank in 1999. Corbis, in the meantime, owns – among others – the 17-million-image Bettmann Archive. Both Getty and Corbis are digitizing these archives very selectively: the cost (including labor and keywording) is estimated at around US\$10–20 per image, making the digitization of whole archives economically unfeasible. Historical images selected for digitization are likely to be those that have the greatest commercial potential as crossover material for advertising and marketing use. Our collective visual image of the past may therefore be less and less varied, its putative historical accuracy made subordinate to its current commercial exploitability (→ Visual Culture).

However, the super-agencies are also aggressively expanding into contemporary photojournalism. Getty is leading the way, since 2003 steadily encroaching on the newspaper market long dominated by the global news agencies. Editorial sales accounted for 12 percent of Getty’s revenue in 2005, and the company sees its images in the major newspapers as invaluable advertising for its other products. This encroachment has been facilitated by the hiring of veteran wire service photographers and editors, and a global content sharing and distribution partnership with Agence France-Presse (→ News Agencies). Reuters and Associated Press (AP) have reorganized their photography divisions in response. AP has even returned fire on Getty’s core business, allowing its staff news photographers to use company equipment to shoot commercial stock images – non-news images of romantic couples etc. – in their spare time (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content).

It is tempting to conclude from these developments that the distinctions between documentary photography and advertising imagery are collapsing entirely, notwithstanding crucial differences between them. However, Getty is at pains to distinguish itself from the “generalist” approach of the wire services by emphasizing the role of specialization: its photographers will remain in their various areas of expertise, and one is unlikely to find photojournalists being encouraged to photograph happy families or make other commercial images in their spare time. Paradoxically, in order to promote itself as the ultimate “one-stop-shop” for all its diverse clients, Getty has shifted away from notions of “visual content” as an abstract universal and is reinstating discourses of *field-specific expertise*. This gives it a persuasive answer to an obvious question: why would a commercial photography corporation like Getty be any good at photojournalism? Rather than saying “because editorial and stock are types of visual content, and a Getty photographer can shoot both,” Getty says “because we recognize that photojournalism is *not* like stock, so

we've hired the best photojournalists.” Of course, a key upshot of Getty's and Corbis's expansion into photojournalism is that – just like the historical archive images they own – news and documentary photographs *do* therefore become more like advertising-oriented stock images: increasingly subject to a commercial logic, severed from immediate contexts of interpretation, and available for multiple resale and recycling in a plethora of contexts, journalistic and otherwise.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Marketing ▶ News Agencies ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation

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## **Storytelling and Narration**

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Communication research has long recognized the centrality of storytelling in the construction of identities, relationships, and communities. Fisher (1987) went so far as to propose the metaphor of man as “homo narrans,” pointing to the narrativization of experience as a fundamental human cognitive strategy and social practice (→ Rhetoric and Narrativity). Narratives are made up of sequentially organized verbal and/or other types of signs (visual, musical, kinesthetic) that depict a temporal transition from one state of affairs to another (Ricoeur 1988). Using one or more modalities, they create a plot that incorporates the narrated events within a sense-making scheme. Thus, narratives interweave events, circumstantial elements, and emotions by imbuing them with a sense of meaning and order in terms of temporal coherence, causal links, and value orientations. Current research into narration as a socio-culturally situated activity is a multidisciplinary enterprise, spanning literary studies, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and linguistics. It encompasses both face-to-face and technologically mediated communicative encounters, as well as the poetics and politics of high-profile narrations and

everyday storytelling performances. While some scholars view the term “narrative” as an overarching category designating any explanatory system (such as science), reserving the term “story” to refer to one of its sub-genres, most studies of narration as a discursive activity embedded in social interaction use these terms interchangeably, as will be done here.

Recognizing the constitutive role of narrating, communication researchers have built upon, elaborated, and refined a range of perspectives originally associated with the study of myths, folktales, and oral performance. These seminal approaches have been inspired by structural-functionalist modes of analysis, whether they were textual or interactional in orientation (or both). A major analytic distinction that cuts through many approaches to the study of narration is that between the *narrated events* that constitute the referential building blocks of the story and the storytelling activity as a social practice (e.g., Young 1987). This distinction anchors a shift from the earlier concern with the study of story-as-text to a view of storytelling as a negotiated performance.

Broadly speaking, research into storytelling has involved the following analytic concerns, separately or in combination: (1) characterization of the discursive organization of narratives as structural units; (2) explorations of the socio-cultural functions of storytelling activities in different socio-cultural contexts; (3) investigations of the dynamic, negotiated construction of narrative as situated performances. The first two analytic foci have long shaped research on storytelling; the third represents recent developments in narrative research that focus on storytelling as an interactionally negotiated mundane accomplishment.

## NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

The study of narrative structure has been central to the exploration of storytelling in a range of research traditions concerned with the role of narration in social life. Thus, Lévi-Strauss (1955) analyzed culturally focal myths in terms of the basic underlying tensions between conceptual, binary categories, such as male vs. female, raw vs. cooked; Propp (1968) analyzed folktales in terms of the plot-generating functions of narrative clauses that identify the basic roles of actors and action types in the construction of a tale; Labov and Waletzky (1967) analyzed elicited personal experience stories as a series of sequentially organized clauses that refer to temporally ordered actions and events. Labov’s framework combines attention both to the referential function of the story clauses as pointing to background information (orientation) and plot structure (complicating action, resolution), and to the use of “evaluation” devices, which convey the narrator’s involvement in the storytelling activity and reflect the attempt to impress the recipients with its significance and relevance. This complex speaker- and recipient-oriented dynamics has been central to narrative research within the sub-field of language and social interaction, engendering a number of complementary research directions.

The interactional structure of naturally occurring narrations as they are embedded in the flow of talk has been explored by conversation analysts (→ Conversation Analysis) in terms of turn-taking mechanisms. Scholars have addressed the ways in which access to the conversational space required for telling a story is negotiated by interactional partners, often through the use of a preface signaling the desire for an extended turn-at-talk, and



how such access is ratified by the story recipients, who suspend their rights to the floor. The telling of a story is usually concluded with “exit talk” that indicates the speaker’s return to the conversational flow in which it was embedded (Polanyi 1989). This structural focus finds its complement in studies concerned with the function of stories and the meaning of storytelling activities.

### **FUNCTIONS OF STORYTELLING**

Storytelling activities are widely viewed as essentially anchored within a broader dynamic of social exchange (Bakhtin 1981), serving a range of personal, interpersonal, and communal functions. Most basically, storytelling serves as an important meaning-making mechanism by narrativizing out-of-the-ordinary, “reportable” events in such a way as to indirectly mark the taken-for-granted, the unremarkable order of things. It serves to span imaginary and everyday contexts by making possible worlds present to contemplation and feeling for both the narrators and the story recipients (Bruner 1986). It serves to link narrators and their audiences through the invitation to empathy and the display of understanding and appreciation.

Even while insisting on the universal significance of storytelling as a sense-making human activity, scholars have highlighted the social and cultural functions of storytelling activities in particular contexts of performance. Personal experience narratives have emerged as central to the construction of personal and collective identities (e.g., Langellier 1989), serving to integrate the self by creating a life story that is embedded within a culturally shared understanding of what constitutes a continuous, reasonable, proper, and worthwhile life trajectory. Studies of self-narrations show how narrators construct cognitively coherent accounts that help them and their audiences make sense of past events as temporally ordered, causally linked, and emotionally motivated. Notably, such narratives are grounded in a rhetoric of self-justification. By selectively presenting and organizing autobiographical materials in particular ways, by offering assessments of the actions, the plotlines, and the characters that inhabit their stories, narrators work to present themselves in a favorable light. In so doing, they invite story recipients to join them in probing the moral dimensions of human experience and the trajectories of morally acceptable identities and conduct.

Other scholars have focused on the role of storytelling in the construction of collective and institutional identities. Thus, for example, the stories exchanged in informal organizational settings serve important communal and interpersonal functions as they underscore notable chapters of institutional history and the people inhabiting it. Such stories shape members’ shared knowledge of the organizational landscape, demarcate the boundaries between those who do and do not belong in it, and socialize novices into the norms and values that ground social relationships and practical arrangements in the workplace.

In studying the role of storytelling in familial, institutional, and communal settings, scholars have mainly attended to the solidarity function of shared narratives. Some scholars, however, have begun to address the role of stories in argumentative and agonistic situations as well (→ Argumentative Discourse). The power of narrative to offer definitions of social situations, to inscribe particular versions of reality, and to endow

protagonists and their actions with a particular valence makes them effective tools in both interpersonal and collective struggles over domination and control. The politics of narration in struggles over meanings, values, and privilege is often couched in terms of clashes between competing narratives and counter-narratives. Hegemonic versions of national narratives and other deeply felt collective tales, which are routinely appropriated by individuals in both face-to-face and mass-mediated settings, provide idioms for the exploration and display of cultural identities. The narrating of alternative versions of present or past events can be viewed as an act of resistance (as, for example, in the circulation of personal blogs that narrate realities obscured by the mainstream media).

### **NARRATIVE PERFORMANCE**

Studies of the performance of narrative roles in face-to-face conversational settings indicate that they are often subject to ongoing modification by story recipients, who challenge, or elaborate upon, the main storyline (Mandelbaum 1989). The entitlement to tell a story is couched in knowledge claims that yield narrative authority. Such claims may be shared by interactional partners or unequally distributed among them. Co-narrations can have a powerful bonding effect, as they both reflect and reinforce a sense of mutuality through the joint enactment of shared ground. Recipient-driven collaborative storytelling, however, may also be associated with asymmetrical social relations. Story recipients may even change the direction or valence of the main teller's narration by introducing explicit challenge or previously unmentioned materials (e.g., in psychotherapeutic discourse or courtroom interrogations).

The study of storytelling rights – whether interpreted in terms of the management of rights to the floor, of access to knowledge about events, or of the right to express one's point of view – is anchored in a view of speech as a social resource. Questions concerning the obligations associated with storytelling as a form of social action must, however, complement the research focus on storytelling rights. A variety of social and institutional roles involve an expectation that their incumbents engage in storytelling activities. The obligation to recount past events is intrinsic to testimonial activities such as those included in legal proceedings, news reporting, or national commemorations. The exploration of such storytelling obligations has been marginal in studies of narrative activities, and deserves more research attention.

The foregoing analytical themes come together in studies concerned with storytelling as a discursive tool for the socialization of children and with socializing children to become participants in narrative events (→ *Intimate Talk with Families and Friends*). These studies focus on culturally designated occasions in and through which children are exposed to adult narrating and are invited to assume the narrator role, such as mother-child interactions and family dinners (e.g., Blum-Kulka 1997).

Thus, research on the social life of narrative has brought out the complex role played by storytelling performances as a form of social action, their role in the communicative production of personal and collective identities, and the ways in which narrative performances are interactionally negotiated in everyday settings. Current research seems to be building on this foundation in further investigating the role of storytelling activities as social practices in landscapes of cultural diversity and social struggle.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Conversation Analysis  
 ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics  
 ▶ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ Power and Discourse  
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## **Strategic Communication**

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Strategic communication is the study of how organizations or communicative entities communicate deliberately to reach set goals. Although the term “strategic communication”

has been in use for years, scholars are only now fully engaged in defining the field and its theoretical influences. Traditionally communication in its organizational context has been studied through various disciplines academically and functionally scattered over domains from management communication, → marketing communication, → advertising, → public relations, technical communication, → organizational communication, and → political communication, to → information or → social marketing campaigns (Hallahan et al. 2007; → Social Movements and Communication). It also covers the full spectrum of economic and social sectors, such as trade and industry, politics, nonprofit, government agencies, activist groups, and even celebrities in the sports and entertainment industries, all referred to here as communicative entities.

All these fields have one commonality: they engage in the *study or practice of deliberate and purposive communication* aimed at reaching goals such as winning market share, building a positive reputation, winning a political campaign, or enacting social change. This involves people who engage in deliberate communication practice on behalf of organizations, causes, and social movements, and thus has a definite focus on the practice of communication (→ Applied Communication Research). Strategic communication is planned and proactive, aimed as much at reaching organizational goals as at prevention of organizational crises.

The field faces a challenge in coordinating and integrating the communication activities of organizations, which are often scattered over several different reporting structures, particularly in large, complex organizations (→ Integrated Marketing Communications). Another challenge is the creation of a multidisciplinary but unified body of knowledge that better serves communicative entities in a society consisting of fragmented audiences and message delivery platforms. Strategic communication also has a significant impact on society at large. Strategic communicators can affect local and global outcomes in terms of every aspect of society, from democracy and political systems and markets to gender roles and cultural orientation.

### **“STRATEGIC” AND “COMMUNICATION” AS PRECONDITIONS FOR THE FIELD**

Generally, scholars in the United States tend to study the field as a process that includes goal setting, audience analysis, message design (→ Message Design Logics), communication channel selection, and assessment. European scholars are more likely to study it as a phenomenon that affects society, e.g., its effect in the public domain on political and policy outcomes. For both these schools of thought the terms “strategic” and “communication” remain central.

The term *strategic* originated in warfare. However, organizations originally used it to describe how they competed in the marketplace to gain competitive advantage and market share (Hatch 1997; Pfeffer & Salancik 1978). Supporters of this view see strategic planning as a rational process that starts with an analysis of the organization’s internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats (popularly known as SWOT analysis). The SWOT analysis is used to set the organization’s goals, objectives, strategies, and tactics. Here the role of the practitioner is to replicate this process with the focus on how communication can be used strategically to support the organization’s overall goals. Managers

believe this enables them to exert control over the organization's environment. Critics argue this approach is manipulative and takes into account only managerial goals and intentions. It is viewed as a one-sided approach to management that is asymmetrical and excludes alternative perspectives, including societal interests. These critics challenge the very notion of rationality.

This is an unnecessarily negative view of strategy. Many view all communication as strategic in the sense that all communication is intentional and aimed at persuading (→ Persuasion). New perspectives on strategy formulation in organizations provide several alternative, and more inclusive, interpretations. Emergent strategy holds that strategy is based on prior experience and actions, and so should value the contribution of employees at every level of the organization. Strategy formulation should therefore be a bottom-up process (Quinn, 1978). In → learning organizations, strategy formulation is viewed as a more short-term and agile process that allows organizations to react quickly to developments in their environments, thus recognizing the importance of those environments.

The *communication part* of strategic communication is also contested. For instance, in the United States public relations is often viewed as "relationships with publics" (Ledingham 2003), whereas the European viewpoint focuses on communication that takes place in the → public sphere through public media (Bentele 1994). The European school argues that communication remains central to the study of the field, and that scholars in the United States ignore the fact that all relationships are formed through communication, thus ignoring the process of relationship formation. Communication also remains the core function of other disciplines such as marketing and campaigns of every nature (→ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations; Trust of Publics).

The study of strategic communication does not preclude these divergent viewpoints. An analysis at the macro- or societal level, the meso- or organizational level, and the micro- or actual communication level provides for a comprehensive application of the different theoretical and practical approaches to the field.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY**

The environment in which the communicative entity operates affects the way strategic communication is practiced. One common way to analyze the environment is to discern between the economic, legal-political, socio-cultural, competitive, and technological segments in the environment. These segments do not operate independently but are deeply interlinked. Several studies indicate that when environments are turbulent, the communication functions in organizations are required to become more strategic. Institutional theory and population ecology theory support the notion that organizational environments determine whether an organization will survive or not. By helping organizations adhere to the value systems of the environments in which they operate, strategic communicators help their organizations endure (Holtzhausen 2005). In terms of value systems, the socio-cultural environment is particularly influential in affecting the strategic communication process. Hofstede (1980) found culture has unique influences on organizations. These cultural influences necessarily affect how strategic communicators operate (→ Public Relations, Intercultural).

*Systems, chaos, and complexity theory* perspectives also often explain communication behavior, particularly in the study of crisis communication (Murphy 2000). From this application comes the concept of strategic communicators as boundary spanners who help organizations adapt to their environment by in turn representing the viewpoints of constituents and the organization. Thus strategic communicators form an inherent part of any change management team (→ Change Management and Communication; Systems Theory).

Although → Habermas (1979, 210) has somewhat softened his stance on strategic communication, he views it as a form of communication that is “pseudo-consensual.” He recognizes that strategic communication has become important in the public sphere, but remains critical of the ability of organizations, politicians, and lobbyists to employ strategic communicators that allow them to gain access to the media and so gain political influence. Strategic communicators help these already powerful people gain social capital that adds to their power. This requires the “actors of civil society” to also use strategic communication to affect the debate in the public sphere (Habermas 2006, 15).

Postmodernists in turn argue that all discourse is political and therefore strategic (Lyotard 1988). Foucault (1988, 168) says: “Every human relationship is to some degree a power relationship. We move in a world of perpetual strategic relations.” What these philosophers have in common is that strategic communication is a real and influential feature of the public sphere (→ Postmodernism and Communication).

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT**

Public relations theorists have led the way in studying the impact of organizational factors on strategic communication practice. Grunig (1989) determined that communication practice differed across organization type. Organic and mixed mechanistic-organic organizations are more likely to use advanced communication practices based on communication research and audience analysis. The structure of the communication function itself can have an impact on communication (→ Organizational Structure). A decentralized communication structure will more likely be able to improve information flow and communication climate in large, divisionalized organizations (Holtzhausen 2002). The worldviews of organizational leaders also affect communication practice and determine whether organizations have participative or autocratic communication philosophies.

Strategic communication requires a holistic approach to communication; therefore the communication function should be integrated into a single organizational function. This is difficult in complex organizations where communication functions are often scattered across divisions and departments. For instance, marketing communications might fall under marketing, community and media relations under public affairs, investor relations under finance (→ Financial Communication), internal communication under human resources, and → corporate social responsibility under an organizational foundation. This fragmentation is further exacerbated by the strict definition of roles within each of these disciplines, e.g., copywriter, media relations specialist, event coordinator, strategist, media planner, creative director, etc. (→ Public Relations Roles). In a strategic communication approach it is important that all these communicators work in a team, which is difficult when they have different reporting structures and strictly defined roles.

There are several *explanations for integration problems*. One is the strict differentiation of tasks typically associated with bureaucratic structures, which makes the coordination of communication activities difficult. This is intensified by the overly specialized approach to communication education, where marketing, public relations, advertising, and speech communication are seldom integrated into a single educational unit. Clegg (1990) suggests de-differentiation, which means the breaking down of the borders that separate these. Practitioners will have more opportunities to become multi-skilled in the field, which then makes them more employable. Thus de-differentiation, in practice and academe, will be necessary for the field of strategic communication to flourish.

*Power relations* within an organization are another stumbling block. Mintzberg (1996, 237) first defined the “strategic apex” of the organization as consisting of “those people charged with overall responsibility of the organization.” The marketing function is typically included in the strategic apex, while communication functions are viewed as support staff. This access to power gives marketing departments a decision-making advantage over other communication functions. Communication functions like public affairs often report to a marketing executive and do not have direct input at the top decision-making level of the organization. In this situation communication practitioners often find an overemphasis on consumers, while other, often more important audiences are ignored (→ Control and Authority in Organizations; Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction).

Organizations that are able to integrate their communication activities into a single, integrated unit that has influence at the highest level of the organization and represents all strategic audiences will have a competitive advantage. They can use the skills of all communicators while addressing every audience in the communication process in a coordinated way, insuring consistency of strategic messages and message delivery platforms (Grunig et al. 2002). This is true for multinational companies as well as nonprofit organizations, NGOs, activist groups, political campaigns, or government agencies.

## **STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AT THE MICRO-LEVEL**

The micro-level is where the actual communication between communicative entities and audiences takes place, and it has always been the major focus of research and practice. The outcome of strategic communication at this level is aimed at reaching the goals set out in the strategic planning phase. Strategic communication goals vary according to the situation at hand. In the marketing context the focus is on → brand building and improving sales. Public relations focuses on reputation management (→ Corporate Reputation) through increasing awareness, maintaining positive attitudes and relationships, or changing negative behavior and poor relationships.

*Integrating marketing and public relations* is also a challenge at this level. Public relations scholars argue that → publics are very different from markets. Organizations choose their markets on the basis of product and service development and then communicate to consumers in specific market niches with the intent to persuade. Publics, on the other hand, engage organizations, often in a negative way because of some perceived transgression. Thus publics can be as diverse as environmental or social activists, shareholders, employees, suppliers of scarce resources, other businesses, and regulators. Members of publics might never be consumers of an organization’s products or services but might still have the

power to influence organizational outcomes. While marketing-oriented disciplines such as advertising focus on persuasion, public relations scholars believe communication with publics should be two-way, providing the opportunity for both the organization and stakeholders to mutually adjust their behaviors. Marketing communications usually takes place through highly controlled mediated channels or at retail level. In public relations the required outcome of communication is lasting and trusting relationships, which needs more direct involvement with publics and less mediated communication. Public relations practitioners typically have much less control over communication situations than marketing communicators.

The strategic communication process overcomes these divisions through a *holistic approach*. The process provides for both persuasive and collaborative communication, depending on the → audiences involved, while maintaining consistent messages. It adopts an audience-centered approach to communication, which is based on a thorough knowledge of the particular audience's characteristics. The ability of an organization to align its goals with those of its publics will thus be more effective in its communication efforts (Werder 2005).

A holistic audience analysis leads to → audience segmentation. Typically this involves defining the demographic, geographic, and socio-graphic profile of audiences, and also identifying social role players, such as activist groups, people in powerful regulatory positions, and even informal leaders. Employees form an integral part of all audience analyses in strategic communication. Many view this as an organization's most important audience. Another way of approaching audiences is to determine their information-processing or information-seeking behavior and their preferred use of communication channels (→ Information Processing; Information Seeking). Thus strategic communication requires knowledge of the full spectrum of communication theories on a continuum from persuasion to full collaboration, contingent on the audience type and situation. Relationships now belong in both the realm of public relations and marketing, which focuses on how employees at all levels interact with customers or how communication platforms enhance interaction with audiences (→ Audience Research).

A recent phenomenon that affects the ability to communicate strategically, and is shaped largely by new communication technologies, is the *network society*. New outlets make it possible for strategic communicators to reach broad but specific targeted audiences outside of the traditional media. As a result both media and audiences have become fragmented, which further necessitates an integrated approach to communicating. These technologies support networks, which Barney (2004, 2) describes as "a structural condition" that bring many people together in multiple, decentralized matrices. Audience members belong to different networks and each network represents a different identity of the audience member. As a result strategic communicators need to identify their target audiences through micro-segmentation (→ Communication Networks; Network Organizations through Communication Technology).

## MEASUREMENT OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OUTCOMES

Traditionally the success of marketing communication has been measured in terms of return on investment (ROI). Public relations scholars argue this is too narrow an approach to measuring the outcomes of communication. First, the ROI principle is only applicable



to for-profit organizations. Return on communication investment, be it financial or time, in activist groups, nonprofit organizations, or political campaigns is measured in social change or election outcomes that require benchmark research to measure progress against. Second, strategic communicators, due to their long-term, proactive approach to communication often prevent crises (→ Crisis Communication). The financial implications are impossible to determine.

Public relations scholars in the United States have long argued that the status of organizational relationships effectively measures public relations outcomes. European scholars particularly focus on measuring trust and reputation. However, trust is inherent in both approaches, which indicates that measuring trust might be an effective way of measuring the outcome of a strategic communication campaign that targets both consumers and other stakeholders.

Some other theoretical concepts that provide measurement techniques in strategic communication would be gap analyses, message adoption, message comprehension, message and media effects, agenda setting, and framing (→ Message Effects, Structure of). These theoretical concepts are often used independently in public relations, advertising, and marketing contexts. Applying them consistently to all organizational strategic audiences allows communicative entities to better evaluate the successes and shortcomings of their communication strategies.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Brands ▶ Change Management and Communication ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Crisis Communication ▶ Financial Communication ▶ Habermas, Jürgen ▶ Information ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Integrated Marketing Communications ▶ Learning Organizations ▶ Marketing ▶ Message Design Logics ▶ Message Effects, Structure of ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Persuasion ▶ Political Communication ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Power, Dominance, and Social Interaction ▶ Public ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations, Intercultural ▶ Public Relations Roles ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Social Marketing ▶ Social Movements and Communication ▶ Systems Theory ▶ Trust of Publics

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## Strategic Framing

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Framing is a rhetorical tool used by communicators to delimit the scope of a situation or argument. Although it is “media framing” that has received extensive attention since the late 1970s (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News), the framing construct is employed to understand communication in a wide range of disciplines, including speech, organizational behavioral, economics, political science, psychology, and sociology. “Strategic framing” involves the purposeful use of this technique by rhetors, social advocates, and communications professionals in fields such as → public relations and advertisers (→ Advertising). The goals of strategic framing are to telegraph → meaning and to focus audience attention on particular portions of a message or aspects of a topic in order to gain a favorable response.

Framing is a critical element in constructing social reality because it helps shape perceptions and provides a context for processing information (→ Information Processing). As a surrounding picture frame delimits a landscape painting, so strategic communicators use message frames to create salience for certain elements of a topic by including and focusing attention on them while excluding other aspects.

Message framing provides “contextual cues” that bias cognitive processing and decision-making. These cues can operate at the conscious or subconscious level during the pre-attention and focal attention phases of processing by message recipients. Framing effects are mediated through the psychological process of “priming” (→ Priming Theory) whereby messages activate particular → schemas (networks of associations and knowledge stored in → memory). Strategic framing thus prompts people to think in particular, desired ways about a topic and to use only a portion of their extant knowledge stored in memory. In so doing, framing shapes inferences made about situations’ definition, causes, and remedy (Entman 1993).

Framing has been cited as a textual, psychological, or socio-political construct in more than 1,000 citations related to the strategic use of framing. These can be categorized into a typology of seven models of framing.

### **FRAMING OF SITUATIONS**

Anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1972, 191) first defined a *psychological frame* as a “spatial and temporary bounding of a set of interactive messages” that operates as a form of meta-communication. Erving Goffman (1974, 21) defined frames as “schemata of interpretation” that provide a context for understanding information that enables individuals to “locate, perceive, identify and label.”

Strategic framing by participants has been recognized as a critical element in the analysis of → discourse, language, and literary storytelling. In the context of → organizational communication, strategic framing is used by managers to impose on others their version of the enacted environment in which the organization operates. In negotiation research, bargaining has been examined as a process of framing and reframing a problem, while linguistic and semantic analysis (→ Linguistics) has been used to examine how problems and solutions can be best stated to the advantage of each of the parties.

### **FRAMING OF ATTRIBUTES**

Semantic framing (i.e., the characterization of objects, events, and people) is a fundamental strategy in promotional communication. Marketers, for example, have a choice of promoting ground beef as either “75 percent lean” or “25 percent fat.” A result can be stated as either “90 percent success” or “10 percent failure.” Evidence suggests that positive framing of attributes such as these almost always leads to more favorable responses.

Advertisers routinely and purposefully place frames around and captions below illustrations to call attention to particular elements of featured products. Advertisers also attempt to characterize (frame) consumer problems as being of a particular type that can be solved by a proffered solution (→ Advertising as Persuasion; Advertising Effectiveness).

Research suggests that a user's prior experience and satisfaction can be primed to link prior experience to an offer and that messages can transform how people perceive and thus justify the subsequent consumption of a product. *Product positioning* is an especially prevalent aspect of framing, in which marketers focus on particular benefits of one brand versus other benefits that might be promoted by other brand-makers in the same product category (Ries & Trout 1981; → Branding).

Attribute framing also has been used by neo-classical economists to investigate decision-making. *Theories of institutional framing*, for example, suggest that focusing on issues such as fairness or environmental friendliness shapes public perceptions of organizations and impacts public choices. In the arena of public issues, McCombs (2004) argues that media framing is equivalent to second-order agenda setting, which prompts people to think about the attributes of a topic, i.e., *how* to think about a topic, not merely *what* topics to think about (traditional or first-order agenda-setting; → Agenda-Setting Effects).

### FRAMING OF RISK

The framing of potentially risky choices has been researched extensively in conjunction with *prospect theory*, which deals with the likelihood that a gain or loss will result from a decision (→ Risk Perceptions; Risk Communication). Kahneman and Tversky (1979, 263) defined a frame as a decision-maker's perception of "the acts, outcomes and contingencies associated with a particular choice." *Prospect theory* posits that people tend to avoid risks when a choice is stated in terms of gains but will take greater risks when choices are stated in terms of losses. Aversion to a hypothetical health risk was the focus of the original psychological experiments related to prospect theory. Not surprisingly, health communication practitioners subsequently have found that framing health arguments in terms of negative consequences generally is more effective than focusing on positive outcomes. Patients are willing to select greater risks if their decision means saving a life or reducing suffering.

There have been similar findings in the domains of strategic bargaining and organizational behavior. Mediators favor bargainers who frame issues in terms of losses rather than gains, resulting in higher values of settlements. The framing of a mediator's role also influences parties' willingness to seek the greatest possible consensus. Business leaders also take greater risks to avoid losses than to seek gains.

### FRAMING OF ACTIONS

Whereas the framing of attributes involves focusing attention on inherent qualities of an object, and the framing of risky choices involves the willingness of individuals to make choices, the framing of actions entails how to best propose actions to achieve compliance with a desired goal.

Parallel to the framing of risky choices, framing of actions in terms of negative consequences appears to be generally more effective than posing positive outcomes. For example, a university might wish to encourage students to pay tuition early in a lump sum instead of paying a slightly higher amount in installments. The university might

frame the early-payment option as a “discount” or the installment plan as a “penalty.” The explanations are different semantically, but the choices are the same. Some evidence suggests that this effect results because negative framing invokes more elaborative processing (→ Negativity). On the other hand, people who engage in less detailed processing or who are high in self-efficacy might actually respond better to positive framing (as with the framing of attributes).

## FRAMING OF ISSUES

Framing plays a critical role in the creation of and public discourse about social problems. Social constructionists argue that activists identify problematic conditions in society and frame them in ways to effect desirable social changes. Activists engage in a variety of *agenda-building activities* and use frames to mobilize support, build coalitions, manipulate symbols, make claims, typify problems, seek publicity, and gain access to the public policy agenda (→ Agenda Building).

*Social movements research* suggests advocates engage in frame enterprise and frame sponsorship. Activists engage in diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing processes and mobilize support through frame alignment, bridging, amplification, and extension (Snow & Benford 1992). Differences between competing groups result in frame contests (Ryan 1991; → Social Movements and Communication).

Related research pertaining to framing of issues has also been conducted examining topics ranging from negotiating to persuading jurors. Economists have examined the framing of fairness as a particular issue that can influence judgments on matters such as tax and income equity, willingness to pay for public goods, and social conflicts pertaining to environmental and public health risks.

## FRAMING OF RESPONSIBILITY

*Attribution theory* examines how people ascribe causes to events. When engaged in disputes or public discussions, a common strategy for both individuals and organizations is to take credit for successes and to avoid blame for failures while ascribing blame to others. How a problem is stated biases attributions about culpability dramatically (→ Attribution Processes).

The causation of events can be attributed to a social actor, the object upon which the action is taken, or the environment or circumstances in which the event occurs (Kelley 1967). Similarly, actions can be labeled (framed) as controlled or uncontrolled, internally or externally originated, or a result of stable or unstable conditions within an individual or environment.

In most societies, citizens frame issues to portray the overall social system as fundamentally sound and prefer to attribute problems to corrupt, inept, or irresponsible individuals. As a result, remedies are often focused on treatment rather than prevention or elimination of underlying systemic causes. In this same vein, news has been criticized for excessive personalization and dependence on “episodic” rather than “thematic framing” (Iyengar 1991). *Investigative news reports* (→ Investigative Reporting) have been characterized as a process of “diagnostic framing,” in which a story is identified as being part of a particular

investigative genre and is typified as an example of a particular, well-known problem (Protest et al. 1991).

## FRAMING OF NEWS

A final important application of strategic framing involves how groups and organizations vie for news coverage and how stories about controversies and disputes are portrayed in the media. Traditional news-framing research focuses on framing as an activity of journalists grounded in their cognitive understanding of the world and their desire to arrange random events into a meaningful, organized interpretive package (Gamson et al. 1992; Graber 1988; Tuchman 1978).

From a strategic perspective, news framing also creates opportunities for groups or organizations to interpret issues or disputes from their perspective. *Publicists and advocates* for causes thus become “frame sponsors” seeking to have their preferred worldview presented and engaging in frame contests in the media.

Successful promotion of a particular news frame requires understanding of the genres and conventions of news work, including the process of frame selectivity by media workers (→ News Routines). When pitching stories to news media, for example, it is essential for strategic communicators to understand what is newsworthy (→ News Values) and to capitalize on the culturally resonating elements of a particular story in order to make it attractive to media gatekeepers and → audiences (→ Gatekeeping). This involves manipulating *framing devices* such as metaphors, catch phrases, exemplars, depictions, and visuals (Gamson & Modigliani 1989; → Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of; Nonverbal Signals, Effects of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising as Persuasion  
 ▶ Agenda Building ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attention ▶ Attribution Processes  
 ▶ Audience ▶ Branding ▶ Construction of Reality through the News ▶ Discourse  
 ▶ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News  
 ▶ Gatekeeping ▶ Goffman, Erving ▶ Health Communication ▶ Information Processing  
 ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Memory ▶ Negativity  
 ▶ Negotiating and Bargaining ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values  
 ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Positioning Theory  
 ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Public Relations ▶ Risk Communication ▶ Risk Perceptions  
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## Structural Equation

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Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a statistical technique that allows tests of complex relationships between large numbers of variables. The term “structural equation modeling” is closely related to terms like covariance structure analysis, causal modeling, or path analysis. According to Kline (2005), the main characteristics of SEM are as follows. First of all, there has to be a model that shows how variables are related; it has to be specified prior to statistical analysis. The idea of the model may come from theory, from prior research, or from researchers’ specified knowledge and experience. The procedure is mainly confirmatory, and generally researchers decide which are dependent and independent variables and how they are linked by causal relations.

When specifying a model one must distinguish between observed and latent variables, or at least explicate at which level a variable is located. Most standard procedures do not allow differentiation between observed and latent variables. As an example, if you want to measure how *political orientation* influences *newspaper usage*, you have two abstract constructs that cannot be measured directly. These constructs – or latent variables – have to be operationalized through indicators, or observed variables. So political orientation may be measured through statements like “I want to know what is going on in the world” or “I want to know the relevant arguments of current political discourse,” and newspaper usage may be measured through “newspaper reading per day in minutes” or “individual

importance of daily newspaper reading.” The strength of SEM in incorporating observed as well as latent variables lies in the validation of constructs that can be achieved through confirmatory → factor analysis. Then, the influence of one construct on another can be measured through structural → regression analysis. The → hypotheses about the modeled relationships can be tested with several indices.

### VALIDATION OF CONSTRUCTS

Constructs in the social sciences may consist of one or more factors, each being represented by one or more indicators. In our example, *political orientation* can be conceived as a one-factorial construct represented through two indicators: “knowing what is going on in the world” and “knowing the relevant arguments of current political discourse.” As valid constructs are the basis of statistical testing of hypotheses – especially at a higher abstraction level – this part of the modeling is very important for the whole SEM process. First, the dimensionality of given indicators can be tested through exploratory factor analysis. After a → reliability test (e.g., with Cronbach’s Alpha), unsuitable indicators can be sorted out in order to strengthen the internal consistency of the construct. Then, construct → validity can be tested statistically through confirmatory factor analysis. This particular application of SEM shows to what extent the measurement model matches empirical data. There are several criteria for a good model fit: global criteria for the fitting of the complete measurement model and single criteria for every indicator to explain a construct. The procedure aims at explaining indicator reliability, factor reliability, and the average variance of a factor. If correlation within one factor is high, then one can speak of high convergent validity. If correlation between factors is low, one can speak of high discriminant validity. If the construct is complete (no relevant variables are missing), the indicators relate only to one construct, and if there are no systematic errors (because of bias in either measurement or sampling), one can speak of a fairly validated construct, which can then be used for further modeling.

### STRUCTURAL REGRESSION ANALYSIS

A structural regression model is the most general kind of structural equation model. It contains hypotheses about several aspects:

- whether there is an influence at all;
- how strong the influence is;
- whether effects are direct or mediated by other variables;
- whether there is reciprocity in effects;
- whether the impact is weakened or strengthened by a mediator.

A structural equation model can also be called a hybrid model, as it incorporates a measurement and a structure model. These models are commonly tested with programs like LISREL or AMOS. It allows testing for both direct and indirect causal effects. An example of a direct effect would be the impact of *political orientation* on *newspaper usage*. An example of an indirect effect would be the impact of *political orientation* via



*interpersonal communication on newspaper usage*. The difference from path analysis is that effects can involve latent – not only observed – variables. This setting can test effects from observed to latent variables and vice versa within a single model, and therefore proves more flexibility than do other procedures. The (causal) relationships between variables are conceptualized and illustrated as paths. Those paths can be expressed as mathematical functions. The methodology of SEM thus can show whether there are significant effects in the relationship between two variables. This principle is commonly known from regression analysis; SEM, however, is more powerful, as the impact of a variable on several target variables can be estimated simultaneously.

In order to conduct a structural regression analysis, two approaches are needed: (1) the features of path analysis to test the structural model, and (2) the features of confirmatory factor analysis to test the measurement component (of the factor model). The *measurement model* consists of the a priori specification of latent factors and the scores on their indicators. The *structural model* incorporates direct effects between the factors (i.e., latent variables). As in regression analysis, we have preconceptualizations of the direction of effects. According to the underlying theory and model, it can be specified which factor has effects on other factors. So the target factors are called *endogenous variables* whereas the influencing factors are called *exogenous variables*. It is important to note that each structural model contains *measurement errors* and *disturbances*. The measurement model – i.e., the confirmatory factor analysis – contains measurement errors for each indicator, whereas the error between the effect of one factor and another is called disturbance. A disturbance is not to be understood as a measurement error but rather as an omitted cause. It is something that has not been incorporated into the model but would have contributed to accounting for a large part of the variance. In the SEM procedure, the relationships are freed from measurement error because the error has been estimated and then removed, leaving only common variance. So the options of decomposition of effects and errors exceed the possibilities of conventional techniques like path or regression analysis (Bollen 1987). Thus, when the phenomena of interest are complex and multidimensional, SEM is the only analysis that allows complete and simultaneous tests of all relationships.

## MODEL TESTING

Many standard operations in multivariate statistics, such as multiple regression, analysis of variance, or canonical correlation, are special cases of SEM. All the stated procedures actually stem from the principle of the general linear model (GLM). Thus, the generality of SEM is very broad. As in regression analysis, the relationship between two variables can be expressed as an equation, e.g.,  $Y = BX + A$ . Most statisticians agree that SEM requires large samples. There are several factors that affect sample size, so it is not easy to answer the question of how large a sample needs to be. The analysis of a complex model requires a larger sample than the analysis of a simpler model. Models with greater complexity and more interrelations require the estimation of more statistical effects, and thus larger samples are necessary in order for the results to be reasonably stable. The type of estimation algorithm used in the analysis also affects sample size requirements. There are quite a few different estimation methods in SEM, and some of these may need

very large samples. However, some rough guidelines can be offered. Using fewer than 100 cases hardly leads to a reasonable test. A size of 100 to 200 cases is regarded as a minimum, but this is not absolute, because the model's complexity must also be considered. Furthermore, a small sample size means that the power of statistical tests may be very limited.

There is a great variety of effects that can be tested for significance in SEM. Options range from the variance of single variables up to the evaluation of entire models across several samples. However, tests for statistical significance are less relevant in SEM than to other techniques. Although single effects of related variables can be tested, SEM usually operates on a higher abstraction level. The question is not so much how strong an effect is; the analysis rather concentrates on the whole model, and the questions are whether it is acceptable or whether it had better be rejected – whether it should be modified, and if so, how. The big picture has priority over specific details such as the single path coefficients of two related variables. Furthermore, the significance of effects is not of so much help to the researcher in evaluation, as larger samples are more likely to produce significant results, even if the absolute effect size is minimal. In this case, the significance would only confirm the large sample (see also Tanaka 1987).

The methodology of SEM offers quite a lot of options for evaluating the fit of the estimated model with empirical data. Among the numerous fit indices, the most commonly used include chi-square value, the goodness-of-fit-index (GFI), the adjusted-goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). If indices show a good model fit, the model thus can be accepted. If the test produces implausible values, however, either model or data are insufficient. In any case, checks for logical and theoretical plausibility of the modeled parameters are recommended. Structural equation models are mainly used for confirmatory purposes. As many communication theories are not sufficiently validated, researchers may feel the need to use SEM in an exploratory way (Holbert & Stephenson 2002). Even then, researchers should have some idea about relationships and effects between constructs. To properly evaluate the quality of a model, analyses with SEM need replication. If similar results are achieved through cross-validation with different datasets, the model structure is proved to be reasonable. Finally, it is important to note that SEM does not prove causality in the same way as experiments do (→ Experimental Design). Causality is always a question of design and not of statistical testing.

SEE ALSO: ► Experimental Design ► Factor Analysis ► Hypothesis ► Regression Analysis ► Reliability ► Validity

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# Structuralism

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Structuralism is a tradition in the history of ideas that rose to special prominence during the twentieth century within the humanities and social sciences. A shared assumption of structuralist approaches to communication, culture, and society is that interactions, discourses, and social groupings are best understood as relatively self-contained systems or structures. Their formation and transformation are accounted for by certain general, immanent principles, rather than by their concrete constituents, or by any external influences.

## DEFINITIONS

In his review of the development of structuralism, Jean Piaget (1971, 5) identified three distinctive features of a structuralist perspective. First, it emphasizes the *wholeness* of a structure of elements; compare the common saying that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. Second, structures are subject to *transformations*: the rules governing them are simultaneously *structured* and *structuring*. Third, structures are *self-regulating*, bounding and maintaining the system in question. To exemplify, an ordinary conversation amounts to a whole, accomplished by two speakers; it represents a contextual selection and transformation of particular linguistic resources; and, to succeed, it requires continuous adjustments, regulating the contributions of the two speakers.

Responding to the likely criticism that structure might be a vacuous concept since, for example, all the units examined by the social sciences can be considered “self-regulating transformational totalities” (1971, 97), Piaget further distinguished between a weak or *global* form of structuralism and a strong or *analytic* and more “authentic” structuralism. Whereas the sociologist Émile Durkheim’s structuralism is weak, speaking of the social whole as emerging from a union of components, the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss’s structuralism is strong because it refers to specific rules of composition that account for particular cultural practices. Most important, structuralism proper assumes that the diverse observable aspects of social life bear witness to generative *deep structures*. While this notion is familiar from linguistics, in which the concrete sentences at the “surface” of language are said to derive from transformations of a general “deep” structure, it has been applied in several other disciplines and fields as an explanatory framework.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY STRUCTURALISMS

Although Piaget (1971) noted structuralist positions in his own developmental psychology as well as in mathematics and logic, it is especially humanistic and social scientific inflections of structuralism that have informed communication research. The linguist Ferdinand de Saussure originated the prototypical formulation of structuralism, describing language as a combinatorial system of paradigms and syntagms, and as a two-tiered structure of concrete expressions (*parole*) and an underlying system (*langue*; → Semiotics). The transformational-generative grammar of Noam Chomsky has been a particularly influential variant of a strong, analytic structuralism in → linguistics since the 1950s. It is, however, in analyses of social interactions and extended discourses that the influence of structuralism has been most in evidence within communication studies (for an overview, see Hawkes 1977).

Perhaps the most elaborate application of structuralist principles to the study of social and cultural life occurred in anthropology, as formulated by Lévi-Strauss (e.g., 1963). He accounted for *myths* in terms of their constituent units by analogy to sentences. It is the combination and transformation of such constituents into specific meaningful wholes that characterize the practices and rituals of different cultures, subcultures, and communities. As processes, myths further help to explain how social order is maintained, and conflicts resolved, through the continuous production of meaning. In a characteristically structuralist formulation, Lévi-Strauss aimed “not to show how men think in myths, but ‘how myths think in men, unbeknown to them’” (cited in Hawkes 1977, 41). Being discursive as well as cognitive entities, myths can be understood as deep structures of culture that are articulated in discourse, exchanged in communication, and enacted in social structures.

Structuralist approaches have been especially manifest in critical traditions of the social sciences (→ Critical Theory). This is in spite of the fact that, for instance, the concepts of structure and function in Talcott Parsons’s work are compatible with central tenets of structuralism (Piaget, 1971, 102); there is at least a family resemblance between structuralism and functionalism (→ Functional Analysis). The key figures of structuralist social theory, however, have emphasized conflictual rather than consensual views of structure. Building on Marx, Louis Althusser conceived the social totality as an interconnected complex of economic, political, and ideological practices that privileges certain social groups in relation to the means of production and to the institutions of power (Althusser 1977). He counted the media among the ideological state apparatuses serving to legitimate the social status quo (Althusser 1971). Modifying the economic determinism of much of the Marxist tradition, Althusser borrowed the concept of overdetermination from Sigmund Freud to suggest the multiple determinations of particular events in different social domains. On the one hand, societies may be governed by their economic mode of production in the final instance; on the other hand, the relative autonomy and efficacy of political, cultural, and other social practices should be accounted for, not just as structured by, but simultaneously as structuring the social totality and its historical trajectory.

Another key figure – Michel Foucault – marked a transition from structuralist to poststructuralist social theory (e.g., Foucault, 1972). Where structuralism represents an

ambition of discovering explanatory categories concerning the deep structures and basic processes of culture and society, *poststructuralism* begins to question the feasibility of any such categories, whether in everyday consciousness or in scholarly analysis (→ Post-modernism and Communication). Taking a radically constructivist position (→ Constructivism), Foucault shifted attention toward the frames of reference – the *epistemes* – that can be considered dominant in different historical periods. Such frames condition what will be understood as social reality in the first place; they change decisively from one epoch to the next; and they set limits to what can be known, in science as well as elsewhere. Although much of Foucault's work critically examined the concrete → *discourses* in which the understanding of, for example, madness, crime, and sexuality has been articulated, he approached these discourses as structures unto themselves, rather than as components of a combinatorial system involving human agents and material resources within observable social practices. From a poststructuralist perspective, ultimately, the structures of discourse do not allow for human subjects as either autonomous actors in a reality beyond signs, or independent observers of either subjects or structures.

### **STRUCTURALISM IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION RESEARCH**

In the strong or analytic sense identified by Piaget (1971), structuralism became a major influence particularly on two interrelated forms of media and communication research from the 1960s onward – qualitative textual studies and cultural studies. While research on media texts may be considered the primary inheritor of the analytical principles of Saussurean linguistics, cultural studies incorporated these principles, developing a conception of cultural practices, everyday life, and, indeed, the entire social system *as texts* to be read and interpreted.

During the 1960s, literary theory was revitalized by the rediscovery and redevelopment of several linguistic and formalist models of analysis; it was in this shape that literary theory fed into media theory (→ Text and Intertextuality). In addition to the work of Saussure, Russian Formalism drove home the point that form carries content – that the structures of narratives and other genres hold meanings. The prototype of such research was offered by Propp (1958) in his study of the constituents and variants of Russian folktales. A wide variety of popular media and genres lend themselves to the systematics of formalist analysis, as exemplified by Umberto Eco's (1987) early study of the James Bond stories. Other contributions included A. J. Greimas's structural analysis of semantic units, including those beyond the sentence (Greimas & Courtés 1982), as well as → Roland Barthes's models of meaning and narrative analysis. Partly overlapping with the structuralist enterprise, further work in film and other media theory from the 1980s onward explored the interrelations between textual and cognitive structures (e.g., Bordwell 1985; → Film Theory). As systematic approaches to the texts and genres of media, both structuralist and cognitivist models represented significant advances in *qualitative media text analysis*.

Summarizing the tradition of → *cultural studies*, Hall (1980) identified structuralism as one of its two constitutive paradigms, the other being culturalism. Combining a structural analysis of media texts and a critical, structuralist theory of society with a processual conception of culture, cultural studies has explored the margins of indetermination in the

social production of meaning. Even if the media, being part of the social *whole*, may offer a unitary representation of society – *regulating* the status quo in the interest of the powers that be – they still provide a potential source of discursive and material *transformation*.

### THE STRUCTURALIST LEGACY

Structuralism was a moment in the development of communication research, with a “classic” period from the 1960s to the 1980s. In retrospect, a strong version of structuralism appears difficult to reconcile both with the multiple types of structures bearing on human communication, and with the historical and cultural variability of communicative practice. Anthony Giddens (1984), for one, while retaining the tradition of semiotics, has questioned the determinist implications of structuralism, re-emphasizing the duality of structure and agency as part of an ongoing process of social *structuration* (→ Structuration Theory). From the outset, 1960s structuralism had been challenged by post-structuralism, which rejected the possibility of stable structures of communication, subjectivity, and society – and, indeed, of science and human knowledge as such (for an overview, see Coward & Ellis 1977). Though present as an epistemological concern in cultural studies and some other communication research, poststructuralism, arguably, has been less influential across the wider theoretical and methodological field. Instead, specific structuralist models and methods continue to offer analytical resources regarding various practices and institutions of communication, at different levels of ambition on a scale from strong to weak structuralism. Piaget (1971) had already suggested that structuralism is not a doctrine or theory, but a method.

The appeal of structuralism, both before and after the classic period, can be interpreted in the context of the history of ideas. The twentieth century witnessed an unprecedented – and massively communicated – degree of social *complexity*, which coincided with a growing *secularization* of both society and science in much of the world. Structuralism provided a conceptual matrix that might account for the combined dynamism and stability of contemporary culture and society – without recourse to transcendental first principles. While familiar from the history and taxonomies of natural and other empirical sciences, the notion of generative matrices could be radicalized with reference to language and other communications as the key mediators of both individual cognition and social interaction. As a prototype of twentieth-century interdisciplinary scholarship, structuralism developed alongside and in dialogue with communication research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Constructivism ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Discourse ▶ Film Theory ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Linguistics ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Semiotics ▶ Structuration Theory ▶ Text and Intertextuality

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# Structuralism in Visual Communication

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As a body of work structuralism assumes that social life and meaning are organized by a set of deep structures that frame understanding and perceptions of reality. Social meaning is the product of systematic conceptual structures through which we apprehend reality (→ Structuralism). Structuralism traces its existence to the work of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who set out his principles on language in his *Course in general linguistics* (published 1959, after his death). Saussure's interest was in the study of language as a system, and he made a distinction between *langue* (the formal structures of language) and *parole* (the way language is employed in varied and individuated ways in actual speech). His argument was that while the individual instances of use (*parole*) may vary, underlying all of them is a formal set of consistent codes and conventions of language (→ Code; Language and Social Interaction).

## STRUCTURALISM IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Structuralism, of the kind influenced by Saussure, emphasized signifying systems, taking the production of meaning to be central to social life. Structuralism therefore puts communication at the center of society and is concerned with the identification of systems that generate meaning (→ Sign Systems). While its central theoretical influences were in → linguistics, the general emphasis on signification has allowed the extension and application of Saussure's theories to the language of cultural signs in general. Thus cultural → artifacts, objects, and practices, including visual modes of communication in their varied forms (art, → television, film, → cartoons, etc.) have all been analyzed using the structuralist approach (→ Visual Communication; Film as Popular Culture; Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

As a body of work structuralism shares a formalist approach to language and cultural practices, emphasizing the laws, codes, formulae, and conventions that structure systems of → meaning creation. Because they sideline issues of → aesthetic worth or value and

concentrate more on the underlying rules and conventions determining meaning, → semiotics and structuralism have afforded visual critics rigorous and systematic tools for engaging in the visual analysis of various media, including film and television (→ Cinema; Content Analysis, Qualitative). Saussure's ideas have been explored by film scholars and theorists of images, including → Roland Barthes, to understand the nature of visual systems of representation. Film scholars have adapted Saussure's methods to analyze films as constructed medium, created through an underlying set of codes and conventions that shape their meanings (→ Film Theory). Thus semiotics and structuralism have helped open up the inner workings of various visual media (Andrew 1984).

### MAIN TENETS OF STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

Structuralism as a method of cultural analysis entails two important steps adopted from Saussure's work. The first is a concern with revealing the underlying grammar or conventions that structure the meaning of a cultural text, and the second is the idea that meanings are dialectically constructed around a set of binary opposites.

Thus one of the principal tasks in engaging in structuralist analysis is to identify the formal structures, the system of hidden codes and conventions (*langue*), that shape the various instances of cultural practices and texts (*parole*). For example, Vladimir Propp (1968) identified the formal set of structural features that underlie Russian folklore tales. While each folklore story may seem different in its individual manifestation (*parole*), the stories' meanings derive from a common set of characters (the hero, princess, helper) and their functions. Umberto Eco (1976) similarly identified the common structure of plot moves and characters (and their functions) – the girl, foreign villain, supportive second agent – that underlie all the James Bond novels, no matter how much the details of the stories change. Christian Metz (1974) applies structuralism to cinematic studies, identifying the language-like system of cinematic codes that help create meaning in film.

Turning to the second important step identified above, according to Saussure, all languages and the meanings they structure work *paradigmatically* (i.e., by selecting from a group of conceptually related signs) and *syntagmatically* (i.e., by combining the selections of signs according to a set of socially conceived rules that determine their combination). For structuralists the paradigmatic organization and selection of signs is paramount to meaning-making. Cultural elements or signs do not mean by themselves; their meanings are produced by their difference from other elements within a paradigmatic system. Thus, Lévi-Strauss, who famously applied structural approaches to the study of culture, argued that the fundamental way in which we make sense is through a system of binary oppositions. As Seiter writes, “characteristically, structuralist analysis proposes binary oppositions such as individual/community, male/female, nature/culture, or mind/matter and argues that every element within the system derives its meaning from its relationship to these categories” (1992, 50).

### EXAMPLES OF STRUCTURALIST STUDIES IN VISUAL COMMUNICATION

There are numerous examples that illustrate the use of structuralism in visual analysis. In his application of the structuralist perspective to the analysis of the film musical *Top Hat*



(1935, featuring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers), Rick Altman (1989) draws attention to the unconscious processes at work in engendering cultural meanings, by revealing the latent structure of the conventions of → Hollywood musicals lurking beneath the film text. He also argues that the film's meanings are organized around binary oppositions. For example, he explores how the dually opposed concepts of restraining social conventions (manifest in the European, stuffy old ways of Rogers) versus its opposing notion of freedom (made manifest in the American, new-world attitudes of Astaire) undergird meanings throughout the film, with meanings resolved in the direction of the superiority of Astaire's American freedom attitudes.

In their applications of semiotics and structural methods to the television cartoon *Fangface*, Hodge and Tripp (1986) also find that the abstract binary axis of nature/culture, and their more concrete manifestations as animals/humans, inform much of the meaning in the cartoon. Lévi-Strauss's analysis of myths and other cultural practices found the binary trope of nature/culture to be a highly significant structure that informed meanings at very abstract and unconscious levels (→ Cultural Studies; Popular Culture).

Analyzing the Western film *The Searchers*, Fiske (1990) demonstrates how the opening sequence of the film constructs a structure of binary oppositions that undergirds the whole narrative (and for that matter the genre of Western films; → Film Genres). The opening shots, which visually juxtapose and oppose the environment of homestead and the wild landscape, "is quickly established as a concrete transformation of the more abstract oppositions between the developed East and the 'raw' West, between whites and Indians, between law-and-order and anarchy, between humanity and cruelty, and, more problematically, between femininity and masculinity, between society and the individual" (1990, 124). All of these oppositions are seen as deriving from a much deeper and more abstract, structured opposition between culture and nature. The deeper set of abstract opposites is concretized in specific events and objects in narratives, which are then naturalized through their relationship with the underlying structure of abstract concepts that inform them.

Laura Mulvey's (1975) pioneering work, "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema," which has been very influential in the area of feminist studies and visual analysis (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), adopts a structuralist perspective in revealing how cinematic conventions structure gendered perceptions of reality. In discussing how these conventions structure cinematic action and gaze, she argues that, invariably, the male is constructed as active with the female as passive (→ Spectator Gaze). Similarly, the cinematic gaze is constructed as male, while the female becomes the object of the gaze.

### **CRITICISM OF STRUCTURALISM**

The vocabulary and special procedures of semiotics and structuralism "have allowed us to describe the workings of cultural communication with greater accuracy and enlarged our recognition of the conventions that characterize our culture" (Seiter 1992, 32). However, structuralism has been criticized for prescribing dominant and absolute meanings, for abolishing the reader from processes of meaning creation, and for being ahistorical. The tendency of structuralism to reduce cultural practices to basic formal elements causes the analyst to lose sight of other complex factors that may be shaping meanings. Because they derive their influences from Saussurean linguistics, which is a synchronic model for the

study of language, semiotics and structuralism study sign systems at a given moment in time, and tend to ignore change over time.

Structuralism as a theoretical perspective and method of analysis has given way to the more popular notions of poststructuralism. While accepting the notion of language as fundamental to social life and meaning-making, poststructuralism critiques structuralism for emphasizing structure at the expense of other elements that do not fit neatly into its formulae or conventions. Poststructuralism rejects the idea of an underlying, stable structure that creates fixed meaning through binary oppositions.

Today, structuralism is still useful as a method of opening up cultural forms, including visual artifacts, for interpretation, but it is seen as more useful if it takes into account poststructuralist critiques and is combined with other approaches. A good illustration of the application of poststructuralist approaches and other methods in visual analysis can be found in Yvonne Tasker's work on action movies. In *Spectacular bodies: Gender, genre and action cinema* (1993), Tasker draws on structuralism to identify the generic codes (in films such as *Die Hard*, the *Rocky* series, and *Lethal Weapon*) that characterized Hollywood action movies in the 1980s (→ Spectacle). But, she also draws on feminist and other theories to show that, rather than the series of action films simply reproducing dominant ideologies of masculinity constructed around fixed binary structures, the films play with such categories, allowing for multiple and contradictory meanings that challenge dominant meanings (Johnson et al. 2004; → Gender: Representation in the Media). Rather than being created around fixed oppositions, meanings are constantly deferred.

Roland Barthes's essay on the Eiffel Tower, in *The Eiffel Tower and other mythologies* (1982), provides us with the application of a structuralist perspective tinged with a measure of poststructuralism. The essay, concerned with the experience of "seeing" Paris from the Eiffel Tower, provides us with an understanding of the structuralist aesthetic of seeing. Barthes contends that "Every visitor to the Tower makes structuralism without knowing it . . . Paris offers itself to him an object virtually prepared, exposed to the intelligence, but which he must himself construct by a final activity of the mind: nothing less passive than the overall view the power gives to Paris" (1982, 9–10). The meanings visually afforded the viewer are constructed around a set of binary opposites, which are revealed in the analysis – Paris is constructed as man-made landscape (artificial), one that is opposed to a natural landscape (nature); the vision afforded the viewer from the tower is a "bird's-eye view" (one that permits a "transcendental sensation"), as opposed to an eye-level view (which thrusts one intimately into the midst of sensation); and the observer becomes a "reader" of rather than a dweller in the city. In a move reminiscent of poststructuralism, Barthes goes beyond the synchronous structural analysis of the bipolar opposites structuring the view to acknowledge the diachronic – the four major historical epochs of Parisian history and development that have shaped and characterize the various sites that face the observer from the Eiffel Tower.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Artifacts ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Cartoons ▶ Cinema ▶ Code  
 ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts  
 ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Film Genres ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Film  
 Theory ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Hollywood ▶ Language and Social  
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## **Structuration Theory**

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The theory of structuration by Anthony Giddens is one of the most influential perspectives of the late twentieth century in the communication discipline. Its main argument is that communication in social systems is not simply a matter of individual action or social structure but a joint product of both these moments: social action, including communication, is an outcome of structuration, or the production and reproduction of structure in social interaction. Giddens's theory (see Giddens 1984 for the most comprehensive statement) embeds this core phenomenon within a wide-ranging, integrative, institutional framework that encompasses many concepts of interest to scholars of human communication, including agency, identity, power, and → modernity.

## MAIN ARGUMENTS AND CONCEPTS

The signature contribution of structuration deals with the classic disagreement in social theory between perspectives that privilege action and those that privilege structure. Some positions assign primacy to the individual and his or her perceptions, experiences, and actions. For example, → phenomenology takes the intuitive experience of the individual as its starting point, building from there to explain more aggregate features of the social world. Other perspectives take social structure as their starting point. Functionalism, for instance, holds that social institutions exist to serve social needs, like the need to live in an orderly society (→ Functional Analysis). Thus action- and structure-based explanations form a “dualism” in traditional social theory, always beginning at one of the points and moving to explain the other. Giddens’s innovation is to argue that action and structure in fact form a “duality”: they are part of a mutually constitutive system in which social structure is produced and reproduced in social interaction, with social structures constituting rules and resources that social actors use to accomplish interaction. Language illustrates of this process: interacting with others, we draw on language and its rules of use to make ourselves understood; however, these structures are not an absolute constraint. We can use words in novel ways or invent new ones, and bend the rules of grammar to suit our purposes, creating new rules and resources that are in play during future social interactions (→ Language and Social Interaction). To account for social phenomena as they change over time we must consider both existing structure and individual action.

This is not to say that all structures are equally fluid. Some structures are “chronically” reproduced, becoming sedimented over time, resulting in institutions (→ Institutional Theory). These structures are not impervious to change, but are resistant because of other structures that depend upon them and favor their reproduction. Giddens defines the three main institutional dimensions of structure as signification, domination, and legitimation, which correspond to phenomena of communication, power, and sanction in the domain of social interaction. Three modalities of interpretive schemes, facilities, and norms are responsible for the translation of phenomena from one domain to the other.

The dynamics of structure leads to two more key concepts: “agency” and the associated concept of “power.” The production and reproduction of structure in interaction is the work of human agents who have the ability to “act otherwise” (i.e., in ways other than those dictated by structure), because they have power. Though their power varies, all agents – except in unusual cases like torture – have some power, and this is what potentiates change in structuration.

However, their power is partly constrained in the stratification model of the agent. At base, agents are motivated to act on a number of conscious and unconscious grounds. Agents make sense of these motivations through the rationalization of action, relating their rationalizations to the consequences of what they do through a reflexive monitoring process. Yet the limitations of consciousness and cognition make this process imperfect, creating the possibility of unintended consequences of action that cannot be explained by agents’ rationalizations and associated motivations. This in turn creates the possibility of unacknowledged conditions of action. Together these phenomena explain how structures that nobody wants or intends can be created and perpetuated through the actions of powerful agents.

## MODERNITY AND IDENTITY

Two other structuration concepts are especially relevant to theory and research in communication. Many social theorists believe that we live in a postmodern period of history (→ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches; Postmodernism and Communication), but Giddens regards this idea as questionable and argues instead (Giddens 1991) that we are in a period of “high modernity” (some believe “hypermodernity” may be a more apt label). The processes of modernity have not been surpassed or transcended; rather, they have reached their zenith and verge on spinning out of control.

Chief among the processes of high modernity is *time-space distanciation*. Whereas in premodern times social interaction was always firmly anchored in particular times and places, modernization has progressively and relentlessly ripped it from these moorings. Written language allows events at one time and place to influence events in the future and perhaps in different locations. As this and other innovations accumulated, social relations became progressively disembedded from the here and now. Given recent trends toward globalization, distanciation has progressed to such a degree that our lives are radically coupled to events that happen far from us in time and space, making the world seem increasingly incomprehensible, erratic, and unmanageable (→ Globalization of Organizations).

*Abstract systems* constitute the primary disembedding mechanisms of modernity, and Giddens distinguishes two types. Written language is a system of *symbolic tokens* (money is another example). *Expert systems* comprise complex assemblages that are based on expert technical knowledge. Examples include legal systems, governments, universities, and even the international air travel system. Whereas we engage symbolic tokens directly, our dealings with expert systems are mediated by access points, human agents – like lawyers, representatives, professors, and pilots – who represent, help us understand, and provide entrée to expert systems.

These features of modernity connect to identity through the concept of *ontological security*. This security-in-being is a natural consequence of interaction in circumstances of co-presence, instilled in us as children by close relationships with caregivers. As social relations move away from these circumstances through the operation of disembedding mechanisms, trust in others and in the systems with which we interact becomes increasingly relevant to our sense of ontological security. This sense of security allows us to develop a sense of *self-identity*, meaning “the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography” (Giddens 1991, 53).

Because of its radical decoupling of social relations from contexts of interaction, high modernity constitutes a grave source of risk. It forces us to deal with a world that we cannot completely understand, often once removed through the access points of abstract systems. This unpredictable and unreliable social world diminishes our bases for trust and creates threats to our ontological security, which in turn disrupt our sense of self-identity. High modernity, therefore, creates conditions wherein self-identity is subject to constant reflection, reinterpretation, and change. Identity is radically socially constructed, and this makes the communicative processes that govern the construction process extremely important to understand (→ Constructivism).

## STRUCTURATION IN COMMUNICATION THEORY AND RESEARCH

While there has been some debate about whether structuration is an ontology or a full-blown meta-theoretical perspective, in practice it has been most often applied to communication problems of the middle range as a general pattern for theory building. As a grand theory of society, it has most traction in the more collectively oriented sub-fields of organizational, small group, and mass communication (→ Organizational Communication; Group Communication), though there are some examples of its use in → interpersonal communication.

Structuration theory finds its greatest application in organizational communication (see Poole & McPhee 2005 for a complete review), and is most commonly used to help *explain the development of communication structures in organizations* (→ Organizational Structure). Structural-functional accounts of organizations came under heavy criticism with the rise of social-constructionist perspectives in the early 1980s. Structuration theory is something of a midpoint between these perspectives because it emphasizes the duality of structure and the role of active agents but at the same time allows for reproduction of structure and even institutional sedimentation.

Structuration has been used to *explain structures* like vertical communication chains in organizations. Studies have shown that organizational hierarchy is produced and reproduced in these chains, giving a somewhat different picture of the hierarchy at different levels of the hierarchy, but still providing a unifying structure overall. Structuration has been used to explain → communication networks as structures in the domain of social relations. Empirical tests have shown, for example, that informal hierarchies are produced and reproduced by organizational activity systems even when no formal hierarchies are specified. The theory has been applied as well to the development of concrete, formal structures such as family leave policies.

Structuration has also been applied to → *organizational identification*, reframing the distinction between identity and identification and explaining how communication differentially reproduces identity across different organizational contexts and situations. Scott et al. (1998) introduce this idea by arguing that identity functions as a set of rules and resources that agents use for acts of communicative identification with organizations in concrete settings of interaction. Outside a formal organizational setting, structuration has been used to explain the identity of particular social groups.

Another topic in organizational communication where structuration has seen significant application is *organizational climate*. Against the traditional view of climate as a characteristic or property of an organization, a structuration approach conceives of it as a set of rules and resources that members use to construct communication about the organization (Poole & McPhee 1983). Structuration theory has been applied, both theoretically and empirically, to the related concept of → organizational culture, and was used in an extensive study to help explain the development of interorganizational structures (Browning & Shetler 2000).

Structuration theory has also had a significant impact on the study of small group communication (see Seyfarth 2000 for a complete review). A major research program by Poole and DeSanctis (DeSanctis & Poole 1994) developed the concept of *adaptive structuration theory* (AST) to explain how groups use information technologies in

task-related activity. Studying group decision support systems (GDSS), they employ structuration concepts at the micro-level by tracking how members produce and appropriate features of the GDSS in their interaction, and at the macro-level by studying the course of whole decisions or series of decisions through multiple sequences of decision-making phases (→ Meeting Technologies).

Structuration has been employed to explain how communication serves as a resource in *group interaction* (→ Group Communication and Problem-Solving; Group Communication and Social Influence). Earlier works used it to theorize the impact of communication on group decision-making in general. Later empirical papers studied the use of arguments as resources in group interaction and values as resources in negotiations.

Structuration theory has had a lesser impact on two other areas of the discipline. There are several examples in mass communication and → public relations, often mirroring applications in organizational and small group communication. For example, some studies explain the structure of news organizations. Others explain the appropriation of technology by news organizations, and the development of public media policy. Still others use it as a framework for case analysis in mass media and public relations. Finally, structuration has made small inroads into interpersonal communication research. In this context it is used as a framework for explaining the impact of family structures on interpersonal relationships (→ Family Communication Patterns).

## **CRITIQUES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

For a more comprehensive review of critiques of structuration theory, see Held and Thompson (1989). Poole and McPhee (2005) and Seyfarth (2000) also provide more detailed analysis of arguments for and against structuration in organizational and group communication, respectively. Two more common classes of critique are briefly reviewed here.

One argument says structuration does *not facilitate empirical work*: it is a good basis for “think pieces” but not much of a guide to empirical research. This critique was common when structuration was first introduced to the discipline and may have been more justified then. Yet it is still heard today even though it is surely no longer valid. Theoretical pieces have been regularly matched by empirical studies investigating their claims. The research discussed above, dealing with organizational structures, identification, group appropriation of technologies, and studies of media cases, are all examples.

A second critique is that structuration either *overemphasizes action or overemphasizes structure*, giving an imbalanced view of structure. Some critical theorists argue that Giddens privileges action, underemphasizing the constraints presented by structure and overestimating the power of individuals to overcome their influence (→ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches). This leads to positions that, according to these critics, are too politically moderate and not focused enough on emancipation. Others with more postmodern or neo-systems sensibilities argue that structuration theory overprivileges structure and institutional constraints, producing explanations that undertheorize the role of agents in producing new structures and potentiating social change.

To the extent to which these criticisms are valid, they result more from the proclivities of communication researchers who have deployed structuration than from the unavailability

of resources in the theory itself. Giddens is a bona fide critical theorist. His books published prior to *The constitution of society* show that his perspective is more than adequately equipped for pursuing a critical agenda. At the same time he maintains that agents (to a greater or lesser extent, based on circumstances) have the power to act in ways other than that dictated by structure, and that even deeply sedimented structures are changeable through the accumulation of small actions, the influence of unintended consequences of action, and so on, casting doubt on the criticism that structuration is too conservative.

Looking to the future, two predictions seem prudent. First, with respect to sub-fields in communication, structuration theory will remain an attractive perspective for those working in organizational, small group, and mass communication because of its broad and inclusive position on structure, and its detailed explanations relating individual action to collective structure. Its applicability to the family context portends greater use of the perspective in interpersonal communication too. Surprisingly, it has not seen significant application to date in the area of intercultural communication. Given the strengths of structuration theory in explaining collective social structures and identity, intercultural communication represents a fertile area for future applications.

Second, with the partial exception of some of the identity studies described above, Giddens's perspective on modernity has not been fully embraced in communication theory and research. Yet the subject of globalization (→ Globalization Theories) is becoming an increasingly important topic in the discipline, and Giddens's perspective provides a wealth of resources for explaining its effects and the important role of communication processes in producing them. Communication and information technology is also an important disembedding mechanism, and the field's growing interest in that topic is also likely to raise the stock of structuration in coming years.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Constructivism ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Globalization of Organizations ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Group Communication ▶ Group Communication and Problem-Solving ▶ Group Communication and Social Influence ▶ Institutional Theory ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Meeting Technologies ▶ Modernity ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches ▶ Organizational Communication: Postmodern Approaches ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Organizational Structure ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Public Relations

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# Student Communication Competence

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Scholars and teachers have endeavored to understand communication competence by defining it conceptually and identifying the components that comprise it. Some researchers have studied why communication competence is important for students, while others have collaborated with employers and policymakers to develop “lists” of basic and advanced student communication competencies. As a result of public mandates from accrediting agencies and academic administrators, still others have examined how to assess students’ communication competence. While these studies were mainly carried out in the US, scholars in other countries have demonstrated keen interest in understanding intercultural communication competence – communicating across cultural differences. Finally, some researchers, in and outside the US, are considering variations in communication competence based on the impact of culture, the information society, and emerging technologies.

Communication researchers have defined communication competence as the extent to which people achieve their desired goals through communication that is acceptable in the situation. This competence involves the use of verbal and/or nonverbal behavior to accomplish the preferred outcomes in a way that is appropriate to the context and the communicators (Morreale et al. 2006). These definitions suggest that communication is competent when it is perceived by the communicators as both appropriate and effective. Appropriate communication means the communicators act in ways suitable to the norms and expectations of the context and situation. Effective communication means the communicators are able to achieve the most desirable objectives or outcomes in the context.

One of the more widely recognized models of communication competence identifies *three critical components of communication messages* that are perceived as appropriate and effective (Spitzberg & Cupach 1984). First, the communicators must be motivated to communicate competently. Second, they must be knowledgeable about the communication situation and the kinds of messages expected, permitted, or prohibited in the situation. Third, they must be skilled at actually communicating messages in that situation. This description suggests that motivation, knowledge, and skills are the foundations of competent communication whether in interpersonal, group, public, mass-mediated, or technologically mediated communication situations. Motivation involves the extent to which communicators want to communicate. Knowledge in communication helps communicators understand what to say and do. Skills are repeatable and goal-directed behaviors.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE FOR STUDENTS

Competence in communication is prerequisite to students’ academic, personal, and professional success in life. For instance, teachers deliver most instruction for classroom procedures orally and students with poor listening skills are disadvantaged (→ Listening).

Their problems are intensified by ineffective speaking skills. Students who cannot clearly articulate what they know may be wrongly judged as less intelligent or poorly informed.

Beyond the confines of school and as students mature to adulthood, numerous US national surveys and studies highlight the importance of communication competence and its instruction. A meta-analysis of nearly 100 articles, commentaries, and publications calls attention to the importance of the study of communication in contemporary society (Morreale et al. 2000). Four themes in the bibliography provide support for the importance of communication education and communication competence to: the development of the whole person; the improvement of the educational enterprise; the development of responsible world citizens, both socially and culturally; and succeeding in one's career and in the business enterprise. In sum, students should learn to communicate competently "at a level that will serve the student both within the university and in postgraduate professional and personal life" (Kenny 2002).

Given this importance of communication competence, various academic associations and researchers, federal government agencies, and research centers in the US and many other countries have worked to identify the specific communication competencies necessary for students to be effective at work, in society, and in their private lives.

In 1990, members of the National Communication Association (NCA) in the US developed a set of expected student outcomes for college students taking a basic communication course or receiving communication instruction in the general education curriculum. Those competencies primarily relate to speaking, listening, interpersonal, and delivery skills. While these skills do comprise much of what is often referred to as communication competence, other communication skills and behaviors are also important to educational, personal, and career success. For example, competent communicators need to be able to discern and understand values and ethics, develop cultural awareness and sensitivity to diversity, receive and understand mediated messages, and seek and send information using computerized media and the array of emerging communication technologies.

Three other sets of competencies were developed through national research projects in the US where over 600 researchers, educators, employers, and government policymakers evaluated the importance of specific skills and competencies. These projects produced the following *communication expectations* specifically for college graduates: basic communication skills (Jones 1995); persuading, informing, and relating skills (Rubin & Morreale 1996); and advanced communication skills (Rubin & Morreale 1996). Basic skills are minimal competency expectations and represent abilities, core knowledge, and attitudes necessary for effective functioning in society and the workplace. By contrast, advanced skills are more than just knowing, doing, or feeling. They are blends of knowledge, skills, and attitudes and they require greater levels of behavioral flexibility and adaptability.

The 1990 NCA communication outcomes for undergraduates and the three sets of competencies for college graduates are downloadable from the NCA website ([www.natcom.org/nca/files/ccLibraryFiles/FILENAME/000000000085/College%20Competencies.pdf](http://www.natcom.org/nca/files/ccLibraryFiles/FILENAME/000000000085/College%20Competencies.pdf)) and the college graduate competencies are synthesized in the following list.

#### *Essential communication skills (Jones 1995)*

##### 1 Basic communication skills:

- a General skills such as: state ideas clearly, be aware of bias, communicate ethically, etc.
- b Develop and organize messages effectively.

- 2 Public speaking skills:
  - a Analyze speaking context.
  - b Support the message.
  - c Understand different message types.
- 3 Interpersonal and group communication skills:
  - a Analyze situation.
  - b Manage relationship effectively.
  - c Exchange information effectively.
  - d Manage conversation open-mindedly and enthusiastically.
  - e Work collaboratively in groups.
- 4 Communication codes:
  - a Use pronunciation, grammar, and articulation appropriately.
  - b Use appropriate and effective vocal behaviors.
- 5 Oral message evaluation:
  - a Listen attentively, with an open mind.
  - b Distinguish facts from opinions.
  - c Identify and distinguish main points.

*Basic skills for persuading, informing, and relating (Rubin & Morreale 1996)*

- 1 General skills for all three purposes:
  - a Students can encode clear messages using appropriate language, articulation, pronunciation, paralanguage, and organizational patterns.
  - b Students can decode messages correctly, understand others' nonverbal cues, critically evaluate messages, and distinguish among various communicative purposes.
- 2 Persuading skills:
  - a Students can construct a persuasive message, adapted to audience, purpose, and context/situation; present the message using effective delivery, reasoning, and organizational pattern; and achieve their persuasive goals.
  - b Students can tell when someone is trying to persuade and can critically evaluate attempts to influence.
- 3 Informing skills:
  - a Students can present information, answer questions, give directions, and give assistance clearly and effectively.
  - b Students can recognize when others do not understand, can understand others' messages, ask questions, and follow directions.
- 4 Relating skills:
  - a Students can develop, maintain, and nurture interpersonal and small-group relationships with others; fulfill their own interpersonal needs; and manage conflict while respecting all interactants' rights.
  - b Students can respond to others' attempts to build relationships and reciprocate by self-disclosing, focusing on the other, empathizing, and displaying affinity.

*Advanced communication skills (Rubin & Morreale 1996)*

- 1 General skills:
  - a Identify and adapt to changes in audience characteristics.
  - b Incorporate language that captures and maintains audience interest in message.

- c Identify and manage misunderstandings.
  - d Demonstrate credibility.
  - e Demonstrate competence and comfort with information.
  - f Recognize time constraints.
  - g Manage multiple communication goals.
  - h Demonstrate attentiveness through nonverbal and verbal behaviors.
  - i Adapt messages to the demands of the situation or context.
- 2 Speaking in public:
- a Incorporate information from multiple sources.
  - b Use appropriate statistics.
  - c Use motivational appeals appropriate to the audience.
  - d Develop messages that influence attitudes, beliefs, and actions.
- 3 Relating to others:
- a Manage and resolve group conflicts effectively.
  - b Approach and engage in conversation with new people in new settings confidently.
  - c Negotiate effectively.
  - d Be open-minded and allow for and understand different views (often referred to as perspective-taking).
  - e Assert self while respecting others.
  - f Convey empathy.
  - g Understand and value differences in communication styles.
  - h Motivate others and work effectively in a team.
  - i Use methods of building group consensus.
  - j Set and manage realistic agendas.
  - k Lead meetings effectively.
  - l Understand and adapt to people from other cultures, organizations, or groups.
  - m Identify important issues/problems, draw conclusions, and understand other group members.

Finally, the College Board, a primary agency for college entrance testing in the US, worked for two years with communication experts from around the US to develop and publish a set of twelfth-grade performance expectations for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and media literacy that clearly state what students should know and be able to do in order to succeed in college. The Language Arts College Board Standards for College Success are available in their entirety on the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)). They are derived from NCA's 1998 K–12 Standards and Competencies for Speaking, Listening, and Media Literacy, which are available on the NCA website at [www.natcom.org/nca/files/ccLibraryFiles/FILENAME/000000000119/K12%20Standards.pdf](http://www.natcom.org/nca/files/ccLibraryFiles/FILENAME/000000000119/K12%20Standards.pdf).

While these efforts were underway in the US, scholars in other countries also were focusing attention on media literacy and communication competence in the information society. One study examined how to build confidence and develop communication competence for *all* citizens in Sweden's twenty-first-century information society, rather than just students' competence (Olsson et al. 2003). And a researcher at the University of Helsinki endeavored to understand what is meant by new forms of literacy like "media literacy," and what importance media competence and communication skills have in the information society (Varis 1996).

## ASSESSING AND STUDYING COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

The sets of communication competencies just described could be used to develop expectations for students from communication as well as other academic disciplines, such as the other social and behavioral sciences; humanities; science, engineering, and math; health-care and helping professions; and the law. Any discipline could examine the competencies, determine which are most applicable and relevant for their graduates, and then designate them as learning outcomes to be expected of all graduates in the discipline. The next step would be to determine how to assess students' achievement of the competencies.

Assessment of communication should be viewed as a gestalt of the *three foundational components of competence* – motivation, knowledge, and skills – with an assessment strategy particular to each component. Assessment of competence should include: an evaluation of the individual's motivation and attitude toward communication (e.g., value placed on oral communication, apprehension, → reticence, willingness to communicate, readiness to communicate [→ Communication Apprehension]); an assessment of knowledge (understanding communication processes; comprehension of the elements, rules, and dynamics of a communication event; awareness of what is appropriate in a communication situation); and an assessment of skills (the possession of a repertoire of skills and the actual performance of those skills).

The *method of assessment* should be consistent with the component of communication competence being assessed. Knowledge and motivation/attitude may be assessed in part through self-report by the individual being assessed, paper-and-pencil instruments, and surveys, but speaking and listening skills are best assessed through actual performance of the skills being assessed (speaking before an audience, undergoing an interview, participating in a group discussion, etc.). And, because oral communication is an interactive and social process and often involves performance, assessment could also include the judgment of a trained assessor or evaluator as well as the impressions of others involved in the communication act (audience, interviewer, other group members and conversants). A collection of useful communication assessment resources is available on the NCA website at [www.natcom.org/nca/Template2.asp?bid=264](http://www.natcom.org/nca/Template2.asp?bid=264).

While communication researchers use a variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to assess students' communication competence, a tendency to use self-report instruments results from the logistics and expense of training and using evaluators and observers other than self. The following studies are representative of this research program.

One study contrasted the communication apprehension and self-perceived communication competence of at-risk students and academically talented students. Academically talented students reported lower communication apprehension and perceived themselves as higher in communication competence than at-risk students (Rosenfeld et al. 1995). Three other studies of the impact of classroom instruction on students' communication competence reported the following findings. One reported that instruction in a basic public speaking course increased students' level of communication competence and self-esteem (Morreale et al. 1995). A second study also reported a favorable influence of instruction in a basic communication course on students' communication competence, apprehension, and academic success (Rubin & Rubin 1997). In this study, high-apprehension and low-competence students experienced greater favorable changes in apprehension

and competence than did their low-apprehension, high-competence counterparts. A third study reported that instruction in a basic interpersonal course also increased self-perceptions of communication competence, self-esteem, and willingness to communicate (Morreale et al. 1998). In methodological contrast, a longitudinal study of college students' communication competence did make use of trained observers (Rubin et al. 1990). That study observed a significant decrease in competence during the sophomore year, but increases during the junior and senior years.

### **VARIATIONS IN COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE**

When observing and evaluating student communication competence, faculty and administrators should be aware of: (1) variations in how students communicate based on their cultural background (age, gender, ethnicity, race, etc.; → Communication Skills across the Life-Span); and (2) students' competence in using emerging technologies to communicate.

Intercultural communicative competence is increasingly a topic of scholarly and instructional interest in many countries. To be considered competent intercultural communicators, students need to be aware of cultural differences in communication and to be able to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from cultures different than their own.

Research on self-perceived communication competence, communication apprehension, and willingness to communicate, conducted in a wide variety of cultures and countries, indicates that cultural expectations and norms significantly shape what is considered competent communication. Any type of cultural variations may significantly impact interpersonal and intercultural communication. For example, researchers discovered substantially lower self-perceived communication competence when using a second language than when using one's first language (Burroughs et al. 2003). Another study identified age and sex differences in willingness to communicate, communication apprehension, and self-perceived communication competence using three age cohorts drawn from junior high, high school, and university student populations (Donovan & MacIntyre 2004).

In addition to culture and competence, faculty and administrators also should consider students' ability to communicate competently using the many emerging technologies now ubiquitous in the US and other countries (Friedman 2005). This form of communication competence involves any human communication through digitally based and technological media as opposed to what are termed natural media. Natural media are those media that send and receive messages using only our bodies and minds, such as spoken words, gestures, and posture. Technological media are those that translate, amplify, or otherwise alter the message and typically include telephones (landlines and mobile phones), instant messaging, teleconferencing, videophone, videoconference, email, and other computer-assisted interactions such as telemarketing, group-decision systems, computer chatlines, blogging, social networking programs, and some virtual reality systems (→ Technologically Mediated Discourse).

Communication competence in a world of these emerging technologies, as in all contexts, is dependent on the students' motivation to use technology to communicate;

their knowledge of how to use it, the context in which the communication occurs, the nature of the message itself; and the skills with which the students send and receive messages using technology. Studies of communication competence are now focusing on what it means to be competent when using emerging technologies.

This form of communication competence also subsumes → information literacy in the curriculum and what competencies college students need in order to search academic literature electronically, in electronic databases, and on the Internet (Rubin & Rubin 2006).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Skills across the Life-Span ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Cultural Patterns and Communication ▶ Information Literacy ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Listening ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Reticence ▶ Technologically Mediated Discourse

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## Style and Rhetoric

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Under the term *style* in rhetorical studies are grouped all those concerns with effective language that have been part of the rhetorical tradition from its beginnings in ancient Greece (→ Rhetoric, Greek). In rhetorical manuals from antiquity through to the present, language issues are typically discussed at the levels of word choice, sentence structure, and passage arrangement according to certain broad principles guiding selection, such as clarity or vivacity. Rhetorical stylistics also describes linguistic devices that can help construct the interaction between rhetor and audience (e.g., *apostrophe* or direct address), express states of mind (e.g., *dubitatio*, the expression of doubt), or even control the flow of discourse (e.g., *transitio*, marking the movement from one section to another). Many of these rhetorical *figures of speech* survive in the everyday vocabulary of language awareness (e.g., *rhetorical question*), while others are studied as literary devices achieving aesthetic effects (e.g., *personification*, extending human attributes like speech to the inanimate and nonhuman).

In the last 20 years, one particular device of word substitution, *metaphor*, has been promoted as a conceptual principle organizing areas of → meaning. In the rhetorical tradition, however, language principles and features are identified for their functional, persuasive potential. Scholars interested in rhetorical stylistics have studied principles of effective language primarily through recovery work in the many texts produced in the 2,500 years of the rhetorical tradition. In the last 50 years, other disciplines, e.g., discourse analysis, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, informal logic, and natural language philosophy, have rediscovered many of the principles of rhetorical stylistics without an awareness of this tradition.

Principles of effective language use, established in antiquity, begin with remarks on the power of language in the speeches of the sophists. But it is the third book of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* that introduces features of persuasive language that still dominate the discussion,

including the *period* as a rhythmic unit of language made up of smaller cola (clauses or phrases), and the two contrasting styles based on the connections between successive periods: the additive or paratactic style and the connected or hypotactic style, the former typical of narrative and the latter of reasoned discourse. Aristotle also discusses effective word choice by pointing out the explanatory power of metaphor, and praises language that brings things “before the eyes” and conveys activity. He nominates the *antithesis*, parallel phrasing with contrasting word choice, as an effective device in argument.

In the centuries following Aristotle, Greek rhetoricians expanded the study of style, but their notions survive principally in a Latin manual from the first century BCE, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. Falsely attributed to Cicero, this succinct treatment of all the parts of rhetoric remained in use through the sixteenth century and has seen some revivals; St. Paul probably studied it, as did Shakespeare. Its fourth book sets principles of selection for effective language: correctness, clarity, appropriateness to situation and audience, and forcefulness. Under appropriateness the *ad Herennium* introduces the influential notion of levels of style: the grand style, suitable to the most important and emotionally intense subjects; the middle style, typical of exposition and reasoning; and the simple style, matching everyday informal conversation. A single speech should vary its style, rising, for instance, to the grand style in the emotionally charged conclusion of a speech. Under the notion of forceful expression, the *ad Herennium* offers the first listing of some 64 devices, including many of the word- and sentence-level figures of speech that are still familiar, but also many other devices that yield paragraph-length units of discourse, accomplishing such goals as vividly describing the consequences of an action (like the fall of a conquered city) or elaborating on a premise–conclusion pair to produce a five-part *epicheireme* or argument. An even fuller treatment of the levels of style and their abuses, and of the figures and their effects, can be found in Quintilian’s first century CE *Institutio oratoria*, which summarizes earlier Greek and Latin treatises since lost. For Quintilian, examples of effective language are drawn frequently from the political and forensic speeches of Cicero, whose own rhetorical treatises tend to merely list what were then widely known stylistic devices.

In late antiquity, writers on rhetorical style expanded the notion of levels (grand, middle, simple) into *types* of style, patterns of language selection that would produce overall effects, such as Hermogenes’ clarity, grandeur, beauty, rapidity, character, sincerity, and force. Scholars in the early modern period, recovering the texts of antiquity with honed philological skills, nevertheless made their own contributions to rhetorical stylistics. They emphasized the goal of amplifying a subject and expanded the taxonomy of rhetorical devices; a typical early modern style manual, like Henry Peacham’s *The Garden of eloquence* (1593), contains well over 100 figures of speech, many of them codifying potential *speech acts* that a rhetor might want to achieve.

In the twentieth century, many literary scholars, working in isolation, reinvented pieces of a rhetorical approach to language, but in the process they also achieved fresh insights in new terms. The Russian critic → Mikhail Bakhtin introduced the notion of *heteroglossia*, the amalgamation of different registers characteristic of different genres or discourse communities into a single text, which then becomes a pastiche of multiple voices. The American narrative theorist Wayne Booth and other “reader response” theorists looked at narratives as persuasion, discovering the linguistic dimensions of ethos and pathos in

novels, etc. Also in the 1970s and 1980s, a group of British literary scholars, influenced by the linguist M. A. K. Halliday, began to study style in a particularly functional and critical way. These practitioners of literary *stylistics*, including language critics like Walter Nash and Roger Fowler, eventually turned their attention to non-literary genres, producing useful analyses of style in news reporting, bureaucratic announcements, instructions, and the like.

While the process of recovering and debating the rhetorical tradition is well underway, the work of mining that recovery for principles of effective style accessible in different contexts is patchy. There are many descriptions of rhetorical stylistics in different periods, but no accessible overviews of durable *rhetorical* principles of style that would be useful to current practitioners in applied fields.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Meaning ▶ Rhetoric, European Renaissance ▶ Rhetoric, Greek ▶ Rhetoric and Poetics ▶ Rhetoric, Roman

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## **Subaltern Communities, Communication in**

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In most of Latin America, subaltern populations are those whose primary origins are indigenous, including lower-class *mestizo* people (i.e., people of mixed origins – indigenous with European) and the urban poor of predominantly indigenous background. Internal migration, urbanization, and modernization are three elements that have influenced transformations in popular communication. For instance, in Peru, television has changed due to socio-economic and political factors. Television came about in 1957 with the altruistic ideal of education, as a plan for modernization, and with → UNESCO's financial and technical aid (Perla 1995). However, within a year of the birth of television in Peru, US → television networks NBC and CBS began lending money and providing content for the recently formed local stations. At that point it was clear that television would be primarily a commercial and entertainment enterprise targeting the middle and upper classes rather than subaltern groups (→ Brazil: Media System; Bolivia: Media System).

For decades, subaltern populations have been excluded from the small screen (→ Television). Local programming generally featured light-skinned people who spoke standard educated Spanish. In the mid-1990s, however, the advent of → cable television substantially changed the face of broadcast television, as audiences with the most purchasing power switched to cable and local advertisers followed. Broadcasters were forced to cut costs in their domestic production, which helped create a space for the subaltern.

Other factors have contributed to the inclusion of subaltern groups in contemporary media. Various social and political struggles in the past 35 years have created internal migration and displacement of populations, changing the makeup of most urban areas. In the 1960s broadcast television began reflecting the realities of Lima's lower class and of migrants. These programs, mostly comedy shows, represented different situations in tenement houses. The main characters were gossipy women, soft-core thieves, and hard-working, macho men with dominated wives (Vivas 2001). Later, the *cholo* (see below) character made a transition from radio to television (Gargurevich 1987; Jochamowitz 1998).

In 1963, *Tulio Loza's show* introduced Nemesio, the first *cholo* ever on national television. Literally, *cholo* means *mestizo*. However, *cholo* is used in Peruvian society to degrade people whose socio-cultural background and physical phenotype are those of indigenous people. Nemesio's adventures came to symbolize the changing social landscape of Lima (Jochamowitz 1998; Vivas 2001). The producers of this program made Nemesio into a modernized *cholo* who changed his *ojotas* (indigenous sandals) for moccasins and his *huayno* (an indigenous folk dance) for the twist (*El Comercio Grafico*, 1964, cited by Jochamowitz 1998; → Modernity). Nemesio spoke a broken Spanish with a thick accent from his mother tongue, *Quechua*.

It was not until 1998, however, that most networks jumped on the bandwagon and brought *los cholos de la calle* to the screen. Broadcasters, desperately seeking to cut costs and gain new audiences, began using popular street skits known as *street theater* as their primary source for new comedy shows. The networks saw in these street comedians an alternative to the economic crisis affecting their stations, and the street actors saw an incredible opportunity to have a steady salary greater than what they could ever earn in the streets (→ Media Economics). Street actors combine oral storytelling with the kind of urban street savvy required to survive the big city. This street theater represents a humorous look at the tribulations of rural migrants and their hybrid culture that has developed from mixing rural and urban cultures. Most of these skits use coarse language and mirror violent aspects of life in the city.

In 1998 Frecuencia Latina hired Juan de los Santos Castellano, also known as "*Tripa*" (Guts), an established street comedian. "*Tripa*" and his troupe created the show *El show de los cómicos ambulantes*. A few months later, Frecuencia Latina's competitor, Channel 13, hired the troupe *Los Reyes de la Risa*. In less than six months this troupe was offered more money and moved to the second-largest network in the country, Panamericana Television, creating the show *Los ambulantes de la risa*, which came to be one of the most popular shows in its time.

A few other television stations created cheap popular programming. Channel 9 hired "*Cholo Cirilo*" and "*the Poet*" to create *Los cómicos de la calle*; Channel 4 hired Ernesto

Pimentel to telecast *La chola Chabuca* (Vivas 2001). Other shows have appeared, but have not gained the success of the first ones and have lasted for only one or two seasons. Examples include *La chola Jacinta* and *La chola Cachucha*, a response to *La chola Chabuca*, where the character of the *chola* is less hybrid and more “authentic” (→ Hybridity Theories).

Having subaltern people on television and representing themselves would appear to be a double triumph. Indeed, these shows have inserted indigenous and hybrid cultural backgrounds and phenotypes, mirroring the majority of the Peruvian population. These comedy shows have brought strong attention to the daily lives and vicissitudes of the poor living in Lima. However, the positive aspects of having the subaltern on national networks is overshadowed by the racist and homophobic stereotypes these shows promote. “Ignorant migrants,” “stupid *cholos*,” and “grotesque transvestites” are the butt of every joke (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). Machismo and overt verbal and physical violence against such characters are blatant, reflecting, at a deep level, Peruvian society’s attitudes toward these people in everyday life. What is problematic here is that while these shows apparently subvert the local hegemony, they use hegemonic representations of subaltern populations and thus reinforce stereotypes about them.

Perhaps it is no surprise that what the popular street actors are producing for television reflects Peruvian hegemonic ideology about the masses today, since what gets put on television comes from above and, as Martín-Barbero (1993) reminds us, “the syntax of that culture is not truly from the popular classes, but represents the disgust and disdain of the upper classes regarding the popular.” The idea of gaining a voice is somewhat false because the subaltern voices are talking, but saying what the middle and upper classes think of them. This is a central contradiction the subaltern face every day in Peru, particularly when creating popular culture that gets transferred to mass-mediated cultural industries.

SEE ALSO: ► Bolivia: Media System ► Brazil: Media System ► Cable Television  
 ► Gender: Representation in the Media ► Hybridity Theories ► International Television  
 ► Media Ecology ► Media Economics ► Mexico: Media System ► Modernity ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► Soap Operas ► Television  
 ► Television Networks ► UNESCO

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# Subsidies for the Media

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Subsidies for the media involve state financial support for media operations and content. Although generally considered undesirable from freedom of expression and economic standpoints, they are sometimes necessary to pursue social and cultural goals that markets fail to serve.

## TYPES OF SUBSIDIES

A wide variety of subsidies are provided to media, but the types and patterns differ depending upon the types of media involved and the political and market orientation of individual nations. Subsidies are provided to promote media industries, support political activities, spur cultural development, meet the needs of minority linguistic and ethnic groups, assist religious and other organizations sanctioned by states, and reward political allies.

The term “subsidies” more precisely refers to state intervention that affects the economics of media, including indirect subsidies, such as tax reductions or reduced charges for state services that reduce costs industry-wide, and direct subsidies provided to specific units of media. Regulatory relief that exempts media from regulations faced by other industries can also be a form of subsidy.

Media subsidies are found worldwide in nations with widely varying political economic philosophies – ranging from those with high levels of market capitalism to those with strong centrally planned economies – and in countries with widely differing degrees of freedom of expression (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of). The patterns of subsidization are related to national economic and industrial policies, and the levels and significance of intervention differ widely. These differences among national policies can be attributed to cultural factors and to economic policies toward industries overall (→ Media Policy).

Subsidies have existed since the first appearance of the print media, but their scale and scope have changed over time as states have responded to national concerns over press developments. Most print subsidies support → newspapers, but some also support → magazines and journals. Subsidies in western nations were originally given to press sympathetic to governments, but these later evolved into support designed to aid the press generally. Three decades ago, after a wave of newspaper mortality, a number of European nations constructed extensive subsidy mechanisms in efforts to reduce the demise of newspapers and the concurrent concentration in the newspaper industry (→ Concentration in Media Systems). In the 1980s and 1990s, concerns over minority languages led to additional subsidies for those purposes in many nations.

The ability of subsidies to solve press mortality problems is debatable because the number of newspapers has continued to decline despite subsidies. Studies have shown that (1) subsidies often have not addressed the underlying economic problems of the

press, (2) subsidies have tended to diminish over time, (3) dependence on subsidies can harm the ability of publications to improve and grow, and (4) there is difficulty maintaining political support for subsidies.

A significant change in subsidization occurred when policy changes privatized post administrations in western nations and thus ended or reduced the postal subsidy, which was the largest subsidy in most nations. Another change is occurring because there are considerable concerns that direct press subsidies – especially operating subsidies – violate contemporary competition policy on state aid due to rulings in other industries in the European Union (→ Communication Law and Policy: Europe; European Union: Communication Law). There are also concerns that the aid primarily benefits commercial firms that do not serve specific social purposes and that aid mechanisms have been used by publishers and dominant political parties to benefit their own purposes.

### **SUBSIDIES FOR BROADCASTING AND FILM**

Broadcasting has typically had a higher degree of state involvement than print media so various types of subsidies to broadcasters exist in most nations. In many nations radio and television began as state or government-supported broadcasting. Even in nations in which broadcasting was private, however, there has been a significant level of government oversight and intervention. Typical subsidies to broadcasting have been free use of radio spectrum, state grants and allocations to support channels and program production, and requirements for audience-paid license fees – a form of taxation – designed to raise funds for broadcasting (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

In the United States, for example, federal funding for broadcast programming is provided to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the government has funded production grants for some content through the National Endowment for the Humanities. These fall into the categories of indirect and direct subsidies, respectively. In Korea, support for public broadcasting is raised by a television license fee administered by the Korean Broadcasting System (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy).

Subsidies for production of *motion pictures* exist for both economic and cultural purposes and are designed primarily to spur domestic production and marketing of films. Tax breaks for investments in film production in Germany induced institutional investors to finance both domestic and co-productions with foreign firms in the last decades of the twentieth century. Another example of film subsidy is the Irish government financing of the Irish Film Board, which provides production loans and equity investments in motion pictures that promote Irish culture and provide domestic employment.

Much of the development of telecommunications worldwide has occurred because telephony was typically operated by government or given regulated monopoly status. Research and development of new services and technologies was often encouraged by special requirements, grants, or tax advantages. Creation of the → Internet was made possible by funding from the US military, and development of the world wide web was funded by the joint nuclear research organization of European governments. Today, many countries provide tax breaks or do not apply taxes on services to Internet services. In other cases, exemptions from sales taxes on e-commerce exist.

## EFFECTS OF SUBSIDIES

The primary effects of subsidies are the provision of additional resources and reduction of costs to a media industry or a specific media firm, and support for creation of individual content products. Support to individual firms affects company finances, allowing firms to use the financial resources to pay expenses or to improve their balance sheets. To fully understand the impact of a specific subsidy, one needs to consider how it enters and affects the operating statements and balance sheets of firms and the effect it has on the financial performance of the company (→ Media Economics).

Most types of support simply help pay variable costs rather than fixed costs so aid does not significantly affect the fundamental economic and market conditions (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media). In such cases, subsidies have little effect on the overall financial or market situations and thus create dependence on the handout of subsidies. State intervention can only support sustainability if it changes the financial and market conditions of the recipients by helping them restructure their operations, expand markets, or acquire cost saving technologies.

Part of the difficulties in achieving intended goals with indirect general subsidies is that they do not change the competitive situation of firms. Because dominant media in a market also receive the subsidy, it provides an additional revenue stream and gives greater resources that can be put to use to provide advantages against secondary media in the market.

State support can promote competition, have no effect, or harm competition in both the economic and information/idea markets. Most subsidies provided by states fall into categories that have no significant effect or actually harm either the economic or information market, and few actually promote competition.

Because subsidies provide financial advantages to firms that receive them that non-recipients do not enjoy, they can affect the rivalry of firms in competitive media markets. Subsidies present trade issues because the *World Trade Organization* policy restricts state aid that affects international trade, but debates over trade in media products there have to date focused primarily on content quotas and ownership restrictions, because the effect of media subsidies in international markets is currently limited.

The *European Union*, in its efforts to create a common and competitive marketplace among European nations, has targeted subsidies in all industries for competition law enforcement if they distort competition in the market. European states have historically supported media industries more than the US and have a broader range of subsidies for media. Regulators in the EU have constrained the use of subsidies in motion picture production and broadcasting, particularly public service broadcasting, but have not yet addressed print media subsidies.

Although the US government provides few direct subsidies, it does provide a range of support, including postal rate reductions, tax advantages, and free use of airwaves. These, however, are provided to all firms in the industries and tend not to have significant market effects other than generally lowering costs of operations. As a result, they have only in rare circumstances been seen to be in conflict with competition law.

Research on the utility of subsidies indicates that state support can be successful in the long run only if it is utilized as more than operating aid that covers losses – that is, only



if it results in a change in managerial and market strategies and is accompanied by a restructuring of the costs of operations. If used merely to pay operating costs and cover losses, subsidies ultimately lead to resource dependency on the state aid and the firm loses market incentives to improve its product and operations.

The optimal outcomes from the policy standpoint are for subsidies to enhance the condition of media so that their cost structures and market situations improve and so they make reinvestments that enhance sustainability. Negative outcomes are inability to preserve competition, long-term dependency on aid, or overprovision of subsidies that transfer wealth to produce unearned profits. This has occurred in many cases where subsidies are given to commercial and profitable enterprises.

For subsidies to be effective, they need clarity in purpose and must address the fundamental causes of the problems they are intended to solve. In the contemporary environment of the so-called information society – with the largest amount of types of media ever available and its enormous number of content providers – explicit purposes and unambiguous rationales for providing subsidies need to be provided, and specific objectives and goals need to be presented.

Subsidies need to be constructed to actually address the underlying economic and market issues that have led to the purposes and rationale for subsidies, and designed to produce effects that make it possible for subsidized media to free themselves from state support at some point in their future.

### **ENVIRONMENTS OF MEDIA SUBSIDIES**

In considering policy and its potential benefits, we need to recognize two distinct environments of media subsidies. First, there is an environment in which market failure results from a general lack of interest and support by audiences because of their preferences to use other media. In the second environment, market failure results from structural and financial challenges despite interest and support by audiences.

The difficulties in the first environment cannot easily be solved by offering subsidies because the state subsidizes something that the public neither desires nor consumes – thus the policy merely expends limited public resources and does not produce the intended benefits. Subsidies to address problems facing the second environment can produce benefits, however, particularly when they are intended to support regional and secondary languages and cultures that may be less interesting to national and international advertisers. To do so, however, requires the presence of strong local identity and audiences willing to consume. If those are absent, they must first be built through cultural organizations and educational institutions before benefits can be produced through subsidies.

Subsidies for print media appear to work best when provided to book literature and magazines because these media have low fixed costs and the subsidies can easily be provided on a project or fixed-term basis. Subsidies in broadcasting and motion pictures appear to be most successful when they aid specific programs and individual film production and are given on a project basis with open competition for funding among producers.

In making contemporary policy, one needs to recognize that this changing media environment is presenting more choices to audiences and significantly altering media use

patterns (→ Exposure to Communication Content). This raises the question of whether subsidies are the most effective means for serving the laudable social purposes that often prompt interest in them. Policymakers need to consider whether their existing or planned subsidy systems are designed to preserve a certain *form of communication* (newspapers, for example) or to preserve its *functions* (facilitating social, political, and cultural interaction and development). If the latter is the purpose, they will have to consider broader options involving other media rather than focusing solely on one type of media.

Judiciously used subsidies can help media make short-term adjustments to the changing environment, and well-placed support can serve some public goals. Relying upon subsidies alone to produce and maintain the desired social benefits in media structure and content, however, will be insufficient, and a range of other policy options will need to be employed as well.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Concentration in Media Systems  
▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ European Union: Communication Law  
▶ Exposure to Communication Content ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet  
▶ Magazine ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Policy ▶ Newspaper ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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# Supervisor–Subordinate Relationships

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Hierarchy is a defining characteristic of organizations. The earliest formal theories of organization – bureaucratic theory and administrative management – held hierarchy at the core of management processes, emphasizing chain of command, order, control, and discipline (→ Bureaucracy and Communication; Control and Authority in Organizations). These processes occur in the context of supervisor–subordinate relationships.

Supervisor–subordinate relationships are workplace relationships in which one partner (the supervisor) holds direct formal authority over the other (the subordinate employee). Early research tended to treat management/supervision and leadership as synonymous terms. Both “processes” involved leaders (supervisors/managers) eliciting the optimal (i.e., most productive) attitudes and performance from followers (subordinate employees). In the early 1980s, scholars began to distinguish between management/supervision, which centers on day-to-day direction of departmental activities, and leadership, which centers on vision and organizational change (→ Leadership in Organizations).

## FUNCTIONS OF SUPERVISOR–SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIPS

Early studies of supervisor–subordinate relationships, conducted by both leadership and management scholars, tended to be unidirectional and focused on the functional aspects of such relationships. This research attempted to identify *supervisor* qualities and behaviors that lead to improved employee attitudes, motivation, and job performance.

Early leadership theories focused either on “traits” or “styles.” *Trait theories of leadership* assumed “great leaders” possess particular personality traits (e.g., charisma, intelligence, courage) that enhance leadership ability (Ghiselli 1963). The follower (subordinate) was largely irrelevant in these theories. A great leader could lead anyone effectively.

“Style” or “behavioral” theories of leadership focused on leader behaviors, rather than traits, arguing that people can learn to be effective leaders. These theories fall under the broad category of “average leadership style” (ALS) theories in that they assume, to varying degrees, that leaders/supervisors tend to adhere to a general supervisory style. The Ohio State leadership studies, for example, indicated that leaders who exhibit a high level of consideration for employees (e.g., trust, warmth, respect) and a high level of initiating structure (e.g., focus on the task) were the most effective (Hemphill 1955).

*Style theories of leadership* differed with respect to the role of the subordinate employees. Managerial grid theory, for example, assumed effective leadership behaviors were universal; that is, all employees would respond similarly to such behaviors, giving subordinate employees a passive role in the leadership/management relationship. In contrast, life-cycle theory (Hersey & Blanchard 1982) assumed certain leader behaviors would be effective only with certain types of employees. For example, research indicated that mature and confident employees respond best to a “delegating” leadership style, while employees lacking maturity and confidence respond best to a “telling” or more

directive leadership style. Although subordinate employees began to play a more active role in these theories, the effectiveness of the relationship was still conceptualized as being in the supervisor's control. He or she only had to determine which behaviors to use with which employees.

In the mid-1970s, Graen and colleagues introduced *vertical dyad linkage (VDL) theory* (Graen & Cashman 1975). VDL theory questioned the prevailing assumptions that supervisors treat employees similarly and that subordinates are generally passive. Instead, VDL theory maintained that supervisors form different types of relationships with their various employees and these relationships vary with respect to quality. In general, high-quality supervisor–subordinate relationships (also known as “ingroup” relationships) are characterized by higher levels of mutual trust, respect, and obligation among the relationship partners than are low-quality relationships (also known as “outgroup” relationships). In high-quality relationships, leaders and members rely on one another for support and encouragement. Such relationships function more as “partnerships” where “members move beyond their own self-interests to focus on larger mutual interests” (Graen & Uhl-Bien 1995). Moreover, leader–member relationships (i.e., supervisor–subordinate relationships) represent a type of “exchange” relationship in which *both* partners negotiate their relationship on an ongoing basis. The theory was eventually renamed “leader–member exchange” (LMX) theory to emphasize the negotiated nature of supervisor–subordinate relationships.

Parallel to the evolution of theory regarding leadership and supervisory relationships, scholars conducted a great deal of research on *supervisor–subordinate communication*. This body of work focused on identifying supervisor–subordinate communication patterns and functions that were more or less effective (with effectiveness typically measured with respect to employee productivity, turnover, and satisfaction). Research indicates that supervisors' and subordinates' openness with respect to both providing and receiving information is associated with higher employee morale and satisfaction with the supervisor–subordinate relationship, and lower employee turnover. Communication openness also contributes to supervisors and subordinate employees having more similar understandings of their tasks, abilities, and responsibilities. Employees perceive effective supervisors to be skilled communicators, viewing them as “communication minded,” skilled listeners, sensitive to their employees' needs and feelings, and skilled at persuading, rather than demanding (Jablin 1979, 2001). Communication research also indicates that information exchange is a crucial function of supervisor–subordinate relationships. Supervisors are one of the most important sources of information for both newly hired and veteran employees (Jablin 2001; → Organizational Assimilation). Likewise, supervisors depend on subordinate employees for information to ensure they make appropriate decisions (Sias 2005). Much research has centered on identifying supervisor and subordinate information-seeking and information-giving tactics (Miller & Jablin 1991).

## POWER AND INFLUENCE

Because hierarchy is a defining characteristic of the supervisor–subordinate relationship, much research has examined power and influence processes among supervisors and subordinate employees. Again, early work tended to be unidirectional, focusing on how

supervisors control and influence employees. Early management theories conceptualized the supervisor–subordinate relationship as a power relationship in which the supervisor held legitimate authority to direct and control the subordinate employee's behavior. Power was conceptualized as a relatively simplistic downward process in which supervisors gave orders to employees and employees were disciplined if they failed to carry out those orders effectively. Later theorists in the human resources movement, such as Mary Parker Follett and Rensis Likert, maintained that subordinate employees are more competent and knowledgeable than earlier theories suggested and not easily or effectively controlled through direct orders. They advocated *participatory processes* in which subordinates participated in decisions and exerted greater control over their tasks and work processes (→ Participative Processes in Organizations).

Conceptualizing subordinates as participants in power and control processes, many scholars have studied “upward influence” and identified several tactics subordinate employees use to influence their supervisors. The tactics fall into three broad categories: hard (e.g., assertiveness, upward appeals, coalitions), soft (e.g., ingratiation, self-promotion), and rational (e.g., providing rational evidence and arguments). A recent → meta-analysis (Higgins et al. 2003) revealed that rationality and ingratiation tend to be the most effective tactics with respect to garnering positive performance assessments from supervisors and greater extrinsic success (i.e., salary increases and promotion). Research also shows that employees with higher quality relationships with their supervisors have more influence on supervisors' decisions than do employees in lower quality relationships.

## DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESSES

Studies of supervisor–subordinate relationship development began largely with the introduction of LMX theory, which maintains that supervisors form different types of relationships with their various subordinate employees. An important issue, therefore, is how and why some employees develop higher (or lower) quality relationships with their supervisor than other employees. Research indicates a process by which supervisor–subordinate relationships evolve from “stranger” to “acquaintance” to “maturity” status (Graen & Uhl-Bien 1995). In the “stranger” phase, the relationship is characterized primarily by “role-taking,” wherein leaders/supervisors and members/employees behave strictly within the bounds of their prescribed jobs. After a time, one of the parties “offers” an improved relationship (e.g., the supervisor seeks employee input on a decision or the employee shares increased information or performs tasks beyond his/her prescribed role). Thus, role-taking transforms to “role-making” and the relationship moves from purely contractual (stranger phase) to a closer, more multifaceted relationship (the “acquaintance” phase). As the relationship grows closer, it enters the maturity, or “role-routinization,” phase, where the relationship develops an emotional, rather than solely instrumental, quality. The supervisor and subordinate exhibit mutual trust, respect, and support for one another. Those who reach the “maturity” stage develop the high-quality LMX relationship discussed earlier.

Not all supervisor–subordinate relationships reach the maturity phase, however, and scholars have examined the factors that affect this developmental process. A subordinate employee who fails to perform a task independently, for example, may lose the trust of the

supervisor, hindering movement to the acquaintance phase (Deluga & Perry 1991). Gender, liking, and similarity also influence the development of leader–member relationships. Specifically, supervisors are more likely to form higher quality relationships with employees of the same sex, whom they like, and with whom they perceive similarities (Graen 1989; Bauer & Green 1996).

Communication scholars conceptualize relationship development as a communicative process. Gail Fairhurst and her colleagues demonstrated that supervisor–subordinate relationships are socially constructed during routine conversations. The differential nature of such conversations constructs differential relationships (→ Interaction; Symbolic Interaction). Research indicates, for example, that *high-quality relationships* are characterized by communication in which supervisors and subordinates minimize power distance, using communication patterns such as insider talk, value convergence, and nonroutine problem solving. Low-quality relationships, in contrast, are constructed via conversations that emphasize power distance between the supervisor and subordinate, including communication patterns such as performance monitoring, face-threatening acts, and competitive conflict (Fairhurst & Chandler 1989).

Communication also enables individuals to *maintain stability* in their supervisor–subordinate relationships. Strategy use varies depending on the quality of the supervisor–subordinate relationship (e.g., high or low quality). In general, ingroup employees tend to rely on personal and direct communication tactics to maintain their leader–member relationship, while outgroup employees rely more on “regulative” tactics (e.g., talking superficially, avoiding discussion of problems, etc.).

Supervisor–subordinate relationship quality has important consequences for both supervisors and subordinate employees. Employees who perceive they have a high-quality relationship with their supervisor tend to experience faster career progression, higher levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction, influence on decision-making, and job enrichment (Duchon et al. 1986), lower levels of turnover (Kramer 1995), and they tend to receive more and higher quality information (Sias 2005) than employees in lower quality relationships.

SEE ALSO: ► Bureaucracy and Communication ► Business Discourse ► Control and Authority in Organizations ► Feedback Processes in Organizations ► Interaction ► Leadership in Organizations ► Meta-Analysis ► Organizational Assimilation ► Participative Processes in Organizations ► Symbolic Interaction

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## Supply and Demand in Media Markets

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The concepts of supply and demand and the relationship between them are the cornerstones of the field of economics. Economic theory holds that supply of a specific product will reach equilibrium with the demand for that product because of the mediating effect of price. As prices rise, the quantity of a product demanded by the market will fall, and as prices fall, the quantity of the product demanded will rise. This relationship is known in economics as the *law of demand*.

An imbalance between supply and demand in the market will affect prices. If demand for a product rises faster than supply, prices will rise. The increase in price will cause demand to fall until the balance between supply and demand is re-established. Conversely, if supply of a product rises faster than demand, prices will fall, leading to an increase in demand.

One reason demand for a product falls when the price rises is that consumers switch to substitute products. The degree to which changes in price affect levels of demand for a particular product is known as *elasticity of demand*. The level of elasticity of demand varies from product to product. If the decrease in demand is greater than the increase in price – that is, if the percentage of change in demand when divided by the percentage of change in price is greater than 1 – then demand for that product is said to be *elastic*. If it is less than 1, demand is said to be *inelastic*. When consumers are able to substitute one product for another, there is *cross-elasticity of demand* between the two products.

Price also affects the supply of products. As prices rise, new suppliers enter the market to capture the higher profits created by increased prices. As the number of suppliers in the market grows, the increase in supply relative to demand puts downward pressure on prices. As prices fall, suppliers exit the market, until a new equilibrium between supply, demand, and price is established. This is known as the *law of supply*.

In addition to price, a number of other factors affect the supply of products in general, and media products specifically. One of those factors is the costs of inputs. If production or distribution costs fall (→ Distribution; Online Media), new suppliers may enter the market in an attempt to capture the profits created by the gap between the established market price and falling production costs. For example, as the costs of music production software and CD burners fell in the 1990s and the world wide web emerged as a low-cost avenue for marketing and promotion, more musicians began producing and distributing their music directly to audiences without going through record labels. Consequently, the total number of suppliers selling music in the market rose (→ Music Industry; Internet).

The development of new technologies also can affect supply. The advent of → cable television technologies in the 1970s and 1980s dramatically increased the supply of television programming available to audiences by providing a new way of delivering that programming (→ Satellite Television). The development of DVD and broadband technologies made films, → videos, and → news more accessible, while the emergence of satellite → radio vastly expanded the supply of radio signals from which audiences could choose (→ Radio Technology). These technologies increased the capacity of various media distribution systems, allowing for an increase in the supply of content reaching audiences.

## THE SPECIAL SITUATION OF MEDIA MARKETS

For many media products, however, the expected relationships between supply and demand are disrupted. The problem stems from several causes. First, media are a *joint commodity*. A joint commodity is a product that is sold into two different markets simultaneously. In the case of media, most media products are sold to both advertisers and → audiences, with advertisers paying most of the production costs for the media content through their purchase of → advertising time or space. As a result of advertising subsidies, the prices audiences pay for media content do not reflect actual production costs. The artificially low prices of media products lead to overconsumption by audiences relative to the actual utility of media to them. Audiences use media more, and perhaps differently, than they would if they had to directly pay the full costs of media production.

Advertising subsidies distort the relationship between the supply and demand of media products in another way. Because advertisers pay most of the costs of media production



(→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media), producers of advertising-subsidized media focus on creating the media products for which advertiser demand, rather than audience demand, is highest. Content is created to attract the audiences that advertisers are most interested in reaching (→ Audience Commodity). However, not all audiences are of equal value to advertisers. For example, low-income people are of relatively little interest to advertisers because of their lack of disposable income, while older audiences are less valuable because they are believed to have already established brand loyalties. Thus, advertising subsidies lead to a systematic undersupply of media content targeted to audience groups advertisers do not value. Demand within those audiences for media content has little effect on the market's supply of that content (→ Access to the Media).

Supply and demand relationships in media markets also are affected by government regulation. In broadcast markets, the requirement that broadcasters be licensed in order to operate creates a barrier to entry that limits the number of suppliers regardless of level of demand (→ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). In some countries, regulations limit the number of minutes of advertising that can be sold by broadcasters, regardless of the level of advertiser demand (→ Advertising Law and Regulation). Similarly, content regulations such as obscenity and decency regulations limit the supply of certain types of content over broadcast media, even if such content wins higher ratings than "family friendly" content (→ Pornography, Media Law on).

The expected relationships between supply and demand in media markets also are disrupted by the *externality* value of media. In economic terms, externalities are the value of the ripple effects that a product has that are not included in its price. Media products have significant externality value in society. For example, effective, independent news organizations that serve as watchdogs on government act as a check on government power and corruption. Therefore, the true economic value of high-quality journalism products includes the economic value of effective democratic government and efficiently used public monies. Similarly, textbooks are central to educational processes, and higher levels of education are associated with positive economic effects ranging from higher wages to lower health-care costs. The actual value of textbooks, then, includes the long-term economic benefits that a person realizes as a result of being educated and that society realizes from having an educated population.

The problem with economic externalities is that they are difficult to recognize and measure. Consequently, the full value of media products that produce positive externalities cannot be captured in their price, leading to an undersupply relative to their actual value. For media products that have negative externalities, the full costs to society are not incorporated into the price of the content, leading to an oversupply.

The relationship between supply and demand in media markets also is distorted by the non-economic externalities associated with owning media companies or producing media content. The laws of supply and demand are based on assumptions of economic rationality. Specifically, the law of supply assumes that producers respond to economic signals and will stop producing when prices fall below what is called *normal profit*. Normal profit is the point at which profits are high enough to keep existing suppliers in the industry but not high enough to attract new suppliers.

Media owners and producers, however, sometimes produce content for non-economic reasons such as recognition, creative expression, or power. Owners of newspapers or broadcast

stations may use their media organizations to gain social prestige, pursue personal political agendas, or promote other businesses they own. Such motivations may induce a media owner to continue to produce media in a market even in the face of financial losses. In developing and transitional countries, the number of media organizations supplying the market often far exceeds audience and advertising demand in the market. The number of suppliers does not substantially fall, however, because political parties, nongovernmental organizations, corporations, and even criminal organizations subsidize unprofitable media companies in pursuit of goals other than profit from the sale of media products (→ Competition in Media Systems).

Similarly, the percentage of people supplying content to the world wide web has grown exponentially. The growth of the *blogosphere* and of *wiki-media* occurs even though few of the individual content suppliers receive profits. Producers create and distribute content because they are motivated by such externalities as the desire for recognition, a creative outlet, or an audience for their opinions, rather than economic returns. The presence of a large supply of free content on the Internet puts downward pressure on both the price and demand for content sold by traditional media companies (→ Blogger).

### ISSUES OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND IN MEDIA MARKETS

The lack of focus on economic returns by many producers and the development of new distribution technologies have led to an exponential increase in the supply of media content available relative to existing demand. Between 1995 and 2002, the average number of channels available to basic or expanded basic cable subscribers in the United States jumped from 38 to 63, while the average number of cable channels viewed by those subscribers rose much more slowly during the same period from about 12 to 16. In 1971, five countries in western Europe had only one television channel and only two countries had more than two channels. By the end of the century, there were at least 700 channels available in Europe through cable and satellite distribution, many of them on the air 24 hours a day. Since the Internet was opened to public access in the mid-1990s, billions of pages of content including audio and video productions have been generated, although relatively few suppliers of that content make a profit on its sale to audiences or advertisers. This rapid growth in media supply has created audience fragmentation and lower demand on average for individual media products as measured through circulation, ratings, and other audience metrics.

Economic theory argues that oversupply, i.e., too much competition, is impossible because increases in supply always benefit consumers by giving them more choices at lower prices. However, research is beginning to challenge that view as it relates to media markets. While highly competitive markets characterized by multiple suppliers may provide high levels of consumer choice among channels, they do not necessarily provide high levels of product quality or even broad ranges of content diversity. The economics of content production are such that as the sizes of audiences fall in the face of audience and advertiser fragmentation, so do revenues and, consequently, the amount of money producers have to invest in product quality. For the producer, there are diminishing returns on investing in quality in terms of incremental increases in the size of the audience that will be attracted and the amount of profit that can be generated (→ Media Performance).

In entertainment programming, this can lead to *excessive sameness* in low-quality programming as producers attempt to generate the largest possible audiences while investing the minimal amount in production. Thus, a programming genre or concept that generates comparatively high ratings will be reproduced by multiple suppliers across the market as spin-offs and sequels in the struggle to carve off a piece of an established audience. As a result, the total number of channel choices available to audiences may be high, while the actual range of choices between program types and content quality declines.

A similar effect has been observed in news media markets. Moderate competition among suppliers has been found to increase media organizations' financial commitment to news production. Increases in financial commitment are associated with increases in the quality of news products as measured by reporter workloads, the amount of time that reporters have to work on stories, the number of sources and points of view included in stories, and the amount of local and enterprise news coverage generated, among other measures (→ News Sources; Quality of the News).

Conversely, as supply and competition become high enough to significantly erode news organizations' profits, financial commitment to news production appears to fall. During the 1990s and early years of the twenty-first century, declining newspaper circulation and broadcast news ratings were associated with news staff reductions and the closing of news bureaus. In some markets, the presence of large numbers of news organizations relative to audience and advertiser demand has been associated with an increased emphasis on → sensationalism, celebrity (→ Celebrity Culture), sports, sex, ideologically slanted news (→ Bias in the News), and other low-cost news-production strategies.

The ongoing development of new media distribution technologies and the growing popularity of user-contributed content sites on the Internet suggest that media markets will continue in the foreseeable future to be characterized by high levels of content supply relative to demand. Issues of media supply and demand, and their relationship to content quality, diversity, and effects on society, will continue to be among the central questions facing communication researchers and professionals.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Advertising Law and Regulation ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Blogger ▶ Cable Television ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Competition in Media Systems ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Distribution ▶ Internet ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Performance ▶ Music Industry ▶ News ▶ News Sources ▶ Online Media ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Video

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## Support Talk

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Problems and troubles are a common aspect of human life; descriptions of these problems and troubles usually make relevant some kind of affiliative or supportive response. The study of support talk examines how interactants seek and obtain aid in a variety of informal and institutional settings. Support talk occurs when interactants attempt to aid, assist, or help another by addressing troubles that can be mutually shared and mutually solved. Support provided can be informational (e.g., advice), emotional (expressions of caring, concern, empathy, and sympathy), or tangible (offers of goods or services). One challenge in distinguishing support talk from other forms of talk in interaction is that routine talk, especially in close relationships, can also serve a supportive function (→ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends).

Advice-giving involves recommending, suggesting, or describing a course of action for remedying another's troubles. In situations where the advice-giver is clearly the authority, advice tends to be strongly prescriptive, including overt recommendations, imperatives ("always be very very quiet at night"), and modal verbs of obligation ("should," "ought": → Directives). Giving advice in these ways implies an asymmetry of roles: the advice-giver plays the role of knowledgeable advisor, while the advice recipient's role is one of lacking competence and needing help. Advice may often be resisted by recipients so as to reassert their autonomy and/or competence, despite their stated troubles.

In situations where the advice-giver wishes to be seen as a friend or equal, more mitigated methods are typically used, such as presenting advice as an allowable alternative ("if you . . ."), placing a recommended action within the format of information or a query (e.g., "did you see the doctor?"), or telling a second story. These allow the advice recipient to determine whether the information/advice/story is relevant to their specific circumstances.

Empathy involves understanding another's situation and/or feelings and, preferably, displaying understanding in such a way that the other feels understood. In response to troubles telling, "how awful" and standardized *oh*-prefaced assessments such as "oh God" and "oh no" display understanding of another's situation as troubling. Formulations (e.g., "sounds like you were really frightened when you discovered that lump") demonstrate

more significant understanding and contribute in meaningful ways to subsequent disclosures of delicate matters, especially if seen as an accurate paraphrase of the trouble's nature and intensity, and placed at the seeming end of a troubles telling.

Sympathy involves relating to another person's trouble by sharing feelings beyond basic concern. Basic expression of one's own feelings (e.g., "I'm sorry to hear that"), sharing similar reactions, and/or telling second stories (i.e., sharing one's own similar experience) convey sympathy. These second stories seem best fitted to peer support. So as to avoid telling second stories, doctors sympathize by describing some possible consequences of the patient's circumstances, implying access to an equivalent experience (→ *Bad News in Medicine, Communicating; Doctor–Patient Talk*).

Troubles tellers also seek tangible aid, often through calls for emergency assistance or customer service. On an emergency assistance line, callers request help as one requests food for delivery, while call takers require proof of a need for assistance before providing it. An interrogative series that, for the call taker, facilitates provision of appropriate assistance, for the caller delays the arrival of help. This dilemma is common to service encounters, whereas a troubles recipient, concerned about the troubles teller's feelings and experiences, and an advice-giver, oriented to a problem to be solved, are seemingly separate and contradictory roles. Methods that address this dilemma often blend these distinctive roles; for example, emergency assistance workers still interrogate but for a condensed period of time (→ *Telephone Talk*).

While conversation analysts and discursive psychologists have described interactional difficulties and nonaffiliative responses that indicate lack of successful support, support talk typically distinguishes itself from the study of social support by focusing not on outcomes but on what is said and done. Compared to the larger literature on social support, studies of support talk are in their adolescence. This area is ripe for language and social interaction contributions, with the recognition that appropriate supportive responses, demonstrated on a case-by-case basis, can improve the health and well-being of others.

SEE ALSO: ► *Bad News in Medicine, Communicating* ► *Comforting Communication* ► *Conversation Analysis* ► *Directives* ► *Doctor–Patient Talk* ► *Emotion and Discourse* ► *Intimate Talk with Family and Friends* ► *Social Support in Health Communication* ► *Social Support in Interpersonal Communication* ► *Telephone Talk*

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## Survey

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Surveys are one of the standard forms of collecting data on individuals. The process is uniquely suited to the collection of knowledge, attitudes, and opinions, but there are many circumstances where it is the only way to obtain information about behaviors as well. Surveys are sometimes distinguished from polls (→ Public Opinion Polling) because they are more likely to be conducted by academic than commercial researchers or because they tend to be longer. This distinction is not applied here.

### APPLICATIONS

In *political research*, for example, there are many ways to obtain information about voter turnout – how many people went to the polls – including official government statistics. But governments do not collect information on candidate or party preferences, and surveys are required to obtain such information, as well as on other personal characteristics such as age, race, or sex, and attitudes about issues of the day or specific policies. The only way that the impact of such personal characteristics on voting behavior and preferences can be pursued is through surveys (→ Election Surveys). In the area of *economic research*, as another example, sales data can indicate the preference of consumers for one product over another or the relative market share of each. But the only way to obtain systematic data on the nature of preferences underlying these purchases or the demographic characteristics is through surveys (→ Marketing). In these instances, the turnout data and the purchase and market share data from an external source can provide an external validation of some of the measures derived from surveys, a useful check on the overall quality of the data.

Surveys are typically used to collect data in areas where other sources of information are unavailable. In the area of *consumer research*, for example, economists now understand

that expectations have just as important a role in determining purchases as do available economic resources. So the measurement of consumer expectation or the national economy as well as consumers' own resources is an important element of economic forecasting. Another area in which surveys are especially relevant is in the measurement of trends and reactions to them; surveys can be used to assess reactions and responses to things that *might* occur in the future or to different policy options that the government might pursue. This applies equally well to the possibilities of new technologies and how they might affect our daily or working lives.

One special and frequent application of surveys is the collection of data by *media organizations*. Their primary interest is to obtain information that is useful for producing news content to add to their coverage of current events (→ Audience Research). But their dissemination of such information provides important social and political cues about → public opinion to elites as well as a small segment of the general population that is interested in what their fellow citizens think. This can have important effects on subsequent measurements of opinion as well as consequences for specific policies that the government pursues.

Surveys have been an important and growing part of news gathering and social science research for more than 70 years. And increasingly, data from a variety of sources have been saved in data archives where they are available for secondary or extended analysis. As a consequence, more and better data are available for the analysis of trends and the comparison of public opinion across political and media systems for relatively long periods of time. Because of data archiving, it is now possible to trace the development of party systems and party identification across this period in individual countries, across countries that differ in their forms of government, or across countries that differ in their stage of democracy, as just one example. Because of the preservation of surveys in this way, there is an added value to the data for such analyses that is greater than the value for which any single survey was conducted (→ Comparative Research).

## **GENERAL SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

Surveys are appropriately seen as a system for data collection that involves several steps or stages. Among the major steps are selection of a mode of interviewing, sampling, questionnaire design and pre-testing, training of interviewers, preparation of the final questionnaire, fieldwork for data collection, and data analysis (→ Interview, Standardized; Interview, Qualitative; Sampling, Random; Sampling, Nonrandom). In a general sense, a survey involves a sequential process of completing these steps, but there are often iterative stages of the process such as when pre-testing of the questionnaire suggests changes that should be made to it, necessitating an additional pre-test of the new instrument.

### **Mode of Data Collection**

The mode of data collection comes at the front of the sequence because so many other issues follow as a result of this decision. Data can be collected through *face-to-face interviews* where the interviewer and the respondent engage in direct personal contact; this is a useful approach when objects such as handout cards with measurement scales,

illustrations, or photographs can be given to the respondent. It is an expensive form of data collection because of travel costs, especially to revisit or recontact respondents who were not available the first time. Data can also be collected on the *telephone*, which is generally a much less expensive form of data collection because of decreasing phone charges. Telephone interviews are usually shorter and consist primarily of closed-end questions. Interviewers have to read the scale options to the respondents, however, and handouts are obviously impossible. Telephone interviewing can usually be done in a shorter period of time, making it a preferred form of data collection for many applications, because it significantly reduces the possibility of the occurrence of external events impeding data collection in a way that makes the later interviews different from the earlier ones.

*Pencil-and-paper surveys* can be administered in person or by mail. Mail surveys are often employed because they are inexpensive and are sometimes preferred for asking about sensitive topics, because there is no interaction between an interviewer and the respondent. One problem with a pencil-and-paper survey is that the respondents can move back and forward through the questionnaire, trying to bring some consistency to their responses, often changing earlier responses to conform to later ones; this is not possible with face-to-face and telephone interviews. The fact that an interviewer is not present can be a problem if the respondent has a question or needs additional information, as no one is available to answer such a query. Handouts are also a difficulty in this mode for the same reason.

*Surveys on the Internet* are another mode; they permit rapid data collection and are very amenable to the use of examples and illustrations. They can also incorporate the use of color and different kinds of fonts to guide the respondent through the questionnaire. In fact, they can also include embedded video and audio segments, which is not possible with most other forms of data collection. A significant push toward data collection on the Internet is currently underway, primarily because of cost and reduced field periods; but there are also significant methodological issues about other aspects of this mode, primarily because of sampling issues.

Many surveys are increasingly employing a *multimode design*. Studies begin with a face-to-face or mail design, for example, but at the end of the process respondents who are difficult to reach are pursued on the telephone in order to obtain an interview. In some instances, the questionnaire is actually shortened for these late interviews as another accommodation to obtaining the most important measures in the survey.

## Sampling

One reason that the mode of data collection is a primary concern is that so many additional choices are affected by it. Sampling is a prime example. In face-to-face interviews, *multi-stage area probability samples* typically have to be designed, where clusters of households in the same neighborhood are selected in order to reduce travel costs. The design of these samples is laborious and time-consuming.

For telephone surveys, on the other hand, a list of phone numbers can be developed or purchased from a commercial vendor, often on the same day a decision is made to field a study. These samples can have true random dispersion across a nation, for example,



because the call rates are cheaper and do not vary with distance to the same extent that travel costs typically do. Procedures have to be followed to insure that unlisted numbers are incorporated into the sample, but these are now pretty well standardized. The use of mobile phones as the only means of contact is a growing problem in many countries.

In mail surveys, lists of addresses sometimes have to be located and often have to be checked independently for currency. Specific procedures have been developed for pursuing mail surveys that can maximize response rates, often making them comparable with other modes of data collection.

### **Total Survey Error Perspective**

Another advantage of seeing a survey as a process is that it provides the basis for reviewing and controlling potential data quality through a *total survey error (TSE) perspective*. A common misperception is that the main source of error in surveys comes from sampling, including design and coverage issues. This view is fostered by the fact that sampling error is the most easily quantified form of error.

But the TSE approach acknowledges that errors can also derive from poorly worded questions, inadequate training of interviewers, or poor supervision of the interviewing process. The approach also permits available resources to be invested effectively at different stages of the process, often based upon the nature of the topics being covered, in order to reduce likely errors. Every survey involves a series of cost–benefit calculations, usually involving decisions about how much of a limited or fixed budget should be devoted to various steps in the process. In the simplest case, a researcher faces a decision about how many questions to ask (improvement of the measurement or the number of relationships to be investigated) as opposed to how many respondents to interview (greater precision in the estimation process). But the TSE approach adds other possibilities: how much to invest in the training and monitoring of interviewers, as opposed to how often to pre-test the questionnaire, as opposed to how persistent the staff should be in trying to raise the response rate.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND CONDUCT OF SURVEYS**

As the preceding discussion suggests, the organization and management of surveys is a complex and expensive process. As a result, there are very few organizations within any country that can offer on-site services that encompass under their direct supervision all of the steps in the process for different modes of data collection; the capitalization and administrative costs are just too great. This has produced *two trends in the survey industry*: specialization among organizations, by mode and in the production of services, and a movement toward telephone surveys because of an increased ability to cover capital and administrative costs.

Surveys can be pursued in a number of ways, especially since most researchers do not belong to organizations that engage in their own data collection. A researcher can construct a general design of all the elements of a survey and then put the study out for bids, eventually contracting with a firm that offers the best quality within the constraints of the available budget. The services offered range from having the original researcher interact

with the survey organization all the way through the process to simply having a final report and a dataset delivered at the end. Many firms offer a full range of services, although they may not in fact have all of the facilities on site or under their direct supervision. Some firms have developed that specialize in the provision of samples, starting with telephone numbers and increasingly moving toward supplying email addresses from recruited panel participants. Other firms specialize in the production and fielding of questionnaires by operating telephone facilities, direct mail operations, or questionnaire design for computer-aided telephone interviews (CATI) or web-based formats. Smaller numbers of firms offer services such as advanced data analysis facilities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Audience Research ▶ Comparative Research ▶ Election Polls and Forecasts ▶ Election Surveys ▶ Internet ▶ Interview, Qualitative ▶ Interview, Standardized ▶ Marketing ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Public Opinion Polling ▶ Research Methods ▶ Sampling, Nonrandom ▶ Sampling, Random

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## **Suspense**

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Which elements of films, novels, or plays are able to produce suspense in the viewer or reader? (We will use the term “viewer” in the rest of this entry to cover viewers, readers, and users.) This question immediately indicates that the concept of suspense has to be treated on multiple levels because it is a multilayered phenomenon. First, suspense is a cognitive-emotional strategy in the dramaturgy of a written, auditive, audiovisual, or performed “text,” which usually possesses a narrative structure. Second, the recipient has to be able to experience the suspense potential of this text. In order to manage this task, her or his cognitive architecture and socio-emotional as well as motivational makeup have to fulfill specific prerequisites. Finally, if the suspense construction has achieved its effect, the question that follows is which processes take place in the viewer. Usually cognitive analyses of suspense phenomena are carried out by focusing either on the text, as a calculated structural proposal for → information processing by the viewer, or on the viewer’s reception process.

The best-studied case for a suspense-evoking text is a film telling a single narrative, prototypically a thriller in the style of Alfred Hitchcock. This prototype also defines a single genre: suspense (→ Film Genres). But → television serials like *24* also unfold a broad range of (new) suspense-inducing techniques, and suspense may be evoked by non-narrative events, e.g., news stories or sports events.

Most *theories of suspense* concentrate on cognitive structures and functions, but it is not always precisely clear which analytical level is exposed: the text or the viewer's information processing. All cognitive theories of suspense focus on one or another aspect of uncertainty. Suspense will arise if the further development of a plot is uncertain. It will also arise if the possible outcomes for a protagonist in a specific scene are unsure. Some scholars (e.g., Ohler & Nieding 1996) assume that suspense peaks when the odds for a positive or a negative outcome for a protagonist are 50–50; others (e.g., Carroll 1996) assume that the highest degree of suspense will be experienced when one outcome for the protagonist is positive but unlikely and the other bad but highly probable.

*Cognitive approaches* differ in explaining suspense experience via different cognitive processing mechanisms (→ Cognition). Two examples may be mentioned briefly. Gerrig (1996) assumes an analogy with problem-solving processes: viewers will experience more suspense if possible problem solutions for the protagonist have been cut off. Ohler and Nieding (1996) model the experience of suspense using schema theory: viewers will experience more suspense if some slots in the multiple schemas that are activated during story comprehension cannot be filled with values. This effect peaks at the turning points of plots and when the expectations of the viewers are transcended systematically by the suspense narrative.

Other approaches suppose that *emotional processes* play an important role in the experience of suspense (→ Emotion; Affects and Media Exposure). For Zillmann (1996), viewers develop affective dispositions toward protagonists (positive) and antagonists (negative) by salient cues offered from the beginning of a narrative. This leads to reactions of empathic stress when the probability of a liked protagonist's positive outcome in his fight against antagonistic forces is reduced (high subjective certainty of a negative outcome). This is followed by euphoric feelings when the liked protagonist has against all odds been able to overcome the invincible obstacles. The reverse pattern holds for antagonists. The viewer fears their highly probable positive outcomes and is euphoric about their highly improbable failure. The seeming paradox that most viewers like to expose themselves to suspense narrations despite their evocation of dysphoric affects is solved in this approach via Zillman's (1983) → excitation transfer theory.

Vorderer (1996) points out that protagonists are often not portrayed as unambiguously sympathetic. It therefore seems not to be necessary to assign a specific morally good–bad dimension (morally correct but improbable outcome tied to the protagonist) to every scene as Carroll (1996) demands. New serials like *24* prove impressively that Vorderer's claim to replace Zillmann's sympathy variable with one like "viewers' subjectively (parasocial) experienced relationship with protagonists" is very profound.

One specific phenomenon requires special attention: suspense can also arise when you read a book or view a film for the *second time*. Brewer (1996) was able to show that rereading short, written suspense narrations leads to a strong overall reduction in suspense ratings. An interesting question is whether this would also be the case in re-viewing a suspense

thriller. Newer results in the neurosciences concerning mirror mechanisms in the human brain (e.g., Gallese et al. 2004) allow the prediction that viewing a protagonist automatically establishes a neurophysiological internal simulation of his actions and emotions. As a consequence a viewer will experience a higher degree of empathy than will a reader (→ Empathy Theory). Therefore in re-viewing films the suspense experience may be on a higher level.

So far only one compendium of the different approaches to suspense and problems associated with the concept exists (Vorderer et al. 1996).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Affects and Media Exposure ▶ Cognition ▶ Emotion ▶ Empathy Theory  
▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Film Genres ▶ Information Processing ▶ Television

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## **Suspension of Disbelief**

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In general, suspension of disbelief is understood to be an audience's tolerance of the fictionality of media content (→ Fiction). The phrase means that the audience accepts

limitations in the presented story, sacrificing → realism, and occasionally logic and believability, as well as the media content's aesthetic quality for the sake of enjoyment. Originally, the term traces back to the British Romantic and literary critic Samuel T. Coleridge (1772–1834), who used it to describe the necessity for readers of poetry to accept the fictive world proposed in literary work. Although Coleridge proposed suspension of disbelief as a stance a user has to adopt willingly – he speaks of the “willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith” (Coleridge 1960, 169) – in later publications the “willing” is often omitted. Only recently, suspension of disbelief has also been connected with the usage of electronic media such as → virtual realities and movies, or, more generally, of narratives (→ Presence; Cinema; Transportation Theory; Storytelling and Narration).

Since Coleridge had introduced the idea of suspension of disbelief, various authors, especially literary and theatrical scholars, have referred to it again and again. Some of them remained purely descriptive, describing the fundamental idea of suspension of disbelief and the background of Coleridge's thoughts, but without explaining the phenomenon. Others emphasized the → audience's surrendering reality-testing when suspending disbelief (→ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception). Literary scholars in general assume that this abdication of reality-testing is a stance of basic trust users adopt directly before they start reading.

In the field of communication, researchers also refer to the notion of suspension of disbelief. In contrast to the considerations of the literary scholars, however, communication scholars connect suspension of disbelief more closely with the process of using fictional media content, especially narratives. Yet there is some disaccord concerning the usefulness of the construct. While Zillmann (2006) negates the necessity of suspending disbelief for evoking emotional reactions (→ Emotion; Emotions, Media Effects on), the construct's value for → persuasion research is emphasized. Slater and Rouner (2002, 180) argue that suspension of disbelief – which they see as the counterpart of counterarguing, i.e., “the generation of thoughts that dispute or are inconsistent with the persuasive argument” – provides an opportunity to influence individuals who would ordinarily be resistant to persuasion. Similar is the reasoning of Shrum et al. (2005) when connecting suspension of disbelief – which they regard as the reduction of counterarguing – to → cultivation effects (→ Cultivation Theory). The reason for suspending disbelief, or in more general terms not critically evaluating a narrative, is universally seen in the individual's desire not to destroy a pleasurable experience, such as involvement in or transportation into the story (→ Involvement with Media Content). In taking up these considerations, Böcking and Wirth (2005) suggested a tripartite model of narrative processing consisting of the components belief, disbelief, and suspension of disbelief. Belief is understood as a form of uncritical processing of a narrative's content regarding its reality adequacy and plot consistency. On the basis of insights into → information processing it is considered to take place mostly automatically and unconsciously. Disbelief, on the other hand, is the individual's critical thinking about both aspects. It arises if the user notices flaws or inconsistencies in the narrative and considers them to be disturbing. Suspension of disbelief, finally, is the user's not focusing on violations of realism aspects and plot consistency, although he or she has noticed them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Cinema ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Fiction ▶ Information Processing ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Persuasion ▶ Presence ▶ Realism ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Transportation Theory ▶ Virtual Reality

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# **Sustainable Development**

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The idea of sustainable development has, for several decades, held out the promise of reconciling the competing goals of economic growth and environmental preservation. The term proposes that economic growth should not be carried out without consideration of environmental and social concerns. This represents a departure from traditional development thinking that suggests that social and political stability will follow the achievement of a robust economy.

However, sustainable development has been difficult to attain and measure. It has been constrained by diversity of interpretations and definitions of the concept, as well as its application. Further, in practice, critics have noted that sustainable development projects

focus on local-level change and imply that the behavior of the poor is the key problem, not poverty and its causes. As a “new” approach to development, sustainable development, for many, goes no further than traditional paradigms by implying that the poor fail to safeguard the earth for future generations.

### **HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

*Our common future*, the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED 1987, 43), defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (→ Development Institutions). While sustainability typically refers to the more general goal of seeking to use resources and effect change at levels that can be sustained, both suggest that the interconnection across physical, social, and political systems be brought to bear when defining development needs and how best to address them.

The term “sustainable development” gained prominence in international development policy circles following the release of *Our common future* and the significant media attention given to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or “Earth Summit” held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. But, it is important to recognize that both the concept of “sustainable,” and *sustainability* as a practical and policy goal, pre-date these events.

At the 1949 *United Nations Scientific Conference on Conservation and Utilization of Natural Resources*, for example, delegates explored the problem of combining economic growth with sound management of natural resources. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, various attempts to place the environment and concerns for the earth’s carrying capacity on the agenda of major multilateral and international entities emerged from both developed and developing nations. But even during these early discussions, the prospect of reaching equitable global cooperation and intergenerational equity in addressing environmental concerns was considered dubious by many poorer nations. A main concern was that priorities and approaches to sustainable development would likely reflect the needs of the industrialized north and west.

The global *United Nations Conference on the Human Environment* in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972 was pivotal in entrenching the ideas of sustainability in international policymaking. Its goals were, first, to attain greater awareness of and attention to the growing urgency of environmental issues; second, to identify issues and needs that could best be addressed through international cooperation; and third, to achieve common goals and objectives to meet these needs. The main outcome of the Stockholm conference was the declaration of 26 principles that expressed the conference’s call for “Governments and peoples to exert common efforts for the preservation and improvement of the human environment, for the benefit of all the people and for their posterity” (UNEP 1972).

But at a lesser-known meeting held in 1974 in Coyoac, Mexico, delegates (many of whom represented the group of 77 nonaligned and developing nations) raised questions about the viability of these goals within an unequal global structure. Convened jointly by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the conference’s final declaration raised the issue

of environmental justice and connected the goals of safeguarding the natural environment to the global redistribution of economic, political, and social power.

While the Stockholm declaration foregrounded international cooperation, the Cocoyoc statement drew attention to the *relationship between the international economic system and environmental degradation and poverty* in the third world. It noted that growth in the developed world had tended to exact a steep price in nations where, for example, extreme poverty had led people to cultivate crops in destructive ways to meet market demand for cheap raw materials. Problems such as soil erosion, deforestation, rapid urbanization, use of hazardous chemicals, and poor waste management protocols were a direct result of the failure of the global market economy to enable a system in which sustainable and just growth could reasonably be expected. The statement concluded that a new social and economic order would be needed to attain the goals of sustainable development.

The *Brundtland Commission* was attentive to such critiques, noting that concerns for the sustainable use of physical and natural resources demanded greater awareness of social equity between generations *and* between nations. On the basis of this and other recommendations, the UN determined that UNCED would be held in 1992 to further the goals of sustainable development. UNCED was intended to examine the institutional, legal, and political capacities of the global partners committed to making sustainability a reality, but also to address a fundamental conflict between developed and developing nations and the role that this conflict played in preventing implementation of sustainable development in practical terms.

The statement issued following the 1992 Earth Summit identified the establishment of “a new and equitable global partnership through the creation of new levels of cooperation among States, key sectors of societies and people” as the path to the creation of new international agreements that respect all interests and “protect the integrity of the global environmental and developmental systems” (UN 1993, 1). Leaders of 179 governments signed off on Agenda 21, the “blueprint” for actions implementing the Earth Summit goals. Subsequent UNCED conferences held in New York, USA, in 1997 and Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 reaffirmed the resolve of many nations and the UN to achieve sustainable development in the twenty-first century.

The scope of sustainable development has expanded considerably since the 1970s and the term has come to encompass a broad range of concerns. The UN’s 2005 World Summit Outcome Document defined three “interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars” of sustainable development as economic development, social development, and environmental protection, with → UNESCO adding cultural diversity as a fourth aspect, needed for nations and communities to achieve a higher intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual existence.

Outside the arena of international agreements and policy statements, local, national, and international development agencies have integrated sustainability as a criterion for the successful implementation of programs and projects, and it became a powerful development “buzzword” during the 1990s. Many agencies came to demand a “sustainability strategy” in project proposals, for example, to ensure that projects could carry on once funding ended. But viable indicators and measures of sustainability that adequately demonstrate how the concept can be applied in direct, measurable, and appropriate ways continue to elude organizations at both micro- and macro-levels.



## CRITIQUES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development has propelled environmental concerns to the forefront of development discourse and practice. The many meetings, conferences, agencies, and institutions that have formed to promote the concept have led to significant global change, including the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, first signed during the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, upon which the Kyoto Protocol was based.

But the broad and complex goals of sustainable development, presented within a seemingly simple framework, do not lend themselves well to uniform understanding and interpretation. The lack of a widely accepted understanding of what sustainable development entails and how to achieve it seems to be one of only a few key points on which agreement exists. Further, critics suspect that the term has been over-used, poorly understood, and vague. With little common ground on how to best understand and apply the term, a common future seems difficult to achieve.

In the 1980s and 1990s, sustainable development became intellectually and politically allied with other “alternative approaches.” Several of these were characterized by greater attention to the needs and capacities of local communities, such as approaches centered on participation in development (→ Participatory Communication), women in development, and gender and development (→ Development, Gender, and Communication). Others sought distance from the technological-economic focus of the modernization paradigm (→ Modernization), and a more far-reaching and holistic definition that encompasses social, cultural, political, and environmental concerns. However, faith in the guiding role played by mainstream development organizations and the state was not challenged by the ways that the concept was discussed and applied by the large institutions that promoted sustainable development at the program level (Melkote & Steeves 2001). Further, the increasingly interwoven global marketplace brought the multinational corporation into a process that was felt by many to be already dominated by large and powerful institutions.

Although the discourse of sustainable development articulates the need for cooperation across agencies, nations, and communities, the voices that are most closely connected with on-the-ground initiatives are marginalized from discussion at policy and program levels (Escobar 1995; Sachs 1992). Critical scholars remain convinced that urgent environmental limitations and problems threaten the survival of *all* human populations. But the widening gap between rich and poor areas of the world means that these problems pose a greater threat to the poor, and simultaneously hinders them from participating in attempts to meet these challenges (→ Development, Geometry of).

The privilege of designing sustainable approaches to development has tended to be afforded to richer nations, while the responsibilities of implementing these approaches, and living with their implications, falls to the poor (Escobar 1995). Critics have noted that while sustainable development, sustainability, “green” development, and other such approaches articulate greater concerns for the well-being of human populations *and* the natural environment, there is little within them that challenges the normative basis of traditional approaches to development that legitimize economic growth within the system of global capitalism (→ Modernity). “Sustainability in this context does not

involve recognition of the limits of nature and the necessity of adhering to them. Instead, it simply means ensuring the continued supply of raw materials for industrial production, the ongoing flow of . . . commodities [and] the indefinite accumulation of capital” (Shiva 1992, 217).

The Brundtland Commission report argued that sustainable development could be built on new options that enable “change in attitudes and reorientation of policies and institutions” (WCED 1987, 343). As a new approach to development, its architects suggested that it would redress many of the perceived failures of traditional models to address poverty, marginalization of the very poor, of women, and of indigenous and other groups, and increased stress on the environment and natural resources. However, its bias is thought by many to *reproduce* prevailing development models by proposing a new way to manage the environment and the people who are most challenged by its limitations (→ Development Discourse). In other words, the discursive frame or “semantic constellation” of development as a process through which societies and people reach greater potential remains untouched (Sachs 1992, 8).

SEE ALSO: ► Development Discourse ► Development, Gender, and Communication  
► Development, Geometry of ► Development Institutions ► Modernity ► Modernization  
► Participatory Communication ► UNESCO

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# Switzerland: Media System

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Switzerland is a small, federal, non-EU-member country in the center of Europe. It has a population of 7.4 million people, about 21 percent of whom are foreigners, and four official languages, namely German (the first language of 64 percent of the population), French (20 percent), Italian (6.5 percent), and Romansh (0.5 percent). The media inflow from the three big neighboring countries is considerable.

A politically opinionated *press* developed in the nineteenth century in the controversy between the absolutist state and the bourgeois class, then in revolt. A small-scale commercial and party-oriented press was established, as a result of this struggle for autonomy from the state and for press freedom, in the second half of the nineteenth century, although with limited circulation. After this founding phase of liberal and conservative papers, new so-called general advertising journals entered the market, like the *Tages-Anzeiger* in Zurich, still in existence today. At the beginning of the twentieth century, there were about 120 daily newspapers, mostly with local distribution only. The changing society of the 1960s transformed the press in manifold ways: There was a weakening of the former party and confessional ties, together with a transformation toward so-called *forum papers*, expressing the whole variety of existing political opinions in a neutral way. Then there was a first wave of expansion and concentration, together with the total disappearance of the small-scale party press. A second wave of concentration in the 1980s favored the big supra-regional papers with circulations over 100,000, and strengthened a few big multimedia companies. New developments become manifest with the launch of free commuter papers (e.g., *20 Minuten*), which have been surprisingly successful.

The year 1922 was the official beginning of *radio broadcasting* in the city of Lausanne. The pioneering station had already requested a license under the federal telegraph and telephone traffic law that came into effect later in the same year. By 1926, four more radio associations had been founded; these were transformed in 1931 into the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation (Schweizerische Rundfunkgesellschaft, SRG). Due to the multi-language nature of the country the corporation today has four different names: besides the German one, there is the French name, Société Suisse de Radiodiffusion et Télévision, the Italian Società Svizzera di Radio-Televisione, and the Romansh Societad Svizra da Radio e Televisiun.

In 1952 the corporation received a temporary license for broadcasting *television* programs. This license was extended until 1957, when Swiss citizens rejected the anchoring of radio and television in the federal constitution for the first time. Despite the successful diffusion of television and the rapid growth of SRG in the 1960s, it took another 20 years before the broadcasting media obtained a legal foundation, in article 55 *bis* of the Swiss constitution in 1984. Between 1983 and 1988, there was an experimental phase with commercial local radio and television stations.

The SRG still dominates the electronic media, with two television and three radio programs for each language region. The corporation is still in the form of a regional public association, but with a professional organization. In 2005, its share of the

television market in the German part of Switzerland was 35 percent and that of the radio market 62 percent. In addition, there are around 45 local and regional *commercial radio* stations and a smaller number of *commercial TV* stations operating. Most of these private electronic media are owned by regional publishers, and most of these publishing companies also operate online media.

Three articles in the new *federal constitution*, which came into effect on January 1, 2000, are dedicated to the media. Article 16 guarantees the right of the citizens to form, express, and communicate opinions in freedom, and article 17 prohibits censorship and guarantees business freedom for press, radio, and television. Furthermore, article 93 formulates a legal framework for radio and television. (1) The electronic media are subject to federal legislation. (2) They have to make a contribution to education, cultural development, the formation of opinions, and entertainment; to take into account the characteristics of the country and the needs of the cantons; and to represent events factually and express the full diversity of opinions adequately. (3) The independence of radio and television is guaranteed, together with the autonomous creation of programs. (4) The situation and functions of other media, especially the press, have to be respected. (5) Complaints about programs can be submitted to an autonomous complaint commission. This general media political framework is specified in a *federal radio and television law* that came into effect in 2006. It gives substance especially to the performance obligations of public broadcasting, and to the way the supervision and control of programming are organized and handled.

Today in Switzerland about 100 newspapers are published at least four times a week, with a total circulation of about 2.2 million. However, the number of these titles is reduced to 39 if one counts only the general editions and not the local ones. Switzerland has one supra-regional or quality daily (→ Quality Press) in German (*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*) and one in French (*Le Temps*), two supra-regional tabloid papers (*Blick*, *Le Matin*), and one leading forum paper in each of the main regions (e.g., the *Tages-Anzeiger* in Zurich). In addition, there are three weekly political magazines, three Sunday newspapers in German, and other popular magazines, specialized financial papers, and two new free commuter papers. Furthermore, there are many popular and lifestyle magazines available at newsstands, imported mostly from Germany, France, and Italy. In addition, smaller local newspapers are still important within this federally structured and locally oriented country.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► Germany: Media System  
► Public Broadcasting, History of ► Quality Press

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## Symbolic Annihilation

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Symbolic annihilation is used to highlight the erasure of peoples in → popular communication. George Gerbner coined the term to describe the “absence” (1972, 44; Gerbner & Gross 1976; → Gerbner, George), “condemnation,” or “trivialization” (Tuchman 1978, 17) of a particular group in the media. Generally applied to women and racial and sexual minorities, symbolic annihilation points to the ways in which poor media treatment can contribute to social disempowerment and in which symbolic absence in the media can erase groups and individuals from public consciousness.

To illustrate, popular communication often overlooks, stereotypes, or ridicules black people, who have been confined to the roles of coons, mammies, jezebels, brutal bucks, etc. (Bogle 2001). Language use in the media also contributes to the trivialization and condemnation of racial groups such as black people in popular communication. For example, in a critical, cultural analysis of the → news, it was concluded that reporters may ignore the effects of (neo-)colonialism by describing African countries as “third world” and “underdeveloped” rather than “overly exploited.” Comparatively, the US and western Europe are referred to as “first world” and as “superpowers” (Moore 1992). Survey research has exposed how Native Americans also experience symbolic annihilation through absence (→ Survey). However, when included, Native Americans are treated by the media as a monolithic group of “Indians” – lazy, savage, stupid, drunk, etc. (Merskin 1998). Arabs, too, experience representational absence and condemnation. They are largely invisible unless they are depicted as villains, terrorists, sexually wanton women, or corrupt oil sheikhs (Shaheen 2001). Symbolic annihilation has been extended to examine, for example, academic literature and census reports where distinct racial and ethnic groups such as Eskimos, Aleuts, and Native Americans have been homogenized and thus symbolically annihilated through the use of categories and descriptors such as “Non-Whites” (Ohye & Daniel 1999).

A discursive analysis of the news and popular → magazines reveals that racial groups escape condemnation only when aligned with the purported value system of “Americanized whiteness,” as witnessed by the model-minority → stereotype of economic success some Asian-Americans encounter (Chen 2004). Otherwise, Asian-Americans face symbolic annihilation as ruthless gang or “triad” members, whose primary contribution to culture is the martial arts (think *The Karate Kid*). The media are becoming aware of their power to influence the public’s knowledge and beliefs about races and ethnicities. As a result, media disclaimers stating that images do not represent any particular racial or ethnic group have been linked to the films *Godfather* (Italians), *Scarface* (Cubans), and *Year of the Dragon* (Chinese; → Media and Group Representations).

While the assumptions underlying the development and application of symbolic annihilation are key to our understanding of the relationship between media and social reality, in the scholarly literature they have not been well interrogated. While Gerbner and Gross (1976) simply repeat Gerbner’s basic definition of symbolic annihilation, their beliefs about the relationship between media and reality differ in subtle but important ways. Gerbner’s (1972) chapter explicitly situates the media as symbolic agents that do not mirror society but operate to maintain power; Gerbner and Gross (1976) suggest that because → television content is presented in a context of realism, viewers will regard it as such (→ Cultivation Theory). The combined effect of its underlying assumptions and its frequent use as shorthand for “bad representation” is that symbolic annihilation is limited in its ability to address more complex popular communication representational concerns. For example, non-stereotypical and seemingly “positive” television → situation comedy characters such as the African-Americans Julia of *Julia* and the Huxtables of *The Cosby Show* have been criticized for being “white Negroes” and assimilationist (Jhally & Lewis 1992). Symbolic annihilation as a concept is ill equipped to address nuanced representational concerns.

Still, symbolic annihilation’s strong connotation should prompt important questions regarding the relationship between representations of race, media ownership, and racial groups’ participation in image-making (→ Identity Politics). Overall, the concept of symbolic annihilation of race is powerful in that it elucidates exceptionally well the destructive consequences of poor or absent media attention. When using this compelling turn of phrase, scholars must continue to interrogate more broadly how infrequent and inadequate depictions contribute to groups’ social and political efficacy and how these depictions might be remedied.

SEE ALSO: ► Cultivation Theory ► Gender: Representation in the Media ► Gerbner, George ► Identity Politics ► Magazine ► Media and Group Representations ► News ► Popular Communication ► Situation Comedies ► Stereotypes ► Survey ► Television

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## Symbolic Convergence Theory

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Symbolic convergence theory (SCT), a general communication theory (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy), explains the emergence of a common symbolic consciousness – one that contains shared meanings, → emotions, values, and motives for human action – among participants in a small group (→ Group Communication), organization (→ Organizational Communication), or other rhetorical community. SCT, as developed by Ernest Bormann, John Cragan, and Donald Shields, among others, is a message-centered theory grounded through the observation of symbolic facts in communication. Observers noted the sharing of dramatized messages, called fantasy themes, within small-group communication, in mediated communication, and among the communicating memberships of organizations and other large publics (→ Rhetoric and Narrativity; Storytelling and Narration). Within each context, researchers found that people shared, reiterated, and wove fantasy themes to form a larger, more complex view of reality called a *rhetorical vision* (e.g., the Cold War, global warming, or neo-conservatism). A *rhetorical vision* contains many fantasy themes that depict heroes and villains in dramatic action within a scene. Within a group such a vision establishes identity, cohesion, and culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

People create and reproduce fantasy themes in conversations – the hallmark of human communication (→ Language and Social Interaction). Fantasy themes often ignite, catch up others, and chain out from person to person within a group or community. People share rhetorical fantasies to account for human experience, repeat them, embellish them, and accept them as their view of reality. The rhetorical principles of novelty, critical mass, and channel access advance symbolic convergence. Symbolic cues, fantasy types, and sagas are specialized fantasy themes. A *symbolic cue* is a shorthand, rhetorical indicant that stands for a fantasy theme (such as a group’s inside joke of “U\$A” for materialist America). A *fantasy type* is a stock scenario that explains new events in a well-known dramatic form, such as Watergate becoming Iran-gate or Whitewater-gate for groups of news reporters explaining new instances of governmental corruption and cover-up. Similarly the initial “perfect storm” material fact, made famous in the book and film of the same name, now denotes new symbolic facts in which a complex series of unlikely events come together to cause economic disruption, political upheaval, educational turmoil, etc. A *saga* is the repeated telling of the achievements in the life of a person, group, community, organization, or nation, such as, in the USA, the *genesis* saga of the first “Thanksgiving.”

SCT’s message-structure concepts include a rhetorical vision’s *dramatis personae*, scene elements, plotline depictions, and sanctioning agent(s). *Rhetorical visions* reflect a life cycle containing stages in which consciousness is created (birth), is raised (critical mass), is sustained (repetition, reconfiguration, and embellishment to maintain commitment), declines (loss of interest or links to reality), and reaches a terminus (implosion). Rhetorical visions exist along pure-to-mixed, inflexible-to-flexible, intense-to-passive, secretive-to-proselytizing, and paranoid-to-healthy continua. Other concepts flesh out the message structure of a rhetorical vision. The *dramatis personae* are fantasy theme depictions of the characters in the vision. *Scene* is found by looking for fantasy themes that detail the symbolic location of the action portrayed in the vision (such as “a smoke-filled room”). *Plotline* is to be found in those fantasy themes that portray the action of the vision, such as “restoration” or a “new day.” The *sanctioning agent* (e.g., “God,” “the Constitution,” or a “code of ethics”) is specified in those rhetorical fantasies that legitimize the vision’s symbolic reality. SCT’s dynamic concepts are the warring righteous, social, and pragmatic master analogs undergirding rhetorical visions. *Righteous* visions depict the correct or moral way of doing things, *social* visions portray a humane or compassionate way, and *pragmatic* visions present an efficient or cost-effective way. The communicator structure concepts are *fantasizers*, who co-join in dramatizing; a *rhetorical community* or group made up of the adherents to a rhetorical vision; *communication style*, or the broad language use of a rhetorical group or community; and *propensity to fantasize*, or the ease with which people use dramatized messages. The media that help propagate symbolic convergence are the small-group and public interaction processes that promote fantasy-chaining (repetition, embellishment, reiteration) and thus convergence and acceptance of the dramatized message.

SCT posits three evaluative concepts. *Fantasy theme artistry* prompts one to judge the rhetorical novelty, consistency, and creativity of fantasy themes, symbolic cues, fantasy types, and sagas. *Shared group consciousness* reminds those using SCT to check for the occurrence of convergence by identifying fantasy themes that are created, told, embellished, reconfigured, and reiterated by the members of a rhetorical group. *Fantasy theme–*



*reality links* tie rhetorical visions and rhetorical fantasies to the objective reality of the authentic record and material facts. Such links remind those using SCT to assess the → sense-making capacity of fantasy themes and rhetorical visions present in group or public communication.

SCT's attendant qualitative method (→ Rhetorical Criticism; Qualitative Methodology) is called fantasy theme analysis (FTA). The fantasy theme is the basic analytical unit when conducting an FTA. The fantasies one is searching for are rhetorical in nature (in the words) as opposed to psychoanalytic (in the subconscious) or psychological (in daydreams). One knows a rhetorical fantasy by its qualities, whether substantive (actual content of a theme, type, cue, or saga), structural (a rhetorical vision's dramatis personae, plotline, scene, sanctioning agent) or stylistic (the linguistic dress of a fantasy theme, such as an animated, boisterous, chaining fantasy in small-group communication or an embellished, repeated, or reconfigured fantasy in public communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Emotion ▶ Group Communication ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Organizational Communication ▶ Persuasion ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Rhetoric and Narrativity ▶ Rhetorical Criticism ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Storytelling and Narration

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# Symbolic Interaction

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Symbolic interactionism is a sociological theory that emphasizes the centrality of meaning, interaction, and human agency in social life. This theory emerged out of the American philosophical tradition of → pragmatism, an approach developed in the late nineteenth century by Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey. Challenging the assumptions of classical rationalism, these scholars saw “reality” as dynamic and pluralistic, viewed people as actors rather than reactors, tied human meanings to social acts and perspectives, and regarded knowledge as a key resource for addressing problems and improving the social world.

## FOUNDING FIGURES

John Dewey, who emphasized the importance of human communication, had a profound intellectual impact on several of his colleagues at the University of Chicago, particularly George Herbert Mead, who was a friend and fellow philosopher. Drawing on Dewey’s ideas, as well as the related insights of Charles Darwin, Charles Horton Cooley, and Wilhelm Wundt, Mead revealed how human consciousness, selfhood, and behavior are grounded in and emerge out of processes of symbolic interaction, or communication.

Mead stressed that human beings are distinct from other creatures because they have the capacity for language and thus can think, reason, communicate, and coordinate their actions with others. While these abilities rely on certain biological characteristics, Mead suggested that humans have evolved in a way that has freed them from some of the constraints of other animals and allowed them to create social worlds separate from the demands of nature. Unlike other animals, which respond to one another primarily through instinctive gestures, such as chirps, growls, or nips, people communicate through exchanging symbols. When using words or gestures that call forth the same meaning for others as they do for themselves, people employ “significant symbols.” According to Mead, most interactions among human beings are based on the exchange of significant symbols. As a result, these interactions require the persons involved to engage in complex processes of interpretation, role-taking, and negotiation.

Mead presented his distinctively sociological account of human consciousness and behavior in a series of classroom lectures that became the foundation for his most famous book, *Mind, self, and society* (1934). His ideas impressed many of his students, most notably Herbert Blumer, who later became a prominent sociologist. Blumer originally coined the term “symbolic interactionism” while writing an essay on social psychology for a social science text in 1937. In that essay, Blumer emphasized how Mead’s work provided a foundation for a new social psychological approach that could transcend the two dominant approaches of the time – behaviorism and evolutionary theory. In turn, Mead is usually credited as the founder of symbolic interactionism, even though Blumer’s analysis drew heavily on the ideas of other theorists and, according to some critics, differed in important respects from Mead’s approach.

### GUIDING PREMISES AND ASSUMPTIONS

In the 1960s, Blumer (1962, 1969) articulated three key premises that serve as the cornerstones of the symbolic interactionist perspective. The first premise is that people act toward things on the basis of the meanings they have for them. The second is that the meanings of such things are derived from people's interactions with others. The third is that these meanings are managed and transformed through the processes of interpretation and self-reflection that people use to make sense of and handle the things they encounter. Embracing these premises and reflected in most interactionist analyses are the following orienting assumptions.

- 1 *People are unique creatures because of their ability to use symbols.* Guided by Mead and the pragmatist founders, symbolic interactionists stress the significance of people's symbolic capacities. Because people rely upon symbols, they do not simply react to stimuli; instead, they give → meanings to the stimuli they experience and then act in terms of these meanings. Their behavior is thus distinctively different from that of other animals or organisms, who act in a more instinctive or reflex-based manner. As Blumer pointed out, things do not have intrinsic meaning. Rather, the meanings of things are learned through, and arise out of, social interaction. Through communication, people learn how to define and act toward the objects and experiences that make up their environment. In essence, they learn to respond to symbolically mediated "realities" – realities that are socially constructed.
- 2 *People are conscious and self-reflexive beings who actively shape their own behavior.* The most important capacities that people develop through their involvement in society, which exists in and through communication (Dewey 1916), are the "mind" and the "self." As Mead (1934) observed, humans form minds and selves through the processes of communication and role-taking: individuals develop the capacity to see and respond to themselves as objects and, thus, to interact with themselves, or think. Because people can think, they have a notable degree of autonomy in forming and directing their actions. Through thinking, individuals actively shape the meaning of things in their worlds, accepting them, rejecting them, or changing them in accord with how they define and respond to them. A person's behavior, then, is constructed, on the basis of which stimuli and objects she or he takes into account and how she or he defines them. This implied voluntarism does not mean that interactionists think people's actions are unaffected by forces beyond their control. In fact, interactionist scholars highlight how a variety of social factors, such as language, culture, class, ethnicity, and gender, constrain people's interpretations and behaviors.
- 3 *People are purposive creatures who act in and toward situations.* Interactionists have illustrated how people's actions and interactions are based on the meanings they attribute to the situation in which they find themselves. This "definition of the situation" emerges out of their communications with others. Individuals determine the meaning of a situation (and their subsequent actions) by taking account of others' intentions, actions, and expressions. As people negotiate and establish a definition of a situation, they also decide what goals to pursue in that situation. Once they begin acting, individuals may encounter obstacles and contingencies that obstruct or divert

them from their original objectives and direct them toward new ones. People's goals, actions, feelings, and communications are thus mutable and emergent. They can make ongoing adjustments in thought, feeling, and behavior, and they can create new ways of thinking, feeling, and acting as they respond to changing circumstances. Above all, people "can modify the social matrices within which they act, and thus . . . are agents of change" (Maines 2001, xiii).

- 4 *The "social act" should be the fundamental unit of research analysis.* Interactionists contend that the "social act," or what Blumer called joint action, should be the central focus of social scientific study. A social act refers to behavior that in some way takes account of others and is guided by what they do; it is formulated so that it fits together with the behavior of another person, group, or social organization. It also depends on and emerges through processes of communication and interpretation. This covers a broad spectrum of human conduct, ranging from a kiss, a punch, and a medical exam to a sermon, a baseball game, and an international war. Whenever people orient themselves to others and their actions, regardless of whether they are trying to hurt, help, convert, or destroy these others, they are taking part in a social act. In doing so, they may be acting as individuals or as representatives of a larger group or organization.
- 5 *To understand people's social acts, researchers need to use methods that enable them to discern the meanings people attribute to these acts.* Because interactionists emphasize that people act on the basis of the meanings they give to things in the world, they believe that researchers must become familiar with the worlds of meaning inhabited by the individuals or groups they choose to study. More specifically, researchers must "take the role of" the social actors they are investigating, immersing themselves in their everyday worlds and discourse, and observing their interactions in an unobtrusive way (→ Emic vs Etic Research). Through adopting this approach, researchers can better understand and describe how these social actors define, communicate, and act toward the "realities" that constitute their daily worlds.

## **INTERACTIONISM AND COMMUNICATION STUDIES**

The following discussion highlights three of several significant arenas of interactionist research in communication studies.

### **Self-Development, Self-Presentation, and Emotion Work**

Guided by Mead's insights, interactionist analysis has always emphasized the social and communicative roots of the self, revealing how individuals acquire the capacity for self-reflexivity through their symbolic interactions with others. Interactionists have also highlighted the dialectical relationship of the self and communication, noting that while the self emerges and develops through communication with others, it also directs a person's communications with others and informs his or her interpretations of their communicative responses.

In elaborating the dynamic interplay between the self and communication, some interactionists have focused attention on how people construct and stage selves in specific

situations. Following Erving Goffman (1959), these scholars have proposed that social life is analogous to the theater, with people being much like actors on a stage. To express and realize desired selves, people must translate their intentions, feelings, and self-images into communicable form, engaging in elaborate rituals and drawing on a variety of dramaturgical resources, including words, gestures, props, scenery, scripts, clothing, and other features of their appearance. In doing so, people participate in the arts of impression management, tailoring their role performances to communicate their intentions, understandings, and preferred identities to the audience in a given situation.

In recent years, interactionists have extended Goffman's dramaturgical approach, elaborating the dynamics of *identity work*, or the techniques actors use to create and sustain identities, both individually and collectively (Benford & Hunt 1992; Sandstrom et al. 2002; Snow & Anderson 1993). These researchers have illustrated how individuals and groups draw on various resources (ideologies, rhetorics, and support networks), interactional strategies (scripting, passing, covering), and forms of talk (distancing, disavowal, embracement, and fictive storytelling) to announce and preserve cherished identities. Some interactionists have also highlighted how people manage and communicate *feelings* in their ongoing identity work, using emotions as strategic methods in their daily interactions. As Hochschild (1983) observed, individuals learn the feeling rules that prevail in their groups and develop skills in two forms of emotion work: "surface acting" (acting as if they feel a particular way, even if they do not) and "deep acting" (calling forth the feelings and feeling displays expected in the situation and suppressing emotions or emotional displays deemed to be inappropriate). Drawing on these skills, individuals proactively control their bodily sensations and emotional experiences. They respond to their emotions as social objects – objects they can shape and manipulate not only to meet others' expectations, but also to influence and direct others' responses. Emotions, then, become a vital channel of communication through which people convey and negotiate definitions of self, others, and situations.

### **Narrative Constructions of Emotion, Identity, and Biography**

While some interactionists focus on how people manage and display their emotions in social interactions, others investigate how emotions are felt by individuals as bodily experiences that affect one's existence and self-understandings. As Denzin (1983) proposes, emotion is *self-feeling*, affecting a lived body and given meaning by a reflexive actor. Emotion represents a window into the self, grounded in felt experience, which connects the individual to a larger community.

To appreciate the personal and interpersonal implications of emotion, a group of interactionists have developed a methodological strategy known as "auto-ethnography," which refers to the study of oneself and one's own experiences, including one's feelings. Drawing in part on introspective strategies used in the early 1900s by scholars such as Charles Horton Cooley, these interactionists seek not only to enhance their self-understandings, but also to extend the boundaries of ethnography and communication studies, particularly by offering unique insights gleaned from a self-reflexive and sociologically informed reading of one's own life. One prominent scholar employing this approach is Carolyn Ellis. She has crafted several auto-ethnographies, including a poignant account of her

partner's illness and eventual death (Ellis 1995). Ellis wrote this auto-ethnography in an effort to examine and convey how individuals (beginning with herself) come to terms with grief, loss, and life-threatening illness.

Other auto-ethnographers have addressed a variety of topics, ranging from struggles with bulimia or cancer to experiences working as an erotic dancer. Above all, in doing auto-ethnography, these scholars seek to illustrate alternative possibilities for methodological practice and expression. They also privilege emotional evocation over analytic abstraction; that is, they seek to engage readers personally, moving them to resonate with the sorrows and triumphs of others and, in so doing, to *feel* a sense of caring, desire, or connection. These writers want to help readers not only to resonate with the experiences and biographies of others, but also to use these experiences and biographies to reflect on their own, thereby enhancing their capacity to cope with life's complexities, ambiguities, and contingencies (Ellis & Bochner 1996).

In addition to resurrecting and refining auto-ethnography, interactionists have developed or extended a number of other ethnographic methods, including narrative analysis, discourse analysis, ethnographic content analysis, and interpretive biography (→ Qualitative Methodology). In the process, they have illuminated the formulae, institutional discourses, media formats, and information technologies that individuals draw upon as they construct narratives of identity and biography. They have also revealed the "rhetorics of self-change" that often inform and shape people's stories of identity transformation (Frank 1993).

### Media Logic, Formats, and Frames

Interactionists are often criticized for having a micro-level orientation but, because they focus above all on social acts, they do not limit themselves to investigating the emotions, behaviors, and discourse of individuals or small groups. While they sometimes study these phenomena, interactionists also examine the outlooks, actions, and communications of crowds, political parties, school systems, hospitals, corporations, occupational groups, and social movements. In addition, they devote significant research attention to the conduct and communications of the mass media, and to the impact that prevailing media formats have on social perspectives and practices.

In their analyses of the mass media, interactionists have been guided by *three key foci*. First, they have investigated the processes and practices through which journalists and other media workers construct the news. In doing so, they have shown how an organized production process directs news reporting and programming, as well as entertainment programming. One of the central aspects of this production process is the development and use of *formats*, or rules and codes for selecting, organizing, and presenting information that shape audience assumptions and preferences (Altheide 2002). Interactionists have highlighted how people learn these formats and, most crucially, come to expect that events and issues will fit with them and have a "proper media look" (Altheide & Snow 1991). In essence, people learn to gauge the importance of an issue or event as much by the structure and organization of the messages about it as by the content of those messages.

Second, and relatedly, interactionists have examined how prevailing media formats, as well as the → media logic that informs them, have altered social assumptions, institutions, and relationships. “Media logic” has become a way of seeing and defining reality in contemporary societies. People tend to trust that they can express and interpret the events of their everyday lives through media formats and information technologies (Altheide & Snow 1991). Moreover, the nature and practices of social institutions, including religion, politics, sports, education, and news, are affected by media logic and technologies. For example, wars and natural disasters have become television events, major sporting events have become media spectacles, and many church services and classroom lectures have become multimedia productions.

Finally, interactionists have investigated how media frames shape the public parameters for interpreting specific events, particularly social problems and issues. As David Altheide has noted, the entertainment format of news has, in many ways, given rise to the “problem frame.” This frame is an important innovation that satisfies the entertainment emphasis that now permeates the news, promoting fear and victimization as widely recognized social realities. According to Altheide (2002, 47), the news media have created the problem frame as “an organizational solution to a practical problem: How can we make real problems seem interesting? Or, how can we produce news reports compatible with entertainment formats?”

What makes interactionist analyses of the mass media distinctively different from other approaches is that they study → “media effects” in terms of the logic, assumptions, and perspectives that individuals share with others because of media logic and frames. These analyses also focus on the interaction between media and non-media segments of society, concentrating on how specific features of media logic, conveyed in media formats, intersect with particular institutional practices to produce and reproduce a media culture. In examining these themes, interactionists reject approaches that construct media audiences as passive entities who are conditioned by media messages. Instead, they stress that audiences are active interpreters who can disregard, reject, or reshape media messages (→ Interactivity in Reception), although their interpretations are influenced by the broader media logic and formats they share with communicators.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Emic vs Etic Research ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Logic ▶ Pragmatism ▶ Qualitative Methodology

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## Symbolic Politics

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In habitual language use, symbolic politics means a publicly displayed deception or surrogate action that is used to detract from actual political reality. In this sense symbolic politics is considered to be a surrogate for politics. Symbolic politics differs from substantial policy. As a policy of → signs (terms and slogans, badges, banners and pictures, gestures, ritual acts, and political staging), symbolic politics evolves in a semantic field. Substantial policy, by contrast, consists of a revisable succession of political decisions (e.g., legislation, contracts, taxes, etc.). Symbolic politics and substantial policy can be related to each other. On the one hand, symbolic politics can have an impact on substantial policy. On the other hand, substantial policy can be communicated, implemented, or averted by symbolic politics.

The negative connotation of symbolic politics, which is meanwhile consolidated in public opinion, does not correspond to the more sophisticated view of symbolic politics in → cultural studies and social sciences, for symbolic politics in a broader sense also means the strategic use of signs to meet society's requirements of political orientation. Attention may be attracted; willingness for political action, loyalty, or protest may be shown by symbolic politics. In the process, the symbolic worth of signs is converted into political power.

Symbolic politics is part of → political communications and, for this reason, an element of a → sense-making process (→ Symbolism). The use of symbols in politics is the expression of a fight for a certain political view of life. Thus, questions of domination or subordination are concerned, tending to unilaterally implement or achieve by mutual agreement what should be generally binding. Symbolic politics as a strategic use of symbolic instruments in politics does not simply aim at achieving → interaction. It is



neither decorative attachment nor ideological ballast, in contrast to “real” politics, but rather an integral part of political communications and thereby of policy in general.

An important impetus to international debate about symbolic politics was given by Murray Edelman in his works *The symbolic uses of politics* (1964) and *Politics as symbolic action: Mass arousal and quiescence* (1971). He understands political actions as playing certain roles, which find their expression in dramatic performances, rituals, and symbols (→ Political Symbols). In his analysis he connects subjective and intersubjective forms of interpretive patterns (micro-phenomena) with the production of binding political decisions (macro-phenomena). Referring to → Walter Lippmann’s classical study of → public opinion (1922), Edelman’s conclusions rest on the premise that politics are too complex to be accessible to the general public. Instead, a surrogate world of political → spectacles as a set of symbols and signifiers is constructed. Yet symbolic politics could refer to objective reality (“referential symbols”). But then there are “condensation symbols” that deceive about reality. Permanently installed democratic rituals encourage the belief in political participation and rationally founded acts of state, even though they are instruments of political “quiescence.” Political elites use language and symbols as instruments of manipulation shaping citizens’ realities, how they think and feel about politics (→ Political Language).

There has been little success within the critical debate initiated by Edelman in correlating the assumed real politics and their legitimation by symbolic politics. Furthermore, symbolic politics has to deal with collective actors and institutions that are symbolic regimes themselves, being central elements in forming, stabilizing, and transforming social relationships. Symbolic politics is successful if it refreshes a specific repertoire of interpretation that can be affiliated to the culture of political interpretation or “symbolic space” (Bourdieu 1991). So symbolic politics in the sense of pseudo-politics is just a special case of a basal aspect of political acting, which always has instrumental and expressive parts.

Four fundamental functions of symbolic politics can be defined (see Sarcinelli 1987). (1) Symbolic politics has a *signal function*, attracts attention, breaches routines for providing or placing information, organizes the perception of politics, and thus contributes to the reliability of behavior. (2) By decreasing complexity it provides a *regulator* to cope with the mass of information. (3) It not only aims to denominate political circumstances but is also *part of the political fight* for the disposal of denomination. (4) By perceiving symbols in a mode of suggestive immediacy, it not only addresses rationality but *activates* → *emotions*.

Symbolic politics is policy and as such neither principally good nor principally bad. It is an essential component of political communication and not just the invention of a media society (→ Media Democracy). Yet modern mass media, through their omnipresence and visual presentation formats, provide means of influence and “symbolic power” (Bourdieu 1991) that have never before been available in history. But it would be a misunderstanding if symbolic politics were regarded in a dualistic frame as being a phenomenon of political acting on stage while “real” politics are seen as taking place backstage. Politics, including symbolic politics, is played on many different stages at the same time. In this action politicians can only succeed if they know how to play different roles and are able to use symbolic politics.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Emotion ▶ Interaction ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media Democracy ▶ Political Communication ▶ Political Language ▶ Political Symbols ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Sense-Making ▶ Sign ▶ Spectacle ▶ Symbolism

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## **Symbolism**

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Symbols are linguistic devices in which complex, culturally specific meanings are communicated simply. Nearly all human utterance is in some ways symbolic, and for many who study communication, symbolizing is the most fundamental attribute of being human (Burke 1966). Peirce defines a symbol as “a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object” (1965, 143). In other words, when cultural conventions define how a → sign is to be associated with an idea or object, then that sign is a symbol. Generally, the connection between signifier and signified in a symbol is arbitrary, necessitating a cultural context for understanding. Because nearly every image has symbolic aspects, symbols are especially important in the visual media (→ Visual Communication).

As in the Magritte painting entitled *Ceci n'est pas une Pipe*, which depicts a pipe yet declares “this is not a pipe,” all communication stands in for something else: nothing is precisely equivalent to what it conveys. With symbols, a simple object represents something complex. Therefore, understanding how a symbol conveys → meaning is essential to making sense of it. As Eliade states, symbols express “a complex system of coherent affirmations about the ultimate reality of things, a system that can be regarded as constituting a metaphysics. It is, however, essential to understand the deep meaning of all these symbols . . . in order to succeed in translating them into our habitual language” (1974, 3). For Jung (1980), a symbol is at once familiar and alien, an everyday, conventional use of language (→ Rhetoric and Language) that is filled with connotations far beyond its denotative simplicity. In fact, the power of symbols is their ability to express complex concepts simply through “deep meaning” extraction.

In → semiotic terms, *symbolism is a type of sign* where the following conditions generally pertain: (1) the symbolic signifier is substantially different from the signified by type and

Table 1 Types of symbol

Signified	Iconic	Metonymic	Representational	Lexical
Narrative	Star of David	Cross	Crucifix	“Darmok”
Affect	Color blue	Smiley face	Sims diamond	Emoticon
Idea or ideology	Swastika	Crown	Statue	“We the people”
Place	Flag	Bear	Maps	“Purple mountains’ majesty”

domain; (2) the relationship between the symbolic signifier and signified is asserted, not natural or intrinsic; (3) a cultural  $\rightarrow$  code is needed to extract the signified from the signifier; (4) this signified is commonly a narrative, an affect, an idea or ideology, and/or a place – symbols often evoke many of these signifieds simultaneously; (5) the device of the symbolic signifier is metonymic, iconic, representational, or lexical – indexical signifiers are not generally associated with symbols except through the most basic level of symbolic embodiment, e.g., onomatopoeia, or through naturally occurring symbols, such as smoke denoting fire; (6) the symbolic signified is not otherwise easily represented; and (7) the symbolic sign is especially connotative, conjuring expansive meaning from a simple denotation.

## SYMBOL TYPES

Symbols can be divided into various types based on the relationships between their signifiers and signifieds, as illustrated in Table 1.

*Iconic symbols* are those where the signifier has a strictly arbitrary relationship to the signified ( $\rightarrow$  Iconography). An example of an iconic narrative symbol is the Star of David, a shape that conveys the history of a people that is not specifically a narrative element. An example of an iconic affect symbol is the color blue, meant to convey sadness, but unrelated to that mood. A swastika is an example of an iconic ideology symbol, intrinsically unrelated to the Nazi ideology it has come to signify, while a plus symbol (+) is a signifier of the idea of addition in mathematics. A flag is an iconic place signifier because its colors and pattern have no intrinsic relationship to what they represent.

*Metonymic symbols* are those where the signifiers embody a particular aspect or attribute of the signified, using that aspect to stand in for the whole ( $\rightarrow$  Metonymy). A cross, for example, is an element in the Christian crucifixion narrative that has come to stand in for all of that narrative. A yellow “smiley” is an indication of happiness that reduces the emotion to one indicator of it, a smile. An example of an ideological metonym is a crown, which is one thing worn by a monarch but signifies the monarchy. A bear is sometimes used as a metonymic symbol of Russia, though a bear is just one of many species found there. A sound can also serve as an iconic or metonymic symbol. For example, the ringing of a bell is an icon that can symbolize the serving of dinner, and the sound “hiss” is an onomatopoeic symbol for a snake that is also a metonym of the sound a snake makes.

*Representational symbols* are those where the signifiers illustrate narrative elements of the signified. Unlike a cross, a crucifix is an illustration of a part of the story in the Christian narrative, not merely an artifact within it. In the computer game “The Sims,” a

rotating diamond levitates over the heads of the characters, symbolizing their mood: green means happy, red means miserable, and so on. A civic statue is often a representational symbol that embodies an idea or ideology, such as the golden statue of Kim Il-Sung in Pyongyang. Maps are a representational symbol of place because the images on a map correspond to and illustrate geographic features.

*Lexical symbols* are those where words or sounds, rather than images, are used as signifiers. An episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* called “Darmok” illustrates lexical symbols. The human crew of a space ship encounters space aliens with whom they find it impossible to communicate. The alien captain keeps saying things that seem nonsensical to the humans, for example “Darmok and Jalad at Tenagra.” It turns out that these phrases are lexical symbols that refer to particular stories in the alien’s mythology. The whale Moby-Dick from Melville’s novel is an example of a particularly complex lexical symbol whose signifier has many signifieds. The whale can be seen as the embodiment of fruitless quests, Ahab’s madness, the greatest glory, a competing god, evil personified, or other signifieds. In a more simple way, phrases like “it was a dark and stormy evening” are used to represent emotions, phrases like “we the people” are used to represent ideologies, and phrases like “purple mountains’ majesty” are used to represent a place.

## DECODING SYMBOLS

For Peirce (1965), symbols find their origins in and evolve from indexical and iconic utterances, relying on complex interactions of sign systems known within a cultural context. As such, symbols are generally *polysemic*, which means they are open to divergent interpretations. The polysemic nature of symbols comes from their unique occurrence within their connectedness to the culture and to other symbols. For example, the swastika in Europe has a very different meaning than it does in India. This is in part because different users of the symbol use it differently. Saussure (1959) examined how symbols emerge from a language (*langue*) but iterate as a single utterance (*parole*) – each utterance relates back to the pre-existing language but also modifies and adds to it.

Hence, the pop singer Madonna’s use of a Christian crucifix in the music video “Like a Prayer” as a single utterance both relies on and inverts the symbol as found in the *langue*. Other uses of a crucifix are more conventional, yet still unique, utterances of the language of the crucifix symbol, such as a highly stylized crucifix that might be found in a modern church or the crucifixion scene in Salvador Dali’s painting *Christ of Saint John of the Cross*. To use Stuart Hall’s (1980) taxonomy of codes, Madonna’s might be considered an oppositional reading of the crucifix symbol, because it rejects the dominant understanding of its meaning; Dali’s painting is an example of a negotiated reading of the symbol because it modifies it into a different context; and the hanging of the crucifix in a church is an example of a hegemonic reading, because it reinforces the dominant sense of its meaning.

The Tibetan Buddhist mandala is an example of a symbol where the correct cultural code, and therefore a prescribed manner of decoding, becomes essential. Over a period of many days, Tibetan monks construct an elaborate depiction of the cosmos out of brightly colored sand, one grain at a time. Upon its completion, the ornate mandala symbol is ceremonially swept away to become a pile of brown dust. To western observers, whose system of symbols and myths prizes eternity, this gesture of destruction can be perplexing

and meaningless, because of the destruction of a time-consuming work of art. To Buddhists, the destruction of the mandala is inextricably part of the mandala, because it symbolizes the temporal nature of existence: nothing, not even the cosmos, is permanent.

### SYMBOLS IN CONTEXT

The specificity of meaning of a symbol varies with its level of analysis. Morris (1970) divides the way signs are understood into three categories: semantics, which examines the relationship between a signifier and what it signifies; syntactics, which examines the relationship between signs in formal structures; and pragmatics, which examines the relationship of signs to those who interpret them. Applying this to symbolism, the semantics of symbols relate to how they are constructed within a cultural context (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts), the syntactics of symbols relate to how they are used linguistically, and the pragmatics of symbols relate to how symbols are understood. Put another way, cultures create genres of symbols, artists and authors create linguistic uses of symbols, and readers create interpretations of symbols. Therefore, → genre theory, auteur theory, and reception theory are all useful approaches to understanding how symbols function.

Substantial literature exists in two of these three domains. Anthropological and psychological approaches focus primarily on the cultural role of symbols. Literary and artistic approaches focus primarily on interpreting symbols created by individual artists and authors. The communication field has done more work on reader responses to symbolism than most other fields, and there are numerous examples of symbolic meaning being created by users. Examples include the symbolism of Paul McCartney's alleged demise found on the *Abbey Road* album cover, of drug use found in the Beatles song "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," and of patriotism found in the Bruce Springsteen album *Born in the USA*, all of them connotations unintended by the creators.

Symbols serve such a profound sense-making function that there has been some theoretical discussion of whether symbols are "hard-wired" into the communication circuits in the human brain. Cognitive scientists such as Steven Pinker have argued, for example, that human intelligence is a product of the ability to manipulate symbols (Pinker & Mehler 1988). Through their ability to create abstractions and store meaning in simple ways, symbols certainly serve an important cognitive function, leading Condit (2004) to suggest that both biological and textual approaches are needed to understand symbols as communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Code ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Genre ▶ Iconography  
▶ Meaning ▶ Metonymy ▶ Rhetoric and Language ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems  
▶ Structuralism ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Visual Communication

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## Synchronization of the News

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“Synchronization” means the selection and presentation of news to favor a medium’s marked editorial policy or stance. “Synchronized” news, then, is news selected and presented to support a medium’s anti- or pro-government sentiments, for instance, or its liberal or conservative philosophy (Schoenbach 1977).

The principle of “comments are free; facts are sacred” is supposed to keep journalists from mixing the facts of a news story with evaluations of those facts. Their own opinion has to stay out of the news, and so has the editorial stance of their media organization or the preferences of other persons or institutions. News is supposed to be factual and sober. What its producers or other people think about it, how they judge it, is limited to → commentaries and editorials, explicitly marked as such.

What at first sight sounds merely like a style restriction on news (“Do not use judgmental words in your news story!”) is just *one* requirement for a much more ambitious goal of that professional imperative – to enable the audience to make up its own mind, without being manipulated. This is why the norm of separating facts and opinion also concerns the *selection* and *prominence* of the facts presented. Journalists are supposed to select and present facts and opinions for their truth to reality and not to support specific views of the world.

Synchronization thus actually describes two mechanisms of a specific form of news bias. First, synchronization by *selection* means that facts or arguments supporting the editorial policy of a medium are put forward in the news more often than facts not supporting that perspective. Research shows that methods of that type of synchronization include the use of “opportune witnesses” – i.e., sources in favor of the editorial policy get a better chance to be quoted (Hagen 1993) – and → “instrumental actualization” (Kepplinger et al. 1991; Staab 1990) – i.e., invoking former cases, examples, and events that seem to confirm the medium’s interpretation of what is going on in the world.

Second, synchronization by *prominence* means that facts or statements unfavorable to what a medium regards as its editorial stance are not suppressed completely but presented in a way that renders them unimportant. They may be hidden away in the middle of a lengthy article, not be accompanied by visual material on television, or be attributed to obscure sources.

Synchronization is a more dangerous variant of violating the separation principle, because it does not work with explicit evaluations that an audience could easily recognize as such. Instead, synchronized news looks like factual news. The audience often has no chance to know that important facts and views are systematically omitted or played down, and unimportant ones blown up, in order to make the editorial policy of the medium look reasonable and plausible.

Measuring synchronization of the news and editorial policy is difficult. One might quickly agree that a journalist has openly expressed the political philosophy of his or her newspaper in a news story. But how can it be claimed that facts were missing or presented less prominently than they deserved, in the absence of some agreed-upon external standard?

Two criteria have to be met to demonstrate a synchronization of news and editorial policy. First of all, the selection and presentation of arguments in the news have to resemble the selection and presentation of the arguments used in editorial pieces. This is the easier requirement in an attempt to measure synchronization. It simply means comparing the profiles of reasoning in the news and, for instance, in commentaries where editorial policy can be expressed openly.

The second, more demanding, requirement for demonstrating synchronization deals with its harmful nature. As long as the editorial line is just middle-of-the road or balanced, as long as there is actually no distinct editorial stance, news may not be regarded as problematic by many if it is synchronized with the editorial line and thus also balanced. In a study on synchronization in 22 German media, Schoenbach (1977) suggested a measure for a *biased* synchronization, one that does not simply present a balanced picture of the world both in the news and in opinion content. He used a proxy for that bias: the coverage of other media. If a medium, he argued, systematically omits facts that do not fit its editorial line, but if those facts are present in other media, would that not indicate a harmful synchronization of facts and opinion? As a standard measure, Schoenbach (1977) used the profile of the information offer of all four German prestige newspapers combined. Prestige or quality newspapers (→ Quality Press) are prestigious because of their claim to be as complete as possible, and in the case of Germany, the four prestige papers cover the left–right political spectrum quite well, as surveys show.

Schoenbach (1977) found some systematic characteristics of media that synchronize their *political* news and their own – and distinct – editorial policy more often: they are media with a small newsroom staff and serious local competition, and they are well known for their political stance. He explained those results by the attempt of news organizations to get their journalists to obey organizational rules. Self-selection of journalists, their recruitment by the medium, their socialization in the newsroom, and finally mechanisms of social control (see also Breed 1960) are the steps that lead to compliance with the political preferences of a medium in selecting and constructing news.

SEE ALSO: ► Advocacy Journalism ► Bias in the News ► Commentary ► Ethics in Journalism ► Freedom of Communication ► Instrumental Actualization ► Objectivity in Reporting ► Quality Press

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## **Systems Theory**

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The word “system” is widely used. We speak of planetary systems, transportation systems, nervous systems, number systems, filing systems, political systems, systems of checks and balances, systems of grammatical rules, systems of weights and measures, and so on as if they shared the same reality. Their common denominator is a multitude of component parts, depending on each other, working together in complex ways, and functioning as wholes. Beyond these commonalities, such systems exhibit at best Wittgensteinian family resemblances.

Systems theory is an interdisciplinary field. It was founded by Ludwig Bertalanffy (1968) in the 1950s and soon attracted other scholars, notably the economist Kenneth Boulding, mathematician Anatol Rapoport, biologist James Grier Miller, architect Russell Ackoff, management scientist West Churchman, and the sociologist Talcott Parsons, to name only a few. The early *dream of finding a general theory* of all systems turned out not to be realizable. Now, several specialized systems theories are recognized. What has kept these and many other scholars together is what is increasingly called systems thinking: the use of a common language and principles to address complex issues.

Systems theory and → *cybernetics*, often mentioned together, have radically different epistemologies. According to Ross Ashby (1956, 1981), whereas cybernetics attends to all possible systems and is informed when some of them cannot be built or found in nature, systems theory seeks to generalize from organizations that exist or function in the world.



Bertalanffy was a biologist and, unlike cybernetics, systems theory is steeped in biological metaphors. Bertalanffy noted that scientists traditionally isolate their objects of research, for example, living organisms, economies, media effects on audiences, or mathematical systems – not realizing that none of these exist in isolation. Closed systems are artificial and inadequate constructions. Thermodynamics, for example, theorizes systems as closed to energy. However, treating living organisms as closed systems would violate the second law of thermodynamics: they do not decay into entropy, but grow in complexity while living (Prigogine 1961). *Open systems theory*, to Bertalanffy, must account for the possibility that systems are more or less open to energy, information, and/or organization. In contemporary systems thinking, therefore, systems are usually conceived of as operating in an environment. This biological conception goes back to Alfred North Whitehead (1929/1979), who, after characterizing European philosophy as a “philosophy of the organism,” suggested that what the organism is *not*, participates in what it *is*.

One maxim of systems theory is that all the parts of a system interact with each other directly or indirectly. Changes in one part affect all other parts. Herbert Simon qualified this maxim by suggesting ways to decompose complex systems into subsystems such that interaction within subsystems is strong while interaction between them is weak. The system/environment distinction is seen as convenient because it recognizes this property.

Systems theory is *holistic*. By definition, systems are wholes composed of parts. For each part, all other parts constitute their respective environments. Parts may be composed of sub-parts, just as any system may be part of a larger super-system. This leads systems theory to acknowledge levels of organization; for example, cells, organs, organism, and species, or individual, family, social group, local government, and the state.

Systems theory privileges wholes over their parts, as in the familiar instruction to “act locally but think globally,” the idea that parts could be replaced to preserve the whole, and the belief that wholes are more than the sum of their parts. However, by most measures, wholes and the sum of their parts merely differ – the difference is explained by their organization, i.e., patterns of interaction or networks of communication. General systems theorists attempt to generalize organizational principles across levels; others consider such generalizations category mistakes or settle this possibility empirically.

Part-whole relationships favor *functional explanations* (→ Functional Analysis). Functions are always assigned to parts in the context of the well-being (purpose, preservation, or identity) of the whole. Functional explanations may well be appropriate in biological or technological systems whose part-whole relations are relatively fixed. In social systems, however, functional explanations favor top-down hierarchies – parts having to be responsible for their whole. They demand consistency, harmony, and efficiency: parts that deviate from these values are considered dysfunctional and undesirable, if not dispensable. And, if levels of organization are not mere observer’s abstractions – as in biology – representing instead what different people are in charge of, functional explanations favor governing elites, for example, the status quo of their power relations. This has been the criticism of Parsons’s sociological systems theory of actions, but it holds for structural-functional explanations more generally.

By celebrating the organismic values of collaboration and integration in larger wholes, conflicts, revolutions, and structural innovation easily escape biological metaphors. Such deviances are typically treated as illnesses in need of curing. Even in ecological systems,

where species thrive by successfully competing with each other for scarce resources, including consuming each other, ecological systems theories herald balances, equilibria, and stable distributions of species, sounding alarms in their absence. Similarly, the mathematical or computational representation of systems – networks, linear equations, or nonlinear dynamics – are comprehensible only if the relationships between parts are regular and proceed unchallenged.

Systems theories can be formulated on vastly *different levels of abstraction* depending on the interests of the theorist or the problems to be addressed. Medical research, for example, is primarily focused on the effects of interventions and, assuming some kind of biological normalcy, systems theory is conservative. Technology tends to be designed for particular purposes, and technical systems can be evaluated accordingly. An aircraft control system, consisting of a vast network of people and equipment, can be evaluated in terms of their capacity and number of air traffic accidents. The sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1984) developed a highly abstract systems theory that avoids the usual conservatism by focusing on how society understands itself. For him, society consists not of individual actors, as in Parsons' system, but of communications. Whatever complexities might exist outside society, they are reduced to communicable meanings. By selectively reproducing these meanings internally, society defines its own identity relative to what it is not, yet this distinction is always understood from within, as reproducible communications.

Such disembodied abstractions are opposed by what Robert Flood and Norma Romm call *critical systems thinking*. It entails three commitments: (1) critical awareness – examining taken-for-granted assumptions along with the conditions that give rise to them; (2) emancipation – ensuring that research addresses “improvement,” defined temporarily and locally, accounting for power relations; and (3) methodological pluralism – using a variety of research methods to address a corresponding variety of issues – without becoming entrapped in any one conception (Flood & Romm 1996). This kind of systems thinking does not shy away from abstractions, but regards them as embodied in the lives of the human constituent of the social systems under consideration.

SEE ALSO: ► Cybernetics ► Functional Analysis

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# T

## Tabloid Press

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Tabloid means compact size. In reference to the press it describes smaller sized newspapers. Yet in contemporary journalism the term tabloid refers to both → newspapers and television and carries a strong normative evaluation of news work (→ Television News). In many respects, the term tabloid has become removed from its original meaning and attached itself to the idea of sensational news coverage (→ Scandalization in the News; Sensationalism). Slogans like “if it bleeds it leads” and “bodybag journalism” refer to emphases on death and destruction and are commonly used in reference to tabloid news. An assessment of public debate among media critics and academics about this journalistic style reveals sweeping declarations about its corruptive influence on journalism. Periods of public outrage about tabloid news have become a frequent ritual in many countries around the world. At the heart of this debate are two popular concerns: tabloid journalism violates notions of social decency, and it displaces socially significant stories.

Tabloid news content is often defined as that which amuses, titillates, and entertains, whereas “proper” news is commended for its assumed ability to enhance the political and social knowledge of the audience by appealing to reason rather than emotion (→ News as Discourse). Stories dealing with celebrities, crime, sex, disasters, accidents, and public fears have consistently been labeled as tabloid topics (Ehrlich 1996; Djupsund & Carlson 1998; Uribe & Gunter 2004; Wang 2004; Vettehen et al. 2005). A number of *dichotomies* have been employed over the years to assist in drawing the line between tabloid and “proper” news topics. These include entertainment versus information, infotainment versus edutainment, human interest versus public affairs, situational versus timeless issues, soft versus hard news (→ Soft News), opinion versus fact, and unexpected events versus issue coverage. Not only is the topical focus of tabloid news seen as trivial but it is believed to displace important news, conducive to informing citizens. And, indeed, some traditionally non-tabloid news outlets are adopting the tabloid news menu to draw viewers.

Tabloid journalists not only focus on sensational topics but use *packaging techniques* to further enhance the titillation of the content. For newspapers these include large headlines, photos with graphic and often disturbing content, and placement of sensational

stories on the front page and as the lead story (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of; Photojournalism). In television news, slow motion video, music, sound effects, and other digital visual effects are employed to dramatize content (→ Television News, Visual Components of). Critics view this as a flagrant attempt at drawing readers and viewers, thereby further abandoning the journalistic mission to inform, not to entertain or titillate. The profit motive is most often identified as the impetus for sensational journalistic practice ratings (Brants & Neijens 1998; Esser 1999; → Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). But there are also concerns about the moral and psychological influences of tabloid reporting. In fact, scholars have described the sensational tabloid approach to reporting as provoking “unwholesome emotional responses” (Mott 1962, 442), complaining that it shocks and thrills our moral and aesthetic sensibilities (Tannenbaum & Lynch, 1960), and emphasizes “emotion for emotion’s sake” (Emery & Emery 1978). According to Daniels (cited in Tannenbaum & Lynch 1960, 382), sensational news stories are “underdistanced” – that is, they provoke more sensory and emotional reactions than what is deemed proper for audience members to desire or experience.

It has been argued that sensationalism plays an important *role* in maintaining a society’s commonly shared notions of decency and morality by publicly showcasing what is unacceptable (Stevens 1985). Thus, instead of corrupting the standards of public decency, tabloid news offers morally conservative commentary on the titillating issues that it covers. Moreover, respected journalists readily admit that they intentionally arouse emotion in readers with the hope that they will channel audience excitement into efforts to right social wrongs. The “muckrakers” of the early 1900s in the US, now celebrated for their socially responsible journalism, practiced investigative reporting with the aim of arousing emotion and to incite the public to act against perceived injustices (→ Muckraking).

The legitimacy of what is defined as socially significant news has also been questioned. Stories about family conflicts, substance abuse, violence, disaster, and other disruptions of everyday life are regarded as more significant to the lives of ordinary people than the traditional political and economic issues that elites prescribe as important information for the masses (Bird 1992; → Violence as Media Content). Like the → “penny press” papers of the 1830s, today’s tabloid outlets have made news accessible and popular among non-elite audiences, serving a democratizing function. Interestingly, in the People’s Republic of China, tabloids have exploded in popularity since the mid-1990s and have tested the limits of press censorship by taking editorial positions critical of the government and by engaging in critical investigative reporting (→ China: Media System).

Media critics seem both skeptical and concerned about the news viewers’ ability to distinguish between “proper” and sensational journalism but there is evidence that the audience is able to make this distinction using production features of television news as cues. In an experimental investigation, Grabe et al. (2000) found viewers rated stories packaged with lavish production features less believable and informative than stories without them. In this sense, production features seem to play an important reflexive function in helping audiences categorize television news as either trustworthy or lacking credibility. Moreover, adding tabloid production features to dull public affairs stories has been shown to enhance memory for news content, furthering the information function of news (Grabe et al. 2003).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ China: Media System ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Muckraking ▶ News as Discourse ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper Journalism ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Penny Press ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Soft News ▶ Television News ▶ Television News, Visual Components of ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Yellow Journalism

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## **Tabloidization**

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“Tabloidization” is a vaguely defined term that since the 1980s has been used to describe stylistic and content changes in → journalism, usually perceived as representing a decline

in traditional journalistic standards (→ Quality of the News). To grasp the significance of the term, it is first essential to understand its root form – the tabloid (→ Tabloid Press).

Although the term “tabloid” strictly refers only to certain newspapers’ half-broadsheet size, it has come to define a particular kind of formulaic, colorful narrative related to, but usually perceived as distinct from, standard, “objective” styles of journalism. The tabloid style is consistently seen by critics as inferior, appealing to base instincts and public demand for → sensationalism. True “tabloids” emerged in Britain during the first decade of the twentieth century, and in the United States in the 1920s. Entertainingly sensational, they were written in the idioms of the people, as William Randolph Hearst proudly declared when launching the American *Daily Mirror* in 1924 (Bird 1992). The tension between a perception of tabloid style as representing the legitimate desires and voice of the people, or as representing a vulgarization of public → discourse, has been at the heart of the debate about tabloidization ever since.

The tabloid is not defined by content; tabloids may cover the same topics as mainstream journalism, although typically more briefly and flamboyantly (Bird 2002). British daily tabloids, such as the *Sun*, cover politics and “hard” news, although much more briefly and superficially than “quality” newspapers (→ Quality Press), while much of their space is devoted to celebrity news, sensational human interest stories, advice, and so on. Their US daily counterparts, such as the *New York Daily News*, have a similar mix of news and entertainment, while US weekly supermarket tabloids, such as the *National Enquirer* or *Star*, rarely touch hard news at all. Publications recognizable as tabloids across the world contain variable mixes of news, entertainment, sports, and other features (Sparks & Tulloch 2000), usually with heavy use of illustration.

If “tabloid” has come to mean a specific style, “tabloidization” is a more recent term developed to describe an inexorable move toward that style by “real” journalism. Long before the term was actually coined, tabloidization was a focus of criticism and concern that began with the emergence of more popular journalistic formats, such as the → “penny press” of the 1830s, whose writers drew on the formulaic conventions of broadsheets and ballads to produce dramatic, human interest news of crime and mayhem, frequently with an implied or overt moral. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, critics bemoaned the cheapening of public discourse represented by such popularization of the news, and this lament has gathered momentum over the last 100 years. In the late twentieth century, the term “tabloidization” appeared, and has come to connote a serious decline in journalistic discourse, whether in television or print. As Sparks (2000, 1) writes, there is a growing perception that “the high standards of yesterday are being undermined by sensationalism, prurience, triviality, malice, and plain, simple credulity.”

## DEFINING TABLOIDIZATION

Neither journalists nor critics agree precisely what tabloidization is, or whether it is invariably a negative force. Indeed, as Sparks (2000) writes, empirical attempts to demonstrate the process have been inconclusive. However, there appear to be some key areas in which most people recognize the phenomenon. Generally, these can be discussed as issues of either style or content, although these are clearly closely related. Under style,

we can look at writing techniques, observed in a movement away from longer, complex, analytical writing into shorter, punchier sentences, primarily in a narrative rather than analytical mode. Second, we see an increasing emphasis on the personal; for instance, journalists handle major economic themes through personal stories about individual people and the way they cope. A third symptom of tabloidization is a greater use of visual images, including photos, artists' sketches, and so on, as well as increased reliance on such techniques as re-enactments and dramatizations, primarily in electronic news.

Tabloidization of content is usually framed in terms of increasing trivialization. For instance, celebrity news and gossip are seen to be crowding out serious news, and human interest stories receive more coverage than important international events. Critics also point to changes such as the move toward covering political debate as horse races (in election coverage; → Horse Race Coverage) or as shouting matches on talk shows and other venues, both of which detract from serious and nuanced debate and analysis (Krajicek 1999; Kurtz 1994).

The term "tabloidization" arose in the specific context of changes in traditional news; for instance, it was used widely in the United States to describe and often decry the emergence of the national newspaper *USA Today*. The paper was launched in 1982 by Al Neuharth, then heading the Gannett chain, and featured innovations such as short, snappy text, extensive use of color photos, dramatic sports coverage (→ Sports as Popular Communication; Sports and the Media, History of), and a detailed weather map. Many critics despised the paper, but it went on to become a great success, and by the early 2000s Neuharth enjoyed the status of a press elder statesman. Without a doubt, *USA Today's* stylistic innovations led to significant changes in print journalism, where more eye-catching design, shorter stories, and use of color and visuals have become standard. By now, such changes are generally regarded as positive and enriching to journalism generally. This progression points to the way in which the very meaning of "tabloidization" continually shifts, as changes once seen as evidence of decline become mainstreamed, if they are successful.

### **TABLOIDIZATION: BEYOND TRADITIONAL MEDIA**

Tabloidization, like most changes in any media form, is primarily audience- and advertiser-driven. This is especially true in print journalism, whose audiences are both declining in numbers and aging, with younger readers apparently not taking up the habit of newspaper reading as they grow older (→ Readership Research). The competition for news has become increasingly fierce, with proliferating broadcast outlets, as well as the enormous impact of the Internet, which has led traditional media to rethink many of their familiar practices (→ Internet News). It seems to be an indisputable fact that "tabloid"-style news, whether about celebrities or sensational crimes (→ Crime Reporting), simply appeals to larger audiences than does serious reporting. The economics of the news business also drives the move toward relatively cheap stories that can have a broad appeal in many different formats rather than, for example, the expensive and time-consuming enterprise of investigative or foreign reporting (→ Investigative Reporting; Foreign Correspondents). For instance, US media in the early twenty-first century gave huge coverage to such stories as the May 30, 2005, disappearance of Natalee Holloway in



Aruba, or the April 2005 Jennifer Wilbanks “runaway bride” saga, both of which consumed both mainstream and tabloid print media, as well as cable news, talk shows, talk radio, and Internet forums. Stories such as these, which invite endless speculation and audience participation, are especially typical of the tabloidized genre.

The spread of these kinds of stories in so many different genres has widened the term “tabloidization” to encompass condemnation of the kind of “chatter” that has become typical of the contemporary media age. News outlets have proliferated across literally hundreds of cable and satellite channels and the Internet. While this democratization raised hopes that this would offer a much greater variety of serious, international news (and to some extent it has), it seems clear that more time has simply been devoted to these narratives. Fears about tabloidization seem now to be less focused on print media, and more on a general decline toward “tabloid culture” (Langer 1997) or “argument culture” (Tannen 1999). An important element in the criticism is anxiety about the free-for-all information market now offered through cable and the Internet; if anyone can be a reporter, surely this is a threat to the hard-fought-for professional status to which journalists have aspired. Journalists have always sought to define “real” journalism by comparison with tabloids, drawing lines between their techniques and those of their tabloid counterparts, in terms of both journalistic style and ethical standards, such as payment for stories or adequate sourcing (Bird 1992). The new media environment blurs boundaries even more, offering many more ways to attempt to redraw the lines through accusations of tabloidization.

### **TABLOIDIZATION AS A MEANINGFUL TERM**

However, it is also important to consider tabloidization in context. A movement to clearer, more accessible news that speaks more directly to readers does not necessarily equate with a decline in standards. For instance, Hallin (2000) reports that in Mexico, these kinds of stylistic changes have signaled positive forces for social reform and democratic participation, as elite controls on news have loosened. Similar changes are noted in former eastern bloc nations, where the emergence of more personal, snappier, and tabloid-like styles go hand in hand with a more open and accessible press. Several commentators, including Macdonald (2000), have pointed out that if done well, “tabloid” features, such as emphasis on the personal over the institutional, can make news more direct and effective.

Thus it is important to understand cultural specificities when discussing tabloidization, or any other journalistic quality. Even in two societies as apparently similar as Britain and the United States, there are significant differences in tabloid media, and thus the implications of tabloidization can also differ. For instance, US supermarket tabloids and UK daily tabloids feature similar layouts, writing styles, and celebrity focus, and journalists have moved comfortably between the two genres for years. However, they are in many ways different, reflecting quite distinct cultural milieus. British tabloids are explicit, visually and verbally, about sex, while American weeklies avoid direct references. Ironically, critics decried the tabloidization of mainstream journalism during coverage of the 1998 Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal, while in fact the mainstream press offered far more explicit details than did the tabloids. And while some American weeklies are far more interested in paranormal and religious topics, such as Biblical prophecies

and faith healing (→ Religion and Popular Communication), British tabloids reflect a much greater sense of working-class consciousness than those in the United States, where “everyone is middle-class.” Tabloid-type media in other countries also reflect a range of social, political, and cultural characteristics; when we discuss “tabloidization,” we may mean very different things depending on context.

It is clear that “tabloidization” is a term that lacks a single, clear definition. When broken down to its constituent elements, such as changes in style and a move toward accessibility and personalization, it becomes a difficult target to see clearly. In part, this is because, although tabloidization is usually seen as antithetical to traditional journalistic standards, there has always been a tension between journalism’s twin impulses to inform and to entertain. For instance, journalists have long been encouraged to see large issues in personal terms; engaging narratives are far more effective in communicating than dry, statistical accounts. Members of the public are not well informed if they simply reject the news out of boredom. The issue seems to hinge on an almost impossible set of questions: when has the balance between entertainment and information shifted too far? At what point has the trivial pushed out all serious discourse? How will we recognize a “media circus” when we see it (Kurtz 1994)?

There are no clear answers to these questions, and thus there can be no clear definition of the term “tabloidization.” As they do with obscenity, critics claim to “know it when they see it.” Essentially the term has become a shorthand way of describing any trend in news production and reception that represents trivialization, cheapening, and a decline in standards; the exact nature of that decline may depend on the point of view of the critic.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Celebrity Journalists ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ Discourse ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Foreign Correspondents ▶ Horse Race Coverage ▶ Infotainment ▶ Internet News ▶ Investigative Reporting ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News Audience ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Penny Press ▶ Quality of the News ▶ Quality Press ▶ Readership Research ▶ Religion and Popular Communication ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Soft News ▶ Sports and the Media, History of ▶ Sports as Popular Communication ▶ Tabloid Press

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## Tailoring, Communication and

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Tailored messages are formal individual messages in which the content and/or style of the materials have been created based on data specific to the individual. Tailoring is distinguished from targeting, in that targeting refers to audience segmentation and development of group-specific messages, whereas tailoring involves individual-specific assessment and feedback driven by that assessment. Individual computerized tailoring for health promotion typically combines health behavior change theory (→ Health Communication; Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of), communication theory, social → marketing principles, and computer-based programs and algorithms, in order to produce personally relevant health messages for each project participant. Information obtained from each individual is accessed and assembled using specially created software to generate customized messages for each person that are designed to promote healthy behavior changes (Campbell et al. 1994; Kreuter et al. 2000a). Providing individualized messages means the information can be tailored so that it is particularly relevant, interesting, culturally appropriate, and credible to the message recipient (Skinner et al. 1999).

In tailoring, appropriate messages for an individual are drawn from a “library” of pre-created messages, which can include text, graphics, photographs, audio or video information, or other types of message files. Each message is developed to address the demographic, health, behavioral, psychosocial, and/or cultural characteristics and determinants considered important for promoting change in a specific behavior or combination of behaviors. The messages are then turned into a single coherent communication by use of computer software that searches, selects, and assembles the messages on the basis of matching rules (algorithms). The development of tailored messages can be resource intensive; however, once developed, the production and delivery are usually of relatively low cost and the messages can be widely disseminated on a population basis.

The development of tailored messages typically involves a number of steps, beginning with identification of the target population, epidemiologic and/or clinical assessment of health risks and targets for change, and formative research to identify salient issues, barriers, preferences, beliefs, and other determinants of behavior change. Next, an assessment tool

is developed that measures the tailoring variables validly and reliably and provides finite data points that determine the range of participant responses for which tailored feedback elements should be created. Typically, “macro-tailoring” involves tailoring a section or block of feedback, such as a page of a newsletter or website, to a particular variable, such as stage of readiness to change or barriers to change. “Micro-tailoring,” on the other hand, usually involves smaller variations of the feedback that are determined by additional variables relevant within a larger tailored section. For example, a tailored feedback segment might be macro-tailored to the participant’s level of perceived social support for increasing physical activity, and then micro-tailored to participant responses to one or more other questions, such as the person who would be most useful to provide that support (spouse/partner, family member, friend, co-worker, etc.). In creating tailored feedback, a parsimonious approach is recommended that focuses on a subset of key variables for which evidence indicates tailoring will make a difference. Once the → survey and the message library are created, pre-testing is recommended by members of the target audience in order to assess factors such as acceptability, usability, and comprehension. Algorithms or instructions are then written by the research team and programmed, using computer-based software, to select the appropriate message files and tailored elements for each individual from the overall message library, and incorporate them into a pre-determined format, layout, or sequence, depending upon the medium of delivery (print, web, video, etc.; Kreuter et al. 2000a).

Research and theory suggest that tailored messages are more likely to be effective than generic materials because they provide personally relevant information that meets the exact information needs of readers and excludes irrelevant or superfluous facts (Brug et al. 2003; Skinner et al. 1994). It follows that when these needs are more closely met, an individual will be more likely to make the desired changes in knowledge, belief, and attitudes, and to move toward the action and maintenance stages of behavior change. A number of recent reviews have concluded that tailored messages are effective in promoting a variety of health behavior changes including diet, physical activity, smoking cessation, and cancer screening (Skinner et al. 1999; Brug et al. 2003). The strongest effects are seen when tailoring is compared to a no-intervention control condition; smaller effects are found when tailored messages are compared to non-tailored or targeted health information on the same topic. Receiving multiple tailored messages versus one dose of tailored feedback has been shown to produce more effect in promoting dietary change (Heimendinger et al. 2005). In addition, tailored messages have shown promise for addressing health disparities among minority and underserved populations (Skinner et al. 1994, Campbell & Quintiliani 2006). Tailored print messages have been most widely studied; however; tailored health behavior feedback systems also have been developed and delivered via the telephone, → Internet, CD-ROM, and other media. Evidence suggests that short-term effects of tailoring via these media are comparable to print; however, longer-term studies seem to favor print over electronic media for maintenance of change (Kroeze et al. 2006).

Refining the theoretical basis of tailoring and choices of variables, media, channels, and other variances of tailored messages will be important for increasing effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. Research is ongoing to investigate issues such as theoretical models and pathways through which tailored messages exert their effects, innovative variables

and algorithms for determining tailored feedback, optimal amounts and timing of tailoring, combining tailoring with other intervention modalities, and effective dissemination of evidence-based tailored messages to achieve broad public health impact.

SEE ALSO: ► Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ► Health Communication ► Internet ► Marketing ► Message Effects, Structure of ► Message Production ► Survey

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## **Taste Culture**

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The idea that → popular culture consists of distinct “taste cultures” was developed by Herbert Gans (1974) as an alternative to the then dominant theory of mass culture. Mass culture theorists (Horkheimer & Adorno 2001) viewed popular culture as a commercial enterprise that represented a debased form of high culture. They claimed that mass culture targeted a mass audience that was passive and uncritical and thus susceptible to mass persuasion, with potentially dangerous consequences for society as a whole (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

Gans argued that the concept of mass culture was an oversimplification. Popular culture exists in various forms that appeal to → audiences with different educational backgrounds and tastes. High culture requires a sophisticated audience and, inevitably, appeals to a minority of the population; most people prefer popular culture.

Gans developed a typology of “taste publics” that consume “taste cultures” appropriate for their educational level and social background. A taste culture consists of values and aesthetic standards for culture, cultural forms that express those values, and the media in which they are expressed. *Five principal taste cultures*, stratified by social class, represented American culture in the 1970s. “High culture” comprised both classics and contemporary styles in literature and the arts. Its taste public included creators and highly educated upper- and upper-middle-class people. “Upper-middle culture” was associated with an upper-middle-class taste public, who were uninterested in the relatively esoteric aspects of high culture, preferring forms of culture that spoke to issues that were relevant to their personal lives. “Lower-middle culture” was America’s dominant taste culture. Its taste public provided the major audience for mass media and sought content that confirmed its worldview, particularly its moral values. The taste public for “low culture” consisted of older, lower-middle-class people who preferred entertainment that dealt with traditional working-class values. “Quasi-folk low culture” was a simpler version of low culture. Its taste public consisted of unskilled blue-collar and service workers with little education.

Thirty years later, Gans’s theory of taste cultures has been eclipsed by subsequent developments in the discipline. *Bourdieu* (1984), who was also interested in identifying social groups with different levels of taste, developed an elaborate theory to explain how social class and education influence cultural choices. According to Bourdieu, the capacity to appreciate different forms of culture is developed through socialization in childhood. Families provide different cultural environments for their offspring, ranging from the culture of distinction in the upper class to the culture of necessity in the working class. Members of the upper class and members of the lower class have different tastes and different perceptions of the same forms of culture. Consequently, arts and culture consumption can be used to legitimate social class differences and as a form of “capital” to advance one’s social position.

Recent research reveals that many people do not restrict their attention to a particular type of culture, possibly because of the enormous *variety of cultural choices* that are now available (Peterson 2005). Studies of tastes for different types of popular music show that “omnivores” consume a wide variety of cultures, both highbrow and lowbrow. “Univores” restrict their attention to a single form of culture, either highbrow or lowbrow. Omnivores and highbrow univores have more education and social status than lowbrow univores.

Today, the most widely used approach for the location of social groups with specific cultural tastes is through the *identification of lifestyles*. In this approach, the emphasis tends to be placed on factors affecting the selection of consumer goods. Differences among lifestyles within the same social class as well as across social classes are anticipated. One approach to the identification of lifestyles is that of matching America’s 36,000 zip code areas with census data and consumer surveys. This produces 40 “lifestyle clusters” that can be differentiated from one another very precisely in terms of income, race, education, leisure activities, media usage, food preferences, and political leanings (Weiss 1989; → Audience Research; Audience Commodity).

In both the US and Europe, market researchers have identified lifestyle clusters on the basis of demographic variables, such as education, income, and age, and surveys that assess people's values, attitudes, and behavior toward work, family, leisure, money, and consumption. For example, in the US, research using Market Statistics' *GeoVALS system* has identified eight American lifestyles on the basis of personal orientations and resource constraints such as education, income, and age (Waldrop 1994). Traditional as compared to modern or liberal values have proved to be important influences on cultural preferences. The lifestyles of over half (57 percent) of the American population were influenced by traditional values. In Europe, the *Sinus-Milieus* approach also combines structural and cultural variables to map lifestyles and detect differences in consumer behavior in different countries (Sociovision n.d.). This approach differs from the American research through its use of ethnographic data to identify more precisely the characteristics of the specific milieus or contexts which shape people's behavior, on the grounds that the life contexts of people with similar socio-economic backgrounds can be very different.

Gans's typology of taste cultures was not based on survey research. Lifestyle research creates typologies that are based on sophisticated quantitative techniques for identifying clusters and indices based on census data, consumer surveys, life histories, in-depth interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic research (→ Cluster Analysis; Scales and Indices; Quantitative Methodology).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Research ▶ Cluster Analysis ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Scales and Indices

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# Teacher Affinity Seeking

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McCroskey and Wheelless, the first to introduce the concept of “affinity” in the communication literature, defined it as “a positive attitude toward another person” (1976, 231). Bell and Daly expanded research in the area of affinity seeking in interpersonal communication. They defined “affinity seeking” as “the active social communicative process by which individuals attempt to get others to like and feel positive toward them” (1984, 91). These pioneers pursued this research stream as it gained momentum, clearing, defining, and redefining a swath so significant that not only did their efforts spawn decades of affinity research, but these early efforts appeared to support the idea that gaining “affinity” may be the single most important reason why we engage in → interpersonal communication (→ Interpersonal Attraction). That the fledgling discipline could assert a simple explanation for what motivates communication interaction is impressive. A more far-reaching impact was felt as interpersonal communication research shifted focus to specialized contexts such as the classroom or workplace. Because the seminal affinity research was conducted by scholars interested in communication education and instruction, affinity research in the instructional context set the agenda for its application to other interpersonal contexts.

Drawing from Bell and Daly, McCroskey and McCroskey (1986) expanded this research area specifically to classroom teachers. Their research indicated that teachers use 10 of the 25 interpersonal affinity-seeking techniques to obtain affinity with students. Frymier and Wanzer (2006) summarized the *10 strategies*:

- 1 Facilitate enjoyment. When teachers are able to make classroom activities enjoyable, students appreciate it and respond positively.
- 2 Optimism. Being optimistic and having a positive outlook has consistently been related to positive affect in the classroom.
- 3 Assume equality. In effect, this is when a teacher de-emphasizes her or his higher status and treats students as equals.
- 4 Conversational rule keeping. This strategy is consistent with assuming equality. When teachers use conversational rule keeping, they are being polite and treating students with respect.
- 5 Comfortable self. A teacher using comfortable self appears relaxed and confident and may help students to also feel comfortable in the classroom.
- 6 Dynamism. Teachers who are dynamic and enthusiastic consistently elicit greater liking from students.
- 7 Elicit other’s disclosure. When teachers use this strategy they are paying individual attention to students and showing interest in them as individuals. Most people find it confirming and complimentary to have someone of higher status showing interest in them.
- 8 Altruism. When teachers attempt to be helpful, students like them better. Students may not expect teachers to go out of their way to be helpful, so when they do, it is particularly appreciated.



- 9 Listening. Listening goes hand in hand with eliciting others' disclosure in terms of communicating confirmation to the student.
- 10 Sensitivity. Sensitivity involves expressing empathy and caring toward the student. Like listening, this strategy involves focusing attention on the student.

Gorham et al. (1989) replicated the earlier research and confirmed that the *most frequent affinity-seeking strategies* teachers use are physical attractiveness, sensitivity, eliciting others' disclosure, trustworthiness, nonverbal immediacy, conversational rule keeping, dynamism, and listening. Later research indicated that students perceived graduate teaching assistants as using somewhat different affinity-seeking strategies. They indicated that graduate teaching assistants assumed equality, conceded control, elicited others' self-disclosure, and used self-inclusion more frequently than their professors. Based on this and subsequent research, it became clear that teachers regularly employ affinity-seeking strategies to establish good relationships with their students (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction).

To date, subsequent studies in the educational context have investigated how affinity-seeking behaviors influence, or are associated with, student affective and cognitive learning, student motivation, teacher credibility and competence, learning climate, and cross-cultural classroom distinctions (→ Learning and Communication). The seminal research results are summarized in the remaining paragraphs (for review, see Frymier & Wanzer 2006).

The first research applications examined the *effectiveness of teacher affinity seeking* in college classrooms. The results indicated that affinity seeking was significantly correlated with affective learning as well as cognitive learning and with student motivation. It was also found that using multiple strategies could enhance students' motivation to study. There were substantial correlations between student motivation and facilitating enjoyment, assuming equality, optimism, self-concept confirmation, and nonverbal immediacy. These strategies as well as others were found to be positively associated with learning as well. Related research determined that teachers' use of affinity seeking led to increased perceptions of teacher credibility (→ Teacher Communication Style; Teacher Socio-Communicative Style). The relationships with teacher character and credibility were strong and moderate, respectively. This research also indicated substantial correlations between teachers' use of affinity-seeking strategies and students' substantially increased motivation to study.

In an effort to extend this research to examine the relationship between teacher affinity-seeking strategies and student communication in the classroom, as well as students' perceptions of teachers' competence, research results indicated that both of these were very substantially increased by the affinity-seeking strategies. Similar results were obtained with teachers' affinity seeking having a positive impact on their perception of the classroom climate. Nineteen affinity-seeking strategies impacted on perceptions of classroom climates. In 2001 Roach and Byrne extended the teacher affinity-seeking research to the German culture. They found that German instructors were perceived to use substantially fewer affinity-seeking strategies than had been observed in the earlier US research. They also found that the relationship between affinity seeking and student cognitive learning was substantially weaker for German students. However, German students' affective learning was substantially benefited by teacher use of affinity seeking. It was virtually equal to the impact in the US research.

Conclusions which can be drawn from this body of research are as follows: (1) when teachers use affinity seeking with students, the classroom climate improves and students are more motivated to study and have higher affective learning; (2) students perceive instructors who use affinity seeking as more credible; (3) the 10 strategies were perceived as positive strategies in the research on teacher affinity seeking.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Interpersonal Attraction ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style

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## **Teacher Assertiveness**

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Assertiveness, one of the three primary dimensions studied under the rubric of → teacher socio-communicative style (the others are responsiveness and versatility), refers to an ability to use effective and appropriate communication in making requests and defending one's position. It involves a willingness to speak up for one's own beliefs without impinging on the rights of others. In the classroom, assertive teachers demonstrate confidence in speaking and presenting, facilitating class discussions, engaging in effective classroom management, and presenting an overall positive, authoritative image (→ Pedagogy, Communication in). Teacher assertiveness varies along a continuum from high to low levels of the behavior. When measured in conjunction with responsiveness, a teacher's level of assertiveness provides an overview of communication effectiveness.

Teacher assertiveness is typically associated with task orientation, thus instructors who are assertive in the classroom tend to demonstrate more authority and control. As a result, students often perceive assertive teachers as being more competent. Their focus

is on accomplishing classroom tasks and assignments. Assertive teachers demonstrate excellence in their own work while expecting the same from their students. Some nonverbal indicators associated with teacher assertiveness include increased use of gestures and smiling, greater vocal volume, more frequency of eye contact, and a faster rate of speech (→ Eye Behavior; Facial Expressions; Gaze in Interaction; Gestures and Kinesics; Gestures in Discourse; Nonverbal Signals, Effects of; Rhetoric, Nonverbal). Variables that are associated with the verbal aspects of assertiveness include increased use of humor and immediacy in the classroom (→ Teacher Immediacy; Teacher Use of Humor). To explain the relationship between teacher assertiveness and immediacy, Thomas et al. (1994) found that students perceive teachers as being more immediate when a combination of both assertive and responsive behaviors is employed in the classroom.

On the initial foundation of research focusing on social style (Lashbrook 1974), instructional communication scholars have identified several factors that answer the question of why teachers vary in their level of assertiveness. Focusing specifically on communication traits and behaviors, teachers with low levels of communication apprehension tend to be more assertive in the classroom (→ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety; Communication Apprehension). This confidence in speaking allows instructors to display communication behaviors that cause them to be perceived as more outgoing and confident. Additional research has identified a relationship between teacher assertiveness and argumentativeness, with assertive instructors more likely to argue for their position (Myers 1998).

Several studies have provided an understanding of the impact of teacher assertiveness from the student perspective. Students who perceive a teacher to be assertive report increased cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. In examining the relationship with affinity seeking, assertiveness is positively correlated with a number of strategies. Teven (2001) identified a positive relationship between assertiveness and perceived teacher caring. Overall, students perceive assertive teachers to be more challenging and more deserving of their respect.

Less positive perceptions of assertiveness have been identified as well. Students report that assertive teachers are sometimes viewed as being more open to imposing punishment for student behaviors. Further, they perceive assertive teachers as more willing to inflict guilt for student performance or behaviors. A lack of assertiveness may also produce negative ramifications. Wanzer and McCroskey (1998) found that students view less assertive teachers as engaging in more teacher misbehaviors in the classroom. When focusing on out-of-class communication, students report that they are less likely to engage in self-disclosure or socialize with teachers who exhibit a high level of assertiveness in class (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction).

Despite information on the benefits associated with teacher assertiveness, it is important to examine the concept in conjunction with teacher responsiveness in order to gain an accurate understanding of its potential implications in the classroom.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Communication Apprehension and Social Anxiety ▶ Eye Behavior ▶ Facial Expressions ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Gestures in Discourse ▶ Gestures and Kinesics ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Pedagogy, Communication in ▶ Rhetoric, Nonverbal

► Teacher Communication Style ► Teacher Immediacy ► Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ► Teacher Use of Humor

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## **Teacher Clarity**

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Teacher clarity is the extent to which the meaning stimulated in students' minds by an instructor accurately matches the meaning an instructor intends to convey. In their article on teacher behaviors, Rosenshine and Furst (1971) identified teacher clarity as the most important aspect of teaching that researchers should investigate. Since that article, research programs originating from both education and instructional communication have examined teacher clarity in a variety of ways and have demonstrated that it is one of the most significant teacher behaviors affecting student learning (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction; Learning and Communication).

A number of *research programs* have investigated teacher clarity (for a more complete review, see Chesebro & Wanzer 2006). The first major tradition emanated out of Ohio State between 1975 and 1985 (for a more complete review of these studies, see Cruickshank & Kennedy 1986). The researchers began by having junior high-school students recall their most clear teacher and identify five things the teacher did when teaching. Using items

identified in this first study, the researchers then created items to discriminate between clear and unclear teachers, and, in the process, they discovered two dimensions of clarity: (1) explaining and (2) providing for student understanding. In a subsequent study they found a moderately strong link between the teacher clarity behaviors and student achievement and satisfaction. These results support the importance of the clear teaching behaviors identified by earlier research studies in this program.

Another program – headed by Smith and Land – examined clarity with a more narrow focus by examining specific behaviors that signal a lack of clarity, such as *disfluencies*, *tangents*, and *vagueness*. Land (1979) found that students of teachers exhibiting these low-clarity behaviors scored lower on tests of recall immediately following a video-taped lecture. Further research in this program identified the effects of “mazes” (Land & Smith 1979), discontinuity (Smith & Cotten 1980), and vagueness (Smith & Land 1981). Each of these variables inhibited clarity and was related to lower achievement scores.

Although Kenneth Kiewra’s work on student note taking does not focus on the teacher clarity variable, it does demonstrate the additional ways in which teachers may make their material more clear for students. Research in this area has helped identify the importance of using *lecture cues* (signaling important ideas, whether verbally, or in writing using visual aids) during lectures in order to help students improve their note taking. These efforts to improve student note taking are important because improvements in student note taking have been linked to greater recall of lecture material (Kiewra 1985; Kiewra & Benton 1988). In addition, research in this area has suggested the importance of providing skeletal outlines to students to guide their note taking (Kiewra 2002). In addition, Titsworth (2001a, b) has demonstrated the positive effect of lecture cues on both affective and cognitive learning.

From the instructional communication discipline, one program involving Chesebro and McCroskey has examined clarity from a variety of perspectives (for a more complete review, see Chesebro & Wanzer 2006). The program posited a *model of clarity* (based on previous research) that consisted of both a structural element (involving the organization of messages, use of previews, transitions, reviews, etc.) and a verbal element (involving the use of examples, the clarity of explanations, staying on-task, etc.). Research using written scenarios, student surveys, and experimental approaches have demonstrated a strong relationship between teacher clarity and important classroom outcomes, such as reduced receiver apprehension, improved student affect for teachers and course material, greater motivation to learn, greater perceptions of learning, and actual learning.

Although teacher clarity has been researched by different teams using different methods, the research consistently has demonstrated the benefit of teaching clearly, and supports Rosenshine and Furst’s (1971) assertion that clarity is one of the most important teacher behaviors in the classroom.

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ► Learning and Communication  
► Teacher Training in Communication

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## Teacher Comforting and Social Support

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The communication of *social support* is central to relationships in and outside of the classroom. Although scholars offer many definitions, social support is widely understood to be resources – time, money, comforting – that people possess and extend to others. These resources can be further defined by the type of help that is provided, using categories like emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support (House 1981). *Emotional support* can be acts that demonstrate concern, empathy, trust, and caring. For teachers, emotionally supportive behaviors can also include being sensitive, positive, involved, and flexible (→ Teacher Communication Concern). *Instrumental support* refers to providing tangible resources (such as gifts or loans) or time. *Informational support* can include advice, counsel, or information that assists another person, whereas

*appraisal support* consists of evaluative feedback and/or social comparison. One other type of support relevant to classroom interactions is *instructional support* – reading to and with students, providing high-quality feedback, leading interactive discussions, and encouraging students to take responsibility in the classroom (Hamre & Pianta 2005).

Some of the most obvious benefits of providing students with a supportive environment are improved attendance and grades. When students perceive that their teachers have positive attitudes, are willing to work with students after class, and appreciate diversity among their pupils, students' grades increase (Bowen & Bowen 1998). In addition, when students feel that their teachers care about them and are supportive emotionally, students have better attendance, spend more time studying, and are more likely to avoid problem behavior such as disrupting class (→ Learning and Communication).

These positive outcomes are even more pronounced among at-risk students. In some cases, teacher support can reduce the effects of factors that mark students as being "at-risk," such as mother's lack of education or other demographic characteristics (Hamre & Pianta 2005). Instructional and emotional support can increase students' achievement and improve the teacher–student relationship. Overall, at-risk students who report no or only low amounts of social support have lower attendance rates, spend less time studying, have less ability to overcome school problems, and report lower self-esteem (Rosenfeld et al. 1998). Overall, support from teachers seems to be a key factor in obtaining positive outcomes among at-risk students (Rosenfeld et al. 2000).

Some additional benefits that have been associated with teacher social support are less concrete but equally gratifying. Emotional support from teachers can enhance students' satisfaction with school (Rosenfeld & Richman 1999); students' feelings that they can understand, manage, and find meaning in their studies (Bowen et al. 1998); and students' perceptions of *school engagement*, or a sense of attachment, belonging, and involvement in school (Brewster & Bowen 2004).

Some techniques for enhancing the social support students receive from teachers intuitively flow from other efforts to improve communication in the classroom. For example, teachers can receive training on the importance of social support and how to convey caring, warmth, and respect in a positive classroom environment (Bowen & Bowen 1998). These types of training programs alone can contribute to a sustained and systematic improvement of student outcomes such as those outlined above. As for student training, Rosenfeld et al. (2000) suggested that students can be taught social skills such as how to know when a person might be available for a supportive conversation and how to initiate such a conversation.

Teachers are not the only potential sources for social support in the lives of their students. One of the best ways teachers can help students form supportive networks is by partnering with other important persons in students' lives such as parents, guardians, community leaders, and school administrators. Studies show that when students feel supported by a variety of network members, positive outcomes are even more pronounced (Rosenfeld et al. 2000).

Finally, it should be noted that social support needs vary by student, and therefore teachers' strategies for providing support should be tailored to meet the needs of each individual student (Rosenfeld & Richman 1999). Although it may seem arduous and impractical to develop individualized plans for each student, utilizing some of these

simple assessment techniques may not only help students to succeed academically, but also assist them in building the self-esteem and other life skills that will sustain them well into their adulthood.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Comforting Communication ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Social Support in Health Communication ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Support Talk ▶ Teacher Affinity Seeking ▶ Teacher Communication Concern ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Confirmation ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style

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## **Teacher Communication Concern**

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Teacher communication concern (hereafter abbreviated TCC) is a concept and research line that developed from attempts to describe specific behaviors of teachers that could influence student learning. Initially conceived as three factors of worry or anxiety about self (confidence and competence as teacher), task (mastering the specific skills),



and impact (affecting learning), it is an area that is part of the general category of instructional communication (→ Communication Education, Goals of), which is the interaction of teacher and student talk in classrooms (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction).

For more than 50 years, from the 1950s on, researchers have been studying variables such as patterns of verbal and nonverbal interaction, teacher communication moves and student communication responses, asking and answering questions, giving directions and information, accepting and rejecting student behavior, positive and negative reinforcement, and so on. How teachers used communication in their various roles was a major focus of study (e.g., lecturing, leading discussions, giving feedback, tutoring, disciplining, etc.) (→ Pedagogy, Communication in). In short, the questions of interest related to the process of communication in classrooms as conducive or not to student learning.

Even though student learning was the goal, the students were not the focus of study except in the research and theory involving learning styles. Most of the pedagogical research and theory has focused upon the characteristics of teaching that were considered effective, e.g., teacher → communication apprehension, communication style, uses of reinforcement, and classroom interaction patterns (→ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style).

### ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT

TCC involves a kind of self-reflection by a teacher as to aspects of the teaching role that they might be worried about. Although professional practice was analyzed in teacher education it was not until Donald Schön (1983) conceptualized the “reflective practitioner” that this received prominence. As professionals, we should think actively and critically about what we do in teaching before, during, and after a class session. Such reflective practice serves as the context for teacher self-analysis of teaching acts, strengths, and weaknesses.

The TCC term and concept emerged in a qualitative research line examining what teacher education students expressed as their concerns about teaching (Fuller 1969; → Qualitative Methodology). Questionnaires were given to the neophyte teachers asking various questions about their anxieties or worries in facing their professional responsibilities. The responses were then analyzed to construct the common themes of concern that emerged. This research used the constructivist approach to educational research (→ Constructivism).

From the results of several studies (Fuller 1969; Staton-Spicer & Bassett 1978), *three areas or dimensions of concern* emerged. It seemed that developing teachers were concerned about (1) themselves meeting their responsibilities, (2) how they would fare with the specific teaching tasks, and (3) the influence or impact they would have on students. So the primary teacher communication concerns were classified as self, task and impact. Further, the results supported a developmental sequence for teacher trainees moving through the three stages – from self concerns to task concerns to impact concerns. Two of the earliest uses in communication of Fuller’s concept were by Staton-Spicer and colleagues. One study used the Fuller questionnaire (Staton-Spicer & Bassett 1978) and another was a case study relating TCC to teacher classroom behavior (Staton-Spicer & Marty-White 1981). These were not fully quantified analyses, however.

## MEASUREMENT

The next step in the research was operationalizing TCC into a measurement instrument (→ Operationalization). Researchers structured items for and tested a three-dimensional scale, which proved to be valid and reliable (→ Scales; Scales and Indices). The first such formulation of scales was carried out by Staton-Spicer (1983). It was subsequently used in several studies by the developers and others.

An *expansion of the measurement instrument* occurred with the application of TCC to graduate teaching assistant (GTA) training. Myers (1994) used the three-dimensional scale in his dissertation, but found evidence in his qualitative analyses suggesting another developmental area of role conflict concerns. GTAs are students but also serve in the complementary role of teachers and teacher aides. Balancing these separate demands (as well as those of a personal, family, or social life) can invoke “role conflict concerns.” In juggling their multiple roles, GTAs expressed communication concerns about coping with those dilemmas and conflicts. Hence one line of research has added this as a fourth dimension of measurement (Feezel & Myers 1997). After testing and validation (→ Validity), the four-dimensional scale has been applied to enable a pre/post-assessment of the developmental process of orientation and socialization. GTA training combined with natural maturation and adaptation should lead to reduced concerns over time. Such has been found to be the case in applications of the GTA–TCC scale.

## APPLICATION

Although occasional studies may be found in other fields, most of the applications have occurred in communication. As an example of the former, a quantitative study of the concerns of nurses in training was presented at a conference in 1992 (Owens et al.; → Quantitative Methodology). Two studies reported here had results contrary to the typical developmental ordering of concerns previously postulated by Fuller and her colleagues. A science education study of new approaches by Hand & Treagust (1995) did not use Fuller’s scale but a constructivism analysis showing that concerns shifted with in-service training from themselves to how to involve their students and maximize their learning. Capel (1998) made a longitudinal study of physical education students in teacher training (→ Longitudinal Analysis). Using two concerns and anxiety scales, she found that self and impact concerns remained strong and did not change over four different school experiences in their training. Other studies in teacher education found that primary school teachers’ self concerns reduced while impact and class control concerns emerged (Ballantyne & Hansford 1995), or that all three concerns reduced after a teaching practicum experience (McCormack 1996). These publications were applying the Fuller conception and not the TCC as developed by Staton-Spicer and Bassett. Some other studies were found to be talking about teaching concerns but not directly applying either the Fuller or TCC construct.

*Applications in communication* have included elementary and secondary education, college basic communication courses, and the work on GTA development described above. In one of the earliest studies in communication, Staton-Spicer & Bassett (1978) examined elementary teachers in three stages of their training. They found that even though the

concerns of pre-service student teachers and in-service elementary teachers tended to correspond as theorized by Fuller, all three categories of concern did occur with each stage. A case study of one college research methods instructor, the Staton-Spicer & Marty-White (1981) research, confirmed the three types of concern and found relationships to teacher behavior. When formulating the scales for the TCC instrument in 1983, Staton-Spicer conducted research in secondary-level communication classrooms. She found positive relationships between the measured communication concerns and attitudes about teaching, indicating the value of the three types of concern as well as their validity and reliability. Further research applied the TCC instrument to college courses in basic communication (Hiemstra & Staton-Spicer 1983). Again, the three types of concern were operable, but not in the precise developmental pattern that Fuller and others had found.

TCC has been established as an important construct in communication education, having significant connections to other variables in teaching. However, there is no large body of publications using the construct in either its three- or four-dimensional form. Although it has been established as reliable and valid to measure in relation to teacher development, behavior, anxiety, and other elements, it has not been as widely pursued as some other variables. This is puzzling, since other studies have talked about the concerns of teachers without using this well-established tool to probe those issues more fully. Further research is needed to clarify the psychological value of the TCC construct and better understand its function in instructional communication and teacher development. Thus far, it may have been used too generally under the term “concern,” and perhaps there are more complex aspects of concern, such as the differences between feelings of worry, anxiety, fear, insecurity, or inadequacy. Such feelings of teachers about themselves and their communication are very important to examine more closely, as they may mark the differences between those who are effective and those who are ineffective, those who survive and those who burn out.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Communication Apprehension  
 ▶ Communication Education, Goals of ▶ Constructivism ▶ Educational Communication  
 ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Operationalization ▶ Pedagogy, Communication in ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ▶ Validity

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## Teacher Communication Style

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Education scholars interested in the communication that transpires within the classroom have often mentioned the importance of studying the teacher as a pivotal source of that communication (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction). After searching the literature, Norton (1977) wrote that very few studies had specifically investigated teacher communication style as it relates to teacher effectiveness, though many of the exciting investigations did allude to the various components or sub-constructs that entail stylistic aspects. To fill this void within the literature, Norton (1977) utilized his conceptualization of → communicator style to investigate teacher effectiveness as a function of the way a teacher communicates within the classroom (Norton 1978).

Specifically, Norton studied both teacher and student perceptions of teacher communicator style using the eleven independent variables/sub-constructs (dominant, dramatic, animated, open, contentious, relaxed, friendly, attentive, impression leaving, precise, and voice) and the one dependent variable (communicator image) that operationally define communicator style. Results from this initial investigation into the relationship between teacher communicator style and teacher effectiveness indicated that teacher effectiveness was indeed related to the way a teacher communicates within the classroom. A second result revealed that both teachers and students rated the teacher's communication style in

similar ways. Thus, teachers who perceived themselves as being dramatic and attentive were also perceived as behaving in dramatic, open, and attentive ways by the students. The final result of the study indicated that effective teachers tend to be attentive, impression leaving, not dominant, friendly, relaxed, and precise. Norton concluded that the findings of this investigation provided strong evidence that “perceived effectiveness in teaching is inextricably related to one’s style of communication” (1977, 541). In addition, he speculated that if this link between teacher communication style and teacher effectiveness exists, then the quality of classroom teaching can be improved by improving those specific teacher behaviors related to the styles that predict teacher effectiveness.

### **RESEARCH ON TEACHER STYLE AND EFFECTIVENESS**

A series of studies followed Norton’s original test of the link between teacher communicator style and teacher effectiveness utilizing his original operationalization of the communicator style construct. Nussbaum and Scott (1979, 1980) and Anderson et al. (1981) found that perceptions of teacher effectiveness and perceptions of student cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning were related to perceptions of active and open stylistic communication dimensions. In addition, these particular studies located teacher communication style within a much larger teacher–student relational context within which a teacher’s style of communication plays a pivotal role. In essence, a teacher’s communication style can have direct positive impact upon perceptions of student learning and student ratings of teacher effectiveness, and, at the same time, add significantly to the overall classroom relationship between the student and teacher that can further help produce positive student outcomes.

Kearney and McCroskey (1980) pointed out that the concept of communicator style utilized by Norton and others in their investigations of classroom communication was not solidly grounded within instructional communication theory. They grounded their notion of *teacher communication style (TCS)* within instructional communication theory, and defined TCS as “the collective perceptions of a teacher’s relational image in the classroom” (Kearney & McCroskey 1980, 533). TCS was measured with a survey instrument composed of three dimensions: assertiveness, versatility, and responsiveness. Findings revealed that students who perceived their teacher to be assertive, versatile, and responsive also reported greater affective and behavioral commitment toward the class, content, and instructor. In addition, students who perceived teachers as more versatile and responsive reported lower fears about communicating in class.

Norton and Nussbaum (1980) investigated the link between dramatic teacher behaviors and effective teaching. Nine *dramatic behaviors* were studied within this study: controls mood; pokes fun; tells good stories; is sarcastic; gets others to fantasize; catches others up in stories; gets others to laugh; is entertaining; and performs double takes (→ Teacher Use of Humor). A measure of dramatic style behaviors was constructed and then administered within the classroom. Norton and Nussbaum (1980) found that two dramatic style behaviors related strongly to effective teaching (both by conventional statistical analysis and exploratory data analysis): the teacher is entertaining and the teacher performs double takes. In addition, several other teacher dramatic behaviors were

shown to be utilized by highly effective teachers: story telling; gets others to laugh; catches others up in stories; pokes fun; and is sarcastic. The authors concluded that highly effective teachers appear to be doing something qualitatively different in terms of their dramatic style behaviors within the classroom than teachers who are not as effective. An additional investigation by Nussbaum (1982) utilizing causal modeling reinforced the finding that teacher dramatic style predicts effective teaching.

Nussbaum (1983) attempted to utilize the research evidence suggesting a link between a teacher's communicator style and teacher effectiveness by conducting a systematic experiment that trained teachers to modify their in-class behavior, then observed the resulting teacher effectiveness and student test scores (→ Experimental Design). Several teacher behaviors that had been associated with teacher dramatic and immediate behaviors (teacher movement, teacher gestures, and teacher eye contact) were manipulated with the use of in-class video tapes during a semester-long teacher training process for five graduate student teachers. Two significant results emerged from this intervention study. First, all five teachers changed their in-class behavior to become more dramatic and immediate after participating in the video-tape feedback training sessions. Second, these behavioral changes were shown to improve student evaluations of teacher effectiveness and student test scores as the semester progressed. While these results must be interpreted with some caution, this investigation does point toward the possibility that teacher communicator styles can be changed and that this change can produce positive outcomes within the classroom.

Javidi (1987), Nussbaum et al. (1987), and Downs et al. (1988) investigated whether highly effective teachers utilized different verbal behaviors within the classroom when compared to ineffective teachers. A coding scheme was developed to count the use of teacher humor, → teacher self-disclosure, and teacher narratives. It was reasoned that each of these verbal behaviors contributed to both the dramatic and open style components of the teacher's communicator style. Results indicated that highly effective teachers did utilize humor, self-disclosure, and narrative more frequently than ineffective teachers. In addition, highly effective teachers knew when to use humor, self-disclosure, and narratives appropriately to draw attention to and reinforce course content. It is also important to point out that the teachers studied within these investigations not only taught quite different content (from economics to music) but also taught at different grade levels (from middle school to graduate school). The common thread across content and grade level was the association between highly effective teaching and the appropriate and frequent use of humor, self-disclosure, and narratives.

Myers and Horvath (1997) have more recently investigated the relationship between Norton's original operationalization of teacher communicator style and student affective, behavioral, and cognitive learning. Noting that the great majority of teacher communicator style research had been conducted over 15 years before this particular study, Myers and Horvath reasoned that not only had the communication dynamics of the classroom changed since the previous research was conducted, significant progress had also been made in the measurement of student learning utilized by instructional scholars (→ Measurement Theory). In this investigation, undergraduate participants completed a series of measures, including Norton's communicator style measure and updated versions of scales measuring affective and cognitive learning. Results did indeed indicate several

significant differences from the much earlier studies. Rather than the dramatic and attentive styles predicting positive student outcomes, Myers and Horvath found that teacher styles that were friendly, relaxed, and impression leaving resulted in students having more positive attitudes about course content. These results reinforce the findings of Potter and Emanuel (1990), who previously had found that high school students preferred teachers who were perceived to be friendly and relaxed, and who had the ability to maintain control (the dominant style) within the classroom.

The relationship between why students are motivated to communicate with their teachers and their perceptions of teacher communicator style was investigated by Myers et al. (2000). It was reasoned that communication context plays a significant role in how individuals are motivated to communicate. Because teacher communication style can affect numerous student outcomes within the classroom and can have a significant impact on classroom climate, perceived instructor communicator style should have an impact on why students choose to communicate with their instructors. Undergraduate students completed Norton's communication style measure as well as the Student Communication Motives scale. Results revealed that five teacher styles affected student motivation to communicate with instructors: impression leaving, friendly, contentious, animated, and attentive.

A series of investigations were conducted by Scott Myers and several colleagues to investigate the relationship between teacher argumentativeness, teacher verbal aggressiveness (→ Teacher Assertiveness; Verbal Aggressiveness), and positive student outcomes within college classrooms (Myers 1998, 2002; Myers & Knox 2000; Myers & Rocca 2001). Teacher argumentativeness was conceptualized as the predisposition to defend one's position while attempting to refute another's position and is considered to be a positive communication trait. Teacher verbal aggressiveness is any message that attacks a student's self-concept to deliver psychological pain and is considered to be a negative communication trait. The results of these investigations do support the notion that perceived instructor argumentativeness in the classroom is positively related to student outcomes while teacher aggressiveness is negatively related to positive classroom outcomes. Related to this work is the finding by McPherson et al. (2003) emphasizing the distinction between teacher assertive displays within the classroom, which are perceived by students to be appropriate, and teacher aggressive displays within the classroom, which are perceived to be inappropriate.

Numerous additional variables related to teacher communication style have recently been investigated and related to positive student and teacher outcomes within the classroom. For instance, teacher self-disclosure (Cayanus 2004), teacher humor (Wanzer & Frymier 1999), and positive facework by teachers (Kressen-Griep 2001) have all been shown to produce positive student and teacher outcomes within the classroom.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Communicator Style ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Interpersonal Communication Competence and Social Skills ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Scales ▶ Teacher Assertiveness ▶ Teacher Clarity ▶ Teacher Confirmation ▶ Teacher Feedback ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Self-Disclosure ▶ Teacher Socio-Communicative Style ▶ Teacher Use of Humor ▶ Verbal Aggressiveness

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## Teacher Confirmation

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Teacher confirmation is the transactional process by which teachers communicate to students that they – the students – are valuable, significant individuals. Like other affective variables such as teacher immediacy and teacher caring, studies indicate that perceived teacher confirmation plays a very important role in students' learning (→ Teacher Communication Concern; Teacher Immediacy).

Philosopher Martin Buber (1957) was the first to write about confirmation in an interpersonal sense. He argued that confirmation may well be the most significant feature of human interaction, and that it is the interactional phenomenon by which we discover and establish our identity as humans. British psychiatrist Laing (1961) further developed the construct and emphasized that confirmation includes *actions* on the part of others that cause individuals to feel *endorsed*, *recognized*, and *acknowledged* as unique, valuable human beings. Disconfirmation, on the other hand, negates the other as a valid message source and communicates to the other that he or she is less than human, that he or she is merely a *thing*, an object in the environment, worthless and insignificant as a human being.

Although empirical research about confirmation is limited, much progress has been made toward the clarification of confirmation theory and the identification and systemization of specific communication behaviors that are likely to influence individuals in such a way that they feel confirmed or disconfirmed. Sieburg (1973, 1975) initiated this effort when she extracted the basic dimensions of confirmation and disconfirmation from the conceptual framework provided by Laing (1961) and the descriptive work by Watzlawick et al. (1967). According to the Sieburg (1975) and Cissna and Sieburg (1981) typology, confirmation includes the interrelated clusters of (1) recognition, (2) acknowledgment, and (3) endorsement. Disconfirmation includes (1) indifference, (2) imperviousness, and (3) disqualification of the speaker, his or her message, or both.

Empirical work is just beginning regarding the role of confirmation in instructional settings. Building upon the theoretical underpinnings just described, Ellis (2000) developed a typology of teacher confirmation behaviors and validated a measure of perceived teacher confirmation that delineates specific teacher behaviors students identified as confirming or disconfirming. Analysis of data obtained through student focus groups revealed four general categories of behavioral patterns through which teachers communicate confirmation: (1) teachers' response to students' questions and comments

(→ Teacher Feedback), (2) demonstrated interest, (3) teaching style (→ Teacher Communication Style), and (4) absence of disconfirmation. Teachers' response to students' questions includes taking time to answer students' questions fully and listening attentively when students ask questions or make comments during class. Demonstrated interest includes making an effort to get to know students, showing interest in whether they are learning, and communicating a belief that students can do well in the class. A confirming teaching style is interactive and employs a variety of teaching techniques to help students understand course material. Absence of disconfirmation includes the avoidance of teacher behaviors such as rudeness, belittling, and embarrassing students in front of the class.

Using two samples, Ellis (2000) explored the relationship between perceived teacher confirmation and learning (→ Learning and Communication) and found that perceived teacher confirmation is a strong, significant predictor of learning, uniquely explaining 30 percent of the variance in affective learning and 18 percent of the variance in cognitive learning. She also found that the effect on cognitive learning was mediated through affective learning. In subsequent studies, Ellis (2004) examined students' actual feelings of being confirmed and disconfirmed as a function of the perceived teacher behaviors previously identified. Findings indicated that 61 percent of the variance in students' feelings of confirmation was attributable to perceived teacher confirmation. Ellis (2004) also examined *how* teacher confirmation operates in the instructional process to influence students' receiver apprehension, state motivation, and learning. She found a very large and direct effect of teacher confirmation on receiver apprehension and large indirect effects of teacher confirmation on motivation, affective learning, and cognitive learning. Thus, the effect of teacher confirmation on learning appears to be mediated through receiver apprehension.

Results of these early studies clearly attest to the importance of teacher confirmation in instructional settings. One may reasonably ask, however, how confirmation differs from immediacy. Although Ellis (2000) demonstrated that the constructs are not completely redundant, given the potency of teacher confirmation reported in the existing studies, it is not unreasonable to speculate that confirmation may actually include immediacy. Confirmation may well be the underlying latent variable of immediacy as well as of several other affective variables that appear in instructional communication literature. All are conceptually and empirically overlapping, yet each is important and contributes to our knowledge of communication behaviors that characterize effective teaching.

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ► Learning and Communication ► Teacher Comforting and Social Support ► Teacher Communication Concern ► Teacher Communication Style ► Teacher Feedback ► Teacher Immediacy ► Teacher Socio-Communicative Style

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## Teacher Feedback

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Teacher feedback is considered one of the most powerful instructional variables in terms of enhancing student achievement (Hattie 1993). Because teaching and learning are relational processes, teachers are both sources and receivers of feedback (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction). Teachers provide feedback to their students about their learning and they receive feedback from their students about their teaching.

Ilgen et al. (1979) defined feedback from a source to a recipient as information about the correctness, accuracy, or appropriateness of the recipient's past performance. As sources of feedback, teachers encode and convey verbal and nonverbal messages to students either face-to-face or through some form of mediation, such as written comments, regarding students' past performance. As receivers of feedback, teachers receive and decode messages from students either face-to-face (i.e., students' responsive behaviors) or through some form of mediation (i.e., teacher evaluations) regarding teachers' past performance.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK

Feedback messages have a number of common characteristics: valence, timeliness, specificity, frequency, and sensitivity (Cusella 1987). Feedback valence refers to perceived attractiveness or value of the information conveyed. Positively valenced feedback consists of messages implying that the recipient's behavior or performance was satisfactory. Negatively valenced feedback consists of messages implying that the recipient's behavior or performance was unsatisfactory. Although the valence of the feedback may be the most important characteristic influencing how students accept teacher feedback, the timeliness, specificity, frequency, and sensitivity have also been shown to enhance acceptance. Timeliness centers on how quickly a feedback source provides feedback after the performance occurs. Specificity refers to the level of detail contained in the feedback

and focuses on what behaviors need to be changed. Frequency refers to the number of times feedback is given. Sensitivity refers to whether or not the feedback demonstrates a concern for the recipient's feelings. Students learn more and are more motivated to learn when their teachers provide them with feedback that is timely, specific, frequent, and sensitive (Kluger & DeNisi 1996).

## TEACHERS AS SOURCES OF FEEDBACK

### Types and Effects of Teacher Feedback

Researchers have identified three large classifications of teacher feedback: classroom management feedback, teacher–student interaction feedback, and competency-based feedback. *Classroom management feedback* functions to manage students' behavior and work habits. It tends to be negative, reactive, and focused on procedures rather than academic performance. Examples of this type of feedback include reprimand, criticism, and disapproval focusing on students' neatness, deportment, timeliness, compliance, attention, and work completion. Morgan (2001) concluded that negative managerial feedback decreased students' activity interest, self-perceived competence, liking for the teacher, and willingness to work with the teacher. Another type of classroom management feedback is referred to as behavioral alteration techniques (BATs; → Classroom Management Techniques; Classroom Power). This type features 11 pro-social and 7 antisocial techniques that are directed at managing students' on-task behavior (Kearney et al. 1984). Pro-social techniques are feedback messages that students perceive as potentially rewarding; students perceive antisocial techniques as potentially punishing. Numerous studies confirm the benefits of pro-social strategies, including increased student learning, motivation, and compliance, and reduced student resistance (Roach et al. 2006; → Teacher Influence and Persuasion).

*Teacher–student interaction feedback* occurs within the context of a teacher–student dialogue and involves feedback that teachers give to students when they answer teachers' questions. This type of feedback functions to enhance student learning and critical thinking. Three types of interaction feedback have been identified: three-term contingency feedback, differential feedback, and instructive feedback. Three-term contingency feedback is when a teacher asks a student a fact-based question, the student responds with an answer, and the teacher immediately comments on the correctness of the student's response (→ Classroom Questioning). Differentiated feedback is when teachers vary their feedback based on the type of response they receive from the student. For example, if a student's response is correct, quick, and firm, then a short statement of acknowledgment is appropriate. If a student's incorrect response is due to a lack of knowledge or understanding, prompts or cues that lead the student to the correct response are appropriate. Instructive feedback is when teachers consistently add supplemental information to students' responses, allowing students to acquire more information while using the same amount of instructional time it takes to simply recognize that the response was correct.

*Competency-based feedback* functions to enhance students' academic ability and performance. There are two types of competency-based feedback – process and product. Process

feedback (also known as formative feedback, corrective feedback, or elaborated feedback) is the feedback that teachers provide to students while students are preparing their assignments. An example of this type of feedback would be students submitting drafts of their work to their teacher before the due date, which allows the teacher an opportunity to provide corrective feedback while the student develops the assignment. Research suggests that there is a positive relationship between formative feedback and student learning (Bloom 1976). Mastery learning occurs when students perform at the optimal level and is promoted by teachers incorporating a number of feedback loops into the development of an academic product (→ Learning and Communication). Mastery learning is also more likely to occur when teachers use elaborated feedback, which includes specific, detailed, and timely information on how students can enhance the quality of their work.

Product feedback (also known as summative feedback, outcome feedback, or knowledge of results feedback) is the feedback that teachers provide to students once students are finished with their assignment or academic product. This type of feedback is to inform students of the correctness or the incorrectness of their work. One type of product feedback is speech evaluation, or the feedback teachers provide to students following an oral presentation (Rubin 1999). Speech evaluation feedback can be given to students in an oral (a conversation) or written (using checklists, rating scales, or open-ended critiques) manner. Although students appreciate receiving positive rather than negative feedback about their speech performances, they remain receptive to negative feedback that is specific and impersonal. Specific feedback is detailed and concrete, and addresses in a step-by-step manner the speaking behaviors that need to be changed. Feedback that focuses on fewer behavioral changes is more effective than feedback that includes a long list of behaviors. Impersonal feedback or comments that focus on aspects of the speech rather than on the speaker are more helpful than personal ones, especially when the feedback is directed at aspects of delivery (Rubin 1999).

### **Student Characteristics that Impact Teacher Feedback**

Teachers provide different types of feedback to male and female students. A comprehensive meta-analysis conducted by Jones et al. (2006) found that although teachers initiated more overall interactions with male than with female students, teachers also reprimanded and negatively critiqued male students more than female students. This research analysis did not reveal any significant differences in the amount of positive teacher feedback between male and female students.

Teachers also provide different types of feedback to students based on their own expectations for student achievement. An expectation is an inference that teachers make about the present and future academic achievement and general classroom behaviors of their students (Rosenthal & Jacobson 1968). Expectations are formed by such individual differences as student personality, social style, physical attractiveness, seating location, writing neatness, nonverbal responsiveness, and speech characteristics (Brophy & Good 1974). These effects were first reported in Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) classic study examining how teacher expectations of students influenced their teaching and interactions with students.

Teachers have been shown to provide high- and low-expectation students with different types of feedback:

- Teachers respond to incorrect answers from low-expectation students (more so than those from high-expectation students) by giving them the answer or calling on another student to answer the question.
- Teachers respond to incorrect answers from high-expectation students by giving them additional time, repeating the question, providing a clue, or asking a new question.
- Teachers criticize low-expectation students proportionately more frequently than high-expectation students when they provide wrong answers.
- Teachers are less likely to praise low-expectation students when they provide a correct answer than high-expectation students, even though they provide fewer correct responses.
- Teachers are less likely to publicly confirm or reaffirm the correct responses of low-expectation students.
- Teachers are less nonverbally responsive (less eye contact, smiling) to low- than to high-expectation students (Brophy & Good 1974).

### **TEACHERS AS RECEIVERS OF FEEDBACK**

Because of the relational nature of teaching and learning, teachers are also receivers of two types of student feedback. Process-related student feedback is the feedback that students provide teachers while they are teaching. Product-related student feedback is the feedback that students provide teachers once the grade level or course is completed. Both process and product forms of student feedback have been shown to impact teachers and their teaching.

Students provide process feedback to their teachers while they are teaching in the form of responsive behaviors. Verbal responsive behaviors include answering the teacher's or other students' questions. Positively valenced nonverbal responsive behaviors include forward body leans, head nods, note taking, and vocal assurances. Many teachers are aware of student responsive behaviors and use these behaviors as feedback information to enhance their teaching effectiveness.

Students' responsive behaviors, especially nonverbal responsive behaviors, have been shown to affect teachers' self-perceptions, perceptions of students, and instructional behaviors (Mottet et al. 2006). As students' positively valenced responsiveness increases, teachers report being more satisfied in their teaching career, consider themselves to be more self-efficacious in their teaching, and are more motivated to teach. Teachers perceive responsive students to be more intelligent, caring, trustworthy, and likeable than less responsive students. Teachers are more willing to let their responsive students influence them and their teaching behaviors than their less responsive students. Finally, as student responsiveness increases, teachers are more willing to comply with students' requests and are more lenient in how they evaluate students' written work and oral presentations (Mottet et al. 2006).

Students provide product feedback to their teachers at the end of a grade level or once the course is completed, in the form of student grades and students' teacher evaluations.

Both of these sources of product feedback have been shown to affect teachers and their teaching behavior. With primary and secondary teachers, high-achieving students positively impact teacher attitudes as well as teachers communicating positive expectations to students' next grade level instructor (Brophy & Good 1974). In higher education, students' teacher evaluations have been shown to affect instructor grading leniency (Eiszler 2002) as well as tenure and promotion decisions (Kennedy 1997).

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Management Techniques ► Classroom Power ► Classroom Questioning ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ► Learning and Communication ► Teacher Influence and Persuasion

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# Teacher Immediacy

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Teacher immediacy is the term used to describe communication behaviors that reduce the perceived distance between teacher and students. By definition, immediacy behaviors convey teacher warmth, communicate positive relational affect, signal approach and availability for communication, and create increased physiological arousal in receivers. Introduced in research based on her dissertation, J. Andersen (1979) identified teacher immediacy as a nonverbal construct and sought ways to measure the impact of teacher immediacy on instructional outcomes. Now, with the accumulation of nearly three decades of research on teacher immediacy, the substantial influences of teacher immediacy in creating positive instructional outcomes are well understood (Witt et al. 2004).

The construct of teacher immediacy was theoretically grounded in → interpersonal communication research on immediacy, interpersonal warmth, and intimacy (→ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends). A parallel body of literature has developed detailed theoretical models that explain the processes of intimacy exchange and describe how the immediacy behaviors function in close relationships (P. Andersen et al. 2006; → Relationship Development). Theoretically, immediacy is encoded and decoded as a “gestalt,” meaning that perceptions arise from an overall impression of the degree of immediacy behaviors rather than from single cues. Nonverbal cues that contribute to the gestalt impression of immediacy include increased eye contact, smiling, positive head nods, closer distances, more direct body angles, greater vocal variation, more touch, more time spent together, and increased gestural animation (→ Rhetoric, Nonverbal; Nonverbal Communication and Culture; Nonverbal Signals, Effects of). Verbal immediacy involves the use of inclusive first-person plural pronouns (e.g., *we* rather than *you and I*), of informal forms of address, of names, of self-disclosure, and the confirmation of others’ statements (Andersen 1998; → Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction).

Several approaches have been used to *measure teacher immediacy*. Most of the research-based claims about nonverbal teacher immediacy have employed summative Likert-type instruments that ask participants or observers to rate their perceptions of a group of nonverbal immediacy behaviors (Andersen & Andersen, 2005; → Scales; Scales and Indices). A few studies have employed → coding of actual teacher behaviors, often in combination with perceptual measures, and some have used holistic or “molar” generalized immediacy measures. Verbal teacher immediacy (Gorham, 1988) has employed similar summative self-report methodologies. Although the → validity of verbal immediacy measurement has been questioned (Robinson & Richmond, 1995), research continues to explore verbal immediacy. Finally, some researchers have utilized a combined measure of nonverbal and verbal immediacy.



Historically, more research has been done on nonverbal immediacy than on either verbal immediacy or the combination of verbal and nonverbal immediacy (McCroskey et al. 2006). This *emphasis on nonverbal communication* in immediacy studies is consistent with research on nonverbal communication generally that suggests that nonverbal behavior is the primary vehicle for the communication of affect. The primary finding from this large body of research is that teacher immediacy has a major positive effect on classroom affect, or liking. The evidence is extensive and consistent that immediate teachers produce increases in affective-based student learning outcomes. Students evaluate the class, the teacher, and the subject matter more positively when teachers display more rather than less immediacy. Immediate teachers are more motivating to students and students are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward the class, attend class more, and approach rather than avoid the subject (Witt et al. 2004; → Learning and Communication).

More immediate teachers also produce positive consequences for *cognitive learning*, but the effect is smaller than that for affective outcomes and less consistent. When student perceptions of cognitive learning are employed as the dependent variable, studies demonstrate moderately large increases in perceived cognitive learning. Smaller and less consistent impacts of immediacy on cognitive learning have been observed in other studies that employ more direct, objective measures of cognitive learning. These small effects may nevertheless be important. Immediacy can motivate cognitive learning in some settings and not others due to the variability of complex, naturally occurring instructional settings. Furthermore, the real impact on cognitive learning may be delayed because student affect increases motivation, which mediates long-term learning. Finally, some of the impact of teacher immediacy on cognitive learning may be attenuated by other more influential factors that predict test and grade outcomes, such as effort, intelligence, and background.

For the studies in the US, the relationship between teacher immediacy and teacher effectiveness is at some point a curvilinear one, with extreme immediate behavior perceived as inappropriate, resulting in negative outcomes even on perceptions of affect. Furthermore, Titsworth (2004) found that naturally occurring low immediacy was actually better than high immediacy in predicting the extent of note taking and note organization in a lecture environment, suggesting a possible distraction effect of immediacy. The power of teacher immediacy has been abundantly demonstrated in American instructional settings. The few findings from global settings suggest that immediacy generally *functions similarly across the world*, though the effects may be smaller.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Coding ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Nonverbal Communication and Culture ▶ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ▶ Relationship Development ▶ Rhetoric, Nonverbal ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Validity

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## Teacher Influence and Persuasion

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Teaching is a social influence process. Teachers influence students to learn. Influencing students to learn requires teachers to find ways to change students' existing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Teachers may need to induce a positive attitude toward learning mathematics or science. They may need to alter students' beliefs about the causes of World War II. Teachers may need to encourage students to read more books. In order to effect such changes, teachers need to strategize ways to influence, motivate, or persuade students.

This process of → persuasion, or the selection of verbal and nonverbal messages to effect change, is fundamental to teacher effectiveness. Persuasion always involves communication. The source of communication, or the teacher, seeks to elicit a particular, desired response from the receiver, or the student. The purpose of the communication is to change, modify, or shape the student's responses. Classroom persuasion involves a conscious effort to influence students' thoughts and behaviors.

Influence involves change; intentional influence involves a plan, a strategy, application, and persistence. From this perspective then, effective teachers are proactive and skilled persuaders. The teacher identifies specific attitudes, cognitions, or behaviors to be targeted, and deliberately designs messages intended to elicit those changes in the student. Most of what we know about learning is a product of persuasion. Influencing students to learn, then, is, by definition, what teachers do.

## HOW TEACHERS INFLUENCE

Researchers have examined the various approaches teachers use to influence students to learn, both in and out of the classroom. *Classroom management strategies*, for instance, are designed to influence active student involvement, minimize student interference, and maximize efficient use of teacher time (→ Classroom Management Techniques). The appeal of this perspective has its roots in a line of research in educational psychology demonstrating that the single best predictor of learning is academic engagement time (Woolfolk 2001). For example, teachers who are “with it” are keenly aware of what is going on in the classroom at all times, allowing them to notice problems early and put a stop to them. Being able to deal with more than one task at a time, or what Kounin (1970) calls overlapping, is another characteristic of effective classroom managers. Momentum is measured by the absence or presence of downtimes or slowdowns during instruction. During downtimes, students are likely to find alternative off-task behaviors more entertaining and engaging (Burden 1995; Charles 1996; Plax & Kearney 1999). In these and other ways, teachers are deliberately and proactively influencing students’ on-task behaviors (→ Learning and Communication).

Another type of teacher influence occurs during *mentoring* (Waldeck et al. 1997). Students who are mentored receive academic, career, and social support, influencing greater student retention, persistence, and success. Similarly, teachers who make content relevant intentionally influence students’ willingness to attend, perceive, and retain information important to them. Teachers might also influence students in ways that *motivate* them to come to class prepared, study for tests, and enjoy the process of learning. Teachers who communicate *caring* or concern stimulate and influence student perceptions of teacher trust. At the same time, students evaluate the course and teacher positively and report greater learning with caring teachers (Teven & Hanson 2004; → Mentoring).

Teachers also avail themselves of a number of *power-based strategies* designed to obtain student compliance (→ Classroom Power). Conceptualized and operationalized as behavioral alteration techniques (BATs) and behavior alteration messages (BAMs), these strategies are used by teachers to influence or manage students’ behavior and misbehavior (Kearney et al. 1984; Kearney & Plax 1992). In all of these ways and more, teachers strategically and proactively influence their students’ attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

## HOW STUDENTS RESIST TEACHER INFLUENCE

Research indicates that students are not entirely open to teacher influence. In fact, US elementary and secondary public and private schoolteachers cite student discipline and disruptions as important reasons for leaving the profession (Ingersoll 2001). Even college professors are not immune to student problems, with one in five students reporting resistance attempts. Inductively deriving from college students themselves the ways they have resisted teacher influence attempts, Burroughs et al. (1989) identified 19 different student resistance techniques. Strategies range from avoidance and reluctant compliance to deception, disruption, and excuses. Further efforts to define the underlying dimensions of resistance resulted in two primary types: teacher owned and student owned. Teacher-owned strategies are those where students assign responsibility or blame to the teacher

(e.g., “The teacher is incompetent”); student-owned techniques are those where the students assign ownership or blame to themselves (e.g., “I forgot to do my homework”).

Subsequent research examined the predictors of students’ resistance decisions and the strategies they select (Kearney et al. 1991). These researchers reasoned that students make decisions about whether to resist or comply as a function of what their teachers say and do. In addition, they argued that students will selectively choose how they resist based on the attributions they make of their teachers (Kearney & Plax 1992). They discovered that students are more likely to comply with nonverbally immediate teachers or those who are approachable, warm, and open, but are more likely to resist those who are non-immediate or who appear as unapproachable and distant. Compliance or resistance was also a function of the type of persuasive strategy the teacher used (→ Persuasion and Resistance). Teachers who relied on more pro-social or positive persuasive techniques were associated with greater student compliance; those who used more antisocial or punishment-based techniques were associated with greater resistance. Of the two predictors, immediacy and strategy type, immediacy dominated students’ decisions to comply or resist. Moreover, immediacy was the more powerful predictor of how students chose to resist, with students opting for student-owned techniques with immediate teachers and teacher-owned techniques with non-immediate teachers. Important to this program of research, these findings demonstrated that teachers can control whether students decide to comply or resist, and they have the potential to control the ways in which students choose to resist (→ Teacher Immediacy).

### PREDICTORS OF TEACHER INFLUENCE EFFECTIVENESS

The ability to influence students effectively is a function of a number of teacher antecedents, including immediacy, credibility, and confirmation, among others. Defined as physical and/or psychological closeness, nonverbal immediacy signals relational perceptions of approach, friendliness, warmth, and interpersonal closeness. *Nonverbal behaviors* indicative of immediacy include positive head nods, smiles, eye contact, vocal expressiveness, overall body movements and physical gestures, direct, relaxed, and open body positions, and close physical distances (→ Nonverbal Signals, Effects of). Without exception, the research on teacher immediacy has established a substantial and positive association with students’ affect toward the teacher, school, and course content, and to a lesser extent, with students’ cognitive learning (Rodriguez et al. 1996). Moreover, students are more compliant or less resistant to immediate, as opposed to non-immediate, teachers (Kearney & Plax 1992). Immediate teachers, then, have more influence potential than non-immediate teachers.

When persuading an audience, Aristotle argued that a *source’s credibility* may be the most powerful rhetorical strategy available. Typically defined as perceived believability (McCroskey 1998), credibility encompasses perceptions of competence, character or trust, and caring. When students find their teacher knowledgeable about the content, trustworthy and honest, and communicating concern about their learning, it is not at all surprising that they would be likely to do what the teacher wants. Credible teachers have the potential to exert a great deal of influence in the classroom. Students report being motivated and learning more from a highly credible teacher; they also evaluate the

teacher highly, enjoy the course, and recommend their more credible teachers to other students (Martin et al. 1997; Pogue & AhYun 2006). The list of positive associations goes on. Teachers perceived as highly credible have a better chance of persuading students to learn and to enjoy the process. With credible teachers, students are motivated to make a good impression and to demonstrate that they are content competent (Myers & Martin 2006).

Yet another social influence strategy available to teachers is → *teacher confirmation*. Defined as those teacher messages designed to endorse, recognize, and acknowledge learners as valuable and significant (Ellis 2000), teacher confirmation is associated with a variety of instructional outcomes. Teachers confirm students in four primary ways. They confirm by responding to students' questions with interest and openness, and by demonstrating a sincere interest and concern for their students. Further, they may use their teaching style to confirm by using a variety of techniques to ensure students' understanding of the course content. Finally, teachers confirm by avoiding disconfirming behaviors, such as rude and embarrassing comments. Teachers who engage in confirming behaviors are also associated with students' motivation to learn, reduced apprehension to communicate in class, increased affective and cognitive learning, and greater power to influence (Ellis 2004; Turman & Schrodt 2006; → Communication Apprehension).

SEE ALSO: ► Classroom Management Techniques ► Classroom Power ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ► Communication Apprehension ► Learning and Communication ► Mentoring ► Nonverbal Signals, Effects of ► Persuasion ► Persuasion and Resistance ► Teacher Confirmation ► Teacher Immediacy

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## Teacher Self-Disclosure

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Teacher self-disclosure occurs when teachers intentionally or unintentionally reveal information about themselves to students (Nussbaum & Scott 1979), often concerning their education, experience, family, friends and colleagues, beliefs, opinions, leisure activities, and personal problems (Downs et al. 1988). Moreover, these early studies suggest that teacher self-disclosure is related in various ways to student learning and teachers' overall effectiveness.

Borrowing the construct from the interpersonal literature, in which scholars describe self-disclosure, the act of revealing personal information, instructional researchers Nussbaum and Scott (1979) reasoned that → interpersonal communication is important in the classroom. Thus, they were interested in the nature and effects of teacher self-disclosure; they found that college teachers do self-disclose in the classroom, and that students evaluate those disclosures as intentional/unintentional, entertaining/self-indulgent, risky/safe, and relevant/irrelevant to coursework.

Subsequently, researchers studied the relationships among student perceptions of teacher self-disclosure and a number of *instructional outcomes*. For example, Scott and Nussbaum (1981) reported that student perceptions of instructors' honesty in self-disclosure, combined with their perceptions of teacher style and communication competence, are highly related to students' overall assessment of teacher effectiveness (→ Teacher Communication Style). Downs et al. (1988) reported that teachers who self-disclose and use humor positively influence student perceptions of teacher clarity, but only when the humorous disclosures are relevant to course material (→ Teacher Use of Humor). In another study, Sorensen (1989) found a positive relationship between teacher self-disclosure and student perceptions of affective learning (i.e., student attitudes toward the teacher and course; → Learning and Communication).

At the end of the 1980s, researchers had a *conceptualization of teacher self-disclosure* and an understanding of its role in learning. Researchers then started to incorporate self-disclosure into larger theoretical frameworks that attempt to explain the process and product of instructional communication. For example, Gorham (1988) found that self-disclosure is one verbal strategy that heightens student perceptions of teacher immediacy, a predictor of student affective and cognitive learning and behavioral intent (Christophel 1990; → Teacher Immediacy).

Fusani (1994) was the first to focus on teacher self-disclosure as a dimension of teacher–student interaction outside the classroom in a theory of *extra-class communication* (→ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction). Bippus et al. (2003) subsequently indicated that undergraduates are much more likely to predict a successful outcome to extra-class mentoring experiences when teacher-mentors provide psychosocial functions, which include self-disclosures (→ Mentoring). More recently, researchers studied the role of self-disclosure in mediated communication. Waldeck et al. (2001) found that “informal and personal communication” is one of three student-reported motivations for using email with instructors, thus revealing another medium for teachers to share relevant personal information that students value (→ Classroom Instructional Technology).

Too much teacher self-disclosure and discussion of certain personal topics may have a *negative influence* on learning outcomes. Specifically, students dislike situations in which teachers stray from the subject with their disclosures, use class time to give personal opinions on unrelated matters, or engage in inappropriate disclosures (e.g., about sexual activity, their feelings about other students, and negative parts of their personality; Kearney et al. 1991). And although teacher disclosures appear to be positively related to student evaluations of all teachers, more experienced, award-winning teachers self-disclose less than other teachers (Downs et al. 1988).

Teacher self-disclosure may be *measured* by (1) quantifiable verbal coding schemes (e.g., Nussbaum et al. 1985), (2) other-reports such as the Perceived Self-Disclosure of Another Person scale (Nussbaum & Scott 1979), or (3) self-reports (Wheless 1978). With the exception of Nussbaum et al.'s scheme, these scales must be modified for the instructional context. Cayanus and Martin (2004) developed and validated an 18-item Instructor Self-Disclosure scale.

Research on teacher self-disclosure has been confined to the college and university setting in the United States. Thus, our understanding of how culture impacts teachers' tendencies to self-disclose and students' perceptions of those disclosures is limited.

Despite the richness of existing work on teacher self-disclosure, more research in diverse and global instructional situations is needed, as is a greater understanding of teacher self-disclosure in the lower grades.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Instructional Technology ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Disclosure in Health Communication ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Mentoring ▶ Self-Presentation ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Immediacy ▶ Teacher Use of Humor

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# Teacher Socialization

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Teacher socialization is a complex, communicative process by which individuals selectively acquire the values, attitudes, norms, knowledge, skills, and behaviors of the teaching profession and of the particular school or educational culture in which they seek to work. It is a widely held view that the effectiveness of teachers, and thus the quality of education, is related to teacher preparation and early teaching experiences. Unlike primary socialization, which occurs from birth, teacher socialization is a form of secondary socialization, a subsequent, ongoing process in which people continually socialize into new realms of their lives. Prospective and beginning teachers have been the main focus of teacher socialization research, on the assumption that socialization occurs during teacher training and the initial years in the teaching position. Researchers acknowledge, however, that teacher socialization also continues throughout the career as veteran teachers change roles and enter new educational environments.

## CONCEPTUALIZATIONS

Communication scholars have utilized various conceptual categories to describe teacher socialization. These include dimensions, phases, and intellectual traditions.

### Dimensions of Socialization

Within the socialization experience of teachers are two distinct, yet interrelated dimensions: role or occupational socialization, and organizational or cultural socialization. Prospective teachers engage in a decision-making process during which they make a cognitive commitment to enter the teaching profession and become members of the occupational group known as teachers. To do so involves at least a tacit assent to learning the role or occupation (i.e., the requisite knowledge and skills necessary to teach effectively; the expectations, functions, and requirements of the teaching profession). This essential dimension is *role or occupational socialization*, which Sarbin and Allen (1968) termed role acquisition or role learning (→ Teacher Training in Communication).

In addition to learning the teacher role, a newcomer must also socialize into an individual school organization and learn the culture of the particular school system. *Cultural or organizational socialization*, a second dimension of teacher socialization, involves learning the norms, social practices, collective understandings, and values of the particular teaching context and educational organization (→ Organizational Culture). In most societies worldwide, educational systems are structured as social institutions, on the assumption that individuals learn through interaction with others. Even as higher education increasingly occurs in online forums, most instruction of children and adolescents occurs within the context of schools, which are social organizations. Thus, not only does socialization involve learning the role or occupation of teacher, the process also requires an individual

to become a member of the particular organization, to learn the culture of the individual school and school system in which she or he teaches or plans to teach (Louis 1980).

Role or occupational and cultural or organizational learning occur as individuals engage in a *range of communication strategies* that Berger (1987) termed passive, active, and interactive. Passive strategies are those such as unobtrusive observation, in which there is an absence of actual contact between individuals. Active strategies involve encounters with others, but with a third party rather than with the most direct source of information. Interactive strategies entail direct engagement between a person seeking to learn a role and a person who has the information or cultural knowledge being sought.

### Phases of Socialization

Teacher socialization is often characterized as a process that occurs in three phases. *Anticipatory socialization* refers both to the choice phase of role socialization, during which a person decides to enter the teaching profession, and to the decision phase of organizational or cultural socialization, during which an individual considers becoming a member of a particular educational institution. An individual first decides to become a teacher, and then selects a school setting.

A second phase of socialization is that of *entry or encounter*, during which a novice experiences a new teaching situation, either the initial teaching role or the first entry into a new school (→ Initial Interaction). *Continuance or adaptation* is the third stage of socialization, during which a novice teacher or a veteran in a new situation makes whatever changes are necessary in order to remain in the profession and/or in the school setting. As the initial reality shock becomes the routine reality, teachers who want to stay in the role and in the environment make adjustments in order to continue. Although adaptation often involves acquiescing to the status quo, another way of adjusting is advocating and effecting change.

### Research Traditions

Three dominant paradigms or intellectual traditions have guided research on teacher socialization: functionalist, interpretive, and critical (Zeichner & Gore 1990). The oldest, most widespread is the *functionalist tradition*, which suggests a deterministic view of teacher socialization as a phenomenon that fits the individual to society, with teachers considered as passive objects of socializing agents (→ Functional Analysis). Research in this tradition focuses on outcomes of socialization and the agents who are influential as catalysts.

A frequently identified outcome is that of dramatic attitude shifts in beginning teachers from progressive and humanistic at the start of their first year to less permissive and more custodial by the end of the year. Agents identified as instrumental in effecting such outcomes include veteran teachers, administrators, and students. For pre-service teachers engaged in internships, critical agents are university supervisors and the cooperating classroom teachers. Inherent in the functionalist tradition is a view of communication as an action in which pre-service and new teachers are objects of socialization and recipients of messages sent from various socializing agents.

The *interpretive* tradition (also known as “conflict” or “dialectical”) stresses the importance of teachers as proactive, creative agents who shape their own roles and environments. Lacey conceives of socialization as going beyond the explanations provided by the functionalists, and presents it as “a more complex, interactive, negotiated, provisional process” (1977, 22) in which individuals engage in conscious choices about their own socialization. Thus, the focus is on understanding the process of socialization, the ways in which it occurs, and the perspectives of the individuals involved, rather than on the outcomes and agents of socialization. The view of communication assumed is that of a dynamic, interactive, transactional process in which novice teachers are active in shaping their own roles as well as the organizational and school culture. Unlike a functionalist tradition, the emphasis in the interpretive tradition is not on the socializing agents, nor on beginning teachers as recipients of communication messages, but on what happens between socializing agents and novice teachers. In this approach, socialization cannot be considered as something that “happens” to newcomers, but is viewed as a dynamic and complex process of communication.

The *critical tradition* is one that “addresses the interplay of micro and macro forces, inside the classroom and beyond, those that social actors are conscious of and those that are taken for granted” (Sprague 1992, 182; → Critical Theory). In this approach, teacher socialization is examined in the context of a person’s biography; in the social, political, and historical context; power; and in the context of ideology. The communication perspective inherent in the critical perspective is not inconsistent with the notion of teachers as active agents, yet also brings to the fore issues of power, gender, race, and class that are embedded in teacher socialization and are considered to be in need of transformation.

### COMMUNICATION FRAMEWORKS

Although communication is considered to be central in the teacher socialization process, there are various theoretical and conceptual frameworks for examining communication in socialization. *Three frameworks* are communication functions, uncertainty reduction, and communication concern.

As a way of examining communication → interactions at a micro-level, communication researchers have utilized Greenbaum’s (1974) descriptive typology of four *communication functions* or purposes. The informative are communication activities and talk related to the exchange of information about tasks – seeking, receiving, clarifying, elaborating. The regulative are communication activities and talk that involve the organizational hierarchy and are related to control, order, direction, and feedback between teachers and subordinates (students) and between teachers and superiors (school principal) in work-related activities. The integrative are communication activities and talk related to the social and relational sphere, maintaining morale, group acceptance, camaraderie, and developing a social support system. The innovative are communication activities and talk related to change, generating new ideas, doing things differently. Analysis of discourse utilizing a typology such as this provides a mechanism for identifying and understanding the process and development of role and cultural socialization.

Originally utilized in communication research by Berger and Calabrese (1975) as a perspective for understanding the early stages of interpersonal interaction in which strangers

meet, the assumption of → *uncertainty reduction theory* is that people seek to reduce their uncertainty about others through communication. Anticipatory and entry phases of socialization are times of uncertainty in which novice teachers face new situations, expectations, people, and environments. There is generally a high need to obtain information about both the teacher role and the culture of the new organization. An examination of communication strategies used to gain information to reduce uncertainty provides a lens for understanding socialization (→ Information Seeking).

A variety of research on the communication concerns of pre-service and in-service teachers supports a conceptual model of teacher concern about self as a teacher, the task of teaching, and the impact of teaching (→ Teacher Communication Concern). *Communication concern* is defined as a constructive frustration or anticipation of a future problem situation that involves interaction with others. Several studies indicate that during the anticipatory and entry phases of socialization, self and task concerns are of foremost importance to novice teachers. Self concerns revolve around both role socialization (e.g., such aspects as their credibility in the teacher role, anxiety about their job performance), and socialization into the new organization (e.g., feelings of not being an integral part of the school culture).

Task concerns also center on both the teaching role (e.g., how to maintain discipline in the classroom) and socialization into the organization (e.g., how major disciplinary problems are handled in the particular school environment). It is through communication that newcomers learn the role expectations and the cultural norms. A communication concerns perspective is also a window for observing and understanding socialization.

Although teacher socialization generally refers to the socialization of pre-service or in-service teachers at the elementary and secondary levels, the experience is a universal one across the range of teaching positions, including community college instructors, graduate teaching assistants, and college or university professors. While the majority of research has been conducted on K–12 teachers, there are studies examining socialization within higher education. Regardless of the educational level or context, teacher socialization is widely considered to occur through communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Initial Interaction ▶ Interaction ▶ Organizational Assimilation ▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Social Norms ▶ Teacher Communication Concern ▶ Teacher Training in Communication ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Teacher Socio-Communicative Style

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Socio-communicative style is a presentational communication trait. Teachers with a particular style should communicate in a consistent manner, demonstrating that style over time and in different situations. The constructs of teacher socio-communicative style (how a teacher would perceive himself or herself) and teacher socio-communicative orientation (how students would view the teacher) are based on earlier research into psychological androgyny, social style, personal style, and → communicator style (→ Teacher Communication Style). Measurement of teacher socio-communicative style is based on teachers' levels of assertiveness and responsiveness.

People who are assertive communicators are strong in their interaction management skills; they are able to initiate, maintain, and terminate conversations skillfully. Assertive people are also able to speak up for what is rightfully theirs and are focused on being successful and achieving their goals. Being competitive, dominant, forceful, and independent are characteristic of being assertive (→ Teacher Assertiveness).

Assertive teachers would have control of their classrooms. Others would perceive these teachers as being the leaders of the classroom. Although there may be plenty of student discussion and participation in their classrooms, assertive teachers would make sure the class focused on the task and accomplished the objectives for the class period. Assertive teachers would stand up for their own rights, as well as for the rights of their students.

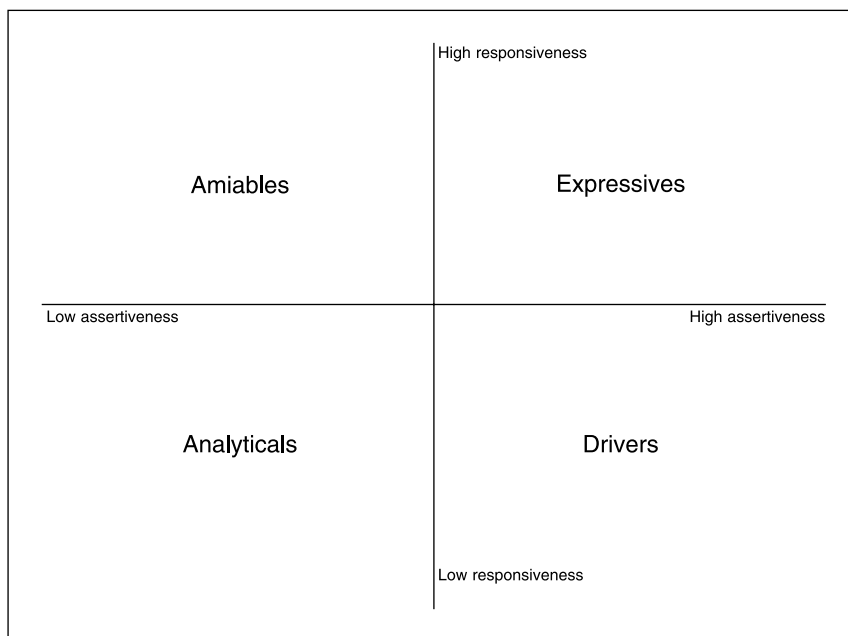


Figure 1 Individuals classified by style

People who are responsive are other-oriented and considerate of others' feelings. Responsive individuals listen to others and show a general concern for the success of others. Being helpful, compassionate, friendly, and sincere are characteristic of being responsive.

Responsive teachers would be sensitive to the educational and personal needs of their students. These teachers would be viewed as being student oriented or student centered. Responsive teachers would be verbally and nonverbally immediate. Students would describe these teachers as caring and approachable.

Merrill and Reid (1981) classified individuals into one of four styles based on their assertiveness and responsiveness (Fig. 1). *Amiables* are those high in responsiveness but low in assertiveness; *expressives* are high in both responsiveness and assertiveness; *analyticals* are low in responsiveness and assertiveness; and *drivers* are low in responsiveness but high in assertiveness. While the expressive style would appear to be more appealing because of being high in both responsiveness and assertiveness, there are positive and negative characteristics for possessing – or being able to communicate – only in one style. To be successful, people need to be flexible and adapt their style to the situation.

In instructional research involving socio-communicative style – following the lead of Richmond and McCroskey (1990) – the four styles are often relabeled. Amiable becomes *submissive*, expressive becomes *competent*, analytical becomes *noncompetent*, and driver becomes *aggressive*.

Research has shown that, in the classroom, both teacher assertiveness and teacher responsiveness are positively correlated with nonverbal immediacy. Students view assertive

and responsive teachers (i.e., competent) as being more trustworthy and credible. Teachers perceived as having the aggressive style are perceived as being low in character. When teachers are perceived as having the noncompetent style (neither assertive nor responsive), students perceive them as being low in competence and caring, and also express less situational motivation.

Additionally, teachers who engage in both assertiveness and responsiveness are perceived to be more argumentative (→ Argumentative Discourse), whereas instructors low in those constructs (i.e., noncompetents) are viewed as more verbally aggressive (→ Verbal Aggressiveness). Teachers who are argumentative would focus on the content of a disagreement when discussing controversial issues with others whereas teachers who are verbally aggressive would be more likely to make personal attacks on those with whom they disagree. Students also claim that their competent teachers are clearer and that they learn more from competent teachers. Students are more willing to communicate with their teachers inside the classroom, as well as outside the classroom, when they believe their teachers are assertive and responsive.

Although research has demonstrated the value of teachers being both assertive and responsive, researchers have also noted the need to be flexible. There might be situations where a teacher does not want to be assertive, and where assertive communication could actually prohibit the teacher from being successful. The truly competent teacher would have the ability to be assertive and responsive, as well as the knowledge and willingness to be flexible, communicating appropriately and effectively in a given situation.

SEE ALSO: ► Argumentative Discourse ► Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction  
► Communicator Style ► Teacher Assertiveness ► Teacher Communication Style  
► Teacher Immediacy ► Verbal Aggressiveness

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# Teacher Training in Communication

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An important part of the history of communication, particularly in the US, focused on how to train teachers to teach this subject. From the first issues of the academic journals in the early 1900s (*Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking*) until today, when entire journals provide research reports for and about teachers, the topic has been at the forefront of professional associations, as evidenced in their publications (e.g., *Communication Education, Feedback, Journalism and Mass Communication Educator*) and association names. For instance, the National Communication Association (NCA) began as the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking (1914–1922) and then the National Association of Teachers of Speech (1923–1945). And the Broadcast Education Association and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication continue to promote education in their association names.

Despite similar interests around the world, the focus on education has not been reflected in communication publications or learned societies as much as it has in the US (→ Communication as an Academic Field: USA and Canada; Communication as a Field and Discipline; Speech Communication, History of; Educational Communication). Since the roots of teacher training lie in the speech communication field, this entry will concentrate on the three main facets of teaching speech communication: training of speech-theatre teachers, teacher communication competencies, and instructional communication.

## TRAINING OF SPEECH-THEATRE TEACHERS

Until the early 1970s, the training of speech-theatre teachers was termed “speech education.” At that time, most speech communication educators were engaged in secondary teacher education at the pre-service and in-service levels, focusing on the content and skills necessary to teach public speaking, group discussion, debate, oral interpretation, and theatre (Wallace, 1954). For example, teachers were trained in evaluating speeches, directing plays, and directing co-curricular activities. In 1973 speech communication educators met in Memphis, Tennessee, to shape the future of speech education within the speech communication community. Their work resulted in the publication *New Horizons for Teacher-Education in Speech Communication*. The recommendations focused on professional education – rather than on specific skills – for communication educators in three areas: research, pre-service education, and in-service education.

A decade after the Memphis conference, leaders in the field of speech communication envisioned a second national planning conference, the Flagstaff conference. The participants of the Flagstaff conference developed several recommendations for each of the goals. The major recommendations for the speech communication preparation of all teachers and of speech communication specialists focused on the widespread dissemination of the *Teacher Certification/Preparation Guidelines*, endorsed by the NCA. These guidelines included preparation in (1) fundamentals of communication, such as effective listening and ethical standards; (2) public and presentation speaking, such as organizational patterns and



evidence in reasoning; (3) oral interpretation, such as forms of performance literature and voice and movement; (4) argumentation and debate; (5) interpersonal and small-group communication, such as development of self-concept and managing conflict; (6) forensics, such as directing a co-curricular program; (7) mass communication, such as media literacy and media influence; and (8) theatre/drama such as history and performance skills. In addition, the attendees urged the continuing development of certification standards and preparation guidelines for elementary and college-level teachers.

In 2000, the NCA published *Communication Teacher Education Preparation Standards and Guidelines*. This document focused on assessing speech communication teacher education programs. Six quality standards are used to assess the speech communication teacher preparation programs: (1) structure of the program, (2) general studies component, (3) knowledge of communication, (4) professional education and pedagogical studies, (5) professional collaboration and growth, and (6) field-based experiences for communication.

### TEACHER COMPETENCY

In 1973 a joint task force by NCA and the American Theatre Association produced two documents intended to improve pre-service and in-service teacher education and to provide guidelines for certification and hiring. The first, *Competency Models in Speech Communication and Theatre for Preparation and Certification of Elementary and Secondary School Teachers*, provided guidelines for generating specific competency statements and assessment procedures in local programs. It addressed the preparation of speech-theatre media specialists as well as the speech-theatre competencies needed by all teachers. The second, *Guidelines for Speech Communication Theatre Programs in Teacher Education*, focused on the components necessary for an effective theatre education program.

In 1988, an NCA subcommittee of the Committee on Assessment and Testing released a document describing the competencies and skills necessary in teaching (Cooper, 1988). According to this report, teachers should be able to send and receive messages that are: (1) informative (e.g., structure information by using preview questions and comments, transitions, internal summaries, and concluding summaries; and identify the main point of students' informative messages); (2) persuasive (e.g., offer sound reasons and evidence in support of ideas, and recognize underlying assumptions in the arguments of others); (3) affective (e.g., demonstrate openness, warmth, and positive regard for students; be nonjudgmental in responding to students' feelings); (4) imaginative (e.g., use vivid descriptive language and respond to students' use of imagination with appreciation); and (5) ritualistic (e.g., demonstrate appropriate behavior in performing everyday speech acts such as greeting, taking turns in conversation, and taking leave; comment favorably when students perform everyday speech acts appropriately).

### INSTRUCTIONAL COMMUNICATION

Over the past 30 years research in the training of speech/theatre teachers has become nearly nonexistent in the US, while instructional communication has increased substantially. Instructional communication concerns are identified increasingly as the province of communication education. Staton-Spicer and Wulff (1984) list three *categories of research*

*in the area of teacher characteristics*: first, studies of the relationship between various teacher characteristics and student learning; second, teacher characteristics and teacher effectiveness; and third, teacher attitudes and expectations.

While much of the early research in instructional communication focused on individual differences in students (for example, levels of communication apprehension; → Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques), much of the research in recent years has focused on the behaviors and orientations of teachers related to communication instruction (→ Classroom Management Techniques; Classroom Power; Teacher Communication Style; Teacher Immediacy; Teacher Influence and Persuasion). Although no general theory of instruction communication has guided this research, two general approaches (relational and rhetorical) have dominated much of the research in instruction communication (McCroskey & McCroskey, 2006).

The *relational approach to instructional communication* has derived from scholarship relating to interpersonal communication, particularly the transactional model of interpersonal communication. This model assumes that teachers and students mutually and simultaneously exchange information and ideas, which results in shared meaning and simultaneous learning. An example of this approach is the “learning communication culture” advocated by Book & Putnam (1992).

The second approach – the *rhetorical approach to instructional communication* – is derived from classical rhetorical theory (→ Rhetorical Studies). The rhetorical model assumes that in instruction, teachers are the primary source of information (including teacher-selected reading material and other instructional aids) and that students are the receivers/learners. Instructional communication according to the rhetorical approach is seen as a teacher-controlled, linear process, where the teacher is the person primarily responsible for creating messages that will stimulate teacher-selected meanings in students’ minds (that is, learning). The teachers carefully design instructional objectives, with specific expectations that students will master the knowledge represented by those objectives. This model is used primarily in the scientific and social-scientific disciplines where specific facts and processes are being taught.

Increasingly, courses are being taught using the findings of both the relational and the rhetorical approaches to instructional communication (Cooper & Simonds 2007; Hunt et al. 2002). These courses are designed to foster the communication competencies of all teachers and are generally *focused on three major areas*: (1) communication competence – classroom communication, interpersonal communication, listening, and verbal and nonverbal communication (→ Student Communication Competence); (2) instructional strategies – the sharing of information, leading classroom discussions, small group communication, and storytelling and communicative reading (→ Classroom Questioning; Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction; Pedagogy, Communication in; Teacher Feedback); (3) communication impact – ethical considerations of influence on students and issues of influence such as power, conflict, handling student misbehaviors, sexism, racism, class, ethnicity, children with special needs, and ways to create a positive classroom climate (→ Learning and Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Classroom Management Techniques ▶ Classroom Power ▶ Classroom Questioning ▶ Classroom Student–Teacher Interaction ▶ Communication as an Academic

Field: USA and Canada ▶ Communication Apprehension: Intervention Techniques  
▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Educational Communication ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Pedagogy, Communication in  
▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Speech Communication, History of ▶ Student Communication Competence ▶ Teacher Communication Style ▶ Teacher Feedback ▶ Teacher Immediacy  
▶ Teacher Influence and Persuasion

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## **Teacher Use of Humor**

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When teachers use verbal and nonverbal messages to elicit laughter and smiling from students, they employ a teaching strategy labeled *instructional humor*. Classic and contemporary scholarship on this topic has shed light on the benefits of teacher humor, how teacher humor relates to student learning, challenges of studying the relationship between humor and learning, and different types of teacher humor. Instructional communication researchers recognize teacher humor as an important type of immediacy behavior often used to reduce psychological distance between students and teachers and facilitate student learning.

There are a number of benefits connected to the use of humor in the classroom. For example, use of teacher humor can improve the student–teacher relationship by reducing student tension and anxiety and creating more favorable impressions of teachers. Not surprisingly, award-winning teachers use moderate as opposed to excessive amounts of humor in their lectures. Also, college students are more likely to engage in communication outside of the classroom setting with professors who use humor as part of their regular teaching style. The most extensively studied advantage of teacher humor has been its connection to student learning. One explanation for the relationship between humor and learning is the attention-gaining function of humor originally advanced by Ziv (1979). When teachers insert humor into their lectures, students express more interest in the material and are able to maintain their attention for longer time periods than when humor is not used. Additionally, students appear to have an easier time recalling course material later when it is connected to some type of humorous content.

Another explanation for the relationship between teachers' use of humor and student learning is that humor is a type of immediacy behavior that helps gain the students' attention and improve the student–teacher relationship. Immediate teachers enact verbal and nonverbal behaviors strategically to reduce physical and psychological distance between themselves and their students. For example, highly immediate teachers will maintain eye contact, use appropriate gestures, and provide appropriate self-disclosures throughout their lectures (→ Teacher Self-Disclosure).

Research on teacher immediacy has provided almost unequivocal support for the relationship between teacher immediacy and student learning. Instructional researchers note that highly immediate teachers are 63 percent more likely to use humor than teachers low in immediacy (Gorham & Christophel 1990). Highly immediate teachers are also seven times more likely than low immediacy teachers to use noticeable humor such as physical and vocal types. Thus, immediate teachers are able to use humor as a means of establishing relationships with their students and simultaneously affecting arousal, retention, and learning in the classroom (Gorham & Christophel 1990; → Teacher Immediacy).

Results from the humor (teacher)–learning (student) investigations conducted over the years have been quite mixed. Ziv (1988) examined 18 studies that tested the *humor–learning relationship* and identified 11 that found either a direct or indirect relationship between humor and learning and 7 that failed to identify any significant relationship. One explanation for the failed relationship between humor and learning was the short length of some of the studies. In several studies, the length of time individuals were exposed to humorous stimuli may have been too short (e.g., 10 minutes) to affect students' ability to retain information. Another important methodological concern expressed by Ziv and others was the extent to which the humorous stimuli were actually perceived as funny by the study participants. If the humorous material was not perceived as funny, participants may not have been aroused enough to pay attention to the material in the humor condition. Differences in earlier study results may be best explained by examining how studies were conducted as well as how humor was operationalized.

In an effort to sort out why teacher humor may not always affect student learning, researchers began to develop detailed explanations of the different *types of humor* used in the classroom. Bryant et al. (1980) asked students to record and later analyze their

professors' use of humor. The researchers identified six different categories of teacher humor, which they labeled jokes, riddles, puns, funny stories, humorous comments, and an "other" category. The researchers also found that male teachers who used humor were evaluated more favorably than female teachers. Gorham and Christophel (1990) expanded on the Bryant study and found 13 different categories of teacher humor. Examples of teacher humor included, among others, brief tendentious comment directed at a specific student, the class as a whole, or the university, personal anecdotes related or unrelated to the subject matter, and physical or vocal comedy. Gorham did not find any differences in student evaluations of male and female teachers who used humor.

While Gorham and Christophel were able to expand on the types of humor teachers typically use in the classroom, their research did not distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate types. Wanzer and her colleagues asked students to generate examples of *appropriate and inappropriate types* of teacher humor (Wanzer et al. 2006). From this study, four categories and 25 sub-categories of appropriate teacher humor emerged. The four categories of appropriate teacher humor were related humor, unrelated humor, self-disparaging humor, and unintentional/unplanned humor. There were four categories and 27 sub-categories of inappropriate teacher humor identified. The four categories of inappropriate humor were offensive humor, disparaging humor targeting students, disparaging humor targeting others, and self-disparaging humor.

Disposition theory explains why students perceived teachers' use of disparaging humor as inappropriate for the classroom. According to disposition theory, individuals determine whether messages are humorous by considering who is targeted in the humor attempt. Humorous messages that target liked or similar others are typically not perceived as funny by recipients. Wanzer et al. (2006) suggested that teachers use neither humor that disparages the groups that students belong to nor the students themselves.

Now that researchers have a better understanding of the types of humor considered appropriate for the classroom, they can begin to investigate the impact of these types on student attendance, learning, motivation, and quality of the student–teacher relationship.

SEE ALSO: ► Communicator Style ► Teacher Affinity Seeking ► Teacher Assertiveness ► Teacher Clarity ► Teacher Comforting and Social Support ► Teacher Communication Concern ► Teacher Communication Style ► Teacher Confirmation ► Teacher Immediacy ► Teacher Self-Disclosure ► Teacher Socialization ► Teacher Training in Communication

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## Technologically Mediated Discourse

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Communication in today's world is mediated by technologies in a multiplicity of ways. Telephones and mobile phones are integrated into the very cultures of sociability and personal connectivity, especially in large-scale industrialized societies where contacts and relationships are maintained across significant distances. Hopper (1992) characterized such populations as “people of the phone” in an attempt to encapsulate the extent to which telephone conversation is relied upon and even actively sought after, as persons are prone to abandon almost any other activity in order to answer the telephone's summons. Increasingly, too, Internet message exchange systems are coming to play a pivotal role in everyday sociability networks, in the light of growing accessibility of computer hardware and software, burgeoning of technological sophistication, especially among the younger population, and expansion of broadband connectivity linking home computers to the Internet.

In a wider sense, the interface between ordinary people and the professional spheres of politics, finance, education, health, and so on operates more and more via technological mediation: for example, television and radio news and interview broadcasts, automated inquiry systems, web-based information gateways, and interactive electronic devices of numerous types. In the world of work (particularly white-collar work), communication is increasingly technologized: from the ubiquitous office phone and email systems, to Internet and video conferencing, to the expert systems frequently deployed in command and control centers for public utility and transport services.

For language and social interaction researchers, broad sociological themes such as these translate into questions of the relationship between structures and patterns of interpersonal communication and the enablements and constraints – or *affordances* (Hutchby 2001) – of technologies used in mediating social interaction. The main areas in which researchers have turned their attention explicitly toward the nature of technologically mediated discourse are radio and television broadcasting, telephone conversation and mobile communications, computer-mediated interaction, and expert systems at work.

### **RADIO AND TELEVISION: COMMUNICATION AND THE OVERHEARING AUDIENCE**

Radio and television talk has a specific character which serves to differentiate it from the vast majority of institutional forms of discourse, and which therefore provides a

specialized set of questions to which researchers in language and social interaction have been drawn to address themselves (→ Broadcast Talk). One feature of particular relevance stems from the fact that its principal intended recipients are not co-present but distributed, physically, geographically, and often temporally. There may be co-present audiences in the studio setting, and that collection of recipients may act as a “mass” audience in the traditional sense. But even then there is a further layer of recipients who are not only physically absent but individually distributed. Given these conditions of production and reception, the issue is one of how broadcast talk is mediated and distributed to its various recipient constituencies.

Much of the work in this area has begun from the perspective of → conversation analysis (CA). For CA, broadcast talk is a form of institutional discourse and its different genres are characterized according to the relative formality or informality of their turn-taking systems. For example, in the case of news interviews, a particular type of question–answer structure provides the oriented-to means by which the institution of the broadcast interview is produced and sustained by participants, but also the means by which interviewers can be adversarial within the constraints of journalistic neutralism (Clayman & Heritage 2004). In the case of radio phone-ins, a much more informal system of turn exchange nevertheless yields observable features of institutionality and orientation to the public, broadcast nature of the talk (Hutchby 1996). In the case of genres such as audience participation debate shows, structures of turn-taking and utterance design can reveal ambivalence in the nature of broadcast talk (Tolson 2001). On the one hand, during confrontations being played out face-to-face on the platform, it is not obvious to what extent the speakers exhibit a mutual orientation to the relevance of an overhearing audience. On the other hand, the design of hosts’ turns in particular reveals an orientation to framing confrontations in terms of the involvement of an audience (both absent and co-present). The question of how broadcast talk is designed for reciprocity by an absent, “overhearing” audience has been central to many studies in this area (Hutchby 2006).

### **TELEPHONY: INTIMACY AT A DISTANCE**

The telephone is a technology that for over a century has allowed people to speak with the intimacy of face-to-face conversation without being physically co-present (→ Telephone Talk). Conversation analysts have investigated the nature of talk and reciprocity on the telephone in some detail (Hopper 1992; Hutchby 2001). While most of the sociological attention that has been given to the telephone has focused on questions of the broad social and cultural impacts of the technology without paying much attention to telephone interaction in itself (Pool 1981), language and interaction researchers have focused on revealing the technology’s impacts at a more local interactional level.

For instance, around the telephone’s affordance for intimacy at a distance there have evolved distinctive forms of conversational opening and closing sequences. In relation to this, the properties of the telephone’s ring itself can afford novel possibilities for patterns of interaction. For example, dimensions of accountability surround apparently minor issues such as how quickly we pick up the phone, how we respond to call-waiting tones, or whether we use answering machines as call-screening devices (Hopper 1992). The range of social contexts in which telephone calling and answering take place also

afford the development of a whole range of new, interactionally relevant forms of social identity (→ Social Identity Theory). For example, analysis of calls can reveal a micro-politics of power around what Hopper termed “caller hegemony”; or around the different responsibilities of callers, answerers, and “not-called” answerers (“gatekeepers”; Hutchby 2001).

The advent of *mobile telephony* yields further possibilities for extending this research. Here, technological elements such as caller identification, along with social factors such as the personalization of phone handsets and the de-anchoring of the phone and its user from singular physical locations, lead to changes in the structures of communication, especially in terms of opening exchanges and the organization of topic initiation (Hutchby & Barnett 2005; → Mobility, Technology for).

### **ONLINE INTERACTION: TEXTUAL “TALK” AND TEMPORALITY**

The Internet affords new and distinctive forms of mediated interaction (→ Internet, Technology of). Here newsgroups and Internet “chat” domains have grown up as spaces in which participants can interact, albeit largely through a textual rather than a verbal medium, while being geographically distributed. Studies of online interaction have foregrounded *temporality* as a dimension of additional relevance. Newsgroup interaction tends to be asynchronous, in the sense that participants leave messages that can be retrieved at any time by others (Baym 1996). Internet relay chat (IRC), on the other hand, is quasi-synchronous: participants need to be online at the same time in order to contribute to the discussion, but the technological mediation introduces a temporal lag between turn production and reception, which renders turn-taking problematic. For example, participants in this environment may experience difficulties relating “current” and “prior” or “current” and “next” turns because other turns may intervene as their own is being typed out or distributed via the network server (Garcia & Jacobs 1999).

IRC enables an escape from traditional paradigms of social interaction, which are based on the centrality of presence (even on the telephone, our interactant is “present” at the other end of the line; in broadcasting, personalities are visually or sonically present). One upshot of this relative anonymity is that users can feel freer than in co-present interaction to breach the social boundaries which humans ordinarily place around interaction with strangers (Reid 1991). Nevertheless, online interaction is mediated not only by the technology of Internet servers and computer terminals, but also by a unique hierarchy of participant statuses. While aspects of IRC encourage users to play with the conventional limits of expression, breaking the boundaries of social etiquette, the participants appear to be attempting to form themselves into “communities” with distinctly structured behavioral norms, forms of expression, and the rest (→ Language and the Internet).

### **EXPERT SYSTEMS: ADAPTING TO THE TECHNOLOGY**

Computer technologies such as expert systems and those for supporting cooperative-work-based tasks also operate as media for communication of a certain sort. Such systems, typically deployed in workplace environments, are designed ostensibly to assist



or complement human workers in carrying out specific tasks. But they do not operate in abstraction from human work and communication, and the humans who work with them need to find ways of incorporating into their interactions with each other the demands and constraints that emerge from the design of the systems. At the same time, there are ways in which the technological artifacts themselves can be seen as “participants” in the interaction, at least in the sense that their outputs (such as words or pictures on a screen) can become oriented to as “contributions,” which are the subject of mutual, active, and collaborative sense-making on the part of humans (→ Computer–User Interaction).

When we encounter such technologies we are often invited into a form of dialogue with them (Suchman 1987). For instance, computer screens make suggestions for us, give us instructions, and ask if we really want to do what we have just instructed the system to do. There are two choices here: either we try to make the technology conform to our existing ways of accomplishing actions, or we adapt to the modalities of action and interchange programmed into the technology. Studies of how doctors use their computers when consulting with patients have suggested that the system itself, and its “activities” (whatever is happening on the screen), can become an intrinsic part of the conversation (Greatbatch et al. 1993). The consultation, in other words, becomes modeled according to the technology’s requirements. However, from the opposite angle, studies of how expert systems are implemented in complex decision-making environments such as emergency services dispatch have indicated that humans often end up working around the technological imperatives of the system because their own situated knowledge and interactive flexibility are better fitted to the rapidly changing nature of the environment in which they are working (Whalen 1995).

Lastly, we increasingly communicate “with” certain forms of technology. Although they have not yet reached particularly high levels of conversational sophistication, speech-generating computers and artificial intelligence systems are increasingly encountered in information seeking and other basic service encounters. Designers of more advanced systems are attempting to build computers that could hold “conversations” with humans (Luff et al. 1990), and this prompts the questions of what those conversations will look like, whether they will manifest any significant differences with human–human conversation, and also, significantly, what implicit assumptions about the nature of human interaction will underlie the design of such systems.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ Conversation Analysis  
▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Language and the Internet  
▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telephone Talk

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# Technology Assessment

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There are numerous approaches to technology assessment but it is essentially a systematic method for exploring technology developments and assessing their potential societal effects. It was typically implemented as a strategy to inform policy decisions within government and industry but now includes a growing body of scholarly research in science and technology studies (Herdman & Jensen 1997; Hill 1997; La Porte 1997). As a research strategy, technology assessment is best viewed as a pragmatic arrangement of theory and method emphasizing one or more concerns: the design and development of an emerging technology; a known technology-related social or environmental problem; or the introduction of a new technology into society (Porter 1980, 51).

## CONSTRUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT

One influential approach that attempts to combine all three concerns is known as constructive technology assessment (CTA). This approach was first developed by the Netherlands Organization of Technology Assessment (NOTA), now known as the Rathenau Institute, along two major paths: by introducing public participation in the technology assessment process, and by the funding of several key studies looking at the value of introducing technology assessment in the early design stage of a technology project.

CTA represents an important contrast with the so-called “early warning” approach of technology assessment as it developed in North America during the middle of the

twentieth century. Whereas proponents of early warning technology assessment, such as the United States Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), tended to adopt an *exogenous* model of technology development for their research projects, the CTA approach was conceived within a participatory *endogenous* model of technology development (Eijndhoven 1997). Whereas an exogenous model anticipates a finished technology that enters into and creates effects in a society (Edge 1995), practitioners consider CTA to be a “new design practice” wherein technologies are socially constructed by numerous stakeholders acting within and attempting to influence a social and political context. Technology projects are viewed as highly contingent undertakings open to a range of alternative development paths and an opportunity for “societal learning” (Schot & Rip 1996, 255).

Following the tradition of constructivist science and technology studies, proponents of CTA view technology assessment as an active contribution to the shaping of technology as opposed to an independent program of ex post impact analysis (→ Technology, Social Construction of). In other words, CTA is an approach that studies the design process itself in order to understand the potential effects – both positive and negative – of technology projects well before they become entrenched or “locked-in” to society.

### **THE COLLINGRIDGE DILEMMA**

Any effort to anticipate future effects of a technology project must address what has come to be known as “the Collingridge dilemma.” This term describes the methodological quandary that confounds attempts at technology forecasting and efforts at social shaping. According to Eijndhoven (1997, 279), “the Collingridge Dilemma points to the fact that the early warning function of technology assessment has severe limitations, because either the knowledge or the power are missing to change the direction of technological development, leaving quick adaptation to new technology as the only way society can react.” In other words, the social and environmental effects of a technology are sometimes difficult to anticipate until it is widely deployed. Yet once deployed, it may be impossible to effect substantial change to a technology because of previous investments made in its development and deployment, as well as the network effects it might have created.

It has been suggested that a solution to this dilemma can be found in developing highly flexible technology designs capable of multiple configurations. CTA proponents claim that this is a conceptually flawed strategy because “entrenchment is necessary to implement a technology” (Rip et al. 1995, 7), and argue that we should accept this inevitability as integral to technology design while asserting that development can be positively directed to the extent that social actors understand the implications of and participate in choosing a pathway from among a range of alternatives – one of which might be the outright cancellation of a technology project.

### **STRATEGIES FOR TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT**

In terms of implications for public policy, three generic strategies for action have been defined within the CTA approach: technology forcing, strategic niche management, and reflexive deliberation. Technology forcing is described as a demand-side strategy where a social actor with some measure of authority, often a government or regulatory agency,

stipulates desired impacts and directs technology development toward those ends through regulations or other incentives. One example of this strategy in action is the mandatory unbundling of telecommunication networks as part of a government-led market liberalization strategy.

Strategic niche management is a supply-side strategy where industry stakeholders orchestrate product development through setting up a series of experimental settings where designers can learn about user needs and other social aspects of the technology. Aspects of the free and → open source software movement might be considered to fall within the definition of this type of technology assessment strategy. Finally, reflexive deliberation is a strategy that seeks to build relationships between users and developers through consensus conferences or special workshops. Government-sponsored public proceedings on, for example, the reform of radio spectrum management policy might, under certain conditions, be regarded as an example of this type of intervention strategy.

## APPLICATIONS

Since its introduction in the Netherlands, CTA has been adopted by numerous organizations across Europe, including technology assessment groups in Denmark, Germany, and Norway, as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Schot & Rip 1996, 254). In addition, various European Union programs in research and development have recognized CTA as having contributed to improved technology policy and development (Berloznik & van Langenhove 1998). While CTA has become a recognized approach in much of Europe, in North America its presence is less evident. This may be a result of the OTA dominating the field until the mid-1990s, when it was disbanded. Despite this, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the normative principle of CTA has taken root in a number of selected areas of science and technology policy research in both Canada and the United States (see, for instance, Loka Institute 2004).

Worldwide, there is also a growing body of technology-assessment-based research involving information and communication technologies (ICTs; → Technology and Communication). Early technology-assessment-inspired work on innovation in telecommunications services was undertaken by the Danish Board of Technology Assessment in a series of experiments to examine user demand for early telematics services, such as video calling (Cronberg 1992). Today, the Centre for Studies of Science, Technology, and Society (CSSTS) at the University of Twente manages a research program that draws on CTA to conduct research on projects involving e-government, open source software, privacy and security aspects of ICT in healthcare, and innovation in telemedicine ([www.bbt.utwente.nl/kennisinst/cssts](http://www.bbt.utwente.nl/kennisinst/cssts)).

The concept of “social learning” has been adapted from the technology assessment literature and applied to a study of the *Digital City project* based in Amsterdam to overcome the descriptive limitations of the social shaping approach and to provide “a more prescriptive or normative position” on the role of research in addressing emergent socio-technical practices (Lieshout 2001). In this respect, technology assessment has provided a foundation for action research that attempts “on-the-spot” adjustments of the social shaping process in ongoing ICT projects. Similarly, CTA has been used in research

on the dynamics of telecommunication networks and the role of stakeholder intervention related to disaster management and public safety communication (Gow 2005).

Research on emerging ICTs and their potential environmental, social, and health effects has also referred to principles and methods associated with technology assessment. This work is particularly concerned with *risk management* and the *precautionary principle* in the context of a future scenario involving ambient intelligence (Som 2004; → Ubiquitous Computing). This principle states that if an action like the introduction of a new technology might cause severe or irreversible harm to the public, but there is no consensus in science, the burden of proof falls on those who are in favor of taking the action. The problem of path dependency and the associated Collingridge dilemma, both formulated in relation to CTA, are regarded as core issues in this work.

CTA has been cited within the community informatics literature, in relation to the development of a *community-oriented technology assessment processes model* (McIver 2005). In this context, the normative principles of CTA are brought to bear in developing an approach for community involvement in ICT development, which is intended to offset some of the shortcomings of other technology assessment methods developed within corporate settings and often dominant in ICT policy research. Several essays dealing with the social shaping of information technology have also appeared in a CTA-informed volume on modernity and technology. Notable examples include Lyon's (2003) chapter on surveillance technologies and Slater's (2003) case study of Internet development in Trinidad.

The journal *Poiesis and Praxis* is devoted to studies in technology assessment and includes articles that examine information and communication technologies. Eggermont et al. (2006), for example, adopted a participatory technology assessment method combined with foresight and scenario-building exercises to look at design issues related to the elderly and their use of ICTs. The results of that study are intended to provide policy recommendations for future policy to address aging populations and access and use of future ICTs.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Applied Communication Research ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Communication Technology Standards ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Open Source ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Technology, Social Construction of ▶ Ubiquitous Computing

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## Technology and Communication

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As users we will come to rely on our handset as a single device to manage not just communications but much of our lives. It will truly become a “remote control for life,” with massively enhanced capabilities, advanced methods of user interaction and in-built tools . . . The substantial change that end users are going to witness has become possible more because the underlying infrastructure has become stable than because it is rapidly evolving. (Webb 2007, 35)

This quotation offers a technologist's view of the potential of technological advance for new modes of communicative interaction based, in this instance, on innovations in handset technology. In this view, by the early part of the twenty-first century technological innovation in the fields of engineering concerned with the underlying communication infrastructure had stabilized, offering a foundation for current and yet-to-be-imagined applications

(Gilder 2000). This observation echoes many of the technologically deterministic views that are frequently criticized in the humanities and social science literature that considers the relationship between technology and communication.

## **DIMENSIONS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION**

In the humanities and the social sciences it is generally understood that research and theory building in this area must be historically situated. Thus Smythe argued, for example, that technology and its relationship to communication are dynamically interrelated and best understood as having a number of constituents:

one part is bureaucracy (in both the private and public sector) . . . The second part is science which is being taken over increasingly by the third part, capital. The fourth part is tools and machines created by engineers. The fifth part is ideology which provides the raw materials with which the sixth part, propaganda, seeks to mould public opinion to accept the myth. (Smythe 1984, 2)

This definition embraces not only the technical features, but also the *human and social dimensions of the relationship between technology and communication*. The technologies of human communication are those that enable the establishment of communicative relationships virtually by creating a sense of co-presence or when participants in such a relationship are physically present. Analytically, the implications of the relationship between technology and communication for human development might begin at any point in human history, with, for example, the Phoenicians and their development of an alphabet, with the Sumerians and their development of cuneiform writing, or, indeed, with the Egyptians and their development of hieroglyphic writing – all between 3500 and 2900 BCE. Historically, many types of information and communication technologies (ICT) have been used to mediate human communication (Innis 1951; → Media History). The first wooden printing press was invented in China in 305 CE, with newspapers appearing in Europe in 1450 (→ Printing, History of; Newspaper, History of). The first telegraph line was invented in 1793 by Claude Chappe (→ Telegraph, History of), while 1876 saw the patenting of an office copying machine by Thomas Edison and the electric telephone by Alexander Graham Bell. Marconi transmitted the first radio signals across the Atlantic Ocean in 1902 (→ Radio Technology). The → Internet (ARPANET) started in 1969, IBM's personal computer was first sold in 1981, and the world wide web became available in 1994 (see [http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bl\\_history\\_of\\_communication.htm](http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/bl_history_of_communication.htm)).

In the media and communication field there are many perspectives upon which one can draw to highlight the complex historical and current relationships between technology and communication. For instance, the way *politics* influences the relationship between technology and communication may provide the focus for research. Sussman's (1998) *Communication, technology, and politics in the information age* examined the intersections between politics, society, and technology. Alternatively, a sociological approach may encourage a focus on cultural specificities and the ways new technologies become embedded in society. Marvin's study *When old technologies were new* notes that "a recurring theme in the study of literacies past and present is how skill and technique for performing particular

literate practices are transferred from communities of adepts to less skilled communities. What is not so easily transferred is the specific cultural setting” (1988, 14).

Another approach that is common in the literature on the relationship between technology and communication is that of the *futurologist*. In this case emphasis is often given to forecasts about the timing of inventions entering the consumer market. Innovations in ICTs have been forecast over periods as long as 60 years such that, for example, Neild and Pearson (2005) speculate that by the 2030s, learning will be superseded by transparent interfaces to a smart computer, by the 2020s network-based telepathy will be in use, and by 2017 the first bacterial computer will be available. No single disciplinary approach encompasses all the facets of the complex relationships between technology and communication.

In this overview entry, emphasis is given to ICTs that incorporate microelectronics or digital technologies, and an effort is made to embrace a broad spectrum of theoretical perspectives that bear on the relationship between technology and communication.

## **TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS**

Interest in the emergence of the → information society (Machlup 1962; Porat 1977), in which there is an increasingly intensive relationship between ICTs and the potential for new modes of communication, has grown since initial efforts to document a shift in the wealthy economies from their reliance on manufacturing to services. The spread of the Internet (→ Internet, Technology of) and access to the world wide web, together with the convergence of communication services around digital platforms since the mid-1990s, has intensified that interest. For some, it is an article of faith that ICTs hold the solutions to economic, political, and cultural problems. These people argue that if ICTs make information easily accessible from multiple sources and on multiple platforms, then the information needs of all segments of the population worldwide potentially can be met. Others have argued that the many forms of → digital divides make it unlikely that these technologies will alleviate deeply rooted social and economic problems (→ Access to the Media; Communication Inequality; Golding 2000).

In fact, the relationships between technology and communication (including changes in the production and consumption of ICTs) are embedded in institutionalized *power relations*. This has implications for the way they become implicated in the workplace and in the everyday lives of their users. These power relations are rarely symmetrical or stable, and it is therefore important to examine the dynamics of change empirically to understand their implications for the changing ways in which communicative relationships are mediated by technology (Mansell & Silverstone 1996). Broadly, there are two main conceptual frameworks that inform research in this area: the exogenous and the endogenous frameworks.

### **An Exogenous Framework**

The question as to whether technological innovation in the ICT area is exogenous or endogenous to a social system is central in differentiating between alternative assessments of its implications. One school of thought treats ICTs as if they are objects isolated from



the social, political, and economic environment in which they are produced and consumed (Bell 1973; Drucker 1961). The way in which ICTs come to be integrated within societies is assessed within this framework in terms of whether a particular technology is a progressive, regressive, or neutral force. Sometimes there is an attempt to find causal relationships between the appearance of new ICTs, for example, such as satellite technology, and social change (de Sola Pool 1983).

This approach tends to isolate technology from its *socio-economic context*. Thus, if a technology such as a computerized database is found to have negative effects, the problem can be attributed to the software design. The result is a mythical understanding of technology, which is taken for the purposes of analysis to exist in an external relation to society. This view is sometimes also found in literature informed by legal perspectives (Barrow & Manelli 1969).

It is assumed within this framework that social relations leading to the production and distribution of ICTs act on society in rational or logical ways. Is it the human being or “technology” that directs social change? As ICTs pervade ever more aspects of human endeavor, it is easy to claim that it is technology and not the human being that is “out of control” (Beniger 1989). If it is technology that is the determining factor in social organization, then what is left for the researcher is an observer role. For example, Ellul argues that “our civilization is constructed *by* technique, *for* technique and *is* exclusively technique” (Ellul 1964, 128). Similarly, Bell, who coined the term “information society,” argued that “technology is the instrumental mode of rational action . . . Technology has created a new definition of rationality, a new mode of thought” (1979, 15). Here, the emphasis is on the efficiency and rationality of technology, and social, cultural, political, and economic factors are relegated to secondary positions.

In addition, from this perspective, it may also be assumed that technology has *universally similar effects* regardless of where it is implemented; that technology is self-generating and goal-oriented (Winner 1977). The goals of efficiency and productivity are seen as being embedded in an autonomous technological system where there is little room for human decision-making or agency. Research tends to focus on the activities of technicians, engineers, and scientists to assess how ICTs or new information (or knowledge) are generated, rather than on the interests (economic, political, social, and cultural) that are at stake. In fact, it is institutions, individuals, and groups that are influential in the development of the ICTs.

This exogenous framework tends to be used to *attribute responsibility* for positive or negative economic, cultural, and other effects to each successive wave of ICTs. Researchers become preoccupied with facilitating the promotion and expansion of technology, without critically assessing the way ICTs become woven into the fabric of life – in terms of morality, the economy, culture, or the political. As Williams (1977, 80–81) argued, abstract analytical categories of idealist thought, “almost unnoticed, become substantive descriptions, which then take habitual priority over the whole social process to which, as analytical categories, they were attempting to speak.”

The notion of exogenous or autonomous technology appears throughout the literature on ICTs. It offers the possibility of avoiding critical assessment of the human factors that give rise to opportunities and the disadvantages associated with each new generation of technology. In contrast to Shallis’s (1984) deterministic account of the microelectronics

revolution in *The silicon idol*, Braverman's comment on technological change is pertinent to the investigation of innovations in ICTs and the way they mediate communicative relationships: "The key innovation is not to be found in chemistry, electronics, automatic machinery . . . or any of the products of these science technologies, but rather in the transformation of science itself into capital" (Braverman 1974, 166).

### An Endogenous Framework

When the endogenous characteristics of technology and communication relationships are considered, it is feasible to investigate the specific, material conditions under which technology is produced and consumed within society and to focus on the everyday aspects of its organization. Technology, in this framework, is regarded as *part of the social fabric* in which actors sanction certain forms of change and not others. Common to the work of those contributing to this framework is an emphasis on the structural factors, external and internal to a country or region, that result in unequal distributions of power. Power is usually located in the interwoven alignment of state (administrative and military), private capital, and civil society interests. In this view, the emphasis is often on the way technology mediates human relationships and on the set of limiting constraints that distort benefits that might otherwise accrue to those who are not at the center of economic and political power (Silverstone 2006). Mattelart (1979, 17), in his analysis of the media, for example, calls for an examination of the process of transnationalization that "can only be understood in a complex correlation of national and international or even local and regional forces, crisscrossed by the existence of resistance, adaptation, recuperation, offensives, and mimicry."

An endogenous framework is also present, for example, in Smythe's work on the concept of "*cultural screens*." Cultural screens were defined as those "aspects of a national culture or ideological system which serve to protect its cultural realism against disruptive intrusion" (Smythe 1981, 232). This idea drew researchers' attention to questions about whether it is feasible, given power relations at all levels, to create a space for distinctive cultural development in a technologically mediated world.

Researchers whose work embraces an endogenous framework have emphasized *historical and recurrent patterns of ICTs*. With respect to changes in ICTs and the organization of media and communication markets, Marvin (1980, 18), for example, has emphasized the idea that "the prediction that all development in communications technology will only lead to greater concentrations of media ownership and less and less information diversity is as classic as the alternative prediction that new communications technologies will inaugurate an era of perfect democracy and well-being." With respect to the implications of advanced digital technologies, an analysis of power relations in the wider economy has been shown to be important for understanding whether and how changes in technology are accompanied by particular changes in the way industrial markets are organized (Mansell & Steinmueller 2000).

With the appearance of new social movements mobilized by civil society actors, the endogenous framework accommodates analysis of the opportunities and constraints offered by innovative technologies. Thus, rather than assume that open source software and networks, for example, automatically give rise to newly empowered virtual communities,

researchers critically examine how the rise of networks is implicated in changing *power relationships* (Kubicek & Wagner 2002). In this framework it is feasible to allow for the fact that the embedding of technology within communicative relationships may be either empowering or disempowering and, depending on the level of analysis, to examine whether they might be both simultaneously. Remaining open to this possibility brings the Janus-faced character of technologically mediated communication relationships to the fore.

The entries for this theme in the encyclopedia draw upon work by those with an affinity to both the endogenous and exogenous perspectives. They are organized around the following sub-themes: (1) theorizing technology and communication; (2) technology, communication, and organization; (3) technology, communication, and governance; (4) innovation, technology, and research; and (5) technological foundations.

### THEORIZING TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION

The specific relationships between technology and communication can be marked at any time in human history. In this entry the focus is mainly on the period from the 1970s to the present, when the term “information society” gained currency across the disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities (Webster 2006). Terminology varies, with some scholars insisting on the “information society” label, while others stress diversity, coining the term “information societies.” Still others prefer the term “knowledge society” or “knowledge societies,” emphasizing the potential of digital technologies to enhance learning and economic development. The literature reflects ongoing disputes about whether the rapid spread of digital technologies constitutes a shift to a new mode of organization of society. Some focus on the growing quantity of information and its implications for the economy, while others give greater emphasis to the ways that these technologies mediate the construction of symbolic meaning, identity, and cultural development. Terms like “network society” (Castells 1996–1998) and “information society” serve as focal points for discussion of the changes associated with intensely technologically mediated societies.

A key concern is the *political implications* of the information society for democracy (→ Communication Technology and Democracy; Activist Media). In this area research is polarized between those who regard developments in ICTs and the media as having the potential to strengthen democracy and those who regard these developments as disruptive of democratic practice. There have been debates about the relationship between communication technology and democracy since the time of the printing press, but the spread of digital technologies and the Internet has raised new questions about alternative models of democratic participation (Cammaerts in press), about the role of the media in formal electoral processes (Scammell 1995), and about whether a “right to communicate” should be enshrined in international law (McIver et al. 2003).

The implications of investing in the production and consumption of ICTs (→ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of; Media Economics) are examined by those working in both the neo-classical and institutional economics traditions. Economic analysis tends to focus on the diffusion of ICTs, that is, on the pathways for the take-up of new technologies and their impacts on firms, specific industries, and the economy as a whole (Greenan et al. 2002). ICTs are classed by economists as general purpose technologies

(GPTs), suggesting that as they become central to the ICT-using sectors of the economy, they are associated with major transformations – paradigmatic shifts – that are reflected in productivity gains across the economy (Freeman 2007). The implications of technological convergence for industrial dynamics and the embedding of digital technologies in local economies, as well as for the increasing contribution of knowledge-based services to economic growth (Boden & Miles 2000), are key areas of research in the field of the economics of innovation and technical change.

Economists sometimes acknowledge that the implications of advances in ICTs cannot be understood fully without recourse to insights from other disciplinary perspectives. Within *sociology*, two approaches have helped to reveal factors influencing the production and consumption of communication technologies: the social construction of technology (→ Technology, Social Construction of; Constructivism) and the → domestication of technologies. The former understands that artifacts result from processes in which outcomes are not prefigured (Bijker et al. 1987), and provides a basis for a critique of technological determinism that is often present in economics approaches. The domestication of technology approach examines the appropriation of older and newer media and ICTs in everyday life, focusing on processes of commodification, imagination, appropriation, objectification, incorporation, and conversion (Silverstone & Hirsch 1992).

In examinations of the relationships between technology, communication, and society, when the diffusion of ICTs is uneven or where the distribution of the gains as a result of investing in them is uneven, this is often referred to as a digital divide. This concept is strongly criticized in some branches of the literature for its oversimplification of the factors that give rise to inequality. Research designed to understand the key determinants of these divides takes the form of → surveys or → case studies focusing on skills and cultural difference and various forms of exclusion and their consequences. Research on → information literacy or → media literacy is concerned with the skills sets needed to interact effectively with ICTs and with digital information, with an important emphasis on critical literacy.

Although standards for literacy are being devised in some countries, agreement has yet to be reached. This has major consequences for economic competitiveness and for fostering inclusive forms of democracy (Livingstone 2004). Research in this area also is concerned with weaknesses in the capacity to process or understand information, and there is a risk that → “information overload” may occur. This term has its roots in the literature on computer-mediated communication (CMC), and it is a problem that indicates the need for high levels of literacy in information management and for the capacity to distinguish relevant and reliable information.

## TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATION, AND ORGANIZATION

Although there is no stable definition, the term → “virtual community” generally applies to online interactions that give rise to new forms of relationships and new organizational forms. These communities also offer new platforms for research that seek to map the architecture of networks and to understand new forms of social relations or “communities of practice.” The fields of → human–computer interaction (HCI) and → personal communication by CMC touch on these issues. HCI is the study of how people interact with

computational devices and the design implications of digital media, whereas studies of personal communication via CMC address the same technologies, but generally focus on the perceived positive and negative features of this mode of communication. This is an area particularly in need of empirical study, since the evidence is mixed, as is the case for research on → online media. Here the aims are to examine the directionality of communication, synchronicity, content modularity, interactivity, personalization, and meaning construction, with issues around user-generated content or Web 2.0 applications providing a focal point for research.

New digital means of interacting online have given rise to interest in the *implications of the Internet* for language development (→ Language and the Internet), for the growth of personal online publishing (→ Personal Publishing), and for the development of → open access journals. In the case of language, research is particularly interested in text-based, interactive modes of communication and may focus on “standard” or “netspeak” languages. Empirically it makes use of large datasets that are contextually classified (→ Log-File Analysis) and archived data (→ Archiving of Internet Content). In the case of personal publishing, attempts are made to understand the motivations of publishers and the sustainability of these online initiatives. Open access publishing refers to the practice whereby the owners of a journal grant the right of free access to digital content and to new models suggested by free or open source software development.

These developments have not only supported online networking activities for individuals, they also have given rise to the “*networked organization*” (→ Network Organizations through Communication Technology), characterized by reciprocal and lateral communication ties. Such organizational forms enable virtual teamworking and, increasingly, outsourcing. They also raise issues about the ownership of the creative capabilities that firms need in order to compete effectively. New business organizations and models are also at the core of the development of electronic commerce (→ E-Commerce), the term used to describe Internet-based ways of engaging in economic exchange. Research in this area focuses on pricing strategies, marketing and strategic behavior, consumer behavior, privacy, and trust. In the case of → e-government services, research tends to focus on models, public confidence in services, and whether new forms of interaction are consistent with democratic practice, sometimes described as “digital-era” governance (Dunleavy et al. 2006).

Changes in the economic and political spheres corresponding to changes in the relationship between technology and communication have been accompanied by *cultural developments* associated with opportunities for the development of sexual relationships and pornography online (→ Sex and Pornography Online; Pornography, Media Law on). “Cybersex” appears to hold the promise of sensitization in a virtual reality where the body is invisible. In addition, there are studies of the role of technology in mediating consumer fashion (→ Technology as Fashion), and developments in this area have implications for the structure and organization of markets for consumer goods such as the iPod or the mobile phone as well as for the advertising industry.

## **TECHNOLOGY, COMMUNICATION, AND GOVERNANCE**

Disruptive technological innovations are often tightly coupled with debates about the positive or negative implications for the global order (→ Technology and Globalization;

Globalization Theories). The relationship between *technology and globalization* is immensely complex, with research on ICTs emphasizing links between local and distant places and the sometimes unifying, and at other times fragmenting, consequences. Differences in views about the relationship between technology and communication in this context give rise to discussions about hybridity and the asymmetric, unpredictable links in the global–local system. Within the globalization debate, the governance of ICTs is an issue that influences how these technologies become embedded in society. In analyzing the relationships between technologies and communication, many authors, for example, are concerned with the relationship between globalization, the nation-state, and the deterritorialization of media (→ Globalization of the Media).

The different framings of the relationship between globalization and communication technology find their echoes in research on the *nature of the governance regimes* that are required on a global basis to enable the production and consumption of ICTs and media content locally and globally. For production and consumption to be feasible on a global basis, governance regimes for technology standardization are essential (→ Communication Technology Standards), especially since compatibility standards are needed when interactivity is required (David 1985). The spread of the Internet has made it necessary to find innovative ways of governing the technical means by which computers are able to “find” each other. The governance of Internet → domain names offers an illustration of the way these complex issues are played out on a global scale. The phrase → “code as law” is associated with Lessig’s (2006) work, which argues that the Internet is “regulated” by the values embedded in the software code (→ Communication and Law; Internet Law and Regulation; Internet: International Regulation; Murray & Scott 2002).

Governance issues arise with respect to specific online behaviors as well. For example, when users access computerized systems, there are many questions about whether there should be sanctions for “bad” behavior. Research on → “*hacktivism*” examines this question, where hacking refers to techniques combined with political strategies. From a governance perspective, whether hacktivism is seen as legal or illegal is a question of the values in a given context (Jordan & Taylor 2004). When it comes to the relationships between crime, terrorism, and communication technology (→ Crime and Communication Technology; Terrorism and Communication Technologies; Mediated Terrorism), the issues and the evidence base are strongly contested. In both cases, there are attempts to control crime and terrorism using law enforcement and criminal justice as well as to “design out” crime through technical measures. The evidence base for claims about the potential for “cyberterrorism” is especially weak (Schmid 2004).

## INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND RESEARCH

New ICTs raise many issues with respect to *ethical conduct* within the humanities and the social sciences (→ Research Ethics: Internet Research; Research Ethics). Guidelines with respect to Internet-related research have been developed nationally and by organizations such as the Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR). Different methods raise concerns about the risks involved to researchers and to those they study. There are also conflicting views of ethical conduct, for example, with respect to online pornography, suicide pacts, or hate speech.

Analysis of the historical online record (→ Online Research) or memory requires an archive of the contents of the world wide web. Although web-harvesting programs have been available since 1995, there are many outstanding questions in this area, such as the representativeness of the results of web crawling and issues of standards, privacy, copyright, and ethical conduct. The results generated by → *Internet ratings systems* (→ Rating Methods) also generate controversy, although the demographic and behavioral data are used by the advertising industry and by the research community. The profiles of users and of digital information can also be discerned through log-file analysis. There has been little analysis in the social sciences of the implications of these systems for markets or for public policy. Another online research tool is → Link Analysis, or the study of hyperlinks between and within websites, giving rise to concerns about the sampling of links and the selection of content.

Methods of researching online content are being considered within the wider context of research strategy and design, and they are continuously reviewed through organizations such as AoIR (<http://aoir.org>) and by contributors to the *Webology* journal and to *First Monday* (<http://firstmonday.dk>).

## TECHNOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

In the social sciences and humanities the technological foundations of mediated communication are sometimes neglected, but by the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century there was a consensus that research should focus on relationships between online and offline activity (Orgad 2007). In essence, the Internet refers to a technological base and a set of standards upon which software applications rely in order to provide users with communication tools. The Internet is a cluster of technological innovations, infrastructures, applications, and social organizations that would not exist without its underlying → communication infrastructure, upon which media and communication services operate. Innovations in ICTs have progressed with improvements stemming both from “technology push” and “demand pull” factors (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). Their application has been accompanied by debates about *technological convergence* (→ Digitization and Media Convergence) and about competition between standardized digital platforms.

Although digitization has been found to contribute to the blurring of boundaries between segments of the media and communication industry, this does not always imply media convergence, that is, the convergence of networks or fully integrated and seamless communication between networks, services, and terminals. Since the Internet revolution in the late 1990s the boundaries between these platforms have become blurred, leading to changes in commercial leadership in ICT markets, with many new firms appearing on the scene.

The spread of digital networks, large increases in information-processing power, media convergence, and the growth of Internet-based communication have supported three *key developments* – → search engines; → P2P networking; and → open source software development – that have called into question the sustainability of traditional business models and the legitimacy of information ownership protected through → *copyright* legislation. The use of wireless communication is also enabling the growth of mobile communication, which, in turn, has substantial implications for the mobility of data,

information, and people (→ Mobility, Technology for). Taken together all of these developments set the parameters for what some envisage as an age of → ubiquitous computing. This refers to networking and computing technologies that are small, fast, interconnected, and cheap enough to be embedded in the environment and in everyday objects. Ubiquitous computing research – when it is grounded in the humanities and the social sciences – resonates strongly with the literature on → cyborgs (a term for a biological, usually human, being enhanced by artificial components), especially with respect to debates about ethics and gendered relationships.

With respect to renewed interest in cyborg developments and related developments in the technological sphere, there is also considerable emphasis in the literature on technology and communication on → *technology assessment*. Some approaches to technology assessment embrace a critical examination of the underlying values and norms that become part of the fabric of everyday life. Constructive technology assessment (CTA), developed largely in Europe, is one line of this work, and is complemented by “early warning” assessments, developed mainly in North America. Technology assessment methodologies seek to evaluate the risks associated with new technologies. In the research literature there is controversy over which approaches work best and about the role of power in influencing whether and how the recommendations of these methodologies filter into policymaking and technology designer practice. Technology assessment methodologies, informed by theories drawn from across the social sciences and humanities, continue to be essential to the ongoing investigation of the historical, present, and future relationships between technology and communication within society.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Activist Media ▶ Archiving of Internet Content ▶ Case Studies ▶ Code as Law ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Inequality ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Communication Technology and Democracy ▶ Communication Technology Standards ▶ Constructivism ▶ Copyright ▶ Crime and Communication Technology ▶ Cyborgs ▶ Digital Divide ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Domain Names ▶ Domestication of Technology ▶ E-Commerce ▶ E-Government ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hacktivism ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Information Literacy ▶ Information Overload ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Internet Ratings Systems ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Link Analysis ▶ Log-File Analysis ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media History ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Online Media ▶ Online Research ▶ Open Access Journals ▶ Open Source ▶ P2P Networking ▶ Personal Communication by CMC ▶ Personal Publishing ▶ Pornography, Media Law on ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Research Ethics ▶ Research Ethics: Internet Research ▶ Search Engines ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Survey ▶ Technology Assessment ▶ Technology as Fashion ▶ Technology and Globalization ▶ Technology, Social Construction of ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Terrorism and Communication Technologies ▶ Ubiquitous Computing ▶ Virtual Communities



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## Technology as Fashion

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In 1957 Vance Packard complained that the manufacturers of typewriters and telephones had recently begun producing models in a wide range of colors rather than in their traditional black. He critically surmised that the sole motive for this innovation was “to make owners dissatisfied with their plain old black models” (Packard 1957, 72). Packard understood that the introduction of color into the appearance of these technologies added nothing to their functionality, that color was ephemeral and external to the workings of these technologies. The ephemeral was merely “fashionable.” That owners of traditional black models might become dissatisfied with their “old” models was, he thought, attributable to the workings of those in the → advertising industries (→ Advertising; Advertising: Global Industry) who would work their sophistries upon a naïve public.

Packard's understanding of the role of advertising in consumer culture looked forward to → Roland Barthes's *The fashion system* (1983), in which Barthes highlighted the central role played by advertising in the construction of cultural meaning. For him, fashion items are never understood raw, as mere material objects, but are always understood through the mediation of media messages. Without the media, there is no → fashion.

Packard's analysis also looked to the work of Thorstein Veblen, who had produced the earliest analysis of the centrality of fashion in consumer culture in his *Theory of the leisure class* (1994), published originally in 1899. Veblen, like Packard, denied any value to the "aesthetics" or "style" of a product, subordinating these aspects as forms of conspicuous consumption, the *raison d'être* of any fashion item. The central dynamic of fashion culture, according to Veblen, was conspicuous waste. In order for their users to stay ahead of others, new fashion objects would continually be made to distinguish their users from those lower down the social ladder. Fashion embodied display, distinction, and cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986). Veblen's -is a "trickle-down" theory of taste in which the less wealthy envy, imitate, and emulate the rich.

### TELEPHONE AS FASHION

The telephone, originally a product for commercial use and then for the families of the rich, was slowly incorporated into the houses of the middle classes in an increasingly urbanized and disparate population, for whom advertisers proclaimed that "Your Voice is You" (Fischer 1992, 76). Packard's consumers had seen the practical advantages of telephone use in the home. What Packard failed to observe was that the black phone itself had been considered fashionable, not merely as an "object" but in terms of the values of connectivity that it represented. A culture's utopian wishes are often located in its most recent consumer technologies (→ Domestication of Technology). These technologies themselves are barometers or signposts of a culture's unfulfilled desires. As more people succumbed to the aspiration toward connectivity, they were thus seeking to emulate others. The 1950s was a time of "keeping up with the Joneses," with consumers striving to keep abreast of their neighbors. The introduction of colored phones, while not adding to the functionality of the device, reflected upon notions of the "fashionable" home in which all contents were color coordinated. The technology of the phone was thus doubly fashionable.

Understanding the role of social emulation was central to the European sociologist and philosopher Georg Simmel's theory of fashion (Frisby & Featherstone 1997). At its core was the dualism of conformity and individualism; thus, telephone users wished to be like others who possessed a telephone (emulation) yet strove to distinguish themselves from others (by purchasing a colored model). Simmel recognized that fashion itself had become the *zeitgeist* and driving force of modernism, represented by the values of universal change, preferring the new to the old, and "keeping up to date." The elevation of the transitory over the permanent is embodied in the very definition of fashion as a "continuing pattern of change in which certain social forms enjoy a temporary acceptance and respectability only to be replaced by others more abreast of the times." (Blumer 1968, 342). Simmel also recognized that fashion had become universalized; "that it has overstepped the bounds of its original domain, which comprised only externals of dress, and

has acquired an increasing influence over taste, theoretical convictions, and even the moral foundations of life in their changing forms.” (Simmel in Frisby & Featherstone 1997, 189).

### **AUTOMOBILES AS FASHION**

Consumer technologies play an increasing role in the economy of fashion. Packard highlighted the role of telephony as fashion; Barthes extolled the cultural significance of the Citroen DS as the ultimate consumer aesthetic object of an age in which the automobile took pride of place. Automobiles embodied the cultural values of movement and individualism, with drivers no longer constrained by the timetables of others, free to travel wherever they pleased. Makes and models were made for differing social strata, so that the automobile became the equivalent of clothing: the aesthetics of speed represented by makes such as Ferrari were, to follow Veblen’s critique, not functional for everyday driving, while the aesthetics of the middle classes were those embodied by the Citroen DS. The aesthetics of durability and power were meanwhile embodied in the emblematic radiator of the Rolls-Royce, symbolizing for Panofsky an unchanged representation of “art nouveau infused with the spirit of unmitigated romanticism” (Panofsky 1997, 166). Yet automobility itself represented an overarching cultural ideal in which most consumers could share (→ Consumer Culture).

Technology as fashion differs from clothing as fashion inasmuch as there are recognizable measurements of progress within the development of the technologies themselves (→ Technology and Globalization). A Ferrari that lacked speed or acceleration would lack the essential ingredients that made it a Ferrari; equally, in a culture in which the values of miniaturization and mobility are paramount, modern mobile phones are considered both more functional and more aesthetically pleasing than their large and heavy forebears. While fashion in dress, music, and furniture has increasingly looked backward in remodeling itself on the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s (Carter 2003), today’s technologies are more resistant to the mass take-up of retro-fashions.

### **DEFINING CONSUMER TECHNOLOGIES OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: MOBILE PHONE AND IPOD**

Two defining consumer technologies of the twenty-first century are mobile phones and Apple iPods. These technologies represent two differing modes of fashion appropriation. Mobile phones are possessed by the majority of consumers in the industrialized world (→ Mobility, Technology for), while Apple iPods, despite being a mass-produced technology, are endowed with an aura of exclusivity, style, and status (Bull 2006; Levy 2006). The mobile phone represents the antithesis of Veblen’s trickle-down theory in which the many emulate the fashion of the rich and powerful. Fortunati (2005) has argued that mobile phones became fashionable only when they became objects of mass consumption. They are emblematic of a transformation in fashion that, due to global → marketing strategies, is largely simultaneous and democratic in nature. The mobile phone, rather like the automobile, embodies a set of fashionable cultural values, such as “distance, power, status and identity” (Katz 2006, 65), that appeals primarily to the young consumer.

The presentation of the mobile phone to young consumers by advertisers invariably appeals to notions of “youth, modernity and futurism” (Katz 2006, 69), with connectivity being emblematic of contemporary → discourses of being “up to date.” Fortunati found that just over one half of young Italian mobile phone users valued the aesthetics of their phones, often allying themselves to brand-name phones such as Nokia or Sony Ericsson – companies that spend millions annually promoting their phones as fashionable to precisely that target audience (→ Brands). However, the perception of mobile phones as fashion objects is not widely replicated among older users, who perceive their phones primarily as functional objects of communication (Katz 2006).

Among those users who do perceive their phones as fashion objects, some engage in customization of them. In doing so they attempt to transform a mass object of consumption into something more individual. Customization has been perceived as the consumer reappropriating the meaning of the consumer object by individualizing it through personalized ring tones or alternative covers, thereby transcending the standard commodified messages embodied in the object. Nevertheless, Fortunati (2005) found that many teenage users of the mobile phone desired forms of “prepackaged individuality,” choosing from a selection of prepackaged ring tones rather than composing their own, for example. When mobile phones have been marketed as Veblen-type objects of conspicuous consumption, such as the Vertu phone, which comes encrusted in expensive jewelry and costs £13,000, they are used primarily as items of jewelry rather than as mobile phones.

Apple iPods were the first cultural consumer icon of the twenty-first century (Bull 2006) and appear to represent a marriage between → aesthetics, → design, and functionality. Apple products invariably cost more than competitor machines and are marketed largely on their aesthetic appeal. Postrel (2003, 2) maintains that “in a crowded market place, aesthetics is the only way to make a product stand out.” She argues that aesthetics is functional in itself, that the pleasure that consumers derive from the aesthetic design of their iPods gives added pleasure. Central to the marketing strategy of Apple has been an attempt to create brand identification through design and advertising that makes the use of Apple products “a way of life.” They are marketed and interpreted as representing “imagination, design and innovation.” Klein (2000) argues that Apple no longer sells mere products, but the brand itself, embodying consumer hopes, dreams, and aspirations. Apple consumers in their identification with the product often see themselves as living within an imaginary community of Apple users and will often acknowledge other iPod users in the street. They also see themselves as distinctive, or individual, through their possession of their iPods, which are visually recognizable to others. Apple spends large amounts of money to convey these meanings through global advertising campaigns, but the status of such identification with consumer products is a contested one. Writers such as Postrel associate fashion with diversity, liberal economies, and the individual freedoms fostered by democratic nations, whereas others take a more critical view of the role of global industries in the manufacture of what they perceive as “diligently assembled illusions.” (Ewen 1990, 38) in which consumers resemble “Yale locks, whose difference can be measured in the fraction of millimetres” (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972, 154). In a global economy in which major brands increasingly control production, the ideological construction of freedom of choice, administered through the advertising industry, becomes paramount: “Fashion and information give individuals the illusion of following

the movement of the world. As life is movement, the continual change produced by fashion and information gives postmodern individuals the sensation of being alive” (Fortunati 2005, 44).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising: Global Industry ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Brands ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Design ▶ Discourse ▶ Domestication of Technology ▶ Fashion ▶ Marketing ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Technology and Globalization

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## **Technology and Globalization**

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The term “globalization” and related terms such as global system, global economy, and global culture have been used since the mid-1980s in both the popular and academic literature to describe the “temporal-spatial compression” of the physical world (Harvey 1989). New information and (tele)communication technologies (ICTs) are viewed as

linking distant localities into one globalizing world in a synchronous time zone that goes beyond real territories. The speed and mobility generated by electronic networks becomes indispensable for creating the physical conditions of globalization, tying together the world as a whole (Virilio 1997; → Mobility, Technology for).

Popular futurists have optimistically characterized a globalizing or united world: Fukuyama (1992) depicts globalization as the last triumph of capitalism and its market economy; Friedman (2006) writes of a flattening and fiber-optic global world; while Gates (1999) refers to friction-free capitalism that creates new opportunities for all countries to participate in global competition. Meanwhile, critical scholars see globalization as the result of the industrialized countries' and multinationals' imperialist expansion without colonies (Magdoff 2003). In this view, advanced technologies offer support for absorbing the surplus generated in the so-called "third world," thus undermining its technological, political, economic, and cultural viability. In the mid-nineteenth century, Marx predicted a global move toward unconstrained capitalist expansion, arguing that "all that is solid melts into air" in the face of the bourgeoisie's constant expansion of markets across the surface of the globe (Marx & Engels 1848/1998, 38). In contrast to the optimistic scholars, for the more pessimistic scholars, technology is subordinate to the expansionist economic logic of contemporary capitalism, which penetrates into every corner of human life.

### MULTIDIMENSIONAL GLOBAL SPHERES

Criticism of these optimistic and pessimistic forms of economic reductionism, both of which tend to focus on a shift toward a *united world economy*, arises from the observation that globalization should not be understood as a dynamic that fosters a unified borderless world. This claim gives rise to a "loose structure" thesis, which emphasizes the relative independence of socio-cultural factors when the local is confronted by globalizing forces. From this perspective it is argued that there are fundamental disjunctures between the economy, culture, and politics. As Appadurai (1990) suggests, a globalizing world mediated by ICTs produces a global sphere of "technoscapes," or multiple spheres consisting of the flows of people, technology, money, media content, and ideologies. Sreberny (2005) similarly sees the technology and market logics as components of multidimensional spheres of the global. These analytical categories of mini-globalizing processes have helped to create an awareness of the nonlinear, unpredictable nature of cultural globalization in contrast to the uniformity envisaged by those more concerned with economic globalization. Empirical studies, for instance, have focused on the independent consumption patterns of television audiences that are understood as being strongly affected by cultural proximity created by factors such as local culture, language differences, local market strengths, and other cultural variables (Straubhaar 1991).

These approaches reveal globalization as a web of hybridity or complexity that gives rise to uneven, asymmetric, and unpredictable links in the global-local nexus, suggesting that this nexus is central to the present phase of globalization. They negate perspectives that give rise to what are regarded as unhelpful dualistic and hierarchical framings of the world in terms of the dominant and dominated, colonizer and colonized, and center/periphery relationships. For instance, Urry (2005) divides the global system into *global networks* and *global fluids*. Whereas global networks are predictable, calculable, routinized,

integrated, and standardized (as in global enterprises), global fluids are regarded as being autopoietic, rhizomatic, and decentralized (as in world money, auto-mobility, social movements, the → Internet, anti-globalization movements, and international terrorism; → Terrorism and Communication Technologies). It is the latter that is said to account for global complexity and hybridity. In view of the out-of-control and unpredictable state of global flows, Giddens (2003) describes the present condition of globalization as a “runaway world.”

Castells’ (1996) concept of flows is helpful in understanding patterns of global interconnectedness as a space that is increasingly process oriented and fluid, unlike the earlier place-adhesive understanding of space as something fixed. The space of flows is said to be a more significant factor in economic, political, and symbolic life than the “space of places.” The fluid and liquid space of flows is enabled by the global conduit of electronic networks, which include transcontinental networks such as submarine cables, ship-to-shore wireless networks, broadcast radio and shortwave wireless services, conventional telecommunication networks, and worldwide Internet-enabled business networks. Castells’ perspective considers the complex and liquid flows of technology, information, and culture across borders. In a similar way, Held et al. (1999) highlight the transformative potential of these spatio-temporal attributes, and it is argued that new complex hierarchies are being reconfigured within a new geography of centrality and marginality, which is bounded not so much by national boundaries as by virtual and geometric representations of power (Sassen 2005).

### THE HOMOGENIZING WORLDVIEW

In contrast to those who favor an unbundling of the global multiplicities of different flows and who argue that globalization cannot be understood using a single world-system model, political economists of media and communication suggest that modern technology and the interests of those active in global markets lead to a continuous tendency to integrate the frontiers of the local into a homogenized globalizing world. For these scholars, a deepening crisis of capital accumulation during the period of the recession in the early 1970s was accompanied by a revolution in microelectronics and computer technologies, creating a foundation for capitalist expansion worldwide. As a result of the expansion of global networks and enhanced computing power, since the 1980s the multinational corporations have sought to tie their local subsidiaries, agencies, and overseas factories together (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Information and Communication Technology, Economics of; Network Organizations through Communication Technology). In this sense, the global electronic telecommunication network is said to become the material infrastructure of contemporary global capitalism, allowing the products of immaterial labor to be disseminated throughout the world. Terms such as *cybernetic capitalism* (Robins & Webster 1999), *digital capitalism* (Schiller 1999), *electronic empire* (Hardt & Negri 2000), and *fast capitalism* (Agger 2004) denote the deepening reliance on the virtual dynamics of a global capitalism shaped by technological innovation. These terms suggest a stage of globalization in which the flows of capital, labor, commodities, information, and images achieve a global reach, and in which they can be produced and consumed almost instantaneously.



Scholars working in the political economy tradition view global crises of capitalism as emerging as a result of the microelectronic revolution and networked flows of information, communication, and culture, and as a result of the flows of industrial and financial capital. Research in this tradition has been centrally concerned with the contribution of digital information and communication to the operation of global monopolies and with transborder data flows (Herman & McChesney 1997). Other key research themes that inform studies of *global technocapitalism* include work on the way in which the international activities of transnational media and communication firms evade regulatory barriers to a greater extent than the activities of firms in traditional manufacturing sectors; the dynamics of monopolistic global media systems; cross-border flows of media outputs; and the restructuring of global electronic communication networks.

In this tradition, globalization is associated with technological regimes that signify rapid changes in spatial structures. The process of *spatial rezoning* is said to stratify and concentrate the power of capitalism over physical and virtual geographies. It creates a domain of symbolic re-territorialization and de-territorialization for increasingly complex flows of information and capital through electronic networks. The virtual global space is regarded as an expanding source of capitalist power augmented by a fabric of electronic networks that enables flows of intellectual assets embodied in financial capital, electronic business data, and entertainment content on a planetary scale. From this vantage point, contemporary capitalism is seen as reshuffling local geographies so as to facilitate the national and global expansion of capital by increasing and channeling the mobility of people, money, goods, and information.

In summary, early globalization theses envisaged globalizing forces as giving rise to unifying hierarchical structures. Later theses, associated with scholars who focus on hybridity and complexity in globalization, suggest the unpredictability of globalization and the multiplicity of local contexts that may be free from the domination of global capital. Others argue, however, that signs of hybridity and complexity should be regarded as indications of global capital's ability to absorb local differences, and that media and communication networks play a central role in this process. The differences between more recent contributions to debates about the consequences of globalization turn on whether the global–local nexus is regarded as an intricate web structure and on whether globalizing forces are seen as having the capacities to absorb differences at the local level.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Infrastructure ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ► Information Society ► Internet ► Mobility, Technology for ► Network Organizations through Communication Technology ► Terrorism and Communication Technologies

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## Technology, Social Construction of

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The social construction of technology (SCOT) is one approach among several constructivist ways of studying science and technology that emerged in the 1980s. Here, “constructivist” means that the truth of scientific facts and the working of technical artifacts are studied as accomplishments; that is, as being constructed, rather than as intrinsic properties of those facts and machines (→ Constructivism).

The phrase *social construction* was first used by Berger and Luckmann (1966) in their “treatise in the sociology of knowledge.” Building on the phenomenological tradition, and particularly on the work of Alfred Schutz, they argue that reality is socially constructed and that these processes of social construction should be the object of the sociology of knowledge. Berger and Luckmann are concerned with the reality of social institutions and their focus is on society at large, rather than on sub-cultures such as

science and technology. Then, scholarship developed around such themes as the social construction of mental illness, deviance, gender, law, and class. In the 1970s the social construction of scientific facts followed (Latour & Woolgar 1979/1986), and in the 1980s the social construction of artifacts (Bijker et al. 1987).

Constructivist studies of science and technology come in a variety of forms, mild and radical (Sismondo 1993). The mild versions merely stress the importance of including the social *context* when describing the development of science and technology; for example Douglas's (1987) history of radio broadcasting. The radical versions argue that the *content* of science and technology is socially constructed. In other words, the truth of scientific statements and the technical working of machines are not derived from nature but are constituted in social processes (→ Communication Theory and Philosophy; Objectivity in Science).

### **THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TECHNOLOGY**

An important, though negative, starting point for the social construction of technology was to criticize *technological determinism*, which was taken to comprise two elements: (1) technology develops autonomously, and (2) technology determines to an important degree societal development. This view was seen as an intellectually weak research strategy because it entails a teleological, linear, and one-dimensional view of technological development. It was considered politically debilitating because technological determinism suggests that social and political interventions in the course of technology are impossible, thus making a political debate on technology a futile endeavor. To bolster this critique, it was necessary to show that the working of technology was socially constructed – with the emphasis on *social*. The unit of analysis was the single artifact. This was a choice for the “hardest possible case.” To show that even the working of a bicycle or a lamp was socially constructed seemed a harder task, and thus – when successful – more convincing, than to argue that technology at a higher level of aggregation was socially shaped.

The agenda of demonstrating the social construction of artifacts by detailed analysis at the micro level resulted in a wealth of *case studies*. A few years later, the program was broadened in two ways (Bijker & Law 1992). First, questions were raised at meso and macro levels of aggregation as well. Second, the agenda was broadened to include the issue of technology's impact on society, which had been bracketed for the sake of fighting technological determinism. Concepts developed for this agenda were “technological frame,” and various conceptualizations of the obduracy of technology (→ Framing Effects). The unit of analysis was broadened from the singular technical artifact to the more comprehensive and heterogeneous socio-technical ensemble. The emphasis now was on *construction* rather than on *social*.

Current research in SCOT combines empirical case studies with more general questions about the modernization of society, politicization of technological culture, and management of innovation. It has become increasingly difficult (and unfruitful) to observe the boundaries between the various approaches within the broader social construction of technology: research collaboration and conceptual combinations have

emerged between, for example, the actor-network approach, the social construction of technology (in the narrow sense; SCOT), and gender and technology studies (→ Gender and Discourse). Connections are developing with studies in the social sciences more generally, including politics, economics, and law.

### SCOT AS A HEURISTIC FOR RESEARCH

As a heuristic for studying technology in society, the social construction of technology can be laid out in three consecutive research steps (Bijker 1995). *Key concepts* in the first step are “relevant social group” and “interpretive flexibility.” An artifact is described through the eyes of relevant social groups. Social groups are relevant for describing an artifact, when they explicitly attribute a meaning to that artifact. Thus, *relevant social groups* can be identified by looking for actors who refer to the artifact in the same way. For describing the high-wheeled *ordinary* bicycle in the 1870s such groups were, for example, bicycle producers, young athletic *ordinary* users, women cyclists, and anti-cyclists. Because the description of an artifact through the eyes of different relevant social groups produces different descriptions – and thus different artifacts – the researcher is able to demonstrate the “interpretive flexibility” of the artifact. There is not one artifact, but many. In the case of the *ordinary* bicycle, there was the Unsafe machine (through the eyes of women) and there was the Macho machine (through the eyes of young male *ordinary* users). For women the bicycle was a machine in which your skirt got entangled and from which you frequently made a steep fall; for the “young men of means and nerve” riding the bicycle was a means to impress people (including young ladies!).

In the second step, the researcher follows how *interpretive flexibility* diminishes, because some artifacts gain dominance over the others and meanings converge – and in the end, one artifact results from this process of social construction. Here, the key concept is “stabilization.” It describes the result of the process of social construction, which can take several years while the degree of stabilization slowly increases.

In the third step, the processes of stabilization described in the second step are analyzed and explained by *interpreting* them in a broader theoretical framework: why does a social construction process follow this course, rather than that? The central concept here is “technological frame.” A technological frame structures the interactions among the members of a relevant social group, and shapes their thinking and acting. It is similar to Kuhn’s concept of → paradigm, with one important difference: “technological frame” is a concept to be applied to all kinds of relevant social groups, while “paradigm” was exclusively intended for scientific communities. A technological frame is built up when interaction around an artifact begins. In this way, existing practice guides future practice, though without logical determination. The cyclical movement thus becomes: artifact–technological frame–relevant social group–new artifact–new technological frame–new relevant social group, and so on. Typically, a person will be included in more than one social group, and thus also in more than one technological frame.

This three-step research process amounts to sociological analysis of an artifact to demonstrate its interpretive flexibility; description of the artifact’s social construction; and explanation of this construction process in terms of the technological frames of relevant social groups.

### SCOT AS A THEORY OF TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIETY

The social construction of technology also provides a theoretical perspective on the relation between technology and society, and on their joint development or co-evolution. The development of technology can be explained as a social process in which a variety of relevant social groups participate. This social process does not stop when an artifact leaves the factory, but continues when users give the technology its specific usage and meaning. Laws of physics and economics are not irrelevant, but insufficient to characterize technology's development.

Analogously, the development of social institutions in modern society cannot be fully understood without taking into account the role of technology. The social fabric of society may be kept together by such institutions as church, capital, government, labor, communication, and education; but where would all these be without technology? Social order in modern society can only be explained by reference to technology (Latour 1992). This requires a view of technology's impact on society. This can be done by conceptualizing the hardness or *obduracy of technologies*.

An artifact can be hard in two distinctly different ways. The first form, "closed-in hardness," occurs when the humans involved have a high inclusion in the associated technological frame. For example, students well versed in the use of mobile phones will react differently to a malfunctioning phone than the old-fashioned author of this article (→ Mobility, Technology for). Students may start modifying the network selection, switch the battery, or tinker with the preferences menu. Only after some time will it occur to them that they could also look for a landline phone: they were "closed-in" by the mobile phone technology. The author of this article, when confronted with a non-working cell phone, might try to ring a second time but then soon give up and look for a landline phone or write a letter. He can barely locate the power switch, and experiences the second kind of impact by technology: "closing-out obduracy." He sees no alternative but to leave the technology aside and pick up his fountain pen. In both cases the technology has an impact on these people, but in completely different ways. These two forms of hardness of technology can also be seen on the societal level. The automobile technology, for example, exerts a "closed-in hardness" on the inhabitants of Los Angeles: much differentiation within auto culture, but no alternatives outside it. The standardization of mains power voltage and wall plugs mean a "closing-out obduracy" to most people: accept it by buying the right plug and apparatus, or do not use electricity (→ Communication Technology Standards).

### THE POLITICIZATION OF TECHNOLOGICAL CULTURE

We live in a technological culture: our modern, highly developed society cannot be fully understood without taking into account the role of science and technology. The social construction of technology offers a conceptual framework for discussing the democratization of this technological culture. The social construction of technology approach not only gives an affirmative answer to Winner's (1980) question "Do artifacts have politics?" but it also offers a handle to analyze these politics. Technology is socially (and politically) constructed; society (including politics) is technically built; and technological culture consists of socio-technical ensembles (Bijker 2006).

Studies that elaborate this agenda do not exclusively extend the SCOT framework, but typically draw on social constructivist technology studies in the broad sense. One of the most fruitful bodies of work is the analysis of gender and technology (Wajcman 1991, 2004; Cockburn & Ormrod 1993). Another domain of research focuses on the politicization of → information society and information and communication technologies (see Schmidt and Werle [1988] for a fruitful approach via standardization issues).

The issue of political decision-making about technological projects acquires a special guise under the light of SCOT. If it is accepted that a variety of relevant social groups is involved in the social construction of technologies and that the construction process continues through all phases of an artifact's life cycle, it makes sense to extend the set of groups involved in political deliberation about technological choices. Several countries are experimenting with consensus conferences, public debates, and citizens' juries. One of the key issues is the role of expertise in public debates. The SCOT approach suggests that all relevant social groups have some form of expertise, but that no one form – for example, that of scientists or engineers – has a special and a priori superiority over the others (Bijker 2003, 2004).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Technology Standards ▶ Communication Theory and Philosophy ▶ Constructivism ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Information Society ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Paradigm

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## Telecenters

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Telecenters are public places where people can gain access to information technologies and other communication resources (→ Access to the Media; Participatory Communication; Public Access Television). They originated in the mid-1980s in Scandinavian countries as an effort to help people in rural areas become part of the information economy, particularly by making modern office equipment available to them on a shared basis. Although the idea spread through many of the industrialized countries during the next decade, it was the emergence of the computer and digital networks in the 1990s that launched a variety of these public access centers – with a variety of names, such as community technology centers, village information centers, and community learning centers. UNESCO, the World Bank, the International Telecommunications Union, and overseas development agencies such as those of Canada, Switzerland, the UK, and the US gave the telecenter movement significant propulsion as they perceived a link between information and communication technologies (ICTs) and development (→ Development Communication; Information and Communication Technology, Development of; Technology and Communication; UNESCO).

While → radio, film, and → video make up an earlier generation of ICTs, it is the unique benefits of computers and networks that drive the interest of national and international agencies toward telecenters as a tool for development. The most important of those characteristics are access by individuals to many information databases “on demand”; opportunity to participate in → e-government, → e-commerce, e-health, and e-education; and the prospects for individuals, at relatively low cost, to connect with one person or millions of people beyond their communities for personal communication or for mass communication. However, because many people could not own their own computers or could not afford network connections, concern arose among many of society’s leaders about a → *digital divide*. Data on ownership and use of the new information technologies demonstrated a gap between countries and between populations within countries (→ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of).

Telecommunications specialists look to experience with telephone services for terminology to apply to the Internet situation. They use the term “universal service” to describe the one-telephone-to-one-household ownership pattern. The more viable strategy for developing countries is “universal access” – meaning that a telephone should be within a reasonable distance for everyone. Thus, an interim strategy for dealing with the digital divide is universal access – to have computers and network coverage *shared* in public places and accessible to all.

## TYOLOGY

Although *telecenter* is frequently used as a generic label for different kinds of public-access communication centers, three principal types – with variations within each – have emerged. These are:

- *Multipurpose community telecenters.* These telecenters tend to be in the public sector, operated by governmental bodies or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Generally, they serve a low-income clientele and have a community development mission. Typically, these telecenters offer a broad range of communication services related to the needs of the community, some of which are free or subsidized by external bodies such as governments or NGOs. Examples include the Community Learning Centers in Ghana and Hungary's *telecottages*. Along with computer and Internet access, services might include desktop publishing, community newspapers, sales or rental of audio and video recordings, and library, training, photocopying, faxing, and telephone services.
- *Cybercafés.* The commercially oriented *cybercafés* that are found in places ranging from Aruba to Vietnam have been an equally energetic movement. They are usually in the private sector and focus more narrowly on providing customers with the use of computers and connections to the → Internet and the world wide web. Often the principal attractions at cybercafés are computer games and email. In some places – for example Senegal and Nigeria – computers and Internet connections are being added to private-sector phone shops. Cybercafé clients tend to be more urban, more educated, and economically better off than the clients of community telecenters.
- *Information access points (IAPs).* IAPs borrow from the cybercafé and telecenter approaches. As they focus on Internet and network services, they emphasize the opportunity for the community to seek information. The most dramatic example is Canada's Community Access Program (CAP), which established almost 10,000 access points in rural and urban areas across the country between 1994 and 2001. Computers and network connections were placed in community centers, libraries, schools, and other public places in order to make Canada "the most interconnected country in the world" (→ Canada: Media System). Canada's success energized other national IAP initiatives such as Mexico's network of Centros Comunitarios Digitales. IAPs play a substantial role in the ITU-led initiative to Connect the World, an effort to connect about one billion people in 800,000 villages – 30 percent of all villages worldwide – that are without any kind of ICT connection except possibly radio broadcasting.

## COOPERATION WITH OTHER INSTITUTIONS

### Schools and Telecenters

While many telecenters are standalone ventures, some initiatives link them with schools. World Links for Development (WorLD) supported the creation of school-based computer and network facilities that would be open to their communities after the close of the school day and on holidays. Using this model, the project established some 800 Community Learning Centers (CLC) across the developing world. In Bindura, Zimbabwe, the dual-use



school and community character of the center was important because the small fees paid by the community for telecenter services helped support the recurrent costs of hardware maintenance, power, supplies, and connectivity of the school's digital system.

### **Radio Broadcasting and Community Multimedia Centers**

Community radio has begun to emerge as a newly discovered medium in parts of the world that have historically had centralized, government-run radio systems. UNESCO, the major supporter of community radio, considers it as a medium "that gives voice to the voiceless . . . a mouthpiece of the marginalized." Building on this approach, in 2001 UNESCO launched a program for the development of Community Multimedia Centers (CMCs), with Kothmale Community Radio in Sri Lanka as the prototype. "Radio browsing" is a feature of this system. Radio browsing encourages people to contact the station to ask for information. The staff research on the Internet and then answer the questions in radio broadcasts. A major UNESCO effort has been to create 50 CMCs in *each* of three African countries – Mali, Mozambique, and Senegal – by the end of 2008.

### **University-Supported Telecenters**

Largely absent from the telecenter movement across the world have been higher education institutions. Although universities in developing nations have started to incorporate information technologies in their teaching, research, and administrative operations, they have paid relatively little attention to using information technologies to support such activities as those associated with rural development. Initiatives supported by such organizations as Canada's International Development Research Centre, the International Food Policy Research Institute, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the World Bank, and Cornell University and the University of Washington in the United States have started to test the idea that universities can be important supporters of telecenters by providing research-based localized content, helping communities assess their communication and information needs, and involving students as interns and volunteers in a telecenter's day-to-day operations. In these situations, universities have incubated community-based telecenters, nurturing them in their earliest development prior to the telecenters becoming independent community institutions. In this model, pioneered in Tamil Nadu, India and in the northern mountainous area of Vietnam, universities continue to assist telecenters after incubation by adapting scientifically authentic content to local conditions for retailing by telecenters, jointly conducting research on such matters as community information needs, and by involving students as volunteers and interns in the day-to-day operations of telecenters. Similar university-supported telecenters have been designed for eastern Africa, especially to support agricultural development and the welfare of small farmers.

### **CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS**

Despite the enthusiasm and the support given to the shared access concept by international and national agencies, significant challenges impede more widespread

scaling up of development-oriented telecenters. Foremost among these is the lingering question concerning the relative benefit of putting money into information technologies versus the demands for other kinds of development resources, such as roads, water supplies, and health clinics. This stems, in part, from the perceived lack of convincing data about the impact of the Internet – a skepticism captured in a 2006 book by World Bank expert Charles Kenny. He points out that “As of December 2005 . . . there had not been survey-based, academically rigorous study of economic impact on an Internet access program in any developing country.” While there is no evidence of a cause–effect relationship, the question of relative return on investment may help explain the minor attention given to information technologies in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, the policy papers drawn up by developing nations as planning documents for encouraging broad-based growth and easing poverty.

Because access to the Internet is one of the principal attractions of telecenters, the quality of service provided by the Internet influences the potential benefits of a telecenter. Broadband connectivity, which reduces downloading speed as well as the delivery of more complex (often graphically enhanced) web pages, is problematic for many telecenters, particularly those in Africa, because of availability and cost. Wireless connectivity has become one of the solutions, especially for providing network services to remote and hard-to-reach locations, although cost–benefit considerations continue to be an issue. Also, the characteristics of Internet content relate to consumer demand for telecenter services: the relevance of content to local needs, the language of databases and websites, and the style of presentation are among the factors that telecenters need to address to become a community-oriented, demand-driven local institution.

Another challenge that telecenters face is their sustainability. Telecenters obtain operating funds from service fees (for example, for sending email or providing computer training), from public subsidies, and from contributions (including volunteer help). Most begin with donor funds and then struggle to survive when donor funds decline or end. An evaluation of UNESCO’s telecenter program indicated that long-term benefits related to health and economic opportunities are being realized. However, the evaluation notes that the telecenters cannot survive solely on charges paid by individuals. This dilemma could mean that efforts to achieve financial sustainability will drive telecenter managers to target services at community members who *can pay* – to the detriment of those who are poor.

Although attachments to existing entities such as schools and local government bodies are a way toward becoming solvent and institutionalized, telecenters as micro-enterprises may be the most feasible arrangement for widespread diffusion of the telecenter concept. The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 to the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and to its founder Dr Muhammad Yunus demonstrated that private enterprise such as the women’s Grameen phone businesses could be profitable while helping combat poverty. Some independent telecenters have been innovative in developing income-producing services to support their operations. Among the *telecottages* in Hungary, there are more than 50 different kinds of income-producing services offered to the community. A major source are the contracts that they obtain from government agencies, thus becoming (for a fee) extensions for government services.

A continual challenge for telecenters is making them and their resources available to women. Location in the community, an inhospitable and intimidating telecenter

atmosphere, and lack of training conspire against women's participation in telecenters in many developing countries. Some organizations have taken steps to address the situation. The International Telecommunications Union launched a program to establish a network of at least 100 multipurpose community telecenters in 20 African countries. The telecenters are to be managed by women to enable them to participate actively in the building of information societies and to expand their role in communities through the use of ICTs. In India, as part of a strategy to attract women to participate in telecenter activities in Pondicherry, the Swaminathan Foundation requires that at least one woman be engaged in the management of each center that it supports (→ Development, Gender, and Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Video ▶ Development Communication ▶ Development, Gender, and Communication ▶ Digital Divide ▶ E-Commerce ▶ E-Government ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Economics of ▶ Internet ▶ Participatory Communication ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Radio ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ UNESCO ▶ Video

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## **Telecommunications: Law and Policy**

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The field of telecommunications law, policy, and regulation is a subset of the larger fields of governance and regulation generally, and the regulation of media and communications in society in particular. Telecommunications law and policy generally concern the ownership and control of and access to large-scale electronic networks that connect people and businesses. These networks may be fixed (primarily involving the use of fiber and wires)

or mobile (primarily involving the use of radio frequency spectrum), but that terminology is increasingly becoming antiquated as new technologies create products and services that are more difficult to define.

Telecommunications law and policy generally involve the application of state power through public regulation to secure three objectives: (1) the promotion of competition in the provision of telecommunications services to end users; (2) ensuring that those services are widely available to all sectors of the public, including the poor and those living in rural areas; and (3) aiding citizens and consumers through the often complex choices associated with telecommunications networks in the face of technological change (→ Media Policy).

### RELATIONSHIP OF THE STATE TO TELECOMMUNICATION

The story of telecommunications regulation is, first and foremost, the story of a relatively recent triumph of a set of governance values that (1) reject state ownership and monopolies, and (2) promote competition and consumer choice. These values have been adopted by most national and regional policy organizations, the end-user community, and the telecommunications providers themselves. Further, organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have placed reform and better regulation of the telecommunications sector near the heart of their missions. These values are so ingrained in this industry sector that it is now difficult to imagine a nation deciding to nationalize its telecommunications sector or otherwise limit competition in some manner.

In terms of policy orientation, the telecommunications industry is typically subject to regulatory control instead of direct political control. The complexities associated with telecommunications regulation often require sustained expertise that is commonly found in public regulation. In modern societies there is also a tendency to view direct political control over media and communications systems with suspicion. Accordingly, in this sector, policies may be originated at the political level, such as the enactment of legislation to govern the sector, but they are often implemented and enforced by public regulators or civil servants who act within a communications-themed ministry or government department.

The European Union, for example, enacts policies to ensure that national regulatory authorities within the telecommunications sector stand independent from their national governments (as well as stand independent from the business sector). For example, the EU Framework Directive requires, *inter alia*, that EU member states insure the independence, impartiality, and transparency of their national regulatory authorities in the communications sector (→ European Union: Communication Law; Communication Law and Policy: Europe).

Because many observers conclude that formerly separate technologies are converging, so that different media and communications service providers will offer similar services over digital networks, there has been an increased interest in what is known as *converged regulation* (→ Convergence of Media Systems; Digitization and Media Convergence). The notion of converged regulation, while perhaps based on an unproven causal connection between regulatory structure and successful economic or social outcomes for the public,

at least satisfies common sense with the notion that one regulator will be better equipped to deal with converged product offerings than multiple regulators. In practice, this has meant the merger of what were formerly separate media and telecommunications regulators. A notable recent example of this trend is in the UK, which created Ofcom (Office of Communications) from five different legacy regulators in 2003.

It was common throughout the world prior to the 1980s for most telecommunications providers to be *state-owned*, or in certain cases, private firms with monopoly power. In those countries with state ownership, the concept of modernized telecommunications regulation was unheard of: the state informally regulated the conduct of the enterprise directly through its ownership and control. Nevertheless, the situation remained far from ideal because the state-owned telecommunications firms were remarkably inefficient and consumer choice was lacking. State ownership of telecommunications firms is definitely now in disfavor as a policy option. However, the phenomenon continues to exist in isolated circumstances; for example, as of October 2006 Australia continued to own a 51 percent stake in that country's largest telecoms provider, Telstra, and was finalizing its plans for privatization.

### **PRIVATIZATION AND SECURING COMPETITION**

By way of example of how a private firm's monopoly power in telecommunications was addressed through public regulation and policy, one only needs to consider the example of the United States. In 1984, using competition law as the instrument, the US government settled a lawsuit against AT&T and partially broke up AT&T's then-existing monopoly on telecommunications services and equipment. Subsequent regulatory and legal decisions at both the state and federal levels further limited the reach of AT&T's market power and the market power of the so-called regional Bell operating companies that succeeded to AT&T's local networks after the 1984 break-up. Finally, the Telecommunications Act of 1996, as well as legislation intended to promote the → cable television and wireless industries, resulted in the current situation where the goal of US telecommunications regulation is to seek intermodal competition – competition between differing platform owners. Intramodal competition efforts, such as the efforts to promote local loop unbundling and similar network access regimes, have generally failed in the US, at least on a national level (→ Communication Law and Policy: North America; United States of America: Media System).

It may be useful for the reader to imagine a large-scale telecommunications network, constructed and maintained for years by a publicly owned or private monopoly. Attempting to change that situation by fostering a climate where multiple private networks exist and interconnect with each other while still sharing certain key facilities and resources is complicated. The picture becomes even more complicated when one adds in other goals, such as permitting end-users to move from network to network without undue delay or cost. This process has generally been called *telecommunications liberalization*. Finally, at the same time as liberalization measures are taking effect, the telecommunications law and policy often requires or encourages the network to be upgraded for better safety and data transmission purposes. Accordingly, telecommunications regulation abounds in policy complexity.

The United Kingdom is generally credited as the first significant country to privatize the ownership of its state-owned telecommunications firm. In 1984 the UK privatized British Telecommunications by selling a 51 percent stake, and also established an independent telecoms regulator known as the Office of Telecommunications, or OFTEL, a regulator that continued in existence until 2003, when it was replaced by the new UK regulator, Ofcom.

Europe has also been a leader in the development of telecommunications competition and modernization of policy in the sector, albeit in the wider economic and social project of greater European integration. Europe's early efforts to regulate the telecommunications sector and put it on the path to competition and private ownership started before the EU even existed as an entity. Early European measures prohibited member states from preventing competition in the telecommunications sector – both in terms of service and equipment manufacture. Later EU directives – effective from July 2003 – enacted a comprehensive regulatory framework that covers everything from universal service to radio spectrum regulation.

## **REGULATION AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL**

At a global level, the pre-eminent institution of telecommunications regulation is the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The ITU, which has most of the world's states as members, serves mostly in a coordinating role in two key areas: (1) radio-frequency spectrum, and (2) standardization of telecommunications networks. It is perhaps in the area of radio-frequency spectrum where the ITU has had the most influence, hosting world radio conferences and adopting the ITU radio regulations to which ITU member states adhere. Certain inherently transnational applications that involve radio spectrum usage, such as satellite and maritime communications, have greatly benefited from ITU coordination. The ITU has not played a significant direct role in the process of telecommunications liberalization.

One important milestone in the advent of telecommunications regulation at the global level was that in February 1997, 69 members of the WTO agreed to open their basic telecommunications networks to competition as of January 1998. The number of parties to that landmark agreement has since grown, as has the number of countries that have adhered to the associated WTO Reference Paper that sets forth telecommunications regulatory principles, such as interconnection, universal service, regulatory independence, and fair allocation of scarce resources like radio-frequency spectrum.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS OF REGULATION**

With a few exceptions, the advent of modernized telecommunications regulation is very recent. The question remains, therefore: has public regulation in the sector of telecommunications been successful? One common critique of telecommunications regulation is that – because it ultimately aims at producing the benefits of a competitive marketplace – telecommunications regulation ought to be replaced by the robust application of general competition law. Competition law alone, however, would probably not produce the outcomes associated with the regulation of telecommunications networks. Nor would

competition law have an ongoing institutional mechanism to perform many of the common tasks found in telecommunications regulation, such as the coordination of the usage of radio-frequency spectrum, or the creation of technical standards that enable products and services to be made widely available.

Further, available evidence indicates that a telecommunications regulation approach that is based on the underlying goal of promoting competition where possible furthers the → public interest. The introduction of competition has lowered prices and increased choices for end-users of networks, without sacrificing quality of service or universality. Nonetheless, public regulators certainly make errors, and the history of telecommunications regulation has seen numerous policy interventions that have proved unsuccessful, such as the US attempt to promote competition by requiring telecommunications carriers to open portions of their networks to competitors. Similarly, inter-carrier compensation policies, special taxes, and fees adopted or required by telecommunications regulators all over the world often lead to retail service fees or situations that confuse or victimize consumers. On balance, however, the world's 20-year experiment with privatization and competition in the telecommunications sector has largely been a successful one.

Simply adopting laws and policies that legally permit new entrants to compete in the telecommunications marketplace may be an insufficient policy step if one desires robust competition to develop. This is because large-scale networks are costly to construct (most being developed initially as monopolies or state-owned firms) and – if true end-to-end communications with all members of society are important – there needs to be a method to interconnect networks. Not only is interconnection important, it is also a means to permit end-users to migrate as customers from one network to another, taking both their end-user equipment (e.g. their telephone) with them, and also the means by which the network addresses them (e.g. a telephone number). In other words, in a competitive system the transaction costs for someone to switch to a competing provider should be kept as low as possible. If an end-user must purchase new equipment and change their telephone number, it will impede competition.

Thus, standardization of telecommunications equipment design and network interfaces becomes important. Accordingly, telecommunications regulations often specify what technical standards should apply to devices that interact with the network. This enables a telephone user to move to a different part of the same jurisdiction and still be able to plug their telephone into the same type of wall jack. Telephone number portability functions in a similar manner: it generally enables users to retain their telephone when switching providers, and sometimes even when switching geographic locations.

## **ACCESS TO TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

In recent years, telecommunications law and policy have taken on increasing importance in the overall governance community, because telecommunications networks serve as the means by which people *access the* → *Internet*. Increasing the number of high-speed, so-called broadband, connections between end-users and the Internet (enabling the use of video applications and other bandwidth-intensive uses) has therefore become an important policy issue (→ *Internet, Technology of*). Policymakers are also grappling with the terms and conditions of the relationships between network owners, such as cable

or telephone companies, and Internet application providers, such as Google or Yahoo! (→ Search Engines). The issue, often called network neutrality, is whether network owners should be prohibited from discriminating among the various applications that run over their networks.

The *management of radio-frequency spectrum* by society is a function usually delegated to telecommunications regulators by policymakers. Working in conjunction with frequency allocation plans agreed on an international and often regional level, telecommunications regulators make decisions about (1) the service and technical rules associated with particular frequency bands, and (2) the terms and conditions under which that spectrum is licensed to individual users. Because radio-frequency spectrum is often made available on an exclusive-use basis to end-users, there is often competing demand for the limited number of licenses that governments make available. One method of resolving that demand is to auction the radio spectrum license to the highest bidder. Radio spectrum auctions have proved to be an attractive license assignment mechanism for two reasons. First, the auctions have sometimes turned into significant revenue raisers for the government involved, raising the internal political profile of the telecommunications regulator. Second, and perhaps more important, auctions have demonstrated themselves to be efficient assignment mechanisms because they tend to result in the spectrum license being awarded to the person who values it most highly.

Telecommunications regulators have, however, also realized the public value associated with the unlicensed use of radio spectrum in the so-called spectrum commons. The US innovated the unlicensed use of spectrum through its Part 15 radio regulations. For years, low-power devices – often with consumer implications such as cordless telephones and remote controls – took advantage of regulations by the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC) permitting unlicensed uses in certain frequency bands. The advent of WiFi technologies in the 1990s changed the debate, however. The remarkable success of WiFi – an unlicensed wireless technology – caused proponents of the spectrum commons to lobby for the increased usage of unlicensed spectrum.

One important concern in the regulation of telecommunications is how to ensure that poorer and harder-to-connect members of society have access to telecommunications networks. The series of policies that is designed to address this potential problem is often called *universal service*. Universal service regulations often involve two elements. First, these policies typically declare what types of telecommunications services the policy will legally enable all people – regardless of their economic status – to secure. Second, these policies usually specify a mechanism by which society funds the universal service obligation. The funding mechanism, such as a special tax on communications services, can be explicit, and may require special obligations of the dominant network owner to connect people to its networks under special rate plans.

Universal service obligations and related government programs are designed to ameliorate the so-called → *digital divide*. The digital divide attempts to measure the significance of those numbers of people in society who do not have access to, or understanding of, the digital technologies provided by telecommunications providers, such as Internet access (particularly broadband) and mobile telephony.

Because most telecommunications products and services are ubiquitous in society, a great deal of telecommunications regulation covers consumers' dealings in the marketplace,



such as fair terms and conditions for telecommunications contracts. Consumer-focused intervention also deals with policies relating to how telecommunications networks connect people to public safety providers. For example, policies may be enacted that require or enable telecommunications providers to give certain end-users (e.g. fire and rescue teams) priority during public safety emergencies. Some policies directly target network end-users themselves, making it illegal to disrupt telecommunications networks or use them in an annoying manner, such as telemarketing restrictions, or restrictions on the use of autodialing devices.

One recent area of telecommunications law and policy that deals with consumers is the issue of *consumer privacy*. Telecommunications regulations now commonly describe what are the acceptable uses of customer-specific data by telecommunications carriers with respect to marketing practices, sharing with third parties or affiliates of the carrier, and cooperation with law enforcement organizations. Other forms of telecommunications regulation deal with the fact that networks are physically intrusive in society. Accordingly, regulation may cover, for example, terms and conditions for the emplacement of wireless antenna devices, or the sharing of conduit or utility pole space among service providers.

SEE ALSO: ► Cable Television ► Communication Law and Policy: Europe ► Communication Law and Policy: North America ► Convergence of Media Systems ► Digital Divide ► Digitization and Media Convergence ► European Union: Communication Law ► Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ► Internet ► Internet, Technology of ► Media Policy ► Public Interest ► Search Engines ► United States of America: Media System

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# Telegraph, History of

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The term “telegraph” was used from the late eighteenth century to describe line-of-sight distance communication systems, most notably Claude Chappé’s semaphore network. By 1810, this network linked 29 of France’s largest cities to Paris. Experimental telegraphs utilizing electricity passing over wire for signaling purposes were developed in the early 1800s, though it was the inventions of Cooke and Wheatstone in the UK in the late 1830s which led to their practical application, initially on railways, where, in warning of accidents and stoppages, this form of signaling had the obvious advantage of traveling much faster than any train itself. Around the same time Samuel Morse, in the US, developed his system of using a series of short and long pulses of electric current, generated by turning the current on and off with a Morse key, to represent letters of the alphabet (Morse code). This system came to dominate telegraph communication for the next 100 years.

From the 1850s telegraph networks spread throughout the world with extraordinary speed. While in continental Europe state-owned systems were developed, in the UK and the US private enterprise drove their expansion, though in the UK the domestic telegraph system was nationalized and became part of British Post Office operations following the Telegraph Act of 1868. In the US, while there were initially dozens of telegraph companies, a single company, Western Union (which completed the line between the east and west of America in 1861), came to dominate, eventually becoming America’s first major industrial monopoly.

The *demand for telegrams* initially came from governments, the military, merchants, and newspaper companies (→ Telegraphic News). It is noteworthy that Germany’s extensive network of underground cables constructed in the 1870s was prompted by the political needs of a newly unified Germany. As prices reduced and technology improved, telegrams came to be also used extensively by the general public. The pattern of growth is indicated by the fact that within the UK the number of words transmitted by telegraph increased from 4.2 million in 1874 to 15.7 million in 1899. Outside Europe and the US, the largest telegraphic network in the second half of the nineteenth century was in India, which by 1860 had 18,000 km of telegraph lines spread across the entire subcontinent.

The development of *intercontinental telegraph links* was delayed because of the difficulty of manufacturing insulated submarine cables. The first successful link across the English Channel was established in 1851, while a link across the Mediterranean between France and Algeria was completed in 1854. The first working submarine cable uniting the vast systems of North America and Europe was completed in 1866, while Australia was connected to the UK via India in 1872. South America was linked to the growing international network in 1873, while eastern and southern Africa were connected in 1880. The encircling of the globe by telegraph cable was completed in the early 1900s.

In the late 1890s Marconi demonstrated the viability of wireless telegraphy and in 1901 sent the first wireless message across the Atlantic. As well as providing a service to

shipping, wireless telegraphy's main application was in long-distance communication augmenting existing cable links. It was boosted by the development of shortwave beam systems in the 1920s.

The telegraph was a watershed in communication history and a model for future developments (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of). From its earliest days, it was recognized as an extremely powerful tool which, it was said, "annihilated time and space." It marked a decisive *separation of communication from transportation* and also allowed communication to control physical processes, such as switching, from a distance. Its introduction, and the advantage it conferred in matters of commerce on those who could access the information it afforded, initiated debate about whether telegraphy should be conducted by governments as a public service or whether it was best left to the private sector. In the upshot, most domestic telegraph systems (that of the US excepted) developed on a public service model, while most international links were established by private enterprise.

The telegraph had a major impact in many realms of activity. It became integral to *military operations*, allowing, through field telegraphs, command at a distance and rapid mobilization of troops. It was credited with preventing a Confederate takeover of Washington during the American Civil War because it enabled a rapid mobilization of Unionist troops in response to this threat. It made world markets a possibility since prices of commodities at geographically separated trade centers could be readily compared. It contributed to the rise of global business, aided imperial expansion, and changed international diplomacy. It also transformed news reporting and distribution, both nationally and internationally, and led to the development of news agencies. Carey (1989) has noted how, in freeing communication from the constraints of geography, the telegraph enlarged the spatial and temporal boundaries of human interaction. Its networks enabled the development of communities of knowledge and action across local and national borders.

As the price of telegrams dropped, the telegraph came to be widely used by the general public. In the UK growth was encouraged by a uniform rate to all parts of the country, which was set at six pence from 1885. However, before too long the telephone (patented in the US in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell) began to encroach on telegraphic use. In 1914 about 69 million inland telegrams were transmitted in the UK, but by 1970 this had declined to 7.6 million.

SEE ALSO: ► Information and Communication Technology, Development of ► News Agencies, History of ► Technology and Communication ► Telegraphic News

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# Telegraphic News

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The telegraph enabled rapid, continuous, and simultaneous diffusion of public information across space. Its application to news reporting transformed journalistic practices, institutional arrangements, and audience experiences. The advent of telegraphic news further affected political, socio-economic, and cultural processes internationally.

Introduced in the US in 1844, the telegraph helped sustain the press for nearly a century as the fastest, most alluring and useful news medium (→ Telegraph, History of). Discovering the → news – the provision of timely information on recent events – helped launch major increases in daily circulations beginning in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Readers found timely news functionally useful for operating in the rapidly changing economic, political, and social world. Fast news also provided emotional gratification, by connecting audiences to major events across time, if not space. Speeding news by telegraph increased the potential usefulness and popularity of newspapers on both accounts. At the same time, news transmission proved the most successful application of the early telegraph and would remain a major source of income and influence for the telegraph industry (→ Newspaper, History of).

This synergy gave rise to an institution mediating between the press and telegraphy: the *news wire service*. Although newspapers at the time were becoming big businesses, their news-gathering operations were organizationally compact, incapable of managing a far-flung system of active news gathering in real time. Nor was the capacity of early telegraph lines sufficient for delivering separate news reports for each newspaper. An operation that specialized in telegraphic news gathering on behalf of many newspapers could economize on telegraphic capacity and tolls, as well as on newspapers' scarce organizational resources (→ News Agencies, History of).

The emergence of wire services also followed a technological rationale. Besides the obvious utility of speeding news from point to point, telegraphy also had the novel capacity of broadcasting. Information from any node on the network could reach all other nodes simultaneously, by integrating the telegraph lines. News gathered at one point could therefore broadcast to every point connected to the network at once. The wire service thus operated as a giant funnel, gathering news from a vast field into its headquarters, processing it, and then broadcasting it to newspaper clients spread over space. The systemic features of both ends of the wire service funnel implied that telegraphic news gathering, like postal or electricity networks, would have monopolistic tendencies. In many countries a single wire service dominated, but the structure varied among geopolitical systems (→ News Agencies).

In the *United States*, once the major trunk lines connected in New York in mid-1846, the city's six leading dailies joined in a cooperative arrangement that became known as the Associated Press (AP). Before long it began selling the telegraphic news it gathered to out-of-town newspapers, and after mid-century the AP dominated a national system of telegraphic news. Once the telegraph began spreading over *Europe*, a variety of telegraphic news-gathering arrangements emerged. In France, a private commercial enterprise

established in 1835, the Havas Agency, added telegraphic news distribution to its translation and advertising services, cooperating closely with government in its wire news operation. The Wolff Bureau in Germany was also a private business, and cross-ownership of telegraph and cable enterprises buttressed its position. Its cooperation with German political and commercial interests was also significant but remained covert. Guiliamo Stefani's agency in Italy was fundamentally a commercial venture, but Paul Usoff in Russia led a telegraphic news-gathering system founded on cooperative elements. In the United Kingdom, the public telegraph companies at first provided news to the provincial press. By the late 1850s Reuters foreign news service augmented the telegraph company reports, and from 1868 it cooperated in the domestic field with the British Press Association.

News gathering by telegraph had far-reaching *implications for the development of the press* and influenced major social processes. Providing a coherent first report, wire news set the agenda for the press (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). The reports, combining news from all over the country and shaped for a national audience, served the cause of national integration. By collating and spreading uniform economic information, wire service news leveled market prices and advanced the integration of national economies. As the most popular kind of news copy, wire reports also influenced journalistic practices and standards, from setting the inverted-pyramid structure for telling news stories to using objective language in reporting (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Read across regions, the wire report spread national languages, discourses, and cultures.

*International news gathering* by telegraph expanded with the laying of trans-oceanic cables in the second half of the nineteenth century, increasing the scope of telegraphic news (→ International News Reporting). Although rapid sharing of economic news across political boundaries rationalized markets, it did not necessarily harmonize international relations. International conflict and war proliferated in the age of the telegraph, illustrating that news briefs from foreign sources could increase friction and hasten belligerence.

Improvements in telegraph user equipment in the 1870s generated a variety of telegraphic indicators and “tickers” for delivering commercial quotations and news headlines direct to subscribers, circumventing the press. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, telephone reporting supplemented telegraphic news gathering, and teleprinters facilitated its distribution. After the turn of the century, news transmissions used radiotelegraphy extensively, with news photographs transmitted alongside text. Radio and television, like newspapers before them, made use of wire reports in their newscasts (→ Radio; Television). By the latter twentieth century, digital transmission replaced telegraphy as the conveyer of fast news in text, voice, and video to media outlets (→ Technology and Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ International News Reporting ▶ News ▶ News Agencies ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Radio ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television

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## Telephone Talk

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Telephone talk has been a central communication practice and site of study since Shannon and Weaver developed their fundamental model of communication at Bell Telephone Laboratories in the 1940s to explain how technological and human channels of communication transmit information (→ Information and Communication Technology, Development of) . As telephone service spread and ushered in the information age in the latter half of the twentieth century, it acquired the status of an important social indicator. Yet little was known of the social use of the telephone until the 1970s (Pool 1977), when sociologist Harvey Sacks recorded and studied telephone conversations for the access they provided to structures of social action (Atkinson & Heritage 1984). With his colleagues Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson, Sacks developed a method of transcribing and analyzing social interaction within and beyond the context of telephone talk (→ Conversation Analysis). In the 1980s and 1990s, Robert Hopper adapted conversation analysis to studies of telephone talk across relational and cultural contexts. These scholars established libraries of recordings that provide a valuable resource to researchers of language and social interaction worldwide. The practice and study of telephone talk have since grown, so that it is now considered vital to the construction of identities, relationships, cultural practices, and institutional procedures – as well as to information exchange.

### **CANONICAL OPENINGS AND SITUATIONAL VARIATIONS**

Openings of telephone calls have garnered the most attention from researchers because of their uniformity, complexity, and the trajectory they set for ensuing talk. In openings, callers and answerers are seen to establish their identities and relationships, and initiate the agendas that are integral to the achievement of their telephone talk (→ Identities and Discourse). Routine features of telephone openings constitute a “canon” for researchers, who draw inferences from circumstantial, technological, relational, institutional, and cultural (i.e. situational) variations on them. The canonical opening is a pattern of ordered

tasks achieved through four sequences: a *summons–answer sequence* (the ring of the phone and answers to it), an *identification–recognition sequence* (identifying and recognizing parties to the talk, implicitly or explicitly), a *greeting sequence* (forms of “hello,” sometimes combined with inquiries), and a *sequence of initial inquiries*, sometimes called the “*howareyou*” sequence (Schegloff 1986).

Although initially identified in studies of telephone talk in English, the canonical opening and variations on it appear in telephone conversations in Finnish and Swedish (Baker et al. 2005); Arabic, Chinese, French, and Spanish (Hopper 1992); and Danish, German, Greek, Japanese, Korean, and Persian (Luke & Pavlidou 2002). The canonical telephone opening serves as a living prototype against which varieties of text and talk in interaction are compared and explained. Its application to various kinds of telephone talk has shown that telephone calls share a “functional similarity,” in spite of structural and situational variations (ten Have 2002). All calls unfold in two phases of action: one primarily relational and phatic (→ Small Talk and Gossip), and a second that is more topical, task-, and goal-oriented. In the first phase, telecommunicators establish contact and relationships through summons–answer, identification–recognition, greeting, and some inquiry sequences. In the second phase, usually marked by an inquiries sequence, telecommunicators work toward a first topic and/or reason-for-calling.

### ESTABLISHING CONTACT AND RELATIONSHIPS

While telephone companies once prescribed ways of answering telephone calls, telecommunicators have developed their own ways of establishing contact that are tailored to their particular relationships and situations. Research on telephone talk shows that call type, relationship type, and participant actions are closely aligned. How people answer phones varies well beyond versions of “hello,” indicating not only that a channel of communication is open, but that contact has been established between parties who are ready (or not) to take action. Answers to telephone summonses range from directives (e.g., “speak, please” and “go ahead” in Greek) to simple acknowledgments of recipient readiness (Italian *pronto*), to polite invitations or commands to talk (e.g., Czech *prosim*, Spanish *mande*; Sifianou 2002).

Researchers *classify telephone calls* according to the relationship established by telecommunicators through their talk (intimates, acquaintances, or strangers) and characterize the talk as ordinary/interpersonal or institutional according to displayed orientations to reasons-for-calling. Calls among acquaintances typically open in canonical order, while calls between strangers or intimates have reduced and specialized openings. In calls between lay persons and institutional representatives, personalized elements of openings (such as greetings and inquiries) are usually suppressed or replaced with specialized identifications and/or inquiries (e.g., “police desk”; “what is your emergency?”). Yet sales, service, and broadcast callers regularly employ synthetic personalization in their openings to foster interpersonal relations and gain specialized access to the time and interest of called parties.

*Telecommunicator relations* are shaped by their means of contacting one another. Technological variations on telephone openings – hyperpersonalized identifications and summonses in mobile phone calls, standardized answers and elaborate accounts in voice

messages, and depersonalized, disjointed exchanges via voice recognition systems – have relational and power implications because they “afford” variable access to participants in telephone talk (Hutchby 2001). Caller hegemony has changed. Technologically modified telecommunication affords some participants more agency (by enabling them to avoid calls or contact unavailable parties) and others less (by constraining the timing and taking of turns at talk). Expectations of increased availability and reduced privacy fueled by greater telephone access further shape relations between callers and answerers. As the telephone hosts media that broaden access to others – Teletype (TTY) conversation, Internet relay chat (IRC) (→ Internet, Technology of), short and instant messaging services (SMS and IM), and media sharing (photos and videos sent via mobile phones) – telecommunicators acquire the means to achieve perpetual contact, micro-coordinate their activities, and form “fused” relationships (Katz & Aakhus 2002).

### WORKING TOWARD A FIRST TOPIC OR REASON-FOR-CALLING

All telephone talk is driven by reasons-for-calling and requires an investment of temporal, financial, and relational capital. How telecommunicators transition from phatic opening sequences and work toward reasons-for-calling often rests on the design and position of inquiries in the talk. An initial inquiry such as “how are you?” or a request for help can mark a pivotal moment in a call, to which the rest of the conversation is anchored. It is at this moment that telecommunicators move beyond establishing contact and/or relationships (and in some cases, the language or dialect of choice) to get to the matters that occasioned the call. Telephone talk is a means of taking care of business as well as relationships, two avenues of activity that are not mutually exclusive, as evidenced in participants’ efforts to manage both in calls whose primary purpose is supposed to be one or the other (Tracy 1997). Nowhere is this more evident than in calls to help lines (→ Support Talk), and other telephone services that involve the management of human relations and emotions (→ Emotion and Discourse).

*Telecommunicator motivations*, as well as relations, are enacted and managed through inquiry sequences. For example, preliminaries and prefaces to questions asked by news interviewers and talk-show callers of public figures instantiate complex asymmetrical relations between them and may display multiple, even contradictory, motivations (→ Broadcast Talk). Prefatory → discourse markers such as *kedo* (Japanese) or *nuntey* (Korean) used in initial inquiries can make some calls sound “businesslike” long before reasons-for-calling are addressed (Park 2000). Yet the absence of prefatory utterances can mark calls as routine or topic-less, as when calling to “say hi” or “keep in touch.” Some telecommunicators use initial inquiries such as “how are you?” to address relational and institutional concerns simultaneously, as in calls concerning healthcare issues. Ambiguous inquiries such as “how [or what] are you doing?” are used to manage calls-on-hold, calls-in-a-series, and calls dealing with delicate matters. Inquiries like these placed at calls’ openings may communicate considerable or urgent concern. How inquiries are used and what they accomplish ultimately depends on their situated use. Inquiries into location and ongoing activities, for example, may be taken as breaches of etiquette or privacy in landline calls, yet are standard in emergency service calls and common in mobile phone calls.



## BEYOND TELEPHONE TALK

The most widely used communication medium that now links others (radio, television, Internet), the telephone is more situated in the lives, loves, and jobs of communicators than ever before, providing researchers with unprecedented access to communication practices in action. Research on telephone talk has spread with mobile telephone use, from its origins in the US, the UK, and the Netherlands to Finland, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan. Yet as telecommunication grows more universal, remote, and standardized, spontaneous telephone talk carries a higher premium for all who participate in it and study it. Telephone talk is now much more than an efficient means of information transmission; it is, as early researchers proposed, a fundamental site of sociality. As a site of study, it offers insights into communication phenomena such as intimacy-at-a-distance, mediated relationships, interpersonal and institutional crisis management, electronic privacy, social networking, emotional labor, the commodification of interpersonal relations, and citizen participation in public spheres.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Broadcast Talk ▶ Business Discourse ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Directives ▶ Discourse Markers ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet, Technology of ▶ Intimate Talk with Family and Friends ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Small Talk and Gossip ▶ Support Talk ▶ Technologically Mediated Discourse ▶ Transcribing and Transcription

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## TeleSur

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TeleSur was a → television initiative launched in July 2005 and spearheaded by the government of Venezuela, in cooperation with three other Latin American states – Argentina, Cuba, and Uruguay (→ Argentina: Media System; Cuba: Media System; International Television). The channel was presented by its promoters as “the new television of the south,” with a geopolitical emphasis on the global south reflected in the way they write its very name: *teleSUR*. While there were some undeniably innovative aspects to this project, its central objectives corresponded to old and traditionally unfulfilled political aspirations for Latin American regional integration on the one hand, and for providing alternatives to the hegemonic ideologies of cultural imperialism on the other (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories). This orientation was clearly reflected in one of the channel’s slogans, often seen on the screen in promotional spots between programs: “Seeing each other we get to know each other, knowing each other we get to respect each other, respecting each other we learn to love each other, and loving each other is the first step toward integration.”

As an actual organization, then, TeleSur had a quite short history at the time of writing. However, the specific motivations behind its formation, beyond the rather general political ideals outlined above, may well be traced to the events of April 2002 in Venezuela, when, after massive yet peaceful demonstrations against the government had resulted in a number of deaths, President Hugo Chávez was briefly removed from power. While the main responsibility for his ousting was commonly attributed to opposing sectors within the military, the mainstream commercial media played an important role, first (and clearly),

in galvanizing the growing discontent against Chávez, and second (but not so clearly), in helping to form and publicize the hastily arranged, ill-conceived, and short-lived interim government. A proper discussion of these crucial events in Venezuela's recent history is well beyond the scope of this entry, but there is little doubt that when the President was reinstated after a two-day absence, one of his top priorities was to find ways to check the power of the commercial media system and generate alternatives to them. The passage of the Law for Social Responsibility in Radio and Television in late 2004 (→ Communication Law and Policy: South America), and the strong support lent to the TeleSur project leading to its implementation in 2005, can both be seen as practical consequences resulting from the heightened importance granted by the Venezuelan government to media issues.

In 2007, two other countries joined the TeleSur partnership: Bolivia and Nicaragua (→ Bolivia: Media System). Bolivia held only 5 percent of the shares, contrasting with the 46 percent held by Venezuela. Argentina (20 percent), Cuba (19 percent), and Uruguay (10 percent) completed the list of shareholders, although this last country's official participation underwent a lengthy approval process and still awaited congressional confirmation at the time of writing. Nicaragua's involvement was limited to the provision of a certain amount of content and the transmission of TeleSur's signal both over the air and via cable. Expanding the reach of its signal, in fact, was one of the crucial challenges faced by this regional channel; even in Venezuela, it was initially only available via pay-TV until free-to-air transmissions began in February 2007, and even so the broadcast signal barely reached 30 percent of the country's population at that point in time. During these early stages, TeleSur's signal was also available, though at times partially and for limited periods, through a wide variety of distribution channels. These ranged from modest community stations in Brazil (→ Brazil: Media System) to the satellite service DirecTV in Venezuela. The common denominator in all cases was a relatively low number of even potential viewers. Besides the effort to place its signal on open TV in Latin American countries, which included a Portuguese version of its transmissions for Brazil, another TeleSur strategy for increasing its reach consisted of plans for making the channel available throughout Europe. To that end, it opened offices with news correspondents in Madrid and London in May 2007 (→ Foreign Correspondents).

The difficulty in reaching very large audiences was not only a function of the lack of adequate distribution channels, but had much to do with the attractiveness of the contents offered. While → news and → information naturally constituted the cornerstone of its programming, TeleSur's broadest objective was to become a window into Latin America and its peoples, not just from the outside, but mainly so that they could recognize each other and the richness and diversity of their cultures. Thus, it encouraged its viewers to be producers of content as well, and to submit their reports, documentaries, and fictional works for broadcast (→ Citizens' Media; Citizen Journalism; Access to the Media; Public Access Television). Perhaps the biggest challenge for TeleSur, then, would be how to attract large audiences and thus become a successful alternative to the commercial media outlets it criticized, without reproducing the habitual practices of such mass-oriented media.

SEE ALSO: ► Access to the Media ► Arab Satellite TV News ► Argentina: Media System  
► BBC World Service ► Bolivia: Media System ► Brazil: Media System ► China Central

Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ Citizens' Media ▶ Communication Law and Policy: South America ▶ Cuba: Media System ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ Foreign Correspondents ▶ Information ▶ International Television ▶ Kurdish International Broadcasting ▶ News ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ Television ▶ Vatican Radio ▶ Voice of America

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## **Televised Debates**

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Televised debates have become a key feature of election campaigns in many countries around the world. Unlike regular campaign media coverage, they provide voters with the chance to directly listen to the candidates and learn about their stands on the issues and their personalities without the filter of the media's news selection. Unlike campaign ads, they provide much more information and give the opposing candidate the chance to counterargue. Therefore, televised debates are often regarded as an especially valuable form of campaign communication (→ Election Campaign Communication). In many countries, televised debates reach a larger audience, generate more media coverage, and stimulate more discussion among citizens than any other single campaign event. In addition, numerous studies in several countries show that televised debates have a variety of effects. Due to their assumed importance, a large body of research has been accumulated investigating various aspects of the debates, especially in the US. However, due to differences in political systems, electoral procedures, the role of the candidates, political cultures, and the debates themselves, these findings should not be uncritically transferred to other countries (→ Political Communication Culture).

### **HISTORY AND FORMATS**

The first televised election debate took place in 1956 in the US when Adlai Stevenson and Estes Kefauver ran for the nomination as presidential candidate for the Democratic party. In 1960, the four debates between John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon were the first US presidential debates broadcast in television. However, it was not until 1976 that

presidential televised debates were held again. Before that, the incumbents refused to take part in televised debates. Besides the US, televised debates have also been common in many other countries for a longer time. For example, the first televised debate in Sweden took place in the late 1950s, in Canada in 1962, and in Germany in 1969. In contrast to that, even some established democracies, like the UK, have never had televised debates in general elections (Coleman 2000).

Since the 1970s, the spreading of televised debates has become part of the modernization and personalization of election campaigns throughout the world (→ Personalization of Campaigning). At the end of the 1970s, televised debates were common in only 10 countries. By the end of the 1990s, they were a regular part of general elections in at least 35 nations (Plasser & Plasser 2002). It is very likely that their number has increased since then, because there are various countries in which televised debates have been held for the first time in the past few years (e.g., Taiwan, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan).

Televised debates are not restricted to general presidential or parliamentary elections on a national level. They are also a part of campaigns at the state/regional or local level (e.g., in the US, Germany, and the UK). In addition, there are debates not only between candidates of different parties but also between candidates of the same party trying to win a party's nomination for an office (e.g., in the US *primaries*). Moreover, televised debates are not restricted to presidential democracies (e.g., France) or two-party systems (e.g., the US). They are also a part of campaigns in parliamentary democracies with multiparty systems (e.g., Australia, Canada, India, Israel, and South Africa).

There are considerable differences between and within countries as far as the *number* of debates and their *format* is concerned. For example, debates differ in their length, the participation of journalists and voters, the number of candidates participating, and their rules (e.g., as far as the length of statements, the possibility of direct responses, etc. is concerned). In the US, candidates standing or sitting on a podium were traditionally interviewed by one or more journalists (*joint press conference*). In the 1990s, the so-called *town hall format* was introduced. Here, (undecided) voters discuss with the candidates. In many countries with multiparty systems, debates are not restricted to two candidates but representatives of several parties hold a joint debate moderated by journalists (e.g., India).

In some countries, separate debates are held for the candidates of small and larger parties (e.g., the Netherlands). And in still other nations, candidates of all parties represented in parliament debate in a series of one-on-one discussions (e.g., Austria). The format of a debate is not without consequence. First, several studies investigating debate content indicate that the format of a televised debate influences the actions of the candidates and moderators. For example, in a podium format, candidates seem to be more aggressive and attack-oriented than in town hall formats. Second, format also seems to have an impact upon what viewers learn from a debate and to what extent issues and images play a role in candidate evaluations. For example, the more informal chat format seems to result in more issue than candidate image learning, because the format generates more issue-oriented discussion.

## AUDIENCE OF TELEVISED DEBATES

In many countries, televised debates in general elections generate the largest audience of all single campaign events. Often, they have the largest audience of all TV events in an

election year. For example, 16 million people – about one quarter of the Italian population – watched the debate in the Italian 2006 general election. In the US, about 63 million citizens watched the first debate in 2004 (about 21 percent of the population). However, at least in the US, the audience of the debates has decreased since the first debates in 1960 and 1976. Generally, if a series of debates is held, the first one usually attracts the largest audience. In addition, the size of the audience is influenced by voters' perceptions of how close the race is, by the number of undecided voters, and by the number of TV stations broadcasting the event.

In several countries, more politically interested voters and those who strongly identify with the debaters' parties are more likely to watch. In addition, education, income, and age have been found to be significant predictors of debate watching: more highly educated voters, those with higher income, and older voters are more likely to tune in. In addition, as has been shown at least for the US and Germany, those watching a debate are heavier users of news media. Overall, the structure of debate audiences is quite similar to that of consumers of other campaign media. Still, in absolute numbers the candidates can reach more undecided and uninterested voters via debates than by any other means of campaign communication.

Just as the large audiences suggest, numerous studies show that voters like televised debates. They regard them as a good opportunity to learn about the candidates' personalities and their stands on the issues. In addition, undecided voters hope to get help with their voting decisions. On the other hand, studies have shown that viewers are not always satisfied with the debates. For example, viewers of the 1996 US presidential debates would have preferred longer responses and more rebuttal opportunities, fewer topics, and more questions distinguishing candidates from one another.

## EFFECTS OF TELEVISED DEBATES

### Content and Research Questions

Numerous studies have dealt with various aspects of what happens during a debate using both social science content analysis and classical rhetoric. Researchers have investigated the statements of candidates and moderators or citizens in town hall formats, looking at both verbal and visual message elements. Studies on *verbal content*, for example, have examined the use of arguments, evidence, and humor, the amount of attacks, acclaims, and defenses, language styles, and the degree of clash (analysis of one's own versus the opponent's position or attacks). Most of these studies show that debates are rather issue-oriented and contain less character discussion or attacks on opponents than other forms of campaign communication. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that there is much depth of argument in the debates. In contrast to that, studies on *visual content* have been rather rare. This is quite surprising, bearing in mind the widespread notion that the visual appearance of candidates might be able to decide a debate. Even in the US, the latest comprehensive analysis of visual message components dates back to the 1992 presidential debates.

The largest amount of debate research investigates their *effects*. Most studies focus on immediate effects on perceptions of who won the debate, knowledge about candidates'

issue stands, candidate images, and voting behavior (→ Political Cognitions). A limited number of studies deal with more latent effects on, for example, voters' civic engagement and political alienation. Most effect studies use pre-test/post-test design with (representative) surveys or focus groups. In addition, there is an increasing number of experimental studies and studies using real-time response measurements of viewers' reactions during debates (→ Real-Time Ratings [RTR]). Generally, debates seem to differ in their impact on voters due to differences in the specific campaign contexts, formats, candidates involved, their performances, etc. This means that some debates seem to have strong effects whereas others remain of marginal influence.

### **Verdicts About Who Won**

Post-debate surveys of viewers and large portions of post-debate media coverage focus on the question of who won the debate. In fact, studies have shown that only the perceived winner can benefit from a debate in terms of votes. Therefore, it is important to know how viewers arrive at their immediate post-debate verdicts. Generally, those verdicts are affected by political predispositions, expectations, and the perception of the debate itself. Unfortunately, there are only a few studies that combine measures of all of these factors to explain post-debate verdicts. These studies show that the debate itself can have an impact on the perceptions of the winner that goes beyond the influence of party identification and expectations. The likelihood of positive verdicts can be increased by candidates when they use acclaims and commonplaces in the debate. These often result in positive reactions by viewers. On the other hand, attacks and factual evidence tend to polarize supporters and opponents of the candidates (Reinemann & Maurer 2005).

### **Learning**

Numerous studies have shown that televised debates can enhance viewer's knowledge of candidates' *issue stands*. These effects are mostly the result of verbal elements of the debate. The question in the studies usually is whether participants are able to accurately assign statements or positions to a candidate. However, effects are stronger for less politically interested viewers, early debates have a stronger impact, and viewers seem to learn more about the challenger than about the incumbent. A second learning effect is *agenda setting* (→ Agenda-Setting Effects). Several studies show that those issues extensively discussed in a debate are likely to be of greater importance to debate viewers afterwards. And finally, although this has not been extensively studied, televised debates have also been shown to affect viewers' *perceptions of reality*, e.g., of the economic state of a country (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Political Knowledge).

### **Candidate Images**

Another group of studies has shown that debates influence → candidate images, i.e., how personal traits and abilities of the candidates are perceived and how candidates are evaluated. Effects on two types of traits can be differentiated: whereas perceptions of political traits like issue competences or effectiveness seem to be more strongly affected

by verbal message components, perceptions of personal traits like trustworthiness or likeability are more strongly affected by visual elements. Again, the images of less well-known candidates are more likely to be affected than those of better-known candidates (incumbents).

### Priming

Recent studies have begun to look at priming effects of televised debates (→ Priming Theory). They argue that debates can change the relative importance of various cognitive elements that are connected to attitudes about candidates and voting decisions. Priming effects are regarded as the link between “indirect” effects on candidate images and “direct” effects on voting decisions. Debates can have priming effects at *three levels*. First, debates can increase the importance of some personality traits in comparison to others (e.g., trustworthiness vs. rhetorical abilities), changing the overall evaluation of a candidate’s personal qualities. Second, they can enhance the importance of personality traits in comparison to personal issue competences, changing the overall evaluation of a candidate. Third, they can enhance the importance of candidates in comparison to party identification and issue positions, changing voting intentions (→ Issue Voting). A study of the second 2002 German debate showed priming effects at all three levels (Maurer & Reinemann 2003).

### Voting Intentions

At least in the US, presidential debates tend to reinforce the voting intentions of those already committed more than they change them. For the US, the number of partisans changing their voting intentions because of debates has been estimated to be about one to four percent (Jamieson & Adasiewicz 2000, 26). In other countries, much stronger effects have been reported for certain debates (e.g., Australia, Mexico). But even when the number of converted party identifiers remains relatively small, this does not mean that debate effects are minimal. In many western democracies, the number of party identifiers has been declining and effects on independent and undecided voters seem to be much stronger. In addition, a small percentage of converts still might decide an election in close races. On the basis of their extensive review of US debate research, McKinney & Carlin (2004) came to the conclusion that four of the eight presidential races between 1960 and 2000 that featured televised debates were *decisively* influenced by them (→ Political Persuasion).

## DEBATE COVERAGE AND ITS EFFECTS

In several countries, content analyses have shown that televised debates generate more media attention than any other single campaign event. Before the debates, the media mold the expectations of the debate. Immediately afterwards, journalists and experts give their interpretations of it, sometimes relying on instant polls (→ Polls and the Media). In addition, the contestants’ campaigners try to get through with their interpretations (→ Spin Doctor). In the following days, the media do not focus on issues but on the performance of the candidates, the question “who won?” and strategic aspects of the



debate. In addition, they generally accentuate the negative. In some countries, general political leanings of the media are also clearly visible in debate coverage. Post-debate coverage influences perceptions of a debate, even among those who watched it themselves. For example, studies in Germany using panel designs showed that up to one quarter of the viewers of the second debate in 2002 changed their minds about who won the debate in the following days as a result of media coverage. In addition, the media communicate the result of the debate to those who did not watch it themselves.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Despite a large body of research, there still is a need for more studies of televised debates. Among the various aspects that seem to deserve special attention are:

- 1 *International comparisons.* Most of our knowledge on televised debates comes from the US context. Internationally comparative studies could enhance our understanding of the impact of contextual factors like political culture, or the political and the media system. For example, effects of televised debates are likely to be stronger in emerging democracies and more complicated in multiparty systems.
- 2 *Linking debate content and effects.* In most studies, debates are regarded as one single stimulus, and what actually happens in them is largely ignored. In recent years, researchers have come to call for more micro-level investigations of how debates produce their effects and what types of arguments, statements, rhetorical means, and visual message elements resonate with the audience.
- 3 *Stability of effects.* In another promising line of research, scholars have begun to investigate whether immediate post-debate effects last until election day and how debate messages interact with messages in other channels of campaign communication. Disentangling these interactions will give us an even better understanding of the impact of televised debates.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Election Campaign Communication ▶ Issue Voting ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Personalization of Campaigning ▶ Political Cognitions ▶ Political Communication Culture ▶ Political Knowledge ▶ Political Persuasion ▶ Polls and the Media ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Real-Time Ratings (RTR) ▶ Spin Doctor

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## Television

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Since the advent of the post-World War II era, television has functioned as the quintessential mass medium. Television's status as a central cultural storyteller that offers a widely shared lens on news information, media events, and fictional narratives has allowed it to transcend academic approaches and operate as a crucial object of study for a range of communication traditions.

The medium's origins in radio inform many of its key characteristics, and although the technology of broadcasting provided for it to easily transcend national boundaries, the medium has been dominated by the particularities of nation-based decisions about its funding and regulation. Early experiments with television date to the 1920s and 1930s, but for the most part, the medium did not become widely used until the 1950s.

Television's status as an object studied by multiple fields results from its integration in central political and commercial activities. Many countries around the world began with publicly run television systems that made television an important source of national

culture and provided it with a particular mandate to serve the government or the citizenry. Most of these countries have since allowed the introduction of commercially based private networks that compete with the public system. The US established such a commercial system from the early days of radio. The commercial mandate still allows television a significant role in culture, although it results in a different relationship between television and the state. There is now significant blending of public and private structures for financing television around the globe.

### **PRIMARY APPROACHES**

The study of television has been central in many different communication intellectual traditions. Initially, researchers focused on the medium in terms of its “effects” and its use for propagandistic purposes (→ Media Effects). This scholarship was influenced by cultural concerns central in the study of many different means of communication in the postwar period and the growing consideration of cultural industries as powerful influences in society. Much of this research is particularly concerned with audiences and how television affects them.

A tradition of critical television studies emerged in the 1970s, coterminous with various developments in cultural studies, feminist studies, and critical theory, which perceives the medium in a very different manner. Initially, this research examined television shows much like any other “text.” Detailed textual analysis of television series drawing from critical theory and the analytical tools central to the study of literature and film also became common as theorists identified how television entertainment and news often reproduced the dominant ideology (→ Television News; Television as Popular Culture). Within cultural studies many scholars soon turned their attention to studying audiences, while those trained in film or literary studies tended to continue more textually focused examinations.

Studies developed from within cultural studies conceive of the audience much differently than the earlier (and ongoing) effects tradition. Cultural studies ascribes considerable agency to viewers and theorizes a complicated and more individualized meaning making process, rather than previous approaches, which tended to perceive fairly standard effects of media upon audiences. Considerable debate emerged about whether news and entertainment media reinforce hegemonic structures of power or whether viewers might make redemptive readings and derive pleasure despite the ideological content (→ Cultural Studies).

Political economy scholarship exploring the governmental and commercial links of the television industry developed various theories about the role of institutional factors such as law, policy, and capital in the functioning of public and private television industries. Such scholarship often linked the structural organization of the industry with the texts that were consequently likely to be produced. As the norms of television have changed – such as the addition of private competition in previously public systems or the introduction of nonbroadcast television competitors (cable and satellite) – political economists have attended to likely outcomes and offered policy recommendations aimed at the public good rather than the advance of controlling commercial or governmental powers.

The study of television now includes many different aspects of the technology and its role in culture, and television continues to be considered through a broad range of intellectual traditions spanning the experimental methods of social science, criticism common to humanities, and applied policy, law, and technology studies. Despite the common object of study, these approaches to television differ significantly in their fundamental conception of the medium, and while vibrant intellectual debates exist within each tradition, there is little interaction among those of differing approaches. Regardless of intellectual tradition, the following six critical functions (adapted from Mittell, in press) organize much television scholarship that considers television as an important communicative and cultural agent.

### **Television as Commercial Industry**

At least some aspect of nearly every country's television system has become commercialized. Despite this, commercial television industries rarely operate as a free market (even in the US), but are regulated by governmental bodies in various ways: the nature of its content (limits on nudity or violence); the origin of its content (quotas limiting importation); or the manner of including commercial messages and the types of claims that they can make (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). This commercial base leads television to operate as a "dual market" system as networks produce programs to sell to audiences in order that they might sell those audiences to advertisers. The mandate of commercial systems complicates the democratic goals for a mass medium such as television because of advertisers' inequitable pursuit of various audiences. Commercial goals also lead to the production of programming unlikely to disturb advertisers. Changes to global economies also have led to increasing consideration of television as a crucial part of the information and entertainment economies that are fundamental to postindustrial nations. This function is particularly central to the research of political economists and others engaged in cultural industries studies.

### **Television as an Electronic Public Sphere**

The functioning of television as an electronic public sphere is important to many intellectual traditions and lines of research. Originally, television derived this status as a source of broadly shared information and stories. Television exists as a ubiquitous media form in many places, and for much of its history it offered a limited range of options, which increased the likelihood of a national audience sharing its programs. Whether the case of a popular comedy, the nightly news, or a media event such as the Kennedy assassination or the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana, the breadth of audience reached through television has been fundamental to those concerned about media effects as well as the constitution of culture. The significance of this breadth has been theorized variably, with some arguing that the medium creates a site of negotiation in which those with different perspectives on social issues might come to see competing positions with sympathy, while others have argued that content can only reinforce existing world views. As opposed to other media, such as particular radio formats or niche-targeted magazines, television's operation as a medium that relied upon and was capable of drawing broad

and heterogeneous audiences has been central to its study as a medium. Notably, the expansion in channel options increasingly in place around the globe has decreased the likelihood of television gathering such audiences and continuing to operate in this way – at least in most cases.

### **Television as a Site of Cultural Representation**

If many have assumed television operates as an electronic public sphere, this reach made it an important source of cultural representation. Many have examined how television does, and most often does not, reproduce the “reality” of the societies that view its content. In the 1970s, many such studies considered, for example, the frequency with which women were depicted in television narratives and in what roles relative to their status in society. Other researchers have assessed how television shows depict the solving of problems and the use of violence, among many other topics. The critical television studies that drew from cultural studies and emerged in the 1980s evaluated representation very differently than the preceding tendency to assess depictions in terms of their realism. Following Stuart Hall’s constructionist view of representation, critical television scholars argue that the depictions are constitutive of the viewers’ “reality” rather than there being a “true” meaning that exists outside of representation (Hall 1997). Such analyses consequently examine what reality or beliefs about the world are likely to develop from the stories and representations available on television.

### **Television as a Textual Form**

Other studies focus less upon the ideological nature of the ideas and depictions of television content, and instead attend to television’s particular textual and visual forms. Examinations of fictional texts draw extensively from film theory in establishing particular generic attributes and narrative techniques common to television storytelling. The reliance on serial storytelling is particularly distinct to television relative to other competing artistic forms. These more formal approaches also have been applied to television news, as in examining how the format of newscasts and story conventions reproduce knowledge in specific ways. These approaches examine the formal attributes of a text – whether an entertainment series or a news program – more than the specific content of the text. The visual features and construction of television images also provide important sites of research – often drawing from film theory and studies of visual culture (→ *Television, Visual Characteristics of*).

### **Television as a Part of Everyday Life**

Television also can be considered as a communicative force broader than the programs or content it transmits. Television continues to be a primary focus of leisure time in many countries, and its transmissions are central to daily routines and structure patterns of behavior. Research traditions such as that of uses and gratifications have explored the different reasons why and the varied ways in which people use television, and have found behaviors that far exceed the rapt and attentive viewing that many other considerations of

its content tend to assume (→ Uses and Gratifications). Such studies face new challenges as technological and distribution developments increasingly enable television to surpass its domestic boundaries and function as a portable and mobile technology.

### **Television as a Technology**

Despite the varied communicative and cultural functions of the medium, television also can be considered based upon its technological features (→ Television Technology). Television's aural and visual registers allowed its early distinction from radio, and subsequent enhancements have allowed greater complexity to its images and sound. Much television use has been domestically based because of its particular technological attributes, although new developments now allow users to view live television on their office computers or on mobile phone screens, among other mobile devices. Likewise, many other technologies – such as the remote control, video cassette recorder, and digital video recorder – have enhanced viewers' ability to control the externally determined programming flows that come through the box.

Many new areas of study are emerging as a result of massive adjustments in the medium itself and consequently, how it is used and experienced. These changes often challenge existing assumptions of the medium and require revisiting previous research about the use of television, its texts, and relationship to culture. The massive expansion in channel choice and personal program control, convergence with other media (computers), new portability, and the digital transition are all redefining the medium in a manner that has significant consequences for how it is studied and the assumptions that can be made of it.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Media Effects ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television for Development ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television News ▶ Television as Popular Culture ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Television Technology ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Uses and Gratifications

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# Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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Historically, TV regulation in various countries has fallen into one of four broad categories. None of these regulatory frameworks exists in its true form in any country, but these categories provide a general framework for how different governments regulate television (→ Media Policy).

*Authoritarian* broadcast regulation is most often seen in countries where there is a strong autocratic government such as a dictatorship or communist regime. The government finances the television system and strictly controls the information and entertainment that is broadcast to the public.

*Paternalistic* broadcast regulation dictates that TV programming content is to be determined by a combination of free marketplace forces and government regulations. In this type of system, the government feels that public demand will not always lead to television programming that is good for the culture. Government recognizes that television can play a pivotal role in helping a country maintain its national heritage and traditions. As a result, government and not the marketplace must have a stronger role in TV regulation to help serve the public interest.

*Permissive* broadcast regulation allows for the marketplace to play a dominant role, with limited regulation from the government. Advertising is the dominant source of funding and thus provides citizens with what is known as “free TV.” In a permissive system, public demand and the marketplace are the primary forces determining the content of programming.

*Pluralistic* broadcast regulation is the “perfect blend” of paternalistic and permissive frameworks, where the government carefully balances the marketplace and the public interest. In the ideal pluralistic setting, television provides programs that not only satisfy the tastes of a diverse public audience but also provide a valuable public service.

## **RATIONALE FOR TV REGULATION AND REGULATORY BODIES**

The US is the world’s model for permissive broadcasting regulation and provides a general model for how other countries view the airwaves (→ United States of America: Media System). The roots of US TV regulation can be found in the American Constitution’s First Amendment: “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press” (→ Freedom of Communication). Still, the US model of regulation does not provide for a system free of all government regulation. The Radio Act of 1912 required that all radio operators and transmitters had to be licensed by the federal government. By the 1920s, the airwaves had become cluttered, with radio station signals overlapping, and nearly 1,000 unlicensed radio stations broadcasting across the nation. Such problems led to the Radio Act of 1927. Congress passed the Act to create the Federal Radio Commission (FRC) to oversee the rapidly expanding radio industry. The FRC’s mission was to assign frequencies and to make radio stations serve the public interest with their programming. Most other countries today use similar justifications for government regulation of broadcasting.

Most nations have special bureaus or government agencies that oversee TV broadcasting. For example, in the permissive US, regulatory authority is given to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The FCC also oversees telecommunications such as the telephone. However, in the paternalistic UK, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport oversees broadcasting while a separate entity, the Department of Trade and Industry, regulates telecommunications. Communist China tends to be authoritarian in its television regulation, and the central government controls all telecommunications.

The Communications Act of 1934 is the foundation for US broadcasting regulation today. The Communications Act replaced the FRC with the FCC, which was given the power to oversee “all of the channels of interstate and foreign radio transmission,” including the telephone industry. Local and state governments have no jurisdiction in broadcasting regulation. The 1934 Act states that the FCC is not allowed to “interfere with the right of free speech by the means of radio (and TV) communication.” However, the FCC, Congress, and the courts treat this part of the Act with great flexibility.

A foundation principle for the FCC was the concept of the “public airwaves,” a general idea that has been adopted in one form or another by many nations around the world. The government views the airwaves as a public, not a private, resource. In essence, the government considers the airwaves to be like a public street. Private citizens are allowed to use the street, but the street still belongs to the government. Therefore, the government has the right to pass certain laws about the use of the street.

### SERVING THE PUBLIC

In the US, the FCC makes sure stations serve the → “public interest, convenience and necessity.” Other countries have similar mandates for broadcasters. Italy, for example, requires TV stations to “represent the full range of social, cultural, religious and philosophical tendencies” (→ Plurality). The US government argues airwave regulation is necessary because of the *scarcity rationale*. This concept says the public airwaves are a “scarce” resource and need to be regulated and monitored. However, courts in recent years have argued the scarcity rationale may no longer be valid because of the proliferation of other media such as satellite, the Internet, and cable.

The UK government has a paternalistic approach and has traditionally seen TV broadcasting as a public service (→ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy). Therefore, a main mission of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) has been to provide the citizenry with news, information, and education programs (→ BBC World Service). The BBC gets its operating budget from a license fee paid by every household with a TV set. The UK also has three commercial TV networks whose programming is determined more by public taste. At the same time, these commercial networks must still provide time for some “public service” shows. In Australia, the Australian Broadcasting Authority (ABA) makes individual TV stations responsible for serving community interests. Still, the ABA has numerous restrictions. For example, broadcasters are prohibited from airing material that could “incite dissension among ethnic peoples and disrupt national unity.”

In *authoritarian systems* such as those of Saudi Arabia or the People’s Republic of China, the airwaves are considered a government entity, and programming critical of the government is prohibited. In 2005, for example, the Chinese government announced it



was prohibiting any new foreign television programs that promoted “western ideology and politics” (→ China: Media System). The government said it would also stop granting licenses to foreign satellite channels and would continue its ban on the private ownership of TV satellite dishes. Chinese TV stations may not form partnerships with foreign companies. One of the major goals of authoritarian regulation is to censor any messages or programming that may be considered “subversive” to the ruling party and its political and cultural ideologies.

Regulatory bodies in most countries are given the power to grant *licenses* to broadcasters and may reject applicants that do not meet government standards. Other regulatory responsibilities often include the allocation of frequencies, the authority to pass rules and regulations, and the power to levy fines on broadcasters that violate rules. In the US, FCC rules may be overturned by the courts or changed through laws passed by Congress. Congress also controls funding for the FCC, which allows Congress to withhold funding to the FCC if law-makers disagree with certain agency policies.

In the US, a person or party may apply for a broadcast license for a new or existing station. The Communications Act states clearly that a broadcasting license is granted “for the use of such channels, but *not the ownership* thereof, by persons for limited periods of time, under licenses granted by Federal authority.” The person/party must be an American citizen or a company with less than 25 percent foreign ownership. Authoritarian systems tend to allow no foreign ownership of broadcast licenses.

### **OWNERSHIP ISSUES: THE CASE OF THE US**

In order to prevent individuals or companies from controlling too many broadcast stations, the FCC has historically instituted ownership rules. These rules limited how many broadcast stations a person could own in a single market or nationwide. In 1940, the FCC began enforcing the duopoly rule, prohibiting one company from owning more than one broadcast station (AM, FM, TV) in any one market. However, the FCC often allowed exceptions to these rules to keep as many stations on the air as possible.

In 1943, the Supreme Court ruled that the FCC had the right to restrict the power of radio networks, limiting the number of stations directly owned by any one network. This ruling would eventually apply to TV networks as well. However, this ruling did not give the FCC the power to interfere with the local operations of network affiliates.

In 1953, the FCC established the 7-7-7 rule, stating that one party could not own more than 7 AM, 7 FM, and 7 TV stations nationwide, with stations in each medium reaching no more than 25 percent of the national audience. The limits were raised to 12-12-12 in 1985 and 20-20-12 in 1994.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 greatly liberalized broadcast ownership rules. The FCC dropped a prohibition on TV networks owning cable systems but still prohibited the “Big Four” TV networks (CBS, NBC, ABC, and Fox) from merging with each other. The Act also allowed the FCC to liberalize the 25 percent national audience limit for TV, which is still a matter of debate. The FCC may no longer prohibit someone from owning a cable system and a TV station in the same market.

Within the next decade, the FCC issued more liberal ownership rules in such areas as newspaper/broadcast cross-ownership and telephone/cable cross-ownership. The

commission also relaxed TV network rules to allow a Big Four network to start up its own smaller network or to merge with an emerging TV network. Smaller TV networks may also now merge with each other.

## CONTENT REGULATIONS

In the US, the FCC is prohibited from “censoring” TV programming, but courts have upheld certain content regulations that serve the “public interest.” The FCC enforces political broadcasting rules such as Section 315 or the “equal time” rule. If a station gives or sells time to one candidate for public office, the station must also give or sell time to every other legally qualified candidate running for that same office. This rule ensures that broadcasters do not use the power of the airwaves to favor one candidate over another.

Broadcasters are not obligated to provide free airtime to any candidate unless the station has offered free time to an opposing candidate. For the most part, stations are not allowed to censor political ads. Also, in specified time periods before primaries and general elections, stations are required to offer candidates the lowest advertising rates. Section 315 does not apply to news reports, so a candidate’s appearance in a news story does not obligate a station to provide “equal time” to opposing candidates. Stations must also abide by the “reasonable access rule,” providing reasonable amounts of advertising time to federal candidates. Stations must keep public files detailing how they have followed political broadcasting rules and also how they have served the public interest in general.

In some countries, politicians are granted *free airtime before elections*. The rules are varied. In Azerbaijan, political parties with more than 60 candidates get free airtime on state-owned media. Smaller parties say such rules give an unfair advantage to larger established parties. In the US, broadcast debates between candidates are exempt from “equal time” restrictions, thus broadcasters usually choose to have only the major party candidates participate (→ Televised Debates). Candidates from smaller parties say this system is discriminatory, helping to keep the major parties in power.

The FCC more directly regulates content through *indecentcy rules*, punishing broadcasters that air “patently offensive” material relating to “sexual or excretory activities or organs at a time of day when children are likely to be in the audience.”

Current indecency regulation had its genesis in a 1978 Supreme Court case involving the afternoon radio broadcast of comedian George Carlin’s monologue “Filthy words,” in which Carlin frequently repeated seven “dirty words.” The Court ruled that the FCC had the right to fine broadcasters who aired indecent material during daytime and evening hours, saying such regulation was justified in protecting children from indecent material.

According to the FCC, indecent material includes foul language, nudity, and sexual innuendo. In February 2004, the infamous “wardrobe malfunction” occurred during the CBS broadcast of the Super Bowl. During halftime, singer Justin Timberlake tore away a part of singer Janet Jackson’s costume, briefly revealing her bare breast. Congress reacted by passing legislation that greatly increased indecency fines and included possible license revocation for repeat offenders. The FCC later fined CBS \$550,000 for the incident, although the network in 2006 said it would contest the fine.

The “wardrobe malfunction” would not violate government standards in countries such as Japan, Brazil, and Germany, where nudity is considered less objectionable than in

the US. On the opposite end of the spectrum are authoritarian systems like that of China, where indecent or offensive material is strictly prohibited. In 2005, the Chinese government banned prime-time shows with crime or violence in an effort to protect children and to “safeguard national cultural safety.”

In the US, the courts have ruled that the FCC does not have jurisdiction to enforce indecency rules on other media such as satellite services, cable TV, newspaper, the → Internet, and telephone (→ Internet Law and Regulation). That is because these media do not operate on the public airwaves. In Europe, though, regulators tend to make no differentiation between broadcasting and cable and satellite. EU standards state that member countries should avoid broadcasts that are indecent, pornographic, racist, or violent. Shows that are “likely to impair the development of children” are to be scheduled at later hours. However, standards of “decency” are determined by each EU country (→ European Union: Communication Law).

Authoritarian countries tend to extend indecency regulation to the Internet as well. In Saudi Arabia, the Council of Ministers requires anyone using the Internet to avoid “any activities violating the social, cultural, political, media, economic, and religious values of the Kingdom.” Persons must also get permission from the government before sending or receiving coded information. China blocks citizen access to a wide variety of Internet sites deemed by the government to be inappropriate or indecent.

### **CABLE, SATELLITE, AND ADVERTISING REGULATION**

The FCC and the courts approach regulation of cable and satellite with more of a “hands-off” approach, saying that these media do not operate on the “public airwaves” and are therefore exempt from most content regulations. However, *cable and satellite* operators must still abide by political broadcasting rules. Both must also follow “must-carry” rules, requiring them to carry local broadcast stations on their services. The FCC says such protections are necessary for broadcasters because of their roles in serving the public interest. There are similar must-carry rules in the EU, requiring cable systems to carry a variety of broadcast stations (→ Cable Television; Satellite Communication, Regulation of; Satellite Television).

In the US, most cable regulation is done at the local level through franchises, where local governments help determine service standards and whether the cable system must provide “access” channels for local public interest programming. The FCC has the right to fine cable and satellite operators that violate FCC policies.

Many countries have separate government agencies that oversee *advertising on television*. For example, in Denmark, the Radio and Television Advertising Commission reviews citizen complaints about ad content. In the US, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) punishes false and misleading advertising. Otherwise, most governments avoid content regulation of commercial speech.

One major exception is advertising for tobacco. In 1965, the UK banned all TV ads for cigarettes, but did allow TV ads for cigars and other tobacco products until 1991. The US Congress in 1970 banned cigarette ads on radio and TV, saying such a ban was necessary to protect the public health and to discourage tobacco use. Broadcast ads for smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco) were banned in 1986. The US continues to allow broadcast ads

for other smoking products such as pipe tobacco and cigars. The 1998 Tobacco Settlement added new restrictions, such as prohibiting cigarette companies from paying to have their brands used by characters in TV shows.

A majority of countries restrict TV ads for cigarettes. In the early 1990s, the European Union (EU) banned all TV cigarette advertising. In July 2005, the EU Tobacco Advertising Directive extended the cigarette ad ban to radio, the Internet, and print media. Japan began banning brand-specific cigarette ads on TV and all other electronic media, including the Internet. However, the law still allows cigarette ads on the electronic media as long as the ads do not show cigarettes or include brand names.

## INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL AGENCIES

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU), founded in 1865, is an international body comprised of roughly 200 countries. The ITU's constitution says the organization's mission is to "promote the extension of the benefits of the new telecommunication technologies to all the world's inhabitants." The ITU is a United Nations organization and works to minimize technical interference between broadcast and satellite services in different countries.

There are also agencies that deal with telecommunications issues on a regional basis. Two examples are the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). However, membership in such agencies often extends beyond their regions. Roughly 100 countries belong to the ABU, including members from Europe and North America. Like similar regional agencies, the ABU represents its members' interests with other regional agencies as well as with groups like the ITU. Such regional groups also provide technical advice and support to members.

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Cable Television ▶ China: Media System ▶ European Union: Communication Law ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Media Policy ▶ Plurality ▶ Public Interest ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Satellite Communication, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Televised Debates ▶ United States of America: Media System

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# Television for Development

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During their colonial occupation, many parts of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean were underdeveloped; forced labor was used in mines, fields, and plantations to supply the factories of Europe. Television has been part of state-led reconstruction attempts for national development since the 1970s, albeit with no explicit policies. After the pressure to privatize and deregulate media in the 1980s, TV for development has increasingly consisted of advertiser-supported → entertainment education.

After the Second North Atlantic War of 1939–1945, the Soviet bloc, the US, and the Bretton Woods institutions (the UN, the World Bank, and the IMF) initiated modernization and development projects in Europe's former colonies (→ Modernization). The Soviet Union promoted its centrally planned economy route to national development that included class struggle. The US and Europe promoted capitalism, class compromise, and modernization. Ignoring the fact that these countries had been set back through western interruption of their indigenous growth path, the modernization approach again focused on the diffusion of western ways, this time through science and technology. By the 1960s, this *social-engineering-of-change project* began to be called "economic development" (or "development" for short, as in the title of this entry). A communication medium like television with audio and visual capability and two sound tracks was considered an extremely promising educational tool for low-literacy populations and a channel for their modernization (→ Educational Communication).

## MODES OF TELEVISION ENTRY

Radio stations spread to developing countries in the 1930s and 1940s (→ Radio for Development). The introduction of television began in the 1950s and was much more complex. The capital and operating costs of television production studios, transmission equipment, and program development were high, not to mention the costs to the consumer of receiver purchase and the need for domestic electricity. The modes of different nations' entry to television varied according to the nature of the state, audience/market size, domestic capital, and national cultural characteristics. These modes of television entry were initiated by domestic private capital for urban entertainment, grants by foreign government (e.g., Japan) to help market expansion, sales promotion by their manufacturers (e.g., Sony), and UN- and foreign-aided demonstrations of television's educational potential.

Competing foreign equipment manufacturers (e.g., Germany and Japan) used *aid-for-trade offers* from their home governments. In Sri Lanka, the Japanese donor offered free staff training and equipment (for production and transmission) in return for the right to monopolize the market for television sets. Local capitalists (television set distributors, ad agencies, etc.) took the initiative for the introduction of television in countries where there was domestic capital and openness to financing by advertising. UNESCO, the Ford Foundation, and bilateral foreign aid agencies promoted demonstrations of the audiovisual

capability of the medium as an educational solution for low-literacy countries (→ UNESCO). In many cases, once the short-term financing ended, the donated equipment and facilities were transformed into a sports and entertainment channel for the middle and upper classes.

### PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES IN THE 1960S AND 1970S

Among the many educational radio and TV projects supported by national governments, intergovernmental organizations (UN agencies), and non-governmental organizations, the documentation on TV projects in Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico, the Ivory Coast, and Samoa is solid (UNESCO 1967; Mayo et al. 1975; Schramm 1977; McAnany et al. 1983). Beginning in 1964, the Ministry of Education and the broadcasting authority in Colombia sponsored a *primary school TV program* with support from USAID and the Peace Corps. Well-respected US communication researchers John K. Mayo and Jack Lyle got their start in the field by working on the evaluation research directed by Nathan Maccoby and George Comstock of Stanford University's Institute for Communication Research. The US Congress, the Department of the Interior, and the territorial government of American Samoa funded a television project in American Samoa from 1964 to 1972. Directed by Lyle Nelson and → Wilbur Schramm, this television project covered all primary and secondary grades plus preschool and some adult services.

Television was also part of the national Ministry of Education's reform of El Salvador's middle schools from 1969 to 1973, with substantial assistance from USAID and its evaluation sub-contractor Stanford University. Television provided program support for instruction in all major subjects in addition to curriculum reform and training for teachers and supervisors. Beginning in 1971, the *French government* (through UNESCO) funded a primary school TV project with an out-of-school evening adult education component in its former colony the Ivory Coast. The only major educational TV project still functioning after decades is the *Mexican Telesecundaria* (grades 7–9) run by its own Ministry of Education. Rather than an add-on for quality improvement, this essential delivery of middle-school classes via television across the nation provides government-recognized credit for students who cannot attend traditional middle school. USAID financed an evaluation jointly conducted by the Ministry of Education and Stanford University (Mayo et al. 1975). The role of communication in development that is clearly conceptualized, alongside a listing of theory, program, and political failures, in Hornik (1988) fully applies to television projects.

With the introduction of direct-broadcast satellites pioneered by NASA in the early 1970s, development pilot projects of varying lengths were conducted to demonstrate the capability of TV, radio, and telecommunication (→ Satellite Television). In 1971, the University of the South Pacific used audio conferencing to connect its extension centers on both sides of the international dateline in four time zones. The state of Alaska also used NASA's experimental satellite services to facilitate the delivery of rural health-care, leading to the development of a 24-hour medical network connecting every village.

The *mid-1970s* saw a more advanced NASA satellite demonstrate educational applications in Alaska, the Pacific, Appalachia, and India. India's year-long (1975–1976) *Satellite Instructional TV Experiment (SITE)* was studied by over 150 social scientists hired by the government of India as part of NASA's requirement for the year-long loan of four hours

of satellite time. SITE research findings (Mody 1978, 1987) elaborated on the findings of projects elsewhere: more attention should have been paid to the design of educational programs. The emphasis on technology and the neglect of TV programming identified in previous projects repeated itself in SITE too: the total effort involved 3,300 person years of which 2,050 were spent on technology, hardware, or equipment: only 9 percent was dedicated to program development.

Hardware work started 5 years before transmissions started; program development started less than a year before. Nevertheless, children exposed to TV in the classroom showed significant gains in language development; programs led to enquiries for more knowledge, as measured by the greater utilization of libraries in schools where they were available. The adult education evening transmissions resulted in statistically significant gains in the knowledge of preventive health: those who watched more learned more. Small farmers and landless day laborers made up the greater part of the audience for the free community TV, resulting in no gain in general agricultural knowledge (dependent on land-holding sizes and purchasing power for irrigation, fertilizer, and pesticides). Twice as many adult men as women watched in the evenings: women were busy with domestic responsibilities after their day jobs in the fields and reported little interest in program topics. In general, the knowledge gains from free community TV were greater for those with limited access to other sources of information: lower castes among the Hindu majority, low income groups in general, and women.

*In the 1980s*, US foreign aid (USAID) and the then satellite cooperative INTELSAT conducted educational demonstrations of satellite capability. INTELSAT enabled the Chinese Open University to experiment with one-way video and audio applications; Ireland and Jordan to exchange university courses; and hospitals in Latin America and Miami, and Uganda, Kenya, and Canada, to do telemedicine.

### **PRIVATIZATION AND ENTERTAINMENT EDUCATION SINCE THE 1980S**

Until the 1980s, TV was owned and operated in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean by the state, except for Latin America, which had fallen under US commercial influence after its independence from European colonizers. The few applications of television for development were expensive and state-financed, and hence constituted additional demands on already overstretched state budgets. As developing countries struggled with spiraling oil costs, budget deficits, and a world economic slowdown, the US, western Europe, and Japan pushed them to open up national firms (including state broadcasting monopolies) to private and foreign investment. Simultaneously, domestic lobbies within developing countries were advocating the US model of advertising-based radio and TV ownership so coverage could expand beyond the capital city (→ United States of America: Media System). US film and TV exports increased nearly five times. State-produced symbolic public service TV programs on agriculture, health, and education with small audience sizes disappeared as large-audience entertainment financed by advertisers became more visible, some imported and some domestic.

A new entrant on the post-1980s scene was the “educational entertainment” dramatic serial, which took off from Miguel Sabido’s pioneering “social content communication methodology” that was made famous in successful family planning serial dramas in Mexico

(Singhal et al. 2004). Promoted by David Poindexter of the US Methodist Church's Population Communication International, "entertainment education" serials in radio, TV, and multiple media have addressed AIDS and sexual issues in South Africa (e.g., *Soul City*), India (e.g., the → BBC World Service Trust's collaborative production of *Vijay Detective*), Kenya (e.g., *Heart and Soul, Come With Me*), Tanzania (e.g., *Let's Go with the Times*) and the Philippines (e.g., *Interweaving Lives*). Foreign aid and technical assistance have been provided by the US and European countries.

The balance between audience enhancement and education is delicate: in the case of *We The People* in India, the strong focus on gender equality had to be diluted by episode 13 in light of opposition from audience and advertisers. Thus, even advocates acknowledge that the "educational" component of these admittedly entertaining shows is highly variable, ranging from a few lines of dialogue, to a general do-good theme, to a strongly targeted focus. It has been found that constant audience research is required to monitor whether a negative role model is being misperceived as a heroine for emulation by some.

The instructional design model of the 1960s and 1970s for specific educational audiences, which was so expensive to implement and was infrequently used outside short-lived, aid-financed projects, has given way to another educational model initiated by foreign aid that is more suited to the large-audience needs of an advertiser-financed media system. Entertainment education has actually been credited with helping the state broadcaster to move from state public service ownership to a commercially competitive operator in India.

Television for development in the early 21st century is promoting *modernization via the marketplace*. Audience-specific educational media interventions are limited to community radio initiatives, where they exist.

SEE ALSO: ► BBC World Service ► Development Communication ► Educational Communication ► Entertainment Education ► Instructional Television ► Media Effects ► Modernization ► Radio for Development ► Satellite Television ► Schramm, Wilbur ► Television ► UNESCO ► United States of America: Media System

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# Television Networks

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Television networks are organizations that produce or acquire the rights to TV programs, which are centrally distributed to affiliated stations where they are scheduled at uniform time slots. The distribution of content to geographically dispersed stations can occur using a variety of technical systems, involving traditional over-the-air electromagnetic broadcasting, cable, satellite, and now digital transmission. The history of television networks has been influenced by two principal broadcast network models: the public service broadcasting (PSB) model (→ Public Broadcasting Systems; Public Broadcasting, History of), epitomized in the English speaking world by the British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC), and by the for-profit commercial model, associated with television networks in the United States.

In the case of the BBC, and many other public service broadcasters, identical programming is simultaneously distributed to repeater stations, with some regional variation. In the case of for-profit networks in the United States, regional affiliate stations produce local content (e.g., → newscasts) while accepting a portion of their programming via the central distribution of their parent network. In vernacular language the terms *television network*, *television channel*, and *television station* are often interchanged; however, the terms are distinct: a channel is a band of electromagnetic frequencies assigned to individual broadcast stations, which, in turn, may be members of a television network. Most historical accounts of the development of network television have pointed to three interrelated factors: the state, as both owner and regulator of broadcasting networks (→ Ownership in the Media; Television Broadcasting, Regulation of); the introduction of new technologies (→ Television Technology); and the influence of commercial and market forces (→ Markets of the Media).

## HISTORICAL ORIGINS

In the United Kingdom and the United States, television networks were launched by the already established → radio networks (→ United Kingdom: Media System; United States of America: Media System). That is to say, by the BBC in the former country, and by the National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) in the latter. The one significant exception was the short-lived Dumont Television Network – itself the first licensed television network in the United States started by inventor and television manufacturer Allen B. Dumont. The network operated for 10 years, beginning in 1946, before closing due to financial losses. But television networks' connection to the production and sale of television receiver sets would continue through NBC's parent company the Radio Corporation of America (RCA).

The BBC began the first regular high definition television service in 1936, broadcasting in London. It was put on hold in 1939 due to World War II; but in 1948 the government threw its support behind the idea of a national television network to parallel radio. Construction began in earnest on a series of transmitter stations to link the various regions of the nation. As with radio, the BBC's national television service would be a monopoly.

The public service remit of BBC television carried forward BBC founder Reith's mission to inform, educate, and entertain. Commercial influences were to be resisted in the name of the public interest and to preserve "quality" broadcasting. Funding was secured through a license fee paid by all television users.

A majority of European nations started their own public service TV networks, as did the Australian (→ Australia: Media System), New Zealand, and Canadian (→ Canada: Media System) governments. Invariably, PSB would reflect national and cultural differences. In Germany constitutional authority for broadcasting was granted to individual states, thereby establishing a decentralized PSB model to protect against government control of radio and television networks, as had been the case under Nazi rule (→ Germany: Media System). In Canada the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was given a national mandate to provide a buffer to easily available signals of American TV networks. Television service would be mixed, accepting some → advertising revenue with the balance of funding coming from government stipend. What united all public broadcasters was a commitment to attracting a broad television audience while serving the needs of citizens, not consumers.

"Auntie" BBC, as the service was known, soon faced competition funded by advertising. The postwar years saw a surge in advertising expenditures with a correspondingly increased desire for consumption, after many years of imposed austerity. Advertisers, helped by the work of the J. Walter Thompson agency, argued that television should be part of a renewed consumer economy. The Conservative government of the day agreed and commercial network television came to Britain in 1955 with the launch of Independent Television (ITV). However, in exchange for lucrative access to a scarce analog spectrum, ITV, and also Channels 4 and 5 launched in 1982 and 1997 respectively, were required to meet public service obligations. In the 1990s both Conservative and Labour governments called on the BBC to adopt a more commercial approach.

In the *United States*, educational television started in 1954; by 1965 there were 100 noncommercial stations. The US Congress passed legislation creating the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) in 1967. Two years later the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) television network was created, but it has remained plagued by funding problems. The dominant American television networks were privately owned and profit oriented from the start. They became possible in 1951 after AT&T began to lay TV cables, and microwave relays were stretched across the continent.

An important element of the growth of television networks has been the economic efficiencies gained through the transmission of one program to multiple stations along the network. But efficiencies were not simply a product of technology. NBC and CBS inherited their corporate structure from radio, as did the American Broadcasting Company (ABC). The so-called "third network" was created in 1943 after a federal competition probe suggested NBC sell one of its two radio networks: NBC Red and NBC Blue. The Blue network was sold and ABC would eventually join NBC and CBS as one of the "big three" networks. The networks also inherited radio's profit model, which structured their relationship with advertisers. Many of the early program formats on network television, such as live episodic drama, were derived from radio. Programs such as CBS's *Man Against Crime* were produced by advertising agencies. Historian Erik Barnouw has documented how the sponsor of the program, Camel cigarettes, dictated to writers how and under what favorable circumstances their product should appear in the drama: "Cigarettes had

to be smoked gracefully, never puffed nervously” (Barnouw 1970). The networks, worried about the loss of control over production, eventually moved to change the relationship. NBC in particular worked to convince advertisers that sponsored programming was less effective than purchasing insertions within programs, which could be used to make direct sales pitches, as in a magazine. In a related move, NBC created two important live programs – *Today* and *Tonight* – which were produced and controlled by the network. Both programs, one a morning current affairs show, the latter a late-night comedy program, are broadcast today.

In 1956 videotape was introduced, replacing the more expensive film. Programs could now be stored and shown again and again. By the mid-1950s the live episodic series was displaced. Advertising was sold on a cost-per-thousand basis and the currency for those sales was audience-ratings surveys. The model that would structure the business of network television for the next 50 years had been established: audiences would be maximized and sold to national advertisers who bought time within a programming schedule controlled by the networks (→ *Television: Social History*).

## PROGRAMMING

The television industry enjoyed enormous growth in its first decade, creating a real mass audience. The number of US households with at least one television jumped from 34 to 90 percent between 1952 and 1962. Television had become an important part of popular culture, with network programming taking the lead. Networks produced what media sociologist Todd Gitlin has called “recombinant culture” – shows based upon proven formats with easily identifiable characters (Gitlin 1983). Successful genres including the → situation comedy, crime drama, and westerns flourished, making programs such as *I Love Lucy*, *The Untouchables*, and *Gunsmoke* popular and lucrative, especially when they were sold as syndicated reruns. Entertainment dominated, including popular quiz shows such as *The \$64,000 Dollar Question*, which drew large audiences until a payola scandal forced it off the air. Indeed, in 1961 Newton Minnow, the chairman of the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC), would quip that US network television was a “vast wasteland.” But the trend was established. Many of today’s most popular programs, including *Friends*, *Jeopardy*, and *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, are extensions of these early program formats.

Entertainment remains a predominant part of network scheduling today, but it was news and current affairs programming that would confer prestige upon TV networks. In Britain, one early moment was the broadcast of Queen Elizabeth’s coronation in 1953. Close to 20 million people are estimated to have watched the program, including a sizable audience from the United States. Some sociologists have argued the broadcast marked the first “media event” (→ *Media Events and Pseudo-Events*), in which a mass audience participates in a live broadcast ritual. In the United States, the first network newscasts were sponsored. NBC’s *Camel News Caravan* took its name from Camel cigarettes. Such dubious associations would eventually be severed, while news budgets expanded and professional work routines of “objective” reporting were established (→ *News Routines; Objectivity in Reporting*). CBS’s *See It Now*, hosted by celebrated newsman Edward R. Murrow, received special praise for its critical coverage of McCarthyism. The nightly

newscast format was regularized following coverage of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963.

Coverage of live sporting events (→ Sports and the Media, History of) has from the beginning been a tremendous boon to television networks. Popular success was found early on in North America with broadcasts of boxing, wrestling, baseball, and football, while the BBC generated interest in 1954 with its coverage of Roger Bannister's "Miracle Mile," breaking the 4-minute barrier at the Iffley Road track in Oxford. The initially small audiences were more than made up for by low production costs. Sporting events did not need to be created and did not require expensive writers and actors. Today television networks sign multimillion-dollar contracts for the broadcast rights to the World Cup and the Olympics. These global media events attract billions of viewers and the interest of transnational corporate sponsors, who have made global celebrities out of athletes such as footballer David Beckham.

### NETWORKS IN FLUX

By the late 1970s and early 1980s new technologies and regulatory changes had ushered in a new area for network television in the United States. In 1984 the FCC lifted federal regulations over cable operators, giving them greater freedom. Satellite and cable subscription services proliferated (→ Satellite Television; Cable Television). Specialty channels such as Home Box Office (HBO), the Entertainment and Sports Network (ESPN), and the 24-hour Cable News Network (→ CNN; Newscast, 24-Hour) became household names. The established American networks saw their prime-time share shrink as audiences fragmented. By the 1990s there were three new broadcast networks: Fox, United Paramount Network (UPN), and Warner Brothers (WB). Further government deregulation followed. Legislation lifted media ownership restrictions in 1996, accelerating a round of corporate media mergers that began in the mid-1980s. After WB and UPN merged in 2006 to create the CW Television Network (CW), five companies owned and co-owned the remaining five networks and most of the highly subscribed cable channels: → Disney (ABC, ESPN), General Electric (NBC), Viacom (CBS, CW), Time Warner (CNN, HBO, CW; → Time Warner Inc.).

Changes in network regulation, ownership, and technological distribution had important repercussions for programming. For nearly 20 years the big three network newscasts provided a similar rundown of the day's most important events. But when audiences began to fragment in the late 1970s networks laid off reporters and started to produce more dramatic stories with emotional human interest angles. CNN's coverage of the 1991 Gulf War scooped the big three and solidified its reputation as a serious news provider. Five years later, Fox News and MSNBC (co-owned by Microsoft and NBC) would start their own 24-hour cable news channels. Competition on melodramatic stories, such as the so-called "Monicagate" sex scandal involving intern Monica Lewinsky and US President Bill Clinton (→ Scandalization in the News), institutionalized a form of live "rolling news." It was coupled with high-octane talk shows in which a spectacular news story could be repurposed among the networks' programs 24/7.

The pressures of neo-liberal globalization during the 1980s and 1990s together with the global expansion of transnational communication companies, such as the News Corporation's

Star News satellite network, contributed to the extension of these melodramatic forms of news storytelling throughout Latin America, Europe, and Asia. In India, Star partnered with the Zee network while the Indian Broadcasting Network (IBN) collaborated with CNN, creating a hybrid mixture of genres and Hindi language programming (→ Globalization of the Media).

Rising production costs were also giving networks trouble. In wrestling with the problem, networks increased the number of ads run during prime time. They also amortized the fixed first-run costs of news programming through newsmagazines such as NBC's *Dateline* and ABC's *Primetime Live*. Another successful strategy was the introduction of the → reality TV genre, epitomized by such programs as *Survivor*. The originally British TV format was a surprise summer hit for CBS in 2000. Its importance was similar to early sports programming – reality TV did not require expensive writers and actors.

All four major US networks quickly adopted the genre, marking a shift in their business model. Antitrust rules that limited the number of hours of network-produced programming were eliminated in 1995. Networks could now produce their own shows in-house. They were still in the business of selling the attention of affluent audiences to advertisers, but now program content would be integrated into multimedia merchandise tie-ins. Synergistic cross-promotion strategies between network programs and → Internet websites expanded. The direct advertiser sponsorship and product placements that were the norm in such 1950s hits as *I Love Lucy* reappeared in the *Apprentice* and *Survivor*.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Antitrust Regulation ▶ Audience Commodity ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ Australia: Media System ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Cable Television ▶ Canada: Media System ▶ CNN ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Disney ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Germany: Media System ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Media Economics ▶ Media Events and Pseudo-Events ▶ News Agencies, History of ▶ News Routines ▶ Newscast ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Popular Culture and the News Media ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Reality TV ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Situation Comedies ▶ Spectacle ▶ Sports and the Media, History of ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television News ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Television Technology ▶ Time Warner Inc. ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ United States of America: Media System

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## Television News

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Almost from the moment Vladimir Zworykin, John Logie Baird, Philo Farnsworth, and others started improving German inventor Paul Nipkow’s “spinning disc television” idea in the early twentieth century, the debate began concerning journalism’s role on the small screen. Communication researchers, sociologists, and other scholars were slow to take the medium seriously as an information source, even while people around the world turned to television as their primary source of news. Television news became one of the most popular sources for information in the last four decades of the twentieth century, especially in Europe and the US. By the start of the twenty-first century, satellite technology helped spread news channels in the Middle East, Asia, and other regions of the world, allowing non-western perspectives on world issues to gain a wider audience (→ Satellite Television; CNN; Arab Satellite TV News).

### TYPES OF TELEVISION NEWS

Diffusion of television, and television news to a greater extent, has happened at dramatically different rates around the world (Conway 2006). Broadly speaking, the two most important

factors determining television news content are the method of funding and the political structure of the host countries. Countries that have set up a *tax or user-fee system for funding* broadcast news (e.g., Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands; → Public Broadcasting Systems) tend to focus more on political and governmental coverage than advertiser-based systems with limited government regulation (e.g., the US, Taiwan, the Philippines), which provide less public affairs coverage and more emphasis on crime, lifestyle, health, entertainment news, and high-decibel, polarizing debates on top issues. But in both scenarios, the pressure is growing stronger to make the coverage more interesting and relevant for the viewers (Holtz-Bacha 1997; Thussu 2003; Deuze 2005; Hendricks Vettehen et al. 2005). Therefore, even traditionally “hard news” news organizations such as the → BBC and Germany’s ARD (→ Germany: Media System) are evolving as they are forced to compete against flashier, faster-paced private news organizations that are gaining market share. The market system pressures therefore affect the publicly funded stations because journalists are worried that if their ratings drop too low, the public will start to question why it must pay for a service provided free on other channels (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content; Tabloidization; Soft News).

The *government influence* on television news also plays an important role in content. Controlling governments such as China (→ China: Media System), the former Soviet Union, and North Korea use television news as a mouthpiece for the people in power. Viewers of these services recognize the → propaganda aspects of the broadcasts and treat them more as government channels than independent news sources. Therefore, former communist countries in eastern Europe are having a hard time setting up legitimate public service broadcasting systems because the people grew up with the idea of broadcasting as propaganda (Thompson 2006). In the 1980s, Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi attempted to turn his country’s television service, Doordarshan, into a more professional news service. But when the ministers realized they would no longer get their free publicity under the new arrangement, they quickly put an end to the plan (Ninan 1995; → India: Media System). In the Middle East, Al Jazeera has built a reputation on controversial and hard-hitting news coverage, but the 24-hours news network avoids most issues that might upset its host country and financial benefactor, Qatar (→ Gulf States: Media Systems).

### EMERGENCE OF TELEVISION NEWS

Two events happened in November 1963 that put television news firmly into the public, and academic, consciousness in the US. First, President John F. Kennedy was shot and killed in Dallas, Texas. For four days, Americans stared at their TV screens as local and network reporters covered the assassination, the installation of Lyndon B. Johnson as president, the murder of suspect Lee Harvey Oswald, and finally, the Kennedy funeral in Washington. Ninety-six percent of all American households watched the coverage, with the nation in communal mourning because of the common, live link of television. Also that month, for the first time in the Roper annual poll of where people get their news, television beat newspapers as the most popular reported source of news in the country.

Television still has the top ranking for news use in the US and in many countries around the world. The advance of satellite technology at the end of the twentieth century allowed

news channels, including Al Jazeera, to break down geographic borders and increase news viewership in areas such as the Middle East. But that same satellite technology allowed the importing and exporting of non-geographic entertainment programming (*Big Brother*, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*) that was much cheaper to present than locally originated news programming (Moran & Keane 2004; Zayani 2005; → Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media; Economies of Scale in Media Markets).

In addition, during the mid-1960s, television news film from civil rights riots in the US and graphic images from the Vietnam War also focused attention on television (→ Civil Rights Movement and the Media), while → Marshall McLuhan argued that content did not matter, since the medium was the message. Whether or not any of these events were the specific impetus, sociologist and communication scholars started to study television news. Instead of the image of an independent journalist seeking the truth, scholars found a structured organization designed to bring order out of the chaos of potential stories (→ News Routines). Epstein (2000) found NBC's criteria for covering a story depended on newsworthiness (→ News Values), predictability, film value, geographic balance, time considerations, and finally, correspondent preferences. These observations apply to other journalistic platforms, but US television news had the added constraint of limited photography crews and indirect government pressure through Federal Communication Commission regulations (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

The merging of audio, moving pictures (→ Newsreel), and words as information has proven to be a slippery area of research. Barnhurst and Nerone argue the divide between words and pictures starts in school, continues in newsrooms, and is reflected in scholarship: "The resulting studies of journalism pay scant attention to visual devices and visual communication usually brackets the text" (Barnhurst & Nerone 2001, 10; → Television News, Visual Components of; Television, Visual Characteristics of; Video).

## NEWS CONTENT AND FUNDING

Around the world, television news content depended on the funding source and mission of the service. In England, BBC television mirrored the public service mission of BBC radio (→ BBC World Service) while ITN was a closely monitored commercial station (→ United Kingdom: Media System). In Germany, the main public broadcasting network, ARD, was shaped by the Allies after World War II to ensure that no political party or powerful group could gain control of the media as the Nazis had done while in power. In developing countries, → UNESCO used both radio and television as a way to disseminate important information to people, especially in rural areas. Teleclubs were set up for community viewing to prompt civic involvement in solving basic problems such as unsafe drinking water and environmentally damaging farming practices (→ Development Communication; Telecenters; Radio for Development; Television for Development).

Over the past 40 years, the pressure has been building for television news to compete with entertainment programming for viewers. The US advertiser-based system has led the way, especially since the 1980s, as media corporations have convinced the government to continually loosen regulations on public affairs programming (→ Media Conglomerates).



The concept of losing money on news as a way to keep highly profitable broadcast licenses faded, especially as local television news, and some network news programs – most notably *60 Minutes* – went from loss leaders to profit centers for television stations and networks.

In the US, local television stations turned to outside consultants for guidance on how to increase viewership, which has resulted in local television news becoming the most profitable program for most stations (→ Media Marketing). Critics have skewered the consultant influence in turning local news into a cookie-cutter approach to journalism with an emphasis on anchors, happy talk, weather, and reduced coverage of traditional government and public affairs issues (Powers 1980). Allen (2001), though, argues that consultants have used detailed → survey research to determine what the public actually wants from news, and that the resultant product reflects the needs of the lower to middle class instead of the upper middle to upper class that tend to work in journalism and critique its content (→ Audience Research). US local television news did lead the way in hiring women and minorities, concentrating on people-oriented and lifestyle news, and employing the latest graphic and live coverage technology; all practices later adopted by network and cable news.

### **TELEVISION WAR AND CONFLICT COVERAGE**

Coverage of war and conflict, especially since the advance of satellite and digital technology, has had a dramatic influence on television news around the world (→ Conflict as Media Content). Historians point to anecdotal evidence of violent civil rights protests and Vietnam War footage in the 1950s and 1960s raising the issues' salience with US viewers and even changing some minds. Arlen (1969) dubbed Vietnam “the living-room war” because of television’s ability to bring the horror into the comfort of the American home.

In 1991, the *Cable News Network (CNN)* turned war coverage from a national to an international viewing experience. With its connections around the world, CNN became the only US network broadcasting from Baghdad as the US invaded the country, and also providing the only live coverage of the war for many nations around the world. For many, CNN became the face of US policy. As a result, nations and multinational corporations witnessed the power of satellite technology in spreading a message beyond national borders. As well, the impact of live television, the communal experience which had gripped the US back during the Kennedy assassination coverage, now could be worldwide. The BBC extended its reach, and the STAR-TV group of stations began broadcasting on an international basis, with RTL and other services around the country extending their reach.

In 1996, after the BBC shut down its Arabic channel, *Al Jazeera* was launched in Qatar with funding from the emir of Qatar, who had deposed his father as leader of the country. Al Jazeera was set up partly to provide a forum for critics of other Arab governments, since many of those nations do not allow oppositional viewpoints. The network took its cues from western news channels with an emphasis on conflict, exciting video, heated debate, and extensive live coverage. Al Jazeera immediately made enemies throughout the Middle East, since leaders in many of those nations were not used to open criticism. The

emir of Qatar ignored pleas for censorship and allowed the Al Jazeera staff to pursue stories without intervention.

### CHANGING DYNAMIC FOR WORLD NEWS

Al Jazeera's impact reached beyond the Middle East with the US invasion of Afghanistan. Instead of just the conflict framed from a western point of view, Al Jazeera also broadcast messages from Osama bin Laden and other Al-Qaeda images. The Taliban in Afghanistan recognized the power of the 24-hour news cycle and used Al Jazeera to present its views during the war. During the US invasion of Iraq, Al Jazeera showed graphic, often unedited, video of Iraqi war victims while western news channels focused on the coalition forces advance toward Baghdad. The US government put pressure on Qatar to shut down or muzzle Al Jazeera, with no effect. Zayani credits Al Jazeera with reversing the traditional flow of news: not "from the Occident to the Orient, but the other way around" (Zayani 2005, 31).

In the US, the success of CNN caused Rupert Murdoch to launch a competitor, the *Fox News Channel*, in 1996. Fox's Roger Ailes, a former Republican strategist, hit upon a successful formula of marketing Fox as the moderate alternative to the traditional liberal media (→ Bias in the News). Confrontational hosts such as Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity, coverage that favors conservative viewpoints, and effective use of graphics and news productions techniques pushed Fox past CNN in the cable news ratings in the US.

The *power of the images* in television news became apparent during the Iraq War with the toppling of a Saddam Hussein statue in Baghdad. Even though Hussein statues could be found throughout Baghdad, the repetitive airing of this one action (later revealed as a staged event by coalition forces) prompted US cable networks to switch from a battle frame to a victory frame in coverage (Aday et al. 2005).

Satellite technology and globalization (→ Globalization Theories) in the twenty-first century have brought increased attention to the effect of television news expanding from a national to an international experience, with an increasing pressure on broadcast journalists' often oppositional missions of both providing a public service for the viewers and attracting a large enough audience to justify either the advertising revenues or the tax or user fees.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Audience Research ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ China: Media System ▶ Civil Rights Movement and the Media ▶ CNN ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Conflict as Media Content ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Development Communication ▶ Economies of Scale in Media Markets ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Germany: Media System ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Gulf States: Media Systems ▶ India: Media System ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media Marketing ▶ News Routines ▶ News Values ▶ Newsreel ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio for Development ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Soft News ▶ Sound Bites ▶ Survey ▶ Tabloidization ▶ Telecenters ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television for Development ▶ Television News, Visual Components of ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ UNESCO ▶ United Kingdom: Media System ▶ Video

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## **Television News, Visual Components of**

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The emergence of television news programs in the late 1940s in the US marked a major historical development in the history of journalism (→ News; Television News; Journalism, History of). Combining the broadcast auditory flow of radio (→ Radio Technology) with the moving images (→ Film Theory) of the movie → newsreels shown in the → cinema, television news was able to provide the public with a new experience in journalism. In the context of American commercial broadcasting, television journalism – more than any previous form of news – was shaped by the economic demands of entertainment and advertising (→ Advertising, Economics of), not least on account of the compelling visual dimension (→ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content). The American model of

television news was quickly exported, and has become the global norm for how it is done. The visual elements are a part of the taken-for-granted professional routines, yet continue to evolve as the genre develops, and they remain of important analytic concern (→ News Routines).

It is the visual dimension that gives television news its unique attributes. In traditional broadcasting, television, like radio, has strict time schedules. Only in very extreme cases can more time be allotted. The public cannot alter the tempo of the program or the sequence of the stories. Unlike radio, television news has moving pictures, which alters the mode of cognitive attention, adding the visual to the aural. Moreover, television news provides a different experiential flow; not only are the images supreme in conveying visual phenomena, the visual elements in themselves generally enhance the affective involvement of the viewer, not least in regard to engagement with people seen on the screen (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships; Emotions, Media Effects on).

Certainly with the advent of video recording, and more recently of digital formats – as well as channels with 24-hour news transmission – some of the temporal and scheduling constraints of viewing have been loosened (→ News Production and Technology; Newscast, 24-Hour). While new technologies have in some ways altered the production processes (e.g., reporters today can transmit their materials immediately to the studio via their digital equipment), the visual dimension retains its decisive role in the production of television news, and exercises certain imperatives that continue to define the genre (→ Newscast). Television news has to be “good television” as well as “good journalism,” and on occasion tensions arise between the use of visuals and journalistic values. Stories that may be of journalistic importance may not always readily lend themselves to suitable visuals (e.g., much political negotiation can be of little visual interest), and conversely, dramatic visual footage may be available but may lack a good informative story (e.g., breathtaking images of war may be weak in terms of information).

## DOCUMENTARY REALISM AND OBJECTIVITY

The principles guiding the use – and evaluation – of visuals in television news derive from the documentary tradition, which in simple terms means that the professional goal is to accurately represent reality (Corner 1995). The visual dimension soon became entangled in the ongoing discussions about “objectivity.” “News” does not exist in nature and can never be a simple “reflection” of reality; it always involves the work routines of news organizations (Tuchman 1978). Thus, there are always two basic sets of journalistic decisions to be made: *what* to inform the public about (i.e., selection), and *how* should it be done, in terms of the manner in which a story should be angled or framed (i.e., presentation). The professional goal of appearing to be “objective,” coupled with the cultural expectation that news does not reflect any subjective point of view, led early on to the development of sets of conventions of camera use that have come to be associated with the visual aesthetics of realism (→ Realism in Film and Photography).

The key element of realism is to convey an impression of “natural observation”: the camera strives to function as the surrogate eye of the viewer, and thereby becomes in a sense “invisible,” deflecting awareness from the constructed character of news (→ Visual Representation). The visual is thus experienced as merely rendering the world as it is, in

a documentary manner, untouched by human intervention (→ News Myths). To say that news is constructed is not to suggest that it is “faked” or deliberately misleading. Rather, it merely asserts that all news, as an organizational product, is predicated on human intervention and decisions.

It remains to be seen whether or not this notion of visual objectivity will be eroded as some segments of the viewing audiences become more aware of how television generally gets done. Popular conceptions about “real” versus fictive have become somewhat more sophisticated in the wake of versions of → reality TV, as well as via the growing involvement in amateur and home digital media productions of all kinds. Audiences seem quite aware of – and sensitive to – the “rules” of various television genres of factual programming (Hill 2007), yet the visuals remain compelling in television news as well as in other media genres (see, for example, Messaris 1995).

### GENERIC PICTURES

At one level, all → journalism is engaged in a kind of “translation service”: it must take that which is new and convey it in terms which are recognizable and meaningful. This tension is of course a continuous challenge, in that certain events or developments cannot be truly understood with reference to the familiar. Much of journalism consists of reiterations of the world as it is: familiar kinds of stories with recurring elements. The highly conventionalized use of language and, in broadcast news, modes of speech, also enhances the impression of the everyday, the “normal.” With television news, the repertoire of the visuals is also quite standardized, consisting of many generic ingredients in the camerawork. The → codes that define the genre are quite unmistakable. For journalists as well as audiences, this camerawork is not merely the “containers” that carry information; the particular use of specific shots is part of a well-developed “language” that can convey meaning in an effective manner.

Thus, the typical title sequences that introduce a TV news program usually make use of graphics signifying “the world,” for example abstract illustrations of the globe and collages of images from “all around the world.” Together with the accompanying fanfare music, the aura of pomp, and the brisk professional efficiency conveyed by the news anchor(s) and reporters in the studio (based on their dress, body language, facial expressions, etc.), this sequence tells us the program should command attention (Bignell 2002). It not only “brings” us the world and “covers” it, but also by implication positions itself in an implied all-knowing Olympian manner. After this introduction, the traditional news program usually makes use of a standard set of visuals, usually comprising: the news anchor(s) in the studio, addressing the viewer; studio interviews/discussion with guests; live sequences with reporters on location; pre-recorded materials (with either a reporter visible at the scene, or with just a voice-over). Still images, such as graphs, charts, and photos, are also used (→ News as Discourse).

Within this basic visual framework, there are more specific signifying practices that serve to transmit meaning (→ Semiotics). For example, the semiotics of location include an inventory of familiar images of political power (e.g., shots of a presidential emblem or the Houses of Parliament), familiar icons of major cities, the chaotic violence in the streets of the Middle East, starving refugees in a camp in Africa. Also surrogate “proxy

images” are used for events and actions where genuine documentary pictures are unavailable (Griffin 1992). There are also tacit rules, or codes, which tell us things about the news organization, such as its hierarchy: there is a “chain of command” that filters the information. Thus, a guest interviewed in the studio never looks into the camera, but instead always at the reporter. Only the reporter has the prerogative to address the viewers directly. Similarly, a reporter on location will usually address the studio anchor, if one is present, rather than the viewer.

Further, the visual codes for depicting people are significant. For instance, different kinds of shots structure social distance. Thus, “normal” and “respectful” distance is suggested by a medium close-up, simulating proximity in social situations; a long-shot of many people suggests their relative lack of significance in terms of social power and individuality; while an extreme close-up signifies intimacy or psychological intensity.

The basic genre of TV news is still very recognizable, but it is of course ever evolving. Viewing videotapes of news programs from, say, three decades ago would make some of these developments quite visible. One would notice, for instance, the increase in tempo and sensationalist news values, even in the traditionally more staid network evening news programs in the US. With the increased tempo come more visual cuts and shorter sound bites. Moreover, with → CNN and other 24-hour news services we have witnessed more material with live shots – focused editing is not always as evident as in the traditional news programs with tight schedules.

Beyond cueing the viewers’ understanding, the visuals also serve a powerful legitimizing function (Griffin 1992). Given that the images afford an almost indisputable experience of reality, of truth, in their visual facticity, the implication is that “seeing is believing.” Moving images also imply immediacy, in the sense of being instantaneous – thereby further underscoring the authority of the news organization – but also in the sense of being direct, untouched by personal subjectivity. The difficulty here is of course that the visual “truth” may not always be able to say much about the social, political, economic, cultural, or other factors that have shaped a phenomenon captured by the camera. In seeing images we all too easily assume that we understand the realities they represent.

## **ONGOING DEBATES**

From a learning point of view, the visual dimension has at times been criticized for being ambiguous, allowing many different meanings to emerge. But research (see Graber 2001) suggests that this is really not the case. The verbal dimension helps anchor the visual and facilitate comprehension. Also, given that the visual repertoire within a given national culture is a limited and rather stereotypical one, it is governed by well-established codes. The “preferred” meaning intended by the news organization is usually not ambiguous. Further, the communication of information in TV news watching depends not just on the contents and form of that which is represented in the images, but also on the stimulation of schemas – i.e., the activation of relevant archives of memory and meaning in the viewer. Visuals thus have the potential to aid learning by triggering recall. Discussions continue, however, in regard to how best to coordinate visuals with voice-overs of spoken text. The larger issue of the ideological interpretation of news is another question, however, and is greatly dependent on the predispositions of different groups in the audience.

The theme of affect and emotional involvement in images is at times raised in regard to the informational function of news. The Enlightenment legacy of rational thought is seen in some quarters as threatened by the visual dimension of news – a dimension that is on the increase in media culture generally. The questions are raised whether democracy can survive the growing journalistic use of images, and whether the visuals automatically imply a “dumbing down” of the public. Can television news seriously address its viewers as citizens, or do they inexorably become positioned as spectators and consumers? Such debates continue, with sustained intensity.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Cinema ▶ CNN ▶ Code ▶ Commercialization: Impact on Media Content ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Film Theory ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ News ▶ News as Discourse ▶ News Factors ▶ News Myths ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ News Routines ▶ Newscast ▶ Newscast, 24-Hour ▶ Newsreel ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Reality TV ▶ Semiotics ▶ Television News ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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## **Television as Popular Culture**

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“Television” refers to “seeing from afar.” It describes a physical device, a cultural system, and a labor process that brings the two together and embeds them in the daily experience of half the world’s population (→ Television). “Popular” signifies of, by, and for the people, offering transcendence through pleasure, but doing so by referring to the everyday (→ Popular Communication). “Culture” derives from agriculture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). With the emergence of capitalism, it embodied instrumentalism and abjured it, via the industrialization of farming and the cultivation of taste.

These terms have generally been understood through the social sciences and the humanities – truth versus beauty. In the humanities, popular television texts are evaluated by criteria of quality and politics, understood through criticism and history. The social sciences focus on different viewers, investigated ethnographically, experimentally, or statistically. So whereas the humanities articulate differences through symbolic norms (for example, which class has the cultural capital to appreciate high culture), the social sciences articulate differences through social norms (for example, which people play militaristic electronic games). “Popular culture” relates to markets, as does most television. Neo-classical economics assumes that expressions of the desire and capacity to pay for services animate entertainment and hence – when the result is publicly accepted – determine what is “popular.”

### EARLY CONCERNS ABOUT TELEVISION

This background explains why television is the focus of so much theory and research. People have long fantasized about transmitting images and sounds. Richard Whittaker Hubbell published *4000 Years of television* in 1942, and the device has its own patron saint, Clare of Assisi, a teen runaway from the thirteenth century who was canonized in 1958 for imagining a midnight mass broadcast on her wall. In 1935, Rudolf Arnheim predicted TV would bring global peace. But he also warned that “television is a new, hard test of our wisdom.” The emergent medium’s easy access to knowledge would either enrich or impoverish its viewers, manufacturing an informed public, vibrant and active – or an indolent audience, domesticated and passive (Arnheim 1969, 160–163).

Such concerns about TV have never receded. When Edward R. Murrow addressed the US Radio-Television News Directors Association in 1958, he used the description/metaphor that television needed to “illuminate” and “inspire,” or it would be “merely wires and light in a box.” In a famous speech to the National Association of Broadcasters three years later, Newton Minow called US TV a “vast wasteland” (1971). He was urging broadcasters to show that the US was not the mindless consumer world that the Soviets claimed. The networks would thereby live up to their legislative responsibilities to act in the public interest by informing and entertaining. For his part, Alfred Hitchcock said: “Television is like the American toaster, you push the button and the same thing pops up every time” (quoted in Wasko 2005, 10; → Television: Social History).

These concerns come from a longstanding class concern. Ever since the Industrial Revolution, anxieties have existed about urbanized populations vulnerable to *manipulation by images* and demagogues through the popular. This is spectacularly the case with television. The notion of the suddenly enfranchised being bamboozled by the unscrupulously fluent has recurred throughout the modern period. It leads to an emphasis on the number and conduct of television audiences: where they came from, how many there were, and what they did after being there. These audiences are conceived as empirically knowable, via research instruments derived from sociology, demography, psychology, communications, and marketing (→ Research Methods). Such concerns are coupled with a concentration on content. Texts are also conceived as empirically knowable, via research instruments derived from communications, sociology, psychology, and literary criticism.



### KEY TOPICS IN RESEARCH

Television analysts “speak different languages, use different methods,” and pursue “different questions” (Hartley 1999, 18). But broadly speaking, TV has given rise to *three key topics*: ownership and control, texts, and audiences, with the question of the audience, and the knowledge that it has or that it lacks, as the governing discourse. Within these categories lie several other divisions. Approaches to *ownership and control* vary between neo-liberal endorsements of limited regulation by the state, in the interests of guaranteeing market entry for new competitors, and Marxist critiques of the “bourgeois” media’s control of the agenda for discussing society. Approaches to *textuality* vary between hermeneutic endeavors, which unearth the meaning of individual programs and link them to broader social formations and problems, and content-analytic endeavors, which establish patterns across significant numbers of similar texts, rather than close readings of individual ones (→ Text and Intertextuality). And approaches to *audiences* vary between social-psychological attempts to validate correlations between watching TV and social conduct, and culturalist critiques of imported television threatening national culture (→ Audience Research; Exposure to Television).

Just as US communication studies doggedly clings to a binary opposition between qualitative and quantitative approaches, between impression and science, between commitment and truth, so its dominant formation has hewed closely, with an almost febrile desire, to methodological individualism in seeking to explain why people and television interact as they do, looking for links between TV and violence, misogyny, and educational attainment. By contrast, most study of TV elsewhere is more exercised by imported programs’ impact on their countries’ cultural expression, using terminology and methods that address TV as a collective issue, rather than an individual one; a matter of interpretation and politics, more than psychological impact. But there is in fact a link between the two anxieties.

### MODELS OF THE IMPACT OF TELEVISION ON POPULAR CULTURE

Each one assumes audience members risk abjuring either interpersonal responsibility (in the US) or national culture (in the rest of the world). Both models assume that the audience is a “cultural dope . . . acting in compliance with the common culture.” Caricaturing people in this way clouds the actual “common sense rationalities . . . of here and now situations” (Garfinkel 1992, 68). The dope first appears in a *domestic effects model* (DEM). Dominant in the US, and increasingly exported around the world, it is typically applied without consideration of place and is psychological (for the apotheosis, see Surgeon General’s Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior 1971). Entering young minds hypodermically, TV can both enable and imperil learning and drive viewers to violence. The DEM is found in laboratories, clinics, prisons, schools, newspapers, psychology journals, television stations’ research and publicity departments, everyday talk, program-classification regulations, conference papers, parliamentary debates, and state-of-our-youth or state-of-our-civil-society moral panics (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

The second means of constituting “dopes” is a *global effects model* (GEM), primarily utilized in non-US discourse. Whereas the DEM focuses on the → cognition and

→ emotion of individual human subjects, via observation and experimentation, the GEM looks to customs and patriotism. Cultural belonging, not psychic wholeness, is the touchstone of the GEM (→ Globalization Theories). Instead of measuring audience responses to TV electronically or behaviorally (→ People-Meter), as its domestic counterpart does, the GEM interrogates the geopolitical origin of televisual texts and the themes and styles they embody, with particular attention to the putatively nation-building genres of drama, news, sport, and current affairs. GEM adherents hold that local citizens should control TV, because their loyalty can be counted on in the event of war, while in the case of drama, only locally sensitized producers will make narratives that are true to tradition and custom. The model is found in media-imperialism critique, everyday talk, broadcast and telecommunications policy, unions, international organizations, newspapers, heritage, cultural diplomacy, and postindustrial service-sector planning. In its manifestation as textual analysis, it interprets programs in ideological terms.

In contradistinction to the DEM/GEM, a third tendency in communication studies is stimulated by the *cultural-dope critique*. Endorsing the audience as active rather than passive, it constructs two other model audiences: all-powerful consumers (invented and loved by neo-liberal policy-makers; desired and feared by corporations) who use TV like an appliance, choosing what they want from its programming; and all-powerful interpreters (invented and loved by utopic communications and cultural critics; investigated and led by corporations) who use TV to bring pleasure and sense to their lives. Each claims that the television audience makes its own meanings, outwitting institutions of the state, academia, and capital that seek to measure and control it. Ownership patterns do not matter, because the industry is “wildly volatile,” animated entirely by “the unpredictable choice of the audience” (De Vany 2004, 1, 140). The first approach demonstrates a mechanistic application of neo-classical economics. The second varies between social-psychological tests of viewers’ gratifications and a critical ethnography that engages cultural and social questions.

But the DEM and the GEM continue unabated as the major players. From one side, effects researchers Dorothy G. Singer and Jerome L. Singer comment on “the impact on children of their exposure through television and films or, more recently, to computer games and arcade video games that involve vast amounts of violent actions” (2001, xv). From the other side, cultural researcher Néstor García Canclini notes that: “We Latin Americans presumably learned to be citizens through our relationship to Europe; our relationship to the United States will, however, reduce us to consumers” (2001, 1).

Regardless of their political or epistemological quixotries, all such researchers begin with popular culture and television as problems in need of address, whether through critique or adulation. Perhaps future scholars will break away from this rather elderly dance, and consider issues of textual diversity, cultural democracy, TV labor, and the high-technology trashing of electronic waste.

SEE ALSO: ► Americanization of the Media ► Audience Research ► Cognition  
 ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Emotion ► Exposure to Television ► Globalization Theories ► Media Economics ► Media Effects ► Media History ► People-Meter ► Popular Communication ► Research Methods ► Television ► Television: Social History ► Text and Intertextuality ► Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Television: Social History**

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Television history has developed relatively recently. After pioneering work in the UK (Briggs 1961–1995) and the US (Barnouw 1976), national histories of television (and broadcasting) have been written, mostly in Europe and sometimes beyond (bibliographies can be found at André Lange's history of television website). Historians have focused

mostly on political and institutional history. Television content has long been ignored except for countries (or researchers) rich enough to have access, and this remains a problem except in privileged situations (as in France, where the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel [INA] archives television programs for free access: [www.ina.fr](http://www.ina.fr)).

However, the growth of → cable television has made, somewhat haphazardly, some past programs available. The main missing link in historical work is the → audience, a notion hard to historicize both from a methodological (→ Audience Research) and epistemological viewpoint. Therefore television history has trouble connecting with major debates of the field that focus on audiences. In sum, globalizing mostly national efforts and digging into the past of television viewing remain the major challenges facing television historians. Taking stock of their efforts cannot be done without first attempting to integrate varied national data.

There is a paradox at the heart of television history (Bourdon 2004). Not only has it mostly been written on a national basis, but researchers often insist on national specificity without clarifying its comparative basis – e.g., on the close relation between television and government in France (→ France: Media System), the penetration of political parties into public television in Italy (→ Italy: Media System), the relation between television and the army in militarized societies, etc. The only major attempt at an “international” history is framed mostly as a set of national (at best continental) histories (Smith & Paterson 1998). And yet, the reader of all these works will easily realize that global similarities are no less striking than celebrated differences. This should not be interpreted as technological determinism (→ Technology and Communication). Television has not necessarily forced similar trends, or at least similar debates, on different societies. More probably it has accompanied, and to some extent encouraged, some globalizing trends. “Global,” however, needs heavy qualification (→ Globalization Theories).

## THE ORIGINS: TELEVISION AS NATIONAL TOOL AND ART FORM

Television was framed, from the start, as a *national medium*, which quickly became important for national culture and politics, despite some resistance. The first major media events (Dayan and Katz 1992) had strong national implications, whether a royal (UK, 1953) or imperial (Japan, 1961) marriage, or a major electoral or sports competition located in the country (→ Historic Key Events and the Media). A technological competition to be the first television country began in the 1930s before World War II, starting with the UK and the US. Everywhere, a television station was considered, unofficially, as part of the outfit of a “fully fledged” nation. Witness, after the war, the tremendous efforts made by poor countries such as African nations and India (→ Africa: Media Systems; India: Media System) to set up networks of transmitters for populations that could barely afford television sets. Often the real or imagined threat of transmissions spilling over from neighboring countries (and sometimes from US army stations) accelerated the setting up of stations, while for stronger nations the willingness to export their culture encouraged the development of television. Israel started television in 1968, mainly to counteract the popularity of Arab stations among Arabic-speaking citizens (Jews or Arabs) and also to reach the population of the newly conquered territories (→ Israel: Media System). In the 1950s, France promptly set up a transmitter in the eastern part of the country where

people were exposed to West German television. West German television, in its turn, played an important part in showing the capitalist world to its communist Eastern counterpart. Neighbors of Brazil worried about the popularity of Brazilian telenovelas on their borders.

Beyond the emphasis on the nation, there is another common feature to early television, in the 1950s in the UK and the US, and in the 1960s in much of Europe (including Eastern Europe). Whether commercial or public, many national stations tried to appropriate television not only as a new medium, but as a *new art form*. A hybrid class of creators excluded from → cinema – engineers dreaming of poetry, avant-gardists willing to experiment with technology – entered television to experiment, mostly in drama – especially live drama, with Shakespeare being a “global” favorite, but also in the documentary, where British television culture was the major exponent of the trend (→ Documentary Film; Documentary Film, History of). Although with less encouragement from heads of programming, this was true both in public and in commercial stations.

### **PUBLIC VERSUS COMMERCIAL**

To a certain extent, this contradicts the well-established view that media developed according to very different national traditions. The notion of “media models” (or “theories”) was first proposed (albeit not for TV) by Siebert et al. (1956), and has been re-elaborated several times since (see notably Curran & Park 2002; McQuail 2005). Radically, this will be simplified into two models, which themselves should be sub-classified: public and commercial.

As defined in this article, “public television” applies to stations controlled by the state, whatever the means of this control are. It is financed by general taxes or by a specific tax, the license fee (“invented” for radio by the UK), although advertising is sometimes added to the financing mix. Within this model can be included stations working within public service (as in western Europe; → Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy), authoritarian, dictatorial, and (formerly) Soviet frameworks. In all cases, the state directly or indirectly regulates the content of television. Television is not only a question of national sovereignty and identity (as it is everywhere), but also of national culture and education (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). In authoritarian, dictatorial systems, it is attached to a ministry of information (as it was also in France until 1974), but everywhere public television emphasizes its educational mission. Feedback from viewers and audience ratings do not really matter (→ Rating Methods). The aims are those that were first set for radio in the → BBC royal charter of 1927, to “inform, educate, and entertain.” Entertainment came third, while it was always first in commercial television. Public television also includes McQuail’s “developmental” model (2005), where television is mobilized to unify new nations (→ Development Communication; Television for Development). Even older European nations had something akin to developmental television, such as postwar Italy, which used television to spread literacy in the national language (notably with a program tellingly called *It Is Never Too Late*).

*Commercial television* is financed by advertisements only, and state control is relatively weaker than in public television. Within the typology used by Siebert et al., there is only one model, the liberal one; according to this, the media are organized on a free-market,

commercial basis, and this is linked to political independence. There is no room for a situation where commercial media are politically controlled, although this has since occurred, and is still occurring, in many countries. Strong commercial television stations are there to maximize the audience and to make money. The big media groups that emerged early in the history of Latin American television, like the Brazilian Globo, launched in 1965 one year after the rise of the military regime that ended only in 1989, knew how to adapt to the military dictatorship of their country quite well (→ Brazil: Media System). Commercial television is related to political independence, which can draw prestige and audiences, especially in situations where commercial television is born out of authoritarian or monopolistic systems. But sometimes independence comes at too high a cost. Witness what happened to oligarch Gusinsky's station NTV in post-Soviet Russia in 2001, when President Vladimir Putin had the state conglomerate Gazprom take over NTV and force the owner into exile (→ Russia: Media System). Present-day semi-commercial Chinese television is by no means politically independent.

### FROM PUBLIC TO COMMERCIAL

The global history of television can then be summed up as follows: in the beginning, the public model was dominant. Commercial television reigned mainly in the United States. Quickly, however, it spread, first south into the Latin American backyard, where educational attempts (notably in Chile) quickly yielded to the ambition of media entrepreneurs supported by US networks. The US also made inroads in countries not formerly colonized by Europe, such as Iran, Thailand, and Japan, or in Anglo-Saxon areas of influence. Commercial television coexisted with public television from the start in Japan (1953) and Australia (1956). In the UK it was born in 1955, whereas most of Europe waited until the deregulation of the 1980s to launch commercial television.

US stations might have been relatively independent vis-à-vis governments and political parties. They can impose their agendas and formats on political life (like the Kennedy–Nixon debates in 1960, which would become a reference for pre-electoral debates in the west and beyond; → Televised Debates). However, television became a tool of imperial commercial policy, supported by the state (Segrave 1998), to export programs, formats, technologies, and even modes of regulation to the rest of the world (→ Americanization of the Media). US executives viewed with surprise the reluctance of Europeans, but quickly (and aggressively) sold their programs in poorer countries with networks officially based on the public model, using strategies like block booking (popular programs had to be bought as parts of a package) or dumping.

Public television was vulnerable: US programs and formats were cheap and attractive, which can be explained both by their competitive commercial character and by their targeting of multicultural audiences of immigrants. By the early 1960s, *I Love Lucy* was popular in parts of South America, Africa, and Japan. Game show formats were adapted in many places, openly and eagerly by British and Australian commercial TV, more discreetly by public European stations, which domesticated popular American recipes – loosely adapting them without paying copyrights at a time when the idea of internationally selling “formats” on the basis of existing copyrights was still in its infancy. In the 1970s, many public television countries talked of promoting a → “New World Information and

Communication Order” (NWICO) to counteract US influence. Their efforts culminated in the publication of the McBride report (*Many voices, one world*, published by → UNESCO in 1980; → International Communication). At the same time, several American series were proving to be successful with audiences around the globe, notably *Dallas* at the end of the decade. *Dallas* was not the first major American export, but its west European triumph came at a time when European public television felt threatened by financial crises and rising costs, increased criticism from social movements demanding more space in the air waves, rising neo-liberalism, and pressures from capitalist groups eager to use the media. Western European television executives then wondered how to produce their own *Dallas* (→ Soap Operas).

### THE MEANING OF DEREGULATION

The deregulation of television affected the whole of western Europe first, but spilled to the south, and also to the east after the fall of the Berlin Wall (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of). New commercial stations were born everywhere. Media barons became key figures, openly embracing populism, and sometimes entering politics. The emblematic figure here is the Italian *Silvio Berlusconi*, pioneer of wild deregulation in the late 1970s, head of Italian media conglomerate Mediaset, and Prime Minister in 1994 and from 2001 to 2006. Other media barons took a less direct interest in politics but entered the field of television, globalizing not necessarily culture *per se* but certainly formats, schedules, and ways of working. The (formerly Australian) press baron *Rupert Murdoch* successfully (but after heavy losses) created a fourth American network, Fox, in 1986, and the main British bouquet of channels, British Sky Broadcasting (BSkyB). But smaller markets also have their media barons, wielding much political influence, and controlling major national TV channels (→ News Corporation).

International *format convergence* seems to be the order of the day. This is clear when considering the rise of a new genre, reality television (Holmes & Jermyn 2004). “Reality television” is a blanket term used originally in the US in the 1980s for programs foregrounding ordinary viewers in “real-life” situations, such as *America’s Most Wanted* (itself adapted from a German show). However, it is the rise of European “reality games” which made the genre universal, such as the Dutch *Big Brother*, in 1999. While major flows of export worldwide still run from the US, reality TV offers many examples of European global hits. In those games, contestants expose themselves to the camera in personal, emotional, intimate, stressful situations. They participate in their own elimination from the program (sometimes with the intervention of a jury and/or the audience. They have triggered media panics, but now seem to have settled down, sometimes recycling well-known formats like couple games or talent shows in *American Idol: The Search for a Superstar*, adapted in 2002 from the British format *Pop Idol*. Comparative analysis shows that national cultures domesticate these formats in different ways.

However, this is not simply the victory of a commercial model of television, a media version of Fukuyama’s end of history. Undoubtedly, some professional norms, ways of scheduling, formats (the anchor-person for news), and audience measurement methods (push-button audimeters; → People-Meter) introduced in the 1970s and now adopted in more than 80 countries, still continue to spread. Commercial television has many faces,

however. Its relation to democracy remains problematic, as in many parts of the former Soviet empire, where one could talk of commercial authoritarian television. There are also varied degrees of commercialization (→ Commercialization of the Media). American (including Latin American) television still leads the trends. Public service television, despite persistent criticism, remains different from and more regulated than its commercial competitors, despite being taken to task for aping them: it still schedules more news (at a slower pace) and current affairs. Weak production infrastructures and the persistent exaltation of individual authorship contribute to explaining why most of Europe still struggles to produce long-lasting series and serials; soap operas and telenovelas tend to remain an American monopoly.

### THE END OF TELEVISION?

The “end of television” has been prophesied many times. It refers to the end of national channels as assemblages of clearly identifiable genres in coherent schedules. The schedule is the same on every weekday (breakfast news, talk, games, mid-day news, soaps) while it changes weekly in the evening, with mostly series (national ones in rich countries), variety shows, and talk (especially in poorer markets). Advertising is the only genre which pervades the schedule at all times, with more interruptions in aggressive commercial markets.

Some researchers have argued that *fragmentation* – e.g., in themed cable channels, digital TV and interactivity, video on demand, diffusion of programmes on the Internet or the mobile phone – will destroy this assemblage. They highlight the implications for daily patterns of living, social memory, and even social cohesion. Since the early 1990s, the rise of cable and → satellite television has changed television but not fragmented its audience into specific groups according to taste and culture, as many had predicted. Major channels did lose audiences, but still garnered the majority of viewing time, and some old genres became the matrix of the new themed channels based on fiction (Home Box Office, 1975), news (→ CNN, 1980), children’s programs, sports – in short, old genres, although one should note the addition of musical videos (MTV, 1981) and later → reality TV as the basis for themed channels. Old television also keeps on expanding. It passed the bar of the majority of world households in the late 1980s (with China becoming a television country), and there is still much room for expansion in Africa and parts of Asia (→ Audience Segmentation).

Finally, television culture remains very much national through the content of some genres (information and light entertainments) and their specific stars (hosts, newscasters, etc.), despite some globalizing trends. Although → media conglomerates have shares in different countries, the dream of a global diffusion of the same program cherished in the 1980s has been forsaken. No channel has embodied this dream as vividly as Viacom’s MTV, created in 1981. The idea of a global music youth culture was enticing both to idealists of a universal world and to advertisers of global brands for the young and affluent. After a noisy start, MTV underwent a process of “*renationalization*” and created national (French, Italian, or even British) or continental (Latino) channels with a mix of “international” (Anglo-Saxon) success, and local clips. This example illustrates how a globalization of formats goes hand in hand with constant hybridization.



Most recently, MTV has announced the launch of MTV-K for Korean Americans. This is a symptom of another major change, connected to the rise of global migration movements. The national public is fragmenting, but it seems to be fragmenting along national-diasporic lines. This was heralded by the rise of video in the 1980s, which reached communities of immigrants in the west. Cable channels now allow for a de-territorialization of national cultures, with Turkish immigrants in Germany, Russian immigrants in Israel, or Pakistanis in the UK keeping in touch with their country and culture of origin (→ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication; Ethnic Media and their Influence).

“Old” channels have shown not only resilience, but the ability to combine with new media (→ Convergence of Media Systems). The relations between television and the → Internet are the best example of this convergence. In reality television, audience participation plays a major part (through the Internet and mobile phone). Official and unofficial sites of such programs are key places for (un)planned exposure of the instant stars’ privacy and biography. Older genres also combine with the Internet, where Internet development has been devoted to constantly updated news in an online environment. On the Internet, the ever-popular US television series grow into a whole sub-culture, not only about celebrity gossip (→ Celebrity Culture), but also alternative screenplays, with international hits like *Lost* (entering its third season in 2006–7) or *24*. The vitality of these programs and their international exposure suggest that (relatively) “old” television still exerts a powerful influence. Undoubtedly, television channels now promote a more instant, more commercial, more individualistic culture than in the past. But this culture remains steadily national and related to major television genres, with reality television as an important addition.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, History of ▶ Africa: Media Systems ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audience Segmentation ▶ BBC ▶ Brazil: Media System ▶ Cable Television ▶ Celebrity Culture ▶ Cinema ▶ CNN ▶ Commercialization of the Media ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Development Communication ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Documentary Film, History of ▶ Elections and Media, History of ▶ Ethnic Media and their Influence ▶ Ethnicity and Exposure to Communication ▶ France: Media System ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Historic Key Events and the Media ▶ India: Media System ▶ International Communication ▶ Internet ▶ Israel: Media System ▶ Italy: Media System ▶ Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media History ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ News Corporation ▶ People-Meter ▶ Public Service Broadcasting: Law and Policy ▶ Rating Methods ▶ Reality TV ▶ Russia: Media System ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Televised Debates ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Television for Development ▶ UNESCO

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## Television Technology

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Technological developments have played a major part in shaping the production, broadcasting, and reception of television. Histories of television tend to highlight a sequence of technologies (e.g., the cathode ray tube, fiber optic cable, and remote control) and their inventors (e.g., Nipkow, Baird, and Zworykin). This approach allows us to trace the development of the devices that together constitute television technology, while also identifying the relevant social groups, including scientists, technicians, entrepreneurs, governments, and even home enthusiasts, involved in shaping this emergence and form.

### TECHNOLOGICAL DETERMINISM VERSUS THE SOCIAL SHAPING OF TECHNOLOGY

Scholarly investigations of television technology frequently revolve around the relative significance of the determining or constraining power of the technology, on the one hand, and the social and cultural circumstances from which the technology emerges and within which it is deployed, on the other. To the extent that these relative emphases can be counterpoised against one another, two broad positions can be identified – positions often characterized as forming a debate about technological versus social determinism. Raymond Williams (1921–1988) is the cultural theorist who first outlined the major issues in this debate, notably in his *Television: Technology and cultural form* (1974), but also in his essay ‘Culture and Technology’ (1983).

*Technological determinism*, Williams argued, is the immensely powerful and orthodox view of the relationship of technology to social change. Harder variants of technological

determinism are sometimes criticized for focusing on the “lone inventor,” the engineer who applies scientific knowledge and invents or modifies technology in some sort of neutral, apolitical way. This is seen as ignoring the fact that invention is goal-oriented; that is to say, it is intended to achieve a particular end or purpose. It also ignores the key role of large corporations (e.g., RCA, EMI, and → Sony Corporation) and state governments in backing the development of specific technologies. It is similarly criticized for focusing on technical development as “one-off” instances, whereas the history of television technology shows a recurrent cycle of development, innovation, adoption, take-up, use, and modification.

“Soft” versions of technological determinism see technology as an element in a process of change that is (about to be) occurring anyway – the technology is a symptom of change of some other kind. This is essentially Williams’s approach. In contrast with technological determinism, his account of the development of television restores intent to the process of research and development – television was developed with particular purposes in mind. He points out that a technology depends on other technologies in a system for its effectiveness; that is, specific artifacts are embedded in what sociologists of technology term “socio-technical systems.” For Williams, television technology is more than simply a series of isolated inventions. Its emergence depended on a set of developments in electricity, telegraphy (→ Telegraph, History of), → photography, film (→ Film Genres), and → radio, most of them made with ends other than the transmission and reception of moving images in mind. The components of television were effectively drawn together to realize the transmission and reception of moving images with little prior thought given to prospective institutional structures, forms, or content. In other words, it was a technology looking for a use.

At the same time, Williams maintains that television (like radio before it) reflects or embodies particular societal features, including the unequal distribution of economic and political power. Television was developed to serve the twin processes of mobility and the more self-sufficient family home – which, together, he terms “mobile privatization.” This is the broader context for understanding the particular development of television technology. For Williams, television technology is the outcome, rather than the cause, of culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). The system of “centralized transmission” and “privatized reception” is not built in to the technology – it was neither inevitable nor immutable, but is what led to licensing and sponsorship or advertising systems. These core aspects of television, as it is understood today, underpin the very notion of broadcasting.

### **THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF TELEVISION TECHNOLOGY**

Williams traces television technology back to Volta’s and Faraday’s work on electricity (in 1800–1831); the electrical telegraph (which was envisioned as a technical system in 1753 and demonstrated in various places in the early nineteenth century); photography (notably the work of Niepce in 1816, Daguerre in 1839, Fox Talbot in London, and George Eastman in the USA); and slide projection by “magic lantern” (which had been practiced since 1736). In other words, television is embedded in a complex system of scientific knowledge, technologies, expertise, organizations, and individuals, and depends on their existence, involvement and compatibility to operate effectively.

Seeing at a distance was imagined in the 1870s, for example by George Carey, who produced drawings for a “selenium camera” that would enable people to see at a distance “by electricity.” Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, had plans for a “photophone” which would enable one to see the person one was talking to on the telephone. The physical realization of this vision was linked closely with the development of radio, since television broadcasting involves sounds and words, as well as pictures.

The visions of the late nineteenth century were developed physically in the early decades of the twentieth century, with many of the key features of television invented by the time of World War I. At the technical core of television is the process of scanning an image. Generally, this has been done with a beam of light, traveling from top to bottom and left to right. When the light passes over the image an electrical impulse (of greater or lesser strength) is produced. This is amplified and transmitted by radio waves or along cables. The *cathode ray tube* (CRT) reproduces the image at the receiver. This contains an electron beam facing the screen, which has a uniform coating of a material that emits light when struck by the beam, which is of varying density – depending on the shade of gray dot being transmitted. The complete picture is received 25 times per second, so movement appears unstilted and realistic. In the 1920s and early 1930s television was “low definition”, with 30 lines to the screen. By 1936 the → BBC had developed a system with 405 lines, while more recently most of Europe has standardized on 625 lines and the USA and Japan on 525 lines (→ Communication Technology Standards). Much of this has changed in recent years with the arrival of digital television technology.

In the 1920s and 1930s there were *two paths of experimentation* that were followed in developing television, namely mechanical and electronic scanning. Mechanical television was based on Paul Nipkow’s spinning metal disc patent that he submitted in Berlin in 1883 for an “electronic telescope” to scan and transmit images. This idea was taken up, in particular, by Charles Jenkins in the USA and John Logie Baird in Scotland. The electronic approach (which proved superior) was developed by Alan Campbell-Swinton in the UK and Boris Rosing in the USSR, and later by Vladimir Zworykin (Rosing’s student) and Philo Farnsworth in the USA. Around this time experimental television broadcasting was underway, with demonstrations held, equipment exhibited (e.g. at the at the 1939 New York World Fair), and small numbers of television sets sold – by 1935 there were 2,000 Baird television sets in service in the UK.

Individuals, corporations, and nations competed with one another, so there are numerous *claims of “firsts” in television* in this period – milestones include Logie Baird’s broadcast, initially of stick figures and silhouettes (in 1925) and then with 30 lines of resolution and a refresh rate of five frames a second (in 1926); Charles Jenkins’s licensed station (1928) and broadcast advertisement (1930); the BBC’s public television service (which began in 1932); the German television “service” (1935), which broadcast the Olympics in 1936; and the British Alexandra Palace 240- and 405-line service (1936). Interest from commercial organizations, state governments, and the public, however, remained lukewarm. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC: the regulatory body in the USA) hampered developments there, and there was no pressure group comparable to the amateur “ham” operators who had pressed for radio broadcasting. By the outbreak of war, only 20,000 sets had been sold in the UK. Nowhere had television broadcasting become a mass medium.

The key factor that transformed television from a toy to a mass medium, according to Brian Winston, was the spare capacity in the electronics industry immediately after the end of World War II. During the war there had been a massive expansion of the radio industry in the USA: between 1942 and 1944 expenditure on radio had expanded by about 1,300 percent (→ Radio: Social History). The industry employed 300,000 workers, and television production provided a cushion against unemployment and depression. This exemplifies how television was accommodated by existing bodies, with radio manufacturers and others shifting to television. By and large it was the same corporations and organizations that had been involved in radio that became involved in television. Television was absorbed by existing bodies, rather than creating new ones.

The 1950s was the decade of expansion and, as such, something of a golden age for television. In the UK, by March 1947, 14,560 households had licenses; by the end of 1951 about 1 million; and by June 1953 about 2 million. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, viewed by 20 million people, added enormous impetus. In the USA 0.02 percent had a television in 1946, 9 percent in 1950 and 65 percent in 1955 (→ Television: Social History).

Since the arrival of television as a mass medium in the developed world in the late 1950s, there has been a steady stream of *technological developments*. These have occurred in relation to production, distribution (or broadcasting), and consumption (receivers and the ancillary devices that are used with television in the home). As with the CRT television receiver, the origins of most distribution and consumption technologies can be traced back over several decades. An experimental *microwave relay system* was introduced by Western Union between New York and Philadelphia in 1945; by the 1970s this was the main form for carrying television signals, having lower costs than coaxial cables. *Color television* was demonstrated in 1946 (by Peter Goldmark at CBS), though this mechanical system (with a red–blue–green wheel spin in front of the CRT) was later replaced by an electronic system; this became available from the 1960s and by 1972 half of US households had color television.

*Videotape* was introduced to television production in 1956, the VCR for use in the home was introduced by Phillips in 1972, and in 1977 RCA introduced the first VHS format VCR in the USA. Today VCRs are hardly sold at all, having been displaced by DVD recorders and players. The TELSTAR *satellite* was launched in 1961, enabling the first transatlantic reception of a television signal by satellite in 1962 (→ Satellite Television). *Fiber optic cable* was introduced from the 1970s; it is used to transmit digital data, carries tens of thousands of times more data than conventional copper wire, and today forms the core of cable and telephone networks (→ Cable Television). *Remote controls*, which can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century and were used relatively widely in World War II, were developed for use with domestic television in the 1950s, notably by Robert Adler at Zenith Radio Corporation in 1957.

Accordingly, rather than being a single or fixed technology, television is a set of inter-linked devices and components that are constantly being upgraded and modified, with “new” technologies arriving on the market after lengthy periods of thought, experiment, demonstration, and development. At the time of writing, the “new” technologies are mainly digital in nature.

## DIGITAL TELEVISION

Digital television was introduced in the late 1990s, and analog television is planned to be switched off in the USA by 2009 and in the EU by 2012. Digital television is much cheaper to transmit and allows considerably greater transmission capacity. It thus facilitates more television channels (which in turn is leading to the decline in viewing of public service broadcasting channels and in the power of public service broadcasters), interactivity, various screen formats, higher-quality sound and cinema-like surround sound systems. Flat-screen monitors with the video signal received by cable are replacing CRT televisions with receivers tuned to a station's frequency to receive the images that are being transmitted. Many of these features are coming together and being further enhanced with the arrival of high definition television (HDTV), which provides much higher-resolution pictures, a larger picture, more colors, higher quality sound and a faster refresh rate – so motion will be smoother and clarity greater, especially from near the screen.

There is much debate about whether it will be the personal computer (PC) or television that will become the home entertainment hub of the home in the future. *Convergence* allows → Internet access via many forms of television, and television can be received on many PCs (by broadband downloads or in-built television receivers; → Digitization and Media Convergence). Still and moving images, as well as sound, all use the same digital systems of data representation and transmission. However, there remain fundamental differences between how television and PC technologies are designed, with the former relatively easily operated by a remote control, and the latter being more of a “lean-forward” activity requiring frequent operation of a mouse, in an environment which does not easily accommodate more than one user at a time, and requiring far greater technical knowledge and intervention. In other words, despite technically similar capabilities, the convergence of the PC and television is far from realized.

Whatever the outcome of this contest, the contemporary era is one characterized by particularly rapid changes in television technology. It may be that, with the greater interactive possibilities afforded by digital technologies, the fundamental characteristic of television, that it is broadcast from one to many, may be changing, with users empowered to become producers too. The preconditions for television that Raymond Williams identified, however, remain as significant now as when he was writing – the unequal distribution of power and information; and the need for institutions to provide social cohesion in the context of mobile privatization. Changing notions of “public” and “private,” and with them of family and community, are among the factors that will shape, as they always have done, the development of television technology.

SEE ALSO: ▶ BBC ▶ Cable Television ▶ Communication Technology Standards  
 ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Film Genres ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Internet ▶ News Production and Technology ▶ Photography ▶ Radio ▶ Radio: Social History ▶ Radio Technology ▶ Satellite Television  
 ▶ Sony Corporation ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Technology, Social Construction of ▶ Telegraph, History of ▶ Television: Social History

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## **Television, Visual Characteristics of**

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Television – which literally means “seeing from a distance” – has seldom been discussed by either critics or scholars primarily as a visual medium. Yet from the start, key sectors of the television industry itself were fascinated by the possibilities and potential for televisual representation (→ Visual Representation). In the shadow of more “legitimate” art forms in the twentieth century, and → cinema’s → spectacle-oriented wide screen in particular, television came to be known in largely style-less terms as “the small screen.” But this denigration of television glosses over a great deal of visual complexity and diversity that can be understood within three broad perspectives: the industry, the audience, and scholarship (→ Television; Television: Social History).

First, “the” television industry is not one thing; it is many, each with very different visual imaging practices. Reality television producers, for example (→ Reality TV), employ very different visual strategies to filmed dramas. Second, “the” television → audience, far from being monolithic, splintered into many different forms of visual consumption, decades before digital cable and YouTube. Since the early 1980s, for example, “narrowcast” music videos challenged their niche audience with visual styles far more complex than televised games in sports bars. Finally, scholarship, while largely discounting television’s visual complexity, offered research theories that viewed televisuality on a wide continuum, from the merely instrumental to the sometimes irrelevant. Many scholars who theorized television within either the social sciences or the humanities followed the modernist impulse to find the “specificity” of each communication medium. For television this meant anything but the image: effects, → propaganda, agenda setting, content, and/or psychological gratifications (→ Media Effects; Uses and Gratifications; Agenda-Setting Effects).

Television, in short, became many different things to many different industry sectors and audiences. Any discussion of television’s visuality, therefore, must be specific, and

explained in terms of television's varying historical genres, end uses, and modes of production. This entry describes the development of the visual characteristics of television mainly from the perspective of the US, where the medium gained its social significance earlier than in other countries, which often followed the path taken in the US.

## INDUSTRY AND TELEVISUALITY

Television's maligned visual status may have fitted early prototypes of television, which glimmered with ghostly, amorphous, black-and-white imagery. But this status ill fits both the ways that production personnel and programming departments in the US conceptualized TV in the 1930s and 1940s, and the ways that television eventually began to appear after 1980, in the multichannel age of → cable television and later high definition television (HDTV). Popular critics had their own reasons for ignoring TV's visual dimension in the 1950s and 1960s. Historian Eric Barnouw (1974) celebrated live drama and method acting as defining features of television's "golden age" in the 1950s. This view presupposed that artifice and production technique were merely obstacles in the creation of naturalistic, psychological authenticity. In hour-long live anthology dramas, jostled stage flats, sweating actors, and lighting hot spots didn't lessen television art. They proved that sensitive, nonvisual writers, directors, and actors were "operating without a net" in front of the camera's disinterested mechanical eye.

Hollywood's telefilms, however, which came to dominate and displace live drama in the mid-1950s in the US, were produced on 35 mm film (→ Hollywood). Golden-age critics characterized telefilms as mindless, lowest-common-denominator factory products from studio assembly lines. This judgment made the writer – not the image-maker – king during this period for scholars and critics. Popular mythology at the time – even from Hollywood – seemed to support this artistic hierarchy and write-off of TV's artistry. Despite Jack Warner's much-quoted prohibition that no TVs should appear on-screen or on the lot, all of the studios had some interest in developing television, and some were systematically involved in making television a central part of their business plans. Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO), one of the "big five" Hollywood studios, sold its film library to television; Paramount launched theatrical television and pay-per-view; → Disney created a weekly synergy between its studio films, television, and the network ABC (→ Television Networks); producer David O. Selznick brought wide-screen spectacle to event-status television; and Warner Bros offered its underused studio, back lots, and labor to satisfy programmers' ravenous appetite to fill network and local schedules each night.

The "three-camera," live, studio mode of production favored by critics spread internationally, in part because real-time "editing" (switching), fewer lighting set-ups, and a singular production site were more economic (→ Video). Many genres that employed this mode (news reading, telenovelas, game shows) offered few on-camera visual complexities. Yet a second, related mode of production, "*electronic news gathering*" (ENG), used smaller and lighter crews and increasingly portable equipment to gather late-breaking reality images and transmit them back to the three-camera control room. ENG work, while rapidly cut and catastrophe-focused, works visually, not because of its high resolution, illusionism, or formal beauty, but because of its fragmentary, frenetic, voyeuristic kick. Pressure to include arresting imagery drives TV news coverage, even to the point of



creating proxy footage and manufactured illustrations for events not recorded (Griffin 1992). Today, 24/7 cable news has updated both three-camera and ENG by embellishing them using digital graphics, text crawls, and multi-screens. If three-camera started as rote style-less news reading, it has ended as stylistically excessive, videographic, and cluttered.

*Single-camera, film-style, location production*, by contrast, has served as a workhorse mode of production since the early years of telefilm. In Europe and the US, many series opted for film style, given prime-time drama's higher budgets and higher stylistic expectations. For years, shows shot on film negative offered far higher resolution, richer contrast and tonality, and more subtle color rendition than shows shot with video cameras. Yet the emergence of HDTV since the late 1990s has meant that the actual capture device (film or chip) is less important than the cinematic look achieved. Many contemporary film critics have naïvely "discovered" that television – à la *The Sopranos*, *Lost*, and *24* – are as stylistically provocative and sophisticated as many high-budget studio films (→ Soap Operas; Television Technology).

Yet these same critics ignore the fact that dramatic television has offered viewers high-level cinematic experiences throughout its history. The A-list film directors that pushed network television boundaries in the US include: John Cassavettes, John Frankenheimer, Paddy Cheyevsky, Michael Mann, Steven Spielberg, Oliver Stone, Spike Lee, and Robert Altman, to name but a few. The portable, *cinéma vérité*-based improvisational television work of Cassavettes in the 1960s, for example, is a direct precursor to many contemporary "improvisational-looking" genres, from reality television to the faux-documentary quality of frantic "real-time" shows like *24* and *The Shield* (both shot continuously with two mobile hand-held film cameras and edited like documentaries). If dense digital graphics and computer-generated images (CGI) have converted even three-camera and ENG into stylistic showcases, then commercials and music videos (where many prime-time cinematographers, directors, and editors got their training) helped teach television how to integrate and synthesize cinematic and videographic impulses as a standard look across many channels.

While high-production-value series of this ilk still pervade prime-time, new *digital technologies*, starting in the 1990s, have uncorked an excessively diverse range of video forms and televisual genres, each with their own aesthetic implications. These newer formats, which move beyond the two traditional modes (three-camera and film style), can best be understood in terms of the changing audiences and consumers, and television's increasingly mobile users (→ Digital Imagery).

## AUDIENCES AND TELEVISUALITY

Broadcast television was developed as part of an integrated nationalistic agenda of postwar consumerism and economic expansion, one that rationalized TV squarely within the context of suburban homes and neighborhoods. This domestic setting impacted on the visual approaches that producers adopted and the kinds of visual perception that audiences were able to participate in. While Paramount studios worked hard and failed to make television a large-screen theatrical experience in the late 1940s, electronic manufacturers like RCA/NBC and DuMont in the US succeeded in making television simultaneously an entertainment activity, a desirable new kind of furniture, and a symbol of social status. Sponsors speculated that daytime viewers would be "distracted" housewives, performing

household tasks with the television on. Producers therefore created dialogue-driven shows that did not require intensive observation to be understood. Thus, the image in daytime soaps receded under the weight of highly redundant dialogue that allowed preoccupied viewers to periodically “glance” at the screen (→ Exposure to Television; Audience Research; Media Use by Social Variable).

Producers imagined prime time differently, as a collective family activity undertaken with the room lights on. These shows should be entertaining, even if family members chatted throughout a broadcast. Advertisers in the 1940s and 1950s also directly imported from radio broadcasting another factor that devalued the visual: “direct address” audio narration that hyped products on-screen by overtly asking viewers to consider them. In these ways the early viewer was addressed as a distracted, calculating, and “*multitasking*” viewer. At least in these verbal, multitasking contexts, TV positioned itself in opposition to the darkened, solitary cinema viewer who was willing to suspend disbelief in order to imagine on-screen worlds as real. Marketed as a “window on the world,” TV eschewed illusion, while cinema posed as a “screen” allowing viewers escape from the world.

TV’s initial “de-visualization” – by broadcasters from radio, product sponsors, set manufacturers, and real estate developers – represented only one of TV’s historical strands. Telefilm and commercials would soon bring Hollywood competencies to program production. These influences included expressive and noir-ish lighting, location shooting, wide-screen genres, and film-style storytelling. The latest stage in viewing this television-into-cinema trajectory lies in the widespread design and construction of wide-screen “home theaters” in viewers’ living spaces. Digital television (DTV) and HDTV make this transition possible. The diversity of DTV forms makes it difficult to theorize TV cleanly without considering how home TV multitasking overlaps with home cinematic experiences (at least for consumers affluent enough to afford the new digital products and systems). The ability of high definition viewers to actually see all of this on-screen digital detail also has a direct impact on the ways that production groups now strategize, visually design, block scenes, and direct the action for new HDTV and DVD frames (Caldwell 2008).

With the advent of cable and the VCR in the 1970s, the → Internet in the 1990s, online downloading, video mobile phones, iPods, and mobcasting (distributing video segments over mobile phones and hand-held devices) in the 2000s, TV soon reckoned with what industry and audiences engaged as television’s “second,” “third,” and “fourth screens.” Audience research began to show that these *multiple screens* were not mutually exclusive (→ Nielsen Ratings). In fact, viewers frequently use various combinations of screens at the same time, and younger viewers choose multi-screen multitasking far more than older generations. This complicated simultaneous viewing across multiple platforms makes the audience’s visual experience very different (more fragmented, frenetic, and mobile). It also forces TV programmers to develop more complicated strategies for “content migration” and “multipurposing.” The most effective of these strategies must address several increasingly important factors: the scale, location, and mobility of viewing.

## SCHOLARS AND TELEVISUALITY

The first two frameworks considered here – the industry and the audience – show just how slippery it is to theorize about the visual specificity or definitive tendencies of television.

Scholars can research TV as broadcast, cable-cast, home cinema, DVR'd, downloaded, uploaded, YouTubed, hand-held, collected, mashed, or remixed. Each of these activities entails and exploits different aesthetic limitations, and new social rituals for viewing that directly affect the perceptual and cognitive demands of television's visual experience. This includes gatherings in which groups view entire seasons – only on DVD – through every consecutive episode during a single, sleepless sitting. Others theorize TV's new second, third, and fourth screens; where, for example, producers attempt to jam 35 mm film images from the series *Lost* shot on Panavision into the tiny coarse screens of a mobile phone, or into the stuttering quick-time images of screen-cluttered computer downloads. Such phenomena mean that scholars need to keep going back to television as a historically changing source – both at sites of production and consumption – to test and challenge their theories and assumptions about television's visual communication.

Given its challenging history, some media theorists have framed television in ways that allow us to understand its image-making. Other research, however, seems to have glossed over the complicated technological, production, and viewing developments outlined above. Some early media theorists, for example, by approaching media as propaganda or as having strong effects, inevitably presupposed televised images as deceptions that produced other more significant realities that researchers could examine more substantively (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on). Some forced important distinctions between constantly developing new media technologies – and the forms of image-making “essential” to each – into locked-down taxonomies and one-size-fits-all formulations.

For → Marshall McLuhan (1964), television's “cool,” low-resolution appearance meant that audiences were conscious not of a show's style, but of a common “all-at-once” viewing experience, shared simultaneously with many others (→ Medium Theory). The global networking of viewers was more important than the screen content or television style. Content analysis researchers also gave some attention to the screen that viewers actually looked at. But content analysis boiled television's communication experience down into isolatable, scripted actions of one sort or another while showing little interest in how stylistic, formal, and narrative engagement in television's visual experience might also create important affective, cognitive, and behavioral effects (→ Emotions, Media Effects on; Content Analysis, Quantitative). Media research tied to broad social processes and “liminal” national rituals (Katz & Dayan 1992), in turn, continued to underscore not TV's visual or formal dimensions, but rather singular events being widely watched in real time through a national TV window.

If McLuhan represented a promising but ultimately limited view of television's visual dimension (because of his technological determinism and tendency to overgeneralize the effects of each medium), then his British contemporary Raymond Williams (1974) offered some of the most important early formulations of television capable of accounting for current digital production and consumption practices. Specifically, Williams argued that scholars must examine not just the history of a communication technology, but the history of the social uses of technology as well. For television this meant examining the medium's most fundamental impact, something he termed “mobile privatized consumption.” Later theorists (Negroponte 1995; Levy 1997; and the magazine *Wired* in general) followed McLuhan's lead in celebrating new media in the 1990s as the result of a new sense of vast digital “networking” – precipitated by engagement with the

wired global Internet rather than with a local visual screen. Williams's more nuanced view of social usage and media mobility (→ Mobility, Technology for) seems a far more accurate description of contemporary uses of television in the age of hand-held video and convergence (→ Convergence of Media Systems).

While social scientists tended to avoid the image, or focus on its use and effects, a new generation of television critical studies scholars (→ Critical Theory) began to seriously engage with the *aesthetics of television*, starting in the late 1970s and 1980s. Yet even these studies started with the assumption that television was largely a narrative phenomenon. While early books in this vein mapped out television as a complex art form involving sophisticated narrative and genre strategies (Newcomb 1974, 1976; Allen 1987), later editions by the same authors show a gradually increasing consciousness of and research into television's visual dimension (Newcomb 2000, 2006; Allen 1992). This shift toward visual aesthetics was due in part to an emerging interest in theories of postmodernism, which took as one focus the pervasive logic of late capitalist societies, which now define themselves through consumer imagery and visual simulation (Jameson 1983).

Cultural studies methodologies (→ Cultural Studies) began to inflect much of this new work on television in the humanities in the late 1980s and 1990s. Yet oddly, this new scholarship tended to place cultural studies in dialectical opposition to aesthetics (Fiske 1987), or simply ignored the possibility that scholars could study culture from the ground up by researching imagery. Both of these tactics again served to devalue the visual dimension in television, in order to excavate its suspect ideologies. Scholars soon demonstrated how this skepticism about the visual in media scholarship was merely the latest manifestation of a recurring, longstanding suspicion and critique of the visual that has defined and animated European philosophy and western intellectual activity for centuries (Jay 1993; Caldwell 1995).

Unlike film studies, communication research never developed visual aesthetics as a central methodology in the field (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). One exception that proves this rule is the work of production educators like Herb Zettl (1990), whose textbooks elaborated the visual grammar of television for successive generations of production students in communication studies. Visual studies of television are slowly emerging as important ways to understand the medium. This new interest in the visual comes from several important sources: the development of visual communication as a research tradition in its own right (Worth, 1981; → Visual Communication); new primary, archival research in television's industrial history; studies of visual activities in TV → fandoms (Jenkins 1992); and studies of the impact of digital convergence on television aesthetics (Caldwell 2003, 2004). In these ways, even as television has developed great visual diversity in the three broad areas examined above, scholars also now pursue systematic visual research from the varying perspectives of industry, production, audiences, and consumption. These multiple approaches enable scholars to understand how television's visual characteristics differ, depending on whether the viewer/user is: inattentively viewing cable news at the airport; intently screening high definition DVDs in the home theater; downloading series television off the Internet while surfing the net; or watching visual fragments of World Cup matches on a mobile phone while commuting. In these ways television's wide range of evolving visual characteristics can never be usefully separated from television's production, delivery, and use.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Convergence of Media Systems ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Disney ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Fandom ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ McLuhan, Marshall ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Use by Social Variable ▶ Medium Theory ▶ Mobility, Technology for ▶ Music Videos ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda, Visual Communication of ▶ Reality TV ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Spectacle ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Television: Social History ▶ Television Technology ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Video ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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# Telework

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Researchers examining new and emerging work forms not following the traditional “9-to-5 schedule” often explore the impact of opportunities for employees to work remotely by teleworking or telecommuting (Nilles 1977). Teleworking may be defined as any form of work that substitutes information technology for work-related travel, so that work travels to the employee instead of the reverse (Hylmö 2006). While working remotely has been a part of organizations for generations (for example, making cloth for entrepreneurs in the textile industry), the 1970s oil crisis, coupled with increased technological capabilities, spurred interest in large-scale teleworking. Teleworking was especially encouraged during the 1990s as a way for employees to balance work with other commitments, thus enhancing overall quality of life. In the United States, the practice resurged following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, as many people wanted to decrease their commutes and work closer to home.

Telecommuting and telework function as alternative work forms offering organizations and individuals an opportunity to transition to virtual organizing by using technology to transfer information to workers as opposed to employees traveling to work. In general, telecommuters work outside the principal office – for example, at a client’s office, at home, or at a telecommuting center – on only an occasional basis, while teleworkers, or virtual workers, complete their tasks “anytime, anyplace” and work remotely on an ongoing basis (Hill et al. 2003).

Teleworking employees establish different relationships to their colleagues compared to co-located workers, as they are not available for the immediate face-to-face interactions and meetings that are normative in many organizations. Individuals working off-site often appear available to family members, neighbors, and friends for tasks and assistance unrelated to their work. Combined with experiences of loneliness and loss of professional identity, teleworking challenges the ways that employees communicate with each other as well as in non-work-related contexts (Brocklehurst 2001).

Researchers have used several *theoretical frameworks* to explore telecommuting as a communicative phenomenon. Structurationists (→ Structuration Theory) have shown that teleworkers who are part of successful virtual teams may adapt their communication media use and adoption depending on the group’s geographic dispersion (Timmerman & Scott 2006). Network theorists (→ Communication Networks) have explored teleworkers’ levels of identification with their teams and organizations (→ Organizational Identification), finding that role conflicts and isolation may lead to decreased experiences of connectedness with colleagues (Vega & Brennan 2000).

Teleworking offers *opportunities for creative organizing* while potentially fragmenting and breaking apart traditional workplaces and company cultures (Hylmö & Buzzanell 2002). The opportunity to take advantage of teleworking opportunities may position some companies as leaders in employee relations, but may also lead to divisions between teleworkers and non-teleworkers. These distinctions may be reinforced by other factors,

including the reasons for seeking out alternative work forms. Individuals who telework while transitioning into retirement likely interact differently with colleagues than those who still view themselves as on the career track.

Critical theorists raise concerns about the need for teleworkers to *sustain images of productivity*, working longer hours than their in-house peers out of concern that they appear committed to the employing organization (→ Critical Theory; Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches). Telework challenges organizations by contesting what constitutes work, working, and legitimate locations for professional work (Hylmö 2006). In-house employees feel awkward contacting teleworkers operating out of their home offices by phone, while teleworkers laud their ability to communicate with colleagues and clients anytime, anyplace. Despite limited empirical evidence (Bailey & Kurland 2002), teleworkers argue that they are more productive and available to important stakeholders by being flexible in their workday.

Critical and feminist approaches examine how teleworking *challenges traditional distinctions between public and private realms* (Shumate & Fulk 2004). Scholars argue that teleworking threatens boundaries between “home” and “work” as the home comes under the surveillance of employers seeking to control workers (Broadfoot 2001; Brocklehurst 2001). The home no longer provides a refuge from the workplace when paid labor spills over into private life. Role spillover may be particularly challenging for women, as traditional gendered divisions of family labor remain. As a result, many teleworkers seek to reify traditional boundaries between home and work by maintaining separate offices or strict work hours during which they enact only a professional persona.

Teleworking continues to provide opportunities for future communication research, including organizational implications at multiple levels, the impact of demographic factors, and international comparisons as teleworking becomes integral to multinational corporations’ ability to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication Networks ▶ Control and Authority in Organizations  
▶ Critical Theory ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Network Organizations through Communication Technology ▶ Organizational Communication: Critical Approaches  
▶ Organizational Culture ▶ Organizational Identification ▶ Organizational Structure  
▶ Structuration Theory

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# Terrorism and Communication Technologies

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Communication and communication technologies are intrinsic to the idea of terrorism as formulated and understood from the nineteenth century onwards (→ Technology and Communication). The discourse of terrorism has come to be symbiotically linked to communication technologies as state and nonstate actors across the globe use and exploit technological advances to further their causes. Schmid and de Graaf (1982, 9) observed that, “without communication there can be no terrorism,” while for Wilkinson (2001, 177), “when one says ‘terrorism’ in a democratic society, one also says ‘media.’”

In an increasingly globalized world, most people make sense of happenings in distant places through the news media, which are now able to communicate events across continents live (→ Media Effects). Groups and individuals branded by states as terrorists use communication technologies at two levels: to orchestrate events and ensure that news about them is communicated through television, press, radio, Internet, etc. for maximum effect on governments and the public; and they use technologies such as presses, photocopiers, satellite phones, video, email, chatrooms, websites, blogs, encryption software, etc. to coordinate, plan, and execute acts of political violence (→ Blogger; Electronic Mail). As Brazilian ex-communist Carlos Marighella stipulated in his *Minimanual of the urban guerrilla*, “modern mass media, simply by announcing what the revolutionaries are doing, are important instruments of propaganda . . . However, their existence does not dispense fighters from setting up their own secret presses and having their own copying machines . . . The war of nerves – or the psychological war – is a fighting technique based on the direct or indirect use of the mass media” (in Nacos 2002, 15; → War Propaganda).

## CONTESTED TERRAIN

The *definition of terrorism* itself has been controversial, with as many researchers formulating as many definitions. It has profoundly negative connotations. There is no



universally accepted definition of the term mainly because it is vulnerable to vastly different interpretation by state and nonstate actors. The conundrum is best exemplified by the dictum of “one man’s terrorist is another’s freedom fighter.” The same act of violence can be evaluated as either despicable or justifiable means to political ends, “as either the evil deed of ruthless terrorists or the justifiable act of freedom fighters and/or warriors of god” (Nacos 2002, 16; → Political Communication).

The value-loaded term has come to be applied to nonstate actors who use violence to attract attention or further the cause that they deem worth fighting for. Acts of violence perpetrated by states are usually not classified as acts of terror. However, it was not always so. In its original definition in the eighteenth century, terrorism meant acts of violence by the rulers (from above); for example, the violence during the Reign of Terror in the wake of the French Revolution, when terrorism meant the mass guillotining of aristocracy and other real and perceived enemies of the state. During the nineteenth century, the idea of terrorism was expanded to include acts of violence, such as assassinations, by anarchists (from below). In the twentieth century, terrorism came to mean mostly political violence perpetrated by nonstate actors, which include autonomous or state-sponsored groups and individuals (Hoffman 1998).

Researchers, however, agree on the *key role played by communication technologies*. Ted Koppel, ABC anchor, observed that, “Without television, terrorism becomes rather like the philosopher’s hypothetical tree falling in the forest: no one hears it fall and therefore it has no reason for being” (in Weimann & Winn 1994, 51). The importance of communication in a terrorist’s design led Nacos (2002) to suggest the idea of “mass-mediated terrorism,” which refers to politically motivated deeds perpetrated by groups or individuals for the sake of communicating messages to a larger audience. Such a communication-oriented view does not include “state terrorism,” or acts of violence perpetrated by states against noncombatants. This is because governments do not want to publicize such incidents while publicity is a key objective of nonstate actors; for them, political violence is committed with the intention to publicize the deed, to gain publicity and thereby public and government attention (→ Public Journalism).

As Laqueur observed (1976, 104), “The success of a terrorist operation depends almost entirely on the amount of publicity it receives,” which stresses the importance of communication technologies in the process of communicating acts of violence. The technologies constitute the cornerstone that links the three elements of a terrorist strategy: the terrorist, the target of the terrorist (victims), and the actual target of the acts of violence: the government or the public. The idea is often to evoke reactions from the government and instill apprehension or fear in the public.

Terrorist activity is immensely *newsworthy* as it satisfies several → news values such as → negativity, timeliness, and scale. Nonstate actors indulging in violence satisfy the news media’s need for spectacle and entertainment to increase circulation or ratings. Such nonstate actors and the news media feed off each other – acts of violence are often choreographed to coincide with journalistic routines and production schedules to ensure maximum coverage (→ Violence as Media Content). Researchers use the metaphor of *theatre* to describe the ways in which modern terrorism can be understood in terms of the production requirements of theatrical engagements (Catton 1978; Weimann & Winn 1994). In such “theatres” of conflict, there is an intense contest for news space between

nonstate actors indulging in acts of violence and the government, each seeking to ensure that their versions of reality get maximum play. Both state and nonstate actors use communication technologies to achieve contending propaganda objectives.

## COMMUNICATING TERROR

Al-Qaeda using video tapes to communicate messages by Osama bin Laden through the Al Jazeera television channel (and many others) is the most recent and visible example of the ways in which nonstate actors dubbed as terrorist groups deploy communication technologies effectively to propagate their perspectives (→ Arab Satellite TV News). An early example of the link between terrorism and communication technology is the late-nineteenth-century discovery of dynamite in 1866 and the rotary press, perfected in 1881 (→ Printing, History of). Schmid and de Graaf (1982, 9) observed that, “The two inventions soon started to interact.” The San Francisco-based anarchist paper *Truth* declared at the time, “*Truth* is two cents a copy, dynamite is forty cents a pound. Buy them both, read one, use the other.”

Before communication technologies such as the press became key elements of everyday life, the *maximum audience* that could be reached was limited to the range of the human voice. According to Weimann and Winn (1994), nineteenth-century European anarchists faced the problem of communicating their ideas to the general public. Their pamphlets had limited distribution. The anarchists turned to the “propaganda of the deed,” which meant using acts of violence to secure coverage from the national and international press as well as encourage word-of-mouth communication. Nineteenth-century Italian anarchists Malatesta and Cafiero are said to be among the first to understand and exploit the symbiotic relationship between the news media and acts of terror. Around the same time in Russia, Peter Kropotkin stated, “By actions which compel general attention, the new idea seeps into people’s minds and wins converts. One such act may, in a few days, make more propaganda than a thousand pamphlets” (in Weimann & Winn 1994, 53).

Inventions and advances in technology in the nineteenth century and their potential were quickly seized upon. Leon Czolgosz, the anarchist who killed US president William McKinley in 1901, explained his deed thus: “For a man should not claim so much attention, while others receive none” (in Schmid & de Graaf 1982, 10). Another anarchist, Lucheni, who collected news clippings and murdered the Austrian Empress Elisabeth, said he had longed to kill “somebody important so it gets into the papers.”

For early anarchists and latter-day nonstate actors dubbed as terrorist groups, every new communication technology invented increased the potential for effective propaganda as well as better coordination and execution of acts of violence. The national press and international news agencies could carry news of violent deeds to remote regions and countries, thereby providing free and fast communication networks to nonstate actors. The assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865 took weeks to be known widely, but when John F. Kennedy was shot in 1963, more than 70 percent of Americans had heard of it within half an hour. The potential for propaganda further increased exponentially with the invention of and advances in radio, film, and television; the world wide web and its many networks of communication such as chatrooms, ICQs, blogs, and email; mobile phone technology and satellite phones (→ Satellite Television); and convergence

technologies that combine text, audio, and video elements. Satellite phones and the → Internet made it easy for journalists to cover acts of violence in different parts of the globe.

The most significant technological change has been the emergence and widespread diffusion of *television broadcasting* (→ Broadcast Journalism; Television News). According to Schmid and de Graaf (1982, 17), “what the rotary press did for the nineteenth-century terrorists, television is doing for contemporary terrorists.” The inclusive nature of the medium – one does not have to be literate to consume it – and its capability to transmit images across continents to millions of viewers, live, provided a new tool to nonstate actors indulging in violence. The medium not only ensured that acts of violence could be covered live, but that the leading nonstate actors could also counter official versions in the cut and thrust of politics in the aftermath. Bin Laden’s selective video appearances made as much news in the western media as outside the west, ensuring that western perspectives in international communications did not go unchallenged. Modern-day terrorists exploit traditional mass media as well as new media technology.

Schmid and de Graaf (1982, 14, 15) observed that, “while in the nineteenth century the deed had to be specific that it would, as it were, speak for itself, developments in communication technology have since allowed for an ever-increasing *distance between victim and message*. Yet in its substance terrorism has not changed fundamentally in the hundred years that separate the beginnings of anarchist terrorism from contemporary terrorism.” Thus, millions of viewers across the globe watched in rapt attention as the second plane ploughed into the World Trade Center on September 11 – the victims were not only those present in the twin towers, but the target included millions of people across the globe.

The 1990 Kosovo military conflict between the Belgrade regime and NATO is seen as the first *Internet war*. Since then, the Internet itself has become a site of terrorism and warfare between contending ideologies and groups, most notably Islamist. According to Khatib (2003, 389), the Internet is used by Islamic fundamentalist groups as a “portable homeland” that allows them to strengthen their global ties and communicate with one another, and also to communicate with the connected world at large. It is important to note that in official and news discourse, the term “Islamic fundamentalism” is often conflated to mean “Islamic terrorism.”

The new information and communication technologies (ICTs) allow a new dimension to nonstate actors who are keen to further their ideologies and causes. The new ICTs allow them diffusion of command and control, which was not available to their predecessors in the nineteenth century, while new opportunities for communication allow them to target the information stores, processes, and communications of their rivals (Whine 1999). The developments in communication technologies facilitate what has been called *netwar*, which refers to offensive acts carried out by often geographically separate, diverse, interconnected nonstate actors. Called *cyberterrorism*, the latest convergence between nonstate actors and communication technologies involves hackers (cyberterrorists) who cripple websites, data systems, and networks of rival groups and/or governments. Nacos (2002) observed that such groups have high-tech specialists in their midst and protect their Internet activities from intelligence and law enforcement agencies in the countries they target.

Whine (1999) listed several benefits ICTs bestow upon nonstate actors: they allow interconnectivity (Hezbollah's website publishes a daily diary of terrorist attacks and urges anybody with an opinion about its anti-Israel activities to get in touch); they enable covert communication; they are cheap to operate; they act as force-multipliers and enable reach and influence that was previously confined to well-organized, state-funded terrorist organizations; and they enable nonstate actors to target audiences that traditional media deny them.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Blogger ▶ Broadcast Journalism ▶ Electronic Mail ▶ Internet ▶ Media Effects ▶ Negativity ▶ News Values ▶ Political Communication ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Propaganda ▶ Public Journalism ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Television News ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ War Propaganda

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# Test Theory

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In psychology, psychometric tests are standardized data collection methods. To provide significant and interpretable results in an empirical study, a test must meet specific requirements that are laid down by test theory. Only if these preconditions are given can reliable and valid conclusions be drawn with respect to the “real” value of a person’s trait or state under measurement. For standardized tests the raw score obtained during administration is transformed into a test score (e.g., an IQ or an anxiety score), which represents the intensity or strength of the trait/state to be measured on the level of an interval scale (→ Scales).

Classical test theory is influenced by → measurement theory in physics. It is based on the assumption that every test value obtained consists of a “true” value (i.e., the “real” intensity of the person’s trait or state) as well as an additional error value. The error part of measured values should be minimized or at least known in size. For that, classic test theory is based on the assumption that error values are balanced out during repeated testing, that the error value is independent of the strength or intensity of the personal state or trait (the “real” value), and that for separate test administrations error values are independent of each other.

The goodness of a test is indicated by three different criteria. A test is *objective* if different testers obtain identical results with respect to application, data analysis, and interpretation. Ideally, the objectivity coefficient of test is as high as 1.0. Objectivity during application can be increased by providing a standardized instruction. Objectivity of data analysis mainly depends on item construction: objectivity is higher if a person can choose answers from a set of alternatives (i.e., multiple choice items). Objectivity of interpretation is high if conclusions can be drawn directly from a person’s test score to the trait/state to be measured.

*Reliability* is an indicator of the exactness of measurement. A lower → reliability corresponds to higher error values during testing. For tests a reliability value greater than 0.80 should be aimed at. Reliability can be qualified in three different ways. First, the test can be applied twice. The correlation between the values of the first and second measurements is an indicator of retest stability (→ Correlation Analysis). Second, reliability also can be determined by administering two parallel versions of a test and computing the correlation coefficient between them. For that an additional pool of homogeneous test items is required. Third, reliability can be estimated by computing internal consistency. For that, the number of test items is divided into two halves (by chance or by odd and even item numbers). Reliability then is indicated by the correlation between both test halves. A better estimation of internal consistency is provided by the Kuder–Richardson formula or the formula for Cronbach’s alpha. Whereas internal consistency always should be as high as possible, a high stability value is only reasonable for traits that are invariant over time. With respect to (variable) states, the parallel test methods are to be preferred.

A *validity* score indicates to what extent a test measures the aspect it is expected to measure. Criterion validity is based on the correlation between test scores and an external criterion that represents the trait or state as closely as possible. For example, if a test is constructed to measure viewers' preferences for film genres, subjects can be asked to record all programs they have seen on TV in a media diary. Preferences that subjects have specified by answering questions in a test can then be related to diary data. However, it is not always possible unambiguously to define a criterion for the trait under investigation. For example, there is no single criterion for human intelligence. In that case, measurement with an intelligence test will be integrated in a network of other variables being related to intelligence (e.g., other intelligence test, grades, judgments of teachers, problem-solving behavior, etc.). Within this network of interdependencies, the construct of intelligence can be validated (i.e., construct validity or internal validity).

*Item response theory* is different from classic test theory because it is not based on the distinction between "true" and error values. Instead, a personal trait to be measured is conceived of as being a "latent dimension." The strength of this latent dimension with a certain probability is indicated by scoring test items. Item difficulty and the person's ability both determine the probability that a specific test item will be solved by the person: the easier an item and the more able a person, the higher the probability that this person will solve the item. Based on Rasch's (1980) logistic model, item difficulty and personal ability can be determined independently of each other. For that, in contrast to classic test theory, the assumptions underlying a test can be tested empirically.

Computing coefficients for reliability or validity is not reasonable within the model of item response theory, as here accuracy of measurement and the person's ability are not independent of each other. Within the item response approach, tests may be developed for personal traits or states that have been intensively studied in other research and where the items for measurement can be formulated precisely (Bortz 1984, 143). However, for developing new methods for the assessment of personal variables, a test in the framework of classic test theory is to be preferred, which in addition saves time and effort.

SEE ALSO: ► Correlation Analysis ► Measurement Theory ► Reliability ► Validity  
► Scales

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# Text Analysis, Computer-Aided

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The basic medium of interpersonal and mass communication is text (→ Text and Intertextuality). Analyzing text helps in understanding the meanings of mass media messages and their potential effects, observing strategies and developments of rhetoric, identifying rules and structures of social communication, etc. Thus text analysis, comprising all kinds of qualitative and quantitative techniques of media content, discourse, and linguistic analysis, is an indispensable methodological field for all social sciences (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative; Discourse Analysis; Linguistics). But as communicators' encoding of → meaning and ideas (semantics) in text (syntax) does not always follow a straight logic and is heavily influenced by social and cultural context (→ Linguistic Pragmatics), the analysis of large text corpuses is a complicated and laborious endeavor. Therefore, from the beginning of computer science, scholars have tried to develop automated tools for understanding, abstracting, and classifying texts.

Compared to the promise of artificial intelligence research in the 1960s and 1970s, today's facilities for computer-aided text analysis are disappointing. Nonetheless, there is virtually no text analysis without computer support, once one basic premise is met: the text corpus under analysis has to be available in a digital format – as a full text, as a collection of relevant portions of the text (title, author, medium, lead text, date of publication, etc.), or in an indexed fashion (containing additional meta-data like an abstract or keywords, etc.). We can differentiate between computer-based and computer-supported methods of text analysis. While computer-based methods are run completely by computer programs and thus can be automated, computer-supported methods enable or facilitate only selected parts of data collection or analysis and require additional manual operations.

The *fields of application* of computer-aided text analysis are manifold and cannot be fully outlined in this article. Some examples can give a first impression.

In *mass communication studies*, content analyses of print media are usually accomplished by human coders. Nonetheless, *retrieving relevant articles* (i.e., articles dealing with the issue under analysis) from online databases (full text, by keyword or title search, or using other meta-data) drastically reduces the amount of time spent browsing volumes of newspapers or magazines, which in earlier days had to be done manually. There are two drawbacks: first, the retrieval of non-text elements such as photographs, sound files, or movies is limited; second, the identification of relevant articles is restricted to articles containing pre-defined terms, whereas relevant articles using other words (representing the identical meaning) are not found.

A completely computer-based variant of content analysis simply counts *word frequencies* in mass media content as a macro-indicator of the media agenda, i.e., the increasing or decreasing coverage of specific issues or actors over time (see the agenda-setting study by Funkhouser 1973; → Agenda-Setting Effects).

Although providing only limited methodological → validity, standard search engines like Google, specialized search services like Google News, or self-programmed web

spiders or crawlers can be applied for *data-mining* on the → Internet, i.e., retrieving relevant websites or web pages which can be automatically or manually analyzed afterwards.

*Linguistic text-mining tools* classify text documents by measuring the vocabulary used (dictionary) or the style of language (e.g., sentence length, the share of nouns and verbs) and conducting → cluster analyses with the material. Such tools can be used for discourse and linguistic analyses of email, chat, or discussion forum communication; they can also help to identify unknown authors of historical texts by comparing them with other texts by known authors.

More sophisticated linguistic technologies can identify the *semantic meaning* of lexical words (disambiguation) by analyzing their context (e.g., the General Inquirer, a classic software package for text analysis developed by Philip Stone in the early sixties at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Stone et al. 1966). There are several tools under development that can identify or classify text corpuses at a semantic level and which can summarize or abstract large text corpuses. For simple English texts, the results are quite acceptable; but for more complex texts or texts in other languages, these tools are still unsatisfactory.

Finally, there is a broad variety of computer programs supporting the basic steps of *qualitative text analysis* (segmenting texts, paraphrasing and classifying propositions, indexing text examples) by elaborate commentary and tagging tools.

Undoubtedly, the Internet is the most important data source for computer-aided text analysis. And it is steadily changing. Some of today's trends present *significant challenges for the analysis of online content*.

Many online documents *change rapidly*, sometimes within seconds (e.g., Internet news sites, discussion forums, emails). This makes online coding almost impossible and requires that data collection is conducted within a restricted period of time. It is almost impossible to identify the *content* of a particular website without referring to the time of retrieval.

On the web, there is a development from static and text-based documents (HTML) to *dynamic media environments* (Flash, Java, mp3, mpeg). Recently, most websites provided distinct and constant units of analysis, which could be saved to file for later (re-)examination and scrutinized with established techniques of text analysis (computer-aided and manual). Today, more and more websites offer animated or audiovisual content, with the boundaries of units of analysis becoming more blurred (→ Online Research).

The most crucial challenge is *interactivity*: in interactive environments, there is no fixed text corpus (→ Interactivity, Concept of). Instead, the content is automatically arranged and constructed according to user input. This means that the researcher cannot gather and analyze a given and unchangeable portion of text, but he or she has to define an inter-subjectively transparent strategy for content retrieval. Methodologically put: the text analysis of interactive material inevitably requires active data *production* instead of data *collection*, which challenges the validity and → reliability of research.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Cluster Analysis ▶ Coding ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Internet News ▶ Linguistic Pragmatics ▶ Linguistics ▶ Meaning ▶ Online Research ▶ Reliability ▶ Research Methods ▶ Text and Intertextuality ▶ Validity



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## **Text and Intertextuality**

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Texts are vehicles of meaning in human expression and communication. Growing out of centuries of literary, → hermeneutic, and other humanistic scholarship, the concept was originally reserved for written and other verbal messages. From the 1960s onwards, however, *texts* came to denote all meaningful entities, including images, everyday interaction, and cultural → artifacts generally (→ Modality and Multimodality), as examined through increasingly interdisciplinary approaches in communication and related fields.

### **TEXTS AS COMMUNICATION**

Deriving from classical Latin *texo* (to weave, to construct) and *textum* (fabric as well as speech and writing), the concept of text directs attention toward the process in which ideas and insights are given concrete shape and offered in communication to others. Compared to the concept of a *message*, which is commonly said to contain and transmit → information, and which is sometimes used interchangeably with text, this latter concept emphasizes that meaning is only articulated in the meeting of form and content, aesthetics, and propositions. Importantly, the → meaning of a given text is considered open to questioning and interpretation both by contemporary audiences and by posterity.

The complexity of textual meaning helps to account for the preferred methodologies of the humanities, probing the subtleties and nuances of the individual text for what is being communicated. In a medieval worldview, the Bible provided an analogy to the Book of Nature as a means of insight into the Great Chain of Being (Lovejoy 1936). Since both “books” articulated divine intent, they required scrupulous attention to potentially significant details, as overseen and enforced by church and state authorities (→ Book). In

a modern perspective, meaning could still be said to reside *within* texts with socially binding implications. Legal contracts as well as entire cultures and sub-cultures are constituted through texts, and their reinterpretation may anticipate fundamental religious or political change.

Texts lend themselves to the immanent analysis of meaning for practical as well as contemplative purposes (→ Aesthetics). As the arts assumed their modern shape as separate social and aesthetic practices in the course of the eighteenth century, the act of interpretation came to be defined programmatically by Immanuel Kant in his *Critique of judgment* (1790) as the disinterested contemplation of the beautiful, the true, and the good. Artworks could and should be appreciated for their inherent logic, rather than any ulterior purpose. The understanding of texts as singular sources of insight fed into idiographic, individualizing, and qualitative approaches to the study of culture and society (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science). Like artworks and historical events, media texts can be examined for their inherent significance.

### TEXTS IN COMMUNICATION

Studies of texts *as communication* traditionally have asked: *where is meaning* – in which content elements and formal structures? Increasingly, communication research has come to explore how texts enter into communication, asking: *when is meaning* – for whom, and in which contexts (Jensen 1991)?

With reference to this last question, qualitative textual analysis, first of all, makes a distinction between the *story* and the *discourse* of a text (Chatman 1989). While the story is the series of events, the *what* of the text, discourse is the *how* or actual organization and representation of these events, typically in a narrative, which can be implemented in many different ways, for example, to create suspense. Literary and film theory, further, has emphasized the spectator's active participation in the creation of textual meaning (→ Film Theory). Drawing on Russian formalism (Erlich 1955), Bordwell (1985) reintroduced *syuzhet* to refer to explicit narrative information about events, whereas *fabula* denotes the audience's reconstruction of the connections between events. Thus, whereas authors, directors, and other producers offer meaning as a potential in various media and modalities, it remains for readers, viewers, and other audiences to actualize specific meanings. Beyond film and literary theory, qualitative media reception studies in particular have explored empirically how audiences decode textual meaning, depending on social and cultural backgrounds and contexts (→ Interactivity in Reception).

Textual communication in the broadest sense is addressed in content and → discourse analysis, which examine how concrete texts are shaped by, and in turn shape, their social settings (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative). The concept of → discourse, moreover, has been employed to refer to historically shifting dominant worldviews. In this regard, structuralist and poststructuralist theories of society, e.g., in the work of Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault, have suggested that the construction and distribution of knowledge through texts, media, and other social institutions may be understood as an exercise of power (→ Structuralism). In an even wider sense, texts can be considered the stuff that social reality is made of: social contexts have been studied literally as texts, for instance, within anthropology and → cultural studies.

## INTERTEXTUALITY

The inclusive notion of texts has been elaborated with reference to the concept of intertextuality. The seminal contribution was made by the Russian literary scholar Mikhail Bakhtin and his circle in the early decades of the twentieth century (Bakhtin 1981). Bakhtin's most basic concept – dialogism (→ Dialogic Perspectives) – was translated by Kristeva (1984) as intertextuality, and underscores the fact that individual signs only acquire their meaning in relation to other signs, past as well as present. Texts are not stable containers of meaning; instead, texts should be taken as the momentary manifestations of textuality, articulating a cultural heritage and historical tradition. The point is that all human acts of communication enter into structures and configurations that follow distinctive cultural patterns. A culture might be considered an almost infinitely complex instance of intertextuality.

The methodological question of how to examine intertextual structures and the social processes shaping them has tended to divide researchers. The majority of studies derive from literary and film studies, and have centered on, for instance, novels, films, or television series as relatively self-contained entities – texts *as communication* – with explicit or, more commonly, implicit references to previous artworks, symbols, themes, or genres. Genette (1982/1997) has been an influential representative of this position, referring to what he calls *transtextuality*; for example, *metatextual* relations hinting at the origins of certain textual constituents and *paratextual* relations between a novel and its explanatory cover text (→ Fiction).

Conceiving intertextuality as an operational way of approaching texts *in communication*, as well, Fiske (1987) distinguished between two dimensions of intertextuality. *Horizontal* intertextuality covers the transfer and accumulation of particular meanings over historical time, as preserved in the metaphors, characters, and styles of traditional arts as well as popular media. *Vertical* intertextuality, in comparison, operates during a more delimited time period, but extends across several media and social contexts. To specify this synchronic perspective, Fiske identified three categories of texts. Primary texts are carriers of significant insight in their own right. (In the horizontal perspective, the primary texts are the center of attention.) If the primary text, for example, is a new feature movie, the secondary texts will consist of studio publicity, reviews, and criticism. And the tertiary texts are produced by audiences who engage in conversation with each other, before, during, and after attending the movie.

In combination, the two axes of intertextuality amount to a model of how meaning is produced and circulated in society, reinserting the concept of texts into the agenda of communication studies (Fig. 1). At the same time, Fiske's (1987) terminology still privileged media texts as the primary sources of meaning in communication. A few major contributions have applied the intertextual perspective to popular cultural phenomena such as James Bond (Bennett & Woollacott 1987) and Batman (Pearson & Uricchio 1990), with further attention to, for instance, their place in popular memory. Also the *flow* of broadcasting has lent itself to studies of how viewers (and listeners) select and combine discursive elements from multiple channels into an intertextual configuration (for overview, see Jensen 1994).

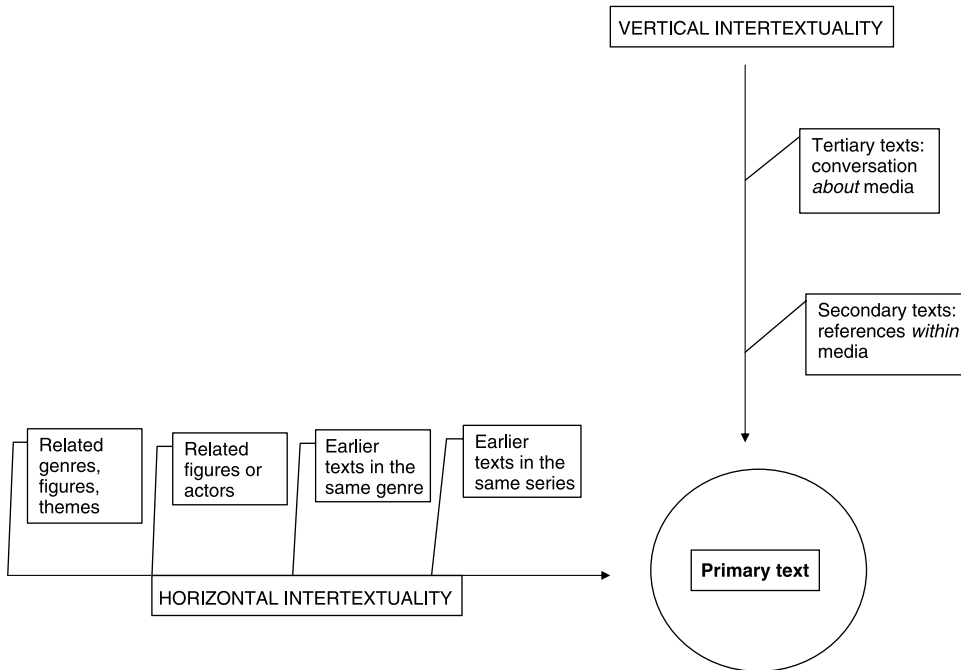


Figure 1 The two axes of intertextuality

## HYPertextUALITY

The rise of digital media and of more differentiated forms of communication has given the theoretical concept of intertextuality renewed importance, also for empirical studies of media use (Bolter 1991; Aarseth 1997). So-called *hyperlinks*, connecting message elements in computer-mediated communication, may be understood as instrumental or operationalized forms of intertextuality – a means of making explicit, retrievable, modifiable, and communicable what might have remained a more or less random association in the minds of recipients (→ Human–Computer Interaction). Hypertexts (or their constituent parts) can be linked for easy access or for purposes of indexing. Similarly, hypermedia join, for instance, video sequences with verbal explanations, to be selected and activated by learners and other groups of users.

While some work on hyperstructures has tended to overestimate their potential for social innovation or political liberation (e.g., Landow 1997), the concepts of hypertextuality and intertextuality hold significant potential for future theory development as well as for concrete analyses of technologically mediated communication. On the one hand, hypertextuality facilitates distinctive kinds of → navigation and intervention by users within more flexible systems of communication (→ Interactivity, Concept of). On the other hand, users of hypertext systems still engage in a process of interpretation, as informed by intertextual clues and implicit links, which is broadly similar to audiences' encounters with images and verbal texts in print and previous electronic media. Building

on the classic concept of texts, communication research may retain both a sensitivity to meaning as complex and contextual, and an openness to the shifting technological and institutional conditions of human communication.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Aesthetics ▶ Artifacts ▶ Bakhtin, Mikhail ▶ Book ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Dialogic Perspectives ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Fiction ▶ Film Theory ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science ▶ Information ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Meaning ▶ Modality and Multimodality ▶ Navigation ▶ Structuralism

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## **Theatre**

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The term theatre refers to that art form based on mimetic activity. It differs from the closely related performance arts of → cinema and → television by its requirement that the enactment be physically present to its observers, which gives it an important specificity of occasion or event. Despite its traditional close connection to the dramatic text, the play script, and the importance of both the spoken word and other auditory

effects, the theatre has generally relied strongly on visual effects, not only involving the physical bodies of the performers, but also the supplementary arts of scenic and lighting design, costume, and makeup (→ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of; Visual Representation).

As the art which most closely imitates the ongoing processes of human society and culture, theatre has been involved in the depiction of almost every aspect of these processes – religious, historical, intellectual, emotional, political. It has been utilized to express the deepest emotional and spiritual intuitions of humanity as well as the lightest and most casual passing fancies. It has served to advance new, sometimes revolutionary, ideas and also to confirm and celebrate well-established traditional ones. Its effectiveness in such matters has caused it to be the most closely watched and regulated of all the arts by civic and religious authorities.

There is a traditional distinction in English between *theatre* and *drama*, according to which drama refers to the written text that has traditionally served as the basis for theatre's live enactment. The proper relationship between the two has been a subject of controversy at least since the romantic period, when critics such as Charles Lamb (1775–1835) and Goethe (1749–1832) raised concerns that the visual power of the theatre was a potential distraction from the literary power of the written text. Modern semiotic theory has considered the play on stage a different text entirely, often referred to as the spectacle text, and controversy continues about the relative priority and autonomy of these two contiguous “texts” (→ Semiotics). The primacy of the written text, generally accepted without question for most of western theatre history, was challenged by many theorists and practitioners during the twentieth century. Toward the end of the century, performance theorists, drawing upon insights developed in the social sciences, urged that theatre study and production move away even more radically from their traditional association with drama and be considered less in relation to literature than to the human activity of performance.

## HISTORY OF THE THEATRE

### Early History

Performance exists in all cultures, but theatre in its traditional western form, as the physical embodiment of a pre-existing written text, is not nearly so widespread (→ Communication Modes: Western). Its first appearance was in classical *Greece*, in the fifth century BCE. From there it spread to Rome, disappearing with the collapse of the empire. Scholars disagree on whether some elements of this tradition remained alive through subsequent centuries, but the theatre did not reappear as a significant element in western culture until the late medieval period. From the *Renaissance* onward, however, it became one of the major art forms and cultural expressions in Europe. Shakespeare in England, Goethe and Schiller in Germany, and Racine and Molière in France are regarded not only as leading creators of the theatre and drama of those countries but also as the dominant figures in the cultural pantheon of their respective nations.

In *Asia*, with the possible exception of Japan, theatre, although widely found, has not been so central a form of cultural expression as it has been in the west, and elsewhere in the world it has generally only developed in relatively modern times, and often in close

association with nineteenth-century colonialism. Its earliest known appearance outside of Europe was in India, where Sanskrit theatre was created between the fourth and eighth centuries, but without resulting in an ongoing tradition similar to that in Europe. Toward the end of this period, theatre was also recorded in China, possibly inspired by that of India, and from China it spread into Korea and Japan. The classical Japanese theatre, Noh, did not appear until the fourteenth century, and the more popular Kabuki not until three hundred years later.

### **From the Renaissance to the Eighteenth Century**

During the Renaissance the theatre, broadly based in classical and medieval times, began to be fragmented into different forms for different levels of society. For the general populace, theatre had a close association to the *entertainment tradition* of the wandering performers of the Middle Ages, and was composed of such offerings as folk farces and the beginning of the *commedia dell'arte* – a highly popular form of largely improvised comedy built around stock characters, some wearing traditional masks. Although these sometimes offered rather elaborate visual spectacle, they were for the most part quite simple, since the resources of the companies were small and the ease of travel important.

The situation was quite different in the theatre fare being developed by the *aristocracy* – court entertainments employing music, dance, and lavish spectacle, partially for entertainment but primarily as a display of the sponsor's wealth and power. Not surprisingly, the *opera*, traditionally the dramatic form most associated not only with music but also with visual display, has been for much of its history also primarily an aristocratic entertainment. The art of scenic design developed rapidly with this encouragement, and some of the leading artists of the Renaissance and the subsequent *baroque period* did some of their most virtuosic work for theatrical production. New developments in painting, most notably the discovery and application of perspective, moved quickly from the painter's canvas to the stage (→ Perspective, Pictorial). Although magnificent entertainments were sometimes held in public spaces for a dazzled populace, the most common location was in elaborately decorated private theatres constructed within princely residences, and open only to their guests.

By the end of the sixteenth century, the popular street theatres and the aristocratic private theatres were supplemented in several parts of Europe by the *first permanent commercial theatres*, catering to a range of social classes, but tending to draw the major part of their audience from the emerging bourgeois population of merchants and tradespeople. These theatres took a variety of forms – structures open to the air in Spain and England, interior spaces more like the standard theatres of later centuries in France. Despite their commercial orientation, these theatres often sought the patronage of some powerful aristocrat, even the king, partly for financial support, but equally importantly for protection from civic or religious authorities, who often regarded these popular gathering places as potential sites of disorder and immorality.

The company protected by the king in Paris enjoyed another major benefit, a monopoly on theatrical activity in that city. During the seventeenth century this protection was codified into the establishment of an official national theatre, the

*Comédie-Française*. During this and the next century, France served as a cultural and political model for much of Europe, and the idea of national theatres spread rapidly.

### From the Eighteenth Century to the Present

During the eighteenth century the monopolies supposedly held by many of the national theatres eroded, and the arrangement more typical of the nineteenth century began to appear. The most lavish, and usually best-situated, theatre of the city was the *opera house*, sometimes supported by the state, sometimes by private funds, but as significant culturally as a place for the upper classes to gather and display themselves as for any artistic function. Major theatres other than the opera houses were particularly favored by the growing middle-class audiences, while the lower classes, if they attended theatre at all, favored the more accessible, more congenial, and less expensive music halls, melodrama houses, and similar entertainments.

During the course of the nineteenth century a fairly consistent repertoire and public came to be associated with each particular theatre or theatres – opera and ballet, comic opera, classic revivals, new serious and comic works, and the great variety of popular forms such as melodrama, vaudeville, minstrelsy, and burletta. Although visual spectacle was most obvious at the two ends of the theatre's social spectrum – in the aristocratic opera and ballet, and in the popular melodrama and burletta – an increasing interest in historical detail and advances in technology affected every theatre of this period. The early nineteenth century even saw a vogue for theatres like the dioramas and panoramas devoted entirely to visual spectacle, involving little or no text (→ Spectacle).

This relatively stable range of theatrical organizations was disrupted toward the end of the nineteenth century when a generation of major experimental dramatists, led by Ibsen and Strindberg, introduced a kind of drama that the system could not readily accommodate, being not well enough established for the national theatres, and too radical in form and content for either the middle- or lower-class commercial theatres, where it faced the double enemy of censorship and audience incomprehension or hostility.

To solve this problem, a new sort of theatre appeared, which became central to the theatrical culture of the next century. This was the *experimental or art theatre*, and in a century where art was dominated by the ideas of innovation and the avant-garde, this sort of theatre became the favored site for the launching of innovative works or whole new movements (→ Art as Communication). Sometimes such theatres were created as annexes of national theatres, but more often they have been independent ventures, frequently located in sections of cities associated with artistic and bohemian culture.

### SOCIETAL POSITION OF THE THEATRE

Theatre is traditionally an urban art, often highly *centralized*. In some countries, most notably in England and France, the capital city has dominated national theatre since the Renaissance and in those countries a major effort was made in the late twentieth century to decentralize the theatre. Germany and Italy, probably because of the relatively late political unification, both entered the modern era with a decentralized theatre system already in place. The United States has not followed the theatrical organizational model



of any European country. Except for the brief experiment of the Federal Theatre in the 1930s, American theatre has received little official government recognition or support, and a national theatre in the European style has been often proposed, but has never appeared. This, along with the great size of the country, has worked as a counterforce to the concentration of theatre activity in any one city, despite the continuing dominance, for much of American theatre history, of New York City. Community theatres, regional theatres, and university theatres make up a significant part of this country's theatrical culture.

The arrival of the cinema and subsequently of television and of digital technology has offered major *challenges to the theatre*, especially in one of its most important traditional roles, as popular entertainment. A similar major challenge had previously appeared in the late nineteenth century with the rise of the novel, and then, as now, doubts were expressed about the future of theatre. Despite their popularity, however, these newer arts lack the essential element of the theatre experience – its physical presence. The power of the relationship between living spectator and living performer has proven so durable across many cultures and many historical periods that theater in some form seems likely to remain an important element in the expression and transmission of human culture.

This does not mean, however, that the theatre has remained resistant to the possibilities of the new media. On the contrary, those types of theatre that have traditionally been strongly interested in visual display, the opera and the musical theatre on one hand, and many parts of the wide spectrum of experimental performance on the other, have in recent years made the innovative blending of live action with video, film, and digital technology one of the most exciting areas of contemporary theatrical production (→ Digital Imagery). The new technologies, far from replacing the theatre, have, like the coming of modern mechanics and electricity, provided inspiration for a new generation of theatre artists to develop the theatre's expressive potential in ways that these new tools now make possible.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Cinema ▶ Communication Modes: Western  
▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Perspective ▶ Pictorial, Semiotics ▶ Spectacle ▶ Television  
▶ Visuals, Cognitive Processing of ▶ Visual Representation

## Third-Person Effects

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The third-person effect was introduced into communication research by W. Phillips Davison in 1983. The term conceptualizes his impression that people overestimate the impact that mass media content has on others – so-called “third persons”:

In its broadest formulation, this hypothesis predicts that people will tend to overestimate the influence that mass communications have on the attitudes and behavior of others. (Davison 1983, 3)

People not only overestimate media impact on others, but they also deny that the mass media have an impact on themselves. This does not mean that media are actually more influential on others than on oneself, or even that the media are influential at all. The crucial point is the difference in the perceived or presumed media effect on others and on oneself (→ Media Effects; Media Effects, Strength of). The third-person effect is a purely perceptual phenomenon (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality; Social Perception). It is sometimes also called third-person perception.

### **CONCEPTUAL ADDITIONS**

Davison's basic assumption has already been confirmed by a series of more than 100 empirical studies. Only two studies failed to do so (→ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses). Although the idea initially seemed to be quite simple, its empirical study led to further questions, such as (1) how general the phenomenon is, (2) what conditions increase or decrease the size of the it, and (3) what psychological or cognitive phenomena might cause it.

#### **Perceptual and Behavioral Components**

In addition to the already mentioned perceptual component, the third-person effect includes a behavioral component. According to Davison (1983, 3) the behavioral component asserts that the difference between self-perception and the perception of others may also have consequences for affected persons' behavior, particularly of those in a leading position:

the impact that they expect this communication to have on others may lead them to take some action. Any effect that the communication achieves may thus be due not to the reaction of the ostensible audience but rather to the behavior of those who anticipate, or think they perceive, some reaction on the part of others.

For example, a politician, from his or her point of view, may overestimate the influence of a negatively biased media report and, as a consequence, decide to retire, although the actual response on the negative report may have been marginal. The following research overview will show to what extent both components of the third-person effect have been confirmed empirically.

#### **The Reverse Third-Person Effect**

When asking about the perceived impact of mass media on others and on oneself in general, the third-person effect turns out to be quite robust. However, under certain conditions the respondent's self-perception and perception of others are identical. Sometimes the effect of the mass media on oneself is even estimated as being higher than the effect on others. This is referred to in the literature as the "reverse" third-person effect

or as the “first-person effect.” A reversal of the presumed media influence often can be observed in combination with media content that apparently has a positive impact on recipients. While, for instance, cigarette ads produce a third-person effect, anti-smoking campaigns produce a reverse third-person effect; that is to say, people will assume they will be affected more than others. It obviously depends on the (lack of) desirability of being influenced by a specific media content whether a third-person effect or a reverse third-person effect is found.

## **STUDIES ON THE THIRD-PERSON EFFECT**

We found more than 100 empirical studies in our recent literature review of all articles related to the third-person effect in international communication journals (Quiring et al. 2007). The perceptual component of the third-person effect has been examined on a very broad basis since it was first identified by Davison (1983). In addition, there are numerous unpublished conference papers and theses. Particularly since the early 1990s, a number of communication scientists, social psychologists, and pollsters have engaged in third-person effect research. Besides moderator variables and causes of the third-person effect, the possible consequences of such perceptions, particularly the behavioral component, have moved more and more into the center of attention (Perloff 1999, 355 f.).

### **Third-Person Effects and the Type of Media Message**

The perceived influence of mass media has been addressed within various thematic contexts. Some of the authors studying third-person effects concentrated on effects of print or television advertisements, among them political ads, ads presenting common consumer goods or luxury articles, and public service announcements (→ Advertising; Advertising Effectiveness; Political Advertising). Other studies referred to the presumed negative impact of violent or pornographic media content (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of). Some others have surveyed the perception of media influence in general or have used real media contents, such as special TV shows, as stimuli. Most of the authors limit their examination to a certain kind of mass media. Nevertheless, seen as a whole, all common mass media genres – including the Internet and even rap music – have been covered. Apart from this thematic diversity, the studies can also be differentiated according to whether the researchers manipulated the crucial media message and whether they did or did not present this media content to the participants.

### **Results on the Perceptual Component of the Third-Person Effect**

#### *The Third-Person Effect: An Artifact?*

In most of the early investigations, → survey instruments placed the question concerning others’ perceptions first, immediately followed by the question concerning self-perception. The notion that the order of questions (primacy or recency) could be responsible for the occurrence of the third-person effect inspired some authors to include the question sequence as an experimental factor. However, the results of these studies

proved that the third-person effect occurred independently of the sequence of questions. Another possibility also was considered: the third-person effect may have been produced because questions concerning self-perception and others' perception were asked in one and the same questionnaire. To test this possibility, a number of respondents were asked to state only their first-person or their third-person perception (David et al. 2004). However, the difference in perception was still observable on the aggregate level. These results indicate that the third-person effect is indeed based on perceptual differences between self and others.

#### *Distance and Perceived Others' Attributes*

As well as the third-person effect in general, the following specific relationship can be taken for granted: when being asked to estimate media effects on others, the more distant or different these others are from oneself, the larger the third-person effect becomes. In particular, the third-person effect is smaller when "others" are described as "neighbors" compared to the description "people in one's country." This distance to others has been specifically varied in the questionnaire by many authors. Apart from social distance, psychological, geographical, and political distance were considered. In most of the studies, the researchers themselves pre-determined the scope of distance. Nevertheless, an increasing perceived distance has also led to larger differences between self-perception and perception of others. The third-person effect also is influenced by the perceived intensity of the third person's exposure to the related media message. For example, respondents who ascribe to others frequent contact with violent or misogynistic songs assume that those others are more strongly influenced. Likewise, if others are perceived to have a lower standard of education than oneself, the third-person effect becomes larger. This observation could possibly be explained by the perception of a sizable cognitive distance between self and others.

#### *Desirability of the Effects*

When media effects are described as positive and personally or socially desirable, the third-person effect not only decreases in size, but it can also develop into a reverse third-person effect. In this regard, desirable media effects are often found in connection with public service announcements such as those against drinking and driving, for the use of seatbelts, etc. The desirability of media effects has been manipulated in (quasi-)experimental designs through the choice of specific media contents or question wording. When, for instance, media influences are not referred to as "being influenced" (undesirable) in the questionnaire but as "being stimulated" (desirable), the third-person effect decreases. Usually, the desirability of effects is postulated in advance by researchers of the third-person effect. But the described interrelation also is evident when the respondents make their own statements on the desirability of media effects.

#### *The Respondents' Attributes and Demographics*

Davison (1983, 9) assumed that the respondent's perceived own knowledge on a relevant topic could play a role in third-person effect research. This assumption has been confirmed by various analyses: people who consider themselves knowledgeable on a certain issue feel invulnerable in regard to media reporting on this issue, resulting in a higher third-person

effect. However, the moderating effect of (political) knowledge is related to the subjective estimation of one's own knowledge. When actual issue knowledge is measured, the relationship disappears. Besides perceived knowledge, age, high education, and low media usage lead to a greater third-person effect.

### **Results on the Behavioral Component of the Third-Person Effect**

Relatively few studies have focused on the behavioral consequences of the perceived difference between oneself and others. Although the relationship between either self-perception or perception of others on the one hand and behavioral intentions on the other has been addressed and analyzed rather often, the behavioral consequences of the third-person effect have only been examined in 25 of the studies at hand. These studies have three main weaknesses. First, the results are not quite consistent: 15 studies confirmed the direct influence of the third-person effect on the respondents' behavior; 10 failed to do so. Unfortunately, examination of these studies' parameters did not help to identify specific conditions that might explain the occurrence or absence of behavioral consequences of the third-person effect. Second, the explanatory power of these results is very limited: rather than real behavior, behavioral intentions are addressed, mostly the disposition to regulate or censor apparent negative media content (→ Censorship). Third, intervening variables concerning the behavioral component have rarely been investigated.

### **THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF THE THIRD-PERSON EFFECT**

Despite the stability of the phenomenon and its comparatively simple testing procedure, it is still relatively unclear what causes might underlie the third-person effect. Various explanatory models have already been discussed without finding a plausible and empirically confirmed theory of the origin and classification of the effect.

#### **Optimistic Bias**

The concept of optimistic bias (also known as "unrealistic optimism" or "biased optimism"; → Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism) describes how people have a more positive picture of themselves than of others. Among other implications, this is manifested in a distorted expectation for the future: while people attribute negative experiences like diseases, accidents, or unemployment to others more often than to themselves, they think they will more likely have positive experiences; they face the future with optimism (Weinstein 1980). The structural affinity to the third-person effect is obvious. Both phenomena are based upon a difference between self-perception and perception of others. Considering that media impact in general is perceived to be negative and therefore ascribed to others rather than to oneself, one could regard the third-person effect as a special case of optimistic bias. This means that the connection between the concepts consists in the desirability of being influenced by mass media. As mentioned above, lesser socially or personally desirable media content leads to a greater third-person effect. Admitting that such messages have an impact on oneself means a loss of one's own autonomy in thinking and acting. As a consequence, one can classify them as a danger or

risk. Such a “threat” by the media can be regarded as a negative event in terms of the optimistic bias hypothesis. The optimistic bias hypothesis could offer an explanation for people assuming greater effects on others than on themselves. However, this connection has so far not been confirmed empirically. Actually, a recent study shows a zero correlation between third-person effect and optimistic bias (Quiring et al. 2007).

### **Self-Enhancement**

Explaining the third-person effect through people’s tendency toward self-enhancement also pertains to the desirability of media contents. The concept claims that people sustain and communicate a picture of themselves that is as positive as possible (→ Impression Management; Self-Presentation). A positive picture of oneself corresponds with assessing oneself as immune to undesired media effects but as open toward (socially) desirable effects. The results of experimental studies seem to support this assumption: lower self-esteem and missing opportunities for self-affirmation lead to a larger third-person effect.

### **Impersonal Impact**

According to Tyler and Cook (1984), human judgments can be based on a societal level and on a personal level. Judgments on a societal level are formed relying on interpersonal communication or information transmitted by the mass media, particularly when the object of judgment is beyond personal experiences. Personal judgments, on the other hand, are based on primary experiences. Discrepancies can occur between the two judgment levels when thinking about the same problem: while people are prone to think they will never suffer from cancer themselves, they may think this event is very probable for others (→ Social Perception: Impersonal Impact). Recalling different background information when forming personal and societal judgments may be responsible for the third-person effect. It appears that mass media are credited with having great impact on the societal level, while the individual denies that the media have any influence on him or her. To support the explanation of the third-person effect by means of the impersonal impact, one can refer to the results on the third persons’ distance, which moderates the discrepancy between perceived media effects on oneself and others. The more distant those others are from oneself, the more likely it is that judgments are built on the societal level.

### **Hostile Media Phenomenon**

The → hostile media phenomenon describes a generalized negative attitude toward mass media (Vallone et al. 1985). People believe that media reports are biased against their own opinion, even if content analyses failed to show any bias at all. The authors found that pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian students both believed that mass media reported against their own position. It was also observed that the respondents expected such media reports to have a great impact on other recipients, who were formerly neutral regarding the specific conflict. They could be convinced of the subjectively wrong side by the “hostile” media. It can thus be expected that respondents’ third-person effect becomes larger, the

more they accuse the mass media of being biased. Again, this connection has not been sufficiently confirmed empirically.

### **Attribution Theory**

Attribution theory has also been considered as a potential explanation of the third-person effect in some studies. This theory refers to the fact that people always seek to rationalize *ex post* their own and others' behavior by looking for causes. In doing so, people trace back their own (undesirable) actions to the particular situation or to the circumstances. In contrast, the behavior of others is often associated with stable personality traits. The tendency to underestimate situation-based influences (external factors) on the behavior of others and to overestimate their personal characteristics (internal factors) is also known as the "fundamental attribution error" (→ Attribution Processes). Relating this fallacy to the third-person effect would mean that – for oneself – one considers factors that may lessen the influence of a media message (such as the appearance and the credibility of the communicator, as well as the specific usage situation). The impact on others, on the other hand, is solely deduced from their exposure to the message. This causes the personal view that one is less vulnerable than others to those contents.

### **THE EFFECTS OF PRESUMED MEDIA EFFECTS**

Not reality itself, but rather its perception and interpretation determine how people act. This simple principle can be very well applied to the third-person effect and is generally known as the Thomas theorem: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (Thomas & Thomas 1928, 572). For human behavior, it is thus not so important how much we or others are actually influenced by the mass media; more important is how much we (collectively) believe we are affected by the media. This appraisal may well affect real behavior, or at least behavioral intentions. This provides a subject for study: one may analyze under what conditions and in what areas (other than the much-researched area of censorship of media contents) the third-person effect encourages or prevents certain actions. For instance, the installation of monitoring cameras in public places could be endorsed if one presumes that media violence exerts much more negative influence on one's fellow humans than on oneself. Another example would be over-purchasing a certain food under the assumption that it might possibly become scarce just because of a negative media report and its presumed influence on others. There is probably a great number of similar possible connections between the third-person effect and societal or political behavior. Further third-person effect research should concentrate on situations in which the perceptual phenomenon gains behavioral relevance.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Censorship ▶ False Uniqueness ▶ Hostile Media Phenomenon ▶ Impression Management ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects, Strength of ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ Perceived Reality: Meta-Analyses ▶ Political Advertising ▶ Self-Presentation ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Social Perception ▶ Social Perception:

Impersonal Impact ► Social Perception: Unrealistic Optimism ► Survey ► Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Time-Series Analysis**

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Time-series analysis is a statistical procedure for describing the characteristics of one time series (e.g., a trend) or predicting the future development of one time series (forecasting), but it can also be used to analyze the impact of an event on a single time series (intervention analysis) and to analyze the correlations between two or more different time series (cross-correlations, transfer-function analysis). The first two applications are usually called the univariate perspective of time-series analysis; the second two are known as the multivariate perspective of time-series analysis.

### **TYPES OF TIME-SERIES ANALYSIS**

The univariate perspective can be compared to descriptive statistical analyses of one variable and its values for all elements of a sample distribution (→ Statistics, Descriptive). Yet with time-series analysis the values of a certain variable are organized consecutively, i.e., in a time order. For example, one can ask 365 people ( $n = 365$ ) about the time they spend watching television and get one value for each person, i.e., 365 different values



altogether. Or one can ask just one person about the time he or she spends watching television on 365 consecutive days ( $t = 365$ ). Again, one gets 365 values, but these are in a sequence and refer to one person ( $n = 1$ ). The multivariate perspective of time-series analysis can be compared to calculating correlations – with two variables – or to regression analysis – with more than two variables – as known from descriptive statistics. Yet in time-series analysis all variables are time series. So, a correlation refers to a first sequence of values of variable  $X_t$  being temporally related to a second sequence of values of variable  $Z_t$ .

Besides this classification according to statistical procedures, time-series analysis has to be categorized according to designs and methods. With respect to design, time-series analysis can be described as a special form of longitudinal design ( $\rightarrow$  Longitudinal Analysis). As in the television-viewing example, asking 365 persons at one point of time would be a cross-sectional study. But when asking one person on 365 consecutive days, one measures longitudinally. With respect to methods, a time series can be obtained by applying a  $\rightarrow$  survey, a content analysis ( $\rightarrow$  Content Analysis, Quantitative), or an  $\rightarrow$  observation. This can be illustrated by some examples, which also help to explain the term “time series” and related concepts. Data in a time series are ordered sequentially. For instance, one can conduct a content analysis and count the number of newspaper articles about foreign affairs on each day. If there is one article on the first day ( $t_1; z_1 = 1$ ), three on the second ( $t_2; z_2 = 3$ ), four on the third ( $t_3; z_3 = 4$ ), and two on the fourth ( $t_4; z_4 = 2$ ), one obtains the time series “daily number of articles on foreign affairs,” which has the value sequence  $\{1, 3, 4, 2, \dots\}$ . This time series  $Z_t = \{z_1, z_2, z_3, \dots, z_n\}$  measures or represents daily values of the variable  $Z$ . If the time span between the observations is longer – say, a month – then one obtains a monthly time series. The span between points of time is called the time lag. The time span, e.g., between  $t_1$  and  $t_1$  is lag 0, while the time span, e.g., between  $t_4$  and  $t_5$  is lag +1 and that between  $t_{18}$  and  $t_{17}$  is lag –1. The length of a time series is represented by the number of data points, i.e., time points. If one asks a person  $Z$  on 100 consecutive days about his or her media use, for instance, the daily time series “media use of person  $Z$ ” has length  $T = 100$ , so the time series  $Z_t$  has 100 data points.

### ARIMA MODELS IN UNIVARIATE TIME-SERIES ANALYSIS

In social sciences, both describing and forecasting a singular time series usually refer to so-called ARIMA models, introduced by George E. Box and Gwilym M. Jenkins. Thus, this type of time-series analysis is also called the Box–Jenkins method. The term ARIMA stands for three different stochastic processes: AR is the abbreviation for autoregressive processes, I for integrated processes, and MA for moving-average processes. Other processes, such as the Wiener process or Markov chains, are not included in the Box–Jenkins method since most time series in social sciences can be described by autoregressive, integrated, and moving-average processes or models quite sufficiently.

The idea of *describing* a time series with an ARIMA model can be illustrated by the example of a single person’s emotional state. Person  $Z$  may be in a good mood on some days and in a bad mood on others. Thus, his or her emotional state develops in the form of a daily time series  $Z_t$ . It is quite likely that the moods on consecutive days are not totally independent of each other. For instance, person  $Z$ ’s mood on a current day ( $t_0$ ) may depend on his or her mood yesterday ( $t_{-1}$ ). In this case, one would say that the time series

$Z_t$  is autocorrelated with a first-order autoregression (AR = 1). If not only  $Z_{t-1}$  has an impact on the present-day mood, but also the moods from the day before yesterday ( $Z_{t-2}$ ), then there is also a second-order autoregressive element (AR = 2) in the time series  $Z_t$ . A model for this time series would be denoted by ARIMA (2,0,0). Autoregressions can be compared to conventional  $\rightarrow$  regression analysis. The only difference is that in time-series analysis the predictor is not another variable  $Z$  but the time series itself in a so-called lagged form. For instance, one predictor for  $Z_t$  may be  $Z_{t-1}$ , another predictor may be  $Z_{t-2}$ , and so on. In terms of the above-mentioned example, the current mood of person  $Z$  ( $Z_t$ ) can be explained by his or her mood on previous days ( $Z_{t-n}$ ).

If there were one integrated element in a time series, the shortcut would be ARIMA (0,1,0). This model can mostly be considered the logical equivalent to an autoregressive model. Next to autoregressive and integrated elements, an empirical time series can have moving-average characteristics, which can be described by MA models. With the example of a person's mood development, moving averages represent random influences on a time series. For instance, a current mood may be due to some event that cannot be predicted. The sequence of such random events is called white noise, which is a special form of a random walk and is denoted by  $a_t$ . But not just current random events, but also random events from yesterday – written as  $a_{t-1}$  – can have an impact on a time series  $Z_t$ . This is called a first-order moving average (MA = 1). With a delay of more than one lag (e.g., lag -2), one obtains a second-order moving average (MA = 2). The models for these two random impacts are abbreviated using ARIMA (0,0,1) and ARIMA (0,0,2). The crucial difference between autoregressive elements and moving-average elements in an empirical time series is the quality of the past impact. Autoregression stands for the impact of past values  $Z_{t-1}$  or  $Z_{t-2} \dots Z_{t-n}$  while moving average represents the impact of past random events  $a_{t-1}$  or  $a_{t-2} \dots a_{t-n}$ .

Times series in social sciences can be described by these three models of stochastic processes. This is comparable to regression analysis. A regression model or regression line is a model of the correlation of two variables  $X$  and  $Y$ . Similarly, a stochastic process, e.g., an autoregressive process, can be conceived as a model for the inherent momentum of an empirical time series  $Z_t$ . Usually a time series  $Z_t$  has elements or characteristics of not just one, but two or three, of these stochastic processes. For instance, a time series  $Z_t$  that can be described by an ARIMA (1,0,1) model has characteristics of a first-order autoregressive as well as of a first-order moving average process.

The general form of an ARIMA model is written as ARIMA ( $p, d, q$ ), where  $p$ ,  $d$ , and  $q$  represent the order, i.e., number of autoregressive, integrated, and moving-average elements of the empirical time series. After having described an empirical time series by an ARIMA model, one obtains the residuals  $a_t$ . As in regression analysis, the residuals should be kept to a minimum. The equation  $a_t = Z_t - \text{ARIMA}(p, d, q)$  expresses the fact that the empirical observations – the time series – and the expected values – the ARIMA model for the time series – should match “perfectly” in the sense of residuals being a random walk, i.e., a white noise process. In other words, the residuals  $a_t$  should be a sequence of totally uncorrelated random events.

Describing a time series by an ARIMA model is quite similar to the second form of univariate time-series analysis, namely *forecasting*. Here, the empirical values of a time series are used for predicting future, but yet unknown values of the time series. One

application may be the prediction of unemployment. Both ARIMA modeling and forecasting afford a time series length of at least 30 data points – the more, the better. And in both cases one should also look out for seasonal components. For instance, unemployment time series often have spring or winter peaks, which can be described by seasonal ARIMA models.

## MULTIVARIATE METHODS

Among the multivariate methods in time-series analysis, are intervention analysis, cross-correlation, and transfer-function analysis. In *intervention analysis*, one examines the impact of an event on a singular time series  $Z_t$ . For instance, September 11 certainly had an impact on the amount of articles about terrorism, which can be modeled as a time series. Following the attacks, coverage on terrorism increased tremendously and was constantly on a higher level than before. In intervention analysis the event itself is modeled like a time series ( $I_t$ ), but in the form of a dummy code. For instance, 0 (“no event”) is assigned to all data points before the event and 1 (“event”) is assigned to all other data points. Then a correlation is calculated for the event series  $I_t$  (e.g., September 11) and the time series  $Z_t$  (e.g., number of articles on terrorism).

In *cross-correlation*, one does not examine the impact of an event, but the influence, e.g., of an assumed independent time series  $X_t$  on an assumed dependent time series  $Z_t$ . In the first step, one usually estimates the ARIMA model for each time series separately. In the second step, one calculates so-called cross-correlations for the residuals obtained by the first step. Cross-correlations can be compared to conventional correlations ( $\rightarrow$  Correlation Analysis). Yet one does not only calculate “synchronous” correlations between the two time series residuals (lag 0), but also “diachronous” correlations (lag  $\pm 1$ ,  $\pm 2 \dots$ ). This requires three steps. First, one correlates the residuals of  $Z_t$  with the lagged residuals of  $X_t$ , i.e., with  $X_{t-1}$ ,  $X_{t-2}$ , and so on. Second, one correlates the residuals of  $X_t$  with the lagged residuals of  $Z_t$ , i.e., with  $Z_{t-1}$ ,  $Z_{t-2}$ , and so on. Finally, one calculates synchronous correlations. With this procedure one detects the causal logic between  $X_t$  and  $Z_t$ . A significant correlation between  $X_{t-2}$  and  $Z_t$ , for instance, indicates that  $Z_t$  is certainly not the predictor of  $X_t$ , but  $X_t$  is likely to be the predictor of  $Z_t$ . Furthermore, one can see that this impact has a delay of two lags (e.g., of two days).

In *transfer-function analysis*, not just one time series ( $X_t$ ), but several time series (e.g.,  $X_p$ ,  $Y_t$ ) serve as predictors for an assumed dependent time series ( $Z_t$ ). Here, an overall model represents the causal logic and time relations between all variables (e.g.,  $X_p$ ,  $Y_t$ , and  $Z_t$ ). Thus, a transfer-function analysis resembles a multiple regression analysis in many ways.

SEE ALSO:  $\blacktriangleright$  Content Analysis, Quantitative  $\blacktriangleright$  Correlation Analysis  $\blacktriangleright$  Longitudinal Analysis  $\blacktriangleright$  Observation  $\blacktriangleright$  Regression Analysis  $\blacktriangleright$  Statistics, Descriptive  $\blacktriangleright$  Survey

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## Time Warner Inc.

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Time Warner is the world's leading multimedia conglomerate (→ Media Conglomerates), with operations in filmed entertainment, broadcast and → cable television, → Internet services and print media. The company generated more than \$43 billion in revenues in 2005.

Time Warner was built through a series of → mergers over more than 80 years. Time, Inc. began in 1922 as a publishing company for *Time* magazine, which first appeared in 1923 (→ News Magazine, History of). Over the years, the company would create additional titles such as *Fortune*, *Life*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Money* magazines. In 1965, Time entered the cable distribution business; it launched Home Box Office (HBO), a premium cable program network, in 1972 (→ United States of America: Media System).

Warner Brothers, a producer of filmed entertainment, was founded in 1923. It was home to the first talking picture, *The Jazz Singer*, and the production home for the animation studio Looney Tunes. Warner Bros also became a major producer of recorded music, with Atlantic Records, Elektra Records, and Reprise Records among its many labels (→ Music Industry). As → television became popular in American homes, Warner Bros began producing programming for this medium, and it remains one of the leading producers of broadcast prime time as well as syndicated programming. Warner Bros entered the cable television business in 1973.

In 1989, Time merged with Warner Communications and the combined company was renamed Time Warner in 1990. This merger created the first vertically integrated media behemoth, mixing the publishing and cable system expertise of Time with the filmed entertainment – both motion picture and television – and cable networks of Warner Communications. The company continued to create new magazines and cable networks after the merger, but achieved its most significant growth in 1996 when it acquired the Turner Broadcasting System, home of several major cable networks, including → CNN.

Taking the industry by surprise, America On Line (AOL) and Time Warner announced merger plans in 2000, with AOL being the lead company. This merger was proclaimed by some to be the death knell for traditional media. Another bellwether of the decline in

traditional media came when AOL Time Warner sold off the Warner Music division in 2003. However, the changing fortunes of the Internet space, and AOL in particular, were evident as early as that same year, when the company removed AOL from its moniker and became simply Time Warner.

As of 2007, Time Warner had five broad product areas: filmed entertainment, television networks, cable systems, interactive services, and publishing. These were contained within seven umbrella corporate brands: AOL, HBO, New Line Cinema, Time Inc., Time Warner Cable, Turner Broadcasting System, and Warner Bros Entertainment.

Filmed entertainment included the production and distribution of theatrical motion pictures (→ Cinema), television shows, and animated programming, as well as the distribution of syndicated television properties. Warner Bros Entertainment Group included, among many other companies, Warner Bros Pictures, Warner Bros Television Group, Warner Bros Animation (Looney Tunes and Hanna-Barbera), and the CW Network. New Line, made up of New Line Cinema and Fine Line Features, was the corporation's independent production and distribution arm. Both of these divisions produced and distributed motion pictures as well as television programming, for both major networks and cable outlets. Prime-time programming included *Without a Trace* and *Smallville*, while syndicated hits included *Friends*, *The Ellen Degeneres Show*, and *The Tyra Banks Show*. Movie hits from 2005 included *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and *Batman Begins*. Releases for 2006 were less successful and included box office bombs *Poseidon* and *Ant Bully*.

The network area included broadcast, basic cable, and premium cable services. It was made up of the Turner Broadcasting System, HBO, and the CW Network. Turner Broadcasting consisted of cable networks including CNN and Headline News, TBS, TNT, Turner Classic Movies (TCM), and the Cartoon Network. Most of these had international counterparts, such as Cartoon Network Latin America and TCM Europe. HBO was the most widely distributed pay-cable service and had approximately 40 million subscribers in the US. Originally created as a purveyor of commercial-free movies, HBO became a leader in prime-time television programming, with shows such as *Sex and the City*, *The Sopranos*, and *The Wire*, which also became successful syndicated products. Cinemax, a second-tier movie channel, was also part of HBO. The CW was a 50–50 joint venture with CBS. This network was launched in late 2006 with a combination of programming from the former UPN and the WB networks.

Time Warner Cable was the second largest US cable provider in the United States behind Comcast. Time Warner served more than 13 million subscribers in 2007 (National Cable and Telecommunications Association). The company had 7 million digital subscribers, and 6.4 million received high-speed Internet access through the company. While the company began to roll out digital phone service, this made no rapid inroads as a significant business. In addition to providing cable service, Time Warner operated 24-hour local news channels in New York, North Carolina, and Texas (→ Newscast, 24-Hour).

AOL was the largest Internet access provider in the United States with more than 19 million subscribers, down from 30 million in 2001 (Holahan 2006). According to the company's website, AOL planned to reposition itself as a global web services company in response to consumers choosing broadband services over AOL's dial-up service. To that end, the company would offer AOL mail and AOL software to anyone with broadband

access. The intention was to take advantage of the continuing growth in online advertising. Other changes included providing innovative programming such as *Gold Rush!* – a 7-week interactive event produced in conjunction with Mark Burnett Productions. In addition to AOL, the company owned a number of well-known online properties including MapQuest, Moviefone and TMZ.com, an entertainment industry insider site which Time Warner planned to turn into a syndicated television program.

Time, Inc. was the leading publisher of consumer magazines and home to more than 150 titles worldwide. *Time*, *People*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *In Style*, *Fortune*, *Money*, and *Cooking Light* were just some of the brand names published by this company.

According to Hoover's, Time Warner had surmounted the debacle of the merger with AOL. While AOL subscriptions declined, the company's restructuring and the divestiture of the music and book businesses appeared to have created a more focused institution.

SEE ALSO: ► Cable Television ► Cinema ► CNN ► Internet ► Media Conglomerates ► Mergers ► Music Industry ► News Magazine, History of ► Newscast, 24-Hour ► Television ► United States of America: Media System

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## **Tourism Industry**

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The term “tourism industry” covers a wide range of services, activities, and commodities, bound together in a complex network of relationships that involves the temporary migration of people for leisure purposes. There has always been an element of the global within tourism. Since the first worldwide figures were gathered in the early 1950s, tourism has continued to grow year on year. In common with many other forms of economic activity, the increasing reach and spread of tourism has gathered pace since the 1990s to the extent that it is now firmly embedded as an established and important sector in many economies of the world, and consequently has had considerable socio-economic and cultural impacts on localities.

One of the basic building blocks of → modernity was the nation-state, which by and large framed a distinct economic and social realm that defined a particular way of life, a distinct cultural constellation. Under the present conditions of globalization (→ Globalization Theories), where money, commodities, and people move more rapidly than they have ever done before, economic and cultural relations are being reordered. Among other elements, globalization involves increasing connectivity both horizontally, across space, and vertically, within local economic and cultural realms. As a consequence both economic and cultural boundaries are more permeable and fluid than they have been in the recent past, to the extent that parts of the third world have been brought into the economic core, while at the same time segments of the first world, such as redundant industrial areas, have been relegated to peripheral status. Tourism also exemplifies these developments, since it involves the global flow of people to specific tourist locales, and the embedding of global economic networks in those locales, as well as offering the opportunity for regions and localities to remake themselves as arenas of consumption.

### **ECONOMIC SPECIFICS OF TOURISM**

Tourism is, however, *distinct from other forms of production and consumption* in a number of significant ways. First, the tourist destination is conceptually and spatially marked as distinct from the realm of work and home. Second, this distinction itself relies on the commodification of place, people, and culture, which together create sites of leisure consumption, or tourist space. As a tourist, one becomes involved, even if only superficially, in the worlds and lives of others. Third, linked as it is to specificity of place, the tourist product itself is not movable. It is people rather than goods that are imported and exported. As a tourist one is mobile and transient, and engages in the conspicuous consumption of time and in some cases hedonistic excess. Fourth, tourism also cuts across a number of sectoral boundaries, as it involves a bundle of services and commodities, such as insurance and currency exchange, transportation, accommodation, food, and entertainment. The purchase and consumption of these goods and services can be seen as a circuit that runs from point of origin via mode of transit to the destination, then a return to the point of origin. Both the production chains and the consumption of goods and services involved in tourism are cyclical and also spread across space and time.

The *differentiation between work and leisure spaces* can be seen as a consequence of modernity, in which the dominant Fordist mode of mass production was matched by a Fordist mode of mass leisure consumption. While today's form of tourism has changed, the basic pattern outlined above was originally established with the development of modernity and urban industrialization in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, with the creation of resorts that tended to cater for national markets. Tourism was also seasonal, peaking in the summer months and almost nonexistent at other times of the year. In the latter part of the twentieth century, the advent of mass air travel gave rise to charter flight tourism and the creation of mass resorts in places such as the Mediterranean and the Caribbean, which catered respectively for European and North American markets, and thus saw the growing internationalization of mass tourism.

However, Fordist production and consumption has been eroded and partly replaced by a shift into post-Fordist modes of niche consumption and a consequent *diversification of*

*tourism*. In part this is a consequence of the reordering of global economic relations with the near-universal adoption of deregulated markets and neo-liberal economic policies. As many cities and regions in the developed economies began to lose their traditional industrial base, there was a need to find alternative forms of employment. One of the ways in which this was achieved was the revaluation and regeneration of urban space. This not only encouraged inward investment, but also opened up opportunities for new forms of tourism such as the short city break and leisure shopping. As a consequence, the distinction which had previously existed between work and leisure spaces was replaced by more complex and diverse patterns.

### THE GLOBALIZATION OF TOURISM

Parallel to such changes in the developed economies was the globalization of tourism. The increase in long-haul flights in the latter part of the twentieth century meant that tourism began to expand beyond the confines of the developed states and regions, especially in South-East Asia, although the trajectory of resort development was somewhat different to that in the west. Unlike other forms of development, tourism requires relatively low capital investment, continues to increase its potential exponentially as an invisible export and foreign currency earner, and is thus a relatively low cost way to balance payments. However, tourism is also vulnerable to short-term economic fluctuations and heightened perceptions of risk, such as those due to terrorist activity or political instability.

One of the features of contemporary globalization is the *growth and influence of multinational corporations* (MNCs). Both their number and importance have increased significantly since the 1970s, most notably in terms of finance capital, and especially during the deregulatory wave of the 1980s. However, as distinct from some other economic sectors, the influence of MNCs is not as great as may be thought, and extends mainly to three sub-sectors: airlines, hotel chains, and to a lesser extent, travel agents and tour operators. In air travel, we find a trend towards strategic alliances among a number of different carriers. Using a system of code-sharing, onward and connecting flights can be booked as a single ticket. Airlines may also offer other services such as hotel booking and car hire. Such developments are only possible through the advent of sophisticated ICT systems, which also allow individuals to create their own itineraries through online booking. Such developments undermine the traditional role of the tour operators and travel agents, and are of great benefit to airlines and hotel chains. It is at this level that we see the emergence of global standards of service that consumers increasingly expect.

However, such alliances and franchise arrangements are not entirely the result of a deregulated global economy. Both national and regional policies will also have some effect in shaping the form and development of tourist space and the flows of both investment capital and people, since a major incentive for governments to pursue tourism development policies is the lure of foreign exchange earnings. Despite globalization, the state has clearly not withered away. Rather its role can be crucial in mediating and directing the political economy. MNCs may exert considerable economic leverage, more so perhaps in relation to the less developed economies, but they are not doing so in a totally unfettered marketplace.

The main issue in terms of the *global political economy* is the degree to which the state either pursues interventionist policies, or deregulates and opens up development to the



play of market forces, even if these are mediated at a number of spatial and administrative levels. The net result is that competition for tourist spend is now played out in a global arena, and culture, in the wider anthropological sense of the word, is the means through which places market themselves for tourist spend. In order to attract tourists, destinations need to be marked out as distinct, and this often involves policy and marketing strategy development at a number of institutional levels, from the national state to the region and the locality.

### CULTURE AND SYMBOLISM

Both policies and marketing strategies, working within the confines of the global economy, assign symbolic value to selected attributes of place. Through such processes cultures are essentialized and commoditized as representations for the global market place (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts; Culture Industries). These representations of people, place, and culture assume an exchange value as objects of consumption along with the other material goods and commodities consumed in the tourist circuit.

*Global* → *marketing* inevitably impinges on the lives of people in tourist destinations. Tourism can provide employment and income in areas that previously, for example, had been dominated by agricultural patterns of production. Development requires land, and the building of hotels and infrastructure may displace local inhabitants. The gender division of labor within local societies may also change as new employment and entrepreneurial opportunities are opened up to locals. On a more negative note, we also need to take account of the exploitative relationships that may develop between locals and tourists, most notably perhaps in sex tourism. This is a phenomenon most commonly associated with developing nations, where the disparity of wealth between hosts and guests gives rise to widespread prostitution, which in turn develops into the tourist attraction itself.

The possibility that the bulk of profits will flow overseas rather than feed into the local economy is an ever-present problem, albeit one neither confined to the tourism sector nor to the less developed economies; it is an aspect of globalization itself. For example, profits may well flow from the western economies to those of the east, as they may flow in the other direction.

Tourists not only bring with them money, but also particular *expectations of the destination and its people*, as well as culturally specific norms and ways of acting that can, in some cases, go against local norms and expectations of acceptable behavior. Many criticisms of tourism are based on the notion that it exports “western” values and ways of life that impinge on more vulnerable societies in the less developed world (→ Americanization of the Media). While changes to local social and economic patterns are an inevitable consequence of tourism development, however we judge them, the flow and pattern of tourism itself has also been changing. Many of the less developed or newly emerging economies now have growing domestic tourism markets, as well as contributing to the net flow of overseas tourists. Some smaller nations, though, for example the island states of Micronesia and the Caribbean, will be more dependent on tourism. Even in the developed economies some cities and regions are also more reliant on tourism spend than they have been in the past. In other words, the new order of globalization appears to cut across and redefine the old pattern of geographical and cultural fixities, to the extent that

binary models of center versus periphery or → modernization versus underdevelopment cannot deal with the complex contemporary situation (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories).

This can be seen in the often-voiced assumption that both globalization and tourism will lead to the *homogenization of cultures* to the detriment of more localized forms of cultural identity and expression. So far the evidence is rather mixed, even contradictory. For example, it is often assumed, particularly in relation to developing countries and culturally peripheral regions, that contact with tourism creates markets for handicrafts, and the intrusion of market mechanisms inevitably leads to the production of tourist goods that are inauthentic representations of local cultures. However, such arguments and their variants rely on an outmoded and static model of culture, and ignore both internal and external dynamics of cultural change. Nonetheless, in certain sub-sectors of the tourism industry, such as travel and accommodation for instance, there are global standards of service provision by which individual providers are judged. At the same time, certain aspects of a destination may well be valued precisely because they are perceived to be “free” of global influences.

The contemporary tourism industry comprises a complex circuit of production and consumption that extends across spatial and cultural boundaries. The dominant Fordist model of production and consumption, exemplified by the mass holiday resort, has, in common with other spheres of consumption, gradually but not entirely been superseded by a more fragmented and niched market. As a globalized phenomenon, it encompasses both the macro and global with the micro and local levels of specific places and destinations.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising: Global Industry ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Culture Industries ▶ Disney ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Hybridity Theories ▶ International Communication ▶ Marketing ▶ Modernity ▶ Modernization ▶ Music Industry ▶ Public Relations: Global Firms

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# Tourism and Popular Culture

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Tourism is now the largest industry in the world, and as such, it has increasingly become of interest to scholars in a number of academic disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology, psychology, → semiotics, communication and → marketing. It is also the subject of analyses using interdisciplinary approaches, such as leisure studies, feminist studies (→ Feminist and Gender Studies), and → cultural studies. Tourism studies have moved from being a relatively marginal aspect of the academy to one of considerable importance, and there are now departments devoted to studying tourism and many scholarly journals devoted to the subject.

Tourism scholars pay a great deal of attention to marketing and to different kinds of tourists and what they are seeking when they travel. The tendency is to focus on sociological topics involving tourism demographics and statistical portraits of tourists. There is also an anthropological approach to tourism that considers it as a cultural phenomenon. In recent years, a broader approach, involving a number of disciplines, has become important and one finds now, for example, psychoanalytic–semiotic studies of tourism being made. A good example of the semiotic analysis of a “foreign” culture is → Roland Barthes’s *Empire of signs* (1982).

## TOURISM AS A SOCIAL PHENOMENON

Several years ago, more than 800 million people made trips out of their home country to another country, and while some of those trips might have involved traveling to a neighboring country or one nearby, a huge number of people traveled to distant lands. Traveling abroad is nothing new, of course. For as long as we have recorded history, people have wandered over the face of the earth, in search of food, lost cultures and civilizations, and adventure, or on religious pilgrimages – trying to escape from the routines of their everyday lives in search of that which is different or exotic. But the scope of international tourism is unprecedented and calls for serious investigation.

At one time, foreign travel was reserved for elites who had the time and money to be able to take the “grand tour” and see the world. In recent decades, as a result of the development of relatively inexpensive means of travel, such as airplanes, and new modes of tourism, such as cruise lines and package tours, more and more people are traveling further and further and tourism has become a mass market phenomenon.

The term “tourism” comes from the Greek word *ornos*, which means circle. Tourism is generally understood to mean traveling, for pleasure, to distant lands and then returning to one’s home city, making, in effect, a circle. The World Tourism Organization defines tourism as follows: “It comprises the activities of personal traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited” (website).

This definition is much too broad and does not consider other important aspects of tourism, such as the notion that it is voluntary, is done for pleasure and amusement, is part of our consumer culture, and involves tourists returning to their point of origin after their travels. Sometimes it is difficult to differentiate between tourism and business travel, for a person who is traveling somewhere on business, which is the main reason for the trip, may spend some time as a tourist, and tourists may occasionally conduct some business while on their trips. For our purposes, tourism and travel will be considered as the same thing.

### **TOURISM AS PART OF POPULAR COMMUNICATION**

Tourism may now be seen as part of our → consumer culture and, because it is so widespread, as a kind of mass culture or popular culture. As such, it is the subject of various kinds of → popular communication. One finds advertisements for cruises, foreign tours, and flights to exotic destinations in our → magazines and → newspapers and on the → Internet. In most newspapers there are special sections in the Sunday editions that deal with travel – both foreign and domestic. There are a number of American magazines, such as *National Geographic Traveler* and *Travel + Leisure*, that are of interest to tourists, and similar magazines exist in most countries.

There are an enormous number of websites dealing with every aspect of tourism, from finding flights to booking cruises and tours. In addition, there are sites where travelers can send back reports about their visits to various cities or countries. For example, on the Frommer's website one can find hundreds of discussions on sites devoted to particular cities and countries. People planning visits to a certain city or country can ask questions and receive answers from others, and many people write involved descriptions of their adventures. There are radio and television shows devoted to travel, and there is a very large travel guide publishing industry.

When tourists visit other places, especially foreign lands, one of the things they do is shop for souvenirs and local products, so tourism is intimately connected with the everyday lives and popular culture of people in sites that are visited. In addition to shopping, tourists visit places to enjoy the food and entertainments found in them, since tourists are in search of that which is different (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

This search for what is different can range from visiting countries where the differences are not great to countries where they are very great. Thus, for example, a person from the United States who visits western European countries would find different cultures (and a person from western Europe would find the United States different), but the difference would not be as great as visiting a country such as India, where there are enormous differences in language, food, religion, architecture, and dress.

### **THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

We can suggest that there are polar opposites – the everyday and the exotic. The everyday, at one extreme, represents one's own culture. In the middle there is the "different," which represents cultures that are different from ours but not in radical ways. And the exotic represents cultures that are distant from ours in almost every way. If we take the United States as representing the everyday pole, we can see that England, France, Italy, and other

western European countries are different in many respects, but not radically different from America – especially in their popular culture. Thailand, Bali, and India, would represent the other pole, the exotic, where most aspects of everyday life are very different to life in America (Berger 2004, 33).

When people travel, they tend to spend much of their time involved with the popular culture and everyday life of the places they visit. Statistics reveal that shopping is the number one activity that tourists engage in when traveling. Popular culture can be defined for our purposes as all that which is not elite culture (opera, classical music, great works of art, and so on). An important aspect of popular culture involves media and what has been described as mass-mediated culture. Many tourists do sample elite culture when they are in distant lands – they may go to an opera, visit museums, or attend concerts – but much of their time is spent shopping, sightseeing, visiting places of touristic interest with good photo opportunities, enjoying popular entertainments, and dining where they can sample the local cuisine (→ Popular Culture).

The growth of the Internet and the development of mass media mean that the exotic is becoming more and more familiar, and many people can now see when they watch television or go to films how people in other cultures live. Television programs on travel and films that take place in exotic countries have led to many countries becoming “hot” popular tourist destinations. One important matter for tourism scholars to investigate is the impact of tourism and first world mass-mediated culture on third world foreign cultures. Is first world popular culture destroying popular culture in third world lands, or have they learned how to adapt it to their own needs? Much of the discussion of “cultural imperialism” (→ Cultural Imperialism Theories) is theoretical in nature and the subject of continual controversy and debate.

Some theorists, such as Claude Lévi-Strauss, suggest the world is becoming a “monoculture.” The implication of this notion is that as the world fills up with *Starbucks* and fast food outlets, that which is distinctive in foreign lands, whether different or exotic, will diminish or disappear. This is an important question for tourism scholars, for if tourists are in search of that which is different (and authentically different), there will be no reason to travel if the world becomes a monoculture. Tourism scholars face the problem of determining to what degree cultures are losing their identities, or, if not, how they are dealing with the impact of mass media and mass tourism. There is also the question of what impact tourists have on the places they visit. Many scholars have been interested in the effect mass tourism has had on Bali, for example, and there is a good deal of debate about whether tourism has been good or bad for Bali.

Related to this matter is the question of authenticity and the development of what might be called “tourist traps,” namely faked or imitated cultural practices. There is also the broader question of the importance of simulations in life and the impact that simulations are having on tourism and on everyday life everywhere.

Scholars studying the impact of tourism and popular or mass-mediated culture on other lands need to be familiar with the popular and everyday life of the cultures being studied, and find ways of assessing how cultures change and the degree to which they change. These are methodological problems of considerable importance – problems that call for a multidisciplinary perspective and a broader approach to tourism studies than tends to be the norm now.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Consumer Culture ▶ Cultural Imperialism Theories  
 ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies  
 ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Marketing ▶ Newspaper ▶ Popular Communication  
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## **Trademarks in the Media**

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Trademarks are symbols used by companies to identify their products and services. These symbols then serve to distinguish a product or service from those of another company (when a service is trademarked, the resulting mark is legally referred to as a “servicemark”). Trademarks can consist of a word, a phrase, a design, a sound, a color, a product configuration, a group of letters or numbers, or any combination of these. The trademark for the NBC television network, for example, consists of the letters “NBC” and a stylized peacock; the trademark for the Playboy empire consists of the word “Playboy” and the famous bunny symbol.

The terms “trademark” and → “brand” are often used interchangeably, and both are considered intellectual property (→ Intellectual Property Law). In the US, trademarks can be registered with the US patent and trademark office. Brands can be registered as trademarks, and include the symbol of an “r” in a circle when this has occurred. If the symbol “tm” is used, it is likely that the brand has applied for registration but has not yet received it.

### **FUNCTION OF TRADEMARKS**

Trademarks play important roles for all companies, including media companies. They minimize consumer confusion regarding the source (or origin) of a product or service.

Trademarks also allow companies to set and enforce high quality standards for those licensing trademarked products and services. Additionally, trademarks prevent other organizations from using a similar trademark on competing products and services. Finally, as consumers become familiar with trademarks and the products or services they represent, trademarks can acquire a secondary meaning, as an indicator of product or service quality.

Thus, these trademarks help consumers select one product or service over another. For this reason, trademarks can be valuable business assets (Tucker & Casabona 2006). For *media companies*, trademarks are arguably even more important than trademarks for products. Media companies invest considerable resources in developing name and trademark recognition, and the reputation associated with such names and trademarks (→ Corporate and Organizational Identity; Corporate Reputation). For media companies, an image or a brand cannot be created overnight; it needs a consistent delivery of a specific type of content in order to become valuable to consumers (→ Branding). The trademark, then, symbolizes this value.

Media companies (such as → Time Warner Inc.) and specific media outlets, such as the → CNN cable network, *Playboy* magazine, and the *New York Times* newspaper, rely on the content that they create to attract audiences (and subsequently advertisers). The audiences create an → image of the media company based on the content provided by the company, and then the company's trademark stands to symbolize that image. The image represents a perceived value to media audiences. *CNN* and the *New York Times*, for example, stand for credible and quality journalism (→ Quality Press), while *Time Warner* and *Playboy* represent certain types of entertainment values. If such values are compromised, the audiences may seek other media outlets, and the media companies would lose not only viewers and listeners but also advertising revenue (→ Advertising).

Trademarks contain a specific *monetary value* for all trademark holders, and trademarks can be valued as part of the assets of a media company. In the US, trademark registration can be sold if it is accompanied by the sale of an underlying asset. When a company that produces trademarked goods is sold, then, the trademark registration will be sold with it. Additionally, a trademark could be sold to someone who purchases a machine specifically made to create a product that bears the trademark. Outside the US, a trademark may often be sold with or without the underlying asset.

## TRADEMARKS AND REGULATION

### Violation of Trademarks

*Trademark infringement* occurs when a non-owner uses an identical or substantially similar trademark that is already being used by an existing party. Infringement exists when the trademark is used to the extent that it is likely that consumers will become confused, mistaken, or deceived about the source of the product. In assessing infringement claims, courts examine the closeness of the appearance, sound, and meaning of the conflicting marks; the similarity of the goods on which the marks are used; the channels of commerce in which the marks are sold; and the sophistication of the relevant purchasers of the goods.

*Trademark dilution* is defined as “the lessening of the capacity of a famous mark to identify and distinguish goods and services, regardless of the presence or absence of (1) competition between the owner of the famous mark and other parties, or (2) likelihood of confusion, mistake, or deception” (Federal Trademark Dilution Act 1995). There are two types of dilution: tarnishment and blurring.

*Trademark tarnishment* occurs if a non-owner uses the mark without permission to promote poor products or services, or illegal or offensive activities. For example, using a Walt → Disney trademark on a website filled with pornography could be claimed to tarnish the reputation of Disney. Tarnishment is not always actionable from a legal perspective; specifically, not when the use would be considered either noncommercial or a parody. The effects of such tarnishment can have negative effects on brands, brand value, and brand equity. Blurring is the gradual decline in the identity or perception of the uniqueness of the trademark or the brand in the minds of consumers.

### **Cybersquatting**

Trademark protection also extends to the Internet (→ Internet Law and Regulation). The Anticybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA) (1999) is designed to protect consumers and businesses by giving trademark owners legal remedies against defendants, also known as “cybersquatters.” These cybersquatters obtain domain names “in bad faith” that are identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark. The Act also allows for a “safe harbor provision.” A cybersquatter is not in violation of the act if he or she can establish that he or she believed that the use of the domain name was a legally fair use, and if the court concludes that this belief was reasonable. Often, these cybersquatters hope to profit by the eventual sale of the domain name to the company who owns the trademark. Media companies have recently had their trademark protections abused by cybersquatters who register domain names that simulate well-known media company trademark names for the purpose of commercially exploiting the domain name.

The result of such cybersquatting is that the media companies that own the trademarks are unable to clearly distinguish themselves from others. As a result, audiences cannot rely on trademarks as source identifiers, and thus the credibility of a news or entertainment source is undermined. For example, ccnews.com is an Internet domain name that for a while directed web users to a Chinese-language news website. Certainly the domain name created confusion or misdirection in the minds of consumers, many of whom erroneously believed that the site was sponsored by CNN, when instead it was sponsored by a company called Maya Online Broadband Network. The United States District Court ruled that CNN had established all of the essential elements of a trademark infringement claim in this case.

### **Fan Sites on the Internet**

The Internet has enabled fans of programs created by media companies to set up dispersed communities based around popular programs (→ Fandom). For example, during the height of popularity of the Fox Network’s television show *The X Files*, over 900 fan websites were in existence. More recently, children have created hundreds of Harry



Potter tribute sites, using trademarks of Warner Bros, the studio that released the Harry Potter films. In both these cases, the sites contained “fan fiction,” stories about the characters created by visitors to the sites and fans of *The X Files* and Harry Potter.

Concerned with the possibility of audience confusion regarding the source of the content, the Fox Network legal department tried to close down the sites that infringed on the trademarks of both the Fox Network and the program, but the mere volume of sites made it difficult for the network to police. Warner Bros instigated suits against the children with the Harry Potter sites. Not surprisingly, such actions have resulted in backlashes toward the company from loyal fans, who responded angrily to Warner Brothers’ lawsuits. In these cases, it is difficult for corporations to determine when to provide goodwill and enjoy the publicity for their content, and when to be concerned about trademark infringement and the confusion caused regarding the veracity of content. Confusion is not the only concern. Many cybersquatters use the media name in order to direct consumers to inappropriate content. For example, a website with the name *Batman-1.com* (one of Time Warner’s media properties) directed visiting online users to a pornographic website, which would dilute the entertainment value associated with the Time Warner and Batman trademarks.

Trademarks in the media may be simple words and images, yet they represent so much more to media companies. Many media companies lobby on a regular basis for increased trademark protection in the online arena.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Branding ▶ Brands ▶ CNN ▶ Corporate and Organizational Identity ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Disney ▶ Fandom ▶ Image ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ Internet Law and Regulation ▶ Quality Press ▶ Time Warner Inc.

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# Transactional Models

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Representation and explanation of complex communication phenomena are goals of communication research and theory building. To reach these goals, communication science uses simplified representations, also known as scientific models. Scientific models describe, in simplified form, the order of elements in a system and their relations to each other. These relations can be described as temporal, spatial, causal, correlative, interactive, or transactional. A model of our solar system, for example, describes the spatial arrangement of the planets. The Lasswell formula describes the central protagonists of the communication process (communicators, recipients, media, etc.) and their temporal and causal relations in a communication model (→ Lasswell, Harold D.; *Models of Communication*).

A transactional relation can best be described in contrast to causal relations. In a causal relationship the two elements “cause” and “effect” can be clearly distinguished from each other. The cause always occurs before the effect. Such a causal consideration is not theoretically correct in every model. In some cases, a relation can also be described as a transaction. Here, the strict analytical separation between cause and effect is eliminated. An element changes itself at the moment at which it causes something, or, in the language of causal logic, when the effect influences the cause before it has appeared. In this way, an element simultaneously represents both cause and effect.

Suggestions for transactional modeling first came from Dewey and Bentley (1949). Bauer (1963) introduced this concept in the field of communication science. Transactional models are used in descriptions of social and individual phenomena. In the social case, processes between individuals or social subsystems are described, and in the individual case, processes within individuals are described. Schönbach and Früh (1984) suggest the terms “inter-transaction” and “intra-transaction” to distinguish the two.

*Inter-transactions* occur in the process of communication between different communication partners. These can be single individuals or social subsystems. Most of these models describe communication in a form known from Mead’s (1934) theory of symbolic interactionism (→ *Symbolic Interaction*). Knowledge of the effect of the communication is the basis for a successful communication. Communication between two individuals is based on the fact that one person has an idea of the effects and reactions of his or her remarks on the other person, and that this person, utilizing this idea, adapts his or her communication. When the remarks of the first person elicit the reactions of the other person, but it is exactly these reactions that are involved as anticipations in the generation of the remarks, then cause and effect are no longer separable in this model. In this case, one can describe the relationship between the remark of the first person and the reactions of the other person as transactional.

However, this does not apply solely to → interpersonal communication but also to communication via mass media. In the field of → public relations or → advertising, the contents of communication are professionally optimized to achieve an intended effect. In the process of the journalist’s selection of a message (→ *News Values*), this anticipatory

effect also plays an important role. It is a part of a general picture of their audience that journalists construct during the course of their work (e.g., in the form of → news factors).

*Intra-transactions* are used for the description of individual psychological processes. Perception and comprehension are explained transactionally by analogy with Neisser's (1976) perception cycle (→ Perception; Comprehension). His concept describes the comprehension of a text (e.g., a news item) as the interplay between the incoming information (data-driven) and an available schema (concept-driven). Such a → schema represents a → memory structure in a simplified form. Initially, the nature of the incoming information determines which schemas are used for comprehension. However, at the same time, comprehension of this information depends on the schemas retrieved and employed. The decoding of the information (data-driven processes) and the choice of schemas required for this (concept-driven processes) can be sorted neither temporally nor causally. Therefore, the relationship between the two aspects of the perception cycle is best described as a transaction.

An important application area of this basic transactional view of communication can be seen in the modeling of → media effects. Both intra- and inter-transactions are involved in the effect of media on individuals. On the one hand, the transactional perception process described above is a prerequisite for an effect, since only perceived information can, in general, have effects on the audience (→ Schemas and Media Effects). A commercial, for example, will only convey a positive product image when the recipient cognitively maps the positive product attributes implied in the commercial in such a schema-escorted comprehension process.

In communication science, this aspect of a transactional effect model has been successfully used in the description of the effect of violent television content (Sander 1997; → Violence as Media Content, Effects of). Furthermore, the relations described as inter-transactions are also important for the modeling of processes of effect. In the context of persuasive communication, e.g., advertising and public relations, trust and credibility are examples of such transactional concepts (e.g., Woodward 2000): a recipient develops a set of ideas about the communicators and their credibility. This trust guides the reception of the message, but a sense of the credibility of the communicators develops only from the reception (→ Credibility Effects; Credibility of Content).

One conclusion drawn from such a transactional modeling of media effects is that the notion of effect is not adequate, either in the form of a → stimulus–response model with a powerful communicator, or in the form of a purely recipient-oriented model with an active, critical audience that determines the effects it chooses to allow and those it chooses to reject. Media effects arise from a transactional interplay of communicators and their intentions, of media messages and the recipients, and of their intentions and schemas (→ Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models).

SEE ALSO: ► Advertising ► Comprehension ► Credibility of Content ► Credibility Effects ► Interpersonal Communication ► Lasswell, Harold D. ► Media Effects ► Media Effects Models: Elaborated Models ► Memory ► Models of Communication ► News Factors ► News Values ► Perception ► Public Relations ► Schemas ► Schemas and Media Effects ► Stimulus–Response Model ► Symbolic Interaction ► Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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# Transcribing and Transcription

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Transcribing is the process of representing, in written form, some stretch of lived activity. The resulting transcription provides a document that is easily perused and examined, and in a variety of institutional settings it serves as the official record of the actual proceedings. Such governmental and commercial transcripts are generally perceived as impersonal or unbiased renderings and are intended primarily as references to activity. In communication research, however, it is understood that transcribing is an *analytic process*, since, in actuality, a transcriber is always selecting and distilling the complexities of speech and action. Or, in the case of rendering original handwritten documents, the researcher loses the artistry of the hand that produced the original document. Transcripts are, therefore, abstract versions of verbal, vocal, bodily, and spatial activities; they embody the transcriber’s stance toward the aims of recording and studying a communication event.

### ORIGIN AND FUNCTION

While researchers who study naturally occurring interaction can agree on the need to represent the participants’ talk and action as carefully as possible, choices of what and how to transcribe are driven by philosophical, theoretical, and methodological orientations to the materials being handled (Ochs 1979). For example, if the researcher is concerned primarily with the thematic content of a narrative – with what is being described or what

the general purpose of the narrative seems to be – then transcribing the verbal content may be sufficient for constructing an argument about that aspect of the discourse. If, however, the researcher is concerned with how a narrative unfolds as an interactive achievement, then the contributions (vocal and nonvocal) of co-present speakers will be necessary as well.

Although the representation of actual events in graphemic and pictorial form can be traced back millennia, the use of transcription for communication research is a relatively modern phenomenon. A variety of systems have developed for the purpose of representing spoken languages. The publication of an international phonetic alphabet (IPA) in 1888 was the first major step in allowing researchers to share materials across language groups without recourse to native orthographic systems. However, the IPA requires a level of phonetic training that is not necessarily relevant for all types of communication research. Therefore, orthographic representation of spoken language is the most widely accepted approach in the field. Furthermore, with the advent of analog and digital recording, researchers rarely try to transcribe human communication directly onto paper; the research process generally begins with electronic recordings, which are then transcribed.

In producing a transcript for analysis, researchers rely on their auditory and visual perceptual skills to render from recordings some stretch of lived interaction. As noted, this is a selective process, based on beliefs about the nature of communication and the aims of the study. Researchers make choices about the kinds of detail they will attend to in interaction and the way in which they will organize those details on the page. Whatever researchers' orientations to their materials may be, all persons engaged in the transcription process confront the paradox that communication is both simultaneous and sequential; participants in interaction move simultaneously through time such that, while some aspects of their activity may co-occur, other aspects follow sequentially. Researchers attempt to capture this layering of simultaneity and linearity by the way that transcripts are structured on the two-dimensional page. Although both the vertical and the horizontal dimensions can represent the passage of time, the horizontal is generally reserved for an individual speaker's contribution (biased in a left to right reading format) while the vertical (top to bottom) will represent the change of speakers over time. Conjoining these levels is accomplished with a variety of symbols to show when overlapping or simultaneous talk (or action) occurs.

### EXAMPLE

In the following (adapted from Roberts & Robinson 2004, 397–407), the beginning of the overlap is captured with the left bracket ([]). Other symbols that capture paralinguistic features are presented in Table 1.

#### Example Transcript

Mara: Have you been there yet?  
 Tina: Yeah. It's really nice.=Like I [go:  
 Mara: [It's like a hotel.

**Table 1** Some transcription symbols and what they indicate

Symbol	Meaning
Question mark (?)	Rising intonation
Period (.)	Falling intonation
Equal sign (=)	Talk that is quickly latched
Colon (:)	Sound that is stretched out

A particularly daunting task for the person transcribing is managing “the recurrent interpenetration of verbal and visual communication” (Duranti 1997, 146). A variety of approaches have been developed for transcribing the coordinated vocal and nonvocal activities of interactants. Some conceive of the transcript as a musical score; others use parallel columns; still others integrate the visual and spatial information parenthetically into the verbal stream or in the lines just below the representation of the verbal stream. The approach used is dependent on the researchers’ interests, their analysis of what is relevant to the participants, and the constraints of the media they are using to format their transcription.

## TRANSCRIPTION METHODS

For transcribing linguistic aspects of interaction, several approaches have developed in the decades since the advent of recording technologies. Although approaches to transcribing talk vary considerably in their details, they can be divided into two *general categories*: those that privilege supra-segmental aspects of language (such as intonation and accent units, or perceptions of rhythmic synchrony) and those that privilege speaker transition and the sequential features of talk-in-interaction. This latter category is the foundation of most contemporary transcription systems since all discourse, whether monologic or multiparty, proceeds through time and therefore develops sequentially. In the case of multiparty conversation, speaker transition will also always be relevant.

The sequentially grounded form of transcription relies, explicitly or implicitly, on a model of conversation (empirically derived) that accounts for the construction and allocation of turns (Sacks et al. 1974). In this approach to segmenting discourse, the core organizing principle is conceived of as speaker transition, with silences providing the fulcrum that moves the transcript forward. In a system for transcription initially developed by Gail Jefferson (Sacks et al. 1974), the representation of both segmental features (sounds/words) and supra-segmental features of talk (such as lengthening, loudness, and other aspects of voice quality) are included, but the transcript is not organized around these supra-segmental features. The range and nature of details in this “Jeffersonian” tradition (e.g., from tokens of laughter to micro-pauses) has allowed research on conversation to move from analysis of surface-level semantic content to the analysis of underlying mechanics and structures of coordinated action. Some of these discoveries might not have been otherwise recoverable from transcription of words alone.

Transcription systems that are intentionally designed around supra-segmental features are often crafted on the basis of a sequential understanding of activities, but they bring an additional interest in the music or rhythm of the speech and its relationship to communication. One prominent approach addresses intonation and action units (also known as “tone groups” or “tone units”). These are conceived of as “units of considerable cognitive significance” (Chafe 1993, 33), which fall under one prosodic contour. In this approach, the tonal unit has a functional significance that may transcend syntactic and semantic boundaries. Such units are discerned by the transcriber’s perception of cues such as phrase-final lengthening, phrase-initial pitch resetting, inter- or intra-utterance pauses, and so on; generally these cues are objectively available in the acoustic signal. Another elaborated, though less widely used, approach is one that captures the rhythmic synchrony in human communication. Here, rhythm is not something objectively measurable in the acoustic information, but is perceived by the transcriber from patterns of acoustic cues. Therefore, “rhythmic transcriptions require the special skill of analytic hearing – a property they share with narrow phonetic transcriptions” (Auer et al. 1999, 35).

### RELIABILITY

Because the process of transcription is essentially one of perception, selection, and representation, questions can arise over the → reliability of transcription practices. Researchers engaged in projects that require transcription must continually work in conjunction with the recorded data to ensure a close relationship between the recordings and the renderings. In addition, researchers often rely on a consensus process, comparing and contrasting their transcriptions with the help of colleagues. This ensures some level of agreement across the perceptions of multiple listeners. Finally, structured assessments of reliability are possible, which can ensure that transcribers are sufficiently converging on the perception and representation of phenomena. This provides some confidence in both the transcription process and its product (Roberts & Robinson 2004).

Although no transcript is ever truly “finished” (in the sense that refinements or new angles of interest can emerge), at some point the researcher makes the transcript accessible to a wider audience for presentation of findings in public meetings or in publications. This “final step” sometimes leads to simplification of the transcript for general consumption or, for those working in languages not known to their audience, the transcription becomes more complex due to the need for translation. Translation poses an additional challenge in that the transcribed activity is now an additional level removed from the original recording. Researchers can provide just the translation, or present the original and the translation in parallel columns, or, in the interest of providing the greatest access to the participants’ actual talk, one common practice is to provide, in three parallel horizontal lines, first a transcription of the original talk (usually in romanized script), then a word-by-word translation underneath, including the identification of grammatical morphemes, and finally a third line which provides an idiomatic translation into the language of the presentation. Following is an example of talk transcribed by Moerman (1988, 125) for a study of Lue-Thai interaction. The Lue-Thai orthography has been simplified here for ease of presentation:

Villager:           xaw   ju    kunthep a       ju    ti    naj    hu    ni  
 Direct translation: They   to be   Bangkok Qprt   to be   CNJ   where   don't   know PRT  
 Idiomatic:            Maybe they were from Bangkok. I don't know where they were from.

Qprt = question particle; CNJ = conjunction; PRT = unanalyzed sentential particle.

In the future, there is always the possibility that machines will be able to handle the conversion from acoustic signal to typewritten transcript. The value of such technology will be debated and its use will vary according to the analytic orientations of the researchers. Perhaps more promising, and useful for presenting and sharing findings, is the proliferation of sophisticated presentation software as well as the possibility of including electronic media (copies of audio/video recordings) in serialized print publications (e.g., *Journal of Communication*, vol. 52, 2002). More widespread is the incorporation of URL addresses to link print readers to audiovisual media through the Internet. Having access to researchers' recordings of lived events allows audiences to experience the data, and keeps the transcript closely linked to that data.

SEE ALSO: ► Action-Implicative Discourse Analysis ► Conversation Analysis ► Gaze in Interaction ► Interactional Sociolinguistics ► Microethnography ► Reliability ► Voice, Prosody, and Laughter

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# Transnational Civil Society

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“Civil society” has been through a series of definitions since it first came into use in the 18th century. Locke, Hegel, Marx, and Gramsci all used the term; but for Locke it meant organized human civilization as contrasted with the animal kingdom’s turbulence, for Marx it meant the economic process, and the other two writers assigned it still other meanings. In Soviet bloc countries in the final years of the bloc’s disintegration, and in Latin America in the same period during the gradual disappearance of military dictatorships, “civil society” was a term of hope often used by advocates of democratic governance to denote the hopeful shoots of democratic process they saw emerging in front of their eyes, that they felt were ushering in the dissolution of dictatorial rule.

## CHANGING DEFINITIONS OF “CIVIL SOCIETY”

Beginning in the 1980s and growing in the 1990s, the term became almost iconic within movements for global social justice, basically denoting projects and initiatives undertaken by, and furthering, grassroots political interests. These might be to develop anti-racist and civil rights strategies, to address the AIDS crisis, to promote sustainable environmental policies, to empower women, to promote peace, to strengthen responsive labor organization, and a variety of other issues, all of them quite often interlinked. In particular, it signified citizens’ actions against the globalized neo-liberal economic policies summarized in the term “the Washington consensus” and by the policies and priorities of global finance corporations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and a series of other international bodies (→ Globalization Theories).

In other words, the term had become one that denoted *ongoing movement*, not simply a static category of society. “Civil society” thus only came to life as a category, at this juncture, when it was in action. By contrast, for many mainstream news media during those years and since, the preferred term was quite often “the protesters,” rendering them marginal and on the verge, for sure, of being simply an irritating nuisance, supposedly often having no clue why they were demonstrating. They were not at all, from this viewpoint, the visible groundswell of a growing tide of informed public opinion. The terminology choice directly mirrored the clash of political visions.

However, the very vagueness of the term “civil society” created a rather pressing need to pin it down to practical specifics. One major response to that need was the *emergence of nongovernmental organizations* (NGOs) as the tangible expression of “civil society.” Indeed NGOs often became defined as the very substance of the concept. This had its drawbacks, given the extraordinary proliferation of NGOs across the planet; as well as having a bewildering diversity of focus and location, their agendas were often not merely diverse but diametrically at odds with each other.

For instance, NGOs could be proponents of abortion rights or evangelists for their denial; they could be US foundations sporting budgets of billions of dollars or an entirely

income-free community radio station in the Andes (→ Community Media). To define them by what they were not (namely, directly dependent on government) was also inaccurate in quite a number of cases, in that they were not seldom recipients of, or conduits for, state funding, at least in significant part, and thus hardly nongovernmental. They also served in some contexts as recruiting pools for public administration. Finally, while far from all were ideological warriors for a reactionary religious body's social agenda or for a neo-colonialist policy, it would be empirically misguided to presume they were one and all selflessly devoted to social justice and cultural enlightenment.

### MAKING CIVIL SOCIETY TRANSNATIONAL

Tacking the adjective “transnational” on to “civil society” is hardly surprising in a period in which discussions of globalization and its implications have become so commonplace, and in which international peace activism, environmental activism, labor activism, and solidarity activism have continued to play an important role in world politics. Given the term's evident tendency to vagueness, though, what is the effect of doing so? Four instances will serve to provide some response to the question. One is a much-cited book by Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond borders* (1998); the second is a special edition of the *Courrier de la Planète* on global civil society (2001); the other two are book-length treatments of the topic by Mary Kaldor (2003) and John Keane (2003).

The Keck and Sikkink study was not only an important contribution, but quite quickly and widely recognized as such. Their distinct preference (1998, 32–34) is for the term “transnational” civil society over “global” civil society. Their rationale is brief, but appears to pivot on the implicitly overly deterministic sense in which they read the term “globalization,” suggesting a process automatically generated by a mixture of economic, transport, and communication changes. For them, in order to analyze transnational advocacy networks focused on human rights, environmental issues, and violence against women – their core topics – it is sociologically and philosophically pivotal to retain a strong sense of both agency and indeterminacy. In their frame, then, *transnational* civil society is a “fragmented and contested arena” whose politics are all about how certain groups emerge and get to be given an official seal of approval. They do not, however, explain why or how their own distinction between the terms “global” and “transnational” is other than idiosyncratic, or reflects any widely argued positions elsewhere.

Nonetheless, their contribution through a term such as “transnational civil society” enables us to acknowledge the growing role of transnational advocacy networks in international political relations, and that international relations are no longer simply the preserve of states. It can also draw our attention to the *roles of activist networks* in providing opportunities to negotiate issues internationally between, for example, gender or ecological activists in the global north and the global south, in order to reframe priorities in ways that address critical concerns in different regions of the planet. What is signally missing from their analysis, however, is any attention to the roles of media within the advocacy networks on which they focus. The communication process seems, by default, to be taking place automatically within these networks. This is, as will be seen, a common failing.

The contributors to the special issue of *Courrier de la Planète* focused on defining or shaping the term “global civil society”; NGOs; the role of the World Bank and the WTO;

the UN; and aspects of the World Social Forum meeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil. Jan Aart Scholte (*Courrier* 2001) defines global civil society as one in which civic organizations “are engaged with cross-border issues, utilize transnational communication formats, have a global organization, and/or privilege cross-border solidarity as their goal.” He readily acknowledges that few such organizations display all four features. He also underscores that criminal, racist, ultra-nationalist, and fundamentalist forces engage in cross-border communication and organization, so that global civil society is not virtuous by nature. He further admits that at present an Anglophone digitocracy dominates even the constructive dimensions of global civil society. Compared to the resources of states and corporations, he laments, civil society has minimal staffing, finance, equipment, and symbolic capital. Nonetheless, he argues, its emergence is a potential sign of hope.

Maxime Haubert (2001) denies that the term “civil society” has any current value at all, given that military strategists, the World Bank, and global social justice activists all use it, but for very disparate goals. He argues it should be confined to history of philosophy textbooks. François Houtart (2001), a Jesuit priest prominent in the global social justice movement, puts forward a normative position, that “global civil society” should denote (1) a coalition of groups, with multifaceted strategies, to create alternatives to the present world structure; (2) their readiness to engage with utopian visions; (3) their engagement with every form of social existence, from the global to the individual; (4) their involvement with the formal political process as well as movement politics; and (5) acknowledging, but not essentializing, cultural differences.

Mary Kaldor, a long-time peace studies scholar-activist, also recognizes the term’s imprecision. She attacks what she sees as the reductive use of “civil society” to equal NGOs, and proposes instead that there is a long-term process underway, not toward unitary planetary government, but rather toward “multi-lateralist law-making states” whose global meetings offer “the possibility of participation and deliberation at global levels” (Kaldor 2003, 110, 141; → Francophonie; International Communication Agencies; Internet: International Regulation; New World Information and Communication Order [NWICO]; UNESCO). Anne-Marie Slaughter, Dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, has provided a landmark study fleshing these processes out as regards emerging global networks of regulators, legislators, and judges (Slaughter 2004).

Political scientist John Keane vigorously echoes critiques of the term’s frequent imprecision and also its equation to NGOs. His own definition of global civil society is that it “has no collective voice . . . is full of networks, flows, disjunctions, frictions . . . only its constituent individuals, group initiatives, organizations and networks act and interact. Global publics consequently heighten the sense that global civil society is an unfinished, permanently threatened project” (2003, 172).

Yet once again, while his and the others’ definitions are helpful in portraying *the scope, the fluidity and the contradictoriness of activities* to be included under the heading of global/transnational civil society, they never or only briefly engage with the media communication process as central to these activities. Keane addresses this critical issue briefly (2003, 162, 166–174), and provides a short discussion (173–174) concerning the importance of “global public spheres” in holding global organizations of all kinds to account, but no specification of what these “spheres” consist of, or where they inhabit. Furthermore, his discussion of media is practically only of conventional mainstream media.

## TRANSNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA COMMUNICATION

The analyses cited here are virtually all by distinguished political scientists. Within international policy discussions of transnational civil society, at the time of writing the political science discipline tends to dominate. It is unfortunate then to be compelled to register the superficiality of these scholars' engagement with mainstream and social movement media issues and problems. These are, nonetheless, central to the question of transnational civil society and so should never be taken for granted as unproblematic (→ Social Movement Media, Transnational; Activist Media; *Le Monde Diplomatique*). There is a large and constantly growing research literature on social movement media of which these writers appear unaware (e.g. Rodríguez 2001; Couldry & Curran 2003; Opel & Pompper 2004; Kidd et al. 2008).

For example, mainstream media often frame transnational civil society processes in ways that social movement activists feel distort their goals and practices (→ Framing Effects). Whether global environmentalists, labor activists, feminists, information policy activists, or human rights activists, their frequent complaint is that mainstream media typically ignore them, trivialize them, define them as semi-informed idiots, or even criminalize them in over-response to occasional attacks on property by some demonstrators.

Activists generally feel compelled to react to those dominant frames by public actions and statements, but especially by creating their own information spaces and strategies in alternative media. Alternative media activists, quite often closer to the ground than prominent professional journalists, may often "scoop" the latter on emerging stories, but may also find mainstream journalists contributing to their publications under pseudonyms, because they know their editors would refuse to take their copy. Moreover, some social justice organizations develop effective public relations strategies for feeding mainstream media with stories in formats the editors will accept. All in all, the clash of media framings of transnational civil society activism, whether Greenpeace or AIDS awareness or human rights campaigns, is a crucial dimension of the question.

So too is the utilization of the → Internet and wireless telephony for debate, information, and mobilization (→ Independent Media Centers Network). This has become a remarkable phenomenon over the past decade and looks set to be a permanent feature of the global landscape (Granjon 2001; Downing & Brooten, 2007). However, the potential for joint research in this area by communication scholars and political scientists remains to be fulfilled.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Community Media ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Francophonie ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Independent Media Centers Network ▶ International Communication Agencies ▶ Internet ▶ Internet: International Regulation ▶ *Le Monde Diplomatique* ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Social Movement Media, Transnational ▶ UNESCO

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# Transportation Theory

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Transportation into a narrative world refers to the feeling of being lost in the world of a narrative, of being completely immersed in a story and leaving the real world behind. This experience is a key mechanism underlying the influence of stories or narratives on individuals' attitudes and beliefs, and is also associated with media enjoyment. Although transportation has long been used as a metaphor for narrative experience, psychologists have conceptualized transportation into a narrative world as a distinct mental process, an integrative melding of → attention, imagery, and → emotions (Gerrig 1993; Green & Brock 2000, 701; see also Nell 1988). Transportation is a form of experiential response to narratives. It is psychologically similar to flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1990) or absorption, although both flow and absorption are more general concepts (individuals can experience flow in a variety of activities; absorption is a dispositional tendency to become immersed in experiences). Transportation is also similar to Vorderer's high involvement (→ Involvement with Media Content).

Transported readers may lose track of time, fail to notice events going on around them, or experience strong emotions. Such readers may experience participatory responses – the desire to communicate with narrative characters or help them toward their goals (Polichak & Gerrig 2002).

The key psychological ingredients of transportation are assumed to take place across different communication media, including text, audio, video, or any means of transmitting

a narrative account. Individuals may be transported into both factual and fictional narratives (→ Fiction; Storytelling and Narration); transportation does not depend on whether a narrative reflects real-world truth. Indeed, fiction can be a cue to engage in more immersive, less critical processing (Green et al. 2004b; → Suspension of Disbelief).

Although individuals may become engaged in non-narrative media (for example, science programs), transportation per se occurs solely or primarily in response to narrative communications. Narratives present a sequence of connected events and characters, typically in a causal chain that moves from beginning to end. In contrast, non-narrative persuasive communications (→ Persuasion; Argumentative Discourse) present propositions or evidence in support of a claim. Note that narrative does not necessarily mean fictional. Documentaries, news reports (→ Narrative News Story), and other nonfiction media products may have a narrative structure, or they may not. Non-narratives do not create alternative worlds for individuals to enter, and thus they may be less likely to engage emotions or create mental imagery.

Transportation is a pleasant state, yet individuals are frequently transported into narratives that evoke negative emotions (fear, sadness, or anger). The enjoyment of a transportation experience does not necessarily stem from the particular emotions evoked by a narrative, but from the process of temporarily leaving one's one reality behind (Green et al. 2004a; → Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking).

The *transportation-imagery model* (Green & Brock 2002) highlights the role of visual imagery in transportation-based belief change. Images take on → meaning from their role in a story. Individuals' imagery ability and situations that allow for the formation of rich mental images increase the persuasive power of a story. The transportation experience links the vivid images with beliefs implied by the story. Over time, recalling the image may re-evoke large parts of the original communication, thus reinforcing the story-relevant beliefs.

## MEASUREMENT AND MANIPULATION

Transportation can be measured with a 15-item self-report scale (Green & Brock 2000; → Scales; Scales and Indices). Participants answer each item on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much). Example items include "I was emotionally involved in the narrative while reading it" and "I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the narrative." The scale has shown good internal consistency, as well as discriminant and convergent → validity. Transportation can be manipulated by varying story quality or the instructions given to readers. For example, instructions to focus on the surface aspects of the story, such as difficulty and grammar, produce lower transportation (Green & Brock 2000; for a related discussion, see Oatley 1994).

Pre-existing familiarity with an aspect of the narrative world can increase transportation. For example, individuals who reported greater knowledge about the fraternity/sorority system were more transported into a story about a man attending his fraternity reunion (Green 2004). Additional research is needed to determine the boundary conditions of this effect; some types of similarity or familiarity do not seem to consistently increase transportation (e.g., matching reader gender with main character gender).

The quality or craftsmanship of a text also influences transportation. Well-written and well-structured texts are more transporting. Bestsellers or classic texts are rated as more

transporting than stories created by psychologists for experiments, for instance (Green & Brock 2000). Although structural elements such as → suspense can lead to transportation, mystery or surprise per se are not necessary ingredients of transportation. Individuals can be transported when rereading or rewatching a narrative, especially a high-quality narrative.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **Relationships to Other Variables**

Transportation has a moderate positive correlation with empathy (as measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index [Davis 1983]; → Empathy Theory). Transportation also has a moderate positive correlation with Tellegen's (1982) "absorption," a more general tendency to become immersed in a range of experiences. Absorption is associated with susceptibility to hypnosis.

Need for cognition is an individual difference variable frequently used in persuasion studies (Cacioppo et al. 1984). It measures dispositional tendencies to engage in and enjoy effortful cognitive activity. Correlations between transportation and need for cognition vary across studies, but range from no correlation to a low positive one.

### **Transportation and Belief Change**

Individuals who are transported into a narrative are likely to change their beliefs in response to events or claims in a story. For example, transported readers of a story about a child being attacked in a shopping mall by a psychiatric patient were more likely than less-transported readers to believe that psychiatric patient freedoms should be restricted and that the world was unjust (Green & Brock 2000). Theoretically, attitudes formed or changed via transportation should be strong (persistent over time and resistant to counterpersuasion).

Transportation may aid in belief change in three ways. First, transportation reduces counterarguing about the issues raised in the story. Next, transportation may affect beliefs by making narrative events seem more like personal experience (Green 2004). If a reader or viewer feels as if she or he has been part of narrative events, the lessons implied by those events may seem more powerful. Finally, attachment to characters may play a critical role in narrative-based belief change. If a viewer likes or identifies with a character (→ Identification), statements made by the character or implications of events experienced by that character may carry special weight.

#### *Reduced Counterarguing*

Transported readers identify fewer "false notes" in a narrative, indicating greater acceptance of story content (Green & Brock 2000). Research on mental correction suggests that individuals need both motivation and ability to reject information that they do not wish to believe (e.g., Gilbert 1991). Transportation may reduce individuals' ability to counterargue assertions or events in the story because the reader's cognitive capacity is

committed to imagining story events. Transportation may also reduce motivation to counterargue. Transportation is typically a pleasurable experience, and interrupting this experience to critique the narrative or dispute the author's claims would detract from story enjoyment. Even when individuals have finished a story, they may be unlikely to go back and critically evaluate story events, especially if they do not believe that the story has influenced them.

It may also be more difficult to discount narratives because stories tend to be concrete, presenting the experience of particular (real or fictional) others, rather than abstractions. Indeed, people tend to generalize from a narrative exemplar even when the presented case is not typical (Strange & Leung 1999), especially if they are engaged in the narrative.

### *Feelings of Real Experience*

Direct experience with attitude objects can result in strong and enduring attitudes. Through vivid imagery and emotional involvement, transporting narratives approach direct experience more than other forms of persuasive messages.

Beyond their impressions of the → realism of the content of the story, individuals who are immersed in a story may also fail to recall whether a story was fact or fiction. If a fictional story is misremembered as fact, it may be even more likely to influence real-world beliefs.

### *Attachment to Characters*

Attachment to a protagonist may be an important determinant of the persuasiveness of a story. Individuals may develop deep affection for protagonists (liking, sympathy, or empathy), and hatred for story villains. They may develop parasocial relationships with the characters (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships), such that characters come to seem like friends. An additional dimension of connectedness may occur if individuals identify with a character. Identification is “a process that consists of increasing loss of self-awareness and its temporary replacement with heightened emotional and cognitive connections with a character” (Cohen 2001, 251). Identification may entail adopting a character's goals as one's own, and may make the character a model for desired behavior (as in social learning theory; → Learning and Communication; Observational Learning). Thus, attachment to characters may make the story more personally relevant to the recipient, and more powerful in changing real-world beliefs. (This process is in contrast to traditional forms of persuasion, where personal relevance of a message typically implies that the message has implications for an individual's own outcomes; see Slater & Rouner 2002.)

## **Individual Differences**

“Transportability,” the extent to which individuals readily become deeply transported into stories, can be measured as an individual difference (Dal Cin et al. 2004). This individual difference measure predicts transportation into later texts and films. Across studies, there is no gender difference in transportation, although men may be more transported into some kinds of stories, and women into others.



### **Applications and Extensions**

Transportation theory has been applied to consumer settings. Individuals who mentally simulate experience with products (imagining themselves wearing a pair of running shoes) are transported, and thus show reduced critical thinking and a more positive attitude toward the advertisement and the product (Escalas 2004; → Advertising). Transportation is also relevant to → health communications, and may underlie some of the effects observed in → entertainment education, a technique that embeds health messages in stories (radio programs, telenovelas; see Singhal et al. 2003).

One aspect of transportation is that individuals may generate counterfactual alternatives to an unhappy ending of a story. This counterfactual thinking can enhance the persuasive power of the narrative (Tal-Or et al. 2004).

Over time, transportation may contribute to cultivation effects, in which individuals' beliefs come to reflect the world as reflected in television portrayals, rather than the real world (e.g., higher crime rates; → Cultivation Effects). Transported individuals may be especially likely to integrate televised portrayals into their real lives.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Transportation requires some action on the part of the individual. At a minimum, the recipient must pay attention to the narrative. However, the extent to which transportation is under conscious control remains to be determined. (Individuals may not be able to force themselves to become involved in a text that they find boring, but perhaps can take themselves out of a narrative world through the use of distraction strategies.)

Future research should also explore the effect of interactivity (→ Interactivity, Concept of; Interactivity in Reception) on experiences of transportation. Being able to act in a narrative world may create an even deeper experience of immersion. However, virtual reality researchers studying → presence, the feeling of being in a virtual world, have noted two obstacles to transportation/presence: the technology itself may be distracting, and the narrative structure may need to be looser to accommodate user input (Biocca 2002; see also Klimmt & Vorderer 2003).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Attention ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Emotion ▶ Empathy Theory ▶ Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ▶ Entertainment Education ▶ Fantasy/Imagination ▶ Fiction ▶ Health Communication ▶ Identification ▶ Interactivity, Concept of ▶ Interactivity in Reception ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Learning and Communication ▶ Meaning ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Persuasion ▶ Presence ▶ Realism ▶ Scales ▶ Scales and Indices ▶ Storytelling and Narration ▶ Suspense ▶ Suspension of Disbelief ▶ Validity

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# Trap Effect

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The “trap effect” of communication is a metaphor for an effect specifically on the uninterested, unmotivated, uninvolved members of the audience (Schoenbach & Weaver 1985). Those people are “trapped” and subsequently influenced by any type of communication that is frequent and striking enough to overcome their weak resistance. They do not care enough to raise the threshold against attempts to teach them something (→ Media Effects).

Originally, the trap effect was ascribed only to television and its political impact, accompanied by pedagogical hopes that television does good things to those citizens that other media cannot reach and influence – activates them politically, for instance (Blumler 1970; Noelle-Neumann 1970). In a key article, Blumler (1970) listed some possible reasons for such an effect of television. Political coverage on television, Blumler assumed, reaches more people than any other channel, and consequently also those who would not bother to turn to that type of information in other media. Because of its visual nature and its credibility, television may also be particularly persuasive (→ Credibility of Content). Finally, the uninterested among its viewers, once confronted by persuasive messages, could be particularly prone to be persuaded because “an uninvolved audience is a potentially persuasible audience” (Blumler 1970; → Persuasion).

Possible *theoretical underpinnings* of the trap effect are “passive learning” (Krugman & Hartley 1970), “incidental learning” (Culbertson & Stempel 1986), the “inadvertent audience” (Robinson 1973), and Petty and Cacioppo’s (1981) “peripheral route” of information processing (→ Elaboration Likelihood Model). All those concepts postulate that an uninterested (low-involvement) audience learns something from, and subsequently is influenced by, information if that information is only abundant and salient enough – although such an impact may not become deeply engrained in the minds of that part of the audience and consequently may not last long.

*Empirical evidence* for a particular trap effect of television’s political coverage, plausible as it may sound, has been surprisingly scarce and mixed so far (→ Television). Most frequently, the trapping power of newspapers has been more impressive. In their literature review, Schoenbach and Lauf (2002) found stronger effects of television on the uninterested, compared to the impact of newspapers, only in the very small segment of totally apathetic citizens. In their study of a campaign for the European Parliament in 12 European countries, Schoenbach and Lauf used the low-key, unexciting nature of that campaign with an uninterested electorate as a setting where trap effects should most likely occur. But even seemingly favorable national conditions, such as considerably more TV news coverage of the European elections than elsewhere and fewer TV channels to evade that coverage, did not support a trap effect of television (→ Elections and Media, History of; Television News). Instead, personal conversations were considerably better than television (and newspapers) at persuading the uninterested to turn out and vote (→ Interpersonal Communication).

In a follow-up study, historically and internationally comparative analyses of election campaigns in Europe and the US revealed that a trap effect of television exists, albeit a weak one, if there are not many TV channels to choose from, such as in the US of the 1950s and early 1960s (Schoenbach & Lauf 2004). And newspapers can also overwhelm their uninterested readers. Finally, the richer information environment of first-order (e.g., US presidential) elections seems to be necessary for a trap effect. Low-key elections such as the ones to the European Parliament may not reach the critical mass of information needed for trapping an uninvolved audience. In other words, the trap effect of television is not as self-evident as it seems in theory.

As a reaction, Schoenbach and Lauf have embedded the concept of a trap effect into a wider framework. Is it really plausible to expect a trapping potential only from television – or at least a greater potential than from newspapers? Instead, under certain conditions, trap effects on the uninvolved should occur more or less for all so-called “display” or “push” media (Schoenbach & Lauf 2004) – and that is not only television, but also → radio, → newspapers and → magazines, personal conversations, and → posters, for instance.

*Display channels* typically provide us with a comparatively fixed information offer, supposed to be consumed “as is,” with not too many options for the audience to select or change anything. As opposed to “research” or “pull” media, such as the → Internet, display media are able to surprise their audiences more easily and to confront them repeatedly with topics they may not be interested in (see also Noelle-Neumann 1973). Those features should be good for a trap effect.

Research media, instead, allow greater user control. They provide more opportunities to select than display channels, but also require more decisions by their users about what kind of information to look for, and thus make more motivation of their recipients necessary. This is why skeptics fear that the Internet lends itself to only caring about one’s own personal hobbies and avoidance of all types of information one is not really interested in, particularly politics (Sunstein 2002; Tewksbury 2003; Prior 2005).

Indeed, according to a recent and comparative field study, printed newspapers seem to “trap” their audience better than their online counterparts when it comes to being aware of a wider range of societal issues, and of political and economic ones, in particular (Schoenbach & Waal, in press). This is evidence for a trap effect that is not restricted to television anymore. Instead, the trap potential of communication channels, or even of single communication messages, must be envisaged as a continuum – from an information offer that is absolutely predictable and patiently waits to be requested (and thus is not capable of trapping anybody) to one that is both obtrusive and surprising, and thus “catchy,” for everybody.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Elaboration Likelihood Model ▶ Elections and Media, History of ▶ Internet ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Effects ▶ Newspaper ▶ Persuasion ▶ Poster ▶ Radio ▶ Television ▶ Television News

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## Triangulation

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Triangulation is a metaphor for research strategies that employ different methods, theories, or data sources in order to capture social reality in a comprehensive manner, reflecting appropriately the multifaceted nature of social objects. While all research approaches in themselves have certain shortcomings, a combination of several approaches may compensate for one another’s weaknesses and provide a more complete picture. The term triangulation originally comes from geodesy and refers to a procedure that uses the known distance between two points in order to determine the unknown distance to a third point (Flick 2004).

Denzin (1989) expands the idea of triangulation to *four research strategies*: triangulation with data, methods, theories, and investigators. *Data triangulation* involves using several data sources that vary in time, space, and persons. For example, to investigate the role of → television for the cohesion of a social group, it may be useful to interview different kinds of social groups like families, college students, and childless couples. Here, the

research objects differ, but the method is the same. Observing the same individuals in different situations, for example watching them use their mobile phones at home or on public transport, is another example of data triangulation. This strategy seeks to investigate the same social phenomenon in different circumstances, and tries to find new aspects until theoretical saturation is achieved; it constitutes a parallel to theoretical sampling in → grounded theory (Flick 2004).

In contrast, *methodological triangulation* involves the same object being investigated with different methods (between-method triangulation), e.g., combining → interviews and → observation to study television viewing habits (→ Exposure to Television); or with different instruments of the same method (within-method triangulation), e.g., using subscales in a standardized questionnaire. The research logic of the latter version is straightforward: both studies should produce the same results, which is similar to the idea of → reliability in quantitative research (→ Quantitative Methodology). Using different methods, however, might result in different insights or give information about completely unrelated aspects of the phenomenon. If different methods do not have the ability to capture the same phenomenon, the goal cannot be to validate methods with each other, but to gather different insights that complement one another (Erzberger & Kelle 2003). For example, observing television viewing may reveal patterns of behavior that viewers may not be sufficiently aware of to reproduce them in self-reporting; confronted with the results from the observation in an interview, however, people may be better able to provide subjective views on the behavior and indicate what was intended with a particular action.

*Different theories* may triangulate data in that they provide competing or complementary frames of interpretation. For example, observational data of television viewing in a family may be seen in the context of social cohesion, or in the context of identity. With this strategy, the researcher keeps an open mind about how to interpret the data, and compares the ability of different theories to explain a social situation, which ultimately serves a more profound theory development (Flick 2004).

Finally, triangulation with *different investigators* ensures that aspects of social reality are not dependent upon one researcher and his or her understanding of the social situation. The goal is to become aware of individual biases, to make an effort to find common ground among researchers about the interpretation of a social fact, and to increase the reliability of data collection.

While the original term “triangulation” implies that the object under investigation is fixed and can be uncovered validly and objectively by approaching it from several angles (→ Objectivity in Science; Validity), many social scientists have concluded in recent decades that methods do not uncover, but construct a social object (→ Constructivism). Accordingly, different methods might not capture the very same phenomenon; divergences in results might call for a truth criterion which does not exist. For the same reason, theoretical triangulation may after all have limited applicability in research: data cannot be collected in a theoretical way. Even if hypotheses and standardized instruments are not used, some previous knowledge about the phenomenon will guide method selection and perception in the field (Erzberger & Kelle 2003). Data collected for one purpose may not be useful in informing about a different theory. For these reasons, triangulation in social sciences is today conceived as a strategy to gain deeper and fuller understanding of a social

object rather than to provide a cross-validation of methods; it is a means of collecting the manifold facets of the social tableau rather than producing an objective picture (Flick 2004; → Realism).

Another strategy discussed in the context of triangulation consists of *combining qualitative and quantitative methods and data* (Erzberger & Kelle 2003). Qualitative methods may be used to explore the field in order to prepare for a quantitative study, but also to follow up results from quantitative studies that require more in-depth explanation (→ Qualitative Methodology). Also, parallel collection of both types of data may be used, either in a continuous and integrated way, or in such a way that the results from one method influence how the next step with the other method is executed (Miles & Huberman 1994). Even more than in method or theory triangulation, applying different methodological paradigms in the same study may result in divergent insights into the social issue, which is detrimental when one expects congruence in triangulation, but advantageous when one expects to get a fuller picture (Erzberger & Kelle 2003).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Constructivism ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Grounded Theory ▶ Interview ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Observation ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Realism ▶ Reliability ▶ Television ▶ Validity

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## **Trust of Publics**

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The “trust of publics” or “public trust” can be defined as a process and outcome of a publicly generated, communicative, complexity-reducing mechanism within which publicly perceptible individuals, organizations, and other social systems act as “trust objects.” Public trust is generated and subjected to change within a mediated, public communication process in which “trust subjects” have their future-oriented expectations shaped by past experiences (see Bentele 1994; Bentele & Seidenglanz 2005). “Trust” has been defined by a variety of disciplines in social studies (sociology, psychology, communication, political

science, etc.). The emphasis is put on interpersonal trust, hence, that obtaining between individuals. An important conception of trust is presented by the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann, who defines trust as a “complexity-reducing mechanism,” as a risky prior concession to future events (Luhmann 1973, 23ff). As “personal trust” it represents the basis of any social relationship. In information and communication societies it is mainly relevant as “public trust.”

Credibility (→ Credibility of Content) can be conceptualized as a sub-phenomenon of trust and can be defined as a feature attributed to individuals, institutions, or their communicative products (written or oral texts, audiovisual presentations) by somebody (recipients) with regard to something (event, factual matters, etc.; see Bentele 1988).

### **LOSSES OF TRUST IN MODERN SOCIETIES**

While in archaic societies and other social formations prior to the civil society, a population’s trust in their political leadership was often an unquestioned given, the civil society carries within itself institutional doubt. In the system of parliamentary democracy both parliament and government depend upon the temporally limited trust of the voters. Based upon fundamental distrust (e.g., regarding the abuse of power), this trust is implemented in the form of control systems. Thus, the political systems of many modern societies hold formal and legal procedures (e.g., asking for a “vote of confidence,” passing a “vote of no confidence”) whose purpose it is to regulate situations in which the trust shown by elections has crumbled. In totalitarian systems, distrust of the political leadership often tends to be particularly pronounced among broad levels of the population. Loyalty and conformity are controlled solely by state power and centralized, barely credible media organs.

However, western parliamentary democracies, too, have had to witness a general decrease in trust within the last 25 to 40 years regarding politics, many branches of the economy, and the media itself (see Reitze & Ridder 2006). On the face of it, crises of trust in politics and the economy are linked with the accumulation of scandals made public (→ Scandalization in the News). The possibilities of “trust maintenance” or of “trust rebuilding” by means of communication, that is, → public relations (PR) and → strategic communication management, are a vital challenge for publicly perceptible individuals and organizations, such as politicians, political parties, CEOs, companies, etc.

### **GENERAL THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND EMPIRICAL RESULTS**

Four important general approaches toward a theory of (interpersonal) trust can be distinguished: those of Luhmann (1973, 2000), Barber (1983), Coleman (1990), and Giddens (1990). More recent interpretations (see Misztal 1996; Sztompka 1999) add little new to the discussion. Both Luhmann and Giddens conceptualize the function of trust for the social system as a kind of “top-down approach,” in which trust is understood as an important “mechanism” and as a constituent component necessary for the functioning of a society. Coleman and Barber, on the other hand, start out from a “bottom-up approach,” that is, with the individual, specifying trust as an → attitude toward other human beings and organizations.



The majority of the approaches stemming from social psychology, as well as work done in the economic domain, especially business management, follow the latter path (see Petermann 1996; Ripperger 2003). Since the 1950s in the USA and since the 1960s in Germany and other European countries, survey institutes have collected data on the question of how far politicians and political and other organizations are met with trust by the population (see Listhaug & Miller 1990; Vercic 2000). Political institutions (parliament, federal government) enjoy more trust than do individual politicians and parties. With growing age, trust in political institutions increases. Party preference and political interest are crucial determinants of the attribution of trust. So far, little research has been done into the social mechanisms of trust attribution (building, loss, and crises of trust).

### A THEORY OF TRUST BY PUBLICS

For PR and, thus, communication studies, trust is mainly relevant as “public trust.” Trust has long been recognized as a vital goal of PR. Only since the beginning of the 1990s has PR studies begun to devote more serious attention to it (see Ronneberger & Rühl 1992). On the one hand and with regard to recipients of (individual) “acts of trust,” the term “public trust” refers to the attribution of different degrees of trust or distrust to publicly perceptible individuals and organizations, that is, agents and social systems (→ Attribution Processes). In this sense, trust is closely linked with the psychological term “attitude.” On the other hand, the possibility of observing publicly perceptible agents and systems in the first place is produced and controlled by actively organized communication (journalism, media, PR). Thus, in that sense, “public trust” refers to the social mechanisms of public communication by which the attitude of agents’ trust is generated. Trust building or processes of losing trust, however, rely on mediators and interpreters of information, i.e., on media and PR agents that, after all, produce and process the lion’s share of socially relevant (public) information. It is the purpose of a “theory of public trust” to describe and explain this nexus systematically and empirically.

Such a theory was for the first time sketched out by Bentele (1994) and has since been substantiated empirically. First of all, the theory of public trust differentiates various elements in the public trust process – a process understood as a sub-dimension of public communication: trust subjects, trust objects, trust mediators, facts, and events, as well as texts and messages. Usually, *trust subjects* (trusters) are individuals, but they can also be groups or organizations. *Trust objects* are individuals – in which case we call them trustees – and organizations. More extensive social systems (the health system of a society, the political system, the economic system, etc.) can be trust objects too (→ Corporate Reputation). Those agents that intentionally or unintentionally mediate trust to the trust subjects within the process of public communication are called *trust mediators*. They can be individuals taking key professional roles in the process of public communication, such as journalists and PR professionals. Usually, however, they act within an organizational context, that is, editorial offices or PR departments of organizations.

Thus, organizations, too, act as intermediaries of trust. The relationships between PR and → journalism itself depend on mutual attributions of trust (→ Intereffication Approach in Public Relations). Other important elements in this process, without which

these attributions would be beyond analysis, are events and factual matters and their semiotic equivalents in texts and themes. The theory distinguishes *four types of trust*: (interpersonal) basic, (public) personal, organizational, and system. It is presumed that there are various trust factors (e.g., problem-solving competencies, adequacy of communication, communicative consistency, transparency, etc.) that are capable of creating high, empirically measurable levels of trust if they appear to a very marked degree or jointly. Low-level occurrence or absence of these factors, however, generates low trust or even distrust. Since trust is always produced or damaged within a process, *dynamic mechanisms* can be observed: the trust-building process, for instance, takes longer and requires various positive reassurances until a high level of trust is achieved.

*Loss of trust*, however, can – often in association with other mechanisms such as generalizations – occur very rapidly and result from merely a single crisis. The most important cause of loss of trust is seen in the trust subjects' perception of discrepancies, such as between information and actual fact (e.g., lies), between verbal statements and actions, between diverging actions within the same institution, between norms and statements or actions, etc. Discrepancies are generated intentionally or unintentionally by the communication or the actions of agents, or have a latent existence in the (political, economic) system. In the process of public trust building these discrepancies are transported and picked out as topics by the journalistic system (→ News Factors), which corresponds to the critical function of the media (→ Functional Analyses). On the other hand, due to the adherence of journalists and the media to the logic of news value, the discrepancies can be reinforced (frequently the case), weakened (rarely the case), or produced in the first place by the media. While the last empirically occurs, it defies the norm of objective reporting (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Journalistic news factors (see Staab 1990) such as negativism, conflict, and controversy, as well as certain journalistic routines, are capable of fostering media construction and the perception of discrepancies at the reception end. Published conflicts are particularly prone to transport, reinforce, and generate discrepancies and, thus, to effect the public's loss of trust in agents from the economy, politics, and society.

Voters' support and, thus, political power as well as economic success depend on attributions of trust by various publics. With regard to the future, the relevance of the trust of publics is almost certain to increase in the context of the information and communication societies. This is due to the process of mediatization and the increased significance that the media, especially television and online media, have assumed in the transmission of any content. All information about the world is received indirectly through the media: thus, trust becomes a structural necessity of modern societies (→ Mediatization of Politics; Mediatization of Society).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Consensus-Oriented Public Relations ▶ Corporate Reputation ▶ Corporate Social Responsibility ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Intereffication Approach in Public Relations ▶ Journalism ▶ Legitimacy Gap Theory ▶ Media Relations ▶ Mediatization of Politics ▶ Mediatization of Society ▶ News Factors ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Public Relations ▶ Public Relations Ethics ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Strategic Communication ▶ Structuration Theory

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# Truth and Media Content

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Truth is a slippery concept, and philosophers since Aristotle have battled over its meaning. The most intuitive and widely adopted understanding of truth is that of correspondence theory – the idea that “true propositions tell it like it is;” that “for a proposition to be true is for it to correspond to the facts” (Blackburn & Simmons 1999, 1). The correspondence theory assumes that the “truth” about a particular event or object is constituted by a set of “facts.” The more skillfully a phenomenon is described, the closer the description gets to the “truth” of it. Such a conception imbues media content and its makers with phenomenal authority, and is central to arguments about the importance of media professions.

Along those lines, → Walter Lippmann (1991, 31) famously suggested that to create a correspondence between “the world outside” and the “pictures in our heads,” we need a battalion of responsible expert journalists to ensure proper “representation of the unseen facts.” Ettema and Glasser (1998) have pointed out that journalism’s belief in correspondence theories of the truth is captured in the extensive use of metaphors of glass to understand and describe news: When we refer to the news as a “mirror of reality” or a “window on the world,” we assume that media content is straightforwardly referential; that there is a one-to-one relationship between the “true facts” of an event and the reality represented in news stories.

As McNair (1998) suggested, the cultural authority of journalism derives from its *discursive status as truth* (→ Journalism: Normative Theories). This status, in turn, is underpinned by the belief that it is possible to separate facts from values and the observer from the observed; that journalism can capture the world in its entirety (→ Separation of News and Comments). Such a belief underlies the ideals of the journalism profession, and is closely tied to key journalistic “strategic rituals,” including ideals of objectivity, and the celebration of → accuracy, fairness, and → balance in reporting (→ News Ideologies; Objectivity in Reporting; News Routines). It provides media producers with a set of readymade justifications for their practices, but also grants them the privilege of being the masters of our collective truths.

The commitment to truth-telling remains a cornerstone of journalism *codes of ethics* in western liberal democracies, and a key defense against encroachments on freedom of speech (→ Ethics in Journalism). However, as Ekström (2002, 271) has pointed out, the presumptions about truth inherent in the epistemology of news reporting are problematic insofar as “truth is largely reduced to a matter of the accuracy of individual facts,” and journalists do not necessarily critically reflect on “how true or accurate the news story *as a whole* may be” (emphasis in original). That is to say, this epistemology does not take into account the problem, memorably described by the Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947), that it may not be sufficient to provide the fact, because we also need to know the truth *about* the fact.

### CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACHES

Scholars in media studies and beyond have nudged at journalism's commitment to a correspondence theory. In particular, proponents of a constructivist perspective on truth in media content question the idea of a direct denotative relationship between language and reality (→ Constructivism). Instead, such an approach starts from the presumption that all truths are contingent because reality is ultimately socially constructed through our use of language. In communication studies, James Carey's work has been associated with a constructivist perspective on the truth. His position is encapsulated in the definition of communication as "a symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (1992, 23).

Rather than assuming a fixed external reality that stands in a one-to-one relationship to accounts of that reality, Carey proposes that we actively make the world through the stories we tell about it. In today's mass societies, most of our store of knowledge about the world comes from mass media, rather than from personal experience. This means that media content plays a key role in shaping our views of reality and our notion of truth (→ Media and Perceptions of Reality). In this vein, Miller (1998, 5) described media forms as "technologies of truth" or "popular logics for establishing fact," suggesting that the multiplication of media, genres, and spaces of reception over the past century has seen the means and sites of truth production increase.

If truth is viewed as socially constructed through mass media content, we must also ask who gets to make our collective truths, and what the consequences are of these truth-making processes. As Gamson et al. (1992, 374) suggested, "the lens through which we receive [media-generated images of the world] is not neutral but evinces the power and point of view of the political and economic elites who operate and focus it." Similarly, scholars such as Herman and Chomsky (1995) have criticized the media for failing to seek out the truth, instead "manufacturing consent" by propagating an elite consensus through the selection of some facts and stories, and the neglect of others. As such, these scholars point to the idea that the truth of media content is essentially hegemonic. Hall et al., in their classic work on media coverage of mugging, *Policing the crisis*, substantiated this view in their influential description of primary and secondary definers. Primary definers – the accredited representatives of major social institutions – come to establish the primary interpretation of the event in question. This primary interpretation comes, over time, to be accepted as the "truth" of that event. Arguments against this primary interpretation put forth by secondary definers are then forced to insert themselves against this already-established framework (Hall et al. 1978, 58).

Constructivist perspectives also underpin the approach of cultivation theory, associated with the work of Gerbner et al. (2002; → Gerbner, George). Cultivation research has demonstrated that television, as the common storyteller of our age, cultivates shared conceptions of reality among viewers. Over time, through repeated exposure to television content that "define[s] the world and legitimize[s] the social order" (Gerbner et al. 2002, 194), heavy television viewers converge toward the dominant television image of everything from violence and crime to science. As a result, heavy viewers perceive the world as a "mean and dangerous" place, and experience a heightened sense of risk. They are therefore more likely to be socially conservative, and to give their consent to

institutional authority and accept its use of force (→ Cultivation Theory; Cultivation Effects; Reality and Media Reality).

Similarly, work on framing acknowledges that when media tell stories, they do not straightforwardly represent the facts, but rather promote particular ways of understanding these facts. To frame is “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman 1993, 52). The framing of texts has been shown to influence the opinions of audiences on issues as varied as the rights of AIDS patients, affirmative action, and the interpretation of political news. By framing “the facts” in certain ways, media narratives privilege some truths over others (→ Framing Effects; Framing of the News). Concerns over the social construction of reality through mediated representations also surface in debates over the role of public relations practitioners and political consultants in shaping news stories, “spinning” the truth in ways that benefit special interests, rather than the common good. Deceptive or untruthful political communications, crafted by such hired guns, are seen to be at the heart of an increasingly negative, cynical, and manipulative political debate that might ultimately contribute to a decline in citizen participation.

### **TRUTH AND AUTHENTICITY**

Finally, communication scholarship has shown that consumers of media are often concerned with the truth of texts in a rather different sense: audiences judge whether content is authentic, or whether it is “thought to be true to the essence of something, to a revealed truth, a deeply felt sentiment, or the ways these are worded or otherwise expressed” (Leeuwen 2001, 393).

For example, in Hill’s study of viewers of reality television, she found that audiences looked for “‘moments of authenticity’ when the performance breaks down and people are ‘true’ to themselves” (2005, 176). In studies of broadcast talk, “authentic” forms of public discourse are ones in which “traces of performance are effected or suppressed” (Montgomery 2001, 398). The more fresh and spontaneous an appearance is judged, the more “truthful” it seems. Similarly, in audience participation genres, including television and radio talk shows and letters to the editor, media producers make decisions about what voices to include on the basis of judgments of authenticity. Such judgments often assume that people can only speak truthfully about matters about which they have personal experience (e.g., Livingstone & Lunt 1994). In the context of a variety of such participatory genres, such assessments form the basis for a valorization of the voices of “ordinary people” and a dismissal of experts and figures of authority, who are seen as less truthful.

Underlying these views is an apparent paradox: although the media are the key source of our collective truths, there is also a widely held belief that access to media power, and the wealth and fame that go along with it, corrupt individuals and groups, making their contributions less truthful. As McLeod (1999) demonstrated, African-American hip-hop discourses, faced with threats of assimilation from the white mainstream, have been centrally preoccupied with notions of authenticity. Artists insist that they are “keepin’ it real,” or staying true to their roots instead of “selling out.” When looking at the content of

media, then, truth and its attendant notions of fact, objectivity, and authenticity remain contested and nebulous ideas, used strategically by scholars, media workers, stars, and audiences alike.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Balance ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Framing Effects ▶ Framing of the News ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Journalism: Normative Theories ▶ Lippmann, Walter ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Routines ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Separation of News and Comments

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# Two-Step Flow of Communication

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The two-step flow of communication hypothesis was first formulated by → Paul F. Lazarsfeld and his colleagues in their classical study on the 1940 American presidential election (1944). It states that there is usually no direct influence of the mass media on the general public. Rather, “ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders and from them to the less active sections of the population” (Lazarsfeld et al. 1944, 151). This assumption, challenging the popular idea of strong direct media effects on the public (→ Stimulus–Response Model), turned out to be one of the most influential ideas in communication research from the 1940s to at least the 1960s. While recent research has contradicted the original hypothesis in its rigid form, many of its underlying ideas have stimulated fruitful further research. This holds especially true for the concept of opinion leadership and the analysis of social networks (→ Network Analysis; Opinion Leader).

## THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

In *The people’s choice*, Lazarsfeld and colleagues found that 17 percent of the voters had changed their voting intentions during the campaign. Two thirds of all voters mentioned radio and newspaper as a “helpful source” for making their voting decisions. From today’s point of view, these results seem to indicate relatively strong media effects. Nevertheless, the authors had expected to find much stronger effects – as had been found by several earlier studies. Consequently, they tried to explain why mass media may be less powerful than commonly assumed. In doing so, they found two explanations. First, voters prefer to be exposed to media content that confirms their own political ideas. Therefore, their opinions are rather reinforced than changed by the media (→ Cognitive Dissonance Theory; Selective Exposure). Second, the flow of ideas from the mass media to the general public is not direct but rather involves two steps: a first step from the media to so-called *opinion leaders*, and a second step from them to so-called followers. Opinion leaders can be found on every level of society and do not differ much in their characteristics from other people. But they are more often exposed to mass media and more often try to convince others of their political ideas. However, because the study was not designed to examine the flow of communication more closely, it remained unclear whether there really was a two-step flow.

In the *Rovere study*, Merton (1949) suggested that opinion leadership is not a general characteristic of a person but rather limited to specific issues. He developed several *typologies*, e.g., the distinction between local and cosmopolitan opinion leaders. Both differ in their media consumption as well as in their areas of influence. In the *Decatur study*, Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) further developed this idea. They distinguished opinion leadership in four areas of decision-making: marketing, fashion, public affairs, and movie-going. Generally, the results confirmed the assumptions of the two earlier studies: opinion leadership was more or less restricted to one of the four areas, and opinion



leaders were more often exposed to mass media than followers. Respondents who changed their opinions or behavior reported more often that they had been convinced by interpersonal communication than by the mass media. In the *drug study*, Menzel and Katz (1955) established the method of *network analysis* by asking doctors to name the three colleagues they most often met, talked to, and got advice from. By mapping all contacts in a social network, authors identified opinion leaders and followers. Again, the study confirmed most results of earlier research. On the other hand, the idea of a two-step flow of communication was not clearly supported. Opinion leaders frequently mentioned other opinion leaders as sources of information. This finding suggested that the flow of communication might be rather multistep than two-step.

Taken the assumptions of the early studies together, the two-step flow of communication model consists of at least *five* more or less explicitly stated *hypotheses*. (1) Most people are not directly exposed to the mass media. They are rather informed via interpersonal communication by so-called opinion leaders. (2) Opinion leaders are much more exposed to mass media and much more engaged in active communication than the general public is. (3) Opinion leaders not only inform the followers, but also transmit the content of the mass media to them. Otherwise, instead of a two-step flow of communication, there was concurring information by interpersonal and mass communication. (4) The general public is not only informed but also influenced by opinion leaders. The information given by opinion leaders leads to changes in opinions or behavior (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on; Public Opinion, Media Effects on). (5) Opinion leaders are no passive gatekeepers of media information. They transmit media content biased through their own opinions. Otherwise, the two-step flow of communication hypothesis would not be challenging the idea of strong media effects. Just the opposite was the case: conveying media information to those who are not exposed to media themselves means *increasing media effects*.

## RECENT FINDINGS

In recent research these hypotheses have often been disentangled and studied separately. Generally, *three types of studies* can be distinguished. First, studies on the *diffusion of news* deal with the flow of information from the mass media to the general public without taking the concept of opinion leadership into account. Second, studies on *opinion leaders* deal with the question of how opinion leadership can be measured, the structure of social networks, and the characteristics of opinion leaders without taking media effects into account. Third, studies on the *sources of public opinion* compare the effects of interpersonal and mass communication without analyzing the flow of information.

### Diffusion of News

The assumption that most people are not directly exposed to mass media but rather informed by interpersonal communication has been proven to be wrong by several recent studies on news diffusion. Nowadays, in western democracies about 80–90 percent of adults are exposed to any kind of media news on an average weekday (→ Exposure to News; News Audience). Comparing the primary source of news in 34 countries worldwide,

Plasser & Plasser (2002) found that in almost all countries under examination, the primary source of news is television, followed by newspaper. On average, less than five percent of respondents say that they are primarily informed by interpersonal communication.

Besides these general findings, since 1945 several studies on the *diffusion of single news events* have been conducted (→ Diffusion of Information and Innovation). In those studies, respondents are asked when and from which source they first heard about an event. They show quite different results, depending on the salience of the events under examination. In the case of extremely *high-salience news events* like Kennedy's assassination or the Challenger explosion in 1986, information diffuses rapidly and is conveyed to a significant number of people via interpersonal communication. In the case of relatively *low-salience news events*, information reaches fewer people and is conveyed almost exclusively by mass media. The reason for that finding, probably, is that only in the case of high-salience news events is interpersonal communication stimulated. Indeed, several studies on news diffusion show that people start talking to others about an event after being informed about it by the mass media. Those discussions were much more likely when the event was highly salient. Consequently, sometimes a two-step flow in news diffusion is quite likely – but only under extreme conditions, which seldom occur.

### Role of Opinion Leaders

The idea of opinion leadership was revived during the 1980s and 1990s by developing new methods of measurement. Besides network analysis, the “strength of personality scale” has become a frequently used tool for measuring opinion leadership. Instead of directly asking people whether they influence others, ten less obvious items (e.g., “I like to assume responsibility”) are used to identify opinion leaders. As in the early studies, opinion leaders, classified by recently developed methods, turn out to be highly exposed to mass media and actively engaged in interpersonal communication. They are located in central positions in social networks and many others report that they are influenced by them.

On the other hand, recent studies on opinion leadership suggest that the concept of a two-step flow of communication is oversimplified. First, opinion leaders engage in interpersonal communication with followers as well as with other opinion leaders. This finding points to a multistep flow of communication. Second, in the communication flow regarding most issues, a clear majority is neither opinion leader nor follower. Instead, they do not engage in interpersonal communication at all. Consequently, they have to rely on media information.

### Sources of Influence

Today, there is clear evidence that mass media influence people's opinions and behavior in many ways (→ Media Effects). The same holds true for → interpersonal communication. The crucial question is how the effects of both sources are related. This question relates to both steps of the two-step flow model. Concerning the first step, the question is how adequately opinion leaders understand the information received from the mass media. Only in cases where they understand and remember media content correctly are they able to convey it to others.

Several studies on *learning from the news* suggest that most people tend to quickly forget at least the details presented by the media. In the event of this holding true for opinion leaders too, a two-step flow of communication is quite unlikely. Concerning the second step, the question is how opinion leaders transmit media content to others. While several studies on interpersonal communication show that people frequently talk about media content, it remains unclear whether they convey it neutrally or in a manner that is biased by their own opinions. Only in the latter case can interpersonal and mass communication be regarded as contrasting influences. If people convey media content in a more or less unbiased way to others, interpersonal communication is not an independent source of influence. Rather, its effects should be regarded as an expansion of media effects.

Thus far, only a few studies have dealt with these questions. By using aggregate data, Brosius and Weimann (1996) found evidence for several models of influence – in this case → agenda-setting effects. Under some conditions, the media agenda, first, influenced the agenda of early recognizers – in the authors' terms – or a sub-group of opinion leaders. In a second step, the early recognizers' agenda influenced the public's agenda. While this finding is in line with the two-step flow model, more often another flow of influence occurred. First, the agenda of early recognizers influenced the media agenda. Then, the media agenda influenced the agenda of the general public.

Still, there is no test of the complete two-step flow model on an individual basis. Such a test would require a complex research design, including detailed analyses of media content and interpersonal discussions as well as → surveys of individual media exposure, engagement in discussions, and opinion changes over time. Carrying out a complex study of this kind seems almost impossible. Nevertheless, more detailed research on the role of interpersonal communication as a mediator of media effects is needed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on  
▶ Cognitive Dissonance Theory ▶ Diffusion of Information and Innovation ▶ Exposure to  
News ▶ Interpersonal Communication ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects ▶ Network  
Analysis ▶ News Audience ▶ Opinion Leader ▶ Public Opinion, Media Effects on  
▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Stimulus–Response Model ▶ Survey

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# Typography

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Typography is a process for reproducing text, figures, punctuation, characters, ornaments, and borders via a printing press or electronic communication. Typography is distinguished from calligraphy, by which single, handwritten copies are made. Manuscripts set into type may be printed or stored electronically, allowing an infinite number of exact replicas to be distributed widely. Early typeface designs were modeled after calligraphic letter-forms but book typefaces quickly moved away from writing as a model. In a development spurred by the Industrial Revolution, commercialization, and later the growth of digital typography, which made type design easier, hundreds of thousands of formal, informal, and decorative typestyles are in use today.

## HISTORY

Typography is technically prefigured in the stamping of seals and signets, a process found in many early civilizations. Starting in the third century CE, the Chinese carved letters into wood blocks for printing. Eventually whole books were carved in relief on wood slabs. The oldest surviving xylographic or woodblock → book is the Buddhist *Diamond sutra* printed in China in 868 CE. In 1045, Pi Sheng of China may have developed the first form of handset or movable type, the name given to processes where multiple copies of individual letters (called characters, sorts, or glyphs) are cast so they can be combined and printed with other characters, taken apart, and stored for reuse. A twelfth-century, nine-volume, Buddhist religious tract titled *Propitiousness has spread to everywhere in Kouhebenxu* was discovered in a pagoda in 1991, and Chinese scholars believe it was printed with wooden, movable type. Around 1443, the Korean scholar-king Sejong the Great developed a phonetic alphabet called Hangul, which made movable type more practical and expanded book printing in Korea.

In 1454, *Johannes Gutenberg* invented movable type in Mainz, Germany. Also called foundry type, its characters are cast in relief out of a lead, antimony, and copper alloy. The characters are stored in cases and the compositor retrieves one character at a time and sets it in a composing stick adjusted to the correct measure (column width). The type is then printed via letterpress, and the characters are redistributed into the case for reuse. Due to the type metal's weight, large letters were cut in wood. Foundry type is still employed today by arts and crafts typographer-printers of the private press movement, who publish limited editions of carefully crafted books (→ Printing, History of). Gutenberg modeled his type and book design after the conventions of manuscript books. He designed blackletter fonts to fit the decorative, gothic style popular in both writing and architecture throughout Europe.

On the Italian peninsula, however, Renaissance scribes had revived a humanistic letter-form they called *Roman*. This hand was, in fact, Carolingian (ninth-century), but nevertheless it had quickly become popular. Printers who moved south from Germany when Gutenberg fell into legal and financial difficulties adopted it, as did Roman and Venetian typographers and printers.

Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century typographer-printers like the Venetians Nicolas Jenson and Aldus Manutius and the French Simone de Colines, Robert Estienne, and Claude Garamond refined what is now called “*old style*” *type design*. It is characterized by contrasting thick and thin strokes that finish in bracketed serifs (a subtly drawn transition at the end of the letter strokes so they widen into the horizontal serifs). Manutius, with punch-cutter Francesco Griffo, created the first italic typeface, which he used to print the text of his most significant invention, the pocket-sized, portable book. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century type designers created a refined type style called “transitional” with more finely drawn thin strokes. Transitional typefaces showed more contrast and matched the fine lines in etchings, engravings, and baroque and rococo penmanship. In 1692 Philip Grandjean designed the “romain du roi” exclusively for Louis XIV’s printing office. In 1757, English printer John Baskerville cut the model transitional roman and italic, which became popular throughout Europe and America.

Later in the century, Italian Giambattista Bodoni and the French François Ambroise and Firmin Didot moved further still from old style when they created rational, elegant “*modern*” *fonts* with even greater contrast between the thick and thin strokes. The fine-lined strokes were matched in weight with unbracketed serifs, drawn as straight, horizontal lines rather than swelling outward as part of the main strokes.

Typesetting was still done mainly by hand until the nineteenth century, when inventors tried to mechanize the process. First, they invented machines to set the old foundry-type characters. However, in 1886 Ottmar Mergenthaler invented the *Linotype machine*, which revolutionized typesetting. It was so named because it set and cast a “line of type” simultaneously. The Linotype stores matrices (molds) for the characters in interchangeable font magazines. Compositors set type by striking a keyboard character, causing the correct “mat” to move into the assembly area. When a full line of mats and spaces is set, the type is cast – a marvel of the Industrial Revolution. Linotype operators set type many times faster than handset compositors.

## INDUSTRIALIZATION OF TYPOGRAPHY

The industrialization of typography and printing is synonymous with the growth of consumerism. Businesses needed more powerful typography and illustrations in their posters and advertisements to attract customers (→ Advertising). So printers employed larger, bolder headlines and decorative typestyles (→ Visual Communication; Graphic Design). Types for reading and advertising became bolder with less contrast, the most extreme called “slab serif” for their heavy, blocky serifs, which could be either bracketed or unbracketed. Another radical style was William Caslon IV’s “sans serif” type. Type “without serifs” appeared early in the nineteenth century but was used sparingly until the twentieth.

In Victorian design, multiple typestyles were often employed in single layouts, making them stand out but also garish and cumbersome to read. (→ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of). However, late in the century the work of William Morris at his Kelmscott Press and other Arts and Crafts movement typographer-printers spawned interest in reviving the fine qualities of traditional typography and printing. Eschewing the Linotype and other industrial processes, the Arts and Crafts craftsmen returned to

handicraft production. Morris himself researched the history of typography and designed his own typefaces based on blackletter and Nicolas Jenson's fifteenth-century Venetian old style type. Industry followed Morris's scholarly lead in the twentieth century. With the resources to research type history and hire expert type designers, industrial type-founders revived and adapted the classical typefaces of the great type designers, making them available to modern designers for machine production.

In the nineteenth century, → photography revolutionized printing plate-making. When stone lithography and zincography evolved into offset lithography, twentieth-century artists suddenly had more freedom to manipulate typography in design. Artists associated with modern movements like Futurism, Dadaism, De Stijl, Cubo-Futurism, Constructivism, and the Bauhaus School employed type in radical, asymmetric layouts (→ Art as Communication).

German typography visionary Jan Tschichold proclaimed that *sans serif type* was the appropriate type for the machine age. The spread of plain, undecorated typefaces like Futura, Twentieth Century, and Univers was the modernists' critical reaction to the overly decorative Victorian typography. Initially, sans serifs typefaces were monotone, with no variation in their stroke weights. Eventually some contrast was added, often where the bowls (the rounded parts of letters like b and d) attach to the main strokes, as in fonts like Franklin Gothic and Helvetica. Eventually, designers restored classical qualities in "humanistic sans serifs" like Hermann Zapf's popular Optima by adding contrasting stroke widths.

Although the rise of sans serif typography had a profound effect, it did not supplant other letter-forms. In fact, new typestyles like "script" (whose letters have tails that link) and "cursive" (whose letters look as though they should link but do not) became popular in the 1920s–1940s. In the 1960s and 1970s modernists discouraged their use, but they have been revived by retro designers of the postmodern period.

## PHOTOCOMPOSITION AND DIGITAL TYPOGRAPHY

At the start of the twentieth century, a new typographical process called *photocomposition* was developed. Herman Freud developed the first commercial phototypesetter, called Intertype Fotosetter, in 1946. In photocomposition typefaces are drawn, photographed, and stored as photographic negatives on film strips or disks. To set type, a high-intensity light is flashed through the clear, negative character, exposing it on photographic paper that is then developed like a photographic print. The photocomposed, paper type is not printed directly but pasted with graphics and images onto a keyline layout for photo-mechanical plate-making. Where metal type was rigid, paper type could be cut and pasted up in any way designers could imagine, opening the door to the experimental, creative typographic layouts of the 1970s and 1980s. Photocomposition blossomed in the 1950s and 1960s when inventors added screens (CRTs) for viewing and editing type and computers to automate hyphenation and set type. The faster, computerized photocomposition quickly replaced the Linotype-style casting machines and made offset lithography the dominant commercial printing process.

Adding computers to photocomposition laid the foundation for *digital typography* and desktop publishing in the 1980s. The first digital screen and print fonts were bitmapped,

ASCII letter-forms that appeared as jagged dots on the screen and in dot-matrix printer output, which did not meet professional typographic standards. In 1984, to improve the appearance of type on the screen and in print, John Warnock and Chuck Geschke of Adobe Systems developed PostScript, which became the standard page description and programming language for desktop and electronic publishing.

The year 1985 was a watershed in the history of typography. Altsys Corporation released Fontographer, the first Bézier-curve-based type-design software. It allowed digital designers to create smooth, digital fonts. Aldus Corporation's PageMaker, a PostScript page-layout program, was also released, enabling designers to mix type, graphics, and images in a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) format. In 1987, QuarkXPress, a superior page-layout program, came on the market. It gave typographers and designers more control over type and its spacing, even permitting characters to be superimposed. It remained the pre-eminent professional page-layout program until challenged by Adobe's InDesign in 1999.

*Page-layout programs* had a profound impact on typography and graphic design when Apple produced its LaserWriter in 1985. Its raster image processor (RIP) contained an Adobe PostScript interpreter that combined high-resolution fonts, graphics, and illustrations in page layouts. Laser scanning resulted in higher-resolution output. For professionals, the German firm Mergenthaler developed the Linotronic image-setter, which set digital type at 2540 dots per inch (dpi), effectively killing photocomposition. Software like FontLab Studio and Fontographer put digital type design in the public's hands, resulting in an explosion of tens of thousands of new, individualistic typefaces associated with postmodern typography. Digital type's impact has been profound. Where earlier type technologies were expensive and thus unavailable to the public, digital type came free on personal computers. Ironically, typefaces like Zapf's digital script Zapfino have brought typography almost full circle. Zapfino is literally calligraphic, with over 1,425 character variations (e.g., over 50 variations of the lower case a), which can be substituted depending on how they look with the nearby characters just as calligraphers did their letters as they wrote. This practice was impractical in foundry or photocomposition. But with the computer able to quickly make character substitutions, Zapfino has been released as a standard font with Mac's System X. Today most typefaces can be found and downloaded from the web, often free of charge, making typography a democratic art.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Book ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Photography ▶ Printing, History of ▶ Visual Communication

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# Ubiquitous Computing

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Ubiquitous computing refers to a new era in which networking and computing technologies become so small, fast, interconnected, and cheap that they can be embedded seamlessly into the environment and everyday objects. It implies that computing becomes ubiquitous. User-friendly services are expected to be available anytime and anywhere and only when demanded by users. This implies computing becoming intelligent because it will need to understand human behavior in context. The term ubiquitous computing was coined by Mark Weiser (1952–1999), chief scientist at the Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) in California, in a seminal paper published in 1991.

The idea of ubiquitous computing or “ubicom” has been taken up and developed since then, in many different parts of the world under a *variety of terms*: pervasive computing, disappearing computing, proactive computing, sentient computing, affective computing, wearable computing, intelligent networks, and ambient intelligence. The use of these terms usually implies a different focus, such as augmenting everyday objects (e.g., a coffee cup) with sensors and/or activators in order for them to sense physical activity and, consequently, to act or communicate this information (e.g., coffee is hot). Others orient their work toward developing natural and intuitive user interfaces such as tangible ones where a person interacts with digital information through the physical environment.

But as a vision for a new era of computing in society, there is a need to encompass three *key technological areas*: invisible/ubiquitous computing, ubiquitous communication, and intelligent user-friendly interfaces. This means that everyday objects are augmented with computing capabilities and that these devices are able to interact with each other and with their users in a way that is natural and intuitive. In addition to technological progress, which is needed in each of the separate domains, the convergence and seamless interoperability between them is seen as a major challenge for research.

The differences in approaches to ubicom also are indicative of geographical preferences. Ubiquitous computing is the term most commonly used in the US and Japan, while in Europe, the term *ambient intelligence*, or AmI, is more prevalent. In Europe the concept

of AmI is raised as a future vision of the information society and is associated with the further development of information and communication technologies as a means of addressing the socio-economic challenges that Europe will face in the future.

AmI in Europe is being promoted by policymakers concerned with research, technology, and development (RTD) in the field of information and communication technologies. AmI was a priority area for research within the *European Commission's RTD Framework Programme 6* (2002–2006), which dealt with information society technologies (IST). The objective continues to be that research on IST should contribute to realizing European policies for the knowledge society as agreed at the Lisbon Council of 2000. At this time the strategic goal for Europe over the next decade was “to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (European Union 2000).

Major steps in developing the vision of AmI in Europe have been taken by the IST Advisory Group (ISTAG), a European group of high-level experts from industry and academia who are advising on the IST program. ISTAG has emphasized, from the start, the human and service aspects of AmI, and that its focus should be on serving people, not technologies (ISTAG 2001). The key ideas for AmI consist of human-centered computing, user friendliness, user empowerment, and the support of human interaction. These explicit human- and user-oriented claims about the future of AmI make the AmI vision different from earlier, more technologically deterministic, visions (Punie 2005).

Ubiquitous computing and ambient intelligence remain visions for the future as the key goals have yet to be realized, but they are based on the ongoing development of current and next-generation information and communication technologies and services. These terms suggest emergent properties that will take shape as they are developed. However, the scale, complexity, and ever-expanding scope of human activity will present enormous *technical and social challenges* to realizing the full potential of AmI. The huge amount of behavioral, personal, and even biological data that is needed to provide context-dependent, value-added, proactive services has major implications for → privacy, identity, and security. In addition, the growing autonomy and intelligence of devices and applications is expected to change the way people interact with technologies and services, and has implications for new business models, product liability, security, and service definition.

Ubiquitous computing has the potential to have major implications for the media and communications sector, as digitized information, communication, and transaction services become increasingly personalized, interconnected, and always available via broadband networks (wired and wireless). Important changes are occurring as new Internet players emerge and become established, such as Google, Yahoo! (→ search engines), and eBay (→ E-commerce). New services under the label of “Web 2.0,” such as social software, blogging, podcasting, and open source content, are also shaping the future of the Internet (→ Language and the Internet). These services seem to point to a trend whereby intelligence is with people and their networks rather than within the environment and with devices, as suggested by AmI and ubicomp. It remains to be seen how these developments will interact with breakthroughs in ubiquitous computing.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Archiving of Internet Content ▶ Avatars and Agents ▶ Blogger ▶ Communication Infrastructure ▶ Computer–User Interaction ▶ Cyborgs ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ E-commerce ▶ Information and Communication Technology, Development of ▶ Information Society ▶ Internet ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Privacy ▶ Search Engines ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Virtual Communities

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# **Uncertainty and Communication**

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Uncertainty has been an important concept in communication theory for many decades (→ Uncertainty Reduction Theory). Understanding how people respond to uncertainty in developing relationships (→ Relational Uncertainty) and in intercultural encounters (→ Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory) has been the foundation of a large body of interpersonal communication research. This work has demonstrated complex relationships between communication, → information seeking, and the management of uncertainty (→ Uncertainty Management).

Recent theory building and testing have extended the concept into the social influence and behavioral change domain, primarily through → health communication research (→ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of). Babrow et al. (1998) noted that uncertainty is a central feature of health and illness experiences, but that it had been conceptualized differently across various strands of research. These researchers integrated those definitions and explained that “uncertainty exists when details of situations are

ambiguous, complex, unpredictable, or probabilistic; when information is unavailable or inconsistent; and when people feel insecure in their own state of knowledge or the state of knowledge in general” (Brashers 2001, 478). Babrow et al. argued that this more complete description forms the basis for further theory building and practical applications in health-care and promotion.

Theories of communication and uncertainty management (Brashers 2001), motivated information management (Afifi & Weiner 2004), problematic integration (Babrow et al. 1998), and the risk perception attitude (Turner et al. 2006) are recent theoretical directions that recognize the complexity of uncertainty and information management in the health domain (→ Information Overload). For example, Brashers (2001) noted that people may want to reduce, increase, or maintain their uncertainty depending on how they appraise it (e.g., maintaining uncertainty about an illness can lead to hope or optimism), and that obtaining information does not necessarily lead to reducing uncertainty (e.g., information can lead to more uncertainty when it is inconsistent across sources or when it contradicts a person’s current beliefs).

Social influence researchers have used theories of → information processing and uncertainty management in recent research on health behavior change. For example, Rimal (2001) used Witte’s theory of fear appeals (→ Extended Parallel Process Model) to predict information-seeking behavior in response to health messages about cardiovascular disease. In a follow-up study, Turner et al. (2006) found that “avoidant” participants in their research (i.e., those with perceptions of high risk for a disease, but low self-efficacy to avoid it) were likely to seek information, but unlikely to retain it, perhaps suggesting that anxiety causes selective retention (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention) or other psychological mechanisms to facilitate maintaining uncertainty. Other related areas of research have included tests of messages promoting HIV testing (using functional theory; see Hullett 2006; → Functional Analysis) and organ donation (using the theory of motivated information management; see Afifi et al. 2006).

One complexity that has received attention is the collaborative nature of uncertainty management. Afifi & Weiner (2004) argued that researchers need to account for the motivations, outcome assessments, and efficacy beliefs of both information seekers and information providers. For example, Dillard & Carson (2005) described how health-care providers and family members deal with uncertainty when a newborn has a positive screening test for cystic fibrosis. They found uncertainty management for the family was negotiated between providers and family members, which included family members seeking information about the illness to reduce uncertainty, health-care providers providing and highlighting information to help family members reduce uncertainty, a midwife recommending that family members avoid information to maintain their uncertainty and avoid anxiety about prognosis until diagnosis was confirmed, and medical technicians checking to see how much information family members wanted. Brashers et al. (2004) noted that supportive others can assist with uncertainty management by helping achieve information goals, but also by means such as facilitating skill development, providing acceptance or validation, or encouraging reappraisal or perspective shifts (→ Social Support in Health Communication; Social Support in Interpersonal Communication). They also noted that support attempts can be problematic, in that they sometimes included a lack of coordination of goals between the support provider and support recipient, the

addition of relational uncertainty to illness uncertainty, and the need for managing the uncertainty of both parties.

Future research in this area should focus on developing our understanding of what makes uncertainty management processes more or less effective. Goldsmith (2001) suggested that this involves asking research questions about the meaning and function of behaviors, with a focus on determining (1) what challenges there are in a particular social context for achieving a communicative goal, (2) what discursive resources are available for addressing those challenges, and (3) how efforts for achieving the goal will be evaluated as effective and appropriate.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ▶ Extended Parallel Process Model ▶ Functional Analysis ▶ Health Behavior Change, Transtheoretical Model of ▶ Health Communication ▶ Information Overload ▶ Information Processing ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Persuasion ▶ Persuasion and Resistance ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Relational Uncertainty ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Social Support in Health Communication ▶ Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Uncertainty Management ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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# Uncertainty Management

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Given that the experience of uncertainty, in some form, is a part of nearly every interaction, it should come as no surprise that new theoretical efforts to understand it are foundational to the study of interpersonal communication and continue unabated today. Uncertainty reduction theory (URT; Berger & Calabrese 1975) served as the field's initial, and most influential, examination of uncertainty in interpersonal contexts, and the theory of motivated information management (TMIM; Afifi & Weiner 2004) represents the most recent effort. Interestingly, the range of theories also reflects an over-twenty-year struggle over the basic assumptions and perspectives that guide our understanding of people's experience of, and response to, uncertainty.

A broad approach to uncertainty defines it as a lack of confidence in the predictive utility of information that one has about a topic (Brashers 2001; → Relational Dialectics; Uncertainty and Communication; Uncertainty Reduction Theory). In other words, high uncertainty translates to a perceived inability to predict or explain a person, interaction outcome, or issue with confidence. The theoretical debates about uncertainty have mostly revolved around two issues. First, how do people experience uncertainty? Second, how do people respond to that experience?

## THE EXPERIENCE OF UNCERTAINTY

URT argued that individuals have an innate motivation to predict and explain people and events (at least up to a certain point). As such, uncertainty is almost inevitably experienced as a negative physiological and psychological state. In fact, the theory's primary author has argued that the motivation to reduce uncertainty can be traced back to evolutionary needs (Berger 1987). Specifically, those who do not make efforts to reduce uncertainty about others are unprepared to defend themselves from the threats they may pose. Others have disagreed. Two communication scholars, in particular, have offered alternative viewpoints. Babrow (1992), in articulating problematic integration theory, and Brashers (2001), in advancing uncertainty management theory, have argued that people's experience of uncertainty differs dramatically according to the context and culture in question. In some cases, uncertainty is experienced as a positive state and, in others, as a negative one.

In support of this position, they have focused on people's experience of illness. For example, Brashers et al. (2000) have shown that people living with HIV often see uncertainty as hope – the otherwise certain outcome of death is less assured. Babrow has found similar positive experiences of uncertainty in patients with cancer, among others (Babrow and Kline 2000). Finally, some studies have suggested that uncertainty is more commonplace in certain cultures than in others, making inhabitants of those cultures less susceptible to aversive reactions to uncertainty (Goldsmith 2001). In an effort to account for this controversy, Afifi and Weiner (2004) recently advanced the notion of *uncertainty*

*discrepancy*. They claimed that uncertainty is an anxiety-producing state only when the actual and desired levels of uncertainty in a specific circumstance do not match. Such a discrepancy could reflect cases in which individuals want less uncertainty than they have, or those in which they want more. While so doing, they also acknowledged that the more common situation is the former. Indeed, their studies have shown just that – most people want less uncertainty, but there is a subset of individuals who report wanting more uncertainty than they have on an issue (Afifi & Weiner 2006).

Unfortunately, this uncertainty paradigm has offered very little in the way of predictive specificity about individuals' experience of uncertainty – only that uncertainty will be psychologically distressing for some, but not for others. One as yet untested possibility that marries the two theoretical camps is that uncertainty is experienced as positive *only* when individuals do not believe that its reduction would perform the preparedness/protective function that the evolutionary explanation otherwise assumes it does. In other words, if people believe that the HIV diagnosis equals inevitable death (something that they cannot prevent or protect against), then the evolutionary utility of uncertainty reduction disappears and another evolutionary tool – maintaining emotional (vs physical) well-being – takes over. Such an explanation would account for most of the empirical discrepancies in this research area and deserves to be tested.

## RESPONSES TO UNCERTAINTY

Closely tied to the debate about the experience of uncertainty is the one that challenges the way people respond to uncertainty. Not surprisingly, given the supposed evolutionary disadvantage of uncertainty, Berger and Kellermann (1983) argue that individuals respond to uncertainty with immediate efforts at uncertainty reduction – attempts that wane once uncertainty is adequately reduced. They also offered three general ways in which people seek information to reduce uncertainty: (1) passive (i.e., through observation), (2) active (i.e., through third parties or by altering the environment and watching the target's reaction), or (3) interactive (i.e., direct communication with the target) (for review, see Berger & Kellermann 1994). Several studies have confirmed that people prefer to start their uncertainty reduction efforts with passive strategies (a less efficient but more socially appropriate tactic), but inundate their targets with questions once in interactions (→ Initial Interaction). Investigations into uncertainty reduction in close relationships also show a preference for more indirect, socially appropriate strategies in these contexts (→ Relational Uncertainty).

Those scholars who see uncertainty as sometimes beneficial do not predict consistent efforts at its reduction. Individuals *may* make efforts to reduce it (when uncertainty is experienced as negative), but might instead choose to avoid information altogether (to prevent the reduction of uncertainty), cognitively re-assess the state of uncertainty, or even bask in its presence. Moreover, low levels of uncertainty do not always translate to a reduction in information-seeking efforts. In some cases they may lead to more vigorous efforts at information seeking – when uncertainty reduction means a loss of hope. Proponents of this model have produced considerable evidence supporting these possibilities. Examples include the avoidance of information when the expected outcome is negative or the search for third or fourth opinions in response to undesirable medical diagnoses.



Personality theorists have also argued that individuals differ systematically in their response to uncertainty. Some (e.g., blunterners) avoid potentially threatening information at all costs while others (e.g., monitors) are voracious information seekers (Miller 1987).

### **THEORY OF MOTIVATED INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

Afifi and Weiner (2004) recently advanced TMIM as a way to address some of the inconsistencies in the literature and more fully capture the complexity of uncertainty management decisions within interpersonal encounters. The process starts with awareness of an uncertainty discrepancy about an important issue. That discrepancy then produces anxiety. In response, people ask themselves two general questions: “What are the costs and benefits of information seeking?” (labeled *outcome expectancy*), and “Am I able to seek and cope with the information?” (labeled *efficacy*). Three specific efficacy assessments are made: communication efficacy (i.e., can they skillfully seek the information from this person?), coping efficacy (i.e., can they cope with the outcome they expect?), and target efficacy (i.e., does the target have the information being sought and are they likely to provide it?).

Based on their perception of outcome expectancies and efficacy, individuals take one of three information-management routes: seek information (varying from direct to indirect methods), avoid information (varying from active avoidance to passive avoidance), or cognitively re-assess the level of actual or desired uncertainty. The theory proposes that individuals are increasingly likely to seek information directly to the extent that outcome expectancies are positive and the efficacy assessments all high. Afifi and Weiner (2004) argue that information providers go through similar assessments in determining what information to give and how to do it. They assess the costs and benefits of information provision and whether they are able to provide it. The end result of this process depends on the seeker’s strategy and the provider’s response. Studies of the theory have shown promise, although to date only the information seeker has been examined.

### **METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

The literature on uncertainty in interpersonal encounters has been mostly dominated by quasi-experimental or → experimental designs. The typical paradigm in the first few studies was to have two strangers interact in a lab (sometimes with varying instructions, sometimes not), then code the interactions for evidence of information-seeking efforts (e.g., questions asked).

Participants were also typically asked to rate their level of uncertainty about the target other. One of the most commonly used measures of self-reported uncertainty is the short version of Clatterbuck’s (1979) attributional confidence scale (CLUES). The measure is intended to capture general uncertainty about a target person and has consistently shown strong psychometric properties. Other measures of uncertainty have emerged since then, some with alternative foci such as relational uncertainty (Knobloch & Solomon 1999), but the question kernels used in these measures are generally adopted from the original CLUES scale. Given the individualized, contextualized, and shifting nature of uncertainty’s

meaning in Babrow's and Brashers' uncertainty management frameworks, it is not surprising that qualitative methods (e.g., interviews) rose to prominence in the mid- to late-1990s as a means of capturing uncertainty and related processes. Still, the dominant methodological paradigm in the area remains quantitative.

Much has changed in the uncertainty landscape since Berger and Calabrese's uncertainty reduction theory was first introduced. Yet there remain many unanswered questions. Perhaps foremost among these is the explanatory mechanism that might lead to greater predictive precision regarding individuals' experience of uncertainty. In addition, despite a large corpus of knowledge about behavior during initial interactions, there is still relatively little known about the fluidity of uncertainty states within and across interactions, or interactants' shifting roles as provider and seeker. These limitations are in part due to an increasing reliance on one-shot survey designs and a noted absence of micro-coding of interactants in conversation and of longitudinal data. Finally, work by Babrow and Brashers has highlighted the need to attend more closely to the influence of emotion on the uncertainty management process, while research on TMIM has revealed the need to study more closely the role played by efficacy perceptions in the management of uncertainty.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Initial Interaction ▶ Qualitative Methodology ▶ Relational Dialectics ▶ Relational Uncertainty ▶ Uncertainty and Communication ▶ Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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## Uncertainty Reduction Theory

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Uncertainty reduction theory explains both how interpersonal communication is affected by a lack of knowledge and how people use communication to gather information (→ Uncertainty and Communication). This theory was founded on the observation that → initial interactions between strangers routinely involve an exchange of demographic and public information, and these interactions change in predictable ways as they progress (Berger 1997a). Rather than simply label these patterns as normative, the theory elaborates on the mechanisms that drive interpersonal communication behaviors. Interpersonal communication plays two roles within uncertainty reduction theory: (1) communication is among the behaviors that people seek to predict or explain, and (2) communication is a tool people use to gather information or form predictions and explanations (→ Information Seeking). Over the 30 years since its inception, uncertainty reduction theory has been applied to numerous communication contexts, and it has given rise to several alternative perspectives on uncertainty and communication. Thus, uncertainty reduction theory has had a major impact on the communication discipline.

### THEORETICAL CLAIMS

A core assumption of uncertainty reduction theory is that people are driven to increase the predictability of their own and their communication partner's behavior. Uncertainty reduction can be *proactive*, focused on predicting future behaviors, or *retroactive*, focused on explaining past experiences. The theory also distinguishes between *behavioral uncertainty*, which is a lack of knowledge about the behaviors that are appropriate or expected, and

*cognitive uncertainty*, which involves questions about a communication partner's personal qualities.

Berger and Calabrese (1975) advanced uncertainty reduction theory as a *set of axioms* concerning the association between uncertainty and facets of interpersonal communication within initial interaction between strangers. The axioms specified in that initial formulation were as follows: (1) As the amount of verbal communication between strangers increases, uncertainty decreases; as uncertainty is reduced, verbal communication increases; (2) As the amount of nonverbal warmth expressed between strangers increases, uncertainty decreases; as uncertainty is reduced, nonverbal expressions of warmth increase; (3) When uncertainty is high, information-seeking behavior is frequent; as uncertainty decreases, information-seeking behavior decreases; (4) When uncertainty is high, the intimacy level of communication content is low; as uncertainty decreases, the intimacy level of communication content increases; (5) When uncertainty is high, partners are more likely to reciprocate each other's communication behaviors; as uncertainty decreases, the rate of reciprocity decreases; (6) Similarities between communication partners decrease uncertainty; dissimilarities between communication partners increase uncertainty; and (7) When uncertainty is high, liking for a communication partner is low; as uncertainty decreases, liking increases.

By considering all possible pairwise combinations of these 7 axioms, Berger and Calabrese also offered 21 *specific theorems* linking uncertainty to interpersonal communication variables and outcomes. For example, considering the first two axioms in tandem generates the prediction that amount of verbal communication and expressions of nonverbal warmth are positively correlated.

Although uncertainty reduction is taken as a necessary priority because it enables communication, Berger (1979) identified three conditions likely to increase a person's desire to reduce uncertainty. When future interaction with a communication partner is likely or expected, people should be especially motivated to gather information about that partner. In addition, the drive to reduce uncertainty should be increased if a communication partner has the ability to control the experience of rewards or costs. A communication partner who behaves in an unusual or deviant manner may also motivate uncertainty reduction, especially if that unpredictable partner cannot be avoided (→ Expectancy Violation).

Berger and Bradac (1982) elaborated on the methods people use to gather information about a target person. *Passive strategies* involve observing a person, preferably within situations where that person must be active or respond to the environment. *Active strategies* involve altering the physical or social context and observing a person's responses to that environment; this category also includes asking third parties for information about a target person. *Interactive strategies* involve gathering information by communicating directly with the target person.

## EMPIRICAL TESTS

Tests of uncertainty reduction theory have addressed three general issues. One line of inquiry is focused on *uncertainty reduction over the course of developing relationships* (→ Relationship Development). In general, people's confidence in their ability to predict a communication partner's attitudes and behaviors is positively correlated with various

measures of attraction (Berger 1987). Research summarized by Berger (1988) also indicates that the nature of uncertainty and uncertainty reduction changes as interactions and relationships progress. Within initial interactions, partners exchange demographic information that allows them to locate each other within social and cultural realms. Whereas the questions strangers ask each other focus on acquiring demographic background details, friends ask questions that elicit more evaluative and attitudinal information. Within romantic relationships, people might employ *secret tests* or covert activities that are designed to acquire information about the state of the relationship. In these ways, uncertainty is reduced about different issues as relationships develop.

Another line of inquiry has focused on the *factors that prompt uncertainty reduction*. A summary of this work highlights conflicting patterns of results (Berger 1997a). In studies that focused on behaviors after an initial real or hypothetical interaction, people did not increase their information-seeking efforts when they anticipated future interaction, had outcomes dependent on a partner, or the partner behaved in an unusual way. Other studies have shown that people communicating with a stranger engaged in more information seeking during the interaction when they expected future contact with that partner.

A third program of research has focused more closely on the *communication behaviors that people use to gather information during face-to-face interactions*. As summarized in Berger and Kellermann (1994), the first few moments of initial interactions are dominated by questions, the majority of which solicit information about the communication partner (→ Questions and Questioning). Another common information-gathering strategy is disclosing information to prompt a partner to make reciprocal disclosures (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). A third option involves putting the partner at ease to encourage him or her to share personal information. These information-seeking behaviors represent a tradeoff between the efficiency and appropriateness of uncertainty reduction efforts. At one extreme, interrogation offers an intrusive but efficient method of soliciting information from a target person. Self-disclosure is less efficient than question asking, because communication partners have to infer that reciprocal disclosures are desirable; however, the freedom afforded to the communication target makes this strategy more socially appropriate. Finally, relaxing a conversational partner involves highly appropriate behaviors, but it is an inefficient method of gathering specific information.

## THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Since its debut, uncertainty reduction theory has been the subject of considerable scholarly debate. One critical question focuses on uncertainty reduction as a motivating force in interpersonal interactions. For example, Sunnafrank (1986) argued that communication in initial interactions is motivated by a desire to predict the potential rewards and costs of continued interaction, rather than a desire to reduce uncertainty. Brashers (2001) argued that people may prefer to maintain uncertainty if the information they might gain is threatening (→ Uncertainty Management). Similarly, Baxter and Montgomery (1996) suggested that uncertainty is both desirable and undesirable in the context of ongoing personal relationships (→ Relational Dialectics).

The central role of uncertainty in interpersonal interactions was elaborated by locating uncertainty within a plan-based model of strategic communication (→ Message Production).

In particular, Berger (1997a, b) suggested that communication unfolds as people enact plans, which are mental representations of the steps required to achieve a goal (→ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of). Plans are hierarchically organized, such that an overall strategy is broken into more specific steps that, in turn, identify specific actions (→ Schemas, Knowledge Structures, and Social Interaction).

Berger (1997a) highlighted how making sense of a communication partner's behavior requires inferences about that person's beliefs, affective states, goals, and plans. Every interaction involves incomplete knowledge about a partner's state of mind; therefore, uncertainty is always relevant to interpersonal communication. Accordingly, people cope with uncertainty by seeking to reduce it and by creating communication plans that accommodate these unknowns. As noted by Berger (1997b), uncertainty complicates planning because people lack necessary information about the context for interaction, their partner's behavior, and their own actions. By this logic, uncertainty reduction is a necessary part of forming and executing communication plans.

## APPLICATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Although uncertainty reduction theory was initially formulated and tested within the context of initial interactions between strangers, it has been widely applied to various communication situations. For example, uncertainty reduction theory has been used to illuminate the experiences of new employees (→ Organizational Assimilation), doctors and patients (→ Doctor–Patient Talk), students in a classroom setting, television viewers (→ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships), computer-mediated communication partners, and members of newly formed stepfamilies. The theory has also contributed to alternative perspectives on uncertainty and communication, such as predicted outcome value theory (Sunnafrank 1986) and uncertainty management theory (Brashers 2001).

One extension of uncertainty reduction is focused on *explaining intercultural communication experiences* (→ Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory). According to Gudykunst (2005), people have a maximum and a minimum threshold for uncertainty and anxiety during interpersonal exchanges. When uncertainty is between the two thresholds, people feel comfortable because they have confidence in their predictions about the other person's attitudes and beliefs, but they are not overconfident. Similarly, a moderate level of anxiety keeps people engaged in an interaction, but not overwhelmed by fear.

Another extension of the theory has focused on the doubts and questions people experience within *romantic relationships* (→ Relational Uncertainty). The *relational turbulence model* specifies that changes in intimacy within romantic relationships spark relational uncertainty, defined as questions or doubts about the nature of involvement in a relationship (Solomon & Knobloch 2004). Although relational uncertainty polarizes emotional, cognitive, and communicative reactions to relationship events, reducing uncertainty and managing those events promote intimacy between relationship partners.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Anxiety Uncertainty Management Theory ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Doctor–Patient Talk ▶ Expectancy Violation ▶ Goals, Cognitive Aspects of ▶ Information Seeking ▶ Initial Interaction ▶ Message Production ▶ Organizational Assimilation ▶ Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ▶ Questions and

Questioning ► Relational Dialectics ► Relational Uncertainty ► Relationship Development ► Schemas, Knowledge Structures and Social Interaction ► Uncertainty and Communication ► Uncertainty Management

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## **Underdog Effect**

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The underdog effect is a phenomenon of → public opinion impinging upon itself: when at an election voters perceive a particular party or candidate to be the likely winner, they tend to support a competitor who is expected to lose – an “underdog” in the race. This

implies that apparent success may undermine itself. The origin of the term is unclear, although it is sometimes claimed that it was first used at the 1948 US presidential election. Simon (1954) was the first to use it in a scientific analysis.

The underdog effect is one of several hypothesized manifestations of “impersonal influence” – effects on individuals’ attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors that derive from these persons’ impressions about the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors of collectives of anonymous others outside the realm of their personal contacts (Mutz 1998; → Social Perception: Impersonal Impact). Other examples are the → “bandwagon effect,” complementing the underdog effect by assuming a positive impact of perceived majority opinion, and the notion of “strategic” or “tactical” voting, which expects electors to refrain from choosing their candidate or party of first preference if they perceive it to be only weakly supported by others, in order not to waste their vote (→ Perceived Reality as a Communication Process).

In the literature, the underdog effect is typically treated as a companion to the bandwagon effect, emerging from the same cause, but leading to a contrary consequence: “If persons are more likely to vote for a candidate when they expect him to win than when they expect him to lose, we have a ‘bandwagon’ effect; if the opposite holds, we have an ‘underdog’ effect” (Simon 1954, 246). However, the implications of this understanding are only clear in the case of two-party systems: turning away from the likely winner automatically implies supporting its sole, apparently losing competitor, as there are no other alternatives left. In multiparty systems it is somewhat ambiguous what the underdog effect might consist in, as voters are faced with several “underdogs” of which not necessarily all are getting weaker if the likely winner is surging, and from which they can only choose one. Under these more complex circumstances, the notion implies the expectation that the anticipated winner of an election will lose votes, but entails no assumption about who will profit from this. It therefore appears appropriate to characterize the underdog effect as an “anti-bandwagon effect” (Irwin & Van Holsteyn 2000).

The media are the main source of information on preference distributions among the citizenry at large (Mutz 1998). Published findings from public opinion polls are an important type of such mass feedback, although not the only one (→ Election Polls and Forecasts; Polls and the Media; Public Opinion Polling). Because of the pervasive trend toward “horse-race journalism,” the question of who is ahead and who is trailing behind is ascribed high → news value in modern election coverage (→ Horse Race Coverage; Election Campaign Communication). Accordingly, journalists and politicians have also become key sources of mediated statements about the mass public’s political sympathies (→ Political Persuasion). Stylistic devices like exemplars or man-in-the-street interviews help journalists to convey impressions of where the public stands regarding candidates or parties prior to elections (→ Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of).

As reporting on public opinion is thus a multifaceted phenomenon, the quality of the information on which citizens base their impressions is critically relevant. Many studies indicate that media audiences are not sufficiently capable to distinguish between sources of valid information, such as well-conducted polls, and sources of dubious significance. Audiences may thus fall victim to → “pluralistic ignorance,” deriving preferences from impressions about the opinions of their fellow citizens that are actually wrong.



Among social scientists, the underdog effect has attracted less interest than its complement, the bandwagon effect. The empirical evidence indicating that underdog effects are real is far weaker. Few studies were so far able to present findings that suggest the operation of underdog effects (Fleitas 1971; Ceci & Kain 1982; Lavrakas et al. 1991). Matching this rather unsatisfactory state of research is the weak theoretical underpinning that has been developed to make the notion of underdog effects plausible. Sometimes they are depicted as rather irrational emotional responses to a party's or candidate's seeming dominance, emerging out of feelings of pity or compassion for apparent losers or of defiance toward apparent winners (→ Emotion). More rational interpretations propose a dislike of large majorities or an anti-establishment bias on the part of voters as motives for supporting minority competitors. More convincing and less ad hoc is a model offered by Mutz (1998), which also accounts for the reasons why the same distribution of public opinion may lead to an underdog effect among some voters, and to a bandwagon effect among others. According to this view, the former is the likely response of voters who are politically involved and strongly committed to a party or candidate that seems to be losing. Among such individuals, the observation of a disadvantageous distribution of support may trigger a "cognitive response mechanism," stimulating them to think up counterarguments, and making them thus highly aware of the necessity of supporting their own camp.

SEE ALSO: ► Bandwagon Effect ► Election Campaign Communication ► Election Polls and Forecasts ► Emotion ► Exemplification and Exemplars, Effects of ► Horse Race Coverage ► News Values ► Perceived Reality as a Communication Process ► Political Persuasion ► Pluralistic Ignorance ► Polls and the Media ► Public Opinion ► Public Opinion Polling ► Social Perception ► Social Perception: Impersonal Impact ► Spiral of Silence

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# Underground Press

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The “underground press” typically refers to those → newspapers and → magazines produced by the counterculture that emerged in the mid-1960s and continued until the early 1970s. The counterculture was concerned with establishing an alternative society in direct opposition to mainstream society. The underground press became a vehicle for the elaboration of this ideal, along with social issues such as women’s rights, ecology, and racial equality, and was politicized primarily by the US involvement in the Vietnam War. The aim of the underground press was to build a society where “culture and society were regarded as one” (Nelson 1989, 49), and to propose norms and values that broke with “straight” society absolutely. Interventions by the state were of particular concern, especially in areas of sexual freedom, drugs, and press → censorship (→ Activist Media).

Precursors of the underground press include independent papers such as the New York-based *Village Voice* (founded in 1955) and Paul Krassner’s the *Realist* (1958). However, three other US titles – the *Los Angeles Free Press* (1964), the *Berkeley Barb* (1964), and the *East Village Other* (1965) – began the underground press of the 1960s. The first underground paper in the UK was *International Times* (founded in 1966 and known as *IT* after the threat of legal action by the *London Times*), followed by *Oz* in 1967. The underground press was typified by its metropolitan locations, which restricted its geographical range; none had regional correspondents; foreign correspondents were absent. Its writers came from the counterculture itself; they were resolutely anti-professional, autodidacts of journalism and of methods of production.

Examples also come from other countries. Western Europe boasted titles in such cities as Amsterdam (*Real Free Press*), Brussels (*Amenophis*), and Paris (*Actuel*). There was a thriving underground press in Canada and in parts of Latin America, such as Argentina (*Contracultura*), Cuba (*Direct from Cuba*), Mexico (*Bohemia*), and Uruguay (*Huevas del Plata*).

While the underground press prided itself on its independence and individualism, it equally valued solidarity and cooperation. In 1967 the *Underground Press Syndicate* was established in the US to promote the underground press; meetings and conferences were held to discuss strategy, fundraising, and distribution. The Liberation News Service was intended as an underground, international press agency, which at least enabled local papers to access content from other cities. The underground press was in general less interested in hard → news; it preferred comment and opinion, theory and strategy, to objectivity and investigation (→ Objectivity in Reporting). Its writers and readers treated it as a “fifth estate,” directly challenging the → fourth estate of the mass media in its content, style, and organization.

The primary *method of finance* was through voluntary, “self-exploited” labor. This extended to technical skills such as typesetting and layout, and accounts in part for the visual experimentation found in many titles. Perhaps the most significant innovation in the underground press was the use of offset litho printing. A paper could be laid out and

pasted up by amateurs; typesetting could be done on a typewriter. It would be many years before the mass newspaper industry moved from hot metal to offset; for the underground press, this new method gave it the freedom to experiment creatively and to be independent of at least one part of the printing industry.

The underground press had little or no presence in high-street shops; its appearance and content made it almost impossible to find commercial distribution. Though limited largely to independent retailers and university campuses, circulation for the more established titles was very healthy. There are *no independent audits of circulation*, but claims from the papers themselves suggest significant peaks among established titles in the US of up to 95,000. The Underground Press Syndicate estimated a peak total circulation in the US of 4.5 million copies across 500 titles (Peck 1985, 183). In the UK, *Oz* claimed a circulation of 40,000 in 1970.

The independence of the underground press manifested itself in experiments with internal organization. Richard Neville, founding editor of *Oz*, emphasized the individualism of its contributors: “each reporter is, in a sense, his own editorialist” (cited in Nelson 1989, 47). The absence of editorial direction led to democratic participation in the organization of the underground press: many established workers’ cooperatives; some experimented with collective organization and with anarchist decision-making.

By the early 1970s the counterculture was in disarray. In the US, an underground press conference in Colorado in 1973 formally declared the renaming of the Underground Press Syndicate as the Alternative Press Syndicate. The underground press was formally at an end. Its music writers were the source of “what became the dominant ideology of rock” (Frith 1983, 169) and became crucial in the development of rock journalism (→ Popular Music). The vision of a “fifth estate” has been developed through an international alternative media and in struggles for media democracy through grassroots publications (→ Alternative Journalism; Grassroots Media; Media Democracy).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Alternative Journalism ▶ Censorship ▶ Fourth Estate ▶ Grassroots Media ▶ Magazine ▶ Media Democracy ▶ News ▶ Newspaper ▶ Objectivity in Reporting ▶ Popular Music

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# UNESCO

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UNESCO – the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization – is a specialized UN agency, founded in 1945, and composed of 192 member states. Its headquarters are in Paris, where member states maintain delegations headed by a person with diplomatic status, typically with the rank of ambassador. UNESCO also has more than 50 field offices around the world. The preamble to the UNESCO constitution emphasizes the importance of the organization’s mission of peace through intellectual and cultural development and exchange, stating that “since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed” (UNESCO 1945). The UNESCO constitution further states that the organization’s purpose is “to contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations.” For the 2006–2007 biennium, UNESCO had a budget appropriation of US\$610 million, with an additional US\$409 million in “extra-budgetary resources” (additional funds from sources other than member states’ assessed contributions), for a total budget of US\$1.02 billion for the two-year period.

## RELEVANCE FOR COMMUNICATION

The main program sectors of UNESCO are Education, Natural Sciences, Social and Human Sciences, Culture, and Communication and Information. As well, UNESCO has a variety of “mainstreaming” themes, which promote particular goals, including gender equality, youth action and integration, meeting special needs in Africa, dialogue among civilizations, and a worldwide culture of peace; and it also has “cross-cutting” themes, namely the eradication of extreme poverty, and the uses of information and communication technologies for the advancement of education, science, culture, and communication. UNESCO has programs that focus on promoting universal education and literacy, exploring the long-term impact of global climate change and ways to mitigate negative impacts on the world’s water resources, promoting sustainable global resource development, addressing ethical issues in scientific research and technological development, and working to promote and sustain worldwide cultural diversity.

UNESCO has special significance for communication scholars, particularly through the Culture sector and that on Communication and Information. In 2005, under the leadership of the Culture sector, the organization adopted a “*Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*,” which had been ratified by 52 countries and the European Union by March 2007, when it entered into force. The convention aims “to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions,” and it emphasizes the unique nature of cultural goods and services as “vehicles of identity,

values and meaning” (UNESCO 2005). Another function of the Culture sector is to identify “cultural and natural properties,” both tangible (specific sites and artifacts) and intangible (e.g., languages, oral histories, “living human treasures”), that are “of outstanding universal value,” place them on the “World Heritage List,” monitor their conservation, and respond to requests for assistance. The Culture sector also works to promote cultural exchange through modern → “culture industries,” including publishing, music, audiovisual technology, electronics, → video games and the → Internet, focusing particularly on freedom of expression (→ Freedom of Communication), cultural diversity, and economic development. UNESCO emphasizes the significant imbalances between cultural exports from the global north and south, and seeks to assist the latter by aiding in the development of local capacities and access to global markets. The Culture sector also emphasizes indigenous art and → design, literature and poetry, art education, → museum preservation and exhibition, and cultural tourism that is respectful of the physical environment and the cultures of others (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

## STRUCTURE

The current structure of the Communication and Information (CI) sector, consisting of the Communication and Development Division, the Division for Freedom of Expression, Democracy and Peace, and the Information Society Division, was established in 1990. The CI sector’s strategic objectives are to promote the free flow of ideas and universal access to information (→ Freedom of Information), promote pluralism (→ Plurality) and cultural diversity through the means of communication, and promote universal access to information and communication technologies (→ Communication Technology and Democracy). Through extra-budgetary funding, the CI sector pursues interregional, regional, and national projects in Africa, the Arab states, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

The CI sector collaborates with other UN and bilateral agencies and with various non-governmental organizations, and it provides secretariats for the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) and the Information for All Programme (IFAP). Included among the general initiatives led by the CI sector are efforts to remove barriers to women’s access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) and explore ways in which ICTs can be used to address gender issues, the promotion of linguistic diversity on the Internet, projects to preserve cultural memory and heritage, support for libraries and archives, support for programs aimed at HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, projects that encourage uses of ICTs for the production of cultural content by indigenous groups, and various other programs aimed at capacity building, advancing literacy, and working to eradicate a north–south → digital divide.

In monitoring these activities and many others that UNESCO does not directly influence, the CI sector hosts an “*Observatory on the Information Society*,” established in 1997. The Observatory provides reports, statistical data, and other resources in fulfillment of its mandate to operate a “permanent international monitoring mechanism” (UNESCO 2007) that focuses on ethical, legal, socio-cultural, and policy challenges in advancing a global information society. The CI sector also is active in promoting freedom of expression

through its annual World Press Freedom Day and its annual Guillermo Cano Press Freedom Prize.

## POLITICAL CONTROVERSIES

For many years, UNESCO was at the center of tense relations between the United States and the UN system. In the early 1980s, US-based critics of UNESCO, particularly members of such conservative US think tanks as the Heritage Foundation, advocated US withdrawal if UNESCO did not comply with US demands. Among the most significant criticisms were that UNESCO was mismanaged and top-heavy with a highly paid administrative staff. More importantly, the US critics of UNESCO considered the organization to be heavily “politicized,” i.e., anti-western and anti-American. Among the issues highlighted were the organization’s positions on US foreign policy. US-based critics took offense at UNESCO’s condemnation of Israeli archaeological excavations in occupied Palestinian territories, and of Israeli education and cultural policies in the occupied territories.

There also was significant criticism by several countries about the majority call by UNESCO members for a → “new world information and communication order” (NWICO), which was articulated in Belgrade in 1980 at the twenty-first UNESCO general conference. In that same year, UNESCO’s International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems published a report, titled *Many voices, one world* (see MacBride Commission 2004), more commonly known as the MacBride Report after the commission’s president Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Sean MacBride. The postcolonial and Cold War context of these developments placed UNESCO in the awkward position of having to negotiate among ideological and material differences between east and west, and between north and south.

Both the NWICO resolution and the MacBride Report highlighted many issues that continue to define the north–south divide related to communication and information. The fact that the causes of some of the most serious media-related problems had been identified with practices by US transnational media institutions and policies (→ Media Conglomerates; Globalization of the Media) led to a defensive posture by the US government and US media corporations. In December of 1983, Reagan administration secretary of state George Schultz explained in a letter to UNESCO director-general Amadou-Mahtar M’Bow the reasons for the US withdrawal. Equal emphasis was given to issues of mismanagement and “the injection of political goals beyond the scope of the cooperative enterprise” (Schultz 1984, 84).

## REFORMS

The effects on UNESCO of the US withdrawal were significant, as the US was a major financial contributor to its budget. The withdrawal appeared to critics to send a message to the UN system as a whole regarding official US distaste for multilateralism as a way of resolving its disputed foreign policies. The US withdrawal was soon followed by the withdrawal of the United Kingdom and Singapore, which further eroded the budget.

In 1997, the UK rejoined UNESCO, and the organization underwent significant reforms under director-general Koïchiro Matsuura, whose term began in 1999. Administrative

costs were cut by US\$10 million, the number of high-level posts was halved, and an “Internal Oversight Service” was created to perform audits, investigations, program management, and evaluations of headquarters and field offices. In 2003, in response, the US rejoined UNESCO. However, there remained tensions, evident in the 2005 conflict over the adoption of the above-mentioned “Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.” The agreement obligated the states ratifying it “to give recognition to the distinctive nature of cultural activities, goods and services as vehicles of identity, values and meaning,” and “to reaffirm the sovereign rights of States to maintain, adopt and implement policies and measures that they deem appropriate for the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions on their territory” (UNESCO 2005, Article 1).

This language, which upholds the idea of a “cultural exception” (→ Cultural Products as Tradable Services), ran counter to the US position, which favored placing the culture industries under the discipline of global trade agreements, like other goods and services. Critics of the US position noted that the US government once favored a cultural exception within UNESCO and pointed to the fact that the US is a signatory to the 1950 “Florence Agreement,” which explicitly enables contracting states “to prohibit or limit the importation, or the circulation after importation,” of cultural materials “on grounds relating directly to national security, public order or public morals” (UNESCO 1950, Article V). Of course, what constitutes “national security, public order or public morals” is subject to wide interpretation, but in fact the official rationale for establishing the US National Endowment for the Arts was expressed in terms of national interest.

UNESCO is not the only UN agency addressing communication and cultural issues. Some of UNESCO’s activities overlap with or complement the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU). The ITU, a UN agency that has mainly served to recommend technical standards, allocate broadcasting frequencies, and coordinate the geostationary positions for communications satellites, came into much higher prominence when it was resolved at the 2002 UN general assembly that the ITU would host the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). The UN resolution emphasized “the urgent need to harness the potential of knowledge and technology for promoting the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and to find effective and innovative ways to put this potential at the service of development for all” (UN 2001). The UN general assembly’s choice to assign this role to the ITU rather than UNESCO seemed inconsistent with the fact that a primary focus of the discourse at the summit was on social and cultural matters that fall more closely within the UNESCO sphere. Nevertheless, the summit proceeded and was convened in two phases, in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005. UNESCO and other UN agencies became parties to the WSIS and led in implementing various “action lines” that resulted from the WSIS. Based on the Geneva “Plan of Action,” UNESCO’s WSIS follow-up responsibilities include developing programs and projects aimed at access to information and knowledge, “e-learning,” “e-science,” cultural and linguistic diversity, various goals related to mass media (in industries, policies, technologies, and content), reinforcing ethical dimensions of the information society, and participating in UN efforts to foster international and regional cooperation through the uses of ICTs.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► Cultural Products as Tradable Services ► Culture: Definitions and Concepts ► Culture Industries ► Design ► Digital Divide ► Freedom of Communication ► Freedom of Information ► Globalization of the Media ► Internet ► Media Conglomerates ► Museum ► New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ► Plurality ► Video Games

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## **United Kingdom: Media System**

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The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (population 58.8 million; 2001 census) dates from the treaty that ceded an independent Irish Free State in 1921. This had followed on from the 1918 general elections, the first under near-universal suffrage, which had seen a rise in support for separatists in Ireland and the youthful Labour party in other parts of the country. Within a generation, Labour had replaced the Liberals as the principal opposition to the Conservatives. The immediate post-World War



If Labour government embarked on a major program of social reform, but changes to the famously unwritten Britain constitution were less forthcoming.

Significant modifications did, however, take place at the end of the twentieth century with the devolution of powers from London to a new Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, and the re-establishment of a Northern Irish government. The UK's entry into the European Union has also brought significant change. Although the monarch remains the head of state, the hereditary principle has been challenged through the removal of several peers from the House of Lords, the upper chamber of the Westminster Parliament. England, the UK's most populous country, dominates the Union's politics and culture: though regional press and broadcasting flourished during the twentieth century, the most influential agenda-setting media are still those based in London.

### LEGAL FRAMEWORK

England was the first European country to abolish → censorship, conceding press freedom as early as 1695, when Parliament did not renew the Printing Act (→ Censorship, History of; Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Communication). The media system is based on a hybrid model of ownership and control. Whereas the newspaper industry has long been dominated by privately owned firms, broadcasting operates on a more complex basis and under considerable influence from both state and market forces. For the half century before the introduction of near-universal suffrage in 1918, politicians appeared reluctant to challenge the power of the so-called “free press” and, more especially, the high-profile proprietors or “barons,” whose influence and circulations grew considerably during this period. Subsequent leaders have proved similarly disinclined to act in any way that might be seen to threaten or otherwise antagonize successive generations of print media owners. However, by the time broadcasting, in the form of → radio and then → television, was introduced, the now popularly elected governments felt more empowered to intervene and regulate what they viewed as a potentially more powerful form of media communication.

For much of the twentieth century the government's supervisory function was discharged by the Home Office (i.e., the interior ministry). Periodically this led to tensions between the state and broadcast media, notably over the often fraught and violent politics of Northern Ireland. In 1988, for instance, the Home Secretary actually banned the voice of a separatist party's Member of Parliament from the airwaves; the restrictions were eventually lifted in 1994 following political progress. It should be noted that the last two decades have seen a significant shift of policy emphasis from enforcing domestic regulations toward encouraging global competitiveness. Consequently government responsibility for the sector has been progressively assigned to the departments of state responsible for culture and trade. Much has been said about the importance and contribution of the so-called creative and media industries to the economy and status of the UK.

The government's 2003 Communication Bill created the current regulator Ofcom through the merger of several existing bodies responsible for supervising a range of media including most broadcasting. The early years of the twenty-first century also saw significant reform of the peculiar governance of the *British Broadcasting Corporation* (→ BBC), with the introduction of a new Trust to monitor the work of the Corporation in place of the

Board of Governors. The Board's ambiguous and potentially conflicting responsibility for both championing and overseeing its charge was highlighted during the notoriously fraught aftermath of the government-sanctioned Hutton report in 2004. The document sharply rebuked the Corporation for defending a journalist who had challenged the integrity of the prime minister's claims in support of the hugely contentious invasion of Iraq in 2003. This led to the unprecedented resignations of both the BBC chairman and director-general, and an apology to the government from the Corporation's temporary management team. The broadcasters' new leadership subsequently embarked on a successful mission to assure the BBC Charter was renewed. They did not, however, achieve their desired goal of convincing the government to raise their income stream by increasing the UK license fee (approximately 200 euros payable annually, at 2007 prices), which every household with a television must pay regardless of whether they use BBC services.

Aside from its statutory influence over the BBC and the similarly chartered Channel 4, the state exerts considerable influence over the commercial side of the market through a licensing system that permits broadcasters to operate. By contrast, the print media are free from similar impositions on their right to exist, not to mention what they publish. Newspapers do, however, face pressures of other kinds, including market forces and a requirement to observe common laws governing libel and defamation that apply to every organization and individual. Press proprietors have long campaigned against statutory government controls, notably through the Press Council, which was relaunched as the Press Complaints Commission in 1990 (→ Accountability of the Media). The PPC is a self-regulatory body made up of senior industry figures that adjudicates on cases brought to it by various aggrieved parties. Its perceived reluctance to censure journalists has led critics to call for government legislation to protect the public, particularly over alleged invasions of privacy by press reporters.

## PRINTED PRESS

Though *The Times* dates back to 1788, the modern newspaper industry only began to develop rapidly during the mid-nineteenth century, an era when politicians appeared willing and able to move against what they regarded as subversive outlets such as the *Red Republican* and *Black Dwarf* (→ Penny Press). The sustainability of these and other popular anti-establishment titles was challenged by the introduction of taxes and duties. Monetary levies of this kind encouraged the increased commercialization of the sector by more conventionally minded businessmen. The space for radical journalism rapidly diminished, to be replaced by other content including more advertising (Curran & Seaton 2003). Marketing revenues were reinforced by the growth of mass literacy in the late nineteenth century, which enabled "press barons" such as the Harmsworth brothers to exert considerable public influence based on their newspaper's growing sales and popularity. The close relationship between the media and political elites was graphically illustrated during World War I when two of the major newspaper proprietors actually worked for the government as propaganda ministers.

The early twentieth century saw considerable "vertical" integration within the print media sector, with smaller family-owned publishers closing, merging, or being taken over by larger firms. Consequently a small group of proprietors consolidated their position

and made it increasingly difficult for new entrants into the newspaper market. These press barons promoted a largely conservative if not Conservative agenda through vehicles like the *Daily Express* and *Daily Mail* and were hostile toward the growing Labour party, whose only reliable mass media support came from the *Daily Herald*. Despite its massive circulation of 2 million by 1933, the *Herald* was not as financially secure as its main rivals because, by comparison, it never attracted sufficient middle-class readers and the advertising revenues that came with them. Consequently the press barons' political and commercial strategies mutually reinforced one another, whereas the healthy sales generated among its largely working-class audience were insufficient to prevent the eventual closure of the *Daily Herald* and its reinvention as the *Sun* in 1964.

By the end of the 1960s the *Sun* had been acquired and relaunched by Rupert Murdoch, an owner destined to become the most influential proprietor over the next three decades through what would become the bestselling daily newspaper and its Sunday sister, the *News of the World* (→ Media Conglomerates; News Corporation). Both papers became leading exponents of an irreverent, bombastic, and intrusive "tabloid" media culture that became increasingly dominant. Murdoch's vociferous support for Conservative (Tory) prime minister Margaret Thatcher eased his potentially controversial takeover of *The Times* and *Sunday Times* in the early 1980s, and all four of his titles became a cornerstone of the so-called "Tory press" (i.e., *Daily Express*, *Financial Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Daily Star*, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Times*, *Sun*, and their Sunday equivalents). The proprietor was keen to maintain his reputation as a major political actor in Britain, and in the mid-1990s his newspapers abandoned their once vociferous denunciation of Labour and thereby prepared the way for the *Sun* and then *The Times* to switch allegiance to Labour leader Tony Blair. That said, Murdoch's titles have remained more consistent in their support for a socially and morally right-wing agenda that is often indistinguishable from the stance of still Conservative newspapers like the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Mail*, and *Daily Express*.

Advertising continues to play a major role in shaping the print media market and insuring the profitability of newspapers, particularly those belonging to the so-called "quality" press (*Daily Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, and *The Times*). These titles usually sell fewer copies than their populist, tabloid rivals, but their appeal to an audience largely comprised of more formally educated and wealthy opinion formers has ensured their marketing space remains a lucrative source of revenue (→ Tabloid Press). Fierce competition for sales and advertising has meant an already declining UK print media market remains highly competitive, with 10 national daily newspapers and serious barriers to new entrants. The total daily circulation of the national press was 11.1 million in 2004. The Sunday papers have a strong position with a total circulation of 12.8 million, with the *News of the World* leading with 3.5 million. With a circulation of 330 copies per 1,000 inhabitants, the UK is by international comparison a well-saturated press market.

Nevertheless press circulation is diminishing, particularly that of the tabloids, a trend exacerbated by major growth in rival news sources such as celebrity magazines, digital television, and the Internet. The best-selling *Sun*, for instance, now sells 3 million rather than the 4 million copies it did 20 years ago, and this is one of the more modest losses. Over the longer term this arguably weakens the perceived political influence of major national newspapers. It is also a reason why the industry has witnessed so much "horizontal"

integration, with newspaper owners seeking to expand their businesses into other areas including the new media sector.

Some national proprietors, such as Associated Press, have also maintained a significant shareholding interest in local newspapers, which continue to command significant and loyal readerships (e.g., *Liverpool Echo*, *Leicester Mercury*, *Eastern Daily Press*, *Yorkshire Post*, *Birmingham Mail*, and various Scottish titles). While the London market has seen a decline in titles serving particular boroughs, two new capital-wide freesheets, the *London Paper* and *London Lite*, have recently appeared in an aggressive battle for advertising revenue between News International and Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT), which also owns the city's long-established *Evening Standard*, now under pressure.

### RADIO AND TELEVISION

The BBC was originally set up as a private company in 1922 but by 1927 it had been brought under government supervision and turned into a public corporation (→ Public Broadcasting, History of; Public Broadcasting Systems). The BBC was granted a license to operate courtesy of a periodically renewable contract, the Charter, and was overseen by a government-appointed Board of Governors. The new Corporation's radio broadcasting adhered to a so-called "public service model" that promoted the virtues of impartial reporting, especially in partisan matters; as the Corporation's hugely influential first director-general, John Reith, put it, his BBC would and should seek "to inform, educate and entertain" (Curran & Seaton 2003). Limited experimentation with television began the following decade, but it was not until the 1950s that television superseded radio as the most popular medium. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 promoted the BBC service, as did the introduction of an advertising-funded *Independent Television* channel (ITV) in 1955 (→ Privatization of the Media). By the end of the decade over 70 percent of British households had a set, on which they were able to enjoy the more explicitly entertainment-based ITV.

Though ITV was a wholly commercially funded venture, the government's regulatory authority required the channel to adhere to certain public service expectations. Significantly, the independent network consisted of 15 franchisees, each based in one of the UK regions, and this originally gave it a distinctive, more localized identity. The BBC too became more consciously diverse, developing a strong network of regional radio stations and television news production facilities. Challenges also came in other guises, notably from illegal broadcasters, among them the hugely popular music channels such as Radio Caroline that operated from ships situated outside of the UK jurisdiction. In response the BBC launched the youth-oriented Radio 1 in 1967, and, like the more middle-aged BBC Radio 2 launched in the same year, it became a huge success. These and other Corporation stations devoted to sport, talk, and the regions continue to shape and dominate the market, with 57 percent audience share in early 2007 (RAJAR 2007; → Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of).

The 1970s saw the introduction of largely locally based commercial radio broadcasters, and this has since been supplemented by national operations including *Virgin*, *TalkSport*, and *Classic FM*. Non-BBC radio stations account for just over 42 percent audience share (RAJAR 2007). Television also expanded in response to social change with the launch of

the more experimental BBC 2 in 1964. The sector gained a further outlet with the setting up of the publicly owned but wholly self-funded *Channel 4* in 1982. By the time the commercial *Channel 5*, a station owned by the RTL group and highly reliant on US imports, was introduced in 1997, attention and audiences were increasingly switching away from traditional terrestrial broadcasters to new digitally based channels. The former market leader, ITV, has found it particularly difficult to compete in the new environment and has suffered a loss of advertising revenue. A consequence has been the merger of the various companies holding its franchises into two groups, Carlton and Granada, by 2001 before the eventual unification of the company into a single ITV plc in 2004 (→ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of).

### NEW MEDIA AND THE INTERNET

Non-terrestrial television began during the 1980s with the launch of the rival British Satellite Broadcasting and Sky services (→ Satellite Television). The former was dogged by problems and was eventually acquired by Rupert Murdoch, the latter's owner, after Margaret Thatcher's government had signaled it would not intervene to prevent the merger on competition grounds. The merged B SkyB consolidated and exploited its monopoly position by launching an audacious, expensive, and ultimately successful bid for the exclusive rights to broadcast English premiership football matches and major → Hollywood films. The gamble paid off as demand for the satellite service rapidly grew. Rival non-terrestrial networks have struggled to compete and have only begun to challenge in anticipation of the nationwide switchover to digital planned by the government for 2012.

The non-subscription Freeview digital service has proved particularly effective in promoting the traditional broadcasters' expansion into multichannel television since it began in 2002. Prior to that, ITV Digital had tried to challenge B SkyB's virtual monopoly of this market, but problems with content and technology caused the spectacular collapse of the venture. By contrast, the relatively inexpensive Freeview set-top box needed to access the digital service helped launch channels BBC 3 and 4, ITV 3 and 4, More4, and 5Life, alongside a huge range of other interactive services. The market remains in flux, the latest change at the time of writing being B SkyB's audacious purchase of a sizable minority stake of 17.9 percent in ITV. Broadcast content as well as ownership is also likely to continue to dramatically change in this fast-moving environment. Since its inception, the 24-hour Sky News channel has been obliged to adhere to strict public service guidelines on balance and impartiality. Officials belonging to regulator Ofcom have begun to speculate whether these regulations could or should be relaxed, giving rise to the possibility of News Corporation's British service developing a more distinctively partisan approach in the style of its US sister Fox News.

Alongside the take-up of digital television by 65 percent of UK households (in 2005/6), there has also been a rapid expansion in access to the Internet. In 1998, less than 10 percent of households had online access, by 2006, this had risen to 57 percent. Traditional media organizations have been particularly proactive in developing their online presence, and the BBC and Guardian Unlimited boast two of the most visited news sites, attracting significant traffic from outside as well as within the UK. Here it should be borne in mind that the total retail revenue value of the UK communications market was 85 billion euros

in 2005, and that television's share of this reached 17.8 billion and radio's 2 billion. The lucrative telecommunications sector accounted for the rest. This is partly explained by the rapid uptake of mobile telephones, to the extent that by 2006 they accounted for 31 percent of all call minutes, compared with 20 percent in 2001 (Ofcom 2007).

It is clear from the above sketch that the British media market has undergone considerable change during the last two decades. The fragmentation of UK audiences has been encouraged by the more ready availability of the Internet, DVDs, MP3 players, and computer games, not to mention the myriad of new digital channels. However, it is important to state that while traditional newspapers and broadcasters have lost audiences, they nevertheless remain at the center of debate and even of the national psyche. For the foreseeable future, the current major providers will continue to shape and influence developments in the UK, although it remains to be seen how and whether the aggressive media empire headed by Rupert Murdoch and his son James will undermine the position of the BBC as the "voice of the nation."

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accountability of the Media ▶ BBC ▶ BBC World Service ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Europe ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Hollywood ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ News Corporation ▶ Penny Press ▶ Privatization of the Media ▶ Public Broadcasting, History of ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Broadcasting, Regulation of ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Television ▶ Television Broadcasting, Regulation of

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# United Nations, Communication Policies of

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Although great importance is not always attached to the political, economical, social, or cultural role of communication activities, their influence on international relations certainly has not escaped the concern of the United Nations (UN). No matter what its limitations are, international law is not only formal but also symbolic. Further, it has a moral or diplomatic value and, albeit weak, a legal value through international conventions. The UN draws up certain essential general principles for communication. It also provides a framework on which specialized institutions are established to formulate various global communication policies.

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The general principles of the UN communication policies are found in the Charter of the United Nations, although the Charter does not explicitly refer to them. They are enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

### Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted on December 10, 1948, as a “resolution” by the UN General Assembly. It recognizes the classic idea of freedom of expression, with both its necessary limits and, in a positive and concrete manner, certain rights including the possibility of demanding those rights, which constitutes, as it were, the basis or inspiration of national communication laws.

Freedom of expression is set forth in Article 19 of the UDHR: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media, regardless of frontiers” (→ Freedom of Communication; Freedom of Information). This Article does not mention necessary limits to freedom of speech and the press; the *limitations on free expression* are in Article 12, which states “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.” Its limiting impact on freedom of expression is bolstered by Article 29 of the UDHR. “In the exercise of his rights and freedoms,” Article 29 provides, “everyone shall only be subject to such limitations as determined by law and solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and general welfare in a democratic society.”

From a positive perspective on freedom of expression, the UDHR sets forth the right to information. Article 22 is illustrative: "Everyone . . . is entitled to the realisation . . . of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality." Article 27-1 is more specific: "everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community." The UDHR guarantees → copyright and related rights by declaring that everyone has the right to protect "the moral and material interests" that are derived from their scientific, literary, or artistic production. As the UDHR has no true legal value as an instrument of enforcement, however, these human rights elements of freedom of expression are set out in two 1966 international covenants.

### **International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights**

The differences between western Europe's individualistic idea of freedom, based on the idea of the state's abstention, and the more collective and interventionist approach to human rights of the eastern block led, in December 1966, to the establishment of two international covenants in order to strengthen the UDHR principles: one on civil and political rights, and the other on economic, social, and cultural rights.

Article 19 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* states that "everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers." This freedom of expression under the ICCPR is not absolute but qualified. Article 19 notes that "the exercise of rights to freedom entails special duties and responsibilities." Hence, freedom of expression may be subject to certain restrictions, which "shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: (a) for respect of the rights or reputations of others; (b) for the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals." Freedom of expression is further balanced by various other competing interests such as right to privacy and reputational interests. The ICCPR recognizes individuals' right to protection against unlawful invasion of their privacy and against injury to their reputations. The ICCPR forbids → war propaganda. It further proscribes hate speech that incites national, racial, or religious animosity against others (→ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms).

The *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)* stands in sharp contrast to the ICCPR in that it provides for a more positive and collective framework of human rights to communication. Article 15 stipulates that "the States party to the present Covenant recognise every individual's right: (a) to take part in cultural life . . . (b) to benefit from the protection of moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author." It lists what member states must do in helping individuals to fully realize their right to free expression. The states must take actions to conserve, develop, and diffuse science while "respecting the freedom which is indispensable for scientific research and creative activity." This positive role of the government in making freedom of expression part of an individual's self-actualization for the good of society as a whole is intertwined with "the benefits to be derived from the encouragement and development of international contacts and co-operation in the scientific and cultural fields." Meanwhile, such international cooperation in the field



of communication among the nations is one of the main aims of specialized UN institutions.

## **SPECIALIZED INSTITUTIONS**

Several specialized UN institutions determine and implement a wide range of international communication policies. Among the most important and visible UN institutions relating to communication law and policy are the UN Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (→ UNESCO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

### **UNESCO**

UNESCO aims to promote peace and security by facilitating collaboration among the nations through education, science, and culture (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). It envisions its role in expanding the mutual knowledge and understanding of all peoples, through mass communication and by presenting “such international agreements as may be necessary to promote the free flow of ideas.” It was within the communication assistance framework of UNESCO that, in the 1970s, many “third world” countries, criticizing the one-way movement of information and TV programs from north to south, demanded, but did not succeed in obtaining, a → new world information and communication order (NWICO; → International Communication).

The UNESCO General Conference adopted, in October 2005, the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression*, hoping to give strength and legal value to the principles and aims underlying the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity. While emphasizing the importance of culture in providing social cohesion, UNESCO’s 2005 convention connected cultural diversity with the free flow of ideas. The Convention stressed that cultural diversity is “nurtured by constant exchanges and interaction between cultures” and that “freedom of thought, expression and information, as well as the diversity of the media, enables cultural expression to flourish within societies.” However, UNESCO’s cultural diversity convention pointed out that whereas globalization, through the rapidly developing information and communication technologies, creates unprecedented conditions for enhanced cultural interactions, it also poses a challenge for cultural diversity, associated with the real or imagined imbalance between the rich and poor countries (→ Communication Technology and Development).

In an effort to implement cultural diversity in information and communication, the 2005 UNESCO Convention recognizes the sovereign right of the states “to formulate and implement their cultural policies and to adopt measures to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions and to strengthen international cooperation. These national regulatory measures aim to encourage diversity of cultural expressions; allow domestic cultural industries genuine access to the means of production, dissemination and distribution of cultural activities, goods and services,” provide public financial assistance, and support public institutions.

Nevertheless, some are doubtful about the practical value of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity, even for the states which have ratified or will ratify it, when they are confronted with international economic agreements like those passed by the *World Trade*

*Organization (WTO)*. The WTO agreements are based on the principles of the free movement of goods and services and on guarantees of competition. Hence, albeit temporarily, they include a principle of “cultural exemption” to place various cultural activities outside the Convention’s application. In order to address this obvious conflict, the Convention characterizes cultural activities, goods, and services as being both economic and cultural because they convey identities, values, and meanings, and thus cannot be treated solely as commercial products or services.

Meanwhile, this UNESCO Convention recognizes the importance of intellectual property rights in protecting those who engage in cultural creativity (→ Intellectual Property Law). Intellectual property is one of UNESCO’s preferred domains. Indeed, it is UNESCO that, in 1952, adopted the Universal Copyright Convention, for which another UN institution has been set up.

## WIPO

WIPO is a UN agency which primarily concerns intellectual property issues, especially copyright and related rights. WIPO is responsible for enforcing the 1886 Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. This was the first international convention on copyright. In 1961, WIPO set up the International Convention for the Protection for Performers, Producers of Phonograms, and Broadcasting Organizations.

Two treaties were adopted to implement WIPO’s conventions in 1996: the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty. Their purpose was to ensure the adaptation of rules to technical evolution in communication. The impact of the treaties on copyright protection as an issue, especially in the Internet era, is open to question.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Communication and Law ▶ Communication Technology and Development ▶ Copyright ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of Information ▶ Hate Speech and Ethnophaulisms ▶ Intellectual Property Law ▶ International Communication ▶ New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) ▶ Right to Communicate ▶ UNESCO ▶ War Propaganda

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## United States of America: Media System

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The United States of America, located in the northern hemisphere of the American continent, is a federal republic that consists of 50 states and the District of Columbia (capital: Washington). The population comprises 250.6 million people. The USA was created in 1776 out of 13 British colonies. The head of state is the president, and responsible for the legislation are two chambers, the House of Representatives and the Senate. The political system is dominated by two parties, the Democrats and the Republicans.

### HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The first → newspaper published in the British North American colonies was *Publick Occurrences, Both Forreign and Domestick*. One issue appeared in 1690 in Boston. It was soon closed down by the colonial government. The first continuously published newspaper was the *Boston News-Letter*, which began publication in 1704 and continued for several decades. The oldest daily paper still publishing is the *Hartford Courant*, which was founded in 1764. Newspapers and especially pamphlets such as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* played an active role in the movement for independence. Although it was ignored by many, the Stamp Act of 1765 required tax stamps to be purchased for a wide

range of documents, including newspapers. The controversy surrounding the act provided a rallying point for both supporters and opponents of independence and reinforced a style of → journalism that infused ideology into the news. After the war, newspapers grew rapidly along with the nation and became entwined with the political system (→ Newspaper, History of).

Partisan journalism (→ Partisan Press) remained the standard for most of the nineteenth century. The latter years of the century introduced two trends that are still visible in newspapers in many countries. Excessive competition between William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer for dominance of the New York market led to → “yellow journalism” – named for a popular cartoon character – that resembles the current tabloid or popular press style (→ Tabloid Press). In contrast was the sober, non-partisan coverage pioneered by the *New York Times*. Adolph Ochs took over the financially ailing *Times* in 1896 and declared that it would publish “All the News That’s Fit to Print,” a slogan that still appears on the nameplate on page one. When Ochs died in 1935, the *Times* had become one of the most prestigious newspapers in the United States and one of the most influential in the world. Its reputation was founded on careful, fact-based reporting and a strong sense of social responsibility. According to scholar Joseph Campbell (2006), a third model of journalism, complementing the popular press of Hearst and Pulitzer and the nonpartisan professional *Times*, was a literary journalism promoted by Lincoln Steffens in the New York *Commercial Advertiser* that anticipated the intellectual emphasis still found in some elite publications.

## LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The simple statement guaranteeing press freedom in the First Amendment to the US Constitution is one of the oldest and surely the most famous legal formulation of what is now considered a universal right (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of; Freedom of Communication). It is also misleading since the guarantee is written as an absolute – “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press” – but in fact several exceptions are recognized. They include defamation, obscenity, and sedition and extend to derivative topics such as privacy, restrictions on access to information, and other laws that act to limit publication of information that is embarrassing or damaging to governments, corporations, or individuals. Criticism of public officials received special protection in 1964 when the Supreme Court ruled that they must prove “actual malice” – defined as knowing that defamatory information was false or had been published with a reckless disregard for its truth or falsehood – in any civil suit for defamation. As a result, lawsuits by public officials against critical media are virtually unknown (→ Libel and Slander).

The American approach to press freedom is minimalist. It is mostly a set of restraints on government, as the First Amendment specifies. At its core is the principle that government cannot prevent publication of information but can hold journalists responsible after publication. The Freedom House Report 2006 ranked the United States seventeenth among 73 “free press” countries. The report expressed concern for government policies linked to its war on terrorism but concluded that “media coverage of political affairs is aggressive and often polarized” (Karlekar 2006, 256).

More controversial is an annual report by the France-based Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF), which ranked the United States fifty-third among 168 countries in 2006. This represented a drop of nine places from the previous report.

Relations between the media and the Bush administration sharply deteriorated after President George W. Bush used the concern over national security to regard as suspicious any journalist who questioned what he called a “war on terrorism.”

## PRINTED PRESS

Daily newspaper → circulation reached a peak in 1985 when 1,676 daily newspapers produced 62.8 million copies. Since then, circulation – along with the number of daily newspapers – has declined steadily. In 2005, 1,452 daily papers printed 53.3 million copies. Most affected by the declining circulation were afternoon dailies and newspapers published in large urban areas. In addition, 6,659 weekly papers published 49.5 million copies, averaging 7,319 copies. The United States has three daily newspapers that circulate nationally: the popular *USA Today*, which was founded in 1982 as a national newspaper (circulation in 2005 was 2.28 million); the business-oriented *Wall Street Journal* (circulation 2.07 million); and the general news-oriented *New York Times* (circulation 1.14 million). Most daily papers are small and oriented toward local communities (→ Local News). In 2005, 86 percent of all dailies had circulations of fewer than 50,000 copies; only 2 percent circulated more than 250,000 copies.

Circulation figures mask the full impact of newspaper decline because they omit reference to the rapid population growth of the United States. A more telling statistic is daily newspaper sales per 1,000 population, which permits cross-national comparisons and comparisons across time. In 1985, the 62 million copies represented 264 copies per 1,000 population; the 53 million copies in 2005 represented 178 copies per 1,000 people, a drop in two decades of 33 percent.

Readership studies (→ Readership Research) reinforce the gloomy circulation statistics. In the 1972 national General Social Survey, 69 percent of respondents said they read a newspaper every day. In 2004, the comparable figure was 41 percent. The Pew Research Center (2006, 3) reported that the percentage of Americans who had read a newspaper “yesterday” dropped from 58 percent in 1993 to 40 percent in 2006.

## RADIO AND TELEVISION

Terrestrial broadcasting in the United States is regulated by the → Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which grants broadcast licenses and maintains limited oversight under a “trusteeship” model of broadcasting represented by the phrase “public interest, convenience, and necessity.” The phrase was contained in the Broadcast Act of 1927 and included in the Broadcast Act of 1934, which provides the basic structure of broadcasting. From the beginning, fixed-term licenses were granted to mostly commercial organizations to broadcast on preset frequencies to local markets. Public broadcasting evolved from early licenses granted to universities, with the involvement, in many cases, of the federal Agricultural Extension Service. Local stations could affiliate to national networks to achieve an approximation of national services.

As of March 2006, the FCC had granted active licenses to 11,002 commercial radio stations and 2,746 educational or public radio stations, and to 1,371 commercial TV stations and 381 public TV stations. Additional licenses, mostly for translators and boosters and for low-power licenses operated by universities and a few communities, brought the number of terrestrial broadcasters licensed in the United States to 27,556.

Most commercial TV stations are affiliated to one of the three traditional networks – CBS, ABC, or NBC – that provide news and prime-time entertainment programming, or to one of the new limited networks, such as Fox and the CW network, which is aimed at young adults (→ Television Networks). Locally produced programming is typically limited to several hours of news that is heavy on coverage of crime, fires, and accidents along with local weather and sports.

Although the big three networks own radio stations, “network radio” in its traditional mix of entertainment and news has disappeared (→ Radio Networks). Within each of the 210 designated market areas (DMAs), individual stations aim for a narrow segment of listeners with a specific format of music – top 40, contemporary adult, country, and rhythm and blues, among others. Stations are programmed and sometimes remotely controlled from a regional or corporate headquarters, with the result that stations broadcasting in a particular format are nearly identical in content across the country. It is not unusual for a single company to own several stations with different formats in the same market. The largest player in the industry was Clear Channel, which, until it announced the sale of more than 400 stations outside the 100 largest markets in 2006, owned more than 1,100 local stations.

## **INTERNET, CABLE, AND SATELLITE TELEVISION**

### **Internet**

The → Internet emerged as a mass medium in the 1970s and remained a communications platform used mostly by educated, elite users until the development of the world wide web in the early 1990s. The net grew quickly in popularity as developers created web browsers that simplified the process of connecting via personal computers. Media organizations soon began to recognize the web’s value as a medium capable of transmitting information instantly and in greater depth and clarity than was possible through traditional forms. Over time, media groups increased their reliance on the web, building more sophisticated sites to exploit its interactive features and to converge traditional forms of → video, audio, print, → photography, and graphics in multimedia offerings. A dominant characteristic of media websites has been change, as professionals have adjusted, often fitfully, to the shifting patterns of innovation and consumer use in the early stages of the digital era.

Almost three-quarters of all US adults, or 73 percent, enjoyed a connection to the Internet in 2006, according to survey results from the respected Pew Internet and American Life Project (Horrigan 2006, 2). The recent growth has occurred in the accelerating adoption of high-speed Internet service. More than four in ten, or 42 percent, of American adults had broadband connections in 2006, a remarkable 40 percent increase in broadband use from a year earlier.

The arrival of digitization posed new techniques and worries for the delivery of entertainment. File-sharing techniques quickened consumers' abilities to obtain copies of popular music and software, for example. Such practices also forced debate and revisions of laws protecting → copyrights, which in turn have spawned movements toward maintaining a democratic use of the web.

News organizations moved warily onto the web as some journalists cautioned against a loss of control, and perhaps function, in a more fluid, interactive environment. The need to change, however, trumped the status quo. For traditional print and broadcast organizations especially, the continued fragmentation and decline of mass audiences has prompted a greater willingness to embrace digital forms.

The surge of independent publishing on the web, popularly labeled → citizen journalism, has awakened the established media to the revolutionary possibilities of digital networking through blogs (→ Blogger), podcasts, video sites, and popular social networking sites. Scholars and professionals continue to explore the implications of the new digital landscape, debating issues such as whether news and advertising will continue to be presented in bundled forms via branded websites, or more commonly delivered through personalized channels and services via feeds to PCs and other, more portable devices such as mobile telephones.

### **Cable**

Most American households can receive six or more terrestrial TV stations with a simple roof-top antenna. However, → cable television is the standard delivery system, providing, in some cases, more than 200 programs as well as high-speed Internet access and even telephone service. In 2005, 85 percent of all TV households were cable subscribers. Private commercial cable companies operate as monopolies with franchises granted by local governments. In 2003, there were more than 9,000 cable systems, although most were owned by a handful of large corporations such as Comcast, Time-Warner, and Cox. Federal regulations require cable providers to carry all local terrestrial stations, which is important to small stations with weak signals in the upper UHF band, and local governments usually require that cable channels be set aside for use by local government and for public access (→ Access to the Media; Public Access Television). Otherwise, content decisions are made by the providers themselves. Since the federal government's authority to regulate content does not apply to cable or satellite broadcasting, cable content on pay services such as Home Box Office (HBO) often includes nudity, rough language, and graphic violence that are prohibited on traditional channels. Some companies even offer "adult" channels that show mild pornography.

### **Satellite**

Direct broadcast satellite (DBS) is available in the United States but relatively limited (→ Satellite Television). Two private companies offer program packages similar to those available on cable TV and serve mainly rural areas that cable does not reach. The small "pizza-dish" antennas are not as much a part of the landscape as they are in many other countries. In 2006, the two companies had about 27 million subscribers. One provider,

Dish Network, specialized in packages of foreign programming, offering 20 different regional and language packages in 2006. Most cable systems and the two DBS systems provide two or more channels in Spanish, including the two US-based Spanish networks, Univision and Telemundo, Spanish versions of national news and sports services, and channels imported from Latin America.

Terrestrial digital radio is undeveloped in the United States, although the FCC does grant licenses, and some stations broadcast a digital signal version of their traditional terrestrial program. The advantages of a digital signal are both the CD-like quality of the sound and the compression, which allows up to five separate signals to be transmitted in the bandwidth used by one analog signal. Receivers, however, are expensive and not readily available and little pressure to develop the system is apparent, either from the government, the public, or the broadcast industry.

Up until now, a source of irritation to long-distance motorists, radio signals fade rapidly as one travels along the interstate highway system. Since the stations are local, it is not always easy to find another signal that offers similar programming. However, satellite radio that reaches coast to coast is available through two commercial companies that began operation in 2001 and 2002. The main market is automobile and truck drivers, although the service is also available for in-home and even portable receivers. As of mid-2006, the two services – XM Radio and Sirius Radio – had from 12 million to 13 million subscribers. Both services offered a mix of channels including 60+ commercial free music programs, 35–40 news/talk programs, and 20+ local traffic/weather and local sports programs that allowed listeners to follow a favorite college or professional team regardless of where they lived. As with DBS television, satellite radio is in the early stages of development, and its future direction is uncertain.

## **HIGH-DEFINITION TELEVISION**

In the 1990s, the US government began moving toward an advanced system of fully digital high-definition television (HD-TV), replacing the half-century-old National Television Standards Committee (NTSC) analog system. To implement the new standard, each terrestrial TV broadcaster would be given a temporary second frequency. During a transition period, it would introduce HD-TV on one frequency while continuing to broadcast in NTSC on the other. At a specified time, the analog service would stop. Broadcasters were happy to receive a second frequency but some wanted to use it for nonbroadcast services; others balked at the expense of converting to the new standard. Broadcasters were reluctant to introduce high-definition programming because so few households could receive it; consumers hesitated to buy the new, relatively expensive HD-TV sets as long as programming was limited.

At some point in the last half of the 2000–2010 decade, HD-TV is likely to reach the takeoff point in the traditional S-curve of adoption of new technology. Households in most markets could receive limited local high-definition signals with a special rooftop antenna, although most consumers are so far opting for a set of HD channels available on cable or satellite. The commercial networks have begun making prime-time programming available in HD to local stations, which have fed the signals to local cable companies before they have begun over-the-air transmission of network programming or converted



local programming to the new standard. The deadline for shutting down the old analog system has remained flexible, although a principle agreed upon early in the debate still seems to apply: when 85 percent of households has access to HD-TV, dismantling of the old analog system will begin. A tentative date, postponed at least once, was 2009.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Access to the Media ▶ Americanization of the Media ▶ Blogger ▶ Cable Television ▶ Circulation ▶ Citizen Journalism ▶ CNN ▶ Communication Law and Policy: North America ▶ Copyright ▶ Federal Communications Commission (FCC) ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of ▶ Internet ▶ Journalism ▶ Libel and Slander ▶ Local News ▶ Measurement Theory ▶ Newspaper ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Photography ▶ Public Access Television ▶ Radio ▶ Radio Networks ▶ Readership Research ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Video ▶ Voice of America ▶ Yellow Journalism

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# Uses and Gratifications

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Dating back to work done in Columbia's Bureau of Applied Social Research in the 1940s, media uses and gratifications (U&G) research represents one of the oldest and largest continuous programs of research in the field of communication. The tradition represents hundreds of research projects since the 1940s examining the reasons why people use mass media including → radio, → television, film (→ Cinema), print media, and the → Internet. U&G has consistently been one of the most frequently published mass communication theoretical perspectives in communication journals over the past 50 years. The product of this massive research effort has been a large set of taxonomies of media use motives; research linking those motives to antecedent variables (e.g., social factors, personality) and media use, along with some consequences (effects) of that use; and an extensive theoretical discussion and critique. Many scholars hold that U&G represents a research perspective that is separate from the → media effects tradition (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline; Exposure to Communication Content; Media Effects, History of).

## MAJOR DIMENSIONS OF USES AND GRATIFICATIONS

In their 1974 collection, → Katz and Blumler, along with Gurevitch, provided the germinal theoretical description of the U&G → paradigm, stating that U&G research is concerned with “the social and psychological origins of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media or other sources, which lead to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in need gratifications and other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones” (Katz et al. 1974, 20). From these first theoretical musings, U&G stood in contrast to many contemporary effects theories by positing an active → audience that uses media to satisfy felt needs, rather than a passive media audience that is affected by media messages.

Rubin, one of the most prolific U&G researchers of the 1980s and 1990s, specified five a priori *assumptions about the relationship between people and media* embodied in U&G research. The first assumption is that media use is motivated, goal-directed, and purposive behavior. Second, individuals initiate media use in response to felt needs. Third, a variety of individual differences and social factors guide and filter media use behavior. Fourth, media use is just one of many alternatives people have; thus media competes with other communication to best satisfy needs and motives. Finally, U&G research assumes that people are a more powerful influence than media in most cases.

In 1961, → Schramm et al. specified three motives for television use among children: entertainment, social interaction, and learning. As other taxonomies were specified with the emergence of new media and genres, these three core motives expanded, but remained

fairly consistent with the original formulation. Typically, television use motives include those for entertainment (e.g., to pass time, diversion, arousal, relaxation), social interaction (e.g., → co-viewing, parasocial interaction, cultural currency), and learning (e.g., information about the environment, → socialization by the media). Print media motivations also include entertainment (→ escapism), social interaction (prestige; → Interactivity, Concept of), and learning (interpreting public affairs, surveillance). New media often introduce different motives. For example, → video game motives include entertainment (diversion, arousal, fantasy) and social interaction, but not learning (Sherry et al. 2006; → Fantasy/Imagination). Instead, unique motives of gaming include the challenge of beating the game and the competition of beating others.

### CHANGES OVER TIME IN THE TOPIC AND ITS TREATMENT

According to Rosengren et al., U&G research proceeded in three major phases up until the writing of their collection, *Media gratifications research: Current perspectives* in 1985. The first phase began in the 1940s and lasted until the late 1950s. This era was characterized by descriptive research focusing on the reasons individuals use media, starkly contrasting with the mass society powerful effects beliefs of the time. The second phase, which Rosengren et al. called the → operationalization period, focused on developing typologies of media use during the 1960s. The working philosophy of the time is best summed up by Schramm et al., who wrote, “In order to understand television’s impact and effect on children, we have first to get away from the unrealistic concept of what television does to children and substitute the concept of what children do with television” (1961, 169). The second era efforts culminated in the early paradigm models proffered by Katz et al. and by Rosengren in Blumler & Katz’s classic 1974 collection *The uses of mass communications: Current perspectives of gratifications research*.

Of these perspectives, the model advanced by Rosengren (1974) best encapsulates the core concepts and theoretical linkages of U&G. Rosengren’s model stated that basic needs, individual differences, and social pressures combine to result in a variety of perceived problems and motivations to which gratifications are sought from the media and elsewhere, leading to differential patterns of media effects on both the individual and societal levels. Thus, in the 1970s U&G became consistent with the emerging emphasis on functionalism found in many other disciplines at the time (→ Models of Communication).

After the publication of the Blumler and Katz collection, researchers continued to expand empirical data in support of the Rosengren model. This effort resulted in the emergence of several core concepts and debates. Some scholars attempted to reduce existing taxonomies into clearer theoretical distinctions, dividing motivations for media use into those that represent media uses (to satisfy anticipated pragmatic goals) and those that satisfy media gratifications (transitory mental or emotional responses). Rubin continued this work, further specifying *instrumental use motives* (seeking exciting or entertaining information) and *ritualistic use motives* (habitual). Instrumental uses were associated with more purposeful, limited, and selective media use, while ritualistic motives were associated with generalized medium or genre use that was more time-consuming.

Another focus emerged from the debate as to whether media audiences were *active or passive*. Though the paradigm had always posited an active audience, this notion was

difficult to sustain as research into habitual or ritualistic motives continued to emerge. Researchers came to understand that media users exhibited varying levels of selectivity and attention before, during, and after the media use process. Recently research has shown that unconscious selection of media and → genres may be driven by biological states that are either transitory or relatively stable across the life-span (Sherry 2001). Thus, media use is likely both active and passive; conscious and unconscious (→ Communibiology).

Rosengren's theoretical explication notes that media use does not guarantee that an individual's perceived problems will always be solved by the media. Researchers therefore began to investigate the differences between media gratifications sought and media gratifications obtained. Further, they developed an approach to media satisfaction based on an → expectancy value model. In this model, media satisfaction resulted from beliefs about gratifications attributes possessed by the media and affective evaluation of those attributes. This model was more successful than a straightforward comparison of the gratifications obtained to the gratifications sought (Palmgreen & Rayburn 1985).

### CRITICISM OF THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS APPROACH

Several scholars have criticized U&G as non-theoretical and lacking in conceptual clarity and explanatory mechanisms. In particular, critics claim that many of the key concepts, particularly motives, needs, gratifications, and uses, are not conceptually distinct from one another. Recently, however, scholars have begun to clarify the concepts implicated in reasons for media use by borrowing concepts from psychology like intrinsic, implicit, and explicit motives, as well as intrinsic motivations (→ Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition). Another problem is that the taxonomic tendencies in the literature are too compartmentalized to support the notion of a unified theory of media use. Careful consideration of the guiding model suggests that this conclusion is more due to the research that has been undertaken than to any deficit in the potential explanatory power of the U&G model. In order for the model to reach its explanatory potential, it must address the question of the etiology of media use motivations theorized in it (Vorderer et al. 2006).

As pointed out above, the approach's key assumption, namely that media users are active in the selection of media and can articulate the reasons for media use, has also been criticized. In response, some researchers have attempted to address the *etiology of use motivation*. For example, researchers have examined the relationship between media use and the "Big Five" personality factors (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness), other personality factors, chronic loneliness, self-esteem, → sensation seeking, and need for arousal. To date, media researchers have not demonstrated a strong link between personality traits and media use (Finn 1997). Typically, the results are mixed, with few personality variables associated with media use variables. However, research on biological drivers such as temperament may go a long way toward solving this problem (→ Personality and Exposure to Communication).

Finally, critics have complained that U&G research is narrowly focused on individuals and does not acknowledge the impact of societal factors and societal-level changes. While this has certainly been the case with the empirical research, scholars have begun to *call for*

*cross-level theorizing* in media research. U&G is a good candidate for cross-level thinking; Rosengren's (1974) model clearly articulates the importance of both individual- and societal-level variables as a part of the media selection process.

### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH, THEORY, AND METHODOLOGY**

One of the advantages of the U&G approach is the ease with which it applies to new media and new technologies. In fact, interactive technologies such as the Internet and video games have breathed new life into U&G research because of its emphasis on active audiences. Online users and games must make frequent content or response choices while engaged with these new media. With the advent of wikis and personal web page sites such as Facebook and MySpace, media users are getting more actively involved in both creating and consuming media. Taxonomies of Internet usage motivations parallel earlier media in some ways (e.g., interpersonal utility, pastime, information seeking, convenience, and entertainment), but also provide a place to communicate with family and friends. This difference marks one of the major distinctions in this new medium.

Recent work on new media highlight *two broad types of gratifications* users can expect: process gratifications and content gratifications. Song et al. (2004) argue that the Internet is different from traditional media because it provides not only an activity to engage in (process motivations such as surfing the net or playing games) and information (e.g., → news stories, product information, online movies), but also a new social aspect that traditional media lack (e.g., instant messaging, chatting with customer service, talking over the Internet while gaming). Further, the Internet puts more information in the hands of users more quickly and easily than any other medium. Users do not need to wait for a newscaster or journalist to provide game scores and analysis – it is all instantly available. It will be interesting to see the gratifications that people will develop with these new media and the extent to which these media will create dependency or replace other forms of human communication (→ Media System Dependency Theory; Addiction and Exposure).

For now, growing numbers of young scholars are focusing attention in two directions. First, they are creating taxonomies of use of emerging media as scholars did in the past. More importantly, they are more closely examining the experience of media use through an array of entertainment media theories and concepts including hedonic theory, → selective exposure, flow, → presence, and transportation (Bryant & Vorderer 2006; → Transportation Theory). These scholars are interested in the phenomenological experience of media entertainment, as well as in clarifying the psychological and neurophysiological systems implicated in media use (→ Phenomenology). Like the U&G scholars that preceded them, they are addressing the weaknesses of the paradigm through continuing empirical and theoretical advances. Thus the oldest and largest research domain in mass communication continues to grow and evolve with each new generation of researchers.

SEE ALSO: ► Addiction and Exposure ► Affects and Media Exposure ► Audience  
► Cinema ► Communibiology ► Communication as a Field and Discipline ► Co-Viewing  
► Enjoyment/Entertainment Seeking ► Escapism ► Excitation and Arousal  
► Expectancy Value Model ► Exposure to Communication Content ► Exposure to Film

► Exposure to the Internet ► Exposure to News ► Exposure to Print Media ► Exposure to Radio ► Exposure to Television ► Fantasy/Imagination ► Genre ► Individual Differences and Information Processing ► Information Seeking ► Interactivity, Concept of ► Internet ► Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation and Volition ► Involvement with Media Content ► Katz, Elihu ► Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ► Media Effects ► Media Effects, History of ► Media Effects, Strength of ► Media System Dependency Theory ► Media Use across the Life-Span ► Media Use by Social Variable ► Mediated Social Interaction ► Models of Communication ► Mood Management ► News ► News Audience ► Operationalization ► Paradigm ► Parasocial Interactions and Relationships ► Parental Mediation Strategies ► Personality and Exposure to Communication ► Phenomenology ► Political Media Use ► Presence ► Public Affairs ► Radio ► Schramm, Wilbur ► Selective Attention ► Selective Exposure ► Sensation Seeking ► Socialization by the Media ► Technology and Communication ► Television ► Transportation Theory ► Video Games

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# V

## Validity

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In logic, validity is an attribute of the form of an argument that cannot lead from true premises to false conclusions. For example, “all A are B; some A are C; therefore some B are C” is a valid form. A common way to evaluate the validity of arguments is by treating it as a function of truth values – true or false – making sure that of all combinations of truth values, no false conclusions follow from true premises. In everyday life, the word “validity” is used similarly to “logic,” but more loosely and with qualifications. Near-synonyms of validity are “soundness,” as in sound or unquestionable arguments; “plausibility,” as in conclusions that make sense and are accepted as most likely true; or “persuasiveness,” as in a convincing, believable, or credible account. Claims of validity are always built on a sense of authority, usually scientific, but also legal and popular. These synonyms can shift the burden of proof from the quality of arguments (soundness) to a community of reasonable people (persuasiveness), or to individual judgments (plausibility).

*In the social sciences*, and in empirical research in particular, researchers go out of their way to justify their findings in terms of how they came to them. The analytical methods they employ to proceed from data to findings are analogous to the arguments by which logicians proceed from premises to conclusions. By definition, data are unquestionable facts, hence true – save for the possibility of being unreliable. Scientific methods are designed to preserve the truths of the original data in the findings to which they lead (→ Research Methods). Because social research – unlike logic – theorizes diverse and often statistical phenomena, validity must here embrace probabilities and contexts. In the social sciences, therefore, validity refers to the quality of research leading to conclusions that are true to a degree better than chance and in the context in which they are claimed to be true. In the particular case of measurement, the validity of a test (→ Test Theory) is the degree to which it measures what it claims it measures (→ Measurement Theory). Reference to chance and degrees of truth implicates probabilistic considerations, and references to claims contextualize the research process.

It is important not to confuse validity and → reliability. Reliability concerns the trustworthiness of data. Data should represent only the phenomena of interest to the researchers. They should not be tainted by the irrelevant circumstances in which they were obtained, by interests in the research results, or by carelessly recording observations



and measurements. Unreliability introduces uncertainty about what the data represent. It acknowledges that there is an above-zero probability of containing falsehoods. Because a method of analysis may well be invalid, perfectly reliable data do not guarantee valid conclusions. However, unreliable data always limit the chance for a valid method to produce valid findings. Just as it is important for logicians to know whether their premises are true, so it is important for researchers to know the extent to which their data are reliable.

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF VALIDITY**

Most social scientists use ways to demonstrate the validity of their research. At least since the 1940s, writers have proposed classifications of these practices and investigated their conclusiveness. Efforts to legitimize particular research methods culminated in a special scientific sub-discipline called “methodology.” The first effort to codify the terminology of validation efforts was undertaken by the American Psychological Association (APA; 1954), concerned with the validity of the then growing practice of psychological testing. This report defined four kinds of validity: content, construct, concurrent, and predictive validity.

Subsequently, the APA’s effort was joined by the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME; 1985). In a series of joint publications by these associations, terminologies emerged and were abandoned, showing no clear consensus. In 1999, the effort to standardize turned toward distinguishing the evidence that researchers use to support their findings (American Educational Research Association et al. 1999). Although some terms of earlier typologies migrated into sociology, political science, and economics, generalizations from psychological testing to truly social research proved difficult. For example, content analysis, a research technique for making valid and reliable inferences from texts to their contexts, bears little resemblance to aptitude tests for individuals (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative).

### **KINDS OF VALIDITY**

There are three kinds of validity to start with: face validity, social validity, and empirical validity. They justify the acceptance of research findings on different grounds.

*Face validity* is obvious or common truth. Researchers rely on face validity when they accept methods and results because they make sense, are plausible, or are persuasive, without feeling the need to give reasons for their judgment. Face validity is omnipresent in many decisions concerning scientific research. For example, findings that seem wrong or counterintuitive are not as likely published as findings that make sense. Face validity can be misleading, however. For example, it makes a lot of sense to take the relative frequency of mentioning a certain issue in the news as an indicator of how important that issue is to members of the public. Yet correlations between the two are notoriously weak. Face validity often overrides other forms of validity. Face validity results from individual judgments, although the cultural root of sense-making cannot be ignored.

*Social validity*, also called pragmatic validity, is that quality of research methods and findings that leads one to accept them for their contribution to public debates or the resolution of important social issues: crime, terrorism, the antisocial behavior of juveniles,

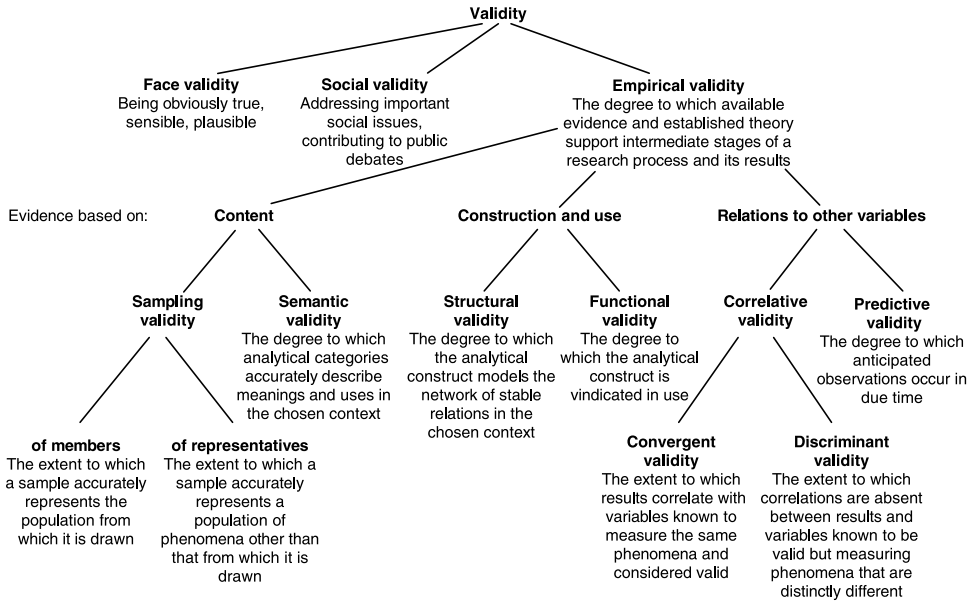


Figure 1 A typology of validity

racism, lack in civility during political campaigns, etc. (Riffe et al. 1998). Justifying a particular research project almost always relies on social validity. Whether one evaluates its contribution to a group of scholars in pursuit of a theory, to a commercial sponsor, or to a research foundation, the criteria usually turn toward its usefulness, relevance, social significance, or impact. Scientific researchers may not acclaim social validity, but it generates valued public or peer-group support.

*Empirical validity* is the cherished concern of the sciences. It is the degree to which available evidence supports various stages of the research process, and the degree to which scientific conclusions withstand the challenges of additional data, other research efforts, and theory based on observations, experiments, or measurements. Campbell and Stanley (1963) call empirical validity “internal validity” and define it somewhat more loosely as the basic requirements for an experiment to be interpretable. Empirical validity cannot deny intuition (face validity), nor can it divorce itself entirely from social, political, and cultural factors (social validity) – after all, researchers are human and their work is reviewed by others, who may have their own theoretical commitments and personal alliances and are, hence, hardly immune to non-empirical concerns. However, the following typology, summarized in Figure 1, separates empirical validity from face and social validity by focusing on how empirical evidence is woven into the research process or brought to bear on its results.

## FORMS AND PROBLEMS OF EMPIRICAL VALIDITY

As already mentioned, most efforts to standardize validity concerns are rooted in experiences with psychological tests, only marginally addressing validity issues arising in content analysis,

public opinion polling, communication research, and other social science methods. The following takes this point to heart and builds its typology on the distinctions among the kind of evidence used to support empirical research: content, construction and use, and relations to other variables.

*Content* refers to evidence that must be read or interpreted by individuals or organizations in order to be considered data. In the domain of psychological testing, Anastasi and Urbina (1997, 114) define content validity as “the systematic examination of the test content to determine whether it covers a representative sample of the behaviour domain to be measured.” It acknowledges the qualitative nature of written test items, text. Indeed, texts, which constitute most of the data in social research, cannot be treated in the same manner as meter readings. Even crime statistics, expressed in seemingly objective numbers, are developed primarily from narratives of people’s experiences or communications. To become a crime statistic, accounts of crimes tend to come in everyday terms that must be, first, understood and, second, analyzed, categorized, and counted. Evidence based on content naturally divides into two types: sampling validity and semantic validity.

*Sampling validity* is the degree to which a sample accurately represents the population of phenomena in whose place the sample is to be analyzed. One can sample from the members of a population, or from representatives of that population. Sampling theory provides various strategies to assure that the *members of a population* have an equal chance to be part of the sample (→ Sampling, Random). If a valid sampling plan is followed, the only uncertainty that remains is how large a sample must be to be representative of the population of interest. Unable to know the population in relevant variables without studying it, sampling theory relies on the law of large numbers, which suggests that the larger the size of a sample, the more likely it is that averages in the sample resemble those of the population. The law serves as validating evidence for a sample being representative of a population. The measure of statistical significance used in statistical tests plays the same role.

Sampling theory fails to address situations in which researchers are forced to select units for analysis from a source that hides, filters, or distorts the phenomena of the researcher’s interest. Therapeutic interviews, for instance, are conducted to aid a therapist’s treatment, not to uncover uncontaminated truths. They have to be interpreted accordingly. Similarly, unless mass communication researchers are interested in purely syntactical features of the media, they may have to be sensitive to the fact that its audiences, at least in the US, are not presented with what the outside world is like, but with what is easily obtainable and communicable, fits the editorial policies of the channel, attracts sponsoring advertisers, and holds audience attention (→ Media Production and Content).

Without direct access to the population of phenomena that they wish to study, researchers must treat the units they can sample for analysis no longer as members of a population but as representatives of that population. The method of selecting among such representatives must take into account how their source represents these phenomena and makes them available for analysis. Under such conditions, validating evidence concerns a data source’s selectivity, how these phenomena are presented. It justifies sampling methods that reverse the statistical biases of the source and guarantee that the sample actually analyzed represents the statistical properties of phenomena to be studied.

*Semantic validity* is the extent to which the categories of an analysis are commensurate with the categories of the object of inquiry. Kenneth Pike’s distinction between emic and

etic categories is important here (Headland et al. 1990). The anthropological preference for emic or indigenous rather than etic or researcher-imposed categories of analysis demonstrates a concern for semantic validity. And ethnographers' attempt to adjust their own accounts to their informers' perceptions is an effort to gather evidence for the semantic validity of their findings. Traditional preference in psychology and sociology for abstract theory may not care about semantic validity. However, in public opinion research – asking questions that are relevant in the life of interviewees – and in content analysis – acknowledging how audiences interpret the texts being analyzed – lack of semantic validity spells trouble for the research results. They may say more about the researcher than about people's opinions and audience receptions. Internet browsers are largely insensitive to the meanings of words and, lacking semantic validity, they often retrieve much irrelevant text.

*Construction and use* refers to evidence about the model characteristics that underlie a method of analysis – its algorithms and networks of analytical steps, or any parts of it. Earlier typologies defined construct validity as the degree to which a common pattern or theory underlies several measurements, until methodologists realized that all valid tests possess implicative structures – systems of relationships that imply each other – and are saturated with theoretical commitments. Evidence about the internal makeup or use of a method leads to two kinds of validity.

*Structural validity* is the degree to which a research method possesses implicit structures that demonstrably correspond to structures in the object of an analysis. Simulations, for example, will be structurally valid if it can be shown that they model the essential features of what they simulate. Psychological tests are structurally valid if they operationalize the psychological processes of the individuals tested. Evidence for structural validity may be obtained in the form of data about the composition and causal connections underlying the object of study, or previously substantiated theories about how the parts of that object work together.

*Functional validity* is the degree to which a method of analysis is vindicated by successful uses rather than validated by structural correspondences (Janis 1965). Because functions may be materialized variously, a research method may be functionally valid without being structurally valid. Demonstrating the functional validity of a method requires evidence in the form of a history of its successes and relative absence of failures – regardless of how that method came to its results. Taking a method's successful and widespread use as a validity criterion can easily lead to self-fulfilling prophecies. For example, the use of college entrance tests, when instituted in a university's admission process, becomes functionally validated by making it difficult for those who fail the test to prove themselves worthy of advanced education. In use, such a test creates its own truth.

Relating other variables to the results of a method of analysis has, again, two forms. *Correlative validity* is established by correlating the research results with variables that are concurrent with and extraneous to the way these results were obtained. The purpose of correlating research results with other variables is to confer validity on the otherwise uncertain research results. This transfer, however, can be accomplished only when the variables with which the research results correlate are known to be of unquestionable truth.

An important systematization of correlative validity is the multitrait-multimethod technique (Campbell & Fiske 1959). It calls for constructing a matrix of all correlations

between variables that are related to measures of the phenomena of interest, including the research results to be validated, and a number of variables that concern unrelated phenomena. Comparisons among these correlations give rise to two kinds of validity, convergent and discriminant. For research findings to be correlationally valid, they must satisfy both.

*Convergent validity* is the degree to which research results correlate with other variables known to measure the same or closely related phenomena.

*Discriminant validity* is the degree to which research results are distinct from or unresponsive to unrelated phenomena and hence do not correlate with variables known to measure the latter.

For example, human intelligence is conceived of as underlying many extraordinary accomplishments in life. To have convergent validity, an intelligence test must correlate highly with all measures of phenomena that involve intelligence. To have discriminant validity, that test must be demonstrably independent of measures of phenomena that do not involve intelligence. If research results correlate with nearly everything, which easily happens when concepts are as pervasive as human intelligence is, correlational validity fails for lack of discrimination.

*Predictive validity* is the degree to which statements made about anticipated but unobserved and uncertain phenomena at one point in time are supported by evidence about their accuracy at later point in time. Prediction, literally “before saying,” is not limited to forecast, and not to be confused with generalizations from a sample to the population from which it was drawn. Moreover, correlations might suggest the predictability of recurrent phenomena, but they do not lend themselves to predictions. Predictions are validated by specifics, for example, by naming the actual author of an anonymously written text, correctly predicting a planned terrorist attack in at least some of its dimensions – perpetrators, time, place, target, and means of attack, or accurately forecasting stock market movements. When predictions are acted upon, their validity may surface in successes, for example in preventing a terrorist attack or gaining in the stock market.

SEE ALSO: ► Content Analysis, Quantitative ► Emic vs Etic Research ► Measurement Theory ► Media Production and Content ► Reliability ► Research Methods ► Sampling, Random ► Test Theory

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## Vatican Radio

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Established in 1931, Vatican Radio (VR) is one of the world's oldest international broadcasting services. Its birth can be traced back to the *Lateran Treaty*, signed in 1929 by Benito Mussolini and the secretary of the Vatican State, Cardinal Gasparri. Aimed at resolving 59 years of tense relationships between the kingdom of Italy and the Holy See, the treaty was intended to compensate the Holy See for what it had lost when Rome, previously under the control of the pontiff, was annexed to the Italian kingdom in 1870. In addition to establishing the Vatican's own borders, jurisdiction, currency, and even stamps, the treaty made it Italy's responsibility to ensure the "necessary link, directly also with other States, of the [Vatican's] telegraph, telephone, and radio and postal services," thereby paving the way for the Vatican to establish its own broadcast media. As a further endorsement of the legitimacy of the pontiff's previous control over Rome, Mussolini agreed to pay more than one billion Italian lira in compensation. This was of great ideological significance: the dictator would now be able to count upon the Catholic elites, who welcomed his generosity and the new "harmony" established between the Italian state and the Vatican. For the then pope, Pius XI, Mussolini was the "man of Providence."

Guglielmo Marconi was commissioned to assist with the creation of the new → radio station, which the pope inaugurated with a speech in Latin on February 12, 1931. From the start, though not without recurrent internal struggles for power, representatives of the Jesuit Order were called upon to head the station's operations. Together with the newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*, founded in 1861, and the weekly magazine *Civiltà Cattolica*, founded in 1880, VR became an integral part of the broader plan to propagate church doctrine. Whereas the print media targeted the Italian political and intellectual elites, VR was, from the onset, a shortwave radio broadcaster, aimed at reaching people all over the world; a truly "universal" medium, perfect for the mission of a "universal" church (→ International Radio).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the history of VR, like that of the Catholic church, is one dense with contradictions. As a child of the Lateran Treaty and therefore of the problematic alliance between the Vatican and fascist Italy, VR found itself in the midst of

controversies from the beginning. Although the relationship between the regime and the pontiff began deteriorating only a few years after the signing of the treaty, the church and its radio were criticized for their positions at the onset of the Holocaust and throughout World War II. Pius XII (Pius XI's successor) was accused of not being vociferous enough against Nazi Germany, and of failing to use the radio station to denounce the Holocaust more forcefully (→ Propaganda in World War II). At the same time, some have defended the radio service and the pope, presenting evidence that even the Allies would use the reports from VR to get invaluable information about what was going on in Italy, and that the station was one of the first to announce to the world that the extermination of Jews had begun (Adler 2004).

Beginning in the year 2000, VR found itself at the center of allegations that its million-watt towers were causing severe *environmental pollution*. According to citizens' groups and environmental organizations, the electromagnetic pollution generated by these emissions was responsible for the high prevalence of leukemia cases, especially in children, in areas surrounding VR's towers in a small town northeast of Rome (Michelozzi et al. 2002). After lengthy legal battles, in the spring of 2006 an Italian court found VR guilty of not respecting the limits imposed by the legislation on the emission of electromagnetic waves. Although fines and time in prison were imposed on those in charge of the station's main operations, the prison sentences were ultimately suspended. National newspapers avidly followed the case as it exemplified the continuation of an uneasy relationship between the Vatican and Italy.

VR is owned by Vatican City. The station is not allowed to carry → advertising, and its annual budget is between 20 million and 25 million euros. Given that the radio station does not generate revenues, its worth is judged in terms of its role in spreading the doctrine of the church and its position on world affairs. VR broadcasts programs in *47 languages in 40 countries*. With more than 42,000 hours of broadcasting and 200 journalists working in different parts of the world, its programs include international news, religious celebrations, and music. The initial acumen that characterized the Vatican's use of the mass media and new technologies continues. In fact, VR is at the forefront of technological developments with its podcasting, videos and audios on demand, streaming broadcasts on the world wide web (→ Internet), and satellite transmission (→ Satellite Communication, Global). Traditionally, however, the core service of VR has been its shortwave transmissions. This bandwidth can be utilized by anybody who wants to broadcast internationally, and its clear reception makes it a strategic choice for a church whose main target, and hope for survival in the third millennium, is to reach millions of people, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and South America.

Due to new technologies, however, the distribution of VR's programs continues to evolve and might slowly change in new directions. With the help of satellite delivery, a network of FM radio stations is developing with a mission to distribute religious messages, including VR's programs, to local audiences. Among those radio stations, there is *Radio Maria* (headquartered in Italy) and *Radio Chrétienness* (based in France). The first is a truly international network of FM radio stations spanning the globe from Argentina to Austria, Burkina Faso, Chile, Croatia, Mozambique, Paraguay, Poland, Perú, Russia, and Uganda. Radio Chrétienness, instead, targets Francophone countries on the African continent. This transition to satellite and FM distribution is significant in that stations such as Radio

Maria and Radio Chrétien, and ultimately VR, might become a notable force in the competition with local stations for the allocation of bandwidth.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ International Radio ▶ Internet ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Communication, Global

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# **Verbal Aggressiveness**

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Verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness are distinct but closely related concepts that apply to conflictual interpersonal interaction (→ Argumentative Discourse; Conflict Resolution; Interpersonal Communication; Interpersonal Conflict). Verbal aggressiveness is the inclination to attack the other person’s feelings or identity. Argumentativeness is the motivation to attack the other person’s position, arguments, or statements. Both are types of aggressive communication, which can be subdivided into two categories: constructive and destructive. Constructive aggressive communication can be assertive or argumentative. Destructive aggressive communication also has two subdivisions: hostility and verbal aggressiveness. Assertiveness and hostility have received little research attention. Verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness are often assessed together in empirical investigations. Males generally score higher than females on both measures, and cultural differences have been explored (though without a simple generalized conclusion to this point). Dominic Infante is the originator of the current work on these two topics.

Both verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness are personality predispositions, although most researchers prefer to call them communication traits (Rancer & Avtgis 2006). While most research treats them as enduring inclinations, they have from the beginning been theorized to have a situation-specific nature as well. Their character as traits is far more studied than their state aspects.

A substantial empirical literature has grown up around these two concepts. The most detailed review of that work is Rancer and Avtgis (2006), which now supplants the earlier summary of Infante and Rancer (1996).



## INSTRUMENTATION

Each of these variables is normally measured with 20-item, self-report Likert scales. The original versions continue to be well regarded and are the standard instrumentation choices (Infante & Rancer 1982; Infante & Wigley 1986). Shorter 10-item versions have been used, and other adaptations have been made for use with adolescents (Rancer & Avtgis 2006). All versions of the  $\rightarrow$  scales are reliable.

Questions have arisen about the unidimensionality of the two scales. Both are composed of two 10-item groups. In the case of argumentativeness, 10 items express approach motivations (e.g., "I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue") and 10 represent avoidance impulses (e.g., "I enjoy avoiding arguments"). The standard verbal aggressiveness scale is composed of 10 negatively worded items (e.g., "If individuals I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character"), and 10 positively worded ones (e.g., "I try very hard to avoid having other people feel bad about themselves when I try to influence them"). In both cases, the composite score is calculated by subtracting the sum of one set of items (avoiding or being pro-social) from that of the other set (approaching or being verbally aggressive).

Hamilton and Mineo (2002) report that the approach and avoidance subsets of the argumentativeness scale are negatively correlated and both are reliable. The composite scale is both internally and externally consistent. Some researchers report separate results for the two subscales Hamilton and Mineo (2002) have reported acceptable reliabilities for the verbal aggressiveness scale. Several researchers have generated evidence that the scale is actually two-dimensional, with the aggressive and pro-social items falling into different (and negatively correlated) factors. Levine et al. (2004) show that a two-factor model should be preferred. The two factors consist of the 10 aggressive items and the 10 pro-social ones. In addition, Levine et al. report that the aggressive subscale is more predictive of other antisocial communicative behaviors and inclinations than is the pro-social subscale, and the reverse seems to be true when benevolent measures are correlated to the two subscales. The two subscales are substantially correlated, and have reasonable levels of reliability. Researchers should begin reporting subscale results as well as composite ones.

## ASSOCIATIONS WITH BASIC PERSONALITY TRAITS

Scholars have explored the connections between various communication traits and general personality factors, factors that have been shown to be heritable. This work is called  $\rightarrow$  *communibiology*, because the main interest is to determine the degree to which genetics controls key traits, such as anxiety about communicating ( $\rightarrow$  Communication Apprehension). The biological claims are controversial, but the empirical evidence is straightforward, and serves to locate both verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness in the general context of personality research.

The usual method in these studies is to test respondents on the *big three personality measures* (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism) as well as on various communication traits. Argumentativeness is positively associated with extraversion and psychoticism, but has no apparent connection to neuroticism. Verbal aggression correlates only with

psychoticism. Research shows a positive relationship between psychoticism and peer ratings of verbal aggressiveness, and a negative relationship between extraversion and peer ratings of verbal aggressiveness. A → meta-analysis of studies involving twins deals with aggressiveness in general, rather than our two specific communication traits or the big three. Beatty et al. (2002) report that aggressiveness is 58 percent heritable.

Taken together, these results suggest that both argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are positively associated with psychoticism, which refers to emotional independence (perhaps hostility or a lack of empathy toward others). This common result may trace back to both traits' connection to overall aggressiveness. Our two traits seem particularly distinct when associated with extraversion. Argumentativeness is characteristic of extraverted people, while verbal aggressiveness is higher among introverts. These findings are based on only a few studies, however, and further work will need to be done before conclusions are secure.

### **ASSOCIATIONS WITH OTHER PERSONALITY TRAITS**

Personality measures other than the big three have also been extensively compared to scores on both verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness. This material has been conveniently reviewed by Rancer and Avtgis (2006). In line with theoretical expectations, the profile of a person high in verbal aggressiveness suggests limited social skills. Such people score high in defensiveness, self-handicapping, and external locus of control. They are low on laudativeness, cognitive flexibility, and need for cognition. A variety of findings suggest that people high in verbal aggressiveness are oblivious to the interpersonal damage they do, and believe that their behaviors are acceptable or even positive (Infante & Rancer 1996; Hample 2005; Rancer & Avtgis 2006).

Those high in argumentativeness, in contrast, have a profile that predicts active social engagement characterized by interpersonal competence. Argumentative people are noticeably low in any sort of communication apprehension. They are extraverted, and high in cognitive flexibility, need for cognition, and the personal power dimension of self-esteem. They rate themselves as being highly competent communicators. Those high in argumentativeness are less likely to be defensive during interpersonal conflicts. However, they are also more likely to self-report that they are compulsive communicators.

### **ATTRIBUTIONS OF PEOPLE HIGH ON VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS AND ARGUMENTATIVENESS**

Personality traits are both self- and other-attributed. Up to this point, we have been examining self-reports and their correlates. Here, however, we consider what additional things others attribute to people high in verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness (→ Attribution Processes). Self- and peer ratings of verbal aggressiveness are positively correlated, and the same is true of self- and friend ratings of argumentativeness. Both of these traits seem to be clearly exhibited to others. Attributions about verbally aggressive people are generally negative. Verbal aggressiveness is associated with lower relational satisfaction. Verbal aggression in parents is directly connected to *authoritarian parenting styles*, which have been in turn associated with a number of negative results for children

(→ Family Communication Patterns). In organizational settings, verbally aggressive supervisors are seen as damaging one's self-concept, and they are rated as less relaxed, friendly, and attentive (→ Organizational Communication). Finally, verbal aggressiveness reduces one's credibility. Results for people high in argumentativeness are essentially the mirror image of these findings. Such people participate in more satisfying relationships, and engage in more reason-exchanging parenting. At work, such supervisors are more affirming and better liked. They are rated as being more credible.

### **BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES OF VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS AND ARGUMENTATIVENESS**

The original impulse that led to this research was the everyday observation that some people attack others while some attack positions. This is a robust result, whether evidenced by the face validity of the instruments, peer ratings, or actual behavioral observation.

Perhaps the most interesting behavioral issue connected to verbal aggressiveness is its relationship to *domestic violence* (→ Frustration Aggression Theory). Infante et al. (1989) introduced the concept of an argument skill deficiency, and provided the first of several pieces of evidence for it. The idea is that as a domestic dispute begins, participants deal with it verbally. If they have arguing skills, they reason and have a good chance of resolving things peaceably, but without such skills, frustration sets in. The person believes that he or she is right, but cannot say why, cannot answer the other's remarks properly, and cannot reach the other persuasively. Aggression increases, possibly culminating in physical violence. Verbal aggressiveness is not held to be a direct cause of the violence, but it is seen as a triggering element and a nearly inevitable stage in the sequence leading to violence.

In the case of argumentativeness, a recurring research topic has been whether those high in argumentativeness actually cause more arguments while interacting. If it were necessary to offer a simple conclusion, we would say that they do; however, the work shows several interactions between own and partner's argumentativeness. This is an expected outcome. Each remark by the other constitutes an instantaneous change in the situation, and the situational character of argumentativeness reasserts itself differently from instant to instant. Several investigations have shown that own arguing behavior is more responsive to other's behavior than to own predispositions (Hample 2005).

### **INTERVENTIONS**

Researchers in the area are committed to the proposition that people are better off if they are argumentative and worse off if they are verbally aggressive. Consequently, interventions have been designed to increase people's argumentativeness and depress their verbally aggressive impulses (Rancer & Avtgis 2006). Researchers have applied a system originally designed by Infante to adults, high school students, and middle school children. While the length and content of the interventions vary, they generally include both conceptual instruction and guided practice in conflictive interaction. Immediate and long-term (up to a year after the intervention) results show that argumentativeness can be increased; however, some of the programs also generated a rise in verbal aggressiveness. These

efforts are very hopeful and generally valuable, but perhaps improved handling of verbal aggressiveness will be developed.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Attribution Processes ▶ Communibiology  
 ▶ Communication Apprehension ▶ Conflict Resolution ▶ Developmental Communication  
 ▶ Family Communication Patterns ▶ Frustration Aggression Theory ▶ Interpersonal Communication  
 ▶ Interpersonal Conflict ▶ Meta-Analysis ▶ Organizational Communication  
 ▶ Scales

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## **Verstehen vs Erklären**

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During much of the twentieth century, the dichotomy between *verstehen* (interpretive understanding) and *erklären* (causal explanation) helped frame the debates about the epistemological foundations, purposes, and methods of the social sciences (→ Research Methods). Similar in many respects to the nomothetic/idiographic controversy (→ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science), the key issue was whether it is possible – or desirable –

to achieve unity between the natural and social sciences. The concept of *verstehen*, in particular, posed a challenge to this idea of unification. By the end of the twentieth century, the coexistence of multiple forms of inquiry had become an accepted state of affairs in all of the social sciences, including communication research, and dampened the urgency of this issue. However, the legacy of the *verstehen/erklären* dichotomy lives on in the worldviews and practical activities of scholars. In such realms as the methods they use, the theoretical traditions they uphold, and the curricula they teach, there can still be found the imprint of the split between interpretive inquiry and causal explanation.

### ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPTS

The *verstehen/erklären* debate originated during the rise of positivist social science in the nineteenth century. Informed by the empiricist philosophies of John Locke and Francis Bacon, and especially by David Hume's arguments about causation and the importance of sensory experience, sociology made its appearance as a fledgling science of "social physics." Sociology, as Auguste Comte conceived it, would achieve scientific legitimacy only by adopting the deterministic, quantitative model of research that was proving so successful in the natural sciences (→ Quantitative Methodology). By the latter decades of the nineteenth century, sociology and the nascent fields of anthropology, political science, psychology, and economics were rapidly usurping the subject matter of history and the other humanistic disciplines. Also in full retreat from the positivists' influence was the use of methods like introspection and textual analysis for studying social and moral problems.

In the midst of these changes, the German historian and philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey argued in a series of works that the subject matter and methods of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, or "human sciences," were of a different order from those of the natural sciences like physics and chemistry. Dilthey included among the human sciences of that era not only the social and psychological sciences, but also history, moral theory, legal and political studies, and literary criticism. All of these fields had in common the study of processes of human understanding and expression. By claiming these processes to be the special province of a science of man, Dilthey rejected the model derived from the natural sciences. His viewpoint is distilled in the famous saying, "Nature we explain, psychic life we understand" (Dilthey 1914).

The German verb *erklären* refers to the process of explaining by citing the antecedent causes of events. Applied to the natural world in the context of Newtonian physics, this statement is unexceptional. However, applying *erklären* to the study of human conduct, as advocated by the nineteenth-century philosophers and social scientists John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer, and August Comte, was far more controversial. Human nature, in the positivists' view, is little different from physical nature. By reducing the action of human beings to a limited number of purely physiological functions (such as "stimulus," "response," and "drive"), and analyzing how these functions interrelate in terms of chains of cause and effect, the science that Dilthey labeled *erklärende Psychologie* ("explanatory psychology") hoped to achieve the same level of certainty as physics and chemistry. Thus, *erklären* science engages in the search for laws of causation that would cover animate as well as inanimate matter. The physical sciences also supplied the nomological-deductive logic (→ Deduction

vs Induction vs Abduction) and experimental methodology that could be used to test hypotheses about human behavior. Meanings (→ Meaning) and intentions were left out of the *erklären* conception of science. Only sensory objects that could be directly observed were deemed suitable for empirical investigation.

*Verstehen*, on the other hand, arose out of Dilthey's belief that "[a]n empiricism which renounces the attempt to ground what happens in the mind on an understanding of the system of mental life is necessarily sterile" (Dilthey 1974, 15). It was self-evident to Dilthey that human beings express themselves in complex ways precisely because they ascribe meaning to things. Moreover, human consciousness is constantly evolving and reshaping objects into outward signs of these meaning ascriptions. Only by "reliving" a person's line of action can scholars gain knowledge of the contents and qualities of meaningful experience. The methodology of natural science, he declared, was ill-suited to this task. The verb *verstehen* (to understand) refers to a method especially suited for the human sciences: empathetic understanding. According to Dilthey, one practices a science of understanding by studying psychic life from the inside. The investigator enters the life-world of the subject by whatever means available – for example, texts, conversation, and social participation – and tries to reconstruct the totality of what the subject believes, values, and desires (→ Emic vs Etic Research). This subjective knowledge is broadened and enriched by relating it to relevant contexts of history, politics, religion, and so on. The method of *verstehen*, then, is closely aligned with that of → *hermeneutics*, in which the meaning of one text is grasped (tentatively) by relating it to an array of related texts.

Although Dilthey thought that empathetic understanding was far more pertinent to the human sciences, he also recognized that *erklären* and *verstehen* are not inimical kinds of inquiry (Harrington 2000). Dilthey claimed that the natural and human sciences do not differ so much in the objects studied as in how each considers the "facts" of an object. For example, the sensory data of a public speech can be analyzed either as a purely physiological event, requiring little or no recognition of the human being as a purposeful subject, or as a communicative event in which evidence of the speaker's motives, expectations, and constructions of meaning becomes relevant. Dilthey also maintained that the subjective understanding of human action always depends on knowledge of material facts. For example, if we wish to learn about the meanings the Internet has for people, we must first possess knowledge of the Internet's structure and physical properties. Finally, Dilthey realized that interpretation and human interests suffuse even the most objective-seeming inquiry. Not only do natural scientists engage in "interpretations" of their own constructs; the historical and discursive circumstances of scientific explanation can also be treated as "facts" in hermeneutic investigations of science.

### CRITICISMS AND REFINEMENTS OF VERSTEHEN

The concept of *verstehen* – and more generally, the notion of a special methodological approach for the social sciences – has come under critical scrutiny since it was introduced. Initially, defenders of *erklären* science argued that if an explanatory psychology had not yet produced the same impressive accomplishments as the physical sciences, it was not due to failures of the experimental method itself, but rather because the appropriate research tools had yet to be developed (Harrington 2000, 440). Later, mid-century logical

empiricists like Ernest Nagel (1961) and Theodore Abel (1948) mounted attacks on the scientific adequacy of *verstehen*. Empathetic understanding, they argued, cannot produce real insights into another person's subjective states because it depends on verification from a social actor (the researcher) who already possesses similar knowledge. Without going the additional steps to engage in controlled observation and verification of behavior, the *verstehen* method can only offer "hunches" about the possible meanings of someone's experience. Therefore, if *verstehen* has a role to play at all in social research, it is as a heuristic tool for generating hypotheses. Similar arguments against interpretivism continue to be voiced by logical empiricists today.

In spite of these criticisms, the *verstehen* view of human action attracted many adherents over the course of the twentieth century, especially in the emerging schools of social → phenomenology, *symbolic interactionism* (→ Symbolic Interaction), and social → constructivism. These "creative sociologies" (Morris 1977) have a common interest in describing action from the social actor's point of view. Another reason why *verstehen* gained wide appeal is that the concept itself was given new meaning. Max Weber (1947), for example, considered the analysis of subjective meanings of action to be an essential step in the construction of ideal social types. Others sought to improve upon Dilthey's version of *verstehen*, which was often considered too metaphysical or "introspective" for empirical application. Trying to resolve confusion about what the concept meant, Alfred Schütz (1970) asserted that it had nothing to do with introspection. Instead, he identified three distinctive uses for *verstehen* – as a form of commonsense experience; as an epistemological problem; and as a research method unique to the social sciences. More recently, such philosophers as Hans-Georg Gadamer (1989, 1st pub. 1960) and Charles Taylor (1971) refigured *verstehen* as a fundamentally intersubjective phenomenon, one which requires the sharing of discourse traditions within a living community.

Although the concept of *verstehen* as such does not play a large role in theoretical discourse in communication research, it loomed large as a foundational idea for the growth of interpretive communication studies from the 1970s onward. The study of organizational cultures, relational management, and media audience interpretation, to name just a few areas, owe a significant intellectual debt to *verstehen* and its varied articulations in the social sciences. Theories of intersubjective understanding also proved very important to nearly all of the varieties of qualitative research methods used in communication studies (Lindlof & Taylor 2002; → Qualitative Methodology).

In recent years, the interpretivist research program in communication, and the method of *verstehen* on which it is largely based, has faced skepticism about its capacity to render the inner realities of individuals, groups, and organizations. *Critical theory*, in particular, suggests that people's modes of understanding are constituted and organized in large part through the governing ideological structures in society and the institutional forces that serve to reproduce these structures (→ Critical Theory). Because power is left out of the usual definition of *verstehen*, the role of dominant discourses in shaping people's understandings of their lived experience can be seriously underestimated or ignored (see Deetz 2001; Giddens 1993). Other theoretical positions, such as standpoint epistemology (Harding 1998), seem to complicate the ability of anyone other than members of the group being studied to get "inside" their perspective. In addition, postmodernist conceptualizations of communication suggest that personal agency is so fluid and subject to

multiple, contradictory interpretations that “subjective understanding” lacks any stable point of reference (→ Postmodernism and Communication). Although *verstehen* is not a lost or discredited idea, there may be a need to rethink its assumptions in a changed epistemological terrain.

Conversely, the term *erklären* is seldom cited in the English-speaking communication literature. It has been replaced by other terms – e.g., objective empiricism (Anderson 1996) – that convey the same defining characteristics, especially that of causal determinism (→ Objectivity in Science). Probably the majority of empirical scientific research on communication today follows some form of causal logic. However, the materialist unity of science that the supremacy of *erklären* science was supposed to usher in has never happened. Multiple domains of epistemology and methodology now thrive in communication research, a circumstance that is largely due to the “interpretivist turn” that occurred in the last two decades of the twentieth century (Anderson 1996).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Constructivism ▶ Critical Theory ▶ Deduction vs Induction vs Abduction  
▶ Emic vs Etic Research ▶ Hermeneutics ▶ Idiographic vs Nomothetic Science  
▶ Meaning ▶ Objectivity in Science ▶ Phenomenology ▶ Qualitative Methodology  
▶ Quantitative Methodology ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Research Methods  
▶ Symbolic Interaction

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# Victimization, Secondary

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An aspect of mass media violence largely ignored in mass communication research and criminology is the effect news coverage has on victims of reported crimes (→ Crime Reporting). Few studies address the reaction of the social environment to the victims after a crime (→ Reciprocal Effects). “Secondary victimization” is defined as the victimization of the crime victim due to media coverage. It must also be taken into account that coverage of the crime can benefit the victim reported about, in that it helps them to deal with the fact of having become a crime victim.

Several authors have investigated the influence of media coverage on the outcome of trials (Bruschke & Loges 1999). There is only one study published about secondary victimization in the print media (Kunczik & Bleh 1995). The study investigated reports about the crime victims’ experiences with media coverage and assessed the influence newspaper reporting had on how the victims coped with the crime. The particular quality of the experience of becoming a victim of crime had to be considered in many ways. Because of the differences between the crimes studied and the different social backgrounds of the victims, experiences with the media vary greatly and show a broad spectrum of positive and negative experiences.

Secondary victimization can occur in the most varied ways and very frequently concerns aspects of reidentification. This implies fears of either becoming the victim of reidentification in the social environment or of being the target of a new crime, for whatever reason (→ Fear Induction through Media Content). Victims of different crimes show *different reactions to reports* about the crimes. Victims of sexual assaults (and to a lesser extent of robbery and physical injury) mostly complained about the distribution of intimate information. They did not want that information about the crime and about their person to be made public. In contrast, victims of crimes against property did not oppose media coverage. However, the results within each category showed a wide variance. Some crime victims under certain circumstances agreed to become an object of journalistic interest while others strongly rejected this.

Very often the victims criticized the *insensitive and/or sometimes inaccurate reporting* by journalists about the crime (→ Reality and Media Reality; Accuracy). Many victims were afraid of stigmatization due to the fact that they could be identified, especially in the case of victims of rape. Reporting about crime victims can, however, also have a positive, therapeutic effect (cf. Otto 2002). It is often hard for the victims to talk about what they have gone through. Here the media can assume an important role because they can make it easier for victims to make themselves understood in their social environment. The results of Kunczik and Bleh’s study show that the effects of reporting about crimes on victims are not independent from personality, type of crime, the consequences of the crime, and the results of the criminal case (whether the culprit was sentenced and whether the conviction was regarded as adequate).

On the whole, the victims’ assessment of mass media coverage turned up a surprise: the majority found it positive that their case was reported, and many felt the reporting to be

neutral and appropriate and said they would agree to publication again. The cases of the victims questioned in this study show that reporting crime has more functions than informing the public. In many cases, it is an important element in the psychological working-over of the experiences and may help victims to reintegrate into the social environments from which the events catapulted them. But great sensitivity is required of journalists to avoid victims being damaged further (→ Ethics in Journalism).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Accuracy ▶ Crime Reporting ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Fear Induction through Media Content ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Reciprocal Effects ▶ Violence as Media Content

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## **Video**

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Video began as a technological innovation and changed the media landscape of mainstream network television around the globe forever (→ Television Networks). As the technology became more accessible to the consumer market, it developed a greater impact on independent filmmaking: “media arts centers” emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as → community media with the advent of community video centers and programs. By the 1980s video had become a revolutionizing force worldwide, changing the way audiovisual media as part of TV and film culture were produced and consumed in everyday life (→ Television; Cinema).

Programming diversified and paved the way to today's transnational media systems, which profoundly impact the way we conduct our public and private lives. Nowadays, average citizens, for example, can upload privately recorded questions to presidential candidates and expect to have direct access to their political realm. The TV news coverage of the Virginia Tech shootings in 2007 privileged amateur footage over the images shot by

professional TV crews, and the footage was distributed via *YouTube* to a national audience (→ Amateur Photography and Movies). The actual perpetrator of the shootings sent his video message post-mortem to NBC television as a video manifesto, similar to the recordings of terrorist suicide bombers or even the tapes circulated by Osama Bin Laden (→ Terrorism and Communication Technologies; Mediated Terrorism). Individually produced media messages have gained validity and authenticity as a discursive device and an acceptable form of public speaking. In this way, the current standard of digital video recording has realized what analog technology was originally meant to be: a form of assembling electronic images, captured on tape, that can be easily distributed.

## DEVELOPMENT

Video is seemingly an outdated technology, but one can also regard it as an umbrella term to capture both analog and digital technologies. As an analog recording and distribution system it is currently being phased out of public and private use. Once a welcome medium of information, used by professional television journalists, cable-casters, independent filmmakers, underground video guerillas, visual artists, educators, therapists, researchers, lawyers, and business executives to record and tape, analog video is now a technological dinosaur. VCRs (video cassette recorders) as playback devices as well as video camcorders are being discontinued in public higher education.

*Video tape* when it was first introduced was a recording device that allowed a new aesthetic of representation. It changed the nature of television programming, expanded access to media production, and altered the way audiovisual material could be viewed and used. Because it facilitated pre-recording and editing, its introduction c. 1960 moved television from a largely live broadcast format, with live commercial pitches incorporated into the programs themselves, to pre-recorded and edited presentations, with advertisements spliced in “magazine style” (→ Advertising). Cheaper than film, video democratized amateur access, eventually making home video nearly as ubiquitous as snapshot photography. This marketing of VCRs made it possible for producers and consumers to quickly wind video tape forward and backward and to review content repeatedly. As Johnson (2005) points out, the VCR was a “repetition engine,” a tool to rewind, replay, repeat. In its opening decades television was a “present-tense medium,” but video tape and the VCR allowed for delayed viewing, limitless repetition of content, and seemingly limitless distribution and syndication (Wasser 2001). It anticipated, and set the stage for, the current explosion of individualized media consumption with its descendant technologies: podcasting, digital recording, → Internet downloads, and hand-held devices.

By the late 1970s, average consumers in industrialized countries could acquire video technology and pursue *amateur video production*. By the 1980s, public service community programming on most European state television systems, and newly established public cable access TV stations in the US, provided venues to exhibit professional and community-based video production (→ Community Video). However, in most US cities participation in community cable access never lived up to early expectations. A variety of factors contributed to this, including tepid support from cable operators, a general lack of publicity for and public awareness of video production opportunities, and the reluctance of many people to invest time or energy in video training and nonprofit media production.

The fact that much of the amateur programming on public cable access does not match the polished look of commercial media also seems to inhibit recruitment of new participants, often limiting producers to small and consistent circles of community activists and media enthusiasts. Still, new television channels for nonprofit, community-based video production have successfully expanded, and some of the earliest attempts to take advantage of these new channels, such as Paper Tiger Television and Deep Dish Television, have become legendary examples of the possibilities for low-budget video.

## HISTORY OF THE VIDEO TAPE

The basic technology for analog audiovisual recording is the *magnetic tape*, the video cassette. This recording technology was developed more than 100 years ago by the Danish telephone engineer Valdemar Poulsen of the Copenhagen Telegraph Company, who attempted to record telephone messages onto magnetic film. The first magnetic recording device received a patent in 1898 as the “telegraphone.” The first “*magnetophone*” was introduced by the German company AEG Telefunken in 1935 during the Radio Fair in Berlin. The first stage of video-tape technology is linked to the 1956 Ampex machine, a stationary device that used a 2-inch video tape. The technology advanced, became more mobile and lightweight, and led to different formats, such as the reel-to-reel format of the 1960s and 1970s (3/4-inch U-matic and then 1/2-inch tape cassette, sold by Sony in 1975). Narrower tape brought with it lower cost and increased portability. It allowed the VCR to become a global mass medium. It became the standard to record media messages in broadcast companies throughout the world and was also introduced to the domestic consumer home market. The introduction of *audio cassettes* in 1963 by Philips led to the opportunity to do sound recordings and voice dictation. What was initially conceived as a dictation device became a technology that allowed for individualized recordings to listen to music or to interviews by journalists, as well as the recording of classroom lectures.

A primary advantage of *digital technology* over analog recording is that sound and video quality do not suffer from reproduction. In the tape-to-tape format of the analog medium, each time a tape is copied (that is, each generation of tape in the post-production process) the sound and picture quality are diminished. Digital recording also allows for fast access to materials, precluding the need for tedious forwarding and rewinding when editing, although losing a quality of video that has been used by filmmakers and videomakers over the years as a stylistic trope.

For example, the Canadian-Armenian director Atom Egoyan uses the qualities of video tape to suggest shifting memory and the erasure of the past, as when he erases recordings by taping over them in his early film *Family Viewing* (1987). Egoyan also questions the notion that video can project reality faithfully, a concept that is at the core of the advent of → reality TV, and continues his work in films such as *Speaking Parts* (1989). In *sex, lies, and videotape* (1989) independent filmmaker Steven Soderbergh uses the look of home video to mimic the voyeurism of the amateur pornography market. Other examples where video plays an integral part in the narrative are David Cronenberg’s *Videodrome* (1982), a science fiction where viewers of video tapes develop violent hallucinations, and the Spanish production *Tesis* (1997) by Alejandro Amenabar, which engages with snuff

videos and murder. Gore Verbinski's US production *The Ring* (2002) belongs to the horror film genre and uses video as a key storytelling device. An independent film from France, *Cachée* ("Hidden," 2005), by German-Austrian director Michael Haneke, represents video tapes as carriers of meaning and access to the past. Earlier examples of Haneke's films, such as *Der Siebente Kontinent* ("The Seventh Continent," 1988) and *Benny's Video* (1992), already engage with the mass media as social criticism: television and video, according to Haneke, lead to the collapse of interpersonal communication and to violence.

Video as a *democratic art form and a means of self-expression* continues to be powerful. It facilitates the recording of content in remote areas of the world and helps to bring marginalized voices into the mainstream. One such example is *Afghanistan Unveiled* (2003), a video collection by Brigitte Brault and the Aina Women Filming Group, distributed by *Women Make Movies* (WMM) in New York. The documentary was shot by 14 young women journalists in Afghanistan who had been trained in the context of the post-US-invasion détente to represent life in their villages. The video was shown in international film festivals and on public television in the United States, and has been distributed by WMM. It effectively illustrates the impact of easy access to video production technology.

## VIDEO DIARIES

Another such example emerged in the early 1990s in the United Kingdom. The British Broadcasting Corporation (→ BBC) launched an experiment to empower individual subjects to record so-called "video diaries" as first-person, subjective video statements – glorified home videos. The domestic camcorder and home access to technology allowed for a reinvention of the video medium by providing personal, visual narratives for television. This movement preceded reality TV. The voyeurism and scopophilia entailed in watching somebody's recordings of their private lives and thoughts were tapped into by this innovative strategy of using a well-established institution to support the representation of the voiceless (→ Voyeurism). A team of producers and camera men would assist and accompany a chosen subject over the course of a year and help record his or her diaries. The ratio between recordings and post-production edited content was 150:1. The sheer amount of recordings that had to be edited and selected in post-production posed a major commitment of time and staff for the BBC. Tony Steyger was one of the producers on the show. He describes the BBC Community Programme Unit in London as being part of the fringes of the organization (Steyger 2006). Access television was considered to be different from cable access in the United States and Canada. The topics were suggested by viewers and campaigning organizations, featured social issues, and reflected a social conscience.

What facilitated the occurrence of this form of programming was the invention of the lightweight domestic video camcorder. While the BBC producers trained subjects in recording their lives, and coached them to represent their own stories on tape, at times speaking directly into the camera in the privacy of their own bedroom, the idea was that "real" stories would emerge, unfiltered by the institutional context of the broadcast establishment: "TV made for the public by the public" (Steyger 2006). A key development

in this movement for self-expression has been a change in the visual language: amateur videographers have changed the norms of representation. The genre of the video diary has revolutionized the visual aesthetic by introducing new forms such as innovative angles, point-of-view shots, longer interview bites, spontaneous-looking interactions between subjects on the screen, jump cuts, and open-ended formats of storytelling. The main code of interviews, where subjects are supposed to look off camera, was transformed by the direct address of the diarists (used by Errol Morris in his documentary projects through the device of the *Interrotron*).

This new wave of reality TV has also triggered a set of new mainstream formats, such as *Big Brother* in England and the US *Wife Swap*. The video revolution facilitated the digital explosion of self-expression that one can witness on the web, where “reality” is packaged by techno-savvy individuals who do not need institutional support to express themselves, and who upload their versions of reality onto YouTube and MySpace or stream a program via podcasting onto computer screens.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ BBC ▶ Cinema ▶ Community Media ▶ Community Video ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Documentary Film ▶ Image Ethics ▶ Internet ▶ Media History ▶ Media Literacy ▶ Mediated Terrorism ▶ Music Videos ▶ Realism in Film and Photography ▶ Reality TV ▶ Symbolism ▶ Television ▶ Television Networks ▶ Terrorism and Communication Technologies ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Culture ▶ Visual Representation ▶ Voyeurism

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# Video Games

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A game is a voluntary activity with rules and some sought-after outcome. A video game is a game played on some electronic device. Playing video games is not necessarily fun all the time. However, succeeding at the challenge of learning the skills to master a game is rewarding.

The computer game industry developed quickly and flourished. Computer or video games have been around since at least 1962 when MIT student Steve Russell programmed *Spacewar!* There was no keyboard, no joystick, and no sound; instead you toggled built-in switches to move the rocket ships. Ten years later, Nolan Bushnell, Atari founder, successfully introduced a version of Pong (electronic Ping-Pong). The first home console units were introduced in the 1970s and the well-known arcade game *PacMan* was introduced in 1980, followed by *Donkey Kong* in 1981 (→ Digital Media, History of). In 2005, the industry saw more than US\$7 billion in sales. Almost 85 percent of the games sold were rated T for Teen or E for Everyone. Puzzle, board, card, or trivia games are played most often. The typical player is no longer a teenage boy playing violent shooter games. In 2005, the average age of video game players was 33; almost 40 percent are women and 25 percent of game players were 50 or older.

Cable television is a good place to start looking for examples of how video games have become a part of our culture. G4, a channel launched in 2002 and available in 53 million US homes, is devoted to video games and the gamer lifestyle, at least the part of the lifestyle represented by males aged 18–24 (→ Cable Television). SpikeTV, another channel targeting young men, hosts the Video Game Awards show annually. And USA Network announced that they would air the Professional Gaming League competition, with announcers and commentators in the style of professional sports.

Video games have influenced movies, too (→ Cinema). One of the earliest movies based on a video game was *Super Mario Brothers*; based on Nintendo's games, it made more than US\$20 million at the box office. Five Pokemon movies have been released in the United States; the first one made US\$85 million at the box office. The two Lara Croft movies grossed approximately US\$200 million. In 2005, three of the top ten bestselling games were based on the *Star Wars* movie franchise. There is even a video game called *The Movies*, in which players become producer and director of their own animated movies. Not all video game movie productions have been successful. The debacle that was the 1982 video game based on *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial* is legendary, with hundreds of thousands of unsold copies of the game cartridge being dumped secretly at night into a landfill. Most video game historians mark the release of the *ET* game as the beginning of the crash in sales from 1982 to 1984.

The amount of attention paid to video games as a part of → popular culture is mirrored by the attention paid by academics to video games and the effects they have on the people who play games (→ Youth Culture). Academic research suggests that video game use leads to less pro-social behavior and more physiological arousal, hostility, anxiety, and aggressive thoughts, as well as increased aggressive behavior after playing

violent video games. There have been several unsuccessful state government efforts to limit sale of violent video games to minors.

However, there is a lack of real evidence that playing violent video games causes harm to minors, and some studies point out that in the United States youth violence has been going down steadily while use of video games has been increasing, suggesting that there is no connection between playing violent video games and violent behavior. Experimental research is criticized, especially when using children, because unnatural settings tend to lead to unnatural results; studies using more natural surroundings have found few violent effects from playing violent video games. Other studies suggest that children need opportunities to experience fantasy violence to distinguish between real and fictional violence and to deal with the real violence in their own lives (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception). Some games are associated with enhanced learning. They engage students and reinforce curricular content. Serious games are being designed to teach emergency response skills, government budgeting, and city planning, as well as health and wellness topics such as biofeedback and asthma management (→ Media Effects; Computer Games and Child Development; Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cinema ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Digital Media, History of ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Media Effects ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Youth Culture

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## **Video Malaise**

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The term “video malaise” was coined by political scientist Michael Robinson in 1975 in reference to a hypothesis that viewership of televised public affairs programming results



in an increased sense of malaise, or vague cynicism or detachment, regarding political institutions, processes, and actors. The rationale was based on a discernible decrease in the 1960s and 1970s in political trust, confidence, and efficacy (→ Political Efficacy) among US citizens, coupled with the rise of → television news and related programming as their dominant source of political information (→ Political News). Various scholars and critics had previously claimed that television posed a unique presentation format and a perceived negative tilt against established political institutions and values. Similar views were voiced in other western democracies (→ Political Cynicism; Negativity).

Some empirical evidence at the time provided partial support for the proposition, but other data were contradictory, as is more the case recently. Nonetheless, the notion gained intellectual and popular currency in part as a result of ongoing conflicts over the role of mass media in western democracies, and the presumed influence of television in particular on political and social culture. More recent work has attempted to tie variations on video malaise, or more generally “*media malaise*,” to such phenomena as decreased credibility in both the media and political institutions, characteristics of political campaigns (especially negative advertising), and increased social and civic isolation resulting from media use. These arguments remain compelling to many, despite largely sketchy and conflicting research evidence.

### **ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT MEDIA INFLUENCE**

Reasoned speculation about the potential for mass media influence on political and social norms and values grew rapidly after World War II, especially in the US. Most of the scholarship emphasized reinforcement of existing norms and values rather than change. Lazarsfeld and Merton’s prescient 1948 essay, “Mass communication, popular taste, and organized social action,” defined several social functions of mass media as operating in that sense (→ Lazarsfeld, Paul F.). However, they noted one potential dysfunction: a “*narcotizing dysfunction*” view of media posed that increased public attendance to a rising “flood” of mediated information could lead to less social action, superficial involvement, and political apathy and inertness. Kurt and Gladys Lang suggested (1959) that television in particular could lead to more passive political activity (→ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on).

Empirical research of the era, however, worked against such arguments. The largely campaign-based media effects studies of the 1940s and 1950s supported the then-popular “minimal effects” view of media, including television, on voter knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors (→ Media Effects, History of). It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that research began taking a broader view of possible media influences on public opinion beyond voting, including political socialization, participation, and the shaping of attitudes and values. The first published research evidence linking television public affairs viewership with political malaise appeared in 1976 in an *American Political Science Review* article by Michael Robinson. Robinson combined a series of experiments with re-analyses of several → survey datasets, impressively making an “equivocal” case that television news viewership was linked to indicators of political malaise in national population samples of US adults, and giving experimental evidence (→ Experimental Design) that exposure to a televised negative portrayal of the Pentagon resulted in less positive beliefs about the military.

## COINING THE TERM

The specific rationale Robinson initially offered for the video malaise proposition is intriguing. As noted above, television had become by far the major source of political news for most of the public, and, equally if not more important, much of that viewing audience was less politically involved to begin with (→ Political Media Use). Robinson termed this portion of the audience “inadvertent”: they were likely watching television for other reasons, and inadvertently came across political information they would likely not have gotten otherwise, e.g., from newspapers or interpersonal sources. With television in many cases as their only source of political news, the effect became magnified for them. News audiences also uniformly ascribed high credibility to the programming, high trust in television news anchors, and belief in the accuracy of information being provided; hence, television news had more persuasive capability (→ Credibility of Content).

Insofar as the medium itself is concerned, Robinson pointed to considerable evidence that television news, unlike print, almost inherently plays up a more dramatic or thematic portrayal of events, following storylines to maintain audience interest. It tends to be more interpretive, which Robinson concluded lends itself to more negativism, contentiousness, and anti-institutionalism than would the same event reported in print (→ Negativity). Rather than an inherent bias against one political party or faction or another (→ Bias in the News), one can argue that television news took a more negative tone against one and all traditional establishments. Moreover, taking a historical view, in the US this research was evolving within the time frame of the debilitating departure of US armed forces from Southeast Asia, with all of the cleavages in American society and culture that spanned that era, not to mention the hard-to-imagine ongoing political drama of Watergate (→ Watergate Scandal). Whatever the merits of arguing that television was more negativistic than other media, the raw material for such coverage was present.

## EVIDENCE FROM SUBSEQUENT STUDIES

The inadvertent audience rationale behind video malaise was specifically tested in a study of the 1999 European elections, and found wanting. Schoenbach and Lauf (2002) posited that less politically interested citizens were “trapped” into viewership of televised campaign information by heightened coverage of the election on fewer available channels, and would thus be more influenced by television than other sources. However, less interested voters were largely able to tune out election coverage, and even for those who did not little television influence was found.

An extensive analysis of several American and European datasets by Norris (2000) found little if any evidence of media or video malaise, and in fact most of the findings flowed in the *opposite direction*: greater attention to news media including television correlated with higher levels of trust, confidence, and engagement in the political system (→ Attending to the Mass Media). Norris carefully posits a case for “a virtuous circle,” in which positive political dispositions lead to greater attention to political public affairs content, which in turn reinforces engagement in civic matters. While the data presented are post hoc and correlational at best, they do work against the malaise contention, and Norris’s rationale is a compelling one that takes into account changes in media systems

over recent decades. For example, in explaining why the views of the less or more negatively politically involved are not reinforced by media, Norris points to the more recent multimedia, multichannel information and entertainment environment, in which it is far easier for the disinterested or dismissive to tune out political content and choose more pleasing alternatives (→ Entertainment; Entertainment Content and Reality Perception). Further, to the extent that the disengaged are exposed to news media, they may see it as less credible, given considerable evidence that trust in government and the news media are well correlated.

More recent findings indicate a *reciprocal downward trend in trust* in both political institutions and the media, with general political malaise more likely to pull down the stature of the news media (Jones 2004). Other work has suggested that attacks and counterattacks between news media and government officials can contribute to the diminished credibility of both.

### CONDITIONS FOR MEDIA MALAISE EFFECTS

Norris also suggests that media malaise is more likely to exist with respect to specific kinds of political issues and content. Cappella and Jamieson (1997) and others offer extensive research on “*strategic*” news coverage of politics that emphasizes the contest-related or competitive aspects of politics, as well as candidate style, candidate tactics, and media depictions, as opposed to presumably more substantive coverage of political issues, candidate and party values, and the like. The argument goes that more strategic coverage leads to more citizen cynicism regarding politics and less engagement. While the link between strategic news and cynicism has been reasonably well established, the relationship to political engagement is less clear (→ Social Capital, Media Effects on). More recent research focused on European Union and integration issues indicates that impact on cynicism is a matter of degree and type of strategic news (De Vreese 2005). Further, the case is made that several studies have been unable to clearly link moderate levels of cynicism to political participation, and that perhaps a modicum of cynicism generated by strategic news or other means is not unhealthy for the politically more active.

Even more to the point regarding television, recent evidence points to *incivility* in political discourse as adversely affecting trust in government (Mutz and Reeves 2005). Televised, heated political arguments that transcend social norms for discussion and debate appear to reduce such trust, while stated differences of opinion in themselves do not (→ Deliberativeness in Political Communication; Political Discourse). Unfortunately, greater incivility in political discussions appears to promote greater viewership and interest, while more polite and reasoned discourse may have trouble finding an audience. Arguably, written debates or reports of them, no matter how acrid, are unlikely to depict to audiences the same emotional fervor as the more intimate televised experience. Yet other evidence appears to consistently suggest that negative political campaigning can be an effective strategy, perhaps particularly in mobilizing voter participation (Martin 2004).

Research focusing on media malaise propositions over the past three decades has largely lacked coherency and cohesion. Theoretic perspectives, operationalizations of the concepts involved, and frames of analysis have greatly varied from study to study. Part of the problem may be the typical intellectual drift that can occur when more emphasis is

placed on demonstrating the impact of an independent variable, e.g., television news, than on explaining the likely multitude of influences on a dependent variable such as political malaise, no matter how specifically defined. One suspects it may now be even harder to clarify linkages between mass media and political dispositions given the converging of media channels, the computer-driven personalization of media sources, and their more interactive nature.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Attitudes, Values, and Beliefs, Media Effects on ▶ Bias in the News ▶ Credibility of Content ▶ Deliberativeness in Political Communication ▶ Entertainment ▶ Entertainment Content and Reality Perception ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Lazarsfeld, Paul F. ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Negativity ▶ Political Cynicism ▶ Political Discourse ▶ Political Efficacy ▶ Political Media Use ▶ Political News ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Social Capital, Media Effects on ▶ Survey ▶ Television News ▶ Watergate Scandal

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# Violence against Journalists

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Violence against journalists is universal, found everywhere there is journalism. But the level and type of violence vary according to a series of factors, involving the general level of violence in a society or political system, the level of professionalism in the news media, and the extent to which violent action is useful in representing public opinion. Violence against journalists almost always includes a symbolic dimension; in some cases, the violence is primarily symbolic.

## EVIDENCE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS

Several organizations track violence against journalists worldwide. *Reporters without Borders* reports the number of journalists killed each year: 2006 (82), 2005 (63), 2004 (53), 2003 (40), 2002 (25). The *Committee to Protect Journalists* has been issuing an annual report, "Attacks on the press," for more than a decade (the reports from 1996 on are available online). The *International News Safety Institute*, a clearinghouse for a variety of journalism and human rights groups, reported in 2007 that more than 1,000 men and women had been killed in the previous 10 years while on the job. Their report lists 167 deaths for 2006, more than double the figure from *Reporters without Borders*, probably because the *News Safety Institute* included auxiliary personnel, like translators. The deadliest locations were in Iraq, Russia, and Colombia, countries that all had high levels of crime and civil unrest or both. These organizations note that, especially in conflict zones, journalists are increasingly subject to violent attack.

Wartime and social upheaval have always produced violence against journalists. The dangers of covering a war are integral to the mystique of the → war correspondent and especially the photojournalist, who want to get "Capa close" to the action, a term that refers to Robert Capa's iconic photographs of military action, from the Spanish Civil War through Vietnam (→ Photojournalism). And in social transitions, specific journalists become engaged and targeted through either partisanship or a determination to expose powerful interests. Autocracies use violence to stifle criticism (→ Freedom of the Press, Concept of), and → crime reporting can also be glamorously dangerous.

But the largest number of fatalities appeared in local reporting of crime and corruption. According to the *Committee to Protect Journalists*, the *most common cause of death* among journalists who have suffered violence is murder, and the most common perpetrators are political groups (26.7 percent), government officials (20.1), criminal groups (12.0), paramilitaries (8.4), and militaries (6.8), with the civilians outnumbering the military by a hefty margin. In China, for instance, a rapidly expanding media system at the beginning of the twenty-first century produced a wave of exposés of local corruption, and the targets of the exposés frequently became violent. In 2005, "dozens of uniformed traffic officers" attacked Wu Xianghu, deputy editor of a newspaper in coastal Taizhou, Zhejiang province, a day after his paper reported corruption in granting vehicle licenses. Senior officer Li

Xiaoguo was removed from his post for his role in the attack, *Xinhua* reported in October. Wu later died from his injuries (→ China: Media System).

Journalism is dangerous, but less dangerous than allied endeavors. To be a soldier is more dangerous than to be a war correspondent, to be a cop more than to be a crime reporter, and to be a labor organizer more than a sympathetic journalist (→ Labor in the Media). Nevertheless, throughout its history and always in its mythology, journalism has always courted danger.

## PATTERNS OF VIOLENCE

Beyond extraordinary events linked to war and social upheaval, patterns of violence are systemic to the operation of a press system and are evident in the histories of most societies. Violence operates at the boundaries of the → public sphere and can be a form of policing. Violence marks the limits of the legitimate operation of the press. In any political system, the media are involved in the representation of → public opinion. Historically, political forces attempt to capture the representation of public opinion through various means: making news, exerting political or economic pressure, winning elections. When peaceful means fail, violence becomes useful (→ Freedom of Communication).

Violence has been used to try to exclude ideas and groups from public discussion. Such exclusionary violence often appears to be a surrogate for government censorship (→ Censorship, History of). In US history, during the build-up to the Revolutionary War, patriots used crowd actions to target printers who published loyalist pamphlets, both to intimidate them and, acting as “the people out of doors,” to symbolically declare loyalism as outside of the sphere of acceptable public expression (→ Printer-Editors). In the nineteenth century, *antislavery organizations* were similarly targeted. The first antislavery publication in any particular locality was highly likely to be the target of a mob, usually one organized by local party leaders who wanted to show the national party that they were “sound” on the slavery issue. Throughout US history, minority and foreign-language publications were targets at moments of tension, also as a way of symbolically defining the limits of legitimate membership in the public (→ Ethnic Journalism; Minority Journalism). The *World War I period*, a watershed for the history of civil liberties generally in the United States, saw a rash of violent attacks against the publications of the large German-speaking minority group (which then experienced a net out-migration following the war) as well as against radical groups like the Industrial Workers of the World.

Violence against the press is a common feature in many countries whose populations are diverse. Communal media in India, for instance, have experienced violence similar to that visited upon African-Americans in the US south at the end of the nineteenth century. Such actions often look like spontaneous popular outbursts (→ Mediated Populism); they are usually carefully scripted to do so. When violence runs along ethnic or religious fault lines, its spontaneity becomes a matter of political contest. In the case of the international wave of violent unrest that greeted the publication of cartoons of the prophet Muhammad in the Danish *Jyllands Posten*, critics of protesters argued that the violence was staged as a way of delegitimizing the newspaper.

The line between public and private has also been a site of violence (→ Privacy). The subjects of personal criticism in the press, whether private or public figures, have often

struck back. Journalists and editors have at times assumed a certain level of combat to be part of the job. Mark Twain's satirical account of "Journalism in Tennessee" is testimony to the ordinariness of this sort of violence in the nineteenth-century United States; the same has been true of highly partisan media in other developing nations (→ Partisan Press). Although generally too low in social stature to merit the ritual, journalists have also *engaged in dueling*. The expectation that a public insult would occasion an opportunity for "satisfaction" by dueling was common. In France, Émile de Girardin, founding editor of the cheap popular Conservative newspaper *La Presse*, killed Armand Carrel, editor of the more established *Le National*, in a duel in 1836. Incidents of personal violence like these have often been primarily political in nature, although they have been choreographed to look like affairs of honor. In recent years, personal violence has been directed more often at journalists covering celebrities, so-called *paparazzi*, for instance, who intrude too closely on what their subjects want to be a protected personal space. This is a depoliticized version of personal violence.

Another common pattern of violence against the press involves *labor issues*. The publicists for labor movements have been targets of violence, though not as often as on-the-ground organizers. Labor activists have also targeted anti-labor newspapers, the most famous case being the bombing of the *Los Angeles Times* in 1910. Within news organizations, too, tensions between workers and management have occasionally produced violence, especially during strikes (→ News Workers). In the United States, the most famous incidents occurred during the 1912 strike in Chicago, during which the newspapers formed a united front and secured the services of Max Annenberg to provide muscle to intimidate newsboys into accepting an offer. Annenberg had honed his techniques during the frequently violent circulation wars of the previous decade, when he had hired out his services first to Hearst's *Chicago Journal* and then to other Chicago newspapers.

A final form of violence that has become more common as the media have become more concentrated in ownership and management is inclusionary. *Movements that feel themselves neglected* by the news media will sometimes commit acts of spectacular violence to claim coverage for themselves. During the 1980s in Peru, for instance, Shining Path operatives attacked the press as well as bombing banks, electrical towers, and other establishment symbols to gain public attention (Barnhurst 1991). In a sense, most terrorism is a form of inclusionary violence. On a more mundane level, acts of vandalism, like inserting fake wraparounds in newspapers in newsboxes, can also be called inclusionary.

## VIOLENCE AND PROFESSIONALIZATION

Because violence is an effective means of intervening in the process of representing public opinion, it is always present in some measure in a press system. In most developed democracies, however, the level of violence is quite low. This might be a result of ownership patterns and market conditions, which discourage the kind of ideological competition that previously nurtured violence. It might also be tied to the → professionalization of journalism, which tends to insulate newswriters from the more personal forms of attack.

Because violence has occurred wherever the press is seen to be an agent of real or potential political transformation, the diminution of violence in a national system might appear as a sad commentary on the power of the press. In the most professionalized press systems,

there is very little violence. But often there is a perception that work is becoming more dangerous. Why? Perhaps the muckraker ideology that pervades the professional press also invites a *myth of violent retribution* (→ Muckraking). It is also possible that the professionalization of the press gives greater visibility to violence. The more “white-collar” journalists become, the less reasonable violent attacks seem. A blue-collar reporter might expect to be slugged occasionally, but a white-collar journalist: that is man-bites-dog territory.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ China: Media System ▶ Crime Reporting  
▶ Ethnic Journalism ▶ Freedom of Communication ▶ Freedom of the Press, Concept of  
▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Labor in the Media ▶ Mediated Populism ▶ Minority  
Journalism ▶ Muckraking ▶ News Workers ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Photojournalism  
▶ Printer-Editors ▶ Privacy ▶ Professionalization of Journalism ▶ Public Opinion  
▶ Public Sphere ▶ War Correspondents

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## **Violence as Media Content**

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Most of what we know about violence in the media has explored violence on → television. While some studies of television violence were conducted during the 1950s and 1960s, most of the information about the amount of violence on television in the US comes from the long-term research conducted as part of the Cultural Indicators (CI) Project’s analysis of samples of prime-time network programs (1967 to 2002; → Cultivation Theory; Gerbner, George) and the National Television Violence Study’s (NTVS) short-term analysis of a larger sample of network and cable channels from the mid-1990s (→ Television Networks; Cable Television). In the UK, information about television violence comes from an analysis of samples of programs from the mid-1990s. Knowledge about television violence in other countries (Japan or the Netherlands, for example)



comes from studies looking at violence in samples of programs taken at one point in time. Most of these studies, whether conducted in the US or in other countries, focus on physical violence (hurting or killing) because emotional violence is extremely difficult to define and isolate in a consistent way.

### **AMOUNT OF VIOLENCE IN TELEVISION PROGRAMMING**

The CI studies examine and measure the amount of physical violence on television by monitoring network broadcast television programming. These analyses show that the levels of violence on television are quite high and have been relatively stable for the past 30 years. Gerbner et al. (1994) found, for samples of prime-time network programs broadcast between 1973 and 1992 (N = 1,306), that violence appeared in 7 out of 10 programs at the rate of 4.6 incidents per program, and that half of the major characters in these programs were involved in violence. Signorielli (2003) found in samples of prime-time programs broadcast between 1993 and 2002 (N = 1,127) that violence appeared in 6 out of 10 programs at an average rate of 4.5 acts of violence per program.

The NTVS (Federman 1998) examined physical violence in three samples (1994–1995, 1995–1996, and 1996–1997) of composite weeks of programming across 23e channels operating between 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. each day. The sample (N = 8,200) included broadcast (commercial networks, independent stations, and public television) and cable channels (basic and premium channels such as HBO). This sample presents a broader picture of violence on television than the CI perspective. In all of the programming sampled, the NTVS found no change in the prevalence of violence from the 1994–1995 to the 1996–1997 television seasons. Moreover, roughly 60 percent of the programs in each sample contained violence, findings very similar to those of the CI researchers.

In the UK, Gunter et al. (2003) sampled programming for 20 days in both 1994–1995 (N = 5,607) and 1995–1996 (N = 7,237). In both samples, the percentage of programs with violence was considerably smaller than in the US studies. In the 1994–1995 sample, 37 percent of the programs were violent, whereas in the 1995–1996 sample, 45 percent were violent. The increase was due to inclusion of programs on the satellite channels as well as the addition of two satellite channels (TNT/Cartoon network and Sky Sports; → Satellite Television) in the second year of the study. Both the NTVS and the UK study found that premium movie channels (e.g., HBO) had the most violence – more than 8 out of 10 of the programs in these samples contained violence.

There have been several studies of television violence in other countries. *Japanese* television programs, for example, are considerably more violent than programs in most other countries but quite similar to US programming (Iwao et al. 1981). Japanese television violence, however, tends to be more graphic than violence seen in other countries. Interestingly, many recent → cartoon programs now seen in the US (*Pokémon*, *Dragon Ball Z*, *Digimon*, etc.) are Japanese → animation that are specifically translated for the US market (→ Anime; Rutenburg 2001). Violence in the programming seen in the *Netherlands* is similar in level to that seen in the US (Bouwman & Signorielli 1985). *Canadian* television is considerably less violent than US programming. Nevertheless, because most Canadians can easily see a considerable amount of US television, audiences would see less violence only if they watched primarily Canadian-produced programs (Gosselin et al.

1997). *Finnish* programming is also less violent than US television, although imported programs tend to be more violent (Mustonen & Pulkkinen 1993). Likewise, *Korean* television is less violent than US programming (Kapoor et al. 1994).

Overall, the US studies, particularly those conducted in the 1990s, show stability in the amount of violence on television: violence appears in roughly 6 out of 10 programs in the US. Consequently, whether viewers watch network broadcast channels or cable channels, it is relatively difficult to avoid violence. From an international perspective, countries that import considerable amounts of programming from the US have levels of violence on television similar to those seen in the US, whereas those that do not import many programs have lower levels of violence. One of the reasons for the high level of violence in imported (typically US) programs is that violence transcends language barriers – it is relatively easy to translate because pictures are self-explanatory.

### THE CONTEXT OF VIOLENCE

The way violence is presented on television (i.e., the context in which it appears) is an important consideration. The NTVS advanced understanding of the way violence is presented on television, particularly its contextual elements, by examining the consequences of violence, whether humor was involved, the graphic nature of the violence (→ Television, Visual Characteristics of), whether weapons were used, and the degree of → realism in the violence. The analysis of data from 1994 to 1995 found that the context in which violence is presented poses risks for viewers. In particular, three-quarters of the violent scenes were committed by characters who were not punished, negative consequences of violence were rarely presented, one-quarter of the violence incidents involved the use of a handgun, and less than 1 in 20 programs emphasized anti-violence themes.

Yet television violence was not particularly graphic (bloody or gory). Even though broadcast network programs had less violence than cable channels, the context of violence on both broadcast and cable was similar. Prime-time broadcast network programming and basic cable programming were less likely than premium cable programming to include violent interactions that depicted pain or harm. Consequently, prime-time network broadcast programs show relatively low levels of pain and suffering. Similarly, CI research also found that violence tends to lack context and that most programs do not show any long-term consequences of violence, such as remorse, regret, or sanctions. The lack of contextual elements is not limited to US programming. The UK study found that programming does not show violence that is particularly harmful and that there was little evidence of blood, gore, and pain. Most of the motives for violence in UK television were related to evil and destruction. The major situations in which violence occurred were interpersonal disputes and crime, followed by scenes focusing on power and self-preservation.

### WHO IS INVOLVED?

Any discussion of the amount of violence on television must examine the characters who do the hurting and killing or are hurt and killed. CI studies show that television violence illustrates and provides lessons about power. Violence illustrates who is on top and who is on the bottom, who gets hurt and who does the hurting, and who wins and who loses.

These studies consistently find a power structure related to character demographics, with earlier studies finding women and minorities more likely to be hurt than to hurt others. In addition, during prime time, men are more likely than women to be hurt (victimized) or hurt others (commit violence).

In the programs of the 1980s, men were slightly less likely to be involved in violence than in the programs of the 1970s. Fewer characters still were involved in violence between 1993 and 2002. Whites and minorities were equal likely to be victimized or commit violence (about a quarter of both whites and minorities). During the 1990s, the ratios of hurting to being hurt changed from the patterns seen in the 1970s and 1980s for women but not for men. Today, for every 10 male characters who hurt or kill, 11 are victimized, the same ratio found in the earlier samples. For women, however, instead of 16 women being victimized for each woman who hurts or kills, the odds are even – women are equally likely to hurt or kill and to be hurt or killed. Moreover, although whites are a little more likely to be victimized than to hurt others, the odds for minority characters are even (→ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media; Stereotypes).

Although the NTVS did not generate a profile of characters on television, it did examine the demographic characteristics of perpetrators (those who commit) and targets (victims) of violence. Most of the perpetrators (close to three-quarters) were men; only 1 in 10 was a woman. Few perpetrators were categorized as heroes, and most were white. Similarly, most of the targets were men and most were white. Potter and colleagues (1995), in looking at a composite week of evening programming (6 p.m. to midnight) on four networks, also found that television typically presents an unrealistic picture of serious aggression in regard to the race of those who commit the acts as well as of those who are victimized. In short, television over-represents both white perpetrators and white victims of aggression. Overall the research shows that more men than women and more whites than minorities are involved in violence. Similarly, studies conducted in the UK found that women were much less likely to be involved in violence.

### **THE MESSAGE OF VIOLENT CONTENT**

Overall, the consensus of findings from studies of media content indicated that contemporary television programs and video games may not adequately support or reinforce the lesson that “crime does not pay.” On television, the lack of adequate contexts for violent behaviors may transmit the lesson that violence is “sanitary,” that it is not necessarily immoral, and that those characters who commit violence are not sorry for their actions and may not be punished for their transgressions – in short, there are few, if any, consequences of committing violence.

Thus, the environment of violent entertainment in which many people, including children, spend most of their free time may be potentially harmful. Last, the lack of realistic contexts for violence on television may signal that aggression and violence are acceptable modes of behavior (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of; Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Animation ▶ Anime ▶ Cable Television ▶ Cartoons ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Realism ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in

the Media ► Sexual Violence in the Media ► Stereotypes ► Television ► Television Networks ► Television, Visual Characteristics of ► Violence as Media Content, Effects of ► Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## **Violence as Media Content, Effects of**

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Discussion of the harmful effects of media violence is as old as the media themselves. There is no medium that has not been suspected of stimulating real-world aggression. Spectacular violent acts such as those in Littleton, Colorado (where in 1999 two teenagers murdered 13 people before committing suicide), or Erfurt, Germany (where in 2002 a 19 year old killed 16 people and himself), regularly instigate public interest on this topic. Although there is a huge body of research on the effects of media violence, public discussion

rarely reflects scientific knowledge (→ Entertainment, Effects of). This may be due to the fact that the results are complex, sometimes contradictory, and do not allow for simple conclusions. However, on the basis of this research some widely accepted assertions about the effects of violence in the media are possible.

Research has mainly focused on the effects of fictional television violence. Recently, however, there has been much interest in violent content in music and music videos (e.g., Smith & Boyson 2002; Anderson et al. 2003), the Internet (e.g., Slater 2003), and especially in computer games (e.g., Carnagey & Anderson 2004; Sherry 2007). Typically, research examines the media depictions of personal violence (i.e., intended physical and/or psychic damaging of a person, living beings, and inanimate objects by another person).

### THEORIES OF PRO- AND ANTI-SOCIAL EFFECTS

Research on the effects of mediated violence has been conducted within several theoretical frameworks. The roots of → *catharsis theory*, which was very popular for a long time, can be tracked back to Aristotle, for whom catharsis meant “the homeopathic cleansing of affects” through compassion and fear aroused by tragic theatre. According to modern catharsis theory (Feshbach 1961), the viewing of media violence would lead to an engagement in fantasy aggression that permits the purging of one’s feelings and the discharge of aggressive tendencies such that the viewer is less inclined to behave aggressively after viewing violent media content. Catharsis theory could not be confirmed by research and has been abandoned by the scientific community, although it is still very popular in non-scientific discussions.

An alternative explanation for sporadic findings of aggression reduction is *inhibition theory*, which assumes a deterrent effect of media violence that causes fear and inhibits aggressive behavior. Grimm (1999) assumes a process of “negative learning” by which the overt depiction of horrible consequences for the victim leads to a critical reflection of the violent perpetrator’s behavior – unless empathy with the victim is so intense that it triggers an aggressive impulse of revenge (the “Robespierre effect”).

The simple assumption that media violence is imitated directly through a *suggestion process* has been clearly refuted. However, there may be special conditions that allow imitation of violent acts. Contagious effects of media violence have been studied concerning homicide, running amok, and suicide. The imitation of suicides is also labeled the “Werther effect” because Goethe’s *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (published in 1774) allegedly led so many people to commit suicide that in some countries the book was banned. Phillips (1974) showed that after intense coverage of suicides (e.g., Marilyn Monroe’s) the suicide rate rose in the USA and in Great Britain. In Germany, statistical proof for imitations of suicide was provided by a study on a television film in the early 1980s in which a 19-year-old high school student committed suicide by throwing himself in front of a train (Schmidtke & Häfner 1988). Imitations of this type of suicide could most clearly be proved for people most similar to the model, male youths aged 15 to 19 in this case. However, media content seems to be only one of many more important causes or the final trigger for an action planned long before. In any case, the details of the media content and the attributes of the recipient must be considered.

Although the simple suggestion mechanism has been refuted by research, public discussion on the contagious effects of violent media depiction is ongoing, and this discussion on the risks of media violence holds a risk in itself: Aggressors often tend to justify their behavior by referring to role models on television. This rationalization of one's own behavior can happen both before an offense (thus facilitating violent behavior) and after it. Denying responsibility by blaming it on the media is so popular because the delinquents can present and/or see themselves as led by external forces. The *habituation theory* emphasizes cumulative, long-term effects (→ Media Effects Duration). It assumes that media violence causes emotional blunting and desensitization. As some followers of the habituation theory maintain, this not only reduces emotional and physiological reactions to violent media content and increases the need for stronger stimuli, but also affects attitudes toward violence in real life. It reduces empathy with the victims of violence, increases tolerance for violent behavior in others, and reduces the inhibition threshold for one's own aggressive behavior. Although some studies seem to back it, habituation is not yet scientifically proven.

Another approach that deals with long-term effects of media violence is *cultivation theory*. It assumes that heavy television viewers suffer from a distorted view of social reality. Viewing violence thus may cultivate fear of crime and the belief that the world is a mean and scary place (→ Cultivation Effects; Gerbner, George). Research is currently concentrating on intervening variables in that process such as the experience of victimization, exploring the effects of special media content (e.g., crime movies), and seeking to explain information processing leading to cultivation in more detail. Additionally it has to be clarified to what extent fear is not the result but the cause of heavy television viewing (escapism).

According to → *excitation transfer theory* different types of media content (violence, but also eroticism, humor, sports, etc.) cause a state of unspecific arousal that intensifies subsequent actions. The behavior being intensified depends on the particular situation and does not relate to the content of the media stimulus. For example, erotic media stimuli may intensify aggression while media violence may foster caring behavior.

The state of arousal and the current situation also are important factors in *stimulation theory*, which is based on → *frustration aggression theory*. According to Berkowitz (1970), certain types of media violence (e.g., violence that is presented as justified) enhance violent behavior under circumstances in which the viewer is emotionally aroused (e.g., due to frustration; → Excitation and Arousal) and meets situational cues that are associated with the actual feeling of anger or with past experiences, or that generally instigate aggression (e.g., weapons). A state of emotional arousal brought about by frustration leads to an aggressive disposition and can result in violent behavior if watching media violence bears a resemblance to the real situation.

Later, Berkowitz (1984) focused on the possibility that media violence could prime thoughts of aggression, making actual violent behavior more likely. The concept of *priming* (→ Priming Theory) is based on "cognitive neo-association theory" and means that in brain cognition, emotions and behavioral tendencies are connected via associative pathways or neuronal networks. If a stimulus (e.g., media violence) activates a node inside this network (priming), activation spreads to related nodes, activating associatively connected thoughts, emotions, and behavior. This process happens automatically and

unconsciously, and it influences the interpretation of new stimuli and makes aggressive behavior more probable in the near future. However, priming theory also assumes that through repeated stimulation, activation may become chronic, resulting in long-term effects. Scientific results support priming theory but priming processes still have to be described more precisely.

Priming is closely connected to *script theory*. Scripts are mental routines that are stored in memory and applied to guide behavior and to solve problems (→ Scripts; Schemas and Media Effects). Scripts contain information about the typical course of an event (e.g., consultation of a doctor, dealing with provocation), people's behavior, and the outcome of actions. It is assumed that children who watch much media violence will develop scripts concentrating on violent solutions to a problem. Situational cues will activate the matching scripts. Scripts that are frequently repeated can be accessed more easily. Media content can help to develop new scripts and to activate existing ones.

### SHORT- AND LONG-TERM EFFECTS

Bandura's *theory of social learning* seems to be the most appropriate approach to explain the quite heterogeneous results of medium-to-long-term studies on media violence (→ Observational Learning; Bandura, Albert). It postulates that people adopt patterns of behavior by observing other people's actions (in reality or in the media). However, these patterns do not necessarily have to be acted out. Normally, they remain latent. Violent actions usually underlie inhibiting conditions (e.g., social norms, fear of punishment or revenge, sense of guilt). Violent patterns of behavior only transfer into manifest action under adequate conditions. This may happen if the person encounters a situation that resembles one observed before and if he or she has the means necessary for imitation (e.g., special weapons).

The most important factor, however, is the consequence of a certain behavior (success or failure, reward or punishment) experienced by the role model and/or experienced or expected by the observers themselves. Factors considered by the theory of social learning comprise the attributes of media contents (e.g., importance, explicitness, comprehensibility, efficiency, justification, rewards for violence) and of the observer (e.g., character, cognitive abilities, state of arousal, interests, former experiences with a certain behavior) and social conditions (e.g., socialization, norms and values in family and peer group). Social learning theory takes into account that different observers perceive the same contents differently and derive different consequences for their own actions (→ Selective Perception and Selective Retention). Against this background, the finding that children who possess no preference for violent media contents will not show any tendency toward violent behavior, even after long contact with it, does not contradict the theory.

From the perspective of social learning theory, the *general patterns of television violence* facilitate learning and implementation of violent patterns of behavior (→ Violence as Media Content). As a rule, the plot is suspenseful and exciting, assuring the necessary attention. Violent acts normally are simple (i.e., easy to perceive and just as easy to imitate). Since the "good" heroes also massively use violence to achieve their aims (e.g., justice), they are suited for identification. Furthermore, violence almost always pays off. Hence, observer can conclude that he or she only needs to be careful enough to avoid the

punishment most of the “baddies” suffer at the end of a plot, although up to then they have successfully used violence in many sequences. Overall, violence is shown as a normal, everyday behavior. Although the acts of violence as such are highly unrealistic (hardly any wounds, injuries, etc.), the models themselves are depicted realistically.

New results indicate that in judging the harmful effects of media violence, it is important not only to consider the attributes of violent role models. The results rather suggest that the recipient often identifies with the *victim* of media violence, resulting in a deterrent effect on violent actions (Grimm 1999).

### AN INTEGRATIVE MODEL

The latest theoretical development in media violence research is the *general aggression model* (Carnagey & Anderson 2004), which tries to integrate different concepts such as learning theory, priming, script theory, and excitation transfer theory. The model suggests that behavior is the result of two input variables: the person (including character, attitudes, values, scripts, current state) and the situation (environmental factors like aggressive cues, rewards, provocation, etc.).

These input variables influence the appraisal of a situation and the subsequent impulsive or thoughtful choice of behavior by influencing the current internal state of a person. This happens through three main routes of impact that may interact: cognition (aggressive constructs become more accessible), affect (evoking of hostility), and increase of arousal. The person's behavior results in reactions in the environment that may influence the input variables and lead to reinforcement or inhibition of the chosen behavior in the future.

Based on this cyclical process, the general aggression model also posits long-term effects, because repeated exposure to violent stimuli helps to develop easily accessible aggression-related knowledge structures that may be reinforced by successful application and that become increasingly complex, automatized, and resistant to change. Together with desensitization effects, this may lead to the development of an aggressive personality.

### EFFECTS STRENGTH AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Most researchers agree that media violence may cause negative effects. However, these effects have to be considered in a differentiated way. Correlations found in empirical studies on television violence are usually quite small (between  $r = 0.1$  and  $r = 0.31$ , which means that at most 9 percent of aggression is explained by media violence; Comstock & Scharrer 2003). Although it is assumed that violence in computer games ( $\rightarrow$  Computer Games and Reality Perception; Computer Games and Child Development) should be far more dangerous (because of the player's active role, the current repetition of violent acts that are rewarded immediately, etc.), and research indicates negative cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects, particularly strong effects of computer game violence have not been found up to now.

These small effects point to the fact that media violence is only one factor within a complex network of causes for real-world aggression. However, a small correlation between media violence and violent behavior that holds true for the average of recipients



does not mean that strong effects for particular forms of media contents and for particular recipients cannot be found.

*Future research* should concentrate on the conditions for negative effects to emerge. In doing so, three main factors of influence must be considered (Kunczik & Zipfel 2006): quality of media content, attributes of the recipient, and his or her social environment. According to the present state of knowledge, negative effects of media violence are most likely to occur to young, male, socially deprived heavy viewers who already possess a violent personality, grow up in violent families with high media (violence) usage, experience much violence from their parents and in school, and belong to aggressive and/or delinquent peer groups. The last point means that they are exposed to a “double dose” of violent role models.

Violent media contents and their own violent experiences interact and reinforce each other; violent media models are much more interesting and “useful” for children growing up in a violent environment, and additionally, the violent behavior of media models seems to be quite normal to them. These recipients are even more at risk if the media content they perceive presents violence in a realistic and/or humorous context, if violent behavior seems justified and is committed by attractive, successful protagonists with whom the recipient can identify (e.g., also because of the resemblance between them), and especially if violence is not punished and does not harm the victim in a visible way. These factors are not independent of each other, but the interaction patterns are not yet described in detail. This remains an important scientific task to be fulfilled.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Catharsis Theory ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Computer Games and Reality Perception ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Desensitization ▶ Entertainment, Effects of ▶ Excitation and Arousal ▶ Excitation Transfer Theory ▶ Frustration Aggression Theory ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Schemas and Media Effects ▶ Scripts ▶ Selective Perception and Selective Retention ▶ Victimization, Secondary ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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Many children today spend more time consuming media than they spend attending school, or in any other activity except for sleeping. By “media” we mean any form of mass communication such as → television, → Internet, video and computer games (→ Video Games), comic books (→ Comics), and → radio. Violence is a dominant theme in most forms of media. For example, content analyses show that about 60 percent of television programs in the USA contain violence, and so do about 70–90 percent of the top-selling video games. By “violence” we mean an extreme act of physical aggression, such as assaulting another person (→ Violence as Media Content).

### EFFECT TYPES

For decades researchers have investigated the short- and long-term effects of media violence (→ Media Effects, History of). These researchers have found evidence for at least two important short-term effects and three important long-term ones. The *short-term effects* are “priming effect” (→ Priming Theory), i.e., exposure to media violence immediately stimulates aggressive thoughts and ideas, and “mimicry effect”, i.e., children immediately

mimic whatever they see, including violent behaviors they see in the mass media. The *long-term effects* are the “mean-world effect” (→ Cultivation Effects), i.e., the more violent media children consume, the more they think the world is a mean and hostile place and the more afraid they are likely to become; the → “observational learning effect,” i.e., the more violent media children consume, the more likely they are to think and act like the aggressors they observe, even long afterward; and the → “desensitization effect,” i.e., the more violent media children consume, the more tolerant and accepting they become of violence (→ Media Effects; Media Effects Duration; Violence as Media Content, Effects of).

### Short-Term Effects

Experimental studies on *priming effects* have shown that exposing participants of any age to violent media for relatively short amounts of time (e.g., 20 minutes) causes increases in their aggressive thoughts, angry feelings, and aggressive behaviors (for a review see Anderson et al. 2003; → Experimental Design). For example, laboratory experiments have shown that exposure to violent media makes people more willing to shock others or blast others with loud noise (→ Experiment, Laboratory). The exposure to violent media activates these aggressive ideas and thoughts in the mind (primes them), which in turn makes aggressive behavior more likely.

Experiments on *mimicry effects* have shown that even very young children will immediately mimic violent or nonviolent behaviors they see being done in the mass media. Bandura et al. (1963) first showed this for nursery school kids hitting “Bobo” dolls, but others have shown the same effect with nursery school kids hitting other kids (Bjorkqvist 1985; → Bandura, Albert). The propensity to mimic facial expressions and simple observed behaviors seems to be a “hard-wired” process that emerges in infancy. It is differentiated from “imitation,” which is a longer-term process requiring encoding of a script, its retention in memory, and its use at a later time.

Heavy TV viewers (defined as viewing for 4 hours per day or more) are more fearful about becoming victims of violence, are more distrustful of others, and are more likely to perceive the world as a dangerous, mean, and hostile place. The description of this as *mean-world syndrome* is derived from → cultivation theory (Gerbner 1969; → Gerbner, George), which claims that repeated exposure to television has small but cumulative effects on people’s beliefs about what the real world is like. This process seems to begin early in childhood, with even 7–11 year olds displaying this pattern (Peterson & Zill 1981). In general, the mean-world syndrome only seems to apply to appraisals of environments with which people have relatively little experience. Although violent media makes people more afraid of crime in their city, exposure to violent media has relatively little impact on people’s feelings of safety in their own neighborhood.

### Long-Term Effects

Although Bandura first included both short-term and long-term copying of observed behaviors under the rubric of “imitation” or “observational learning,” more recent theoretical approaches to imitation have distinguished immediate copying of observed behaviors (called *mimicry*) from delayed copying (called *imitation or observational learning*). Often

what is acquired in observational learning is not a simple behavior but behavioral → scripts, beliefs, → attitudes, and other → cognitions that make a class of behaviors (e.g., aggressive behaviors) more likely. A number of longitudinal studies have now shown that exposure to media violence in childhood has a significant impact on children's real-world aggression and violence when they grow up (Anderson et al. 2003; → Longitudinal Analysis).

For example, in one study children exposed to violent media were significantly more aggressive 15 years later (Huesmann et al. 2003). Importantly, this study also found that aggression as a child was unrelated to exposure to violent media as a young adult, effectively ruling out the possibility that this relationship is merely a result of more aggressive children consuming more violent media. The effects of violent video games on children's attitudes toward violence are of particular concern. Feeling empathy requires taking the perspective of the victim, whereas violent video games encourage players to take the perspective of the perpetrator. Exposure to violent TV programs and films increases people's pro-violence attitudes, but exposure to violent video games has the additional consequence of teaching decreased empathy for victims (Funk et al. 2004; → Computer Games and Child Development).

In part, this impact occurs because exposure to violent media desensitizes people emotionally to violence and makes them more tolerant of their own aggression (see below). However, a more important process is likely that violent media teaches children that violent behavior is an appropriate means of solving problems, the violent scripts they can use to solve social problems, and that good consequences can come from behaving violently. As adults children do not recall exactly the violent behaviors they saw in the media as children but they do imitate those behaviors, because they learned lasting beliefs that make those behaviors likely.

People who consume a lot of violent media become less sympathetic to victims of violence. For example, research has shown that after exposure to violent media people show more sympathy for perpetrators of violence and less empathy toward their victims. The reduced empathy for victims of violence can cause people to become less willing to help violence victims in the real world and more likely to accept violent behavior in themselves and others. In one such study, children who saw a violent movie were then less willing to intervene when they saw two younger children fighting (Drabman & Thomas 1974). One reason why people may become more tolerant of violence and less empathic toward victims is that they become emotionally desensitized to it over time (*desensitization effect*). Research has shown that after consuming violent media, people are less physiologically aroused by real depictions of violence (e.g., Carnagey et al. in press; → Habituation).

### **MODERATORS AND SIZE OF VIOLENT MEDIA EFFECTS**

Although it is clear that violent media make people more aggressive, more tolerant of violence, and more fearful of crime, not all forms of violence are alike. Media that glamorize violence and feature attractive role models (e.g., "good guys") may have a particularly strong influence, especially when the model's behaviors are reinforced. Whether someone is more likely to become an aggressor or a victim may also depend on whom they identify with, the perpetrators of violence, or their victims. However, for practical purposes, the sheer amount and variety of violence children are exposed to makes it likely that all children

are vulnerable to these effects in varying degrees. Both boys and girls are affected. Both more and less intelligent children are affected. Both aggressive and nonaggressive children are affected. The long-term effects are greater for children than for adults (Bushman & Huesmann 2006).

The effect of violent media on aggression is not trivial, either, ranging from a significance of 0.2 to 0.3 on the average. For example, exposure to violent media is a larger risk factor for youth violence than other well-known risk factors such as low IQ, being from a broken home, having abusive parents, and having antisocial peers (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2001, Table 4-1).

Smoking cigarettes provides a good analogy for violent media effects (Bushman & Anderson 2001). Not everyone who smokes gets lung cancer, and not everyone who has lung cancer smokes, but smoking is an important risk factor for lung cancer. Similarly, not everyone who consumes violent media becomes aggressive, and not every aggressive person consumes violent media, but violent media is an important risk factor for aggression. Smoking one cigarette probably will not give a person lung cancer, but repeated smoking over time greatly increases the risk. Watching one violent program or playing one violent video game probably will not make a person more aggressive, but repeated exposure over time greatly increases the risk.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attitudes ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cognition ▶ Comics ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Desensitization ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Habituation ▶ Internet ▶ Longitudinal Analysis ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Effects Duration ▶ Media Effects, History of ▶ Observational Learning ▶ Priming Theory ▶ Radio ▶ Scripts ▶ Television ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of

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## **Violence and the Media, History of**

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For over a century violence in the media has been framed as a “problem” by social commentators. The arrival of a new medium (from the early tabloids to comic books, from → cinema to the → Internet) has typically been accompanied by a wave of concern about its potential for “exposing” an audience to representations considered undesirable by policymakers and moral guardians (→ Tabloid Press; Comics; Morality and Taste in Media Content). It is no accident that it is the mass availability of these texts that has typically been of concern: the “mass” audience being conceived as endangered and dangerous, vulnerable and victimizing (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects of). These concerns have also shaped academic debate. As a result, work on violence in the media has been concentrated in social science disciplines, particularly in the US, and the work of arts and humanities scholars has been marginalized in public debate and policymaking.

### **DEFINING VIOLENCE**

One of the difficulties of summarizing this work is that there is no clear consensus as to what violence is. Much work in the field has defined violence as a physical action (a punch, a slap, a shooting). One of the benefits of such a definition is that it makes it relatively easy to determine how much violence there is in a text or group of texts. Content analysis has been a key method for analyzing violence in the media (→ Content Analysis, Quantitative; Content Analysis, Qualitative), particularly on television (although “television” has itself become more difficult to define, and hence sample, as channels and modes of delivery have multiplied). Such studies have measured violence and tracked changes in the amount and nature of violence on television over fixed periods. The most influential of these studies in the US is the Cultural Indicators Project begun by → George Gerbner and his colleagues in the 1960s (Gerbner et al. 1994).

The findings of these studies are easily extracted by policymakers – typically in sensationalist terms – but such statistics cannot shed light on the *meaning of violence*, with the emphasis on action and the inevitably limited sample period diminishing important differences in generic context. For example, it is difficult to quantifiably differentiate between the shooting of an abusive husband by his wife in a long-running soap opera, and the shooting of an incidental “bad guy” by the hero in an action movie. Clearly, viewer engagement with these acts may be very different, however: in the first instance a viewer may have spent years in the company of these characters, whereas in the second they may know (and care) little about them. Broadening the definition of violence to include explicit verbal threats and talk about violence has given a more complete picture (Seawall 1997). However, less explicit behaviors such as stalking, a staple of the horror genre, and nonphysical injuries (e.g., social alienation or fear) remain difficult to account for in this way (Parks 2003).

Research that has considered *viewers' own definitions of violence* is a newer development. This work has suggested that viewers are more likely to define as “violent” situations that they consider unjust or socially undesirable, while sometimes failing to recognize as “violent” (and hence socially undesirable) texts they enjoy (Morrison et al. 1999). This draws attention to the fact that all definitions of violence, including those used by researchers, are ideological. This is only a problem when the ideological assumptions are not made explicit and a consensus is assumed as to how “violence” is defined and for what purpose.

## EFFECTS?

Gerbner's work also sought to investigate whether people who watched more television “cultivated” a television worldview in relation to violence (→ Cultivation Effects; Cultivation Theory). This exemplifies a broader trend in thinking about violence in the media as a social problem, namely a concern with the putative effects or impacts of these representations. Empirical research on the effects of media violence has a long history, dating back more than 70 years to the Payne Fund Studies, conducted between 1929 and 1932, which investigated the influence of movies on children's emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (Jowett et al. 1996). Effects research is based on the assumption that the effects of the media can be isolated, measured, and/or predicted. Such research is typically conducted in a laboratory environment where media consumers are “exposed” to a media text in controlled conditions, and the consumers' subsequent behavior is measured. Notably, the research participants are rarely questioned directly about their experiences and understandings of the text: rather, the model relies on disguising the nature of the experiment from the participants (→ Experimental Design).

Research conducted by → Albert Bandura and associates in the early 1960s provides a prototype for research in the field (e.g., Bandura et al. 1963). Bandura's work investigated the possibility of imitative aggression, focusing specifically on children. The typical design involved showing a child a film of adults behaving violently, most famously by hitting a doll. The children would then be placed in a room with a similar doll and their behavior would be monitored to see if they too would behave aggressively (e.g., by hitting the doll). Bandura, and others who followed him, also considered whether the mood of the child

before the play session would impact on the likelihood of their behaving aggressively: for example, if the child had been angered or frustrated by an adult beforehand, would they be more or less likely to hit the doll (→ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of)?

Experimental research of this kind has been widely criticized. Key criticisms are, e.g., that sanctioned behavior in a laboratory setting is no indicator of people's willingness to behave violently in the real world (→ Experiment, Laboratory); that the research pays little attention to the media texts studied, using clips or even material generated for the experiment rather than the commercial media; that it removes consumers from context and offers little choice about consumption practices; that it conceives of audiences as inadequate and fundamentally "different" than the researchers; and that it uses unrepresentative audiences. The effects paradigm has nevertheless retained a hold in US scholarship. Although the media have changed, altering the modes of engagement for consumers (e.g., with developments in gaming technologies; → Video Games; Computer Games and Child Development), the question for effects researchers has remained broadly the same: does  $x$  cause, or increase the likelihood of,  $y$ ? Yet even if we accept the premise of this research, there is a striking lack of consensus as to the sum of its findings, with the evidence often being marshaled to prove opposing viewpoints (compare Freedman's 2002 meta-analysis of the literature with Kirsch's 2006 account).

The enduring influence of the effects paradigm can in part be explained by its continuing high profile within news media, policy reviews, and even courtrooms wherever a simple answer is sought to the question, "Do representations *cause* violence in the real world?" This question is frequently posed in the aftermath of otherwise apparently inexplicable acts of *real-world violence*: the murder of 2-year-old James Bulger by two 10-year-old boys in 1993 is perhaps the most notorious example in the UK; the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School has a similar status in the US. Scrutiny of the evidence in these cases typically concludes that a causal link cannot be proven (Buckingham 1996; Barker & Petley 2001; Boyle 2005).

This has led critics outside the effects tradition to a further question, namely, what is to be gained by making this link? Feminists, noting that the vast majority of alleged copycat cases involve male perpetrators, have offered one explanation: blaming the media is a way of not blaming men, of ignoring the connections between violent men and ideals of masculinity that permeate the culture more broadly. Such an approach makes it more difficult to isolate, as "problems," individual media texts, as it establishes continuities in cultural representations from the Bible to competitive sports and fairytales as well as the usual suspects of horror, pornography, and violent video games (Boyle 2005; → Feminist and Gender Studies).

## AUDIENCES

Moving beyond the effects tradition, researchers – primarily, though not exclusively, in arts and humanities traditions – have begun to examine how people make sense of these contentious texts in the context of their day-to-day lives. Research on the audiences for a wide variety of texts – from controversial films such as Cronenberg's *Crash* (Barker et al. 2001) to children's television dramas (Buckingham 1996) and reality-crime shows (Schlesinger et al. 1992) – has pointed to diverse understandings and interactions. For example, Barker



et al.'s work on *Crash* highlighted the extent to which viewers' responses were shaped by another media text: a daily newspaper's moral crusade against the film. This research demonstrated that viewers understand that individual representations of violence are embedded in a wider cultural context, that they make informed choices about their media consumption, and that they are engaged in an active process of making → meaning from what they see.

Investigating media in the context of complex lived experiences, including personal experiences of violence, adds a further dimension. Research by Schlesinger et al. (1992) and by Jenny Kitzinger (2004) has identified the importance of media representations of domestic and sexual violence against women and children in allowing victims/survivors to recognize their own experiences and so to escape violent situations or seek support, challenging the assumption that violence in the media is necessarily undesirable. In a very different context, scholars of the Rwandan genocide have identified how radio (a hitherto rather neglected medium in violence research) was used to incite Hutu violence (Kellow & Steeves 2006). Indeed, close textual analyses of news media and their portrayals of violence are increasingly central to the violence debates, demanding an attention to the specificity of both textual practice and socio-historical context (Weaver & Carter 2006). Clearly, just as violence in the real world is multifaceted and complex, so, media researchers are coming to understand, are the ways in which media consumers make sense of, use, and interact with media discourses of violence. One size does not fit all.

It is not possible to prove, conclusively, that a media text *causes* a human being to behave in a particular way, although this question has dominated the first century of debate on violence in the mass media. As the debate moves forward, not only are the media texts and modes of delivery different but the types of violence of most concern to social commentators in the west are changing in response to the post-9/11 socio-political context. Questions about how and why we use, make sense of, and produce violence in the media at this historical juncture require an attention to the specificity of both text and viewing context.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Audience Research ▶ Bandura, Albert ▶ Cinema ▶ Comics ▶ Computer Games and Child Development ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultivation Effects ▶ Cultivation Theory ▶ Experiment, Laboratory ▶ Experimental Design ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Gerbner, George ▶ Internet ▶ Meaning ▶ Media Effects ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Tabloid Press ▶ Video Games ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects of ▶ Violence as Media Content, Effects on Children of

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## Virtual Communities

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Largely due to Rheingold (1993), the term “virtual communities” has become the most popular way to identify interpersonal and Internet-based communication networks to form, maintain, or extend social relationships. In 1993, Rheingold was writing ethnographies (→ Ethnography of Communication) of the communities anticipated by pioneers such as Licklider (1968), who imagined the → Internet as the source of new meeting places and as a revolutionary advance in communication capability. For social scientists, virtual communities represent a new platform for the observation and testing of theories of interpersonal communication behavior (Sproull & Kiesler 1986), structuration (Orlikoski 1992; DeSanctis 1994), and identity (Turkle 1995; → Personal Communication by CMC). A distinctive literature employing various combinations of underlying theories has emerged (e.g., Kollock & Smith 1999; Wellman & Gulia 1999).

### DEFINING VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

Efforts to sharpen the definition of virtual communities such as the one by Wellman and Gulia (1999) illustrate the difficulty of distinguishing between a network of communicating

individuals and the various concepts of “community” – a term that brings with it many connotations of mutuality, trust, and identity. It is reasonable, however, to exclude some communication modalities as having no relation to the idea of “virtual community.” For example, the websites of broadcast media (one-to-many forms of communication), such as those of many major news services, fail to provide a direct way for readers to communicate with one another and therefore do not, themselves, provide a foundation for building virtual communities of interest about their content. It is possible to reach the same conclusion concerning many locations maintained by commercial, governmental, or nonprofit actors that are accessible using the world wide web and that have been designed using the broadcast model of information dissemination, or that seriously constrain persistent interaction between their users (→ Human–Computer Interaction).

A somewhat more ambiguous case exists in communication capacities that were initially designed to facilitate direct interpersonal communication such as email. Because these capacities can be used, through the capture and reuse of addresses, to establish numerous dyadic or more complex network communication linkages, it is difficult to rule out the possibility of email-based virtual communities. At the same time, however, mailing list servers that permit only replies to the entire group or bar replies are essentially forms of information broadcasting, and the same may be said for most discussion forums and weblogs (blogs; → Blogger). Defining virtual communities in terms of network formation possibilities and enactments is one, minimalist approach. It has the advantage of not requiring the assessment of the nature or depth of social relationships or sense of “community” among participants (→ Social Networks).

This network-based definition of virtual communities is broadly compatible with those of authors, such as Mitchell (1996), who focus upon the architectural features of communication spaces. Likening some Internet spaces to the Italian piazza, a paved pedestrian area central to many Italian towns and villages, Mitchell observes that social norms evolve in relation to the nature of the space. Mitchell’s architectural metaphor can be applied to many different features of the Internet, including the hundreds of channels of Internet relay chat (IRC) servers or explicit efforts to build “cyberspaces” or massively multi-player online role-playing games (MMORPGs). While it is undeniable that these examples are frequented by large numbers of individuals, applying the term “virtual community” to them is controversial, even offensive (Werry 1999), to those who take the view that communities are more than networks – that they necessarily involve elements of mutuality and democracy (→ Communication Technology and Democracy), including some sort of collective definition of identity or democratic control of resources. These features are largely absent in either IRC channels or MMORPG sites, which are controlled by and dependent upon their sponsors within explicit or implicit terms of service (even though some may allow users to co-produce content).

## **BEYOND NETWORKS TO COMMUNITIES**

Extending either the definition or the analysis of virtual community to encompass other aspect of “community” inevitably creates complexity. One way to manage this complexity is to explicitly consider how authority concerning belonging and purpose is constituted in specific communities (Kollock & Smith 1996; Steinmueller 2001). Considering the

rules or norms governing *organizational authority* – who is recognized as a part of the community and how they might participate – and *procedural authority* – how and for what purpose collective purposes and actions are taken – makes it straightforward to distinguish voluntary and open virtual communities from those embedded within organizations or professional associations. For example computer supported cooperative work (CSCW), which often involves flexibility in the configuration of communication networks, may be implemented within organizations where organizational and procedural authority is an extension of the organizational hierarchy or line management. Where organizational and procedural authority is concentrated in the hands of the sponsor, this distinguishes these communities (Hagel & Armstrong 1997) from more “open” structures where belonging and purpose are based upon individual choice and democratic decision-making.

When there is not a sponsor exercising organizational and procedural authority, there is some evidence that these roles emerge from the social learning of community participants (Tuomi 2002). Alternatively, they may have to be created by the community through collective decision (Kim 2000). Not surprisingly, the variety of ways in which this may be done largely replicates the ways in which nonvirtual communities form. The approach that currently dominates discussion of the “emergent” properties of virtual communities is derived from the “communities of practice” framework proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) and exemplified in Brown and Duguid (2000). This framework combines elements of “social learning” and structuration in which “novices” are, in essence, tested by those more experienced as they develop skills in the context of the practice of the community, creating an emergent form of hierarchy based upon mutual regard. The communities of practice framework is most relevant in contexts involving a gathering of expertise or where a collective effort with common purpose is a factor motivating the interaction.

There are, however, virtual communities where simple association and mutual support are the aims, and these include patient, parenting, and other types of mutual support groups (→ Social Support in Health Communication; Support Talk; Social Support in Interpersonal Communication). Many of these communities are “sponsored” by charities or individuals who are themselves part of the community of interest, and a large number are hosted by web services companies such as Yahoo! and Google. There may be fewer problems with procedural authority in these groups due to their aim of simply being “spaces” where those of similar interest might gather. However, such groups may face significant problems with regard to organizational authority resulting from unwanted participation or interaction (Smith 1999).

The need for some form of authority in virtual communities is an ongoing tension because of the direct financial and, even more important, time commitments required to exercise this authority. A consequence is that many communities that originated in looser collective management or were organized by single individuals have moved toward either commercial or charity-based forms of organization. The nature of sponsorship has a number of implications for the future development of virtual communities, and several models have emerged. The most prevalent model involves maintaining the virtual community using *tools provided by a platform provider*, which is often an Internet service company such as Yahoo! or Google (→ Search Engines). Although generally permissive of a broad range of content, a few virtual communities on these platforms have come into

conflict with national governments intent on removing content deemed to be offensive. Perhaps of greater significance, the use of these platforms creates ambiguities regarding the ownership of content and the leadership of any specific community.

A second model, typified by Wikipedia, involves a “*social contract*” with participants that assures a continuing right to access and use information and resources that are collectively produced. A variant of this model is “virtual world” sites employing MMORPG-type technologies and offering explicit rules granting property rights for individual developers, such as Linden Lab, the sponsor of Second Life.

A third type of model is identified with communities that have a particular purpose, such as the creation of → *open source software*. These communities best illustrate the communities of practice form of governance, with the emergence of hierarchies based upon reputation for expertise and effective contribution to the collective purpose of the community. A mix of sponsorship models can be observed in these purpose-directed communities along with the emergence of “paid participation,” i.e., individuals participating as the result of company sponsorship with the aim of helping to create a collective good that can be of benefit to the sponsoring organization. The ways in which virtual communities are organized and the purpose they serve in their participants’ interests seem sure to expand with the growth in Internet usage, skills, and capabilities.

### FURTHER RESEARCH

The expansion of sponsorship models has brought with it a growing professionalism in the role of community manager and a proliferation of ideas and literature (e.g., Kim 2000), which provide the basis for future research on effectiveness and value creation. Due to the wide variety of motivations for establishing virtual communities, the creation of a comprehensive census of virtual communities is likely to require new approaches to social science research. While the current research focus is largely case-study oriented, comparative and quantitative studies in this area of human endeavor would provide greater understanding of the variety and level of virtual community initiatives. Better research on factors limiting community size and shaping interactions within communities would provide useful knowledge to managers and policymakers concerned with promoting such initiatives.

SEE ALSO: ► Blogger ► Communication Technology and Democracy ► Communities of Practice ► Ethnography of Communication ► Human–Computer Interaction ► Internet ► Open Source ► Personal Communication by CMC ► Search Engines ► Social Networks ► Social Support in Health Communication ► Social Support in Interpersonal Communication ► Support Talk

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## Virtual Reality

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Virtual reality (VR) has at least three dominant meanings in communications. Though the distinctions blur in some analyses, these largely discrete areas are: (1) immersive audiovisual technologies; (2) technologies that achieve a similar effect through their ubiquity and apparent removal from mundane reality; and (3) technologies, architectures, and social processes that in some degree resemble immersive technologies, and the thesis that social life in the contemporary world is itself virtual. A fourth usage of the term “virtual” to denote a philosophy of becoming is also emergent.

## HISTORY

Immersive VR emerged from NASA as a scientific tool. During the later 1980s and early 1990s, there was much excitement about the possibility of immersive entertainment, particularly in the arcade games industry and among artists. The typical interface comprised a mask-and-glove wearable device, that provided stereo sound and stereoscopic screens mounted in front of each eye, and a glove whose spatial movement could be tracked to provide navigation and in some cases the ability to manipulate digital objects. Many significant artworks were produced, perhaps the most famous being Char Davies's *Osmose* which used a mask that was sensitive to head movements and a chest belt that responded to the expansion of the lungs, in order to move up and down in the virtual environment, in an experience analogous to diving. Other experimental artworks created the possibility of bringing two or more people into a shared environment.

Despite hopes for tumbling prices in the mask-and-glove interface, other pioneers opted for less expensive and less individualistic interfaces, among them Dan Sandin of UIUC who developed the widely used *CAVE system*, in which users equipped with 3D glasses and motion-sensor gloves enter a three- or four-walled stereoscopic projection space. Similar experimental systems have been developed by NHK in Japan and at Jeffrey Shaw's *iCinema* project in Sydney. However, the largest use of immersive environments today is in science and technology and in the training of pilots, soldiers, and ships' captains and pilots.

The term "virtual reality" was rapidly generalized to include all digital environments, especially their visual attractions (→ Digital Media, History of; Digital Imagery). The arrival of the world wide web as a consumer medium with the launch of the Mosaic browser in 1993 led to a host of utopian and apocalyptic visions of network societies as variants of Huxley's *Brave new world* (→ Internet). Movies like *Lawnmower Man* made little distinction between immersive and network technologies, a blurring that was fostered by the assertion, most famously in the Electronic Freedom Foundation's "Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace," that the environment opened up by the web to public interaction was no longer subject to the normal laws of states any more than it was to the law of gravity.

In the early twenty-first century, the term *second life*, derived from an online game environment, has become closely synonymous with the sense of virtual reality as an alternative to "first life," the ordinary world experienced away from the computer (→ Video Games). Two variant terms have arisen from this new perception of a pair of human environments, one actual, the other virtual. The term "mixed reality" is applied to devices and techniques that are intended to meld elements of each into a single experience. Examples include enhanced wearable computers that, for example, stream data, maps, or images over otherwise normally transparent eyeglasses. The second is becoming widely known as "locative media," characterized by the use of ubiquitous computing and cheap consumer technologies, notably mobile phones (→ Mobility, Technology for). In projects like *Urban Tapestries*, users navigate the real city of London, locating via their mobiles a wealth of memories, histories, artifacts, and inventions left at particular locations by other users. Commercial applications are close at hand, including various value-added GPS (global positioning systems) software and web technologies increasingly available for

handheld devices such as *Google Earth* and the various hacks based on it. Such enhanced or blended forms of immersion lead to particularly interesting questions about the relations between actual and virtual realities (Tuters & Varnelis 2006).

## UTOPIA AND APOCALYPSE

The arrival of both enthusiastic and apocalyptic accounts of immersive VR (for example, Rheingold 1991) sparked an interest among postmodernist media scholars and sociologists, especially those influenced by Debord's (1977) theory of the society of the spectacle (→ Postmodernism and Communication). For such theorists, immersive VR was not the logical outcome of Wagner's total artwork (*Gesamtkunstwerk*) but a technological response to the changing urban environment. For these critics, virtual reality described a mode of experience rather than a technology. The new architecture of malls, the ubiquity of screens, even the windscreens of automobiles (Virilio 1995), produced an experience analogous to immersive VR by mediating the environment to the exclusion of any unmediated sensation.

Virilio also pointed to the militarization of society as a *self- or endocolonization*, arguing that the increasing distance between weapon and target in modern warfare, the post-human speed of decision-making, and the arts of camouflage had become hallmarks of contemporary political and cultural life. The massive expansion in Internet and mobile participation and the promise of ubiquitous computing in the industrial economies has led to a decreasing visibility of computers, and a lowering of both utopian and apocalyptic discourses about them. The arrival of mixed-reality genres indicates a shift toward a sense of the virtual as an immanent element of any urban space, invisible without the aid of technology, but omnipresent. The notion of perpetual connectedness has overtaken that of immersion, although there remains the sense that specialized immersive installations are only a more intense form of a generalized immersion in the informational city, the knowledge economy, and the mediated world which is now indistinguishable from first-life, mundane reality (→ Computer Games and Reality Perception).

In an extreme form, this phenomenon has produced the *philosophical nihilism* of Jean Baudrillard (1996), for whom the over-writing of the world by ubiquitous media has resulted in the elimination of reality itself. It is ironic then that the most significant uses of the most powerful engines of virtual reality occur in areas such as the manipulation of large molecules in biosciences and in centers in which, for example, harbor pilots learn to handle supertankers. In the former instance, the connection between the representations and the actual molecules is provable through the physical results of the manipulations afforded by immersive interfaces. In the latter, the effectiveness of the training depends on its provision of the chance to make a mistake without causing actual environmental damage, such that the preservation of the marine environment is an actual outcome of a virtual activity. Moreover, the failure of the consumer market for immersive wearable VR devices (a trend paralleled by the decline in cinema attendances), in parallel with the huge take-up for interactive technologies, including online game environments, texting, and Internet relay chat, suggest that the loss of self in fictional worlds has become less attractive than new modes of mediated socialization. While the degree of social integration consequent on such mediated intercourse is widely debated, it is clear that individualistic interfaces are less popular than social ones.



Nonetheless, virtual reality discourses continue to generate interest in a number of areas in communications. The rise of → Disney studies in the 1990s pointed toward the theme park as a *model for immersion in entertainment*. A number of authors (Klein 2004; Ndalianis 2004) flagged the parallels between contemporary physical environments like the Disney parks and the cornucopias of architecture, painting, and ritual of the baroque. Indeed a number of immersive and installation artworks directly referenced the baroque, especially the trompe l'oeil architecture and ceilings of Counter-Reformation churches, as precursors for the creation of fictive spaces and overwhelming experiences in virtual environments, both digital and architectural. While there is little iconographic connection between such spaces, the creation of architectural environments that are radically separate from the external world, that provide heightened experiences, that may be understood as narratives, and that are designed to trick the senses is a common theme. The theme park ride has proved an especially rich vein for analysis of this comparison, and for extending the definition of immersive virtual reality to incorporate physical movement on specially designed vehicles based on fairground rides. In this analysis, many other precursor technologies have been mentioned, notably the phantasmagorias of the eighteenth century, the panoramas of the nineteenth century, and the cinematic railway rides of the early twentieth century (Huhtamo 1995). One interesting element common to these precursor media is that they are rarely individualized, which may help explain the lack of success of immersive mask-and-glove systems.

## VIRTUALITY

The fourth emergent concept of virtuality may derive some of its impetus from the significance ascribed to immersion as a factor both in technological media and in social life. Where for Baudrillard the virtual threatened to annihilate the direct experience of existing in the real world, critics following the lead of Gilles Deleuze argued that virtuality was a state of potential, and as such was immanent in all living creatures and all historical process. Where theorists influenced by Heidegger emphasized the lack of being, Deleuzeans emphasized the process of becoming. Thus a body in motion is never entirely actual, but instead exists as perpetual variation (Massumi 2002). Given this definition, it may be argued that all moving images are virtual. Despite the film strip's composition as a series of still images, it is not the images that constitute movement, but the spaces in between them, a truth that is even more true of the interlaced screens of television and the arrays of digitally compressed/decompressed images, where the image never exists as a completed whole at any given moment. This argument may be extended to the production of virtual space in perspective construction, still or moving. Where apparatus theory, grounded in Heideggerian nostalgia for the loss of being, saw only ideologically loaded vanishing points, a theory of virtuality describes the construction of space through points of becoming.

Such analyses have proved both productive and controversial in fields as diverse as politics, photography, geography, phenomenology, art history, architecture, and engineering. With relations to possible worlds theory in philosophy, to the psychology of perception, to analyses of power and ideology, and closely allied to critics and supporters of computer simulation as a predictive tool, for example in the science of global climate change, the discussion of virtuality produces a number of critical disturbances (→ Simulation).

On the one hand, the term “virtual reality” is applied to such phenomena as the baroque cathedral and the contemporary theme park, spaces marked by their cultural intensity, even totalitarianism; while on the other it is applied to the unmarked spaces of anonymous passage: the airline terminal, the waiting room, or the interiors of public transport.

The fading distinctiveness of computer technology, its gradual passage into the general background of life in the same way that writing is now rarely observed to be writing, only what it communicates, is a phenomenon observed historically of other technologies by Don Ihde (1990) and now clearly apparent in the daily life of the industrial world. On the one hand, this suggests that either the nature or the experience of reality is indeed changing and becoming more virtual. On the other, it suggests that where such technological mediation does not obtain, reality persists. If so, then reality is the state in which there is a minimum of technological mediation, in other words, the poorest areas of the world. Given the choice between living in the manner of the world’s poorest inhabitants or of inhabiting a virtual or at least a mixed reality, most people, including most economic migrants, would choose the latter. This implies of course that the “fourth” sense of virtuality, that of the potential to become other than what one is, is restricted to the wealthiest populations of the planet.

SEE ALSO: ► Communication Technology and Development ► Computers and Display Programs in Education ► Computer Games and Reality Perception ► Digital Imagery ► Digital Media, History of ► Disney ► Human–Computer Interaction ► Internet ► Mobility, Technology for ► Postmodernism and Communication ► Simulation ► Video Games

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# Visual Communication

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The study of visual communication comprises such wide-reaching and voluminous literatures as art history, the philosophy of art and → aesthetics, → semiotics, → cinema studies, → television and mass media studies, the history and theory of → photography, the history and theory of → graphic design and → typography, the study of word–image relationships in literary, aesthetic, and rhetorical theory (→ Rhetorical Studies), the development and use of charts, diagrams, → cartography and questions of geographic visualization (images of place and space), the physiology and psychology of visual → perception, the impact of new visual technologies (including the impact of digitalization and the construction of “virtual realities”; → Digital Imagery), growing concerns with the concept and/or acquisition of “visual literacy,” and the boundless social and cultural issues embedded in practices of → visual representation.

Amid such an eclectic field no consensus has emerged regarding canonical texts. Even the concept of “imagery” itself seems to have no clear boundaries, encompassing concepts of the image that extend from the perceptual process, through the mental reproduction of perceptions in eidetic imagery, dreams, and memory, to the realms of abstract symbols and ideas by which we mentally map experience, and the physical creation of pictures and visual media. Consequently, the study of imagery is as integral to the study of language, cognition, psychoanalysis, and ethology as it is to the study of pictorial or graphic representation.

## **SOCIAL RELEVANCE OF THE FIELD**

This entry notes key themes and theories in this cross-disciplinary area of study. For purposes of manageability the focus is on *pictures* rather than the broader concept of *the visual*, and with a bent toward the study of twentieth-century mass communication media rather than the larger history of art and visual representation. The term “picture” is used here in a sense that is similar to the Albertian definition of a picture noted by Alpers: “a framed surface or pane situated at a certain distance from a viewer who looks through it at a second or substitute world” (1983, xix). I do not, however, wish to limit my definition to a strictly Renaissance model of picture-making but rather would include all types of visual image-making that address viewers in a picture-like manner. The choice to concentrate on the pictorial directs the emphasis toward the production and interpretation of communication media and avoids the insurmountable problem of addressing a diffuse and boundless range of the visual. The focus on recent history reflects the concern for contemporary media and cultural environments that is such a prominent part of communication studies.

In this context the study of visual communication as an institutional interest area has grown primarily in response to perceived gaps in the more widely established field of mass communication research. The relationship to mass communication may not be

readily apparent, for visual communication study did not emerge within established traditions of mass communication research, nor was it bound by the same theoretical or methodological paradigms (→ Communication as a Field and Discipline). Yet the study of visual communication (as opposed to the study of art, art history, design, or architecture) has been defined in relation to the mechanical reproduction of imagery that has characterized modern mass media (Ivins 1953; Benjamin 1969; Berger 1972).

Those intrigued by the role and influence of visual imagery in mass circulation publications, television, and the entire range of commercial → advertising have often been disappointed by the lack of attention given to pictures in established traditions of mass communication research. Prominent strains of mass communication research – → public opinion and → attitude research, social psychological studies of behavior and → cognition, experimental studies of media exposure (→ Exposure to Communication Content), → marketing research, correlational studies of → media effects, content analysis (→ Content Analysis, Qualitative; Content Analysis, Quantitative), studies of media → uses and gratifications, agenda-setting research (→ Agenda-Setting Effects), or sociologies of media organizations and media production (→ Media Production and Content) – have only sparsely and inconsistently incorporated the analysis of visual forms and their role in communication processes. For years content studies of television news were conducted solely from verbal transcripts, and audience studies often documented viewer responses to program stories and characters without attending to the nature of the specific visual presentations of those programs (Griffin 1992b).

Even *studies of* → *political communication*, where one might expect a keen interest in the role of visual images, focus overwhelmingly on rhetorical strategies, issue framing (→ Issue Management in Politics), and a concern for the tactical effect of linguistic symbols and slogans, and lack a sustained attention to the contributions of the visual. A 1990 survey of political communication literature, for example, found that only five out of more than 600 articles and studies actually examined the concrete visual components of televised election coverage and advertising, and that when the term “image” *was* used it most often referred to conceptual interpretations of the public ethos of political candidates rather than specific concrete visual attributes of media presentations (Johnston 1990). Consciousness of the importance of visual images in political communication expanded greatly in the wake of the Reagan presidency, when such Reagan advisers as Michael Deaver averred that the control and manipulation of images overpowered anything that the public heard or read (Deaver 1987). Following the 1988 campaign, prominent political rhetoricians, such as Kathleen Hall Jamieson, began for the first time to explicitly call for the visual analysis of political spots and contemporary political discourse (Jamieson 1992).

Against this background the *growing interest in visual communication throughout the 1970s and 1980s* was often perceived as a corrective response. The increasingly ubiquitous visual appeals of advertising, both commercial and political, and the alarming number of hours most people spent watching television, had certainly made media researchers aware of the potential impact of images and triggered interest in some to include visual analysis in their work. Yet, few examples of research specifically focused on the visual mode could be found in the mass communication literature, and those hoping to pursue such research needed to look beyond the boundaries of communication scholarship for theories, templates, and inspiration.

Often, this meant foraging purposefully among literatures institutionally separated from communications: aesthetics, anthropology, art history, graphic design, electronic and video arts, → film theory and history, the philosophy of perception and knowledge, literary theory, linguistics, semiology. Sometimes it meant opening the door to the developments within communications that were more attentive to the impact of images: to feminist scholars, and others, interested in gender portrayals; to those concerned with representations of homosexuality; and to those concerned with the stereotyping of various racial, cultural, and social groups (→ Social Stereotyping and Communication; Stereotyping and the Media). And sometimes it meant reframing or redefining entrenched areas of professional and technical training: in film and video production, photography and photojournalism, broadcast journalism, typography and publication design.

By the 1980s this trend led to movements within academic communication associations to provide *expanded forums for visual communication research* presentations. In the → International Communication Association (ICA) nondivisional paper sessions were organized around visual communication themes, eventually leading to the establishment of a Visual Communication Interest Group. In the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) attempts were made to encourage the presentation of scholarly research in the Visual Communication Division, a division previously focused almost exclusively on professional training in graphic design and photojournalism, and seen largely as an area of technical support for the primary work of writing and editing. In the Speech Communication Association (SCA) in the US, an interest group on “visual literacy” was formed. These developments have continued to have a bearing on the place of visual communication studies within the larger field of communication research. However, primary sources of new theory and new research have continued to originate from outside these institutional parameters. In the rest of this entry I shall attempt to chart some of the major influences in the intellectual history of visual communication studies that led it to be identified as a distinct sub-field within communications.

## HISTORY AND THEORY

The rise of contemporary visual communication studies was, of course, preceded by centuries of thought and writing concerning the arts and the visual image. Yet the last decades of the twentieth century have seen a renewed philosophical concern with the visual that Mitchell (1994), following Rorty’s (1979) notion of “the linguistic turn,” has called “the pictorial turn.” In *Picture theory* (1994) Mitchell argues, “The simplest way to put this is to say that, in what is often characterized as an age of ‘spectacle’ (Debord), ‘surveillance’ (Foucault), and all-pervasive image-making, we still do not know exactly what pictures are, what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and on the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them” (1994, 13). He adds, “while the problem of pictorial representation has always been with us, it presses inescapably now, and with an unprecedented force, on every level of culture, from the most refined philosophical speculations to the most vulgar productions of the mass media” (1994, 16). In this, Mitchell echoes the challenge described by Worth in the early 1970s (Worth 1981). An extensive body of literature explores the *ontology and epistemology of photography and the cinema*, the foundations of contemporary lens-based

media. Writings on photography since the middle of the nineteenth century have continually explored, and revisited, the nature of the photographic image as art vs science, pictorial expression vs mechanical record, trace vs transformation. Meanwhile, the practice of photography has been dogged by the ongoing contradictions between the craft of picture-making and the status of photographs as “reflections of the real” (Sekula 1975; Brennen & Hardt 1999). Similarly, the extensive *literature of film theory*, going back at least to the treatises of Lindsay, Munsterberg, Arnheim, and Balazs, has struggled with the nature of cinema and its proper aesthetic and communicational development (Andrew 1976). A wellspring of analytic concepts regarding the composition and juxtaposition of images have been applied to sophisticated analyses of *mise-en-scène* (the construction of the shot) and montage (the structuring of sequences of shots through editing). The synthesis of realist theories of *mise-en-scène*, formalist theories of montage, and structural theories of narrative in the work of Jean Mitry (1963–1965), and the subsequent application of linguistically based semiotic theory to cinema by Christian Metz (1974) pushed film analysis into new territories of narrative and syntactical exegesis in the attempt to identify a “language of film.” We are still looking.

### Film Studies

An important foundation for the development of visual communication studies, film theory comprises a body of concepts and tools borrowed from the study of art, psychology, sociology, language, and literature. Work in visual communication has often returned to these various sources for new applications to photography, design, electronic imaging, or virtual reality. A central theoretical parameter of debate has involved the distinction between formative and realist theories (Andrew 1976; 1984), but has also involved questions concerning the scope and centrality of narrative, an issue that has preoccupied the philosophy of representation across numerous fields.

*Formative film theories* treat cinematic presentations as wholly constructed visual expressions, or rhetoric, and seek to build schematic explanations for the semantic and syntactic capacity and operation of the medium (→ Rhetoric and Visuality). *Realist theories* argue that there is a natural relationship between life and image (→ Realism). They assert that photographic motion pictures inherently mirror everyday perception and moreover that the goal for filmmakers should be to employ that essential capacity to create the most realistic possible simulations of actual experience (→ Realism in Film and Photography; Reality and Media Reality). All film students learn about the concepts of film art posited by early formalists such as Munsterberg, Arnheim, Kuleshov, Pudovkin, Eisenstein, and Balazs, and countered by realists such as Bazin and Kracauer. Many aspects of this theoretical opposition have re-emerged repeatedly as visual communication studies have come to encompass parallel issues in television, photojournalism, news, advertising, and most recently digital image creation and manipulation.

The heart of the matter, and arguably the central question of all visual communication study, is the *precise status of the image as a copy or analogue*. As Andrew writes of the work of Bazin and Mitry, “Bazin spent his life discussing the importance of the ‘snugness’ with which the filmic analogue fits the world, whereas Mitry has spent his life investigating the crucial differences which keep this asymptote forever distinct from the world it runs

beside and so faithfully mirrors” (1976, 190). Historically, film and photographic theory and criticism were absorbed with these questions as they pertained to the properties of the image-text itself. As will be discussed at a later point, visual communication studies turned the question toward the manner in which images were utilized and interpreted by media production institutions and viewing audiences.

The key point here, to be revisited throughout this entry, is that the study of pictures brought into even greater relief questions of reflection and construction in human representation. And although these issues are not confined to modern visual media, and perhaps are questions that cannot be asked of pictures as if they were a purely visual medium, somehow outside of intertextual contexts, they have become defining issues for visual communication study in an era of constant photographic reproduction when it is so often taken for granted that visual media technologically mimic reality. These issues relate as well to spatial and temporal constructs in literature and the earlier plastic arts, and were raised by writers at least as early as the eighteenth century (Mitchell 1986).

Various *technical advances* have seemed to provide an inexorable progression toward ever more convincing recreations of the “real world” and have consistently raised the ante on illusion and simulation. Yet film theory has persistently directed attention toward the processes of constructing visual representations, constantly reminding us of the inherent tension between the craft of picture-making and the perception of pictures as records. Against the commonsense assumptions so often made that visual media give us a window on the world with which to witness “reality,” film theory from the beginning has interrogated the ways in which such “windows” are created and structured to shape our view. Even in the practice of documentary film, theorists such as Nichols (1991) identify patterns or “modes” of representational strategy that make each documentary a formal and rhetorical articulation. Writers on still photography, perhaps ironically, followed the development of film theory in fully theorizing the ontology of the photograph, but in the last 50 years have also contributed an extensive literature on the relationship of photo images to their subjects.

The fact that film studies provided an important stock of conceptual tools for the study of pictorial communication of all types was not lost on communication scholars who hoped to better understand the growing prominence of visual mass media in late industrial society. British cultural studies also borrowed freely from film studies (much of it centered around the British Film Institute and its sponsored book and journal publications) and the resulting sensitivity to the culturally constructed nature of visual representation in much cultural studies work made it attractive to visual communication scholars in America. Writings on visual media by British and Australian cultural critics and scholars such as John Berger (1972); Raymond Williams (1974), Laura Mulvey (1989), Judith Williamson (1978), and John Fiske and John Hartley (1978) drew the attention of those tuned into what the British increasingly called “lens theory.”

The *influence of this brand of cultural studies* on the American scene fueled a nascent interest in semiotic analysis and the interpretation of media texts, and it was not a far leap to imagine the incorporation of visual analysis into studies of representation, meaning, and ideology. An early example of the incorporation of visual analysis in the study of representation and ideology is Stuart Hall’s essay “The determination of news photographs” (1973). In this essay he attempts to apply the cultural and ideological analysis derived

from Birmingham Center studies of popular culture to news photographs in order to demonstrate how pictures enhance and frame the ideological positions of accompanying linguistic text. In the mid 1970s the Glasgow University Media Group (1976; 1980) carried out some of the first detailed visual analyses of television news footage in order to expose the ideological nature of BBC reporting on industrial labor disputes. Moreover, the fast-growing popularity of cultural studies often helped to open up additional curricular space for addressing the nature of visual symbol systems and processes of meaning construction. A convergence of interest in the study of photographically mediated culture was building from several directions, including anthropology, sociology, and the psychology of art.

### **The Psychology of the Visual: Language and Image**

The work of E. H. Gombrich serves to represent the essential themes of this tradition, although its roots lie in the earlier work of Panofsky (1991; 1st pub. 1924) and others. In his highly influential book *Art and illusion* (1960) Gombrich makes a powerful case for the conventionality of schemes for visual representation. With an art historian's knowledge of the traditions of western art, and particularly the development of linear perspective, he argues that picture forms of all kinds are conventionally constructed according to learned schemata, not copied from nature (→ Perspective, Pictorial; Art as Communication). Building from the idea that perceptual gestalts are not necessarily innate but often learned (a concept fully developed in the perceptual research of R. L. Gregory [1970]), Gombrich argued that perceptions of visual representations in art operate by means of gestalts that are culturally based and that, in this sense, pictures are *read* on the basis of prior knowledge of cultural conventions.

Gombrich develops the metaphor of “reading images” in his article, “The visual image,” written for *Scientific American* (1972). Here he reiterates the ways in which images are intertwined within cultural systems of language and function and depend upon “code, caption, and context” for understanding. Pictures rarely stand alone, and rarely communicate unambiguously when they do. The mutual support of language and image facilitates memory and interpretation, making visual communication (as separate from artistic expression) possible. Without using the same structuralist paradigm or terminology, Gombrich comes very close to reproducing the semiological notions of icon, index, and symbol in his analysis. Most images seem to combine all three qualities of signification in some measure, although it is most often the iconic prevalence and/or limits of images that preoccupies scholars of the visual, the iconic being that which most clearly distinguishes visual signs from lexical, mathematical, musical, and socio-gestural (Gross 1974).

Although a substantial body of research by perceptual psychologists contradicts Gombrich's suggestion that visual apprehension is culturally learned – providing evidence instead that many aspects of visual perception derive from a natural, hard-wired set of sensory, neurological, and perceptual processes – the impact of Gombrich's analysis has still been enormous. His writings provide a strong case against the equation of art and communication, and help to lay a basis for the study of visual communication as distinct from the study of art. They also demonstrate the need to understand the history of art, and the various traditions of depiction and symbolization that have influenced visual practices, before we can hope to explain the role of visual communication in modern media systems.



Together with film theory, semiotics, the social history of art, and anthropological concerns with art and visual representation, the psychology of visual representation has contributed to an eclectic body of theory and research on which communications scholars began to draw for conceptualizing approaches to visual communication analysis.

Other strains in the history of art and aesthetics that have contributed much to contemporary thinking about visual communication include the *social history of art and aesthetic theories* regarding the relationship between pictures and language. The social history of art, particularly in the work of writers such as Michael Baxandall (1972) and Svetlana Alpers (1983), offers models for investigating relationships between the production of images and the social contexts of their sponsorship, use, and interpretation. Alpers has explored the relation between picture-making and description, from the ekphrastic tradition of the Sophists in which they used the subject matter of paintings as jumping-off points for discursive monologues and storytelling, a model, she argues, for Vasari's famous descriptions of Renaissance paintings (Alpers 1960), to the seventeenth-century tradition of Dutch painting, when northern European painters broke with the narrative tradition of Italian painting to create a new "descriptive pictorial mode."

Baxandall's (1972) study of painting and experience in fifteenth-century Italy provides an example of what reviewer Larry Gross (1974) called a historical "ethnography of visual communication," demonstrating how patronage and contractual obligations, on the one hand, and viewer expectations and understandings of convention, on the other, combined to make of painting a currency of social communication (→ *Ethnography of Communication*). Becker's *Art worlds* (1982) applies a similar approach to twentieth-century social worlds of artistic production with specific attention paid to painting and photography, among other arts. Gross's *On the margin of art worlds* (1995) follows in this vein with a collection of studies explicitly devoted to the social definitions and boundaries that have emerged among worlds of visual art and communication.

Related to these extra-textual studies of visual communication practice and meaning is a long history of attention to the *intertextual relationships between word and image*. Whether in studies of the relationship between religious painting and scripture, pictures and narrative, or in attempts to pursue the study of *iconology* (the general field of images and their relation to discourse), the existence of pictures within larger multi-textual contexts has led to several rich traditions of scholarship (Panofsky 1939; Mitchell 1986; 1994; → *Iconography*). Here the dispersed boundaries of visual communication studies become especially apparent. Its coherence as a field diffuses into myriad strains of philosophy, literary theory, linguistics, cultural theory, art history, and media studies – the concerns with the subject/spectator (the look, the gaze, the glance, observation, surveillance, and visual pleasure) and with the interpreter/reader (decipherment, decoding, visual experience, "visual literacy," or "visual culture") running through numerous disciplines and theories (→ *Visual Culture*).

### **The Sociology and Anthropology of Visual Communication**

This tradition of research emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the US largely in association with the work of Sol Worth, Jay Ruby, Richard Chalfen, Larry Gross, Howard S. Becker, and their students. It was carried forward by scholars particularly interested in the *cultural*

*codes and social contexts of image-making* within particular communities, sub-cultures, and social groups. This movement was influenced by work in the psychology of art and representation, film theory, semiotics, and the social history of art. For example, attempts to assess and compare the types of psychological schemata suggested by Gombrich in image-making and image interpretation across different cultures suggested that processes of visual communication were not universal and needed to be explored within specific socio-cultural settings.

The anthropology of visual communication was also heavily influenced by new approaches to the study of linguistics, not only by structuralist tendencies and the semiological theories and methods that structural linguistics engendered, but in particular by the rise of sociolinguistics (Hymes 1964). *Sociolinguists* had begun to examine the differing uses of language across sub-cultures, social classes, and ethnic groups, and provided exemplars for the similar study of visual “languages” in varying social contexts. A key figure in adapting these influences to the study of visual communication was Sol Worth. The collection of his writings, *Studying visual communication* (1981), edited posthumously by his colleague and co-author Larry Gross, is perhaps the best starting point for those interested in gaining a sense of the origins of the field of visual communication research. “The central thread that runs through Worth’s research and writings is the question of how meaning is communicated through visual images” (Gross 1981).

This interest led to the landmark Navajo Filmmakers Project, in which Worth collaborated with anthropologist John Adair and graduate assistant Richard Chalfen to study film made not as records *about* Navajo culture, but as examples *of* Navajo culture, reflecting the value systems, coding patterns, and cognitive processes of the maker (Worth & Adair 1972). The Navajo films (now in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York), and the published results of the project, were praised by such commentators as Margaret Mead as a “breakthrough in cross-cultural communications” (Mead 1977, 67).

The critique of documentary practice led Worth to propose “a shift from visual anthropology to the anthropology of visual communication” (1981) suggesting the need to abandon taken-for-granted assumptions about the capacity of film and photography to portray culture from the outside. Instead, he suggested, it would be better to study the forms and uses given to visual media by the members of different cultures and social groups themselves. Worth vigorously distinguished this work from traditional “visual anthropology,” much of which he considered naïve and unreflective in its reliance on photographic records *about* culture, and increasingly became identified with the alternative of studying all forms of visual communication as examples *of* culture, to be analyzed for the patterns of culture that they reveal.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY CROSS-CURRENTS

Worth’s idea of an “anthropology of visual communication” dovetailed with the work of numerous students, colleagues, and scholars working along cognate trajectories, leaving a fruitful legacy. These included, among others: ground-breaking studies of family photography and home moviemaking (Chalfen 1987; → Amateur Photography and Movies); explorations of the nature and limits of documentary representation (Ruby 2000; → Documentary Film; Ethnographic Film); the study of pictorial perception, learning, and interpretation

(Worth & Gross 1974; Messaris & Gross 1977); children's socialization to visual forms (Griffin 1985; → Socialization by the Media); the nature of visual rhetoric and persuasion and questions of visual literacy (Messaris 1994; 1997); institutionalized standards and practices in picture-making and use; the study of social worlds of visual production and legitimization – from art to advertising, to news (Tuchman 1978; Rosenblum 1978; Schwartz & Griffin, 1987; → Television, Visual Characteristics of; Television News, Visual Components of; Photojournalism; Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of); and the ethics of visual representation (Gross et al. 1988; 2003; → Image Ethics).

It also led to the establishment of the *first scholarly journal* in the US devoted specifically to visual communication research, *Studies in Visual Communication*. The journal published contributions from a wide range of disciplinary sources, representing the new critical histories of photography, work on the visual languages of science and cartography, research on caricature and political cartoons, essays on public art, new interpretations of the documentary tradition in photography and film, and a greater emphasis on television and media events. The pioneering study *Gender advertisements* (1976) by Erving Goffman was first published as a special issue of *Studies in Visual Communication*, and for a time the journal provided impressive evidence that scholarly attention to visual imagery was growing across the social sciences and humanities. An attempt to extend this attention led directly to the organization of a Visual Communication Interest Group in the International Communication Association, which in 2004 became the Visual Communication Studies Division of the ICA.

By the 1980s traditional notions of visual media were being re-evaluated across programs of art, communications, and journalism. A few journalism schools attempted to recast their photojournalism and publication graphics tracks into more integrated and multi-disciplinary visual communication curricula. Communication scholars increasingly pointed out that, given the pervasively visual nature of contemporary mass media, it was no longer tenable to study mass communication separately from visual communication (Griffin 1992a), and that even a medium such as the newspaper needs to be understood as an inherently visual phenomenon (Barnhurst 1994; → Newspaper, Visual Design of).

### KEY ISSUES AND CURRENT TRENDS

The key issues for visual communication in the new millennium are surprisingly similar to those of 30 years ago. The major difference is that greater attention is being paid to these issues within communications scholarship itself, and the application of these ideas is being made across an even greater diversity of media forms and technologies, including digital ones. Recent attempts to examine the state of visual research, and its application to new media, remind us that the kinds of questions asked by Sol Worth decades ago have not been settled (Manovich 2001; Elkins 2003). We are still exploring “how, and what kinds of things, pictures mean.” And “how the way that pictures mean differs from the way such things as ‘words’ or ‘languages’ mean” (Worth 1981, 162). Barthes wrote that photography, “by virtue of its absolutely analogical nature, seems to constitute a message without a code” (1977, 42–43). This quality not only lends itself to the proliferation of pseudo-events, and the ever new developments and consequences of virtual realities, but makes of images a kind of automatic evidence that is rarely questioned. Therefore, the

ontological questions regarding the status of images as simulated reality blur together with epistemological questions concerning the validity of images as evidence.

These compounded theoretical issues continually re-emerge in nearly every area of visual communication studies. A great, but still largely unmet challenge for visual communication scholars is to scan, chart, and interrogate the various levels at which images seem to operate: as evidence in visual rhetoric, as simulated reality bolstering and legitimizing the presence and status of media operations themselves, as abstract symbols and textual indices, and as “stylistic excess” – the self-conscious performance of style (Caldwell 1995). Visual style itself, apart from content-related denotation, connotation, and allusion, can be a powerful index of culture – sub-cultures, professional cultures, political cultures, commercial fashion. Initial forays suggest that scrutinizing visual forms of simulated “reality” tell us a great deal about the nature of media rhetoric, the limits of veridical representation, and the self-conscious performance of style in entertainment, advertising, and news. These issues are perhaps more significant than ever for the processes of “remediation” that characterize “new” digital media and the emphases on “transparent immediacy” and “hypermediacy” that distinguish digital visualization (Bolter & Grusin 1999; → Digitization and Media Convergence).

Visual communication research, more than anything else, has been a path into the examination of the specific forms of our increasingly visual media surround. In the early stages of mass communication research Lang & Lang reported on “The unique perspective of television and its effect” (1953). The heart of the study was their comparison of the televised coverage of Chicago’s MacArthur Day parade with the reported observations and experiences of informants on the scene, a comparison that found the representation of the parade on television, the “TV screen reality,” to be very different from, even contradictory of, the “reality” seen and experienced by those attending the event. They concluded that television’s need to create a coherent presentational structure from separate, fragmented, and often only indirectly related scenes and activities resulted in a “televisual perspective” or *televisual form* specific to the nature and workings of that medium. Visual communication research is often distinctive precisely for its attention to forms of representation, forms created by the intersection of aesthetic and pictorial traditions, shifting industrial uses of visual media, and evolving media technologies. To many it seemed that the movement toward visual communication studies in fact best fulfilled cultural studies pioneer Raymond Williams’s exhortation to focus attention on the *forms and practices* of media production and representation (Williams 1974; → Cultural Studies).

This is not a return to a McLuhanesque essentialism regarding media technology. Rather it is a recognition (following Raymond Williams) that the historically and culturally specific forms of representation that have evolved in particular industrial and commercial systems inexorably shape and delimit the nature of media discourse. This is an issue of particular concern to visual communication researchers as we proceed into an era of increasingly convincing virtual realism on the one hand, and an increasingly systemic textualization of images in cyberspace on the other. More and more visual practices are moving away from the ideal that visual media can and should explore and reveal our social and natural environment and toward self-contained visual lexicons that reduce all visual elements to characters in digital texts. For both economic and technological reasons

digital designers and television producers increasingly create “virtual worlds of excessive videographics” in place of the realist style of conventional production techniques (Caldwell 1995). It is as if we seek to follow French structuralist philosophy to its logical conclusion, taming the potential autonomy and power of images and making them subservient to structural linguistic interpretation (Jay 1993). It is not just what we *can* do with new digital technologies of manipulation but to what purposes we seek to use the production of images in a “post-photographic age.”

Finally, in that emerging condition often referred to as the “global media environment” visual images have become a new sort of transnational cultural currency. Not the “universal language” that promoters such as Eastman Kodak Company claimed for photography earlier in the century, but a currency of media control and power, indices of the predominant cultural visions of predominant media industries.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Advertising ▶ Aesthetics  
 ▶ Agenda-Setting Effects ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ Art as Communication  
 ▶ Attitudes ▶ Cartography ▶ Cinema ▶ Cognition ▶ Communication as a Field and Discipline  
 ▶ Content Analysis, Qualitative ▶ Content Analysis, Quantitative ▶ Cultural Studies  
 ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Documentary Film  
 ▶ Ethnographic Film ▶ Ethnography of Communication ▶ Exposure to Communication Content  
 ▶ Film Theory ▶ Graphic Design ▶ Iconography ▶ Image Ethics ▶ International Communication Association (ICA)  
 ▶ Issue Management in Politics ▶ Marketing ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media Production and Content  
 ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Perception ▶ Perspective, Pictorial ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism  
 ▶ Political Communication ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Realism ▶ Realism in Film and Photography  
 ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Rhetoric and Visuality ▶ Rhetorical Studies ▶ Semiotics  
 ▶ Social Stereotyping and Communication ▶ Socialization by the Media ▶ Stereotyping and the Media  
 ▶ Television ▶ Television News, Visual Components of ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of  
 ▶ Typography ▶ Uses and Gratifications ▶ Visual Culture  
 ▶ Visual Representation

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## Visual Culture

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Visual culture is an area of study focused on practices of looking and the role of visual representations in the arts, popular and alternative media cultures, institutional and professional contexts, and everyday life. Art history, film and media studies, → cultural studies, sociology, and anthropology are some of the fields in which visual culture study is conducted. Forms of → visual representation studied include → museum display, fine art, film and → television, old and new media, computer and → video games, digital culture, medical images such as X-rays and sonograms, and advertising (→ Art as Communication; Painting; Cinema; Film as Popular Culture; Television, Visual Characteristics of; Video; Digital Imagery; Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of).

The study of visual culture emphasizes the relationship of looking and visual representation to forms of knowledge, power, experience, and ideology in everyday life and culture in

different historical periods. Emphasis is placed on looking as a social practice and the place of visual texts and artifacts in relationships of power, pleasure, and knowledge within and among social groups including nations, communities, workplaces, audiences, and members of institutions such as schools, churches, and cultural organizations. Research in visual culture tends toward qualitative and interdisciplinary methods informed by post-structural critical theory and cultural studies (→ Structuralism in Visual Communication).

The majority of work on visual culture considers the postwar period during which electronic and digital media became pervasive components of industrialized cultures. During this period previously distinct media forms such as painting, photography, the → Internet, and video converged (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). Just as individual works of fine art were subject to more pervasive reproduction and circulation with the rise of digital imaging and the world wide web, changing the status of the original work of art, so mechanical forms of reproduction like photographic and motion picture film converged with digital media in production and exhibition processes. With this increased and enhanced presence of visual media forms in everyday life, the visual became a more crucial area of research among humanists and social scientists studying postwar culture. However, the field also includes significant research in the visual cultures of earlier historical periods and the place of the visual in cultures that have not known the same accelerated advances in electronic and digital media forms experienced by those with access to new technologies in the industrialized west (Baxandall 1972; Worth & Adair 1972).

The parallel and overlapping traditions of cultural studies, visual culture, and visual studies are reviewed and critiqued in Elkins (2003). The study of “visual culture” is usually distinguished from the study of “visual communication,” which is more often associated with popular and commercial forms of mass media and the efficient communication of information (→ Popular Culture; Popular Communication; Popular Culture and the News Media; News; Photojournalism; Infographics).

Visual culture became a formalized area of study in the early 1990s with the founding of PhD programs at institutions including the University of Rochester (New York) and the University of California at Irvine. These entities grew out of the efforts of individuals whose original training was in art history, film studies, sociology, and comparative literature. The field was strongly influenced by literary and film theorists who forged their methodology out of the writings of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan on the gaze (→ Spectator Gaze); Ferdinand de Saussure on semiotics (→ Semiotics); and the Marxist theory of power elaborated by the French philosopher Louis Althusser.

A strong foundational influence was the writing on culture, myth, and photography by the French philosopher → Roland Barthes. Early work in visual culture study, before the term itself came into conventional use, was introduced by art historians such as Michael Baxandall. The British sociologist Stuart Hall was a leading author and teacher in visual culture study in the UK and globally by the 1970s. Literary and art historical writing on the semiotics of the gaze by Mieke Bal, Michael Ann Holly, and Norman Bryson; and British and North American feminist film studies scholars, art historians, and artists John Berger, Jacqueline Rose, Mary Kelley, Victor Bergin, Mary Ann Doane, Kaja Silverman, Constance Penley, D. N. Rodowick, Jackie Stacey, Douglas Crimp, and Griselda Pollack contributed an important theoretical foundation for the emergence of self-conscious



programs of visual culture research. Other key influences included Laura Mulvey's essay on the male gaze and visual pleasure in western art and film, Janet Wolff's work on the social production of art, and Martin Jay and Jonathan Crary's conceptions of → scopic regimes.

Also movements to study the social use and role of pictures and visual artifacts in anthropology and social communication, largely in the US, provided important pioneering contributions to the rise of visual culture study (Worth 1981).

Since the early 2000s, visual culture study has solidified into a field of study in its own right, marked by the inauguration of the interdisciplinary and international *Journal of Visual Culture* in 2002. Rather than emerging merely as a field in its own right, visual culture has achieved recognition as a viable approach in many of the traditional disciplines including literature, history, art history, film and media studies, and communication studies. One of its major innovations in academic study has been the integration of visual practice and critical theory; and a sustained interest in feminism, queer theory, and critical race studies as strong components of the field's work.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertisement, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Amateur Photography and Movies ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Barthes, Roland ▶ Cinema ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Digital Imagery ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Ethnographic Film ▶ Film as Popular Culture ▶ Iconography ▶ Infographics ▶ Internet ▶ Museum ▶ News ▶ Painting ▶ Photography ▶ Photojournalism ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Popular Culture and the News Media ▶ Scopic Regime ▶ Semiotics ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Structuralism in Visual Communication ▶ Television ▶ Television, Visual Characteristics of ▶ Video ▶ Video Games ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Visual Representation

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# Visual Representation

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The study and conceptualization of visual representation were primarily associated with art and art history prior to the twentieth century, and drew on the analytical tools of iconology with a focus on the artist's intention and perception (→ Iconography). With the advent of → semiotics, followed by other theories of the visual, the twentieth century marked a broadening in conceptions of visual representation from the realm of art to the realm of the everyday. Studies of visual representation have expanded to include the images that surround people everyday. This includes studies of images in film (Metz 1990), the use of photography (Sontag 1979), advertising (Goffman 1979), scientific imagery (Latour & Woolgar 1986), learning and development (Kress 1996), and the representation of social identities (Hall 1997). This expansion of the domain of the visual has influenced how visual representation is theorized and approached, including a shift in focus from the image to contexts of production and viewers. Today a range of theories is applied to understanding the visual, including theories drawn from anthropology, art history, cognitive psychology, cultural studies, linguistics, psychoanalytical theories, and sociology.

Studies of visual representation have shown that the visual is central to the cultural construction of social life. People's everyday experience of the world, socially, physically, and psychologically, and their production of meaning are mediated by the visual. Visual representation is not only a matter of how people experience the world; it is also crucial in how the world itself is constructed. The twenty-first century is marked by a plethora of imaging and visual technologies, and in contemporary western society everyday life is saturated with the images that these technologies make available. Studies of late twentieth-century culture have noted a *turn to the visual* (Mitchell 1995; Mirzoeff 1999) in which the modern world has become a visual phenomenon; a world that conflates looking, seeing, and knowing (Jenks 1995) to become a "vision machine" created through new visualizing technologies in which people are all caught (Virilio 1994).

Visual representation is a complex concept that connects with fundamental questions of "reality," ideology and power, agency, as well as signification and the procedures and potentials for interpreting meaning. There is, however, a general agreement that the meaning of an image is "made" at three sites: (1) the site of the image, (2) the site of production, and (3) the viewer interaction. The meaning of visual representation is realized in the interplay across these three sites or factors.

## THE IMAGE

The concept of visual codes and conventions (socially agreed ways of doing something) is often employed in the analysis of visual representations. Semiotics proposes that there is a wide range of visual, pictorial, material, and symbolic → signs that are conventional in the way that they simplify, and yet bear some kind of resemblance to, an object or quality

in the “real” world that they signify. This includes abstract signs that become associated through agreement into convention with the object or quality represented. These conventions are extended to a semiotic → “code” to form an extended system of semiotic signs. Social semiotics uses the concept of “semiotic resource” rather than code. This serves to foreground the work of the sign-maker in interpreting and assembling semiotic resources.

What is depicted in an image and how it is represented are an obvious starting point for understanding the process of visual representation. Visual codes can, for example, be designed to realize visual narratives or conceptual categories, each of which serves to connect or disconnect depicted elements in different ways. That is, the way these relationships are represented marks (and establishes) what belongs and does not belong together, who acts on what, and so on. These *represented relations* are realized through a range of codes, including the representation of depicted elements, compositional arrangements, and analytical structures. Visual representations also work by using and representing many of the visual codes that are employed in lived rather than textual forms of communication. In this way visual representations can carry all the sign systems and codes (dress, style, body language, and so on) that can “make” the lived world meaningful. For instance, Goffman’s *Gender advertisements* (1979) offers a classic exemplar of how depicted elements, compositional structures, posture, and gaze contribute to the production and regulation of gendered identities.

In addition to their “content,” visual representations position the viewer to look in particular ways. In this way an image can be understood as “telling” viewers who they are and where they are. In doing so the image realizes the ideological design of the viewer’s relationship with the depicted object, person, or event. The viewer can refuse to adopt the viewing position offered by an image, but nonetheless it is present.

## PRODUCTION

In order to get at the meaning of an image, the ways in which the meanings and uses of images are regulated by institutions of production, distribution, and consumption need to be considered. The economics, motives, and intentions of those who produce and disseminate visual representations are aspects of the site of production. That is, visual representations need to be understood in context because these social factors and experiences are not separate from the signifying systems of the visual; they do not exist in an abstract realm – they actually structure it (→ Sign Systems).

The production of an image is therefore integral to its use and meaning. Technologies of production, in particular new technologies, are key to the question of the relationship between visual representation and “reality.” Technologies have changed what it is possible to see and how these entities are seen, through the magnification of detail, slow motion, capturing images that escape “natural” vision, and the changing context of viewing.

## VIEWER AND GAZE

The viewer, looking, and subjectivity are key themes in theorizing and understanding visual representation (→ Spectator Gaze). Understanding the agency of the viewer demands a shift of analytical emphasis away from the image or text to the social identities and

experiences of the viewer. This necessarily connects with the context of viewing as part of the production of meaning. From this perspective, meaning is understood as constituted in the articulation between the viewer and the viewed, between the power of the image to signify and the viewer's capacity to interpret meaning. Visual representations work (mean) by producing effects each time they are looked at. However, the image also depends for its effects on a certain way of seeing.

Asking who the viewer is raises the question of the alignment and identification of their points of view and perspective with those of the maker of the image (→ Visual Communication). In other words, both the maker and the reader of a visual representation are involved in the process of making sense (*designing meaning*). Seeing the viewer as agentive means that the power of a visual sign remains a potential until the viewer engages with it. The parameters within which interpretations are made are shaped by the viewer's social position and subjective capacity in conjunction with the conventions and codes of a visual representation.

The mediating effect of contexts of viewing is especially relevant for visual representation in the twenty-first century, when images are mobile across different media and contexts (→ Digitization and Media Convergence). For example, reading a magazine at home, driving by a billboard on the road, and watching an advert at home on television or with friends in the cinema all call forth different practices of viewing. The context of viewing contributes to realizing different practices of looking and interpreting.

In summary, visual representation can be understood as a *cycle of production*, circulation, and consumption, a cycle in which visual representations become a site of struggle over what something means.

## VISUAL REPRESENTATION AND SIGNIFICATION

Signification and how to theorize the relationship between referent, signifier, and signified are central to the way visual representation is conceptualized. Current theories of → perception, → structuralism, poststructuralism, and postmodernism theorize their relationship in different ways (→ Postmodernism and Communication). This influences how the power of visual representation is understood to shape people's experience of the world, what the world is, and what it can be.

### Perception

Models of perception are concerned with image-making as an internal psychological process, that is, with the perceptions and sensations in the mind of the image-maker and the viewer. Here the goal is the perfect reproduction of reality. This places reality as external to representation, in which the referent "exists" and the signifier reflects it.

From this perspective an image is a *transparent window* through which the viewer can connect directly (via the signifier) to an original object or presence (the referent). This presents a notion of the image as autonomous and as containing within itself an inherent meaning. This conception of visual signification and image-making as cognition, perception, and a kind of optical truth severs the connection between image and society and fails to account for the relationship between image and power.

## Structuralism

In the twentieth century semiotics began to interrogate the elements and structures of systems of representation, language, and the visual. Traditional semiotics (e.g., Saussure 1986) views → meaning as consisting of two parts: the signifier and the signified. On the one hand, the signifier denotes a sign's literal meaning: that is, who or what is depicted. On the other hand, the signified connotes a sign's associated meanings: that is, the cultural ideas and values associated with the objects depicted. Structuralism asserts that although we depend on the relationship between these two parts to produce meaning, it is an arbitrary relationship established through cultural convention. This presents language and other systems of meaning as self-contained structures, a system of arbitrary and differential signs that do not name or reflect thoughts or concepts that pre-exist it, but rather actively construct them.

Structuralism attempts to understand the social and cultural forces that motivate representation, rather than accepting representation as given or natural. This brings the relationship between referent, signifier, and signified into a social relationship. Viewing is repositioned as a social process that involves the unfolding of meaning through the “activation” of visual codes of recognition, codes learnt through the viewer's interaction in the social cultural world, rather than an individual physiological and cognitive process.

Locating visual representation in the social domain in this way opens up the necessity of thinking of visual representation as discursive work, work that produces society. This reconnects images with the social and in doing so locates image in relation to power. However, structuralism has been criticized for being *ahistorical* and for being *deterministic* in the way that it privileges structure over individual human agency. In this way it is inadequate in theorizing the potential of human agency to resist, challenge, and change systems of representation. Peirce (1991) brought human agency into semiosis by his assertion that sign-making involves the cooperation of a sign, its object, and its interpretant. In other words, for Peirce signs cannot exist independently of a subject to interpret them. This shifts attention from the idea of meaning as embedded in text to a concern for the interactive process of *meaning-making*.

## Poststructuralism

Poststructuralism developed in the 1960s as a critical response to the assumptions of structuralism. Poststructuralism rejects the structuralist notion that there is a consistent structure to a text and argues instead that these structures and systems that underlie a text are themselves a cultural product. Poststructuralism argues that the systems of knowledge that produce it, as well as the text itself, need to be analyzed in order to understand the meaning of a text. In other words, poststructuralism can be seen as the study of the production of knowledge (Worth 1981).

Poststructuralism argues that the author is not the primary source of the meaning of a text (Barthes 1977) and that there is a *multiplicity of meanings* to any text. Decentering the authority of the author in this way serves to open up the meaning of a text to the work of the reader and other sources for meaning, such as cultural norms and historical context. Placing the reader at the center of meaning-making in this way asserts that no text has one

meaning, purpose, or existence. In addition to demanding a rethinking of texts and representations, poststructuralism also destabilizes the notion of the “self.” From this perspective the concept of the self as a single and coherent entity is a fictional construct.

*Social semiotics* rejects the concept of code as too rigid and static and instead uses the concept of semiotic resource (Hodge & Kress 1988). A focus on semiotic resources serves to recognize the social, historical, and cultural character of visual codes and the ideological work of signs. From a poststructuralist perspective the act of reading a sign is repositioned as the act of sign-making, of giving meaning to a signified. That is, the reader is the sign-maker and signs are constantly remade and transformed through people’s engagement with them. In this way, the denotative (the signified) can be seen as always connotative, no matter how literal its relationship to the “real” world.

The relationship of the referent with the signifier and signified is significantly “loosened” in poststructuralism- and the term “signifier” is preferred to “sign” to indicate that no single meaning is secured to a word, and that the possibility of a full and secure meaning is always deferred (Derrida 1978). In other words, meaning is never as fully “fixed” as structuralism appears to suggest. This attempts to move away from the linking of representation with the idea of reconstituting the missing “presence,” the original source “content” of the empirical form of a representation.

### Postmodernism

Postmodernism argues that the economic and social conditions of late capitalism, in particular globalization and new technologies, have led to a decentralized, fragmented, and media-dominated society saturated with images (→ Globalization Theories; Technology and Communication). Postmodernism rejects the idea of “representation” in favor of “*simulation*” to emphasize the constructed character of signs. Simulations are understood as simulacra of the “real” that presuppose and precede the “real.” These hyperreal symbols and signs do not have an original, stable referent or a source of meaning. In this way postmodernism breaks the relationship between seeing and knowing. Baudrillard (1983) argues that society has replaced all reality and meaning with symbols and signs, and that what people understand as “reality” is actually a simulation of reality. From this perspective, images are to be fundamentally mistrusted because they claim to signal a referent that they have become detached or severed from.

Postmodernism is a contested term. Whether or not it is a distinct historical period or an extension of modernism remains a matter of debate. There is agreement, however, that the conditions of late capitalism have realized some of the aspects encompassed in postmodernist theory, such as the breakdown of traditional structures (e.g., genre and other stylistic forms) and classificatory categories. This conceptualization of visual representation refutes the possibility of representation as a mimetic reflection of “reality.”

### VISUAL REPRESENTATION, IDENTITY, AND POSTCOLONIALISM

The visual produces as well as represents culture, constituting (and constituted by) its relations of power and difference, so that cultures of everyday life are entwined with practices of representation. The continuous circulation and repetition of images presented

as the norm or reality in visual media actively define social and cultural norms as fixed and natural. In the ways that people are depicted, vision is complicit with power and discipline through surveillance. Understanding visual representation as embodying and constituting ideologies (the system of thoughts and beliefs that determine the subjects action and behavior) shows how ways of investing meaning in the world are realized in visual representations.

The theorization and study of identities (→ Social Identity Theory) is one example of a significant area that has shown the potential of visual representation in understanding social and cultural phenomena (e.g., Hall 1997). Work has shown how racial, gendered, and other identities are visually represented, recycled, and contested. Visual discourses work to govern and empower particular understandings of a subject through their representation. Building on the work of Foucault (1977), identity theorists have examined visual representation as a part of the regulatory force of culture (sets of practices, cultural norms, meanings, and values) as they apply to the production of identities.

The cultural practices of looking and seeing are (like other social practices) organized around the founding principles of the *articulation of difference*. Looking at how representations attempt to fix difference offers a way of conceptualizing the complex relationship of power and representation. The practices of representation can be employed, for instance, to mark gender and racial difference. The “visible” signifiers of race and gender on the body can be called on to make these differences seem real and therefore true. The differences we can “see” appear to ground their “truth” beyond the social and historical construction of race and gender into nature and therefore to be unchangeable. The question of how the “other” is produced and reproduced through visual representation is central to postcolonial theories. The idea that discipline and control can be achieved through relations of looking and the knowledge and power that vision allows over what is seen is central to Foucault’s work and postcolonial theories.

Visual representations are, then, a discursive means by which a dominant group works to establish and maintain hegemonic power within a culture in which meaning is constantly reproduced and remade as signs are articulated and rearticulated. Images are thus a site of *struggle for meaning*, a site of power, and constitutive of society. Cultural production therefore has real political and ideological effects (→ Cultural Studies). As a result, visual representation has also been taken up as a potential tool for resistance and the remaking – reimagining – of society (→ Art as Communication).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Code ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Digitization and Media Convergence ▶ Globalization Theories ▶ Iconography ▶ Meaning ▶ Perception ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Social Identity Theory ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Structuralism ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Visual Communication

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## Visuals, Cognitive Processing of

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Visual perception is a seemingly effortless process for most people. However, it is not the case that the human brain receives information just as it exists in the environment. Vision is an *active process*, and while information from the outside world becomes transformed into information sent to the visual cortex, there are a number of decisions the visual system makes in order to solve inherent ambiguities (→ Information Processing). For example, objects in the physical world are three-dimensional, while images stored on the retina are represented in only two dimensions. Consequently, it is almost impossible to resolve the information about size and distance with complete accuracy. Consider the case of a scuba diver with limited visual cues – the shark in her visual field could be seen as a very large fish 10 meters away, or as a very small fish just 1 meter away. Much research in psychology has focused on how people resolve ambiguous information using various visual cues including object size, motion, color, segregation (i.e., determining when one object begins and another one ends), and the distance of the object from the perceiver.

A separate line of research seeks to understand *how people form and process mental images internally*. Evidence suggests that the manner in which people store and utilize



visual memories is different than that for verbal memories (→ Dual Coding Theory), because the former are largely contingent on spatial principles, while the latter are stored in a propositional format. Researchers have utilized various → paradigms to study the manner in which people store and use images. For example, work by Shepard and colleagues in the early 1970s established a paradigm of mental rotation (e.g., Shepard & Metzler 1971). By having experimental subjects rotate objects in their mind (e.g., rotate the letter “K” 90 degrees counterclockwise) and comparing the imagined results to the actual results, researchers learned about the accuracy and malleability of mental representations. In addition, by running experiments in which subjects scanned mental maps and recalled features of imagined images, Kosslyn and colleagues demonstrated that people used mental imagery often and accurately (e.g., Kosslyn 1973). Moreover, certain types of visualization are qualitatively different from others in terms of richness of representation; evidence suggests that people process human faces more substantially than other images.

When people communicate with others, either face-to-face or through some mediated context, vision usually plays a major role. Of course, how substantial that role is obviously depends on context – watching → television relies more on vision than listening to the → radio. However, communication scholars have relied on theories and methodologies created by cognitive and perceptual psychologists to guide their work (see Smith et al. 2005 for a review; → Psychology in Communication Processes).

One fruitful area of work has been examining the manner in which visual information *interacts with verbal information*. The now classic “McGurk effect” had demonstrated that people rely on visual information when listening to another person speak. McGurk and McDonald (1976) created a video clip with the speaker mouthing the sound “pa-pa” but coupled with the sound “na-na”. People watching the clip integrate the two conflicting cues and hear the phoneme “ma-ma.” In other words, visual information changes the way a communicator hears information.

Many communication scholars have studied the *effect that visualization has on verbal processing*, when the two channels are either redundant (i.e., consistent) or inconsistent. For example, Edell and Staelin (1983) have provided support for a model in which the degree to which visual information improves or detracts from a verbal advertisement depends on the type of message presented in the advertisement and on the congruence of the verbal and visual information. Subsequent work has examined the degree to which visual information augments verbal information in newscasts, political flyers, and many other forms of mediated messages with visual information.

The effect of visual processing is significant enough that people may be unknowingly influenced in various important decisions made in society. The realm of politics serves as a good example. Modern politics depends heavily on the development of communication media, which heighten the visual aspect of political campaigns (→ Candidate Image). Work has demonstrated that in low-information situations people often turn to *visual affective cues* and base their electoral choices on the appearance of the candidate. One study demonstrated that manipulating images to increase the facial similarity of the candidates to the voters’ own facial features increased the likelihood the voter would support that candidate (Bailenson et al. 2006). Of course, well-informed voters have the ability to filter such intuitive attractions out of their decision-making processes, but the influence of the visual information above and beyond substantive issues is significant.

Infinite possibilities for visual processing await discovery in the field of communication. In the future, it will become increasingly important for scholars and the public alike to constantly question the ethics of innovative methods to influence the human mind through visual manipulation (→ Image Ethics).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Attending to the Mass Media ▶ Attention ▶ Candidate Image ▶ Comprehension ▶ Discourse Comprehension ▶ Dual Coding Theory ▶ Image Ethics ▶ Information Processing ▶ Listening ▶ Memory ▶ Memory, Message ▶ Memory, Person ▶ News Processing and Retention ▶ Paradigm ▶ Psychology in Communication Processes ▶ Radio ▶ Schemas ▶ Television

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## **Voice of America**

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Voice of America (VOA) is a multilingual international broadcasting service funded by the US government, which, since its creation in 1942, has played an important role in projecting American news, culture, and policy to the world (→ International Radio; News; Culture: Definitions and Concepts).

The US government was slow to begin international broadcasting. While Soviet Russia had been transmitting to the world since 1927, the United States left such activity to a few religious stations. The outbreak of World War II changed this. In February 1942 federally funded broadcasts began from New York in German, French, and Italian under the collective name of Voice of America. More languages soon followed. The first VOA broadcast set the tone with the announcer declaring in German: “The news may be good or bad. We shall tell you the truth.” Overseen by the Office of War Information, VOA sparked controversy when it repeated criticism of US foreign policy, but it was considered effective enough to survive into the postwar period as an adjunct of the State Department.

While postwar funding was initially hard to come by, the ubiquity of Soviet → propaganda soon convinced Capitol Hill that the US needed a permanent international information machine including shortwave radio. The authorizing legislation came in 1948. In 1953 the Eisenhower administration placed VOA within the United States Information Agency (USIA) a new agency for what would eventually be dubbed “public diplomacy.” At the same time VOA moved from New York to Washington, DC to quiet McCarthyite claims that the station was running a radical foreign policy of its own.

From the outset VOA’s output was strongly influenced by the ethics of domestic American journalism. The station’s broadcasters worked to present the news in a balanced way (→ Balance). The Eisenhower administration recognized the prime value of credibility and in 1960 authorized a Voice of America charter to require the Voice both to reflect American policy and broadcast all sides of a story. VOA was helped in its journalistic mission by the existence of a parallel network of ostensibly independent stations broadcasting to the Eastern bloc, known as Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty and actually funded by the CIA (→ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty). VOA took the role of the good cop while RFE/RL played propaganda hardball. Had VOA been America’s only voice it is likely that the pressure on them to transmit propaganda would have been even more intense than they were. Even so, while the charter strengthened the hand of the journalists at VOA it was not enough by itself to deter politically motivated attempts to skew the Voice’s output. Political pressure during the → Watergate scandal and the closing years of the Vietnam War prompted a bipartisan move to write the VOA charter into law in 1976.

Besides news, VOA output always included cultural programming. Its most famous program was the *Music USA Jazz Hour*, hosted by Willis Conover, which ran from 1956 to Conover’s death in 1996. The show was an immense hit with audiences in eastern Europe. Conover saw jazz as a musical expression of American democracy. VOA also carried features, drama, commentary and broadcast some of its English-language programming as “Special English,” a system that used a limited vocabulary delivered at dictation speed for those with only a beginner’s grasp of the language.

As the Cold War progressed the Voice pulled back from its European languages and added more *Asian and African content*, typically maintaining 46 or so different languages. VOA built an audience generally reckoned in excess of 100,000 per week. Refugees from the communist world consistently affirmed its value while further evidence of its effectiveness could be found in the counter-measures deployed by its enemies, including jamming across the Soviet bloc and China.

In the 1980s VOA entered a period of *modernization and controversy*. While some Reagan administration appointees sought to increase the political content of the Voice and expand the use of editorials on the air, journalists fought a rearguard action to protect their charter. VOA began to move away from shortwave, seeking out FM affiliates to rebroadcast its material. In the 1990s the Voice redoubled its quest for FM affiliates and began broadcasting television programs, starting with its Mandarin and Farsi services. Under the leadership of director Geoffrey Cowan, the VOA greatly expanded its use of call-in formats, a shift characterized by Cowan as “from monologue to dialogue.” The Voice swiftly recognized the value of the Internet and launched language streams in all its broadcast languages. As post-Cold War budget cuts bit, some of these replaced the on-air version.

The 1990s saw two major *bureaucratic shifts*. First, in 1994, VOA came into the same stable as RFE/RL – the International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB) – which required a pooling of engineering resources. Then, in 1999, as USIA disappeared into an expanded State Department, VOA and the wider IBB became subject to a new Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). While the BBG was designed to keep out political influence, VOA managers soon complained that the structure had actually locked in the influence of particular board members.

The global “war on terror” sparked familiar tussles over alleged attempts to skew VOA. The Voice embraced new technology (including feeds in several languages to personal data devices), and increasingly used → television, but resources remained scarce (→ International Television). The BBG launched several major initiatives, including new radio and TV services in Arabic, outside the VOA structure. The Voice paid the price in budget cuts, culminating in a budget for fiscal year 2008 that eliminated most English-language programming. At the time of writing the future of the Voice seems increasingly in doubt.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Balance ▶ BBC World Service ▶ China Central Television Channel 9 (CCTV-9) ▶ CNN ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Deutsche Welle ▶ International Radio ▶ International Television ▶ News ▶ Propaganda ▶ Radio France Internationale ▶ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty ▶ TeleSur ▶ Television ▶ Vatican Radio ▶ Watergate Scandal

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## **Voice, Prosody, and Laughter**

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The terms “voice,” “prosody,” and “laughter” refer primarily to vocal, nonlinguistic aspects of communication. Human communication is rich with meaning conveyed through multiple channels, often divided into verbal (language, words, and symbols) and nonverbal. It may be tempting to think of nonverbal communication as primarily visual, but speakers convey much meaning vocally, too. Considering prosody, voice, and laughter together may promote a misleading view that spoken language operates somewhat independently from such paralinguistic indicators (also called supra-segmentals in linguistics). This view has its origins in scholarly traditions that begin with studying the

printed word. A different starting point is interaction, where all features of message production work integrally to contribute to meaning, which participants negotiate moment by moment. The French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure captured this distinction between studying *langue*, the abstract system that a particular group of people internalizes, and *parole*, actual speaking practices.

*Prosody* and *voice* features such as pitch, intonation, emphasis, volume, rhythm, timing, and tempo contribute to the emergent meaning of utterances. For example, intonation at a possible transition point (where change from one speaker to another is relevant) helps mark an utterance as a completed question (upward intonation) or declarative statement (downward intonation) or as still in progress (continuing intonation). In this and various other ways prosodic features help shape turn-construction and turn-taking. They also play a role in action design and sequence organization matters that arise routinely in interaction (→ Conversation Analysis). Prosodic features indicate perceived confidence and attractiveness and mark aspects of individual identity such as gender, race, and class (→ Interactional Sociolinguistics).

Under some circumstances speakers will tend to adjust prosodic features to be more convergent with or divergent from those of their interlocutors. These changes may reflect rapport or status. Prosody and vocal patterns make up different accents and dialects of spoken languages (→ Language Varieties). Prosody and voice also mark attitude and affect in interaction (→ Emotion). Such features have long been of interest to teachers and scholars of performance, both for the stage and professions that rely on effective vocal performance and for culturally grounded studies of performance genres around the world. Studies of speech play and verbal art pay attention to performance elements that give spoken language heightened drama, involvement, ritual value, aesthetic value, or emotional impact (for example, rhyme, repetition, and rhythm).

*Laughter* has long drawn attention for its distinctive place in the human communicative repertoire. Philosophers from the time of Plato and Aristotle to the present have sought to understand why people laugh, although such investigations often reveal ultimate concern with what makes something funny. However, much laughter in interaction does not respond to humor or anything particularly funny but serves other social functions, such as showing friendliness or affiliation. Ethological researchers have studied how human laughter resembles and differs from similar behaviors exhibited by other higher primates. Chimpanzees and baboons, for example, show a relaxed, open-mouthed face and make a reiterated uh-uh-uh sound when playing. Human laughter differs physiologically (enabled in part by our upright, bipedal posture and breathing apparatus) and shows a greater variety and subtlety of social functions. Researchers in psychologically grounded traditions have sought to understand the mental mechanisms that underlie laughter and some of the social variable that may prompt someone to laugh in certain contexts.

Although laughs have no semantic content, they routinely occur closely intertwined with talk and help shape overall meaning. Social interactional researchers document laughter's placement, production features, and workings within all kinds of talk, ranging from casual conversation to meetings, medical interviews, and televised political debates. Laughter is finely organized, precisely placed, and subject to interpretation based on its acoustic properties and sequential location. People often laugh together, and such shared

laughter routinely begins with one person inviting another to laugh along (Jefferson 1979). Whether one is the first to laugh or joins in both shapes and reflects issues of local relationship and role (e.g., whether one is the butt of a tease, or is affiliating with someone else). Researchers in nearly all traditions have found fascination with laughter's dual nature: it may signal alignment and bring people together, but it may also display hostility and be used mockingly or derisively. Whether someone is *laughing at* or *laughing with* another in interaction gets worked out according to specific cues. Laughter itself may be ambiguous in the extent to which it displays going along with what is happening or resisting it. This makes laughter a valuable social tool for negotiating identities and relationships (Glenn 2003). Laughter conveys meaning visually as well as aurally, but most social interactional studies have attended primarily to its aural features.

Different systems for transcribing prosody, voice, and laughter (→ Transcribing and Transcription) carry different assumptions about what is important to notice and how features interrelate with each other. The conversation analytic transcription system developed by Gail Jefferson (see Atkinson & Heritage 1984) uses symbols on the keyboard to note prosodic features such as changes in pitch and intonation, volume, emphasis, and tempo. Laughter is not merely noted but actually transcribed. This allows analysis of how variations in the acoustic structure of laughter – for example, a closed-mouth “hmh” contrasted to an open-mouthed “hah” – contribute to what it is doing at a moment in interaction.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Conversation Analysis ▶ Discourse Markers ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Identities and Discourse ▶ Interactional Sociolinguistics ▶ Language Varieties ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Transcribing and Transcription

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# Voyeurism

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Voyeurism (from the French *voir* – to see) is a term used to describe the act of observing the actions of other people in order to provoke sexual arousal. Although all-encompassing, it is often associated specifically with the behavior of adolescent males, who frequently engage in voyeuristic activities in the period leading up to sexual maturity.

In Robert Zemeckis's *Back to the Future* (1985), the time-traveling teenager Marty McFly watches a teenage incarnation of his own father (George) in the act of spying on his own future mother (Lorraine), herself still a nubile girl. While she is happily undressing in what she believes to be the safe haven of her own bedroom, her future husband is perched on the branch of a tree, peering at her through binoculars. Here George conforms exactly to the popular idea of a "voyeur," someone whose primary sexual gratification derives from the unseen, hidden act of looking. Although Lorraine is unaware of being watched, the horrified Marty, who can see everything, groans, "Oh my God, he's a peeping tom." Marty's disgust is understandable. Described as a "perversion" by Freud, the act of voyeurism is seen as a violation of the victim's privacy, something that, conversely, also applies to the voyeur – for whom gratification is often dependent on not being seen to look.

If this kind of voyeuristic activity may appear dangerous (in the United Kingdom it was criminalized under the 2003 Sexual Offences Act), then the visual arts offer considerable respite. The act of looking is essential to the construction of → meaning in → painting, → photography, → television, → cinema, and online (→ Internet). All present the opportunity to peer into an oft-denied space, regardless of whether it provides intellectual or sexual stimulation.

An example of voyeurism as "intellectual" stimulus is provided by the history of the *female nude in western art*. Fundamental to the type of voyeuristic pleasure gained through the study of these paintings is the question of whether or not the women represented return the gaze of the, presumably male, spectator (→ Spectator Gaze). Typically, the gaze of the female protagonist is turned away from the voyeur, possibly toward an unseen lover (→ Gaze in Interaction). However, from the early nineteenth century onward this tradition is undermined. Certain painters deliberately challenge this convention by depicting a traditional reclining nude who stares defiantly out of the canvas to meet the eye of the male spectator; the most controversial example is possibly Manet's *Olympia* (→ Art as Communication). Berger (1972) examines the tradition of the nude in western art and suggests that at this ruptural moment the conventional distinction between images on canvas and mass-produced soft-core pornography disappears (→ Sexualization in the Media).

Voyeurism is, of course, often confused with *scopophilia* (the pleasure derived from gazing at another body). Mulvey (1975) used this latter term in her deconstruction of the

voyeuristic gaze of → Hollywood cinema, arguing that the pleasure of “looking,” within classic narrative cinema, is constructed, quite specifically, for a male viewer. Yet, interestingly, the male gaze is never directly returned – the film spectator subjectively identifies himself with either the male protagonist or the camera. The cinema offers three potential *examples of voyeuristic participation*: that of the camera, of the character, and of the spectator. As the very process of watching a film – in the dark, separated spatially from other members of the audience – appears to offer audiences the unseen, individual pleasure of the “peeping tom,” the importance of such “looking” is intensified, particularly in relation to the communal, visible-to-others viewing traditional with, say, television (→ Film Theory). Certainly, the term “voyeur” often appears to suggest a male viewer. Kaplan (1991) describes how very few reported cases of sexual voyeurism involve a woman as perpetrator (→ Women in the Media, Images of; Audiences, Female). In relation to pornography, the most voyeuristic of all the visual arts and one primarily “consumed” by men, this would certainly appear to be the case (→ Pornography Use across the Life-Span; Pornography, Feminist Debates on). Freud described how such pleasure in looking becomes perverse when it supplants the desire to engage in intercourse (→ Fetishization). While all the visual arts offer a pleasure of sorts, pornography (which has as its eventual aim the sexual gratification of the voyeur) perfectly exemplifies this idea. It is perhaps for this reason that the Internet, the one great extension to the possibilities offered for voyeurism in the last two decades, contains such a vast array of pornographic material (→ Sex and Pornography Online). The widespread use of the webcam allows the voyeur to interact with his or her chosen target while remaining unseen and anonymous.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Art as Communication ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Cinema ▶ Fetishization ▶ Film Theory ▶ Gaze in Interaction ▶ Hollywood ▶ Internet ▶ Meaning ▶ Online Media ▶ Painting ▶ Persuasion ▶ Photography ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Pornography Use across the Life-Span ▶ Sex and Pornography Online ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Television ▶ Visual Communication ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# W

## War Correspondents

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War correspondents provide first-hand accounts of military conflict for dissemination to the public. The literature of war correspondents manifests a decidedly western focus. War correspondents originated during the imperial age, when British newspapers sought first-hand accounts of distant continental and colonial wars, and became an institution during major nineteenth- and twentieth-century wars. Newspapers originated the role of war correspondent. *The Times* of London hired barrister Henry Crabb Robinson to cover Napoleon's campaign in Spain and later employed William Howard Russell to cover the Crimean and Franco-Prussian wars. Scholarship about conflicts and journalism practices in general focuses disproportionately on western sources.

### ORIGINS AND TECHNOLOGY

Before the nineteenth century, reports from the front lines depended on accounts from travelers or letters from troops, who were untrained and poorly educated. Accounts of war in newspapers often served simply to promote nationalism. Two factors that influenced the role and function of war correspondents are social and ideological (→ News Ideologies). Social changes, especially those involving technology, shortened the time required to get news from the front lines to the public, and ideological pressures created tension over whether war reports are independent accounts or government propaganda (→ Technology and Communication).

Early on, correspondents wrote their reports by hand and transmitted them to newspapers by horse or ship. Sometimes weeks or months passed before the public read about battles. The pattern began to change in the late nineteenth century. During the Mexican-American War, correspondents sent their reports first by steamship to New Orleans, then via telegraph to the east coast or by pony express to the US heartland (→ Telegraphic News). War reporting changed again when the US and European networks of telegraph lines expanded. The telegraph sped movement of news reports from the front lines. The number of war correspondents increased during the US Civil War: more than 500 from the north alone covered the early battles in Virginia and Maryland. Although coverage became more immediate, reports were often inaccurate, fabricated, partisan (→ Partisan

Press), and incendiary (Knightley 1975), largely because correspondents lacked education and training (→ Journalism Education).

The Atlantic cable laid in 1866 meant that news of war on one continent no longer took weeks to reach readers on another. At first the flow of news was largely one-sided, with the US press depending heavily on foreign reports, especially from Britain. During the last half of the nineteenth century, British war correspondents dominated coverage. Europeans and Americans read news reports of the Crimean and Franco-Prussian wars by William Howard Russell of *The Times* of London and accounts of the Franco-Prussian, Russo-Turkish, and Zulu wars by Archibald Forbes of the *London Daily News*. During the Spanish–American War, US correspondents dominated, including Richard Harding Davis of the *New York Journal* and Stephen Crane of the *New York World*, and the Associated Press emerged as a major source of war news.

The sharp rise in literacy and the development of *economical printing* increased the number of mass circulation → newspapers and → magazines in the late nineteenth century, enlarging audiences for war news. The expanding audience for news between the US Civil War and World War I produced a *golden age* for US and European war correspondents (Knightley 1975).

The next significant development was the dissemination of war news over the → *radio*, which spread with mass production of radio receivers following World War I. The first radio networks formed in Great Britain and the United States in the 1920s. By the late 1930s, almost all urban (and a majority of rural) US residents relied on radio as their primary news source. On the eve of the outbreak of World War II in Europe, correspondents in London and Prague could narrate events for a widening audience. Radio remained a primary source of news during the Korean conflict. Following the outbreak of war, radio ratings jumped by more than half.

In the United States, only one in six homes had → *television* when the Korean War began, but nine out of ten had TV sets by 1960, and most had a color TV by mid-decade. The Vietnam War was the first to enter US homes by television (Hallin 1989). The color film and video images were graphic and powerful (Allan & Zelizer 2004), but not live, because → television news divisions had to transport film canisters from the front. Television war reporting shifted the structure of news reports from thematic frames, which include background and context, to episodic frames, which communicate stories in piecemeal fashion without context (Iyengar 1991).

Starting with the Gulf conflict in 1991, *satellite transmission* eliminated the lag from the time correspondents covered events in war to the time audiences witnessed those events in news reports (→ Satellite Television). After → CNN broadcast the US bombing of Baghdad live in January 1991, instantaneous coverage of war was dubbed the *CNN effect*. When an audience thousands of miles away can experience words and images from a war zone as they occur, journalists have less time to exercise news judgment (→ News Values).

## TENSIONS

War correspondents face tension because of their several roles in wartime (→ Journalists' Role Perception). They may see themselves as a mirror, providing largely objective accounts of war with little or no interpretation; as a watchdog, counterbalancing the power of

political and military officials; or as a cheerleader, serving as a conduit to disseminate government positions. Which role prevails depends, in part, on three factors: the attitudes of news publishers, editors, and reporters; whether the public is unified or divided in its support of war; and the access to the front lines that political and military officials permit.

Early war reports served more as → *propaganda* (→ War Propaganda). Before World War I, war correspondents were more likely to provide what audiences wanted to read, mainly patriotic accounts that contributed to the illusion of war as an adventure or thrilling story (Knightley 1975). Governments did not necessarily interfere. For example, during the US Civil War, the government in Washington made little effort to control correspondents, in part because President Abraham Lincoln valued a free press and in part because of the difficulty of enforcing restrictions.

Competition between news outlets in reporting war news has been present since the mid-nineteenth century, when *The Times* and *Daily News* of London sent their own war correspondents to cover the Crimean, Franco-Prussian, and Russo-Turkish wars. In time, however, competition spurred overzealous newspaper owners to use sensational coverage to build circulation. That motive helped trigger US entry into the Spanish–American War, as William Randolph Hearst’s *New York Journal* and Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* competed for readers.

### GOVERNMENT CONTROLS

In war, the first casualty is truth. At the start of the twentieth century, Great Britain in the Boer War and Japan during the Russo-Japanese War were the first governments to censor war correspondents (→ Censorship; Censorship, History of). All major belligerents during World War I employed strict censorship of war news. Government and military officials reasoned that total war requires sacrifices, not just from soldiers but also from civilians.

Governments used two approaches to foment hatred of the enemy in order to sustain public support for war. First, they controlled press access to the front. The military provided reports of battles and subjected any correspondents found on the battlefield to arrest and expulsion. Second, governments created vehicles for their own propaganda by manipulating information. When these efforts were revealed following World War I, the press experienced a sharp decline in credibility.

During World War II the degree of censorship ranged from moderate control of the press among democratic nations to total control among totalitarian nations. US president Franklin Roosevelt sought to balance the conflicting goals of secrecy and candor, first through the Office of Censorship, formed after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and then through the Office of War Information, under Elmer Davis, formed in June 1942. US officials rationed pictures of American dead on the basis of public relations needs. They banned photographs of casualties early in the war but encouraged them later, fearing that US battlefield successes might result in overconfidence and reduce willingness to accept domestic hardships. Military officials in Britain and France intended to treat the press much as they had in World War I, but were instead more relaxed toward the press during World War II. US and British militaries considered correspondents part of the armed forces, a view that many correspondents shared (Knightley 1975; → Propaganda in World

War II). The press–military relationship, often contentious in previous wars, was cooperative during World War II, the Korean War, and the start of the Vietnam War.

At the outset of the latter two wars, news reports from the front were highly supportive. Occasional tension with the military arose over personalities or over the requirement to send stories from Korea through controls in Tokyo. By contrast, US journalists operated in Vietnam with complete freedom. After the Tet offensive in 1968, some political and military officials claimed that negative war coverage influenced public opinion. They blamed press access to the front lines for the reporting of casualties and atrocities. The reporting on bad news coverage would remain contentious in future wars.

In Korea and Vietnam, the US press was supportive of war early on, relying heavily on political and military officials for reports about progress. Later, as elite and public opinion began to divide, news reports reflected the divisions, and public support for limited war fell as casualties rose (Hallin 1989). News coverage tends to be critical in the late stages of longer wars.

Some political and military officials, believing that the news media undermined → public opinion during Vietnam, devised strategies to control press access during combat. The US invasion of Granada occurred in secret, absent press coverage. By the time of the invasion of Panama and the Gulf War, the US military employed a pool system that restricted battlefield access to a few reporters. Initial pools in the Gulf War consisted of 150 journalists out of more than 1,400 located in the region. The press corps strongly opposed the pool system.

During the Falklands War against Argentina, the British → *embedded* journalists in combat units, which fostered an *esprit de corps* between press and military that, some claim, slanted coverage toward the military. The US Department of Defense adopted a policy of embedding journalists in combat units during the Iraq War, partly in response to criticism of the pool system. The US government also wanted to showcase American military forces and simultaneously pre-empt misinformation anticipated from the Iraqi regime. The more than 600 journalists embedded in combat units during the Iraq War produced newspaper and television news reports that were structurally different from unilateral (non-embedded) reports. Embedded reports in the first two years featured greater episodic framing and, as a result, greater affect, and embedded reports were more favorable toward the military (Pfau et al. 2005).

Governments also continued creating new vehicles to influence war coverage. Following World War II, the US military used its own public affairs (once called “public information”) practitioners to work with civilian journalists covering war news. Since the Gulf conflict, governments also have used multinational public relations firms to influence public opinion. For example, the Hill and Knowlton firm represented the government of Kuwait at the time Iraq invaded the country. The firm helped shape US public opinion in favor of military intervention, in part by using the longstanding technique of claiming atrocities. During the Iraq War, the US government turned to public relations agencies to influence world opinion.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Censorship ▶ Censorship, History of ▶ CNN ▶ Embedded Journalists ▶ Journalism Education ▶ Journalists’ Role Perception ▶ Magazine ▶ News Ideologies ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Propaganda ▶ Propaganda in World War II ▶ Public Opinion ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Technology and Communication ▶ Telegraphic News ▶ Television ▶ Television News ▶ War Propaganda

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## **War Propaganda**

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War propaganda fuses international and domestic processes in communicating one or more nations as the “Other,” as worthy en masse of death and mutilation. During the twentieth century, as examples from Britain, Germany, and the US indicate, domestic as well as international media → propaganda became essential for planning and engaging effectively in combat against other countries. In World War I, governments employed verbal and visual strategies that effectively influenced mass public opinion in favor of war. Since then, technological media developments and advances in communication design have been employed to promote positive attitudes toward war, albeit with varying effectiveness. Terms such as public diplomacy, media campaign, information management, “stagecraft,” spin, and even “militainment” have also been deployed to characterize ever-evolving propaganda strategies. War propaganda to boost “Us” and dehumanize “Them” is also, however, the target of ongoing public scrutiny and challenge.

### **LANGUAGE, THE USES OF HISTORY, AND THE UNAVOIDABILITY OF VIOLENCE**

Over the decades, even in the face of significant public opposition, elected officials and military planners have called for and waged war. Convincing the public that war is

necessary, that all diplomatic means have been exhausted, and that the call to military action justifies the inevitable loss of life in its wake requires well-planned media campaigns. And during war, problems with battlefield logistics, military misconduct, and casualty figures can all corrode what has been referred to since World War I as “home-front morale.”

Wartime rhetoric includes linguistic and visual strategies that either obscure the human costs or present the loss of human life as acceptable (→ Linguistics; Propaganda, Visual Communication of). Phrases such as “smart bombs” assure that only military targets will be destroyed; the identification of images of dead and wounded civilians as “enemy propaganda” denies their reality; and “collateral damage” presents human destruction as a legitimate and inevitable by-product.

When *historical frameworks* are used to shape news of war, certain war events may be turned, very questionably, into transferable reference points, yet others may stay untouched, almost untouchable. Many US news media equated the 9/11 terrorist attacks with the 1941 Pearl Harbor attack that drove the US into World War II (→ Propaganda in World War II). Historical references to the danger of appeasing Hitler (in the renowned 1938 Munich summit) placed Afghanistan, Iraq, even Iran, within the context of the “Good Fight” of World War II. Yet during the build-up to the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, no mention was made in US news media of the standard brutalities of actual military interventions, to well-documented massacres by US troops such as No Gun Ri in the Korean War and My Lai in the Vietnam War, or to the fact the US was forced to withdraw from Vietnam.

War rhetoric *nurtures fear and hatred*, rendering reasoned discussion less compelling. Society generally punishes unlawful violent behavior, so that mobilizing collective hatred of an enemy requires blocking out peacetime inhibitions. In promoting state-sanctioned violence the enemy’s actions must be defined as so far outside the bounds of tolerance that negotiation is absurd. War must appear to be the only defense against a menacing, murderous aggressor. The demonized enemy is no longer recognizably human, and can be killed with impunity. Such narratives of exclusion provide the necessary psychopolitical context for war.

## **WORLD WAR I AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN WAR PROPAGANDA**

The cognitive, linguistic, and visual communication strategies that fueled World War I were designed in a variety of ways. In conjunction with → censorship, the repetition of carefully designed messages helped fuel the public’s fear and hatred, and to drag out the conflict over four years, with many millions of dead and maimed (→ Message Design Logics).

The linguistic and conceptual devices used almost a century ago are still recognizable today. Ambiguity must be eliminated, replaced by definitive assertions. The world is divided between “our civilized way of life” and “their barbarism.” A simple *binary of good and evil* facilitates mass consensus. War propaganda asserts that conflict is caused by the inherent evil of the enemy, not by historical injustices, failed diplomacy, competition for economic resources, or global inequities.

During World War I, stories of the brutality of the German “Hun” predominated in Britain and France. Official documents featured atrocity narratives of malevolent German soldiers carting away young women and bayoneting babies. Posters selling war bonds and recruiting troops, first in the UK and then in the US, depicted German soldiers as brutes,

with ape-like stature, often hunched over the defenseless and innocent victims who lay at their feet. The visceral fury evoked by this sub-human, club-wielding image became indispensable in overcoming much of the public's strong resistance to war.

In the years between World Wars I and II, many researchers became interested in the nature of information, as opposed to propaganda. As Europe lay devastated in the wake of a death toll of 8 million, the values of skepticism and independent thought were rearticulated. American scholars and many in the media industries were troubled by propaganda's efficacy. Even some of its practitioners would later question its damaging legacy for the democratic process.

War propaganda, some proposed, challenges the foundations of democratic governance by substituting government secrecy, and the repetition of officially sanctioned points of view, for accurate information and uninhibited public dialogue. Under these discursive controls, citizens cannot freely determine their own policies. If a public could be so uniformly swayed, held under a totalizing atmosphere, convinced to accept a conflict that most were privately convinced should stop, how could democracy remain a historical force for good? How would governments be kept accountable?

As these debates continued, the Third Reich emerged from the ashes of World War I. The Nazis now became the masters of war propaganda, evident in films such as *Triumph of the Will* by Leni Riefenstahl. Her film depicted a God-like Hitler descending from the heavens, and images of mass enthusiasm for authoritarian rule at the Nuremberg rallies. The 1939 invasion of Poland was shown in Nazi → documentary film as justified by provocations to the then German population of Poland and by the genetic inferiority of Slavs, and was to have concluded in a mere three weeks with tiny loss of German lives. War propaganda facilitated the acquiescence of the German population in Hitler's regime. In the US meanwhile, the experience of World War I made the public skeptical about backing another war, so that there propaganda creation became institutionalized in the US military (and continued to evolve with each new war).

### **NEW WAR PROPAGANDA FORMATS: "MILITAINMENT," STAGECRAFT, AND VIDEO GAMES**

Recently a hybrid format that blurs the boundaries between fiction and nonfiction, referred to as "*militainment*," has been employed by the US media and military to represent war. Militainment and "stagecraft" are attempts to control the meanings of war through fictional formatting, information management, and media choreography.

After September 11, 2001, Pentagon officials met with Hollywood producers and directors and requested they join the fight against terrorism. They collaborated on such films as *Behind Enemy Lines*, a story validating unilateral US military action, and ABC's *Profiles from the Front Lines*, a "reality show" about the Afghanistan war. Producer Jerry Bruckheimer made *Profiles* for ABC's entertainment division with full US military cooperation, even while news reporters were denied independent battlefield access. Media coverage of Iraq's invasion was largely foreshadowed by *Profiles*. Iraq also became the first war to be televised in real time with → embedded journalists providing live video-phone dispatches. These compelling images featured brave soldiers fighting, but almost no images of death, injury, or bereavement.



By the twenty-first century, the defining moments in the reporting of war in the US were increasingly *stage-managed* by Pentagon and White House public relations professionals. A leading illustration was when President George W. Bush declared an end to “major combat operations” in Iraq. Dressed in a military flight suit in a fighter jet cockpit, the president landed on aircraft carrier *USS Lincoln*, and in front of a banner proclaiming “Mission Accomplished,” announced the Iraq invasion over.

The White House said the jet fighter was necessary because the carrier was too far out to sea to be reached by helicopter. In fact, a few columnists and alternative news sources reported that the ship was so close to land that it had to be turned around to prevent television cameras from catching the San Diego coastline in the background. More importantly, the invasion of Iraq only began a long and devastating occupation.

Newer technologies also tie the media industries to the Pentagon in what has been called by a number of scholars the “military–entertainment complex.” During the 1990s, new-media designers joined with US Department of Defense engineers to trade expertise in cutting-edge digital technologies. These multipurpose protocols have been used to create news graphics and → video games, are used as components of military weaponry, and are also key training and recruiting tools. On July 4, 2002, America’s Army, the first video game created by the military, was offered free to download off the Internet. Players are positioned as first-person shooters, and after basic training, the advanced “marksmanship” was so realistic that the computer screen moved in time to the digital soldier’s breathing under fire. The online actors were patterned after the actions of real soldiers. “From a propaganda perspective the Army has seemingly hit the jackpot. (And the Army readily admits the games are a propaganda device)” (Morris 2002).

The ongoing merger between the entertainment industry and the military, together with the use of sophisticated media stagecraft by the government, has raised serious issues for the media’s wartime role. People rely on news media to report war’s impact, but the shift to turning war into entertainment may well lessen their ability to feel alarm, or compassion for those who die in wars carried out in their name.

### **WAR PROPAGANDA UNDER SCRUTINY**

There are countless examples, however, of opposition to war propaganda over the past century and beyond. Two twenty-first-century US examples follow. Patrick Tillman, an iconic football player who had enlisted in the US Army after the 9/11 massacres, was a 2004 “friendly fire” victim in Afghanistan. The army, however, claimed Tillman was killed by enemy gunfire as he strove to help some ambushed soldiers, and awarded him a Silver Star. Only an agonizingly slow army investigation finally revealed that military officials had systematically misled Tillman’s family and the public.

Private Jessica Lynch, injured and briefly separated from her unit, was helped back to safety by Iraqi medical personnel. Military press releases claimed that on capture, she fought bravely but was shot and stabbed by enemy forces, and was only saved by a crack commando unit storming the hospital. Mainstream US media trumpeted the daring raid, but a BBC report concluded the rescue had been staged, with the green night-footage produced by the military’s own combat camera. The BBC noted the raid’s fictional aspects, and the influence of both reality and action movies, not least Jerry Bruckheimer’s *Profiles*.

In both cases, the military fabricated exciting stories at difficult points during the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to garner public support for war. The stories illustrate the ways in which fictional narratives are now embedded within military practice, as the representations of war become central to war itself. But the cases also illustrate increasing public awareness of propaganda strategies. US Representative Henry Waxman's 2007 Congressional hearing, entitled "Misleading Information on the Battlefield," invited Jessica Lynch and Kevin Tillman, Patrick Tillman's brother, to provide evidence to legislators investigating the reach of Pentagon information management. Their critical testimonies drew considerable mainstream media attention.

As researchers, First Amendment scholars, Congressional investigators, and journalists probe the war propaganda strategies employed during the early years of the twenty-first century, more will be understood about the trend to merge military and media operations. While perception management and conflict operations have become more closely united, the loss of public support for the American war in Iraq shows the limits of even the most powerful propaganda. It remains to be seen whether the US public, or other publics in similar situations, will benefit from media support to help remember the painful counter-narratives of constructing the Other before belligerencies are allowed to begin; and further, to understand that while entertainment and fictions facilitate the prosecution of war, they offer no exit strategy from the bitter realities of escalating violence.

SEE ALSO: ► Censorship ► Documentary Film ► Embedded Journalists ► Linguistics  
 ► Message Design Logics ► Propaganda ► Propaganda, Visual Communication of  
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# Watergate Scandal

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Watergate was more than a break-in at Democratic national headquarters. It reflected a larger struggle over US foreign policy between an increasingly powerful executive branch and a resurgent legislative branch. The precursor to this struggle was US involvement in the war in Indochina.

The Watergate crisis grew directly out of this war. As was usual with President Richard Nixon's public crises, the press played a major role in the beginnings of Watergate (→ Fourth Estate; Historic Key Events and the Media). In June 1971 the *New York Times* began publishing a series of articles that chronicled American involvement in the Vietnam War. The documents, which had been leaked to the *Times* by former Pentagon employee Daniel Ellsberg who had become disillusioned with the war, were basically a historical account of American participation in the conflict. They dealt with mishandling of the war by the previous Democratic administration and were first thought by Nixon to be embarrassing only to his political opponents. However, Nixon's national security advisor Henry Kissinger convinced the president that to allow the leakage of such classified information without retaliation on his part would be harmful to ongoing secret negotiations with the North Vietnamese, the Chinese, and the Soviet Union. The United States might be viewed by these countries as being unable to keep a secret.

The Nixon Justice Department sought and obtained an injunction against the *New York Times* and other papers that were running the series of articles. A US district judge in New York granted a temporary injunction against the newspapers and, for the first time in the history of the country, the press was ordered by the government to stop publication of a story (→ Censorship; Censorship, History of). The conflict between freedom of the press and national security during wartime was such a momentous issue that the US Supreme Court agreed to hear the appeal on an expedited basis. The high court ruled in a 6–3 decision that the government had not met the heavy burden of proof that continued publication of these Pentagon Papers would cause a direct and immediate threat to national security.

It was after the Supreme Court ruling that Nixon made the politically fatal decision to order the creation of a White House investigative unit that would search for and stop further damaging leaks to the press by government employees. This unit, later known as the Plumbers because its purpose was to stop leaks, eventually broke into Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office in California in search of material that might reveal whether Ellsberg had more information that could be used to discredit the government and influence foreign policy (Ambrose 1989).

To this day, it is not clear whether Nixon knew beforehand of the break-in at the psychiatrist's office, but he later admitted that his concern about damaging leaks to the press had created a climate in which such operations grew (Frost 1978). He also said that he would not have stopped the operation if he had known about it because he believed it was important in protecting national security during wartime.

Although the Plumbers unit soon disbanded, intelligence-gathering operations continued to be conducted from the White House. One such operation was the break-in at the Democratic national headquarters in the Watergate complex in Washington, DC during June 1972, where five burglars were arrested by the police. The incident eventually led to the exposure of White House complicity in the break-in and Nixon's own involvement in the cover-up (Aitken 1993). The early reporting of Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein of the *Washington Post* was an important factor in keeping the Watergate story alive when other media outlets viewed it as what it initially appeared to be: a nonsensical attempted third-rate burglary (→ Investigative Reporting; Journalism, History of).

The US Senate conducted an inquiry in 1973 into the Watergate break-in and alleged improprieties during Nixon's re-election campaign the previous year. Nixon aide Alexander Butterfield testified before the Senate committee that Nixon had secretly recorded conversations between himself and others at the White House and other offices he used as president. After a year-long legal battle, the US Supreme Court ruled without dissent that the president had to turn over to the special prosecutor investigating Watergate the audio-tapes of discussions he had had with aides concerning Watergate. The reason for this decision was that the audiotapes were needed as evidence in the criminal trials of Nixon's aides who had been accused of the Watergate break-in. Ironically, the smoking-gun tape that led to Nixon's resignation was caused by his attempt at implicating an agency that he bypassed with the creation of his own intelligence-gathering operations. This was the June 23, 1972 tape in which Nixon told his chief of staff Bob Haldeman (1978) to tell the CIA leadership to tell acting FBI director Patrick Gray to stop the investigation that was tracing the money supplied to the Watergate burglars because it might expose CIA assets in Mexico. In reality, it would have revealed that the money had been supplied by the Committee to Re-Elect the President. There was no national security reason to order the investigation to be halted, as Nixon later maintained in his defense. The real reason was the political one of protecting the names of political donors whose money had been laundered through a bank in Mexico.

The significance of the Watergate story today is related to the power struggle between the executive and legislative branches of US government, particularly during times of war. To what extent can secrets in wartime be maintained in a democratic society? That question has to be resolved ultimately, with the help of an independent press, by the third branch of government, the judicial branch.

SEE ALSO: ► Censorship ► Censorship, History of ► Fourth Estate ► Historic Key Events and the Media ► Investigative Reporting ► Journalism, History of ► Scandalization in the News ► United States of America: Media System

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## West Asia: Media Systems

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The media landscape of West Asia includes countries and media systems as diverse as Turkey, with big media conglomerate holdings; Lebanon, whose media strongly influence developments in the Arab media sector, state-controlled Syrian media, partly controlled media under the Palestinian National Authority (PNA); and pro-government media in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The media market of *Turkey* (population estimate 68 million) has changed from family-owned media enterprises to large media empires that have additional stakes in construction, banking, and other industries (→ Media Conglomerates). This applies not only to the press but also to → radio and → television, so that the majority of national dailies and television stations are owned by a few media holdings. The largest is Doğan Group, which owns influential dailies *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, *Radikal*, *Posta*, and numerous other publications, several publishing houses, three TV channels (*CNN Türk*, *Kanal D*, *Star TV*), and radio stations, followed by the Merkez Group and smaller media holdings (→ Cross-Ownership; Ownership in the Media). The popular private television stations offer a diet of entertainment, sports and news, and locally produced dramas, but there are also several thematic channels for news (*CNN Türk*, *NTV*, *Habertürk*) and music (*Kral TV*, *Number One TV*) alongside Islamic TV stations (*Mesaj TV*, *Kanal 7*). Public *TRT* television, with seven channels ranging from general to thematic programs, is faced with political interference and strong competition with successful private channels (→ Public Broadcasting Systems). Of around 1,100 private radio channels, 36 stations broadcast nationally, and TRT has four national radio channels with different themes.

*Lebanon* is a small country (population approximately 4 million) but known throughout the Arab world for a vibrant and free, privately owned press. Different political opinions are published in the biggest dailies, *An-Nahar*, *As-Safir*, and *Ad-Diyar*, and numerous other dailies and periodicals. Government-run *Télé Liban* has never recovered from its division during the civil war (1975–1990) and suffers from political interference and financial neglect. The state also owns *Radio Liban*. In 1985, *LBC* was founded as the first private television in Lebanon and the Arab world. By the early 1990s a plethora of illegal television and radio stations existed in Lebanon. As a result, the government wanted to control private television and radio through the audiovisual media law of 1994 (→ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East). After many protests, only a few stations were licensed to broadcast news and political programs, and they had to represent the major sects and political leaders: *LBCITV/Sawt Lubnan Radio* (Maronite), *MTV/Radio Mont Liban* (Greek Orthodox), *Future TV/Radio Orient* (owned by Sunni ex-prime minister Hariri), *NBN TV/Radio* (representing Shiite parliamentary speaker Berri), and *Al-Manar TV/Al-Nour Radio* (affiliated to the Shiite militia and party Hizbullah). *New TV/ Sawt as-Shaab Radio* (Sunni) received a license in 1998.

The political and sectarian affiliations of the stations are visible in the news and political programs (→ Partisan Press). Those who criticized Syrian policies in Lebanon had to

bear the consequences: *MTV/Radio Mont Liban* was closed down in 2002, and parliament reversed the decision only in 2005. Lebanese entertainment and game shows attract large audiences and are transmitted also by the satellite channels *LBC*, *Future*, and *New TV* to the Arab Gulf. The transmission of international formats such as *Superstar* and *Star Academy* on *FutureSat* and *LBCSat* was highly successful throughout the Arab world. *Al-Manar* broadcasts family series adapted to the Islamic moral code of Hizbullah, with political programs praising the Islamic resistance, interrupted by advertisements for Hizbullah-affiliated organizations. Its satellite operations, which include English and French newscasts, have earned *Al-Manar* a worldwide Muslim audience. *LBC*'s cooperation with pan-Arab daily *Al-Hayat* gives *LBCSat* competence in news reporting throughout the Arab world (→ Arab Satellite TV News). Lebanon's media will continue to play a significant role in the development of Arab media and many journalists have been trained in Lebanese stations and universities before joining pan-Arab channels (→ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World).

The media sector of *Syria* (population estimate 18.5 million) is controlled by the Baath party and the government under Bashar al-Assad. Criticism of the president and his family is not permitted and domestic and foreign press are censored (→ Censorship). There are three official newspapers: *Al-Baath*, *Al-Thawra*, and *Tishreen*. The licensing of private publications characterized a short period in the "Damascus spring" after Bashar al-Assad's ascension to power in 2000, but a subsequent press law of 2001 imposed restrictions. Syrian radio and television are government owned. Syrian TV operates two domestic channels and a satellite service, and there are two national radio channels. Because the use of satellite receivers is permitted, many Syrians have access to foreign television programs. The → Internet is censored by the Syrian state and various websites are blocked.

The *Palestinian* media have to operate between Israeli occupation and the control of the PNA (population 3.7 million) The public Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation and Voice of Palestine radio have been the mouthpiece of the PNA. Numerous private television stations, such as *Al-Watan* or *Al-Alam*, exist but they are often restricted to certain regions. Expressing opinions differing from those of the PNA has led repeatedly to the punishment of several media outlets. *Al-Quds* and *Al-Ayyam* dailies are privately owned, whereas *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* is partially owned by the Palestinian authority, but all are considered supporters of the PNA.

With approximately the same size population as Lebanon, *Jordan's* media sector does not come close to the vibrant Lebanese media market. *Ar-Rai* and the *Jordan Times* are published by the Jordanian Press Foundation, whereas *Ad-Dustour* is owned by the Sherif family. All papers, including the formerly independent *Arab al-Yawm*, are considered pro-government. After restructuring in 2001, Jordanian Television comprises of three terrestrial channels (one full program, a movie channel, and a sports channel) and a satellite channel (→ Satellite Television). Radio Jordan has three national radio stations, broadcasting in Arabic, English, and French. Television and radio are state run and the news reports mainly about the activities of the king and his government. With the Press and Publication Law of 1999, censorship of journalists was to be diminished, but security services still interfere in media content and a climate of self-censorship prevails. The concentration of Internet cafés is high, especially in cities near universities, but the Internet is mainly used for chat.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Arab Satellite TV News ▶ Censorship ▶ Communication as an Academic Field: Middle East, Arab World ▶ Communication Law and Policy: Middle East ▶ Cross-Ownership ▶ Internet ▶ Iran: Media System ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Ownership in the Media ▶ Partisan Press ▶ Public Broadcasting Systems ▶ Radio ▶ Satellite Television ▶ Television

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## **Woman as Sign**

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Woman as → sign is a → semiotic construct developed by feminist scholars trying to explain the ways in which women's status in patriarchal society is understood, communicated, and acted on through institutional practices. Film scholar Laura Mulvey's (1975) application of psychoanalysis to → film theory was foundational to the construct's development. Mulvey argued that woman stands in patriarchal culture "as signifier for the male other" within a symbolic system in which men are permitted to live out their fantasies of domination both linguistically and through images they create (1975, 7). Feminist anthropologist Elizabeth Cowie (1978) coined the term "woman as sign" on the basis of her work with Claude Lévi-Strauss on kinship systems that featured the exchange of women (e.g., a bride leaves her father's house to live in her husband's house). Woman's status in such systems, she said, is economic but also that of a sign, which conveys an understanding of subordination and enables her to be exchanged physically among men. Cowie advocated a revolution in kinship systems to create more egalitarian *sex roles* and the meanings associated with them.

Feminist communication scholars Lana F. Rakow and Kimberlie Kranich (1991) are credited with giving the construct "woman as sign" a place in more recent feminist media theory. These scholars placed the construct at the center of their study of → television news in the late 1980s. Like other critical scholars (e.g., Molotsch 1978; Hartley 1982) Rakow & Kranich recognized the news as an essentially masculine narrative in which women function as a sign in men's → discourse (→ Masculinity and the Media; Discourse

Analysis; Narrative News Story). To investigate more specific ways in which women function as sign in television news, Rakow & Kranich conducted a two-part study. First, they examined 1,203 news stories contained in one month's news programs aired on NBC, ABC, and CBS networks in the United States. They found that women were largely absent from newscasts, with only 15 percent of all stories containing any women as on-camera sources. Second, they examined six months' news transcripts in which women were more likely to be important to the story (and thereby more able to be examined as signs in news). They found that women were most likely to appear as private (not public) individuals, serving as signs of the times "to make a connection between the private sphere of home, family, emotions, neighborhood, and personal experience and the public world of politics, policy and authority" (1991, 16; → Public Sphere). In their association with the private realm, women were also allowed to serve as signs of support, endorsing an action or policy, often through institutional affiliations that do not represent women.

Conversely, the study showed, women were much less likely to appear as experts, politicians, or political activists or in other public roles. Even stories that might logically have a woman speak to the issues – e.g., a story about men's battering or killing of women – generally did not. In order to speak for women, they found, a woman must signify as feminist, and in six months of stories examined, they found a feminist source only seven times. In addition, they found that only white women were allowed to signify as "woman," another way that news homogenized all women's experiences, except in cases where a news item specifically involved race or ethnicity. They found a few stories in which women became news by disrupting the social order, and in these, women were often pitted against each other, arguing different positions. Like Cowie, Rakow and Kranich leaned toward a radical solution to women's disregard and misrepresentation in television news, one that would require feminizing the masculine news narrative (→ Feminization of Media Content) and altering the symbolic system (→ Sign Systems; Symbolic Annihilation) positing woman as objects of men's exchange.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Discourse ▶ Discourse Analysis ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Film Theory ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ News Sources ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Semiotics ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Sign ▶ Sign Systems ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Television News ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Women in the Media, Images of

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Images of women in the media have presented a serious problem and challenge to feminist activists and scholars concerned about women's status in society. In the US in particular, but also in other parts of the world, the type, quality, and number of → images of women in various fictional and nonfictional → genres (in film, television, and magazines especially) have been well documented since the 1970s. Consistently, such research documents women's subordinate status to men, demonstrated by their key absences (such as in → news) and attention to physical appearance or domesticity (such as in commercial advertising). While documenting problematic visualizations of women has been a dominant approach to assessing women's relationship to the mass media, other approaches have raised challenges about the theoretical and political shortcomings of a focus on "images." Consequently, more sophisticated understandings of the relationship between mass media, reality, and political and economic structures have taken hold in feminist communication scholarship (→ Reality and Media Reality; Media and Perceptions of Reality).

Nonetheless, analysis of women's media images in countries around the world has been important in efforts to make changes for women. The International Women's Media Foundation ([www.iwmf.org/resources/stats.php](http://www.iwmf.org/resources/stats.php)) compiles study results showing, for example, how few women in southern African countries are news sources in political stories, the state of images of women in the European Union, the coverage of women's rights in Arab countries, and the small percentage of women's appearances in Canadian newspapers. While there are notable similarities in women's images in many countries, there also are important differences related to religious, political, and cultural contexts, as demonstrated in a study of sexual advertising content (Nelson and Paek 2005). These differences dispel the assumption there is a universal image and meaning of "woman" across countries as well as within them (for examples, see Hill & Ly 2004; Woodward & Mastin 2005).

## MEDIA AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

The scholarly and systematic documentation of women's media images got its impetus from what is now called the second wave of feminism in the US (→ Women's Movement and the Media). The *second wave of feminism*, as compared to the first wave beginning in the nineteenth century and fading with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women the right to vote in 1920, was concerned more with the legal and economic rights of women in the home and the workplace. It is often criticized as a movement that focused on the issues of white, middle-class women. Indeed, journalist Betty Friedan's landmark book *The feminine mystique*, published in 1963, identified the "problem that has no name" of primarily white, middle-class women dissatisfied with their lives, which were focused on domestic and family responsibilities, despite the way in which women's magazines at the time idealized such a life.

Second wave feminism, like the first wave, rested on two different *theoretical positions*, now identified as liberal feminism and radical feminism. *Liberal feminism* accepts many of the features of US liberal social theory, including the notion of the autonomous individual with inherent rights to the equal chance to compete on the basis of merit in a democratic and capitalistic society. Hence liberal feminists typically have argued for equal opportunities for women, insisting that the country's fundamental principles of citizenship should be extended to all, advocating that women be treated the same as men. While women and men may be biologically different, liberal feminists hold, their social roles can be adapted and even interchanged, if we can overcome stereotypes of appropriate behavior and activities.

*Radical feminism*, on the other hand, views women and men as distinctly and importantly different, with women's attention to relationships, nurturing, and cooperation to be valued over men's competition, hierarchy, and aggression. Overcoming men's domination of women requires, from a radical feminist perspective, resistance to oppressive structures and relationships and a critique of patriarchy as one if not the most significant feature of US society.

Given its theoretical basis, which matched that underlying most US academic institutions, especially in journalism and mass communication programs, it is no surprise that liberal feminism was able to make the greatest headway in establishing a research agenda for issues about women and media. Women researchers, often in contexts in which their work was not rewarded and their own positions as faculty were tenuous or isolated, began accumulating empirical evidence that women were absent, denigrated, and devalued throughout much of the mass media. An important step in the process of documenting and theorizing these images occurred with the publication of a book in 1978 edited by Gaye Tuchman, Arlene Kaplan Daniels, and James Benet, *Hearth and homes: Images of women in the mass media*. Tuchman's concept of → "symbolic annihilation" to describe how women were invisible and devalued in much mass media content is still used today.

Research results consistently demonstrated that in programming aimed at women, particularly in → soap operas on television and in → magazines directed at women, storylines and commercial advertisers took the cue of radio soap operas sponsored by manufacturers of soap and other domestic products, making women's domestic responsibilities as primary caregivers of families and homes seem their natural fulfillment. On the one hand, media content directed at men, including news, fictional action narratives, and pornography, displayed women as sexual enhancements of male power. The *sexualization of women's images* began in mainstream mass media in the 1960s, in what many feminists considered a co-optation of the women's movement and its attention to reproductive rights and freeing women from oppressive restrictions on sexuality (→ Sexualization in the Media; Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media). Media-created and media-perpetuated myths of feminist bra-burning and "free love" in the 1960s era of the student and peace movements made women's sexuality a new sales tool for advertisers, who began draping bikini-clad women on cars, and for television and filmmakers, who seized the opportunity for increasing audiences through increasingly escalated sexual and violent content.

Sexual and violent content became a concern not only of researchers on images of women but also of public policymakers and conservative social commentators (→ Sexual Violence in the Media). Feminist activists and scholars, reflecting liberal and radical

feminist positions as well as others such as postmodern feminism, remain divided about how to understand and change such images, especially given the political consequences. At issue, on the one hand, have been concerns that attacking pornography will lead to restrictions on free speech, including sexual content created by women for women (→ Pornography, Feminist Debates on). On the other hand, there have been concerns that women as performers, models, and the objects of men's fantasies are harmed by images that make women men's (apparently) willing and unwilling sexual objects (see Russo 1992; Wackwitz 2001).

### FROM IMAGES TO REPRESENTATIONS

While images research has been criticized as undertheorizing both gender and media, the analysis of women's images became more theoretically and ideologically complex through feminist analysis of film. Of particular importance was the work of Laura Mulvey, who in 1975 published a piece on "*the male gaze*" in cinema that, although much refined and critiqued since its original publication, reverberates in feminist work today (→ Spectator Gaze). Mulvey's work ushered in psychoanalytic feminism to the task of understanding women's images in media. She argued that the camera is a male eye with women as its object. Men look; women are to be looked at. Contemporary manifestations of the problem are revealed by the alarming rise of eating disorders in girls and young women, suggesting that men's surveillance of women results in women's self-surveillance in order to achieve a particular shape and look.

A further advance was made when images research was scrutinized for differences among media images of women along *racial lines*. It became clear that images of white women were different from those of women of other racial and ethnic groups. While white women often were portrayed as madonnas or whores (Kuhn 1985), Native American women were shown as beautiful Indian princesses or unattractive squaws (Bird 1999), African-American women as mammies or matriarchs (Collins 1990), Chicana/Latina women as Spanish noblewomen or beautiful cantina girls (Fellner 2002), and Asian/Asian-American women as sexually servile geishas or powerful dragon ladies (Kim 1986; → Black Feminist Media Studies; Feminist Media Studies, Transnational; Latina Feminist Media Studies). The differences in images among women of different "races" illustrate the need for the larger meaning systems within which the images appear to be examined.

### CRITICAL INTERVENTIONS

More recent images research has taken on changes in women's portrayal, such as the phenomenon of the "tough chick" image of women in some television programs and movies, producing feminist discussion of whether or not these images represent an advance by showing powerful women, despite exaggerated physical characteristics emphasizing sexuality (Inness 2004). Even if an argument can be made that some images have changed, the limited ability of an images research approach to yield substantive social change has been pointed out on a number of fronts.

First, the approach has been wedded to a liberal social theory that accepts the current *commercial media system* while arguing for only limited reforms (i.e., making representations

of women “more realistic”). Socialist feminists have pointed out that the economic system and the power of ownership and production must be accounted for to produce a sufficient critique of the media. It has been noted that even if some changes are made in women’s images in the mass media, little else changes, including the concentration of media ownership in a few corporate hands and the commercialization and commodification of not only news and entertainment but also much of contemporary life (→ Political Economy of the Media). Meanwhile, the material conditions of the lives of women who are not middle-class continue unexamined and unchanged (Steeves 1987; Ferguson 1990). Other feminists push for changes that would give women access to the means of production and representation, following from the analysis that the media represent men’s interests and experiences that must be countered by the stories and experiences of women (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). Consequently, these feminists have attended to women’s alternative media as an antidote to mainstream mass media images of women (Ross & Byerly 2004).

Second, the critique has been made that images research based on a liberal feminist paradigm is unlikely to lead to substantial change because of its connection to the *dominant “effects” paradigm* of much mass media research (→ Media Effects). Documenting limited and negative images of women is usually insufficient for making a case to policymakers that change is required. Demonstrating audience effects has been a less than straightforward task for media researchers, despite almost a century of attempting to do so. It is not clear what would be done if negative effects of any media phenomenon were unequivocally proven, since the First Amendment rights of media owners, at least in the US, precludes all but minor policy adjustments to the current media system.

Third, images research based on a liberal feminist paradigm has been critiqued for its *narrow theoretical understanding of both media and gender*. Its epistemological foundation of realism, following from an ontological position giving reality the status of an objective phenomenon existing outside of human meaning, results in a reliance on a mirror-image relationship between reality and media texts. Media texts not only *can* present veridical accounts of reality, they *should*, from this theoretical position. In the case of gender, a realist position adheres to an understanding of gender as a condition of difference that pre-exists the social roles, malleable as they are, that women and men occupy. Hence, a realist position on the media supposes that “real” women and men exist outside of cultural texts that should accurately represent them. Postmodern feminists, often working outside of the field of journalism and mass communication, have challenged the position with a constructivist rendering of both social reality and gender. Teresa de Lauretis (1987), for example, showed how gender is both a product and process of representation, not something that exists outside of representation. Even one’s own identity must be represented to oneself. If representations cannot logically be thought of as accurate or inaccurate, it makes little sense to press for accurate representations of women, and more to argue for different meanings about gender.

### INTERNATIONALIZING FEMINIST MEDIA RESEARCH

While research on images of women has been primarily a US liberal feminist project, women around the world have found political and theoretical value in examining and

challenging women's images in media systems. In fact, the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, identified two strategic objectives in its platform for action regarding media. These were to "increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication" and to "promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media" (UNESCO 1995, 94–95).

By attending to the larger political, economic, and ideological meaning systems within which images arise and function, scholars and activists can elucidate significant issues affecting women and suggest how change might and does occur in gender systems. Myra Macdonald's reading of media images of veiled Muslim women leads to challenges to western feminist assumptions about sexuality (Macdonald 2006), for example. Barbara Sato's interpretation of the "the new woman" that emerged in Japan between the two world wars, confronting previous notions of women as gentleness and meekness with a new urban femininity, shows how images of women can be used to explain and manage periods of social change (Sato 2003). These more sophisticated notions of both "images" and "women" have extended and enriched the important work begun by liberal feminist scholars.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Black Feminist Media Studies ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Image ▶ Latina Feminist Media Studies ▶ Magazine ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Media Effects ▶ Media and Perceptions of Reality ▶ News ▶ Political Economy of the Media ▶ Pornography, Feminist Debates on ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Sex and Pornography as Media Content: Feminist Perspectives ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Sexism in the Media ▶ Sexual Violence in the Media ▶ Sexualization in the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Spectator Gaze ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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## Women's Communication and Language

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With the general growth of gender research across multiple disciplines, it is not surprising that issues surrounding women's language and communication have become a popular area of study (→ Feminist and Gender Studies). Research in this area has been traced back to a 1664 report that cited differences in speech forms of “Carib” women and men (Jespersen 1922). This research was the beginning of a fruitful area of study looking at language use, speech styles, and communication strategies associated with women.

Early research on women's language and communication focused on linguistic aspects of language, mainly concentrating on sounds (e.g., phonetics) and syntax (→ Linguistics). The more systematic interest and dichotomy of sex-role- and gender-related aspects of language and communication came much later (→ Rhetoric and Gender). With the influence of the feminist movement in some parts of the world, a serious interest in women's language and communication research materialized. Thus, in these countries

research concerning women's language and communication became apparent from the 1970s.

### **EARLY RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE**

One of the first books to look at women's language and communication was Robin Lakoff's (1975) *Language and woman's place*, in which the author investigated the structure of women's speech. This pioneering work was later revised and expanded with the 2004 publication of *Language and woman's place: Text and commentaries*. These books outline what has often been deemed the foundational work of describing feminine speech style, illustrating the significant relationship between language and gender. Lakoff identified a number of characteristics in women's speech patterns (hedges, super-polite speech, tag questions, speaking with intonation emphasis, empty adjectives, hypercorrect grammar and pronunciation, lack of sense of humor, direct quotations, special lexicon, rising intonation in declarative statements). Although criticized for labeling women's language as varying from the norm, Lakoff's research has had great heuristic value in current communication, linguistic, and gender studies.

From the work of Lakoff many lines of research emerged in regards to women's language and communication. In particular, *three influential perspectives* underpin the research on women's language and communication: first, research that emanates from a sex-role perspective; second, that which utilizes feminist frameworks; and, finally, an approach which employs gender as culture viewpoint. These perspectives help shape what is known about women's language and communication styles and patterns.

In short, researchers from a sex-role perspective believe there are innate similarities and differences between women's and men's language and communication. For feminist researchers, women's language and communication are analyzed in relation to issues of power (or lack thereof; → Gender and Discourse). Researchers from the gender-as-culture perspective argue that similarities and/or differences found between women's and men's language are a creation of performing gender. A further summary of the three perspectives as they relate to women's language and communication follows.

### **SEX-ROLE, FEMINIST, AND GENDER-AS-CULTURE RESEARCH AGENDAS**

In the early 1960s and 1970s, many scholars considered *biological sex* as a dominant indicator of language and communication use. Researchers from this perspective contend that notable differences are apparent between women's and men's brains, especially surrounding issues of language and communication. For example, it has been found that women are better able to process information simultaneously in both of the brain's frontal lobes, resulting in higher scores associated with language → comprehension and vocabulary (→ Information Processing).

It has also been noted that *women's brains* are smaller than men's brains and that women have more gray matter than men do. This may help explain why women perform better on verbal tasks than men. In addition, other studies show that women's language and communication differ from men's due to how the brain is stimulated when listening and interpreting communication. It has been found that during passive listening, a

woman stimulates both sides of her brain. This is different than a man, who activates neurons on only one side of his brain. Similarly, when asked to interpret certain aspects of communication (whole sentences), women use both sides of their brains while men use one side. In short, this perspective assumes natural differences exist between women and men that result in the two sexes often communicating differently.

In the 1970s and 1980s, research about women's language and communication saw an increased number of publications from feminist and gender-as-culture perspectives (→ Culture: Definitions and Concepts). These scholars consider women to be at a disadvantage to men due to *power imbalances*. Mainstream feminist researchers point to studies that have found language and communication differences between men and women as an indication of men's power over women. For example, various studies report different talking time given to women, different types of interactional interruptions, and different uses of silence in current communication practices (→ Language and Social Interaction). Further, these researchers argue that women's language and communication perpetuate the subordinate role of women. As a result, many feminists have pushed for the creation of a new woman's language which does not reflect a male-dominated worldview (e.g., *chairman* of the board). This new language would emphasize community, affect, and equality in order to neutralize the patriarchy that dominates current language and communication practices (→ Power and Discourse).

The *gender-as-culture perspective* takes a different approach to women's language and communication. Scholars posit that men and women inhabit different linguistic cultures due to being socialized to enact gender in specific ways. In 1990, US linguistics researcher Deborah Tannen published *You just don't understand: Women and men in conversation*, attracting extensive attention in popular culture. One of Tannen's central arguments in this book, and in later books, contends that women and men are socialized to use communication differently, thus forming unique cultures of communication. She further states that communication styles of men and women are best explained as "cross-cultural communication" (→ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication), meaning that women's communication promotes connection and intimacy while men's communication promotes status and autonomy. In other words, women's communication indicates a concern for solidarity, using language to build connections and intimacy. Men's communication indicates a concern for power, using language to disseminate information.

Another approach to the gender-as-culture perspective is the gender-as-a-result-of-culture perspective. In *Gendered lives* (2005), US communication scholar Julia Wood argues that gender is socially learned through communication. She considers language and communication differences between women and men to be more about socialization than innate traits. By using the concepts of feminine and masculine speech, she explains how men and women are socialized to have characteristics of feminine speech styles and masculine speech styles. From this perspective, feminine speech is about creating interconnectedness and relationships (→ Femininity and Feminine Values). *Feminine speech styles* include more details in conversation, not because of their importance to the content of the message but because the details help with the relational level of the interaction. Feminine speech is also concerned with involving others in the conversation and promoting connections between people. Thus, feminine speech is related to socio-emotional aspects of interactions (→ Emotion and Discourse). In contrast, masculine speech is less about



building connections and is more direct and instrumental. Masculine speech is concerned with independence, enhancing status, and autonomy. Scholars from this perspective claim women can be socialized to have characteristics of both feminine and masculine speech styles.

### **ASSESSING WOMEN'S COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE RESEARCH**

As with many prolific areas of study, there is a discrepancy among research findings. A number of scholars assert that most differences found between women's and men's language are based on conventional perceptions of gender rather than any real evidence, in that, despite research findings indicating that women are more similar than different to men in their language and communication, women are perceived to be more talkative than men are. Women are believed to use more circuitous and elaborate language than men do. For example, in one study women were rated as speaking more than men in spite of the fact they read the same amount of information. It is believed that the stereotype that women talk more is the cause for women being perceived differently than men. Similarly, a commonly held belief is that women self-disclose more than their male counterparts. In a review of 205 studies involving over 23,000 participants, researchers found mixed results (Dindia & Allen 1992). They found that women disclose more when in same-sex interactions but did not disclose more than men in cross-sex interactions (→ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication). It is the predisposition to believe gender differences occur that some researchers believe perpetuates the notion that women's and men's language and communication are different.

Opposing this line of research, other scholars report that → stereotypes of women's language and communication are consistent with research findings. Researchers have found distinct language features in women's and men's language use. In a review of over 30 studies, Mulac et al. (2001) found men and women use language differently. They report 16 language characteristics found consistently in research that demonstrate men and women communicate differently.

Distinct research findings are apparent in each perspective, reinforcing the idea that the perspectives are often viewed as mutually exclusive. Current studies, however, tend to show intersections of similarities underlying the three perspectives. For example, many feminist scholars believe gender is socially learned, and many gender-as-culture scholars believe power may in fact be a factor in language and communication differences between men and women. Some scholars argue that the three perspectives build a stronger framework for understanding women's language and communication when combined. In all three approaches, it is interesting to note that research highlights the notion that the structure and use of language and communication by women and men may result in different life experiences.

### **RESEARCH FUTURES**

Beyond the three perspectives' similarities and differences, there has been a rise in research concerning women's language and communication in different contexts. For example, examinations of women's language and communication regarding *computer-mediated communication* have been shown to mirror face-to-face communication (→ Language

and the Internet; Human–Computer Interaction), in that women appear to emphasize supportiveness, apologize more, hedge, and use more emoticons than men. Women's language use online has also been shown to include more exclamation points and capitalization when writing emails than men's. Another example of research concerning women's language and communication in context is the increase in publications exploring women's communicative influence in family relations. This line of inquiry has established the intense impact a mother's language and communication have on her children, especially daughters.

*International advances* in women's language and communication are also on the rise. An interest concerning women's language and communication has been seen worldwide. To name a few, researchers from New Zealand have been studying women's use of compliments and apologies, noting that women compliment and apologize more than men. In Japan, scholars have made comparisons between Japanese women's language and women's language from the United States, remarking upon the ways in which culture may influence the perception of the power or powerlessness of women's language. Researchers in Morocco have reported on the linguistic practices of women and the influence of gender on women's language and communication. Global interest in women's language and communication is now gaining momentum. As a result, the insights to be gained from international studies and cross-cultural investigation are set to make important contributions to the knowledge base of information surrounding women's language and communication worldwide.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Comprehension ▶ Culture: Definitions and Concepts ▶ Disclosure in Interpersonal Communication ▶ Emotion and Discourse ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Gender and Discourse ▶ Human–Computer Interaction ▶ Information Processing ▶ Intercultural and Intergroup Communication ▶ Interpersonal Communication, Sex and Gender Differences in ▶ Language and the Internet ▶ Language and Social Interaction ▶ Linguistics ▶ Power and Discourse ▶ Rhetoric and Gender ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Stereotypes ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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## Women's Media Genres

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Women's media genres include women's → magazines and romances in print media, the → soap opera on → television, and romantic comedy in film (→ Film Genres). They are not generally the corollary of men's media but defined in contrast to general audience media such as newspapers or "family genres," including situation comedies, quiz shows, and action series on television. In some cases, they are specifically made for female audiences. In other cases, they have, over time, come to be identified as "women's genres" due to their consumption by largely female audiences. For instance, the classic detective novel has long been typical reading for middle-class women and as such has come to be known as a women's genre. Western women's movements, notably second wave feminism from the 1960s onward, pointed to women's media genres as sources of women's oppression (→ Women's Movement and the Media). They criticized the assumed effect on readers of these genres (→ Media Effects) because of the traditional gender definitions in them. To be referred to as a "women's media genre" is not particularly a mark of distinction for a media form. It is sometimes used as an indication of (overly) high emotional or sentimental content (→ Emotions, Media Effects on). Audience reasons for using women's media genres include widely divergent arguments ranging from the everyday usefulness of traditional women's magazines (Winship 1987; Hermes 1995; Currie 1999; Gough-Yates 2002), via recognition of real-life dilemmas in soap opera, to the guilty pleasures afforded by romantic fiction.

Feminist critical attention started a tradition of research in women's genres and women as readers (known as feminist media studies, also part of the new audience research in → cultural studies in the early 1980s; → Feminist and Gender Studies; Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture). Over the years, a nuanced view emerged based on recognition of the triple role of these genres. First, the label *women's* media genres and their existence confirm a traditional definition of gender that defines femininity and masculinity as opposites. Second, they disseminate traditional gender roles, and third, they afford a unique pleasure to readers. Readers' pleasure in these genres may well also include subversive resistance to traditional coding of gender roles. It has been generally accepted that feminism has become a presence in all types of audiovisual and print texts made for women. Sometimes this is an absent presence, forcing conservative portrayal of gendered identities to relate to a wider range of roles, responsibilities, or options for women and for men (→ Gender: Representation in the Media). More commonly, storylines in women's media genres

reference emancipatory or feminist arguments or introduce emancipated characters, even if the overall message favors a traditional view of gender. Although minor, lesbian film, detective novels, romances, and magazines form recognizable women's sub-genres.

In terms of content, women's genres tend to deal with private rather than public life. They generally address the reader in an intimate manner. Their subject matter is not found elsewhere. Women's media genres do not often prioritize the analysis of fact or arguments (→ Argumentative Discourse). Rather, facts are presented as part of a worldview that also recognizes intuition and → emotions as acceptable components of a reflexive knowledge of the world. Part of the private-life orientation of women's media genres is their focus on relationships. In some women's genres, the maintenance relationships require takes precedence, in others their coming into being. Not surprisingly, use of these media can be seen as voluntary training for the role of emotional and practical caretaker of households and family relationships. The fantasy today's mainstream women's media offer is that of a woman capable of doing a job well while raising children and maintaining a fulfilling relationship with a male partner. Glossy magazines and girls' magazines especially present slim and young-looking women with no physical handicaps as an ideal, hard to imitate, example. Most though not all of the women portrayed in ads, in fashion spreads, or as main characters in narratives in western media forms are white.

### EARLY CRITICISM OF WOMEN'S MEDIA GENRES

US feminist author Betty Friedan's *The feminine mystique*, published in 1963, is generally regarded as the start of western feminist criticism of women's media genres (→ Feminine Mystique). In this book, she describes women's magazine content as convincing audiences that they could find identity and meaning in their lives through their husbands and children. Such a "false belief" system would cause women to lose their identity in that of their family. Friedan referred to the problem of gender roles as "the problem without a name." Others used terms such as "the happy housewife myth." In empirical communications research, the content of women's magazines and daytime television was further indicted for producing a gender gap in society. Available images did not prepare young women well for their future roles as wage earners and professionals. In a famous large-scale study conducted in the US in the early 1970s, Gaye Tuchman (Tuchman et al. 1978) showed that women made up a significant part of the North American workforce. The media, and especially women's media genres, however, depicted them solely in domestic roles and in relation to men: their husbands, fathers, brothers. Tuchman suggested that women were "symbolically annihilated" by the media (→ Symbolic Annihilation; Reality and Media Reality). While general audience media rarely portrayed women, women's media genres relegated them to the home. In turn, she felt this would provide young women with an entirely skewed notion of what society needed from them when they grew up.

Underlying the symbolic annihilation thesis is the idea that the media provide "role models." Given the right role models, girls would behave less "girlishly" and stop under-achieving in order to do well in the marriage market. Gender, argued second wave and earlier feminists such as Ursula Scheu, a German researcher, and Simone de Beauvoir, a French philosopher and novelist, was not imprinted on one's genes. It was Simone de Beauvoir who famously remarked "On ne naît pas femme: on le devient" ("One is not

born a woman: one becomes one:) in her 1949 book *Le deuxième sexe* (*The second sex*). Scheu and many others echoed this observation in books that after 30 years are still in print; for example, Scheu's *Wir werden nicht als Mädchen geboren, wir werden dazu gemacht* (*We are not born as girls, we are made into them*), first published in 1977. Apart from the expectations of parents, the media in this view are mostly to blame for disseminating skewed images of women. Although the role model theory is seen as somewhat less than adequate by academic critics today, it is still an important part of common wisdom about the media. It does fit with academic discussion today that suggests that gender is a social construction that is built and rebuilt, in different situations and contexts (social → constructivism; → Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media).

Women's media genres have continued to be debated over the last half century. Cultural criticism, empirical research on texts and representations, and → audience research (→ Audience; Nielsen Ratings) form the three types of intervention in academic and public debate. Cultural criticism is both a part of reports on empirical findings and a contribution to public debate in its own right. Betty Friedan's *The feminine mystique* fits this category, as does Australian feminist Germaine Greer's equally well-known *The female eunuch* (1970). In this book, Greer discusses women's popular culture, including women's media genres, as part of the production of "femininity" that forces women to adjust to particular roles and rigorous work on their bodies (→ Body Images in the Media) and self-presentation (see also Coward 1984). The book's main thesis is that the traditional, suburban, consumerist, nuclear family represses women sexually, and that this devalues them, rendering them "eunuchs."

Humorous and witty, Greer found a wide audience. By the mid-1970s, men and women readers and nonreaders alike denounced women's media genres. Although women's magazines themselves changed significantly, their reputation as a "women's genre" had been carved in stone. In that same period, the Dutch women's weekly *Margriet* supported women's right to abortion and significantly widened the scope of its questions and answers rubric. Feminist etiquette and sexist denigration of women and women's media were in serious danger of becoming bedfellows.

It took 10 more years for a new kind of feminist criticism to put the record straight by seriously addressing the qualities of women's media genres. In all this time, up to today, there has been little research on women's media genres other than by women, who often hold a women's studies perspective. Research in the early 1980s suggested that although these genres were clearly and exclusively aimed at the private sphere and excluded the → public sphere, thus narrowing the reader's view of the world significantly, it was possible that there was more to women's media genres than met the eye. A number of publications, usually counted as cultural studies' rewriting of audience research, were in fact feminist studies of women's genres. The best known of these are Janice Radway's (1984) extensive US study of romance reading and Ien Ang's (1985) Dutch study of the prime-time soap opera *Dallas* (→ Audiences, Female).

### THE "OTHER" SIDE TO WOMEN'S MEDIA GENRES

By the early 1980s, the low status of popular culture had become a cause of disagreement for the thriving new discipline of cultural studies. From the outset – a general argument

against the reproduction of class society via such distinctions as the one between “art and high culture” on the one hand and “mass culture” on the other – cultural studies soon turned to a reevaluation of popular forms. Women’s media genres easily counted as forms of culture that had not been considered seriously. Radway’s and Ang’s key studies were preceded by Tania Modleski’s US study of Harlequin romances, gothic novels for women and soap opera. In *Loving with a vengeance: Mass-produced fantasies for women*, Modleski (1982) shows how using literary analysis, popular culture may be shown to be far more complex than assumed. She uncovers, for example, the psychological mechanisms needed for readers to identify with the heroines and thus for Harlequins to be written in the third person. Most interestingly, she shows how soap opera is a unique form of storytelling. Rather than a backward and slow example of television drama, Modleski argues that soap opera’s open-ended, multi-threaded structure suited the viewers for whom it was made. She points to soap opera’s cyclical logic as the formal counterpart to household chores. Likewise, the serials’ point of departure – that families may experience all kinds of upheaval but never really fall apart – would suit women taking care of their families in an age of increased divorce rates. Soap opera, in her discussion, is no less than a vanguard form of television drama. Not only does it provide never-ending stories, it also turns television’s weakness as a “talking heads” medium into strength. The close-ups of facial expressions so typical of daytime soap opera, suggests Modleski, is nothing less than the privileged gaze of the mother, appealing to and sharpening especially women’s dexterity in managing the relations and emotions of their loved ones.

Although revolutionary in its suggestion that women’s popular genres merited serious attention and should be treated as literature, Modleski followed earlier feminist criticism. Her basic contention was that while women’s genres provided a way out for women’s rage at their social oppression, women’s media genres reworked that rage in such a way that the social order was never threatened. On the contrary, Harlequins as much as gothic novels strengthen the ideological notion that a good man is the only thing a woman really needs. Soap opera likewise underwrites the value of being able to read and interpret the emotions of those around you in order to manage family relations. While Modleski made it clear that women’s media genres were far more complex than they had been assumed to be, her work also confirmed that these were anti-feminist “fantasies” standing in the way of women’s liberation.

Although often read as criticism of Modleski’s text-based analysis, Janice Radway’s (1984) major study of Harlequin romances confirms Modleski’s conclusion. Radway based her study on a questionnaire and extensive interviews with popular romance fiction readers in a small US town. For contacts with readers, Radway relied on “Dot,” a bookseller who wrote a newsletter for her customers in which she rated all romances as they were published. It becomes immediately clear from *Reading the romance* that readers have a strong emotional investment in their novels. Popular genres are rescued from being seen as uniform trash. Rather, readers uphold the view that there are huge quality differences between writers and between different sub-genres in romances.

Interestingly, Radway asked her readers to name excellent as well as very bad romances. Reading these, she reconstructs viewer pleasure to be mostly dependent on portrayal of the hero. A good hero is sensitive and masculine at the same time. He knows how to “mother” without losing his heterosexual attraction. A bad hero is not very sensitive and

may come close to crossing the line between ardent lover and rapist. Radway concludes that the ideal hero is a rewritten version of contemporary masculinity (→ Heterosexism and the Media; Masculinity and the Media). Such rewriting and the activity of romance reading itself as claiming time away from family and household chores suggest to her that romance reading is a crypto-feminist activity. At the end of her book, she laments that romances are still needed, suggesting that in a post-patriarchal world such diversion would not be wanted.

This point of view is challenged by studies such as Ien Ang's *Watching "Dallas"* (1985). Ang placed a small ad in a Dutch women's magazine asking readers whether they received "strange reactions" when people learnt that they liked watching *Dallas*. More than 30 viewers, most of them women, responded. In the study, Ang positioned herself as a viewer, part of the audience she wishes to research. The earlier view that women's media would divert a viewer from becoming a feminist was thus falsified. Other feminist critics too have written about their favorites in (traditional) women's media genres. Among them are Cora Kaplan (1986), who wrote about television melodrama (*The Thorn Birds*); Helen Taylor (1989), who shared the enthusiasm of the *Gone with the Wind* fans whose letters she analyzed; and Janice Winship (1987), who selected a feminist, a traditional, and a glossy women's magazine she liked to read herself for a study of their content and ideology. The combination of an academic and a fan perspective proved highly fruitful (→ Fandom). Ang's study of *Dallas*, for example, laid bare how the "tragic structure of feeling" in the soap opera text produced a melodramatic imagination of the world for readers, who recognized and validated the soap's view of the world. Although readers were aware that soaps such as *Dallas* are not factual representations, they translated the insight of soaps to another level. "Emotional realism," the term Ang coined for this, has since been used widely beyond analysis of women's media genres.

## DEVELOPMENTS

While discussion of women's media genres has changed considerably over time, opening up to a more even-handed view of their social and cultural value, so did the market. Although second wave feminism has in many ways become part of commonsense views of the world, women's media genres have continued to hold sizable market shares (→ Markets of the Media). The strength of women's media genres in some cases has traveled to other genres. "Soapification" can be recognized in most types of television drama and notably in crime serials. While earlier these genres would not include much information about the personal lives of detectives, most of them in the 1990s started providing background storylines for their key characters, thus adding depth and emotional complexity.

Another significant development regarding women's media genres is the growth of men's genres as their corollary. While "men's magazines" used to denote pornographic content, and all general interest magazines were in fact aimed at what were perceived to be "male" interests, there are now women's magazines for men. Men's lifestyle magazines differ from their female counterpart. They are less intimate in address and content matter and often rely on hard forms of humor. However, they do portray men as equally interested in fashion, gadgets, and other men's lives. Their coming into being in the late 1980s and 1990s coincides with the marketing of new ranges of consumer products specifically at

men, such as cosmetics. Clearly, men are now faced with perfect male bodies and the implicit pressure to conform to high beauty standards in terms of musculature and body fat percentage (Benwell 2003).

Women's media genres meanwhile continue to go through cyclic changes in content. Sometimes there is overall more (post)feminist content, stressing women as autonomous agents in the world; sometimes there is a return to traditional definitions. Humor and reflexivity often soften the narrative impact of outspoken gender roles. Women's media genres have not yet extended far into the world of the → Internet and gaming (→ Video Games). Although sizable numbers of women and girls are gamers, gaming is often either a male domain or a not heavily gendered field.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Argumentative Discourse ▶ Audience ▶ Audience Research ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Body Images in the Media ▶ Constructivism ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Cultural Studies: Feminist Popular Culture ▶ Emotion ▶ Emotions, Media Effects on ▶ Fandom ▶ Feminine Mystique ▶ Femininity and Feminine Values ▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminization of Media Content ▶ Fictional Media Content ▶ Film Genres ▶ Gender: Representation in the Media ▶ Genre ▶ Heterosexism and the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Magazine ▶ Markets of the Media ▶ Masculinity and the Media ▶ Media Effects ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Public Sphere ▶ Reality and Media Reality ▶ Sex Role Stereotypes in the Media ▶ Soap Operas ▶ Symbolic Annihilation ▶ Television ▶ Television as Popular Culture ▶ Video Games ▶ Women's Movement and the Media

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## Women's Movement and the Media

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In the US, as in many other western countries, the link between the media and organized feminism goes back to the establishment of what in the west has been called "first wave feminism" in the nineteenth century. At the famous 1848 Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, NY the organizer Elizabeth Cady Stanton sought to raise public awareness about women's rights by composing a Declaration of Sentiments modeled after the already sacrosanct US Declaration of Independence. Her Declaration elicited denunciatory press editorials. While she was unhappy about the misrepresentation of her ideas, Stanton understood the value of press attention. Subsequent waves of feminism continued to make use of media attention to achieve their ends, contributing to the discussion of the role of mass media in social movements, especially when messages are framed according to media practices contrary to the intent of the social movement (Barker-Plummer 1995; → Feminist and Gender Studies).

By the turn of the twentieth century, as mass newspapers became entrenched in everyday life in North America and many parts of Europe, *organized feminism* had become expert in utilizing media strategies. Alice Paul, founder and head of the National Women's Party (NWP), 1915, heavily relied upon the publicity techniques of confrontation and hunger strikes she had learned from British suffragist Emmeline Pankhurst. For example, in 1917 over 1,000 NWP women picketed the White House day and night for 18 weeks in order to put pressure on the federal government to pass the Susan B. Anthony Amendment (for women's suffrage). Paul was arrested in October and sentenced to seven months in jail. After being placed in solitary confinement, she began a hunger strike. Newspapers across the country ran articles about the suffragists' jail terms and forced feedings, which increased public support for the case for women's suffrage.

From the 1970s, *second wave feminists*, as they have come to be called in many western countries, were strongly influenced by the publicity techniques of various new social movements (student antiwar, gay rights, civil rights). This was also true of burgeoning feminist movements in Japan (Muto 1997), West Germany (Lewis 1995), and many other democratic countries. In India, however, the emergence of feminism during this period was more closely related to the independence movement and its aftermath, tied up with profound changes in thinking about social class, religion, culture, and colonialism (Kumar 1993).

In the US, feminists in leadership positions, notably Betty Friedan (co-founder and first leader of the National Organization for Women) and Gloria Steinem (co-founder of the feminist magazine *Ms.*), were media practitioners who believed in the value of mass media in advancing feminist goals (→ Gender and Journalism). The media savvy that characterized the new wave of feminism helped put feminist voices on the national news agenda. Early attention came by way of articles written by feminists in agenda-setting publications, such as the *New York Times* (Brownmiller 1970). “Agit-prop” (agitation propaganda) techniques soon dominated the movement’s activities. Both the reformist and the radical wings of the movement mounted events specifically designed to attract television coverage, from the Friedan-inspired sit-in at New York’s Plaza Hotel in 1967 to the famous protest at the Miss American Contest a year later (Bradley 2004).

As the women’s movement found a place on the news agenda, activist women were increasingly the subject of media coverage, none more sought out than Steinem, whose attractiveness comported with the demands of television. Steinem used her celebrity as a launch pad for the founding of *Ms.* in 1972, which aimed to take feminist issues to a mass media audience. Although critics of the magazine argued that the emphasis on sisterhood weakened the political message, the slick and well-produced magazine, which resembled mainstream domestic magazines for women, introduced subjects such as abortion, lesbianism, infanticide, and domestic abuse which had never before been broached in the mass media (Farrell 1998; → Women in the Media, Images of). For the rest of the twentieth century, discourses around feminism were influenced by a *largely unsympathetic media* (Faludi 1991). Mass media focused on traditional messages of beauty and fashion, as well as the concerns of working women. More than ever the emphasis was on the individual and on personal solutions to gender problems rather than on the structural discrimination that confronted women as a group.

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, there have been notable developments within feminism that have led to a resurgence of feminist political action around the world (→ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational). There has been a steadily growing number of feminist Internet sites and blogs (→ Blogger). As Youngs (2007) notes, “feminism is alive and well, evolving and changing in these cyber times. Women’s online voices and activities expand day by day across the world, as does their diversity.” In global terms, feminism is enjoying renewed public and media interest. Issues including the plight of Afghan women, girls’ education, domestic violence, the feminization of poverty, abortion rights, women’s health, and HIV/AIDS have been brought to the attention of global audiences (Sarikakis & Shade 2007).

SEE ALSO: ▶ Activist Media ▶ Audiences, Female ▶ Blogger ▶ Feminine Mystique  
▶ Feminist and Gender Studies ▶ Feminist Media ▶ Feminist Media Studies, Transnational ▶ Gender and Journalism ▶ Women in the Media, Images of

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# Y

## Yellow Journalism

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The term “yellow journalism” first emerged in the United States as a pejorative to characterize the news produced by publishers William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer in their competition for New York City readers during the late 1890s. Their success in achieving daily circulations surpassing one million helped spread their innovations, including → sensationalism, to other newspapers. With Pulitzer and Hearst, the US news industry joined that of other industrialized democracies at the turn of the century, including Sweden, Germany, Canada, and England (with the Northcliffe revolution), in evolving from a limited “class” press to a “mass” medium. These mass newspapers adopted varying proportions of sensationalism, populism, and socialism to address the interests of new, urban, working-class, and immigrant readers. In response, the established upper-class journals fought back on matters of taste and politics, in part by disputing the legitimacy of the new journalism and castigating it as yellow (→ Newspaper, History of).

During the late 1800s, two factors altered the economic strategies of US news publishers. First, the cost of paper stock continued a long-term fall from approximately 12 cents a pound in 1860 to 2 cents in 1900. Second, advertising revenues rose drastically, first from display ads for department stores and later from name brands. US census data reports that advertising constituted 44 percent of gross revenue for periodicals (including newspapers) in 1879, but reached 54.5 percent in 1899 and 65.5 percent in 1919 (→ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media; Advertising, Economics of). *Falling costs and rising revenues* allowed publishers to lower the price for each copy and simultaneously increase the quantity of material published in the daily paper, thus attracting the growing audiences that advertisers desired. The US news industry, following Pulitzer, began to focus on the marginal customer, who previously possessed neither the means nor the desire to purchase newspapers. A pursuit of readers led papers out of limited market niches into general competition.

Pulitzer bought the moribund *New York World*, with 15,000 readers, in 1883 and quickly experimented with new techniques to attract readers. He expanded headlines from one-column stacked decks to full-page banners, splashed illustrations and photos across page one, introduced comic strips, and added pages for women and sports, among other innovations (→ Newspaper, Visual Design of). The *World* quickly surpassed the

city's circulation leader, the *Sun*, with 130,000 readers. By 1887, Pulitzer's distribution hit 250,000 – the country's largest – and at the peak of the 1898 Spanish–American War, Pulitzer and Hearst each amassed a circulation of 1.2 million. With the impetus from yellow journalism, newspapers had achieved almost universal readership. In 1880, the daily papers in New York City printed only four copies for every ten inhabitants, but by 1900 the rate had doubled, to eight copies for ten inhabitants.

The “yellow” label refers to how journalists handled news content. Pulitzer, and in his footsteps the competitive acolyte Hearst, emphasized reporting on crime and scandal (→ Scandalization in the News) and launched populist crusades against governmental corruption and corporate power. Sensational journalism in the *World* and the *Journal* violated the tastes and social understandings of the American upper and middle classes (→ Morality and Taste in Media Content). In response, competitors from the genteel press condemned the focus on crime, scandal, and reform, saying that Hearst and Pulitzer were pandering to the tastes of the masses.

The *New York Press* coined the term “yellow journalism” in 1897 to denote the sensationalist coloring of the news. In fact, in western Europe “yellow” had long been a depreciating expression for cheap, popular, sensationalist fiction. In New York City, however, yellow had a more specific referent in one of the *World's* and *Journal's* most prominent features: comic strips (→ Comics) and, in particular, Richard Outcault's brightly colored Yellow Kid, a gap-toothed ragamuffin from the city slums. Conflicts over the correct conduct of journalism and proper public discourse (→ Standards of News) produced a movement aimed at chastising the two New York publishing magnates. Elite papers joined with upper-class magazines, reforming social scientists, and political leaders in criticizing the yellow press and calling for the banning of sensational sheets from libraries and clubs.

The *hunt for readers* heightened Hearst's and Pulitzer's demand for news. The pursuit of scoops and scandalous stories, however, tied yellow papers to mainstream ones in a general turn from past traditions of interpretive, literary, and partisan reporting. The shift toward unadorned facts redefined and temporarily lowered the reporters' place in the news organization, as well as their general social status in public life (→ Journalists, Credibility of). The number of reporters multiplied, but they lost independent authority. They became increasingly subject to a hierarchy of rewrite men, copy editors, and editors. With the adoption of the telephone during the 1890s, reporters often called in the story to a rewrite man, who seized upon salient details and wove them into a snappy narrative. Reflecting their lack of workplace power, turn-of-the-century news workers endured long working hours, low pay, and uncertain tenure. These working conditions, along with low standards for journalism, reinforced the sensationalism of the news as reporters padded, altered, and even fabricated their stories to boost their pay.

The manipulation and, indeed, *creation of news* by yellow journalism reached its apogee in the 1898 Spanish–American War. Critics, led by such anti-imperialists as E. L. Godkin, blamed the yellow press for drumming up public opinion against Spanish colonial rule and pressuring US president William McKinley to enter the war, but historians later discounted the power of the yellow press. In any case, a corrupt circuit of information emerged. Starting in 1895, Cuban exiles in New York City provided the press with exaggerated or fabricated reports, detailing the attacks of Cuban rebels and reprisals of the Spanish government. The yellow journals seized on the information and twisted it

to fit their own jingoistic, republican plots. Their stories described Cubans longing for freedom but subject to vicious Spanish masters. Once the war began, the yellow journals offered up patriotic tales of American heroism in the face of war. In Godkin's 1898 analysis, an unholy collusion united the publishers' desire for circulation, a public roused to nationalism, and the propaganda interests of the national government.

In the end, what vanquished yellow journalism were not the attacks of genteel critics but Pulitzer himself, deciding to end his race to the gutter with Hearst. In the early 1900s, Pulitzer pursued a veneer of respectability, engaging in such ventures as founding the Columbia University School of Journalism and the Pulitzer Prizes. Although centered on US history, yellow journalism was a precursor to sensationalism elsewhere in the media.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Comics ▶ Cost and Revenue Structures in the Media ▶ Ethics in Journalism ▶ Journalism, History of ▶ Journalists, Credibility of ▶ Media Performance ▶ Morality and Taste in Media Content ▶ Narrative News Story ▶ New Journalism ▶ News Values ▶ Newspaper, History of ▶ Newspaper, Visual Design of ▶ Scandalization in the News ▶ Sensationalism ▶ Standards of News

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## **Youth Culture**

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As the social historian Philippe Aries reminds us (1962), “childhood” and “youth” are socially constructed conceptions of age and not biological givens. Indeed, the idea that a transitional period of youth occurs between childhood and adulthood is a relatively recent invention, beginning with Rousseau's *Emile* in mid-eighteenth-century Europe, which celebrated childhood and delineated stages of youth. Generational terms referring to the “lost generation” of the 1920s, or the “silent generation” post-World War II (1950s), began emerging in the twentieth century. During the post-World War II period, “youth culture” was widely used to describe the growing music and rock culture and consumer and fashion styles of the era that quickly mutated into the counterculture of the 1960s.

Since then there has been a flourishing industry in sociology, → cultural studies, and popular media designing terms like “baby-boomers” – who were born in the mid-1940s and the postwar period and came of age during the affluence of the 1950s and 1960s

(Strauss & Howe 1991; Gillon 2004; → Popular Communication; Popular Culture). This generation were the beneficiaries of an unprecedented economic expansion and a highly self-conscious sense of generation, having gone through the turbulent 1960s together and emerged in many cases to prosperity and success in corporate, academic, and political life in the 1970s and beyond.

### ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT

The category of “youth culture” can be traced back to theorists associated with and influenced by the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in Britain who emphasized its counter-hegemonic and “generational” qualities and examined the ways in which working-class youth sub-cultures resisted subordination through the production of their own culturally subversive styles (Hall & Jefferson 1976). From this perspective, youth of the 1950s celebrated beatniks, teddy boys, and the styles associated with American rhythm and blues music. A decade later, when these became appropriated by the mainstream, 1960s youth turned to the mods on the one hand, and hippy and countercultural styles of sex, drugs, and rock and roll on the other. After the commercialization and appropriation of the counterculture in the 1970s, youth turned to new movements like punk and, with the rise in global popularity of hip-hop culture from the 1980s onward, youth have turned increasingly to more urban and underprivileged “gangsta” styles of violent rap sub-culture (Kellner 1995).

While there have been attempts to present baby-boomers and “post-boomers” as coherent generations (Howe & Strauss 1993; 2000), in fact contemporary youth embrace a wide array of young people and its youth culture is equally heterogeneous. Post-boomers include those who helped create the Internet and the culture of video-gaming; the latchkey kids who are home alone and the mallrats quaffing fast food in the palaces of consumption; the young activists who helped generate the anti-globalization and emerging peace and antiwar movements; the cafe slackers, klub kidz, computer nerds, and sales clerks; a generation committed to health, exercise, sustainability, ethical dietary practices, and animal rights, as well as anorexics and bulimics in thrall to the ideals of the beauty and fashion industries. Today’s youth also include creators of exciting zines and diverse multimedia such as can be found on sites like MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube; the bike ponies, valley girls, and skinheads; skaters, gangstas, low-riders, riot grrls, and hip-hoppers; all accompanied by a diverse and heterogeneous grouping of multicultural, racial, and hybridized individuals seeking a viable identity.

### POSTMODERNISM

By the 1990s, new forms of “postmodern culture” became a central part of youth culture (see Best & Kellner 1997; 2001; → Postmodernism and Communication). Originating during this period, the style of MTV has come to influence postmodern media culture on the whole – normalizing a cultural style that seeks to absorb and pastiche anything and everything, while it turns oppositional cultural forms such as hip hop and grunge into seductive hooks for fashion and advertising. The postmodern media and consumer culture is alluring, fragmented, and superficial, inviting its audiences to enter the postmodern

game of consumption, style, and identity through the construction of look and image. Postmodern cultural forms are becoming dominant – at least for youth – with genre implosion a recurrent feature of contemporary film and TV, as are pastiche, sampling, hyper-irony, and other features of postmodern culture. Novel forms of electronic music such as techno and rave clubs also produce cultural artifacts where youth can experience postmodern culture intensely as they indulge in designer drugs, chemical and herbal ecstasy, and psychotropic drinks. Thus, for contemporary youth, postmodernism is not merely an avant-garde aesthetic, or an academic topic, but the form and texture of their everyday lives.

Most crucially perhaps, experiences of the → Internet have brought postmodern culture into the homes and lives of contemporary youth (→ Internet and Popular Culture). Hooking into the world wide web, individuals can access myriad forms of culture, engage in discussions, create their own cultural forums and sites, establish relationships, and create novel identities and social relations in a unique cyberspace (see Turkle 1995). Internet culture is on the whole more fragmented, diverse, and interactive than previous media culture and as sight and sound increasingly become integral parts of the Internet experience individuals will live more and more in a space significantly different from previous print and media culture. Being propelled into a new cultural matrix is thus an integral part of the postmodern adventure with unforeseen results. Contemporary youth constitutes the first cybergeneration, the first group enculturated into media and computer culture from the beginning, playing computer and video games, accessing a wealth of TV channels, plugging into the Internet, and creating communities, social relations, artifacts, and identities in an entirely original cultural space for which the term “postmodern” stands as a semiotic marker (→ Media Production and Content).

Youth culture is thus today intersected by media and computer technologies, and the current generation has grown up in postmodern culture. Media culture has indeed extended and prolonged youth culture as 1960s rockers like Mick Jagger, Tina Turner, and Bob Dylan continue to strut their stuff, and youth becomes an ever more obsessive ideal in US culture with the mass marketing of plastic surgery and medicines like Viagra supporting a highly sexualized mass culture that appears to idealize the youthful libido as a satisfying state of being ideally obtainable by every person. Yet in opposition to the dominant media and consumer culture, resistant youth sub-cultures have emerged that provide autonomous spaces where they can define themselves and create their own identities and communities (Kahn & Kellner 2003). Youth sub-cultures can be merely cultures of consumption where young people come together to consume cultural products, like rock music, that binds them together as a community. Yet youth sub-cultures can also be countercultures in which youth define themselves against the dominant culture, such as in punk, goth, grrrl, or hip-hop culture (see Epstein 1998).

## WORLDVIEW

“Global youth culture” is the transdisciplinary category by which theorists and policy analysts attempt to understand the emergence of the complex forms of hybrid culture and identity that increasingly occur among youth throughout the world due to the proliferation of media like film, television, popular music, the Internet, and other information and communication technologies (ICTs) in their everyday lives (for a global range of forms of



contemporary youth culture see SPoKK 1997; Dolby & Rizvi 2007). “Youth,” defined alternatively as post-adolescent and pre-adult groups, or by the United Nations as the over 1.1 billion young people between the ages of 15 and 24, are perceived as a primary engine for the growth of global media culture (→ Globalization of the Media). Youth generally comprise the most media- and technologically literate sector of their societies and the multinational corporations that trade in global media commodities actively target young people as a consumer class now believed to be worth more than US\$2 trillion in potential sales.

The potential for global media to enlist youth as agents for the cultural logic of advanced capitalist culture and economy has led some theorists to criticize global youth culture as dangerously ethnocentric and imperialist (see Gidley & Inayatullah 2002). Others see global popular culture as promoting a progressive postmodern diversity, hybridized cosmopolitanism, and proliferation of voices, cultural forms, and styles (see Dolby & Rizvi 2007). In this view, youth are being empowered by new cultural opportunities to question reactionary and regressive cultural and political attitudes in their respective societies. Therefore, while global youth culture is mistakenly characterized as being simply homogeneous and imperialistic, it also cannot be separated from a rigorous critique of its political economy. In this respect, there are ways in which global youth culture is undergoing a “McDonaldization” and represents a form of “McWorld” that seeks to replace local and traditional cultures with universal liberal and egalitarian values that surreptitiously support the geopolitical aims of countries like the United States and the profits of primary multinational media conglomerates like News Corporation, AOL/Time Warner, Vivendi Universal, Viacom, Bertelsmann, Sony, and the Walt Disney Company (→ Media Conglomerates; Disney; Time Warner Inc.).

But either condemning youth culture as homogenizing, or celebrating it as hybridized and creative, may miss the potential resistant elements in youth culture. Youth sub-cultures can comprise an entire way of life, involving clothes, styles, attitudes, and practices. Youth sub-cultures contain potential spaces of resistance, though these can take various forms ranging from narcissistic and apolitical to anarchist and punk cultures, from environmental and social justice activist cultures promoting progressive vegan lifestyles to right-wing skinheads and Islamic jihadists promoting startlingly reactionary ideas and values. Thus, although there might be elements of opposition and resistance to mainstream culture in youth sub-cultures, such counterculture might not be progressive and must be interrogated in specific cases concerning their politics and effects.

## **GLOBALIZATION AND YOUTH CULTURE**

Though there are undeniably a plethora of contemporary youth sub-cultures, the thoroughly mediated aspects of today’s youth culture, with technology like the Internet able to provide youth the world over with instant access to a wide diversity of cultural styles and artifacts, has led recent theorists to question the applicability of the concept of “sub-culture” in a global context. Proposing “post-subcultural studies” which emphasize the complexity, multiplicity, diversity, and syncretistic aspects of youth cultures as they localize global media influences and globalize local lifestyles, postmodern cultural theories are attempting to account for the ways in which global youth negotiate individualism amid market-based tribalism and strive for political agency within a world of media

spectacles. In this perspective, one would trace the international appeal of a rapper like Eminem, but also observe how local forms of hip hop have taken root from New York to Tokyo and Berlin to Sao Paulo, with global music channels and websites broadcasting not only these performances, but also hybridized forms of club music that mix rap styles with a *mélange* of cultural sounds and ideas. Further, whereas it was once believed youth culture was little more than a symbolic political gesture of defiance, today's youth have utilized new media to mobilize and coordinate global political expressions like the anti-corporate globalization movement which voices the desire of youths for a progressive world based upon alternative globalizations.

While → television and → radio remain the most powerful and pervasive media in the lives of most global youth, the Internet often supplant them as a primary influence and will continue to do so under institutional frameworks that push for the further development of a wired world that is both global village and global mall. While western corporations like Microsoft, Yahoo!, Google, eBay, ESPN, and Electronic Arts maintain top websites for global youth, Asian sites from China, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, and Singapore also represent some of the most fashionable domains. As Asian countries are estimated to comprise 60 percent of the world's youth, evidence suggests that Asian website popularity may still be regional in large part. But the Japanese → anime-style Internet phenomenon of the Neopets site, where over 70 million global youth have created virtual pets that they care for and compete with for real prizes, demonstrates the manner in which online global youth culture can be hybridic and complex.

The continued growth of the Internet throughout Asia, Latin America, and Europe, as well as in parts of Africa, means that material on the global Internet will continue to become more diverse. Still, the hundreds of millions of global youth who live in abject poverty, fight in wars, and continue to be forced into slavery must serve as reminders that theories of global youth culture that celebrate its urbanity, cosmopolitanism, and mediated qualities can be misleading and may not be applicable to the cultural experiences of the downtrodden whose "youth" itself has become a political question.

Contemporary global youth culture is thus defined today by products and usages of mass media and information technologies and a common social and political environment. Today's youth are not the first TV generation (their boomer parents had that honor), but their media experience is far more intensive and extensive. Where boomers were introduced to a TV world with limited channels in black and white, post-boomers experienced the cornucopia of 100-plus channels in living color transmitted by cable and satellite television, a wealth of video cassettes, remote control and wireless devices, massively multi-player online games (MMOGs), DVDs, BitTorrent, MySpace, and YouTube. Whereas much boomer TV-watching was rigorously supervised and circumscribed by concerned parents, post-boomers, often with both parents at work, were parked in front of the TV as a pacifier and indulged themselves in a media orgy supplemented by video and computer games.

### **A MULTIMEDIA ENVIRONMENT**

Post-boomers have therefore watched much more TV than boomers, the time competing with that they spend in school and with other forms of media consumption. The shows

post-boomers watch are of a very different nature, often filled with images of sex and violence the likes of which were not seen in the 1950s and early 1960s, replacing shows like *Ozzie and Harriet*, *Dobie Gillis*, and *Lassie* with *Law and Order*, the *CSI* series, and *The Sopranos*. Since the late 1990s younger viewers have watched shows like *The OC* and *Grey's Anatomy* (teens), *SpongeBob SquarePants* and *The Fairly OddParents* (pre-teens), compared to the likes of *The Howdy Doody Show*, *The Mickey Mouse Club*, and *Mr. Ed*, which had entertained young boomers. While for young boomers the nightly news was iconic, post-boomers prefer the comedic critique of *The Daily Show*, and follow the superficial antics of *American Idol* and the dramas of celebs like Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan.

The current wave of → “reality TV” shows feature young contestants struggling for survival, prizes, and celebrity against older players in *Survivor*, locked up in a panopticon of surveillance in *Big Brother*, and subject to the degradations of sexual and social rejection in the highly competitive personality/sex contests of *Temptation Island*, *The Bachelor*, *The Bachelorette*, *Joe Millionaire*, and MTV's *The Real World*. These latter shows generally feature narcissism and sadism, depicting a highly Darwinist neo-liberal struggle for survival of the fittest and sexiest, while losers are rejected and cast aside as unworthy.

But post-boomers are also the first generation to grow up with personal computers, CD-Roms, the Internet, the world wide web, and iPods, which provide for exciting adventures in cyberspace and proliferating technological skills, making this generation the most technologically literate in history and offering unprecedented opportunities for them to become politically engaged and to create their *own* culture. Peer-to-peer (P2P) sharing of music, video, computer programs, and other digitized products represents more communal and social sharing than is evident in the reality TV shows, and programs like BitTorrent, MySpace, Facebook, and YouTube represent social technologies designed by youth to create a participatory and shared digital youth culture, one currently at war against the adult world of copyright litigation and the net police (→ Fandom).

Of course, one needs to distinguish between a youth culture produced by youth themselves that articulates their own visions, passions, and anxieties, and media culture produced by adults to be consumed by youth. One also needs to distinguish between youth cultures that are lived and involve immediate, participatory experience as opposed to mediated cultural experience and consumption, and to be aware that youth cultures involve both poles. Moreover, one should resist both reducing youth culture merely to a culture of consumption and glorifying it as a force of resistance. It is best instead to ferret out the contradictions and both the way in which youth cultures are constructed by media and consumer culture and the way in which youth in turn construct their own communities.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Anime ▶ Cultural Studies ▶ Disney ▶ Fandom ▶ Globalization of the Media ▶ Internet ▶ Internet and Popular Culture ▶ Media Conglomerates ▶ Media History ▶ Media Production and Content ▶ Popular Communication ▶ Popular Culture ▶ Postmodernism and Communication ▶ Radio ▶ Reality TV ▶ Television ▶ Time Warner Inc.

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# Z

## Zapping and Switching

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Zapping is the selective avoidance of television commercials, either by changing the channel with the remote control or by leaving the room during the commercial break. Sometimes the term “zapping” is used as a synonym for changing channels, or switching, but more often it is connected to advertising avoidance. Analog or digital video recorders can be used for “zipping,” fast-forwarding past the commercials (Bellamy & Walker 1996). The opposite of zapping – watching the commercials – is often referred to as “sticking” (Ottler 1998).

Zapping has economic significance as it challenges the value of → advertising in → television and threatens the basic income of commercial television (→ Advertising Effectiveness; Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of; Advertising, Economics of). This makes empirical research especially sensitive to external interests, even more so as the amount of zapping reported strongly depends on the → operationalization (→ Audience Research). The self-reported zapping rate may be biased by a negative attitude toward advertising if respondents answer according to their attitude rather than their actual behavior (→ Interview). Also, → social desirability might lead to increased zapping rates in self-report. Electronic counting devices make up for this shortcoming by measuring actual behavior (Danaher 1995).

Even though the exact amount of zapping is difficult to establish, there is some agreement in research about the characteristics of the zappers: mostly, young and male viewers tend to avoid commercials (Bellamy & Walker 1996).

Television planners employ various *strategies to prevent zapping*. Increasing the appeal and likeability of commercial spots is one strategy (Woltman Elpers et al. 2003). Commercials between shows are more likely to drive away viewers than commercials that interrupt a show (van Meurs 1998). Thus, a strategy for limiting zapping is to announce the next show while the credits for the previous show are still on, using a split-screen. Eliminating commercials between shows altogether might be another strategy; instead, the commercial break may be inserted before the previous show ends or after the next has started. In a common effort to prevent zapping, channels may schedule their commercial breaks in parallel time slots (“roadblocking”; Ottler 1998). Also, announcing the short duration of the break or the small number of spots until a show starts is a strategy for decreasing zapping behavior. In the digital future, receiving devices may block channel changes

during commercials or, if a show has been recorded, block the fast-forwarding of commercials. Viewers might then be given the option to either watch the commercials or pay for viewing the show. A patent application for such a device by Philips exists; however, there is no intention to actually develop the device (yet; Snyder Bulik 2006).

Zapping represents a widespread reason for changing channel (→ Channel/Program Loyalty). There are many other *reasons for switching* (Heeter & Greenberg 1988; Walker & Bellamy 1993; Bellamy & Walker 1996). Channel changes may be motivated by the intent to avoid certain content, like boring shows or certain actors. Changes also may serve to look for certain content, like → news or → music videos, or, in an unspecific orienting search, to see what programs are on (often described as “scanning” the programs or “flipping” through the channels; → Selective Exposure). Both uses are instrumental in that they enable the viewer to make the optimal viewing decision. In contrast, there is a more playful way of switching: without having a specific goal of finding or avoiding content in mind, viewers take a stroll in the television world and experience pleasure in picking up snippets of different shows and not respecting traditional entities. Changing the channels with the remote control also enables viewers to watch two or more shows at the same time, switching back and forth between the shows (“hopping”). Also, a number of psychological traits, e.g., novelty seeking or locus of control (Bellamy & Walker 1996), and waning involvement (Vorderer 1993; → Involvement with Media Content) are connected to channel changing.

Apart from these television-related reasons for changing the channel, switching has also a social implication for the viewing group, as the person holding the remote control exerts a certain power over his or her co-viewers (Bellamy & Walker 1996).

As in zapping, there is little agreement between studies concerning the exact amount of switching. Self-report is a common *method for measuring channel changes*, being relatively cheap compared to electronic counting devices, and convenient for collecting data on other constructs like viewing motivations, personality traits, etc. in the same sample. However, switching is a mundane and repetitive behavior that viewers do not remember easily (Ferguson 1994). Moreover, self-report measures that ask for switching rate per hour might go beyond the respondents' capacity. Finally, there may be an effect of social desirability when respondents try to embellish their true switching frequency. Comparisons of self-report and electronic counter data show that actual switching frequency is underestimated by viewers (Kaye & Sapolsky 1997). More valid data can be expected from → observation, either through observers who sit in during a television session, or by recording channel changes with a video camera or a video recorder. Either way, the effort for the respondents is reduced, and validity is increased, because actual channel changes are recorded. However, the method is reactive, putting the viewers in an experimental situation that may alter their usual behavior. Moreover, preparing observational recordings for data analysis is costly and limits the number of respondents. Finally, electronic counting devices work without the presence of an observer, and offer exact data on each channel change. Such devices are used in commercial ratings measurement (→ Nielsen Ratings). While exact and less obtrusive than observation, this method is quite expensive, and commercial data are not easily available for academic use. Moreover, ratings data represent behavior, but not a viewer's intentions like searching or avoiding content. Mixed method designs combining self-report and observation or electronic counting devices are useful to get more complete information.

Again as for zapping, the socio-demographic characteristics of heavy switchers are similar across studies (Heeter & Greenberg 1988; Bellamy & Walker 1996): young male viewers change channels to a greater extent. Also, the presence of many channels promotes channel changing. The frequency of switching increases when new shows begin, e.g., on the hour or the half hour.

SEE ALSO: ▶ Advertising ▶ Advertising, Economics of ▶ Advertising Effectiveness ▶ Advertising Effectiveness, Measurement of ▶ Audience Research ▶ Channel/Program Loyalty ▶ Exposure to Television ▶ Interview ▶ Involvement with Media Content ▶ Music Videos ▶ News ▶ Nielsen Ratings ▶ Observation ▶ Operationalization ▶ Selective Exposure ▶ Social Desirability ▶ Television

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## **Zines**

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A *zine* is an independent publication produced by an individual or collective on a low budget and distributed on a small scale primarily for personal, artistic, or social aims rather than for profit. Because zine communities arise outside of mainstream media systems, they represent ways in which people understand and engage with media that diverge from consumer capitalism. While there is some question as to whether modern



self-publishing can foster social change, scholars (as well as zine producers themselves) have observed that many common practices of zine culture are guided by democratic ideals of expression, inclusion, and participation.

The term “zine,” an abbreviation of *fanzine* (itself a contraction of *fan* → *magazine*), refers to printed work typified by idiosyncratic themes and noncommercial motives. Individual zines might cover a wide range of subjects – music, politics, culture, sex, travel, work – or focus on an esoteric topic such as thrift shopping, baseball nostalgia, conspicuous consumption, or eight-track tapes. Popular articles often discuss publishers’ daily lives and comment seriously or humorously on social trends, offering perspectives from anarchists, obese women, feminists, HIV-positive men, senior citizens, and other underrepresented groups. Well-known zine titles include *Ben is Dead*, *Bunnyhop*, *Chickfactor*, *Cometbus*, *Dishwasher*, *Fifth Estate*, *Giant Robot*, *Hip Mama*, *Maximumrocknroll*, the *Realist*, *Rollerderby*, and *Temp Slave*.

Some zine creators are accomplished writers and designers with a professional attitude toward publishing, while others take an amateur approach. Zine production techniques range from low-tech (hand-writing, typewriters, cut-and-paste, office paper) to sophisticated (desktop publishing, offset printing, binding, specialty stock). Many zines are photocopied, folded, and saddle-stapled as a booklet. Titles such as the *Baffler* and *Bust*, rooted in the zine movement, physically resemble traditional journals and magazines. With a few exceptions, zines are made in small quantities on an irregular schedule, sold and traded through local venues and mail order, and publicized through word of mouth and independent publications.

Zine producers situate themselves in the tradition of American revolutionaries who printed *Common Sense* and *Poor Richard’s Almanack*, of Dada and surreal artists who self-published manifestoes in the early twentieth century, and of the countercultural press that developed in the 1960s. The first zines appeared in the United States in the 1930s when science-fiction enthusiasts mimeographed original stories along with readers’ letters and addresses, which encouraged fan networks to develop (→ Fandom). Several influential, long-running zines grew out of the 1970s punk-rock scene that glorified do-it-yourself, or “DIY,” culture.

In the early 1990s, zines emerged in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain as a distinct cultural form. Their presence and popularity exploded due to the convergence of several favorable factors. Production became cheaper and easier as desktop computers and copy machines proliferated. Many young people unfulfilled by temporary or part-time employment devoted time and energy to such projects. The Riot Grrrl movement linking feminism, music, and politics also encouraged DIY publishing as a means of empowerment (→ Youth Culture). Zine editors and readers (often the same people) connected with each other through *Factsheet Five*, a comprehensive guide that reviewed and promoted zines through the 1980s and 1990s. Book retailers became interested in distributing zine titles, and national news media spotlighted them. While underground circulation is difficult to determine, estimates place the number of zines being published in the United States between 10,000 and 50,000, with a total audience in the millions.

The print phenomenon of zines boomed prior to mass adoption of the Internet in the late 1990s, when *e-zines* (electronic magazines, a format akin to web pages and blogs) emerged. Some online publications – for example, *BoingBoing.net* or *Pitchfork.com* – sprang from the same underground community that produces print zines. The term

“e-zine” denotes the technological form of a publication and does not necessarily connote the independent context of production associated with zines.

Communication scholars have explored the roles zines play in sub-cultural communities and the reasons for which people publish their own social messages. For instance, Duncombe (1997) describes how zines fostered oppositional identities, utopian goals, and alternative practices without challenging or changing mainstream culture. Other work shows how gay men published zines that celebrated their lifestyle and marginal status during the early AIDS crisis (Long 2000; Brouwer 2005).

Several studies focused on how self-publishers responded to the Internet’s emergence as a medium for producing and distributing zines. Smith (1999) argued that online fanzines can build and maintain sub-cultural communities, transcending geography. Cresser et al. (2001) discussed how female authors of e-zines created a space for political discussion online that neither marginalizes nor liberates women and girls. Rauch (2004) concluded that many editors of printed and handmade zines are ambivalent toward web publishing because they derive pleasure from the social interaction inherent in physical circulation (→ Virtual Communities; Personal Publishing).

A sign of zines’ enduring significance is that major institutions such as Barnard College Library, the New York State Library, and the Salt Lake City Library have built diverse zine collections to secure these primary source materials and document popular culture (Bartel 2004).

SEE ALSO: ► Fandom ► Internet ► Magazine ► Personal Publishing ► Virtual Communities ► Youth Culture

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